



# City of Bellingham 2010 Survey Results

Prepared for:

City of Bellingham

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Introduction

The City of Bellingham conducted a public opinion survey in order to assess resident perceptions and satisfaction with City services and projects. The primary purpose of the survey was to determine whether the City is meeting the needs and expectations of Bellingham residents, as well as to discover areas where shortcomings are perceived and identify any services or programs which could be reduced.

Resident surveys were also conducted in 2004, 2006 and 2008. This year's survey repeats many of the questions asked earlier. It also expands areas of inquiry to get a better measure of opinion about issues associated with the Legacies and Strategic Commitments adopted by the Bellingham City Council in July 2009.

Survey findings in this report are grouped by topic areas that comprise the Legacies and Strategic Commitments.

Key Findings preface the Detailed Findings of the report. Key Findings focus on results obtained for sixteen questions associated with the Performance Measures Project enacted by the City in March 2009.<sup>1</sup>

## Purpose and Objectives

The primary purpose of the Bellingham Residential Survey is to gather information necessary to most effectively plan and provide for City services and programs. Key objectives are driven by Legacies and Strategic Commitments adopted by the City Council. These include:

- Determine opinions about efforts made to provide Clean, Safe Drinking Water to the City by limiting development in the Lake Whatcom watershed;
- Assess perceptions of actions taken to promote a Healthy Environment;
- Understand attitudes about efforts made to provide a Vibrant Sustainable Economy;
- Determine effectiveness of actions taken to establish a Sense of Place for the community;
- Measure opinions regarding the Safety and Preparedness of the Community;
- Assess attitudes about the Mobility and Connectivity Options supported by the City;

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<sup>1</sup> The Performance Measures Project is a system of measure designed to increase alignment between long-range strategic goals, department and program budgets and work plans, and employee work plans and performance reviews. It is based on Association of Government Accountants best practices.

- Determine how residents feel about Access to Quality of Life Amenities;
- Measure perceptions regarding delivery of Quality, Responsive City Services; and
- Understand attitudes about neighborhood housing affordability, as a component of City commitment to Equity and Social Justice.

## Methodology & Sample Design

In recent years, the landscape for public opinion research has changed tremendously. With ever increasing cell phone usage rates, surveys using the traditional random digit dial sample of landline phone numbers no longer adequately represent a residential population. Findings from a study conducted by the Centers for Disease Control showed that the number of “cell phone only households” exceeds the number of households with only a landline.

The current population for the City of Bellingham is estimated at 75,628, with a median resident age of about 30 years old, younger than for most other Washington cities. Slightly less than half (46%) of Bellingham residents live in multi-family dwellings. All of these demographic factors indicate that a good portion of households may not be reachable by landline telephone because they either don’t have a landline phone, or because they use the landline only to screen calls.

The 2010 survey of Bellingham residents differs from previous surveys in its improved coverage of the Bellingham resident population. It does this by employing sample frames and multiple modes of data collection to achieve a more complete coverage of population.

The current survey employed a sampling frame based on *addresses* rather than landline phone numbers in order to increase the coverage of the target population (this is because each household has an address, but not every household has a landline telephone). In contrast, each of the previous surveys was conducted by landline telephone using a random digit dial sample of City of Bellingham residents. The 2010 survey urged residents to complete the survey online, and also provided interviews by telephone. This multi-mode methodology is a distinctly different approach than in the past.

### *Sampling Methodology*

Using a random sample drawn from a USPS Delivery Sequence File (DSF) of all residential addresses within the city limits of Bellingham, telephone numbers and names were reverse-matched where available. This process resulted in approximately 65% to 70% of the addresses being matched in this way. All addresses were sent a pre-notification letter describing the purpose of the survey and seeking residents’ participation, signed by the Bellingham City Mayor, Dan Pike and produced on Bellingham City letterhead and envelopes.

Residents were invited to complete the survey online. Each pre-notification letter offered a PIN and a URL to access the survey.

### ***Survey Fielding***

Pre-notification letters were sent to Bellingham residents on November 22, 2010. The electronic survey was posted the same day, following a pre-test of programming and question wording. Phone interviewing began on November 30, 2010 and continued until December 6, 2010. The electronic survey proceeded from November 22 until December 2, 2010.

Surveys were completed online with 814 respondents and 200 were completed by telephone, for a total of 1,014 interviews. Telephone interviews averaged 14 minutes in length. The response rate for the entire survey was 53%. A disposition of the sample for the study is provided in the Appendix.

### ***Margin of Error***

The margin of error for a sample size of 1,014 respondents is  $\pm 1.53$  percentage points at the 95% confidence level. Margins of error will be higher for smaller subgroups. For example, for the subgroup of 200 telephone respondents, the margin of error is  $\pm 6.93$  percentage points. For the subgroup of 814 web respondents, the margin of error is  $\pm 3.43$  percentage points.

Rounding of decimals (at 0.5) may sometimes produce percentages that exceed or fall below 100%.

### ***Analysis of Respondent Subgroups***

Respondents were split into standard demographic subgroups to explore whether they differed from one another in their opinions about items asked in the survey. Demographic subgroups were categorized in the following ways:

- Type of survey (web or phone)
- Home ownership (own or rent)
- Years of residence (5 or less, 6 to 15 and more than 15)
- Children under 18 living at home (yes or no)
- Age (18 to 34, 35 to 49, 50 to 64 and 65+)
- Gender
- Income (\$15K to \$25K, \$25K to \$50K, \$50K to \$100K and \$100K+)

Respondents were also evaluated in terms of two attitudinal factors:

- Perception of overall quality of life in Bellingham (excellent, good, not good)
- Attitude about instituting non-resident user fees for City services (in favor or opposed)

Statistically significant differences between these subgroups are reported for close-ended questions by each topic area of the study. These are displayed in the Appendix to the report. Differences between subgroups are called out on the basis of respondent subgroups that are more likely than others to give top positive ratings (*excellent/ good* or *excellent/ very good*, depending on question wording) or top importance ratings (*extremely/ very important*).

Significant differences were also evaluated on the basis of those more likely to give low ratings (bottom two or bottom three ratings, depending question wording). These are *not* reported because they are very often associated with subgroups who voice opinions “inverse” of those giving top ratings.<sup>2</sup> Presentation of these findings would make the summary of subgroup differences unmanageably lengthy, and needlessly repetitive.

### ***Statistical Testing and Comparison of Current Findings with Previous Surveys***

Statistical testing of response proportions against previous results is not possible because of the change in research methodology. Statistical testing of response proportions across the years requires an “apples to apples” comparison based on similar methods of data collection. When data collection methods vary, results cannot be confidently attributed to changes in opinion.

Understanding the desire to look back and compare with the previous results, this report provides a text summary of 2008 results for repeated questions. Readers should be aware of the need to exercise caution in drawing conclusions based on 2010 and 2008 comparisons.

## **The Questionnaire**

The survey questionnaire consisted of 50 items, including three open-ended questions. Four new questions were asked this year:

- *What do you value most about Bellingham as a place to live?*
- *How would you rate the job the City is doing providing public safety services, such as police, fire and emergency medical services?*
- *How do you rate your neighborhood for social connections, such as neighbors looking out for neighbors?*
- *How do you rate your neighborhood for physical condition of streets?*

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<sup>2</sup> For example, if home owners give top ratings, renters are likely to give bottom ratings. If females give top ratings, males are likely to give bottom ratings.

# KEY FINDINGS

The survey asked 16 questions associated with the Performance Measures Project. Fifteen of these were *ratings* type questions. Results found that 11 of the 15 gathered a majority share of top ratings, either *excellent/good* or *excellent/very good* depending on the category of rating.

Fourteen of the 15 ratings questions also appeared in the 2008 survey. A comparison of top ratings this year with 2008 top ratings found increases in top ratings for 10 of the 14. The largest increases occurred for *livability of neighborhoods* (up 20 percentage points in *excellent/good ratings*), *neighborhood access to shopping and other services* (up 15 points), *involving the public in decision-making* (up 12 points) and *planning for growth* (up 9 points).

Of the 4 ratings questions that showed declines in top ratings, the largest occurred for *crime prevention*: there was a decrease in *excellent/good* ratings of 9 percentage points for this item as compared to 2008.

Comparisons with 2008 results are reported as information of interest. Because of a difference in sampling methods between the years, results should not be interpreted as indicative of opinion trends.

Results are summarized below:

1. **Overall Quality of Life Rating:** 94% gave top ratings for *overall quality of life* in Bellingham and 6% gave low ratings. Top ratings showed an increase this year over 2008 (90%).
2. **Livability of Neighborhoods:** In 2010 76% of respondents gave top ratings for *the job the City is doing protecting the livability of neighborhoods*, and 24% gave low ratings (*fair/poor*). Results this year showed a large increase in positive ratings over 2008 when just 56% gave *excellent/good* ratings for livability of neighborhoods.
3. **Growth Planning:** *The job the City is doing planning for growth* gathered less than half (44%) positive ratings, but more positive ratings than in 2008 (35%). Negative ratings (*fair/poor*) showed a decrease from 2008 (56% this year vs. 65% in 2008).
4. **Environmental Protection:** Nearly three-quarters of respondents (73%) gave *excellent/good* ratings for *City efforts to protect the environment*; 26% gave *fair/poor* ratings. Results show a boost in positive ratings this year and a decrease in low ratings as compared to 2008. At that time 68% gave top ratings and 32% gave low ratings.
5. **Responsible Use of Tax Dollars:** While nearly half the respondents (48%) gave positive ratings for the *City's responsible use of tax dollars*, a slight majority (51%) gave

negative ratings. Ratings this year are about even with 2008 ratings when 49% gave positive ratings and 50% gave negative.

6. **Provision of Public Safety Services:** 84% of residents gave *excellent/good* ratings for *the job the City is doing providing public safety services, such as police, fire and emergency Medic*, and 17% gave *fair/poor* ratings. This question did not appear on the 2008 survey.
7. **Maintenance of Parks and Trails:** Most respondents (91%) gave top ratings (*excellent/good*) for *City maintenance of Bellingham parks and trails*. Top ratings were up this year over 2008 (85%).
8. **Crime Prevention:** Two-thirds of respondents (65%) gave positive ratings for *crime prevention*, but one-third (35%) did not. Top ratings are lower this year than in 2008 when the opinion split was 74% positive and 26% negative.
9. **Feelings of Safety Walking in Neighborhoods at Night:** 58% of residents indicated that they feel *extremely/very safe walking alone at night in their neighborhoods*, but 42% indicated they feel less safe (*somewhat safe/not very/not at all*). Results this year are very similar to results obtained in 2008 (59% *extremely/very*; 42% less than *extremely/very safe*).
10. **Feelings of Safety Walking Downtown at Night:** In results similar to 2008 findings, less than one out of four respondents (22%) said they feel *extremely/very safe walking alone in downtown at night*. In 2008 25% gave similar ratings. This year 78% said they felt *somewhat/not very/not at all safe*, compared to 74% in 2008.
11. **Street Improvements:** A majority (58%) gave top ratings for *the job the City is doing improving streets, such as fixing potholes, signage and traffic lights*, but 42% gave low ratings. Results this year are not notably changed from 2008 results when 56% gave top ratings and 45% gave low ratings.
12. **Creating Opportunities for Culture and Art:** A majority said they approve of the job that the City is doing *creating opportunities for culture and the arts* (81%, top ratings). In 2008 80% gave similar ratings. One in five (19%) gave low ratings this year. In 2008 20% gave low ratings.
13. **Involving the Public in Decision-Making:** Over half the respondents (52%) gave *excellent/good* ratings for *involving the public in decision-making*, but 48% gave *fair/poor* ratings. Top ratings were up sharply over 2008 results (40%) and low ratings showed a steep decline (60%).
14. **Communication with Citizens about City Issues:** Respondents were divided in their opinions about how well *the City communicates with citizens about City issues, decisions and services*: 47% gave positive ratings, but 53% gave less than positive ratings.

Positive ratings were up slightly this year over 2008 (44%) and negative ratings were somewhat lower (56%)

15. **Ability to Sustain the Family Following an Emergency:** 54% of residents said they *are prepared to sustain themselves and their families for 72 hours following a major disaster*, but 33% said they are only *somewhat prepared*. Twelve percent are *not prepared*. Level of preparedness this year showed a decline from 2008 when 64% said they were *prepared*, and 19% said they were *somewhat prepared*.
16. **Neighborhood Access to Shopping or Other Services:** About two-thirds of respondents (64%) rated *neighborhood access to shopping excellent/very good*, and 35% rated it *good/fair/poor*. Top positive ratings showed an increase over 2008 (49% said *excellent/very good*) and lower ratings showed a decrease (41% said *good/fair/poor*).

# RESPONDENT PROFILE

Table 1 displays a demographic profile of survey respondents. It shows several notable differences between 2010 respondents interviewed by telephone and 2010 respondents who completed the online survey.

These are highlighted in boldface type and denoted with a single asterisk (\*). They include:

- A significantly larger percentage of females in the phone sample than males; likewise a larger percentage of males in the web sample.
- A significantly older group of respondents interviewed by phone than surveyed online.
- A longer length of residence for phone respondents than web respondents.
- Significantly more phone respondents with incomes of less than \$15,000 than web respondents, and significantly more web respondents with incomes in the \$50,000 to \$75,000, than phone respondents.

Table 1 also presents demographic information for the total 2010 group of 1,014

respondents, alongside the total 2008 group of 600 respondents. Notable differences (tested for significance using a standard Z-test for proportions) are displayed in boldface (and colored type) and denoted with a double asterisk (\*\*). These include:

- A larger proportion of females in the 2008 survey than in the 2010 study and larger proportion of males this year than in 2008.

Table 1 Respondent Profile				
	2010			2008 Total
	Web (814)	Phone (200)	Total (1014)	(600)
<b>Sex</b>				
Female	37%	<b>56%*</b>	41%	<b>58%**</b>
Male	<b>58*</b>	45	<b>55**</b>	42
<b>Age</b>				
18 to 24	<b>6%*</b>	2%	5%	4%
25 to 34	14	9	<b>13**</b>	7
35 to 44	15	15	15	13
45 to 54	18	17	18	<b>22**</b>
55 to 64	<b>25*</b>	18	23	24
65 and older	<b>19*</b>	40	23	<b>29**</b>
<i>Mean Age</i>	<i>50.2</i>	<b><i>57.8*</i></b>	<i>51.8</i>	<i>NA</i>
<b>Mean Years in Bellingham</b>	19	<b>24*</b>	20	22
<b>Children Under 18 in Home</b>				
Yes	24%	27%	25%	27%
No	75	74	75	74
<b>Home Ownership</b>				
Own residence	69%	73%	70%	72%
Rent residence	30	27	30	29
<b>Income</b>				
Less than \$15,000	9%	<b>16%*</b>	10%	11%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	8	13	9	12
\$25,000 to \$34,999	9	8	9	<b>13**</b>
\$35,000 to \$49,999	12	15	12	14
\$50,000 to \$74,999	<b>18*</b>	12	17	19
\$75,000 to \$99,999	13	10	12	15
More than \$100,000	15	11	14	15

- More respondents in the 25 to 34 year old age range in 2010 than in 2008 and fewer in the oldest age bracket (65+). Although the 2008 survey did not provide a mean age for respondents, it is likely that it would be significantly older, given the greater representation of oldest respondents (65+) and fewer younger people.

The differences noted between the two 2010 sample types (between web and phone sample) underlie the demographic differences noted between the total group of respondents this year and the 2008 total. Because the differences lie within the most primary demographic variables used in research (gender and age), it is important to view results of the two studies as separate sets of findings, and refrain from drawing any conclusions about trends in results.

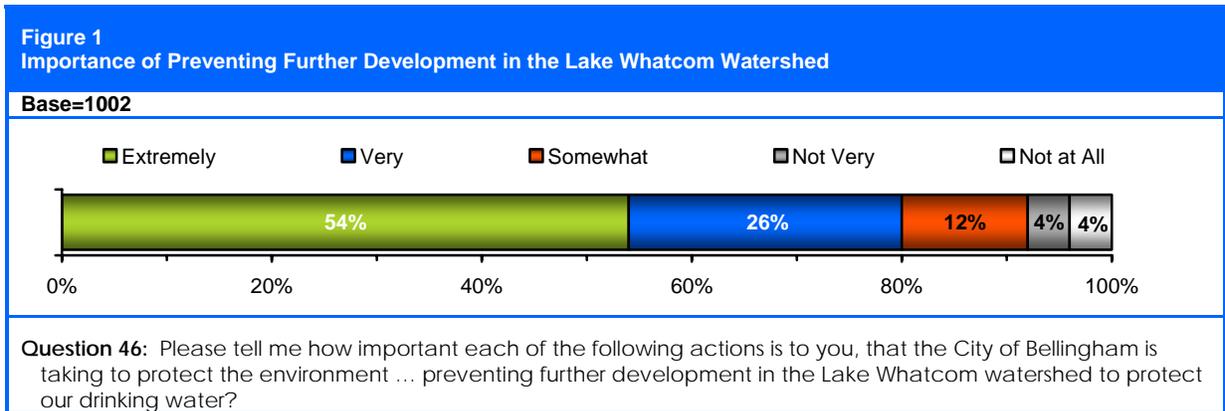
# DETAILED FINDINGS

## Clean, Safe Drinking Water

Of the nine Legacies and Strategic Commitments adopted by the City of Bellingham, Clean, Safe Drinking Water is listed first. Within this commitment there is specified an imperative to limit development in the Lake Whatcom watershed.

Asked to give their opinion of how important they believe it is for the City *to prevent further development in the Lake Whatcom watershed*, 80% of Bellingham residents indicated *extremely or very important*. (Figure 1) This year just 1% of respondents (n=12) opted out of the question, answering *don't know* or refusing an answer

2008 results were similar to results obtained this year: 80% gave this item top importance ratings, and 20% gave lower importance ratings.



## Healthy Environment

As a second Legacy and Strategic Commitment, the City established an objective to maintain a Healthy Environment for Bellingham residents.

The survey featured several topics related to achievement of this goal. These include environmental protection, reducing human impact on the environment, reducing automobile trips and promoting use of renewable energy.

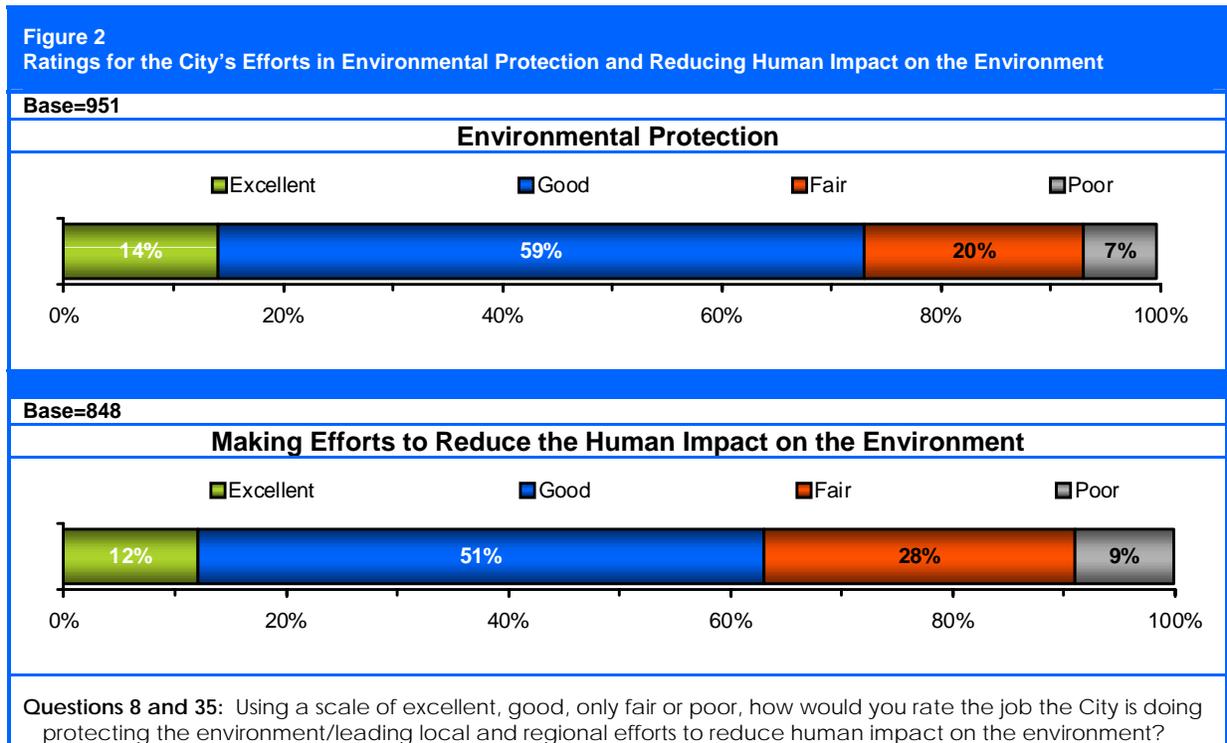
## Environmental Protection and Efforts to Reduce Human Environmental Impact

About three-quarters of respondents (73%) gave top ratings for *City efforts to protect the environment*, but 26% gave low ratings. (Figure 2) Six percent (6%) of respondents answered *don't know* or did not answer the question.

Results show a boost in positive ratings this year and a decrease in lower ratings as compared to 2008. In 2008 68% gave top ratings and 32% gave low ratings.

Nearly two out of three (63%) gave top ratings for *the job the City is doing in leading local and regional efforts to reduce human impact on the environment*. Sixteen percent (16%) did not give an opinion.

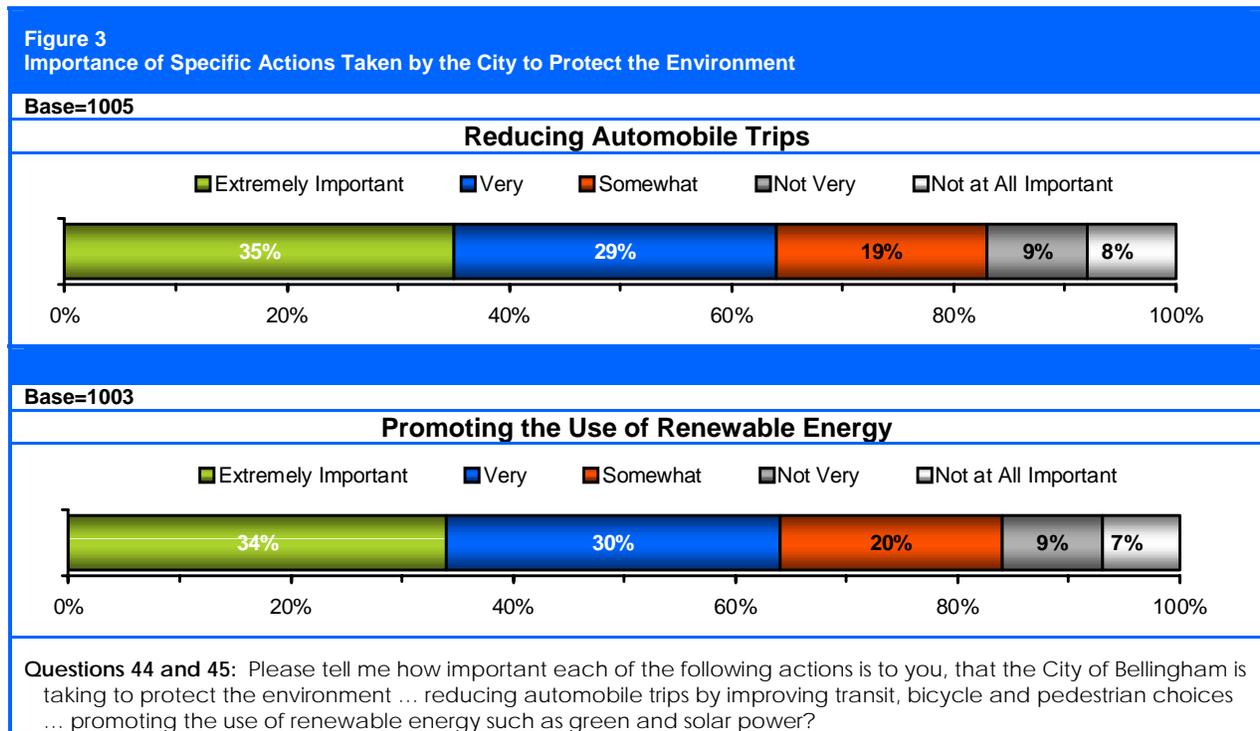
This result is also an increase over 2008, when 56% rated City efforts in this area positively. Low ratings this year showed a decrease from 2008 (36% this year vs. 44% in 2008).



## Specific Actions Taken to Protect the Environment

About two thirds of Bellingham residents (64%) said they thought it was *extremely* or *very important* for the City to both *reduce automobile trips* and *promote the use of renewable energy*. (Figure 3) Even proportions (36%) gave lower importance ratings to each of these actions. One percent (1%) of respondents did not provide ratings for either question.

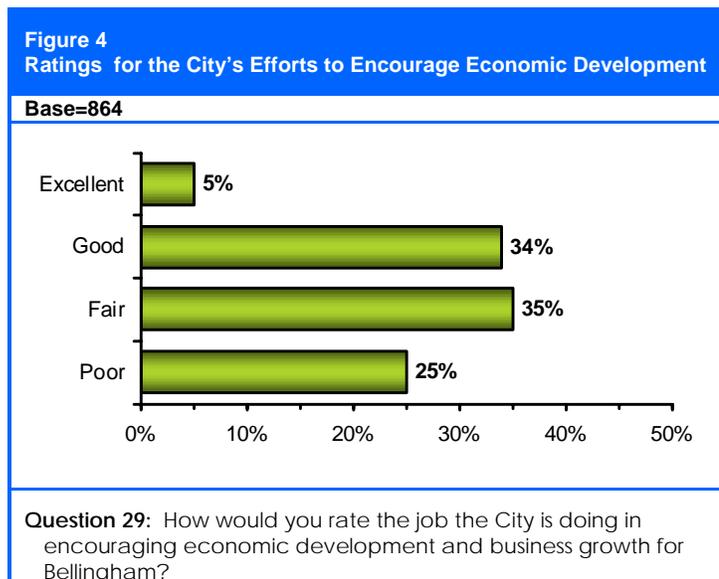
In 2008 more respondents (71%) gave top importance ratings to each of these environmental protection measures.



## Vibrant, Sustainable Economy

As a third Legacy and Strategic Commitment, the City of Bellingham is committed to promote a Vibrant and Sustainable Economy by offering support for a thriving local economy, across all sectors. To test how well this commitment is being fulfilled the survey asked respondents to *rate the job the City is doing in encouraging economic development and business growth for Bellingham.*

Given the duration of the economic recession it is not surprising that less than 2 in 5 respondents (39%) gave a positive rating for this item. A majority of respondents (60%) gave negative opinions. A substantial proportion of respondents (15%) chose to not answer the question.



Top ratings this year were lower than in 2008 (43%), and low ratings were up over 2008 (56%).

## Sense of Place

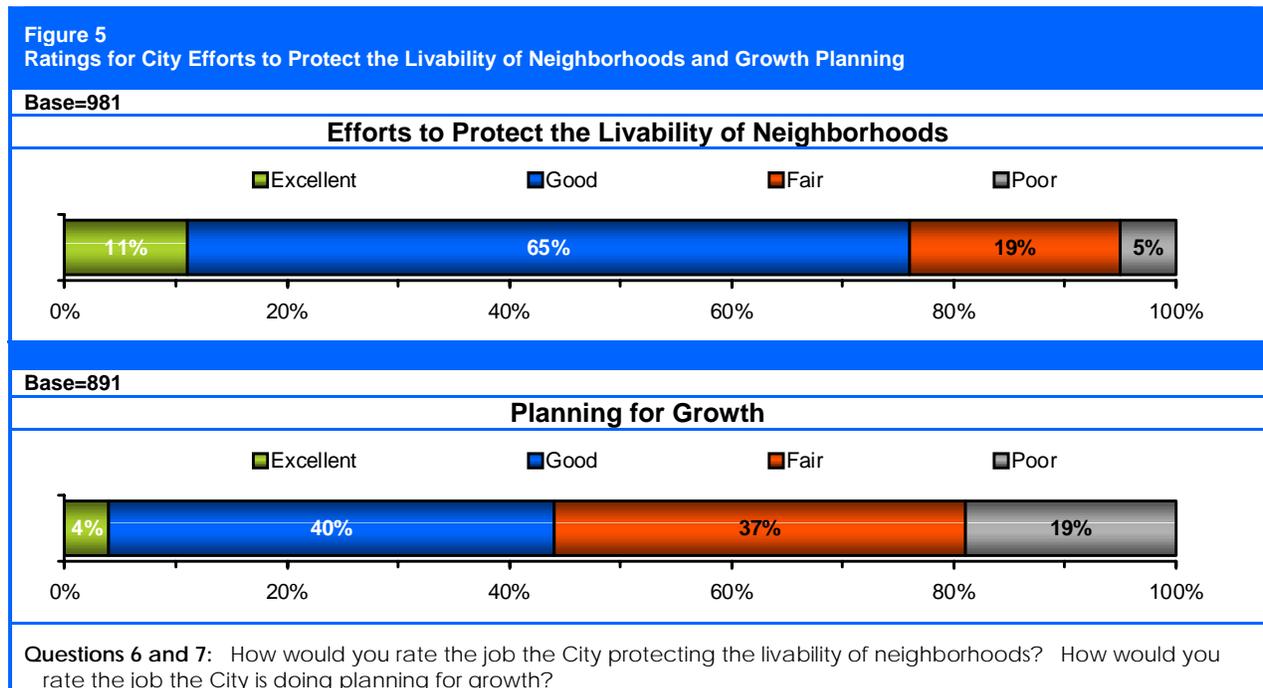
The 2010 survey repeated two questions asked in 2008 to determine residents' feelings about how well the City fulfills a fourth Legacy and Strategic Commitment: provision of a Sense of Place for the community. Questions included how the City does in *protecting the livability of neighborhoods* and *planning for growth*. In addition to these two items, the survey asked a new question about *neighborhood social connections*.

Of the three questions asked about Sense of Place, *growth planning* gathered the largest share of *don't know* response (12%). The question about *neighborhood social connections* gathered the smallest (2%).

### Protecting Livability of Neighborhoods and Planning for Growth

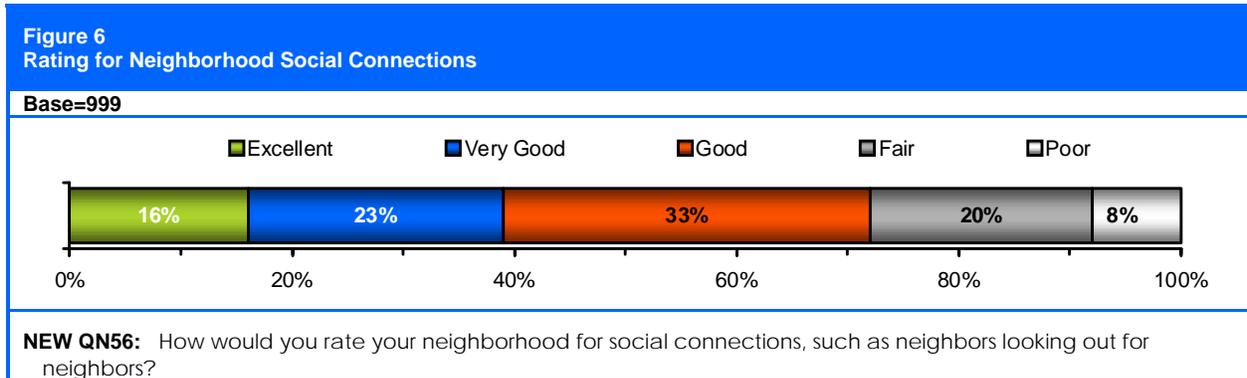
More than three out of four respondents (76%) gave top ratings (*excellent/good*) for the job the City is doing *protecting the livability of neighborhoods*. This is a very large increase over 2008 results when just 56% gave similar ratings. This year 3% said *don't know* or refused.

*City efforts to plan for growth* gathered less than half positive ratings (44%) and mostly negative ratings (56%). Positive ratings increased this year over 2008 (35%), and negative ratings decreased (65%). Twelve percent (12%) did not provide a rating this year.



## Neighborhood Social Connections

In a new question, a majority of respondents (72%) gave positive ratings for *neighborhood social connections*, including 39% that gave a top rating of *excellent* or *very good*. Two percent did not give a rating.



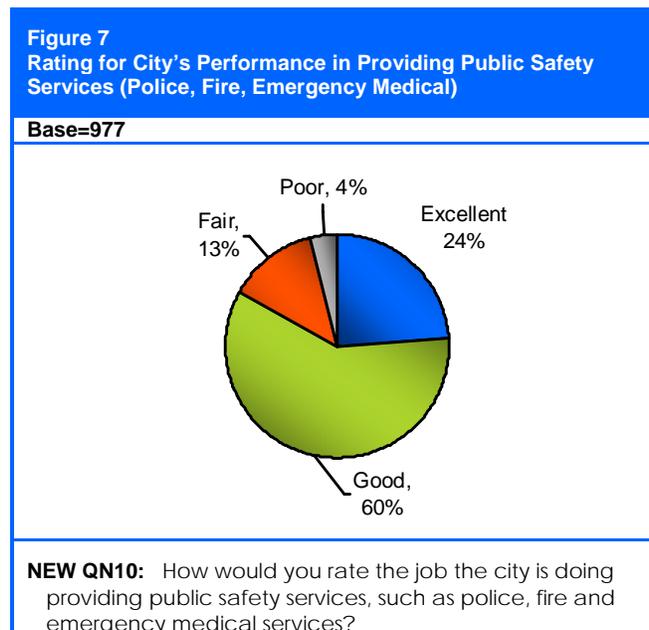
## Safe and Prepared Community

In order to determine how well the City is doing in achieving its commitment to provide a Safe and Prepared Community (a fifth Legacy and Strategic Commitment), the survey asked a series of questions to learn how residents feel about efforts to prevent and respond to emergencies and crime in the community. Residents were also asked to provide ratings for how secure they feel walking in their neighborhoods and in downtown Bellingham, during and day and at night.

Non-opinion (answers of *don't know* or response refusals) for the nine question series ranged from a low of 0% (*feeling of safety walking in your neighborhood during the day*) to a high of 13% (*provision of Medic One emergency services*).

### Overall Provision of Public Safety Services

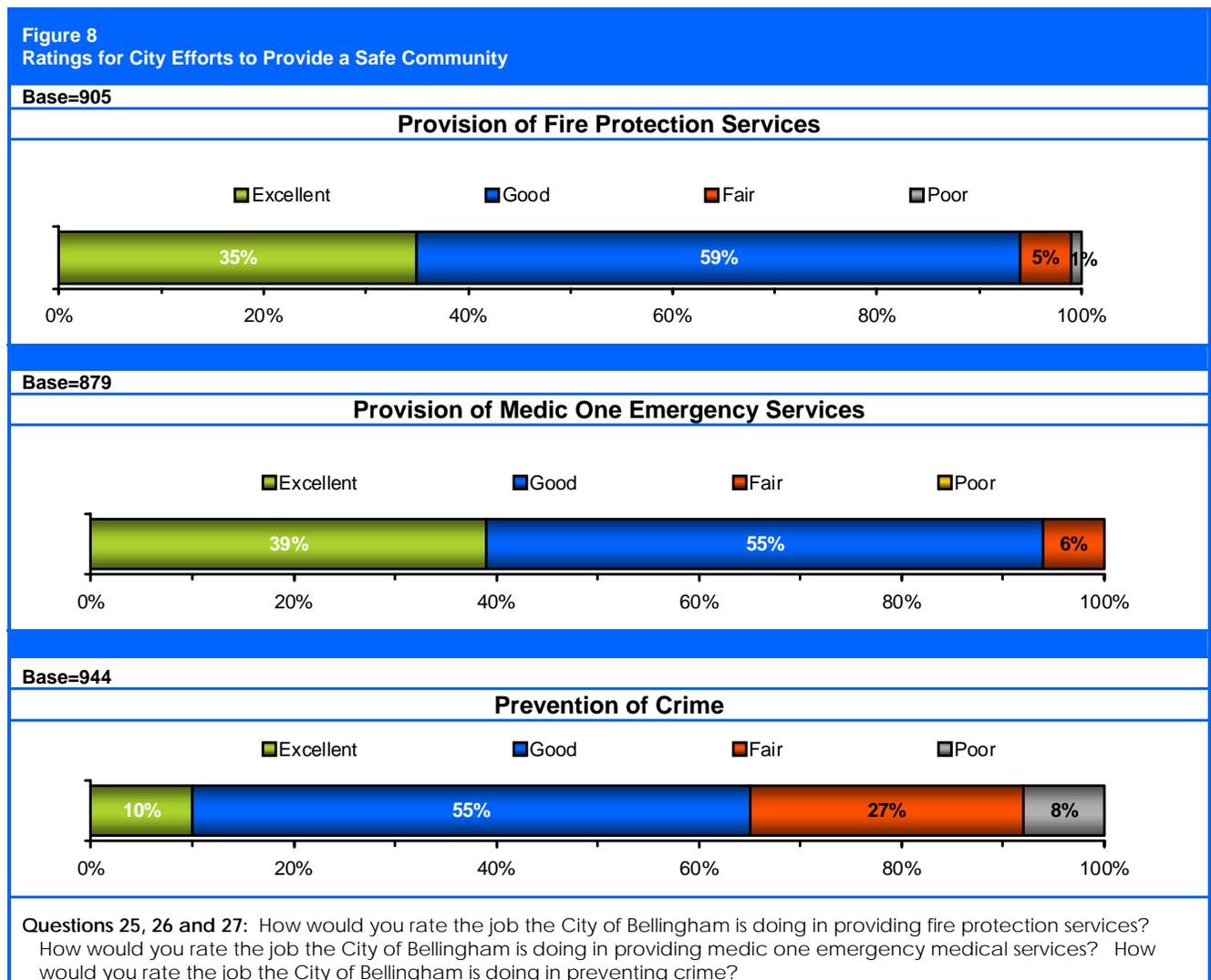
In a new question this year respondents were asked to give a rating for *overall provision of public services*. Results found a very large majority of positive (*excellent/good*) ratings (84%).



## Fire Protection, Medic One and Crime Prevention Services

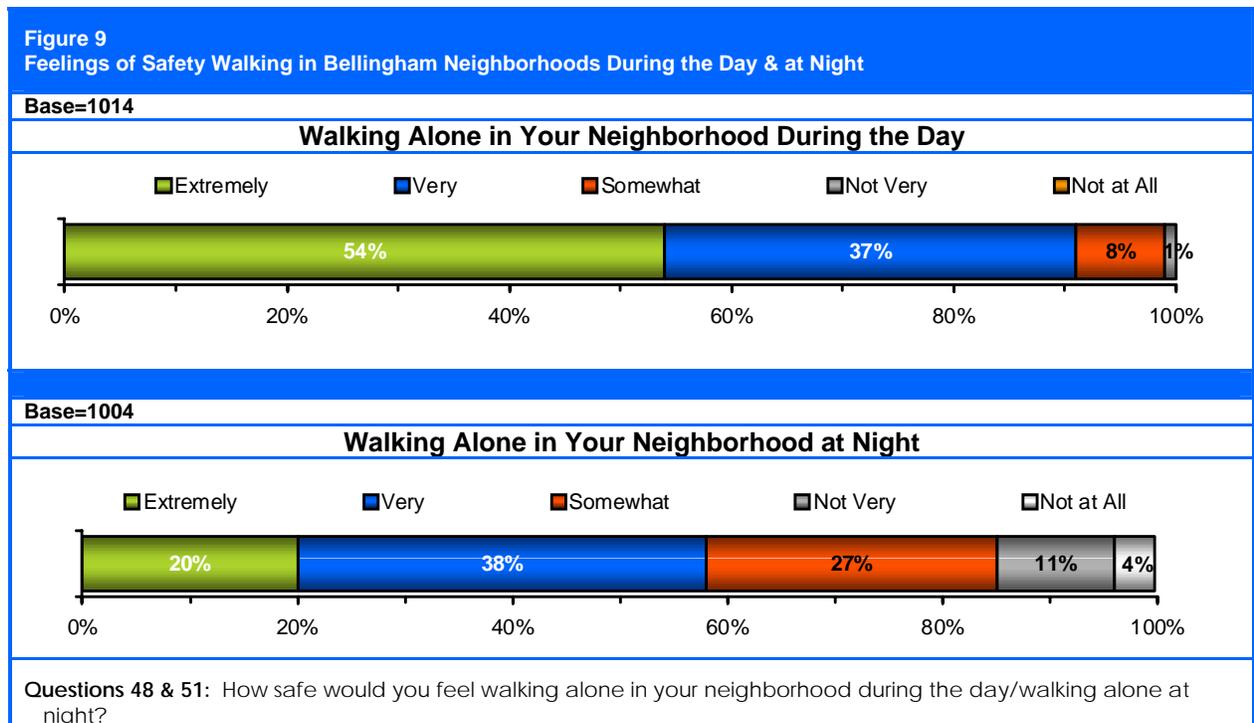
A large majority of respondents gave *excellent/good* ratings for provision of *fire protection* (94%) and *Medic One emergency services* (94%). Both of these ratings show increases from 2008 results when 91% gave positive ratings for *fire protection services* and 84% gave positive ratings *Medic One emergency services*.

City efforts to *prevent crime and protect the community* gathered a lower share of positive ratings (65%) and over one third (35%) negative ratings. Top ratings showed a decrease from 2008 results (74% said *excellent/good*) and low ratings showed an increase (26% *fair/poor*).



## Feelings of Safety While Walking in Bellingham Neighborhoods

A large majority of respondents said they felt *extremely* or *very* secure *walking alone in their neighborhoods during the day* (91%) and most (58%) said they felt safe *walking at night*. Ratings this year are very similar to ratings obtained in 2008 when 91% said they felt *extremely/very safe in their neighborhoods during the day* and 59% said they felt the same *walking in neighborhoods at night*.

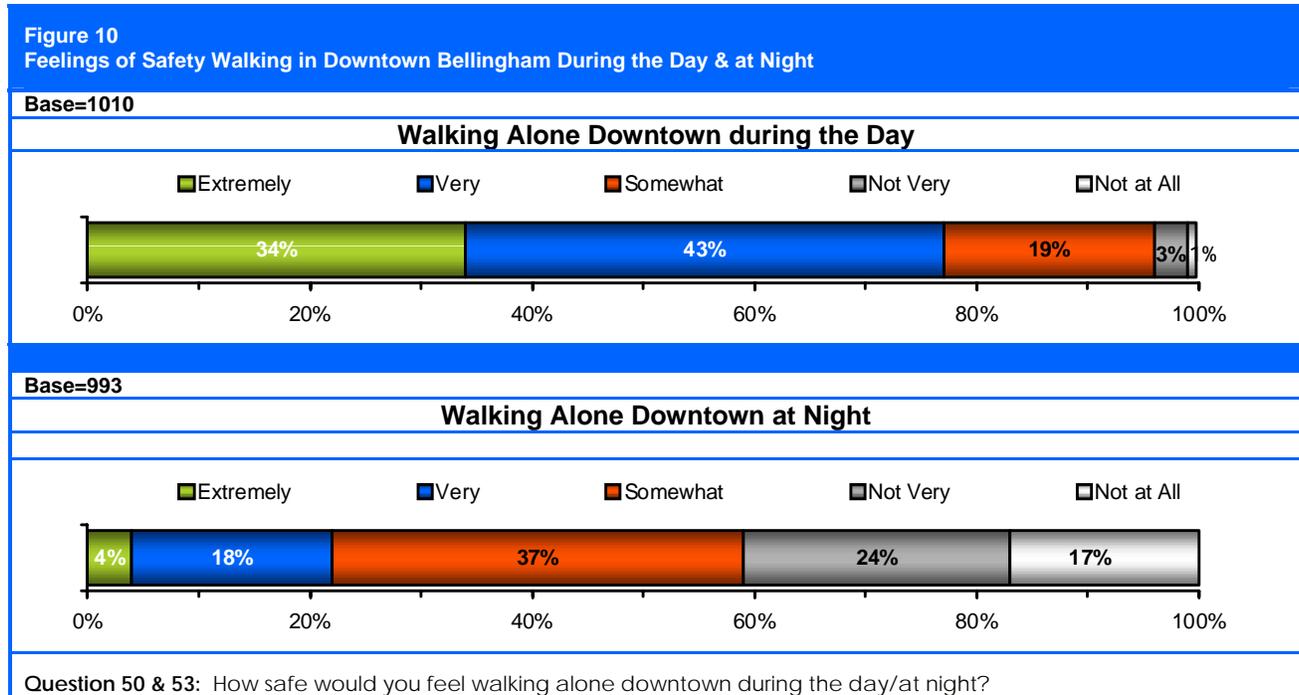


## Feelings of Safety While Walking in Downtown Bellingham

The figure on the following page (Figure 10) displays ratings for feelings of safety while walking in downtown Bellingham, during the day and at night. As expected, ratings for feelings of safety while *walking in downtown Bellingham* were lower than ratings for feelings of safety while *walking in Bellingham neighborhoods*.

Although a large majority (77%) said they feel *extremely/very* secure while *walking in downtown Bellingham during the day*, less than one quarter (22%) said they felt this secure at night. In fact, more than three out of four residents (78%) said they felt only *somewhat* or *less than somewhat* secure alone in the downtown at night.

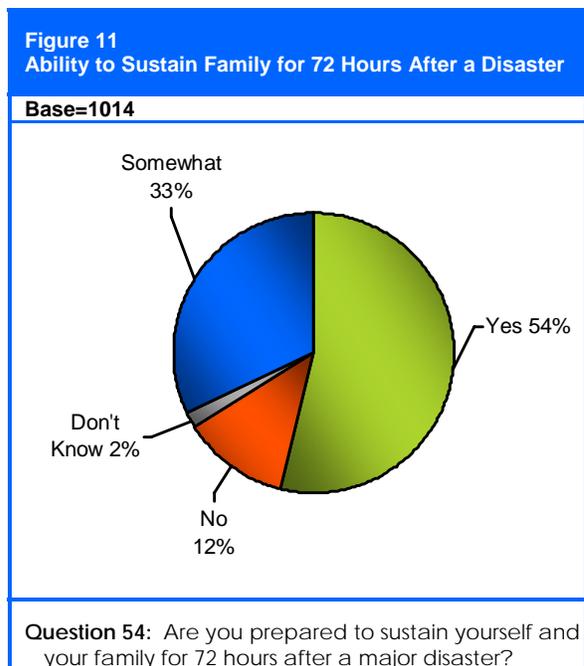
Feelings of being *extremely* or *very safe walking downtown during the day* increased from 2008 results when 72% gave top ratings. Feelings of being *extremely* or *very safe while walking downtown at night* dropped slightly this year compared to 2008 (25%).



### Emergency Preparedness

Most respondents (54%) said they are prepared to sustain themselves and their family for 72 hours following a major disaster, but one third (33%) said they are only *somewhat* able to do this.

In 2008 nearly two thirds (64%) said they were prepared and 19% said they were *somewhat* prepared.



## Mobility and Connectivity Options

As a sixth Legacy and Strategic Commitment the City of Bellingham wishes to provide safe, well-connected mobility options for all users, and to maintain and improve streets, trails and other infrastructure. This is the reason for asking 7 survey questions about street improvements, condition of neighborhood streets, access to bus stops and shopping and safety of neighborhood streets with regard to traffic speed, pedestrians and bicyclists.

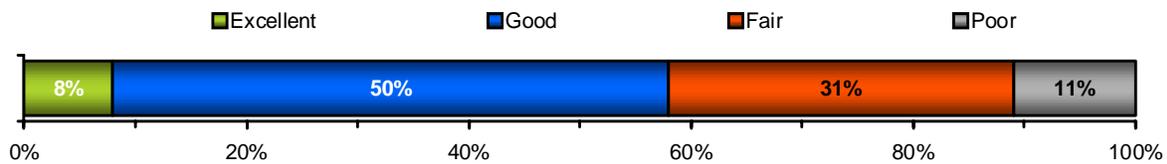
Most residents gave answers for all 7 questions in this section of the survey. The top rate of non-response (*don't know/refused*) was just 4% for the question asked about *neighborhood street safety for bicyclists*.

### Streets

Although a majority of respondents (58%) said they think the City is *doing an excellent or good job of improving streets*, 42% gave lower ratings, indicating they believe the City is falling short. Positive ratings were up slightly this year over 2008, when 56% rated it *excellent/good*.

**Figure 12**  
Rating for City Efforts to Improve Streets

Base=1003

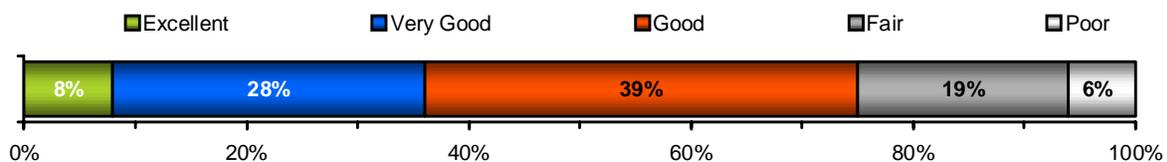


**Questions 28:** How would you rate the job the City of Bellingham is doing in improving streets, such as fixing potholes, signage and traffic lights?

To better understand what residents think about their neighborhood streets in particular, this year's survey asked them to give a rating for the *physical condition of their streets*. Results found a majority (75%) gave positive ratings, including 36% who gave top ratings of *excellent/very good*.

**Figure 13**  
Rating for Physical Condition of Neighborhood Streets

Base=1012



**Question NEW QN60:** How would you rate the physical condition of streets in your neighborhood?

## Access to Bus Stops and Shopping

About two thirds of respondents gave *excellent/very good* ratings for *walking distance to bus stops* (67%) and *access to shopping or other services* (64%). (Figure 14)

*Excellent/very good* ratings were up over 2008 results: 8 percentage points for *walking distance to bus stops* (59% in 2008) and 15 points for *access to shopping* (49% in 2008).



## Neighborhood Street Safety

Figure 15 (page following) displays 2010 ratings for three aspects of street safety: traffic speed, pedestrian safety and safety of bicyclists.

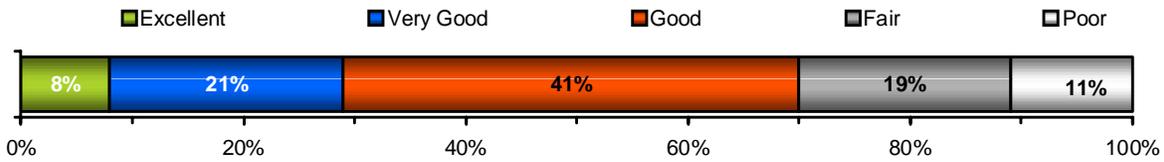
Although a majority of Bellingham residents gave positive ratings for each aspect of neighborhood street safety, only one third or fewer gave top ratings (*excellent/very good*) for any of them: 29% gave top ratings for *traffic speed*, 32% for *pedestrian safety* and just 23% for *safety of bicyclists*.

Comparing top ratings this year with 2008 showed decreases for each aspect of street safety. In 2008 35% gave *excellent/very good* ratings for *traffic speed*, 35% for *safety of pedestrians* and 28% for *bicyclist safety*.

**Figure 15**  
**Ratings for Neighborhood Street Safety**

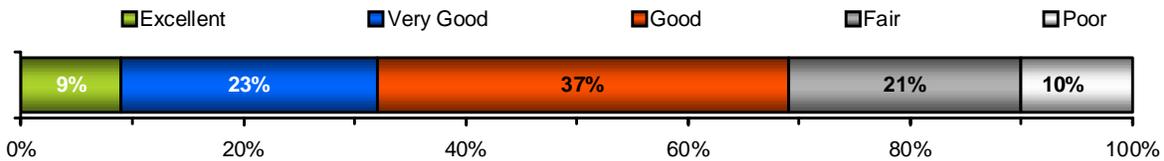
**Base=1007**

**Safety of Traffic Speed**



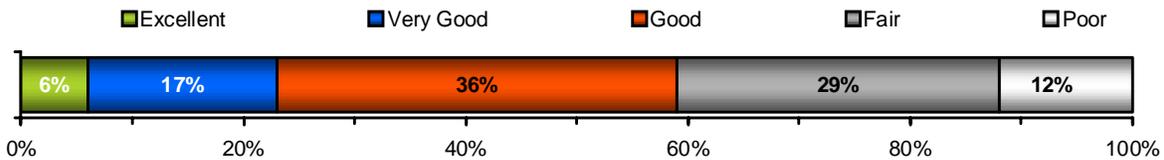
**Base=1012**

**Safety of Pedestrians**



**Base=977**

**Safety of Bicyclists**



Questions 61, 62 and 63: How do you rate the streets in your neighborhood for safety of traffic speed / safety of pedestrians / safety of bicyclists?

## Access to Quality of Life Amenities

The City wishes to maintain and enhance publicly owned assets, foster arts, culture and lifelong learning, provide recreation and enrichment opportunities and ensure convenient access and availability of parks and trails for Bellingham residents. The survey asked six questions about Quality of Life Amenities in the community in order to determine how well it is meeting these goals.

## Overall Rating for Quality of Life

A very large majority of respondents (94%) gave *excellent/good* ratings for overall quality of life in Bellingham. Just 3 respondents chose not to give a rating.

This is an increase over 2008 when 90% gave similar ratings.

## Most Valued Aspects of Living in Bellingham

A new open-ended question appeared on this year's survey asking respondents to describe what they value most about living in Bellingham. (Table 2) Results found respondents very eager to discuss what they like about the City and the area.

Aspects of the physical environment topped the list of qualities (66%), particularly, *being close to the mountains, to water and to the outdoors* (31%) and *living in a beautiful area of the country, with wide open spaces to enjoy* (23%).

Positive characteristics of the community were discussed next most often (61%). Among other things, residents said they liked the *relaxed, small town feeling* of Bellingham (18%) and its *strong sense of community* (10%).

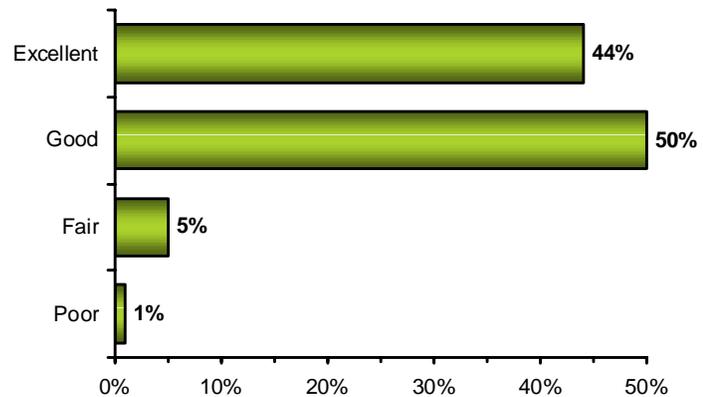
Bellingham's public services and amenities gathered 32% of comments. Residents frequently talked about the *arts scene and cultural activities* (9%) and the presence of *Western Washington University* (7%).

Its transportation services and overall accessibility were also mentioned frequently (29%). Most often comments were given about Bellingham's *proximity to Seattle and to the Vancouver, B.C. Metro area* (7%).

Remarks about Bellingham's recreational services, its *parks, trails, sports programs* and *favorable environment for bicyclist and pedestrians* often surfaced, too (28%).

Figure 16  
Overall Quality of Life Rating

Base=1011



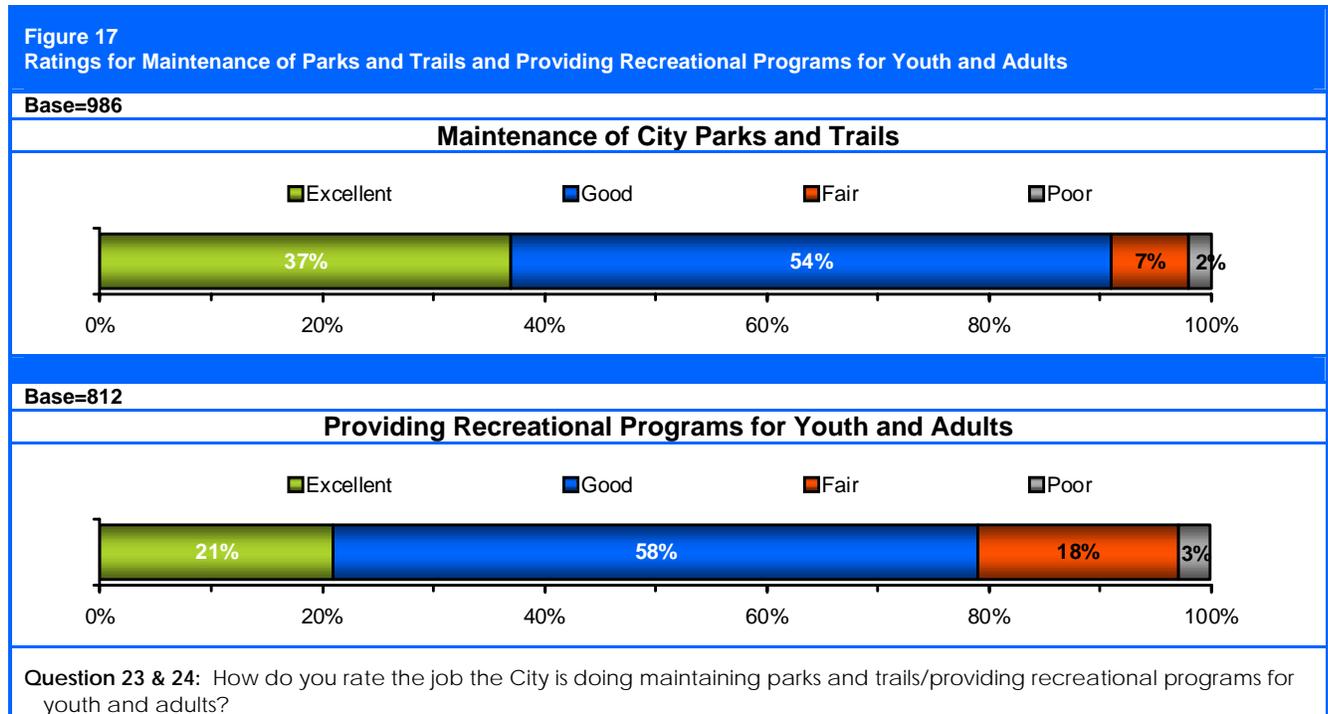
Question 2: Overall, (how) would you rate the quality of life in Bellingham?

<b>Table 2</b>	
<b>Most Valued Aspects of Living in Bellingham</b>	
	<b>Total</b>
<b>(Base)</b>	<b>(n=1013)</b>
<b>Physical Environment</b>	<b>66%</b>
Proximity to mountains / water / outdoors / outdoor opportunities	31
Beautiful area / natural / open spaces / the environment	23
Good weather / climate	7
Clean air / clean water	3
Clean city / clean area	2
<b>Community Characteristics</b>	<b>61%</b>
Ambiance / Relaxed / Small town feeling	18
Strong sense of community	10
Friendly people	9
Environmentally smart / green	7
Educated, well informed population / progressive in thinking	4
Family friendly	3
My hometown / family and friends are here	3
Right-sized community	3
Diverse population	2
Nice neighborhoods	2
<b>Public Services and Amenities</b>	<b>32%</b>
Art / culture	9
Presence of a college / WWU	7
Quality of schools	4
Good libraries	2
Good retail stores	2
Good downtown	2
Support of local businesses	2
Restaurants	2
Farmers' Market / Locally grown food	2
<b>Transportation and Accessibility</b>	<b>29%</b>
Close to major Metro areas (Seattle, Vancouver)	7
Location (general)	4
Public transportation	4
Easy to get around / easy access	3
Well-planned city / good growth management	3
Accessible shopping	3
Less traffic / low traffic congestion	3
Access to medical and health services	2
<b>Outdoor Services and Recreation</b>	<b>28%</b>
Good parks / beautiful parks	12
Good trails	7
Sports and recreation programs / (outdoor) activities	5
Pedestrian / bike friendly	4
<b>Public Safety</b>	<b>8%</b>
Low crime rate / safe place to live	6
Public safety services	2
City services (general)	2
Don't Know/Refused	2%
<b>New QN2: What do you value most about Bellingham as a place to live?</b>	
Multiple response question; responses gathering 1% or less of total overall response are not shown.	

## Parks, Trails and Recreation

Most respondents gave *excellent/good* ratings for the job the City is doing *maintaining parks and trails* (91%) and *providing recreational programs for youth and adults* (79%). Positive ratings for both items were up over 2008 ratings (85% and 72%, respectively).

This year just 3% of respondents opted out of the question about *maintaining parks and trails*, but many (20%) chose not to rate *provision of recreational programs for youth and adults*.



## Library Services, Culture and the Arts

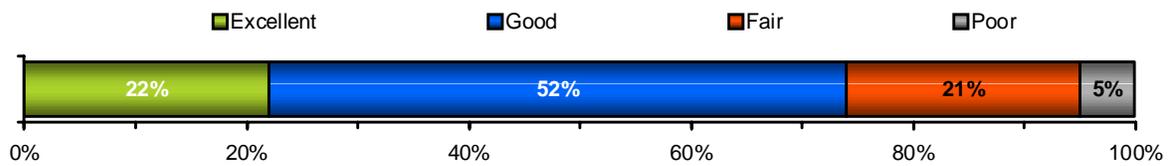
Three out of four respondents said they approve of the job that the City is doing *providing library services* (74% rated this *excellent/good*). (Figure 18 page following) Four out of five (81%) said they approve of its efforts to *create opportunities for culture and the arts*. Five percent (5%) did not give a rating for *provision of library services* and 6% did not rate *opportunities for culture and the arts*.

*Provision of library services* gathered a lower share of positive ratings than in 2008 (79%), while *creating opportunities for culture and the arts* gathered slightly more (81%).

**Figure 18**  
Ratings for Provision of Library Services and Creating Opportunities for Culture and the Arts

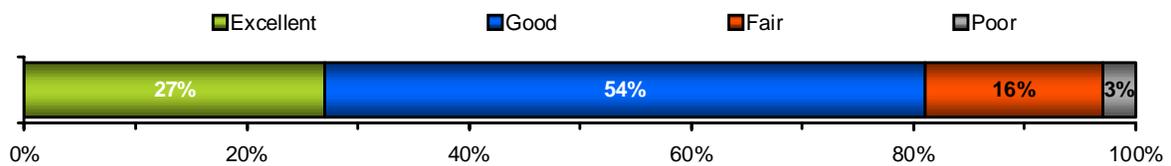
Base=963

**Provision of Library Services**



Base=954

**Creating Opportunities for Culture and the Arts**



**Question 30 & 31:** How do you rate the job the City is doing in providing library services/creating opportunities for education in culture and the arts?

## Equity and Social Justice

As part of its commitment to Equity and Social Justice, the City strives to support safe and affordable housing for Bellingham residents. To determine how effectively it is meeting this goal, the survey asked respondents to rate their neighborhoods for *housing affordability*.

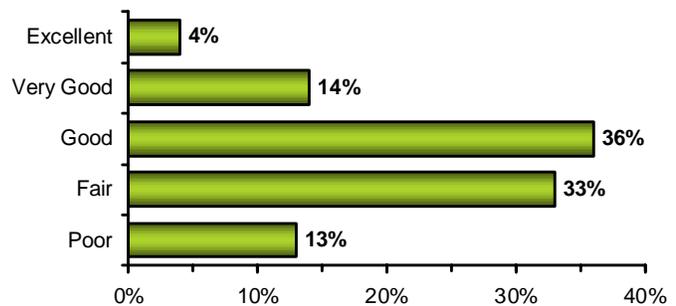
Although over half (54%) gave positive ratings, only 18% gave top positive ratings (*excellent/very good*). Many (46%) gave ratings of *fair/poor*.

In 2008, 51% gave positive ratings, including 21% that gave *excellent/very good* ratings. Forty-nine percent (49%) gave ratings of *fair/poor*.

This year 4% of respondents said *don't know* or chose not to answer.

**Figure 19**  
Rating of Neighborhood Housing Affordability

Base=954



**Question 55:** How would you rate your neighborhood for housing affordability?

## Quality, Responsive City Services

The City is interested in delivering efficient, effective and accountable municipal services to Bellingham residents. In an effort to determine how it can successfully accomplish this goal, the survey asked respondents to *name the most important problem facing Bellingham that its leaders can do something about.*

Results found that problems associated with growth, gathered the greatest share of comments (42%). Examples include discussion of *growth/sprawl/overcrowding* and *overbuilding* (15%), *inadequate planning/zoning* (14%), *traffic and congestion* (7%) and *development of the waterfront area* (6%).

Problems with the economy were also named very often (23%), such as *insufficient employment* (11%), a need for *greater business development* (8%) and the *overall economy/falling property values* (4%).

Budget and finance concerns accounted for about 18% of responses (*general government spending* and *general government budget* - 4%, each type of remark), *making necessary budget cuts* (3%), *prioritizing essential services* (3%), and *City government budget and spending* concerns (2%, each type of remark).

Comments about streets and transportation issues surfaced frequently, too (15% of overall response). Examples include *transportation* and *public transportation* (8%), needed *street repairs* (5%) and *parking* (2%).

Respondents also often said they wished City leaders would address environmental concerns (12%), like *Lake*

**Table 3**  
Most Important Problem Facing Bellingham Today

	Total
<b>(Base)</b>	<b>(1014)</b>
<b>Growth</b>	<b>42%</b>
Growth/sprawl / overcrowding population / overbuilding / building construction	15
Inadequate planning / zoning	14
Traffic/congestion	7
Waterfront development	6
<b>Economy</b>	<b>23%</b>
Insufficient employment / jobs	11
Need more business development / help local businesses	8
Overall economy / property values	4
<b>Budget and Finance</b>	<b>18%</b>
Government spending (general) not Bellingham City government	4
Government budget(general) not Bellingham City government	4
Making necessary budget cuts / reducing spending /	3
Maintaining / prioritizing / balancing essential services	3
City government spending	2
City budget management	2
<b>Streets and Transportation</b>	<b>15%</b>
Transportation / public transportation / mass transit	8
Streets /repair / more lanes / pedestrians / bike lanes	5
Parking	2
<b>Environmental Issues</b>	<b>12%</b>
Lake Whatcom water quality/ drinking water quality	6
Maintaining the environment (general)	3
Open spaces	3
Crime/safety	10
Welfare / social services / homelessness	7
Downtown revitalization	5
Taxes / property taxes	5
Schools / quality / neighborhood	3
Maintaining overall quality of life	2
Affordable housing	2
Law enforcement / more law enforcement	2
Don't Know/Refused	3%
<b>Question 4:</b> What do you think is the most important problem facing Bellingham today that City leaders can do something about? Multiple response question; responses gathering 1% or less of total overall response are not shown.	

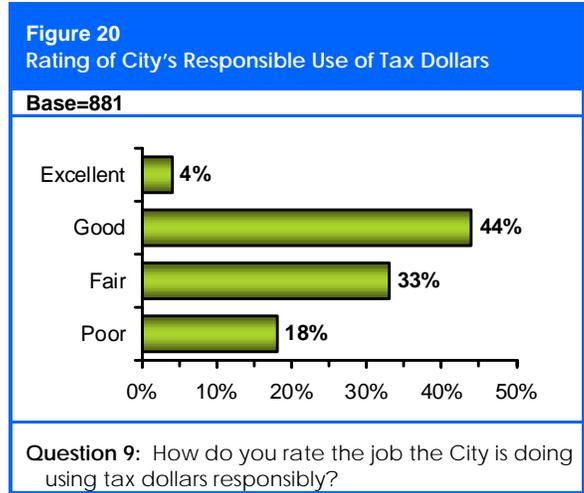
Whatcom water quality (6%), maintaining the environment, in general (3%) and maintaining open spaces (3%). Residents voiced an assortment of other concerns and these are displayed in Table 3.

### ***Budget and Taxes: Responsible Use of Tax Dollars***

Almost half of all respondents (48%) gave *excellent/good* ratings for the *City's responsible use of tax dollars*, but more than half (51%) gave *fair/poor* ratings.

One out of eight residents (13%) opted out of the question.

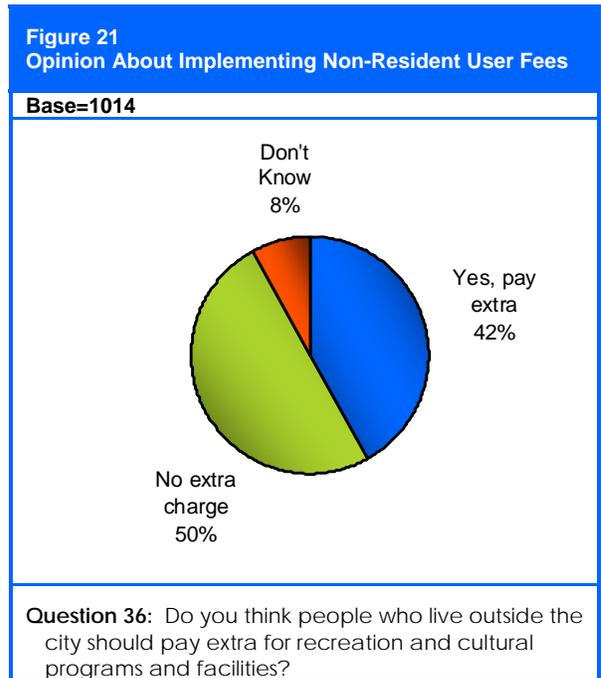
Ratings this year are on par with ratings obtained in the previous survey when 49% gave positive ratings and 50% gave less than positive.



### ***Implementation of Non-Resident User Fees***

Half of all respondents (50%) said they are in favor of allowing non-residents to use City tax-supported recreational and cultural programs and facilities at no extra charge, but 42% said they are against this.

A comparison of results this year with 2008 shows a *decrease* in the proportion of those in favor of allowing free use of City programs and facilities (50% this year vs. 57% in 2008), and an *increase* in those who would have non-residents pay extra and (42% currently vs. 39% in 2008).



## Choices for Taxation and Service Levels

This year's survey repeated a question asked in 2008 about taxation and service levels. It offered a variation in wording with this preliminary statement: *since 2008, the City has reduced expenses by more than \$30 million dollars, cut 78 staff positions and eliminated some services.*

The question asked residents to make a choice for the City: should it increase taxes and fees to maintain services at current levels, or should it keep taxes and fees the same and cut services?

Results found nearly twice as many in favor of increasing taxes (43%) than in favor of cutting services (22%).

More than one third did not choose, but instead offered alternative ideas for managing the budget (25%), or said they didn't know (10%).

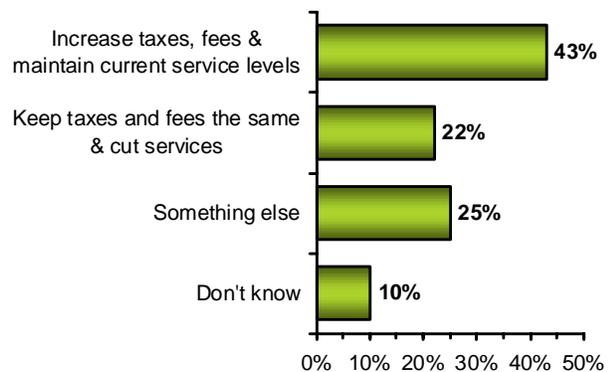
The most popular alternative ideas (those that gathered at least 2% of total opinion) included:

- *Better manage revenue* (3%)
- *Reduce staff salaries/cut more staff* (3%)
- *Cut/reduce taxes* (2%)
- *Be more efficient* (2%)
- *Prioritize services* (2%)
- *Institute user fees* (2%)
- *Manipulate the budget* (2%)
- *Increase taxes* (but not maintain current service levels, 2%)

Given the different question wording in the 2008 survey, respondents at that time more often made a choice (52% said *increase taxes*, and 35% said *cut services*), and less often suggested alternatives.

**Figure 22**  
Choices for Taxation and Service Levels

Base=1014



**Question 37:** Since 2008, the City has reduced expenses by more than \$30 million, cut 78 staff positions and eliminated some services. From today forward, if you had to choose only one, which of the following would you choose for the City?

### Suggestions for Trimming City Services

In its commitment to provide quality, responsive services to Bellingham residents, the City strives to involve stakeholders in decision-making. This motivation prompted a new question for this year’s survey, asking residents to *provide suggestions for City services that could be cut, if demand for services outpaces revenues.*

Results found a wide range of areas recommended for trimming, if need be. *Arts and parks* topped the list (12% and 10%, respectively), followed by *transportation* and *public works* projects (7%, each) and *recreational programs and services* (6%). Some perceived an overabundance of *public safety services* (5%), while others said *City administration* might be winnowed (5%). Altogether, suggestions for cuts, including consolidations, accounted for about 74% of comments.

Suggestions were also given in opposition to cutting services (about 38% of remarks). Some said *no services should be cut* (7%) or gave *specific mention of programs or services that should not be cut* (6%). *Elimination of expenses* was sometimes recommended and so was *raising taxes* (4%, each).

A large proportion of respondents offered no suggestions (26%).

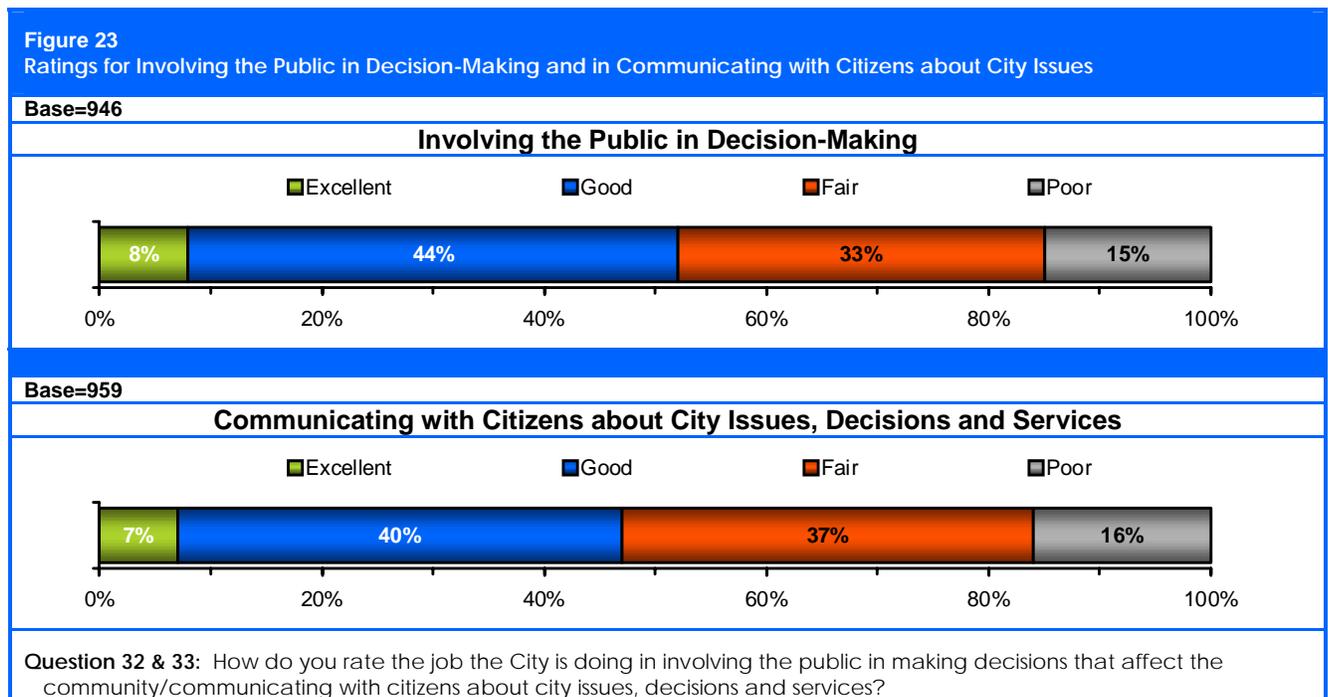
Table 4 Suggestions for Cutting City Services	
	Total (n=1014)
<b>Suggested areas to trim:</b>	
Arts / culture/ museum	12%
Parks	10
Transportation / Public transportation, transit	7
Public works / maintenance of infrastructure (roads, sidewalks) / City Maintenance Dept.	7
Recreation / entertainment	6
Public safety (fire, police)	5
City managers / Administrators	5
Development / City planning	4
Consolidate departments / Reduce city staff	4
Non-essential services	3
Library services	3
Parking enforcement / Parking regulations	2
Entitlement programs	2
Special projects (e.g., marina)	2
Trails	2
<b>Suggestions given in opposition to cutting services"</b>	
No services should be cut	7%
Specific mention of program/service not to cut	6
Eliminate / reduce / cut expenses, not services	4
Raising taxes is okay	4
Give a list to choose from	4
Maintain public health & safety	3
Encourage voluntarism	3
Institute user fees	3
Cuts will hurt quality of life	2
Prioritize services	2
Don't Know/Refused	26%
<b>N38:</b> If the City of Bellingham was to cut city services, what services do you think the City of Bellingham should cut when citizens' demand for services outpace revenues? Multiple response question; responses gathering 1% or less of total overall response are not shown.	

## Public Involvement and Communications

Just over half of survey respondents (52%) gave *excellent/good* ratings for *the job the City is doing involving the public in making decisions* that affect the community. Fewer than half (47%) gave similar ratings for *how well the City communicates with citizens about City issues, decisions and services*.

Seven percent (7%) did not give ratings for *involving the public in decision-making*, and 5% did not rate *communication with citizens about issues, decisions and services*.

A comparison of results obtained this year with 2008 results found a sharp increase in positive ratings for *involving the public in decision making* (12 percentage points, or 40% in 2008) and a smaller increase in *communicating with citizens about City issues* (3 percentage points, or 44% in 2008).



## Awareness of the City Television Channel

Most respondents (73%) indicated they were aware of Bellingham's City television channel. Three respondents said *don't know* and two chose not to answer the question.

In the 2008 survey 70% indicated they were aware of the television channel.

## Frequency of Watching BTV-Ten

Of those aware of the channel (n=736), about two thirds (66%) watch rarely (*less than once per month – 27%*) or *never* (39%).

In 2008 viewership was more frequent. Where 21% said they watched BTV-10 weekly in 2008, just 13% watch that often now.

## Viewing of City Council Meetings

Respondents who said they watch BTV-10 at least once per month were asked *how often they tune in to watch City Council meetings*. More than a third indicated they watch fairly often: 31% said *sometimes* and 3% (n=13) said *always*.

In 2008 respondents said they tuned in to City Council meetings a little more often: 37% said *sometimes* and 3% said *always*.

Figure 24  
Awareness of Bellingham's City Television Station

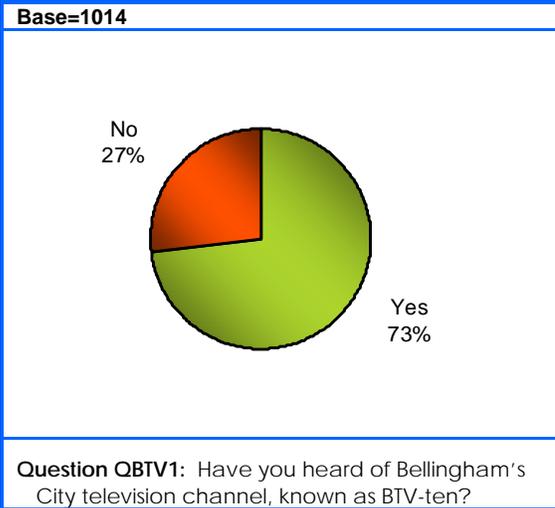


Table 5  
Frequency of Watching BTV-Ten and Viewing City Council Meetings

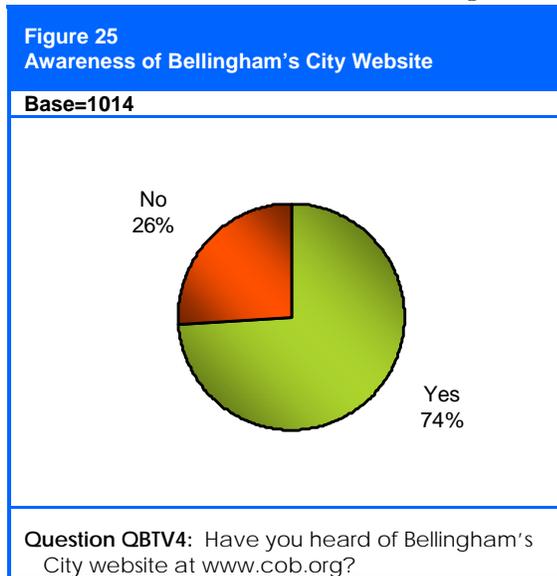
	Total (n=736)
<b>Frequency of Viewing</b>	
Never	39%
Less than once per month	27
Once per month	16
Weekly	13
Many times a week	4
Daily	<1
Don't Know/Refused	1
	<b>Total (n=445)</b>
<b>Frequency of viewing City Council meetings</b>	
Always	3%
Sometimes	31
Rarely	45
Never	21

Question QBTV2/QBTV3: Tell me which fits you best. Do you watch BTV-ten ...? How often were you tuning in to watch a City Council meeting?

## Awareness of the City Website

Nearly three out of four respondents (74%) said *they had heard of [www.cob.org](http://www.cob.org)*. Just 3 respondents said *don't know*.

Website awareness showed a steep increase over 2008 results, when 54% said *they had heard of [www.cob.org](http://www.cob.org)*.



## Website Visits

Among those aware of the City website, 37% said they *visit at least once per month*, including 12% who view the site *weekly, several times weekly or daily*. Twelve percent (12%) *never* visit the City website.

In 2008 43% said they visited the website *at least once a month*, including 14% who said *weekly or more often*. One quarter said they *never* visited [www.cob.org](http://www.cob.org).

**Table 6**  
Frequency of Visiting [www.cob.org](http://www.cob.org)

	Total (n=750)
Never	12%
Less than once per month	50
Once per month	25
Weekly	8
Many times a week	3
Daily	1
Don't Know/Refused	1

**Question QBTV5:** Tell me which fits you best. Do you visit [www.cob.org](http://www.cob.org) ...?

## Statistically Significant Differences between Respondent Subgroups

Respondents were split into standard demographic subgroups to explore whether they differed from one another in their opinions about items asked in the survey. Demographic subgroups were categorized in the following ways:

- Type of survey (web or phone)
- Home ownership (own or rent)
- Years of residence (5 or less, 6 to 15 and more than 15)
- Children under 18 living at home (yes or no)
- Age (18 to 34, 35 to 49, 50 to 64 and 65+)
- Gender
- Income (\$15K to \$25K, \$25K to \$50K, \$50K to \$100K and \$100K+)

Respondents were also evaluated in terms of two attitudinal factors:

- Perception of overall quality of life in Bellingham (excellent, good, not good)
- Attitude about instituting non-resident user fees for City services (in favor or opposed)

Major differences between these subgroups are summarized for closed-ended questions by report section. They are reported on the basis of those more likely than others to give top positive ratings (*excellent/ good*), (*excellent/ very good* – if asked) or top importance ratings (*extremely/ very important*).

Differences were also evaluated on the basis of those more likely to give low ratings (or bottom three ratings, depending on the scale of question). These are *not* reported because they are very often associated with subgroups who voice opinions “inverse” of those giving top ratings.<sup>3</sup>

### ***Clean, Safe Drinking Water***

- *Preventing further development in the Lake Whatcom watershed - (extremely/ very important)* to:
  - Those who perceive an *excellent* quality of life in Bellingham
  - Renters
  - Residents of Bellingham 15 years or less
  - Females
  - Those with incomes of less than \$50,000

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<sup>3</sup> For example, if home owners give top ratings, renters are likely to give bottom ratings. If females give top ratings, males are more likely to give bottom ratings.

## ***Healthy Environment***

The Healthy Environment section focused on four items of inquiry: *environmental protection, efforts to reduce human impact on the environment, reducing automobile trips* and *promoting use of renewable energy*.

- *Environmental protection* - rated (*excellent/ good*) by:
  - Those who perceive an *excellent* quality of life in Bellingham
  - Bellingham residents 5 years or less
- *Efforts to reduce human impact on the environment* - rated (*excellent/ good*) by:
  - Those who perceive an *excellent* quality of life in Bellingham
  - Residents 5 years or less
  - Those under age 50
- *Reducing automobile trips* - (*extremely/ very important*) to:
  - Those who perceive an *excellent* quality of life in Bellingham
  - Residents who oppose instituting non-resident user fees for City services
  - Renters
  - Residents of 15 years or less
  - Respondents younger than age 65
  - Females
- *Promoting the use of renewable energy* - (*extremely/ very important*) to:
  - Those who give *excellent* or *good* ratings for quality of life in Bellingham
  - Renters
  - Residents of 15 years or less
  - Respondents younger than age 50
  - Females

## ***Vibrant, Sustainable Economy***

- *Encouragement of economic and business development* - rated (*excellent/ good*) by:
  - Those who perceive an *excellent* quality of life in Bellingham
  - Renters
  - Females

## ***Sense of Place***

Questions asked about Sense of Place include *livability of neighborhoods, growth planning* and *neighborhood social connections*.

- *Livability of neighborhoods* - rated (*excellent/ good*) by:
  - Those who perceive an *excellent* quality of life in Bellingham

- Those who oppose instituting non-resident user fees for City services
- Residents of 15 years or less
- *Planning for growth* - rated (*excellent/good*) by:
  - Those who perceive an *excellent* quality of life in Bellingham
  - Females
- *Neighborhood social connections* - (*excellent/very good*) by:
  - Respondents interviewed by phone
  - Those who perceive an *excellent* quality of life in Bellingham
  - Home owners
  - Respondents older than age 35

### ***Safe and Prepared Community***

The Safe and Prepared Community section encompasses a very large portion of the study. The nine items covered in this section are each listed below.

- *Overall rating for provision of public safety services* - rated (*excellent/good*) by:
  - Those who perceive an *excellent* quality of life in Bellingham
  - Those who oppose instituting non-resident user fees for City services
  - Home owners
- *Provision of fire protection services* - rated (*excellent/good*) by:
  - Those who perceive an *excellent* quality of life in Bellingham
  - Home owners
- *Provision of Medic One services* - rated (*excellent/good*) by:
  - Those who perceive an *excellent* quality of life in Bellingham
  - Residents who are 65 years old and older
  - Home owners
- *Crime prevention* - rated (*excellent/good*) by:
  - Respondents interviewed by phone
  - Those who perceive an *excellent* quality of life in Bellingham
  - Residents who oppose instituting non-resident user fees for City services
  - Home owners
  - Residents who are 65 years old and older

- *Safety walking alone in neighborhoods during the day* - rated (*extremely/very safe*) by:
  - Those who perceive an *excellent* quality of life in Bellingham
  - Respondents who oppose instituting non-resident user fees for City services
  - Home owners
  - Residents who have children under age 18 living at home
  - Those who have annual incomes of \$25,000 or more
- *Safety walking alone in neighborhoods at night* - rated (*extremely/very safe*) by:
  - Those who perceive an *excellent* quality of life in Bellingham
  - Home owners
  - Males
  - Those who have annual incomes of \$25,000 or more
- *Safety walking alone downtown during the day* - rated (*extremely/very safe*) by:
  - Those who perceive an *excellent* quality of life in Bellingham
  - Respondents who oppose instituting non-resident user fees for City services
  - Those who are 18 to 34 years old
- *Safety walking alone downtown at night* - rated (*extremely/very safe*) by:
  - Those who perceive an *excellent* quality of life in Bellingham
  - Males
- *Ability to sustain self and family for 72 hours after an emergency* – more likely to answer *yes*:
  - Respondents interviewed by phone
  - Home owners
  - Residents of Bellingham for longer than 15 years
  - Those who are 50 years old and older
  - Those who have annual incomes of \$25,000 or more
  - Males

### ***Mobility and Connectivity Options***

The survey presented respondents with seven questions about Mobility and Connectivity Options mostly in their neighborhoods, including *access to bus stops* and *shopping, street safety* and *physical condition of streets*. It also asked about general *street improvements, such as fixing potholes, signage and traffic lights*.

- *Street improvements* – rated (*excellent/good*) by:
  - Those who perceive an *excellent* quality of life in Bellingham
  - Respondents who oppose instituting non-resident user fees for City services

- *Physical condition of neighborhood streets* – rated (*excellent/very good*) by:
  - Those who perceive an excellent quality of life in Bellingham
  - Respondents who oppose instituting non-resident user fees for City services
- *Walking distance to neighborhood bus stops* – rated (*excellent/very good*) by:
  - Those who perceive an *excellent* quality of life in Bellingham
  - Respondents who rent
  - Residents of Bellingham 5 years or less
  - Those younger than 50 years old
  - Respondents who have annual incomes of less than \$50,000
- *Access to shopping and other services* – rated (*excellent/very good*) by:
  - Those who perceive an *excellent* quality of life in Bellingham
  - Respondents who rent
  - Residents who have children under age 18 living at home
  - Those younger than 50 years old
- *Neighborhood safety of traffic speed* – rated (*excellent/very good*) by:
  - Those who perceive an *excellent* quality of life in Bellingham
  - Respondents who oppose instituting non-resident user fees for City services
  - Residents who are 18 to 34 years old
  - Respondents who rent
  - Residents of Bellingham 5 years or less
  - Respondents who have annual incomes of less than \$50,000
- *Neighborhood pedestrian safety* – rated (*excellent/very good*) by:
  - Those who perceive an *excellent* quality of life in Bellingham
  - Respondents who oppose instituting non-resident user fees for City services
  - Residents who are 18 to 34 years old
  - Respondents who rent
  - Residents of Bellingham 5 years or less
- *Neighborhood safety for bicyclists* – rated (*excellent/very good*) by:
  - Those who perceive an *excellent* quality of life in Bellingham

### ***Access to Quality of Life Amenities***

This topic area surveyed opinions regarding *overall quality of life, maintenance of parks and trails, recreational programs for youth and adults, provision of library services and creating opportunities for culture and the arts.*

- *Overall rating for quality of life in Bellingham - rated (excellent/good) by:*
  - Home owners
  - Those who have annual incomes of \$50,000 or more
- *Maintenance of City parks and trails - rated (excellent/good) by:*
  - Respondents to the web survey
  - Those who rate overall quality of life in Bellingham as *excellent* or *good*
  - Residents of Bellingham 15 years or less
  - Those who are younger than 50 years old
- *Provision of recreational programs for youth and adults - rated (excellent/good) by:*
  - Home owners
  - Those who perceive an *excellent* quality of life in Bellingham
  - Residents of Bellingham 15 years or less
- *Provision of library services - rated (excellent/good) by:*
  - Those who perceive an *excellent* quality of life in Bellingham
- *Creating opportunities for culture and the arts - rated (excellent/good) by:*
  - Those who perceive an *excellent* quality of life in Bellingham
  - Residents who have *no* children under age 18 living at home

### ***Equity and Social Justice***

- *Neighborhood housing affordability – rated (excellent/very good) by:*
  - Respondents interviewed by phone
  - Those who perceive an *excellent* quality of life in Bellingham
  - Respondents who are 65 years old and older
  - Those with incomes of less than \$25,000
  - Residents who have *no* children under age 18 living at home

### ***Quality, Responsive City Services***

The survey asked respondents to give ratings for two items related to *public communications* and *involvement in decision-making* and one rating for *responsible use of tax dollars*. It also asked them to voice their support for or opposition to *non-resident user fees*, and polled *awareness of the City television channel and its website*.

- *Communicating with citizens about issues, decisions and services – rated (excellent/very good) by:*
  - Respondents interviewed by phone
  - Those who perceive an *excellent* quality of life in Bellingham
- *Involving the public in decision-making – rated (excellent/very good) by:*

- Respondents interviewed by phone
- Those who perceive an *excellent* quality of life in Bellingham
- Residents of Bellingham 15 years or less
- *Responsible use of tax dollars* – rated (*excellent/very good*) by:
  - Those who perceive an *excellent* quality of life in Bellingham
  - Respondents who oppose instituting non-resident user fees for City services
  - Residents of Bellingham 15 years or less
- *Opinions about implementing non-resident user fees* – subgroups more likely to say non-residents should pay extra:
  - Home owners
  - Those who have annual incomes of \$50,000 or more
- *Aware of BTV-10* – subgroups more likely to have heard of the channel:
  - Home owners
  - Those who have been residents more than 5 years
  - Respondents 35 years old and older
  - Those who have annual incomes of \$50,000 to \$100,000
- *Aware of [www.cob.org](http://www.cob.org)* – subgroups more likely to have heard of the website:
  - Respondents to the web survey
  - Home owners
  - Those who have been Bellingham residents for 6 to 15 years
  - Respondents between the ages of 35 and 49
  - Those who have annual incomes of \$25,000 or more
  - Respondents who have children under age 18 living at home

# CONCLUSIONS

Results of the 2010 survey of Bellingham residents find the City is meeting the needs and expectations of residents in most areas of service. Evidence can be found in a majority of positive ratings given for nearly all aspects of the Legacies and Strategic Commitments, and a 94% *excellent/good* rating for *overall quality of life* in Bellingham.

Of the 29 specific areas of service rated by respondents, 24 received a majority share of *excellent/good* or *excellent/very good/good* ratings. Five items that gathered mostly *fair/poor* ratings were also identified as areas of shortcoming in 2008. They include:

- *Encouraging economic development and business growth*
- *Growth planning*
- *Feelings of safety walking downtown, alone at night*
- *Responsible use of tax dollars*
- *Communicating with citizens about issues, decisions and services*

Asked to provide suggestions for programs or services that could be trimmed if public demand outpaces revenues, respondents frequently gave ideas, but did so with great reluctance. Suggestions were very often peppered with comments that services would be missed, that eliminating programs would negatively affect quality of life and that reductions should be made only if absolutely nothing else can be done. It is notable that when asked to choose between having an increase in taxation or a reduction in services, one quarter of respondents offered alternatives to the choice, and one in ten opted out of the question.

In open-ended comments Bellingham residents revealed their awareness of and their sensitivity to the difficult position the City has in managing affairs of government at this time. Survey findings suggest that whatever choices must be made, most residents will likely lend support.

## ***Recommendations***

Based on results of this survey, we offer three primary recommendations for the City to consider:

1. Be attentive to areas of shortcoming - areas where more than half of all respondents voiced negative opinions of City performance. Focus efforts to improve in these areas. It is especially important to keep residents well-informed of issues and decisions about potential service cuts. Be demonstrative in efforts to seek public input.

2. Take actions to increase the rate of emergency preparedness in the community. A large proportion of respondents (45%) said they are only *somewhat* prepared or *not* prepared to sustain their families for 72 hours following a disaster.
3. Employ identical methods of sampling and data collection in future residential opinion surveys. The methods used in the 2010 survey provided a more complete coverage of the population and resulted in much better representation of residents by age and by gender. This year's survey successfully reached many residents by web, those who would be very difficult to reach by phone. Likewise, the survey accessed another sizeable segment of the population, those who would be very unlikely to communicate online.

# APPENDIX

## Questionnaire:

### SC1

Do you live in the city of Bellingham?

N = .....	1014	100%
Yes.....1	1014	100%
No.....2	0	0%
Don't know.....7	0	0%
Refused.....9	0	0%

### Q2

Overall, would you rate the quality of life in Bellingham as excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

N = .....	1014	100%
Excellent.....4	449	44%
Good.....3	500	49%
Only fair.....2	55	5%
Poor.....1	7	1%
Don't know.....7	2	0%
Refused.....9	1	0%

### N2A

What do you value most about Bellingham as a place to live?

N = .....	1014	100%
RECORD COMMENTS.....97 O	334	33%
Beautiful area/natural/open spaces.....01 N	231	23%
Proximity to mountains/water/outdoors.....02 N	315	31%
Ambience/relaxed/small town feel.....03 N	184	18%
Clean city/clean area.....04 N	29	3%
Strong sense of community.....05 N	103	10%
Environmentally smart, progressive.....06 N	77	8%
Nice neighborhoods.....07 N	24	2%
Educated, well-informed population.....08 N	17	2%
Friendly people.....09 N	112	11%
Family friendly.....10 N	56	6%
Good parks/beautiful parks.....11 N	117	12%
Good trails.....12 N	73	7%
Affordable place to live (rent,housing).....13 N	13	1%
Well-planned city/good growth management.....14 N	25	2%
Close to major metros (Vancouver, Seattle).....15 N	71	7%
Arts/culture.....16 N	93	9%
School quality.....17 N	47	5%
City services (gen).....18 N	21	2%
Sports and recreation program.....19 N	20	2%
Public safety services (fire, police, medic).....20 N	34	3%
Public transportation.....21 N	42	4%
Good government.....22 N	13	1%
Good infrastructure/roads.....23 N	9	1%
Accessible shopping.....24 N	36	4%
Accessible parks.....25 N	4	0%

Good retail stores.....	26	N	43	4%
Jobs/employment.....	27	N	11	1%
Other positive.....	40	N	0	0%
Traffic congestion.....	50	N	1	0%
Over-development/too much growth.....	51	N	6	1%
Budget problems.....	52	N	1	0%
Taxes too high.....	53	N	0	0%
Services cut.....	54	N	0	0%
Welfare/social services/homelessness.....	55	N	0	0%
Maintain quality of environment.....	56	N	1	0%
Crime/safety.....	57	N	5	0%
Infrastructure maintenance.....	58	N	0	0%
Need more affordable housing.....	59	N	0	0%
Need more retail/business development.....	60	N	1	0%
Overall quality of life.....	61	N	5	0%
Locally grown or produced food/Farmers' Market.....	62	N	16	2%
Restaurants.....	63	N	11	1%
Low crime rate/safe place to live.....	64	N	28	3%
Less traffic/low traffic congestion.....	65	N	22	2%
Pedestrian/bike friendly.....	66	N	11	1%
Good weather/climate.....	67	N	55	5%
Clean air/clean water.....	68	N	35	3%
Presence of a college/WWU.....	69	N	28	3%
Other negative.....	80	N	0	0%
Unrelated response.....	90	N	0	0%
Don't know.....	98	X	13	1%
Refused.....	99	X	4	0%

#### Q4

What do you think is the most important problem facing Bellingham today that city leader can do something about?

N = .....			1014	100%
RECORD COMMENTS.....	97	O	126	12%
City budget/general (City of Bellingham only).....	01	N	38	4%
Government budget/general (any government other than City of Bellingham) .....	02	N	53	5%
Schools (quality, neighborhood).....	03	N	34	3%
Shrinking tax base/loss of revenue.....	04	N	16	2%
Welfare/social services/homelessness.....	05	N	69	7%
Reducing size of government/cutting staff/salaries.....	06	N	12	1%
Traffic/congestion.....	07	N	85	8%
Growth/sprawl/overcrowding population/over building/building construction .....	08	N	170	17%
Transportation/public transportation/mass transit.....	09	N	77	8%
Streets/repair/more lanes/pedestrians/bike lanes.....	10	N	66	7%
Affordable housing.....	11	N	24	2%
Crime/safety.....	12	N	105	10%
Need more business development/help local businesses.....	13	N	108	11%
Taxes/property taxes.....	14	N	51	5%
Parks and recreation maintenance.....	15	N	12	1%
City government spending.....	16	N	18	2%
Government spending (gen mention or any government other than City of Bellingham .....	17	N	33	3%
Planning/zoning.....	18	N	46	5%
Maintaining the environment/general.....	19	N	27	3%

Lake whatcom water quality/drinking water quality .....	20	N	62	6%
Employment/jobs.....	21	N	114	11%
Infrastructure/not keeping up with growth .....	22	N	17	2%
Youth programs.....	23	N	3	0%
Overall economy/property values.....	24	N	53	5%
Emergency preparedness .....	25	N	2	0%
Emergency medical services .....	26	N	5	0%
Open spaces.....	27	N	28	3%
Snow removal.....	28	N	14	1%
Road construction.....	29	N	6	1%
Parking .....	30	N	22	2%
Downtown revitalization .....	31	N	22	2%
Waterfront development.....	32	N	69	7%
Lack of entertainment/nightlife .....	33	N	3	0%
Utilities cost/management .....	34	N	11	1%
Small town identity .....	35	N	14	1%
Art/culture in the community .....	36	N	14	1%
Overall quality of life .....	37	N	18	2%
Library funds/More books for the libraries .....	38	N	17	2%
Law enforcement/more law enforcement/funding for police officers/etc .....	39	N	16	2%
New jail.....	40	N	6	1%
No issues .....	00	N	7	1%
Don't know .....	98	X	32	3%
Refused.....	99	X	3	0%

**Q6**

Using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, how would you rate each of the following....

The job the city is doing protecting the livability of neighborhoods				
N = .....			1014	100%
Excellent.....	4		111	11%
Good.....	3		641	63%
Only fair .....	2		185	18%
Poor .....	1		44	4%
Don't know .....	7		30	3%
Refused.....	9		3	0%

**Q7**

(Using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, how would you rate each of the following....)

The job the city is doing planning for growth				
N = .....			1014	100%
Excellent.....	4		35	3%
Good.....	3		357	35%
Only fair .....	2		329	32%
Poor .....	1		170	17%
Don't know .....	7		119	12%
Prefer not to answer.....	9		4	0%

**Q8**

(Using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, how would you rate each of the following....)

The job the city is doing protecting the environment

N = .....	1014	100%
Excellent.....4	136	13%
Good.....3	562	55%
Only fair.....2	194	19%
Poor.....1	59	6%
Don't know.....7	46	5%
Prefer not to answer.....9	17	2%

**Q9**

(Using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, how would you rate each of the following....)

The job the city is doing using tax dollars responsibly

N = .....	1014	100%
Excellent.....4	39	4%
Good.....3	389	38%
Only fair.....2	292	29%
Poor.....1	161	16%
Don't know.....7	123	12%
Prefer not to answer.....9	10	1%

**N10**

(Using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, how would you rate each of the following....)

The job the city is doing providing public safety services, such as police, fire and emergency medical service

N = .....	1014	100%
Excellent.....4	230	23%
Good.....3	585	58%
Only fair.....2	128	13%
Poor.....1	34	3%
Don't know.....7	33	3%
Prefer not to answer.....9	4	0%

**Q23**

Now I'm going to ask you to rate the job the City of Bellingham is doing in providing services that rely on tax-payer dollars. Again, using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, how would you rate the job the city of Bellingham is doing..

Maintaining parks and trails

N = .....	1014	100%
Excellent.....4	366	36%
Good.....3	533	53%
Only fair.....2	72	7%

Poor .....	1	15	1%
Don't know .....	7	21	2%
Prefer not to answer.....	9	7	1%

**Q24**

(Now I'm going to ask you to rate the job the City of Bellingham is doing in providing services that rely on tax-payer dollars. Again, using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, how would you rate the job the city of Bellingham is doing...)

Providing recreational programs for youth and adults			
N = .....		1014	100%
Excellent.....	4	170	17%
Good .....	3	470	46%
Only fair .....	2	143	14%
Poor .....	1	29	3%
Don't know .....	7	189	19%
Refused.....	9	13	1%

**Q25**

(Now I'm going to ask you to rate the job the City of Bellingham is doing in providing services that rely on tax-payer dollars. Again, using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, how would you rate the job the city of Bellingham is doing...)

Providing fire protection services			
N = .....		1014	100%
Excellent.....	4	317	31%
Good .....	3	536	53%
Only fair .....	2	44	4%
Poor .....	1	8	1%
Don't know .....	7	103	10%
Refused.....	9	6	1%

**Q26**

(Now I'm going to ask you to rate the job the City of Bellingham is doing in providing services that rely on tax-payer dollars. Again, using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, how would you rate the job the city of Bellingham is doing...)

Providing medic one emergency medical services			
N = .....		1014	100%
Excellent.....	4	340	34%
Good .....	3	479	47%
Only fair .....	2	53	5%
Poor .....	1	7	1%
Don't know .....	7	128	13%
Refused.....	9	7	1%

**Q27**

(Now I'm going to ask you to rate the job the City of Bellingham is doing in providing services that rely on tax-payer dollars. Again, using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, how would you rate the job the city of Bellingham is doing...)

Preventing crime. and protecting the community		
N = .....	1014	100%
Excellent.....4	97	10%
Good.....3	515	51%
Only fair.....2	254	25%
Poor.....1	78	8%
Don't know.....7	65	6%
Refused.....9	5	0%

**Q28**

(Now I'm going to ask you to rate the job the City of Bellingham is doing in providing services that rely on tax-payer dollars. Again, using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, how would you rate the job the city of Bellingham is doing...)

Improving streets, such as fixing potholes, signage, and traffic lights		
N = .....	1014	100%
Excellent.....4	82	8%
Good.....3	504	50%
Only fair.....2	307	30%
Poor.....1	110	11%
Don't know.....7	10	1%
Refused.....9	1	0%

**Q29**

(Now I'm going to ask you to rate the job the City of Bellingham is doing in providing services that rely on tax-payer dollars. Again, using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, how would you rate the job the city of Bellingham is doing...)

Encouraging economic development and business growth in Bellingham		
N = .....	1014	100%
Excellent.....4	44	4%
Good.....3	296	29%
Only fair.....2	306	30%
Poor.....1	218	21%
Don't know.....7	136	13%
Refused.....9	14	1%

**Q30**

(Now I'm going to ask you to rate the job the City of Bellingham is doing in providing services that rely on tax-payer dollars. Again, using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, how would you rate the job the city of Bellingham is doing...)

Providing library services for the community

N = .....	1014	100%
Excellent.....4	207	20%
Good.....3	499	49%
Only fair.....2	199	20%
Poor.....1	58	6%
Don't know.....7	41	4%
Refused.....9	10	1%

**Q31**

(Now I'm going to ask you to rate the job the City of Bellingham is doing in providing services that rely on tax-payer dollars. Again, using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, how would you rate the job the city of Bellingham is doing...)

Creating opportunities for education in culture and the arts. For example through the museum and the Mount Baker Theater

N = .....	1014	100%
Excellent.....4	259	26%
Good.....3	510	50%
Only fair.....2	155	15%
Poor.....1	30	3%
Don't know.....7	45	4%
Refused.....9	15	1%

**Q32**

(Now I'm going to ask you to rate the job the City of Bellingham is doing in providing services that rely on tax-payer dollars. Again, using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, how would you rate the job the city of Bellingham is doing...)

Involving the public in making decisions that affect the community

N = .....	1014	100%
Excellent.....4	74	7%
Good.....3	419	41%
Only fair.....2	307	30%
Poor.....1	146	14%
Don't know.....7	64	6%
Refused.....9	4	0%

### Q33

(Now I'm going to ask you to rate the job the City of Bellingham is doing in providing services that rely on tax-payer dollars. Again, using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, how would you rate the job the city of Bellingham is doing...)

Communicating with citizens about city issues, decisions, and services		
N = .....	1014	100%
Excellent.....4	69	7%
Good.....3	384	38%
Only fair.....2	357	35%
Poor.....1	149	15%
Don't know.....7	55	5%
Refused.....9	0	0%

### Q35

(Now I'm going to ask you to rate the job the City of Bellingham is doing in providing services that rely on tax-payer dollars. Again, using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, how would you rate the job the city of Bellingham is doing...)

Leading local and regional efforts to reduce human impact on the environment		
N = .....	1014	100%
Excellent.....4	102	10%
Good.....3	436	43%
Only fair.....2	241	24%
Poor.....1	69	7%
Don't know.....7	136	13%
Refused.....9	30	3%

### Q36

Currently, your city taxes support recreation and cultural programs and facilities that are used by people who don't live in the city. Do you think people who live outside the city should pay extra for these services? Examples of programs and facilities that anyone can use might be things like rented picnic shelters at city parks, meeting room rentals at the Bellingham library, city recreation programs, and the museum.

N = .....	1014	100%
Pay extra.....1	428	42%
No additional charge.....2	506	50%
Don't know.....7	74	7%
Refused.....9	6	1%

**Q37**

Since 2008, the City has reduced expenses by more than \$30 million dollars, cut 78 staff positions and eliminated some services. From today forward, if you had to choose only one, which of the following would you choose for the City...

N = .....		1014	100%
Increase taxes and fees to maintain services at current levels .....	01	441	43%
Keep taxes and fees the same and cut services .....	02	220	22%
Institute user fees .....	03 N	16	2%
Reduce staff salaries/cut more staff .....	04 N	27	3%
Manipulate the buget/make budget trade-offs .....	05 N	15	1%
Reduce/slow spending .....	06 N	7	1%
Encourage business development/make taxes better for businesses .....	07 N	10	1%
Institute a consumption tax .....	08 N	2	0%
Prioritize services .....	09 N	10	1%
Cut specific program, service .....	10 N	5	0%
Be more efficient .....	11 N	13	1%
Or something else (SPECIFY:) .....	97 O	63	6%
Cut non-essential services .....	12 N	6	1%
Encourage voluntarism .....	13 N	4	0%
Maintain public safety .....	14 N	6	1%
Cut services (gen) .....	15 N	1	0%
Increase/maintain services (gen) .....	16 N	5	0%
Cut/reduce taxes .....	17 N	19	2%
Increase taxes .....	18 N	8	1%
Parks .....	19 N	2	0%
Public works .....	20 N	3	0%
Arts/culture/museum .....	21 N	7	1%
Recreation/sport programs .....	22 N	0	0%
Better management of revenue .....	23 N	18	2%
Do neither .....	24 N	3	0%
Don't know .....	98 X	86	8%
Refused .....	99 X	17	2%

**Q38**

If the City of Bellingham was to cut city services, what services do you think the City of Bellingham should cut when citizens' demand for services outpace revenues?

N = .....		1014	100%
RECORD COMMENTS .....	97 O	206	20%
Eliminate/reduce/cut expenses, not services .....	01 N	34	3%
Raising taxes is okay .....	02 N	35	3%
Institute user fees .....	03 N	21	2%
Specific mention of program/service not to cut .....	04 N	64	6%
Special projects (e.g., marina) .....	05 N	9	1%
Non-essential service .....	06 N	35	3%
Recreation/entertainment .....	07 N	53	5%
Arts/culture/museum .....	08 N	120	12%
Library services .....	09 N	36	4%

Sports fields.....	10	N	4	0%
Parks.....	11	N	98	10%
Trails.....	12	N	16	2%
Transportation/public transportation, transit .....	14	N	63	6%
City Maintenance Dept./public works/maintenance of infrastructure (roads, sidewalks) .....	15	N	72	7%
Cuts will hurt quality of life .....	16	N	15	1%
City permits/permitting office .....	17	N	6	1%
Public outreach/education .....	18	N	7	1%
Entitlement programs .....	19	N	2	0%
City planning/development .....	20	N	24	2%
Outside consultants/contractors.....	21	N	4	0%
Public safety (fire, police) .....	22	N	49	5%
City managers/administrators .....	23	N	42	4%
Consolidate departments/reduce city staff.....	24	N	36	4%
Maintain public health and safety.....	25	N	27	3%
Parking enforcement/public regulations .....	26	N	20	2%
Give a list to choose from.....	27	N	22	2%
Cut all services equally across the board.....	28	N	9	1%
None/no services should be cut .....	29	N	29	3%
Don't know .....	98	X	258	25%
Refused.....	99	X	11	1%

**QBTV1**

I'm going to ask you about ways the City provides information to residents. Have you heard of Bellingham's City television channel, known as BTV-ten?

N = .....			1014	100%
Yes.....	1		736	73%
No .....	2		273	27%
Don't know .....	7		3	0%
Refused.....	9		2	0%

**QBTV2**

Tell me which fits you best, do you watch BTV-ten...

N = .....			736	100%
Never .....	1		283	38%
Less than once a month .....	2		200	27%
Once per month .....	3		119	16%
Weekly .....	4		96	13%
Many times a week.....	5		27	4%
Daily .....	6		3	0%
Don't know - DO NOT READ .....	7		5	1%
Refused - DO NOT READ.....	9		3	0%

**QBTV3 ASKED IF QBTV2 IS 2-6**

How often were you tuning in to watch a City Council meeting? Would you say...

N = .....			445	100%
Always.....	4		13	3%
Sometimes .....	3		137	31%
Rarely .....	2		201	45%
Or never.....	1		94	21%
Don't know - DO NOT READ .....	7		0	0%

Refused - DO NOT READ.....	9	0	0%
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**QBTV4**

Have you heard of Bellingham's City website at www.cob.org?

N = .....	1014	100%
Yes.....1	750	74%
No.....2	261	26%
Don't know.....7	3	0%
Refused.....9	0	0%

**QBTV5 ASKED IF QBTV4 IS YES**

Tell me which fits you best, how often do you visit www.cob.org? Would you say...

N = .....	750	100%
Daily.....6	4	1%
Many times a week.....5	21	3%
Weekly.....4	61	8%
Once per month.....3	187	25%
Less than once per month.....2	378	50%
Or never.....1	92	12%
Don't know - DO NOT READ.....7	4	1%
Refused - DO NOT READ.....9	3	0%

**Q44**

I am going to read you several actions that the City of Bellingham is taking to protect the environment. Tell me how important each action is to you. Please answer on a scale of extremely, very, somewhat, not very, or not at all important.

Reducing automobile trips by improving transit, bicycle and pedestrian choices

N = .....	1014	100%
Not at all important.....1	76	7%
Not very.....2	91	9%
Somewhat.....3	190	19%
Very.....4	292	29%
Extremely important.....5	356	35%
Don't know.....7	5	0%
Refused.....9	4	0%

**Q45**

I am going to read you several actions that the City of Bellingham is taking to protect the environment. Tell me how important each action is to you. Please answer on a scale of extremely, very, somewhat, not very, or not at all important.

Promoting the use of renewable energy such as green and solar power

N = .....	1014	100%
Not at all important.....1	72	7%
Not very.....2	89	9%
Somewhat.....3	202	20%
Very.....4	300	30%
Extremely important.....5	340	34%
Don't know.....7	7	1%
Refused.....9	4	0%

**Q46**

I am going to read you several actions that the City of Bellingham is taking to protect the environment. Tell me how important each action is to you. Please answer on a scale of extremely, very, somewhat, not very, or not at all important.

Preventing further development in the Lake Whatcom watershed to protect our drinking water

N = .....	1014	100%
Not at all important.....1	39	4%
Not very.....2	41	4%
Somewhat.....3	120	12%
Very.....4	265	26%
Extremely important.....5	537	53%
Don't know.....7	7	1%
Refused.....9	5	0%

**Q48**

Next I have some questions about how safe you feel in and around Bellingham.

How safe would you feel walking alone during the day in your neighborhood?

N = .....	1014	100%
Not at all safe.....1	4	0%
Not very.....2	8	1%
Somewhat.....3	83	8%
Very.....4	372	37%
Extremely safe.....5	547	54%
Don't know.....7	0	0%
Refused.....9	0	0%

**Q50**

Next I have some questions about how safe you feel in and around Bellingham.

How safe would you feel walking alone downtown during the day?

N = .....	1014	100%
Not at all safe.....1	11	1%
Not very.....2	28	3%
Somewhat.....3	191	19%
Very.....4	435	43%
Extremely safe.....5	345	34%
Don't know.....7	4	0%
Refused.....9	0	0%

**Q51**

Next I have some questions about how safe you feel in and around Bellingham.

How safe would you feel walking alone at night in your neighborhood?

N = .....	1014	100%
Not at all safe.....1	51	5%
Not very.....2	108	11%
Somewhat.....3	267	26%
Very.....4	379	37%
Extremely safe.....5	199	20%
Don't know.....7	9	1%
Refused.....9	1	0%

**Q53**

Next I have some questions about how safe you feel in and around Bellingham.  
How safe would you feel walking alone in downtown at night?

N = .....	1014	100%
Not at all safe.....1	172	17%
Not very.....2	235	23%
Somewhat.....3	362	36%
Very.....4	181	18%
Extremely safe.....5	43	4%
Don't know.....7	21	2%
Refused.....9	0	0%

**Q54**

Thinking about your household, would you say you are prepared to sustain yourself and your family for 72 hours after a major disaster?

N = .....	1014	100%
Yes.....1	544	54%
Somewhat.....3	331	33%
No.....2	119	12%
Don't know.....7	17	2%
Refused.....9	3	0%

**Q55**

Next I have some questions about your neighborhood. How do you rate your neighborhood in the following categories...  
Housing affordability

N = .....	1014	100%
Poor.....1	127	13%
Fair.....2	322	32%
Good.....3	352	35%
Very good.....4	139	14%
Excellent.....5	41	4%
Don't know.....7	31	3%
Refused.....9	2	0%

**N56**

Next I have some questions about your neighborhood. How do you rate your neighborhood in the following categories...  
Social connections, such as neighbors looking out for neighbors

N = .....	1014	100%
Poor.....1	81	8%
Fair.....2	195	19%
Good.....3	327	32%
Very good.....4	232	23%
Excellent.....5	164	16%
Don't know.....7	15	1%
Refused.....9	0	0%

**Q57**

Next I have some questions about your neighborhood. How do you rate your neighborhood in the following categories...

Walking distance to a bus stop

N = .....	1014	100%
Poor .....	46	5%
Fair .....	94	9%
Good .....	190	19%
Very good .....	255	25%
Excellent .....	409	40%
Don't know .....	18	2%
Refused .....	2	0%

**Q58**

Next I have some questions about your neighborhood. How do you rate your neighborhood in the following categories...

Access to shopping or other services

N = .....	1014	100%
Poor .....	24	2%
Fair .....	87	9%
Good .....	246	24%
Very good .....	316	31%
Excellent .....	338	33%
Don't know .....	3	0%
Refused .....	0	0%

**N60**

How do you rate the streets in your neighborhood in the following categories?

Physical condition of streets

N = .....	1014	100%
Poor .....	62	6%
Fair .....	187	18%
Good .....	399	39%
Very good .....	281	28%
Excellent .....	83	8%
Don't know .....	2	0%
Refused .....	0	0%

**Q61**

How do you rate the streets in your neighborhood in the following categories?

Safety of traffic speed

N = .....	1014	100%
Poor .....	119	12%
Fair .....	191	19%
Good .....	408	40%
Very good .....	206	20%
Excellent .....	83	8%
Don't know .....	6	1%
Refused .....	1	0%

**Q62**

How do you rate the streets in your neighborhood in the following categories?  
Safety of pedestrians

N = .....	1014	100%
Poor .....	104	10%
Fair .....	211	21%
Good .....	372	37%
Very good .....	236	23%
Excellent .....	89	9%
Don't know .....	2	0%
Refused .....	0	0%

**Q63**

How do you rate the streets in your neighborhood in the following categories?  
Safety of bicyclists

N = .....	1014	100%
Poor .....	112	11%
Fair .....	279	28%
Good .....	356	35%
Very good .....	169	17%
Excellent .....	61	6%
Don't know .....	32	3%
Refused .....	5	0%

**Q69**

Finally, I'd like to ask you a few questions for statistical purposes only. Do you own or rent your apartment or home?

N = .....	1014	100%
Own/buying .....	708	70%
Rent .....	299	29%
Don't know .....	1	0%
Refused .....	6	1%

**Q70**

How long have you lived in Bellingham?

Response	Count	Percentage
N = .....	1014	100%
Less than 1 year.....	50	5%
Don't know .....	5	0%
Refused.....	4	0%
.....1	19	2%
.....2	34	3%
.....3	47	5%
.....4	34	3%
.....5	44	4%
.....6	51	5%
.....7	32	3%
.....8	46	5%
.....9	18	2%
.....10	46	5%
.....11	26	3%
.....12	37	4%
.....13	27	3%
.....14	12	1%
.....15	26	3%
.....16	14	1%
.....17	14	1%
.....18	18	2%
.....19	7	1%
.....20	38	4%
.....21	11	1%
.....22	16	2%
.....23	9	1%
.....24	6	1%
.....25	25	2%
.....26	2	0%
.....27	6	1%
.....28	5	0%
.....29	5	0%
.....30	29	3%
.....31	11	1%
.....32	6	1%
.....33	8	1%
.....34	11	1%
.....35	18	2%
.....36	9	1%
.....37	13	1%
.....38	9	1%
.....39	4	0%
.....40	24	2%
.....41	7	1%
.....42	9	1%
.....43	2	0%
.....44	5	0%
.....45	7	1%
.....46	5	0%
.....47	5	0%
.....48	6	1%
.....49	2	0%

.....	50	13	1%
.....	51	1	0%
.....	52	2	0%
.....	53	4	0%
.....	54	7	1%
.....	55	3	0%
.....	56	2	0%
.....	57	2	0%
.....	58	5	0%
.....	59	5	0%
.....	60	8	1%
.....	61	3	0%
.....	62	4	0%
.....	63	4	0%
.....	64	2	0%
.....	65	3	0%
.....	66	2	0%
.....	67	2	0%
.....	70	5	0%
.....	71	1	0%
.....	72	2	0%
.....	74	2	0%
.....	76	2	0%
.....	77	1	0%
.....	78	1	0%
.....	79	1	0%
.....	80	2	0%
.....	84	1	0%

**Q71**

Do any children under the age of 18 live in your household?

N = .....		1014	100%
Yes.....	1	252	25%
No.....	2	757	75%
Refused.....	9	5	0%

**AGEG**

N = .....		1014	100%
18 to 24.....	01	53	5%
25 to 29.....	02	68	7%
30 to 34.....	03	63	6%
35 to 39.....	04	84	8%
40 to 44.....	05	71	7%
45 to 49.....	06	85	8%
50 to 54.....	07	92	9%
55 to 59.....	08	117	12%
60 to 64.....	09	118	12%
65 or older.....	10	232	23%
Refused.....	99	31	3%

**Q73**

What is your annual household income before taxes?

N = .....	1014	100%
Less than 15,000.....01	103	10%
\$15,000 to just under \$25,000 .....02	93	9%
\$25,000 to just under \$35,000 .....03	87	9%
\$35,000 to just under \$50,000 .....04	124	12%
\$50,000 to just under \$75,000 .....05	173	17%
\$75,000 to just under \$100,000 .....06	125	12%
\$100,000 or more .....07	141	14%
Don't know - DO NOT READ .....77	15	1%
Refused - DO NOT READ.....99	153	15%

**Q74**

RECORD GENDER

N = .....	1014	100%
Male.....1	559	55%
Female.....2	414	41%
Prefer not answer.....3 N	41	4%