



Appendix B – Strategic Profile Questionnaire



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Analysis of the Strategic Profile Questionnaire

Questionnaire Overview

One of the initial steps in the Comprehensive Plan update process was a Strategic Profile Questionnaire. The Strategic Profile Questionnaire contained a number of statements regarding the external environment (activities which occur outside of city government) and the internal environment (activities which occur inside of city government) of De Soto (see attached questionnaire).

The intent of the questionnaire was to allow the City to identify strengths and weaknesses as defined by the internal City government. In addition, the results will be used to prepare a working draft "Vision Statement" for the Planning Commission and City Council to adopt, which will guide the policy assumptions of the planning process. The questionnaire along with the results of the public workshops help shape the goals, objectives and policies of the Comprehensive Plan update.

The questionnaire was distributed on July 9, 2002 to each member of the City Council and Planning Commission as well as the City department heads. Each respondent was asked to individually and confidentially indicate their agreement with each statement according to the following scale:

- Strongly agree with the statement;
- Mildly agree with the statement;
- Neither agree nor disagree with the statement;
- Mildly disagree with the statement; or
- Strongly disagree with the statement.

Results

Following collection of the questionnaires, the results were tabulated based upon the following scoring:

"Strongly Disagree" = 1 point
"Mildly Disagree" = 2 points
"Neutral" = 3 points
"Mildly Agree" = 4 points
"Strongly Agree" = 5 points

The scores were evaluated for high and low scoring issues to identify major issues and strong satisfaction with existing conditions. Standard deviations were also evaluated to determine substantial differences of opinion and general consensus.

Although the overall responses of each group were close, the City department heads had higher responses than the City Council or Planning Commission. Of the three groups, the planning commission had the lowest responses and the greatest deviation in responses, indicating greater difference of opinion among its members. A great deal of similarity between the responses of the Governing Body and City Staff was also observed.

High Scoring Issues

Several statements received high scores indicating mild to strong agreement and general satisfaction with existing conditions. For the purpose of this analysis a median of 4 or less was considered a high score. Based on this standard, respondents generally agreed with the following statements:

- Our city has an on-going community recreation program.
- Our residents have access to a solid health care delivery system (medical staff, facilities, ambulance service, etc.).
- Our ordinances are up-to-date and reflects the changing nature of the community.
- Our city government staff members are well-educated and well-trained to provide quality public service.
- Our city officials work well with local school officials.
- Our code enforcement policies encourage improvement of property.
- Our police respond very quickly to local emergencies.
- Our city has an established network of residents who volunteer for public service opportunities.
- Our city's capital improvement plan is an active part of the annual budget process.
- Our city's economic future is sound.
- Our city taxes are reasonable for the services provided.
- Our form of government (council, mayor, administrator) is the best vehicle for providing local government services in our community.
- Our city officials work well with county officials.
- Our local fire district responds quickly to emergency calls.
- Our city's population increased in the 1990s.
- The city has a need to acquire park land and other open space.
- Our city is served by a quality K through 12 education system.
- Our planning and zoning staff members are well-equipped to facilitate development/redevelopment in the community.
- The city's capital improvement plan is adequate to ensure the maintenance and improvement of the city's capital infrastructure.
- Our city generally provides consistent and equal services to all residents.
- Our city governing body provides coherent and strategic policy direction for the community.
- Our city budget successfully balances expenditure demands with revenues
- Our city's population is growing.
- Our recreation facilities are well-accessible to those with disabilities.
- Our city encourages development/redevelopment.
- City employees are courteous, helpful, and are well-perceived by the community.
- Our city participates in League activities (annual conference, training sessions, legislative activities, etc.).
- Our city's long-term debt is manageable.
- Our city is active in working with the business community in recruiting and retaining business.
- The city actively pursues federal and state grants to fund park and recreation programs and facilities.
- Our city actively seeks federal and state grants for human services programs.
- The city's zoning decisions are fair and equitable.
- Our city government staff members have the skills to lead the city into the 21st Century.
- City staff members are competent in managing the financial matters of the city.
- Our city effectively implements its policies and regulations.
- Elderly members of our community have access to programs and services which improve their quality of life.

- Our planning commission shares a common vision of the future direction of the community with the governing body.
- Our city actively and aggressively complies with all applicable federal and state human resources-related laws (Americans with Disabilities Act, Fair Labor Standards Act, etc.).
- Our city makes adequate use of revenues allowed to be used by state law.
- Our emergency service providers (police, fire and ambulance) have adequate equipment to perform their duties.
- Our city uses financial incentives (tax abatements, improvement districts, TIF, etc.) to encourage businesses to locate and expand in our community.
- Our park facilities are well-maintained.
- Our city actively seeks federal and state grant monies for capital improvement projects.
- Our city is considered economically healthy.
- City employees have access to productivity-enhancing technology.
- Our parks facilities are free from crime.
- The city's policies on development and redevelopment are current and work effectively.
- Our citizens approve bond issues for public infrastructure projects.
- City employees have access to quality, functional equipment in the performance of their duties.
- Our city reviews and adjusts its user fees to reflect changing costs.
- Our city staff are adequately compensated.
- Our city services are accessible to persons with physical and mental disabilities.
- Our city is financially able to meet mandated requirements from the state and federal level.
- Overall, our community is a desirable place to live and work.
- Our city is fiscally sound.
- The city staff is empowered to perform their necessary duties.
- Our transportation system (streets, bridges, etc.) adequately manages traffic.
- Severe financial problems are not likely to occur within our city government.

Low Scoring Issues

Several statements received low scores indicating mild to strong disagreement and potentially major issues and concerns of the Governing Body, Planning Commission and City Staff. For the purpose of this analysis a median of 2 or less was considered a low score. Based on this standard, respondents generally disagreed with the following statements:

- Our city is attractive to visitors and tourists.
- Our residents do not feel over-taxed.
- Our city provides adequate employment opportunities for its residents.
- Our city has a healthy retail and commercial sector.
- Our citizens rarely complain about the quality of city streets.
- Our city offers a variety of quality housing opportunities for current and new residents.
- Our citizens rarely complain about the quality of city water services.
- Our public infrastructure is not deteriorating.
- Our city has a viable economic development strategy.
- Our code enforcement policies are adequately enforced.
- Our community does not have a large number of citizens on "fixed incomes" (senior citizens, etc.).
- Most residents stay in the community to do their shopping.
- Our city offers a diverse selection of shopping alternatives.

Agreement among Responses

Several statements received a lower than normal standard deviation indicating a general consensus. A standard deviation of 0.75 or less was considered a threshold for identifying general consensus on issues. Based on this standard, respondents generally concurred that the following statements were correct:

- Our police respond very quickly to local emergencies.
- Our city's capital improvement plan is an active part of the annual budget process.
- Our form of government (council, mayor, administrator) is the best vehicle for providing local government services in our community.
- Our local fire district responds quickly to emergency calls.
- Our city's population increased in the 1990s.
- Our city is served by a quality K through 12 education system.
- Our city governing body provides coherent and strategic policy direction for the community.
- Our city budget successfully balances expenditure demands with revenues.
- Our city's population is growing.
- Our city makes adequate use of revenues allowed to be used by state law.
- Our city reviews and adjusts its user fees to reflect changing costs.
- Our city is financially able to meet mandated requirements from the state and federal level.
- Overall, our community is a desirable place to live and work.

Respondent generally concurred that the following statement was incorrect:

- Our citizens rarely complain about the quality of city streets.

Disagreement among Responses

Several questions provided a broader array of responses than normal, indicating potential disagreement on issues. A standard deviation of 1.5 and greater is used to indicate a strong difference of opinion among the respondents. No standard deviations of 1.5 or greater existed between all three groups. However, strong disagreement existed within each of the respondent groups individually. Following are strong disagreements by group.

The City Council expressed strong differences of opinion on the following issues:

- The city actively pursues federal and state grants to fund park and recreation programs and facilities.
- Our city actively seeks federal and state grants for human services programs.
- Elderly members of our community have access to programs and services which improve their quality of life.
- City staff members actively track legislative actions affecting local governments at the state and federal levels.
- Our city actively seeks federal and state grant monies for capital improvement projects.
- There is ample coordination of services and programs among various governmental units in our community.
- The city takes an active role in improving the aesthetics of the community through urban design.

The Planning Commission had the greatest number of differences of opinions on the questionnaire statements. They expressed a strong difference of opinion on the following issues:

- Our city has an on-going community recreation program.
- Our city officials work well with local school officials.
- Our city has a diverse and stable tax base.
- Our code enforcement policies encourage improvement of property.
- Our city offers an adequate variety of recreational programs for residents of all ages.
- Our city has an established network of residents who volunteer for public service opportunities.
- Our city taxes are reasonable for the services provided.
- Our city participates in League activities (annual conference, training, legislative activities, etc.).
- Our city is active in working with the business community in recruiting and retaining business.
- Community revitalization is good.
- Our city effectively implements its policies and regulations.
- Our public infrastructure is not deteriorating.
- Our emergency service providers (police, fire and ambulance) have adequate equipment to perform their duties.
- Our park facilities are well-maintained.
- Our local taxes are not too high.
- Our community does not have a large number of citizens on "fixed incomes" (senior citizens, etc.).
- The city takes an active role in improving the aesthetics of the community through urban design.

The City department heads expressed very few strong differences of opinions. Staff expressed a strong difference of opinion on only the two following issues:

- Our ordinances are up-to-date and reflect the changing nature of the community.
- Our city uses financial incentives (tax abatements, improvement districts, TIF, etc.) to encourage businesses to locate and expand in our community.

Because no strong disagreement existed among all three groups, a standard deviation of 1.25 was considered adequate for identifying moderate disagreement and initiating a discussion concerning specific issues. Moderate disagreement was identified in regard to the following statements:

- Our ordinances are up-to-date and reflect the changing nature of the community.
- Our city has a diverse and stable tax base.
- Our code enforcement policies encourage improvement of property.
- Our planning and zoning staff members are well-equipped to facilitate development/redevelopment in the community.
- Our city participates in League activities (annual conference, training sessions, legislative activities, etc.).
- Our city works well with other communities to create regional solutions to municipal problems.
- Community revitalization is good.
- Our planning commission shares a common vision of the future direction of the community with the governing body.
- Our emergency service providers (police, fire and ambulance) have adequate equipment to perform their duties.
- Our city uses financial incentives (tax abatements, improvement districts, TIF, etc.) to encourage businesses to locate and expand in our community.
- The city takes an active role in improving the aesthetics of the community through urban design.
- Our city-owned facilities are adequate to meet the needs of the community.
- Our city is well respected within the metropolitan region.

Analysis by Category

Community Planning

Overall there was some concern indicated about the City’s community planning efforts. There is an agreement among most respondents that the code enforcement policies are not adequately enforced. Staff had a slightly more positive perspective on this issue than the City Council and Planning Commission. Similarly, the average score of the Planning Commission indicated an opinion that the City’s code enforcement policies don’t encourage improvement of property, although opinions varied.

The Planning Commission felt that planning and zoning staff members are not well-equipped to facilitate development/redevelopment in the community. The opinion of all three groups varied significantly on this issue. The Planning Commission’s responses also indicated an opinion that the City’s ordinances are not up to date. Staff’s opinions of this issue scored neutrally, their opinions varied significantly. Similarly, The Planning Commission’s opinions regarding whether the City effectively implements its policies and regulations varied significantly. Both the Planning Commission and City Council’s opinions varied regarding the City’s role in improving the aesthetics of the community through urban design.

In regard to process, the City Council perceives the planning process at their level to be somewhat contentious and divisive. Similarly, the City Council and Staff felt that decisions and the Planning Commission level are contentious and divisive. Lastly, the opinion between all three groups varied significantly in regard to a shared common vision of the future direction of the community between the City Council and Planning Commission.

Analysis of this category indicates that the City’s vision, planning policies and implementation processes need to be revisited. This issue may be significantly resolved through the Comprehensive Plan Update.

COMMUNITY PLANNING									
Questions by Category		Average Response				Most Common Response	High	Median	Low
		All Respondents	City Council	Planning Commission	Staff				
Q #						All Respondents			
5	Our ordinances are up-to-date and reflects the changing nature of the community.	3.1	3.5	2.8	3.0	4	5	4	1
12	Our code enforcement policies encourage improvement of property.	3.0	3.0	2.3	3.5	4	5	4	1
17	Our city has effectively implemented our current comprehensive plan.	3.1	3.0	3.4	3.0	4	5	3	1
28	Our planning and zoning staff members are well-equipped to facilitate development/redevelopment in the community.	3.7	4.3	2.2	4.1	4	5	4	1
32	Our city governing body provides coherent and strategic policy direction for the community.	3.7	3.8	4.0	3.4	3	5	4	3
39	Our city encourages development/redevelopment.	3.8	3.7	4.3	3.4	4	5	4	1
50	The city's zoning decisions are fair and equitable.	4.2	3.8	4.7	4.1	4	5	4	2
59	Our city effectively implements its policies and regulations.	3.4	3.5	3.0	3.6	4	5	4	1
63	Our planning commission shares a common vision of the future direction of the community with the governing body.	3.4	2.8	4.2	3.3	5	4	4	1
70	Our code enforcement policies are adequately enforced.	2.7	2.3	2.0	3.4	2	4	2	1
74	Planning and zoning decisions are seldom contentious or divisive for the governing body.	3.0	2.7	3.6	2.9	4	4	3	1
82	The city's policies on development and redevelopment are current and work effectively.	3.3	3.4	3.8	2.8	4	5	4	1
88	The city takes an active role in improving the aesthetics of the community through urban design.	2.9	2.6	2.8	3.3	2	5	3	1
90	Planning and zoning decisions are rarely contentious or divisive for the planning commission.	2.8	2.7	3.4	2.6	4	4	3	1

Fiscal Strength

All three groups shared a positive view of the City’s fiscal strength. The City Council had a slightly more positive perception of fiscal strength than the other two groups. However, concern was indicated with the diversity and stability of the City’s current tax base and the perception of the level of taxation by residents. Although all three groups felt that residents feel over-taxed, only the Planning Commission expressed a clear opinion that taxes are actually too high. In regard to both the tax base and level of local taxes, the opinions among members of the Planning Commission differed significantly.

It is also worth noting the City’s confidence in the manageability of the City’s long-term debt, the current balance between expenditure demands and revenues, use of revenues and current user fees.

Analysis of this category indicates that all three groups are positive about the current fiscal strength and optimistic about the future strength of the City. However, the concern regarding the diversity and stability of the tax base and the level of taxation indicates that non-residential development should be a focus of the comprehensive plan update.

FISCAL STRENGTH									
Questions by Category	Average Response				Most Common Response	High	Median	Low	
	All Respondents	City Council	Planning Commission	Staff	All Respondents				
Q #									
11	Our city has a diverse and stable tax base.	2.7	2.5	2.5	2.9	1	5	3	1
18	Our city's capital improvement plan is an active part of the annual budget process.	4.2	4.3	4.0	4.3	5	5	4	3
23	Our residents do not feel over-taxed.	2.3	2.7	1.8	2.4	3	4	2	1
34	Our city budget successfully balances expenditure demands with revenues	3.8	4.2	3.3	3.9	4	5	4	3
45	Our city's long-term debt is manageable.	4.2	4.5	3.6	4.3	4	5	4	3
69	Our city makes adequate use of revenues allowed to be used by state law.	3.9	4.4	3.4	4.0	4	5	4	3
79	Our local taxes are not too high.	3.0	3.2	2.7	3.0	4	4	3	1
86	Our city reviews and adjusts its user fees to reflect changing costs.	3.9	4.2	4.0	3.8	4	5	4	3
92	Our city is financially able to meet mandated requirements from the state and federal level.	3.6	3.8	3.6	3.6	4	4	4	2
95	Our city is fiscally sound.	3.7	3.8	3.0	4.0	4	5	4	2
99	Severe financial problems are not likely to occur within our city government.	3.6	4.0	3.0	3.9	4	5	4	2

Growth

Overall, all three groups had a fairly negative perception of many of the questions which are used to analyze the City’s growth potential. The City’s opinion of the current transportation system was low. The City Council and staff expressed strong negative opinions about the current transportation system.

The perception of the City was also in question. All three groups shared very similar opinions that the community may not be attractive to visitors and tourists. Similarly, the City Council and Planning Commission felt that the City is not currently well respected within the metropolitan region. Staff had a slightly more positive perception of the City’s standing within the region.

The City Council and Planning Commission also appear to have concern regarding the City’s economic development program. Staff respondents had less concern. The use of financial incentives is a closely related issue. Although it scored positively, there was a notable difference of opinion among members of all three groups and within the department heads.

Housing quality and variety are indicators of a City’s ability to accommodate new development and diverse growth and to retain existing citizens. All three groups indicated that the City does not currently offer a variety of quality housing opportunities for current or new residents.

Analysis of this category indicates that the City’s growth potential is limited by current conditions and lack of programming. A focus of the plan update should be transportation improvements, economic development programming and housing diversity. The City should also strongly consider the development and marketing of a vision and image for the City.

GROWTH									
Questions by Category		Average Response				Most Common Response	High	Median	Low
		All Respondents	City Council	Planning Commission	Staff				
Q #		All Respondents							
2	Our community is attractive to outside investors and developers.	3.2	3.2	3.0	3.4	4	5	3	2
6	Our city has a good transportation system (streets, bridges, etc.).	2.5	2.2	3.0	2.4	3	5	3	1
7	Our city is attractive to visitors and tourists.	2.6	2.7	2.2	2.9	2	5	2	1
14	Our community has a viable economical development program.	2.8	2.5	2.3	3.3	2	5	3	1
25	Our city's population increased in the 1990s.	4.9	4.8	5.0	4.9	5	5	5	4
27	Our city is served by a quality K through 12 education system.	4.6	4.2	4.4	5.0	5	5	5	3
36	Our city's population is growing.	5.0	4.8	5.0	5.0	5	5	5	4
39	Our city encourages development/redevelopment.	3.8	3.7	4.3	3.4	4	5	4	1
47	Our city is active in working with the business community in recruiting and retaining business.	3.3	3.2	3.7	3.0	4	5	4	1
52	Our city offers a variety of quality housing opportunities for current and new residents.	2.6	2.5	2.8	2.5	2	5	2	1
58	Community revitalization is good.	3.3	3.0	2.7	3.9	2	5	3	1
72	Our city uses financial incentives (tax abatements, improvement districts, TIF, etc.) to encourage businesses to locate and expand in our community.	3.7	4.0	3.8	3.4	4	5	4	1
93	Overall, our community is a desirable place to live and work.	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.1	4	5	4	3
101	Our city is well respected within the metropolitan region.	2.7	2.2	2.3	3.3	1	5	3	1

Government Services

Government services related questions generally scored above average, though no issues were scored high. Moderate to strong concerns were only expressed about a couple of issues. The adequacy and variety of recreational programs offered was scored below average overall. The City Council scored the current level and variety of recreation programs very low. The Planning Commission’s average score was also low. However, it should be noted that members’ opinions varied significantly.

Respondents also indicated a concern about the community’s satisfaction with the quantity and quality of City services overall. The City Council and Planning Commission both scored the perception of City services low, while staff had a more neutral opinion. In comparison, the average score for all groups was slightly higher when asked about the quality of services alone. However, the City Council indicated a stronger opinion that the community’s opinion of the quality of service was lower than that of quantity. They also felt that the public held a slightly negative opinion of City Government in general.

Lastly, The Planning Commission also scored the quality of existing utility services below average. Both the City Council and Staff had favorable perceptions of the City’s utility services.

Analysis of this category indicates a need to evaluate the quality of City services as a means of identifying specific deficiencies in quantity and quality. The Comprehensive Plan Update should address utilities and recreation opportunities.

GOVERNMENT SERVICES									
Questions by Category	Average Response				Most Common Response	High	Median	Low	
	All Respondents	City Council	Planning Commission	Staff					
Q #	All Respondents								
8	The utility services our residents have access to, such as water, wastewater and and solid waste collection are of high quality.	3.1	3.5	2.5	3.3	4	5	3	1
15	Our city offers an adequate variety of recreational programs for residents of all ages.	2.7	2.3	2.8	3.0	2	5	3	1
19	Our city's economic future is sound.	3.6	3.7	2.8	4.0	4	5	4	2
20	Our city taxes are reasonable for the services provided.	3.4	3.3	3.4	3.5	4	5	4	1
31	Our city generally provides consistent and equal services to all residents.	3.5	3.2	3.5	3.8	4	5	4	1
42	Our community's residents are satisfied with the quantity and quality of city services provided.	2.7	2.7	2.4	3.0	3	4	3	1
53	Our citizens are generally satisfied with the quality of city services.	3.1	2.3	3.2	3.5	4	4	3	1
66	Community members speak of our city government in a favorable light.	3.2	2.8	3.6	3.3	3	5	3	2
77	City employees have access to productivity-enhancing technology.	3.6	4.0	3.0	3.8	4	5	4	2
85	City employees have access to quality, functional equipment in the performance of their duties.	3.6	4.0	3.4	3.4	4	5	4	1
91	Our city services are accessible to persons with physical and mental disabilities.	3.5	4.0	3.2	3.4	4	5	4	2
96	The city staff is empowered to perform their necessary duties.	3.8	4.0	4.0	3.5	4	5	4	1

Human Services

With the exception of cultural diversity, all three groups indicated that human services needs are currently being addressed within the City. In regard to diversity, the overall response was very low, indicating an opinion that the City is not well prepared to effectively deal with cultural diversity. The Planning Commission in particular had a very strong opinion of the lack of preparedness, giving the statement one of the lowest scores in the questionnaire.

Although above average scores were recorded, The Planning Commission’s opinions of the City’s volunteer base varied significantly. Similarly, the City Council’s opinions of the City’s utilization of federal and state grants for human services programs and services for elderly residents varied significantly.

Analysis of this category indicates that overall, the City’s human services are well perceived and substantially adequate for the City’s current demographics. However, projected increases in the elderly population and diversification of the population appear to warrant additional service considerations.

HUMAN SERVICES									
Questions by Category		Average Response				Most Common Response	High	Median	Low
		All Respondents	City Council	Planning Commission	Staff				
Q #						All Respondents			
4	Our residents have access to a solid health care delivery system (medical staff, facilities, ambulance service, etc.).	3.3	3.0	3.0	3.6	4	5	4	2
16	Our city has an established network of residents who volunteer for public service opportunities.	3.7	3.7	3.3	3.9	4	5	4	2
27	Our city is served by a quality K through 12 education system.	4.6	4.2	4.4	5.0	5	5	5	3
38	Our city is well prepared to deal effectively with the service demands of a culturally diverse community.	2.6	2.8	1.8	3.0	2	4	3	1
49	Our city actively seeks federal and state grants for human services programs.	3.6	3.6	3.8	3.5	4	5	4	1
62	Elderly members of our community have access to programs and services which improve their quality of life.	3.4	3.0	3.8	3.4	4	5	4	1

Intergovernmental Relations and Cooperation

The opinions regarding intergovernmental relations and cooperation scored average or above, with the exception of coordination of “various governmental units” in the community. Both the City Council and Staff felt that better cooperation amongst the various governmental units was needed. It should be noted that the opinion of the City Council members varied significantly.

The opinions of the City Council also varied significantly on whether the City actively tracks legislative actions affecting local governments at the state and federal levels. Overall the Council’s score indicated an opinion that more tracking was needed.

Other differences of opinions were expressed between all respondents on the City’s participation in the Municipal League activities and the creation of regional solutions to municipal problems. Within the Planning Commission members’ responses varied significantly regarding the coordination with the school district and participation with the League.

Analysis of this category indicates a need to further discuss the coordination within the local governmental agencies. In particular, it may indicate a need for improved coordination and communication between the City Council, Planning Commission and other advisory boards.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS & COOPERATION									
Questions by Category	Average Response			Most Common Response	High	Median	Low		
	All Respondents	City Council	Planning Commission Staff						
Q #	All Respondents								
10	Our city officials work well with local school officials.	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	4	5	4	1
33	Our city interacts actively with our state legislative delegation.	3.4	3.2	3.6	3.4	3	5	3	2
44	Our city participates in League activities (annual conference, training sessions, legislative activities, etc.).	3.8	4.5	3.0	3.9	5	5	4	1
55	Our city works well with other communities to create regional solutions to municipal problems.	3.0	2.7	3.0	3.3	3	5	3	1
68	City staff members actively track legislative actions affecting local governments at the state and federal levels.	3.2	2.8	3.0	3.7	4	5	3	1
78	There is ample coordination of services and programs among various governmental units in our community.	2.8	2.6	3.2	2.8	2	5	3	1

Local Economy

Disagreement with statements about the local economy raised the most concern for a category overall. Ironically, the respondents were positive about the overall health of the economy and, with the exception of the Planning Commission, moderately positive about the economy’s ability to weather difficult economic times. The Planning Commission had a low opinion of the City’s ability to weather difficult economic times.

The City’s economic development program and strategy are not generally perceived as viable. Similarly, the retail and commercial sector are perceived as unhealthy, with little shopping diversity offered locally. Likely, as a result, the responses indicate that local residents do the majority of their shopping elsewhere.

Responses to another economic indicator, residents on fixed incomes, indicated a perception that a large number of citizens are on fixed incomes. The perception of housing variety and quality also scored low, indicating a need for a greater variety and diversity of housing options to meet current and future needs.

Analysis of this category indicates a great deal of concern with local economic factors. It also appears to reflect the City’s more recent trend as a “bed-room” community to Kansas City metro, Johnson County and Lawrence. Although the Comprehensive Plan Update will not include an economic or market analysis, related residential and non-residential development issues and opportunities can be addressed.

LOCAL ECONOMY									
Questions by Category		Average Response				Most Common Response	High	Median	Low
		All Respondents	City Council	Planning Commission	Staff				
Q #									
14	Our community has a viable economical development program.	2.8	2.5	2.3	3.3	2	5	3	1
30	Our city provides adequate employment opportunities for its residents.	2.5	3.0	1.8	2.5	2	4	2	1
41	Our city has a healthy retail and commercial sector.	2.1	2.2	1.5	2.5	2	4	2	1
52	Our city offers a variety of quality housing opportunities for current and new residents.	2.6	2.5	2.8	2.5	2	5	2	1
65	Our city has a viable economic development strategy.	2.4	2.0	2.8	2.5	2	4	2	1
76	Our city is considered economically healthy.	3.6	3.7	3.0	4.0	3	5	4	2
84	Our community does not have a large number of citizens on "fixed incomes" (senior citizens, etc.).	1.9	2.0	2.0	1.9	2	5	2	1
89	Most residents stay in the community to do their shopping.	1.6	2.0	1.5	1.3	1	3	1	1
94	Our city offers a diverse selection of shopping alternatives.	1.8	2.0	1.3	1.9	1	4	1	1
97	Our economic base has the diversity to weather difficult economic times.	3.1	3.2	2.2	3.5	4	5	3	1

Local Government Leadership

The perception of local government leadership was high overall. However, the City Council raised moderate concern with City Staff’s helpfulness and perception by the community and ability to manage financial matters. They also perceived that staff would need additional skills to lead the City into the 21st Century. Similarly, the Planning Commission felt that planning and zoning staff members are not well-equipped to facilitate development/redevelopment in the community. The opinion of all three groups varied significantly on this issue.

Analysis of this category indicates that the City’s local government leadership is relatively strong and in check. In regard to staffing issues, more specific concerns should be identified and addressed at the administrative level.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP									
Questions by Category		Average Response				Most Common Response	High	Median	Low
		All Respondents	City Council	Planning Commission	Staff	All Respondents			
Q #									
9	Our city government staff members are well-educated and well-trained to provide quality public service.	3.8	3.7	3.7	4.0	4	5	4	1
21	Our form of government (council, mayor, administrator) is the best vehicle for providing local government services in our community.	4.7	5.0	5.0	4.3	5	5	5	4
28	Our planning and zoning staff members are well-equipped to facilitate development/redevelopment in the community.	3.7	4.3	2.2	4.1	4	5	4	1
32	Our city governing body provides coherent and strategic policy direction for the community.	3.7	3.8	4.0	3.4	3	5	4	3
43	City employees are courteous, helpful, and are well-perceived by the community.	3.5	2.7	3.5	4.0	4	5	4	2
54	Our city government staff members have the skills to lead the city into the 21st Century.	3.5	2.7	3.5	4.1	4	5	4	1
56	City staff members are competent in managing the financial matters of the city.	3.5	2.8	3.7	3.9	4	5	4	1
67	Our city actively and aggressively complies with all applicable federal and state human resources-related laws (Americans with Disabilities Act, Fair Labor Standards Act, etc.).	4.1	4.3	3.6	4.1	4	5	4	3
87	Our city staff are adequately compensated.	4.0	4.5	4.0	3.6	4	5	4	2
96	The city staff is empowered to perform their necessary duties.	3.8	4.0	4.0	3.5	4	5	4	1

Public Infrastructure

The quality, quantity, condition and maintenance of City facilities and infrastructure were identified as issues, receiving below average scores. Specifically, the transportation system (streets and bridges), stormwater and city owned facilities were all of concern. Similarly, the citizens’ opinions of streets and water quality were perceived to be very low. All three groups felt that the City’s public infrastructure was significantly deteriorating.

In comparison, the City Council and City Staff perceived the actual quality of the City’s utilities as slightly positive. All three groups perceived the City’s capital improvement plan as adequate to ensure the current and future maintenance and improvement of the City’s infrastructure.

Analysis of this category indicates a need to address several infrastructure issues as part of the Comprehensive Plan. It also reflects the need to address not only future needs, but also the needs of the current population.

PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE									
Questions by Category		Average Response				Most Common Response	High	Median	Low
		All Respondents	City Council	Planning Commission	Staff				
Q #		All Respondents							
6	Our city has a good transportation system (streets, bridges, etc.).	2.5	2.2	3.0	2.4	3	5	3	1
8	The utility services our residents have access to, such as water, wastewater and and solid waste collection are of high quality.	3.1	3.5	2.5	3.3	4	5	3	1
29	The city's capital improvement plan is adequate to ensure the maintenance and improvement of the city's capital infrastructure.	3.7	4.2	3.0	3.9	4	5	4	2
40	Our city-owned facilities are well-maintained.	2.8	2.5	3.2	2.8	4	4	3	1
51	Our citizens rarely complain about the quality of city streets.	1.7	1.7	2.0	1.5	2	3	2	1
57	Our citizens rarely complain about the quality of city water services.	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.8	1	4	1	1
61	Our city's stormwater system adequately meets our needs.	2.5	1.8	2.8	2.8	3	4	3	1
64	Our public infrastructure is not deteriorating.	1.9	1.5	2.2	2.0	1	5	2	1
75	Our city actively seeks federal and state grant monies for capital improvement projects.	3.8	3.8	3.6	4.0	4	5	4	1
98	Our transportation system (streets, bridges, etc.) adequately manages traffic.	3.5	3.2	4.0	3.4	4	5	4	1
100	Our city-owned facilities are adequate to meet the needs of the community.	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.9	2	5	3	1

Parks and Recreation

Overall, a positive perception of the City’s coordination with the County, accessibility to parks, and park maintenance and safety were perceived as positive. Similarly, park fees are perceived to be adequate and appropriate.

In regard to the programming, facilities, land and open space, the responses indicated a need for improvement. Specifically, the City Council, Planning Commission and overall responses indicated a moderate inadequacy of the current recreational program’s ability to meet the needs of the community. The Planning Commission’s responses varied significantly on this issue. Overall responses indicated a need for more park programs and facility planning. In particular, Staff scored this issue low.

It should also be noted that the high scores related with the need to acquire park land and open space indicate a need to consider long-range parks and recreation needs and acquisition procedures. Because the statement was not structured positively, the high scores indicate a strong negative response. In particular, the Planning Commission’s responses indicate that the need for additional park land and open space is a significant issue.

Analysis of this category indicates a need for additional parks and recreation planning, programming and implementation. To that extent, the Comprehensive Plan will help address park land and open space needs, and parks and recreation related goals and objectives.

PARKS AND RECREATION								
Questions by Category	Average Response				Most Common Response	High	Median	Low
	All Respondents	City Council	Planning Commission	Staff				
Q #	All Respondents							
3 Our city has an on-going community recreation program.	3.8	3.8	3.4	4.0	4	5	4	1
15 Our city offers an adequate variety of recreational programs for residents of all ages.	2.7	2.3	2.8	3.0	2	5	3	1
22 Our city officials work well with county officials.	3.9	3.8	4.4	3.8	4	5	4	2
26 The city has a need to acquire park land and other open space.	4.1	3.7	4.8	3.9	5	5	4	2
37 Our recreation facilities are well-accessible to those with disabilities.	3.3	3.7	3.2	3.1	4	5	4	2
48 The city actively pursues federal and state grants to fund park and recreation programs and facilities.	3.5	3.3	3.2	3.9	4	5	4	1
60 Our city has an implementation plan for parks programs and facilities for the next five years.	2.9	3.2	3.3	2.4	3	5	3	1
73 Our park facilities are well-maintained.	4.1	4.5	3.4	4.3	5	5	4	2
81 Our parks facilities are free from crime.	3.6	4.6	2.8	3.5	4	5	4	2
86 Our city reviews and adjusts its user fees to reflect changing costs.	3.9	4.2	4.0	3.8	4	5	4	3

Public Safety

The City’s public safety services scored above average with the exception of the perceived ability to handle natural or man-made disasters. In particular, the response times of the fire department and police department were rated high. Responses also indicated that residents feel safe with ample police patrol and safe streets at night.

The Planning Commission indicated a concern with the adequacy of emergency service equipment, and the resulting ability of service providers’ ability to perform their duty. They also moderately disagreed that the City’s firefighters had access to “state-of-the-art” equipment, although opinions varied significantly.

Analysis of this category indicates that the City is relatively satisfied with the quality and quantity of public safety currently provided. However, responses indicate a need for additional disaster relief planning.

PUBLIC SAFETY									
Questions by Category		Average Response			Most Common Response	High	Median	Low	
		All Respondents	City Council	Planning Commission Staff	All Respondents				
Q #									
1	Our city has an ample amount of police patrols.	3.3	3.5	3.2	3.1	4	5	4	2
13	Our police respond very quickly to local emergencies.	3.7	4.0	3.6	3.6	4	4	4	2
24	Our local fire district responds quickly to emergency calls.	4.5	4.7	4.2	4.6	5	5	5	3
35	Our streets are safe at night.	3.9	4.0	3.3	4.1	4	5	4	2
46	Our city is adequately prepared to deal effectively with a community disaster (tornado, flood, explosion, chemical spill, etc.).	2.9	2.5	3.4	2.9	2	5	3	1
71	Our emergency service providers (police, fire and ambulance) have adequate equipment to perform their duties.	3.6	4.4	2.4	3.9	4	5	4	1
80	Our district firefighters have access to state-of-the-art fire fighting equipment.	3.2	4.0	2.6	3.1	2	5	3	2