
**BYERS
COMMUNITY SURVEY
2007 RESEARCH**

P R E P A R E D F O R

Arapahoe County Planning Department

Byers Community

P R E P A R E D B Y

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Overview of Results

Results from the Byers community survey conducted in December of 2007 yielded the following key findings:

Quality of Life. The quality of life in Byers was rated positively overall (61 percent rated it as “good” or “excellent” compared to 13 percent who rated it as “poor” or “not so great”). Residents who have lived in the area for 15 years or less tended to be slightly more positive about the quality of life in comparison to respondents who have lived in the area for more than 15 years (78 percent rating it as “good” or “excellent,” compared to 52 percent).

In regards to how the quality of life and sense of community have changed over time, more than half of respondents feel each has stayed relatively consistent (62 percent of respondents said the quality of life has stayed the same and 50 percent of respondents said the sense of community has stayed the same).

	<u>Improved</u>	<u>Stayed the Same</u>	<u>Gotten Worse</u>
Quality of life:	21 percent	62 percent	13 percent
Sense of community:	18 percent	50 percent	26 percent

Awareness of events organized by the Byers Community Association was relatively high, with 93 percent of all respondents indicating awareness of at least one event (66 percent of all respondents indicated that someone in their household had attended an event in the past year).

Current Functions and Services. Satisfaction levels of specific functions and services currently provided in the Byers area were particularly high for infrastructure and police/fire/rescue aspects, but were significantly lower for economic and parks/recreation/open space/trails/programs aspects. Community and county services received a variety of positive and negative ratings, with the County Sheriff receiving particularly high ratings but the “planning and approval process for new and existing development projects” receiving relatively low ratings.

Future Priorities. A variety of issues and opportunities were listed for respondents to indicate which ones were the highest and lowest priorities for Byers to focus on in the future. Priorities that respondents indicated as the most important include improve local roads, seek new businesses/employers to locate in Byers, and improve school quality. The incorporation of Byers as a town is the lowest priority for community members, followed by the development of Byers as a tourist information center.

Growth and Development. When asked about the rate of residential, commercial/retail, and industrial growth over the last few years in Byers, respondents indicated that the rate of commercial/retail and industrial growth had been too little, while responses in regards to residential were more divided. More than half of respondents (52 percent) indicated residential growth has been just about right, while 25 percent said it has been too much, and 23 percent said it has been too little.

When asked about the management of growth and development in Byers, 22 percent of respondents indicated it is poorly managed and not well-controlled, 20 percent said it is too strictly controlled, that even desired growth is not allowed, and 8 percent said the growth is well-managed and orderly.

Respondents were asked to what level they agreed with a number of statements regarding how new growth and development should be handled in Byers. Most respondents felt strongly that “there should be additional regulations to manage the quality of new development” (71 percent) and “new growth should be encouraged in specific areas” (70 percent of respondents in agreement).

Economic and Commercial Development. The opportunities which respondents indicated as the greatest priorities for economic development were “work to retain and expand existing smaller local businesses to provide additional opportunities for residents/businesses,” “make infrastructure improvements to support development,” and “work to increase employment opportunities in the community so that the majority of residents can live and work in the town.”

The results show clear opinions on which types of commercial development respondents felt would be important to the future of the community. The types of commercial development most important to respondents include health care facilities, small-scale independent retail development, and agricultural operations. The types of commercial development least important to respondents include big box commercial retail development, industrial storage, contractor yards, and mini-storage.

Overall, there was not strong support for the development of a special taxing district to fund infrastructure improvements and achieve goals outlined in the Sub-Area Plan. Only 25 percent were in favor of creating a special taxing district, while 36 percent were opposed, and 39 percent didn’t know or were uncertain.

Housing. Overall, the majority of respondents are satisfied with the variety of housing options available in Byers. However, the results show strong consensus among respondents that there is not enough assisted living for senior citizens.

Communication. Ratings of communication within the Town were relatively low overall. Satisfaction with “current communication and information dissemination” in the community was rated negatively by 41 percent of respondents, while 61 percent of respondents indicated that “increased communication to residents and business owners” was very important for Byers to focus on. When asked how Byers can best reach community members, 86 percent of respondents indicated that the I-70 Scout is the best method of reaching them, followed by direct mailings (56 percent), and the creation of a community newsletter (41 percent).

Introduction and Methodology

Byers conducted a survey of residents, property owners, and business owners to evaluate opinions on a variety of current issues and how the area is progressing into the future. Results from this survey will be used to update the Byers Sub-Area Plan for Arapahoe County. A combination of mail and Web-based surveys was used to evaluate respondents' level of satisfaction with respect to a full range of services and to gather opinions on selected issues currently facing the Byers community.

The survey was mailed on December 6, 2007 to approximately 940 households in the Byers area. A Web-based survey was also made available in addition to surveys available for people to pick up at the Byers General Store and Byers America Feed Supply. In order to increase awareness of the survey, advertisements were placed in the I-70 Scout and East Colorado News reminding community members to fill out the survey they received, or to complete it online or pick one up if they had not originally received one.

A total of 166 mail surveys were received as of January 15, for a total response rate of 17.7 percent. During this same period, 5 Web surveys were completed and 4 surveys distributed at the Byers General Store and Byers America Feed Supply were completed, for a total of 175 completed surveys and a 18.6 percent response rate.

Throughout this report, the analysis includes responses from the mail, web, and handed out surveys. While the Web and handout surveys include self-selected responses, they were included in the analysis because the results did not differ greatly from the mail responses and made up a small proportion of the responses overall. Open-ended comments (that is, hand written comments in response to certain questions) from all surveys are summarized in the results and a full set of comments are provided as an appendix to this report. Cross-tabulations (i.e., statistical breakdowns that segment responses to the survey into subgroups such as results by length of residency, respondent age, etc.) of all results are provided as an appendix.

Demographics and Respondent Characteristics

Characteristics of survey respondents are summarized below, providing a basis for the cross-tabulations used throughout this report and analysis.

- The average age of respondents is 52 years. Empty-nesters (households with children no longer living at home) were the most prevalent household type (44 percent of responding households), followed by households with children (37 percent), couples without children (9 percent), and singles without children (9 percent).
- The average household size of respondents was 2.8 people, with 52 percent of respondents having two or fewer people in the household. Thirty-five percent of responding households had at least one member under the age of 18, while 25 percent of responding households indicated at least one member was enrolled in school in Byers. Twenty-nine percent of responding households had at least one member over the age of 65.
- The majority of respondents live in Arapahoe County (81 percent), while 19 percent live in Adams County. Almost all respondents live within the Byers School District 32-J boundary (90 percent), while 51 percent live in the boundary and within 1.5 miles of the Byers School.

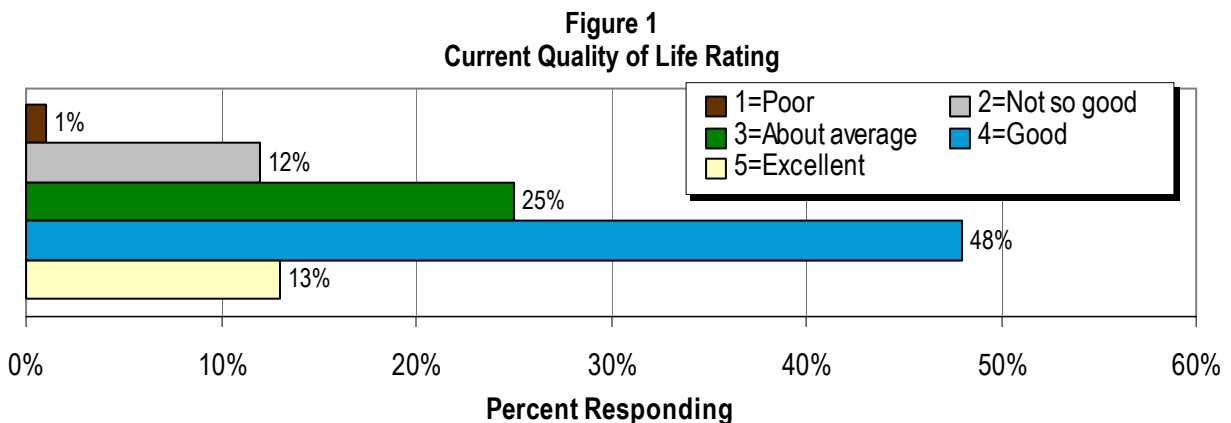
- Almost half of respondents (42 percent) have lived or owned property in Byers for more than 15 years (74 percent have lived in the area for more than five years). Sixty-three percent of respondents do not plan on moving out of the area in the next 20 years, while 23 percent of respondents are likely to move out of the area, and 13 percent are not sure of their plans.
- Eighty-eight percent of respondents own their home and 8 percent indicated that they are currently renting. When asked what type(s) of property they live in and/or own in Byers, 56 percent of respondents live in a single-family home, 48 percent own or live on a farmland/ranch, followed by a mobile home (7 percent), and/or other vacant land (6 percent).
- Ninety-six percent of all respondents are registered to vote.
- The majority of responding households had at least one member currently employed (88 percent). When asked about their specific employment status, 55 percent of respondents indicated they are employed full-time, followed by 17 percent who are self-employed, 15 percent retired, and 8 percent employed part-time.
- The top business types that respondents are employed in include:
 - “Other” professional services (16 percent)
 - Construction (13 percent)
 - Agriculture (11 percent)
 - Government (11 percent)
 - Education (11 percent)
- The majority of respondents (81 percent) drive alone to work, with only 10 percent indicating that they carpool, and 5 percent who telecommute or work from home. The most identified place of employment was in the Denver area (53 percent), followed by Byers (28 percent), Strasburg/Bennett (6 percent), and other locations (13 percent). Twenty-one percent of respondents own or operate a business in the Byers area.
- A variety of locations were identified as places where respondents go to purchase goods and services, including:
 - Byers (72 percent)
 - Aurora (69 percent)
 - Bennett (46 percent)
 - Strasburg (28 percent)
 - Other Denver area (27 percent)
 - Various other locations (9 percent)

Survey Overview

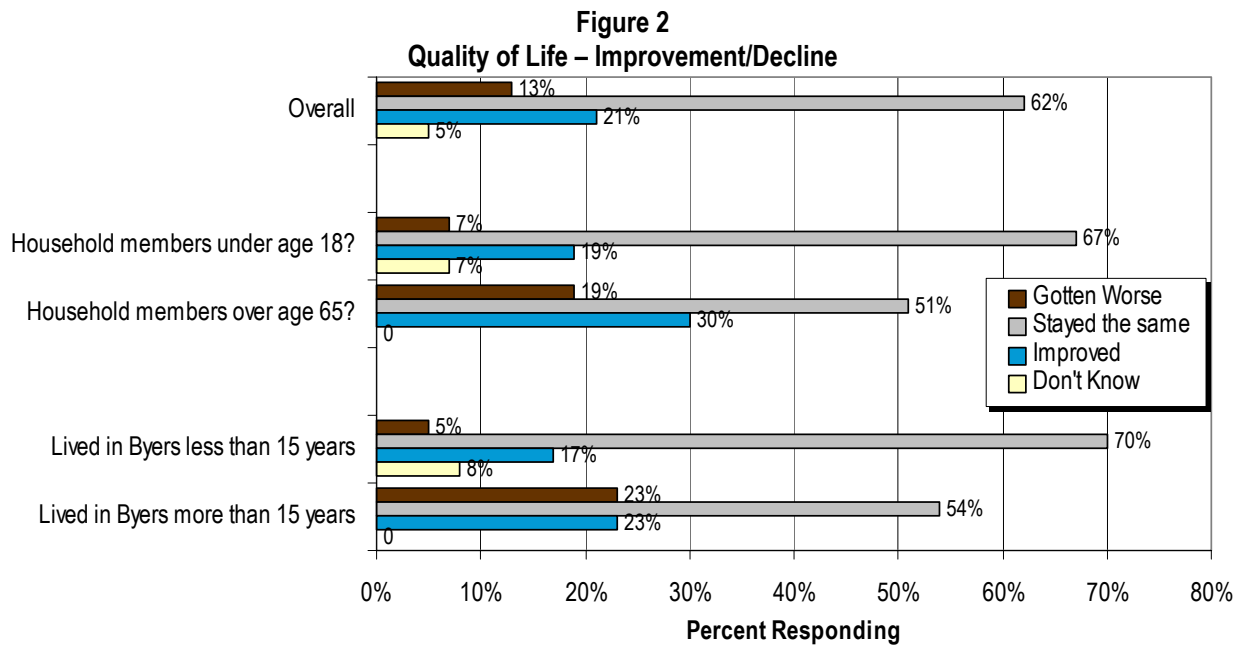
Quality of Life

Responses to many of the survey questions are influenced by the length of time lived or owned property in Byers. Respondents who have been in Byers for more than 15 years are slightly more negative than those who have lived in the area for less time.

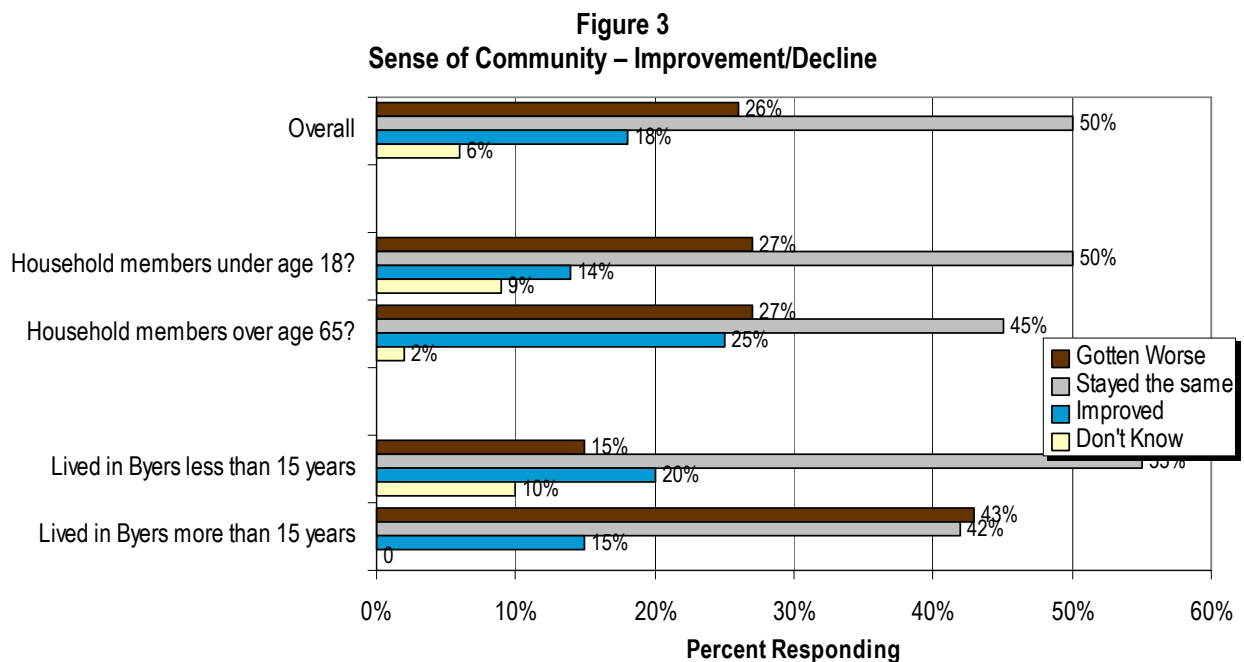
Overall, how would you rate the quality of life in Byers (quality of life meaning economic, social, and environmental health, well-being, and vitality of the community)? Overall, the quality of life in Byers is rated positively. While only 13 percent indicated that the quality of life was “poor” or “not so good” (rating of 1 or 2 on 5-point scale), 25 percent rated it as “average” and 61 percent rated it as “good” or “excellent” (4 or 5 on 5-point scale). Residents who have lived in the area for 15 years or less tended to be slightly more positive about the quality of life (78 percent rating it as a 4 or 5), compared to respondents who have lived in the area for more than 15 years (52 percent rating it as a 4 or 5). The perception of quality of life also differed based on the household composition of respondents. Households with members under the age of 18 were slightly less satisfied with the quality of life in Byers than overall respondents (59 percent rating it as a 4 or 5), while households with members over the age of 65 were more satisfied (64 percent rating it as a 4 or 5).



Over the past few years, has the quality of life in Byers gotten worse, stayed the same, or improved? More than half of respondents (62 percent) felt the quality of life has stayed the same, compared to 21 percent who felt that it has improved, 13 percent who felt it has gotten worse, and 5 percent who did not know or did not have an opinion. Respondents who have lived in the area for a shorter amount of time were more likely to say the quality of life has stayed the same (70 percent), while respondents who have been in the area longer were more likely to indicate that it had gone in one direction or the other (23 percent indicated it had gotten worse and 23 percent indicated it had improved).



Over the past few years, has the sense of community in Byers gotten worse, stayed the same, or improved? Fifty percent of respondents felt the sense of community has stayed the same, compared to 26 percent who felt that it has gotten worse, 18 percent who felt it has improved, and 6 percent who did not know or did not have an opinion. Respondents who have been in the area longer were more likely to indicate that the sense of community had gotten worse (43 percent). Households with members over 65 years were slightly more likely to feel the sense of community had improved (25 percent) than overall respondents.



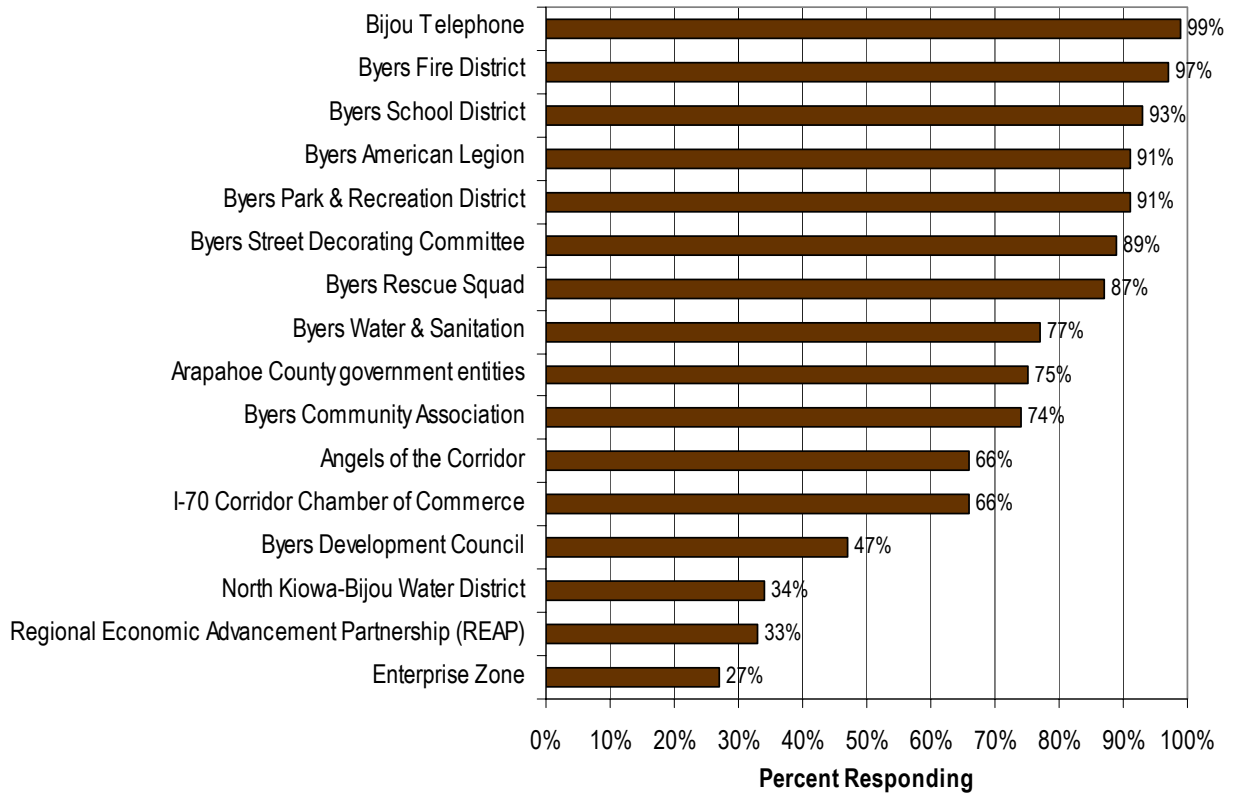
A review of open-ended responses in regards to the quality of life and sense of community are summarized below and a complete breakdown of responses is provided in the appendix.

Quality of Life	Sense of Community	Comment
Gotten worse	Gotten worse	<i>Cliques and gossips, less volunteering, no cooperation or neighborliness</i>
Gotten worse	Gotten worse	<i>Lack of community involvement</i>
Stayed the same	Stayed the same	<i>Changes have been made, with having Byers businesses clean up there (sic) appearance - still have areas to focus on</i>
Stayed the same	Stayed the same	<i>Economic is poor but social and environmental are great. People here have always been friendly.</i>
Stayed the same	Gotten worse	<i>It's not a community just a group of individuals existing</i>
Stayed the same	Gotten worse	<i>More people moving in to town, less concern about the actual community as a whole</i>
Stayed the same	Gotten worse	<i>No long term vision, "it worked 30 years ago, it will work in 30 more"</i>
Stayed the same	Stayed the same	<i>No med. service, no jobs for young, no youth activities, no rec parks</i>
Stayed the same	Stayed the same	<i>The community is great but there is a lot of crime still</i>
Improved	Gotten worse	<i>It has grown and too many city people have moved in and don't know what it means to be in a small community</i>
Improved	Gotten worse	<i>People have to go to Aurora or further for entertainment, etc. Nowhere to go in Byers for fun to take company.</i>
Improved	Improved	<i>Junk cars have been removed from main intersection and one volunteer thinks enough of the community to spend her time mowing/cleaning common grassy areas</i>

Byers Functions and Services

Districts/Boards/Organizations. The survey asked which districts/boards/organizations respondents were specifically aware of. The majority of respondents were aware of Bijou Telephone, the Fire District, School District, American Legion, Recreation District, the Street Decorating Committee, and the Rescue Squad. Organizations with lower levels of awareness include the Byers Development Council (47 percent of respondents indicating awareness), North Kiowa-Bijou Water District (34 percent), the Regional Economic Advancement Partnership (33 percent), and the Enterprise Zone (27 percent).

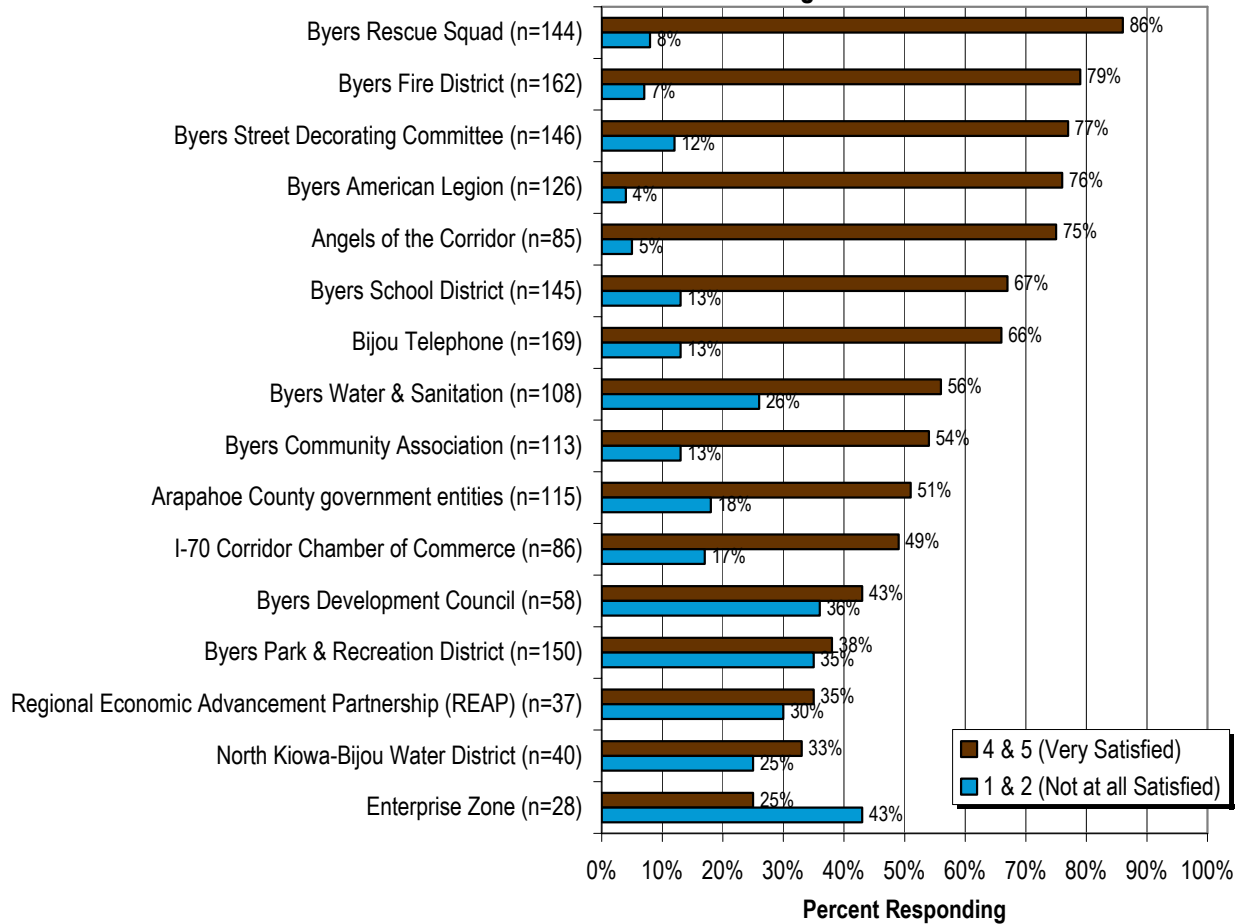
**Figure 4
Awareness of Districts/Boards/Organizations**



Respondents were then asked to rate their satisfaction with current levels of service provided by each entity of which they were aware. For the most part, there is a positive correlation between ratings and the level of awareness of each entity. The Byers Rescue Squad received the highest ratings (86 percent of respondents rated it as a 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale), followed by the Fire District (79 percent), Street Decorating Committee (77 percent), Byers American Legion (76 percent), Angels of the Corridor (75 percent), the Byers School District (67 percent), and Bijou Telephone (66 percent). Entities receiving the lowest ratings include the Byers Development Council (43 percent), Parks & Recreation District (38 percent), Regional Economic Advancement Partnership (35 percent), North Kiowa-Bijou Water District (33 percent), and the Enterprise Zone (25 percent). While awareness of the Parks & Recreation District was particularly high, the ratings were substantially lower (91 percent awareness level, compared to 38 percent positive satisfaction level), indicating an opportunity to improve an entity which already has strong visibility within the community.

Figure 5

Satisfaction of Current Districts/Boards/Organizations



Community Events. When asked whether they were aware of the events organized by the Byers Community Association, almost all respondents had at least heard of the events, such as the Easter Egg Hunt, Fourth of July Parade, community dances, Parade of Lights, and Chili and Soup Supper. In the past year:

- 66 percent of all respondents indicated that someone in their household had attended an event;
- 27 percent were aware of the events, but indicated that no one in their household had attended;
- 7 percent were unaware of the events.

Awareness of the events was slightly higher among households with members over the age of 65 (98 percent were aware of the events, compared to 93 percent overall), but attendance at the events was higher among households with kids living at home (75 percent had attended an event, compared to 66 percent overall). The survey gave respondents the opportunity to provide comments on events and any additional events they would like to see in Byers. A sampling of these comments and suggestions are shown below, and the entire set can be found in the appendix.

The Christmas parade leaves much to be desired
Awareness of boards, districts and organizations is via the I-70 Scout - really know little about them
I always look forward to Fourth of July Parade
Town of Byers should put out a notice of events
The parades are well put on, need more stuff for the kids to do
More advertising would help these events. The Fourth of July parade is the only one I have seen advertised.
Events involving community clean up and "togetherness"
More events for children, seniors and disabled
Very impressed with Christmas décor
A fair would be nice
Very enjoyable, can see the sense of community. New Year's Eve bingo night for those who do not drink yet would like socializing at Byers American Legion. Kids could also attend.
Great involvement, need better publicity weeks in advance
I'd like to see them better advertised, something for the kids/teens and young adults

Functions and Services. The survey probed satisfaction levels of specific functions and services currently provided in the Byers area in regards to community services, economic, parks/recreation/open space/trails/programs, infrastructure, police/fire/rescue, and county services (See Figure 6 for a summary of the ratings).

Community services. The highest rated community services aspects include sense of community (43 percent rating it as a 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale) and preservation of small-town character (42 percent). Aspects that were rated substantially lower were the planning and approval process for new and existing development projects (57 percent rating it as a 1 or 2 on a 5-point scale), historic preservation programs (52 percent), and communication and information dissemination (41 percent).

Economic. Economic aspects of the community were rated relatively low overall. Seventy percent of respondents indicated that they were "not at all satisfied" (rating it as a 1 or 2) with job creation, followed by the viability and expansion of local businesses (56 percent), economic development efforts (55 percent), and shopping opportunities (49 percent).

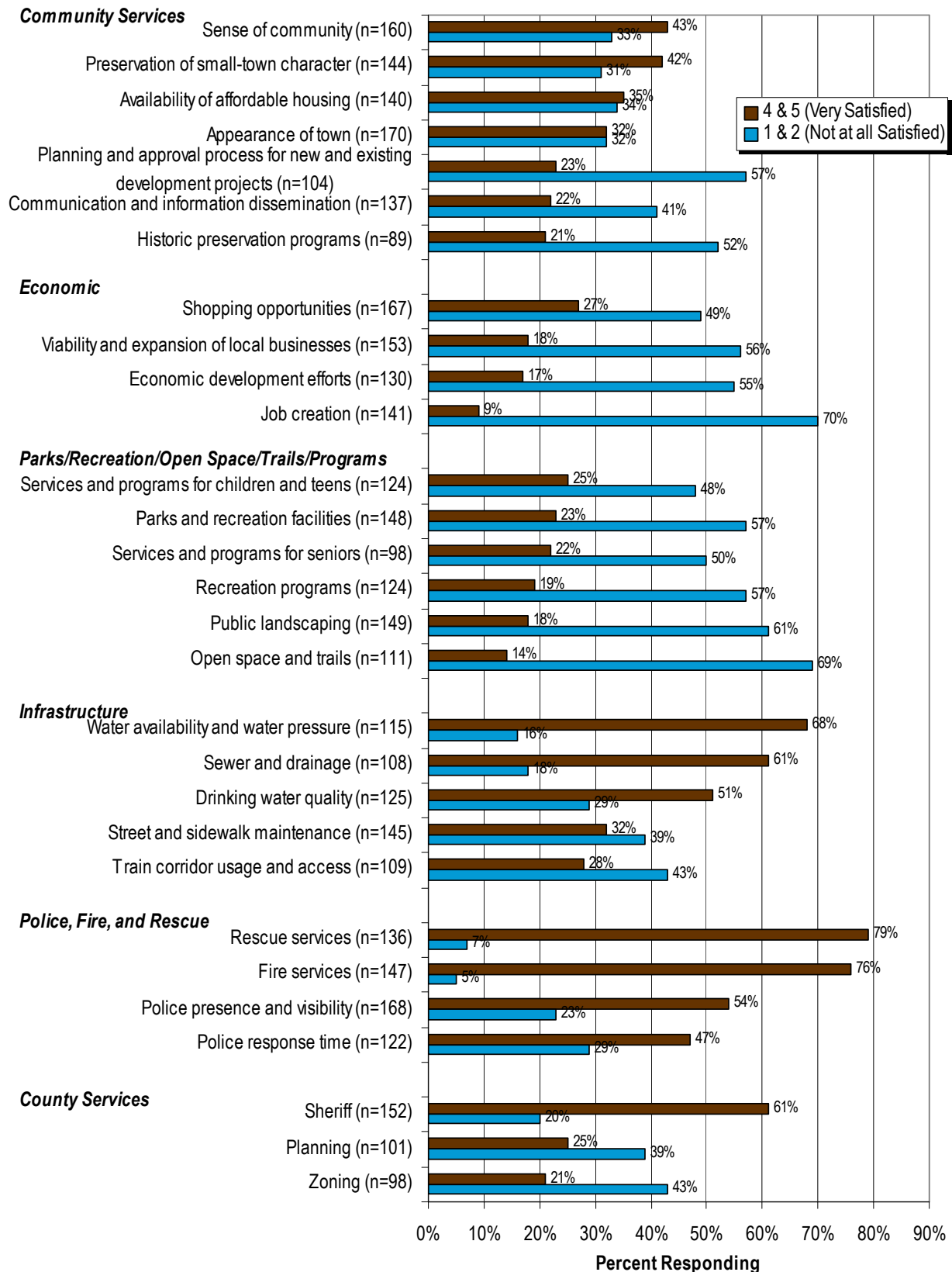
Parks/Recreation/Open Space/Trails/Programs. Ratings of parks, recreation, open space, trails, and programs were also low overall. Open space and trails received the lowest rating with 69 percent of respondents indicating that they were not at all satisfied. Other categories include public landscaping (61 percent rating it as a 1 or 2), recreation programs (57 percent), parks and recreation facilities (57 percent), services and programs for seniors (50 percent), and services and programs for children and teens (48 percent).

Infrastructure. Aspects of Byers' infrastructure were rated positively with the exception of street and sidewalk maintenance (39 percent rating it as a 1 or 2) and train corridor usage and access (43 percent), which were rated significantly lower than other infrastructure categories. Water availability and water pressure was rated the highest (68 percent rating it as a 4 or 5), followed by sewer and drainage (61 percent), and drinking water quality (51 percent).

Police/Fire/Rescue. Police, Fire, and Rescue received the highest ratings of all categories. Rescue services were rated the highest (79 percent), followed by fire services (76 percent), police presence and visibility (54 percent), and police response time (47 percent).

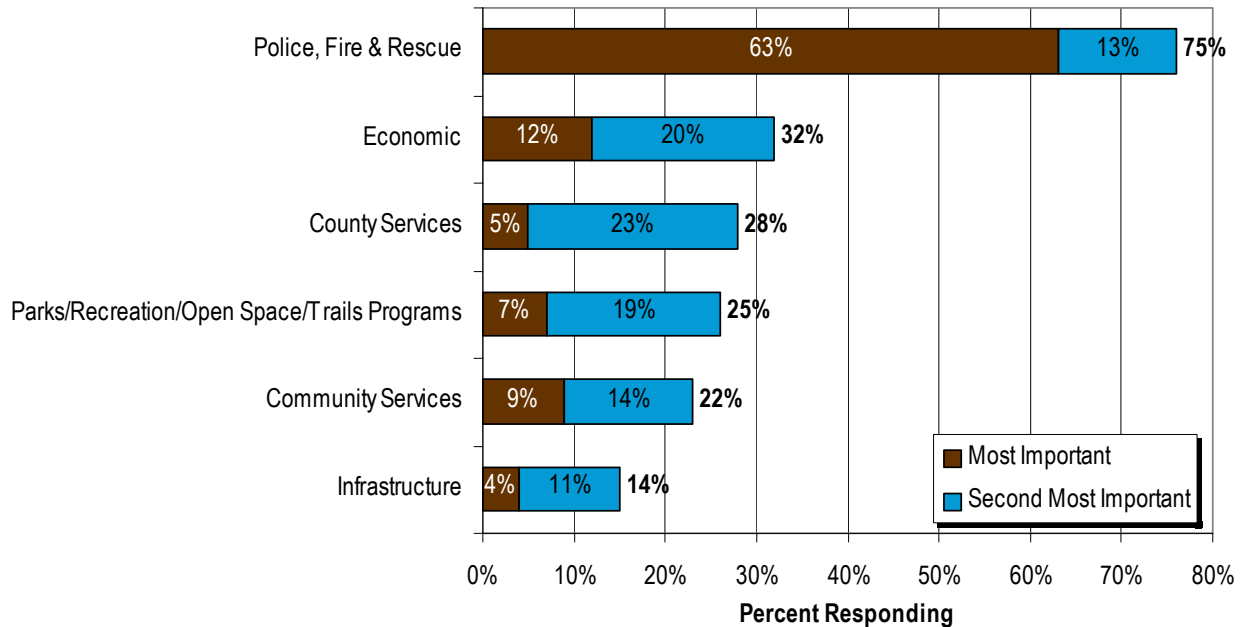
County Services. Of the county services provided, the sheriff received the most positive ratings (61 percent “very satisfied”). Rated substantially lower were the planning (25 percent) and zoning (21 percent).

Figure 6
Satisfaction with Current Functions and Services in Byers



Respondents were then asked to indicate which two of the above broad types of issues (community services, economic, parks/recreation/open space/trails/programs, infrastructure, police/fire/rescue, and county services) were the most important to their household. The following figure depicts respondents' top two issues overall. Police, Fire, and Rescue is by far the most important issue with 75 percent of respondents overall naming it as one of the top two (63 percent of which named it as the single most important issue type). While significantly lower, economic was also indicated to be of high importance to responding households.

Figure 7
Importance of General Issues



Byers Priorities

Sub-Area Plan. When asked whether they were aware of the Byers Sub-Area Plan, which was completed in 2003, only 36 percent of respondents overall indicated that they were aware of the plan. Overall, 14 percent of respondents were aware of the plan and its contents, 22 percent were aware of the plan but were not familiar with its contents, and 64 percent were not aware the plan existed or were unsure if they knew of it. As expected, residents who have lived in the Town for more than 15 years were the most likely to be aware of the plan (54 percent, compared to 22 percent of respondents who have lived in Byers for 15 years or less).

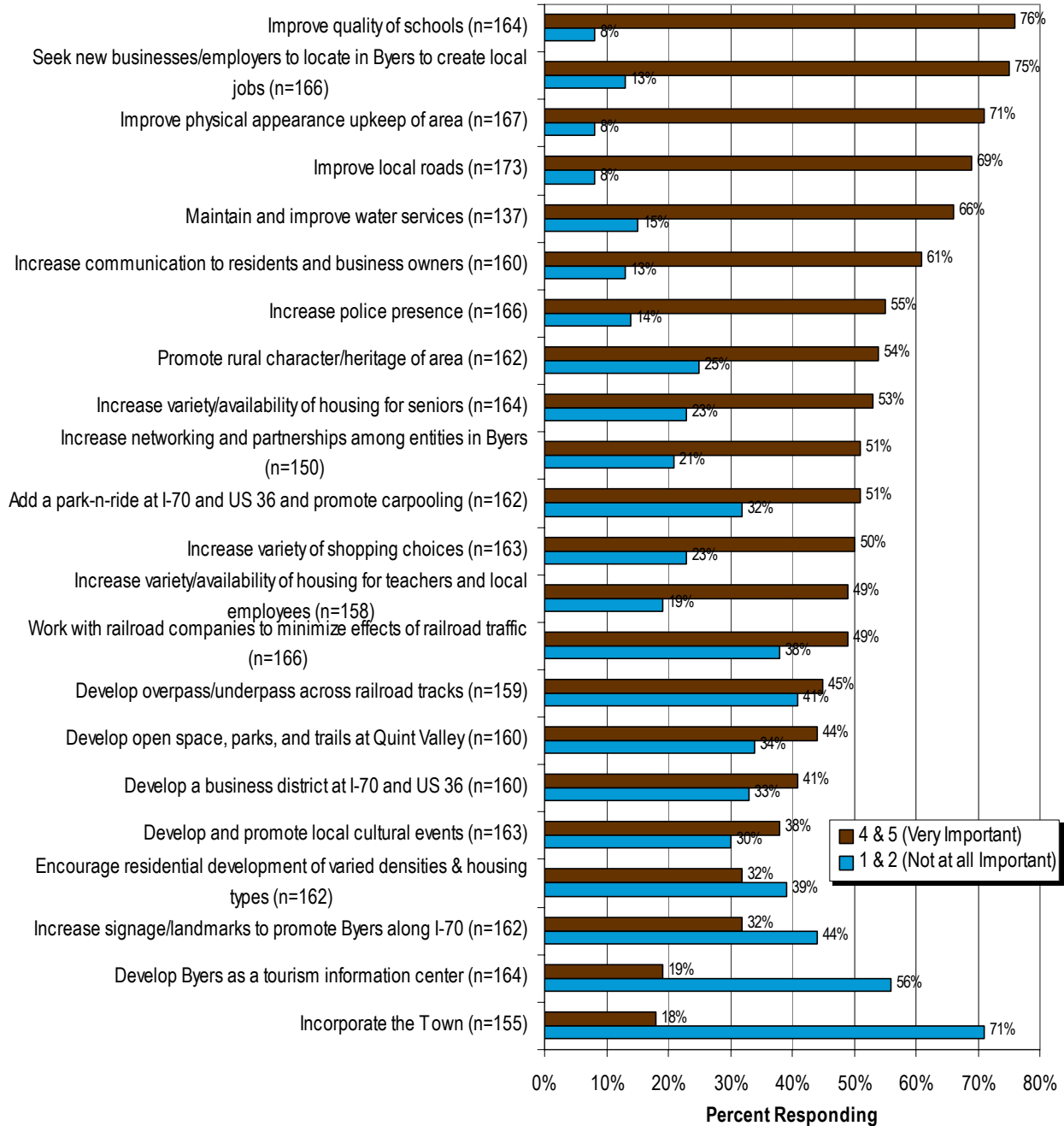
Priority of Future Issues. During the Sub-Area Plan update in 2003, a number of issues and priorities were identified as important to the future of Byers. In an effort to establish if these issues remain as priorities for Byers residents, respondents to the survey were asked to indicate the importance of each issue to their household on a scale of 1 (“not at all important”) to 5 (“very important”).

Priorities which received the greatest amount of “very important” (4 or 5) ratings were “improve the quality of schools” (76 percent), “seek new businesses/employers to locate in Byers to create local jobs” (75 percent), “improve physical appearance and upkeep of area” (71 percent),

“improve local roads” (69 percent), “maintain and improve water services” (66 percent), and “increase communication to residents and business owners” (61 percent).

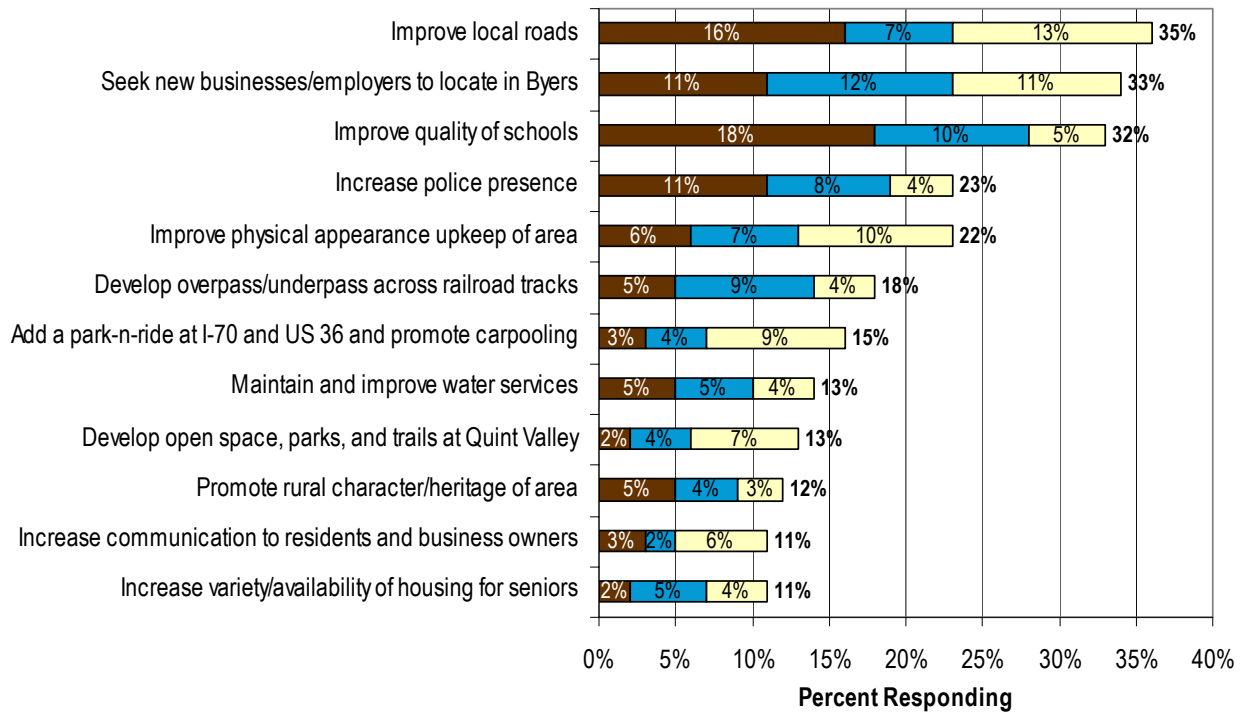
Priorities which received the most “not at all important” (1 or 2) ratings included “incorporate the town” (71 percent), “develop Byers as a tourism information center” (56 percent), “increase signage/landmarks to promote Byers along I-70” (44 percent), and “encourage residential development of varied densities and housing types” (39 percent).

Figure 8
Priorities important to the future of Byers



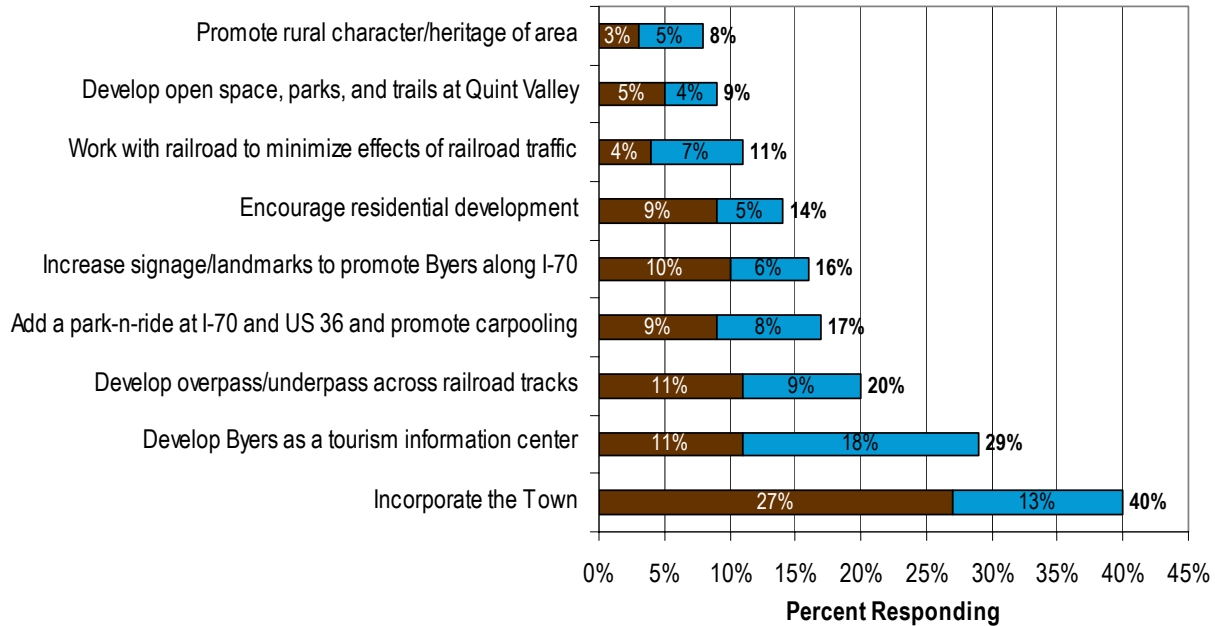
Of these priorities, respondents were asked to indicate which three should be the highest priorities for Byers to focus on and which two should be the lowest priorities where Byers could spend less time, cut back, or eliminate altogether. As shown in the following figure, priorities which respondents indicated as the most important issues to focus on in the future include improvement of local roads (35 percent indicated it as one of the top three priorities, 16 percent as the top priority), seek new businesses/employers to locate in Byers (33 percent; 11 percent), and improvement of school quality (32 percent; 18 percent). It is important to note that while improvement of school quality appears to be the third priority, it actually received the largest percentage of “top priority” ratings and therefore should receive a high level of attention.

**Figure 9
Top Priorities for Future of Byers**



The incorporation of Byers as a town is clearly the lowest priority for community members. Forty percent of respondents identified incorporation as one of the two lowest priorities while 27 percent listed it as the lowest priority. Also identified as a relatively low priority was the development of Byers as a tourist information center (29 percent identifying it as one of the two lowest priorities and 11 percent listing it as the lowest priority).

Figure 10
Lowest Priorities for Future of Byers



The survey also asked respondents to list any programs or services Byers should plan to provide to improve either the quality of life or sense of community in Byers. Most responses echoed the ratings and priorities already mentioned, but additional options named by respondents included the creation of a recreation or community center, funding for fire and rescue services, and increased medical care. A sampling of comments is listed below:

- Paid firefighters and rescue*
- Anticipating water and sewer needs for the future. Infrastructure.*
- Make efforts to let new residents aware of programs and community services in the area (sic)*
- Improve local roads*
- More local medical care, transportation of elderly and disabled to Medicaid appts., ensure services, access for seniors and/or disabled*
- Recreation facilities for the children. They have nothing here. They need something to do. So they don't end up in horrible accidents. They need a place to gather.*
- We need more opportunity for work in this area*
- Family recreation center with pool*
- Organized and realistic development*
- The trailer park is an eye sore and a detriment not as a trailer park but how it is maintained and represented as a slum. Low cost housing need not look like a dump.*
- Recreation center with amenities that will work for all ages. Don't make it a large daycare center but a place where classes and activities are available.*

Road and Bridge Services Shop. With the planned relocation of the Arapahoe County Road and Bridge Services shop to the new Eastern Service Center in Bennett in late 2008 or 2009, respondents were asked if they feel the relocation will cause the level of maintenance in the eastern end of the county to decrease. More than half of respondents (55 percents) anticipate maintenance will likely decrease, while 15 percent don't believe the maintenance will decrease, and 30 percent are uncertain.

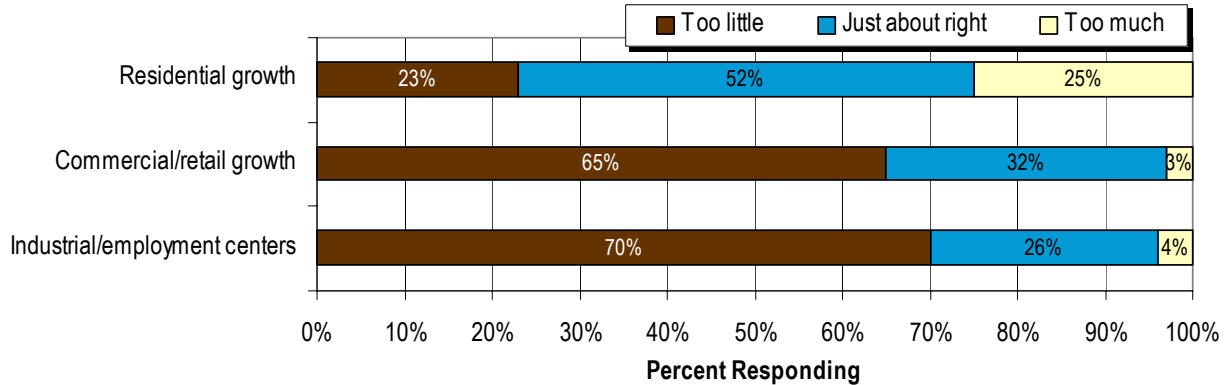
In looking at future uses for the facility once it has relocated, one possibility is that it could be used for school bus storage for the district. Sixty percent of respondents indicated that they thought this would be a good use, 12 percent did not think so, and 28 percent were uncertain about what the best use of the facility would be. Open-ended comments offered about alternative uses for the site described options of selling it to an individual or private business for uses such as a vehicle repair shop or maintenance trade school, or converting it to a County Sheriff or Highway Patrol station, a fire department substation (so that rescue equipment is available on the south side of the railroad tracks), community center, or recycling facility. A sampling of these comments are shown below:

- Car repair shop*
- Community center for events*
- County police station*
- Fire dept. substation on the south side of tracks*
- I wish R & B would keep it to park county vehicles in the winter*
- Recycle facility similar to Broomfield County*
- Sell for private business*
- Sell to individual for workshop - business incentive for body shop mechanic*
- Vehicle maintenance trade school*

Growth/Development

Over the last few years, do you feel the rate of growth and development (in regards to residential, commercial/retail, and industrial) in Byers has been too little, just about right, or too much? The opinion of the residential growth rate in Byers was somewhat split with 52 percent of respondents indicating it is just about right, 25 percent saying it has been too much, and 23 percent saying it has been too little. In respondents' opinions, the rates of growth of Commercial/retail and industrial/employment centers has been too little, with approximately two-thirds of respondents indicating that there has not been enough growth.

Figure 11
Rates of Growth and Development

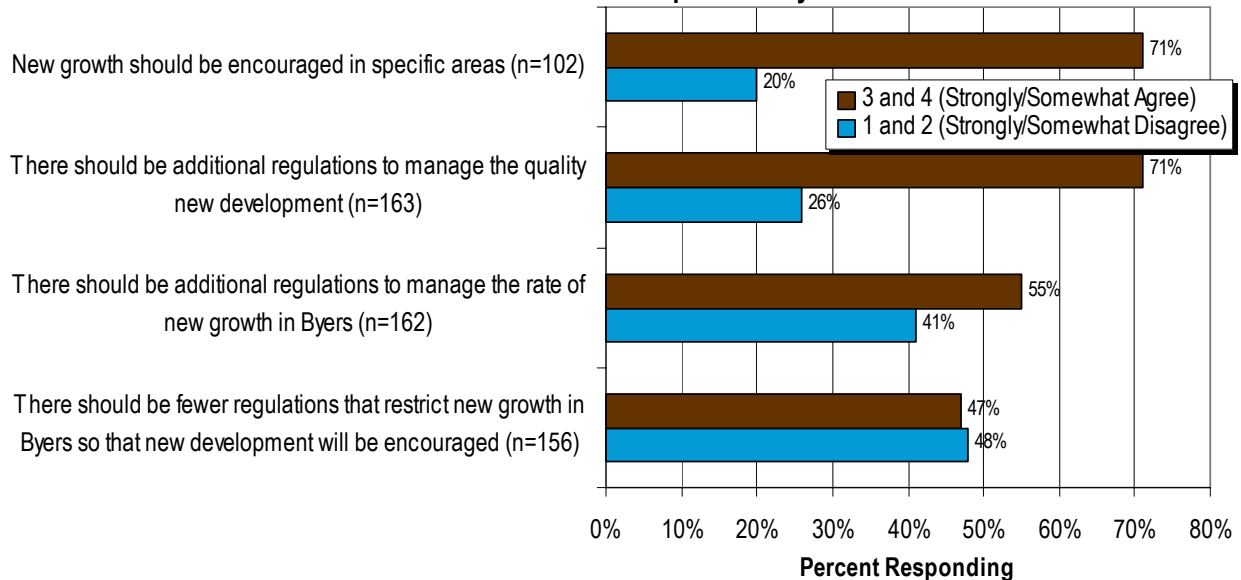


Management of growth and development. When asked about the management of growth and development in Byers, respondents indicated the following opinions of how it has been handled:

- 22 percent said it is poorly managed, not well-controlled
- 20 percent said it is too strictly controlled, that even desired growth is not allowed
- 8 percent said the growth is well-managed and orderly
- 29 percent said it varies by development
- 30 percent were uncertain

New growth and development. Respondents were asked to what level they agreed with a number of statements regarding how new growth and development should be handled in Byers. Most respondents felt strongly that “new growth should be encouraged in specific areas” (71 percent of respondents in agreement) and “there should be additional regulations to manage the quality of new development” (71 percent). There was less agreement that “there should be additional regulations to manage the rate of new growth in Byers,” (55 percent in agreement). Respondents were significantly less in agreement that “there should be fewer regulations that restrict new growth in Byers so that new development will be encouraged,” with 47 percent of respondents in agreement and 48 percent of respondents in disagreement.

Figure 12
New Growth and Development in Byers



The next 20 years. In order to address Byers' identity as a "bedroom community," and whether residents are hoping for a change in this status for the future, the survey provided three statements of which respondents were asked to choose the one they most agreed with. Results are shown below.

- Over the next 20 years, Byers should:
 - Maintain it's status as a "bedroom community" with primary services and employment provided by other areas (8 percent of respondents);
 - Strive to achieve a goal of employing more of the workforce and providing primary services in the area (30 percent of respondents);
 - Maintain an equal balance as a "bedroom community" and providing in-town employment/services (62 percent of respondents).

Town incorporation. Taking into consideration the benefits and risks of town incorporation, respondents indicated a low level of support for incorporating Byers as a town. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "strongly against" and 5 being "strongly in favor," 62 percent of overall respondents indicated a 1 or 2, while 17 percent indicated a 4 or 5. These results are congruent with the results previously mentioned that 71 percent of respondents indicated "town incorporation" is not a priority at all for the future of Byers.

Respondents were asked to provide any additional open-ended comments they had on issues related to growth, development, and town incorporation. As evident in the discussion of these topics so far, there is a range of opinions, both positive and negative. These can be further assessed through the open-ended comments and suggestions provided. A sampling of these comments follows, and the full set of comments is provided in the appendix.

Byers does not have the tax base to incorporate at this time. We would face higher taxes and lose some county services.

Byers is an inexpensive place to live because it is unattractive. Attracting quality residence (sic) and a better commercial base would allow more tax base and yet keep it relatively inexpensive.

Developers should be held accountable for there (sic) developments. They survey the property, grade a dirt road & enforce no requirements as to how it will be maintained or upkept.

Growth is a good thing as long as it is aimed in the right direction. People will be more willing to pay for the right kind of developments. They can see what needs to be done; but you have to help it happen!

Limit and regulate housing densities, keep rural small town sense of community, incorporate (?) not sure benefits outweigh risks and costs

Look what happened to Watkins when they decided to incorporate and the problems Deer Trail is having. Now Byers has police protection and road service without any cost.

Services provided by county are far and few between

Too much control and NOT by the citizens

Uncontrolled and unregulated growth is worse than no growth. Special attention should be given to not changing what this community is just to grow. Large corporate businesses should not be brought in at the expense of independent business.

Unincorporated has not provided any benefits - water not fit to drink, no pressure due to old pipes, growth limited as there's nothing to offer, little or no community pride

Economic/Commercial Development

Where should the town focus resources for economic development? Respondents were given the opportunity to prioritize a list of economic development opportunities based on how they think the town should focus their resources.

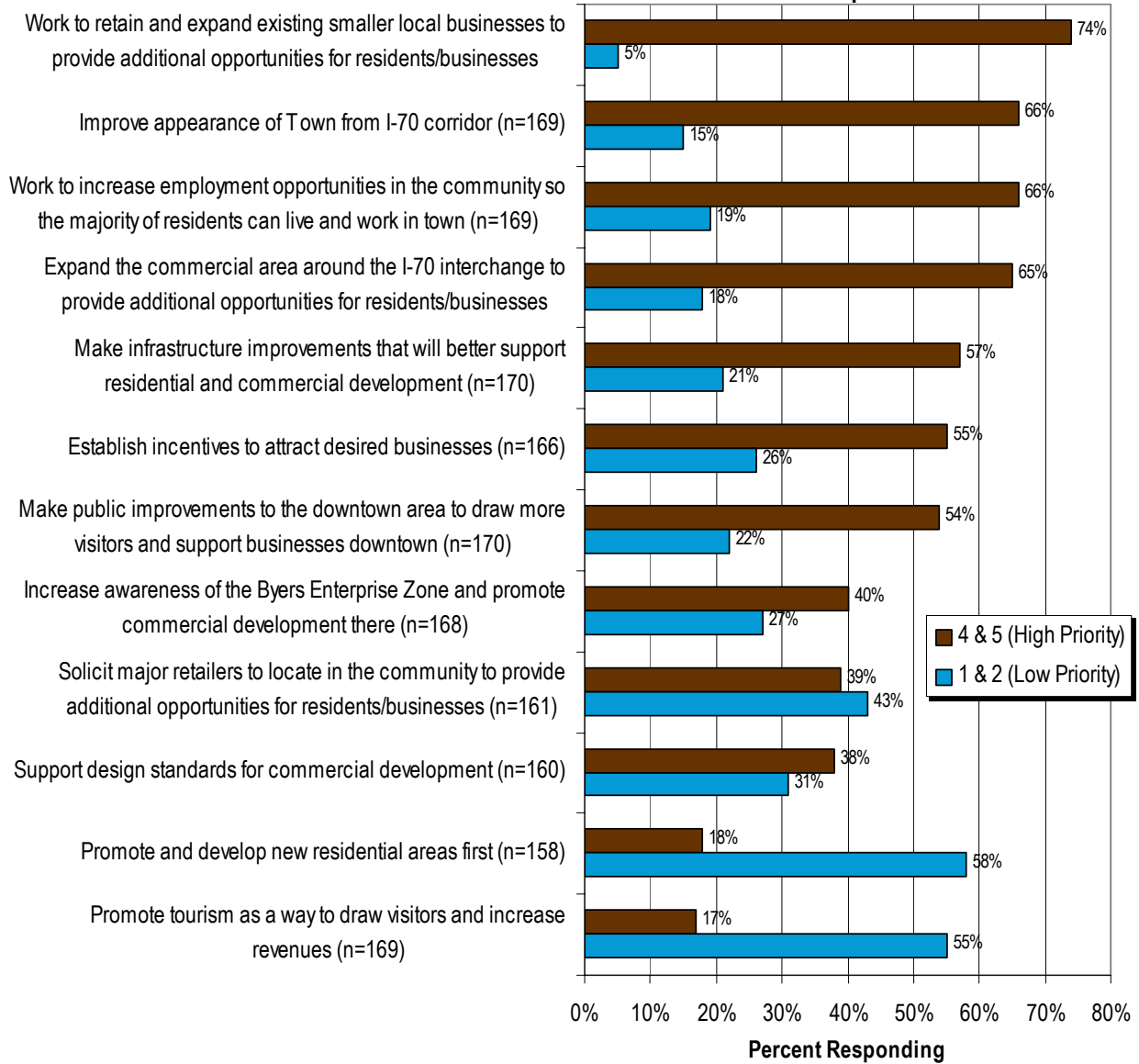
The opportunities which respondents indicated as the greatest priorities for economic development were:

- Work to retain and expand existing smaller local businesses to provide additional opportunities for residents/businesses (74 percent of respondents indicating “important/highest priority”)
- Improve appearance of town from I-70 corridor (66 percent of respondents indicating “important/highest priority”)
- Work to increase employment opportunities in the community so that the majority of residents can live and work in the town (66 percent of respondents indicating “important/highest priority”)
- Expand the commercial area around the I-70 interchange to provide additional opportunities for residents/businesses (65 percent of respondents indicating “important/highest priority”)

The opportunities which respondents indicated as the lowest priorities for economic development were:

- Promote and develop new residential areas first (58 percent of respondents indicating “low priority/not a priority”)
- Promote tourism as a way to draw visitors and increase revenues (55 percent of respondents indicating “low priority/not a priority”)

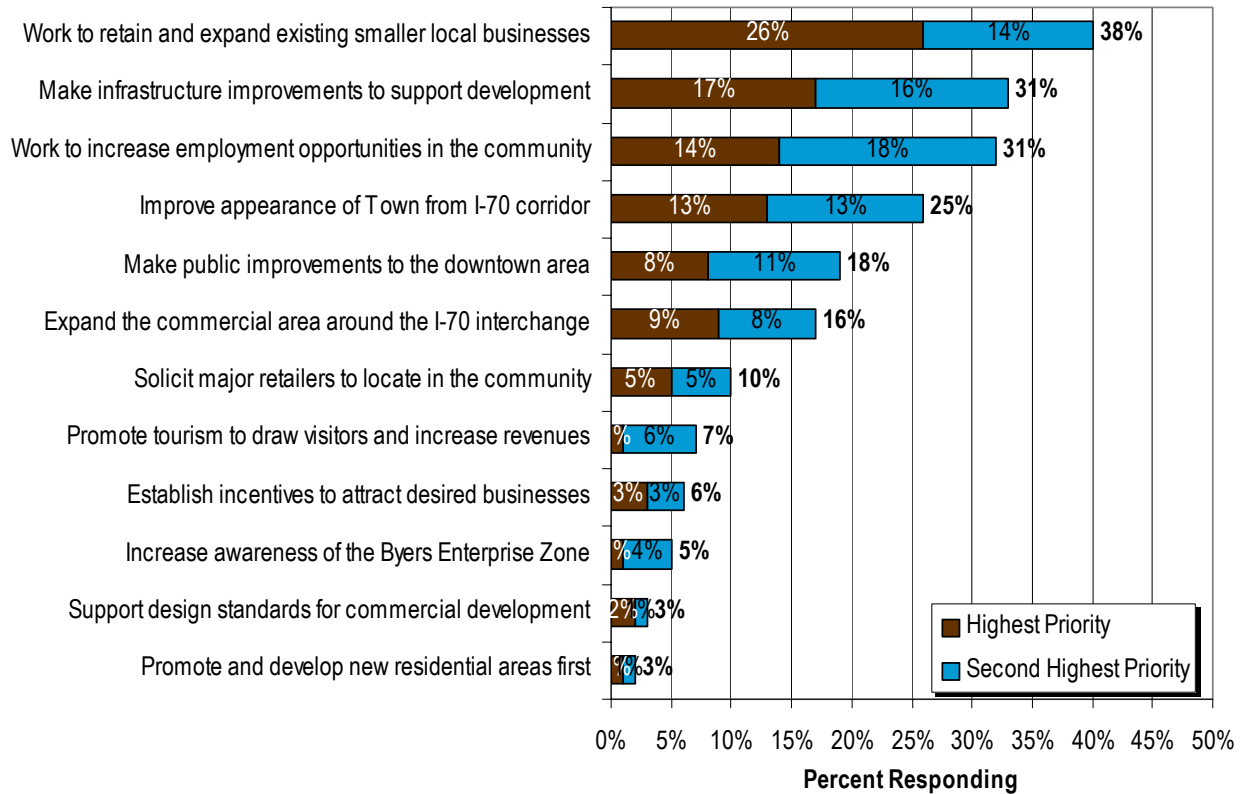
Figure 13
Where should the town focus resources for economic development?



After rating each economic development aspect individually, respondents were then asked to name the two aspects they felt were the highest priorities for Byers to focus on. This provides the opportunity to not only see what opportunities are important to respondents, but also to get an idea of how the same opportunities are viewed in relation to each other.

The top category (“work to retain and expand existing smaller local businesses”), shown in the previous graph became the clear number one priority. In a slight shift, “make infrastructure improvements to support development” increased as a priority when asked in relation to the other economic development opportunities, followed by “work to increase employment opportunities in the community.”

**Figure 14
Top Priorities for Economic Development in Byers**



Commercial Development. In regards to types of commercial development, there were clear opinions on which types respondents felt would be important to the future of the community. The survey listed 18 various types of development and asked respondents to rate each on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means “not at all important” and 5 means “very important.”

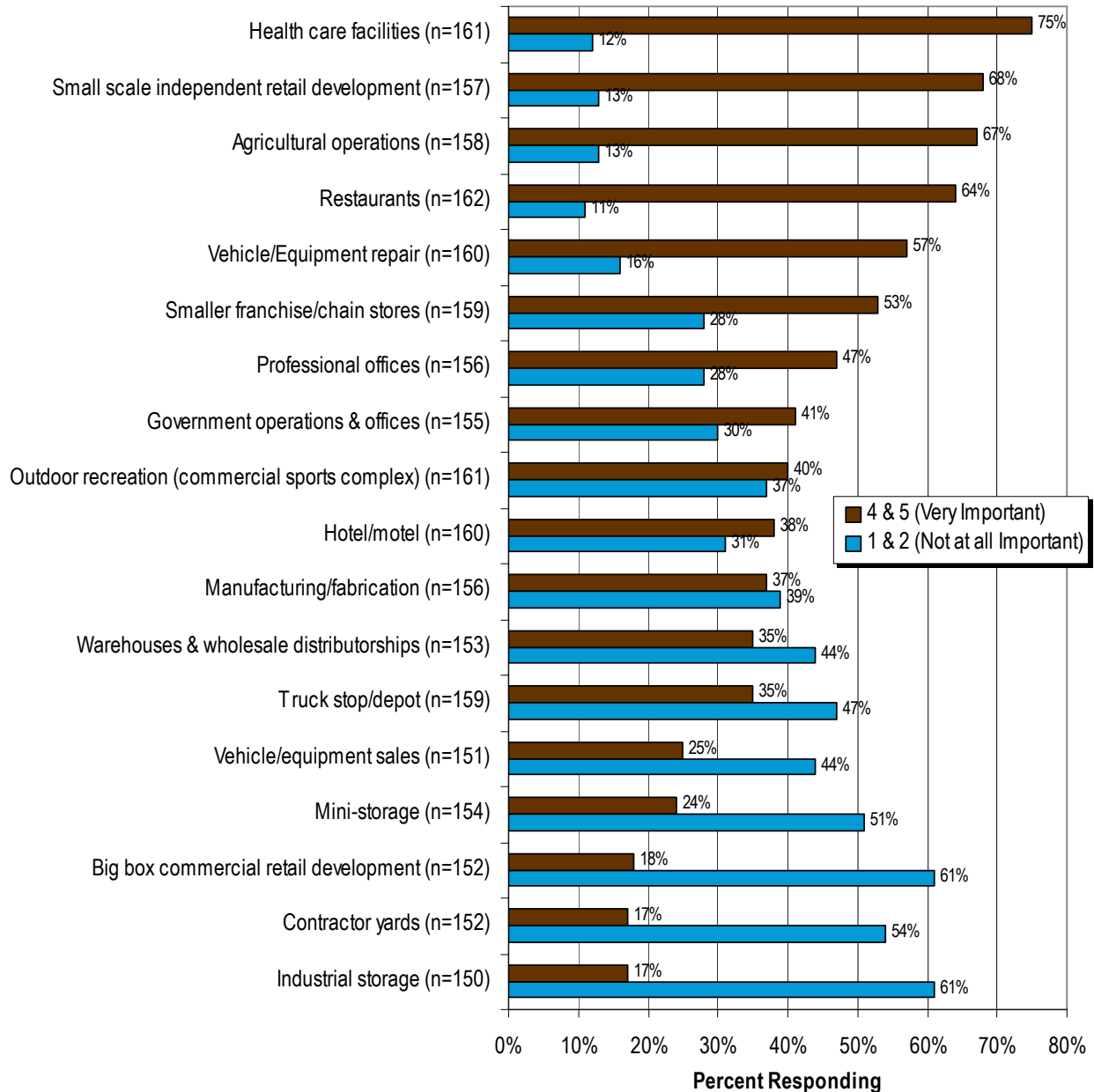
As shown in the following figure, the types of commercial development most important to respondents include:

- Health care facilities (75 percent indicating 4 or 5 “very important”)
- Small-scale independent retail development (68 percent)
- Agricultural operations (67 percent)
- Restaurants (64 percent)
- Vehicle/equipment repair (57 percent)
- Smaller franchise/chain stores (53 percent)

Types of commercial development least important to respondents include:

- Big box commercial retail development (61 percent indicating 1 or 2 “not at all important”)
- Industrial storage (61 percent)
- Contractor yards (54 percent)
- Mini-storage (51 percent)
- Truck stop/depot (47 percent)
- Vehicle/equipment sales (44 percent)
- Warehouses and wholesale distributorships (44 percent)

Figure 15
Importance of Commercial Development Types

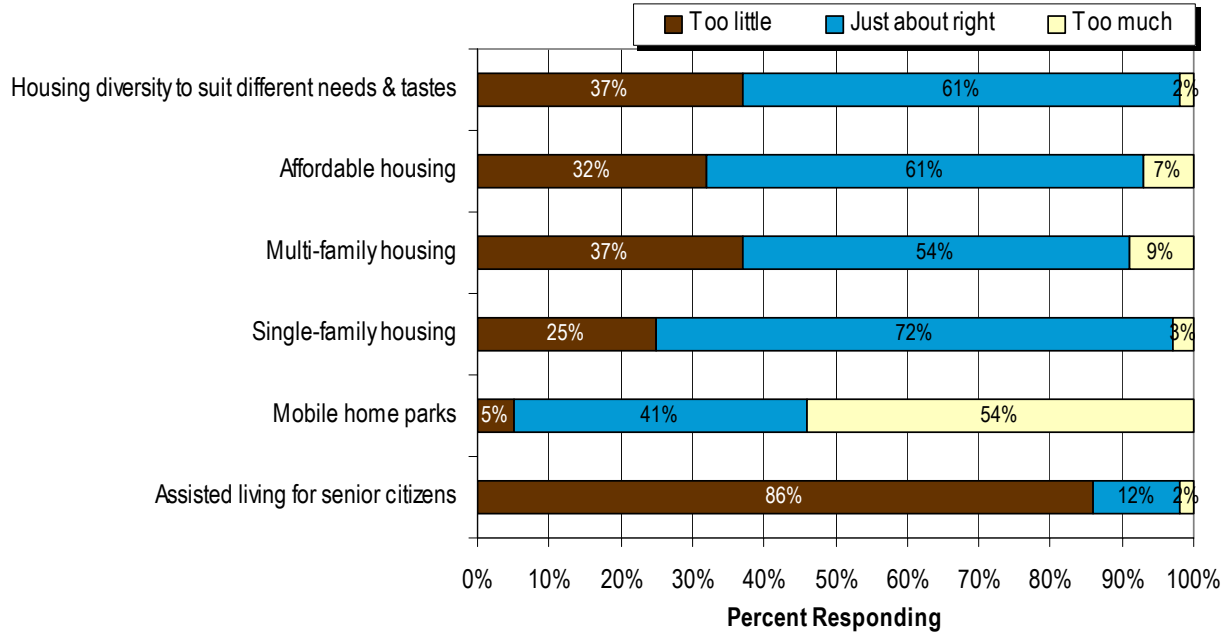


Housing

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they felt like Byers had too much or too little of a variety of housing types. Results provide an indicator as to how community members view the current housing available in Byers. Overall, the majority of respondents feel the availability of “housing diversity to suit different needs and tastes,” “affordable housing,” “multi-family housing,” and “single-family housing” are just about right. The only type respondents feel there is too much of are mobile home parks (54 percent of respondents indicated there is too much, and 41 percent indicated the amount is just about right). The results show strong consensus

among respondents that there is not enough assisted living for senior citizens (86 percent indicated there is not enough).

Figure 16
Current Availability of Housing Types in Byers

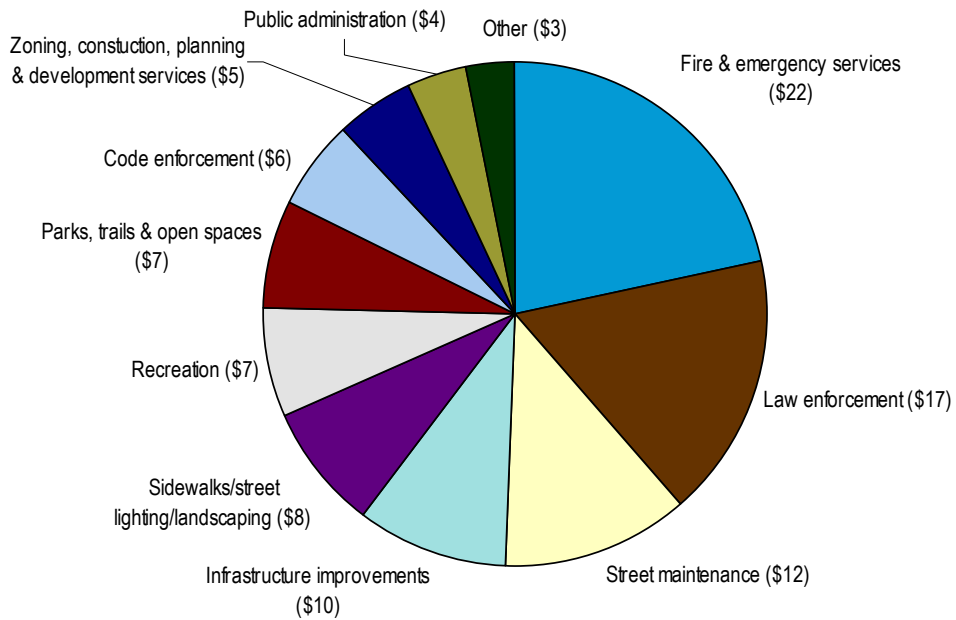


Financial Decisions (Priorities for Budgeting Taxpayer Revenue)

The survey asked respondents, “If you were responsible for budgeting \$100 of taxpayer revenue, how would you spend it?” As illustrated in the following figure, residents distributed the greatest share to fire and emergency services —\$22 or 22% of their total \$100 allocation.

After fire and emergency services, residents allocated \$17 (or 17%) to law enforcement, \$12 to street maintenance, \$10 to infrastructure improvements, \$8 to sidewalks/street lighting/landscaping, \$7 each to recreation and parks, trails, and open space, \$6 to code enforcement, \$5 to zoning, construction, and planning development, and \$4 to public administration.

**Figure 17
Revenue Allocation**



Would you support the development of a special taxing district funded through property taxes to fund infrastructure improvements and achieve goals outlined in the Sub-Area Plan? Overall, there was not strong support for the development of a special taxing district, but a large proportion of the respondents indicated uncertainty or no opinion about the topic. Only 25 percent were in favor of creating a special taxing district, while 36 percent were opposed, and 39 percent didn't know or were uncertain. These results were fairly consistent across all respondent types.

Communication and Information

Ratings of communication within the Town were relatively low overall. As shown in an earlier section, satisfaction with “current communication and information dissemination” in the community was rated positively (rating of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale) by 22 percent of respondents, but was rated negatively (rating of 1 or 2) by 41 percent of respondents. Emphasizing the importance of communication and the need for improvement in this area, when asked how important certain issues were, 61 percent of respondents indicated that “increased communication to residents and business owners” was very important (11 percent of overall respondents listed it as one of the top three priorities Byers should focus on).

When asked how Byers can best reach community members, 86 percent of respondents indicated that the I-70 Scout is the best method of reaching them. Other effective forms of communication include:

- Direct mailings (56 percent),
- Creation of a community newsletter (41 percent),
- E-mail (21 percent),

- Flyers (21 percent),
- Internet/website (14 percent),
- Parks & Recreation publication (5 percent), and
- Radio (5 percent).

The importance of the I-70 Scout is notable, and should be utilized to communicate information within the community whenever possible. Although mentioned less frequently than direct mailings and a community newsletter, e-mail and the Internet may be effective forms of communication as 84 percent of respondents indicated that they have Internet access either at home or work.