

City of Oshkosh Citizen Surveys: 2009 – 2014

Oshkosh Public Library Trends

Starting in 2009, City Manager Mark partnered with U.W.-Oshkosh professor Karl Nollenberger and his Public Policy Analysis class to conduct surveys of citizen opinions about life in Oshkosh and the services the city provides.

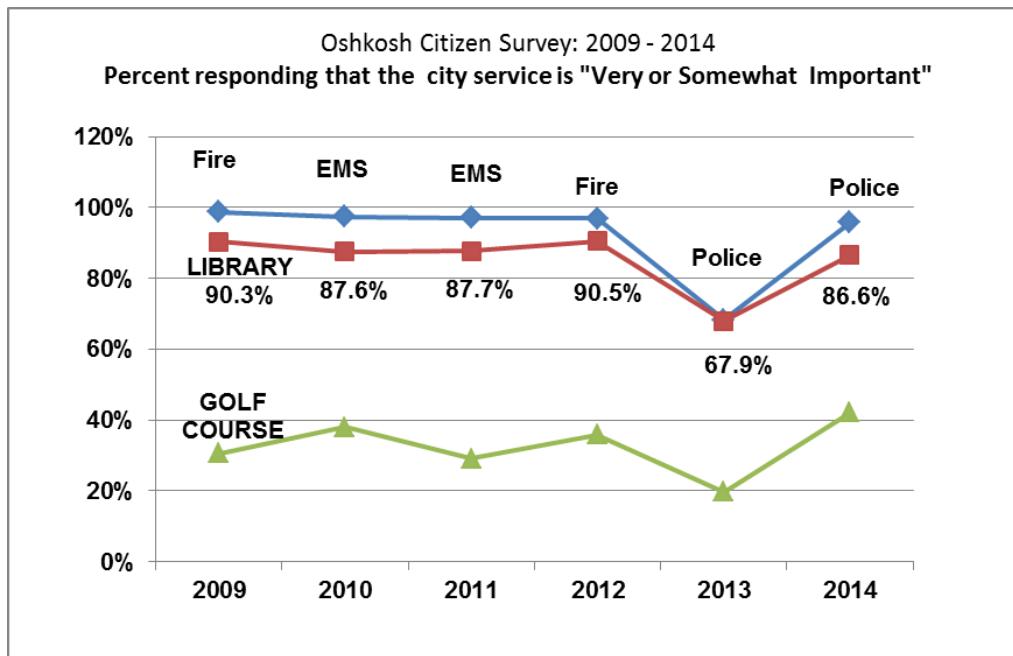
Questions about the importance and quality of city services have been asked every year from 2009 through 2014. With six years' worth of data, we can now examine some trends in the opinions of Oshkosh citizens about their public library's importance and the quality of the services it offers.

For the sake of comparison, I will present library data along with a trend line for the top-rated city service each year and a trend line for the lowest-rated city service.

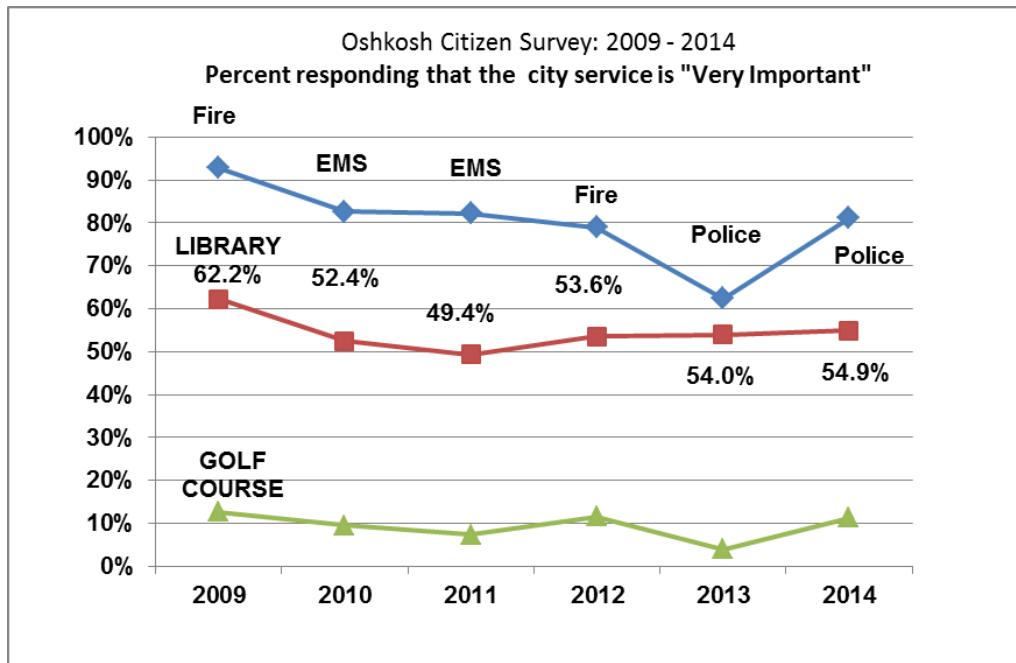
Before presenting the data, I would like to say a word about what I think is a flaw in the report data. After examining the 2013 survey report closely, it appears to me that the table reporting results to the question about Importance of city services is exactly the same as the one in Appendix A., which reports responses to the same questions as solicited in an Internet-based survey. It cannot be determined whether the data we have is from the mailed survey or the Internet survey. And, while the Internet survey data would be thought to mirror the mailed survey data, the respondents were self-selected and it is unclear how many citizens responded to the survey in this format. I hope to secure the correct data for 2013 and will update the report when I do.

Importance of Library Services

First, the good news. Over the six years of the survey (excluding the questionable 2013 data), 86% - 91% of citizens have rated the importance of public library services in Oshkosh as either "Very Important" or "Somewhat Important."

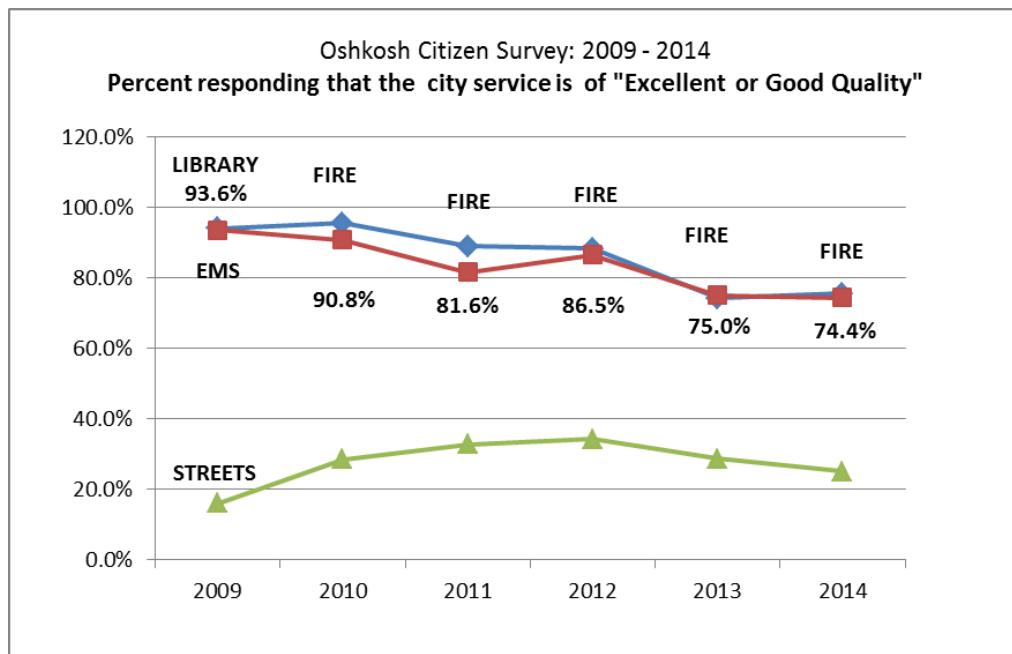


However, the percentage of citizens responding that public library services are “Very Important” has decreased from 62% in 2009 to just under 55% in 2014. This may reflect more negative opinions about city services and government in general, since the period in question was also characterized by a serious national economic crisis and divisive political developments that focused the attention of Wisconsin citizens on the compensation of public employees. Even the top-rated city protective services saw a decline in their “Very Important” rating from almost 93% to just over 81%.

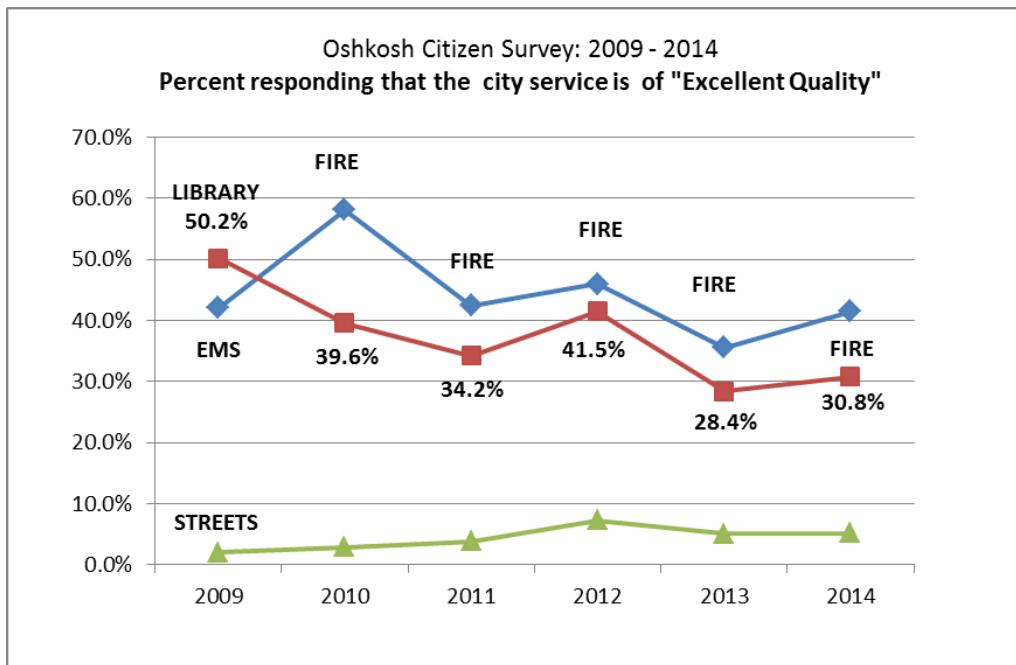


Quality

Again, the good news first: combined citizen ratings of the quality of public library service as “Excellent” or “Good” are equal to the top-rated city protective services over the period 2009 – 2014.



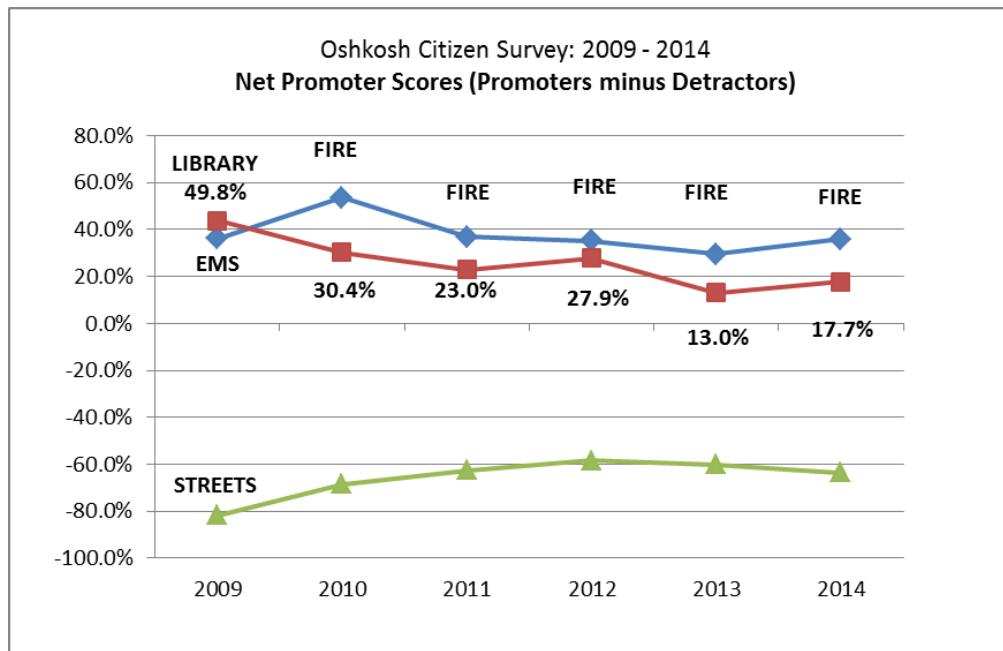
And, the same slightly declining trend is seen in citizens assigning the topmost rating of “Excellent” quality to both library services and the city protective services, which were consistently the highest-ranking services provided by the City of Oshkosh.



Net Promoter Score (NPS)

I am able to use the Oshkosh Citizen Survey to calculate a measure that I have long been interested in using to track OPL’s performance. The Net Promoter Score process asks people to respond, on a scale of 0 to 10, whether they would recommend the service to a friend or family member. Ratings of 0-6 indicate “Detractors” of the service; ratings of 7-8 indicate “Neutrals,” and ratings of 9 or 10 indicate “Promoters.” The Net Promoter Score is calculated by subtracting the percentage of Detractors from the percentage of Promoters. It is then, ideally, compared to industry benchmarks.

For the purpose of calculating a pseudo-NPS for Oshkosh Public Library, I took the Quality responses of Excellent on the Oshkosh Citizen Survey to indicate “Promoters;” Good to indicate “Neutrals,” and Fair, Poor, or No Response answers to indicate “Detractors.”



Unfortunately, I can find no industry benchmarks for public libraries in the United States. According to CheckMarket (www.CheckMarket.com), a company that provides and supports online survey services, “Average” companies have NPS scores in the range of +5 to +10 while top performing companies have NPS scores in the range of +50 to +80.

Here are NPS figures for some of the top-ranked U.S. Companies in 2013.

1. USAA - Insurance = 80%
2. USAA - Banking = 78%
3. Costco = 78%
4. Apple - Laptop = 76%
5. Dillards = 75%
6. Nordstrom = 75%
7. Apple - iphone = 70%
8. Amazon = 69%
9. Southwest Airlines = 66%
10. Apple - ipad = 65%