



**U.S. Conference of Mayors
Small Business Topline
500 Interviews - March 2001**

Economic Outlook

I would now like to ask you some general questions about the economy.

1. What would you say is your short-term, or six-month economic outlook for your business? Would you say it is...

20%	Excellent	Net positive	63%
43%	Good		
25%	Just okay	Net negative	32%
7%	Poor		
5%	Don't know/Refused		

2. What would you say is your medium-term, or two-year economic outlook for your business? Would you say it is..

18%	Excellent	Net positive	65%
47%	Good		
18%	Just okay	Net negative	23%
5%	Poor		
12%	Don't know/Refused		

3. What would you say is your long-term, or five-year economic outlook for your business? Would you say it is...

21%	Excellent	Net positive	65%
44%	Good		
12%	Just okay	Net negative	16%
4%	Poor		
19%	Don't know/Refused		

4. How much do you plan to invest in computer technology, including the Internet, in the coming year?

20%	More than last year
19%	Less than last year
42%	About the same as last year
19%	Don't know/Refused

5. In the next three months, is it more likely that your business will add, subtract, or keep the same number of employees?

27% Add
4% Subtract
66% Keep the same
3% Don't know/Refused

6.A* How difficult would you say it is to hire and retain qualified workers, very difficult, somewhat difficult, not very difficult, or not difficult at all?

44% Very difficult Net difficult 74%
30% Somewhat difficult
10% Not very difficult Net not difficult 21%
11% Not difficult at all
4% Don't know/Refused

6.B* Do you think that federal government support of local skills training should be increased, decreased, or stay the same?

50% Increased
6% Decreased
24% Stay the same
20% Don't know/Refused

7. Compared to 5 years ago, do you believe that the economic prospects for the central city in your metropolitan area have improved, declined, or stayed the same?

45% Improved
22% Declined
25% Neither
8% Don't know/Refused

8. Would you say that small business access to capital, or the ability to get loans, is better, worse, or about the same as 6 months ago?

5% Much better Net better 13%
8% Somewhat better
10% Somewhat worse Net worse 16%
6% Much worse
46% About the same
26% Don't know/Refused

Business and the Community

Please tell me how each of the following will affect employees' overall morale on the job?

9.A* Lessening traffic congestion

24%	Greatly improve	Net improve 46%
22%	Somewhat improve	
22%	Not improve that much	Net not improve 46%
24%	Not improve at all	
7%	DK/NR	

10.A* Building better and more affordable housing

17%	Greatly improve	Net improve 44%
27%	Somewhat improve	
16%	Not improve that much	Net not improve 44%
28%	Not improve at all	
12%	DK/NR	

Now I would like to ask you about the neighborhood in which your business is located. Looking back over the past five years, would you say that _____ in the area where your business is located has gotten better, worse or stayed the same?

11.A* Traffic

10%	Better
50%	Worse
38%	Stayed the same
2%	DK/REFUSED

11.B* Commuting time to work

16%	Better
27%	Worse
48%	Stayed the same
10%	DK/REFUSED

12.A* Access to public transportation

22%	Better
11%	Worse
59%	Stayed the same
8%	DK/REFUSED

13.A* Cost of housing

14% Better
54% Worse
26% Stayed the same
6% DK/REFUSED

13.B* Availability of jobs

39% Better
16% Worse
33% Stayed the same
12% DK/REFUSED

14.A* Has the level of crime increased, decreased, or stayed the same over the last three years in the area where your business is located?

27% Increased
21% Decreased
47% Stayed the same
5% Don't know/Refused

14.B* Do you support or oppose continued efforts by the federal government to fund local law enforcement efforts to fight crime?

58%	Strongly support	Net support 75%
17%	Somewhat support	
3%	Somewhat oppose	Net oppose 12%
9%	Strongly oppose	
14%	Don't know/Refused	

Business and Investment

Changing subjects...

15. Would you prefer development in your metropolitan area to occur outward, in open spaces or farmland, or inward, on available land in the downtown part of cities?

24% Outward, in open spaces and farmland
42% Inward, on available land in the downtown part of cities
15% A mixture of both
6% Neither, development should be halted
13% Don't know/Refused

Housing

Now changing subjects again....

16.A* Do you think that the Federal government should play a more active role in encouraging home ownership?

60% Yes
32% No
9% Don't know/Refused

Traffic

Changing subjects one more time....

17.A* Looking back over the past five years, would you say that **COMMUTING TIME TO WORK** in the area where you currently live has gotten better, worse or stayed the same?

8% Better
42% Worse
46% Stayed the same
4% DK/NR

18. Would you support or oppose greater investment in public transportation if it cut down on commute times for employees?

36%	Support strongly	Net support 64%
28%	Support somewhat	
12%	Oppose somewhat	Net oppose 20%
8%	Oppose strongly	
16%	DK/NR	

* Split sampled questions were asked of half of the respondents