

# **Sterling, KS**

## **Strategic Planning**

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Prepared by



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## **Sterling, KS Strategic Planning Project**

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## **Executive Summary and Recommendations**

**S**trategic P lanning is a way to determine a community or other organization's short term and long term goals to help identify a plan and achieve those goals. Strategic Planning can be done using three methods, these methods are as follows: (1.) Through focus group research, (2.) through survey research (mail, telephone, face-to-face), and (3.) through a combination of these two methods.

**Focus groups**, as defined by Webster's dictionary, are small groups selected from a larger population and sampled, as by open discussion, for its members' opinions about or emotional response to a particular subject or area. Focus groups are often used in market research or political analysis. For example, let's say you decide to conduct a few focus groups to discover what your community's issues are, what citizen's wants, and needs are, and what ideas they might have for improvements within the community. Typically, we would want representation from a cross section of the local community in each focus group. In this case, the demographic information collected from the focus groups can be viewed in the table below.

<b>Group #1</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Time living in Sterling</b>	<b>Plan to live/continue to live in Sterling</b>	<b>How do you get the majority of your news/Information</b>
1.	66	M	10+	10+	Planning Committee
2.	41	F	5-10	N/A	Newspaper
3.	30	M	10+	10+	On-line
4.	59	F	10 + (42 yrs.)	10 +	Newspaper
5.	52	M	10+	10+	Newspaper
6.	51	F	10+	10+	Television
7.	88	M	10+	10+	Newspaper
8.	64	M	5-10	5-10	Newspaper
9.	52	F	10+	10+	Newspaper
10.	49	F	5-10	5-10	Newspaper
<b>Group #2</b>					
11.	71	F	10+	10+	Newspaper
12.	45	M	5-10	10+	From other people
13.	48	M	5-10	10+	Newspaper
14.	22	F	3-5	10+	On-line
15.	24	M	3-5	5-10	From other people
16.	72	M	1-2	N/A	Newspaper
17.	54	M	5-10	10+	Television
18.	77	M	10+	10+	From other people
19.	55	M	10+	10+	Television

Each participant was asked to fill out a demographic sheet (**Appendix A**). Demographic information gives us a better idea of representation within the focus groups. We can also tie needs and wants to different segments of the community.

Focus group participants ranged in age from 22 to 88 with an average age of 53.6. There were 7 women and 12 men who participated. 10 of them lived in the Sterling area ten or more years, 6 lived in the area between 5 and 10 years, and three of the participants lived in the area less than 5 years. Of the 19 participants 14 plan to continue living in the area for 10 or more additional years. In fact, one of the participants wrote in "Till death do us part." This would indicate their love for the City of Sterling. Most of them get the majority of their news from a newspaper. Verbatim responses from the two focus groups conducted can be viewed in both **Appendix C** and **Appendix D**.

**Survey Research**, is often paired with focus group research to pin point specific areas of concern. Survey research helps to provide a more in-depth look into focus group(s). Specifically, we are reviewing Sterling residents' wants, needs, and ideas for their city. What they think the city does well and what could use improvement. Each participant was asked to fill out a survey (**Appendix B**). Survey analysis breakdowns are explained and displayed throughout this report but can also be viewed in **Appendix E**.

This report presents information gathered in focus groups (groups of citizens) and from the survey administered on November 12, 2005. The following issues concerning the City were assessed: **(1.) Issues Affecting The Future Of Sterling, (2.) Quality Of Life Issues (Including the Regional Economy), (3.) Life in Sterling (Including Personal Safety), (4.) Possible City Improvements (Including Downtown Uses and Improvements), (5.) Possible Park Improvements, (6.) Service or City Of Sterling Employee Evaluation, (7.) City Services, (8.) City Communications with the Public, (9.) Funding Of City Services, and (10.) General City Funding Views and Other Issues.** The survey administered had a total of 114 questions.

### **Issues Affecting the Future of Sterling**

The most important issues affecting the future of Sterling in descending order are to attract and keep young families; assist in creating and maintaining attractive schools and college campuses; continue to improve Sterling's downtown area; maintain quality city services' market and promote the city as a great place to live and work; promote redevelopment of commercial properties; provide cost effective City services that meet the needs of users; promote community involvement and service opportunities; maintain access to regional jobs, goods, and services; require that property be kept up in

appearance; create affordable housing options for current and future Sterling residents; create a strong identity for Sterling as a community separate and distinct from other communities in the surrounding area; improve the physical appearance of the City of Sterling, and support seniors living independently.

Many of these issues have to do with maintaining the quality of life in Sterling. They overlap with and affect one another. For example, attracting and keeping young families is strongly related to schools, attractive places to live and work, access to jobs and quality city services.

Citizens see the least important issue affecting the future of the City of Sterling is to create and promote an industrial park. Although some cities have done this, they are either already industrial centers themselves (Wichita) or located quite near industrial centers (Derby, Hutchinson).

Other less important issues from the least important upward were to create a strong identity for Sterling as a bedroom community for the Wichita/Hutchinson area; provide opportunities to serve on boards and commissions; promote development of below-market interest rates for home improvement loans; cooperate with nearby communities to provide services together; develop a community/senior center for activities, functions, and events; and encourage investment in private home maintenance and remodeling projects. This may reflect physical distance from Wichita and Hutchinson. Perhaps, other issues may be less desirable because they benefit only a small segment of the community rather than everyone.

## Issues Affecting the Future of Sterling

(5 = Very Important...1 = Not Important)

Issues	Average
Attract and keep young families	4.94
Assist in creating and maintaining attractive schools and college campuses	4.89
Continue to improve Sterling's downtown area	4.61
Maintain quality City services	4.56
Market and promote the City as a great place to live and work	4.44
Promote redevelopment of commercial properties	4.44
Provide cost-effective City services that meet the needs of users	4.35
Promote community involvement and service opportunities	4.28
Maintain access to regional jobs, goods, and services	4.12
Require that property be kept up to appearance	4.11
Create affordable housing options for current and future Sterling residents	4.05
Create a strong identity for Sterling as a community separate and distinct from other communities in the surrounding area	4.05
Improve the physical appearance of the City of Sterling	4.00
Support seniors living independently	4.00
Encourage investment in private home maintenance and remodeling projects	3.94
Develop a community/senior center for activities, functions, and events	3.83
Cooperate with nearby communities to provide services together	3.81
Promote racial and economic diversity as community strength	3.65
Promote development of below-market interest rates for home improvement loans	3.56
Provide opportunities to serve on boards and commissions	3.50
Create a strong identity for Sterling as a bedroom community for the Wichita/Hutchinson area	3.50
Create and promote an industrial park	3.39

## Quality of Life in Sterling

Residents perceive their quality of life in Sterling very favorably. This overall rating is 4.33 out of a possible 5. They give some aspects of their quality of life higher ratings than this including quality of schools (4.94); how they see Sterling as a place to raise children (4.89), and the overall appearance of the city (4.77). They assess the quality of their immediate neighborhood. They rate Sterling as a place to live when retired at the same level as their overall quality of life in Sterling (4.33). They give Sterling as a place for teens and opportunities to serve others through community organizations (civic groups) nearly as favorable ratings (4.28 and 4.22, respectively).

The aspect of quality of life in Sterling receiving the lowest rating is travel on unpaved roads (2.56). This issue may reflect that people dislike unpaved roads and prefer paved ones. This interpretation is supported by citizens' assessment of travel on paved streets. The condition of paved streets in Sterling is viewed favorably. Travel on paved streets received a rating of 4.0 out of a possible 5.

Sterling does not fare well as a place for young single adults to live (2.89). The later issue may reflect a comparative lack of activities and attractions for young single adults, and the availability of such attractions in bigger cities.

Housing valuations are given a rating of 3.56. Does this show that people do not like taxes, but believe their valuations are fair?

## Quality of Life in Sterling

(5 = Excellent, 3 = Fair, 1 = Poor)

	Average
Overall, how would you describe the quality of life in Sterling	4.33
Quality of schools	4.94
How would you rate Sterling as a place to raise children	4.89
Overall appearance of the city	4.77
How would you rate the quality of your immediate neighborhood	4.33
How would you rate Sterling as a place to live when retired	4.33
How would you rate Sterling as a place for teens	4.28
Opportunities to serve others through community organizations (civic groups)	4.22
Travel on paved streets and highways	4.00
Sense of community acceptance, friendliness, belonging	3.94
Housing value (assessed valuation)	3.56
How would you rate Sterling as a place for young single adults to live	2.89
Travel on unpaved roads	2.56

## **Sterling's Regional Economy**

Some aspects of the regional economy of Sterling are viewed positively, including opportunities to participate in/watch sporting events (4.26) and opportunities to attend cultural events (4.06). Access to personal recreation opportunities (3.56), shopping and dining (3.28), and to jobs (3.11) are viewed less positively. Opportunities for peer social interaction received the lowest rating of all 2.78. These patterns may reflect what is available locally—sporting and cultural events, and both distance and commuting time to locations where the other opportunities exist, and the lack of equally desirable recreation, shopping, dining, and employment opportunities locally. Having them nearby, in Hutchinson for example, is not the same as having them in town.

<b>Sterling's Regional Economy</b> (5 = Excellent, 3 = Fair, 1 = Poor)	
	<b>Average</b>
Opportunities to participate in/watch sporting events	4.26
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	4.06
Opportunities for personal recreation - Biking, swimming, hiking, etc.	3.56
Access to shopping and dining	3.28
Access to jobs	3.11
Opportunities for peer social interaction - night life, dating, etc.	2.78

## Life in Sterling

Sterling residents have very positive perceptions of the community. They perceive it as the best choice in Rice County (4.78). They would recommend Sterling to their friends (4.61). They like Sterling better than other communities in the greater Wichita/Hutchinson area (4.50). If they move, most will remain in Sterling (4.39). Most disagree with the statement "I would move somewhere else if I could afford to" (1.50).

An important factor that helps explain these positive views of the community is the fact that Sterling is a safe place. They believe that Sterling is a safe place overall (4.89). They believe that they are safe walking downtown (4.94), in their neighborhood (4.83), and at Sterling Lake (4.78). Similarly, they believe that their loved ones are safe playing in Sterling (4.78). Being a safe place is an issue that could be used to promote growth both through attracting new residents and retaining current ones.

<b>Life in Sterling</b> (5 = True, 3 = Somewhat True, 1 = Not True)	
	<b>Average</b>
I need/want to live in Rice County and Sterling is the best choice.	4.78
I would recommend Sterling to my friends.	4.61
I like Sterling better than other communities surrounding the greater Wichita/Hutchinson area.	4.50
The next time I move, I will consider remaining in Sterling.	4.39
I can afford a better home than in other suburban communities.	4.00
I would move somewhere else if I could afford to.	1.50
I feel safe in Sterling.	4.89
I feel safe walking downtown after dark.	4.94
I feel safe from crime walking alone at night in my neighborhood.	4.83
I feel safe walking at Sterling Lake after dark.	4.78
I feel that my loved ones are safe playing in Sterling.	4.78

## Possible Improvements Downtown

Citizens have great interest in further development of Sterling's downtown. Evidence for this exists in their overwhelming disagreement with the statement "No interest further developing Sterling's downtown" (94.4% disagreed). They prefer having a mix of cafes and retail shops in the downtown area (100% yes). Alternatively, they find either a mix of housing and commercial opportunities (83.3 % yes) and/or a community/senior center (83.3% yes) appealing. Both space for activities such as art shows/classes, dance/music/theater productions also appealed to many of them (66.7% Yes), as did an outdoor band shell, picnic area, play equipment, and benches (66.7% Yes). More off street parking was found desirable (61.1% yes). However, citizens either did not see a need for a small performance theater with seating for less than 100 (38.9% No) or had no opinion about it (27.8%).

<b>Possible Improvements Downtown</b>	
Percentages saying Yes, No, No Opinion	
	<b>Yes, No, No Opinion</b>
No interest in further developing Sterling's downtown	5.6, <b>94.4</b> , 0.0
A mix of cafes and retail shops	<b>100.0</b> , 0.0, 0.0
A mix of housing and commercial opportunities	<b>83.3</b> , 5.6, 11.1
Community/Senior Center	<b>83.3</b> , 16.7, 0.0
Space for activities such as art shows/classes, dance/music/theater productions	<b>66.7</b> , 22.2, 11.1
An outdoor band shell, picnic area, play equipment, and benches	<b>66.7</b> , 27.8, 5.8
Off-street parking	<b>61.1</b> , 22.2, 16.7
A small performance theater (seats for less than 100)	33.3, <b>38.9</b> , 27.8

## Possible Park Improvements

The park improvement getting the highest level of citizen support was increasing the number of restrooms at Sterling Lake (55.6% Yes). Half the citizens were interested in a band shell/stage, community movie nights, musical/theatrical productions, and increasing the number of campsites at Sterling Lake (50% Yes).

There was less interest in expanding Sterling Lake than anything else (16.7% Yes). Adding a gazebo did not fare much better (22.2% Yes). Other options received slightly more support. Converting the tennis courts into a skate park and addition of historical lighting at Sterling Park both received (27.8% Yes), and, adding historical lighting in other parks was supported by more than a third (38.9% Yes).

Possible Park Improvements	
"Which of the following improvements would you like to see in Sterling Parks?"	
	% Selecting This Item
Increase the number of public restrooms at Sterling Lake	55.6
Band shell/stage	50.0
Community movie night	50.0
Musical/theatrical productions	50.0
Increasing the number of campsites at Sterling Lake	50.0
Addition of historical lighting to Peace, Evergreen, and/or Dysart Parks	38.9
Convert the tennis courts into a skate park	27.8
Addition of historical lighting at Sterling Lake	27.8
Gazebo	22.2
Expand Sterling Lake	16.7

## **Impression of Sterling Employees**

Based on their most recent contact citizens have a very favorable overall impression of city employees (4.67). They perceive city employees as courteous (4.56), timeliness in response (4.56), and knowledgeable (4.33).

### **Impression of Sterling Employees**

“What was your impression of City of Sterling employees in your most recent contact?  
(5 = Excellent, 3 = Fair, 1 = Poor)

	<b>Average</b>
Overall impression	4.67
Courtesy	4.56
Timeliness of response	4.56
Knowledge	4.33

## **City of Sterling Services**

Citizens gave very positive evaluations of many services provided by the City of Sterling. These included the city pool (4.76), the Police Department's response to emergencies (4.59), city park cleanliness (4.56), Fire Department's response to emergencies (4.53), city park playground equipment (4.50), Police Department visibility and presence (4.44), community events including the July 4<sup>th</sup> Celebration, Pots and Petals, Old-Time Christmas, and Warriorfest (4.41), Library services (4.39), Fire Department education services (4.18), cleanliness of city streets (4.17), emergency medical response (4.17), public sewer services (4.11), and enforcement of traffic laws (4.00).

Other services received ratings less than 4.0 but greater than 3.5. These include public trees, plantings, and green spaces (3.94), snow and ice removal from downtown sidewalks (3.72), and street lighting (3.67). These ratings indicate occasional issues or problems.

Smoothness of city streets (3.06), recreation amenities (3.06), storm water management/flood control (3.22), snow and ice removal from public streets (3.22), response to neighborhood appearance complaints (3.24), public drinking water (3.28), and building inspections (3.44) were not viewed as positively. These lower ratings may indicate some problems.

## City of Sterling Services

"How would you rate the quality of each of the following City of Sterling services now?"  
(5 = Excellent, 3 = Fair, 1 = Poor)

	<b>Average</b>
City pool	4.76
Police Department's response to emergencies	4.59
City Parks cleanliness	4.56
Fire Department's response to emergencies	4.53
City Parks playground equipment	4.50
Police Department visibility & presence	4.44
Community events (July 4 <sup>th</sup> Celebration, Pots & Petals, Old-Time Christmas, Warriorfest, etc.)	4.41
Library services	4.39
Fire Department's education services	4.18
Cleanliness of streets	4.17
Emergency medical response	4.17
Public sewer services	4.11
Enforcement of traffic laws	4.00
Public trees, plantings, and green spaces	3.94
Snow & ice removal from downtown sidewalks	3.72
Street lighting	3.67
Building inspections	3.44
Public drinking water	3.28
Response to neighborhood appearance complaints	3.24
Snow & ice removal from public streets	3.22
Storm water management / flood control	3.22
Recreation amenities	3.06
Smoothness of streets	3.06

## City Communications with the Public

Most citizens prefer to receive city programs, events, policies, and news from the city website (83.3% Yes) than by any other means. The City Newsletter (72.2%), an electronic community sign (66.7%), and *The Sterling Bulletin* (66.7%) also were viewed favorably. Only half of these citizens had a favorable view of using an electronic distribution list or email.

Two communication methods were not viewed favorably. These were the use of the public channel on Cox Cable (50.0% No), and the current community sign in front of the power plant (44.4% No).

### City Communications with the Public

“In your opinion what is the best way to let citizens like yourself know about city programs, events, policies, news, etc?

Yes, No, No Opinion

	% Yes, No, No Opinion
City website	<b>83.3</b> , 16.7, 0.0
City newsletter	<b>72.2</b> , 22.2, 5.6
Electronic community sign	<b>66.7</b> , 16.7, 16.7
<i>The Sterling Bulletin</i>	<b>66.7</b> , 16.7, 16.7
City electronic distribution list / email	<b>50.0</b> , 16.7, 33.3
Current community sign in front of power plant	38.9, <b>44.4</b> , 16.7
Public channel on Cox Cable TV	22.2, <b>50.0</b> , 27.8

## Funding of City Services

There is little support for use of fees only for any city service. Only the city burn site gets 33.3 percent support for fees only financing. The city pool and the city pool house /bath house receive 27.8 percent approval for fee only financing.

Preference for taxes only support reaches the 50 percent level for only street and storm water system maintenance. Support of taxes only support is 38.9 percent for public safety, and the library building. The next highest level of support for taxes only financing is 33.3 percent for development of an industrial park.

There is a great deal of support for use of a combination of both taxes and fees to finance library programs and services (72.2%), the city pool (61.1%), public safety (55.6%), the library building (55.6%), and the city burn site (55.6%). Fees and taxes is the preferred method of financing development of an industrial park (44.4%). Also, more than a third preferred using fees and taxes to finance street and storm water system maintenance.

<b>Funding of City Services</b>	
"Think about how you would like the following services to be financed."	
	<b>Fees only, Taxes only, Fees &amp; Taxes, Not a city responsibility</b>
Library programs & services	0.0, 22.2, <b>72.2</b> , 5.6
City pool	27.8, 5.6, <b>61.1</b> , 5.6
Public safety (police, fire, etc.)	0.0, 38.9, <b>55.6</b> , 5.6 %
Library building	0.0, 38.9, <b>55.6</b> , 5.6
City pool house / Bath house	27.8, 11.1, <b>55.6</b> , 5.6
City burn site	33.3, 5.6, <b>55.6</b> , 5.6
Development of an industrial park	11.1, 33.3, <b>44.4</b> , 11.1
Street & storm water system maintenance	5.6, <b>50.0</b> , 38.9, 5.6

## Future City Funding

Participants were asked to select one of the four choices shown in the following table which best described their view of future use of city property taxes. More than three-quarters (77.8%) preferred that “City property taxes should be increased if necessary to maintain a high quality of life, services, and property values.” The next most popular property tax funding preference (16.7%) was “An increase in City property taxes equal to inflation is OK to keep City services the same.” No one (0.0%) selected the most negative of the four options “City property taxes should be reduced, even if it means reducing City services.”

<b>Future City Funding</b>	
“Please indicate which choice best describes your view.”	
	% Selecting This Alternative
“An increase in City property taxes equal to inflation is OK to keep City services the same.”	16.7%
“City property taxes should not increase at all even though this may reduce or change City services.”	5.6%
“City property taxes should be reduced, even if it means reducing City services.”	0.0%
“City property taxes should be increased if necessary to maintain a high quality of life, services, and property values.”	77.8%

## Recommendations

The City of Sterling is a growing community. At present the city has a total of 2,586 residents and 9 churches and schools. Sterling, Kansas is located in Rice County. In sum, Rice County is home to a total of 10,761 people and is the second largest city within the county out of 15 surrounding cities.

Sterling fosters a very caring and supportive community. In fact, the day that we conducted our focus group research, quite a few individuals were not present due to the Sterling College football game in a nearby city. This clearly indicates a high level of support for the City and other recreational activities

There are many things that the City does well. I would recommend that the City focus not only on improvements, but also on the things that they do well. Sterling residents praise their public schools (school district #376). They are very involved with local sports and other activities. This includes Sterling College and other community organizations like the VFW. In addition, other activities with respective church families were also noted. Sterling is also very proud of other community events such as the July 4<sup>th</sup> Celebration, Pots & Petals, Old Time Christmas, and Warriorfest.

Other recommendations include attracting and keeping young families in Sterling by marketing the city as a great place to live and work. Citizens believe that Sterling is a safe place to live, work, and raise a family. They also believe that Sterling has excellent quality schools, and that they have a beautiful city. Focus group participants affirmed these suggestions by stating the following:

- “I like the collaboration with the college and the schools. Of course, I’m connected with the schools and was also a graduate of the college [Sterling College] but I think what I like the most is the simplistic opportunity that exists. You know the simple things. We’re still a small town, we still talk to each other, we don’t ignore each other when we are walking down Main Street, and it’s just the friendly atmosphere that I like. You can go 18 miles away and see something totally different.”
- “I just always appreciated the way the community and the students have interacted. The relationships that came about because of that sort of thing is something that I think attracted us to this town.”

- “In many respects I like that it’s just a great atmosphere to raise a family in and it’s a part of all these things we’re talking about you know good restaurants downtown, wonderful churches, and it is all connected.”
- “You know, you don’t have to go very far to go to church here.”
- “The churches are kept up. They are nice and clean. They take an interest in the city too.”
- “I go home at night and it’s quiet and it’s safe. If I want to walk around the lake at 1:00 in the morning, before I go to bed, I can do that. I don’t even give it a second thought.”

Sterling should continue to improve their downtown area by promoting the re-development of commercial properties. There was much talk in the focus groups about restaurants, a thrift store (similar to the Duckwalls store that used to be in Sterling) and a bookstore/coffee shop. These are all things that citizens want.

- “We need a fine Italian restaurant. I would like to see a restaurant with a nice variety of wine here in Sterling.”
- “If there was a restaurant like that [an Italian restaurant] in Sterling I think that it would do very well.”
- “Don’t we have that in the process? With the Shay Project?”
- [The proprietors behind the Shay Project plan to take over an older building in Sterling and turn it into a combination hotel, restaurant, coffee shop, and theater].
- “I don’t know what kind of restaurant they had in mind.”
- “Yeah, it’s something that draws people in. Something like the Brookville Hotel [in Abilene, KS] is the idea that we are looking for.”
- “Another thing I truly miss here is our Dairy Land [Dairy Land is an ice cream parlor]. It has been a long time since we had something like that. They had wonderful jobs [the people who worked at Dairy Land]. They had a lot of people coming from out of town because they were famous for their recipes. Milkshakes and malts were some of the things they served. They brought people in from Lyons, Hutchinson, and from Nickerson.”
- “It would be nice to have a place with stools at a counter top [soda fountain style].

- “A place to get a snack.” A place like this would be a good idea.”
- “I also think that Sterling needs a Mexican restaurant. A place where the kids feel like they can go would also be nice.”
- “I was going to suggest a coffee shop. Something like a coffee shop anyway. I would like to see a bookstore/coffee idea come to Sterling. A lot of the college students go down to Hastings [Hastings is a coffee shop/music/and bookstore] in Hutchinson. A lot of kids go to Starbucks too.”
- “Somebody started a bookstore in Lyons but it did not stay open very long. I don’t know why they did not stay? I don’t think that it was because it was not a popular place?”
- “We have a college town. Lots of teachers and students are here in town. I can’t imagine a bookstore not doing well.”
- “Like a Barnes and Noble?”
- “Sure, but even if it was a paperback trading bookstore with a coffee shop. That would be fine too.”

#### **Duck walls/Addition of a Department/General Thrift Store –**

Residents want a general store (miscellaneous goods) available in town. This concern was raised more than anything else within the focus group sessions. For example, respondents said the following when asked about shopping in their city:

- “I would like to have what we just lost. The Duckwalls store.”
- “Any kind of store like Duckwalls.”
- “Yeah, put in a Dollar Store. A Dollar General.”
- “I wish that we had the Duckwalls we used to have. You know, not the one that just closed. The one when they had everything you wanted. I mean, I remember when you could go and find thread, socks, and shoes. They had a variety of everything!”
- “They have an Alco in Lyons but you know it’s not in Sterling.”
- “Well, our place [reference to Duckwalls] was pretty well stocked.”

- “Yeah, it used to be.”
- “Now we are really hurting because there is not a Duckwalls. We have to write a really long shopping list and go to Wal-Mart. I really wish we had these things available in town and other things that kids could do.”
- “But we do need another variety store downtown so that if I need something we do not have to drive to Hutchinson to get it. Just the other day I needed dishwashing detergent but I can get that at Dillon’s.”
- “What about a spool of thread though?”
- “Yeah, you can’t get a spool of thread at Dillon’s.”

**Note:** Members of the Economic Development Committee have been in communication with Mr. Wynn Phipps regarding possible retail uses for the building formerly housing Duckwalls. Several options are available, including the possibility of attracting a leading discount retailer. To attract retail and commercial enterprises to the community and more specifically the Downtown Committee would like to create a list of incentive options for the Commission's consideration. A major issue identified in the attraction of a national discount retailer is parking; additionally a market analysis is also needed before specific program options could be initiated. In other words, will a discount retailer do well in Sterling, Kansas? At present the idea, or concept is on the calendar, and will be pitched to the general public or City Commission in mid- January (01/2005).

Other recommendations include maintaining quality city services and providing cost-effective services that meet the needs of citizens. Again, residents think that these are things that their city does well.

Sterling residents believe their city is a great place to live in retirement. I would suggest marketing this theme to neighboring communities. This could be done using a “Small is Beautiful and Safe” theme.”

Another thing that Sterling residents want are opportunities to be involved and to serve their city. They want to help their community prosper. Residents were very vocal about this, as indicated by their following comments:

- “Sometimes [after traveling] I want to come home and say ‘wake up and smell the rose’s guys.’ You know you haven’t made it to heaven yet. There have to be a few hurdles to cross. You know we have opportunities here. We just have to find them.”
- “I was a missionary for a while. Now, you are going to have to excuse me for this one because I love Sterling and I’ve expressed that plenty of times but there are a lot of times when living in Sterling reminds me of being a missionary. At the missionary base we used to have a teen center and you know it didn’t make any money. I mean they had a hamburger night once a week and they had a dance night once a week. They also had a skating night and we would clear the floor and everybody could just roller skate.”
- “I guess the thing was that all the parents and everyone else that lived in the missionary camp put something into the pot. Everyone helped out to keep it going.”

Citizens believe that police and fire department responses to emergencies are excellent. They also believe that the City pool and parks are outstanding. This includes the indoor pool at Sterling College.

In addition, they want after school activities for young children and teens. The following dialog between citizens clearly displays this point.

- “I am really concerned that there are not enough things for the students to do here in town. That’s the only real worry that I have. But in two months [individual has lived in Sterling for only 2 months] I don’t think I can be a real expert on any part of this.”
- “It would be nice if there were some evening activities though.”

- “One thing I wish we had is a dance school. The first year we lived in Sterling there was a dance school. My girls had a place to go for dance lessons [ballet and tap dance]. When there was not a school activity they had something to do. Now, it means driving to Hutchinson or Great Bend for extra activities.”
- “Sometimes, when there are a lot of school activities it keeps the kids busy and I think that’s great. There are times though when there aren’t any. It would be nice if there were some sort of activity center. I don’t mean a video arcade with games though!”
- “You know, when I was growing up we had the Boys and Girls club. There was a place where kids could go and they could play games and do things with each other. It wasn’t an arcade type of place, but it was a managed activity place for the kids.”
- “People get pretty nostalgic wishing about a movie theater or some sort of an activity place. You know, I do too! I don’t know why we can’t have a dollar theater somewhere, just a place to see old movies if nothing else.”
- “Pretty Prairie has something like that.”
- “I wish we had a candy store or an ice cream parlor. We need something because there are evenings where there is just anything to do. The kids all go out and play Man Hunt and I am just biting my fingernails. I hope that one of the children does not get hit by a car or something.”
- “I almost hit a guy on a bicycle the other night!”
- “Yeah, you know there are kids playing in the streets. I am speaking as a parent here. I mean there are times when I think you have to have other things for the kids to do.”
- “Sometimes my kids end up glued to the Internet and I wish they were not even on the computer. But you know, we turned our cable off and when we had cable they would just sit in front of the television. I don’t want them to stay inside all the time at the computer or watching television but there isn’t anything else to do in town.”

It would be my recommendation that the City have someone come in once a week to teach dance classes, ballet classes, and art classes (pottery, drawing, and painting). This person could come in from Wichita, Hutchinson, Salina, or another surrounding

area. It is clear that parents and adults in the community want their young people to have things to do for fun.

In addition, it might be nice to set up a town movie night once a month. Residents could bring their families for entertainment and pay a nominal fee for this activity. A small fee would cover heating/air conditioning for the building used, for provision of refreshments (popcorn and soda), and for movie projection/rental costs.

Citizens raised questions about the smoothness of city streets. This was not brought up in the focus group sessions but was made clear in the survey.

Can city street surfaces be improved? Citizen groups or Ad Hoc committees could be formed to look into these possibilities.

Another area of improvement would be recreational activities. Residents do not believe that the amenities available to them are very good. This concern ties in with activities for young people and adults alike. Citizens said the following:

- “When we were going to school here you know the complaint was that there was nothing to do after ten or eleven at night. That may not really be a problem with the majority of the community but with the college it is a problem. You have a lot of college kids who just don’t go to bed at 10 or 11 at night. Most college kids are up until 1 or 2 in the morning. Most of them are out of town and not in Sterling because there is nothing to do in town after midnight and that’s a problem.”
- “Yeah, you have to go to Hutchinson or some other place close by.”
- “Exactly!”
- “Even in Wichita! They have coffee houses that are open late and they have live music and other things to do. I think businesses would have a little more chance to stay alive in Sterling if they catered a little bit more to the college students. This is a huge market for college students 9 months out of the year.”
- “Did any of you [college age kids] go to Pablo’s [references sandwich and coffee shop] when it was open?”

- “It seems like there were a lot of college students who ate at Pablo’s. I don’t really know why they shut down though? I was never in there that late at night. I know another place took over when Pablo’s left but they left too. Now there’s no place to go in Sterling.”
- I can’t think of any place to go. The college kids just go to Hutchinson or hang out at the dorm.”
- “You know in Hutchinson there is a CD [compact disc/music] trading post. I mean, if there were a place like this or a place with tables, books, CD’s and coffee I think it would do well. I think that it should be open after 10:00 at night too. I think it would really do well then. It would thrive with all of the college kids around.”
- “After the ballgames there is no place to go afterwards. We have football, basketball, and a swimming pool too. The college has an indoor pool too! But when the games and sports are over there is no place to go. The younger generations don’t want to go home. They want to hang out, they want to do something and they don’t have any place to do it.”

Another thing citizens were concerned about is the quality of the City water. Can the City take actions to improve the quality of water? Again, this was a concern raised in the survey as opposed to the focus groups.

Last, several citizens indicated that they would like to have alcohol available to them. They simply want to be able to have a glass of wine with their meal.

- “I would like to see a restaurant with a nice variety of wine here in Sterling.”
- “Well, I am from California, and that probably explains a lot about me, but when my husband and I first moved here I felt like we were considered Pariah’s of the community. We were looked at in this way because we like to have a glass of wine with dinner.”
- “I know a lot of people who go out of town to eat because they want a nice meal and they also want to have a glass of wine. They also don’t want to be seen by everybody in town.”
- “If we use the same rules then we should count out Applebee’s too!”

- Well, I think that Applebee's would be well accepted in Sterling. Everyone likes Applebee's. As long as we keep things disciplined and the owners do not let people drink too much, then I think that it would be okay."

I would recommend that the City Commission address the issue of allowing alcohol sales? However, after talking with City Manager, Brian Silcott, it is my understanding that the idea, or concept is on the calendar and will be pitched to the City Commission in mid- January (01/2005).

Sterling is a close knit community with a lot to offer. Many of the residents cannot imagine living any other place. This would indicate that they are generally pleased with the City and City services. Aside from improvements, I would suggest the City focus on the things that they do well and take into consideration the opportunities that exist for improvement as indicated in this report.

The results indicated here reflect 19 residents' differing opinions from focus group research conducted on November 12, 2005. There were 18 surveys administered as well. This small number of citizens represents a mere snapshot of the community. While the results are directional, they are not projectable. In other words, these results indicate where things are going, and how the people who participated feel but we can't project too far into the future with these results. This is also true for the surveys administered. For further analysis, I would ultimately recommend a smaller version of the existing survey (**Appendix B**) be sent out with resident's water bill. This would provide a cost effective way to gather information and would also provide a larger demographic representation of the Sterling, Kansas population.



RECOMMENDATIONS		
	Priorities	Recommendations
1.	Attract and keep young families. Market and promote the City as a great place to live and work.	<p><b>A.</b> Citizens believe that Sterling is safe places to live, work, and raise a family. <b>Market the community as a safe place.</b></p> <p><b>B.</b> Citizens believe that they have excellent quality schools. <b>Market the community emphasizing its high quality schools.</b></p> <p><b>C.</b> Citizens believe that Sterling is a beautiful city. <b>Market Sterling using a “Small is Beautiful and Safe” theme.</b></p>
2.	Continue to improve Sterling’s downtown area. Promote redevelopment of commercial properties.	Citizens want (1.) Restaurants, (2.) Thrift Store e.g. Dollar General, (3.) Bookstore/Coffee shop. <b>Use Community Ad Hoc Committees to examine these options.</b>
3.	Maintain quality City services. Provide cost-effective City services that meet the needs of users.	This supports priority #1.
4.	Citizens believe that Sterling is a great place to live in retirement.	<b>Market Sterling emphasizing this theme.</b>
5.	Most citizens want opportunities to become involved and serve the City of Sterling.	<b>Create new opportunities and activities for citizen involvement.</b>
6.	Citizens believe that police and fire department responses to emergencies are excellent.	This supports priorities #1, #3, and #4.
7.	Citizens believe that the City pool and parks are excellent.	This supports priorities #1, #3, and #4.
8.	Citizens believe that there need to be after school activities for young children and teens.	Focus groups mentioned ballet and tap dance lessons, arts and craft classes (pottery, drawing, & painting), movies, and sports. Have an instructor teach a class a few times a week. <b>Citizen groups should look into these possibilities.</b>
9.	Citizens raised questions about the smoothness of paved City streets.	Can street surfaces be improved? <b>Citizen groups should look into these possibilities.</b>

10.	Citizens believe that recreation and other amenities are not very good.	Can recreation amenities be improved? <b>Citizen groups should look into these possibilities.</b>
11.	Several citizens were concerned about the quality of City water.	Can the City take actions to improve the quality of water?
12.	Several citizens want alcohol e.g. a glass of wine with dinner.	Should the City Commission address the issue of allowing alcohol sales?

## Appendix A

## **DEMOGRAPHIC SHEET FOR THE CITY OF STERLING, KANSAS**

### **FOCUS GROUP RESEARCH**

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 12<sup>TH</sup>**

Please note: this is only a demographic sheet. We do not need your name/personal information. Please answer the questions below (circle). Thank you.

- How long have you lived in the Sterling area?**

1 to 2 years, 3 to 5 years, 5 to 10 years, more than 10 ten years.

- How much longer do you plan to live in the Sterling area?**

1 to 2 years, 3 to 5 years, 5 to 10 years, more than 10 ten years.

- How do you get the majority of your news information?**

Newspapers, television, on-line, from other people.

- What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_**

- What is your gender? Circle one. Male Female**

## Appendix B

**The City of Sterling, KS**

**Thank you for being here today!**

Your opinion about issues affecting the City of Sterling is very important to our future. Please answer all of the questions in the following survey.

Please mark answers on the scales provided indicating how you feel. Please be honest. This survey is anonymous and we will not know who filled it out but name. This survey is ultimately a representation of how a citizen (like yourself) feels about certain issues surrounding their community.

# The City of Sterling, KS Survey Research Questions

## Section 1.

### ISSUES AFFECTING THE FUTURE OF STERLING

Please use the following scale to answer these questions:

Think about your vision for the future of Sterling, KS.

How important are each of the following?

1= Not Important, 3= Somewhat Important, 5 = Very Important

1. Attract and keep young families

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

2. Cooperate with nearby communities to provide services together

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

3. Assist in creating and maintaining attractive school & college campus

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

4. Develop a community/senior center for activities, functions, and events

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

5. Continue to improve Sterling's downtown area

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

6. Improve the physical appearance of the City of Sterling

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

7. Maintain quality City services

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

8. Market and promote the City as a great place to live and work

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

9. Create affordable housing options for current and future Sterling residents

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

10. Provide opportunities to serve on boards & commissions

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

11. Promote community involvement and service opportunities

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

## The City of Sterling, KS Survey Research Questions

12. Promote racial & economic diversity as community strength

1 2 3 4 5

13. Encourage investment in private home maintenance and remodeling projects

1 2 3 4 5

14. Promote redevelopment of commercial properties

1 2 3 4 5

15. Create and promote an industrial park

1 2 3 4 5

16. Promote development of below-market interest rates for home improvement loans

1 2 3 4 5

17. Maintain access to regional jobs, goods, and services

1 2 3 4 5

18. Provide cost-effective City services that meet the needs of users

1 2 3 4 5

19. Require that property be kept up in appearance

1 2 3 4 5

20. Support seniors living independently

1 2 3 4 5

21. Create a strong identity for Sterling as a bedroom community for the Wichita/Hutchinson area

1 2 3 4 5

22. Create a strong identity for Sterling as a community separate and distinct from other communities in the surrounding area

1 2 3 4 5

---

**The City of Sterling, KS Survey Research Questions**

**Section 2.**

**QUALITY OF LIFE**

Use the following scale to answer these questions:  
1 = Poor, 3 = Fair, 5 = Excellent

**Quality of Life**

23. Overall, how would you describe the quality of life in Sterling?

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

24. How would you rate the quality of your immediate neighborhood?

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

25. How would you rate Sterling as a place to raise children?

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

26. How would you rate Sterling as a place for teens?

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

27. How would you rate Sterling as a place for young single adults to live?

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

28. How would you rate Sterling as a place to live when retired?

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

29. Housing Value (assessed valuation)

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

30. Opportunities to serve others through community organizations (civic groups)

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

31. Overall appearance of the city

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

32. Quality of Schools

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

33. Sense of community acceptance, friendliness, belonging

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

34. Travel on paved streets & highways

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

# The City of Sterling, KS Survey Research Questions

35. Travel on unpaved roads

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

## Regional Economy

Please indicate how you rate Sterling as part of the greater Wichita/Hutchinson area:

36. Access to jobs

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

37. Access to shopping & dining

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

38. Opportunities for personal recreation (biking, swimming, hiking, etc)

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

39. Opportunities to attend cultural activities

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

40. Opportunities to participate in/watch sporting events

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

41. Opportunities for peer social interaction (night life, dating, etc)

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

# The City of Sterling, KS Survey Research Questions

## Section 3.

### LIFE IN STERLING

Please tell us how true each of the following statements is in describing life in Sterling as compared to the greater Wichita/Hutchinson area.

Please use the following scale to answer these questions:

1= Not True, 3= Somewhat True, 5 = True

42. "I can afford a better home than in other suburban communities."

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

43. "I would move somewhere else if I could afford to."

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

44. "I like Sterling better than other communities surrounding the greater Wichita/Hutchinson area."

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

45. "I need/want to live in Rice County and Sterling is the best choice."

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

46. "I would recommend Sterling to my friends."

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

47. "The next time I move, I will consider remaining in Sterling."

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

### Personal Safety

48. "I feel safe in Sterling."

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

49. "I feel safe from crime walking alone at night in my neighborhood."

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

50. "I feel safe walking downtown after dark."

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

51. "I feel safe walking at Sterling Lake after dark."

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

# The City of Sterling, KS Survey Research Questions

52. "I feel that my loved ones (children/grandchildren, nieces, nephews, etc) are safe playing in Sterling."

1

2

3

4

5

---

## Section 4.

### POSSIBLE CITY IMPROVEMENTS

Please rate the following improvements you would like to see developed or improved upon in Sterling's downtown

Please use the following scale to answer the following questions:

Yes, No, No Opinion (Circle the statement that best applies)

#### Downtown Uses & Improvements

53. Space for activities such as art shows and classes, dance music and theatre productions

Yes

No

No Opinion

54. A small performance theater (seating of less than 100)

Yes

No

No Opinion

55. An outdoor band shell, picnic areas, play equipment, and benches

Yes

No

No Opinion

56. A mix of cafes & retail shops

Yes

No

No Opinion

57. A mix of housing and commercial opportunities

Yes

No

No Opinion

58. Off-street parking

Yes

No

No Opinion

59. Community/Senior Center

Yes

No

No Opinion

60. No interest in further developing Sterling's downtown

Yes

No

No Opinion

# The City of Sterling, KS Survey Research Questions

## Section 5.

### POSSIBLE PARK IMPROVEMENTS

Which of the following improvements would you like to see in Sterling Park's?

Please place an X by the improvements that you would like to see

**61.** Band Shell/Stage \_\_\_\_\_

**62.** Gazebo \_\_\_\_\_

**63.** Community movie night \_\_\_\_\_

**64.** Musical / Theatrical Productions \_\_\_\_\_

**65.** Increasing the number of campsites at Sterling Lake \_\_\_\_\_

**66.** Expand Sterling Lake \_\_\_\_\_

**67.** Increase the number of public restrooms at Sterling Lake \_\_\_\_\_

**68.** Convert the tennis courts into a skate park \_\_\_\_\_

**69.** Addition of historical lighting to Sterling Lake \_\_\_\_\_

**70.** Addition of historical lighting to Peace, Evergreen, and/or Dysart Parks \_\_\_\_\_

# The City of Sterling, KS Survey Research Questions

## Section 6.

### SERVICE EVALUATION

Please use the following scale to answer these questions.

1= Not Important, 3= Somewhat Important, 5 = Very Important

What was your impression of City of Sterling employees *in your most recent contact*?

71. Knowledge

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

72. Courtesy

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

73. Timeliness of response

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

74. Overall impressions

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

---

# The City of Sterling, KS Survey Research Questions

## Section 7.

### CITY OF STERLING SERVICES

How would you rate the quality of each of the following City of Sterling services now?

Please use the following scale to answer these questions:

1 = Poor, 3 = Fair, 5 = Excellent

75. Building inspections

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

76. Cleanliness of streets

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

77. Emergency Medical Response

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

78. Enforcement of traffic laws

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

79. Fire Department's Education Services

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

80. Fire Department response to emergency calls

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

81. Library Services

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

82. Police Department visibility & presence

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

83. Police Department response to emergency calls

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

84. Public drinking water

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

85. Public sewer services

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

86. Public trees, plantings, and green spaces

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

## The City of Sterling, KS Survey Research Questions

87. Recreation amenities

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

88. Response to neighborhood appearance complaints

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

89. Smoothness of street services

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

90. Snow & ice removal from downtown sidewalks

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

91. Snow & ice removal from public streets

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

92. Storm water management / flood control

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

93. Street lighting

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

94. City Parks Cleanliness

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

95. City Parks Playground Equipment

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

96. City Pool

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

97. Community Events

(July 4<sup>th</sup> Celebration, Pots & Petals, Old Time Christmas, Warriorfest, etc.)

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

**Section 8.**

**CITY COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE PUBLIC**

In your opinion what is the best way to let citizens like yourself know about city programs, events, policies, news, etc ...

Please use the following scale to answer the following questions:

Yes, No, No Opinion

(Circle the statement that best applies)

**98. City newsletter**

**Yes**

**No**

**No Opinion**

**99. City website**

**Yes**

**No**

**No Opinion**

**100. City electronic distribution (e-mail) list**

**Yes**

**No**

**No Opinion**

**101. Electronic community sign**

**Yes**

**No**

**No Opinion**

**102. Current community sign (located in front of the power plant)**

**Yes**

**No**

**No Opinion**

**103. The Sterling Bulletin**

**Yes**

**No**

**No Opinion**

**104. Public Channel on Cox Cable**

**Yes**

**No**

**No Opinion**

# The City of Sterling, KS Survey Research Questions

## Section 9.

### FUNDING OF CITY SERVICES

Think about how you would like the following services to be financed.

Please select the source of funds you most prefer.

Fees only, Taxes only, Fees & Taxes, Not a City Responsibility

(Circle the statement that best applies)

**105.** Public safety (police, fire, etc)

<b>Fees only</b>	<b>Taxes only</b>	<b>Fees &amp; Taxes</b>	<b>Not a City Responsibility</b>
------------------	-------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

**106.** Library Programs & Services

<b>Fees only</b>	<b>Taxes only</b>	<b>Fees &amp; Taxes</b>	<b>Not a City Responsibility</b>
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**107.** Library building

<b>Fees only</b>	<b>Taxes only</b>	<b>Fees &amp; Taxes</b>	<b>Not a City Responsibility</b>
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**108.** Street & stormwater system maintenance

<b>Fees only</b>	<b>Taxes only</b>	<b>Fees &amp; Taxes</b>	<b>Not a City Responsibility</b>
------------------	-------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

**109.** City Pool

<b>Fees only</b>	<b>Taxes only</b>	<b>Fees &amp; Taxes</b>	<b>Not a City Responsibility</b>
------------------	-------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

**110.** City Pool House AKA 'Bath House'

<b>Fees only</b>	<b>Taxes only</b>	<b>Fees &amp; Taxes</b>	<b>Not a City Responsibility</b>
------------------	-------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

**111.** Development of an industrial area

<b>Fees only</b>	<b>Taxes only</b>	<b>Fees &amp; Taxes</b>	<b>Not a City Responsibility</b>
------------------	-------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

**Section 113.** City Burn Site

<b>Fees only</b>	<b>Taxes only</b>	<b>Fees &amp; Taxes</b>	<b>Not a City Responsibility</b>
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## Section 10.

## FUTURE CITY FUNDING

Please indicate which choice best describes your view: (Check only one box)

113.

- “An increase in City property taxes equal to inflation is OK to keep City services the same.”
  - “City property taxes should not increase at all even though this may reduce or change City services.”
  - “City property taxes should be reduced, even if it means reducing City Services.”
  - “City property taxes should be increased if necessary to maintain a high quality of life, services, and property values.”

114. Do you have another opinion about property tax/taxes that you would like to express?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Your opinion really does matter. We will use the information you have provided to help implement a positive change for your city  
-- The city of Sterling, KS. Thank you!

## **Appendix C**

**FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS FOR THE CITY OF STERLING, KS**  
**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 12<sup>TH</sup>**

- Q.** Let's talk about things to do in Sterling. What do you like to do?
- Q.** How about **dining out**? Where do you like to dine? Do you think this [the dining out scene] could use improvement? Or, is it just fine the way it is?
- Q.** Let's talk about **Outdoor life, enjoying nature**? Is there a city park you like to go to with your family? Do you play sports and other physical activities? What are those sports/physical activities? Do you feel like you have an adequate place to do these things or are these areas that could use improvement? Tell me about this.
- Q.** **City arts scene**? Does the city have a city arts scene? If yes, tell me about it. If no, would you like there to be a city arts scene? Are any of you artists?
- Q.** **Family activities** – Let's talk about family activities. What do you like to do with your family? Do you feel that there are a lot of family activities in the city of Sterling? Do you go to other places for family activities?
- Q.** Tell me about **night time entertainment**. Is there nighttime entertainment in Sterling? What for example would you consider Nighttime Entertainment? [When I think about Nighttime Entertainment I think about a dinner and dancing district. Are you familiar with Wichita's Old Town area? This is what I would think of]. Other ideas?
- Q.** Tell me about **shopping** in the city. Is there a lot of shopping available to you? Do you travel to other cities to go shopping? If you could choose a few stores (name a few) to come to the city of Sterling, what stores would they be? Suggested stores: Target, Eddie Bauer, Barnes and Noble book store? What would you like to see?
- Q.** Are there a lot of **sporting events** in the city? What kinds of sporting events? Do you travel to other cities to attend sporting events?
- Q.** Let's talk about **concerts**. Are there concerts in the Sterling area? Are there music festivals of any kind? Tell me about them. Do you travel to other cities to attend concerts or music festivals? Tell me about them?
- Q.** Are there **religious activities** in the city? What kind of religious activities? Church retreats? Vacation bible school? Tell me about them. Anything you might suggest?
- Q.** Let's go around the table and each of you can tell us your **top three favorite things to do in Sterling**. Tell me about them. Which activities are your favorites? What do you like best about them? The least? What do you think needs improvement?
- Q.** Is there **another issue** that you think is important to the future of Sterling that we haven't talked about and you would like to add? What is that issue?

### Demographic Information for Group #1

Group #1	Age	Gender	Time living in Sterling	Plan to live/continue to live in Sterling	How do you get the majority of your news/Information
1.	66	M	10+	10+	Planning Committee
2.	41	F	5-10	N/A	Newspaper
3.	30	M	10+	10+	On-line
4.	59	F	10 + (42 yrs.)	10 +	Newspaper
5.	52	M	10+	10+	Newspaper
6.	51	F	10+	10+	Television
7.	88	M	10+	10+	Newspaper
8.	64	M	5-10	5-10	Newspaper
9.	52	F	10+	10+	Newspaper
10.	49	F	5-10	5-10	Newspaper

There were 10 participants in Focus Group 1. Each participant in was asked to fill out a demographic sheet (**Appendix A**). Demographic information gives us a better idea of who was represented in the focus groups and we can also tie needs and wants to different segments of the community.

Focus group participants for Group 1 ranged in age from 30 to 88 with an average age of 55.2. This group had an equal representation of women and men. There were 5 women and 5 men who participated. 7 of them lived in the Sterling area ten or more years, 3 lived in the area between 5 and 10 years, and 3 lived in the area 1 to five years. Of the 10 participants in this group 7 plan to continue living in the Sterling area for 10 or more years. Most of them get their news information from other people and from the newspaper.

In sum, focus group participants (groups one and two) ranged in age from 22 to 88 with an average age of 53.6. There were 7 women and 12 men who participated. 10 of them lived in the Sterling area ten or more years, 6 lived in the area between 5 and 10 years, and three of the participants lived in the area less than 5 years. Of the 19 participants 14 plan to continue living in the area for 10 or more additional years. In fact, one of the participants wrote in "Till death do us part." This would indicate their love for the City of Sterling. Most of them get the majority of their news from a newspaper.

**Q. Let's talk about things to do in Sterling. What do you like to do?**

"My kids are in High school and they play a lot of sports. They play basketball, football, track, and a few other sports."

"We also like to go to college night [Sterling College sports]. In fact, we are off to a college football game later today [after the focus group]. Sterling College is playing a football game against Friends in Wichita."

"I am also going to a soccer game. I go to some of the soccer games because we have a soccer player."

"I think one of the biggest things [in terms of "things to do" in Sterling] are grade school and High school concerts and plays. Things like this."

"Last night there was a play at the High School and they had to turn people away. It was crowded and there was not enough room to seat everyone at the High School auditorium."

"Well, the college productions that the Art Department does are just fabulous!"

"Right!"

"Yes, they are!"

"The High School Art Department is wonderful. We hope to have some sort of art park in Sterling. I think something like this in downtown Sterling during the spring-time would be nice. We could show the community our art."

"You know, some people do not have the opportunity to go to the schools or to the college to see the art displayed. There are many artists here in town! There are a lot of entrepreneurs!"

"I want to talk about shopping!"

**Q. Tell me about shopping in the city. Is there a lot of shopping available to you?**

"I miss our Duckwalls. I miss having them around. Now you have to run up to Lyons to Alco. I went to Alco the other night and they close at eight o'clock in the evening!"

"It gets late and it is dark at night. I thought Alco was open until nine o'clock."

"We need a variety store!"

“Particularly for the elderly folks that can’t get out of town very easily.”

“I do not want a Wal-Mart!”

“Absolutely not!”

“Specialty stores. We want specialty stores. Stores like they have in McPherson. Now, I know that’s a dream but specialty stores along some kind of variety store would be great!”

“You know, we don’t have a very big population to support specialty stores but if we could get something here that would really draw people in, everyone would have to shop there.”

“Yeah, we miss the variety stores.”

“I miss our bakery.”

“I wish we had an art gallery too.”

“You know, we have a lot of phenomenal artists and not one outlet for exhibits or sales.”

“Yeah, they should have some place to display their art work.”

“That would be nice.”

“I would like to have a venue for musicians, poetry readings, and one-man acts.”

“That’s in the works with the Shay building isn’t it?”

“I thought they [Shay building proprietor(s)] had planned for a restaurant in the back, a venue for plays and that sort of thing?”

**Q. So, tell me more about what needs improvement.**

[Tell me about the Shay building]

“Oh well, I guess you don’t know do you? It is right downtown at Monroe and Broadway. There is a big white building there. It is an older building and I think it was built in the 1800’s. It is empty right now. Someone in town purchased the building and they plan to put a hotel upstairs, which is really critical to the community. They will have really nice lodging for guests and then a restaurant. This is not typical of something that we already have. This is a little bit higher end [nicer]. In the back of the building they are planning for a little stage and the idea is that people go and hang out.”

“It will also be a nice place to display art work.”

“To try and cover a lot of the needs that one place has not been able to so far.”

“Yes, I can’t wait!”

“You know, you cover lots of things in one place. I mean the desires of the community.”

“The Shay building is in the works and there are also investors to help continue the project.”

“One thing we need to do is to find a way to attract capital. We have two pretty substantial buildings downtown that are not occupied right now. I know there are efforts underway to try and fill one of them. Now, the other one needs lots of work and investment.”

“One of the things we have been talking about at the Chamber is a way to try and fill these buildings. We thought that one might be filled with another Duckwalls. A store like Duckwalls or Dollar General would fit right in.”

“If that falls through, one of the things that we have been talking about is breaking up the building into little retail shops. Basically, an indoor shopping center. The shops would sell things similar to Duckwalls. Cheap picture frames, office supplies, canned goods, and maybe even tobacco?”

“A wine shop would be nice!”

“A wine shop that we would have to put in the back alley so that nobody could see you as you drove by to buy some wine.” [Comical voice]

“Yeah, our own version of Whiskey Road.” [Joking behavior - laughs]

“That’s right!”

“But, the idea would be to break it up into smaller stores inside the building.”

“If you go into the old Duckwalls building you will see – it’s huge!”

“It’s really huge! It goes all the way back another 40 or 50 feet, beyond the back wall. All the way back into the alley.”

“Another thing we have been talking about is how to get the college kids more involved in our retail downtown. We really don’t have that much for them to do right now.”

“Now, that was a corporate decision. The Duckwalls store closed because numerous stores were closed. Probably the stores that were not generating much in the way of income, and I am sure we fell into that category.”

“I think Duckwalls did well when they did things right!”

“Yeah, they had management problems, and changes to their stock.”

“They had kind of become a dumping ground for stock that was not sold anywhere else.”

“They were corporately owned and sold.”

“I wondered about that because of their merchandise choices.”

“Oh yeah, I worked down there and every order would have a bunch of plastic flowers. It seemed like half of that store had plastic flowers. I think they had them all over!”

“Dumb wasn’t it? What they brought in.”

“The stuff that would sell they would never bring in.”

“They didn’t pay attention to the inventory changes.”

“No. They didn’t.”

“Like what people bought. You know, they paid no attention. They just bought things that they could get a good deal on because they could sell them.”

“You know, a spin off is that our community is also very generous. You could always go to Duckwalls and buy \$20.00 worth of canned goods for the food bank. You could walk out of there with a lot of stuff to give to them. You can’t do that if you go to Dillon’s. \$20.00 at Dillon’s grocery store will only buy two or three cans of food.”

“Yeah, there were some residual benefits to having a Duckwalls here for other people in the community. Other than the people who might shop there all the time. It benefited other people.”

“Dollar Store!”

“Dollar General.”

“We want a business that carries all of the same things Duckwalls did.”

“Right! Like a Dollar General.”

“Everyday needs of the community. That’s what we need. When we run errands we don’t want to leave town for little things that you buy everyday. This is the most important thing. The other stuff is nice to have, but what we seriously need is a store where you can get everyday items that people need.”

“I don’t think you can buy thread or sewing materials in town? Can you?”

“No!”

“There are all kinds of little things that we need.”

“Just little things.”

“Just to get the little compact discs for your video camera. You have to go to Radio Shack in Hutchinson, or you have to go to Lyons.”

“Sometimes you can’t even find them [compact discs] in Lyons.”

“Well, I just need plastic storage containers.”

“Yeah.”

“You do have to go far away.”

“Things like that. Simple everyday things.”

“I think it is important. We have a lot of building vacancies. We have multiple buildings that are for sale.”

“So, there is a need for change.”

“A changing of the guard.”

“I don’t think that we have any synonyms to describe people who ‘step up,’ or who should ‘step up’ to the challenge. The owners who are tired need people to replace them. Not only do we need to fill the vacancies, but we need to find the capital and incentives for people to buy those businesses. We want them to buy the businesses that are for sale. This way there would be some continuity and we would not end up with multiple businesses [means multiple businesses that sell the same things].”

“I think that there is a perception that nothing can be successful downtown. I don’t believe that’s the truth though. I think to myself ‘what’s happening downtown?’ I don’t think it is such a bad thing though. I think it is a natural cycle of any downtown area. We have a changing of the guard going on right now. A lot of our retailers and our business

owners are leaving. They are old, and they would like to retire and just get out of it. There's a fear that you can't make it in downtown Sterling."

"Right!"

"The old guys are tired and we need to encourage the new guys to step in and take over."

"I don't know if you get a lot of encouragement?"

"I would like to see some young people take over. We have had some leadership in the past with the young people in the community."

"I have seen interest from younger people in the community in terms of taking a step forward but I think that we need to energize the downtown area with new vibrant businesses that will market themselves and respond to the need of the customers [City of Sterling residents]."

"They also need to respond to the change. They need to be willing to change, and they need to accept change. A good healthy retailer would do this for the community."

"I think that the downtown area would do just fine. I mean, you are not going to do as well as you would in a big metropolitan area where there is a lot of traffic, but people choose to do things in small communities like this. They choose lifestyle changes."

"There are a lot of people that could afford to pay the rent downtown. I also think that they would do alright downtown. I think that the downtown area just needs to be energized with a lot of creative and active people."

"Now, I am not saying that the stores that are downtown right now are bad. I am just saying that a lot of our existing stores are tired."

"They need to be re-energized. "

"Yes! We need some new ownership."

#### **Continued talk about wants/needs in the City of Sterling.**

"I think that the new ownership is probably going to come from outside the community. "

"That's not to say that the new owners would not move here."

"It's almost like you've got to advertise your downtown and let people know about the stores. I think niche marketing would be the best way to advertise."

“You need to let people know that there are office spaces available in downtown Sterling.”

“You need to be aggressive with the advertising.”

“For example, the best person would be somebody who wants to sell, who wants to come in and fill the old Duckwalls building, who wants to spend some money renovating the old Bulletin building or the old general store. We need somebody to come in and turn these places into retail establishments! It is almost like we need to quit waiting for that somebody and get up and do some of that stuff ourselves.”

“Well, that is also something that I am concerned about. I know that we have vacancies and old businesses for sale. I have talked with some people about this but I don’t get a lot of interest. You know, my job is to look out for this community and the communities future and the downtown. My main concern is that I don’t believe that we can loose any more retail space downtown by filling in the offices or any other place we have available.”

“We need to equalize. There are really strong businesses downtown right now and I think that’s good. However, we need to focus on filling in the holes and empty places that are available.”

“Looking at the big picture and towards the future, I would like to protect these locations. If there is any way to encourage retail growth or to promote them with that would be great!”

“Yes, a lot of interaction between the community and the businesses that would be wonderful!”

“You know, it is hard to come back after you have lost it all. We don’t want to build things up and loose them again.”

“I think it’s scary. I mean, my friend and I are partners and we own a few buildings downtown. We embarked on what I think is probably one of the greatest ideas that could happen in Sterling. Things are different now though. For a variety of reasons we are now at the point where we want to sell these buildings. I am not too reluctant but my partner. Really, this is only because I think it’s still a great idea and I would still like to see it happen.”

“I have tried to learn how to grow but you know my partner and I could not go out and try to make it on our own. It is just so scary. I mean, I have three children and all of them are going to be in college at the same time. This is a lot of money. You know, my husband asks me ‘you are not going to commit more time are you?’ I feel like I don’t have any more time and if it takes money out of the family then I just can’t afford to do it.”

“We wanted to have a large store. An eclectic kind of store with an ice cream parlor, antiques/specialty items, a café, and an art gallery too! It is a long building. It takes up the entire width of the block! It’s just that we got into our personal funds and ran out of money. It takes capital income and we need this to finish the buildings. We need to make them sound and operable. Wiring and plumbing are additional costs and it all adds up!”

“That kind of goes back to what I said regarding capital. I think that even now we have local businesses that need to be re-energized. I think it is also hard for local people to support them. If they don’t change in some way or if they don’t fill the needs of the people then they will just go away. We need to encourage local people to support our local businesses so they don’t go broke or go away.”

“That is the biggest thing. It is the classic chicken and the egg story. You know, you have to find a way to create a social synergy between people. We need people who are willing to take risks and start these kinds of businesses and people who are going to come in and support them at the same time.”

“You can’t be exclusive. Business owners and consumers have to work together.”

“Well, I almost think that it has to be some kind of big event. My husband and I are refugees from Wichita [joking voice]. We have lived in Sterling now for 13 years. But we always have had an idea of what Sterling should be. This is such an artistic community. We have everything artistic from vocal artists, musical artists, and other artists in general. The fine arts, that’s what I am talking about.”

“We have always felt that Sterling should have some kind of big music festival. We need an annual event to draw people in to the community. We need to make Sterling a destination spot!”

“We have some folks involved with economic development and they are always trying to promote the state. I think that they are pretty successful but we have always thought about a music festival. Maybe a festival would include more of the fine art culture? A classical artist like Yo Yo Mah or someone like this would be fantastic! Why couldn’t we get someone like this to come to Sterling and be the center of attention at an art/music festival?”

“Something like a ‘Sterling Stock’ as opposed to ‘Wood Stock?’”

“There you go! Just look at what Robert Redford has with the Sundance Film Festival in Utah!”

“Isn’t it Montana?”

“I think it started in Montana. The name is Sundance. Sundance is huge and people visit from around the world to attend the big event.”

“I think that we are just going to have to start small but I also think that we have to think big. Unless we get somebody to keep coming back every year it just isn’t going to work out. We need to get on Marcy Penner’s [Tour guide] Destination Location list for tours and things. I think that she has an ice cream parlor or two, and some other nostalgic places on her tour(s).”

“There have to be people willing to do it and do it well. There needs to be involvement. People will need to put some money into the pot and I think that we are at a loss right now in Sterling. A loss for those two things -- leadership and money is what we need.”

“Yeah, you know there are a lot of people who will back you up, but no one wants to take the lead. I know that I shouldn’t say no one wants to but it is very difficult to get leaders involved. We need leaders to step up and take charge.”

“I wonder if everyone is just satisfied right now and they just don’t feel any urgency. Maybe they just need a break. You know, the whole town needs a break from charging forward. I don’t know that it is a lack of leaders. Maybe that is what everyone really wants, a break.”

“I can answer that. The leaders in the community are already stretched too thin. They already have a lot going on and just to keep their own businesses and families going is a lot. You know, it is not so much complacency as it is being stretched too thin. They are already doing three different things. They are already running their own business and they have a leadership position in the community too.”

“Yeah, it is a 72 hour a week job just to keep things going the way that they have been. We do need new leadership and it is probably going to have to come from outside the community. Just like the capital it will have to come from outside the community. This is one of the problems with having a ‘Sterling Stock’ or some kind of a music festival concept. We have no place to house people. We have no place to put the visitors if they come in to town.”

“Unless we have the festival in the summer and we house people in the Sterling College dormitory.”

“One of the interesting concepts that is going on right now is to do some work down at the park. People want to enlarge our camping facility to allow for outdoor camping.”

“Well, until our future hotel is up and running we have nothing. All of our Bed and Breakfasts have folded and now we don’t have anything. Now we are faced with a challenge.”

**Q. Tell me more about things to do in Sterling. Tell me about entertainment in Sterling.**

“Well, I can tell you that we have been asked again this year to advertise with the Hutchinson Convention and Visitors Center. Last year we partnered with the City and ran a really nice full color advertisement on the back of their map section. However, it did not really produce anything. I think it is because we do not have any place to house people when they visit. Even if they are visiting Hutchinson, we have no place to put them.”

“I know that some people visit Hutchinson every year. Every year they come in a motor home or a personal vehicle. If they came to Sterling at all they could not stay here for more than a couple of hours because there is no place to stay and spend the night.”

“Well, they could play a round of golf at our golf course. We have an excellent golf course just southwest of town! Now, as far as attracting out of town golfers, that’s another story.”

“I don’t know that it is as much of a need for new leadership as it is a focus. You know, once we determine a focus we could have a united leadership. I really don’t think there is anything that Sterling can’t do. If we are focused, we can do anything!”

“I think that we are missing something though. That same thing, a focus. A focus to market our downtown area. I mean, does the Chamber do that? Does the whole street do that? Who markets it? Who steps up and carries the cause? Who rallies people together to do this? Granted there are the same leaders who do everything all the time. These same leaders are tired.”

“Yeah, it’s just like this meeting today. Do we accomplish a purpose out of this? I mean, what we are charged to do? Do we gain anything from this?”

**Continued talk about wants/needs in the City of Sterling.**

“In what manner does everybody want the downtown to grow? What businesses do we want? How do we get them? I think we need to get a plan together, that might work.”

“Every year that we have an opportunity for the community to get together and talk, something comes up. A group or an organization needs to be formed. We need to get together and get something going.”

“That just doesn’t happen. It’s just that people want it and we haven’t had anybody really step up and say ‘let’s do it.’ You know, we need someone to say ‘let’s get organized, let’s do something.’ You know what I mean? It’s taking that next step.”

“It’s been identified for as long as I can remember. When I took my job back in 1998 it was a really hot topic. To put in some kind of general store. Now, we just need to take that extra step forward. You know, if we say we are going to do something, we need to do it!”

“It’s getting that cluster of people together. The people who are passionate. We need to get them together and organize.”

“The big barriers are going to be about where to get the money.”

“If you do have the money you have to look and see if you have enough people to support it [business] in the long run so that it can last for a long time.”

“Sometimes our dreams and what we might be able to generate from those dreams are completely different.”

“How does anybody know though? Really. I mean, how does anybody know the answer to your speculation? I mean, how does anybody know. They can’t.”

“It’s the same story with any business.”

“I mean, the economy has a lot to do with it.”

“Yes.”

“Well, we do have that market analysis that shows where we have a lot, a little, and where we need significant improvements. What I am talking about are improvements for leaks [means money that is spent elsewhere and not in the City of Sterling].”

“The money people earn here needs to be spent here. People spend their money on stuff but they don’t spend it here. They spend it elsewhere. You know, they call that a leak. That’s what I am talking about.”

“Yes, the 2004 market analysis for downtown shows this. There are leaks. The market analysis is a good source. It shows that it is harder to do something like that. Like an art gallery. It would be hard to start an art gallery in downtown Sterling because of the leaks.”

“Aren’t the arts something to build? I mean, anything that we talk about doing needs to be a generator of financial support in some way, shape, or form. Right?”

“I mean, it needs to at least start. The arts are something to build around.”

“Well, you might sell some paintings out of an art gallery but you can’t plan on selling enough paintings out of an art gallery to make the art gallery work financially.”

“Right.”

#### **Continued talk about wants/needs in the City of Sterling.**

“Right [in agreement].”

“Right! I mean, a lot of people in Sterling are interested in the arts. We have a much bigger percentage of people interested in the arts than anywhere else! That’s what it seems like to me anyway.”

“I think that the arts provide a fun activity. Even if some of the people are not interested in it and it doesn’t generate much income, you can still bring people into the art gallery from outside and sell them some art work. You can also put them up in a hotel room, sell them dinner, and these are the things that actually generate the income. Not the art entirely.”

“An issue with that is the fact that we have very poor venues. I mean they are not kept up. We have a very small High School auditorium, and that’s about it.”

“It is in sad shape though.”

“Yeah, very sad shape. The place at the college is not much better either. If we had a civic center or even a place where a theater could move off campus it would be nice.”

“More seating too!”

“I think that something like that would be part of an attraction, to attract outside capital. Our arts are absolutely awesome and yet they are a pretty well kept secret simply because we don’t have the venues to attract people. It would be nice if others could share in what really sets Sterling apart from a lot of other communities our size. The High School art program is awesome! It is absolutely awesome! You know, they have more brass [trophies] for High School art awards in the trophy case than they do for the entire history of the school. Even for football, basketball, and baseball!”

“Are you talking about the fine arts?”

“No. Theater.”

“We’re talking about the art program at the High School. The theater and forensics program. We have won a lot of awards, and up until a year ago we won 14 straight forensic state forensic championships.”

“But they probably could not even hold a competition at our High School because of the facility.”

“They do Forensics once a year.”

“Yeah, we do a debate here once a year and we do a Forensics tournament here once a year too. That’s just a week long event though. These events draw an awful lot of parents into the community so they come here and watch their child perform in either one of the two tournaments. Debate or Forensics. There is nothing else for them to do though. There should be something else for them to see and do.”

“Yeah, they stop at Sonic or at McDonalds.”

“They stop there on their way out of town though.”

“Yeah, on the way home. You know exactly what I am talking about. Like my friend said last night. We were talking about the capacity at the High School. How many people can be in the auditorium at one time? I think it is something like 300 people? Maybe?”

“Yeah.”

“Something like that. They were putting chairs in the aisles. I think that the Fire Marshall would have had a cow because it was so crowded!”

“Yeah, it was so crowded that they had to turn people away.”

“It was terrible. I mean, terribly crowded.”

“Plastic chairs in the aisles and people were standing in the back.”

“I’d say that they had close to 400 people there last night.”

“They had to turn people away.”

“Yeah.”

“I know.”

“I just don’t know, it is just kind of frustrating when we just built a beautiful brand new Wellness Center. I think that the Wellness Center was funded with grant money.

“Although, it is more of a weight lifting facility than for performances and things like that. They use it primarily for weight lifting.”

“I am not objecting to the facility being used for weight lifting because I happen to have boys and they like to go there. On the other hand, if we tried numerous times to get a Bond issue passed for a new theater it would be tough.”

“We need some sort of an enriched theater. One that could accommodate a lot of people. We need one that would accommodate more people than the one we currently have. We just could not get a Bond issue to pass for this sort of thing. So, I don’t know what it takes. I just don’t know.”

“I think it is great that we have a Wellness Center and that it is open to the entire community. There are, however, other needs. A theater serves the community and over and over again it would accommodate a lot more people. It could serve a lot more people than the Wellness Center ever would.”

“Well, you know that these are two different issues. We need the Wellness Center. It is true that the community needed to give the school a new theater that would adequately accommodate all of the wonderful things happening here in Sterling.”

“Yeah, maybe we should have them both.”

“I think so [in agreement].”

“Not one or the other, we need both.”

“Maybe if we did the theater just like we did the Wellness Center and approach it as more of a community theater?”

“Well, a theater is not very well taken. You say ‘Sports Center’ and everyone gets excited.”

“Nobody shows up to vote for a thater.”

“Well, I think a lot of that mind-set has to do with the fact that it is also identified as a government priority too. I mean, whether it is right or wrong the theater probably isn’t as much of a priority. If you start talking about matching funds or doing twice or three times as much with everyone’s dollar it creates a pull.”

“I mean, I agree that this community is historically sports oriented and sports are a number one topic. They still are and always will be.”

“Yeah, they could not get that project to go through.”

“The right leadership is all backing it up. The right leadership backs everything up.”

“Recently I went to Cottonwood Falls and stayed there for a while. They had some wonderful things in this tiny little town. They had a Taco Tico and a few other little restaurants. They had some wonderful things without a lot of resources. They are in the same shape we are as far as population. They have a moderate population and they have a lot! What I was most impressed with was the Tall grass Prairie National Reserve. This would not have happened if a few individuals had not formed a small group and helped. They helped to institute the Tall grass Prairie Preserve and also helped to make the downtown area come alive! The community bought into the idea and it was more of a grass roots effort. This was not some upper echelon kind of deal. I think that is why it has continued to be successful. They have a few entrepreneurs in the town who have helped along the way and motivated people. They have done the right thing. Can’t we do something similar in Sterling?”

“There is also a generational thing here too. They have already done their switch over and I think that there is a lot here in Sterling. But we have to be careful because it is going to take some organization to make it here. A big organization! A lot of people are going to have to commit their time and effort to make it happen. I know I have said this before but we need the younger generations to step up.”

“You know, the unfortunate thing is that a lot of the kids in Sterling just don’t stay around. They move away. We need the young kids to stay here. We need them to move back after college too! We need them to invest and re-invest in Sterling.”

“I know what it must be like though. I mean, they are all working. Both the husband and wife are, and they have little children. They are involved in all of these things and they just don’t have the time and energy to give. It takes a lot of hours as a volunteer and a lot of effort.

“Yeah, I guess what it comes down to is that it is going to take folks with a lot of energy and it is also going to take a lot of volunteers in the community.”

“Remember it also takes money.”

“Absolutely!”

“I am not disregarding anything that you just said but it does take volunteer activities for people to get involved. The young people are in that age group that can revitalize the town. The younger age group is just bursting with energy!”

“New sparkplugs [young adults] don’t have a lot of money though. This makes everything just a little bit harder for them.”

“We have to remember that money is not the core. Just the effort that the kids put fourth is a lot! The young people are just trying to make ends meet.”

“We need some new ways to find creative financing. We really do.”

“Yes.”

“My friend has kind of led the way on that same topic. You know, in terms of creative financing. Our new College President has made a fortune with his creative financing ideas. He has done this mainly through his creative projects.”

“We need to advocate ourselves and showcase the great opportunities that we have in Sterling. We could re-do the general store or help out the other building owners. The old Bulletin building needs a lot of work and so does the old Duckwalls building. There is a lot to be done but I think that specialty shops will answer our problem. We just need to get them here. We need to get the retailers to come and if we simply showcase opportunities that are available here I think that would do the trick!”

“Maybe the President of Sterling College could lead us in some kind of workshop.”

“Yes!”

“He is a real entrepreneur.”

“Yes, he really is.”

“Do you think that he would do it?”

“I think that he would.”

“He is very nice.”

“I think that he is such a valuable resource. I wish that we had him in our focus group today.”

“He has a lot of knowledge. He has been around the world and he knows a lot.”

“He is 70 or 72 years of age? Something like that.”

“He [President of Sterling College] just took over as President.”

“Yeah, he just received his third PhD degree too!”

“Talk about intelligent!”

“I think that he will stay in Sterling for at least a couple of years. I do not want him to leave but I think that he will.”

“I know, I feel like we have to get every piece of information out of him before he moves on.”

“Especially about creative financing.”

“Yes.”

“You know, I like our churches!”

“Me too!”

“They have little bake sales and craft fairs. I like to go and shop.”

“Well, as far as activities that are outside of your own church ... well, they don't exist. Let me tell you something, I moved here in 1998 and faith is something that folks here in Sterling wear on their sleeve. It is part of the everyday conversation around here. I had never lived anywhere like this before in my life. You know, you just don't talk about religion and your beliefs. Here [in Sterling] it is different. I like that.”

“The religion aspect is the foundation of Sterling's values. Our values and beliefs are faith based. This has helped to create an excellent school district.”

“Yes, if there is anything that brings people to Sterling it is the school system. Our schools are wonderful!”

“Some people think that families move here for the schools. Once their children graduate they move away. Well, now that's a common thought.”

“I really don't think that's true. I mean, I know some people who have done that but not most people. Most people stay in Sterling.”

“Some families are here because they are attached to the college.”

“Yes, that’s true.”

“We are a small enough community where you know exactly where people are [meaning religious beliefs] and there are enough churches to go around. So many people are here and they all go to different churches. There are so many activities too! One for each day of the week!”

“One of the ironies of the religious make up of our community is that because of religion there are probably 35 to 45 kids that are home schooled here in Sterling. They would be very valuable additions. These kids come from bright and intelligent parents yet they have nothing to do with our public school system.”

“Well, they are allowed to participate and take certain courses through the public schools.”

“I know, I know.”

“But you see, they bring no financial benefit to our public school system and it is a real loss for our school system because of this.”

“I think we have done a number of different stories on home school children and I know that religion is the number one reason why there is an aspect of the religious make up of the community that does not help us out.”

**Q. So tell me more about what needs improvement.**

“Well, I am from California, and that probably explains a lot about me, but when my husband and I first moved here I felt like we were considered Pariah’s of the community. We were looked at in this way because we like to have a glass of wine with dinner.”

“People around here just don’t understand. In fact, there are no liquor stores around here.”

“Yes, no public display of drinking!”

“No alcohol.”

“No public displays because there is a stigma attached to drinking.”

“I understand that this is common in small communities but the whole mood of the community is against alcohol.”

“I know a lot of people who go out of town to eat because they want a nice meal and they also want to have a glass of wine. They also don’t want to be seen by everybody in town.”

“I guess what I am trying to say is that we should just accept this.”

“It does create a bit of awkwardness I think.”

“It does mean that we have tried numerous times and we have even thought about having a sports bar or something like a sports bar anyway.”

“Well, we did have a little bar at one time, but it was not very well maintained.”

“Yeah, that place got the reputation as being the bad place to go.”

“Yeah, all of the low-life folks would go there and hang out.”

"I bet everyone in this room has been to the little bar in Lindsborg though."

“It is a little Sports bar and it is okay. I mean its borderline. They have a great deli and they also have wonderful sandwiches.”

"I think that this is a central issue. You know, everyone wants alcohol here. I mean, some do, and some don't. Just a glass of wine with a meal would be alright though. Don't you think?"

"Well you know there is an ordinance every time someone brings up alcohol."

“Yeah.”

"I think a little deli/sports bar would be something that would attract the kids downtown and I think it would also be fun and a nice place for the college kids to go too!."

"Well, you can't do that because it's against the Sterling codes or laws. Something like that?"

"I don't even know if the codes or laws are still holding."

“Yeah, are they even true anymore?”

“Sterling College kids have to sign a waiver that they will not consume alcohol.”

“Yeah, our kids in school here cannot do that.”

“Well, you don’t have to go to a sports bar and just consume alcohol.”

“Well, I know, but at Sterling they get turned in if they drink any kind of alcohol. When my boys were in High School if you were seen by someone else you would get reported and kicked off the team [respective sports team].”

“If we use the same rules then we should count out Applebee’s too!”

Well, I think that Applebee’s would be well accepted in Sterling. Everyone likes Applebee’s. As long as we keep things disciplined and the owners do not let people drink too much, then I think that it would be okay.”

“We need a bar place. You know, when they did that market analysis there was a lot of support for a bar and they had a lot of community meetings.”

“People got together to talk about the issues.”

“I think that some people didn’t speak up though. I mean some people felt differently and five years later they still feel the same way.”

“Yeah, some people don’t want a bar but they want a snack diner or even just a place to get a glass of wine.”

“Everyone doesn’t have to drink you know!”

“I guess that the bottom line is that we want to have some kind of place here in town where it feels like we are going out.”

“You know, a night on the town.”

“It is very hard to grow grapes here you know. It is because of ariel spraying. You know the pesticides. If a grape comes in contact with pesticide, airborne, ariel spray, or anything like this it dies. I know I’ve looked into it.”

“It’s just that the process. It is very complex.”

“Did you know that Kansas was one of the top grape wine growing states at the turn of the century?”

“We don’t have any in Kansas right now do we?”

“Certainly!”

“Talking about things to do, we have nice evening concerts sometimes. We also go to plays sometimes. We have no where to go afterwards. You know, we used to have a nice little coffee shop and deli and it was great! The college was in charge of it and it was not well maintained so it folded.”

**Q. Let's talk a little bit more about things to do in Sterling. What do you like to do?**

“Yeah, the two gentlemen decided to fold and get out of the business. So we lost the deli/coffee shop.”

“Another nice venue.”

“There is no where to go after 8:00 at night!”

“Yeah, it is sad. There is no where for the kids to go downtown in the evening.”

“The lake is an excellent place to go as far as an open venue. I think that the lake is an excellent place to spend some time.”

“Yes, the lake is nice. For walking, riding, and just hanging out. I have had people from out of town comment on the lake. They tell me about driving around it and they have all been very impressed. You know, they are impressed to see people in the park and they are actually using it.”

“In a lot of towns there parks and you don't see anyone using them. I think parks are a great place for families to go and I think that organized events that center around the lake and the park are also nice.”

“We have an excellent gold course too!”

“We have a large tournament every year and it is during the summer time.”

“It is a lot of fun!”

“I love the bike trail.”

“The bike trail around Sterling Lake is nice. Come to think of it ... wouldn't it be nice if there were some sort of bike trail between here and Lyons. You know, biking is a big sport around here and I think that places that have bike trails are nice too.”

“Some folks go to Hutchinson to ride bikes. I hear they have a trail of some kind.”

**Q. Tell me about your three favorite things to do in Sterling. Or, you could tell me about your three main concerns.**

“My three favorite things to do are to attend the High School and College events and also the 4<sup>th</sup> of July events. The 4<sup>th</sup> of July is a lot of fun. Now, I can’t think of a third. I’m sorry.”

“Well, I like the school district we have here in Sterling. Our schools are wonderful you know. I also like the 4<sup>th</sup> of July events, and the fine arts events that we have from time to time.”

“I think that the park is a great environment. I also like the fine arts and the schools here in Sterling.”

“My favorite is golfing! We have an excellent golf course here in Sterling! I also like the spectator sports like the High School basketball and baseball. The cultural events are okay too.”

“The lake area is beautiful. I like it! Basketball, and the fine arts too! These are my favorite three things to do.”

“You know, I like to go down to the café and just visit with friends. That is a lot of fun. I also like the church activities. School arts events are a lot of fun too!”

“Well, let’s see, I like the school sports, the plays and the shows that the schools have, and I also like to go fishing with my Grandkids.”

“Schools, although everyone has said the same thing. They’re excellent you know. I also think that Sterling is a great place to raise kids. Let’s see, what else? I think that our quality of life is good and I also think that the diversity is good too. We have a lot of diversity with the small college. We have good city government here too.”

“Overall, I would say that the schools are exceptional. I think the city itself. Overall, this is a great place to live.”

“Well, I like the sports. Specifically, the school sponsored sports. I also like the regular performances at the community theater. Let’s see, what else? Well, the total package. I like Sterling and I enjoy the friendships. We have a lot of friends in Sterling and everyone is pretty friendly here. I like that!”

“I think that we have some pretty advanced technology for a small town and I like that.”

## Appendix D

**FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS FOR THE CITY OF STERLING, KS**  
**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 12<sup>TH</sup>**

- Q. Let's talk about things to do in Sterling. What do you like to do?**
- Q. How about **dining out**? Where do you like to dine? Do you think this [the dining out scene] could use improvement? Or, is it just fine the way it is?**
- Q. Let's talk about **Outdoor life, enjoying nature**? Is there a city park you like to go to with your family? Do you play sports and other physical activities? What are those sports/physical activities? Do you feel like you have an adequate place to do these things or are these areas that could use improvement? Tell me about this.**
- Q. **City arts scene**? Does the city have a city arts scene? If yes, tell me about it. If no, would you like there to be a city arts scene? Are any of you artists?**
- Q. **Family activities** – Let's talk about family activities. What do you like to do with your family? Do you feel that there are a lot of family activities in the city of Sterling? Do you go to other places for family activities?**
- Q. Tell me about **night time entertainment**. Is there nighttime entertainment in Sterling? What for example would you consider Nighttime Entertainment? [When I think about Nighttime Entertainment I think about a dinner and dancing district. Are you familiar with Wichita's Old Town area? This is what I would think of]. Other ideas?**
- Q. Tell me about **shopping** in the city. Is there a lot of shopping available to you? Do you travel to other cities to go shopping? If you could choose a few stores (name a few) to come to the city of Sterling, what stores would they be? Suggested stores: Target, Eddie Bauer, Barnes and Noble book store? What would you like to see?**
- Q. Are there a lot of **sporting events** in the city? What kinds of sporting events? Do you travel to other cities to attend sporting events?**
- Q. Let's talk about **concerts**. Are there concerts in the Sterling area? Are there music festivals of any kind? Tell me about them. Do you travel to other cities to attend concerts or music festivals? Tell me about them?**
- Q. Are there **religious activities** in the city? What kind of religious activities? Church retreats? Vacation bible school? Tell me about them. Anything you might suggest?**
- Q. Let's go around the table and each of you can tell us your **top three favorite things to do in Sterling**. Tell me about them. Which activities are your favorites? What do you like best about them? The least? What do you think needs improvement?**
- Q. Is there **another issue** that you think is important to the future of Sterling that we haven't talked about and you would like to add? What is that issue?**

### Demographic Information for Group #2

Group #2	Age	Gender	Time living in Sterling	Plan to live/continue to live in Sterling	How do you get the majority of your news/Information
(1.) 11.	71	F	10+	10+	Newspaper
(2.) 12.	45	M	5-10	10+	From other people
(3.) 13.	48	M	5-10	10+	Newspaper
(4.) 14.	22	F	3-5	10+	On-line
(5.) 15.	24	M	3-5	5-10	From other people
(6.) 16.	72	M	1-2	N/A	Newspaper
(7.) 17.	54	M	5-10	10+	Television
(8.) 18.	77	M	10+	10+	From other people
(9.) 19.	55	M	10+	10+	Television

There were nine participants in Focus Group 2. Each participant in was asked to fill out a demographic sheet (**Appendix A**). Demographic information gives us a better idea of who was represented in the focus groups and we can also tie needs and wants to different segments of the community.

Focus group participants for Group 2 ranged in age from 22 to 77 with an average age of 52. There were 2 women and 7 men who participated. 3 of them lived in the Sterling area ten or more years, 3 lived in the area between 5 and 10 years, and 3 lived in the area 1 to five years. Of the 9 participants in this group 7 plan to continue living in the Sterling area for 10 or more years. Most of them get their news information from other people and from the newspaper.

In sum, focus group participants (groups one and two) ranged in age from 22 to 88 with an average age of 53.6. There were 7 women and 12 men who participated. 10 of them lived in the Sterling area ten or more years, 6 lived in the area between 5 and 10 years, and three of the participants lived in the area less than 5 years. Of the 19 participants 14 plan to continue living in the area for 10 or more additional years. In fact, one of the participants wrote in “Till death do us part.” This would indicate their love for the City of Sterling. Most of them get the majority of their news from a newspaper.

**Q. Let's talk about things to do in Sterling. What do you like to do?**

“Well, I am gone a lot and my business keeps me out of town. But when I’m here I like to work around my house and I also like to ride my bike around town. I enjoy riding my bike around town; there is very little chance of getting run over.”

“I like to go out to eat if I can. I like to eat at Patty’s for breakfast.”

“Now, if I had more time I would probably play golf. I have to work though, I have to get that work in to pay the bills.”

“I like the school activities, and I like to eat at Patty’s also. The Sterling café is good too.”

“Oh last night and tonight there’s a wonderful play, a musical! I went to see it last night, it was great. I also like the basketball.”

“We have good churches here in Sterling. Well, school and church, they all kind of run together.”

“I want to talk about “Friendship Meals.” This is a wonderful organization that delivers meals to home bound people, and the seniors. I like to help out with this organization. It’s really nice.”

“Right now we have lots of entertainment. At the present time we have to have our part [church related activity] in the churches but I hope we might get an addition to the plaza. We would be able to have our meals and entertainment there!”

“I like the collaboration with the college and the schools. Of course, I’m connected with the schools and was also a graduate of the college [Sterling College] but I think what I like the most is the simplistic opportunity that exists. You know the simple things. We’re still a small town, we still talk to each other, we don’t ignore each other when we are walking down Main Street, and it’s just the friendly atmosphere that I like. You can go 18 miles away and see something totally different.”

“In many respects I like that it’s just a great atmosphere to raise a family in and it’s a part of all these things we’re talking about you know good restaurants downtown, wonderful churches, and it is all connected.”

“Well, my family has found this to be a good place for the last 25-30 years to raise kids and cattle. It has been a wonderful environment to try to help develop new opportunities. In my way of thinking we have to look to our past and recognize debts that we have to pay. This has been a wonderful place to try and re-pay some of those debts by helping create opportunities for younger people.”

“As far as the environment to do it in, it’s very close knit; most of us know each other’s names, we often times know each other’s birthdays, and this just shows that it is a close knit group.”

“This environment adds a unique flavor to the culture here that’s supported by the college.”

“One of the things that we’ve certainly seen change over the last 18 years is just how great an open and current leader relationship between campus and community can be! The first ten years I lived in Sterling I didn’t know who the college president was, and I remember it was at a Fourth of July activity one year that I was in charge of the community church service. I asked the college president to give the invitation for that church service, and that was the first time I remember ever meeting someone who sat in that chair [the president’s position]. Through the past couple of presidents [Sterling College Presidents] the position has really opened up. It is a lot friendlier.

“I think there’s been more recognition. More recognition means that if the town were to survive in a long term sense, it is going to have to have a viable relationship with the campus. I think the campus recognized some of those same concerns. Those are my thoughts.”

“I think that it was really important [to have Sterling College and the community relationship building activities]. I know that it was important to me when I went to Sterling College. A lot of the community members would come to the sporting events, to the school plays, and were also involved in foster programs. A lot of student athletes come from far away and a lot of the community members are happy to get involved with them. They allow the students to come to their homes and crash, to have a place to get away from the campus.”

“I just always appreciated the way the community and the students have interacted. The relationships that came about because of that sort of thing is something that I think attracted us to this town.”

“I’ve only been here two months and I started out behind. I have been working and so far, we have met some really wonderful people. When we showed up here the man that advises me on academic affairs said he had a few questions for me. He asked me if I agreed with the mission statement of the college and I do. I was in the chemistry department and I think we have a lot of wonderful people.”

“I am really concerned that there are not enough things for the students to do here in town. That’s the only real worry that I have. But in two months [individual has lived in Sterling for only 2 months] I don’t think I can be a real expert on any part of this.”

“Well, when I ride my bike I always go to the park. I like to ride around the lake at least a couple of times. I try to take different routes too! We have a beautiful park here in Sterling.”

“The park would be the center piece of the city.”

“The Sterling Lake was originally an old sand pit. It was a WPA [Works Progress Administration] project back in the 1930s [part of the New Deal legislation under Roosevelt] and celebrations are held there. In the last few years Sterling has done a lot of work to improve the lake. They have really done a good job and a lot more people are enjoying it. The sidewalk goes all the way around the lake, you can stop and fish, and a lot more kids are down there fishing now! More than ever before, in the last few years.”

“There’s even an RV camping ground there!”

“There are one, two, three, four, five potential six potential spots [talking about things to do in Sterling/places of interest]. We have been holding on to six.”

“Are you counting Sterling College also?”

“Seven.”

**Q. How about dining out? Where do you like to dine? Do you think this could use Improvement? Or, is it just fine the way it is?**

“I know some people go there [Sterling College Cafeteria] to eat on Sunday.”

“Right, the college is a wonderful place to eat on Sunday there are a lot of people who eat there.”

“I just mentioned that same thing this morning. We need a fine Italian restaurant. I would like to see a restaurant with a nice variety of wine here in Sterling.”

“I don’t know if you know this or not, or if my wife mentioned this in the earlier group but did she mention stopping in Duran, Oklahoma recently? We play dulcimers and were hired to play at a festival in Oklahoma. On our trip we went through Duran, Oklahoma and noticed an Italian restaurant. The Italian restaurant was owned by an Italian family, even the cooks were Italian! The host was Italian too! I think that one of the waitresses was Italian also. They were all related and they hired other people to help out. We couldn’t figure out why this was in a town like Duran, Oklahoma though. Duran is very similar to Sterling. They even have a small college there. I would say Duran has a population of something like 4,000 people compared to Sterling’s population of 2,600.”

“We started talking to them and they said that they set up restaurants like this all the time. They said they would stay in Duran for 3 or 4 years, get it going, and then try to sell it to somebody local. After selling the business they plan to move to another little town and start another restaurant. They plan to continue this trend and go on like that. We said why don’t you come to Sterling, Kansas? We gave them a bunch of information and whether they’ll look into it or not I don’t know but I think my wife has been in contact with them.”

“If there was a restaurant like that [an Italian restaurant] in Sterling I think that it would do very well. They had very good food. The most expensive thing on the menu was \$14.95 and it was a seafood dish with some kind of linguini. I thought it was very reasonably priced. I think if you had a restaurant like that in Sterling that it would do well. It was probably one of the best Italian restaurants I have ever been to. I think you could draw people into Sterling from other cities, bigger cities, with a restaurant like this. I think that people from Hutchinson would come over. I think that people from Great Bend would come to a restaurant like this too.”

“Don’t we have that in the process? With the Shay Project?”

[The proprietors behind the Shay Project plan to take over an older building in Sterling and turn it into a combination hotel, restaurant, coffee shop, and theater].

“I don’t know what kind of restaurant they had in mind.”

“Yes, I don’t know if it’s Italian or not but I think they have an idea.”

“Yeah, it’s something that draws people in. Something like the Brookville Hotel [in Abilene, KS] is the idea that we are looking for.”

“Another thing I truly miss here is our Dairy Land [Dairy Land is an ice cream parlor]. It has been a long time since we had something like that. They had wonderful jobs [the people who worked at Dairy Land]. They had a lot of people coming from out of town because they were famous for their recipes. Milkshakes and malts were some of the things they served. They brought people in from Lyons, Hutchinson, and from Nickerson.”

“They [references Dairy Land ice cream parlor] were doing a good business.”

“Right [in agreement].”

“But the things they like and provide are a problem.”

[Need business support]

“Yep.”

“It is a problem.”

“We used to have a bakery in town and that was nice because it gave people a place to stop and visit in the morning. If it was open in the afternoon it also gave kids a place that was centrally located. They could meet and play.”

“I think that one of the things about Dairy Land is that the kids think of it as being out of town, or on the edge of town. But, it would be nice if there was something like a Dairy Land. I know some people have talked about a soda fountain or something similar. A place where teenagers would like to go, where people can sit and visit.”

“It would be nice to have a place with stools at a counter top [soda fountain style]. A place to get a snack.” A place like this would be a good idea.”

“I also think that Sterling needs a Mexican restaurant. A place where the kids feel like they can go would also be nice.”

“Well, we did have a deli.”

“We had a deli one time. It was nice because the college kids could go. I think it was a coffee house and deli.”

“I can’t remember what they called it … I can’t think of what it was.”

“Pacco’s?”

“Pablo’s?” [Group members decide that the deli name was Pablo’s]

“Yeah, I don’t know why they closed. I heard a few different reasons why it didn’t make it but I think something like that would be good.”

“I think that if it was someone had a lot of initiative that it could be a place that could make it in Sterling.”

“We left out something. How about the VFW on Lincoln? They have dollar hamburgers once a week. I’ve never been there but I have heard about it.”

“Oh, it’s great!”

“I’ve heard about it.”

“It is good.” [In agreement]

“Dollar hamburgers?”

“Yes, you can buy a dozen and take them home.”

“When?”

“Monday night.”

“Every Monday night?”

“Yes, they even have French fries for 50 cents.”

“They [in reference to the VFW] have bingo too! They have lots of different things to do.”

“I think that they have re-done the place. They cut out the smoking and stuff. Upstairs it’s one thing, and downstairs it’s another.”

“You haven’t been downstairs!”

**Q. Tell me about entertainment in Sterling.**

“I was going to suggest a coffee shop. Something like a coffee shop anyway. I would like to see a bookstore/coffee idea come to Sterling. A lot of the college students go down to Hastings [Hastings is a coffee shop/music/and bookstore] in Hutchinson. A lot of kids go to Starbucks too.”

“Somebody started a bookstore in Lyons but it did not stay open very long. I don’t know why they did not stay? I don’t think that it was because it was not a popular place?”

“We have a college town. Lots of teachers and students are here in town. I can’t imagine a bookstore not doing well.”

“Like a Barnes and Noble?”

“Sure, but even if it was a paperback trading bookstore with a coffee shop. That would be fine too.”

“I think that’s one of the hardest things we have to do here is to get a grasp or at least an understanding of who we are and what we can support. I think that the story behind Pablo’s [references sandwich and coffee shop] is very simple. There simply was not enough money going through the cash register for them to stay open. It was the same problem with the bakery. There was not enough money going through to support the place. The delicate thing is to determine what do we want?”

“I am talking about the worst or the most. What is it that we desire the most? Also, what can we afford and sustain. Oh, you know we’re not going to open a store downtown and sell blue jeans. The problem with a store that sells blue jeans is that we are just not going to buy enough of them.”

“The inventory they [a blue jean store] would have to maintain to suit everybody is not economically viable. The difficult question is ‘what is desired?’ Also, ‘what is viable?’ I like the idea of the Italian restaurant though. I just ate at an Italian restaurant in San Francisco and I had the thought at that time ‘gosh, if we could have food like this in Sterling!’ I bet we could sustain a place like that [an Italian restaurant].”

“They [the Italian restaurant in Oklahoma] were certainly doing a good business. We ate there twice in one weekend and the place was always busy.”

“I think that it all boils down to the question ‘what can we afford?’ I mean, what can we sustain? “ But you know, you talk about Pablo’s [references sandwich and coffee shop] and you talk about the bakery and I guess I’m not going to be critical of the people who ran the places, but I think that both those places failed not because of support. [Explains] I never once went in the bakery and I was the only person in there and I never once went in Pablo’s when I was the only person in there. There were always other people you know. It looked like good traffic was going through there [both places] but after I think about it, and I don’t know the back story, all I can think of is the financial situation. You notice the se things and you notice people purchasing things.” “Now, I am not Mr. Business man or anything and I know that I am in and out of town all the time. But, I think I’ve been in business for myself for twenty seven years and to this day I have never purchased a brand new service truck for my business. It has always been a used one. I keep my overhead as low as I can, and I see so many people in my business that have started up and they go right out and rent a big building, buy a bunch of new trucks, hire a bunch of people, pay high wages, and they go out of business fast, within 2 years! I have never seen the books but I think if a business is properly operated, and the overhead is kept low, that they can survive. You see, I think a place like Sterling could support a deli and a bakery. I think that if they were properly owned that we could support them.”

“Well, you need a lot of money.”

“That is a problem. I mean, in my business you have a guy that can bake and he knows his stuff when it comes to baking but he is not a good businessman.”

“It’s tough.”

“Sure.”

“Well, what I think is if there could be some kind of way, and I don’t know if this could tie into the college somehow or not, to have a few businesses under one umbrella.”

“I think if you have a few businesses all together that whoever the person is that is managing should be able to train the people who are in charge of the individual businesses. They should have some say-so about what kind of equipment is bought.”

“I know that the university where I went to school owned a couple of restaurants, a store, and some other things around the city. The business department actually managed the different businesses and they put graduate students in charge of those different stores. Having the graduates in place and being owned by the university really kept them going.”

“I guess they probably got some money from the alumni or the college would pay for a few things, like a truck or something. You know it was part of the training though. They trained the young people in the community and also made sure that the businesses were funded by other sources, not just from the money coming in.”

“I think that we have all had some utility increases too! If I remember correctly, the bakery had a lot of money tied up in their electric bills. The problem was just that the gas prices went up so high.”

**Q. So, tell me more about what needs improvement.**

“We have a problem in Sterling and it is a problem that all small communities have. You see, we used to have a lot of people who lived in Sterling and worked in McPherson, Hutchinson, and even Wichita! Gas prices got too high and they could live in the other places cheaper than they could in Sterling. It was so expensive for them to drive back and forth. This is why we have so many places for sale in town. The community has really been hurting the past couple of years.”

“We have a bowling alley!”

“Bingo too!”

“That’s Right! The high school and the college are both good at having entertainment. We just went to the high school for a play last night. The kids sang for us. It was nice. Tonight they are having a lot of activities. There is quite a bit of entertainment here in the city.”

“It would be nice if there were some evening activities though.”

“One thing I wish we had is a dance school. The first year we lived in Sterling there was a dance school. My girls had a place to go for dance lessons [ballet and tap dance]. When there was not a school activity they had something to do. Now, it means driving to Hutchinson or Great Bend for extra activities.”

“Sometimes, when there are a lot of school activities it keeps the kids busy and I think that’s great. There are times though when there aren’t any. It would be nice if there was some sort of activity center. I don’t mean a video arcade with games though!”

“You know, when I was growing up we had the Boys and Girls club. There was a place where kids could go and they could play games and do things with each other. It wasn’t an arcade type of place but it was a managed activity place for the kids.”

“People get pretty nostalgic wishing about a movie theater or some sort of an activity place. You know, I do too! I don’t know why we can’t have a dollar theater somewhere. Just a place to see old movies if nothing else.”

“Pretty Prairie has something like that.”

“I wish we had a candy store or an ice cream parlor. We need something because there are evenings where there is just anything to do. The kids all go out and play Man Hunt and I am just biting my fingernails. I hope that one of the children does not get hit by a car or something.”

“I almost hit a guy on a bicycle the other night!”

“Yeah, you know there are kids playing in the streets. I am speaking as a parent here. I mean there are times when I think you have to have other things for the kids to do.”

“Sometimes my kids end up glued to the Internet and I wish they were not even on the computer. But you know, we turned our cable off and when we had cable they would just sit in front of the television. I don’t want them to stay inside all the time at the computer or watching television but there isn’t anything else to do in town.”

**Q. Tell me about night time entertainment. Is there nighttime entertainment in Sterling?**

“When we were going to school here you know the complaint was that there was nothing to do after ten or eleven at night. That may not really be a problem with the majority of the community but with the college it is a problem. You have a lot of college kids who just don’t go to bed at 10 or 11 at night. Most college kids are up until 1 or 2 in the morning. Most of them are out of town and not in Sterling because there is nothing to do in town after midnight and that’s a problem.”

“Yeah, you have to go to Hutchinson or some other place close by.”

“Exactly!”

“Even in Wichita! They have coffee houses that are open late and they have live music and other things to do. I think businesses would have a little more chance to stay alive in Sterling if they catered a little bit more to the college students. This is a huge market for college students 9 months out of the year.”

“Did any of you [college age kids] go to Pablo’s [references sandwich and coffee shop] when it was open?”

“It seems like there were a lot of college students who ate at Pablo’s. I don’t really know why they shut down though? I was never in there that late at night. I know another place took over when Pablo’s left but they left too. Now there’s no place to go in Sterling. I can’t think of any place to go. The college kids just go to Hutchinson or hang out at the dorm.”

“You know in Hutchinson there is a CD [compact disc/music] trading post. I mean, if there was a place like this or a place with tables, books, CD’s and coffee I think it would do well. I think that it should be open after 10:00 at night too. I think it would really do well then. It would thrive with all of the college kids around.”

“After the ballgames there is no place to go afterwards. We have football, basketball, and a swimming pool too. The college has an indoor pool too! But when the games and sports are over there is no place to go. The younger generations don’t want to go home. They want to hang out, they want to do something and they don’t have any place to do it.”

“When my kids were in school we had a place called Teen Town. It was here in Sterling and it was open several nights a week. The children could have a soda and play games. It closed though.”

“No, it didn’t! I mean, there was nobody to run it [implies that this is the reason that Teen Town closed]. They didn’t want to work. They had dances and games of different kinds, and they even had a pop machine too. They didn’t have food but they probably had some kind of vending machine for snacks.”

“I was a missionary for a while. Now, you are going to have to excuse me for this one because I love Sterling and I’ve expressed that plenty of times but there are a lot of times when living in Sterling reminds me of being a missionary. At the missionary base we used to have a teen center and you know it didn’t make any money. I mean they had a hamburger night once a week and they had a dance night once a week. They also had a skating night and we would clear the floor and everybody could just roller skate.”

“I guess the thing was that all the parents and everyone else that lived in the missionary camp put something into the pot. Everyone helped out to keep it going. It even had a memorial because there were a couple of teens who had died. Teens that had once been connected to the missionary base. People would put memorials in the teen center to keep it going and you know, something like that would be a good idea.”

**Q. Tell me about shopping in the city. Is there a lot of shopping available to you?**

“I would like to have what we just lost. The Duckwalls store.”

“Any kind of store like Duckwalls.”

“Yeah, put in a Dollar Store. A Dollar General.”

“I wish that we had the Duckwalls we used to have. You know, not the one that just closed. The one when they had everything you wanted. I mean, I remember when you could go and find thread, socks, and shoes. They had a variety of everything!”

“They have an Alco in Lyons but you know it’s not in Sterling.”

“Well, our place [reference to Duckwalls] was pretty well stocked.”

“Yeah, it used to be.”

“Yeah.”

“Do you know why the Duckwalls went out of business?”

“They were not in the hole [out of money]. They were just not making enough profit. That’s why they went out of business.”

“The corporation?”

“Yeah.”

“Yes, the corporation wasn’t doing well.”

“Another problem was that they didn’t have enough help. They could not afford to pay very well, so they didn’t get very good help. They just didn’t. I think this has always been the excuse though.”

“Well, one problem we seem to have in Sterling is that now a lot of the trucking companies will bring some products in and not others. I know that our Dillon’s [grocery store] cannot get Pepperidge Farm products. The trucking company that brings Pepperidge Farm will not come to Sterling. They drive through Sterling to get to McPherson though.”

“It will drive through Sterling to Great Bend, but it won’t stop in Sterling. You know, we have UPS and we have FED EX. We have all these things and it seems to me that a store that opens in Sterling would do well if they used these delivery systems.”

“It doesn’t take much to stock up or provide for the people in Sterling.”

“You know, it seems to me that if you had a business that had a variety of things to offer that they could use a small shipping company to help provide them with their goods. We could get some of the brands we wanted this way [using the shipping options available].”

“I never leave town, I mean I am always in town and if there is something I want, I go to C-Mart [convenient store] or I go to Dillon’s [grocery store]. I used to go to Duckwalls when they were open.”

“Now we are really hurting because there is not a Duckwalls. We have to write a really long shopping list and go to Wal-Mart. I really wish we had these things available in town and other things that kids could do.”

“I find it interesting in Sterling. I have two daughters that live on the East Coast. They live in large cities and I can get to the airport quicker than either one of them. I can get to Home Depot, Target, or even a Wal-Mart quicker than either one of them. Sometimes I just want to say ‘Sterling! You are spoiled!’”

“You know, we have a decent sized shopping center 30 minutes away and when I go to Washington D.C. to visit my oldest daughter I guarantee you that we are not going to go any place to shop within 30 minutes of her house.”

“I go to New York to visit my other daughter and it is a lot further away than 30 minutes to get to a Home Depot. Sometimes I pause and think to myself ‘what are we griping about?’”

“Some of us have cars that have 100,000 miles on them and if it weren’t for our car repair man we couldn’t make it out of town.”

“Well, the difference is that the big cities have a subway and they have taxis. Here we drive everywhere. It seems to me that you just have to give a little bit.”

“I go home at night and it’s quiet and it’s safe. If I want to walk around the lake at 1:00 in the morning, before I go to bed, I can do that. I don’t even give it a second thought.”

“I can look at the stars, I can see the moon, and I can breathe fresh air. If I go to New York it is a much longer distance to the airport and Home Depot. You never get to be alone and it is never quiet. I guarantee you that you never get to see the stars. Sometimes I want to come home and say ‘wake up and smell the rose’s guys.’ You know you haven’t made it to heaven yet. There have to be a few hurdles to cross. You know we have opportunities here. We just have to find them.”

“I think that’s another thing that attracted us to Sterling.”

“I went to high school in McPherson, but I grew up on the West Coast. I grew up in Los Angeles County, California.”

“One of the first things that I noticed about Kansas was that you could see the stars. In Los Angeles you could not see the mountains on most days. You could not even see the mountains even though they were 10 miles away! I don’t know what to say, there are a lot of things about Sterling that are really nice that I appreciate. There are things in Sterling that you just can’t find in a big city.”

“I have no problem with that. I like Sterling.”

**Q. Are there religious activities in the city?**

“God is just as big in Sterling as he is in New York.”

“There’s a bunch of good churches here and they are all really attractive.”

“Yes, they are.”

“Well, I belong to a church in town and we have a wonderful neighbor [church babysitter] who takes care of about 40 kids. It has been wonderful for the children. They have activities planned for them and I think that the Presbyterians started some kind of organization too. I think this is something that really needs to be done and I think it could grow. It is so nice for the little ones to have something to do.”

“You know, you don’t have to go very far to go to church here.”

“The churches are kept up. They are nice and clean. They take an interest in the city too.”

“I read something recently that Jeff Foxworthy [a comedian] wrote. He said that you know you live in Oklahoma if the town you live in has just as many churches as it has bars. Well, in Sterling we have about 12 to 0.”

“No, no, no what about the VFW? It’s 12 to 1.” [Joking behavior - laughs]

“That’s one reason you don’t walk around the lake at 2 or 3 in the morning.” [Joking behavior - laughs]

“You know, you have to go out and buy it [alcohol].”

“When is the Shay building going to open up?”

**Q. Tell me more about the Shay building.**

“I think it will be a convenient place to go.”

“Yes, a nice little restaurant.”

**Continued talk about wants/needs in the City of Sterling.**

“When you have to go to Hutchinson to get things you can usually buy gasoline for a little bit cheaper price.”

“Now, you know you should buy at home when you can. Support the local economy!”

“I know, but we have the best gas station here. Co-op is one of the best stations in the country and I realize that you get service here that you would not get anywhere else. I’ve realized that. Nevertheless, right now in Hutchinson you can buy gasoline for \$2.09 or \$2.05 a gallon.”

“You are going to need that gas to get back to Sterling!”

“I know.”

“Ok, this is what I am saying. The big corporations hurt us. They have hurt us very badly and there isn’t much we can do about it. Plus, our politicians aren’t doing much about it so we have another problem.”

“Well, you know you shouldn’t forget the things that you need that we have here in Sterling.”

“Right.”

“But we do need another variety store downtown so that if I need something we do not have to drive to Hutchinson to get it. Just the other day I needed dishwashing detergent but I can get that at Dillon’s.”

“What about a spool of thread though?”

“Yeah, you can’t get a spool of thread at Dillon’s.”

“If there is something you need you just keep a list and then go to Hutchinson to buy the things you really need.”

“I just think that we should support our own stores. We shouldn’t have to go out of town.”

“A lot of people complain about Dillon’s though. I don’t complain about it and I don’t know what we would do without it.”

“I was just about to say the same thing. But you know, my wife is one of their bigger complainers. She always tells me that they don’t have anything that she wants.”

“Yeah, I understand.”

“We shop at Dillon’s and that’s just where we go to get groceries. I just wish they had more. I wish they offered other things.”

“Well, for any kind of dog food or special order you can tell the manager about it. He will special order anything for you.”

“You know, it is easy to go to Home Depot. If I can’t find something here at the lumber yard I will go and get what I need at Home Depot.”

“They do have a lot of stuff here at the lumber yard though. You still can get a lot of the same stuff here that you can get at Home Depot.”

“Yeah.”

Well, I know when I built a two car garage behind my house I checked prices. I checked Stucky's [Hardware store] and they had the materials for a cheaper price.”

“Stucky's went out of business you know.”

“Yeah, I know.”

“Did you notice any difference in quality?”

“No, I really didn't. But you know, the actual building looks pretty nice to me.”

“We priced doors and windows for our house and they gave us a really good price at Stucky's. They even delivered!”

“There are a few things that I am really concerned about. Really good quality is one of them. I will admit though, if I need something of really good quality, I will go and buy it at Stucky's [Hardware Store] in Hutchinson.”

## **Appendix E**

### Statistics

		Attract & keep young families	Cooperate w nearby communities for services	Assist w attractive schools & college	Develop community/se niор center	Improve Sterling's downtown area
N	Valid	18	18	18	18	18
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		4.94	3.61	4.89	3.83	4.61
Median		5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	5.00
Minimum		4	2	4	2	2
Maximum		5	5	5	5	5

### Statistics

		Improve Sterling's physical appearance	Maintain quality city services	Market city as a great place to live & work	Create affordable housing	Prvd opportunities to serve on boards & commissions
N	Valid	18	18	18	18	18
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		4.00	4.56	4.44	4.06	3.50
Median		4.00	5.00	5.00	4.50	3.50
Minimum		2	2	3	1	1
Maximum		5	5	5	5	5

### Statistics

		Promote community involvement & service	Promote racial & economic diversity comnty strength	Encourage invstmnt-priv ate home mntnce & remdlng	Promote redevelopment commercial property	Create & promote industrial park
N	Valid	18	17	18	18	18
	Missing	0	1	0	0	0
Mean		4.28	3.65	3.94	4.44	3.39
Median		4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00
Minimum		3	1	3	3	1
Maximum		5	5	5	5	5

		Promote below mrkt intrst rate home imprvmt loans	Maintain access to regional jobs, goods & services	Provide cost effective city services to meet user needs	Require that property be kept up in appearance	Support seniors living independently
N	Valid	18	17	17	18	18
	Missing	0	1	1	0	0
Mean		3.56	4.12	4.35	4.11	4.00
Median		3.50	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Minimum		2	3	3	3	4.00
Maximum		5	5	5	5	2

### Statistics

		Create strong id as bedroom commnty fr Wichita-Hutch	Create a strong id separate fm surrounding communities	How rate overall quality of life in Sterling	How rate the quality of your immediate neighborhood?	How rate Sterling as place to raise children?
N	Valid	18	18	18	18	18
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.56	4.06	4.33	4.33	4.89
Median		4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	5.00
Minimum		1	2	3	3	4
Maximum		5	5	5	5	5

### Statistics

		How rate Sterling as place for teens?	How rate Sterling as place for young single adults to live?	How rate Sterling as place to live when retired?	How rate housing valuation (assessed value)	How rate opportnites serve others thru comm orgs-civic grp
N	Valid	18	18	18	18	18
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		4.28	2.89	4.33	3.56	4.22
Median		4.00	3.00	4.00	3.50	4.00
Minimum		3	1	3	3	3
Maximum		5	5	5	5	5

		How rate overall appearance of the city	How rate quality of schools	How rate sense community acceptance, friendliness, belonging	How rate travel on paved streets and highways	How rate travel on unpaved roads
N	Valid	18	18	18	18	18
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		4.17	4.94	3.94	4.00	2.56
Median		4.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	3.00
Minimum		2	4	2	3	1
Maximum		5	5	5	5	4

### Statistics

		How rate access to jobs in Wich/Hutch area	How rate access to shopping & dining Wich/Hutch area	How rate opprtnies persnl recreation Wich/Hutch area	How rate opprtnies attend cultural activies Wich/Hutch area	How rate opprtnies participate/wa tch sports Wich/Hutch area
N	Valid	18	18	18	18	18
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.11	3.28	3.56	4.06	4.28
Median		3.00	3.50	4.00	4.00	4.00
Minimum		1	1	2	3	3
Maximum		5	5	5	5	5

### Statistics

		How rate opprtnites peer social interaction Wich/Hutch area	I can afford better home than in other suburban communities	I would move if I could afford to	I like Sterling better than other communities in Wich/Hutch area	I need/want to live in Rice County & Sterling is the best choice
N	Valid	18	16	18	18	18
	Missing	0	2	0	0	0
Mean		2.78	4.00	1.50	4.50	4.78
Median		3.00	4.00	1.00	5.00	5.00
Minimum		1	2	1	2	3
Maximum		5	5	4	5	5

		I would recommend Sterling to my friends	The next time I move I will consider remaining in Sterling	I feel safe in Sterling	I feel safe from crime walking alone in my neighborhood at night	I feel safe walking downtown after dark
N	Valid	18	18	18	18	18
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		4.61	4.39	4.89	4.83	4.94
Median		5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Minimum		2	2	4	4	4
Maximum		5	5	5	5	5

### Statistics

		I feel safe walking at Sterling Lake after dark	I feel that my loved ones are safe playing in Sterling	Improve Space for activities art shows/classes, dance & music productions	Improve Small performance theater	Improve Outdoor band shell, picnic area, play equipment, benches
N	Valid	18	17	18	18	18
	Missing	0	1	0	0	0
Mean		4.78	4.76	1.44	1.94	1.39
Median		5.00	5.00	1.00	2.00	1.00
Minimum		4	4	1	1	1
Maximum		5	5	3	3	3

### Statistics

		Improve Mix of cafes & retail shops	Improve Mix of housing & commercial opportunities	Improve Off street parking	Improve community/secondary center	No interest in further developing Sterling's downtown
N	Valid	18	18	18	18	18
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		1.00	1.28	1.56	1.17	1.94
Median		1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	2.00
Minimum		1	1	1	1	1
Maximum		1	3	3	2	2

## Statistics

		Improve Sterling's parks band shell/stage	Improve Sterling's parks gazebo	Improve Sterling's parks community movie night	Improve Sterling's parks musical / theatrical productions	Improve Sterling parks increase # of campsites at Sterling Lake
N	Valid	18	18	18	18	18
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		1.50	1.78	1.50	1.50	1.50
Median		1.50	2.00	1.50	1.50	1.50
Minimum		1	1	1	1	1
Maximum		2	2	2	2	2

## Statistics

		Improve Sterling parks expand Sterling Lake	Improve Sterling parks increase # of restrooms at Sterling Lake	Improve Sterling parks convert tennis courts to a skate park	Improve Sterling parks add historical lighting to Sterling Parks	Improve Sterling parks add historical lighting to other parks
N	Valid	18	18	18	18	18
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		1.83	1.44	1.72	1.72	1.61
Median		2.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Minimum		1	1	1	1	1
Maximum		2	2	2	2	2

## Statistics

		Impression of City of Sterling employees knowledge in most recent contact	Impression of City of Sterling employees courtesy in most recent contact	Impression of City of Sterling employees timeliness of response in mst rcnt cntct	Impression of City of Sterling employees OVERALL	Quality of City of Sterling services - Building inspection
N	Valid	18	18	18	18	18
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		4.33	4.56	4.56	4.67	3.44
Median		4.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00
Minimum		3	4	4	4	1
Maximum		5	5	5	5	5

		Quality of City of Sterling services - Cleanliness of streets	Quality of City of Sterling services - Emergency medical response	Quality of City of Sterling services - Enforcement of traffic laws	Quality of City of Sterling services - Fire department education services	Quality of City of Sterling services - Fire department response to emergencies
N	Valid	18	18	18	17	17
	Missing	0	0	0	1	1
Mean		4.17	4.17	4.00	4.18	4.53
Median		4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00
Minimum		3	1	2	3	3
Maximum		5	5	5	5	5

### Statistics

		Quality of City of Sterling services - Library services	Quality of City of Sterling services - Police department visibility / presence	Quality of City of Sterling services - Police department response to emergencies	Quality of City of Sterling services - Public drinking water	Quality of City of Sterling services - Public sewer services
N	Valid	18	18	17	18	18
	Missing	0	0	1	0	0
Mean		4.39	4.44	4.59	3.28	4.11
Median		4.00	4.50	5.00	4.00	4.00
Minimum		3	3	2	1	1
Maximum		5	5	5	5	5

### Statistics

		Quality of City of Sterling services - Public trees, plantings, green spaces	Quality of City of Sterling services - Recreation amenities	Quality of City of Sterling services - Response to neighborhd appearance complaints	Quality of City of Sterling services - Smoothness of city streets	Quality of City of Sterling services - Snow ice removal fm downtown sidewalks
N	Valid	18	18	17	18	18
	Missing	0	0	1	0	0
Mean		3.94	3.06	3.24	3.06	3.72
Median		4.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	4.00
Minimum		1	1	1	1	1
Maximum		5	4	5	4	5

**Statistics**

		Quality of City of Sterling services - Snow ice removal fm city streets	Quality of City of Sterling services - Stormwater management / flood control	Quality of City of Sterling services - Street lighting	Quality of City of Sterling services - City parks cleanliness	Quality of City of Sterling services - City parks playground equipment
N	Valid	18	18	18	18	18
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.22	3.22	3.67	4.56	4.50
Median		3.00	3.50	4.00	5.00	5.00
Minimum		1	1	1	3	3
Maximum		5	5	5	5	5

**Statistics**

		Quality of City of Sterling services - City pool	Quality of City of Sterling services - Community events 4th of July, etc.	Best way for city to communicate with public - City newsletter	Best way for city to communicate with public - City website	Best way for city to communicate with public - City email / listserve
N	Valid	17	17	18	18	18
	Missing	1	1	0	0	0
Mean		4.76	4.41	1.33	1.33	1.83
Median		5.00	5.00	1.00	1.00	1.50
Minimum		4	1	1	1	1
Maximum		5	5	3	3	3

**Statistics**

		Best way for city to communicate with public - Electronic community sign	Best way for city to communicate w public - Current community sign at Power Plant	Best way for city to communicate w public - The Sterling Bulletin	Best way for city to communicate w public - Public Channel on COX Cable	Preferred way to finance following service - Public safety (police, fire, etc.)
N	Valid	18	18	18	18	18
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		1.50	1.78	1.50	2.06	2.67
Median		1.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	3.00
Minimum		1	1	1	1	2
Maximum		3	3	3	3	4

		Preferred way to finance following service - Library programs and services	Preferred way to finance following service - Library building	Preferred way to finance following service - Street & storm water system maintenance	Preferred way to finance following service - City pool	Preferred way to finance following service - City pool house / bath house
N	Valid	18	18	18	18	18
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		2.83	2.67	2.44	2.44	2.39
Median		3.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	3.00
Minimum		2	2	1	1	1
Maximum		4	4	4	4	4

### Statistics

		Preferred way to finance following service - Development of an industrial area	Preferred way to finance following service - City burn site	City Funding Preference	V115	Group
N	Valid	18	18	18	18	18
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		2.56	2.33	3.44	1.61	1.44
Median		3.00	3.00	4.00	2.00	1.00
Minimum		1	1	1	1	1
Maximum		4	4	4	2	2

### Frequency Table

#### Attract & keep young families

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4	1	5.6	5.6
	5	17	94.4	94.4
Total		18	100.0	100.0

#### Cooperate w nearby communities for services

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2	2	11.1	11.1
	3	6	33.3	33.3
	4	7	38.9	38.9
	5	3	16.7	16.7
Total		18	100.0	100.0

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4	2	11.1	11.1	11.1
	5	16	88.9	88.9	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Develop community/senior center**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	3	5	27.8	27.8	33.3
	4	8	44.4	44.4	77.8
	5	4	22.2	22.2	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Improve Sterling's downtown area**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	4	4	22.2	22.2	27.8
	5	13	72.2	72.2	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Improve Sterling's physical appearance**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2	2	11.1	11.1	11.1
	3	4	22.2	22.2	33.3
	4	4	22.2	22.2	55.6
	5	8	44.4	44.4	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Maintain quality city services**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	4	5	27.8	27.8	33.3
	5	12	66.7	66.7	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Market city as a great place to live & work**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	3	2	11.1	11.1	11.1
	4	6	33.3	33.3	44.4
	5	10	55.6	55.6	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	3	5	27.8	27.8	33.3
	4	3	16.7	16.7	50.0
	5	9	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Prvd opporunities to serve on boards & commissions**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	2	2	11.1	11.1	16.7
	3	6	33.3	33.3	50.0
	4	5	27.8	27.8	77.8
	5	4	22.2	22.2	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Promote community involvement & service**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	3	3	16.7	16.7	16.7
	4	7	38.9	38.9	55.6
	5	8	44.4	44.4	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Promote racial & economic diversity comnty strength**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	1	5.6	5.9	5.9
	2	1	5.6	5.9	11.8
	3	5	27.8	29.4	41.2
	4	6	33.3	35.3	76.5
	5	4	22.2	23.5	100.0
	Total	17	94.4	100.0	
Missing	9	1	5.6		
	Total	18	100.0		

**Encourage invstmnt-private home mntrnce & remedng**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	3	7	38.9	38.9	38.9
	4	5	27.8	27.8	66.7
	5	6	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	3	2	11.1	11.1	11.1
	4	6	33.3	33.3	44.4
	5	10	55.6	55.6	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Create & promote industrial park**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	2	11.1	11.1	11.1
	2	2	11.1	11.1	22.2
	3	4	22.2	22.2	44.4
	4	7	38.9	38.9	83.3
	5	3	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Promote below mrkt intrst rate home imprvmnt loans**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	3	8	44.4	44.4	50.0
	4	7	38.9	38.9	88.9
	5	2	11.1	11.1	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Maintain access to regional jobs, goods & services**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	3	2	11.1	11.8	11.8
	4	11	61.1	64.7	76.5
	5	4	22.2	23.5	
	Total	17	94.4	100.0	100.0
Missing	9	1	5.6		
	Total	18	100.0		

**Provide cost effective city services to meet user needs**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	3	1	5.6	5.9	5.9
	4	9	50.0	52.9	58.8
	5	7	38.9	41.2	
	Total	17	94.4	100.0	100.0
Missing	9	1	5.6		
	Total	18	100.0		

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	3	4	22.2	22.2	22.2
	4	8	44.4	44.4	66.7
	5	6	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Support seniors living independently**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	3	3	16.7	16.7	22.2
	4	9	50.0	50.0	72.2
	5	5	27.8	27.8	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Create strong id as bedroom commnty fr Wichita-Hutch**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	2	1	5.6	5.6	11.1
	3	6	33.3	33.3	44.4
	4	7	38.9	38.9	83.3
	5	3	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Create a strong id separate fm surrounding communities**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2	2	11.1	11.1	11.1
	3	2	11.1	11.1	22.2
	4	7	38.9	38.9	61.1
	5	7	38.9	38.9	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**How rate overall quality of life in Sterling**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Fair	2	11.1	11.1	11.1
	4	8	44.4	44.4	55.6
	Excellent	8	44.4	44.4	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Fair	4	22.2	22.2	22.2
	4	4	22.2	22.2	44.4
	Excellent	10	55.6	55.6	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

How rate Sterling as place to raise children?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4	2	11.1	11.1	11.1
	Excellent	16	88.9	88.9	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

How rate Sterling as place for teens?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Fair	3	16.7	16.7	16.7
	4	7	38.9	38.9	55.6
	Excellent	8	44.4	44.4	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

How rate Sterling as place for young single adults to live?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Poor	3	16.7	16.7	16.7
	2	4	22.2	22.2	38.9
	Fair	6	33.3	33.3	72.2
	4	2	11.1	11.1	83.3
	Excellent	3	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

How rate Sterling as place to live when retired?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Fair	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	4	10	55.6	55.6	61.1
	Excellent	7	38.9	38.9	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

How rate housing valuation (assessed value)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Fair	9	50.0	50.0	50.0
	4	8	44.4	44.4	94.4
	Excellent	1	5.6	5.6	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Fair	4	22.2	22.2	22.2
	4	6	33.3	33.3	55.6
	Excellent	8	44.4	44.4	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

#### How rate overall appearance of the city

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	Fair	2	11.1	11.1	16.7
	4	8	44.4	44.4	61.1
	Excellent	7	38.9	38.9	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

#### How rate quality of schools

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	Excellent	17	94.4	94.4	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

#### How rate sense community acceptance, friendliness, belonging

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2	2	11.1	11.1	11.1
	Fair	3	16.7	16.7	27.8
	4	7	38.9	38.9	66.7
	Excellent	6	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

#### How rate travel on paved streets and highways

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Fair	2	11.1	11.1	11.1
	4	14	77.8	77.8	88.9
	Excellent	2	11.1	11.1	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Poor	3	16.7	16.7	16.7
	2	5	27.8	27.8	44.4
	Fair	7	38.9	38.9	83.3
	4	3	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

How rate access to jobs in Wich/Hutch area

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Poor	2	11.1	11.1	11.1
	2	3	16.7	16.7	27.8
	Fair	6	33.3	33.3	61.1
	4	5	27.8	27.8	88.9
	Excellent	2	11.1	11.1	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

How rate access to shopping & dining Wich/Hutch area

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Poor	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	2	4	22.2	22.2	27.8
	Fair	4	22.2	22.2	50.0
	4	7	38.9	38.9	88.9
	Excellent	2	11.1	11.1	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

How rate opprtnities persnl recreation Wich/Hutch area

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2	3	16.7	16.7	16.7
	Fair	5	27.8	27.8	44.4
	4	7	38.9	38.9	83.3
	Excellent	3	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

How rate opprtnities attend cultural activies Wich/Hutch area

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Fair	5	27.8	27.8	27.8
	4	7	38.9	38.9	66.7
	Excellent	6	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Fair	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	4	11	61.1	61.1	66.7
	Excellent	6	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**How rate opprtnites peer social interaction Wich/Hutch area**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Poor	2	11.1	11.1	11.1
	2	6	33.3	33.3	44.4
	Fair	6	33.3	33.3	77.8
	4	2	11.1	11.1	88.9
	Excellent	2	11.1	11.1	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**I can afford better home than in other suburban communities**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2	2	11.1	12.5	12.5
	Somewhat true	3	16.7	18.8	31.3
	4	4	22.2	25.0	56.3
	True	7	38.9	43.8	100.0
	Total	16	88.9	100.0	
Missing	9	2	11.1		
	Total	18	100.0		

**I would move if I could afford to**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not true	14	77.8	77.8	77.8
	2	1	5.6	5.6	83.3
	Somewhat true	1	5.6	5.6	88.9
	4	2	11.1	11.1	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**I like Sterling better than other communities in Wich/Hutch area**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	Somewhat true	1	5.6	5.6	11.1
	4	4	22.2	22.2	33.3
	True	12	66.7	66.7	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Somewhat true	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	4	2	11.1	11.1	16.7
	True	15	83.3	83.3	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

I would recommend Sterling to my friends

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	Somewhat true	1	5.6	5.6	11.1
	4	2	11.1	11.1	22.2
	True	14	77.8	77.8	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

The next time I move I will consider remaining in Sterling

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	Somewhat true	3	16.7	16.7	22.2
	4	2	11.1	11.1	33.3
	True	12	66.7	66.7	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

I feel safe in Sterling

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4	2	11.1	11.1	11.1
	True	16	88.9	88.9	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

I feel safe from crime walking alone in my neighborhood at night

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4	3	16.7	16.7	16.7
	True	15	83.3	83.3	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

I feel safe walking downtown after dark

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	True	17	94.4	94.4	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4	22.2	22.2	22.2
True	14	77.8	77.8	
Total	18	100.0	100.0	100.0

**I feel that my loved ones are safe playing in Sterling**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4	22.2	23.5	23.5
True	13	72.2	76.5	
Total	17	94.4	100.0	100.0
Missing	9	5.6		
Total	18	100.0		

**Improve Space for activities art shows/classes. dance & music productions**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	12	66.7	66.7
	No	4	22.2	22.2
	No Opinion	2	11.1	11.1
Total		18	100.0	100.0

**Improve Small performance theater**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	6	33.3	33.3
	No	7	38.9	38.9
	No Opinion	5	27.8	27.8
Total		18	100.0	100.0

**Improve Outdoor band shell, picnic area, play equipment, benches**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	12	66.7	66.7
	No	5	27.8	27.8
	No Opinion	1	5.6	5.6
Total		18	100.0	100.0

**Improve Mix of cafes & retail shops**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	18	100.0	100.0

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	15	83.3	83.3	83.3
	No	1	5.6	5.6	88.9
	No Opinion	2	11.1	11.1	
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Improve Off street parking**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	11	61.1	61.1	61.1
	No	4	22.2	22.2	83.3
	No Opinion	3	16.7	16.7	
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Improve community/serior center**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	15	83.3	83.3	83.3
	No	3	16.7	16.7	
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	100.0

**No interest in further developing Sterling's downtown**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	No	17	94.4	94.4	
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Improve Sterling's parks band shell/stage**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	9	50.0	50.0	50.0
	No	9	50.0	50.0	
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Improve Sterling's parks gazebo**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	4	22.2	22.2	22.2
	No	14	77.8	77.8	
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	100.0

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	9	50.0	50.0	50.0
No	9	50.0	50.0	100.0
Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Improve Sterling's parks musical / theatrical productions**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	9	50.0	50.0	50.0
No	9	50.0	50.0	100.0
Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Improve Sterling parks increase # of campsites at Sterling Lake**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	9	50.0	50.0	50.0
No	9	50.0	50.0	100.0
Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Improve Sterling parks expand Sterling Lake**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	3	16.7	16.7	16.7
No	15	83.3	83.3	100.0
Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Improve Sterling parks increase # of restrooms at Sterling Lake**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	10	55.6	55.6	55.6
No	8	44.4	44.4	100.0
Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Improve Sterling parks convert tennis courts to a skate park**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	5	27.8	27.8	27.8
No	13	72.2	72.2	100.0
Total	18	100.0	100.0	

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	5	27.8	27.8	27.8
	No	13	72.2	72.2	
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Improve Sterling paks add historical lighting to other parks**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	7	38.9	38.9	38.9
	No	11	61.1	61.1	
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Impression of City of Sterling employees knowledge in most recent contact**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Somewhat Important	2	11.1	11.1	11.1
	4	8	44.4	44.4	55.6
	Very Important	8	44.4	44.4	
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Impression of City of Sterling employees courtesy in most recent contact**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4	8	44.4	44.4	44.4
	Very Important	10	55.6	55.6	
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Impression of City of Sterling employees timeliness of response in mst rcnt cntct**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4	8	44.4	44.4	44.4
	Very Important	10	55.6	55.6	
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Impression of City of Sterling employees OVERALL**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4	6	33.3	33.3	33.3
	Very Important	12	66.7	66.7	
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	100.0

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Poor	2	11.1	11.1	11.1
	2	1	5.6	5.6	16.7
	Fair	5	27.8	27.8	44.4
	4	7	38.9	38.9	83.3
	Excellent	3	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Quality of City of Sterling services - Cleanliness of streets**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Fair	3	16.7	16.7	16.7
	4	9	50.0	50.0	66.7
	Excellent	6	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Quality of City of Sterling services - Emergency medical response**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Poor	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	4	11	61.1	61.1	66.7
	Excellent	6	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Quality of City of Sterling services - Enforcement of traffic laws**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2	2	11.1	11.1	11.1
	Fair	2	11.1	11.1	22.2
	4	8	44.4	44.4	66.7
	Excellent	6	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Quality of City of Sterling services - Fire department education services**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Fair	4	22.2	23.5	23.5
	4	6	33.3	35.3	58.8
	Excellent	7	38.9	41.2	100.0
	Total	17	94.4	100.0	
Missing	9	1	5.6		
	Total	18	100.0		

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Fair	1	5.6	5.9	5.9
	4	6	33.3	35.3	41.2
	Excellent	10	55.6	58.8	100.0
	Total	17	94.4	100.0	
Missing	9	1	5.6		
	Total	18	100.0		

#### Quality of City of Sterling services - Library services

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Fair	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	4	9	50.0	50.0	55.6
	Excellent	8	44.4	44.4	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

#### Quality of City of Sterling services - Police department visibility / presence

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Fair	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	4	8	44.4	44.4	50.0
	Excellent	9	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

#### Quality of City of Sterling services - Police department response to emergencies

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2	1	5.6	5.9	5.9
	4	4	22.2	23.5	29.4
	Excellent	12	66.7	70.6	100.0
	Total	17	94.4	100.0	
Missing	9	1	5.6		
	Total	18	100.0		

#### Quality of City of Sterling services - Public drinking water

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Poor	4	22.2	22.2	22.2
	2	1	5.6	5.6	27.8
	Fair	3	16.7	16.7	44.4
	4	6	33.3	33.3	77.8
	Excellent	4	22.2	22.2	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Poor	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	Fair	2	11.1	11.1	16.7
	4	8	44.4	44.4	61.1
	Excellent	7	38.9	38.9	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

#### Quality of City of Sterling services - Public trees, plantings, green spaces

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Poor	2	11.1	11.1	11.1
	Fair	3	16.7	16.7	27.8
	4	5	27.8	27.8	55.6
	Excellent	8	44.4	44.4	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

#### Quality of City of Sterling services - Recreation amenities

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Poor	2	11.1	11.1	11.1
	2	1	5.6	5.6	16.7
	Fair	9	50.0	50.0	66.7
	4	6	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

#### Quality of City of Sterling services - Response to neighborhood appearance complaints

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Poor	2	11.1	11.8	11.8
	2	1	5.6	5.9	17.6
	Fair	6	33.3	35.3	52.9
	4	7	38.9	41.2	94.1
	Excellent	1	5.6	5.9	
	Total	17	94.4	100.0	100.0
	Missing	9	1	5.6	
Total		18	100.0		

#### Quality of City of Sterling services - Smoothness of city streets

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Poor	3	16.7	16.7	16.7
	2	1	5.6	5.6	22.2
	Fair	6	33.3	33.3	55.6
	4	8	44.4	44.4	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Poor	2	11.1	11.1	11.1
	Fair	2	11.1	11.1	22.2
	4	11	61.1	61.1	83.3
	Excellent	3	16.7	16.7	
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	100.0

#### Quality of City of Sterling services - Snow ice removal fm city streets

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Poor	2	11.1	11.1	11.1
	2	2	11.1	11.1	22.2
	Fair	6	33.3	33.3	55.6
	4	6	33.3	33.3	88.9
	Excellent	2	11.1	11.1	100.0
Total		18	100.0	100.0	

#### Quality of City of Sterling services - Stormwater management / flood control

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Poor	2	11.1	11.1	11.1
	2	2	11.1	11.1	22.2
	Fair	5	27.8	27.8	50.0
	4	8	44.4	44.4	94.4
	Excellent	1	5.6	5.6	100.0
Total		18	100.0	100.0	

#### Quality of City of Sterling services - Street lighting

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Poor	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	2	2	11.1	11.1	16.7
	Fair	3	16.7	16.7	33.3
	4	8	44.4	44.4	77.8
	Excellent	4	22.2	22.2	100.0
Total		18	100.0	100.0	

#### Quality of City of Sterling services - City parks cleanliness

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Fair	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	4	6	33.3	33.3	38.9
	Excellent	11	61.1	61.1	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Fair	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	4	7	38.9	38.9	44.4
	Excellent	10	55.6	55.6	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Quality of City of Sterling services - City pool**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4	4	22.2	23.5	23.5
	Excellent	13	72.2	76.5	100.0
	Total	17	94.4	100.0	
Missing	9	1	5.6		
	Total	18	100.0		

**Quality of City of Sterling services - Community events 4th of July, etc.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Poor	1	5.6	5.9	5.9
	4	6	33.3	35.3	41.2
	Excellent	10	55.6	58.8	100.0
	Total	17	94.4	100.0	
Missing	9	1	5.6		
	Total	18	100.0		

**Best way for city to communicate with public - City newsletter**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	13	72.2	72.2	72.2
	No	4	22.2	22.2	94.4
	No Opinion	1	5.6	5.6	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Best way for city to communicate with public - City website**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	15	83.3	83.3	83.3
	No Opinion	3	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	9	50.0	50.0	50.0
	No	3	16.7	16.7	66.7
	No Opinion	6	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Best way for city to communicate with public - Electronic community sign**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	12	66.7	66.7	66.7
	No	3	16.7	16.7	83.3
	No Opinion	3	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Best way for city to communicate w public - Current community sign at Power Plant**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	7	38.9	38.9	38.9
	No	8	44.4	44.4	83.3
	No Opinion	3	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Best way for city to communicate w public - The Sterling Bulletin**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	12	66.7	66.7	66.7
	No	3	16.7	16.7	83.3
	No Opinion	3	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Best way for city to communicate w public - Public Channel on COX Cable**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	4	22.2	22.2	22.2
	No	9	50.0	50.0	72.2
	No Opinion	5	27.8	27.8	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Preferred way to finance following service - Public safety (police, fire, etc.)**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Taxes Only	7	38.9	38.9	38.9
	Fees and Taxes	10	55.6	55.6	94.4
	Not A City Responsibility	1	5.6	5.6	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Taxes Only	4	22.2	22.2	22.2
	Fees and Taxes	13	72.2	72.2	94.4
	Not A City Responsibility	1	5.6	5.6	
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Preferred way to finance following service - Library building**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Taxes Only	7	38.9	38.9	38.9
	Fees and Taxes	10	55.6	55.6	94.4
	Not A City Responsibility	1	5.6	5.6	
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Preferred way to finance following service - Street & storm water system maintenance**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Fees Only	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	Taxes Only	9	50.0	50.0	55.6
	Fees and Taxes	7	38.9	38.9	94.4
	Not A City Responsibility	1	5.6	5.6	
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Preferred way to finance following service - City pool**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Fees Only	5	27.8	27.8	27.8
	Taxes Only	1	5.6	5.6	33.3
	Fees and Taxes	11	61.1	61.1	94.4
	Not A City Responsibility	1	5.6	5.6	
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Preferred way to finance following service - City pool house / bath house**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Fees Only	5	27.8	27.8	27.8
	Taxes Only	2	11.1	11.1	38.9
	Fees and Taxes	10	55.6	55.6	94.4
	Not A City Responsibility	1	5.6	5.6	
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	100.0

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Fees Only	2	11.1	11.1	11.1
	Taxes Only	6	33.3	33.3	44.4
	Fees and Taxes	8	44.4	44.4	88.9
	Not A City Responsibility	2	11.1	11.1	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Preferred way to finance following service - City burn site**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Fees Only	6	33.3	33.3	33.3
	Taxes Only	1	5.6	5.6	38.9
	Fees and Taxes	10	55.6	55.6	94.4
	Not A City Responsibility	1	5.6	5.6	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**City Funding Preference**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	increase prop tax = inflatn ok for same city services cut city prop tax even if change reduce city services	3	16.7	16.7	16.7
		1	5.6	5.6	22.2
	city prop tax increase to maintain high qual life & services	14	77.8	77.8	
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	100.0

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		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Made a statement	7	38.9	38.9	38.9
	2	11	61.1	61.1	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

**Group**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	First Group	10	55.6	55.6	55.6
	Second Group	8	44.4	44.4	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	