



**BOROUGH OF
STATE COLLEGE, PA
2011**

Report of Open-ended Question

C O N T E N T S

Survey Background..... 1
 About The National Citizen Survey™ 1

Understanding the Results 2
 About Closed-ended and Open-ended Questions2
 Verbatims.....2

Verbatim Responses to Open-ended Questions 4
 State College is working to increase community involvement among all residents. What types of events or programs could the Borough encourage to increase your community involvement? ... 4
 Inclusion and access - engaging students, seniors, families, making events accessible to all. 4
 Block parties, neighborhood events and gatherings..... 5
 Public service events- volunteering, clean-up days.....6
 Events- festivals, arts, holidays 7
 Public information, promoting events, city meetings and forums.....8
 Sports, park and active events.....8
 Too busy, unable to be involved, not interested, nothing..... 9
 Education- activities related to program and continuing education for residents 9
 Activities related to crime, alcohol issues, etc., involving law enforcement and public safety 10
 Response not related to question asked..... 10
 Community gardening..... 11
 Don't know 11
 Other 11

SURVEY BACKGROUND

ABOUT THE NATIONAL CITIZEN SURVEY™

The National Citizen Survey™ (The NCS™) is a collaborative effort between National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA).

The survey and its administration are standardized to assure high quality survey methods and comparable results across The National Citizen Survey™ jurisdictions. Participating households are selected at random and the household member who responds is selected without bias. Multiple mailings give each household more than one chance to participate with self-addressed and postage paid envelopes. Results are statistically weighted to reflect the proper demographic composition of the entire community.

The National Citizen Survey™ customized for this jurisdiction was developed in close cooperation with local jurisdiction staff. The Borough of State College staff selected items from a menu of questions about services and community problems; they defined the jurisdiction boundaries NRC used for sampling; and they provided the appropriate letterhead and signatures for mailings. Borough of State College staff also determined local interest in a variety of add-on options to The National Citizen Survey™ Basic Service.

UNDERSTANDING THE RESULTS

ABOUT CLOSED-ENDED AND OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Questions can either be asked in a closed-ended or open-ended manner. A closed-ended question is one where a set of response options is listed on the survey. Those taking the survey respond to each option listed. Open-ended questions have no answer choices from which respondents select their response. Instead, respondents must “create” their own answers and state them in their own words. The verbatim responses are categorized by topic area using codes. An “other” category is used for responses falling outside the coded categories. In general, a code is assigned when at least 5-10% of responses will fit the code.

Advantages of an open-ended question include:

- Responses are not prompted, allowing respondents to provide answers that are not anticipated or well known.
- This type of question tends to capture response options that come to mind most quickly.
- The final result can be richer, since verbatim responses are included in an appendix, giving you and others a chance to “hear” the voice of respondents in their own words.
- There is a smaller risk of missing important dimensions.

VERBATIMS

Respondents were asked to record their opinions about State College in the following question:

- State College is working to increase community involvement among all residents. What types of events or programs could the Borough encourage to increase your community involvement?

The verbatim responses were categorized by topic area and those topics are reported in the following table with the percent of responses given in each category. Because some comments from residents covered more than a single topic, each topic mentioned by a resident was categorized and counted for in the table below. Verbatim comments that contain more than one topic nevertheless appear only once (in the category of the first topic listed), however the analysis in the following table counts each of the topic areas given by all respondents regardless where those topics appeared in the comment.

Results from the open-ended question is best understood by reviewing the table of frequencies that summarize responses as well as the actual verbatim responses themselves.

State College is working to increase community involvement among all residents. What types of events or programs could the Borough encourage to increase your community involvement?	Percent of Respondents
Inclusion and access - engaging students, seniors, families, making events accessible to all	23%
Block parties, neighborhood events and gatherings	18%
Public service events- volunteering, clean-up days	16%
Events- festivals, arts, holidays	14%
Public information, promoting events, city meetings and forums	11%
Sports, park and active events	7%
Too busy, unable to be involved, not interested, nothing	7%
Education- activities related to program and continuing education for residents	6%
Activities related to crime, alcohol issues, etc., involving law enforcement and public safety	6%
Response not related to question asked	6%
Community gardening	5%
Don't know	5%
Other	12%
Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one category.	

VERBATIM RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

The following pages contain the respondents' verbatim responses as written on the survey and have not been edited for spelling or grammar. Responses have been organized by coded topic areas according to the first response given.

STATE COLLEGE IS WORKING TO INCREASE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AMONG ALL RESIDENTS. WHAT TYPES OF EVENTS OR PROGRAMS COULD THE BOROUGH ENCOURAGE TO INCREASE YOUR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT?

Inclusion and access - engaging students, seniors, families, making events accessible to all

- Accommodate those of us who work afternoons evenings and Saturdays.
- Advertise events more to students! Any free event would be of more interest to students who are living on minimum funds.
- Any activity that brings diverse ethnic communities together - Arts, gardening, music activities.
- Anything that diversifies a community dominated by PSU student partying and athletics events. That is the biggest obstacle to community here.
- Anyway that the Borough actually reached out to students that actually looked at them as members of the community rather than a nuisance.
- As a student I'd like to see more student involvement in the local government.
- Attending new events or programs can be very difficult for people with heavy work commitments. I would suggest more networking with community groups & churches that are already established to bring them together in increased community involvement rather than trying to set up separate programs.
- Encourage CATA to allow seniors to shop with carts. Provide neutral parties such as league of women voters to in services seniors/handicapped at larger communities. Many seniors and handicap stay home rather than mangle with drunken students. More patrols, please.
- Establish more community opportunities for his & college & adult senior people to join - the rewarded significantly (recognition, or money, pleasures) in community work/training programs; fire dept, parks upkeep, bicycle paths routes 2. Fund ways to TRAIN toward desirable activities, behavior, most of us don't know-recycling for example, or yard maintenance standards, or ways of helping.
- Events for seniors.
- First of all, you can't go targeting students, making laws against them, etc. Because (1) its hypocritical, (2) The whole economy and area is based on Penn State, you should have students interests first and foremost in your decisions.
- Get students to do things together
- Greeting new students & block parties also; more market-style vendors.
- Help retirees - shop, clean garden, drive to events "shopping". If parking downtown were free. I would patronize stores there, but since it's not, I never go down there & take my business elsewhere.
- I feel like so much is geared towards PSU students. Anything that would be more open to the community. I would consider involving myself in.

- I feel students and residents are too disconnected. We need more of a sense of community.
- If students felt appreciated & respected through things like more affordable housing & renter's rights, the world probably be more enthusiastic about community involvement & making a positive contribution.
- Increase better PSU student behavior in our town and community.
- Increase the number of LGBTQ: (Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender questioning) events, music acts, speakers and other activities that cater to the State College queer community! Add more gay bars please!!
- Increase the program for door-to-door contact with incoming students. More connection between permanent & transient residents.
- LGBT outreach programs - both PSU and the surrounding community have a large LGBT community that is largely ignored and at times harassed. Make State College a more LGBT - friendly place and we'll give back because we're wealthy and have time to volunteer...
- Make college students aware of the potential activities. We have lived in town for two years and have never known about community activities until it was too late.
- More "Town-Gown" activities to improve student community relations.
- More activities/options for seniors. More opportunities for youth to volunteer their time & connect w/ seniors.
- More cross - cultural events.
- More events to involve students in State College community
- More festivities geared towards teens and young adults.
- More meetings with the local government and students, not just officials from the student government.
- More openness between town & gown.
- More programs geared to student - community members collaborating for good of community. Must engage/market to all students.
- More responsibility to students in the community.
- More senior living.
- More town & gown events where students & residents work together - maybe a day of service?
- Need to have more events for unmarried/single widowed unchilded adults (that do not occur in bars).
- Programs geared toward keeping students here after graduation / making it more attractive to young professionals.
- Student / young adult focused activities.
- Unite students with other community members.

Block parties, neighborhood events and gatherings

- A block party for the west end followed by organized neighborhood clean up days/events.
- Attractive block party.
- Be a part of a neighborhood.
- Block parties
- Block parties
- Block parties off-campus so we can get to know our neighborhood.
- Block parties, community activities, clean up days. Provide more information about meetings and other community activities.
- Block parties, community events / (games?).
- Block parties, fairs, picnics

- Block parties, kid-oriented gatherings such as opening of spring event, Easter egg hunt.
- Block parties.
- Block parties.
- Chili-cook off; ways of volunteering that don't require training or other binding stipulations, such as publicized food bank events that people can show up to for a few hours and lend a hand (i.e. Expand the idea PSU groups use to promote blood drives).
- Community block parties sound like a good idea. Any basic social events for neighbors, especially within apartment's downtown.
- Friendly contacts & events.
- I found it intriguing to consider neighborhood community service and/or block parties. Additionally, neighborhood strategic planning is an excellent idea to consider.
- I like the idea of neighbor block parties - Maybe a pot luck would be good, or a sharing meals/leftovers program for students living off campus. I'd join a facebook group, too.
- Improve relations between apartments (student) & residents block parties. Cook out or game watching / movie watching.
- Maybe a "neighbor" day to know more about people living near by.
- More block parties. Neighborhood socials. Instead of arts "Festival" (which benefits business only). More local activities. Amateur performances magic show, outdoor theater, sing-a-longs. Outdoor movies etc.
- More community activities and events for students.
- More neighborhood activities, with a publication that is mailed to the residents.
- More neighborhood meeting. More info given out have local officials be there.
- Neighborhood activities.
- Neighborhood block parties, gardens, clean-ups, etc. Awareness is currently lacking. Flyers or other advertisements for events would be helpful.
- Neighborhood events? Downtown events other than lame arts festival.
- Neighborhood get together
- Outside social events like block parties or music.
- Picnics to meet with our neighbors. Community services activities. Free bus services to school.
- Picnics, fairs, block parties during the day so students don't feel the need to drink.
- Potluck dinners, picnics, ethnic dancing
- Programs to help neighbors get to know one another.
- Something that helps people to meet each other. New to neighborhood greetings by a "group"?

Public service events- volunteering, clean-up days

- Clean-up, litter removal, charity, fundraisers.
- Community cleaning of sidewalks and trash pick-up.
- Environmental programs & promote more recycling & improve facilities to recycle more plastic
- More community service opportunities (most opportunities are focused on the Greek community, but there are other students who would like to be involved)
- More environmental protection events/programs. More events/programs that bring people in neighborhoods together to create a stronger sense of community.
- More service opportunities.
- More volunteer opportunities - lunch buddies @ schools or senior centers.
- Neighborhood clean-up days & a community garden.
- Neighborhood clean-up days and community gardens and periodic discussions or meetings about common living issues would be beneficial.

- Organized community service events.
- Programs that involve helping with the environment.
- Public clean up days.
- Service opportunities
- Setting up community clean up days and volunteer opportunities for community members & students.
- Some fair to make the non-profit community known to its residents so that we can better know where there are opportunities to volunteer our time.
- Things to constructively improve environmentally sustainable practices, bike routes through town, things for kids to do in winter/bad weather.

Events- festivals, arts, holidays

- A new Borough festival
- Comm-university fest: outdoor street fair w/ booth & vendors from both community & university.
- Community art projects, writing groups w/publications, urban theory seminars, tutoring/after school volunteer
- Cultural events
- Downtown fairs and festivals
- Events - live Christian entertainment for Christian families, Christian book stores. My involvement would mean no involvement until the State College leaders start solving the on going problems that we now have. Many of us feel that's the case.
- Events like arts-fest, but a bit smaller.
- Events that include free entertainment and food.
- Events that raise the resident's environmental concerns, such as recycling program.
- Festivals, Block parties - More events like arts fest or craft vendor shows.
- Festivals, fairs, park clean up.
- Free concerts or other events. We are senior citizens hence limited by health & income.
- Have everybody put out the illuminations (candle in a paper bag) on winter holiday nights- Christmas Eve, New Years Eve, etc.
- Have more fun community events (ex. Fair/carnivals etc)
- Live music is always good. In general, more PR about the Boroughs plans for the future - seems lacking on PSU side of College Ave.
- More art and theatre.
- More art programs, open air concerts.
- More events downtown that bring community together. I like the clean-up day's idea.
- More festivals and summer time activities.
- More fire works!!
- More summer concerts on old main lawn like arts fest. Or like Beatle mania.
- More things like arts fest.
- Open-air concerts, sporting activities (outdoor sports), community fair.
- Outdoor music events.
- Street fairs/carnivals
- The Borough should embrace Saint Patrick's Day & try to control it. Mardi Gras is a boon to the economy of New Orleans. It helps our economy as well.

- We have the Halloween a 4th parade - let's have a Boro celebration day - w/ features like a pet, doll, pies contest - w/ a mini carnival theme - something for residents to celebrate "community".

Public information, promoting events, city meetings and forums

- A comment area would be helpful. Please see comments positive experiences w/ Mrs. Slay Baugh's and Alan Sam's departments enjoy activities that bring ages/diversity together. This seemed too long.
- Apt complex ways of interaction.
- Attend more meetings Borough & county
- Better communication of events or programs: perhaps a Boro sponsored "bulletin board" (website) with all such events posted & with suitable description.
- Better notification of current events would be useful since I can't really say I know of them. Fitness and health oriented programs would be nice. Perhaps well publicized fitness/health programs would encourage students to behave more responsible with respect to alcohol.
- Flyers @ residences
- Knowing more about the area & activities in advance just moved here a year ago and don't realize everything that is here.
- Make more information available as to areas where volunteer help is needed. Suggest information be posted on 95.3 !! I volunteer my time with CHL and veterans services, but the public needs better informed.
- More programs making me aware of what's around since I'm somewhat new to the area. I did not know about Mt. Nittany or the fact there were bike paths around, for example.
- Notification of ways to volunteer.
- Open forum nights involving Ferguson township and the Borough, since many decisions effect us jointly (esp. Zoning & development that abuts SC)
- Planning meetings.
- Send flyers in mail
- Sending newsletters of events to student's apartment's downtown so we can learn other ways to get involved.
- Since I am disabled it would be beneficial of elected officials would visit the apartment building in which I have to explain programs.
- State College needs to better publicize opportunities for citizens to get involved. State College also could help neighborhood associations to publicize themselves. How am I supposed to get involved if I don't know how to?
- Town meetings. Polling via internet: Most opinions heard. More focus on charity & community strength, less on trivial events like state patties and silly sports parties. Town always gets trashed.

Sports, park and active events

- 5K runs, physical activities & park/community involvement.
- Any activity that combined exercise.
- Build indoor tennis facility & sports complex
- Coaching kid's soccer.
- Cycle tours of the Borough and country.

- Events @ community parks (tournaments, etc.)
- Events held at local parks (bbq & such) get together for people with similar interests/hobbies.
- Local sports leagues. Art classes
- Mountain bike/BMX park, Rock climbing wall (big one, not just the one at the YMCA), community gardens.
- Programs emphasizing a healthy and active lifestyle that also recognize our natural resources within and surrounding town.
- Sports, (2). Pot hole

Too busy, unable to be involved, not interested, nothing

- 93/retired/ appreciate all that is here.
- At present, I'm undergoing some health problem normally I would volunteer for sand-raising activities or assisting w/children's programs.
- Foxdale provides many volunteer opportunities & cultural events. Can't do more.
- I am a F/T graduate student at Penn State in a very demanding discipline, and I will be graduating in 1 year. It is unlikely that I will be participating in any community - related activities.
- I am a graduate student and generally too busy to get involved.
- I am raising a family so only do family things.
- I am retired and ease in Foxdale. I am not involved at this time.
- I work 70+ hours per week so I will most likely not be involved no matter what.
- I'm too elderly to participate much
- It is very unlikely that I would be involved. I am 84 yrs old.
- None
- None, due to my advanced age
- Not sure, school keeps me involved enough.
- Nothing much really. I find that it's very difficult for me to make the time, outside of the cab.
- Nothing stop Saint Patty's Day fine business that participate look for violations.
- There is too much always going on, so somehow you must make your program take priority over everything. People used to want to go.
- Unable to participate outside Foxdale Village.
- What you are doing now seems to work
- You do a good job now I just have to get involved.

Education- activities related to program and continuing education for residents

- Adult education programs not at Penn State campus, maybe at high school or community center
- Community literacy groups
- Educational seminars (free), pet-friendly activities.
- English communication program
- More continuing-ed classes.
- Recycling education.

- There are so many run down homes in my neighborhood of College Heights. A program to help educate resident home owners on how to combat this would help pull together the people who live 2nd pay taxes here before we all move out to tidier areas.
- Tutoring programs, cleanup programs, connections with clubs on campus.

Activities related to crime, alcohol issues, etc., involving law enforcement and public safety

- Borough holidays such as kick-a-drunk day. Alcohol is a dramatic issue in this community which can make it hazardous to go downtown at night or work in downtown bars and restaurants.
- Control of downtown after dark
- Figure at now to decrease public drunkenness and criminal mischief it has gotten at of hand!
- I would participate in any activity that is focused on decreasing public drunkenness & disorderly conduct.
- Neighborhood crime watch. Educational program about drugs (let what to watch out for). Any activities that will discourage students from drinking.
- Programs to curtail the rampant drinking among the youth and the apparent inadequate enforcement. Fund raising drives to repair the horrible roads around town.
- Something to decrease drunk driving from downtown. Allow overnight parking or increase taxi/bus availability or promote ride share.
- Stiffer fines for drinking & public disorderly conduct & more resident patrols of neighborhoods on party/event days.
- Stop the drunk frat boys from being such idiots, do something about the noise and harassment of women and minorities.
- Talks w/ Borough police on what constitutes “disorderly conduct”, and “public drunkenness”

Response not related to question asked

- Actually follow-up on things you say you will attend to. You say you will change the light @ Mckee & Park but haven't. Someone will die there. Very disappointing. Just one example.
- Change from a council-weak mayor structure to a city structure. Redevelopment for age 25 + businesses, housing
- Dancing drinking. Stopping in magazine displays. Stopping in lottery promotions.
- Enforcement of an 11 o'clock curfew; State College Borough police would conduct roaming patrols and would cite, fine, and arrest offenders. No longer would the taxpaying citizens have to put up with and deal with partying until 3 A. M.
- Have the landlords of student housing be more responsible for having the students occupying their places do a better job of cleaning up after partying.
- I am 87 years old I enjoy going to the senior center.
- I live in a senior citizen residence - Foxdale.
- More recycling, composting - better waste management.
- Offenders need to not be around victim living short distance, and don't bend the law, because of disability.
- Oh, what do you do? I don't know how many times I've seen DUIS/drunk incapacitated people walking & police cars just drive by. You are part of the problem.
- Please define “community involvement”
- Safely and humanely (no kill) reduction to feral cat population. Spay/neuter and release.

- Same as now
- SC needs to decrease the # of students living just off campus. There are many quality of life issues that have been brought about by student over population that this questionnaire does not address.
- Snow removal so sub par - school closings - bad for kids, families, jobs, etc. Library.
- Stricter punishment of question 22 offenders.
- The problem with students is deep and a reflection of our society today. It's all about them (at times) and their spoiled nature. This is the parent's fault and unfortunately our responsibility.

Community gardening

- Community garden space.
- Community gardens in town! More bike friendly paths, respect, traffic lanes more public transportation.
- Gardening
- More community gardens, more work at integrating student and non-student communities, more care of and involvement of the international populations.
- Neighborhood gardens. Neighborhood recreational activities e.g. Neighborhood walks, outdoor yoga. Neighborhood cooking classes.
- Not sure maybe urban gardening or neighborhood sustainability programs.

Don't know

- Don't know
- Don't know
- Don't know
- Don't know
- Don't know.
- Don't know.
- Have no idea at this point
- I don't have a suggestion at this time.
- I would have to look over the suggestions before making a decision.
- Just moved here, sorry!
- No opinion
- Not sure at my age!
- Not sure.

Other

- A rally to make parking cheaper and to discourage the Borough from hiring morbidly obese arrogant meter maids and local police. How about a group that slaps the retard that spent \$ 1.2 million tax payer dollars to not fix the traffic lights.
- Civil engagement
- Efforts to curb unscrupulous absentee landlords who allow their student rentals to degrade the neighborhood.
- Employment opportunities.
- Everything listed in Question 22.

- Free food.
- I think the ones listed in No 22 are all good ideas.
- Increase the amount of parking - it is a limiting factor. Also more ice cream
- LARPing
- Make money.
- More & better movies books for all ages.
- Paid events.
- Parking is really the main issue... Are there free parking spots in State College?. Ticketing / towing process seems like it is overly stressed to generate income. May be necessary, I guess.
- Partnership with local business, not chains, would increase my involvement in the community.
- Programs to help young people find jobs.
- Recognition of philanthropies other than THON
- Recycling activities, community agriculture.
- Re-establish downtown State College as an area for residents of State College by encouraging and promoting growth of retailers-eating establishments etc that are geared to long term residents of all ages.
- See 1s & 2s above # 22.
- See question 22
- Several of those in # 22 above.
- Something to do with pets (Dogs).
- Support of interfaith projects. Support public forums sponsored by community education.
- Support Webster's.
- Things that improve the quality & affordability of graduate student housing property owners do not respect students & there is no avenue of ensuring renters rights. This is a big problem here would also be involved in anti student drinking activities it's obnoxious too tolerated.
- Work as a region, not just a Borough emphasis.
- You could give me a job I could do (i.e., am equipped to do).