Intergovernmental Issues in Indiana
1999 IACIR Survey

April 2000

Executive Summary

Introduction

Intergovernmental Issues in Indiana (1999) is the third in a series of periodic surveys of elected officials designed to help the Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (IACIR) and the Indiana General Assembly understand the issues that are important to local governments. The 1999 IACIR survey included 27 questions and addressed a number of issues that were included in previous IACIR surveys or National League of Cities surveys, including local conditions and services, workforce development and employment, the relationship between school corporations and other local governments, local government finance, and responsibility for the provision of services. The survey also addressed "hot topics" affecting local governments currently, including methods of contacting state government, Y2K, annexation, planning and zoning, the 2000 Census, and information technology.

Methods and Response Rate

A mail survey was administered to 1,381 officeholders. Fifty-one (51) percent were returned. The sample population included all members of the Indiana General Assembly, county council presidents, county commission presidents, mayors, town council presidents, and school board presidents, as well as a sample of township trustees. Response rates varied by type of officeholder; township trustees had the highest response rate at 68 percent and state representatives had the lowest, 35 percent.

Findings

– ***Officials Optimistic About the Futures of Communities***

     More than 80 percent of officials indicated that they were optimistic about the future directions of their communities.

– ***Most Community Services Believed to Meet Needs***

     In assessing current levels of services relative to community needs, more than 75 percent of officials rated their services as good or very good.

– ***Infrastructure, Economic Conditions, Affordable Housing and Education Quality Most Important Issues for Action***

     A majority of elected officials indicated that conditions are stable within their communities. They reported improvements in Police-community Relations, Economic Conditions, Infrastructure, and Parks and Open Space during both the previous twelve months and the past five years. They expressed concern that conditions related to Youth crime, Substance abuse, Affordable housing, Gangs, Economic Conditions, Cable TV, and Infrastructure had deteriorated during the previous five years. They also believed that Cable TV service had deteriorated during the previous year. They identified Infrastructure, Economic Conditions, Affordable Housing, and Educational Quality as the most important issues to address over the next two years.

     Economic Conditions and Infrastructure are identified as both improving and deteriorating. Both also are listed as priorities for action in the next two years. This likely reflects the critical nature of these issues and the variation in conditions faced by local communities.

– *Prospects for Job Growth Considered Mixed*

Respondents reported mixed quality in terms of local employment prospects. Forty-nine percent reported prospects as good or very good; 51 percent reported them as fair or poor. Town officials indicated more often than other officeholders that the prospect for employment within their communities was poor.

– *Retraining Resources Considered Lacking*

Most respondents reported that job-training resources within their communities were adequate but that retraining resources were inadequate. Town and township officials, however, reported more often than any other officeholders that training resources also were inadequate.

The identification of Economic Conditions generally as both improving and deteriorating further underscores the critical nature of economic and workforce development and the variation in conditions faced by local governments.

– *Concern Expressed Over School Funding*

Funding various programs and services, particularly those required by the state and federal governments, pose challenges for local governments. Respondents were especially concerned about school funding. When asked about the most effective measures for local government finance reform, respondents chose Eliminate school funding from the property tax, Reform assessment practices, and Transfer welfare funding from local to state most often. To improve the local assessment process, respondents suggested education, elimination of elected assessors for small townships, and the restructuring of the Indiana State Board of Tax Commissioners to provide more effective training and assistance. Respondents generally favored continuation of tax increment financing and tax abatement as local economic development tools. School board presidents and township trustees were less supportive than respondents as a whole.

– *State Customer Service Considered Satisfactory*

The Lt. Governor's office is studying options to improve customer service, particularly how to better serve citizens and local governments that contact state agencies with inquiries or problems. When asked about their previous contacts with state agencies, the majority of respondents were satisfied with their contact regardless of the type of contact. The methods of contact most often used were direct phone contact with a specific agency and referral from another agency. This probably reflects that most officials know or have an idea about which agency can best respond to their request or inquiry. When asked which method of contact they would prefer if they were unaware of the appropriate agency, most answered either an information specialist or a switchboard. Because the state information center is currently the method used least by local officials, augmentation of this function or addition of an information specialist function may require significant marketing and publicity to make them aware of the new service.

– *Room for Growth in Use of Information Technology*

Respondents report moderate success in most areas of information technology included in the survey. The weakest area, according to these survey results, is in using information technology as a means of communication between citizens and government.

– ***Mixed Participation in Census Programs***

At the end of 1999, Y2K and census issues were among the issues faced by local communities. At the time of the survey, respondents indicated that most communities were preparing for technical failures that could result from equipment using a two-digit date format. Most officials indicated their communities had participated in the Boundary and Annexation Survey that establishes boundaries for the decennial census count. Less than half said that they had established complete count committees to promote citizen participation in the census.

– ***Communities Continue to Annex***

The IACIR published a study in 1998 reporting the number of annexations that occurred in 1996 and 1997. The survey asked municipal officials to report annexation activity for 1998 and 1999. The responses for 1998 reflect an increase in the number of communities that passed annexation legislation. The responses for 1999 show a precipitous decline from the previous three years. Both the increase for 1998 and the decrease in 1999 may be the result of the general prohibition against annexation in the year preceding a decennial census.

– ***Support Shown for Intergovernmental Cooperation***

Most officials, particularly school board presidents, were optimistic about the working relationship between local government and schools. Respondents also were asked to parse government responsibilities as primarily local, state, or shared responsibility. Respondents indicated most often that correction, health care, and welfare should be primarily the responsibility of state government. Drinking water, wastewater, police, fire, and emergency management services, and property tax assessment should be primarily the responsibility of local government. Other functions, like courts, economic development, workforce development, education, streets and roads, and tax collections should be shared responsibilities. Officials reported mandates regarding local tax levels, welfare funding, correction, health, and courts as having the most significant impact. Respondents reported environment, welfare, highways, court, health and safety (OSHA) and the American Disabilities Act as the most significant federal mandates.

Intergovernmental relations between the local, state, and federal levels will continue to be important in providing services to citizens, and improvements in these relationships are an ongoing process. As mentioned above, the most important issues to address in the next two years were: Infrastructure, Economic conditions, Affordable housing, and Educational quality. These issues are categories respondents said should be responsibilities shared between state and local government. This result further emphasizes the need for good intergovernmental cooperation and communication.

Introduction

Intergovernmental Issues in Indiana (1999) is the third in a series of periodic surveys of elected officials designed to help the Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (IACIR) and the Indiana General Assembly understand the issues that are important to local government. The 1999 survey was sent to legislators and officials from counties, townships, cities, and towns. At the request of the IACIR membership, the survey also was distributed to school boards.

The IACIR conducted similar surveys in 1996 and 1997. The original survey was modeled on periodic surveys of local elected officials conducted by the National League of Cities (NLC). The most recent edition of the NLC survey (January 1998) is documented in *The State of America's Cities: The Fourteenth Annual Opinion Survey of Municipal Elected Officials*. The 1999 IACIR survey included 27 questions and addressed a number of issues that were included in previous IACIR surveys or the NLC surveys, including local conditions and services, workforce development and employment, the relationship between school corporations and other local governments, local government finance, and responsibility for the provision of services. It addressed "hot topics" affecting local governments in 1999, including methods of contacting state government, Y2K, annexation, planning and zoning, the 2000 Census, and information technology.

This report summarizes the results of the 1999 IACIR survey. Following this introduction, the survey methodology and results are presented. National results as well as results from previous IACIR surveys are compared with the results of the current Indiana study when appropriate. The report closes with selected conclusions. For reference, the survey instrument, results by office, and additional comments from the respondents are provided as appendices.

Methodology

The survey process included four steps: development of the questionnaire, selection of sample populations, administration of the survey, and coding and analysis of results.

Questionnaire Development

The questionnaire was developed using the two previous IACIR questionnaires as a basis. Several questions were repeated to allow comparisons over time. Commission staff consulted with commission members regarding current issues for inclusion in the 1999 questionnaire. The survey instrument is provided in Appendix A.

Selection of Sample Population

The survey was administered to 1,381 officeholders (Table 1). The sample population included all members of the Indiana General Assembly, county council presidents, county commission presidents, mayors, town council presidents, and school board presidents, as well as a sample of township trustees. The sample population for township trustees consisted of 184 trustees, two trustees from each county. One trustee assessor and one trustee within each county were randomly selected from the list of each group in each county, using a random number generator. Names and addresses of the various officeholders were obtained using printed directories (Indiana General Assembly) or lists provided by the Indiana Department of Education, Indiana Association of Cities and Towns, Association of Indiana Counties, and Indiana Township Association.

Administration of Survey

The survey was administered by mail according to procedures recommended by Dillman (1978). Cover letters explaining the purpose of the survey, the questionnaires, and business reply envelopes were sent to all officials except township officials September 14, 1999, and to township officials September 21, 1999. Follow-up postcards were sent to all officials except township officials September 21, 1999, and to township officials September 28, 1999. All officials who had not yet responded were sent a replacement questionnaire October 5, 1999. Fifty-one percent (698) of officeholders returned surveys. Response rates are analyzed in greater detail in a subsequent section.

Coding and Analysis

All questionnaires were returned to the Center for Urban Policy and the Environment, staff to the IACIR. The results were coded in SPSS® (Statistical Package of Social Sciences) and checked for accuracy. All analyses were completed using statistical routines in either SPSS® or Excel® (spreadsheet software).

A few respondents returned questionnaires that were blank or partially completed. Questionnaires with at least responses to questions on the first several pages were coded and included in the results and analyses.

All respondents did not complete all questions. In order to account for nonresponses to specific questions and questions addressed to selected officeholders, the number of respondents is provided within the table or figure for each question.

Several questions provided respondents with the option of providing a written "other." In cases when these responses closely matched one option within the list provided, the response was grouped with that option. Interpretation is noted in Appendix C and the results section as appropriate.

Survey Results

The results of the survey are presented below in the order in which the questions appeared in the survey instrument. Generally, the responses from all offices are combined except in a few cases when the responses provided by one type of officeholder deviated from the remainder. For reference, Appendix B provides responses by office.

Response Rates

Of 1,381 surveys mailed, 698 were returned. The 51 percent total response rate compares favorably with the 1996 IACIR survey in which 375 of the 1,025 surveys were returned (37 percent). However, the 1999 response rate represents a drop in participation from 1997 (721 of 1,174 surveys returned, or 61 percent).

Question 1 addressed the office held by each respondent. Table 1 shows the number of surveys sent and returned by office held by the respondent. Thirty-three respondents indicated *other.* These responses were assigned to one of the eight categories based on the level and branch of government they represented, and are listed in the right-hand column of the table. For example, two respondents specified *Township trustee/assessor* as their office. These responses were coded as *Township Trustee.* Response rates varied by office. Township trustees had the highest response rate at 68 percent and state representatives had the lowest, 35 percent.

Table 1: Response Rates by Office (Question 1)

Office	Returned	Mailed	Rate	Included *Others* (number of respondents)
Senator	23	50	46%	
Representative	35	100	35%	
County Council President	56	92	61%	County Council (1)
County Commission President	55	92	60%	County Treasurer (1)
Mayor	71	116	61%	City Council (1), City Operations Manager (1)
Town Council President	197	451	44%	Town Council (10), Clerk-Treasurer (8), Town Clerk (1), Town Manager (2)
Township Trustee	125	184	68%	Township Trustee/Assessor (2)
School Board President	132	296	45%	School Board Member (1), School Superintendent (4), School Board Vice President/past president (1)
No response	4			
Total	698	1,381	51%	

Local Conditions and Services

Questions 2- 7 addressed local conditions and services. Question 2 addressed local conditions generally. When asked, *How do you feel about the general direction in which your community is heading?,* **more than 80 percent of survey respondents said they were optimistic, representing a slight drop from the two previous surveys (86 percent in 1997 and 91 percent in 1996)(Figure1). Conversely, however, a lower percentage of respondents also reported feeling pessimistic than in previous years. Eight percent were pessimistic about the future of their community in 1999, whereas 14 percent and 9 percent were pessimistic in 1997 and 1996, respectively. In 1999, survey respondents were offered** *Neither optimistic nor pessimistic* **as a choice for the first time, which could explain the differences in results.**

The only group of officeholders to vary far from this range was township trustees. Only 65 percent of trustees responding were optimistic and 17 percent were pessimistic. This group also selected *Neither optimistic nor pessimistic* **(18 percent) most often.**

Figure 1: Feelings About the General Direction the Community is Heading (Question 2; n=599)
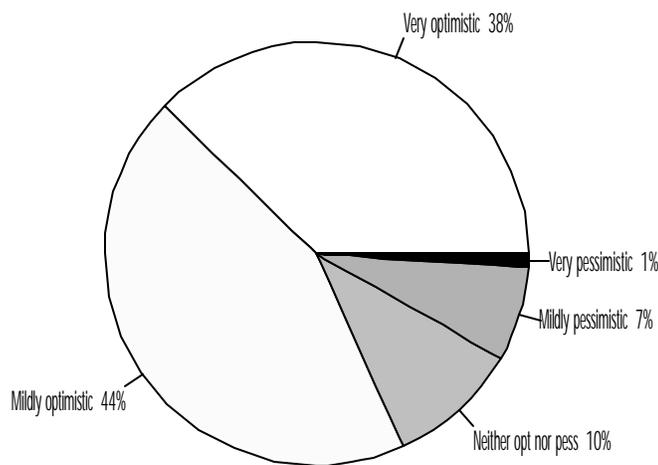
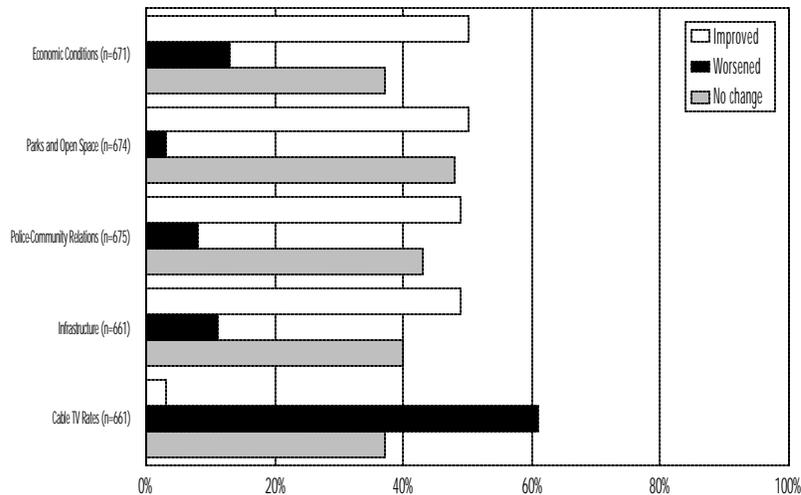Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 1999

Questions 3 – 6 queried officeholders about the status of 25 community issues divided into five general categories: Health, Public Safety, Economics, Local Services, and Community Quality of Life. Question 3 asked specifically about whether conditions had improved, worsened, or not changed over the last year (Table 2). Generally, respondents reported no change in these conditions in their communities over the last 12 months. In only six of the 25 listed items did the percentage of respondents reporting *no change* fall below 50 percent. Even then, *no change* was the response selected most often (Unemployment - 49 percent) or second most often.

More respondents described their communities as *improved* in four of the five conditions for which *no change* was not the most common answer (*Police-community relations* - 49 percent, *Economic conditions* – 50 percent, *Infrastructure* – 49 percent, and *Parks and open space* – 50 percent)(Figure2). The only category for which most respondents reported that conditions had worsened in their community was *Cable TV rates* (61 percent). In 1997 and 1996 more respondents also reported a worsening in *Cable TV rates* (57 and 61 percent, respectively). These results correspond with the national results, in which 72 percent of the respondents reported a worsening in this condition.

Table 2: How Conditions Have Changed in the Last 12 Months (Question 3)

		Improved	Worsened	No Change
Health	AIDS (n=629)	8%	4%	88%
	Healthcare (n=653)	32%	9%	59%
	Substance Abuse (n=652)	12%	26%	62%
	Teen Pregnancy (n=649)	17%	12%	71%
Public Safety	Gangs (n=646)	11%	20%	69%
	Police-Community Relations (n=675)	49%	8%	43%
	Violent Crime (n=664)	18%	9%	73%
	Youth Crime (n=668)	13%	29%	57%
	School Violence (n=667)	14%	13%	73%
Economics	Corporate Responsibility (n=654)	28%	10%	62%
	Economic Conditions (n=671)	50%	13%	37%
	Labor Responsibility (n=645)	21%	10%	68%
	Unemployment (n=668)	44%	7%	49%
	Workforce Development (n=649)	34%	6%	59%
Local Services	Cable TV Rates (n=661)	3%	61%	37%
	Infrastructure (n=661)	49%	11%	40%
	Solid Waste Management (n=671)	37%	10%	53%
Community Quality of Life	Race-Ethnic Relations (n=665)	14%	6%	80%
	Air Quality (n=665)	13%	7%	80%
	Water Quality (n=670)	24%	9%	67%
	Poverty (n=664)	20%	8%	72%
	Vitality of Neighborhoods (n=667)	34%	8%	58%
	Educational Quality (n=663)	39%	8%	53%
	Affordable Housing (n=672)	27%	21%	52%
	Parks and Open Space (n=674)	50%	3%	48%

Table 3:   Percent of Respondents Ranking Condition as One of the Three That Have Deteriorated the Most in the Last 5 Years (Question 4; n=561) (continued)

Local Services	Local Services (General)	2%
	Cable TV Rates	29%
	Infrastructure	12%
	Solid Waste Management	8%
Community Quality of Life	Community Quality of Life (General)	1%
	Race-Ethnic Relations	5%
	Air Quality	6%
	Water Quality	7%
	Poverty	6%
	Vitality of Neighborhoods	7%
	Educational Quality	8%
	Affordable Housing	25%
	Parks and Open Space	2%
	Other	1%

The conditions that respondents said had deteriorated the most in the last five years were: *Cable TV rates, Youth crime, Substance abuse*, and *Affordable housing* (Figure 3). The respondents selected these four conditions nearly twice as often as any other. More than ten percent of respondents also indicated that *Gangs, Economic Conditions*, and *Infrastructure* had deteriorated. *Youth crime* and *Substance abuse* also were in the top three in 1997 and 1996.

Several officials either stated that none of the conditions had deteriorated, that they did not have enough information to make this judgment, that their community was too small for any of the items to be relevant to them, or did not specify any items for this question. All of these surveys were grouped together for this question as *no response*.

Figure 3: Conditions that Have Deteriorated Most in the Last Five Years (Question 4; n=561)
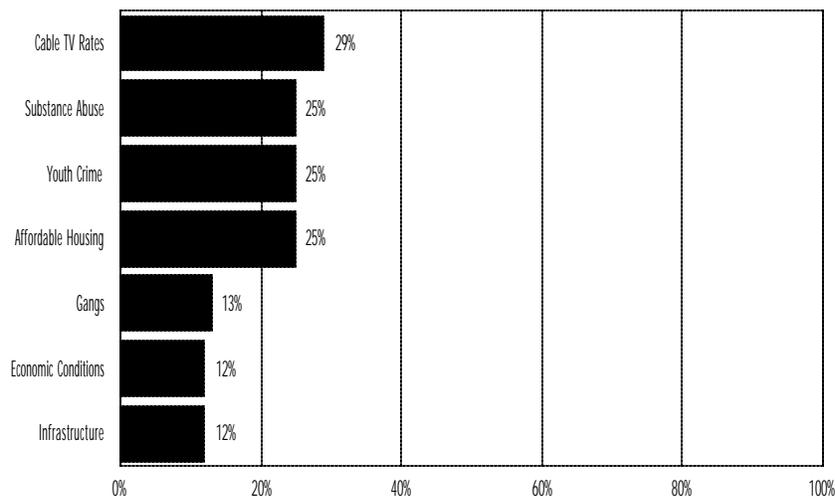
Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 1999

The officials surveyed were then asked to select the three conditions that had improved the most in the last five years (Table 4). Again, determinations were made to place *other* responses in provided categories where possible. Figure 4 shows the conditions listed most often as improved. These were: *Economic conditions, Infrastructure, Unemployment,* and *Police-community relations. Economic conditions* also was selected in 1997 and 1996, and the other two each appear among the most improved for one of the two years (*Infrastructure* in 1997 and *Police-community relations* in 1996).

Table 4: Percent of Respondents Ranking Condition as One of the Three that Have Improved the Most in the Last 5 Years (Question 5; n=605)

Health	Health (General)	0%
	AIDS	1%
	Healthcare	17%
	Substance Abuse	1%
	Teen Pregnancy	3%
Public Safety	Public Safety (General)	3%
	Gangs	1%
	Police-Community Relations	27%
	Violent Crime	3%
	Youth Crime	1%
	School Violence	2%
Economics	Economics (General)	0%
	Corporate Responsibility	5%
	Economic Conditions	38%
	Labor Responsibility	1%
	Unemployment	27%
	Workforce Development	6%
Local Services	Local Services (General)	1%
	Cable TV Rates	1%
	Infrastructure	30%
	Solid Waste Management	16%
Community Quality of Life	Community Quality of Life (General)	2%
	Race-Ethnic Relations	1%
	Air Quality	2%
	Water Quality	8%
	Poverty	4%
	Vitality of Neighborhoods	9%
	Educational Quality	18%
	Affordable Housing	12%
	Parks and Open Space	24%
	Other	0%

Figure 4: Conditions That Have Improved the Most in the Last 5 Years (Question 5; n=605)
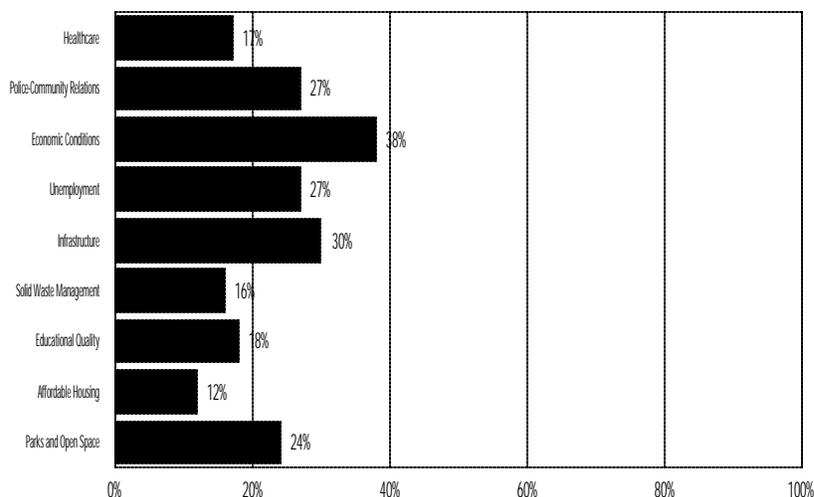
Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 1999

In Question 6, the respondents were asked to select the three conditions " *most important to address during the next two years***" from the list provided (Table 5). Allowing for determinations made for** *other* **responses as in the previous two questions, the conditions seen as the most important were:** *Infrastructure, Economic conditions, Affordable housing,* **and** *Educational quality* **(Figure 5). Again,** *Infrastructure* **and** *Affordable housing* **were listed among the three most important in the previous two surveys as well.**

Table 5: Percent of Respondents Ranking Condition as One of the Three Most Important in the Next 2 Years (Question 6; n=625)

Health	Health (General)	0%
	AIDS	1%
	Healthcare	16%
	Substance Abuse	16%
	Teen Pregnancy	4%
Public Safety	Public Safety (General)	4%
	Gangs	6%
	Police-Community Relations	8%
	Violent Crime	6%
	Youth Crime	19%
	School Violence	8%
Economics	Economics (General)	0%
	Corporate Responsibility	4%
	Economic Conditions	25%
	Labor Responsibility	2%
	Unemployment	7%
	Workforce Development	14%

Table 5: Percent of Respondents Ranking Condition as One of the Three Most Important in the Next 2 Years (Question 6; n=625) (Continued)

Local Services	Local Services (General)	2%
	Cable TV Rates	4%
	Infrastructure	30%
	Solid Waste Management	9%
Community Quality of Life	Community Quality of Life (General)	3%
	Race-Ethnic Relations	5%
	Air Quality	5%
	Water Quality	12%
	Poverty	5%
	Vitality of Neighborhoods	10%
	Educational Quality	23%
	Affordable Housing	24%
	Parks and Open Space	5%
	Other	1%

Figure 5: Conditions Ranking as Most Important in the Next 2 Years (Question 6; n=625)
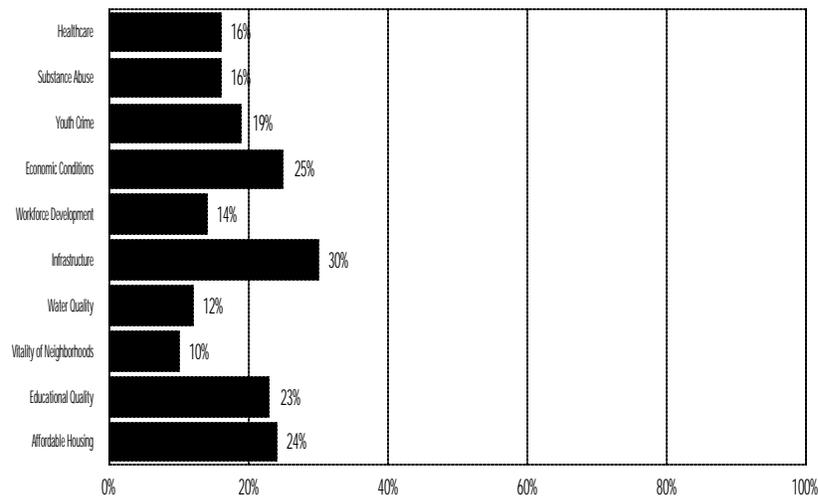
Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 1999

Question 7 addressed current levels of local government services in communities as compared to community needs. More than 75 percent of the respondents rated their community services as *good* or *very good* (Figure 6). Only two percent of respondents reported *poor* levels of services compared to needs. These rates have changed little from previous surveys.

Figure 6: Current Level of Local Government Services Compared to Community Needs
(Question 7; n=692)
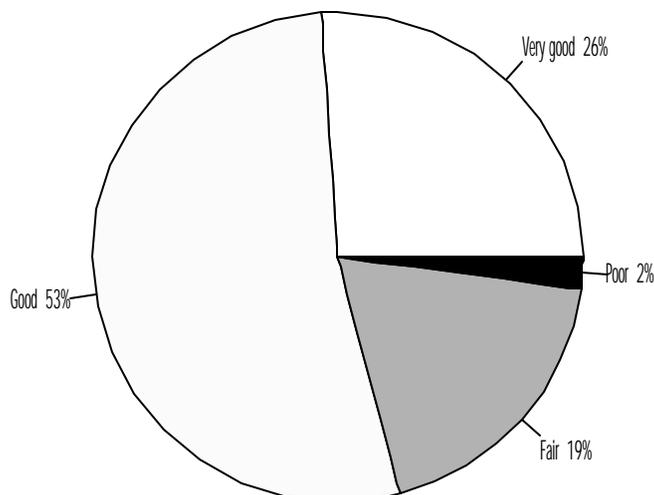
Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 1999

Workforce Development and Employment

Questions 8, 9, and 10 addressed community employment issues. Question 8 asked respondents about how they would describe employment opportunities to a prospective newcomer. Responses were evenly distributed among the options (Figure 7). Nearly an equal number of respondents rated job prospects as *good* or *fair* in their communities. More officials said employment opportunities were *poor* in their communities than *very good*. These results are similar to the results from the 1997 and 1996 surveys.

Examining the responses by office reveals that town council presidents, as a group, rated job prospects as *poor* more often than the other offices. *Poor* was selected by 43 percent of these officials. Mayors as a group, however, rated community job prospects higher than survey respondents as a whole (70 percent *good* or *very good* and only seven percent *poor*).

In Question 9 respondents were asked about the adequacy of workforce development resources, both private and public, in their communities. Figure 8 illustrates the responses regarding work training and work retraining. Though the difference was not large, more respondents indicated that work-training resources were adequate in their communities than inadequate. Conversely, more respondents thought work-retraining resources were inadequate than adequate. In fact, more respondents were unsure of available work-retraining resources than thought these resources were adequate for the community.

Town council presidents and township trustees were the only groups among the respondents to report work-training resources more often as inadequate than adequate. Both groups reported being unsure about these resources more often than they thought them adequate (33 and 35 percent, respectively). State representatives, county commission presidents, and mayors were more likely to think work-retraining resources were adequate in their communities.

Figure 7: Community Employment Prospects (Question 8; n=688)

Good 28%

Very good 21%

Poor 23%

Fair 28%
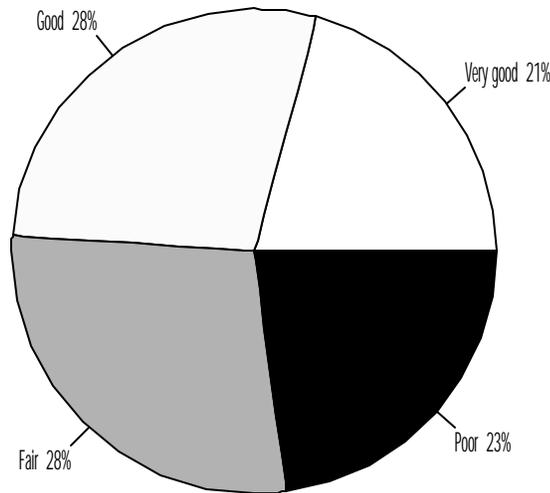
Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 1999

Figure 8: Adequacy of Dedicated Resources (Question 9)

Work Training (n=660)

Work Retraining (n=659)

Adequate   Inadequate   Unsure

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%
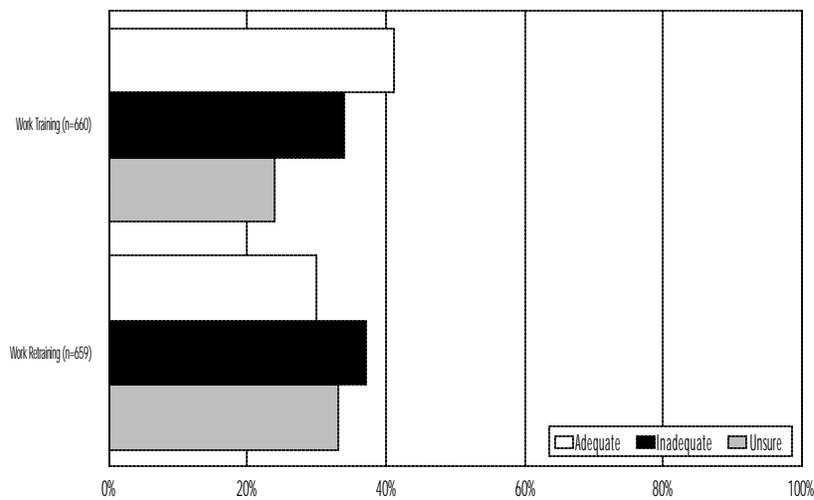
Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 1999

In Question 10, respondents were asked to choose from among 16 conditions those three which were most likely to be effective in preparing people for and moving them into good jobs. Table 6 illustrates the percentage of respondents that ranked each measure as one of the three most effective for worker preparation. As shown, *Jobs that pay a living wage* (47 percent) was chosen by many more respondents as the most effective measure for preparing people for good jobs than the next most often selected measure— *Trade and technical schools* (32 percent) (Figure 9). *School-to-work programs* and *Linkages between training*

institutions and the business community were ranked highly by the same percentage of respondents (26 percent).

The first three measures discussed above also were selected most often in 1997. (The question in 1997 asked respondents to rank the top six.) *Linkages between training institutions and the business community*, however, was outranked by six other options in 1997. In 1996 the two most often selected measures were the same as in 1999, but *School-to-work programs* was fifth.

Table 6: Most Effective Measures for Worker Preparation (Question 10; n=591)

Linked financial and tax incentives for businesses	20%
Trade and technical schools	32%
Improved job search support networks	7%
Summer job programs	4%
Work-mentoring for students	11%
Collaboration between local government and schools	8%
Employer-sponsored job training and mentoring	24%
Union and professional programs	8%
Linkages between training institutions and the business community	26%
Improved public schools	21%
Adult education programs	14%
School-to-work programs	26%
Business partnerships with local schools	20%
Jobs that pay a living wage	47%
Better libraries	1%
Information services that alert people to training and jobs	19%

Figure 9: Most Effective Measures for Worker Preparation (Question 10; n=59)
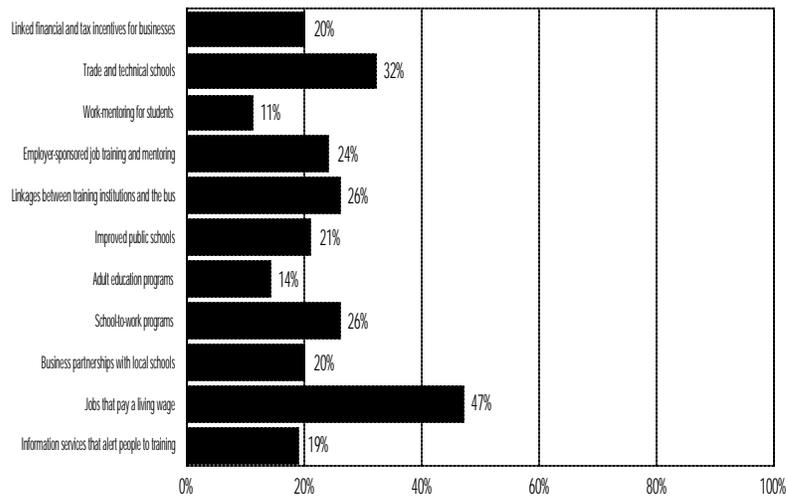
Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 1999

Relationship Between Schools and Local Government

Question 11 addressed the working relationship of local government and local schools. The majority of the officials were optimistic about the ability of their local governments and schools to work together to address local needs (Figure 10). Only 12 percent responded as being either *somewhat pessimistic* or *very pessimistic.* School board presidents, as a group, were more optimistic (39 percent *very optimistic*, 46 percent *somewhat optimistic*) than the respondents as a whole. Nine percent of the school board presidents were pessimistic.

This represents a decrease in the percentage of officials who responded as being pessimistic about the relationship between local government and schools from prior years (24 percent and 26 percent in 1997 and 1996, respectively). In the prior two surveys, however, respondents were not given the option of *Neither optimistic nor pessimistic* for this question. Nineteen (19) percent of the 1999 respondents selected this option. Only seven percent of the school board presidents made this choice.

Figure 10: Outlook on Working Relationship Between Local Government and Schools
(Question 11; n=682)
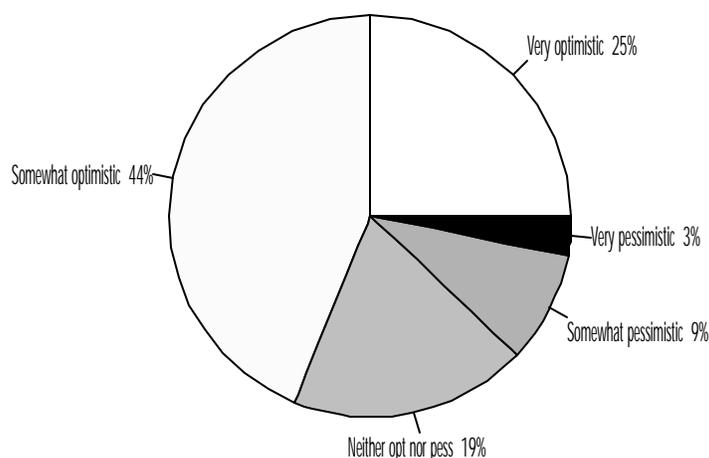
Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 1999

Local Government Finance

In Question 12 respondents were asked to select the three most effective measures for local government finance reform from a provided list. The measures selected most often were: *Eliminate school funding from property tax, Reform assessment practices*, and *Transfer welfare from local to state funding* (Figure 11). The same measures also were chosen most often in 1997 and 1996.

Respondents provided over 70 *other* responses. However, many of these responses were similar to the 11 measures provided on the survey, or were further explanations of the respondents' positions. For example, at least 14 of the *other* measures concerned school financing.

Question 13 specifically asked officials if Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and property tax abatement should remain options for local governments. Figure 12 illustrates that essentially the same proportion of respondents believes both options should remain available for local government use—approximately 70 percent. Changing or eliminating Tax Increment Financing was provided by a number of respondents in the *other* category in Question 12.

School board presidents and township trustees were not as supportive of the continuance of either incentive as respondents generally. Fifty-four percent of school board respondents agreed local governments should be allowed to continue using TIF and 56 percent were in favor of retaining the tax abatement option for local governments. The impact of the use of these incentives on school funding has long been a concern. The township trustees responded *no* to the continued use of TIF and tax abatements 59 and 52 percent of the time, respectively.

Figure 11: Most Effective Local Government Finance Reform (Question 12; n=607)
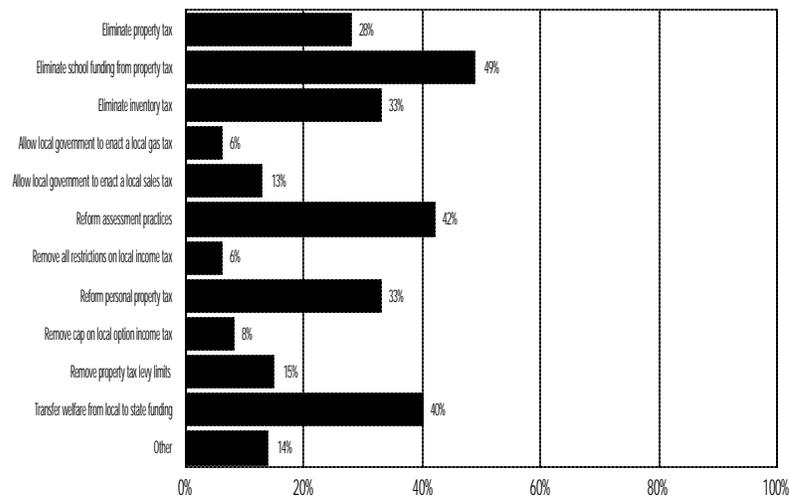
Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 1999

Figure 12: Should Local Governments be Allowed to Continue Using TIF or Tax Abatement?
             (Question 13)
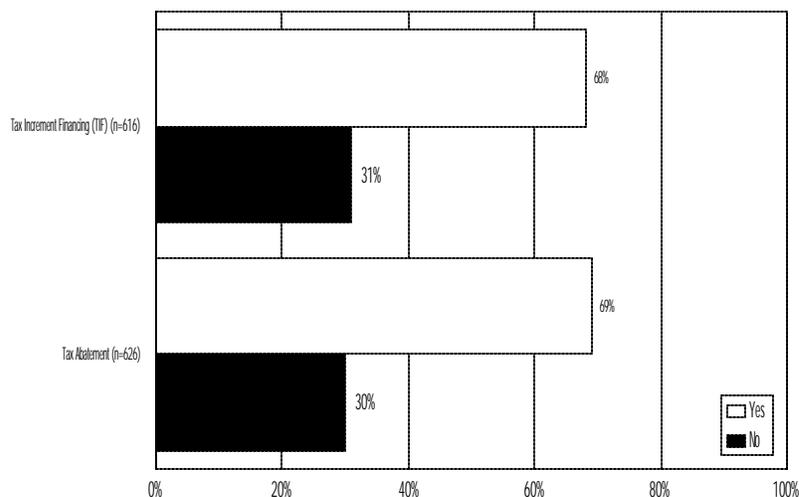
Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 1999

Service Provision Responsibility

Question 14 asked respondents whether state or local government should have primary or shared responsibility for 16 services:

- Corrections
- Courts
- Drinking Water
- Economic Development
- EMS
- Healthcare for the Indigent
- Information Services
- Police and Fire

- Property Tax Assessments
- Public Education
- Solid Waste Disposal or Handling
- Streets and Roads
- Tax Collection
- Wastewater Treatment
- Welfare
- Workforce Development

In prior surveys the question asked about primary *financial* responsibility. In 1999, in addition to choosing state government or local government as having primary responsibility, officials could assign it as shared responsibility. For discussion purposes, the responses have been divided into the category to which a majority of the respondents assigned the responsibility, as shown in Figures 13 through 15.

Only two of the services were chosen by a majority (over 50 percent) of the respondents to be the primary responsibility of state government: *Corrections* and *Welfare*. As shown in Figure 13, more respondents chose *Healthcare for the indigent* as a state responsibility rather than a local one, but it was less than a majority of respondents and nearly as many thought it a shared responsibility (48 percent and 43 percent). The survey results were similar in 1997. *Shared responsibility* was not an option on the 1996 survey. In addition to *Corrections* and *Welfare*, the majority of 1996 respondents thought the state should be financially responsible for *Indigent healthcare* and *Courts*.

Figure 13: State Government Should Have Primary Responsibility (Question 14)
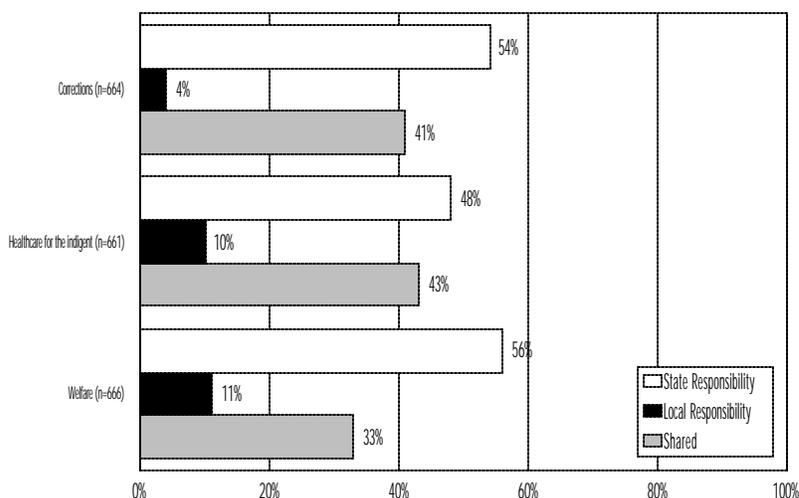
Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 1999

Figure 14 shows the five services seen as the primary responsibility of local government. *Drinking water* was the only one of these categories for which less than a majority of the respondents chose local government (49 percent). *Police and fire* was overwhelmingly thought to be the responsibility of local government (77

percent). Again, the results were the same in 1997, except an equal percentage of respondents thought
S*olid waste disposal or handling* **to be the responsibility of local government or both (43 percent each).**
Survey respondents indicated that eight, or one-half, of the services listed are the shared responsibility of
state and local government. Figure 15 lists these services. For four of these services (*Economic development,*
Information services, Streets and roads,* and *Workforce development*) over 60 percent of respondents thought the**
responsibility should be shared. Only S *olid waste disposal or handling* **of the remaining four services was not**
chosen by a majority of the respondents (45 percent).

Figure 14: Local Government Should Have Primary Responsibility (Question 14)
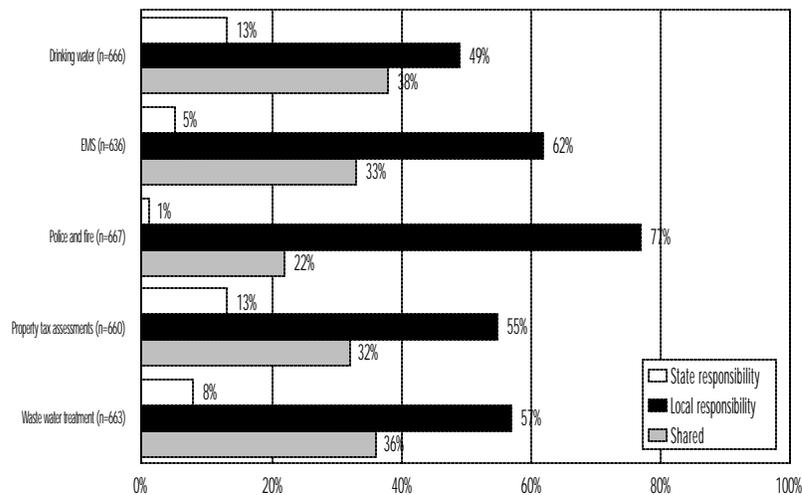
Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 1999

Figure 15: State Government and Local Government Should Have Shared Responsibility
(Question 14)
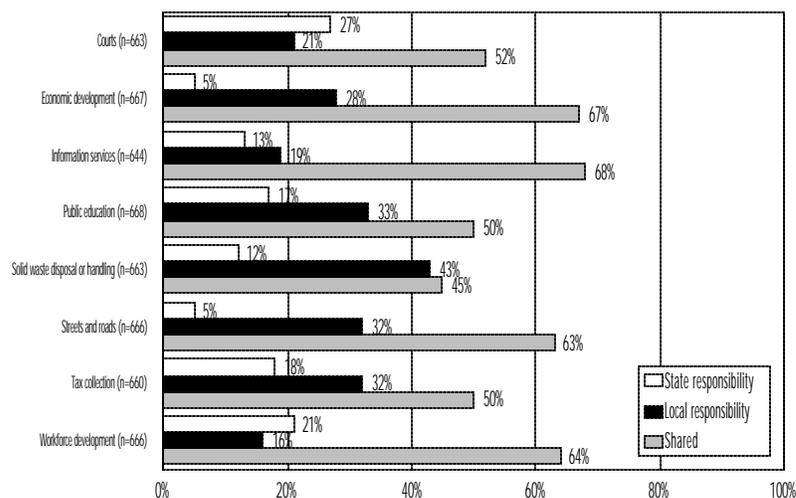
Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 1999

Government Mandates

Question 15 addresses state and federal mandates, and how they affect local government's ability to meet community needs. Respondents selected three mandates from a provided list, in proportion to the level of impact they have on local government. The officials also could specify other high-impact mandates. By far, the single greatest impact on local government, state or federal, is *Tax controls* **by the state, according to the survey respondents (Figure 16). Over 400 of the 563 respondents answering this question, or 76 percent, selected this item. The next highest state mandates were:** *Welfare funding* **(61 percent),** *Corrections* **(39 percent), and** *Health* **(39 percent). The federal mandates (Figure 17) selected most often by the respondents were:** *Environmental* **(66 percent),** *Welfare* **(51 percent), and** *Highways* **(48 percent)** *.*

Many of the comments, provided when respondents were given an open-ended opportunity to voice concerns, addressed mandates and funding from the state or federal government to local government. Specifically, these comments mentioned educational mandates, education funding sources and formulas, environmental and/or wastewater and water services mandates and funding, taxing structures and types, and the availability of funding and/or tax sources to local governments.

Figure 16: State Mandates/Responsibilities with the Most Significant Local Impact
        (Question 15; n=563)
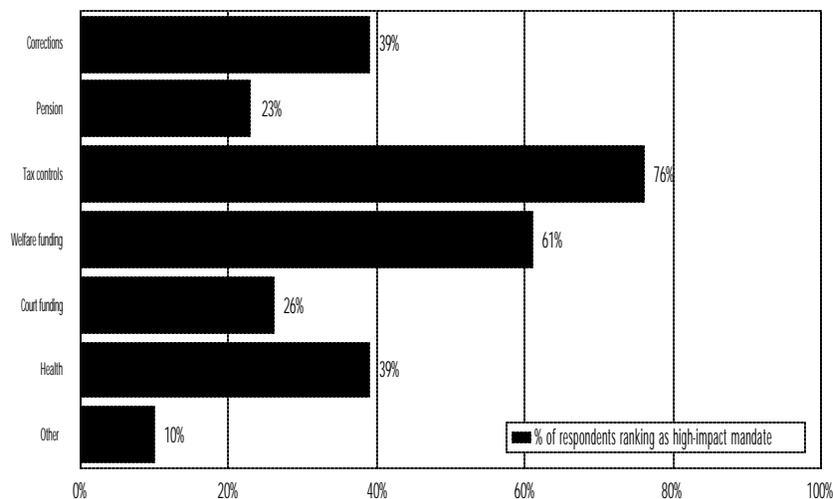
Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 1999

Figure 17: Federal Mandates/Responsibilities with the Most Significant Local Impact
(Question 15; n=559)
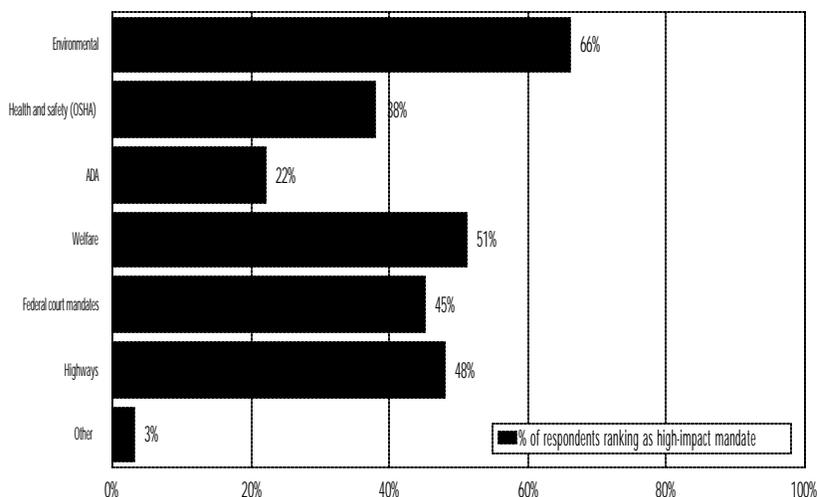
Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 1999

Contact with State Government

As an outgrowth of the Jobs Council, the Lt. Governor's office is studying options to better serve citizens and local governments that contact state agencies with questions or problems. Citizens and local governments currently can call the State Information Center switchboard for information. One proposal is to expand the current switchboard function to a centralized case management center that would be staffed by information specialists and allow for more substantive assistance. The goal of this augmented system would be to ensure that callers make contact with the appropriate office more quickly and that problems are addressed in a timely manner.

In Question 16a officials were asked if they had contacted a state agency or office for information during the previous year. Nearly the same number of respondents reported contacting a state agency or office for information in the 12 months preceding this survey as did not (52 percent, yes and 48 percent, no). Those respondents answering *yes* were asked to rate the level of satisfaction they experienced using five different contact methods (Question 16b).

Table 7 shows that the overwhelming method of contact used was *Direct phone call to appropriate agency or office*. Ninety-three (93) percent of the officials who had contacted the state in the past 12 months used this method at least once. The next most often used method was *Referral from another state agency or office* (54 percent).

Table 7: Evaluation of Contact Method (Question16b)

Method of Contact	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Direct phone call to appropriate agency or office (n=297)	11%	16%	11%	48%	14%
Referral from another state agency or office (n=172)	8%	16%	26%	43%	7%
Referral from the state information center (n=86)	16%	9%	24%	36%	14%
World Wide Web (n=107)	5%	8%	21%	50%	17%
E-mail (n=108)	4%	6%	25%	52%	13%

For all methods of contact, more respondents were satisfied than dissatisfied with the service provided. The State Information Center (SIC) was used the least of the options provided (only 86 of the officials rated this method). This information suggests the expansion of the services of the SIC's switchboard or creation of a system of information specialists may require significant publicity to make local officials aware of this service.

In Question 17 respondents were asked to specify the preferred method of contact when there is uncertainty about which is the appropriate agency. Of the 646 officials who responded to this question, 53 percent would prefer to contact an *Information Specialist*, and 31 percent prefer a *Switchboard*. Only 13 percent of respondents prefer to use the *World Wide Web*, perhaps reflecting the availability, or lack, of Internet resources to local officials.

Assessment/Reassessment System

Question 18 queried respondents about which methods would be most effective in improving the current system for assessment/reassessment. Among the 516 officials who responded, *Require basic and continuing education for assessors* was most often selected (39 percent) (Table 8). The next most often selected choice was *Eliminate elected assessors from townships under 10,000 population; Administer assessment through county assessor* (21 percent).

Table 8: Most Effective Way to Improve Assessment/Reassessment System (Question 18; n=516)

Measure	% of Respondents selecting Measure
Require basic and continuing education for assessors	39%
Move to annual assessments	4%
Eliminate elected assessors for townships under 10,000 population; administer assessment through county assessor	21%
Move responsibility for assessment of real property for major industrial facilities to the Indiana State Board of Tax Commissioners (ISBTC)	15%
Restructure ISBTC to better provide educational and technical support	19%
Not applicable/Other	2%

Y2K Issues

Questions 19 and 20 addressed Y2K assessment, repair, and contingency planning. Preliminary results from these questions were reported to the IACIR members in November 2000, because of the time-sensitive nature of the questions. Eighty-six (86) percent of the respondents indicated that their local governments had completed Y2K assessment and made any necessary adjustments (Question 19a). Only 11 percent reported no assessments or adjustments.

Of those respondents who reported that all Y2K fixes had not been made, 29 percent reported that 90 percent of vulnerable equipment had been fixed (Question 19b). Nearly 80 percent of the respondents, who had not completed the adjustments at the time of the survey, reported at least 50 percent completion. Over 65 percent of the responding officials reported that their local government had a contingency plan to respond in the event of Y2K disruption of critical government operations (Question 20).

Table 9: Percentage of Y2K Vulnerable Equipment Fixed (Question 19; n=70)

Percentage Complete	% of Respondents
10% Complete	10%
25% Complete	6%
50% Complete	27%
75% Complete	21%
90% Complete	29%
0% Complete/Don't know	7%

Annexation

Question 21 asked municipal officials if their community passed local legislation to annex territory in 1998 and 1999. Of the officials who responded to this question (250 out of a possible 268 municipal officials) 35 percent responded that they had passed legislation in 1998, and 23 percent in 1999 (Table 10). State law places very strict limits on the annexations that can become effective in the year preceding a decennial census.

The 88 communities that reported having passed local annexation in 1998 represents potential increase based on the data collected by the IACIR in its 1998 annexation study. The study reported that 70 and 74 communities passed annexation legislation in 1996 and 1997, respectively. The increase may be due to the statutory limits placed on annexation in 1999.

The number of communities passing legislation dropped in 1999. This decrease likely reflects the prohibition against annexations becoming effective in the year preceding a decennial census.

Table 10: Local Annexation Legislation (Question 21; n=250)

	Yes			No		
	City (n=68)	Town (n=181)	Total	City	Town	Total
1998	59%	26%	35%	41%	79%	65%
1999	42%	15%	23%	58%	85%	77%

Plan Commissions

County and municipal officials were asked to respond to Question 22 regarding the type of plan commission in their community (379 respondents hold offices in governments that may establish a plan commission). The responses are shown in Table 11.

Table 11: Type of Plan Commission (Question 22; n=283)

Type of Plan Commission	Percentage of Responding County and Municipal Officials
Municipal advisory plan commission	19%
Municipal advisory plan commission with extraterritorial (2-mile fringe) jurisdiction	14%
County advisory plan commission	14%
County area plan commission	37%
Metropolitan plan commission	4%
County or municipality does not have a plan commission	11%

Over one-third of the county and municipal officials reported that their community operated under a *County area plan commission*. The large percentage of county and municipal officials who did not respond to this question (25 percent) could indicate that the officials did not know which type of plan commission is in existence in their community since *County or municipality does not have a plan commission* was an option. Also, these results do not reflect the percentage of counties or municipalities that have plan commissions or even, necessarily, the proportion of any one type of plan commission. Either type of county plan commission may be overrepresented because (1) two officials from each county were surveyed and (2) county area plan commissions include at least one incorporated community as well as the unincorporated territory within a county.

The least number of officials (3 percent) selected *Metropolitan plan commission*. According to Indiana Code (IC 36-7-4-202(a)) this type of plan commission can only be established in counties with populations greater than 160,000 and less than 200,000 or between 112,000 and 125,000 in population where the county and the municipality with the largest population in the county pass identical ordinances creating a metropolitan plan commission as a department of county government. Because of the wording of the question, any respondents from Marion County also may have selected this option. IC 36-7-4-202(c) states, "A metropolitan development commission is established in the department of metropolitan development of the consolidated city."

2000 Census

Questions 23 and 24 addressed the 2000 Census. Officials were asked in Question 23 if the 1999 Boundary and Annexation Survey (BAS) was completed and returned for their community. The BAS is the mechanism by which the U.S. Bureau of Census obtains information regarding incorporations, annexations, and other boundary changes. The BAS is mailed to all counties, minor civil divisions (townships in Indiana), and incorporated places annually in the three years preceding the decennial census.

Seventy-six (76) percent of the 449 responding officials said the BAS was returned. Thirty-two (32) of the 48 respondents who answered *no* to Question 23 and five of the officials who did not provide a response to the question gave a reason why the BAS was not returned. Most often the respondents said they knew nothing about the survey or it is the job of someone else in the organization. Others said the BAS was sent during a particularly busy time for their office or required a too quick turnaround time.

Question 24 asked if the community had formed a Complete Count Committee for Census 2000, recommended to increase the return rate and participation in the census. One-half of the responding officials said a committee was not established in their community, and 48 percent answered *yes*. Ten (10) percent stated they did not know if a committee had been formed or not.

Information Technology

Questions 25 and 26 addressed information technology. Question 25 asked respondents about their level of personal comfort with information technology. As shown in Figure 18, the largest percentage selected *Moderately comfortable* (48 percent). Only two percent of the respondents stated that they were personally not comfortable at all with information technology. Results to the same question in the national survey of municipal officials were similar (43 percent *Moderately comfortable*; six percent *Not comfortable*).

Figure 18: Official's Personal Comfort Level with Information Technology
(Question 25; n=605)
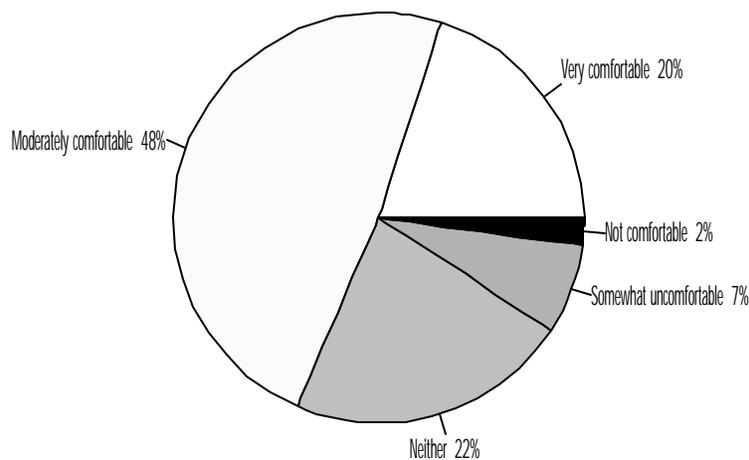
Source: Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations 1999

Question 26 further probed technology issues by asking the officials, *When it comes to **computers** and **telecommunications**—also known as information technology (IT)—how successful do you feel your community has been in each of the following?* Table 12 illustrates the responses.

Neither successful nor unsuccessful was selected by the highest percentage of respondents for five of the eight categories:

–   **Using IT to connect citizens with government**
–   **Creating IT infrastructure to improve economic development**
–   **Using IT to promote equity in access to information**
–   **Ensuring IT skills in the workforce**
–   **Working with the telecommunications industry**

Somewhat successful was chosen the most for the remaining three items: *Overall integration of IT into local government, Using IT to improve government management and service delivery,* and *Using IT to improve education.* If reporting the responses generally as "successful" or "unsuccessful," more officials say their communities have been successful than unsuccessful in all but one category (*Using IT to connect citizens with government*). Between 20 and 25 percent of the officials did not provide a response to the eight areas of IT included in the question.

Table 12: Community Information Technology (IT) Success (Question 26)

	Not Successful	Generally Unsuccessful	Neither Successful or Unsuccessful	Somewhat Successful	Very Successful
Overall integration of IT into local government (n=554)	7%	14%	23%	44%	13%
Using IT to improve government management and service delivery (n=546)	8%	13%	26%	42%	10%
Using IT to connect citizens with government (n=538)	14%	18%	41%	21%	5%
Creating IT infrastructure to improve economic development (n=537)	12%	17%	42%	26%	3%
Using IT to promote equity in access to information (n=532)	11%	14%	43%	25%	6%
Using IT to improve education (n=541)	7%	10%	30%	37%	15%
Ensuring IT skills in the workforce (n=532)	8%	12%	39%	36%	5%
Working with the telecommunications industry (n=529)	10%	12%	43%	31%	4%

Other Issues

The final survey question allowed officials to make any comments they wished about issues affecting intergovernmental relations in Indiana. Of the 698 respondents, 125 provided comments. The complete comments as written in the surveys are provided in the Appendix D.

Many comments concerned the usefulness of the survey. For example, several respondents said their communities were too small for many of the questions to be pertinent. Also, there were many comments about a lack of computer resources in their local government.

As mentioned above, many comments concerned mandates and funding from state or federal government to local government. Specifically, these comments mentioned educational mandates, education funding sources and formulas, environmental and/or wastewater and water services mandates and funding, taxing structures and types, and the availability of funding and/or tax sources to local governments.

Conclusions

Generally, local officials responding to the 1999 survey were optimistic about the future of their communities, and report positive conditions with little change over the last year. The only exception was *Cable TV rates*. Most officials, particularly school board presidents, were optimistic about the working relationship between local government and schools as well.

Responses regarding workforce issues were less positive. Except for town council presidents, more officials described employment opportunities as a *good* or *fair* than *poor*. However, training resources, particularly retraining resources, need improvement. The respondents report moderate success in most areas of information technology included in the survey as well. The weakest area, according to these survey results, is in using information technology as a means of communication between citizens and government.

When asked about the previous five years, *Economic Conditions* and *Infrastructure* are identified as both improving and deteriorating. Both also are listed as priorities for action in the next two years. This likely reflects the critical nature of these issues and the variation in conditions faced by local communities.

Funding various programs and services, particularly those required by the state and federal governments, pose challenges for local governments. When asked about local government finance issues, respondents were especially concerned about school funding. Many comments and responses concerned changing the method of financing schools, specifically, finding another source of funding besides property tax. Rather surprising, though, was the survey result that a higher percentage of responding township officials were opposed to TIF and tax abatement, than school officials. Property assessment and reassessment reform also was a local government finance concern for many officials.

Intergovernmental relations between the local, state, and federal levels will continue to be important in providing services to citizens, and improvements in these relationships are an ongoing process. As indicated in Figure 5 of this report, the most important issues to address in the next two years are: *Infrastructure, Economic conditions, Affordable housing,* and *Educational quality*. All of these issues are categories respondents indicated that should be responsibilities shared between state and local government. This result further emphasizes the need for good intergovernmental cooperation and communication.

Appendix A:
Survey Instrument

Appendix B:
Survey Responses by Office
(Selected Questions)

Responses by office are provided here for reference.

Question 2. How do you feel about the general direction in which your community is heading? (n=689)

Office	Very optimistic	Mildly optimistic	Neither optimistic nor pessimistic	Mildly pessimistic	Very Pessimistic
Senator (n=22)	27%	59%	9%	5%	0%
Representative (n=34)	35%	50%	9%	6%	0%
County Council President (n=56)	36%	52%	11%	2%	0%
County Commission President (n=55)	31%	51%	15%	2%	2%
Mayor (n=71)	83%	14%	1%	1%	0%
Town Council President (n=194)	38%	45%	11%	6%	1%
Township Trustee (n=123)	22%	43%	18%	15%	2%
School Board President (n=132)	34%	48%	6%	11%	1%
No office given (n=2)	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%
Total	38%	44%	10%	7%	1%

Question 7. Compared to your community's needs, overall, how would you rate the current levels of local government services? (n=692)

Office	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Senator (n=22)	18%	59%	23%	0%
Representative (n=35)	23%	40%	37%	0%
County Council President (n=55)	22%	62%	15%	2%
County Commission President (n=54)	17%	70%	13%	0%
Mayor (n=71)	66%	34%	0%	0%
Town Council President (n=194)	20%	53%	23%	5%
Township Trustee (n=125)	25%	57%	15%	3%
School Board President (n=132)	22%	50%	28%	1%
No office given (n=4)	50%	25%	25%	0%
Total	53%	19%	2%	27%

Question 8. A good friend has just called to inquire about the prospects of a young person finding a job and beginning a career in your community. How would you describe the employment opportunities in your community to the prospective newcomer? (n=688)

Office	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Senator (n=22)	18%	41%	41%	0%
Representative (n=35)	34%	29%	26%	11%
County Council President (n=54)	28%	20%	44%	7%
County Commission President (n=53)	34%	30%	26%	9%
Mayor (n=71)	35%	34%	23%	8%
Town Council President (n=193)	9%	23%	25%	42%
Township Trustee (n=124)	15%	26%	31%	28%
School Board President (n=132)	28%	32%	20%	20%
No office given (n=4)	0%	25%	50%	25%
Total	22%	28%	27%	24%

Question 9: Within your community, are adequate resources being dedicated (public and private) to workforce development (that is, preparing youth and training adults for jobs) and the performance of the local economy?

Work Training (n=660)

Office	Adequate	Inadequate	Unsure
Senator (n=21)	43%	43%	14%
Representative (n=35)	46%	34%	20%
County Council President (n=55)	53%	33%	15%
County Commission President (n=52)	54%	25%	21%
Mayor (n=67)	57%	24%	19%
Town Council President (n=177)	27%	41%	33%
Township Trustee (n=117)	31%	34%	35%
School Board President (n=132)	51%	35%	14%
No office given (n=4)	50%	25%	25%
Total	41%	34%	24%

Work Retraining (n=659)

Office	Adequate	Inadequate	Unsure
Senator (n=21)	38%	43%	19%
Representative (n=35)	40%	29%	31%
County Council President (n=55)	35%	38%	27%
County Commission President (n=52)	44%	23%	33%
Mayor (n=66)	45%	29%	26%
Town Council President (n=178)	19%	42%	40%
Township Trustee (n=117)	26%	36%	38%
School Board President (n=131)	29%	41%	30%
No office given (n=4)	25%	50%	25%
Total	30%	37%	33%

Question 11. How optimistic are you about the ability of local government and schools in your area to work together to address local needs? (n=682)

Office	Very optimistic	Somewhat optimistic	Neither optimistic nor pessimistic	Somewhat pessimistic	Very Pessimistic
Senator (n=22)	18%	59%	18%	0%	5%
Representative (n=35)	17%	43%	17%	11%	11%
County Council President (n=55)	19%	41%	24%	13%	4%
County Commission President (n=53)	15%	49%	25%	9%	2%
Mayor (n=71)	39%	44%	7%	8%	1%
Town Council President (n=188)	23%	40%	24%	9%	4%
Township Trustee (n=122)	16%	42%	30%	9%	4%
School Board President (n=132)	38%	46%	8%	7%	2%
No office given (n=4)	0%	75%	25%	0%	0%
Total	25%	44%	20%	9%	3%

Question 13: Should local government be allowed to continue using Tax Increment Financing (TIF) or granting property tax abatement?

TIF (n=616)			
Office	Yes	No	Unsure
Senator (n=22)	82%	18%	0%
Representative (n=33)	82%	18%	0%
County Council President (n=51)	75%	25%	0%
County Commission President (n=51)	82%	18%	0%
Mayor (n=69)	93%	7%	0%
Town Council President (n=163)	75%	25%	0%
Township Trustee (n=101)	40%	59%	1%
School Board President (n=122)	55%	44%	1%
No office given (n=4)	50%	50%	0%
Total	68%	31%	0%
Tax Abatement (n=626)			
Office	Yes	No	Unsure
Senator (n=22)	82%	18%	0%
Representative (n=33)	76%	24%	0%
County Council President (n=53)	79%	21%	0%
County Commission President (n=50)	82%	18%	0%
Mayor (n=69)	91%	9%	0%
Town Council President (n=166)	75%	25%	0%
Township Trustee (n=104)	46%	53%	1%
School Board President (n=125)	56%	43%	1%
No office given (n=4)	50%	50%	0%
Total	69%	30%	0%

Question 16. Over the past 12 months, have you contacted a state agency or office for information? (n=662)

Office	Yes	No
Senator (n=22)	9%	91%
Representative (n=35)	20%	80%
County Council President (n=56)	66%	34%
County Commission President (n=54)	37%	63%
Mayor (n=68)	38%	62%
Town Council President (n=183)	51%	49%
Township Trustee (n=111)	62%	38%
School Board President (n=130)	66%	34%
No office given (n=3)	33%	67%
Total	52%	48%

Question 17. In cases when you are unsure of the appropriate agency or office to contact, which of the following methods of contact would you prefer? (n=646)

Office	Switchboard	Information specialist	World wide web	Other*
Senator (n=22)	27%	50%	5%	18%
Representative (n=32)	44%	31%	9%	16%
County Council President (n=54)	26%	57%	15%	2%
County Commission President (n=52)	29%	50%	15%	6%
Mayor (n=63)	30%	51%	16%	3%
Town Council President (n=182)	31%	58%	8%	3%
Township Trustee (n=111)	32%	59%	6%	2%
School Board President (n=127)	28%	46%	24%	2%
No office given (n=3)	67%	33%	0%	0%
Total	31%	53%	13%	4%

*Includes: Other local officials and associations, state legislators, phone line answered in person (not automated), and state office directory.

Question 18. Which of the following would be most effective in improving the current system for assessment/reassessment? (n=513)

Office	Require basic and continuing education for assessors	Move to annual assessments	Eliminate elected assessors for townships under 10,000 population; administer assessment through county assessor	Move responsibility for assessment of real property for major industrial facilities to the Indiana State Board of Tax Commissioners (ISBTC)	Restructure ISBTC to better provide educational and technical support	Other*
Senator (n=15)	60%	13%	20%	7%	0%	0%
Representative (n=29)	28%	0%	21%	17%	34%	0%
County Council President (n=42)	24%	7%	43%	19%	7%	0%
County Commission President (n=38)	24%	3%	32%	18%	24%	0%
Mayor (n=50)	48%	6%	14%	16%	14%	2%
Town Council President (n=139)	47%	4%	21%	9%	18%	1%
Township Trustee (n=88)	41%	6%	19%	16%	16%	2%
School Board President (n=109)	33%	3%	15%	18%	29%	2%
No office given (n=3)	33%	0%	33%	0%	0%	33%
Total	39%	4%	21%	15%	19%	2%

*Includes: Not applicable and comments, such as drop property tax.

Question 19: Has your local government completed Y2K (Year 2000) assessment and made the necessary fixes to ensure that computers and embedded micro-chips will function when the date changes to January 1, 2000? (n=645)

Office	Yes	No	Unsure
Senator (n=20)	70%	15%	15%
Representative (n=29)	79%	3%	17%
County Council President (n=55)	87%	9%	4%
County Commission President (n=53)	77%	23%	0%
Mayor (n=71)	94%	6%	0%
Town Council President (n=183)	88%	12%	0%
Township Trustee (n=102)	81%	15%	4%
School Board President (n=129)	90%	7%	3%
No office given (n=3)	33%	67%	0%
Total	86%	11%	3%

If no, what percentage of vulnerable equipment has been fixed? (n=70)

Office	0% complete	10% complete	25% complete	50% complete	75% complete	90% complete	Unsure
Senator (n=4)	0%	0%	0%	25%	50%	0%	25%
Representative (n=4)	0%	0%	0%	0%	25%	25%	50%
County Council President (n=7)	0%	0%	14%	14%	57%	14%	0%
County Commission President (n=12)	0%	8%	8%	25%	33%	25%	0%
Mayor (n=9)	0%	0%	0%	22%	0%	78%	0%
Town Council President (n=13)	0%	23%	8%	15%	23%	31%	0%
Township Trustee (n=11)	9%	18%	0%	36%	9%	27%	0%
School Board President (n=8)	0%	13%	13%	50%	0%	13%	13%
No office given (n=2)	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%
Total	1%	10%	6%	27%	21%	29%	6%

Question 20. Does your local government have a contingency plan to respond in the event of Y2K disruption of critical government operations? (n=628)

Office	Yes	No	Unsure
Senator (n=19)	47%	16%	37%
Representative (n=28)	68%	14%	18%
County Council President (n=53)	64%	32%	4%
County Commission President (n=53)	74%	26%	0%
Mayor (n=71)	83%	17%	0%
Town Council President (n=176)	61%	37%	2%
Township Trustee (n=103)	61%	27%	12%
School Board President (n=122)	79%	15%	7%
No office given (n=3)	100%	0%	0%
Total	68%	26%	6%

Question 21. MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS ONLY: Did your community pass local legislation to annex territory?

1998 (n=250)		
Office	Yes	No
Mayor (n=69)	59%	41%
Town Council President (n=181)	26%	74%
Total	35%	65%
1999 (n=250)		
Office	Yes	No
Mayor (n=69)	42%	58%
Town Council President (n=181)	15%	85%
Total	23%	77%

Question 22. COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS ONLY: What type of plan commission does local planning and zoning operate under in your community? (n=283)

Office	Municipal advisory plan commission	Municipal advisory plan commission with extraterritorial (2-mile fringe) jurisdiction	County advisory plan commission	County area plan commission	Metropolitan plan commission	County or municipality does not have a plan commission
County Council President (n=47)	2%	2%	23%	55%	0%	17%
County Commission President (n=50)	2%	6%	24%	56%	0%	12%
Mayor (n=52)	33%	37%	6%	13%	10%	2%
Town Council President (n=134)	27%	13%	11%	34%	4%	12%
Total	19%	14%	14%	37%	4%	11%

Question 23. Did your county, township, city, or town complete and return the Boundary and Annexation Survey (BAS) maps sent to you in early 1999 by the U.S. Bureau of the Census? (n=449)

Office	Yes	No	Unsure
Senator (n=10)	60%	10%	30%
Representative (n=9)	44%	0%	56%
County Council President (n=43)	60%	5%	35%
County Commission President (n=46)	85%	9%	7%
Mayor (n=65)	94%	2%	5%
Town Council President (n=168)	86%	9%	5%
Township Trustee (n=79)	68%	24%	8%
School Board President (n=28)	29%	21%	50%
No office given (n=1)	100%	0%	0%
Total	76%	11%	13%

Question 24: Has your community formed a Complete Count Committee for the 2000 Census? (n=504)

Office	Yes	No	Unsure
Senator (n=12)	67%	8%	25%
Representative (n=20)	40%	25%	35%
County Council President (n=41)	32%	46%	22%
County Commission President (n=47)	47%	49%	4%
Mayor (n=68)	66%	34%	0%
Town Council President (n=180)	40%	59%	1%
Township Trustee (n=85)	24%	60%	16%
School Board President (n=48)	25%	48%	27%
No office given (n=3)	0%	100%	0%
Total	40%	50%	10%

Question 25: Which of the following best describes your own comfort level with information technology? (n=605)

Office	Very optimistic	Mildly optimistic	Neither optimistic nor pessimistic	Mildly pessimistic	Very Pessimistic
Senator (n=17)	24%	47%	18%	12%	0%
Representative (n=28)	7%	61%	14%	18%	0%
County Council President (n=53)	21%	53%	17%	6%	4%
County Commission President (n=54)	15%	52%	19%	11%	4%
Mayor (n=70)	23%	54%	20%	3%	0%
Town Council President (n=180)	24%	43%	25%	7%	2%
Township Trustee (n=98)	10%	42%	32%	8%	8%
School Board President (n=102)	26%	51%	18%	5%	0%
No office given (n=3)	0%	33%	67%	0%	0%
Total	20%	48%	22%	7%	2%

Appendix C:
”Other Responses”

Survey Questions 4, 5, and 6 asked the respondents to list three conditions from the list provided in Question 3. Some respondents provided answers in their own words, and others used the five broad categories (Health, Public Safety, Economics, Local Services, and Community Quality of Life) instead of the 25 more specific topics listed. The tables below (Tables C1, C2, and C3) demonstrate how these responses were coded for analysis. The five broad categories, because of the frequency with which they were listed, were included as separate categories in the report.

Table C1: "Other" Responses to Question 4 and How These Responses were Coded (Most Deteriorated Conditions)

Response on Survey	Category to Which the Response Was Assigned
Public safety (10)	Public safety
Local services (6)	Local services
Community quality of life (3)	Community quality of life
Crime (3)	Public Safety
None (3)	None/No response
Sewers (2)	Infrastructure
Utility rates (2)	Local services
Economics	Economics
"Farm community all affected by current low prices."	Economic conditions
"We're a small community with hardly any changes."	None/No response
Factories closed	Economic conditions
Factory closing	Economic conditions
Not enough jobs in town	Unemployment
Not enough for young people to do	Community quality of life
Hometown businesses	Economics
Junk cars	Community quality of life
Leadership/politics	Other
More adolescents smoking	Health
Main employer criticized by shareholders for community philanthropy	Corporate Responsibility
Lack of labor	Workforce development
Neighborhoods are becoming rental properties near the campus.	Vitality of neighborhoods
Other neighborhoods are very expensive.	Affordable Housing
No vision in school corporation decisions	Educational quality
Nobody has pride anymore in taking care of their homes or has the money to improve their homes.	Vitality of neighborhoods
Pay scales around our counties are horrible.	Economic conditions
Retail business loss	Economic conditions
Lack of employees	Workforce development
Road conditions	Infrastructure
Traffic	Infrastructure
Roads in the county	Infrastructure
Traffic congestion - quality of life	Infrastructure
Economics - lack of employees	Economics
Wastewater treatment	Infrastructure
Zoning standards	Local services
Retail quality	Community quality of life
Acceptance of increase of Hispanic population	Race-ethnic relations
Crack-cocaine from Chicago	Substance Abuse

Table C1: "Other" Responses to Question 4 and How These Responses were Coded (Most Deteriorated Conditions) (continued)

Response on survey	Category to which the response was assigned
Crime-mostly theft	Public Safety
Ethnic groups crowding our streets during traffic	Race-ethnic relations
More trash for more bucks	Solid waste management
Hospital went bankrupt	Health
Loss of recycling service	Solid waste management
Truck traffic in residential areas	Infrastructure
Ozone	Air quality
Police protection (county)	Public Safety
Property taxes	Local services
Price of housing overall has risen dramatically	Affordable Housing
Teen activities	Community quality of life
Community Leadership	Other
I don't feel the area has deteriorated.	None/No response
If any has worsened, I have no knowledge of it.	None/No response
Illegal aliens moving into the community	Race-ethnic relations
Insufficient information	None/No response
Lack of respect from our youth	Other
Loose morals and lack of discipline in school. Teachers need more authority. The president was NO example for anyone.	Other
My township is rural. We have no towns.	None/No response
No deterioration in any of the above in the last 60 months.	None/No response
Roads due to construction and rapid growth	Infrastructure
State government doesn't attract high paying jobs to IN.	Economics
We are a town of 10 houses w/a pop'n of 27. Located w/in a city's limits; basically none of the above apply to our town.	None/No response
We are a very small town and most of the above are not applicable to us.	None/No response

Table C2: "Other" Responses to Question 5 and How These Responses were Coded (Most Improved Conditions)

Response on Survey	Category to Which the Response Was Assigned
Public safety (15)	Public safety
Community quality of life (13)	Community quality of life
Local services (6)	Local services
Crime (2)	Public safety
Police (2)	Public safety
Recycling (2)	Solid waste management
Cleaning up the area	Community quality of life
Neighborhood organizations	Vitality of neighborhoods
Transportation	Infrastructure
Assessed valuation	Local services
Economics - lack of employment people	Economics
Employment	Economics
Need more walking paths	Parks and open space
New distribution systems for water	Infrastructure
Pride of community	Other
Sewer	Infrastructure
(Sewer system)	Infrastructure
A new clinic	AIDS
Housing. Most people own their homes.	Affordable housing
Law enforcement, more exposure (DARE) etc.	Police-community relations
Streets and sanitation	Local services
One new park was created in 1993	Parks and open space
Process of getting sewage treatment facility	Infrastructure
Property value	Economic conditions
Taxes	Economic conditions
Roads	Infrastructure
Recycling trailer from state grant	Solid waste management
New fire truck for township from state grant	Public safety
School safety	School violence
Sewer development	Infrastructure
Streets and roads	Infrastructure
The new US 24	Infrastructure
Waste water	Infrastructure
Waste water treatment plant (sewage plant)	Infrastructure
Sidewalks	Infrastructure
Relationship between Gov.-Industry-Education	Economics
Welfare-to-Work	Workforce development
New Housing	Community quality of life
New/Remodeled Schools	Community quality of life
We only have 27 households - they are all in the over 50 yrs group.	None/No response

Table C3: "Other" Responses to Question 6 and How These Responses were Coded (Most Important Conditions)

Response on Durvey	Category to Which the Response was Assigned
Public safety (18)	Public safety
Community quality of life (17)	Community quality of life
Local services (8)	Local services
Crime (3)	Public safety
Businesses	Economics
Factory	Economics
Recreational	Community quality of life
Taxes	Other
Sewers	Infrastructure
Roads	Infrastructure
Zoning	Local services
Budget organization	Other
Homes	Affordable housing
Unemployment/Poverty	Other
New addition to sewage treatment plant	Infrastructure
Public safety	Public safety
2 is also drugs	Health
Sewer plant	Infrastructure
Sewer lines	Infrastructure
Park	Infrastructure
Still more work to be done on streets	Infrastructure
Traffic congestion	Infrastructure
Pollution by Indiana precision technology (IPT)	Community quality of life
Uncontrolled use of tax abatement/tax incentive of financing private	Other
Traffic issues	Infrastructure
Healthcare/Environment	Other
Wastewater treatment	Infrastructure
Well and septic fields	Infrastructure
Ethnic education (teach respect for others)	Race-ethnic relations
Government development	Other
Gangs and Youth Violence	Gangs
Police protection	Public safety
Retail	Other
School safety	School violence
We need a few fire stations	Public safety
All types of crime	Public safety
Water & air quality	Other
Drugs (go hand in hand w/gangs)	Gangs
Improvement of respect for others by youth	Other
Is youth substance abuse	Substance abuse
Local jobs	Economic conditions
More state funding instead of property taxes	Educational quality
Storm sewers	Infrastructure
Continued improvement of road	Infrastructure

Appendix D:
Additional Comments by Respondents
(Question 27)

The final survey question provided an opportunity for officials to make any additional comments. These comments are transcribed below. They have been edited only in cases where a particular elected official could be identified.

Table D1: Additional Comments Provided by Respondents

Office	Comments
County Commission President	"Mandates should not be funded by allowing a county to put on a fee. This only allows State or Federal to say we didn't raise your taxes, and fees are very unpopular at local level."
County Commission President	As I tried to write on the gas tax in category 12, I would like to add these comments. Local government, county or city has not had an increase in the gas tax for 12 years. Gas price keep going up and down like a yoyo. The only fair tax or users fee there is an increase in the gas tax. So the legislature and governor need to bite the bullet and pass legislation to do this. [our county] has a wheel tax and edit tax that helps us on the roads, but we need more monies that these (2) local taxes bring in to keep up w/the roads and streets.
County Commission President	Being President of Commissioners, I feel we should get money from [municipality to our county], as we furnish all services, Low, EMS and extra out of State. Traffic is very hard on our County Roads. I feel State is putting too much cost to county w/o any funding.
County Commission President	Re: Q #13: It is not a simple yes or no question. I dislike both options, however as long as competition for these two types of benefits exist in competing communities and neighboring states to lure new business it is necessary. Hopefully the county/municipal leaders will make good decisions when to use it.
County Commission President	Reference question # 24, respondent said, "We will advise people of the importance."
County Commission President	Reference question 23-24 unsure what has been completed in this area.
County Commission President	Still working on computers and telecommunications.
County Commission President	The county does not use computers for all phases of work, some is still done by hand. Only 7000 pop'n in county.
County Council President	1. Too many restrictions are imposed by the state or local gov't. 2. Eliminating property tax should be considered very carefully. The current system is horribly inefficient. I favor no property tax.
County Council President	Counties w/limited tax base need assistance w/mandated expenses: probation officers' salaries, court and prosecutor services, jail facilities, reassessment charges, not to mention education. Some counties need alternatives for basic functions - grants, matching funds, something.
County Council President	Funding sewers will be a major issue in [our] County. Taxes and lack of school funding from the state (not equitable). Infrastructure (roads) will be a problem. [Our] County is growing quickly!
County Council President	I believe no bills which impact county, or any local gov't should become law w/o public hearings and input. Too often legislators have no conception how implementation affects us at the local level.
County Council President	I feel intergovernmental relations on the whole are good.
County Council President	No opinion to the last set of questions - no idea.
County Council President	Reference question # 21 2nd part (Annexation 1999): answer was "Don't know."

Table D1: Additional Comments Provided by Respondents (continued)

Office	Comments
County Council President	State gov't has too much control over local finances and mandates too much unfunded programs, such as court systems, Children and Family Services, mental health, etc.
County Council President	There are too many mandates and restrictions for local gov't to operate as it should. Local highways are in need of more funding. Leave welfare alone.
County Council President	Very slanted questionnaire. Too many "do you still beat your wife" questions. Unfunded mandates are a great problem. OSHA creating unreasonable requirements.
Mayor	"The Quad Cities (Lake Co.) Model and Grant Co. Model should be presented to as many jurisdictions as necessary to foster collaborative efforts in local government."
Mayor	1. Survey does not inquire about grow issues or impact an existing infrastructure, schools and general quality of life. 2. Survey does not inquire about fire protection as a part of public safety. Significant portion of budget goes to fire protection. 3. Survey does not inquire about the relationship between city town and county governments. 4. Survey does not inquire about relationships with state and/or federal government. See survey for more detailed answers
Mayor	Indpls really doesn't have any idea about what is going on in my area. If they did when we ask for help we would get a response that would be positive, not a "we will see what we can do, but it probably won't happen!"
Mayor	Last week the mayor and city spent at least 30 combined hours mailing FOA requests because state bureaucrats would not share information. This is ridiculous!
Mayor	The fundamental issue is state restriction on local revenue capabilities including annexation.
Mayor	This questionnaire should have been sent to the city clerk-treasurer.
Mayor	We don't have a computer.
No office given	Our community is too small and selective to be concerned with all these issues.
Representative	I don't know much about the present situation in local gov't.
Representative	I have been active in working w/annexation legislation as a member of Intergovernmental Relations Commission.
Representative	Local communities are too adversarial. It is not a contest.
Representative	Reference question # 3, "I am not aware of any objective measurements."
Representative	The questions I did not answer were ones I have no information on…
Representative	Training and facilitating for gov'ts at the local level to combine resources and form more regional partnerships. Financial incentives would be a very useful tool to encourage this. School boundaries in many counties need to be redone - things have changed in 30 years!
School Board President	"My biggest concern as a taxpaying parent/school board member has been what seems to be Indiana's STATE government handing down mandates for schools to implement with NO FUNDING."
School Board President	"This survey seems to me as another waste of tax payer money. Another bureaucratic document!" Pertaining to question # 15: "OSHA should be abolished"

Table D1: Additional Comments Provided by Respondents (continued)

Office	Comments
School Board President	"We have a "logjam" in [our community] on the installation and implementation of a fiber optics system for the city and schools. The logjam is between mayor and city council. We in the school city are ready for implementation. The ultimate losers are the taxpayers and students.
School Board President	All governmental entities w/in a county should meet regularly to share concerns, projects, info. I feel the taxpayer would be better served if this were to happen.
School Board President	Central govt. places our needs last i.e. property taxes
School Board President	Gov't, at all levels, seems disconnected w/modern quality and productivity improvement techniques and measures. General focus seems to be on holding tax increases to a minimum. While I agree with this, I strongly feel that gov't agencies are not making sufficient use of their resources. There does not seem to be a sense of urgency in making productivity and quality improvements through technology and lean training.
School Board President	I have grave concerns about our community's ability to meet present water/sewer needs. To meet our future needs we will need help and/or assistance from state gov't and possibly intervention. We need grants and an improved system of distribution and assistance.
School Board President	I would like a copy of the results of this survey. Thank you.
School Board President	In order to improve aging school facilities tax $s are stretched too thin to support all local services and responsibilities. Property taxes are outdated, esp in an agriculture based area. State needs to help with educational funding to ease property tax bite. Bedroom communities like ours suffer. The local workforce goes out of school district improving those w/their labor to improve economy of large towns. Equal-quality education should be available from river to the lake - Ill. to Ohio, not just where most of you send your kids and grandchildren! Teachers' salaries are embarrassing low - come on! Work on now
School Board President	Legislation continues to push programs on the school system w/o funding and then wonders why Indiana schools continue to rank poorly in the nation. Points to consider: Also, if education is so bad then why is our economy doing so well? Also, can all of our legislators pass the I-STEP?
School Board President	Need to correct the funding of schools formula…some systems receive almost twice per students as others…it is set to reward bad schools - need to reward good schools. Have schools a goal to get better!!!
School Board President	Property taxes must be reduced/eliminated. Eliminate excise tax - license plates on cars. The high cost of plates discourages buying new cars and the auto industry is the primary employer in the state!!! How foolish of the state!
School Board President	Reference question # 21: "I don't know."
School Board President	Rest??
School Board President	See question #22-lists two types of plan commission. (Town–Municipal advisory plan commission with extraterritorial (2-mile fringe)) and (Outside of town–County area plan commission.)

Table D1: Additional Comments Provided by Respondents (continued)

Office	Comments
School Board President	State legislature made pension accrual payments the resp of the schools several yrs ago. It has not funded these pension obligs fully since the 1st yr after the law changed. These payments have doubled in each of the last 2 yrs and have put increasing pressure on the general fund. This results in less $ to spend on the avg student since many special ed and 'English as a 2nd language' programs are mandated by law. We expect pension $s to more than double in the next yr resulting in drastic program cuts in very short order.
School Board President	State of IN officials need to work to send more of state surplus (2 billion +) to local districts for local financial decisions; not to be mandated by the state on what we need, but more local control.
School Board President	The schools are ahead in the computer issues. We plan on doing more.
School Board President	Too much att'n in state gov't being made to IPS system w/very little att'n to rest of state.
School Board President	We need to have more cooperation among levels of gov't instead of passing unfunding mandates and passing along costs and taxation issues to other levels of gov't. Thank you for asking.
Senator	"The survey does not consider or include some primary answers in some very important areas."
Senator	Reference Question # 10; "All are helpful–depends on job sought."
Senator	You must realize that a lot of your questions are very much focused toward the local governments and I may not be full up to speed on what that may be. Thank you.
Town Council President	"Class IV Towns need an equal opportunity to get funding for infrastructure needs. Under the present governor's guidelines I feel that we are Indiana's IV class citizens. The last application that I received stated IV class towns need not apply. We don't have enough money for your needs."
Town Council President	"Does not apply–stupid questionnaire. Waste of tax payers money."
Town Council President	"Far too much of this is not applicable in a town of under 1000."
Town Council President	"Need to cut taxes on gas. Keep cable fees down."
Town Council President	"No computer"
Town Council President	"Small towns don't stand a chance of interacting with big government without a good representative. Tom Saunders is a perfect example of what a representative should be."
Town Council President	"This is our greatest problem: Meeting water quality levels and waste water requirements, due to aging of distribution systems and equipment is a very large burden financially for our community. We are a fixed income town and people are pressed to pay for utilities and taxes."
Town Council President	"We are a very small town and much of the information requested does not apply significantly to our situation."
Town Council President	1. State assistance to help pay for local law enforcement on an annual basis. 2. Inter-local agreements between small towns and counties for equipment use and contracting for road resurfacing.
Town Council President	All assessors should be appointed and under control of county assessors.
Town Council President	Do not have any computers.
Town Council President	Do not use computers.
Town Council President	[Our county] needs better leadership and aggressive attitude in econ dvlpt. The cty also needs a better school corporation that is more proactive in the community.

Table D1: Additional Comments Provided by Respondents (continued)

Office	Comments
Town Council President	I really don't know about computers and telecommunications, as we are just a small town around 600 people. We do have computers.
Town Council President	IDEM mandates are so arbitrary and ever changing that long range planning relative to waste treatment is not possible.
Town Council President	In communities with limited access, highways after 10 yrs access should be granted. Reference question # 19: no computer
Town Council President	It is very difficult for small communities to comply w/unfunded mandates, but it state or federal.
Town Council President	Local gov'ts need help - 1% sales tax, 1% gas tax.
Town Council President	Need better way to fund, police, EMS, fire dept in small towns.
Town Council President	No computers.
Town Council President	Not done?
Town Council President	Our town is very small. Less than 100 population. Most of the information does not relate to our community as a town.
Town Council President	Please cut the red tape out.
Town Council President	Quit bragging about hoarding all of excess taxes that they have cheated the taxpayers out of.
Town Council President	Reference question #24; respondent answered "we are in the middle of working with the county." (respondent did not check "yes" or "no".)
Town Council President	Small towns lack the funds to provide the services homeowners and businesses are looking for. People live in our town because its tax rate is low. Less money means less service. No school plus less services means no growth. Drive through Newberry or Marco and you'll see that our small towns need big help.
Town Council President	Small towns w/low tax rates when property taxes were frozen years ago will never be able to catch up to a realistic rate for today's needs. State tax laws need to b revised to allow them to increase the rate in order to provide adequate services.
Town Council President	Sometimes it's better for the state to enforce the laws, then leaving it up to us to make enemies out of our neighbors. Businesses use zoning. Trash burning.
Town Council President	The annexation bill sponsored by B. Gard was the single most detrimental thing to ever happen to small towns.
Town Council President	The population of our town is just over 400, so a lot of the info talked about in this form does not affect us. We have no industry in town so jobs are not available in town.
Town Council President	The state board of accounts needs to disqualify local treasurers that are ill equipped to handle bookkeeping.
Town Council President	[Our town] is 706 people. We have $200,000 in extra cash. The state will not appropriate enough in our budget to cover the rising cost of running a town. Elec, gas, water, insurance, fire contract and salaries go up every yr. The State needs to be a bit more relaxed and trust the Clerk-Treasurer and Council to know what the expenditures of the Town will be for the following year. I'm not suggesting spending it all but, we just scrape by every yr w/cash in the bank because the State won't appropriate it.
Town Council President	This is a typical questionnaire written by well-paid people for a specific purpose. These people are totally unaware of and usually don't care about the life/problems of small town Indiana. If industry were to use the same mentality as government, then a shoe manufacturer would only make one size shoe to fit all people.

Table D1: Additional Comments Provided by Respondents (continued)

Office	Comments
Town Council President	Too little for towns of less than 2,500.
Town Council President	Until [our county] allows towns such as [ours] to receive our share of COIT we will continue to struggle. Our citizens pay a tax which we see NO benefit from. [Our county] does not use it to benefit us in any way, shape, or means.
Town Council President	We are a town w/a pop'n of less than 100 citizens. Info and bookkeeping is done manually.
Town Council President	We are a very small incorporated town, and much of this was not as applicable to us as to some of the larger areas.
Town Council President	We are a very small town - 318 houses. No commercial areas. We run on +/- 70 K/year. and would like info on grants, and other resources.
Town Council President	We have been on a long-term infrastructure rebuilding program and the cooperation between all agencies involved has been good. RE: qu #25: Too easy to disseminate false or misleading data.
Town Council President	We have not had any help from state or county govt on getting factory in town.
Town Council President	We would like to know of there are items such as grants or funding available to use?
Town Council President	When we lost our school in [our community] the governor was down here and we asked him to help us get our speed limit signs back that was removed on U.S. 50 through [our community] because buses still use the old school parking lot to unload ? Children. That was 4 years ago. We need more tax money returned to this low to moderate community to improve living conditions. Please read and respond w/help. Air pollution control won't help us on sawmill burning.
Town Council President	Working w/the State Board of Tax Commissioners has been a headache. They are far too removed from a small town such as ours.
Township Trustee	"Local governments need money they can spend where it is needed--every dollar is "earmarked." Whatever happened to Federal Revenue Sharing Money? Needs of small government change year to year. We use to get $10,000 a year to spend where we needed it--whether it be: poor relief-- fire truck--OR park improvements. Government is only going through motions and real loser is working man trying to pay more taxes and mont. and car payments and insurance and still be able to feed."
Township Trustee	"[Our township] is not computerized."
Township Trustee	"Regarding elected township assessors and elected trustee/assessors. They must be kept. We try to find and assess all real and personal property not updated. It is impossible for us in the field to assess 100% of it. If the county or state is given the responsibility there will be much much more not reported, thus not treating the taxpayers who report correctly in a fair manner. I am a trustee/assessor in a rural township and small town. We know our community much better than the county. The state will never know us and could care even less about us."
Township Trustee	"To whom it concerns: [Our] Township is very small. A lot of the questions I don't' know how to answer. Our township is all country. We do not have any factory in our township. We don't hardly have any crime or poor relief in our township.
Township Trustee	"Voice mail should not be used by state agencies."
Township Trustee	Although our unemployment is down and we have created jobs most of the jobs are low paying and are not filled by local people.

Table D1: Additional Comments Provided by Respondents (continued)

Office	Comments
Township Trustee	Calls to agencies (voicemail) not successful, as there is no info on who to talk to for help.
Township Trustee	I feel my community is too involved in politics and what that politician can do for his personal gain, instead of what is best for the future of our community. I also know that our state funded welfare depts can't do the BEST job for their clients that a local agency, such as a township trustee can do. Vouchers, direct payment to the vendors, and time elements are used to their best access by trustees!
Township Trustee	Indiana desperately needs to attract hi-tech better paying jobs that would be an incentive for our college graduates to stay in Indiana. I do not think an overhaul on assessing will affect homeowners in a positive way. Any improvement in education for assessing officials would be implemented by the state in more regional classes.
Township Trustee	My office has problems communicating with local welfare office plus we have to take care of clients who qualify for their service but they cannot get their paperwork done. So we use township tax money to care for clients that state should be paying for.
Township Trustee	No computer yet
Township Trustee	No computers in township.
Township Trustee	Reference question #18(?); "What happened to the 2 billion dollar surplus? It would take more people to do the assessments if were turned over to county as assessor. The more control you give the state for re-assessment, the worse the situation is going to."
Township Trustee	Removing the two-mile zoning regulations would greatly improve relations between city and counties.
Township Trustee	Small townships, such as [ours] are hindered by having budgets froze. Cannot get funding necessary to better run township.
Township Trustee	[Our] Twp. is very rural w/little change in pop'n so it is hard to apply some of your questions to our area. Have did the best I can w/this but I am afraid I am not much help. I know that in other places the info you desire would be very important. Taxes on local land owners, esp our farmers, would be my major concern and of course to conserve our resources.
Township Trustee	Taxing structure needs to be totally redone, family farms + small businesses are disappearing daily because of the load of the prop tax. We desperately need a flat income tax and/or a higher sales tax on all items, food included. Prop tax doesn't need to be eliminated, but reduced to not carry the load.
Township Trustee	The need to be kept up to date on what new laws have been passed each year.
Township Trustee	The reason I hadn't filled this out is because I don't have a lot to say about some of this as [our] Twp has no towns. Rural area. Sorry.
Township Trustee	They have no computers, and "I did not complete all questions as I feel they do not apply to [our] Township."
Township Trustee	This does not really apply to me because my main function is poor relief.
Township Trustee	We are a small rural township w/no computer equipment.
Township Trustee	We are a very rural community and some of these items are not applied. Do not have computers.
Township Trustee	We do not have a computer.
Township Trustee	We do not have computers at the local level.