

**CITY OF NEWARK
DELAWARE**

2009 NEWARK RESIDENT SURVEY

Planning and Development Department

Survey Conducted and Report Prepared By:

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Introduction – Brief History	iv
How the Survey was Conducted	iv
Format of the Report	v
Some Interesting Results	vi
Satisfaction with City Services – Trends Over Time	viii
2009 Resident Survey Questionnaire	ix
Council District Map	xv
Citywide Results from the 2009 Newark Resident Survey	
A. City Service Evaluation Questions	1
B. Quality of Life	41
C. Demographics	67
D. Comment Section	72

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I would specifically like to thank a few key participants:

- **Debra Harrington, System Support Specialist, Finance Department:** Provided the technical assistance to create a labeling program for over 4000 households.
- **Alexis Hackett and the Students of the Delaware Autism Program (Brennen School) Vocational Department:** As a community service, the students of the Delaware Autism Program printed, folded, stapled, labeled, stamped, and mailed over 4000 Resident surveys to Newark households. This saved the City of Newark hundreds of hours of staff time.
- **Mark Lotierzo, Graduate Intern, Planning and Development Department:** Mark provided hours of data entry in recording the questionnaire responses in Excel, tabulating the results, and creating the corresponding charts.
- **Elizabeth Dowell, Secretary, Planning and Development Department and Angela Conrad, Secretary, Code Enforcement:** Elizabeth and Angela spent hours typing the lengthy responses residents included in the “Comment” section of the report. Providing this section in the final report provides an excellent “snapshot” of how Newarker’s perceive their community.
- **Roy Lopata, Planning and Development Director and Maureen Feeney Roser, Assistant Planning and Development Director:** Roy and Maureen provided assistance and guidance during each phase of this project.

INTRODUCTION

BRIEF HISTORY

The last Newark Resident's Survey was conducted by the Newark Planning Department in 2004. Other Surveys were conducted in 1980, 1982, 1985, 1988, 1993, and 1999. Since the City services satisfaction and demographic portions of the initial surveys were found not to vary significantly over time, we now conduct the Survey on about a five-year cycle.

In general, in the Evaluation of City Services portion of the Survey, the Planning Department tried to maintain a relatively standard questionnaire so that it would be possible to compare City services over time. However, the questionnaire has been revised and updated to provide the best and most meaningful data for City Staff and Council. For example, the 1999 Survey also asked residents to rate characteristics of their neighborhood, as well as, to rate improvements downtown. The 2004 Survey asked residents to provide their top three (3) preferences regarding which businesses to recruit downtown. The 2009 Survey asks residents to rate the "importance" of each City service, as well as asking a series of open-ended questions such as listing the three (3) things which they liked **most** and **least** about living in Newark.

And finally, as in 2004, this year's report includes transcripts of a sample portion of the resident comments in Section D: Comment Section. We believe that this portion of the report will help give the reader a better understanding of the variety of opinions and attitudes of our residents.

The Survey sample, developed for statistical reliability, geographic distribution and randomly selected, was analyzed by the Planning Department using the statistical software package SPSS. This statistical software package allows the Planning Department to manipulate data for Staff and Council requests for additional information and analysis. Microsoft Excel 2007 provides "reader friendly" charts and graphs – and they are in color!

HOW THE SURVEY WAS CONDUCTED

Preparation for the 2009 Survey began in February of 2009. By early March, a draft questionnaire was distributed to the City Manager and Staff for comments and suggestions. As a result, several changes were made in the 2009 Survey including adding a rating of the importance of each City service (Question 3) and requesting demographic information (Questions 17 and 18). The survey results were also coded and separated into six Council Districts so that each member of Council has a level of service profile for their District, along with an evaluation of the City as a whole.

In May 2009, approximately 4,300 questionnaires were mailed. This represents approximately one-half of the households in our community. Of these questionnaires, over 1,200 were returned – over 25% response rate. Returned questionnaires were separated into Council Districts. A random sample size of 600 (100 per Council District) was selected to establish a representative sample for final analysis. This sample is large enough to permit inferences based upon survey results at the 95% confidence level with a 3.5% margin of error. This confidence level indicates that if the same survey was administered repeatedly, nine times out of ten we would get the same results, give or take 3.5%, for each response category.

One important caveat regarding the demographic results of the Survey that begin on page 67; the data shown is valid only for those who responded. In other words, for example, Newark's actual residents' age distribution is not as shown in this report since these results are a valid and very accurate representation of the ages of those who responded. To demonstrate this point, City-wide information from the 2000 U.S. Census is also included for each demographic question.

FORMAT OF THE REPORT

The Evaluation of City Services portion of the report begins with a summary of the ratings that Newark residents have reported on City services over time. A Trends Over Time table shows City resident satisfaction with City services for the year 1999, 2004 and 2009. Information from other surveys during the 1990's is available upon request. Complete 2009 Citywide results and bar graphs show local satisfaction for each service categories. Please note that the Trends Over Time chart does not include the residents who answered either "don't know" or show "no response" for the service category. By eliminating the "non-responses", the Trends Over Time chart gives us a very clear picture of levels of satisfaction evaluated by those who have received the service. Beyond that, each individual City Service Evaluation sheet contains three sets of data – the first, the Citywide result, illustrated by the corresponding graph; the second, the Council District results for each of the six Districts, and third, the Satisfaction Rating charts at the bottom of the page that show the results, both Citywide and for each Council District, for those actually familiar with the service. This means that the percentage for each category appears different between the two sets of data. The Satisfaction Rating charts provide the best information regarding the service. The "don't know" responses in the bar graphs may be used by Staff to determine the need to increase advertisement of certain services or for the City to evaluate the need for the service. The report also includes household information and an evaluation of improvements to downtown. Finally, the report includes a transcript of a sample portion of the resident's comments.

SOME INTERESTING RESULTS

Trends Over Time

Perhaps the most interesting and striking aspect of the comparison over time of residents' satisfaction with City services is that their ratings continue to be very high. As the Trend Over Time illustrates, by and large, Newarkers continue to give the individual service categories positive evaluations.

Other specific trends worth noting include the very high percentage (over 90 percent) of respondents indicating that they are "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with City recreation programs, parks maintenance, street lighting, street cleaning, trash collection, the grass recycling program, spring and fall leaf collection, electric service, neighborhood parking, the City's customer billing system, the City website, and the City Newsletter. Very high ratings are also shown for street repair – both for neighborhood and major streets – snow/ice removal, and the UniCity Bus.

Interestingly, Newark residents have rated the "Water Odor/Taste" 21% higher this year than when last evaluated in 2004. In addition, there is a 17% approval increase in "Traffic Control;" a 16% approval increase in "Repairs – Major Streets;" an 11% approval increase in "Repair – Neighborhood Streets;" and a 6 percent approval increase in "Parking (Downtown)."

Regarding the approval ratings for "Repair – Neighborhood Streets" and "Repair – Major Streets", in the 2004 Survey, both showed decreased ratings of 6% and 17% respectively. The decrease in satisfaction was attributed, in part, to the significant deterioration in the condition of Elkton Road after heavy snows during that winter. The 2009 Survey returns the satisfaction ratings of both neighborhood and major street repair to about the same level as the 1999 Survey. "Snow/Ice Removal" also had also a decrease rating in satisfaction in the 2004 Survey (8% decline) and showed an increased rating in satisfaction (6%) in the 2009 Survey.

Regarding downtown parking, the 2009 Survey's increase follows an 11% approval increase from the 1999 to 2004 Surveys. It's especially noteworthy that the City assumed control from the old Newark Parking Authority just before the 1999 Survey was conducted. In other words, it appears that the efforts of the City, the Downtown Newark Partnership, and our Parking Committee continue to bear fruit in terms of satisfaction with parking downtown.

"Traffic Control," while still a somewhat low rated service with a 79% satisfaction rating, represents a 17% increase from the 2004 Survey. We believe this shows progress in the efforts of the City Traffic Committee, the Transit and Bikeway Subcommittees, the Mayor and City Council, and, of course, DelDOT, in addressing local traffic and transportation issues.

Differences Between the Districts

In general, City service satisfaction ratings do not vary drastically amongst the Districts. Although the variations are small in levels of service satisfaction, it is important to look at these results on a district-by-district basis to evaluate improving program delivery within the districts or to improve advertising and notification regarding some of the City's programs. In the 2009 Survey report, for the first time, each City evaluation sheet, in addition to the overall City results, has a breakdown of the results for each Council District. The intent is more clearly illustrate to the reader the variations of the results between each District.

**SATISFACTION WITH CITY SERVICES
CITYWIDE TREND OVER TIME
1999 - 2009**

	<u>1999</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>CHANGE 2004-2009</u>
Parks in the City	NA	NA	93%	NA
Recreation Programs	95%	98%	96%	-3%
Bike Lanes/ Trails	NA	88%	82%	-6%
Parks Maintenance	95%	96%	96%	0%
Repair - Neighborhood Streets	84%	78%	89%	11%
Repair - Major Streets	88%	71%	86%	16%
Street Lighting	90%	90%	90%	0%
Street Cleaning	90%	91%	94%	2%
Snow/Ice Removal	89%	81%	87%	6%
Trash/ Garbage Collection	97%	97%	96%	-1%
Grass Recycling Collection	NA	94%	94%	1%
Spring/ Fall Leaf Collection	NA	90%	94%	5%
Water Odor/ Taste	53%	57%	78%	21%
Water Pressure	87%	87%	91%	4%
Electric Service	97%	92%	95%	2%
Police Protection	92%	93%	93%	0%
Traffic Control	57%	62%	79%	17%
Property Maintenance Code Enforcement	NA	NA	81%	NA
Parking (Downtown)	45%	59%	66%	6%
Parking (Neighborhood)	79%	90%	92%	2%
UNICITY Bus	89%	91%	89%	-3%
Newark Trolley	NA	NA	80%	NA
City Customer Billing	NA	94%	95%	1%
City Web Site	NA	88%	91%	3%
City Newsletter	97%	99%	98%	-1%
Overall City Services	NA	96%	97%	1%

CITY OF NEWARK 2009 RESIDENT SURVEY



Please fill out this questionnaire if you are the adult (age 18 or over) in the household whose birthday most recently passed.

A. CITY SERVICE EVALUATION QUESTIONS

1. Please circle the number that best represents your opinion.

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know
Taking all things into consideration, how satisfied are you with the overall quality of life in the City of Newark?	1	2	3	4	5
How satisfied are you with the overall quality of your neighborhood?	1	2	3	4	5
In general, how satisfied are you overall with City of Newark services?	1	2	3	4	5

2. Please rate each of the following City services:

<u>Parks and Recreation</u>	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know
Parks in the City	1	2	3	4	5
Recreational Programs	1	2	3	4	5
Bicycle lanes/Trails	1	2	3	4	5
Parks Maintenance	1	2	3	4	6
<u>Public Works</u>	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know
Repair – Neighborhood Streets	1	2	3	4	5
Repair – Major Streets	1	2	3	4	5
Street Lighting	1	2	3	4	5
Street Cleaning	1	2	3	4	5
Snow/Ice Removal	1	2	3	4	5
Trash/Garbage Collection	1	2	3	4	5
Grass Recycling Collection	1	2	3	4	5
Spring/Fall Leaf Collection	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Utilities</u>	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know
Water Odor/Taste	1	2	3	4	5
Water Pressure	1	2	3	4	5
Electric Service	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Public Safety</u>	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know
Police Protection	1	2	3	4	5
Traffic Control	1	2	3	4	5

Other Services	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know
Property Maintenance Code Enforcement	1	2	3	4	5
Parking (Downtown)	1	2	3	4	5
Parking (Neighborhood)	1	2	3	4	5
UNICITY Bus	1	2	3	4	5
Newark Trolley	1	2	3	4	5
City Customer Billing	1	2	3	4	5
City Web Site	1	2	3	4	5
City Newsletter	1	2	3	4	5

3. Please rate each of the following City services as to its importance to the overall quality to Newark.

Parks and Recreation	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not at all Important	Don't Know
Parks in the City	1	2	3	4
Recreational Programs	1	2	3	4
Bicycle lanes/Trails	1	2	3	4
Parks Maintenance	1	2	3	4
Public Works	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not at all Important	Don't Know
Repair – Neighborhood Streets	1	2	3	4
Repair – Major Streets	1	2	3	4
Street Lighting	1	2	3	4
Street Cleaning	1	2	3	4
Snow/Ice Removal	1	2	3	4
Trash/Garbage Collection	1	2	3	4
Grass Recycling Collection	1	2	3	4
Spring/Fall Leaf Collection	1	2	3	4
Utilities	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not at all Important	Don't Know
Water Odor/Taste	1	2	3	4
Water Pressure	1	2	3	4
Electric Service	1	2	3	4
Public Safety	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not at all Important	Don't Know
Police Protection	1	2	3	4
Traffic Control	1	2	3	4
Other Services	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not at all Important	Don't Know
Property Maintenance Code Enforcement	1	2	3	4
Parking (Downtown)	1	2	3	4
Parking (Neighborhood)	1	2	3	4
UNICITY Bus	1	2	3	4
Newark Trolley	1	2	3	4
City Customer Billing	1	2	3	4
City Web Site	1	2	3	4
City Newsletter	1	2	3	4

4. In the past 12 months, about how many times, if ever, have you done each of the following things?

	Never	Once or twice	3 to 12 times	13 to 26 times	More than 26 times
Visited a City of Newark Park	1	2	3	4	5
Rode the UNICITY Bus	1	2	3	4	5
Rode the Newark Trolley	1	2	3	4	5
Used Channel 22 to Obtain Community Information.	1	2	3	4	5
Used the City Newsletter to Obtain Community Information	1	2	3	4	5
Used the City Web Site to Obtain Community Information	1	2	3	4	5

How would you like to obtain Community information: _____

5. How often have you experienced the following conditions?

	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Brown Water				
Chlorine Taste in Water				
Low Water Pressure				

B. QUALITY OF LIFE

6. About how many years have you lived in Newark? (Please record "0" if you have lived here less than 1 year.) _____

7. How would you rate the following City of Newark neighborhood characteristics?

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know
Convenience to Stores	1	2	3	4	5
Noise Level of Neighborhood	1	2	3	4	5
Amount of Traffic	1	2	3	4	5
Nearness to Places of Employment	1	2	3	4	5
Maintenance of Neighborhood Property	1	2	3	4	5
Nearness to City Parks	1	2	3	4	5
Suited for Children's Needs	1	2	3	4	5

8. On average, how often do you go to downtown Newark to eat or shop? (Choose One.)

- (1) More than 3 times a week (2) 1 to 2 times a week (3) 1 to 3 times a month (4) Less than once a month

9. How would you rate the following City of Newark special events? (If you have never attended the event, please mark "Don't Know".)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know
Easter Egg Hunt	1	2	3	4	5
Memorial Parade	1	2	3	4	5
Newark Nite	1	2	3	4	5
Liberty Day/Fireworks	1	2	3	4	5
Community Day	1	2	3	4	5
Halloween Parade	1	2	3	4	5
Trick-or-Treat Main Street	1	2	3	4	5
Turkey Trot	1	2	3	4	5
Winterfest	1	2	3	4	5
Taste of Newark	1	2	3	4	5
Newark's Wine and Dine Downtown	1	2	3	4	5
Newark's Food and Brew Festival	1	2	3	4	5
Downtown Newark's Restaurant Week	1	2	3	4	5

10. Please rate the following characteristics of downtown Newark:

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know
Cleanliness of Area	1	2	3	4	5
Quality of Restaurants	1	2	3	4	5
Quality of Retail Goods	1	2	3	4	5
Variety of Businesses	1	2	3	4	5
Feeling of Safety	1	2	3	4	5
Attractiveness of Buildings	1	2	3	4	5
Helpfulness of Business Owners	1	2	3	4	5
Art/Murals	1	2	3	4	5
Banners	1	2	3	4	5
Street Signs	1	2	3	4	5

11. Of the persons in your household who are employed outside the home, where is their general employment location? (Write down the number of members of your household who work in each location.)

- _____ Within Newark's City Limits
- _____ Within Wilmington's City Limits
- _____ New Castle County (outside Newark that includes municipalities such as Middletown, New Castle, Newport, etc.)
- _____ Other Delaware (includes Kent and Sussex Counties)
- _____ Maryland
- _____ Pennsylvania
- _____ Other (Please Specify) _____

12. Check the one choice listed below that best describes the kind of residence in which you now live.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A detached single family home | <input type="checkbox"/> A group living area such as a nursing home or shelter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A row or townhome | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> An apartment or complex with four or more units | _____ |

13. What three things do you like most about living in Newark?

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

14. What three things do you like least about living in Newark?

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

15. What do you think will be the three biggest challenges that Newark will face within the next five years?

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

16. Which three types of businesses would you most like to see in Newark?

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

C. DEMOGRAPHICS

17. Please check the appropriate gender and age for yourself.

Gender

Age

Male ___ Female ___ 18-25 ___ 26-35 ___ 36-45 ___ 46-55 ___ 56-65 ___ Over 65 ___

18. Please check the line that comes closest to describing your race, ethnicity, and the amount of education you have completed.

Race

- ___ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ___ Asian
- ___ Black or African American
- ___ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- ___ White
- ___ Other

Education

- ___ 0-11 years
- ___ Completed high school
- ___ Some College
- ___ Associates Degree
- ___ Bachelor's Degree
- ___ Graduate/Professional Degree

Ethnicity

- ___ Hispanic or Latino
- ___ Not Hispanic or Latino

19. Please identify the Neighborhood or Development in which you live. (For example, Oaklands, Old Newark, Woods at Louviers, etc.)

D. COMMENT SECTION:

Below please write any comment you might have pertaining to any aspect of City Services

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

City of Newark

Planning Department
220 Elkton Rd.
Newark, DE 19711

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**IMPORTANT:
NEWARK RESIDENT SURVEY**

Place Mailing Label Here

City of Newark Council Districts
 Approved by City Council: November 26, 2001

