
STRASBURG 2009 COMMUNITY SURVEY

P R E P A R E D F O R

Arapahoe County Public Works and Development

Strasburg Community

P R E P A R E D B Y

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Overview of Results

Results from the Strasburg community survey conducted between February and March of 2009 yielded the following key findings:

Quality of Life and sense of community. Both quality of life and sense of community in Strasburg were rated positively overall.

	“Poor” / “Not so good” <i>(Rating of 1 or 2)</i>	“About average” <i>(Rating of 3)</i>	“Good” <i>(Rating of 4)</i>	“Excellent” <i>(Rating of 5)</i>
Quality of life:	5%	25%	47%	23%
Sense of community:	9%	25%	41%	25%

In regards to how the quality of life and sense of community have changed over time, more than half of respondents feel each has stayed relatively consistent (45 percent of respondents said the quality of life has stayed the same and 51 percent of respondents said the sense of community has stayed the same).

	<u>“Improved”</u>	<u>“Stayed the Same”</u>	<u>“Gotten Worse”</u>	<u>“Improved some / worse in others”</u>
Quality of life:	23%	45%	13%	19%
Sense of community:	15%	51%	20%	14%

Overall, quality of life ratings are slightly higher than sense of community ratings in Strasburg. Some open-ended comments describe potential contributing factors to the somewhat lower sense of community rating, such as a loss of Strasburg’s “small town” atmosphere due to the amount and rate of residential growth that has occurred over the last few years, an increase in vacant homes due to overbuilding and the housing market, and the perception of “too many city people moving in with their city attitudes.”

Fifty-nine percent of respondents overall say Strasburg currently feels like a “town” while 38 percent say it feels more like a suburb / bedroom community. When asked how they would like to see Strasburg progress over the next 20 years, 65 percent want it to maintain a balance as a “bedroom community” while also providing in-town employment/services. Twenty-three percent of respondents would like to achieve a goal of employing more of the workforce and providing primary services in the area, while only 11 percent of respondents would like to see it strictly as a “bedroom community.”

Current Functions and Services. Satisfaction levels of specific functions and services currently provided in the Strasburg area were particularly high for infrastructure and sheriff/fire/rescue aspects, but were significantly lower for economic and parks/recreation/open space/trails/programs aspects. Community and county services received a variety of positive and negative ratings, with historic preservation programs receiving particularly high ratings but the “planning and approval process for new and existing development projects” receiving relatively low ratings.

Future Priorities. A variety of issues and opportunities were listed for respondents to indicate which ones were the highest and lowest priorities for Strasburg to focus on in the future.

Highest Priorities
(% indicating one of top three priorities)
Seek new businesses/employees to locate in Strasburg, 40%
Improve quality of schools, 34%
Develop open space, parks, and trails, 24%
Add recycling center in Strasburg, 24%
Improve local roads, 20%
Add park-n-ride along I-70 and promote carpooling, 20%

Lowest Priorities
(% indicating one of bottom two priorities)
Incorporate the town, 41%
Develop Strasburg as a tourism info center, 33%
Increase signage/landmarks to promote Strasburg along I-70, 25%
Encourage residential development of varied types, 20%

Awareness of REAP. To the extent that economic development is a priority for the community, improved awareness of the Regional Economic Advancement Partnership (REAP) represents a significant opportunity on which the community could focus (only 36 percent of respondents are currently aware of REAP).

Growth and Development. When asked about the rate of residential, commercial/retail, and industrial growth over the last few years in Strasburg, 56 percent of respondents feel that the rate of residential growth has been too much, while 40 percent feel it was just about right, and only 5 percent feel it has been too little. In respondents' opinions, the rates of growth of Commercial/retail and industrial/employment centers has been too little, with 57 percent of respondents indicating that there has not been enough commercial/retail growth and 64 percent indicating that there has not been enough industrial/employment center growth.

When asked about the management of growth and development in Strasburg, 32 percent said it is poorly managed, not well-controlled; 31 percent said it varies by development; and 14 percent said the growth is well-managed and orderly. Many open-ended comments provided by respondents indicate a specific dissatisfaction with the amount and rate of residential growth over the last several years, a result of perceived poor planning or lack of county oversight.

Economic Development. The opportunities which respondents indicated as the greatest priorities for economic development include:

- Work to retain and expand existing smaller local businesses to provide additional opportunities for residents/businesses (58 percent of respondents indicated it is one of their top three priorities)
- Work to increase employment opportunities in the community so that the majority of residents can live and work in the area (40 percent)
- Make infrastructure improvements (water, roads, etc.) that will better support residential and commercial development (31 percent)
- Make public improvements to the downtown area (29 percent)
- Solicit major retailers to locate in the community (26 percent)
- Continue to expand the commercial area around the I-70 interchange to provide additional opportunities for residents/businesses (24 percent of respondents indicating "important/highest priority")

There was somewhat mixed interest in the creation of a Strasburg business development council, with approximately one third of respondents rating it positively, one third rating it

neutrally, and one third rating it negatively (in terms of it's level of importance as a priority to the community).

Types of Commercial Development. The results show clear opinions on which types of commercial development respondents feel would be important to the future of the community.

Highest Priorities <i>(% indicating one of top three priorities)</i>	Lowest Priorities <i>(% indicating one of top three priorities)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Small independently-owned retail stores (48%)• Health care and public facilities (39%)• Smaller franchise/chain stores (31%)• Agricultural operations (25%)• Restaurants/bars (23%)• Hotel/motel (21%)• Outdoor recreation (20%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Industrial storage (0%)• Mini-storage (0%)• Vehicle/equipment sales (1%)• Contractor yards (2%)• Truck stop/depot (4%)• Warehouses and wholesale distributorships (5%)• Big box commercial retail dev. (13%)

Financial Decisions. Overall, there was not strong support for the development of a special taxing district, particularly for the purposes of funding transit services or consolidating services of existing districts. Greater support was indicated for the purpose of funding road and infrastructure projects and to manage development, but was still not overly strong.

Transportation and Transit Services. The results show that there is not strong support for a commuter route bus or shuttle service to Denver, with only 31 percent of respondents indicating that they would “probably or definitely” use it, while 21 percent indicated “maybe” and 48 percent indicated that they would “probably or definitely not” use the service.

Housing. Overall, the majority of respondents are satisfied with the variety of housing options available in Strasburg. However, the results show strong consensus among respondents that there is not enough assisted living for senior citizens.

Communication. Ratings of communication within the Town were relatively low overall. Satisfaction with “current communication and information dissemination” in the community was rated negatively by 27 percent of respondents, while 50 percent of respondents indicated that “increased communication to residents and business owners” was very important for Strasburg to focus on. When asked how Strasburg can best reach community members, 87 percent of respondents indicated that the I-70 Scout is the best method of reaching them, followed by direct mailings (54 percent), the creation of a community newsletter (31 percent), e-mail (23 percent), and Internet/website (21 percent).

Conclusions and Observations. The following summarizes the major overriding themes apparent from the research that represent areas of focus upon which the community should direct efforts for the immediate future:

- Continue to build upon the good quality of life that Strasburg affords (friendly, rural way of life, family-oriented etc.), while improving the sense of community (getting newcomers involved in the community, while long-time residents become more receptive and accepting).
- The focus on economic development and employment opportunities locally is clearly the #1 priority, although maintaining a balance between providing the necessary services and amenities that residents desire (but not creating too much growth) while preserving the small town, rural atmosphere will be important.
- Better growth management and coordination of residential development in future. Less residential development, except for possibly assisted living for seniors.
- To the extent that economic develop is the priority, improving awareness of REAP and its mission represents opportunity.
- Development of parks, recreation, open space and trails system is also a clear priority, which will add much to the overall quality of life in Strasburg.
- Maintain a high level of satisfaction with schools and sheriff, fire, and rescue services while improving other aspects of the community (don't lose focus on these important functions of the community while working on other aspects).
- Improving roads and sidewalks has a relatively high level of interest, as does consideration of a recycling center for Strasburg.
- Park and ride and bus service to Denver has relatively strong support from approximately 10% to 30% of residents, depending on the measure.
- Economic development centered around smaller local, independent businesses (including smaller chain/franchise stores) is most appropriate. Interest in "big box" stores is somewhat limited, however.
- Health care facilities, agricultural, restaurants/bars, hotel/motel, and outdoor recreation businesses are most desired.
- Expanding commercial around the I-70 interchange, as well as within the existing old town Colfax district has support. Cleaning-up the appearance in the main corridors, however, is an expressed concern.
- Improving communications will go a long way towards pulling the community together on many of the issues discussed in the survey.
- There are also additional challenges to overcome in terms of coordination and organization within the community, as well as willingness to financially support initiatives. Support for the creation of a special district to fund a lot of these endeavors is somewhat limited. Also, there is limited enthusiasm for creation of a Strasburg Business Development Council or for creation of a Community Council organization to coordinate the various districts and service providers in the area. The survey also indicated very little interest in incorporating the town. Clearly, Strasburg will need to unite in some form and build a common voice to represent the community in order to effectively carry many of these initiatives forward into the future.

The remainder of this report, which follows, describes the full research results in detail. Additional runs and segmentations of the data are available upon request.

Introduction and Methodology

Strasburg conducted a survey of residents, property owners, and business owners to evaluate opinions on a variety of current issues facing Strasburg and how the area is progressing into the future. A combination of mail and Web-based surveys was conducted by RRC Associates of Boulder, Colorado, and was designed to evaluate respondents' level of satisfaction with respect to a full range of services and to gather opinions on selected issues currently facing the Strasburg community, such as jobs, commercial development, infrastructure needs, quality of life, and other topics. Results may be used to update the Strasburg Sub-Area Plan for Arapahoe and Adams Counties at a future date. RRC also conducted a similar community survey for the community of Byers in late 2007.

The survey was mailed on February 18, 2009 to approximately 1,857 households in the Strasburg area. A Web link and individually assigned password (one per household) were included in the mailed invitation, in order to allow recipients to complete the survey online, should they prefer. Completed surveys received as of March 13 totaled 321, representing a very good response rate of approximately 17.3%. Based upon the total sample size of 321 responses received, overall results have a margin of error of approximately +/- 5.5 percentage points calculated for questions at 50% response¹. In order to increase awareness of the survey, advertisements were placed in the I-70 Scout reminding community members to fill out the survey they received, complete it online, or pick one up at Guaranty Bank in Strasburg if they had not originally received one.

Throughout this report, the analysis includes responses from the mail and web surveys. Open-ended comments (that is, hand written comments in response to certain questions) from all surveys are summarized in the results and a full set of comments are provided as an appendix to this report. Cross-tabulations (i.e., breakdowns that segment responses to the survey into subgroups such as results by length of residency, respondent age, etc.) of all results are also provided as an appendix.

Demographics and Respondent Characteristics

Characteristics of survey respondents are summarized below, providing a basis for the cross-tabulations used throughout this report and analysis.

- **Family/marital status and age.** Households with children living at home (43 percent of responding households) were the most prevalent household type, followed by empty-nesters (households with children no longer living at home) (35 percent), couples without children (12 percent), and singles without children (10 percent). The average age of respondents is 51 years, with 11 percent of respondents under the age of 35, 23 percent between 35 and 44, 29 percent between 45 and 54, 23 percent between 55 and 64, and 14 percent over 65 years old.

¹ For the total sample size of 321, margin of error is +/- 5.5 percent calculated for questions at 50% response (if the response for a particular question is "50%"—the standard way to generalize margin of error is to state the larger margin, which occurs for responses at 50%). Note that the margin of error is different for every single question response on the survey depending on the resultant sample sizes, proportion of responses, and number of answer categories for each question. Comparison of differences in the data between various segments, therefore, should take into consideration these factors. As a general comment, it is sometimes more appropriate to focus attention on the general trends and patterns in the data rather than on the individual percentages.

- Household size and income. The average household size of respondents was 2.7 people, with 57 percent of respondents having two or fewer people in the household. Half of respondents have an annual household income of between \$50,000 and \$100,000, while 23 percent have incomes of \$100,000 or more, and 26 percent have incomes less than \$50,000.
- Location of residence. A larger proportion of the respondents live in Adams County (65 percent), compared to 35 percent who live in Arapahoe County. Almost all respondents live within the Strasburg School District 31-J boundary (95 percent), while 70 percent also live within the Strasburg Planning Area boundary.
- Length of residency. Almost one-third of respondents have lived or owned property in Strasburg for more than 15 years (31 percent), while 39 percent have lived in the area 6 to 15 years, and 31 percent have lived in the area five years or less. The average length of time respondents have lived in the Strasburg area is almost 15 years. Most respondents (71 percent) do not plan on moving out of the area anytime soon, while 18 percent of respondents indicated a possibility of moving, and 13 percent are not sure of their plans.
- Employment status. The majority of responding households had at least one member currently employed (84 percent). When asked about their specific employment status, 62 percent of respondents indicated they are employed full-time, followed by 8 percent who are self-employed, 7 percent employed part-time, 2 percent who own a business in Strasburg, 17 percent who are retired, and 5 percent who are currently unemployed.
- Place of employment / mode of commute. The majority of respondents (87 percent) drive alone to work, with only 9 percent indicating that they carpool, and 2 percent who telecommute or work from home. The most identified places of employment were Strasburg (23 percent) and Aurora (23 percent), followed by “other” parts of the Denver area (outside of Aurora, downtown Denver, or Denver Tech Center) (20 percent), downtown Denver (6 percent), Bennett (4 percent), Denver Tech Center (4 percent), and other locations (15 percent). Respondents commute an average of approximately 30 miles each way to work.
- Where purchase goods and services. A variety of locations were identified as places where respondents go to purchase goods and services, including:
 - Aurora (79 percent)
 - Bennett (75 percent)
 - Strasburg (51 percent)
 - Byers (31 percent)
 - E-470 Corridor (21 percent)
 - Other Denver area (13 percent)
 - Various other locations, including downtown Denver and Denver Tech Center (8 percent)

Figure 1
Household Characteristics of Respondents

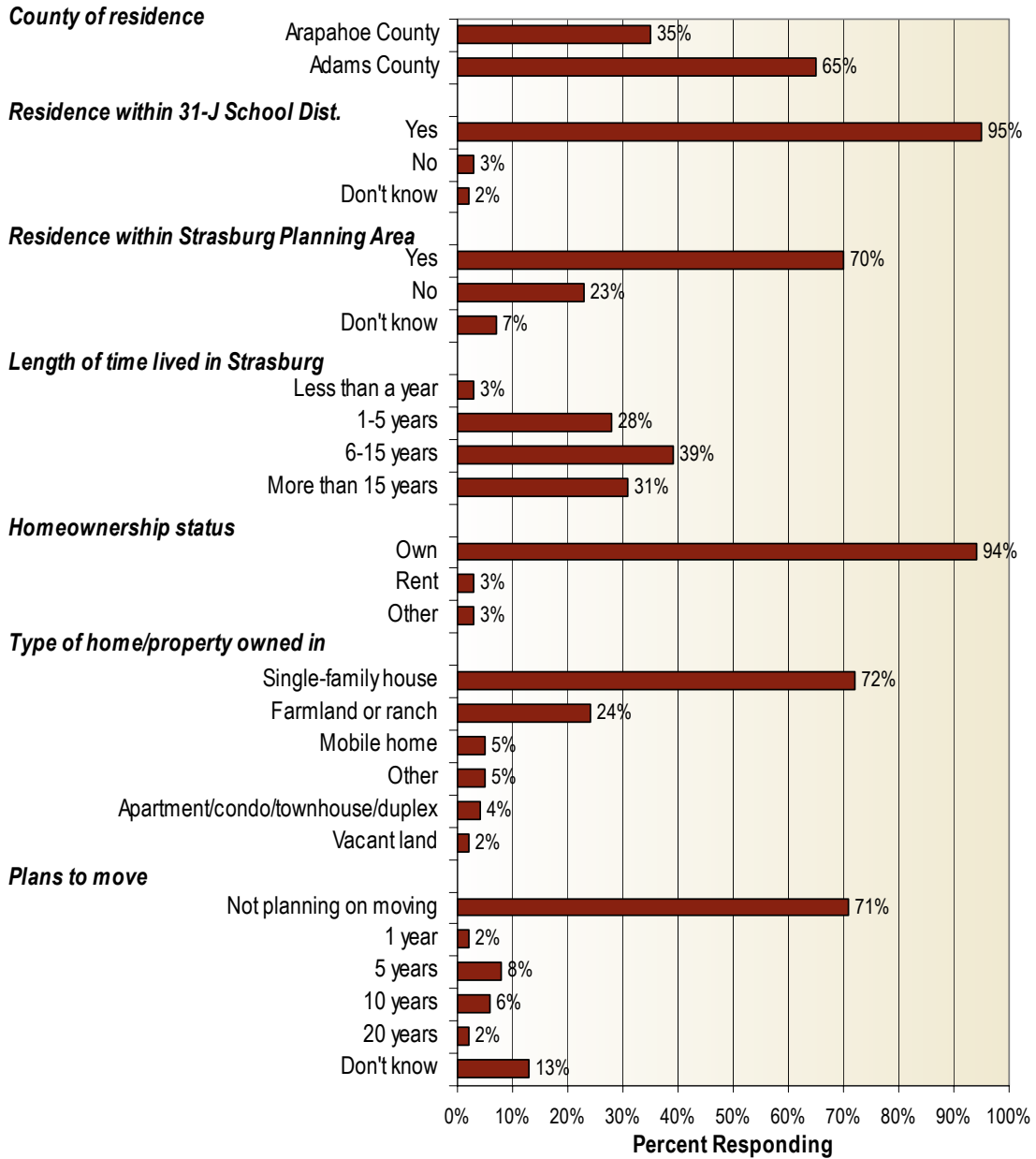


Figure 2
Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

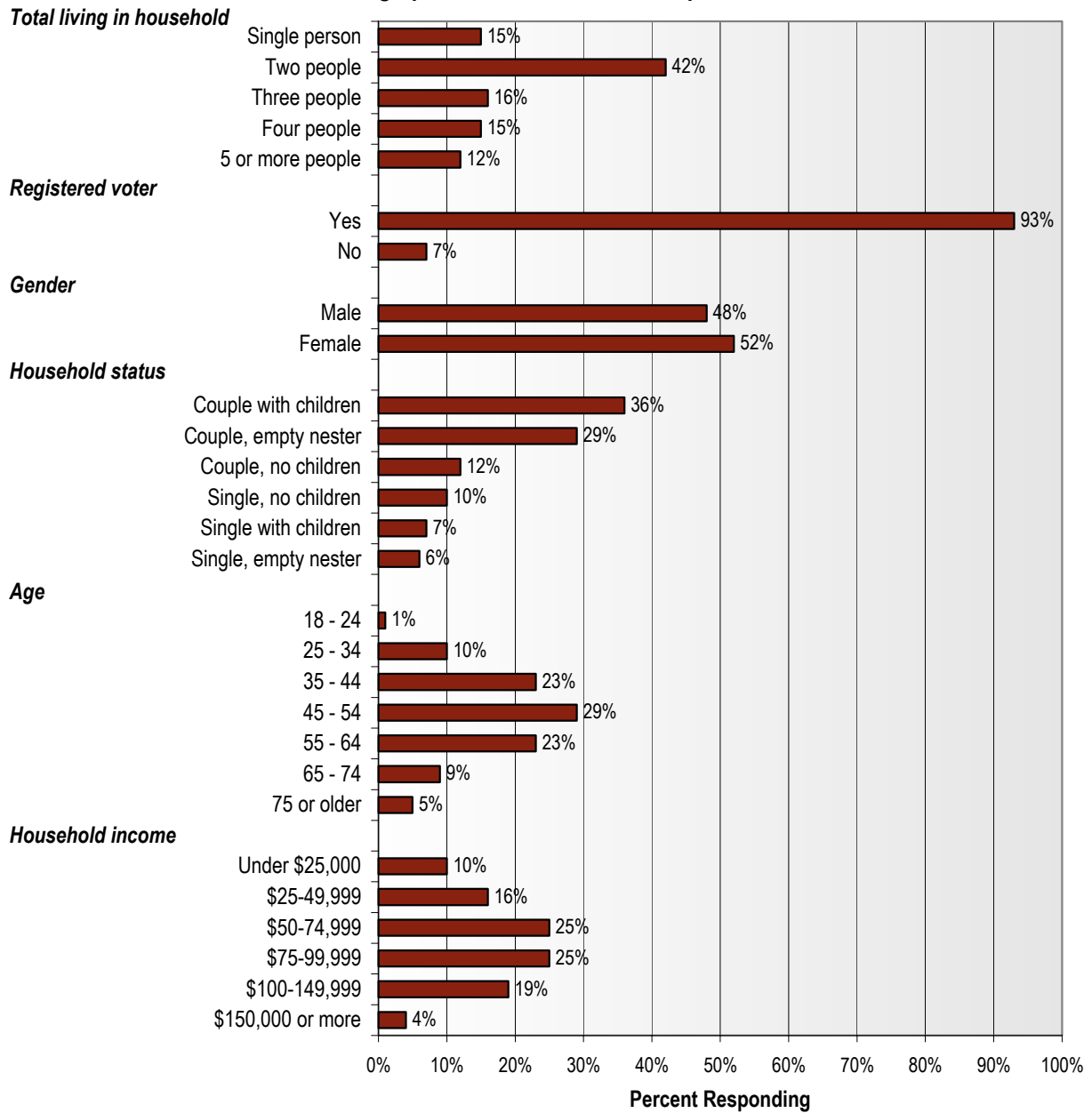
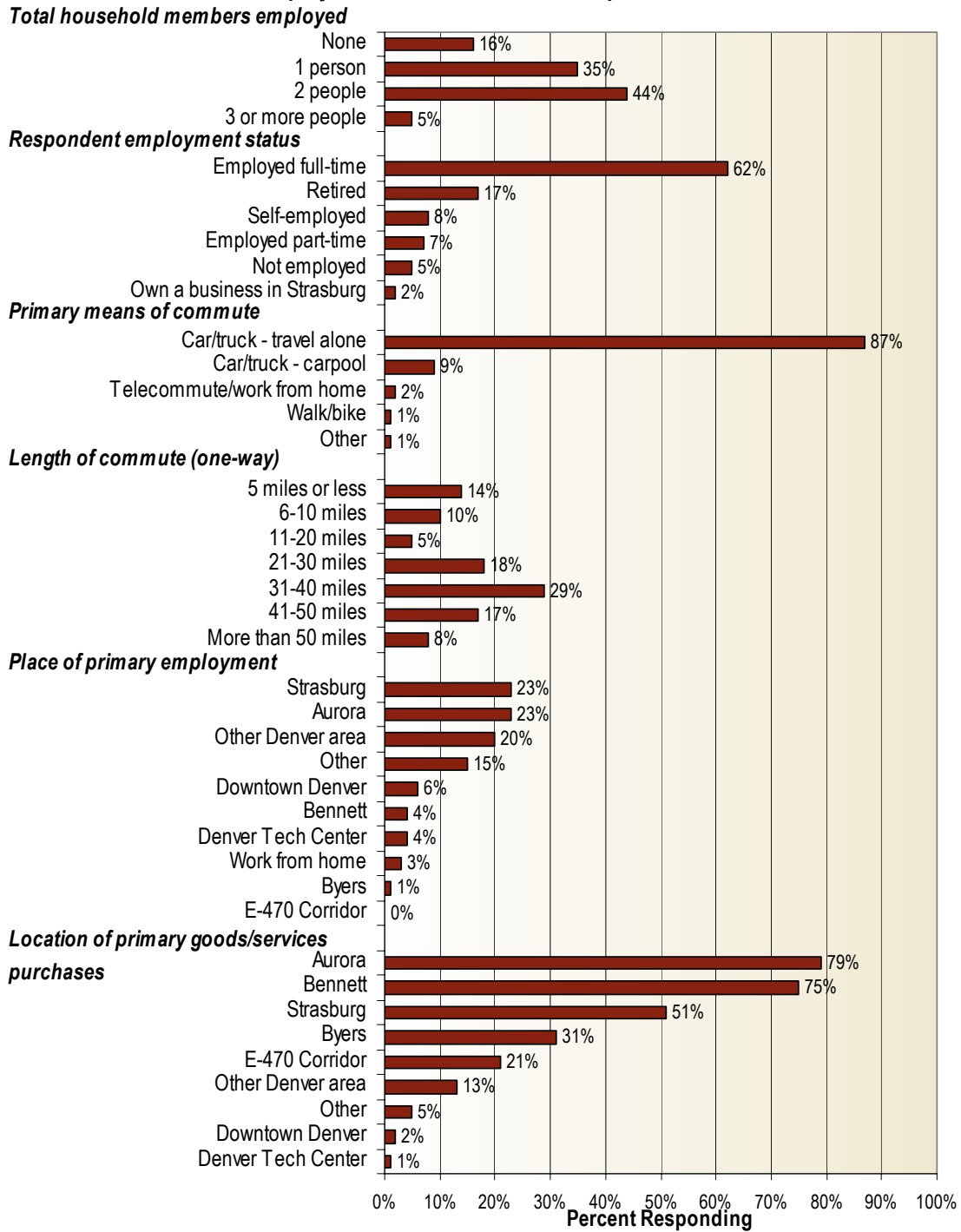


Figure 3

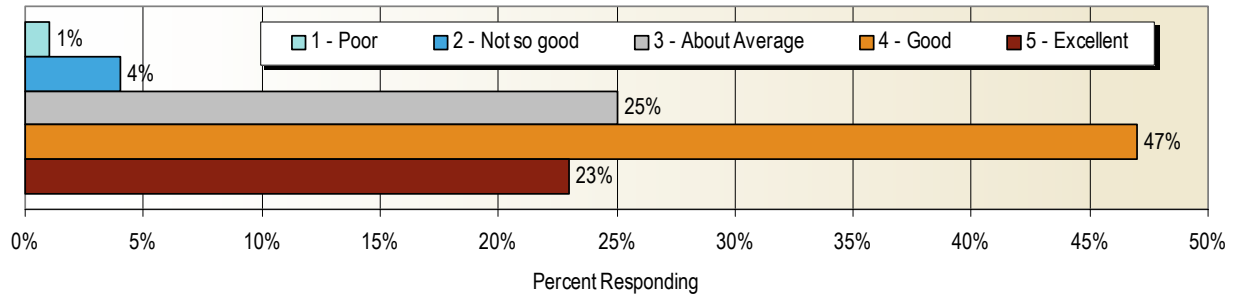
Employment Characteristics of Respondents



Quality of Life

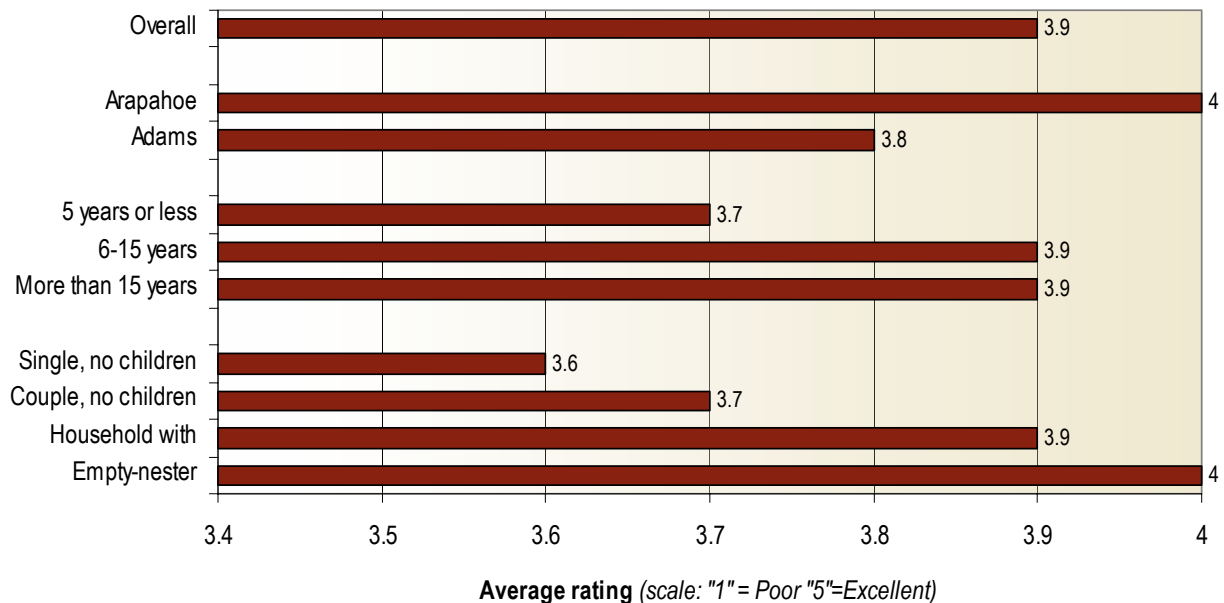
Overall, how would you rate the quality of life in Strasburg (quality of life meaning economic, social, and environmental health, well-being, and vitality of the community)? Overall, the quality of life in Strasburg is rated relatively positive. While only 5 percent indicated the quality of life was “poor” or “not so great” (rating of 1 or 2 on 5-point scale), 25 percent rated it as “average,” 47 percent rated it as “good” (4 on 5-point scale), and 23 percent rated it as “excellent” (5 on 5-point scale), for an average rating of 3.9.

Figure 4
Current Quality of Life Rating



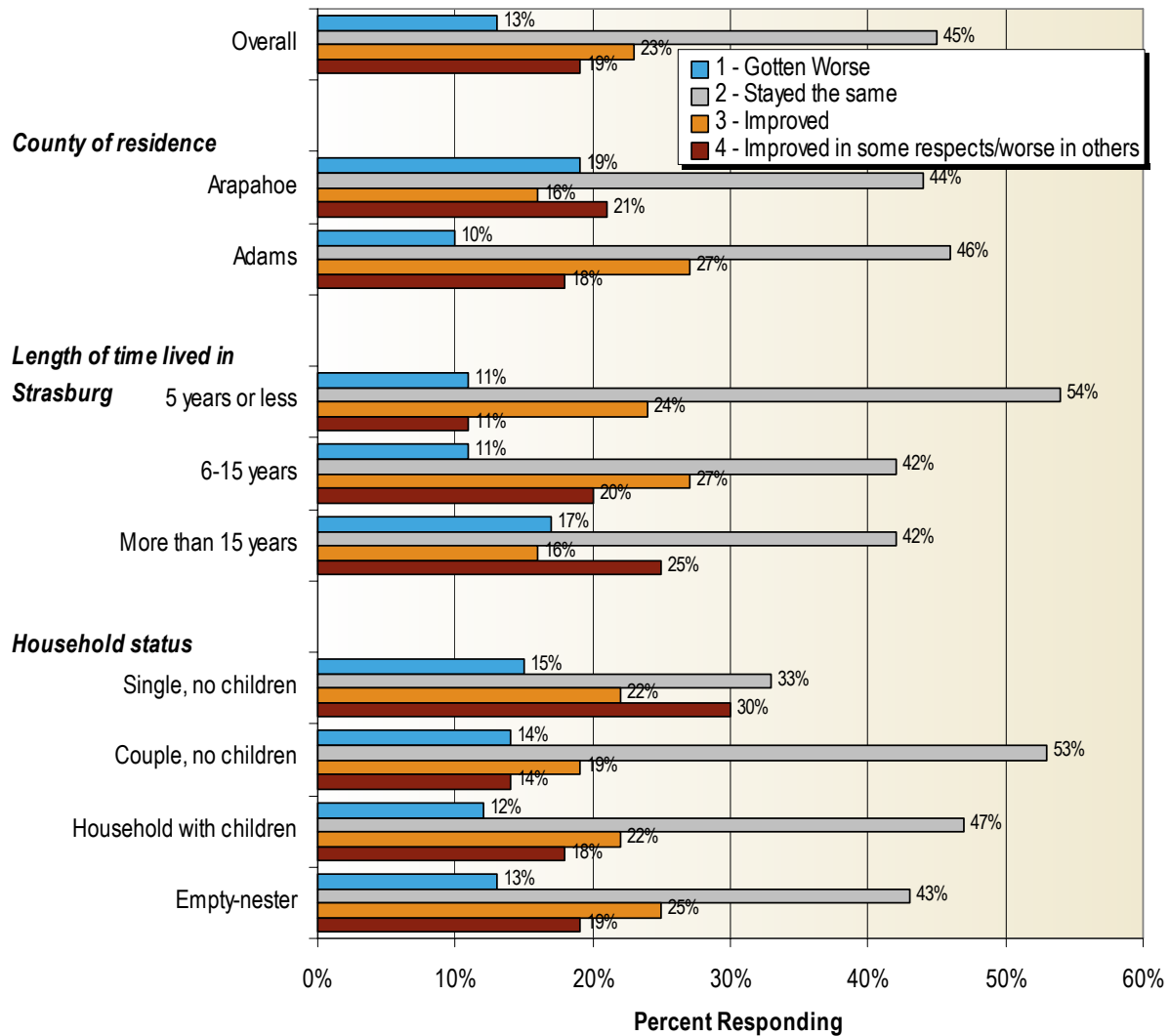
Residents of Arapahoe County indicated a slightly higher quality of life rating compared to their Adams County counterparts (average rating of 4.0 for Arapahoe County respondents vs. 3.8 for Adams County respondents). Residents who have lived in the area 5 years or less tended to be slightly less positive about the quality of life (average rating of 3.7 vs. 3.9 for respondents who have lived in Strasburg for more than 5 years). The perception of quality of life also differed based on the household composition of respondents. As shown in the following figure, empty-nesters and households with children at home were slightly more satisfied with the quality of life in Strasburg than singles and couples with no children.

Figure 5
Current Quality of Life Rating



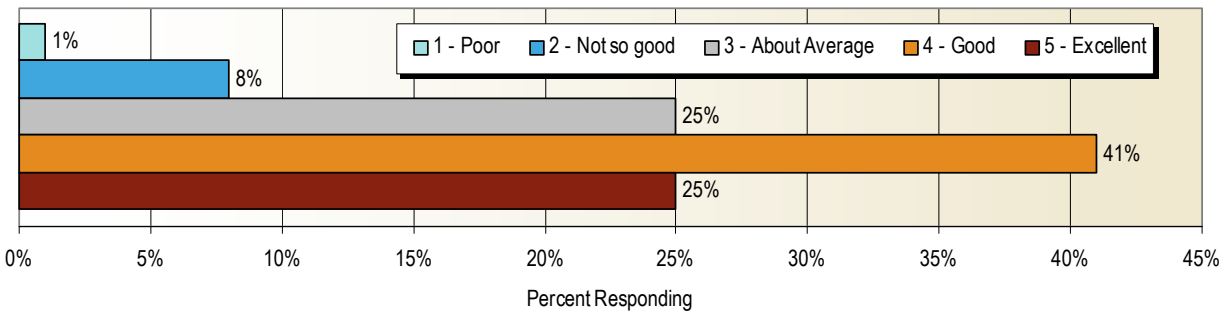
Over the past few years, has the quality of life in Strasburg gotten worse, stayed the same, or improved? Almost half of respondents (45 percent) felt the quality of life has stayed the same, compared to 23 percent who felt that it has improved, 13 percent who felt it has gotten worse, and 19 percent who felt it has improved in some respects, but has declined in others. While Adams County residents indicated slightly lower quality of life ratings than Arapahoe County residents in the previous section, when asked how the quality of life has changed in the past few years, Adams County respondents were more likely than Arapahoe County respondents to indicate that the quality of life has improved (27 percent vs. 16 percent). Respondents who have lived in the Strasburg area for a shorter amount of time (15 years or less) were more likely to say the quality of life has improved in recent years, while respondents who have been in the area more than 15 years were more likely to indicate that it has gotten worse or improved in some respects, but worse in others.

Figure 6
Quality of Life – Improvement/decline over the past few years



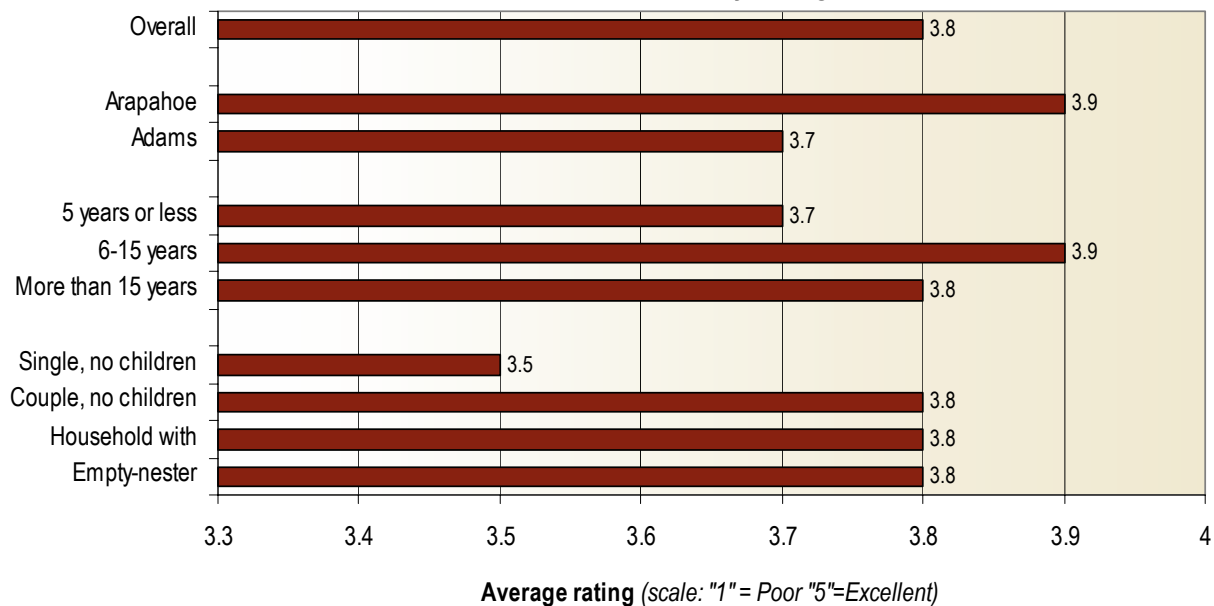
Overall, how would you rate the sense of community in Strasburg (sense of community meaning friendliness, cooperation, neighborliness, etc.)? Similar to quality of life, the sense of community in Strasburg received relatively positive ratings. Only 9 percent indicated the sense of community is “poor” or “not so great” (rating of 1 or 2 on 5-point scale), while 25 percent rated it as “average,” 41 percent rated it as “good” (4 on 5-point scale), and 25 percent rated it as “excellent” (5 on 5-point scale), for an average rating of 3.8.

Figure 7
Current Sense of Community Rating



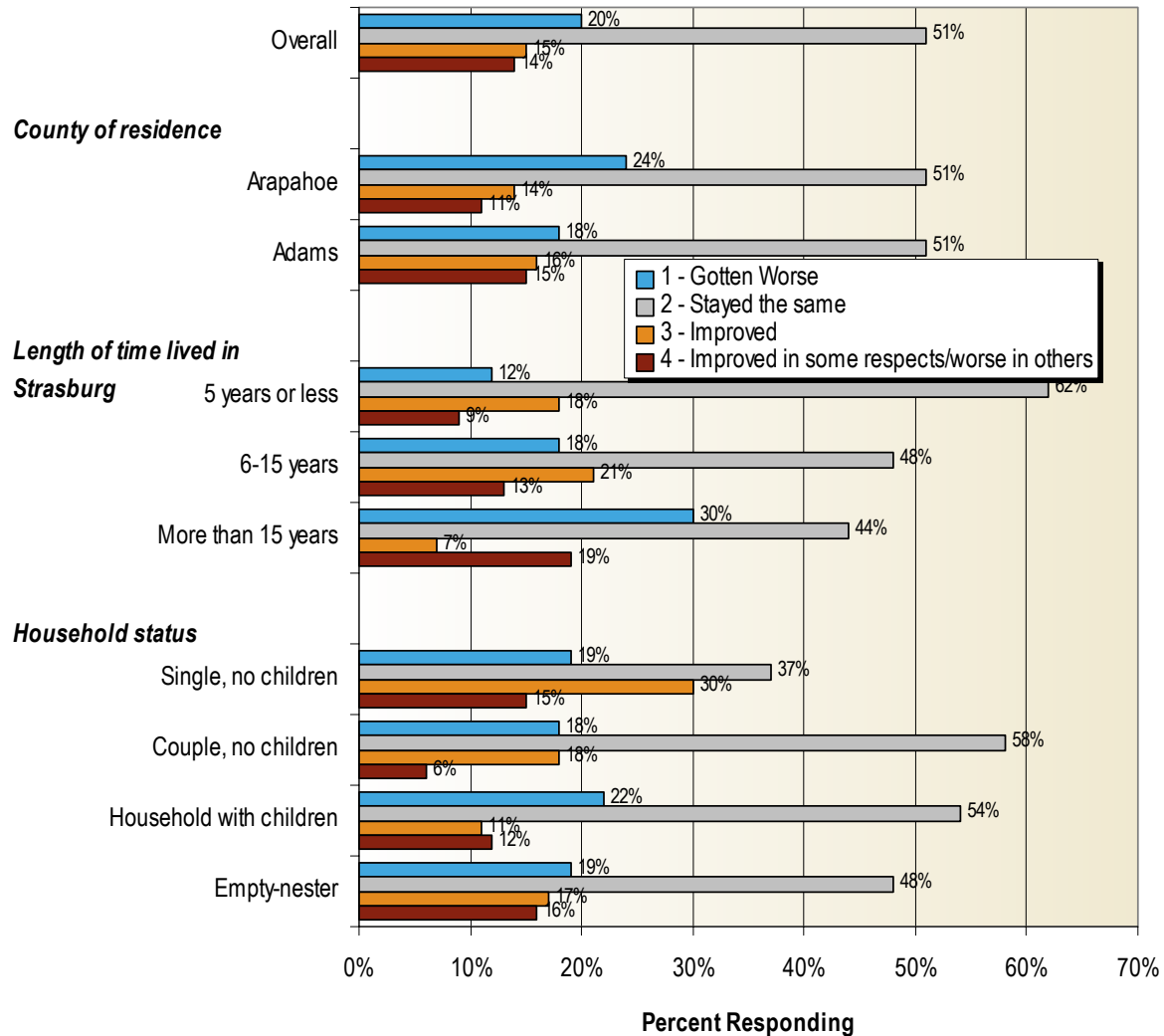
Similar to the quality of life rating, residents of Arapahoe County indicated a slightly higher sense of community rating compared to Adams County (average rating of 3.9 for Arapahoe County vs. 3.7 for Adams County respondents). Residents who have lived in the area between 6 and 15 years tended to be more positive about the sense of community (average rating of 3.9). The perception of sense of community remained relatively consistent among all types of households, with the exception of singles without children who rated the sense of community substantially lower (average rating of 3.5 vs. 3.8 for all other household types).

Figure 8
Current Sense of Community Rating



Over the past few years, has the sense of community in Strasburg gotten worse, stayed the same, or improved? Fifty-one percent of respondents felt the sense of community has stayed the same, compared to 20 percent who felt that it has gotten worse, 15 percent who felt it has improved, and 14 percent who felt it has improved in some respects, but worsened in others. Respondents who have been in the area longer were more likely to indicate that the sense of community has gotten worse (30 percent of respondents who have lived in Strasburg for more than 15 years vs. 12 percent of respondents who have lived there for 5 years or less).

Figure 9
Sense of Community – Improvement/decline over the past few years



A review of open-ended responses in regards to the quality of life and sense of community are summarized below and a complete breakdown of responses is provided in the appendix.

Gotten worse:

Growth has deteriorated "small town" atmosphere

More moving out, less becoming involved

New people in community not getting involved

Too many city people with city attitude

Many new people have moved in with their big city attitudes and mindsets.

The economy is striking harder in Strasburg compared to similar economic communities in the metro area. The sense of community has dropped a little due to low income housing startups and lack of involvement by new comers. The schools are still very good.

Stayed the same:

Most newcomers do not buy local or work local but some have added to community spirit

Growing comes with problems attached. More growth, more problems. Kind of makes it stay the same. This isn't a complaint though. Just a lot of vacant houses now.

No job base or places to spend time with others.

Improved:

More businesses opening make it more enjoyable to live here.

The addition of a full service grocery store in Bennett has improved the quality of life by making it easier to access needed supplies. The sense of community has stayed the same in that, people don't go out of their way to be friendly or accepting of newcomers or transplants. "Big fish in little pond" theory.

We moved here 8 years ago to get away from the city, traffic and noise. We love it here and the growth has been slow and steady, which I like. Everyone is so friendly and neighborly.

We moved here from California 2 years ago and we have enjoyed living in a rural area with all of the space around us. However it is nice that the King Soopers was built in Bennett, as we do like having some amenities near us. It is very nice living with a bit of both.

Improved some / worse others:

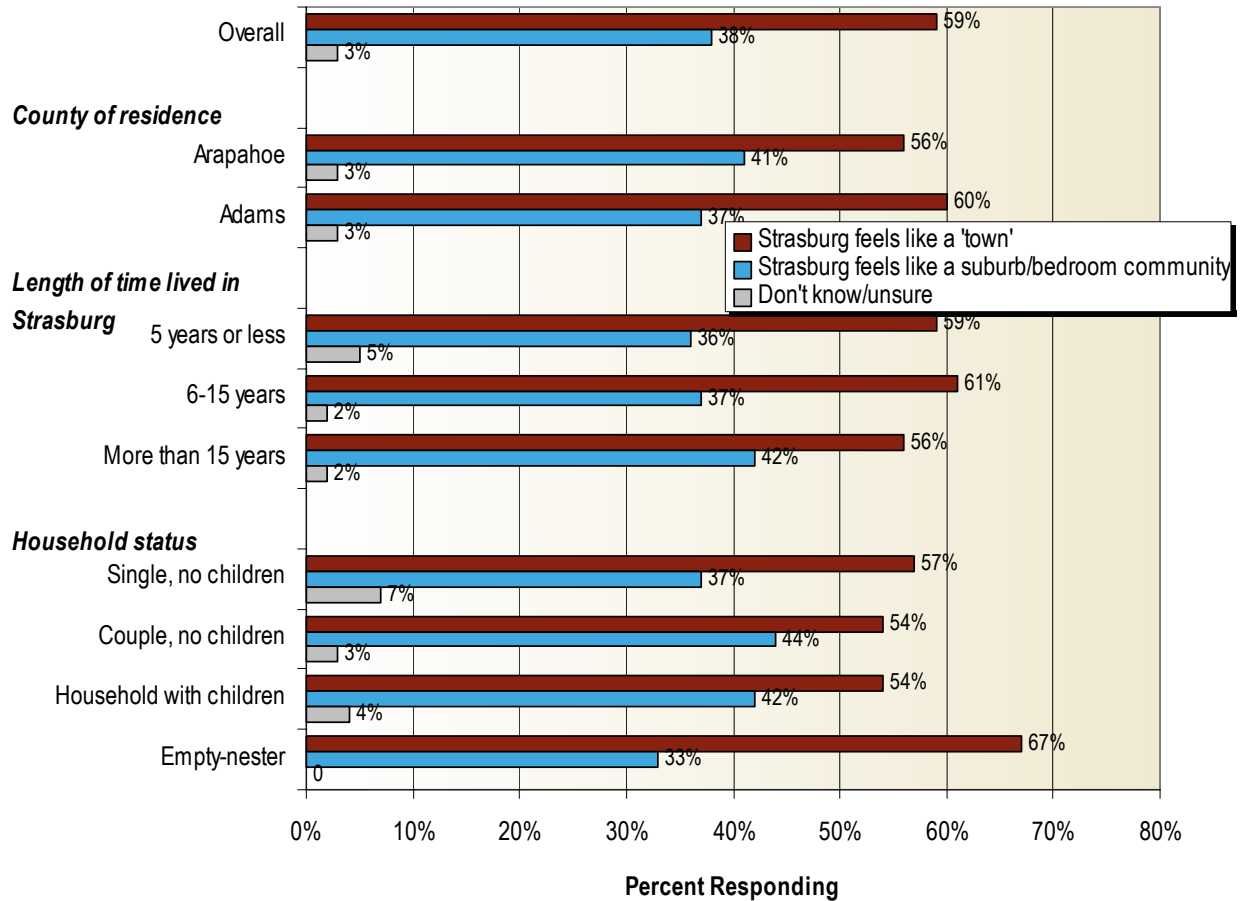
Strasburg used to be rural and close knit - now it's all about greed and bedroom community lifestyle

The newcomers don't appreciate the small county life

Too many houses built/loss of open spaces

While Strasburg is not an incorporated town, in your opinion, do you think of Strasburg as a genuine “town” or more of a suburb / bedroom community? Fifty-nine percent of respondents overall say Strasburg feels like a “town” while 38 percent say it feels more like a suburb / bedroom community. For the most part, this breakdown was relatively consistent across all respondent types. Empty-nesters were the most likely to indicate that Strasburg feels like a real “town” (67 percent) in comparison to 33 percent who said it feels more like a bedroom community.

Figure 10
Strasburg: a genuine “town” or a “suburb / bedroom community”



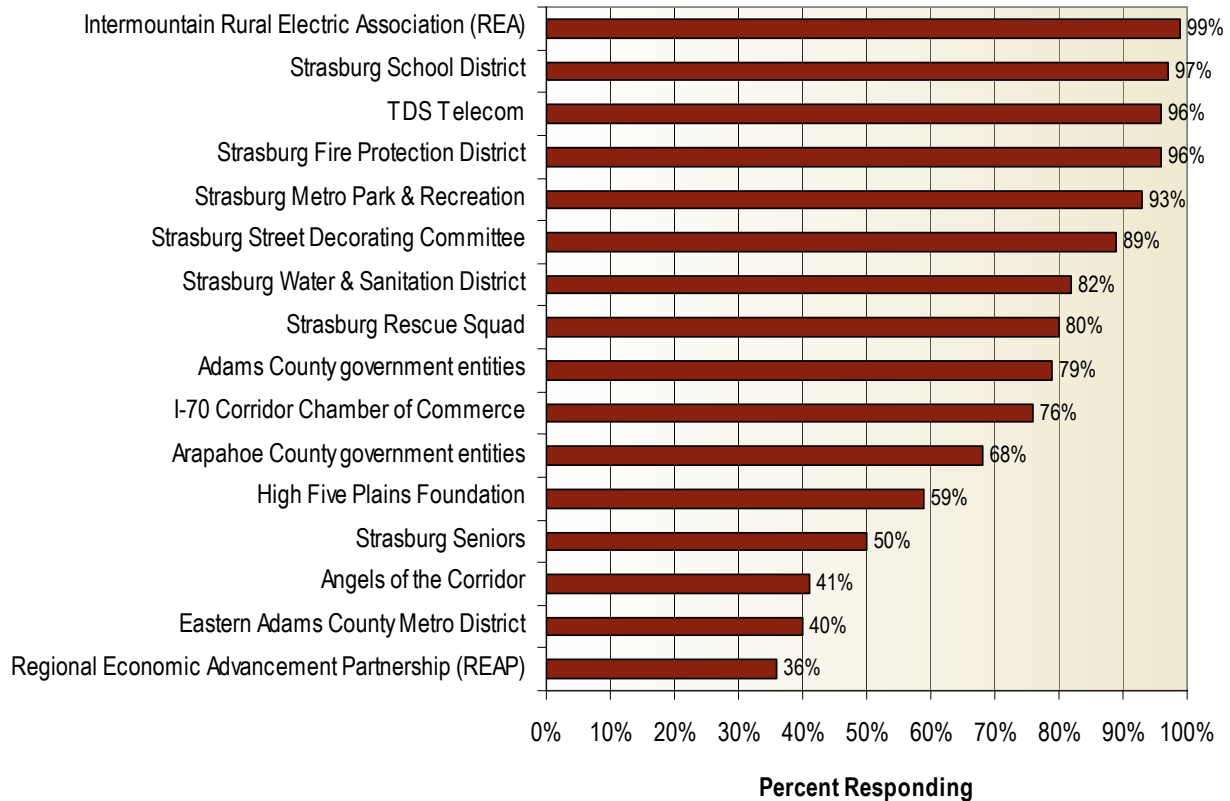
Strasburg Functions and Services

Districts / Boards / Organizations

Awareness of Districts/Boards/Organizations. The survey asked respondents' awareness levels of specific Strasburg districts/boards/organizations. The majority of respondents were aware of Intermountain REA, Strasburg School District, TDS Telecom, Strasburg Fire Protection District, Strasburg Metro Park & Recreation District, and the Strasburg Street Decorating Committee (each with 89 percent or more of respondents indicating awareness). A second tier of organizations (based on overall awareness levels) included the Strasburg Water and Sanitation District, Strasburg Rescue Squad, Adams County Government entities, I-70 Corridor Chamber of Commerce, and Arapahoe County government entities (each with awareness levels between 68 and 82 percent).

Organizations with lower levels of awareness include the Regional Economic Advancement Partnership (REAP) (36 percent), Eastern Adams County Metro District (40 percent), Angels of the Corridor (41 percent), Strasburg Seniors (50 percent), and the High Five Plains Foundation (59 percent). To the extent that economic development is a priority to the community, improved awareness of REAP would represent a significant opportunity.

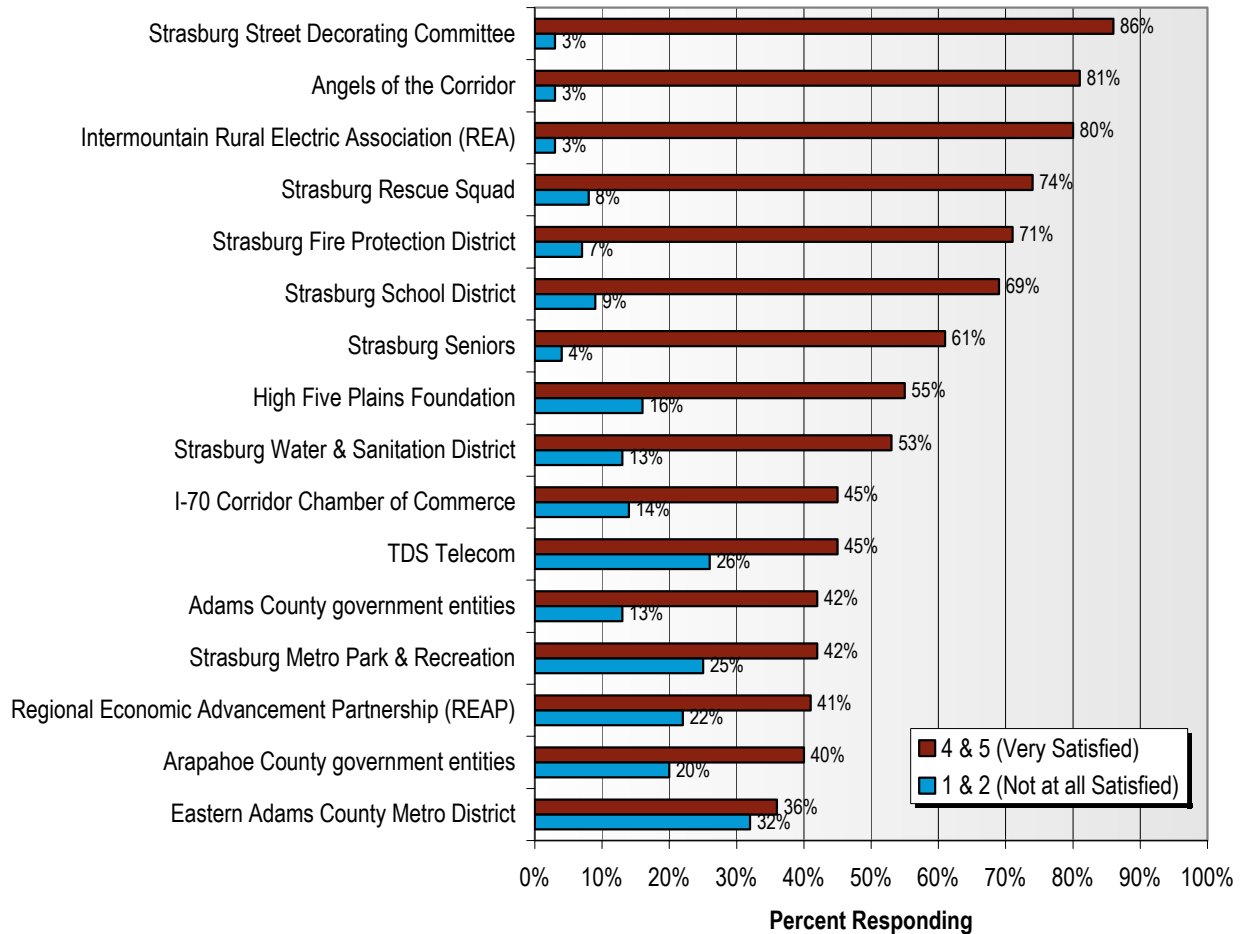
Figure 11
Awareness of Districts/Boards/Organizations



Satisfaction with Districts/Boards/Organizations. Respondents were then asked to rate their satisfaction with current levels of service provided by each entity of which they were aware. For the most part, there is a positive correlation between ratings and the level of awareness of each entity, with a few exceptions. The Strasburg Street Decorating Committee received the highest ratings (86 percent of respondents rated it as a 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale), followed by Angels of the Corridor (81 percent), Intermountain REA (80 percent), Strasburg Rescue Squad (74 percent), Strasburg Fire Protection District (71 percent), and Strasburg School District (69 percent).

Entities receiving the lowest ratings include Eastern Adams County Metro District (36 percent), Arapahoe County government entities (40 percent), Regional Economic Advancement Partnership (41 percent), Strasburg Metro Park & Recreation District (42 percent), and Adams County government entities (42 percent). While awareness of the Metro Park & Recreation District and TDS Telecom were particularly high, the ratings were substantially lower (93 percent awareness level of the Park & Recreation District, compared to 42 percent positive satisfaction level; 96 percent awareness level of TDS Telecom, compared to 45 percent positive satisfaction level), indicating an opportunity to improve each of these entities which already have strong visibility within the community.

Figure 12
Satisfaction of Current Districts/Boards/Organizations



Community Events

When asked whether they were aware of the events that take place in Strasburg, almost all respondents had at least heard of the events, such as Home Town Days, the circus, rodeos, and Strasburg Christmas Night. In the past year:

- 83 percent of all respondents indicated that someone in their household had attended an event;
- 14 percent were aware of the events, but indicated that no one in their household had attended;
- 3 percent were unaware of the events.

Awareness and attendance was highest among households with children at home, empty-nesters, and respondents who have lived in Strasburg for more than 5 years. The survey gave respondents the opportunity to provide comments on events and any additional events they would like to see in Strasburg. A sampling of these comments and suggestions are shown below, and the entire set can be found in the appendix.

*4th of July celebration/fireworks, Oktoberfest, Christmas decorating is awesome
Christmas Night was well organized and well attended
Enjoyed Hometown Days, Circus, would like to see 4th of July annual barbecue
Events listed in the I-70 Scout before they happen
Hometown Days is fun, Strasburg Christmas Night is really special
I believe these events are "very" important to retaining the "small town" atmosphere. I would like to see a larger
Farmer's Market from spring to fall.
I think these events bring out even more of the "sense of community"
I think these events do a great deal to bring everyone together
It would be nice if there was more interest on the part of newcomers in helping with these events
Love them! Maybe one or two more - but don't overextend
Need to do better job of letting people know about these events
We moved here to enjoy a small town life style, love the parade, rodeo, would like to see a better Farmer's Market
We need better support of the local Farmer's Market
Working in Denver precludes attendance due to schedule
Really enjoy the Hometown Days and the Strasburg Christmas Night (and the lights during the holiday season). It is
just wonderful to see how much of the community gathers to see these events. Thanks for continuing to hold these
events.
We love these events...these are the types of events that gives Strasburg that "small town" feeling.*

Current Functions and Services

The survey probed satisfaction levels of specific functions and services currently provided in the Strasburg area in regards to community services, economic issues, parks/recreation/open space/trails/programs, infrastructure, sheriff/fire/rescue, and county services. Economic issues and parks/recreation/open space/trails/programs were rated the lowest overall (see the following figure for a summary of the ratings).

Community services. The highest rated community services aspects include historic preservation programs (60 percent rating it as a 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale) and appearance of the town (52 percent). A second tier of community services include the availability of affordable housing, preservation of small-town character, and cooperation between counties, districts, and services providers (each receiving a positive rating from 46 percent of respondents, but a negative rating from 17 to 24 percent of respondents). Aspects that were rated substantially lower were the planning and approval process for new and existing development projects (27 percent rating it as a 1 or 2 on a 5-point scale) and communication and information dissemination (45 percent rating it as a 1 or 2).

Economic issues. Economic aspects of the community were rated low overall. Sixty-eight percent of respondents indicated that they were “not at all satisfied” (rating it as a 1 or 2) with entertainment options, followed by job creation (63 percent), viability and expansion of local businesses (55 percent), shopping opportunities (50 percent), and economic development efforts (45 percent).

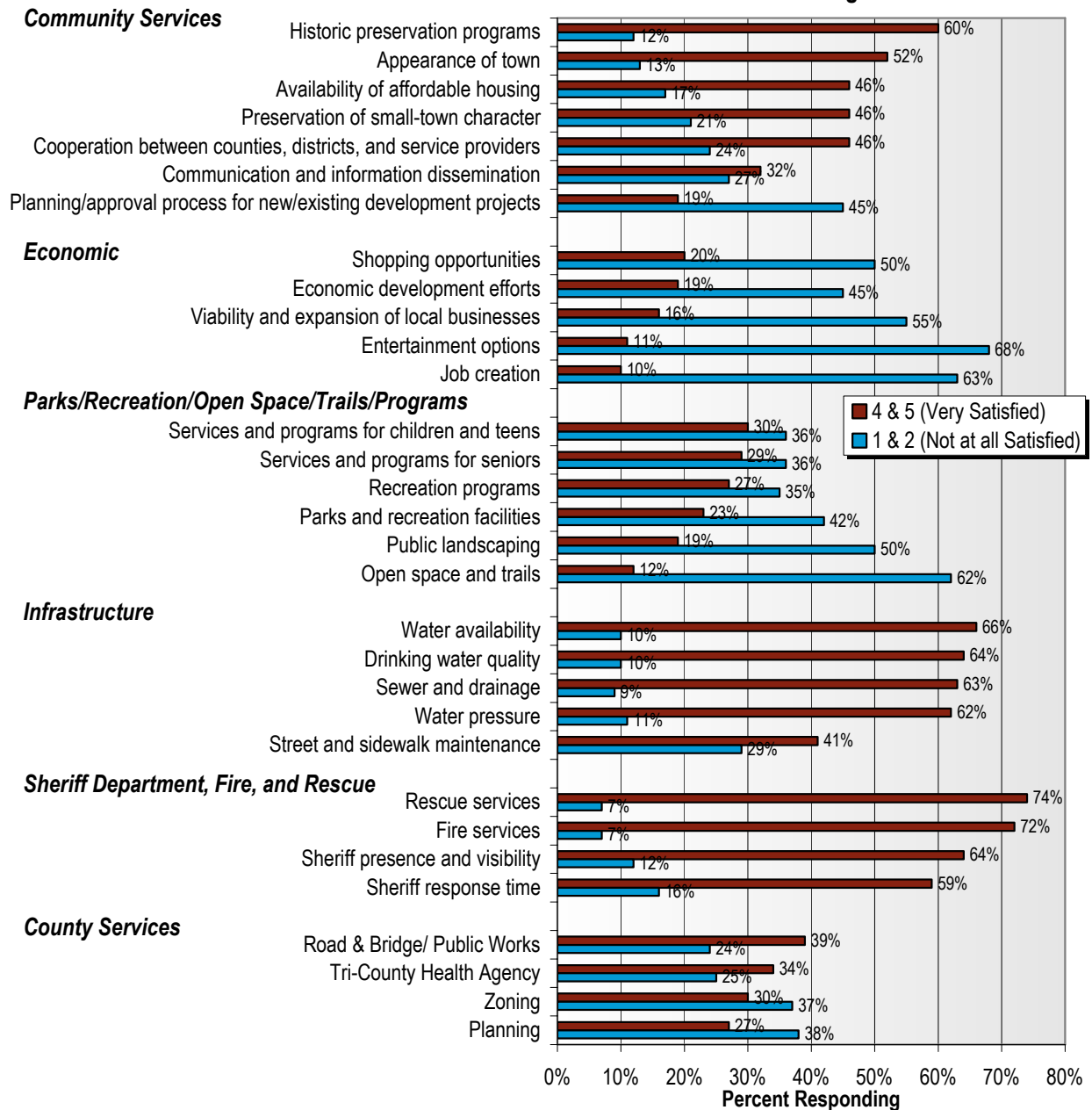
Parks/Recreation/Open Space/Trails/Programs. Ratings of parks, recreation, open space, trails, and programs were also relatively low overall. Open space and trails received the lowest rating with 62 percent of respondents indicating that they were not at all satisfied. Other categories include public landscaping (50 percent rating it as a 1 or 2), parks and recreation facilities (42 percent), services and programs for seniors (36 percent), services and programs for children and teens (36 percent), and recreation programs (35 percent).

Infrastructure. Aspects of Strasburg’s infrastructure were rated quite positively with the exception of street and sidewalk maintenance, which was rated significantly lower than other infrastructure categories (29 percent rating it as a 1 or 2 vs. 9-11 percent in other infrastructure categories). Water availability was rated the highest (66 percent rating it as a 4 or 5), followed by drinking water quality (64 percent), sewer and drainage (63 percent), and water pressure (62 percent).

Sheriff Department/Fire/Rescue. Sheriff, Fire, and Rescue received the highest ratings of all categories. Rescue services were rated the highest (74 percent), followed by fire services (72 percent), sheriff presence and visibility (64 percent), and sheriff response time (59 percent).

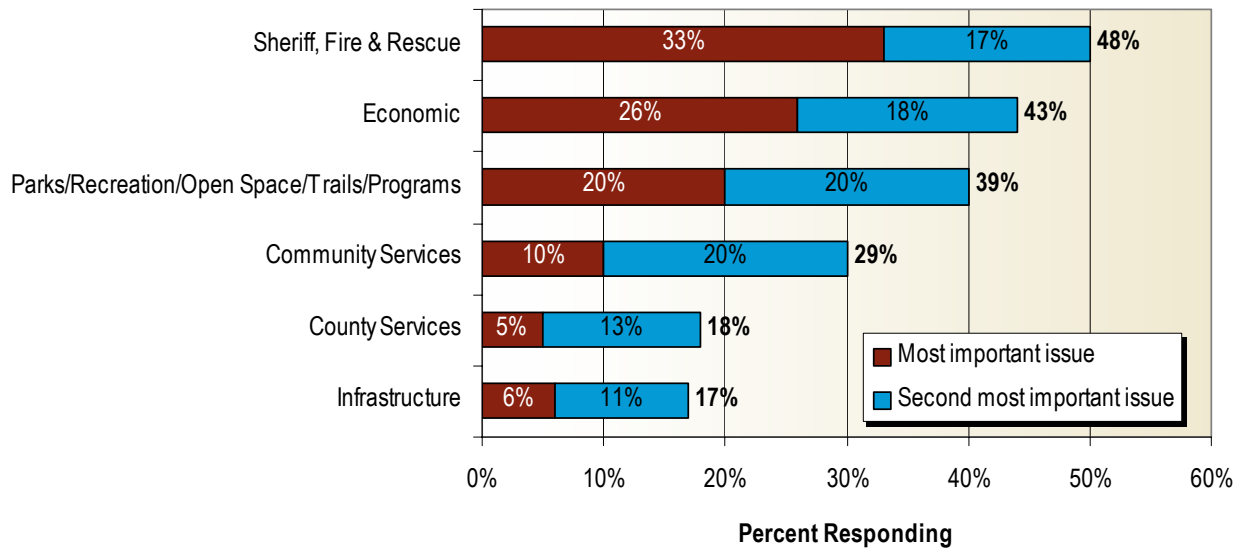
County Services. Of the county services provided, Road & Bridge / Public Works (39 percent “very satisfied”) and Tri-County Health Agency (34 percent) received the most positive ratings, although not relatively high overall. Rated lower were the counties’ zoning (30 percent “very satisfied”) and planning (27 percent).

Figure 13
Satisfaction with Current Functions and Services in Strasburg



Most important functions and services issues. Respondents were then asked to indicate which two of the previous broad types of issues (community services, economic, parks/recreation/open space/trails/programs, infrastructure, sheriff/fire/rescue, and county services) were the most important to their household. The following figure depicts respondents' top two issues overall. Sheriff, Fire, and Rescue is the most important issue with 48 percent of respondents overall naming it as one of the top two (33 percent of which named it as the single most important issue type), followed by economic (43 percent as one of the top two issues), and parks/recreation/open space/trails/programs (39 percent).

Figure 14
Importance of General Issues



Strasburg Priorities

Sub-Area Plan

When asked whether they were aware of the Strasburg Plan, which was completed in 2002, only 27 percent of respondents overall indicated that they were aware of the plan. Overall, 8 percent of respondents were aware of the plan and its contents, 19 percent were aware of the plan but were not familiar with its contents, and 73 percent were not aware the plan existed or were unsure if they knew of it. As expected, residents who have lived in the Town for more than 15 years were the most likely to be aware of the plan (39 percent, compared to 16 percent of respondents who have lived in Strasburg for 5 years or less), along with empty-nesters (33 percent were aware of the plan).

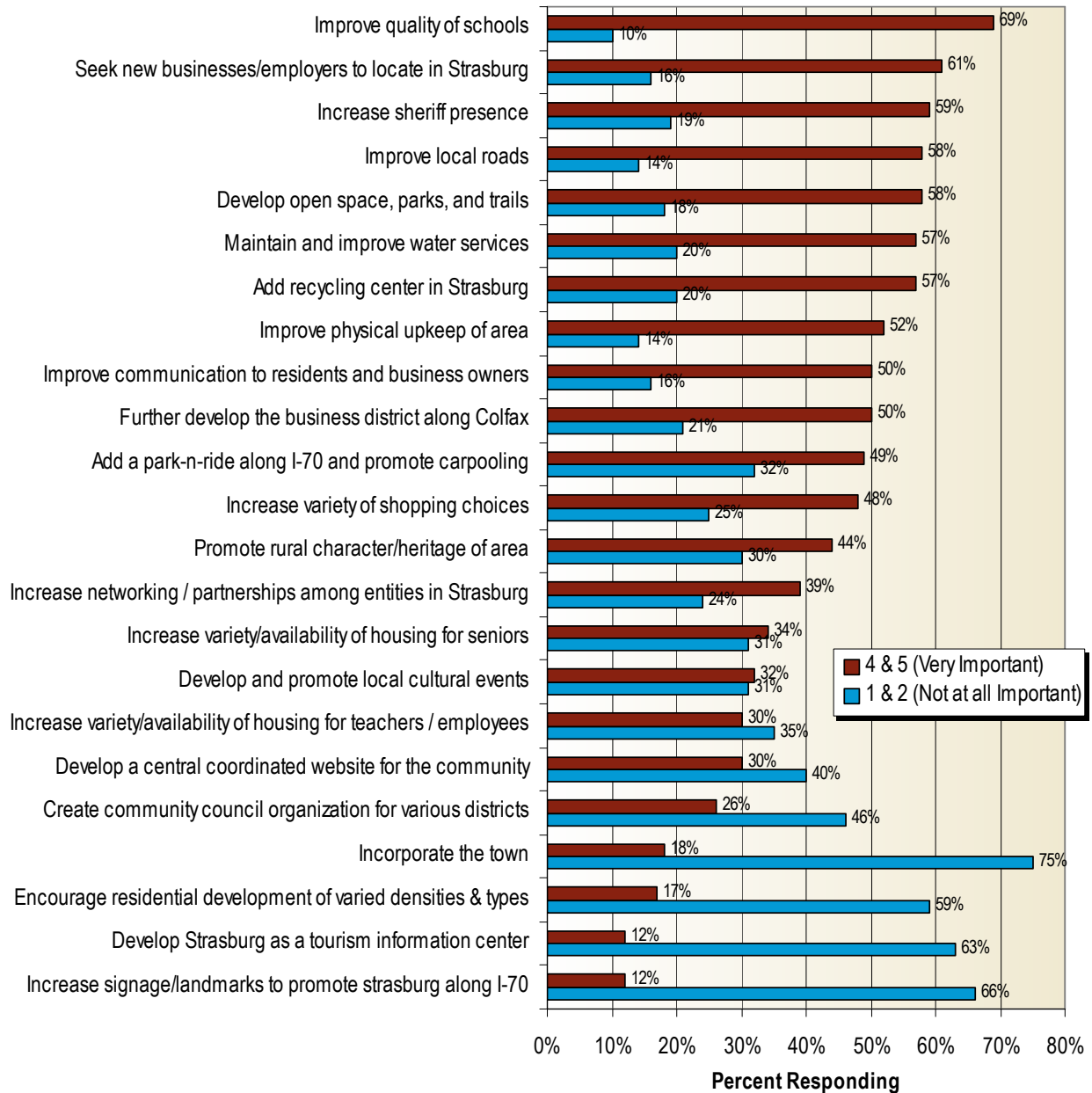
Priority of Future Issues

A number of issues and priorities have been identified as important to the future of Strasburg. In an effort to establish if these issues remain as priorities for Strasburg residents, respondents to the survey were asked to indicate the importance of each issue on a scale of 1 (“not at all important”) to 5 (“very important”).

Priorities which received the greatest amount of “very important” (4 or 5) ratings were “improve the quality of schools” (69 percent), “seek new businesses/employers to locate in Strasburg to create local jobs” (61 percent), “increase sheriff presence” (59 percent), “improve local roads” (58 percent), “develop open space, parks, and trails” (58 percent), “maintain and improve water services” (57 percent), and “add recycling center in Strasburg” (57 percent).

Priorities which received the most “not at all important” (1 or 2) ratings included “incorporate the town” (75 percent), “increase signage/landmarks to promote Strasburg along I-70” (66 percent), “develop Strasburg as a tourism information center” (63 percent), and “encourage residential development of varied densities and housing types” (59 percent).

Figure 15
Priorities important to the future of Strasburg



Most important priorities. Of these priorities, respondents were asked to indicate which three should be the highest priorities for Strasburg to focus on and which two should be the lowest priorities where Strasburg could spend less time, cut back, or eliminate altogether. As shown in the following figure, priorities which respondents indicated as the most important issues to focus on in the future include seeking new businesses/employers to locate in Strasburg (40 percent indicated it as one of the top three priorities, 20 percent as the single top priority) and improvement of school quality (34 percent; 18 percent).

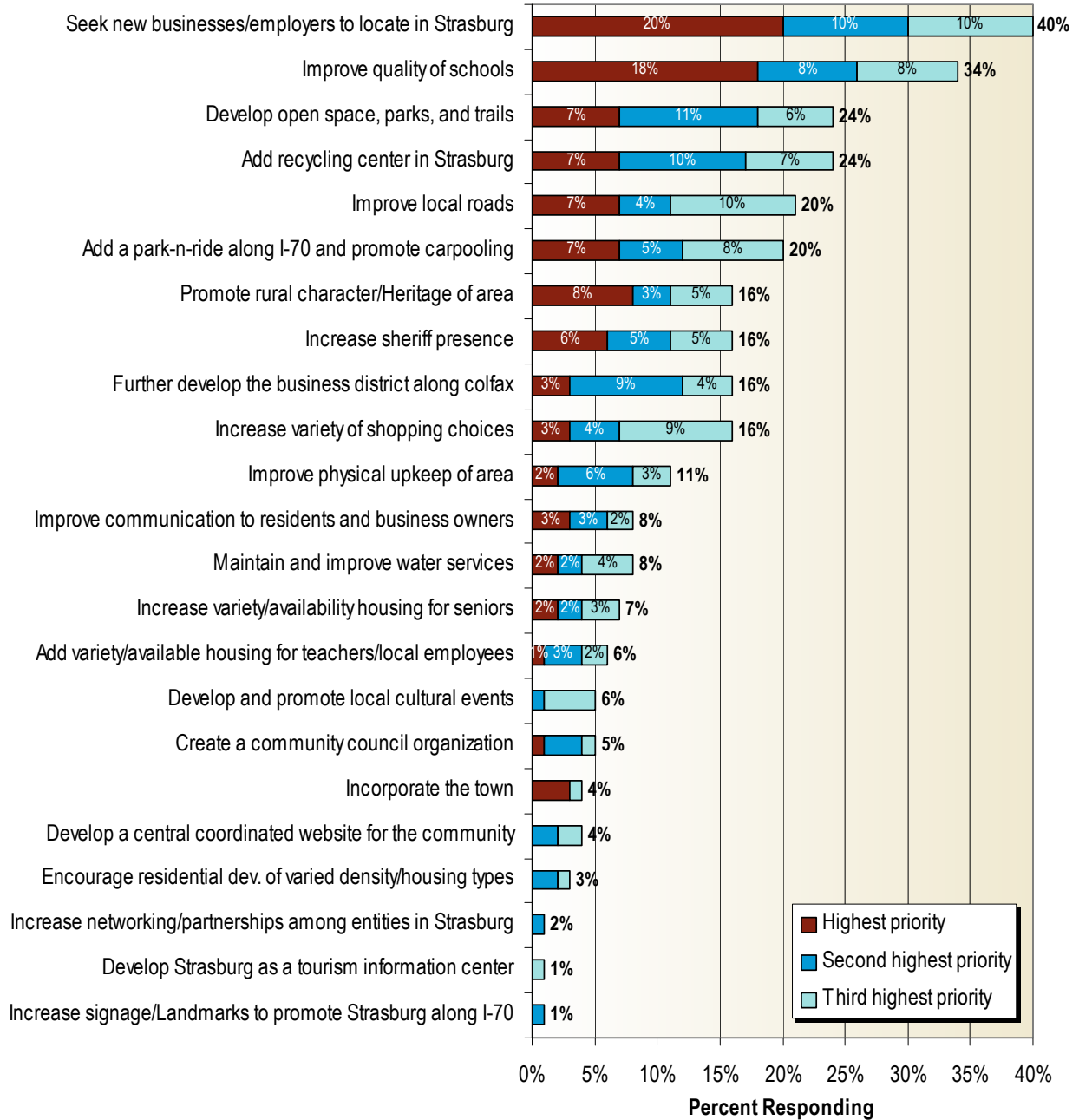
A second tier of priorities include:

- ◆ Develop open space, parks, and trails
- ◆ Add recycling center in Strasburg
- ◆ Improve local roads
- ◆ Add a park-n-ride along I-70 and promote carpooling

A third tier of priorities include:

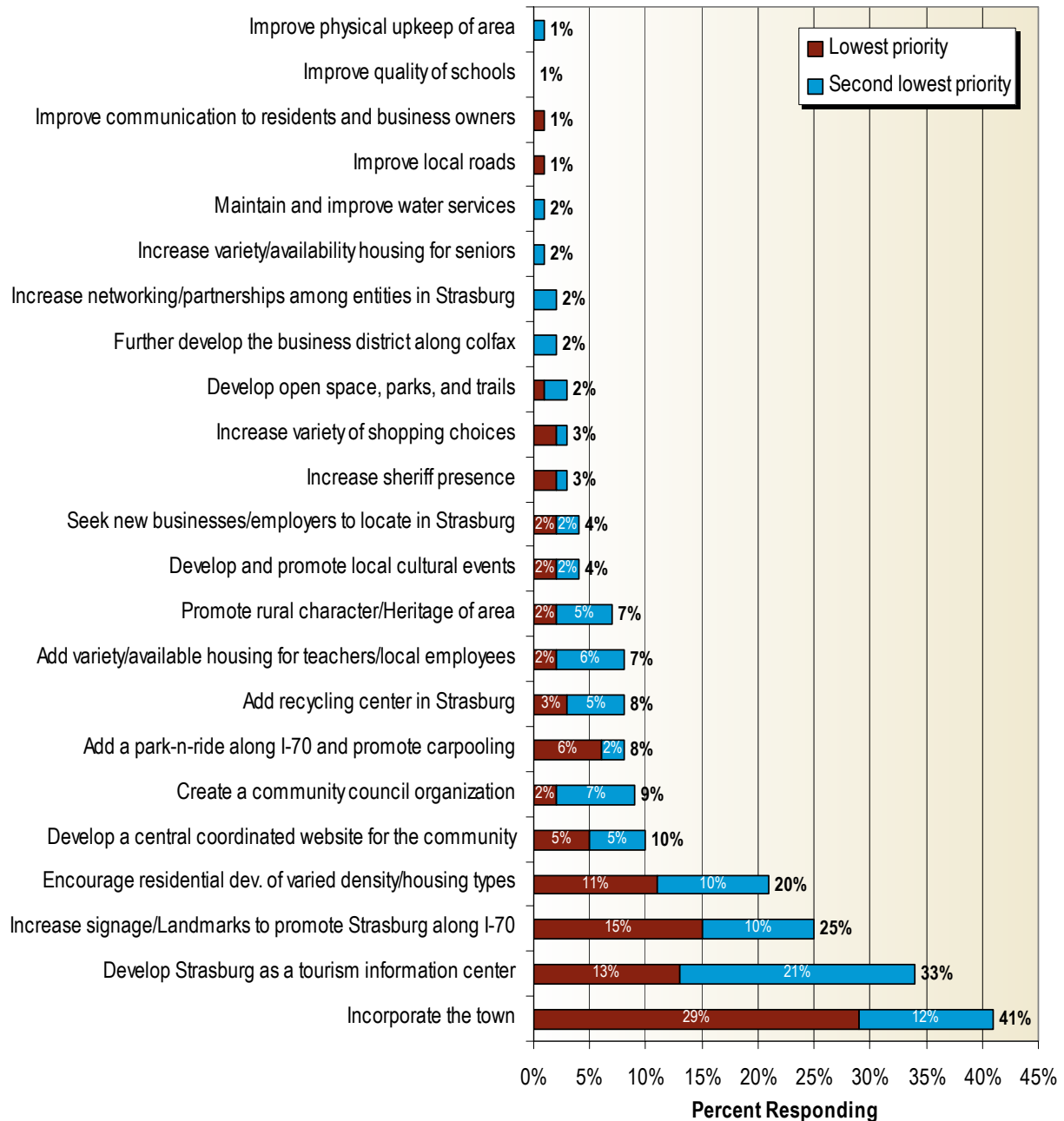
- ◆ Promote rural character / heritage of area
- ◆ Increase sheriff presence
- ◆ Further develop the business district along Colfax
- ◆ Increase variety of shopping choices

Figure 16
Top Priorities for the Future of Strasburg



Lowest priorities. The incorporation of Strasburg as a town is clearly the lowest priority for community members. Forty-one percent of respondents identified incorporation as one of the two lowest priorities while 29 percent listed it as the single lowest priority. Also identified as relatively low priorities was the development of Strasburg as a tourist information center (33 percent identifying it as one of the two lowest priorities and 13 percent listing it as the lowest priority), increase of signage/landmarks to promote Strasburg along I-70 (25 percent; 15 percent), and encouragement of residential development of varied densities/type (20 percent; 11 percent).

Figure 17
Lowest Priorities for the Future of Strasburg

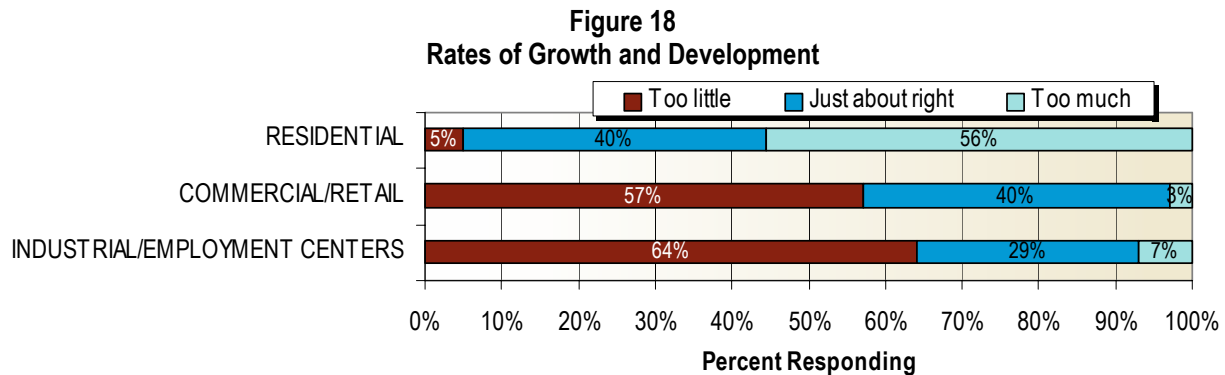


Comments for additional programs and services. The survey also asked respondents to list any programs or services Strasburg should plan to provide to improve either the quality of life or sense of community in Strasburg. Most responses echoed the ratings and priorities already mentioned, with a few additional options named. A sampling of comments is listed below:

- A better recreation center for people to workout, better organization of fields and sports offered.*
- Better and cheaper ambulance service, full time fire department, do away with volunteer services of both.*
- Encourage businesses to provide honest and dependable services so that local people will want to do business here.*
- Affordable rent for small business because of the limited traffic. Outdoor flea market would be great.*
- Improve the recycling facilities.*
- Medical doctors and hospital.*
- More entertainment/recreational activities, movies, swimming, activities for youth.*
- More parks or recreation center would greatly improve the community, maybe a pool?*
- Nothing new, but more assistance to the recreation center and other youth sports so they have the playing fields etc. they need.*
- Really would love to have bike/walking trails.*
- Recycling would be huge, just a drop off to help Strasburg be earth friendly.*
- We need to have a coordination of districts and have a presence with the counties.*

Growth/Development

Over the last few years, do you feel the rate of growth and development (in regards to residential, commercial/retail, and industrial) in Strasburg has been too little, just about right, or too much? More than half of respondents felt that the rate of residential growth over the last few years has been too much (56 percent of respondents), while 40 percent felt it was just about right, and only 5 percent felt it has been too little. In respondents' opinions, the rates of growth of Commercial/retail and industrial/employment centers has been too little, with 57 percent of respondents indicating that there has not been enough commercial/retail growth and 64 percent indicating that there has not been enough industrial/employment center growth.



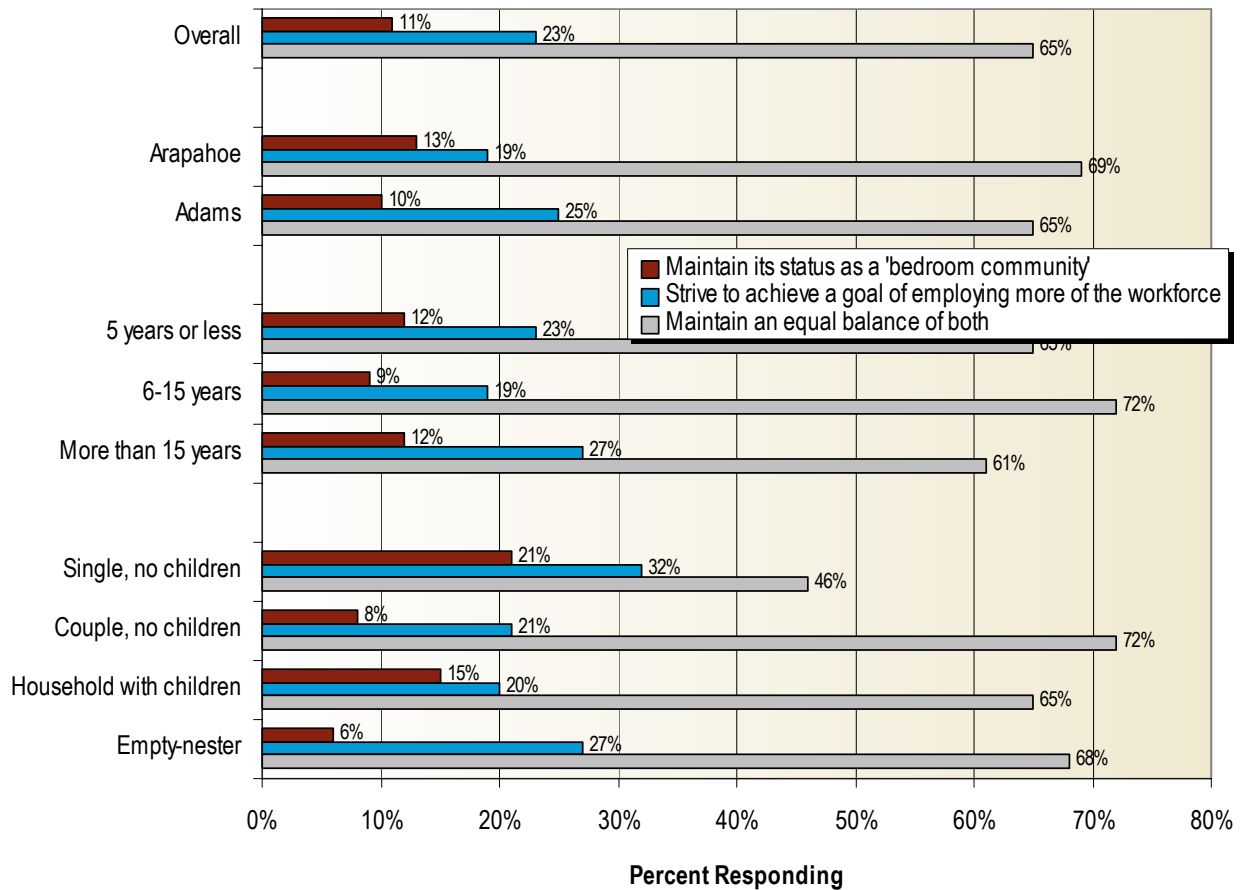
Management of growth and development. When asked about the management of growth and development in Strasburg, respondents indicated the following opinions of how it has been handled:

- 32 percent said it is poorly managed, not well-controlled
- 31 percent said it varies by development
- 14 percent said the growth is well-managed and orderly
- 5 percent said it is too strictly controlled, that even desired growth is not allowed
- 30 percent were uncertain or had other opinions

The next 20 years. While an earlier section of this report addressed respondents' current perception of Strasburg's identity as a genuine town or bedroom community, the survey also probed respondents' desire for a change in this status in the future. The survey provided three statements of which respondents were asked to choose the one with which they most agreed. Results are shown below.

- Over the next 20 years, Strasburg should:
 - Maintain it's status as a "bedroom community" with primary services and employment provided by other areas (11 percent of respondents);
 - Strive to achieve a goal of employing more of the workforce and providing primary services in the area (23 percent of respondents);
 - Maintain an equal balance as a "bedroom community" and providing in-town employment/services (65 percent of respondents).

Figure 19
Over the next 20 years, Strasburg should:



Comments about growth and development. Respondents were also given the opportunity to provide any additional comments they had in regards to growth and development in Strasburg. Many comments emphasized the dissatisfaction with how growth has been handled in recent years, particularly a feeling of too much residential growth, too quickly. A sampling of comments is listed below:

Allowed too much subdivision and residential/small acreage housing, not enough code enforcement for those areas. County commissioners need to use more prudent judgment in approving residential/rural developments and stick to zoning requirements.

Due to our economic plunge and fall in housing market, there should be no more single family homes permitted/built. I believe by the number of vacant homes in the area, Strasburg has overbuilt.

Maintain a small town, rural atmosphere.

Most come to Strasburg to get away from the growth.

Need to plan and control development much better. Developers tend to get their way with both county planning departments.

Strasburg should work with the neighboring towns to share in providing services. One town may provide one service, while another provides others.

To see the commercial side increase, but keep the residential growth managed.

I guess I want it both ways. A nice quiet small place to raise your kids, but more activities for them and more employment opportunities for everyone.

Would like to see growth to better support the existing community without commercializing this good rural town.

Economic/Commercial Development

Where to focus resources for economic development

Respondents were given the opportunity to prioritize a list of economic development opportunities based on how they think the town should focus their resources.

The opportunities which respondents indicated as the greatest priorities for economic development were:

- Work to retain and expand existing smaller local businesses to provide additional opportunities for residents/businesses (79 percent of respondents indicating “important/highest priority”)
- Work to increase employment opportunities in the community so that the majority of residents can live and work in the area (56 percent of respondents indicating “important/highest priority”)
- Make public improvements to the downtown area (53 percent of respondents indicating “important/highest priority”)
- Make infrastructure improvements (water, roads, etc.) that will better support residential and commercial development (51 percent of respondents indicating “important/highest priority”)
- Continue to expand the commercial area around the I-70 interchange to provide additional opportunities for residents/businesses (50 percent of respondents indicating “important/highest priority”)

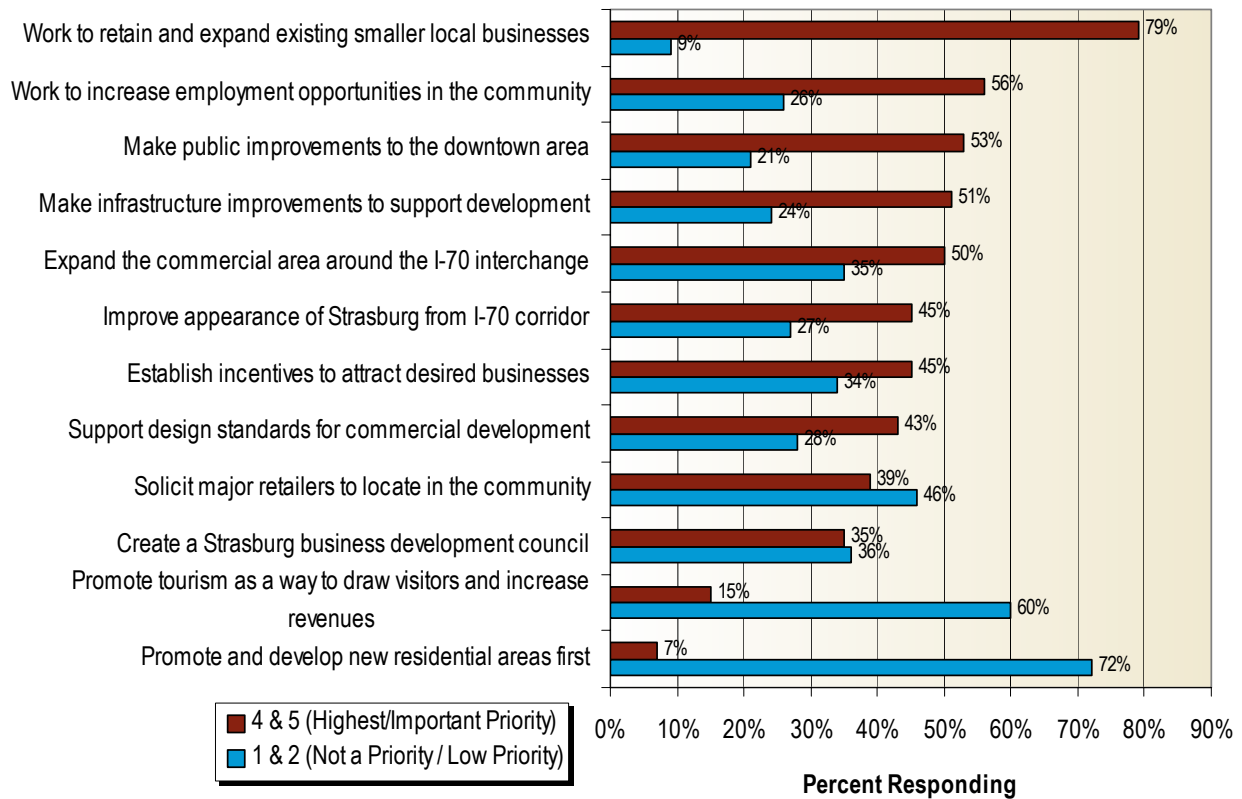
“Solicit major retailers to locate in the community” and “create a Strasburg business development council” received somewhat mixed ratings, with approximately similar proportions of respondents giving them positive, neutral, and negative ratings (i.e. the creation of a business

development council received 35 percent positive ratings, 29 percent neutral ratings, and 36 percent negative ratings).

The opportunities which respondents indicated as the lowest priorities for economic development were:

- Promote and develop new residential areas first (72 percent of respondents indicating “low priority/not a priority”)
- Promote tourism as a way to draw visitors and increase revenues (60 percent of respondents indicating “low priority/not a priority”)

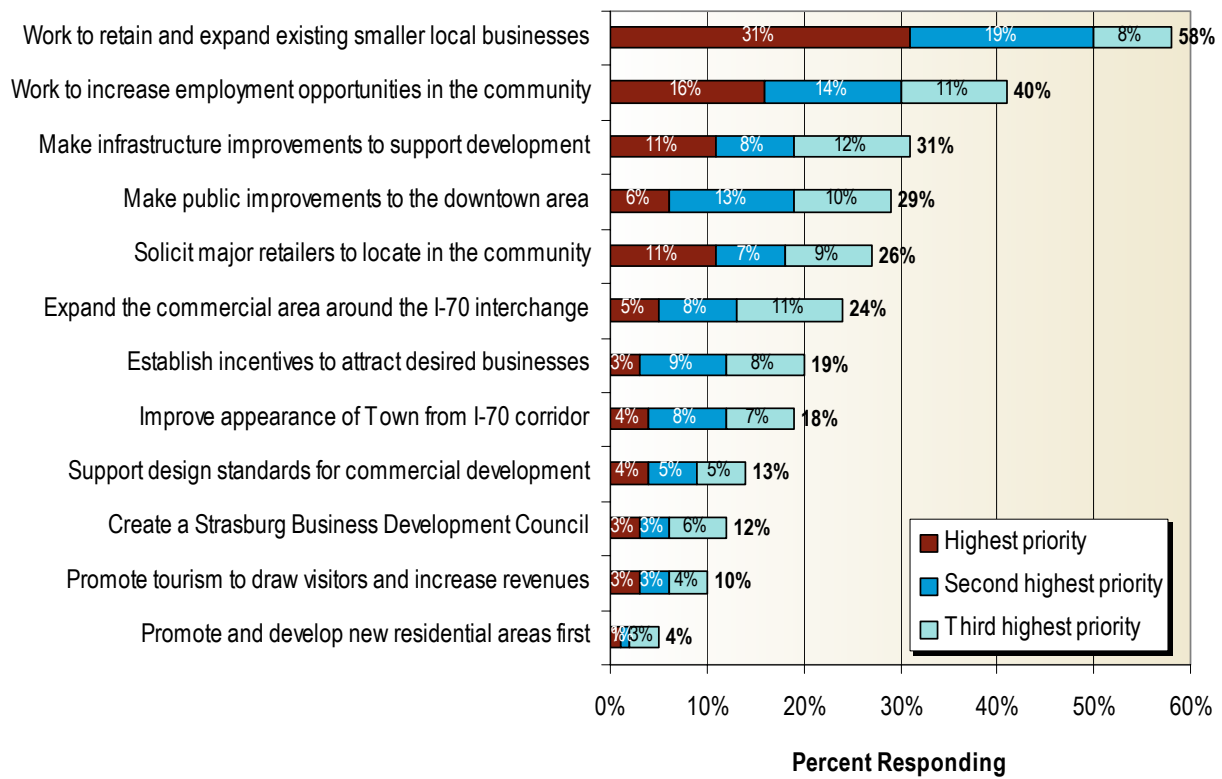
Figure 20
Where should the town focus resources for economic development?



Most important priorities for economic development. After rating each economic development aspect individually, respondents were then asked to name the three aspects they felt were the highest priorities on which Strasburg should focus. This provides the opportunity to not only see what opportunities are important to respondents, but also to get an idea of how the same opportunities are viewed in relation to each other.

The top category (“work to retain and expand existing smaller local businesses”), shown in the previous graph, became the clear number one priority (with 59 percent of respondents indicating it as one of the top three priorities, and 31 percent indicating it is the highest priority). Overall, the top four priorities remained consistent with the ratings shown in the previous figure.

**Figure 21
Top Priorities for Economic Development in Strasburg**



Types of Commercial Development

In regards to types of commercial development, there were clear opinions on what respondents felt would be important to the future of the community. The survey listed 19 various types of development and asked respondents to rate each on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means “not at all important” and 5 means “very important.”

As shown in the following figure, the types of commercial development most important to respondents include:

- Small independently-owned retail stores (70 percent indicating 4 or 5 “very important”)
- Health care and public facilities (64 percent)
- Agricultural operations (59 percent)
- Smaller franchise/chain stores (55 percent)
- Restaurants/bars (54 percent)

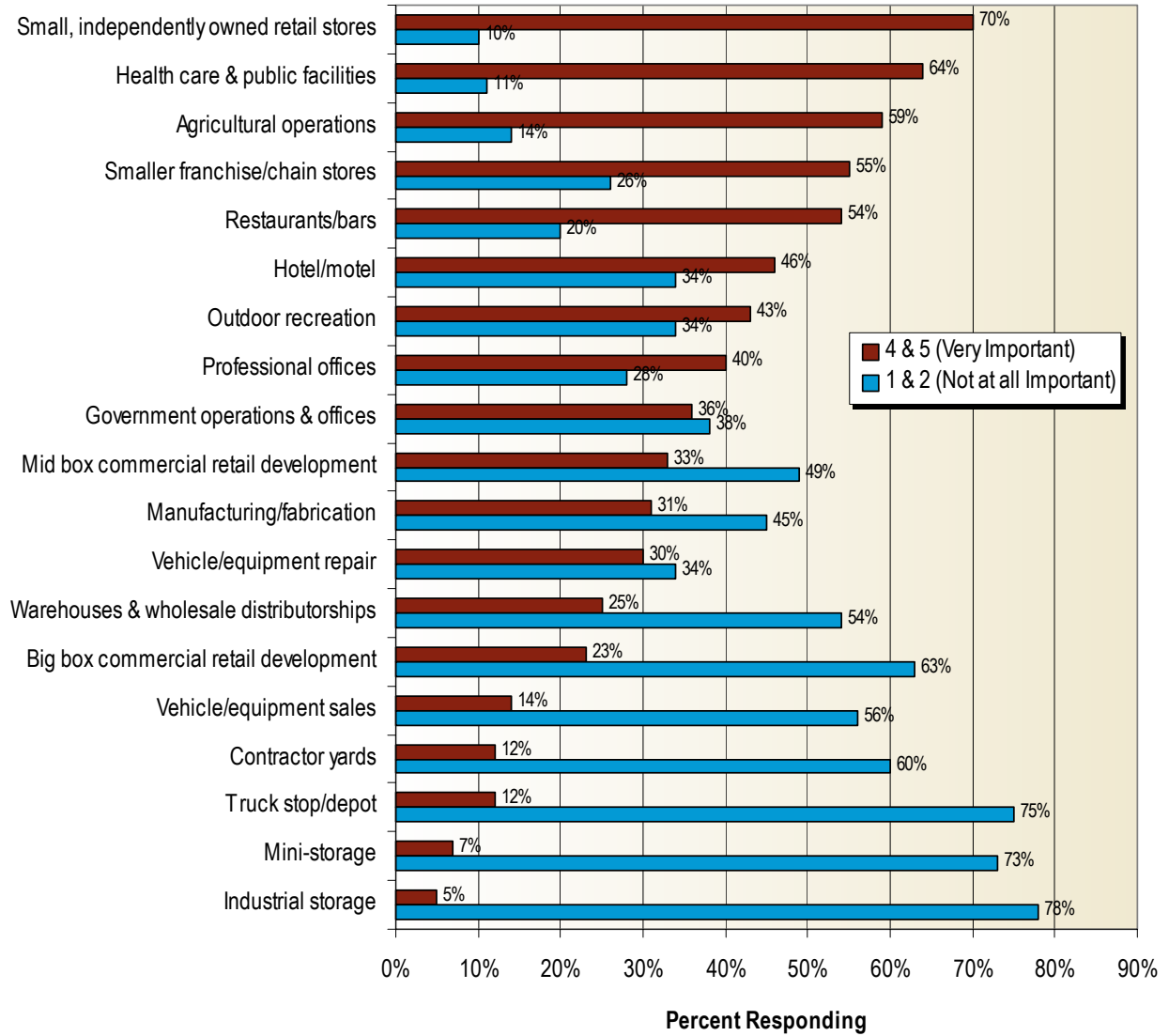
A second tier of types of commercial development most important to respondents include:

- Hotel/motel (46 percent indicating 4 or 5 “very important”)
- Outdoor recreation (43 percent)
- Professional offices (40 percent)

Types of commercial development least important to respondents include:

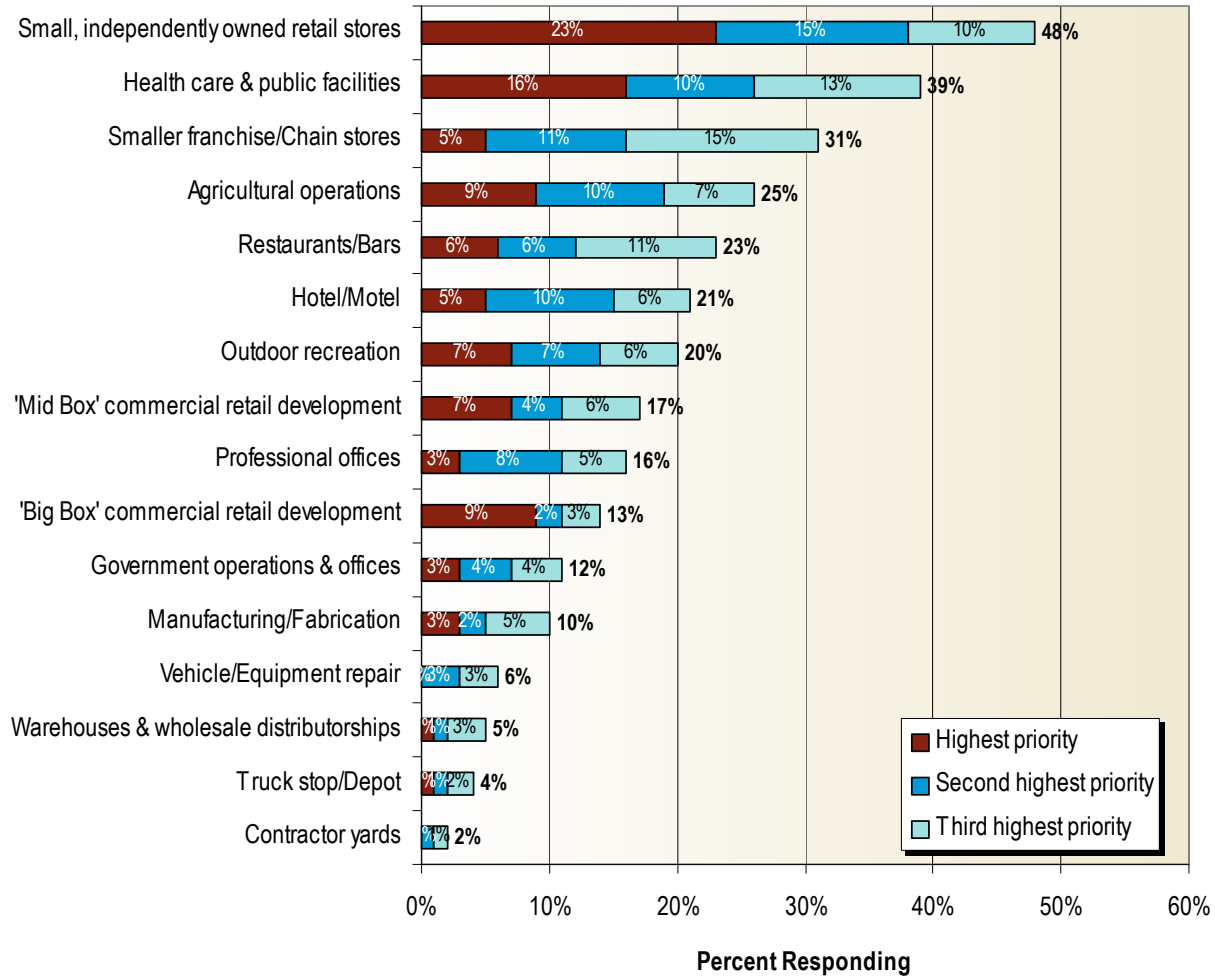
- Industrial storage (78 percent indicating 1 or 2 “not at all important”)
- Truck stop/depot (75 percent)
- Mini-storage (73 percent)
- Big box commercial retail development (63 percent)
- Contractor yards (60 percent)
- Vehicle/equipment sales (56 percent)
- Warehouses and wholesale distributorships (54 percent)

Figure 22
Importance of Commercial Development Types



Most important types of commercial development. Again, respondents were asked to name the three commercial aspects they felt were the highest priorities on which Strasburg should focus. Overall, the top seven priorities remained consistent with the ratings shown in the previous figure, with “small, independently-owned retail stores” emerging as the clear commercial priority for respondents (48 percent of respondents indicating it as one of the top three priorities, and 23 percent indicating it is the highest priority). Also important were health care and public facilities (39 percent of respondents indicating it as one of the top three priorities), smaller franchise / chain stores (31 percent), agricultural operations (25 percent), and restaurant/bars (23 percent).

Figure 23
Top Priorities for Commercial Development in Strasburg



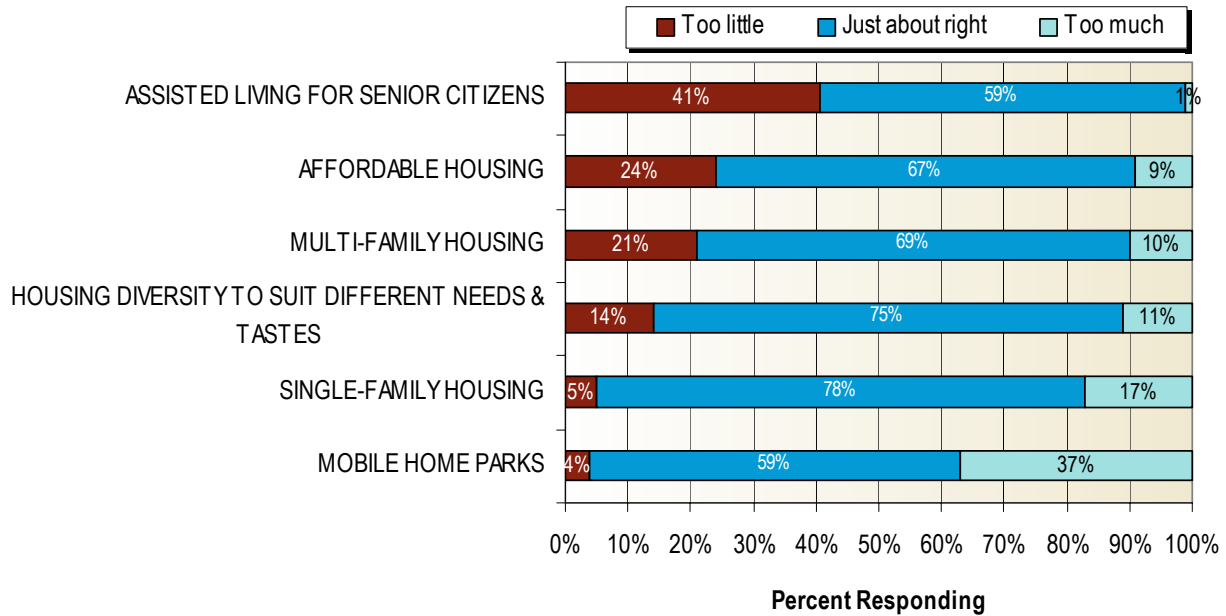
A sampling of other types of businesses or services respondents commented that they would also like to see provided in Strasburg in the future are listed below:

- Garden center, nursery, home healthcare, furniture store*
- More good restaurants and professional services*
- Urgent care, 24/7 medical*
- Health/fitness, maybe educational services centered on rural skill sets (farming, ranching, alternative energy (wind power would be good)).*
- I think that some development of the I-70 interchange area would be a start to drawing other business needs to the area. It would have to be done in a way to not effect the homes in the area.*

Housing

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they feel Strasburg has too much or too little of a variety of housing types. Results provide an indicator as to how community members view the current housing supply available in Strasburg. Overall, the majority of respondents feel the availability of “housing diversity to suit different needs and tastes,” “affordable housing,” “multi-family housing,” and “single-family housing” are just about right (67 to 78 percent of all respondents feel the current supply of each is “just about right”), although 17 percent of respondents feel there is too much single-family housing. The results show strong consensus among respondents that there is not enough assisted living for senior citizens (41 percent indicated there is not enough). Outside of single-family housing, the only type of housing respondents feel there is relatively too much of are mobile home parks (37 percent of respondents indicated there is too much, and 59 percent indicated the amount is just about right).

Figure 24
Current Availability of Housing Types in Strasburg

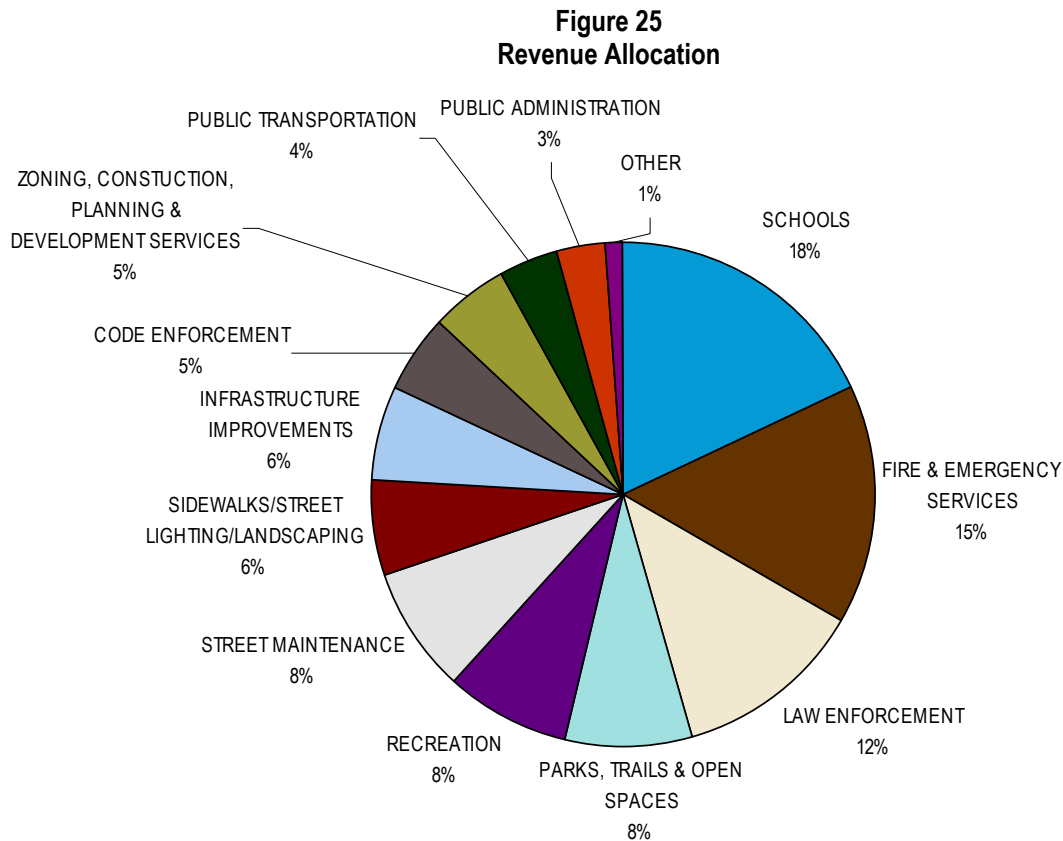


Financial Decisions

Budget Allocation

The survey asked respondents, “If you were responsible for budgeting \$100 of taxpayer revenue, how would you spend it?” As illustrated in the following figure, residents distributed the greatest share to schools—\$18 or 18% of their total \$100 allocation, followed by fire and emergency services (15 percent).

After fire and emergency services, residents allocated \$12 (or 12%) to law enforcement, \$8 each to recreation and parks, trails, and open space, \$8 to street maintenance, \$6 to sidewalks/street lighting/landscaping, \$6 to infrastructure improvements, \$5 to code enforcement, \$5 to zoning, construction, and planning development, \$4 to public transportation, and \$3 to public administration.

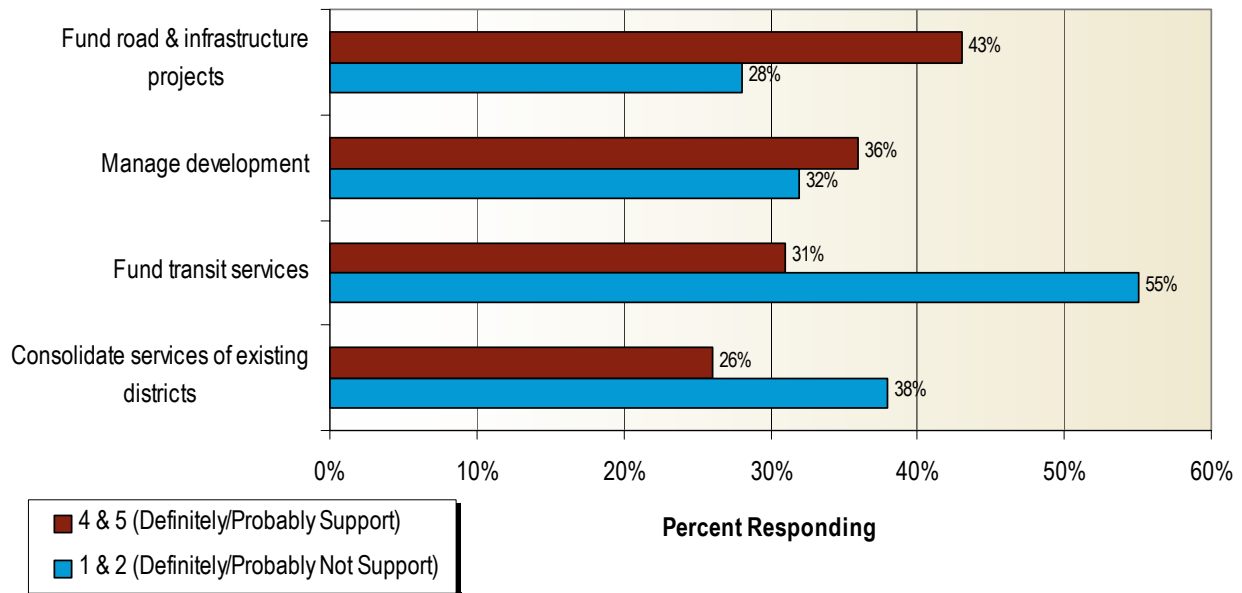


Support for creation of metropolitan special district

Would you support the creation of a metropolitan special district funded through property taxes to fund a variety of services and/or projects? Overall, there was not strong support for the development of a special taxing district, particularly for the purposes or funding transit services or consolidating services of existing districts. Only 26 percent were in favor of creating a special taxing district to fund transit services, while 55 percent were opposed, and 26 percent were in favor of creating a special taxing district to consolidate services of existing districts, while 38 percent were opposed

Greater support was indicated for the purpose of funding road and infrastructure projects and to manage development, but was still not overly strong. Forty-three percent were in favor of creating a special taxing district to fund road and infrastructure projects, while 28 percent were opposed, and 36 percent were in favor of creating a special taxing district to manage development, while 32 percent were opposed. These results were relatively consistent across all respondent types, with slightly higher support among Adams County respondents and households with children living at home.

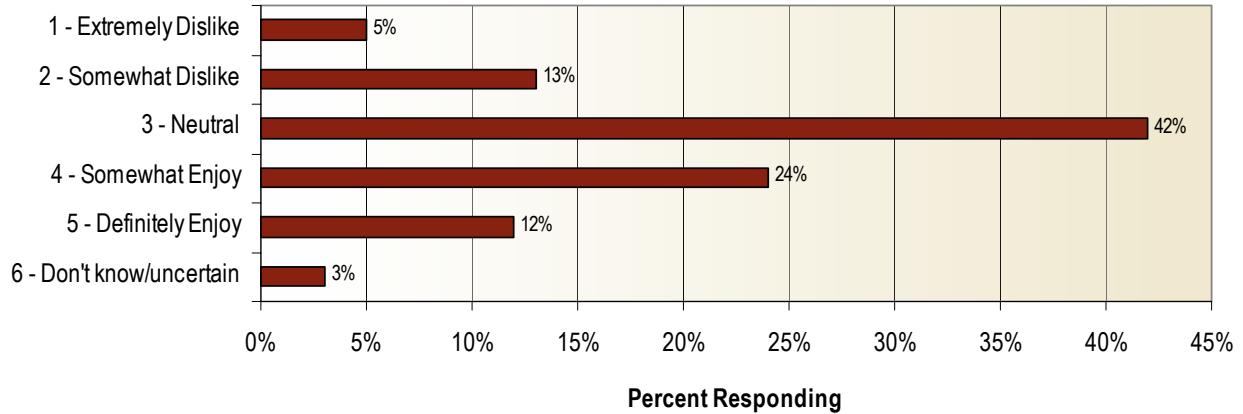
Figure 26
Would you support the creation of a metropolitan special district funded through property taxes to:



Transportation and Transit Services

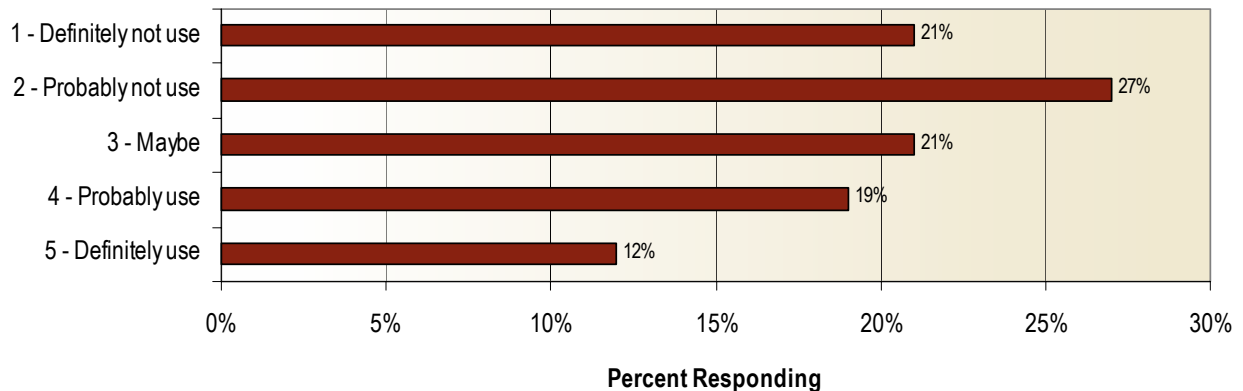
In order to get an idea of respondents' opinion of their current daily commute, they were asked to rate it on a 5-point scale where 1 was "extremely dislike" the commute and 5 is "definitely enjoy" the commute. Overall, 42 percent of respondents were neutral about their commute, while 36 percent "somewhat or definitely enjoy" the commute, and 18 percent "somewhat or extremely dislike" the commute.

Figure 27
Overall, what is your opinion of your current daily commute?



The question was then asked if they would be likely to use a commuter route bus or shuttle service to Denver, if such a service were available. The results show that there is not broad community strong support for the service, but 31 percent of respondents indicate that they would "probably or definitely" use it, while 21 percent indicate "maybe" and 48 percent indicate that they would "probably or definitely not" use the service. The average score on the 5-point scale was 2.7.

Figure 28
If a commuter route bus or shuttle service to Denver were available, what would be the likelihood you would use this service?

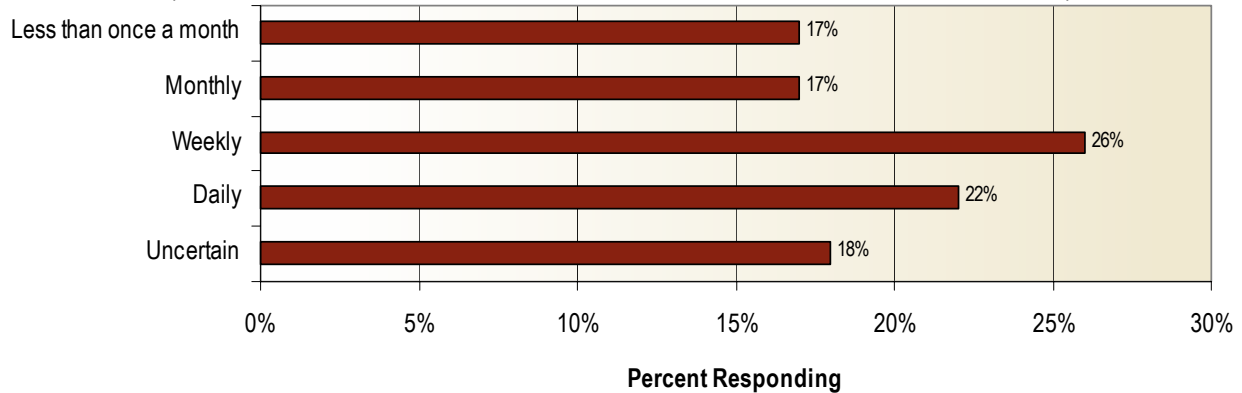


Respondents who indicated a "3, 4, or 5" (maybe, probably, or definitely use the bus service) in the previous question were then asked how frequently they would use a commuter bus or shuttle service if it were available. Twenty-two percent indicated that they would likely use the

service daily, while 26 percent would use it weekly, and 34 percent said they would use it monthly or less.

Figure 29
If a commuter route bus or shuttle service to Denver were available,
how frequently would you use the service?

(only respondents who indicated they might, probably, or definitely use a bus service)



Communication and Information

Ratings of communication within the Town were relatively low overall. As shown in an earlier section, satisfaction with “current communication and information dissemination” in the community was rated positively (rating of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale) by 32 percent of respondents, and was rated negatively (rating of 1 or 2) by 27 percent of respondents. Emphasizing the importance of communication and the need for improvement in this area, when asked how important certain issues were, 50 percent of respondents indicated that “improve communication to residents and business owners” was very important (8 percent of overall respondents listed it as one of the top three priorities Strasburg should focus on).

When asked how Strasburg can best reach community members, 87 percent of respondents indicated that the I-70 Scout is the best method of reaching them. Other effective forms of communication include:

- Direct mailings (54 percent),
- Creation of a community newsletter (31 percent),
- E-mail (23 percent),
- Internet/website (21 percent),
- Flyers (12 percent),
- Parks & Recreation publication (8 percent), and
- Radio (4 percent).

The importance of the I-70 Scout is notable, and should be utilized to communicate information within the community whenever possible. Although mentioned less frequently than direct mailings and a community newsletter, e-mail and the Internet may be efficient and cost-effective forms of communication as 89 percent of respondents indicated that they have Internet access either at home or work.

One thing you would improve about Strasburg

One thing you would improve about Strasburg. In order to get an idea of what respondent's overall priorities for the community are, the survey asked "If you could improve one thing about Strasburg, what would it be?" Comments included issues ranging from the overall appearance and upkeep of the area, to available services, jobs, and shopping opportunities; to growth restrictions and the attitudes of residents. A sampling of these comments is listed below, but the entire set can be found in the appendix section of this report.

Appearance of the community. Abandoned and dilapidated buildings must go.
Better communication of events and services
Better medical care
Better roads and sidewalks
Bring in green industry that doesn't pollute so people living here could work here and not commute to Denver
Clean up the appearance of town. Help out parks & rec.
Control growth
Health services, medical availability for treatment on a 24-hour basis
I would like to see old town Strasburg grow larger and left on Colfax with some better parking
If the new folks would integrate into a rural society instead of trying to change a rural society into a "Denver" society
Less new housing
More economic development
More independent businesses
Sidewalks along all streets and especially along Strasburg Rd. north
Upgrade downtown district/Colfax main drag - run down, not appealing
I wish some town folks had a bit more pride in their homes and of the main corridors through Strasburg. Some areas look hodge-podge and un-kept.
Parks and Recreation - pool, golf course, improved parks and open space