



**City of Gahanna, Ohio  
A Community Survey Update  
2010**

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Corporation**



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## Introduction

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In October, 2008, a benchmark survey of 920 registered voters was conducted for the City of Gahanna, Ohio (the City). The survey was repeated in 2010 with a smaller sample (N=400) and somewhat revised questionnaire. The objectives of the 2010 survey were to measure changes in citizen satisfaction and citizen perspectives on various issues facing the community, and to examine new issues that have arisen since the 2008 survey.

In the political background during the 2008 survey, the national and certain state level and local issue elections were being contested. President Obama was elected in November 2008 along with large majorities in the congress. However, a deep recession had already begun and the transition period was consumed by politically contentious discussions of the TARP and other “bailout” legislation under President Bush, controversy which continued and deepened under President Obama. Rancorous debate accompanied all of these governmental and economic movements and other legislation, specifically the stimulus and the health care legislation. As an anti-governmental and anti-tax mood took hold, Democrats lost the US House, all state offices in Ohio, and a number of seats in the US Senate.

With the deep recession came a loss of both employment and revenue at state and local levels. With political leaders assuming the public would not stand for a tax increase, and fearful that any increase would depress the economy more than a loss of state and local services, pledges were made in many states, including Ohio, that budgets would have to be cut, and no taxes raised.

With this political stormy weather in the background, the 2010 survey of Gahanna voters was conducted after the conclusion of elections in November, 2010. The mood of growing optimism at the time of the 2008 survey, when the depth of economic problems was not yet apparent to much of the public gave way to a national dark cloud as documented in many surveys and in the elections of November, 2010. The 2010 Gahanna survey reflects that mood.

### ***Method***

**Sample.** A sample of 400 persons gives us a 95% probability that responses are accurate within  $\pm 5\%$  when the proportions giving a response break down roughly 50:50. When the responses divide in a more unequal manner (e.g. 80:20) the sample error is lower (e.g.  $\pm 4\%$  at 80:20 distribution).

At the request of the City, the sample frame consisted of a list of registered voters sampled within the four wards of the city, with an equal number sampled from each ward<sup>1</sup>. The individual ward samples consist of 100 responses within each ward. At the ward level, the sample error is  $\pm 9.7\%$  at the 95% level of confidence when the distribution

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<sup>1</sup> The “sample frame” is the total list from which the sample is drawn.

is 50:50. At the 80% level of confidence the error level is 6.3% (i.e. you can be 80% confident the percent is within the error limit).

One purpose of limiting the sample to registered voters rather than using an alternative methodology such as random-digit-dialing was to assure that respondents reside within Gahanna, and to know reliably in which ward they reside. The fact that they are registered to vote also indicates at least a minimal level of interest in and involvement with the community, an important consideration since respondents were asked their views on public priorities. Finally, this approach assures that respondents are at least eighteen years of age, the minimum age for reliable responses in most telephone interviews.

It is also clear that with a total population of roughly 34,000 persons (including those under 18) and a total registered voter list of approximately 26,000, that the voter list accounts for the vast majority of the adult population.

One limitation of the use of a voter list is that, unlike a sample drawn using random digit dialing, only those with listed telephone landline telephone numbers can be included. Those with listed landline telephones tend to be older than the general population. This potential tendency is largely, though not entirely, corrected by statistical weighting for age. This has repeatedly been shown to be an accurate adjustment because of the fact that consistently it enables us to predict election outcomes. However, the youthful population is increasingly using only cell phones, and texting more than speaking on the phone. They will tend to be ever more under-represented in standard voter list surveys. Moreover, as they age, they are not likely to convert to listed landlines. For these reasons, the listed-landline sampling method, while appropriate this year and perhaps for another two years, is certain to become problematic.

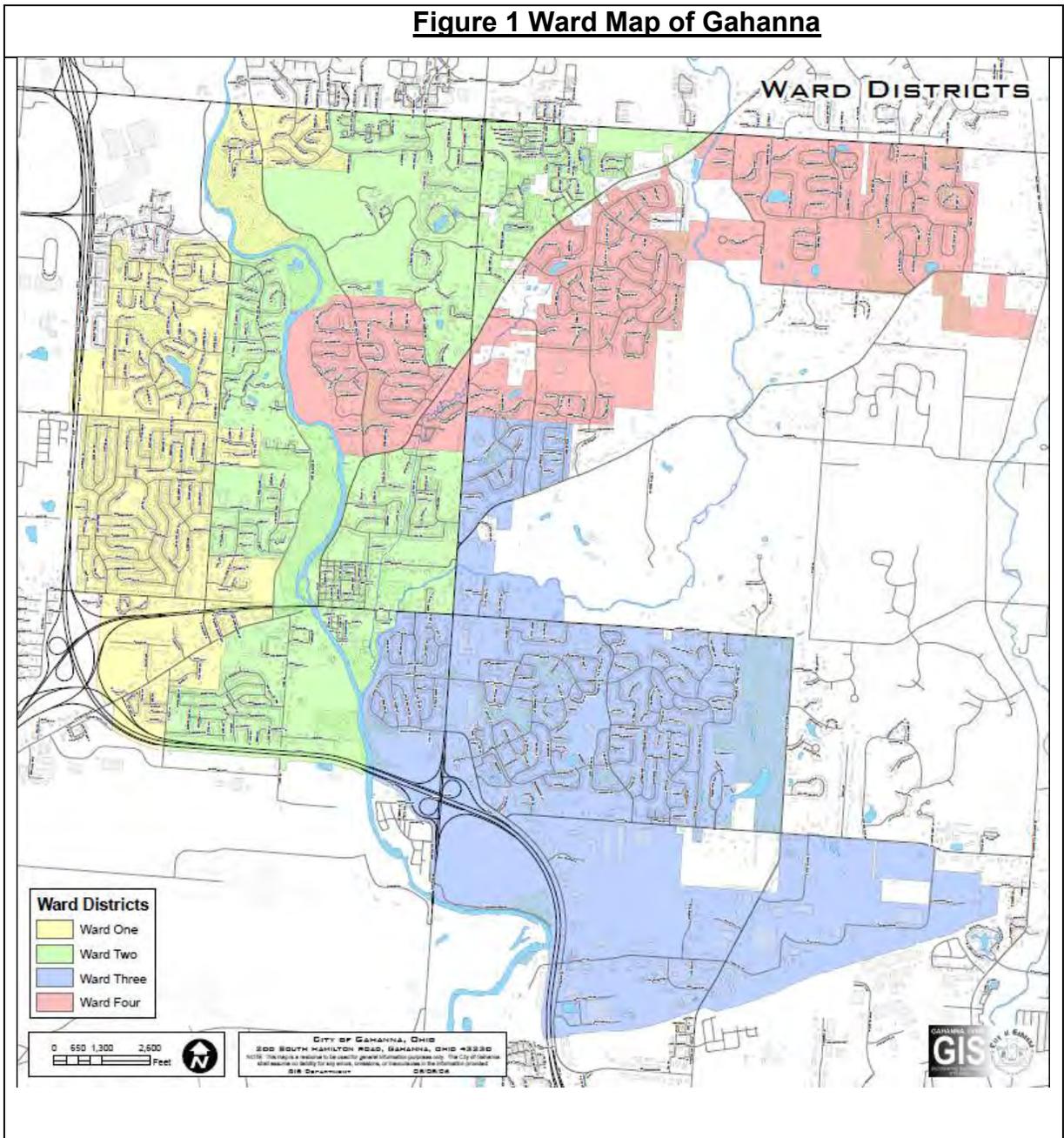
Interviews were conducted on behalf of CJI Research by trained interviewers of Foresight Research of Rochester, Michigan. The interviews were conducted using computer assisted telephone interviewing (CATI), a system in which the interviewer reads questions and enters answer on screen rather than on-paper. This provides the ability to do such things as ask certain preference questions in random order to avoid bias inherent in asking question in a certain order.

For simplicity, in this report we will use the term “Gahanna residents” or similar terms to refer to the responses to the survey rather than the cumbersome “registered voters in Gahanna.”

**Weighting.** Data were weighted to the correct proportions of ward populations, men and women, and age groups such that the survey data reflects the total voter list.

In various tables, percentages will sum to 101% or 99% due to rounding to the nearest whole percent. This is not an important matter and should be ignored.

**Figure 1 Ward Map of Gahanna**



## ***Wards***

The inset map above shows the basic geography of the four wards of Gahanna.

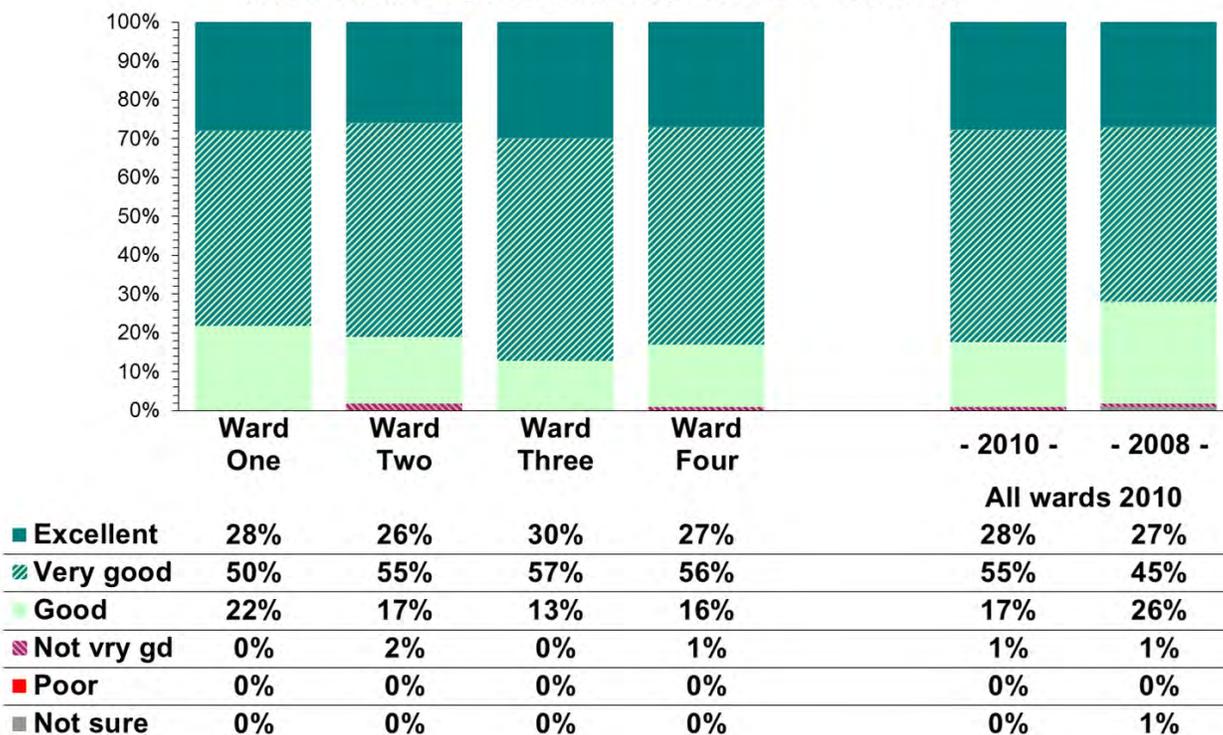
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## **Part 1: General Satisfaction with Life in Gahanna**

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## Figure 2 Rating the Overall Quality of Life in Gahanna

Q1. How would you rate the overall quality of life in Gahanna? Would you rate the quality of life in Gahanna as excellent, very good, good, not very good, or poor  
(Source: Gahanna Registered Voter Survey, 2008 N=920 & 2010. N=400)



### Quality of life

Gahanna residents continue to like the quality of life in their community. Of all respondents in 2010, 28% rated it “excellent,” while another 55% rated it “very good” and 17% as “good.” Only 1% rated it as “not very good.” This represents a somewhat positive change since 2008, when 45% had rated the quality of life as “very good” and 26% as only “good.”

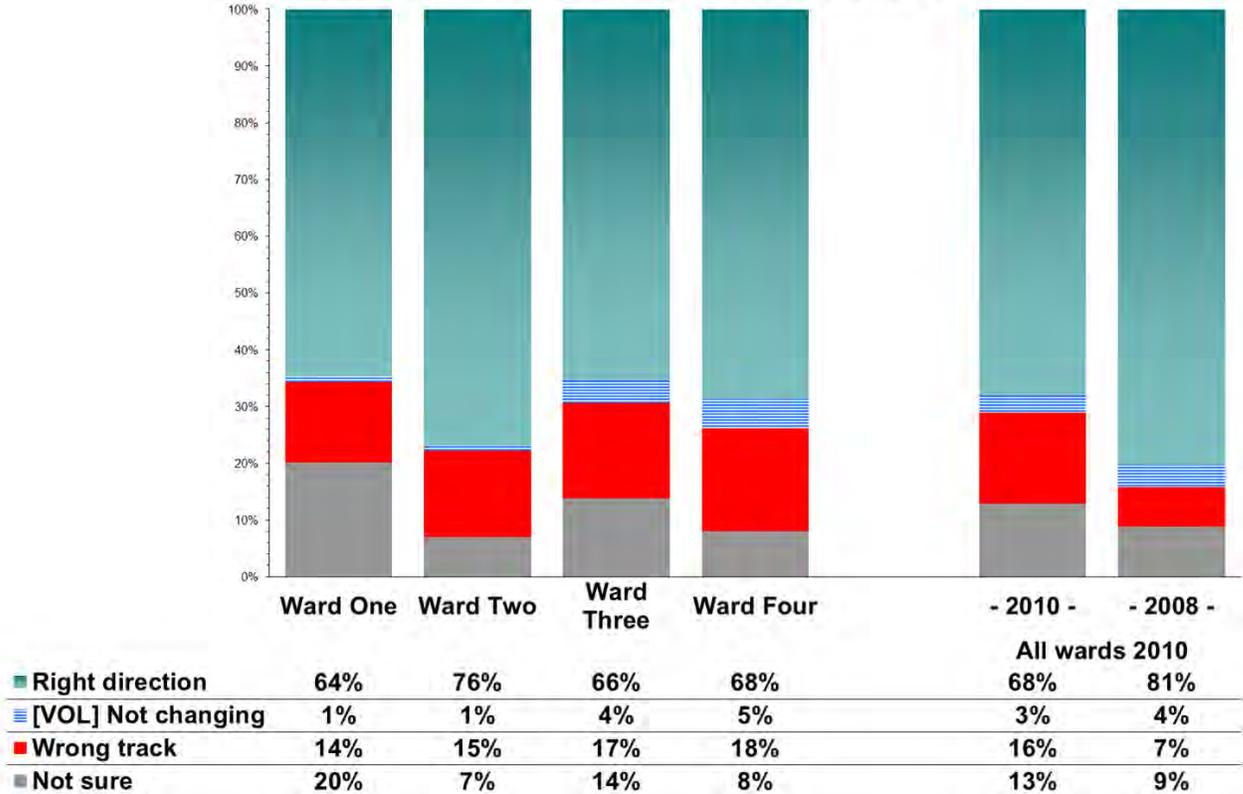
There is no statistically significant difference among the four wards in this respect.

### A note on the layout of the charts

In most charts in this report, the 2010 and 2008 results appear at the right side of the chart for ease of comparison of the total samples. At the left of the chart the 2010 results are broken down by Ward. Keeping in mind the levels of sample error discussed in the introduction, when comparing the 2008 and 2010 results we would consider a difference of 5% or greater to have a 95% probability of reflecting the true public attitude. Regarding differences among the wards, however, the sample size of 100 would require a difference of 10% or greater to be considered statistically significant in that sense.

### Figure 3 Gahanna Headed in the Right Direction or Off on Wrong Track?

Would you say that in terms of being a good place to live, things in Gahanna are headed in the right direction or do you feel things in Gahanna are off on the wrong track?  
 (Source: Gahanna Registered Voter Survey, 2008 N=920 & 2010 N=400)



#### Right direction or wrong track?

Residents tend to believe that Gahanna is “headed in the right direction,” (68%) rather than being “off on the wrong track” (16%). However, this is a less positive result than was observed in 2008.

There is very little difference among the wards in terms of this new mood. In 2008, Ward One had shown greater optimism than the other wards. However, in 2010, Ward Two shows greater optimism.

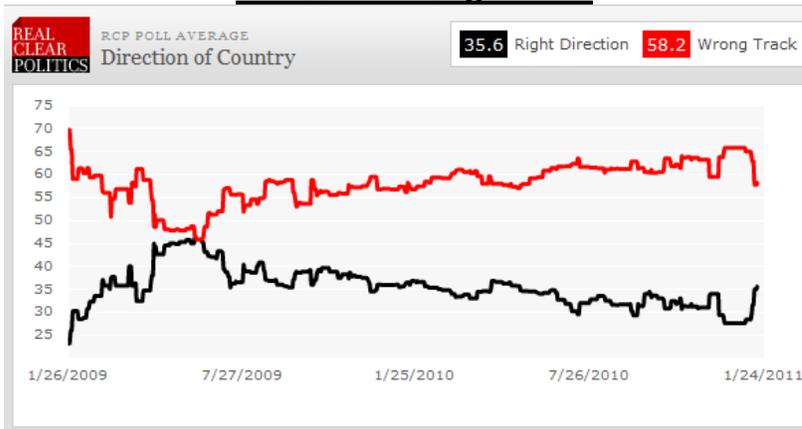
Recall that in 2008, in spite of contentiousness surrounding the election, there was a certain sense that the country was at a turning point and large portions of the public were very optimistic. Yet, by 2010, economic and political realities had taken their toll. On the following page the chart indicates national trends in these attitudes during the same period. While change in Gahanna’s attitudes was in the same negative direction, it also was far more positive – in fact the local attitude was almost the mirror opposite of the national.

Nationally, optimism was growing rapidly through late July of 2009. At that point it began to deteriorate again and a long downward trend began. “Right direction” began to pick up slightly more positive attitudes only in late January 2011.

The ABC news/Washington Post surveys show very similar tendencies. The survey they conducted in December of 2010, very close to the same time that Gahanna survey was conducted showed 67% of the public indicating that the nation was on the wrong track. This, oddly, is a figure very close to the 68% indicating just the opposite judgment in the Gahanna survey. Only 22% felt that it was “off on the wrong track.” The only negative news in this respect is that while 81% of respondents in 2008 felt that Gahanna was headed in the right direction, fewer, 68%, felt that way in 2010.

In the Gahanna survey, the question was specific to living in Gahanna, and not to the nation. However, clearly, the local mood often reflects national tendencies. The fact that

**Figure 4 National Poll Results on "Right Direction/Wrong Track"**



the measurement of quality of life in Gahanna held up so strongly and reflected the national funk only in a mild way suggests that the citizenry as a whole feels very solid in terms of their view of their community.

Source: <http://realclearpolitics.com/>

## ***Comments on why many respondents feel Gahanna is headed in the right direction***

After respondents indicated their beliefs that Gahanna was headed in the right direction or off on the wrong track, they were asked for comments on those opinions. In this section we list comments on “right direction” first, and “wrong track” after that.

The list of responses that follows displays a randomly selected set of more than seventy responses given when residents were asked to tell us what they meant by saying Gahanna is headed in the right direction<sup>2</sup>.

The most frequent responses convey excitement with growth and improvements being made in the city. Creekside was mentioned specifically by 23% of those offering a comment (which amounts to 15% of the total electorate. We will see in the subsequent table that 8% the electorate offered a negative view of Creekside in their comments.). Others mentioned the quality of city services or the schools, or various aspects of community activity, and a sense of progress.

### **Figure 5 Random Sample of Positive Comments on how Gahanna is Headed in the Right Direction**

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**When you say things in Gahanna are headed in the right direction, can you describe in your own words what you mean?**

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A lot of the events and road repairs.

They are trying to improve the quality of the city, without making too big.

I think they are doing as well as they can do.

The mayor is doing a good job. Also, they are building an addition to the high school and the politicians are doing a good job.

They have done a better job on plowing the streets and maintaining the parks.

The development around Creekside and all of that. shopping, restaurants.

They keep things up, roads are good, streets cleaned off, police are very vigilant, good restaurants, grocery stores.

I like the parks - they are in good shape and getting better.

I like the schools. My concern is the crowding problem in the high schools. Students have to go outside to change classes. City services in general are very good -- no issues.

The police are great.

I think economic development, city improvement of the infrastructure, and public services are good.

Shopping is good, stores are easy to get to. It's a good spot to raise my family. There is no traffic.

Our roadways are being repaired and nice. Shopping centers always clean. Everything is in easy access for shopping for necessities and specialty item. Areas are well kept.

The city seems to be doing things to bring in industry and renovations, as well as remodeling existing structures.

We are very pleased with the community and we use the clubhouse.

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<sup>2</sup> The full list of all open-end responses is provided as Appendix B.

Well, things like last year when I was out shoveling my driveway some firemen were driving by and stopped to shovel for me.

You have to separate national problems from local problems in Gahanna. We are caught by a lot of the problems in the states. Children that need school lunches - the rate is about 25. I am troubled by the two school levy defeats. It is difficult to get people to tax themselves during a recession. They seem to be developing and growing a lot over the years.

I believe the city government has spending going down the right avenues, reinvestment in the community seems good and there never seem to be too many major issues or problems.

I feel that this is a great place to live, but the fact that they're putting rat poison in the water is not a good thing, nor am I happy about the school levy.

It is progressing and developing.

I think the development of Creekside was a great start.

I enjoy all the community activities that they hold in the Creekside area. I see efforts to bring businesses into Gahanna.

Services are ok.

I like the small town community feel.

I would say that one thing we like about it is the accessibility to everything, like the bike path that links to New Albany and the parks, the Creekside area as well. I feel like they are always on top of snow removal and services in general.

The school system is good, they take care of streets really well, tree trimming, it's easy to get in and out of Gahanna, events they have are well done, and people really like them.

I think that Creekside is going in the right direction. It is powerful, beautiful and fun for any family. The library is a wonderful asset to the community and people of all ages. This includes schools, too. Also, the trees added are beautiful.

I like the community where I live -- very nice people. I like so many shops around. It's very comfortable as far as getting around.

I guess since the devolvement ... trailed off

No, I can't describe it. I am happy with the city.

They're always upgrading the services.

I think the city is trying to make a better city. Some of the things they've put in at Creekside are pretty good. I hope they continue to grow in that direction. Things are going well, seem to be growing.

We think it's a great place to live.

It seems like the neighborhoods are in good repair, the school systems are doing well - other than needing the expansion to the high school.

The location is good. The taxes are relatively sane. The schools are good. There is a little entertainment downtown. Crime is probably average or less than average.

I think this is a great place to live, that the schools are great for the children. Everything is nearby that you need, you don't have to go outside because it's all right here. Creekside is wonderful for the people, and we should have done this sooner.

I see improvements in terms of the roads. I also see that the streets are cleaned. The neighborhoods are very well maintained.

I think the investment in public spaces is good.

I think it is a good place to raise a family.

They are trying to improve the schools and Creekside.

Well, it seems like they're trying to improve the business part, to get more people in to our community, which I think is important. It is growing and we have to grow it.

I am a supporter of Creekside and laud the council for approving it, as it has improved overall view of Gahanna and has acquired a better reputation.

Sewer is coming in, which isn't great. I like the city otherwise, though.

I think the transportation is good. Creekside is a nice place to go. I like the direction.

They seem to get most things done that they want to.

I feel that we have everything we need in the city, for being a small town.

The location, and the services the city provides are pretty good. The schools are good.

Like renovations, taking care of roads, community offerings, yoga, golf course, parades, festivals, exits, the upscale look to it.

It's a good friendly place to live and is safe, but could stand a few changes.

I belong to the senior center and that's a big asset for me. I like Creekside, the library. I think we have good services.

Educational system is pretty good. They do a good job taking care of the streets in the winter. They take care of what needs to be taken care of.

It's close to my job and still has a small town atmosphere. And, it's reasonably safe.

Traffic moves well. It's fine, nice parks, everything in Gahanna is convenient.

The areas are basically kept up, overall presentation of Gahanna is good.

I'm happy with the quality of schools and the Creekside development, yet it has kept it's small town environment where everybody knows everybody else.

Notice is progressive, mayor moves towards technology, other communities are doing it.

I think they have a good school system. I think they have a good shopping area. Good doctors and other things that you really need are right at your hands.

I think they're trying to do things downtown and build it up a little bit. Make it like a small community and bring people in to the shops and to eat.

I think the parks and recreation around here are very well taken care of, with a lot of free opportunities for families and children.

I believe our quality of life here is good, we have excellent police and fire protection, we have good schools.

The executive golf course and surrounding walking trails. Creekside is another great example.

We really like the Creekside area. it seems like they have a lot more activities going on.

The neighborhoods are safe, the schools are good, everything that you would need as far as dry cleaning and stores and that type of thing are close by.

I think what they are doing to get the high school better and fixing up the downtown to make it look better.

I like that there are a lot of community activities available. The police are fairly visible.

Well, I really like the way they clean the streets when we have snow and ice. There is a lot of building going on. It's a clean city.

Just with the development of River Rock and stuff like getting a little more upscale stuff.

The mayor has been a good leader, and we have a good city counsel.

I think everything is going well, good police protection, everything is being kept up well, everything is going good.

I think the city stays up to date on the general economy and pays more than its fair share to the community.

I like living here.

**When you say things in Gahanna are headed in the right direction, can you describe in your own words what you mean?**

A lot of the events and road repairs.

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I like living here.

## **Comments on why many respondents feel Gahanna is “off on the wrong track.”**

Of all respondents, 22% felt that Gahanna is “off on the wrong track.” All 22% offered negative comments. Of all negative comments, 34% mentioned Creekside and 22% mentioned taxes. This is 8% and 5% of the electorate, respectively. (Recall that 15% of the electorate offered a positive view of Creekside in their comments.) Many comments about taxes relate to the schools. This illustrates one of the challenges faced by the several taxing jurisdictions in tax referenda. From the citizen’s perspective, a tax is a tax regardless of the programmatic destination of the funds it provides. It is interesting that while most tax-related comments had a theme of perceived excessive taxation, a few of the negative comments related to disappointment that the recent school levy did not pass.

---

### **Figure 6 Random Sample of Negative Comments on Gahanna on the Wrong Track**

---

Q4b. When you say things in Gahanna are off on the wrong track, can you describe in your own words what you mean?

With the recent cut backs in the budget, I have cause for concern.

With the defeat of the school levy, the sports programs in the high school will be in jeopardy.

When they wanted to raise taxes for improvements and Creekside, that did not pan out, and now they want to increase our taxes.

We've got problems in that education levy was not passed. Government does not look after what is best for the people. Creekside development is a lovely facility, but at the wrong time.

Well, I think sometimes they appropriate money in the wrong way and they spend money in the wrong way, some confusion in city hall.

We need more stores with clothing and less bars and pizza places.

We are on the boarder of being retired, and the taxes keep going up. It is getting hard to keep up. I don't like the city getting into real estate.

Too many apartment buildings are going up.

Things like the school levy failing is very bad for the community.

Things are moving out of Gahanna, like stores for example.

They're in too much debt because of Creekside, and now they want to raise the income tax.

They waste too much money on stupid things.

They want to increase the income tax substantially knowing that the economy will turn around and they'll have all this money.

There's too much development. Too much retail and sprawl.

There's been too much money spent on Creekside and not using it on other places. The street repair is done in a poor, hopscotch way.

The whole Creekside thing was bigger than what Gahanna could handle. They're finding that out -- they can't hold businesses there.

The school thing, I know, is not their issue. They need to do something about the road deal. There's only one way to get through town. No roads other than way out of town. The structure is very badly laid out. No through roads but one, and they shut it down and that's bad.

The school systems are going in the wrong direction. The new facility is being built for gifted kids, but other kids might need that more. Might be the reason the levy did not pass.

The school issue that didn't pass.

The recent issue of raising the taxes for schools failing and now people want to raise the income tax. Now is not the time to raise taxes.

The present administration is poor. They've gotten into a couple of things in real estate and it is going poorly. They are in it, but it should have been a private thing.

The politics, the levy, and the housing market need to be improved.

The police department seems to be going down, maybe it's less people? One thing that bothers me; the shenanigans with the close of the grocery store down there, and then all of a sudden there's another school building. It seemed funny to me.

The more recent decisions made by them I don't agree with.

The Creekside development was a waste of money.

The city's spending is on the wrong stuff. I'm disappointed the school levy did not pass.

The city wants to raise taxes and they are driving the elderly out of the city.

The city is trying to develop commercial properties and I think it's a great idea. But they are hurting the quality of life because they've cut out the fireworks, parades and a lot of people loved those. It seemed like a fairly cheap thing for the city, so for the number of people it affected in a positive way, it is very surprising that they cut these out. They should have tried to cut somewhere else. As a trend in these economic times, they are taking away things that make this a great place to live. We hope they don't take away live music in the park at Creekside. They are positive reasons to spend time in Gahanna.

The city is catering to the upscale people and not catering to the blue collar people who built Gahanna.

The building and zoning of Creekside was money poorly spent. It was a quaint little town before Creekside. It's massive on a very busy, narrow street. It wasn't well thought out.

The biggest issue is building Creekside, which was the biggest waste ever. 180 degrees. 45 condos, half a million a piece - if I could afford half a million I would not live in Gahanna, next to a creek and a golf course. 75% are still empty, as far as store frontage. One store didn't even last 6 months. If something doesn't happen soon the city will be belly up, and the people of Gahanna will foot the bill. We're competing with Easton, but there's no comparison. No shops there, except maybe a Coldstone ice cream bar. As far as police are concerned, I only see them once every 6 months now. Questions to raise the income tax to 2.5 % - I'm, in a sense, already paying that.

Taxes.

Taxes are unreal.

Some of the things the city government is trying to save money on. They are spending money on only a select few instead of spending on things all of the people can benefit from.

Some of the directions for development have not been the choices I have seen in other towns. Creekside needed to be improved, I am frustrated with the direction they are taking, no unified downtown.

Schools are spending too much money with too many administrators making too much money.

Schools taxes.

Recent failure to pass the school levy, which I was in favor of.

Poor city attitude.

Police protection is poor, overall services are fair and schools are starting to decline.

Not frugal.

More houses are rented and not owned. When houses are rented, people don't care about houses.

Just because we did not pass the school levy.

---

Its the Creekside development -- it sounded like a good idea, but they overdid it. Too large, not enough small family-oriented shops.

---

It's a good place to live but it's an expensive place to live. I'm paying as much to live in this house as two of them are worth. They never seem to have enough. Let them learn to live the way we have to live.

---

It seems like they've lost their concern for the people. It doesn't seem like they listen to what the people want.

---

It seems like there is a lot of money being wasted doing things not necessary for the area.

---

I'm worried about the school levy not passing.

---

I'm not happy with the Creekside development - its half empty, and economically not doing well.

---

I'm not happy with city government because of Creekside, and the school district because of Clark Hall being done without a vote, both spending money that did not need to be spent.

---

I'm not encouraged by the Creekside area. I think that the ambitions are over extended. The expectations were too high.

---

I'm disappointed that they didn't vote on the building of the new high school.

---

I'm disappointed that the school levy did not pass twice now. I worry about what that means for the quality of the schools, since we have two young children entering school. I also am concerned about the effect on property values. I have seen it in our neighborhood - it was a little nicer five years ago than it is now. The foreclosures and lack of maintenance on homes has hurt things.

---

Il don't like what I'm seeing from the community leaders, and I don't agree with the politics here.

---

I think we could be spending money a little more wisely, like short falls for school and I think the property taxes should be able to cover that. I think the majority of Gahanna pays about what I do, and that's a high standard of living.

---

I think they've gone a little bit overboard on development. That's about it.

---

I think they spend too much time on Creekside. I think they haven't spent much taking care of its citizens. I haven't been very happy with Gahanna lately. They could do more with the parks.

---

I think they need more shops and restaurants, because if they fail it will fall back on the taxpayers.

---

I think they messed up on Creekside -- the way they built it. They built it in the wrong place. They should have built it right by the VFW or Friendship Park.

---

I think there's a lot of negative things happening in Gahanna today. They do things without communicating to the people, in just about every area. The school taxes, and stuff like that. There's no communication on what they're going to do, it's just there. Now they're talking about this city tax they're going to do, probably about a year from now. They're going to inform people that they're going to do it, but not why they're going to do it. When my wife and I first moved to Gahanna it was a small community, and there was no crime, and it's escalating all the time now.

---

I think the school levy should have passed. I think they have a school system and they are letting it down. They are trying too hard to keep taxes low. I feel the best places to live in Ohio also have higher tax rates.

---

I think the building and the structures on Mill Street, obviously we do not use. Clark Hall - they did not ask the voters. Come up with a concrete purpose for it, rent out now, original purpose was because the school was overcrowded. Areas around them need to expand. It was not clearly thought through.

---

I think the board of education has gotten off the track by building the new build. That's why the levy didn't pass.

---

I think money was allocated to the Creekside project and shouldn't have been used for that, it was taxpayer's money.

---

I think maybe the tax issues here. I have seen the property taxes rise, making it less desirable for home owner.

---

I think Creekside's overrated. I think they spent too much money on it and it's not developing the way they hoped it would. The only other complaint that I have is the high school that they built is so close to the road...why did they do that? They had all that space.

---

I think Creekside lacks new shops and friendlier restaurants. Businesses move in and out. We have plenty of shops in Gahanna.

---

I see the road conditions not being taken care of , and the Creekside development was not a great idea.

---

I see some spending that is kind of crazy, which will cause unneeded taxes -- i.e., the Creekside project and the bridge in the industrial area.

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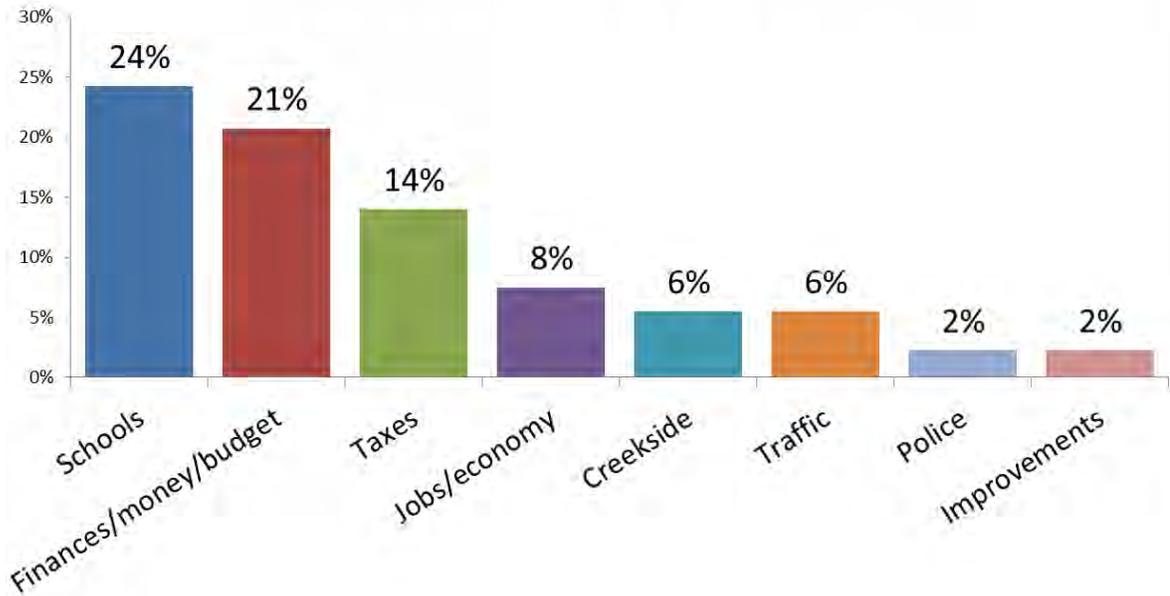
### **Figure 7 Words Used in Describing Main Challenge Facing Gahanna**

#### Words Mentioned When Asked Main Challenge Facing Gahanna

(Context provided in full comments in appendix)

(Results shown as percentages of all respondents. Multiple mentions allowed)

(Source: Gahanna Registered Voter Survey, 2010. N=400)



### ***Main challenge facing Gahanna***

All respondents were asked the following question: “What would you say is the most important challenge facing the City of Gahanna?” Their answers are provided in full in the appendices. The table above simply indicates the percentage of all four hundred respondents who used the words shown in their responses. It is important to note that the inclusion of a word carries neither a positive nor a negative connotation. For example, while some people mentioned schools in a positive light, others did so in a negative light.

Also, note that the categories are not mutually exclusive. That is, for example, a respondent may have mentioned both schools and taxes, either complaining about high taxes or lamenting that the recent levy did not pass. In other cases, mentions of taxes or budget, related only to the city government and not to the schools.

The object of the chart is simply to provide a quick glimpse of some of the most commonly cited concerns without providing any indication of the context or slant of the response, both of which are apparent in the full list in the appendix and in the partial lists shown below.

It is clear that three main topics are on the minds of Gahanna residents: the schools, funding of public agencies in Gahanna (schools and city) and taxes. In the three lists that

follow, randomly selected comments are reproduced to provide a flavor of what people were saying about the three topics.

## **Schools**

Thirteen respondents simply mentioned the word "Schools" when asked the main challenge facing Gahanna. Others (see below) mentioned schools in a more complex manner.

## **Taxes**

Tax increases, school systems

Disappointed that the school tax issue didn't go through

The money. The taxes are too high. I may have to sell my house after 40 years because the taxes are too high.

How to best use the funding the city has without raising taxes.

Taxes and revenues

Probably taxes, revenue for the city

Keeping residents, based on the local tax structure.

Right now, the issue is the proposed income tax,

Taxes are high for retired people

Passing the school tax.

Probably just trying to maintain services when the economy is so bad, trying to figure out ways to keep us where we are when housing values are dropping and people are clamoring that they don't want more taxes or are concerned about services. I read the other day that Ohio is one of the top states that people are moving away from so it is a real challenge.

## **Finances/money/budget**

Finances. Rising expenses with no tax increase for awhile, to keep up with inflation.

Keeping the taxes low.

A sustainable tax base.

To get people to the get new tax

Because of economic times, they want to increase taxes and the mayor wants to make it like San Antonio, TX.

Taxes. Schools and the income tax issue.

They are going to have to go with the taxes, meet current expenses, make a lot of cuts

The tough economy. The city needs to do better with the money.

Improving the roads and the school finances need to be addressed.

I would imagine its the budget.

Probably schools. I think having one high school has always been a problem. The idea that it takes so much money to keep it going is an ongoing problem.

Money.

Money--need more.

Finances. Rising expenses with no tax increase for awhile, to keep up with inflation.

Finances for the schools, need to pass levies, but still building the new high school.

I think the whole budget issue is not going to go away --more because of the economy than what the city is actually doing. They need to improve the overall pedestrian infrastructure.

The fiscal responsibility and the fiscal budget coming up next year

Balancing the budget.

Staying within budget

The budget with the upcoming reductions of budget and services.

Money.

I am concerned about the school levy not passing and it seems like the city doesn't have enough money and they are cutting services.

The idiots in the city that don't realize it costs money to run things.

---

Budget issues.

---

Jobs and the economy, like every city. Its the budget -- what they can do and what they can't do.

---

Maybe spending their money more wisely.

---

Keeping the budget straight - especially in these tough times.

In all of these there is a concern with budget balancing and high taxes. But there are also comments about needing to fund local services adequately. For the most part the comments suggest that residents have a real interest in challenges to the community. Although the context of a survey does not allow much room for nuance in responses to these kinds of questions, the comments are, in general, not simple expressions of tax resentment or broadsides against city governance. Nor are they unrealistic expressions of desire for city actions that are unattainable. Rather they are indicative of an active, involved citizenry.

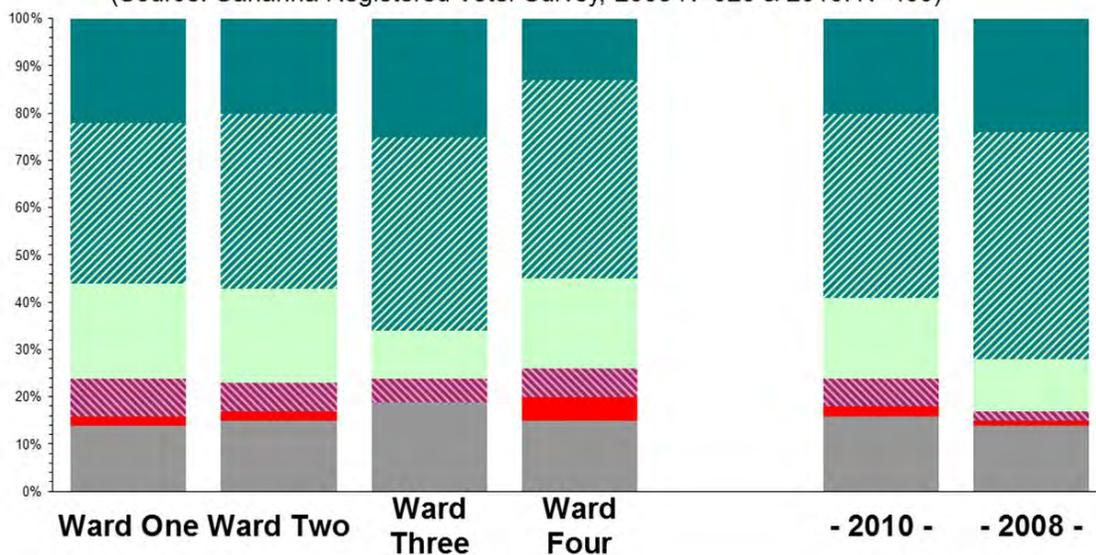
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## **Part 2: Rating the Job Performance of City Officials**

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**Figure 8 Rating the Job Performance of the Mayor of Gahanna**

Q20. Overall job performance of the Mayor of Gahanna?  
 (Source: Gahanna Registered Voter Survey, 2008 N=920 & 2010. N=400)



	Ward One	Ward Two	Ward Three	Ward Four	All wards	
Very good	22%	20%	25%	13%	20%	24%
Good	34%	37%	41%	42%	39%	48%
Just average	20%	20%	10%	19%	17%	11%
Poor	8%	6%	5%	6%	6%	2%
Very poor	2%	2%	0%	5%	2%	1%
Not sure	14%	15%	19%	15%	16%	14%

**Rating the elected leadership**

Respondents were asked to rate the job performance of the Mayor and the City Council.

**The Mayor**

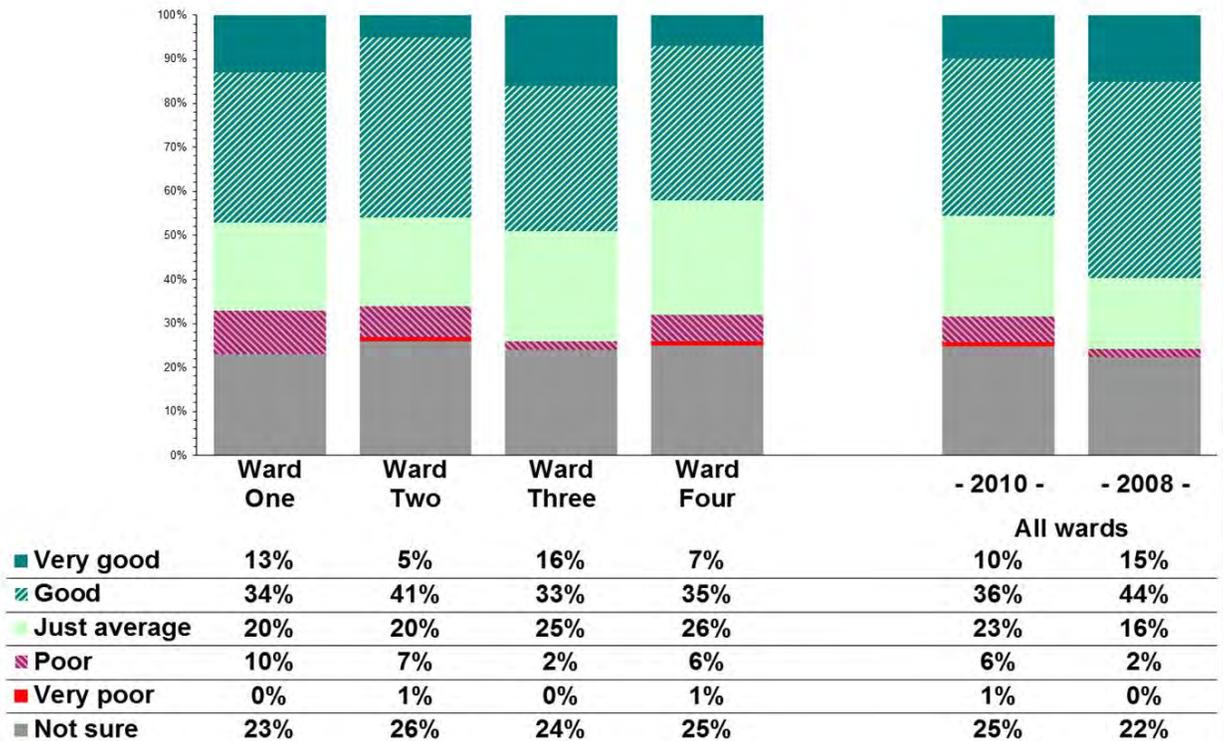
The Mayor continues to receive positive job ratings, with 20% rating her performance as excellent, and another 39% as good for a total of 59% positive. Only 8% rate her performance as poor or very poor. This does, however, indicate a decline in the most positive scores (72% in 2008) and an increase in the score of "just average" and poor or very poor.

The ratings do not vary greatly among the wards, although Ward Three may be slightly more positive.

## Figure 9 Rating the Job Performance of Gahanna City Council

Q21. Overall job performance of the Gahanna City Council?

(Source: Gahanna Registered Voter Survey, 2008 N=920 & 2010 N=400)



### City Council

Ratings of the City Council's job performance also remain generally positive, although lower than for the Mayor. It is common for legislative bodies to score lower than executive offices on job performance ratings. While a total of 59% had rated council's job performance as good or very good in 2008, that percentage had declined to 46% by 2010.

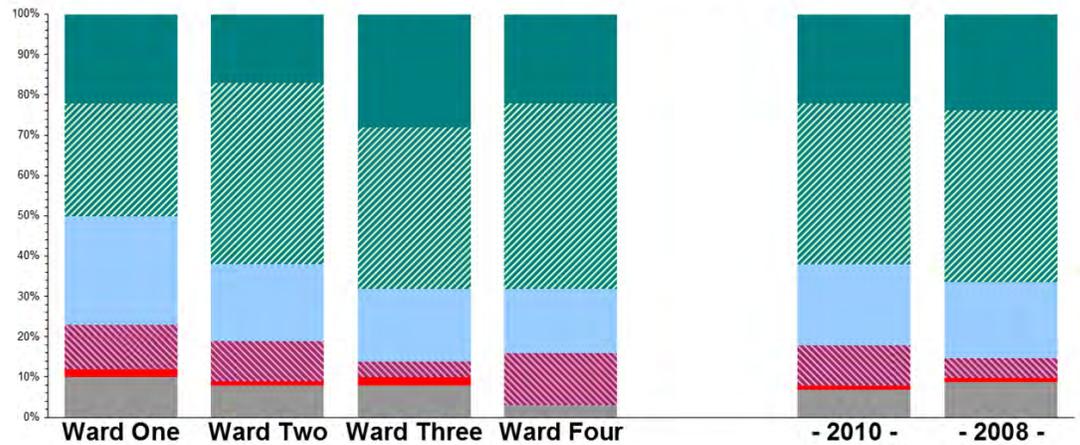
The difference in ratings does not reflect a much higher negative for council, but primarily higher scores for "just average."

*As we commented in 2008: "It is inherent in the nature of legislative bodies that they are less visible to the public than executive offices. Moreover, councils take collective – and thus negotiated – actions more difficult for the public to focus on in a singular way. As a result, we expect that under most conditions ratings of legislative bodies will be lower overall, and the "not sure" higher than for the executive, not because of actual performance, but because of the nature of the institutions."*

## Figure 10 How Well the City Has Kept Citizens Informed

Q24. How well the city has kept people informed about major issues that might affect city services or local taxes...

(Source: Gahanna Registered Voter Survey, 2008 N=920 & 2010 N=400)



	Ward One	Ward Two	Ward Three	Ward Four	- 2010 -	- 2008 -
Very good	22%	17%	28%	22%	22%	24%
Good	28%	45%	40%	46%	40%	43%
Just average	27%	19%	18%	16%	20%	19%
Poor	11%	10%	4%	13%	10%	5%
Very poor	2%	1%	2%	0%	1%	1%
Not sure	10%	8%	8%	3%	7%	9%

### Keeping citizens informed

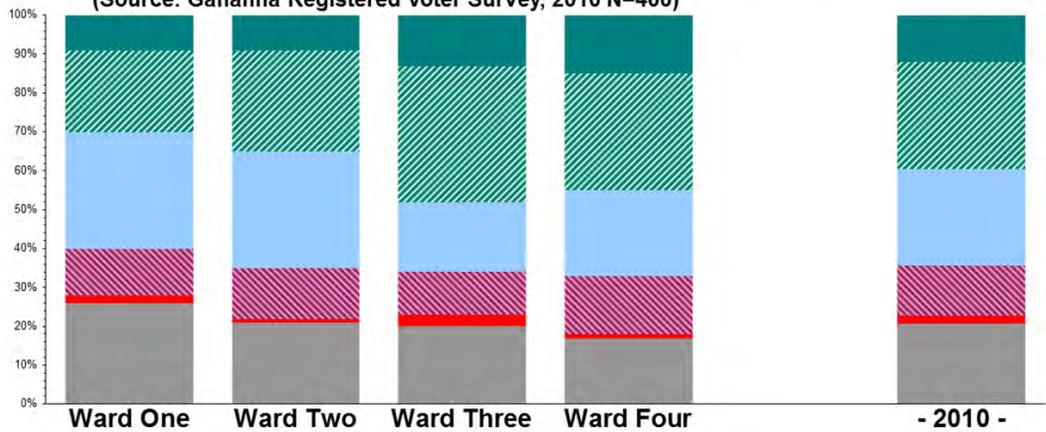
Residents continue to be quite satisfied that the city administration keeps citizens “informed about major issues that might affect city services or taxes.” Twenty-two percent (22%) of all respondents rated this as very good, and another 40% as good. Only 11% rated it as poor or very poor. In such an anti-government period in the political culture when suspicion of public information runs so high, this appears to be an excellent score.

Respondents in Wards Three and Four were more likely than those in other wards to say they feel communications are very good.

**Figure 11 How Well the City is Handling City Finances during the Recession**

Q25.How well the city government is handling city finances and tax policy during this economic recession

(Source: Gahanna Registered Voter Survey, 2010 N=400)



Very good	9%	9%	13%	15%	12%
Good	21%	26%	35%	30%	28%
Just average	30%	30%	18%	22%	25%
Poor	12%	13%	11%	15%	13%
Very poor	2%	1%	3%	1%	2%
Not sure	26%	21%	20%	17%	21%

***How well the city is handling city finances during the recession***

An additional question was included in the 2010 survey which had not been included in the previous survey. It dealt with the question of how well the city administration is handling city finances during the economic recession. Overall, the public gives moderate to favorable marks to the city in this respect. A total of 40% rated the performance as "very good" (12%) or "good" (28%). Another 25% said the performance was "just average."

An additional 15% indicated they felt handling of finances was poor (13%) or very poor (2%), and 21% were not sure.

There was considerable variation among the wards, with Wards Three and Four giving considerably higher marks than Wards One and Two.

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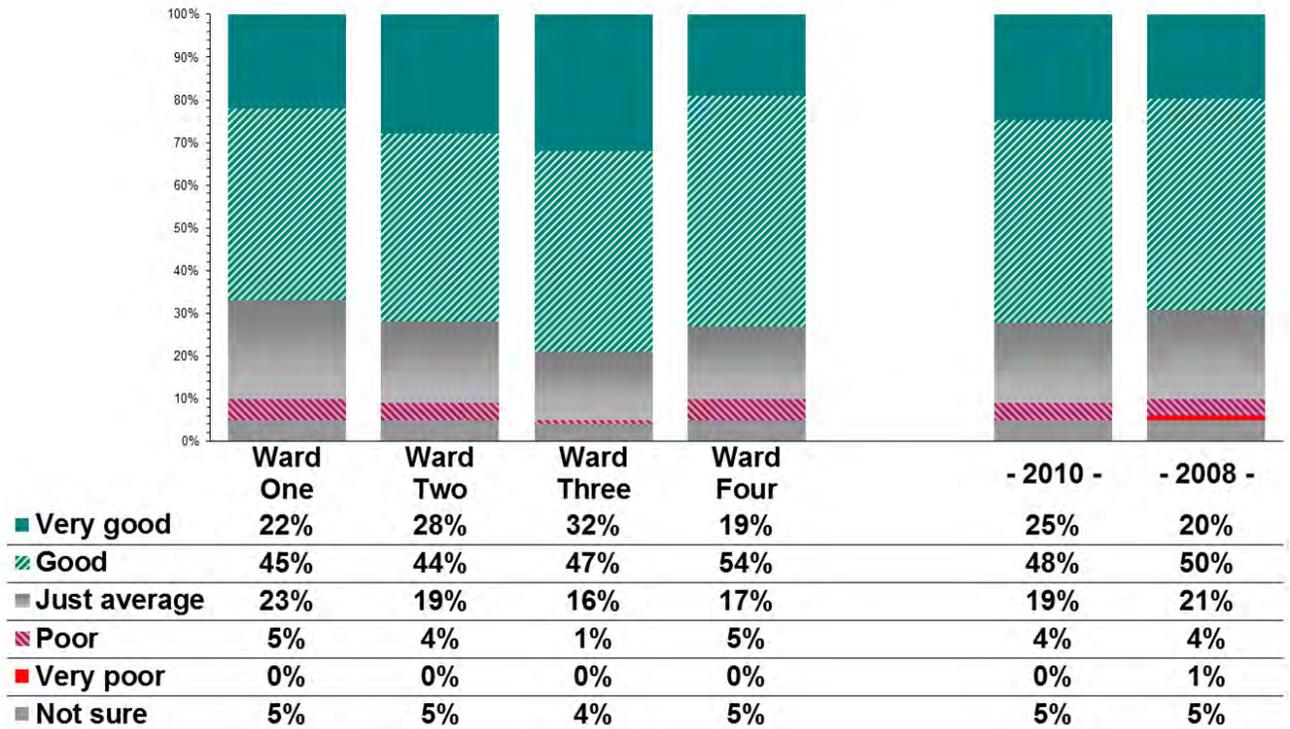
## **Part 3: Citizen Satisfaction with City Services**

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## Figure 12 Rating Value of City Services Overall Relative to the Tax Paid

Q22. Not including Gahanna schools, how would you rate the city services you and other taxpayers get for the tax you pay to the City of Gahanna?

(Source: Gahanna Registered Voter Survey, 2008 N=920 & 2010 N=400)



### Value of services for the taxes paid

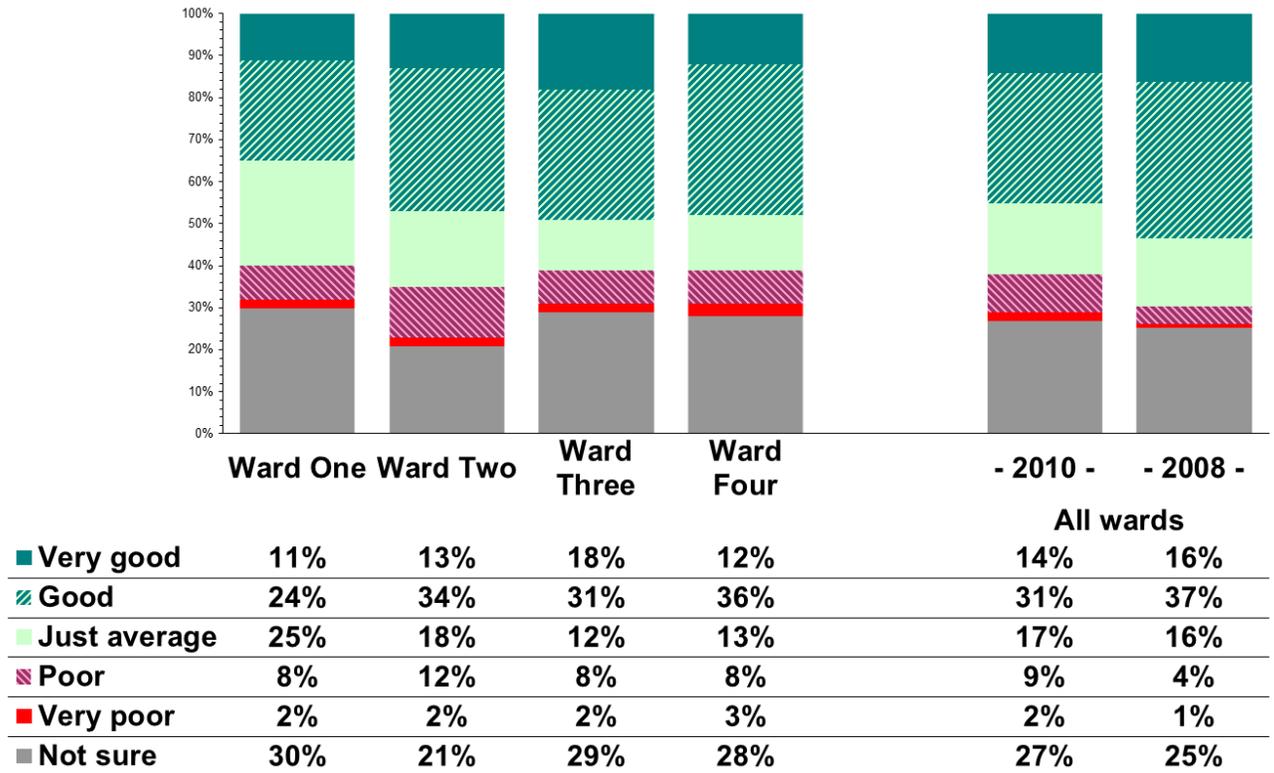
Most Gahanna voters in 2010 continue to believe that city services were a good or very good value for the taxes paid. Citywide, a total of 73% of respondents rated the services as very good (25%) or good (48%). Most others did not suggest that services are a poor value, but only that they are average rather than good or very good.

Although all four wards tend to rate the value of services for their tax dollars as very good or good, voters in Ward Three were distinctly more positive (79% good or very good) than those in Ward One (67%).

### Figure 13 Efficiency of City Departments

Q23. How efficiently the City officials in Gahanna have been operating city departments in the sense of holding down costs and avoiding waste

(Source: Gahanna Registered Voter Surveys, 2008 N=920 & 2010 N=400)



#### ***Efficient operation of city departments***

The city administration continues to get good marks from residents for operating city departments efficiently and “holding down costs and avoiding waste.” While 14% of all residents said their performance is very good, another 31% said it is good. However, as with several other performance measures, the ratings slipped slightly since 2008 when the very good and good percentages totaled 45% compared to 53% in 2010.

Ward One had a distinctly lower percentage who rated efficiency as very good or good compared to other wards. There, the positive total was 35% compared to 47% in Ward Two, for example.

**Figure 14 Contacting City Hall to Resolve Issues or Seek Information**

		Ward One	Ward Two	Ward Three	Ward Four	- 2010 -	- 2008 -
Q26. In the past two years, have you called or gone to any office of the City of Gahanna for any reason?	Yes	49%	46%	48%	52%	49%	46%
	No/Do not recall	51%	54%	52%	48%	51%	54%
Q26a. Which office or department did you contact? (If multiples, which did you contact most recently?)	Service department / water / Sewer / Trash	37%	33%	38%	35%	35%	38%
	Planning / permits / zoning	22%	24%	15%	21%	21%	17%
	Finance (including Tax Division)	10%	13%	13%	23%	15%	11%
	Parks and Recreation	12%	17%	15%	10%	13%	16%
	Police	4%	4%	10%	4%	6%	9%
	Mayor	6%	4%	6%	4%	5%	5%
	Council member	8%	0%	2%	4%	4%	4%
	Does not recall	0%	4%	2%	0%	2%	2%
Q26b. Did you contact them just for information only or to resolve an issue, provide a permit or take other action?	Just for information	31%	30%	27%	33%	30%	32%
	Resolve an issue/take other action	69%	65%	69%	63%	67%	67%
	Do not recall	0%	4%	4%	4%	3%	1%
Q26c. Did the people you reached provide the information you needed?	Yes	*(See footnote)				95%	95%
	No					5%	5%
Q26d. Regardless of whether it turned out as you wished, how satisfied were you that the people you reached resolve the	Very satisfied	68%	60%	67%	58%	63%	50%
	Somewhat satisfied	15%	20%	21%	24%	20%	24%
	Not very satisfied	9%	10%	3%	9%	8%	12%
	Very dissatisfied	9%	10%	3%	9%	8%	14%
	Do not recall	0%	0%	6%	0%	2%	0%
Q26e. Regardless of how your inquiry turned out, were you treated in a courteous, respectful manner?	Yes	96%	100%	98%	98%	98%	92%
	No	4%	0%	2%	2%	2%	8%

\*Ward level sub-samples of those seeking only information are too small to show differences in a valid manner.

## Contacting City Hall

In 2008, in all wards combined, a total of 46% said they had contacted City Hall during the past two years<sup>3</sup>. In 2010, that was statistically unchanged at 49%. As in 2008, the most frequent contact was with the Service Department (35%). Fewer people contacted Planning (21%), Finance (15%) and Parks & Recreation (13%). Police (6%) were followed by city officials (Mayor, 5% and City Council members 4%).

The wards did not differ greatly in their tendency to call or their levels of satisfaction.

Ninety-eight percent (98%) of callers said that, regardless of how their inquiries turned out, they had been "...treated in a courteous, respectful manner." This represents an improvement over 2008 results when 92% indicated the same positive response.

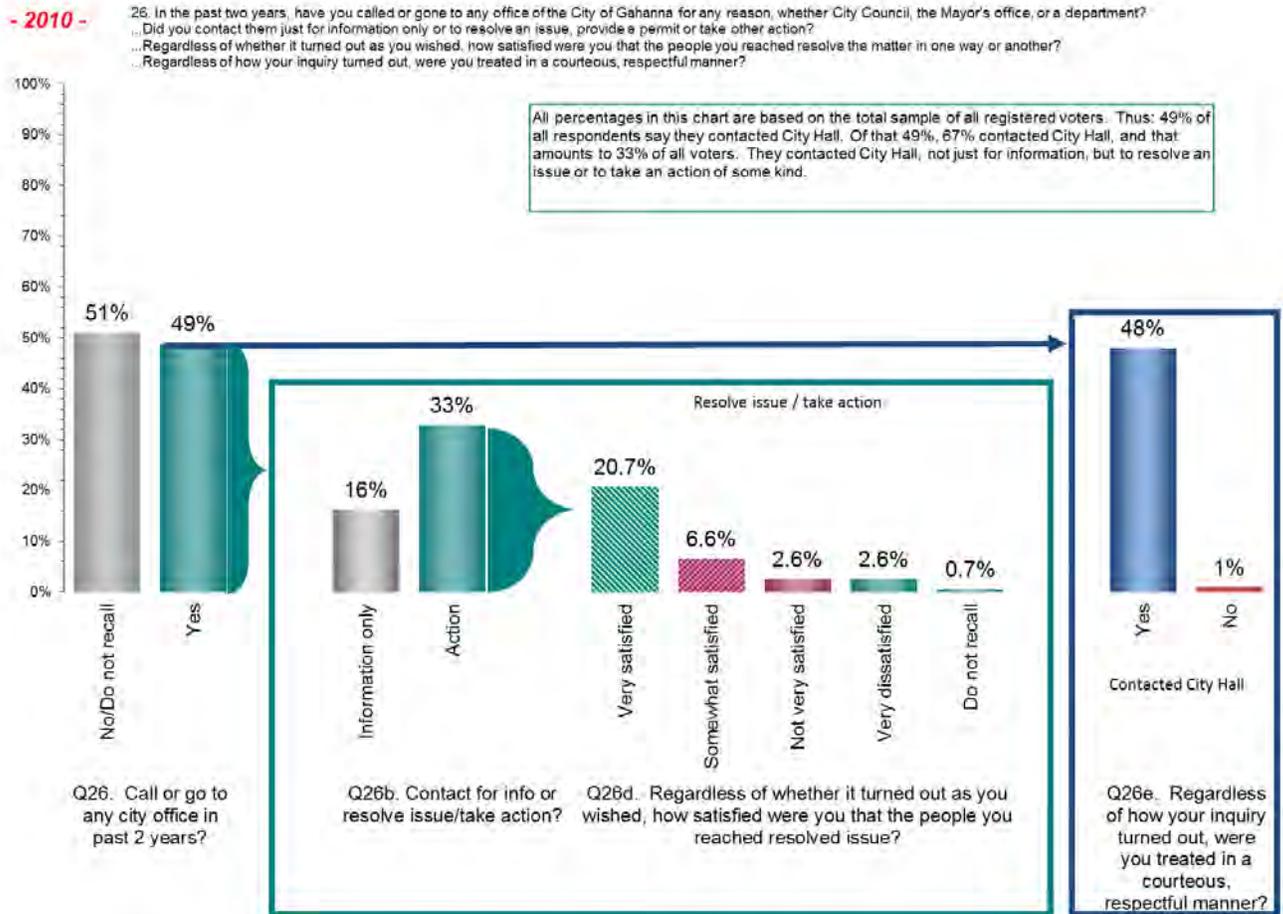
The percentages in the table above for the questions Q26a – Q26e are percentages computed on the base (i.e. denominator) of only those who said they had contacted the city. Thus, for example, of the 49% who said they had contacted City Hall, 35% said they had contacted the Service Department. This amounts to 17% of all people on the registered voter's list (i.e. 35% of 49%), and is identical to the percentage in 2008. Similarly, of the 49% contacting the city, 30% indicated they were doing so only for

<sup>3</sup> Respondents who had contacted more than one department were asked to name the one they had contacted most recently.

information. This amounts to only 15% of the registered voters.

Unfortunately in a city-wide sample of 400, when a sub-sample of 15% is extracted (as in the case of persons contacting city hall for information only), 15% represents only 60 respondents – adequate in themselves but not realistically able to be subdivided into ward sub-samples. When sub-divided four ways into ward, there are an average of only 24 persons per ward. Thus the differences among the wards row for question Q26c are not displayed because the sub-sample sizes are too small to provide accurate results within a reasonable range at an acceptable level of confidence for the sample error in such a small sample would be  $\pm 14\%$ .

**Figure 15 Satisfaction with City Hall Contacts – Resolution of an Issue**



**Satisfaction with city hall contacts**

Percentages in Figure 15 above and Figure 16 on the following page are re-computed to reinterpret percentages shown on a previous page in Figure 14 so that all percentages are based on the *total sample*, rather than only those who made contact with the city. The figures are presented in this way to keep the proportions in the perspective of the entire population studied rather than just those who have made a call.

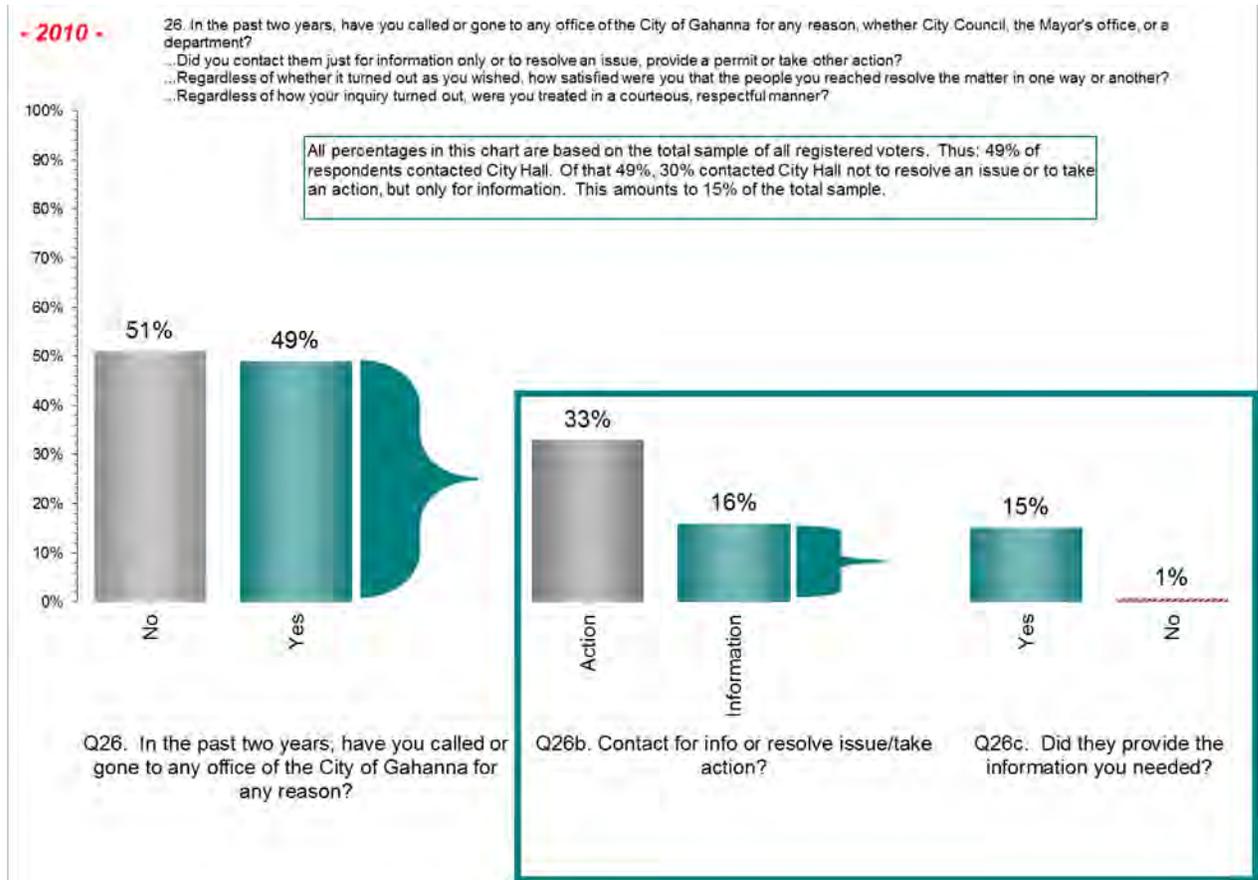
The chart on this page deals only with those wanting action or resolution, not information.

**Contacting City Hall to resolve an issue or take an action.** Those who had contacted city hall for any reason constitute 49% of the respondents. Those who had called City Hall were asked whether the call had been for information only or to take action or resolve some type of issue. Those who said they made contact to resolve an issue or take an action amount to 33% of the entire sample, while the other 16% were calling only for information. Dividing the 33% wanting action by their level of satisfaction, most were quite satisfied, 20.7% were quite satisfied, while another 6.6% were somewhat satisfied, and 5.2% were not satisfied while the balance did not recall.

At the right side of Figure 15, (blue box) we see that of the 49% who contacted City Hall, that 48% said that regardless of the outcome, they had been treated in a courteous,

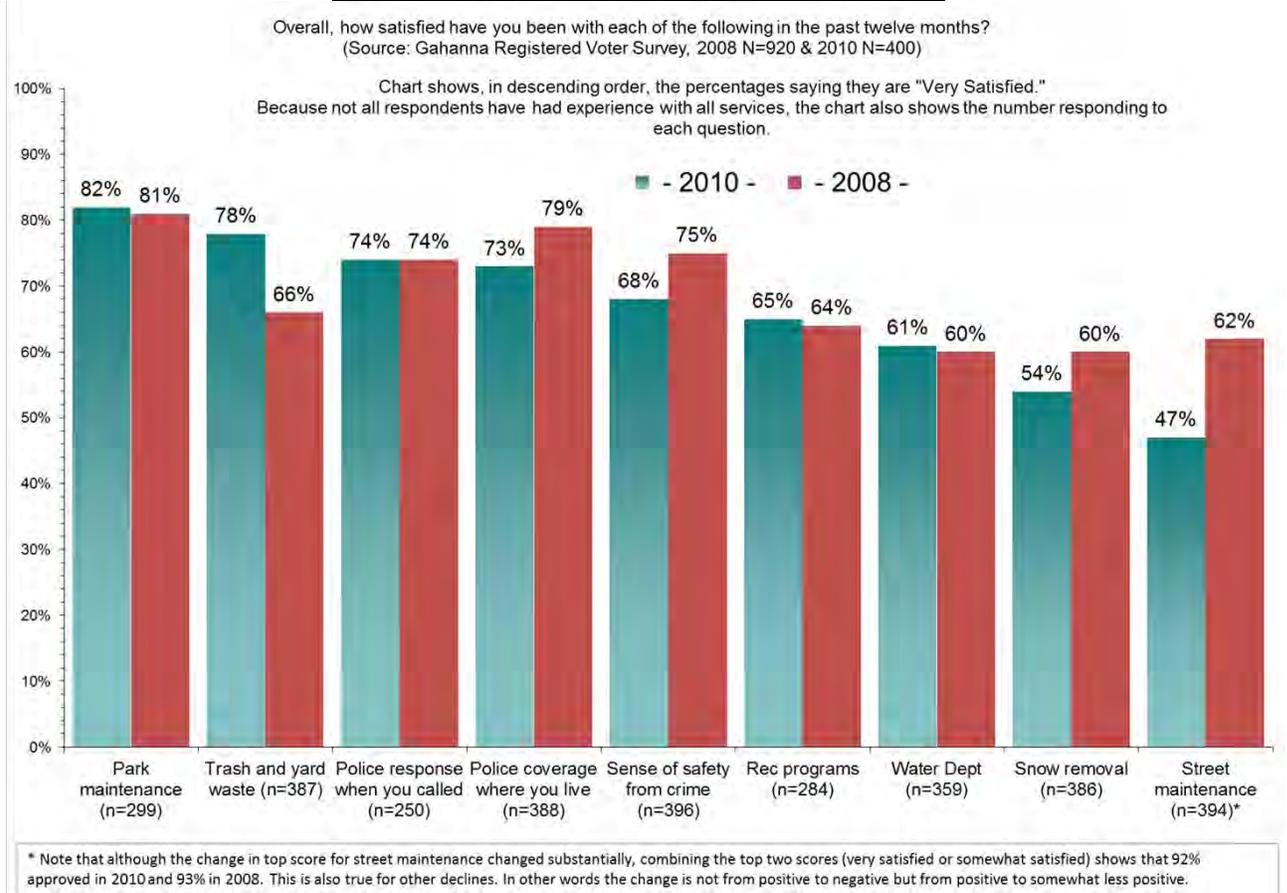
respectful manner. That represents 98% of all those who had contacted city hall for any reason, leaving only 2% of the callers dissatisfied with the courtesy and respect accorded them. This represents an improvement over 2008 when 92% were satisfied and 8% dissatisfied.

**Figure 16 Contacting City Hall for Information**



**Contacting City Hall for information.** The (49%) who had called City Hall were asked whether the call had been for information only or to take action or resolve some type of issue. Those who said they made contact simply to obtain information amount to 15% of the total sample. Virtually all of them, 14% of the total of 15%, said that they had obtained the information they needed, and that they had been treated in a courteous, respectful manner.

## Figure 17 Satisfaction with City Services



### ***Satisfaction with the several city services in the past 12 months in 2008 and 2010***

The chart above provides a quick summary of citizen satisfaction with the several city departments by showing only the percent giving the department the highest score ("Very satisfied") for the entire sample taken as a whole.

Because not all respondents would have had experience with the departments, those who said they no experience or contact with the department were dropped from the percentage computation. For this reason the sample sizes vary in the chart above from service to service.

Satisfaction with city services continued to be very high in 2010 as it was in 2008. In 2008, every service received very satisfied ratings by 60% or more of respondents. In 2010, that was true for all but two aspects of city service – snow removal and street maintenance – both of which were not only below 60%, but also showed declines between 2008 and 2010 in the percentages saying they were very satisfied.

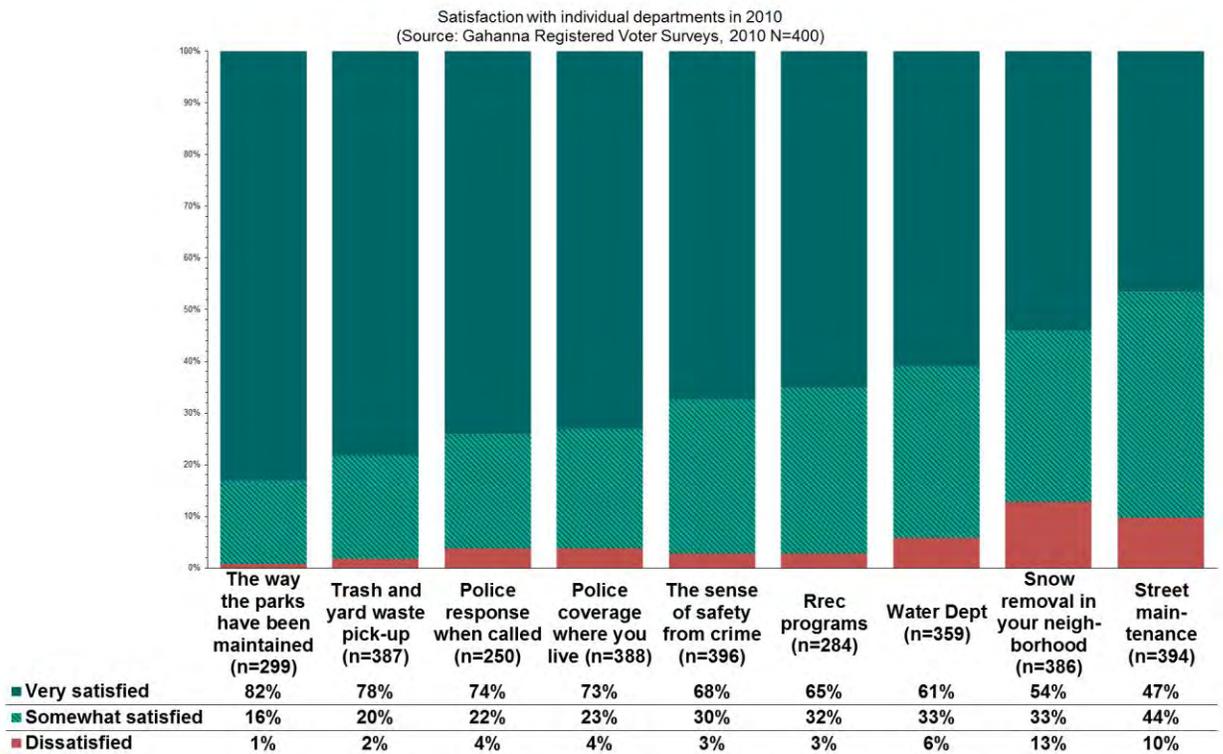
To some extent, we can perhaps discount the response to snow removal because the survey was completed prior to first snowfall of winter 2010-2011. However, it is possible

people were remembering the previous winter. On the other hand, street maintenance has been postponed for fiscal reasons, and the data reflect that.

However, it would be a mistake to dwell only on the negative. Park maintenance (82%) and police response (74%) were all statistically the same as in 2008. Trash and yard waste pickup improved from 66% to 78%.

On the other hand, although satisfaction with police coverage and a sense of safety from crime remain high (73% and 68% respectively), they also show declines from the previous survey. Since 2008, attrition has been allowed to reduce the size (and thus the payroll) of the police department. In this light, the findings on coverage and sense of safety are understandable.

**Figure 18 All Departmental Satisfaction Scores in 2010**



Lest any reader misunderstand the previous chart (Figure 17) to suggest that those who were not very satisfied, were dissatisfied, the chart above serves as a clarification. For simplicity, the ratings of “very dissatisfied” and “somewhat dissatisfied,” are combined in a single “dissatisfied” category. Notice that overwhelmingly, citizens in Gahanna are either very or somewhat satisfied with all departments.

Figure 19 Specific Service Satisfaction among Those Who Had Contact

		<b>Overall satisfaction with specific services</b>				- 2010 -	- 2008 -
		Ward One	Ward Two	Ward Three	Ward Four		
Q6a. How satisfied are you with police response when you or others have called them in the past year? (n=250)	Very satisfied	65%	75%	81%	74%	74%	74%
	Somewhat satisfied	26%	23%	15%	23%	22%	21%
	Somewhat dissatisfied	6%	0%	0%	2%	2%	4%
	Very dissatisfied	3%	2%	4%	0%	2%	1%
Q7a (How satisfied are you with...) Snow removal in your neighborhood? (n=386)	Very satisfied	61%	58%	44%	53%	54%	60%
	Somewhat satisfied	24%	29%	39%	39%	33%	31%
	Somewhat dissatisfied	14%	8%	10%	7%	10%	7%
	Very dissatisfied	1%	5%	6%	1%	3%	2%
Q8a (How satisfied are you with...) Trash and yard waste pick-up? (n=387)	Very satisfied	77%	81%	80%	74%	78%	66%
	Somewhat satisfied	21%	16%	18%	26%	20%	28%
	Somewhat dissatisfied	1%	2%	1%	0%	1%	4%
	Very dissatisfied	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Q9a (How satisfied are you with...) Services of the Water Department? (n=359)	Very satisfied	58%	56%	63%	66%	61%	60%
	Somewhat satisfied	35%	36%	32%	29%	33%	31%
	Somewhat dissatisfied	2%	7%	3%	4%	4%	6%
	Very dissatisfied	5%	1%	1%	1%	2%	3%
Q10a (How satisfied are you with...) Street maintenance, such as repairing pot holes and keeping pavement in good condition? (n=394)	Very satisfied	51%	46%	49%	41%	47%	62%
	Somewhat satisfied	41%	46%	42%	44%	44%	31%
	Somewhat dissatisfied	6%	5%	5%	11%	7%	6%
	Very dissatisfied	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	2%
Q11a How satisfied have you been with the recreation programs sponsored by the Gahanna Parks and Recreation Department? (n=284)	Very satisfied	69%	63%	66%	62%	65%	64%
	Somewhat satisfied	25%	33%	31%	37%	32%	29%
	Somewhat dissatisfied	2%	4%	3%	1%	2%	6%
	Very dissatisfied	5%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%
Q12a (How satisfied are you with...) Police coverage of the part of Gahanna where you live? (n=388)	Very satisfied	68%	77%	79%	67%	73%	79%
	Somewhat satisfied	27%	21%	19%	25%	23%	17%
	Somewhat dissatisfied	5%	2%	0%	6%	3%	2%
	Very dissatisfied	0%	0%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Q13a (How satisfied are you with...) The sense of safety from crime in Gahanna? (n=396)	Very satisfied	60%	72%	71%	69%	68%	75%
	Somewhat satisfied	36%	26%	27%	31%	30%	20%
	Somewhat dissatisfied	4%	2%	0%	0%	2%	3%
	Very dissatisfied	0%	0%	2%	0%	1%	1%
Q18a (How satisfied are you with...) The way the parks have been maintained? (n=299)	Very satisfied	82%	86%	86%	75%	82%	81%
	Somewhat satisfied	15%	13%	14%	22%	16%	16%
	Somewhat dissatisfied	3%	0%	0%	3%	1%	2%
	Very dissatisfied	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%

### ***Variation of service satisfaction among wards***

In the table above, the service satisfaction results are broken down by ward.

Satisfaction with city services is quite high overall and within each of the four wards. The variation that is observed tends to be between degrees of satisfaction (especially between very satisfied and somewhat satisfied) and not between satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

There are some differences among the wards in the percent saying they are very satisfied. However, there is no consistent pattern that would enable us to conclude that residents in one ward were any more satisfied or dissatisfied across the board than any other ward. For example, collectively, Ward Three is less satisfied than other wards with

snow removal and street maintenance, but more satisfied with the police department response and sense of safety from crime.

In spite of these kinds of differences, there is considerable uniformity among the wards. A rough test demonstrates this<sup>4</sup>. When we take an average of the percentages giving the top satisfaction score on all aspects of service covered here, we find that the average percent for Ward One is 66%, Ward Two 68%, Ward Three 69%, and Ward Four, 65%. The range is only 4% between the lowest and highest percentages of high satisfaction.

### **Perception v reality**

As in 2008, we remind the reader that perception is not always a close reflection of reality. There are many reasons for which equal public performance of an agency may be differentially perceived. For example, differing street and block designs and parking tendencies may make snow removal more difficult in some areas than in others. Differing age characteristics in certain areas may make recreation programs more or less satisfactory to many people. Differing housing and business densities may make police patrols more or less visible and more or less difficult. Moreover, differing levels of income sometimes create differing perceptions of quality and differing expectations of service.

For these reasons, the differing satisfaction scores are a symptom of possible operational problems, not a definitive indication that a problem exists in an objective sense. They do provide a clear indication of service *perceived* as excellent or problematic, but it is important for departments also to maintain objective measures of performance to maintain a proper overall perspective. In other words, a relatively low satisfaction score is not a mandate to take corrective action immediately, but a mandate to confirm the public perception and act appropriately.

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<sup>4</sup> Given that (as we pointed out previously) the number of respondents varies from service to service, it is not strictly acceptable to use an “average percent,” but as a rough rule of thumb, it is adequate.

**Figure 20 Incidence and Impact of Negative Experiences with Service**

	<b>Impact of negative perceptions on ratings</b>									
	A	B	(B-A)	C	(C*gap)					
	Mean scores on scale from 1 - 4 where 4 is more positive					- 2010 -			- 2008 -	
	Those reporting a problem	Those reporting no problem	Gap	Percent reporting a problem	Impact score	Gap	Percent reporting a problem	Impact score		
Maintenance of parks (n=704)	3.53	3.86	0.33	8%	0.03	0.64	4%	0.03		
Trash and yard waste (n=891)	3.07	3.78	0.71	6%	0.04	1.03	14%	0.14		
Police response when you called (n=661)	2.26	3.78	1.52	3%	0.05	1.10	4%	0.04		
Water Dept (n=847)	2.93	3.61	0.68	7%	0.05	1.46	6%	0.09		
Sense of safety from crime (n=908)	3.12	3.80	0.68	10%	0.07	0.81	14%	0.11		
Police coverage where you live (n=891)	2.83	3.82	0.99	7%	0.07	1.20	5%	0.06		
Rec programs (n=520)	2.41	3.75	1.34	6%	0.08	0.27	8%	0.02		
Street maintenance (n=905)	2.62	3.52	0.90	14%	0.13	1.06	12%	0.13		
Snow removal (n=895)	2.44	3.62	1.18	23%	0.27	1.18	11%	0.13		

***The impact of perceiving a service problem***

The table above provides several pieces of information:

- For 2010:
  - The mean, or simple average, score on a scale of one to four on which 1 is a negative score and 4 is a positive score, broken down by those who indicated a problem and those who did not.
  - The gap between those scores.
  - The percent reporting in November, 2010 they had a problem with the service in the past twelve months.
  - The “Impact score,” which is the percent reporting a problem multiplied by the gap. (More on this below.)
- For 2008: The gap, the percent reporting a problem, and the impact score for 2008.

What does this table tell us? It tells us the frequency with which residents perceived a problem in the past twelve months, and if they did perceive a problem, what impact it had on their satisfaction score. It also provides comparison data to 2008.

**Perceiving a problem**

- Respondents were asked if they had had any problem with each service in the past twelve months. The percent reporting they had a problem is shown in the fourth column of the table above. Notice that for all but two aspects of service, 10% or fewer reported having become aware of a problem. Thus for all but two elements of service, 90% or more of respondents reported no problem.

- Notice also, that several aspects of service showed a change in the percent reporting a problem<sup>5</sup>. Two changes stand out. First, those reporting a problem with trash or yard waste dropped from 14% to only 6%. On the other hand, the percent reporting a problem in the past (previous) winter with snow removal increased from 11% to 23%.
- For a sense of safety from crime, 14% reported a problem in 2008, but this declined to 10% in 2010. This is, however, much more subjective than the other items.
- Maintenance of the parks, went from 4% reporting a problem to 8%. Nonetheless, 92% are still reporting that there was no problem.
- As one would expect, all mean satisfaction scores of those reporting a problem were lower than those reporting no problem.

### **The impact scores**

The impact scores are really a measure of the degree to which experiencing a problem results in a negative response as measured by the satisfaction-scale rating. It might better be called a “Degree of irritation score.” I.e. How irritated or concerned are you when you do have a problem with a specific service?

Because the lowest score is 1 and the highest is 4, the maximum gap is (4-1) or 3. Theoretically, then, the impact score can approach 3. Let us say, for example, that 99% of respondents had a problem and they all scored the service 1 (which is therefore also the mean) while the 1% reporting no problem all scored the service 4, then the gap would be the average score of those noticing a problem (i.e. 1) minus the mean score of those not noticing a problem (i.e. 4), or 3. The impact score is the product of this gap times the percent citing a problem, in this example, 99%. Voila:  $3 \times 99\% = 2.97$  which is the impact score. Admittedly this is an approximation of impact, but it does give a sense of the effect on people’s attitudes when service problems arise.

In practice, impact scores for public services people use and enjoy rarely exceed 1 although such scores do occur when people are truly annoyed. The more common impact scores are like those shown in the actual table, and are well below 1 because for most services people vary between somewhat and very satisfied, and relatively few cite problems. For the Gahanna data, the impact scores do not even approach 1, meaning that even when there is a perceived problem, the impact overall on the aggregate public is relatively small.

In other words, people like living in Gahanna, like the services the community provides, and are quite willing to live with some occasional glitches.

The most irritating problem in 2010 appears to have been with snow removal, with 23% reporting having had or having observed a problem, and an impact score of .27, the

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<sup>5</sup> Because for this table N=400 and the distribution is in the area of 90:10 or even 95:5, the sample error is  $\pm 3\%$ .

highest score in the set. (See also, Figure 17.) Notice that whereas only 11% had reported having had a problem “this past winter” with snow removal in 2008, 23% reported such a problem in 2010. Thus, although the “gap” in scores between those with no problem and those with a problem remained constant (1.18), the impact score increased from .13 to .27. It wasn’t that the problem was more irritating to those who experienced it. It was that more people observed a problem.

Reported problems with collection of trash and yard waste declined by more than 100% (from 14% to 6%). In addition the irritation factor, or gap, declined from 1.03 to .71. So, fewer people had a problem, and those who did were less irritated by it.

The bottom line is that few Gahanna residents see a problem with services, and those who do, like the community well enough that they tend to shrug off the problem, probably assuming that it will be taken care of.

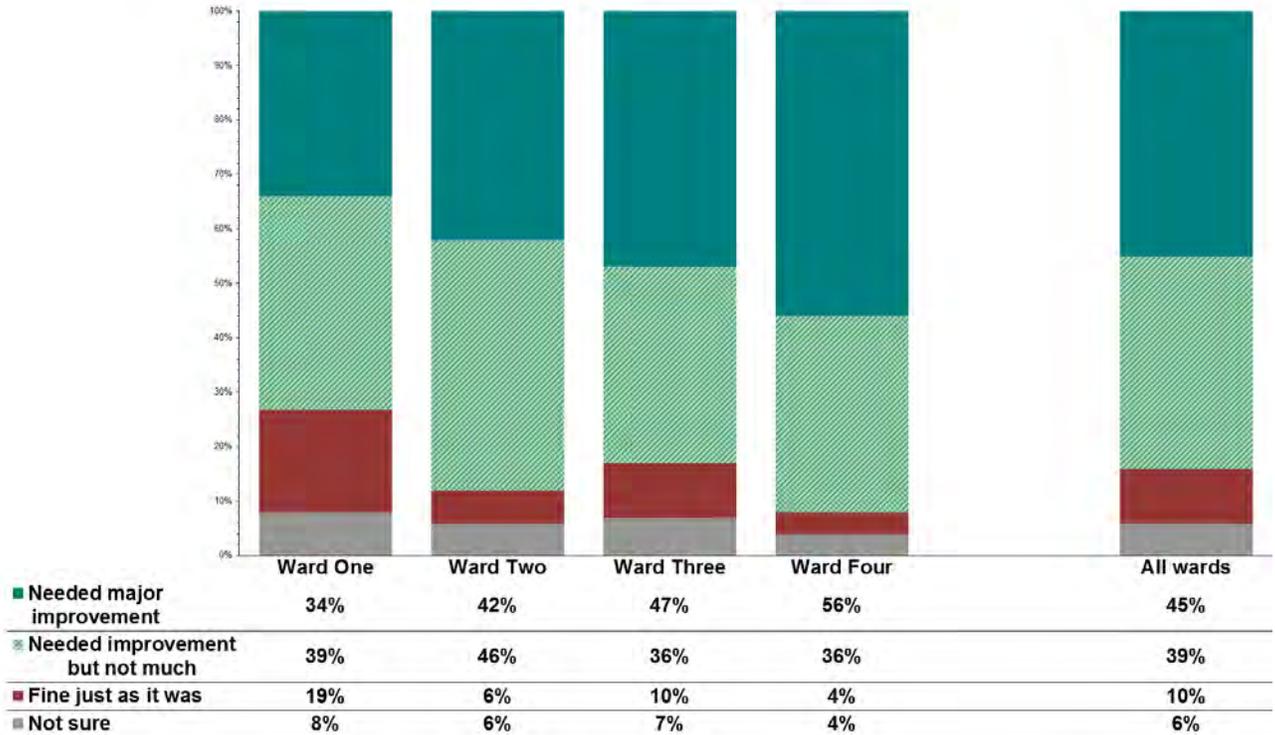
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## **Part 4: Major City Initiatives**

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## Figure 21 Attitudes toward Old Downtown

Q32 Before the development of the Creekside project, how would you have described the old downtown area of Gahanna?  
(Source: Gahanna Registered Voter Surveys, 2010. N=400)



### ***Downtown***

Respondents were asked whether, prior to the development of Creekside, they would have described the old downtown area of Gahanna as needing major improvement, needing improvement, but not much improvement, or as fine just as it was.

Among all wards, 45% of respondents indicated that the area needed major improvement, while 39% indicated that it needed improvement although not much. Only 10% perceived that it was fine just as it was and needed no improvement.

These opinions vary considerably among the wards. Residents of Wards One and Two were approximately evenly split between the perception that downtown needed major improvement and the perception that it needed only some improvement. However, in both of those wards somewhat more of the sample felt that it needed only some improvement. In contrast, Wards Three and Four showed larger percentages indicating that old downtown needed major improvement .

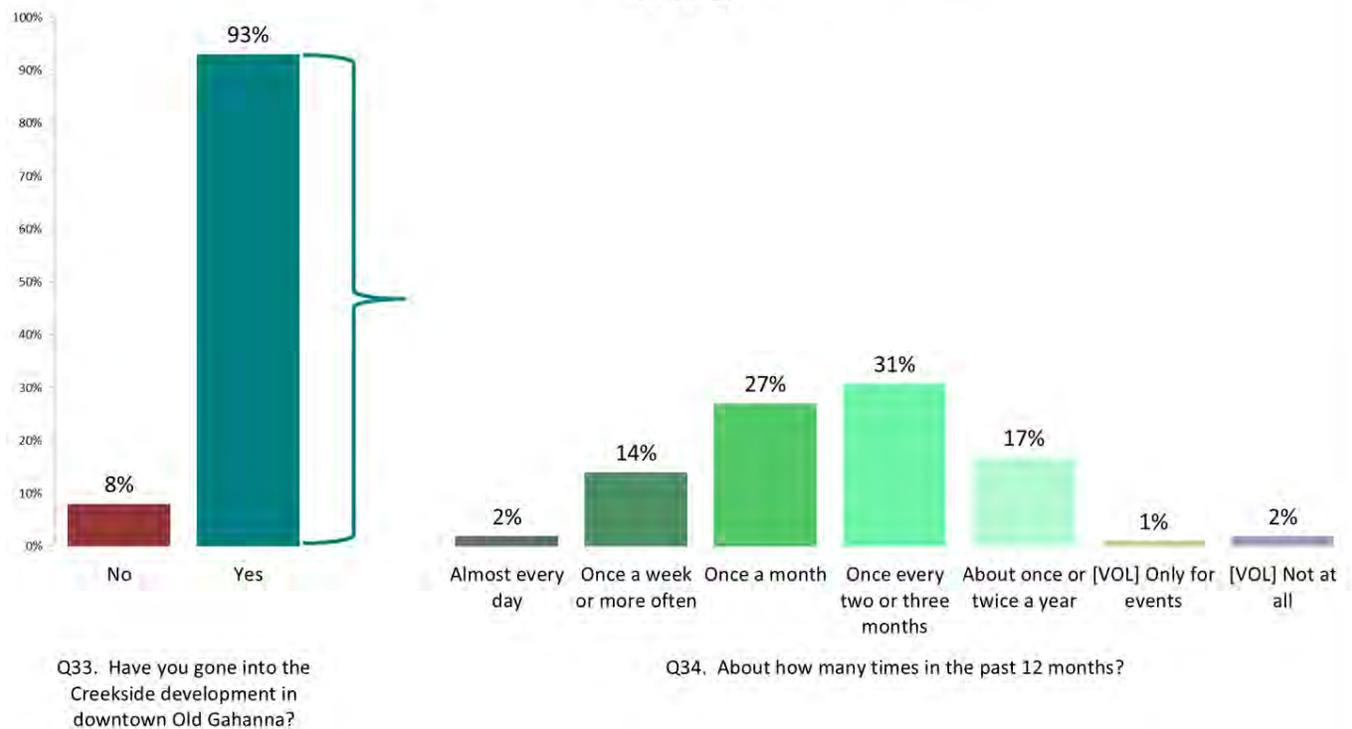
## Figure 22 How many Have Been to Creekside?

Q33. Have you gone into the Creekside development in downtown Old Gahanna?

Q34. About how many times in the past 12 months?

(Source: Gahanna Registered Voter Surveys, 2010. N=400)

All wards



## Visiting Creekside

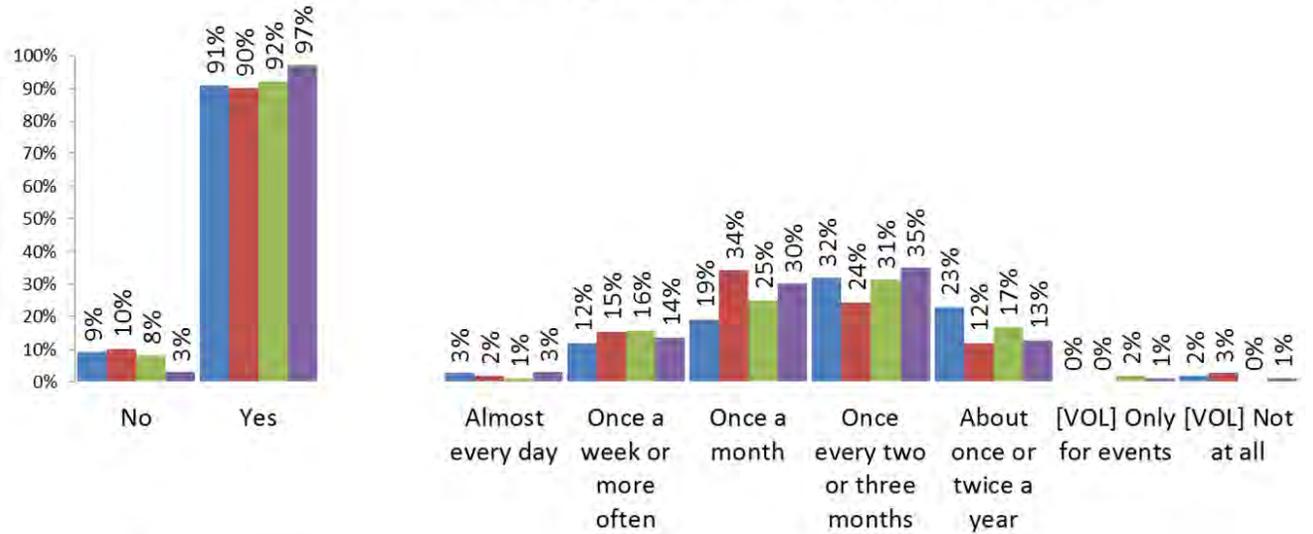
Respondents were asked not whether they had been to Creekside, but whether they had been into Creekside. Of respondents in all wards in 2008, 90% said they have been into Creekside. In 2010, 93% said they had been into Creekside. Moreover, these were not one-time visits. Forty-three percent (43%) said they had been into Creekside once a month or more often, and another 31% had been there once every two or three months for a total of 74% saying they use Creekside often or at least somewhat regularly.

**Figure 23 Use of Creekside, by ward**

**Q33. Have you gone into the Creekside development in downtown Old Gahanna?**

**Q34. About how many times in the past 12 months?**

(Source: Gahanna Registered Voter Surveys, 2010. N=400)



Q33. Have you gone into the Creekside development in downtown Old Gahanna?

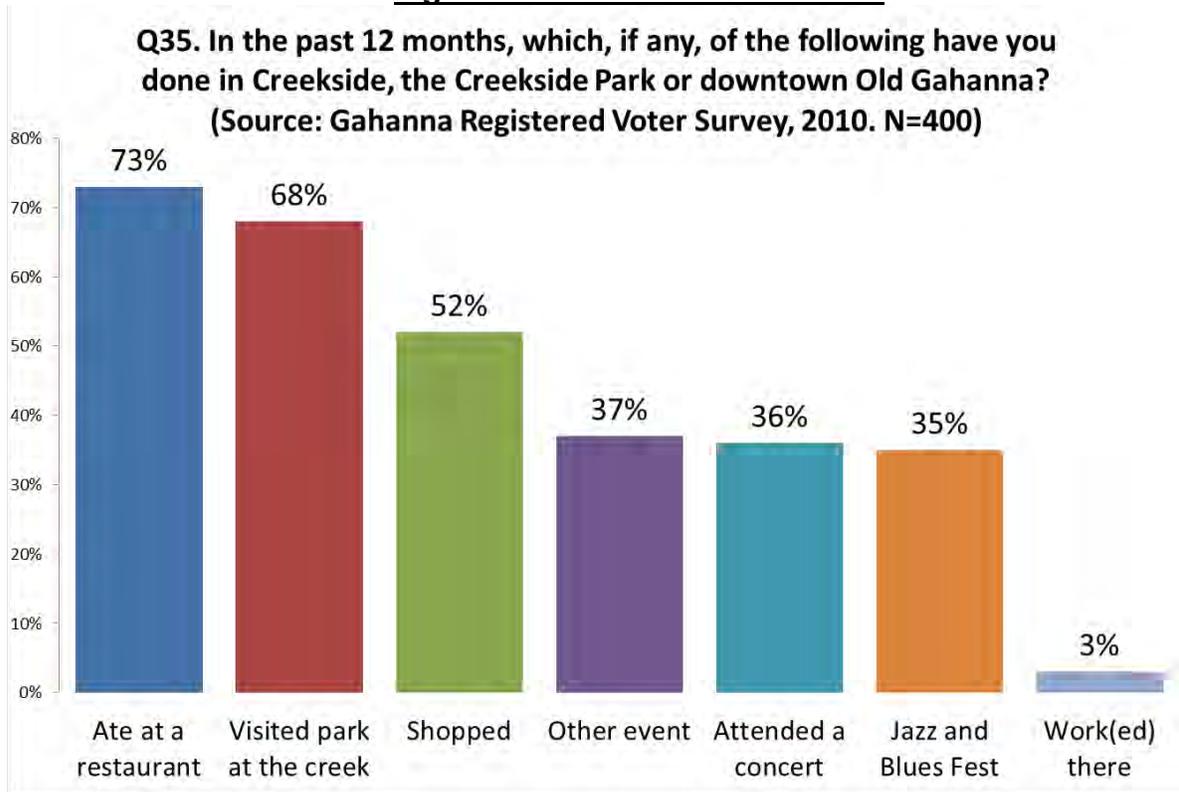
Q34. About how many times in the past 12 months?

■ Ward One ■ Ward Two ■ Ward Three ■ Ward Four

**Use of Creekside, by ward**

There is rather little variation by ward in the use of Creekside, although Ward Two may use it slightly more frequently than other wards.

**Figure 24 Activities at Creekside**



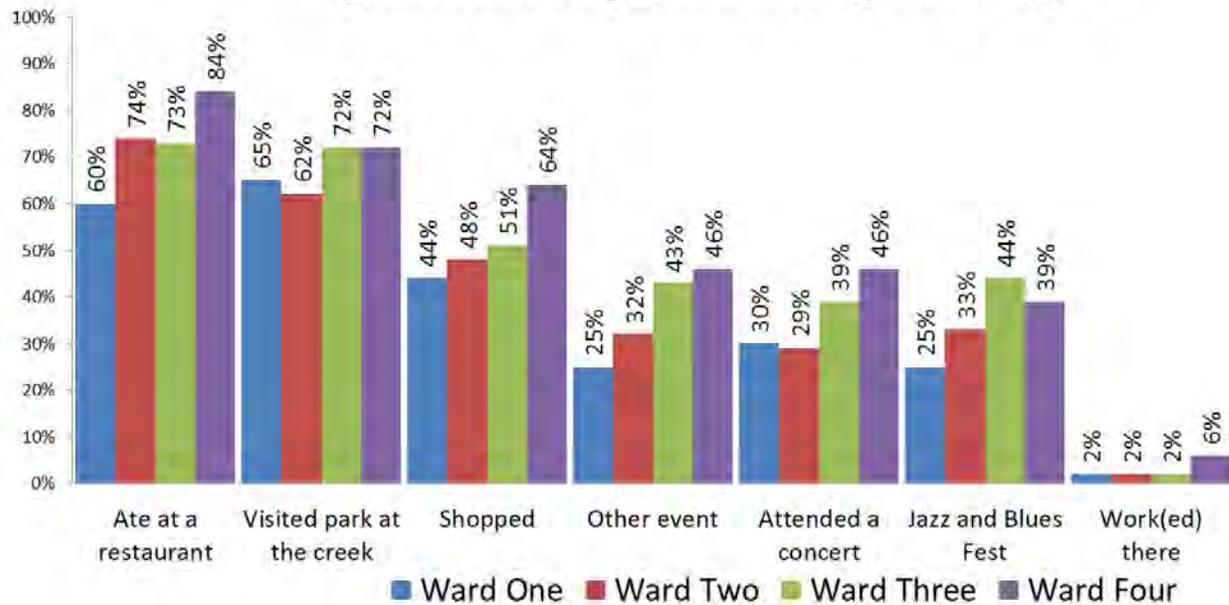
### ***Activities at Creekside***

Gahanna residents who have visited Creekside have done various things, the most common being eating at a restaurant, visiting the park itself, and shopping – all of which were done by more than half of the visitors. Approximately one-third of residents have attended a concert, the Jazz and Blues Fest, or other events. Finally, 3% say they work at Creekside.

**Figure 25 Activities at Creekside, by ward**

**Q35. In the past 12 months, which, if any, of the following have you done in Creekside, the Creekside Park or downtown Old Gahanna?**

(Source: Gahanna Registered Voter Survey, 2010. N=400)



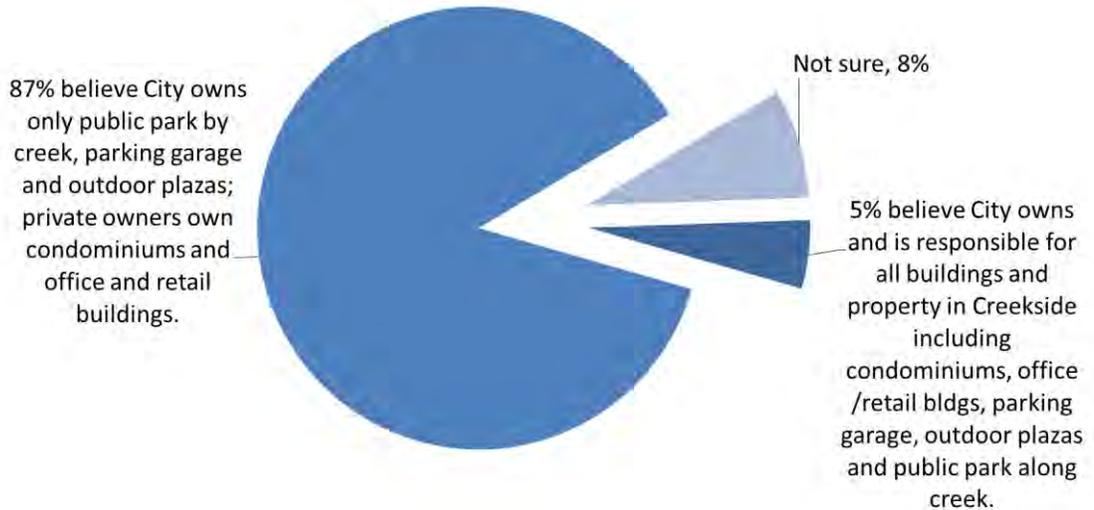
**Activities at Creekside, by ward**

The activity patterns of the four wards are somewhat distinctive. Although large numbers of residents from each ward have visited Creekside in the past year, and have eaten at a restaurant, visited the park (etc.) several different patterns are apparent:

- Residents of Ward Four (84%) are more likely than residents of other wards to have dined there. Residents of wards Two (74%) and Three (73%) are less likely than those of Ward Four to have dined there, but they are more likely than those of Ward One (60%).
- Visiting the park itself is less differentiated, but residents of Wards Three and Four are more likely than those of Wards One and Two to have visited.
- Residents of Ward Four are considerably more likely (64%) than those of other wards to have shopped at Creekside.
- Residents of Wards Three and Four are more likely than those of the other two wards to say they have attended concerts or other events.

## Figure 26 Perceived Ownership of Creekside

Understanding Ownership of and Responsibility for Creekside  
(Source: Gahanna Registered Voter Survey, 2010. N=400)



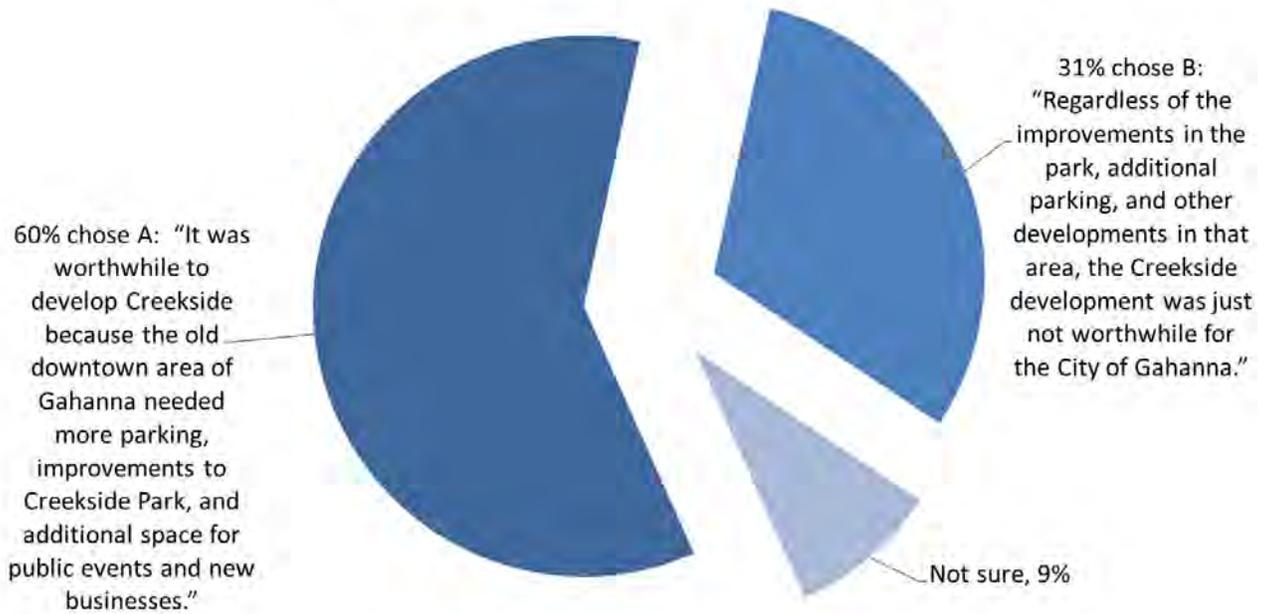
### ***Perceived Ownership of Creekside***

The public understands the basic ownership and responsibility patterns of the Creekside development. Eight-seven percent (87%) understand the limited role of the city in the development.

### **Figure 27 Perceived Value of Creekside to Gahanna**

**Q37. Here are two statements of opinion, not fact. Which of them, A or B, is closer to your personal opinion?**

**(Source: Gahanna Registered Voter Survey, 2010. N=400)**



### ***Perceived Value of Creekside to Gahanna***

Respondents were asked to choose between two opinions as shown in the chart above. Essentially, the choice was whether it had been worthwhile to develop Creekside because of need for parking, improvements to the park, public events, and for new business or, that in spite of those advantages that it was just not worthwhile for the city to develop Creekside. Of all respondents, 60% chose the former opinion, and 31% the latter. Another 9% were not sure.

## **Figure 28 Handling of Economic Development**

### **Handling Economic Development Matters**

	One	Two	Three	Four	All wards (2010)
Q14. The city's efforts to stimulate jobs and economic growth?					
Very Satisfied	16%	14%	26%	15%	18%
Somewhat satisfied	48%	49%	47%	51%	49%
Somewhat dissatisfied	23%	35%	21%	29%	27%
Very dissatisfied	13%	2%	6%	5%	6%
Q15. The handling of development of Olde Gahanna, also known as the Creekside District?					
Very Satisfied	39%	26%	44%	23%	33%
Somewhat satisfied	26%	33%	26%	37%	30%
Somewhat dissatisfied	19%	25%	19%	25%	22%
Very dissatisfied	17%	16%	11%	15%	15%

### ***Handling of Economic Development***

How satisfied are residents with the city's efforts at economic development? Two questions were asked, one a general question about jobs and economic growth, and the other specifically about the development of “Olde Gahanna.”

Regarding efforts to stimulate jobs and economic growth there is approval but with some ambivalence evident in the results, with 18% saying they are very satisfied with the efforts and 49% saying they are somewhat satisfied. This is a continued recessionary period after all, and it would be very difficult for the administration of any city or even state to receive very high marks in this respect. On the other hand, a total of 33% indicated that they were either somewhat or very dissatisfied. We would note, however, that only 6% indicated they were “very dissatisfied.”

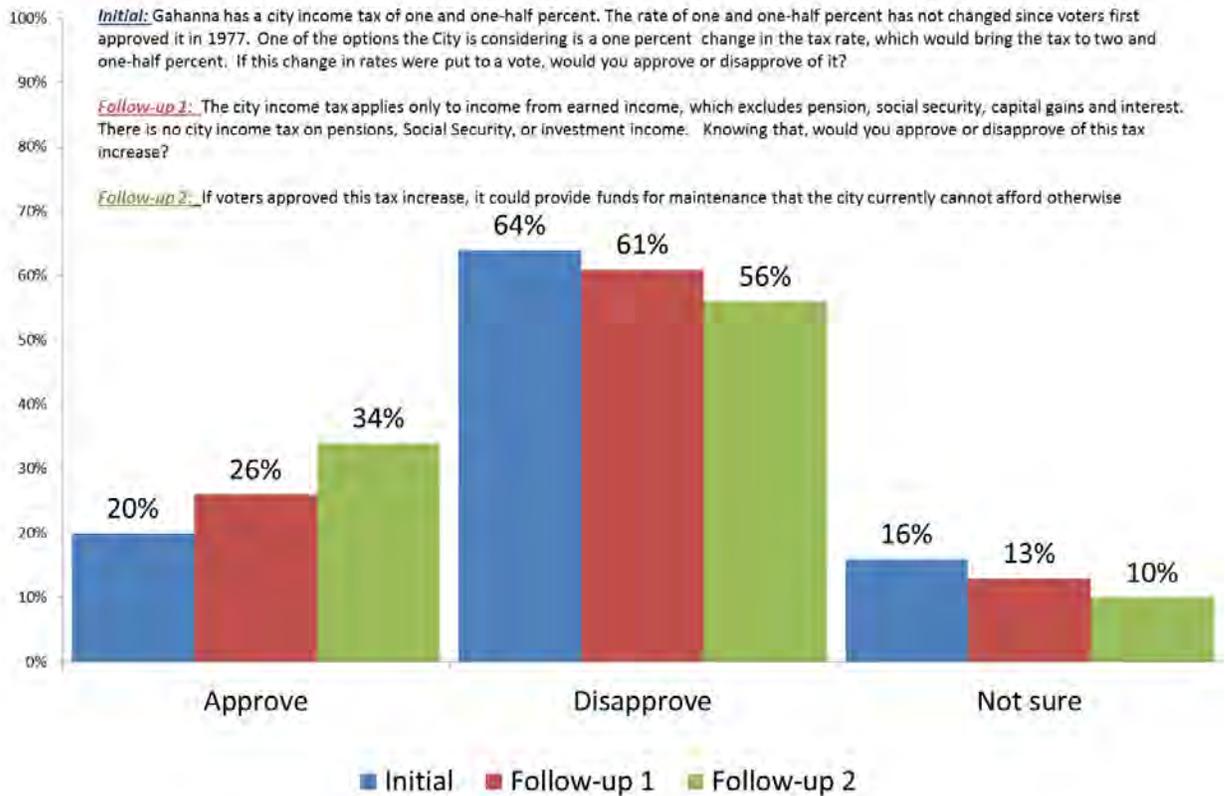
Regarding the development of “Olde Gahanna,” one third (33%) said they were very satisfied with how that was handled, and another 30% indicated they were somewhat satisfied. On the other hand, 22% said they were somewhat dissatisfied, and 15% that they were very dissatisfied, for totals of 63% satisfaction and 37% dissatisfaction.

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## **Part 5: Gahanna City Income Tax**

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## Figure 29 Initial and Modified Responses to Change in Tax Rate



### Response to Change in Tax Rate

After studying income and necessary expenditures by the City of Gahanna, a community advisory panel called “the Citizens Financial Advisory Committee” (CFAC) recommended a 1% increase which would bring the total to 2.5%.

Respondents were asked three questions regarding changes in the Gahanna city income tax.

- First, with very little context or reasons for the change provided beforehand, respondents were asked whether they would approve or disapprove a change in the tax rate from 1.5% 2.5% (wording is shown in chart above).
- Subsequently they were told that the income tax applies only to earned income and they were asked again whether they would approve or disapprove.
- Finally respondents were told that the city would be unable to afford certain types of maintenance without this increase and they were asked to approve or disapprove for a third time.

The initial response, as one might expect in current political and economic environments, was very negative, with 64% disapproving, and only 20% approving, with the balance (16%) indicating they were undecided. However, responding to the second and third questions which provided a context and rationale for the increase, some respondents changed their minds.

When they were told that the city income tax applies only to earned income (and that term is defined as shown in the chart above) approval rose to 26%. Similarly, when they were informed that the city would be unable to afford certain types of maintenance without the rate increase, approval rose to 34%, still very far from a majority, but substantially above the initial 20% approval.

At the time of the survey, Gahanna's voting public clearly disapproved of a tax increase of 1%. However, a survey is a snapshot, not a forecast. The initial disapproval may not be set in stone. For example, with only the very limited information provided in two follow up questions, 14% of the respondents changed their opinion. Therefore, it is important not to interpret to the initial result simplistically as indicating an attitude of unchanging opposition to a local tax increase.

A survey can provide a snapshot of public opinion at a moment in time. But the snapshot is based on what the public knows or believes at the moment the picture is taken. When an issue is actually placed on the ballot, more information becomes available, and voter opinion can be expected to shift significantly.

This is particularly true of city income taxes because local income taxes are actually quite complex. A city income tax involves the nuances of applying only to earned income, a concept which many people appear to misunderstand without further explanation of the term "earned." A city income tax also involves credits for tax paid in jurisdictions where one works, a system of balancing among workplace and residential jurisdictions that many people find confusing. Moreover, significant portions of the tax are paid by people working in Gahanna but not resident there and therefore not voting in its tax elections. These are some of the complexities inherent in the tax itself that make it difficult for a respondent to provide a considered response.

In addition, there are issues of context as well. For example, it remains unclear at the time of this report what action the new legislature and administration at the state level in Ohio will take regarding the Local Government Fund. Such state level changes can have significant impacts on local decisions

The bottom line is that at present the public opposes a municipal tax increase of 1%. However, the issue is complex, the context of state funding is changing, and given further information the attitudes of a significant minority of respondents change.

### Figure 30 Detail on Tax Issue

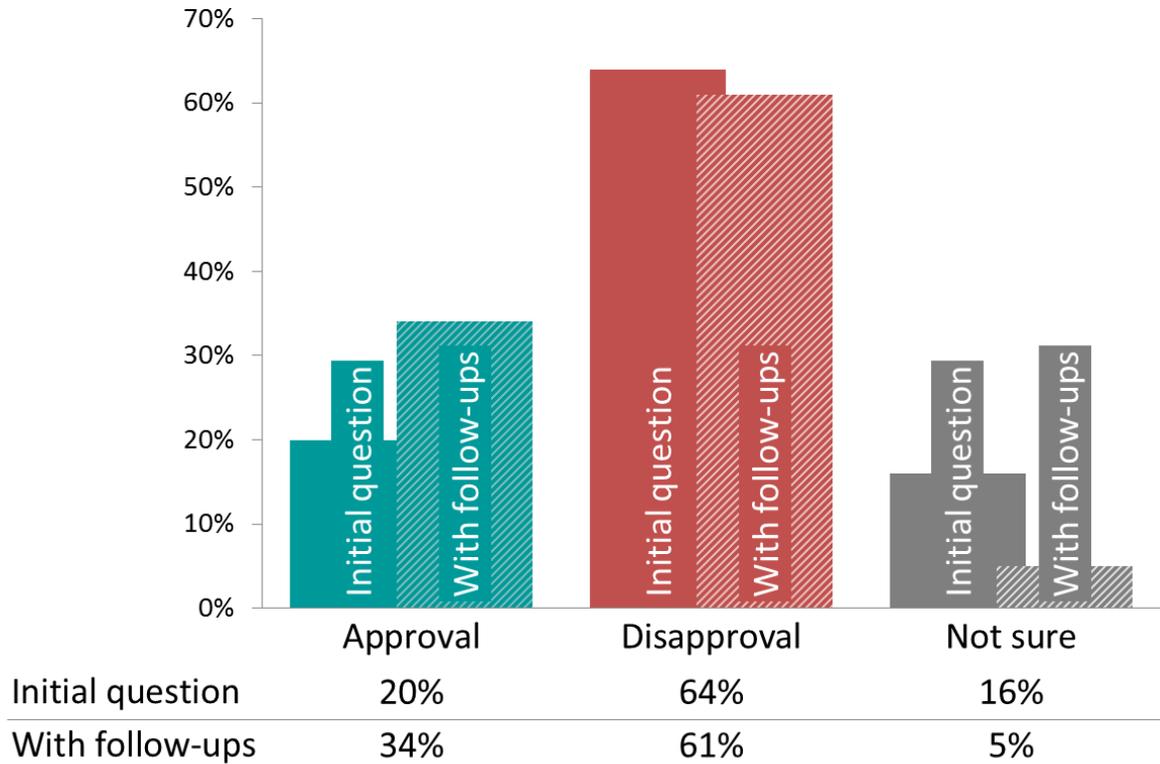
<u>Tax Issue</u>		Ward One	Ward Two	Ward Three	Ward Four	All wards
Q27. On a different subject now...Gahanna has a city income tax of one and one-half percent. The rate of one and one-half percent has not changed since voters first approved it in 1977. One of the options the City is considering is a one percent change in the tax rate, which would bring the tax to two and one-half percent. If this change in rates were put to a vote, would you approve or disapprove of it?	Approve	11%	24%	29%	15%	20%
	Disapprove	80%	51%	61%	61%	64%
	Not sure	10%	25%	10%	24%	16%
Q28. The city income tax applies only to income from earned income, which excludes pension, social security, capital gains and interest. There is no city income tax on pensions, Social Security, or investment income. Knowing that, would you approve or disapprove of this tax increase?	Approve	18%	27%	35%	21%	26%
	Disapprove	74%	50%	59%	56%	61%
	Not sure	8%	23%	6%	23%	13%
Q29. If voters approved this tax increase, it could provide funds for maintenance that the City currently cannot afford otherwise. This includes things like repairing city streets, replacing aging police cars and police computers, and trucks and other aging equipment used by the park department. Knowing that, would you approve or disapprove of this income tax change?	Approve	20%	46%	38%	35%	34%
	Disapprove	70%	45%	55%	50%	56%
	Not sure	10%	9%	7%	15%	10%

### ***Ward detail on tax issue***

Voters in all wards tend to disapprove of the tax increase recommended by the CFAC. Voters in Wards Two and Three are more likely than voters in Wards One and Four to approve the tax increase, but even there majorities oppose it.

**Figure 31 Changing Approval**

(Source: Gahanna Registered Voter Survey, 2010 N=400)



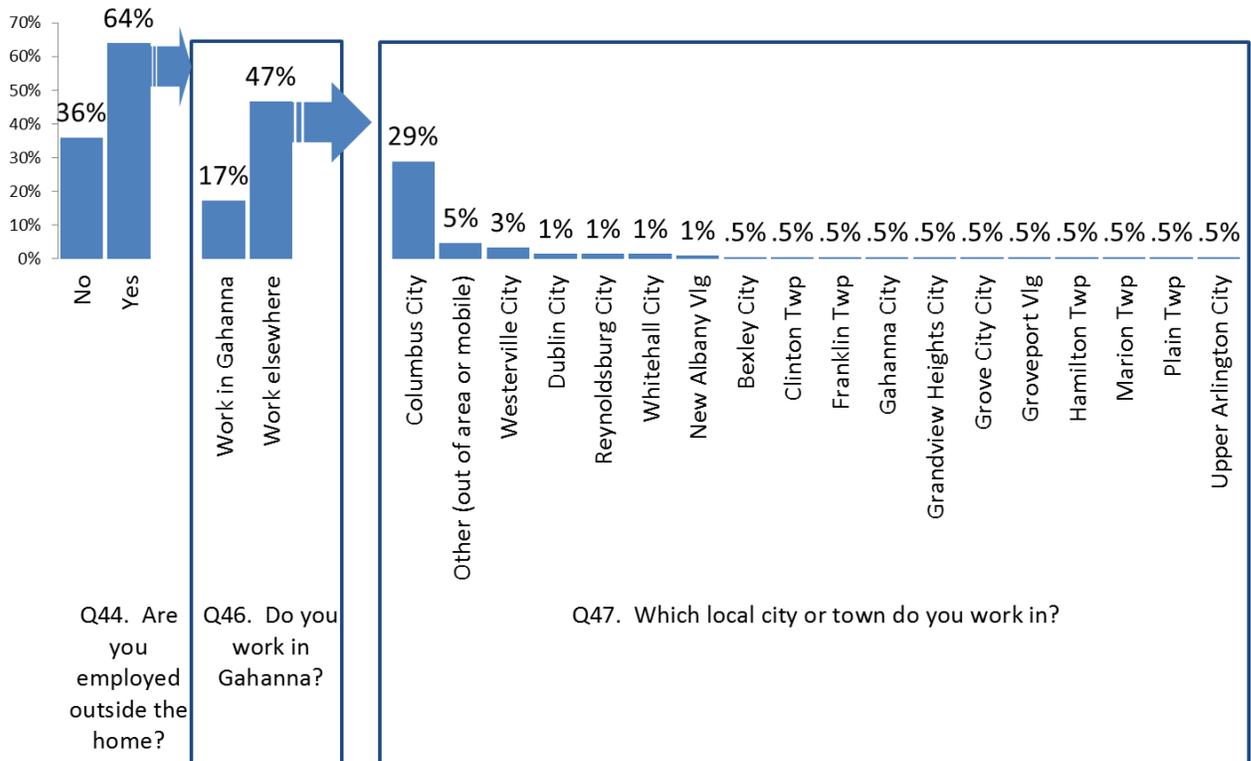
***How approval changes with further information***

The initial level of approval of a 1% tax increase was 20%. When respondents were told that only earned income is taxed, and that to afford maintenance new revenue was needed, a total of 15% of the respondents changed to approval from a “not sure” or disapproval position to approval.

**Figure 32 Where Gahanna Residents Work**

**Employment and Location**

(Source: Gahanna Registered Voter Survey, 2010. N=400)



**Where Gahanna Residents Work**

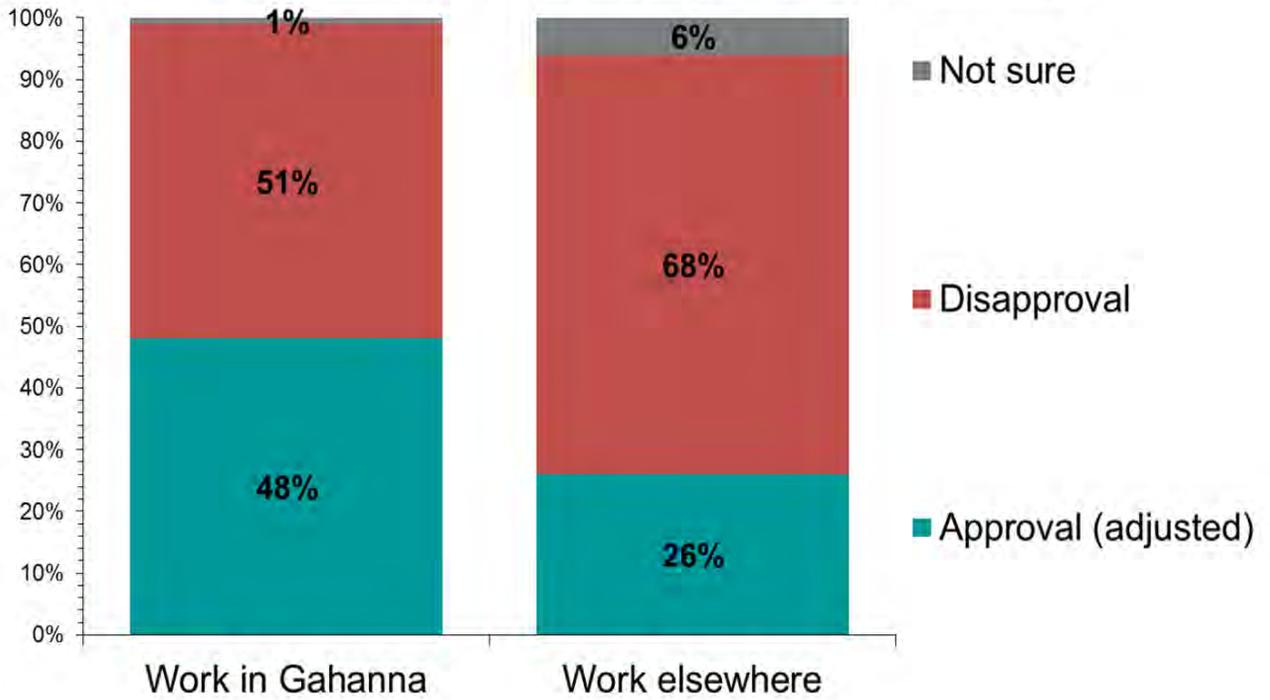
The location of employment of Gahanna voters is important because of the fact that the tax is collected at both the point of residence and point of employment, but with the place of employment taking precedence.

Among all Gahanna residents who are registered to vote, 64% are employed outside the home. Within that 64%, 17% work in Gahanna itself, and 47% work elsewhere. The most common employment location other than Gahanna itself is the City of Columbus (29%). For this reason, the way in which the tax is shared between Columbus and Gahanna is important.

### **Figure 33 Employment and Shift in Approval of Tax Change**

Employed persons only - Net approval or disapproval of a 1% tax increase

(Source: Gahanna Registered Voter Survey, 2010 n=195 employed respondents)



### **Location of employment and approval of tax increase**

Respondents who approved the tax change initially or when the conditions of earned income and the need for revenue to afford maintenance were explained were combined for the chart above (see also Figure 31), providing a simple division between approval and disapproval of the issue.

Workers working outside of Gahanna are given a “credit” of 83.3% of the Gahanna income tax rate, making the dollar impact on them of any tax increase less than that on their peers working in Gahanna. However, in spite of that fact, those workers are much more likely (68%) to disapprove of a 1% tax increase than those who work in Gahanna (51%). Why might this be?

The location of employment of Gahanna voters is important because of the fact that the income tax is first assessed at the City of employment and then at the point of residence. Among all Gahanna residents who are registered to vote, 64% are employed outside the home. Within that 64%, 17% work in Gahanna itself, and 47% work elsewhere. The most common employment location other than Gahanna itself is the City of Columbus (29%).

Given the current taxing structure, a Gahanna resident who works in the City of Columbus pays an effective municipal tax rate of 2.75%. The standard Columbus tax rate of 2.5% would be paid to the City of Columbus and the remaining .25% would be paid to the City of Gahanna. Why .25%? Because Gahanna provides a credit of 83.3% of its own 1.5% income tax rate to those who must pay income tax to a municipality where they work<sup>6</sup>.

If an income tax increase from 1.5% to 2.5% were to pass in Gahanna (assuming the same 83.3% credit), this hypothetical worker would pay an additional .17% to Gahanna (.25% goes to .42%). Thus his or her total municipal tax would increase from the current rate of 2.75% to 2.92%. Columbus would continue to receive the full 2.5% and Gahanna .42%. If the credit Gahanna provided were to be changed from 83.3% to 90%, this hypothetical worker would pay no additional taxes because of the increased credit.

Thus, the person employed outside of Gahanna would see a smaller increment measured in terms of both percentage and dollars in his or her municipal tax, but would still have a tax rate higher than those employed in Gahanna itself.

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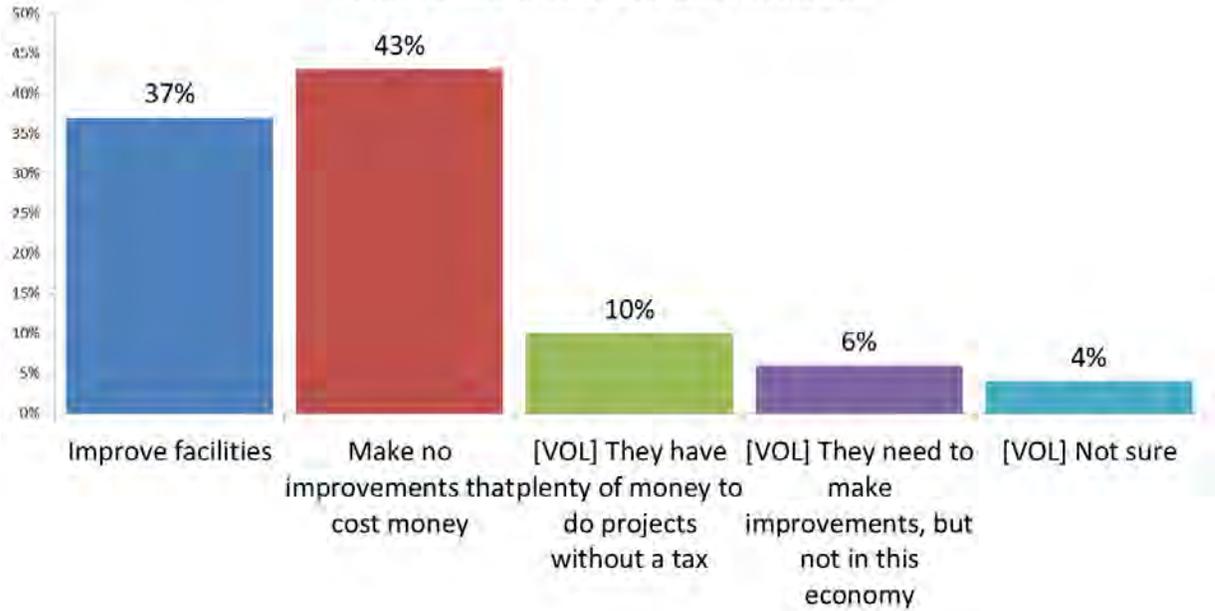
<sup>6</sup> 83.3% of the usual Gahanna rate of 1.5% is 1.25%. Subtract the credit of 1.25% from the standard rate of 1.5%, and you get .25% that taxpayers who must pay income tax to another municipality will have to pay in addition to that municipality's standard tax rate. Thus, for example, a Gahanna resident working in Columbus currently pays 2.5% plus .25% for a total of 2.75%.

### Figure 34 Using Income Tax to Improve Facilities

Q31. Some people say that even if it requires an increase of 1% in the city income tax, improve facilities; others say no improvements that cost tax money.

Which do you agree with?

(Source: Gahanna Registered Voter Survey, 2010 N=400)



### Using Income Tax to Improve Facilities

Respondents were also asked if they would prefer to improve local facilities even at the cost of an increase of 1% in the tax rate, or would prefer no improvements that required new revenue. The chart above shows their responses.

While 37% indicated approval of the tax for improvements, 43% rejected it, and another 10% volunteered that they believe the city has the resources to make improvements without additional tax revenue. Another 6% volunteered that the city will need to make improvements, but needs to await improvement in the economy.

## **Figure 35 Which Facilities Should Be Improved?**

### **Facilities Improvements**

30. If voters approved this tax increase, it could fund not only maintenance but also certain improvements. For each one, please tell me if you feel it would make approving a tax increase more worthwhile, less worthwhile or make no difference if it were included in the improvement plan.

		<u>Ward One</u>	<u>Ward Two</u>	<u>Ward Thre</u>	<u>Ward Four</u>	<u>All wards</u>
Q30a. Improvements to city swimming pools, including Hunters Ridge Pool and Gahanna Swim Club	More worthwhile	10%	36%	25%	13%	21%
	Less worthwhile	20%	21%	17%	26%	20%
	Make no difference	70%	43%	58%	60%	59%
Q30b. Improvements to the athletic fields in the city parks	More worthwhile	22%	31%	28%	24%	26%
	Less worthwhile	14%	20%	14%	18%	16%
	Make no difference	64%	49%	58%	58%	58%
Q30c. Building walking and bicycle trails in Gahanna	More worthwhile	25%	53%	45%	43%	41%
	Less worthwhile	16%	16%	14%	20%	16%
	Make no difference	59%	31%	42%	37%	43%
Q30d. Develop indoor meeting space for Gahanna citizens to use	More worthwhile	9%	13%	22%	20%	16%
	Less worthwhile	20%	34%	26%	36%	28%
	Make no difference	71%	53%	51%	44%	55%
Q30e. Develop indoor recreation space for Gahanna citizens to use	More worthwhile	17%	36%	48%	36%	35%
	Less worthwhile	19%	34%	26%	27%	26%
	Make no difference	64%	30%	26%	37%	39%

### ***Which facility improvements would make a tax increase more worthwhile?***

The first thing to notice about this table is that in each case more people indicated that the improvement would make no difference in their attitude toward a tax increase than felt it would make increase more worthwhile or less so. In the cases of swimming pools, athletic fields, and development of indoor meeting space, an absolute majority said it would make no difference to their approval or disapproval of a tax increase if these improvements were made.

Of the five facility improvements mentioned, building walking and bicycle trails in Gahanna was the most popular, with 41% indicating it would make a trade-off between the tax increase in facility improvement more worthwhile.

The next most popular improvement was the development of indoor recreation Gahanna citizens to use (35%). However, this was also one of the most polarizing of the options because while 35% said it would make the tax trade-off more worthwhile, 26% said it would make it less worthwhile. In a similar vein, improvements to city swimming pools saw an even split with 21% of respondents saying it would make the arrangement more worthwhile, and 20% that it would make it less worthwhile.

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## **Part 6: Local Information Sources**

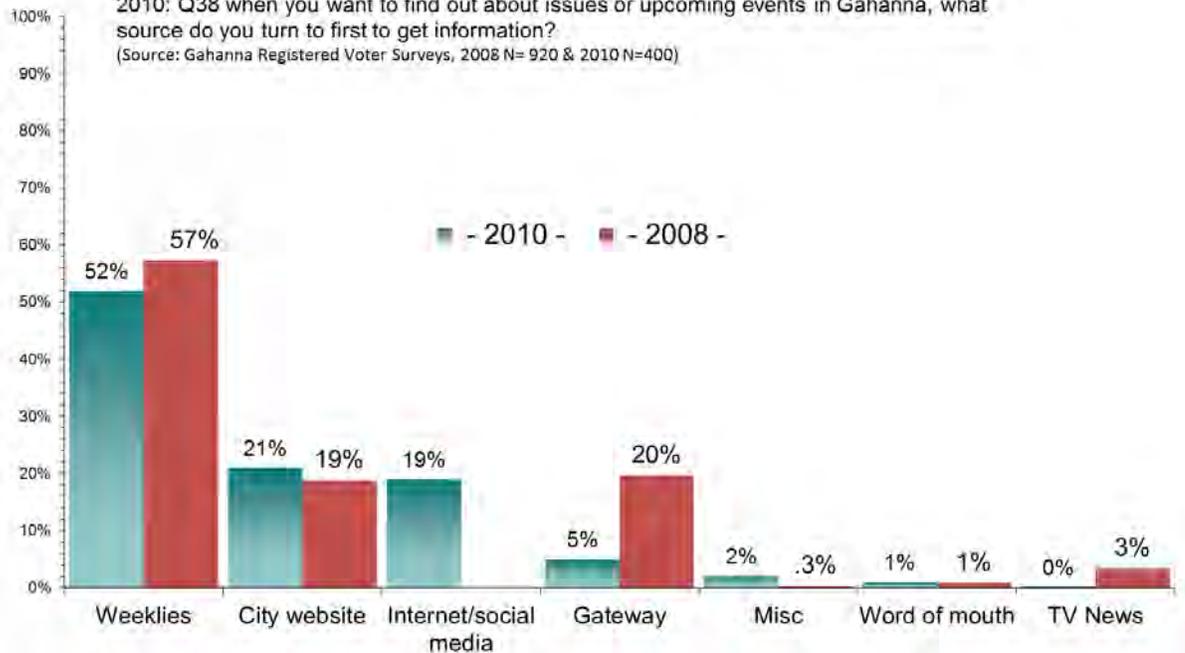
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### Figure 36 Information Sources

2008: Q43. Which of the following sources do you regularly look into for information about city issues, services and events in Gahanna you might like to attend?

2010: Q38 when you want to find out about issues or upcoming events in Gahanna, what source do you turn to first to get information?

(Source: Gahanna Registered Voter Surveys, 2008 N= 920 & 2010 N=400)



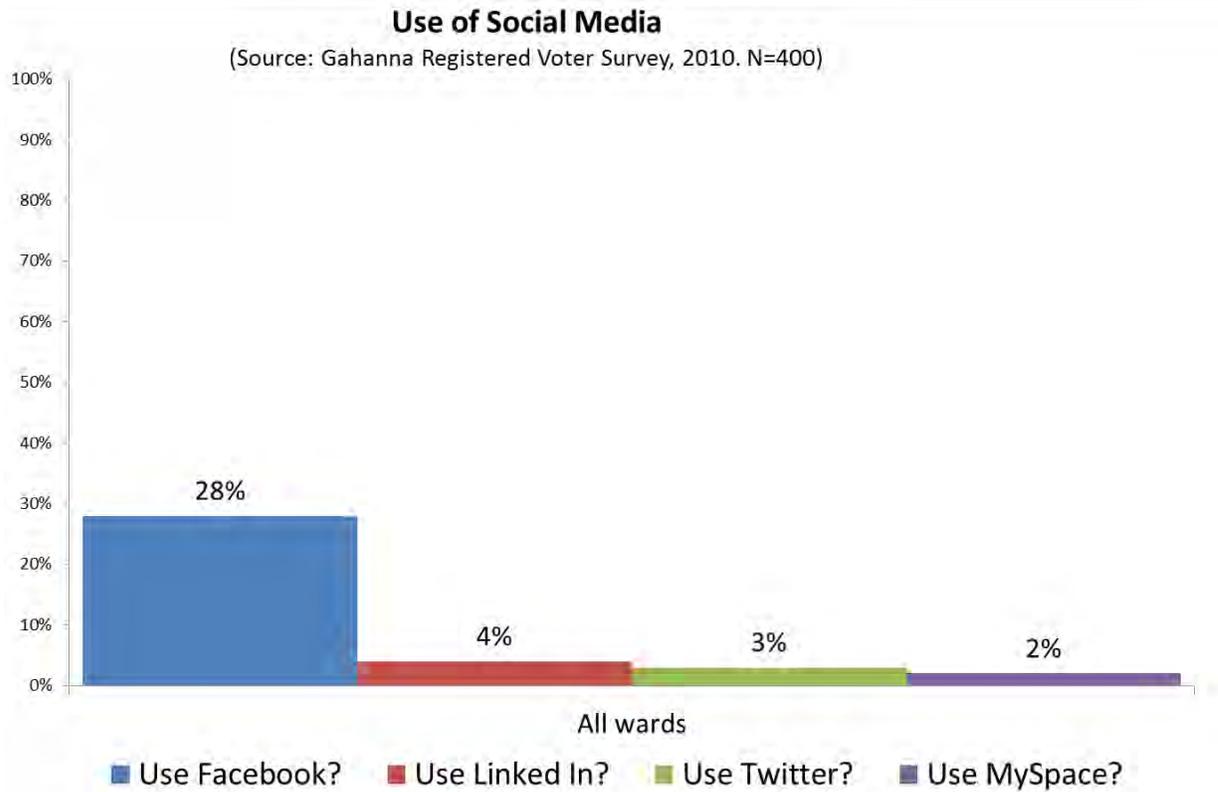
### Where do people find news about Gahanna?

Respondents were asked where they obtain news on a regular basis when they are looking for information about city issues, services and events.

The weekly newspapers declined from 57% to 52% as a primary source of Gahanna news. This decline parallels much of the changing fate of printed news nationally. The publication Gateway declined from 20% to only 5% of the respondents citing it as a primary source for local Gahanna news. This decline may have to do with the change in delivery mechanism from direct mailing to insertion in the coupon bag. Television, which had been cited by 3% in 2008 was cited by no one in 2010 as a primary source of Gahanna news.

In 2008, the Internet was included in the questioning only to measure the prevalence of use of the Internet, and potential access to the Gahanna website – not as a general source of Gahanna news. In 2008, social networking sites were also not included as a category. In 2010 both the Internet as a whole and the social networking sites in particular were included and garnered 19% of the responses, very close to the city website percentage (21%).

**Figure 37 Social Media Used**

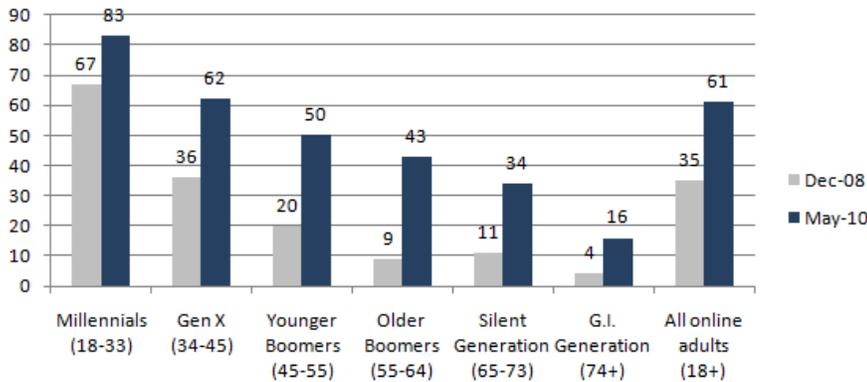


***Social Media Used***

The 28% of respondents who indicated they use social networking media were asked which of them they use. They could cite more than one. Of all of the commonly used social networking sites, Facebook, with 28% of respondents in the survey, is completely dominant compared to the other sites.

**Figure 38 2008 – 2010 Generational use of Social Networking Sites among US Adults**

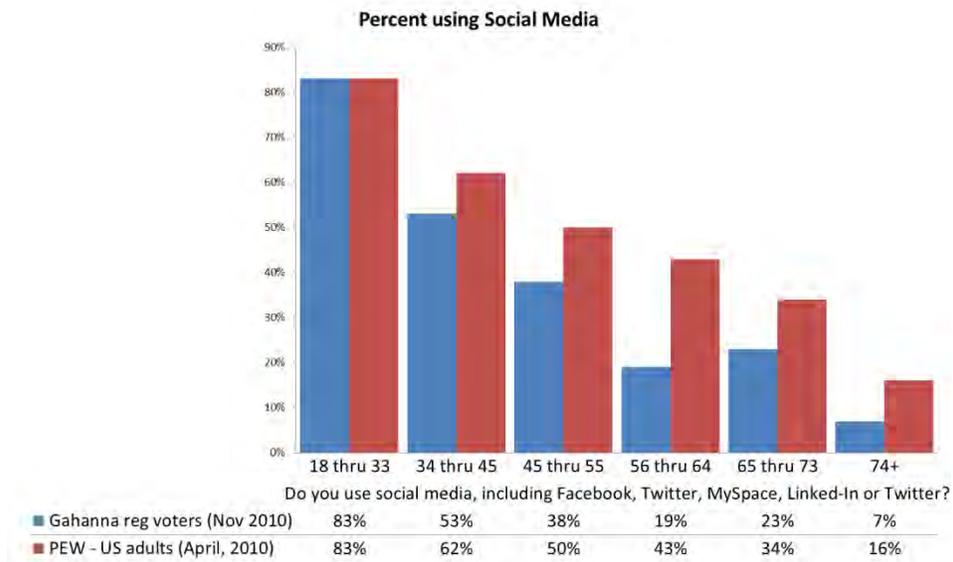
**Changes in social network site use, 2008-2010, by generation**  
*% of internet users who use social network sites, over time*



Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project, April 29-May 30, 2010 Tracking Survey. N=2,252 adults 18 and older.

Source: <http://pewresearch.org/pubs/1831/generations-online-2010>

**Figure 39 Gahanna and US Social Network Usage**



Nationally, the use of social networking sites has grown rapidly since 2008 according to the PEW Research Surveys. Comparing Gahanna voters to the PEW survey provides an interesting contrast. The two samples are, of course, dissimilar – Gahanna respondents are registered voters with landline telephones (weighted to conform to actual age of electorate). The PEW sample is of all adults and includes a cell-phone sample.

With those caveats, we can see that Gahanna follows the same age tendencies as the nation in terms of social network use. However, nationally adults are somewhat more

likely to be users than are Gahanna voters. Since voters tend to be older than non registered voters, this may be as much a difference between registered voters and the general population as it is between Gahanna and the nation.

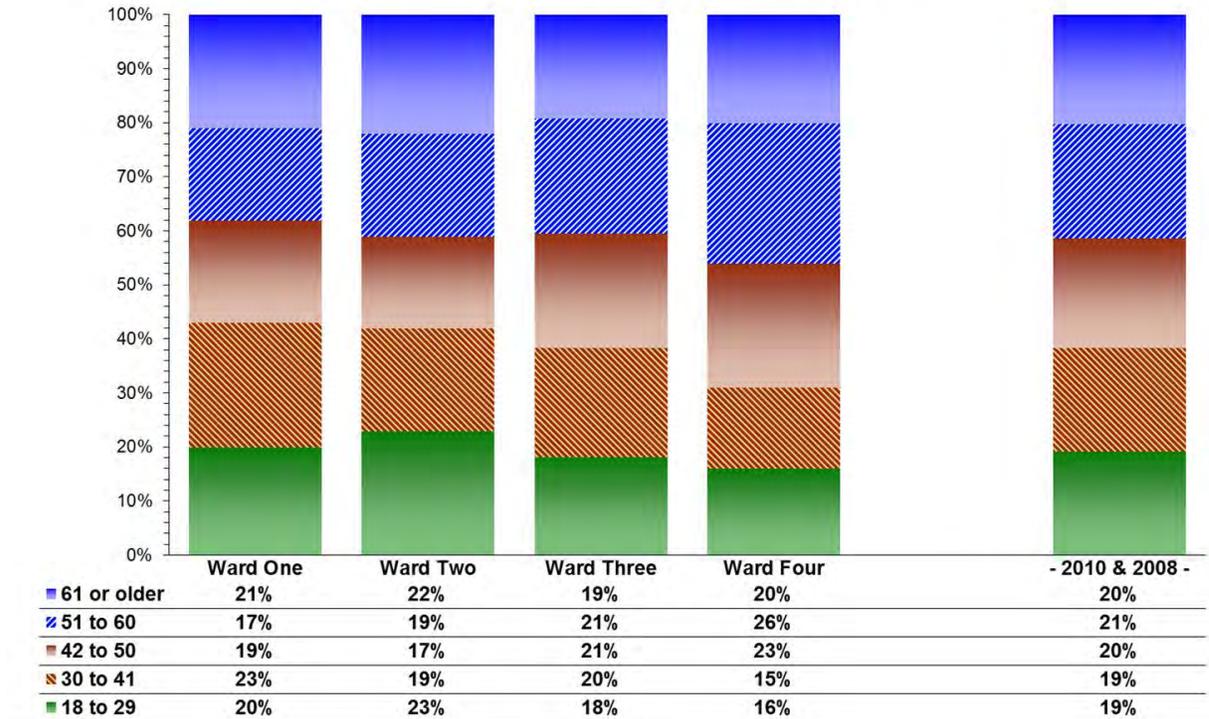
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## **Part 7: Demographics**

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## Figure 40 Age

Age quintiles  
(Source: Gahanna Registered Voter Survey, 2008 N=920 & 2010 N=400)



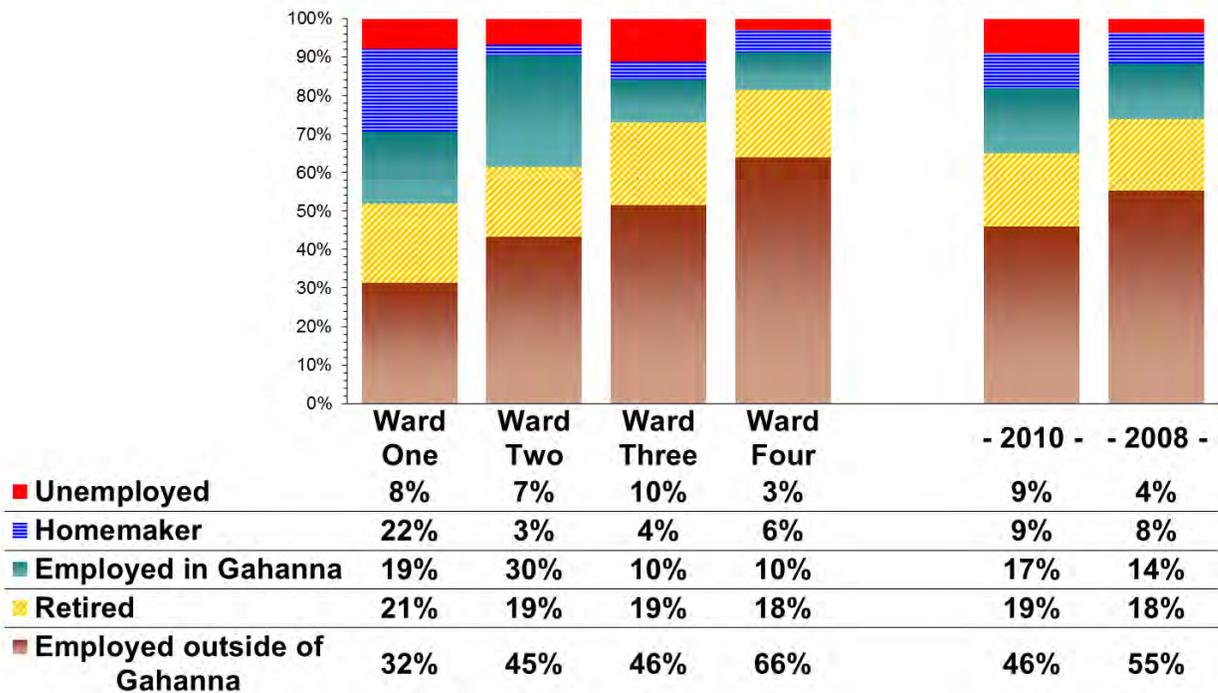
## Age

In both the 2008 and 2010 surveys, respondents' ages were categorized in quintiles for ease of analysis – i.e. five approximately equal set of ages. The distributions in 2008 and 2010 are identical because the weighting matched them so that random differences in age in the two samples would not produce an age bias in the sample.

With 46% 51 or older, Ward Four has the oldest population. With 43% and 42%, respectively, in the age groups under 40, Wards One and Two have the youngest populations.

### Figure 41 Employment Profile, by Ward

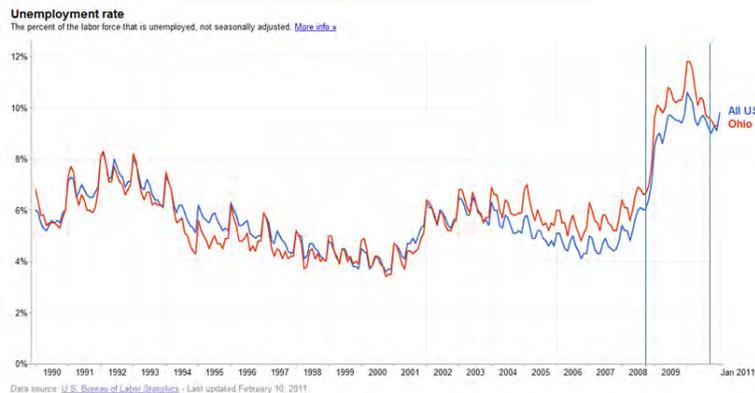
(Source: Gahanna Registered Voter Surveys, 2008 N=920 & 2010 N=400)



### Employment

In both 2008 and 2010, most respondents were employed, either outside of Gahanna (55% in 2008 and 46% in 2010) or within Gahanna itself (14% in 2008 and 17% in 2010).

### Figure 42 US & Ohio Unemployment Rates at Time of 2008 and 2010 Gahanna Surveys



As might be expected, unemployment more than doubled among residents in Gahanna between 2008 and 2010, rising from 4% to 9% reflecting an increase that had started somewhat earlier and ending a bit higher at the state level in Ohio.

Blue vertical lines represent approximate timing of the Gahanna surveys.

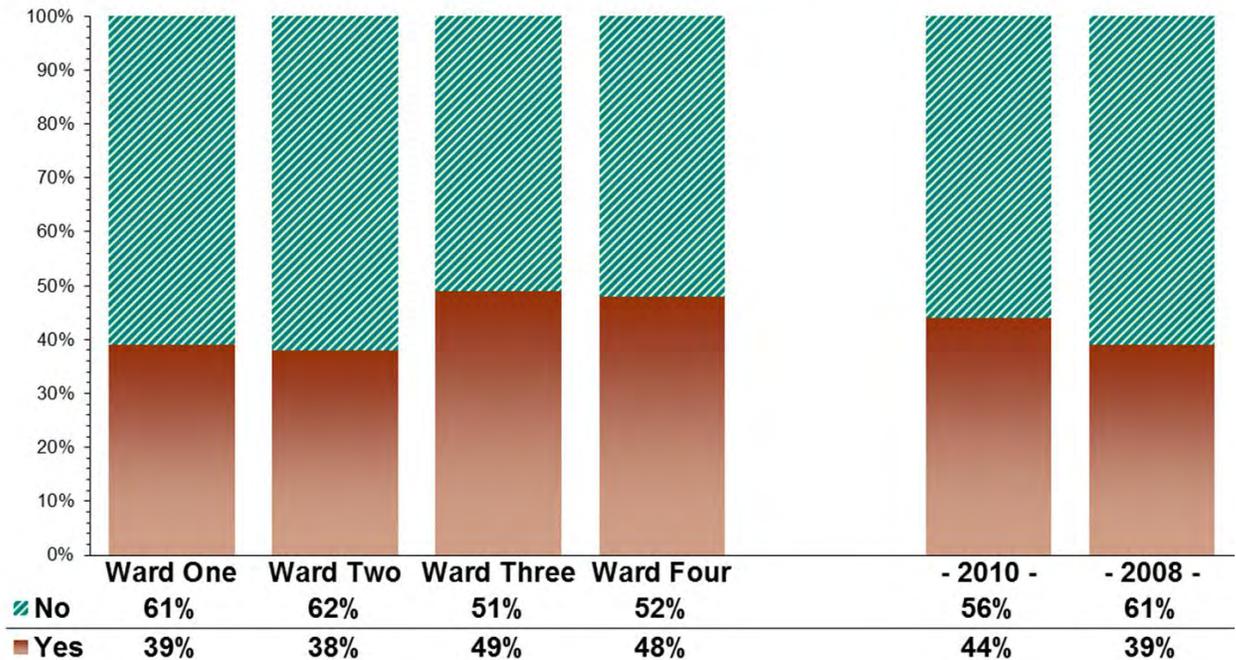
At the time of the survey in 2008, the Columbus Metropolitan Area rate of unemployment was 5.8% and in Ohio as a whole was 7%. By November 2010 the local rate had increased to 8% and the rate for Ohio as a whole stood at 9.8%. Thus, if we assume that

registered voters are more or less representative of the public, Gahanna was better off in 2008 in this respect than the state as a whole. However, by the time of the 2010 survey, the Ohio unemployment rate was 9.3%, and Gahanna's rate was approximately equal, at 9%.

A total of 18% and 19% (2008 and 2010, respectively) indicated that they are retired. This is quite high given that only 8% were 65 years and older according to the census of 2000. Eight to ten years after the 2000 census was taken this percentage would have increased given the aging of the baby boom generation. However, the survey was conducted only with registered voters, and older people are much more likely to register.

### Figure 43 Children Living in the Household

Q41. Do you have children under the age of 18 living in your household?  
 (Source: Gahanna Registered Voter Surveys, 2008 N=920 & 2010 N=400)



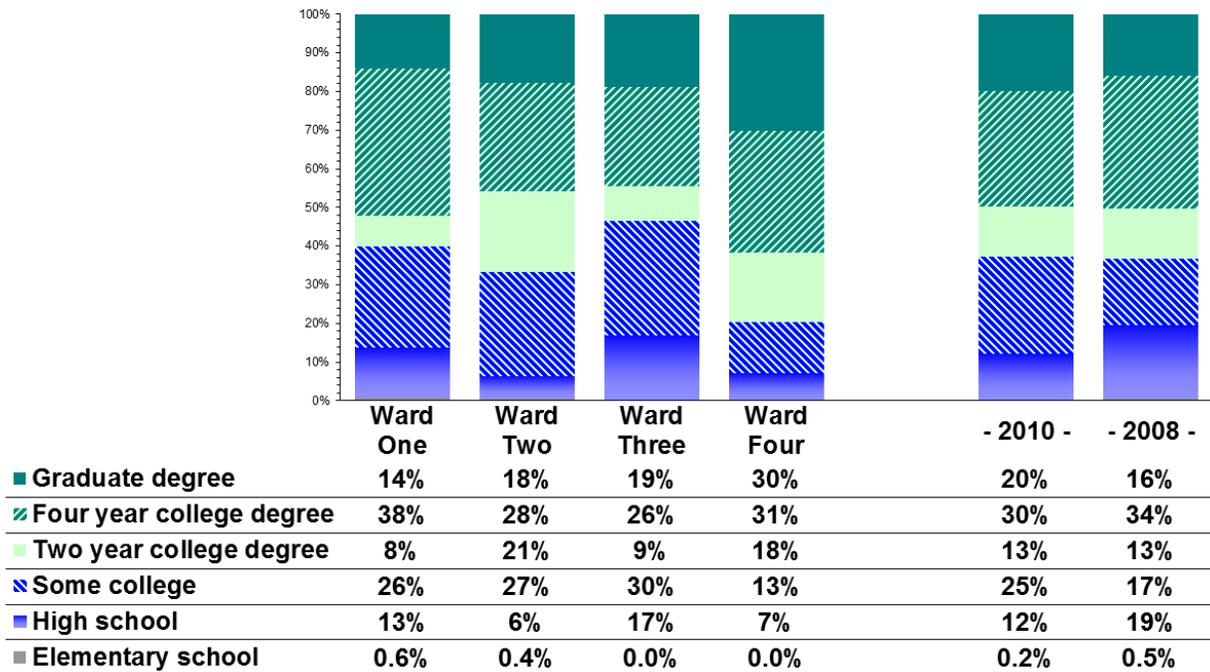
#### Children in the household

More than one-third of respondents (39%) indicated in 2008 that they have children under the age of eighteen living in the household. In the 2010 sample the analogous figure was 44%. This does not necessarily mean that there was an influx of children into the community. It is more likely a result of slight differences in the sampling. Unlike the situation for unemployment we do not have external data that would confirm or contradict this statistic.

The safest estimate is that roughly 40% of households include a school age child.

## **Figure 44 Education**

**Q42. What is the highest level of education you have completed?**  
 (Source: Gahanna Registered Voter Surveys, 2008 N=920 & 2010 N=400)



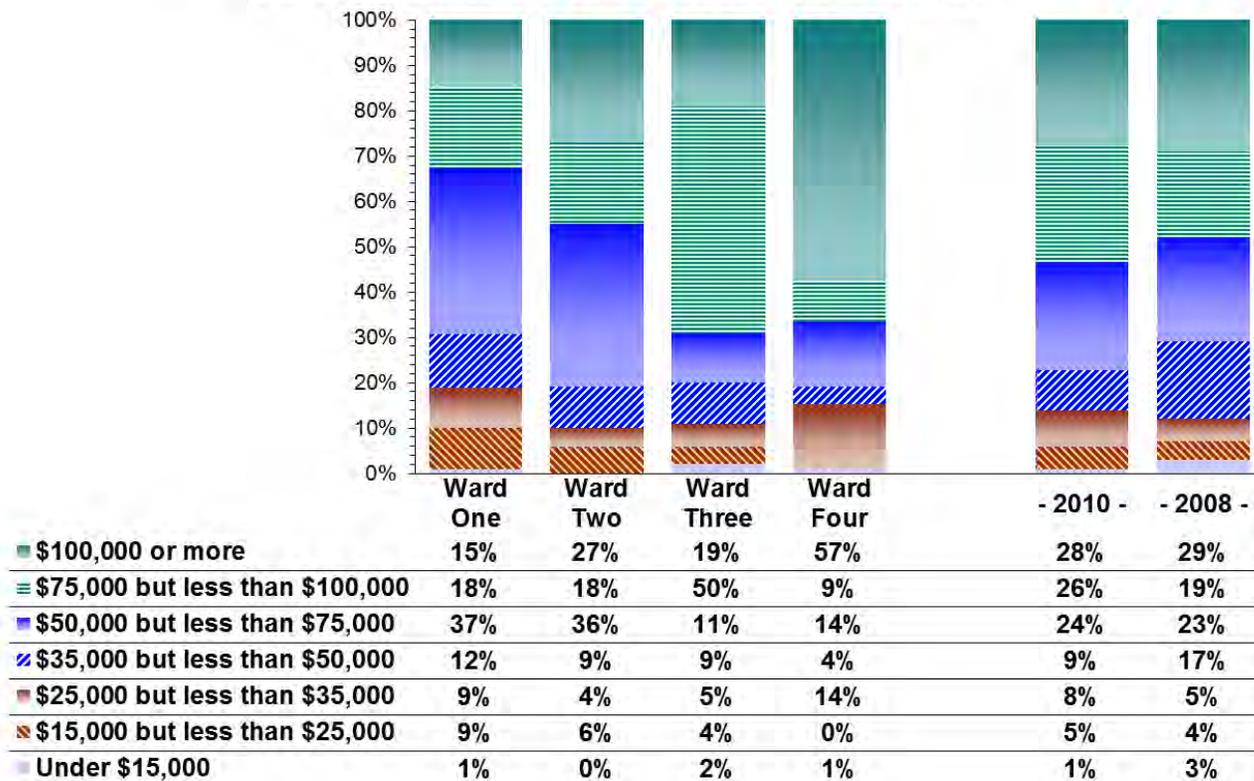
### **Education**

As in 2008, 50% of the respondents indicated that they have either a four-year college degree (30%), or indicated they have graduate degrees (20%).

The percent reporting having some college rose to 25% from 17%, although those with a two-year college degree remained constant at 13%. There was a decrease from 19% to 12% of those whose highest level of education was high school. Less than one percent indicated that they had not gone beyond elementary school.

## Figure 45 Household Income

Q48. Which range that I read you did your total household income fall into last year?  
(Source: Gahanna Registered Voter Surveys, 2008 N=920 & 2010 N=400)



### ***Income***

Although unemployment increased, the percent of respondents stating that their household incomes were \$75,000 or more increased from 49% to 54%. Unfortunately we lack information from the Census or IRS statistics to verify that this represented an actual change rather than mere sample variation.

As in 2008, income varies considerably among the wards, but Ward Four stands out as clearly the highest income area. In Ward Four, 57% of respondents report household incomes of \$100,000 or more. Contrast that with Ward One in which only 15% reported incomes of that level.

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## A Few Key Conclusions

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**Optimism.** Gahanna residents remain optimistic about their community. The challenges they believe face the city are based on a desire to maintain what they consider a solid, desirable place to live, enjoy recreation, and to send their kids to school. Very few perceive darkly threatening challenges. People like living here.

**Right direction/wrong track.** Contrary to the national mood, approximately two-thirds (68%) of Gahanna residents tend to believe that things are headed in the right direction in Gahanna. This is lower than in 2008, but still represents an optimistic community. When asked what constituted the right direction or wrong track, many people in both camps mentioned Creekside and the local schools. To many, Creekside represents a progressive, appealing aspect of city action. To a smaller, but significant number of people, it presents overreach by the city.

Schools, not city governance, were also mentioned by more people than any other topic when asked about the main challenge facing Gahanna. Many people spoke well of the schools and lamented the defeat of school levies. Others decried what they perceive as wasteful spending by the schools. This is a discussion that plays out in every Ohio school district. Fewer than half of the registered voters have children in the schools, a fact that makes levy passage especially challenging.

**City official job ratings.** In this era of widespread anti-government feeling, the job ratings of both the mayor and the council remained positive, though they slipped somewhat from 2008. In addition, 40% say that the City is doing a very good or good job handling finances during this economic recession, while another 25% say the performance is average. Only 15% say that the performance is poor or very poor. Moreover, people continue to feel Gahanna's city services provide a very good or good value for the tax dollar paid (73%), about the same level as in 2008.

In short, the ratings of city government performance, while in some respects not as positive as in 2008, are still positive and solid.

**Contacting City Hall.** Many people, 49%, contacted City Hall during the twelve months prior to the survey. In 2008, 92% had said that regardless of the outcome of their call, they had been treated courteously and respectfully. In 2010, that percentage rose to 98%, a significant improvement.

**Rating departmental functions.** Ratings of the various functions performed by city departments were highly positive in 2010. The best rated was park maintenance which had a 99% positive rating. Even the least well rated function, street maintenance had a 90% positive rating. Comparing 2008 to 2010 ratings of the separate departmental functions remained constant or improved for five of nine functions. Collection of trash and yard waste improved substantially. Rating of police coverage was very positive (96% positive) slipped slightly in the "very satisfied" category, perhaps as a consequence of attrition. Similarly, while both remained highly positive overall, snow removal last winter

and street maintenance both declined in the “very satisfied” category, moving them to the “somewhat satisfied” category – still positive, but less so.

**Economic development and Creekside.** Handling of economic development matters was rated positively by 67%, and the specific rating of handling of Creekside by the city was rated positively by 63%. However, the latter remains a point of controversy for a significant portion of the public, with 37% saying either that they are “somewhat dissatisfied” (22%) or “very dissatisfied” with the handling of the Creekside development by the city.

Creekside remains controversial: 60% said it was worthwhile to develop it, but a significant minority, 31% said it was not worthwhile. In spite of disagreement over Creekside development as city policy, however, 93% of the public said they had been into Creekside during the past twelve months, and with some regularity. Moreover, of those going into Creekside many had engaged in economic activity; 73% had eaten at a restaurant and 52% had shopped. Many attended events, a type of activity that was cited by many respondents as an appealing aspect of community life in Gahanna.

Most of the public does understand the city’s role in Creekside: 87% know that the city owns only the parking facility, outdoor plazas, and the park.

**Raising tax rate to 2.5%.** Most residents (64%) who are registered to vote oppose raising the city income tax. However, when told of the fact that only earned income is taxed and that maintenance of city facilities would depend on passage, opposition, while still in the majority, declined to 56%. Those who work outside of Gahanna tend to work in Columbus where they already pay 2.5%. They are especially opposed to the increase, while those living and working in Gahanna split, with 51% disapproving and 48% approving.

These facts suggest that while there is opposition to the tax today, a substantial proportion of the public is willing to consider a rate increase. Also, additional facts related to the increase were not presented in the survey. For example, almost half of the tax revenue is derived from persons working in Gahanna but residing elsewhere. Also, if the tax credit for those working in other municipalities with an income tax were increased from 83.3% to 93%, the person working outside of Gahanna would see no tax increase at all. Moreover, under present circumstances we do not know what impact, if any, changes in the state local government funds may have on Gahanna. All of this suggests that the survey result is a static snapshot of opposition at the time of the survey, but that it in no way predicts the outcome in a general election in which more information and discussion would inevitably occur.

**Communication.** The weeklies continue (52%) to provide local information about Gahanna to many of its residents. However, the Gateway publication dropped as a source from 20% to 5% as the method of distribution was changed. The city website continues to be used as a source of information by 21% of the public, and social media are now used by 19%.

**In summary.** Gahanna remains an optimistic community, generally upbeat about its quality of life and governance. It is not without challenges such as an unemployment rate now about equal to that of the state of Ohio as a whole, and the difficulty in funding the local school district. In addition there are controversies, especially with regard to the need for the income tax increase recommended by the Citizen's Financial Advisory Council. Nevertheless, the community's registered voters generally approve of their community's direction, services, governance and the recent development of Old Gahanna.

This is a city whose citizens feel it is feeling bumps in the road, but proceeding well and weathering current economic storms in a way that they tend to approve. The challenge will be to explain coming fiscal realities to the public in a way that enables them to make a choice to either maintain the quality of life they so clearly value even if, as the Citizen's Financial Advisory Council maintains, that means paying more to maintain it, or sacrifice some elements of it.

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# Appendix A: Survey Questionnaire

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## Gahanna Community Survey, 2010

**IN PROGRAMMING SAMPLE IN CATI SYSTEM - VERY IMPORTANT - PLEASE NOTE: WHEN A RESPONDENT AGREES TO PARTICIPATE, I NEED THE ENTIRE SAMPLE RECORD – NAME, PHONE, WARD, PRECINCT, ADDRESS ETC – EVERYTHING – BROUGHT INTO THE RECORD.**

### SCREEN:

Hello, my name is..... with CJI Research. We are conducting a survey today concerning community issues in the City of Gahanna. The survey is sponsored by the Gahanna City government and concerns questions about living in Gahanna and about city services. May I speak with [PERSON NAMED ON VOTER LIST]. The survey takes about fifteen minutes.

**IF INITIALLY SAMPLED RESPONDENT IS NOT AVAILABLE, FOLLOW RULE FOR SELECTING BACKUP. IF NONE AVAILABLE, ASK FOR A CALL-BACK TIME FOR THE INITIAL RESPONDENT.**

Interviewer: Are you speaking with the initially sampled person or a substitute?

1. Person listed → Name \_\_\_\_\_
2. Substitute -> Name \_\_\_\_\_

Ward: \_\_\_\_\_

Note gender: 1. Male 2. Female

I would like to begin by assuring you that your answers will be completely confidential. The city will receive only a statistical report after we talk with 400 people. Your name will not be mentioned.

1. Now for the first question -- Do you use a cell phone?

- (1) Yes (a)
- (2) No (Q1a)

(a) Am I speaking to you on a cell phone now?

- (1) Yes → Are you in a place that is safe to talk, or are you driving or in an unsafe location?  
(If not in safe place or if driving – arrange call back)
- (2) No

(b) Do you receive all, most, or only a few of your phone calls on your cell phone?

- (1) All
- (2) Most
- (3) Only a few
- (4) REF

2. For about how many years have you lived in Gahanna?

\_\_\_\_\_ years

**Refused (THANK RESPONDENT FOR STARTING, BUT TERMINATE: "I appreciate your starting the survey, but we need to have answers to questions such as this in order to get accurate and in-depth information for the City.")**

3. How would you rate the overall quality of life in Gahanna? Would you rate the quality of life in Gahanna as excellent, very good, good, not very good, or poor?

- (1) excellent
- (2) very good
- (3) good
- (4) not very good
- (5) poor
- (6) Not sure
- (7) REF

4. Would you say that in terms of being a good place to live, things in Gahanna are headed in the right direction or do you feel things in Gahanna are off on the wrong track?

- (1) Right direction (a)
- (2) Wrong direction (b)
- (3) [VOL] Not changing (0)
- (4) Not sure (0)

- (a) When you say things in Gahanna are headed in the right direction, can you describe in your own words what you mean?
- (b) When you say things in Gahanna are off on the wrong track, can you describe in your own words what you mean?

5. What would you say is the most important challenge facing the City of Gahanna?

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Randomize order of a/b sets, but only for items from Q6 to Q13

Overall, how satisfied have you been with each of the following in the past twelve months?  REPEAT FOR EACH: "How satisfied are you with... in the past 12 months"	a.						b.	
	Very satisfied	Some-what satisfied	Some-what dis-satisfied	Very dis-satisfied	No experience with this / No contact with this dept	Not sure	Have you had a problem with this in past 12 months?	
6. a. How satisfied are you with police response when you or others have called them in the past year? ◆ b. In the past year have you noticed or heard about any problems with police response to problems?	4	3	2	1	5	8	Y	N
7. a. Snow removal in your neighborhood. ◆ b. Last winter did you experience any lack of attention to snow removal in your area of Gahanna?	4	3	2	1	5	8	Y	N
8. a. Trash and yard waste pickup. ◆ b. In the past year have you experienced any problems with the trash and yard waste pickup?	4	3	2	1	5	8	Y	N
9. a. Services of the Water Department. ◆ b. In the past year have you experienced any problems with services of the Water Department?	4	3	2	1	5	8	Y	N
10.a. Street maintenance, such as repairing pot-holes, and keeping pavement in good condition. ◆ b. Currently are there any problems with street pavement in your neighborhood you feel have been neglected by the City?	4	3	2	1	5	8	Y	N

11.a. [IF ANY ACTIVITIES] How satisfied have you been with the recreation programs sponsored by the Gahanna Parks and recreation Department? ◆ b. In the past year, have you experienced any problems with Gahanna's Parks and Recreation programs?	4	3	2	1	5	8	Y	N
12.a. Police coverage of the part of Gahanna where you live. ◆ b. In the past year have you noticed any lack of police coverage of your part of Gahanna?	4	3	2	1	5	8	Y	N
13.a. The sense of safety from crime in Gahanna. ◆ b. In the past year have you had reason to be particularly concerned about crime here?	4	3	2	1		8	Y	N
14. The City's efforts to stimulate jobs and economic growth	4	3	2	1	5	8		
15. The handling of development of Olde Gahanna, also known as the Creekside District?	4	3	2	1	5	8		
16. In the past two years, have you visited a Gahanna City park?							Y	N
17. [IF Q16=Y] Which one park have you visited most often? (This is unaided. On interviewer screen, list the parks and provide an optional blank)	LIST OF PARKS FOR CATI: Academy Park; Friendship Park; Gahanna Woods; Hannah Park; Headley Park; Pizzurro Park (including the dog park); Shull Park (including "The B.A.S.E."); Veterans' Memorial Park; Woodside Green Park							
[IF Q16=N, SKIP TO Q0] 18.a. In the past year, how satisfied have you been with the way the parks have been maintained? ◆ b. In the past year have you experienced any problems with a lack of maintenance in any Gahanna city park?	4	3	2	1	5	8	Y	N

19. I would like to ask you about various officials and departments of Gahanna City government. For each one I read, would you tell me if you consider the job performance of the officials very good, good, just average, poor, or very poor? Thinking of only the past two years, how would you rate the ...

RANDOMIZE ORDER OF Q20 TO Q25,	Very good	Good	Just average	Poor	Very poor	Not sure
20. Overall job performance of the Mayor of Gahanna?	5	4	3	2	1	8
21. Overall job performance of Gahanna City Council?	5	4	3	2	1	8
22. <b>Not</b> including Gahanna schools and the Fire Department, how would you rate the city services you and other taxpayers get for the tax you pay to the City of Gahanna?	5	4	3	2	1	8
23. How efficiently the City officials in Gahanna have been operating city departments in the sense of holding down costs and avoiding waste	5	4	3	2	1	
24. How well the city has kept people informed about major issues that might affect city services or local taxes	5	4	3	2	1	8
25. How well the City government is handling city finances and tax policy during this economic recession	5	4	3	2	1	8

26. In the past two years, have you called or gone to any office of the City of Gahanna for any reason, whether City Council, the Mayor's office, or a department?

- (1) Yes (a)
- (2) No (27)
- (3) Do not recall (27)

(a) Which office or department did you contact? (If multiples, which did you contact most recently?)

- (1) Council member
- (2) Mayor
- (3) Parks and Recreation
- (4) Planning / permits / zoning
- (5) Police
- (6) Service department / water / Sewer / Trash
- (7) Finance (including Tax Division)
- (8) Does not recall

(b) Did you contact them just for information only or to resolve an issue, provide a permit or take other action?

- (1) Just for information (c)
- (2) Resolve an issue/take other action (d)
- (3) Do not recall (e)

(c) Did the people you reached provide the information you needed?

- (1) Yes (e)
- (2) No (e)
- (3) Do not recall (e)

- (d) Regardless of whether it turned out as you wished, how satisfied were you that the people you reached resolved the issue in one way or another?
  - (1) Very satisfied (e)
  - (2) Somewhat satisfied (e)
  - (3) Not very satisfied (e)
  - (4) Very dissatisfied (e)
  - (5) Do not recall (e)
- (e) Regardless of how your inquiry turned out, were you treated in a courteous, respectful manner?
  - (1) Yes (27)
  - (2) No (f)
- (f) Can you tell me in what way you were treated poorly? \_\_\_\_\_

27. On a different subject now...Gahanna has a city income tax of one and one-half percent. The rate of one and one-half percent has not changed since voters first approved it in 1977. One of the options the City is considering is a one percent change in the tax rate, which would bring the tax to two and one-half percent. If this change in rates were put to a vote, would you approve or disapprove of it?

- (1) Approve
- (2) Disapprove
- (3) Not sure

28. The city income tax applies only to income from earned income, which excludes pension, social security, capital gains and interest. There is no city income tax on pensions, Social Security, or investment income. Knowing that, would you approve or disapprove of this tax increase?

- (1) Approve
- (2) Disapprove
- (3) Not sure

29. If voters approved this tax increase, it could provide funds for maintenance that the City currently cannot afford otherwise. This includes things like repairing city streets, replacing aging police cars and police computers, and trucks and other aging equipment used by the park department. Knowing that, would you approve or disapprove of this income tax change?

- (1) Approve
- (2) Disapprove
- (3) Not sure

30. If voters approved this tax increase, it could fund not only maintenance but also certain improvements. For each one, please tell me if you feel it would make approving a tax increase more worthwhile, less worthwhile or make no difference if it were included in the improvement plan.

- (a) Improvements to city swimming pools, including Hunters Ridge Pool and Gahanna Swim Club
- (b) Improvements to the athletic fields in the city parks
- (c) Building walking and bicycle trails in Gahanna
- (d) Develop indoor meeting space for Gahanna citizens to use
- (e) Develop indoor recreation space for Gahanna citizens to use

31. Keeping these projects in mind, some people say that even if it requires an increase of 1% in the city income tax, Gahanna should improve the quality of its community facilities or risk falling behind neighboring cities that compete for new residents and employers. Others say that Gahanna should not make any improvements that would cost tax money. Which view do you agree with?

- (1) Improve facilities
- (2) Make no improvements that cost money
- (3) [VOL] They have plenty of money to do projects without a tax increase
- (4) [VOL] They will need to make improvements, but not now in this economy
- (5) [VOL] Not sure

32. Before the development of the Creekside project, how would you have described the old downtown area of Gahanna? Fine just as it was; Needed a little improvement but not much; Needed major improvement?

- (1) Fine just as it was,
- (2) Needed a little improvement but not much,
- (3) Needed major improvement
- (4) [VOL] Not sure – Never went there much
- (5) [VOL] Not sure – Have not lived in Gahanna that long
- (6) [VOL] Not sure

33. Have you gone into the Creekside development in downtown Old Gahanna?

- (1) Yes (34)
- (2) No (36)
- (3) Not sure (36)

34. About how many times in the past 12 months?

- (1) Almost every day
- (2) Once a week or more often
- (3) Once a month
- (4) Once every two or three months
- (5) About once or twice a year
- (6) [VOL] Respondent says s/he does there only when events are occurring

35. In the past 12 months, which, if any, of the following have you done in Creekside, the Creekside Park or downtown Old Gahanna?

- |     |                                  |     |    |
|-----|----------------------------------|-----|----|
| (a) | Attended a concert               | Yes | No |
| (b) | Shopped                          | Yes | No |
| (c) | Eaten at a restaurant            | Yes | No |
| (d) | Visited the park at the creek    | Yes | No |
| (e) | Attended the Jazz and Blues Fest | Yes | No |
| (f) | Attended another event           | Yes | No |
| (g) | Work (or worked) there           | Yes | No |

36. Which of the following two statements do you believe is true, statement A or statement B?

A. Statement A is this: The City of Gahanna owns and is responsible for **all** of the buildings and property in the Creekside Development including the condominiums and office and retail buildings, parking garage, outdoor plazas and the public park along the creek

B. Statement B is this: The City owns only the public park along the creek, the parking garage and the outdoor plazas, but private owners and developers own the condominiums and office and retail buildings?

- 1. A (a)
- 2. B (b)
- 8. Not sure (b)

- a. That is correct. The City owns and is responsible for only the park, the parking garage, and the public plazas, and private owners and developers own and are responsible for the condos and office and retail buildings.
- b. Many other people also think that. However, just so you will know for other questions, the City owns and is responsible for only the park, the parking garage, and the public plazas, but private developers own and are responsible for the condos and office and retail buildings.

37. Here are two statements of opinion, not fact. Which of them, A or B, is closer to your personal opinion?

Opinion A is that "It was worthwhile to develop Creekside because the old downtown area of Gahanna needed more parking, improvements to Creekside Park, and additional space for public events and new businesses."

Opinion B is that "Regardless of the improvements in the park, additional parking, and other developments in that area, the Creekside development was just not worthwhile for the City of Gahanna."

1. A
2. B
8. Not sure

38. To change the subject for the final few questions, when you want to find out about issues or upcoming events in Gahanna what source do you turn to first to get information?

- (1) Gateway [INTERVIEWER NOTE: GATEWAY IS A PARKS AND REC BOOKLET THAT GOES TO EVERY HOME]
- (2) Local weekly paper (Respondent may say: "This Week," "The SNP paper," "Gahanna News," Rocky Fork Enterprise)
- (3) The Internet / The web
- (4) The City of Gahanna website
- (5) Social media, including Facebook and Twitter
- (6) Other: SPECIFY: \_\_\_\_\_

39. Do you use social media, including Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, Linked-In? Twitter?

- (1) Yes (40)
- (2) No (41)

40. Which do you use?

- |     |           |     |    |
|-----|-----------|-----|----|
| (a) | Facebook  | Yes | No |
| (b) | Twitter   | Yes | No |
| (c) | MySpace   | Yes | No |
| (d) | Linked-In | Yes | No |

### **Demographics**

41. Do you have children under the age of eighteen living in your household?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) REF

42. What is the highest level of education you have completed? (READ RESPONSES)

- (1) Elementary school
- (2) High school
- (3) Some college
- (4) Two year college degree
- (5) Four year college degree
- (6) Graduate degree
- (7) Refused

43. In what year were you born? 19 \_\_\_\_ 99=refused

44. Are you employed outside the home?

- (1) Yes (46)
- (2) No (45)
- (3) REF (48)

45. Are you retired, unemployed, a homemaker?

- (1) Retired (48)
- (2) Unemployed (48)
- (3) Homemaker (48)
- (4) REF (48)

46. Do you work in Gahanna, or is your place of employment outside of Gahanna?

- (1) Work in Gahanna
- (2) Work elsewhere
- (3) REF

47. Which local city or town do you work in?

- |                             |                       |                           |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| (1) Bexley City             | (15) Harrisburg Vlg   | Pickerington City         |
| (2) Blendon Twp             | (16) Hilliard City    | (29) Plain Twp            |
| (3) Brice Vlg               | (17) Jackson Twp      | (30) Pleasant Twp         |
| (4) Brown Twp               | (18) Jefferson Twp    | (31) Prairie Twp          |
| (5) Canal Winchester Vlg    | (19) Lockbourne Vlg   | (32) Reynoldsburg City    |
| (6) Clinton Twp             | (20) Madison Twp      | (33) Riverlea Vlg         |
| (7) Columbus City           | (21) Marble Cliff Vlg | (34) Sharon Twp           |
| (8) Dublin City             | (22) Marion Twp       | (35) Truro Twp            |
| (9) Franklin Twp            | (23) Mifflin Twp      | (36) Upper Arlington City |
| (10) Gahanna City           | (24) Minerva Park Vlg | (37) Urbancrest Vlg       |
| (11) Grandview Heights City | (25) New Albany Vlg   | (38) Valleyview Vlg       |
| (12) Grove City City        | (26) Norwich Twp      | (39) Washington Twp       |
| (13) Groveport Vlg          | (27) Obetz Vlg        | (40) Westerville City     |
| (14) Hamilton Twp           | (28) Perry Twp        | (41) Whitehall City       |
|                             |                       | (42) Worthington City     |

48. For the next to last question and it is completely confidential for statistical purposes only, which range that I read you did your total household income fall into last year?

- (1) Under \$15,000
- (2) \$15,000 but less than \$25,000
- (3) \$25,000 but less than \$35,000
- (4) \$35,000 but less than \$50,000
- (5) \$50,000 but less than \$75,000
- (6) \$75,000 but less than \$100,000
- (7) \$100,000 or more
- (9) Refused

49. And the final question, have you any other comments about the City of Gahanna?

\_\_\_\_\_

VERIFY: FIRST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Sometimes in surveys like this, our research personnel like to ask a follow up question by e-mail. Would you be willing to share your email address for this purpose? It will not be given to the city or anyone else.

EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Appendix B: Verbatim responses to open end questions**

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**Figure 46 Most important Challenge Facing Gahanna**

**What would you say is the most important challenge facing the City of Gahanna?**

I don't know. Just spending on unneeded things.

A major that is more responsible.

A revenue stream for the city and the Schools, basically we need to raise our taxes.

A sustainable tax base.

Another thing is, the more the city does in Creekside area would be a good thing. Like the music festival. The city has a big investment in this area, like the light parade. The one thing that really hurt that development was the hotel tenant withdrew. They need to replace that concept with another use for that area. Something that will create turnover for a lot of people in that area.

Attracting more business and keeping the Schools in good working order.

Attracting new businesses to bring in revenue to the city, maybe by offering attractive proposals and making it business-friendly.

Balancing the budget.

Based on the city activities we've gone to, I think it is going to be difficult for the city to expand its downtown the way they seem to want. It doesn't seem like there's enough room.

Because of economic times, they want to increase taxes and the mayor wants to make it like San Antonio, TX.

Better government.

Bringing in more businesses.

Budget cuts.

Budget issues.

Budget, money.

Budget.

Budget.

City services.

Controlled spending.

Creekside because someone is going to have to pay for all that stuff.

Currently need a little better accountability, in terms of their planning practices, how much they are spending on projects, need more family oriented things in Creekside.

Dealing with the Schools. Bringing in not only business but families into the city. That's something I know will be an issue down the road.

Disappointed that the School tax issue didn't go through

Dollars, getting more.

Drainage

Economic and service related issues.

Economics, holding the level that it is without raising taxes.

Economics. The finances to do the work of the city - there is only so much money.

Economy

Economy is a problem.

Economy.

Education

Education, going in the right direction.

Education. I think the future of any community is the quality of education.

Education; also planning and development.

Employment

Filling in Creekside with businesses.

Filling up the store fronts that are vacant and have been vacant for a long time, getting new businesses into town.

Finances

Finances

Finances - the city is having a hard time with levies not passing.

Finances and paying for our Schools. Raising city income taxes.

Finances for the Schools, need to pass levies, but still building the new high School.

Finances.

Finances. Rising expenses with no tax increase for awhile, to keep up with inflation.

Financial -- handling the budget.

Financial challenges and raising income.

Financial concerns.

Financial crisis

Financial issues

Financial.

Financial.

Finding a way to fund the School, fire and police without adding more taxes to senior citizen base who have no income. To continually ask for more is stupid.

Finding for Schools.

Fiscal responsibility -- making do with what they have.

Fiscal responsibility.

Fix the streets.

For lack of a better word, they are land locked.

Funding, budgets and keeping the current services up to date so we don't lose any services.

Funding.

Funds management. Making sure there's enough money and not squandering it. It should go to police and fire departments and maintaining the infrastructure.

Gee, I don't know. I'm older and not as involved now.

Getting benefits from Creekside that they wanted.

Getting business for a tax base.

Getting money and people to finance the upkeep of the infrastructure of the city.

Getting people in the community involved. There's a lot of things happening and people could help to improve our community.

Getting the cost of utilities -- water and sewage.

Getting the levy passed for the School.

Getting the School levy passed.

Good stewardship of funds -- handling the funds they have.

Growth

Growth

Growth with the School.

Growth. I'm thinking it might be negative in terms of not having enough space for homes or land for additional people in the city.

Hamilton Road construction will be challenging.

Havens Corners road needs to be widened.

Having to raise the taxes.

High taxes.

Houses aren't selling, same things facing everybody else, not many condos sold.

How to best use the funding the city has without raising taxes.

How to continue the progress without affecting the factors I just mentioned.

I am concerned about the School levy not passing and it seems like the city doesn't have enough money and they are cutting services.

I am not sure I have an opinion on that.

I am on a fixed income and no longer getting low income discount for water bill. It sounds like they are encouraging people to be on welfare but if you own your home you get no help.

I believe that the School issue should have been passed but it was not.

I can't think of any.

I can't think of anything except funding for the Schools.

I can't think of anything.

I could be critical of Creekside and the shopping area was not necessary.

I could not tell you, because I have not lived here that long.

I do not know, could not single out one thing.

I do not know.

I don't feel there is any challenge facing the city.

I don't have any real complaints about anything.

I don't keep too much up on politics. I know they're building that thing, I'm not sure what it is, and people are upset about it. I know the School levy didn't pass.

I don't know. Probably Traffic.

I don't really know, maybe the taxes aren't being used right.

I don't see any big challenges.

I don't think it has a challenge.

I don't think they spend their money wisely.

I got this thing about how in the private sector so many people have had to take cuts and teachers have not. It's ok to give them a raise but cut benefits. The government jobs have too many benefits like the private sector does.

I guess getting the School levies to pass and parking around Creekside.

I guess maintaining what we have with the economy the way it is.

I guess operating costs. The levy just failed, so they are having a hard time allocating funds and dealing with what we have.

I guess they are going to have a budget shortage and the School funding.

I have no idea.

I have seen changes that I am wondering about. The holiday lights thing was cancelled. People digging holes that they don't do anything with. Goshan Lane and West Johnstown Road - they dug a hole and then filled it back in and there are pipes and equipment just sitting there. No one is doing anything.

I know the Creekside project was quite expensive and some of the places there are not filled, some of the businesses and housing. That would be better if they could draw more people there. Probably also Schools, I know just one high School for the area and it's getting kind of old. I just think the facility needs updating.

I know they still need to widen Hamilton Road and some people are fighting it.

I really can't say - I don't feel they really have any challenges.

I really don't have any opinion. I'm not aware of any problems.

I really don't know.

I really don't know.

I see the biggest challenge passing the School levy and maintaining small business.

I think it is it's finances.

I think it is the government expenditures have created some real problems for the city.

I think keeping businesses here. I look at Creekside and there are a lot of empty spaces there. Parking is a huge issue there, and no one should have to pay to park there. Do they think they can charge to go to the park when they can go to Easton and pay nothing.

I think our music and arts programs could get more funding. I think its horrible the School levy didn't pass.

I think right now the funding for the education levy that didn't pass.

I think that the Creekside was a mistake.

I think that we are behind other cities as far as jobs and money. It seems that the city is falling behind.

I think the economic conditions - its going to be a tough year, with not enough funds to service the city.

I think the high School should be expanded. I feel the teachers that should work with children that have special needs.

I think the infrastructure to keep up with the developments they've allowed.

I think the most important challenge is to sustain growth, jobs and opportunities for young people.

I think the Traffic is the biggest problem. Too crowded and too dimly lit at night. Too dangerous. Not enough street lights.

I think the whole budget issue is not going to go away --more because of the economy than what the city is actually doing. They need to improve the overall pedestrian infrastructure.

I think their police department -- I think they need to work on their characters and personalities.

I think they are not making their budget, they need a levy or something.

I think they should attempt to live within their budget.

I think they should improve on some community thing like Westerville Community Center. A bigger or more active senior center.

I think Traffic at times is terrible. To much Traffic for our streets to handle.

I think we need bike paths -- more paths, more connectivity. Creekside seems worthless because the rent is too high and the patrons/businesses just aren't attracting people. Too expensive and not big enough assortments. Something like a California Pizza Kitchen or some other fun place for kids.

I would imagine its the budget.

I would imagine revenue.

I would say from what I read, its not over spending and funding the correct things.

I would say School system. I think there is a problem with diversity in the area and it creates challenges of parity across the community. The high School structure is not a draw for coming in to the community. It's not a deterrent, but people are not moving here for that reason.

I would say Schools.

I would say some of the roads get pretty crowded, backed up with not a lot of access to some of the side streets.

I would say taxation.

I would say the major roadways only have two way Traffic on them. They could be widened.

I would think what are they going to do about that, would it raise taxes.

I would want to see more condos sold in the Creekside area or give tax incentives to attract more businesses and keep the ones they have.

I'd say the Schools.

If you listen to the news, it's money. But they are thinking about raising our taxes, so that's their biggest challenge.

I'm 87 years old and I'm not much with it anymore. I just don't pay attention to much anymore. I may not be a good candidate for your survey.

I'm all for the education for the children and their future. But I was disappointed that the School levy was not passed. I hate to see programs cut and good teachers lost. My two daughters are teachers and we all believe that it will hurt the children to lose good teachers and cut back on that.

I'm not very active in what's going on so can't voice my opinion on that.

I'm not very decisive at this moment. I'm upset about the taxes and have had problems with the tax department.

Improvements, streets, lighting and Schools.

Improving the roads and the School finances need to be addressed.

Income

Income, I'm sure. The city budget has challenges.

Incoming business growth.

Increase in crime, by keeping the city safe.

Infrastructure, the roads need to be widened like the state roads. Also the School levy by getting more information out to the people.

Intentional growth. People leave Gahanna, we need a strong business / industrial base to support the Schools. We can not depend upon retirees to bear the burden.

It is becoming too crowded.

It needs more balance with long term residents as well as attracting more residents.

It over coming a mind set in the people and leaders that find taxes to be the only issue. if the city want to maintain identity it needs to offer more

Its outgrowing its bounds. The Traffic seems too much for the size of the city.

It's probably the funding of the Schools. I think we have to find some way other than pro taxes.

It's the growth of the city, with all the Traffic and lots of new stores and such. Mostly Traffic, I would say.

Jobs

Jobs and the economy

Jobs and the economy, like every city. Its the budget -- what they can do and what they can't do.

Jobs and the economy, like every place else.

Jobs and the economy, like everywhere else.

Jobs and the economy.

Jobs and the economy. Unique to Gahanna is the rising costs in general -- heading towards high inflation.

Just the School. Property taxes are getting pretty high,

Keep costs in line.

Keeping and attracting more businesses and keeping the people already living here in Gahanna.

Keeping businesses here. There are a lot of empty storefronts in the Creekside area.

Keeping city services through taxes.

Keeping residents, based on the local tax structure.

Keeping Schools going well.

Keeping the budget straight - especially in these tough times.

Keeping the city going.

Keeping the Schools funded.

Keeping the taxes low.

Keeping their head above water without raising any taxes.

Keeping up with the numbers. Education is in there. One high School. One very large high School. Our children are grown. We don't pay as much attention to the growth of number of children that's critical to the city. I hate to see high Schools grow so large, they become more like college campuses.

Keeping up with the other communities.

Learning to manage the resources with the economy.

Levy for the Schools did not pass.

Looks like financial issues and the Schools.

Loss of tax revenue.

Lost revenue and businesses.

Lower tax revenues because of the economy.

Maintaining services within the budget.

Maintaining the infrastructure, keeping roads nice, paying for fire and police departments, maintain a city employee base without adding to many people.

Maintaining the School system we've had for years, which is outstanding.

Maintenance of street signs.

Maintenance.

Making a budget and sticking to it.

Making sure it's community members stick behind its Schools.

Maybe just trying to find an identity. I just don't think Gahanna has one, and is trying to catch up with the other suburbs, like with Creekside, which isn't doing it. Nothing gives the whole area unity.

Maybe spending their money more wisely.

Maybe taxes and developing revenue.

Mill Street area. They spent too much money.

Modernization of the utilities and being able to pay online.

Monetary spending -- too much in the wrong places. Creekside is an example -- they've put millions into it and they're not getting anything out.

Money and the economy

Money, as far as the city and how they use it.

Money, as far as the city needing more to keep going.

Money.

Money.

Money.

Money.

Money.

Money.

Money.

Money. At Creekside, all the rentals are not rented, condos are empty.

Money. Not enough funding for all the services.

Money--need more.

Most important is the Traffic issue, you can't get around. Traffic gets bottle necked and not enough roads to handle Traffic.

None that I have seen

Not enough to keep kids busy - more sports activities.

Not having the money to carry on their normal, good educational programs.

Our police need to improve patrol.

Outsourcing jobs hurt the people here because we can't afford to buy their products.

Overall development. Continue to do the development they are doing.

Overall the city itself needs to develop viable parking, need to get Traffic around town not through town.

Parking downtown.

Passing a levy to finance the Schools.

Passing the School levy.

Passing the School tax.

Personally, I like it but I'm afraid they're growing too fast and they need to try to maintain a good balance.

Planning for the future is huge. Traffic and zoning and keeping the budget in line. And again the holiday parade getting cancel was bad.

Politics

Probably a balanced budget.

Probably budget.

Probably funding is inadequate.

Probably getting the budget down without increasing taxes. The levy was turned down. Not everything is good in Gahanna.

Probably have to control growth, road Traffic and Schools.

probably I would think the budge right now because of the economy

Probably just trying to maintain services when the economy is so bad, trying to figure out ways to keep us where we are when housing values are dropping and people are clamoring that they don't want more taxes or are concerned about services. I read the other day that Ohio is one of the top states that people are moving away from so it is a real challenge.

Probably like most small towns, the recession.

probably police protection, public services

Probably Schools. I think having one high School has always been a problem. The idea that it takes so much money to keep it going is an ongoing problem.

probably taxes, revenue for the city

Probably the balance of population growth to not feeling crowded. There's more and more people moving in.

Probably the economy.

Probably the high School

probably the Schools

Probably the taxes not coming in from the foreclosures

Probably the taxes, like property taxes. Hopefully they don't go to the highest.

Probably, supporting the School levies which have failed before.

Probably.. We don't know our mayor and council members all that well. They seem to be low profile

Public School levee

Raising money for the Schools

revenue

Revenue -- need more.

revenue, industrial base needs improvement

revenue, meeting needs, having a tax rate that covers everything

Revenues

Right now it is keeping expenditure in line with the income.

Right now the School levy

Right now, the issue is the proposed income tax,

roads and accessible streets

School

School district and keeping them up to standards.

School funding

School issue

School maintenance

School system and attracting businesses

School system because had a levy go down and talking about cuts

School system, keep it up to snuff. Trying to pass the levy.

Schools

Schools

Schools

Schools

Schools

Schools

Schools

Schools budget cuts

Schools, keeping the quality good

seems like they need to have more meetings with the public, School district is overspent

something with revenue, services for residents

Spending their money more wisely

Staying within budget

stop excessive spending

stop signs, people walking are almost hit, people don't stop for them

Support of the new high School

Taking care of the citizens, for example maintaining the parks and streets

tax money and having money available

taxes

taxes

Taxes and revenues

taxes and School district issues

Taxes are high for retired people

taxes are to high

Taxes going to high

taxes increases, School systems

taxes right now and job market

Taxes. For the last 3 elections, they have tried to increase School taxes by an unreasonable amount. If they had asked 1/3 of that, I would have approved it. And now they're asking to raise income taxes.

Taxes. Schools and the income tax issue.

That the School tax did not pass.

That's a tough one. Keeping the roads clear of snow

that's mostly it

The basic running of the city given the economy -- harder to harder.

The bottom line is money.

the budget

The budget with the upcoming reductions of budget and services.

The city is spending too much money -- i.e., Creekside is an example.

The creek side development and the condos taking care of

The development

The economy

The economy -- jobs are scarce.

The economy and employment. Traffic congestion during the rush hour.

The economy. We are really struggling.

The fiscal responsibility and the fiscal budget coming up next year

The general economy the city is pretty much land locked and they need somebody to get more business into the city in other words I feel they need more corporate tax than income tax

The growth...it might be growing too fast. I think when we have a lot of power outages...events at Creekside can get too crowded to enjoy.

The idiots in the city that don't realize it costs money to run things.

The inability to finance the School sports programs because homes aren't selling and new people with kids aren't moving in.

The main thing is the expansion of Hamilton Rd between the high School and 62

The money. The taxes are too high. I may have to sell my house after 40 years because the taxes are too high.

the one challenge is we became the city all the handicap people come to because we have a lot of good services for them, access to streets, the elderly are looked out for, rezoning of Taylor for a half-way house of some sort so may be asking the residents a lot to support this, don't think through things all the way so may be putting to much responsibility on the residents.

The over spend money they don't have and then cry for more.

The roads -- pot holes and rough areas in many parts of the city.

the same

The School district. The challenge is passing the bond issue, and I'm not in favor of it.

the School district. If it continues to fail it people will choose not to move here

the School issue as far as the levee

The School levy department. The levy did not pass.

The School levy didn't pass

The School levy not passing. I have a child in middle and high School. My older child in particular is very active in voluntary or elective activities and we're pretty worried that those will be things that get cut, like drama, theatre. One of the reasons we came to Gahanna was for the superior education. We're supposed to be a somewhat affluent suburb and the fact that the levy wasn't approved is a big concern to us

The School levy. We need support our Schools

the School system

The School system both the quality and financial

The School systems in a good direction

The Schools

The Schools

The Schools again. If they don't get funding we ll be in trouble

The situation with the School system. The levy just fail again.

The slabs are out of kilter. So, sidewalks need to be better maintained

The tax base for the Schools.

The taxes are too high.

The tough economy. The city needs to do better with the money.

The Traffic congestion off 670 up thru Old Gahanna

The way the voting goes most people don't get a chance to choose what changes get made,

they are going to have to with the taxes, meet current expenses , make a lot of cuts

they have a problem with Creekside and when they changed the flea market they lost a lot of people

They have to get the School thing in check. They keep raising the levy and not cutting their belts anywhere.

they really have any stores in Gahanna

They should have more programs or activities for juniors -- the YMCA doesn't offer as much as other cities' YMCAs

They're having a financial crisis of some sort and I think the problem is to convince the people that it's a necessity and that it's worthwhile

They're land locked right now, with no room to grow.

Thiers no more place for it to grow

To fund education

To get people to the get new tax

to me I guess it would be Creekside. To me it cannot sustain itself and if it closes up one big empty building

to provide services with there budget.

Too many property taxes -- people are going to start moving away.

Too much building down town that was not necessary.

Traffic

Traffic

Traffic

Traffic -- too congested.

Traffic -- too much, especially Hamilton Road. They've talked about widening it.

Traffic as far as some areas need to be fixed

Traffic control because the city is growing in leaps and bounds and a lot of the roads are 2-lanes.

Traffic is becoming a big problem and of course the Schools

Traffic on Hamilton Road or the Schools (not passing the levy) - it could affect homes' values

Traffic problems -- Too crowded, too many cars on the road

Transportation

Try to get money for the Schools

Trying to get jobs going

Trying to get the money back that they spent on Creekside.

Trying to keep the city of Gahanna in decent shape without making "improvements" that are unnecessary.

Trying to keep the government running.

We need to get that police department on track. The first thing that other people from other cities say is that "You've got to stop those police from Gahanna from going 140 miles an hour" down the road. We had two caught on motorcycles joyriding going over 100 miles an hour. It was a big joke on Gahanna. If you are going to make the public do something, you need to set the example first.

We need to get the School levy passed.

We seem to spend money for peculiar things -- like Creekside development. They put trees in the middle of the streets for no reason. Things like this don't have any value to the city.

We send our kids to private School, so I don't know if the School system is financed totally. And Creekside is having trouble filling the businesses and restaurants and coffee shop have come and gone.

Well, as far as I know Schools. I think it's money and funding of programs.

Well, I suppose trying to keep things going, all the roads in good shape, people happy I guess. Keeping things going like they are and not let them slide.

Well, I would say people respecting laws. I live in an apartment complex and some of the neighbors have had to call police for rowdiness. The police were wonderful, and honestly I am struggling to find something challenging because it's hard to say something bad about Gahanna.

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### **Figure 47 Comments: Headed in Right Direction**

**When you say things in Gahanna are headed in the right direction, can you describe in your own words what you mean?**

A lot of the events and road repairs.

They are trying to improve the quality of the city, without making too big.

I think they are doing as well as they can do.

The mayor is doing a good job. Also, they are building an addition to the high school and the politicians are doing a good job.

They have done a better job on plowing the streets and maintaining the parks.

The development around Creekside and all of that. shopping, restaurants.

They keep things up, roads are good, streets cleaned off, police are very vigilant, good restaurants, grocery stores.

I like the parks - they are in good shape and getting better.

I like the schools. My concern is the crowding problem in the high schools. Students have to go outside to change classes. City services in general are very good -- no issues.

The police are great.

I think economic development, city improvement of the infrastructure, and public services are good.

Shopping is good, stores are easy to get to. It's a good spot to raise my family. There is no traffic.

Our roadways are being repaired and nice. Shopping centers always clean. Everything is in easy access for shopping for necessities and specialty item. Areas are well kept.

The city seems to be doing things to bring in industry and renovations, as well as remodeling existing structures.

We are very pleased with the community and we use the clubhouse.

Well, things like last year when I was out shoveling my driveway some firemen were driving by and stopped to shovel for me.

You have to separate national problems from local problems in Gahanna. We are caught by a lot of the problems in the states. Children that need school lunches - the rate is about 25. I am troubled by the two school levy defeats. It is difficult to get people to tax themselves during a recession.

They seem to be developing and growing a lot over the years.

I believe the city government has spending going down the right avenues, reinvestment in the community seems good and the there never seem to be too many major issues or problems.

I feel that this a great place to live, but the fact that they're putting rat poison in the water is not a good thing, nor am I happy about the school levy.

It is progressing and developing.

I think the development of Creekside was a great start.

I enjoy all the community activities that they hold in the Creekside area. I see efforts to bring businesses into Gahanna.

Services are ok.

I like the small town community feel.

I would say that one thing we like about it is the accessibility to everything, like the bike path that links to New Albany and the parks, the Creekside area as well. I feel like they are always on top of snow removal and services in general.

The school system is good, they take care of streets really well, tree trimming, it's easy to get in and out of Gahanna, events they have are well done, and people really like them.

I think that Creekside is going in the right direction. It is powerful, beautiful and fun for any family. The library is a wonderful asset to the community and people of all ages. This includes schools, too. Also, the trees added are beautiful.

I like the community where I live -- very nice people. I like so many shops around. Its very comfortable as far as getting around.

I guess since the devolvement ... trailed off

No, I can't describe it. I am happy with the city.

They're always upgrading the services.

I think the city is trying to make a better city. Some of the things they've put in at Creekside are pretty good. I hope they continue to grow in that direction.

Things are going well, seem to be growing.

We think its a great place to live.

It seems like the neighborhoods are in good repair, the school systems are doing well - other than needing the expansion to the high school.

The location is good. The taxes are relatively sane. The schools are good. There is a little entertainment downtown. Crime is probably average or less than average.

I think this is a great place to live, that the schools are great for the children. Everything is nearby that you need, you don't have to go outside because it's all right here. Creekside is wonderful for the people, and we should have done this sooner.

I see improvements in terms of the roads. I also see that the streets are cleaned. The neighborhoods are very well maintained.

I think the investment in public spaces is good.

I think it is a good place to raise a family.

They are trying to improve the schools and Creekside.

Well, it seems like they're trying to improve the business part, to get more people in to our community, which I think is important. It is growing and we have to grow it.

I am a supporter of Creekside and laud the council for approving it, as it has improved overall view of Gahanna and has acquired a better reputation.

Sewer is coming in, which isn't great. I like the city otherwise, though.

I think the transportation is good. Creekside is a nice place to go. I like the direction.

They seem to get most things done that they want to.

I feel that we have everything we need in the city, for being a small town.

The location, and the services the city provides are pretty good. The schools are good.

Like renovations, taking care of roads, community offerings, yoga, golf course, parades, festivals, exits, the upscale look to it.

It's a good friendly place to live and is safe, but could stand a few changes.

I belong to the senior center and that's a big asset for me. I like Creekside, the library. I think we have good services.

Educational system is pretty good. They do a good job taking care of the streets in the winter. They take care of what needs to be taken care of.

It's close to my job and still has a small town atmosphere. And, it's reasonably safe.

Traffic moves well. It's fine, nice parks, everything in Gahanna is convenient.

The areas are basically kept up, overall presentation of Gahanna is good.

I'm happy with the quality of schools and the Creekside development, yet it has kept it's small town environment where everybody knows everybody else.

Notice is progressive, mayor moves towards technology, other communities are doing it.

I think they have a good school system. I think they have a good shopping area. Good doctors and other things that you really need are right at your hands.

I think they're trying to do things downtown and build it up a little bit. Make it like a small community and bring people in to the shops and to eat.

I think the parks and recreation around here are very well taken care of, with a lot of free opportunities for families and children.

I believe our quality of life here is good, we have excellent police and fire protection, we have good schools.

The executive golf course and surrounding walking trails. Creekside is another great example.

We really like the Creekside area. it seems like they have a lot more activities going on.

The neighborhoods are safe, the schools are good, everything that you would need as far as dry cleaning and stores and that type of thing are close by.

I think what they are doing to get the high school better and fixing up the downtown to make it look better.

I like that there are a lot of community activities available. The police are fairly visible.

Well, I really like the way they clean the streets when we have snow and ice. There is a lot of building going on. It's a clean city.

Just with the development of River Rock and stuff like getting a little more upscale stuff.

The mayor has been a good leader, and we have a good city counsel.

I think everything is going well, good police protection, everything is being kept up well, everything is going good.

I think the city stays up to date on the general economy and pays more than its fair share to the community.

I like living here.

The community developments, the Creekside area - I thought that was great. It brings the community together, like the freedom festival in summertime.

An easy place to live, convenient for moving around and there are no big battles or controversies going on.

The schools kept up, and so are the parks. The parades are good.

Tight knit community.

I think that things in the city are going just fine. I'm concerned about the schools, but otherwise they are fine.

I'm very proud of the school district. That was the main purpose for moving to Gahanna; I have two small children in elementary school. I like the strong sense of community where we can close down the streets and celebrate as a community on a regular basis. I think we're surrounded by some beautiful parks.

The police force seems to be handling everything and the schools seem to be good.

We have revitalized old Gahanna and are trying to increase park space. Public safety services are good.

I agree with everything they are doing, wouldn't want to live anywhere else.

I like the Creekside idea - it could have been a little larger, but I see they have been having some problems.

I think the schools are great and all the businesses are close.

Right now we are experiencing financial problems, and we still trying to keep city services at a high level while dealing with the problems.

I think the city does a great job in providing services. The Creekside development was done well.

It is a good place.

City services that I have dealt have done very well.

I feel it's getting more up-to-date such as parks, trails, and the downtown area.

It is an expanding community. It is a quaint town that offers everything.

I like what they did with Creekside, the police do a good job of patrolling areas, they keep the streets plowed and salted well in the winter, the parks are excellent. They certainly have improved the downtown area and done a good job in planning the city improvements.

It's small and convenient.

Really it's on how the city reacts to the financial issues it faces.

They seem to be updating things such as building new apartments, taking good care of the streets, etc.

They're looking to be more progressive in their development of businesses, schools and parks.

I like the way things are going.

I like the fact that they added to the high school. They knew what needed cutting. I hope they bring back the parade but that was a reasonable thing to cut.

I like what they did with the downtown area, the schools are great.

Low crime and city is pretty much financially stable.

I believe the police and fire department are great and the schools are great, too.

I think its a great place to live. I'm disappointed the school issues were not passed.

They take care of the city and keep it maintained. And if you have a problem you can just call and they take care of it right away.

I like the development of the park system, the roads are well maintained, and we have an excellent fire and police departments.

The parks are nice, and the interstate connections are good. The new park, Hannah, is very nice.

It is a city that is very progressive in our community.

I've seen a lot of changes. The opening of Creekside. It's a wonderful area. The economy downturn at the same time. I don't think it's the wrong place or not needed or wanted, the economy played a part of that. As the economy improves, the place will improve.

They were ranked really high in a magazine for places to live and they have a really good soccer program.

They are opening another school and good cleanliness. We passed issue 5.

I've seen a lot of development of community property, like parks.

I just think its a nice place to live. I moved here from Columbus.

I'd say that they are doing a bit better about getting some business in here. They missed the boat for awhile and it seemed like there wouldn't be much here. Creekside, down Hamilton Road is what I'm talking about. They are filling some of the business buildings.

I like the effort the city is putting in improvement like Creekside and new school buildings. I didn't like that the school levy didn't pass.

Well, there doesn't seem to be a high rate of crime, the police respond quickly, Creekside development is a joke.

We've got Creekside which is pretty nice, restaurants in there, traffic okay, housing reasonable, close to shopping.

Good community, safe.

It seems like the city is trying to beautify Creekside, which is a good place to go. They keep things clean and sweep up the streets and things like that.

They have jobs here and continue to improve the roads. They have good schools and nice parks.

We are growing and keeping up with other areas

Considering the overall economic economy, that the town is able to get through it and to grow once it comes back. We could use new leadership.

I see the community programs provide opportunities to all ages.

I like Creekside - that was a good move on their part, and I like the swimming pools.

To me they are just making it a better community.

I think they brought business to the area.

They are getting more businesses (Stoneridge).

We have our police protection, good schools, traffic is not too bad, good shopping areas.

I feel its good place to live.

Oh, it has everything I'm interested in doing and it has a lot of things to do here.

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I think overall they have a great plan for the future, other than the Creekside condos not being a good idea.

Very progressive city, doing a lot to improve things here.

I like the jazz fest and all the family events. I have young kids and I like having fun things to do.

I am living here on a nice street in a nice section near a school and I am well satisfied.

They keep the streets are very clear. The school system is good. Creekside is a good addition.

I think it is a nice community, everything is well taken care of.

I think that over the years the community has grown. The roads have been maintained and widened

Well, I live west of Gahanna and we are now getting sewer lines. I say that we're getting ahead.

The schools are excellent.

Very good school system and parks. Good parks and recreation.

The city is keeping control of the costs, in line with the economy.

I like the Creekside development. I'd like to see them finish it. Also, the schools are great.

Well, I was raised in Gahanna, I raised my kids here and am helping with my grandkids in Gahanna. I love Creekside, all the family things going on.

I live near Creekside. Its a beautiful area with a lot activity. The idea of Creekside is a good idea.

The people here are very nice.

They always do events at the parks for the community, and keep it family oriented.

I feel its very safe in the area, not a lot of robberies or gangs, and the school system is very good.

Creekside is great. When we moved here it was a village and now its a city.

Well Creekside is a good example. The additional businesses that have come in the last few years are good. I remember when there was only restaurants.

I like the downtown area and the trees look good.

They are doing the best that they can.

I think some of the things I've seen over the past several years, like areas of development, the parks and recreation, new places for dining and shopping. Those are things that are going in the right direction.

The city does a pretty good job of taking care of the city.

Schools are good, parks are good. Community itself is very good.

It seems like a good place to live. I think the police force is good - I feel safe.

Its a good school system. I always see police cars, we have a nice park system, economic development has struggled but is heading in the right direction. It's also located next to the comfort of the larger metropolitan area, being Columbus.

Nice area.

It seems to be very progressive in offering events for families, children, and seniors.

The schools are good, police and fire protection are good, emergency services are good.

Obviously I would like to see the school levy pass, so I am interested in how things work out. We like it because it's very centrally located.

Well, you have good police protection, good schools, maybe the water bill is too high.

Because I see new places opening up, people are trying to move forward, and they are expanding the schools which I think is important.

I think it's a progressive community that balances it's budget and resources well.

Because they're meeting our needs.

I hope the school levy goes through because the teachers are all excellent.

There's been a lot of development and I think its all been well planned and controlled.

I like the way the Creekside is going, another tax on the levy, like the way the parks and recreation have done concerts in the park on Fridays. I just love Gahanna.

We enjoy Creekside. We love living here.

Convenient.

It seems like a safe place to live.

I think they are doing a good job.

They've built up Creekside.

There is an overall development near Creekside and effective zoning.

Services, I guess. Yard waste, recycling, trash pickup.

The Creekside project. I really like the Creekside project. I think it's a smart thing to do and that they are struggling a bit, but it's the right thing to do. If you're trying to help the city maintain a good atmosphere, I think that small businesses help with that. If you want to make it a good place to live, the businesses along the creek and all the storefronts add value to living here.

Well, I know a lot of people are upset by Creekside, but sometimes you gotta try stuff. I like it here. It is a diverse city. The schools are good. My only complaint is that it is a long drive to the zoo.

I think the city services are taking care of business. The fire department has done a great job and so has the police department.

The new developments downtown and so forth.

City is safe, clean, good schools. Lots of parks.

I am too old too have much concern about what's going on now. I've been here for 70 years.

Well, I think they try to do the best they can for their residents. With planning, streets and everything. I just think they keep on top of everything and do a fine job.

I like what the Parks and Recreation department is doing, adding trails and nature areas. They do a good job in terms of the infrastructure, roads, etc.

I really can't say for sure, there are some things I'm not happy with, like allowing solicitors. We allow them in a condo community which says nobody is allowed to come in. I think people coming to the door and asking you to buy things is not safe for older people.

Well, they keep up with things, like Creekside, things that really involve us and outside people and makes them look to Gahanna. And our schools are of good quality.

I think it's gotten pretty good in terms of the commercial development, with Creekside. We have a very good school system, which I'm not using yet, but that's my opinion right now. The infrastructure is very good and they have put in a lot of money lately for improving the roads, and things like that.

The city has made some progress with the Creekside development and other community activities that I really like.

The beautification of the buildings, good quality schools. I think they're doing the right thing.

I think the school system has improved and government has been fiscally responsible, government services are good.

I think the city seems to manage money pretty well and do things that make a lot of sense. They seem to have more common sense than other cities do.

I like the way they fixed up Creekside and there are a lot of good programs for seniors, the recreation program, the Herb Festival.

I think our government is doing a good job trying to promote businesses to come into Gahanna and I approve of what they did over at Creekside and think they're always working to try to improve our community.

Services are good.

I think that the neighborhoods are nice and parks are well maintained.

Its a very quiet city. In terms of having a lot of festivals and different things going on. Youth sports are good.

All three of my kids went through the local school district and they saved and spent money wisely - not just looking for new growth, but considerate of retired and elderly and they don't try to tax them out of their homes. We also have good fire and police departments.

Safe.

I just think that we are growing and we have Creekside and this has been a great place to live and the schools are great.

I would say as far as the police do a good job prevent crime. Recently, the city has made many improvements with the parks and trails. Creekside has added some quality to the community.

I like what is going on out here.

You are doing a good job.

I think they are trying to be progressive by adding the Creekside development, creating more trails and areas for nature, not commercial.

I would say especially the Creekside development , there is a lot more community events out there now.

Many assets.

The job market is pretty good, the schools are up and up and everyone seems to be happy.

It seems like a pretty well planned city.

I would like to see more commercial in the downtown area, Creekside go on.

I think with the new school addition and the Creekside project they are heading to the future.

I'm retired and have observed a lot, like a good police dept, city government is good and the churches are very good, a sense of community pride is good.

It's not too terrible.

The people are very nice and the stores and stuff are very nice.

I just think they look after the citizens and do things to do improve the city, like Creekside.

I like the area that I live in, the quietness. Its not the ghetto.

I think they need more concerts and original music.

I think Creekside is great and I think Stoneridge is great.

You have so much in Gahanna, like the library and shopping and restaurants, everything that I need that is in close proximity to where I live.

Good schools and city services. services.

We have had a lot of new retail shops and restaurants. I also believe the schools are high quality.

Despite economy.

I didn't approve of the Creekside development, but outside of that I enjoy the golf course and the people that run the city.

They have a lot of thing for families, seniors and adults in the parks and recreation area.

They don't do anything on the West side and everything is done on the East side. All the money for city improvements are being done on the East.

Everything seems to be going well.

They need a little more guidance with money and planning.

I think we have great schools but people should help them out move. This why we moved here, for our kids to go to Gahanna schools. I can't believe the levy lost

The high school is getting too small, but other than that.

It is a good school district and Creekside is a really good community area.

There are excellent schools, the streets are good, most of the time traffic flow is good. It's close to things we need, interstate, airport. It's a wonderful place to live.

I think the Creekside development was a good effort. It brought in a lot of business.

I like the activities that they have, especially on July 4th, because it reminds me of a small town.

I honestly don't know.

I like the police force -- they respond quickly to resolve problems.

I feel that they are attracting business.

The lack of use of getting around. The traffic controls could be better. The other services are pretty good.

I think the schools are great and the parks, too.

Businesses are stable, as well as government and schools.

Well, when we moved here things were a lot different than now. It was pretty much country and there were only 12,000 people then. It's much bigger and there's a lot more to do and more stores and businesses.

The crime rate is fairly low. The schools are fairly good and the people are friendly.

Well, I wasn't happy that our last school levy didn't pass.

They care about what their community thinks and put that into their planning especially with parks and recreations.

The neighborhood I live in is a safe place, quality schools, lots of parks and lot of green space.

I think Gahanna has a leg up on the neighboring cities, the growth has been planned in a much more efficient way.

Comfortable.

I'm not sure what is going to happen with the Creekside development.

I think that Creekside is awesome and has been great. I really like all the options for senior citizens. I wish the holiday parade would come back.

I like the way they're fixing up the high school area and how they revitalized downtown. I know it's a down economy, but at least they made attempts to do that. The only thing I think they need to work on

is the roads.

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Creekside is a plus and the building developments in the city and park are well maintained.

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Some of the developments, like Creekside.

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I like the fact that they still plow the streets but I wish they wouldn't block the driveways. One year it was so bad my snow thrower couldn't get through it. I called the police department the snow was so bad.

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I think the school system is good and down town is great.

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I have interest in the schools, and the schools are very good and are good for the next generation.

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They have tried to enforce people not texting or using cell phones while driving.

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They've done good.

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I would say as far as recreation wise, cost of living is average.

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I think the people in Gahanna are generally stable, good people. I think the city works very well with the citizens to keep things up to date. I think it's a good place to live.

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I think they have very good services - police, fire, water, sewer - everything they do in the city is good. Especially the schools.

### **Figure 48 Comments: Off on Wrong Track**

Q4b. When you say things in Gahanna are off on the wrong track, can you describe in your own words what you mean?

With the recent cut backs in the budget, I have cause for concern.

With the defeat of the school levy, the sports programs in the high school will be in jeopardy.

When they wanted to raise taxes for improvements and Creekside, that did not pan out, and now they want to increase our taxes.

We've got problems in that education levy was not passed. Government does not look after what is best for the people. Creekside development is a lovely facility, but at the wrong time.

Well, I think sometimes they appropriate money in the wrong way and they spend money in the wrong way, some confusion in city hall.

We need more stores with clothing and less bars and pizza places.

We are on the boarder of being retired, and the taxes keep going up. It is getting hard to keep up. I don't like the city getting into real estate.

Too many apartment buildings are going up.

Things like the school levy failing is very bad for the community.

Things are moving out of Gahanna, like stores for example.

They're in too much debt because of Creekside, and now they want to raise the income tax.

They waste too much money on stupid things.

They want to increase the income tax substantially knowing that the economy will turn around and they'll have all this money.

There's too much development. Too much retail and sprawl.

There's been too much money spent on Creekside and not using it on other places. The street repair is done in a poor, hopscotch way.

The whole Creekside thing was bigger than what Gahanna could handle. They're finding that out -- they can't hold businesses there.

The school thing, I know, is not their issue. They need to do something about the road deal. There's only one way to get through town. No roads other than way out of town. The structure is very badly laid out. No through roads but one, and they shut it down and that's bad.

The school systems are going in the wrong direction. The new facility is being built for gifted kids, but other kids might need that more. Might be the reason the levy did not pass.

The school issue that didn't pass.

The recent issue of raising the taxes for schools failing and now people want to raise the income tax. Now is not the time to raise taxes.

The present administration is poor. They've gotten into a couple of things in real estate and it is going poorly. They are in it, but it should have been a private thing.

The politics, the levy, and the housing market need to be improved.

The police department seems to be going down, maybe it's less people? One thing that bothers me; the shenanigans with the close of the grocery store down there, and then all of a sudden there's another school building. It seemed funny to me.

The more recent decisions made by them I don't agree with.

The Creekside development was a waste of money.

The city's spending is on the wrong stuff. I'm disappointed the school levy did not pass.

The city wants to raise taxes and they are driving the elderly out of the city.

The city is trying to develop commercial properties and I think it's a great idea. But they are hurting the quality of life because they've cut out the fireworks, parades and a lot of people loved those. It seemed like a fairly cheap thing for the city, so for the number of people it affected in a positive way, it is very surprising that they cut these out. They should have tried to cut somewhere else. As a trend in these economic times, they are taking away things that make this a great place to live. We hope they don't take away live music in the park at Creekside. They are positive reasons to spend time in Gahanna.

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The city is catering to the upscale people and not catering to the blue collar people who built Gahanna.

The building and zoning of Creekside was money poorly spent. It was a quaint little town before Creekside. It's massive on a very busy, narrow street. It wasn't well thought out.

The biggest issue is building Creekside, which was the biggest waste ever. 180 degrees. 45 condos, half a million a piece - if I could afford half a million I would not live in Gahanna, next to a creek and a golf course. 75% are still empty, as far as store frontage. One store didn't even last 6 months. If something doesn't happen soon the city will be belly up, and the people of Gahanna will foot the bill. We're competing with Easton, but there's no comparison. No shops there, except maybe a Coldstone ice cream bar. As far as police are concerned, I only see them once every 6 months now. Questions to raise the income tax to 2.5 % - I'm, in a sense, already paying that.

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Taxes.

Taxes are unreal.

Some of the things the city government is trying to save money on. They are spending money on only a select few instead of spending on things all of the people can benefit from.

Some of the directions for development have not been the choices I have seen in other towns. Creekside needed to be improved, I am frustrated with the direction they are taking, no unified downtown.

Schools are spending too much money with too many administrators making too much money.

Schools taxes.

Recent failure to pass the school levy, which I was in favor of.

Poor city attitude.

Police protection is poor, overall services are fair and schools are starting to decline.

Not frugal.

More houses are rented and not owned. When houses are rented, people don't care about houses.

Just because we did not pass the school levy.

Its the Creekside development -- it sounded like a good idea, but they overdid it. Too large, not enough small family-oriented shops.

It's a good place to live but it's an expensive place to live. I'm paying as much to live in this house as two of them are worth. They never seem to have enough. Let them learn to live the way we have to live.

It seems like they've lost their concern for the people. It doesn't seem like they listen to what the people want.

It seems like there is a lot of money being wasted doing things not necessary for the area.

I'm worried about the school levy not passing.

I'm not happy with the Creekside development - its half empty, and economically not doing well.

I'm not happy with city government because of Creekside, and the school district because of Clark Hall being done without a vote, both spending money that did not need to be spent.

I'm not encouraged by the Creekside area. I think that the ambitions are over extended. The expectations were too high.

I'm disappointed that they didn't vote on the building of the new high school.

I'm disappointed that the school levy did not pass twice now. I worry about what that means for the quality of the schools, since we have two young children entering school. I also am concerned about the effect on property values. I have seen it in our neighborhood - it was a little nicer five years ago than it is now. The foreclosures and lack of maintenance on homes has hurt things.

I don't like what I'm seeing from the community leaders, and I don't agree with the politics here.

I think we could be spending money a little more wisely, like short falls for school and I think the property taxes should be able to cover that. I think the majority of Gahanna pays about what I do, and that's a high standard of living.

I think they've gone a little bit overboard on development. That's about it.

I think they spend too much time on Creekside. I think they haven't spent much taking care of its citizens. I haven't been very happy with Gahanna lately. They could do more with the parks.

I think they need more shops and restaurants, because if they fail it will fall back on the taxpayers.

I think they messed up on Creekside -- the way they built it. They built it in the wrong place. They should have built it right by the VFW or Friendship Park.

I think there's a lot of negative things happening in Gahanna today. They do things without communicating to the people, in just about every area. The school taxes, and stuff like that. There's no communication on what they're going to do, it's just there. Now they're talking about this city tax they're going to do, probably about a year from now. They're going to inform people that they're going to do it, but not why they're going to do it. When my wife and I first moved to Gahanna it was a small community, and there was no crime, and it's escalating all the time now.

I think the school levy should have passed. I think they have a school system and they are letting it down. They are trying too hard to keep taxes low. I feel the best places to live in Ohio also have higher tax rates.

I think the building and the structures on Mill Street, obviously we do not use. Clark Hall - they did not ask the voters. Come up with a concrete purpose for it, rent out now, original purpose was because the school was overcrowded. Areas around them need to expand. It was not clearly thought through.

I think the board of education has gotten off the track by building the new build. That's why the levy didn't pass.

I think money was allocated to the Creekside project and shouldn't have been used for that, it was taxpayer's money.

I think maybe the tax issues here. I have seen the property taxes rise, making it less desirable for home owner.

I think Creekside's overrated. I think they spent too much money on it and it's not developing the way they hoped it would. The only other complaint that I have is the high school that they built is so close to the road...why did they do that? They had all that space.

I think Creekside lacks new shops and friendlier restaurants. Businesses move in and out. We have plenty of shops in Gahanna.

I see the road conditions not being taken care of, and the Creekside development was not a great idea.

I see some spending that is kind of crazy, which will cause unneeded taxes -- i.e., the Creekside project and the bridge in the industrial area.

I like Creekside, but the occupancy rate is so bad it probably was overdone.

I just think we need to have some new citizens in the city.

I just think the overall look of it, there's no cohesive look to the city. No one is paying attention to the overall look. I look at New Albany and they have some very strict codes there. In Gahanna, buildings don't go together and there is no planning in terms of it all having a common look.

I just read today about increasing the city tax and I don't agree with that. And, I'm concerned about the school system. I'm not pleased with the new Clark Hall across the street from the high school. It looks out of place with the architecture and location. I don't like the idea of the high school kids having to cross the street for safety and just congestion in general.

I have some concerns about the development department and bringing new businesses. I have concerns for the schools not being fiscally responsible. I think the Grinch came and stole Christmas this year. I haven't seen a snow plow on my street.

I feel that the money that went into Creekside was a big mistake and that long term it will hurt the city for a long time.

I don't think we're spending our money wisely.

I don't see a lot of positive things. I don't see any real growth, besides Creekside. Compared to Worthington, it's inferior. I'm not impressed with the school system, based on neighbor opinions. A lot more can be done to reduce school costs.

I don't agree with the new school building.

I can't see putting money into Creekside when other things need attention.

I am very angry about the school bond issue that did not go through.

I am starting to feel that the city is not spending their money correctly.

Gahanna has initiated condominiums in town and Creekside: I disagree with the decisions.

Creekside was a mistake.

Creekside was a disaster, the business with the Clark Hall for the school will be another disaster.

Because we can't pass the school levy and they won't be good if we can't support them.

Because they built Creekside. They're putting too much money into fancy things when the city doesn't have money. They should be saving for the future. I think they are making a mistake.

Because of the tax increases.

**Figure 49 Final Comments**

Approval of 2.5% income tax	Q49 Any further comments about Gahanna?
Consistent approval	Creekside is nice but get business.
Consistent approval	Doing well but need to pass an income tax to fully fund the city.
Consistent approval	Enjoy Gahanna.
Consistent approval	I am very satisfied with the city of Gahanna. I had a choice between Gahanna and Westerville, OH and am very happy here.
Consistent approval	I do think it is a good place to live and to raise kids.
Consistent approval	I enjoy the recent improvements. I know they are facing deficits coming up, and doing a good job of keeping up with it and making people aware of what is going on in the city.
Consistent approval	I have conveyed a lot of positive thought and I know my issues, if I have them, will be heard.
Consistent approval	I have recommended Gahanna to several people who were looking in this area.
Consistent approval	I just love Gahanna.
Consistent approval	I just think it is great.
Consistent approval	I just think it's a great place to live. My husband had a cardiac arrest at home, and the emergency squad came right away and it made a lasting impression and it means a lot.
Consistent approval	I just think it's a nice place to live.
Consistent approval	I like Gahanna, we looked at our development before they started. It's close to most freeways. I also enjoy Creekside.
Consistent approval	I love living here. I'm originally from New York. I've been all over, and it's a good place to raise children.
Consistent approval	I love the accessibility of everything in town.
Consistent approval	I think its a great place to live. Everything is very convenient.
Consistent approval	I think its about time that people start asking questions about what's going on and getting involved in what's going on. I love the fact that young people are getting involved in what's going on in the city. I'm 81 years old and still working, but you have to turn the page and stay up on what's going on.
Consistent	I think some of the sidewalks near the schools need repairs. Just a few spots.

approval	
Consistent approval	I think that I don't want to see continued cut backs.
Consistent approval	I think the present administration has done a very poor job in the retention of jobs. I think the property taxes are overused and that's why I'd I approve the increase of 1% . We have a huge amount of taxes for schools, yet our schools don't add up to schools with same amount of taxation. My own work situation. I feel the city doesn't use money wisely sometimes. The council is adrift in what direction the city should be going.
Consistent approval	I think they should not be afraid to think big. The better places to live in central Ohio have higher property values for the same types of houses because they have higher taxes and therefore better city services. If we raised taxes we could offer more services and more people would move here.
Consistent approval	I think they should stop the negotiation for natural gas or do better at it.
Consistent approval	I think they're focusing on parks and recreation is good. Determining the character of downtown Gahanna and matching it up with businesses is critical.
Consistent approval	I would strongly recommend that they work with the school district when they put their levy up. I would prefer the school levy to go on the ballot prior to the tax increase.
Consistent approval	I'm a little disappointed that Creekside is not filled. The parking is not good, a lot of people don't like to park underground.
Consistent approval	I'm fine.
Consistent approval	I'm supportive of the Creekside development, but they went a little too far. It would be different if there was occupancy down there, so we don't have the traffic or businesses we wanted to attract. It could be timing with the economy and we missed a window, but it is a bit of a disappointment as a result. As frequently as I go there, I would like to see more people in the coffee shop.
Consistent approval	Its a great place to live, I'm just a little disappointed that they aren't following through on the schools and parks. The Fire Department is OK, but our schools and parks need to funded. People like me moved to Gahanna for the schools and parks, but these people need to be willing to get off their butts and support these programs.
Consistent approval	I've enjoyed living here and recommend it to anyone.
Consistent approval	Like I said before, I would rather live here than in the city of Columbus.
Consistent approval	More bike and walking paths in the city that connect to each other. I live a mile from Creekside, but there is no way for me or my kids to get there safely.
Consistent approval	My only comment is it is a good place to live
Consistent	Need to fund our schools.

approval	
Consistent approval	No, but I'm happy.
Consistent approval	No, I just like living here.
Consistent approval	No, I just think the city is going in the right direction and I'm very happy to live in Gahanna.
Consistent approval	No, I love it here and have been here for almost 50 years.
Consistent approval	No, other than we picked Gahanna because it was one of the better communities. We wanted our kids to go to good schools, and Gahanna fulfilled that.
Consistent approval	Not really. My only thing is the snow removal at my house is really bad. I'm 70 years old, and I shouldn't have to shovel. I've had to flag down the plow just to get out of my driveway.
Consistent approval	Our area of Gahanna has sidewalks that have not been fixed for over 6 months. That is just one thing I wanted to add. When we first moved here, people were not able to park large vehicles in their driveways (large mobile homes, campers, etc) and no city department is enforcing that.
Consistent approval	Poor street lights.
Consistent approval	Rumor was that they weren't going to be able to do fireworks for financial reasons. I think that was a mistake. I really enjoy that celebration.
Consistent approval	So far, I am very happy living in Gahanna.
Consistent approval	Take down the ugly wooden street signs. Betty said she would take them 5 years ago. They are worthless and ugly. You also need to find a new way to pay for schools because I will not pay for a levy. I went to high school, too, and we did without all these principals and offices.
Consistent approval	The Creekside is done. The new high school is done. I guess it would be nice if the next time the city does any project of this type they would have more discussion with the citizens of Gahanna -- either publish the plans in the local paper or hold a town meeting.
Consistent approval	Very happy.
Consistent approval	We have a fantastic Fire and Police department. Sometimes I wonder about Parks and Recreation -- they do select improvements that don't seem to benefit all the people in the city.
Consistent approval	We have been here in three different houses because we like it here.
Consistent approval	We need a new development director. Examine school levy and how money can be saved in schools besides cutting services.

Consistent approval	What they developed at Creekside was too huge for the space it occupies. They can't handle the size. They could have scaled it down and it would have met the needs.
Disapprove	I will level a complaint with the zoning commission regarding fences. It created a tremendous amount of grief in my life, unnecessarily.
Disapprove	Against raising income tax.
Disapprove	As a resident, I'm real happy with the way the city is run. If they make a good argument when they put this thing on I may support it (tax increase)
Disapprove	As far as the income tax, I should be able to file in Columbus and have it passed back to Gahanna. I used to live in Cleveland and that's how it was done.
Disapprove	Be cautious where they spend the money.
Disapprove	Better communication with and by government - more efficiency.
Disapprove	Blacklick is a village within the Gahanna school district. Our police also have jurisdiction there. The population of Blacklick has boomed and the impact is overcrowding the Gahanna school system. Blacklick needs to be their own district with their own school system and city services so that the people of Gahanna aren't footing the bill while receiving diminished services.
Disapprove	Creekside is a disaster, they should not have put that much money in it. Why wasn't there a vote? It didn't need to be that big and fancy, it could've been smaller scale. It needed to be an option, and I heard it was and the mayor refused that.
Disapprove	Creekside was too much. It needed some improvement but that was too much. \$200,000 condos? Also, I think some riff raff have moved in and it has caused my property value to go down.
Disapprove	Even though the fire tax didn't improve I think that they need improvement. Need improvements like less people in a response. They're wasting money in man power vs. need trucks or things like that. Need to figure out how to make more improvements and not to increase the taxes.
Disapprove	Figure out another way to get us to Hamilton Road from the west side.
Disapprove	Gahanna has grown so big and I know they need more schools, but the one they are building is too big and in the wrong place. Bad traffic and not enough parking - its so congestive.
Disapprove	Get Creekside to its full potential. Fill some of the stores.
Disapprove	Get more lights out on the street at night and add more connections to the walkways.
Disapprove	Good place to live.
Disapprove	How much the city is in debt? What is the debt?
Disapprove	I am angry with the bond issue that did not pass. I went door to door and worked very hard on that not to go through, it seems that people just don't care any more. If you think your going get any extra tax out of me, your crazy.

Disapprove	I am not happy with Creekside - with putting all the money into it and nothing into the rest of Gahanna, and treating the old part of Gahanna unfairly.
Disapprove	I am very worried about this high school they are building. I went to a Board meeting to find out what is happening. They said the upper part of the building is high school and the lower part retail. I am not in favor of that. I'm in favor of adding on to the high school vs. combining it with retail.
Disapprove	I don't think so.
Disapprove	I guess not at this time.
Disapprove	I have a problem with the electrical company, and I'm very disappointed with them cancelling the Christmas Parade.
Disapprove	I have enjoyed the survey.
Disapprove	I have observed as they were building the new school building that they had lights on 24/7, non stop, and that seemed to me like a waste.
Disapprove	I just think they're doing a really good job of Morrison Road. The new drive for people coming off the expressway looks really good.
Disapprove	I kind of like our little town. I do want to say, that while my kid was in the school system, I did have some problems with the school system - they are a little wasteful. I am opposed to any tax increase.
Disapprove	I like Gahanna, its a good town, but they put an arch up at the entrance to the city and can't get the lights to work.
Disapprove	I like Gahanna, I feel comfortable and safe here.
Disapprove	I like it better here than anywhere I've lived. It's close to everything and easy to get everywhere.
Disapprove	I love Gahanna.
Disapprove	I love it. Its a great place. Don't ask me to raise taxes. I'm going to vote against any tax increase. I'm five years from retirement and I can't afford to live here anymore if my taxes are \$500 a month.
Disapprove	I see every tax problem on the last ballot failed. When you're on a fixed income, how can you pay any more? I grew up in Gahanna and I've just seen things go up. I think they have an excellent school. Who determines how much it costs to run Gahanna? How can they say they need more money? I like Jim McGregor. You saw him going to church. They ought to have a newsletter. Everybody I talk to thinks they are being taxed to death. I don't hear about taxes like this in other communities. Has the government cut back on their salaries?
Disapprove	I think it's a great community.
Disapprove	I think its a wonderful place to live, but they failed in the area of marketing - as far as highlighting the right thing.
Disapprove	I think more music festivals should be brought there and the local bars should support local musicians that live in the area and offer original music.

Disapprove	I think the biggest is we need to address the schools, as far as we have to figure out the schools before we put any other tax on the ballot.
Disapprove	I think the people of Gahanna should be able to vote for Prosecuting Attorneys and not allow them to be appointed. We should have a say in who they are.
Disapprove	I think the police chief does a poor job. Creekside was a waste of money, and I'm not happy with the board of education. They've wasted too much money, bike paths were kept free of snow but the streets were impassable.
Disapprove	I think they needed to have shops there that people could afford to shop at. The rent is just so high, prices are so high - every time you turn around the businesses close. They are not going to get the traffic. Great that there is free parking, but there is nowhere to go. The Bread Basket is good, but I worry about them being able to stay. There are not enough interesting things to attract traffic. More moderate prices are needed.
Disapprove	I think you covered it. The only complaint I have is traffic control. It's better than Columbus, but it could be better. I've called several times . We're pretty satisfied overall.
Disapprove	I understand you have to pay for what you get. At this time, I feel we have a good infrastructure - we don't need more improvements. Only maintain what you have. Have more activities to draw more crowds.
Disapprove	I was a little disappointed in the lack of the parade.
Disapprove	I wish the planning and zoning commission would coordinate projects better. We call it Clutterville. For example, Huntington Bank building did not go with other buildings in the area.
Disapprove	I wish there were more job openings, I would love to work down at Creekside. I have put in applications at human resources before, now through the computer, and I feel like it goes into a black hole and I never hear anything. Acknowledgement that they got it at least.
Disapprove	I wish they'd get more updated stores here, in Gahanna and not on the outskirts.
Disapprove	I would like the city to take more time informing the people before going forward with projects that cost the city money -- that way they would have more success in passing some of the increases.
Disapprove	I would like to get more information out about the enforcement of keeping people from texting or using their cell phones while driving.
Disapprove	I would like to live here if it was warmer, I love the area but its just too cold.
Disapprove	I would like to see more activities available for juniors and high school students, where the teens can keep busy and that wouldn't cost anything.
Disapprove	I would like to see where all the money is going that we are already paying.
Disapprove	If they were going to look into improving things, they can look into the water quality, and particularly its taste.
Disapprove	I'm really happy here. I think its a great place to live. They just need to spend less.
Disapprove	I'm very concerned about the housing industry.

Disapprove	Income tax, work with what we got, keep on going with what they have been doing.
Disapprove	It has always bothered me that Gahanna is trying to be like the other suburbs. I wish they could come up with something unique. It seems to be still a city that is divided - east, west, north and south. Creekside didn't do it.
Disapprove	It is a good place to live and grow up in. They need to watch their expenses. It is one of the nicest communities surrounding Columbus.
Disapprove	It is a nice, friendly city.
Disapprove	It seems like the school levy that didn't pass would have passed if it wasn't such a significant increase. \$400 in these economic times is too much. Myself and a number of other citizens would be willing to pass a new school levy, but at a more affordable amount.
Disapprove	Its a great city to raise a family.
Disapprove	It's a great place to live. I think at this time, any city talking about raising taxes is shooting themselves in the foot.
Disapprove	It's a great place to live. I think at this time, any city talking about raising taxes is shooting themselves in the foot.
Disapprove	Its a great place to raise a family. All the services are wonderful, the parks are wonderful. They just bit off more than they can chew with Creekside. The new high school addition or building sticks out like a sore thumb -- should have been set back -- its like Creekside, it just doesn't belong in Gahanna.
Disapprove	It's a nice city to live in, but we can't afford anymore tax increases.
Disapprove	It's a pretty nice place to live, but the politicians want to make it a metropolis and the people like it as smaller community.
Disapprove	It's a very nice place to live.
Disapprove	It's a wonderful place to live in and raise a family.
Disapprove	It's been my impression that the city of Gahanna has more money than it knows what to do with. I am not in favor of a tax increase. The police stop way too many people and we're wasting additional investment in the police department. They are stopping people for show vs. providing actual protection.
Disapprove	Just keep trying and keep working.
Disapprove	Just like I said about the property taxes. Hopefully they don't go up. The water bill, of course. I like living in Gahanna. Hopefully that won't keep going up and up and up.
Disapprove	Make the tax policies easier to follow.
Disapprove	My biggest concern is street cameras and how they are being used. I've been assured they are being used for traffic, but believe in government mentality, and I'm not a big fan of them. I don't know what they use them for, such as to find people or just for traffic monitoring, but I believe they should not be there. There is some talk about having a community internet, possibly getting utilities to help pay for it. Are they able to get real time meter readings?

Disapprove	My family has lived here since 1977. A lot of good things have been done in the past. If the city government would look at what is really necessary and not what they think is necessary, a lot more good things can happen. A lot of people are willing to add their own sweat and work for the city, as opposed to raising taxes.
Disapprove	My issues are for the city service department and the school bond issues, also the street repairs have been neglected in my area.
Disapprove	My neighbors can't afford any more new taxes and plan to move out. Problem in Gahanna, people are unemployed and/or retired.
Disapprove	My only concern is that they really need to understand that the economy is not going to grow, and that the senior citizens cannot absorb extra costs.
Disapprove	Need to pass a levy for the schools.
Disapprove	No I don't really. I do have one comment, last year they had an option to put trash at curbside or go to a city facility. Curbside was a fee but Gahanna did not offer the option this year.
Disapprove	No new taxes and what are they doing with the school they're building
Disapprove	No, but I like the city a lot. It is not as crowded and sought after as some.
Disapprove	No, I enjoy living here. It's a good place to raise a family.
Disapprove	No, I really love it here.
Disapprove	No, just that it's a nice place to live.
Disapprove	No, nothing else.
Disapprove	No. I feel like we've covered everything I can think of.
Disapprove	No. Over all doing a good job
Disapprove	Nothing specific. I would like to know if it would be possible for residents of the city, like myself, to get some feedback from the City as to the results of this survey.
Disapprove	On the Creekside, before it was built, I thought it was going to cost too much. Not many people take time to go there, not much parking space, I would not have put a business of my own in there.
Disapprove	Our neighborhood -- the ghetto side of town -- needs new street signs, like everyone else.
Disapprove	Our street, Linconshire, has the lights go off for all kinds of reasons. All they need to do is replace the fuse and protect it.
Disapprove	Overall I think the city is doing a great job, but I also think that they need to check into other options on how to spend the tax money before asking to raise the taxes.
Disapprove	Poor services
Disapprove	Regardless of the tax increase what's important to me is the police protection.
Disapprove	Schools need help.
Disapprove	Some of the speed limits in Gahanna are exceedingly slow. In certain areas and streets the speed limit is 25 and could be 35.

Disapprove	Something needs to be done with our antiquated electric lines. Our power goes out at a slight breeze. There have been several Christmas' we were without power for days. Even during the summer time a breeze puts out the power for hours or days several times a year.
Disapprove	Streets should be resurfaced since its been about 20 years. They also need to do the repairs to the curbs damaged by the snow plows during the winter, so the homeowners don't have to pay for the repairs to the curbs. Also, stop asking about Creekside Park. Its done and over with - if you want to get more people to go, do more advertising.
Disapprove	The cities efforts to stimulate jobs. They went overboard on the development of Creekside, building condos that are now empty and cancelling the Christmas parade. I also feel the city has had poor money management.
Disapprove	The city asks for more money, but after you already have decided what you're going to do. The school district needs to do more to help themselves.
Disapprove	The Creekside Park enhanced Gahanna, but the scale was too big and the funding too extravagant. There are already these facilities close by in Columbus. I really like the bike trails, they should have done more in that respect.
Disapprove	The high school is overcrowded and they need to do something. I'm in favor of the new high school because it will be larger and should accommodate the growing population.
Disapprove	The housing that was developed at Creekside could have been done differently.
Disapprove	The number of apartment buildings that they put in area.
Disapprove	The only problem I have is the real estate taxes they charge. I am fed up with it.
Disapprove	The parks and recreation department is something we support a lot, we benefit from it a lot.
Disapprove	The school needs to be patrolled in the zones and watched for speeders, also the city needs to have more of a destination to draw in more people.
Disapprove	The snow removal has been poor and I've had to pay for it myself. There is sewage water coming into my driveway from the street. I was a teacher at the largest school in the state and we only had one principal. The Gahanna high school has 5, making far more money. The snow removal people shoveled snow from the street into my driveway this week. I've had disputes concerning my property line the city could not resolve
Disapprove	The tax increase would be stupid.
Disapprove	The tax increase. I am concerned. If they want to increase the tax rate, they should not raise it so much. They should start out smaller.
Disapprove	The trash men need to stop throwing the garbage cans and breaking both the garbage cans and recycling bins, so we won't have to purchase new ones.
Disapprove	Their needs to be more police patrol in certain areas at certain times. As far as the tax increase, I will move from the area if it passes. I feel that everyone gets a raise in the school system, but they want to raise our taxes every time they get a levy. Not everybody in Gahanna has to pay property tax.

Disapprove	There are some things I'm happy about, but some improvements could be made.
Disapprove	There is something hanging from the street lamp -- it's gray and about 8" by 6".
Disapprove	They need to control salary increases for the police department.
Disapprove	They need to market and promote Creekside and that would bring revenue into the city and not raise taxes. They need to replace the street lights at Goshen and Hermitage and Hermitage and Wittenburg, in College Park.
Disapprove	They ought to increase the speed on the main thoroughfare, it's five lanes wide and it's 25 miles per hour.
Disapprove	They should not have used tax money for Creekside. It's not fully occupied because it is too expensive and will flood again.
Disapprove	Thing only thing I have to say, is they are trying to push the tax increase on the citizens by stopping services they have been doing for years - like cutting the grass. They are not going about it the right way.
Disapprove	Too many levies -- every time you turn around. And, they don't go away.
Disapprove	Traffic backups during rush hour going in and out of the city. Not sure what can be done, but it is a hassle. The bike trail / walking system is improving, but its slow and not interconnected. Also, I would like to use the city's website to find out what's going on in Gahanna, but the site seems to be very dated and, therefore, not as useful as it could be if it were more current.
Disapprove	US Route 62 is a main highway through town, during festivals they close the road which is the main road through town.
Disapprove	Watch spending.
Disapprove	We are very satisfied here which is why we live in Gahanna. I am disappointed in the school levy, however. I don't believe it is necessary.
Disapprove	We need two high schools, rather than just one.
Disapprove	Well, I just think it's a nice place to live. I'm satisfied here and moved to be close to my daughter. We've been happy here.
Disapprove	We've been pleased living here. We're coming from a place with a low population. Although its not the same atmosphere, it feels like a safe place and a clean place. My wife and I both they use too much salt on the roads, though.
Disapprove	We've been pretty happy.
Disapprove	Why such a large tax increase?
Disapprove	With respect to snow removal, they allow too many cars to park on the streets and can't plow correctly. They allow parking on both sides of the street and I fear emergency vehicles will not be able to through the street. Creekside is money not well spent, not well thought out. The condos are too expensive and they have too many unoccupied.
Not sure	Can't think of anything.
Not sure	Don't go wild on the spending.

Not sure	I called the Permit Department and sent an email and have never heard back from either. I was not happy about that.
Not sure	I do think on the whole it's a good place to live.
Not sure	I go to an awful lot of events for my grandkids and a number of them are held in the Westerville Park. I think we need a recreational complex like that.
Not sure	I have some issues with the school board and the building going on, but I'm moving anytime soon.
Not sure	I just hope that things pretty much stay the same. I'm not feeling harassed in any way and I'd like it to stay that way.
Not sure	I think its a nice place to live, not too uppity. Trying to do what's right, I guess.
Not sure	I think that their traffic lights - particularly at Clotts Road - are unnecessary for evening and weekends. Traffic doesn't demand it. I think they've over extended with traffic lights in downtown. The light on Hamilton in downtown needs to be revamped for left turns. We need a Gahanna zip code for Gahanna only. We are the only suburb without our own zip code.
Not sure	I think they should have more events at Creekside. More retail store development.
Not sure	I think they shouldn't be so focused on Creekside.
Not sure	I think we shouldn't have aimed so high with the Creekside development. They needed to bring more practical business, all you can do is eat at a restaurant or get your nails done, it should have been thought though better.
Not sure	I would like them to keep Hunter's Ridge open.
Not sure	I'm pretty well pleased except for tax and spending.
Not sure	No, not really.
Not sure	No. You all are doing a good job down there.
Not sure	No. Like I say, Gahanna is an easy place to live. We are retired and enjoy the quietness of the town. I think Creekside is a beautiful addition to Gahanna and I wish them success, but I'm afraid they tried to do a too much.
Not sure	People are very friendly. I'm African American and have been treated very well, as has my son. It is a good place to live. I'm from Maryland, and called up here prior to moving and needed to relocate and asked "what is a good place to live"? I called Columbus Christian Center and the young lady said Gahanna was a great place, the crime is very low and the schools are very good. It's one of the best places I have lived in my life. It's a warm and friendly place.
Not sure	The recent road repairs along 62. Building those walls was a waste of money.
Not sure	They need to provide a better way to get in and out of the post office.
Not sure	We are just very pleased with it and have had a great experience here. Our kids love it and I feel that the city does a great job of not letting certain parts of the town go badly or downhill. It's a family oriented city and we like it.

Oppose, then approve	Creekside, the police department that I don't see anymore, they do a good job with the parks that my family use mostly, the streets will need replacement in the next 5 years, not a fan of the mayor, the Stoneridge shopping mall, they didn't widen the road and now it bottles up and the focus and attention are that way.
Oppose, then approve	Do as good as job as any.
Oppose, then approve	For me, the city needs to invest in the infrastructure without trying to do everything all at once. Spend only what the city can afford by utilizing the existing revenue.
Oppose, then approve	Glad we chose to live here, we love it here.
Oppose, then approve	I am anxiously awaiting the completion of the proposed bike path so I can ride from my house to Creekside in a straight shot.
Oppose, then approve	I am disappointed in the Creekside development - it is pretty much vacant.
Oppose, then approve	I came here from Germany and have remained here ever since. We really like it here.
Oppose, then approve	I felt the school system was fabulous. We moved in 1962, wanted same system as our children, think they have fabulous teachers.
Oppose, then approve	I hope to stay here. It is a nice place to live.
Oppose, then approve	I just wish it would have mercy on us senior citizens. I want to stay. It makes me cry.
Oppose, then approve	I really like living here.
Oppose, then approve	I stayed here for 38 years, doesn't that speak for itself?
Oppose, then approve	I think it is a very, very nice neighborhood, people are friendly, very friendly.
Oppose, then approve	I think it is very nice living here.
Oppose, then approve	I think it's wasteful to throw salt on the roads after the snow is gone.
Oppose, then approve	I think the left hand turn lane is the best thing they ever did.
Oppose, then approve	I think the utilities for the water are too high. Other than that, I like living in Gahanna.
Oppose, then approve	I'd like to see some of our east side street repaved. I've been here 42 years and they haven't done anything. The curbs are all busted out and crumbled.
Oppose, then approve	I'm encouraged by the city. Forward thinking people are working hard to make it a good community.

Oppose, then approve	I'm very big on Gahanna. I think it's a great place to live. I'd encourage anybody that asked me, don't hesitate to move in. I think it's best of all the suburbs, it's not as upscale as New Albany maybe or Dublin, but the location is great, it's close to shopping. There's a nearby airport.
Oppose, then approve	It is a pretty little city, I feel safe here. We are not thinking of leaving Gahanna.
Oppose, then approve	It is comfortable.
Oppose, then approve	It would be more helpful if they changed the post office -- with a drive up postal drop. The nearest one is the airport.
Oppose, then approve	I've been here long enough to really feel OK about everything so far.
Oppose, then approve	I've enjoyed my last 23 years here.
Oppose, then approve	I just like Gahanna.
Oppose, then approve	Nice place.
Oppose, then approve	No. Other than what I have already said. We have thought about moving to a condo in Columbus, but because of poor services, we probably won't move.
Oppose, then approve	Parks and recreation should do a better job maintaining the soccer fields.
Oppose, then approve	Property taxes are too high.
Oppose, then approve	Snow removal in courts, not pushing the snow in front of the driveways, street repair in certain neighborhoods, taxes for the schools - retired people should have some kind of discount.
Oppose, then approve	The Christmas Parade and 4th of July should not be taken away, it's a big plus for Gahanna.
Oppose, then approve	The city may have run people off their property.
Oppose, then approve	The city needs to differentiate the borders for service from the police department. On any future income tax increase, the city needs to figure out who will pay and who will benefit. It seems imbalanced that seniors won't have to pay for all the services, but we as younger residents will. Those are probably the same people who are voting down the school levies.
Oppose, then approve	The new school is too close to the sidewalk.
Oppose, then approve	The only improvement I would like to see them make is widening the rest of Hamilton Road between 62 and Haven's Road, by the high school.
Oppose, then approve	They are doing more right than not. Still a good place to live

Oppose, then approve	They need to work on the roads in the Venetian Way areas and courts.
Oppose, then approve	Unlock the restrooms in the city parks, don't drive businesses away. There was an opportunity for Meijer's and other business within city limits.
Oppose, then approve	We are very happy living here. It's a wonderful spot, as far as access to the airport, to the loop. We love going downtown. When our kids and grandkids are here there's a lot to do and go outside. We are very happy moving here. When first moving here, we felt very fortunate to have found this spot. Everybody makes it inviting for others as well. I know the tax is a hard call. Not just where we're at, but the community and families raising children. It's important to keep up with things or it'll cost you in the long run. Taxes are very high from where we came from. This is our first time with a city tax. First time with a state tax.
Oppose, then approve	We came from a New England town like Worthington, only larger. The same size as Gahanna. I think there is a lot of isolation between city government. A lot can be done to look nicer besides Creekside. We spent a lot of years in a pretty community. It would be nicer if it looked prettier.
Oppose, then approve	We have enjoyed it.
Oppose, then approve	We like living here, but we don't see ourselves living here forever. When we look for a new house in the future it will probably be outside of Gahanna.
Oppose, then approve	We're pretty happy and glad we moved here
Oppose, then approve	When trying to decide whether or not to support an additional city tax, information about surrounding cities and their tax rate would be very helpful. We appreciate the dog park so much and it's a great resource and opportunity. Also, I would like to see the city keep working with the school district and the high school is getting very large and will be a challenge in the future. I support the "freshman" building across the street and it is a creative solution, I think. I'd like to see the city do more of that, partnering with the school system. And I've seen some of the surrounding housing fall in value (in other cities) so this is still a concern for me, even though my children are grown and out of high school.
Oppose, then approve	Why not go with 1/2% percent increase instead of a full percent?