

Public Participation



II. Public Participation

A snapshot of comments from Sidney Survey Respondents:

"I appreciate the opportunity to weigh in on the future of our community. I hope we're able to make some meaningful changes to improve Sidney. I know that is often easier said than done, but this survey and the upcoming community events are a good start."

"I grew up in this community and am choosing to raise my family here. The Sidney I grew up in and the Sidney now is vastly different. A reflection of the changes in our world, but also a reflection of the lack of participation by our community members - the same small group of people volunteer, serve on boards, do good in our neighborhoods, support our schools, etc. There are wonderful people in this community who do care but for whatever reason do not get involved. This needs to change so more people don't leave our community and residents find ways they can contribute on whatever level they are able."

"Sidney must revitalize its downtown community if it wishes to have a future."

Introduction

Over 1000 community stakeholders participated in various activities over the nine-month planning process to help guide and frame the Sidney Comprehensive Plan. These stakeholders were able to participate in events that ranged from steering committee meetings, three interactive community forums, and interactive discussions with high school students from Sidney's public and parochial schools. A web-based community survey was also used to capture the ideas and thoughts of Sidney's residents, employees and businesses.

Public Involvement Process

The comprehensive plan update was forged through an intensive public process that consisted of four primary elements: six steering committee meetings, a 13-month interactive community survey, three community forums, and a survey of high school students.

Steering Committee Meetings

Six steering committee meetings were held to help frame the Plan's development. The committee consisted of appointed community leaders with

varying backgrounds. This diverse committee was tasked with guiding the Plan based on input gathered from the community.

Committee members were very active in the community by informing their peers of the survey and events that were scheduled for public participation. They were also energetic participants at the Community Forums.

Community Surveys

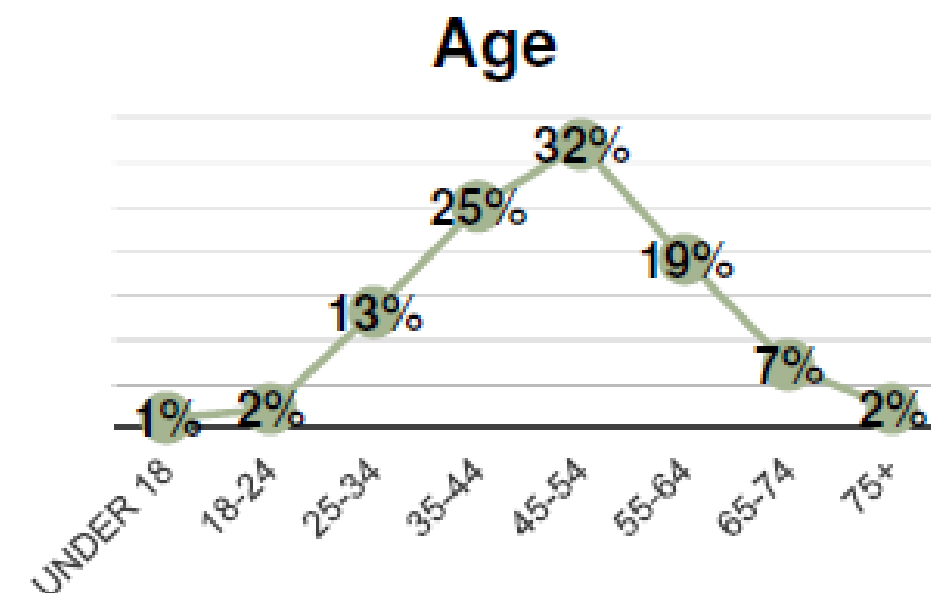
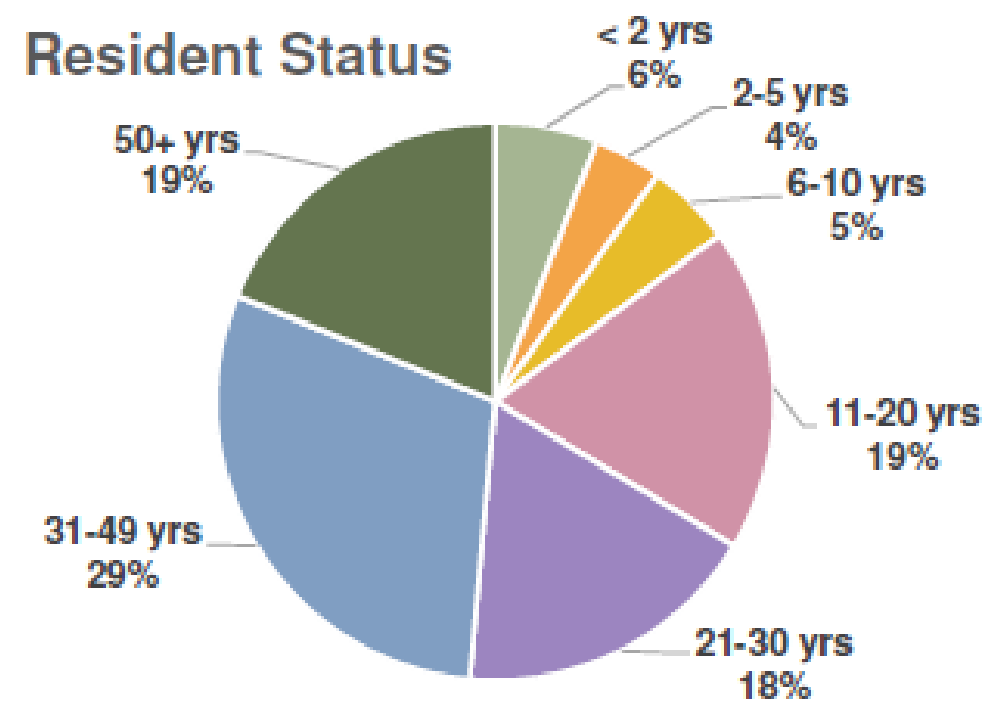
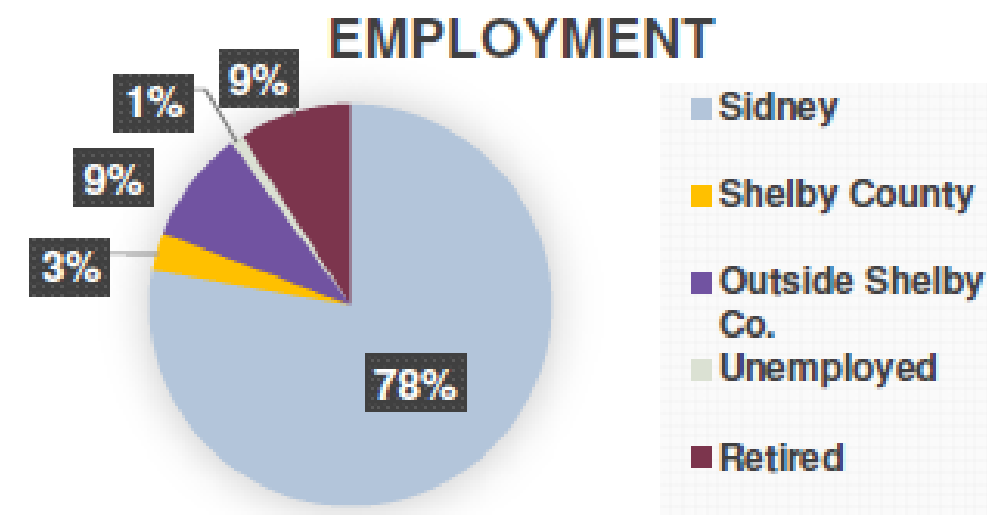
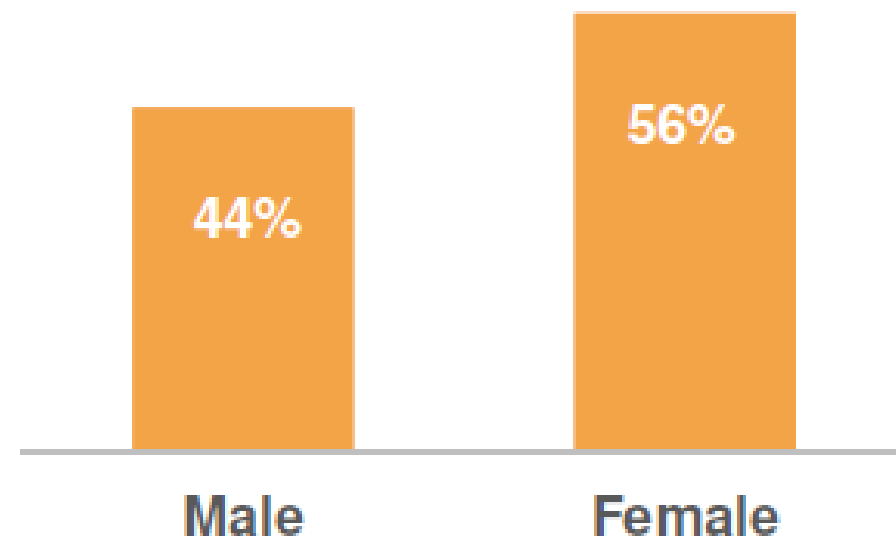
A 17-question interactive survey helped to guide this planning process. The survey was made available online and in hard-copy beginning November 2015 and remained active until December 2016. Snapshots of the survey results were analyzed in July and October 2016 to help frame the Plan. The final results outlined below were gathered on December 2016 when 790 respondents had completed the survey. High schools students were also surveyed from all three high schools. Over 155 students participated.

Community Forums

Three community forums were held during the planning process, one of which was held to discuss (specifically) downtown revitalization. At the first community forum, a snapshot of the survey results was presented and the audience completed visioning exercises. This visioning exercise helped to formulate several strategies presented in this Plan. An initial overview of survey results was also presented at the second forum where the audience was asked to weigh in on proposed strategies for the Plan.

An overview of the survey results are highlighted on the following pages.

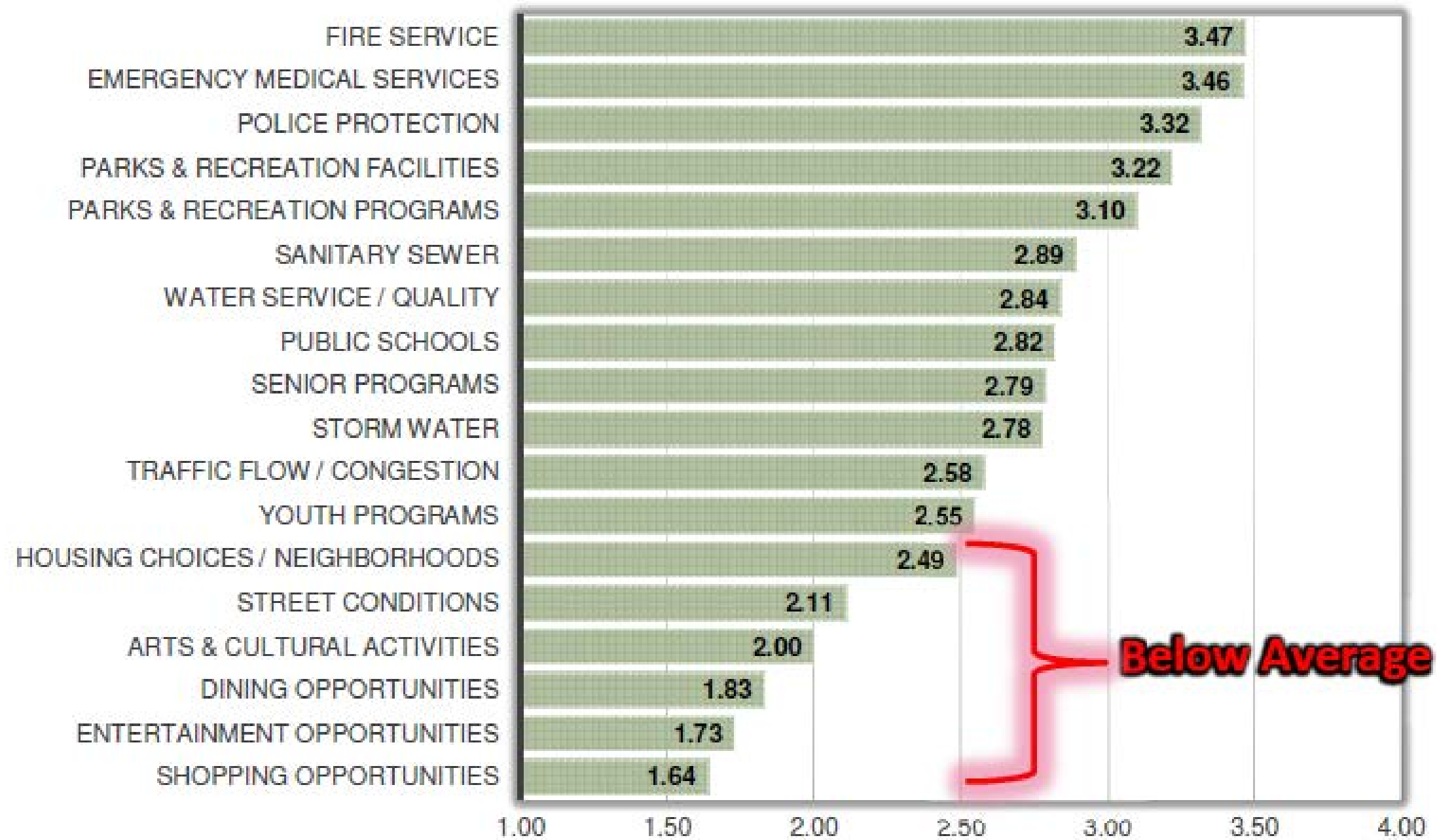
Comprehensive Plan Survey Results



Survey Results

Rate the following amenities:

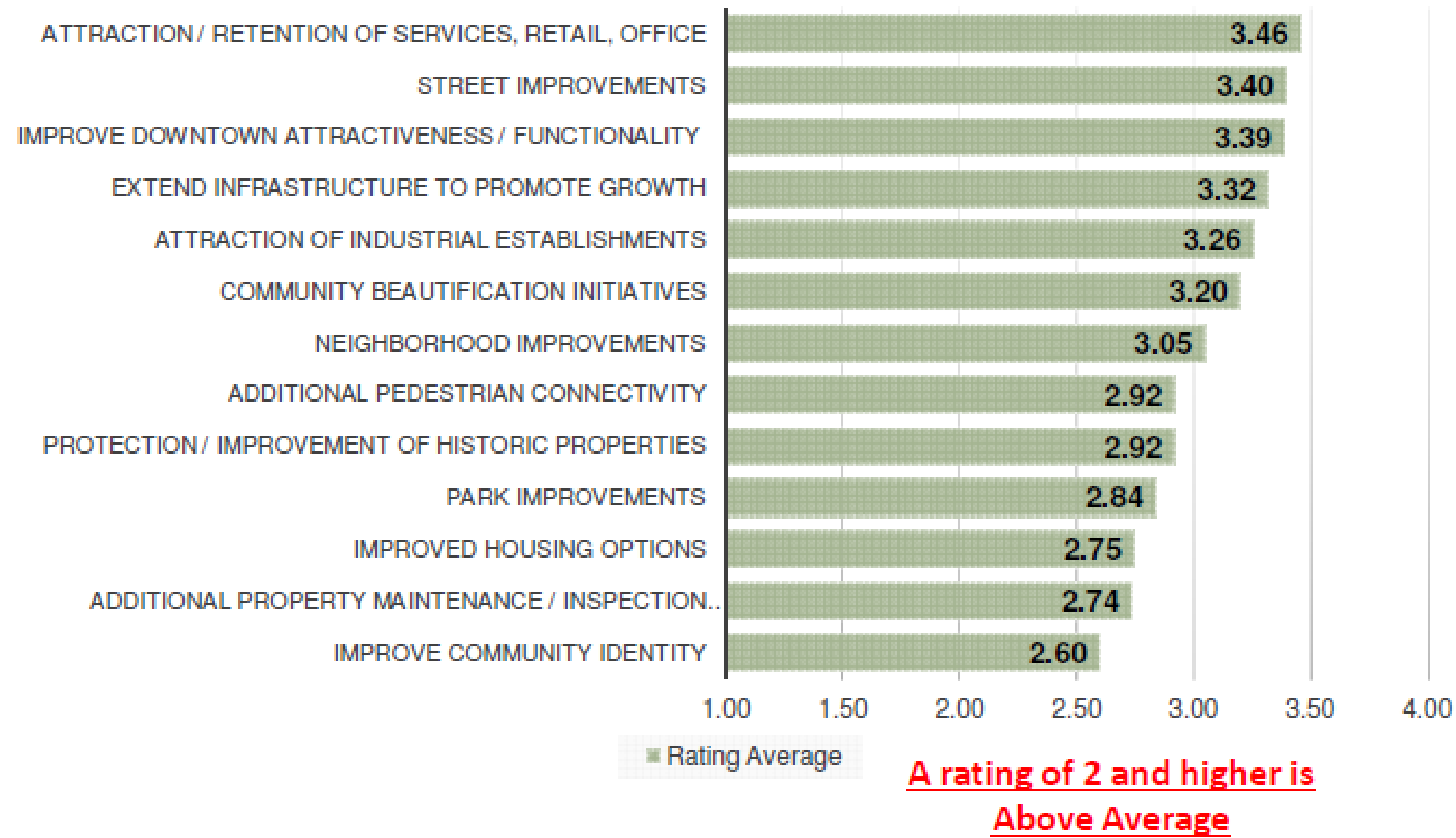
(1 = poor 4 = excellent)



Survey Results

Rate your support for
the following activities:

(1 = no priority 4 = high priority)



Survey Results

Transportation Issues / Problematic Areas

- SR 47
- Vandemark Road
- Port Jefferson, Jefferson, and N. Main Avenue Intersection
- Fair Street
- Russell Road
- Michigan Avenue
- Broadway
- CR 25A
- I-75

What Businesses / Programs are Needed?

- Youth / Park Programs
- Higher Education Options
- Restaurants, Pubs
- Retail Variety
- Professional Offices
- Entertainment – Theater / Festivals
- Dog Park
- Pharmacy
- Industrial
- Outdoor Recreation Programs

Survey Results

Biggest Concern for the Future of the Community

- Losing Residents
- Losing Businesses & Jobs
- Crime / Drugs / Safety
- Decaying Infrastructure
- Too much Industry
- Downtown Decline
- Housing Maintenance / Disinvestment
- Taxation / Increasing Fees

Other Thoughts or Concerns

- Decline of City Pride = Disinvestment
- Entertainment options are needed to maintain younger populations
- Improve higher education options (college satellites)
- Sidney is a great community that needs events to bring people in
- A clear vision & branding are needed
- Investment in the Downtown should be a priority

Student Survey Results Snapshot

HIGHLIGHTS:

> 155 RESPONSES

> APPROXIMATELY 50%:

~Public vs. Private

~Sidney-Born

~Sidney-Born Parent

~Rate Quality of

Life - Good

“Sidney is a town in which I believe needs drastic improvements. Certain aspects of the town are great, however some are very poor. Downtown areas of Sidney really show the poverty of the town.”

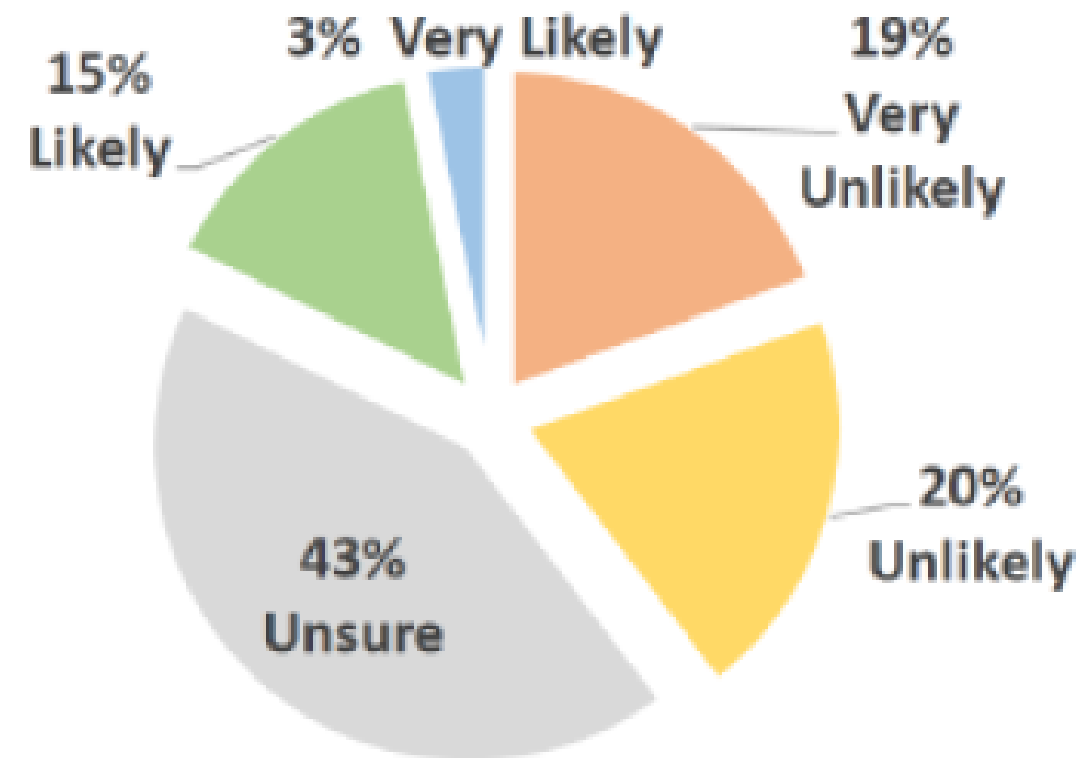
~Sidney Student responding during the Plan Survey

Student Survey Results

If you were in charge of the community, what one improvement would you make?



How likely is it that you will live in Sidney as an adult?



- Almost 40% are unlikely and/or very unlikely to return
- 43% are "unsure"

Student Survey Results

In Twenty years, Sidney will be?

