

Heartland 2050: Omaha-Council Bluffs Values and Priorities Quantitative Study

Prepared for Fregonese Associates

January 28, 2014

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About three in four see their quality of life in the Omaha-Council Bluffs Region as positive and increasing. While slightly less, the majority say the region is on the right track.

Quality of Life in the Future

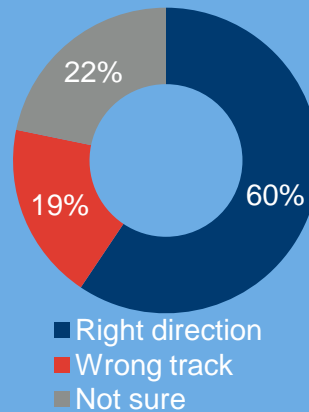
78%

23%

Increasing Decreasing

18-34 yr olds most likely to believe quality will increase.

Direction of Their Own Community



Quality of Life in the Region: Positives vs. Negatives

71%

29%

Positive Negative

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (N=400)

Q320. Thinking about the quality of life that will be here for you or your friends' children and grandchildren, do you see their quality of life in the Omaha-Council Bluffs region increasing or decreasing in the future?

Q330. On another subject, do you feel things in your own community today are going in the right direction or do you feel things have pretty seriously gotten off on the wrong track?

Q335. Thinking of all the positive and negative aspects about the quality of life here in the Omaha-Council Bluffs region, what percentage of things would you classify as positive? What percentage is negative?

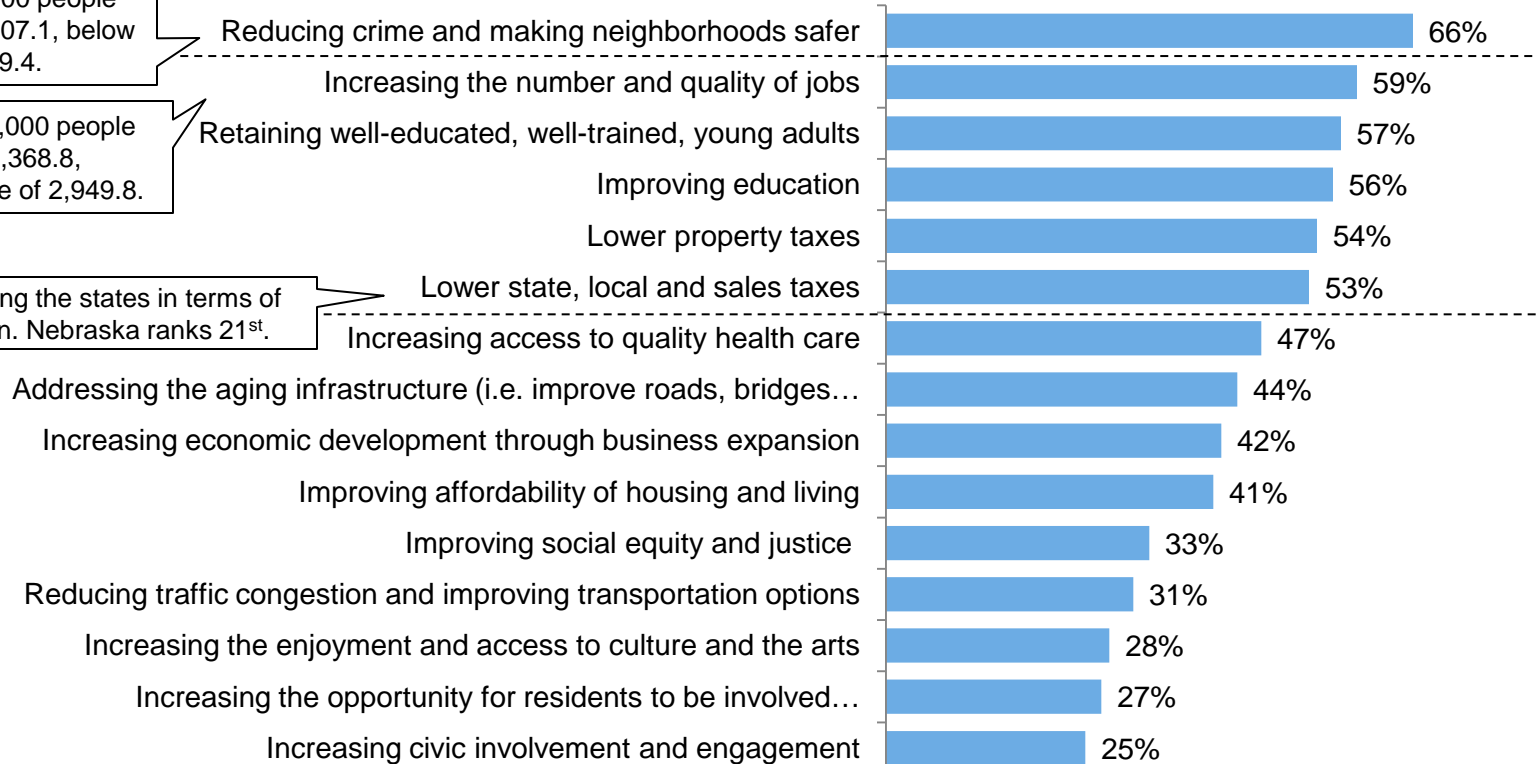
Reducing crime is the most important issue to the region with two thirds giving it high priority. Jobs, young adult retention, education and taxes also rise to the top.

Top 2 Box Importance (Rated 9/10 on 10 pt. scale)

Violent crime per 100,000 people in the Omaha MSA is 407.1, below the MSA average of 409.4.

Property crime per 100,000 people in the Omaha MSA is 3,368.8, above the MSA average of 2,949.8.

Iowa ranks 24th among the states in terms of state/local tax burden. Nebraska ranks 21st.



Greater Importance To:

Jobs: those with high school education or less (71%)

Education: those residing in Iowa (73%)

Property taxes/State, local & sales taxes: those 55+ (63%)

63

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (N=400)

Q350 Please rate each of the following issues where 1 means "Not at all important to the future of the region" and 10 means "Extremely important priority for the future of the region":

Values-Based Strategic Hinge

There is a “strategic hinge” which exists, linking the attributes and benefits of life in the Omaha–Council Bluffs Region to the people



Reason
Emotion



Identifying the rational and emotional drivers of this hinge is the purpose of “values” research.



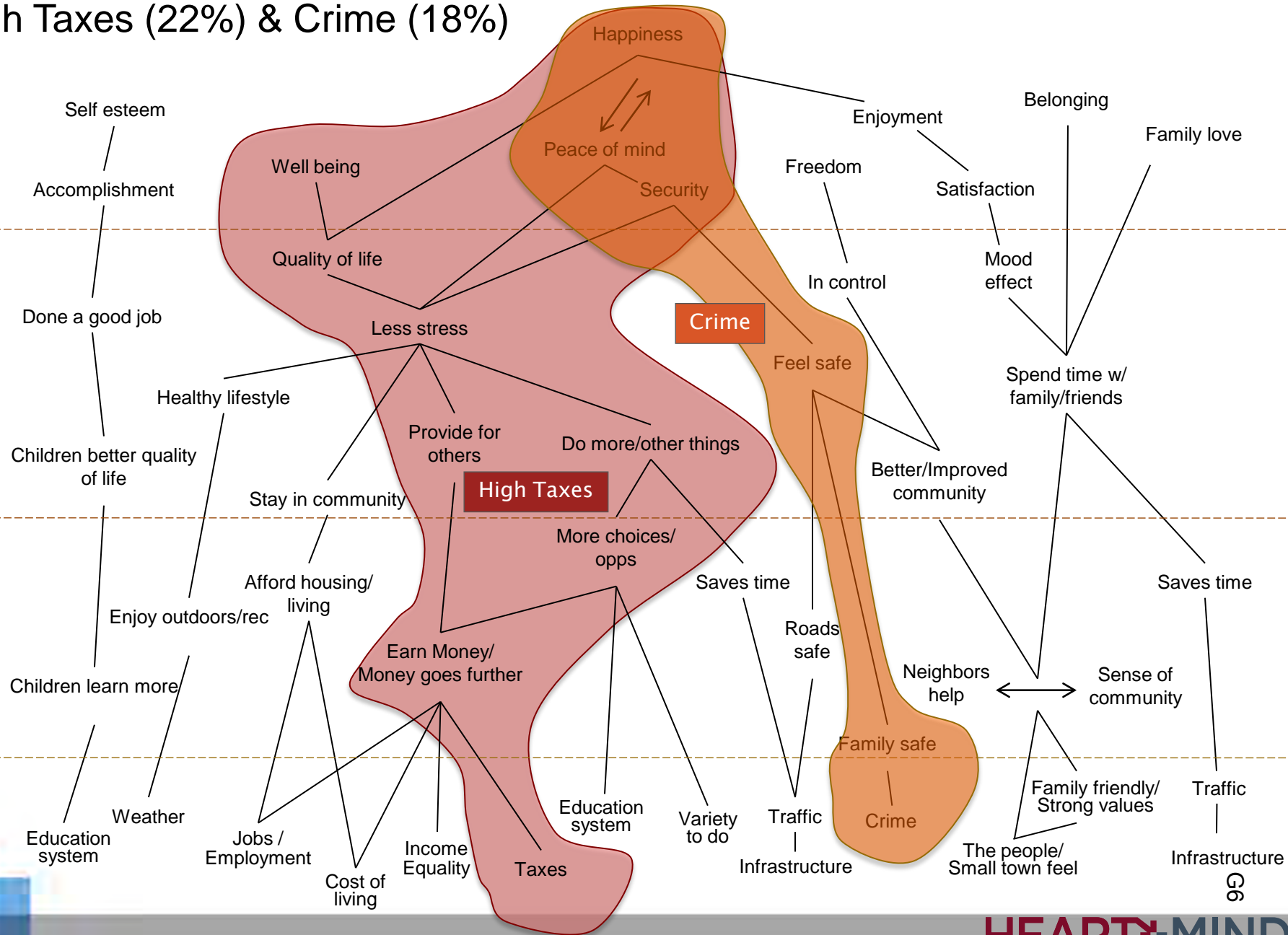
Omaha-Council Bluffs Values: High Taxes (22%) & Crime (18%)

VALUES

EMOTIONS

BENEFITS

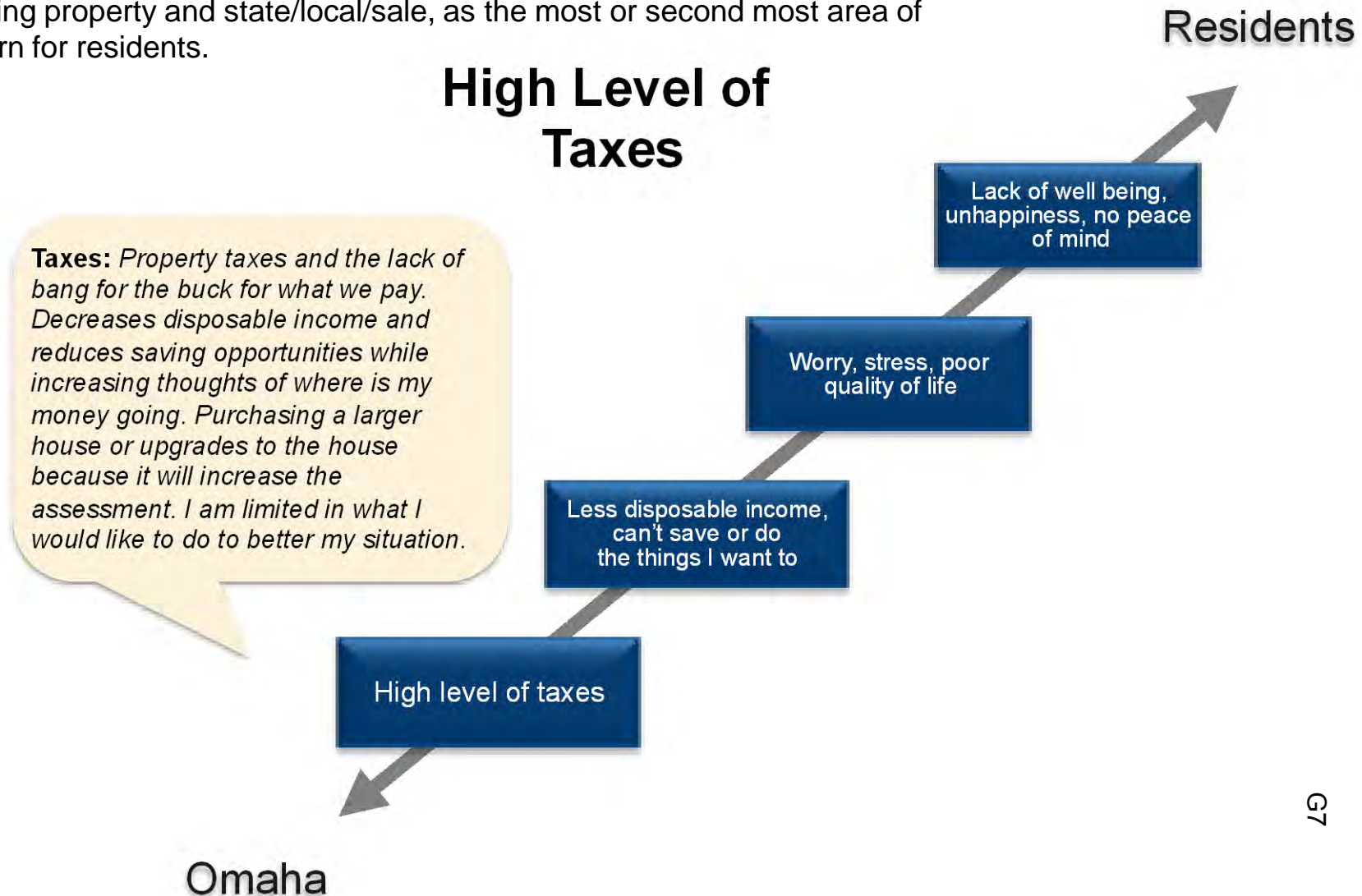
ATTRIBUTES



Executive Summary

Omaha-Council Bluffs Resident Values

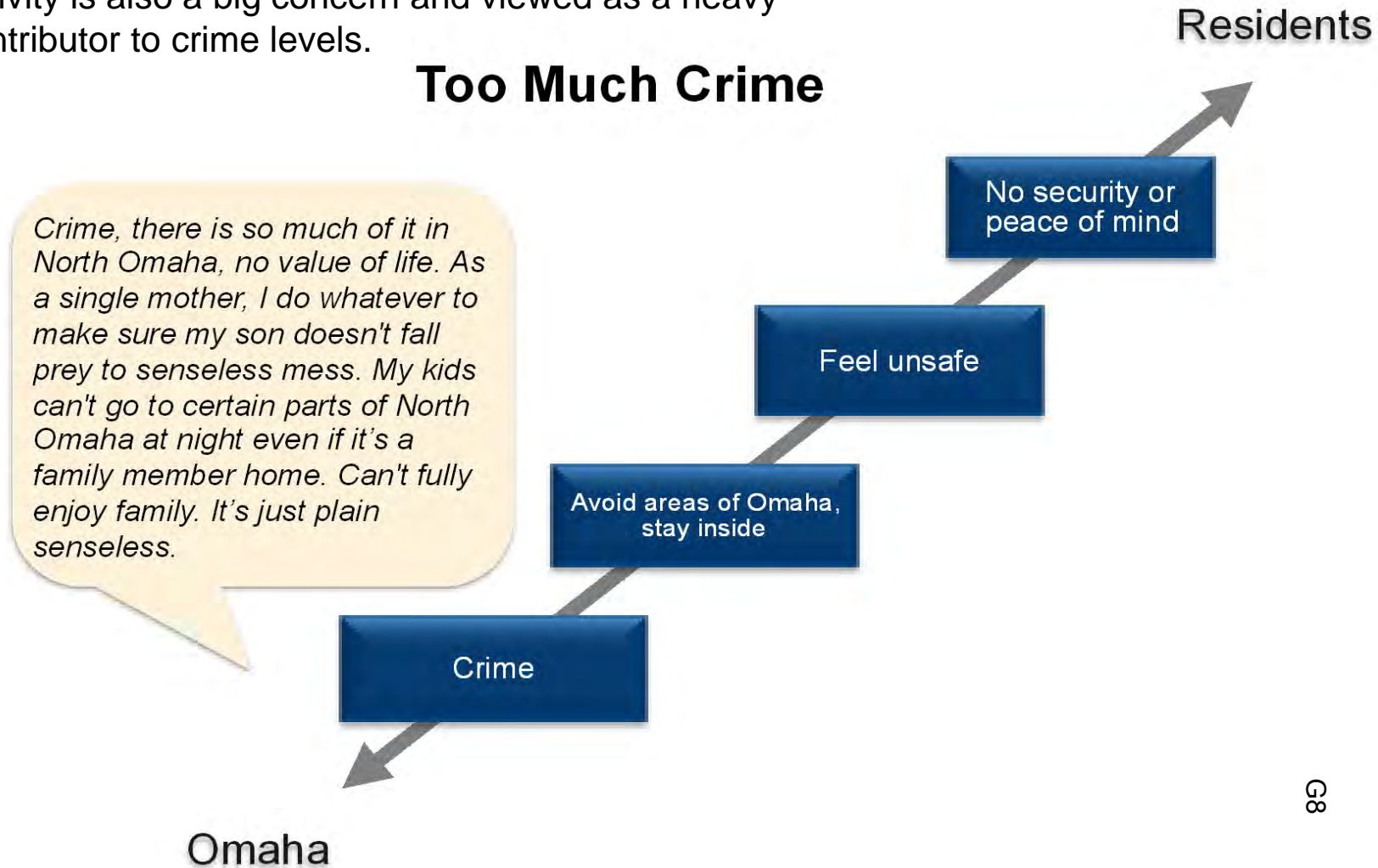
Nearly a quarter (22%) of respondents identified the high level of taxes, including property and state/local/sale, as the most or second most area of concern for residents.



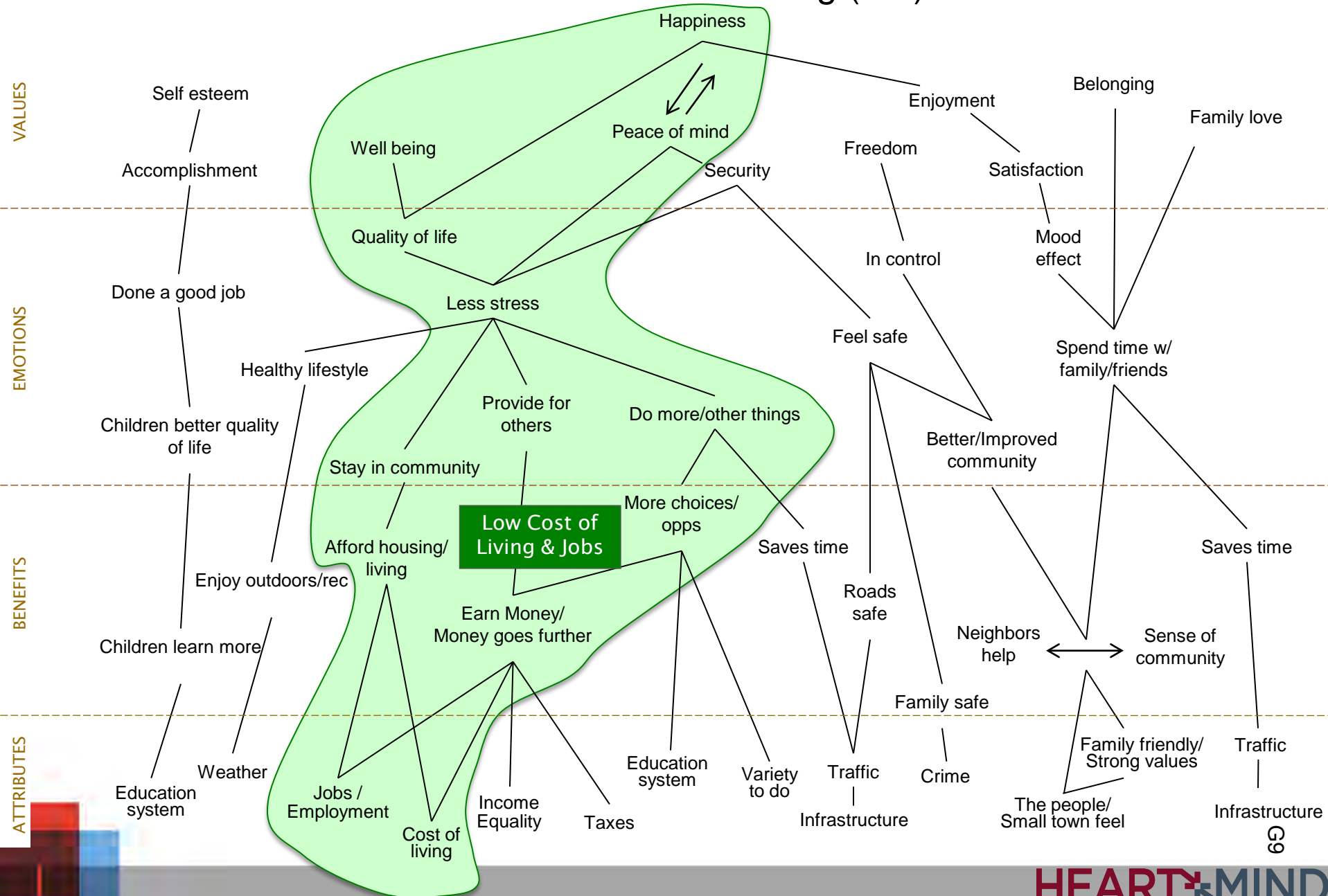
Executive Summary

Omaha-Council Bluffs Resident Values

- Nearly one-in-five (18%) identified crime as a major factor impacting quality of life in Omaha-Council Bluffs. Gang activity is also a big concern and viewed as a heavy contributor to crime levels.



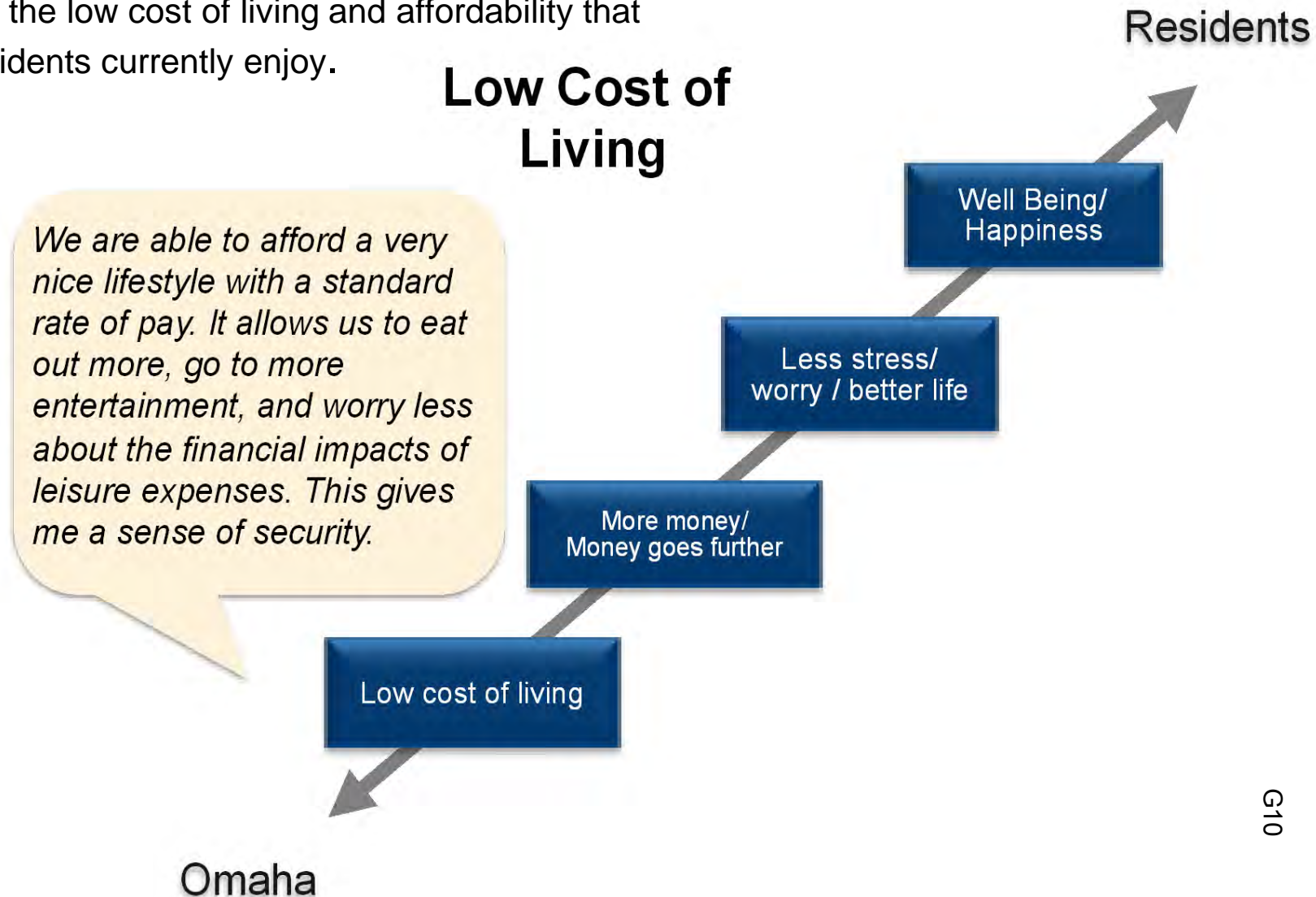
Omaha-Council Bluffs Values: Low Cost of Living (9%)



Executive Summary

Omaha-Council Bluffs Resident Values

- Key values to protect and promote are derived from the the low cost of living and affordability that residents currently enjoy.



Region residents prefer growth strategies focused on centralizing jobs and shopping close to residence, encouraging a range of housing options and infusing existing cities and towns.

Agreement with Growth Strategies	% Agree
Locating new jobs and shopping close to where people live	81%
Encourage a range of housing options that meet the needs and budgets of residents*	81%
Locating new growth in the existing cities and towns	80%
Invest in new roadways and road improvements	78%
Investing in areas of poverty to reduce crime	75%
Making it convenient to walk or bike to neighborhood stores, businesses, and schools	75%
Reinvesting in the Region's Main Streets and Downtowns	68%
Providing more public transportation options	62%
Locate new growth along major transportation corridors (i.e. I-80/I-29, Dodge Street, etc.)	61%

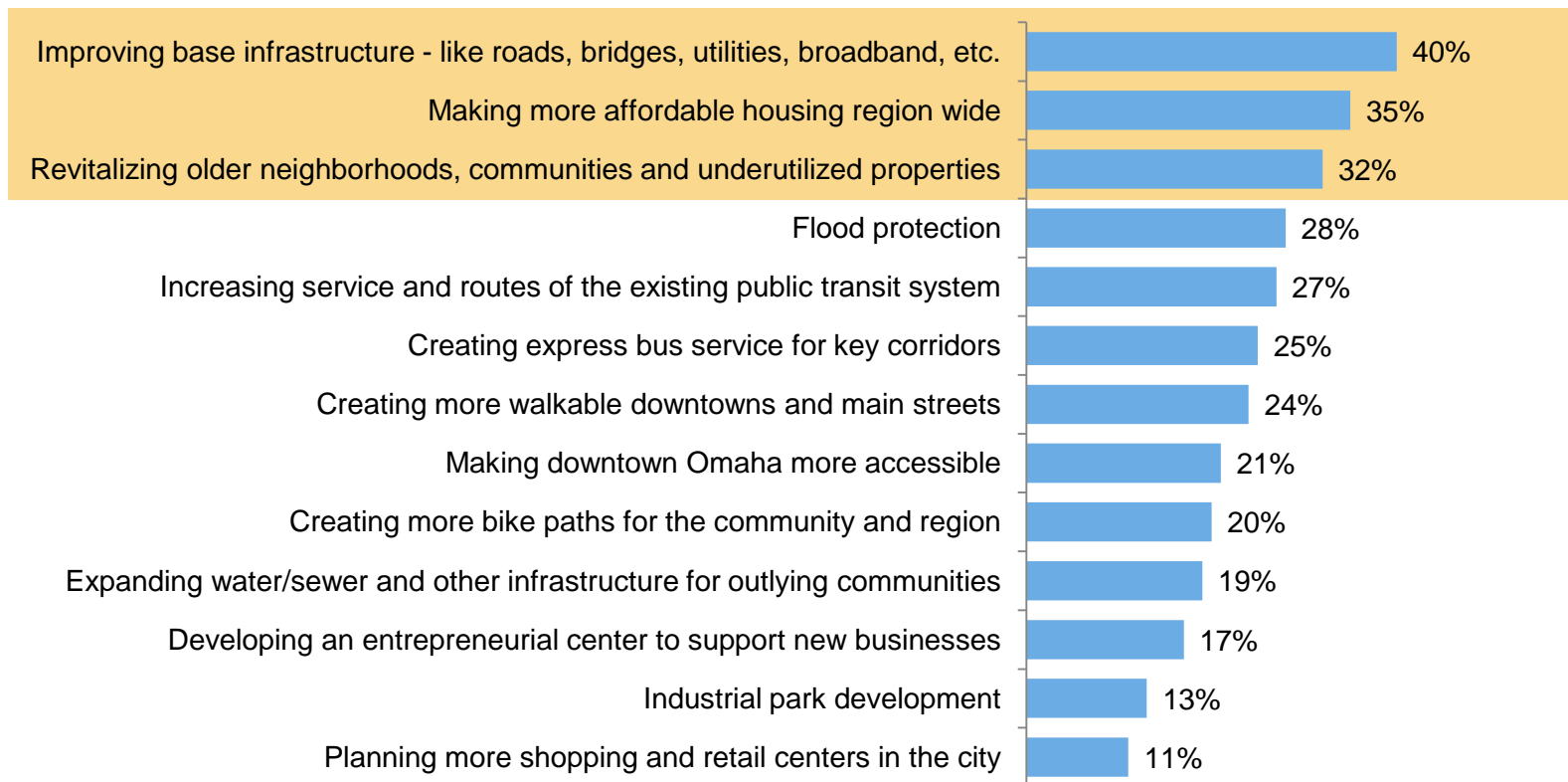
* Iowa residents more strongly agree with strategy encouraging range of housing options (94%)

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (N=400)

Q760 How much do you agree or disagree with the following growth strategies for the Omaha-Council Bluffs region? Please note that these strategies are not mutually exclusive.

Making improvements to existing elements, such as infrastructure and communities, is important for future growth in the region.

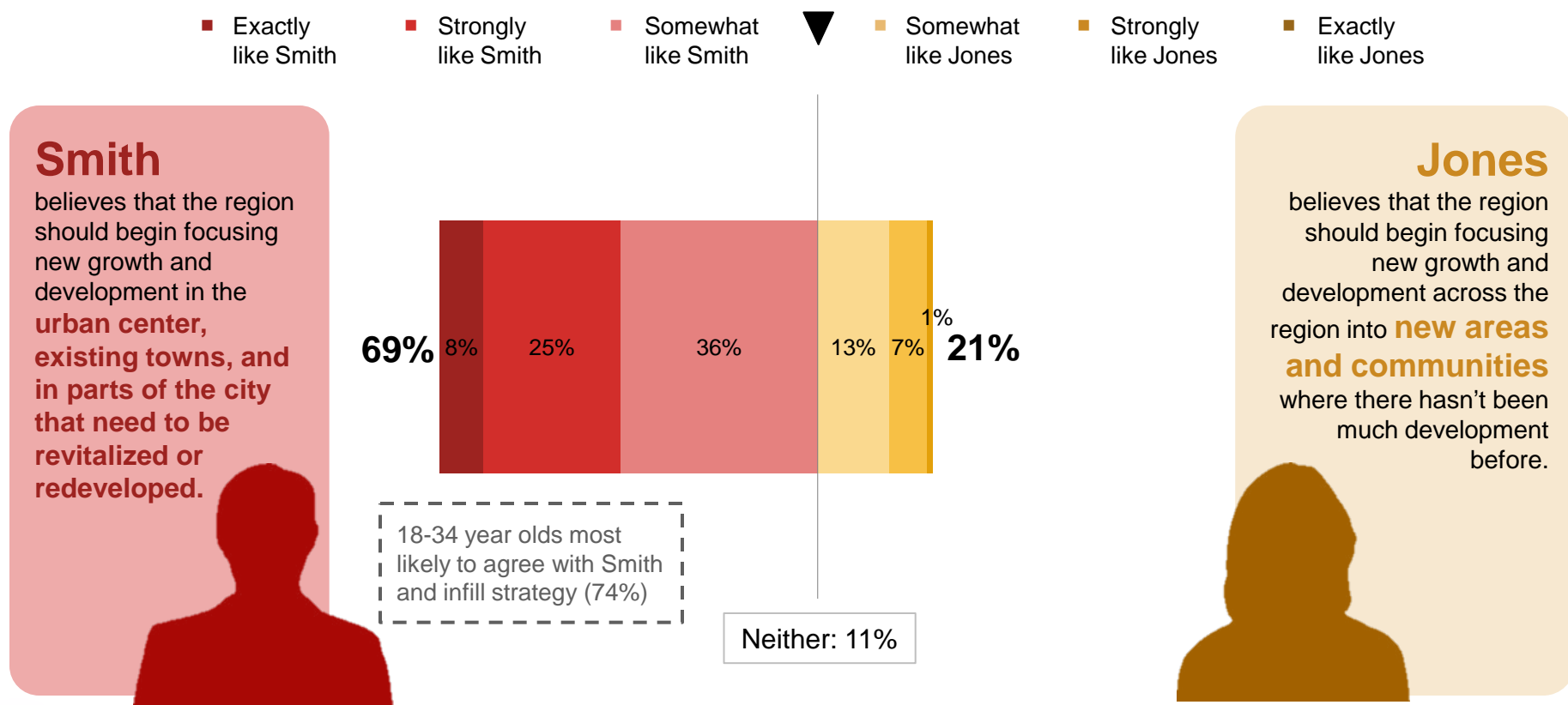
Top 2 Box Importance (Rated 9/10 on 10 pt. scale)



BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (N=400)

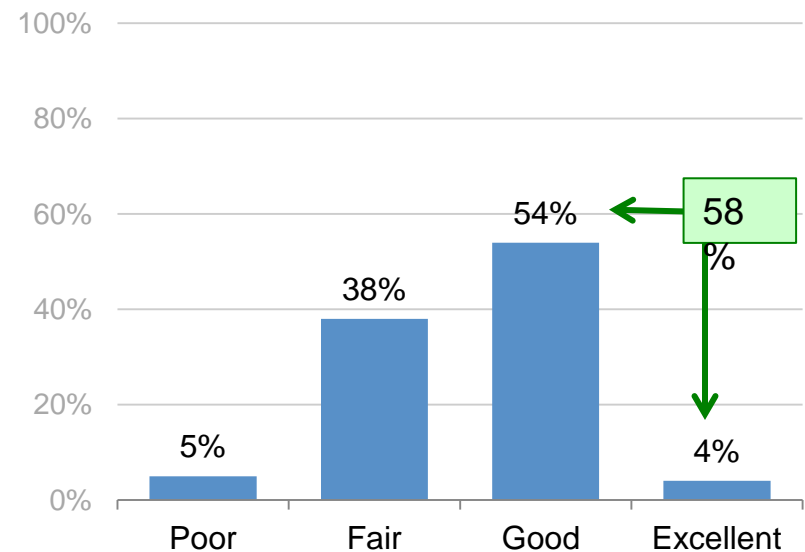
Q765. Thinking about the projects, renovations, new elements, or considerations for future growth and development of the Omaha-Council Bluffs region, please tell me how important each of the following is for the region. Please use a scale where a 1 means "not at all important" and a 10 means "extremely important."

Three times as many residents prefer infill of existing areas over new growth in outlying communities.



Nearly all believe having a plan for regional growth in the region is important. More than half feel the Omaha-Council Bluffs region has preformed 'good' or 'excellent' in this area.

Importance of Having a Vision or a Long Range Plan for Growth in the Region – Top 2 Box (Extremely/Very Important)



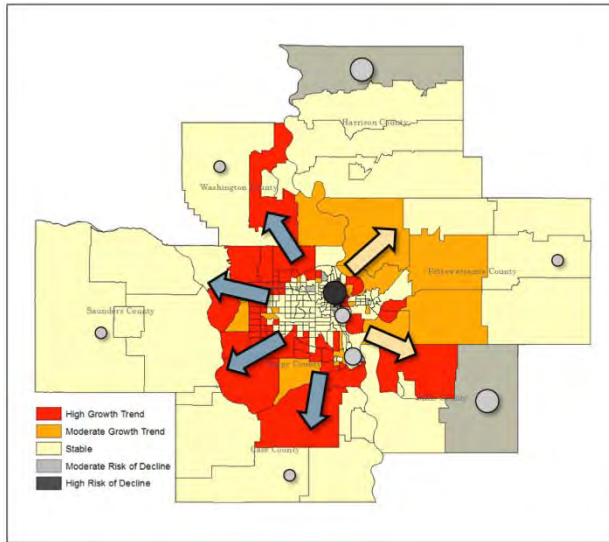
BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (N=400)

Q800. How important is it that Omaha-Council Bluffs region have a vision or a long range plan for growth in the region?

Q805. How would you rate the performance of Omaha-Council Bluffs region when it comes to planning and preparing for growth in the region?

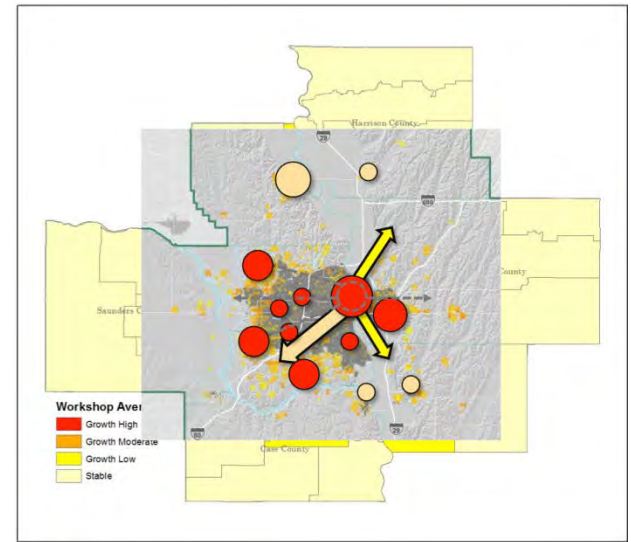
Scenario A

In Scenario A, we will continue to grow and decline much the same as we have in the recent past. **Areas of the urban core will continue to lose population, as westward expansion continues** in Douglas and Sarpy counties.



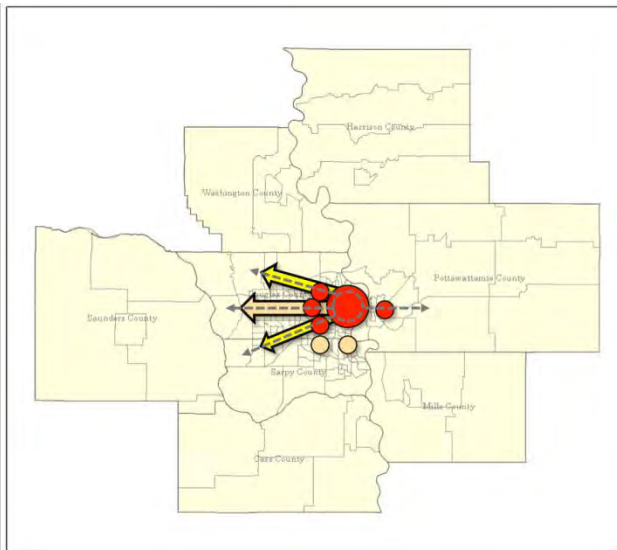
Scenario B

In scenario B, the **highest growth occurs in central Omaha and Council Bluffs, and over 40% of new growth takes place in existing urban and suburban areas**, making efficient use of road and water infrastructure.



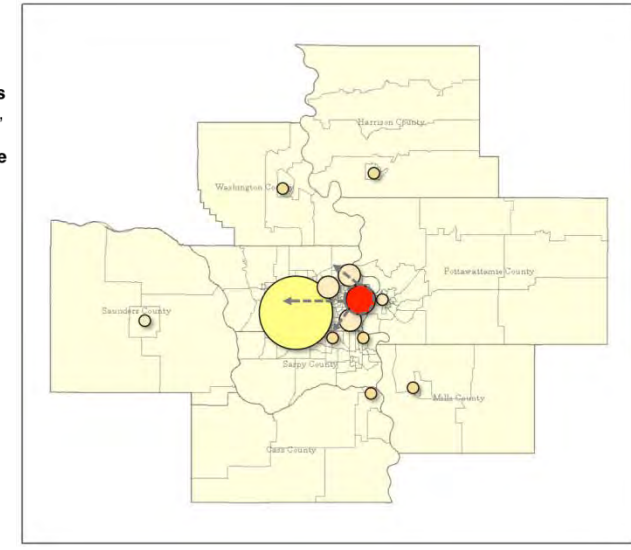
Scenario C

In Scenario C, **population and employment growth are focused in the core, revitalizing North, South and Midtown Omaha and Council Bluffs**. Sarpy County and western Douglas County see some moderate growth. The region makes significant transit investment to serve the bustling central city.

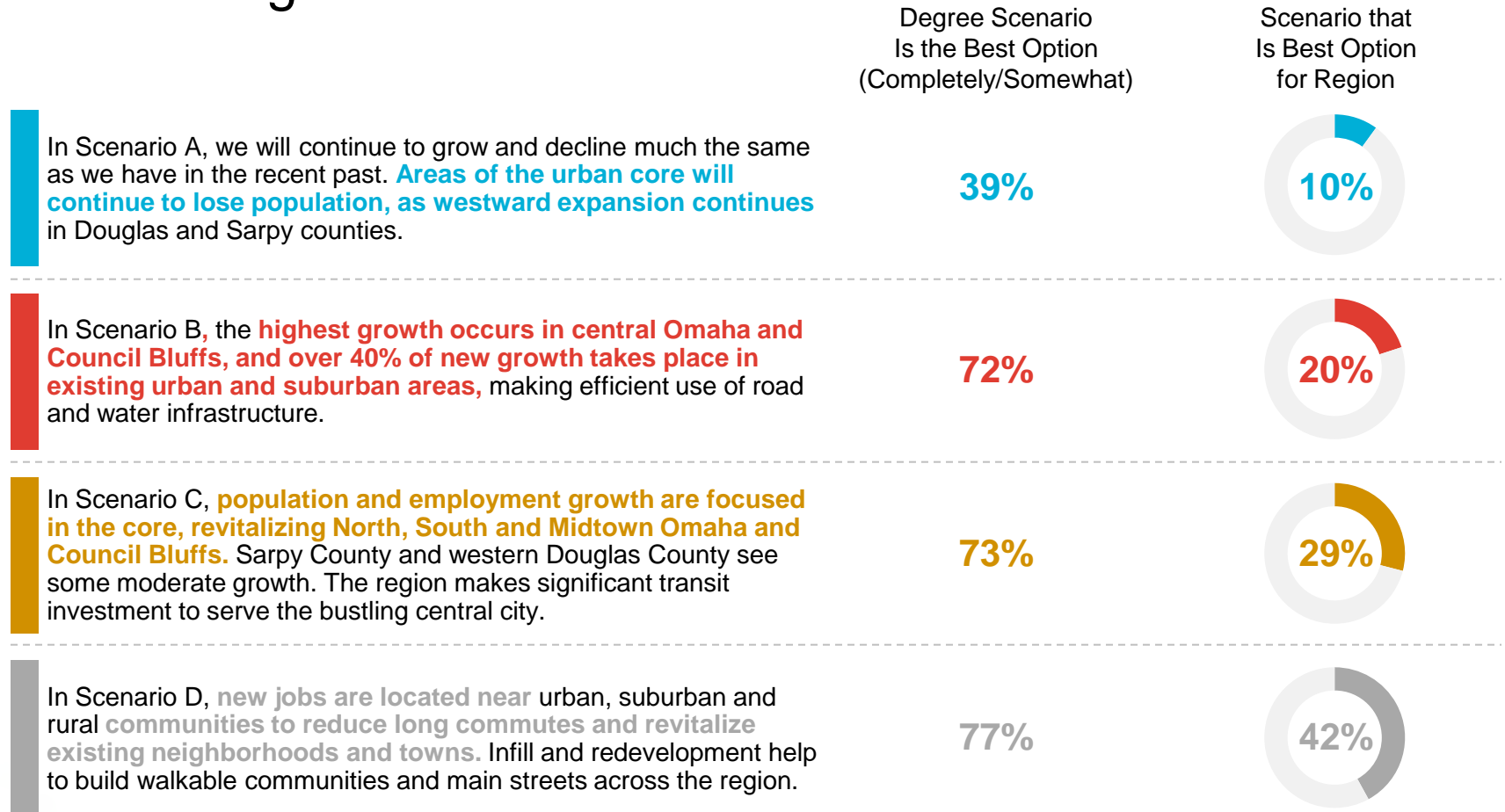


Scenario D

In Scenario D, **new jobs are located near urban, suburban and rural communities to reduce long commutes and revitalize existing neighborhoods and towns**. Infill and redevelopment help to build walkable communities and main streets across the region.



Though scenarios B, C, and D are all rated highly, when forced to choose only one, Scenario D is most preferred for the region.



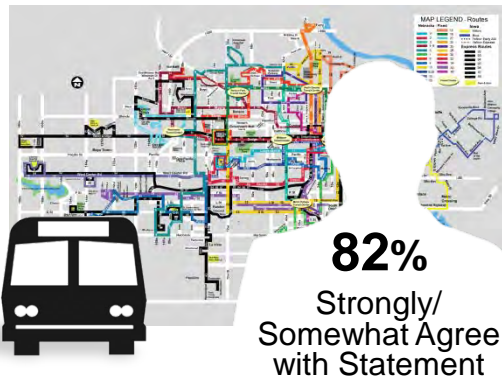
BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (N=400)

Q810. Please read the four scenarios presented below. To what degree do you feel this represents the best option for the Omaha Council-Bluffs region?

Q815. Of the four options presented, which **one** do you feel represents the best option for the Omaha Council-Bluffs region?

While most agree that investing in regional transportation is important, a majority believe funds allocated for public transportation should be kept the same or increased only somewhat.

“Investing in regional transportation is an important priority for our region.”



BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS (N=400)

Q920. To what extent do you agree with the statement: Investing in regional transportation is an important priority for our region?

Q930. Thinking about just one part of the transportation picture... Do you support or oppose the allocation of your local tax dollars toward the expansion and improvement of public transportation services in your community?

Q935. Thinking about your own local public transportation, what level of spending do you believe should be allocated for the improvement of public transportation services and access for the local system where you live?

Support or Oppose Allocation of Local Tax Dollars Toward Public Transportation Services



Level of Spending that Should Be Allocated for Public Transportation Services

