

# Intergovernmental Issues in Indiana 2001 IACIR Survey

May 2002

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# Executive Summary

*Intergovernmental Issues in Indiana (2001)* is the fourth in a series of periodic surveys of elected officials designed to help the Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations and the Indiana General Assembly understand the issues that are important to local governments. The 2001 survey included 24 questions and addressed a number of issues that were included in one or more previous IACIR surveys, including local conditions and services, the relationships between school corporations and other local governments, state government customer service, local government finance, information technology, and annexation. The survey also addressed a few new “hot topics” affecting local government currently, including land use and brownfields.

## Methods and Response Rate

IACIR administered a mail survey to 1,376 officeholders in early spring/late summer of 2001. Forty (40) percent were returned. The sample population included all members of the Indiana General Assembly, county council presidents, county board of commissioners presidents, mayors, and school board presidents. The sample also included a member of each town council and two township trustees from each county chosen at random. Response rates varied by type of officeholder. Mayors had the highest response rate (56 percent) and state representatives had the lowest (19 percent).

## Findings

- ***Officials Continue to be Optimistic About the Futures of Communities***

Eighty-four (84) percent of officials indicated that they were optimistic about the future direction of their communities. This result is consistent with the results from the two previous surveys (82 percent in 1999 and 86 percent in 1997).

- ***Roads and Streets, Sewer, Traffic, Unemployment, and K-12 Education Most Important Issues for Action***

A majority of officials indicated that most conditions are stable in their communities. They reported that conditions related to *K-12 education, Internet access, Amount of development, Parks and recreation, and Police-community relations* had improved in the last year. *Roads and streets* and *Sewer* are two additional issues reported as improving over the last five years. They expressed concern that conditions related to *Traffic, Roads and streets, Drug and alcohol abuse, Cost and availability of health care, and Unemployment* had deteriorated over the last year and the last five years. They identified *Roads and streets, Sewer, Traffic, Unemployment, and K-12 education* as the most important issues to address in the next two years.

- ***Continued Support Shown for Local Intergovernmental Cooperation***

Most officials, particularly school board presidents, mayors, and county commissioners, were optimistic about the working relationship between schools and other local governments.

- ***Officials Support Human and Web-Based State Government Customer Service Options***

The Office of Lieutenant Governor continues to explore options for improving customer service in state government. Among the options offered, more than 40 percent of respondents chose information specialists, case management technology, and Web-based networks as the most preferred options for improving state government customer services. Outsourcing was the least favored option.

- ***Planning Officials Need State Assistance for Planning Studies***

Among the activities within the Indiana Land Resources Council's statutory charge, municipal and county officials chose *Identify funding for planning studies*, *Facilitate relationships between state and local government*, and *Development best management practices* most often. Interestingly, when all officials were asked the same questions, the same options were chosen but in a different order

- ***Many Officials Work with State Agencies on Land Use Issues***

Officials reported working most often with the Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), the Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), and the Department of Transportation (IDOT) on land use issues. They rated their experiences with the Department of Commerce as the most favorable among the agencies listed, and IDEM and the Utility Regulatory Commission least favorably.

- ***Constituents Favor Lower Density Development***

Officials surmised that their constituents favor lower density development, although the survey indicates that officials believe that constituents in municipalities and unincorporated areas may define *low density* differently. Officials said that constituents generally oppose proximate housing and commercial development and have slight preferences for mixing housing types and property values, establishing walking connections between developments, and remote and homogeneous neighbors.

- ***Constituents Favor Non-Tax Options for Funding Open Space***

Officials surmised also that their constituents preferred *Open space requirements for new subdivisions*, *Using Build Indiana funds*, *Modify assessment rules for open space in subdivisions*, and *Protection by Non-Governmental, Nonprofit conservation organizations* as mechanisms for funding the protection of open space. Options that would impose dedicated taxes or fees were unpopular.

- ***Mayors Report Most Knowledge and Experience with Brownfields***

Mayors reported understanding the brownfields issue and available solutions and having participated in the redevelopment of a brownfield most often. As a group, mayors also reported having undertaken the most remediations and that a majority of these efforts were led by the local government.

- ***Communities Continue to Annex***

Approximately one-third of municipal respondents reported passing annexation legislation in 2000. A large majority of these annexations were owner-initiated, a finding consistent with the data collected for the IACIR's 1998 report, *Annexation in Indiana: Issues and Options*.

- ***Officials More Likely to Have Access to the Internet than to E-mail***

All senators and representatives reported having a dedicated e-mail account and access to the Internet. Except for township trustees, a majority of officials in all other groups have access to the Internet. Fewer officials reported having a dedicated e-mail account in each group.

- ***Mixed Success in Integrating Telecommunications and Information Technology***

The experiences of officials varied with respect to a variety of applications. Only *Using information technology to improve education* was rated as successful by a majority of officials. *Providing high-speed Internet access* and in *Integrating information technology into local government* were rated by more than 40 percent of officials as successful.

# Introduction

*Intergovernmental Issues in Indiana (2001)* is the fourth in a series of periodic surveys of elected officials designed to help the Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (IACIR) and the Indiana General Assembly understand the issues that are important to local government. This report summarizes the results of the 2001 IACIR survey. The 2001 survey was sent to state legislators and officials from counties, townships, cities, towns, and school districts.

The 2001 survey process included development of the questionnaire, selection of the sample populations, administration of the survey and coding. IACIR mailed the 2001 survey to 1,376 officeholders in the late spring/early summer. A complete description of methodology appears in Appendix A.

The IACIR conducted similar surveys in 1996, 1997, and 1999. The original survey was modeled after a regular survey of local elected officials conducted by the National League of Cities (NLC). The most recent addition of the NLC survey (January 2001) is documented in *The State of America's Cities: The Seventeenth Annual Opinion Survey of Municipal Elected Officials*. The 2001 IACIR survey included 24 questions and addressed a number of issues that were included in previous IACIR or NLC surveys. It also addressed several "hot topics" affecting local communities in 2001, including land use and planning, brownfields, Internet access, and natural gas prices. The Indiana Land Resources Council (ILRC), the Indiana Development Finance Authority (IDFA), and the Office of the Lieutenant Governor provided questions for the 2001 survey. The survey instrument appears in Appendix B.

Results of the survey are presented in the general order in which the questions appeared in the survey instrument. Generally, the responses from all offices are combined except in a few cases when the responses provided by one type or grouping of office holders deviated from the remainder. Results from previous surveys are provided for comparison when appropriate.

In order to account for non-responses to specific questions and questions addressed to specific types of officeholders, the number of responses is provided with the table or figure for each question. Questions 8 and 9 provided respondents with the option of writing in a specific response to "other." In cases when these responses closely matched an option within the list provided, the response was grouped with that option. A complete listing "other" responses is provided in Appendix C. Appendix D includes the complete listing of responses to the open-ended question (24) at the end of the survey. In a few cases, names or other identifiers have been removed to ensure that no individual respondents can be associated with a particular response.

## Survey Results

This report presents the results of the survey below in the general order in which the questions appeared in the survey instrument. Generally, the responses from all offices are combined except in a few cases when the responses provided by one type or grouping of office holders deviated from the remainder.

### Response Rates

Of 1,376 surveys mailed, 559 were returned. Six of the surveys returned were excluded from the analysis. Two respondents provided responses to fewer than two questions; four respondents did not hold elective office. The effective response rate for the survey was 40 percent (553 of 1,370).

Question 1 addressed the office held by each respondent. Table 1 shows the number of surveys sent and returned by each group. Sixteen respondents indicated *Other*. These responses were assigned to one of the remaining categories based on the type of government they represent. For example, several clerk-treasurers from towns responded. Each of these surveys was coded under town council member.

The 2001 response rate (40 percent) is lower than those established for the 1997 and 1999 surveys (61 percent and 51 percent, respectively). The response rate compares favorably with the 1996 rate (37 percent). Mayors had the highest response rate at 56 percent and state representatives had the lowest at 19 percent. All groups of officeholders experienced a decline in response rates from 1999.

**Table 1: Response rates by office (Question 1)**

Office	Returned	Mailed	Rate	Included others (number of respondents)
Senator	15	50	30%	
Representative	19	100	19%	
County council president	48	92	52%	County council vice-president (1)
County board of commissioners president	47	92	51%	
Mayor	65	117	56%	
Town council member	143	451	32%	Town clerk-treasurer (7)
Township trustee	80	184	43%	Township assessor (1)
School board president	136	290	47%	School board member (7)
Total	553	1376	40%	

## Local Conditions and Services

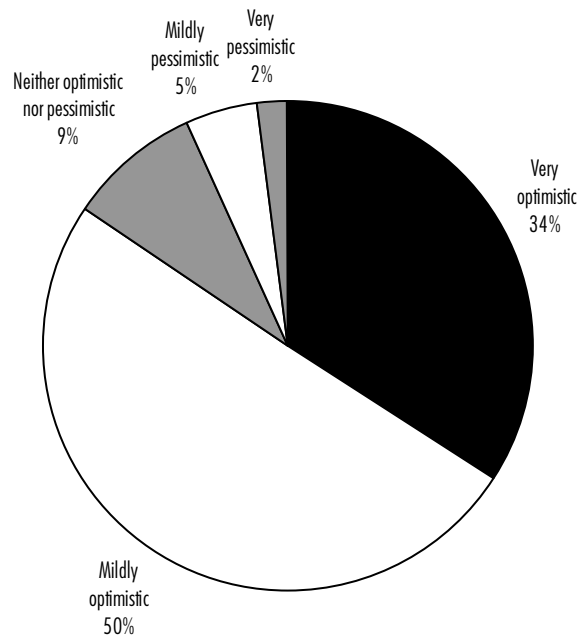
Questions 2–6 addressed local conditions and services. Question 2 queried respondents about their feelings regarding the future of their communities. As shown in Table 2 and Figure 1, respondents were overwhelmingly optimistic about the future of their communities (84 percent). This result is consistent with the results from the two previous surveys (82 percent in 1999 and 86 percent in 1997). Respondents were most optimistic in 1996 (91 percent). Fewer respondents reported being pessimistic than in all previous surveys.

Among groups of officeholders, mayors were the most optimistic (100 percent). Trustees reported being the least optimistic (63 percent).

**Table 2: Feelings about the general direction in which your community is heading (Question 2)**

	Very optimistic	Mildly optimistic	Neither optimistic or pessimistic	Mildly pessimistic	Very pessimistic
Senator (n=15)	33%	60%	7%	0%	0%
Representative (n=19)	26%	47%	16%	5%	5%
County council president (n=47)	26%	51%	19%	2%	2%
County commission president (n=47)	30%	57%	9%	4%	0%
Mayor (n=63)	73%	27%	0%	0%	0%
Town council member (n=139)	37%	53%	5%	5%	1%
Township trustee (n=77)	27%	36%	25%	6%	5%
School board president (n=135)	22%	63%	6%	7%	1%
Total (n=542)	34%	50%	9%	5%	2%

Figure 1: Feelings about the general direction the community is heading (Question 2; n=542)



Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 2001

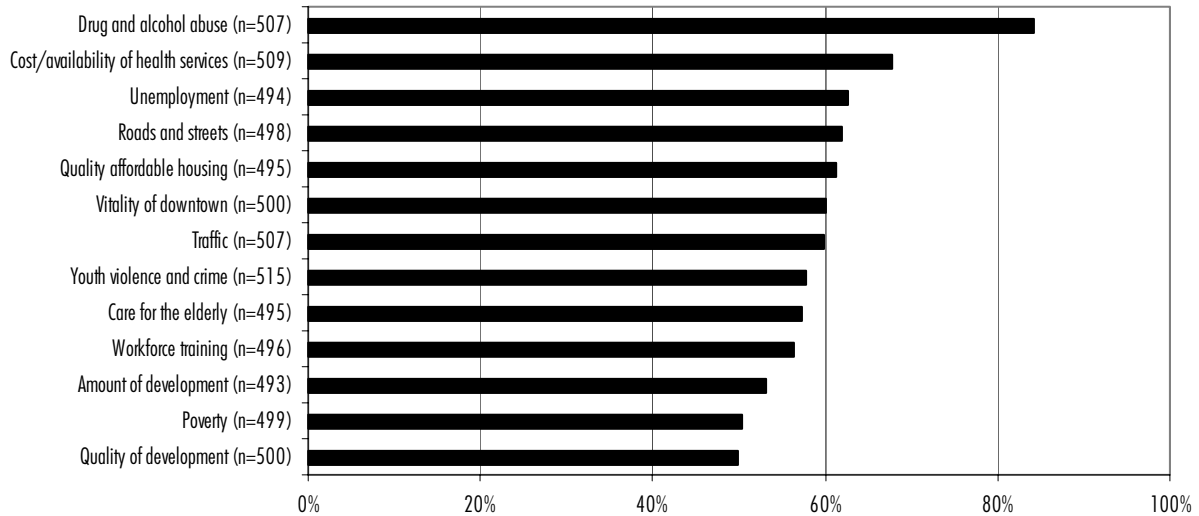
Questions 3-6 asked officeholders about the status of 32 community issues divided into six general categories: Health, Public safety, Economics, Local services, Land use, and Community quality of life. Respondents were asked about the current status of the condition as a problem, change over the last year, the most improved or deteriorated conditions over the previous five years, and the most important issues to address in the next two years.

Question 3 asked respondents to identify whether each of the 32 issues is a problem and if so, how severe. For 19 of the 32 conditions, a majority of respondents identified the condition as a *Minor or no problem* (Table 3). Among the remaining 13 conditions, respondents indicated most often that the following were either a major or moderate problem (Figure 2): *Drug and alcohol abuse* (84 percent), *Cost/availability of health services* (68 percent), *Unemployment* (62 percent), *Roads and streets* (61 percent), *Quality affordable housing* (61 percent), *Traffic* (60 percent), and *Vitality of downtown* (60 percent). Only *Drug and alcohol abuse* (26 percent) was rated by more than a quarter of respondents as a major problem within their communities.

**Table 3: Current status of community conditions (Question 3)**

		Major problem	Moderate problem	Minor or no problem	
Health	Cost/availability of health services (n=509)	22%	46%	32%	
	Drug and alcohol abuse (n=507)	26%	58%	16%	
	Care for the elderly (n=495)	10%	47%	43%	
Public safety	Police-community relations (n=511)	4%	23%	74%	
	Violent crime (n=508)	5%	32%	64%	
	Youth violence and crime (n=515)	9%	49%	42%	
Economics	Unemployment (n=494)	16%	46%	37%	
	Workforce training (n=496)	11%	45%	44%	
	Workforce retraining (n=485)	9%	40%	51%	
Local services	K-12 education (n=503)	10%	26%	64%	
	Drinking water (n=500)	6%	17%	77%	
	Sewer (n=493)	18%	28%	54%	
	Roads and streets (n=498)	22%	39%	38%	
	Internet access (n=497)	4%	22%	73%	
	Telephone (n=502)	5%	22%	73%	
	Parks and recreation (n=499)	5%	16%	79%	
	Solid waste management (n=496)	7%	27%	66%	
	Cable TV (n=495)	6%	23%	71%	
	Public transportation (n=493)	13%	26%	62%	
	Land use	Quality of development (n=500)	13%	37%	50%
		Amount of development (n=493)	16%	37%	47%
		Quality affordable housing (n=495)	19%	42%	39%
Open space (n=485)		9%	28%	63%	
Brownfields (n=469)		9%	23%	68%	
Community quality of life	Race-ethnic relations (n=507)	2%	27%	71%	
	Air quality (n=509)	5%	18%	77%	
	Water quality (n=503)	6%	19%	76%	
	Traffic (n=507)	21%	39%	40%	
	Poverty (n=499)	9%	41%	50%	
	Vitality of neighborhoods (n=495)	8%	35%	57%	
	Vitality of downtown (n=500)	21%	39%	40%	
	Volunteerism (n=504)	9%	29%	61%	

Figure 2: Conditions identified by most as major or moderate problems (Question 3)



Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 2001

Question 3 also asked specifically about whether conditions have improved, worsened, or not changed over the last year (Table 4). As in previous years, respondents reported *No change* most often for most conditions over the last 12 months. Only *Traffic* was reported by a majority of respondents as either *Improved* or *Worsened*. For 11 issues, greater than 30 percent of respondents indicated a condition as *Improved* or *Worsened* over the last 12 months. It is important to note, however, that for eight of these issues a majority of respondents still reported *No change*.

Table 4: Change in local conditions in the last 12 months (Question 3)

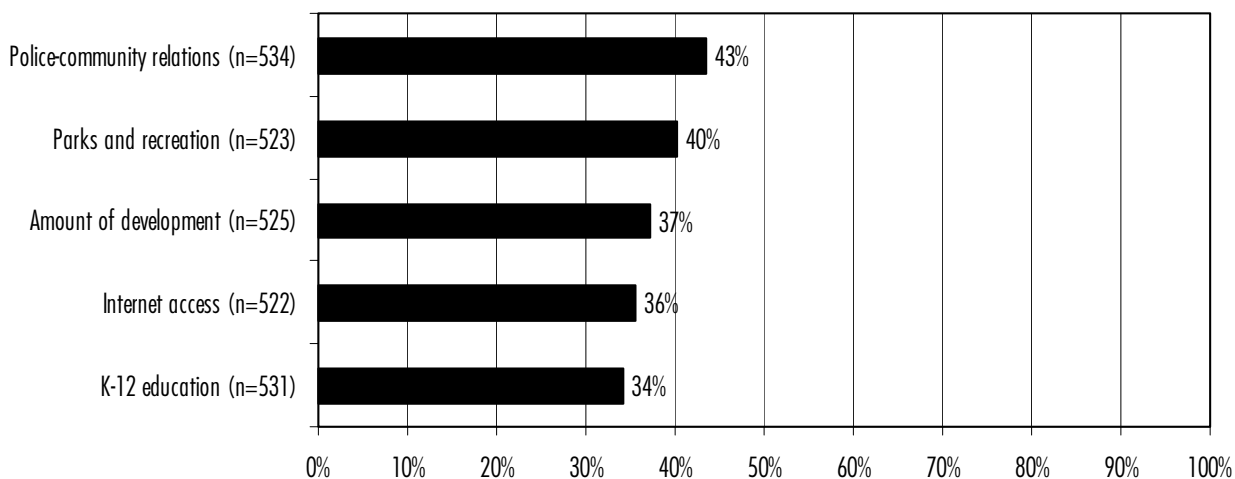
		Improved	Worsened	No change
Health	Cost/availability of health services (n=528)	18%	34%	48%
	Drug and alcohol abuse (n=520)	10%	34%	56%
	Care for the elderly (n=513)	18%	11%	71%
Public safety	Police-community relations (n=534)	43%	5%	51%
	Violent crime (n=523)	15%	13%	72%
	Youth violence and crime (n=528)	10%	29%	61%
Economics	Unemployment (n=534)	14%	48%	38%
	Workforce training (n=524)	19%	22%	60%
	Workforce retraining (n=519)	15%	12%	73%
Local services	K-12 education (n=531)	34%	10%	56%
	Drinking water (n=530)	21%	10%	69%
	Sewer (n=521)	27%	20%	53%
	Roads and streets (n=534)	27%	37%	36%
	Internet access (n=522)	36%	7%	57%
	Telephone (n=524)	16%	16%	68%
	Parks and recreation (n=523)	40%	5%	55%
	Solid waste management (n=528)	27%	11%	63%
	Cable TV (n=522)	16%	20%	64%
	Public transportation (n=516)	13%	7%	80%

Table 4: Change in local conditions in the last 12 months (Question 3) (continued)

		Improved	Worsened	No change
Land use	Quality of development (n=531)	29%	20%	51%
	Amount of development (n=525)	37%	18%	45%
	Quality affordable housing (n=526)	20%	26%	54%
	Open space (n=515)	9%	25%	67%
	Brownfields (n=497)	7%	13%	80%
Community quality of life	Race-ethnic relations (n=532)	14%	8%	77%
	Air quality (n=530)	6%	11%	83%
	Water quality (n=529)	15%	12%	74%
	Traffic (n=532)	7%	51%	42%
	Poverty (n=526)	4%	23%	73%
	Vitality of neighborhoods (n=520)	16%	18%	67%
	Vitality of downtown (n=525)	20%	32%	48%
	Volunteerism (n=528)	25%	16%	59%

Conditions reported most likely to be *Improved* (Figure 3) by respondents, included *Police-community relations* (43 percent), *Parks and recreation* (40 percent), *Amount of development* (37 percent), *Internet access* (36 percent), and *K-12 education* (34 percent). *Police-community relations*, *Parks and recreation*, and *K-12 education* were among the conditions reported as most improved in 1999 also. *Amount of development* and *Internet access* appeared as conditions for the first time in the 2001 survey.

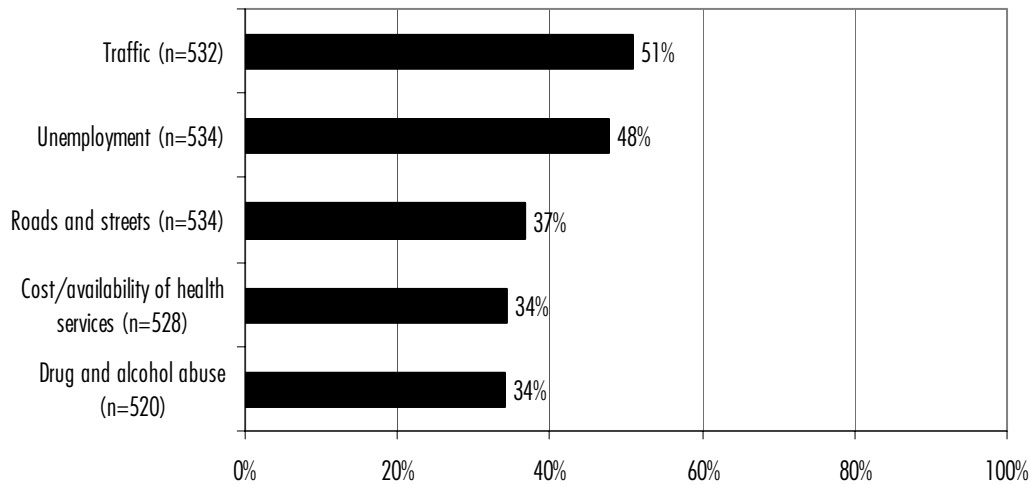
Figure 3: Conditions that have improved most over last 12 months (Question 3)



Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 2001

Conditions that were reported most often as deteriorated (Figure 4), included *Traffic* (51 percent), *Unemployment* (48 percent), *Roads and streets* (37 percent), *Cost/availability of health services* (34 percent), *Drug and alcohol abuse* (34 percent), and *Vitality of downtown* (32 percent). These conditions are the same ones identified most often by respondents as being major or moderate problems. Interestingly, *Unemployment* was reported among the most improved conditions in 1999. Many communities obviously are experiencing changes in the state and national economy. *Traffic*, *Cost/availability of health services*, and *Vitality of downtown* are conditions that have not appeared on previous surveys.

Figure 4: Conditions that have deteriorated most over last 12 months (Question 3)



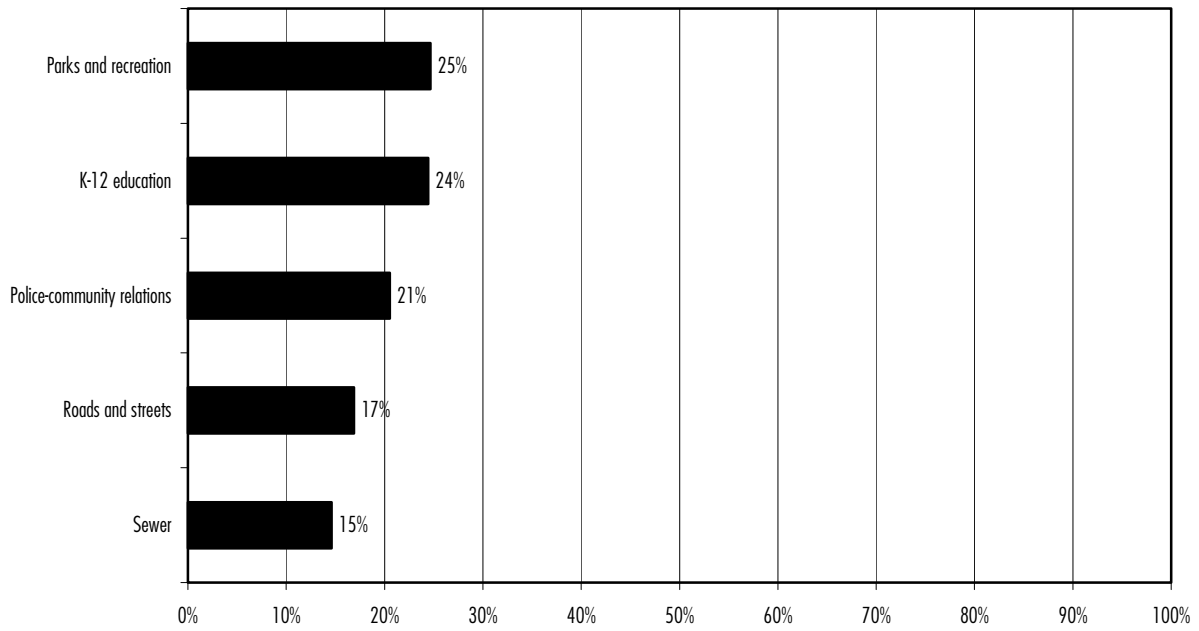
Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 2001

Questions 4 and 5 asked respondents to list the three most deteriorated and three most improved conditions over the last five years; Question 6 asked respondents to list the three most important issues to address in the next two years (Table 5). Five conditions were ranked by 15 percent or more of respondents as among the three most improved (Figure 5): *Parks and recreation* (25 percent), *K-12 education* (24 percent), *Police-community relations* (21 percent), *Roads and streets* (17 percent) and *Sewers* (15 percent). Five additional conditions were ranked by 15 percent or more of respondents as deteriorating most (Figure 6): *Traffic* (26 percent), *Roads and streets* (23 percent), *Cost/availability of health care services* (18 percent), *Drug and alcohol abuse* (18 percent), and *Unemployment* (17 percent). These responses are similar to the most frequent responses to conditions that had improved or deteriorated over the last year. Interestingly, *Roads and streets* appears both as most improved and most deteriorated. This result reflects that circumstances among communities are varied.

Table 5: Conditions ranked as one of three most improved, deteriorated, or important to work on (Questions 4-6)

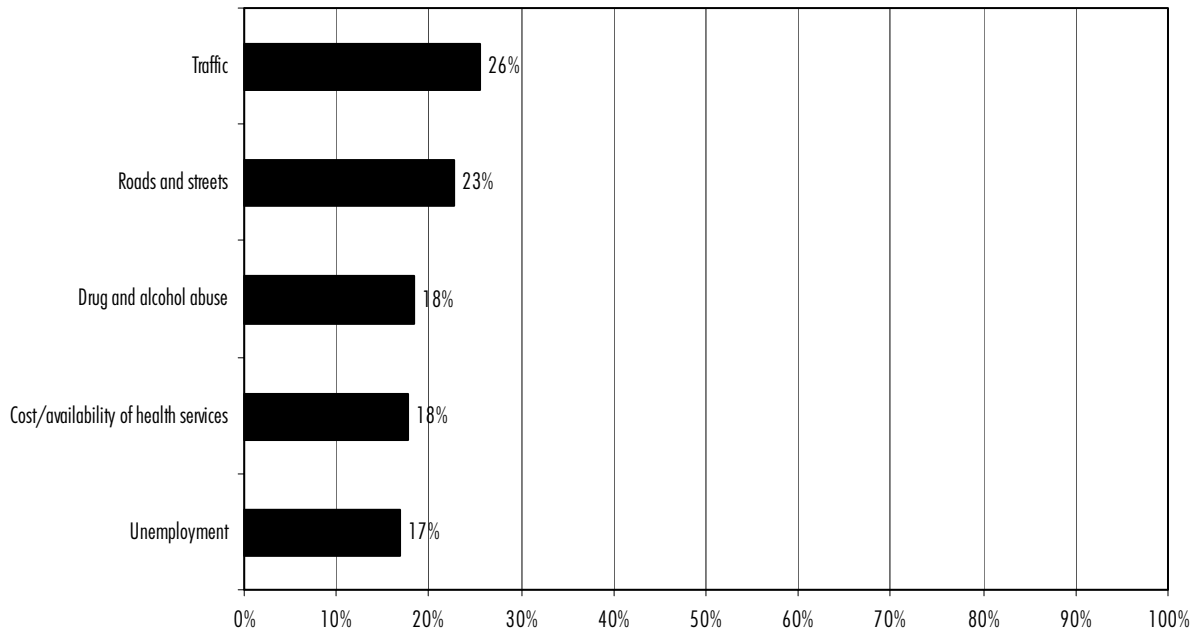
		Conditions improved most in the last 5 years (n=438)	Conditions deteriorated most in the last 5 years (n=476)	Conditions most important to work on over the next 2 years (n=462)
Health	Health (general)	4%	8%	8%
	Cost/availability of health services	5%	18%	13%
	Drug and alcohol abuse	1%	18%	13%
	Care for the elderly	7%	4%	5%
Public safety	Public safety (general)	8%	4%	4%
	Police-community relations	21%	2%	3%
	Violent crime	5%	4%	4%
	Youth violence and crime	1%	8%	7%
Economics	Economics (general)	5%	11%	12%
	Overall economic conditions	3%	6%	6%
	Unemployment	8%	17%	15%
	Workforce training	6%	3%	5%
	Workforce retraining	2%	2%	2%
Local services	Local services (general)	8%	4%	6%
	K-12 education	24%	6%	15%
	Drinking water	9%	6%	7%
	Sewer	15%	14%	20%
	Roads and streets	17%	23%	27%
	Internet access	11%	1%	2%
	Telephone	3%	3%	2%
	Parks and recreation	25%	2%	4%
	Solid waste management	8%	4%	5%
	Cable TV	6%	4%	0%
	Public transportation	4%	3%	3%
	Land use	Land use (general)	6%	8%
Quality of development		8%	4%	6%
Amount of development		8%	5%	5%
Quality affordable housing		5%	13%	12%
Open space		1%	3%	2%
Brownfields		0%	1%	2%
Community quality of life	Community quality of life (general)	4%	6%	6%
	Race-ethnic relations	3%	3%	5%
	Air quality	1%	4%	3%
	Water quality	3%	4%	3%
	Traffic	1%	26%	18%
	Poverty	1%	5%	6%
	Vitality of neighborhoods	3%	4%	3%
	Vitality of downtown	8%	14%	11%
Volunteerism	11%	3%	1%	

Figure 5: Conditions identified most often as improving most in the last five years (Question 5; n=561)



Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 2001

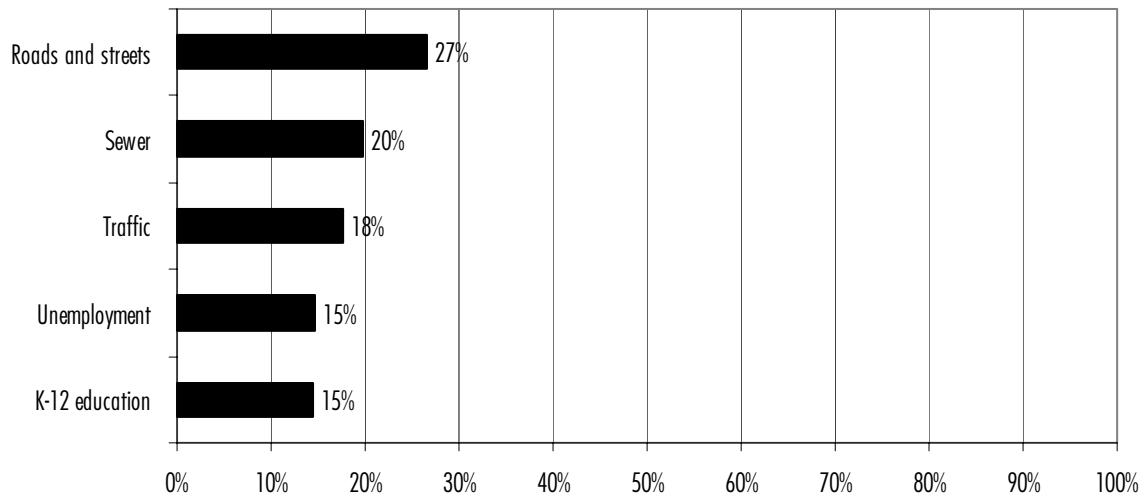
Figure 6: Conditions identified most often as deteriorating most in the last five years (Question 4; n=476)



Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 2001

The five conditions listed most frequently as important to address over the next two years were (Figure 7): *Roads and streets* (27 percent), *Sewer* (20 percent), *Traffic* (18 percent), *K-12 education* (15 percent), and *Unemployment* (15 percent). All of these conditions appeared among the most frequent responses for most improved or most deteriorated conditions over the last five years. *Infrastructure* has been listed in all previous surveys. *Economic conditions* was listed in 1999.

**Figure 7: Conditions identified most often as most important to address in the next two years (Question 6; n=462)**



Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 2001

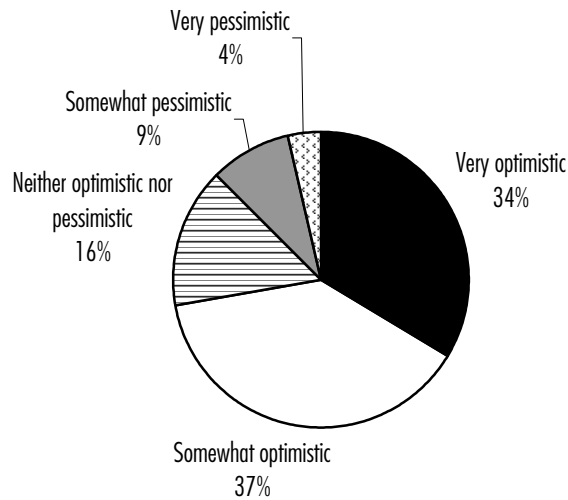
## Relationship Between Schools and Local Government

Question 7 addressed the working relationship between local governments and local school systems. The majority of officials were optimistic about the ability of these governments to work together to address local needs (Figure 8). Overall, responses in 2001 were comparable to those given in 1999. Among officeholders, mayors, school board presidents, and county commissioners were more optimistic than other types of officeholders. Senators were the least optimistic group.

**Table 6: Outlook on working relationship between local government and schools (Question 7)**

	Very optimistic	Somewhat optimistic	Neither optimistic nor pessimistic	Somewhat pessimistic	Very pessimistic
Senator (n=15)	20%	47%	20%	13%	0%
Representative (n=18)	11%	61%	17%	11%	0%
County council president (n=47)	26%	38%	17%	17%	2%
County commission president (n=47)	36%	43%	11%	6%	4%
Mayor (n=64)	47%	39%	9%	5%	0%
Town council member (n=140)	36%	34%	16%	7%	6%
Township trustee (n=75)	19%	29%	35%	11%	7%
School board president (n=135)	39%	43%	7%	8%	2%
Total (n=541)	34%	38%	16%	9%	4%

Figure 8: Outlook on working relationship between local government and schools (Question 7; n=541)



Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 2001

## Local Government Finance

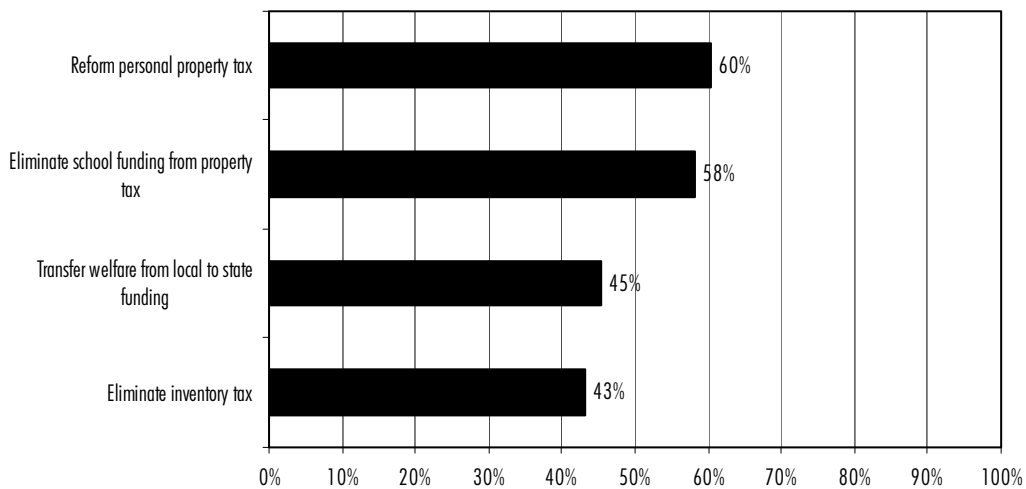
In Question 8 respondents were asked to select the three most effective measures for local government finance reform from a list provided (Table 7 and Figure 9). The measures most often selected were *Reform personal property tax* (60 percent), *Eliminate school funding from property tax* (58 percent), *Transfer welfare from local to state funding* (45 percent) and *Eliminate inventory tax* (43 percent). Respondents to previous surveys chose similar measures most often.

Respondents provided approximately 90 *Other* responses. Most reflect additional options for reforming local government finance. Multiple responses were provided for a number of issues including unfunded mandates, the overall level of taxes in the state, fiscal flexibility/home rule, the need to reduce spending, and school and road funding. These responses are provided in Appendix C.

**Table 7: Most effective local government finance reform (Question 8; n=448)**

	Percentage
Eliminate school funding from property tax	58%
Eliminate inventory tax	43%
Allow local government to enact a local gas tax	11%
Allow local government to enact a local sales tax	17%
Remove all restriction on local income tax	9%
Reform personal property tax	60%
Remove cap on local option income tax	12%
Remove property tax levy limits	18%
Transfer welfare from local to state funding	45%
Other	13%

**Figure 9: Most effective local government finance reform (Question 8; n=448)**

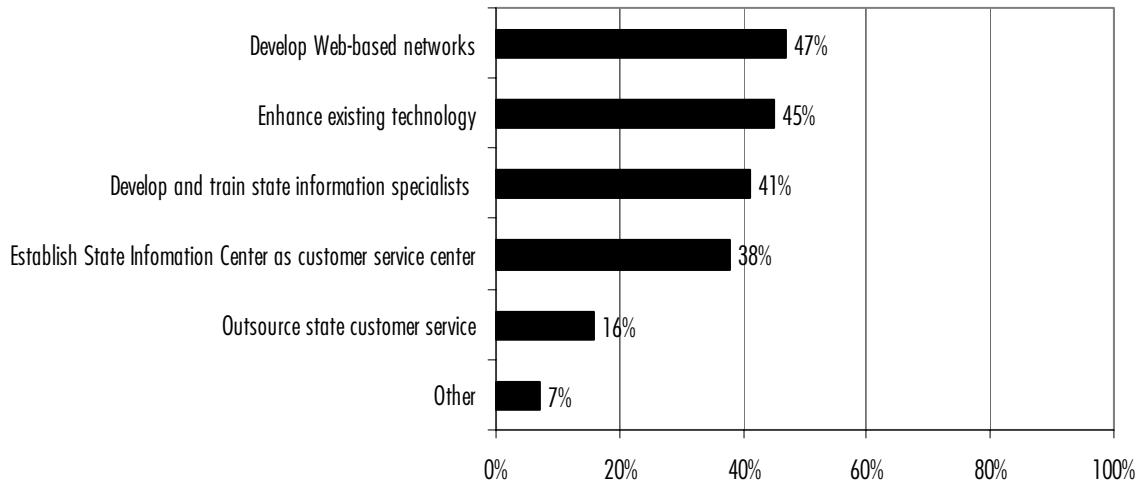


Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 2001

### Contact with State Government

Question 9 is a follow-up to a series of customer survey questions included in the 1999 survey that asked respondents to rank several options for improving customer service in Indiana state agencies (Table 7 and Figure 10). When considering the option identified by respondents as most effective, *Developing easy-to-use, Web-based networks* was chosen most often as first or second choice (47 percent). Overall, all options with the exception of *Outsourcing* and *Other* were rated similarly by respondents (means ranging from 2.7 to 3.0). *Outsource state customer service to the private sector* and *Other* were considered to be the least effective options (mean = 1.7 and mean = .4, respectively). Respondents provided over 25 *Other* responses. These are listed in Appendix C.

Figure 10: First or second most effective options to improve customer service (Question 9; n=402)



Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 2001

Table 8. Options for improving Indiana state government agencies' customer service (Question 9; n=402)

	1st Choice (5)	2nd Choice (4)	3rd Choice (3)	4th Choice (2)	5th Choice (1)	Unchosen (0)	Mean
Establish the State Information Center (already exists) as the customer service center for all of state government and accessible at 1-800-CALLGOV	20%	18%	16%	18%	13%	14%	2.7
Formally develop and train state information specialists who are accessible via telephone	19%	22%	25%	17%	7%	10%	3.0
Outsource state customer service to the private sector	7%	9%	11%	16%	38%	19%	1.7
Enhance existing technologies with case management techniques in order to increase accountability to citizen needs	18%	27%	21%	17%	7%	10%	3.0
Develop easy to use Web-based networks that connect state and local customer service functions making relevant information readily accessible	30%	17%	16%	12%	13%	12%	3.0
Other	6%	1%	0%	0%	0%	92%	0.4

## Land Use

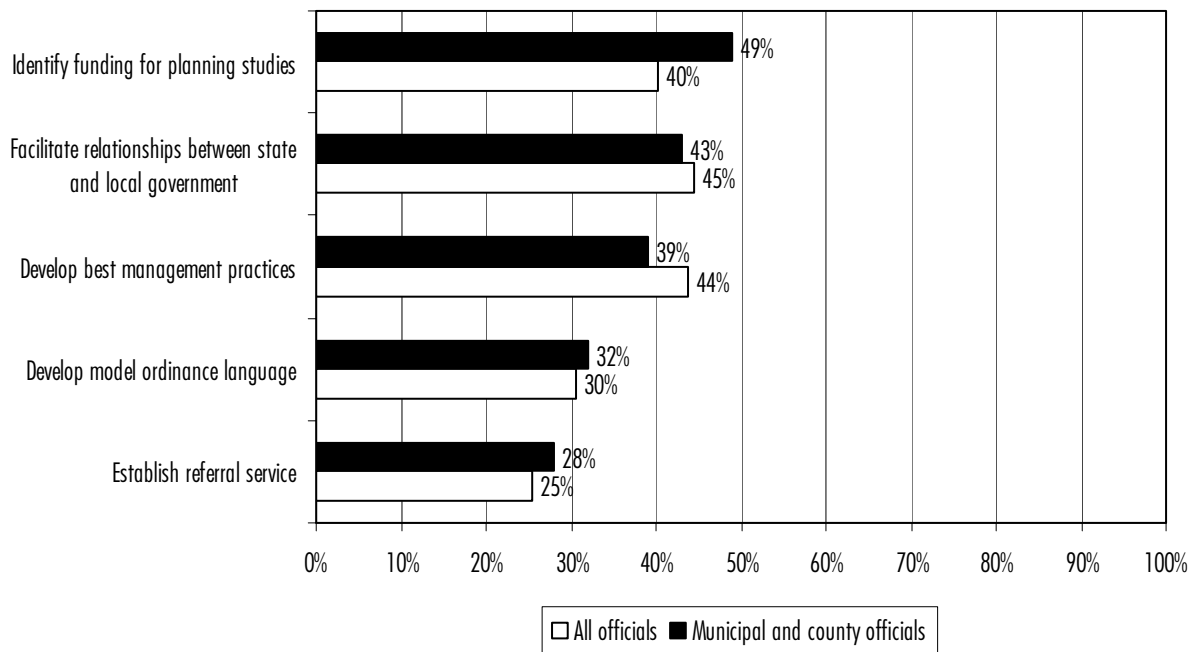
Land use issues are of growing concern to citizens in Indiana and around the nation. In 1999, the Indiana General Assembly created the Indiana Land Resources Council (ILRC). The ILRC has been charged with tracking land use patterns and assisting local governments in dealing with this important issue. Questions 10-14 addressed land use issues.

In Question 10, respondents were asked to rank the various activities suggested as appropriate to fulfilling the ILRC's statutory charge (IC 15-7-9) (Table 9). The responses provided most frequently were *Facilitate relationships between state and local government* (45 percent), *Develop best management practices* (44 percent), *Identify funding for planning studies* (40 percent), and *Develop model ordinance language* (30 percent) (Figure 11). When considering responses by those officials representing governments that have local planning authority (municipalities and counties) responses were similar. *Identify funding for planning studies*, however, was identified most frequently (49 percent) by this group.

**Table 9: Activities ranked among three most helpful in managing land use (Question 10)**

	Municipal and county officials (n=247)	Remaining officials (n=209)	All officials (n=456)
Collect land use data	23%	33%	28%
Develop best management practices	39%	50%	44%
Develop model ordinance language	32%	28%	30%
Develop planning library	15%	15%	15%
Augment educational programs provided by universities	25%	27%	26%
Identify funding for planning studies	49%	30%	40%
Identify funding for planning staffing and training	25%	19%	22%
Establish referral service	28%	23%	25%
Facilitate relationships between state and local government	43%	47%	45%
Inventory state agency programs	15%	23%	19%

Figure 11: Indiana Land Resources Council activities (Question 10)



Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 2001

Question 11 asked respondents to rate their experiences in working with various state agencies on land use issues. Respondents reported working most with the Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), the Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), the Department of Transportation (IDOT), and the Department of Commerce (IDOC). They rated their experiences with the Department of Commerce as *Good* and the most favorable among the state agencies listed. The Department of Environmental Management and the Utility Regulatory Commission were rated least favorably (Table 10).

Table 10: Agency ratings for land use issues (Question 11)

	Very good (4)	Good (3)	Fair (2)	Poor (1)	Have not worked with	Average
Department of Commerce (n=282)	26%	48%	21%	5%	44%	2.9
Department of Environmental Management (n=356)	12%	31%	36%	21%	29%	2.3
Department of Natural Resources (n=374)	19%	41%	29%	11%	26%	2.7
Department of Transportation (n=339)	16%	33%	37%	14%	32%	2.5
Development Finance Authority (n=155)	13%	38%	36%	13%	69%	2.5
Housing Finance Authority (n=155)	10%	47%	31%	12%	68%	2.5
State Department of Health (n=281)	8%	39%	40%	12%	44%	2.4
Utility Regulatory Commission (n=204)	8%	29%	42%	21%	59%	2.2
Office of the Commissioner of Agriculture (n=127)	17%	45%	29%	9%	74%	2.7
Office of State Chemist and Seed Commissioner (n=108)	18%	35%	43%	5%	78%	2.7

Question 12 asked respondents to indicate community preference regarding development and quality of life, including mix of housing types and values, density of development, proximity to shopping, transportation connections between development, proximity to neighbors, and diversity. Respondents were asked to choose the number along each continuum that corresponded most closely to the preferences of their constituents (Figures 12-14).

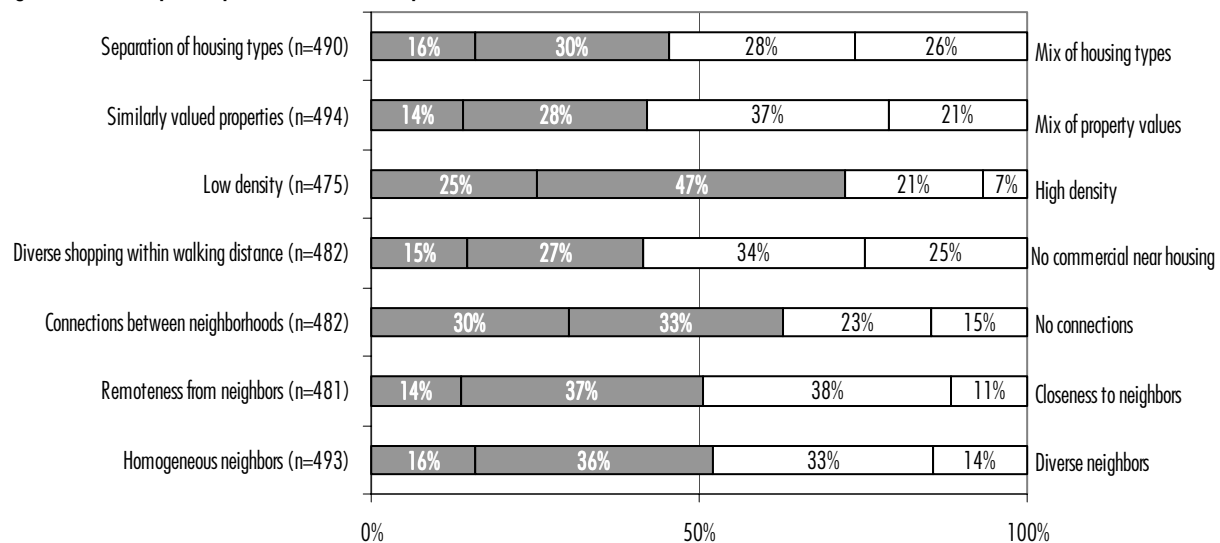
Overall, respondents showed a slight preference for mixing housing types and property values. County and township officials showed a slight preference for a separation of housing types but favored mixed property values slightly. Municipal officials showed a stronger preference for mixed housing types and property values than all respondents.

All groups favored lower density development. The preference by the entire set of respondents was stronger than for either sub-group. The responses to a subsequent question regarding density (Question 13), however, would indicate that officials' perceptions of municipal residents' definitions of *low density* differ from county and township residents.

All groups indicated a preference for separating shopping and commercial uses from housing and for providing street and walking connections between developments. County and township officials expressed the strongest preference for separation of commercial uses. Municipal officials favored walking connections more strongly.

Overall, responses were mixed regarding preferences for proximity to neighbors and for diversity of neighbors, with a slight preference toward remoteness and homogeneity for all respondents. County and township officials indicated a slight preference toward remoteness and homogeneity, while municipal officials preferred closeness and diversity slightly.

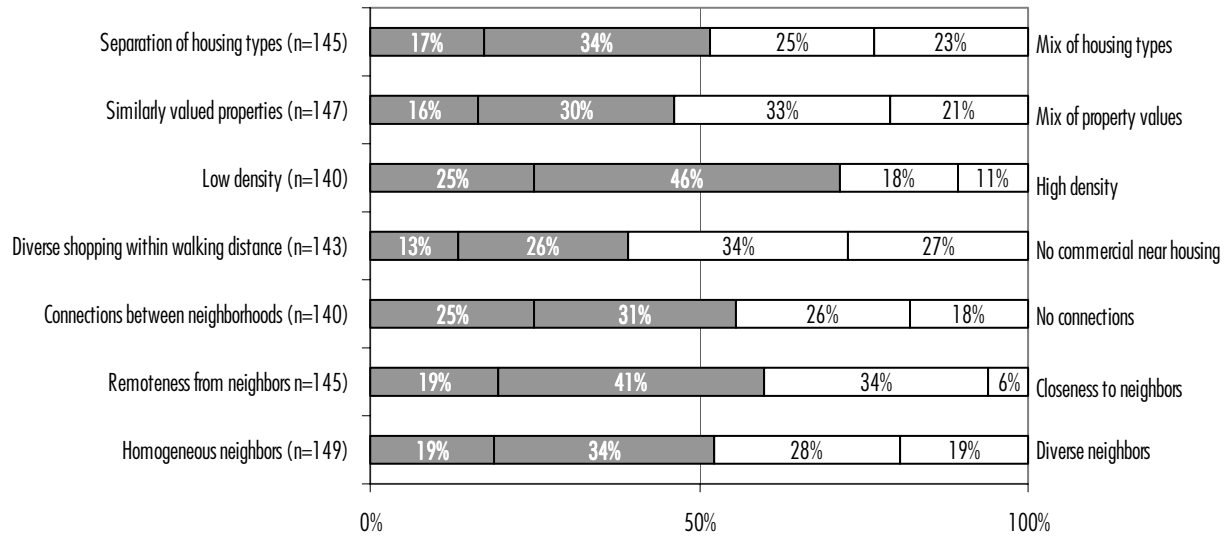
**Figure 12: Development preferences—All respondents (Question 12)**



Note: Officials were asked to rate the preferences of their constituents on a four-point scale. The shaded bars on the left represent selections of one or two. The white bars on the right represent selections of three or four. Sixteen percent of officials chose one (left most bar) for the first question indicating a constituency with a relatively strong preference for a separation of housing types, while 26 percent of officials chose four (right most bar) indicating a constituency with a relatively strong preference for a mix of housing types. Overall, officials indicated a slight preference for mixed housing types (54 percent).

Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 2001

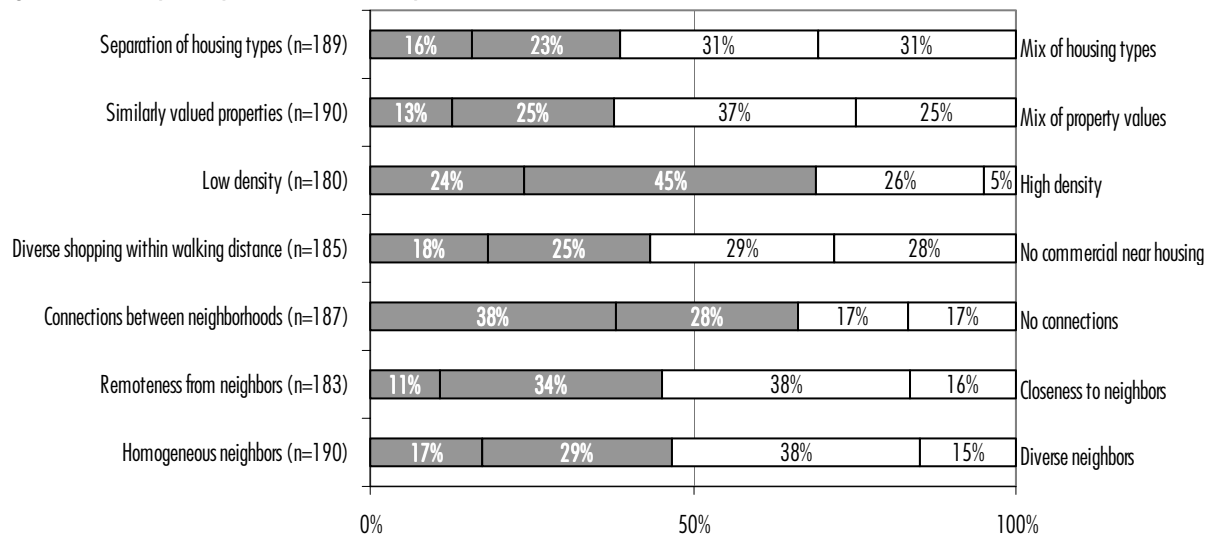
Figure 13: Development preferences — County and township officials (Question 12)



Note: Officials were asked to rate the preferences of their constituents on a four-point scale. The shaded bars on the left represent selections of one or two. The white bars on the right represent selections of three or four. Seventeen percent of county and township officials chose one (left most bar) for the first question indicating a constituency with a relatively strong preference for a separation of housing types, while 23 percent of officials chose four (right most bar) indicating a constituency with a relatively strong preference for a mix of housing types. Overall, county and township officials indicated a slight preference for separation of housing types (51 percent).

Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 2001

Figure 14: Development preferences — Municipal officials (Question 12)



Note: Officials were asked to rate the preferences of their constituents on a four-point scale. The shaded bars on the left represent selections of one or two. The white bars on the right represent selections of three or four. Sixteen percent of officials chose one (left most bar) for the first question indicating a constituency with a relatively strong preference for a separation of housing types, while 31 percent of officials chose four (right most bar) indicating a constituency with a relatively strong preference for a mix of housing types. Overall, officials indicated a slight preference for mixed housing types (62 percent).

Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 2001

Question 13 addressed preferences for density. Consistent with the responses provided to Question 12, respondents generally favor densities consistent with one to four units per acre. County and township officials indicated a stronger preference for one or two units per acre. Municipal officials expressed strong preferences for densities of two to four units per acre (Table 11).

**Table 11: Preferences for development densities (Question 13)**

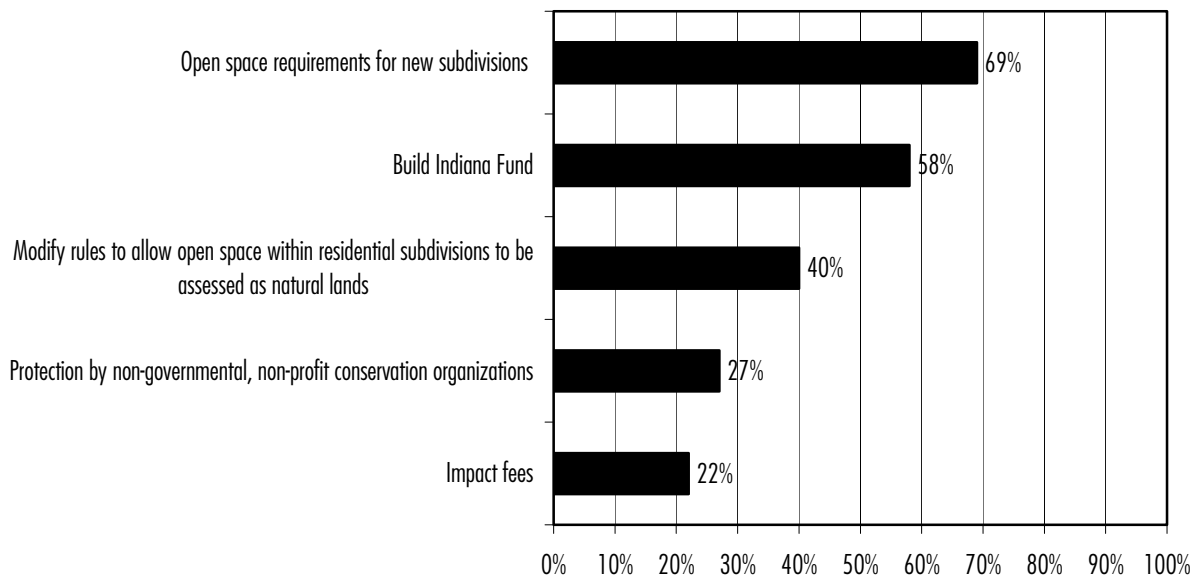
	All (n=500)	County and township officials (n=155)	Municipal officials (n=188)
1 unit per acre (160 acres)	26%	41%	13%
2 units per acre (80 acres)	35%	35%	35%
4 units per acre (40 acres)	21%	8%	28%
8 units per acre (20 acres)	9%	8%	12%
9 units per acre (18 acres or less)	9%	7%	12%

Question 14 asked respondents to identify mechanisms for funding open space acquisition that would be supported by a majority of their constituents. *Open space requirements for new subdivisions* (70 percent), *Build Indiana Fund* (58 percent), *Assess open space within residential subdivisions as natural lands* (40 percent), and *Protection by non-governmental, nonprofit conservation organizations* (26 percent) were favored most by respondents (Table 12 and Figure 15). All of the remaining options, many addressing increased taxes or fees, were identified favorably by fewer than 25 percent of respondents.

**Table 12: Percentage of respondents choosing options for protecting and preserving open space (Question 14; n=480)**

	Percentage
Slight increase in state sales tax	14%
Issuing locally funded general obligation bonds	22%
Local option sales tax (0.2 percent)	12%
Protection by non-governmental, non-profit conservation organizations	11%
Modify rules to allow open space within residential subdivisions to be assessed as natural lands	69%
Real estate transfer taxes and fees	40%
Open space requirements for new subdivisions	15%
Impact fees	17%
Build Indiana Fund	58%
Increased state contribution to the Heritage Trust Fund (environmental license plate)	27%

Figure 15: Options chosen most often for protecting and preserving open space (Question 14; n=480)



Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 2001

### Annexation

The IACIR completed a study of annexation in 1998 and continues to track statutory changes as well as annexation activity. Question 15 addressed whether municipalities passed annexation legislation in 2000. Of the officials who responded (194 of 208 municipal respondents), 30 percent reported that they passed annexation legislation in 2000 (Table 13).

The number of communities (59) that reported having passed local annexation legislation in 2000 is comparable to the data reported for 1999, but may represent a decrease based on the data collected for 1996, 1997, and 1998. A decrease in annexation activity was expected for 1999 because state law prohibits most annexations from becoming effective in the year before the decennial census. The possible continuation of this lower level of activity in 2000 may be the result of legislation passed in early 1999 that enacted significant changes making it more difficult to annex property, or simply the result of the limited response to the survey.

Unlike in past years, Question 15 also asked respondents to indicate who initiated annexation legislation. Among annexing municipalities, 46 percent of municipalities indicated that annexation was initiated by ordinance, and 71 percent indicated that annexation was initiated by petition (Table 14). This finding is consistent with the data reported in the 1998 IACIR report and the statutory changes passed in 1999.

Table 13: Annexation activity in 2000 (Question 15)

City (n=64)	32 (50%)
Town (n=130)	27 (26%)
Total	59 (30%)

**Table 14: Annexation activity by type (Question 15)**

	Municipal-initiated	Owner-initiated	Type unknown
City (n=32)	15 (47%)	25 (78%)	0 (0%)
Town (n=27)	12 (44%)	17 (63%)	3 (11%)
Total (n=59)	27 (46%)	42 (71%)	3 (5%)

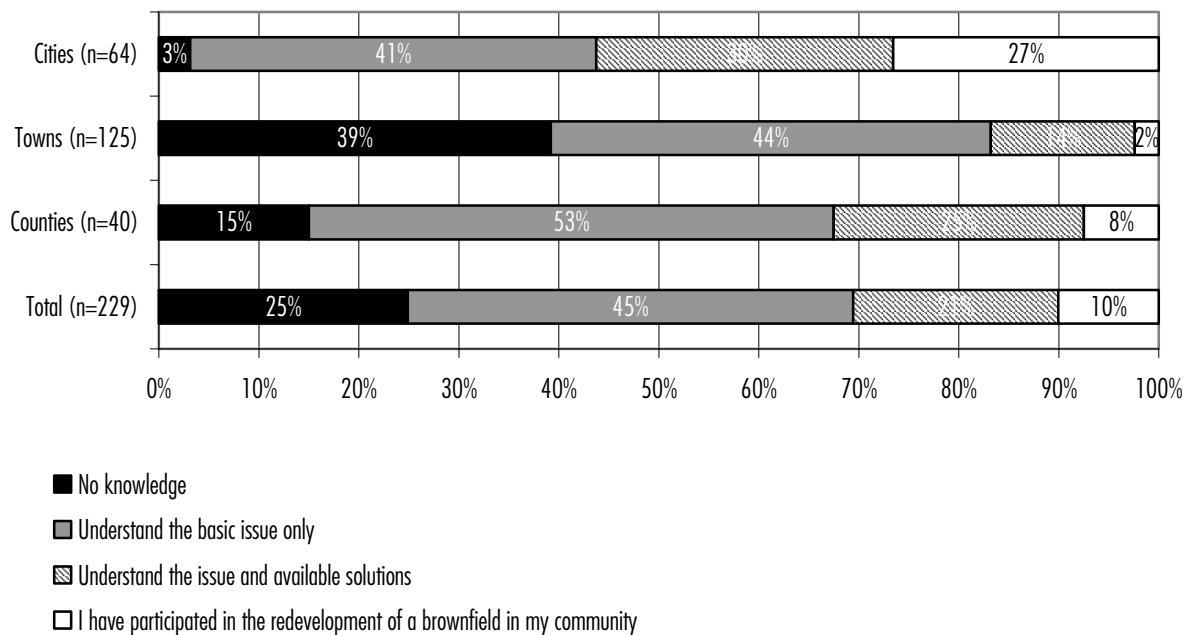
\*Totals add to more than 100% because respondents were given three options: municipal-initiated, owner-initiated, or both.

## Brownfields

Questions 16–18 addressed brownfields and were developed in cooperation with the Indiana Development Finance Authority. These questions address municipal and county officials understanding of brownfields, the inventory of local brownfield sites, and remediation activities.

Question 16 asked specifically about local officials’ understanding of the concept of brownfields and available solutions. City officials reported having the most knowledge and experience with brownfields (30 percent understand the issue and available solutions and 27 percent have direct experience in redeveloping a brownfield)(Figure 16). A majority of town and county officials, however, reported having no knowledge or only a basic understanding of the concept (83 and 68 percent, respectively). Town officials reported having no knowledge most often (39 percent).

**Figure 16: Officials’ knowledge and experience with brownfields (Question 16)**



Question 17 asked respondents to identify the number of brownfield properties within their communities (Table 15). Most municipal and county officials indicated having less than ten brownfields (78 percent). About one-fifth of respondents indicated having ten or more sites (22 percent).

Table 15: Estimated number of brownfields (Question 17)

	Cities (n=65)	Towns (n=120)	Counties (n=42)	Total (n=227)
Under 10	43 (66%)	112 (93%)	22 (52%)	177 (78%)
10 to 25	13 (2%)	7 (6%)	13 (31%)	33 (15%)
25 to 50	7 (11%)	1 (1%)	6 (14%)	14 (6%)
50 to 100	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (<1%)
Over 100	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	2 (1%)

Question 18 asked respondents how many brownfield remediation projects had been undertaken in their communities and what type of organization led those efforts (Tables 16 and 17). Mayors reported the most remediation efforts (66); county officials reported the fewest (24). Officials reported that local governments and private developers lead the majority of remediation efforts. In cities, the local government was reported as leading most often (65 percent). For towns and counties, private developers led these efforts most often (50 and 48 percent, respectively).

Table 16: Brownfield remediations (Question 18)

	Cities (n=57)	Towns (n=95)	Counties (n=27)	Total (n=179)
0	29 (51%)	70 (74%)	14 (52%)	113
1-5	25 (44%)	25 (26%)	13 (48%)	63
>5	3 (5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3
Total brownfields	66	32	24	122

Table 17: Brownfield redevelopers (Question 18)

	Cities (n=37)	Towns (n=38)	Counties (n=23)	Total (n=98)
Local government	24 (65%)	15 (39%)	10 (43%)	49 (50%)
Private developer	12 (32%)	19 (50%)	11 (48%)	42 (43%)
Community organization/not-for-profit	1 (3%)	4 (11%)	2 (9%)	7 (7%)

## Information Technology

Questions 19–22 addressed information technology. Questions 19 asked respondents about their use and level of personal comfort with information technology. A majority of officials reported being either very comfortable or moderately comfortable (Table 18). Questions 20 and 21 asked officials whether they have access to the Internet at work and whether they have an e-mail account for government business (Figures 17 and 18). Interestingly, a greater proportion of officials have access to the Internet (69 percent) than reported having e-mail accounts for government business (49 percent). Legislators and mayors reported having both resources most often. Town council members and township trustees reported having these resources least often. County and school board presidents reported access to the Internet at least 20 percent more often than having an e-mail account.

Table 18: Officials' comfort level with information technology (Question 19)

	Very comfortable	Moderately comfortable	Neither comfortable or uncomfortable	Somewhat uncomfortable	Not comfortable
Senator (n=12)	17%	50%	33%	0%	0%
Representative (n=12)	8%	75%	0%	17%	0%
County Council (n=42)	14%	40%	40%	5%	0%
County Commissioner (n=43)	7%	49%	23%	16%	5%
Mayor (n=65)	9%	60%	20%	11%	0%
Town Council Member (n=137)	15%	48%	24%	7%	6%
Township Trustee (n=62)	11%	42%	32%	13%	2%
School Board President (n=101)	34%	41%	21%	4%	1%
Total (n=474)	17%	47%	25%	8%	3%

Figure 17: Officials with Internet access in office (Question 20; n=421)

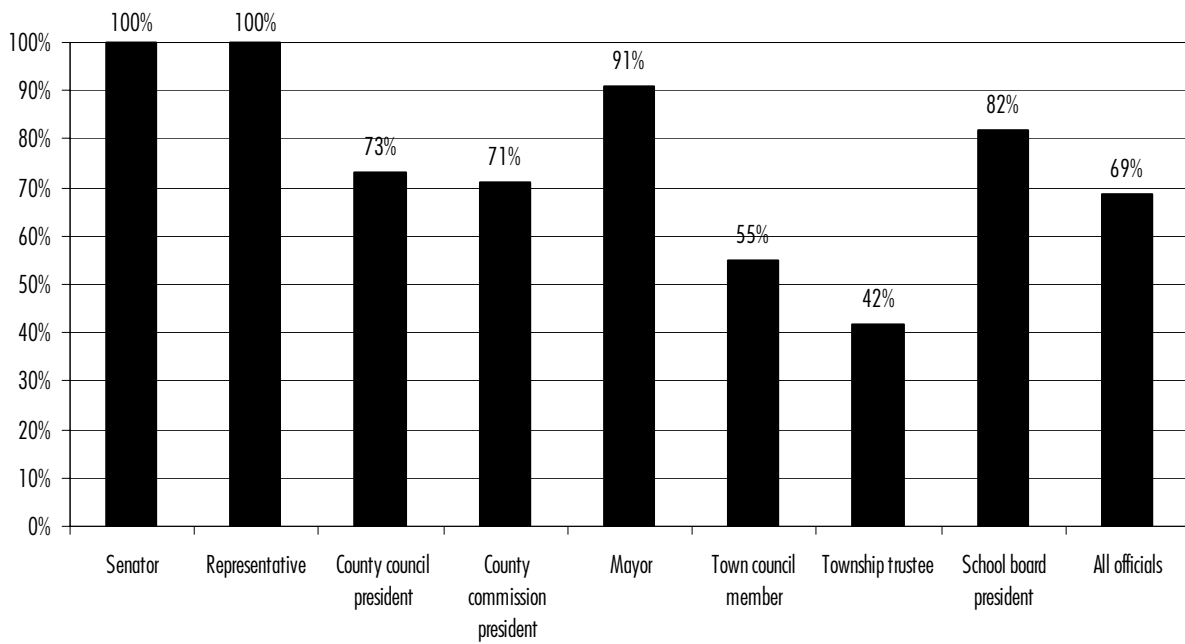
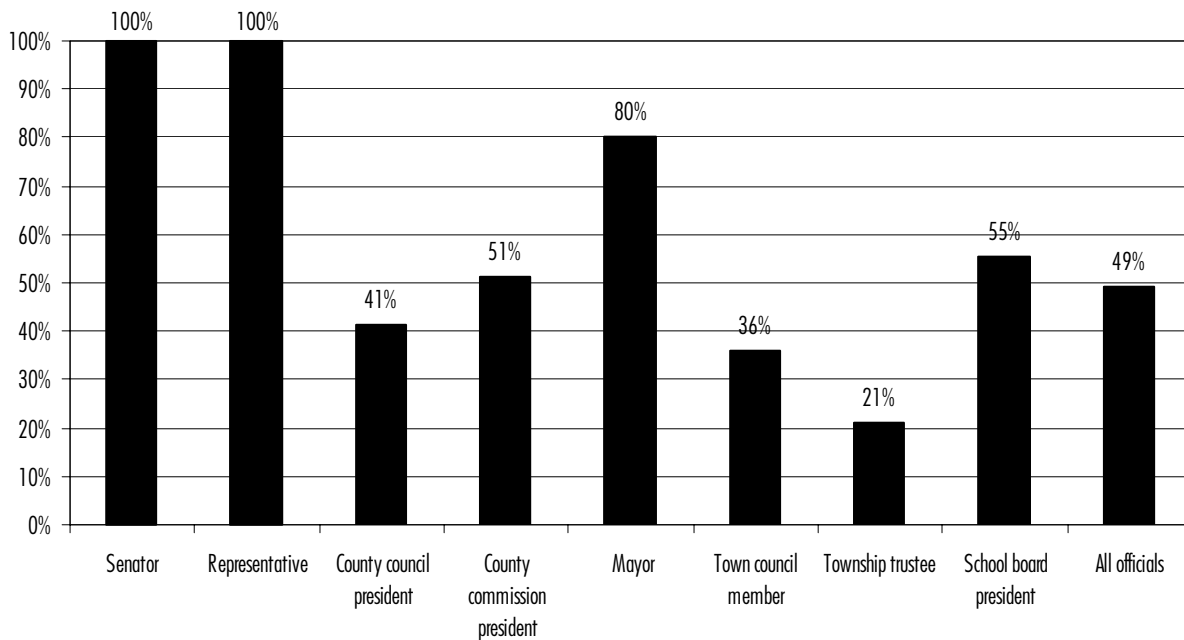


Figure 18: Officials with e-mail accounts (Question 21; n=469)



Question 22 asked officials to rank their communities' success in dealing with a number of telecommunications and information technology issues, including access to high-speed Internet services and integration of information technology into local government and education. Generally, responses for each of the items were mixed. Only *Using information technology to improve education* was rated as successful by a majority of officials (52 percent). Perceptions among types of officials varied. Table 19 shows the seven items that were identified by a majority of a particular type of official as successful or unsuccessful. All groups of officials except town council members and township trustees identified their communities as successful in using information technology to improve education. A majority of mayors, school board presidents, and county officials also indicated integration of information technology into the daily activities of local governments.

Table 19: Success in integrating telecommunications and information technology—All respondents (Question 22)

	Not successful	Generally unsuccessful	Neither successful nor unsuccessful	Somewhat successful	Very successful
High speed Internet access (n=432)	23%	13%	22%	32%	11%
Integration into local government (n=434)	14%	12%	26%	41%	8%
Improve government (n=432)	14%	14%	34%	30%	8%
Connect citizens (n=429)	18%	18%	37%	22%	5%
Economic development (n=424)	20%	16%	39%	22%	4%
Equity in access (n=427)	18%	16%	36%	25%	4%
Improve education (n=424)	11%	9%	28%	39%	13%
Skills in workforce (n=429)	14%	12%	39%	30%	4%
Working with telecomm industry (n=427)	15%	14%	41%	25%	4%

Table 20: Success in integrating telecommunications and information technology (Question 22)

	Majority indicate success	Majority indicate being unsuccessful
High speed Internet access		
Integration into local government	Mayors (60%), School board presidents (57%), County officials (55%)	
Improving government management and service delivery	Mayors (55%)	
Connect with citizens		Towns (52%)
Economic development		Towns (55%)
Equity in access		Towns (51%)
Labor, Education	All officials (52%), Mayors (54%), School board presidents (82%), County officials (51%), Legislators (64%)	
Skills in Workforce	Legislators (59%)	
Working with Telecomm industry		

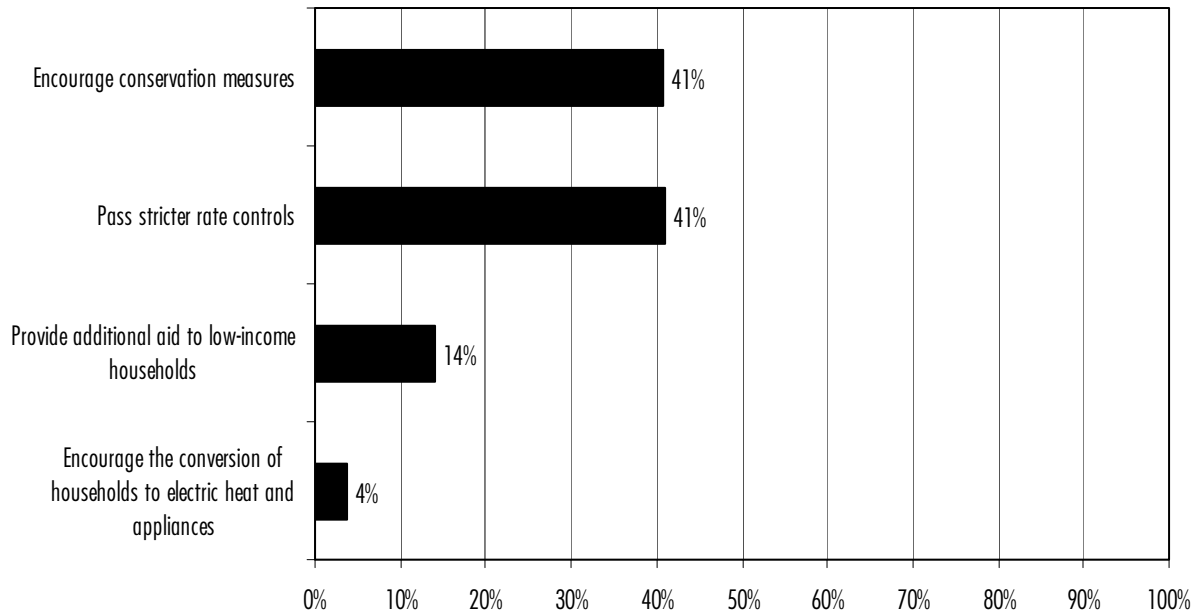
## Natural Gas Prices

In response to the high natural gas prices during the previous winter, Question 23 asked officials about the options for reducing the cost in the future. Respondents chose *Pass stricter rate controls* (41 percent) and *Encourage conservation measures* (41 percent) most often.

Table 21: Most appropriate actions to minimize the effects of a natural gas price increase in the future (Question 23)

	Provide additional aid to low-income households	Pass stricter rate controls	Encourage conservation measures	Encourage the conversion of households to electric heat and appliances
Senator (n=5)	20%	20%	60%	0%
Representative (n=9)	11%	11%	78%	0%
County council president (n=31)	6%	48%	35%	10%
County commission president (n=28)	11%	43%	46%	0%
Mayor (n=43)	12%	37%	49%	2%
Town council member (n=91)	19%	42%	35%	4%
Township trustee (n=35)	31%	43%	26%	0%
School board president (n=80)	8%	41%	46%	5%
Total (n=322)	14%	41%	41%	4%

Figure 19: Options for reducing the cost of natural gas (Question 23; n=322)



## Other Issues

The final survey question allowed officials to make additional comments about intergovernmental issues in Indiana. The complete set of comments is provided in Appendix D.

## Conclusion

As in previous surveys, local officials who responded to the 2001 survey were optimistic about the future of their communities, and generally report stable conditions over the last year. The only condition reported by a majority of officials as improving or deteriorating was *Traffic* (51 percent reported deteriorated). Among the remaining issues, officials reported improvements in *K-12 education*, *Internet access*, *Amount of development*, *Parks and recreation*, and *Police-community relations* in the last year. Over the last five years, *Roads and streets* and *Sewer* also are issues reported as improving over the last five years. They expressed concern that conditions related to *Traffic*, *Roads and streets*, *Drug and alcohol abuse*, *Cost and availability of health care*, and *Unemployment* had deteriorated over the last year and the last five years.

Officials identified *Traffic*, *Unemployment*, *Roads and streets*, *Sewer*, and *K-12 education* as the most important issues to address in the next two years. The first two issues were identified frequently as community problems. The last two issues were identified as improving conditions. Their inclusion likely reflects their relative importance among community issues. *Roads and streets* was identified frequently as improving and as deteriorating, reflecting the varied conditions across the state and the importance of the issue.

# Appendix A

## Complete Methodology

# Appendix A: Complete Methodology

The survey process included four steps: development of the questionnaire, selection of sample populations, administration of the survey, and coding and analysis of the results.

## Questionnaire Development

The questionnaire was developed using the three previous questionnaires as a basis. A few questions were repeated to allow comparisons over time. Commission staff consulted with IACIR members, the Indiana Land Resources Council, the Indiana Development Finance Authority, and the Office of the Lieutenant Governor regarding current issues for inclusion in the 2001 survey. The survey instrument is provided in Appendix B.

## Selection of Sample Population

The survey was administered to 1,376 officeholders. The sample population included all members of the Indiana General Assembly, mayors, county council presidents, county board of commissioner presidents, and school board presidents. The sample also included a member of each town council and a sample of township trustees. Town council members were selected randomly. The sample population for township trustees consisted of 184 trustees, two trustees from each county selected randomly. Names and addresses of the various officeholders were obtained using printed directories (legislators and school board presidents) or lists provided by the Indiana Association of Cities and Towns, Association of Indiana Counties, and Indiana Township Association.

## Administration of Survey

IACIR staff administered the survey by mail according to procedures recommended by Dillman.<sup>1</sup> Cover letters explaining the purpose of the survey, the questionnaires, and business reply envelopes were sent on April 23, 2001. Follow-up postcards were sent on April 30, 2001. All officials who had not responded were sent a letter and replacement questionnaire on May 14, 2001.

## Coding and Analysis

Respondents returned all questionnaires to the Center for Urban Policy and the Environment, staff to the IACIR. Surveys received by July 9, 2001, were coded in SPSS® (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) and checked for accuracy. Staff completed all analyses using statistical routines in this program.

A few respondents returned questionnaires that were blank or partially completed. Questionnaires with responses to two or more questions were coded and included in the analyses. In order to account for non-responses to specific questions and questions addressed to specific types of officeholders, the number of responses is provided with the table or figure for each question.

Several questions provided respondents with the option of writing in a specific response to “other.” In cases when these responses closely matched an option within the list provided, the response was grouped with that option. A complete listing of the remaining “other” responses is provided in Appendix C. In a few cases, names or other identifiers have been removed to ensure that no individual respondents can be associated with a particular response. Appendix D includes the complete listing of responses to the open-ended question (24) at the end of the survey. In a few cases, names or other identifiers have been removed to ensure that no individual respondents can be associated with a particular response.

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<sup>1</sup> Dillman, Don A. (1978). *Mail and telephone surveys: the total design method*. New York: Wiley.

# Appendix B

## Survey Questionnaire

























# Appendix C

## Other Responses

Questions 8 and 9 offered respondents the opportunity to identify “other” responses.

**“Other” responses to “Which local government finance reform would be most effective in advancing the well-being of your community? (Question 8)”**

- Stop unfunded mandates (7)
- Fiscal home rule/fiscal flexibility (5)
- Lower all taxes (4)
- Control or reduce expenses in local and state government offices (3)
- Develop equity in school funding (2)
- Increase sales tax (2)
- Increase sales tax and reduce property tax (2)
- Increase state funding for roads and highways (2)
- Lower taxes in my county
- Adopt E.D.I.T. in my county
- Less federal government
- Many options would not help our small community
- Hotel tax
- Get more Build Indiana funds
- Get more money from county in real estate taxes returned; we get only a small percent
- Consistent budgeting on state level
- Use sales or income taxes instead of property taxes.
- Recapture tax abatements
- Rework gas tax to include pick up trucks
- Allow for com fund for criminal justice
- None of these questions are a reasonable option to local government problems
- Tax base sharing in lieu of annexation, so developments outside the city support city services
- Help business to be successful and grow
- Gaming funds to schools
- Quit taxing
- Provide funding for police department
- Water quality improvement funds
- Reform new county jail funding
- State fuel tax increase for local roads.
- Allow innkeeper tax to be used for diverse programs (roads, parks, bridges).
- None of these would have an impact. You’re chasing the wrong rabbit!
- Address regional fiscal disparities through regional revenue sharing for major infrastructure improvements.
- Have state help fund emergency services in my local area.
- Eliminate TIFs
- Make government more efficient.
- Kick the lobbyists out.
- Improve state funding of education.
- Return more state tax funds collected locally to local schools and county governments.
- Return more business tax to county where business is located.
- There is enough money available if legislators and governor used it wisely. I will not favor any reforms until the current act is clean.

- Stop depending on income from gambling to pay the state's bills.
- Stop purposeless government spending.
- Stop mandating programs for rural areas to be with urban areas.
- Eliminate "value-added" tax.
- Remove sales tax from necessary utilities (heat, light, and water are not nice-to-haves)
- Government-owned land should be placed on property tax rolls.
- Leave all the others the same.
- Dedicate funding for roads and streets.
- Reform personal property tax for farm machinery.
- Reform real estate tax.
- Take care of elderly.
- Reform assessment system.
- Restructure all taxes.
- Cut property taxes.
- Eliminate inheritance tax.
- Allow casino gambling.
- Limit exempt property.
- Funds for very small towns to repair and maintain water systems
- Make yearly increase to counties from the now five percent to ten percent.
- Cut inefficient programs.
- Fire 20%, decrease rental space, and send savings to locals.
- Allow assessments on developers-impact fees
- Stay out of local government
- Stay out of local government or bring lots of money to pay for your involvement.
- If we could end the antiquated tax system, we can meet our own needs!

**"Other" responses to "Please rank the following options to improve the customer service provided by Indiana state government agencies. (Question 9)"**

- Information Center cannot take place of responsive customer service by agencies
- State workers or government should understand that they are there to serve the people.
- Make agencies accountable to other government units instead of the Governor
- Train current employees sufficiently to answer questions
- Privatize whenever possible
- Improve and fund state officers to develop better means to handle UCC and corporation information. The UCC department is a mess. Information is not accurate or up to date.
- Quit treating northwest Indiana like we are not part of the state.
- All personnel speak clear English
- Eliminate duplicity and increase accountability
- Make government officials more accessible
- Place responsible/responsive people in management positions and stand back.
- Require cross training and sensitivity to eliminate ostracizing customer.
- Cut down on bureaucracy.
- All state agencies complete reviews and projects in timely manner.
- Face to face accessibility.
- Get party politics out of hiring! Better evaluation of each agency. Hire on basis of ability, not because of color or gender.

- Clear, direct, language and literature shuffle the least amount.
- Personal contacts with officials.
- All government offices should have toll free numbers.
- Establish customer service center where you call and talk to a live person who is knowledgeable about resolving constituents.
- Focus on being more assistance oriented and less regulatory focus.
- Provide jobs and incentives for educated people to stay in the state.
- Train your people.
- Create an agency that helps all the people all the time with no aggravation to customer.
- Teach state employees and department heads that citizens are our customers, not our servants.
- Reduce state oversight
- Reduce government

# Appendix D

## Additional Comments

The final survey question provided an opportunity for officials to make any additional comments. These comments are transcribed below. They have been edited in cases where a particular elected official could potentially be identified.

**Table D1: Additional Comments by Respondents (Question 24)**

Officer	Comments
Clerk Treasurer	None of these questions fits our town problems
Clerk Treasurer	Major violations of open door policy. Major problem of informing citizens of various plans Governing body actions all relevant to personal needs Suggest survey be taken on smaller city/towns and contact be made with elected financial persons such as clerk, treasurers and or record keepers.
Clerk Treasurer	Situations horrible for elderly or handicapped <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare</li> <li>• Prescriptions</li> <li>• Home health care aide</li> <li>• Nursing homes</li> <li>• Insurance</li> </ul> Fuel price increases are a function of greed, not necessity Citizens are over-taxed Schools and education need to be addressed
County Commission President	My concern is that results of such surveys show a "consensus" that is often misused. There are still a few "old timers" like me that believe government does not have the solution to every problem.
County Commission President	Please eliminate the ISTEP Graduation Test. It is not a good measure of intelligence and ability. There are upper level students not passing the test. These students are honor roll, class officers, and very active leaders. The test is causing stress in high school students' lives. The students are humiliated and embarrassed by how the state and local system treats them. We are causing potential leaders to see themselves as failures
County Commission President	At federal and state levels: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Rescind as many old laws as possible</li> <li>2. Pass as few new laws as possible</li> </ol> Assume people can, for the most part, make their own decisions!
County Commission President	Road funding on local county level largely being ignored by state officials. IURC and IDEM's oversight of utilities is very, very political and weighted against local taxpayers. Water quality deteriorating. Monopoly of the local private water company is causing huge problems and resentment. Need another source of water in our county, i.e. a reservoir
County Commission President	It appears to me that whomever designed these questions has little knowledge of what really goes on in local government. Question 12 for example, indicates that government works only for the popular opinion, not necessarily what is the right decision. You didn't ask my opinion only the opinion of the "community." Question 22. Much of what is needed here should be the responsibility of the telecom industry, not local government. Question 23. All forms of energy, not just natural gas are more expensive. Propane, heating oil, and electricity. Do the people who use these forms of energy need help also? Probably. Alternative sources of energy are going to be an essential part of the answer to this problem as well as more exploration for petroleum.

Table D1: Additional Comments by Respondents (Question 24) (Continued)

Officer	Comments
County Commission President	State makes laws and then makes counties responsible for enforcement. If a commercial property has state law violations, I feel the state should act on those violations, because they put the laws into effect. Such as, a lumber yard applied for a septic permit 3 times on the same property. There should be a record of when they applied and when it was completed, in their records. How can you apply for a septic permit and receive an okay and 5 years later never have installed said system. I know you're going to say its up to the county, but a red flag should appear if a company applies 3 times and you should wonder why! Building ordinance sent in 1987 and we have a letter of acceptance now in 2001. We're told, "we can't find anything in our files, you should have no ordinance." Why? Our updated ordinance has been at the State since January 2001. We are still waiting (May 3, 2001) for the State to decide if our 2001 Building Ordinance is approved. Why has it taken so long and why won't they accept our records of proof on our '87' ordinance
County Commission President	There is a real need to provide for interlocal agreements between and among counties to provide bond possibilities for regional projects (e.g. youth correctional & treatment centers). Increased street and road monies adequate for some new construction as well as maintenance and repair. Welfare funding needs to come from the state.
County Commission President	Property tax can no longer fund schools. Fuel tax increases to fund local roads. Has a state flat tax been considered?
County Commission President	Local governments in many areas (counties experiencing high growth) need funding assistance for infrastructure such as roads, bridges, sewers, etc. While it appears that there are more programs than ever to help first time low-end homebuyers, these homes do not create a tax base that fully funds new schools, etc. Property taxes in some portions of our country are skyrocketing for all property owners while the new schools are only needed to support the large amount of new growth. The large growth has increased congestion on our local roads while the heavier construction traffic and increased number of vehicles is deteriorating roads and bridges at a much faster rate.
County Commission President	The Indiana General Assembly does a poor job of addressing local problems. For example, our county roads and bridges are still in the 50's without state help those conditions will not get better.
County Commission President	Dire need to get state historic preservation officer under control. The natural gas costs have affected local government also. Every time we have attempted to increase the energy efficiency of our older structures, we hit a stonewall with SHPO. The modifications they support are marginally effective and the best solution is always denied. Let the local people decide how they wish to preserve their historic structures!!
County Commission President	Need money for local roads. This is what we receive the most complaints about.
County Commission President	Increase fuel tax but change formula for distribution that makes sure the increase goes to the counties for their roads not to the state police, etc. Question 6-Farm income declining; real estate taxes increase burden.
County Commission President	Need to support alternative fuels. Natural gas is not the only fuel used to heat homes. Propane and heating oil, for example. We need to remember that this is still America. More laws and ordinances are not only the best ways to serve people. People need to take more responsibility for their own actions.
County Council President	We need the state to look at changing how local government is structured. Township trustees are an unproductive tax drain on county governments. Property taxes to support schools have to be eliminated. Fund schools from state sales taxes. All who buy, pay. We need the ability to reduce the number of staff (local and state) needed to fill out forms and input them on computers. With technology we should be shrinking the size of government, not always increasing it!
County Council President	State agencies create mandates with no funding. The state is becoming much like the federal government. It thinks it can solve all problems by throwing money at them or demanding that local governments use their money to solve problems.
County Council President	U.S. 31 is a disgrace. But, not as bad as the K-12 system. How could the state of Indiana let their public schools get this bad?
County Council President	State needs to spread the wealth within the state to all counties not just where the votes are. Build Indiana funds need to go to help not buy votes.

Table D1: Additional Comments by Respondents (Question 24) (Continued)

Officer	Comments
County Council President	State and federal mandates without funding creates local government funding problems. Unclear responsibilities due to conflicting Indiana Code. Lack of unified interpretation of codes.
County Council President	Less mandated laws from the legislature. It is very irritating for the legislature to pass laws that require local funding where there was no local input into the law.
County Council President	Our county needs more help and quicker response from INDOT on highway improvements.
County Council President	Help get our sewer problems solved. What are we going to do with the loss of 15% of the jobs in our county as the result of the closing of a local hospital?
County Council President	Too often the state mandates certain things without providing the funding. It then falls upon the county to "find the money" for this or that service. Whether it's state or local, called a "user fee" or whatever, it's still a tax and taxes are overall too high! Working citizens are expected to pay too much for those who can't or won't help "row the boat". There has to be an end to how much taxes take as a percentage of income. Right now it's nearly 50%!
Mayor	Escalating gas prices hurt our citizens; low income and retired ones first. Our unemployment rate is one of the highest in the state. Low paying jobs rampant. Sometimes I wonder how they survive from paycheck to paycheck. Property taxes are going to escalate due to new school. Textbook fees are unbelievable!
Mayor	Common sense government. More local road and street funds. C.S.O. (combined sewer overflow)- common sense/cost effective allows engineers to have more input and not government employee or appointee! Building/Infrastructure etc.- concept to concrete must be faster. Too many regulators and others, driving project cost up and up! Give local communities more local control. Build Indiana should not be pork funding for state officials! Common sense Brownfield cleanup! More cooperation between parties! Major highway to northern Indiana US 31 is a joke! Overall, great state. I hope we can work together to solve our problems. Indiana should be in the top half of all states on all major issues! Conservative is great, but let's not put our future leaders (our children) in such a hole that it will take billions to catch up.
Mayor	The State should establish a written plan and procedure for dealing with local government. Sharing or dedicating of financial resources should be clear and consistent. HOME RULE! Let local government decide with our local citizens the level of funding, flexibility, and procedures. Get legislature out of city council and city administration. It would be more efficient and give them time to deal with state problems.
Mayor	It appears deregulation is not a very successful program (telephone, electric and whatever may be tried next). Country needs competition so more controls are needed on large monopolies, gas (natural), electric, etc. Government officials making the regulations need to be educated to assist the community not to assist a company to make more money.
Mayor	Our state legislators need to quit playing politics and deal with the business at hand. We need leadership from the governor.
Mayor	If the state takes our road funding, we are in real trouble.
Representative	We <u>must</u> have local officials "at the table" when discussions of tax restructuring are conducted at the state level!
Representative	Too many of your options include raising taxes!
Representative	State officials don't care about any communities except Indianapolis and their own community.
Representative	This may be all you have to do. I have many other things to do. Should you like me to answer questions in the future, don't take so much of my time!
Representative	Just because my constituents prefer a course of action doesn't mean that's the correct choice.

Table D1: Additional Comments by Respondents (Question 24) (Continued)

Officer	Comments
School Board President	School district boundary changes are too difficult to make due to the property tax implications and the state funding formulas. This pits school districts against each other. City and county governmental offices do not cooperate well on many issues. Would like to see some attempts to facilitate (consultants) the investigation of Unigov possibilities. Same could apply to county-wide school system-need someone to facilitate the investigation, meetings, plus and minus, etc.
School Board President	It is difficult to get quality people involved in local government. Only a minority of local officials even wants to look at a "big picture" as they are consumed with immediate needs. There is a decided lack of vision in local government.
School Board President	All people involved must work and use the best judgment on all issues to make Indiana a better place in which to live and encourage the younger generation to stay here in the state after making decisions for their future.
School Board President	As a school board member, our major concerns are: 1. Effect of state regulations and lack of guidance and support from Indiana Department of Education 2. Fiscal restraints 3. Lack of control over economic development incentives 4. Lack of consideration given to units providing services (i.e. schools) when zoning and annexation is done.
School Board President	Allow more control to promote policy at the point of impact although all communities are similar no two are exactly alike. Give guidelines, not mandates, and don't enforce unfounded mandates.
School Board President	Intergovernmental units must work closer to anticipate the impact of TIF districts and tax abatement plans on all government units. The school corporation is usually shut out of these discussions.
School Board President	Most rural communities and municipalities have very little voice in state government. We have little value in their eyes and our needs draw little or no attention. We have minor political clout and as a small rural community feel very little support in general. If we wish to make strides in quality of life, we will have to fight hard for our normal share of resources and do it mostly on our own. We feel detached from Indiana government except when they need something from us.
School Board President	Should be more in tune with local schools!
School Board President	While meetings may occur, there seems to be little true action as a result. Town government seems to have high expectations of the school corporation but does not accept or respond to similar expectations placed on it by school corporation. Local land development (excessive higher density housing) by county and town very negatively impact school corporation and taxpayers. I.e. increased number of students; increased number of school buildings. Schools respond to the number of children who enroll. The county and town don't seem be willing to control the growth.
School Board President	Not much collaboration in our community. Elected bodies are "ingrown" and lack dynamics necessary for meaningful change. Progress is getting the most fast food chains possible and polluting the aquifer.
School Board President	We need one health insurance plan and one retirement plan for all schools in the state of Indiana. Example, 401K and 401H school corporation pay %, employee pay %. When employee transfers to different school, % stays same for both. All schools would budget some amount for employees.
School Board President	Tax burden is very heavy on taxpayers Small communities need funding to provide adequate infrastructure. Water, sewer, roads, and street repairs are real problems.
School Board President	The biggest problem is the rapid growth of government and its reach, surpassing the growth rate of the economy and population.

Table D1: Additional Comments by Respondents (Question 24) (Continued)

Officer	Comments
School Board President	State funding for education for in our county is a joke, given the size our school systems and that we provide alternative schools, school nurses, and all day kindergarten. Small communities get 10%. The poor and elderly are not receiving proper care. We have closed our urban hospital, and by doing so are walking away from the poor, elderly and minority communities. Cost of medications for elderly.
School Board President	Thank you for the opportunity. Our computer technology program is excellent but our high school building is in dire need of major repairs. We are in financial crisis but our kids deserve and need what students in high income and high-assessed valuation have. HELP!
School Board President	It should be illegal to hold a regular public meeting on the same night as another governing body holds its meetings. Public access stations should be established universally and mandated to air all public meeting of governing bodies. There should be incentives to serve on local governing bodies. Public meetings should also be on the internet. All state government agencies should have toll-free numbers. The state is big on passing financial burdens to local governing bodies. School funding formula needs major overhaul.
School Board President	We need to remove school funding from the property tax and get an equalization of funding for all school districts.
School Board President	Property tax to support local schools is far too outdated. It's time government officials stop teasing taxpayers with promises of reform every year. We're tired of all the talk all the time. No one seems to have guts enough to act. Small business and agriculture bear the brunt of 80% of population. It's far outdated from the time of 90% agriculture base economy. It made sense 200 years ago. If small business and agriculture voted, we would have reform.
School Board President	All local, state, and federal advertised meetings should be broadcast live over the internet and kept on file for later viewing, just like minutes of the meeting. Our school corporation broadcasts our school board meetings from our website. When I first suggested we do this, there was some apprehension at first. As I explained to other board members, we are not going to do or say anything we are ashamed of and minutes are public record anyway. This has been very well received by the community. This has been very positive for community relations. This survey should offer a website address.
School Board President	When state purchases land for conservation purposes there should be a mechanism in place to permanently replace the loss of local property taxes. State excise taxing formula on vehicles should recognize the fact that pickup trucks are no longer solely used for farming purposes only and should be treated as passenger vehicles when calculating distribution of excise taxes.
School Board President	Indiana needs to totally restructure local government to eliminate waste and duplication.
School Board President	I believe that it would benefit Indiana to give a tax write off for the installation of energy saving thermostats. These could save not only the tax payer money but reduce Indiana's need for energy.
School Board President	I think we should work harder to integrate intergovernmental agencies together. We need faster, more effective, and more responsive action once a problem has been identified. There needs to be greater accountability on solving citizen and community needs. Someone calls in a problem and there is little confidence that the problem will be solved in a timely manner forcing the citizen to call repeatedly or become frustrated. I also feel most citizens believe decisions are made for business reasons instead of decisions based on what is best for the total benefit of the community.
School Board Vice President	As a school board member, I am frustrated to no-end by unfunded and under-funded state and federal mandates. If the Legislature mandates something-they should be willing to pay for that mandate completely, or leave it up to the local boards to decide. Another issue that troubles me is having one government entity passing mandates that lower entities must comply with, as an example, teacher tenure laws should not be a state or federal issue, but rather a local one. These type laws make local governance so difficult that many good, qualified candidates will not seek local offices.
Town Council Member	As a town board member for a small town we are having trouble obtaining enough money to maintain the basic infrastructure of our town. Most of our water system is 40-60 years old. Our streets are deteriorating from truck use. Our storm water system is in dire need of repair. Our tax rate is the maximum that state tax board will allow and we are functioning with fewer dollars than we had ten years ago. State bureaucrats need to look at the need of small towns relative to big towns and big government.

Table D1: Additional Comments by Respondents (Question 24) (Continued)

Officer	Comments
Town Council Member	When you mandate programs like wellhead protection, or any other high dollar programs, and the state does not pay for or help pay for them, the burden that this puts on a small community is unbelievable and should stop. It only hurts us and the people who live there.
Town Council Member	Local road and street distributions have been and are being cut. Our clerk has written to all the representatives in a futile attempt to change the situation. After a year the lack of funding has taken its toll on all of Indiana's roads. Small towns rely on this funding. I find it interesting that before the election there was a so-called surplus and now that the election has passed there is a short fall. We really need these funds to help us repair our streets. Also, state mandates disproportionately affect small towns. There is not consideration of fiscal capacity when rules are passed.
Town Council Member	If you want to pass down mandates from the state level, don't forget to send money to pay for them. Small communities can't afford the luxuries of big city-big government.
Town Council Member	Stricter controls on gasoline prices. \$2.00 a gallon. Big company profits are up 50%
Town Council Member	This is for a much larger city than we are.
Town Council Member	As a very small town, we have most of the same problems as a large city, but we have very little money. Our county offices seem to forget about our small town. We seem to be at the bottom of the list for many county services. In other words, the County Health Department, County Plan Commission, etc., pretty much ignore our town. What a shame!
Town Council Member	Biggest problem is ability of developers to impose education costs created by development onto the community. Why can't legislators give communities/schools more ability to control growth? Towns should have more control over buffer areas instead of being at mercy of the county.
Town Council Member	Our biggest challenge is meeting the infrastructure needs. It causes conflict between the residents and merchants. The needs are directly related to the tourism but the only way to access is through landowners. A much fairer practice would be a 1% local sales tax.
Town Council Member	I have only been in local elected government 18 months and have learned: 1. There is too much government 2. There needs to be greater cooperation between local government 3. Communications between town/city government is poor 4. Government entities have common goals but each considers themselves fiefdoms unto themselves. 5. Northwest Indiana has been and continues to be treated as a stepchild to the rest of the state.
Town Council Member	We feel very left out in our small community. We have some very radical citizens and some of the needs of the many are passed over to take care of the radicals.
Town Council Member	We have environmental hazards on both sides adjacent to our village. On one side is an abandoned housing left over from government housing that is in shambles. It has asbestos and three or four fires have been set there. There is dumping. This is not a part of our town, but is in our county. I feel no one has connected with the right agency to address this issue, as it has been lingering many years. It is an endangerment to children who may wander up there. On the other side is an old abandoned school of brick with a damaged roof. Children go in there. It also probably has asbestos in it. No one has been able to get the right government, state, or county to address this. We would like to have this cleaned up, so our town would be a better, more presentable and safe place to live. There has to be someone out there that would take interest in this but whom?
Town Council Member	This did not apply to our small town. I filled it out so I would not get any more mail. I don't have time to mess with things I do not understand.
Town Council Member	Whenever city officials attempt to contact state officials they are never readily available. And what's worse-they very seldom return your call on issues that are important to the city-county officials.
Town Council Member	The state government demands plans and programs without giving support for the development of these plans. For example, storm water. The business sector gets much better help than the city/town government side.

Table D1: Additional Comments by Respondents (Question 24) (Continued)

Officer	Comments
Town Council Member	I feel that in my community the unavailability of community police and the youth crime issue is connected. While roads in the area have improved. We need upgrades for our local state highways to deal with recent development. Cell phones are of no use in 75% of the area. Sewers are the biggest problem for the town and the lack of a sewer system is the main cause of brownfields. I also feel the school system is poorly run and have felt powerless to change anything to do with my children's education. We have good people in the area. Strong scouting, groups, churches, and improvements and I feel my community has tremendous potential.
Town Council Member	Most questions are covered by the town ordinance.
Town Council President	More control over emergency
Town Council President	Having worked with the IDOC, INDOT and IDEM, I feel that we have had a pretty good relationship. These agencies have definitely had a positive impact on our community.
Town Council President	The budgeting process for communities is outdated, redundant, and without options for local needs. The responsible agency has neither the time nor talent to give more than cursory reviews of local budgets, let alone attempt to understand the real budget needs of communities. Without change, this process and the results will continue to force communities to operate "behind" issues instead of having the ability to "get-in-front" of issues. Changes in state funding to local communities are poorly planned, even more poorly communicated, and leave communities without funding alternatives to provide services. An example is the recent substantial reduction in state funding for local road and street use, because of the excise tax reduction. The monies were supposed to be made-up from lottery money, but were spent for something else, leaving communities with substantially lower funding and without the ability to locally raise the money because of outdated budgeting processes.
Town Council President	We have a drainage problem with a local ditch. We cannot get the county to fix the problem. It already has affected land development.
Town Council President	Restructure information needed on annual reports so local government entities only have to do one report. State agencies could then share the information.
Town Council President	Need more industry in area Help on natural gas prices More property tax to sales tax Investigation on gas prices Process of Section 8 (HUD) Overhaul Bureau of Motor Vehicles Federal and state dollars for infrastructure
Town Council President	Methanol production would utilize renewable natural resources for gas and should be encouraged
Town Council President	Small towns need more help from the state to meet the requirements as large city. Small town water/sewage users have to meet the same requirements as larger cities.
Town Council President	Township trustees have control of a poor relief fund. There are so many restrictions and so many hoops to jump through that these funds don't get utilized. For example, our township has many households below the poverty level. Many times desperate needs are not met because of these restrictions. The taxpayers of our township paid \$1,000 into the poor relief fund last year. The fund has a balance of over \$20,000. Only \$65 was disbursed from the fund. If this money can't be used for poor relief, then it should be turned over to an agency that will help.
Town Council President	A small community with very limited budget depends greatly on state funding like grants just to make needed improvements. As our community grows, which it definitely will, local services will not be equipped to care for the community needs (i.e. fire department, police). When our town receives grants, matching or otherwise, it seems to prevent the fire department from receiving grants. The fire department is funded by the town of Lizton and Union Township. I don't understand why grants to the town negate the option for the fire department.

Table D1: Additional Comments by Respondents (Question 24) (Continued)

Officer	Comments
Town Council President	I would support legislation that would allow counties to be like Marion County (Unigov). I believe this would create a more efficient government, allow for regional economic development and save taxpayers money by eliminating duplication of services in local communities. To compete with larger metropolitan areas for business and development, we need to have regional input. We have too many counties trying to do the same things and essentially competing against themselves. The first step is to eliminate so many local public officials, townships, smaller town boards, local zoning issues, and move to public officials who will serve a larger area and population.
Town council president	Our town is too small and unique for this survey to be of any value. We have no public streets, schools, and police. We have five private homes and one condominium complex.
Town Council President	We are a small community that is primarily residential. Many of the issues addressed have a minimal impact on our community. Education is our biggest problem. Once top-level management discovers the local educational system, they settle elsewhere including their business. I believe that local accountability could go a long way. However, government believes that throwing more money at education is the answer. Somewhere in between has to be a workable solution.
Town Council President	Disbursement of budget funds has routinely been very late. This causes undue hardship on local government to operate. Fortunately, we have not yet had to borrow operating funds. I don't know if the blame is at the county level or the state level, but it is still a major pain! It just shouldn't be so delayed.
Town Council Member	State should reconsider reevaluating its budget process. It is very restrictive and limiting to small towns.
Town Manager	I have worked with numerous state agencies. The most frustrating experiences are a lack of general concern of local issues and the inability to locate the right or responsible person. Often things like projects take way too long, are way too complicated, and cost way too much because of the hoops that need to be jumped through. I know that government was not created to be expedient, however, without clear, concise, consistent, and equitable treatment; I see further resentment, apathy, and general reluctance to participate in programs.
Township Trustee	Measures must be taken to reduce and/or nullify the effect the new property tax assessments will have on homeowners. If the new rules just move the tax burden around, I don't see much we can do. If they actually increase state revenue, then the money must be given back to the taxpayers in some way (similar to the way lottery money reduced excise tax).
Township Trustee	I believe the state government assistance with Access Indiana was one of the best things that has happened. Also, the legislative agency putting the Indiana Codes on this link was great. Need assistance provided to the local assessor to be able to communicate electronically with the county assessor. This is true for all local assessors regardless of size of township. (Access land parcels)
Township Trustee	This is a small town.
Township Trustee	In our county I find people who are trying to improve the structures on their property and finding it difficult. If you let the property run down, area plan commissioners could care less. If you try to improve, they put you through many steps and costs to get this done.
Township Trustee	Our community has lost many good jobs that allow a person can be self-sufficient. More working poor Cost of medication Too many slum lords We need some type of law to make slum lords repair and maintain property Cost of heating gas and gasoline are killing us. Additional state funds should be considered for Trustee's with high poor relief.
Township Trustee	This is a very small rural community. So, many questions are not applicable.
Township Trustee	Less government! Cut out outdated programs. Do less with less.

Table D1: Additional Comments by Respondents (Question 24) (Continued)

Officer	Comments
Township Trustee	I think the time has come for us to become very serious about tax restructuring. As a township trustee/assessor I continue to be amazed how much this state spends on reassessments (the 92 counties in this state). Why couldn't we price the land of each homeowner and forget about assessing the houses? We all know that the real property tax is revenue we can depend on. If people don't pay their property taxes, the prosperity goes into the tax sale so owners pay their property taxes even if we charge them, borrow the money, or plan for the payment. We could value the land highly enough and save all this money on assessing the houses. We could also raise the sales tax, another dependable revenue. I work in part-time sales in a tourist community; out-of-state people are always surprised at our sales tax being so low.
Township Trustee	Keep state bureaucracy out of land use issues. Land use issues must be a local issue. State bureaucracy is not suited to deal with land use. This questionnaire appears to be designed to solicit support for state bureaucracy to control land use policy. Why do the questions not have a "no action by state" option?
Township Trustee	The governor is definitely affecting the well being of our township in a negative way. The closing of our local facility for disabled citizens will cause crime to go up. The welfare of the patients there will be adversely affected.
Township Trustee	This reassessment scares me. Increased tax bills will become a severe hardship for many homeowners. Something needs to be done. Increased taxes will be a further burden for farmers who must deal with the current low price of grain and rising costs of production.
Township Trustee	As Township Trustee a number of these questions do not apply to this government agency!
Township Trustee	We have a big demand for increased housing in our rural county. We want to preserve the rural "look to feel", while at the same time bring in some new housing so that younger families can have a place to live in our community. That way, we can get our median age (which is quite old) younger!
Township Trustee	Our community uses either electric or propane gas tanks to heat homes with. I feel the price of propane gas is just too high and causes more people on low income to come to the township trustee for help with their heating bills.
Township Trustee	Politics plays such hard ball in Indiana. It's too bad that we have so much talent and they can't work together for the betterment of the citizens of Indiana. This starts with the governor and works its way through the house. I've found that local government does a much better job for local counties and townships.