



Knight Soul of the Community 2010

Why People Love Where They Live and Why It Matters: A National Perspective

Minnesota

ST. PAUL

www.knightfoundation.org

KNIGHT

Soul of the Community

A PROJECT OF JOHN S. AND JAMES L. KNIGHT FOUNDATION

in partnership with GALLUP



At the Knight Foundation, our mission is to create more informed and engaged communities. We emphasize transformational projects. The Soul of the Community project reflects this mission. This study offers leaders a radically new way to think about their community and invites creative approaches for improvement. The report, based on interviews with residents in 26 Knight communities, proves that a significant connection exists between residents' levels of emotional attachment to their community and its economic growth. It presents surprising and nearly universal findings about why people form lasting emotional bonds to where they live.

We hope these discoveries inspire renewed engagement in all residents and create lasting, positive change.

Paula Lynn Ellis, Vice President/Strategic Initiatives
John S. and James L. Knight Foundation

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paula Lynn Ellis".



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	4
Community Attachment: An Emotional Connection	5
Why Attachment Matters	5
The Relationship to Community Outcomes	6
How Gallup Found the Factors With the Strongest Links to Attachment	9
What Matters Most	10
Findings for St. Paul	12
Overall Attachment	12
Key Drivers of Attachment	13
Who Is Most Attached in St. Paul	16
Implications for St. Paul	18
Strengths to Leverage	18
Opportunities to Prioritize	18
Methodology	19



Introduction

On behalf of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and Gallup, we are pleased to present the third annual Soul of the Community report. This study was conducted over three years in 26 cities across the United States where Knight Foundation is active. It was designed to find out what emotionally attaches people to a community — what makes them want to put down roots and build a life there.

In today's challenging economic climate, community leaders are seeking new ways to attract and retain people, develop prosperous economies, add intellectual capital, and create jobs. This report provides a fresh perspective about the current driving factors of passion and loyalty in a community. Most importantly, it represents the voice of the residents themselves. Gallup gathered insights from nearly 43,000 individuals, and the resulting picture will help community leaders to answer important questions such as: What makes residents love where they live? What draws people to a place and keeps them there?

The study provides empirical evidence that the drivers that create emotional bonds between people and their community are consistent in virtually every city and can be reduced to just a few categories. Interestingly, the usual suspects — jobs, the economy, and safety — are not among the top drivers. Rather, people consistently give higher ratings for elements that relate directly to their daily quality of life: an area's physical beauty, opportunities for socializing, and a community's openness to all people.

Remarkably, the study also showed that the communities with the highest levels of attachment had the highest rates of gross domestic product growth. Discoveries like these open numerous possibilities for leaders from all sectors to inform their decisions and policies with concrete data about what generates community *and* economic benefits.

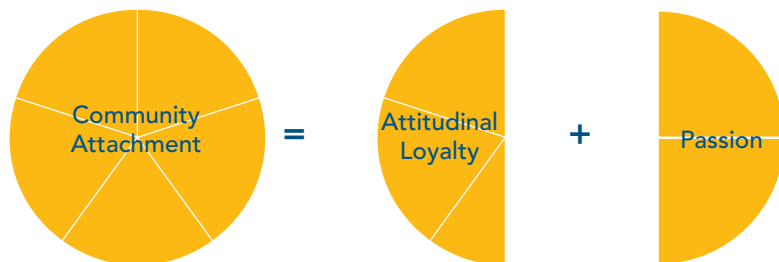
This report is not meant to be prescriptive, but rather to inform and engage leaders in new thinking and action. We hope you will read it, share it, and discuss with others what it might mean for the future of communities across our country. Our hope is that this leads to new conversations and partnerships, and new ways for all of us to work together to increase people's attachment, to strengthen our cities, and to ensure a brighter future for all people and communities.

COMMUNITY ATTACHMENT:

AN EMOTIONAL CONNECTION

Community attachment is an emotional connection to a place that transcends satisfaction, loyalty, and even passion. A community's most attached residents have strong pride in it, a positive outlook on the community's future, and a sense that it is the perfect place for them.

They are less likely to want to leave than residents without this emotional connection. They feel a bond to their community that is stronger than just being happy about where they live.

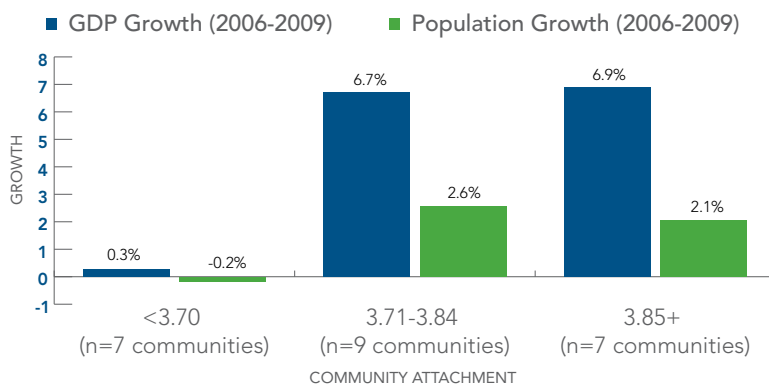


Why Attachment Matters

Over the past three years, the Soul of the Community study has found a positive correlation between community attachment and local GDP growth. Across the 26 Knight communities, those whose residents were more attached saw more local GDP growth. This is a key metric in assessing community success because local GDP growth not only measures a community's economic success, but also its ability to grow and meet residents' needs.

Local GDP Growth by Levels of Community Attachment

CA Correlation to GDP Growth=.411
CA Correlation to Population Growth=.374



GDP and population growth figures available for 23 of the 26 communities.

Gallup research proving the link between employee engagement in a workplace to business outcomes such as productivity, profitability, and employee retention helps to underscore why emotional attachment matters. Just as actively engaged employees are more productive and committed to the success of their organizations, highly attached residents are more likely to actively contribute to a community's growth.

The Relationship to Community Outcomes

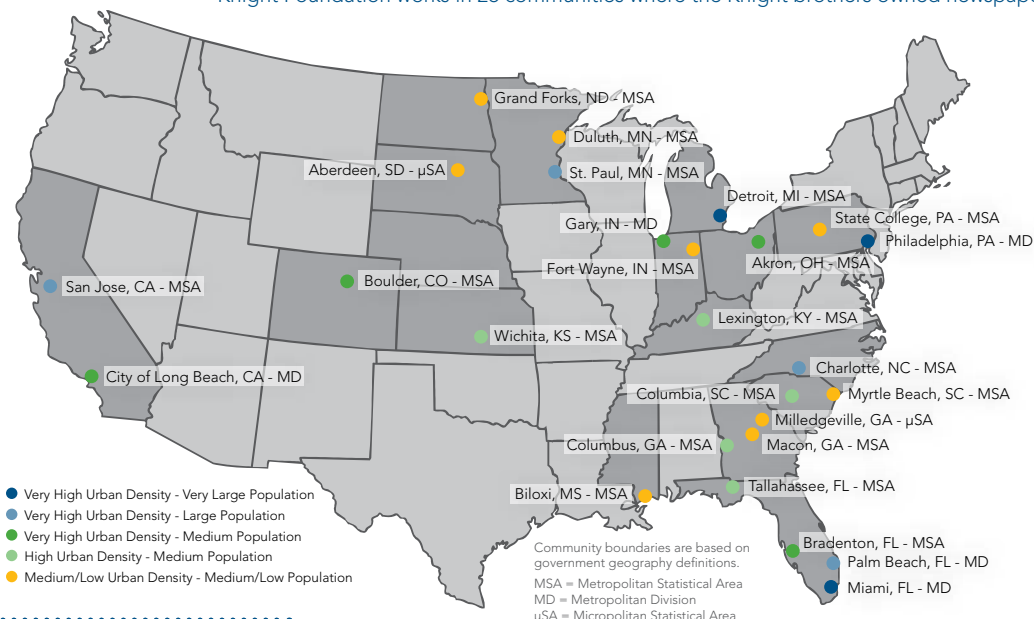
Precisely how community attachment affects community outcomes is at best a scientific guess at this point. However, the data make clear that highly attached residents are more likely to want to stay in their current communities. When this is true for college graduates and other productive residents, it increases the number of talented, highly educated workers striving to positively affect economic growth.



Highly attached residents are also more likely to see their communities as being open to many kinds of people, including talented, young college graduates and families with young children. Communities that are more open to diversity are better able to compete for talent.

Attachment is also higher when residents agree that their communities provide the social offerings and aesthetics they enjoy. When residents enjoy their community's offerings, they are more likely to spend their money on local activities and businesses, directly benefiting the local economy.

Knight Foundation works in 26 communities where the Knight brothers owned newspapers.



Highly attached residents are more likely to see their communities as being open to many kinds of people.





How Gallup Found the Factors With the Strongest Links to Attachment

To find out what drives attachment, Gallup asked residents five questions examining their level of attachment to their community and then asked them to rate various aspects of the community such as basic services, the local economy, social offerings, and openness.

Gallup then analyzed the relationship between the overall level of community attachment and residents' perceptions of aspects of the community itself to reveal the strongest links. The greater the correlation between attachment and a given factor, the stronger the link. Using this analysis, Gallup ranked the aspects of communities that have the strongest links to attachment, understanding that even small differences can be very meaningful.

Community Attribute	Correlation to Attachment*		
	2008	2009	2010
Social Offerings	0.49	0.52	0.54
Openness	0.53	0.52	0.50
Aesthetics	0.51	0.50	0.49
Education	0.47	0.44	0.47
Basic Services	0.41	0.34	0.42
Leadership	0.41	0.40	0.39
Economy	0.41	0.39	0.36
Safety	0.22	0.19	0.23
Social Capital	0.14	0.16	0.15
Civic Involvement	0.06	0.04	0.04

*The higher the correlation, the more closely the attribute is related to attachment.

What Matters Most

What attaches residents to their communities doesn't change much from place to place. While one might expect the drivers of attachment would be different in Miami from those in Macon, Ga., in fact the main drivers of attachment differ little across communities. Whether you live in San Jose, Calif., or State College, Pa., the things that connect you to your community are generally the same.

When examining each factor in the study and its relationship to attachment, the same items rise to the top, year after year:

- **Social Offerings** — Places for people to meet each other and the feeling that people in the community care about each other
- **Openness** — How welcoming the community is to different types of people, including families with young children, minorities, and talented college graduates
- **Aesthetics** — The physical beauty of the community including the availability of parks and green spaces



Key Drivers of Attachment in 2010

Knight Community	Social Offerings	Openness	Aesthetics
	Attribute Rank in 2010		
Overall	1	2	3
Aberdeen, SD	1	3	2
Akron, OH	1	3	1
Biloxi, MS	1	3	2
Boulder, CO	1	3	1
Bradenton, FL	1	3	1
Charlotte, NC	1	3	1
Columbia, SC	1	2	2
Columbus, GA	1	2	2
Detroit, MI	1	2	4
Duluth, MN	1	3	2
Fort Wayne, IN	1	3	2
Gary, IN	1	3	1
Grand Forks, ND	1	3	2
Lexington, KY	1	2	2
City of Long Beach, CA	1	3	1
Macon, GA	1	3	2
Miami, FL	1	2	4
Milledgeville, GA	1	3	2
Myrtle Beach, SC	1	3	2
Palm Beach, FL	1	3	2
Philadelphia, PA	1	2	4
San Jose, CA	1	3	2
St. Paul, MN	1	3	2
State College, PA	1	3	2
Tallahassee, FL	1	2	2
Wichita, KS	1	2	2

While the study also measures perceptions of the local economy and basic services, these three factors are always more important in terms of their relationship to community attachment. This is not to say that communities should focus on building parks when jobs aren't available. However, it does make it clear that these other factors, beyond basic needs, should be included when thinking about economic growth and development. These seemingly softer needs have an even larger effect than previously thought when it comes to residents' attachment to their communities.

Generally, demographics are not the strongest drivers of attachment. In almost every community Gallup studied, attachment is more strongly related to certain perceptions of the community than to residents' age, race, income, or other demographic characteristics. In other words, whether a resident is young or old, wealthy or poor, or black, white, or Hispanic matters less than his or her perceptions of the community. This reality gives community leaders a powerful tool to influence residents' attachment to the community, no matter who they are.



Key Community Attributes

SOCIAL OFFERINGS INCLUDES PERCEPTIONS OF:

- Vibrant nightlife
- Good place to meet people
- Other people care about each other
- Availability of arts and cultural opportunities*
- Availability of social community events*

OPENNESS INCLUDES PERCEPTIONS OF:

- Good place for older people
- Good place for racial and ethnic minorities
- Good place for families with young children
- Good place for gays and lesbians
- Good place for young, talented college graduates looking for work
- Good place for immigrants
- Good place for young adults without children*

AESTHETICS INCLUDES PERCEPTIONS OF:

- Availability of parks, playgrounds, and trails
- Beauty or physical setting

**New in 2010. Not included in overall attribute score to allow for trending to previous years.*

FINDINGS FOR ST. PAUL

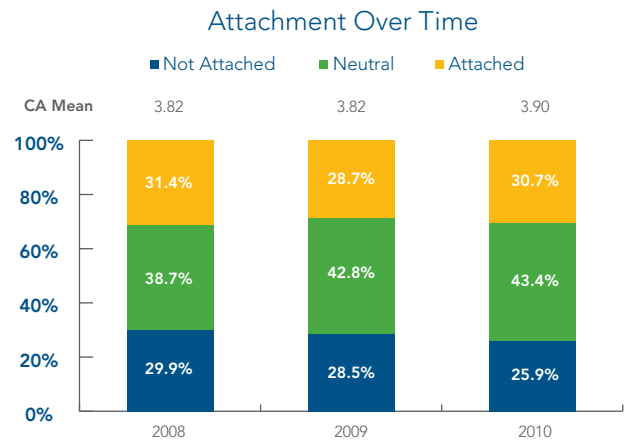
METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREA

OVERALL ATTACHMENT

More St. Paul residents expressed attachment to their community in 2010 than at any point in the past three years. Attachment increased to a mean score of 3.90 out of a possible 5.00 from 3.82 in both 2008 and 2009. Results reflect surveys conducted in Anoka, Carver, Chisago, Dakota, Hennepin, Isanti, Ramsey, Scott, Sherburne, Washington, and Wright counties in Minnesota, and Pierce and St. Croix counties in Wisconsin.

This level of attachment is higher than for the other comparable communities with very high urban density and large population in the 2010 study: Charlotte, N.C. (3.70), Palm Beach, Fla. (3.80), and San Jose, Calif. (3.84).

Findings in this report represent the St. Paul MSA unless otherwise noted.



Community Attachment in All Large Population — Very High Urban Density Communities

	2008	2009	2010
Charlotte, NC	3.74	3.74	3.70
Palm Beach, FL	3.78	3.73	3.80
St. Paul, MN	3.82	3.82	3.90
San Jose, CA	3.88	3.85	3.84
Comparison Group Mean	3.81	3.80	3.83

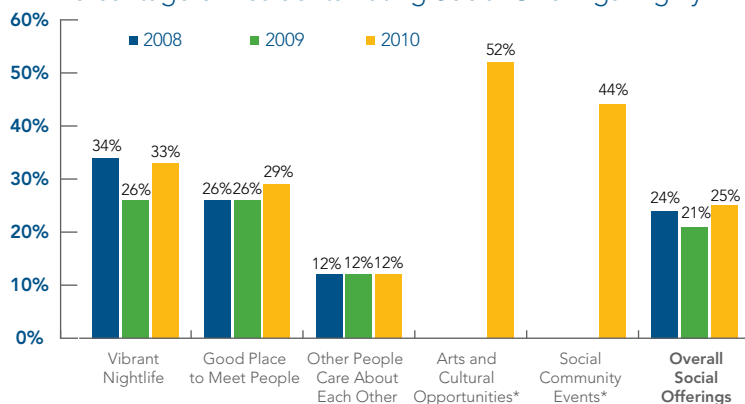
KEY DRIVERS OF ATTACHMENT

St. Paul's social offerings, aesthetics, openness, and education are, in that order, the most likely to influence the attachment of its residents. Social offerings became even more important to St. Paul residents in 2010 while education lost some influence.

- Social Offerings:** St. Paul residents are most positive about the availability of arts and cultural opportunities and social community events — two social offerings Gallup asked about for the first time this year — with many residents rating them highly. They are relatively less positive about the availability of a vibrant nightlife but rate it better than they did last year. The perception that the community is a good place to meet people has hardly improved, and few residents say that people care about each other in St. Paul.

Social Offerings

Percentage of Residents Rating Social Offerings Highly

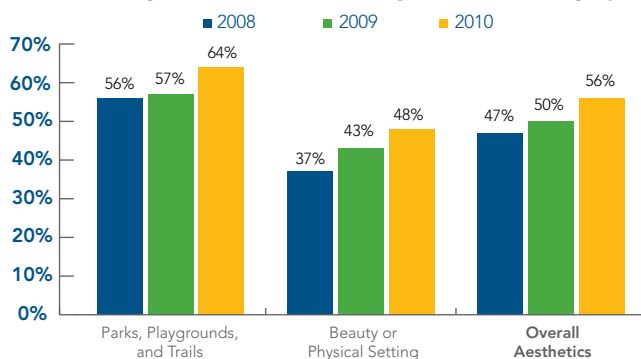


*New in 2010. Not included in domain score to allow trending.

- Aesthetics:** About two-thirds of residents rate the availability of parks, playgrounds, and trails highly, and nearly half say the beauty or physical setting of the community is good. While these aspects of the community generally receive high marks from residents, more St. Paul residents this year rated these areas highly, sustaining a key area of strength for the community.

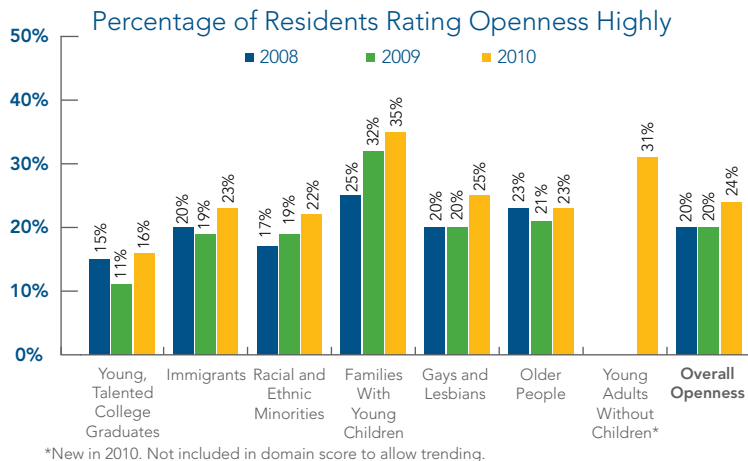
Aesthetics

Percentage of Residents Rating Aesthetics Highly



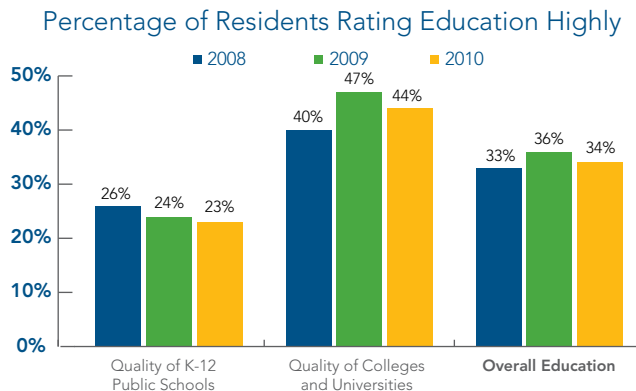
- Openness:** While openness is a key driver of attachment in St. Paul, the majority of residents continue to provide middle-of-the-road or negative responses, contributing to the community's overall lackluster performance on this metric. Residents are most likely to say St. Paul is a good place to live for young adults without children and families with young children, but only about a third say this. No more than one in four residents say St. Paul is a good place to live for older people, racial and ethnic minorities, gays and lesbians, or immigrants. Fewer than 2 in 10 say it is a good place for young, talented college graduates looking for work. Thus, St. Paul has much room for improvement on this metric critical not only to attachment but also to attracting the best and brightest to the community.

Openness



- Education:** While St. Paul residents are more positive about the quality of local colleges and universities and public K-12 education in their community than residents of the other large urban communities in the study, their perceptions leave room for improvement. Less than half are positive about the quality of higher education available in the community, and less than a quarter are positive about the quality of the public K-12 education available. These ratings are essentially unchanged since last year, suggesting little to no improvement on this metric critical to maximizing the potential of St. Paul's current residents and increasing their likelihood to stay in the community.

Education



Summary Table of Strengths and Opportunities



The vertical axis shows the strength of relationship to attachment based on average level of correlation between the item and attachment. The stronger the relationship, the higher the item on the chart. The horizontal axis shows how well the communities are performing on the item, as rated by respondents. Items farther to the right have better performance.

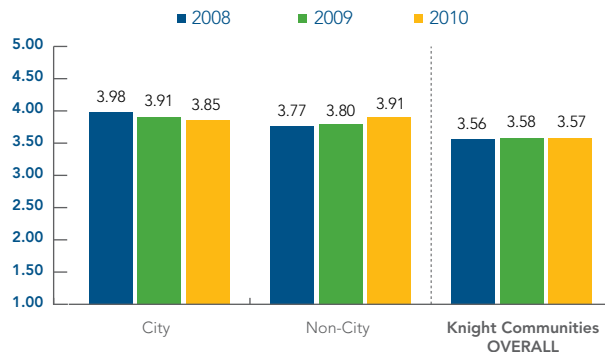


WHO IS MOST ATTACHED IN ST. PAUL

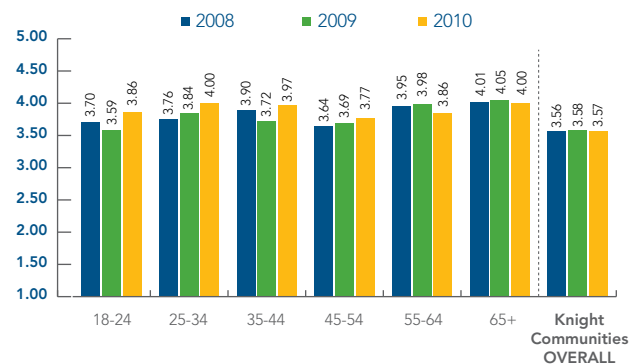
While demographic characteristics don't have as much effect on attachment as residents' perceptions of their communities, patterns do emerge among various groups.

- Geography:** There are no meaningful differences in attachment between the city of St. Paul and the balance of the MSA.
- Age:** St. Paul residents aged 65 and older are among the most attached, with an attachment score slightly above the community average. However, since last year, this group became slightly less attached while St. Paul's younger residents became more attached. Attachment among those aged 18 to 34 increased encouragingly, helping to boost the community's attachment overall, and 25- to 34-year-olds now tie older residents as the most attached groups in the community. Those aged 45 to 54 remain the least attached, but they also showed positive momentum since last year.
- Education:** St. Paul residents with a college degree or even more advanced education are the most attached, providing encouraging news for the community as it seeks to retain highly educated individuals. Still, perceptions have remained flat since 2009, suggesting little momentum among this important group. Attachment remains lower, but is increasing, among those with a high school education or less and lower and flat among those with some college.

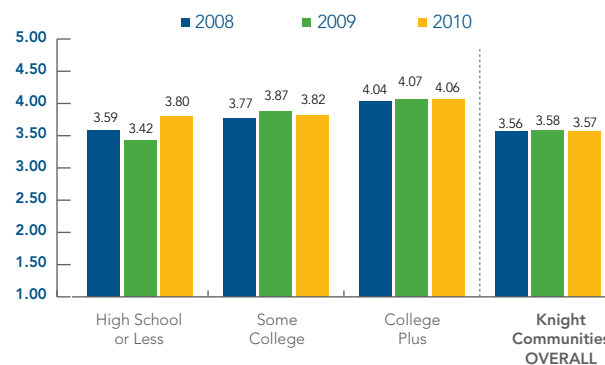
Community Attachment by Geography



Community Attachment by Age

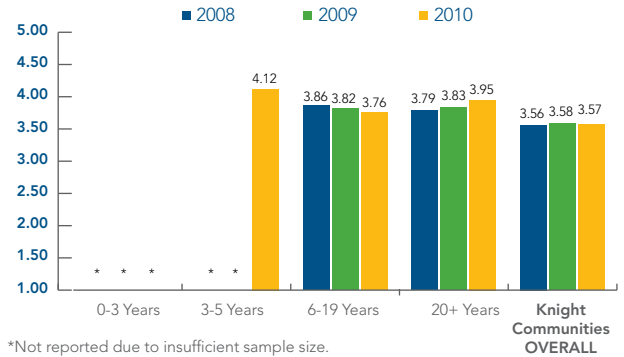


Community Attachment by Education



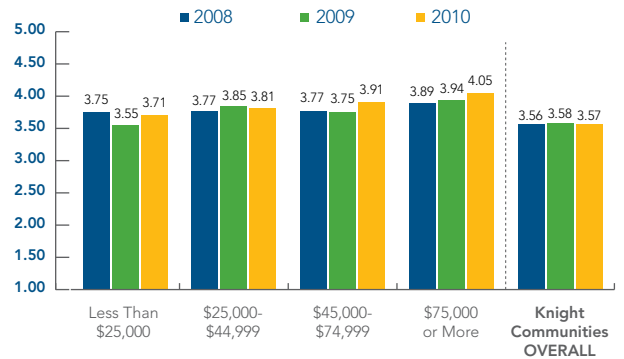
- Community Tenure:** St. Paul residents who have been in the community for three to five years are the most attached, followed by those who have been there for more than 20 years. These groups express levels of attachment above the community average while those who have lived in the community for 6 to 19 years express slightly lower levels of attachment.

Community Attachment by Tenure



- Income:** Attachment tends to increase with income in St. Paul, with those making \$75,000 or more per year easily the most attached. What's more, attachment increased across all income levels this year, except among those making \$25,000 to 44,999 per year, whose perceptions remained flat.

Community Attachment by Annual Household Income



STRENGTHS TO LEVERAGE

Social offerings remain an overall positive for St. Paul, with residents particularly positive about the availability of arts and cultural opportunities and social community events. Further investment in this area of clear value to residents will help St. Paul to achieve higher levels of attachment.

Residents are proud of St. Paul's **aesthetics**, including access to parks, playgrounds, and trails and the beauty of the setting more broadly. The community should continue to maintain and promote these offerings, perhaps through large community events, so that even greater numbers of residents feel positively about them.

Local **colleges and universities** are well-regarded compared with other communities and are an area in which continued investment could pay dividends, especially as highly educated residents continue to be the most attached.

These factors contribute to residents' attachment and are positive aspects of the community to promote.

OPPORTUNITIES TO PRIORITIZE

St. Paul residents tend to give the community low marks for **the extent to which residents truly care about each other**. Leaders should consider ways in which residents interact and relate to one another in thinking about ways to improve this important dimension.

St. Paul's weaknesses in the area of openness are likely an interrelated factor. Residents' neutral or negative responses about the community's **openness to older people, racial and ethnic minorities, gays and lesbians, or immigrants** could be inhibiting residents' desires to stay in their community and to recommend it to others. The community can and should do more to increase knowledge of initiatives to create a diverse and tolerant community that is welcoming to all groups.

Few residents rate St. Paul highly for its **desirability to young college graduates** looking for work. Leaders should do more to showcase the availability of jobs that appeal to new college graduates and to attract more businesses providing such opportunities.

While St. Paul is perceived as being relatively more welcoming to young adults without children and families with young children, the largely neutral or negative perceptions of the quality of the **K-12 education in the community** may be hurting the longer-term attachment among these groups. The community should do more to increase public awareness about what its schools are doing right and to engage all residents in the improvement and success of community schools.

Each of these elements or all of them combined may be playing a role in the finding that while attachment is higher among those who have been in the community three to five years, it drops off among those who have been there 6 to 19 years. Greater attention to these areas is likely to improve attachment in the community broadly and also to keep attachment at a high level over a longer period of time.

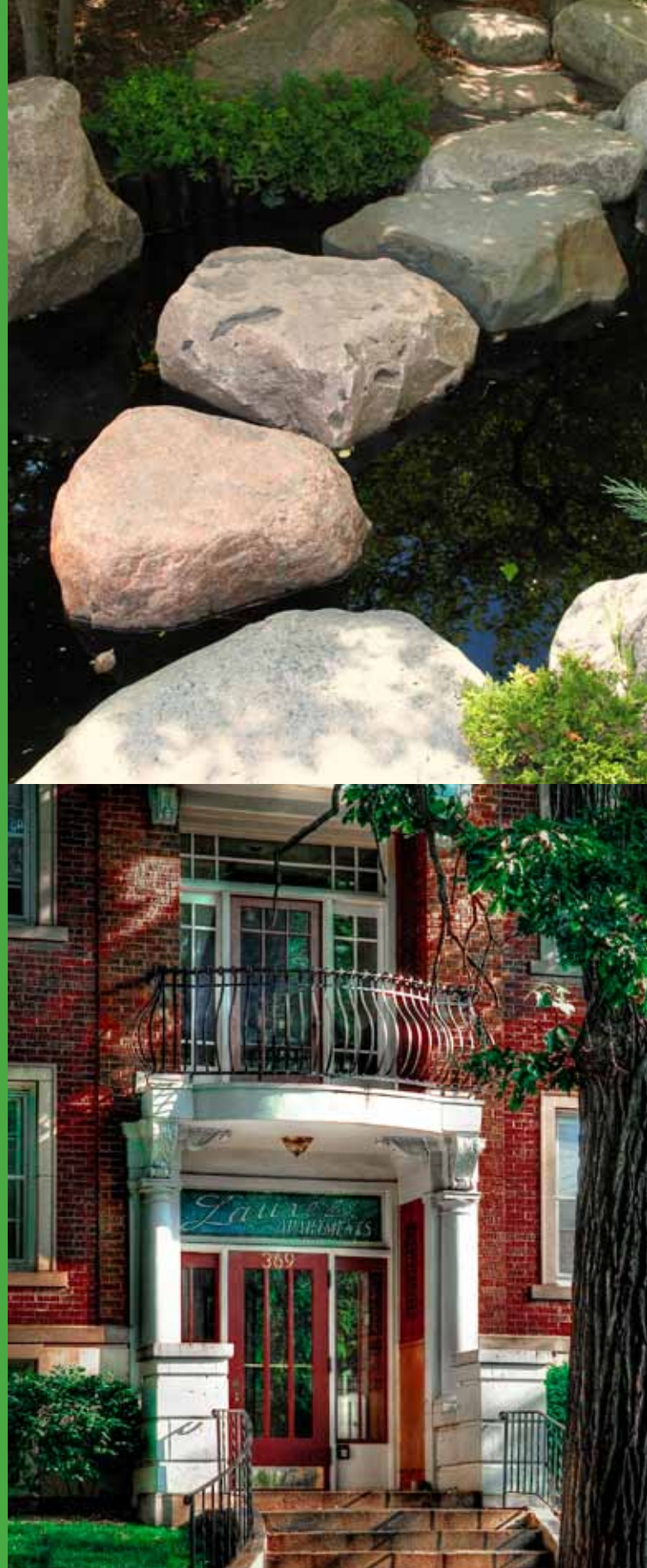
METHODOLOGY

The Gallup study is a 15-minute phone survey conducted in the 26 communities the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation serves, including St. Paul. The survey is available in English and Spanish, and both landlines and cell phones are called.

Each year, a random sample of at least 400 residents, aged 18 and older, is interviewed in each community, with additional interviews conducted in selected resident communities. In 2010, 15,200 interviews were conducted, with 1,000 conducted in eight resident communities, including St. Paul. The 2010 study also included 200 interviews among residents aged 18 to 34 in the resident communities to give Gallup more information about that age group. Overall data were adjusted to ensure an accurate representation of the real demographic makeup of each community based on U.S. Census Bureau data

Gallup also used U.S. Census classifications to choose the geographical area included in each community. For the most part, Gallup used the Metropolitan Statistical Area. However, in a few cases, Gallup used other accepted definitions of the community area. These census definitions allow Gallup to compare other information such as local GDP and population growth so that Gallup can more closely examine community attachment and key community outcomes.

In St. Paul, Gallup interviewed residents in Anoka, Carver, Chisago, Dakota, Hennepin, Isanti, Ramsey, Scott, Sherburne, Washington, and Wright counties in Minnesota, and Pierce and St. Croix counties in Wisconsin.



About the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation

The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation advances journalism in the digital age and invests in the vitality of communities where the Knight brothers owned newspapers. Knight Foundation focuses on projects that promote informed and engaged communities and lead to transformational change. For more, visit www.knightfoundation.org

Contact us: soul@knightfoundation.org

Join the conversation on Twitter via
the hashtag #SOTC

KNIGHT

Soul *of the* **Community**

A PROJECT OF JOHN S. AND JAMES L. KNIGHT FOUNDATION

in partnership with GALLUP