

# Community and Economic Development Internet Survey Results

CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS

Summary of findings

April 24, 2002

# ABOUT THE COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INTERNET SURVEY



## COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SURVEY

Welcome to the Minneapolis Community and Economic Development Survey!

The Mayor and the City Council of Minneapolis are currently in the process of reviewing and prioritizing the city's community and economic development goals and realigning city departments and agencies to support these new priorities. To assist in this effort, McKinsey and Company has volunteered to conduct this web survey to gather community input on what the city does well and how Minneapolis can improve.

Three versions of the survey are available. The first is for Twin Cities business owners, the second is for Minneapolis neighborhood group leaders, and the third is for concerned citizens living in the Twin Cities. If you belong to more than one of these groups and would like to complete more than one version, please feel free to return to this site

If you are a Twin Cities business owner, [click here.](#)

If you are a Minneapolis neighborhood group leader, [click here.](#)

If you live in the Twin Cities, [click here.](#)

Thank you for your help! Your input will be invaluable to our effort to ensure strong, sustainable growth for the future of Minneapolis.

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- This internet survey was conducted as part of a pro bono study on community and economic development in Minneapolis by McKinsey & Company, a global management consulting firm. The goal of this study is to assist the Mayor and City Council in developing community and economic development strategies and realigning city entities to support these plans
- The survey was designed to supplement hundreds of city, community and business interviews and to help focus on issues which community members believe need attention
- Three individual surveys designed for residents, neighborhood leaders, and business owners were created to collect information from constituencies affected by development. The survey was available online from February 10 through April 15. Respondents included
  - 767 Twin Cities residents
  - 123 Neighborhood group leaders
  - 88 Business owners

# INTENT OF THE SURVEY

## This survey was . . .

- ☒ An internet survey on development issues conducted by McKinsey & Company through the City of Minneapolis web site from February 10 through April 15, 2002
- ☒ Designed to supplement a 4-month, in-depth pro-bono study of development in Minneapolis, which included the review of over 100 documents, over 250 interviews, and many financial and organizational analyses
- ☒ Designed to widen the breadth of community input into the development study, and allow Minneapolis citizens, neighborhood leaders and business owners to express their opinions on development issues
- ☒ A self-selecting, non-random sample of Minneapolis citizens, neighborhood leaders, and business owners

## This survey was not . . .

- ☒ Conducted or paid for by the City of Minneapolis
- ☒ Designed to be used in isolation to determine the views of the community, or as a basis for city decision making
- ☒ Designed to provide statistically relevant or correct information about the opinions of the community as a whole
- ☒ Conducted in a fashion which would ensure broad-based representation and results representative of the feelings of the community at large



- **Twin Cities residents results**

- Neighborhood leaders results

- Business owners results

# SUMMARY – TWIN CITIES RESIDENTS SURVEY RESULTS

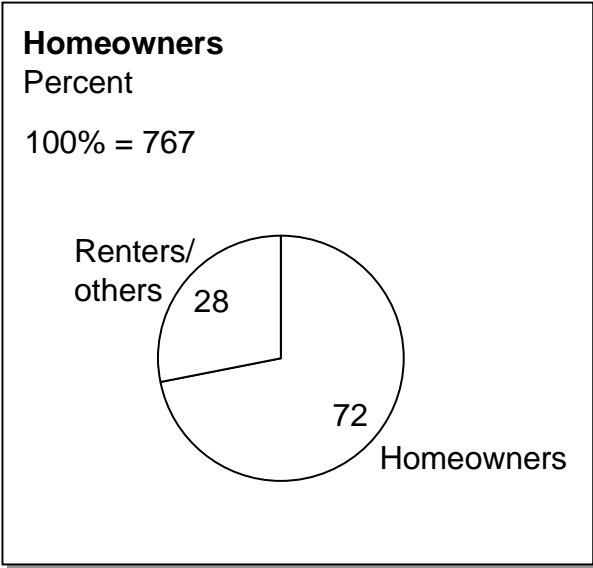
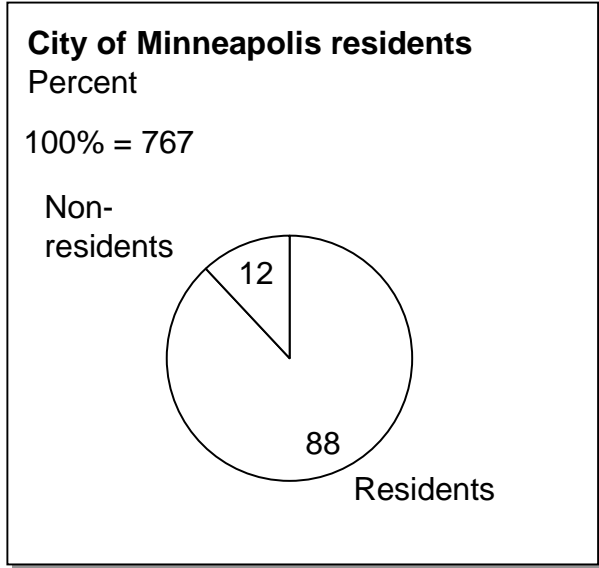
RESIDENTS

- 767 residents from 78 neighborhoods completed the survey
- Residents believe that the best characteristics of the city relate to the quality of life – culture, recreation, neighborhood charm, and livability. These are also seen as the primary source of the city’s distinctiveness over the suburbs
- Residents believe city leadership should be focusing on housing affordability, education and transportation as development priorities
- Residents believe that the city’s support and limited public resources should be channeled towards improving neighborhoods, job and business development and affordable housing
- Residents who responded to the survey generally believe that they have some ability to influence decisions in their neighborhood; increased level of involvement in their neighborhood association is tied to increased confidence in ability to have influence

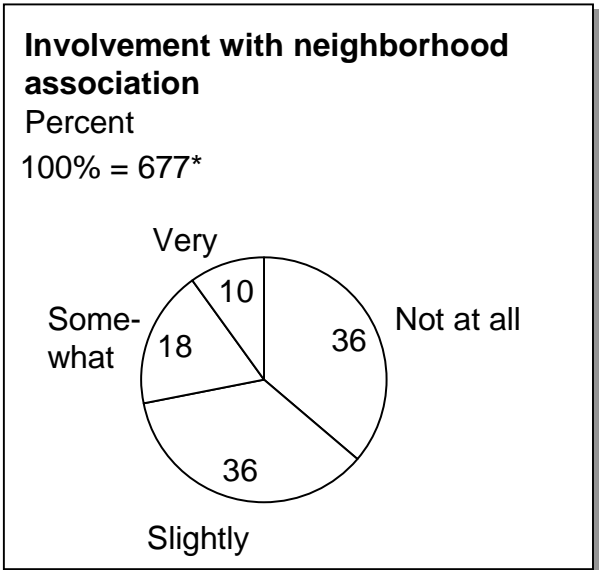
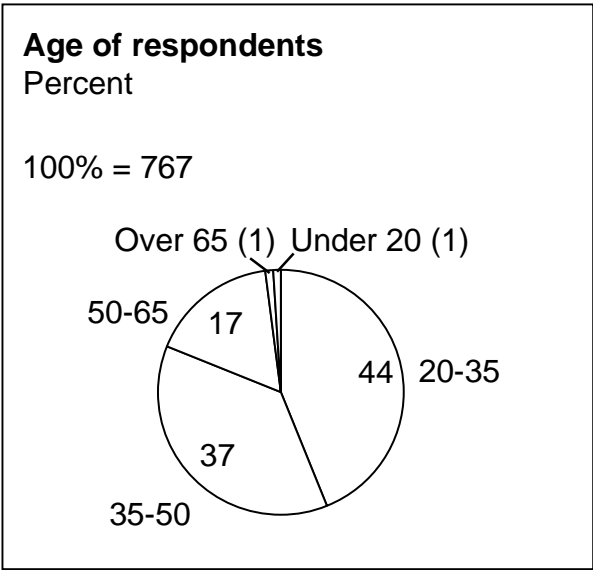
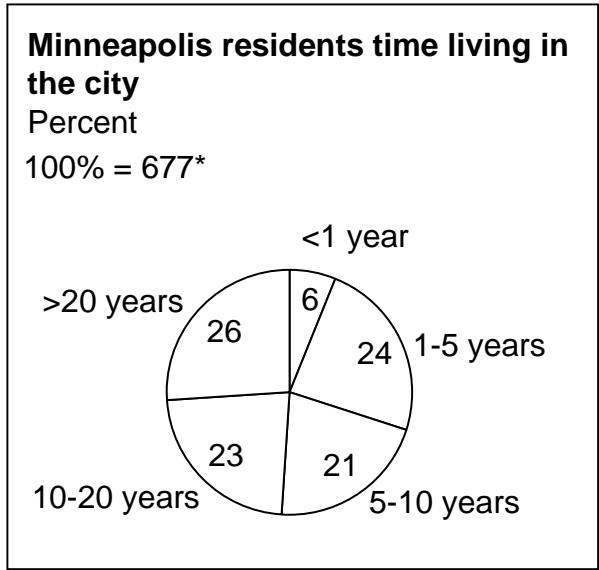
# TWIN CITIES RESIDENTS SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

RESIDENTS

Total number of respondents: 767



- Respondents by neighborhood**
- Responses were received from 78 of Minneapolis' 81 neighborhoods
  - The top 3 neighborhoods for responses were Kingfield (74), Longfellow (27), and Powderhorn Park (25)
  - In addition, 20 responses were received from St. Paul residents and 65 from Minneapolis/St. Paul suburbs



\* City of Minneapolis residents only  
Source: Internet survey

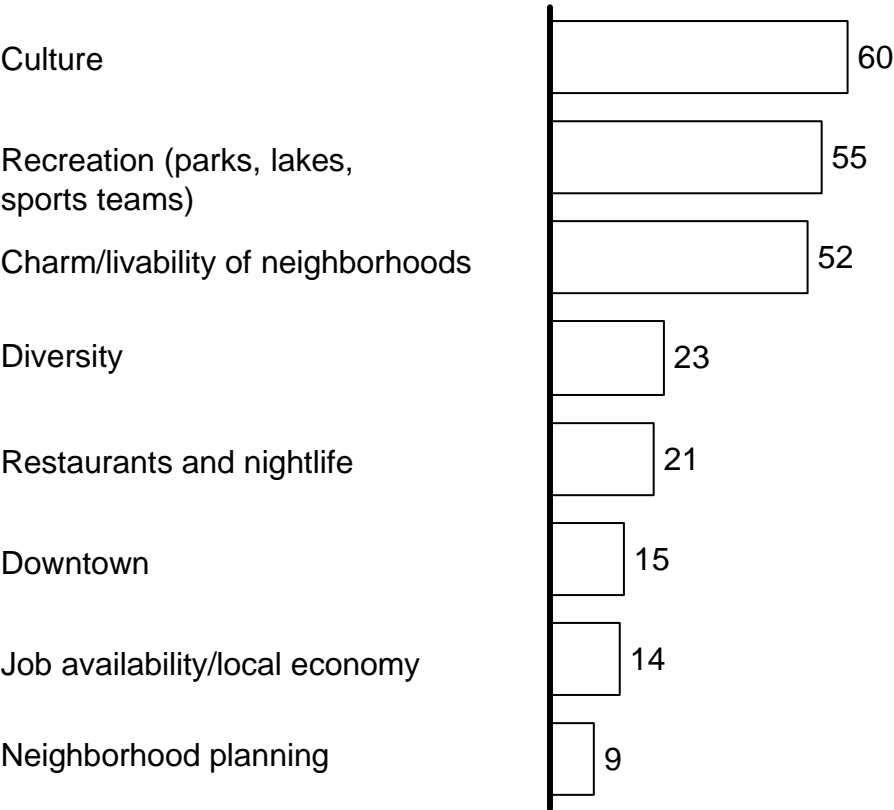
# BEST THINGS ABOUT MINNEAPOLIS

RESIDENTS

**Question:** What are the best things about the City of Minneapolis?

**Top factors**

**Percent of respondents selecting**



Minneapolis scores high on quality of life characteristics, with residents concurring that the best of the city is to be found in its culture, recreation, and neighborhoods

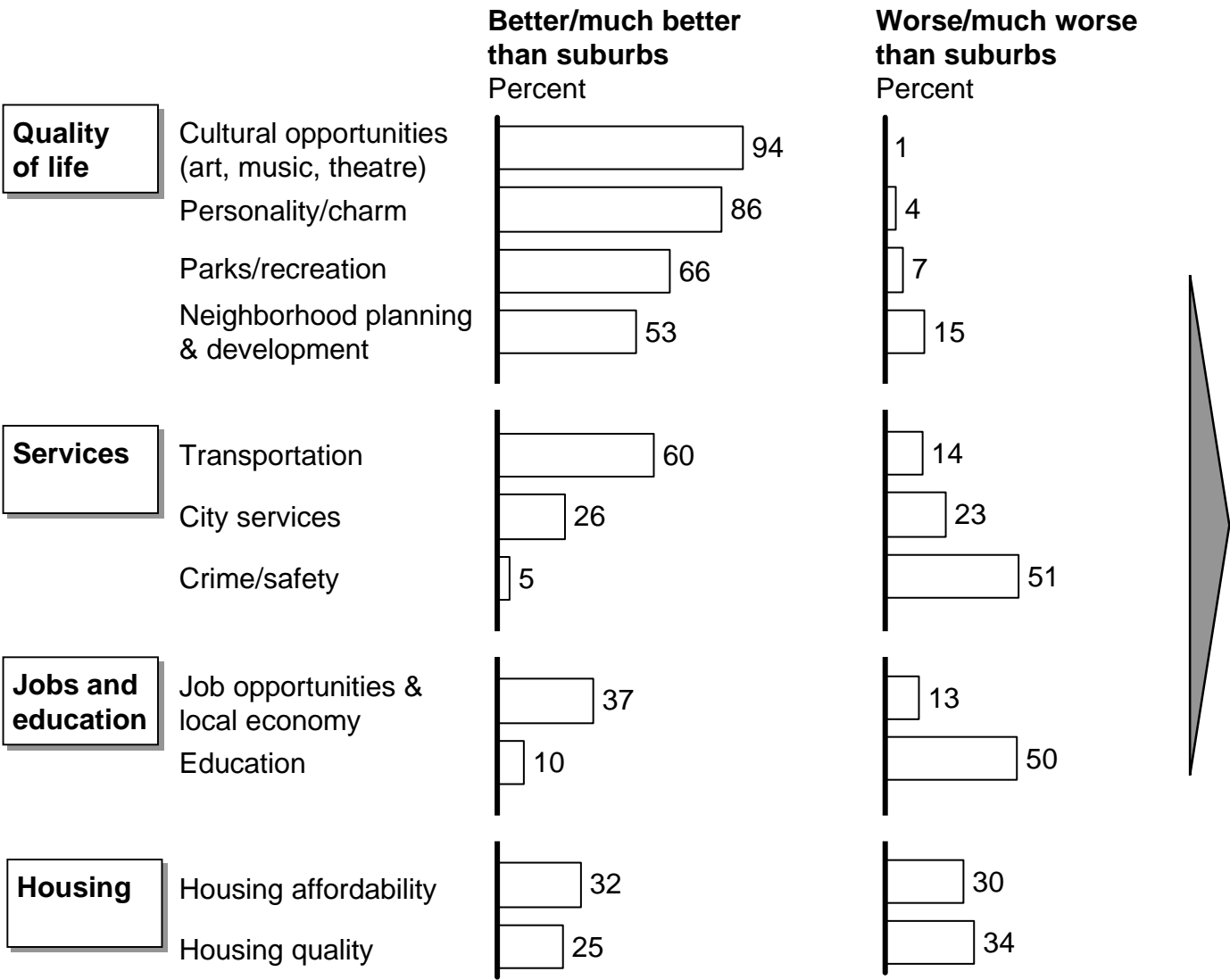
The factors that were selected by the least respondents are housing quality (8%), bus and mass transit (6%), education system (4%), crime rate (4%), close to the airport (4%), housing affordability (3%), traffic (2%), and parking (1%)

Note: All respondents (total = 767). Respondents could select up to three responses. Percentage of respondents selecting each choice is presented  
Source: Internet survey

# COMPARISON TO THE SUBURBS

RESIDENTS

**Question:** How does the City of Minneapolis compare to the suburbs in the following areas?



- Minneapolis is generally seen as having the advantage over suburbs in quality of life characteristics – such as cultural opportunities – and transportation services
- The city is perceived to lag the suburbs in crime and safety, and education

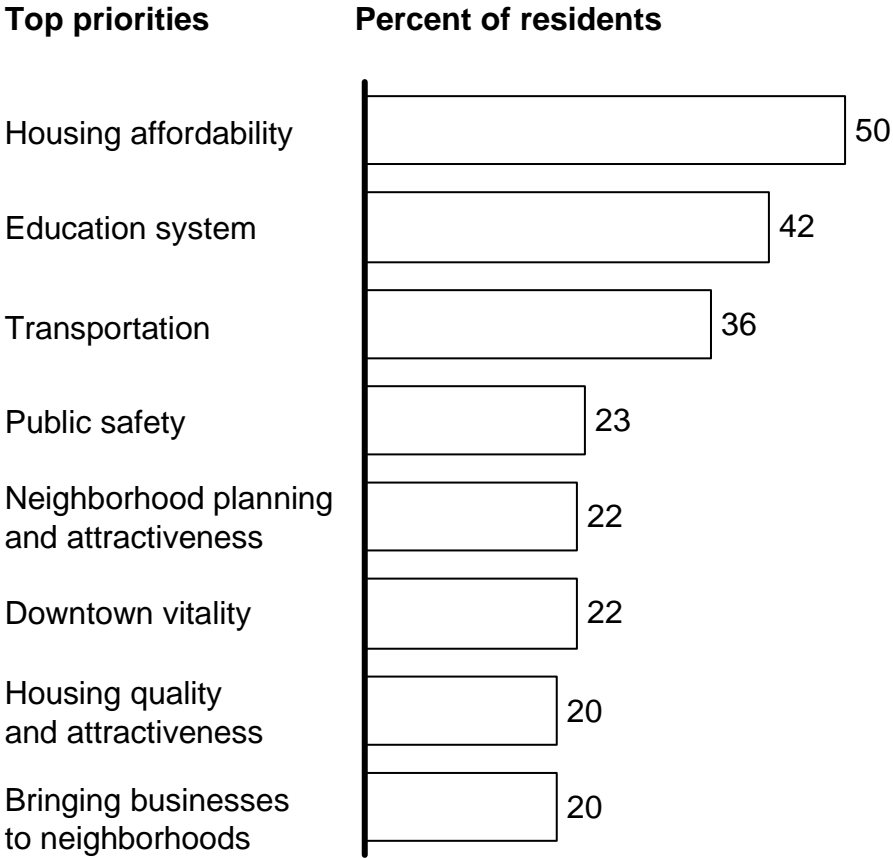
Note: All respondents (total = 767). Percentages shown are of respondents answering the question for each category. A “neutral” response to each question was also allowed  
Source: Internet survey



# DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES FOR CURRENT LEADERSHIP

RESIDENTS

**Question:** Which of these development priorities should the Minneapolis Mayor and City Council focus on during their current session?



Minneapolis residents believe the Mayor and Council should focus on are housing affordability, the education system and transportation

The areas that gained least support for high-priority leadership were job creation (12%), getting higher-wage jobs (12%), recreation (12%), and helping new businesses get started (9%)

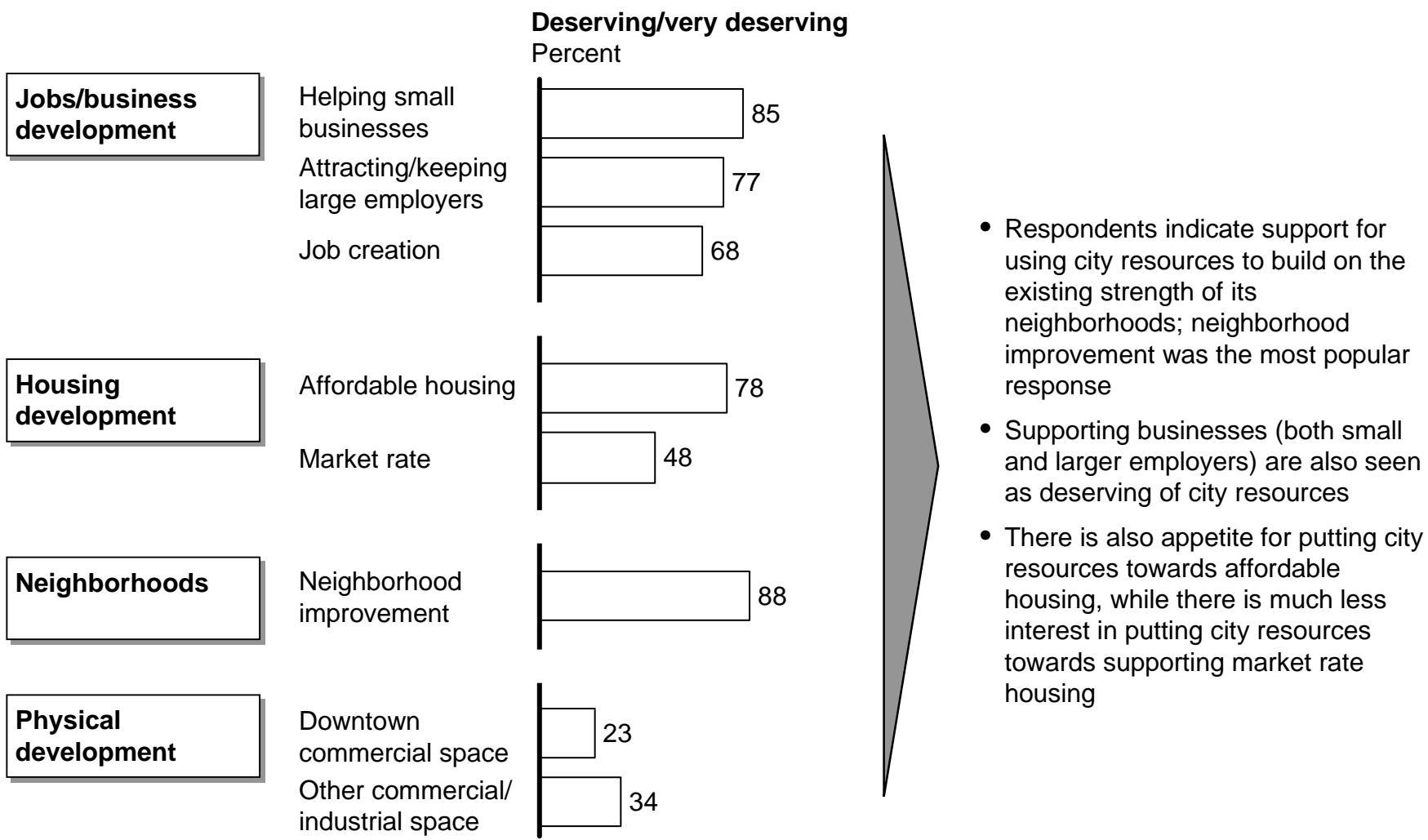
Note: Minneapolis residents only (total = 677). Respondents could select up to three responses. Percentage of respondents selecting each choice is presented

Source: Internet survey

# DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES DESERVING SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

**Question:** In your opinion, what types of development activity are deserving of City of Minneapolis support and limited public resources?

RESIDENTS



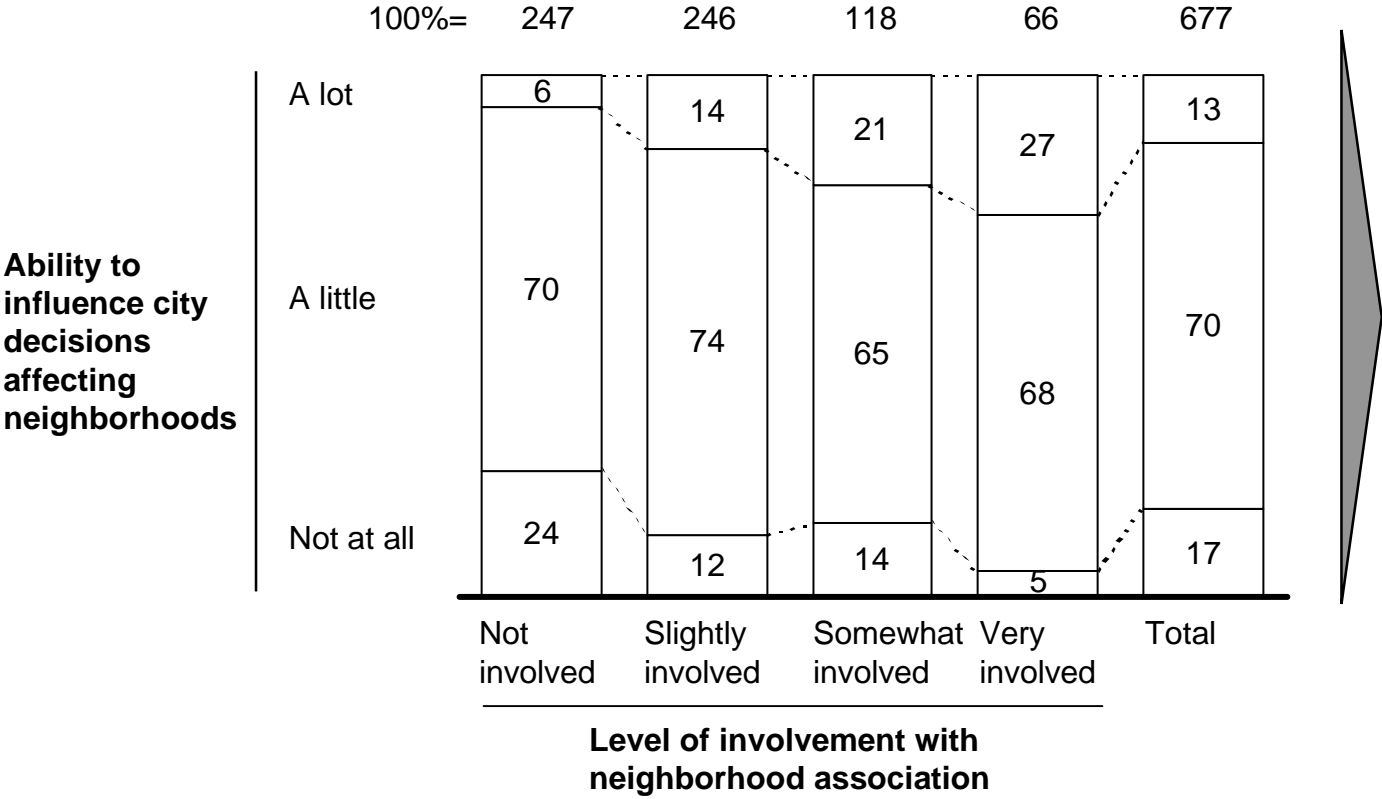
Note: Minneapolis residents only (total = 677). Percentages shown are of respondents answering the question for as “deserving” or “very deserving”. “Neutral”, “undeserving” and “very undeserving” responses were also allowed

Source: Internet survey

# NEIGHBORHOOD INVOLVEMENT AND INFLUENCE

RESIDENTS

Percent of residents



- Residents' sense of influence over decision-making rises with their level of participation\* in their neighborhood association
- Even amongst those people who report not being involved with their neighborhood association, the vast majority still believe they can exert some influence over decisions in their neighborhood

\* 64% of respondents report being slightly, somewhat or very involved with their neighborhood association. The survey was self selecting and publicized through neighborhood groups and therefore may not reflect the greater city participation

# SUGGESTIONS ON CITY SUPPORT FOR THE COMMUNITY

RESIDENTS

**Question:** If you could change anything about how the City of Minneapolis supports your community, what would you change?

## Illustrative survey respondent comments

### Build community and communication

- “An effort to bring together the diverse group of communities in Minneapolis so that we can pull together as a team and try to reconcile differences, allowing for our different cultures to live together while maintaining our individuality.”
- “More people-oriented programs (as contrasted to programs to help developers or businesses) such as tutoring/mentoring, recreation programs for youth, housing subsidies, and welfare that goes beyond just giving folks money.”

### Support city and neighborhood planning

- “A reworked, stronger NRP and planning and development approach that gives community folks better tools and allies at the city level. And give planners the tools and respect they deserve – they could be doing much more, given better training and leadership and integration into the larger city system. They could really be teaching community people and acting as their true liaisons in the city.”
- “Increase current minimal Planning Department involvement with neighborhood groups; improve customer-friendliness of Planning/Development Services & Zoning.”
- “City Planning Public Works, and to a lesser extent, Park and Rec and MCDA staff are, by design, remote from neighborhood residents. This tends to prolong the planning process and can lead to mutual distrust and poorer decisions.”
- “More NRP money—better coordination with other neighborhoods. Seems to me that the plans are pieced together without looking at an overall strategic plan for the city.”

### Develop the neighborhoods

- “I would hope that the city would make neighborhood programs/ revitalization and downtown it's highest priority. If the city is safe and if leaders care about the health & attractiveness of their neighborhoods, people will come to the city from the suburbs to live and the jobs will move here as well.”
- “Many Minneapolis neighborhoods have great old commercial and small business spaces within the neighborhoods. The city should be supporting small businesses and encouraging them to inhabit these buildings throughout our neighborhoods.”
- “It is more important that the city preserves and improves the existing housing stock than it is to use neighborhood revitalization money for projects that are "eyewash" or social services. The NRP has run amok. Housing revitalization and replacement of substandard housing is the way to preserve neighborhoods. New business and community schools revitalize them.”
- “I would change the focus of improving neighborhoods that are clean and nice already and focus more on the run down neighborhoods of south and north Mpls. Public resources for renovations of run down homes can help change how the city looks and it would attract new people to move into those areas of trouble.”

Note: Quotes illustrative of the main themes discussed by respondents are presented here; many quotes were omitted for brevity. Some quotes were edited for grammar and length

Source: Internet survey

# SUGGESTIONS ON CITY SUPPORT FOR THE COMMUNITY (CONTINUED)

**Question:** If you could change anything about how the City of Minneapolis supports your community, what would you change?

RESIDENTS

## Illustrative survey respondent comments

### Focus on housing

- “Increase support for affordable housing – modify codes and inspection procedures to streamline costs and processes.”
- “I would like to see some type of support for helping the homeless. Maybe some way of organizing those of us who live here to help those who aren't lucky enough to have a place to live?”
- “My neighborhood is high rental/absentee landlords. To have a more livable neighborhood, more emphasis is needed on landlord responsibility for property upkeep.”
- “More affordable housing and low percentage loans for fix up and first time home buying. Also more first time homebuyer incentives.”
- “There are huge housing discrepancies within the neighborhoods of Minneapolis... More effort should also be made to make affordable housing available within higher income neighborhoods.”

### Increase policing efforts

- “More community oriented public safety initiatives like CCP/SAFE.”
- “I think the state of policing in the city is abysmal. The police have virtually no street presence and seem very unresponsive to local crime issues.”
- “Increase the effort to have police be part of the community... React more quickly to crack houses and nuisance properties. The process takes months or even years.”

### Improve transportation options

- “Public transportation. I live and work in Minneapolis. It is the nearly the same cost (and infinitely more convenient) for me to drive and park than to bus to and from work. Buses are drastically over-crowded and run erratically.”
- “Have better control over MNDOT decisions. Switch the priority from unlimited automotive access (impossible to keep up with demand) to directed, mass-transit access. In other words, don't keep adding lanes and ramps.”
- “Trains, trains, trains!!! I can't see this city really getting anywhere with just buses... No major city in the country (or world) exists without some rail transport. Put trains down the "medians" of each of the major roadways.”
- “More bike paths to connect all parts of the city—the Greenway project is great, but it's still difficult to bicycle commute safely to all areas of the city.”

### Enhance downtown

- “The crowds of unfortunate people have made downtown a place people avoid like the plague. Even liberal, urban people try not to come down here anymore. The litter is incredible. The yelling, screaming, pushing, fighting, drug dealing on the Nicollet Mall make it a very unpleasant place to me. It is very sad, almost tragic. It is like watching a city die. We need to build daytime shelters for the homeless, enforce all laws about drunkenness, increase support services for the mentally ill.”
- “It would be nice to see street islands filled with planters and more trees in the landscaping of the downtown. Chicago has done this recently and it has garnered national attention.”
- “Trash is a big problem downtown... I walk on Hennepin every morning to work and trash barrels are overflowing, there is litter all over the sidewalks.”
- “Minneapolis needs more green spaces downtown.”

Note: Quotes illustrative of the main themes discussed by respondents are presented here; many quotes were omitted for brevity. Some quotes were edited for grammar and length

Source: Internet survey

# SUGGESTIONS ON CITY SUPPORT FOR THE COMMUNITY (CONTINUED)

**Question:** If you could change anything about how the City of Minneapolis supports your community, what would you change?

RESIDENTS

## Illustrative survey respondent comments

### Provide better city services

- “Focus efforts on basic public services: trash, snow plowing, streets, parks, safety these are the things that attract and keep people in the city. Providing efficient responsive licensing, inspections and planning services will attract businesses.”
- “I'd like to see city services focus on excellent customer service.”
- “I would like to see a greater effort to eliminate trash along streets and highways. This is becoming a huge problem and creates a very negative impression on visitors.”

### Improve regulatory processes

- “Make sense of the Inspection Department regulations and zoning ordinances.”
- “Make planning and zoning and licensing more user friendly—more of a partner than a ‘police’.”

### Provide leadership

- “Make a decision! The Council as a whole is afraid to make unpopular decisions, because it might upset the constituents. Well, welcome to public life - it's a reality that you will make unpopular choices. Accept it. Be thoughtful, courteous, and most of all be brave. Do what you think is right - but just do it. Stop dragging your feet and sticking your fingers into the political wind – decide.”

### Improve education

- “Somehow, I would involve the city in the educational system. They seem so interconnected yet so separate.”
- “Please help us fund our schools.... If we don't fund education, our city will become a public education "ghetto" system of families in economic crisis, with high mobility issues and students with issues of rage, disenfranchisement and hopelessness. You cannot expect stable, high-income families to stay in a system that constantly pulls the rug out from under them.”
- “I would put more money into the education system, not cutting vital programs such as the arts and extracurriculars. The education system is supposed to educate our children equally, and provide a well-rounded curriculum to meet each child's interests.”

Note: Quotes illustrative of the main themes discussed by respondents are presented here; many quotes were omitted for brevity. Some quotes were edited for grammar and length

Source: Internet survey

# DEVELOPMENT SUGGESTIONS FOR THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL RESIDENTS

**Question:** Do you have any other comments that would help the Mayor and City Council as they consider the city’s development priorities?

## Illustrative survey respondent comments

**Develop with vision**

- “Development in the city needs to be more creative and proactive. We need to inspire developers to think outside of their world and we need to inspire the public to support more visionary thinking. To do this, the planning department, MCDA, and NRP should be combined into one department lead by a visionary, creative thinker – not a financial wizard.”
- “First develop a vision – with input from citizens – of what this city should and could be, and then focus on the things that will accomplish this vision. Wonderful recreational facilities, diversity, strong theatre and other performing arts, many corporate headquarters, and the University of Minnesota in our midst are all strengths. But there's a lack of vision and momentum. Start with one or two things that can be accomplished and we can all feel good about.”
- “The city should have a clear set of housing and economic development goals that are communicated and understood widely throughout the city. Council members, the mayor and neighborhood organizations would then be responsible for meeting these goals.”
- “Go for infrastructure, take a ‘build it and they will come’ philosophy. Invest in education, transportation, beautiful and quality structures. Look at things from the perspective of what the historians in 3002 will think of Minneapolis. Do more to build relationships with companies and organizations that demonstrate strong ethics and outstanding investment in the city. In short, help the good guys succeed. And finally, pay close attention to the impact on the environment regarding each decision. Be a leader, have vision, make us all proud!”

**Grow businesses and jobs**

- “Keep good employers and attract others that pay good wages. There are probably enough low wage jobs; the City needs to attract companies who employ higher income wage earners who can contribute to the tax base. Get a strong technology base in the area.”
- “There needs to be serious thought given to business development within the different ethnic groups.”
- “It is important to support business. Business and a strong downtown help the neighborhoods too. They are not mutually exclusive – one helps the other.”

**Support affordable housing efforts**

- “I would suggest that the demolition of housing should come to a halt in all but the most extreme cases. The boarded houses in the city should be renovated and put back to use as quickly as possible. Also, incentives to build on the vacant lots in neighborhoods such as Phillips should be made available. A higher density of housing in Minneapolis will help alleviate the housing crisis, and make projects like the Hiawatha light rail line and business development more successful.”
- “Get more specific with regards to affordable housing. Is it 60%, 50% or 30% of median income that determines affordable rental rates. At 50% or 60% the rental rates are about the same as market rate in that area.... why provide TIF that is only helping the developer?”
- “Good quality affordable housing needs to be the top priority. Part ownership (co-ops, etc.) for low income housing would encourage pride of ownership and create a more stable population... the only way to jump start this process, and end the downward spiral that so many families are stuck in, is to create sensible programs that target very specific needs and have quantifiable end results.”

Note: Quotes illustrative of the main themes discussed by respondents are presented here; many quotes were omitted for brevity. Some quotes were edited for grammar and length  
Source: Internet survey

# DEVELOPMENT SUGGESTIONS FOR THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL (CONTINUED)

**Question:** Do you have any other comments that would help the Mayor and City council as they consider the city's development priorities?

RESIDENTS

## Illustrative survey respondents comments

### Build neighborhood vitality

- "Keep NRP healthy and vital! It is a huge part of neighborhood success because it lets the neighborhood inhabitants decide what is best for their individual section of Minneapolis."
- "Strive for economically diverse development and continue to incorporate more pedestrian and bicycle based transportation options for "daily living" kinds of trips (ex. to school, the market, the local park, etc.). Above all, make decisions for the long-term even if the current focus is on the short-term funding challenges."
- "Support the creation of small businesses. Also support in-filling vacant land with market-rate housing."
- "I would suggest that the demolition of housing should come to a halt in all but the most extreme cases. The boarded houses in the city should be renovated and put back to use as quickly as possible. Also, incentives to build on the vacant lots in neighborhoods such as Phillips should be made available. A higher density of housing in Minneapolis will help alleviate the housing crisis, and make projects like the Hiawatha light rail line and business development more successful. Every vacant lot is a missed opportunity. Every house holds citizens, consumers, commuters, entrepreneurs, and workers which will strengthen the city."
- "Providing grants and low interest loans allows residents with limited incomes the ability to make much needed improvements to their properties, which overall improves the livability of the City."
- "Don't forget the City's charm. Too many times we develop over saving historic buildings. People flock to old neighborhoods. We should give money to rehabs and not tear them down for the sake of development. The Warehouse district speaks for itself."
- "Mpls has a large influx of new immigrants (Hispanic, Somali, etc) who are hard working, wanting to be educated, etc. Lets make sure we provide them the opportunities (education, housing, jobs, respect from police, etc) to succeed so that Mpls will be a strong community that takes advantage of its cultural diversity."

### Improve city schools

- "Unless we make the neighborhoods nice places that people can afford to live in where their children can get a good education, they will continue to commute from the suburbs. I believe that as people are able, they will move so their children can have a quality education in a safe environment. If we cannot create this for the families, they will continue to move away and those left will be only those who cannot afford to move. This will continue the cycle of poverty for those people."
- "Good quality schools that are a first choice for families are crucial to the long term viability of any City. Support the School Board initiatives that make real progress towards these objectives as much as possible. I'm not sure that means the City should direct development funds to be targeted to schools, but it does suggest a mindfulness about successful models, eg community schools and geographically targeted housing development."

### Overhaul policing

- "The police department severely needs a overhaul. Incidents of police brutality and poor attitudes in addition to a complete lack of morals has eroded public confidence."
- "While crime is down, it is still a huge issue. We need to find a way to move the "bad guys" out of the city completely instead of chasing them out of one neighborhood, only to have them move into another. These people have to go!"

Note: Quotes illustrative of the main themes discussed by respondents are presented here; many quotes were omitted for brevity. Some quotes were edited for grammar and length

Source: Internet survey



# DEVELOPMENT SUGGESTIONS FOR THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL (CONTINUED)

**Question:** Do you have any other comments that would help the Mayor and City council as they consider the city's development priorities?

RESIDENTS

## Illustrative survey respondents comments

### Support vitality of downtown

- "Do not let the pendulum swing too far toward solely developing neighborhoods. Keep in mind that a vibrant, thriving downtown helps the entire region. – Curtail sprawl, support smart growth."
- "Some things needed (in downtown): A great urban public space (e.g., a park on the site north of the library) ...unique small businesses & art galleries . . . strong support for arts/cultural orgs . . . removal of the sex shops in the otherwise promising urban residential district north of 1st Avenue."
- "Work to maintain the integrity and history of this city, and do not rush to accept the quick deal at the expense of the city's character. Work to revitalize downtown through development of mixed-use areas, rather than creation of "urban strip malls".
- "Concentrate on people-scale public buildings that are inviting, instead of monolithic glass structures. Think of transportation in the long-term, which means more mass transit and bicycle lanes and intersections that can be crossed on foot without nearly being killed. Stop pandering to large corporations who are vying for office space downtown, while the small business owner with the loyal following has his building razed to make way for a giant company. Downtown Minneapolis should be a cultural center, not a Mall of America transferred into Minneapolis."

### Develop more transportation options

- "Focus on pedestrian and mass-transit oriented development. Make our community walkable."
- "Focus on a transportation system that is extensive enough to benefit most (not some), provides incentives for use of mass transit and reduced car use, increase bike lanes in the core."

### Refocus on environmental issues

- "Put aside more land in the city for recreation- small squares in and around housing. Block off more residential streets to create squares instead of planning the city for cars. Look at air quality issues when developing – we have exceeded safe levels many times."
- "Chicago has a long-term energy plan. The attractiveness of the Twin Cities is their commitment to balancing environmental and economic priorities. Energy use is a large part of this commitment."
- "As air traffic increases I would like to see some traffic (perhaps cargo) diverted to other airports. Sound proofing homes is not good enough. We have a right to enjoy the outdoors, and to fresh air from open windows when it is warm. If there is anything that would make me leave Minneapolis for St. Paul, it is the airport."

Note: Quotes illustrative of the main themes discussed by respondents are presented here; many quotes were omitted for brevity.  
Some quotes were edited for grammar and length  
Source: Internet survey

# DEVELOPMENT SUGGESTIONS FOR THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL (CONTINUED)

**Question:** Do you have any other comments that would help the Mayor and City council as they consider the city's development priorities?

RESIDENTS

## Illustrative survey respondents comments

**Build/do not build a stadium**

- “Encourage building of a new Twins stadium in Mpls (rather than put up roadblocks every step of the way). While I'm not a huge fan myself I think the Twins are a huge asset to the entire community.”
- “Financing a Twins (or Vikings) stadium with public funds is poor policy. ... raising taxes on other services or products to finance a ballpark is irresponsible and misguided. With much more pressing issues and problems in this city (housing, sanitation, transportation to name a few), any taxes raised should be going to solve these problems.”

**Improve parks**

- “Please plan to put some parks or green space in downtown Minneapolis. Our city is so bereft of greenery it's depressing - why couldn't there have been some space set aside in the Block E project for a park and some trees? All other world class cities have green space - try looking at Portland as an example.”
- “Preserve and expand recreation/park facilities... and don't forget the middle aged resident. MPRB has a tendency to focus its programming on children (done well) and seniors (done poorly). With the exception of baseball/softball leagues, there is little for residents who fall between those two extremes...and these are the wage earners and major tax payers.”

**Facilitate communication**

- “I would hope that city council members and the mayor could be more accessible and/or visible at neighborhood meetings and events--at minimum be profiled more regularly by neighborhood papers and publications. I would also hope that efforts are being made to solicit input and feedback from communities least likely to be filling out surveys like this one.”
- “I think developing partnerships with community agencies, religious organizations, the county, and other parties is one way to leverage limited resources. I would encourage creative partnerships, and a continued focus on what is unique about Minneapolis: The neighborhoods, the many types of arts organizations/ programs that are in the city, the charm of the older neighborhoods and buildings, and the diversity of the people.”
- “Please continue to involve the public. I try to participate in my neighborhood group, but sometimes it's hard to make the time. Consider using the Star Tribune as a voice for public involvement.”
- “More online services to save having to go downtown and take time off to do business with the city.”

- Residents results



- **Neighborhood leaders results**

- Business owners results

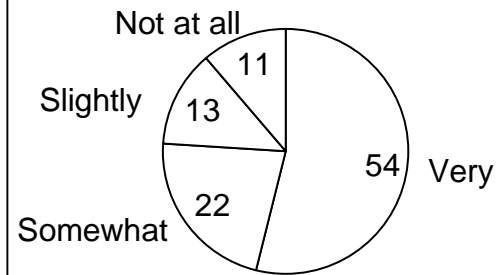
# NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERS SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

Total number of respondents: 123

## Level of involvement in NRP process

Percent

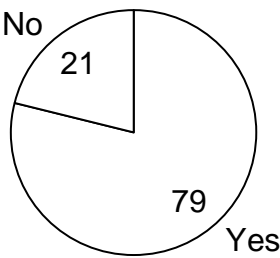
100% = 113



## Homeowners

Percent

100% = 123



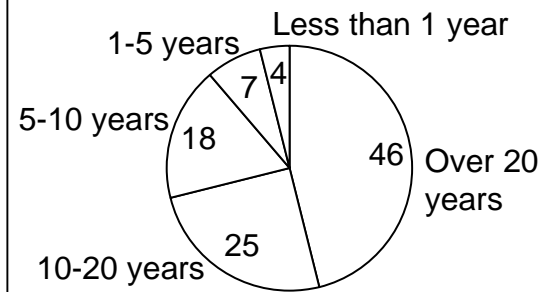
## Respondents by neighborhood

- Responses were received from 42 of Minneapolis' 67 neighborhood associations (or 63% in total)
- 15% of respondents were from other community groups, with over 60 neighborhood-based organizations represented in total
- Top 3 neighborhoods were Seward (7%), Powderhorn Park (5%) and Whittier (5%)

## Minneapolis residents time living in the city

Percent

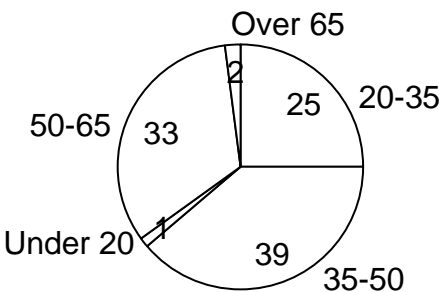
100% = 123



## Age of respondents

Percent

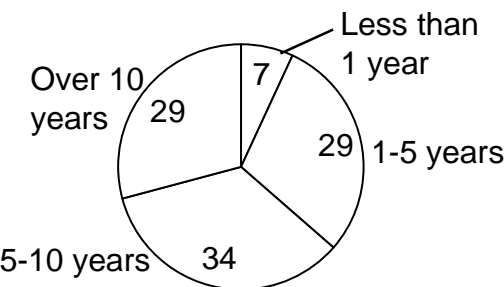
100% = 123



## Involvement with community groups

Percent

100% = 113



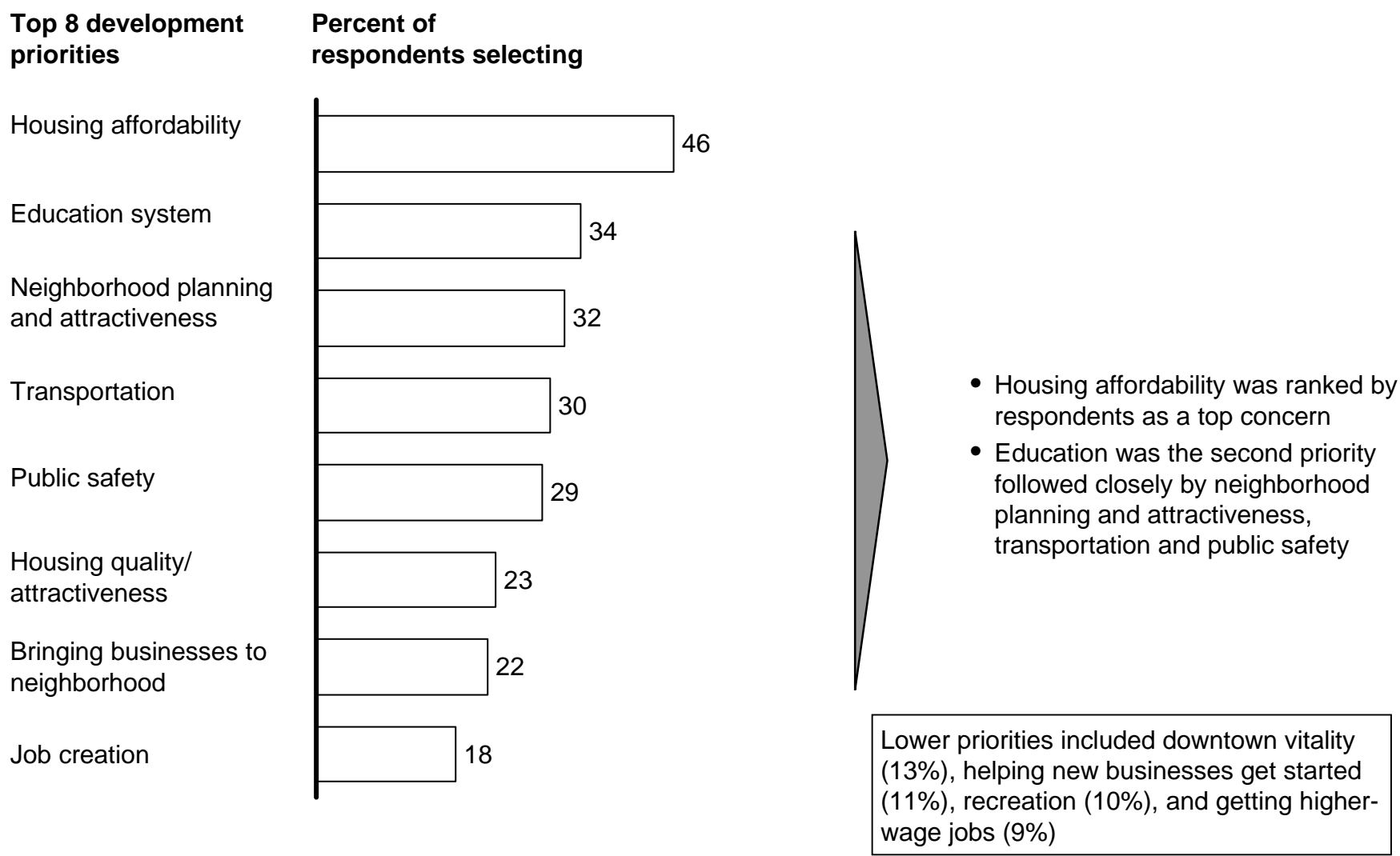
# SUMMARY – NEIGHBORHOOD LEADER SURVEY RESULTS

*NEIGHBORHOOD  
LEADERS*

- 123 neighborhood leaders participated in this survey, representing 42 of Minneapolis' 67 neighborhood associations
- Neighborhood leaders identified affordable housing, education, and neighborhood planning as the most critical development issues
- Respondents identified neighborhood improvement, job and business development, and affordable housing development to be most deserving of the city's limited resources
- Respondents reported the NRP administration to be the most helpful city entity
- Nearly all respondents believe they can influence city decisions affecting their neighborhood and most consider the city to be helpful partner to their neighborhood group
- 75% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with NRP and its impact

# RANKING OF CRITICAL DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

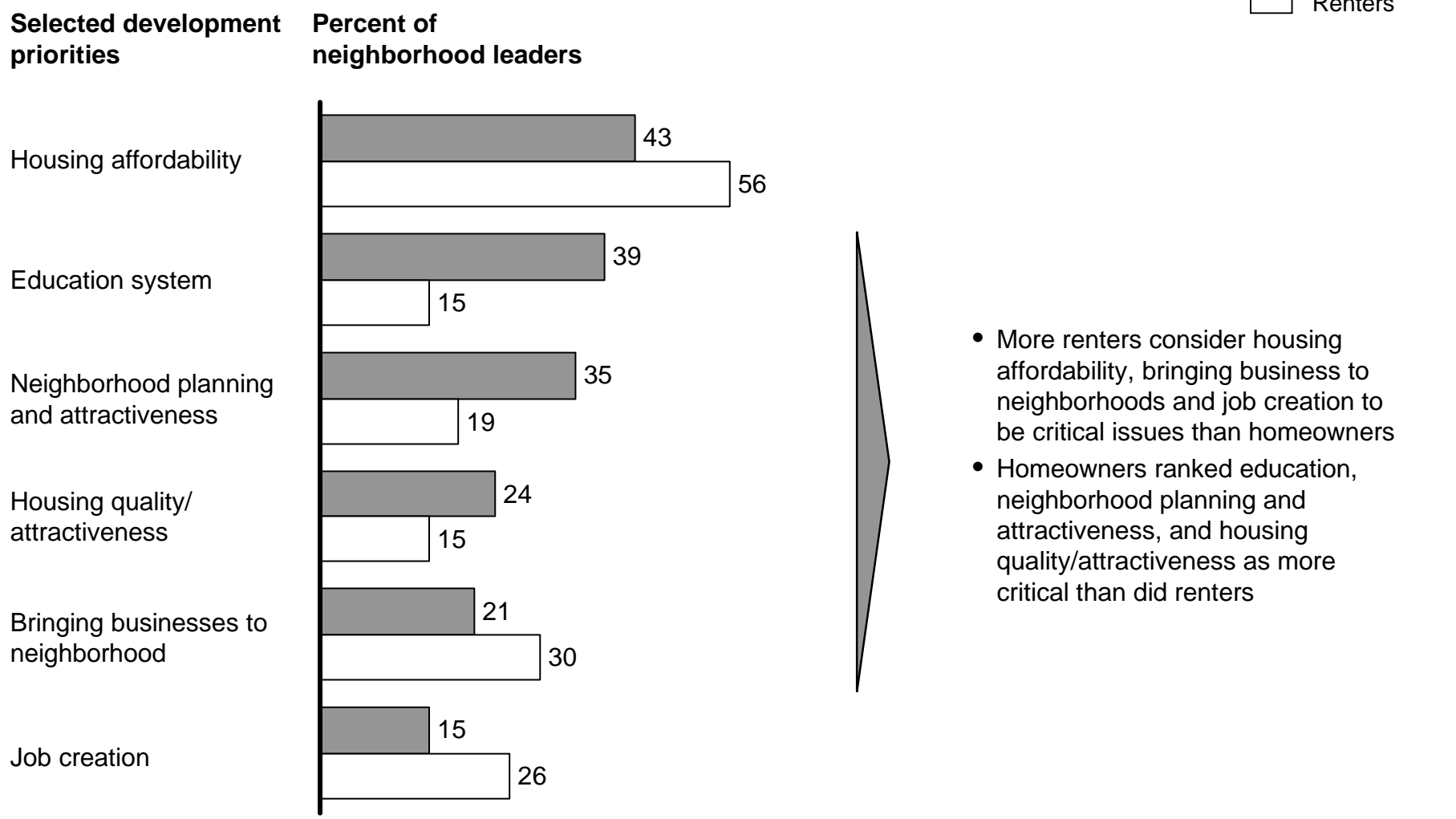
**Question:** What are the most critical development issues that the city should address?



Note: Survey respondents could check up to 3 priorities; order of priorities taken from overall results  
Source: Internet survey

# RANKING OF CRITICAL DEVELOPMENT ISSUES – COMPARISON OF RENTERS AND HOMEOWNERS

**Question:** What are the most critical development issues that the city should address?

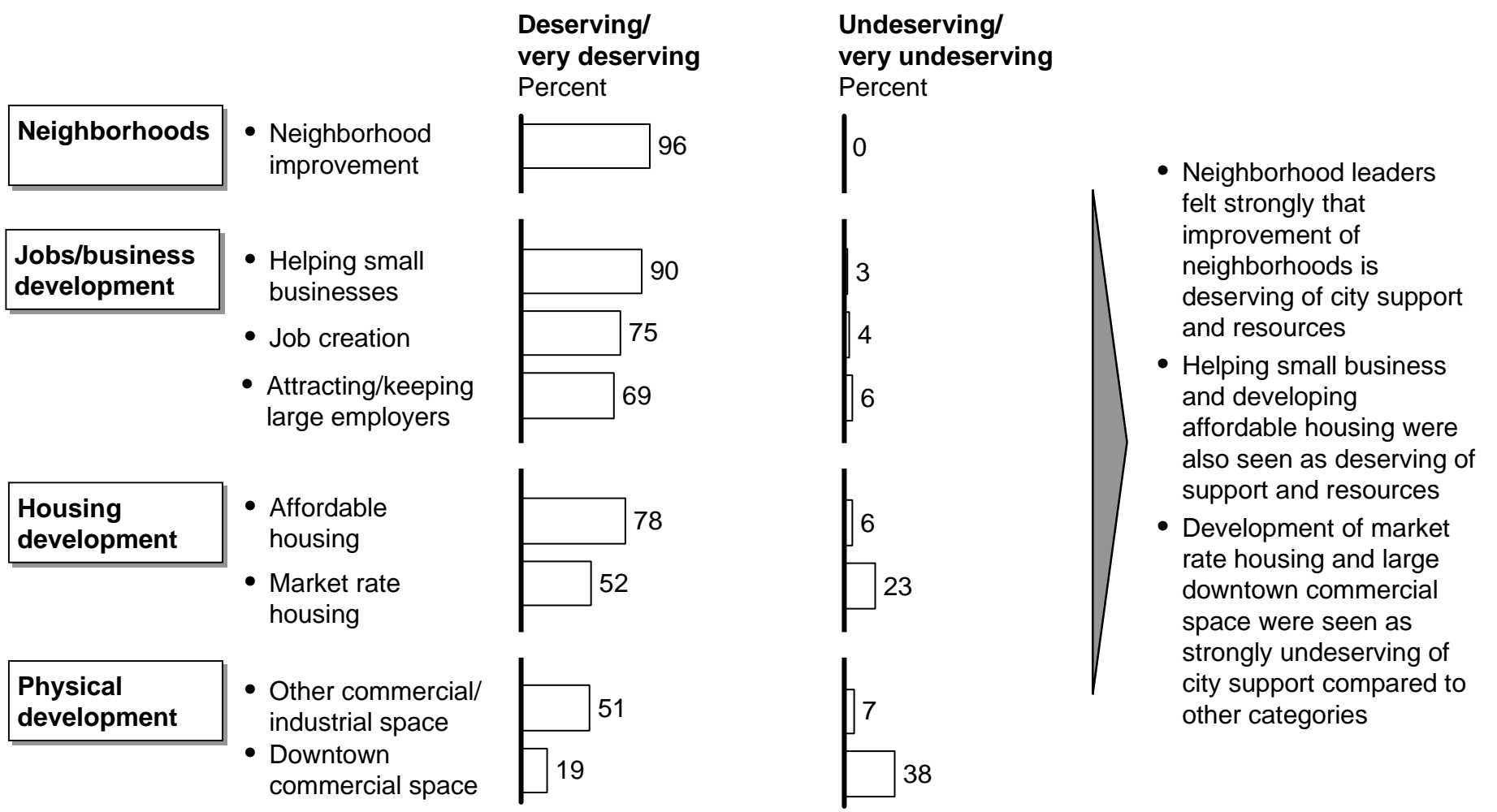


Note: Survey respondents could check up to 3 priorities; order of priorities taken from overall results  
Source: Internet survey

# DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES DESERVING CITY SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

**Question:** In your opinion, what types of development activity are deserving of City of Minneapolis support and public resources?

*NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERS*



Note: Percentages shown are of respondents answering the question for each category. A “neutral” response to each question was also allowed

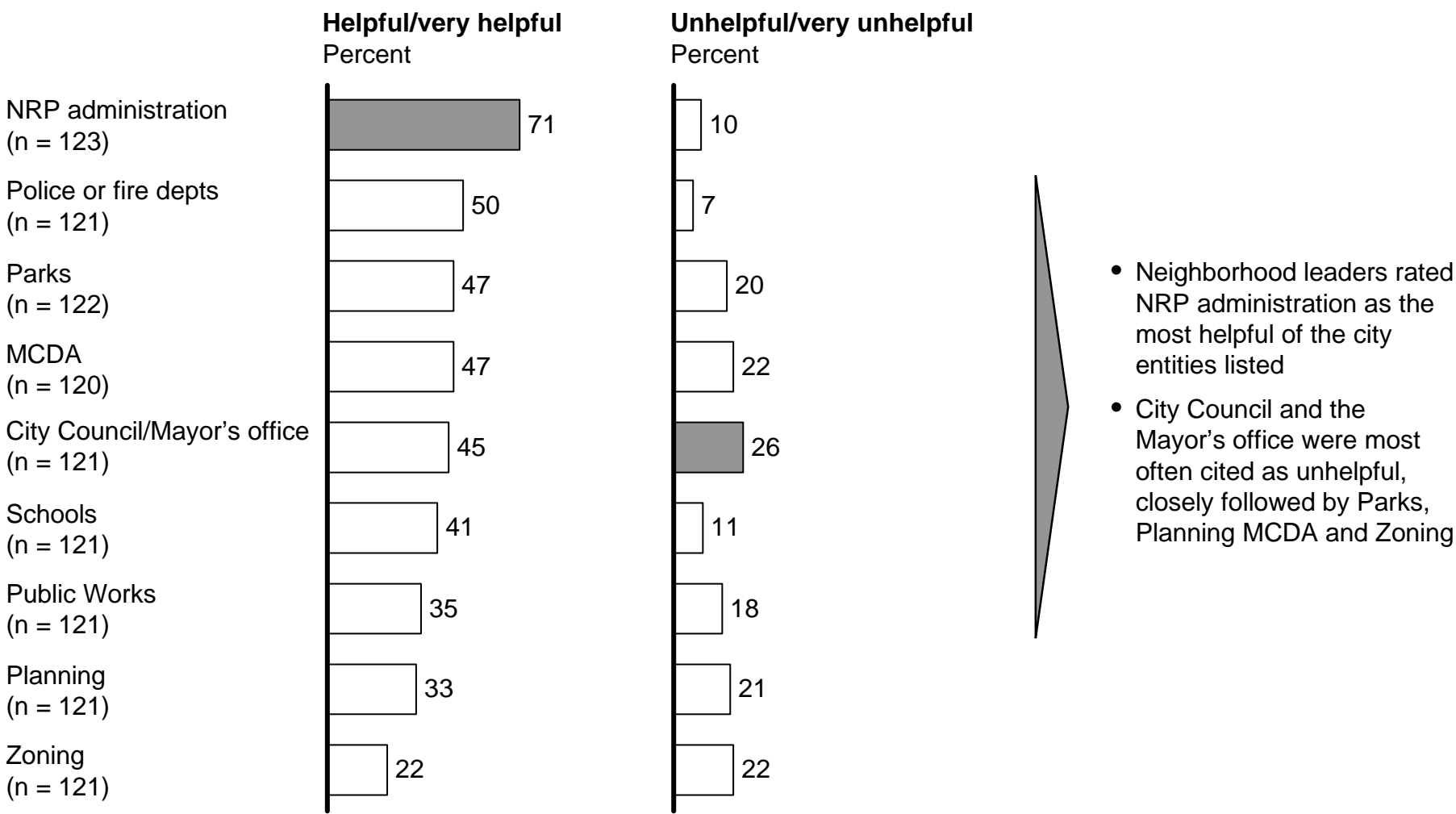
Source: Internet survey



# NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERS PERCEPTIONS OF CITY ENTITIES

**Question:** How helpful have the following city agencies been in development and implementing your neighborhood plans?

*NEIGHBORHOOD  
LEADERS*

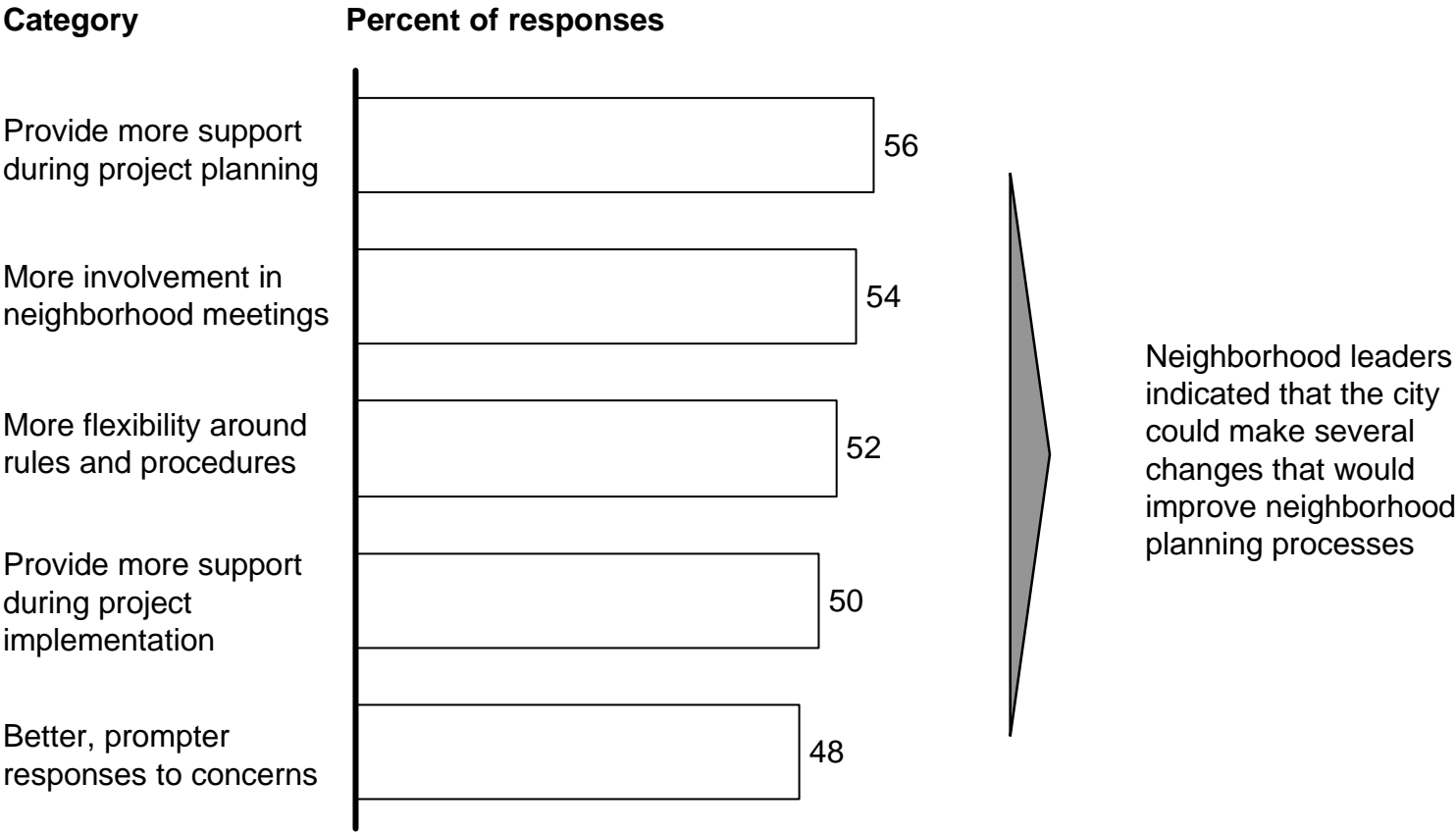


Note: Percentages shown are of respondents answering the question for each category. A “neutral” response to each question was also allowed

Source: Internet survey

# PREFERENCES FOR IMPROVING NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING PROCESS

**Question:** How could these agencies make the neighborhood planning process easier or more efficient?



Note: Respondents could check as many answers as they wished; ranking is based on total number of responses  
Source: Internet survey

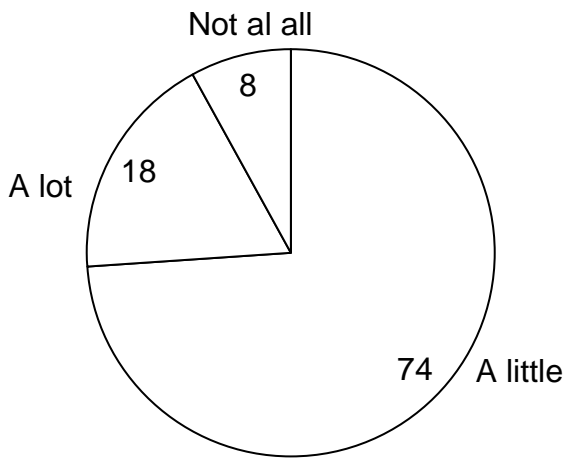
PERCEPTIONS OF THE CITY AS A PARTNER AND ABILITY TO INFLUENCE CITY DECISIONS ABOUT NEIGHBORHOODS

NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERS

Percent

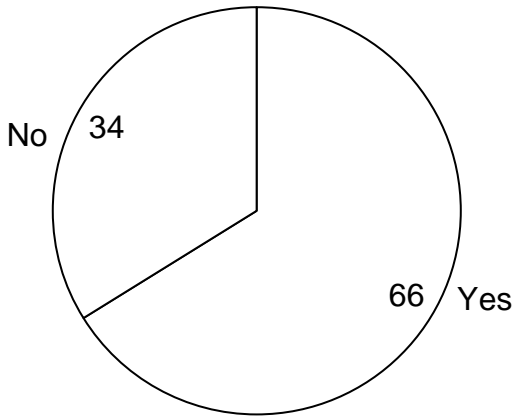
**Question:** In your opinion, how much can you influence City of Minneapolis decisions that effect your neighborhood?

100% = 123



**Question:** Do you consider the City of Minneapolis a helpful partner to your neighborhood group?

100% = 123



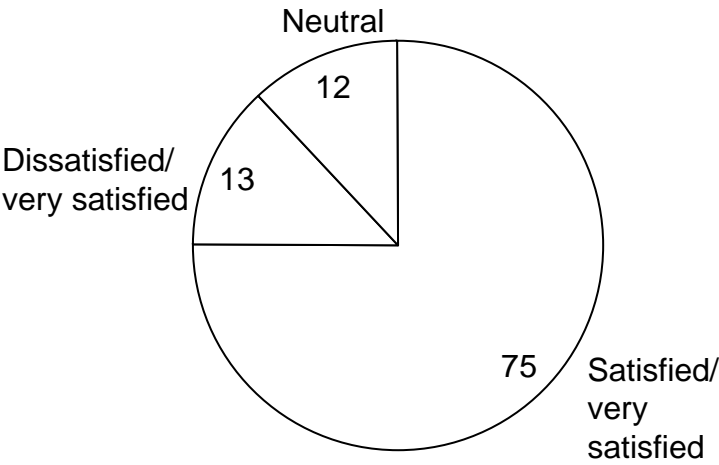
- Most respondents consider the city to be a helpful partner to their neighborhood group
- Nearly all respondents believe then can influence city decisions affecting their neighborhoods

# LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT IN NRP PLANNING PROCESS AND SATISFACTION WITH NRP PROGRAM AND IMPACT

Percent

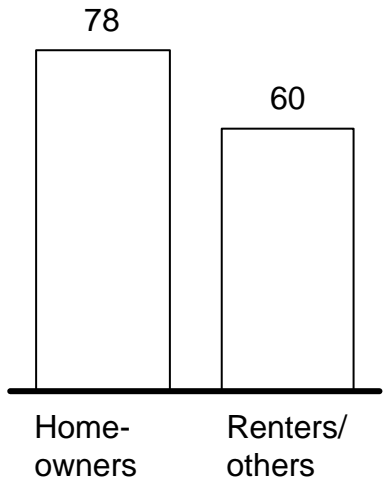
**Question:** How satisfied are you with the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) and its impact on your community?

100% = 122



**Number of neighborhood leaders reporting they are satisfied/very satisfied with NRP**

Homeowners vs. renters/others



- 75% of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with NRP and its impact
- Homeowners tend to be more satisfied with NRP than renters/others

# SUGGESTIONS ON IMPROVING CITY/NEIGHBORHOOD RELATIONSHIPS

**Question:** If you could change anything about how the city works with neighborhoods, what would it be?

*NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERS*

**Illustrative survey respondent comments**

**Improve communication**

- “Easier, more direct communication with departments, for clarification of issues that can then be communicated to neighborhoods. I would like to see a dedicated person in each department who would significantly assist neighborhood organizations in answering questions relating to neighborhood projects and planning, as well as questions raised by residents.”
- “City Council members should show up (or at least send an aide) to all neighborhood board meetings -- and should be an advocate for those boards' decisions.”
- “Please consider having more important informational, planning and decision making meetings in the evenings.”
- “It would also be helpful to develop some educational materials that help inform neighborhood groups and individual residents about what services are available at the city. Garbage pick-up is made very clear, but who the heck knows what the Public Works department does?”

**Increase support for neighborhood**

- “Lend professional staff to assist neighborhoods with planning.”
- “It is imperative that the city provide support (i.e., dollars) to neighborhood groups for the sole purpose of bringing low-income and people of color into the neighborhood systems. There are numerous neighborhoods currently that are majority people of color, but governed by an overwhelmingly white neighborhood board. Unless more people of color are included in the process, this obvious tension will build and continue to build until the only outlet is organized protest.”

**Change city organization**

- “We need better coordination between the various city departments. Oftentimes it feels like separate departments are actually working at odds with each other -- or at the very least doubling their efforts.”
- “I support the integration of the NRP/MCDA/Planning Dept. The issue is -- does the city have the will to do this?”
- “The way [city] officials are elected.”
- “The weak mayor, strong city council structure.”
- “You need to call one department for business license non-compliance, one for traffic issues, park operations, and another for housing inspections. Why can't I just call one office and get the info passed on? Has technology passed over City Hall?”
- “I think there could also be better coordinating in planning capital improvement projects. There seems to be a great deal of tension between the various city departments, NRP, and MCDA. Almost like a case of sibling rivalry. None is more important than the other. They all play a crucial role in revitalizing the city. There needs to be better communication among all three (Planning Department, MCDA and NRP).”
- “I would pull the Library and Park Boards into step with the broader city goals. They are a pain in the butt to work with from a neighborhood viewpoint. It's tough to get things accomplished amicably.”

# SUGGESTIONS ON IMPROVING CITY/NEIGHBORHOOD RELATIONSHIPS

(CONTINUED)

NEIGHBORHOOD  
LEADERS

**Question:** If you could change anything about how the city works with neighborhoods, what would it be?

## Illustrative survey respondents' comments

Work together  
more closely

- “I would like to see both parties have clear and articulated expectations of each other. I would like to see a cohesive, easily understandable approach in which the city states its priorities clearly and the neighborhood states its goals clearly and then have a clear decision-making process in which both groups work to reach a compromise - even some sort of worksheet would be fun.”
- “City Council members should refer all development, variance and zoning proposals to the neighborhood boards for their approval, before any city action is scheduled.”

Focus on housing

- “Housing inspectors need to be increased and standards set for housing. They need to be able to follow through on housing needing upgrading. They are too few and too over worked.”
- “Don't talk affordable housing if [it means] placing families in already questionable run-down housing who can barely afford to make payments and have no skills or interests in exterior maintenance. NRP and MCDA could work cooperatively on certain key areas of the city and then move to another, etc.”
- “Too much of a focus on ‘affordable housing’. The city should not feel obligated to provide housing to every person regardless of their life choices. I would like to restrict this crisis in providing housing to low income people who are legitimately in need. Otherwise, we are using up our resources on people who have no plan to contribute to the future...they are just a drain on our resources.”
- “Discard the quarter-mile spacing requirement for ‘supportive’ housing ... - more focus on public good (functional utility, placement in relation to transportation and needed services, highest and best use of standing buildings) less on narrowly defined and highly subjective neighborhood resistance.”

Develop the  
city's economy

- “Zoning and licensing advocates should be assigned to small businesses to help shepherd them through the process. New businesses should not have to hire an attorney to get their site plan approved or to get a beer and wine license or a parking variance. The process is way too complicated and political, and the staff and Planning Commission is very mean spirited. Minneapolis should be a friendlier place to do business in.”
- “It is important to remember that the downtown is the economic engine of the city. We must not neglect it.”

Note: Quotes illustrative of the main themes discussed by respondents are presented here; many quotes were omitted for brevity.  
Some quotes were edited for grammar and length  
Source: Internet survey

# SUGGESTIONS ON IMPROVING CITY/NEIGHBORHOOD RELATIONSHIPS

(CONTINUED)

NEIGHBORHOOD  
LEADERS

**Question:** If you could change anything about how the city works with neighborhoods, what would it be?

## Illustrative survey respondents' comments

Change/  
improve NRP

- “The city dictates to the neighborhoods. Take NRP funds, for example. The city took part of these funds to do what they thought was best. In this case I am talking about the four million dollars they recently decided to use for affordable housing. I thought the neighborhoods were to have all these funds.”
- “Let the neighborhoods make the decision of how to spend their tax money. Not City Council where it only goes to the most needy areas. Let the neighborhoods decide what to do with their money.”
- “Continue to empower neighborhood input and impact for change through the NRP. Do not let the NRP go by the wayside with inadequate funding. “
- “At times it has been frustrating, because individual city departments (i.e., Parks and Recreation, Public Works) have used NRP funds to pad their budgets. Neighborhood should not be expected to bear the entire costs of new park buildings, playgrounds, etc...with NRP funds. There should be a greater willingness on the part of city departments to match NRP funds with the city's capital improvement funds.”
- “There are too many neighborhood groups competing for attention. The number of recognized citizen organizations supported with NRP money should be reduced to no more than 3 per ward, accomplished by merging existing groups.”
- “Be sure that you are actually hearing from the people who live in the neighborhoods. In areas that there are high percentages of renters an effort must be made to hear from that sector of the community. Many times, they are a major sector of the community that goes unheard. There are many times language, culture and others factors which dictate specific effort must be made to hear from these sectors of our community.”
- "Flexibility with rules to allow and promote regular citizens building their neighborhoods together. For example, we were not allowed to gather neighborhood volunteers to erect a new playground. The requirement to use city (Park) employees added greatly to the cost (so we could only do one playground not two) and, more importantly, deprived us of a chance to bring neighbors together in something constructive that would build community ties in addition to a playground.”

Note: Quotes illustrative of the main themes discussed by respondents are presented here; many quotes were omitted for brevity.  
Some quotes were edited for grammar and length  
Source: Internet survey

# OTHER NEIGHBORHOOD LEADER COMMENTS

**Question:** Do you have any other comments that would help the Mayor and City Council as they consider the city’s development priorities?

Focus on housing

Illustrative survey respondents’ comments

- “Affordable housing is your first priority. Other systemic issues of higher living wage and good jobs and tax base need to be addressed to support housing initiatives.”
- “Stop funding politically connected non-profit developers who build apartments at \$180.00 per sq. ft. and pocket the difference. Provide safe clean streets and tax paying citizens and business will begin to return. No subsidies are needed.”
- “No more group homes in the City of Minneapolis! This city cannot support everybody. The affordable housing issue is chasing the middle class out of the city. We are struggling to keep our family-oriented neighborhoods (of which there are few decent ones left in Minneapolis) alive. This struggle directly affects the cities schools and the decisions of future families to live here if they cannot afford private schooling.”
- “Stop placing ‘affordable housing’ at the top of every agenda; recognize that some neighborhoods need a better balance. Some neighborhoods, dominated by rental housing, need affordable home ownership opportunities. Some neighborhoods are unfairly saturated with ‘supportive’ housing and social service agencies, yet city officials refuse to publicly recognize the instability this creates, while privately steering developers of attractive, market-rate projects away from these neighborhoods.”
- “Emphasize pedestrian-friendly, eyes-on-the-street 24/7, mixed-use projects instead of strip-mall or institutional-type housing developments.”
- “Areas of the city near transit corridors should be permitted to have special zoning to make it possible to add carriage houses and accessory housing units in basements and in attics. This is a great way to promote ‘low rise, higher density’ which can help our commercial areas, schools and transit to thrive.”
- “I would love to see some vision from the Mayor's office about what a healthy community/city looks like in terms of housing: rental vs. owner, what is the mix of incomes we should strive for, etc. Then that can help inform how the city spends money on housing: what goes to market rate housing (if any) and what goes to affordable.”
- “The city should consider prioritizing, if not requiring, that funds spent on affordable housing be on permanently-affordable units.”
- “Build and maintain a diverse and growing economic base as the first priority. Social problems are easier to handle when families and individuals enjoy prosperity.”
- “ Work with the county and others on jobs and other strategies for addressing the needs of African American men, youth and other significantly economically deprived groups. We can’t be a strong city when so many are unemployed.”
- “I personally believe affordable housing and housing related issues can be best addressed by bringing jobs into the neighborhoods. Development priorities should be focused on providing the physical infrastructure (Zoning, Public Works and safety, etc.) and coordinated services (Planning, Inspections, Licensing, etc.) for businesses to start, grow and become invested in the neighborhoods in which they reside.”

Develop the city’s economy

Note: Quotes illustrative of the main themes discussed by respondents are presented here; many quotes were omitted for brevity. Some quotes were edited for grammar and length

Source: Internet survey



# OTHER NEIGHBORHOOD LEADER COMMENTS (CONTINUED)

**Question:** Do you have any other comments that would help the Mayor and City Council as they consider the city’s development priorities?

## Illustrative survey respondents’ comments

Develop the city’s  
economy  
continued

- “Streamline bureaucratic maze for small businesses.”
- “Please do not subsidize large corporations who give minimum wage jobs back to the community and city.”
- “The need to maintain a viable downtown needs to be balanced with the need to maintain livable neighborhoods. The city will not thrive in an downtown versus neighborhood atmosphere. NRP has provided neighborhoods with a chance to improve their livability in a manner that respects the unique character of each neighborhood.”

Improve  
education

- “Over the last decade of downtown development, the city council has been justifying it with a mantra of “jobs, jobs, jobs.” But, how many of the jobs that have been created are actually held by Minneapolis residents and pay a livable wage? The mantra should be ‘education, education, education’ so that we can produce a workforce that can secure and maintain the higher skilled and better paying jobs. The flip side of affordable housing is a livable wage.”
- “The number one priority is to make Minneapolis school system the best in the U.S. No other part of the city has such a great affect on the future viability of the city. Families with children make up the future of the city. Now its time to take the \$12,000/student and make the public schools so attractive that people want to move back to the city. If you don't do that the city will just become a stepping stone for people to succeed and leave -- a transitory place. Not good enough to live in. Just good enough to take from.”
- “ When our city's school standards are equal to those in the suburbs, sprawl will become far less of an issue for our state. Transportation will then become more effectively able to serve a greater number of residents, Minneapolis housing will continue to grow, and we'll have a greater tax base to address some of our more serious social and housing issues.”

Continue NRP

- “Please preserve the neighborhood control of planning and resource allocation that has been established through NRP. Also recognize the value of the community and neighborhood building that has been an outcome of the NRP process and continue to prioritize that function regardless of what changes occur with the MCDA, NRP and planning departments.”
- “Please continue funding the NRP program. Thanks to the NRP program, our neighborhood has pulled together over the years to address concerns of all. With the use of NRP funds we have come up with win/win/win solutions for our neighborhood, community school and neighborhood park.”
- “Please provide NRP funding to allow the neighborhoods to continue housing fix-up programs. The housing in our neighborhoods is aging and some of the repairs are extremely expensive. Many homeowners need help, and the neighborhoods can deliver that help in a very efficient yet personalized way.”

# OTHER NEIGHBORHOOD LEADER COMMENTS (CONTINUED)

**Question:** Do you have any other comments that would help the Mayor and City Council as they consider the city’s development priorities?

## Illustrative survey respondents’ comments

Support diversity

- “Embrace the changing demographics in the neighborhoods encircling the Central Business District by encouraging civic engagement by diverse ethnic communities.”
- Work on developing small little mini-malls in the empowerment zones where Hmong, Somali, African-American, Hispanic, American Indian entrepreneurs can locate space quickly to start a small shop. The Mercado Central on Lake and Bloomington is an excellent example. There a lots of immigrant and minority entrepreneurs dying to start a small business but the horrors of zoning and finding a space are too great.”

Focus on public safety

- “I hope that the city government will continue the more recent and successful efforts of reducing crime, through such approaches as police involvement at a community level.”
- “The North Side of Minneapolis has been blighted for years with run down, boarded up buildings, drug traffic and prostitution which have created real concerns for most of Penn, 26th Avenue, Broadway and Lowry Avenues. Since most of the other neighborhoods in Minneapolis have been cleaned up it's time for the city government to use some of it's money and people power to clean up the Northside, too.”

Other comments

- “Make sure that arts are recognized as an economic force. Look at what the arts community has done for Northeast Minneapolis. The economic upswing in Northeast is a result of the strong arts community making it a safe place. How is Minneapolis going to help the artists stay there and ride this wave of gentrification?”
- “More cooperation with Metro Transit on public transportation issues is needed. Traffic demand management plans should be part of every development project, rather than unreasonably high requirements for parking spaces.”

- Residents results
- Neighborhood leaders results

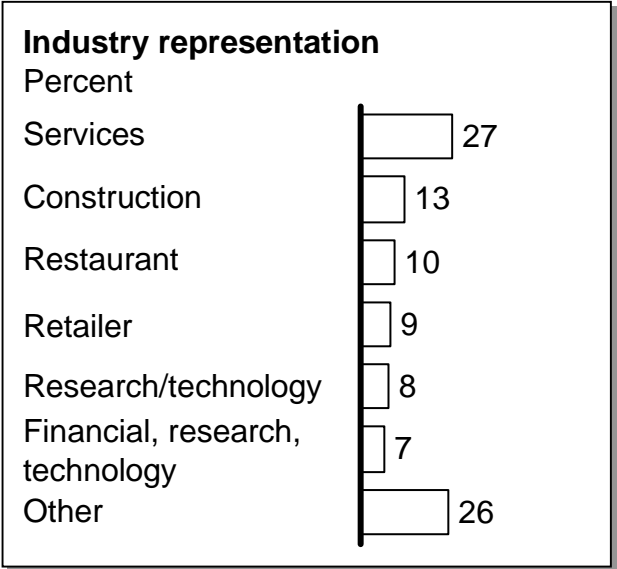
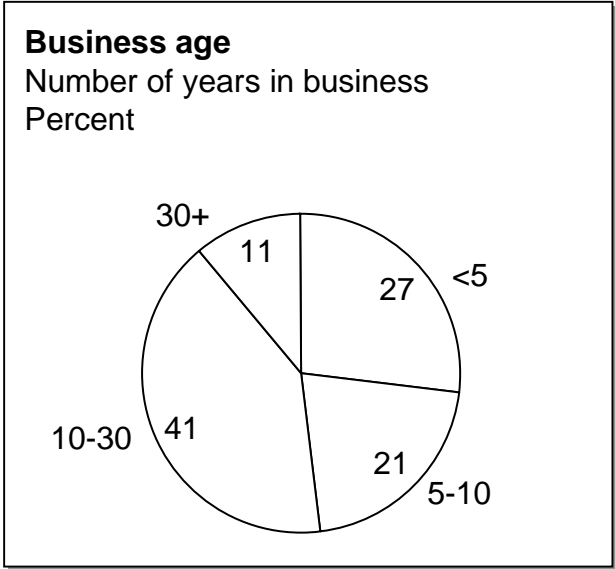
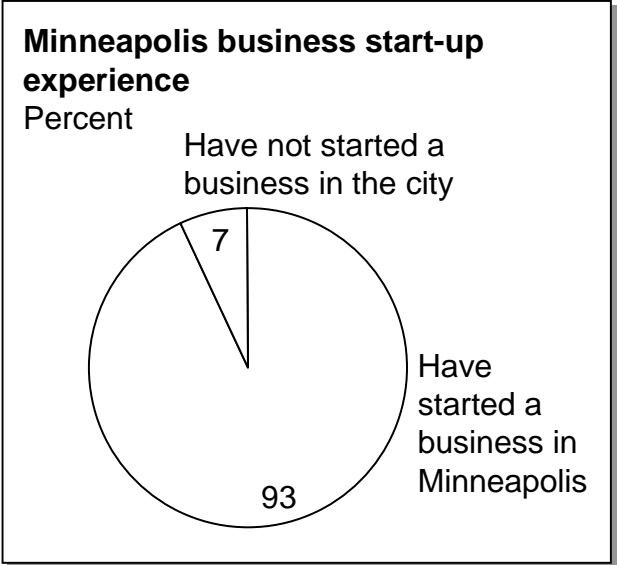
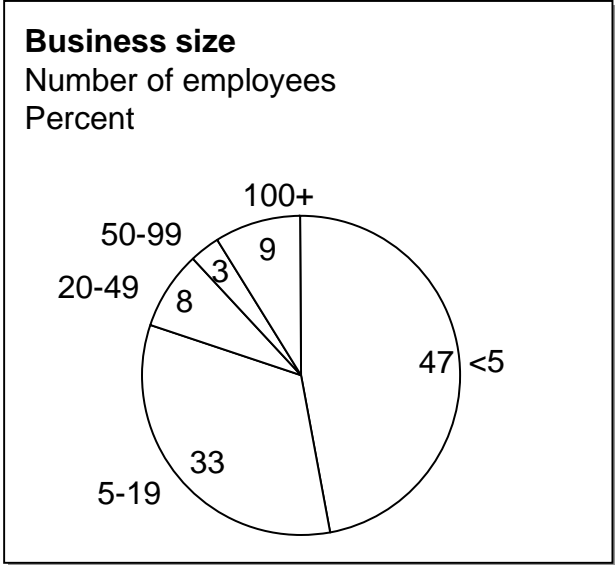


- **Business owners results**

- A diverse set of business owners responded to the survey – including owners of businesses of varying size and age from a diverse set of industries
- Businesses surveyed selected their locations predominantly because of access to customers, cost or availability of office space, and proximity to home
- Once selecting Minneapolis, businesses find that it is hard to start up in the city, particularly in comparison to other areas. For many new businesses, starting up is time-consuming and requires a great deal of interaction with the city
- Few business owners think the city is helpful to businesses, with city regulations and taxes frequently cited as the most negative part of doing business in Minneapolis
- Respondents feel the city should help businesses to navigate city regulations, and had many other ideas on how the business climate in Minneapolis could be improved

# BUSINESS OWNERS – SURVEY RESPONDENTS

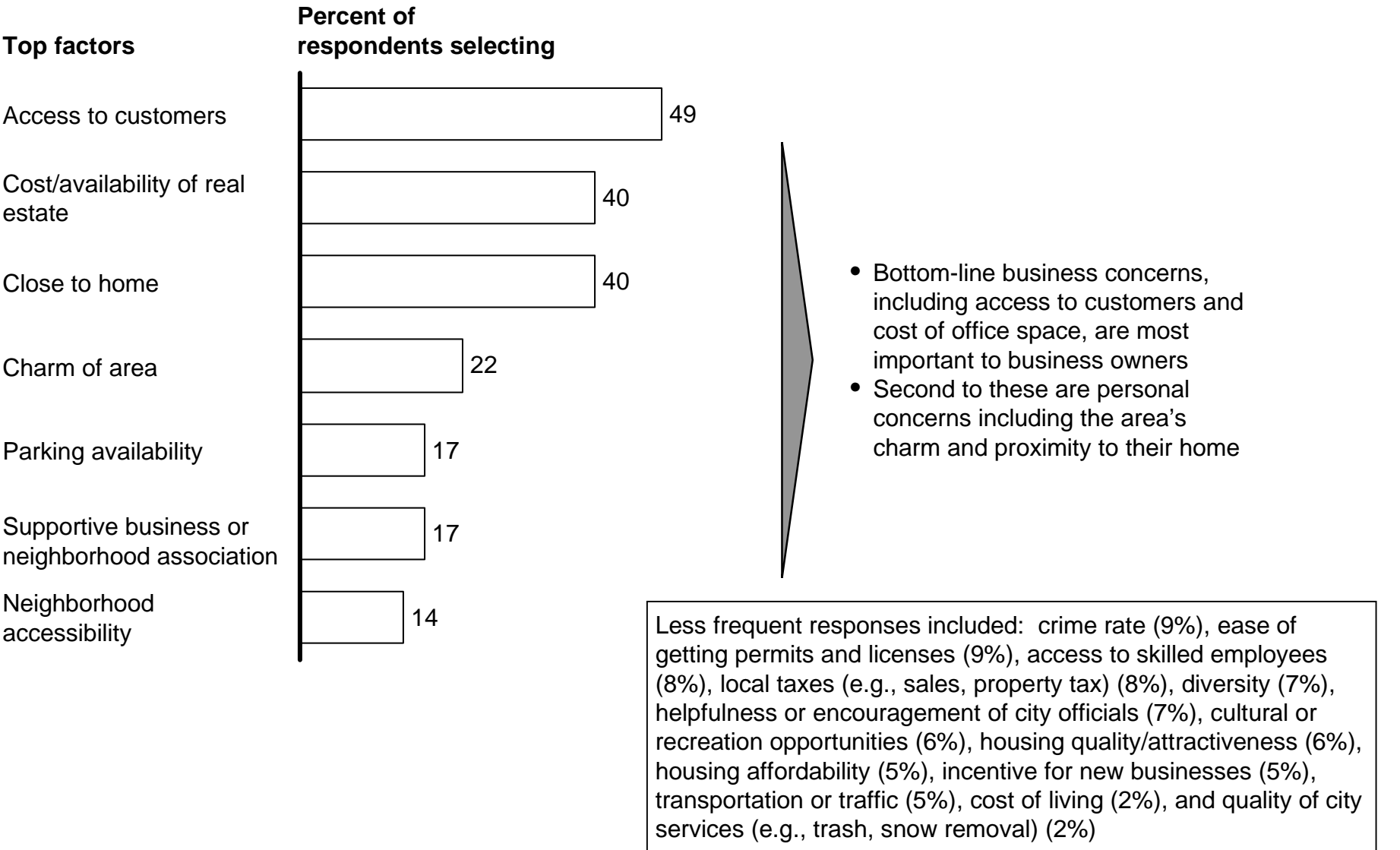
Total number of respondents: 88



FACTORS AFFECTING BUSINESS LOCATION

BUSINESS OWNERS

Questions: “What factors were most important to you when deciding to locate your business?”



Note: Respondents could select up to three responses. Percentage of respondents selecting each choice is presented

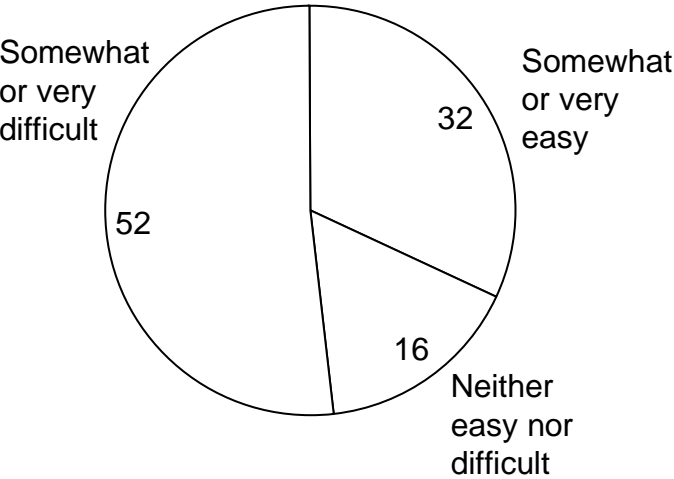
Source: Internet survey

# EASE OF STARTING A BUSINESS IN MINNEAPOLIS

Percent

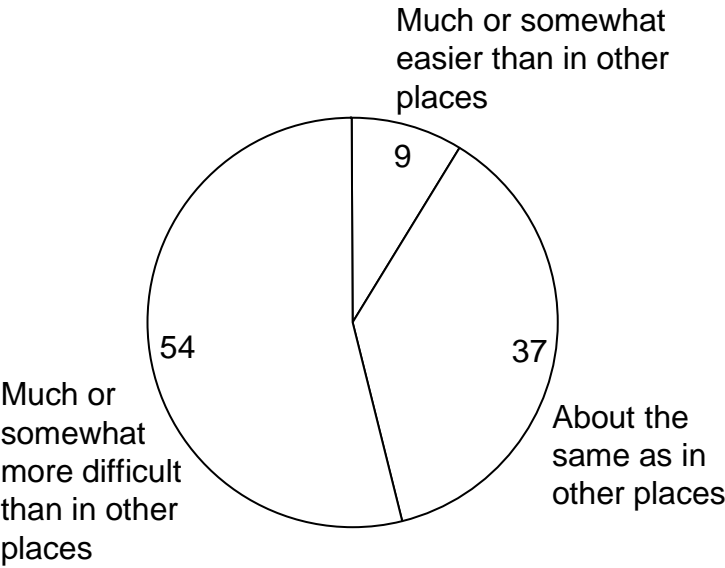
**Question:** In your opinion, how easy is it to start a business in Minneapolis?

100% = 83



**Question:** In your opinion, is starting a business in Minneapolis more or less difficult than in other places?

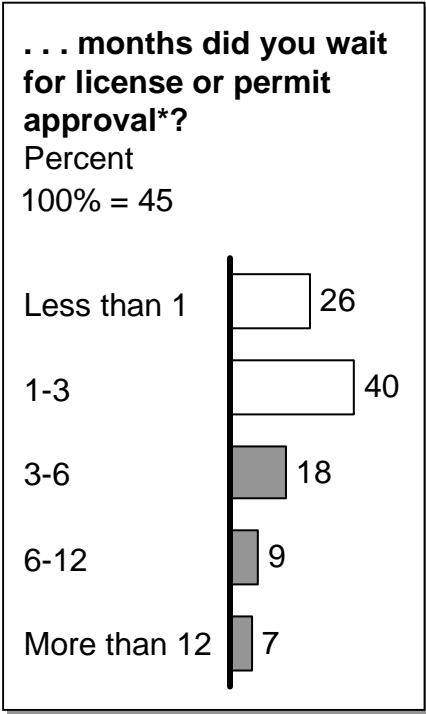
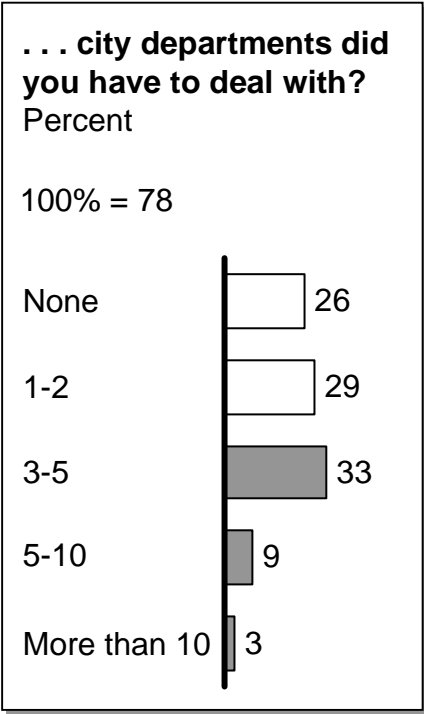
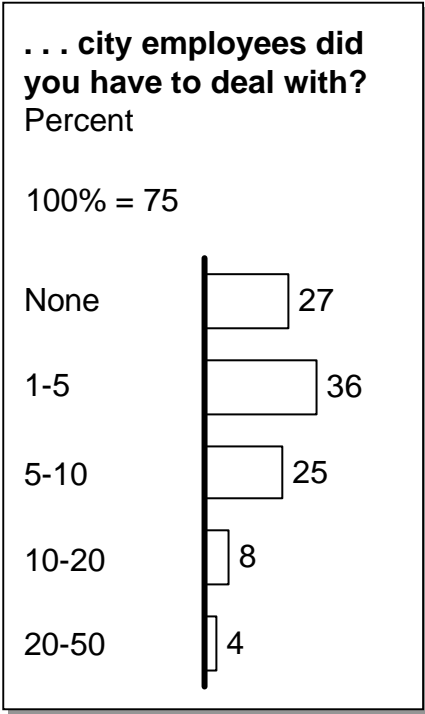
100% = 46



Businesses find it difficult to start up in Minneapolis, particularly in comparison to other places

# DEALING WITH CITY PROCESSES

**Questions:** When you first started your business in Minneapolis, how many . . .



- Nearly half of the respondents had to deal with 3 or more departments to get their businesses started
- Over one-third of businesses needing permits and licenses spent over 3 months waiting for approval

\* Of businesses requiring permits or licenses

Note: Samples only include those business owners who reported direct involvement in starting a business in Minneapolis and exclude "Don't know" responses

Source: Internet survey



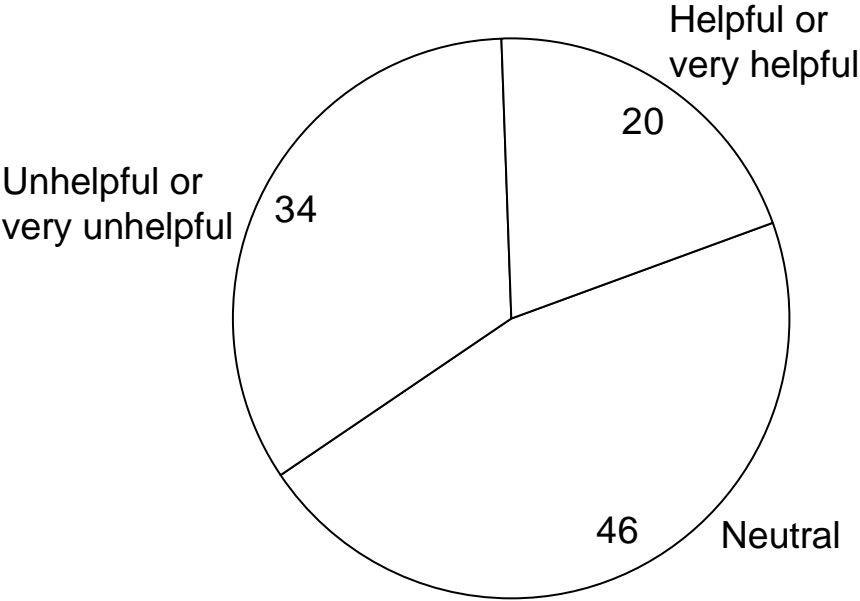
# HELPFULNESS OF THE CITY TO BUSINESSES

BUSINESS OWNERS

**Question:** “Overall, how helpful is the city in helping businesses start up and operate in the city?”

Percent

100% = 79

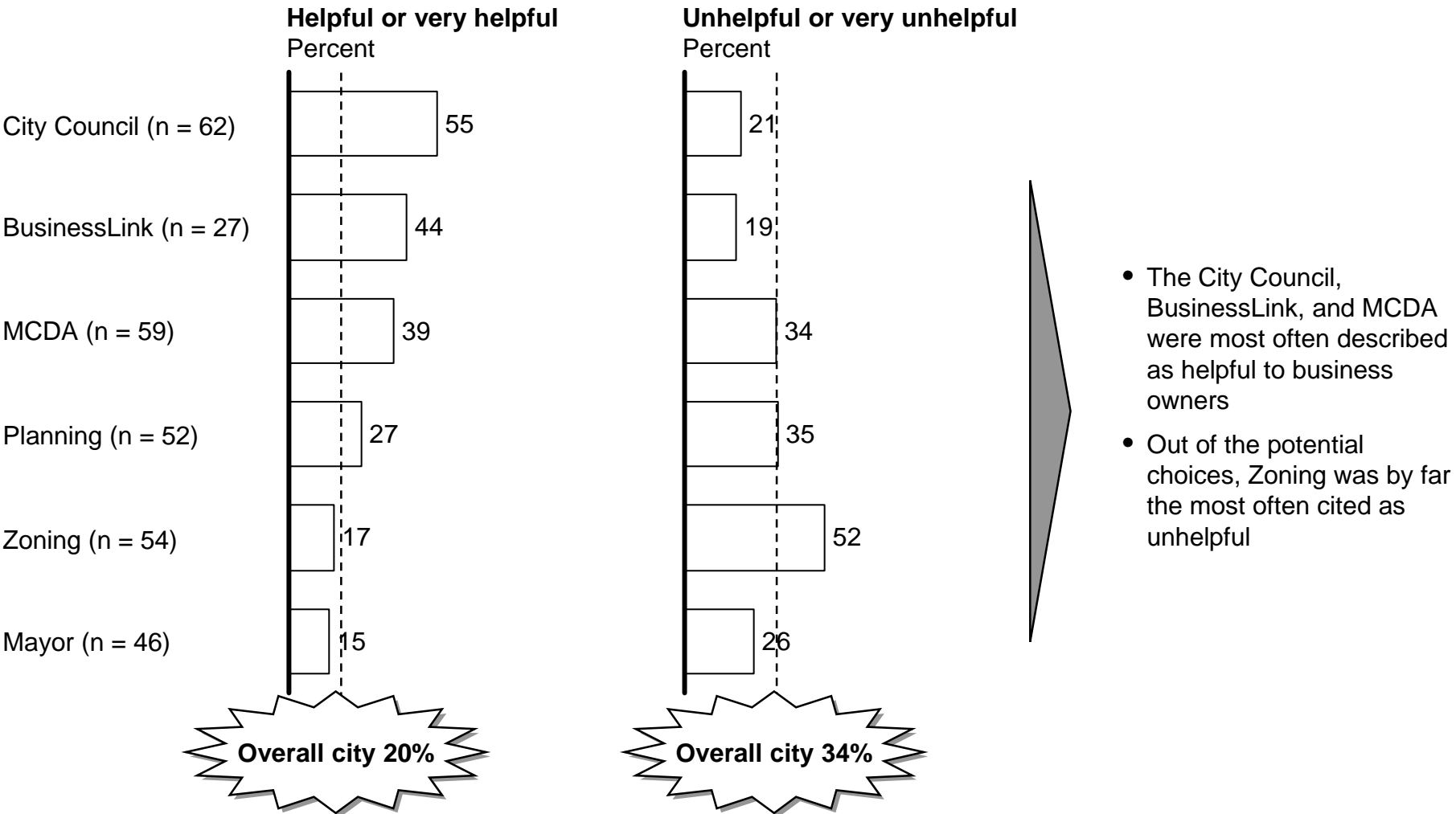


Only 20% of business owners think the city is helpful to businesses starting and operating in the city

# HELPFULNESS OF SPECIFIC CITY AGENCIES AND DEPARTMENTS

**Question:** “Specifically, how helpful are each of the following agencies in helping businesses start up and operate in the city?”

BUSINESS OWNERS



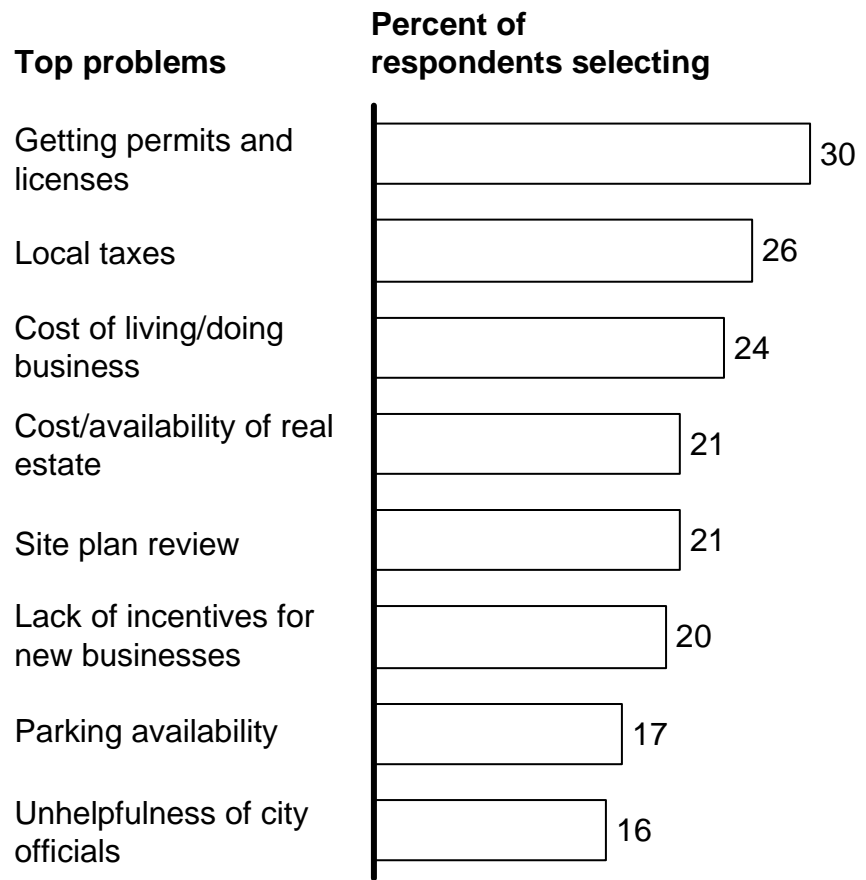
Note: Percentage shown are of respondents answering the question for each category. A “neutral” response to each question was also allowed

Source: Internet survey

# PROBLEMS WITH BUSINESS CLIMATE

BUSINESS OWNERS

**Question:** “What are the biggest negative aspects of doing business in Minneapolis?”



City taxes and regulatory issues top the list of complaints about doing business in Minneapolis

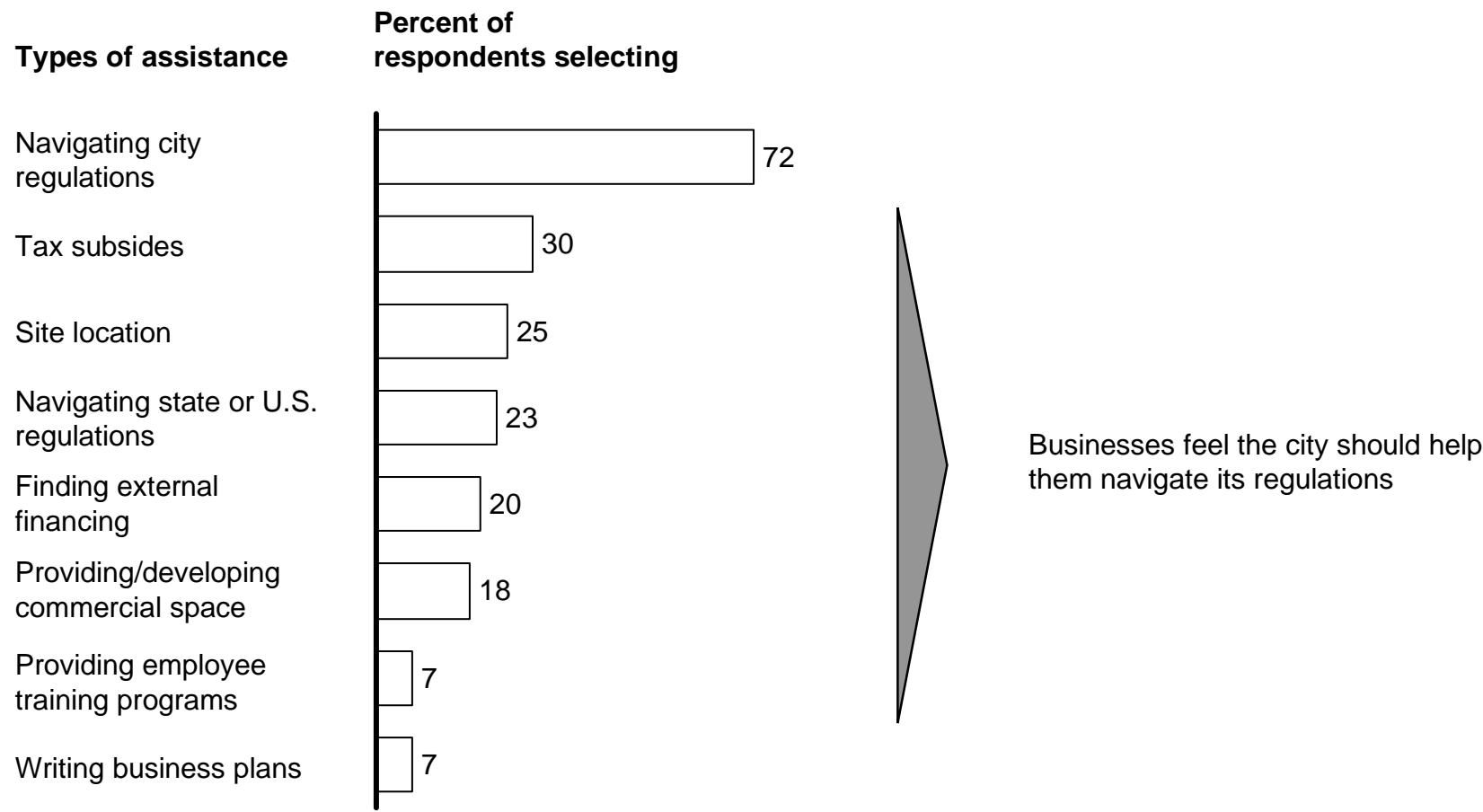
Other responses included: crime rate (15%), financing difficult to find (14%), transportation or traffic issues (13%), talent difficult to find (6%), housing costs (6%), insufficient customer base (5%), and neighborhood accessibility (e.g., foot traffic, on bus lines) (2%)

Note: Respondents could select up to three responses. Percentage of respondents selecting each choice is presented  
Source: Internet survey

# VIEWS ON BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

BUSINESS OWNERS

**Question:** “What kinds of assistance do you believe are most appropriate for the city (as opposed to service organizations on private businesses) to offer businesses?”



Note: Respondents could select up to three responses. Percentage of respondents selecting each choice is presented  
Source: Internet survey

# SUGGESTIONS ON IMPROVING BUSINESS CLIMATE

**Question:** List up to three specific things would you change to make Minneapolis a better place to do business. Specifically, what could the city do to make your business more successful?

## Illustrative survey respondent's comments

### Ease regulations

- “Business owners should be able to improve their business spaces as they can afford to. For example, if they need to upgrade a bathroom so it's handicap accessible, they should be allowed to make that change without having to bring everything else up to code at the same time. If making one positive change in my business establishment opens up the rest of the property to scrutiny, then I can't afford to make the first change until I can afford to renovate the whole place.”
- “Zoning office should enforce the spirit of the requirements as opposed to the letter of the law. The city needs more consistency in rules and regulations.”
- “I would change the licensing requirements and fees. Make the fees less to start then go up as the business grows. Be more user friendly in the rules & regulations.”
- “Be creative in commercial site plan rules to help a business begin or continue; never force an existing business to beg for variances simply to continue doing business.”

### Streamline processes

- “Coordinate the various licensing, zoning, and review processes by assigning one or two staff who can assist a business in navigating the whole system. It is very disjointed now, and difficult to find out what all the requirements are. Just when you think you have met all the requirements, you find out there are many more hoops to jump through.”
- “Business owners have to sift through layers of groups to approve a new business. This discourages businesses from looking in Minneapolis for sites. Long range development planning, to include zoning, would benefit businesses with design and development issues. Streamlining the MCDA process to make it easier for business owners to use the tools of the MCDA would help reduce the barriers and red tape.”
- “One stop shopping where you not only can get answers, but also more important, where decisions are made, would be extremely helpful.”

### Improve business climate

- “Lower state and local taxes, including property tax, income tax and worker's comp. Encourage diverse types of business, especially those not well represented now such as biotech, computer hardware, and light manufacturing. To make my business more successful, all you need to do is make the general climate for business better.”
- “Move from a regulatory compliance mindset and how to get the most money from existing businesses to a more cooperative and productive climate of economic growth: win/win rather than how much money can we extract from your business. Minneapolis is not a pro-business town. It should become one in order to prosper and thrive – like Austin, Texas, and Denver, Colorado.”
- “Stop blaming business or property owners for the conduct of tenants or customers. If a crime pattern is discerned at a street corner or elsewhere, create and implement a multi-departmental solution until the problem ceases.”

Note: Quotes illustrative of the main themes discussed by respondents are presented here; many quotes were omitted for brevity. Some quotes were edited for grammar and length

Source: Internet survey

# SUGGESTIONS ON IMPROVING BUSINESS CLIMATE (CONTINUED)

**Question:** List up to three specific things would you change to make Minneapolis a better place to do business. Specifically, what could the city do to make your business more successful?

## Illustrative survey respondent's comments

**Improve business climate**  
continued

- “Review the ‘bad check’ laws, and direct them in the favor of the victim (usually small business owners), not the criminal. The cost of business percentage is raising to extreme levels because there are little consequences for fraud, forgery and NSF checks that are impossible to collect on.”
- “More cultural events that draw customers to a business district such as St. Paul’s Peanuts on Parade. This example is of special interest because it partnered with artists and businesses.”

**Assist businesses**

- “I would appreciate a small business start up program that would walk me through the basics of an employer’s responsibilities. An opportunity for a mentor relationship for the first year would also be valuable.”
- “As a new business owner, I wish I were more aware of resources available to small business owners and operators. A directory of local resources would be helpful.”
- “The city should help rather than make it more difficult for developers and neighborhood business groups to reclaim or replace blighted properties.”
- “The city needs to promote local business associations, and involve city planning staff and elected officials in these organizations.”

**Improve quality of life**

- “Keep the streets and sidewalks clean, run more buses, and prosecute shoplifters and graffiti artists.”
- “Better police/law enforcement and zoning/public safety enforcement, especially in Phillips and other South Minneapolis neighborhoods. Improve trash cleanup, ticketing people who park on the lawn and leave dead cars around.”
- “Attract more talented creative professionals and knowledge workers to Minneapolis through building bike paths and frisbee parks, rather than stadiums; encouraging more small theatres/galleries, book stores, public art/sculpture, and music/cultural venues like Open Book and Dunn Brothers.”
- “Maintain a livable city that our employees can afford to reside in.”
- “More attractive neighborhood design, including decorative lighting, banners and art to welcome people to neighborhoods. Each neighborhood needs to have inner city tourism to keep business viable. People are traveling to other areas of the city because of preconceived notions of these areas.”

# SUGGESTIONS ON IMPROVING BUSINESS CLIMATE (CONTINUED)

**Question:** List up to three specific things would you change to make Minneapolis a better place to do business. Specifically, what could the city do to make your business more successful?

## Illustrative survey respondent's comments

Improve transportation and parking

- “Validated parking or leasing of spaces for clients to use at the times I need has been incredibly difficult and expensive. Monthly parking can run half as much as my rent. Somewhere, somehow, free downtown parking is needed.”
- “Keep working to improve non-automobile transit: bike paths, bus, light rail.”
- “Affirmative planning to address transit issues; we need to decrease cars in the city but without transit which people like and trust this will be impossible. Until this happens we need more parking spaces. Create more green space. Washington Avenue downtown needs trees! Support new retail, especially basic services (groceries, etc.) to encourage people to live and shop downtown.”

Reconsider priorities

- “Greater consideration of businesses when considering redevelopment. Attention to small businesses equal to that given the giants – it is the small businesses that provide the attention and qualified accountability needed by young and at-risk employees.”
- “Stop charging excessive property taxes – and then giving my hard earned money to my competition in the form of subsidies.”
- “Improve the commercial corridors throughout the city. Support a more even-handed practice of development rather than huge amounts to one or two projects.”

Other

- “I think the number one problem in both the business and neighborhood developments is the cost of property, both commercial and housing. I think the city needs to assist small businesses to balance out larger firms in developing areas but keeping the cost of rent down, through tax incentives, or reduced prices.”
- “As a home-based desktop publisher and freelance writer, I would appreciate a central location to visit to locate opportunities to work for the City of Minneapolis as an independent contractor.”
- “Continue the effort to help us interact with the city on the Web, saving us the time of going "down there." ”
- “Quicker turn around time when purchasing building permits by fax. Quicker turn around time for payment when contracting with the city.”

# OTHER BUSINESS OWNER COMMENTS (CONTINUED)

**Question:** Do you have any other comments that would help the Mayor and City Council as they consider the city’s development priorities?

## Illustrative survey respondent’s comments

**Focus on small business development**

- “It is not clear at all what the city’s real priorities are from an economic development point of view. The city should be more progressive and realize that the best social service program is a good paying job. Too often the city leaders think business and wealth creation is bad. In fact, it is the key to economic independence for citizens and constituents.”
- “Balance neighborhood commercial corridor development with continued emphasis on strategic investments in the downtown. Accept that there will be multiple nodes/center of business attraction in Metro area. Build on proximity to University science and technology commercialization opportunities.”
- “Be considerate when using Tax Increment Financing. Don't squeeze out the local flavor to bring in the big boys.”
- “Minneapolis needs more corner stores and coops that carry good quality foods, and no more car-happy Quarry developments. Put your focus on building neighborhoods where all the essentials of life are within walking distance or easy range of a high quality public transit system, and everything else will fall into place.”
- “More creative approaches to bringing in customers is needed on a ongoing basis. Adding an art element to all business and infrastructure projects brings a positive element to the perception of consumers and increases customer traffic. It's been a long time since artists were asked to design manhole covers. The city needs more projects like this.”

**Improve permitting**

- “Minneapolis requires far more permits and has increased taxes far higher than any other city in the state, including St. Paul. I don't recommend anyone start a business in Minneapolis because of the extra costs of doing business in this city. My permit costs have doubled this year. Obviously, the city officials decided to keep personal property taxes down at the huge expense of the business community. Small businesses cannot afford to bear this burden.”
- “Once the business is established, easier, faster, more efficient License renewals would be nice. It should not take more than 5 minutes to renew a Liquor License once you have established an operating history, given that there are no other problems or changes with the Licensee. The process is too time consuming when none of the information has changed from year to year.”



# OTHER BUSINESS OWNER COMMENTS (CONTINUED)

**Question:** Do you have any other comments that would help the Mayor and City Council as they consider the city’s development priorities?

## Illustrative survey respondent’s comments

Focus on housing

- “Solving housing problems helps not only the employees, but also the business owner. This is especially true when many individuals would start businesses if they had reasonable living expenses, but can't start a business if housing costs allow for no additional cushion.”
- “Create access to affordable housing owned by a nonprofit organization to eliminate the "bottom lines" that exist with the for-profit majority. A small influential group can have a substantial impact on our lower income workers.”
- “Allow private sector and not non profits (subsidized) companies to build housing. We need to try to fix buildings rather than board them up.”
- “I think you have to expand businesses and incentives for businesses to move into the city. People need jobs close to home. I think that the city talks about housing too much. Before, there was a shortage, but now, I hear from landlords that there are 5-10% vacancies.”

Other

- “I think the amount of effort put forth in this City is second to none. NRP, the neighborhood groups, churches, non-profits, CDCs, city officials, etc. are moving mountains. The City needs to focus those efforts, help eliminate the duplication, create the vision, and harness the efforts so we all pull in the same direction.”
- “Keep up this kind of request for information. Don't wait for us to complain. And let's see the implementation required to improve the status quo.”
- “Absolutely, positively no taxpayer financing for a sports stadium. We need more folk/blues clubs and art galleries, not giant corporate baseball parks. Our downtown open spaces are under-utilized, under-promoted and way too concrete – where are the trees? Keep Minneapolis gay-friendly (it's a far more important signal of a hip, lively city than any sports stadium!)”.

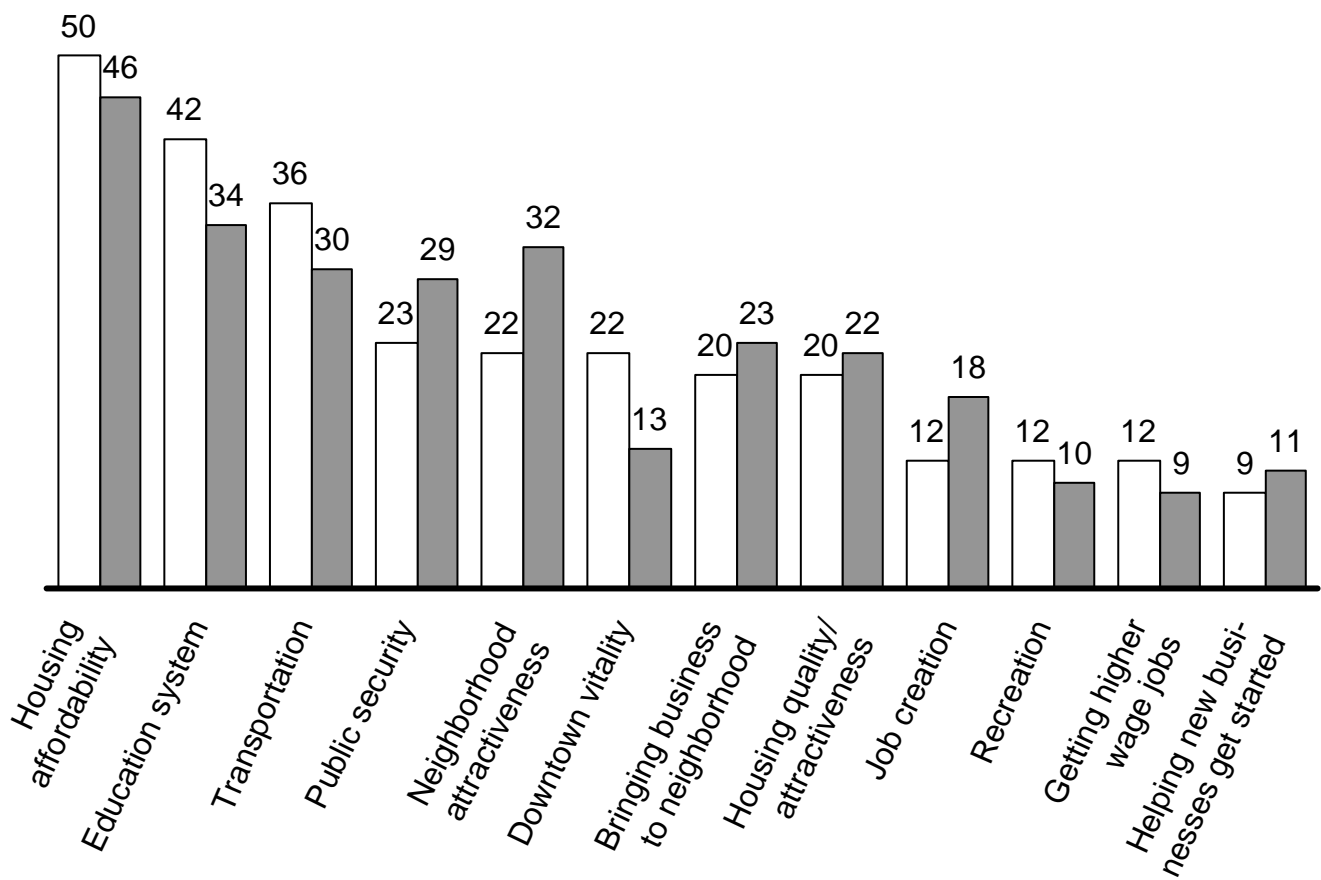
# Appendix

# COMPARISON OF DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES FOR THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

**Questions:** “Which of these development priorities should the Minneapolis Mayor and City Council focus on during their current sessions?”\*

Percent

Residents  
Neighborhood leaders



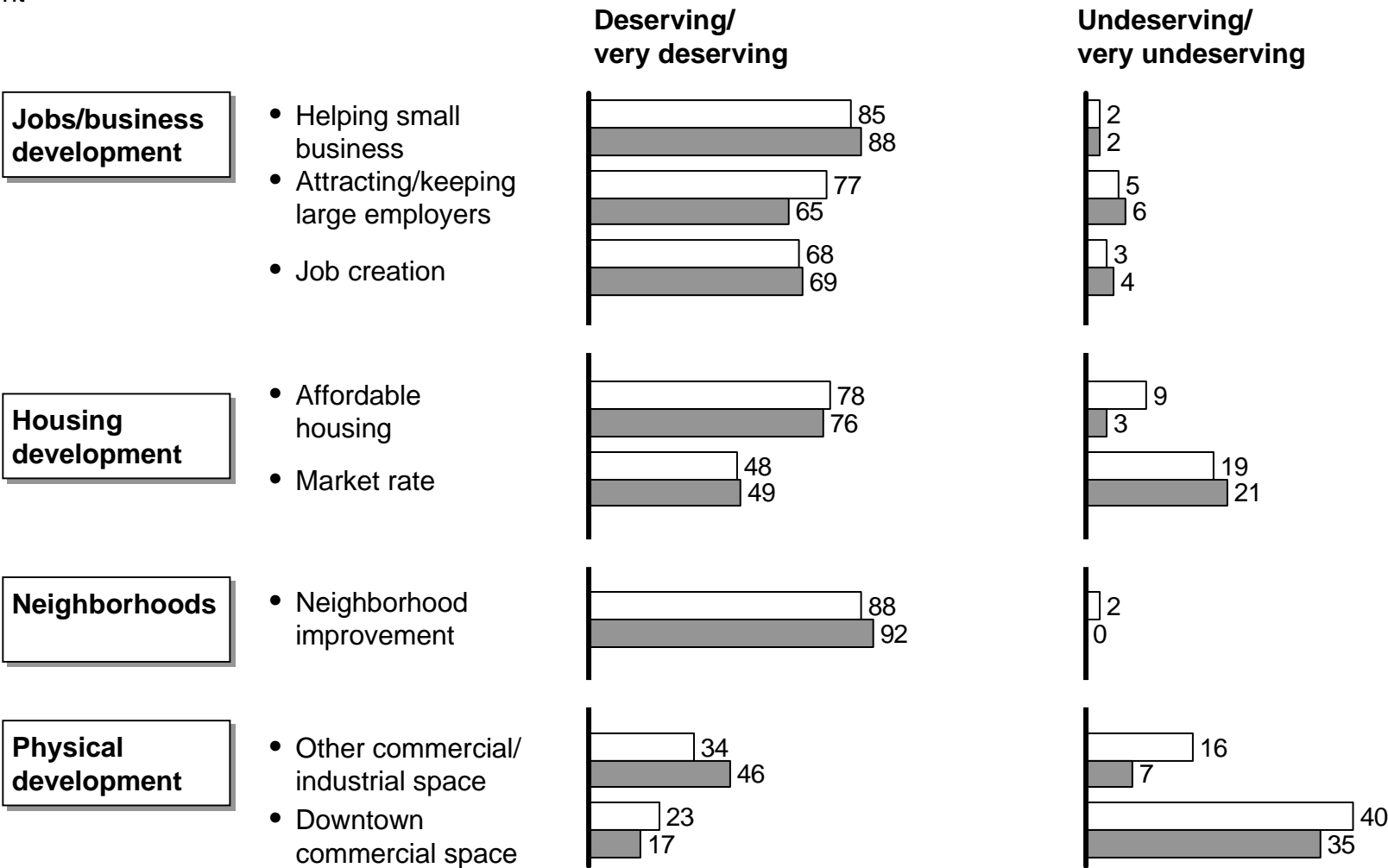
\* Respondents could select up to three responses. Percentage of respondents selecting each choice is presented  
Source: Internet survey

# COMPARISON OF DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES DESERVING OF CITY TIME AND RESOURCES

Residents  
Neighborhood leaders

**Question:** In your opinion, what types of development activity are deserving of City of Minneapolis time and limited public resources?

Percent



Note: Percentages shown are of respondents answering the question from each category. A “neutral” response to each question was also allowed

Source: Internet survey