

City of Boise
a
CityMARKS™

Executive Summary

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SUBMITTED BY:



Executive Summary

Background / Overview

Cities today are competing with one another to successfully provide the essential services each city needs for their rapidly changing communities. In order to help cities think smart and grow strategically for these changes, cities need to provide the quality of services residents expect and require, be able to deliver the quality of life to attract and retain businesses and residents, allocate city's increasingly scarce resources to support important projects, and attract and retain the human and economic resources necessary to support long-term economic growth. By providing and knowing what your community needs, residents within the community will be more satisfied with their city.

Citizen satisfaction surveys have become increasingly more common as many jurisdictions attempt to gauge citizen expectations and satisfaction with government services. They have become important tools for identifying citizen preferences, detecting citizen satisfaction, measuring government performance, and involving citizens in the administrative process.

In 2005, as part of its strategic planning effort, the City of Boise conducted its first comprehensive citizen survey. City of Boise contracted with Northwest Research Group, Inc. to gain a greater understanding of the:

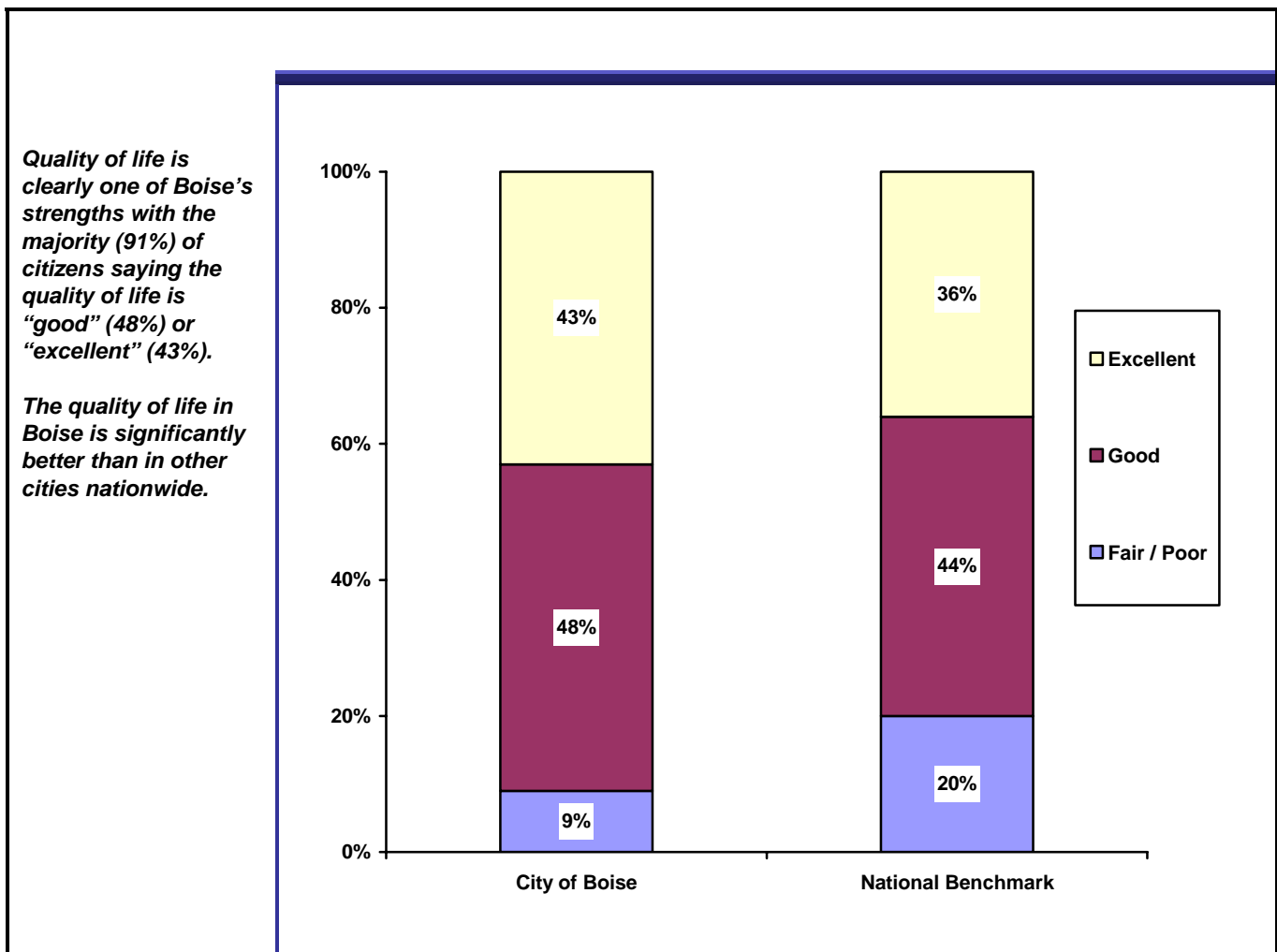
- ~ Perceptions of the quality of life in Boise,
- ~ Perceptions of the quality of city services,
- ~ Key city issues,
- ~ Code enforcement,
- ~ Personal safety,
- ~ Downtown Boise,
- ~ Budget priorities (overall priorities and specific departments),
- ~ Other key issues, and
- ~ Respondent demographics.

This study used NWRG's CityMARKS™ research program which was initiated in 2002. The CityMARKS™ benchmark survey is updated each spring based on a random sample of more than 2,000 individuals in participating cities across the United States. An approximately equal number of interviews are completed in each of the major census areas of the country, allowing for reliable analysis within each key area. Participating clients may add additional questions specific to their community and/or as use the national questions conducted every spring to enhance the usefulness of the research to meet the specific needs of their community.

Key Findings

Overall Quality of Life

- ~ The quality of life in Boise is clearly a strength. Overall, the majority of Boise residents rate the quality of life as being “good” to “excellent” – 43 percent rate the quality of life in Boise as “excellent” and 48 percent give a rating of “good.”
- ~ This is significantly higher than noted in the 2004 National CityMARKS™ Survey where only 36 percent of people rate their community’s quality of life as “excellent” and 44 percent rate it as “good.”
- ~ The City of Boise needs to work hard to maintain these high marks in the upcoming years as the city continues its rapid growth and development.

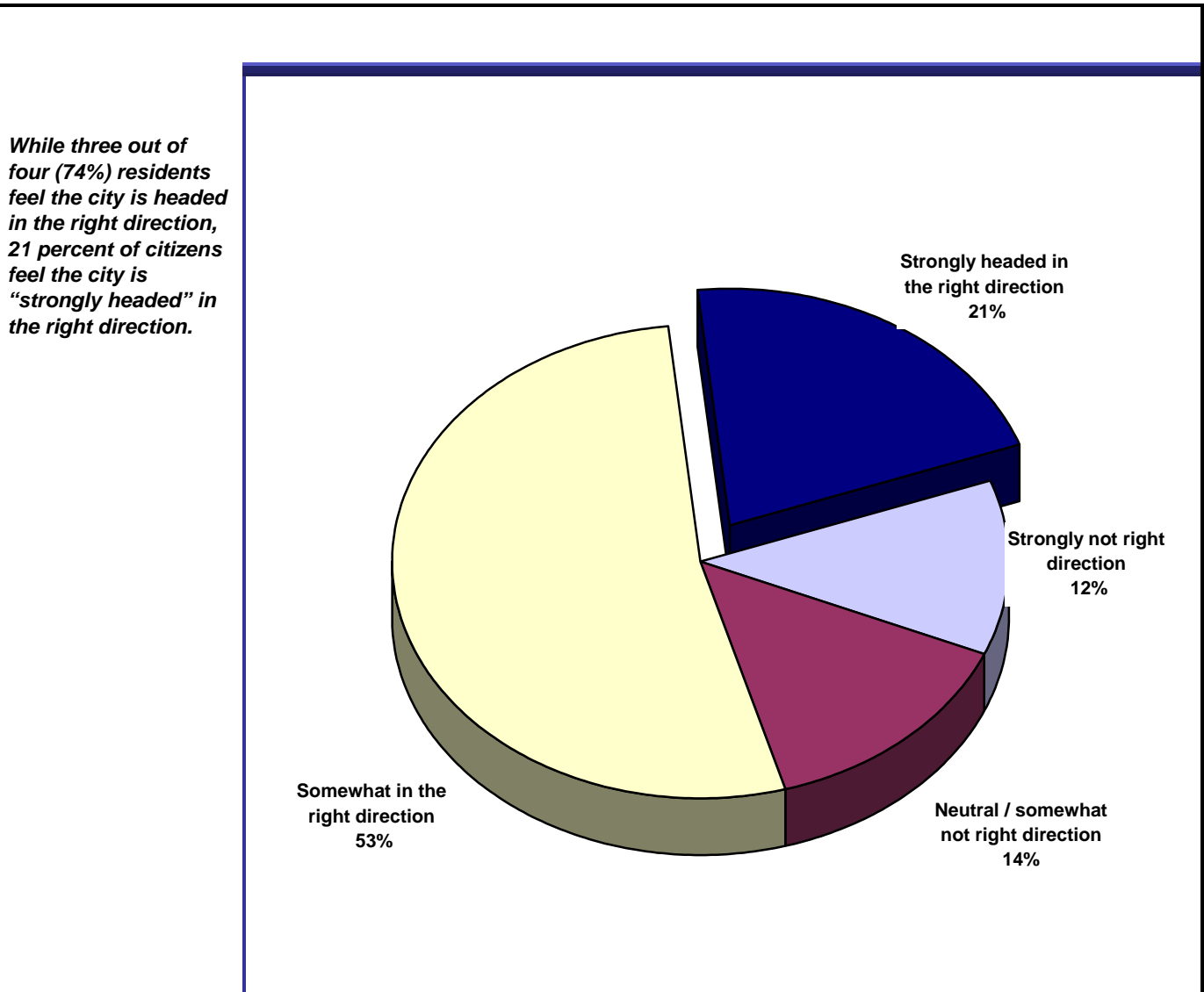


- ~ City of Boise residents in each region feel very positive about the quality of life within their region. In fact, most residents rate the quality of life in the City of Boise as being “good” to “excellent.” However, there are some differences in ratings between the different communities.
- ~ North / Northeast Boise and Southeast Boise residents give the city the highest ratings for overall quality of life. This is notable in terms of the above-average percentage (53%) of “excellent” ratings among those living in North / Northeast Boise.
- ~ Southwest Boise residents give the city an average rating (mean of 3.32) with an above-average percentage (58%) of “good” ratings.

<i>City of Boise residents in each region feel very positive about the quality of life within their region.</i>	North / Northeast Boise	Northwest / West Boise	Southeast Boise	The Bench	Southwest Boise
Excellent	53%	39%	50%	45%	37%
Good	39	53	42	42	58
Fair / Poor	8	9	8	14	5
Mean*	3.44	3.28	3.39	3.28	3.32
<i>*Mean based on a 4-point scale where “1” means “poor” and “4” means “excellent.”</i>					

City Direction

- ~ While three out of four (74%) City of Boise residents feel the city is headed in the right direction, 21 percent of citizens feel the City is “strongly headed” in the right direction. This is a key baseline measure and efforts should be targeted at identifying areas for improvement that could increase the percentage of citizens who strongly believe the city is heading in the right direction.
- ~ It is critical to note that a significant segment (26%) of the population feels that the City of Boise may be headed in the wrong direction.



- ~ Those living in Southeast Boise and, to a lesser extent, North / Northeast Boise are the most likely to feel strongly that the City of Boise is moving in the right direction.
- ~ More residents (28%) in Southeast Boise “strongly feel” the city is headed in the right direction. On the other hand, 30 percent of Southwest Boise residents feel the City of Boise is headed in the wrong direction.
- ~ Clearly there are aspects of the city in Southeast Boise that could serve as a model for future growth and planning.

<i>Those living in Southeast Boise and, to a lesser extent, North / Northeast Boise are the most likely to feel strongly that the City of Boise is moving in the right direction.</i>		North / Northeast Boise	Northwest / West Boise	Southeast Boise	The Bench	Southwest Boise
Strongly headed in the right direction	18%	19%	28%	28%	15%	
Somewhat headed in the right direction	63	54	50	46	48	
Neutral	3	2	4	6	7	
Headed in the wrong direction	16	24	18	21	30	
Mean*	3.74	3.55	3.80	3.69	3.33	
<i>*Mean based on a 5-point scale where “1” means “strongly not headed in the right direction” and “5” means “strongly headed in the right direction.”</i>						

Key City Issues

- ~ By far, City of Boise residents feel that there are three major issues facing the city:
 - ~ The extent to which the community is planning for growth – nearly three out of five (59%) say this is a “major issue” facing the city. This is significantly higher than noted in the National CityMARKS™ Survey where just 18 percent say this is a major issue and most likely reflects the high awareness of current planning efforts as well as concerns about how these plans may affect the future of the city and its long-term quality of life.
 - ~ Problems with traffic congestion – 53 percent say this is a “major issue.” This is somewhat surprising and is significantly higher than noted in the National CityMARKS™ Survey. Again, this may reflect the high awareness of current transportation planning efforts and how these plans may affect long-term congestion.
 - ~ Availability of jobs that pay reasonable wages – 52 percent say this is a “major issue.” The availability of jobs that pay reasonable wages is seen as a greater issue than the number of jobs and economic opportunities available – 52 percent compared with 41 percent, respectively.
- ~ Other potential issues include:
 - ~ Quality of public schools – 48 percent say this is a “major issue.” While the City of Boise itself has little impact on the quality of schools, the residents feel that this is a major issue.
 - ~ Amount of crime – 39 percent say this is a “major issue.” This is somewhat higher than noted in the National CityMARKS™ Survey where only 20 percent say crime is a “major issue.”
 - ~ Air pollution – 42 percent say this is a “major issue.” This is significantly higher than noted in the National CityMARKS™ Survey where only 29 percent say that air pollution is a major issue. This would be as expected given the inversions the city experiences.
 - ~ Alcohol and/or drug abuse – 40 percent say this is a “major issue.” This is significantly higher than noted in the National CityMARKS™ Survey where only 10 percent say this is a major issue. This may be linked to the concerns on the amount of crime.
 - ~ Cost of living – 36 percent say this is a “major issue.” While this is lower than the most of Northwest, it is rapidly increasing.
 - ~ Adequacy of public transportation – 37 percent say this is a “major issue.” This is nearly the same as noted in the National CityMARKS™ Survey where 30 percent say the adequacy of public transportation is a major issue.

City of Boise residents feel that there are three major issues facing the city: the extent to which the community is planning for growth, problems with traffic congestion, and availability of jobs that pay reasonable wages.

	City of Boise		CityMARKS™	
	% Major Issue	*Mean	% Major Issue	*Mean
Planning for growth	59%	3.38	18%	2.24
Traffic congestion	53	3.33	24	2.44
Availability of jobs that pay reasonable wages	52	3.31	n.a.	n.a.
Quality of public schools	48	3.15	n.a.	n.a.
Amount of crime	39	3.12	20	2.53
Air pollution	42	3.12	29	2.69
Adequate number of jobs & economic opportunities	41	3.11	n.a.	n.a.
Alcohol & drug abuse	40	3.09	10	2.05
Cost of living	36	3.05	n.a.	n.a.
Adequacy of public transportation	37	3.04	30	2.61
Availability / preservation of open space	37	2.97	27	2.57
Availability of affordable housing	31	2.95	19	2.29
Availability of programs / services for children	36	2.95	n.a.	n.a.
Gangs	35	2.93	39	2.95
Ability to get around by car	35	2.92	n.a.	n.a.
Extent to which community promotes economic development	31	2.89	18	2.38
Availability of support services for seniors	26	2.83	n.a.	n.a.
Water quality / pollution	31	2.76	26	2.56
Quality of existing neighborhoods	24	2.67	27	2.56
Quality of services provided by city employees	18	2.57	n.a.	n.a.
Availability of city recreational programs	15	2.52	28	2.63
Availability of branch libraries	14	2.47	n.a.	n.a.
Ability to get around by bicycle	14	2.47	n.a.	n.a.
Ability to get around by foot	14	2.43	n.a.	n.a.
Availability of arts and cultural activities	14	2.40	25	2.62
Availability of city parks close to home	16	2.37	n.a.	n.a.

**Mean based on 4-point scale where "1" means "not an issue at all" and "4" means a "major issue."*

- ~ Those living in Southwest Boise are most distinguished from those living in other parts of the city by the extent to which they feel the following are issues facing the City of Boise (listed in order of differentiation):
 - ~ Availability of city parks within walking distance from home,
 - ~ Availability of arts and cultural opportunities,
 - ~ Ability to get around by foot,
 - ~ Cost of living, and
 - ~ Amount of crime.

- ~ Those living in North / Northeast Boise are more likely than those in other areas of the city to feel that the availability and preservation of open space and the availability of branch libraries are major issues facing the City of Boise.

Residents in Southwest Boise feel the following issues are more of a concern for the City of Boise: availability of parks close to home, availability of art and cultural opportunities, ability to get around by foot, cost of living, and amount of crime.

	North / Northeast	Northwest / West	Southeast	The Bench	Southwest
Overall Mean	2.93	2.86	2.81	2.85	2.96
Quality of public schools	3.22	3.15	2.95	3.24	3.29
Mean	52	45	44	53	50
% Major Issue					
Amount of crime	2.99	3.17	3.01	3.08	3.30
Mean	33	42	32	36	46
% Major Issue					
Preservation of open space	3.24	2.89	2.98	2.86	2.98
Mean	53	33	38	37	33
% Major Issue					
Youth programs / services	3.04	2.94	2.75	3.00	3.07
Mean	39	36	28	39	39
% Major Issue					
Gangs	2.75	2.97	2.83	2.95	3.09
Mean	27	37	33	36	39
% Major Issue					
Economic development	2.89	2.93	2.65	2.92	3.07
Mean	36	30	22	35	35
% Major Issue					
Quality of services from city employees	2.59	2.57	2.66	2.29	2.63
Mean	17	18	25	14	12
% Major Issue					
Branch libraries	2.61	2.51	2.46	2.28	2.43
Mean	17	14	12	11	14
% Major Issue					
Getting around by foot	2.54	2.35	2.40	2.22	2.69
Mean	21	10	12	10	20
% Major Issue					
City parks close to home	2.32	2.28	2.30	2.19	2.80
Mean	18	14	11	7	28
% Major Issue					

**Mean based on 4-point scale where "1" means "not an issue at all" and "4" means a "major issue."*

City's Strengths

- ~ The City of Boise has a number of strengths in terms of providing services to the community. Efforts should focus on maintaining current service levels for these services. The City of Boise's top strengths include:
 - ~ **A good place to raise children.** By far, this is Boise's greatest strength with two out of five (40%) Boiseans saying the city is an "excellent" place to raise children. Moreover, while the percent of "excellent" is the same as in the National CityMARKS™ Survey, the overall mean for Boise is higher due to the high number also giving the city a "good" rating. In total, 86 percent of Boise citizens rate the city as a "good" to "excellent" place to raise children.
 - ~ **Availability of art and cultural opportunities.** Despite its relatively small size, Boise is seen as comparable to cities nationwide in terms of the availability of art and cultural opportunities.
 - ~ **Availability of city recreation programs.** Relative to other factors, Boise receives a relatively high percentage (19%) of "excellent" ratings for the availability of city recreation programs. However, compared to cities nationwide, this could be perceived as a potential weakness.
 - ~ **Quality of existing neighborhoods.** Note this was not asked in the national benchmark survey. This question was specifically requested by the Mayor and members of the Boise City Council.
 - ~ **Ability to find housing close to work.** This should be considered a potentially unique aspect of Boise relative to other cities. While the percentage of "excellent" ratings is the same, Boise receives a significantly higher percentage of "good" to "excellent" ratings than nationwide – 74 percent compared with only 56 percent, respectively.
 - ~ **Quality of water.** While receiving an above-average percentage of "excellent" ratings, this may become a future problem. Ratings may reflect residents' current concerns about availability of water after continued drought years.
 - ~ **Availability of parks closes to home.** While seen as a relative strength, the mean suggests some variability in responses. Nearly one out of five (19%) Boise citizens give this factor a "poor" rating and 14 percent say "fair."

The City of Boise has a number of strengths in terms of providing services to the community.

	City of Boise		CityMARKS™	
	% Excellent	Mean*	% Excellent	Mean*
Place to raise children	40%	3.25	39%	3.08
Availability of art and cultural opportunities	20	2.94	19	2.56
Availability of city recreation programs	19	2.91	35	2.97
Quality of existing neighborhoods	13	2.87	n.a.	n.a.
Ability to find housing close to work	16	2.83	17	2.53
Quality of water	16	2.81	26	2.90
Availability of city parks close to home	31	2.78	34	3.06
Ability to get around by bicycle	23	2.76	23	2.73
Availability / preservation of open spaces	17	2.74	19	2.64
Quality of service from city employees	11	2.74	16	2.74
Ability to get around by car	17	2.72	32	3.08
Quality of public schools	15	2.74	23	2.80

**Mean based on a 4-point scale where "1" means "poor" and "4" means "excellent."*

Present Potential Weaknesses

- ~ The City of Boise has a few critical areas that citizens rated as poor. These include:
 - ~ **Amount and/or extent of congestion.** Somewhat surprisingly, the City of Boise receives the lowest rating for the amount and/or extent of traffic congestion. Note this is also listed as one of the key issues facing the city. Boise receives significantly lower ratings for this factor than do other cities nationwide.
 - ~ **Ability to get around by public transportation.** Given the current service levels, it is not surprising that the City of Boise receives relatively low ratings for the adequacy of its public transportation. Moreover, Boise receives significantly lower ratings for this factor than noted in other cities nationwide.
 - ~ **Availability of alcohol and drug treatment programs.** Only 3 percent give the city an “excellent” rating.
 - ~ **Planning for future growth.** Consistent with the ratings given for congestion and public transportation, the city receives one of its lowest ratings for the extent to which it is planning for growth. As with congestion, this is rated as a key issue facing the city. Boise achieves significantly lower ratings for this factor than other cities nationwide.
 - ~ **City communications with the public and level of public involvement in decision-making.** These may also be weaknesses. While Boise is seen as being less effective than other cities nationwide, Boise does a better job of public involvement than with city communications.

<i>The City of Boise has a few critical areas that citizens rated as poor. Those include: amount / extent of congestion, availability of alcohol and drug treatment programs, ability to get around by public transportation, planning for future growth, and city communications with the public.</i>	City of Boise		CityMARKS™	
	% Excellent	Mean*	% Excellent	Mean*
Amount / extent of congestion	4%	1.80	13%	2.28
Availability of alcohol and drug treatment programs	3	2.01	n.a.	n.a.
Ability to get around by public transportation	5	2.01	13	2.29
Planning for future growth	4	2.09	18	2.63
City communications with the public	5	2.29	13	2.56
Level of public involvement in decision-making	4	2.31	13	2.55

**Mean based on a 4-point scale where “1” means “poor” and “4” means “excellent.”*

Target Improvement Opportunities

One way to identify target improvement opportunities is to classify the perceived importance of different factors (as measured by the extent to which they are seen as issues) and the quality ratings into four quadrants that provide indicators of potential problems and opportunities. They can be used to set priorities for areas that may require attention, as illustrated below:

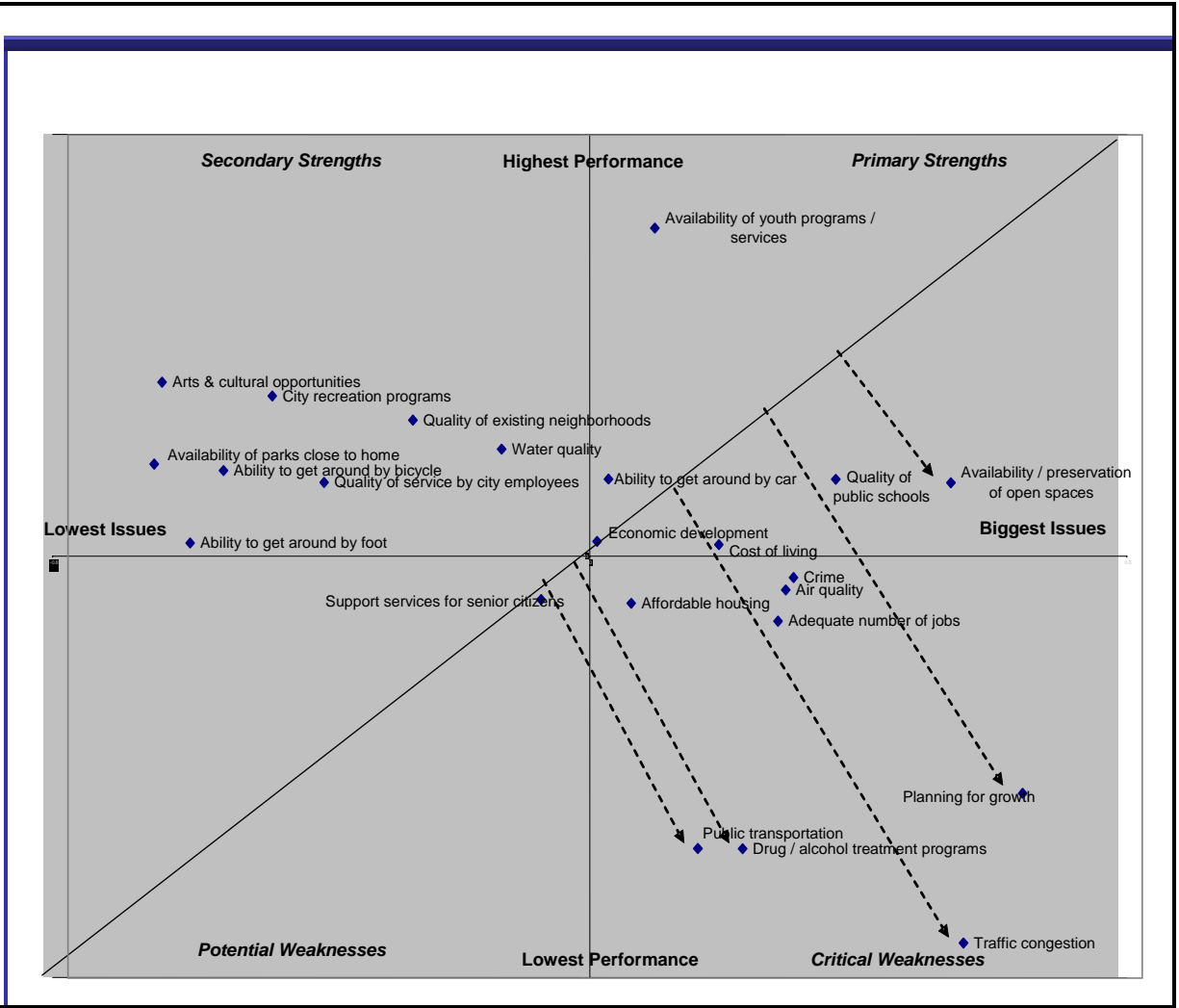
		Issues	
		Low	High
Performance	High	<p>Priority 4: <i>Secondary Strengths:</i> Maintain Current Level of Service</p>	<p>Priority 1: <i>Primary Strengths:</i> Maintain / Continue to Improve Current Level of Service</p>
	Low	<p>Priority 3: <i>Potential Weaknesses:</i> Improve if Resources are Available</p>	<p>Priority 2: <i>Critical Weaknesses:</i> Target Improvement Efforts Here</p>

In addition, a diagonal line can be drawn through the quadrant from low importance / low performance to high importance / high performance. This line represents the “ideal” match between resident requirements and system performance. The further the distance from a point to the line suggests the greater mismatch between resident’s requirements and perceived performance.

- ~ **Primary Strengths:** This quadrant contains those attributes that are seen as the greatest issues and that receive the highest performance ratings. Efforts should be focused on continuing to maintain current service levels in these areas. These strengths can also be used to leverage support for other improvement areas. Boise’s strengths include:
 - ~ Availability of youth services and programs making Boise a good place to raise children.
 - ~ The availability and preservation of open spaces. It should be noted, however, that there are opportunities for improvements in this area with continued acquisitions as indicated by the distance from the diagonal line.
 - ~ Quality of public schools.
 - ~ Ability to get around by car.
 - ~ Cost of living.
 - ~ Economic development activities.
- ~ **Critical Weaknesses:** This quadrant contains those services that are seen as the greatest issues facing the city and are given the lowest performance ratings. Efforts should be focused on improvements in this area by targeting resources here:
 - ~ **Planning for growth and the amount / extent of traffic congestion.** These are the city’s biggest weaknesses – as measured by its distance from the diagonal line – and are likely related. That is, it is likely that the low ratings for the amount / extent of traffic congestion may be suggesting concerns about the extent to which this is being planned for in the future rather than current conditions and levels of congestion.
 - ~ **Adequacy of public transportation.** This is also potentially related to concerns for the future and the need for adequate public transportation services to serve a rapidly growing city such as Boise.

~ **Availability of Drug and Alcohol Treatment Programs:** Boise citizens see this as a major issue and where services may not be adequate to serve the need. Improvements in this area will definitely have a positive impact on crime rates, which is also seen as a weakness, although less so than the availability of drug and alcohol treatment programs.

The City of Boise's strengths include: availability of youth services and programs, the availability and preservation of open space, quality of public schools, ability to get around by car, cost of living, and economic development activities.



Quality of City Services

- ~ Overall, Boise residents rate the services in Boise as being “fair” to “good” – overall mean rating of 2.65 (*Responses were recorded on a 4-point scale where “1” means “poor” and “4” means “excellent”*).
- ~ Residents are most satisfied with the fire department services in Boise where 35 percent of residents rated the service as “excellent.” Ratings for fire department services are comparable to those noted nationwide.
- ~ Boise residents are also generally satisfied with garbage services, but gave lower ratings for recycling services. Ratings for recycling services are lower than noted nationwide, perhaps reflecting the more ambitious programs in other areas.
- ~ Boise’s parks and recreation services are also rated as “good” and are seen as comparable to other cities nationwide.
- ~ Potential weaknesses are Boise’s planning and building services. These ratings may reflect residents’ lack of awareness of these services or direct experience with these services. They may also be linked to concerns about planning noted in the previous section.
- ~ Boise’s police department also receives somewhat below-average ratings, relative to other departments. This may reflect the concerns raised overall about the level of crime in Boise, noted as a weakness in the previous section.

Overall, Boise residents rate the services in Boise as being “fair” to “good” – overall mean rating of 2.95.

	City of Boise		CityMARKS™	
	% Excellent	Mean*	% Excellent	Mean*
Overall		2.95		
Fire department services	35%	3.27	39%	3.29
Garbage services	27	3.18	30	3.06
Airport services	27	3.12	18	2.65
Parks and recreation services	30	3.09	35	3.05
Library services	24	3.00	33	3.02
Sewer services	18	3.00	23	2.97
Police services	18	2.88	28	3.01
Animal control	11	2.75	n.a.	n.a.
Recycling services	17	2.72	30	3.06
Planning and building services	5	2.38	n.a.	n.a.

**Mean based on a 4-point scale where “1” means “poor” and “4” means “excellent.”*

- ~ Overall, residents living on the Bench are more likely to rate the city services as being “good,” compared to the other regions of the city.
- ~ Also, residents living on the Bench are more likely to rate the city as being “good” to “excellent” with their sewer services – overall mean rating of 3.23.
- ~ Boise residents who live in Southeast Boise, the Bench, and Southwest Boise are more likely to rate library services in their region as being “good” to “excellent” compared to those who live in Northwest / West Boise.
- ~ Residents in Northwest / West Boise are least satisfied with the city’s services – overall mean rating of 2.89. Particularly parks and recreation services, library services, sewer services, and animal control were rated the lowest.

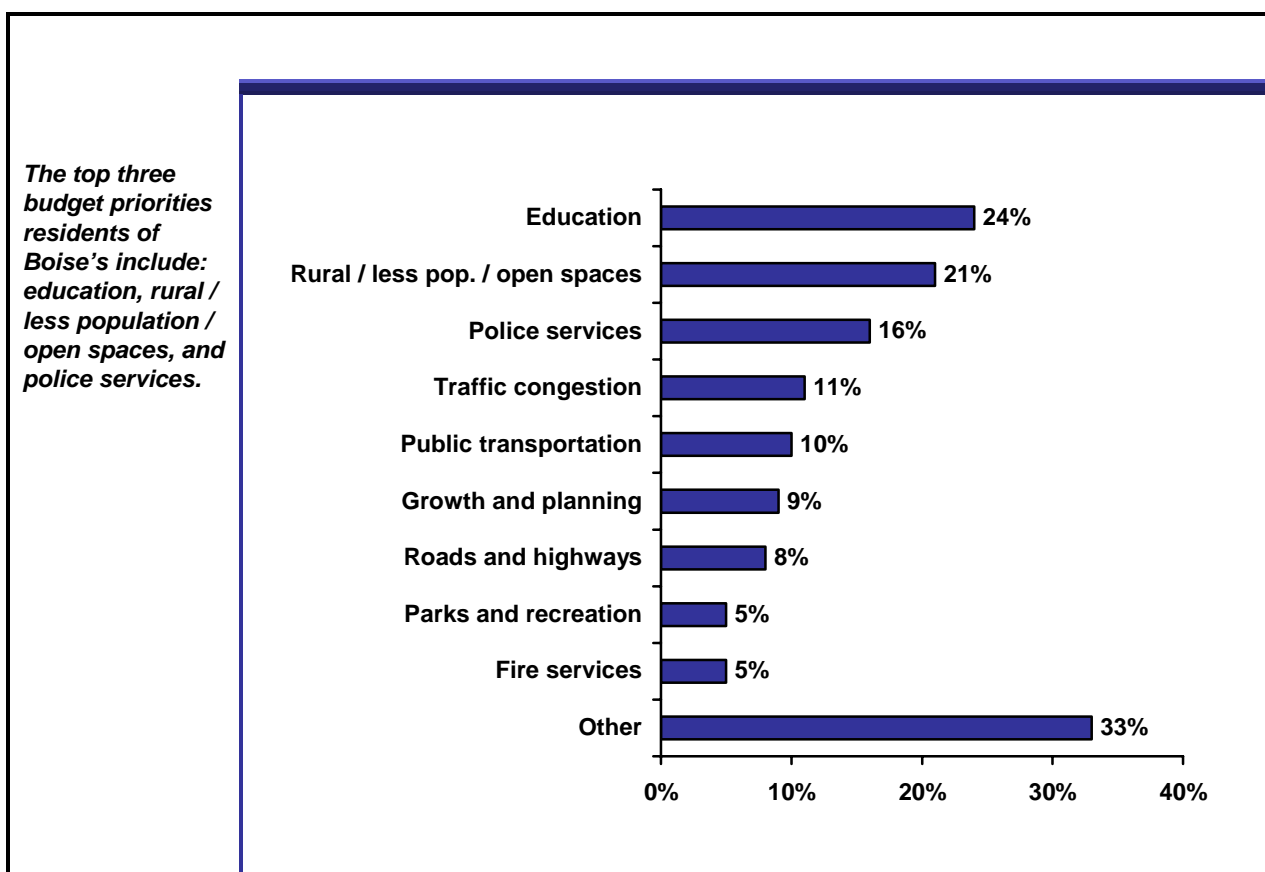
Overall, residents living on the Bench are more likely to rate the city services as being “good” compared to the other regions of the city.		North / Northeast Boise	Northwest / West Boise	Southeast Boise	The Bench	Southwest Boise
	Overall	2.92	2.89	2.99	3.10	2.93
	Fire department services	3.25	3.26	3.27	3.43	3.21
	Garbage services	3.11	3.17	3.18	3.27	3.20
	Airport services	3.13	3.04	3.15	3.23	3.19
	Parks and recreation services	3.25	2.94	3.24	3.22	3.01
	Library services	3.01	2.79	3.16	3.18	3.12
	Sewer services	2.95	2.96	3.04	3.23	2.91
	Police services	2.90	2.86	2.84	3.11	2.81
	Animal control	2.79	2.61	2.83	2.96	2.76
	Recycling services	2.56	2.72	2.72	2.77	2.81
	Planning and building services	2.27	2.46	2.41	2.50	2.18
	<i>*Mean based on 4-point scale where “1” means “poor” and “4” means “excellent.”</i>					

Budget Priorities

Unaided: Budget Priorities

Respondents were asked to indicate what they think the city should make its highest budget priorities when allocating funding to programs and services for the community. *Note “unaided” means respondents were not given a list to choose from, they provided programs and services without being prompted.* Respondents listed the following priorities:

- ~ Improvement of education (24%),
- ~ Maintain rural / less population / open spaces (21%),
- ~ Improvement of police services (16%),
- ~ Cut down on traffic congestion (11%),
- ~ Availability of public transportation (10%), and
- ~ Growth and planning (9%).



Aided: Budget Priorities

After defining the top budget priorities for Boise, residents were then given a list of budget priorities (“*aided*”) that they were asked to order in terms of importance for the city for the next two years. The list included: public safety, environmental protection, economic development, public transportation, libraries, parks and recreation, and visual and performing arts.

- ~ The majority (76%) of Boise residents feel that public safety is the most important budget priority for the next two years.
- ~ Environmental protection and economic development are the second and third most important budget priorities – 60 percent for environmental protection and 51 percent for economic development.

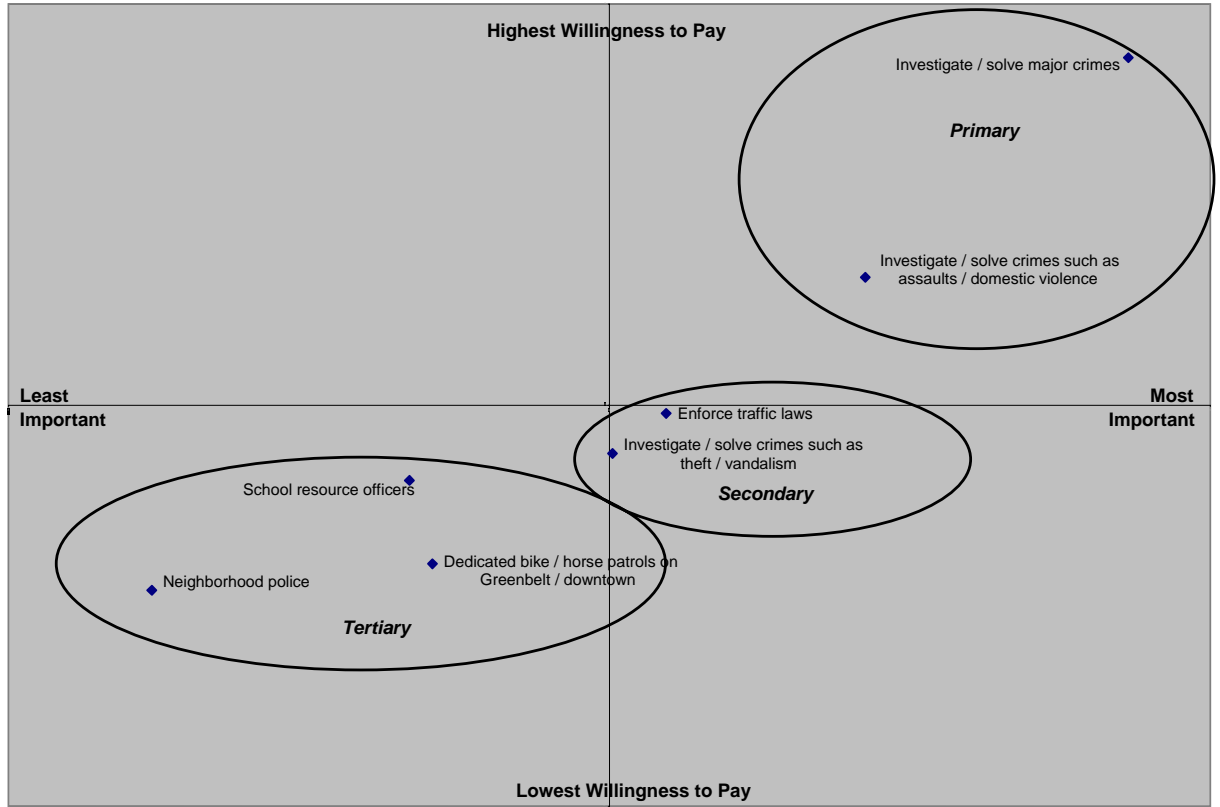
<i>The majority (76%) of Boise residents feel that public safety is the most important budget priority for the next two years.</i>		1 st	2 nd	3 rd	Total
	Public safety	39%	24%	13%	76%
Environmental protection	19	22	19	60	
Economic development	18	16	17	51	
Public transportation	15	17	18	50	
Libraries	4	5	9	18	
Parks and recreation	3	13	16	32	
Visual and performing arts	2	3	8	13	

Key City Services

Priorities for City of Boise Police Department

- ~ Boise residents feel the following are the most important and are willing to pay to maintain these services:
 - ~ Investigate / solve major crimes, and
 - ~ Investigate / solve crimes such as assaults / domestic violence.
- ~ The second most important services that residents are willing to pay for are the following:
 - ~ Enforce traffic laws, and
 - ~ Investigate / solve crimes such as theft / vandalism.
- ~ The following services rank low in terms of importance and willingness to pay:
 - ~ School resource officers,
 - ~ Dedicated bike / horse patrols on Greenbelt / downtown, and
 - ~ Neighborhood police officers (Note: Residents are not willing to pay for these services compared to the other services that the police department provides for the city. Also, for the next question, investigating / solving major crimes and investigating / solving crimes (e.g.; assaults / domestic crimes) were not included in the list of services.).

Boise residents feel the following services are the most important and are willing to pay to maintain them: investigating / solving major crimes and investing / solving crimes.



- ~ Nearly half (49%) of Boise citizens listed neighborhood officers as the one thing they could not live without compared to the other services listed below. However, as mentioned above, they are not willing to pay for these services compared to the other services that the police department provides for the city. Note that investigating / solving major crimes and investigating / solving crimes (e.g.; assaults / domestic crimes) were not included in the list of services.

- ~ Additionally, 48 percent of Boise residents say they could not live without traffic enforcement teams.

Nearly half (49%) of Boise citizens listed neighborhood officers as the one thing they could not live without.	Service	% Could not live without
	Officers assigned to neighborhoods	49%
Traffic enforcement teams	48	
School resource officers	43	
Horse and bike patrol	34	
Officer response to non-emergency calls	21	

Priorities for Fire Services

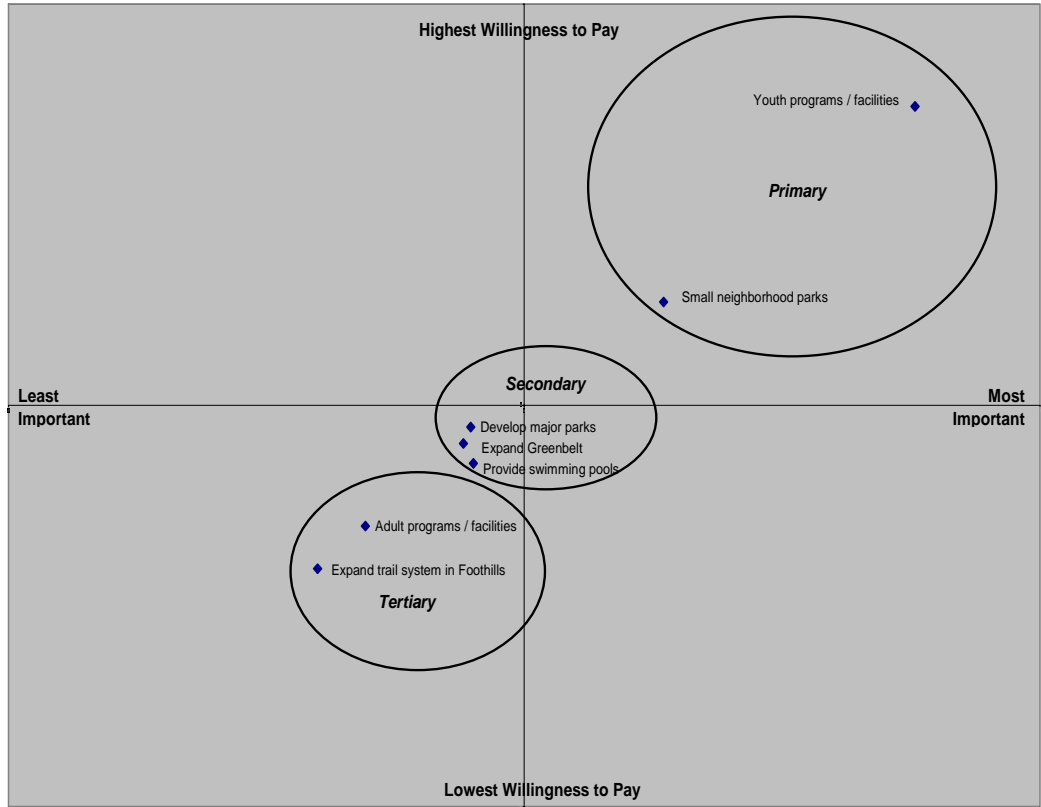
- ~ Boise citizens are more likely to pay more taxes to maintain the current four minute response time than to get advanced paramedic services – 55 percent of residents are willing to pay to maintain the current four minute response time compared to 47 percent who are willing to pay to maintain advanced paramedic services.

<i>Boise citizens are more likely to pay more taxes to maintain the current four minute response time.</i>	Advanced Paramedic	Maintain Response Times
	% Extremely willing (10)	17%
% Willing to pay (7-9)	30	36
% Willing to pay (Net)	47	55
% In the middle (4-6)	30	30
% Not willing to pay (1-3)	10	5
% Not at all willing to pay (0)	13	9
Mean*	5.80	6.47
<i>*Mean based on an 11-point scale where "0" means "not at all willing to pay an additional fee" and "10" means "extremely willing to pay an additional fee."</i>		

Priorities for Parks and Recreation Department

- ~ Boise residents feel the following services provided by the Parks and Recreation Department are most important and are willing to pay to maintain them:
 - ~ Youth programs and facilities, and
 - ~ Small neighborhood parks.
- ~ The second most important services that residents are willing to pay for include:
 - ~ Developing major parks,
 - ~ Expanding the Greenbelt, and
 - ~ Providing public swimming pools.
- ~ The following services rank low in terms of importance and willingness to pay:
 - ~ Adult programs and facilities, and
 - ~ Expanding the trail system in the foothills.

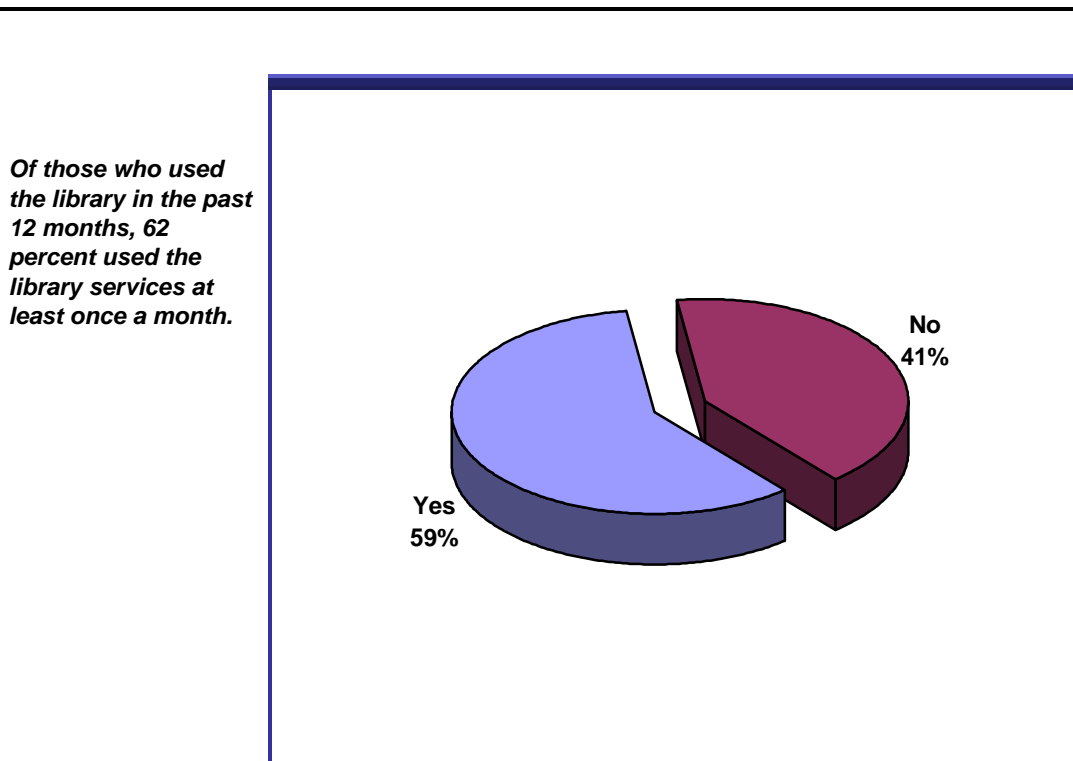
Boise residents feel the following services are most important and are willing to pay to maintain them: youth programs / facilities and small neighborhood parks.



Priorities for Library Services

Usage

- ~ Of those who used the library in the past 12 months, 62 percent use the library services at least once a month.
- ~ Residents who live in Southeast Boise are more likely to have visited the Boise Public Library in the past 12 months compared to those who live in Southwest Boise – 66 percent versus 50 percent.
- ~ In addition, younger residents (those who are 18 to 64 years of age) are more likely to use the library than are older residents (those who are 65 years of age or older) – average of 62 percent versus 36 percent, respectively.
- ~ Of those who have not used the library in the past 12 months (n=220), seventy-eight percent (78%) have used the Boise Public Library sometime in their life.



Willingness to Pay for Library Services

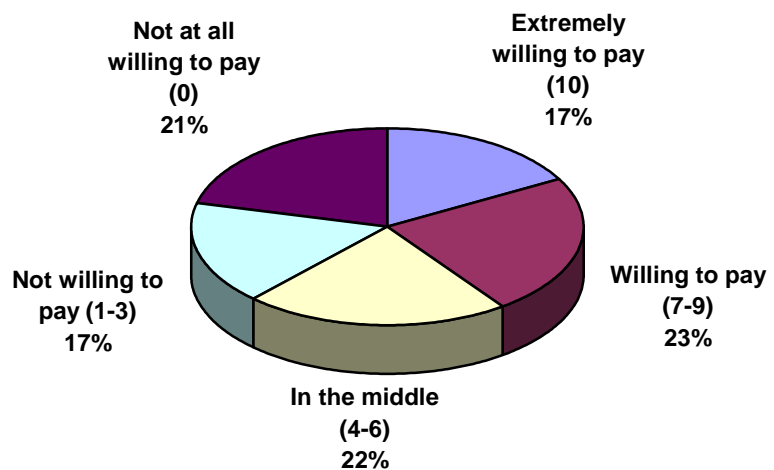
- ~ Residents in Boise are more willing to pay an additional fee for youth programs compared to any other services – overall mean rating of 6.31.
- ~ Residents are least likely to pay for adult programs where only 6 percent say they are “extremely willing to pay an additional fee.”

<i>Residents in Boise are more willing to pay an additional fee for youth programs compared to any other services – overall mean rating of 6.31.</i>	% Extremely Willing (10)	Mean*
	Overall	
Youth programs	16%	6.31
Bookmobile service	12	5.09
Hours of operation	12	4.95
Reference services through the Internet	11	4.85
Internet access on public computers	10	4.56
Adult programs	6	3.83
*Mean based on an 11-point scale where “0” means “not at all willing to pay an additional fee” and “10” means “extremely willing to pay an additional fee.”		

Support for Branch Libraries

- ~ Overall, Boise residents are mixed on whether they would pay additional taxes to support branch libraries within the city – overall mean rating of 4.94.
- ~ Two out five (40%) Boise residents are willing to pay additional taxes to support branch libraries. An additional 22 percent are “in the middle” in supporting a tax increase to fund branch libraries.
- ~ Twenty-one percent (21%) of residents are “not at all willing to pay” additional taxes to support branch libraries.

Overall, Boise residents are mixed on whether they would pay additional taxes to support branch libraries within the city.



Downtown Boise

- ~ Virtually everyone (90%) visits downtown Boise. The primary reasons why they come downtown are to do the following:
 - ~ Dine (48%);
 - ~ Shop (38%);
 - ~ Attend events (22%); and for
 - ~ Entertainment (16%)

- ~ There is a strong support for a vital and vibrant downtown Boise where 35 percent of Boise residents think it is “extremely” important and 48 percent feel it is important.

<i>There is a strong support for a vital and vibrant downtown Boise.</i>	Total	North / Northeast Boise	Northwest / West Boise	Southeast Boise	The Bench	Southwest Boise
% Extremely important (10)	35%	47%	30%	36%	35%	33%
% Important (7-9)	48	46	48	53	44	49
% Important Net	83	93	78	89	79	82
% In the middle (4-6)	13	4	17	8	15	15
% Not important (0-3)	4	3	4	3	6	4
Mean*	8.04	8.63	7.77	8.34	7.89	7.86
<i>*Mean based on an 11-point scale where “0” means “not at all important” and “10” means “extremely important.”</i>						

Overall Rating of Youth Programs for Children 0 to 12 years of Age

- ~ Overall, Boise residents only rate the City of Boise as doing a “fair” to “good” job in providing youth services for children 0 to 12 years of age.
- ~ The City of Boise receives the highest rating for the availability of quality pre-school programs – 8 percent say “excellent” and 38 percent say “good.”
- ~ Residents are least satisfied with the affordability of childcare in the City of Boise – overall mean of 1.99.
- ~ There are, however, very few residents that give the City of Boise an “excellent” rating for services provided for children 0 to 12 years of age.

Overall, Boise residents only rate the City of Boise as doing a “fair” to “good” job in providing youth services for children 0 to 12 years of age.	% Excellent	% Good	Mean*
Availability of quality pre-school programs	8%	38%	2.42
Availability of quality childcare	8	38	2.37
Availability of quality before and after school programs	7	39	2.35
Affordability of childcare	2	30	1.99
<i>*Mean based on a 4-point scale where “1” means “poor” and “4” means “excellent.”</i>			

Overall Rating for Youth Programs for Children 12 to 18 Years of Age

- ~ Boise residents rate each of the services for children 12 to 18 years of age as being “fair” to “good” in the City of Boise. Drug and alcohol prevention and awareness programs are rated the highest in the city – overall mean rating of 2.27.
- ~ The availability of mentoring programs receives the lowest rating – overall mean rating of 2.05.
- ~ There are no significant differences in residents’ ratings of youth programs for children 12 to 18 years of age by region.

<i>Boise residents rate each of these services as being “fair” to “good” in the City of Boise. Drug and alcohol prevention and awareness programs are rated the highest in the city – overall mean rating of 2.27.</i>	Overall	North / Northeast Boise	Northwest / West Boise	Southeast Boise	The Bench	Southwest Boise
Drug and alcohol prevention	2.27	2.20	2.13	2.38	2.56	2.40
Availability of volunteer service programs	2.26	2.51	2.02	2.37	2.50	2.36
Availability and quality of supervised after school activities	2.20	2.37	2.05	2.09	2.46	2.34
Availability of youth mentoring programs	2.05	2.16	1.95	2.17	2.26	1.93
<i>*Mean based on a 4-point scale where “1” means “poor” and “4” means “excellent.”</i>						

Support to Fund Transportation Projects

Support for Paying Additional Taxes to Expand the Current Bus System

- ~ While Boise residents feel the availability of public transportation is an issue / concern (15% of residents suggest this is a budget priority), there is minimal / low support of paying additional taxes to expand the current bus system – overall mean rating of 4.98. Note more than one out of three (36%) residents are “in the middle” with this additional service.

- ~ Residents who live in North / Northeast Boise are significantly more likely to support paying additional taxes to expand the bus system compared to those residing in Southwest Boise – overall mean rating of 5.53 versus 4.47.

<i>There is minimal / low support of paying additional taxes to expand the current bus system – overall mean rating of 4.98.</i>		Overall	North / Northeast Boise	Northwest / West Boise	Southeast Boise	The Bench	Southwest Boise
	% Extremely likely (10)	10%	10%	8%	15%	10%	5%
	% Likely (7-9)	25	34	25	25	21	23
	% Likely (Net)	35	44	33	40	31	28
	% In the middle (4-6)	36	34	38	30	43	37
	% Not likely (1-3)	11	5	9	15	12	16
	% Not at all likely (0)	18	17	20	15	15	20
	Mean*	4.98	5.53	4.84	5.28	5.03	4.47
	<i>*Mean based on an 11-point scale where “0” means “not at all likely” and “10” means “extremely likely.”</i>						

Support for Paying Additional Taxes to Build a Light Rail System

- ~ As with paying additional taxes to expand the current bus system, residents do not support paying additional taxes to build a light rail system. However, they are more supportive of having a light rail system than buses – overall mean rating of 5.07 versus 4.98.
- ~ Residents who live in North / Northeast Boise are more likely to support paying additional taxes to build a light rail system compared to those who live in Southwest Boise – 24 percent say “extremely likely” versus only 10 percent in Southwest Boise.

Residents do not support paying additional taxes to build a light rail system. However, they are more supportive of light rail system than having a bus system.		Overall	North / Northeast Boise	Northwest / West Boise	Southeast Boise	The Bench	Southwest Boise
% Extremely likely (10)		17%	24%	17%	16%	17%	10%
% Likely (7-9)		26	32	23	26	28	24
% Likely (Net)		43	56	40	42	45	34
% In the middle (4-6)		23	18	23	22	28	23
% Not likely (1-3)		12	7	11	15	9	17
% Not at all likely (0)		23	20	27	21	18	26
Mean*		5.07	5.82	4.88	5.19	5.59	4.35
*Mean based on an 11-point scale where “0” means “not at all likely” and “10” means “extremely likely.”							

Growth and Development in the City of Boise

- ~ Overall, Boise residents prefer compact development within existing neighborhoods (76%) over new residential development on large scale lots outside city limits (22%).
- ~ Over two out of five (44%) residents in Boise “strongly prefer” compact development within existing neighborhoods. An additional 32 percent of residents “somewhat prefer” compact development.
- ~ Residents who live in Southeast Boise are significantly more likely to “strongly prefer” compact development compared to both Northwest / West Boise and Southwest Boise – 55 percent “strongly prefer” in Southeast Boise while only an average of 38 percent say they “strongly prefer” compact development in Northwest / West Boise and Southwest Boise.

<i>Over two out of five (44%) residents in Boise “strongly prefer” compact development within existing neighborhoods. An additional 32 percent of residents “somewhat prefer” compact development.</i>		Overall	North / Northeast Boise	Northwest / West Boise	Southeast Boise	The Bench	Southeast Boise
	Strongly prefer compact development	44%	48%	39%	55%	41%	37%
	Somewhat prefer compact development	32	30	34	27	29	39
	Compact development (Total)	76	78	73	82	70	76
	Strongly prefer large lots outside the city limits	12	12	12	9	10	13
	Somewhat prefer large lots outside of the city limits	10	9	10	6	19	9
	Large lots outside of the city limits (Total)	22	21	22	15	29	22

Willingness to Pay Additional Taxes for City Services

- ~ Overall, 45 percent of residents in Boise “strongly prefer” to keep taxes and services in Boise where they are rather than increasing or decreasing services and taxes.
- ~ Residents who live on the Bench are significantly more likely to agree with keeping taxes and services where they are compared to the other regions – 60 percent say “strongly keep taxes and services where they are.”
- ~ There are a very low percentage of residents who want to decrease services and taxes in the City of Boise – only 8 percent.

<i>Overall, 45 percent of residents in Boise “strongly prefer” to keep taxes and services in Boise where they are rather than increasing or decreasing services and taxes.</i>	Overall	North / Northeast Boise	Northwest / West Boise	Southeast Boise	The Bench	Southwest Boise
Strongly keep taxes and services where they are	45%	44%	41%	42%	60%	47%
Somewhat keep taxes and services where they are	27	28	27	27	23	30
Keep taxes and services where they are (Total)	72	72	68	69	83	77
Somewhat increase services and raise taxes	13	12	16	14	10	9
Strongly increase services and raise taxes	7	11	6	10	4	4
Increase services and raise taxes (Total)	20	23	22	24	14	13
Strongly decrease services and taxes	6	4	6	6	2	8
Somewhat decrease services and taxes	2	2	3	1	2	1
Decrease services and taxes (Total)	8	6	9	7	4	9

Conclusions

Overall, the majority of residents in the City of Boise gives the city's quality of life high marks and also feels the city is headed in the right direction. In order to keep these high marks, the City of Boise will need to work hard in the upcoming years as the city continues to rapidly grow and develop.

In addition to receiving high satisfaction rating for quality of life, there are also some critical areas that were perceived very well by the residents of the City of Boise. The City of Boise should continue to devote resources to maintain current levels of quality in these areas. Moreover, the City of Boise can leverage these strengths to support other areas. The primary strengths include:

- ~ Availability of youth services and programs making Boise a good place to raise children,
- ~ Quality of public schools,
- ~ Ability to get around by car,
- ~ Cost of living, and
- ~ Economic development activities.

While the availability and preservation of open spaces is a strength for the City of Boise, there are opportunities for improvement in this area with continued acquisitions.

However, there are some critical areas that are not as well perceived by city residents. The City of Boise should consider focusing on addressing the following improvement opportunities to provide high quality of services that residents expect and require:

- ~ Planning for growth,
- ~ The amount / extent of traffic congestion,
- ~ Adequacy of public transportation, and
- ~ Availability of drug and alcohol treatment programs.

Residents in the City of Boise are also aware of the city's growth and would like the city to communicate to its residents that compact development within existing neighborhoods is preferred over new residential development on large scale lots outside the city limits. Residents also understand the current drought issues and are supportive of water conservation efforts in the city. On the whole, residents are supportive of keeping taxes and services where they are currently and are less willing to pay additional taxes to support programs and services.

It is also necessary for the City of Boise to communicate its efforts to the public emphasizing Boise's strengths and focusing on the steps that are being taken to increase support in areas where Boise residents are not particularly satisfied. Therefore, the City of Boise should continue to focus on improving the system's performance and communicate these efforts to the public as this will have an impact on how citizens feel about the City of Boise and will encourage support for future projects.