

# **Intergovernmental Issues in Indiana 2012 IACIR Survey**

# Intergovernmental Issues in Indiana 2012



A Survey  
Administered by  
the Indiana Advisory  
Commission on  
Intergovernmental  
Relations



**T**his survey is administered by the Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (IACIR) on a periodic basis to gather information on current issues affecting the relationships between governments in the state. The IACIR seeks your opinions on the issues presented in the survey for use by state elected officials and for policy research. The survey must be completed by a person holding elective office with the exception of appointed school board members. Please feel free to consult others within your local government if you are unsure about the correct response to a particular question.

Completion of the questionnaire is voluntary. Respondents have the option to complete the survey online at [www.iacir.spea.iupui.edu](http://www.iacir.spea.iupui.edu) or to return the printed questionnaire in the enclosed postage paid envelope. Online participants will need the identification number printed on the cover letter or on the back of the questionnaire in the lower right-hand corner.

## 1 What elected office do you hold?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> County council member | <input type="checkbox"/> Township trustee or trustee-assessor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> County commissioner   | <input type="checkbox"/> School board member                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mayor                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other ( <i>specify</i> ) _____       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Town council member   |   |

## 2 What local government do you represent?

\_\_\_\_\_

## 3 In which county(ies) is your local government located?

\_\_\_\_\_

## 4 How do you feel about the general direction in which your community is heading?

- Very optimistic
- Mildly optimistic
- Neither optimistic nor pessimistic
- Mildly pessimistic
- Very pessimistic

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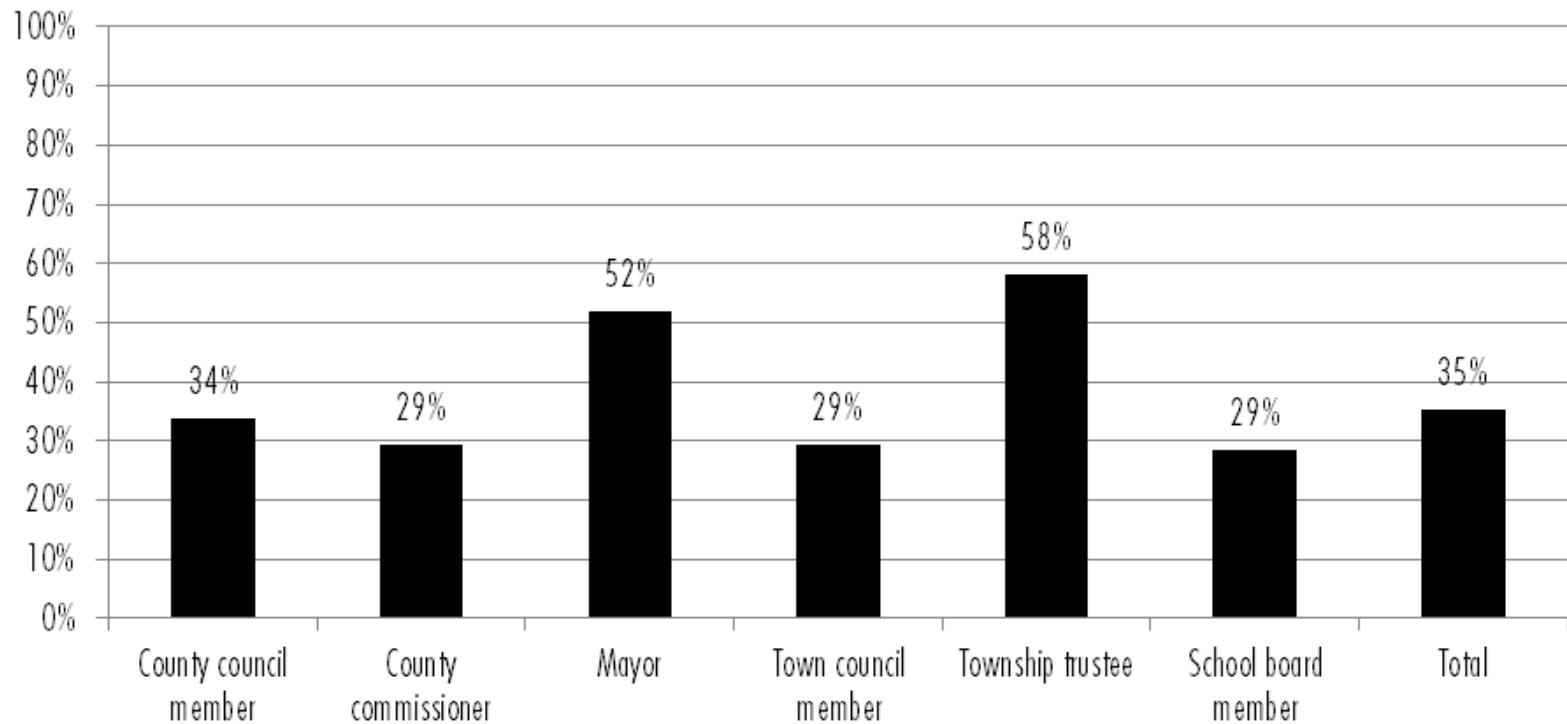
# 2012 Themes

- Community conditions
- Responses to fiscal challenges
- Service arrangements
- TIF, tax abatement, PILOTs, SILOTs
- Pensions, health insurance, and training
- Infrastructure
- Communication
- Civics

# Response Rates

<b>Office</b>	<b>Effective responses</b>	<b>Mailed</b>	<b>Undelivered or excluded</b>	<b>Effective return rate</b>
County council member	31	92	0	34%
County commissioner	27	92	0	29%
Mayor	61	119	1	52%
Town council member	129	442	4	29%
Township trustee	83	149	6	58%
School board member	82	290	3	29%
<b>Total</b>	<b>413</b>	<b>1,184</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>35%</b>

# Response Rates



Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, 2012 Survey of Elected Officials

# Response rates

Office	2012	2010	2008	2006	2004	2003	2002	2001
Senator	--	--	--	16%	29%	40%	32%	30%
Representative	--	--	--	24%	26%	28%	23%	19%
County council member	34%	38%	41%	37%	49%	64%	54%	52%
County commissioner	29%	33%	34%	45%	44%	53%	41%	51%
County auditor	--	43%	--	--	--	--	--	--
Mayor	52%	48%	41%	56%	63%	52%	50%	56%
Town council member	29%	29%	23%	25%	39%	37%	38%	32%
Township trustee	58%	55%	53%	52%	61%	57%	57%	43%
School board member	29%	21%	29%	31%	28%	44%	34%	47%
Total	35%	35%	41%	36%	41%	47%	41%	40%

# Responses by County

- Began asking to identify local government in 2008
- 2012 :
  - Represent 401 individual local governments
  - At least one local government from every county, except Crawford County.

# Paper vs. Online

<b>Office</b>	<b>Paper</b>	<b>Online</b>
County council member (n=31)	84%	16%
County commissioner (n=27)	89%	11%
Mayor (n=61)	72%	28%
Town council member (n=129)	83%	17%
Township trustee (n=83)	93%	7%
School board member (n=82)	83%	17%
Total (n=413)	84%	16%

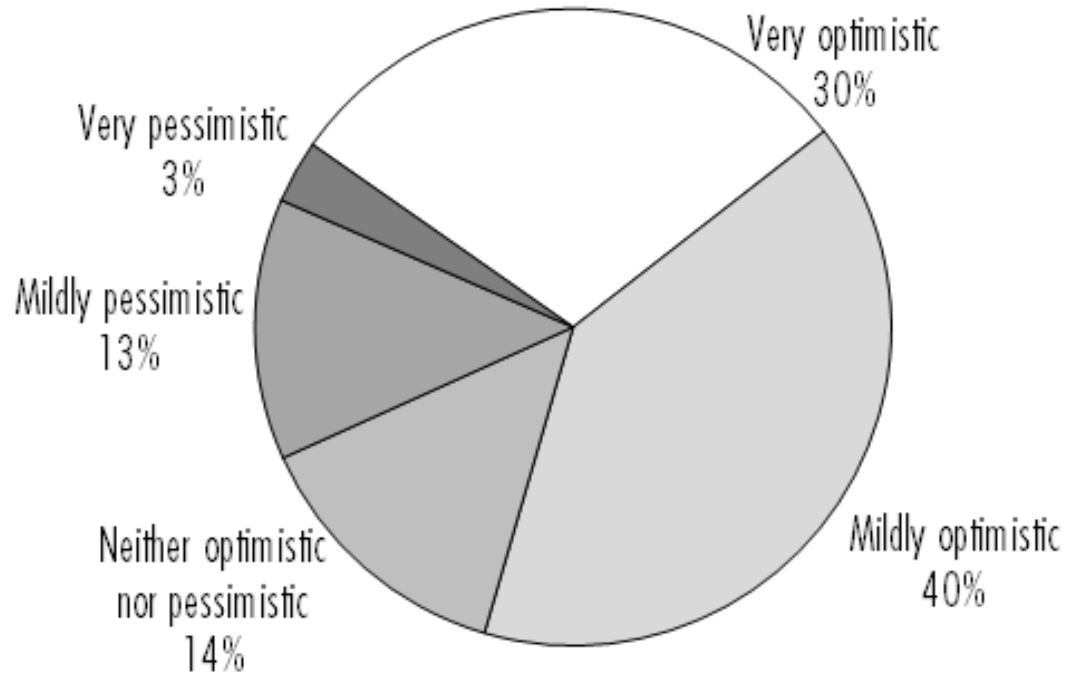


# Feelings about Community Direction

	<b>Very optimistic</b>	<b>Mildly optimistic</b>	<b>Neither optimistic nor pessimistic</b>	<b>Mildly pessimistic</b>	<b>Very pessimistic</b>
County council member (n=31)	29%	48%	10%	13%	0%
County commissioner (n=27)	33%	37%	4%	22%	4%
Mayor (n=61)	59%	34%	5%	2%	0%
Town council member (n=127)	26%	43%	17%	10%	3%
Township trustee (n=81)	15%	41%	21%	17%	6%
School board member (n=80)	28%	36%	13%	20%	4%
Total (n=407)	30%	40%	14%	13%	3%

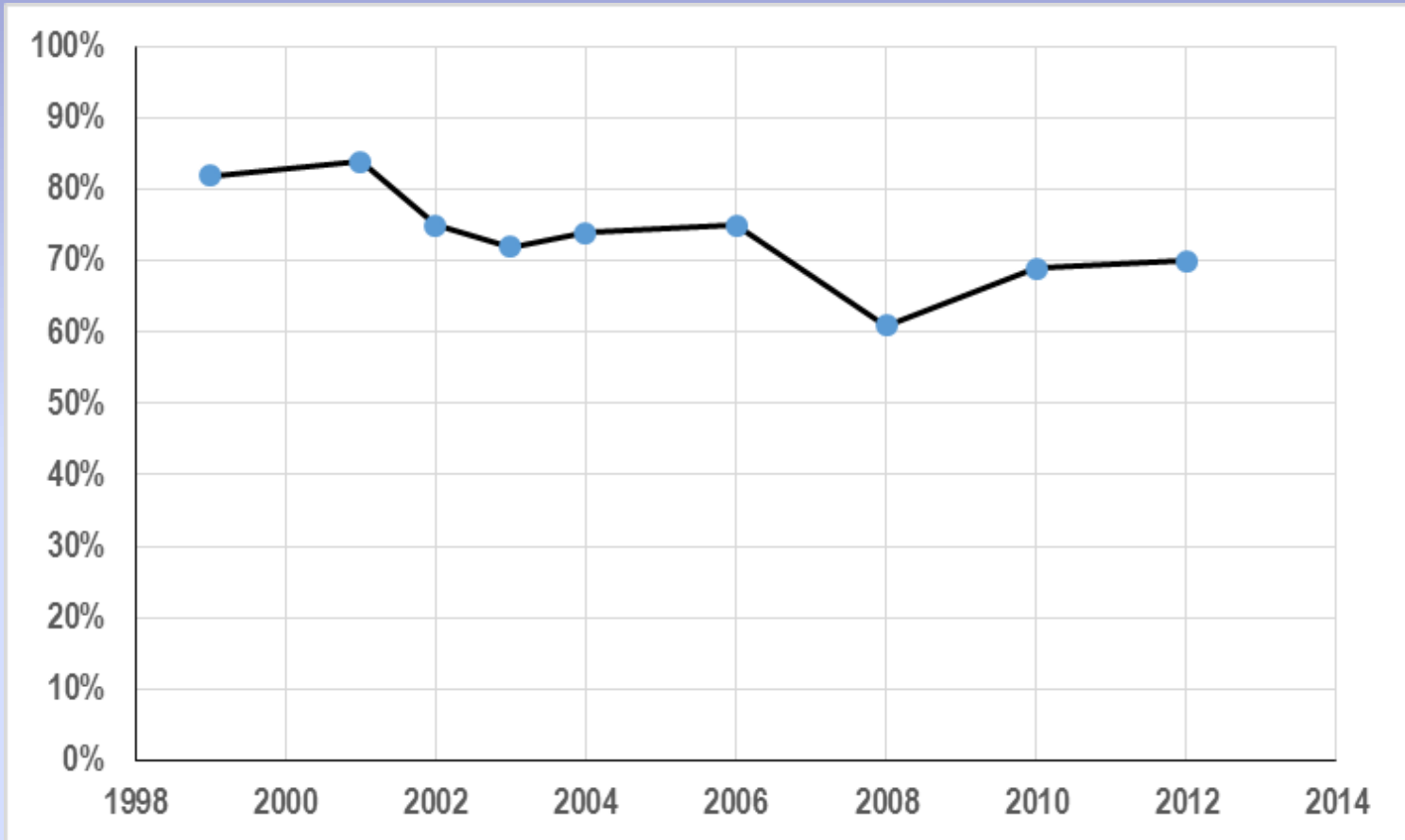
\*Some of the totals may be slightly more or less than 100 percent due to rounding.

# Feelings about Community Direction



Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, 2012 Survey of Local Elected Officials

# Optimism over Time



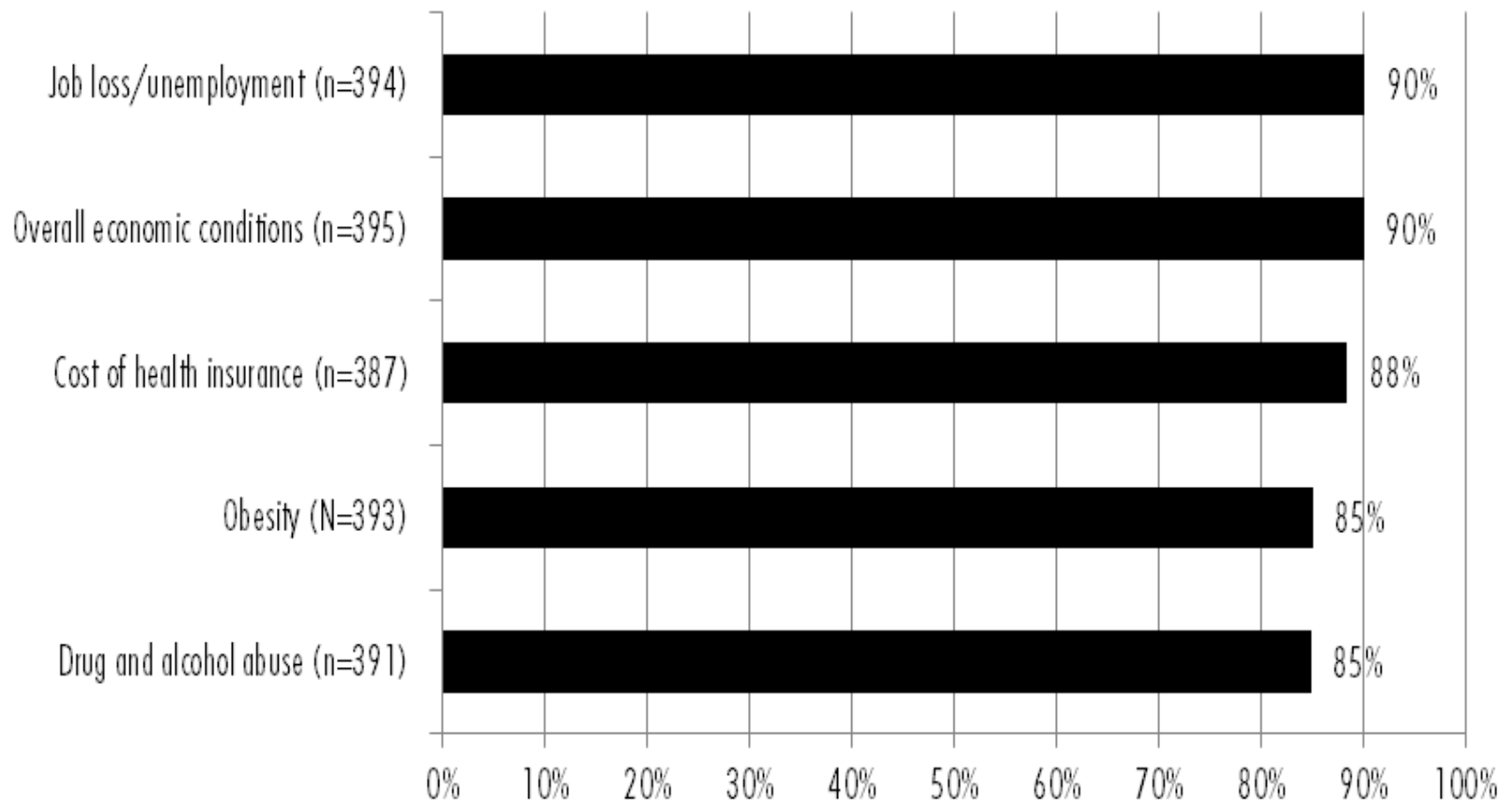
# Community Conditions

- 75 conditions
- Categories
  - Health
  - Economics
  - Public safety
  - Local services and infrastructure
  - Land use
  - Community quality of life

# Community Conditions

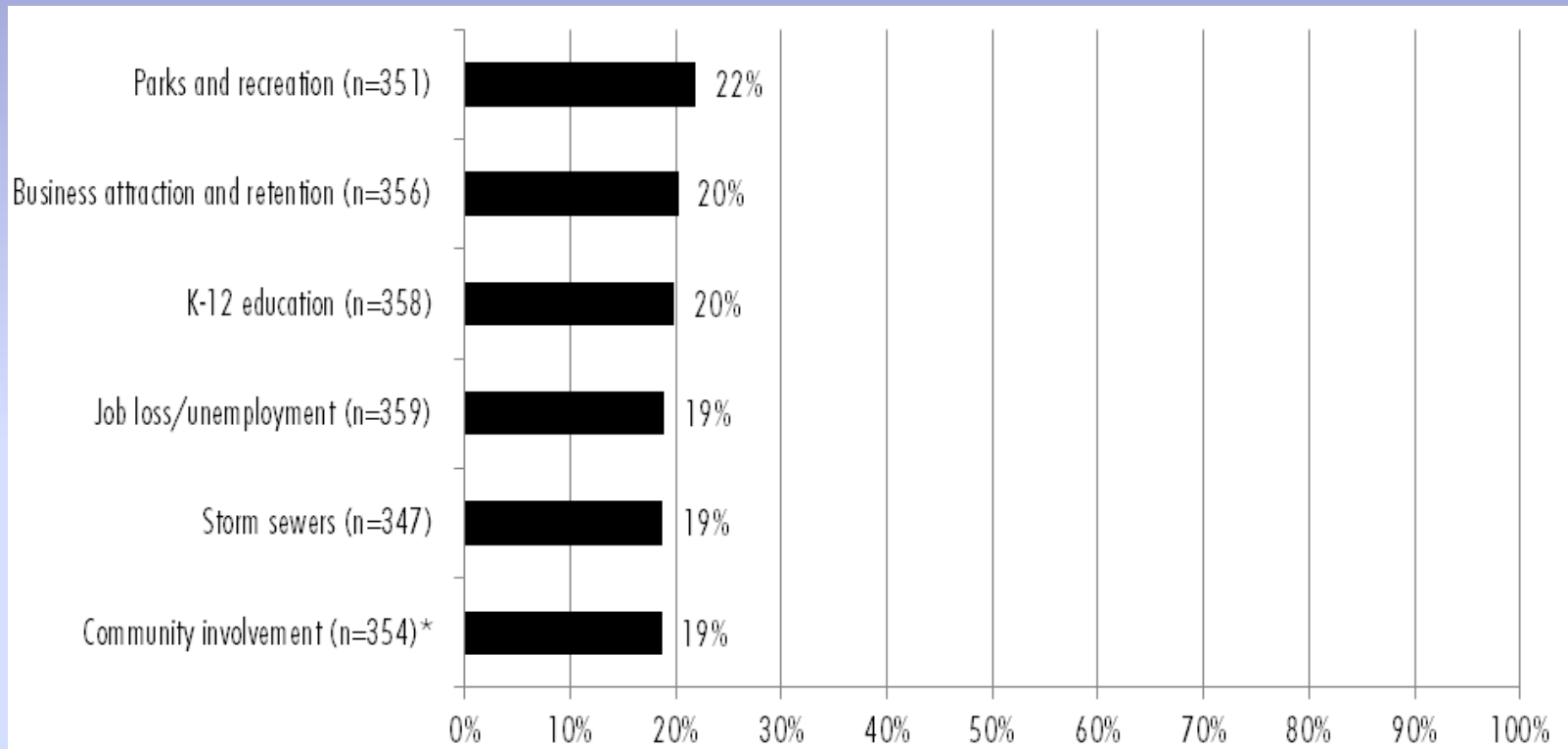
- Current: Major, moderate, or minor or no problem
- Last year: Improved, worsened, or no change
- Last year: 3 most improved
- Last year: 3 most deteriorated
- Next 2 years: 3 most important to work on

# Top Five Issues Identified as Major or Moderate Problems



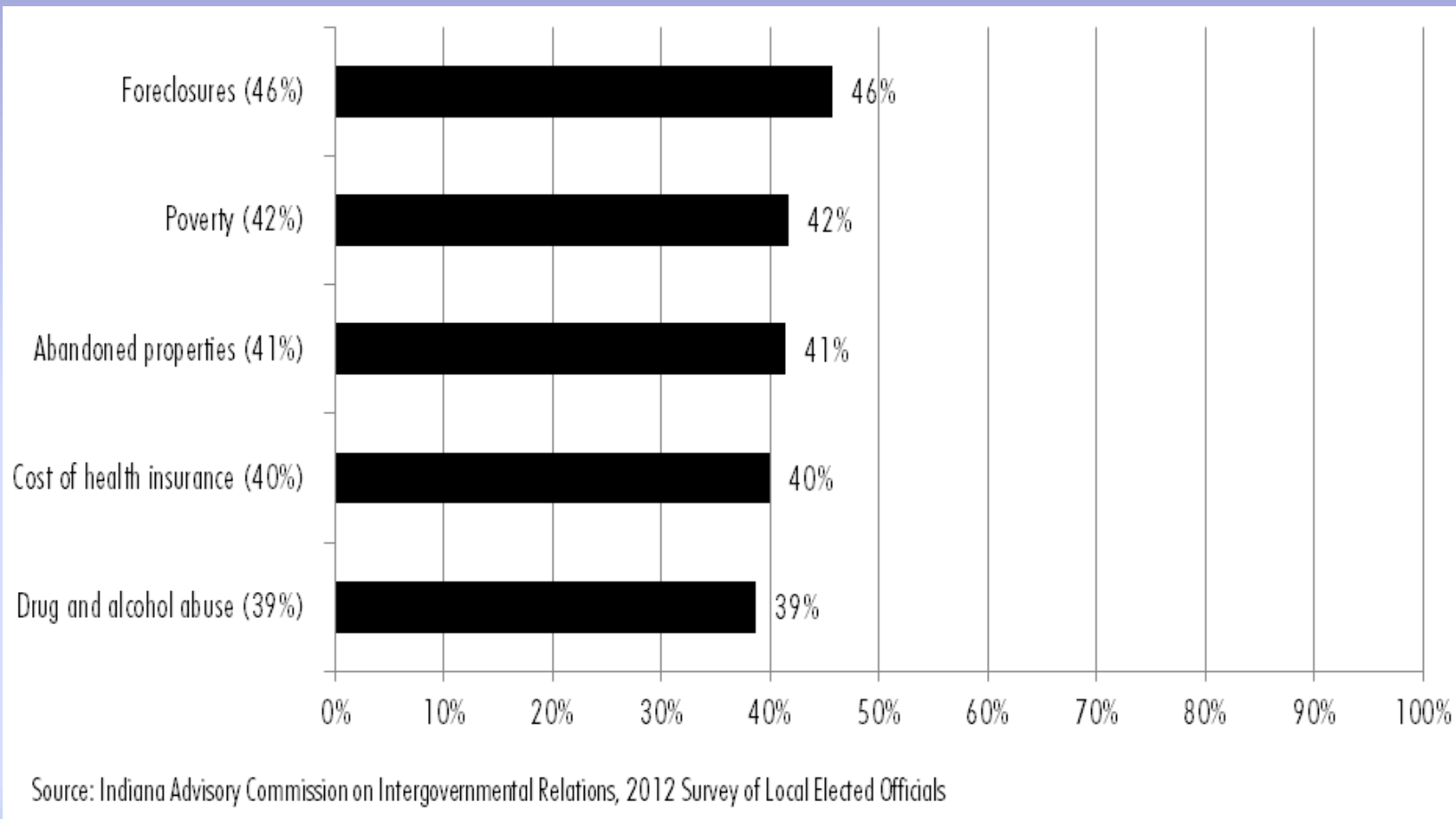
Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, 2012 Survey of Local Elected Officials

# Top Five Issues Identified Most Often as Improved Since Last Year



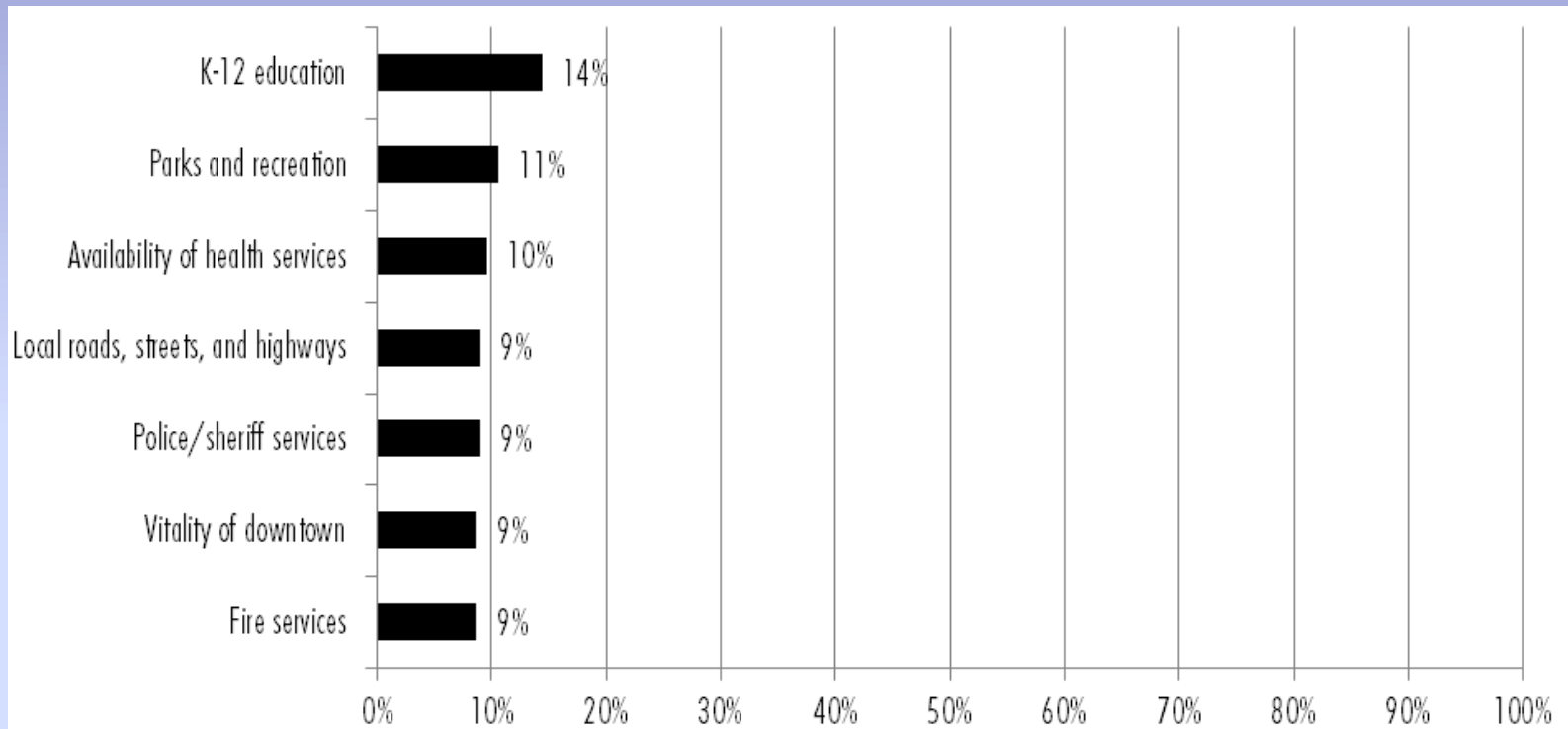
Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, 2012 Survey of Local Elected Officials

# Top Five Issues Identified Most Often as Worsened Since Last Year



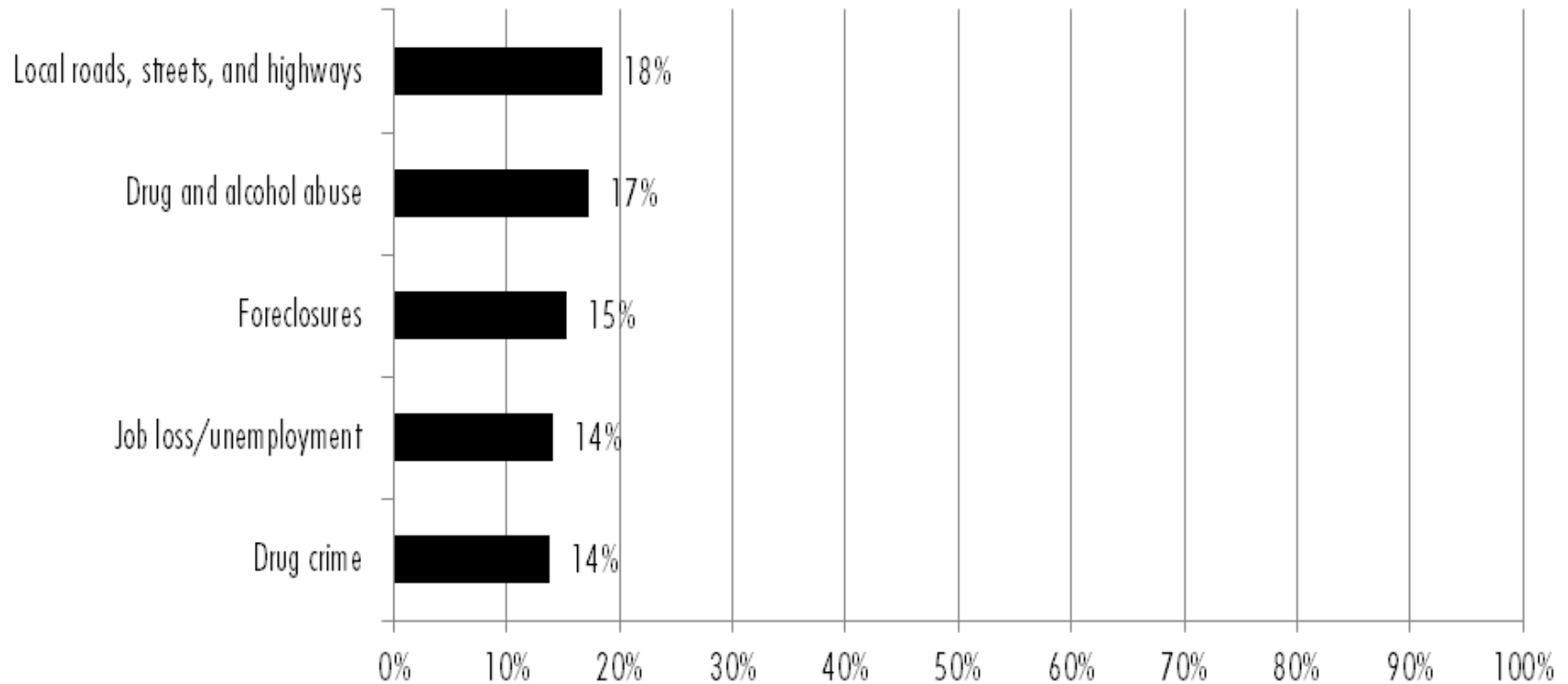


# Top Five Issues Ranked as Most Improved During the Past Year



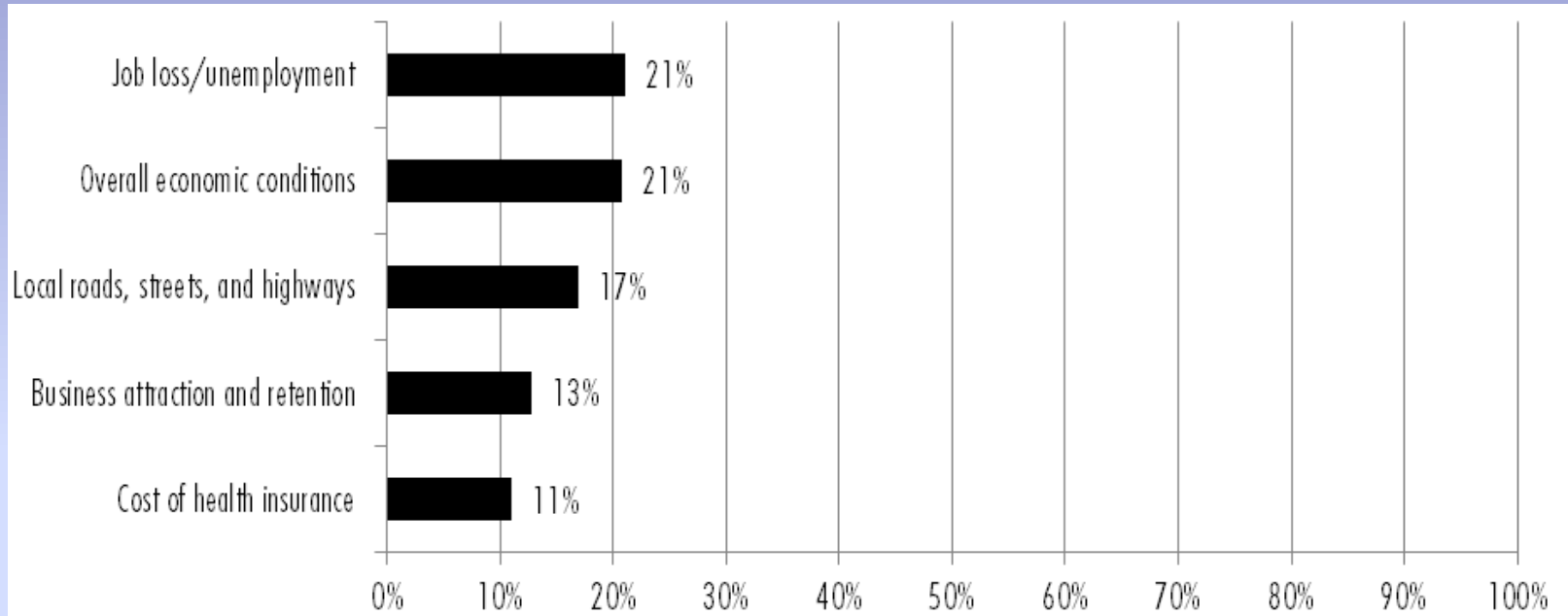
Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, 2012 Survey of Local Elected Officials

# Top Five Issues Ranked as Most Deteriorated During the Past Year



Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, 2012 Survey of Local Elected Officials

# Top Five Issues Ranked as Most Important to Work on over the Next Two Years



Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, 2012 Survey of Local Elected Officials

# Fiscal Challenges

Local governments have faced a number of fiscal challenges over the last few years

- Property taxes are now subject to property tax caps
- Other tax revenues, such as local option income taxes, have declined as a result of the depressed economy
- Local governments face the rising costs of employee health insurance, fuel, and other supplies

## **Question 11**

**Officials were asked to identify their local government's response to fiscal challenges in 2008-2009 and 2010-2011**

# Responses to Fiscal Challenges

2008:

- Over 1/3 of the officials indicated they had not made, or were not planning to make, any changes

2008-2011:

- However, responses from the current survey indicate that many local governments have used various tools to respond to the fiscal challenges

# Responses to Fiscal Challenges

## Options:

- New revenues
- Changes to workforce
- Cuts or reductions in services
- Changes in service arrangements

# Changes Reported Most Frequently

	<u>08-09</u>	<u>10-11</u>
Cut or delay in capital expenditures	57%	62%
Reduced spending on roads and streets	56%	62%
Making internal operational changes	52%	61%
Cut or reduced spending on training and travel	51%	55%
Increased fees and charges for local services	41%	55%



# Chosen Less Frequently

	<u>08-09</u>	<u>10-11</u>
Passed a new or additional local option income tax	11%	13%
Privatized capital assets or local government functions	12%	14%
Pursued consolidation with another unit of government	13%	20%
Reduced spending on solid waste management	16%	18%

# Cooperative Arrangements

Questions asked how local officials:

- Made changes to address fiscal challenges
- Whether particular services were provided through agreements with another local government, a private sector firm, or a nonprofit organization
- Cooperative purchasing
- Amount and character of cooperative activity within each county

# Cooperative Arrangements

## Responses to Fiscal Challenges:

- Adjusted the terms for contract services
- Implemented cooperative service arrangements with other local governments, and
- Engaged in joint purchasing with other local governments

## **Question 16**

**Respondents indicated the arrangement currently used to provide each type of a variety of public services**

# Cooperative Arrangements Services

- Jail
- Juvenile detention
- Roads and streets
- Parks and recreation
- Drinking water utility
- Solid waste services
- Sewer utility
- Police services
- Fire services
- Emergency medical services
- Emergency dispatch
- Planning/plan commission
- Economic development
- Vocational education
- Special education
- Property assessment

# Cooperative Arrangements

## Internal Resources:

- The majority of respondents indicated they provided most services with internal resources.
- The two services reported most often that were not provided by internal resources were:

1. Emergency medical services (45%)
2. Juvenile detention (27%)

# Cooperative Arrangements

Contracts with other local governments:

- Juvenile detention (57%)
- Emergency dispatch (42%)
- Emergency medical services (36%)

# Cooperative Arrangements

Contracts with private firms:

- Solid waste services (25%)
- Property assessment (22%)
- Juvenile detention (16%)



# Cooperative Arrangements

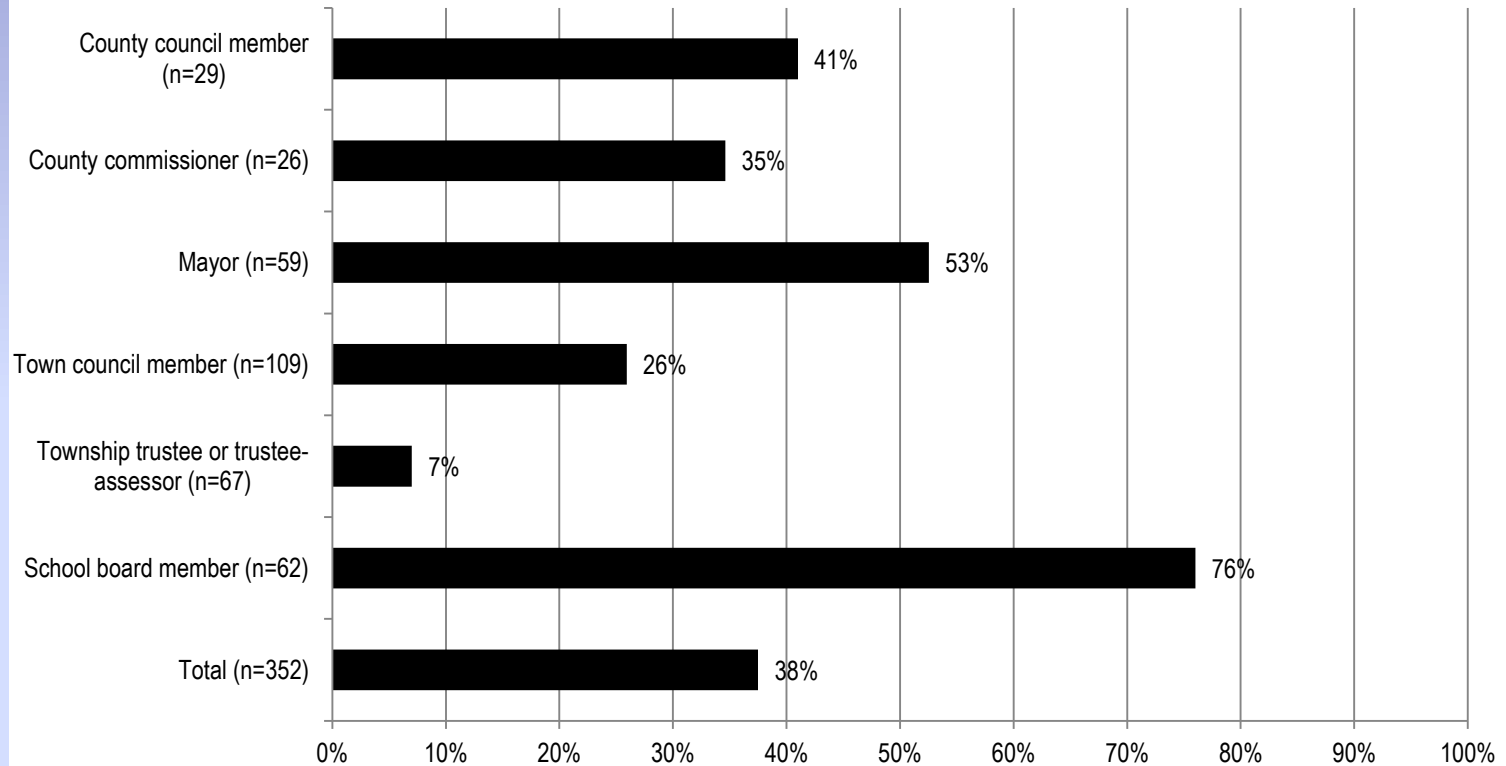
Contract with a nonprofit organization:

- Fire services (19%)
- Economic development (14%)
- Emergency medical services (13%)

## **Question 17**

**Respondents indicated if their local government purchased goods cooperatively in the last year.**

# Joint Purchasing



Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, 2012 Survey of Local Elected Officials

## **Questions 18 and 19**

**Amount of Cooperative Activity**

**Quality of Cooperative Activity**

# Intergovernmental Cooperation

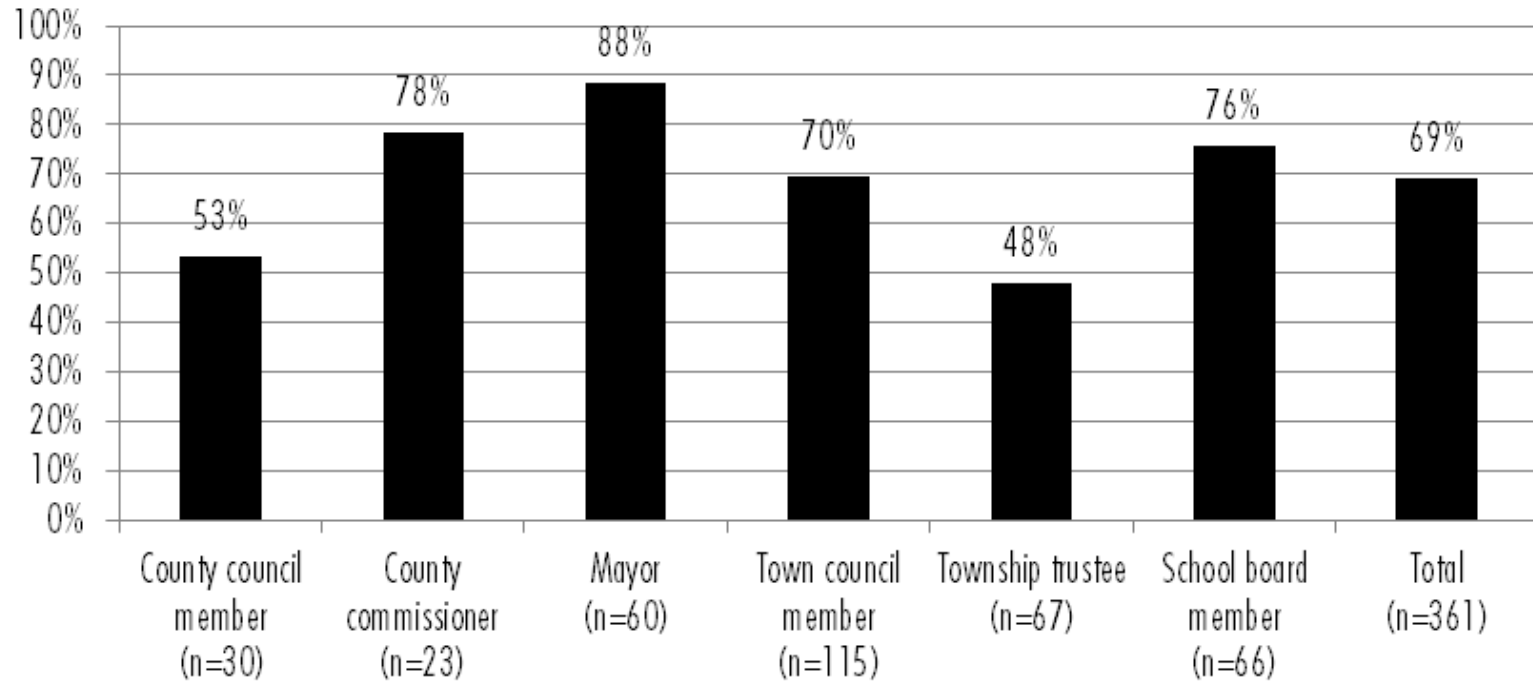
Office	2012			
	n	Increased	Decreased	Stayed about the same
County council member	<b>30</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>53%</b>
County commissioner	<b>25</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>40%</b>
Mayor	<b>61</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>34%</b>
Town council member	<b>115</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>77%</b>
Township trustee	<b>63</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>83%</b>
School board member	<b>66</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>47%</b>
Total	<b>360</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>61%</b>

# Quality of Working Relationship with Other Local Governments

Positive relationship:

County governments	69%
City governments	66%
Town governments	66%
Township governments	70%
School districts	68%
Libraries	63%
Local businesses	72%
Local charities and other non-profits	78%

# Use of Volunteers



Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, 2012 Survey of Local Elected Officials

# Use of Volunteers

- General reception/clerical
- Technology
- Police/sheriff
- Courts
- Fire
- Parks
- Roads
- Health services
- Senior services
- Environmental protection
- Planning and code enforcement
- General beautification
- Animal services
- Emergency management and shelters
- Election
- Education
- Other



# Use of Volunteers

- Education (78%)
- Beautification (66%)
- Parks (52%)
- Police/sheriff (50%)
- Fire (50%)
- Election (40%)
- Senior services (38%)

# TIF and Tax Abatement

- Counties and municipalities continue to use TIF and tax abatement (2009-2012)
- Generally, reported using tax abatement more than TIF
- Strong majorities of county commissioners and mayors reported using TIF
- Strong majorities of county councilors, county commissioners, and mayors reported using tax abatement

# Payment In Lieu of Taxes for Governments and Nonprofits

Type of organization	Should be required to make payments in lieu of property taxes to local government
Units of federal government	33%
Units of state government	33%
Units of other local government	23%
Nonprofit hospital	35%
Private university or school	48%
Church or other religious nonprofits	32%
Other nonprofits	23%

# Governments and Nonprofits Provide Services at Reduced Cost

Type of organization	Should be required to provide services to local government below cost in lieu of property taxes
Units of federal government	22%
Units of state government	23%
Units of other local government	19%
Nonprofit hospital	25%
Private university or school	29%
Church or other religious nonprofits	21%
Other nonprofits**	16%

# Local Government Benefits Pension/Retirement Contributions

	Elected Officials	Full-time employees	Part-time employees
County council member	90%	100%	4%
County commissioner	72%	84%	4%
Mayor	65%	92%	5%
Town council member	13%	58%	4%
Township trustee	32%	31%	6%
School board member	28%	95%	21%
Total	38%	70%	7%

# Local Government Benefits

## Health Insurance

	Elected Officials	Full-time employees	Part-time employees
County council member	93%	100%	8%
County commissioner	88%	100%	0%
County auditor	83%	98%	4%
Mayor	15%	64%	7%
Town council member	19%	26%	1%
Township trustee	52%	98%	39%
School board member	44%	73%	10%
Total	93%	100%	8%

# Local Government Benefits Increasing Health Insurance Costs

County council member	83%
County commissioner	80%
Mayor	95%
Town council member	80%
Township trustee	70%
School board member	93%
Total	85%

# Local Government Benefits – Responses to Increasing Health Costs

Increased elected official/employee health insurance contributions	59%
Reduced costs by changing vendors	43%
Reduced costs by reducing health insurance coverage	38%
Reduced non-insurance expenditures	37%
Reduced health insurance eligibility for officials and employees	17%
Reduced costs through a cooperative purchasing arrangement	17%
Other (89)	
Increased deductibles (6)	
On-site clinic (5)	



# Local Government Benefits – Responses to Increasing Health Costs

Increased elected official and employee health insurance contributions	64%
Reduced health insurance coverage	31%
Reduced health insurance eligibility for officials and employees	11%
Reduced health insurance costs through a cooperative purchasing arrangement with the state of Indiana or another local government	4%
Reduced health insurance costs by changing vendors	39%
Reduced non-insurance expenditures	9%

# Education and Training for Officials First Year

Office	Yes
County council member (n=30)	63%
County commissioner (n=25)	88%
Mayor (n=56)	91%
Town council member (n=118)	47%
Township trustee (n=77)	75%
School board member (n=74)	93%
Total (n=380)	72%

# Education and Training for Officials Last 12 Months

<b>Office</b>	<b>I received adequate training</b>	<b>I received some training, but would like to participate in more opportunities</b>	<b>I did not receive any training</b>
County council member (n=30)	10%	57%	33%
County commissioner (n=25)	72%	20%	8%
Mayor (n=56)	63%	32%	5%
Town council member (n=116)	24%	39%	37%
Township trustee (n=76)	51%	29%	20%
School board member (n=72)	71%	17%	13%
Total (n=375)	46%	32%	22%

# Sources of Information for Implementation

- Local gov't peers (94%)
- State agencies (78%)
- Private consultants (68%)
- State trade associations (61%)

# Infrastructure Investment

- Highways
- Local roads and streets
- Bridges
- Parks
- Public school classrooms
- Public school performance and athletic facilities
- Libraries
- Drinking water
- Sanitary sewers
- Storm sewers
- Telephone
- Cellular telephone
- High-speed internet
- Electricity
- Natural gas
- Other

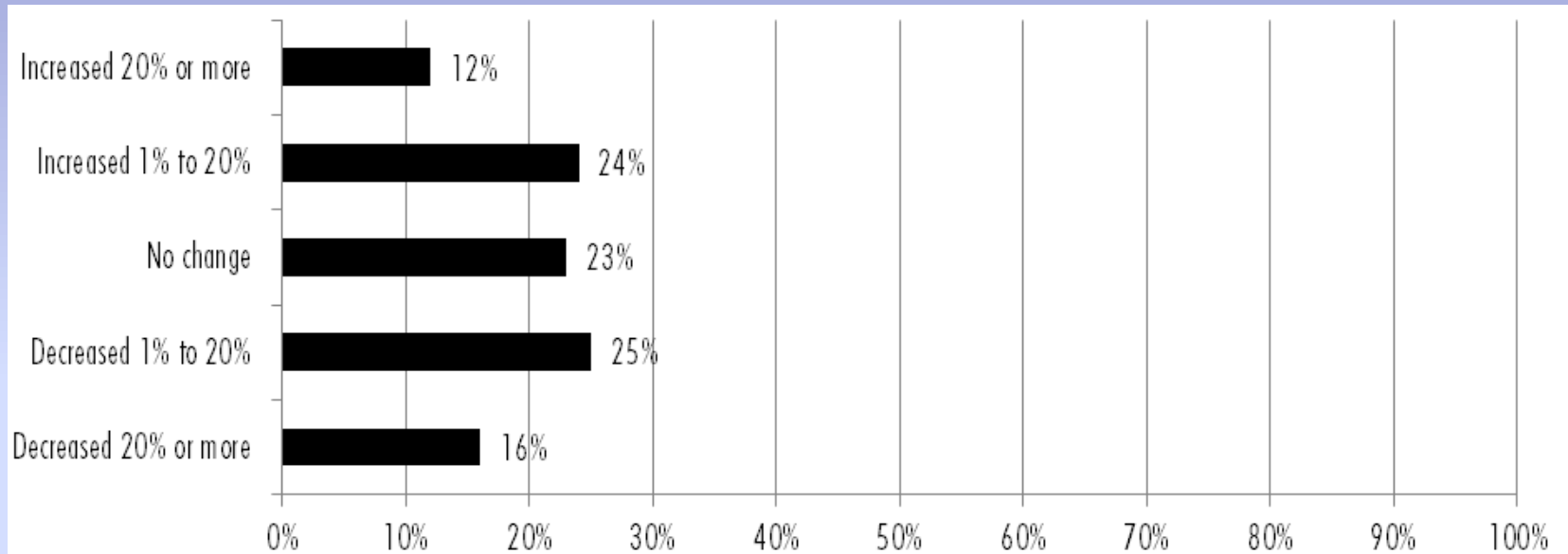
# Infrastructure Investment

- A majority of respondents reported adequate investment in all infrastructure categories, except roads and streets and highways.
- Public school performance and athletics (16%), public library facilities (13%), and public school classrooms (7%) chosen most often for overinvestment

# Infrastructure Investment

- Underinvestment:
  - Local roads and streets (56%)
  - Highways (41%)
  - Bridges (39%)
  - Storm sewers (30%)
  - High speed internet (27%)
  - Public school classrooms (24%)

# Road Funding – Change over Last Two Years



Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, 2012 Survey of Local Elected Officials



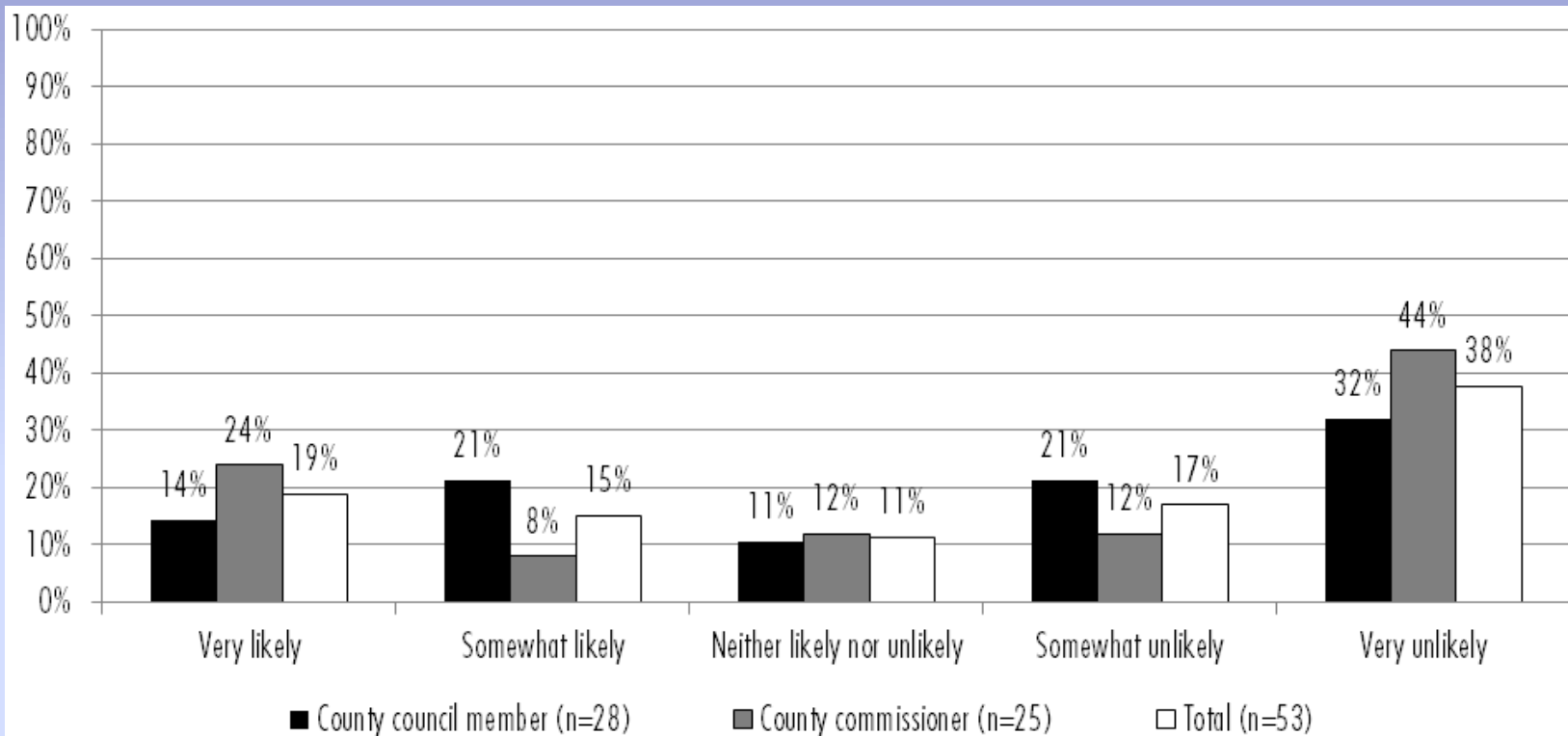
# Additional Road Funding – Future Needs

	<b>Local road maintenance</b>	<b>Local bridge maintenance</b>	<b>Local road construction</b>
\$10,000,000 or more	9%	4%	8%
\$7,000,000 - \$9,999,999	2%	2%	4%
\$4,000,000 - \$6,999,999	4%	3%	6%
\$1,000,000 - \$3,999,999	12%	14%	17%
\$500,000 - \$999,999	14%	9%	10%
\$100,000 - \$499,999	23%	14%	16%
\$1 - \$99,999	28%	8%	20%
No additional funding needed	8%	45%	19%

# Funding Options for Roads and Streets

- Earmark state sales tax revenue from motor vehicle fuel purchases for roads (71%)
- Expand local funding options (56%)
- Remove State Police & BMV from MVH (46%)
- Expand public private partnerships (35%)
- Increase vehicle excise tax (33%)

# Roads and County Property Taxes



Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, 2012 Survey of Local Elected Officials

# Communications

## Web Sites and Social Media

	Use Website	Use Social Media
County council member	76%	3%
County commissioner	88%	20%
Mayor	90%	52%
Town council member	52%	21%
Township trustee	26%	11%
School board member	96%	52%
Total	66%	28%

# Public Trust

- Strong majority of officials think that these types of org do the right thing almost always/most of the time:
  - Local governments
  - Local businesses
  - Local charities and non-profits

# Public Trust

- Strong majority of officials think that these organizations do the right thing some of the time/almost never:
  - Federal government
  - State government

# Informed Citizens

- Majority of officials generally reported that citizens understand almost always/most of the time:
  - Local gov't structure
  - Local gov't services
  - Local gov't funding
- Less than a majority of county councilors and school board members reported same.

# Public Misconceptions

- Perceive that gov't has unlimited resources to provide services (22%)
- Local gov't funding comes from property taxes and other sources (8%)
- Unaware of restrictions on spending from particular sources/accounts (6%)
- Unaware of mandates local gov'ts must follow (6%)
- Responsibilities of each type of local gov't (6%)

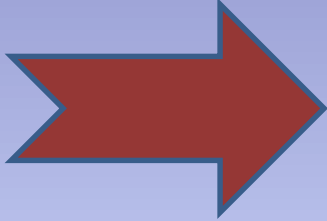


# K-12 Civics

Office	Yes
County council (n=28)	25%
County commissioner (n=25)	20%
Mayor (n=54)	28%
Town council member (n=112)	29%
Township trustee (n=71)	28%
School board member (n=73)	60%
Total (n=363)	34%

# Open Question

- Lack of resources
- Changes in state funding for schools
- Changes in funding options for local gov'ts
- Unfunded mandates
- Micromanagement by legislature
- Road funding
- Other infrastructure funding



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| <input type="checkbox"/> Mayor                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____                |
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## 2 What local government do you represent?

\_\_\_\_\_

## 3 In which county(ies) is your local government located?

\_\_\_\_\_

## 4 How do you feel about the general direction in which your community is heading?

- Very optimistic
- Mildly optimistic
- Neither optimistic nor pessimistic
- Mildly pessimistic
- Very pessimistic

CONTINUE 