

JACKSON



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CITY SURVEY SHOWS 9/10 RESPONDENTS HAVE POSITIVE VIEWS OF THE JACKSON POLICE DEPARTMENT

JACKSON, MI - A recent survey aimed at discovering how city residents view the Jackson Police Department shows that although more than one-third of respondents believe the community has negative views of JPD, more than 90 percent personally hold a positive view of the department.

Dr. John Hawthorne, a professor of sociology at Spring Arbor University, drafted the survey and mailed it to Jackson residents this spring. Hawthorne said while the response rate was lower than he originally hoped, there is “still sufficient data for a baseline evaluation of city residents and their views on the JPD.”

The survey was mailed to 3,500 Jackson residents in late April. The responses showed, overall, a positive view of the city’s police department as well as consistently positive interactions with officers.

Roughly six in 10 responses reported “all” interactions with JPD officers were either positive or very positive, compared with only 8 percent reporting no positive interactions.

“This survey underscores the police department’s commitment to excellence,” Director of Police and Fire Services Elmer Hitt said. “We’ll always strive to improve, and while most interactions from respondents were positive, there are things to learn from those who held negative views.”

Nearly half of the survey respondents see police-community tensions as present everywhere, while about one-third don’t see this as a serious issue at all. Hawthorne noted that media reports on national issues may have made people sensitive about the risk of tensions here in Jackson and elsewhere, but two-thirds of survey-takers are willing to partner with the JPD and build community relationships.

Hawthorne will discuss his findings at a City Council meeting in the future - a date and time is to be determined.

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