

## Executive Summary

The Metropolitan Sports Facilities Commission (MSFC) conducted a Listening Tour from November 2007 to January 2008, visiting the areas around Rochester, Mankato, Virginia, Moorhead, St. Cloud, Duluth, Marshall, Minneapolis, and Woodbury. In addition to hosting events for local community leaders in each city, the MSFC also hosted and participated in events to solicit broader community input on two vital questions:

*“How do we preserve the benefits of a year-round, climate-controlled sports facility with a roof for the citizens of Minnesota for the next 30 years and beyond?”*

*“Should we retain the Minnesota Vikings as an asset to our State and a continuing part of cultural heritage? If so, how?”*

These questions are intimately related. Retaining the Vikings makes possible the benefits of a climate-controlled facility with a roof and, judging by what we heard, preserving the benefits of a facility like the Metrodome is important to many Minnesotans.

The answers are to be found in deciding what comes next for the Metrodome. Since 1982, the Metrodome has served our State extraordinarily well, hosting more than 77 million people and serving as the venue for major national events such as the World Series, the Super Bowl, and the NCAA Final Four. As importantly to many Minnesotans, the Metrodome also has served as a place for in-line skating, home and garden shows, amateur baseball practices and scrimmages, and the nine-man championship game between Stephen-Army and Wheaton.

Today, however, the Metrodome no longer can be counted among the pre-eminent facilities of its kind. Twenty-five new stadia have been built in the U.S. since 1995, and increasingly we hear that the Metrodome is no longer in consideration for major events and tours. With the departure of the Minnesota Gophers football team in 2009, the Minnesota Twins in 2010, and the expiration of the Vikings' use agreement after the 2011 season, it's time to move forward on “Metrodome Next.”

Our experiences from the Listening Tour suggest that our fellow Minnesotans are ready to discuss these questions as well. In every community we visited, we asked those citizens to complete a survey. Among those who completed it, the following conclusions are inescapable:

- Five out of six people surveyed believe that **Minnesota needs to move forward and build a facility with a roof: a year-round, climate-controlled facility like the Metrodome.**

- **Minnesotans want to keep the Vikings in Minnesota;** 92 percent of those surveyed believe the franchise should remain in the state for the next generation.
- More than three-quarters of survey participants have **personally attended and/or participated in events at the Metrodome.**

Although not scientific, our survey generally reflects the attitudes we encountered across the State. After communicating with more than 1,000 Minnesotans personally the Listening Tour generated media coverage that reached millions of our fellow citizens. We are more convinced than ever that Minnesotans believe we should now take up the question of Metrodome Next.

The balance of our report is divided into the following sections:

**Tour Overview:** A brief look at where we went, the meetings we held, and the number of people we reached.

**Survey Results:** Nearly 250 Listening Tour attendees completed a survey designed to measure the public's interest in various stadium-related issues. The answers offer a quantitative snapshot of Minnesotans' thinking in these areas.

**Voices of Minnesota.** In their own words, Minnesotans let us know how they felt about everything from their personal experiences at the Metrodome to their preferences for financing the construction of a new stadium. We heard from many people who support a new stadium, as well as many who oppose it.

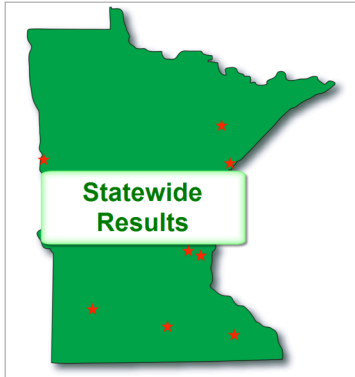
**Media:** In more than 100 interviews with electronic and print media, members of the Commission worked to extend the dialog beyond our meetings and encourage more Minnesotans to voice their opinions directly to the MSFC.

**Appendices:** We attach for reference a copy of the presentation we used to spark the conversations we heard, along with a copy of the survey, **[STATE MAP]** and an **[EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/COPY]** of the McGladrey report commissioned by the MSFC to audit the tax impact of the Metrodome and professional sports.

We were not surprised to discover a fairly high degree of public interest in our questions. We were surprised, however, to find a uniformity of opinion and interest in what happens next for the Metrodome, and the benefits it represents.

# Survey Results

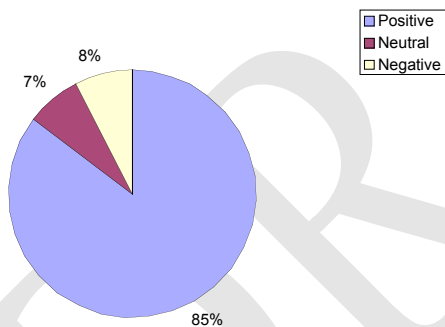
## Statewide Results



The MSFC conducted the Metrodome Next Listening Tour to gather feedback and public opinion from a broad cross-section of Minnesotans throughout the state. As part of that process, attendees were asked to complete an eight-question survey to measure their sentiments on a variety of stadium-related issues, including the need for a facility with a roof, benefits the public has derived from the current facility, and the desire to host national events such as NCAA basketball tournaments. A copy of the survey is appended.

To date, nearly 250 event attendees and members of the public have completed the MSFC survey – with feedback continuing to come in via regular mail and e-mail. Below are the results from this survey, as well as a number of comments and opinions provided to us by the people of Minnesota.

Question 1: Does Minnesota need a year-round, multi-purpose sports and entertainment facility with a roof?



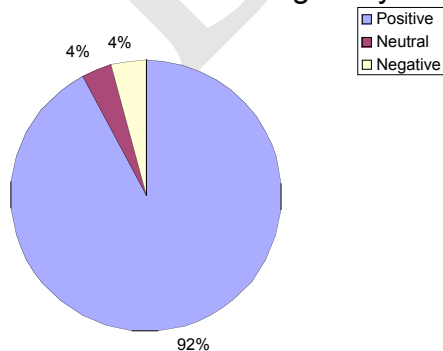
*“Absolutely! Outstaters do not want to risk travel to be snowed out or rained out.”*  
–Ken K., Cook

*“Yes. Minnesota can be a cold and nasty place.”*  
–Brian C., Roseville

*“Who wants to play or spectate in -20 degrees and in snow, ice, or rain?”*  
–Don S., Rochester

*“Possible. I think football should be an outdoor sport. Other activities do need a covered facility.”*  
–Christopher N., Minneapolis

Question 2: Should the Vikings stay in Minnesota for the next 30 years?



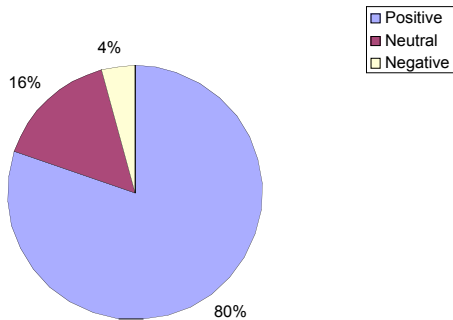
*“Absolutely – It’s part of the culture of our state.”*  
–Steve B., St. Cloud

*“Yes. Minnesota is a football state; the state would really miss not having a team.”*  
–Paul S., Mankato

*“Yes. It is important to the future of the state, as well as the local – Minneapolis – economy.”*  
–Mike M., Duluth

*“Yes, but not at too great of a cost.”*  
–Theresa L., Marshall

Question 3: Would you support a plan that ensured that the Vikings stay in Minnesota for the next 30 years?



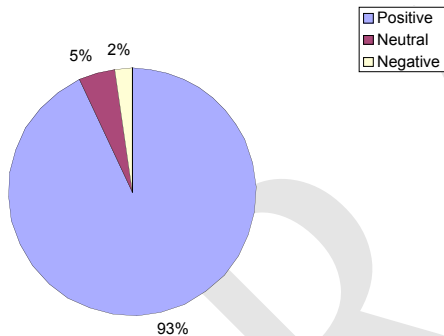
*"Yes. I'm willing to pay my share to keep the team here and build a new stadium."  
–Tim H., Waconia*

*"Yes, but should be a plan that ensures for even longer!"  
–Mark J., Rochester*

*"Yes, with consideration of who pays for any new facility and cost of attendance."  
–Larry R., Stewartville*

*"As long as it's economically smart."  
–Matthew H., Mankato*

Question 4: Would you like to see Minnesota continue to host national events like the Super Bowl and the NCAA Final Four?



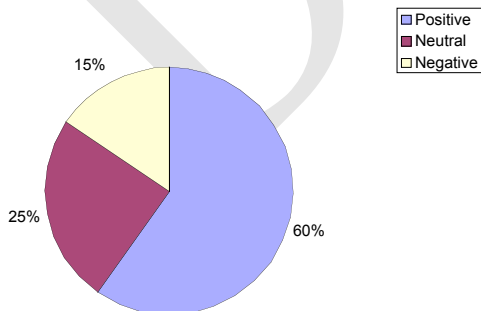
*"It is important to the status and economy of Minnesota."  
–David C., St. Cloud*

*"Absolutely. It's a beautiful state that can really showcase just how great the Midwest can be! It would help the economy grow tremendously and in effect, help everyone."  
–Liz R., Mankato*

*"Of course! How great would that be!"  
–Mike M., Duluth*

*"Most definitely!"  
–Tom R., St. Paul*

Question 5: How important is the Metrodome to Minnesota's reputation nationally?



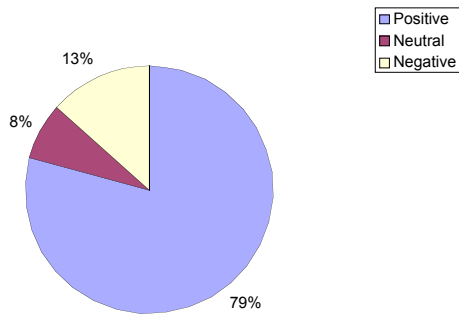
*"Important. However, its role will have to change to keep pace with the other small market cities."  
–Keith S., North Mankato*

*"Very important. It is a symbol of our state."  
–Ryan V., Marshall*

*"When initially built – extremely – we were a 'major league' city. I think with age and negative marketing, it has lost some significance."  
–John H., St. Cloud*

*"The Metrodome is synonymous with Minnesota!"  
–Monte B., Rochester*

Question 6: Have you ever benefited from the presence of the Metrodome? How?

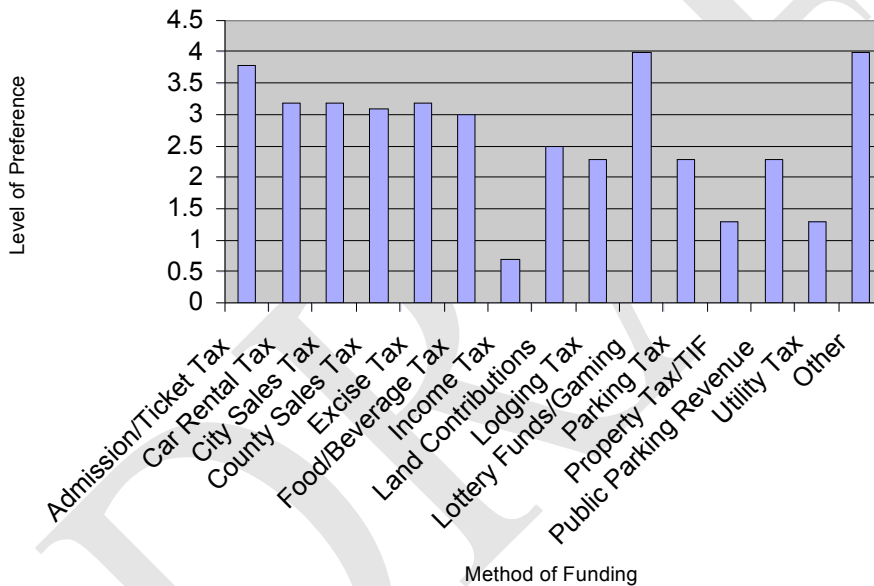


*"Yes. I've had great experiences at many different events in or around the Metrodome."  
-Fred K., Virginia*

*"Watched local teams compete there on television. A boost for our high school teams."  
-Janet S., Moorhead*

*"Our baseball team has been able to play in the Metrodome when Minnesota weather couldn't allow us to be outside...I played in a state soccer tournament in the Metrodome while there was more than a foot of snow outside."  
-Nate H., Buffalo*

Question 7: How should the public raise the money to help finance a new stadium, assuming the Vikings' team will make a contribution?



Question 8: What do you think about Metrodome Next?

*"The MSFC is headed in the right direction."  
-John L., St. Cloud*

*"This facility will continue to bring opportunities outside of sports related activities."  
-Randy B., Hermantown*

*"Renovate or rebuild – whether it is funded publicly or privately, it will pay for itself over time."  
-Steve E., Inver Grove Heights*

*"I think the state needs to do what it can to keep the Vikings and have a multi-purpose facility (indoor) for not only the Vikings, but high schools, colleges, and youth activities."  
-Gene T., Fargo-Moorhead*

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