



## Council Minutes – Regular Meeting

July 2, 2024

### CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Spalding called to order the New Albany City Council Meeting of July 2, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. at the New Albany Village Hall, 99 West Main Street, New Albany, Ohio. Staff attending were City Manager Joseph Stefanov, Law Director Benjamin Albrecht, Finance Director Bethany Staats, Deputy Finance Director Morgan Joeright, Management Analyst Ethan Barnhardt, Administrative Services Director Adrienne Joly, Police Chief Greg Jones, Development Director Jennifer Chrysler, City Engineer Kylor Johnson, Economic Development Manager Sara Ziegler, Public Service Director Mike Barker, Planner II Chris Christian, Chief Marketing Officer Josh Poland, Community Program Administrator Abbey Brooks, and Clerk of Council Jennifer Mason.

### ROLL CALL:

The following Mayor/Council Members answered Roll Call:

Mayor Sloan Spalding	P
CM Marlene Brisk	P
CM Michael Durik	P
CM Chip Fellows	P
CM Kasey Kist	P
CM Matt Shull	P
CM Andrea Wilttrout	P

### ACTION ON MINUTES:

Clerk Mason reported that she received a few typo corrections from staff and Council Member Shull. None were substantive and the corrections were made to the original. Council adopted the June 18, 2024 meeting minutes by consensus.

### ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA:

City Manager Stefanov requested to add an executive session for personnel. Mayor Spalding moved to amend the agenda under executive session to include a right to adjourn pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 121.22(G)(1) for discussion regarding appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee or official. Council Member Shull seconded and council voted with 7 yes votes to add the executive session. Motion passed.

### HEARING OF VISITORS:

2024 Community Survey Results – Marty Saperstein, Saperstein Associates presented the attached slides.

Mr. Saperstein stated he had shared a notebook with detailed results with city staff who could distribute it to council members. He described how the survey methodology had also changed to include both phone and online surveys.

Mayor Spalding asked and Mr. Saperstein answered that everyone was having same problems with phone surveys. Fewer people answered their phones resulting in many more phone calls, greatly increasing the survey cost. Mr. Saperstein believed the current data with the split methodology was better because they could reach people who would never do the phone survey. He recalled researchers expecting there to be published email

July 2, 2024

directory someday, similar to phone books. He described the positive influence of a live interviewer on the data versus the more negative results from online surveys because the respondent could “let ‘em have it.” Mr. Saperstein stated he often cared less about absolute value of a finding and more about the trend from survey to survey. This year’s change in methodology suggested a new baseline. The next survey would make for better comparisons. Mr. Saperstein’s 2024 data displayed both the combined numbers and the telephone versus online responses.

*Clerk’s note: Mr. Saperstein’s presentation is represented by the attached slides. The minutes reflect council member questions and comments.*

Council Member Fellows expressed that it would be hard to explain to the public why the numbers went down in the online interviews. Mr. Saperstein recommended an article by the Pew organization and offered to send a copy to Chief Marketing Officer Josh Poland. This was also why he included both the phone and online numbers.

Council Member Kist thought that data was likely more accurate with 2 kinds of surveys. The phone method skewed numbers up, and the online method skewed numbers down. The middle was likely where the sentiment was all along.

Mr. Saperstein agreed with Council Member Kist. His company would have used the online surveys a long time ago if email addresses were available. It was possible now to buy lists with phone and email records for some individuals. Mr. Saperstein noted, if he didn’t think the online method was as accurate or better, he wouldn’t have adopted it or would have expressed less confidence in it.

Council Member Shull volunteered he, personally, would be more likely to take an online survey. He asked and Mr. Saperstein answered that the results for phone and online were available for each of the questions. Mr. Saperstein pointed to a set of cross tabs in his report. He recommended that council members look through the report and see where the data for each methodology was the same or different.

Council Member Shull agreed that the split methodology was better. He asked and Mr. Saperstein confirmed he would weight/match methodologies from year to year to get an apples-to-apples comparison, unless someone convinced him they had a better idea. Data trending was critical, but accurate data for the year was also important, because that’s what residents were responding to. He predicted he’d be in his 80s before someone came up with a better way to capture thoughts.

Council Member Durik agreed that both sources resulted in better data and a new benchmark going forward. He asked how many more people Mr. Saperstein reached using the online survey. Mr. Saperstein replied that the online surveys reached a broad number of people, but his company stopped collecting data when they reached a quota. The online surveys also reached different people - the sampling was more representative. Surveys were moving away from registered voters to adult residents. These methodology changes were dramatic and yet the change in the results was not dramatic in most cases. He was therefore reassured that the results were being driven by what people thought, not the method.

Council Member Brisk asked and Mr. Saperstein responded that he made the decision to move from registered voters to adult residents after advising staff. We were moving into an era where new methodologies were more representative. Also, without the online methodology, surveys would be priced out of communities in many places. Decreasing the number of phone interviews only would cause the sampling error to go up. The split method



July 2, 2024

got better data for less cost. He saw little chance of moving back just to phone surveys. The temptation would be go all online as it was cheaper because there wouldn't be workers dialing phone numbers. The combined methodology seemed like the best of both worlds.

Council Member Wiltout asked and Mr. Saperstein replied that they didn't use text message survey requests. Upper Arlington mailed all residents a questionnaire and provided a postage-paid return envelope. He was not fond of that method because questions on paper had to be simple. One could be more sophisticated by phone or online. Getting the data off a paper questionnaire require a key punch. Postage was expensive now.

Mayor Spalding appreciated hearing what the community had to say on these topics. The city would dig into the data as they decided how to move forward.

Sharon Montgomery, 572 Bonnington Way, Gahanna, Ohio addressed council by reading the attached statement. She advocated for stricter penalties for distracted driving. New Albany could create its own law, use Gahanna's or Grove City's models, or get models from other safety organizations which she could provide.

Mayor Spalding thanked Ms. Montgomery for her continued advocacy. Many motorists had seen distracted drivers. It was dangerous, happening throughout the day and night. This was an issue the New Albany Police Department had been engaged in for years and they would continue to be vigilant.

**BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS:**

PLANNING COMMISSION: No meeting.

PARKS AND TRAILS ADVISORY BOARD: No meeting.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD: No meeting.

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS: Council Member Shull reported the BZA approved a variance for a home on Wiveliscombe to use artificial grass in a portion of the backyard. The owner was willing to make some accommodations. The BZA approved the creation of lot on Smiths Mill Road which did not front on a public or private street. The BZA approved a request for the quantity and size of signage for Amplify Bio on Innovation Campus Way.

SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY BOARD: Council Member Kist reported that the latest issue of Healthy New Albany magazine included articles featuring the SAB student grant recipients' composting initiative and the school's composting program led by SAB Members Pete Barnes and Laura Gallo. Mayor Spalding noted Council Member Fellows was also featured in that issue.

IDEA IMPLEMENTATION PANEL: Council Member Wiltout reported that Juneteenth volunteers issued 1,200 wrist bands at the entry gate. That attendance number was astounding because of the extraordinarily hot weather. She praised the IDEA focus group and residents who helped to produce the event. She thanked corporate sponsors Amgen, Intel, and Meta. Juneteenth came in well under budget. They were able to reduce CAPA costs. She thanked city staff for keeping budgets low while maintaining a high-quality event. The IDEA was turning now to Diwali as the next big event. However, the next initiative was the Community Connectors Program (CCP), formerly known as the Neighborhood Ambassadors or Welcome Wagon program, roll out. This program was new and had taken a long time to get going. The CCP was a drive to get residents from each neighborhood to



July 2, 2024

become involved and complete 3 goals – (1) act as a main point of contact for city-provided information and useful community contact information, (2) create a list of current neighborhood information for the city, plus offer new residents a gift which was still being workshopped, and (3) planning at least 1 neighborhood event each year with the IDEA Panel and city staff to make sure it was successful. This was in the budget. The IDEA Panel would have a promotional table at the July 11 community concert. The CCP would launch with a video and start recruiting ambassadors. Those ambassadors would start training in November/December. Staff, working with the city attorney, was drafting handbooks, expectations, and guidelines.

Council Member Brisk noted the current panel was at the expiration of its pilot program. The IDEA program was started in 2020 for the purpose of having discussions with neighbors and friends, and finding out how New Albany could be the most inclusive community it could be. It had great support from staff and council. 1.5 years of discussion taught the city a lot. Council gave permission for what Council Member Brisk was calling the pilot program. Council and staff set up the IDEA Panel with 1 set of representatives with a sunset in June of 2024. The panel had done tremendous programming and outreach - all below the budget council approved. She was grateful for the support. The CCP was the final initiative on the to-do list. It had taken a long time because the panel and staff wanted to be thoughtful about it. Council Member Wiltout would be presenting an ordinance to take the IDEA Implementation Panel into the long term. The council liaisons had spoken to panel representatives and were ready to shift to staggered terms, like the Sustainability board. She hoped the IDEA Panel would be a part of the city's future. They were seeing companies join in. They had just received a grant from the Columbus Arts Council for their Diwali program. Amgen was going to be a Diwali sponsor. Juneteenth had garnered 3 company sponsors. Given that it was only their second year of programming, this showed the desire from business partners to see the city doing these activities. Council Member Brisk credited Community Program Administrator Abbey Brooks for diving into this with them. The city was doing great things and Council Member Brisk thanked council for their support.

Council Member Fellows asked and Council Member Wiltout responded that the CCP would have an outline and she invited feedback on it. She did not believe the program needed a formal council motion to approve it because it was under parameters of program. Council Member Fellows was supportive of it, but wanted to better understand what the elements were. Council Member Wiltout welcomed input. They were modeling the CCP off of what was already working and there would be further discussion. Council Member Brisk added that there had been a lengthy discussion with staff to make sure the CCP maintained a narrow focus. The CCP would be a work in progress for a while. They needed to see if they would get a sufficient volume of volunteer participation. Knowing if it was 5 people or 50 would help them start to move it forward. They would update council. Council Member Brisk concurred that she didn't think they needed a council vote on the process. Council Member Fellows thought it would be good to see how the program was going to work and how it would be represented. Council Members Brisk and Wiltout agreed.

Council Member Wiltout wanted all council member's help to reach out to the neighborhoods and identify people to get the CCP going. Council Member Brisk stated the primarily goal was to have a person who said, "Welcome to New Albany," provided a small gift and links to websites and phone numbers, and to put on a once-a-year event that brought the neighborhood together - maybe to watch fireworks or celebrate the end of the school year. Perhaps there would be templates for the yearly neighborhood activity and the city could help make it happen. The CCP person would be a contact and facilitate communication with the city.

Council Member Shull asked and Council Member Wiltout answered that the budget for the CCP annual neighborhood events was \$15,000. She suggested that could be spent on postcards for invitations, perhaps a kit with a pop-up tent. Director Joly stated the \$15,000 was part of the 2024 overall IDEA budget to get the CCP



July 2, 2024

launched and set up. She expected there would be more financial projections by end of this year for ongoing program costs. She suggested the city could print flyers to hang on doors announcing a gathering. There would be some city-provided resources, but that would have to be figured as they moved into 2025.

Council Member Brisk clarified that she did not foresee the city catering neighborhood events. The program was to help neighbors coordinate an event together. Maybe everyone would bring a dish. Council Member Wiltrout agreed. The city would be providing some supportive materials for the event and that would be accounted for in the budget. Council Member Brisk stated they would be coming back to council with budget requests.

**CEMETERY RESTORATION ADVISORY BOARD:** Clerk Mason reported that the board heard from guest Keri O'Donnell, a Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Chapter Historian, Registrar, and Lineage Research Chair, among other titles. Ms. O'Donnell had located records of veterans in Wagner Cemetery and offered input on the various names of the cemetery: Wagner, Wagnor, Waggoner, and Tripplett. This was important because the Wagnor Cemetery historical marker was appearing increasingly inaccurate. The CRAB discussed their request for more cemetery-appropriate fencing at Wagner and would be approaching council likely later this year. Some CRAB members had seen Director Joly's presentation about Veteran's Memorial and she would be presenting at the August CRAB meeting so they could hear more.

Council Member Fellows stated the newly-painted horse fencing around Wagner Cemetery looked great.

**PUBLIC RECORDS COMMISSION:** No meeting.

**CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATION:**

NONE

**SECOND READING AND PUBLIC HEARING OF ORDINANCES:**

**ORDINANCE O-20-2024**

Mayor Spalding read by title AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 1187 "SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS" OF THE CITY OF NEW ALBANY CODIFIED ORDINANCES.

Planner II Chris Christian referred to the detailed presentation at first reading. He summarized that this code change added the Minor Residential Subdivision definition and regulations, updated processes and procedures to reflect current practices, and allowed public infrastructure to be accepted by the city engineer.

Mayor Spalding opened the Public Hearing. Hearing no comments or questions from the public, he closed the Public Hearing.

Mayor Spalding moved to adopt the ordinance. Council Member Fellows seconded and council voted with 7 yes votes to approve Ordinance O-20-2024.

**ORDINANCE O-21-2024**

Mayor Spalding read by title AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE NEW ALBANY VILLAGE CENTER URBAN CENTER FORM-BASED CODE OF THE CITY OF NEW ALBANY CODIFIED ORDINANCES.





## Council Minutes – Regular Meeting

July 2, 2024

Planner II Chris Christian referred to the detailed presentation at first reading. He stated that strict interpretation of the city's Urban Center Code (UCC) could result in 2 parkland and open space regulations being applied in the Village Center. The proposed code modified the UCC to clarify that only 1 open space requirement applied to properties in the Village Center.

Mayor Spalding opened the Public Hearing. Hearing no comments or questions from the public, he closed the Public Hearing.

Council Member Wiltout moved to adopt the ordinance. Council Member Kist seconded and council voted with 7 yes votes to approve Ordinance O-21-2024.

### **ORDINANCE O-22-2024**

Mayor Spalding read by title AN ORDINANCE TO ADOPT A TAX BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF NEW ALBANY, OHIO FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2025.

Finance Director Bethany Staats stated this legislation authorized the 2025 tax budget required by the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) and Franklin County Budget Commission. Franklin County used the tax budget to establish the local need for property tax revenue derived from the inside millage. Other Ohio counties, such as Licking and Delaware, had eliminated this requirement and used other tools. From a local perspective, the tax budget was considered housekeeping in nature. Its purpose was to remain compliant with ORC section 5705.30 as applied in Franklin County and show the need for the additional inside millage allocated to New Albany each year. She referred back to the detailed presentation at the first reading.

Council Member Kist asked and Director Staats indicated it was unlikely Franklin County would change their requirements to match the other counties. They'd had years to do so and continued with this method.

Mayor Spalding opened the Public Hearing. Hearing no comments or questions from the public, he closed the Public Hearing.

Council Member Brisk moved to adopt the ordinance. Council Member Durik seconded and council voted with 7 yes votes to approve Ordinance O-22-2024.

### **INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING OF ORDINANCES:**

#### **ORDINANCE O-23-2024**

Mayor Spalding read by title AN ORDINANCE TO CREATE CHAPTER 138 "IDEA IMPLEMENTATION PANEL" OF THE CITY OF NEW ALBANY, OHIO'S CODIFIED ORDINANCES AS REQUESTED BY THE CITY OF NEW ALBANY.

Clerk Jennifer Mason stated IDEA Implementation Panel members' 2-year terms were up as of June 30, 2024. The panel was still going strong, having just completed a successful Juneteenth, and with New Albany 101 and Diwali coming up. Council Member Wiltout had approached Clerk Mason about turning the panel into a typical city board like the Sustainability Advisory Board (SAB). Clerk Mason modeled this legislation after the 2021 SAB ordinance, O-19-2021. The panel would have 7 members, but now with 3-year terms and a staggered start. Council could appoint more than 1 council liaison to this board, but those council positions remain non-voting. Council Member Wiltout and Director Joly completed the proposed legislation.



July 2, 2024

Council Member Wilttrout referred back to Council Member Brisk’s remarks during the Board and Commissions reports about the history of the IDEA Committee and IDEA Implementation Panel. Council Member Wilttrout was proposing to take the IDEA Panel from pilot program to ongoing board, like the SAB. The ordinance proposed the IDEA Panel have powers and duties as set forth on Exhibit A.

- (a) Provide advice and recommendations to City Council for advancing the city’s proposed projects and events to connect the community, including but not limited to IDEA events, neighborhood ambassador programs and NA101 events.
- (b) Carry out specific actions recommended by the IDEA Committee in their 2021 report.
- (c) Advise and assist Council and the City Manager in efforts to help create an inclusive and welcoming community.
- (d) Provide a liaison to Council by attendance at a Council meeting as required by Council or deemed appropriate by the chairman or the chairman's designate, who shall report on Panel activities.
- (e) Undertake such other assignments or studies on inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility issues as may be requested by the Council and/or the City Manager.

Council Member Wilttrout stated the core asks for the panel were the same as 2 years ago. Since that time, the city had seen successful events – as was just shown in the resident survey. 1 in 3 community members attended and had a good time. That was from the first year of these events and a sign of great things to come. When people were tense and talking about growth and change in the community, creating connection and belonging was something that needed be ongoing.

Council Member Kist stated there was a framework of great events now. The last initiative was coming to fruition now. He asked if the role of panel was planning or active in the events, coordinating and executing.

Council Member Wilttrout answered it was both. The events were not static. Each year, the panel decided which big events to do. The New Albany 101s took a lot of discussion, planning, and execution work. The panel members promoted events and, for example, made soups for the Souper Supper. The panel would have an active role in the Community Connector Programs.

Council Member Kist asked if, in the future, Diwali and Juneteenth events might not happen. Council Member Brisk replied that anything was possible. They would consider community desire and support, financially and attendance-wise. If support waned or a different organization wanted to take over an event, the panel could move forward with other efforts. In 2023, the panel produced a women’s networking event which did very well. The panel didn’t know if they’d repeat or find another project. The panel was looking to do something on accessibility and a representative on the IDEA Panel wanted to help. The panel previously did a family event at the Miracle Fields and was talking about working on that again. As long as the program fell into the panel’s parameters - there would be open dialog with council about that – there needed some room to be fluid with the events.

Council Member Kist liked that the programming was dynamic and looked forward to new things.

Council Member Wilttrout understood the New Albany Women’s Network was interested in doing a networking event next year. They could take over from the IDEA Panel.

Council Member Fellows asked if it was necessary for IDEA events to be under the IDEA Implementation Panel. Could they just be city events, like Oktoberfest? Staff was typically managing events already.



July 2, 2024

Council Member Wiltout responded that one of the roles the panel fulfilled was to work with city staff to ensure the events were authentic and special. It was one thing to put on a July 4 event in a small town - everyone agreed what that looked like. Many IDEA Panel events were culturally significant. It was important to work with a focus group to make sure it was done correctly. The panel did an amazing job of looking at the plan, the budget, and how an IDEA event fit into the New Albany community.

Mayor Spalding noted, as council had discussed in the past, if there was interest in the community for an event to become self-sustaining or self-supporting, through the business community or elsewhere, that was a victory. The city put the idea out there and, if a group proceeded with the event on its own, that allowed city to venture into other areas. The city was taking some risks doing this and had been successful, so far. As these events gained lives of their own, that was a success story and what council was hoping to achieve.

Council Member Wiltout agreed. To grow the focus groups as they had, and for Juneteenth to receive the robust sponsorship that it did – they came in under budget even without the sponsorship - her hope was that panel events would continue to trend that way.

Council Member Shull agreed that the panel’s programs were working. He recalled responses on the resident survey from years past saying that the city should look at being more inclusive and celebrate some of the diversity it had. The results were out there. He agreed the panel should continue in whatever form it took. He looked at the legislation and understood that the panel, “shall assist Council and Administration in efforts to create policies and programs...” He understood the programming piece, but asked about the create policy piece.

Council Member Wiltout asked and Clerk Mason confirmed that the “policies and programs” language was also in the SAB legislation. Council Member Wiltout considered policies as fitting in with the CCP program, for example, regarding what the neighborhood ambassador requirements would be. That was not an event, but a list of requirements for the ambassador to follow. There wouldn’t be policy work outside of the stated IDEA parameters. Council Member Brisk thought the parameters were spelled out in Exhibit A.

Council Member Shull stated he was supportive of the way Council Member Wiltout described it. He would need a bigger discussion if the IDEA Panel was going to give recommendations for public policies for the City of New Albany and staff.

Council Member Wiltout replied that everything was under the asks of the IDEA Implementation Panel which were the IDEA events, the ambassador program, and New Albany 101 events. There was language allowing it to be expanded as requested by council.

Council Member Fellows asked to make the legislative language clearer per Council Member Shull suggestion - that the policy piece only relate to actions taken by the panel, not the city.

Council Member Durik agreed. The city didn’t have other committees that were establishing policy throughout the city. Policy was council’s venue. He thought projects, programs, and community outreach – those were administrative processes – to say who was an eligible community ambassador – that was not a policy. That was more of an administrative process. He thought policy could be misconstrued to a much broader term. Where council understood it now – years from now policy broadly stated could be taken a different direction. He thought the language could be clearer or requested to eliminate the policy part.



July 2, 2024

Council Member Wilttrout read that the panel’s role shall be that of a facilitator to help create a inclusive and welcoming community and to assist council and administration in efforts to create policies and programs that support inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility. The language, as written, did not contemplate the IDEA Panel writing legislation. It contemplated that the panel would assist council and administration in efforts that *they* may undertake to create policies and programs. Council could ask the IDEA panel - would “x” be a good policy? Would this be supportive of inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility? Council could ask the panel for their assistance.

Council Member Fellows asked for “policy” to be removed.

Council Member Brisk read the language that the panel “...shall not become an advocacy forum for any one group or organization. The panel’s role shall be that of facilitator to help create an inclusive and welcoming community and to assist Council and Administration in efforts to create policies and programs that support inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility.” She asked council, if they struck the word “policies” and kept, “create programs that support inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility,” if that would be acceptable. Council members agreed that it would.

Council Member Shull asked about Exhibit A, 138.06 Powers and Duties (b) “Carry out specific actions recommended by the IDEA Committee in their 2021 report.” The IDEA Committee put 11 recommendations in that report and most he agreed with, but some he wouldn’t be highly supportive of moving forward. He suggested adding language, “subject to council approval” or something similar. Council Member Wilttrout thought that “as provided by council” was assumed and would be fine with that suggestion or “as directed by city council.” Council Member Brisk recalled having language like that elsewhere.

Council Member Brisk didn’t want a requirement that council pass an ordinance every time the IDEA Panel put on a social event.

Law Director Albrecht stated the suggested language “as directed by council” would require some sort of council action giving direction. Council could perhaps do that more broadly, not necessarily every time it came out. Council could set guidelines. Yearly planning might cover it. But if council didn’t do that, “as directed by council” would require council direction.

Council Member Fellows stated council needed to have a degree of oversight.

Council Members Brisk and Wilttrout asked Council Member Kist how the SAB operated. Council Member Kist stated, if an SAB project needed funding, then it would come to council and be incorporated into the budget. But when the SAB decided to do an event, they weren’t coming to council. The budget was the only thing that needed approval.

Mayor Spalding thought that the SAB’s language should get a fresh look, too. Council shouldn’t be unknowingly giving policy responsibility to a board or commission. There were boards and commissions created in the charter and city code which had certain legal responsibilities, but the SAB and IDEA Implementation Panel were not those. Council needed to be deliberate about how that was accomplished.



July 2, 2024

Council Member Durik agreed that the SAB was establishing programs and projects, but not setting a standardized policy that all residents would have to adhere to. Council Member Brisk responded that neither was the IDEA Panel. Council Member Durik asked to clear it up so the ambiguity didn't exist going forward – take policies out. Council Members Brisk and Wiltout responded it was already agreed to take “policies” out.

Council Member Brisk stated that council had to figure out where line was regarding how much discretion a board like the SAB and IDEA Panel had versus what required a vote by council for approval. If certain language was added, then council technically would vote on every program.

Council Member Wiltout thought council's budget approval was a good way to vote. Council had looked at SAB proposed programs and supported them. The same had happened with the IDEA Panel when they came to council with a budget with programs they wanted to do – those would cost money – that was a good way for council to get behind that.

Council Member Fellows asked for confirmation. If an item was approved during the budgeting process, was it approved? And anything outside of the budget discussion and approval, if the board/panel wanted to add or change something – he thought most would be covered during the budget - outside of that, if there was additional money not spent – it should come back to council.

Council Member Kist stated there was a difference between policy and programming. He thought the SAB and IDEA Panel had lived in programming space. The concern was when it veered to policy. Council Members Brisk and Wiltout agreed. He posed a hypothetical situation where the SAB voted that every new construction in New Albany must have solar panels. Even if approved at the board level, it would still have to come to council. Law Director Albrecht agreed, for it to be binding, it would have to be adopted by council by some means. Council Member Kist said he viewed these boards as making recommendations, even on policy, but it was ultimately up to council to decide whether something became the policy of the city.

Mayor Spalding recalled stories of boards and commissions in central Ohio going in different directions than their elected officials. He thought that's what council was trying to avoid - pitting citizens against council. He posed a hypothetical where the SAB voted on a policy and carried out specific actions, using language in the legislation, that the City of New Albany would only use electric vehicles. It was a nice goal, but from financial, health, and safety perspectives, there were a lot of reasons why that policy could be problematic. Council could be at loggerheads with a committee because it delegated policy authority. Council should lay expectations clearly on the table at the beginning so it didn't run into those issues.

Council Member Brisk reiterated that “policy” would come out. No one intended the SAB or IDEA Panel to make a policy decision. She agreed with Council Member Kist that these boards were about programming. What she didn't want to do was get the panel locked in as Law Director Albrecht described and where she didn't think the SAB was locked. Council Member Brisk asked if the word “policy” was in the SAB code language. Council Member Wiltout confirmed that it was.

Council Member Shull stated #10 of the 2021 IDEA Committee recommendations said, “build equity in New Albany by embedding IDEA into all municipal policies, practices, and procedures.”

Council Member Brisk responded they were never given that authority, never headed in that direction. She didn't think there was any question about pulling “policy” out. She wanted to clear up whether “only as directed by



July 2, 2024

council” meant a council vote on everything, including a happy hour event. That was her concern. Council Member Wilttrout also wanted to consider that and believed the language could be redone before second reading. Council Members Brisk and Wilttrout asked if removing the Exhibit A language referencing the 2021 IDEA Committee report would be sufficient.

Council Member Kist preferred striking 138.06(b) regarding carry out policy actions.

Council Member Brisk asked and Mayor Spalding replied he believed taking out “policy” and 138.06(b) would work.

Council Member Brisk thought the word “policy” should also come out of the SAB code, if that was council’s intention.

Mayor Spalding agreed that the language should be consistent amongst the boards that weren’t created in the charter or in city code where specific statutory responsibilities had been delegated.

Council Member Fellows asked and Law Director Albrecht replied, based on council’s discussion, removing 138.06(b) would solve the problem because paragraph 138.06(e) also talked about taking on assignments as requested by council or the city manager. So, council could always reach back to other issues under that existing language. He noted he wasn’t the city attorney in 2021.

Director Joly stated the IDEA Implementation Panel was created in 2021 and the panel members were appointed in 2022. In 2021, when the panel was created, it was under the same concept – that the panel would implement recommendations from that IDEA Committee report, but council would designate which recommendations the panel would work on. At that time, council decided on the 3 programmatic lines which were the neighborhood ambassadors, the welcoming reception, and the events. It was consistent with how it was created originally, but if council wanted to be more specific, there was the ability to do that. She recommended some discussion about the SAB because she thought there were some policy-related areas that the SAB wanted to work on, like native landscaping. Council could still take that language out, but she recommended talking that through to see how it could affect something the SAB might want to recommend. City staff made it very clear that these were advisory boards making recommendations. They would never think that any decision by a board was binding and wouldn’t come to council. As part of the budget process, staff did an annual report and work plan outlining what the board did that year, proposed projects for the coming year, and listed what those budgets were based on the board’s recommendations. They needed some flexibility because things changed, but those were the broad parameters of how staff implemented the board’s work based on what council approved.

Council Member Fellows agreed with all of that, but the language had to have guardrails to ensure that happened in the end.

Council Member Brisk believed there was a consensus on how to fix the language and, unless there were other objections, she and Council Member Wilttrout could polish up the ordinance for the second reading.

Mayor Spalding set the ordinance for second reading at the July 16, 2024 council meeting.

**READING AND PUBLIC HEARING OF RESOLUTIONS:**



July 2, 2024

**RESOLUTION R-28-2024**

Mayor Spalding read by title A RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH THE NEW ALBANY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOR THE SUPPORT OF COMMUNITY EVENTS.

Administrative Services Director Adrienne Joly stated that the city had taken different approaches to the delivery of special events within the community. Recently, the New Albany Chamber of Commerce had managed and produced events such as the Independence Day parade & festival and Oktoberfest, on the city's behalf. This agreement between the chamber and the city would memorialize certain commitments, outline a process for budgeting and payments, and document city policy related to alcohol sales at events. After the matter was tabled at the prior council meeting, the chamber requested that the agreement end on December 31, 2024, so that would need to be amended where indicated. The city and chamber would work together at the end of the year to determine the future of the event partnership.

Council Member Shull asked when the chamber would normally start planning for the 2025 Oktoberfest.

New Albany Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Cherie Nelson replied that the chamber started planning all of their events starting in December/January for the next year. It depended on the event. Santa needed to be booked by April. Some bands had to be booked early.

Council Member Fellows asked if the chamber had had any success getting sponsors for Oktoberfest or growing the sponsorship. Mr. Nelson stated they had not because they didn't have a date and location. Now that they did, they could open it up for sponsorship.

Council Member Brisk asked and Ms. Nelson answered that the city and the chamber had talked about the chamber taking on city events for a few years. The city formally asked the chamber to take on Oktoberfest in 2020 and the chamber put it on in 2021. Council Member Brisk knew from working on IDEA events how much time and effort they took and appreciated the chamber for what they did. The chamber put on great events and programming, getting a lot of people involved.

Council Member Brisk asked, based on Ms. Nelson's knowledge, whether it was realistic to think Oktoberfest could pay for itself. When the city first started doing the event, prior to the chamber's involvement, council members talked about getting it to a point where it would pay for itself. Council Member Fellows stated that was council's aspiration. Ms. Nelson responded in its current form, she didn't see how it could be self-sustaining. It was a free event - that was good and people enjoyed it. Council Member Brisk asked if Ms. Nelson could recommend ways to make it possible to be self-sustaining. Ms. Nelson stated the entertainment could be more special and expensive, so that there could be charge – for example, a big headliner band on a Saturday night.

Ms. Nelson asked if the goal was for the city not to finance Oktoberfest? Council Member Brisk answered that she couldn't speak on all of council's behalf. At one time, it was the goal - getting closer to that would be nice. It was a big budget item. Council Member Fellows expressed that he wanted to take more expense away from city and shift to sponsorship.



July 2, 2024

Council Member Wiltout asked, if Oktoberfest was a 1-day event, would that make self-sustaining more achievable? Ms. Nelson replied that this was the first she was hearing about it. She would have to think about it. She asked if the city was hoping not to do Oktoberfest in the future and have another group do it.

Council Member Fellows replied that he'd love for the chamber to do it, but were their opportunities to garner more sponsorship – by going to large breweries and asking them, offering naming rights, that type of thing? Ms. Nelson answered it was possible. Council Member Fellows stated, as the community grew, it would be more possible because the city would be larger and there would be more attention focused here. Oktoberfest was already a large event. He recalled Ms. Nelson presenting the chamber's online feedback and Oktoberfest had the most clicks, it was popular.

Council Member Brisk asked if this was a responsibility Ms. Nelson felt comfortable taking on. Ms. Nelson needed a deeper dive into expectations. If Oktoberfest was to be the chamber's event, the chamber could change it any way they wanted. She asked if that was correct.

Council Member Fellows stated the city still wanted to support it, it was just a matter of –

Council Member Brisk stated she wanted Ms. Nelson's insight as the person who had run it. Were there things the chamber would like to see done differently? Were there things the city was doing well? If the budget piece was removed, was the length of time too much? She wanted Ms. Nelson's thoughts before the city and chamber moved forward together.

Ms. Nelson responded this was the reason for the formalized agreement, less waiting to get reimbursed - not that they were worried about getting paid. It was good to have a process in place. This was a start of a good conversation about planning, council's expectations, how those would be measured, how the chamber could fulfill them, and what resources from chamber would be required to do that. Ms. Nelson asked if Oktoberfest would be chamber's event, but the city would support it. She didn't understand that.

Council Member Brisk asked Ms. Nelson, before council conveyed expectations, what did she think was realistic based on her experience?

Mr. Nelson stated the city came to chamber and asked if they would take this project. The chamber said yes. That's what they'd done. The need for a 2-day festival was important in the fall. Her preference was for an away OSU game weekend, no homecoming, no Friday/Monday school holiday – people traveled those weekends, no religious holidays, and no other events. The date was important. The chamber tracked metrics for ticket sales and temperatures. The first date they picked for Oktoberfest, there was another major community event. They didn't want 2 large events with alcohol in 1 weekend. Council Member Fellows agreed that they didn't want a home OSU football game date because people would be going there. Council members listed other local football-related conflicts. Ms. Nelson observed that the published schedule had changed recently. She couldn't book and put down deposits if she thought the event date would change. She was still waiting to see if the Oktoberfest location would be approved. Most cities put on a July 4 event. Based on her experience, she didn't think that a July 4 event could be profitable in and of itself.

Council Member Brisk stated that she didn't believe council had discussed July 4 being self-sustaining. Council Member Durik agreed July 4 was a national holiday versus another event.



July 2, 2024

Ms. Nelson agreed that so much of July 4 was coordinated with the city, police, public service. It was all hands on deck for the city and chamber. That's why they wanted to have the agreement this year. July 4 was happening soon. Oktoberfest, if the location was approved -. She wanted to, based on the questions council was asking -. She thought everyone needed to understand what the city was contracting chamber to do, so they could do a good job.

Council Member Brisk asked if Ms. Nelson wanted more time to come back with more thoughts on some of these questions, sit down at later date. Ms. Nelson thought it should be soon. Council Member Brisk expected 2024 Oktoberfest was likely baked in at this point.

Council Member Brisk and Ms. Nelson discussed when the city and chamber started planning for 2025, likely in October/November of 2024.

Council Member Brisk asked and Ms. Nelson answered that Oktoberfest's biggest expenses included bounce houses. Council Member Brisk noted the city's budget was significantly larger for Oktoberfest than July 4. Ms. Nelson said that was partly due to Oktoberfest being a 2-day event. Everything was doubled. The stage was a big expense. She offered to share the budget.

Council Member Kist asked and Council Member Brisk answered that the July 4 fireworks were budgeted separately and were not a chamber expense.

Ms. Nelson stated they were happy to put on the events with the city, but the chamber wanted to make sure council was happy with what they were paying for.

Council Member Kist didn't want this conversation to be misconstrued as the council not thinking the chamber was doing a fantastic job. Council Member Brisk stated it was quite the contrary. Council Member Kist stated, with all of council's initiatives, they were trying to make things more sustainable, without necessarily funding them year after year. Council wanted to continue to put out programs that the community enjoyed. Oktoberfest was very well received. Council was looking at ways to divert funds. If the city couldn't get there, then they couldn't, and needed to make a decision about whether to continue it.

Ms. Nelson stated that the chamber was not married to Oktoberfest either. It was the city that came to the chamber. Council Member Brisk recognized and appreciated that.

Council Member Brisk stated, since the chamber had been doing it for a few years, she'd love insight about budget or anything that she thought -

Ms. Nelson stated, as someone who did events for a living, what council was doing was smart. One should always look – don't do what you've always done every single year. The chamber looked at every single event at the end of the year. Was there a sacred cow? Did an event need a rest? She gave the example of a golf outing that they gave up. She noted the city's growing events department. July was a very busy month for the chamber because that when they hosted their biggest fund raiser. The chamber could do it. They were good at it, but it was up to council if they want to continue doing it.

Council Member Brisk reiterated the city was grateful for what the chamber did. She asked and Ms. Nelson answered that the biggest Oktoberfest challenge was early marketing. There were so many things to work



July 2, 2024

around, homecoming, the Friday football game. Volunteers were very tough to find on July 4 because it was a holiday, but less so for Oktoberfest.

Council Member Wiltrout asked and Ms. Nelson answered she there was no way for her to know whether attendees at these events were residents or non-residents.

Mayor Spalding stated, so there was no misunderstanding, the city was not canceling July 4. It was on and there would be lots of fireworks. Council members and Ms. Nelson discussed the enduring popularity of the bounce houses.

Council Member Brisk acknowledged that the events were a lot work and gave the city’s appreciation.

Ms. Nelson stated the chamber couldn’t do these events without the city. They were intensive for staff, volunteers, board members, and the city.

Mayor Spalding thanked Ms. Nelson for coming out and speaking to council.

Mayor Spalding opened the Public Hearing. Hearing no comments or questions from the public, he closed the Public Hearing.

Mayor Spalding moved to adopt the resolution. Council Member Brisk seconded and council voted with 7 yes votes to approve Resolution R-28-2024.

**RESOLUTION R-30-2024**

Mayor Spalding read by title A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE TO PROVIDE A ONE-TIME RETROACTIVE PAYMENT AND MAKE BI-ANNUAL REVENUE-SHARING PAYMENTS TO PLAIN TOWNSHIP IN AMOUNTS EQUAL TO THOSE THE TOWNSHIP WOULD HAVE RECEIVED FROM PROPERTY TAX LEVIES FOR FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES IN THE ABSENCE OF TAX INCREMENT FINANCING DISTRICTS CREATED FOR THE RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY TIF AND BLACKLICK II (BOB EVANS) TIF.

Finance Director Bethany Staats stated the purpose of the proposed legislation was to authorize staff to take the necessary actions to share Tax Increment Financing (TIF) revenue with Plain Township from the Research and Technology TIF and the Blacklick II - Bob Evans TIF for fire and EMS services. The city had several agreements with Plain Township which outline obligations related to TIF revenue. Historically, the city had shared residential TIF revenue received from Franklin County to compensate the township for fire and EMS services. Most of the original legislation and original agreements with Plain Township did not contemplate compensation for the TIF districts established for commercial development. Typically, the city needed all of the TIF revenue it received to fund various infrastructure projects related to each TIF district area. In 2021, the city had additional consideration and analysis of the estimated revenue from some of the TIFs outside of the agreement with Plain Township and determined that the city would the look at Straits Farm, Oxford, and Schleppe/Nottingham Trace residential TIFs as they were TIFs created after the prior agreements, plus the Blacklick and Blacklick II - Forest Drive TIFs. At the request of Plain Township, the city analyzed the revenue received from the remaining TIF funds established for commercial development that had not been included in the prior agreements, which included the Research and Technology TIF, Blacklick II - Bob Evans TIFs, and Village Center II TIF. The analysis performed determined the ability to establish similar revenue sharing for the Research and Technology and Blacklick II - Bob Evans





## Council Minutes – Regular Meeting

July 2, 2024

TIFs for fire and EMS services. Those generated an estimated \$455,000, net of county fees, in a one-time retroactive payment to the township for the tax years 2015 through 2022. There was an estimated annual distribution of \$84,000, net of county fees, thereafter. During a presentation at the June 18 council meeting, Plain Township representatives expressed that additional TIF revenue would help offset a projected financial deficit. This legislation authorized the New Albany director of finance to make a one-time retroactive payment to Plain Township for the amounts equal for Research and Technology and Blacklick II - Bob Evans TIF funds, and continue on with the annual revenue that they would receive from those funds for fire and EMS services.

Mayor Spalding recalled the presentation and discussion with the township at the June 18 council meeting. The city took another look at the city's TIF agreements and, in spirit of the city doing its best to hold partners harmless in these economic development opportunities, went back and looked at the numbers again. Where there was leeway, the city did what it could to provide resources to township. TIFs and abatements were not his favorite things. If congress outlawed them tomorrow, he'd lead the celebratory parade. However, it was the way the game was played and, in a growing community, they were a part of the process. The city did its level-headed best to make sure schools and township were taken care of, while achieving the city's economic development goals. There were other central Ohio communities that did not go as far as New Albany did. New Albany deserved some credit for that. The city appreciated the hard work done by the township. Based on their presentation, the township was trying make a tough decision about going to November ballot to ask voters for additional taxes. Anything the city could do to make that a lower request, was something the city should consider.

Plain Township Trustee Kerri Mollard, thanked council and the city for the partnership, the analysis, and the hard work. She was available to answer any additional questions.

Mayor Spalding opened the Public Hearing. Hearing no comments or questions from the public, he closed the Public Hearing.

Council Member Brisk moved to adopt the resolution. Council Member Durik seconded and council voted with 7 yes votes to approve Resolution R-30-2024.

### **COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:**

NONE

### **REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES:**

- A. Council Representative to MORPC: No meeting.
- B. Council Representative to Joint Parks and Recreation: No report.
- C. Council Representative to New Albany-Plain Local Schools: Council Member Wilttrout encouraged everyone to view the last meeting or read the school district's correspondence. The district discussed the Master Facilities Plan and how to pay for it. The board published a school calendar for public input. The district added 2 extra work days per the new union agreement. The majority of the public comments expressed that they wanted school to end by Memorial Day. It was hard to do that and fit all the exams in, so the end date did not change. The school added dates in January and February. Regarding the campus Master Plan, the board discussed their wish list, if price was



July 2, 2024

no object. There was a proposal to add to the Kindergarten building, in addition to a new school for Grades 1 and 2. The board prioritized and cut \$12 million off of the budget by combining all-day Kindergarten as part of the Grades 1-2 school building. There was an \$8 million overall cost savings because they had to add on to the Grades 1-2 building. The board continued to look at other projects. The total project was estimated at \$166 million. The project items were split it into permanent, phase 1, phase 2, and nice to have if the community funded it. The board discussed a bond levy that would request to add .55 mills from voters, equating to a cost increase \$19.25 per \$100,000 of home value. The board heard a student belonging update including the progress over the year with their programs. The board discussed discipline data, including positive behavior intervention supports. More developments on bond levy were coming.

- D. Council Representative to Plain Township: Council Member Durik stated the township met regarding the fire department budget, the direction levy, and the anticipated TIF money from the City of New Albany.

**REPORTS OF CITY OFFICIALS:**

- A. Mayor: Mayor Spalding complimented Director Staats on being named President of Ohio Government Finance Officers Association. Director Staats’ finance team had done a great job and received multiple awards. Having peers elect her to be president of Ohio’s most prominent government finance organization was special.
- B. Clerk of Council: Clerk Mason polled council about Local Dragon New Albany LLC’s, a.k.a. Bendi Wok’s, request for a D-1 liquor permit transfer. Council did not have any objections. Clerk Mason and council members reviewed July 4 parade plans including golf cart decorating, driving the carts to the line-up, and council wear.
- C. Finance Director: No report.
- D. City Manager: City Manager Stefanov invited Chief Jones to speak on recent truck complaints. Mayor Spalding pointed to discussions on social media about SR 161 traffic, accidents, and speeding. Someone filed complaint with Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSP) regarding construction trucks. The New Albany Police Department got involved.

Chief Jones described the complaint about commercial trucks on SR 161 and extending to Mink and Beech roads and elsewhere. The complaint was about driving, speeding, and rocks from trucks hitting cars. This was not the first complaint and the NAPD had the same concerns. NAPD cruisers had been hit by rocks. The NAPD recently pulled over a truck which lost one of its dualies, 300 pounds of tire, into the area between the freeway and exit ramp. The NAPD was seeing issues with the conditions of trucks, drivers who were under suspension, drivers not endorsed for the size of the truck they were operating, lack of inspection, and poorly maintained trucks. As commercial traffic increased, including construction trucks and semis, the NAPD had increased enforcement on commercial vehicles. The NAPD had 1 officer who had already been through commercial vehicle enforcement school and the NAPD sent 3 more officers in May of 2024. In the last 2 months, those officers had been very active on the roads, going beyond the regular shift. In partnership with the with the OSP, the NAPD had been conducting a “traffic blitz.” It was a 360 type of enforcement and going well. The OSP had also been



July 2, 2024

partnering with the City of Columbus and the Licking County Sheriff's Office to go further out past New Albany. While the city had 4 officers with special training, additional training wasn't needed to stop vehicles for violations like missing mud flaps, speeding, loose loads, registration violations, suspensions, and not having the right endorsements. The NAPD invited the OSP to give a 1-day class on commercial vehicle enforcement for the majority of NAPD officers to make them more effective. Officers could tell that the word about increased enforcement was getting out. Drivers talked on the CB radio and tried to find detours. Mud flap violations were becoming rarer.

Chief Jones noted the most enforcement was happening during weekdays and business hours. The formal complaint mentioned the hours of enforcement, saying violations were also happening on evenings and weekends. The NAPD had put officers out overtime in the evenings, but they were not seeing a lot of violations. The NAPD would continue to emphasize enforcement at times that mirrored the truck drivers' schedules. The NAPD would continue partnering with the OSP and neighboring agencies. NAPD officers were scheduled for additional overtime through August and would reevaluate at that time.

Mayor Spalding noted that there were many jurisdictions crossed by SR 161, including City of Columbus, Blendon Township, New Albany, Plain Township, Franklin County, and Licking County. Including the OSP, 7 different agencies were responsible for that stretch of road. Chief Jones stated all were working well together. With the existing construction, there was little room for police work on the freeway, but officers had been looping around the area and waiting for a targeted truck to get close to an exit to pull them over. The various agencies had been active and it was nice to see them making a difference.

E. City Attorney: No report.

**POLL FOR PUBLIC COMMENT:**

NONE

**POLL FOR COUNCIL COMMENT:**

Police Chief Greg Jones described the Special Olympics Torch Run and praised School Resource Officer Leland Kelly who was a state board member for the organization. He would be carrying torch at the national convention this year. The kids loved this year's Torch Run, especially when Officer Kelly went down the waterslide. It was a great cause and a great time.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Mayor Spalding moved that council go into executive session pursuant New Albany Charter Section 4.03 (E) for economic development purposes and pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 121.22(G)(1) for discussion regarding appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee or official. Council Member Shull seconded and council voted with 7 yes votes to go into executive session at 9:03 pm. Council did not anticipate taking action after.

Council Member Kist moved that council come out of executive session and resume the regular meeting. Council Member Fellows seconded and council voted with 6 yes votes and 1 absent (Spalding) to come out of executive session and resume the regular meeting. Council resumed the regular meeting at 10:29 pm.





# Council Minutes – Regular Meeting

July 2, 2024

**ADJOURNMENT:**

With no further comments and all scheduled matters attended to, Council Member Durik moved and Council Member Kist seconded to adjourn the July 2, 2024 regular council meeting at 10:30 pm.

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jennifer H. Mason, Clerk of Council

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Sloan T. Spalding, Mayor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**NEW ALBANY CITY COUNCIL**  
**JULY 2, 2024**  
**DISTRACTED DRIVING PENALTIES**

Your predecessors were among the first in Ohio to proactively address distracted driving. When the state had failed for 13 years to pass a law to restrict this dangerous behavior, they passed your own law. I came to the meetings in 2010 and watched as they gave it careful thought. I was delighted when they sought and took my advice to specify that it was a primary offense.

You have been wise in not jumping on the bandwagon with the 2023 state law that has way too many permissive exceptions along with its other shortcomings. Your exceptions for emergency use and for when out of traffic are pretty much all that we need.

I'm here tonight to ask you to build on this impressive safety record. Neither your law nor the state law provides stronger penalties when a driver using a phone causes serious injury or death. In the early stages of creating bills that became the current distracted driving law, the governor wanted causing serious injury to be a 3<sup>rd</sup> degree felony and causing death to be a 2<sup>nd</sup> degree felony. What he got—what we all got—was an unclassified misdemeanor for violating the law, AND for causing serious injury by violating the law, AND for causing death by violating the law!

Not only is there no justice for the victim in this, there is absolutely no logic in this.

The state has not only refused—for at least 19 years-- to do this for distracted driving but also for other offenses by sober drivers. Why? Their reasons are “stronger penalties don't deter,” or “the driver didn't *mean* to cause harm.” If these reasons are valid, then there is no justification for serious injury or death by DUI to be felonies.

The state distracted driving law [4511.204(E)] allows stronger local penalties. Gahanna and Grove City have raised these outcomes to anywhere from third to first degree misdemeanors. Westerville is having a serious discussion about this. Hilliard is looking at what Gahanna & Grove City have done.

You could create your own, or use Gahanna's or Grove City's model, or get ideas from a proposal that the Ohio Bicycle Federation and a motorcycle safety advocacy organization [ABATE (American Bikers Aimed Towards Education)] have created for the state that addresses more than just distracted driving. I can provide these models for your review if you want them.

Sharon Montgomery  
572 Bonnington Way  
Gahanna, OH 43230  
614-475-8588 (landline)  
[smontgomery77@yahoo.com](mailto:smontgomery77@yahoo.com)





≡ NEW ALBANY ≡

2024 Community Survey

Saperstein Associates

This research gives New Albany residents a voice. It allows them to express opinions on myriad issues, and, in doing so, provides city officials objective data as planning for the future continues.



## Methodology

- This survey is the fourth in a biennial series dating to 2018.
- Unlike the earlier surveys, the current research employs two data-collection methodologies. Specifically, 154 adult residents of New Albany were interviewed by telephone (51%), while 146 completed a self-administered online questionnaire (49%). In total, 300 adult residents participated in this study.
- In recent years, employing multiple data-collection methodologies has become more common as the percentage of potential survey participants who answer their telephone continues to decline.
- For this survey, for example, skilled interviewers dialed, on average, 29 telephone numbers prior to completing an interview. In 2018, the comparable figure was 17.



- The current study also differs from the previous studies due to a significant and intentional change to the sampling frame (i.e., the list of residents from which the sample is drawn). Indeed, while the sampling frame for each of the earlier studies was developed almost entirely from an updated list of New Albany's registered voters, the sampling frame for the current study is more comprehensive in that it includes all adult residents of New Albany for whom contact information (i.e., a telephone number or email address) was available. In other words, the current study includes adult residents of New Albany whether or not they are registered to vote.
- The telephone interviews were completed from April 8 through April 16 and averaged 14 minutes in length.
- The online interviews were completed from April 9 through April 24 and averaged 12 minutes in length.

5

- The margin of error for a random sample of 300 respondents is  $\leq \pm 5.6$  percentage points at the 95 percent level of confidence.
- To compensate for limitations in the data-collection process, the combined file of respondents was weighted on key demographics to more accurately reflect known population parameters.

	Actual*	Survey* (weighted)	Phone* (weighted)	Online* (weighted)		Actual*	Survey* (weighted)	Phone* (weighted)	Online* (weighted)
18 to 24	11%	11%	22%	0%	< Bachelor's	23%	23%	31%	15%
25 to 34	7%	7%	14%	0%	Bachelor's+	77%	77%	69%	85%
35 to 44	27%	27%	23%	31%	Male	51%	51%	56%	46%
45 to 54	33%	33%	27%	39%	Female	49%	49%	44%	54%
55 to 64	11%	11%	7%	15%					
65 to 74	4%	4%	4%	5%					
Older than 74	7%	7%	3%	10%					

\*SOURCES: Neilsberg Research, Updated September 17, 2023; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 2017-2021 5-Year Estimates  
 \*Data were weighted to reflect known population parameters.

6

### A Cautionary Note

As detailed previously, the methodology informing this research differs significantly from the approach employed in the three biennial studies dating to 2018. Specifically, the latter were limited to telephone interviews with registered voters, while the current study employs two methods of data collection and invited participation from a broader pool of residents.

It is likely, therefore, that at least some of the findings in this study that differ from those in the earlier research are methodological artifacts.

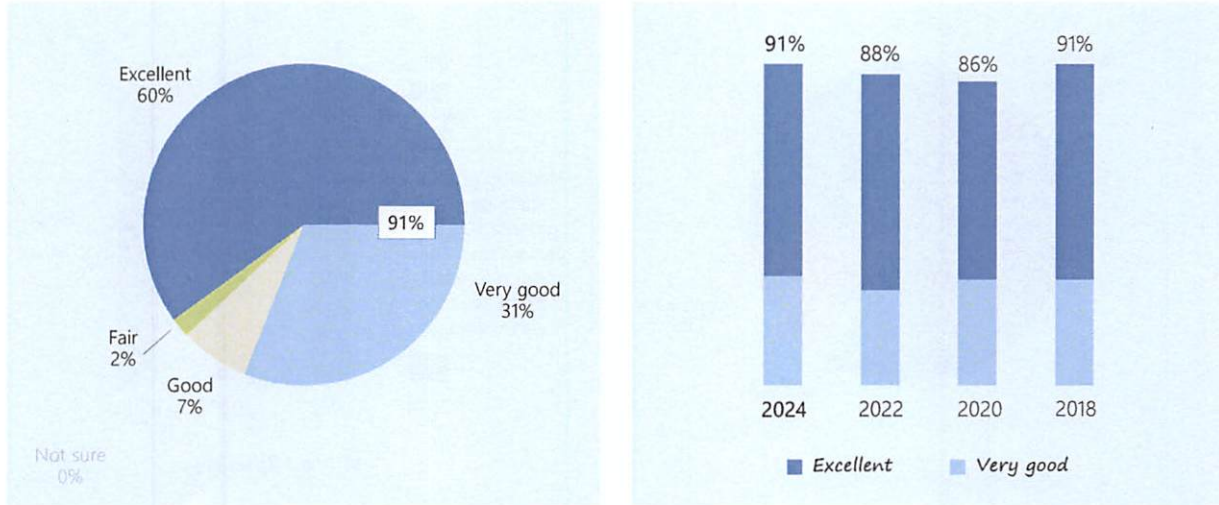
7



Overall Impressions

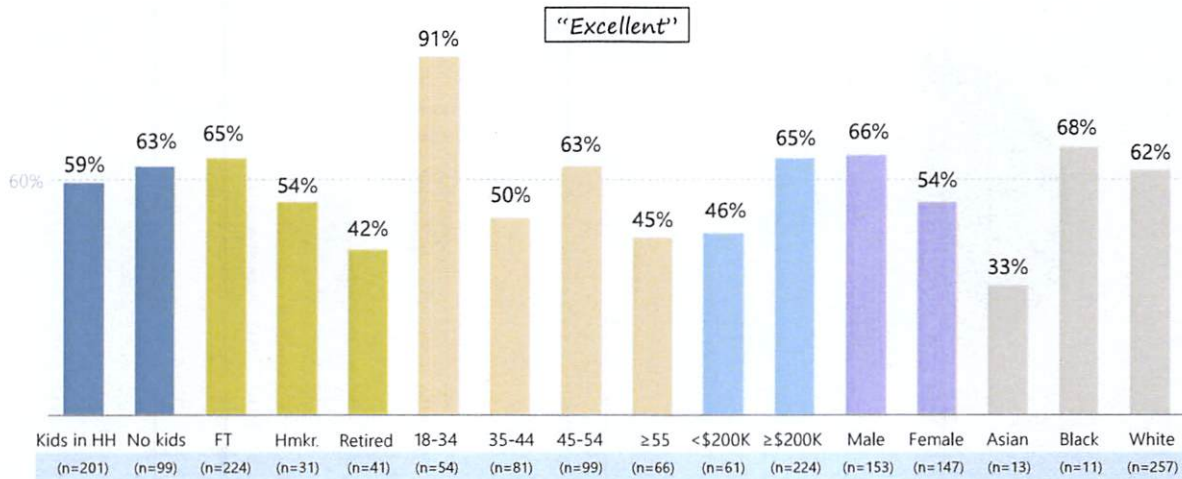


Six out of ten New Albany residents consider the city an "excellent" place to live. An additional three out of ten said "very good." Positive impressions have increased slightly since 2020.



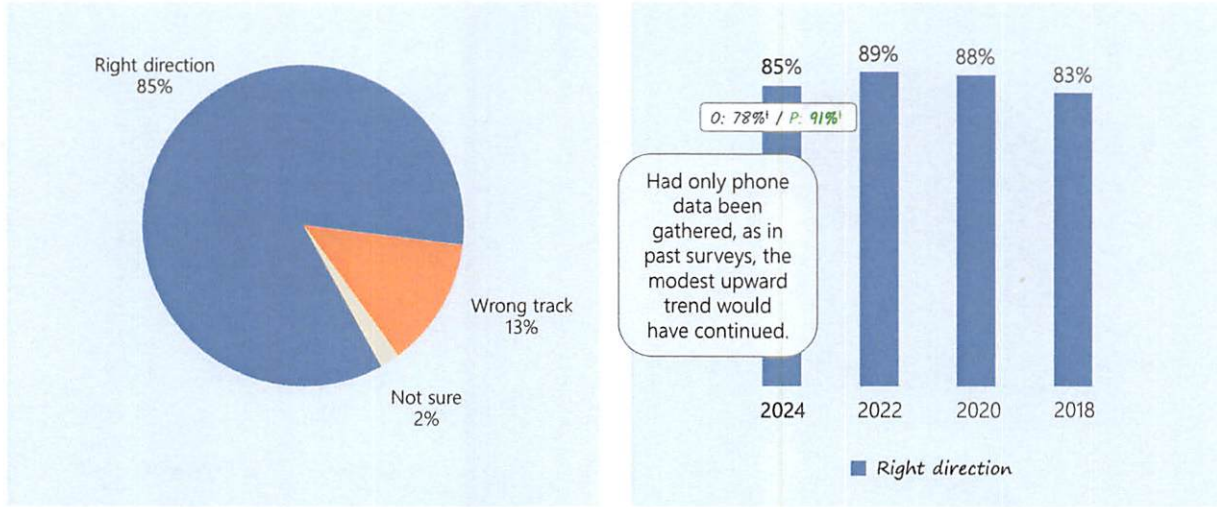
Q6: As a place to live, is New Albany excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor?

Impressions of New Albany as a place to live vary widely across demographic categories, though some of the differences may be a function of the limited number of respondents.



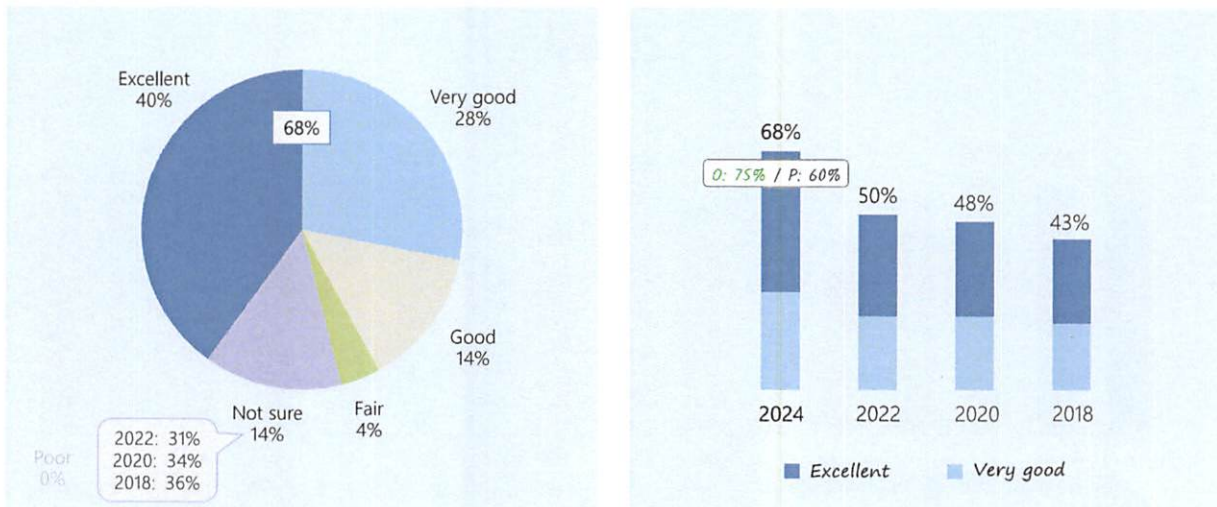
Q6: As a place to live, is New Albany excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor?

More than eight out of ten residents agree that New Albany is heading in the right direction. Roughly one out of eight claims it is off the wrong track. Little has changed since 2018.



IO = online survey only, P = phone survey only  
 Q9: In your opinion, is New Albany heading in the right direction or is it off on the wrong track?

As a place to work, seven out of ten New Albany residents consider the city either "excellent" or "very good" ... up dramatically from years past.



Q7: As a place to work, is New Albany excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor?



“

What could be done to make New Albany a better place to work?

Provide affordable housing options for employees to become residents. Starter homes that new families and younger professionals can actually afford.

We need public transportation.

There are not many corporate opportunities.

Traffic patterns would lead me to not want to work here if I had to travel 161 daily.

Faster network service for Wi-Fi.

There's no walkable business community ... for example, like there is at Bridge Park. It feels very disconnected.

We lost a lot of business that took up major buildings that are now vacant. Just get some new stuff besides Intel and Amazon.

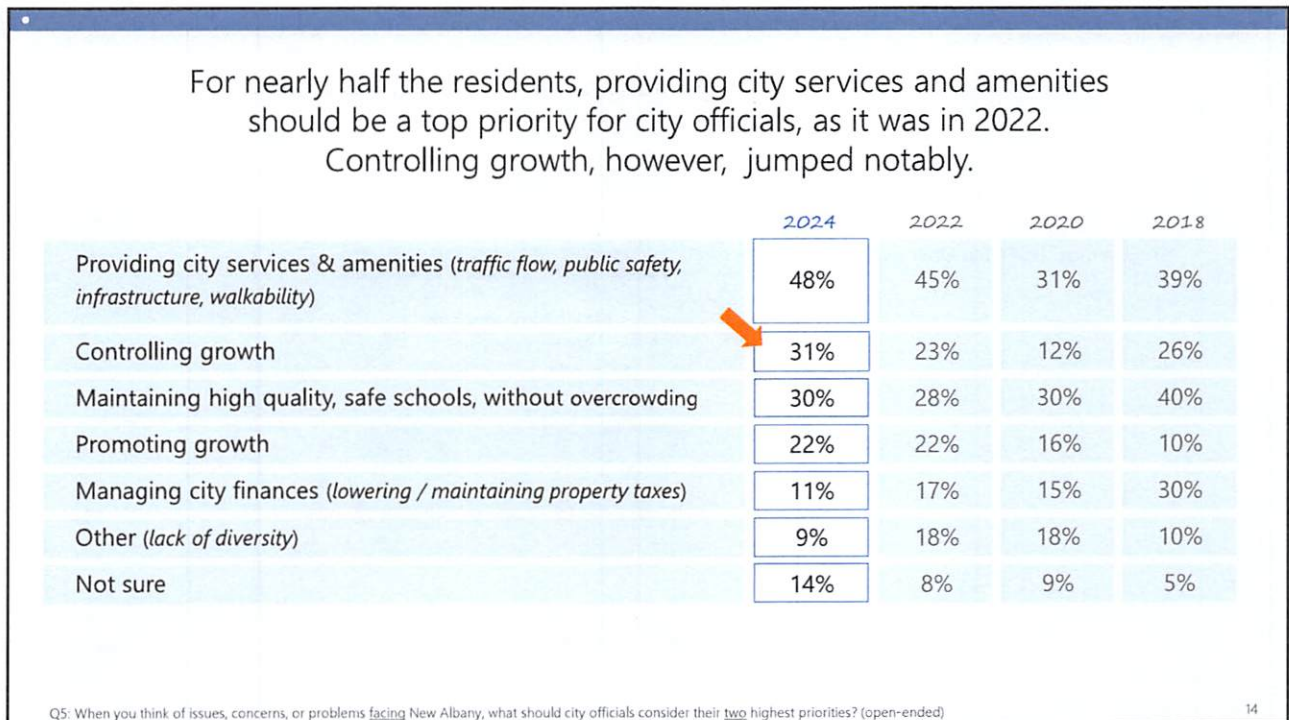
RITA tax. It's terrible to communicate with them and higher than Ohio's state tax.

Making it very easy to get to work. Also, proper support ... a better way of getting employment for people in the community they are building. They are having all of these corporations come in but they are not promoting job fairs.

”

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS APPEAR IN A SEPARATE DOCUMENT

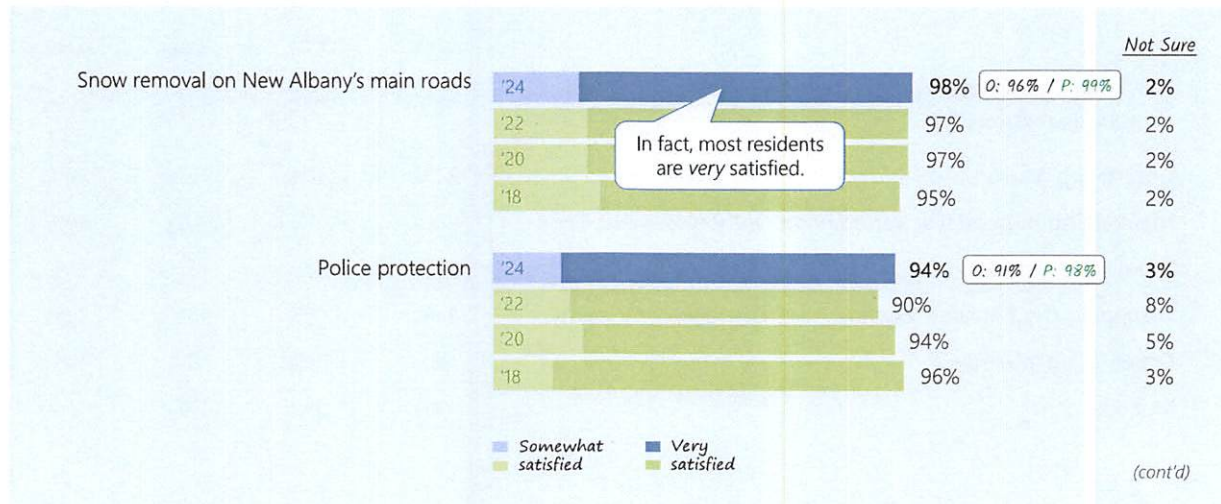
13





## City Services

As in previous surveys, satisfaction with city services is almost universal.



Q11e+a: As a resident of New Albany, how satisfied are you with each of the following city services?



As in previous surveys, satisfaction with city services is almost universal.



Q11c+f: As a resident of New Albany, how satisfied are you with each of the following city services?

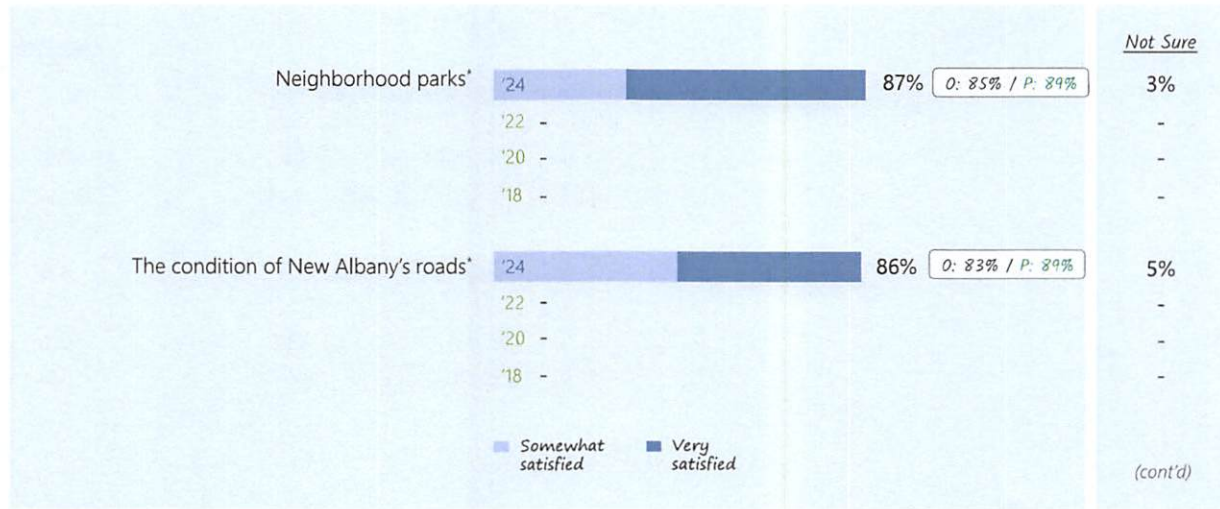
As in previous surveys, satisfaction with city services is almost universal.



\*new category

Q11g+d: As a resident of New Albany, how satisfied are you with each of the following city services?

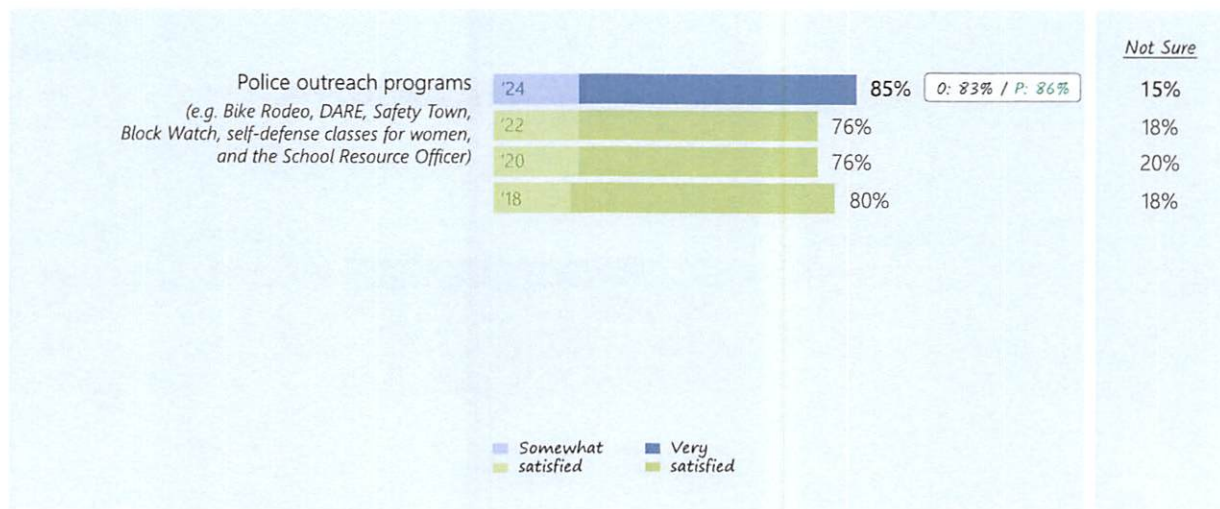
As in previous surveys, satisfaction with city services is almost universal.



\*new category

Q11h+i: As a resident of New Albany, how satisfied are you with each of the following city services?

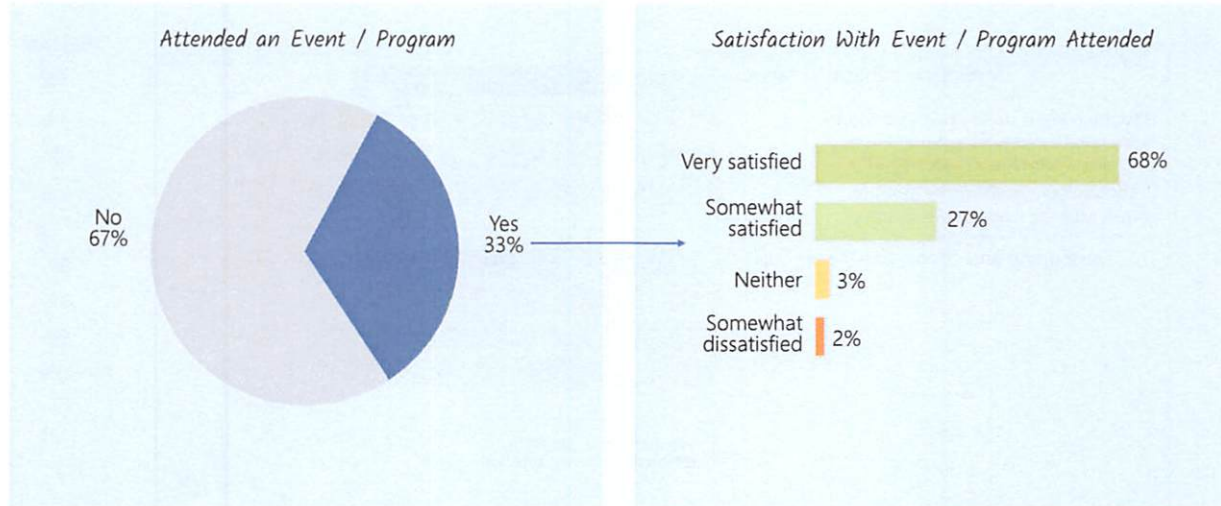
As in previous surveys, satisfaction with city services is almost universal.



Q11b: As a resident of New Albany, how satisfied are you with each of the following city services?



One out of three residents attended a new series of events and programs, including Juneteenth, Diwali, Miracle League Family Fun Day, and free concerts. Two out of three were very satisfied.



Q21: In 2023, the City of New Albany launched a series of events and programs, involving Juneteenth, Diwali, Miracle League Family Fun Day ... Did you attend any of these? (new question)  
Q22: Overall, how satisfied were you with events or programs you attended ... ? (new question)



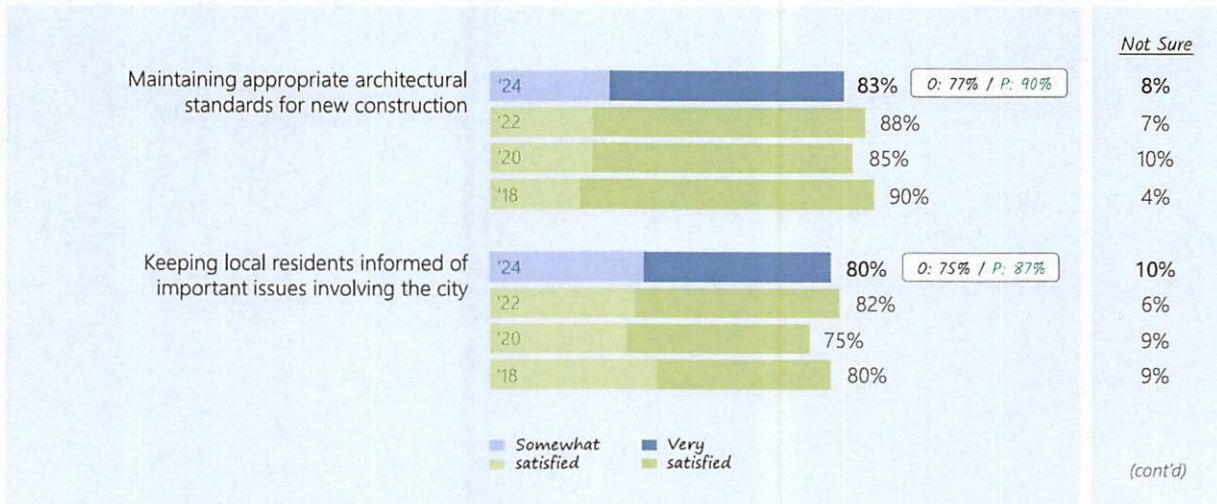
City Officials

On myriad issues, most residents, once again, are satisfied with the performance of city officials.



Q12k+l: How satisfied are you with the performance of city officials in these areas?

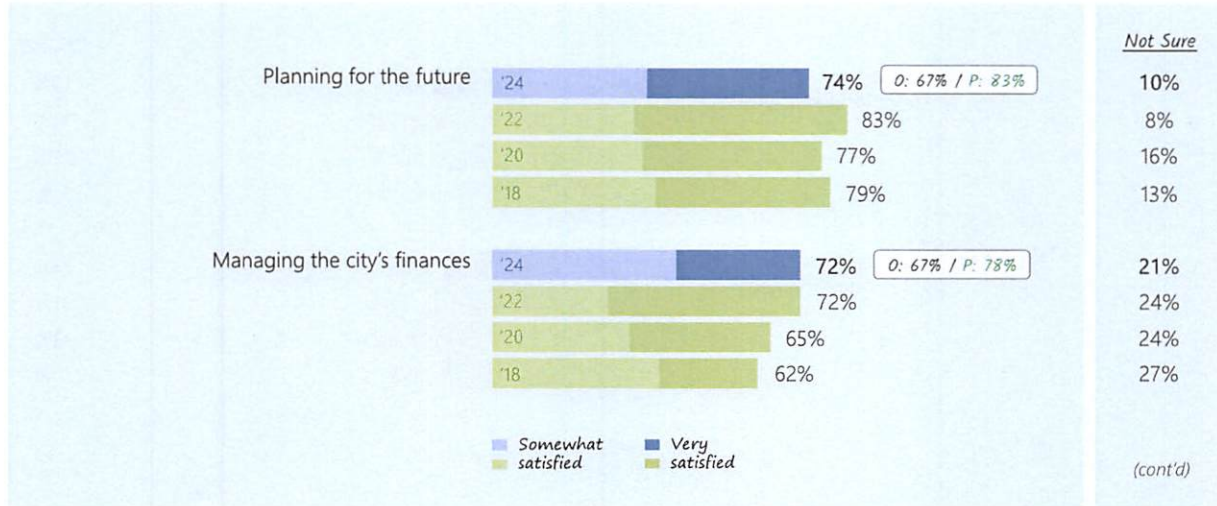
On myriad issues, most residents, once again, are satisfied with the performance of city officials.



Q12h+g: How satisfied are you with the performance of city officials in these areas?

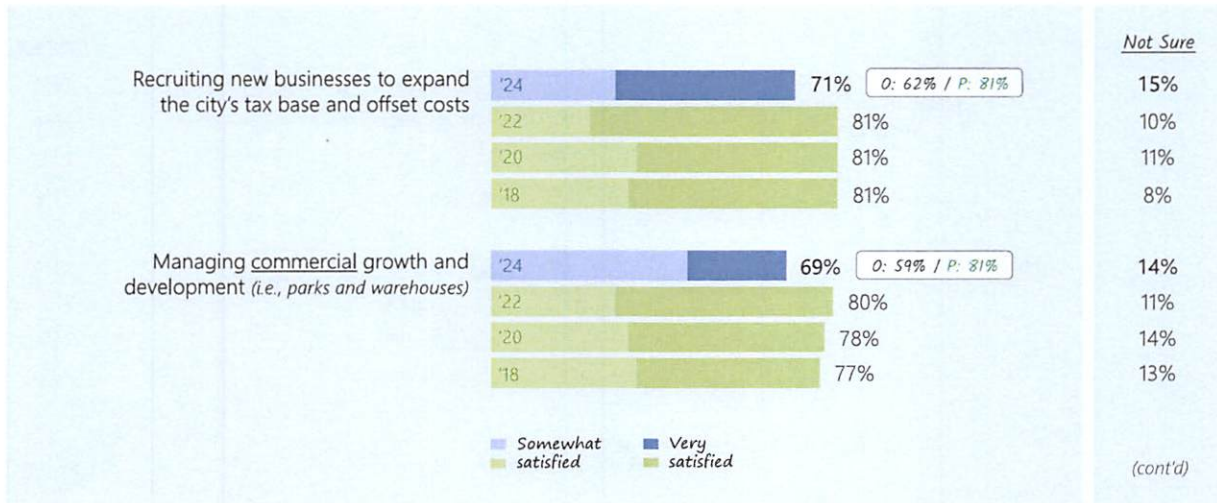


On myriad issues, most residents, once again, are satisfied with the performance of city officials.



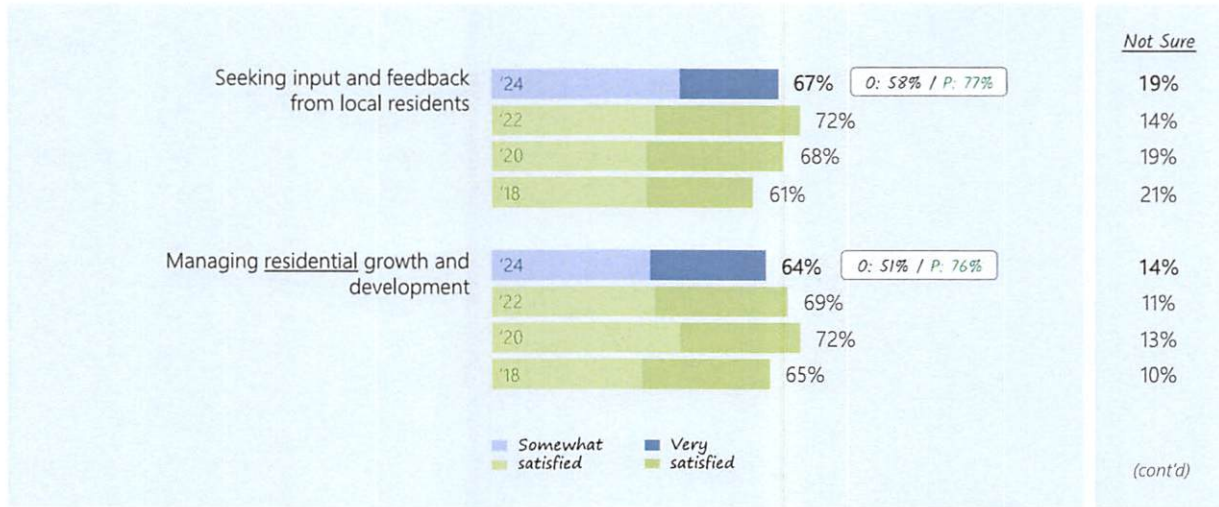
Q12a+f: How satisfied are you with the performance of city officials in these areas?

On myriad issues, most residents, once again, are satisfied with the performance of city officials.



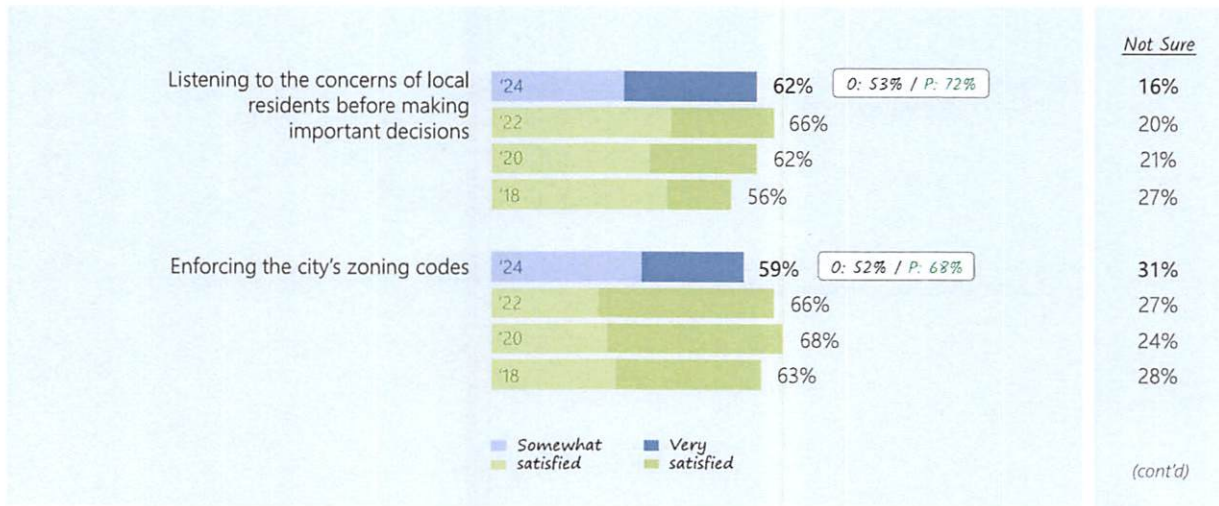
Q12j+d: How satisfied are you with the performance of city officials in these areas?

On myriad issues, most residents, once again, are satisfied with the performance of city officials.



Q12i+b: How satisfied are you with the performance of city officials in these areas?

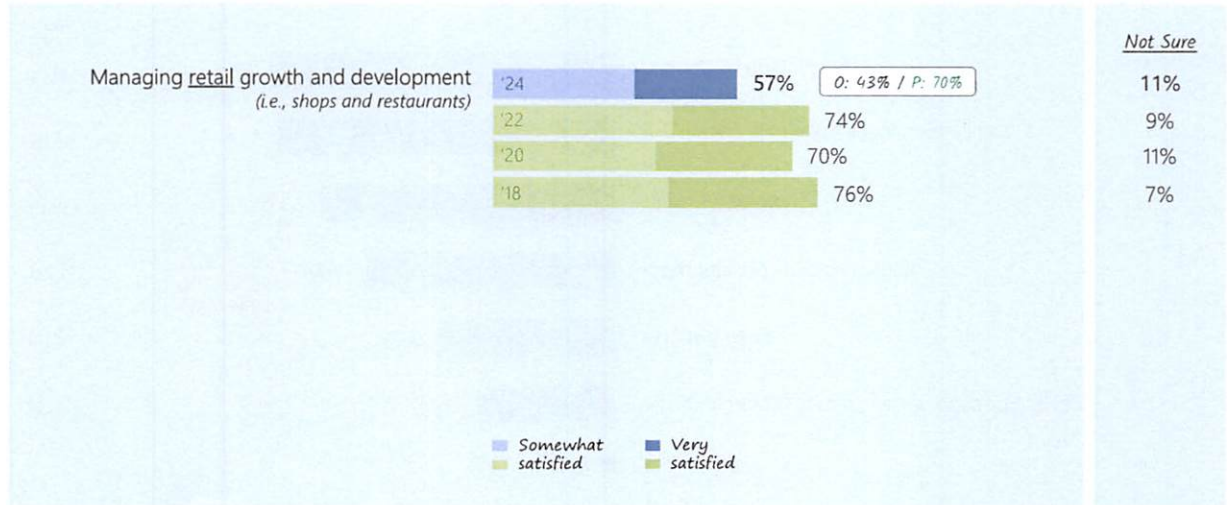
On myriad issues, most residents, once again, are satisfied with the performance of city officials.



Q12e+m: How satisfied are you with the performance of city officials in these areas?



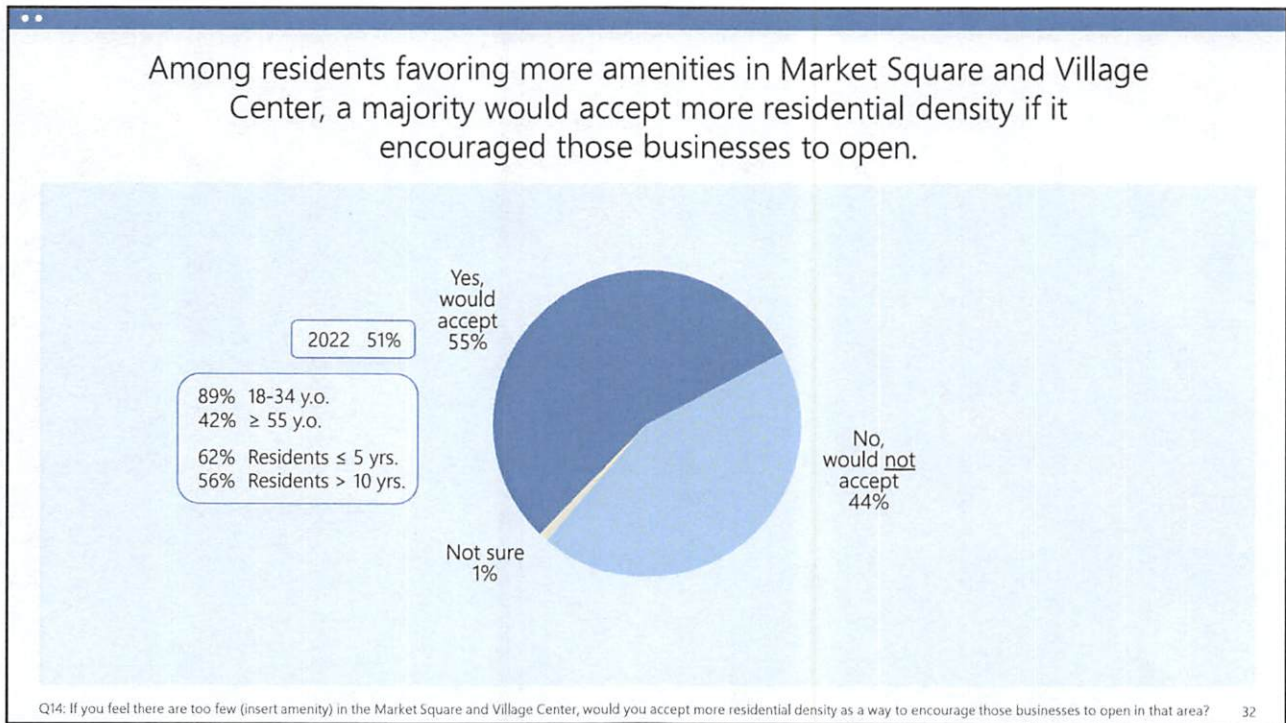
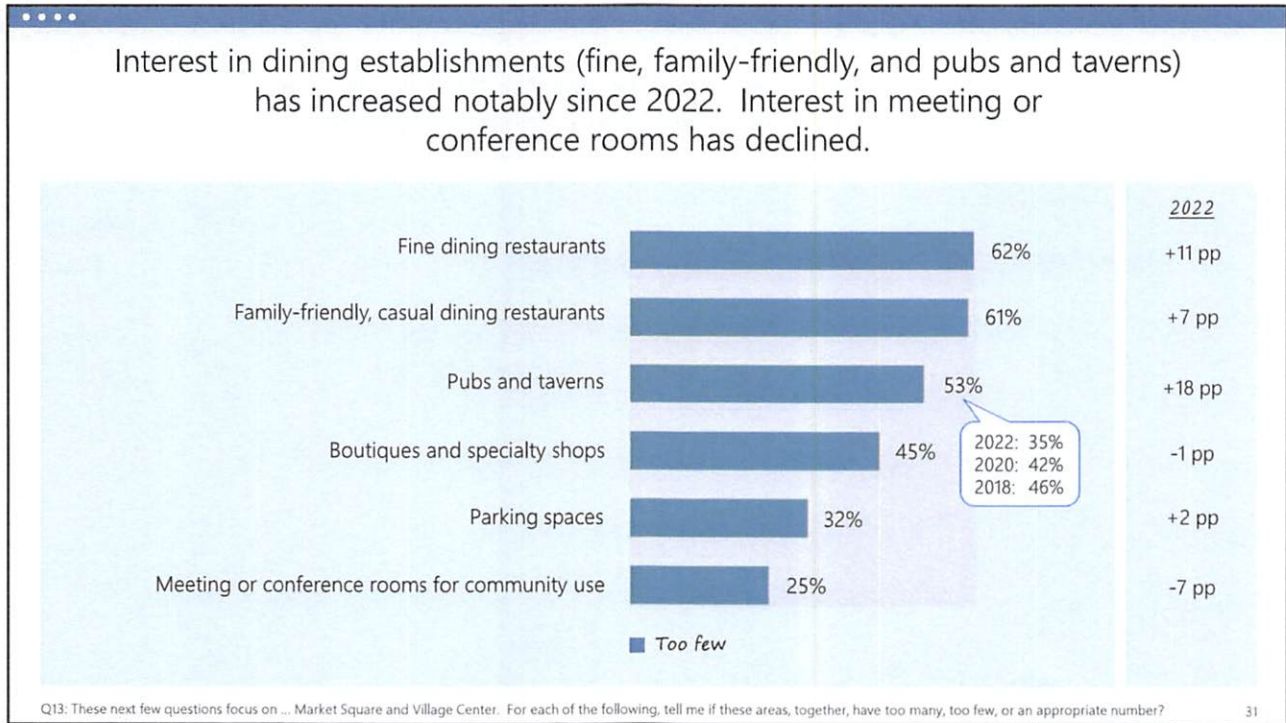
On myriad issues, most residents, once again, are satisfied with the performance of city officials.



Q12c: How satisfied are you with the performance of city officials in these areas?

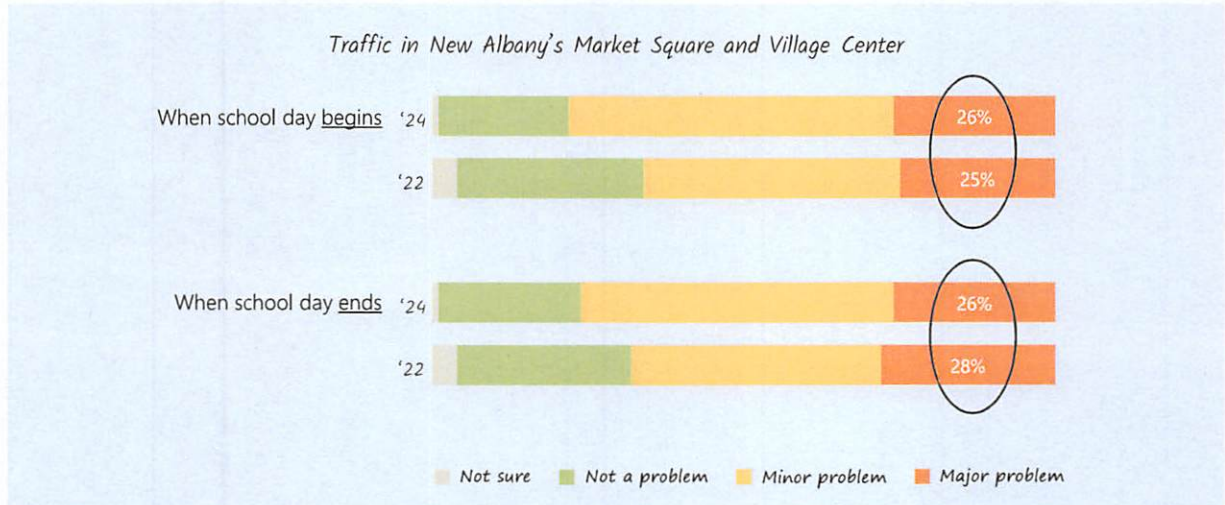


Market Square / Village Center



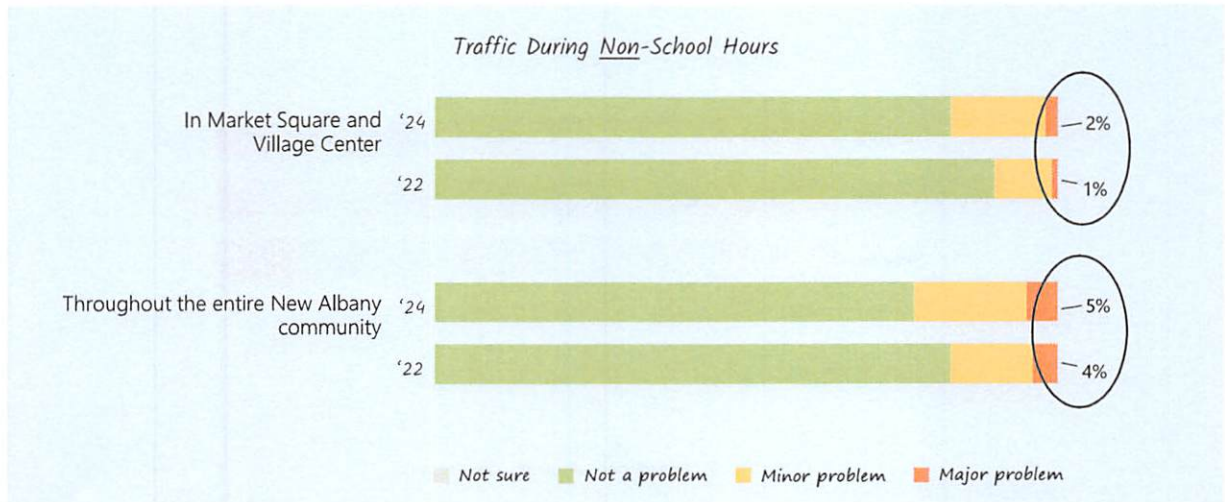


Once again, one out of four residents consider traffic in New Albany's Market Square and Village Center a major problem when the school day begins and ends.

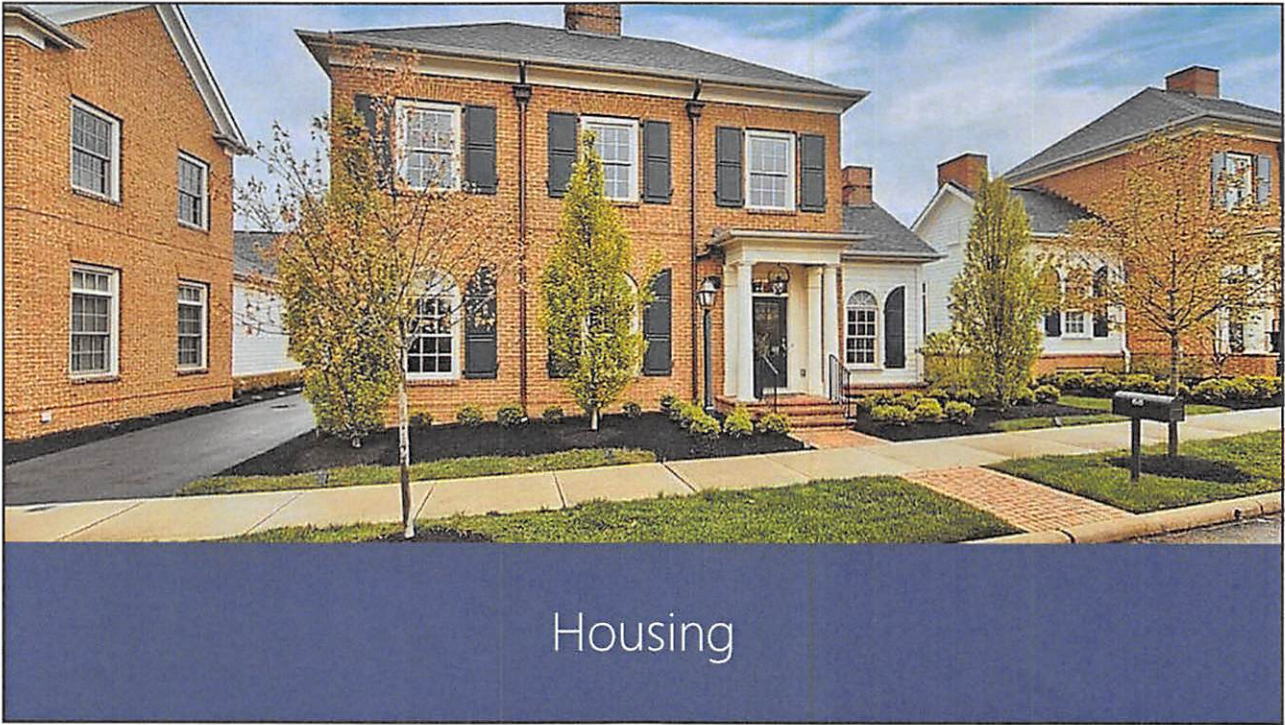


Q15-16: Do you consider traffic in New Albany's Market Square and Village Center – (when the school day begins / when the school day ends) ... ?

For most residents, traffic in Market Square and Village Center is not a problem during non-school hours. Nor is it a problem throughout the entire New Albany community.



Q17: Do you consider traffic in New Albany's Market Square and Village Center – (during non-school hours) ... ?  
 Q18: How about traffic throughout the entire New Albany community during non-school hours ... ?



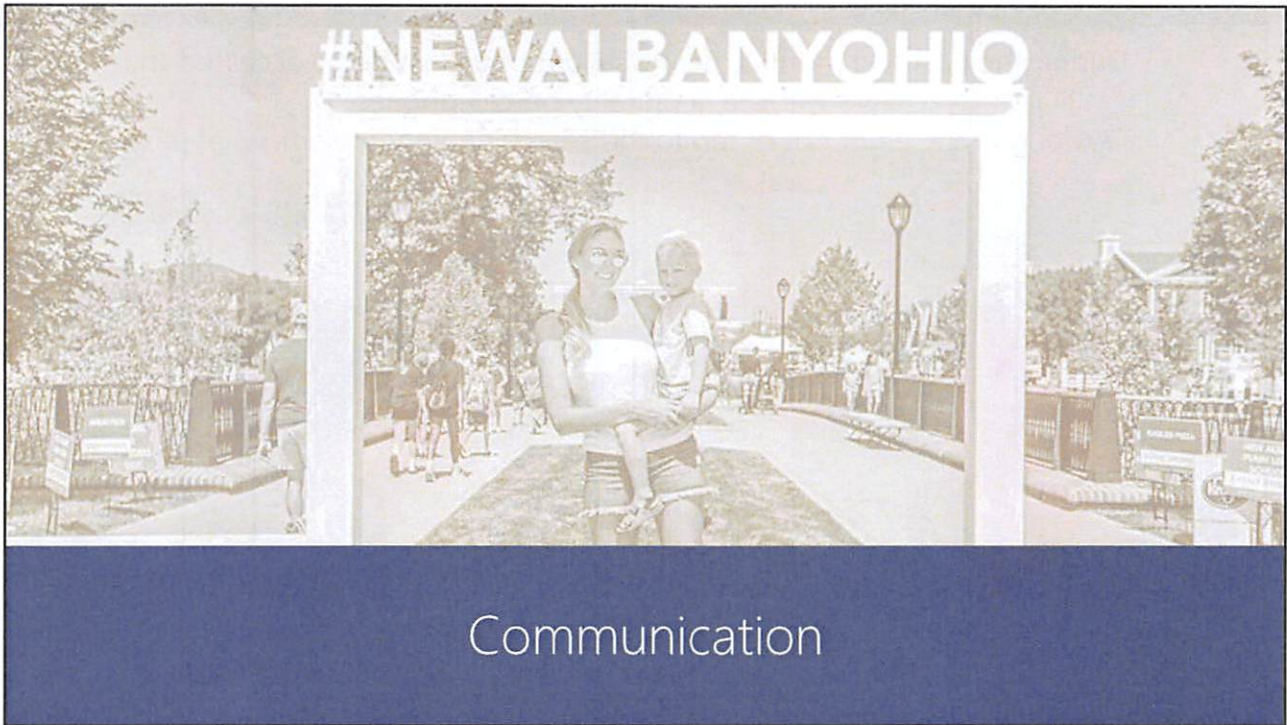
According to one resident in five, New Albany has too little housing for seniors, young families, and singles. Most feel the amount of housing is appropriate.



■ Too little ■ Appropriate amount ■ Too much

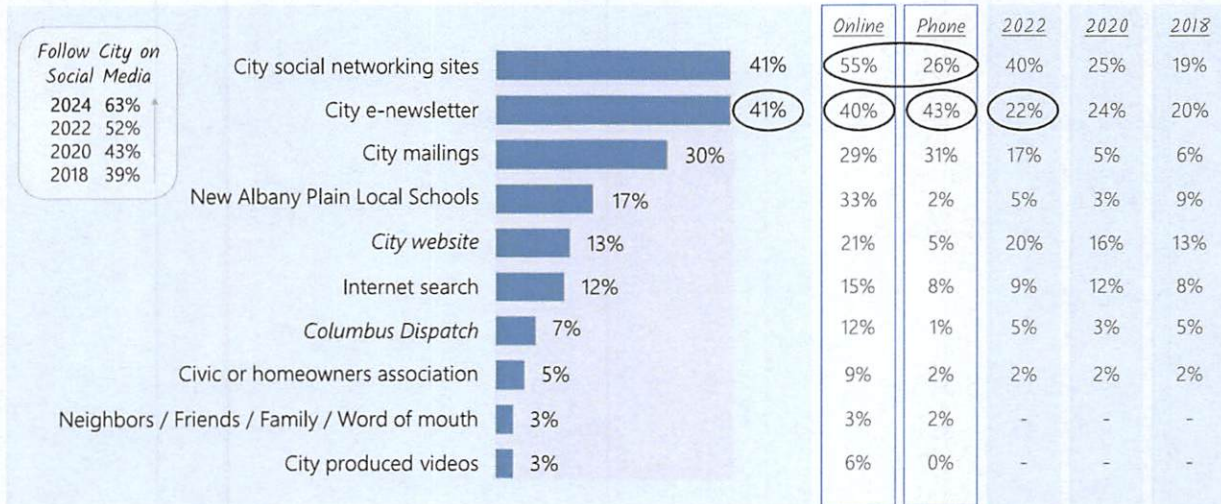
\*Percentages above do not include "don't knows."  
Q19a-c: Does New Albany have too much, too little, or an appropriate amount of housing for \_\_\_\_\_?





## Communication

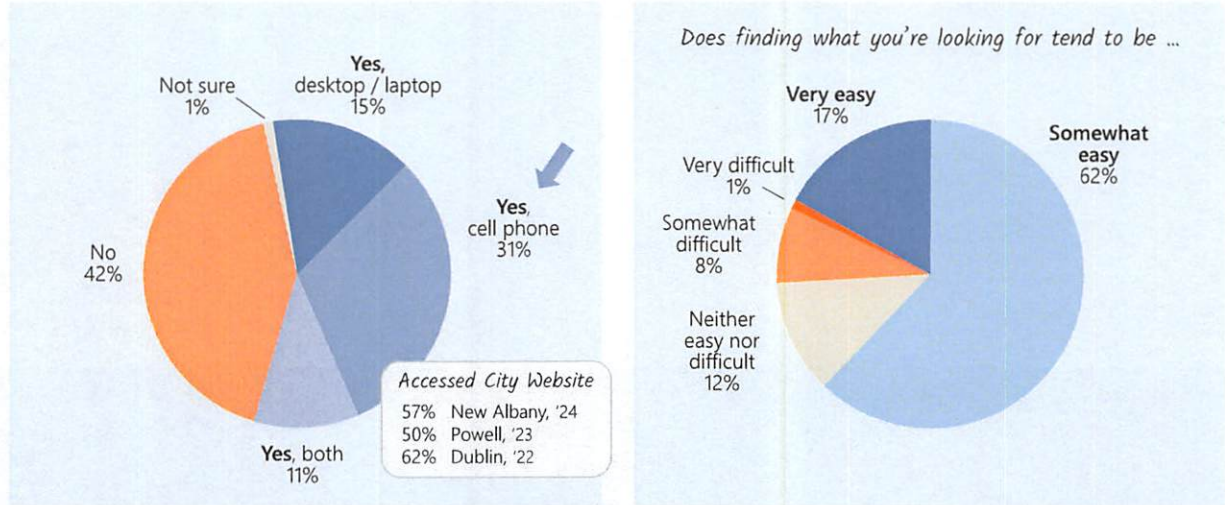
The most common sources of news and information about New Albany are the city's social networking sites and e-newsletter. The latter is up significantly since 2022.



Q31: Other than friends and family, where do you get most of your news and information about New Albany? / Q34: Do you follow the city on social media?



During the past few months, nearly six out of ten residents accessed the city's website, a plurality on cell phones. Among them, eight out of ten found searching very or somewhat easy.



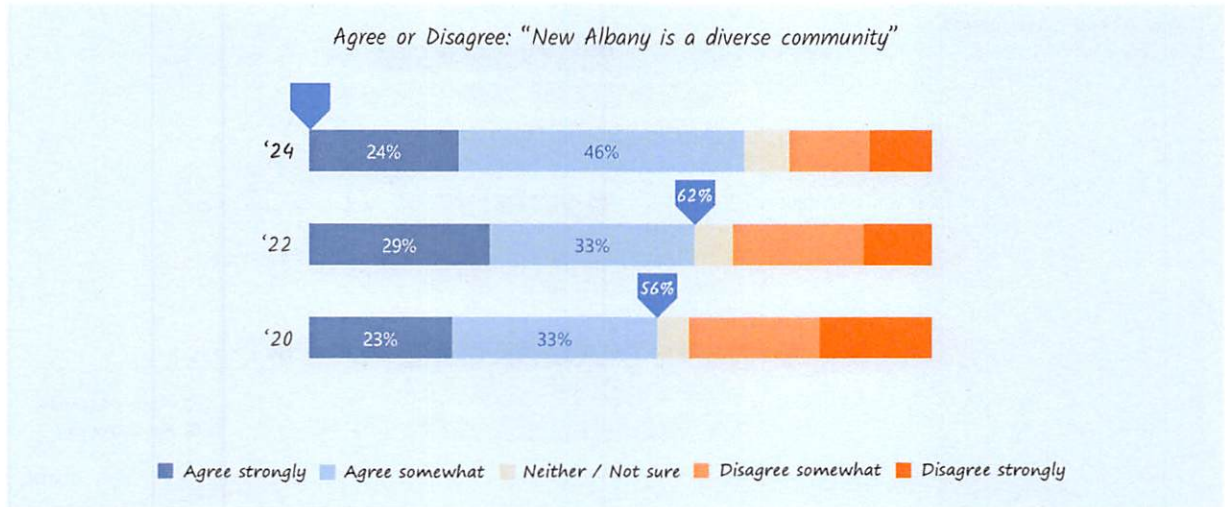
Q32: During the past few months, have you accessed the city's website at newalbanyohio.org from a desktop, laptop, or cell phone? (new question)  
Q33: When you're on New Albany's website, does finding what you're looking for tend to be ...? (new question)



## Diversity and Inclusion



### Seven out of ten residents consider New Albany a diverse community, up steadily since 2020.

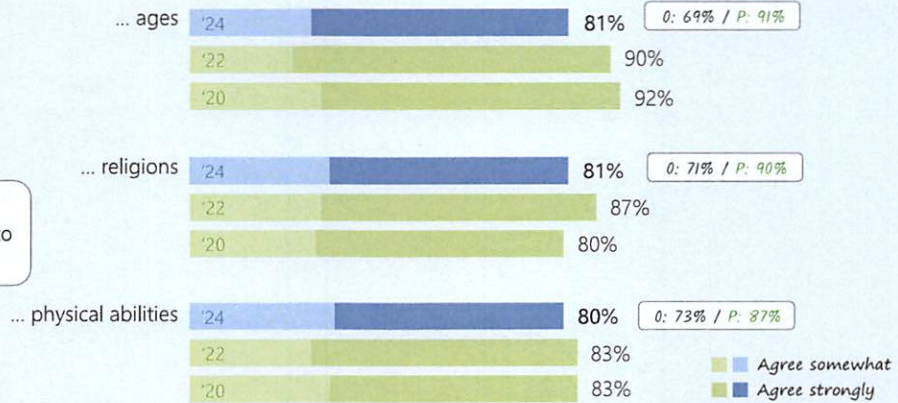


Q20a: Next, I have several statements about diversity and inclusion in New Albany. As I read each one, tell me if you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly. If you neither agree nor disagree, just tell me and I'll go on.

### Across most demographic and social dimensions, most residents consider New Albany a welcoming community.

New Albany is welcoming to people of all ...

Once again, the telephone data tend to be more positive.

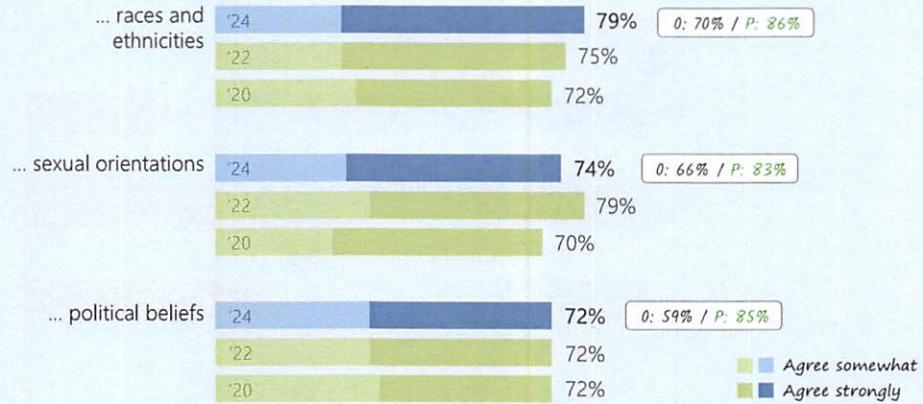


(cont'd)

Q20b, c, + f: Next, I have several statements about diversity and inclusion in New Albany. As I read each one, tell me if you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly. If you neither agree nor disagree, just tell me and I'll go on.

## Across most demographic and social dimensions, most residents consider New Albany a welcoming community.

*New Albany is welcoming to people of all ...*

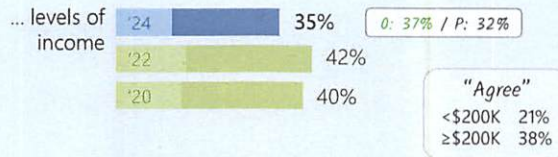


(cont'd)

Q20d, e, + h. Next, I have several statements about diversity and inclusion in New Albany. As I read each one, tell me if you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly. If you neither agree nor disagree, just tell me and I'll go on.

## New Albany is less welcoming, however, when it comes to income.

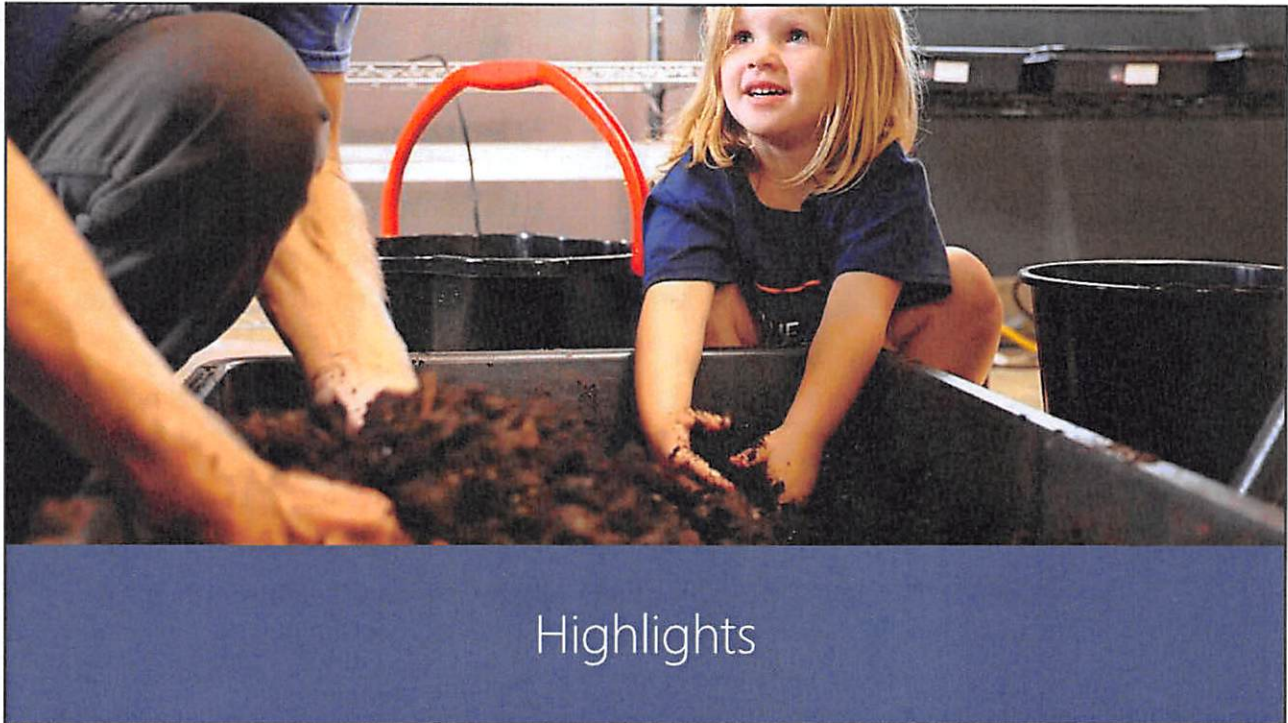
*New Albany is welcoming to people of all ...*



Agree somewhat  
Agree strongly

Q20g: Next, I have several statements about diversity and inclusion in New Albany. As I read each one, tell me if you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly. If you neither agree nor disagree, just tell me and I'll go on.





- Once again, impressions of New Albany among the city's residents are broadly positive, despite the shift in methodology.
- A majority of residents agree that New Albany is an excellent place to live. Most also agree that New Albany is heading in the right direction and is either an excellent or good place to work.
- As in past surveys, residents agree that, for city officials, providing city services and amenities should be the highest priority, followed by controlling growth.
- On most of the city services addressed, at least nine out of ten residents are satisfied. It's hardly surprising, therefore, that most residents are satisfied with the performance of city officials.
- The new series of events and programs was widely attended with many reporting they were very satisfied with the experience.

- A growing number of residents would like more dining options in Market Square and Village Center. More than half would accept additional residential density if that would encourage these establishments to open.
- Once again, traffic in Market Square and Village Center, before and after school, is a major problem for one resident in four. Few, however, consider traffic even a minor problem during non-school hours anywhere in New Albany.
- One resident in five reports that New Albany has too little housing for seniors, young families, and singles.
- The city's social networking sites and e-newsletter are the most common sources of news and information about New Albany.
- More residents than ever agree that New Albany is a diverse community.

47

## Questions?



This study was conducted by  
Saperstein Associates  
4942 Reed Road  
Columbus, Ohio 43220  
(614) 261-0065

[www.sapersteinassociates.com](http://www.sapersteinassociates.com)