

# *2008 Business Survey*

## **Final Report**

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conducted for  
**The City of Des Moines, Iowa**

by  
**ETC Institute**

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# *2008 City of Des Moines Business Survey*

## Executive Summary Report

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### *Overview and Methodology*

During the summer of 2008, ETC Institute administered a business survey for the City of Des Moines to determine how well the city is meeting the needs of businesses in the area. The survey was administered by mail and phone to a random sample of 404 business owners and managers throughout the City. The overall results of the business survey had a precision of at least +/-4.8% at the 95% level of confidence.

### *Major Findings*

- The majority of businesses were generally satisfied with the overall quality of services offered by the City of Des Moines. Ninety-two percent (92%) of the businesses surveyed *who had an opinion*, were satisfied with the quality emergency medical services, 90% were satisfied with the quality of fire services, 80% were satisfied with the quality of police services, 78% were satisfied with the quality of water and sewer services and 78% were satisfied with the quality of parks and recreation services.
- The City services that businesses felt were most important included:
  - police services (41%)
  - street maintenance (41%)
  - water and sewer services (35%)
  - economic development (33%)
- 46% of businesses rated the physical appearance of the area where their business is located as “excellent” or “good.” Forty percent (40%) rated it as “average,” and 14% thought it was “poor.”
- 64% of businesses felt Des Moines is a “Business Friendly” community, 23% disagreed, and 13% did not know.
- When asked to indicate which issues were most important in their decision to locate their business in Des Moines, the most important reasons included:

- availability of telecommunication, utilities and other infrastructure (88%)
  - availability of trained employees (87%)
  - attitude of the local government toward business (87%)
  - low crime rate (86%)
- The top three items that businesses felt would most impact their decision to stay in Des Moines for the next 10 years were:
- level of taxation (35%)
  - attitude of local government toward business (30%)
  - image of the City (25%)
- Thirty-two percent (32%) of the businesses surveyed thought the tax structure in the City of Des Moines is fair, 32% disagreed, and 36% did not know.
- When asked to rate the performance of various units of City government businesses had contact with the previous year, 86% of businesses rated the Fire Inspections unit as “excellent” or “good;” 85% of businesses rated the Police Department as “excellent” or “good and 75% rated the Des Moines International Airport as “excellent” or “good.”
- Eighty-four percent (84%) of businesses *who had an opinion*, were satisfied with the overall quality of life in the City; 83% were satisfied with the overall image of the City, and 77% were satisfied with the overall feeling of safety in the City.
- Sixty-two percent (62%) of businesses agreed the City offers adequate services to entrepreneurs in Des Moines; 21% disagreed and 17% did not know.

### ***Other Findings***

- Businesses indicated that 51% of their customers are from Des Moines, 22% are from Polk County outside Des Moines, 16% are from other areas of Iowa, 10% are customers from outside Iowa but still within the United States and 1% are international or overseas customers.
- The majority (66%) of businesses indicated they were not interested in participating in future focus groups to discuss City-related issues; 25% were interested and 9% did not provide a response.

*Section 1:*  
***Charts and Graphs***

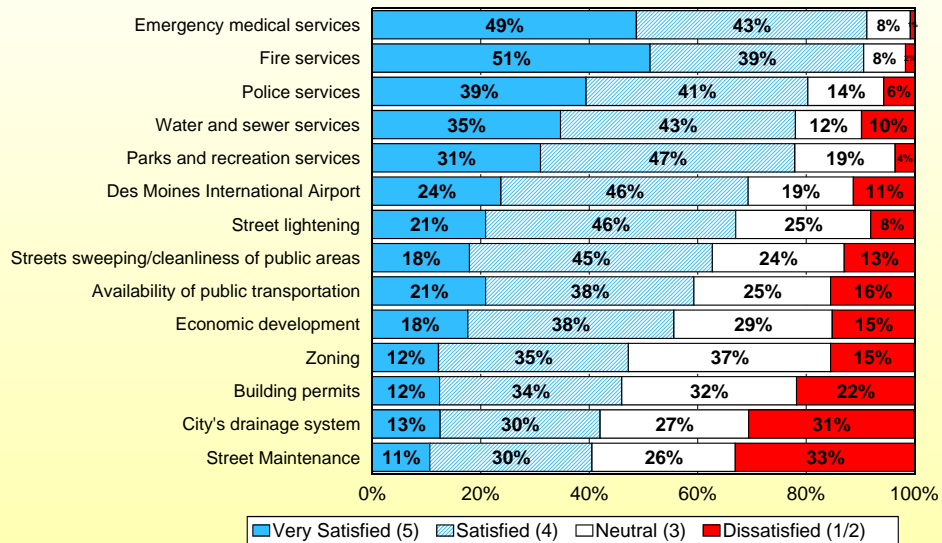
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# 2008 City of Des Moines Business Survey

Source: ETC Institute (2008 - Des Moines, IA, Business Survey)

## Overall Satisfaction With City Services With Regard to How the Services Affect Business Operations

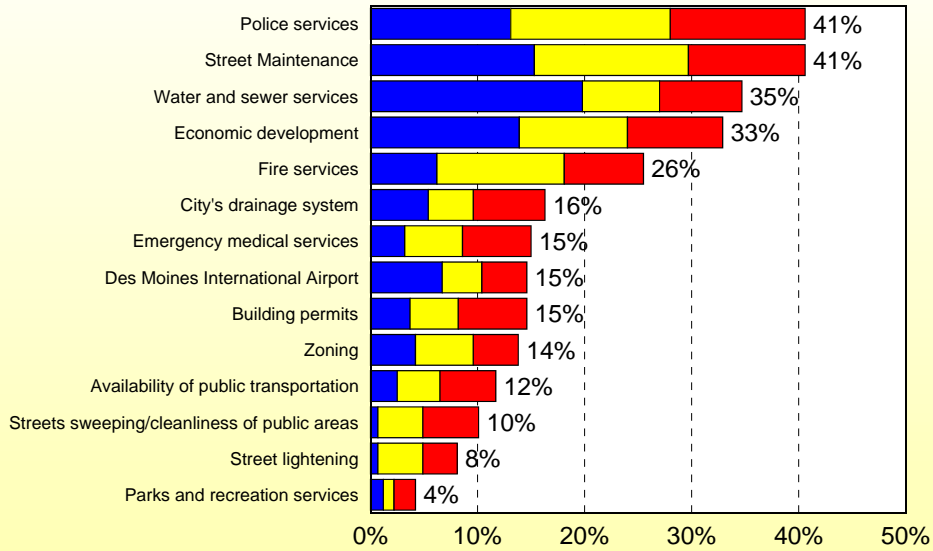
by percentage of business respondents who rated the item as a 1 to 5 on a 5-point scale (excluding don't knows)



Source: ETC Institute (2008 - Des Moines, IA, Business Survey)

### City Services That Are Most Important To Businesses

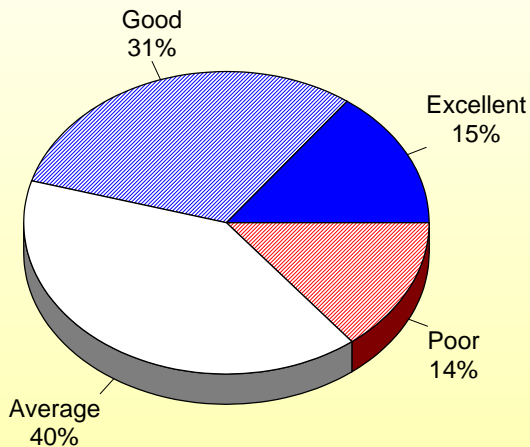
by percentage of business respondents who selected the item as one of their top three choices



Source: ETC Institute (2008 - Des Moines, IA, Business Survey)

### How Would You Rate the Physical Appearance of the Area where Your Business is Located?

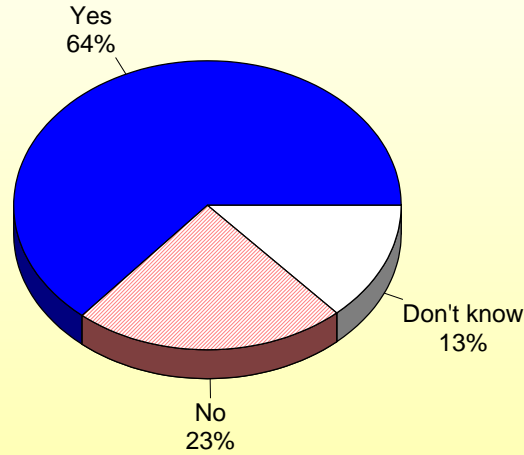
by percentage of business respondents



Source: ETC Institute (2008 - Des Moines, IA, Business Survey)

## Do You Think That the City of Des Moines is a "Business Friendly" Community?

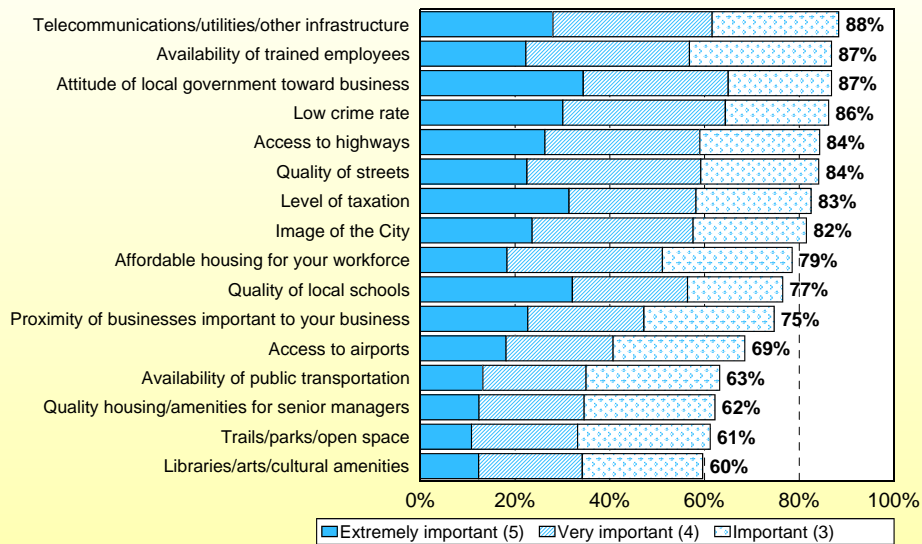
by percentage of business respondents



Source: ETC Institute (2008 - Des Moines, IA, Business Survey)

## How Important Various Issues Were to Businesses When They Decided to Locate in Des Moines

by percentage of business respondents who rated the item as a 3 to 5 on a 5-point scale (excluding don't knows)



Source: ETC Institute (2008 - Des Moines, IA, Business Survey)

























































































