

Research Report

on
America's Cities



The State of America's Cities 2005: The Annual Opinion Survey of Municipal Elected Officials



National League of Cities

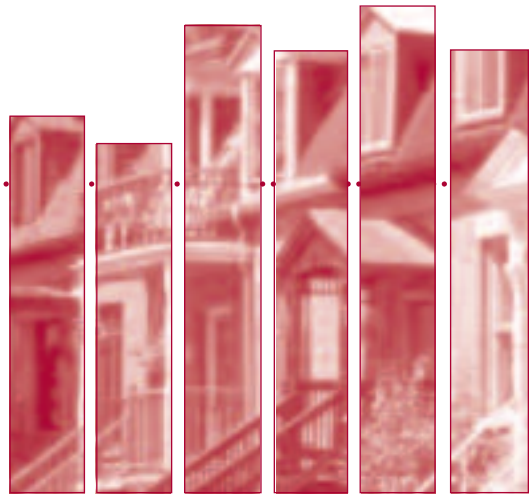
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The State of
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of Municipal Elected Officials

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National League of Cities

*Research
Report*

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*Research
Report*

Preface

We are pleased to present *The State of America's Cities 2005: The Annual Opinion Survey of Municipal Elected Officials*. These annual studies offer a balanced framework for understanding how local elected officials view issues and problems they face in governing our nation's cities and towns. We intend that these survey research reports will help to inform and promote public discussion on issues of importance to America's cities and towns.

The study is based on survey results obtained from a random sample of the nation's municipal elected officials. This year's study was prepared by Christiana Brennan, NLC Research Associate, Elisabeth Wheel, NLC Research Intern, and Christopher Hoene, NLC Research Manager.

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*Research
Report*

I. Summary

This report offers a framework for understanding how local elected officials view issues and problems they face in governing our nation's cities and towns. The views of city officials on local conditions reflect the climate in which they are governing. It's a time of state and federal budget deficits, rising health care and infrastructure costs, turmoil abroad, and long-term economic shifts. Research of city officials' opinions on these matters is helpful in order to inform and to promote public discussion on issues of importance to America's cities and towns.

The results in this report are based on a mail survey of local elected officials conducted in January 2005. A random sample of 1,566 local elected officials was drawn from the National League of Cities (NLC) database of municipal officials. A total of 442 valid responses were received and tabulated, resulting in a 28 percent response rate and a four percent margin of error.

These are the major findings from the survey:

Direction the Country is Heading

City officials are more pessimistic in 2005 than they have been in a decade about the general direction the *country* is heading.

Critical Conditions

City officials were asked to assess a set of 38 local conditions. Specifically, how had the condition changed since last year, which conditions had worsened the most during the past five years, to what extent is each currently a problem for their city, and which are the most important to address over the next two years? The cost and availability of health services, the impact of unfunded mandates and preemption of local authority, traffic, infrastructure, and affordable housing are among the most critical conditions that city officials feel are facing their cities.

- The *cost and availability of health services* consistently ranks as a top deteriorating condition, one that poses a "major problem" for city officials, and an issue that needs to be addressed in coming years.
- *Traffic congestion* is the most widely cited condition by city officials as having worsened during the past five years and as being the most important to address during the next two years.

- A majority of city officials cite *infrastructure, availability of quality affordable housing, and the impact of unfunded mandates and preemption of local authority* as a problem for their city. Many report that these conditions have worsened since last year.

Economic Conditions

A special focus of NLC's work in 2005 is local economies. To gauge city officials' views on this topic, they were asked a series of questions relating to indicators of economic health, such as overall economic conditions, unemployment, and economic vitality.

- City officials' assessment of local economic conditions vary. *Economic conditions* are among the ten most cited worsening and improving conditions in the past five years, depending upon the respondent.
- Although city officials' assessment of overall economic conditions are mixed, they are more generally pessimistic about *unemployment*, one indicator of economic conditions. Many city officials report that unemployment has worsened in the past year and is a major problem for their city.
- *Economic vitality and health*, new to the survey in 2005 and intended to reflect the impacts of global and technological change in the economy, is cited as one of the ten most important conditions for city officials to address during the next two years.

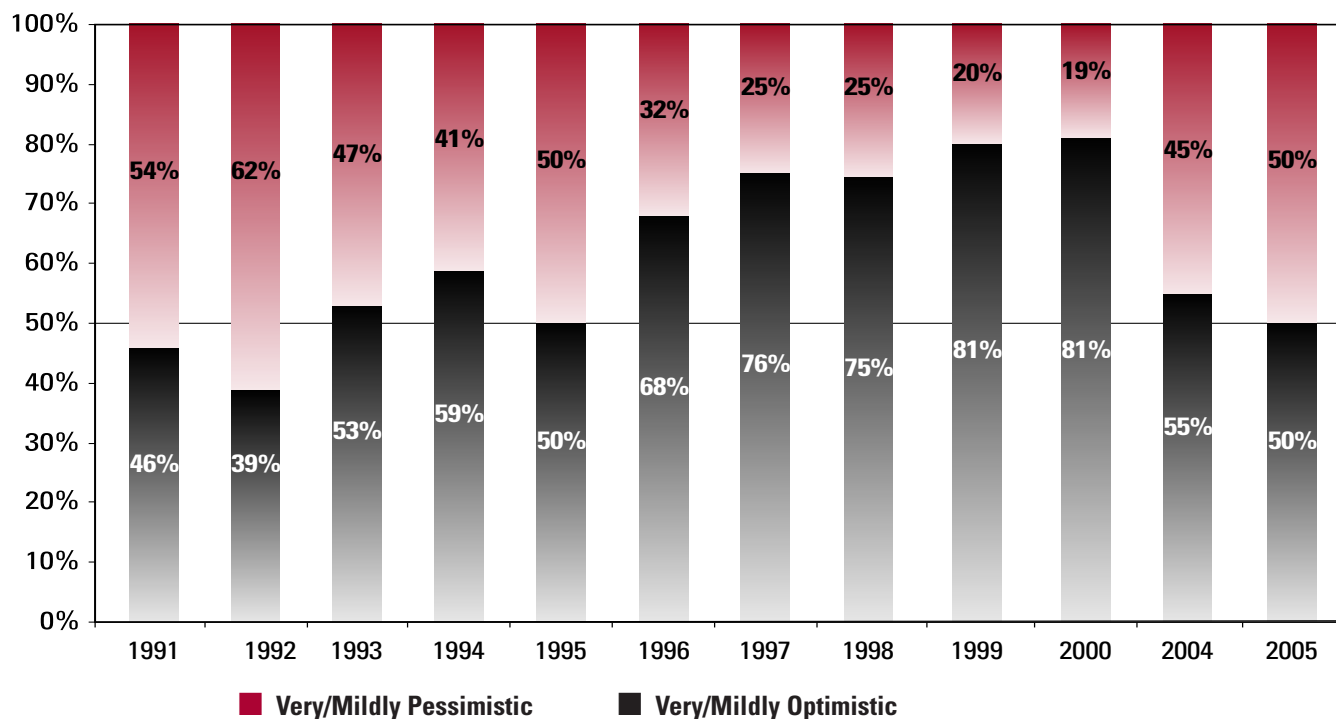
Improving Conditions

Vitality of downtown and mainstreet, police and community relations, and city relationships with community groups are among the most often cited improving conditions in cities.

II. Trends in Overall Local Conditions¹

City officials are more pessimistic in 2005 (50%) than they have been in a decade about the general direction the *country* is heading. Not since 1995 have 50 percent of city officials said they are pessimistic about the general direction of the country. Nevertheless, 50 percent of city officials remain optimistic about the direction of the country.

FIGURE 1
Feeling about General Direction Country is Heading



Despite concerns about a variety of issues and the increasing pessimistic view about the general direction of the country, city officials continue to be optimistic about the direction of their individual cities (90% optimistic, 10% pessimistic). Nearly nine in ten city officials (88%) feel that the current levels of municipal government services in their community are being well provided (44% very good, 44% good).

However, one in three city officials (32%) say that if city tax rates and fees are not increased, city service levels next year will be decreased. City officials from cities in the South² are much less likely (17%) than those from the Northeast (48%), Midwest (41%), and West (32%) to report the need to decrease city service levels if city tax rates and fees are not increased.

City officials from cities with populations greater than 100,000 are more likely (43%) than those from cities with populations less than 10,000 (22%)

¹ The State of America's Cities survey was not conducted in 2002 or 2003, due to targeted survey research on homeland security needs in cities.

² U.S. Census Regions include: the Northeast (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont); the Midwest (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin); the South (Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia); and the West (Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming).

FIGURE 2
Expected Changes in Service Levels During Next Year without Tax Rate or Fee Increases

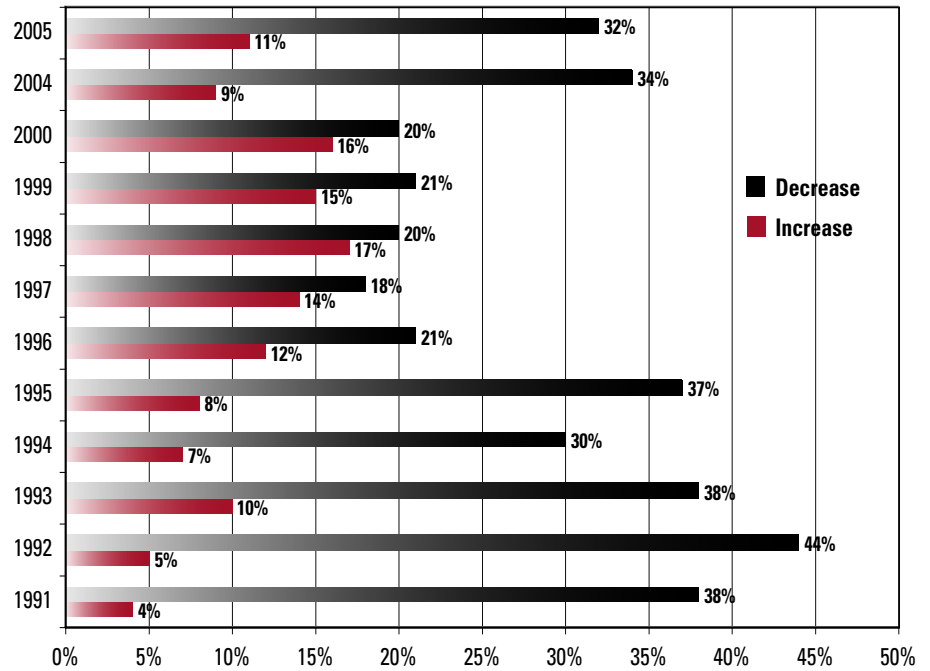
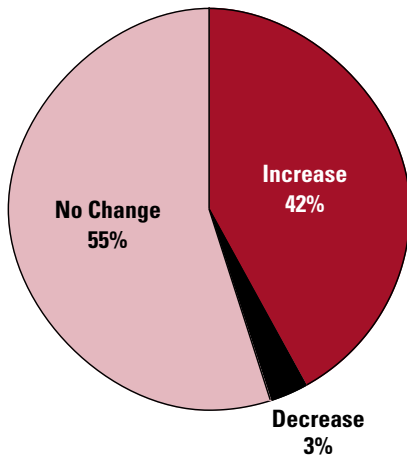


FIGURE 3
Change in Need for Survival Services during Past Year



and 10-50,000 (31%) to say that their city will need to decrease service levels if tax rates and fees are not increased.

In addition to the threat of city service cuts, many city officials (40%) report an increase in the need for survival services such as food, shelter, heating/AC, clothing, and health care for people in their city during the past year.

City officials from cities in the West are more likely (51%) than those from the Northeast (33%), Midwest (41%), and South (40%) to report that the need for survival services has increased during the past year.

City officials from cities with populations greater than 100,000 are slightly more likely (52%) than those from cities with populations less than 10,000 (36%) and 10-50,000 (41%) to say that the need for survival services has increased.

III. Critical Conditions for Cities

City officials' opinions about the future of their cities and the country are influenced by a set of critical conditions facing their communities, such as traffic congestion, healthcare costs, infrastructure, and affordable housing. These conditions mirror those that city officials say have worsened over the past year and are causing major problems for their city.

Traffic Congestion	26%
City Fiscal Conditions	25%
Infrastructure	20%
Availability of quality affordable housing	18%
Overall economic conditions	18%
Impacts of unfunded mandates and preemption of local authority	17%
Vitality of downtown and mainstreet	16%
Cost and availability of health services	15%
Economic health and vitality	15%
Unemployment	14%

Traffic Congestion	34%
Impacts of unfunded mandates/preemption	29%
Cost and availability of health services	21%
City fiscal condition	20%
Availability of quality affordable housing	18%
Unemployment	15%
Drugs/alcohol abuse	14%
Overall economic conditions	13%
Infrastructure	13%
State relations with your city	12%

Changing for the Worse	
Impacts of unfunded mandates/preemption	58%
Traffic congestion	55%
Cost and availability of health services	55%

Causing Major Problems	
Cost and availability of health services	35%
Impact of unfunded mandates	33%
Traffic congestion	29%

TABLE 1
Most Important Conditions to Address*

*Percent of city officials listing item as one of the three most important conditions to address during the next two years.

TABLE 2
Most Deteriorated Conditions*

*Percent of city officials listing item as one of the three most deteriorated conditions in their community during the past five years.

Box 1
Conditions Changing for the Worse*

*The top 3 conditions that city officials say have worsened when asked about changing conditions over the past year.

Box 2
Conditions causing Major Problems for Cities*

*The top 3 conditions that city officials cite as a "major problem" when asked about how much of a problem these conditions are.

Healthcare

Health care is a major source of concern for many city officials. When asked to select three local conditions that have *deteriorated most* in their community during the past five years, out of a possible 38 conditions, the cost and availability of healthcare is the third most widely cited condition by city officials.

When asked to select three local conditions that are the *most important to address* during the next two years, the cost and availability of healthcare is the eighth most widely cited condition by city officials.

More than one-third of city officials (35%) cite the cost and availability of healthcare as a condition that poses a “major problem” in their city; 55 percent say this problem has worsened in the last year.

City officials from cities with populations greater than 100,000 are more likely (68%) than those from cities with populations less than 10,000 (48%), 10-50,000 (56%), and 50-100,000 (55%) to report that the cost and availability of health services has worsened in the last year. City officials from cities with populations greater than 100,000 are also more likely (89%) to report that the cost and availability of health services is either a major (38%) or moderate problem (51%) in their city.

Unfunded Mandates and Preemption of Local Authority

The impact of unfunded mandates and preemption of local authority has been a pressing concern for city officials as state and federal governments have encountered budget deficits. Eighty percent of city officials say that the impacts of unfunded mandates and preemption of local authority are either a major (33%) or moderate problem (47%) in their city.

When asked to select three local conditions that have *deteriorated most* in their community during the past five years, out of a possible 38 conditions, unfunded mandates and preemption of local authority is the second most widely cited condition by city officials.

When asked to select three local conditions that are the *most important to address* during the next two years, out of a possible 38 conditions, unfunded mandates and preemption of local authority is the sixth most widely cited condition by city officials.

City officials from the Midwest are much more likely (70%) than those from the Northeast (57%), South (49%), and West (53%) to cite unfunded mandates and preemption of local authority as a condition which has worsened since last year.

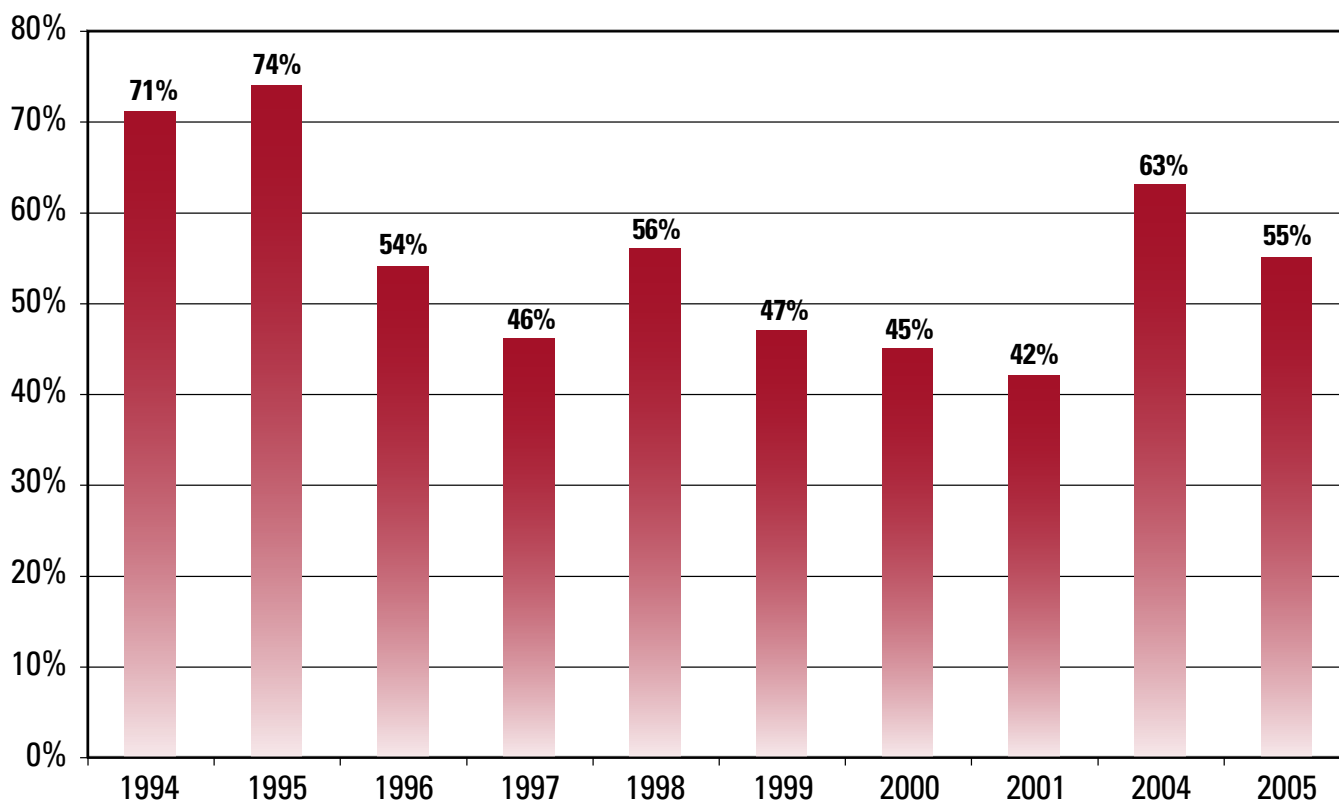


FIGURE 4:
Unfunded Mandates and
Preemption of Local Authority*

*Percent of city officials who say unfunded mandates and preemption of local authority has worsened when asked about changing conditions over the past year.

Despite increases in concern about unfunded mandates and preemption of local authority over the past couple of years, reports about concerns have actually dropped by nearly a quarter since the early 1990's. In 1994 (the first time "unfunded mandates and preemption of local authority" appeared on the survey), 71 percent of city officials reported that unfunded mandates and preemption of local authority had worsened when asked about changing conditions over the past year; in 2005, 55 percent of city officials cite unfunded mandates and preemption of local authority as a condition that has worsened over the past year.

Traffic

When asked to select three local conditions that have *deteriorated most* in their community during the past five years, out of a possible 38 conditions, traffic congestion is the most widely cited condition by city officials. Additionally, when asked to select three local conditions that are the *most important to address* during the next two years, traffic congestion is the most widely cited condition by city officials.

Nearly three-fourths of city officials (73%) report that traffic congestion is either a major (29%) or moderate problem (44%) in their city; 55

percent say this problem has worsened in the last year.

City officials from larger cities are more likely to report traffic congestion as a major problem. Half of the city officials from cities with populations over 100,000 (49%) and populations between 50,000 and 100,000 (50%) report that traffic congestion is a major problem (49%), whereas only one-fifth of city officials from cities with populations between 10,000 and 50,000 (21%) and populations less than 10,000 (20%) say that traffic congestion is a major problem.

City officials from the West are much more likely (71%) than those from the Northeast (37%), Midwest (46%), and South (58%) to say that traffic congestion has worsened since last year. City officials from the West are also much more likely (52%) than city officials from the Northeast (26%), Midwest (13%), and South (30%) to cite traffic congestion as a major problem

Infrastructure

3 "Infrastructure" appears as a top ten condition on both the Most Deteriorated Conditions list and the Most Improved Conditions list. Many city officials feel this condition has worsened, but many also feel that it has improved, indicating a wide variation in the opinions about this condition.

When asked to select three local conditions that have *deteriorated most* in their community during the past five years, out of a possible 38 conditions, infrastructure is the ninth most widely cited condition by city officials.³

When asked to select three local conditions that are the *most important to address* during the next two years, out of a possible 38 conditions, infrastructure is the third most widely cited condition by city officials.

Nearly two-thirds of city officials (63%) report that infrastructure is either a major (18%) or moderate problem (45%) in their city; 22 percent say this problem has worsened in the last year.

City officials from cities with populations greater than 100,000 are much more likely (65%) than city officials from cities with population less than 10,000 (17%), 10-50,000 (15%), and 50-100,000 (18%) to report that infrastructure is a major problem in their city. There are no vast differences of city officials' views on infrastructure between city officials from localities in different regions of the country (Northeast, Midwest, South, and West).

Affordable Housing

City officials also mention affordable housing as a major source of concern. When asked to select three local conditions that have *deteriorated most* in their community during the past five years,

availability of quality affordable housing is the fifth most widely cited condition by city officials.

When asked to select three local conditions that are the *most important to address* during the next two years, out of a possible 38 conditions, availability of quality affordable housing is the fourth most widely cited condition by city officials.

Nearly two-thirds of city officials (64%) indicate that the availability of quality affordable housing is either a major (22%) or moderate problem (42%) in their city; 29 percent report that this problem has worsened in the last year.

City officials from cities with populations greater than 100,000 are more likely (41%) than those with populations less than 10,000 (25%), 10-50,000 (27%), and 50-100,000 (30%) to report that the availability of quality affordable housing has worsened since last year. City officials from cities with populations greater than 100,000 are also likely to report that affordable housing is a problem in their city (75%).

City officials from the Midwest (20%) are less likely than city officials from the Northeast (30%), South (30%), and West (39%) to report that the availability of quality affordable housing has worsened since last year. Those from the Midwest (51%) are also less likely than city officials in the Northeast (72%), South (67%), and West (74%) to report that affordable housing is a problem in their community.

IV. Economic Conditions

A special focus of NLC's work in 2005 is local economic health. In order to gauge city officials' views on this topic, they were asked a series of questions relating to indicators of economic health, such as overall economic conditions, unemployment, and economic vitality. City officials were asked how these indicators have changed since last year and during the past five years and the extent to which each is currently a problem for their city.

Economic Conditions

When asked to select three local conditions that have deteriorated the most during the past five years, economic conditions is the eighth most widely cited condition by city officials. When asked to select three local conditions that have *improved most* in their community during the past five years, however, economic conditions is the sixth most widely cited condition by city officials. This split in city officials' assessment of local economic conditions reveals that the health of local economies may vary widely across the nation.

Although opinions about economic conditions are varied, when asked to assess how economic conditions have changed *during the last year*, the percent of city officials (37%) that say economic conditions have improved increased from the 2004 survey (26%). Nevertheless, a large majority of city officials (63%) still report that economic conditions have worsened or remained the same.

City officials from cities with populations less than 10,000 are less likely (26%) than those in cities with populations 10-50,000 (37%), 50-100,000 (44%), and greater 100,000 (46%) to say that overall economic conditions have improved. There are no vast differences of city officials' views on economic conditions between city officials from localities in different regions of the country.

Unemployment

Although city officials' assessments of local economic conditions vary, they are more pessimistic about unemployment, one indicator of economic conditions.

When asked to select three local conditions that have *deteriorated most* in their community during the past five years, unemployment is

the sixth most widely cited condition by city officials. When asked to select three local conditions that are the *most important to address* during the next two years, unemployment is the tenth most widely cited condition by city officials.

Six in 10 city officials (60%) note that unemployment is either a major (18%) or moderate problem (42%) in their city. When city officials were asked in 2000 how unemployment had changed in the past year, only six percent responded that it had worsened. In 2005, over a quarter of city officials (28%) say that unemployment has worsened in the past year.

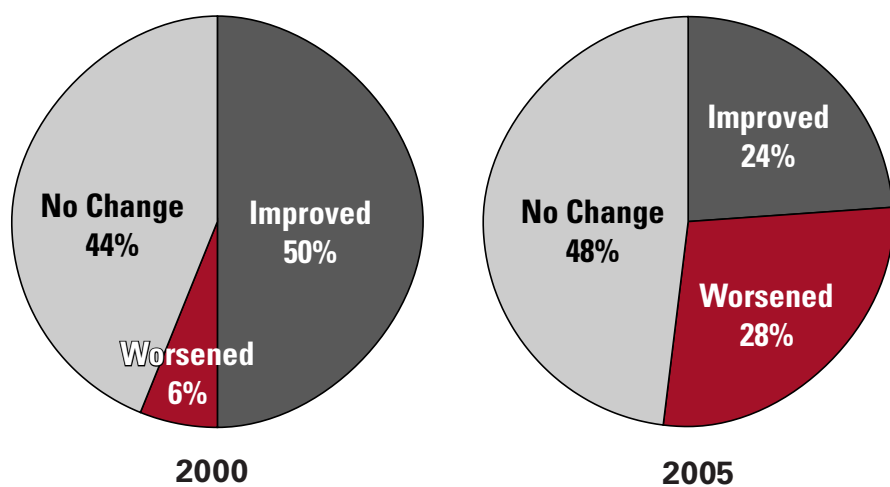


FIGURE 5:
Unemployment, 2000 and 2005*

**Percent saying unemployment has improved, worsened, or stayed the same since last year.*

City officials from cities with populations greater than 100,000 are more likely (71%) than those from cities with populations less than 10,000 (61%), 10-50,000 (57%), and 50-100,000 (59%) to report that unemployment is a problem in their city. City officials from cities in the Midwest are more likely (37%) than city officials in the Northeast (26%), South (19%), and West (27%) to say that unemployment has worsened in the last year.

Economic Vitality

Economic vitality and health, new to the survey in 2005 and intended to reflect the impacts of global and technological change in the economy, is cited as one of the ten most important conditions for city officials to address during the next two years.

Fifty-five percent of city officials cite economic vitality as either a major (17%) or moderate problem (38%) in their city; 20 percent report that this problem has worsened since last year.

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City officials from cities with populations greater than 100,000 are less likely (13%) than those from cities with less than 10,000 (22%), 10-50,000 (21%), and 50-100,000 (22%) to cite economic vitality as a condition which has worsened since last year. City officials from the South are also less likely to cite economic vitality as a condition which has worsened (13%) – less than those from the Northeast (23%), Midwest (25%), and West (24%).

V. Improving Conditions in Cities

Many of the improving city conditions reflect city officials' sentiments that their cities are continuing to foster a sense of place and a good quality of life for their residents.

Vitality of downtown and mainstreet	52%
Overall sence of community	50%
Efficiency of muncipal service delivery	48%

Box 3:
Conditions Changing for the Better*

**The top 3 conditions that city officials say have improved when asked about changing conditions over the past year.*

Vitality of downtown/main street	28%
Police/community relations	20%
Infrastructure	18%
Recreation	16%
City fiscal condition	15%
Overall economic conditions	14%
Regional/area-wide problem solving	14%
City relationships with community groups	14%
Efficiency of municipal service delivery	14%
Overall sence of community	13%

TABLE 3:
Most Improved Conditions*

**Percent of city officials listing item as one of the three most improved conditions in their community during the past five years.*

Vitality of Downtown

When asked to select three local conditions that have *improved most* in their community during the past five years, out of a possible 38 conditions, vitality of downtown and mainstreet is the most widely cited condition by city officials. City officials most often cite the vitality of downtown as an improved condition (52%) when asked about changing conditions in the last year.

Although city officials are positive about the prosperity of their downtowns, this condition remains a concern for city officials. When asked to select three local conditions that are the *most important to address* during the next two years, vitality of downtown and mainstreet is the seventh most widely cited condition by city officials.

City officials from cities with populations less than 10,000 are much less likely (21%) than those in cities with populations 10-50,000 (57%), 50-100,000 (65%), and greater than 100,000 (67%) to report that the vitality

of downtown and mainstreet has improved since last year. City officials from the Midwest are less likely (45%) than those from the Northeast (61%), South (54%), and West (57%) to report that the vitality of downtown and mainstreet has improved since last year.

Police and Community Relations

When asked to select three local conditions that have *improved most* in their community during the past five years, police and community relations is the second most widely cited condition by city officials. Almost half of city officials (45%) believe that police and community relations have improved over the past year.

City Relationships with Community Groups

When asked to select three local conditions that have *improved most* in their community during the past five years, city relationships with community groups is the eighth most widely cited condition by city officials. Almost half of city officials (46%) believe that city relationships with community groups have improved over the past year.

APPENDIX I: Methodology

A random sample of 1,566 locally elected officials was drawn from the National League of Cities (NLC) database of municipal officials. The survey was mailed to all of the officials in the sample in January 2005. A total of 442 valid responses were received and tabulated, resulting in a 28 percent response rate, acceptable for surveys of this type. With this response rate it can be expected with a 95 percent degree of confidence (i.e. in 95 out of 100 random sample surveys) that the answers to the survey questions from another random sample of municipal officials would be within four percentage points (+/- 4%) of the results of this survey.

The survey was conducted by the National League of Cities' Center for Research and Municipal Programs. NLC developed the questionnaire, drew the sample, mailed the survey instrument, coded, cleaned, and tabulated the data, and prepared the final report.

For this report, regional analysis is based on the Bureau of the Census' definition of regions:

NORTHEAST	MIDWEST	SOUTH	WEST
Connecticut	Illinois	Alabama	Alaska
Maine	Indiana	Arkansas	Arizona
Massachusetts	Iowa	Delaware	California
New Hampshire	Kansas	District of Columbia	Colorado
New Jersey	Michigan	Florida	Hawaii
New York	Minnesota	Georgia	Idaho
Pennsylvania	Missouri	Kentucky	Montana
Rhode Island	Nebraska	Louisiana	Nevada
Vermont	North Dakota	Maryland	New Mexico
	Ohio	Mississippi	Oregon
	South Dakota	North Carolina	Utah
	Wisconsin	Oklahoma	Washington
		South Carolina	Wyoming
		Tennessee	
		Texas	
		Virginia	
		West Virginia	

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TABLE 4:
Cities by Region

Region	Number of Surveys Sent	Number Returned	Response Rate	Percent of Respondents
Northeast	226	43	19%	10%
Midwest	431	155	36%	35%
South	513	142	28%	32%
West	368	99	27%	22%
Puerto Rico	28	3	11%	1%
TOTAL	1566	442	28%	100%

TABLE 5:
Cities by Population

City Population	Number of Surveys Sent	Number Returned	Response Rate	Percent of Respondents
>100,000"	251	58	23%	13%
50,001-100,000	387	92	24%	21%
10,001-50,000	644	200	31%	45%
<10,001	284	92	32%	21%
TOTAL	1566	442	28%	100%

APPENDIX II: Responding Cities

Kodiak	AK	Huntington Beach	CA
Boaz	AL	Lafayette	CA
Calera	AL	Livermore	CA
Center Point	AL	Los Angeles	CA
Cullman	AL	Milpitas	CA
Florence	AL	Mountain View	CA
Gadsden	AL	Oceanside	CA
Helena	AL	Ontario	CA
Madison	AL	Palmdale	CA
Robertsdale	AL	Palo Alto	CA
Vestavia Hills	AL	Pasadena	CA
Wetumpka	AL	Pittsburg	CA
Bentonville	AR	Portola Valley	CA
Conway	AR	Poway	CA
Forrest City	AR	Rancho Cucamonga	CA
Fort Smith	AR	Rosemead	CA
Harrison	AR	Santa Ana	CA
Lamar	AR	Santa Barbara	CA
Marked Tree	AR	Santa Clarita	CA
Osceola	AR	Santa Cruz	CA
Prescott	AR	South San Francisco	CA
St Charles	AR	Sunnyvale	CA
Star City	AR	Temecula	CA
Texarkana	AR	Thousand Oaks	CA
Warren	AR	Torrance	CA
Avondale	AZ	West Hollywood	CA
Cave Creek	AZ	Arvada	CO
Flagstaff	AZ	Aurora	CO
Gilbert	AZ	Broomfield	CO
Glendale	AZ	Centennial City	CO
Lake Havasu City	AZ	Fort Collins	CO
Marana	AZ	Greeley	CO
Mesa	AZ	Littleton	CO
Page	AZ	Northglenn	CO
Show Low	AZ	Thornton	CO
Sierra Vista	AZ	Westminster	CO
Albany	CA	Bridgeport	CT
Arcadia	CA	Fairfield	CT
Atascadero	CA	Groton	CT
Buena Park	CA	Manchester	CT
Burbank	CA	Monroe	CT
Canyon Lake	CA	South Windsor	CT
Carlsbad	CA	Waterbury	CT
Chino	CA	West Haven	CT
Claremont	CA	Westport	CT
Corona	CA	Dover	DE
El Monte	CA	Lewes	DE
Encinitas	CA	Newark	DE
Fairfield	CA	Newport	DE
Fremont	CA	Wilmington	DE
Hayward	CA	Fort Pierce	FL
Hemet	CA	Fort Walton Beach	FL

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Greenacres	FL	Naperville	IL
Gulf Breeze	FL	Oak Lawn	IL
Hialeah	FL	O'Fallon	IL
Hollywood	FL	Olney	IL
Lakeland	FL	Palos Hills	IL
Lauderhill	FL	Rockford	IL
Margate	FL	Rolling Meadows	IL
Milton	FL	Schaumburg	IL
Mulberry	FL	Skokie	IL
Niceville	FL	South Holland	IL
North Miami	FL	Springfield	IL
Orlando	FL	Auburn	IN
Pembroke Pines	FL	Bluffton	IN
Pompano Beach	FL	Columbus	IN
Sarasota	FL	Elkhart	IN
Tamarac	FL	Elwood	IN
West Palm Beach	FL	Evansville	IN
Wilton Manors	FL	Frankfort	IN
Winter Springs	FL	Gary	IN
Albany	GA	Lebanon	IN
Baxley	GA	Michigan City	IN
Columbus	GA	Mishawaka	IN
Conyers	GA	Noblesville	IN
Darien	GA	Plainfield	IN
Savannah	GA	Rockport	IN
Thunderbolt	GA	Tell City	IN
Valdosta	GA	Terre Haute	IN
Vienna	GA	Warren	IN
Bettendorf	IA	West Lafayette	IN
Burlington	IA	Lenexa	KS
Cedar Rapids	IA	Manhattan	KS
Clinton	IA	Ottawa	KS
Coralville	IA	Salina	KS
Fort Madison	IA	Shawnee	KS
Iowa City	IA	Edgewood	KY
Mason City	IA	Elizabethtown	KY
Monroe	IA	Fort Mitchell	KY
Rock Valley	IA	Henderson	KY
Sioux City	IA	Hopkinsville	KY
West Des Moines	IA	Jeffersontown	KY
Caldwell	ID	Louisville-Jefferson County	KY
Moscow	ID	Lyndon	KY
Pocatello	ID	Maysville	KY
Belvidere	IL	Morehead	KY
Carbondale	IL	Murray	KY
Carol Stream	IL	DeRidder	LA
Champaign	IL	Gonzales	LA
Des Plaines	IL	Haynesville	LA
East St. Louis	IL	Kenner	LA
Elk Grove Village	IL	Lafayette	LA
Galesburg	IL	Lake Charles	LA
Harristown	IL	New Iberia	LA
Harwood Heights	IL	Shreveport	LA
Joliet	IL	Slidell	LA
Kankakee	IL	Springhill	LA
Matteson	IL	Vivian	LA

Duxbury	MA	Carthage	MO
Saugus	MA	Clayton	MO
Woburn	MA	Columbia	MO
Annapolis	MD	Gladstone	MO
Baltimore	MD	Grandview	MO
Cumberland	MD	Hazelwood	MO
Denton	MD	Jefferson City	MO
Greenbelt	MD	Kirkwood	MO
Laurel	MD	Lee's Summit	MO
Ocean City	MD	Liberty	MO
Poolesville	MD	St. John	MO
Salisbury	MD	University City	MO
Seat Pleasant	MD	Greenwood	MS
Bangor	ME	Meridian	MS
Brewer	ME	New Albany	MS
Scarborough	ME	Pontotoc	MS
Waterville	ME	Southaven	MS
Bay City	MI	Tupelo	MS
Birmingham	MI	Brevard	NC
Farmington Hills	MI	Elkin	NC
Fremont	MI	Gastonia	NC
Grand Blanc	MI	Greenville	NC
Holland	MI	Kenly	NC
Kalamazoo	MI	Monroe	NC
Lansing	MI	Reidsville	NC
Mackinaw City	MI	Wilmington	NC
Muskegon	MI	Wilson	NC
Norton Shores	MI	Winston-Salem	NC
Pontiac	MI	Bismarck	ND
Romulus	MI	Fargo	ND
Sault Ste Marie	MI	Grand Forks	ND
Taylor	MI	Alliance	NE
Trenton	MI	Chappell	NE
Utica	MI	Crete	NE
Wayne	MI	Holdrege	NE
Wyoming	MI	Plattsmouth	NE
Ypsilanti	MI	Seward	NE
Bemidji	MN	Wayne	NE
Bloomington	MN	York	NE
Glencoe	MN	Montville	NJ
Independence	MN	Orange	NJ
Little Falls	MN	Pleasantville	NJ
Montgomery	MN	Belen	NM
Moorhead	MN	Farmington	NM
New Brighton	MN	Gallup	NM
Paynesville	MN	Roswell	NM
Pine Island	MN	Carson City	NV
Plymouth	MN	Henderson	NV
Red Wing	MN	Reno	NV
Richfield	MN	Sparks	NV
St. Cloud	MN	Brighton	NY
Waconia	MN	Buffalo	NY
Willmar	MN	Garden City	NY
Belton	MO	New Rochelle	NY
Bolivar	MO	New York City	NY
Bridgeton	MO	Rome	NY

Research Report

Schenectady	NY	Greenville	SC
Bellbrook	OH	Greenwood	SC
Brecksville	OH	Greer	SC
Celina	OH	Hollywood	SC
Chillicothe	OH	Myrtle Beach	SC
East Cleveland	OH	Rock Hill	SC
Fairborn	OH	West Columbia	SC
Fairfield	OH	Madison	SD
Franklin	OH	Rapid City	SD
Grove City	OH	Watertown	SD
Highland Hills	OH	Athens	TN
Huber Heights	OH	Bolivar	TN
Kettering	OH	Farragut	TN
Lakewood	OH	Gallatin	TN
Lorain	OH	Galloway	TN
Maple Heights	OH	Huntingdon	TN
Mason	OH	Lakeland	TN
Maumee	OH	Millington	TN
Miamisburg	OH	Springfield	TN
Oakwood Village	OH	Carrollton	TX
Springfield	OH	Cedar Hill	TX
Stow	OH	Lake Dallas	TX
Trotwood	OH	North Richland Hills	TX
Westlake	OH	San Angelo	TX
Whitehall	OH	Sugar Land	TX
Wickliffe	OH	Universal City	TX
Woodmere	OH	Victoria	TX
Broken Arrow	OK	Brigham City	UT
Lawton	OK	Kaysville	UT
Muskogee	OK	Layton	UT
Woodward	OK	South Ogden	UT
Beaverton	OR	West Jordan	UT
Cottage Grove	OR	West Valley City	UT
Dallas	OR	Lynchburg	VA
Medford	OR	Poquoson	VA
Bensalem	PA	Roanoke	VA
Chambersburg	PA	Winchester	VA
Darby	PA	Arlington	WA
Elizabethtown	PA	Auburn	WA
Erie	PA	Bellevue	WA
Hazleton	PA	Benton City	WA
Lebanon	PA	Kelso	WA
Meadville	PA	Kennewick	WA
Nether Providence	PA	Lakewood	WA
New Castle	PA	Mill Creek	WA
Pittsburgh	PA	Port Angeles	WA
Pottsville	PA	Sammamish	WA
West Chester	PA	Shoreline	WA
West Goshen	PA	Spokane Valley	WA
Whitehall Township	PA	Tukwila	WA
Bayamon	PR	La Crosse	WI
Caguas	PR	Milwaukee	WI
Loiza	PR	South Milwaukee	WI
North Smithfield	RI	Wauwatosa	WI
Warwick	RI	West Allis	WI
Charleston	SC	Parkersburg	WV
Columbia	SC	Glendo	WY

APPENDIX III: Summary of Survey Results

- I. What municipal office do you hold? (Circle one)
- | | |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Mayor | 33% |
| Council | 51% |
| Other elective office | 2% |
| Non-elective office | 14% |

Overall Local Conditions

2. Please indicate the changes in service levels in your city for each of the following statements (Circle one each from A, B, and C)
- | | INCREASED | MAINTAINED | DECREASED |
|---|-----------|------------|-----------|
| A. During the past year (2004) city service levels have been: | 27% | 63% | 10% |
| B. During the next year (2005) city service levels will be: | 25% | 66% | 9% |
| C. If city tax rates and fees are not increased, city service levels next year (2005) will be: | 11% | 57% | 32% |
3. **Compared to needs**, how would you rate the current levels of municipal government services in your community? (Circle one)
- | | |
|-----------|-----|
| Very Good | 44% |
| Good | 44% |
| Fair | 11% |
| Poor | 1% |
4. How do you feel about the general direction in which your **city** is heading? (Circle one)
- | | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Very optimistic | 50% |
| Mildly optimistic | 40% |
| Mildly pessimistic | 9% |
| Very pessimistic | 1% |
5. During the past year have you seen an increase, a decrease, or no change in the **need for "survival services"** (food, shelter, heating/AC, clothing, health care) for people in your city? (Circle one)
- | | |
|-----------|-----|
| Increase | 42% |
| Decrease | 3% |
| No change | 55% |
6. How do you feel about the general direction in which the **country** is heading? (Circle one)
- | | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Very optimistic | 13% |
| Mildly optimistic | 37% |
| Mildly pessimistic | 37% |
| Very pessimistic | 13% |

Specific Local Conditions

7. For the following conditions, please **(a)** indicate how each has changed in your community during the last year; and **(b)** assess the extent to which each condition is currently a problem for your city, if at all. (Circle responses for each condition for **both** parts (a) and (b))

CODE/CONDITION	a) Change in condition since last year			b) Current status of condition		
	IMPROVED	WORSENE	CHANGE	NO PROBLEM	MAJOR PROBLEM	MODERATE PROBLEM
A. Violent Crime	34%	13%	53%	7%	37%	56%
B. Unemployment	24%	28%	48%	18%	42%	40%
C. Impacts of unfunded mandates/preemption	3%	58%	39%	33%	47%	19%
D. City fiscal condition	32%	29%	37%	18%	45%	37%
E. Cable TV rates/Broadband internet availability	24%	30%	47%	7%	34%	59%
F. Family stability	9%	16%	75%	8%	38%	54%
G. Race/ethnic relations	18%	8%	74%	5%	31%	64%
H. Vitality of neighborhoods	39%	10%	51%	7%	36%	57%
I. Police/community relations	45%	8%	47%	5%	25%	70%
J. Overall economic conditions	37%	26%	37%	19%	44%	37%
K. Poverty	7%	25%	68%	15%	41%	45%
L. Volunteerism/community services	42%	9%	49%	5%	21%	74%
M. Availability of quality affordable housing	26%	29%	45%	22%	42%	36%
N. Quality of public education	27%	19%	54%	18%	32%	50%
O. Homelessness	5%	22%	73%	8%	33%	59%
P. City relationships w/community groups	46%	7%	47%	2%	19%	79%
Q. Youth violence and crime	15%	20%	65%	9%	43%	48%
R. Regional/area-wide problem solving	43%	13%	44%	12%	40%	48%
S. Infrastructure	45%	22%	33%	18%	45%	37%
T. Traffic congestion	11%	55%	35%	29%	44%	27%
U. Local environmental quality	23%	11%	66%	6%	33%	61%
V. Federal relations with your city	21%	14%	65%	6%	33%	61%
W. State relations with your city	27%	25%	48%	14%	37%	49%
X. Public school relations with your city	34%	14%	52%	6%	26%	68%
Y. Drugs/alcohol abuse	7%	31%	62%	20%	50%	30%
Z. Vitality of downtown/main street	52%	14%	34%	17%	45%	38%
AA. Availability of child care	15%	9%	76%	5%	34%	61%
BB. Recreation	48%	8%	44%	5%	27%	68%
CC. Civility in public life	21%	21%	58%	6%	26%	68%
DD. Family-friendliness of city	41%	5%	54%	2%	18%	80%
EE. Overall sense of "community"	50%	7%	43%	4%	26%	70%
FF. Efficiency of municipal service delivery	48%	4%	48%	5%	23%	72%
GG. Public transportation/transit service	23%	14%	63%	12%	40%	48%
HH. Cost and availability of health services	9%	55%	36%	35%	43%	22%
II. Homeland Security/Emergency Preparedness	46%	5%	49%	9%	37%	54%
JJ. Availability/Quality of After-school programs	22%	10%	68%	9%	39%	52%
KK. Population changes/migration	17%	21%	62%	11%	36%	52%
LL. Economic health/vitality	35%	20%	45%	17%	38%	45%

For questions 8 through 10, refer to the conditions and letter codes listed on the previous page. (For example, if one response to question #8 is "unemployment," enter "B" on one of the blank spaces.)

8. Of the conditions listed in question II, which three **deteriorated most** in your community during the past five years?

1. Traffic congestion	34%
2. Impacts of unfunded mandates/preemption	29%
3. Cost and availability of health services	21%
4. City fiscal condition	20%
5. Availability of quality affordable housing	18%
6. Unemployment	15%
7. Drugs/alcohol abuse	14%
8. Overall economic conditions	13%
9. Infrastructure	13%
10. State relations with your city	12%
11. Quality of public education	10%
12. Vitality of downtown/main street	8%
13. Youth violence and crime	8%
14. Population changes/migration	7%
15. Economic health/vitality	7%
16. Civility in public life	7%
17. Violent Crime	6%
18. Public transportation/transit service	5%
19. Poverty	5%
20. Cable TV rates/Broadband internet availability	5%
21. Vitality of neighborhoods	4%
22. Police/community relations	4%
23. Regional/area-wide problem solving	4%
24. Federal relations with your city	4%
25. Public school relations with your city	4%
26. Homelessness	4%
27. Local environmental quality	3%
28. Race/ethnic relations	3%
29. Family stability	2%
30. Volunteerism/community services	2%
31. City relationships w/ community groups	2%
32. Availability of child care	2%
33. Availability/Quality of After-school programs	2%
34. Recreation	1%
35. Family-friendliness of city	1%
36. Overall sense of "community"	1%
37. Efficiency of municipal service delivery	1%
38. Homeland Security/Emergency Preparedness	1%

9. Of the conditions listed in question II, which three **improved the most** in your community during the past five years?

1. Vitality of downtown/main street	28%
2. Police/community relations	20%
3. Infrastructure	18%
4. Recreation	16%
5. City fiscal condition	15%
6. Overall economic conditions	14%
7. Regional/area-wide problem solving	14%
8. City relationships w/ community groups	14%
9. Efficiency of municipal service delivery	14%

10. Overall sense of "community"	13%
11. Vitality of neighborhoods	13%
12. Volunteerism/community services	13%
13. Public school relations with your city	10%
14. Homeland Security/Emergency Preparedness	10%
15. Quality of public education	9%
16. Economic health/vitality	8%
17. Availability of quality affordable housing	7%
18. Violent Crime	7%
19. Unemployment	6%
20. Family-friendliness of city	6%
21. Public transportation/transit service	5%
22. Availability/Quality of After-school programs	5%
23. State relations with your city	5%
24. Cable TV rates/Broadband internet availability	5%
25. Race/ethnic relations	5%
26. Local environmental quality	4%
27. Traffic congestion	3%
28. Federal relations with your city	3%
29. Population changes/migration	3%
30. Availability of child care	3%
31. Youth violence and crime	2%
32. Family stability	2%
33. Drugs/alcohol abuse	1%
34. Civility in public life	1%
35. Cost and availability of health services	1%
36. Homelessness	1%
37. Impacts of unfunded mandates/preemption	0%
38. Poverty	0%

10. Of the conditions listed in question 11, which three will be the **most important to address** during the next two years?

1. Traffic congestion	26%
2. City fiscal condition	25%
3. Infrastructure	20%
4. Availability of quality affordable housing	18%
5. Overall economic conditions	18%
6. Impacts of unfunded mandates/preemption	17%
7. Vitality of downtown/main street	16%
8. Cost and availability of health services	15%
9. Economic health/vitality	15%
10. Unemployment	14%
11. Quality of public education	11%
12. Drugs/alcohol abuse	11%
13. State relations with your city	9%
14. Regional/area-wide problem solving	7%
15. Population changes/migration	6%
16. Vitality of neighborhoods	6%
17. Violent Crime	6%
18. Police/community relations	5%
19. Poverty	5%
20. Efficiency of municipal service delivery	5%
21. Overall sense of "community"	4%
22. Public transportation/transit service	4%
23. Race/ethnic relations	4%
24. Youth violence and crime	4%

25. Local environmental quality	4%
26. Homelessness	3%
27. Federal relations with your city	3%
28. Public school relations with your city	3%
29. Recreation	3%
30. Homeland Security/Emergency Preparedness	3%
31. Volunteerism/community services	2%
32. Cable TV rates/Broadband internet availability	2%
33. Family stability	2%
34. City relationships w/ community groups	2%
35. Availability of child care	1%
36. Civility in public life	1%
37. Family-friendliness of city	1%
38. Availability/Quality of After-school programs	1%

*Research
Report*

About the National League of Cities

The National League of Cities (NLC) is the oldest and largest national organization representing municipal governments throughout the United States. NLC serves as a national resource and advocate on behalf of over 1,700 member cities and for 49 municipal leagues whose membership totals more than 18,000 cities and towns across the country. The mission of NLC is to strengthen and promote cities as centers of opportunity, leadership, and governance.

Through its Center for Research and Municipal Programs, NLC provides an applied think tank capacity by developing, conducting, and reporting research on programs and issues affecting cities and towns.



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