



# CITY OF KALAMAZOO

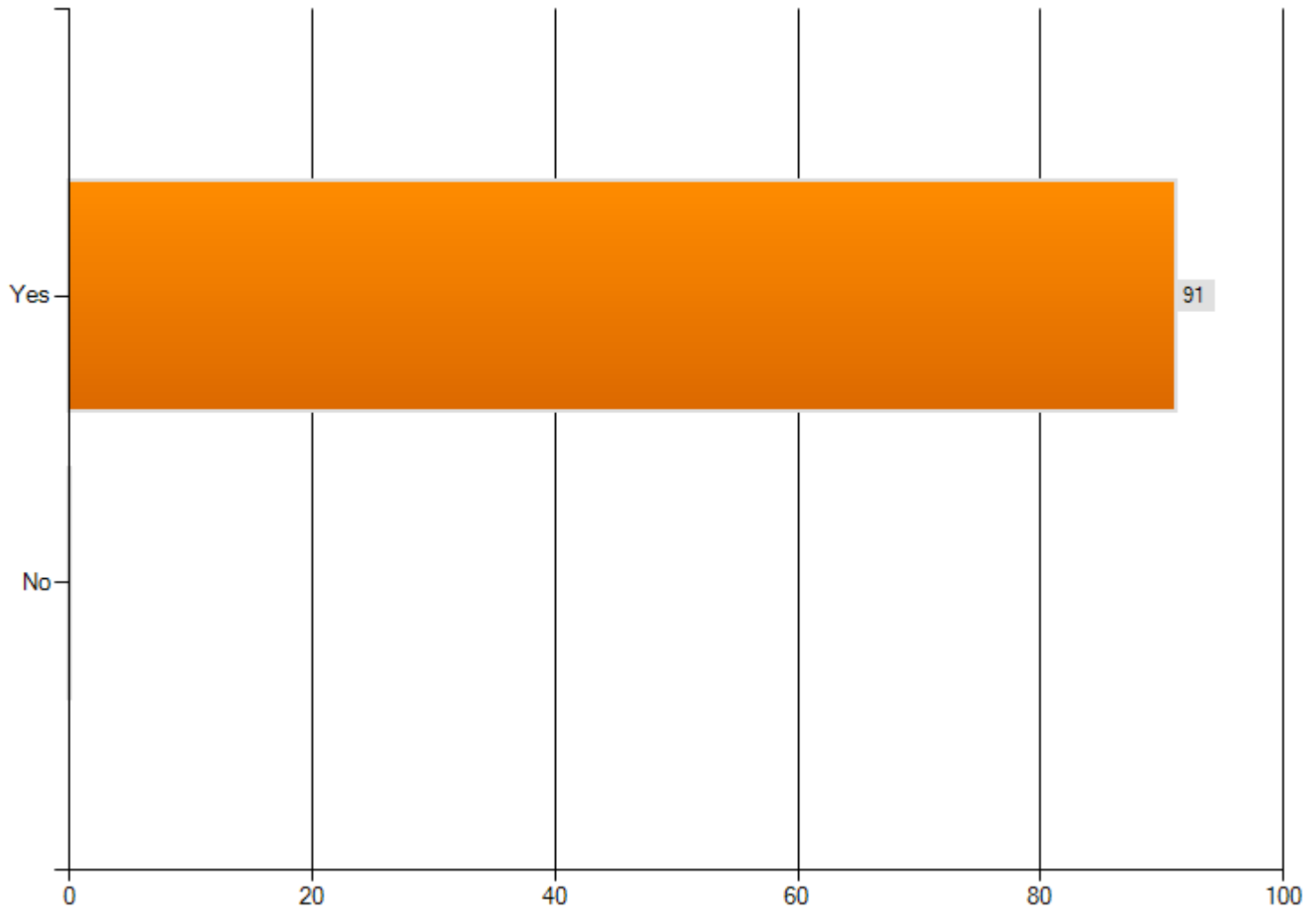
## Community Relations Board

2010 Online Budget Questionnaire  
Updated November 12, 2009

Online Survey Results  
118 Total Responses

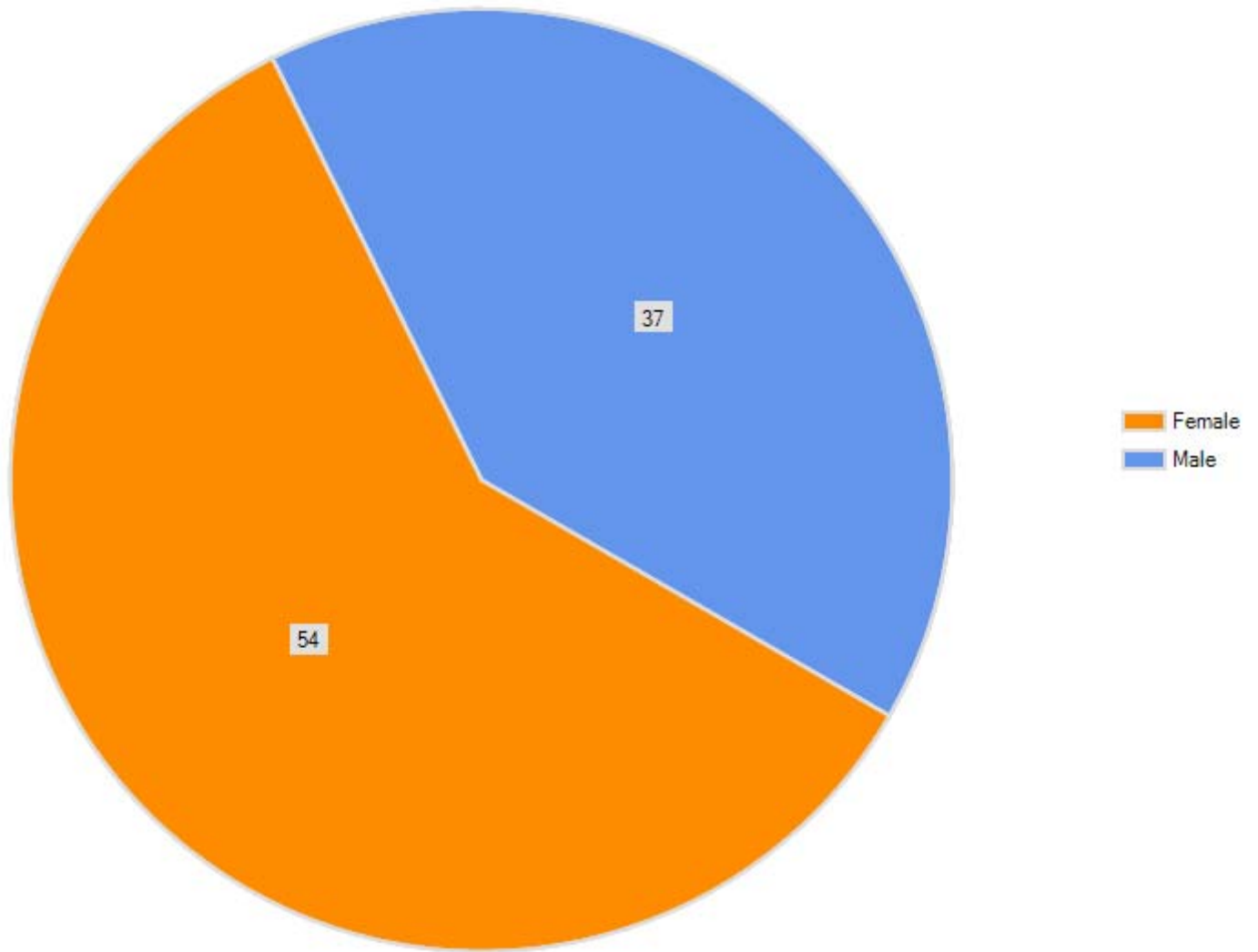
### City Resident

91	Yes	27	No
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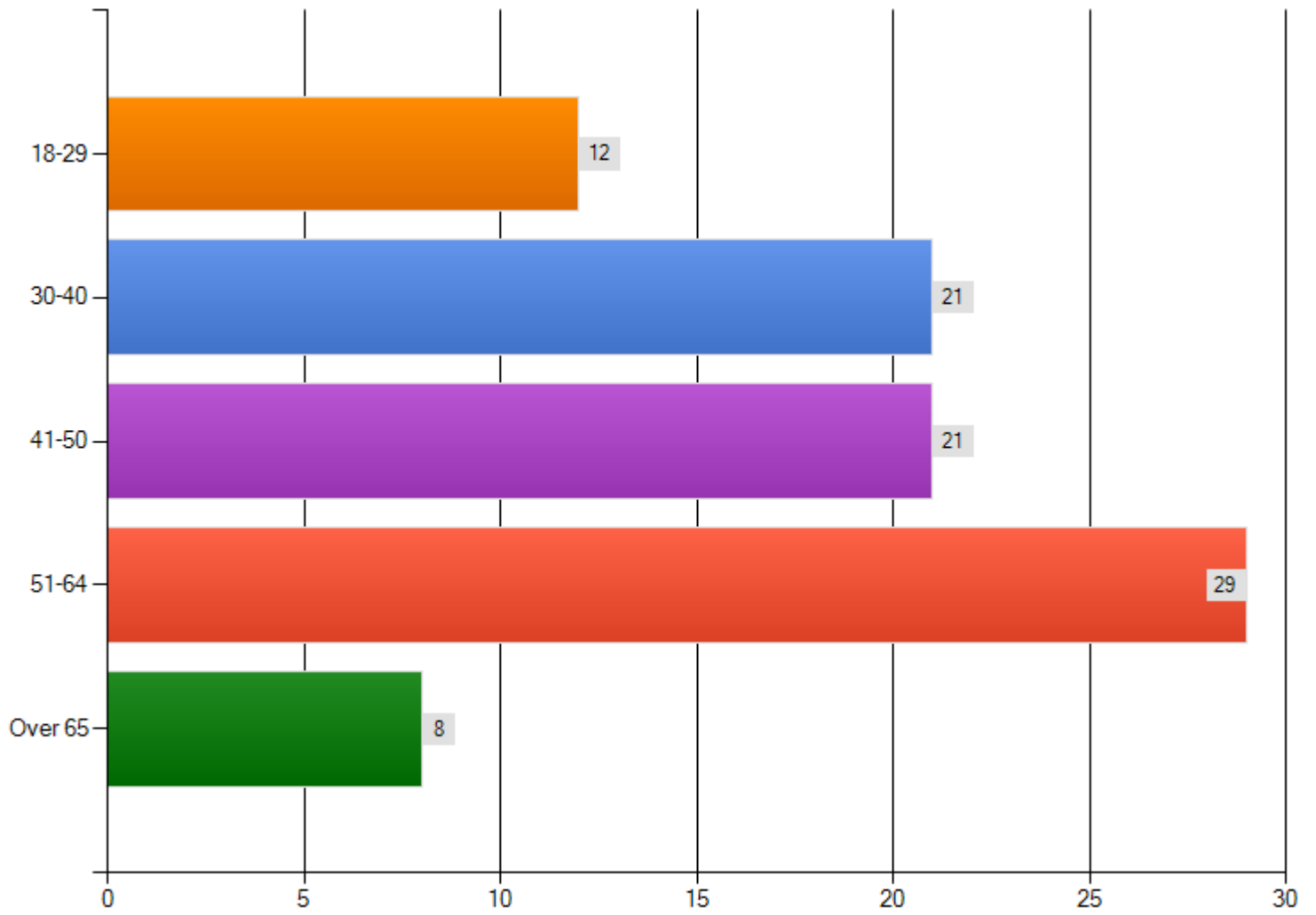
**Gender**

<b>54</b>	Female	<b>37</b>	Male
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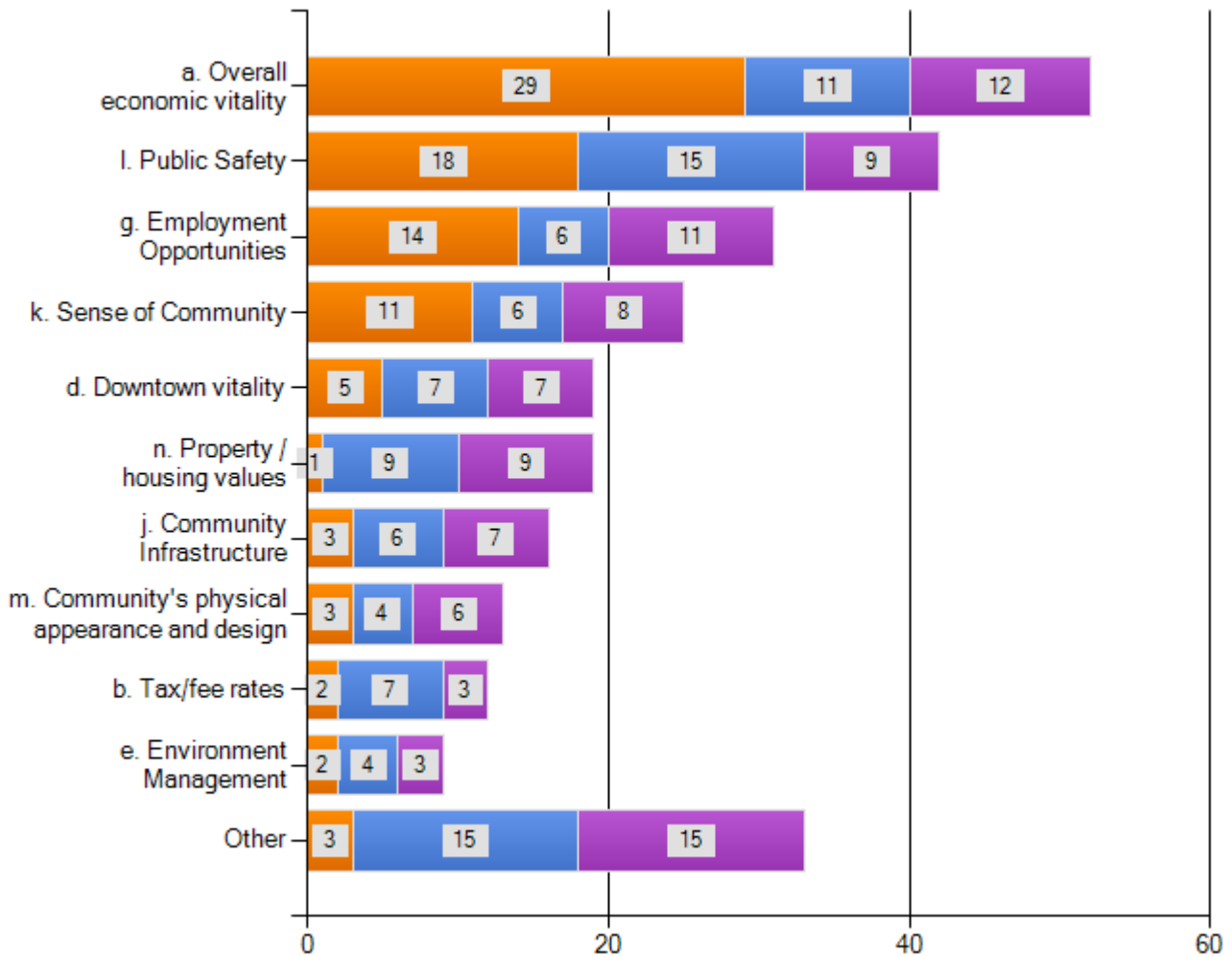
# Age

<b>12</b>	18-29	<b>21</b>	30-40	<b>20</b>	41-50	<b>29</b>	51-64	<b>8</b>	Over 65
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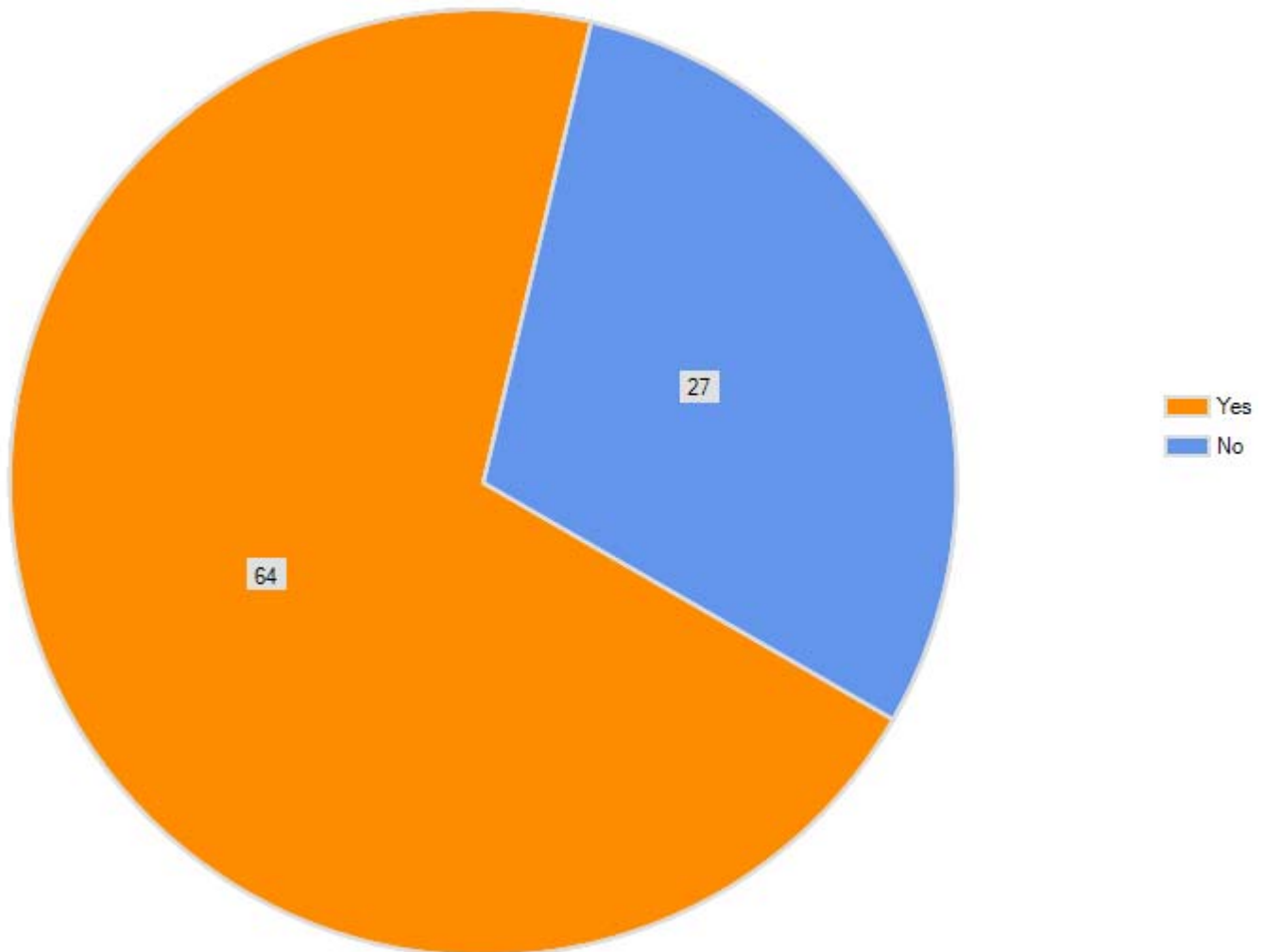
**1. What are the most important criteria the City of Kalamazoo can use to evaluate the quality of life in our community? Top three options ranked.**

a. Overall economic vitality	b. Tax/fee rates	c. Open space
d. Downtown vitality	e. Environmental management	f. Local government management
g. Employment opportunities	h. Transportation	i. Recreation activities
j. Community infrastructure	k. Sense of community	l. Public safety
m. Community's physical appearance and design	n. Property / housing values	o. Civic engagement
p. Other (please describe)		



1.	C: Quit trying to re-write the agreement - leave Colony Farms wild; L: Don't cut personnel; Q: Do not need downtown arena
2.	Racial integration within city (black/white neighborhoods)
3.	Need to get POLICE to do there JOB
4.	Lower taxes for Downtown residents # 1 !!!!!
5.	Increase tax base, not raise taxes

**2. Do you believe the financial crisis in the State of Michigan and/or the Nation has affected your local government's ability to deliver services? Yes or No**



## If so, how?

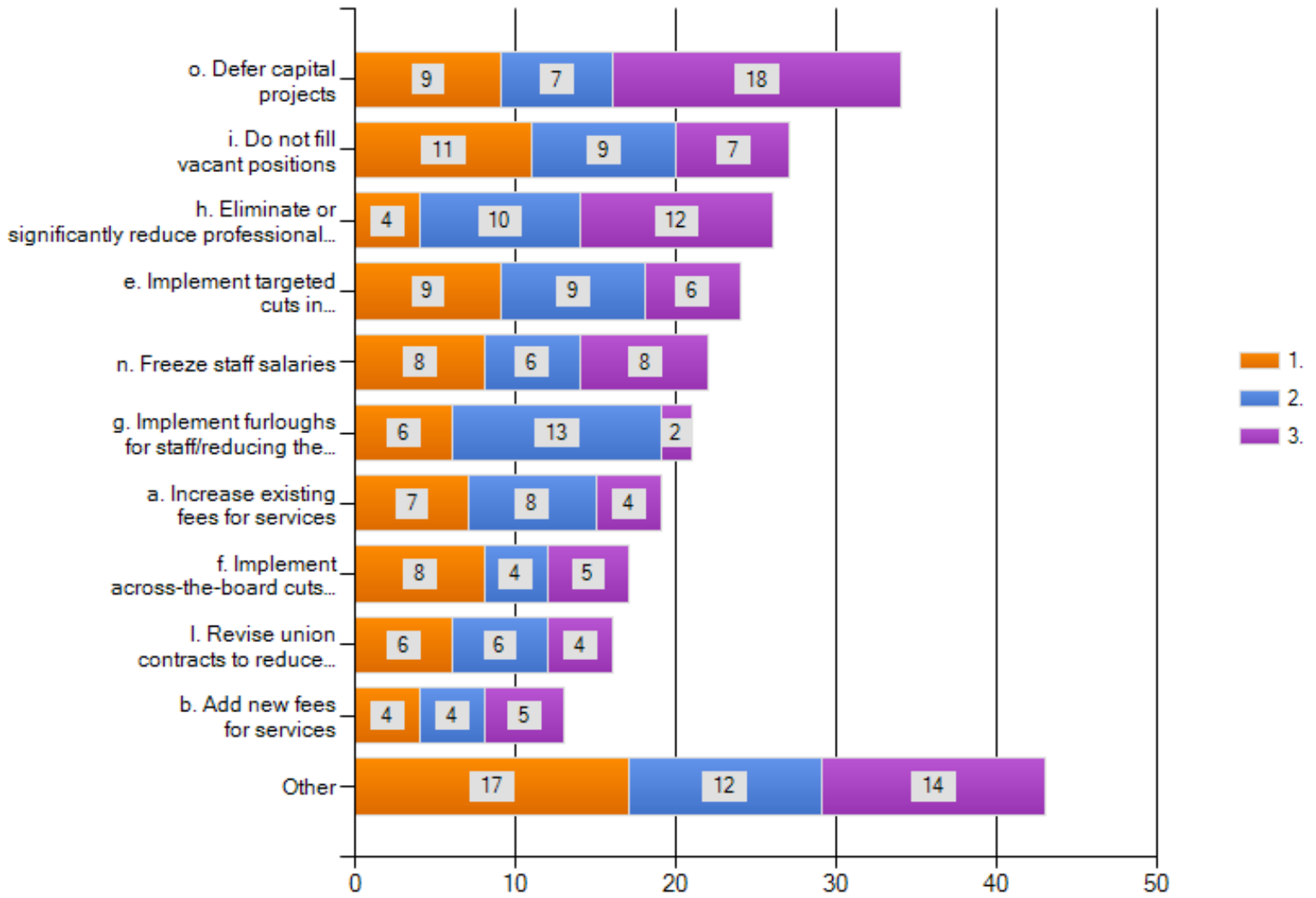
1.	Reduced revenue, causing reduces services
2.	From my understanding of how the City gets its funding for services, the reduced revenue sharing monies and the revenues generated from reduced property values are severely hurting the City's ability to deliver services. So far, I personally have not seen a reduction in fire/police services. Streets are in bad shape generally
3.	Recent city employee layoff notices. This will affect what I consider heretofore a well-run city. Also, housing issues. Can Kalamazoo obtain stimulus monies to paint/fix-up while employing city residents in this effort?
4.	Not enough money to pay for everything needed, particularly infrastructure improvements
5.	Reduced revenue, increased crime
6.	Revenue sharing
7.	I think they are taking it out on the lower income population, those who can least afford it
8.	With less money flowing down to local governments, there is increased pressure to find ways to increase incoming cash or reduce outgoing by cutting services or staff
9.	Yes I do believe it has although I can offer little in "specifics" to explain my answer. The two areas that I am aware of... House sales are down and people out of jobs are going to be the most obvious. Local government is not responsible for some of the cuts that come from the State, i.e. education and can hardly peck up all the loss. Nor is the local government able to correct unemployment or the sales and property values decline . . . all creating a vicious circle
10.	Revenue sharing cut. Billions given to banks who will pay large sums to the people who got us here. That money could have been used to help states that would have helped local governments
11.	Transportation cuts
12.	Loss of public investment and private access to credit - reduced job maintenance/development
13.	Probably- times are tough all over. Tighten the belt for awhile. We lived through the 30's depression. People can make it if they pull together and eliminate the greedy ones. They are a major problem through the centuries. A tough break to up rent
14.	Honestly, I'm sure that it has, although I personally haven't experienced any negative repercussions
15.	Actually i don't know how it has affected local government
16.	Reduction of programs, including Health Dept. services (gynecological services, birth control subsidies, etc) have impacted the citizens of Kalamazoo. For example, the birth control program that ended about 5 years back took away education and options for birth control for low-income women. This can result in higher costs (health care for unplanned pregnancies, etc) long-term
17.	The economic downturn has limited the amount of money available for the vitality of Kalamazoo and Downtown Kalamazoo specifically. Services that provide safety and the physical appearance of downtown have been stretched
18.	We are too reliant on the state and federal government

19.	Increase safety issues, More section 8 housing. Poor=decrease in quality of living for all in kazoo
20.	State funding
21.	Snow seemed to get plowed a lot less often last year
22.	The business climate has suffered on a State and local level
23.	Ask yourself why you would in these economic times increase the wages for HR, Finance and increase their level status so they cannot be touched during the turndown and the city manager then put out a stupid poll like this. All you have done is manipulate the system to work in your favor. You already know what you are going to do. The city manager should be fired for several months earlier putting out a note in the city link stating that the economic turndown has not touched Kalamazoo. The pension fund should have been put into bonds where it would not have lost interest instead of losing millions. Now they want to cut lower end jobs because of their mistakes. All wages should have been frozen a long time ago without HR, Finance and all the higher ups suddenly getting promotions and raises. Does this make sense in these times? They are only worried about their own and not the good of the city and its people
24.	But it should.
25.	The population in need has increased not only in numbers, but in the types of services that they need. There is a greater demand on our public services and they are tasked to do more with less. For the first time in 5 years I've had to rely on several public services to get some sort of help and/or resolution within my neighborhood. I've seen an increase in demand for animal control, child protective services and public safety. I did not witness an effective resolution from any of these public services in the 18 months of working with a single family. I did witness an effective resolution from a non-governmental nonprofit organization. This experience was disappointing for me to learn how disjointed and bureaucratic the public services are in downtown Kalamazoo
26.	If they begin cutting City jobs, the services rendered will become less effective
27.	State funding has been reduced
28.	Less resources
29.	The city spreads the tax money around on all services. They should discontinue low priority services and provide enough funding for essential services
30.	I've generally been impressed by the level of maintained service in the city, but I know that public institutions like the library and others have struggled with having to cut back programming, etc
31.	Un needed cuts in public safety
32.	Tighter budget means you need to prioritize basics
33.	Very generally---in how our state/community is perceived
34.	The police did not do very good before they need to stop trying to make friends and enforce the laws
35.	We have lost taxable property value, we have lost jobs and so neighbors: less money more need
36.	Less state and federal money equates into less funding for local government
37.	Deteriorated infrastructure, less money to schools

38.	Cut to funding from State will affect everything from roads to school funding. All areas are vital to our city but not funded fully by the city
39.	I think the City has been spared the worst of the impact - so far. Good government and a relatively strong local economy can be thanked for that, but I know fiscal "belts" are being tightened at City Hall and I suspect the 2011 budget will be even more lean. Eventually, local government's ability to deliver services will be affected and felt at the neighborhood and household levels. If this impact is happening now, I haven't experienced it yet
40.	Without the stimulus money, I think the city was having a hard time keeping up with roads and other necessities
41.	Everyone MUST cut back to cover losses. We cannot keep things at the level we would like to keep. Cuts have to be made even if they hurt. Salaries must be the first thing we look at to cut
42.	Less money for schools, public safety library
43.	Operating funds have decreased. Too many using services and not paying for them
44.	I assume revenue sharing will be impacted
45.	I assume revenue sharing will be impacted
46.	Less revenue sharing equals less revenue for the city equals less ability to invest in local priorities
47.	Reduction in services provided
48.	Residents benefit less from the property taxes they pay. Kalamazoo has extremely high property tax rates compared to other areas (but a depressed housing market). The services we could have are lessened by the state's inability to cut services and control budgets
49.	Not yet, my City does a wonderful job of making it work. I know cuts are coming, but Kalamazoo always finds a way!

**3. With that in mind, how should your local government balance the budget during this financial crisis? Top three options ranked.**

	a. Increase existing fees for services		b. Add new fees for services		c. Reduce services
	d. Eliminate services		e. Implement <i>targeted</i> cuts in expenditures		f. Implement <i>across-the-board</i> cuts in expenditures
	g. Implement furloughs for staff/reducing the number of hours worked		h. Eliminate or significantly reduce professional development budget		i. Do not fill vacant positions
	j. Lay off staff		k. Eliminate positions		l. Revise union contracts to reduce pay or benefits
	m. Reduce salaries		n. Freeze staff salaries		o. Defer capital projects
	p. Other (please describe)				



1.	Don't know how much this is really saving, but it seems like the right thing to do in these tough times
2.	Bring students closer to downtown area. Let's look at how effective this has been in Ann Arbor
3.	No Tax increases. Response above based on Fees not being defined as taxes
4.	No lay offs to staff. Cut a project over some ones job
5.	Eliminate or significantly reduce professional development budget; Eliminate or significantly reduce travel budget
6.	Do not eliminate professional development, what a silly idea
7.	Bid out less, and have city employees do more
8.	Stop funding neighborhood workers
9.	Drug test to eliminate those who are not adhering to policy, those who are misusing city property for personal use and not repaying city should be reprimanded i.e. city cell phones
10.	My first choice is 4 day work week
11.	Tax people fairly on their property. People here before '94 way underpay. I pay more than twice what most of my neighbors pay. Not fair for some to subsidize others. Everyone needs to pitch in
12.	Put a hold on road construction...well at least limit it. I see a lot of road construction going on around town, while I understand the safety implications for SOME of the repairs, I don't understand the urgency. Yes, I understand that it creates jobs, TEMPORARILY. The #1 issue I have is careless spending. While we always say that today's kids are our future, our efforts are NOT proving this. We continue to put a band-aid on our economic troubles rather than to fix the real issues. The real issue is this, we have no sense of community and we are proving this to be true to our kids. We're talking about eliminating educational programs and restructuring the benefits of teachers. Is this our real priority? Since the parents and adults of today aren't educated enough to "get it" lets not educate our kids some more so we can continue this trend. Maybe I'm missing something but it just seems that our priorities are all wrong. If the economy is truly as bad as the media portrays it, than I think we can all deal with a few bumpy roads. Or at least deal with roads where pot holes are just filled. I think we can deal with no raises for those who don't fulfill their job requirements. WE can definitely do more to ENCOURAGE people to succeed or to do well. When was the last time that the whole front page of the paper, or news cast, was dedicated strictly to the good going on in the community. If we want change, than we need to do some more recognizing of the improvements that are happening everyday. LET'S ENCOURAGE!
13.	Create opps. for youth
14.	4 day work week for governmental entities
15.	Charge a city tax for people who work in the city but live outside of it. Especially foe Public Safety and School employees
16.	Don't waste money on a downtown arena that will lose money because it doesn't have good highway access
17.	Stop spending money on so many social programs; also gear the community more to a self sustaining economy with little to no reliance on state funding and almost nill reliance from the

	bloated federal government
18.	Implement a city income tax. reduce property tax
19.	Require non-profits to pay for services
20.	Require non-profits to pay for services
21.	Increase taxes by .5 or 1 cent in the county
22.	Organize more volunteer and training/intern opportunities to offset some of the expenses