



City of Columbus Citizen Survey Report, 2009

**James Janke
Shelly Hadley
David Trechter**

**Survey Research Center Report 2009/30
November 2009**

Staff and students working for the Survey Research Center at UW-River Falls were instrumental in the completion of this study. We would like to thank Denise Parks, Grady Stehr, Mandy Speerstra, Aaron Peterson, Megan Keune, Ashley Julka, Hannah Stuttgen, and Ted Cannady. We gratefully acknowledge their hard work and dedication. The SRC would also like to thank City Administrator Boyd Kraemer and City Clerk Anne Donahue for their assistance. Nancy Olson of Columbus Water and Light provided the mail list for the project and her assistance is gratefully acknowledged. Finally, we would like to thank the Columbus residents, who took the time to complete their questionnaires.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
Survey Purpose	3
Survey Methods	3
Profile of Respondents	4
Transportation	6
Natural and Cultural Resources	9
Housing	14
Economic Development and Land Use	16
Utilities and Community Facilities/Services	20
Government	24
Conclusions	25
Appendix A – Written responses “other” category	26
Appendix B – Quantitative Summary of Responses by Question	28

Executive Summary

In October 2009, the Survey Research Center (SRC) at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls mailed surveys to a random sample of 1,137 Columbus households. The overall response rate was 39 percent (447 completed questionnaires), resulting in a confidence interval of plus/minus 4.4 percent

Compared to the 2000 Census, the demographic profile of the sample contains fewer young people and renters and more persons with post-high school education. The sample contained fewer households with incomes between \$50,000 and \$74,999 and more households with incomes above \$100,000. There were relatively few significant differences in the opinions among the demographic groups.

The questionnaire contained six topical sections related to the development of the City's comprehensive plan: transportation, natural and cultural resources, housing, economic development and land use, utility and community facilities/services, and government.

The City's roads received particularly low ratings, with nearly nine in ten respondents saying the roads are fair or poor. More than half (55%) of respondents said the City's sidewalks are fair or poor. Three in four said bike trails are fair or poor. Respondents were nearly unanimous (97%) in their opinion that Columbus should invest in maintenance of existing roadways and a large majority (78%) supported improvements to existing sidewalks. Three-fourths of respondents said they support additional taxes or fees to maintain the City's roadways, and half said they would support additional fees or taxes for improvements to existing sidewalks.

Respondents expressed relatively high levels of satisfaction with the environmental quality in Columbus. Majorities ranging from 62 percent to 97 percent said they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with nine of the ten environmental factors listed in the survey. The sole exception was storm water drainage; about half are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with storm water drainage in the City. Nearly 80 percent of respondents said current City policies and regulations adequately protect the environment.

Majorities of respondents said additional conservancy parks, community parks, neighborhood parks, and tot lots are a low priority or not a priority. When asked to rate the priority of expanding each of 12 recreational facilities in the community, respondents gave relatively few high priority ratings. The top priorities were an ice skating rink, teen center, and playground equipment, but none of these were deemed a high priority by more than 26 percent of respondents. Majorities said expansion of the remaining nine facilities was a low priority or not a priority. Respondents preferred a combination of taxes and fees to fund any improvements to the City's recreation facilities and disagreed with using taxes alone to fund recreation improvements.

More than three-fourths of respondents said Columbus needs more programs to improve existing housing units. When asked what types of housing are needed in the City, the top three were assisted living units, apartments and condos for seniors, and affordable housing. Majorities said more multi-family units and mobile home parks are not needed in Columbus.

Respondents said new neighborhoods should have sidewalks (81%) and believe neighborhoods should be designed with parks (73%). A majority also want recreational trails included.

Regarding the size of home lots, Columbus respondents favor medium size lots rather than large lots or small lots.

Majorities of Columbus respondents think there are too few retail shops (79%) and light industrial manufacturing businesses (63%) in the City. They are evenly split regarding whether there are enough restaurants and office developments in Columbus.

When asked specifically about industrial development, large majorities support light manufacturing, high technology, transportation facilities, and non-intensive agricultural related businesses. Regarding retail development, respondents were nearly unanimous in their support for supermarkets, and large majorities supported family restaurants, downtown redevelopment, small specialty stores, and discount department stores.

A large majority (83%) disagreed with Columbus becoming a suburban bedroom community; rather, they strongly preferred that their city be an independent full-service community. Smaller majorities supported redeveloping the City's core rather than annexing additional land and focusing on the passenger train station as an economic development tool.

Columbus respondents are generally pleased with the services provided by the City, with majorities rating most of the 15 services listed as "excellent" or "good." Services with the highest ratings include garbage collection, the public library, fire protection, the municipal electric service, and police protection. Consistent with earlier findings, the services with the lowest ratings are street and road maintenance (90% "fair" or "poor") and storm water management (61% "fair" or "poor"). A substantial proportion of respondents also expressed some dissatisfaction with snow removal (56% "fair" or "poor"). Nearly seven in ten said they would support a tax increase to improve street and road maintenance.

Six in ten respondents said Columbus should consider spending funds on improvements to the Fireman's Park pavilion and to repair Udey dam.

Six in ten respondents agreed that the mayor should be a voting member of the City Council, but three-fourths of respondents opposed extending the terms of alderpersons from two years to four years.

Survey Purpose

The purpose of this study was to gather opinions regarding issues to be considered in the development of the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Columbus. The City chose to work with the Survey Research Center (SRC) at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls.

Survey Methods

In October 2009, the Survey Research Center (SRC) at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls mailed surveys to a random sample of 1,137 Columbus residents.

The overall response rate from the public was 39 percent (447 completed questionnaires). Based on the estimated number of adults in the population of the City (3,757)¹, the results provided in this report from the public respondents are expected to be accurate to within plus or minus 4.4 percent with 95 percent confidence.

In addition to numeric data, respondents provided additional written answers in the “other” category. **Appendix A contains the compilation of the comments.**

Appendix B contains a copy of the survey questionnaire with a complete quantitative summary of responses by question.

¹ 2009 Wisconsin Department of Administration Estimate

Profile of Respondents

Table 1 summarizes the demographic profile of the 447 respondents from the public who returned surveys. Where comparable data were available from the 2000 Census of Population and Housing, they were included to indicate the degree to which the sample represents the underlying adult population in the City.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents							
Gender	Count	Male	Female				
Sample	418	50%	50%				
Census (Age 18+)	3,314	47%	53%				
Age 18+	Count	18 – 24	25 – 34	35 – 44	45 – 54	55 – 64	65+
Sample	432	1%	14%	15%	20%	20%	30%
Census	3,314	9%	18%	23%	16%	11%	23%
Employment Status	Count	Full time	Part time	Self - Empl.	Unempl.	Retired	Other
Sample	423	50%	8%	6%	3%	31%	2%
Census (Age 16+)	3,456	65%		4%	2%	29%	
Residence	Count	Own	Rent				
Sample	431	81%	19%				
Census households	1,843	65%	35%				
Adults in Household	Count	1	2	3	4	5+	
Sample	422	29%	60%	9%	2%	0%	
Census	1,843	31%	69%				
Children in Household	Count	0	1	2	3	4	5+
Sample	400	72%	12%	10%	5%	1%	0%
Census	1,843	67%	33%				
Household Income	Count	<\$15,000	\$15,000 – 24,999	\$25,000 – 49,999	\$50,000 – 74,999	\$75,000 – 99,999	\$100,000 or More
Sample	413	7%	11%	30%	26%	12%	14%
Census	1,858	5%	9%	33%	35%	12%	7%
Length of Residency	Count	<1 yr	1 – 4	5 - 9	10 - 24	25+	
Sample ²	433	4%	15%	16%	21%	44%	
Highest Level of Education	Count	Less than High Sch.	High Sch. Dipl.	Some College/ Tech.	Tech. College Grad.	Bachelor Degree	Graduate/ Profess. Degree
Sample	424	4%	26%	23%	12%	24%	12%
Census (age 25+)	3,026	15%	38%	22%	5%	14%	6%

² Census data does not contain a length of residence category.

Over all, the sample matches the Census numbers quite well. However, there are fewer people under 45 years of age in this sample (30%) than the Census indicates should have been included (50%) and fewer renters (19%) than reported in the Census (35%). Our experience is that younger residents and renters in most jurisdictions are less likely to participate in surveys. The sample contained a higher proportion of respondents with post-secondary education than was reported in the Census. The sample contained fewer households with incomes between \$50,000 and \$74,999 and more households with incomes above \$100,000. Because the Census data are nearly 10 years old, the income numbers, in particular, may be substantially different in 2009 than in 2000. Again, the SRC is quite pleased with the apparent representativeness of this sample.

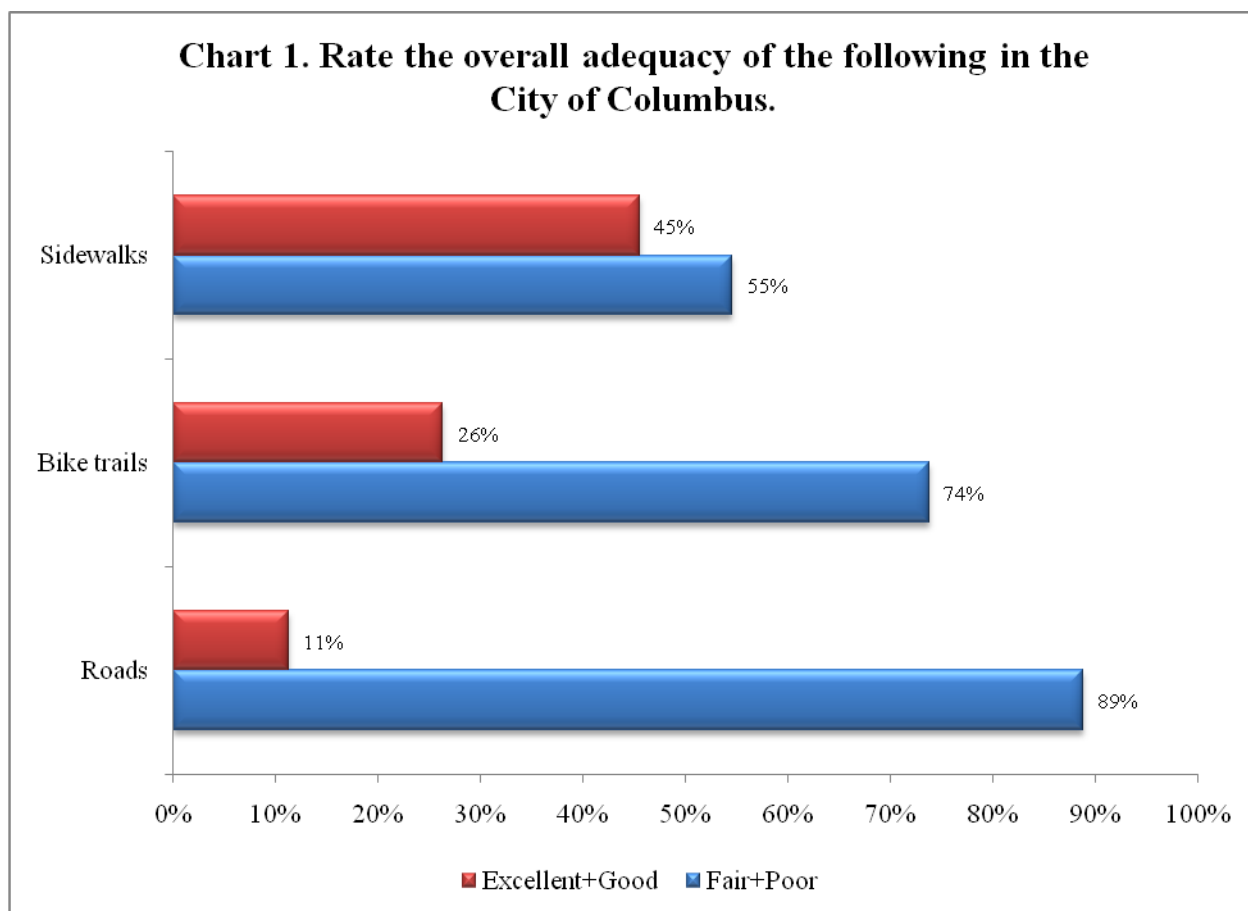
As we analyze the data, we will identify when demographic groups vary in their response patterns.

Transportation

The initial section of the survey asked respondents three groups of questions regarding transportation issues in Columbus. The first question asked about the current adequacy of roads, sidewalks and bike trails, and Chart 1 summarizes the responses.

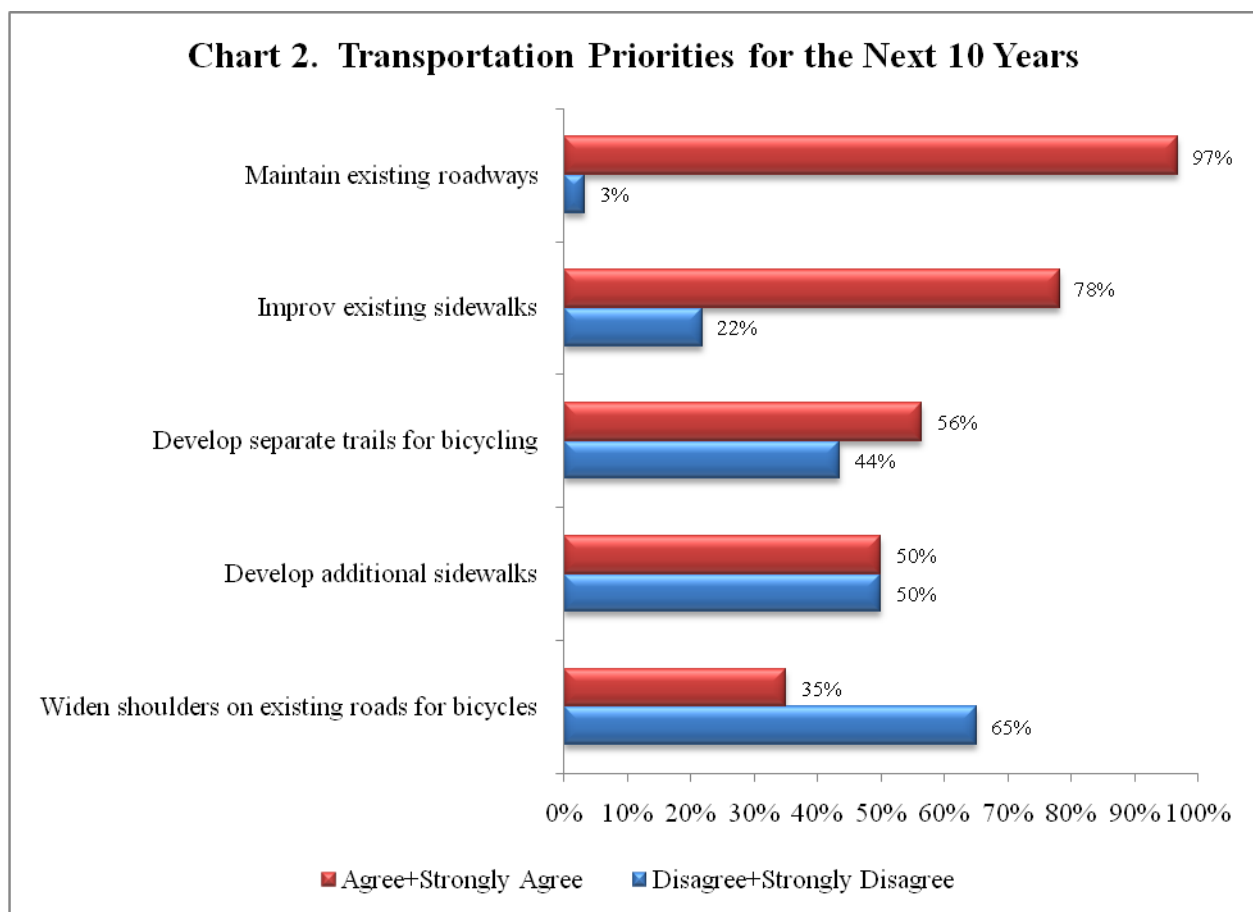
More than half (55%) of respondents said the City's sidewalks are fair or poor. Three in four said bike trails are fair or poor. The City's streets received particularly low ratings, with nearly nine in ten respondents saying the street are fair or poor. The overall rating given to the City's streets by Columbus respondents is the lowest among the 31 comprehensive planning surveys conducted by the SRC in recent years that have asked this question. In contrast to the 11 percent of Columbus respondents who gave a positive rating to the City's streets, the average positive rating among respondents in the other 30 surveys was 58 percent.

Among the demographic groups, respondents with post-high school education were slightly less likely to give excellent or good ratings for the adequacy of the streets in Columbus.



When asked about the transportation priorities for City investments over the next ten years, respondents' answers were consistent with the concerns suggested by Chart 1. As shown in Chart 2, 97 percent of respondents said they "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that the City should invest in road maintenance. Improvements to existing sidewalks was another high priority item, with three-fourths of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that investments are needed in pedestrian infrastructure. A majority supported investments in separate bicycle trails, but two-thirds were opposed to widening shoulders on existing roads for bicycle use. Respondents' opinions were evenly split regarding the development of additional sidewalks, with 50 percent in agreement and 50 percent in disagreement.

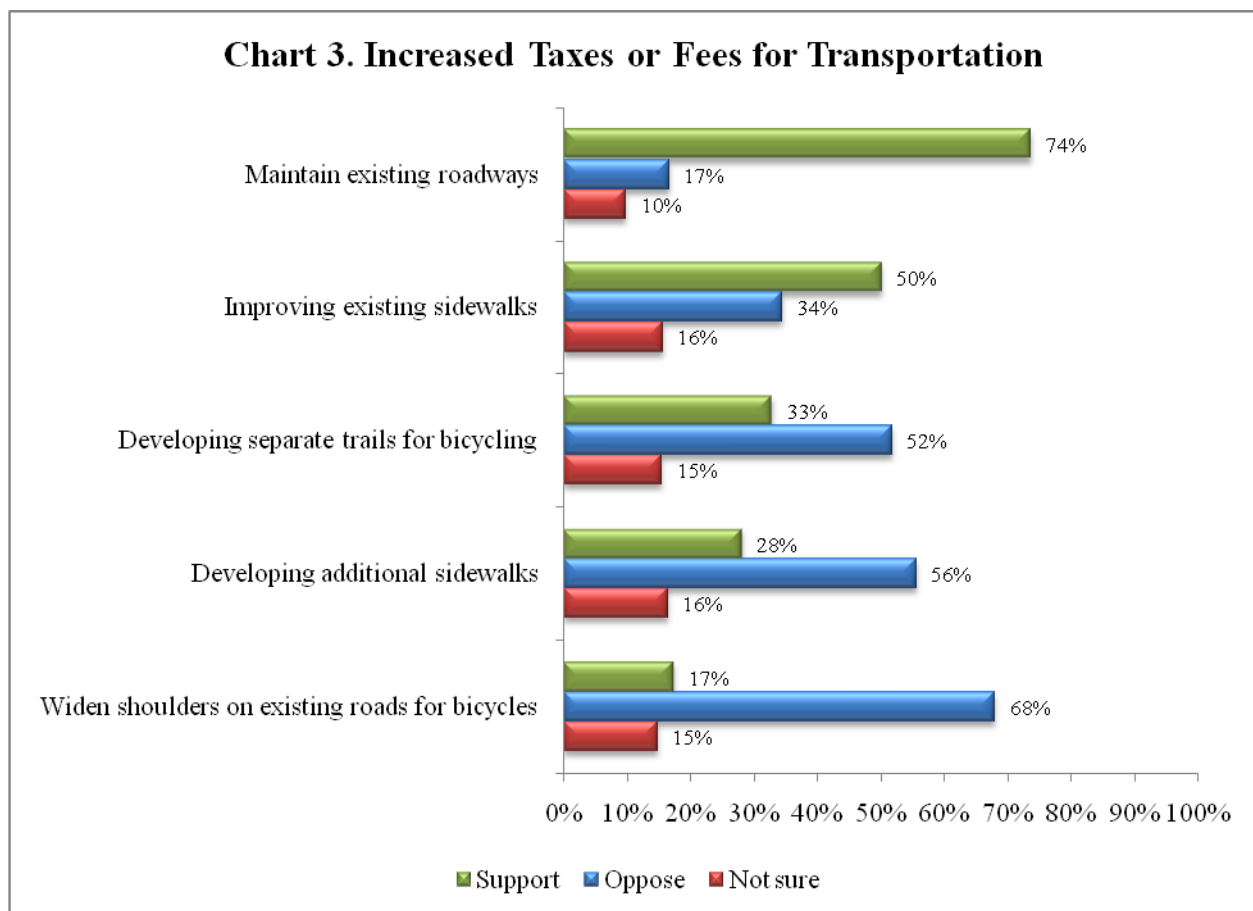
Among the demographic groups, respondents in the following groups were more likely to "agree" or "strongly agree" that separate trails should be developed for bicycling: those under age 45, those with post-high school education, and recently-arrived residents (fewer than five years).



The last group of questions in the transportation section asked respondents' opinions regarding additional fees or taxes to make the investments discussed in Chart 2. Chart 3 indicates that street maintenance and improvement to existing sidewalks were priority concerns. Three-fourths of respondents said they support additional taxes to maintain the City's roadways, and half said they would support additional fees or taxes for improvements to existing sidewalks.

Majorities of respondents opposed additional fees or taxes for separate bike trails, new sidewalks, and widening shoulders on existing roads for bicycle use.

There were no noteworthy differences in the responses among the demographic groups.

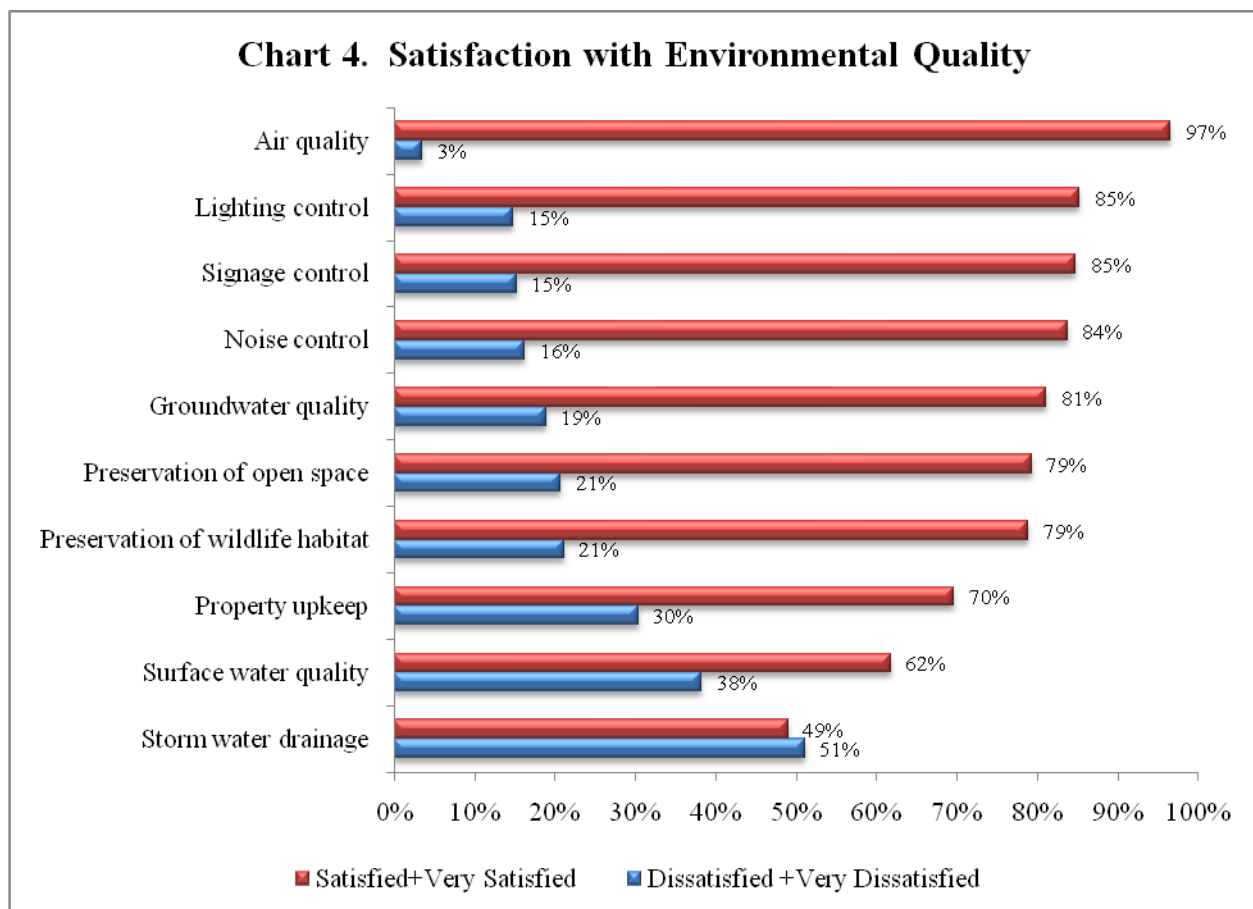


Natural and Cultural Resources

The second section of the questionnaire asked five questions about natural and cultural resources, including recreation. With the exception of storm water drainage, Chart 4 indicates that Columbus respondents were generally “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with environmental quality in their City. The highest satisfaction ratings were given to air quality, with 97 percent saying they are “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with air quality. Large majorities, ranging between 79 percent and 85 percent said they are “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with lighting control, signage control, noise control, groundwater quality, preservation of open space, and preservation of wildlife habitat. Seven in ten were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with property upkeep in Columbus, and about six in ten were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with surface water quality.

A narrow majority (52%) of respondents was “dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied” with storm water drainage in Columbus.

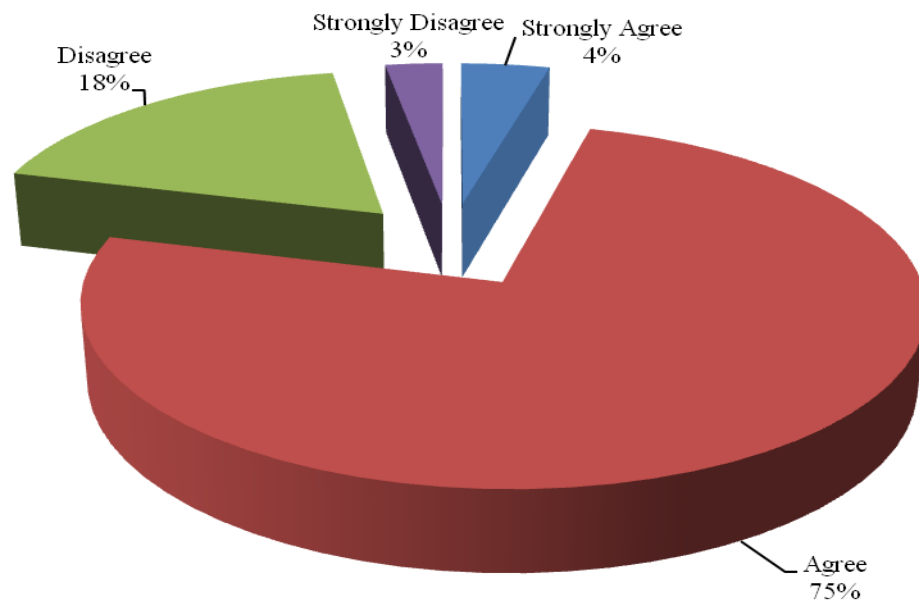
There were no noteworthy differences in the responses among the demographic groups.



Related to the generally high level of satisfaction with the natural resources in Columbus, a large majority said they “agree” or “strongly agree” that current environmental policies and regulations in Columbus adequately protect the local environment from damage or disruption (see Chart 5).

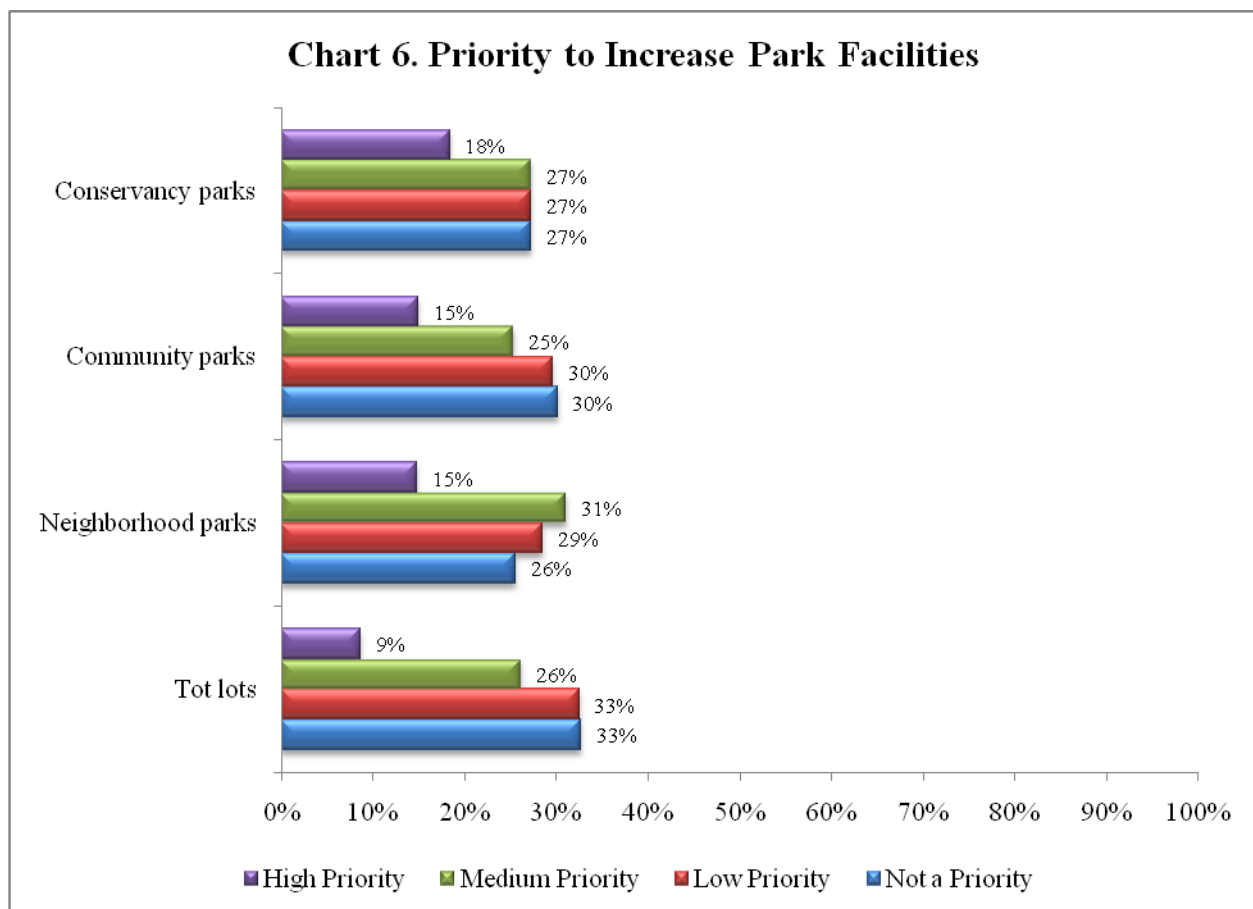
There were no noteworthy differences in the responses among the demographic groups.

Chart 5. Current Policies & Regulations Adequately Protect the Environment



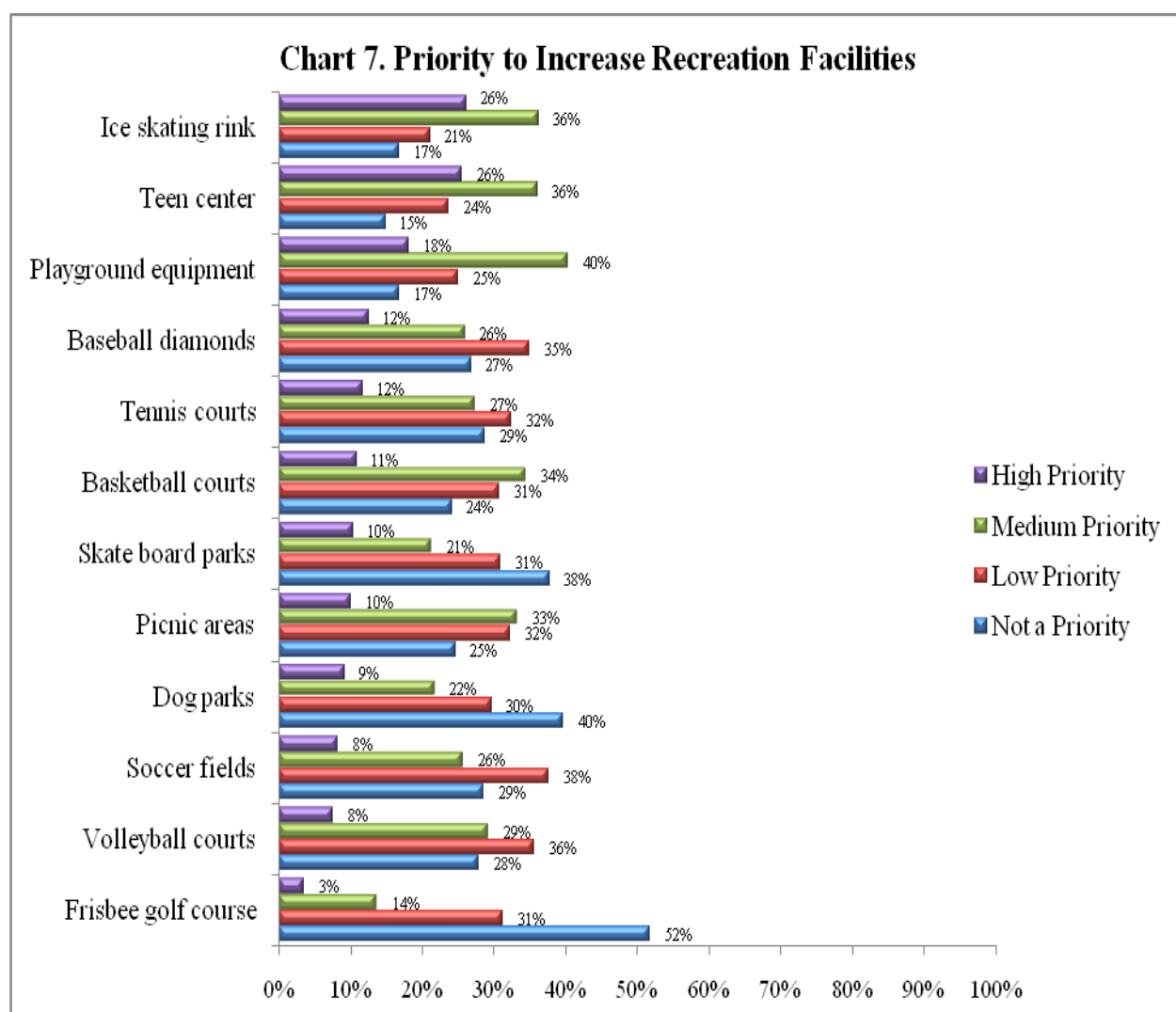
The remaining three questions in this section addressed issues related to parks and recreation. The first question asked respondents to indicate a priority rating (high (top bar), medium (second bar), low (third bar), or not a priority (bottom bar)) for increasing the number of certain types of recreational facilities. As shown in Chart 6, majorities of respondents rated each of the four the facilities listed as a “low” priority or “not a priority.”

Younger respondents (under age 45) and households with children were more likely to place a higher priority on the development of neighborhood parks. Younger respondents and recent residents (fewer than five years) were more likely to place a higher priority on the development of conservancy parks. Even though they gave higher priority ratings to neighborhood parks and conservancy parks, fewer than 30 percent of respondent from these demographic groups said neighborhood parks and conservancy parks are a “high” priority.



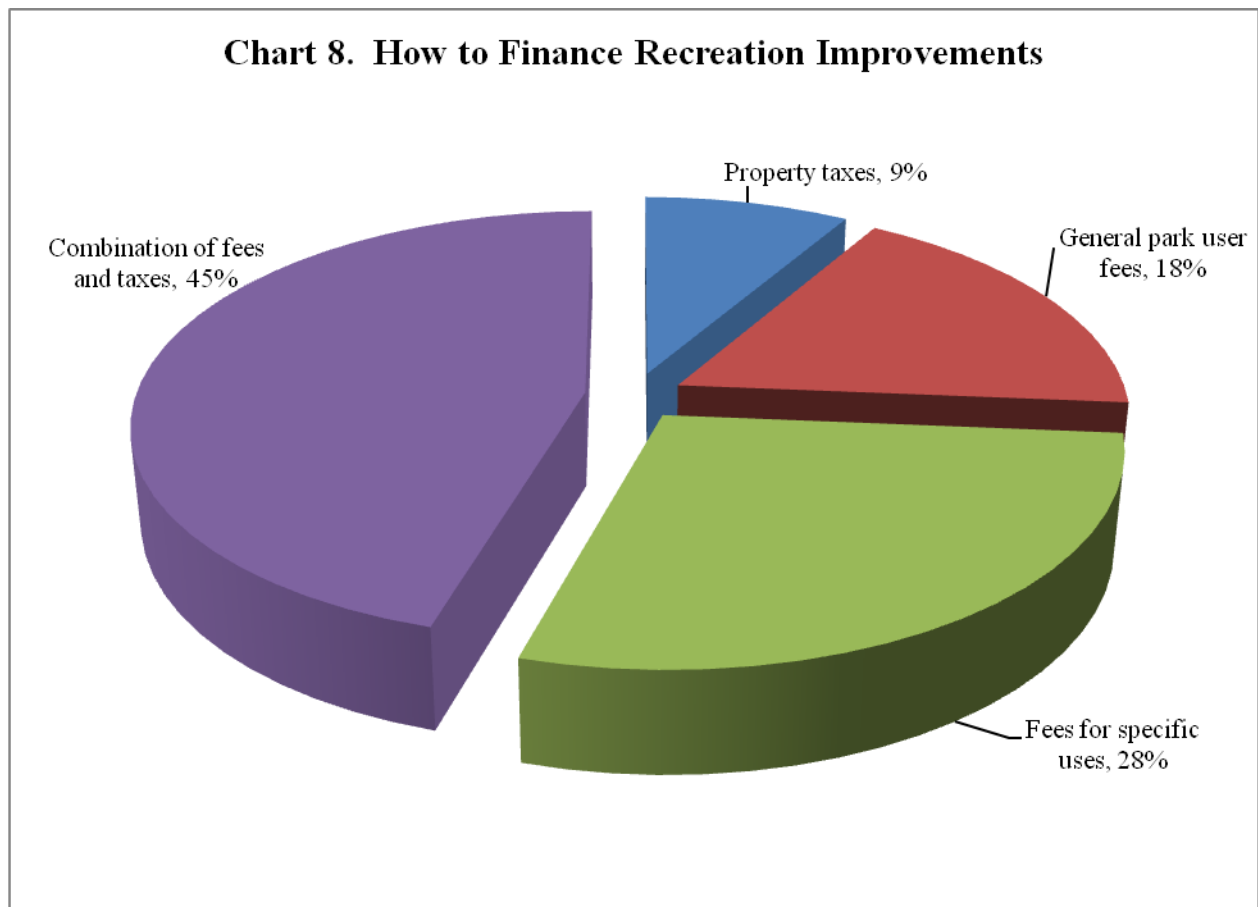
As shown in Chart 7, when asked to indicate a priority rating for investments in each of twelve recreational facilities over the next ten years, Columbus respondents gave relatively few “high” priority ratings. At the top of the list were an ice skating rink and teen center with 26 percent in the “high” priority category, followed by playground equipment with 18 percent. These three facilities also achieved the largest percentages of “medium” priority ratings, ranging from 47 percent for playground equipment to 36 percent each for an ice skating rink and teen center. These three facilities were the only facilities on the list for which a majority gave a combined “medium” or “high” priority rating. All other facilities were rated as a “low” priority or “not a priority” by more than half of the respondents.

Among the demographic groups, younger respondents and newer residents said an ice skating rink was “not a priority.”



As described above, Columbus respondents placed a relatively low priority on expenditures to improve or expand recreational facilities. However, if recreational facilities were to be improved or expanded in Columbus, the largest proportion of respondents (45%) preferred combining taxes and fees. Funding recreation facilities solely with the property tax was favored by only nine percent. (See Chart 8).

There were no noteworthy differences in the responses among the demographic groups.



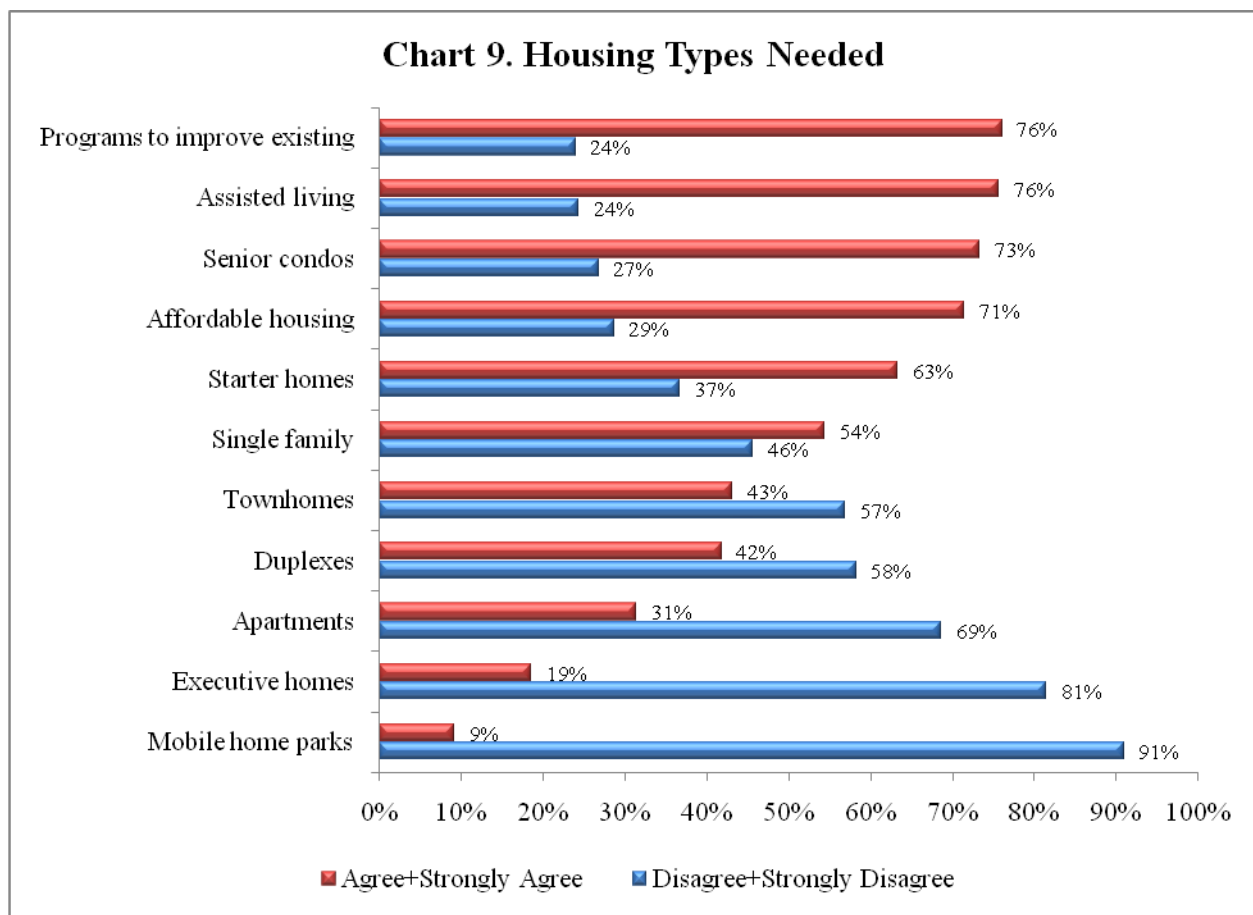
Housing

The next section of the questionnaire asked about housing issues in Columbus. The first question asked respondents for their opinion about the need for additional types of housing and housing programs. As shown in Chart 9, large majorities agreed that there is a need for four housing options:

- programs to improve existing housing quality (76% agreed or strongly agreed)
- assisted living (76% agreed or strongly agreed)
- senior condominiums (73% agreed or strongly agreed)
- additional affordable housing (71% agreed or strongly agreed)

Smaller majorities also “agreed” or “strongly agreed” with the need for additional starter homes (63%) and single family units (54%).

Majorities of respondents said they “disagree” or “strongly disagree” with the need for additional multi-family housing types or with the need for executive housing. Mobile home parks were supported by less than 10 percent and opposed by over 90 percent.



Respondents age 45 and older and retirees were more likely to say there is a need for additional affordable housing, apartments and condos for seniors, and assisted living facilities. A higher percentage of renters said there is a need for additional duplexes, apartments, and affordable

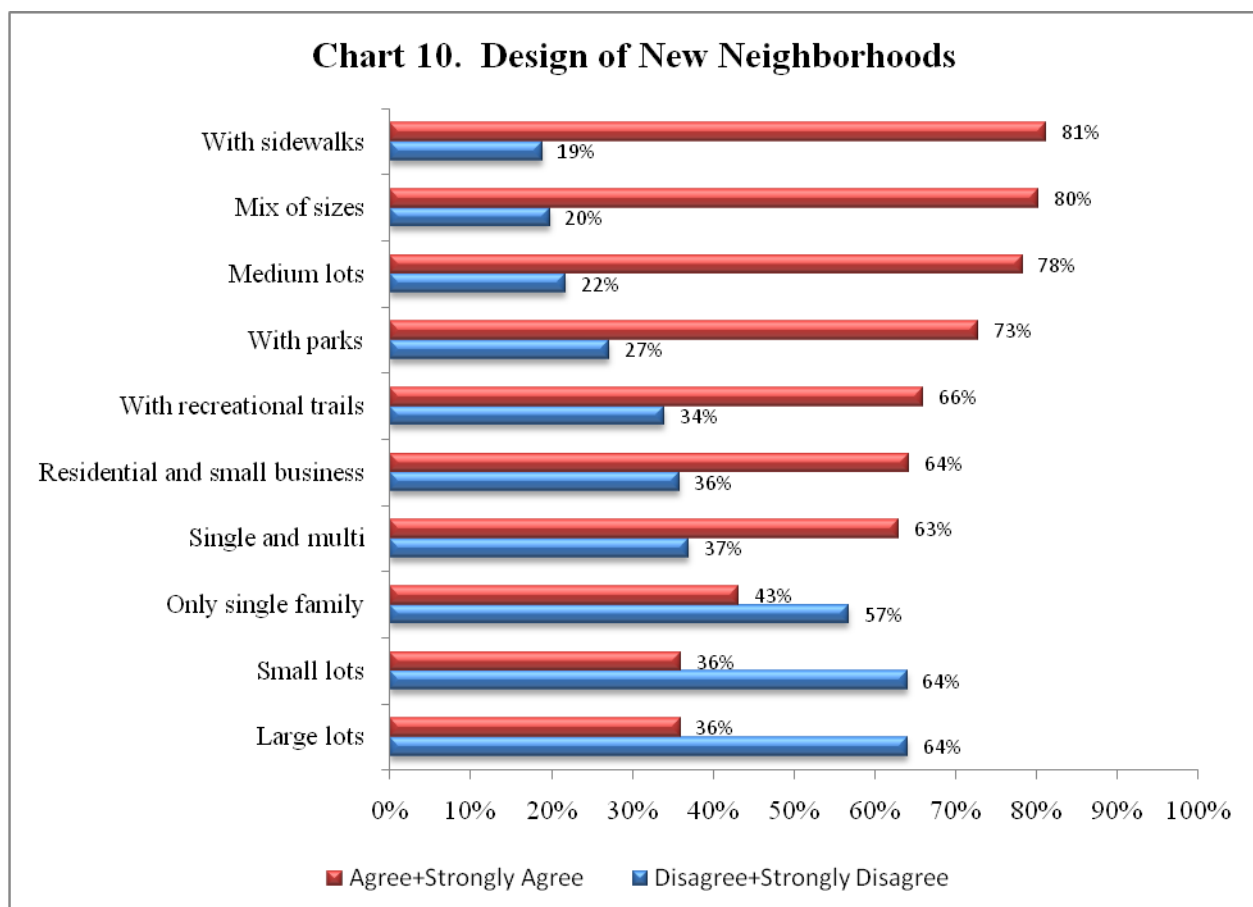
housing. Respondents with a household income below \$50,000 were less likely to disagree that more mobile home parks are needed in Columbus and more likely to say there is a need for additional affordable housing. A higher percentage of women said there is a need for more affordable housing in Columbus.

The second question in the housing section asked respondents for their opinions about the design of new housing and neighborhoods in Columbus. The results are shown in Chart 10. More than eight in ten said they “agree” or “strongly agree” that new neighborhoods should have sidewalks and a mixture of single-family and multi-family units. Nearly three-fourths want parks to be included in new neighborhoods, while two-thirds want recreation trails.

More than two-thirds opposed neighborhoods composed solely of large lots or small lots. A large majority preferred medium-sized lots and neighborhoods designed with a mixture of lot sizes.

More than six in ten respondents “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that new neighborhoods should contain a mixture of residential and small business.

Households with children were more likely to agree that new neighborhoods should be designed with recreational trails and open space and should contain only single-family units. A larger percentage of younger respondents agreed that the design of new neighborhoods should include recreational trails and open space, and parks within walking distance.

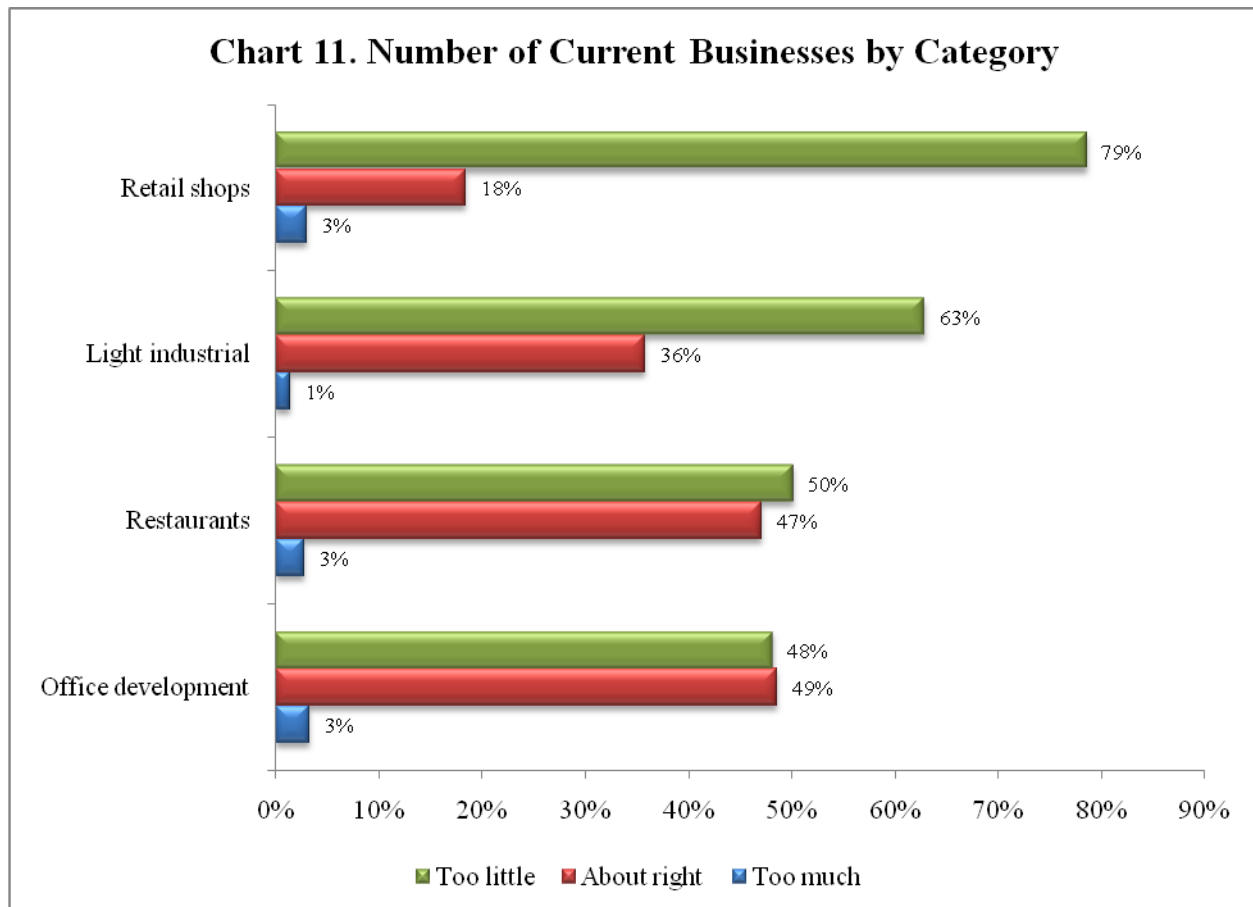


Economic Development and Land Use

The next section of the survey contained four groups of questions focused on economic development and land use in Columbus. The first question asked respondents about the current number of businesses in four categories. Chart 11 indicates that about eight in ten respondents believe the number of retail shops in Columbus is “too little.” More than six in ten Columbus respondents also said they would like to see additional light industrial businesses in the community.

When asked about the current number of restaurants and office developments, respondents had mixed opinions. About as many said the number of restaurants and office developments were “about right” as said the number of restaurants and office developments were “too little.”

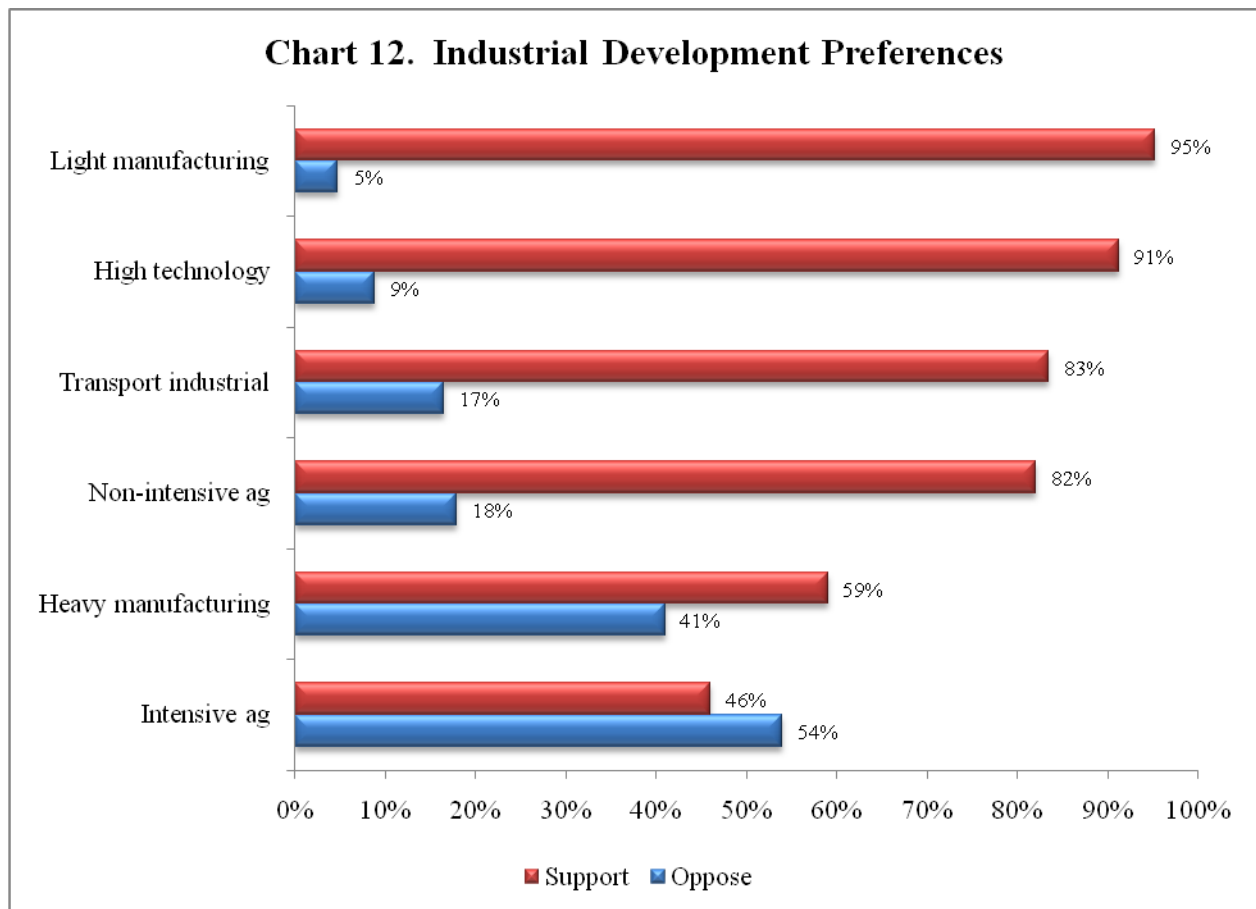
Among the demographic groups, recent residents were more likely to say that the current number of light industrial businesses is “about right.”



The second group of questions in this section focused specifically on industrial development. Respondents were given a list of six sub-categories of industrial business types and asked if they supported or opposed the development of each in Columbus. As shown in Chart 12, large majorities ranging from 95 percent to 82 percent supported light manufacturing, high technology, industrial transportation (e.g., warehousing), and non-intensive agricultural businesses (e.g., implement dealerships). The nearly unanimous support for light manufacturing development was consistent with the majority in the previous question who said there was “too little” light manufacturing in Columbus.

A smaller majority (59%) supported heavy manufacturing operations (e.g., foundry). However, a majority of respondents said they opposed intensive agricultural operations (e.g., “factory farms”).

There were no noteworthy differences among the demographic groups.

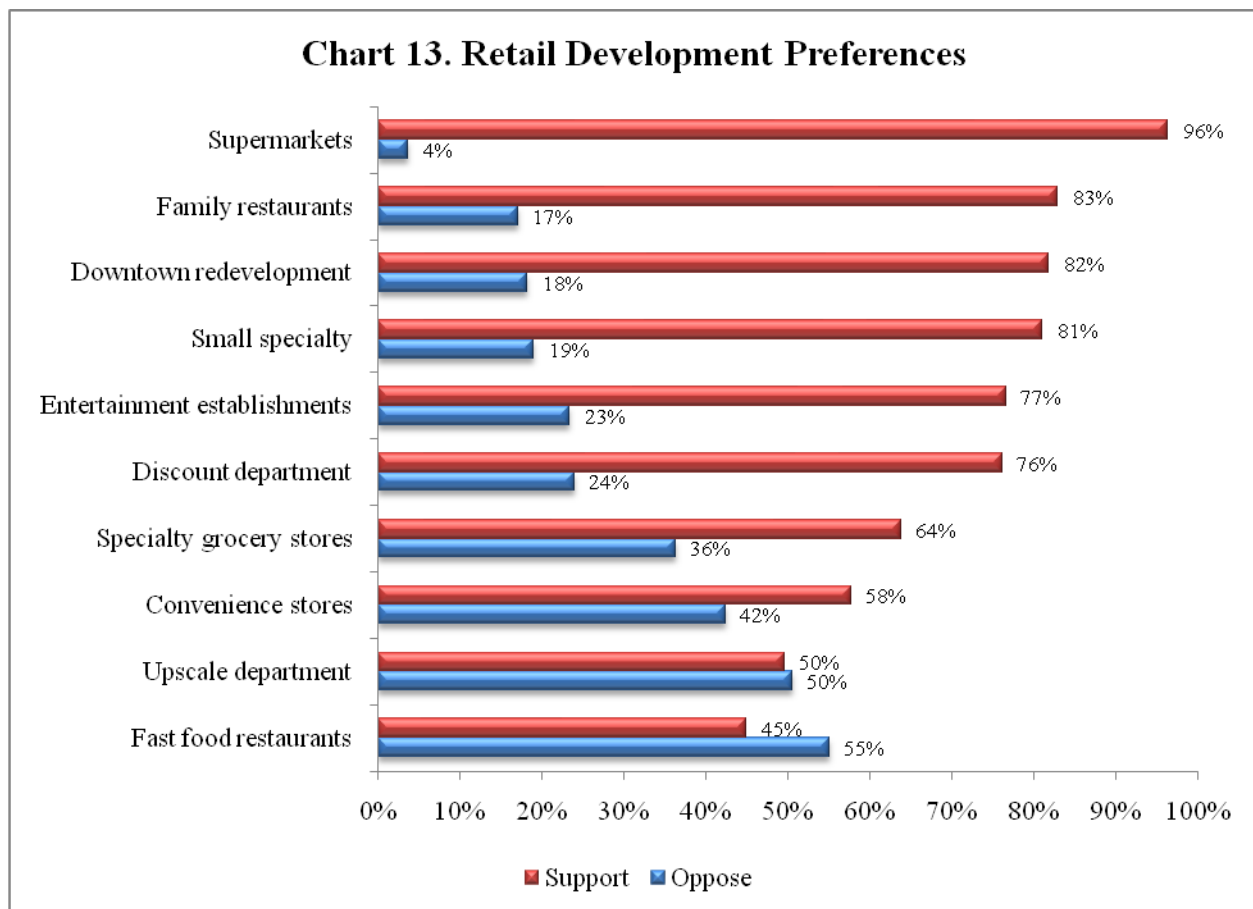


Preferences for retail development were the focus of the next group of questions in this section (see Chart 13). Consistent with their earlier assessment that there are “too few” retail establishments in Columbus, majorities supported most types of retail establishments listed in the question. Among the ten types of retail businesses listed in the question, development of supermarkets stood out at the top of the list, with 96 percent of respondents supporting their development. About eight in ten respondents supported development of family restaurants, downtown redevelopment, and small specialty shops. More than three-fourths of respondents supported the development of entertainment establishments and discount department stores.

Compared to their very strong support for supermarkets, smaller majorities of respondents said they supported development of specialty grocery stores and convenience stores.

Respondents are split down the middle regarding upscale department stores, with 50 percent supporting, and 50 percent opposing this type of retail business in Columbus. When asked about fast food restaurants, the scale tipped in the other direction, with over half of respondents indicating they were in opposition.

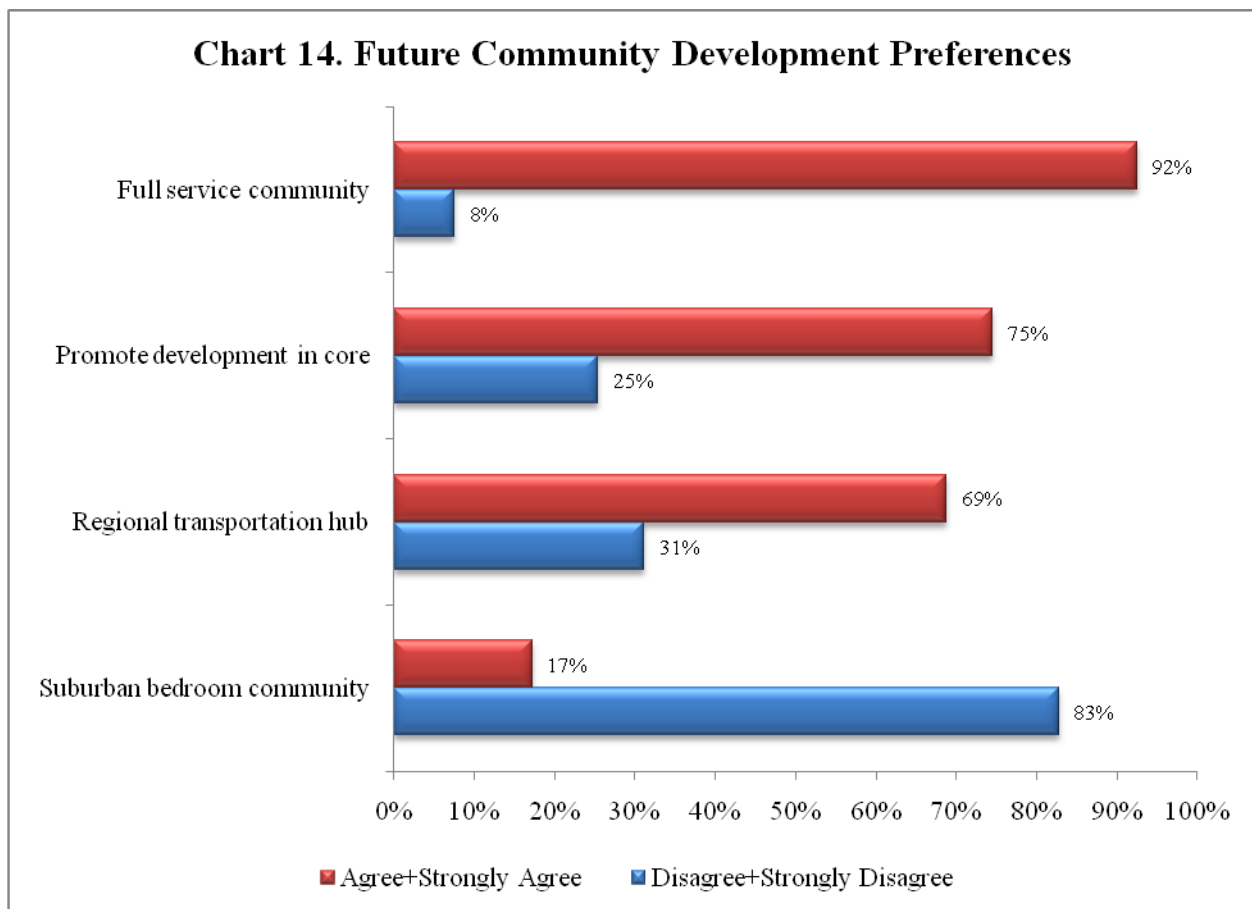
There were no noteworthy differences among the demographic groups.



The last group of questions in this section asked for residents' opinions about the future directions for their City. The results are shown in Chart 14. Respondents were given four scenarios and asked for their level of agreement with each. More than nine in ten respondents said they agreed or strongly agreed that Columbus should strive to be a full service community where all work, shopping, service, housing and healthcare needs can be met. Three-fourths of respondents agreed or strongly agreed the City should promote development or redevelopment in the core of the community instead of annexing additional property. Support was also strong for becoming a regional transportation hub by enhancing and promoting the passenger rail station, with 75 percent saying they "agree" or "strongly agree."

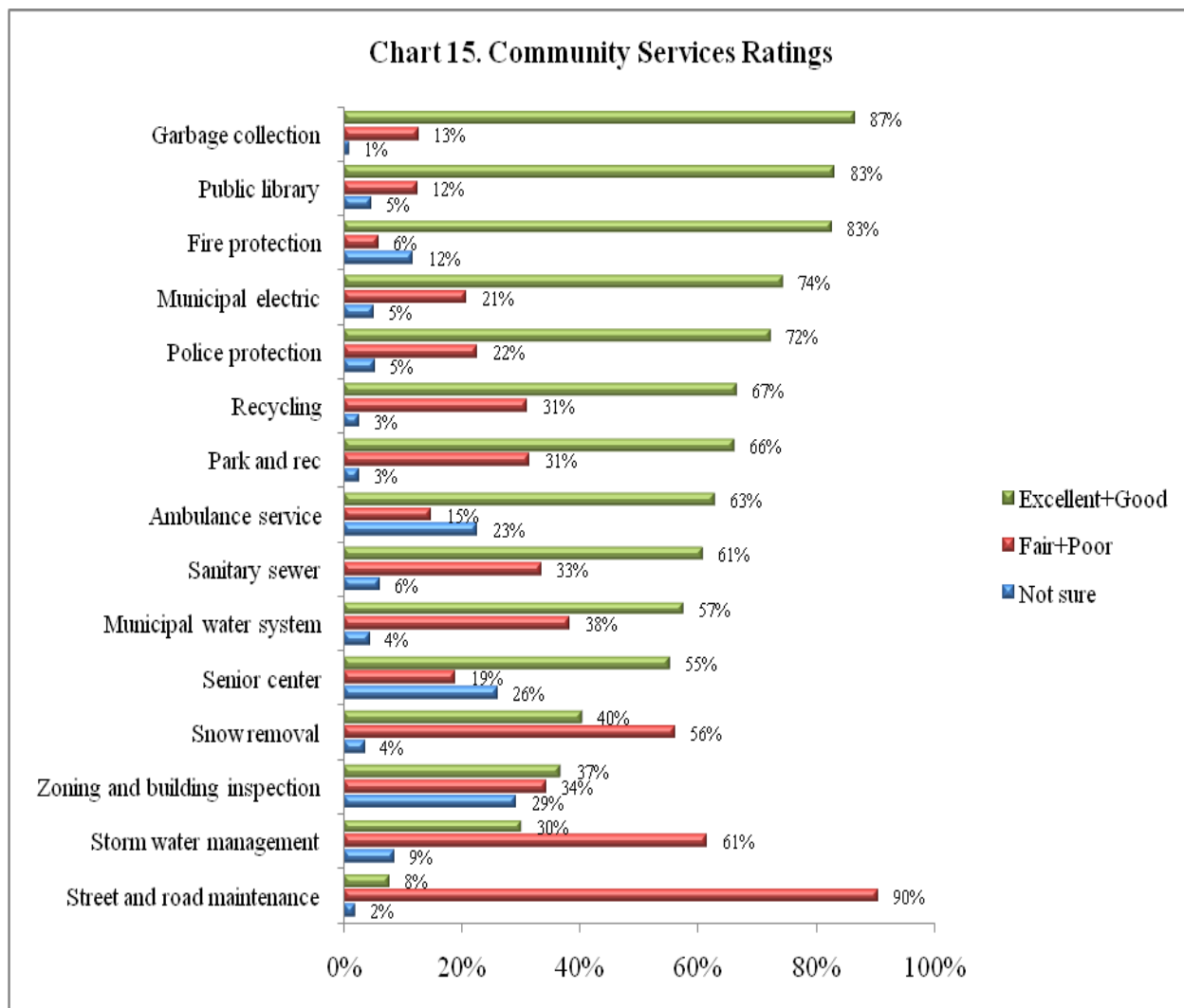
In contrast to their support for the previous scenarios, Columbus respondents clearly stated their opposition to becoming a suburban bedroom community for Dane County with few industries and limited commercial services. More than 80 percent of respondents said the "disagree" or "strongly disagree" with this scenario.

Among the demographic groups, a higher proportion of respondent age 45 and older agreed that Columbus should strive to be a regional transportation hub by enhancing and promoting the passenger rail station.



Utilities and Community Facilities/Services

The fifth section of the survey contained questions pertaining to City utilities and City facilities/services. In the first group of questions, respondents rated each of 15 City services on a scale ranging from “excellent” to “poor.”



Most services fared well among respondents. As shown in Chart 15, garbage collection, the public library, and fire protection topped the list with more than 80 percent of respondents rating each as “excellent” or “good.” About three-fourths of respondents gave high ratings to the municipal electric service and police protection. About two-thirds of respondents said the recycling service and the community’s parks and recreation were “excellent” or “good.”

While 63 percent of respondents gave high ratings to the ambulance service, nearly a quarter of respondents chose the “not sure” response. The relatively high percentage of “not sure” responses probably reflects the responses of residents who have not used the ambulance service and lack the experience on which to base a judgment. Among those with an opinion, those who rated the ambulance service as “excellent” or “good” outnumbered those who said it was “fair” or “poor” by four to one.

Smaller majorities rated the City's sanitary sewer system and municipal water system as "excellent" or "good." In these two categories, the number of "fair" and "poor" ratings became noticeable, exceeding a third of respondents.

Although 55 percent of respondents rated the senior center as "excellent" or "good," a quarter of respondents chose the "not sure" option. The percentage of "not sure" responses decreased as the age of the respondent increased. Among the respondents in the age group comprising the likely users of the Senior Center (age 65+ years), the ratings for the Senior Center were very high; more than three-fourths of senior citizens rated the Center as "excellent" or "good" and only 5 percent chose the "not sure" option.

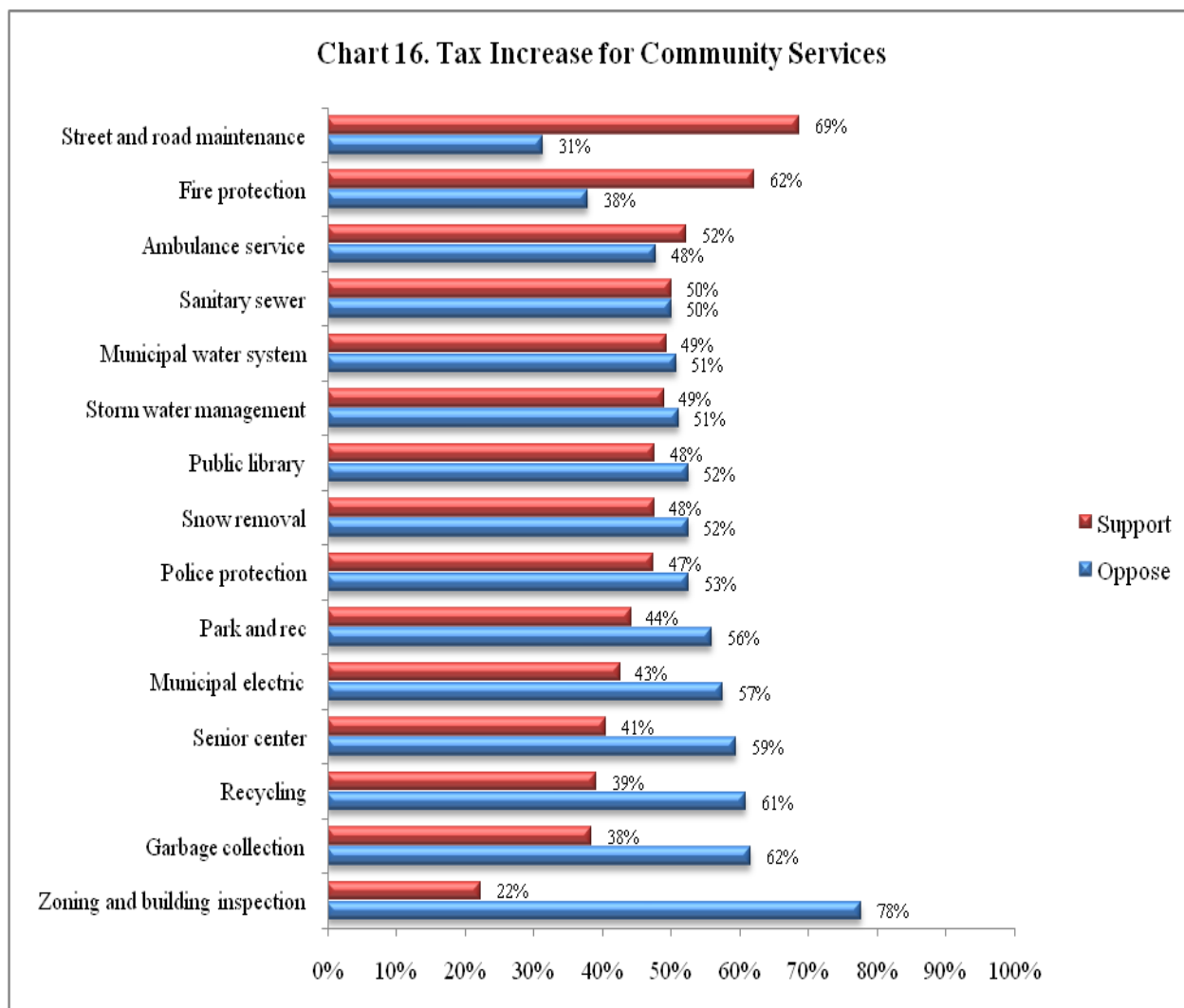
Zoning and building inspection services received the highest proportion of "not sure" responses. Again, this is a likely reflection of the fact that a significant portion of the residents have not requested a building permit or had a land use issue and lack the experience on which to base a rating. Among those with an opinion about zoning and building inspection in Columbus, there were split opinions. About the same proportion gave high ratings as those who gave low ratings.

Snow removal, storm water management, and street maintenance were given noticeably lower ratings compared to most other services; more than half gave a rating of only "fair" or "poor" to these three services. Fifty-six percent of respondents rated snow removal in the two lower categories. More than six in ten respondents gave low ratings to storm water management. Street maintenance received particularly low ratings; 90 percent of respondents gave it a "fair" or "poor" rating, and the highest percentage was in the "poor" category (64%). The ratings for storm water management and street maintenance are a continuation of concerns expressed by respondents in previous sections of the survey (see Chart 1 and Chart 4).

Among the demographic groups, older residents were more likely to give higher ratings to the recycling program, sanitary sewer service, and snow removal. Households without children gave higher ratings to the ambulance service, park and recreation facilities, and the Senior Center. Recent residents were less likely to give excellent or good ratings to the recycling program.

There were numerous instances where a high percentage of particular demographic groups chose the "not sure" response. This is particularly true among respondents who have lived in Columbus for less than five years. A larger percentage of newer residents said they were "not sure" about the ambulance service, fire protection, zoning and building inspections, police protection, public library, municipal electric service, snow removal, and the Senior Center. Younger respondents were more likely to be "not sure" about the ambulance service and fire protection, and a higher percentage of renters said they are "not sure" about the municipal electric service. Respondents from higher income households were more likely to say they are "not sure" about the ambulance service and Senior Center.

Respondents next were given the same list of 15 community services and asked whether they would support or oppose a tax increase to improve each service. As shown in Chart 16, Columbus respondents are willing to address their dissatisfaction about street maintenance by opening up their pocketbooks; seven in ten said they would support a tax increase to fund improvements in street maintenance. Although they are generally satisfied with the fire protection service offered by the City, 62 percent of respondents would support a tax increase if needed to fund improvements in fire protection.



Even though they gave relatively low ratings to the storm water management and snow removal in the City, respondents were evenly split regarding additional taxes to fund improvements for either of these services. Respondents were also evenly split between supporting and opposing tax increases to fund improvements to the sanitary sewer system, municipal water system, public library, and police protection.

Majorities of respondents said they opposed additional taxes for improvements to park and recreation facilities, municipal electric, senior center, recycling, and garbage collection.

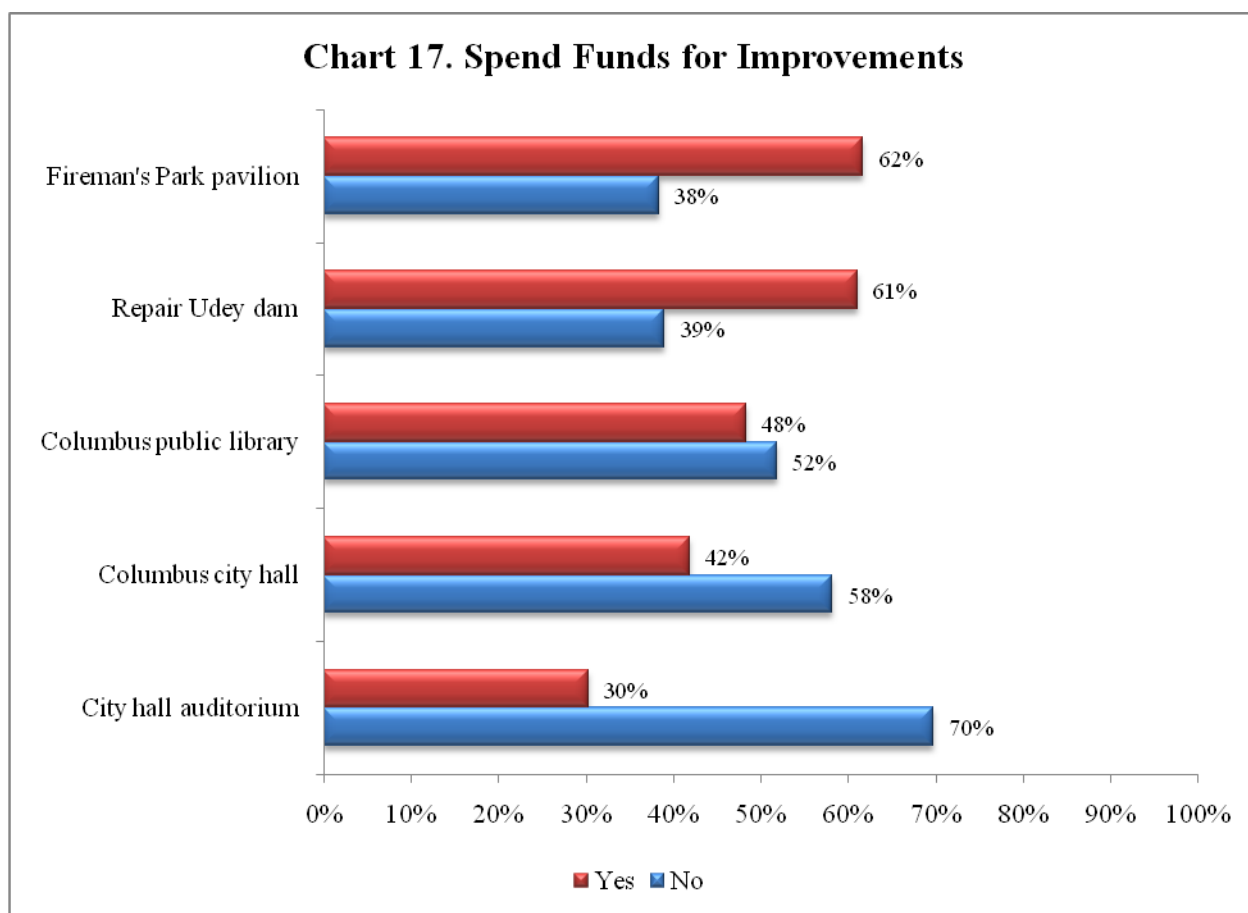
Zoning and building inspection services were a particularly low priority for additional tax dollars, with a large majority, nearly eight in ten, in opposition.

There were no noteworthy differences among the demographic groups.

The last group of questions in this section of the survey asked respondents about funding improvements regarding five specific community facilities. As shown in Chart 17, two of the five received the support of a majority of respondents; about six in ten said they would support expenditures to improve Fireman's Park pavilion and to repair Udey dam.

Respondents were evenly split regarding improvements to the public library, with 48 percent in support and 52 percent in opposition. A majority (58%) opposed funding improvements to city hall, and a larger majority (70%) opposed improvement to the city hall auditorium.

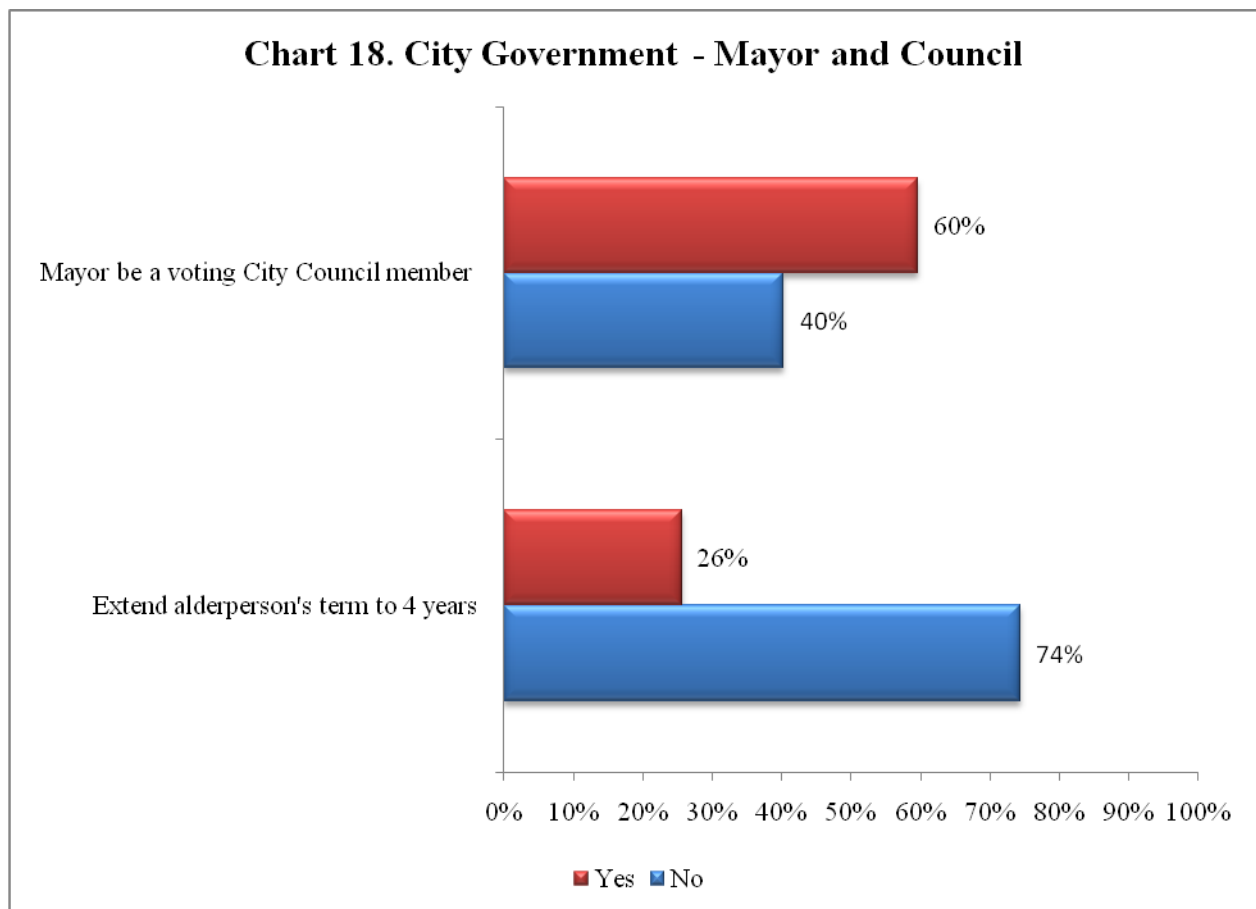
There were no noteworthy differences among the demographic groups.



Government

The last topic in the survey pertained to City government, specifically the length of terms of alderpersons and the voting power of the mayor. As shown in Chart 18, respondents were divided on these two issues. On one hand, a majority (60%) favored the mayor being a voting member of the City Council. On the other hand, three-fourths of respondents said they opposed extending the term of alderpersons from two years to four years.

Among the demographic groups, older respondents were less opposed to extending the term of alderpersons.



Conclusions

The results of this survey indicate some clear strategic directions for the City of Columbus.

- Residents of Columbus want (and are willing to pay for) improvements in roads, sidewalks, storm water management, and selected community projects (Fireman's pavilion and Udey dam).
- Columbus residents want the City to be a regional center that benefits from its passenger train service and to have vibrant downtown retail and light industrial sectors.
- Residents of Columbus want the housing stock to reflect the emerging demographic profile with more options for seniors, more affordable housing, and programs to improve existing housing.
- There is broad agreement across demographic groups on these strategic directions.

Appendix A – Written responses “other” category

Q12. Do you support or oppose the development of the following types of industrial establishments in the City of Columbus? “Other” responses (67 total). Support or opposition shown in parentheses, otherwise blank.

- Grocery Store (9x) (support)
- Anything to hold to the tax base (3x) (support)
- Any jobs will do (2x) (support)
- Grocery store, clothing store (2x) (support)
- Welcome businesses with open arms (2x) (support)
- All commercial development (support)
- All the junk shops coming in downtown that aren't even open to the public! (opposed)
- All with union workers (support)
- Alternative energy production (support)
- Antique store (opposed)
- Any business (support)
- Any business to support job/increase tax base
- Any employer (support)
- Anything legal (support)
- Business incubation or coop small business office space for start-ups (support)
- Business to employ local people
- Businesses that create jobs (support)
- Businesses would help in this town for employment and property taxes (support)
- Casino
- Casino (support)
- Chemical (opposed)
- City officials can't handle what we have now; need to set deadlines, not so many studies.
- Cooperative facilities for multiple businesses with shared support services (E.G. reception, computer/internet, maintenance, roofs oriented to accept solar) (support)
- Cottage industry, (work at home, assembly collection centers for added income or for those with limited transportation) (support)
- Family supporting wages in whatever type of business. (support)
- Furniture restoration & building (support)
- Grocery store/movie theatre (support)
- I support more industry in town so the workers don't have to travel out of town to find a good job (support)
- Jobs (support)
- Locally owned, environmentally neutral/friendly, No more chemicals
- Medical or computer (support)
- Medical Research Center doesn't use animals. (support)
- Medical technology (support)

- More complete grocery opportunities (support)
- More nursing home (support)
- NA
- Not enough jobs in Columbus and the water is so bad, I don't give it to the cat or the plants.
- Not for profit (opposed)
- Pet food manufacturing (support)
- Professional office building for small business to serve or sell their product (support)
- Professional services--need to attract more educated people! (support)
- Recreational facilities (support)
- Renewable energy related industry i.e. solar, wind, equipment manufacturing
- Small agricultural operations (support)
- Small business & incubators for entrepreneurial development (support)
- Small variety retail--no big box stores (support)
- Tech related to UW development (support)
- Technical college/training center (support)
- Technology services (support)
- We need help in paying taxes
- We need jobs, put them in our industrial park
- We need lower taxes, keep the money in the hands of the public.
- Welding (support)
- Whatever that would bring jobs to our area

Q22. Employment status: Other (8 responses)

- Disabled (4x)
- Homemaker
- In arbitration
- Mother
- Seasonal

Q23. Place of Residence: Other (2 responses)

- Had housing
- Rent to own

Appendix B – Quantitative Summary of Responses by Question

TRANSPORTATION

1. Rate the overall adequacy of the following in the City of Columbus.	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
a. Roads	1%	10%	35%	53%
b. Sidewalks	3%	43%	47%	7%
c. Bike trails	3%	23%	23%	51%
2. During the next 10 years, in which of the following transportation alternatives do you think the City of Columbus should invest?	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. Improve bicycling opportunities by:				
i. Widening shoulders on existing roads	8%	27%	42%	23%
ii. Developing separate trails for bicycling	21%	35%	24%	20%
b. Maintain existing roadways	68%	29%	2%	1%
c. Improve pedestrian opportunities by:				
i. Improving existing sidewalks	23%	55%	17%	5%
ii. Developing additional sidewalks	20%	30%	33%	17%
3. If these steps in Question 2 to improve transportation services required an increase in taxes or fees, would you support or oppose increases for the following?	Support	Oppose	Not Sure	
a. Improve bicycling opportunities by:				
i. Widening shoulders on existing roads	17%	68%	15%	
ii. Developing separate trails for bicycling	33%	52%	15%	
b. Maintenance to existing roadways	74%	17%	10%	
c. Improve pedestrian opportunities by:				
i. Improving existing sidewalks	50%	34%	16%	
ii. Developing additional sidewalks	28%	56%	16%	

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

4. How satisfied are you with the following aspects of environmental quality in the City of Columbus area?	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
a. Air quality	28%	69%	3%	1%
b. Surface water quality (rivers, lakes)	8%	54%	30%	8%
c. Groundwater quality	11%	70%	15%	3%
d. Storm water drainage	4%	45%	38%	13%
e. Preservation of open space	7%	73%	17%	4%
f. Preservation of wildlife habitat	7%	72%	17%	4%
g. Signage control	7%	78%	10%	5%
h. Noise control	8%	76%	13%	3%
i. Lighting control	7%	78%	12%	2%
j. Property upkeep/cleanliness	5%	65%	24%	6%

5. Current environmental policies and regulations in the City of Columbus adequately protect the local environment from damage or disruption.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	4%	75%	18%	3%

6. How high a priority is it to increase the number of the following types of park and recreational facilities in the City of Columbus ?	High	Medium	Low	Not a Priority
a. Tot lots (< 1 acre, serves a limited population) includes limited recreation facilities, such as benches and playground equipment.	9%	26%	33%	33%
b. Neighborhood parks (1-5 acres, serves up to ¼ mile radius), includes multiple recreation facilities such as basketball courts, playground equipment, etc.	15%	31%	29%	26%
c. Community parks (5-20 acres, serves entire community), with multiple recreation facilities such as lighted ball fields, concession areas, trails, shelters, swimming facilities, etc.	15%	25%	30%	30%
d. Conservancy parks (> 1 acre) includes nature trails, wildlife viewing areas, ponds, picnic areas, etc.	18%	27%	27%	27%

7. During the next 10 years, how high a priority do you think it is for the City of Columbus to invest in the following recreational facilities?	High	Medium	Low	Not a Priority
a. Soccer fields	8%	26%	38%	29%
b. Baseball/softball diamonds	12%	26%	35%	27%
c. Basketball courts	11%	34%	31%	24%
d. Skate board park	10%	21%	31%	38%
e. Ice skating rink	26%	36%	21%	17%
f. Dog parks	9%	22%	30%	40%
g. Frisbee golf course	3%	14%	31%	52%
h. Picnic areas	10%	33%	32%	25%
i. Playground equipment	18%	40%	25%	17%
j. Teen center	26%	36%	24%	15%
k. Tennis courts	12%	27%	32%	29%
l. Volleyball courts	8%	29%	36%	28%

8. If you believe that any of the resources above (Question 7) should be created or expanded, how should the improvements be paid for? (Mark (•) one only)	Property Taxes	General Park User Fees	Fees for specific uses	Combination of fees and taxes
	9%	18%	28%	45%

HOUSING

9. More of the following types of housing are needed in the City of Columbus area:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. Single-family housing	14%	40%	35%	10%
b. Mobile home parks	1%	8%	38%	53%
c. Duplexes (2 units)	4%	38%	42%	16%
d. Apartments (3 or more units)	4%	28%	50%	19%
e. Townhomes and condominiums	6%	37%	39%	18%
f. Affordable housing	30%	41%	19%	9%
g. Senior condominiums and apartments	22%	51%	22%	5%
h. Assisted living facilities for seniors	23%	53%	20%	5%
i. Starter (first time buyer) homes	14%	49%	28%	9%
j. Executive (high-end) homes	4%	14%	46%	35%
k. Programs to improve existing housing quality	23%	53%	16%	8%

10. Indicate your level of agreement with how new housing and neighborhoods in the City of Columbus should be designed.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. Small lots (under 10,000 sq. ft; under 80' by 125')	5%	31%	49%	15%
b. Medium lots (10,000-15,000 sq. ft.)	10%	68%	16%	5%
c. Large lots (over 15,000 sq. ft.)	5%	31%	50%	14%
d. A mix of lot sizes	21%	59%	16%	4%
e. Only single-family residential	9%	34%	47%	10%
f. A mix of single-family and multifamily residential	9%	54%	30%	7%
g. A mix of residential and small businesses	12%	53%	27%	8%
h. With sidewalks	29%	52%	13%	6%
i. With recreational trails and open space	23%	43%	25%	9%
j. With parks within walking distance of residents	25%	48%	20%	7%

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND LAND USE

11. Please rate the current amount of light industrial, office development, restaurants, and retail in the City of Columbus .	Too Much	About Right	Too Little
a. Light industrial	1%	36%	63%
b. Office development	3%	49%	48%
c. Restaurants	3%	47%	50%
d. Retail shops	3%	18%	79%

12. Do you support or oppose the development of the following types of industrial establishments in the City of Columbus ?	Support	Oppose
a. Transport industrial (warehousing, distribution centers, etc.)	83%	17%
b. Light manufacturing (product assembly, product fabrication, etc.)	95%	5%
c. Heavy manufacturing (primary manufacturing such as foundries, etc.)	59%	41%
d. High-technology manufacturing	91%	9%
e. Intensive agricultural operations ("factory" farms or egg processing plants)	46%	54%
f. Non-intensive agricultural related businesses (implement dealer, etc.)	82%	18%
g. Other (please specify) _____	78%	22%

13. Do you support or oppose the development of the following retail establishments in the City of Columbus ?	Support	Oppose
a. Supermarkets	96%	4%
b. Specialty grocery stores	64%	36%
c. Fast food restaurants	45%	55%
d. Family restaurants	83%	17%
e. Entertainment establishments	77%	23%
f. Small specialty retail stores	81%	19%
g. Discount department stores	76%	24%
h. Upscale department stores	50%	50%
i. Convenience stores	58%	42%
j. Downtown redevelopment	82%	18%

14. Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following to complete the statement: "In the future, the City of Columbus should strive to _____."	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. Be a full service community where all work, shopping, service, housing and healthcare needs can be met.	52%	40%	7%	1%
b. Focus on becoming a regional transportation hub by enhancing and promoting the passenger rail station.	25%	43%	25%	7%
c. Be a suburban "bedroom" community for Dane County that is primarily a residential community with few industries and limited commercial services.	3%	14%	53%	30%
d. Promote development or redevelopment in the core of the community instead of annexing additional property.	23%	51%	21%	4%

UTILITY AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES/SERVICES

15. Based on your experience, please rate the following City of Columbus services.	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Not Sure
a. Ambulance service	15%	48%	13%	2%	23%
b. Fire protection	38%	45%	5%	1%	12%
c. Garbage collection	36%	51%	10%	3%	1%
d. Zoning and building Inspections	4%	32%	26%	8%	29%
e. Municipal water system	11%	46%	27%	11%	4%
f. Park and recreation facilities	13%	53%	25%	6%	3%
g. Police protection	19%	54%	16%	7%	5%
h. Public library	27%	56%	11%	1%	5%
i. Municipal electric system	17%	58%	17%	4%	5%
j. Recycling program	15%	51%	22%	9%	3%
k. Sanitary sewer service	11%	50%	23%	10%	6%
l. Snow removal	7%	34%	34%	22%	4%
m. Storm water management	3%	27%	32%	30%	9%
n. Street and road maintenance	0%	7%	26%	64%	2%
o. Senior center	12%	43%	17%	2%	26%
16. If improvements required increases in your taxes or fees, would you support or oppose increases for the following services?	Support	Oppose			
a. Ambulance service	52%	48%			
b. Fire protection	62%	38%			
c. Garbage collection	38%	62%			
d. Zoning and building inspections	22%	78%			
e. Municipal water system	49%	51%			
f. Park and recreation facilities	44%	56%			
g. Police protection	47%	53%			
h. Public library	48%	52%			
i. Municipal electric system	43%	57%			
j. Recycling program	39%	61%			
k. Sanitary sewer service	50%	50%			
l. Snow removal	48%	52%			
m. Storm water Management	49%	51%			
n. Street and road maintenance	61%	39%			
o. Senior center	41%	59%			

17. Should the City Council consider spending funds to improve the following city structures?	Yes	No
a. Repair Udey Dam	61%	39%
b. Columbus public library	48%	52%
c. Columbus city hall	42%	58%
d. Firemans Park pavilion	62%	38%
e. City hall auditorium	30%	70%

GOVERNMENT

18. Should the term of the elected alderpersons be extended from 2 years to 4 years?	Yes 26%	No 74%
19. Should the elected mayor be a voting member of the City Council?	60%	40%

DEMOGRAPHICS

20. Gender:	Male	Female						
	50%	50%						
21. Age:	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 and older		
	1%	14%	15%	20%	20%	30%		
22. Employment status:	Employed Full Time	Employed Part Time	Self Employed	Unemployed	Retired	Other: _____		
	50%	8%	6%	3%	31%	2%		
23. Place of residence:	Own	Rent	Other: _____					
	81%	19%	1%					
			0	1	2	3	4	5+
24. Number of Adults (18 or older) in household:				29%	60%	9%	2%	0%
25. Number of children (under 18) in household:			72%	12%	10%	5%	1%	0%
26. Household income range:	Less than 15,000	15,000 – 24,999	25,000 – 49,999	50,000 – 74,999	75,000 – 99,999	100,000 or More		
	7%	11%	30%	26%	12%	14%		
27. Highest level of education:	Less than high school	High school diploma	Some college/tech	Tech college graduate	Bachelor's degree	Graduate or professional degree		
	4%	26%	23%	12%	24%	12%		
28. How many years have you lived in the City of Columbus?	Less than 1	1 – 4	5 - 9	10 - 24	25+			
	4%	15%	16%	21%	44%			