

WICHITA-SEDGWICK COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: “Citizen Engagement in Strategic Investment Decisions”

September 2014

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the global economy advances and fiscal challenges intensify, it becomes increasingly important that communities strategically plan for the use of limited resources. The Wichita-Sedgwick County community currently has infrastructure assets with an estimated value of 7 billion dollars. Infrastructure constitutes some of the most basic building blocks of civil society and is instrumental to quality of life. The magnitude of the investment coupled with growing fiscal challenges tempts communities to disinvest in infrastructure. In some cases, it is possible to disinvest in infrastructure without immediate implications for quality of life. However, in the long-run disinvestment in infrastructure amounts to borrowing against the future. Unfortunately, disinvestment often has safety and cost-effectiveness implications.



This survey research project is the second stage in a three-stage citizen engagement process to better understand the will of the community. Input from more than 4,000 citizen survey respondents is used to improve understanding of citizen values, priorities and recommendations for investment. In contrast to traditional approaches to citizen survey research, respondents were encouraged to advise public investment decisions in ways that are less about their personal wishes and more about actions necessary to preserve the long-term well-being of the Wichita-Sedgwick County community.

Section 1: Commitment to Community and the Public Interest

Part 1: Recognition of the Need to Change

The first step in any change process involves recognition of the need to change. This section provides insight about the extent to which citizens recognize global challenges and are prepared to work together as a community to respond to these challenges.



- ▶ **Wake-up Call to the Wichita-Sedgwick County Community from the Global Economy** - Boeing's decision to sell its manufacturing operations in Wichita to a Canadian firm is just one of many transactions that make it clear to most residents that the Wichita-Sedgwick County community is locked in a global economic struggle that will much to do with community well-being. Three-quarters (75.4%) of the respondents understand that Boeing's decision to move its operations is a warning for what can happen if the community fails to respond to global challenges.
- ▶ **Political Division and Diminished Community Capacity** - Political division within a community reduces capacity to respond to global economic challenges. The first step in reducing division within the community hinges on recognition of the need for change. Consistent with this understanding the findings indicate that most respondents recognize that political divisions at the national (88.7%) and community (74.5%) level are negatively impacting our ability to respond as a community to global economic challenges.

Section 1: Commitment to Community and the Public Interest

Part 2: Strength of Commitment to Community

Community is strengthened and the public interest is advanced when the actions of government and the citizens they serve reflect balanced concern for the well-being of; the individual and the broader community, current and future generations, and advantage and disadvantaged segments of the community.

- ▶ **Balanced Concern for Personal and Community Well-Being** - The willingness of citizens to rise above self-interest is driven by how they see themselves in conjunction with the anticipated behavior of their fellow citizens. More than two-thirds (71.7%) of the responding citizens feel that they can put community interest above personal interest. Less than a third (28.2%) feel that most people are willing to put community interest above personal interest. When citizens have confidence in themselves but lack confidence in their fellow citizens, they are less likely to act in ways that are consistent with community well-being.
 - **The Public Interest** - When government acts in ways that are consistent with the public interest citizens are more likely to behave in ways that are consistent with the well-being of community. Therefore, the public interest is advanced when government denies requests driven by narrow bands of self-interest and invests public dollars in ways that are consistent with the well-being of the broader community.

- ▶ **Balanced Concern for Current and Future Generations** - Community is strengthened when citizens accept responsibility for the well-being of future generations and are willing to make sacrifices today to ensure quality of life tomorrow. More than four-fifths (85.7%) of the responding citizens report that they are willing to make personal sacrifices for the well-being of future generations. Two-fifths of the respondents (41.7%) feel that that most people are willing to make sacrifices for well-being of future generations. Consistent with concern for future generations, almost all (97.0%) of the respondents feel that the community should strive to balance the needs and concerns of current and future generations.
 - **The Public Interest** - The public interest is advanced and community is strengthened when government invests public dollars in ways that reflect balanced concern for current and future generations. Accordingly, local government demonstrate to the community that it is investing public resources in ways that benefits future generations. Consistent with this understanding, nearly all (98.3%) of the respondents feel that the community has a responsibility to make sure that the next generation has clean drinking water.

- ▶ **Balanced Concerns for Advantaged and Disadvantaged Segments of the Community** - Community is strengthened when there is broad public support for creating opportunity for all citizens. Nearly all (95.3%) of the respondents feel that the Wichita-Sedgwick County community should strive to create opportunity for all individuals that are willing to work.

Similarly, more than four-fifths (92.7%) of the respondents feel that the community has a responsibility to assist disadvantaged neighborhoods when residents are willing to do their part. Consistent with previous findings, more than four-fifths (92.8%) of the respondents feel that the community should help seniors, those with disabilities, and low-income residents meet their transportation needs.

- **The Public Interest** - The public interest is advanced and community is strengthened when government invests public dollars in ways that reflect balanced concern for advantaged and disadvantaged citizens. These investments are particularly important because the divide between advantaged and disadvantaged citizens is considerable and growing.

Section 2: Economic Development

Part 1: Short-Term Strategies

Quality of life in the Wichita-Sedgwick County community depends, in no small part, on a vibrant local economy. The challenges of building and maintaining a vibrant local economy have always been considerable but these challenges will only intensify as the economy is increasingly globalized. In some cases, local economic development policy and the investment of public dollars can tip the balance of a business investment decision in favor of a particular locality. It is crucial that economic development policy leverage public resources in ways that are consistent with the public interest by promoting convergence between community and corporate well-being. If citizens perceive that their tax dollars are providing unjustifiable “windfalls” to private entities they become disenfranchised, less community minded, and reluctant taxpayers. Therefore, it is exceedingly important that public economic development agencies dialogue with the community about the risk and opportunities associated with important economic development strategies.

- ▶ **Promote Local Business Expansion** - More than four-fifths (86.1%) of the respondents feel that local government should use public resources to encourage job creation through local business expansion. Households earning less than \$20,000 (91.4%) and African-Americans (95.9%) are especially supportive of efforts to encourage job creation through local business expansion. Individuals with very strong commitments to community (95.4%) are much more supportive of investments to encourage job creation through local business expansion compared to those with very weak commitments (61.2%).
- ▶ **Encourage Business Relocation** - There is strong public support (83.8%) for job creation strategies that encourage business relocation. Citizens with very strong commitments to community (90.5%) are much more likely to support economic development policy that encourages business relocation compared to those with very weak commitments (64.0%).
- ▶ **Prepare Industrial Sites** - Three-quarters (77.0%) of the responding citizens feel that local government should use public resources to prepare industrial sites (water, sewer, streets, etc.) for immediate development. Citizens with very strong commitments to community (91.0%) are much more supportive of industrial site development than those with very weak commitments (51.7%).
- ▶ **Job Training** - Structural unemployment is a mismatch between the skills of the labor force and the demands of the labor market. The global economy brings rapid change in technology and labor demands. Economic development policy sometimes involves job training or retraining to improve the match between labor supply and labor demand to encourage investment. More than four-fifths (86.8%) of the responding citizens support the use of public resources to encourage businesses to train high school students and young adults. Citizens also strongly support (85.0%) the use of public

resources to encourage businesses to retrain adults. Households earning less than \$20,000 are particularly supportive of economic development ventures that train young adults (94.0%) or that retrain adults (93.5%).

- ▶ **Community Return on Public Dollars Invested**- Approximately 84 percent (83.6%) of responding citizens feel that local government should use public resources to encourage private investment when business can demonstrate that community benefits are greater than public dollars invested. Citizens with very strong commitments to the well-being of community are especially supportive (96.0%) of local governments' use of public resources to encourage private investment when private enterprise can demonstrate that community benefits are greater than public dollars invested.

Section 2: Economic Development

Part 2: Long-Term Strategies

Long-term economic development strategies are more likely to bring meaningful and lasting returns to the community. Long-term strategies are also less likely to distort markets because they reflect basic and lasting changes to the community that shape business investment decisions. Long-term economic development strategies have the potential for improving quality of life and strengthening the local economy. For example, improvements to road systems advance quality of life by making automobile travel more convenient and at the same time lower business shipping costs.

- ▶ **Community and Infrastructure Improvements** - The vast majority (89.5%) of citizens feel that local government should use public resources to fund community and infrastructure improvements that attract business investment. Individuals with very strong commitments (96.1%) to community are much more likely than those with very weak commitments (69.0%) to support the use of public dollars to fund community and infrastructure improvements.
- ▶ **Improve Quality of Life to Attract and Retain Young Talent** - Economic prosperity depends in part on the ability of the community to attract bright young professionals and to avoid what is sometimes referred to as "brain drain". The vast majority of respondents (89.4%) support the use of public resources to improve quality of life in ways that encourage young talent to stay and new talent to move to the community. Respondents with very strong (97.2%) commitments to community are much more supportive of efforts to recruit or retain young talent compared to those with very weak commitments (67.6%).
- ▶ **Business Formation** - Newly formed businesses have a high failure rate for a number of reasons including undercapitalization and steep learning curves associated with new business operations. The utilization of public funds to assist business formation lowers but does not eliminate risk of new business failure. Slightly less than three-quarters (73.4%) of the responding citizens support local governments' use of public resources to assist in new business formation and to meet the challenges of initial business operations. Individuals with very strong



(88.9%) commitments to community are much more likely than those with very weak (43.5%) commitments to support the use of public resources to assist in new business formation and to meet the challenges of initial business operations.

- ▶ **Collaboration between Local Government and Local Public Schools** - Long-term solutions to local economic concerns necessarily require high school graduates that are better prepared to enter the workforce including increases in high school graduation rates. Low-income students often begin their formal education behind their advantaged classmates and many never catch up without some form of educational assistance. Most citizens (90.3%) support local governments' use of public resources to collaborate with local public schools to better prepare schoolchildren for employment and adult responsibilities. Households earning less than \$20,000 (95.9%) and those that did not finish high school (98.6%) are particularly supportive of collaboration between local government and the public school system. Most individuals with very strongly commitments (96.8%) to community support collaboration between local government and local public schools to better prepare schoolchildren for employment and adult responsibilities.
- ▶ **Collaboration between Local Government and Higher Education** - Creativity and innovation have always been important but they are imperative in the era of the global economy. As a result, it is increasingly important for local government to collaborate with institutions of higher education to spawn innovation that positions communities to more effectively compete in the global economy. The effectiveness of collaborative ventures hinges on improved understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of regional economies and targeted investment guided by this understanding. To build strategic advantage, institutions of higher education must assess their strengths and weaknesses as they relate to the regional economy and must strategically invest in staff, faculty and facilities creating "centers of excellence". There is strong citizen support (87.0%) for the use of public resources to fund collaboration to encourage innovation. In this case, innovation includes new product development and "technology transfer" that better positions local business in global markets. Citizens with very strong commitments (96.6%) to community are much more likely than those with very weak commitments (61.9%) to support collaborations between local government and higher education.
- ▶ **Business Ventures that Narrow the Divide between Advantaged and Disadvantaged Segments of the Community** - The Wichita-Sedgwick County community, like most urban communities throughout the United States, has a considerable and growing divide between advantaged and disadvantaged segments of the community. Nearly 82 percent (81.9%) of all respondents feel that local government should use public resources to create employment opportunity for all citizens. This means that most citizens not only want to see economic growth but prefer that employment opportunity be realized by all segments of the community. Households earning less than \$20,000 annually (93.4%) and respondents that did not finish high school (94.5%) are particularly supportive of the use of public funds to create employment opportunity for all citizens. Individuals registering very strong commitments (96.1%) to community are much more likely to support the creation of employment opportunity compared to those with very weak commitments (51.9%).

Section 2: Economic Development

Part 3: Willingness to Pay

It is one thing to support economic development and quite another to be willing to pay for economic development ventures. Approximately two-thirds (62.3%) of the responding citizens indicate willingness to pay increased taxes or fees to pay for investment to encourage economic development, business investment and job creation. Respondents who are less than 25 years of age (79.2%) are especially willing

to pay for economic development-related investments. Individuals with very strong (79.5%) commitments to community are much more likely to be willing to pay for economic development investment than those with very weak (28.8%) commitments.

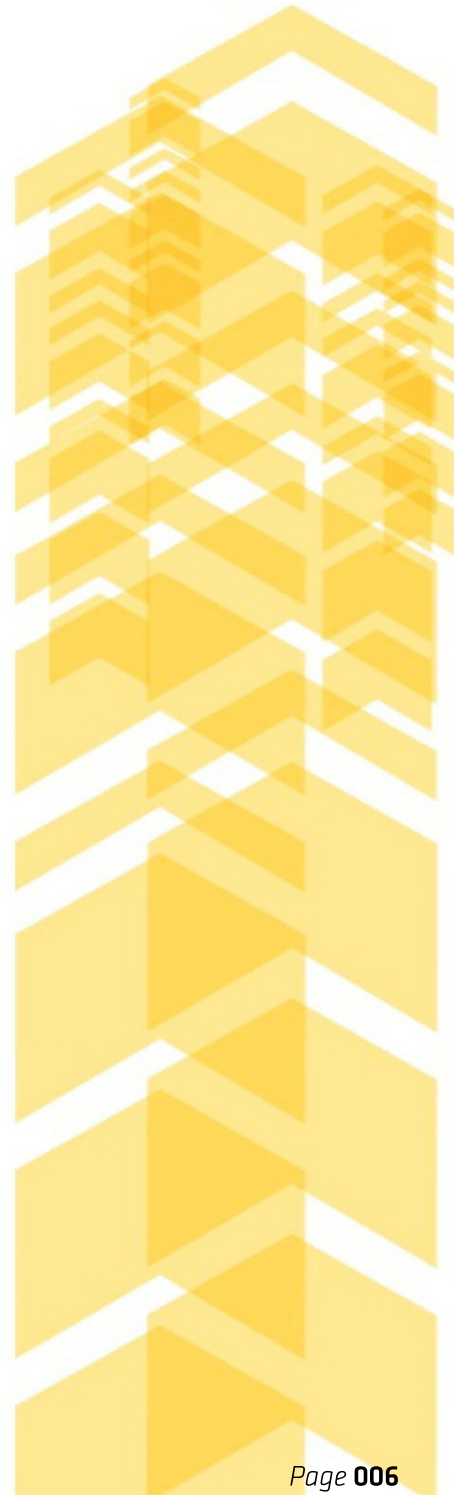
- ▶ **Downtown and Economic Development** - Downtown development potentially contributes to the vitality of the local economy and makes direct contributions to quality of life. Downtown development is assumed to improve the capacity of the community to attract and retain young professionals to the Wichita-Sedgwick County community. Downtown development may also contribute to positive images of the community. Visitors tend to form images of a community based on selected places and activities. Downtown development provides an entertainment destination for residents and visitors alike. The downtown venue in general, and Old Town in particular, is an entertainment destination for all but is expected to be particularly attractive to young professionals. Two-fifths (40.9%) of the responding citizens are willing to pay increased taxes or fees to support investment in downtown and the river walk creating a cultural arts and entertainment center where people want to live and business is willing to invest in office space. Respondents less than 25 years of age (56.2%) and those between 25-35 years of age (52.5%) are particularly willing to pay increased taxes in support of downtown development. Respondents with very strong commitments (60.1%) to community are much more likely than those with very weak commitments (13.9%) to be willing to pay increased taxes or fees to pay for investment in downtown Wichita.

Section 3: Community Development

Part 1: Commitment to Neighborhood

Neighborhoods have long been the building blocks of community and this research finds that neighborhoods are still an important vehicle for building connections between individuals. Neighborhoods can also become tools for community improvement, assuming that neighbors know and are willing to work together to respond to the challenges they face.

- ▶ **Strengthen Connections between Neighbors** - Nearly all responding citizens (96.6%) report that they are willing to work with their neighbors to improve their neighborhood. Willingness to collaborate to improve neighborhoods depends on the image that an individual holds of themselves in combination with anticipated behavior on the part of neighbors. In other words, an individual might be favorably predisposed to work with their neighbors but fail to act because they are not sure that their neighbors will reciprocate. Three-quarters (75.3%) of the respondents feel that their neighbors are willing to work with them to improve their neighborhood. Households with incomes of \$100,000 and above (83.0%) are more likely than those with incomes below \$20,000 (69.7%) to anticipate assistance from their neighbors. Individuals with very strong commitments to community (84.2%) are much more likely than those with very weak commitments (62.2%) to expect neighborhood improvement assistance.
- ▶ **Coproduction of Neighborhood Safety** - Willingness on the part of individuals to intervene in issues of public safety is an essential form of coproduction. Almost all responding citizens (98.2%) indicated that if



they saw a stranger hanging around a neighbor's home when they were gone, they would contact their neighbor or the police. Nearly 86 percent (85.5%) feel that their neighbors would behave similarly if the situation was reversed. Citizens with household incomes below \$20,000 (77.0%) are less likely than households with incomes of \$100,000 and above (91.0%) to trust that their neighbors will intervene by calling them or the police if they saw someone hanging around their house when they were gone.

- ▶ **Citizens Working with Police** - Effective law enforcement and improved public safety depend in no small part on the willingness of citizens to work with police. Nearly all (99.0%) responding citizens are willing to work with and provide community police officers the information they need to prevent or solve crime.
- ▶ **Neighborhood-Based Organizations (NBOs)** - Half of the respondents feel that their neighborhood has a strong neighborhood organization that encourages neighbors to work together. Respondents under 25 years of age (38.9%) are less likely than older citizens to feel that their neighborhood has a strong NBO. Households earning less than \$20,000 (42.8%) are less likely than other income groups to report having a strong NBO. Respondents with very strong commitments (57.9%) to community are more likely than those with very weak (42.4%) commitments to report that their neighborhood has a strong NBO that encourages neighbors to work together.
- ▶ **After-School Programming** - After-school programming can be useful in developing social skills and limits free time, when children are more likely to get in trouble. Approximately 58 percent of the respondents feel that neighborhood schoolchildren need more after-school and supervised activities than they are currently receiving. Households earning less than \$20,000 (79.0%) are much more likely than those earning \$100,000 or more (48.3%) to report the need for additional after-school programming. African-Americans (85.2%) are much more supportive of after-school programming compared to Caucasians (55.8%). Individuals with very strong commitments (77.1%) to community are much more likely than those with very weak commitments (35.9%) to feel that neighborhood schoolchildren need more after-school and supervised activities than they are currently receiving.

Section 3: Community Development

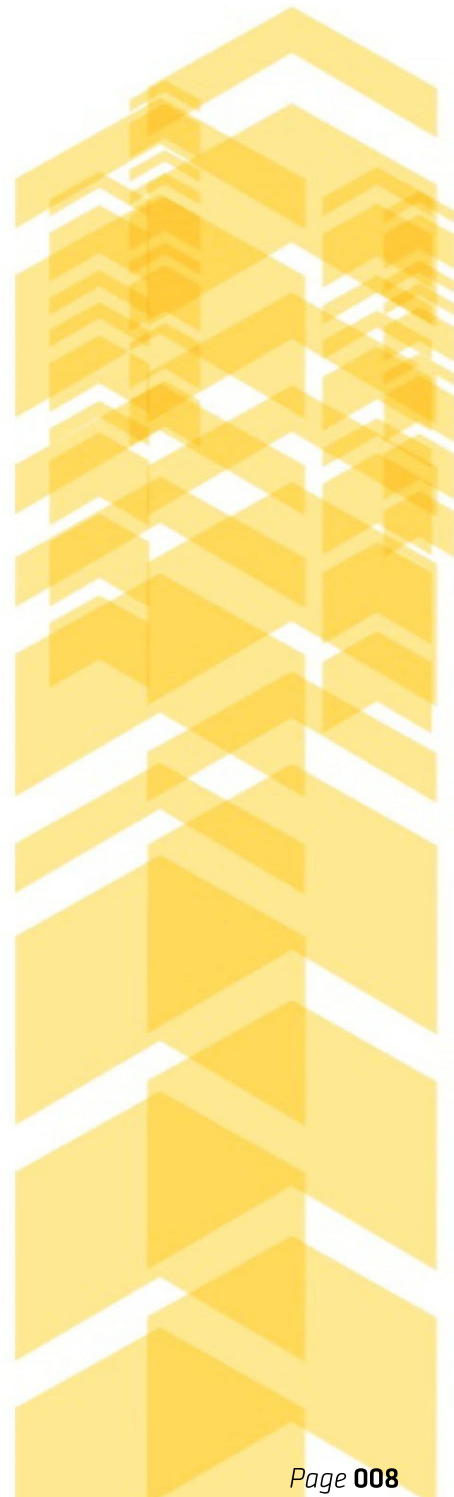
Part 2: Community and Local Government Investment

Part 2 of the community development section assesses public support for investment in basic infrastructure and issues of community responsibility for assisting disadvantaged citizens.

- ▶ **Investment in Green Space and Parks** - Two-thirds (67.5%) of the responding citizens feel that public dollars should be spent to create green space and parks. Nearly three-fourths (73.6%) of the respondents below the age of 25 support investment in parks and green space. Individuals with very strong commitments (82.2%) to community are much more likely than those with very weak commitments (40.1%) to support the use of public dollars to pay for investment in parks and green space.
- ▶ **Local Government Investment to Compensate for Federal Government Disinvestment: Neighborhoods** - As the federal government struggles with fiscal constraints and austere budgets, local government can expect reductions in intergovernmental transfers. Local governments and the communities they serve must make some difficult decisions about whether to disinvest. Three-quarters (74.9%) of the respondents feel that reductions in federal funding should be offset by increases in local government investment in neighborhoods including streets, sidewalks, streetlights, etc. African-Americans and Hispanics are particularly supportive of local government investments to

counter disinvestment on the part of the federal government. More than 88 percent of those who are very strongly committed to community feel that disinvestment by federal government should be offset by local government investment in neighborhoods.

- ▶ **Neighborhood Coproduction** - Coproduction is the willingness of citizens to collaborate with governmental and community-based organizations, including NBOs, to improve their neighborhood. Approximately 88 percent (88.4%) of the survey respondents support the use of public resources to improve neighborhoods when neighbors are willing to do their part. Most respondents with household incomes below \$20,000 (93.9%) support leveraged neighborhood improvement strategies that involve coproduction. Approximately 94 percent of responding African-Americans and Hispanics support coproduced neighborhood improvements. Respondents with very strong commitments (96.5%) to community are particularly supportive of the use of public resources to improve neighborhoods when neighbors are willing to do their part.
- ▶ **Creation of Opportunity for Children** - The creation of opportunity for all classes of citizens is a lofty goal in a society where divisions between advantaged and disadvantaged are considerable. Long-term cost-effective strategies to strengthen community and advance the public interest necessarily involve interventions that assist children. Working with children is much more cost-effective than working with adults with entrenched behavior driven by poverty. Collaborative ventures involving a variety of community and governmental agencies including the local school district are more likely to reach the critical mass of resources necessary to institute change and create opportunity for children. Therefore, long-term strategies necessarily include interventions that build the capacity of children to become productive adults that are socially adjusted and connected to the community. The vast majority of responding citizens (88.3%) feel that the community is responsible for providing assistance to children whose parents are unable to meet their needs. Consistent with previous research, respondents are somewhat less willing (71.7%) to accept responsibility for assisting children whose parents are unwilling to meet their needs. These results make it clear that public debate must be reframed to match the reality of disadvantaged children. Children are the future of the community, and intergenerational responsibility dictates that we act in ways that are consistent with the well-being of the child not the deservedness of the parent. Consistent with this understanding, nearly 97 percent of those registering a very strong commitment to the community feel that the community has a responsibility to assist children whose parents are unable to meet their needs. Citizens with very strong commitments (83.6%) to community are also much more likely than those with a very weak commitment (39.5%) to accept responsibility for children whose parents are unwilling to meet their needs.
- ▶ **Compensate for Federal Government Disinvestment: Homelessness and Housing Assistance** - Nearly 82 percent of responding citizens feel that the community should respond to reductions in federal funding by



developing local solutions for homelessness. Approximately 64 percent of respondents feel that the community should respond to reductions in federal funding by providing housing support to those who have lost their jobs. Households earning less than \$20,000 are much more supportive (78.9%) of providing housing assistance for those who have lost their jobs than are households with incomes of \$100,000 and above (55.3%). Respondents with very strong (84.1%) commitments to community are much more likely than those with very weak (31.4%) commitments to feel that the community should respond to reductions in federal funding by providing housing support to those who have lost their jobs.

Section 3: Community Development

Part 3: Willingness to Pay

- ▶ **Parks and Green Space** - Although earlier results indicated that two-thirds of the citizen respondents support public spending on parks and green space, a much smaller percentage (41.0%) are willing to pay increased taxes or fees to create additional green space and parks. Respondents less than 25 years of age (46.6%) and those between 25-35 years (54.4%) are much more willing to pay for park related investment than individuals 65 years of age and older (36.1%). Nearly two-thirds of those with very strong (61.5%) commitments to community compared to less than 18 percent of those with very weak (17.6%) commitments are willing to pay increased taxes or fees to support investment in green space and parks.
- ▶ **Low-Income Neighborhoods** - Half of all respondents indicated that they would be willing to pay increased taxes or fees to pay for investment to improve low-income neighborhoods, including housing. Households earning less than \$20,000 (68.9%) are much more willing to support increased taxes or fees to improve low-income neighborhoods compared to those earning \$100,000 and above (44.9%). African-Americans (85.0%) are particularly willing to pay increased taxes or fees to improve low-income neighborhoods. Nearly 82 percent of those with very strong commitments (81.7%) to community support increased taxes or fees to pay for investment to improve low-income neighborhoods including housing as opposed to less than 12 percent of those with very weak commitments (11.8%).
- ▶ **Homeless** - Nearly two-thirds of the respondents (63.4%) indicate a willingness to pay increased taxes or fees to pay for investments to meet the needs of those who are homeless. Households earning less than \$20,000 (73.2%) and African-Americans (83.4%) are particularly supportive of increased taxes or fees to meet the needs of those who are homeless. Those with very strong commitments (87.3%) to community are much more likely than those with very weak commitments (24.6%) to indicate willingness to pay increased taxes or fees to pay for investment to meet the needs of those who are homeless.

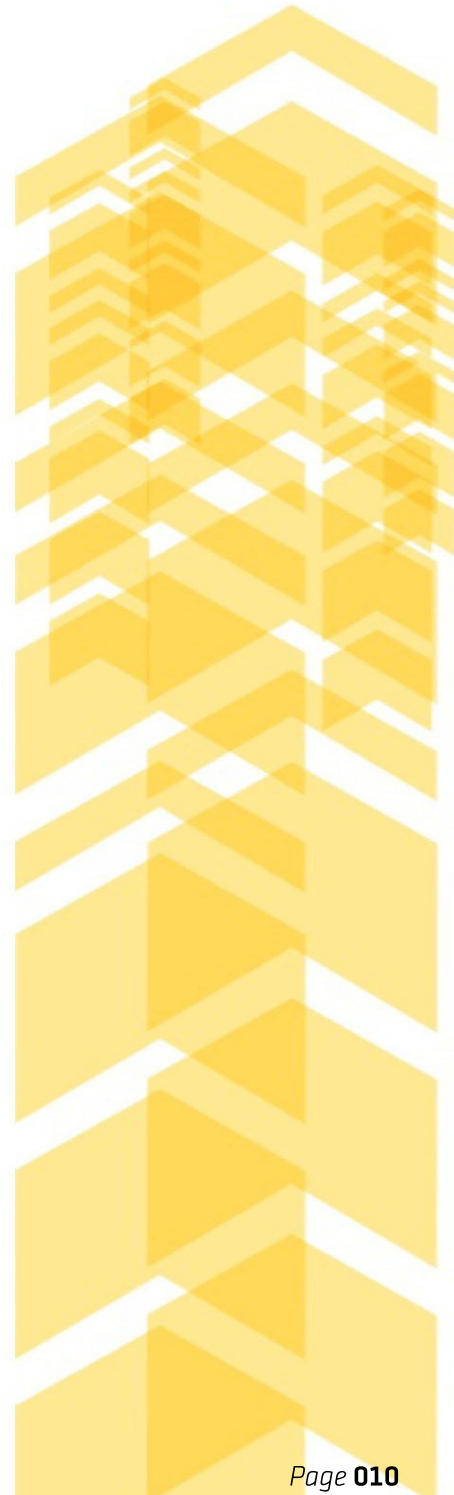
Section 4: Transportation

Part 1: General Transportation

This section provides an assessment of citizen support for different strategies for street maintenance. The first strategy seeks to maximize cost effectiveness by allowing road surfaces to depreciate to predetermined levels. In other words, this strategy repairs streets when it cost-effective and resurfaces streets primarily when it is not or when it is necessary to protect the investment in roadbeds. This strategy is generally preferred when cost effectiveness is the primary goal and the quality of automobile travel is of secondary importance. Unfortunately poor road surface quality can contribute to vehicle depreciation. The second strategy involves continuous and aggressive investments in street maintenance

with the intent of maintaining street surfaces to some predetermined professional standard. This strategy maximizes the quality of the street surface and minimizes automobile depreciation but is generally more expensive.

- ▶ **Reduced Residential Street Maintenance** - Roughly one-fourth of the responding citizens (26.3%) support local government policy that involves reduced residential street maintenance where by repairs are only made when absolutely necessary to protect investment. Individuals younger than 25 years of age (43.8%) are more likely to support a reduction in street maintenance compared to those 65 years of age and older (22.0%). Preliminarily, then, these findings indicate limited support of this approach.
- ▶ **Residential Streets and Freeways** - Most citizens (90.4%) feel that local government should continue to improve residential streets and they are also supportive of continued investment in freeways (81.6%) such as the Kellogg expressway and K-96. Citizens with very strong commitments to community support strategies that give priority to road surface quality and, accordingly, support continued investment in residential streets (94.4%) and freeways (88.1%).
- ▶ **Willingness to pay for Streets and Freeways** - It is one thing to generally support a strategy but support does not necessarily extend to willingness to pay. Two-thirds of citizen respondents (66.4%) are willing to pay increased taxes or fees to pay for improved street maintenance. Approximately half the responding citizens are willing to pay for new street construction and the expansion of the road system (50.2%), and freeways such as Kellogg and K-96 (51.4%). Willingness to pay for street maintenance appears to be directly related to age. Individuals 65 years of age and older (71.9%) are more willing to pay for improved street maintenance than are individuals under 25 years of age (56.2%). Individuals under 25 years of age (43.0%) are less willing to pay for new street construction and the expansion of the road system compared to all other age groups. This youngest class of citizens (39.7%) is also less willing to pay for freeways such as Kellogg and K-96 compared to all other age groups. Individuals with very strong commitments (78.3%) to community are much more willing to pay to improve street maintenance than are individuals with very weak (37.9%) commitments. Individuals with very strong (64.1%) commitments to community are much more willing to pay for new street construction and the expansion of the road system than those with very weak commitments (23.5%). Similarly, those who are very strongly (61.1%) committed to community are much more willing to pay for investments in freeways such as Kellogg and K-96 compared to those with very weak commitments (28.9%).
- ▶ **Reduced Investment in Bicycle and Walking Paths** - Thirty-five percent of the responding citizens feel that local government should reduce investment in bicycle and walking paths. Support for investment in bicycle and walking paths is inversely related to age. Individuals younger than 25 years of age (23.6%) are much less supportive of disinvestment in bicycle and walking paths compared to individuals 65 years of age and older (41.4%). Individuals with very weak commitments (56.5%) to community are much more likely than those with very strong



commitments (27.3%) to advise local government to disinvest in bicycle and walking paths.

- ▶ **Willingness to Pay for Bicycle and Walking Paths** - Approximately 44 percent (44.1%) of the responding citizens are willing to pay increased taxes or fees to pay for investment to develop additional bicycle and walking paths. Willingness to pay for investment in bicycle paths decreases as the age of the respondents increases. Respondents younger than 25 years of age (58.9%) are much more willing to pay to develop additional bicycle and walking paths compared to individuals 65 years of age and older (37.1%). The response bias created by disproportionate returns by older citizens' means that willingness to pay for bicycle and walking paths may be underestimated. Those living in Wichita (46.2%) and other incorporated areas (47.6%) of the county are more willing to pay for the development of bicycle and walking paths compared to those living in unincorporated areas (30.1%) of the county. Individuals with very strong commitments (62.8%) to community are much more willing to pay to develop additional bicycle and walking paths compared to those with very weak commitments (19.7%).
- ▶ **Build Bike Lanes** - Nearly two-thirds of the respondents (62.7%) feel that local government should build bike lanes to encourage bicycle travel. Those with very strong commitments (79.9%) to community are much more likely than those with very weak commitments (35.4%) to feel that local government should build bike lanes to encourage bicycle travel.

Section 4: Transportation

Part 2: Public Transportation

Extension of Bus Routes More than three-quarters of the responding citizens (76.8%) feel that local government should improve public transportation by extending bus routes to reach additional parts of the community. Households earning less than \$20,000 (89.3%) are much more likely to support the extension of bus routes compared to households earning \$100,000 or more (66.6%). African-Americans (91.5%) and Hispanics (80.0%) are particularly supportive of bus route extensions. Individuals with very strong commitments (92.6%) to community are much more likely than those with very weak commitments (48.4%) to support the extension of bus routes.

- ▶ **Make Bus Travel More Convenient** - Three-quarters of the responding citizens (75.7%) support making bus travel more convenient by expanding evening and weekend service. Households earning less than \$20,000 (86.8%) are much more supportive than those earning \$100,000 or more (64.9%). African-Americans (91.5%) and Hispanics (80.0%) are particularly supportive of expanding evening and weekend bus service. Individuals with very strong commitments (91.2%) to community are much more likely than those with very weak commitments (49.8%) to support improved public transportation by making bus travel more convenient by expanding evening and weekend service.
- ▶ **Reduce Bus Travel Time** - Approximately two-thirds of responding citizens (64.0%) feel that local government should improve public transportation by reducing the bus travel time between destinations. Households earning less than \$20,000 (65.7%) are more supportive of reducing bus travel time between destinations compared to households earning \$100,000 and above (56.0%). Individuals with very strong commitments (73.8%) to community are much more supportive of local government actions to reduce bus travel time between destinations compared to those with very weak commitments (46.7%).
- ▶ **Improve Public Transportation for Future Generations** - More than four-fifths (81.1%) of the respondents feel that local government should improve public transportation now to prepare for the

future where petroleum is limited and more expensive. Approximately 90 percent of households earning less than \$20,000 feel that public transportation should be improved now to prepare for the future. African-Americans (89.8%) and Hispanics (90.3%) are somewhat more supportive than Caucasians (80.2%) of improving public transportation for the future. Individuals with very strong commitments (91.9%) to community are much more likely than those with very weak commitments (51.5%) to encourage local government to improve public transportation now to prepare for the future where petroleum is limited and more expensive.

- ▶ **Improve Bus Service for Disadvantaged** - Approximately 91 percent (91.1%) of the responding citizens feel that local government should improve bus service for seniors, those who are disabled, and low-income residents who do not have access to automobiles. Nearly 97 percent of the responding households earning less than \$20,000 support improving bus service for those who are in some way disadvantaged. Support for a bus system that creates access for all is driven in part by self-interest. In contrast to motives of self-interest, nearly 86 percent of those earning \$100,000 and above support actions by local government to improve bus service for those who are disadvantaged. Ninety-eight percent of responding African-Americans support improved bus service for those who are in some way disadvantaged. Individuals who are very strongly committed (98.6%) to community are much more likely than those with very weak commitments (68.1%) to support improved bus service.
- ▶ **Willingness to Pay for Improved Bus System** - More than half of the responding citizens (54.7%) are willing to pay increased taxes or fees to pay for investment in public transportation including bus service that is faster and more convenient. Citizens earning less than \$20,000 (67.9%) are more likely than those earning \$100,000 and above (48.4%) to indicate a willingness to pay to invest in improved public transportation. Three-quarters (76.1%) of the responding African-Americans are willing to pay to improve public transportation. Individuals with very strong commitments (79.9%) to community are much more willing to pay increased taxes or fees in support of investment in a public transportation compared to those with very weak commitments (21.7%).

Section 4: Transportation

Part 3: Intercity Transportation

Part 3 of the transportation section focuses on building intercity transportation opportunities.

- ▶ **Establish Intercity Bus Service** - More than half of responding citizens (58.6%) feel that local government should develop intercity bus service between Wichita and surrounding communities. Respondents below 25 years of age are the most supportive (68.6%) and those 65 years of age and older (55.4%) are the least supportive of developing bus service between Wichita and surrounding communities. Households earning less than \$20,000 (73.2%) are the most supportive and households earning \$100,000 or more (47.3%) are the least supportive of developing

bus connections between Wichita and surrounding communities. African-Americans (79.4%) and Hispanics (75.5%) are particularly supportive of developing bus connections between Wichita and surrounding communities. Citizens living in Wichita (66.7%) and surrounding communities (69.7%) are more supportive than those living in unincorporated areas (56.1) of intercity bus service. Individuals with very strong commitments (81.5%) to community are much more supportive than are individuals with very weak commitments (36.6%) to support the development of a transit system with bus connections between Wichita and surrounding communities.

- ▶ **Willingness to Pay for Incentives to Improve Air Travel** - The cost to fly into or out of a particular airport is inversely related to competition. As the cost of commercial air flights into or out of Wichita Mid-Continent Airport increases, residents of the metropolitan area increasingly elect to drive to surrounding airports such as Kansas City and Oklahoma City. To reverse this negative chain of events, state and local governments have used public dollars to underwrite the costs of selected low-cost carriers making Mid-Continent a more attractive option for flyers. Nearly three-quarters of the responding citizens (74.8%) feel that local government should continue to use public resources to encourage airlines to increase the number and reduce the cost of flights through Mid-Continent. More than half of the responding citizens (54.6%) are willing to pay increased taxes or fees to pay for airline incentives. Citizens with very strong commitments (69.9%) to community are much willing than those with very weak commitments (26.0%) to pay increased taxes to make Wichita Mid-Continent Airport more attractive to flyers.
- ▶ **Willingness to Pay to Establish Interstate Passenger Train Service** - Four-fifths (82.6%) of the respondents feel that local government should build rail connections for passenger train service between Wichita and other cities including Kansas City, Oklahoma City, and Fort Worth. Approximately two-thirds of the responding citizens (65.3%) are willing to pay increased taxes or fees to pay to establish interstate passenger train service. More than three-quarters of the responding citizens (78.9%) registering very strong commitments to community are willing to pay increased taxes or fees to pay for investment to establish passenger train service connecting Wichita to cities such as Kansas City, Oklahoma City, and Fort Worth.

Section 5: Water

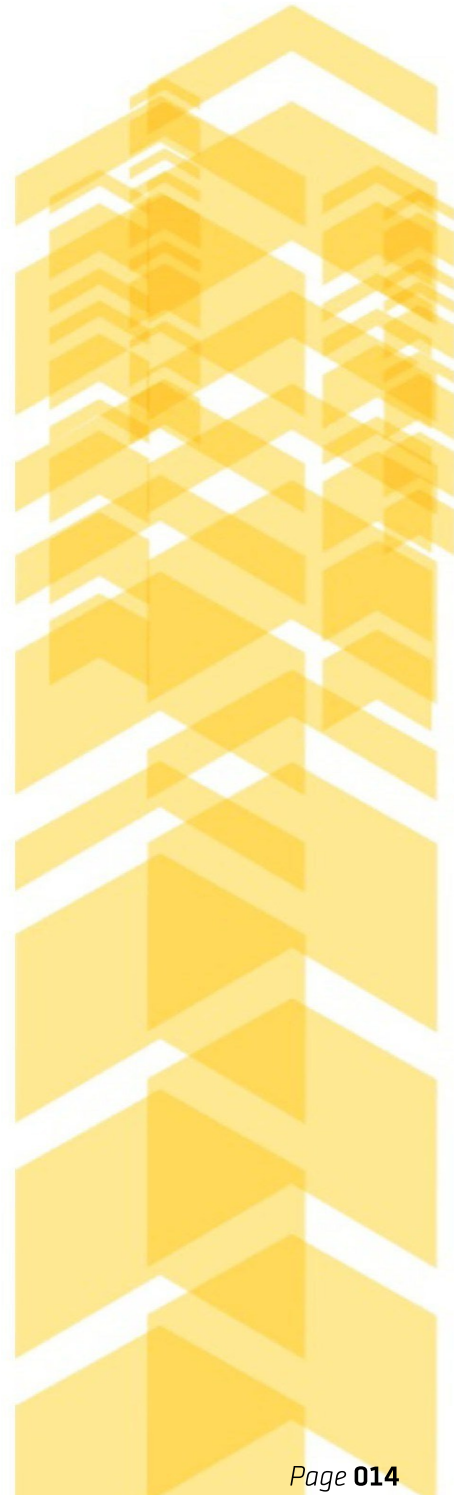
Part 1: Water Supply

Securing a reliable source of clean drinking water is an important and growing concern for most urban areas throughout the United States. The Wichita-Sedgwick County area is no exception. Water is a finite natural resource and access to clean water raises many ethical, legal, economic, and quality of life concerns. Establishing and maintaining a clean water supply is an intergenerational responsibility that has much to do with the long-term well-being of a community. Part 1 assesses public support for changes in water usage behavior and actions necessary to ensure that the community will have an adequate water supply in the future.

- ▶ **Restrict Use of Water** - Nearly three-quarters of the responding citizens (73.4%) agree that clean water management necessarily requires residential and commercial property owners to reduce water consumption including reductions in watering grass. Individuals 65 years of age and older (77.6%) are more supportive of changes in water consumption behavior in comparison to those under 25 years of age (67.1%). Citizens with very strong commitments to community (80.6%) are much more likely than those with very weak commitments (54.1%) to support mandated reductions in water consumption including reductions in watering grass.
- ▶ **Landscaping to Conserve Water** - There is broad support (88.2%) for actions to encourage changes in residential and business landscaping to conserve water. Citizens with very strong commitments to

community (92.4%) are much more likely than those with very weak commitments (72.9%) to support changes in residential and business landscaping to conserve water.

- ▶ **The Economy versus Water Supply** - Approximately half of the responding citizens (47.8%) feel that the community should discourage investment in businesses that are heavy water users. In other words, the community is evenly split when forced to choose between competing quality of life concerns. Households with incomes below \$20,000 (58.5%) are more likely than those with household incomes of \$100,000 and above (37.4%) to feel that the community should discourage investment by businesses that are heavy water users. Citizens with very strong commitments (58.4%) to community are much more likely than those with very weak commitments (32.7%) to support actions that discourage investment by businesses that are heavy water users.
- ▶ **Restrict Water Consumption to Delay Investment in Infrastructure** - The vast majority of responding citizens (80.8%) feel that the community should encourage reductions in water consumption now to delay necessary investment in water related infrastructure. Individuals 65 years of age and older (83.8%) are somewhat more likely than those under 25 years of age (76.7%) to support immediate changes in water consumption behavior. Individuals with very strong commitments (84.1%) to community are much more likely than those with very weak commitments (63.7%) to support actions to encourage reductions in water consumption now to delay necessary investment in water related infrastructure.
- ▶ **Reduce Water Consumption by Increasing the Price of Water** - Citizens are not particularly supportive of increasing the price of water. Less than a third of the responding citizens (30.3%) feel that the community should discourage water consumption and generate resources to pay for water related investments by increasing the price of water. Households earning \$100,000 or more (44.0%) are much more likely to support increases in the price of water compared to citizens earning less than \$20,000 (25.6%). Similarly, individuals holding graduate degrees (39.2%) are more likely than those that did not finish high school (23.5%) to support increases in the price of water. Citizens that are very strongly committed to community (38.7%) are more likely than those with very weak commitments (21.1%) to support actions that discourage water consumption and generate resources to pay for water related investments by increasing the price of water.
- ▶ **Reduced Consumption and Invest in Water Related Infrastructure** - The vast majority of citizen respondents (88.9%) support actions on the part of the community to reduce water consumption now and investments in infrastructure to ensure that we will have water in the future. Individuals that are very strongly committed to community (93.0%) are more likely than those with very weak commitments (69.8%) to support reduced water consumption now and investment in infrastructure to ensure access to water in the future.
- ▶ **Willingness to Pay to Develop Additional Sources of Water** - Almost all



citizens (96.6%) see water supply as an intergenerational responsibility and a finite natural resource and, consequently, support the development of additional sources of water to make sure that the community has an adequate supply in the future. Even more convincing, most of the respondents (85.3%) indicate a willingness to pay increased taxes to pay for investment to create a reliable source of water that will meet the future water needs of the community. Individuals 65 years of age and older (87.1%) are slightly more likely than individuals under the age of 25 (83.5%) to indicate a willingness to pay increased taxes to pay for water related investment. Households earning \$100,000 and above (89.3%) are somewhat more willing to pay to create a long-term water supply compared to households earning less than \$20,000 (81.8%). Individuals that are very strongly committed to community (90.4%) are much more likely than those with very weak commitments (61.8%) to indicate a willingness to pay increased taxes to create a reliable sources of water that will meet the future needs of the community.

Section 5: Water

Part 2: Stormwater and Flooding

Part 2 of Section 5 assesses citizen stormwater concerns and support for the development of a county-wide storm water drainage system.

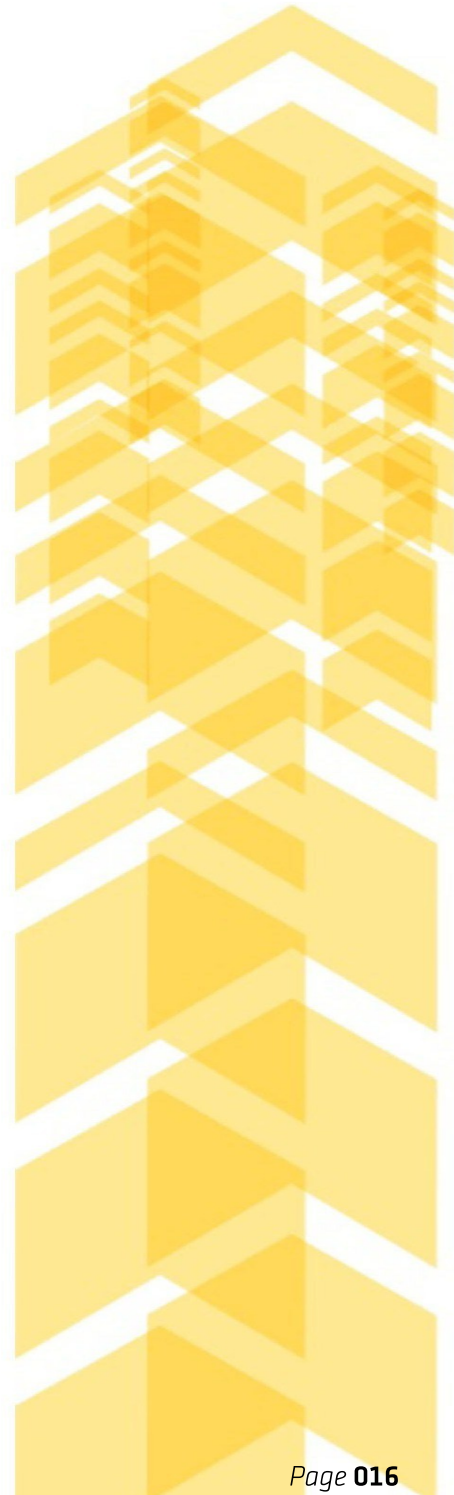
- ▶ **Problems with Flooding** - Half of the respondents (51.1%) do not view flooding as a problem. Households with incomes of \$100,000 and above (57.7%) are more likely than households earning less than \$20,000 (41.7%) to indicate that flooding is not a problem. Wichita residents (51.0%) are somewhat less likely to indicate that flooding is not a problem compared to those living in surrounding communities (61.3%) or those living in unincorporated areas (57.6%) in Sedgwick County. Individuals with very strong commitments to community (42.1%) are less likely than those with very weak commitments (61.8%) to indicate that flooding is not a problem.
- ▶ **County-Wide Strategy to Address Stormwater** - Concerns Four-fifths of the responding citizens (81.6%) feel that we should develop a county-wide strategy to manage and fund stormwater improvements. Citizens 65 years of age and older (85.6%) are more likely than those under the age of 25 (63.0%) to support a county-wide stormwater strategy. Approximately 86 percent of the responding households with incomes below \$40,000 compared to approximately 78 percent of households with incomes of \$80,000 and above support the development of a county-wide strategy to address stormwater concerns. Approximately 92 percent of citizens registering very strong commitments to community (92.2%) support the development of a county-wide strategy to address stormwater concerns compared to approximately 61 percent of those with very weak commitments (60.7%).
- ▶ **Willingness to Pay to Create a Regional Stormwater Drainage System** - More than half of the responding citizens (56.5%) indicate a willingness to pay increased taxes or fees to pay for investment to create a regional stormwater drainage system. Households earning less than \$20,000 (66.2%) are more willing to pay increased taxes to fund a county-wide system compared to households earning \$100,000 and above (51.8%). Hispanics (69.1%) and African-Americans (67.5%) are more likely to indicate a willingness to pay for a county-wide stormwater system compared to Caucasians (55.5%). Three-quarters of individuals (74.9%) with very strong commitments to community are willing to pay increased taxes to create a regional stormwater drainage system to reduce flooding compared to less than 30 percent of those with very weak commitments (29.9%).

Section 6: Citizen Evaluation of Public Investment

Advance Community Well-Being and the Public Interest

The public interest is advanced when public dollars are invested in ways that bring important returns to the community. This section provides a citizen evaluation of the extent to which citizens feel that selected investments are consistent with the public interest. Strong support for the investments discussed below provides evidence that local government has demonstrated that it can be trusted to invest public dollars in ways that are consistent with the public interest with outcomes that advance community well-being. Conversely, if large numbers of citizens feel that the investments have not contributed to making the community a better place to live, then there are legitimate questions about whether public expenditures are advancing the public interest and contributing to community well-being.

- ▶ **The Kellogg Expressway** - Ninety-two percent of the respondents feel that the community is a better place because of investments in the Kellogg expressway to reduce congestion and to make automobile travel easier. Individuals who are 65 years of age and older (92.7%) are more supportive of the Kellogg expressway than are individuals who are less than 25 years old (79.5%). Households earning \$100,000 or more (96.0%) are somewhat more supportive of the investment in the Kellogg Expressway compared to those earning less than \$20,000 (85.8%). Individuals with very strong commitments to community (93.8%) are somewhat more likely than individuals with very weak commitments (83.1%) to feel that the community is a better place because of the investment in the Kellogg expressway.
- ▶ **Aquifer Storage and Recovery System** - In the 1990s, local government, working collaboratively with a number of for profit businesses developed an innovative model for identifying and cleaning contaminated groundwater. Building on the successes of this groundwater clean-up model, local government has taken the next step to ensure that the community has an adequate supply of clean drinking water. Local government invested in infrastructure that recovers and cleans water from the Arkansas River during high water periods and recharges the groundwater supply. This groundwater recharge system is referred to as the Aquifer Storage and Recovery System (ASR). The vast majority of the respondents (90.3%) feel that the community is a better place because of the investment in the ASR. Citizens that are very strongly committed to community (93.3%) are particular supportive of the investment in the ASR compared to those with very weak commitments (76.6%). However, both are very high.
- ▶ **National Center for Aviation Training** - Long-term economic development strategies attempt to change the profitability of business in ways that encourage investment. Sedgwick County government, working in concert with aviation manufacturers, developed the National Center for Aviation Training (NCAT) to provide local workers with the job skills they need to secure employment. This type of job skills preparation becomes increasingly important as the Wichita-Sedgwick County community positions to compete in an increasingly competitive global economy. More than three-quarters of the responding citizens (77.1%) feel that the community is a better place because of the



creation of NCAT to prepare workers for aviation related employment. Individuals with very strong commitments to community (89.0%) are much more likely to support investment in NCAT compared to those with very weak commitments (55.7%).

- ▶ **Downtown Wichita** - For more than two decades, Wichita and Sedgwick County governments have invested in downtown Wichita. This investment is intended to restore economic vitality to the core of the community and to reshape the image of the community. The image that visitors and residents carry of a community tend to be shaped by selected experiences and places, such as downtown Wichita. These types of places are particularly important for attracting and retaining young professionals. Downtown Wichita is also an important part of the tax base of the community. Nearly three-quarters of the responding citizens (71.5%) feel that the community is a better place because of the investment and revitalization of downtown to encourage the development of residential units and office buildings making downtown a place where people want to live and work. Citizens 65 years of age and older (69.8%) are slightly less supportive of downtown development compared to respondents under the age of 25 (77.0%). Residents of Wichita (72.0%) and surrounding communities (71.4%) are more supportive of downtown development compared to individuals living in unincorporated areas (63.6%) of the county. Individuals with very strong commitments to community (83.3%) are much more supportive of downtown development compared to those with very weak commitments (43.8%).
- ▶ **Walking and Bicycle Paths** - Three-quarters of the responding citizens (75.1%) feel that the community is a better place because of the investment in walking and bicycle paths to improve health and to create an alternate form of transportation. Individuals below the age of 25 (83.5%) are particularly supportive of walking and bicycle paths compared to those 65 years of age and older (73.4%). African-Americans (83.9%) and Hispanics (85.5%) are also especially supportive of walking and bicycle paths. Individuals living in Wichita (76.1%) and surrounding communities (73.4%) are more supportive of walking and bicycle paths compared to individuals living in unincorporated areas (60.4%) of the county. Individuals with very strong commitments to community (89.0%) are much more supportive of walking and bicycle paths compared to those with very weak commitments (43.8%).
- ▶ **Selected Investments** - A number of investments have been grouped (Wichita Art Museum, Sedgwick County Zoo, Exploration Place, and Intrust Bank Arena) and citizens were asked to indicate whether they feel the community is a better place because of this group of investments. Eighty-six percent of the responding citizens feel that the community is a better place because the community made these investments. Residents of Wichita (86.9%) and surrounding communities (85.9%) are somewhat more supportive of these investments compared to those living in unincorporated areas of the county (75.8%). Individuals that are very strongly committed to community (93.0%) are particularly supportive of this group of investments compared to those with very weak commitments (63.4%).

Section 7: Recommended Changes in Investment and Recognition of Opportunity Costs

Part 1: Transportation

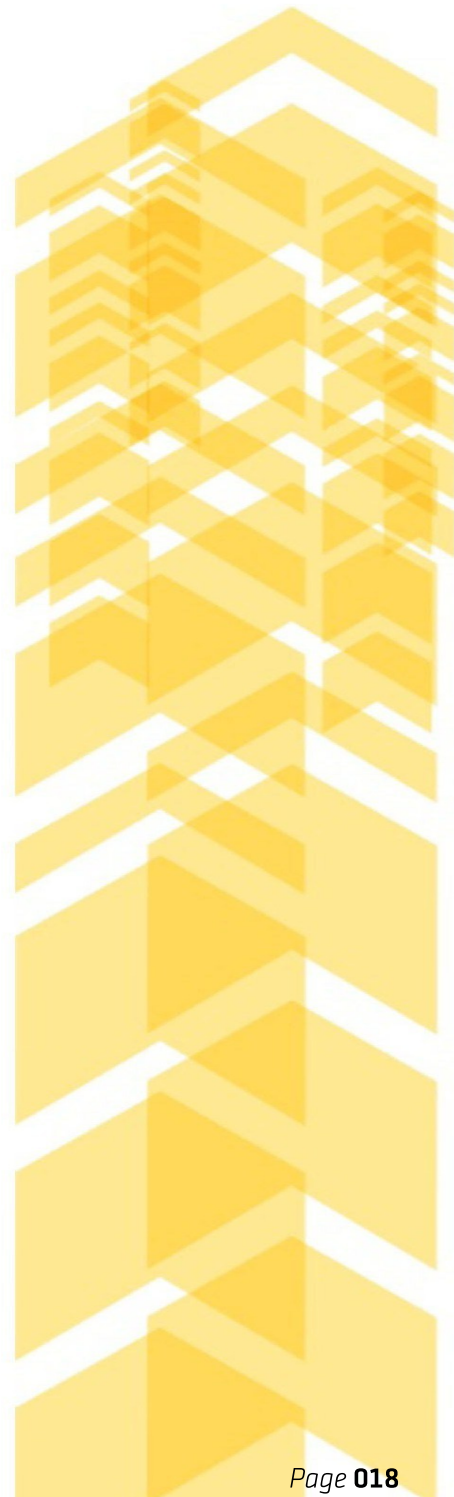
As economic and fiscal challenges mount and global competition intensifies, it becomes increasingly important to prioritize investments and identify opportunity costs. Opportunity costs, as they are defined here, recognize limited resources and that investment in one form of infrastructure requires disinvestment in another assuming that revenue streams remain constant. The section of the questionnaire associated with this section of the report places various forms of investment side by side in recognition of difficult choices. Respondents were asked to recommend changes in investment based on what they feel are consistent with the long-term well-being of the community.

► **Recommended Change in Investment: Street Improvements** - Consistent with findings in earlier sections, the evidence indicates that when forced to prioritize there is moderate to strong support for investments in street improvements with more than half of citizens (58.5%) recommending increased investment. Looking at these results from the opposite perspective, less than 5 percent (4.2%) of the respondents recommend disinvestment in street improvements. The evidence indicates that support for street improvement tends to increase with age. Citizens 65 years of age and above (67.3%) are much more likely to recommend increased investment in streets compared to those less than 25 years of age (46.6%). There are also important differences in support for investment in streets based on household income. Higher income households tend to be less supportive of increased investment in streets compared to their lower income counterparts. Specifically, households earning less than \$60,000 tend to be more supportive of street improvements. Even more specifically, households earning less than \$20,000 (71.0%) support increased investment while households earning \$100,000 or more (51.5%) are much less supportive of increased investment in streets. Support for increased investment in streets seems to be inversely related to the education of the respondent. Respondents that did not finish high school (80.0%) are much more likely to support increased investment in streets compared to those holding graduate degrees (56.8%). African-Americans (76.8%) and Hispanics (70.6%) are more supportive of increased investment in streets compared to Caucasians (57.0%). Those with very strong (70.4%) commitments to community are much more likely than those with very weak (45.0%) commitments to recommend increased investment in streets.

► **Recommended Change in Investment: Freeways/Expressways** - Less than half of the responding citizens (46.3%) support increased investment in freeways. Older citizens tend to be more supportive of increased investment in freeways. Citizens 65 years of age and older (49.0%) are much more supportive of increased investment in freeways compared to individuals under 25 years of age (30.5%). Citizens with very strong commitments to community (75.6%) are much more supportive of increased investment in freeways compared to those with very weak commitments (34.3%).

► **Recommended Change in Investment: Public Transportation** - Nearly two-thirds of the responding citizens (62.9%) recommend increased investment in public transportation with the intent of making traveling by bus faster and more convenient. Much as expected, households earning less than \$20,000 (80.5%) are much more likely to recommend increased investment in public transportation compared to those earning \$100,000 and above (50.4%). African-Americans (82.3%) are also particularly supportive of increased investment in public transportation. Citizens with very strong commitments to community (83.8%) are much more likely than those with very weak commitments (33.6%) to recommend increased investment in public transportation, making traveling by bus faster and more convenient.

► **Recommended Change in Investment: Walking/Bicycle Paths** - Approximately half of the respondents (47.8%) support increased



investment in the development of walking and bicycle paths to improve health and to create an alternative form of transportation. Citizens under 25 years of age (62.5%) are much more likely to support increased investment in walking and bicycle paths compared to individuals 65 years of age and older (43.0%). Households earning less than \$20,000 (59.1%) are somewhat more likely than those earning \$100,000 and above (48.0%) to recommend increased investment in walking and bicycle paths. African-Americans (58.3%) and Hispanics (59.6%) are more likely to recommend increased investment in walking and bicycle paths compared to Caucasians (46.9%). Citizens living in Wichita (49.7%) and surrounding communities (42.5%) are more likely to support increased investment in bicycle and walking paths compared to those living in unincorporated areas of the county (33.8%). Those with very strong commitments to community (65.2%) are much more likely than those with very weak commitments (23.6%) to recommend increased investment in walking and bicycle paths to improve health and to create an alternate form of transportation.

- ▶ **Recommended Investment: Interstate Passenger Train Service** - There is surprisingly strong support for investment to establish interstate passenger train service. Nearly three-quarters (74.1%) of the responding citizens recommend investment to establish passenger train service between Wichita and a number of major cities including Kansas City, Oklahoma City, and Fort Worth. Citizens 65 years of age and older (77.7%) are particularly supportive of investment to establish interstate passenger rail service. Households earning less than \$20,000 (81.5%) are particularly supportive of investment to establish interstate passenger train service. African-Americans (87.4%) and Hispanics (81.5%) are also particularly likely to recommend investment to establish rail service. Citizens living in Wichita (75.5%) and surrounding communities (70.1%) are more supportive of investment to establish passenger rail service compared to individuals living in unincorporated areas (65.9%) of the county. Citizens with very strong commitments to community (85.9%) are much more likely to recommend increased investment to establish interstate passenger train service compared to those with very weak commitments (54.4%).
- ▶ **Recommended Change in Investment: Air Travel through Mid-Continent** - Airport Air travel is the final transportation item examined here. Approximately 62 percent of the responding citizens support additional investment to encourage increases in the number of flights and decreases in the cost to fly into and out of Wichita Mid-Continent Airport. African-Americans (79.1%) are particularly supportive of investment to expand opportunities for air travel. Individuals with very strong commitments to the community (72.0%) are much more likely than those with very weak commitments (38.9%) to support additional investment to increase the number of flights and decrease the cost to fly into and out of the Wichita Mid-Continent Airport.

Section 7: Recommended Changes in Investment and Recognition of Opportunity Costs

Part 2: Other Investments Recommended Change in Investment: Long-Term Water Supply

Water is the most important community concern among the investments identified in this study. More than four-fifths of the responding citizens (83.4%) recommend increased investment to support the development of a reliable long-term supply of water. Citizens 65 years of age and older (87.1%) are particularly supportive of increased investment to create a long-term water supply. Citizens with very strong commitments to community (92.9%) are much more likely than those with very weak commitments (60.3%) to support increased investment in developing a reliable long-term supply of water.

- ▶ **Recommended Change in Investment: Parks and Green Space** - When forced to consider opportunity costs, less than 38 percent of the respondents (37.8%) support increased investment in the development of additional parks and green space for recreation. Support for parks and green space appears to be inversely related to age. Younger households, those more likely to have children, are

more likely to support investment in parks and green space. For example, half of the respondents under the age of 25 support development of additional parks and green space, while 1 in 3 of the respondents 65 years of age and older do. Households earning less than \$20,000 (47.9%) are slightly more likely than households earning \$100,000 and above (40.6%) to support additional investment in parks and green space. African-Americans (48.1%) and Hispanics (49.5%) are more likely than Caucasians (36.8%) to support increased investment in parks and green space. Citizens living in Wichita (39.3%) and surrounding communities (34.4%) are more supportive of increased investment in parks compared to those living in unincorporated areas of the county (23.3%). Individuals with very strong commitments to community (55.9%) are much more supportive of increased investment to develop additional parks and green space for recreation compared to those with very weak commitments (19.1%).

► **Recommended Change in Investment: Economic Development** - When forced to consider opportunity costs, slightly more than half of the responding citizens (52.5%) support increased investment in economic development and the use of incentives to encourage business investment and new job creation. Respondents under the age of 25 (65.8%) are particularly supportive of increased investment in economic development. Similarly, households earning less than \$20,000 (64.1%) are especially supportive of policy to strengthen the economy. African-Americans (67.2%) and Hispanics (69.2%) are more supportive of increased investment in economic development compared to Caucasians (51.5%). Citizens with very strong commitments to community (65.5%) are much more likely to support increased investment in economic development including the use of incentives to encourage business investment and new job creation compared to those with very weak commitments (26.9%).

► **Recommended Change in Investment: Downtown Wichita** - Investment in downtown Wichita has been instrumental in transforming the central business district into an attraction for visitors and young professionals, and to some extent, a place of residence. This section assesses whether there is broad public support for additional investment. Approximately one-third of the responding citizens (35.5%) support increased investment in downtown, making it a place where people live and work. Citizens below the age of 25 (53.4%) are much more supportive of increased investment downtown compared to citizens 65 years of age and older (32.9%). Households earning less than \$20,000 (49.8%) are more supportive of increased investment downtown compared to households earning \$100,000 or more (38.4%). African-Americans (61.2%) and Hispanics (50.0%) are particularly supportive of increased investment downtown. Residents of Wichita (37.4%) and surrounding communities (29.3%) are more supportive of increased investment downtown compared to individuals living in unincorporated areas of the county (21.5%). Individuals with very strong commitments to community (56.1%) are much more supportive of increased investment downtown compared to those with very weak commitments (14.7%).

