

## COMMUNITY SURVEY

Public participation is critical to the comprehensive planning process and the community survey conducted by the Comprehensive Plan Committee is one of the key elements. In addition to gaining a general understanding of interested resident opinions and concerns, the survey served to inform the community of the planning process and many of the issues confronting the Milford area. The survey results will be incorporated into the *Comprehensive Plan* and will be used as one of many factors for the formulation of community goals and objectives. Given budget constraints and the Committee's desire to give all residents involved in the community the opportunity to participate in the survey, the decision was made to distribute the survey form to all residents on the voter registration list. News releases also announced that

the survey was available from local officials and on the Internet. A random sample survey with higher return rates would have resulted in a better cross section of opinions but would have precluded many interested residents from participating. In other words, it is important to remember that the survey results simply represent the opinions of those registered voters and other interested residents who responded to the survey and not necessarily all area residents. To achieve a definitive representation of resident opinions (i.e., a high confidence rate of survey results) would require a scientific survey using a relatively small random sample with a high return rate. This is typically achieved by multiple mailings, tracking each survey, and follow-up phone calls.

### MILFORD BOROUGH SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

#### Return Rates

- Total number of surveys distributed: 962.
- Total number of surveys returned: 192.
- Return rate: 20%.

#### Quality of Life

C Respondents were about evenly divided about **how Milford has changed** - 42% believe it is more desirable and 38% less desirable.

C Taken as a whole, almost 70% of respondents rated the **overall quality of life** as good-to-excellent.

C **Future expectations** about how the Borough will change in the next five to ten years were less than optimistic -- 31% believe the area will become more desirable, 45% less desirable, 10% expect little change, and 14% are not sure.

C The small town lifestyle, historic character and proximity to friends and relatives influenced many respondents **choice to live in Milford** and continue to keep them in the Borough.

C Respondents rated the **individual elements** of the quality of life in the larger Milford area as follows:

C Scenic beauty (88%), environmental quality

(86%), overall quality of life (69%) and place to raise children (66%) were rated good-to-excellent by the highest proportion of respondents.

C At 53%, quality of schools, received a somewhat lower good-to-excellent rating than place to raise children.

C Job opportunities received the highest poor ratings, 61%, and the cost of living was rated good-to-excellent by only 26% of respondents, and fair by 46%..

C Recreational opportunities, cultural activities, and social activities were rated good-to-excellent by 49%, 43%, and 38% of respondents, respectively, and poor by 13%, 18% and 20%.

C The **individual elements** of the quality of life received a range of importance ratings by area wide survey respondents.

C Overall quality of life, cost of living, environmental quality, and scenic beauty garnered the highest rankings of importance.

C Social activities, cultural activities and

recreational opportunities ranked the lowest.

- *What do you like least about Milford Borough?* In descending order the most cited reasons were: traffic difficulties, cost of services/taxes, lack of public sewage treatment, lack of shopping/services, pace of development, lack of culture/recreation, and quality of public services.

**Community Facilities and Services**

C *Which of the following programs would you be willing to support with local tax revenues?*

|                                    | # of responses |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| none                               | 52             |
| improved sidewalks, streetscapes   | 46             |
| recreation facilities and programs | 41             |
| Borough street improvements        | 39             |
| expanded ambulance service         | 37             |
| Borough alley improvements         | 32             |
| public parking lots                | 32             |

- C Most respondents appear satisfied with **overall Borough services** - 13% rated services excellent, 60% good, 20% fair, and only 5% poor.
- C **Emergency services** were rated good-to-excellent as follows: police protection - 71%, fire protection - 88%, and ambulance service - 81%.
- C **Borough road maintenance** was rated as excellent by 11% of respondents and good by 43%; but, 37% rated it as only fair, and 9% as poor.
- C In the case of **state roads**, 9% rated maintenance as excellent, 58% as good, 24% as fair and 4% as poor.
- C **Garbage pick-up** was rated high by most respondents – 24% excellent, 63% good, 11% fair, and 2% poor.
- C 42% percent of respondents agree that **recreation facilities** and programs available to area residents are adequate; however, 46% disagreed, suggesting

a possible role for the Borough in providing additional recreation facilities.

- C A pool, bicycle routes, hiking/walking trails and youth recreation programs are viewed as the **most important recreation** needs.
- C Improving and maintaining **sidewalks** on Broad Street and Harford Street is most important to respondents, with the installation of sidewalks throughout the Borough far less important.
- C Protecting the **Borough water supply** using Water Authority funds to purchase water shed land or conservation easements is supported by almost 85% of respondents.
- C Most respondents think the entire Borough should be served by **public sewage collection and disposal**, but many others want more information before deciding.
- C The Borough taking action to provide more **parking in commercial districts** is supported by 55% of respondents, 34% disagree, and 11% are uncertain.
- C Most respondents believe the Borough **street tree management** program has been positive and many believe additional steps should be taken to manage street trees.
- C The **commercial historic district** is viewed as a benefit to the Borough by 112 respondents while 35 believe it has done little to benefit the Borough, and some others feel the Borough should not be involved in historic preservation.

**Respondent Characteristics**

- C **Arrival to the Borough** - 12% have always lived in the Borough, 13% moved to the Borough from elsewhere in Pike County, 16% from elsewhere in Pennsylvania, and 44% from New Jersey or New York.
- C **Type of Employment** - 37% are professionals, executives or managers, 33% are retired, and 9% are homemakers.
- C **Place of Employment** - a total of 55% work in Pike County -- 14% with a home-based business,

27% in the Borough, and 14% elsewhere in the County.

**C Age distribution . . .**

| AGE   |       |       |       |       |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 18-24 | 25-44 | 45-64 | 65-74 | 75+   |
| 2.8%  | 18.1% | 44.1% | 18.6% | 16.4% |

**• Length of residency . . .**

| # YEARS |       |       |       |       |       |
|---------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| <1      | 1-5   | 6-10  | 11-15 | 16-20 | 20+   |
| 1.6%    | 20.1% | 20.7% | 10.3% | 6.0%  | 41.3% |