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The City of Powell Community Attitudes Survey

Saperstein Associates, Inc. | Spring 2014

Introduction

This research gives residents of Powell a voice. It allows the voting public to express opinions on myriad issues – and, in doing so, provides city officials important data as planning for the future continues.

Similar studies were conducted in 2008, 2010, and 2012. With the current study, opinions can now be tracked over a six-year period.

Methodology

- Telephone interviews were conducted with a random sample of more than 400 adults registered to vote in the City of Powell.
- Averaging 17 minutes in length, the interviews were completed on landlines (74%) and cell phones (26%) from May 12 through May 20.
- The margin of error for the total sample is ± 4.9 percentage points (or less) at the 95 percent level of confidence.
- The sample was developed from records provided by the Delaware County Board of Elections.

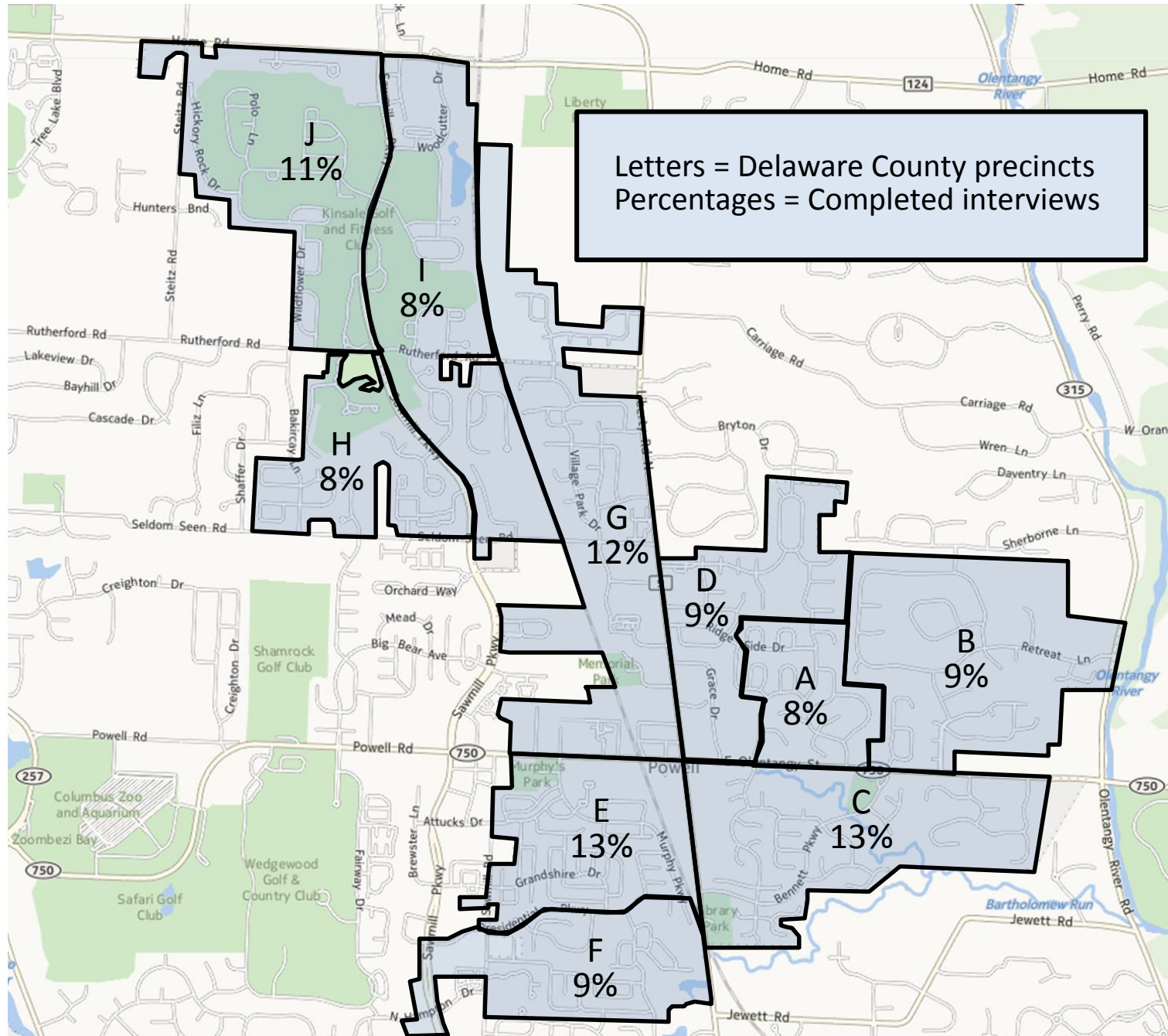
The survey respondents represent Powell's registered voters on several key dimensions, including gender, age, ...

	Actual*	Sample
Gender		
Male	51%	50%
Female	49%	50%
Age		
18 to 24	9%	9%
25 to 34	10%	10%
35 to 44	25%	25%
45 to 54	26%	26%
55 to 64	16%	16%
65 or older	14%	14%

*Source: Registered voter data files for Delaware County

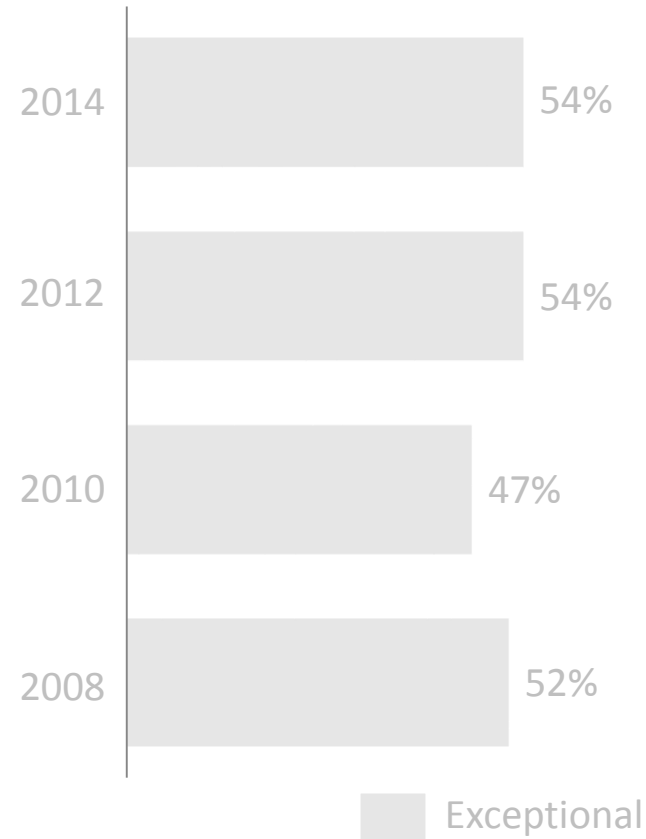
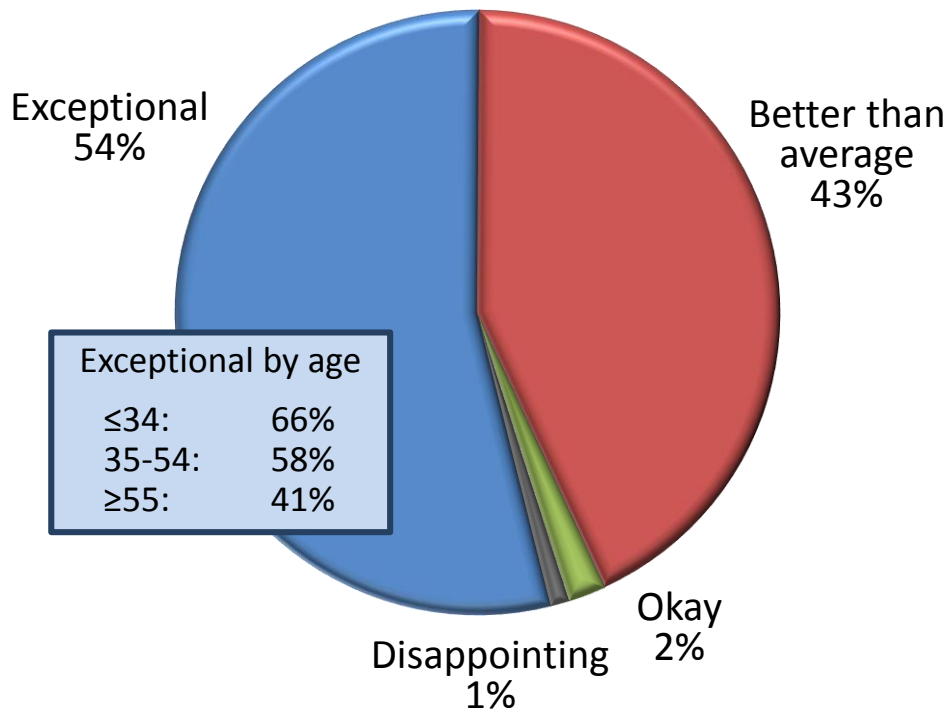
... and political jurisdiction.

	Actual*	Sample
Jurisdiction		
Precinct A	8%	8%
Precinct B	9%	9%
Precinct C	13%	13%
Precinct D	9%	9%
Precinct E	13%	13%
Precinct F	9%	9%
Precinct G	12%	12%
Precinct H	8%	8%
Precinct I	8%	8%
Precinct J	11%	11%

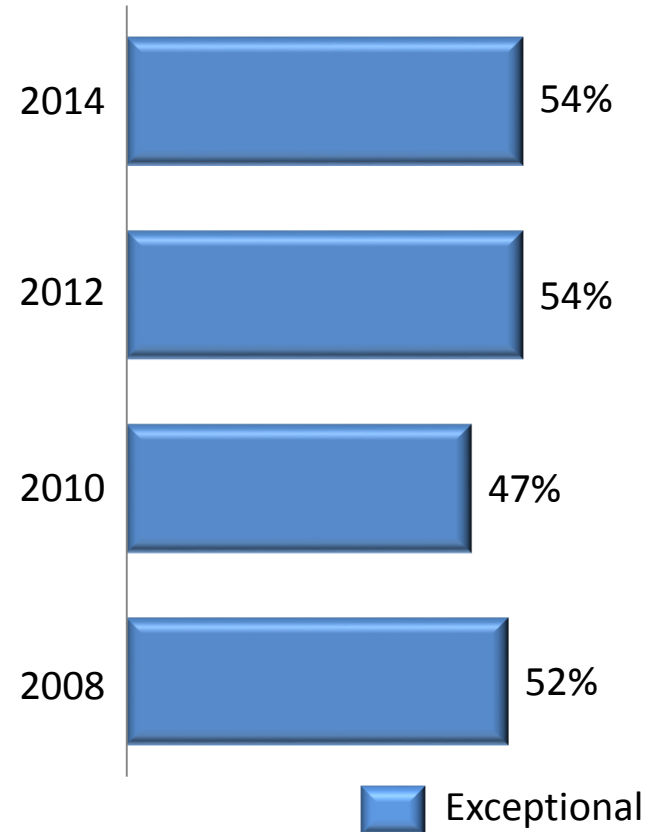
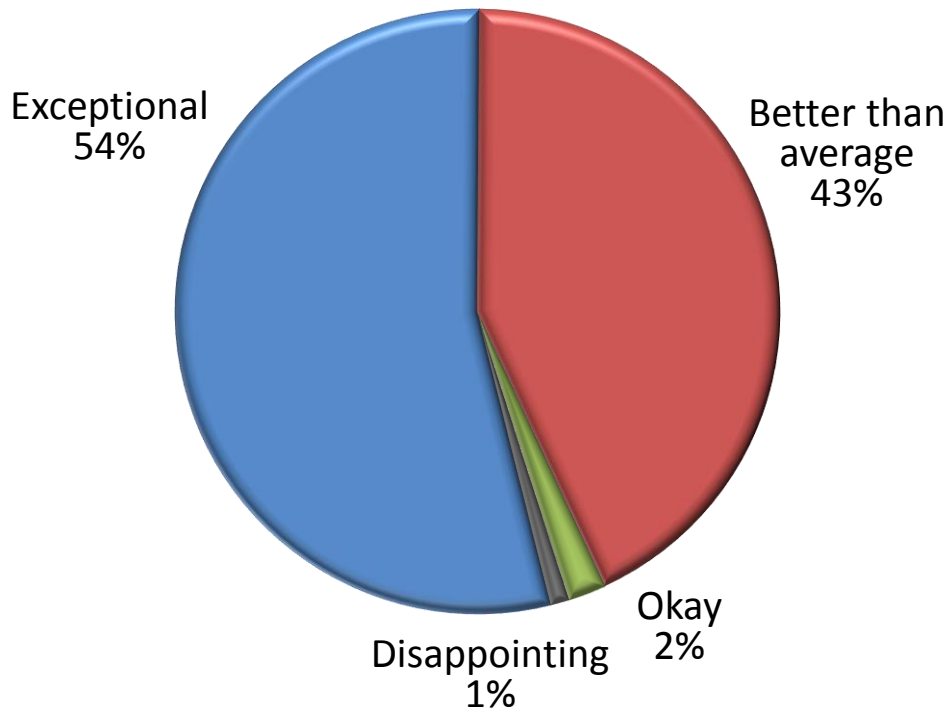


Powell as a Place to Live

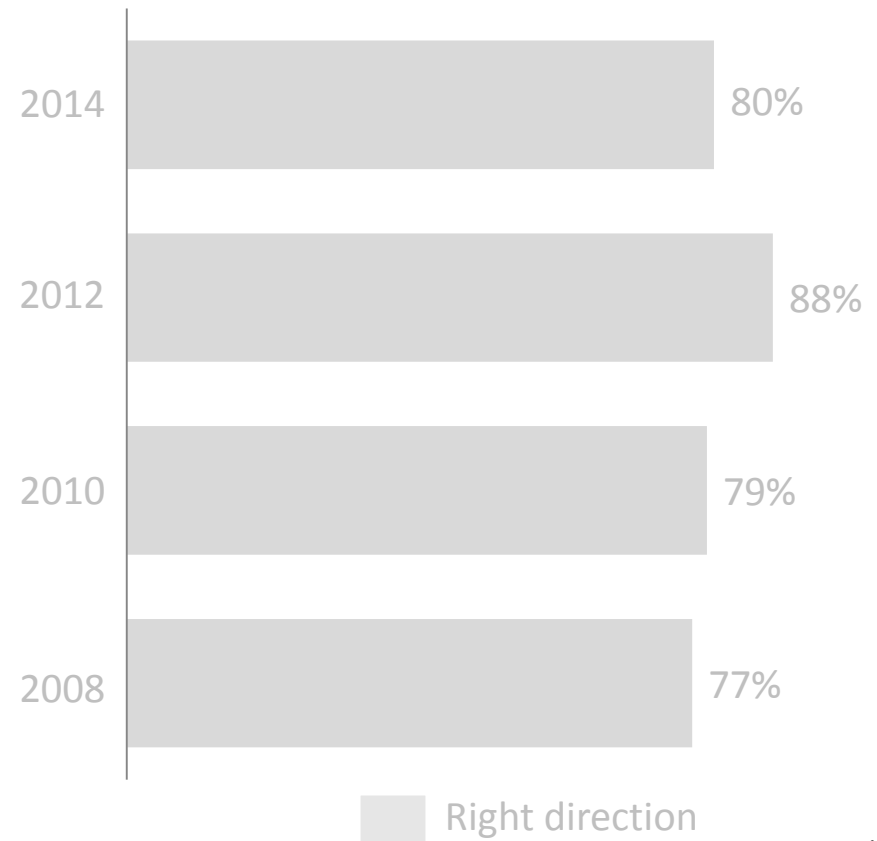
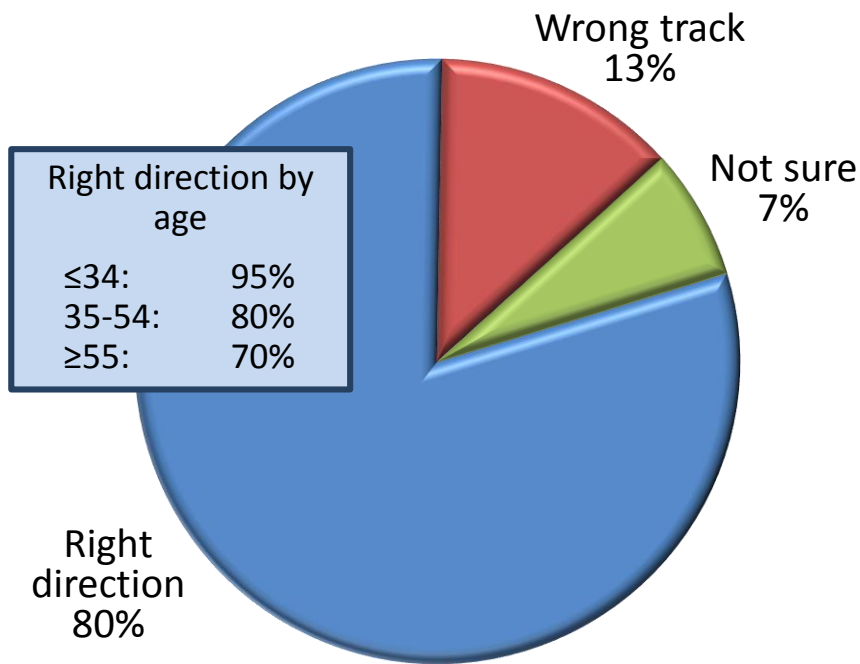
More than half the residents (54%) consider Powell exceptional as a place to live. Almost everyone else (43%) considers the city better than average.



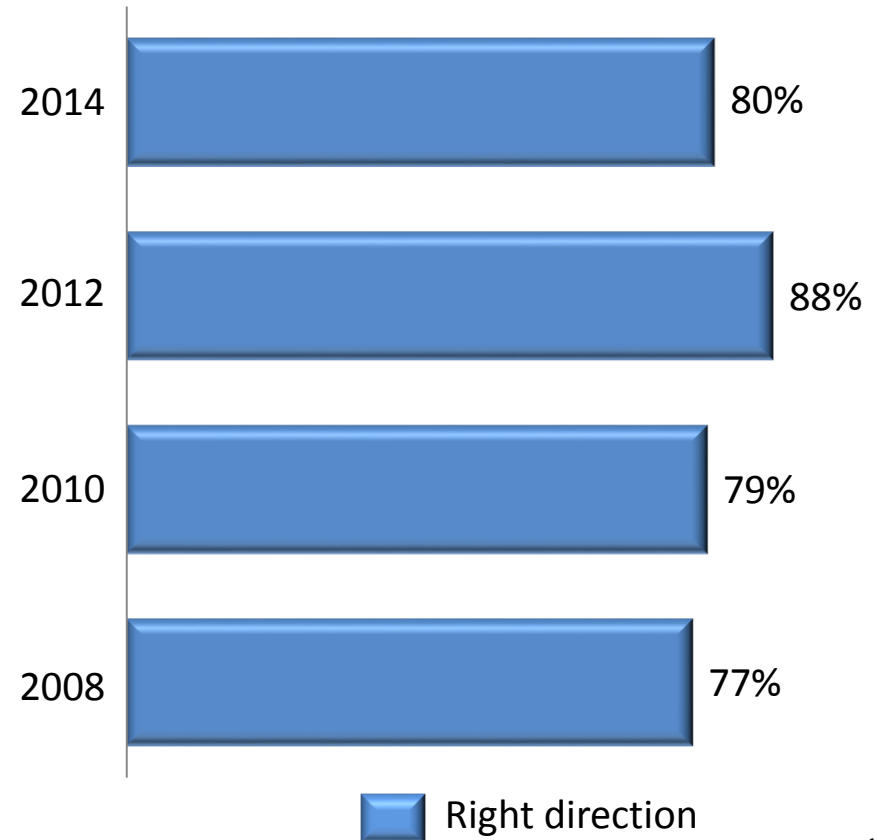
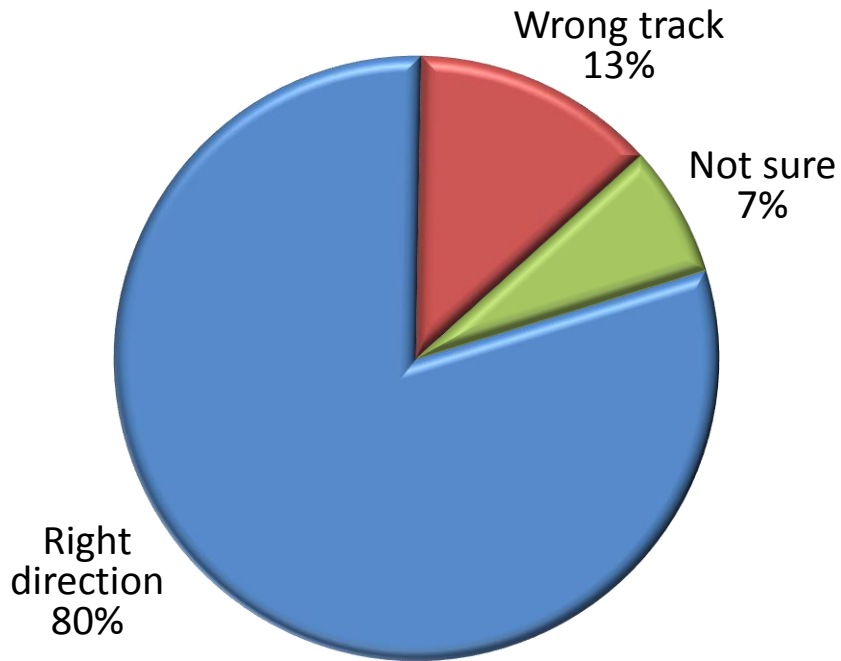
Little has changed since 2012.



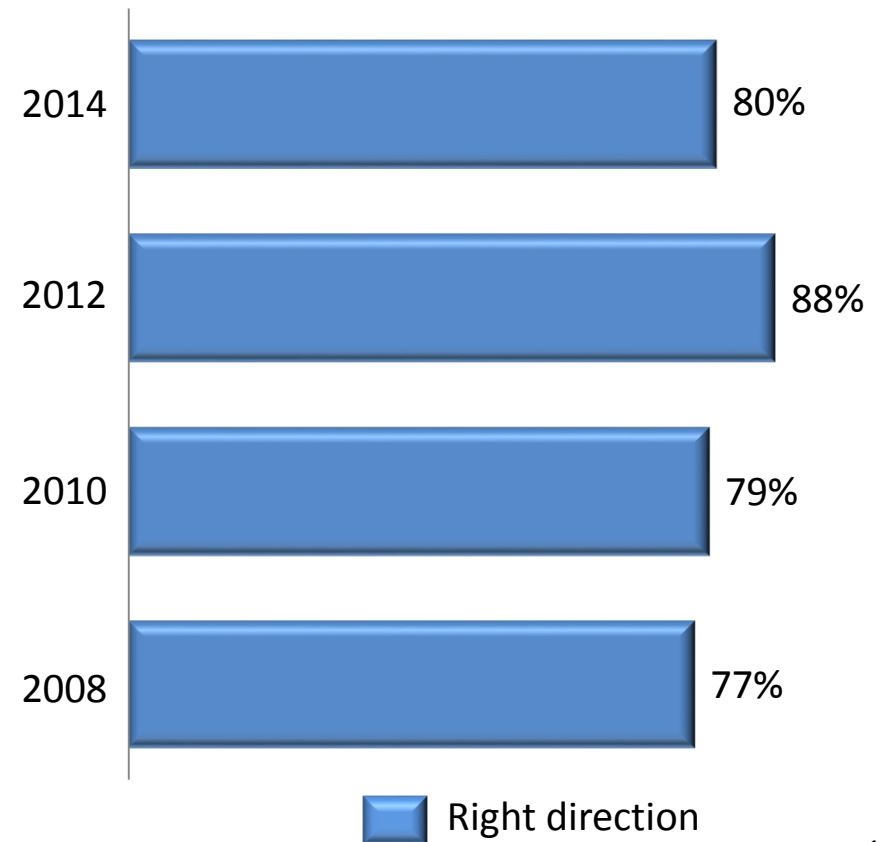
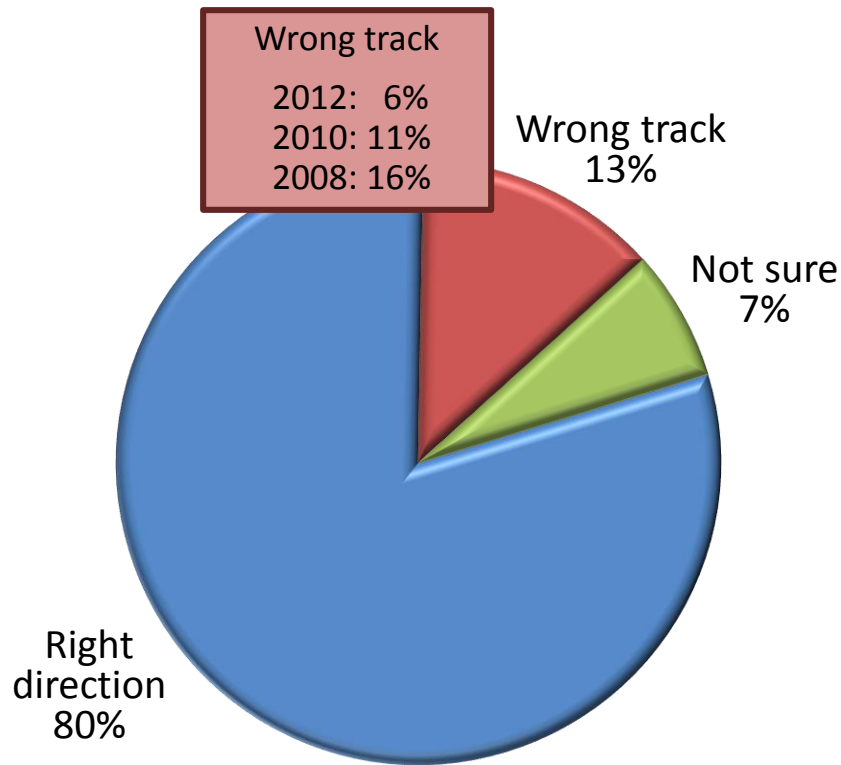
Eight out of ten residents (80%) feel that Powell is headed in the right direction, ...



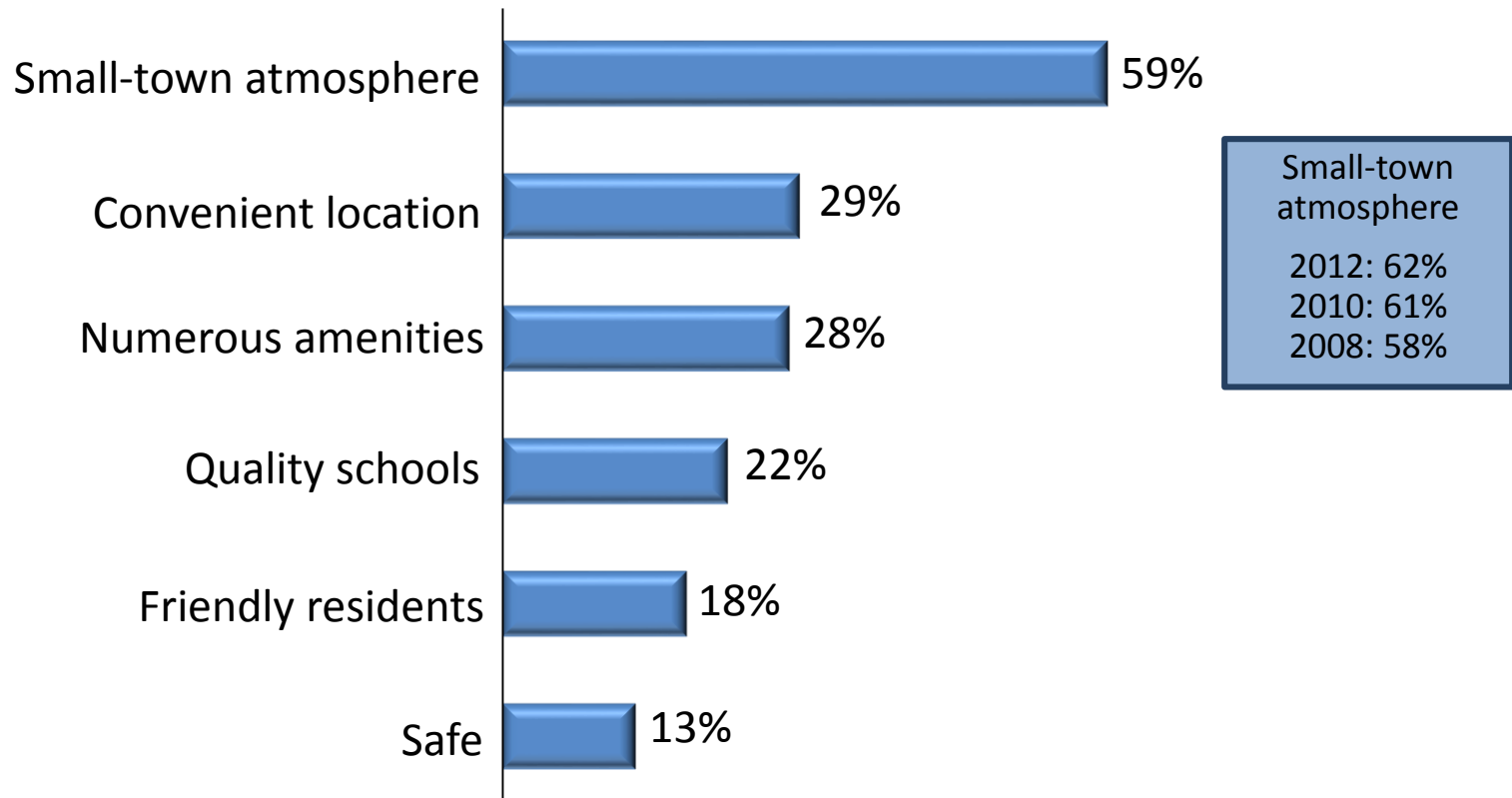
... down from 2012, but similar to 2010.



The wrong-track percentage has doubled since 2012 (from 6% to 13%), after declining in previous surveys.



Once again, Powell's small-town atmosphere, by far, is its greatest strength.

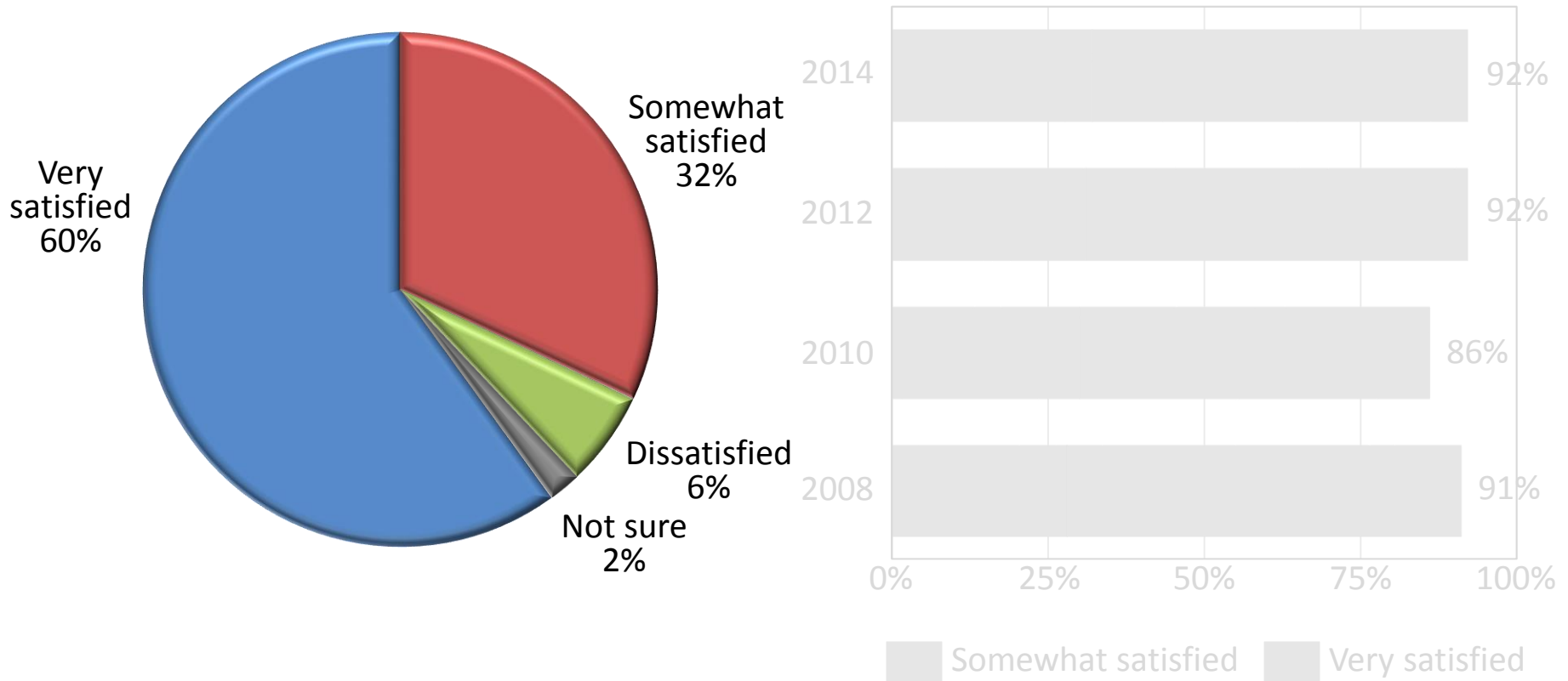


“Small-town atmosphere” means that Powell is ...

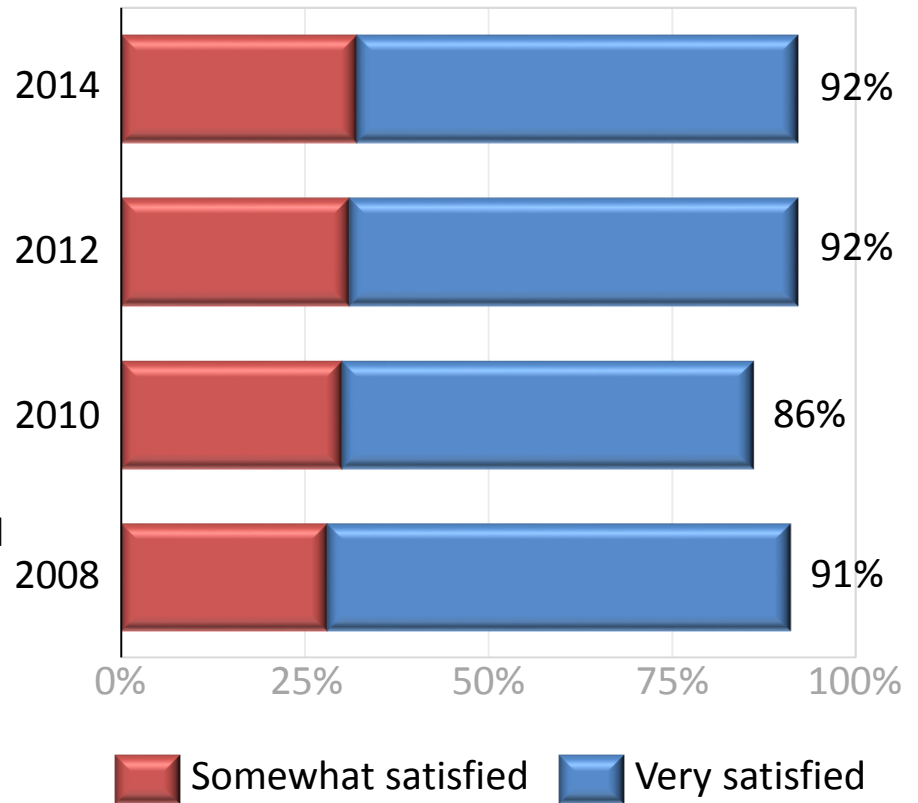
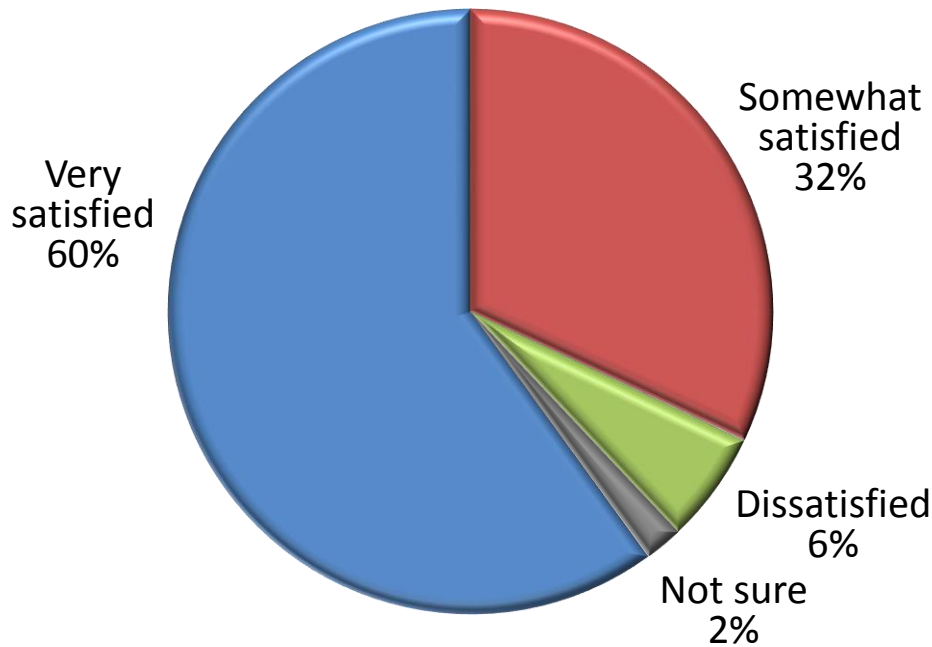
- Family-oriented;
- Well maintained;
- Verdant;
- Pedestrian-friendly;
- Quiet;
- Safe;
- Peaceful; and
- Less commercial.

Satisfaction With City-Managed Amenities

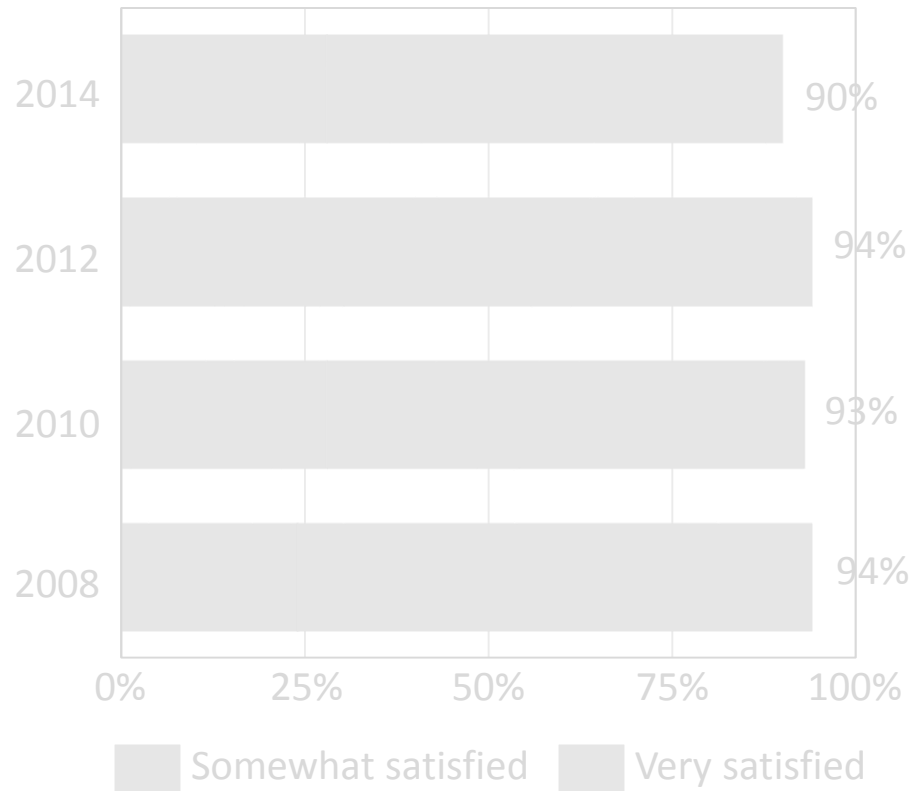
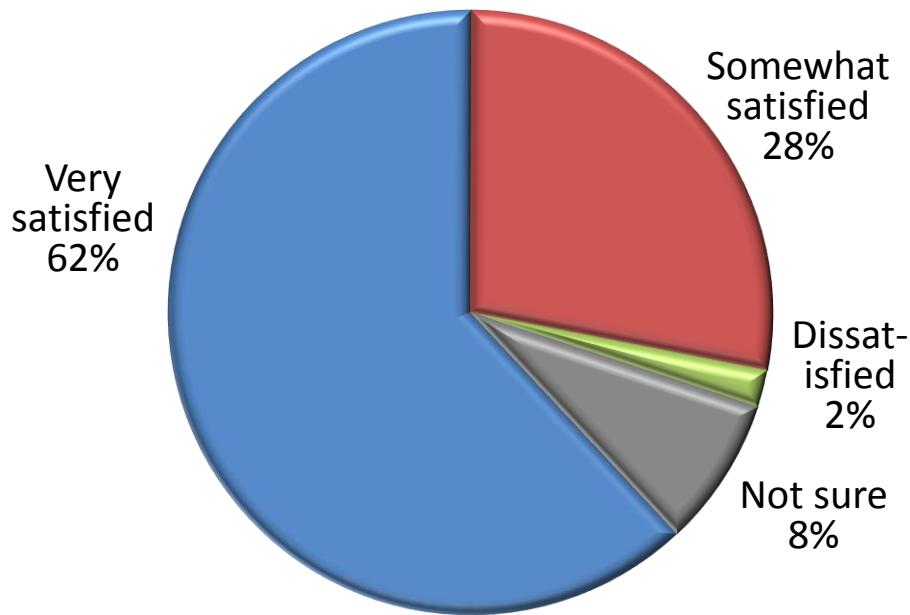
Nine out of ten residents (92%) are pleased with Powell's parks, open spaces, and bike paths ...



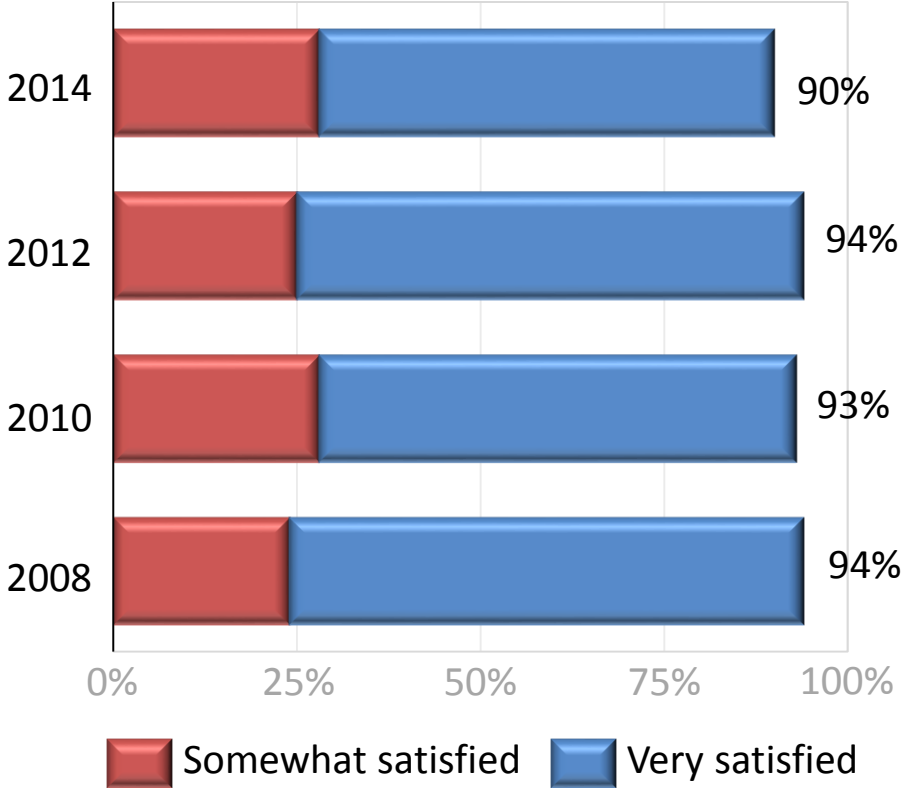
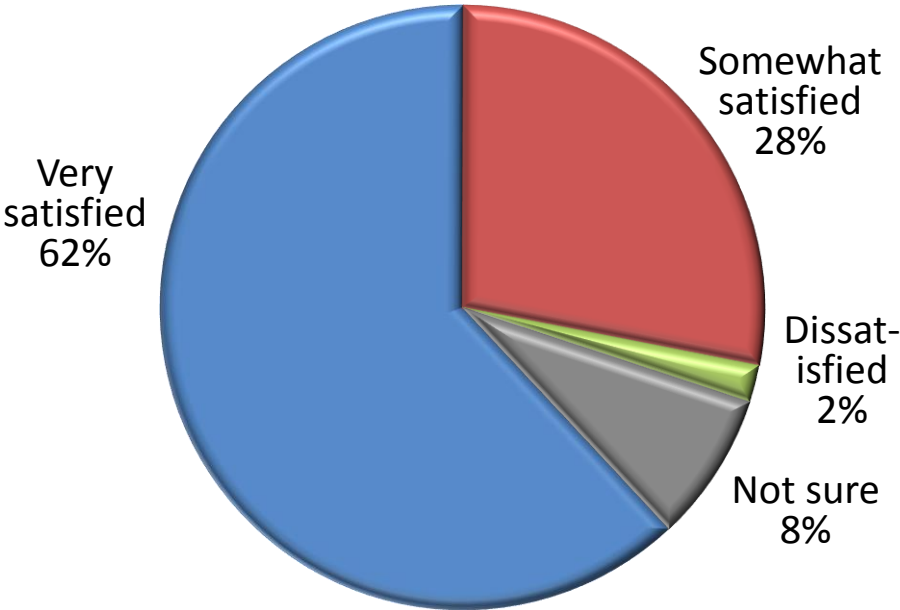
... just as they were in 2012.



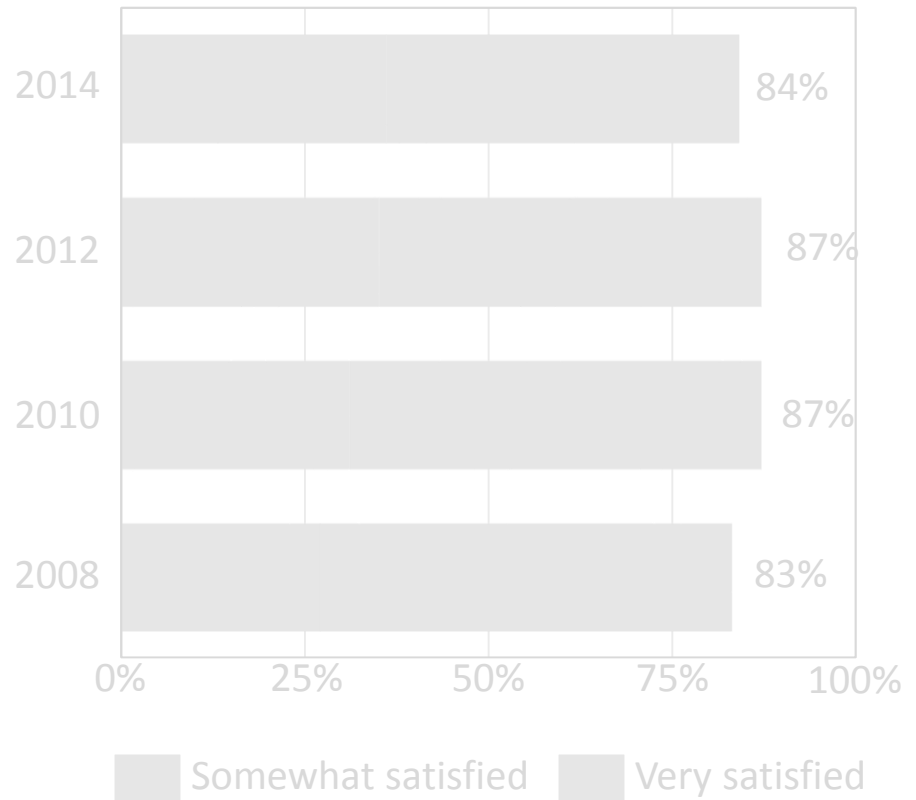
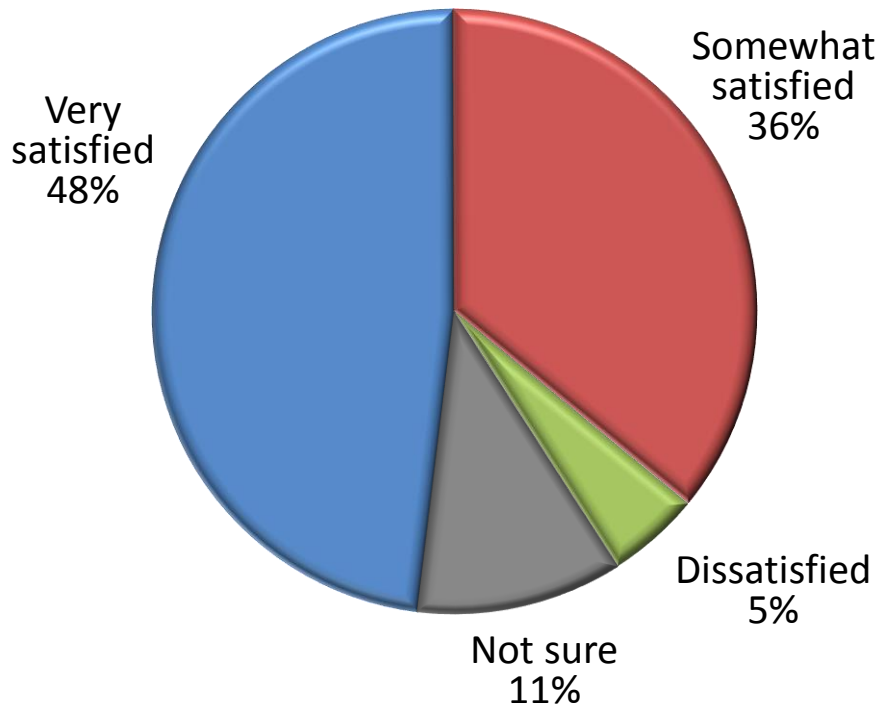
Nine out of ten (90%) also are pleased with the events and activities the city sponsors ...



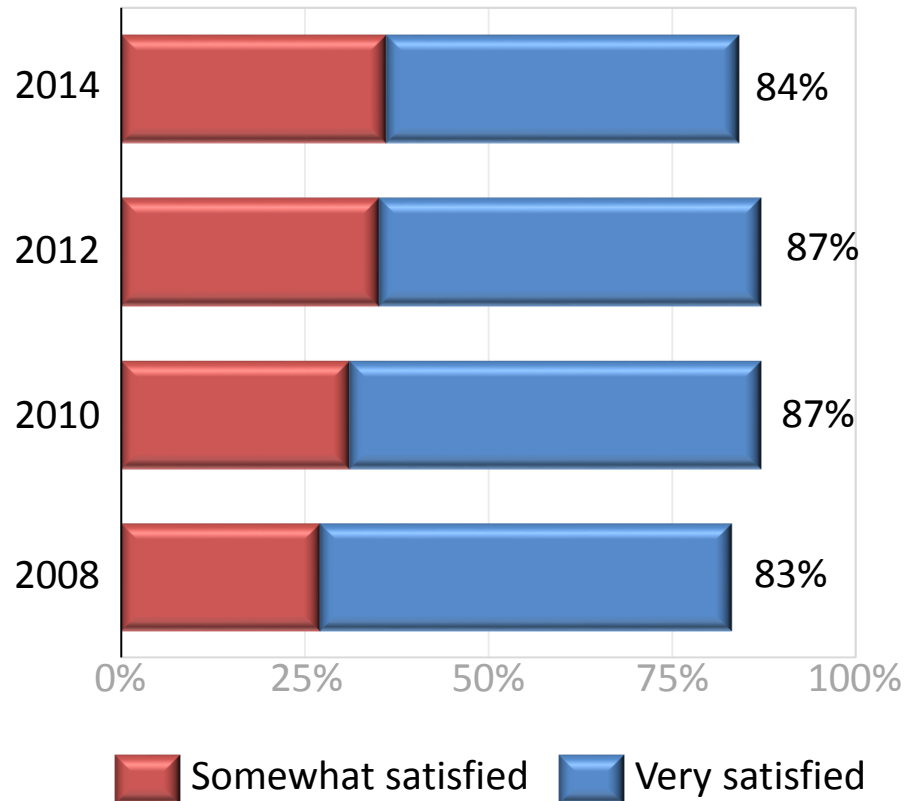
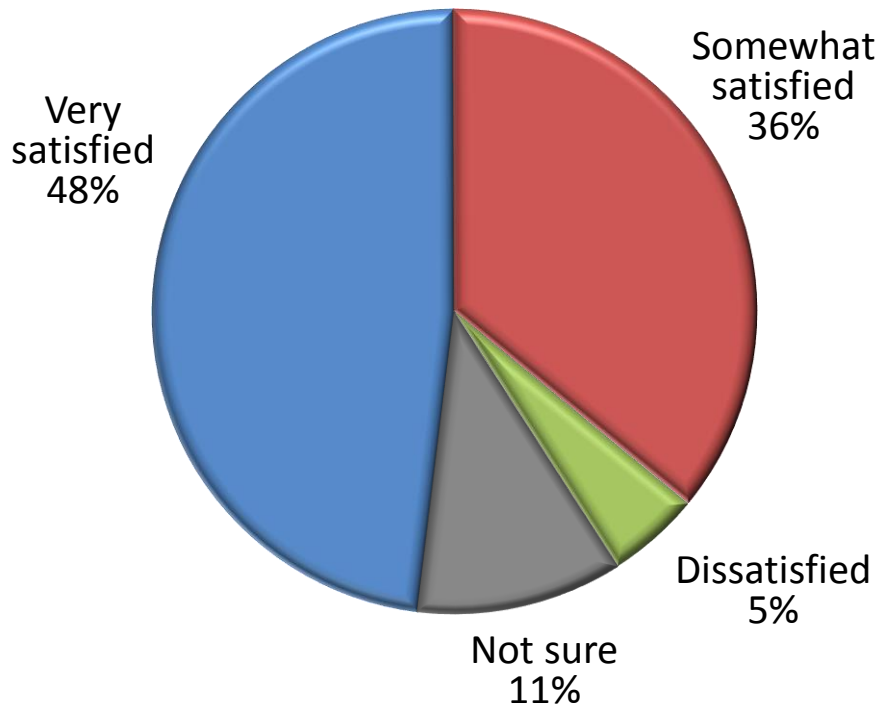
... down slightly from years past.



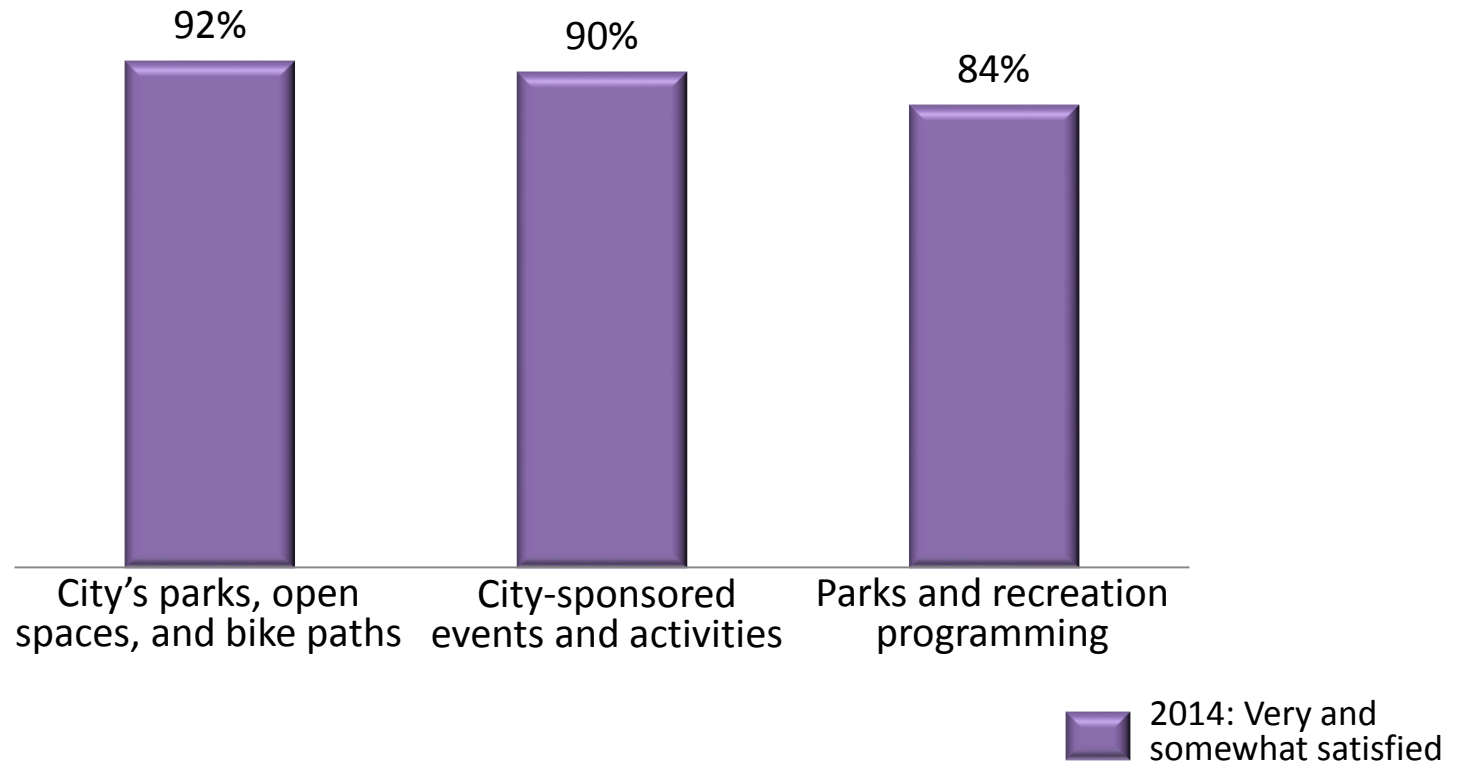
More than eight out of ten residents (84%) praised parks and recreation programming ...



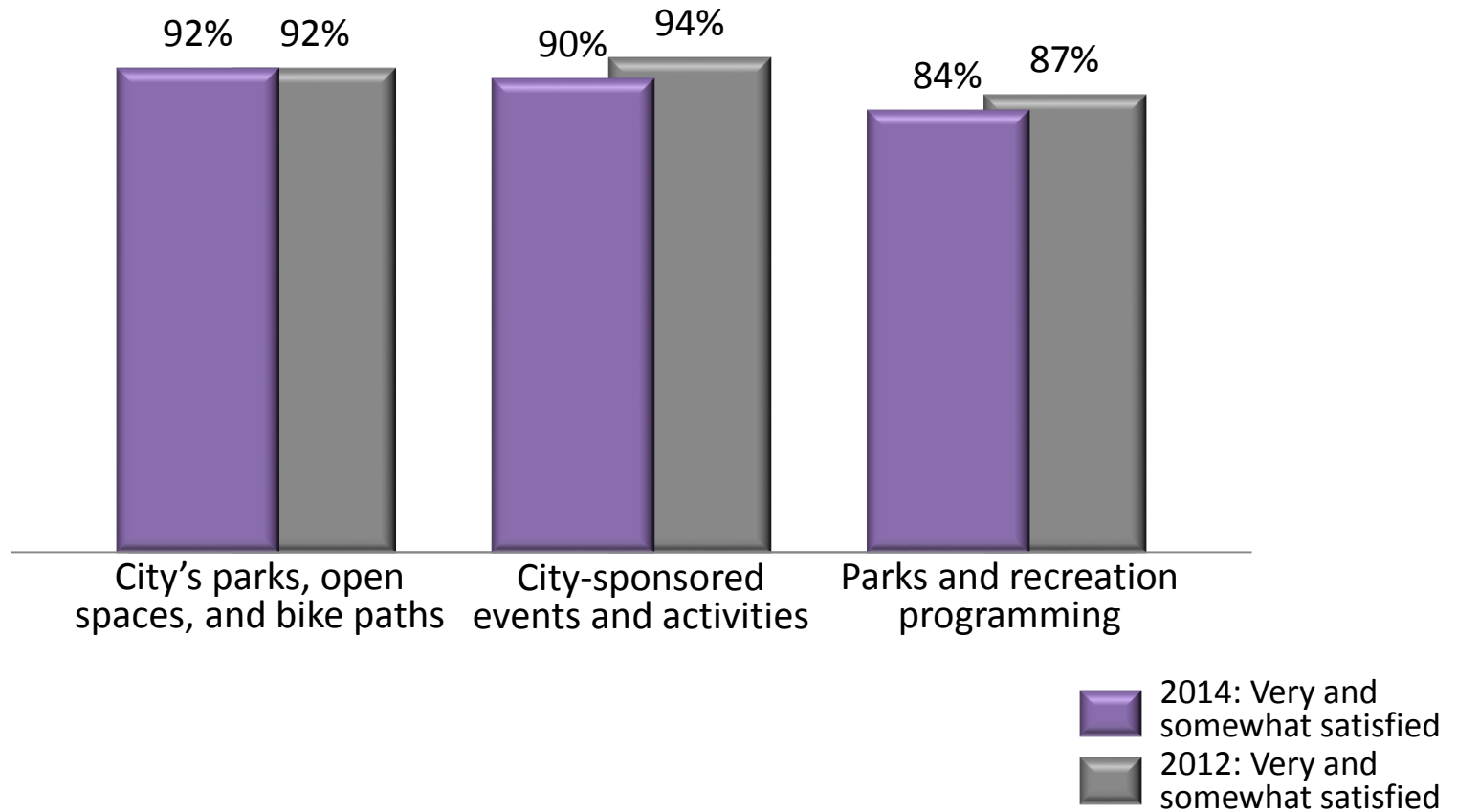
... down slightly from 2012 and 2010, but similar to 2008.



In short, though most residents are satisfied with Powell's city-managed amenities,...

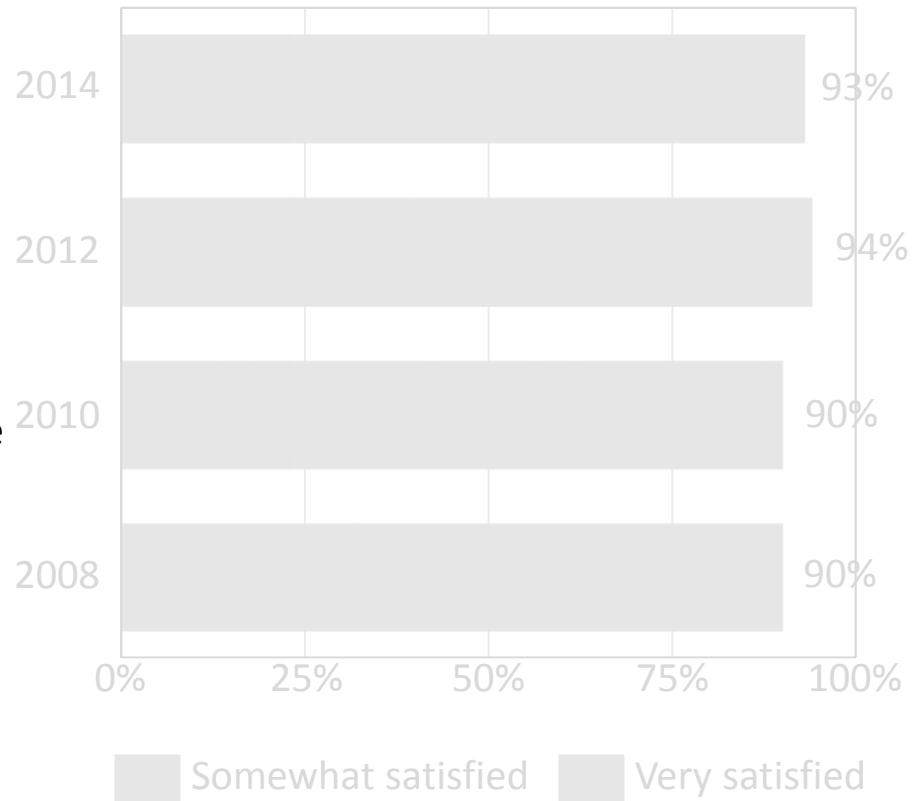
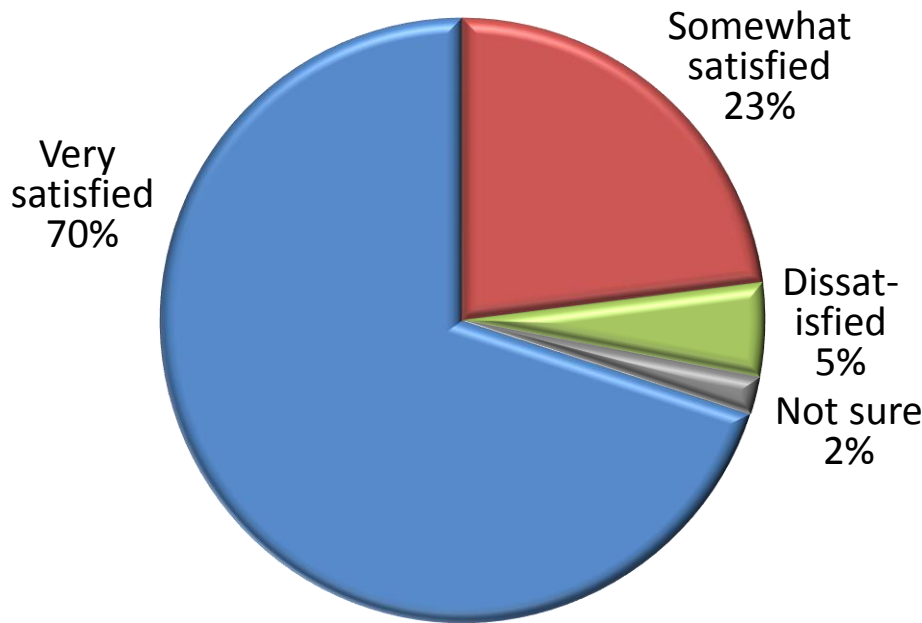


... satisfaction has not increased over the past two years.

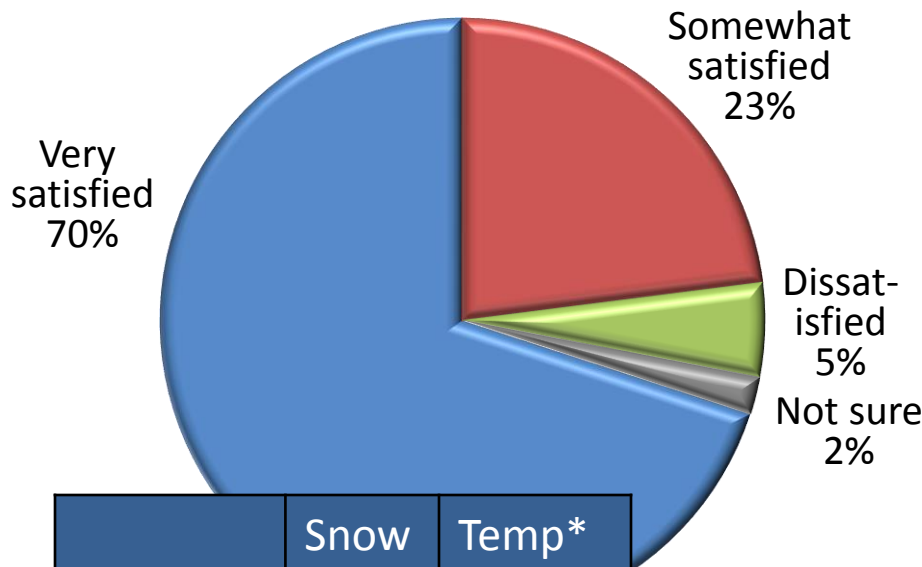


Satisfaction With City Officials and Services

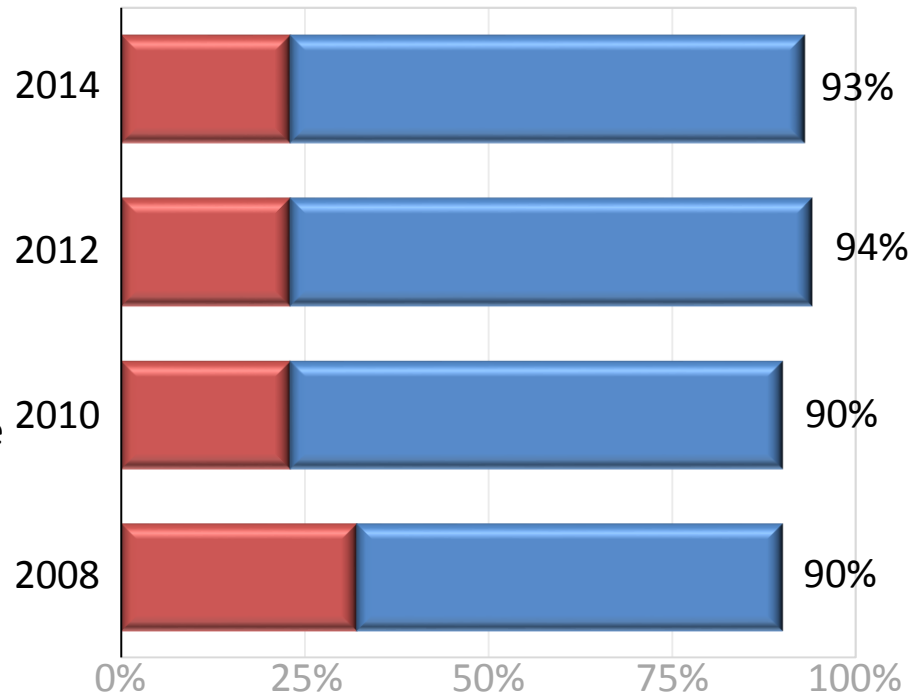
In the wake of a difficult winter, more than nine out of ten residents are satisfied with Powell's snow removal services.



Little has changed since 2012 despite the significant increase in snowfall and colder temperatures.



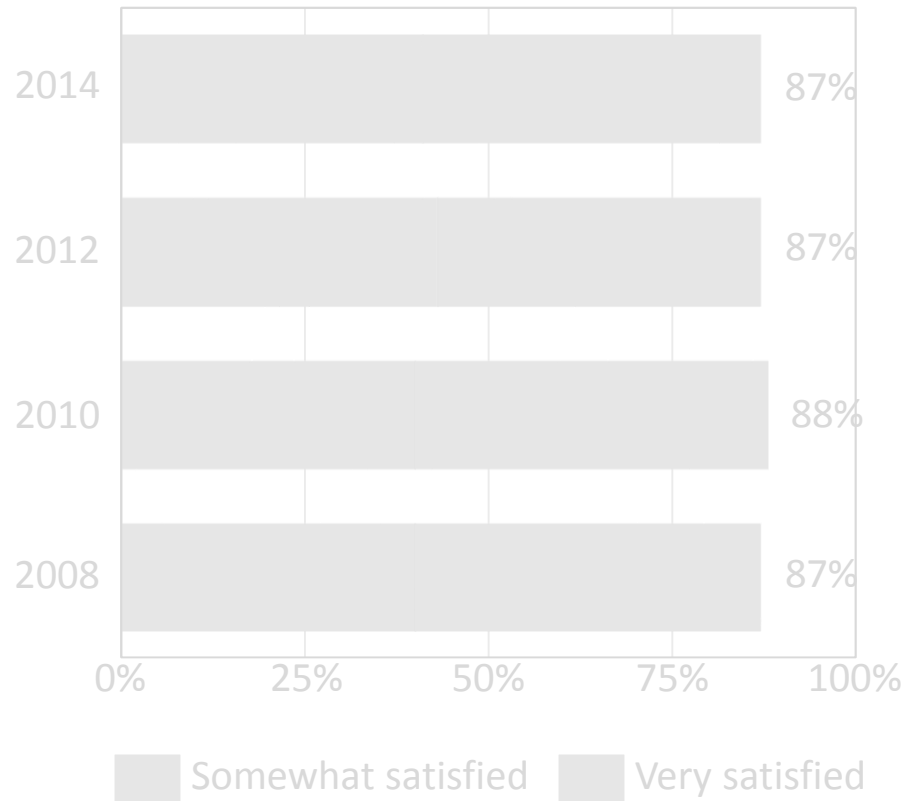
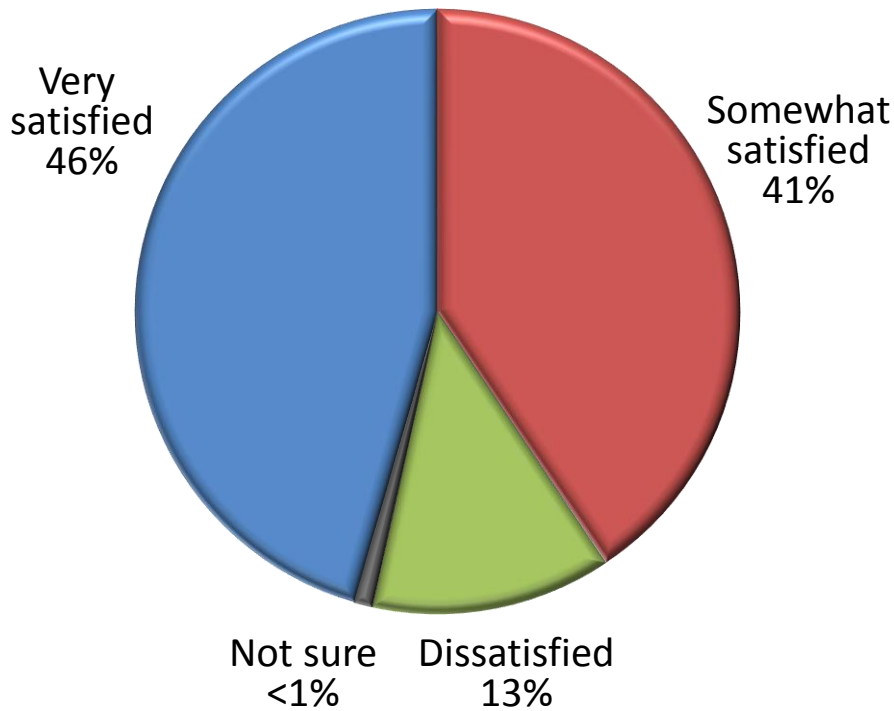
	Snow	Temp*
2013-14	56.5"	38°
2011-12	12.2"	48°



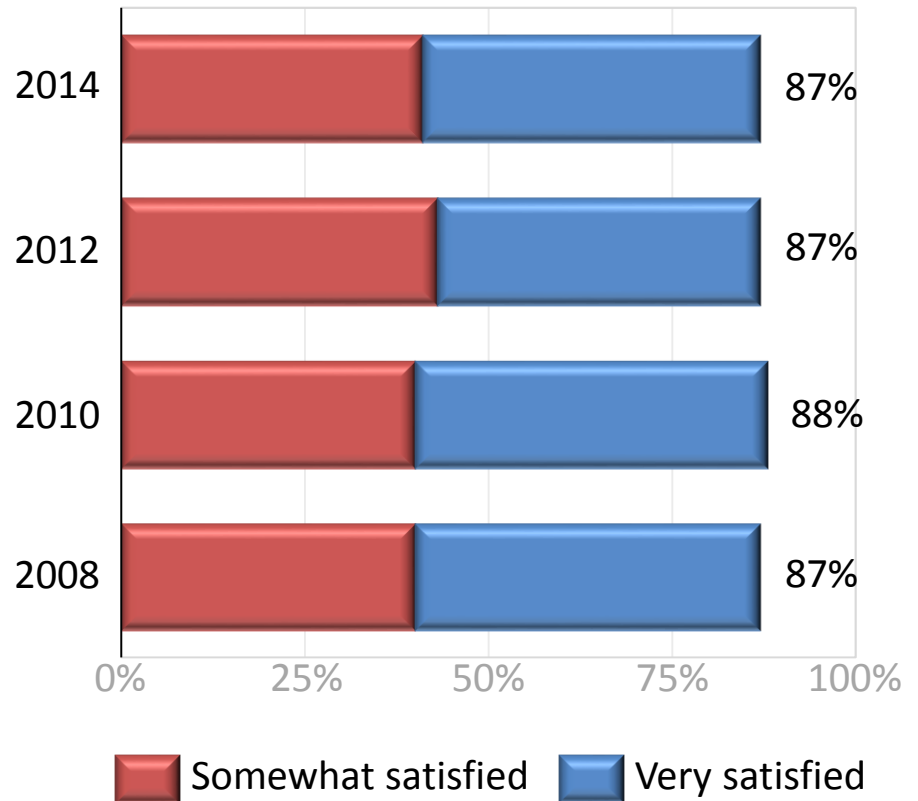
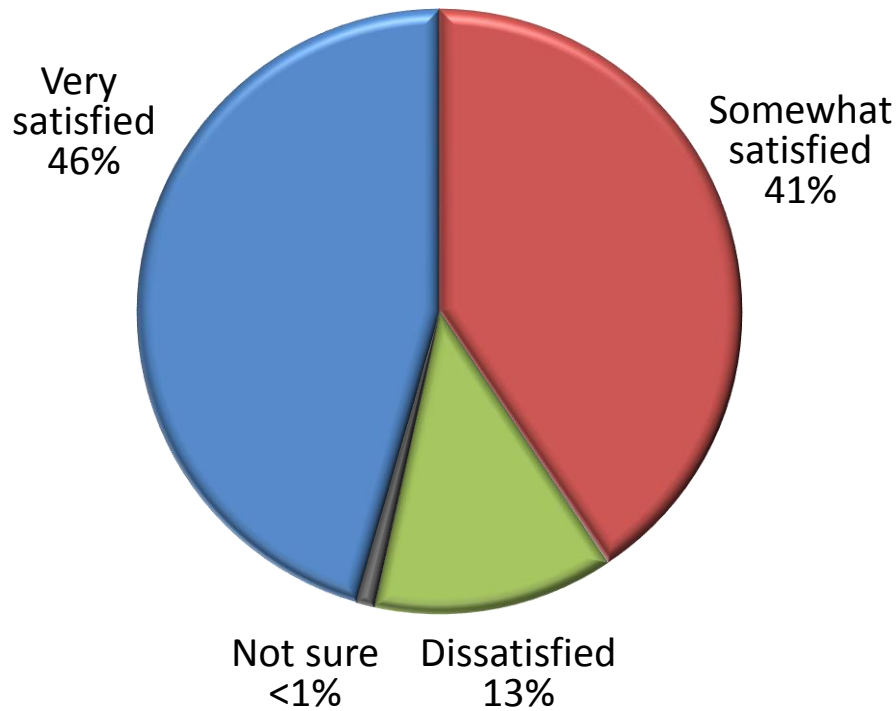
■ Somewhat satisfied
 ■ Very satisfied

*Average from 12/21 to 3/20; source: theweathercollector.com
 Q10f: As a resident of Powell, how satisfied are you with snow removal?

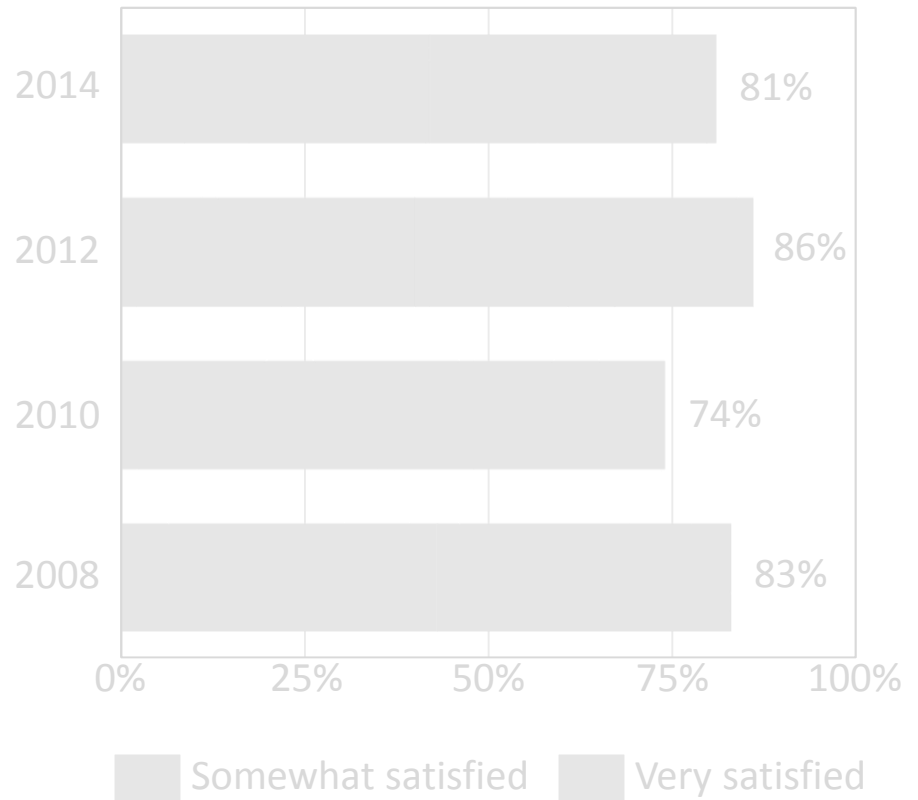
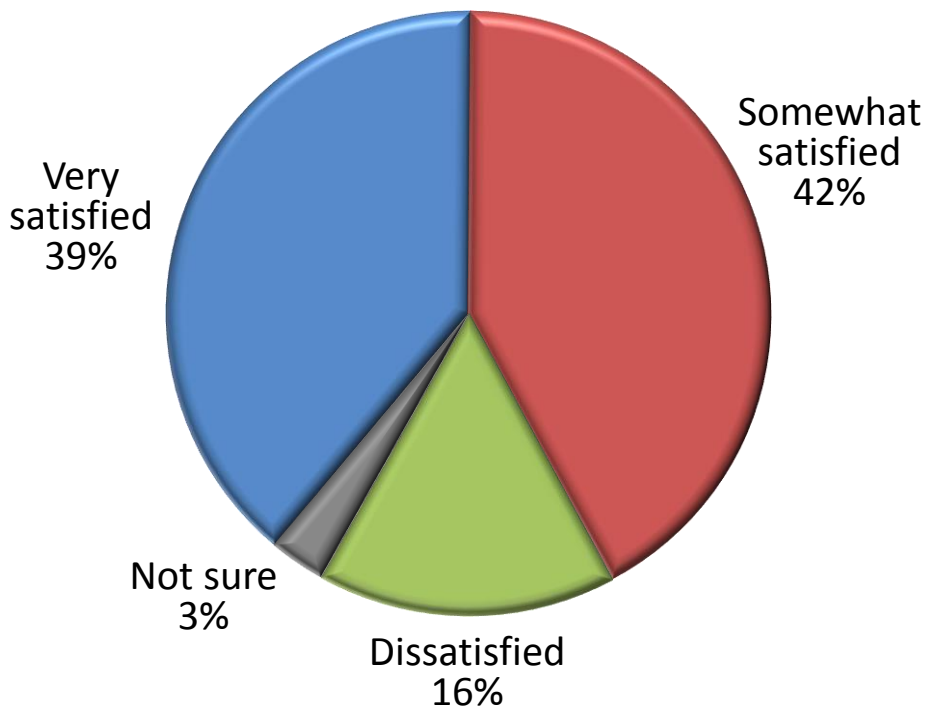
Nearly nine out of ten residents (87%) are satisfied with the maintenance of streets and roads.



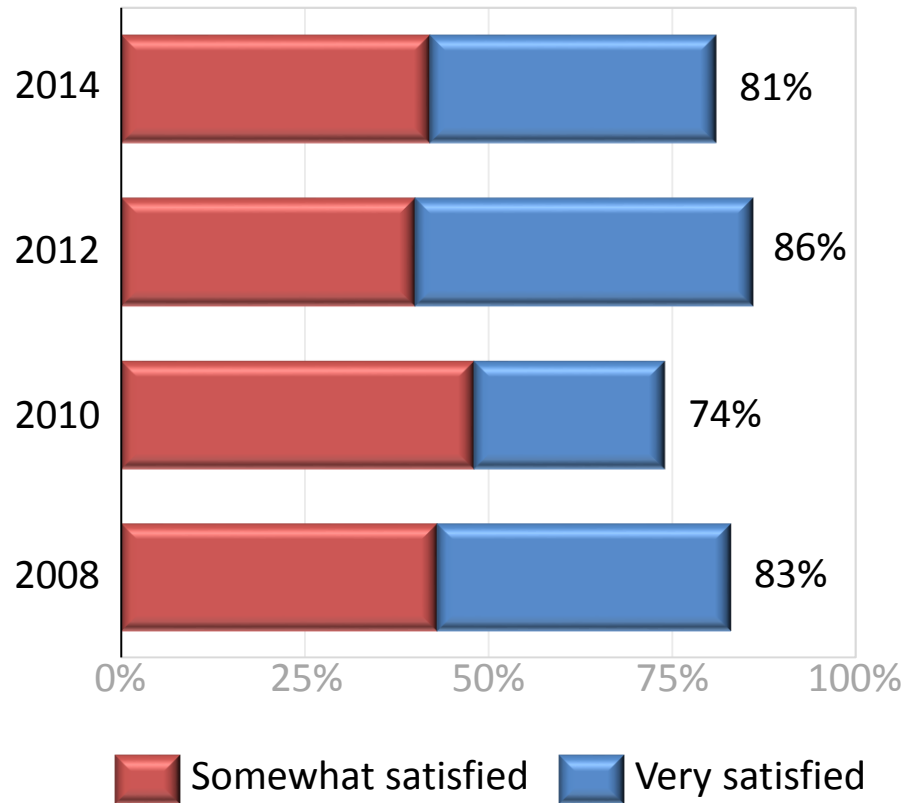
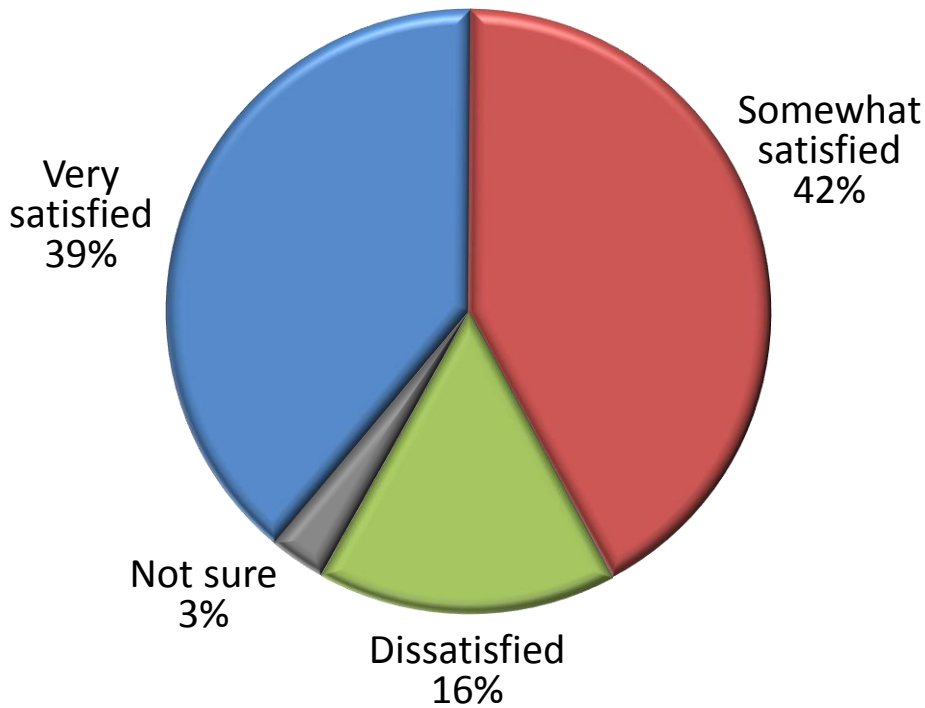
Here, little has changed since 2008.



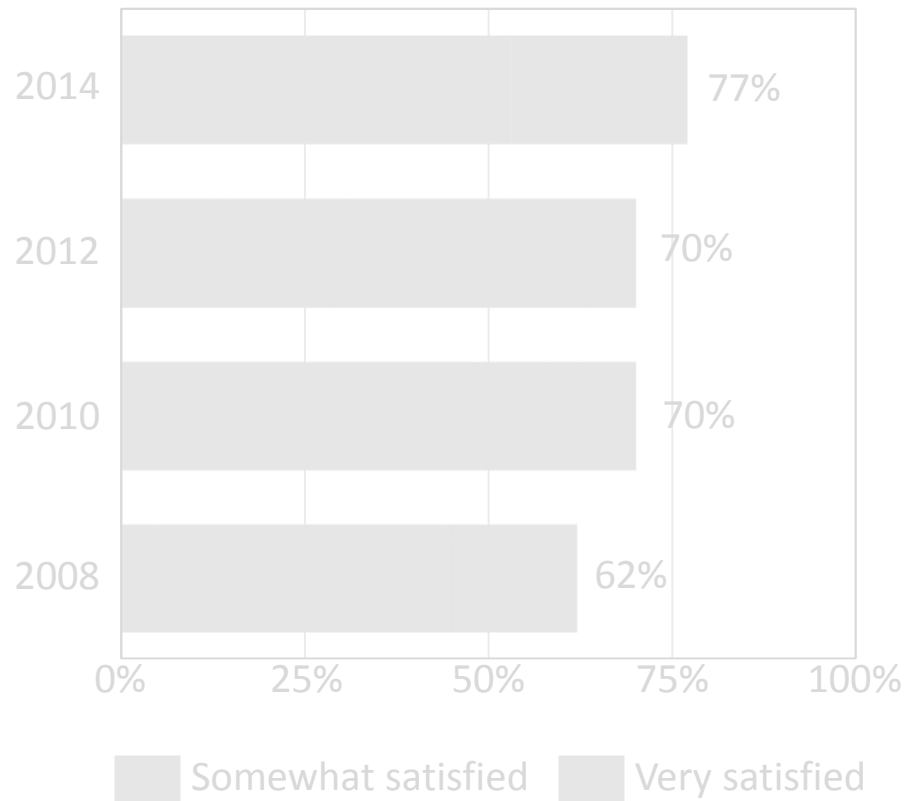
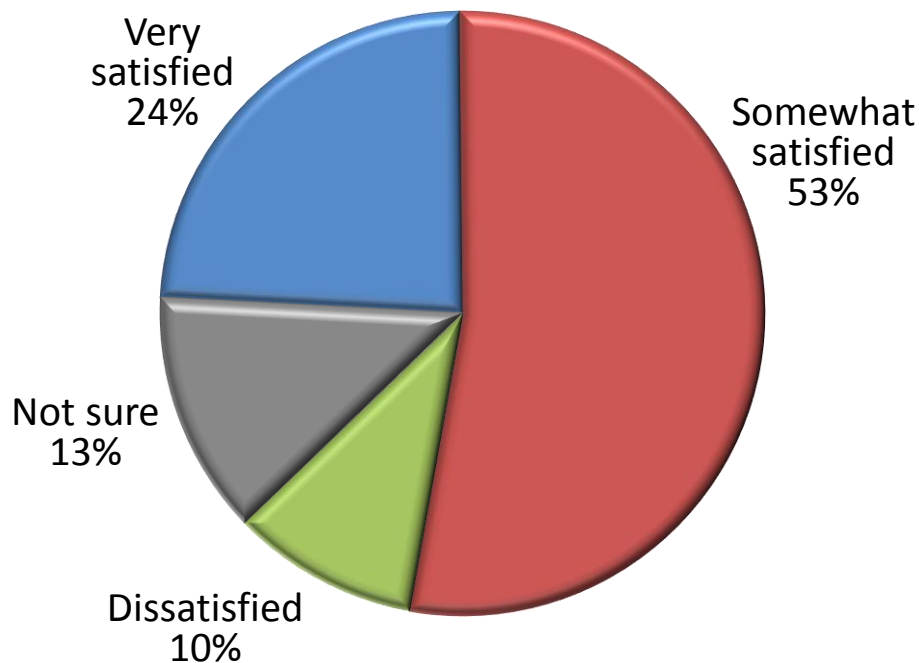
Eight out of ten residents (81%) are pleased with the city's efforts to revitalize downtown, ...



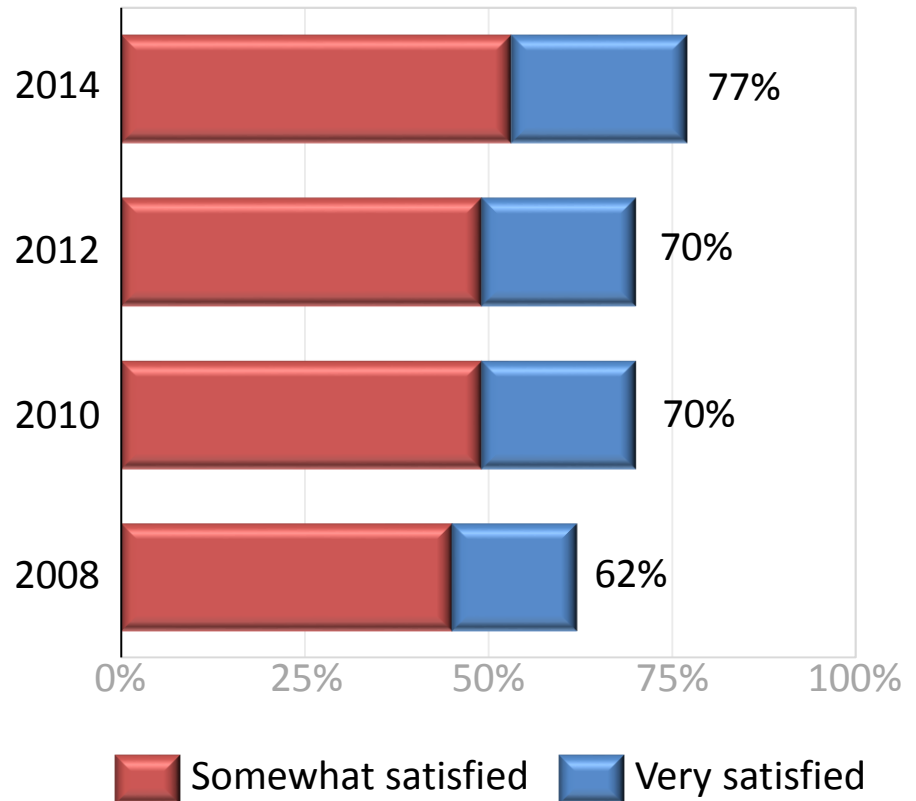
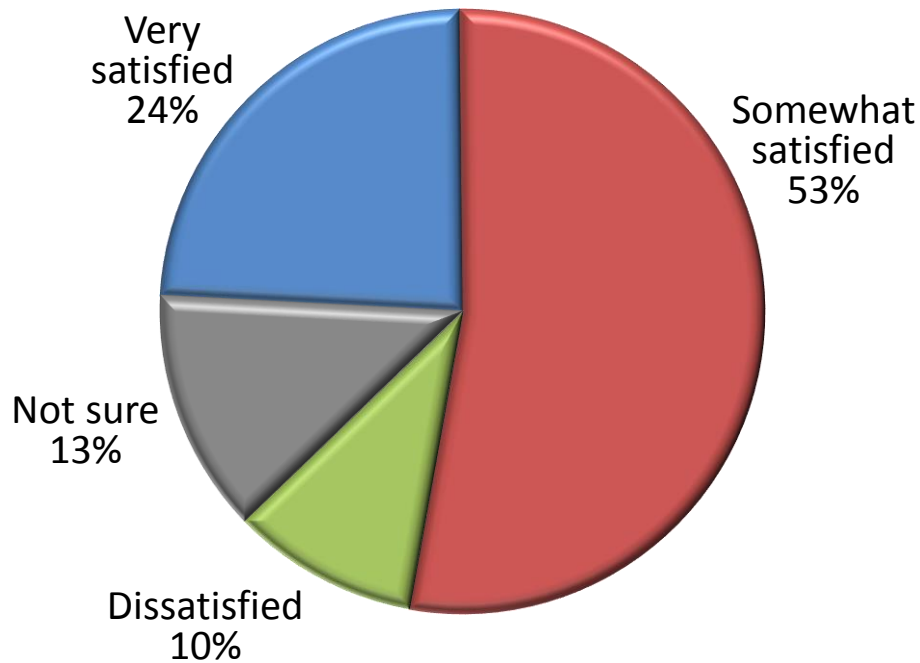
... down slightly from 2012, but still higher than 2010.



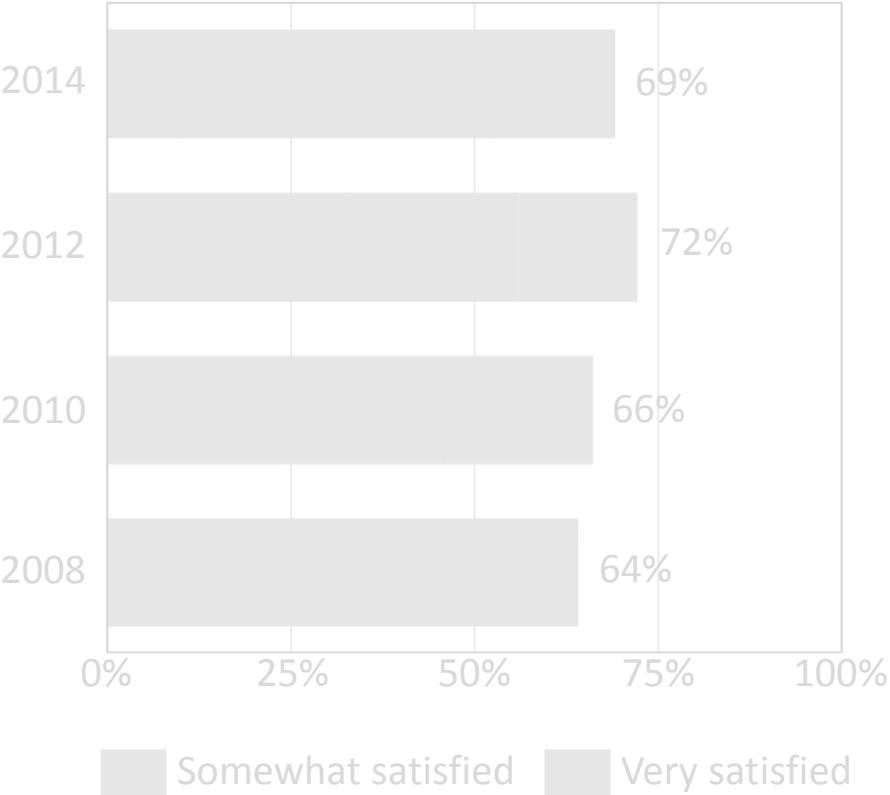
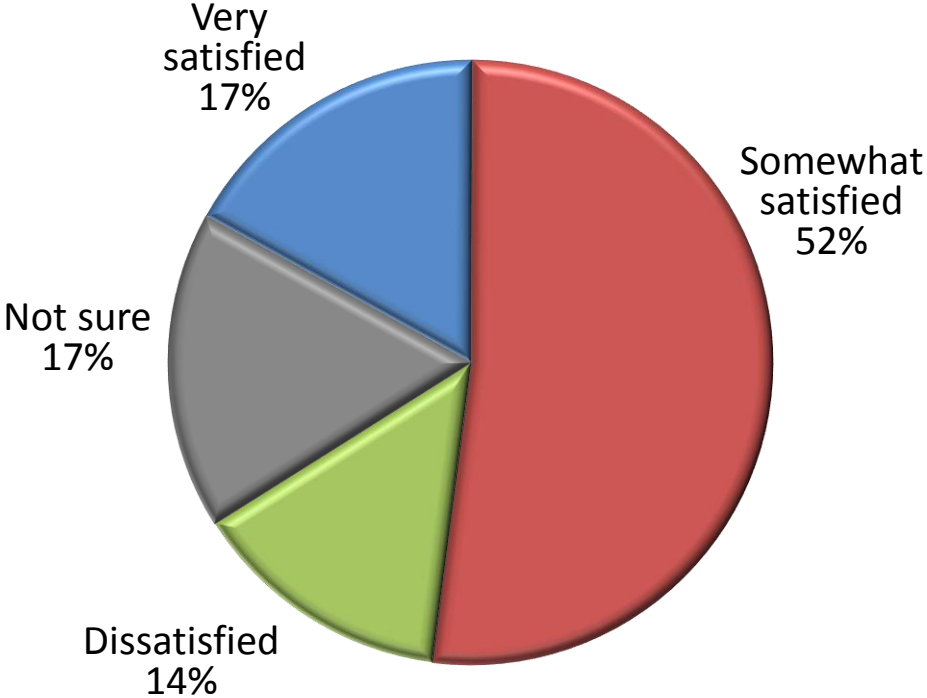
Nearly eight out of ten residents (77%) are satisfied with how city officials manage the city's finances, ...



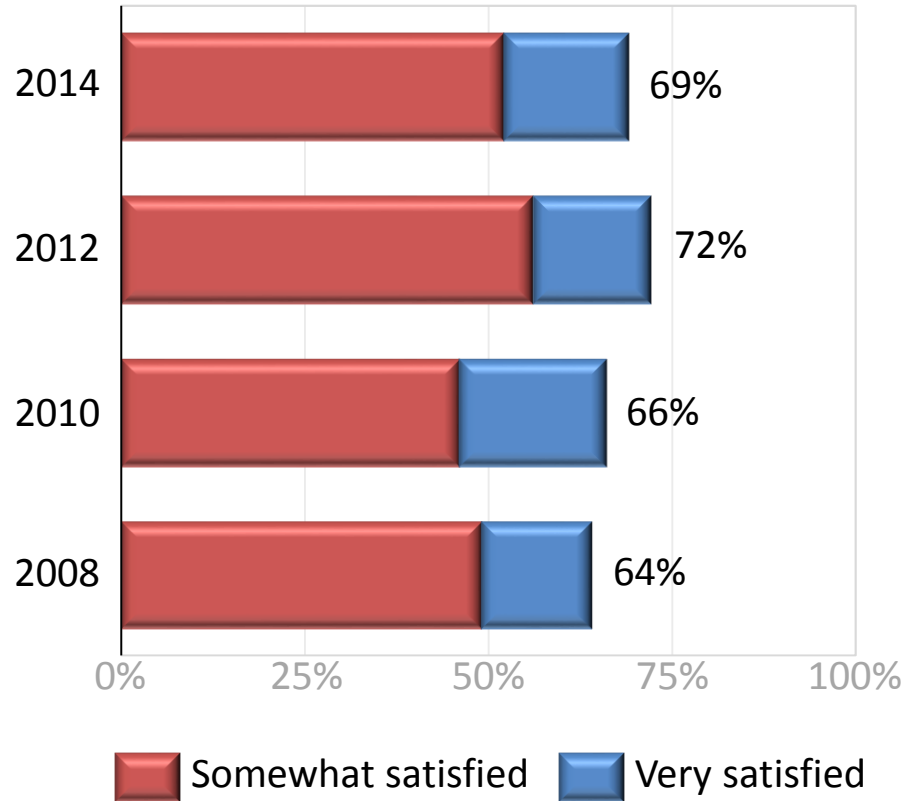
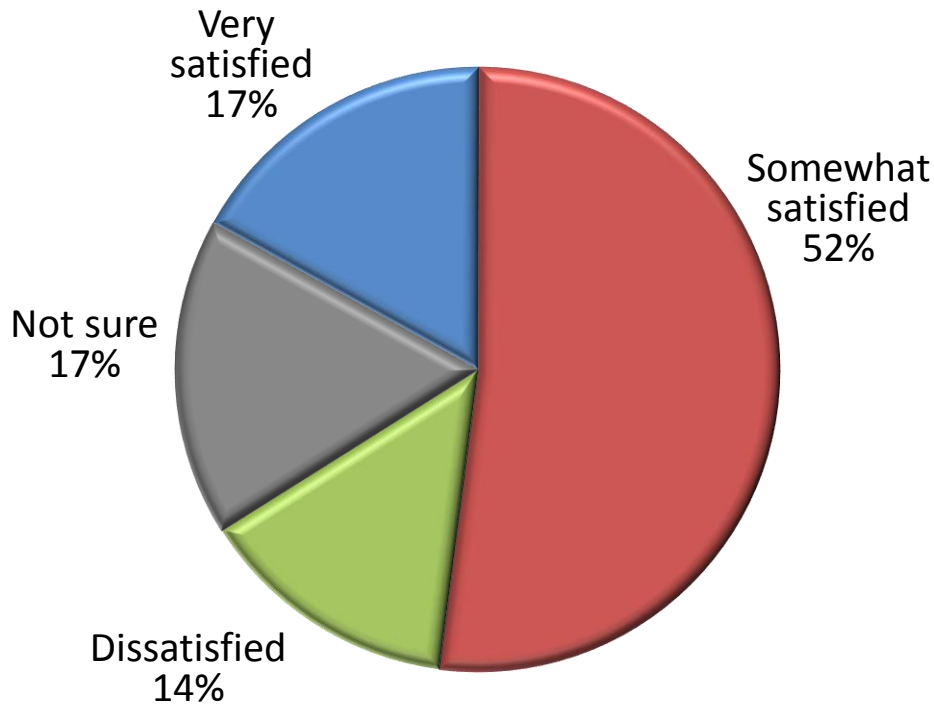
... up from 2012 to an all-time high.



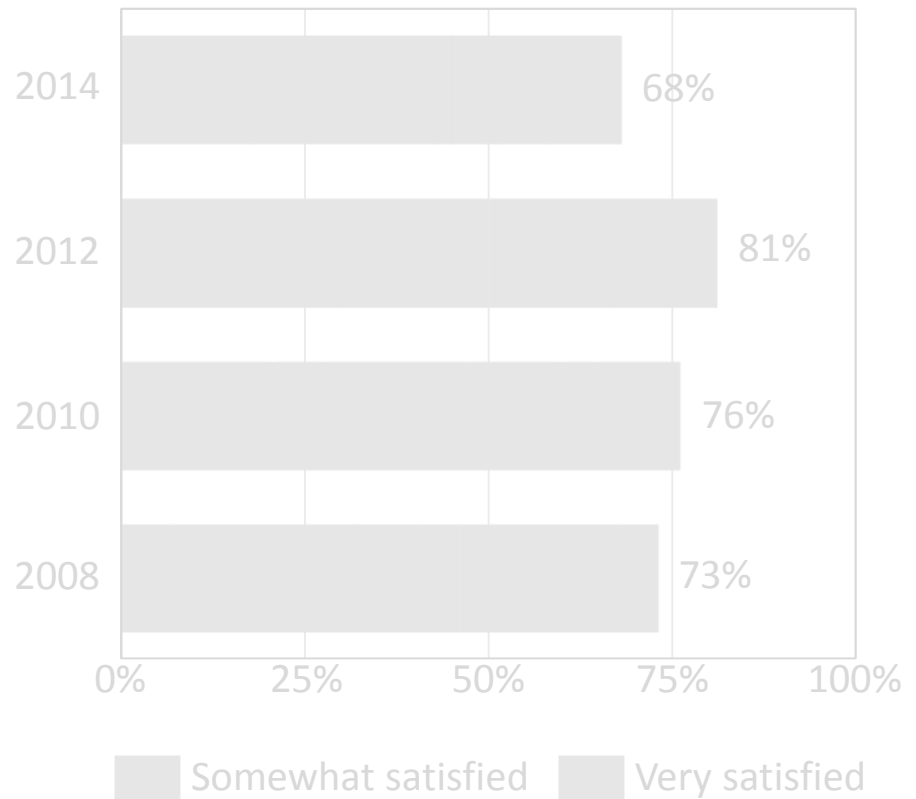
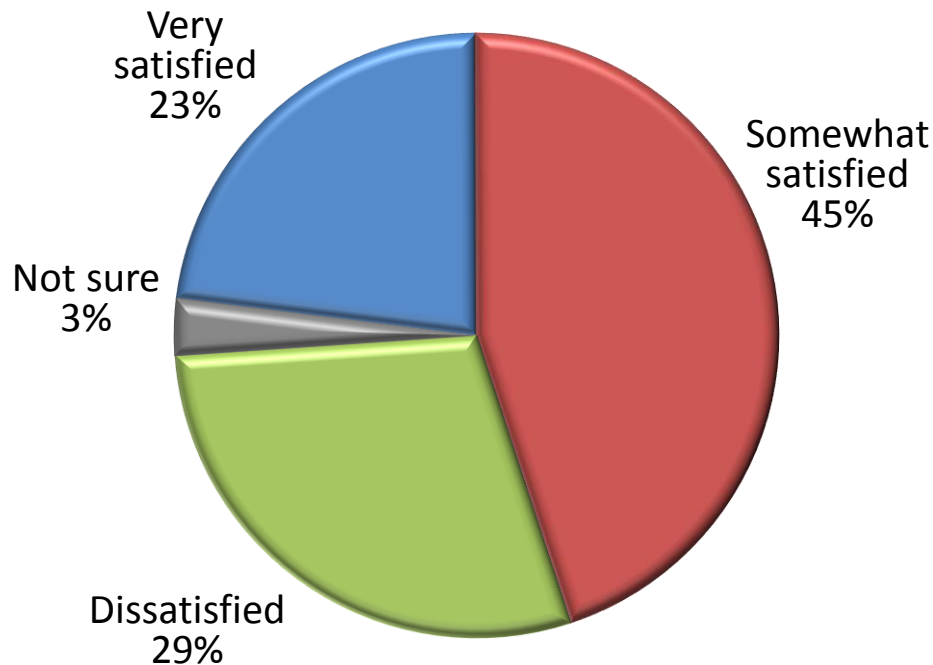
Seven out of ten residents (69%) are satisfied with City Council.
Fewer than one out of five, however, are very satisfied.



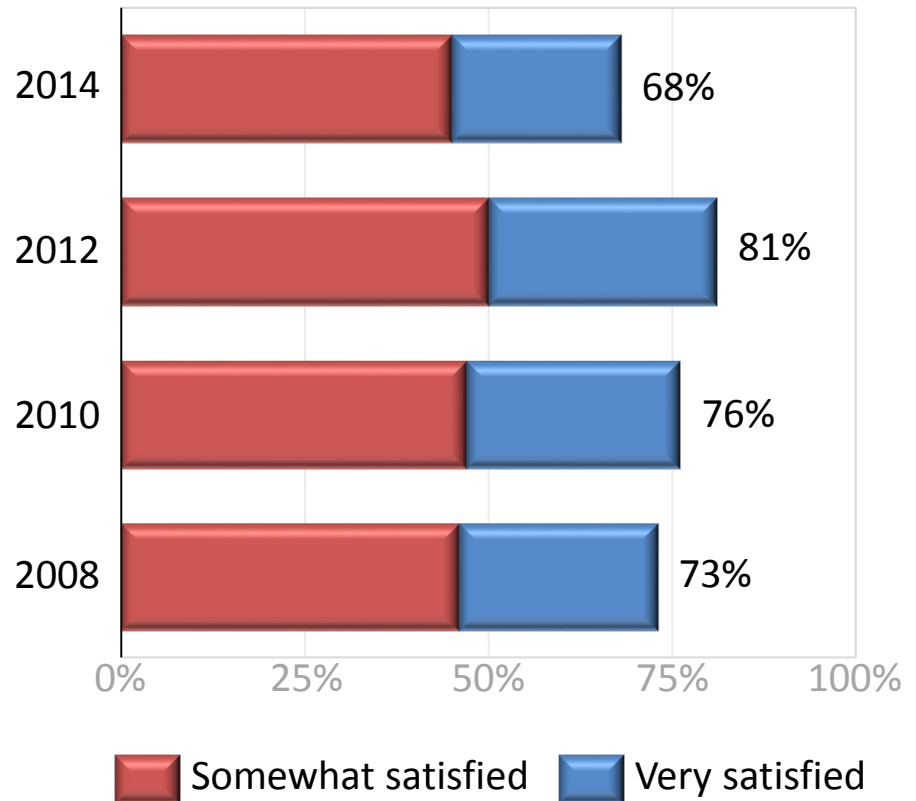
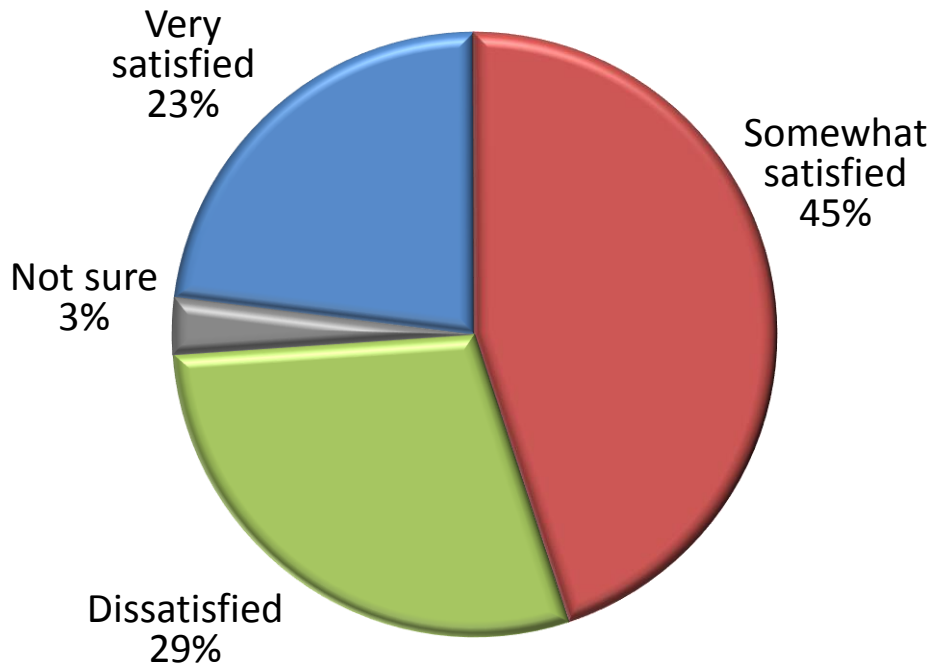
The current figure (69%), though high, reverses a trend that began in 2010.



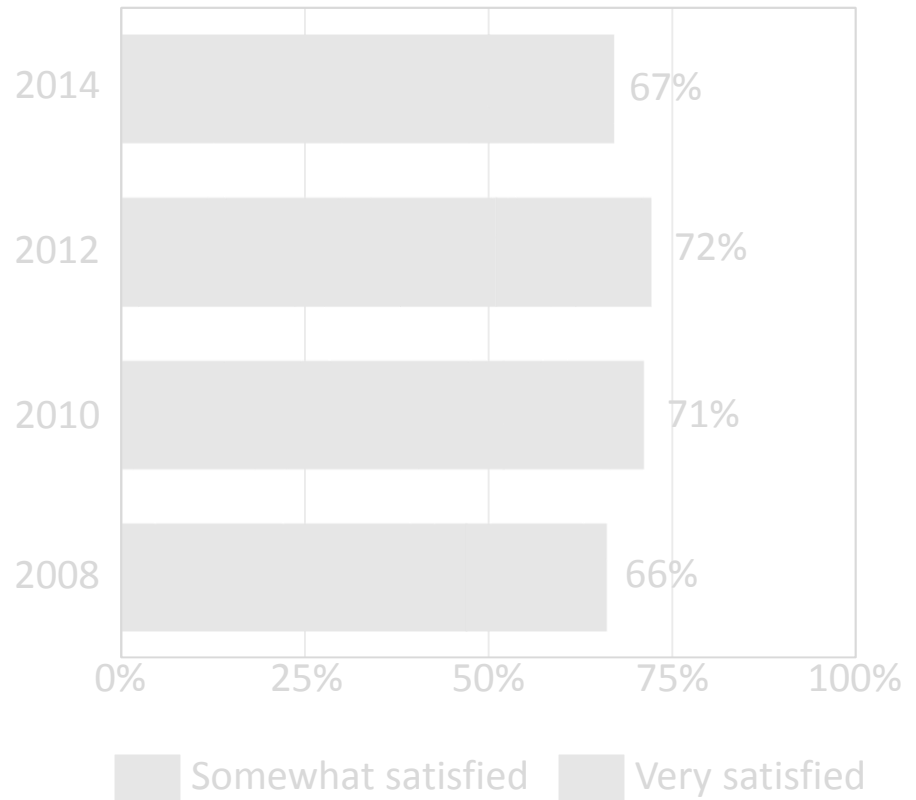
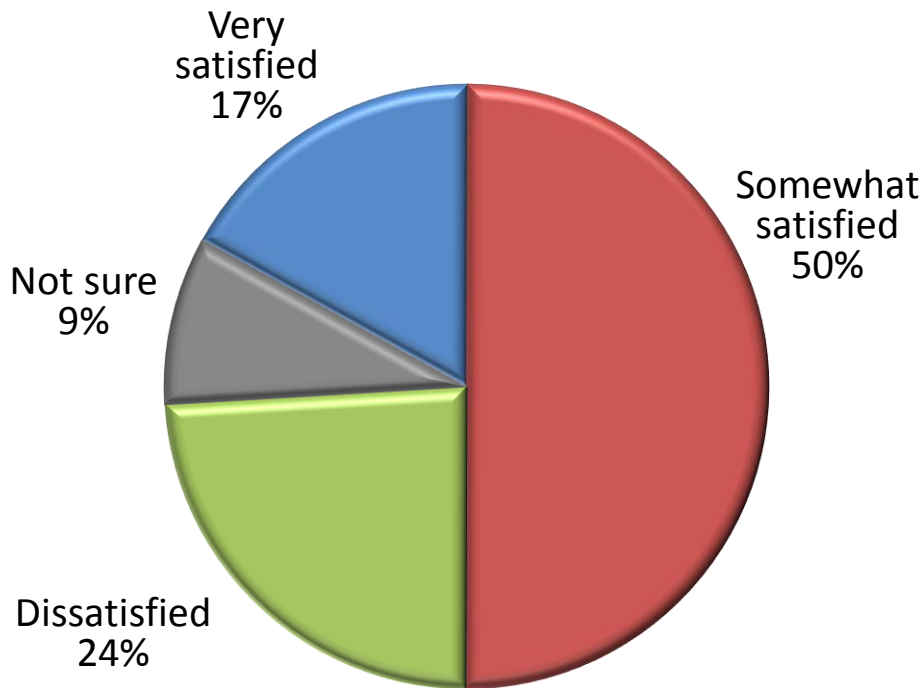
Fewer than seven out of ten residents (68%) are pleased with the city's efforts to control residential growth.



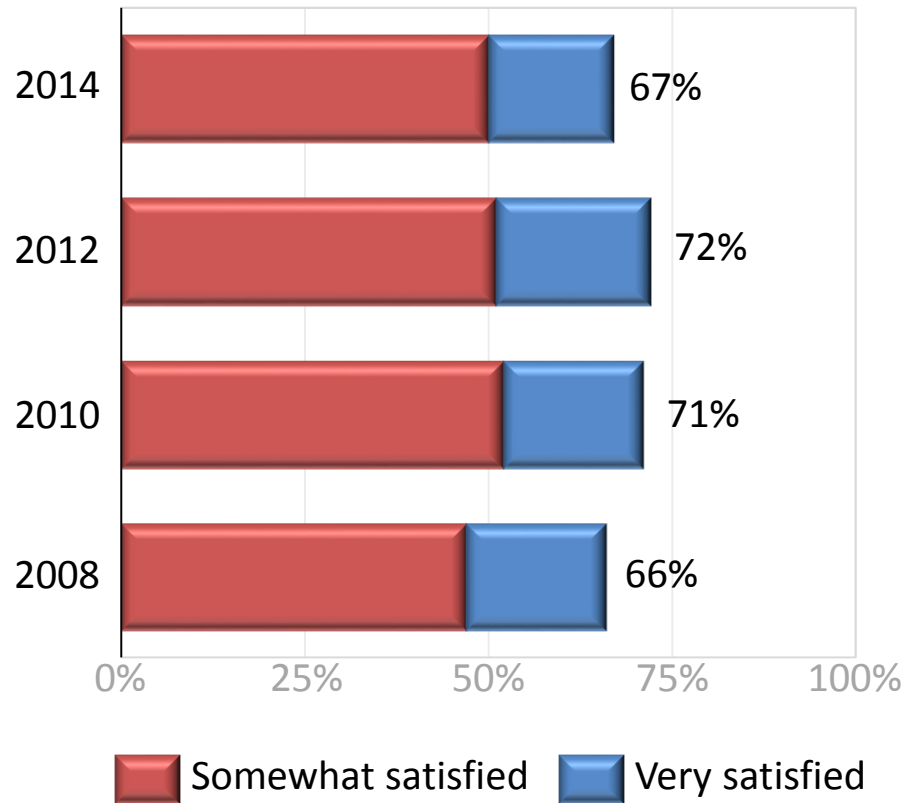
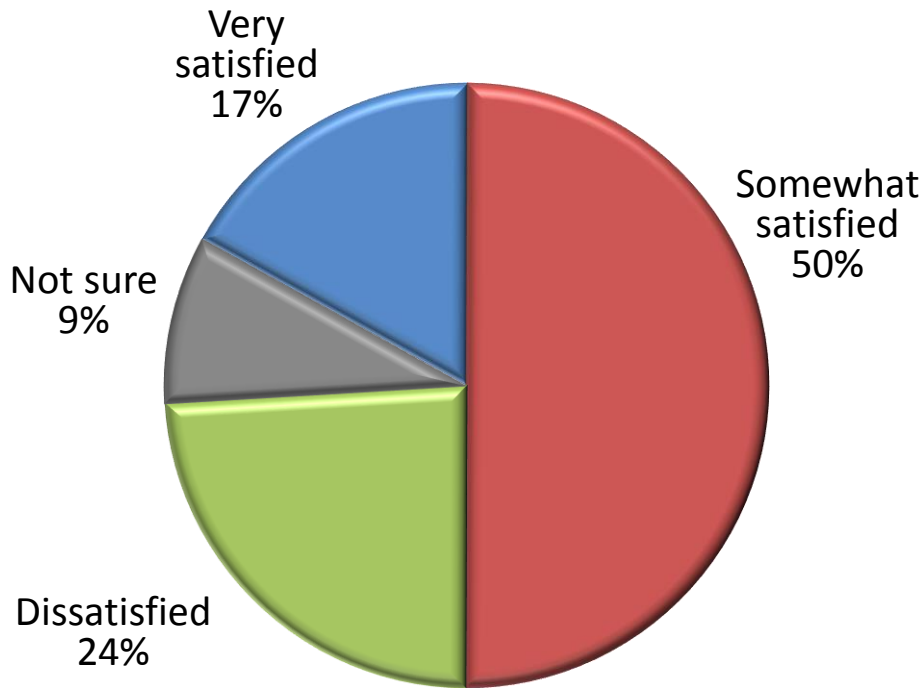
This figure (68%) is an all-time low – and ends another trend that began in 2010.



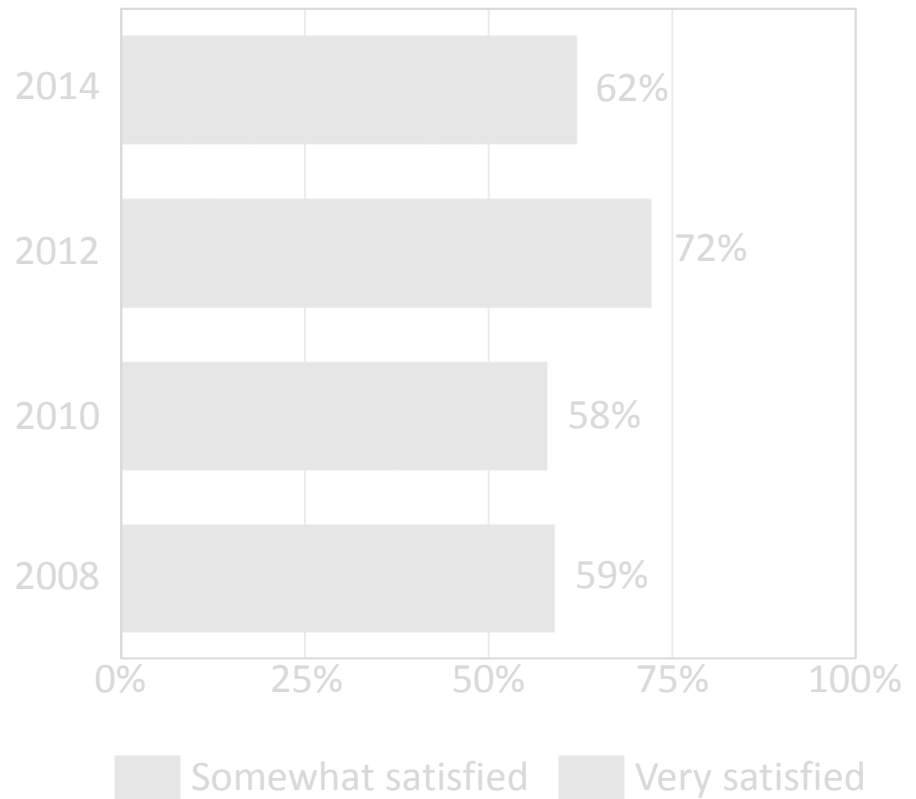
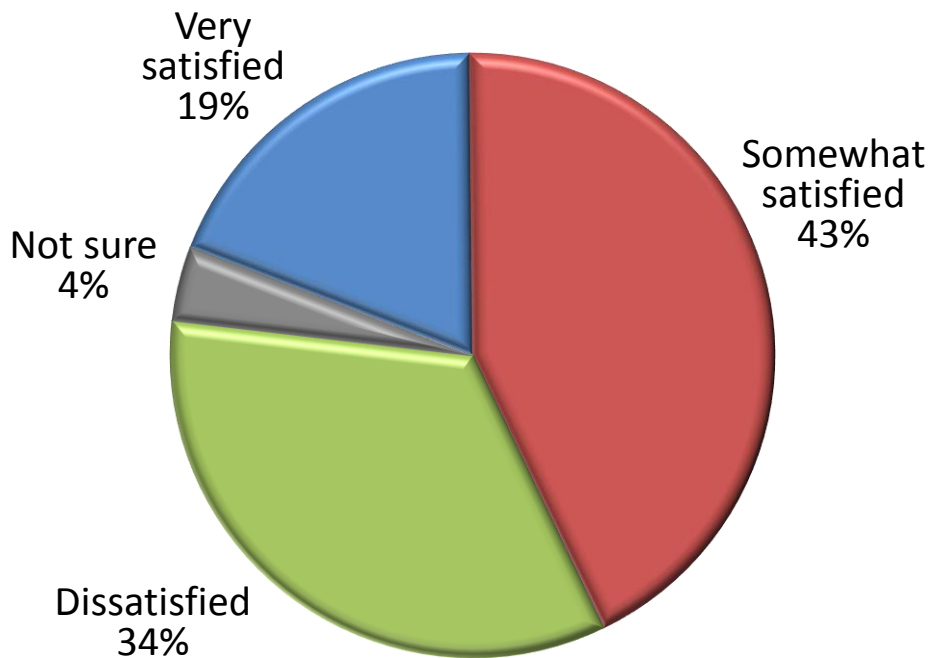
Fewer than seven out of ten residents (67%) also feel that city officials plan well for the future, ...



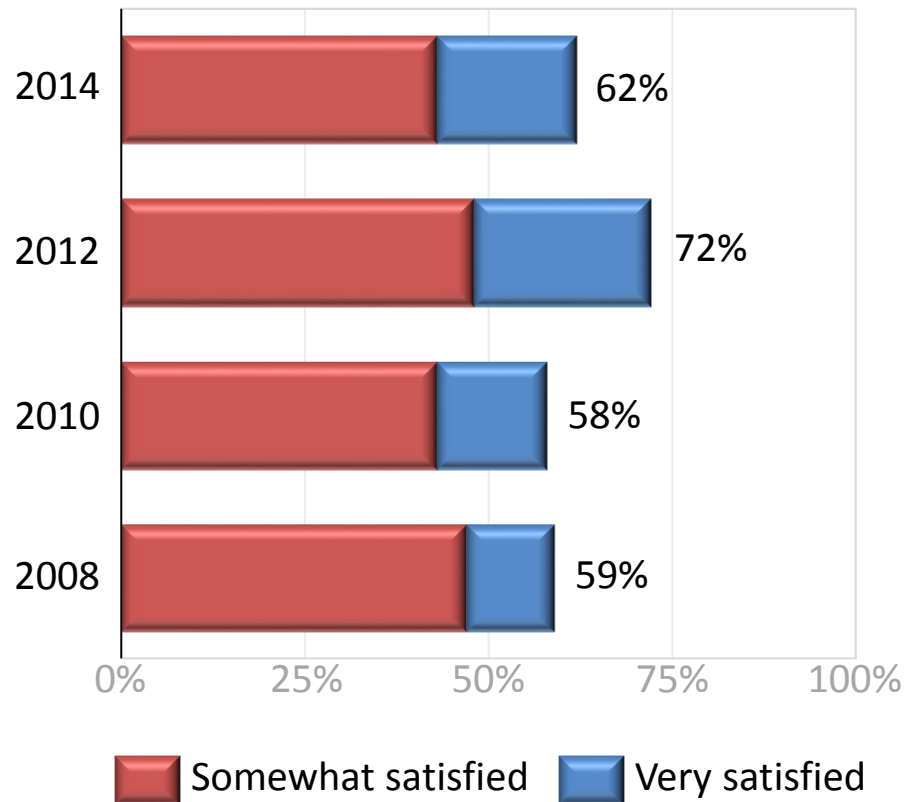
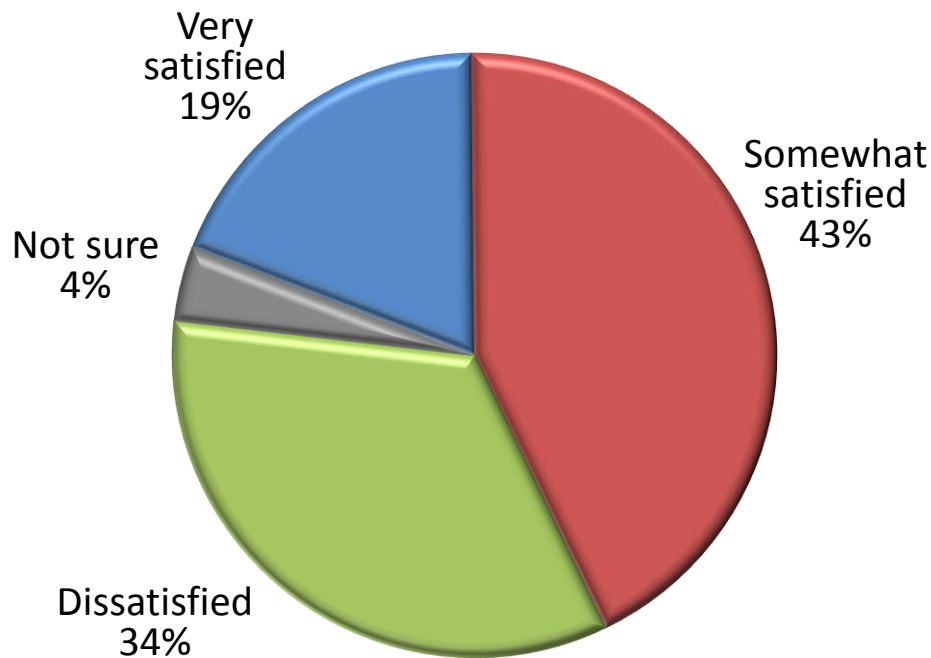
... down, as well, from 2012.



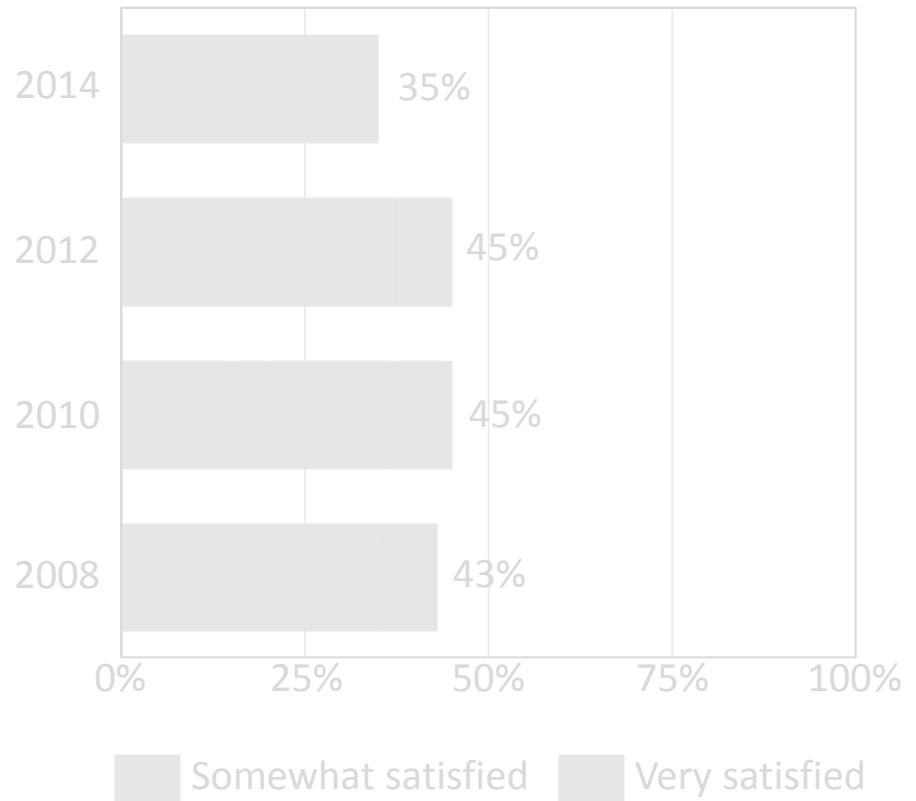
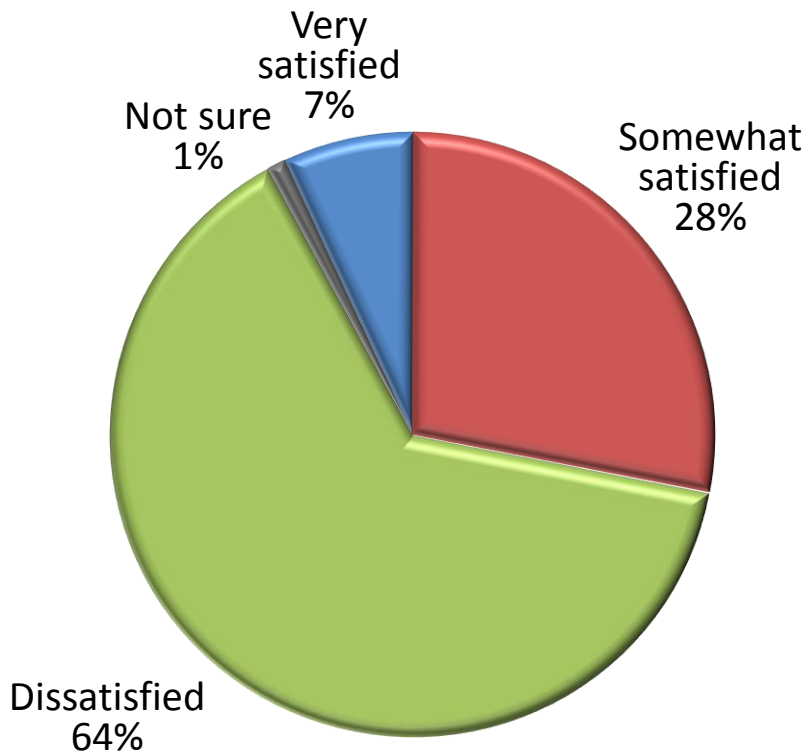
Six out of ten residents (62%) are satisfied with the city's efforts to manage commercial growth. One out of three (34%) is dissatisfied.



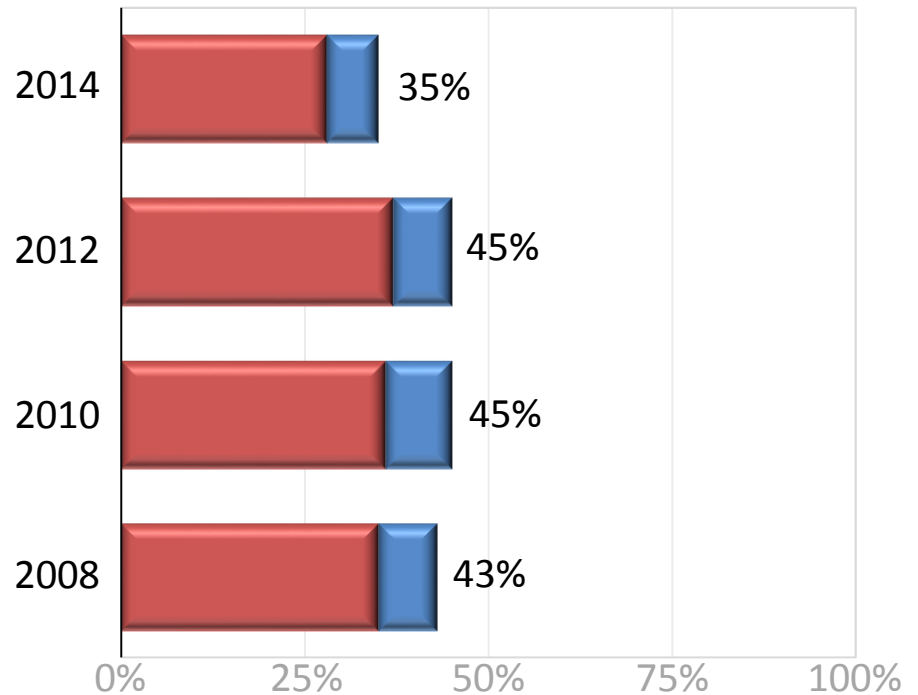
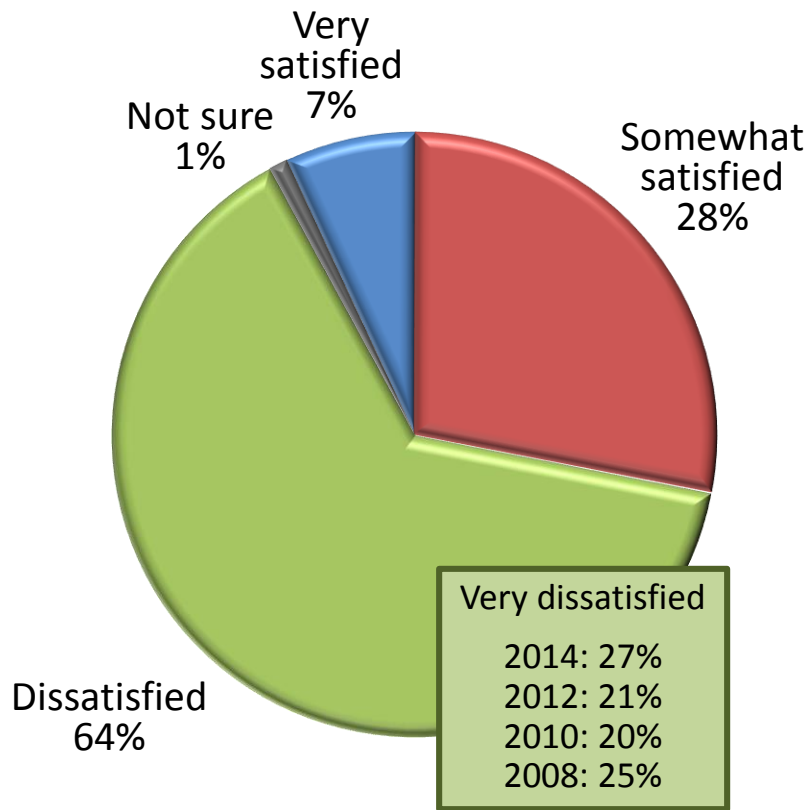
Satisfaction with commercial growth has dropped markedly since 2012.



Only one resident in three (35%) is satisfied with the city's efforts to manage local traffic, ...

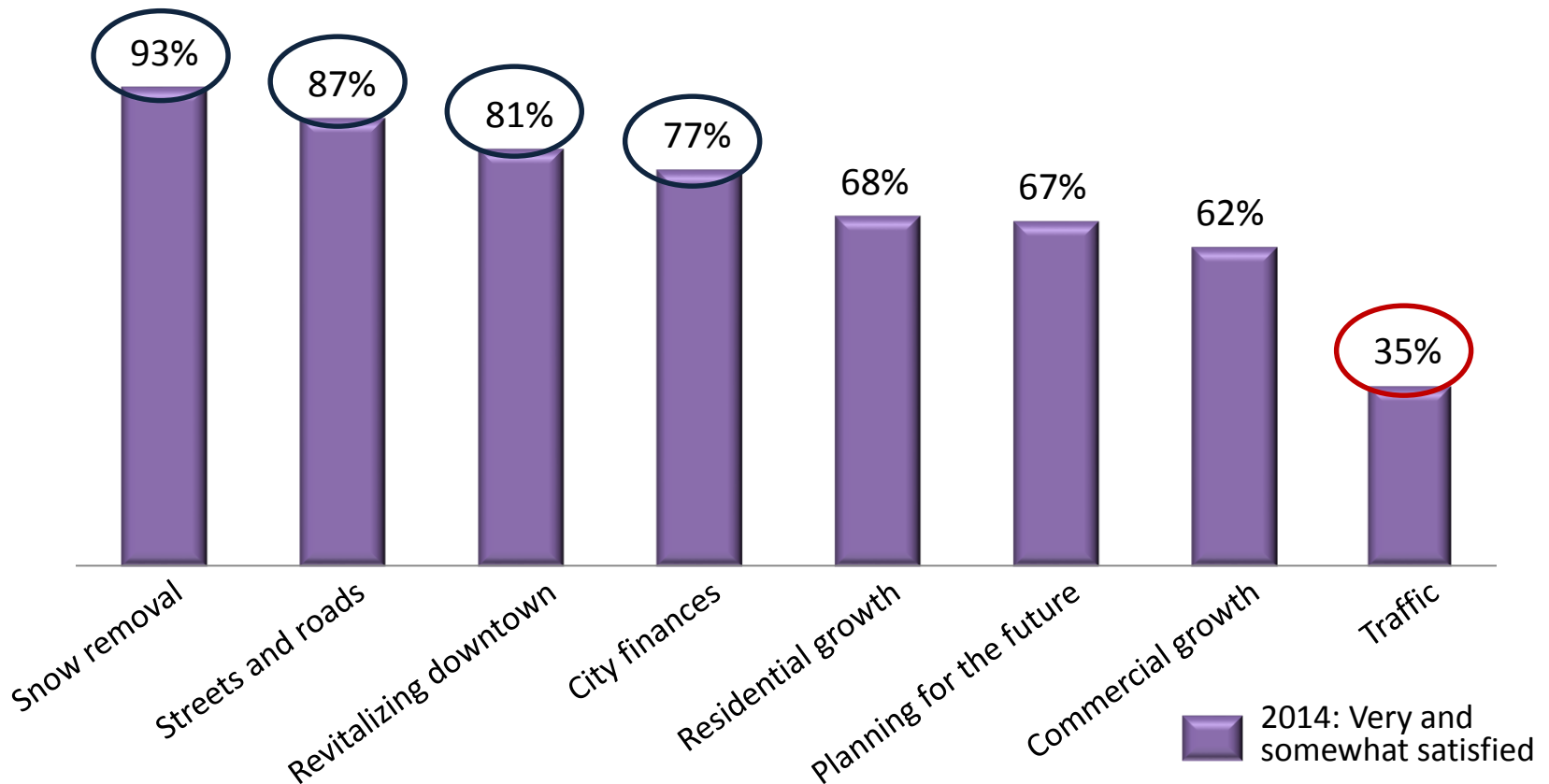


... down from 2012 to an all-time low.

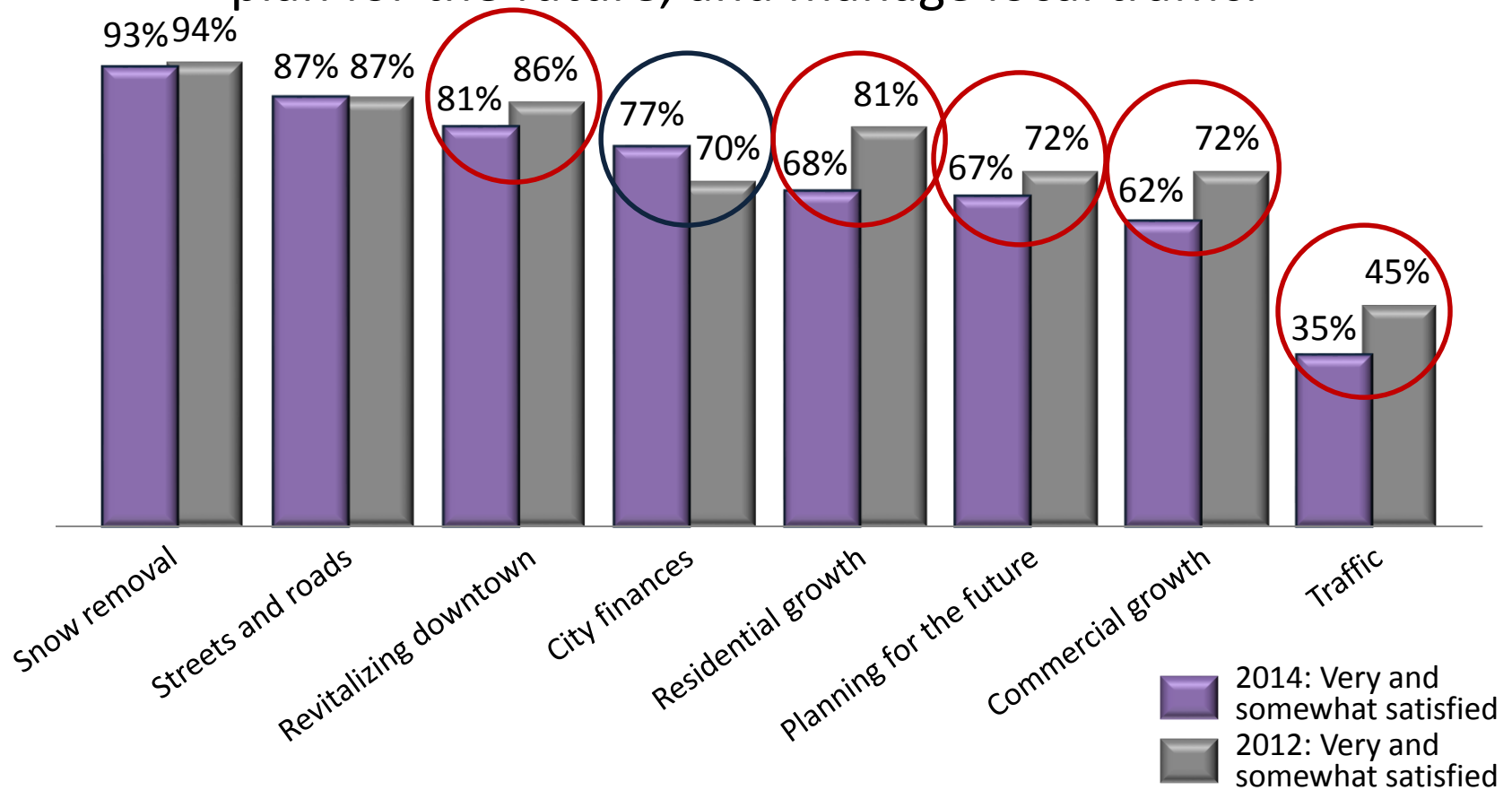


 Somewhat satisfied  Very satisfied

In sum, while substantial majorities tend to be satisfied with the city's efforts to remove snow, maintain the community's streets and roads, revitalize downtown, and manage the city's finances, traffic continues to be the dominant concern.

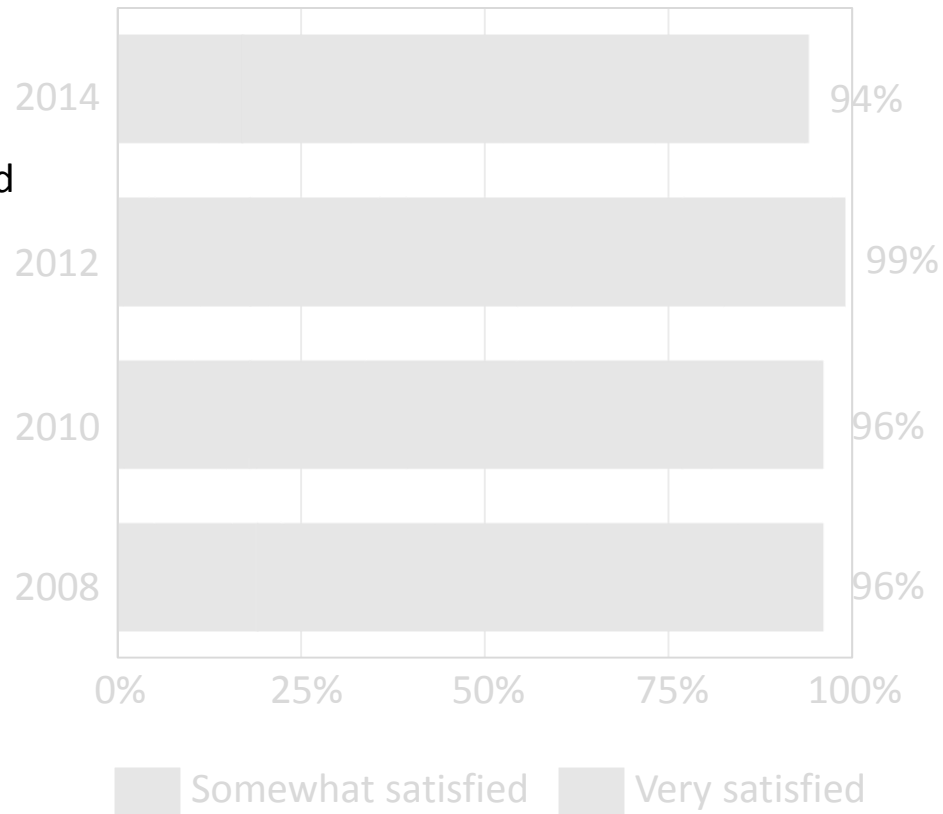
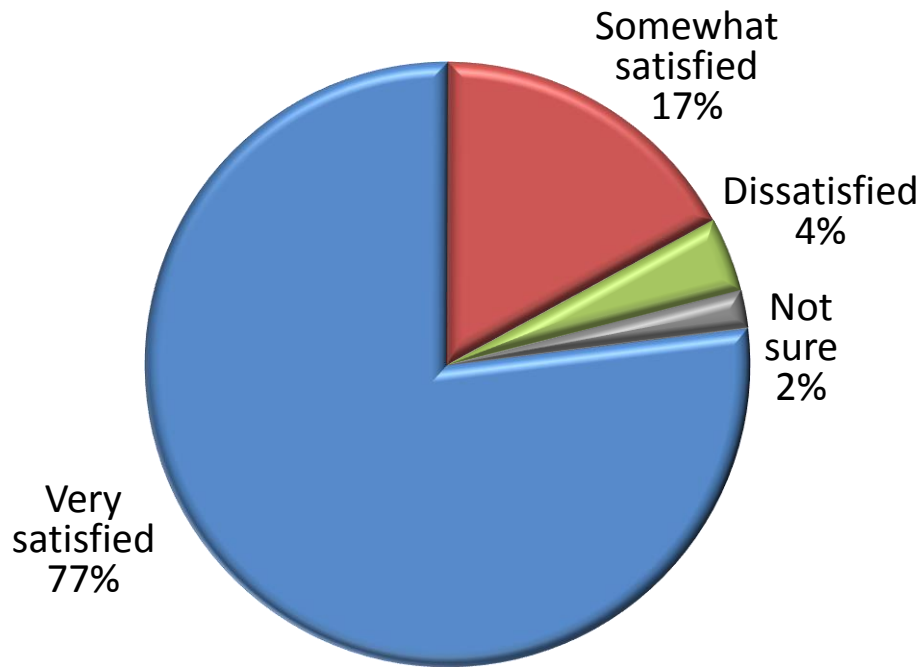


In addition, though more residents today, compared with 2012, are satisfied with how city officials manage the city's finances, fewer are satisfied with the city's efforts to revitalize downtown, control both residential and commercial growth, plan for the future, and manage local traffic.

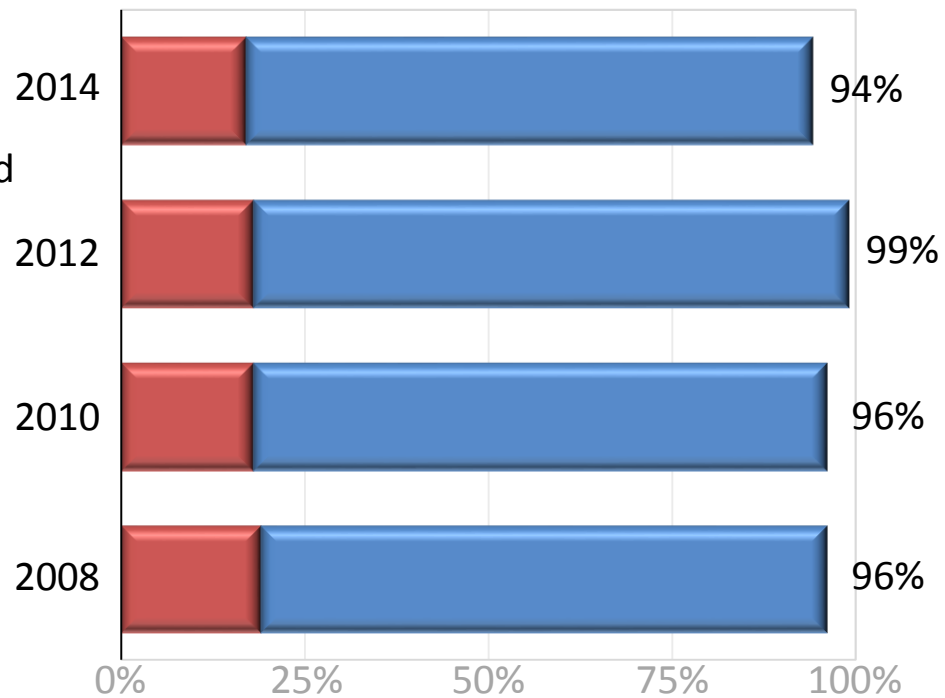
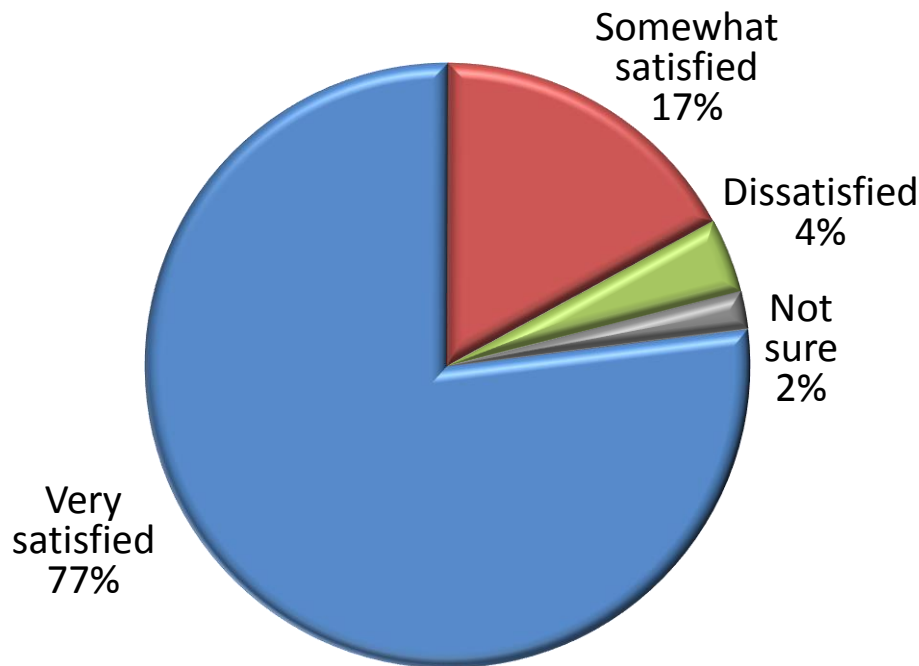


First Responders

More than nine out of ten residents (94%) are satisfied with the Powell Police Department.

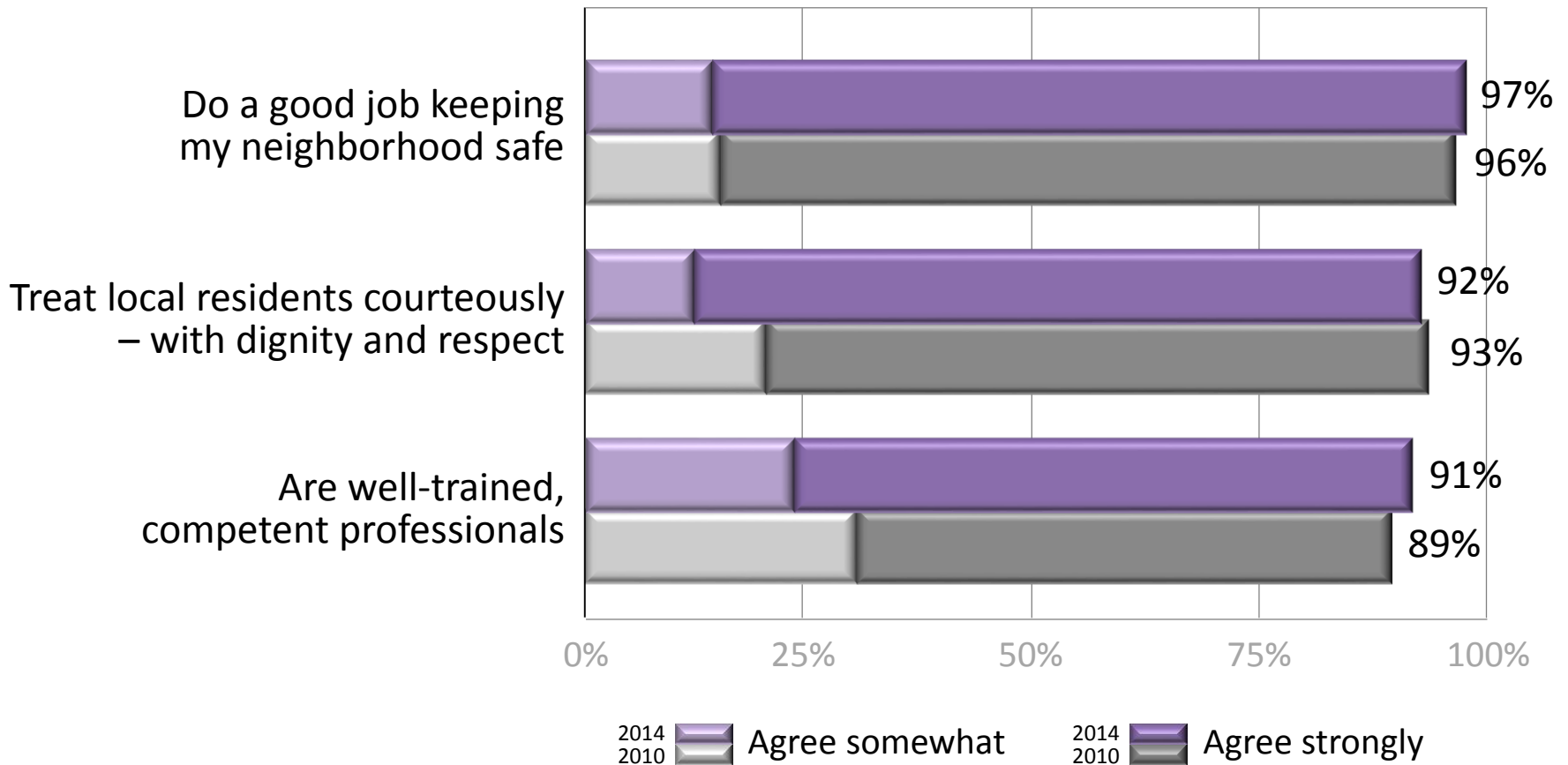


Though almost universal, satisfaction this year is slightly less common than it has been.

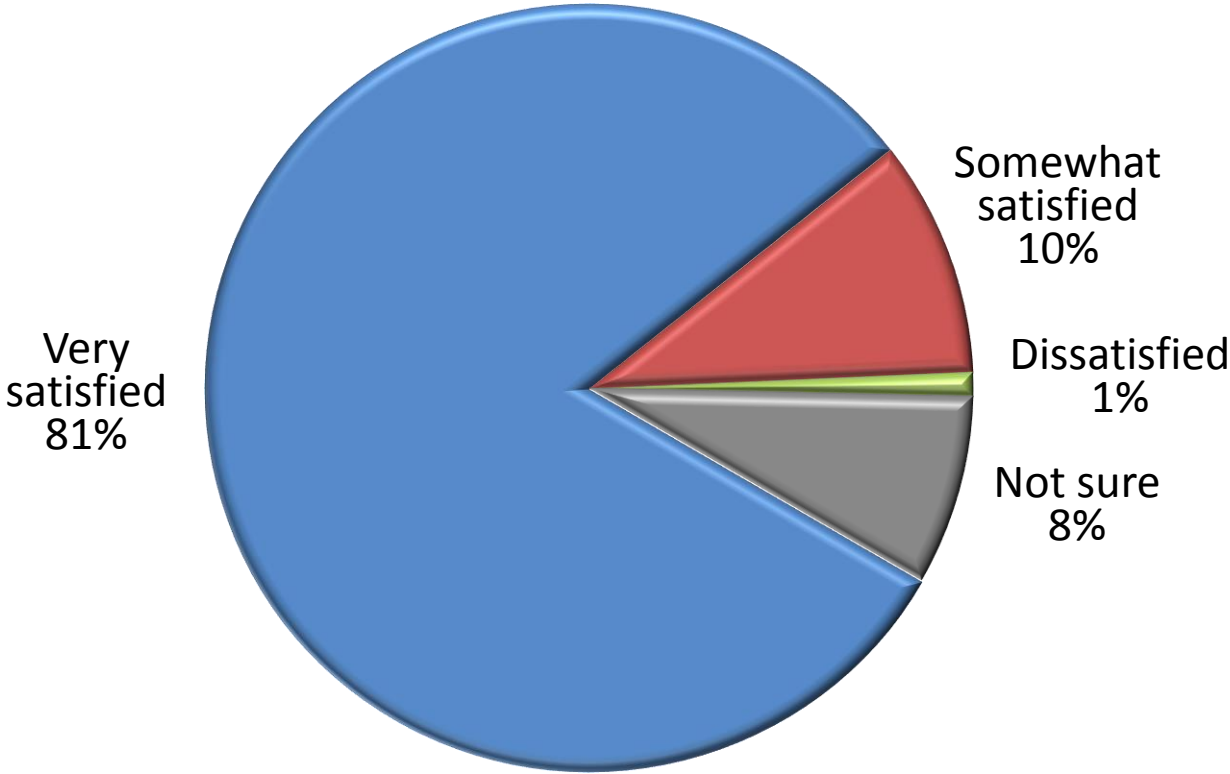


 Somewhat satisfied  Very satisfied

The previous observation notwithstanding, most residents continue to agree that Powell police keep neighborhoods safe; treat residents courteously; and are well-trained, competent professionals.

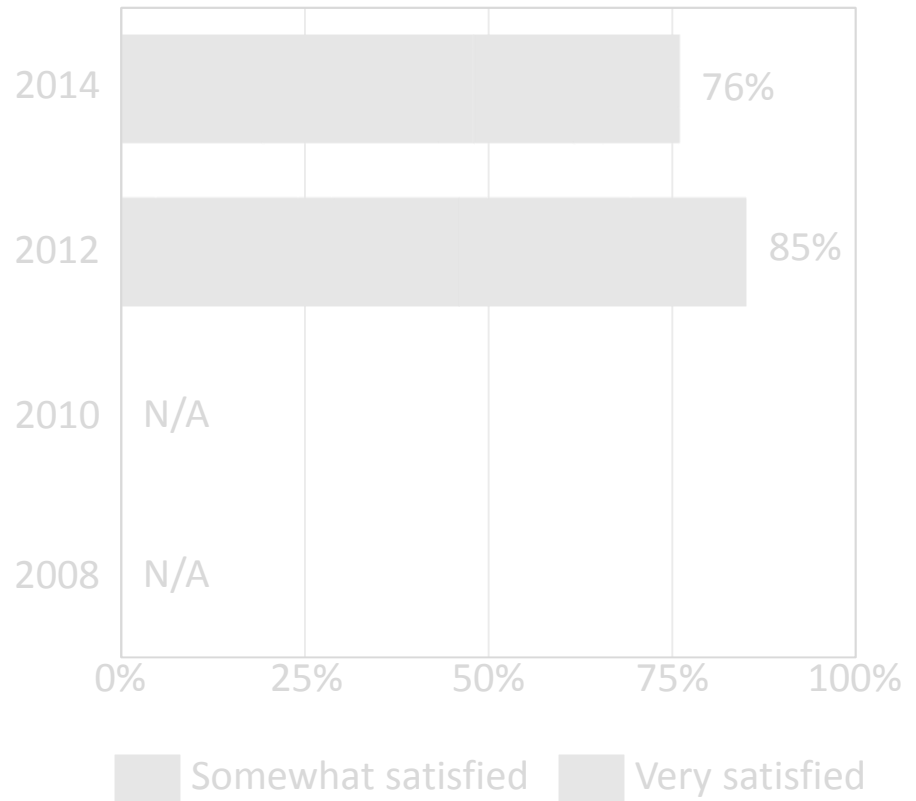
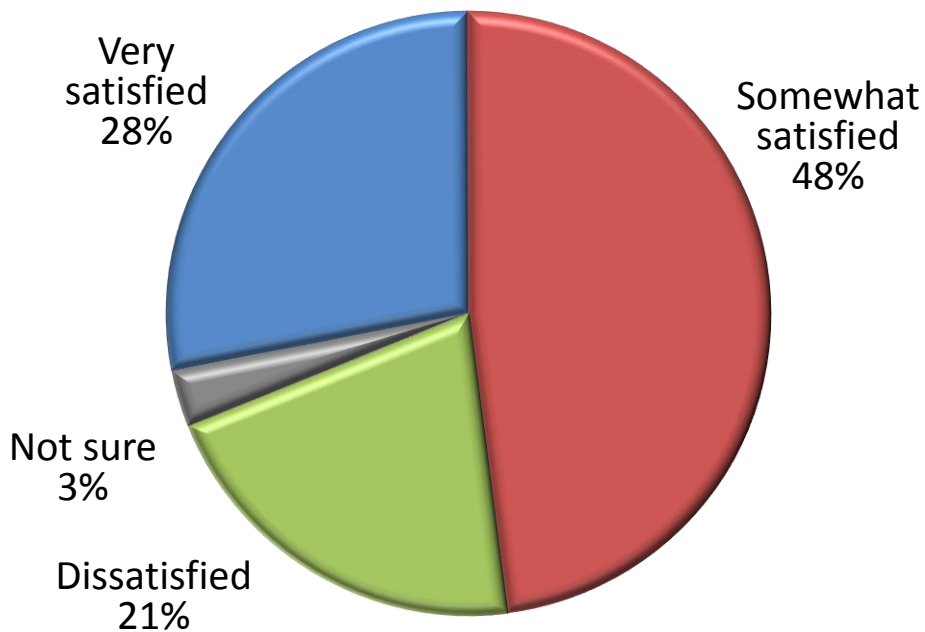


Nine out of ten residents (91%) are satisfied with the Liberty Township Fire Department and EMS. Almost everyone else (8%) has no opinion.

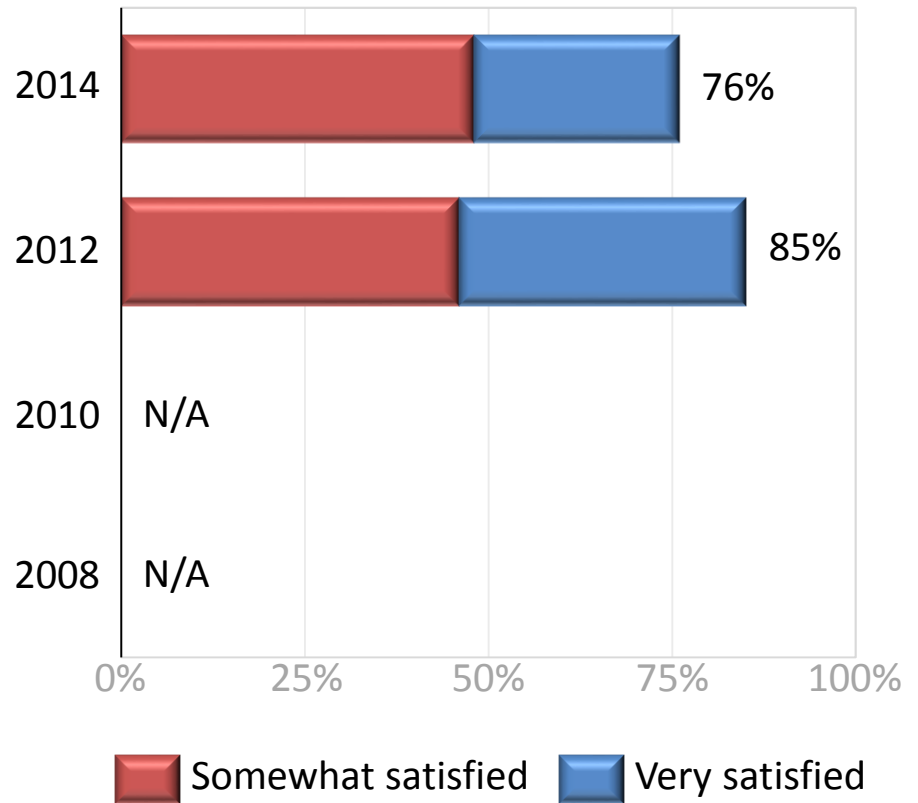
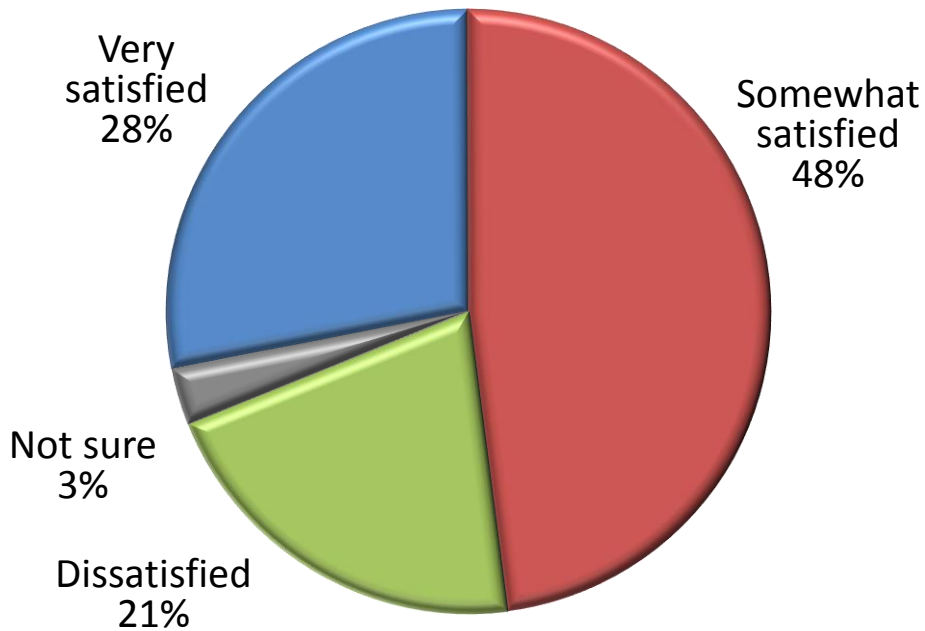


Communications

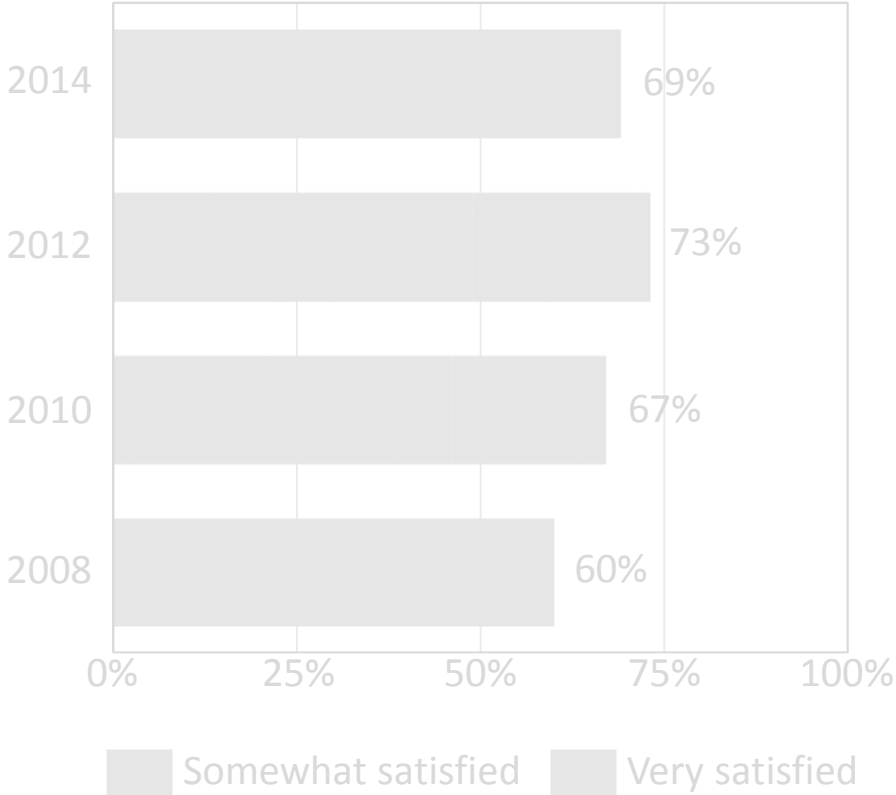
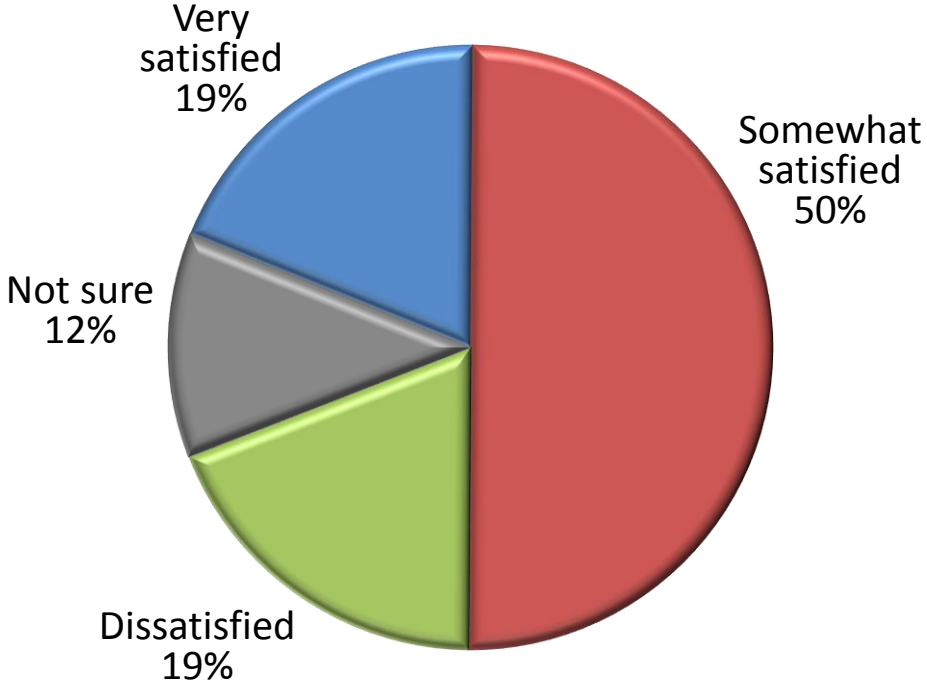
Three out of four residents (76%) are satisfied with how city officials keep them informed of important local issues, ...



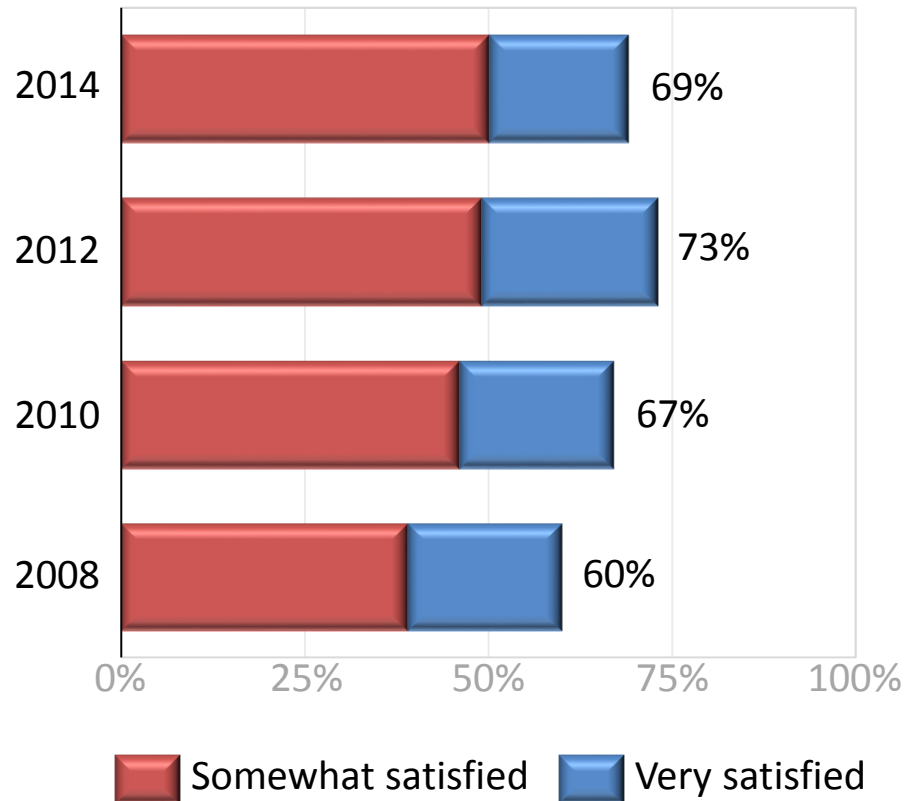
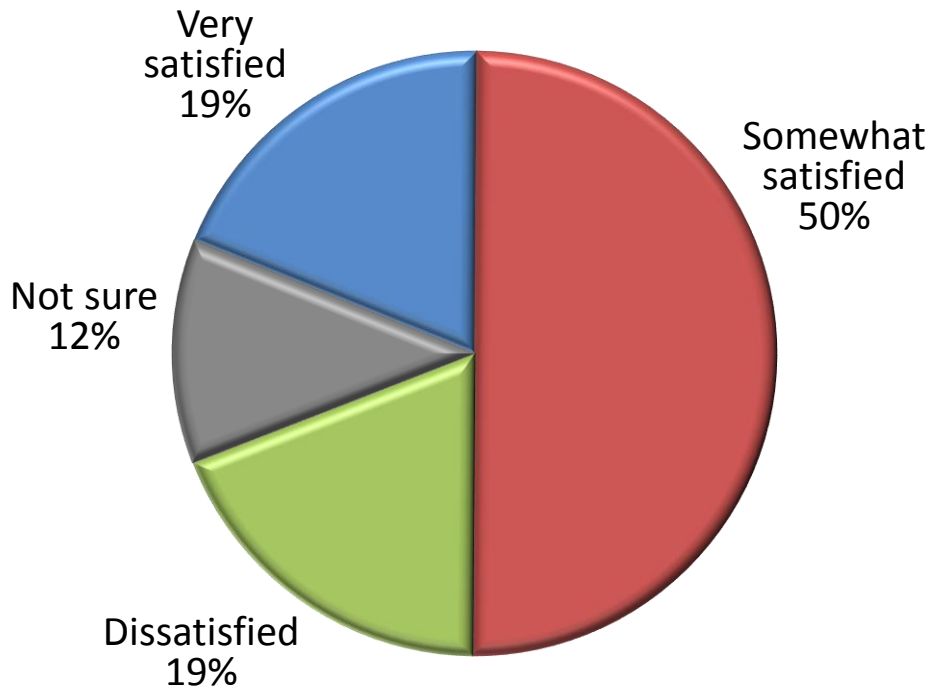
... down from 2012.



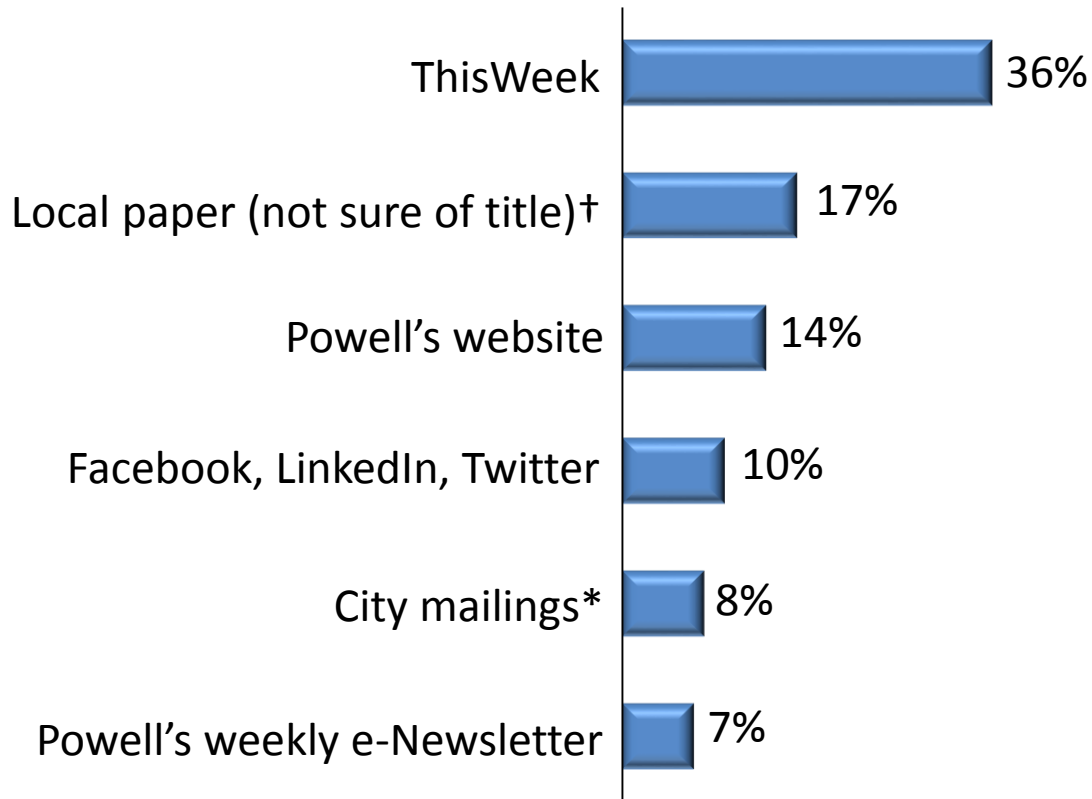
Seven out of ten residents (69%) feel that city officials listen to the concerns of residents, ...



... down slightly from 2012 – and reversing a trend that began in 2010.



Most residents get their news about Powell from a local paper ...



*Excluding quarterly newsletter

†The pattern of responses suggests that virtually all of these residents were referring to ThisWeek

Q22: Other than friends and family, where do you get most of your news and information about Powell?

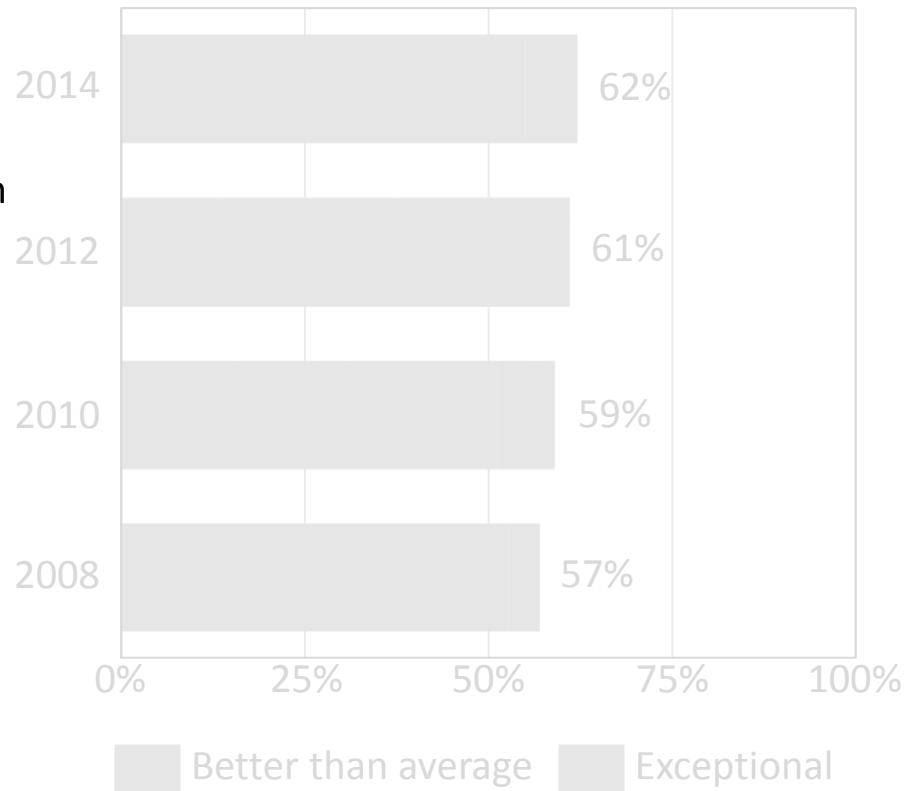
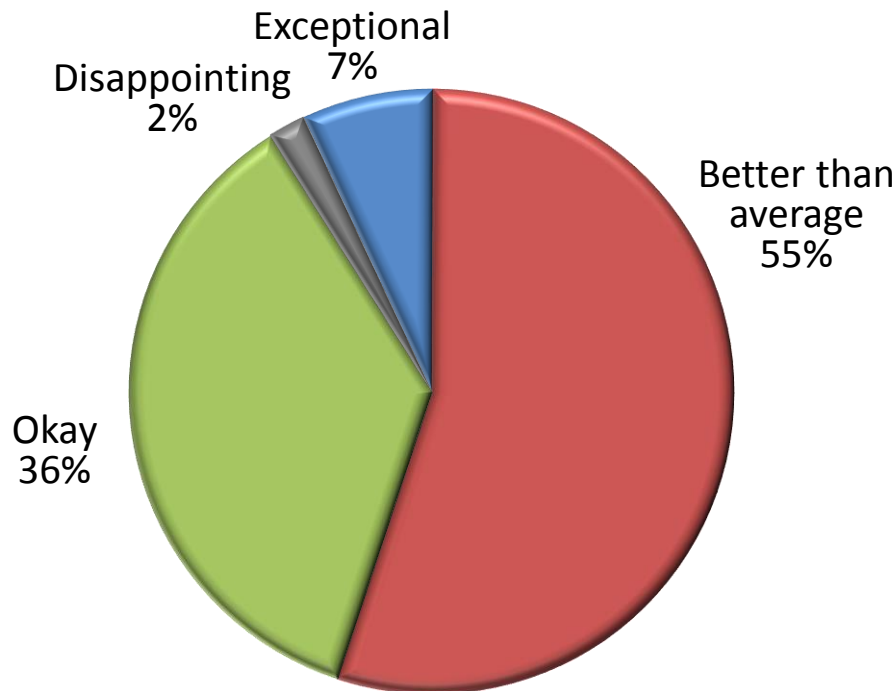
... a preference that is likely to change as interest in print declines and the appeal of digital increases.

	2012	2014
Subscribe to Columbus Dispatch	70%	58%
Subscribe to Delaware Gazette	12%	6%
Signed up for weekly e-Newsletter	11%	19%
Have Facebook account	63%	67%
Been to Powell's Facebook page	15%	29%
Have a Twitter account	18%	29%
Own a Smartphone	67%	86%

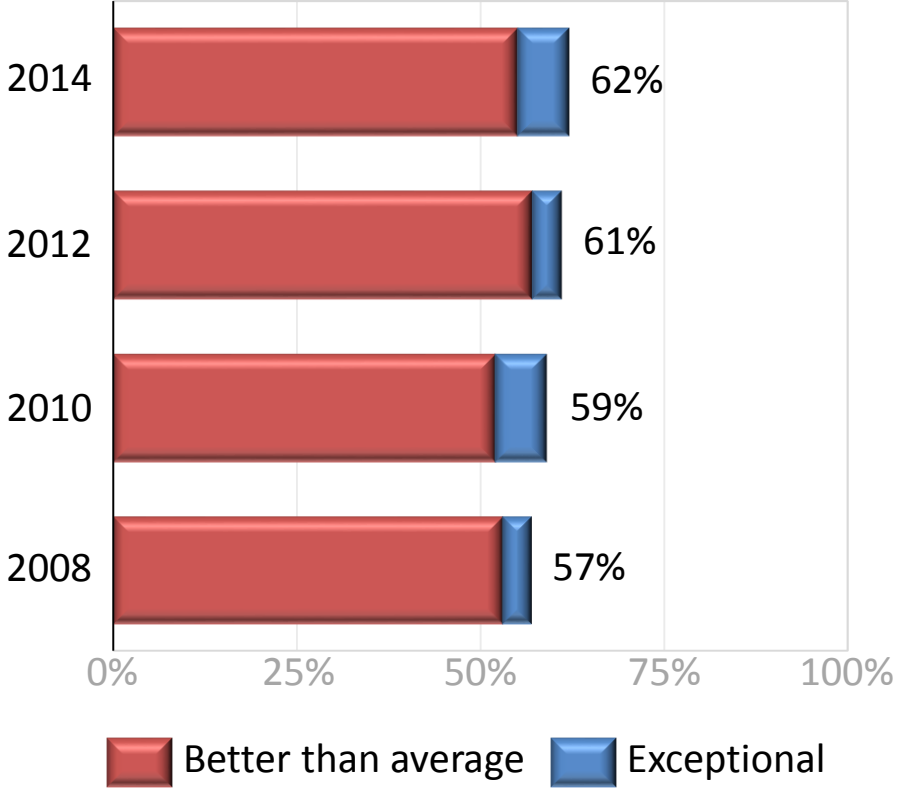
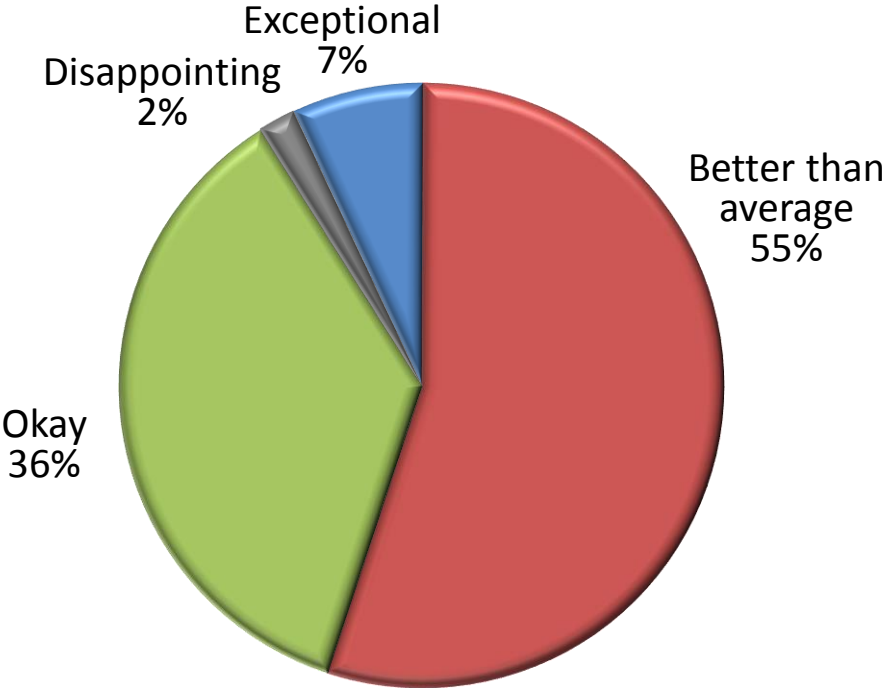
- Q23: Do you currently subscribe to the Delaware Gazette?
- Q24: Do you currently subscribe to the Columbus Dispatch?
- Q25: Have you signed up for Powell's weekly e-Newsletter?
- Q30: Do you have a Facebook account?
- Q31: Have you ever been to Powell's Facebook page? (all respondents)
- Q32: Do you have a Twitter account?
- Q33: Do you own a Smartphone – in other words, a phone that allows you to access email?

The City's Website

Six out of ten residents (62%) consider the city's website either exceptional or better than average. Roughly a third (36%) consider it just okay.

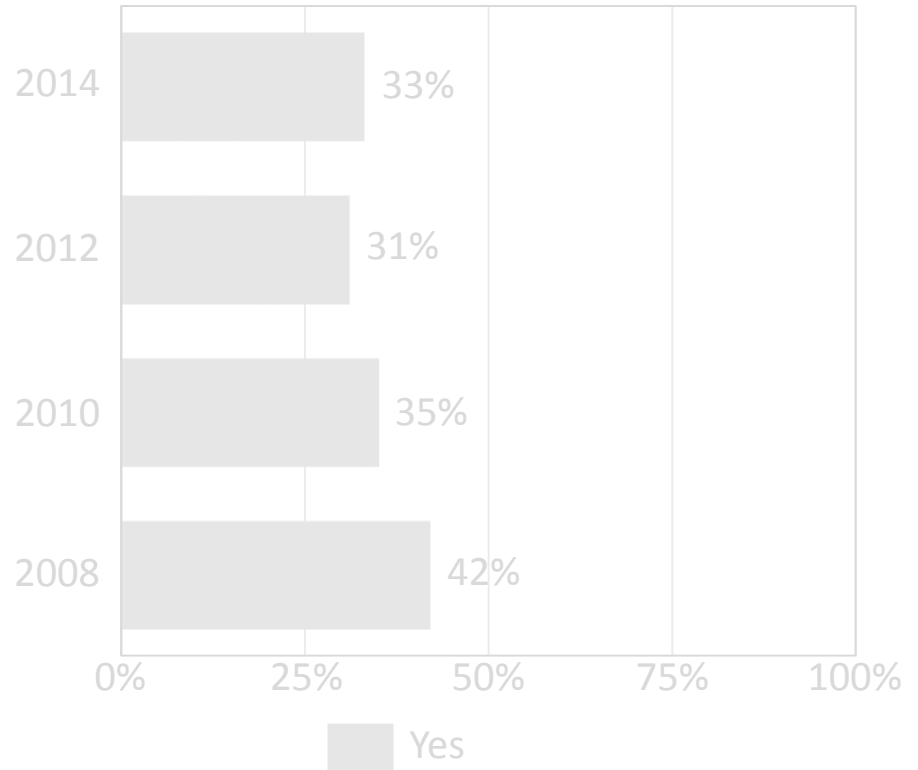
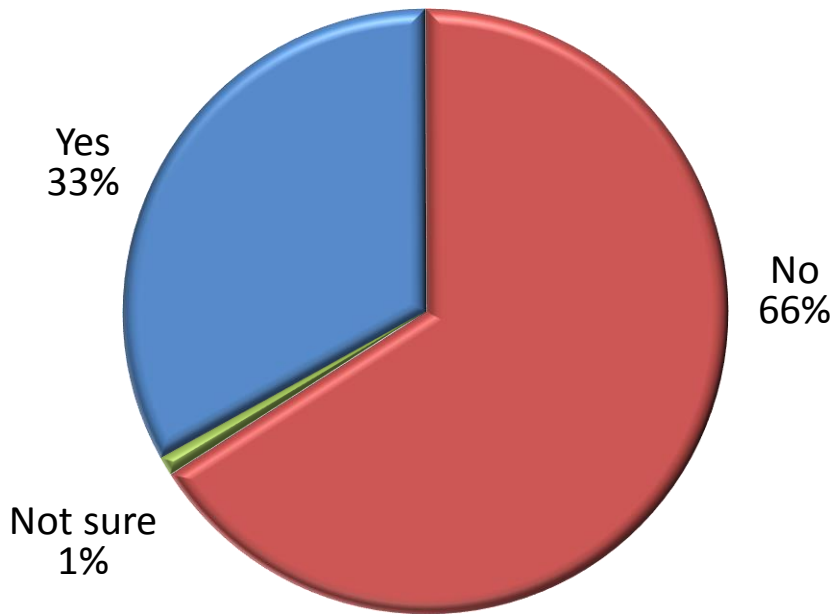


Positive impressions of the city's website continue to trend upward, albeit slowly.

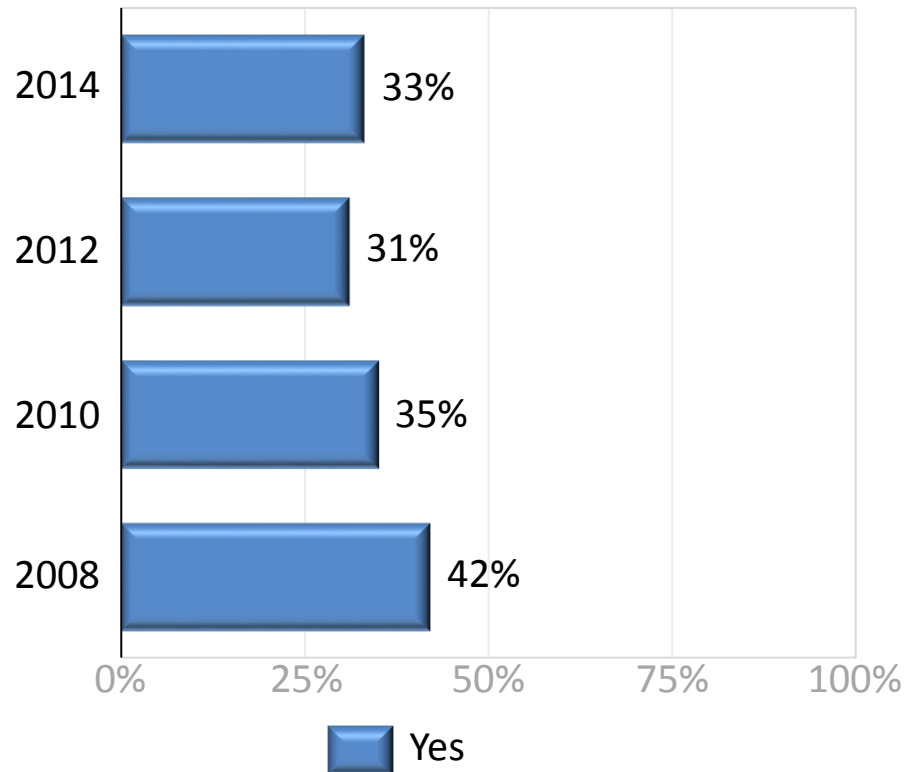
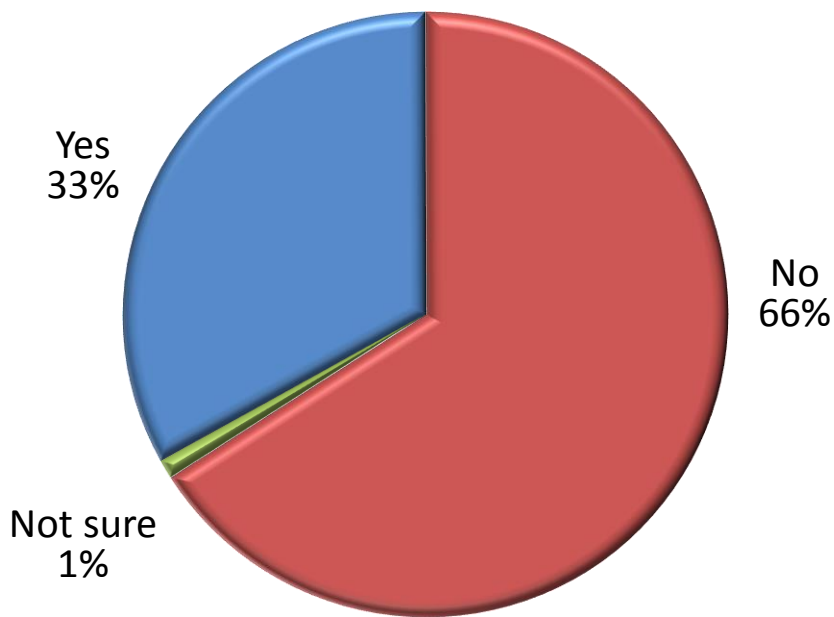


Figures based on respondents who have been to the city's website in the past three months
Q40: Overall, is the city's website ...?

One out of three residents has visited Powell's website over the past three months.



Little has changed since 2010. Though curious, this finding may reflect an increasing reliance on other, more immediate digital technologies, such as Twitter and Facebook. City websites, in other words, may now be passé (i.e., “old” technology).

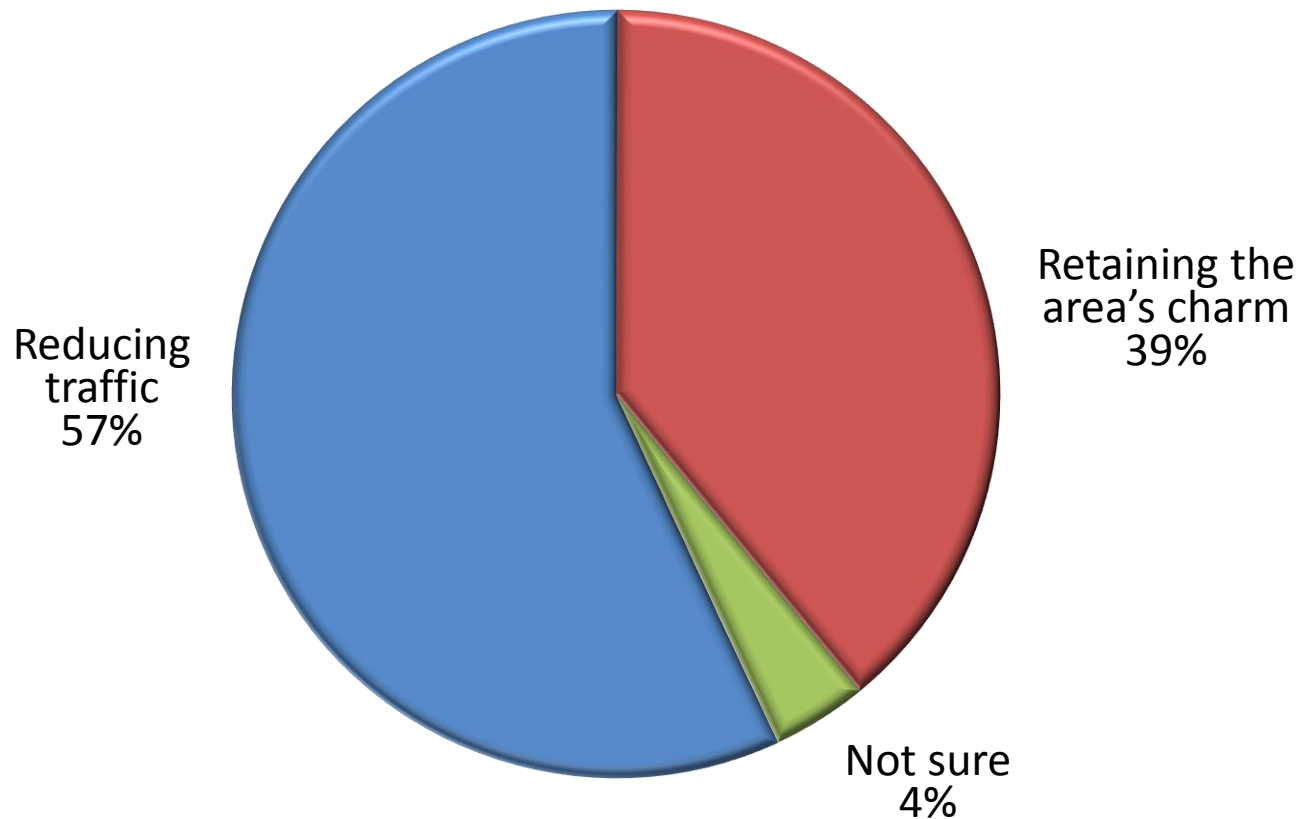


Residents offered a variety of suggestions for content on the city's website (much of which may already be there).

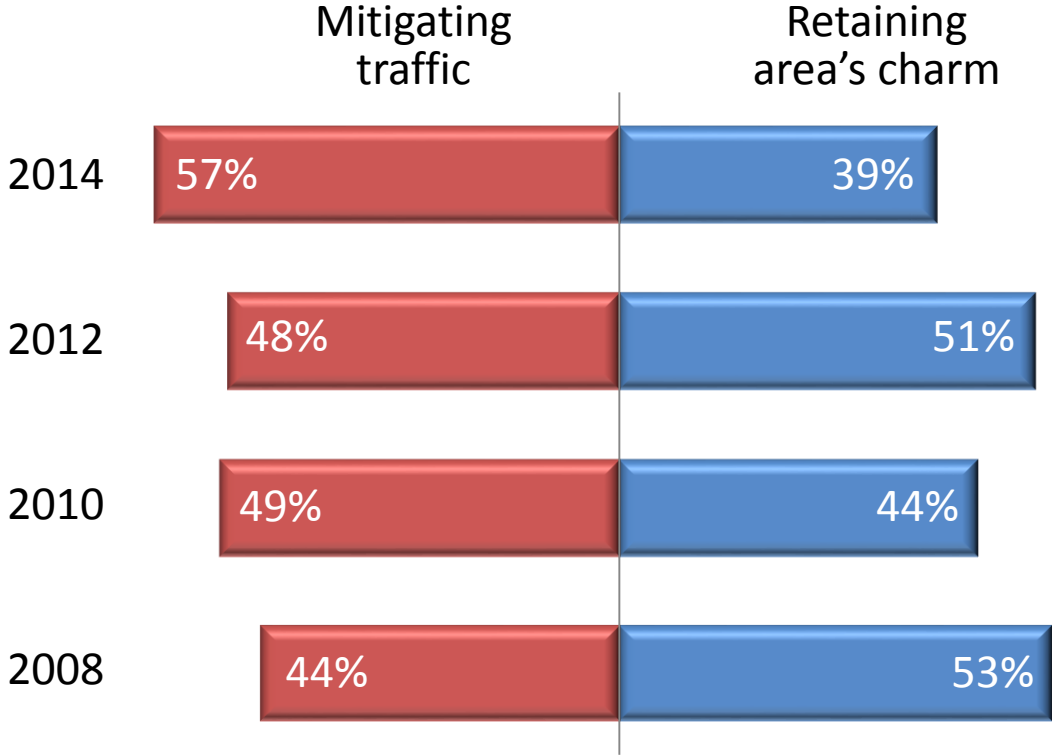
- A community events calendar – with cancellation notices
- Information involving city services, such as departmental emails and phone numbers, and a calendar for trash pickup
- City council calendars, agendas, meeting minutes, and other related information
- Biographical and contact information for city officials
- Community news addressing, for example, controversial issues, the schools, and local sports
- New development, involving, for example, new shops, changes to downtown, and the construction of housing
- Information involving Parks and Rec classes and registration

Downtown Powell

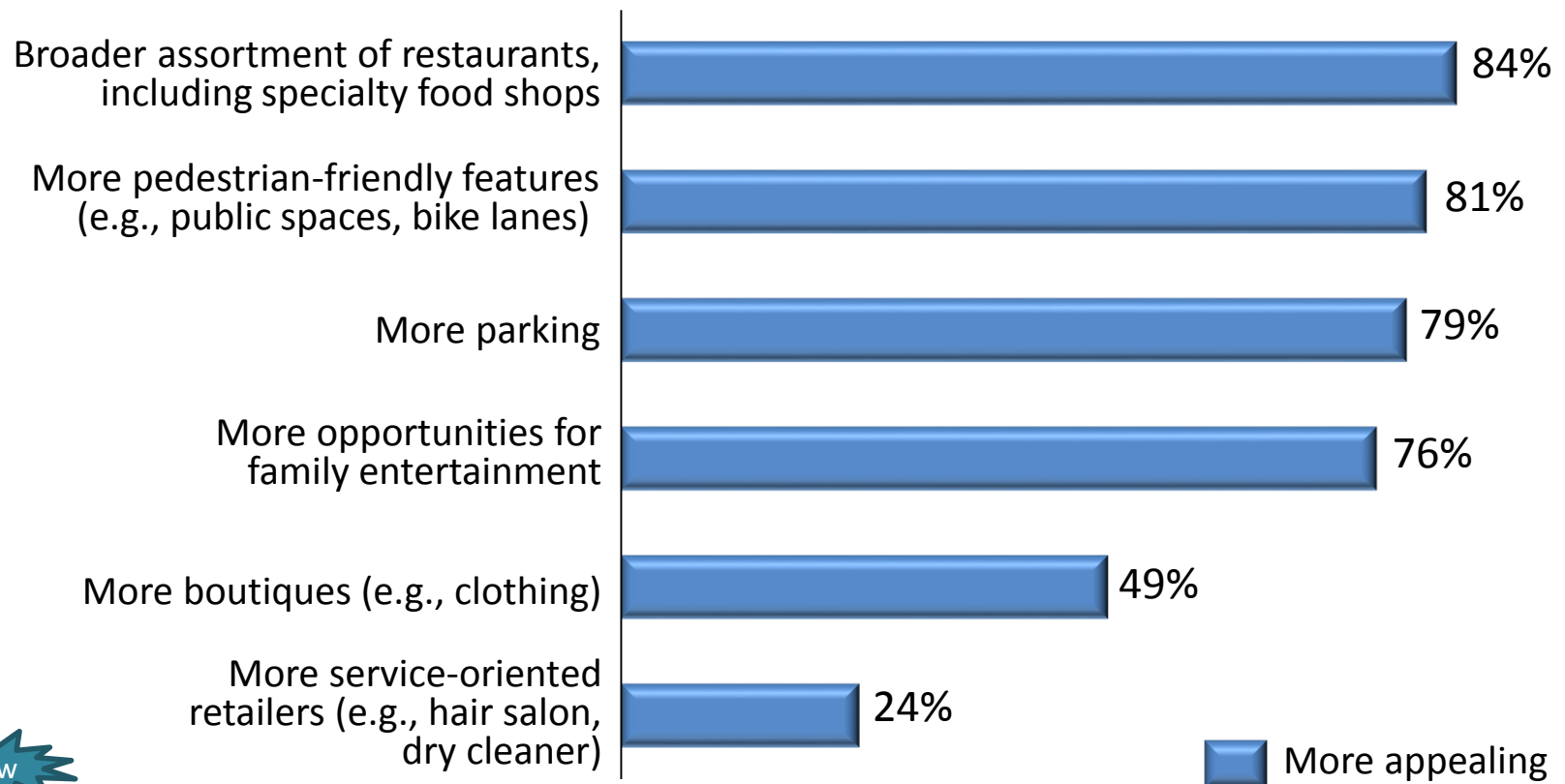
A majority of residents (57%) feel that mitigating traffic is more important for downtown Powell than retaining the area's charm.



This year, mitigating traffic is at an all-time high.



Though most of the proffered suggestions for improving downtown Powell pleased at least three out of four residents, expanding the assortment of restaurants and specialty food shops topped the list, albeit barely. Much less popular were adding boutiques and service-oriented retailers.



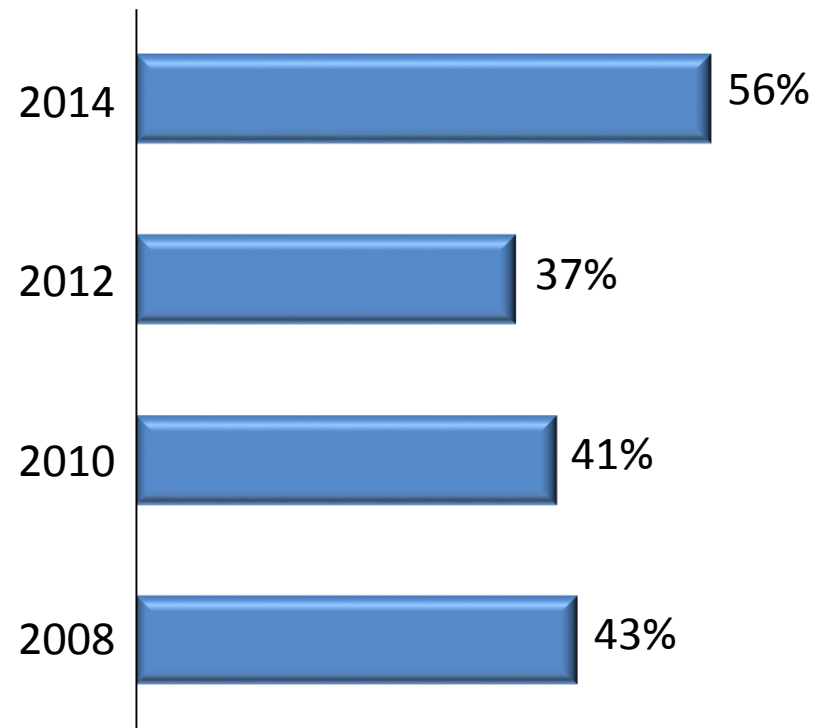
The Future

As in past years, residents were asked:

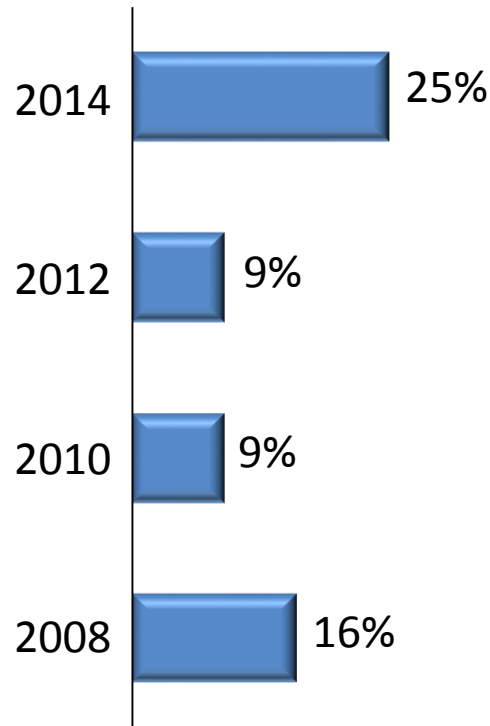
“When you think of issues, concerns, or problems facing the City of Powell, what should your local public officials consider their ... highest priorities?”

Two issues were mentioned repeatedly
and
more often than in previous surveys.

Traffic ...



... and growth – residential and commercial.



Nearly one resident in five (18%) expressed concerns with multi-family housing and agreed that stopping it should be a priority.

We will not get enough benefit for the effort on the construction at Powell Road and 315.

I am concerned about the traffic.

The traffic is horrible. You can't leave Powell because you are boxed in by traffic.

Improve the traffic downtown.

Take care of the traffic. Do something about it.

Fix the traffic.

Sawmill Parkway is a nightmare. The timing on the lights is terrible.

Fix the traffic flow at the Liberty and Seldom Seen intersection.

Just reduce the traffic congestion.

Traffic congestion is an issue.

I think the biggest thing is the traffic issue.

Work on the traffic.

I don't want apartments coming to Powell. I don't care what kind of people come to our community, but they should have the same responsibilities we do as homeowners.

I am concerned about apartments making the schools overcrowded.

Do not build those apartments that will be backing up to our development.

They are ruining the quaint aspects of Powell by building ... apartments.

They need to quit building housing downtown.

We are trying to get the city to stop with the apartment and condo building.

Avoid high-density housing because it increases traffic and the number of transient families in the area.

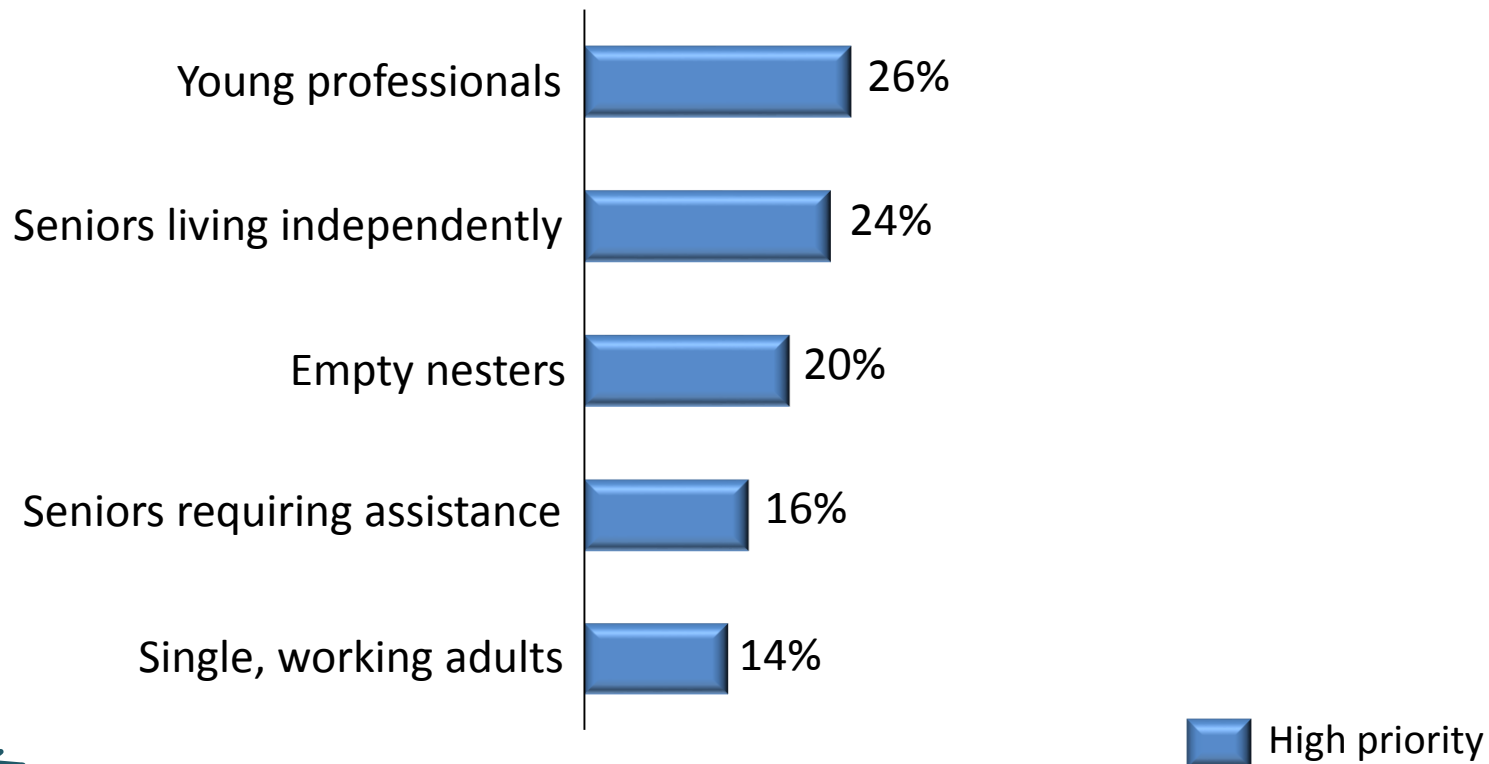
Building more apartments will add to the traffic problem.

They are talking about apartments [which] will make traffic worse.

Residents were read:

“Think for a moment about the housing available in Powell – and whether city officials should encourage more options for each of the following: empty nesters; single, working adults; seniors living independently; seniors requiring assistance; and young professionals.”

Housing options for young professionals and seniors living independently garnered the most support. Least popular were housing options for seniors needing assistance and single, working adults. Note, however, that none of these options was deemed a high priority by more than one resident in four.



Residents were asked:

“What would you like to see more of in Powell?”


A word cloud featuring various community-related terms. The most prominent words are 'Traffic solutions' in large blue font, 'Restaurants' in large blue font on the left, and 'Community events' in large green font on the right. Other significant words include 'Bike paths', 'Parks', 'Business', 'Commercial growth', and 'Downtown development'. Smaller words include 'Control over growth', 'Parking', 'Infrastructure repairs', 'Concerts', 'Listening / communicating with residents', 'Condominiums', 'Retail stores', 'Cooperation with Liberty Township', 'Obeying zoning laws', 'Parks and rec programs', 'Sidewalks', 'Walking trails', 'Occupied businesses', 'Rec center', 'Small town charm', 'Nothing', 'Pools', 'Senior citizen programs', 'Green space', 'Arts', 'Speed limit enforcement', 'Single family homes', and 'Downtown development'.

Residents were asked:


“What would you like to see less of in Powell?”



Conclusions



Once again, a majority of residents consider the City of Powell an outstanding community. They praise the city-managed amenities, city services, and Powell's public officials. They also praise the city's small-town atmosphere.



Yet, two issues, though hardly new, appear to be fueling a level of angst not seen in previous surveys. One is traffic, the other development – especially residential development involving high-density housing. Arguably, these two issues have caused what looks to be a small, but discernable erosion of popular support for the efforts of city officials to revitalize downtown, plan for the future, and keep residents informed of important issues. Along similar lines, today, fewer residents than in 2012 believe that Powell is headed in the “right direction.” Obviously, these shifts in opinion should be monitored closely.



Other findings suggest that:

- A revitalized downtown should include a broader assortment of restaurants, new pedestrian-friendly features, and more parking;
- Many residents see little need to expand the housing options available in Powell; and
- The city should continue its efforts to communicate with residents in a variety of digital formats.

Questions?

