City of Columbus
Citizen Survey Report, 2011

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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, Jacki Roden, Erin Ingli, and Caleb Riedeman. We gratefully acknowledge their hard work and dedication. The SRC would also like to thank City Administrator Boyd Kraemer and Confidential Administrative Assistant Lana Platz 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.

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Executive Summary

In October 2011, the Survey Research Center (SRC) at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls mailed surveys to a random sample of 1,047 Columbus households to gather opinions from Columbus residents about city functions, services, and facilities. The overall response rate was 38 percent (396 completed questionnaires), resulting in a confidence interval of plus/minus 4.7 percent. The results were compared to a similar survey of Columbus residents in 2009. The SRC identifies when differences between the 2009 and 2010 results are "statistically significant," i.e., not due to chance.

Compared to the 2010 Census and the American Community Survey (2005-2009 average), the demographic profile of the sample contains fewer young people and renters and more people with post-high school education. The sample contained more households with incomes between $50,000 and $74,999. There were relatively few significant differences in the opinions among the demographic groups. The demographic profile of respondents to this survey is very similar to the demographic characteristics of the respondents to the 2009 survey, suggesting a high degree of comparability between identical questions on the two surveys.

The quality of parks and senior citizen opportunities in the City received particularly high ratings by respondents. Over half of respondents said the City's recreation opportunities, energy sustainability initiatives, and sidewalks are good or excellent. The quality of the City's roads received particularly low ratings, with nearly nine in ten respondents saying the quality of the roads are fair or poor. Compared to the 2009 survey, the quality rating of the sidewalks increased. The quality rating of the roads rose slightly compared to 2009, but the difference was not statistically significant. Respondents said their top priorities for the City's infrastructure are maintaining and improving existing roadways. About six in ten respondents said they support a tax increase to improve and maintain existing roadways. Compared to the 2009 survey, support for increased taxes or fees to pay for transportation infrastructure has declined slightly among respondents.

Respondents expressed relatively high levels of satisfaction with the signage control, noise control, sewer system, street lights (both the number and illumination), and animal control. About 60 percent of respondents were satisfied with storm water drainage, which is a slight improvement when compared to the results of the 2009 survey. Respondents were also more satisfied with noise control and signage control compared to the 2009 survey results.

Respondents gave relatively few high priority ratings to expanding recreational facilities in the community. The top priories were an ice skating rink, teen center, and playground equipment, but none of these were deemed a high priority by more than 23 percent of respondents. Majorities said expansion of the remaining 10 listed facilities was a low priority or not a priority. Compared to the 2009 survey, respondents gave lower priorities ratings to investing in recreational facilities. 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.

When asked what types of housing are needed in the City, the top four were senior condominiums, affordable housing, assisted living facilities, and starter homes. Large majorities of respondents said they do not see a need for additional mobile homes or for additional

executive homes. Compared to the 2009 survey, more respondents said additional apartments and duplexes are needed in the City.
Large majorities said they support efforts to promote economic development in the downtown area as well as industrial retail, and office development along the corridors for Highways 151-16/60/73. A smaller majority also favor economic development activities in the AMTRAK depot area.

The top three priorities for retail development in the City are for supermarkets, downtown development, and discount department stores.

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. At least three-fourths of respondents gave excellent or good ratings to garbage collection, fire protection, the public library, the municipal electric system, and police protection. The services with the lowest ratings are street and road maintenance (83% fair or poor), snow removal (56% fair or poor), and storm water management (51% fair or poor). Compared to the 2009 survey, ratings improved for the ambulance service, municipal water system, sanitary sewer service, storm water management, and maintenance of the City's streets and roads. Sixty-five percent of respondents would support an increase in taxes or fees to pay for improvements in maintenance of City streets and roads, and 55 percent would support increases in taxes or fees for fire protection. Majorities oppose increases in taxes or fees for the remaining 13 municipal services listed. Compared to the 2009 survey results, respondents increased their level of opposition to increased fees or taxes for the ambulance service, municipal water system, public library, municipal electrical system, sanitary sewer service, and Senior Center.

Slightly over half of respondents support expenditures to improve Fireman's Park Pavilion (56%). Respondents gave mixed responses about expenditures to improve the public library. Respondents were evenly split, with 52 present supporting and 48 percent opposing. However, with 61 percent of respondents opposed to a tax increase for the library, improvements would likely need to be paid for in other ways. Improvements to the City Hall Auditorium were opposed by 72 percent. Compared to the results in the 2009 survey, the differences were not statistically significant.

Survey Purpose

The purpose of this study was to gather opinions from Columbus residents about city functions, services, and facilities. A similar survey project was completed in 2009. This report contains comparisons between the responses to identical questions on the two questionnaires. The SRC conducted statistical tests to compare the results of identical questions on both surveys. When the differences are identified as "statistically significant," we are at least 95 percent sure that the differences between the two samples (2009 and 2011) are not a result of chance and, thus, represent an actual difference in the results of the two surveys.

Survey Methods

In October 2011, the Survey Research Center (SRC) at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls mailed surveys to a random sample of 1,047 Columbus residents.

The overall response rate from the public was 38 percent (396 completed questionnaires). Based on the estimated number of adults in the population of the City (3,790)[1], the results provided in this report are expected to be accurate to within plus or minus 4.7 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] 2010 US Census

Profile of Respondents

Table 1 summarizes the demographic profile of the 396 respondents from the public who returned surveys. Where comparable data were available from the 2010 US Census of Population and Housing and the US Census American Community Survey (ACS) 5 year average (2005-2009), 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	375	47%	53%				
Census (Age 18+)	3,790	49%	51%				
Age 18+	**Count**	**18 – 24**	**25 – 34**	**35 – 44**	**45 – 54**	**55 – 64**	**65+**
Sample	389	2%	12%	18%	18%	20%	30%
Census	3,790	9%	19%	17%	21%	15%	19%
Employment Status	**Count**	**Full time**	**Part time**	**Self - Empl.**	**Unempl.**	**Retired**	**Other**
Sample	387	52%	7%	7%	2%	31%	2%
ACS (Age 16+)	3,841	65%			1%	33%[2]	
Residence	**Count**	**Own**	**Rent**	**Other**			
Sample	386	81%	18%	1%			
Census households	2,123	65%	35%				
Adults in Household	**Count**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5+**	
Sample	372	28%	63%	8%	2%	0%	
Census households	2,123	31%	69%				
Children in Household	**Count**	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5+**
Sample	354	66%	14%	14%	5%	1%	0%
Census households	2,123	69%	31%				
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	368	7%	11%	24%	30%	12%	15%
ACS (2005-2009 est.)	1,858	11%	12%	28%	23%	10%	17%
Length of Residency	**Count**	**<1 yr**	**1 – 4**	**5 - 9**	**10 - 24**	**25+**	
Sample[3]	390	2%	14%	18%	24%	42%	
Highest Level of Education	**Count**	**Less than High Sch.**	**High Sch. Dipl.**	**Some College/ Tech.**	**Tech. College Grad.**	**Bachelor Degree**	**Graduate/ Profess. Degree**
Sample	386	3%	26%	22%	13%	25%	11%
ACS (age 25+)	3,301	11%	37%	21%	10%	14%	7%

[2] Includes all persons not in the labor force
[3] Census data does not contain a length of residence category.

Over all, the pattern of the sample's demographic characteristics matches the 2010 Census numbers and the estimates from the American Community Survey quite well. However, there are fewer people under 45 years of age in this sample (32%) than the 2010 Census indicates should have been included (45%) and fewer renters (18%) than reported in the 2010 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 who have completed a post-secondary education program (49%) than was reported in the American Community Survey estimate (31%). The sample contained more households with incomes between $50,000 and $74,999 than in the American Community Survey estimate**.** Again, the SRC is quite pleased with the representativeness of this sample.

The demographic profile of the sample aligns well with the sample in the 2009 survey. Data on gender, age, employment status, type of residence, household composition, and length of residency characteristics were very similar between the two samples. Both samples contained fewer young people and renters and had more respondents with post-secondary educational attainment. The only exception is with respect to income in the $50,000 to $74,999 range. In the 2009 survey, this group was slightly underrepresented, while in the 2010 results this group was slightly overrepresented. The difference may be due to the use of different sources of income data for the comparisons. The 2009 survey used data from the 2000 Census, which was a decade old at the time of the survey (1999 income data). In contrast, the 2010 survey used the more recent income estimates from the American Community Survey (2005-2009) as the basis of comparison between the survey sample and the City's total population. Overall, the respondents to the two surveys are very similar groups, suggesting a high degree of comparability between the identical questions on the two surveys.

Most differences in the responses between demographic groups are relatively small and are a matter of degree. As we analyze the data, we will identify when the differences between demographic groups are substantial and noteworthy.

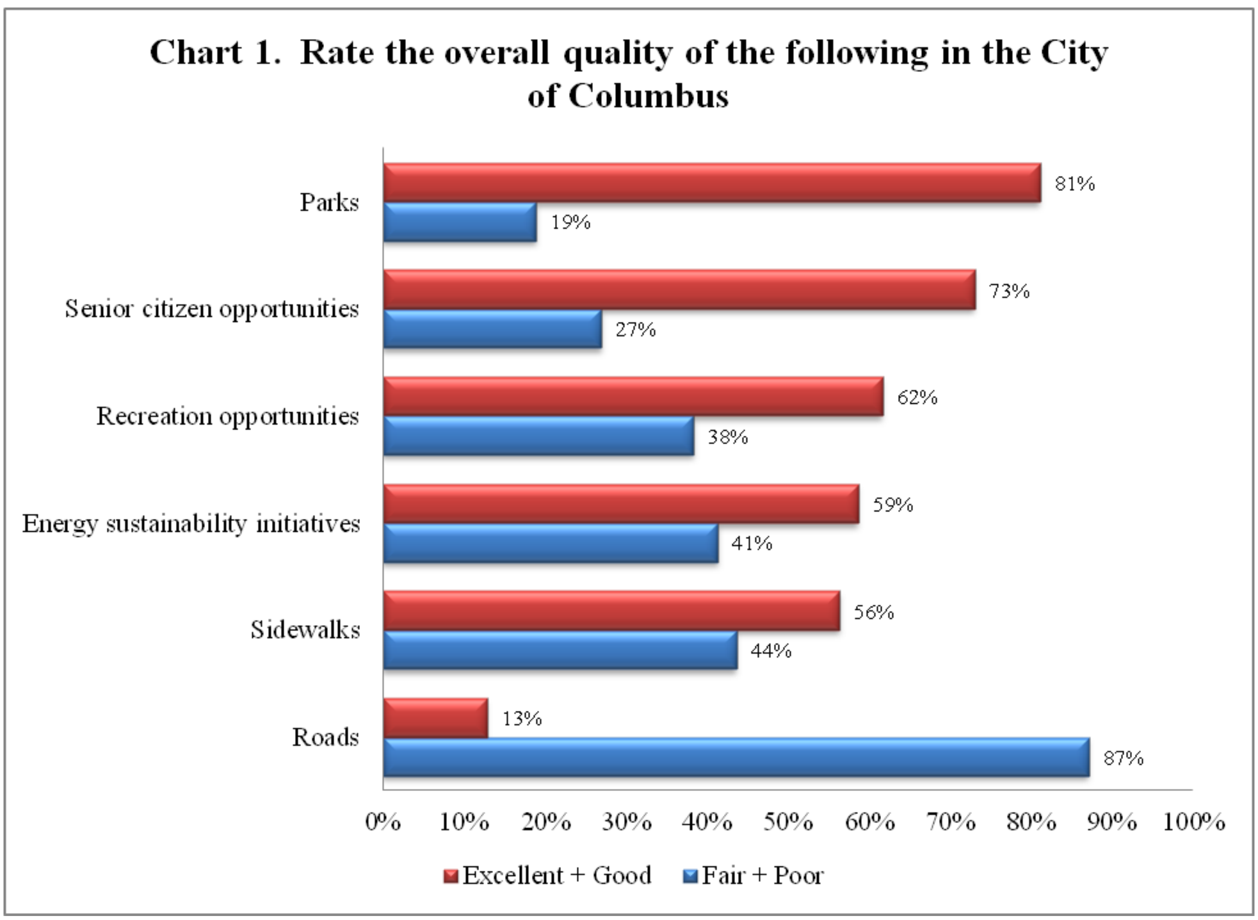
Streets, Sidewalks and Infrastructure

The initial section of the survey asked respondents three groups of questions regarding the quality of streets, sidewalks, and city infrastructure in Columbus.

As shown in Chart 1, over 80 percent of respondents gave excellent or good quality ratings to the parks in Columbus and about three-fourths said senior citizen opportunities are good or excellent. About 60 percent rated recreation opportunities and energy sustainability initiatives as good or excellent, and 56 percent gave favorable ratings to the city's sidewalks. A significant minority of respondents, ranging from 38 percent to 44 percent, gave only fair or poor ratings to recreation opportunities, energy sustainability initiatives, and sidewalks. (The top bar is the combined percentages of excellent and good. The bottom bar is the sum of fair and poor ratings.)

The quality of City's streets received particularly low ratings, with nearly nine in ten respondents saying the streets are fair or poor.

There were no noteworthy differences in the opinions among the demographic groups for this group of questions.



Comparison to 2009 survey results. The 2009 survey also asked for respondents to rate the quality of the City's sidewalks and roads. As shown in Table 2, ratings for the sidewalks increased slightly, particularly in the good category, and these differences in the sidewalk ratings are statistically significant. The quality ratings in the good category for the City's roads rose slightly in 2011, but the difference is not statistically significant. In both years, very large majorities of respondents gave combined fair or poor ratings to the quality of the City's roads.

Table 2. Transportation Infrastructure Ratings: 2009 and 2011

	Year	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Sidewalks					
	2009	3%	43%	47%	7%
	2011	5%	51%	34%	10%
Roads					
	2009	1%	10%	35%	53%
	2011	0%	13%	35%	52%

When asked to rank their top four transportation-related priorities for City investments during the next five years, Table 3 indicates that respondents' priorities were consistent with the concern about the quality of the roads indentified in Chart 1. Improving existing roadways was rated the top priority by 57 percent of the respondents, and maintaining existing roadways ranked as the second highest priority. Improving existing sidewalks ranked third, and developing additional sidewalks ranked fourth.

There were no noteworthy differences of opinion among the demographic groups for this group of questions.

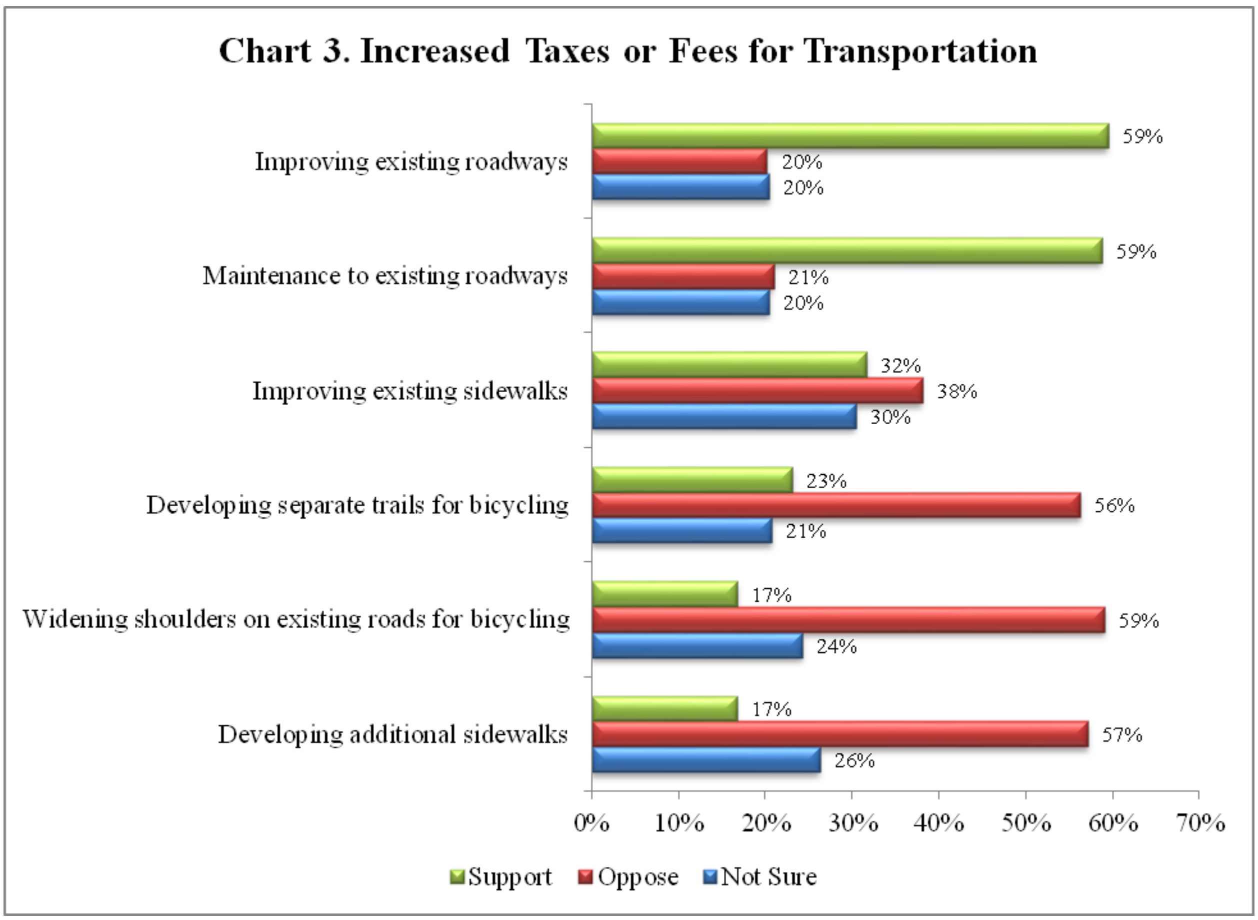
Table 3. Priority Rankings for Transportation Infrastructure

	Highest Priority	2nd Highest Priority	3rd Highest Priority	4th Highest Priority
Maintaining existing roadways	34%	**39%**	10%	10%
Improving existing roadways	**57%**	29%	7%	3%
Developing additional sidewalks	2%	7%	19%	**27%**
Improving existing sidewalks	2%	15%	**41%**	21%
Improving bicycling opportunities by widening shoulders on existing roads	1%	4%	8%	18%
Improving bicycling opportunities by developing separate trails for bicycling	4%	6%	15%	21%

Comparison to 2009 survey results. Although the 2009 survey contained a similar question, direct comparisons are not possible because the structure of the question was changed in the 2011 survey. The overall response pattern is similar between the two surveys. Respondents to both surveys said maintaining existing roadways and improving existing sidewalks were important issues.

The last group of questions in the transportation section asked respondents' opinions regarding additional fees or taxes to pay for the investments listed in the items in Table 3. As shown in Chart 3, about 60 percent of respondents said they would support an increase in taxes or fees to improve and maintain existing roadways. Respondents had mixed opinions about funding improvements to existing sidewalks. About a third of respondents said they would support increased taxes or fees for improving existing sidewalks, while 38 percent were opposed and 30 percent were not sure. Over half (57%) were opposed to tax or fee increases to fund <u>additional</u> sidewalks in the City. Majorities also were opposed to fees or taxes for widening shoulders on existing roads for bicycling (59%) or for developing separate bicycling trails (56%). (The top bar is the percentage who support, the middle bar is the percentage who oppose, and the bottom bar is the percentage who are not sure.)

Among the demographic groups, renters were more likely to support improving existing sidewalks (46%) than homeowners (29%). Households without children were more likely to support increases for <u>maintaining</u> existing roadways (64%) than households with children present (47%). Similarly 64 percent of households with children supported increases in taxes or fees for <u>improving</u> existing roadways compared to 49 percent of households without children.



Comparison to 2009 survey results. Overall, as shown in Table 4, support for increases in taxes or fees to pay for transportation improvements decreased between 2009 and 2011. The only exception was that fewer respondents, but still a majority, opposed increased taxes or fees for widening shoulders on existing roads for bicycling (the percentage of not sure answers showed a corresponding increase). All the changes in survey results from 2009 and 2011 for this group of questions are statistically significant, i.e., not due to chance.

Table 4. Increased Taxes or Fees for Transportation: 2009 and 2011

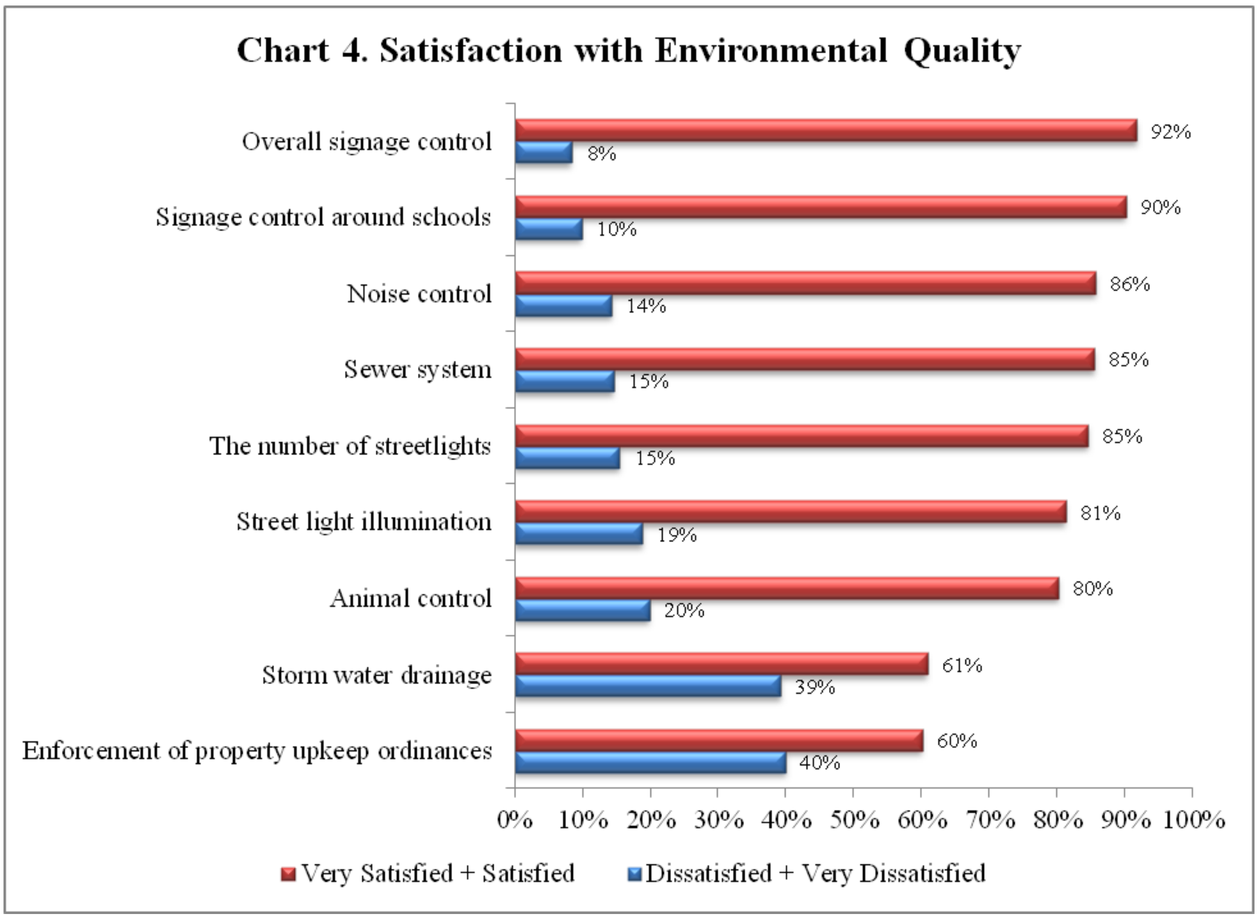
Year	Support	Not Sure	Oppose
Maintenance to existing roadways			
2009	74%	10%	17%
2011	59%	20%	21%
Developing additional sidewalks			
2009	28%	16%	56%
2011	17%	26%	57%
Improve existing sidewalks			
2009	50%	16%	34%
2011	32%	30%	38%
Widening shoulders on existing roads for bicycling			
2009	17%	15%	68%
2011	17%	24%	59%
Developing separate trails for bicycling			
2009	33%	15%	52%
2011	23%	21%	56%

Natural and Cultural Resources

As shown in Chart 4, large majorities of respondents, ranging between 80 percent and 92 percent, were satisfied or very satisfied with overall signage control, signage control around schools, noise control, sewer system, the number of streetlights, street light illumination, and animal control. (The top bar is the combined percentages of satisfied and very satisfied. The bottom bar is the sum of dissatisfied and very dissatisfied responses.)

Although majorities of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with storm water drainage (61%) and enforcement of property upkeep ordinances (60%), there were substantial minorities of respondents who were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with those two aspects of environmental quality in the City of Columbus.

There were no noteworthy differences in the responses among the demographic groups for this group of questions.



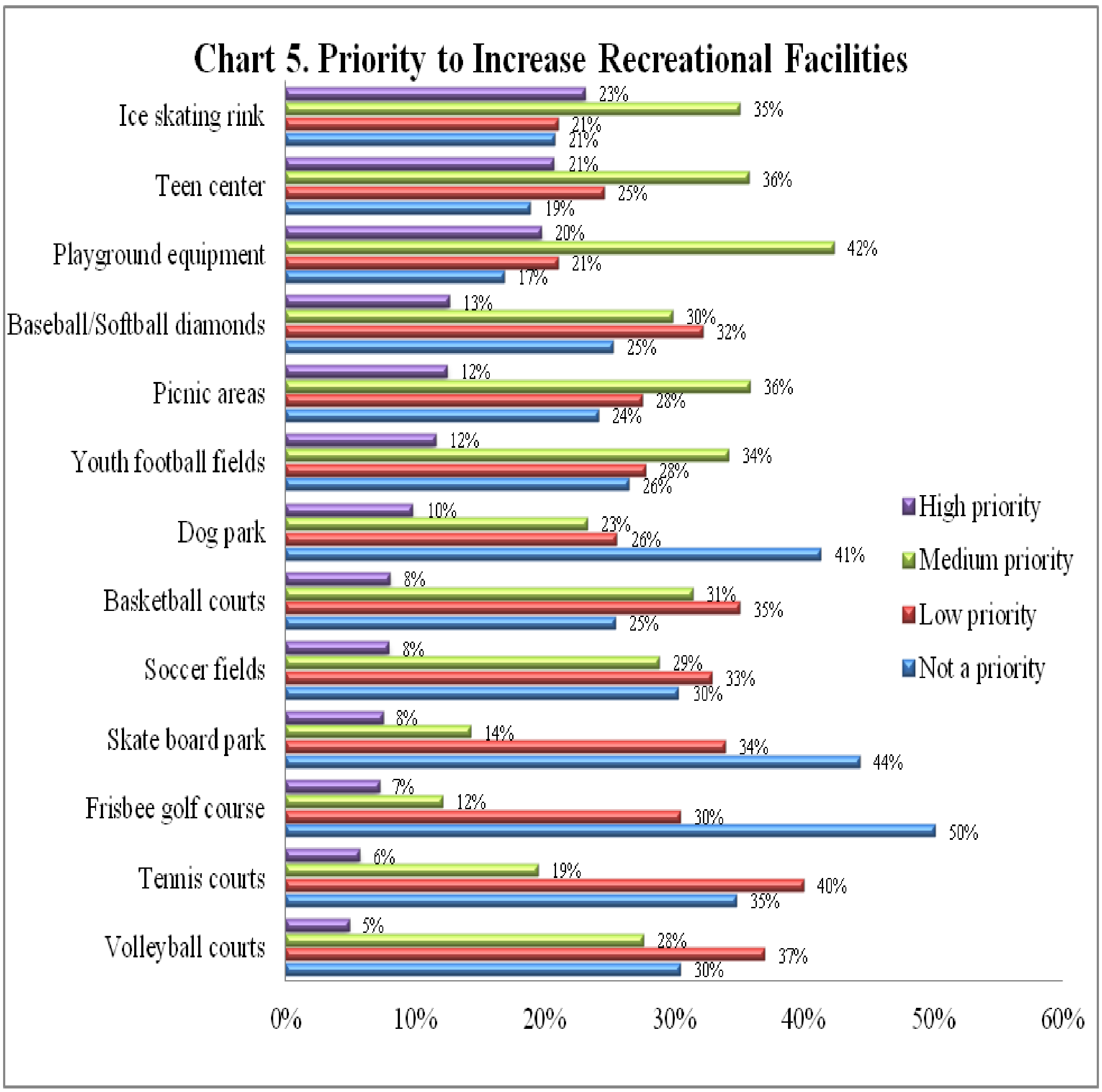
<u>Comparison to 2009 survey results</u>. Among the three questions regarding environmental quality asked in both surveys, respondents' level of satisfaction has risen. Table 5 shows that more respondents in 2011 said they are very satisfied with noise control, overall signage control, and storm water drainage than in 2009. All the changes in survey results shown in Table 5 are statistically significant.

Table 5. Satisfaction with Environmental Quality: 2009 and 2011

Year	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Noise control				
2009	8%	76%	13%	3%
2011	15%	71%	12%	2%
Overall signage control				
2009	7%	78%	10%	5%
2011	16%	75%	6%	2%
Storm water drainage				
2009	4%	45%	38%	13%
2011	8%	52%	30%	10%

Respondents were asked to indicate a priority rating for investments in each of thirteen recreational facilities over the the next five years. The results are shown in Chart 5. The top bar for each facility is the high priority percentage; the second bar is the medium priority percentage; the third bar is the low priority percentage; and the bottom bar is the not a priority percentage. The results in Chart 5 indicate that Columbus respondents gave relatively few high priority ratings. At the top of the list were an ice skating rink (23% high priority), teen center (21% high priority), and playground equipment (20% high priority). These three facilities also achieved the largest percentages of medium priority ratings, ranging from 42 percent for playground equipment to 35 percent for an ice skating rink. 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 households with children gave higher priority ratings to playground equipment. Retirees and long-term residents (25+ years) gave a higher priority rating to an ice skating rink.



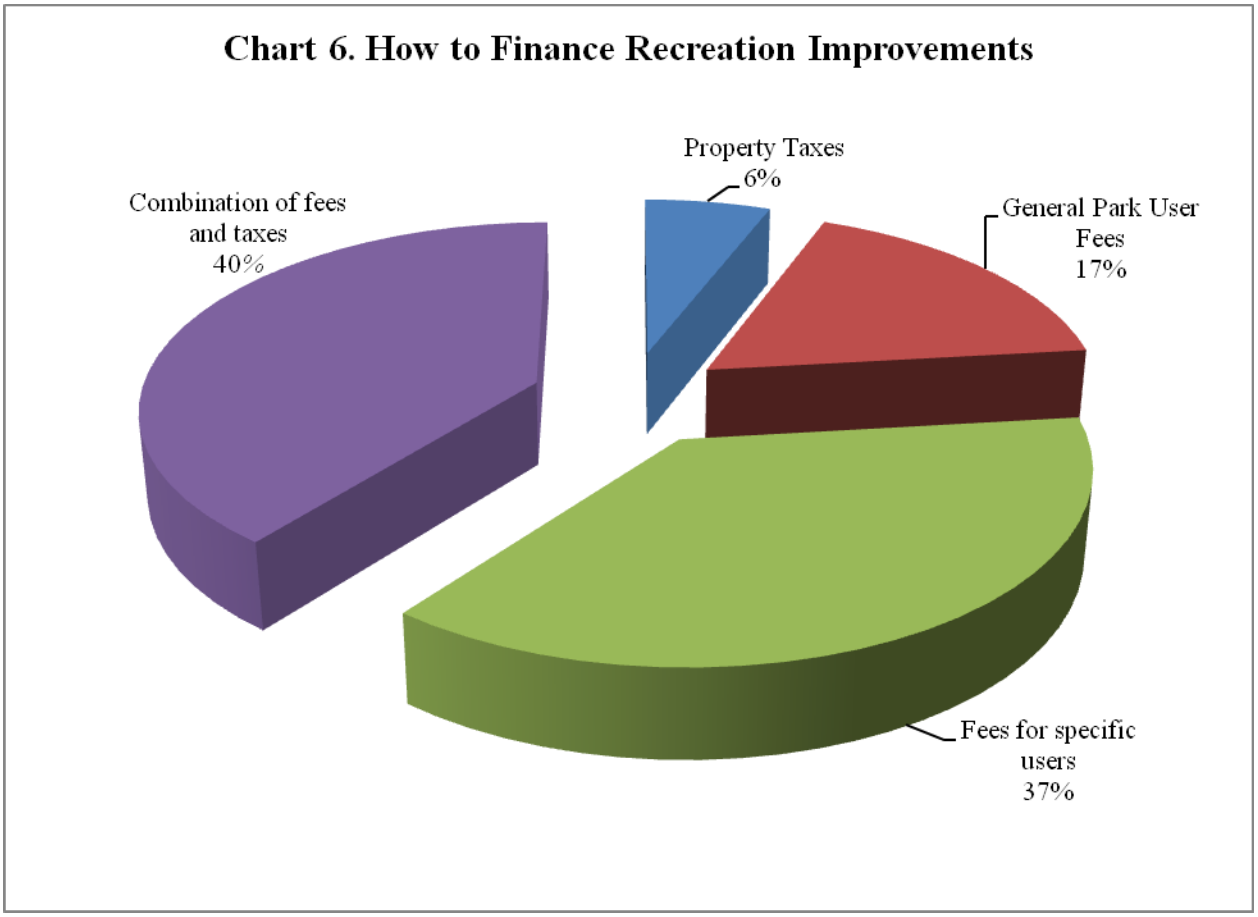
<u>Comparison to 2009 survey results</u>. Twelve of the thirteen recreational facilities were included in the 2009 survey (youth football fields was added as a choice in 2011). Table 6 shows the 2009 ratings compared to the 2011 ratings. Only three facilities had statistically significant changes in the ratings between 2009 and 2011, skate board park, teen center and tennis courts (highlighted in Table 6). In all three cases, respondents gave lower priority ratings in the 2011 survey.

Table 6. Priority to Increase Recreational Facilities: 2009 and 2011

Year	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Not a Priority
Soccer fields				
2009	8%	26%	38%	29%
2011	8%	29%	33%	30%
Baseball/softball diamonds				
2009	12%	26%	35%	27%
2011	13%	30%	32%	25%
Basketball courts				
2009	11%	34%	31%	24%
2011	8%	31%	35%	25%
Skate board park				
2009	**10%**	**21%**	**31%**	**38%**
2011	**8%**	**14%**	**34%**	**44%**
Ice skating rink				
2009	26%	36%	21%	17%
2011	23%	35%	21%	21%
Dog park				
2009	9%	22%	30%	40%
2011	10%	23%	26%	41%
Frisbee golf course				
2009	3%	14%	31%	52%
2011	7%	12%	30%	50%
Picnic areas				
2009	10%	33%	32%	25%
2011	12%	36%	28%	24%
Playground equipment				
2009	18%	40%	25%	17%
2011	20%	42%	21%	17%
Teen center				
2009	**26%**	**36%**	**24%**	**15%**
2011	**21%**	**36%**	**25%**	**19%**
Tennis courts				
2009	**12%**	**27%**	**32%**	**29%**
2011	**6%**	**19%**	**40%**	**35%**
Volleyball courts				
2009	8%	29%	36%	28%
2011	5%	28%	37%	30%

As described above, Columbus respondents placed a relatively low priority on expenditures to improve or expand recreational facilities. As shown earlier in Chart 1, respondents expressed high levels of satisfaction with the City's parks and recreational opportunities. However, if recreational facilities were to be improved or expanded in Columbus, the largest proportion of respondents (40%) preferred combining taxes and fees. Funding recreation facilities solely with the property tax was favored by only six percent of respondents. (See Chart 6).

Households with children were more likely to support a combination of user fees and taxes (48%) compared to households without children (34%).



Comparison to 2009 survey results. As shown in Table 7, overall, preferences for funding recreational improvements were similar to the 2009 data, but support for fees for specific uses increased in 2011. Differences in the design of the question in 2011 precluded testing for statistical significance.

Table 7. How to Finance Recreation Improvements: 2009 and 2011

Year	Property Taxes	General Park User Fees	Fees for Specific Uses	Combination of Fees and Taxes
2009	9%	18%	28%	45%
2011	6%	17%	37%	40%

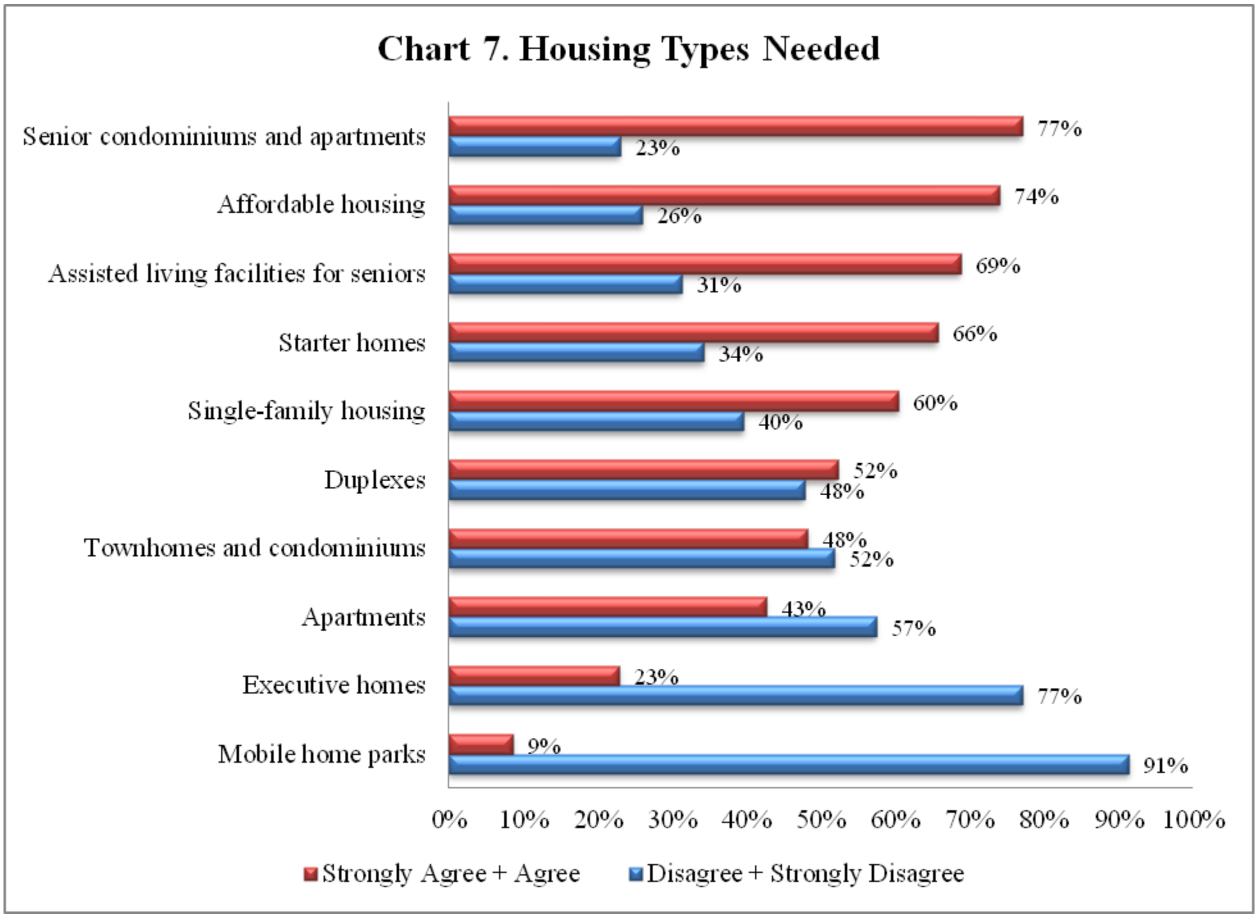
Housing

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 7, between two-thirds and three-fourths of respondents identified four housing types for which they agreed more are needed:

- senior condominiums (77% agreed or strongly agreed)
- affordable housing (74% agreed or strongly agreed)
- assisted living (69% agreed or strongly agreed)
- starter homes (66% agreed or strongly agreed)

Smaller majorities also agreed or strongly agreed with the need for additional single family units (60%) and duplexes (52%).

Majorities of respondents said they disagree or strongly disagree with the need for additional townhomes/condominiums (52%) and apartments (57%) or with the need for more executive housing (77%). Mobile home parks were supported by less than 10 percent and opposed by over 90 percent. (The top bar is the combined percentage of strongly agree and agree; the bottom bar is the sum of disagree plus strongly disagree.)



Demographic comparisons:

- 94 percent of renters agree or strongly agree with the need for more affordable housing compared to 69 percent of homeowners. 61 percent of renters said there is a need for more apartments compared to 38 percent of homeowners. 83 percent of renters said there is a need for more starter homes compared to 63 percent of homeowners. As noted in the Demographic Profile (Table1), renters are underrepresented among the respondents. Thus, the data in Chart 7 probably understates the support for these types of housing in the overall population of the City.

- 89 percent of households with under $50,000 annual income agree or strongly agree that more affordable housing is needed compared to 64 percent of households with annual incomes of $50,000 or more.

Comparison to 2009 survey results. Table 8 shows the 2009 results compared to the 2011 results. Only two housing types had statistically significant changes in the ratings between 2009 and 2011, duplexes and apartments (highlighted in Table 8). In both cases, 2010 respondents were more likely to agree with a need for additional duplexes and apartments.

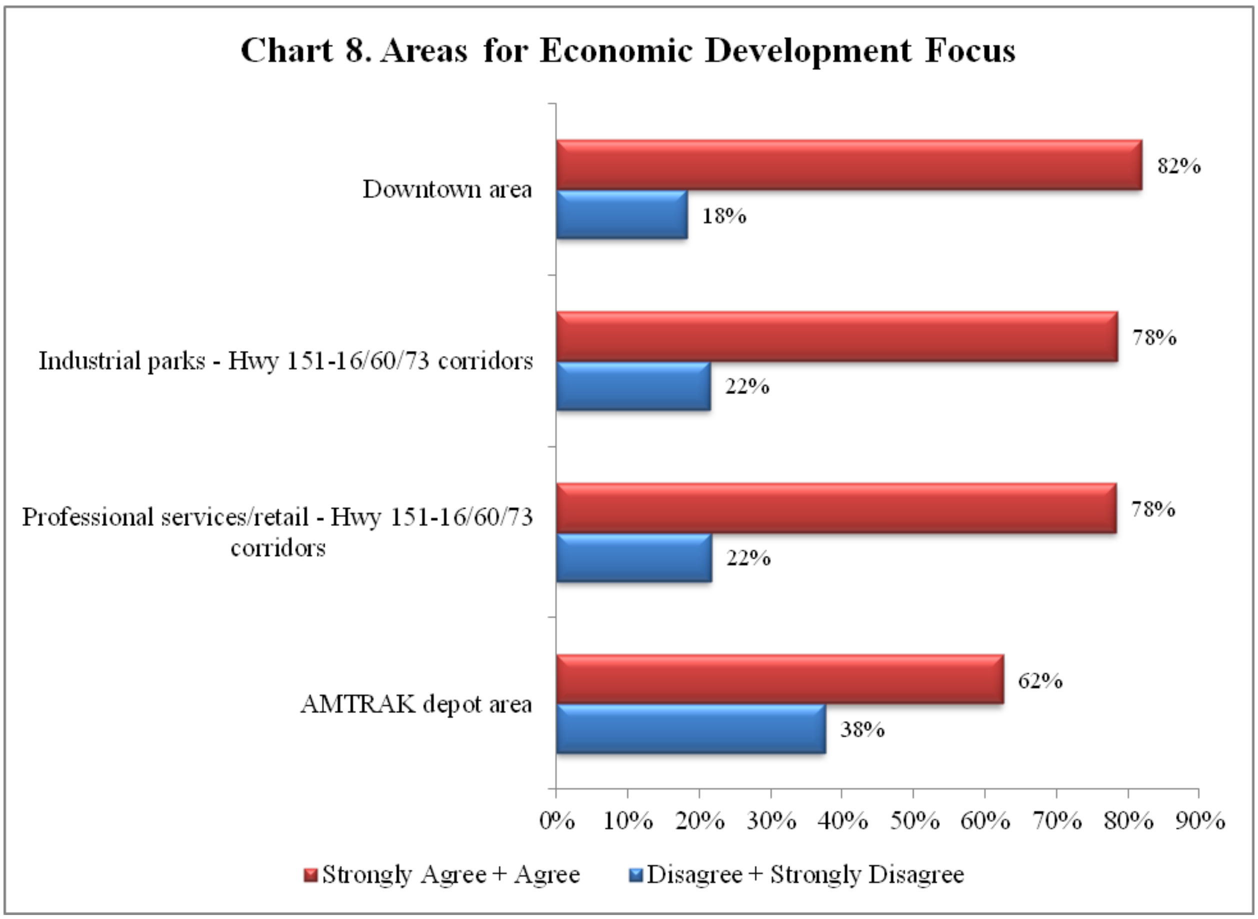
Table 8. Housing Types Needed: 2009 and 2011

	Year	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Single-family housing	2009	14%	40%	35%	10%
	2011	16%	44%	29%	10%
Mobile home parks	2009	1%	8%	38%	53%
	2011	1%	8%	42%	49%
Duplexes (2 units)	**2009**	**4%**	**38%**	**42%**	**16%**
	2011	**4%**	**48%**	**37%**	**11%**
Apartments (3 or more units)	**2009**	**4%**	**28%**	**50%**	**19%**
	2011	**4%**	**39%**	**40%**	**17%**
Townhomes and condominiums	2009	6%	37%	39%	18%
	2011	6%	43%	39%	13%
Affordable housing	2009	30%	41%	19%	9%
	2011	31%	43%	16%	10%
Senior condominiums & apts.	2009	22%	51%	22%	5%
	2011	21%	56%	17%	6%
Seniors assisted living facilities	2009	23%	53%	20%	5%
	2011	18%	51%	25%	7%
Starter (first time buyer) homes	2009	14%	49%	28%	9%
	2011	19%	47%	26%	9%
Executive (high-end) homes	2009	4%	14%	46%	35%
	2011	6%	17%	41%	36%

Economic Development

The next section of the survey focused on economic development in Columbus. As Chart 8 indicates, respondents support a variety of economic development efforts in multiple locations in the community. About eight in ten respondents agree or strongly agree with focusing economic development efforts in the downtown area (82%), industrial parks in the Highway 151-16/60/73 corridors (78%), and professional services and retail in the Highway 151-16/60/73 corridors (78%). A smaller majority (62%) also agreed with focusing on the AMTRAK depot area. (The top bar in Chart 8 is the combined percentage of strongly agree and agree; the bottom bar is the sum of disagree plus strongly disagree.)

Although both men and women agreed or strongly agreed with industrial parks in the Highway 151-16/60-73 corridors, a greater percentage of men strongly agreed (42%) than did women (23%).



Respondents were next asked to rank their top four choices for retail development from a list of 12 choices. The results are shown in Table 9a. Regarding the top priority, the desire for a supermarket stood out (48%), while downtown development placed a distant second (22%), and all other types of businesses were in the single digits. Choices for the second highest priority were spread among more choices, with discount department stores receiving the most votes for the second highest priorty (19%). It is worth noting that the supermarkets category received 15 percent of the second highest category votes, further indidating its overall priority. Downtown development and discount department stores shared the most choices for the third highest priority (15%), and discount department stores received the most votes for the fourth highest priority (14%).

Table 9a. Priority Rankings for Retail Establishments by Type – Percentages

	Highest Priority	2nd Highest Priority	3rd Highest Priority	4th Highest Priority
Supermarkets	**48%**	15%	9%	10%
Downtown development	22%	12%	**15%**	9%
Discount department stores	9%	**19%**	**15%**	**14%**
Specialty grocery stores	4%	7%	6%	6%
Convenience stores	3%	7%	5%	6%
Upscale department stores	3%	4%	6%	6%
Small specialty stores	3%	9%	9%	11%
Entertainment establishments	3%	7%	11%	9%
Meat wholesaler	2%	6%	8%	9%
Supper clubs	1%	6%	5%	5%
Family restaurants	1%	7%	8%	9%
Fast food restaurants	1%	4%	3%	6%

In order to provide additional clarity on the rank order of all 12 retail choices listed, the SRC assigned a point system to the choices. Each selection for the highest priority was assigned 4 points, the second highest priority received 3 points, the third highest priority 2 points, and the fourth highest priority received 1 point. Table 9b confirms that supermarket development dominates the rankings. Downtown development is in second place, followed by discount department stores.

Table 9b. Priority Rankings for Retail Establishments by Type – Points

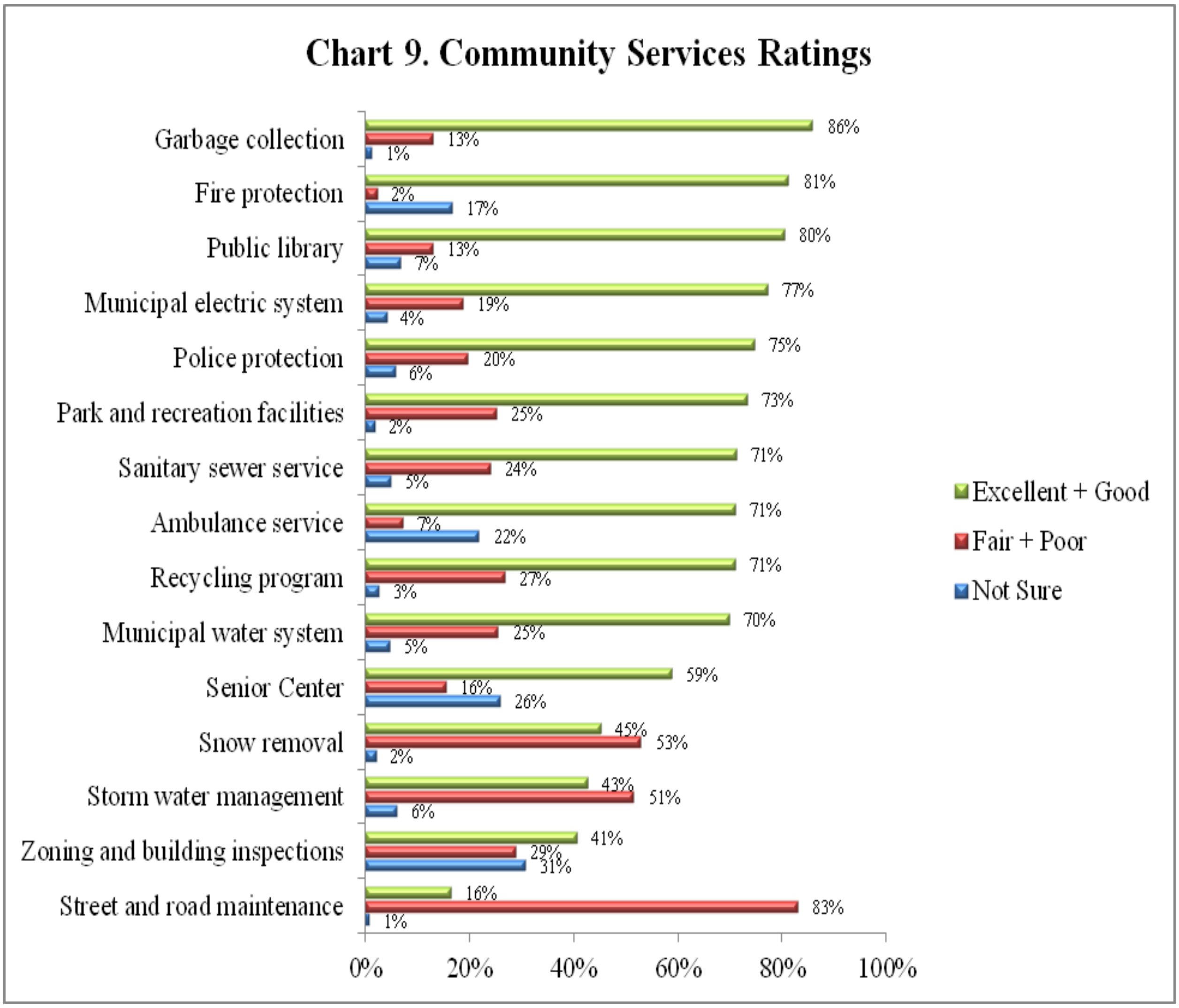
Rank	Retail Type	Average Points	Rank	Retail Type	Average Points
1	Supermarkets	2.51	7	Family restaurants	0.54
2	Downtown development	1.72	8	Specialty grocery stores	0.48
3	Discount department stores	1.26	9	Upscale department stores	0.47
4	Entertainment establishments	0.78	10	Convenience stores	0.40
5	Small specialty stores	0.66	11	Supper clubs	0.37
6	Meat wholesaler	0.57	12	Fast food restaurants	0.28

Utilities and Community Facilities/Services

Ratings of most City services and utilities fared well among respondents. As shown in Chart 9, garbage collection, the public library, and fire protection topped the list with 80 percent or more of respondents rating each as excellent or good. Between 70 percent and 77 percent gave excellent or good ratings to the municipal electric system, police protection, park/recreation facilities, sanitary sewer service, ambulance service, recycling program, and the municipal water system. The Senior Center was rated excellent or good by 59 percent of respondents. (The top bar is the excellent plus good ratings; the middle bar is the fair plus poor ratings; the bottom bar is the not sure responses.)

Slightly more than half of respondents rated snow removal and storm water management as fair or poor.

The lowest performance ratings went to street and road maintenance, which was rated as fair or poor by 83 percent of respondents. The low ratings for street maintenance are a continuation of concerns expressed by respondents in previous sections of the survey about the quality of the City's roads (see Chart 1 and Table 3).



Four of the listed services/facilities received substantial percentages of not sure responses: Ambulance (22%), Senior Center (26%), and Zoning and building inspections (31%).

The relatively high percentage of not sure responses for the ambulance service and planning and zoning inspection probably reflects the responses of residents who have not needed to use these services and lack the experience on which to base a judgment. Among those with an opinion, a large majority rated the ambulance service as good or excellent, but this was somewhat less true of planning and zoning.

With respect to the Senior Center, the percentage of not sure responses decreased as the age of the respondent increased. Among the respondents in the age group comprising the most likely users of the Senior Center (age 65+ years), the ratings for the Senior Center were very high; 79 percent of senior citizens rated the Center as excellent or good, and only 8 percent chose the not sure option.

There were no substantial differences among the demographic groups except in the not sure category, where some demographic groups were more likely to choose the not sure response. This is particularly true among newer residents. A larger percentage of newer residents said they were not sure about each of the 15 listed services and facilities. Younger respondents were more likely to be not sure about the ambulance service and fire protection. A higher proportion of women and renters were not sure about zoning/building inspections. Respondents from higher income households were more likely to say they are not sure about the ambulance service and Senior Center.

<u>Comparison to 2009 survey results</u>. As shown in Table 10, there were statistically significant changes in respondents' ratings of the ambulance service, municipal water system, sanitary sewer service, storm water management, and maintenance of streets and roads (highlighted in Table 10). In all cases, the overall ratings improved in 2011 compared to 2009.

Table 10. Community Services Ratings: 2009 and 2011

	Year	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Not Sure
Ambulance service	**2009**	**15%**	**48%**	**13%**	**2%**	**23%**
	2011	**25%**	**46%**	**6%**	**1%**	**22%**
Fire protection	2009	38%	45%	5%	1%	12%
	2011	39%	43%	2%	0%	17%
Garbage collection	2009	36%	51%	10%	3%	1%
	2011	38%	48%	10%	3%	1%
Zoning and building inspections	2009	4%	32%	26%	8%	29%
	2011	5%	35%	23%	6%	31%
Municipal water system	**2009**	**11%**	**46%**	**27%**	**11%**	**4%**
	2011	**14%**	**56%**	**19%**	**7%**	**5%**
Park and recreation facilities	2009	13%	53%	25%	6%	3%
	2011	14%	59%	21%	4%	2%
Police protection	2009	19%	54%	16%	7%	5%
	2011	20%	54%	12%	7%	6%
Public library	2009	27%	56%	11%	1%	5%
	2011	28%	53%	12%	1%	7%
Municipal electric system	2009	17%	58%	17%	4%	5%
	2011	20%	58%	15%	4%	4%
Recycling program	2009	15%	51%	22%	9%	3%
	2011	22%	49%	19%	8%	3%
Sanitary sewer service	**2009**	**11%**	**50%**	**23%**	**10%**	**6%**
	2011	**14%**	**57%**	**17%**	**7%**	**5%**
Snow removal	2009	7%	34%	34%	22%	4%
	2011	11%	34%	31%	22%	2%
Storm water management	**2009**	**3%**	**27%**	**32%**	**30%**	**9%**
	2011	**5%**	**37%**	**30%**	**21%**	**6%**
Street and road maintenance	**2009**	**0%**	**7%**	**26%**	**64%**	**2%**
	2011	**3%**	**13%**	**31%**	**52%**	**1%**
Senior center	2009	12%	43%	17%	2%	26%
	2011	16%	43%	14%	1%	26%

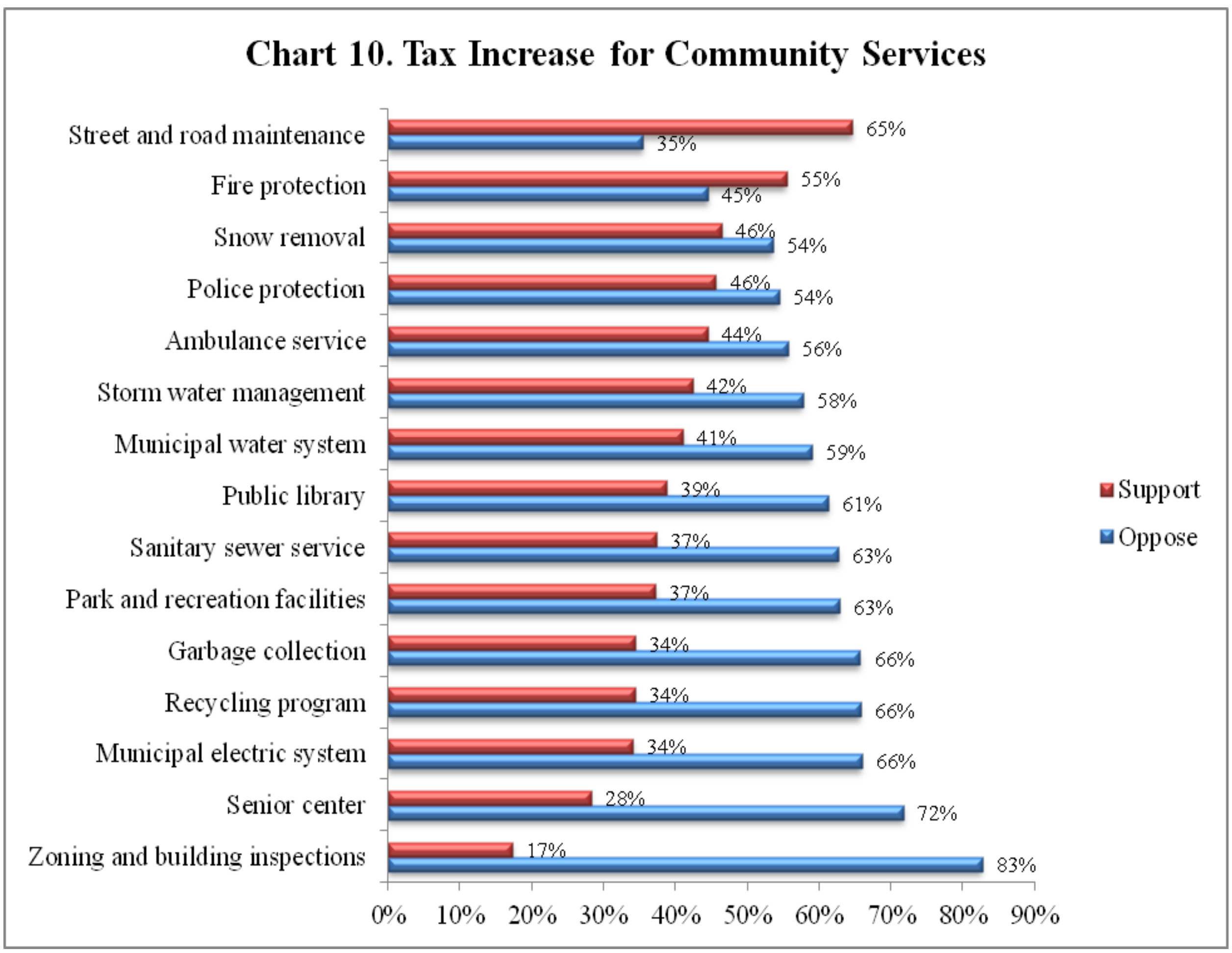
Respondents next were given the same list of 15 community services and asked whether they would support or oppose a tax increase to improve each service. As shown in Chart 10, a majority of Columbus residents are willing to increase their taxes for only two services: maintenance of streets and roads (65%) and fire protection (55%). (The top bar is the support responses; the bottom bar is the oppose responses.)

Between 54 percent and 59 percent of respondents opposed tax increases for snow removal, police protection, ambulance service, storm water management, and the municipal water system. Between 61 percent and 66 percent of respondents opposed tax increases for the public library, sanitary sewer service, park/recreation facilities, garbage collection, recycling program, and the municipal electrical system.

With respect to the Senior Center, 72 percent of respondents opposed additional taxes.

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

There were no substantial differences among the demographic groups.



Comparison to 2009 survey results. As shown in Table 11, there were statistically significant changes from 2009 to 2011 in respondents' willingness to increase taxes or fees for the ambulance service, municipal water system, public library, municipal electric system, sanitary sewer service, and the Senior Center (highlighted in Table 11). In all cases the level of opposition increased in 2011 compared to 2009.

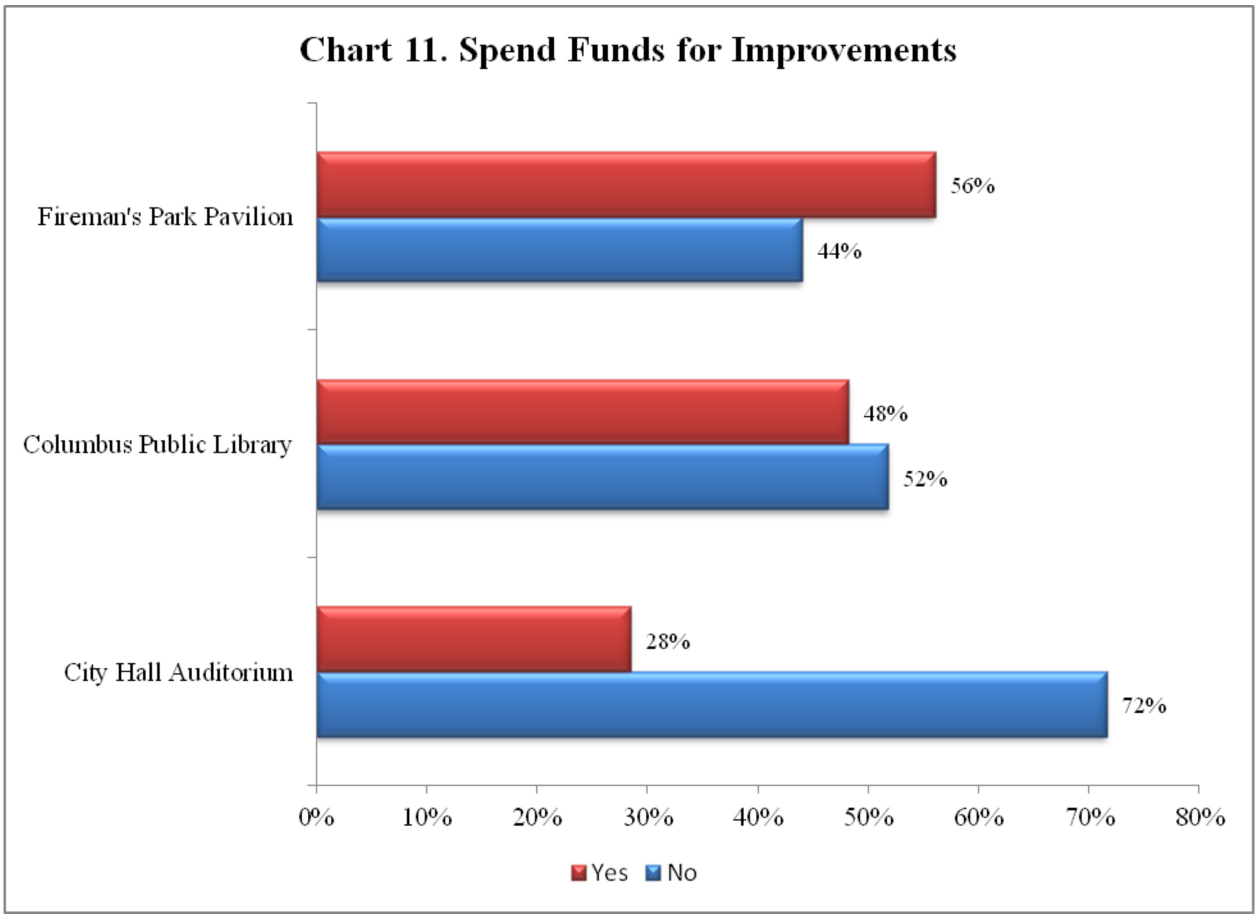
Table 11. Tax Increase for Community Services: 2009 and 2011

	Year	Support	Oppose
Ambulance service	**2009**	**52%**	**48%**
	2011	**44%**	**56%**
Fire protection	2009	62%	38%
	2011	55%	45%
Garbage collection	2009	38%	62%
	2011	34%	66%
Zoning and building inspections	2009	22%	78%
	2011	17%	83%
Municipal water system	**2009**	**49%**	**51%**
	2011	**41%**	**59%**
Park and recreation facilities	2009	44%	56%
	2011	37%	63%
Police protection	2009	47%	53%
	2011	46%	54%
Public library	**2009**	**48%**	**52%**
	2011	**39%**	**61%**
Municipal electric system	**2009**	**43%**	**57%**
	2011	**34%**	**66%**
Recycling program	2009	39%	61%
	2011	34%	66%
Sanitary sewer service	**2009**	**50%**	**50%**
	2011	**37%**	**63%**
Snow removal	2009	48%	52%
	2011	46%	54%
Storm water management	2009	49%	51%
	2011	42%	58%
Street and road maintenance	2009	69%	31%
	2011	65%	35%
Senior center	**2009**	**41%**	**59%**
	2011	**28%**	**72%**

The last group of questions in this section of the survey asked respondents about funding improvements regarding three specific community facilities. As shown in Chart 11, only one of three choices received the support of a majority of respondents; 56 percent said they would support expenditures to improve Fireman's Park pavilion. (The top bar is the yes responses; the bottom bar is the no responses.)

Respondents were evenly split regarding improvements to the public library, with 48 percent in support and 52 percent in opposition. An earlier question in the survey indicated 61 percent of respondents were opposed to a tax increase for improvements to the public library (see Chart 10). Funding for improvements to the City Hall Auditorium was opposed by 72 percent of respondents.

Again, there were no noteworthy differences among the demographic groups.



Comparison to 2009 survey results. Table 12 indicates there were small differences between the 2009 results and the 2011 results. None of the differences were statistically significant.

Table 12. Spend Funds for Improvements: 2009 and 2011			
	Year	**Yes**	**No**
Columbus Public Library	2009	48%	52%
	2011	48%	52%
Fireman's Park Pavilion	2009	62%	38%
	2011	56%	44%
City Hall Auditorium	2009	30%	70%
	2011	28%	72%

Conclusions

Residents of Columbus are generally pleased with most municipal services and facilities. Overall, the ratings for most services and facilities remained the same as the 2009 survey results. Among the services and facilities for which the ratings changed, respondents' level of satisfaction increased. The most notable exception is the City's streets. Continuing a theme from the 2009 survey, large majorities of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the condition of streets and roads in Columbus.

The City's residents are generally opposed to increasing taxes and fees to improve municipal services and facilities. Levels of opposition to an increase in taxes or fees remained the same as in 2009 for most services and facilities. Among those with a change, the level of opposition increased slightly. However, reflecting their concern about their streets, respondents said they would be willing to pay more in taxes for street improvements.

Columbus residents support efforts to expand retail, industrial, and office development along the major transportation corridors of the community and to focus downtown on downtown development. The highest priorities in the retail sector are for supermarkets, downtown development, and discount department stores.

Residents of Columbus want a variety of housing types in the City to match different stages of life, from younger residents (affordable housing, duplexes and starter homes) to older ones (assisted living and senior housing). They are also somewhat more supportive of additional multi-family housing development than in 2009.

There is broad agreement across demographic groups on these issues.

Appendix A – Written responses “other” category

<u>Q15. Employment Status (Other): 4 Responses</u>

- Disabled (2x)
- Seasonal
- Semi-Retired

<u>Q16. Place of Residence (Other): 4 Responses</u>

- Business Renter
- CBRE
- Rent to own
- Temporary

Appendix B – Quantitative Summary of Responses by Question

City of Columbus Citizen Survey - 2011

****Please return by November 10, 2011****

STREETS, SIDEWALKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

1. Rate the overall quality of the following in the City of Columbus?	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
a. Sidewalks	5%	52%	34%	10%
b. Parks	17%	64%	17%	2%
c. Recreation opportunities	12%	49%	32%	6%
d. Senior Citizen opportunities	16%	57%	24%	3%
e. Roads	0%	13%	35%	52%
f. Energy sustainability initiatives	14%	45%	35%	6%

2. During the next 5 years, in which of the following do you think the City of Columbus should invest? **Using the letters a to f, please rank your top 4 choices in priority order below:**

	Highest Priority	2nd Highest Priority	3rd Highest Priority	4th Highest Priority
a. Maintaining existing roadways	34%	39%	10%	10%
b. Improving existing roadways	57%	29%	7%	3%
c. Developing additional sidewalks	2%	7%	19%	27%
d. Improving existing sidewalks	2%	15%	41%	21%
e. Improving and widening shoulders	1%	4%	8%	18%
f. Improving by developing separate trails	4%	6%	15%	21%

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	Not sure	Oppose
a. Maintenance to existing roadways	59%	20%	21%
b. Improving existing roadways	59%	20%	20%
c. Developing additional sidewalks	17%	26%	57%
d. Improving existing sidewalks	32%	30%	38%
e. Improving bicycling opportunities by:			
i. Widening shoulders on existing roads	17%	24%	59%
ii. Developing separate trails for bicycling	23%	21%	56%

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. Sewer system	16%	69%	9%	6%
b. Noise control	15%	71%	12%	2%
c. Signage control around schools	18%	72%	8%	2%
d. Overall signage control	16%	75%	6%	2%
e. Storm water drainage	8%	52%	30%	10%
f. Street light illumination	20%	62%	12%	6%
g. The number of streetlights	18%	66%	12%	4%
h. Enforcement of property upkeep ordinances	7%	53%	28%	12%
i. Animal control	10%	70%	14%	5%

5. During the next 5 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%	29%	33%	30%
b. Baseball/softball diamonds	13%	30%	32%	25%
c. Basketball courts	8%	31%	35%	25%
d. Skate board park	8%	14%	34%	44%
e. Ice skating rink	23%	35%	21%	21%
f. Dog park	10%	23%	26%	41%
g. Frisbee golf course	7%	12%	30%	50%
h. Picnic areas	12%	36%	28%	24%
i. Playground equipment	20%	42%	21%	17%
j. Teen center	21%	36%	25%	19%
k. Tennis courts	6%	19%	40%	35%
l. Volleyball courts	5%	28%	37%	30%
m. Youth football fields	12%	34%	28%	26%

6. If you believe that **any** of the resources above (Question 5) 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
6%	17%	37%	39%

HOUSING

7. To what extent do you agree or disagree that more of the following types of housing are needed in the City of Columbus	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. Single-family housing	16%	44%	29%	10%
b. Mobile home parks	1%	8%	42%	49%
c. Duplexes (2 units)	4%	48%	37%	11%
d. Apartments (3 or more units)	4%	39%	40%	17%
e. Townhomes and condominiums	6%	43%	39%	13%
f. Affordable housing	31%	43%	16%	10%
g. Senior condominiums and apartments	21%	56%	17%	6%
h. Assisted living facilities for seniors	18%	51%	25%	7%
i. Starter (first time buyer) homes	19%	47%	26%	9%
j. Executive (high-end) homes	6%	17%	41%	36%

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

8. In which of the following locations should Columbus focus its economic development efforts? Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. Downtown area	34%	47%	14%	4%
b. Industrial parks along the highway 151-16/60/73 corridors	32%	47%	17%	5%
c. Professional services/retail developments along the highway 151-16/60/73 corridors	30%	48%	16%	6%
d. AMTRAK railroad depot area	18%	45%	29%	9%

9. Which of the following retail establishments are the highest priorities for the City of Columbus? **Using the letters a to l, please rank your <u>top 4</u> choices in priority order below:**

	Highest Priority	2nd Highest Priority	3rd Highest Priority	4th Highest Priority		Highest Priority	2nd Highest Priority	3rd Highest Priority	4th Highest Priority
a. Downtown development	22%	12%	15%	9%	g. Supper clubs	1%	6%	5%	5%
b. Convenience stores	3%	7%	5%	6%	h. Family restaurants	1%	7%	8%	9%
c. Upscale department stores	3%	4%	6%	6%	i. Fast food restaurants	1%	4%	3%	6%
d. Discount department stores	9%	19%	15%	14%	j. Specialty grocery stores	4%	7%	6%	6%
e. Small specialty stores	3%	9%	9%	11%	k. Supermarkets	48%	15%	9%	10%
f. Entertainment establishments	3%	7%	11%	9%	l. Meat wholesaler	2%	6%	8%	9%

UTILITY AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES/SERVICES

10. Based on your experience, please rate the following City of Columbus services.	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Not Sure
a. Ambulance service	25%	46%	6%	1%	22%
b. Fire protection	39%	43%	2%	0%	17%
c. Garbage collection	38%	48%	10%	3%	1%
d. Zoning and building Inspections	5%	35%	23%	6%	31%
e. Municipal water system	14%	56%	19%	7%	5%
f. Park and recreation facilities	14%	59%	21%	4%	2%
g. Police protection	20%	54%	12%	7%	6%
h. Public library	28%	53%	12%	1%	7%
i. Municipal electric system	20%	58%	15%	4%	4%
j. Recycling program	22%	49%	19%	8%	3%
k. Sanitary sewer service	14%	57%	17%	7%	5%
l. Snow removal	11%	34%	31%	22%	2%
m. Storm water management	5%	37%	30%	21%	6%
n. Street and road maintenance	3%	13%	31%	52%	1%
o. Senior center	16%	43%	14%	1%	26%

11. If improvements required increases in your taxes or fees, would you support or oppose increases for the following services?	Support	Oppose
a. Ambulance service	44%	56%
b. Fire protection	55%	45%
c. Garbage collection	34%	66%
d. Zoning and building inspections	17%	83%
e. Municipal water system	41%	59%
f. Park and recreation facilities	37%	63%
g. Police protection	46%	54%
h. Public library	39%	61%
i. Municipal electric system	34%	66%
j. Recycling program	34%	66%
k. Sanitary sewer service	37%	63%
l. Snow removal	46%	54%
m. Storm water Management	42%	58%
n. Street and road maintenance	65%	35%
o. Senior center	28%	72%

12. Should the City Council consider spending funds to improve the following city structures?	Yes	No
a. Columbus Public Library	48%	52%
b. Fireman's Park Pavilion	56%	44%
c. City Hall auditorium	28%	72%

DEMOGRAPHICS

13. Gender:	Male	Female				
	47%	53%				
14. Age:	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 and older
	2%	12%	18%	18%	20%	30%
15. Employment status:	Employed Full Time	Employed Part Time	Self Employed	Unemployed	Retired	Other: _______
	52%	7%	7%	2%	31%	2%
16. Place of residence:	Own	Rent	Other: _______			
	81%	18%	1%			

	0	1	2	3	4	5+
17. Number of Adults (18 or older) in household:		28%	63%	8%	2%	0%
18. Number of children (under 18) in household:	66%	14%	14%	5%	1%	0%

19. 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%	24%	30%	12%	15%
20. Highest level of education:	Less than high school	High school diploma	Some college/tech	Tech college graduate	Bachelor's degree	Graduate or professional degree
	3%	26%	22%	13%	25%	11%

21. How many years have you lived in the City of Columbus?	Less than 1	1 – 4	5 - 9	10 - 24	25+
	2%	14%	18%	24%	42%