

2012 Medicine Lodge Citizen Survey

RESULTS

Presented by
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City Administrator

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I. Introduction

Surveys are one tool among many to help decision makers evaluate important aspects of any operation. It is hoped that this survey can provide an additional tool to help collectively gauge the performance and expectations of Medicine Lodge's city government.

II. Confidence and Limitations

No survey is perfect. Surveys can be useful if four important rules are followed:

1. A clear goal of the survey is defined.
2. The population is defined.
3. The respondents are random, appropriate in size, and represent the population.
4. Questions are unbiased.

Clear Goal

The goal of the survey is to provide general feedback about the performance of Medicine Lodge's city government. The survey is not designed to set any policy or to make any official decisions. It is only general information to be used by and for city officials. As with any survey, the results are subjective and interpretive.

Population defined

The survey was sent by mail to the 800 addresses that receive city utility bills in city limits. As a practical matter, this is the most comprehensive mailing list the city has, and it is a minimal cost strategy. It is also assumed that some participants followed the instructions to make a copy for others in the household who might have been interested. As such, while the survey is titled Medicine Lodge Citizen Survey, the results must be qualified as "citizens who receive utility bills from the city." It is theoretically expected that those who receive utility bills represent the views of those households that comprise the city – especially given that provisions were made to include those who may have differing opinions.

Sample of population

A total of 202 responses were received for a response rate of about 25 percent. No control was exercised over response procedures, which lends to the assumption of randomness. It also presents the possibility that individuals may have submitted more than one survey – without any evidence of such, it is believed safe to assume that the responses are reflections of random individuals who chose to respond. Furthermore, as revealed in the results, the respondents appear to represent the population as a whole with the exception of a higher percentage of college education than is represented in U.S. census data. This may be due to the nature of the survey, old census data, exaggerated self-identification, or bad response categories.

Ultimately, the response rate, representation, and randomness provide confidence that the responses are a valid reflection of how the population as a whole might respond. In terms of statistical significance, there is 95 percent confidence that these results are within six percent of how the overall population would respond.

Unbiased questions

The questions in the survey are simply stated with appropriate response categories. This does not, however, preclude misinterpretations, unintended bias, or just plain mistakes. For instance, the survey asks for the respondent's birthplace, but the response categories are not exclusive, which can create confusion and weaken interpretation. Also, how a participant defines the terms in the question is very subjective. For instance, in the first question, the term "great" is used. That is a participant-defined term that makes any specific interpretation impossible. Furthermore, the issues and projects list is an arbitrary list and may not include other important items or may include superfluous items. These "problems" do not inhibit the ability to draw general conclusions from valid responses, but it should prevent anyone from making any mandate from the resulting information.

III. Who Responded?

The 25 percent response rate is a very high response rate whereas many survey programs hope for a 10 percent response rate, and the number of responses is almost identical to the 2011 survey.

Do you live in City limits?			2011
Yes	178	92%	98%
No	16	8%	2%

n=194

Birthplace?			2011
Medicine Lodge	34	18%	19%
Barber County	23	12%	15%
Kansas	93	48%	39%
Other	42	22%	28%

n=192

Years living in Medicine Lodge?			2011
0 to 4	16	8%	7%
5 to 9	17	9%	6%
10 to 14	16	8%	6%
15 to 19	15	8%	5%
20 plus	126	66%	76%

n=190

Age:			2011
0 to 19	0	0%	1%
20 to 29	13	7%	8%
30 to 39	13	7%	11%
40 to 49	26	13%	10%
50 to 59	42	21%	26%
60 to 69	51	26%	20%
70 plus	55	28%	26%

n=200

Education:			2011
High School	77	40%	39%
Vocational	19	10%	10%
College+	98	51%	51%

n=194

Occupation:			2011
Agriculture	19	10%	6%
Construction	5	3%	2%
Food/Beverage	2	1%	2%
Government	8	4%	7%
Healthcare	13	7%	6%
Homemaker	13	7%	9%
Industrial	8	4%	7%
Retail	7	4%	9%
Retired	56	29%	27%
Trucking	10	5%	4%
Other	54	28%	23%

n=195

IV. Level of Agreement

Below are the responses to the statements presented in the survey.

Medicine Lodge is a great place to live.				2011
Strongly Agree	40	21%		
Agree	142	73%	93%	82%
Disagree	13	7%	7%	19%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%		

n=189

In the next few years, Medicine Lodge will be an even better place to live.				2011
Strongly Agree	23	12%		
Agree	119	63%	75%	56%
Disagree	45	24%	25%	44%
Strongly Disagree	2	1%		

n=193

Overall, the Medicine Lodge city government is effective.				2011
Strongly Agree	21	11%		
Agree	114	59%	70%	48%
Disagree	49	25%	30%	52%
Strongly Disagree	9	5%		

n=198

City employees are courteous and professional.				2011
Strongly Agree	55	28%		
Agree	130	66%	93%	83%
Disagree	13	7%	7%	17%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%		

n=189

City employees are knowledgeable and well-trained.				2011
Strongly Agree	30	16%		
Agree	132	70%	86%	75%
Disagree	26	14%	14%	25%
Strongly Disagree	1	1%		

n=195

I am satisfied with the quality of city services.				2011
Strongly Agree	31	16%		
Agree	118	61%	76%	59%
Disagree	42	22%	24%	41%
Strongly Disagree	4	2%		

n=173

I would like to serve on a city board or committee.				2011
Strongly Agree	10	6%		
Agree	22	13%	18%	19%
Disagree	70	40%	82%	81%

Strongly Disagree	71	41%		
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n=187

V. Priorities

The following table details the identification of important issues and projects and those who identified them as priorities for the city. The resulting rankings are in the subsequent table.

Item	2012 Importance Rank	2011 Importance Rank	2012 Priority	2011 Priority
Airport Improvement	10	10	6	5
Blighted/unsightly property	4	4	2	2
Economic Development	1	1	1	1
Housing Development	6	7	5	6
Improving City Streets	3	2	4	3
Lower taxes/utility fees	2	3	3	4
Main Street Improvements	8	8	9	8
More youth program support	7	6	8	10
Sunflower H2O project	9	9	10	7
Water/Sewer Systems upgrades	5	5	7	9

The following table ranks the items by how often they were identified as important and by how often they were identified as a priority. The shaded items reveal those that received significant increases in rank when prioritization is applied. This suggests more intense opinions about these items. Keep in mind that only half of the respondents indicated a priority ranking.

By Importance	2012 Rank	By Priority
Economic Development	1	Economic Development
Lower taxes/utility fees	2	Blighted/unsightly property
Improving City Streets	3	Lower taxes/utility fees
Blighted/unsightly property	4	Improving City Streets
Water/Sewer Systems upgrades	5	Housing Development
Housing Development	6	Airport Improvement
More youth program support	7	Water/Sewer Systems upgrades
Main Street Improvements	8	More youth program support
Sunflower H2O project	9	Main Street Improvements
Airport Improvement	10	Sunflower H2O project

VI. Public Safety

In case of an emergency situation, I know what to do.	2011			
Strongly Agree	80	43%		
Agree	92	49%	92%	95%
Disagree	11	6%	8%	14%
Strongly Disagree	4	2%		

n=187

I have personally interacted with or had dealings with the City police department in the past 12 months				2011
Strongly Agree	26	15%		
Agree	44	26%	41%	50%
Disagree	61	36%	59%	50%
Strongly Disagree	40	23%		

n=171

I have attended or I am aware of ongoing public safety programs in the community.				2011
Strongly Agree	10	6%		
Agree	72	41%	47%	42%
Disagree	74	42%	53%	58%
Strongly Disagree	20	11%		

n=176

I believe law enforcement should be a high priority in our community.				2011
Strongly Agree	71	37%		
Agree	104	55%	92%	87%
Disagree	12	6%	7%	13%
Strongly Disagree	2	1%		

n=190

We need more police officers in our community.				2011
Strongly Agree	16	10%		
Agree	51	31%	40%	30%
Disagree	81	49%	60%	70%
Strongly Disagree	19	11%		

n=167

I feel safe at night in our city.				2011
Strongly Agree	60	31%		
Agree	120	63%	94%	84%
Disagree	10	5%	6%	16%
Strongly Disagree	1	1%		

n=191

City police officers are courteous and professional.				2011
Strongly Agree	45	24%		
Agree	124	66%	90%	75%
Disagree	17	9%	10%	25%
Strongly Disagree	2	1%		

n=188

City police officers are knowledgeable and well-trained.	2011			
Strongly Agree	37	21%		
Agree	112	63%	84%	65%
Disagree	22	12%	15%	35%
Strongly Disagree	5	3%		

n=177

I am well informed about the crimes that occur in our city.	2011			
Strongly Agree	14	8%		
Agree	73	40%	48%	39%
Disagree	77	43%	52%	61%
Strongly Disagree	17	9%		

n=181

I have confidence in our fire department.	2011			
Strongly Agree	73	38%		
Agree	107	56%	95%	93%
Disagree	6	3%	5%	7%
Strongly Disagree	4	2%		

n=190

Appendix

The following are the open-ended comments provided in the survey responses. These responses are unedited with the exception of proper names have been concealed by [brackets] and profanity has been reduced to dashes.

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- The utility bills in Medicine Lodge are outlandish! I don't know anyone in KS who pays more for the City utilities than Medicine Lodge. Also leave people alone about their properties unless you want to start to pay a portion of their property tax! How people keep their own properties is their business! You are ----- your community with utility prices, a good reason not to live in here!
 - In my opinion, Medicine Lodge has tons of potential! My hope is that enough people can embrace that concept and go to work to make our potential realized.
 - My name is [name]. I have been on a fire department in Cherryvale Kansas for six years. I just moved here from there four months ago I talked to the fire chief about getting on here in Medicine Lodge about three months ago. He said he would contact me if there was an opening. I still have not heard anything from him. I would love to get on the fire department if at all possible. Thanks. [name] [Phone #]
 - Banks are a problem here. Wont loan efficient money to buy and develop a property. Low value means low rent and NO improvements!
 - We need to get people to clean up their yards from trash, toys, and junking old buildings. We need to enforce laws on drugs ,robberies, and illegal actions! No matter how old. They are or whose kid it is. M.L. is spending too much \$. Need to cut back.
 - Get rid of stop lights.

- See water leaks but are they going to be fixed?
 - Unightly Property and too many - makes ML look Really dumpy.
 - Property and business owners with closed doors need to clean up – esp. on main street Business
 - People that are open regular hours – good job!
 - Love the spring and fall cleanups – hope that can continue.
- All are noble but without business and ancillary support none of the rest is possible. I am returning to M.L. having inherited house from father. I would be interested in a higher degree of familiarity and involvement in City affairs. The large cities are paddling upstream against strong currents of civil decay. Places like M.L. have a chance and duty to be the seed beds for the future citizens of an honorable liberty Loving nation. [name] [number]
 - M. L. needs more and new business. So we can grow. Something for our children to do or go. Lake is fine. Thanks for the Survey.
 - GOOD JOB!
 - We need a Down Town. We live on a fixed income. Can not participate in a lot of activities cause of no funds. When I retire in 7 years I am selling out and moving to Oklahoma.
 - 1. For years I have gotten the run around about trees hanging over or in the roadways and have seen very little if any change.
 - 2. It always seems like some people are singled out for non compliance. We have some real dumps in the community that never clean up but other get noticed for a vehicle with a flat tire.
 - 3. We have a wonderful police chief he deserves respect and cooperation from the Administrator. Kudos to [name], [name], and [name]. They are the best.
 - Get taxes in line with declining property values. Get water bills down [name]
 - In section 2. One doesn't know for sure that anyplace, Medicine Lodge or any other place, will be even better for live in the future it could be better or could be worse depending on lots of things. - you should be a don't know box for the uncertain answers. Or a maybe - if there are no jobs or new businesses in the future as in the past. All of your young persons will leave after finishing school or dropping out which ever and the town could very well be a ghost town. Like many around the state spending money one doesn't have and mismanaging ones budget aren't good habits to get into. You have a hospital and borrowed money to expand/improve. But people are sent off to other hospitals. Maybe a clinic only would be better and more in your budget. Issues issues issues neverending.
 - Section 3. We have three higher priorities not just two.
 - Section 2. Not on a City Board, but would consider committee.
 - Section 4. Really don't know much about the police or sheriff Depts. Just hear rumors and never know if really correct.
 - lower water bill, exclude pool charge of 5.0 each month. Sometimes I'm paying more for my trash than my water. The trash comes out to be 5.00 each week just to pickup one container. That's wrong.
 - Best City employees since have lived here!
 - We really haven't lived here long enough to have a valid opinion concerning many of the questions. We really don't have any complaints except the road condition of the alley behind our house.

- Section 3. Depends on if it gets used if not throw money at it.
 - We need to draw new companys to ML. We need to beautifying the town it is shabby compared to Pratt, Kiowa and Harper . You cant draw good companys if your town looks like it is a dump There needs to be new ideas, we find to be satisfied with what is going on. But other towns are going out and helping companies come to there towns but we have to have studies. So we get left in the dust. Get moving – don't sit and things will improve- it takes movements not just talk.
 - We need to draw new companys to
 - Our polices are good but they let kids get away with to much, they know they are large underage parties with drugs and alcohol but nothing gets done. That is something that needs to be fixed. They laugh when you say they could get arrested they say our cops and attorneys are incompehantant and cant do anything right.

- I have never had a late bill on my life of any kind. The last 2 months I received a disconnect notice for a bill I paid. We are not please 42 years married.

- I have never had a late notice for my bill in my life. Recently received 2 for water due to an error in copying meter reading Lets get this fixed.

- Section 2: The current City Administrator demonstrates a conescending attitude and must be reighned in . In order to set the appropriate goal, and objectives as determined by the citizens. He does not appear to understand he is a Civil Servant for the local populace. The mayor has reached the lofly heights of mediocvity due to a self aggrandistny attitude. Cescation of telling everyone how great and rich he is will be most appreciated. There are a great number of men more decorate militarily in the community than he. Section 9: Chief of Police [name] and Staff are absolutely superb! There is no community around our area with a better police department. The City Administrator need lessons from Chief [name] regarding professional conduct.

- Didn't we just get a new sewer system? The crime, alcohol, drug problems keeping getting increasingly worse! Our police officers are nice guys but are not trained enough for our problems. Maybe if they were paid more we could expect more!

- I see a dying community and it makes me sad. Some serious changes and people working together is the only way we can turn this sinking ship around. CHANGE IS NECESSARY AND THINGS CANT STAY THE SAME. Thank YOU FOR PUTTING OU A SURVEY! I look forward to seeing what you will do with the information. Good luck.

- MEDICINE LODGE IS NOT A COMMUNITY! We feel as if we are singled out for parking our own equipment next to our house in our own lot, that city officials should take a look at the other men, especially oilfield, who park their equipment at their personal residents maybe they should get letters also. Its not as though we are doing business from there, we are simply getting in the truck/trailers and leaving. This town to work! Other people/business men should be banned from this also. Other roustabouts oilfield that do the same thing--- [names]

- This is a older Comm. And we need home health, assessment living, nursing home. We you get a certain age you have to move out of town we have nothing take care of what we do have. And we don't need a City Administrator he is costing us a lot of wasteful money.

- Need to have better City Council. Do away with City Administrator

- In the 70's 2 police 1 sheriff for 3000 now 1200 people – 1 sheriff 9+ police Terrible for much Co. money for unnesseritces for Barber County P.S.

- Police are extremely important HOWEVER... They cant do their job correctly unless we have a Co. Attorney and court who will prosecute! Wake up Medicine [name] need to retire as does [name]. Feeling safe lately? Gun

shots on 3 separate nights in vicinity of W 1st and W2nd please help. City police need to smile and wave – they can still enforce the law without bein so glum. City Administrator - time to stop targeting certain people and property if there's a law for 1 then it needs to apply to everyone.

- The City Council seems to have little interest in checking the facts on who the City Administrator hires. Great deal of funds going out of the City! Would like to see him replaced!
- We will never get people to move to M.L. until we cleanup!. Street's are very bad.
- Have a problem with animal control. Dogs run lose all over town.
 - Need to enforce leash laws
- I do not know what the Sunflower H2O Lake project is. Many of these questions concern things about which I have little or no information.
- The trash guys are AMAZING!!!! They are always in a good mood. They are very nice and courteous. I enjoy seeing them once a week!
- I would like to see [name] the City Administrator Fired He is the worst thing to happen to Medicine Lodge. Thanks for asking.
- I am very satisfied but I don't get out very often. I get my hair done on Fri. I am so fortunate to have my daughter [name] to care for me she is an R.N. I am proud to have my address M.L. my entire life. M. L. has been my address all of my life even on my farm north of 99 Springs.
- Get rid of [name]
- I think the police try to do all they can but get NOWHERE When we have a county attorney [name] – obviously refuses to prosecute! We have a horrible drug problem in this town and it just goes on and on this is what is important to do something about. I also wonder why the majority of City Council member seem to be unable to have a thought of their own. Whatever the City Administrator wants or says is DONE.
- I don't know how [name] got the Chief of Police. But he does a very poor job of it. He has a very arrogant attitude and acts like he is the better than every one. In reality most of the time he doesn't have clue what he is talking about.
- Unanswered just not knowledgeable
- No matter what police do unless attorney follows up is done. Why police. Do not harass the teen drivers.
 - Why the out sourcing-----
 - Why a City Adm. That has a questionable background and you let him write his own contract and raise ??????
 - City Council do your job instead of being yes men to the Admin.
- Need new city manager.
- We need a decent place to eat around here. Tired of going out of town to get a nice meal.
- We need an industrial park where we can grow oilfield business while the boom is ongoing!. The lake project would bring vast amount of tourism which would help business flourish and county support a growing community.

- I'm not sure about needing more police officers or whether they are well trained. I hope so though. But criminals need to pay for their crimes.
- To the 2nd question the answer is – NO to the 3rd question the answer is – NO The answer to the 7th question is – I don't know the answer to the 8th question is – I don't know.
- I hope when so many improvement are needed.
- City rules and building codes should stop at the City limits not any farther.
- We need police that will DO something to these kids that are getting into trouble and getting away with warnings all the time.
- We do not need a city manager!! We managed before without one and all that money that is paid for his salary could be put to the community.
- The water bills are way too high.
- A blighted property – Please be diligent about getting it taken care of in a timely MANNER untagged vehicle's are a major problem.
 - II. Chamber of Commerce should be more involved in economic Development – Help recruit Drs., Dentist, and businesses.
 - III. We all know what to in a medical EMERGENCY but what about where to go in a disaster situations?
 - IV. Our trash collection people ARE just great!!
- The ones that are not marked not sure about.
- U need a fifth column for Not Sure

END###