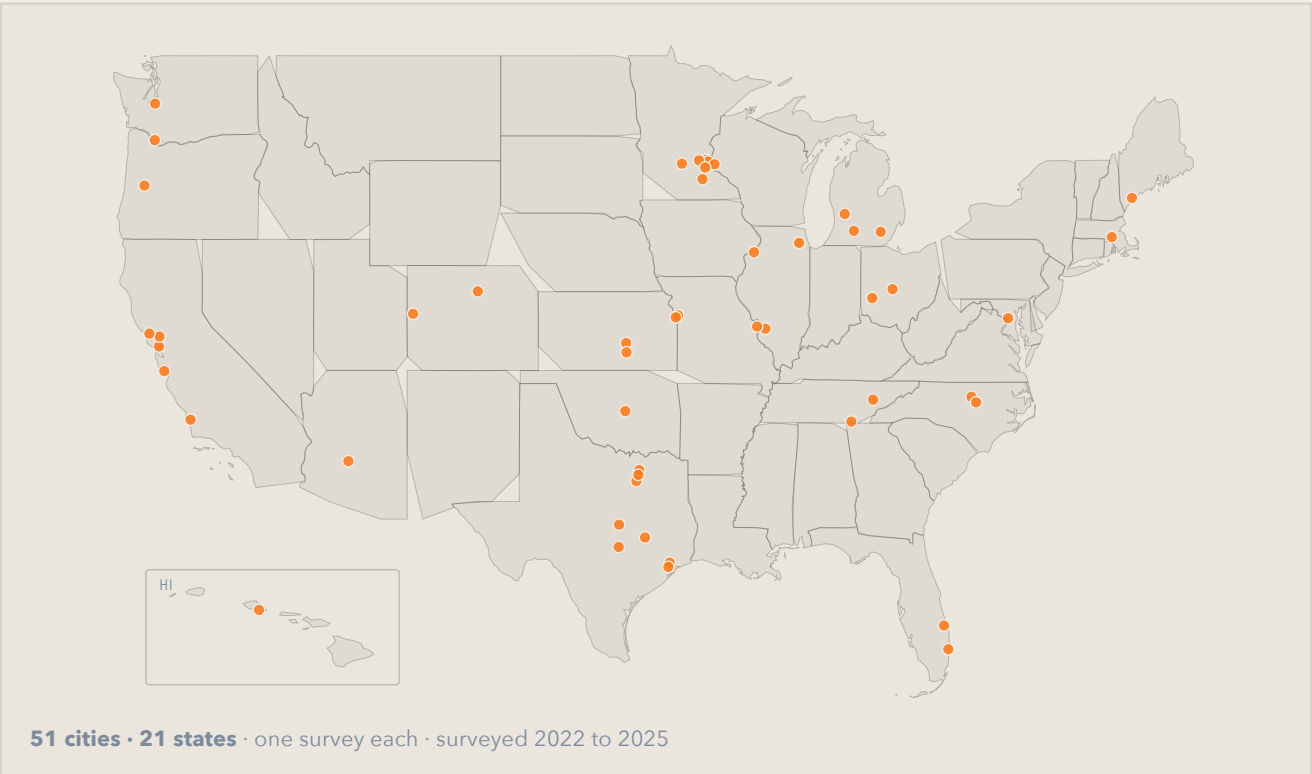


RESIDENTS RATE QUALITY OF LIFE HIGHER THAN TRUST AND VALUE FOR TAXES.

From 51 city surveys across 21 states: where both are asked on the same survey, quality of life runs ahead of confidence in local government and value for tax dollars.

CITIES ALREADY SURVEY RESIDENTS. THE CHALLENGE IS COMPARING WHAT THEY ASK.

Each year, cities survey residents to guide budgets and plans, judge services, and hear from people beyond council meetings. Those reports are public, but each city asks in its own way, so the scores are not safe to line up as if they came from the same test. We are reading them now because the surveys in this review ran from 2022 to 2025, and cities are still using them for decisions today. This is not a poll we ran. It is a review of what cities published.



HOW WE READ THE REPORTS*

01

Gather

51 cities in 21 states, one public survey each, from Polco, ETC Institute, Probolsky, and two surveys cities built themselves.

02

Match

Look for the same sixteen topics in every report. Count a topic only when the report clearly asks that thing.

03

Keep apart

Never mix excellent to poor answers with satisfied to dissatisfied answers. Different questions make different scores.

04

Compare carefully

Quality of life versus trust or value for taxes only when both answers come from the same people on the same survey.

In this report, we will stay with what residents told their cities: what showed up again and again, what showed up less often, and which of those answers can honestly be compared.

RESIDENT SURVEYS FOLLOW LOCAL PRIORITIES, NOT ONE NATIONAL FORM.

There is no shared national questionnaire. Firms such as Polco/NRC and ETC Institute typically draft and field these instruments. Cities commission the work and sign off on what gets asked. So the topics on each form reflect different agendas, not a common national form.

The numbers are the proof of that:

- Almost every city asks about services: fire 43, roads 41, police 40.
- Far fewer ask about relationship or judgment items: trust 15, direction 16.

TOPIC	CITIES THAT ASKED IT	COUNT
Fire "Fire services"		43
Roads "Street repair"		41
Police "Police/Sheriff services"		40
City services "Overall quality of services provided by City"		38
Quality of life "Overall quality of life in City"		32
Value for taxes "Overall value that you receive for your City tax dollars & fees"		31
Direction "The overall direction that City is taking"		16
Trust "Overall confidence in City government"		15

Each count is how many of the 51 cities asked that topic on their published survey.

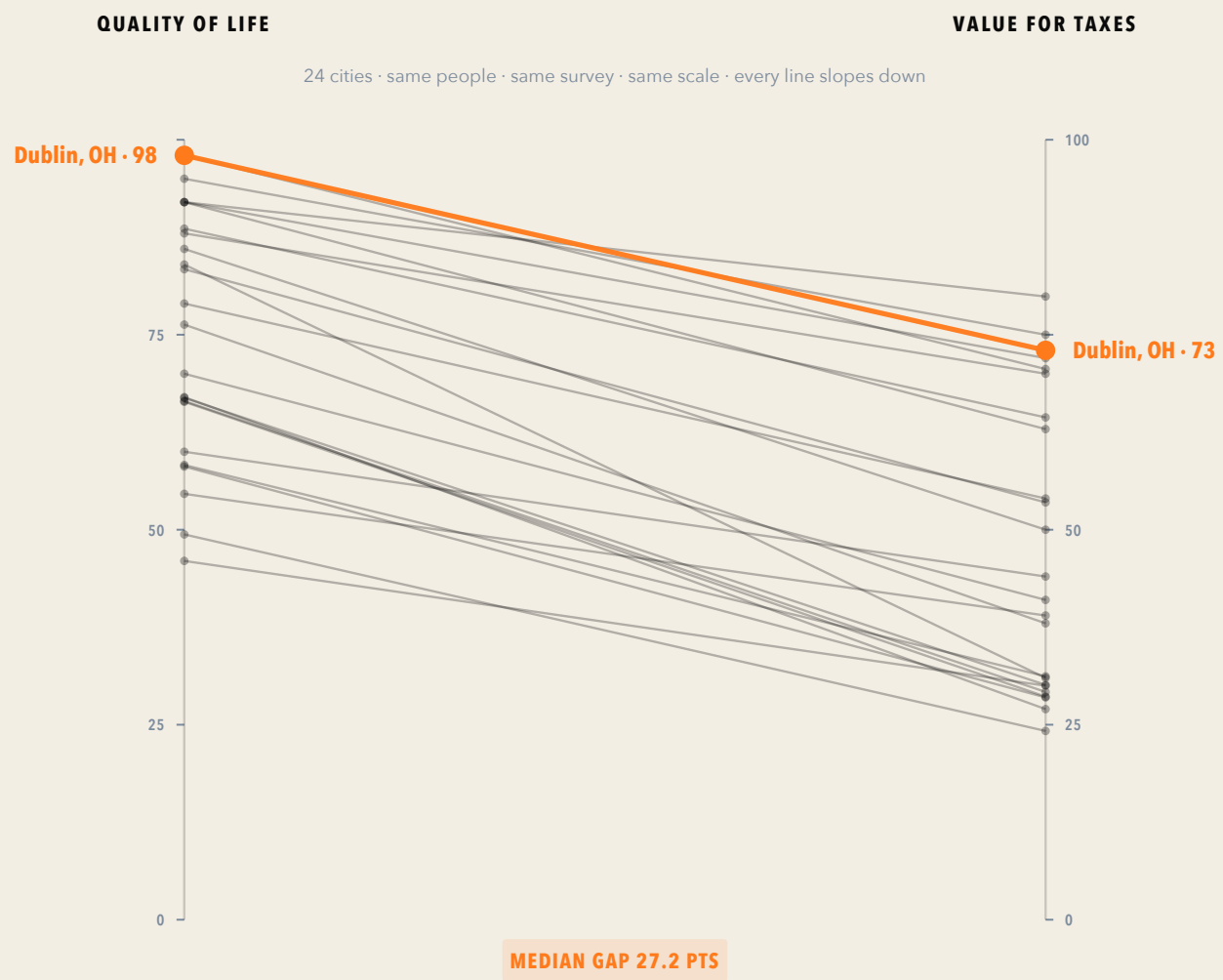
Honest comparison is possible only where surveys ask the same questions. Quality of life and value for taxes appear together in 24 cities; quality of life and trust in 12. Those overlaps are the basis for the finding on the next page. Full city by city coverage is on page 07.

WHERE CITIES ASK BOTH, QUALITY OF LIFE RUNS AHEAD OF TRUST AND VALUE FOR TAXES.

The questions were specific. Residents rated their city’s **overall quality of life**, their **confidence in city government**, and the **value they receive for city taxes and fees**. Each score represents the share of residents selecting one of the top two responses on that city’s scale, expressed from 0 to 100.

In every city that asked quality of life alongside either confidence in government or value for taxes on the same survey, quality of life scored higher. The chart shows all 24 cities that asked both quality of life and value for taxes; Dublin is highlighted in orange.

- “Overall value that you receive for your City tax dollars & fees” · median gap 27.2 points behind quality of life · 24 cities · quality of life higher in every one
- “Overall confidence in City government” · median gap 25.0 points behind quality of life · 12 cities · quality of life higher in every one



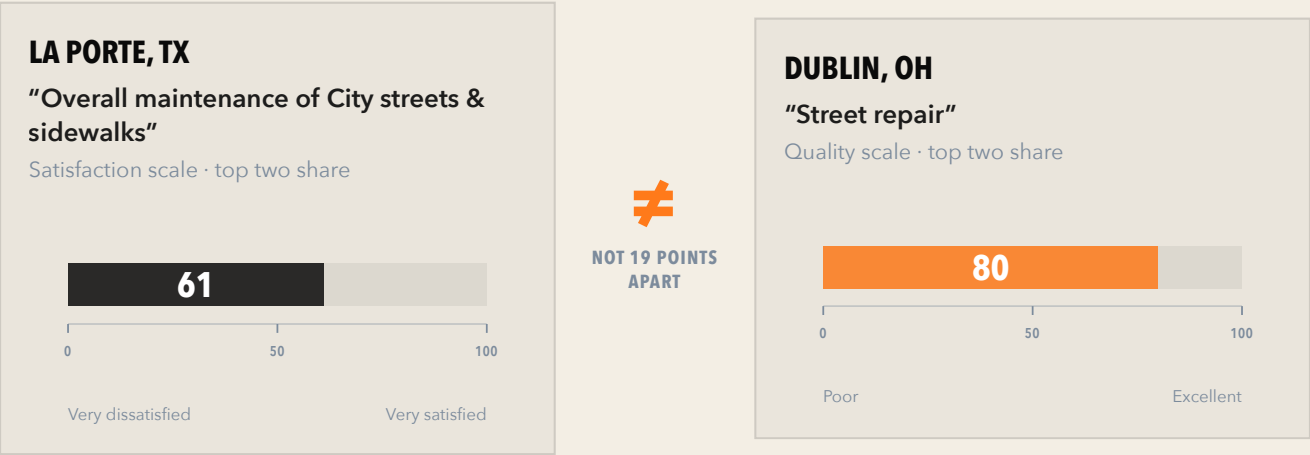
IN DUBLIN, 98% GAVE A TOP TWO ANSWER ON QUALITY OF LIFE; 73% DID SO ON VALUE FOR TAXES.

Where cities asked both, residents gave quality of life a higher top two share than trust or value for taxes. Whether adding those questions would close the gap is a separate question; the pattern only records what residents said when both items were on the same survey.

DIFFERENT QUESTIONS MAKE DIFFERENT SCORES.

A percentage is only comparable when the question, the scale, and the context match. Cities produce scores between 0 and 100 on both quality scales (Excellent / Good / Fair / Poor) and satisfaction scales (Very satisfied to Very dissatisfied). Those numbers look interchangeable. They are not.

SAME TOPIC FAMILY: DIFFERENT QUESTIONS, DIFFERENT SCALES



WHY: LA PORTE ASKED "OVERALL MAINTENANCE OF CITY STREETS & SIDEWALKS" ON A SATISFACTION SCALE; DUBLIN ASKED "STREET REPAIR" ON A QUALITY SCALE. 61% SATISFIED IS NOT 19 POINTS BEHIND 80% GOOD OR EXCELLENT: DIFFERENT QUESTIONS, DIFFERENT RESPONSE SCALES.

WHY THE SAME NUMBER IS NOT THE SAME MEASURE

25	15	11
MAINLY QUALITY SCALES	MAINLY SATISFACTION SCALES	OTHER OR MIXED
Excellent / Good / Fair / Poor	Very satisfied to very dissatisfied	Approval, grades, or mixed forms
Of 51 cities, by the scale that dominates each city's scored items. A top two share from one tradition is not a peer of a top two share from another.		

WHAT YOU CAN COMPARE	Paired questions inside the same survey, using the same scale. That is why the quality of life finding on the previous page holds.
WHAT YOU SHOULD NOT	Percentages from different survey traditions as if they sat on one national scale. Benchmark only against surveys that use the same kind of measure.

Across cities, some topic patterns repeat. Fire often rates ahead of streets inside the same survey, but the percentages still are not interchangeable.

Once the shared ground is clear, the practical question is what to keep asking, and what to add.

WHAT A MORE COMPLETE RESIDENT SURVEY COULD INCLUDE.

Comparing your city with public peer surveys is hard: there is no single shared questionnaire and no single peer table every city can trust. Fire, roads and police appear in 43, 41 and 40 of 51 surveys; trust, value for taxes and direction in 15, 31 and 16. A more complete wave keeps what cities already ask well, adds the relationship questions most surveys omit, and holds every item on one scale, so the shared answers can be read against public peers that asked the same questions the same way. A peer core is not the whole survey: that keep and add set is what lets you read your city against public peers on one scale. Questions only your city needs sit beside that shared core, not instead of it.

KEEP		ADD	
Already common in these surveys		Add on the same scale	
Fire services	43	Overall confidence in City government	15
Street repair	41	Overall value that you receive for your City tax dollars & fees	31
Police/Sheriff services	40	The overall direction that City is taking	16
Overall quality of services provided by City	38		

Counts are cities (of 51) that asked the item. Wording is what cities used most often.

HOW INTELLIMARK HELPS

Intellimark can help your city fill the gaps this review shows. We keep the service questions residents already expect, add the relationship items most public surveys omit, and field everything on one scale, so you can comfortably benchmark against peers that asked the same questions the same way.

SIX WEEKS · ONE SURVEY



CITY BRINGS

- Agenda, concerns, and council priorities for this wave
- Opinions on what residents need to be asked
- Local questions that belong in this wave
- Resident sample frame and prior wave, if any

WHAT YOU GET

- Designed questionnaire on one scale: peer core, relationship items, and your local questions
- Fielded resident survey and clean response dataset
- Results weighted and read against matching public peers from this review
- Council ready brief: city versus peers on the same measures

ABOUT THE RESEARCH.

A review of **51 public city surveys across 21 states** (2022 to 2025), from Polco/NRC, ETC Institute, Probolsky, Leatherman, and one city-built survey. Not a poll Intellimark fielded. Quality and satisfaction scales are never mixed; paired gaps are within one survey only. The full source list is on the next page.

SOURCES

One survey per city, held on file and logged (city, year, vendor, page ranges). Polco/NRC (24), ETC Institute (21), Probolsky (4), Leatherman (1), city-built (1).

INCLUSION

U.S. city, town or village; field year from the methodology text; ≥300 completes; probability or address-based sample; named frame, field window and margin of error; stable public URL.

LIMITS

No proprietary national tables. No invented percentages. Paired gaps: quality of life vs value (24 cities, median 27.2 pts) and vs trust (12 cities, median 25.0 pts); higher for quality of life in every paired city. Street items alone used 16 distinct wordings; quality and satisfaction medians on streets were 32 and 39. Inside one survey, “Fire services” scored ahead of “Street repair” in 34 of 35 paired cities: familiar topic order, still not interchangeable levels.

CITY BY CITY COVERAGE

CITY	ST	FIRE	ROADS	POLICE	SVC	QOL	VALUE	DIR	TRUST
Ann Arbor	MI	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○
Austin	TX	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○
Battle Creek	MI	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Battle Ground	WA	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○
Boca Raton	FL	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Boulder	CO	●	○	●	●	○	○	○	○
Chattanooga	TN	●	○	●	○	○	○	○	○
College Park	MD	●	○	●	○	●	●	●	●
College Station	TX	●	●	●	●	○	●	○	○
Cottage Grove	MN	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●
Dallas	TX	●	●	●	○	●	○	○	○
Dayton	OH	●	●	●	○	●	●	○	○
Dublin	OH	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Durham	NC	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○
El Cerrito	CA	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	○
Eugene	OR	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	○
Faribault	MN	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○
Farragut	TN	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●
Franklin	MA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Fruita	CO	○	●	○	●	●	●	○	○
Glendale	AZ	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●
Grand Rapids	MI	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○
Grover Beach	CA	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○
Honolulu	HI	●	●	●	○	○	●	●	●
Hutchinson	MN	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○
Kansas City	MO	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	○
TOTAL / 51		43	41	40	38	32	31	16	15

● Asked on that city's survey ○ Not asked

FIRE “Fire services”

POLICE “Police/Sheriff services”

QOL “Overall quality of life in City”

DIR “The overall direction that City is taking”

Paired on one survey: quality of life with value in 24 cities; with trust in 12. Column totals are under each panel.

CITY	ST	FIRE	ROADS	POLICE	SVC	QOL	VALUE	DIR	TRUST
Killeen	TX	●	●	●	●	○	●	○	○
La Porte	TX	●	●	●	○	○	●	○	○
Lakewood	WA	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
League City	TX	●	●	●	○	○	●	○	○
Little Canada	MN	●	●	●	○	●	○	○	○
McKinney	TX	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○
Merriam	KS	●	○	●	●	●	●	○	○
Midwest City	OK	●	●	●	○	●	○	○	○
Moline	IL	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Napa	CA	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○
Newton	KS	●	○	●	●	●	●	○	○
O'Fallon	IL	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○
Oakdale	MN	●	●	●	○	●	○	○	○
Plano	TX	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○
Plymouth	MN	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Port St. Lucie	FL	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○
Raleigh	NC	○	●	○	●	●	○	●	○
River Falls	WI	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	○
Rosemount	MN	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○
Santa Cruz	CA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Scarborough	ME	●	○	○	●	●	●	○	○
Sebastopol	CA	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○
University City	MO	○	○	○	●	●	●	○	○
Wheaton	IL	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	●
Wichita	KS	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●
TOTAL		43	41	40	38	32	31	16	15

ROADS “Street repair”

SVC “Overall quality of services provided by City”

VALUE “Overall value that you receive for your City ...”

TRUST “Overall confidence in City government”

SOURCES – EVERY CITY IN THIS REVIEW.

Each row is one published resident survey used in this report: the report title, city, state, field year, and firm.

TITLE	CITY	ST	YEAR	FIRM
Ann Arbor, MI The National Community Survey Report of Results 2024	Ann Arbor	MI	2024	Polco/NRC
2025 City of Austin Community Survey Findings Report	Austin	TX	2025	ETC
Battle Creek, MI The National Community Survey Report of Results 2025	Battle Creek	MI	2025	Polco/NRC
2025 Battle Ground Survey Findings Report	Battle Ground	WA	2025	ETC
Boca Raton, FL The National Community Survey Report of Results 2024	Boca Raton	FL	2024	Polco/NRC
City of Boulder Sales Tax Voter Poll July 2023	Boulder	CO	2023	Probolsky
City of Chattanooga 2025 Community Survey Results	Chattanooga	TN	2025	City-built
2025 City of College Park Community Survey Findings Report	College Park	MD	2025	ETC
2025 City of College Station Citizen Survey Findings Report	College Station	TX	2025	ETC
Cottage Grove, MN The National Community Survey Report of Results 2025	Cottage Grove	MN	2025	Polco/NRC
2025 City of Dallas, Texas Community Survey Findings Report	Dallas	TX	2025	ETC
2025 City of Dayton Resident Opinion Survey Findings Report	Dayton	OH	2025	ETC
Dublin, OH The National Community Survey Report of Results 2025	Dublin	OH	2025	Polco/NRC
2025 City of Durham Resident Survey Findings Report	Durham	NC	2025	ETC
El Cerrito, CA The National Community Survey Report of Results 2025	El Cerrito	CA	2025	Polco/NRC
2025 City of Eugene Community Survey Findings Report	Eugene	OR	2025	ETC
Faribault, MN The National Community Survey Report of Results 2024	Faribault	MN	2024	Polco/NRC
Farragut, TN The National Community Survey Report of Results 2025	Farragut	TN	2025	Polco/NRC
Franklin, MA The National Community Survey Report of Results 2025	Franklin	MA	2025	Polco/NRC
City of Fruita 2025 Community Survey Findings Report	Fruita	CO	2025	ETC
Glendale, AZ The National Community Survey Report of Results 2025	Glendale	AZ	2025	Polco/NRC
Grand Rapids, MI The National Community Survey Report of Results 2024	Grand Rapids	MI	2024	Polco/NRC
City of Grover Beach Community Survey October 2023	Grover Beach	CA	2023	Probolsky
Honolulu, HI The National Community Survey Report of Results 2025	Honolulu	HI	2025	Polco/NRC
Hutchinson, MN The National Community Survey Report of Results 2023	Hutchinson	MN	2023	Polco/NRC
2023-24 Kansas City, MO Resident Survey Findings Report	Kansas City	MO	2024	ETC
2025 City of Killeen Community Survey Findings Report	Killeen	TX	2025	ETC
2024 La Porte Community Survey Findings Report	La Porte	TX	2024	ETC
City of Lakewood Community Survey April 2022	Lakewood	WA	2022	Polco/NRC
2025 League City Community Survey Findings Report	League City	TX	2025	ETC
City of Little Canada 2025 Residential Survey Findings and Implications	Little Canada	MN	2025	Leatherm...
McKinney, TX The National Community Survey Report of Results 2023	McKinney	TX	2023	Polco/NRC
2024 City of Merriam Community Survey Findings Report	Merriam	KS	2024	ETC
2024 Midwest City, OK Community Survey Findings Report	Midwest City	OK	2024	ETC
Moline, IL The National Community Survey Report of Results 2025	Moline	IL	2025	Polco/NRC
City of Napa Community Climate Survey 2022	Napa	CA	2022	Probolsky
2025 City of Newton Community Survey Findings Report	Newton	KS	2025	ETC
O'Fallon, IL The National Community Survey Report of Results 2024	O'Fallon	IL	2024	Polco/NRC
Oakdale, MN The National Community Survey Report of Results 2024	Oakdale	MN	2024	Polco/NRC
2025 City of Plano Resident Survey Findings Report	Plano	TX	2025	ETC
Plymouth, MN The National Community Survey Report of Results 2025	Plymouth	MN	2025	Polco/NRC
Port St. Lucie, FL The National Community Survey Report of Results 2024	Port St. Lucie	FL	2024	Polco/NRC
2024 City of Raleigh Community Survey Findings Report	Raleigh	NC	2025	ETC
River Falls, WI The National Community Survey Report of Results 2025	River Falls	WI	2025	Polco/NRC
Rosemount, MN The National Community Survey Report of Results 2024	Rosemount	MN	2024	Polco/NRC
Santa Cruz, CA The National Community Survey Report of Results 2024	Santa Cruz	CA	2024	Polco/NRC
2025 Town of Scarborough Community Survey Findings Report	Scarborough	ME	2025	ETC
City of Sebastopol City Services Voter Poll July 2024	Sebastopol	CA	2024	Probolsky
2025 City of University City Community Survey Findings Report	University City	MO	2025	ETC
2025 City of Wheaton Citizen Satisfaction Survey Findings Report	Wheaton	IL	2025	ETC
Wichita, KS The National Community Survey Report of Results 2025	Wichita	KS	2025	Polco/NRC

FIELD YEAR · 2022 (2) · 2023 (4) · 2024 (14) · 2025 (31) FIRM · Polco/NRC 24 · ETC 21 · Probolsky 4 · Leatherman 1 · city-built 1 COMPLETES · 300-4056 (median 517) · 21 states

One survey per city. Field year from each report's methodology. Completes are published sample sizes. Source PDFs held on file with page ranges logged.