



City of Tigard Memorandum

To: Mayor Dirksen and Councilors
From: Kent Wyatt, Senior Management Analyst
Re: Results of 2011 Community Attitudes Survey – **Executive Summary**
Date: November 18, 2011

Background

This memo contains a summary of results from a telephone survey conducted among a representative sample of 400 residents age 18 and older in the City of Tigard, Oregon. The interviews were conducted October 2011. The potential sampling error is plus or minus 5% at the 95% confidence level.

To allow all residents the opportunity to participate in the study— an identical (but separate) online survey was available to interested residents between October 25 and November 10, 2011 (Table 1). A total of 268 residents completed the online version. Since online surveys are less accurate and may not represent a cross section of the community, only a limited amount of the results are included in the memo.

Table 1: Demographics of Telephone and Online Survey

	Telephone	Online
Number of respondents	400	268
Median age (years)	57	47
Employed full time	27%	56%
Employed part time	15%	19%
Homeowner	88%	--
One child in the household	11%	19%
Two or more children	9%	16%
Three or more children	4%	--
Registered voter	88%	----
College graduate	43%	
Post-graduate studies	13%	35
Median time lived in Tigard (years)	7	--

In sum, the 2011 Community Attitudes Survey provided more than 650 Tigard residents an opportunity to express their use of and satisfaction with City services as well as to determine priorities for their neighborhoods and the City. Residents were also asked their opinion on new topics such as recreation, social media, economic development, and high capacity transit.

Key Findings

1. Ninety-nine percent of residents are satisfied with Tigard as a place to live.
2. Residents are most satisfied with the water supply and Tigard's work protecting environmental areas.
3. Traffic/congestion remains the biggest issue.
4. One in three residents (32%) have contacted city officials/employees in the last year. Nearly all respondents report that they were treated fairly by respectful and honest City employees.
5. Three out of four residents (75%) report getting their information about the city through the Cityscape newsletter. Nearly as many (71%) consider it their preferred communication method.
6. While 29 percent said the city should increase use of social media, only 1 percent of respondents listed Facebook/Twitter as their preferred communication method.
7. A majority of residents (58%) are opposed to the city encouraging greater residential density to accommodate future growth
8. Residents desire more family friendly restaurants, upscale restaurants, and grocery stores in Tigard
9. Sixty percent of residents are in favor of light rail into Tigard; 15 percent are unsure.
10. While eight out of ten (79%) think the city should have some role in recreation, more residents prefer a limited role.

Widespread Satisfaction with Tigard as a Place to Call Home

Ninety-nine percent of Tigard residents are either “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with Tigard as a place to call home. With additional analysis a mean score was calculated and finds Tigard earns a 7.6 satisfaction score overall which is a slight decrease from 7.8 in 2009, but higher than 7.4 in 2007.

Safety

Most residents feel safe in Tigard. The perception of safety in downtown Tigard significantly increased from 58 percent in 2009 to 78 percent in 2011. Compared to 2009 results, residents also feel safer walking in their neighborhood and report knowing more of their neighbors. Despite these increases, residents rank safety as one of the most important issues in Tigard which suggests that residents would still like to see improvement.

Environment

Nearly all residents (96%) agree that Tigard’s rivers and streams are worth protecting. This is an increase from 94 percent in 2009. Most also agree that open spaces and trees should be protected, although fewer residents feel strongly about these statements.

Future Growth

“To accommodate future growth, the City should encourage greater residential density than exists today in both new and existing neighborhoods.” Three out of five respondents (58%) disagree with this statement, and one out of three (34%) strongly disagree with it. This is consistent with the 56 percent that disagreed in 2009.

Contact with City Personnel

One-in-three residents (32%) had contact with city officials, an increase from 26 percent in 2009. More than half of these contacts were with the Police Department which is an increase from 28 percent in 2009.

Nearly all respondents report that they were treated fairly by respectful and honest City employees. All but one area (accurate and helpful assistance/information) increased from 2009.

Issue Priorities

Traffic/congestion (32%) remains the most important issue for the Tigard City Council to address over the next year (Table 2). A noticeable exception is found in the demographic breakdown for the question. Respondents age 40-44 chose education/schools first, followed by growth planning. While those ages 55-59 favored a focus on jobs and the economy. Crime and drugs was second to traffic/congestion among those ages 18-34.

Table 2: Issues of Importance

	2011	2009	2007
Traffic/congestion	32 %	28 %	39 %
Jobs and economic development	11	8	2
Education/schools	8	8	3
Growth and development	7	3	14
Crime and drugs	7	7	7
Street improvements/maintenance	7	8	3
Water supply	4	----	5
Taxes/lower taxes	4	5	3
Government spending	4	4	----
Parks and recreation	2	5	2
Downtown development	2	3	4
Transportation/public transit	2	3	3
Protecting/preserving open space	1	----	4
Local government effectiveness	1	----	----

Importance vs. Perception

In comparing importance ratings of nine characteristics and perceptions of how well those characteristics describe Tigard, a deficit is present in all nine categories (Table 3). The deficit in job availability continues to increase as the economy remains in flux as it was in 2009. Despite the high unemployment rate in Oregon, residents consider job availability the least importance of the nine characteristics. Other noticeable deficits for the City are in the areas of safety, civic affairs, and streets/utilities.

Table 3: Importance vs. Perception of Nine City Characteristics

Issue	Importance	Perception	Deficit in 2011	Deficit in 2009
Residents feel safe	8.7	7.5	-1.2	-1.1
Streets and utilities are well maintained	8.4	7.6	-0.8	-0.9
Friendly, cohesive neighborhood	8.2	7.4	-0.8	-0.7
Positive community image	7.9	7.2	-0.7	-0.4
Development respects the natural environment	7.7	7.0	-0.7	-0.8
Services needed by residents are provided within the community	7.7	7.1	-0.6	-0.7
Quality recreation and leisure activities are available	7.4	6.7	-0.7	-0.7
Residents are informed and active in civic affairs	7.3	6.3	-1.0	-0.7
Jobs are available within the community	6.7	4.4	-2.3	-1.4

Business Development

Increased dining options especially family-friendly restaurants, upscale restaurants, and ethnic restaurants were mentioned most frequently as a reason for residents traveling outside Tigard. Of the respondents that chose “other”, 27% indicated specific type of restaurant they would like to see, 20% listed stores they would like for groceries, and 10% indicated a desire to have a recreation center or pool. More than 40 percent of respondents stated they did not feel there were any businesses that they wanted to see in Tigard.

Light Rail

Support for light rail was a new question for this year’s survey. Respondents were provided the following context before being asked their position.

“The Southwest Corridor which includes parts of Tigard in the vicinity of Highway 99 and Pacific Highway was designated in 2009 as the as next regional priority for high capacity transit expansion. Tigard and its regional partners are considering a variety of transit options including light rail, bus rapid transit, commuter rail or rapid streetcar, or even improved local bus.”

After being read the statement, three out of five residents responded favorably of the idea of light rail into Tigard (Table 4). Responses were mostly consistent between age ranges, with the exception of those older than 65 who expressed more uncertainty (19%).

Table 4: Citizen Comments on Light Rail

Favor	Oppose
“It makes sense and helps practical development and helps high way 99.”	“Because it will raise taxes and I will never use it.”
“I have used light rail before, is great, keeps cars off the street.”	“We already have an excellent bus system.”
“I just enjoy it as a convenient way to go around and you do not have to take your car. I would go into Portland more often, for museums and special events.”	“It would be inefficient with the current model being used in Portland, too slow, stops too often, no express lines, takes longer than bumper to bumper traffic.”
“For my job, easier to commute and faster.”	“Because its not the direction people need to be moved.”
“Better for people who do not drive.”	“Cost, disturbance, highway 99 is not big enough.”
“Best option for cutting down congestion.”	“I think they should build roads instead.”
“More people would come to Tigard.”	“I don't think it's the right fit for area to be utilized.”

Recreation and Leisure Activities in Tigard

Survey results indicate four-in-five (80%) Tigard residents **support** the city having an active role in recreation and leisure activities (Table 5). As for what that role should be varies with informing citizens but providing limited coordination ranking the highest with more than 35 percent. Opinions were similar in each age range.

Table 5: City's Role With Respect to Recreation And Leisure Activities

Statement	Percent	Number
Monthly catalog of activities and coordinate a limited number of activities.	35.4 %	127
Monthly catalog of activities, coordinate a limited number of activities, and schedule athletic fields and facilities.	24.5	88
The City should <u>NOT</u> be an active provider for recreation and leisure activities.	20.9	75
Full service provider ranging from cataloging activities, coordinating and scheduling a full range of activities from youth leagues to festivals, hosting events and festivities, and acquiring the necessary facilities, fields, and buildings.	19.2	69

Note: 359 respondents, 41 skipped the question

Those supporting a role for the city expressed comments such as, "It's a bummer that we're "out of district" for both Conestoga and the YMCA!" to "local recreational activities - are expensive for my family, sometimes we have to travel to Portland to get something cheap?"

Supporters of the city becoming a full-service recreation provider had following comments:

- *I would love to see a parks and rec district similar to THPRD. That is an incredible facility that offers incredible recreational programs to youth and adults.*
- *I lived in Corvallis for 12 years, and they spend a large amount of their general fund on parks and recreation. They also have 250 adult softball teams and many things offered in their recreation department. They also have trails that circle the city. I have never heard of another city the size of Tigard that does not even have a park and recreation department. It is pathetic!!*
- *We would love Tigard to have a full service Park and Recreation Department/District. We are very disappointed that Tigard does not offer such services/activities.*
- *I would like to see a regional recreation program like THPRD. Something encompassing, Tigard, Tualatin, Sherwood and surrounding area.*

Conversely, the 20 percent opposing the city having an active role in recreation reasoned, “I think there is a lot of availability in the area”, “for a city our size we have all the important bases covered,” and “I do NOT favor spending my local tax dollars to provide entertainment of any kind for citizens. That should be PRIVATE funding.”

Beyond the city’s role in recreation, the survey asked residents for input on those recreation activities lacking in Tigard. A wide range of activities were suggested including youth activities, community gardening, hiking trails, and indoor swimming. Another suggestion was partnering with private companies to offer activities such as the First Lego League which is sponsored by Intel and volunteers.

Methods of Communication

More than 70 percent of residents named Cityscape, the city’s newsletter as the primary way of receiving information about Tigard (Table 6). Compared with 2009, Cityscape, *The Oregonian*, *The Tigard-Tualatin Times*, and the city’s website have increased as information sources. Social media outlets, Facebook and Twitter, ranked at the bottom which can partially be attributed to the city’s limited presence.

Table 6: Where Residents Receive City News

Information Source	2011	2009	2007
Cityscape	75 %	49 %	69 %
The Oregonian	27	18	46
City of Tigard website	20	8	18
Tigard Times	17	15	31
Word of mouth	9	13	30
Local TV	5	13	32
Public access TV	2	3	10
Neighborhood Network	2	5	
Know H20	2	----	----
Radio	2	4	14
El Hispanic News	1	----	----
Facebook	0	----	----
Twitter	0	----	----

In considering future communications, residents expressed a preference in receiving information from three sources: Cityscape (71%), the city’s website (16%), and email alerts (12%). However, a majority of residents are open to the city increasing its social media presence. Only 7% felt there should be a decrease in these communications.