

Quality

of
LIFE

**CITIZEN
SATISFACTION**

S P O K A N E

SPOKANE COUNTY - SECTION 3A



INSET

SPOKANE COUNTY Neighborhood Boundaries

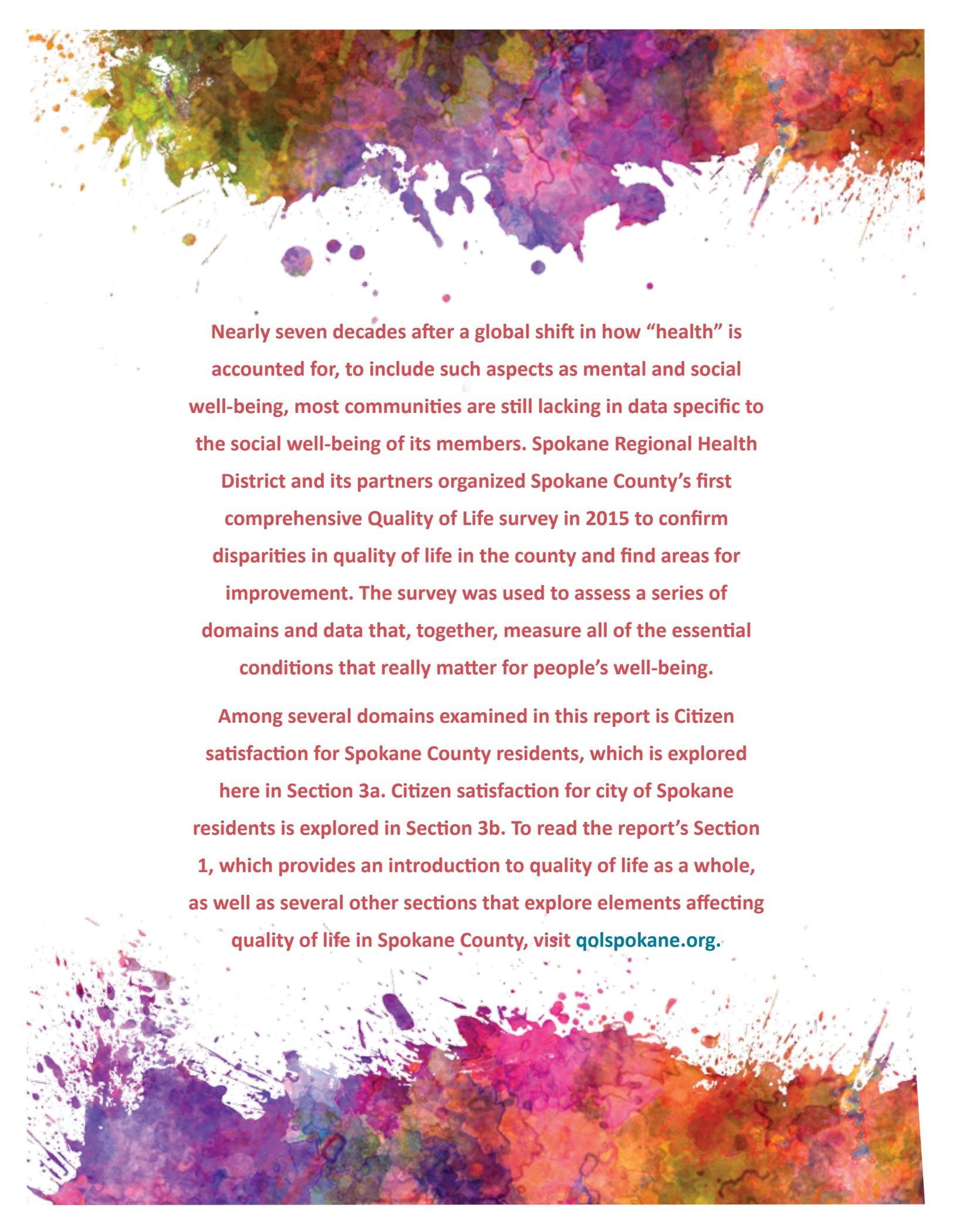


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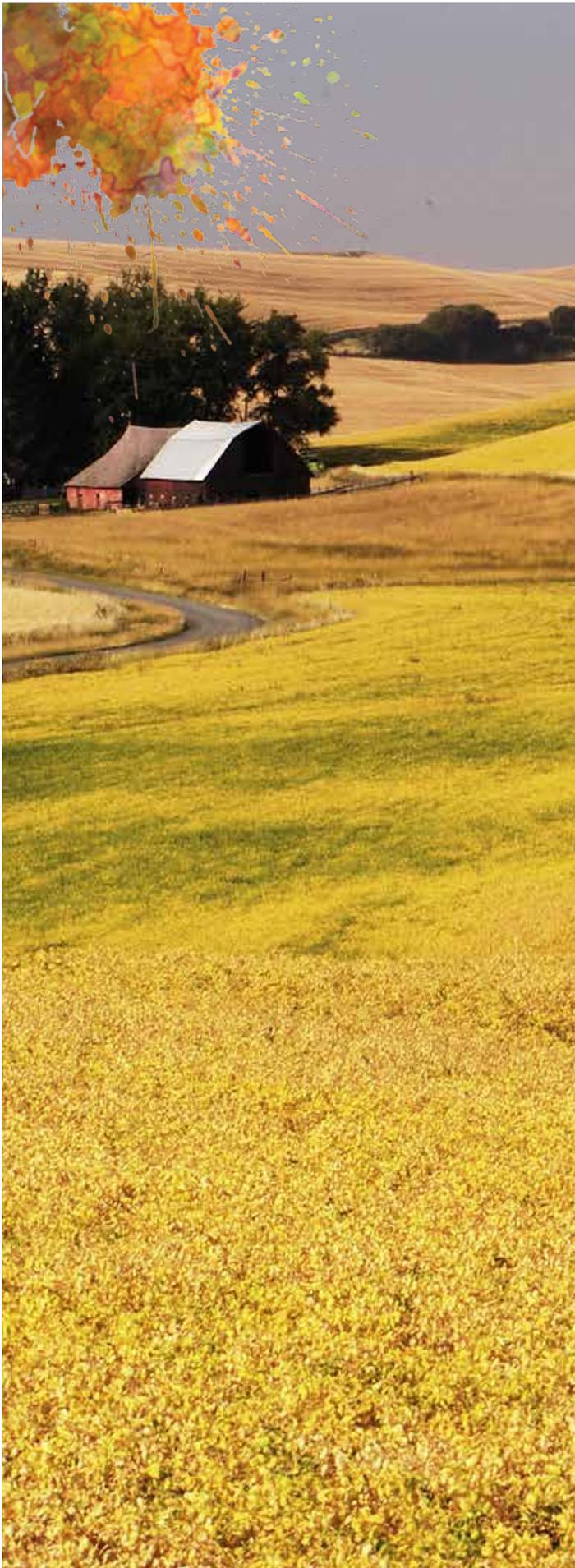


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Nearly seven decades after a global shift in how “health” is accounted for, to include such aspects as mental and social well-being, most communities are still lacking in data specific to the social well-being of its members. Spokane Regional Health District and its partners organized Spokane County’s first comprehensive Quality of Life survey in 2015 to confirm disparities in quality of life in the county and find areas for improvement. The survey was used to assess a series of domains and data that, together, measure all of the essential conditions that really matter for people’s well-being.

Among several domains examined in this report is Citizen satisfaction for Spokane County residents, which is explored here in Section 3a. Citizen satisfaction for city of Spokane residents is explored in Section 3b. To read the report’s Section 1, which provides an introduction to quality of life as a whole, as well as several other sections that explore elements affecting quality of life in Spokane County, visit qolspokane.org.



Introduction

Spokane Regional Health District (SRHD) is interested in helping local governments track citizen satisfaction due to linkages between citizen satisfaction and quality of life. Many communities routinely evaluate their citizens' satisfaction with local government services and functions. Surveys, similar to Spokane County's Quality of Life (QOL) survey, were conducted in:

- Lewiston, Idaho and Clarkston, Washington (2005, 2007).
- Boise, Idaho (2005, 2007, 2009 & 2010).
- Vancouver, Washington (2012).
- Coeur d'Alene, Idaho (2013).
- Redmond, Washington (2014).

For this survey, the term *citizen satisfaction* was defined as satisfaction with local government, infrastructure and government services. Satisfaction with these aspects of government is helpful in gauging local quality of life, due to the impact these services can have on the lived experience of residents. While quality of life is affected by personal resources such as health, social relationships and income, it is also influenced by public resources, ranging from availability of jobs and affordability of the area, to the availability and quality of services from both the government and non-government sectors.

Personal resources were discussed extensively in the first two sections of this report series, Quality of Life and Social Capital. In this section and in Section 4, Public Safety, public resources are addressed. This report is intended to provide a broad overview of findings.



Why was this survey done?

- *Quality of life and citizen satisfaction are closely linked, but there is very little data on quality of life or citizen satisfaction in Spokane County. Efforts to improve local quality of life needed a baseline to be used for future comparison.*

What were the key results?

- *Satisfaction with government services varied notably by the type of service.*
- *Crime, jobs/economy and roads were top concerns for residents overall.*

How can these results be used?

- *These survey findings represent the overall “pulse” or disposition of the community toward local government.*
- *This information can be used to guide long-term planning, budgeting and overall management of government services.*

Methods

Spokane County’s Quality of Life (QOL) survey was administered following a “push-to-web” model used extensively within Washington state and other states. Survey invitations were mailed to a random sample of 12,000 addresses within Spokane County. Respondents were encouraged to respond to the survey online (pushed to web) before being given the option of completing a hardcopy survey. In total, 3,833 people responded (32%) and 3,334 records (28%) were valid for analysis. The survey was weighted to account for the sampling design and differential response rates among subgroups. Weights were created using iterative proportional fitting (raking) across five margins: age, race/ethnicity, sex, education and home ownership. Please see Section 7, Technical Appendix, for detailed methodology.

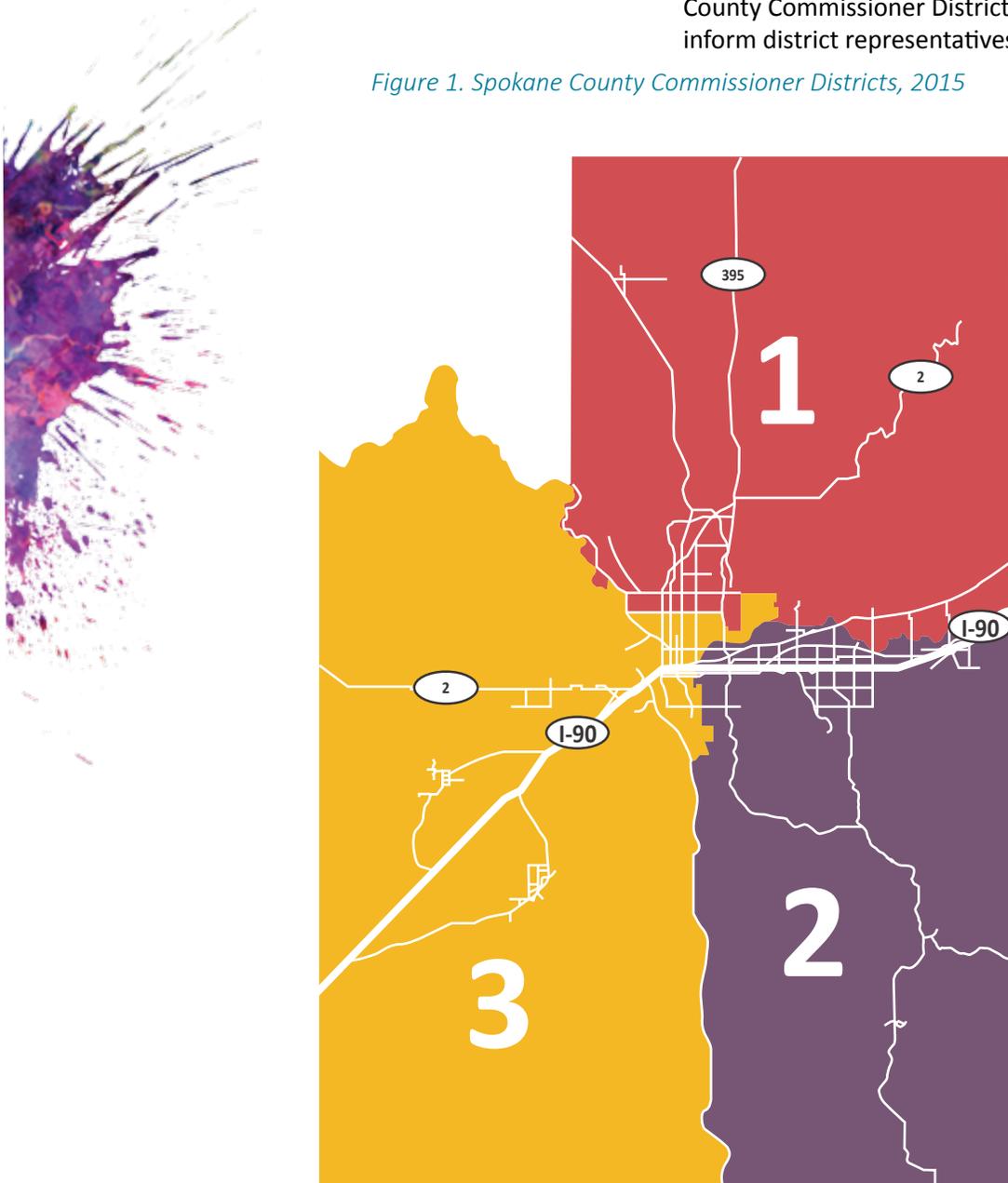
Neighborhood boundaries

Due to small reporting numbers in some residential areas, neighborhoods were collapsed with others nearby for the purpose of analyses. Neighborhood labels, as utilized for analysis in the QOL report series are located on the inside cover of each QOL report.

Spokane County Commissioner District boundaries

The current section of the QOL report discusses citizen satisfaction across the various areas of Spokane County; an additional layer of analysis was added to further understand differences across the county. Several subsections of this report present differences by Spokane County Commissioner District boundaries (figure 1) to inform district representatives.

Figure 1. Spokane County Commissioner Districts, 2015



Satisfaction with Local Government, Infrastructure and Government Services

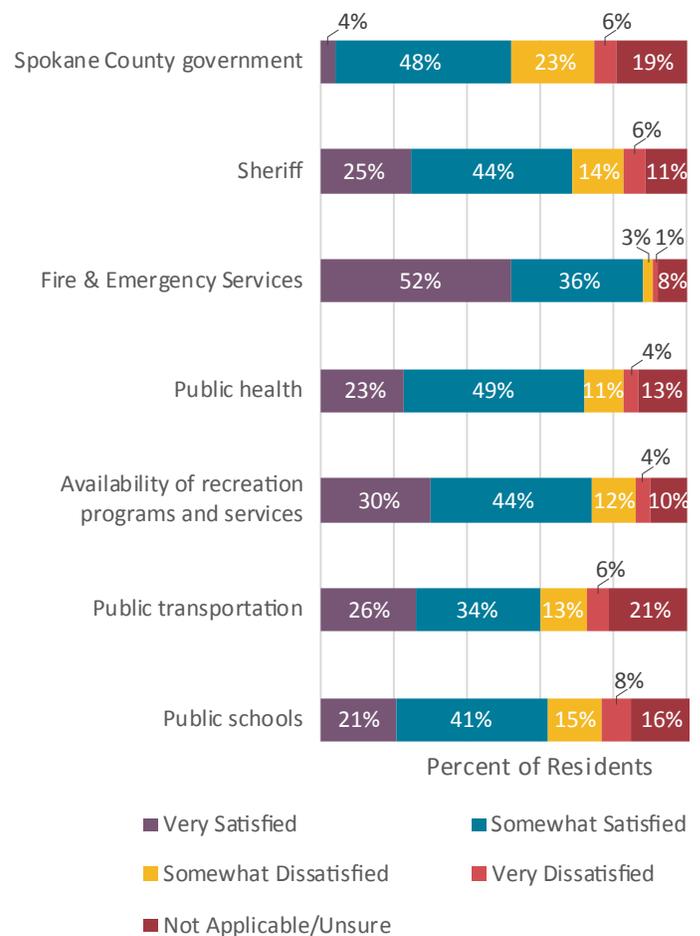
Survey respondents were asked the following question: “How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following?”

- Spokane County government
- Sheriff
- Fire & emergency services
- Public health
- Availability of recreation program and services
- Public transportation
- Public schools

Satisfaction with local government and selected government services appears in figure 2. In brief, many county residents (48%) were *somewhat satisfied* with Spokane County government. Only 4% reported that they were *very satisfied*, while 23% were *somewhat dissatisfied* and 6% were *very dissatisfied*. Of county residents, 19% were unsure of how satisfied they were with Spokane County government, or felt that the topic was not applicable for them. Those who answered not applicable/unsure to this question were also less likely to follow local politics and less likely to be interested in politics in general.

Overall, county residents were most satisfied with fire and emergency services—88% were *somewhat or very satisfied*, only 4% were *somewhat or very dissatisfied*. Residents were least satisfied with public transportation (60% were *somewhat or very satisfied*), and public schools (62% were *somewhat or very satisfied*).

Figure 2. Satisfaction with Local Government Services, Spokane County 2015



Key Findings:

- 88% were satisfied with fire & emergency services
- Approximately 70% were satisfied with sheriff and public health
- 52% were satisfied with Spokane County government

Differences in satisfaction by demographics

Satisfaction with Spokane County government was related to employment status, general health, neighborhood, and age. Race and ethnicity showed indications of differing levels of satisfaction, though there were not enough data to be sure. The following factors were not related to satisfaction with county government: sex, marital status, income, education, or home ownership.

People out of work were less satisfied with county government, with 22% reporting that they were *somewhat* or *very satisfied*, compared to those employed for wages (52%), those unable to work (37%), or those who were students, retirees, or homemakers (58%).

Residents who rated their health as *excellent* or *very good* had higher rates of satisfaction with the county government with 60% reporting that they were *somewhat* or *very satisfied*, compared to reporting *good* or *fair* health (43%), and those reporting *poor* health (41%).

Younger people were less likely to report satisfaction with the county government with 40% of those 20 to 39 years

of age reporting that they were *somewhat* or *very satisfied*, compared to those 40 to 59 years of age (60%), and those over 60 years of age (63%).

There was some indication that satisfaction with county government was also related to race/ethnicity. Blacks were least likely to report satisfaction at 30%, followed by Hispanics (38%), compared to whites (52%), American Indian/Alaska Natives (58%), and Asians (76%), who reported the highest levels of satisfaction.

By Spokane County Commissioner Districts

In general, satisfaction with local entities was highest in Spokane County Commissioner District 2 (see figure 3). Satisfaction with fire and emergency services was highest in district 2 with 94% of residents reporting that they were *somewhat* or *very satisfied*, compared to 85% in district 1, and 85% in district 3.

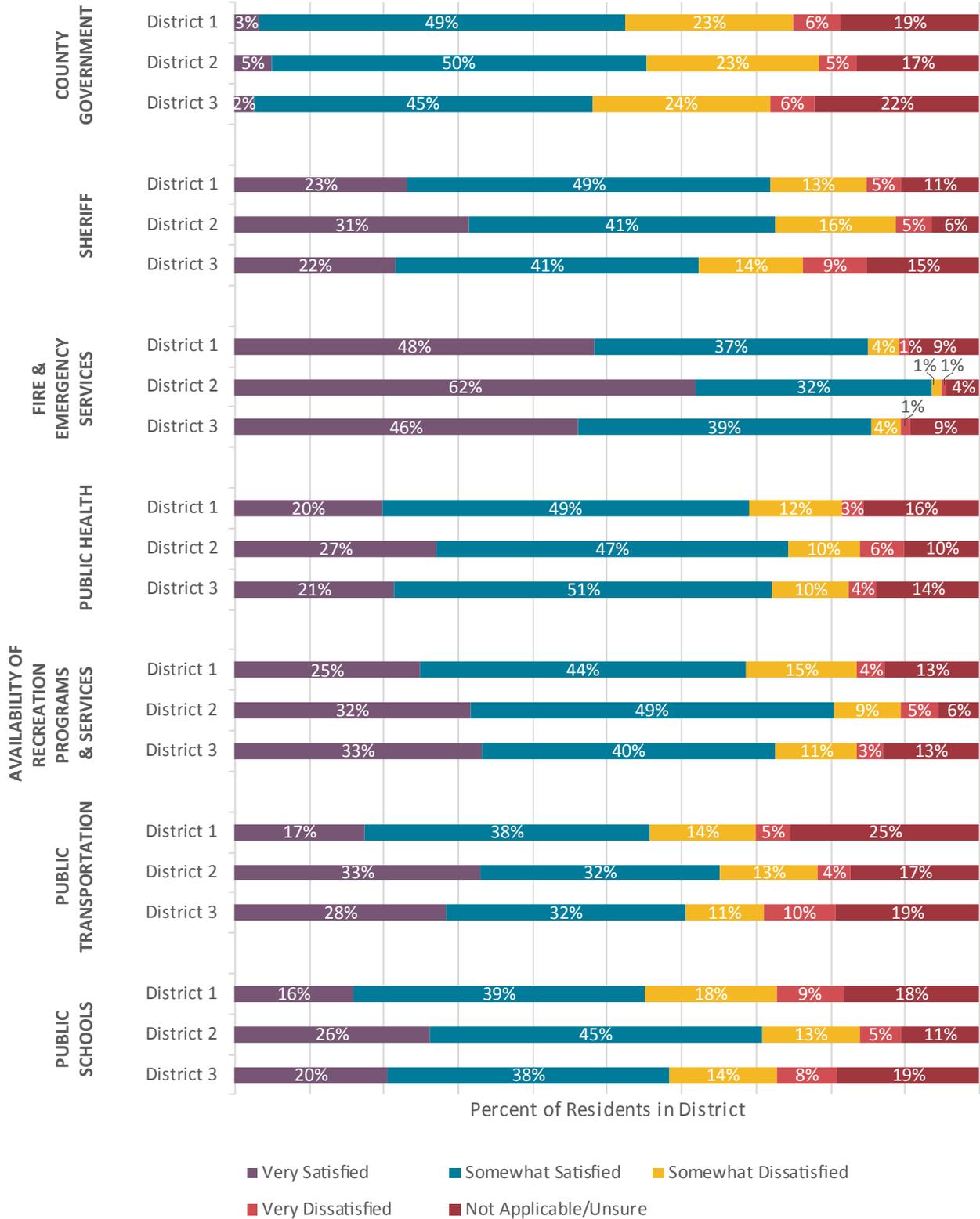
Likewise, satisfaction with sheriff was also highest in Spokane County districts 1 and 2 with 72% of residents reporting that they were *somewhat* or *very satisfied*, compared to 63% of district 3 residents.



Satisfaction with Spokane County government was higher among those who were:

- *Older*
- *Employed*
- *In better health*
- *Living in certain neighborhoods*

Figure 3. Satisfaction with Local Government Entities by County Commissioner District, Spokane County 2015



Satisfaction with Neighborhood

Residents were also asked to reflect on their own immediate neighborhoods with specific regard to natural space and built environment. Overall, 88% of residents were either *somewhat* or *very satisfied* with their neighborhood or community (figure 4). Satisfaction with the availability and quality of parks, trails and open space was also high at 80% for both. In contrast, the highest dissatisfaction rating was for the conditions of roads and streets with 54% of residents reporting that they were *somewhat* or *very dissatisfied*. The next highest dissatisfaction rating was 29% for condition of sidewalks and bike paths followed by the availability of sidewalks and bike paths with 23% reporting that they were *somewhat* or *very dissatisfied*.

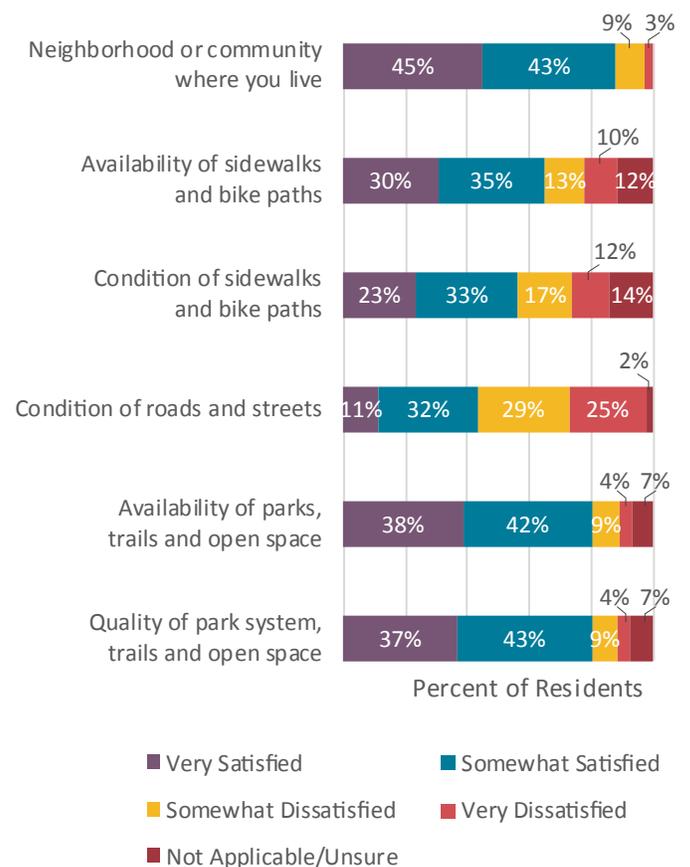
By Spokane County Commissioner District

There were notable differences in satisfaction with neighborhoods, and aspects of neighborhoods by Spokane County Commissioner Districts (figure 5). The widest span of satisfaction was found in resident reports of satisfaction with the condition of roads and streets. Spokane County Commissioner District 2 reported the highest levels of satisfaction with the condition of roads and streets with 57% of residents reporting that they were *somewhat* or *very satisfied*, compared to 38% of district 1 residents and 33% of district 3 residents.

Survey respondents were asked the following question: “How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following in your neighborhood?” :

- Availability of sidewalks and bike paths
- Condition of sidewalks and bike paths
- Availability of parks, trails and open space
- Quality of park system, trails and open space

Figure 4. Satisfaction by Aspects of Neighborhood, Spokane County 2015



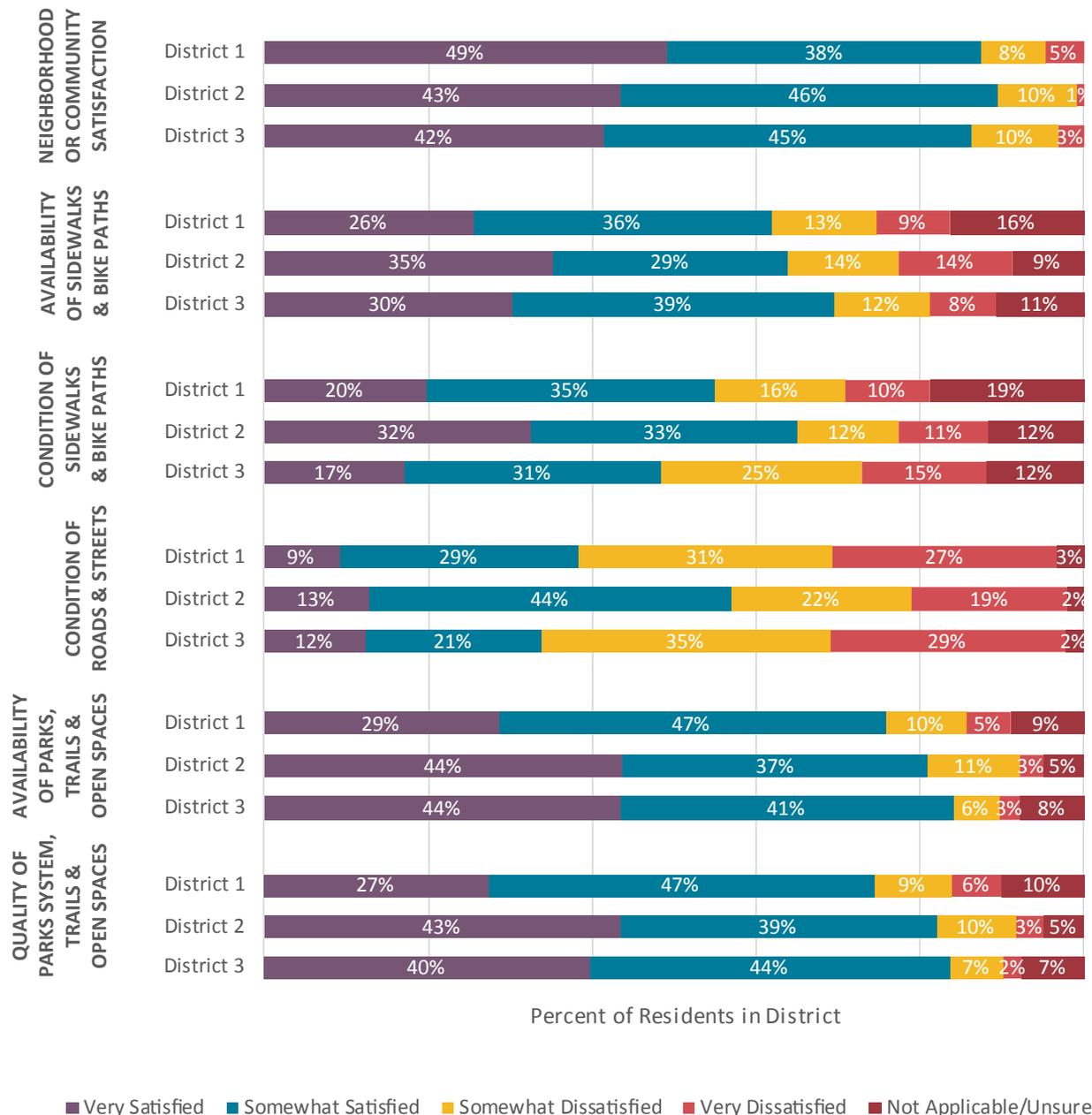
Resident reports of the condition of sidewalks and bike paths also showed low levels of satisfaction compared to other aspects of neighborhoods. Spokane County Commissioner District 2 reported the highest levels of satisfaction with the condition of sidewalks and bike paths with 65% of residents reporting that they were *somewhat* or *very satisfied*, compared to 55% of district 1 residents and 48% of district 3 residents.

Significant differences were also found in resident reports of availability and quality of parks, trails and open spaces, with Spokane County Commissioner District 1 residents reporting the lowest rates of being *somewhat* or *very*

satisfied with both neighborhood aspects. Seventy-six percent of district 1 residents reported that they were *somewhat* or *very satisfied* with the availability of parks in their neighborhood, compared to 81% of district 2 residents, and 85% of district 3 residents. Seventy-four percent of district 1 residents reported that they were *somewhat* or *very satisfied* with the quality of parks in their neighborhood, compared to 82% of district 2 residents, and 84% of district 3 residents.

Availability of sidewalks and bike paths and overall satisfaction with neighborhoods did not vary significantly between Spokane County Commissioner Districts.

Figure 5. Satisfaction with Aspects of Neighborhood by County Commissioner District, Spokane County 2015



Issues Facing Spokane Area

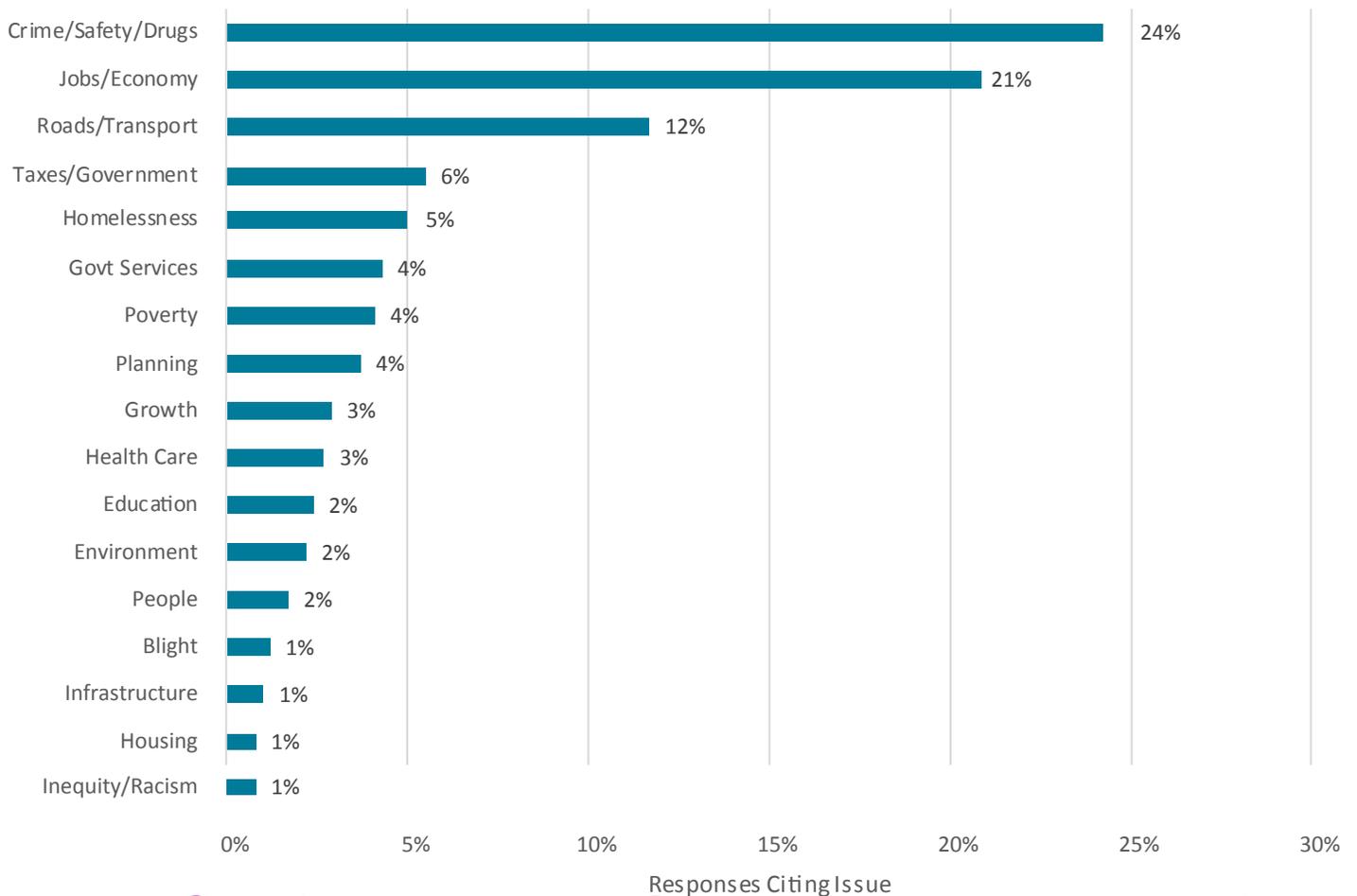
To understand which issues were important to the Spokane community overall, the QOL survey included the question, “What is the most important issue facing the Spokane area today?” Responses to this open-ended question were categorized into major themes (see Section 7, Technical Appendix for more information).

The most frequently cited issues were crime, which included concerns about safety and drugs, with 24% of responses, followed by jobs/economy (21%), and roads/transport (12%) (see figure 6).

The most frequently cited issues facing the Spokane area were:

- *Crime (including safety and drugs)*
- *Jobs and the economy*
- *Roads and transportation*

Figure 6. Citizen Report of Issues Facing Spokane Area, Spokane County 2015



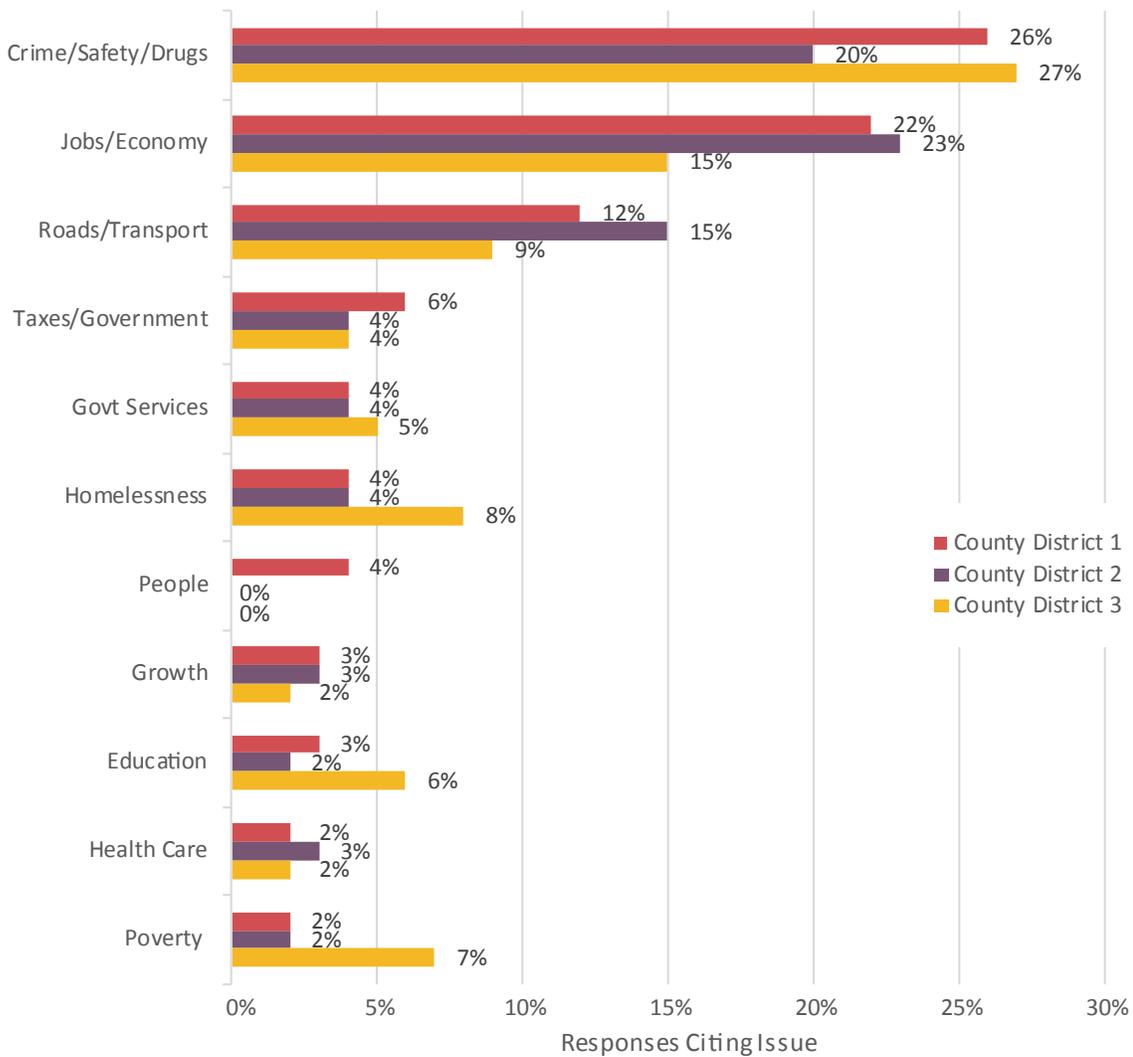


By Spokane County Commissioner District

There were notable differences in what the residents in each county commissioner district were concerned with (see figure 7). Crime was the most cited issue for residents in Spokane County Commissioner District 1 (26%) and district 3 (27%). Residents of Spokane County Commissioner District 2 were most often concerned with the economy and jobs (23%).

- Residents of Spokane County districts 1 and 3 were most often concerned with crime.
- Residents of Spokane County Commissioner District 2 were most often concerned with the economy and jobs.

Figure 7. Citizen Report of Issues Facing Spokane Area by Commissioner District, Spokane County 2015



By neighborhood

Although there was general agreement that crime, jobs, and roads were among the most important issues, residents in some neighborhoods had different concerns. For example, blight was the number one issue cited in the Logan/Chief Garry neighborhood and homelessness was the number one issue cited in the Emerson/Garfield neighborhood. In the West Central/Riverside neighborhood, the most commonly cited issue was poverty.

Issues were ranked by the number of respondents who named that issue. The top 10 issues facing “the Spokane area” are highlighted in figure 8. Darker shades represent high ranking issues (i.e. 1 or 2) and lighter shades represent low ranking issues (i.e. 9 or 10).

How to read figure 8:

- *Look down the rows on the left-hand side to find the neighborhood of interest. Neighborhoods are listed first in alphabetical order.*
- *Look across the column headings at the top of the chart to find the issue of interest.*
- *Find where the neighborhood row and issue column meet.*
- *The number in that cell is how neighborhood residents ranked that issue.*

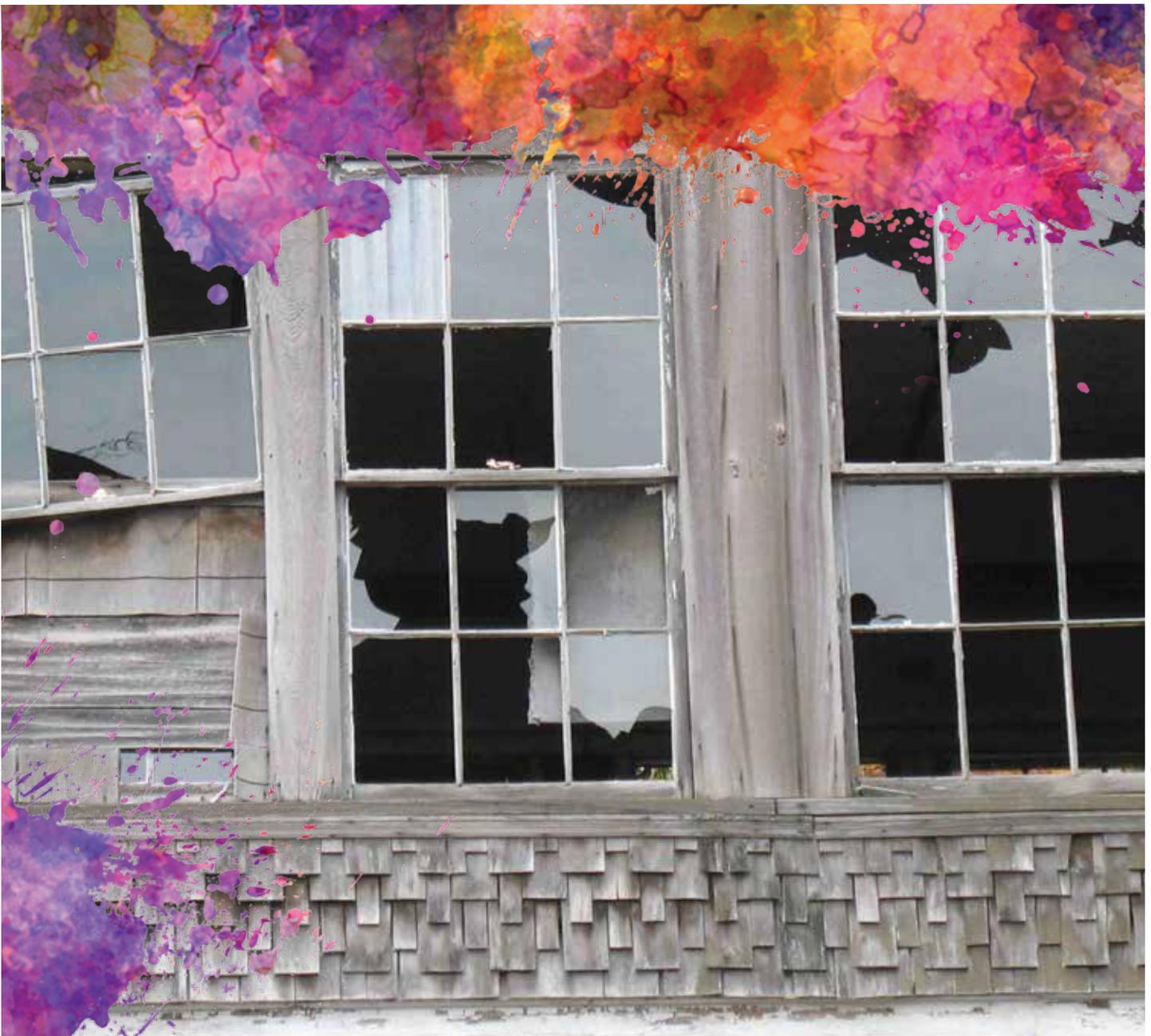


Figure 8. Top 10 Issues Facing Spokane Area by Neighborhood, Spokane County 2015

NEIGHBORHOOD/ AREA	Crime/Safety/Drugs	Jobs/Economy	Roads/Transport	Taxes/Government	Government/Services	Homelessness	Growth	Environment	Poverty	Education	Health Care	Planning	Infrastructure	People	Inequality/Racism	North-South Freeway	Mental Health	Housing	Blight	Activities
Balboa/ South Indian Trail	1	4	2	9	7		5			8	10	3	6							
Bemiss/Minnehaha	1	2	4	7	8	5		10		3	6	9								
Chattaroy/ Deer Park	3	1	2	7	9			10	5				8	6					4	
Cheney/ Medical Lake	1	2	4	6	5	3		9	7				8							10
Cliff/Cannon	2	1	6		5	4	10	7	3	9					8					
Comstock	1	2	3	7	4	8		9	6			5			10					
East Central	1	2	4	7	5	3		10	6			8			9					
East Valley	5	1	3	4	6		8	2		7	10		9							
Edgecliff	3	1	2	4	9			7	5	6				8						10
Emerson/Garfield	3	2	4	5	6	1	9		8		7								10	
Five Mile	1	2	7	4		5	3	10	6			8			9					
Hillyard/Whitman	1	2	4	3	7	9	5				6								10	8
Lincoln Heights	4	1	2	5	3	6	7	9			10	8								
Logan/Chief Garry	2	3	4	10		5			6						9	8		7	1	
Manito	1	2	10	8		7	6		3		5		9		4					
Mead/Green Bluff/ Mt Spokane	1	2	3	4	7		9	10		6				8		5				
Nevada/ Lidgerwood	1	2	4	8	6	3			5		7	10			9					
Newman Lake	2	1	3	4	5				7	8	6		10		9					
Nine Mile/Colbert	2	1	3	4	6	9	5		7	10						8				
North Hill	1	3	2	6		7	10	8		5		9		4						
North Indian Trail	1	2	3	7	4	5	6	8		10	9									
Northwest	1	3	4	6		8	9		7	5	10	2								
Opportunity	1	2	3	10	7	5	4			6				8			9			
Otis Orchard/ Liberty Lake	2	1	4	6	5	10	8			7		9		3						
Rockwood	1	3	4	7		5	9		2	8		10					6			
South Palouse	2	1	3	4	5			9	8	7		10	6							
Southgate	3	1	2		7	4	5	9				6	8		10					
University	1	3	6	10	8	4	5	7			2	9								
Upriver/Millwood	1	2	4	6	5	3	7				9	10		8						
West Central/ Riverside	3	5	6		2	4	7	8	1	10				9						
West Hills/ Browne's/Latah	1	2	3	8	7	5	4	6	9		10									
West Plains	2	1	7	6	5			8	4		10	3		9						
West Valley	1	2	3	10	5		6		8		4		9						7	

Note: More information about each issue grouping and their definitions can be found in Section 7, Technical Appendix.



Issues facing specific neighborhoods within Spokane County

To understand what issues were important within individual communities and neighborhoods (vs. the greater Spokane area), the QOL survey also included the question: “What is the most important issue facing your area, neighborhood or community today?” This question was asked of residents throughout Spokane County. Responses to this open-ended question were categorized into major themes (see Section 7, Technical Appendix for category descriptions). Figure 9 represents the responses as cited by Spokane County residents.

Crime was the neighborhood issue most cited by Spokane County residents (33%), followed by roads/transportation (14%), and jobs/economy (10%).

By County Commissioner District

There were a number of differences in neighborhood issues cited by Spokane County Commissioner District (figure 10). All districts were concerned with crime, although Spokane County Commissioner District 3 was more so (35%). Similarly, all districts were concerned with roads/transportation, but Spokane County Commissioner District 1 (18%) was more concerned than district 2 (14%) or district 3 (11%). Job and economy concerns were less often cited by residents in Spokane County District 2 (8%), than in either district 1 (10%) or district 3 (12%). Issues with animals were a notable issue of concern for residents in district 2 (8%).

Figure 9. Citizen Report of Issues Facing Spokane Communities, Spokane County 2015

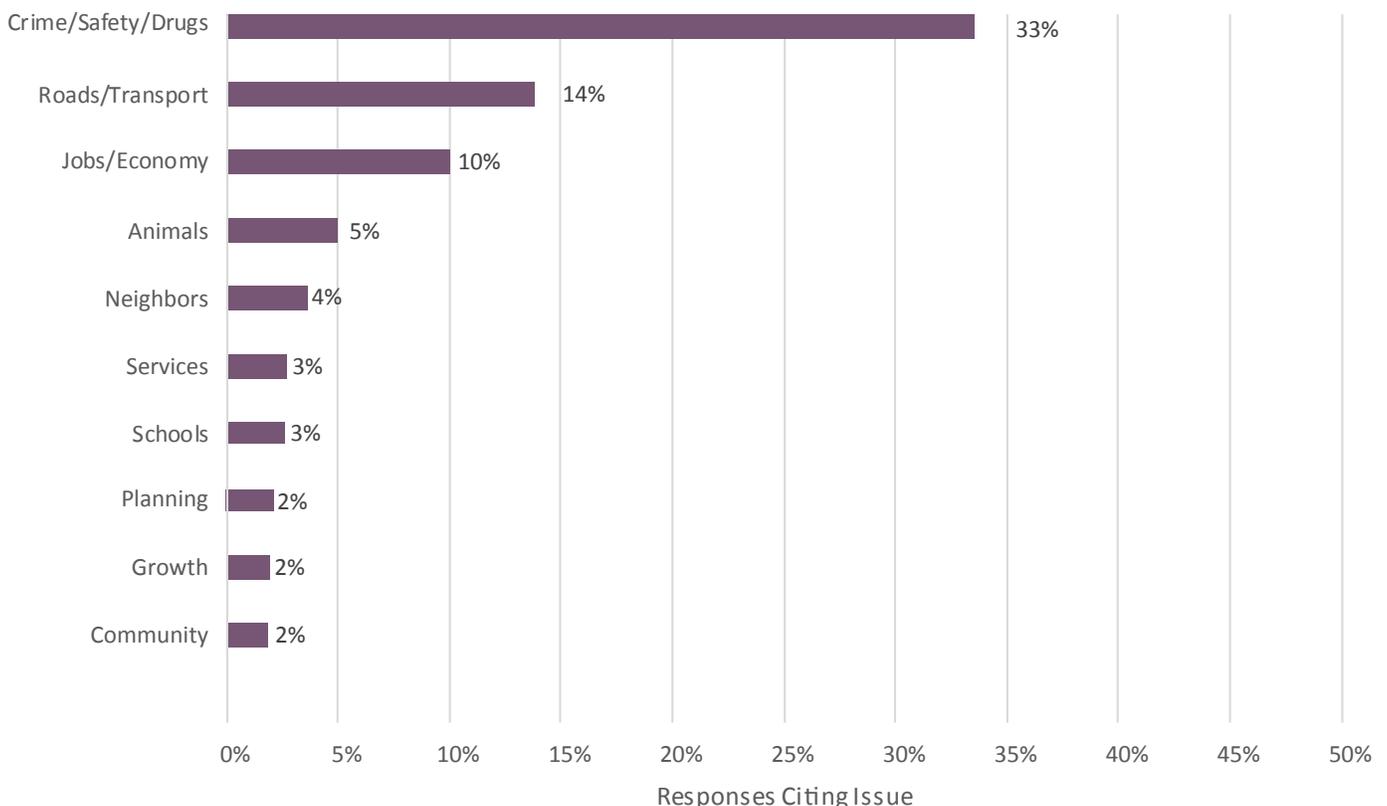
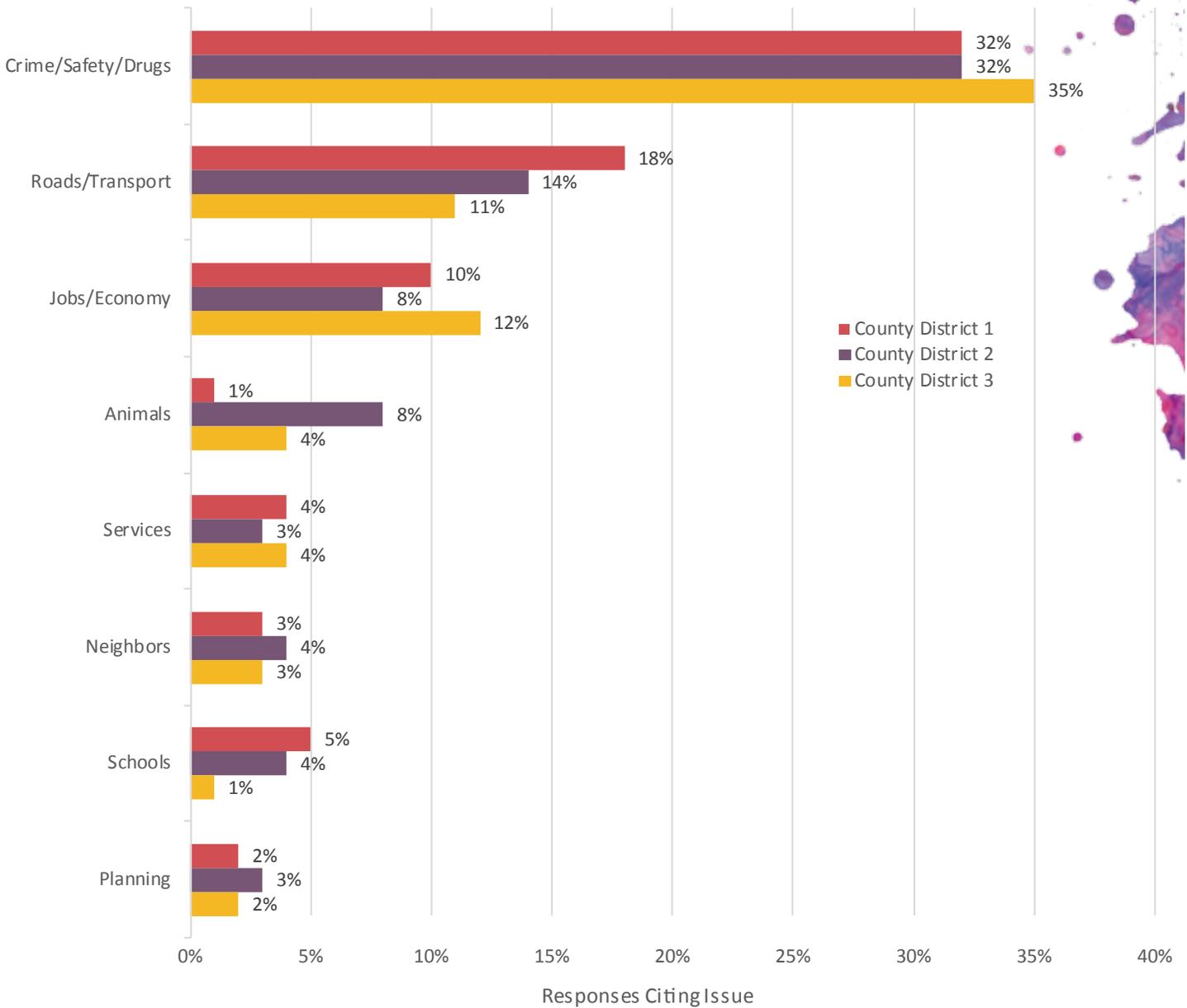


Figure 10. Issues Facing Neighborhoods by Spokane County Commissioner District, Spokane County 2015



By neighborhood

Residents of individual neighborhoods agreed that crime, roads, and jobs were important issues facing their respective neighborhoods (see figure 11). However, some issues were identified that were specific to certain neighborhoods. For example, the most-cited issue in Edgecliff and Logan/Chief Garry neighborhoods was animals. Schools were among the top five most-cited issues for Chattaroy/Deer Park, Lincoln Heights, Manito, Newman Lake, North Indian Trail, Opportunity, Otis

Orchard/Liberty Lake, and Upriver/Millwood neighborhoods. By way of comparison, sidewalks were in the top five most-cited neighborhood issues for Cliff Cannon and West Valley neighborhoods. Planning, which included responses related to government, economy, or general planning in the city or county, and services, which included responses related to utilities (water, sewer, electric, roads), and city/county services (plowing, garbage pickup, etc.), were also commonly cited. Figure 11 presents the top 10 issues facing individual neighborhoods as reported by their residents.

Figure 11. Top 10 Issues Specific to Neighborhoods by Neighborhood, Spokane County 2015

NEIGHBORHOOD/ AREA	Crime/Safety/Drugs	Roads/Transport	Jobs/Economy	Services	Planning	Neighbors	Growth	Schools	Taxes/Government	Community	Rental Properties	Environment	Homelessness	Sidewalks	Animals	Activities	Home Values	Construction	Infrastructure	Police	Parks	Social Services	Housing	Food	Appearance	Bikes	People	Diversity	Crosswalks	Health
Balboa/ South Indian Trail	1	2	3	5			9		4	10				8			7	6												
Bemiss/Minnehaha	2	3	1	10		4				6					9			7		9					5					
Chattaroy/ Deer Park	2	4	1	9		7	5	3	10							6							8							
Cheney/ Medical Lake	1	2	3	4	7		9	8	10	5		6																		
Cliff/Cannon	1	2	4	6	9	7							8	3	10			5												
Comstock	1	2	4	10	8		6						3	7			9	5												
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East Valley	1	4	8		7	9	6	10								3				5	3									
Edgecliff	2	3	4			10		6	7						1			5					9		8					
Emerson/Garfield	1	10	2		6	5	7			4		3					9							8						
Five Mile	3	1	5	8	6	10		2	4			7											9							
Hillyard/Whitman	1	3	2		9	5			8	7	4			6			10													
Lincoln Heights	2	1	5			4	9	3		6	7			10	8															
Logan/Chief Garry	2	8	4		10	3				7			5		1	6						9								
Manito	1	2		4	8	10		5	6	3										9										8
Mead/GreenBluff/ Mount Spokane	2	1	3	5	8	9	6		7		10	4																		
Nevada/ Lidgerwood	1	4	2	5		3				6	9		8	7		10														
Newman Lake	1	2	6		8		9	4	10	7	5	3																		
Nile Mile/Colbert	1	2	5	7	3	6	10	8	9		4																			
North Hill	1	3	2	6	4	7				10			8			9		5												
North Indian Trail	2	1	9	7			3	5		4	6				8		10													
Northwest	1	2	3	10	8	4					5	9	7																6	
Opportunity	2	1	4	7		3		5	9	8	6								10											
Otis Orchard/ Liberty Lake	2	1	7	4	10		6	5	9									8									3			

Note: More information about each issue grouping and their definitions can be found in Section 7, Technical Appendix.

NEIGHBORHOOD/ AREA	Crime/Safety/Drugs	Roads/Transport	Jobs/Economy	Services	Planning	Neighbors	Growth	Schools	Taxes/Government	Community	Rental Properties	Environment	Homelessness	Sidewalks	Animals	Activities	Home Values	Construction	Infrastructure	Police	Parks	Social Services	Housing	Food	Appearance	Bikes	People	Diversity	Crosswalks	Health
Rockwood	1	3	2	9	5	4			10	8			6											7						
South Palouse	2	1	5	4	3	7	6		8			10					9													
Southgate	2	1	5		3		8		10	6	4			7												9				
University	1	2	5		10	6	8	9								4	7				4									
Upriver/Millwood	1	3	2		9		6	4		10	5					7	8													
West Central/ Riverside	1	4	3			9				2	10		7	8								6		5						
West Hills/ Browne's/Latah	1	2	5	6	9		3				7	10	4									8								
West Plains	2	4	1	3	7	5	6		8			9				10														
West Valley	1	7	2			4				3		8	6	5	10													9		

Conclusion

Citizen satisfaction is closely connected to quality of life. While quality of life is affected by personal resources such as health, social relationships and income, it is also greatly influenced by the community in which one lives. Aspects of the community impacting one’s life range from availability of jobs and affordability of housing, to the availability and quality of services and public resources from both government and non-government sectors.

In the absence of systematic measurement in communities, special interest groups or the “vocal minority” can have undue influence on the decisions of government officials and policymakers, sometimes to the detriment of a community’s most vulnerable and under-served citizens.

Generally, surveys that assess citizens’ satisfaction with government, and the services it provides, are one of the best ways of measuring needs, concerns, and priorities of citizens. Doing so in a way that represents the population in its entirety, such as the Spokane QOL survey, can be particularly useful, while notably requiring a substantial community investment. Results of these surveys provide a high-quality source of information that can be used to strategically guide community priorities in long-term planning, budgeting and overall management of government services.

This report found that Spokane County residents’ satisfaction with government services varied notably by type of service, identifying areas of opportunity for growth and improvement throughout the community. Crime, jobs and roads were top concerns for county residents. Residents also cited crime, jobs and roads when asked about issues affecting their specific neighborhood, although there was substantially more variation in what each neighborhood thought was important.

As stated previously, this report was intended to spark conversation; further analyses are available upon request. Additional dialogue with individual community or resident groups about these results could help guide efforts to improve citizen satisfaction with local government services and overall quality of life in Spokane County.

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