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Community Interview Project

Developed for Lane County
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Project Overview

The objective of the Lane County Community Interview Project was to gain a better understanding of what needs to happen in order for voters to support Lane County government, including public safety. The method selected for accomplishing this was to collect the ideas, opinions and insights from a cohort consisting of City of Eugene Neighborhood Association (NA) Chairs/Co-Chairs that typically hasn't had input into County government concerns and challenges. The objective is that a fresh perspective will offer valuable information for developing strategy.

Organization

This project report includes an Overview, Summary of Key Findings, Primary and Secondary Recommendations, Full Findings workup and supportive appendices.

Methodology

The project employed a two-step discovery process. In step one, several elected officials (Appendix A) were asked what types of questions (Appendix B) they'd most like to have answers to regarding pre-existing County and public safety challenges. In step two, the chairs and/or co-chairs of all 19 City of Eugene neighborhood associations (Appendix C) were interviewed using the questions suggested by elected officials. This second step involved interviewing the neighborhood association sample using a twenty-item questionnaire (Appendix D) with a selection of dichotomous, multiple choice and open-ended questions. These interviews were conducted by telephone and audio recorded.

Neighborhood Association Interviewees

The average age for 19 interview respondents is 55 years. Almost all of these people have lived in the Eugene area for many years – the average being 23 years. 13 of the 19 interviewees identified their political affinity as “liberal,” three as “moderate” and three more as “conservative. As these were city residents, they might have been expected to be more focused on the City of Eugene and the issues facing it, and not the problems vexing Lane County. The results of the interviews do not support this assumption.

Findings Note

Some of the comments that led to the findings are critical of Lane County government. Other comments and findings run counter to prevailing thought. None of those comments have been toned down by this writer. In the interest of readability, the interviewee comments found in the Findings section are not produced verbatim (tapes are available).

Summary of Key Findings

The following key areas are drawn from the Full Findings section (pages 7-20) which lay's out interviewee responses to all 20 questions. These key findings represent the areas that are most often commented upon by the interviewees. As such, they stand out.

Public Trust

In the perception of interviewees the trust afforded Lane County government and the county commissioner's has been sliding for sometime. Interestingly, the respondent criticisms did not target individual commissioners but rather the Board and the County in general. In the opinion of many interviewees this situation has been due to a number of considerations: ongoing money measure failures, over-hyping funding threats, public squabbling on Board, Lane County gaffes featured in local media stories and lack of citizen input and involvement opportunities to name a handful. As a result, County voters are now more sensitized to, and suspicious of, things with the name of Lane County on them. See questions 2, 3, 7, 14, 17, 19 in the Full Findings for additional information.

Information/Communication

For many interviewees, Lane County government appears to be an amorphous bureaucracy that is dense and difficult to understand. This perception, dissuades many from going any further in their thinking. During their interviews, respondents strongly indicated that it was important for them personally to be aware and informed of the challenges facing the County. Amplifying on this response, was the fact that nearly every interviewee thought that there was also a strong need for citizens in general to better understand the problems, challenges and duties of County government. In a nutshell: contact and communication between the public and the county commissioners is desired and needed. See questions 3, 4, 14, 17, 19 in the Full Findings for additional information.

Crime

Many of the interviewee comments regarding public safety seemed at odds with local government pronouncements on the seriousness of crime growth. Most of the research sample thought of Eugene as a low to medium crime area, and Lane County as lower still. Respondents also thought that the crimes in both areas were at the lower-end of the violence continuum, often petty crime related. However, concern for personal safety was identified as a rapidly growing concern, but some respondents wondered if this perception wasn't more driven by the media than by reality. See questions 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16 in the Full Findings for additional information.

Feeling Safe

Nearly all 19 interview respondents mentioned that they "feel safe" in their neighborhoods and in their homes. These two words were often voiced with real conviction by these City of Eugene residents. The reasons given for these positive feelings of safety were police presence and response capability. One must wonder then,

how the residents of unincorporated Lane County would express their thoughts on this same subject. See questions 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16 in the Full Findings Section for source information.

Funding Strategy

The majority of the respondents thought that any county money measure request should start within the community rather than within the Board of County Commissioners (BCC). However, some thought a joint community-BCC effort would work best while a few others thought that a BCC-only effort would do, as that is the job of the Commissioners. The respondent's reasoning for the community-only option is that the County has a poor track record when it comes to creating successful funding requests, and the other element is that a grass roots effort would be viewed as less biased than a government effort, less self-serving, and more credible. See questions 1, 2, 3, 7, 14 in the Full Findings for additional information.

Public Safety System Options

The last interview question presented three public safety system options for interviewees to choose between: 1) split-rate measure where rural county residents without police services would pay one rate that covers both patrols and jails and city residents with police services would just pay for jails, 2) metro-policing concept that would combine Eugene and Springfield police and the Sheriff's Office into one combined entity, and 3) Just-the-Basics model that doesn't provide treatment. Interviewees rated the options:

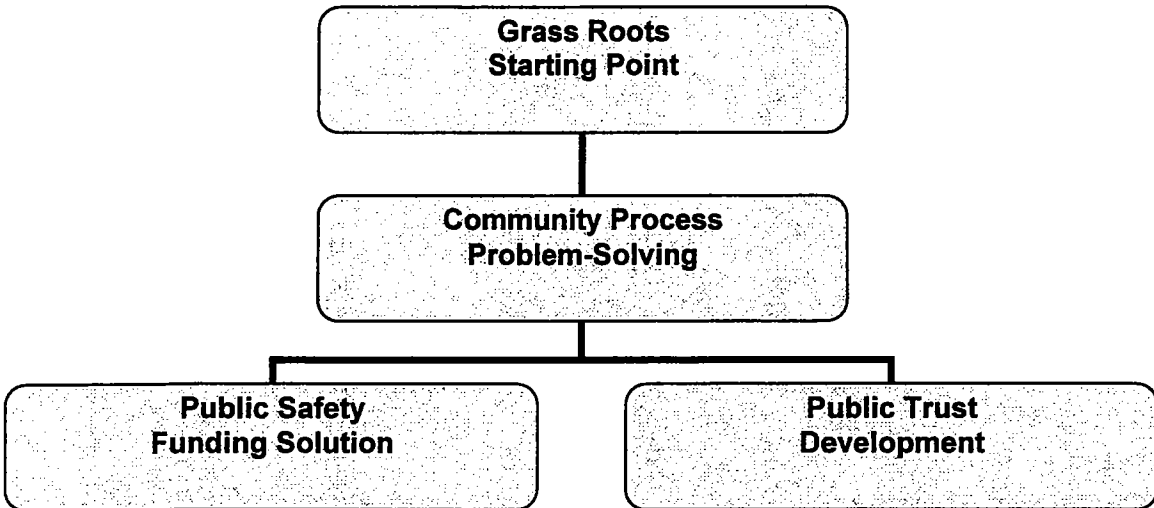
Metro Policing number one (11 ranked it tops)
Split-rate number two (8 ranked it tops)
Just-the-Basics a distant number three (0 ranked it tops)

Although Metro Policing ranked first, this option drew criticism as many deemed it politically and organizationally unrealistic. Its attractiveness was in its coordination, efficiencies (less duplication) and ideals (commonwealth: one for all and...). Not far behind in the ratings was the Split-rate option, which interviews found attractive because of its equability and inherent fairness. In last place was the Just-the-Basics option which lost out because it lacked treatment and other human services; however more than one interviewee thought this option might actually have the best chance of passing with the public. One other system option idea suggested by one of the Neighborhood Association interviewees: To create a separate public safety district with its own taxing authority.

All of the system options had good points to offer, with some having more than others and some being more in tune with the tastes and preferences of the interviewees. See questions 14, 15, 19, 20 in the Full Findings for additional information.

Primary Recommendation

This report recommends that 1) a concerted effort to solve the public safety funding challenge be launched, that 2) it emerge from the grass roots level and that 3) it employ a robust community process. Ideally, this effort will grow organically from the community, rather than out of the Board of Commissioners. It may be that the Board will need to prime the pump i.e., recruiting, public forums, opinion editorials and such.



Currently, two groups are involved in major community process activities. In Eugene, the 26 members of The West Eugene Collaborative have been working on transportation and traffic solutions. The Collaborative is a citizen-centric group. Forty miles to the North, the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition was formed in January 2007. The coalition is composed of many organizations in Corvallis and Benton County that are working together on a dozen fronts to create a sustainable community.

By employing a transparent community process, both Lane County's need for improved trust by the citizenry and the County Sheriff's need for increased revenue can be advanced. The community process being open, collegial, and educative and welcoming of public participation, will help sow the seeds of trust for government. For the Sheriff's Office the result of the process will be a community-generated funding option.

The process will likely involve many people in an ongoing series of meetings where the public or a steering committee conceptualizes and critiques solutions. To get a commitment of this magnitude from community members requires that participants feel that they are needed and have a vital role to play in solving difficult challenges.

On the following page are a number of recommendations in the public safety funding and public trust-building areas. The actual recommendations utilized will depend on what direction the community process moves in. The above recommendation, like those on the next page, was drawn from interviewee comments.

Secondary Recommendations

Public Safety

- Any public safety measure must have endorsements from the cities of Eugene and Springfield, and the unanimous support of the Lane County Commissioners, plus significant others in this community
- Compare Lane County Public Safety funding to that in other similar State of Oregon counties
- By way of a facilitation or community process, public safety services must first be put into a priority ranking

Money Measure Research

- Tax measure must show voters what they are buying, where the money will come from, how the dollars will be spent and the benefit they will receive
- Residents in unincorporated Lane County need to be asked many of the same questions that were asked of the Neighborhood Associations in this project
- Test voters with a variety of money measure possibilities (focused and broad measures) to learn what they find acceptable and how they would vote
- Particular attention needs to be paid to a possible bifurcated tax (split-rate?) measure shaped for meeting both urban and rural needs equitably.

Building Trust

- The County needs to develop a graphic, engaging and reader-friendly publication that informs the public about County government and what's happening. An example of this is the newsletter that EWEB produces
- Continue the Lane County Listening effort with visits by all Lane County Commissioners to inform and answer questions
- Public messages/information needs to be brief, easy to understand, repeated often and sufficiently eye-opening to make people stop, think and reconsider
- Distribution of messages need to be through County Commissioners, opinion editorials, County newsletter, neighborhood associations and other organizations
- Pernicious public perceptions must be changed. Examples include: 1) County employees are overpaid, 2) The County always finds the money that it needs, 3) Lane County Commissioners neither lead nor follow, 4) County government has adequate funds – it's just a matter of allocation, and 5) Lane County uses threats of service cuts to motivate the public to support needed money measures

Full Findings

Question 01: What are the most critical issues facing Lane County government (open-ended)?

Question responses by frequency

County Revenue/Funding Crisis (15 responses)
Public Safety Issues (10 responses)
Environment (3 responses)
Mental Health (3 responses)
Land Use (3 responses)
Local Economy (2 responses)
Social Services (1 response)
Youth Recreation (1 response)

Respondent sample comments

- Tax structure revising is needed
- Allocation of resources and services are needed
- The revolving jail door and meth production stand out

Analysis

Neighborhood Association chairs and co-chairs appear to have a current and reasonable awareness of the fiscal challenges that Lane County government and the Lane County Sheriff's Office face.

Question 02: In your opinion how credible is Lane County government (high/medium/low)?

Question responses by frequency (Note: one respondent did not answer Question 2)

High: 01
Medium: 14
Low: 03

Respondent sample comments

- Understanding local government is below the radar for most citizens (4 responses)
- I do not respect county commissioners (2 responses)
- There is considerable public skepticism regarding Lane County
- County Commissioners squabble over perceived petty issues
- The County could do better or worse with the funds they have

- Faye Stewart and Bill Fleenor are a breath of fresh air
- Compared to the past, the Board of County Commissioners are doing a better job

Analysis

Only one of 18 interview respondents said that Lane County was a highly credible government. Most other respondents (14) gave the County a passing grade and three did not. In addition, four of the respondents mentioned that most people know very little about county government (see “below the radar bullet” above). By itself, this question reveals little. Added to the questions yet to come however, the picture clarifies.

Question 03: What can Lane County government do to earn your trust (open-ended)?

Respondent sample comment

- Inform the public about what the County is doing (5 responses)
- County leaders need to attend more of our area’s meetings as this would help voters to understand the issues facing the County (4 responses)
- I would like to see my County Commissioner representative more often (3 responses)
- The County needs to expand public dialogue opportunities (3 responses)
- Stop the public bickering at County Commissioner Board meetings and find common ground (3 responses)
- The County Commissioners need to be more attuned to citizen needs (2 responses)
- Lane County is not taking leadership and seems to be flailing about
- Lane County needs to have a vision of where it is going
- I don’t understand what the Board of Commissioners do but I do understand what the City Council does
- The Board of Commissioners needs to take the lead in rebuilding trust and in rebuilding the funding structure
- Keep criminals in jail

Analysis

The findings from this productive open-ended question strongly suggest that Lane County government, including the county commissioners, has its work cut out. Many of the above comments are closely related. In this regard, 1) information on important County issues, 2) civic involvement and 3) opportunities for citizen interaction with each other and with the county commissioners are all desired. This information, involvement and interaction theme represents a pattern that surfaces again and again in this report.

Question 04: How important is it for you personally to be aware of the challenges that Lane County government faces and what services it provides (high/medium/low)?

Question responses by frequency

High: 16
Medium: 01
Low: 02

Analysis

It is fairly easy to understand the interviewee's responses to the preceding Question 3 after one has seen the responses to this question. Clearly, about 85 percent of respondents place value in knowing what's cooking at the County level. The same desire for information and involvement that surfaced in Question 3 has surfaced in Question 4, and will again surface in question 19.

Question 05: Do you think of Lane County government as a fiscally poor and struggling government (yes/no)?

Question responses by frequency (Note: one respondent did not answer this question)

Yes: 17
No: 01

Analysis

The answer to this question was easily, quickly and (seemingly) effortlessly responded to by all interviewees.

Question 06: Do you think that Lane County has the dollars to adequately run government (yes/no)?

Question responses by frequency (Note: one person did not answer this question)

Yes: 00
No: 18

Analysis

Among the City of Eugene residents that responded to this question, the fiscal condition of the County was known by all, if not well understood.

Question 7: Were there to be a money measure to support Lane County services, should it start with the County Commissioners or should it start with the community (open-ended)?

Question responses by frequency

BCC: 03
Community: 13
Both: 03

Respondent sample comments

- Community support comes first – it is more credible (3 responses)
- One is torn, but the BCC is supposed to make these types of decisions
- The BCC has unilaterally come up with measures in the past but they have not worked
- Start with the BCC then tie into county groups and neighborhood associations
- BCC must get out in front and lead, however grassroots participation is also a must
- There needs to be citizens on the ground that can create support for it
- It must start with the community – it’s messy and time-consuming but it works
- The BCC has used hype, fear and marketing in the past which has led to voter distrust

Analysis

The preference (13 responses) among respondents is that the community should be highly involved in the search for a funding solution. This leaning is primarily because the community is perceived as having greater credibility than the county. Note: lack of County credibility is another persistent trend that surfaces again and again in this report.

Question 08: In your opinion is Eugene a high, medium or low crime area, and what about Lane County?

Question responses by frequency

Eugene: High: 04
 Med: 08
 Low: 07

Lane County High: 04
 Med: 04
 Low: 10

Respondent sample comments

- Are you kidding, Eugene is nothing like Sacramento, New York or San Diego!
- I rate Lane County high because of the cuts to the Sheriff's patrols
- Eugene and Lane County are high but only in petty crimes

Analysis

Respondents perceived that both Lane County and the City of Eugene had criminal activity, but that the activity was at the lower end of the violence continuum and largely involved less serious property and drug activity. This was especially true for Lane County, where most of the responses (10) landed on "Low" and only four responses landed on "high." From this information it doesn't appear that the respondents think of Lane County as having a serious criminal problem.

Question 09: Do you think that personal safety is a rapidly growing concern for people (yes/no)?

Question responses by frequency

Yes: 13
No: 05

Note: one person did not answer this question

Respondent sample comments

- I think that public safety is a rapidly growing concern, but is it real?
- I think the concern is growing, but not for me
- One must understand that people are always concerned about crime
- Media coverage also figures into this
- This is a tough question to answer and I am not sure a response would be valid

Analysis

Although more than half of the respondents thought that personal safety is a rapidly growing concern, many comments questioned the accuracy of this. This question also appears to contradict the findings for Question 8 above where both the City of Eugene and Lane County were seen to be low crime areas. However, when one factors in the profound impact that the media has on shaping opinions, it could indeed be true that NA respondents are simply drawing conclusions from so much local media buzz on crime, the jail's revolving door and deep reductions in law enforcement personnel.

Question 10: How concerned are you that the current state of the Lane County public safety system will attract criminals into the community (high/medium/low)?

Question responses by frequency

High: 05
Medium: 08
Low: 05

Respondent sample comments

- I think that my responses to this question could be influenced by media stories on crime related to the question
- What effect does criminalizing minor drug offense's have?
- What concerns me is the revolving door at the jail
- Having visible patrols is a deterrent

Analysis

The fairly even distribution of responses to this question fails to reveal any real preferences or patterns. What is suggested is that interviewee responses do not agree with pronouncements emanating from local government regarding the public safety funding dilemma and the seriousness of growing crime.

Question 11: Have you or your family or anyone you know been a victim of crime, and if yes what type of crime (yes/no)?

Question responses by frequency

Yes: 14
No: 05

Petty: 07
Theft: 03
Robbery: 02

Analysis

Although a large number of interviewees indicated that they have been a victim of crime, many mentioned they had been victims years ago or perhaps in another city. Many had been victims in Eugene too. Nonetheless, the most meaningful information was that only five out of 19 had not been a victim of crime. Respondents also mentioned that petty crimes were by far the most common in their experience. For many people these types of crimes are thought of as an annoyance not a major trauma. To some extent the respondents could desensitized.

Question 12: Do you feel safe in your community, or do you feel unsafe (open-ended)?

Respondent sample comments

- I feel safe
- Not as a safe as I once did
- The crime we have is not violent
- I make decisions that make me feel safe
- I feel safe in my home and around the neighborhood, but not walking alone near 4th and Blair at two in the morning.

Analysis

18 of the 19 interviewees in this research project answered the above question with the words: I feel safe. For these urban residents, the City of Eugene represents a safe and inviting haven. The question that begs asking however, is just how safe do the residents of rural, unincorporated Lane County feel?

When this writer asked interviewees Question 12, more than a few of them actually laughed out loud saying that people here don't realize how good they have it in terms of safe surroundings. These were transplants from Sacramento, San Diego, New York and other high-crime areas. Bottom line: everything is relative.

Question 13: What does it mean, or what does it take for you to feel safe (open-ended)?

Question responses by frequency

1	Strong community/neighborhood	8 responses
2	Police response	7
3	police presence	5
4	Consequences for perps	2
5	Street smarts	1
5	Night lighting	1
5	Knowing that public safety systems are in-place and functioning	1

Analysis

The first response represents the highest comfort level and includes having a sense of community, neighbors that one knows, and geography that one is familiar with. The second response is the knowledge that police are in the vicinity and that they could, if needed, respond promptly to an emergency situation. Having both conditions would probably be ideal for all the respondents to Question 13.

Question 14: Why do you think that every public safety tax measure that Lane County has brought forth, over the last twelve years, has failed (open-ended)?

Respondent sample comments

- People have not perceived the measures to ring true, especially the PR and marketing pieces
- There was a lack of dialogue and information exchange with the public
- There was a lack of understanding of the measures by the voters
- Many people do not understand what it costs to run a county government (people who grew up in the 40s, 50s and 60s measure cost with a different yardstick than those that grew up in 70s, 80s and 90s)
- Broad support will be needed to pass a money measure
- The measurers have been “top down” affairs not “bottom up”
- There is an anti-tax mood nationally, in Oregon and in Lane County
- There has not been enough information, contact, communication and campaigning in support of past measures
- People get use to less protection and services, and learn to live with it
- The anti-tax movement keeps repeating the message that all that you need to do is wisely spend what you collect, and many people believe it
- The measures have been poorly put together and hard to understand
- County officials lack confidence and are unable to prioritize the County budget
- Exaggeration of measure failure consequences by the County is the problem
- The measures have failed to differentiate between jurisdictions (i.e., cities and unincorporated areas)
- The public was not involved in formulating the proposition and polling
- Public safety is wasting its time chasing pot growers

Analysis

This question elicited more interviewee responses than most of the other questions. Every respondent had answers to this question, and many of those answers fell into one of four groupings or patterns. These included: 1) the cost (and attendant complexities) of running a government is Greek to most voters – they just don’t have the time or interest to learn about it but they will need to, 2) there is a strong and ubiquitous anti-tax sentiment that has been on the scene for many years creating doubt and eroding trust, 3) the need has surfaced for more and better citizen information, myth debunking, communication, education and civic involvement, 4) the County’s use of exaggeration, threats of service cuts, crying Wolf and other behaviors has hurt its image and credibility with the public.

Question 15: Why did you vote the way you did, for or against, on any of the tax measures dating back to the 1990's (open-ended)?

Respondent sample comments

- Lack of knowledge about where the money goes influenced my support
- I thought there was inequitable support for rural areas compared to urban areas
- I have supported the measures if they are reasonable
- I voted for all the measures because we have to take care of ourselves
- I supported the measures as I believe in the value of community services
- My taxes are already high enough
- I've always supported the measures as treatment can change people and cut recidivism rates
- I tend to vote in favor unless the measure is so vague that I don't know where the money is going. Schools can often pass tax measures because voters know where the money is going
- It seemed like there was a need
- Currying favor by the County Commissioners seems to be a characteristic (that I don't care for)
- I have voted against the Public Safety measures because I'd like to see the money go elsewhere
- Even though I'm a conservative I voted for most of the measures
- Public safety funds are misused in my opinion

Analysis

Among the responses to this question a pattern emerged that might suggest an area where tax measures can be improved, perhaps considerably. This includes: providing specific, detailed information on where the tax revenue comes from, where the tax revenue will be going and what the public will be getting.

Although the interviewer did not ask the respondents how they voted on measures, most were happy to volunteer that information without prompting. Many seemed proud to say that they had supported most of the measures. The tally was ten in support, 3 against and the remainder silent. Given this apparent level of support, albeit from a small and community-involved sample, why might so many measures have failed? A possible answer is that urban residents and rural residents have different needs, different perspectives and probably live in relatively different worlds. This could suggest that a bifurcated measure shaped for urban and rural needs just might fare better (see recommendations section).

Question 16: Has the repeated failure of public safety measures made Lane County a less safe place to live (yes/no)?

Question responses by frequency (note: one respondent could not make up their mind)

Yes: 9
No: 9

Respondent sample comments

- Maybe or probably less safe
- The meth problem seems to have dropped off, so I can't tell yet
- To some degree it has
- Not yet, but without federal timber dollars it will
- I don't feel any less safe than I did
- Not yet, but it could be coming

Analysis

The respondent comments indicate an even split on whether this county is less safe or about the same as it has been. The more interesting finding is that no strong or even very concerned responses were voiced.

Question 17: Where do you get your information to make decisions about supporting or rejecting local government money measures (open-ended)?

Question responses by frequency mentioned

1	Register-Guard newspaper (editorials and letters to the editor)	11 responses
2	Word of mouth	10
3	News media	5
4	League of Women Voters	4
5	Voter's pamphlet	3
5	Radio	3
5	On-line/blogs	3
6	County government	2
6	Eugene Weekly newspaper	2
7	Reading the measure	1

Analysis

Respondents mentioned a preference for bias-free news, as people were somewhat concerned that some sources might have their thumb on the scale.

Question 18: How do you actually make the decision when it comes to supporting or rejecting a Lane County money measure (open-ended)?

Respondent sample comments

- I Look at the issue, at the price (assessment amount) and then decide
- I compare the ends against the means
- I ask myself will it solve the problem
- I weigh the facts and make a decision on what's best for the community
- I want to know if the measure is well thought through
- For me the wording is key – if its not clearly written I'm not going to vote for it
- My decision has to do with the merits of the measure not the costs
- 80 percent is logic: do the benefits warrant the costs
- I listen to what the supporter and opponents say
- The measure needs to be clear and specific as to what the money is going to
- I need to know the revenue source and how the funds will be spent
- Seeing who supports the measure is an important decision element for me
- Do the measure's priorities line up with mine
- On Lane County public safety measures I ask is this a fair way to tax

Analysis

Almost all of the comments speak to a logical and somewhat methodical approach to personally researching, understanding and evaluating tax measures. The range of responses is scattered, yet patterns do emerge. For example: 1) some combination of benefits and costs are often central in a respondents decision process, 2) what is best for the community is often more important than what it costs, and 3) tax measure clarity, readability and explain-ability are essential.

Question 19: How would you rate the community knowledge and understanding level when it comes to county government and public safety (high, medium or low)?

Question responses by frequency

High	01 response
Medium	06 responses
Low	12 responses

Interviewee sample comments

- It seems like letters to the editor reveal just how uninformed area voters are
- There is a segment of voters who will never trust government. There is also a segment that is educable
- There is a national anti-tax mood
- It is hard to dumb it down enough for most people
- Voters don't understand what government costs
- Lane County does have some highly informed voters
- People have trouble connecting the dots
- People watch too much television

Analysis

Among the 19 responses to this question only one person rated the knowledge and understanding level of the community as high. The other 18 rated it mostly low with a few moderate responses thrown in. However to really understand the significance of this important question one must also factor in Question 4. In that question, interviewees were asked how important is it for you personally to be aware of the challenges that Lane County government faces and what services it provides. 18 of the 19 interviewees rated the importance as high. In other words, almost every respondent said that it was highly important for them to be aware of challenges the County faces and services it provides, yet at the same time respondents also said that the community understanding and knowledge level were low. Judging from this question it appears that people prefer to be aware and informed about the County and its services, but few may actually be.

Question 20: Here are three different public safety funding scenarios for your consideration. Can you tell me which one you'd rank 1st, 2nd and 3rd?

Scenarios

Scenario A calls for a split-rate measure where people in the County and without police services would pay one rate that would cover both patrols and jails. People in the cities that have police services would just pay for jails.

Scenario B would support a metro policing concept that combined Eugene Police, Springfield Police and the Lane County Sheriffs Office into one entity

Scenario C would support a just-the-basics model that provided the most traditional services such as jail, prosecution, patrol and such, but not treatment.

Scenario responses ranked by frequency

Scenario B (Metro Policing Concept)	11 ranked it 1 st 06 ranked it 2 nd 01 ranked it 3 rd	<u>Scenario Rank #1</u>
Scenario A (Split-rate Measure)	08 ranked it 1 st 07 ranked it 2 nd 03 ranked it 3 rd	<u>Scenario Rank #2</u>
Scenario C (Pared Down Model)	00 ranked it 1 st 04 ranked it 2 nd 14 ranked it 3 rd	<u>Scenario Rank #3</u>

Respondent sample comments by Scenario Rank

Scenario B (metro-policing)

Rank #1

- Coordination could maximize efficiencies
- Cuts down on duplication
- Commonwealth idea (one-for-all and all-for-one)
- Integration makes sense, but a downside is that so much power would be concentrated in this model
- Consolidation could create too many political hurdles
- Conceptually I like this idea, but I'd prefer voting for a Lane County Sheriff's measure
- I doubt that this would work

Scenario A (split-rate)

Rank #2

- I am very concerned about the inequitable public safety taxation between urban and rural areas
- This could prove to be divisive
- Equitableness is a problem here
- I question tax fairness between urban and rural areas which this idea might be able to rectify
- I do not support (scenarios B and C)

Scenario C (just-the-basics)

Rank #3

- Realistically, a lot of people would probably vote for this option
- Hey, don't we already have this?

Analysis

Although **Scenario B** ranked highest, it also received a number of critical comments from interviewees. However the concept, and its potential to improve efficiencies, definitely proved to pique people's interest as its high ranking shows. A couple of respondents suggested that even though it might not be organizationally feasible, trying to get more coordination between public safety agencies made good sense. The idea of diving up public safety duties also received mention.

Scenario A which ranked second, received a number of similar comments from interviewees concerning equitableness. The problem with inequitable taxation between urban and rural areas is perceived as a real problem and something that needs fixing. An additional piece of information is the fact that two of the 19 Neighborhood Associations, River Road and Santa Clara, have mixed unincorporated and incorporated areas within their boundaries. Both of the chairs from these blended neighborhood Associations supported the split-rate tax option.

Scenario C was largely rejected by most of the respondents. There was a concern that a pared down system would not include treatment and other human services which made this option less attractive. Conversely, there was also a realization that a pared down and less expensive public safety system could actually stand a better chance of gaining voter support.

For the reader's interest, two respondents offered a fourth and fifth public safety scenario suggestion. The first idea was to create a separate public safety district with its own taxing power. The other comment was to put everything out onto the table and redesign a funding structure from scratch.

Appendix A

Elected Official Interviewees

Russ Berger, Lane County Sheriff

Bill Dwyer, Lane County Commissioner

Bill Fleenor, Lane County Commissioner

Alex Gardner, Chief Deputy District Attorney (incoming DA)

Bobby Green, Lane County Commissioner

Doug Harclerod, District Attorney

Kitty Piercy, Mayor of Eugene

Karstan Rasmussen, Circuit Court Judge

Jerry Smith, Springfield Chief of Police (standing in for the Mayor of Springfield)

Pete Sorenson, Lane County Commissioner

Faye Stewart, Lane County Commissioner

Appendix B

Elected Official Interview Questions

Intro: Over the last 12 years roughly a dozen public safety tax measures have been turned down by the citizens of Lane County. A few of the measures lost by a narrow margin but most didn't. Clearly something isn't working.

Questions: 1) What do you think is will take to get the support of the community in funding public safety?

2) Is there anything you'd like to know from the citizen's viewpoint that would help you in the effort to fund public safety?

3) Do you have any questions in mind that you would like to ask the community?

4) What might the "ideal" relationship between Lane County government and the community look like?

5) Is there anything else that you would like to tell me?

Appendix C

Neighborhood Association Interviewees

Aleta Miller, Active Bethel Citizens

Erik Muller, Amazon Neighbors

Lloyd Zimmer, Cal Young Neighborhood Association

Alan Buck, Churchill Area Neighbors

David Kolb, Crest Drive Citizens Association

Sue Jakabosky, Fairmount Neighbors

Heidi Beierle, Far West Neighbors

Bernie Corrigan, Friendly Area Neighbors

Bob Kline, Harlow Neighbors

Bud Tracy, Industrial Corridor Community Organization

Rene C. Kane, Jefferson Westside Neighbors

Jan Wostmann, Laurel Hill Valley Citizens

Jolene Siemsen, River Road Community Organization

Jerry Finigan, Santa Clara Community Organization

Marilyn Milne, South University Neighborhood Association

Kevin Matthews, Southeast Neighbors

Clayton Walker, West Eugene Community Organization

Deborah Healey, West University Neighbors

Miguel Board, Whiteaker Community Council

Appendix D

Neighborhood Association Interviewee Questionnaire

- 01) What are the most critical issues facing Lane County government?
- 02) In your estimation how credible is Lane County government (LMH)?
- 03) What can Lane County government do to earn your trust?
- 04) How important is it for you personally to be aware of the challenges that Lane County government faces and what services it provides?
- 05) Do you think of Lane County government as a poor and struggling government (Y/N)?
- 06) Do you think that Lane County has the dollars to adequately run government (Y/N)?
- 07) Were there to be a measure to support Lane County services, should it start with the County Commissioners or should it start with the community?
- 08) In your opinion is Eugene a LMH crime area? And what about Lane County (LMH)?
- 09) Do you think that public safety is a rapidly growing concern for people (Y/N)?
- 10) How concerned are you that the current state of Lane County public safety system will draw criminals into the community (LMH)?
- 11) Have you, your family or anyone you know been a victim of crime (Y/N)?
- 12) Do you feel safe in your community, or do you feel unsafe, please explain?
- 13) What does it mean, or what does it take, for you to feel safe, please explain?
- 14) Why do you think that every public safety tax measure that Lane County has brought fourth during the last 12 years has failed, please explain?
- 15) Why did you vote the way you did – for or against – on any of the tax measures dating back to the late 1990s, please explain?
- 16) Has the repeated failure of public safety measures made Lane County a less safe place to live in your opinion (Y/N)?
- 17) Where do you get your information to make decisions about supporting or rejecting local government money measures, please explain?

18) How do you actually make the decision when it comes to supporting or rejecting a County money measure, please explain?

19) How would you rate voter knowledge and understanding level when it comes to public safety and county government, please explain?

20) Here are three possible public safety funding scenarios for your consideration. Can you tell me which one you'd prefer and how you'd rank them?

- The first one is a split-rate measure where people in the county and without police services pay one rate that covers both patrol and jails. People in the cities that have police services would pay just for jails.
- The second one would support a metro-policing concept that combined Eugene and Springfield police with the Lane County Sheriff into one entity.
- The third would support a pared down public safety model that only provided the most traditional of services (Jail, patrol, investigation and prosecution).