

# Community Needs Assessment Survey Superior, NE September 2014

By  
South Central Economic Development District, Inc.



Ask us...we can help.

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## Introduction

Local governments that take the time to understand, and respond to the needs of its constituents are able to lead their communities into a future that is envisioned and therefore supported by the people. The accurate identification of a community's needs and priorities is an important investment that will provide meaningful information as well as a method for the engagement of passionate, committed residents. The information gained and engagement created by a Community Needs Assessment Survey will assist local officials with setting a precedent for ongoing community engagement and creating a legacy for generations.

The Community Needs Assessment Survey (CNAS) is an important first step in the path that leads to ongoing community development and growth. The CNAS process produces information that enables a Community to systematically set and achieve goals. The City of Superior is a testament to the amount of community development success that is made possible by gathering and utilizing meaningful community input. Since 2001, the City Council has completed four CNAS and, as a result has experienced an ongoing process of setting and achieving community development goals.

In order to ensure that the CNAS produces meaningful information and community engagement, each survey process has consistently included the following steps:

- hired a third party entity to guide the survey process, provide data analysis and present the results of the surveys;
- formed a survey question selection committee that represents multiple community interests such as healthcare, economic development, education, retirees, and the local government;
- developed a complete list of all households within the City's corporate limits;
- provided appropriate publicity to ensure all households were aware of the importance of the survey;
- enlisted the help of committed local volunteers to personally deliver and pick-up surveys at each household; and
- hosted a town hall meeting for the presentation of results and inclusion of residents in priority identification and goal setting.

The City of Superior contacted the South Central Economic Development District, Inc. (SCEDD) to request its support to complete a 2014 CNAS. With the guidance and support of SCEDD, survey questionnaires were created and delivered to local volunteers for distribution. Volunteers personally distributed and received survey questionnaires from every household within the City's corporate limits. SCEDD staff then received the completed surveys, accounted for each questionnaire, conducted data analysis, and prepared the report that follows.

## Methodology

The questionnaire was divided into seven areas of interest:

- Demographics
- City
- Business & Economic Development
- Child Care
- Housing
- Education
- Superior Country Club

Volunteers hand delivered and picked up surveys during the week of May 28 through May 30. Each survey had an attached cover letter and envelope. The cover letter explained the survey and the necessity of answering each question honestly and completely. An envelope was provided for each household to seal their survey to ensure confidentiality. Copies of the survey and cover letters are located in the appendix. Completed surveys were scanned by the Center for Rural Research and Development (CRRD) at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. The results were aggregated and reported to SCEDD.

The City provided an address list based on utility billing information to ensure that each household within the corporate limits of the City received a survey. Eight hundred fifty-three (853) households within the corporate limits of Superior received a survey. The community displayed a strong turnout as 616 households returned a completed survey, resulting in a response rate of 72% for the City of Superior. One hundred residential properties in Superior were deemed vacant for a 10.5% vacancy rate in the community.

	Superior City Limits
Total Households	953
Less Vacancies	100
Total Households Surveyed	853
Total Returned	616
Response Rate	72%
Vacancy Rate	10.5%

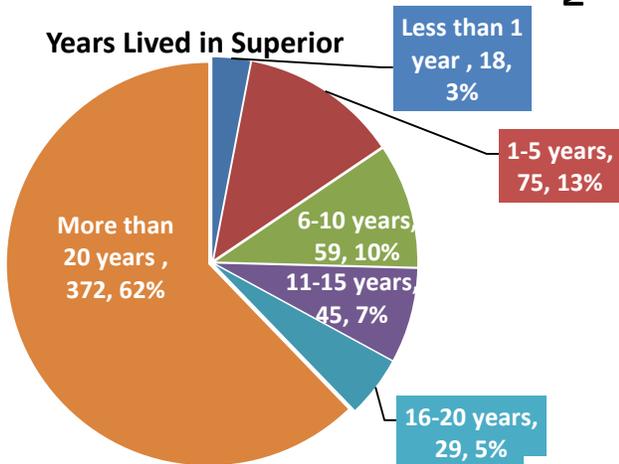
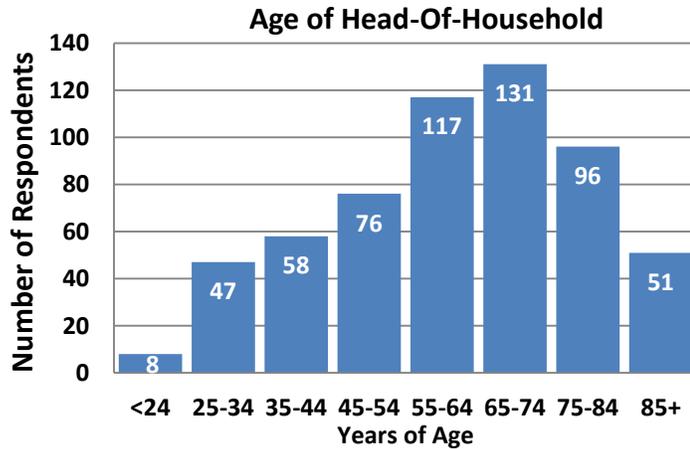
## Results

Questions included in this survey offered a variety of answer formats, including multiple choice, yes/no, and rating scales. Ratings scales were either Excellent=4, Good=3, Fair=2, Poor=1 or Definitely=4, Probably=3, Probably Not=2, Definitely Not=1. Responses to the four choices available on each rating scale were averaged to arrive at an overall rating. In addition to the four responses outlined, don't know or no opinion could be selected; don't know or no opinion responses were omitted from the final results.

## Demographics

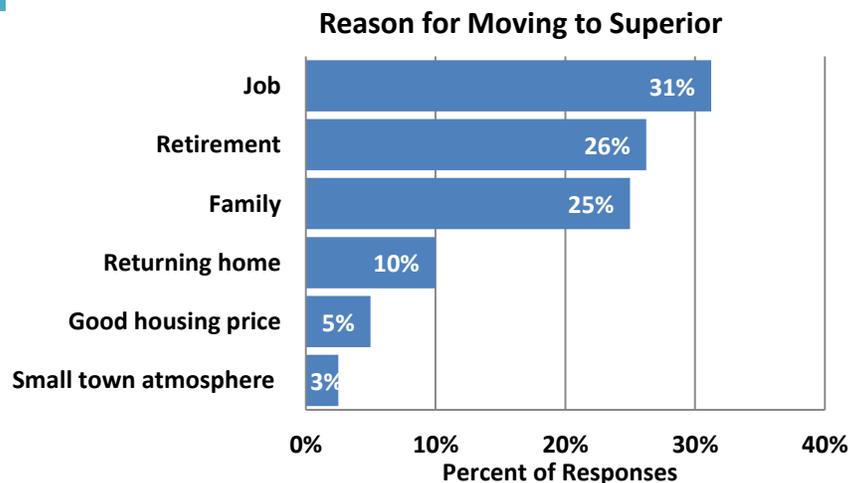
Demographic questions provide an overview of the make-up of a community, based on age, number of years in the community, and reason for moving to the community. Questions regarding internet service were also covered in the demographic section of the survey.

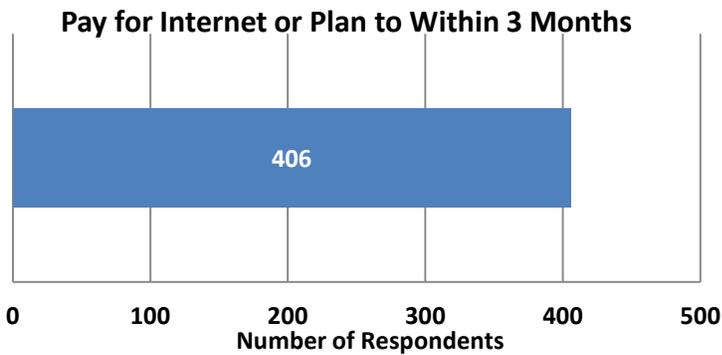
The first demographic question asked about the age of the head-of-household. The largest age group represented was 65-74, but no age group exceeded 25% of the population. Just under half (278 or 48%) of 584 survey respondents stated their head-of-household was 65 years of age or older, 68% or 395 were 55 years of age or older. Nineteen percent were under 45 years of age, 1.3% or 8 heads-of-household were twenty-four years of age or younger.



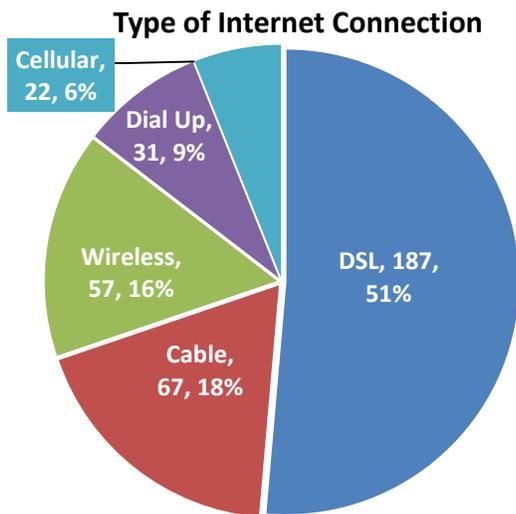
Of the 598 respondents who indicated how long they had lived in Superior, 62% or 372 had lived there for more than 20 years. Approximately one-sixth of respondents had lived in Superior five years or less, 3% less than one year.

Those that had moved to the community within the last five years were asked to provide their primary reason for moving to Superior. Eighty households responded to this question. The top three reasons for moving to Superior were job, retirement, and family. Ten percent were returning home while 5% moved to Superior for good housing price. Three percent moved for a small town atmosphere.





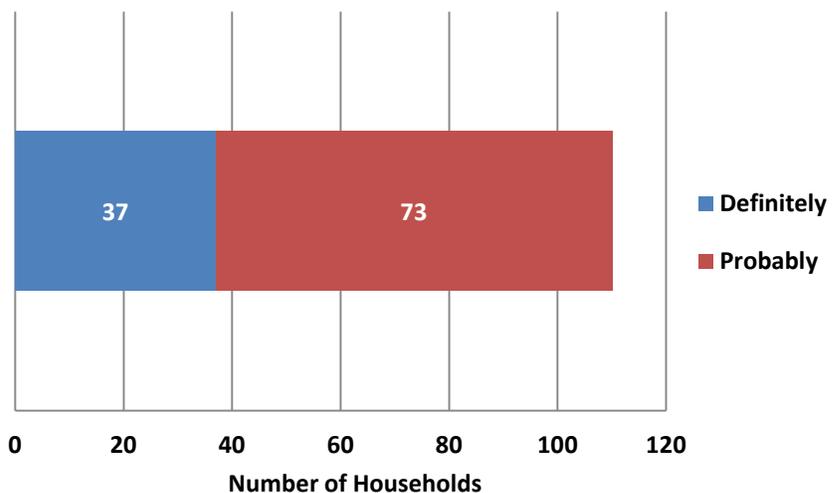
The next questions asked about internet connections in the home. Four hundred and six households indicated they currently paid for internet access or planned to pay for internet access within three months.



The households that paid for internet access or were planning to pay for internet access were asked what type of internet connection their household currently had or would have. Fifty-one percent indicated their household's type of connection was DSL, 18% cable, 16% wireless, 9% dial up, and 6% used cellular.

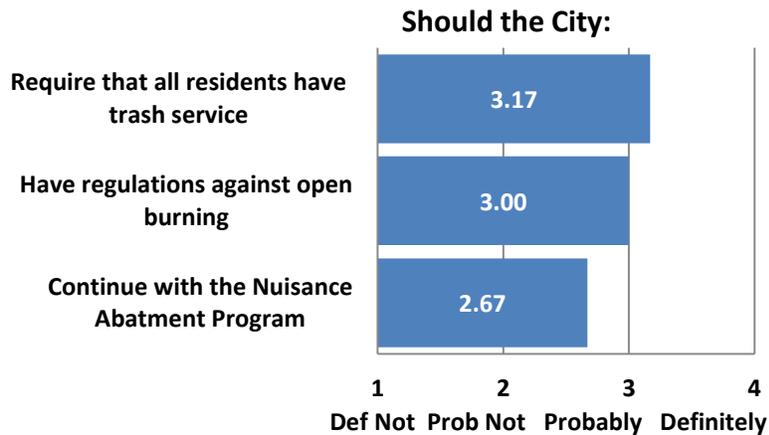
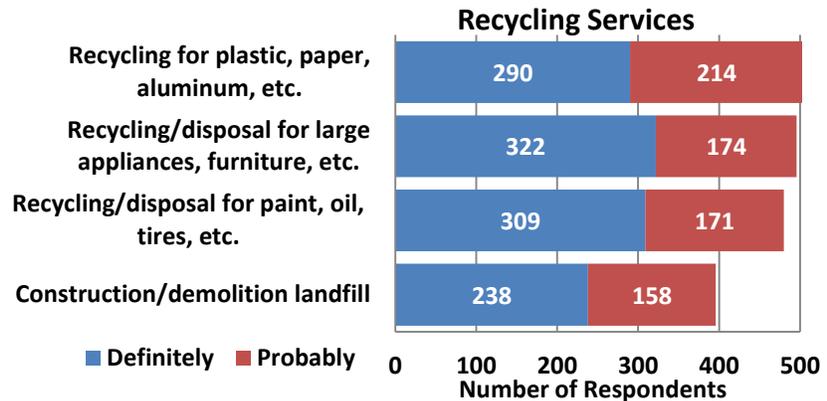
The last question of this section asked if Superior residents that currently paid for internet access or planned to within the next three months would be interested in a fiberoptic connection (including voice, video, and broadband through one connection) for \$130 a month. A total of 110 households stated they would definitely or probably be interested in a fiberoptic connection for this price.

### Interested in Fiberoptic Connection for \$130/month



## City

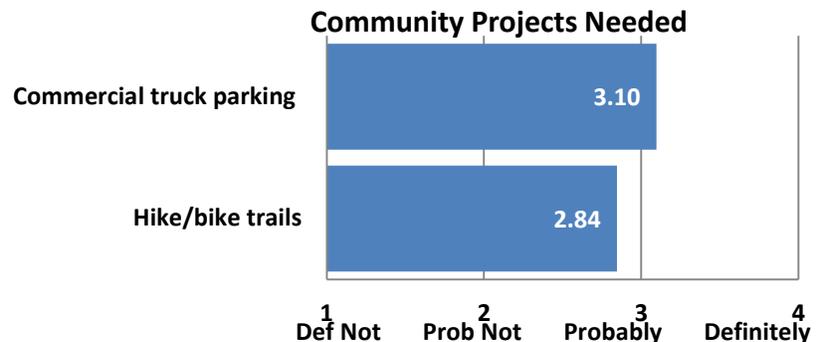
Superior residents were asked if their households would utilize four types of recycling/disposal services if available in town. Each type of service received strong support; 88% of respondents indicated their household would definitely or probably utilize recycling for plastic, paper, aluminum, etc., and recycling/disposal for large appliances, furniture, etc. Eighty-four percent stated they would utilize recycling/disposal for paint, oil, tires, etc., and 76% would utilize a construction/demolition landfill.



Residents were asked if the City of Superior should require that all residents have trash service, have regulations against open burning, and continue with the Nuisance Abatement Program. Each of these items received an overall “probably” rating. Seventy-seven percent of respondents stated that the City should probably or definitely require all residents

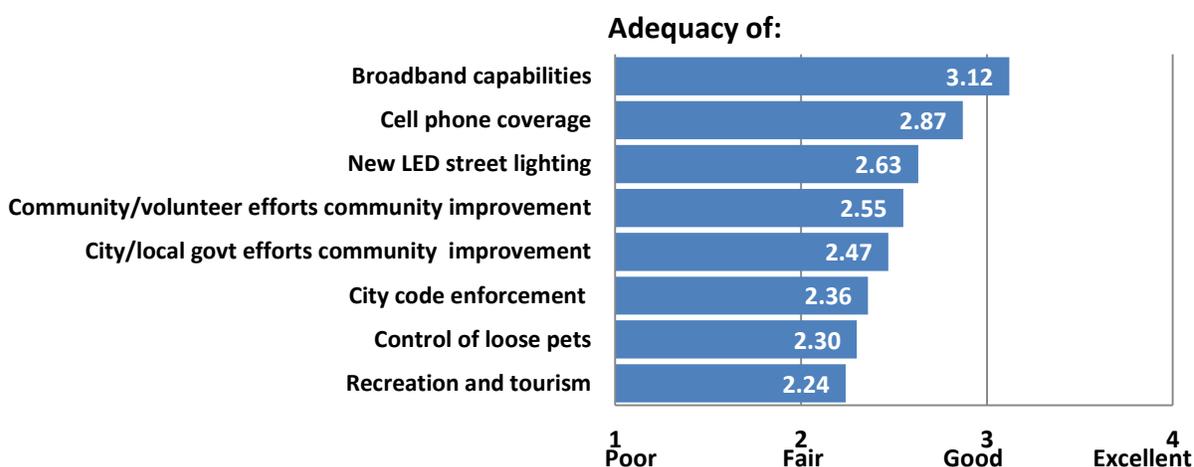
to have trash service; 69% stated that the City should probably or definitely have regulations against open burning within the City. Regarding continuation of the Nuisance Abatement Program, 60% of respondents indicated that the program should probably or definitely be continued.

Superior households were asked to voice their opinion regarding the need for two community projects. Both commercial truck parking and hike/bike trails were viewed as probably needed. Commercial truck parking was rated as probably or definitely needed by 80% of respondents; 65% stated that hike/bike trails were probably or definitely needed within the community.

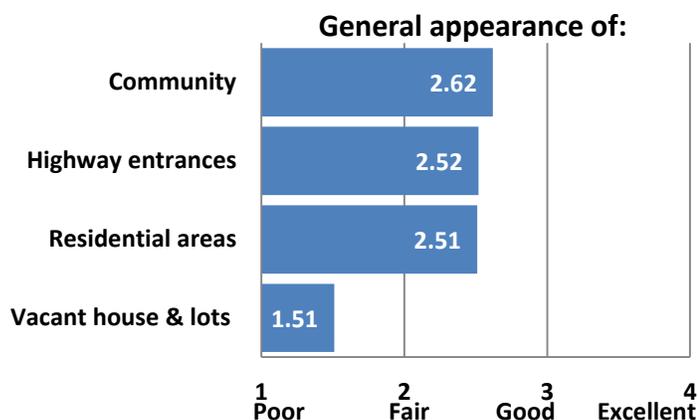


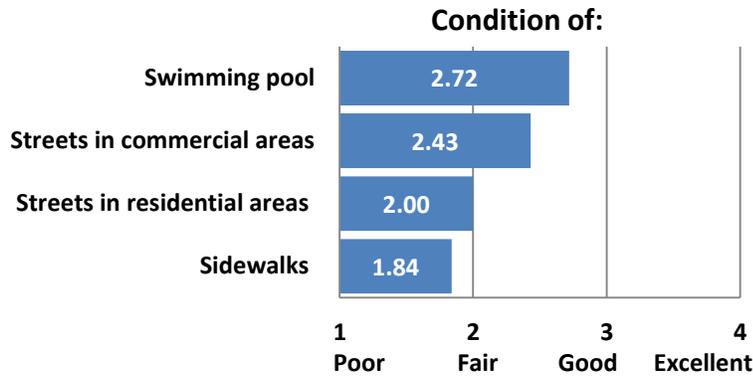
The survey questioned residents about the adequacy of specific items impacting the quality of life in Superior. Respondents could indicate their level of support by selecting excellent, good, fair, or poor; these responses were weighted 4, 3, 2, 1 respectively, and then averaged for an overall rating. Residents could also select don't know or no opinion; these responses are not reported.

The adequacy of broadband capabilities, cell phone coverage, new LED street lighting and volunteer efforts toward community improvement each received an overall good rating. Adequacy of broadband was rated good or excellent by 61% of respondents. The adequacy of cell phone coverage was rated good or excellent by 72%, 61% rated the adequacy of new LED street lighting as good or excellent. Regarding the adequacy of community/volunteer efforts toward community improvement, 56% of respondents rated it good or excellent. The adequacy of City/local government efforts toward community improvement, City code enforcement, control of loose pets, and recreation and tourism each received an overall rating of fair to good. City/local government efforts toward community improvement was rated fair or good by 72% of respondents; 71% rated City code enforcement as fair or good. Control of loose pets was rated fair or good by 65%, and 74% stated the adequacy of recreation and tourism was fair or good.



Asked about the general appearance of specific aspects of Superior, residents rated the community as a whole, highway entrances, and residential areas, as good overall. Sixty-two percent of households stated that the community appearance was good or excellent; 57% rated highway entrances as good or excellent; and 53% stated residential areas were good or excellent. The general appearance of vacant houses and lots received an overall poor rating with 61% of all households stating the appearance of these items was poor.



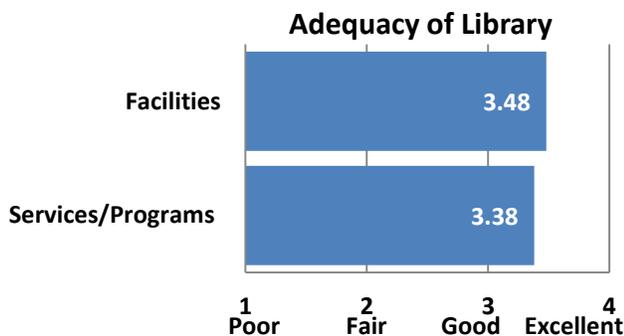
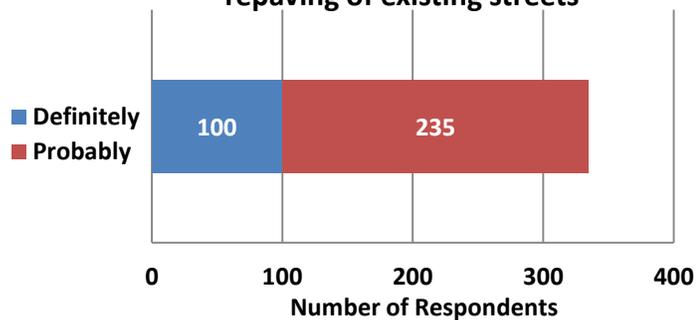


The next topic examined by the survey was the condition of the sidewalks, the swimming pool, and the streets in both the commercial and residential areas in Superior. The swimming pool condition received an overall good rating as 2/3 of respondents considered it to be in excellent or good condition.

Streets in commercial areas received a fair to good rating; 80% of respondents considered them to be in fair or good condition. Streets in residential areas received an overall fair rating, almost 3/4 of respondents considered them to be in fair or poor condition. Sidewalk conditions were rated as poor to fair, as 82% of respondents considered the sidewalks to be in fair or poor condition.

In Superior's 2009 Community Survey, 75% of patrons indicated the condition of the streets was poor or fair. In the current survey, residents were asked if they would support a bond issue to fund repairing or repaving of existing streets. Three hundred thirty-five respondents (65%) indicated they would definitely or probably support a bond issue for this purpose.

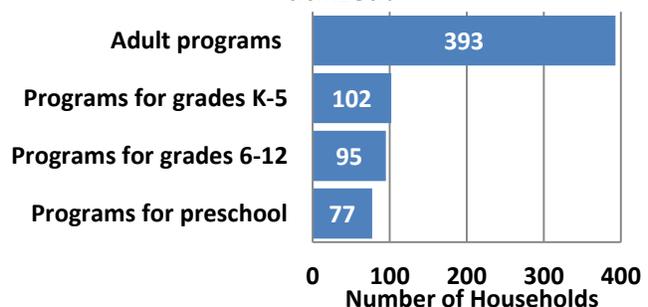
**Support a bond issue to fund repairing or repaving of existing streets**



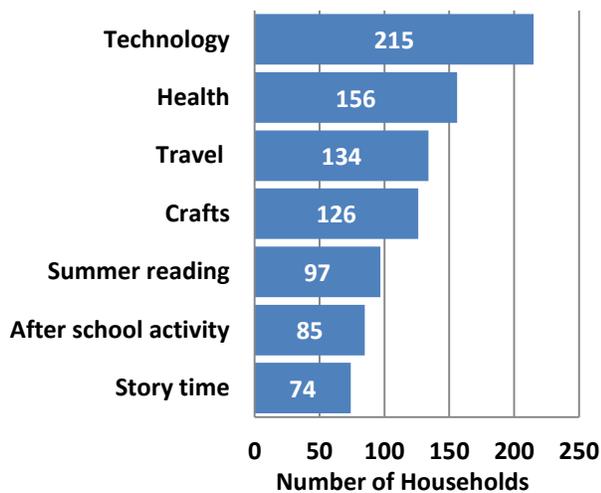
Regarding the library, residents were asked to rate both the adequacy of the facilities as well as the adequacy of services/programs. Both areas received a rating between good to excellent; 95% of respondents indicated that library facilities were either excellent or good and 92% rated library services/programs as excellent or good.

When asked what library programs their household would most utilize, the highest number of respondents (393) stated adult programs. A total of 102 households sought programs for grades K-5, 95 would utilize programs for grades 6-12, and 77 indicated an interest in programs for preschool age children.

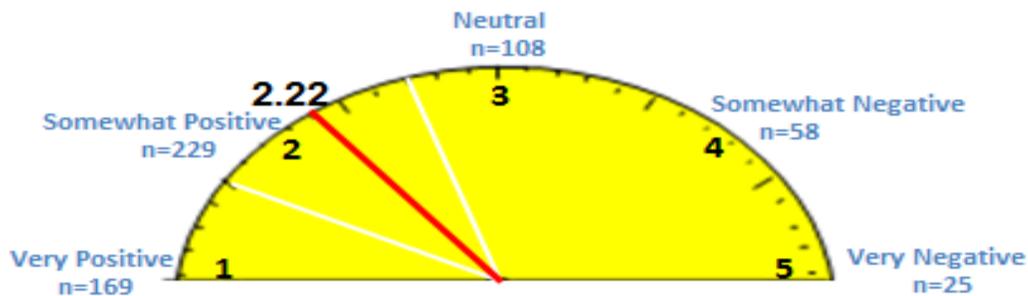
**What library programs would be most utilized?**



### Library Programming Participation



Superior residents were asked to identify in which areas of library programming their household would participate, multiple selections were allowed. Results indicated technology would have the highest participation, 215 households, followed by health with 156 households. Travel could see participation from 134 households, crafts, 126 households. Participation in summer reading, after school activity, and story time was indicated by 97, 85, and 74 households respectively. There was also a place to fill in another idea; these are listed in the appendix.



The final question of this section asked local residents, “Overall, how do you feel about Superior?” Respondents could select from a five point scale of very positive (1) to very negative (5). Overall, residents felt somewhat positive about their community, with a rating of 2.22; this is slightly higher than 2009 survey in which Superior residents scored their overall feeling as 2.26. In over forty communities in the last fourteen years of experience, the highest rating was 1.55, while the lowest came in at 2.69. Respondents were then asked to describe the reason behind their feelings about Superior; specific comments are included in the appendix.

## Business & Economic Development

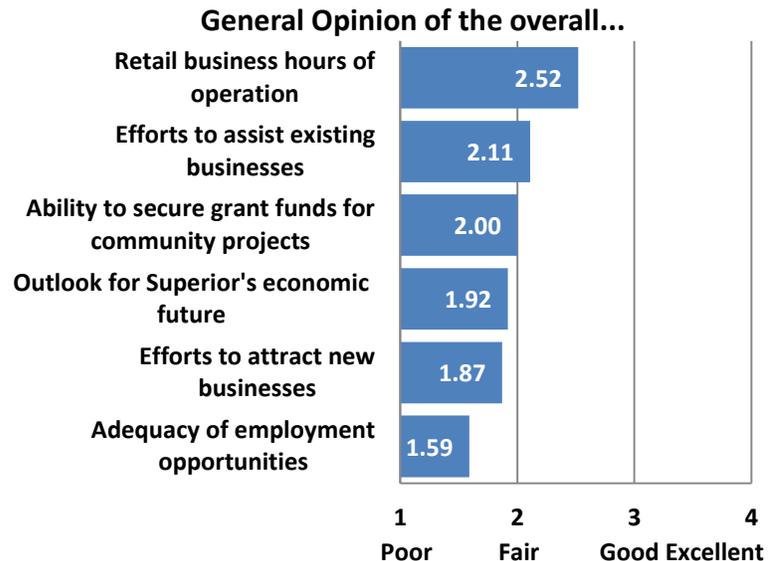
The next set of questions in the survey addressed business and economic development



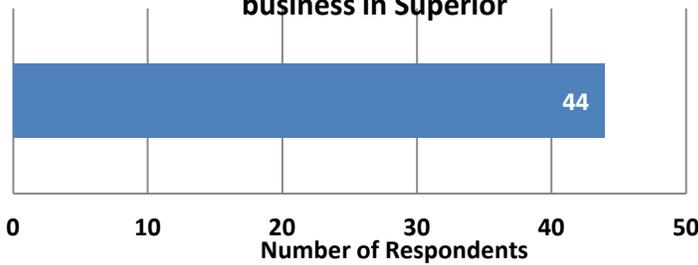
in Superior. Households were asked if they would utilize three types of businesses if each business was available in town. A restaurant open in the evening received the most support as 527 respondents indicated they would utilize such a business. A total of 290 households indicated they would utilize a men's clothing store, while 203 stated they would

utilize a home/business cleaning service. A list of other businesses suggested by respondents can be found in the appendix. A feasibility study would need to be conducted to determine if these endeavors would be profitable.

Superior residents were asked to provide their opinion of business and economic development factors on a scale of excellent to poor. Retail business hours of operation were rated good overall, 58% of respondents stated the hours were excellent or good. An overall fair opinion was the consensus for the remaining factors. Efforts to assist existing businesses was rated fair or good by 75% of respondents, 70% rated the ability to secure grant funds for community projects as fair or good. The general outlook for Superior's economic future was rated fair or good by 65% of respondents; 60% rated efforts to attract new businesses as fair or good. The adequacy of employment opportunities received the lowest rating as only 46% of respondents stated that it was fair or good while 53% rated it as poor.



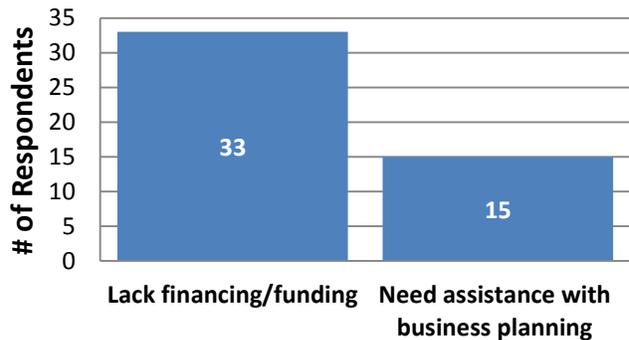
**Interested in starting or purchasing a business in Superior**



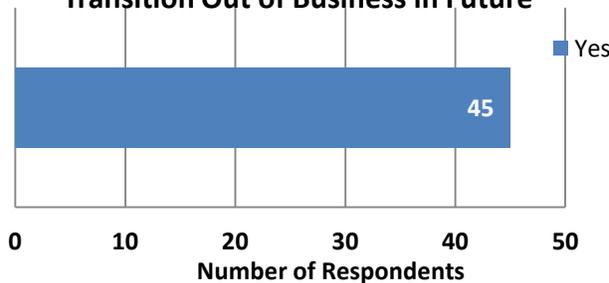
Survey respondents were asked about their interested in starting or purchasing a business in Superior, 44 respondents indicated they were interested in pursuing such an endeavor.

Those expressing interest were asked to indicate barriers to starting or buying a business, multiple barriers could be chosen. Of the 44 respondents interested in starting or purchasing a business in Superior, 33 indicated the lack of financing or funding as a barrier to this effort, while 15 indicated the need for assistance with business planning as a barrier to this endeavor.

**Barriers to Starting or Buying a Business**



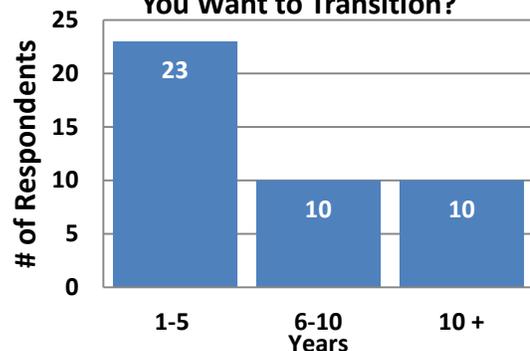
**Business Owners Seeking to Transition Out of Business in Future**



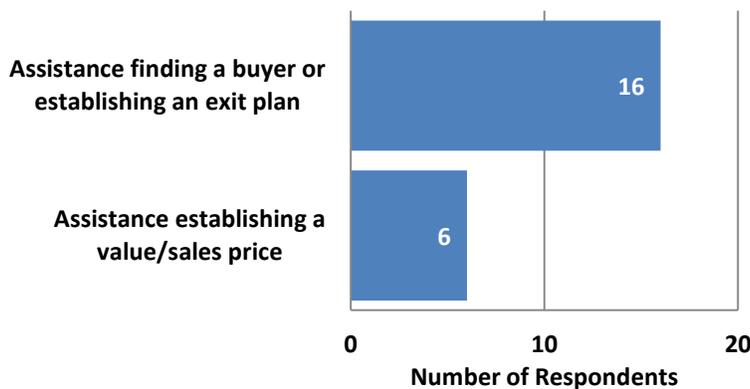
Respondents were then asked if they were a business owner seeking to transition out of their business in the future. A total of 45 respondents indicated they were a business owner that would be seeking to transition out of their business in the future.

Of those 45 business owners seeking to transition out of their business in the future, 43 communicated how soon they would want to transition. Over half (23) business owners stated they wanted to transition in one to five years, one-fourth (10) owners said between six and ten years, and another quarter (10) said they would be seeking to transition in more than 10 years.

**Business Owners: How Soon Do You Want to Transition?**



### Business Owners: What Assistance Would be Helpful for Business Transition



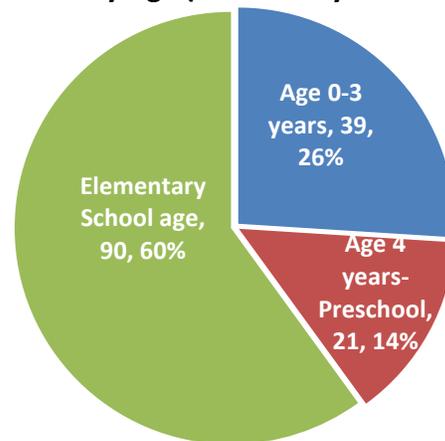
These same 45 business owners were then asked to select what assistance, if any, would be helpful in preparing to transition their business. Multiple items could be selected. Sixteen owners stated that assistance finding a buyer or establishing an exit plan would be helpful to them, while six stated that assistance establishing a value or sales price would be helpful. A total of 23 owners indicated they did not need assistance.

### Child Care

In order to assess the need for or adequacy of child care opportunities in Superior, the next set of questions addressed this topic.

The first question asked about the ages of children in each home. A total of 150 children that were between the ages of zero and elementary school age were reported. Slightly over one quarter, 39 children, were zero to three years old, 14% (21 children) were between 4 years old and preschool age. The largest age group consisted of elementary school age children, as 60% (90) were reported were in this group.

### Children by Age (Elementary and Younger)

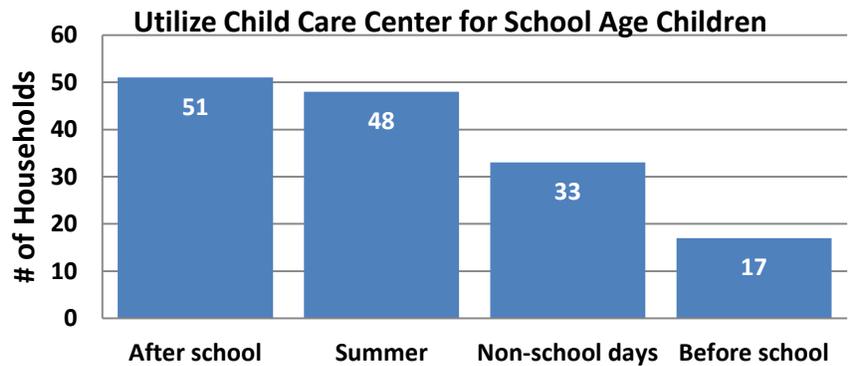


### Anticipate needing child care within 5 years



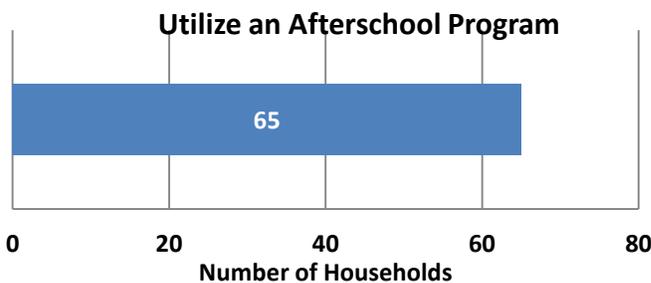
In order to anticipate the future need for child care in Superior, households who didn't report children age zero to elementary school age were asked if they anticipated needing child care within the next five years. Fifteen households indicated they definitely or probably anticipate this need.

Next households were asked when they would utilize a local child care center for school aged children. The highest demand for school age child care was after school; 51 households said they would utilize a local child care center during this time.



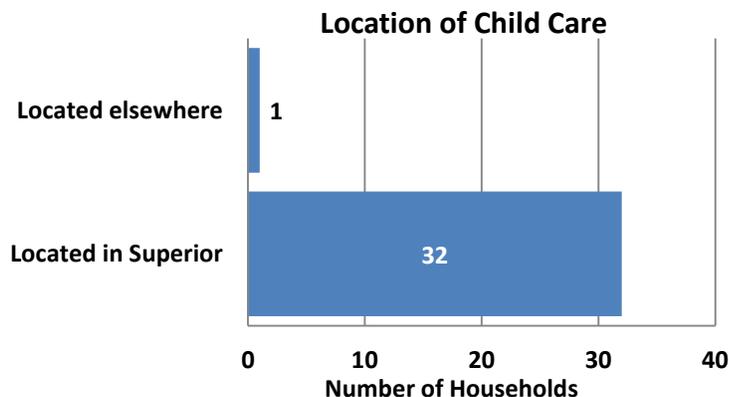
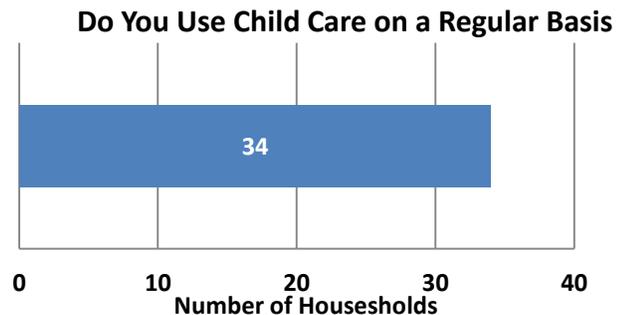
Summer had the next highest demand as 48

households expressed interest, followed by non-school days (33 households). Before school child care was least in demand, only 17 households stated they would use a local child care center for school age children before school.



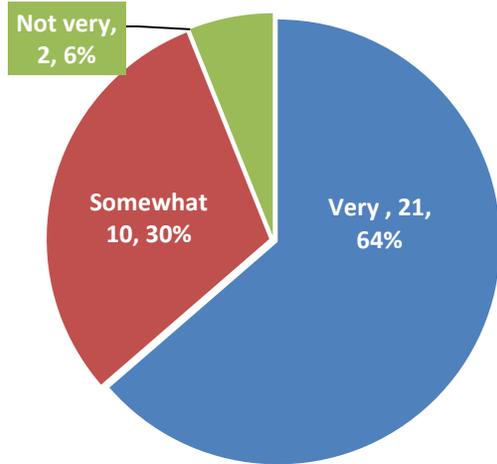
To assess interest in an afterschool program, households were asked if they would utilize such a program. Sixty-five households indicated they would utilize an afterschool program.

The next question asked if households used child care on a regular basis. Thirty-four households affirmed that they currently use child care on a regular basis. The remaining questions in this section were directed to these 34 households.



Regarding the location of child care, 32 households that used child care on a regular basis stated their child care was located in Superior. Only one household utilized child care located elsewhere.

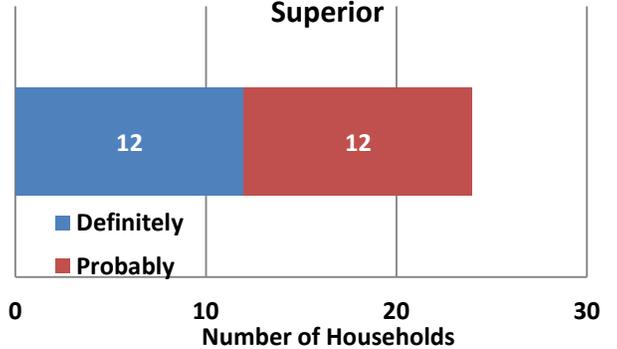
### Difficulty Finding Quality Child Care



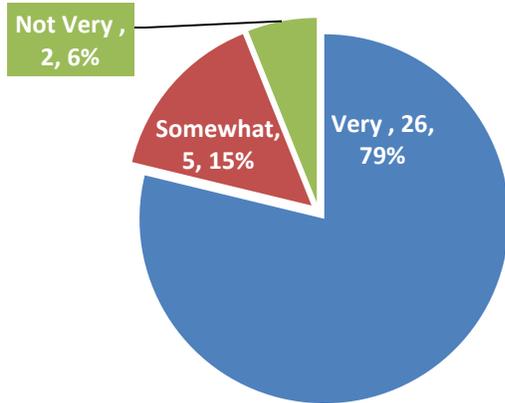
Thirty-three of the households that used child care regularly stated their level of difficulty in finding quality child care in Superior. Ninety-four percent, or 31 households, stated it was very or somewhat difficult to find quality child care. Two households indicated it was not very difficult to locate this service. Not at all difficult was also an option, but this answer was not selected by any responding households.

Asked if they would use a child care center if one were located in Superior, 24 households that used child care on a regular basis stated they would definitely or probably use a local child care center if one was available.

### Use Child Care Center if Available in Superior



### Satisfied with Current Child Care Provider

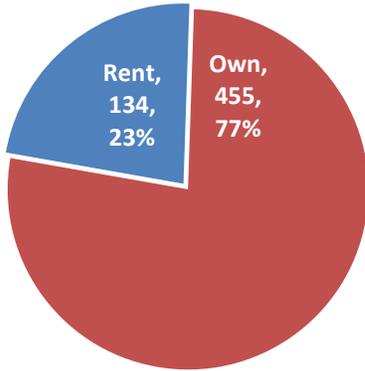


The final question regarding child care asked households that utilized child care on a regular basis to identify their level of satisfaction with their current child care provider. Ninety-four percent of these respondents, 31 households, indicated they were very or somewhat satisfied. Only two households indicated they were not very satisfied with their current child care provider. Not at all satisfied was also an option, no responding households selected this answer.

## Housing

Superior's greatest asset is its people. The City's ability to attract and retain residents is tied directly to the health of its neighborhoods, both old and new. Quality housing is an important need for every resident at every stage of life. Therefore, a significant number of questions were geared toward the identification of several types of housing needs.

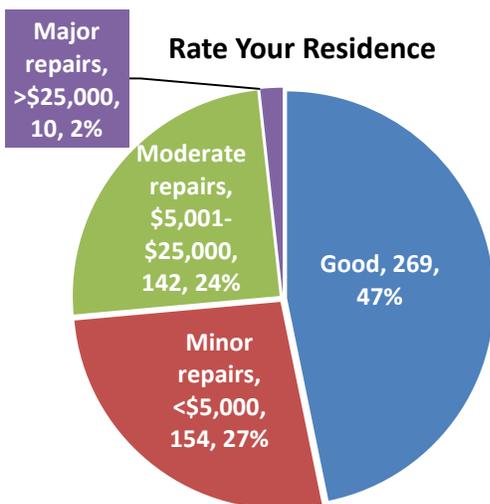
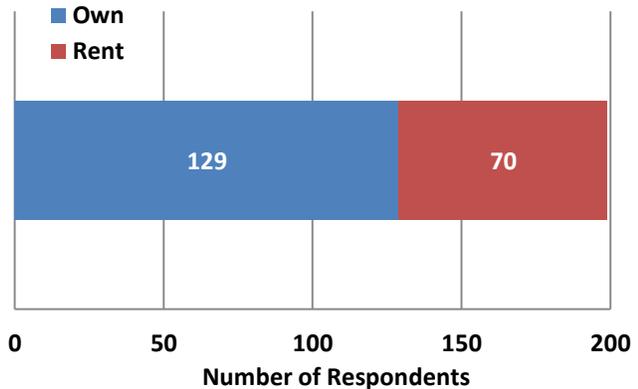
### Do You Own or Rent Your Home?



First, households were asked if they owned or rented their residence. The results indicated homeowners outnumber renters three to one as just over  $\frac{3}{4}$  of respondents in Superior indicated they were homeowners and just shy of  $\frac{1}{4}$  were renters.

Households paying more than 30% of their income toward housing (rent or mortgage plus utilities) are considered "cost burdened." Results of the survey of Superior households showed 199 households, or 1/3 of all respondents, were "cost burdened." Of those stating they pay more than 30% of their income toward housing, 129 (65%) were owners and 70 (35%) were renters.

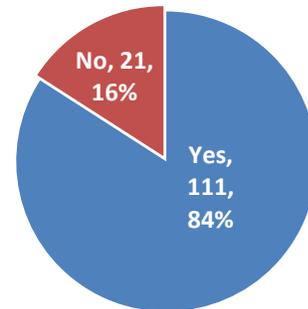
### Housing >30% of Income



To assess the condition of Superior's housing stock, residents were asked to rate their own residence. Options were good; needs minor repairs, under \$5,000; needs moderate repairs, \$5,001-\$25,000; or needs major repairs, over \$25,000. Of the 575 owners and renters that responded, 74% stated their residence was in good condition (269) or in need of only minor repairs (154). Nearly one quarter of households (142) indicated their home needed moderate repairs ranging in cost from \$5,001 to \$25,000. Only 2% or 10 respondents stated their home was in need of major repairs costing over \$25,000.

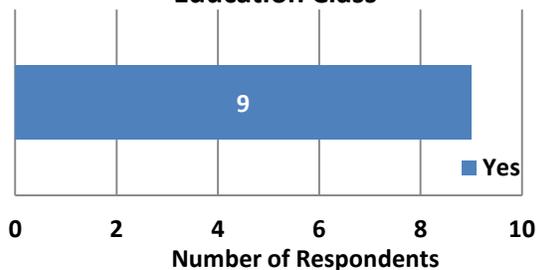
The next few housing questions were specific to renters. Asked if their current rental met their needs, 111 renters (84%) stated their needs were met, while 21 (16%) stated that their current rental did not meet their needs.

**Renters Only: Current Rental Meet Your Needs?**



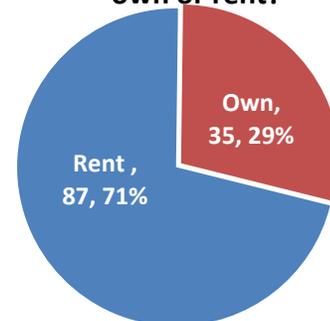
Renters were then asked if they would be interested in a renter education class. Of the 127 renters who answered, nine said they would be interested in such a class.

**Renters Only: Interested in Renter Education Class**

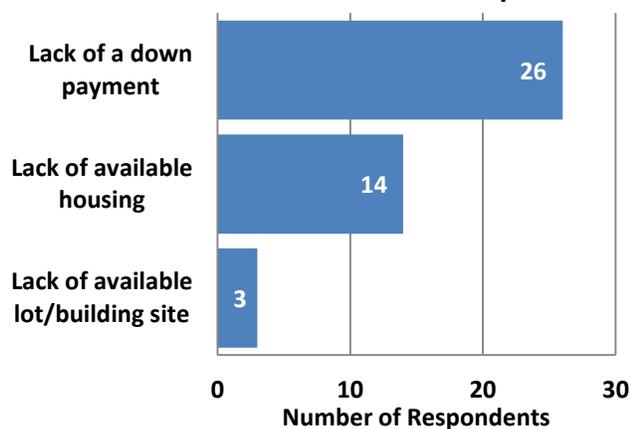


Renters were asked if they preferred to own or rent. Seven out of ten (87) renters responded that they preferred to rent. Thirty-five households that currently rent (29%) preferred to own.

**Renters Only: Do you prefer to own or rent?**



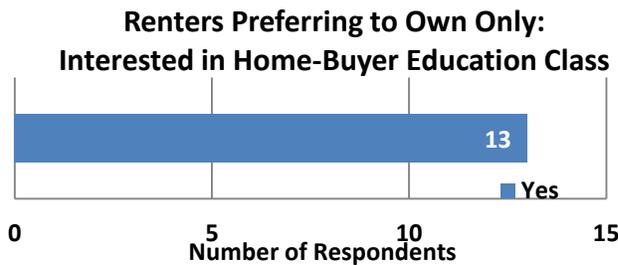
**Renters Preferring to Own Only: Barriers to Ownership**



The next questions were specific to the 35 renters that preferred to own, and asked about barriers preventing home ownership; multiple barriers could be selected. The most prevalent barrier to renters that preferred to own was lack of a down payment, 26 listed this as a barrier. Lack of available housing was the second most common barrier, 14 respondents stated this was a barrier. Lack of an available lot or building site was a barrier to 3 renters. Thirteen renters indicated there were “other” barriers not listed.

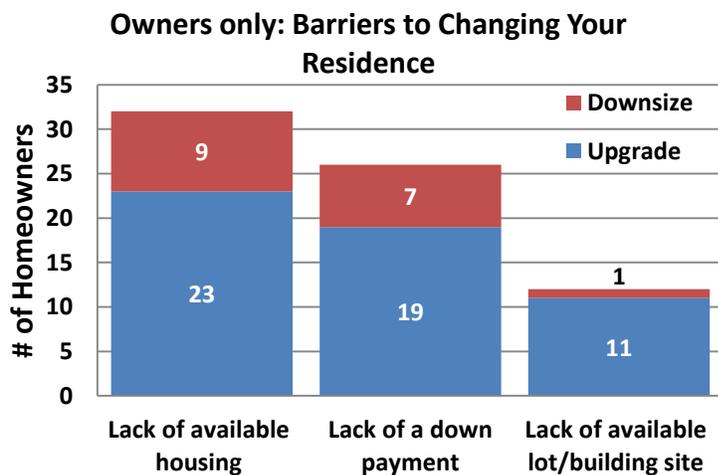
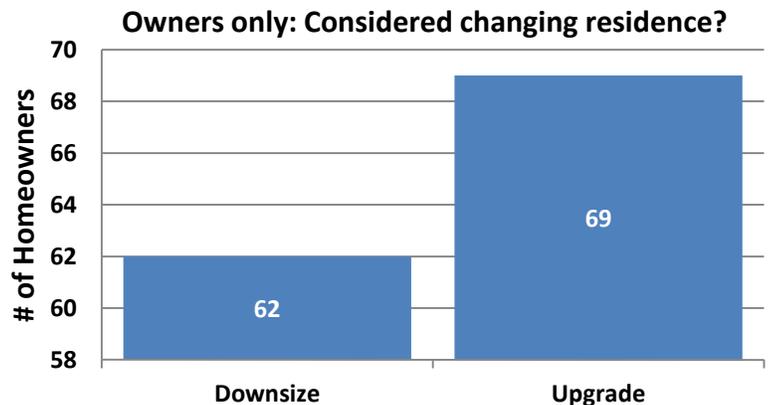
To gauge the interest in a down payment assistance program, renters that preferred to own but lacked a down payment were asked if they would be willing to apply for government-backed down payment loan assistance. Seventeen of the 26 renters that preferred to own and lacked a down payment were interested in government-backed down payment loan assistance. Fourteen of these renters met income eligibility guidelines to qualify for such funding.

Renters Preferring to Own	Willing to apply	Willing to apply & Income eligible
Lack Down Payment	17	14



When asked about their level of interest in a home-buyer education class, thirteen renters who preferred to own said they would be interested in this class.

The last few housing questions were directed to homeowners. One asked if they had considered changing their residence to upgrade or downsize. Sixty-two homeowners indicated they have considered downsizing their residence and 69 homeowners expressed an interest in upgrading their housing.



Homeowners that were considering upgrading or downsizing their residences were asked to identify the barriers that kept them from making a change; multiple barriers could be selected. Of the homeowners considering downsizing, nine stated lack of available housing, 7 said lack of a down payment, and one stated lack of available lot or building site as a barrier to downsizing. Thirty-four homeowners listed "other" as a

barrier preventing them from downsizing their residence. Of the homeowners who were considering upgrading their current residence, 23 listed lack of available housing, 19 stated lack of a down payment, and 11 said lack of available lot or building site was a barrier to upgrading. An additional 35 homeowners stated “other” as a barrier preventing them from upgrading their residence.

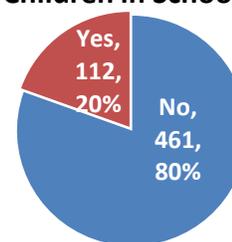
Regarding home rehabilitation, owners were asked to indicate their willingness to apply for cost sharing assistance to complete the rehabilitation of their home. Properties needing repairs of \$5,001-\$25,000 are generally the best candidates for such programs. There were 63 owners within Superior that owned a home that needed moderate repairs and were willing to apply for cost sharing assistance. Of these 41 met income eligibility criteria for such programs. Four home owners residing in a residence needing major repairs were willing to apply; three met income eligibility criteria.

Owner only: Potential for Cost Sharing Assistance	Owners in Superior	Income eligible & willing to apply
Needs moderate repairs, \$5,001-\$25,000	63	41
Needs major repairs, >\$25,000	4	3

## Education

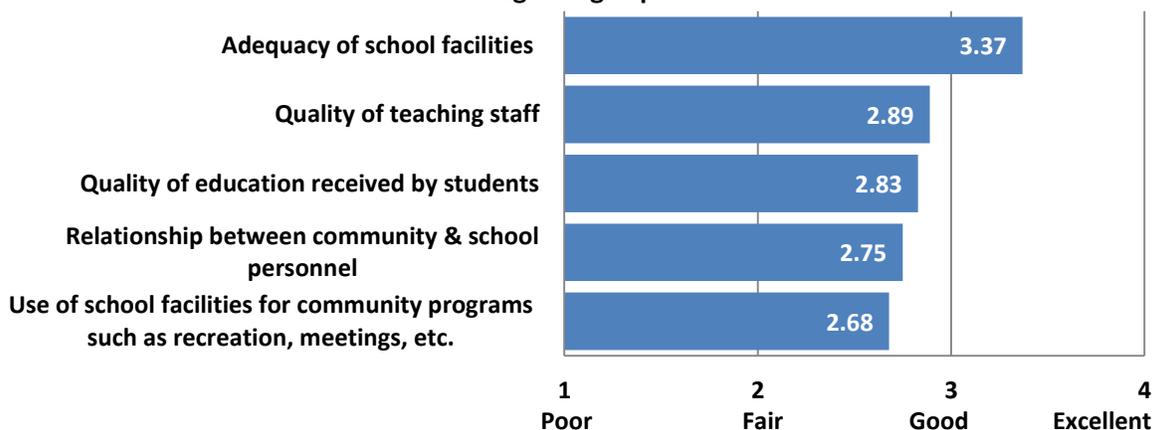
The topic covered in the survey was the Superior Schools. One out of five responding households had children in school.

Children in School



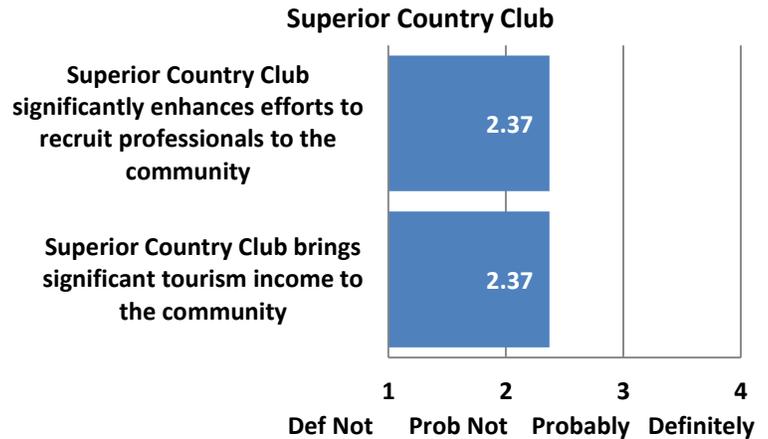
Superior residents were asked to rate items pertaining to the school. Each item addressed received an overall good rating. The adequacy of school facilities received the highest rating, 92% of respondents rated it excellent or good. The quality of teaching staff and quality of education received by students were rated excellent or good by 75% and 72% respectively. The relationship between community and school personnel and the use of school facilities for community programs such as recreation, meetings, etc., were rated excellent or good by 69% and 65% of respondents respectively.

Regarding Superior School

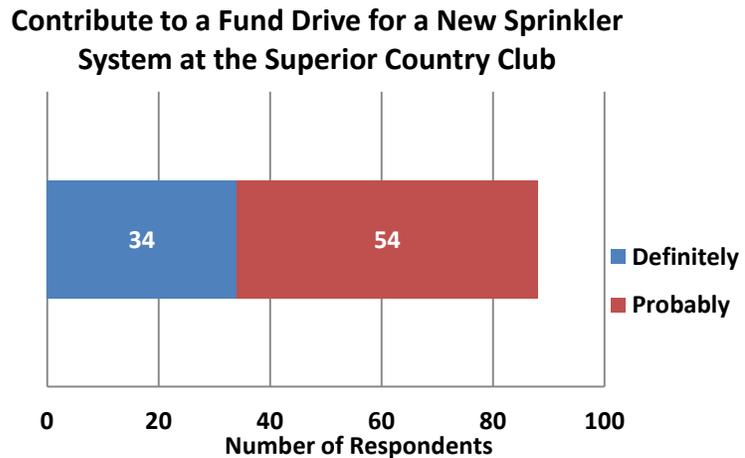


## Superior Country Club

The Superior Country Club was the subject of the next few questions. Respondents were asked if they agreed with the statements, “Superior Country Club significantly enhances efforts to recruit professionals to the community” and “Superior Country Club brings significant tourism income to the community.” Overall, results indicated respondents probably did not agree with the statements. Fifty-six percent of responses to each statement were definitely not or probably not.



The last question regarding the Country Club asked if householders would contribute to a fund drive for a new sprinkler system at the Superior Country Club. Eighty-eight respondents stated they would definitely or probably contribute to such fund drive.



## Random Sample Income

Household size and income information were included on the survey questionnaire in order to determine the City’s eligibility for certain types of community development grant funding. The number of households answering these questions was not adequate to satisfy the minimum sample size as required by Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Shortly after the survey was completed, HUD announced that income information used to determine grant eligibility would be based upon figures provided by the US Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS). According to the ACS, the City of Superior is 59.6% low to moderate income (LMI) and eligible for certain types of community development grant funding. Due to information provided by the ACS, the City of Superior and SCEDD elected not to make repeated attempts to receive household size and income information through the CNAS process.