

Living in Peoria: A Behavioral Assessment

Conducted for:

The City of Peoria

Conducted by:

Bruce D. Merrill Ph.D.

October 20, 2000

METHODOLOGY:

The information in this report is based on telephone interviews with a random sample of 500 registered voters living within the city limits of Peoria, Arizona. The interviews were conducted by professional interviewers during the period October 10 –16, 2000.

The sampling error for the survey when the proportion answering a question is 50%, and assuming the 95% level of confidence, is plus or minus 4.3%.

The study was designed and conducted by Dr. Bruce D. Merrill. Dr. Merrill is Professor of Mass Communication and Director of the Media Research Program in the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Telecommunication at Arizona State University. The study was conducted by Dr. Merrill as an independent consultant.

Hello, my name is _____ and I am calling for Dr. Bruce Merrill and ASU professor who has been retained by the City of Peoria to do a survey to find out how you feel about living in the City. Your name was randomly selected and your answers will be completely confidential. Will you answers just a few questions for us please?

Are you registered to vote in Arizona? IF NO: Is there a registered voter there I could talk to? IF NO: Thank and end interview!

First, how satisfied are you living in the City of Peoria. Would you say you are:

1.very satisfied	51%
2.generally satisfied	41
3.somewhat dissatisfied or	5
4.very dissatisfied	<u>3</u>
	100%

Now, please complete this sentence for me. The thing I like most about living in Peoria is:

<u>%</u> <u>responses</u>	<u>%</u> <u>all citizens</u>	<u>Response</u>
31	26	Small town feel, kind or rural but not in Phoenix
11	9	Good shopping, close to stores, services, malls
10	8	Location, accessible to everything
7	6	Good schools
6	5	Like the community, planned community I live in
6	5	Beautiful city, nice neighborhoods and areas
5	4	Friendly people, good neighbors
5	4	City is well run, progressive
5	4	City is safe, well policed
3	2	Less traffic, can get around quickly
2	2	Clean city, well kept
2	2	Weather, sunshine
2	2	Nice community to live in
2	1	Close to my
*	*	Cleaner air
*	*	Near golf courses
*	*	Good place for seniors to live
*	*	Good community involvement
*	*	Growing city
*	*	Sports Center
*	*	Near Lake Pleasant
-	<u>19</u>	No response
100%	100%	

There were 442 responses

We would also like to know what you feel is the single most important problem or issue facing the City of Peoria that the Mayor and City Council should be trying to do something about? ASK OPEN-ENDED/CODE BELOW WHERE APPROPRIATE

<u>%</u> <u>responses</u>	<u>%</u> <u>all citizens</u>	<u>Response</u>
36	33	Better control of growth, planning and zoning
14	13	Traffic congestion, roads under repair
14	13	Education, better schools, financing, teachers
13	11	Crime, violence, theft, drugs, gangs
6	6	Need for public transportation
5	5	Environmental concerns, air, water, noise
3	3	High taxes
1	1	Over spending
8	8	Other mentions
-	7	No response
100%	100%	

Other Mentions

(numbers in parentheses are number of mentions)

- Do something about blighted areas (2)
- Do something about downtown area (2)
- Needs to be more citizen involvement (2)
- More for youth to do (2)
- Need more industry, jobs (2)
- Airplane noise is bad (1)
- Loud band concerts (1)
- Balance needs of schools and seniors (1)
- More care for elderly (1)
- High water and sewer bills (1)
- More code enforcement (1)
- Need to use more ground water (1)
- Need better people in city government (1)
- Illegal immigration (1)
- Lot sizes too small (1)
- More recycling (1)
- Improve water management department (1)

We would also like to know how you feel about the facilities the City provides. Please tell me if you feel there are (1) not enough, (2) too many or (3) about the right number of each of the following. Lets start with:

	<u>not enough</u>	<u>too many</u>	<u>about right number</u>	<u>total</u>
Fire stations	19%	1	80	100%
Police stations	32%	1	67	100%
City parks	33%	4	63	100%
Libraries	34%	1	65	100%

Overall, tell me if you are (1)very satisfied, (2)generally satisfied, (3) somewhat dissatisfied or (4)very dissatisfied with these services the City provides. Let's start with:

Parks and recreation:

1.very satisfied	29%	(35)
2.generally satisfied	46	(55)
3.somewhat dissatisfied or	2	(6)
4.very dissatisfied?	2	(4)
5.no answer/no opinion	<u>21</u>	
	100%	

- numbers in parentheses are for those with an opinion.

IF DISSATISFIED: Why are you dissatisfied?

<u>Mention</u>	<u>Number of mentions</u>
Not enough parks	16
No parks in my area	8
Parks are not well maintained	3
Parks are too small	2
Need to have more for kids	2
Need more for adults	2
Need skateboard park	1
Not enough softball fields	1
Poor planning	1
Should be open later	1
Builders should provide them	1

Police and fire protection

1.very satisfied	46%	(49)
2.generally satisfied	43	(46)
3.somewhat dissatisfied or	4	(4)
4.very dissatisfied?	1	(1)
5.no answer/no opinion	<u>6</u>	
	100%	

IF DISSATISFIED: Why are you dissatisfied?

<u>Mention</u>	<u>Number of mentions</u>
Not enough, don't see them much	20
Response time too slow	5
Unhappy with way do job	5
Need more stations	2
Just don't feel protected	1

Water provided by the City

1.very satisfied	29%	(31)
2.generally satisfied	40	(42)
3.somewhat dissatisfied or	17	(18)
4.very dissatisfied?	8	(9)
5.no answer/no opinion	<u>6</u>	
	100%	

IF DISSATISFIED: Why are you dissatisfied?

<u>Mention</u>	<u>Number of mentions</u>
Quality, taste, can't drink	76
Price too high	76
Chlorine	5
Fluoride	4
Smells	3
Possibly contaminated	2

Sewers provided by the City

1.very satisfied	34%	(36)
2.generally satisfied	48	(51)
3.somewhat dissatisfied or	8	(8)
4.very dissatisfied?	5	(5)
5.no answer/no opinion	<u>5</u>	
	100%	

IF DISSATISFIED: Why are you dissatisfied?

<u>Mention</u>	<u>Number of mentions</u>
Expensive	18
Need more sewers, flooding	9
Always working on them	4
Roaches, insects, rodents	3
Poor planning	2
Recycling plan odor	1

Garbage and refuse collection

1.very satisfied	46%	(48)
2.generally satisfied	42	(43)
3.somewhat dissatisfied or	6	(6)
4.very dissatisfied?	2	(3)
5.no answer/no opinion	<u>4</u>	
	100%	

IF DISSATISFIED: Why are you dissatisfied?

<u>Mention</u>	<u>Number of mentions</u>
Need more recycling	10
Price too high	9
Pick up more often	7
Shouldn't pay for large trash pickup	7
Crews should clean up after themselves	4
Canisters need cleaning more often	2
Canisters too big	1
Only need once per week	1
Come to late in day	1
Connected to water bills	1

The City could provide weekly, curbside recycling pickup in your area. This would involve keeping your trash that could be recycled in a separate container. Once a week, your normal trash would be pickup up and once a week trash to be recycled would be picked up. It would cost you an additional two or three dollars per month to add curbside recycling. Would you favor adding curbside recycling or do you prefer keeping trash collection as it is?

1.add recycling	42%
2.keep way is	52
3.no answer/no opinion	<u>6</u>
	100%

Overall, how satisfied are you with the way the City spends your tax dollars. Are you:

1.very satisfied	14%	(15)
2.generally satisfied	60	(66)
3.somewhat dissatisfied or	13	(14)
4.very dissatisfied?	5	(5)
5.no answer/no opinion	<u>8</u>	
	100%	

IF SOMEWHAT OR VERY DISSATISFIED, ASK: Why are you dissatisfied?

<u>Mention</u>	<u>Number of mentions</u>
Spending too much, waste, unwise spending	22
Taxes are too high	9
Spending too much on schools	7
Spending not well planned out	6
Spend more on police, traffic control	5
Cost have gone up too high	5
Don't spend on sports center, stadium	5
Don't spend on airport	5
Dig up and repair roads all time, wasteful	5
Don't spend on sports center, arena	4
Growing too fast, too quickly	4
Can't see where spending has gone	3
Helping developers too much	2
Bond issue is to expensive	2
Spend more on roads and streets	2
Spending too much on research, \$75,000	2
They don't ask us how to spend the money	1
Stones in road was waste	1
Council offices too expensive	1
Downtown needs improvement	1
Don't fund Fourth of July celebration	1
Don't like funding mental health patients	1
Spend more on parks, recreation	1
Spend more on schools	1
Spending too much on parks, recreation	1
Too much focus on new areas	1
More needs to be done in code enforcement	1
More spent on the arts	1
Lack of amenities in the City	1
Spend more on kids activities	1
Spend too much on kids activities	1
Need more schools	1
The park situation needs to be addressed	1
The 91 st . Ave situation	1
Put in lights that were not needed	1

Overall, how satisfied would you say you are with the way the City is handling growth?

Are you:

1.very satisfied	12%	(13)
2.generally satisfied	43	(46)
3.somewhat dissatisfied or	27	(29)
4.very dissatisfied?	12	(12)
5.no answer/no opinion	<u>6</u>	
	100%	

IF DISSATISFIED, Why are you dissatisfied? (BE SPECIFIC)

<u>Mention</u>	<u>Number of mentions</u>
Growing, building too fast	94
No plan for growth, not being handled well	37
Need more schools to keep up with growth	34
Too high of density, small lots, too many apartments	15
Can't provide infrastructure for growth, water, etc	15
Traffic is getting worse	15
Too much sprawl, annexation, Lake Pleasant	13
Developers running things, Council interested in money	8
No open spaces left	4
Older areas being neglected	3
Should get more public input	3
Need better tax base, jobs	2
Charge more impact fees	2
Concerned with what's happening in Lakes area	1
Taxes are too high	1
Heavy load on people with fixed incomes	1
Not taking advantage of good economy	1

How safe do you feel walking around your neighborhood at night. Do you feel:

1.very safe	54%	(57)
2.safe	30	(32)
3.unsafe or	9	(9)
4.very unsafe?	2	(2)
5.no answer/no opinion	<u>5</u>	
	100%	

Would safe do you feel (read 1-4) walking around your neighborhood during the day?

1.very safe	75%
2.safe	23
3.unsafe or	1
4.very unsafe?	0
5.no answer/no opinion	<u>1</u>
	100%

Overall, how satisfied are you with the job the Mayor and City Council are doing? Would you say you are (read 1-4)

1.very satisfied	18%	(20)
2. satisfied	62	(69)
3. somewhat dissatisfied or	9	(8)
4. very dissatisfied	2	(3)
5. don't know/no answer/no opinion	<u>8</u>	
	100%	

Where would you say you get most of your information about what goes on in Peoria?

Percent of <u>All residents</u>	<u>Where get information</u>
34%	Arizona Republic
19	Peoria Times
9	Family, friends, city workers
9	Peoria Independent
9	Television
1	Radio
5	The Prospector
3	Daily News Sun
2	Home owners association
*	Chamber of Commerce
*	Schools
3	Other
4	None
100%	

In the last 12 months, have you watched Channel 11, the public service broadcast channel that televises information about the City of Peoria

1.yes 33%

In the last 12 months, have you read the Peoria Focus put out by the City of Peoria?

1. yes 58%

In the past 12 months, have you attended any kind of a City sponsored meeting like a Council meeting or a planning or zoning committee meeting?

1. yes 15%

Have you attended any school sponsored meeting besides a local PTA meeting?

1.yes 12%

Would you support or oppose building a community theatre on city owned property if the theatre could be paid for from lease payments from a local community theatre group or from existing city funds, and if building the theatre would not cause your taxes to go up?

1. Support	76%
2. Oppose	14
3. Undecided	<u>10</u>
	100%

Would you support spending bond money authorized by voters in the last election to build public safety facilities?

1. Support	81%
2. Oppose	10
3. Undecided	<u>9</u>
	100%

Would you support spending bond money authorized by voters in the last election for parks and recreation facilities?

1. Support	76%
2. Oppose	15
3. Undecided	<u>9</u>
	100%

Do you own or rent your home?

1. Own	91%
2. Rent	<u>9</u>
	100%

Do you have children under the age of 18 living at home?

1. Have children	31%
2. No children	<u>69</u>
	100%

Have you lived in Peoria longer than 10 years?

1. Less 10 years	42%
2. Over 10 years	<u>58</u>
	100%

Which of these intervals includes your age –

1. Under 35	10%
2. 35-54	35
3. Over 54	<u>55</u>
	100%

Do you live north or south of Bell Road?

1. North	35%
2. South	<u>65</u>
	100%

Gender: 1.male 45% 2. Female 55%