



TAKING CHARGE 2012

A Study of the 2012 Budgeting Priorities of the
Residents of Lincoln, Nebraska

Final REPORT
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the results of the 2012 Taking Charge initiative sponsored by the city of Lincoln. This was the fifth year of Taking Charge activities, and included an online survey and a half-day Community Conversation.

A number of consistent findings came from the analysis of approximately 1,400 online survey responses and the preferences obtained from 40 participants after their face-to-face, community conversation. The consistent findings included:

- ♦ **Non-injury accident investigation** was at the bottom of residents' preferences. It was identified as the least important service to fund on the ranking task. Less than half of respondents to the online survey, and less than half of the participants at the Community Conversation, indicated a desire to continue funding this service. Even among those who were willing to raise taxes, only 51% supported funding this service. Among those who wished to keep taxes the same or decrease taxes, only 34% wanted to fund this service.
- ♦ **Workforce investment** and **economic development** were also among the three least important services, according to both the survey respondents and the Community Conversation participants.
- ♦ The **relocation plan** for **fire stations** was supported, but there were slight differences, with partial implementation of the plan supported by survey respondents and full implementation supported by Community Conversation participants. In general, those who appeared more knowledgeable about the issue appeared more supportive of budgeting for the fire station relocation plan.
- ♦ Of those choosing to fund **library services**, more people from both the survey respondents and participants in the Community Conversation chose to fund libraries fully rather than partially. .

Differences between the online surveys and the Community Conversation responses included:

- ♦ Substantially more people in the Community Conversation were willing to fund **library services** and **Handi-Van & midday StarTran services** than the online survey respondents.
- ♦ **Swimming pool** and **fire services** were most supported by online survey respondents.

Comparisons of subgroups of residents showed that residents across Lincoln, including both those living in central Lincoln and those living nearer the edges of Lincoln, ranked the **library, fire station** and **pools** items as their top priorities for funding, and **non-injury accident investigation** as their lowest priority. **Handi-Van & Midday StarTran** service was viewed as more important by central Lincoln residents (who, on average, ranked it third in importance) than by residents from outside central Lincoln (who, on average, ranked it fifth in importance).

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The success of the Taking Charge effort over the years has been primarily due to the vision of Lincoln Mayor Chris Beutler. However, as has been the case each of the five years that Taking Charge has been in place, the final success depended on the efforts of many. In addition to funding from the city of Lincoln, in-kind and other product and service donations were provided by The Mediation Center (www.themediationcenter.org), The Nebraska Mediation Association (nemediation.org), Creighton University's Werner Institute for Negotiation and Dispute Resolution (www.creighton.edu/werner), University of Nebraska-Lincoln Department of Communication Studies (www.unl.edu/cs), the University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Law (law.unl.edu), Qualtrics Survey Software Company of Provo, Utah (www.qualtrics.com), the Pesticide Education Office of the Agronomy and Horticulture Department (pested.unl.edu), and the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center (ppc.nebraska.edu).

Alan Tomkins of the Public Policy Center moderated this year's Community Conversation. We express our deep gratitude to the many individuals who volunteered their efforts to ensure the Community Conversation was a success by managing the event and moderating discussions: Ryan Anderson, Kristen Blankley, Rob Broderick, Ashley Ermer, Alan Frank, Frank Gonzales, Gary Javitch, Sylvia Kessler, Mischele Lindley, Damien Smith Pfister, Terrie Spohn, Michaela Tallman, Tobin Wolfe, and the many members of the city Staff who helped plan and set up the event.

Additional thanks to Clyde Ogg and Vicki Schroeder of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Pesticide Education Office for providing the remote voting technology used at the Community Conversation, and Bill Luxford and the staff of 5 City-TV for taping and producing part of the Community Conversation events for broadcast on Channel 5. The Lincoln Journal Star provided coverage of the events and links from their website to facilitate access the online survey, for which we are most appreciative.

The most important thanks, however, go to the 1400+ residents of Lincoln, Nebraska who took their time and put forth their effort to think through the difficult choices facing city administrators. Their willingness to learn more about the city's fiscal situation and the programs that could be affected, and to give both their recommendations and reasons for how the city should handle the current fiscal challenges are key to keeping democracy alive and Lincoln thriving.

BACKGROUND

◆ PURPOSE

As part of its commitment to transparency and the inclusion of public input into its decision making, the city of Lincoln held its Taking Charge 2012 initiative from May 8th to June 9th of 2012. The initiative included a citywide online survey and a face-to-face Community Conversation among residents and public officials. This report presents the key findings from the city's 2012 Taking Charge budgeting activities.

In addition to reporting key findings, this report provides an overview of the activities and procedures used to gather public input, the analyses applied to the data gathered, and the strengths and limitations of various approaches. The intended audiences of the report are the city of Lincoln Government, who requested the information for consideration as they make their final budgeting decisions, and the city of Lincoln residents and interest groups who provided input or otherwise have an interest in the results.

Feedback pertaining to the findings of this report and how they might relate to prioritizing city services¹ can be directed to mayor@lincoln.ne.gov. Feedback, questions and comments pertaining to the study design, procedures and statistical analyses in this report can be sent to Lisa PytlikZillig at lpytlikz@nebraska.edu.

◆ BUDGETING FOR OUTCOMES: FROM PRIORITY LINCOLN TO TAKING CHARGE

The Taking Charge 2012 project was the fifth public engagement initiative the city of Lincoln has convened about its budget and public services. In 2008 the city of Lincoln began its long-term commitment to moving away from incremental budgeting and toward outcome-based budgeting. In outcomes-based budgeting, city priorities and performance criteria are identified and assessed with active input from residents. Thus, the city launched *Priority Lincoln*, which consisted of a random sample telephone survey, a nonrandom online survey, town hall meetings, a deliberative discussion involving over 50 residents and city officials, and a small focus group. Since the effort in 2008, the city has convened a series of additional surveys (both random and nonrandom) and online and face-to-face discussions about the budget in order to stay in touch with Lincoln residents' interests and priorities (University of Nebraska Public Policy Center, 2008, 2009, 2011). Specifically, in 2009 in conjunction with the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, the city implemented a non-random online survey with over 1,800 respondents and convened an all-day discussion with 107 Lincolnites to measure community attitudes toward various performance measures with which to guide city budget decisions. In

¹ For more information about the current prioritization of services, and to view the Mayor's Community Prioritization, including the ranking of the City's programs in light of citizen and staff input, see <http://lincoln.ne.gov/city/mayor/takingcharge/program-prioritization.htm>.

2010, the city focused on incorporating a public satisfaction with services element into its budgeting process. From November 2009 to January 2010, the Policy Center worked with the city to conduct a random phone survey of 605 residents and a non-random online survey with about 1,000 respondents. Another discussion, this time involving 83 residents and city officials, was also held to focus on budgetary issues and city services. In 2011, during a particular challenging budgeting situation, more than 2,700 residents took the online survey and approximately 60 residents attended the community conversation to discuss the budget with city officials. Finally, early in 2012, a random mail survey of 657 residents was conducted, followed by a non-random survey online survey (using the same questions as were on the mail survey) of more than 700 residents. Many of the reports of these activities are available on the city's website (lincoln.ne.gov) as well as at <http://ppc.unl.edu/priority/publicparticipation>.

TAKING CHARGE 2012

◆ THE 2012 FISCAL ENVIRONMENT

After several consecutive years of city budget deficits which resulted in significant reductions in city programs and the elimination of positions (Lincoln Journal Star, 2010), the 2012 budget was less onerous. Only a small amount of budget cutting and/or service reduction would be required to balance Lincoln's budget. This is a far-cry from previous years: Since 2008, more than 130 city positions have been eliminated, and public bus and library services have been reduced, among other changes (Hicks, 2011b).² These cuts, several of which were made in light of public input from Taking Charge engagements, substantially relieved the pressure on city finances. At the same time, a continuing economic recovery led the city to record net sales tax receipts in the first half of the year (Lincoln Journal Star, 2012). Much of this additional revenue was needed to offset a projected increase in health care costs for 2012-13 (Hicks, 2012). Consequently, only modest cuts to city services were required to balance the budget.

◆ PUBLIC PARTICIPATION METHODS

As part of the Taking Charge 2012, residents were given the opportunity to complete an online survey and/or attend a face-to-face Community Conversation with city officials.

Online Survey

The online survey was open from May 8 to June 9, 2012, and was available via a link on the front page of the city's website. In addition, press releases and media publicity

² For additional information about Taking Charge, see <http://lincoln.ne.gov/city/mayor/takingcharge/index.htm>.

directed residents to the websites linking to the survey.³ The Taking Charge 2012 survey was accessed 1,929 times and, of the total number of accesses, it was estimated that approximately 1,404 responses were serious and valid responses.⁴

The survey question of greatest relevance to decisions facing the city was the simulated budgeting question in which nine programs were listed, and residents were asked to choose to fund or cut each program. This question was presented at the beginning of the survey and accompanied by information about each program under consideration. Residents were asked to imagine that they were in the process of balancing the budget, that they had already allocated monies to mandated and high priority programs, and now only had \$1.3M left to allocate if they wanted to avoid raising taxes. Then they were asked to choose from among \$2.4M worth of current or potential programs that could be funded.

The simulation was a simplified task compared to the task facing city officials. The reason for using a simplified simulation was in order to keep the task manageable. Attempting to list all of the medium and lower priority programs that could be considered for funding or cutting (there were over 100 total Tier 2 and 3 programs that were considered of medium or low priority) would have resulted in an overwhelming task that, in all likelihood, most people would not have completed.

The small list of programs presented to residents were chosen based on the following criteria: (1) each program needed to be one that the city was able to fund or cut and under serious consideration for cutting back or funding,⁵ (2) each program needed to be one which would likely benefit from community discussion (e.g., programs that community members might reasonably disagree about), and (3) programs were chosen to be representative of a broad spectrum of outcomes (e.g., Safety & Security, Economic Opportunity, Efficient Transportation⁶).

The list of programs and services in the budget simulation survey question included the following nine choices:

- 1) A choice to fund or not fund either of two fire station relocation plans, one which involved building four fire stations in the next year (at a cost of \$750K) and one which involved building only two stations in the next year (at a cost of \$375K) and a delay in building the other two.

³ A list of media coverage of the Taking Charge 2012 activities and events can be found at the Public Policy Center project page, <http://ppc.unl.edu/project/TakingCharge2012>.

⁴ Because the questions asked for an explicit choice to fund or not fund, any respondent who viewed but left blank all checkboxes next to the funding question were assumed to be “clicking through” the survey rather than answering questions and were omitted. ($n = 525$ omitted, leaving $n = 1,404$ in the sample).

⁵ As noted on its Community Prioritization page (see <http://lincoln.ne.gov/city/mayor/takingcharge/program-prioritization.htm>), certain programs designated as “Tier 0” programs were required by state or federal mandates and could not be considered for cuts.

⁶ See <http://lincoln.ne.gov/city/mayor/takingcharge/performance-indicators.htm> for the list of program areas, outcomes and goals.

- 2) A choice to cut or maintain library services, resulting in a savings of \$460K if one day of services per library branch were cut, or a savings of \$240K if only a half day per branch were cut.
- 3) A choice to maintain or reduce StarTran services. The StarTran reductions would involve reducing Handi-Van services to federally mandated levels and reducing lunchtime StarTran bus services (for a total savings of \$220K).
- 4) A choice to keep open or close the Pioneers Park Nature Center (with closing the park resulting in a total savings of \$330K).
- 5) A choice to keep or eliminate non-injury traffic accident reporting (with elimination saving \$140K).
- 6) A choice to maintain current levels or reduce the funding for economic development by \$200K.
- 7) A choice to maintain the traditional swimming pool season or shorten it to save \$90K in public pool operations.
- 8) A choice to keep or eliminate the Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion programs (elimination would save \$60K).
- 9) A choice to maintain or reduce workforce investment by \$150K. This reduction would result in cutting funds for the One Stop Career Center.

The program costs and savings associated with each program choice were real and roughly matched the reported amounts listed on the city's Community Prioritization page.⁷ Participants were also asked to read additional information that the city had prepared about each program which included information about the likely implications of funding or not funding the different programs.

Participants' choices of programs to fund or cut were followed by computer-generated feedback regarding how their choices would (according to the simulation) impact property taxes. The possible outcomes in the simulation ranged from a \$13 decrease to an \$11 increase in annual property taxes on an average cost (\$150K) Lincoln home. The computation of the change in taxes was based on the actual relationship between property taxes on an average home and the revenue generated by those taxes (i.e., \$1 per year results in approximately \$100K of revenue). The feedback page also encouraged participants to return to the budget simulation question to change their choices if they did not agree with the implications their choices had for taxes.

After completing the simulated budgeting question, participants were asked to explicitly indicate whether or not they would accept the estimated increase or decrease in estimated taxes computed by the system (yes/no) and the extent to which they felt satisfied with their choices. As noted in the survey, the opportunity to indicate satisfaction was provided because,

⁷ See <http://lincoln.ne.gov/city/mayor/takingcharge/program-prioritization.htm>. Some numbers were rounded up or down to simplify the budgeting exercise.

“Although you [the participant] may have made the best choices you felt you could given the constraints of the exercise, the constraints themselves may have affected how satisfied you feel about the choices you made.”

To obtain more detail about resident preferences, participants also were asked to rank order the programs that they chose to fund or not to fund in order of importance for funding. Finally, participants were also asked to explain why they ranked certain programs higher or lower in priority, and if they were not satisfied with their choices of programs, to explain why not.

Other survey questions included questions designed to assess their satisfaction with and trust in city government, and demographics (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender, age, zip code). Demographics were asked in order to assess the extent to which the survey respondents represented Lincoln as a whole.

Finally, at the end of the survey, participants were asked if they would be willing to answer an additional set of questions strictly for the purposes of the research being conducted by the Public Policy Center. These questions included knowledge questions (discussed later in this report) as well as questions that were for the purposes of improving public engagement activities in the future and not for the purposes of providing input to the city. (Thus, these latter questions are not discussed in this report.)

Community Conversation

The Community Conversation on the budget was held Saturday, June 2, 2012 at City Hall. The objective of the Conversation was to provide an opportunity for respondents to engage with each other, city department heads, and the Mayor, about the budget situation and city services. Moderators recruited for the Conversation included experienced facilitators from the Public Policy Center, The Mediation Center, Nebraska Mediation Association, Creighton University’s Werner Institute for Negotiation and Dispute Resolution, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Department of Communication Studies, and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Law.

A total of 82 online survey respondents indicated on the survey that they wanted to attend the Community Conversation and 155 said “maybe” they would attend. All such individuals who also provided contact information were contacted by e-mail, letter, or telephone, and asked to confirm their participation. A total of 50 people confirmed their attendance with the Policy Center prior to the event, and 46 individuals attended.

The format for the Conversation was based on the Deliberative Polling model. This model is a public engagement method which has been used successfully in a variety of municipalities across the nation (Fishkin, 1996, 1996). Deliberative Polling measures changes in opinions and knowledge about a public policy issue among individuals after having had an opportunity to learn more about the issue and discuss it with others. Deliberative Polling thus provides individuals with an opportunity to consider their ideas and make decisions informed by other perspectives (Fishkin & Luskin, 2005).

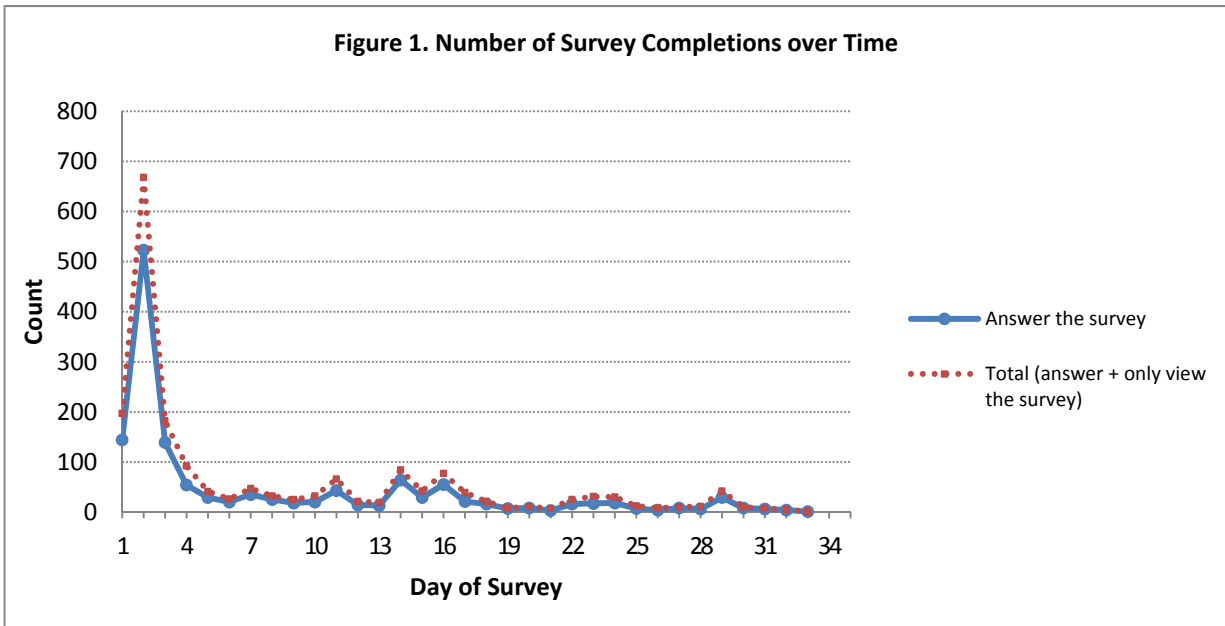
Upon arrival at the meeting, individuals were randomly assigned to one of 8 small discussion groups, each one facilitated by discussion moderators. Participants completed a pre-event survey at the beginning of the day. The Conversation was then composed of the following activities:

- First, there was a large group session in which Mayor Chris Beutler provided a presentation about the city of Lincoln’s budget and city services and gave Lincoln residents a chance to ask questions.
- Second, participants broke into small groups to discuss and rank select city services in order of importance and identified whether they should be preserved or eliminated from the budget. Small groups were encouraged to discuss any programs they wished, but were asked to especially focus on three services: StarTran/Handi-Van services, non-injury accident reporting services, and Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion services. These three service areas were given special emphasis because, by the time of the Community Conversation, and based on results thus far from the online survey, they were the service areas that the city was most considering for cuts. During the small group session, city officials went from group to group to answer questions that arose relating to the city programs.
- Finally, there was a large group session in which participants reported back on their discussion results. At the end of the Community Conversation, participants completed a post-event survey upon which they could give their final reflections, including feedback on the Community Conversation events.

The large group proceedings were aired on the city’s Channel 5. In addition, throughout the day, Conversation participants were given the opportunity to video-record individual messages that they would like the Mayor and city Directors to hear.

◆ SURVEY TIMELINE

A timeline of the number of survey responses received by day of the survey is shown in Figure 1. Examination of Figure 1 shows that while there more views of the survey than actual completion of the budgeting questions, the percentage of completions to views was relatively constant and thus the profile shapes of the two lines are similar. As has been observed in previous years, the greatest participation was at the beginning of the survey. The opening day press conference was on May 8, there was a Day 2 peak in responses which, fell to Day 4. Other small rises in participation that were seen throughout the time that the survey was open were likely due to visits that city staff made to community and interest groups in order to tell them about the survey. A small rise was also shown on the 29th day of the survey, at about the time of the Community Conversation event.



Note: Persons were coded as completing the survey if they, at minimum, answered the funding question.

♦ **DEMOGRAPHICS & DATA**
REPRESENTATIVENESS

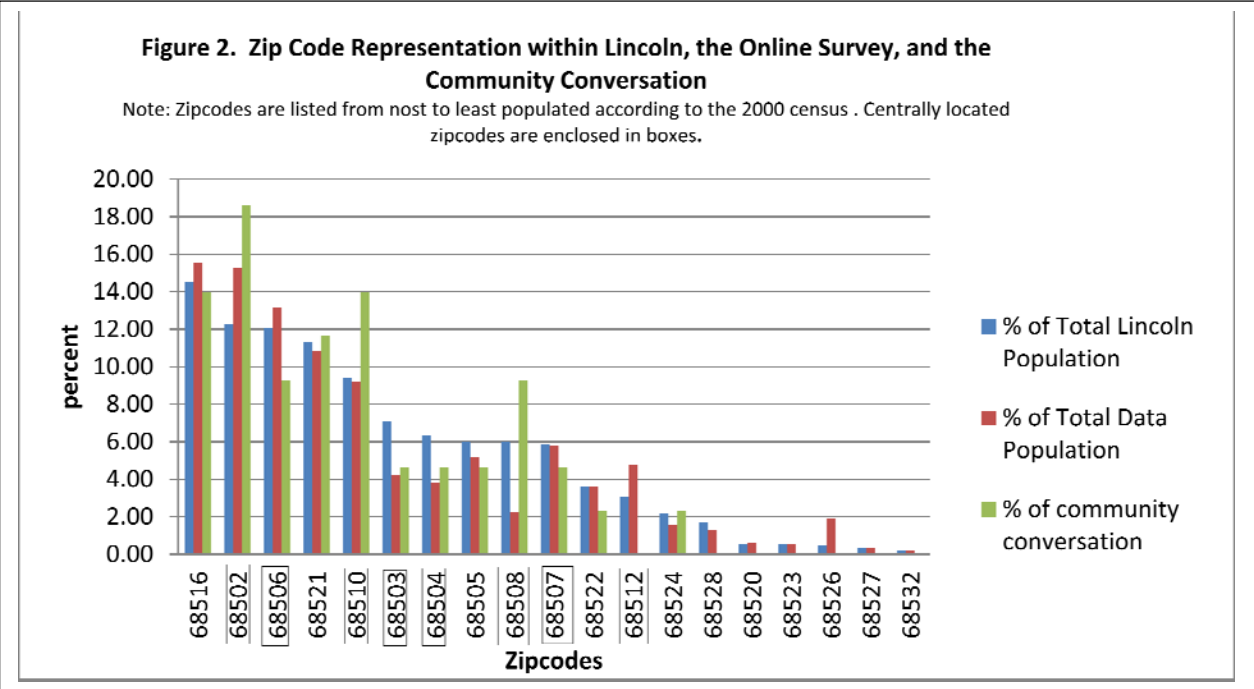
Table 1 summarizes the demographics obtained from the online survey and the Community Conversation as compared to the Lincoln Population (as recorded in the 2000 census). The sample of survey respondents and Community Conversation participants tended to over represent white, male residents. In addition, compared to the online survey, the Community Conversation was made up of older individuals, had a greater proportion of participants with a graduate or professional degrees.

Figure 2 shows the percentage of the population within each zip code in Lincoln compared to the percentages of responses on the survey and percentages of persons attending the Community Conversation within each zip code. As shown, zip codes 68502, -10 and -08 were especially overrepresented in the Community Conversation, while -03, and -04 were underrepresented in both the online and Conversation opportunities.

Table 1: Comparative Demographics

	Online Survey %	Comm Conv %	Lincoln Pop. %
Gender			
Male	50.4	53.5	49.8
Female	49.6	46.5	50.2
Education			
Less than High School	.1	0	
Some high school	.3	0	
High school Diploma	5.4	7.0	
Some college, no degree	15.2	20.9	
Two year college or Technical degree	11.1	14.0	
Bachelor's degree	31.5	23.3	
Some graduate school	10.9	4.7	
Advanced Degree	25.5	30.2	
Ethnicity/Race			
Hispanic	1.6	2.4	5.0
White	96.0	95.2	89.1
Black	.4	0	3.5
Asian	.2	0	.1
Native American /Native Alaskan	.2	2.4	3.4
Other	3.1	2.4	1.2
	Mean (SD)		
Age	48.3 (14.2)	55.8 (11.2)	

Note: Online survey N = 1,404; Community Conversation N = 44.



KEY FINDINGS

♦ WHAT DO PEOPLE WANT?

The funding preferences of Community Conversation participants are listed in Table 2 alongside of the results obtained from the responses to the larger-scale citywide survey. The bottom portion of Table 2 reports Lincoln Resident preferences in terms of their impact on taxes. Table 3 reports the average rankings from the online survey. Examination of these results shows most consistency in the lowest prioritized programs, and least consistency in the highest ranked programs. Specifically, with regard to lowest prioritized programs, the results show:

- ♦ **Non-injury accident reporting services were ranked lowest and had the smallest percentage of persons supporting their funding.**
- ♦ **There was low support for workforce investment and senior programs, as these programs were consistently funded by the smallest percentages and ranked near the bottom of services.**

These findings were true for both the online survey and Community Conversation respondents. In addition, other findings included:

- ♦ **Of those choosing to fund library services, more people chose the fund libraries fully option rather than the fund partially option.**
- ♦ **The fire stations relocation plan was generally supported by residents, but partial implementation was supported by survey respondents and**

full implementation was supported by Community Conversation participants.

There was less consistency in top-prioritized programs: Examination of other top-most prioritized programs revealed inconsistent patterns. Examples of these included:

- ♦ Substantially more people in the Community Conversation were willing to fund library services and Handi-Van & midday StarTran services (the top two most funded programs by the Conversation participants), than the online survey respondents.
- ♦ In contrast, the swimming pool and fire services were most supported by online survey respondents. These two services were funded by the greatest percentages of and ranked in the top three programs (along with library services) by online respondents.
- ♦ Support for libraries was generally strong, but it also varied by both group (online versus conversation respondents) and method of measurement (choice to fund/cut versus ranking task).

Table 2: Funding Preferences: Percentage of Persons Funding Programs on the Online Survey and at the Community Conversation

Programs	Online Survey		Post-conversation		
	%		%		
Swimming Pool Season	75.4		89.7		
Fire Station Implementation	At lower level	46.1	84.6	At lower level	30.8
	At higher level	27.9		At higher level	53.8
Pioneers' Nature Center	67.5		89.7		
Handi-Van & Midday StarTran	67.4		92.3		
Library Services	At lower level	28.9	95.0	At lower level	37.5
	At higher level	37.8		At higher level	57.5
Foster Grandparent & Senior Companion	63.5		89.7		
Workforce Investment	62.9		78.9		
Economic Development	52.0		59.5		
Non-injury Traffic Accident Investigation	42.6		42.1		
<i>Implied Tax Change</i>	<i>+\$5.85</i>		<i>+\$9.60</i>		
<i>Ave Chosen Tax Change</i>	<i>+\$0.42</i>		<i>+\$2.68</i>		
<i>(SD Chosen Tax Change)</i>	<i>(\$5.46)</i>		<i>(\$6.56)</i>		

Notes: Survey N = 1368-1393, Post N =37-40. Percentages < 50% are in red, indicating that the majority of respondents chose not to fund the program. Implied tax change refers to tax change if programs supported by the majority were funded at the level chosen by the plurality. Average chosen taxes are averages across individuals based on their choices of programs to fund.

As shown in Table 2, almost all of the community conversation participants chose to fund libraries at either the higher or lower level in the funding task, but only two-thirds of the survey respondents chose to fund libraries. Furthermore, although the online survey respondents' funding task results suggested that library services was not as important to fund (based on percentages of persons funding) as swimming pools and the fire station relocation plan, the average rank ordering of libraries by this same group, placed libraries first in importance.

Table 3: Average Program Rankings from Most Important (Ranked First or Lowest) to Least Important (Ranked Last or Highest) Funding Priorities.

Programs	Online Survey	
	Mean Rank	SD
Library Services	4.08	2.40
Fire Station Implementation	4.11	2.74
Swimming Pool Season	4.56	2.36
Handi-Van & Midday StarTran	4.71	2.37
Pioneer's Park Nature Center	4.89	2.56
Economic Development	5.31	2.76
Workforce Investment	5.40	2.40
Foster Grandparent & Senior Companion Programs	5.73	2.27
Non-injury Accident Investigations	6.20	2.53

Notes: Survey N = 1,147. Low ranks indicate highest-prioritized programs.

As a means for explicitly checking the individual choices on the online survey, respondents were asked about their acceptance of the taxes implied by their choices of certain programs to fund. It is important to note that online survey responses were, for the most part, choices made by survey respondents and then explicitly approved by the respondents. In response to the following question:

Given your choices of programs, the change in property taxes for a 150K home would be \$_____ per year. If Lincoln City government funded your choices of programs, would you be willing to accept this change in property taxes?

Only 3.9% of online survey respondents answered, "No." Furthermore, in response to the question:

Although you may have made the best choices you felt you could given the constraints of the exercise, the constraints themselves may have affected how satisfied you feel about the choices you made. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the choices of programs you made?

a total of 84.3% of online survey respondents said they were very satisfied, satisfied, or somewhat satisfied, while only 10.3% said that they were dissatisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied. The remaining 5.4% of respondents were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

♦ **WHO WANTS WHAT?**

Just as the use of different public input methods can give one confidence in the results one finds when the results are consistent, examination of different subgroups within a population can also either give one additional confidence in the widespread opinions of the public, or illuminate important differences, such as differences between neighborhoods, or differences based on familiarity with the issues.

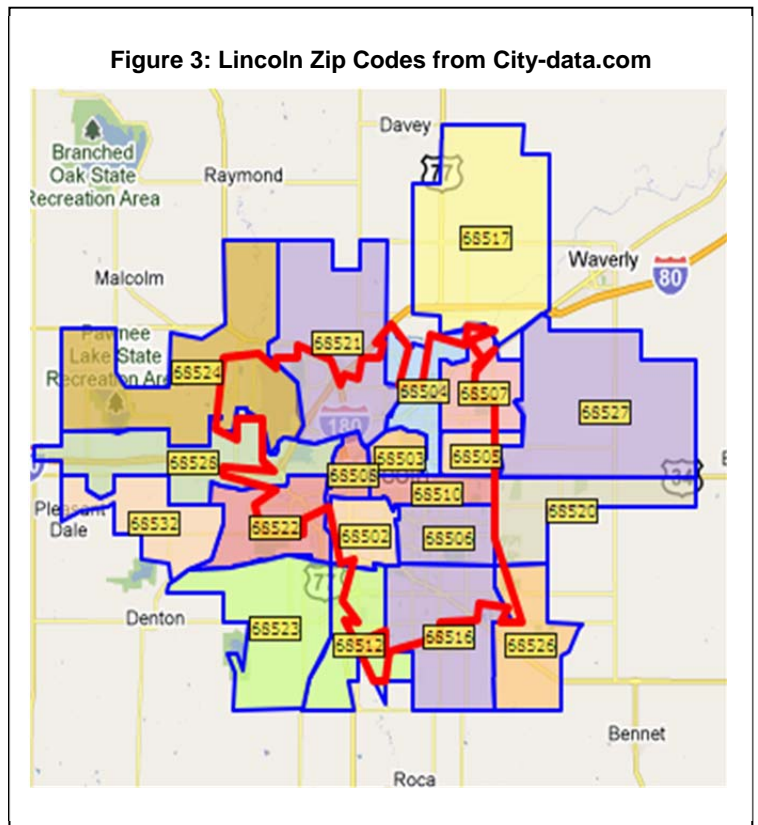
Residents of Central & Outer Lincoln

Figure 3 shows the zip code areas for central and outer Lincoln (central zip codes are within the red border). We divided the data according to generally central zip codes (those in areas 68502 through 68510) and outer zip codes (those in other areas) to test the stability of resident preferences across areas of Lincoln. The data in Table 4 suggests that centrally-located and outer areas agree on some, but not all, priorities. For example,

- ♦ **Fire stations and libraries were consistently ranked as the top two most important programs by central and outer Lincoln residents.**
- ♦ **Across both groups, non-injury accident investigation was ranked least important to fund.**

In the funding task, less than half people from both areas believed non-injury accident investigations should be funded.

There were some differences across different parts of the community. Residents in central Lincoln ranked libraries as their highest priority, while those in outer Lincoln area ranked Fire Station as their top priority. Between central and outer Lincoln, there were also some differences in the valuing of different programs.



- ♦ **The biggest difference was with regard to Handi-Van & Midday StarTran services, which were ranked as more important to central than outer Lincoln residents.**

Specifically, the Handi-Van and StarTran services item was the third most important program for central area residents but the fifth ranked program for outer area residents. Significant differences were also seen in preferences for funding the Foster Grandparent & Senior Companion programs and library services (both of which were prioritized more highly and funded by significantly more central Lincoln residents), as well as for economic development and non-injury accident reporting (both of which were ranked significantly higher, but not funded by significantly more outer city residents).

Table 4: Funding Preferences of Residents Living in Central or Outer Lincoln

Programs	Central Lincoln			Outer Lincoln		
	% Fund	Mean Rank	SD Rank	%Fund	Mean Rank	SD Rank
Swimming Pool Season	76.0	4.54	2.38	75.4	4.55	2.29
Fire Station Implement.	73.8	4.39*	2.76	76.4	3.72*	2.65
Pioneer’s Nature Center	70.9	4.72	2.55	66.7	4.96	2.55
Handi-Van & Midday StarTran Bus Service	70.8*	4.53*	2.37	64.2*	5.01*	2.36
Library Services	69.7*	3.78*	2.36	63.5*	4.41*	2.41
Foster Grandparent & Senior Companion	68.5*	5.50*	2.27	61.7*	5.98*	2.26
Workforce Investment	65.1	5.55	2.35	62.7	5.31	2.42
Economic Development	50.0	5.59*	2.68	54.1	5.09*	2.82
Non-injury Accident Investigation	42.0	6.42*	2.46	44.9	5.99*	2.63
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>Ave Chosen Tax Change</i>		+1.02*	5.44		+.33*	5.21

Notes: * $p < .05$, for comparisons between groups, i.e., between central and outer group comparisons of the %Fund values or the *M* ranks. Total $n_s = 683$ central and 477 outer zip codes. Average chosen taxes are averages across individuals based on their choices of programs to fund. % Fund = percentage of persons in the group choosing to fund the item, *M* = Mean, *SD* = Standard Deviation.

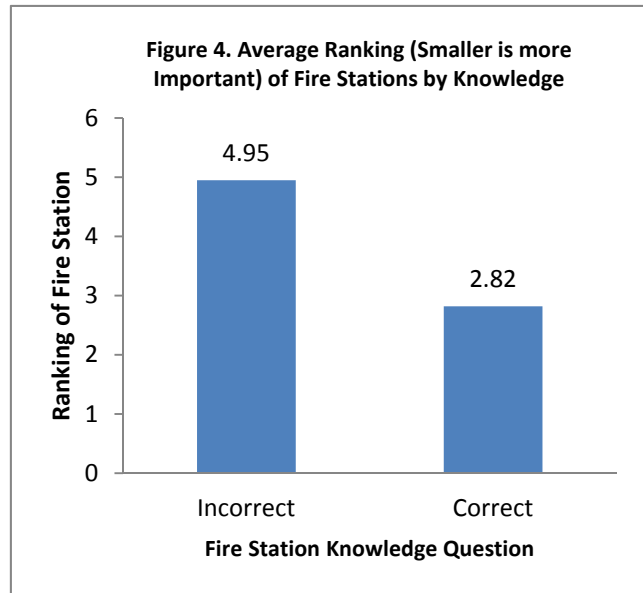
Knowledge-Related Differences in Priorities

If the goal of public officials is to make informed, thoughtful, and deliberative decisions, then it may also be important to know if differences in opinion are due to values or to differences in knowledge of facts. When priorities are based on incorrect facts, it is important to know if those priorities change significantly when those facts are corrected.

To investigate the relationships between knowledge of programs and one’s priorities, participants in the online survey were asked to complete a number of optional multiple choice questions.⁸ Analysis of participant answers found only a few significant relationships between knowledge and support for different programs.

- ♦ **Higher knowledge predicted higher prioritization and/or greater preference for funding the fire station relocation plan and the funding of non-injury accident reporting services**

For example, participants indicated their knowledge about Fire Station program (which may have come from having read the background information within the survey), by indicating how much equipment and personnel would be needed to equip and staff the new stations. Those who were able to



correctly answer this question also were significantly more likely to want to fund the fire station relocation plan compared to those who answered incorrectly (81% of those who answered it correctly, but only 74% of those who answered the question incorrectly, see Table 5). Similarly, those who were able to correctly answer the multiple choice question about how many Lincoln addresses are outside of the range of the 4-minute recommended distance from a fire station also ranked the fire stations significantly more important (i.e. lower average ranking, indicating higher priority, see Figure 4) compared to those who did not answer that question correctly.

There was only one knowledge question that predicted wanting to fund or prioritize a program *lower*.

- ♦ **Persons who correctly answered the Handi-Van question, “*Currently, what percentage of the territory covered by the StarTran bus routes does Lincoln’s Handi-Van service for people with disabilities cover?*,” were less likely to agree to fund the program, and more willing to cut services.**

This pattern of results reflects a greater willingness to cut services by those who were aware that the current Handi-Van service meets and exceeds federal requirements.

⁸ The optional multiple choice questions appeared at the end of the survey, after all of the questions relevant to the budgeting questions had been completed. Participants were informed that they were finished with the main questions, and then given a choice to continue answering additional questions or to exit the survey. A total of 531 persons chose to continue on and answer additional questions. Participants were given a random subset of the knowledge questions to answer. Thus, the number of persons answering the knowledge questions ranged from 129 to 196 depending on the question.

Table 5: Knowledge Questions by Funding/Ranking Preference

Questions	Answer	Mean Rank	Funding (%)			Total (%)
			Not Fund	Fund		
				Full	Partial	
Fire Station Q1	Incorrect	3.51	22.6	16.1	61.3	100
	Correct	3.55	18.9	37.7	43.4	100
Fire station Q2	Incorrect	4.95*	40.2*	34.5*	25.3	100
	Correct	2.82*	9.1*	48.1*	42.9	100
Library Q1	Low	3.98	22.8	29.8	47.4	100
	High	4.01	35.4	23.2	41.4	100
Library Q2	Incorrect	3.98	38.1	23.9	38.1	100
	Correct	3.89	24.4	22.2	53.3	100
Handi-Van Q	Incorrect	4.45*	28.9	71.1		100
	Correct	5.44*	41.3	58.7		100
Midday StarTran Q	Incorrect	4.46	32.8	67.2		100
	Correct	4.67	30.4	69.6		100
Nature Center Q1	Incorrect	5.07	34.6	65.4		100
	Correct	5.19	29.8	70.2		100
Nature Center Q2	Incorrect	4.80	25.4	74.6		100
	Correct	4.80	30.1	69.9		100
Non-injury Accident Q1	Incorrect	6.10	61.5*	38.5*		100
	Correct	6.07	44.9*	55.1*		100
Non-injury Accident Q2	Incorrect	6.38	64.3	51.1		100
	Correct	6.12	35.7	48.9		100
Economic Development Q	Low	5.48	52.4	47.6		100
	High	5.32	41.8	58.2		100
Swimming Pool Q1	Low	5.14	21.3	78.7		100
	High	4.58	25.3	74.7		100
Swimming Pool Q2	Incorrect	4.44	23.9	76.1		100
	Correct	4.75	24.3	75.7		100
Senior Companion Q	Incorrect	5.83	25.8	74.2		100
	Correct	5.67	32.5	67.5		100
Foster Grandparent Q	Incorrect	5.44	32.4	67.6		100
	Correct	5.73	22.7	77.3		100
Workforce Investment Q	Incorrect	5.29	31.7	68.3		100
	Correct	4.73	22.2	77.8		100

Notes. * p < .05 differences between persons with high/low or correct/incorrect answers. Red text indicates a pattern of greater knowledge being associated with a lower prioritization of the program, green text indicates higher knowledge associated with a higher prioritization of funding the program. The significant test is based on Fund v.s No Fund (so, for fire station and library questions, the full and partial funding cells were combined). Please see *Appendix D* for the knowledge questions.

Persons in Favor of Increasing versus Decreasing Taxes

Finally, we examined the stability of preferences over two potentially distinct groups of persons: Those whose choices indicated they were willing to raise taxes, and those whose choices indicated they were not in favor of raising taxes.

Table 6: Funding Preferences of Residents NOT Willing or Willing to Raise Taxes

Programs	NOT Willing to Raise Taxes			Willing to Raise Taxes		
	% Fund	Mean Rank	SD Rank	%Fund	Mean Rank	SD Rank
Swimming Pool Season	63.6	4.45	2.44	86.2	4.66	2.28
Fire Station Implement.	54.2	4.31*	2.76	92.3	3.94*	2.70
Handi-Van & Midday StarTran Bus Service	48.6*	4.82*	2.45	84.4*	4.62*	2.29
Foster Grandparent & Senior Companion	47.5*	5.85*	2.27	78.0*	5.63*	2.26
Library Services	45.0*	4.61*	2.36	86.5*	3.61*	2.34
Pioneer’s Nature Center	44.9	5.22	2.63	88.0	4.60	2.46
Workforce Investment	44.0	5.26	2.47	80.1	5.52	2.33
Economic Development	41.6	4.92*	2.76	61.4	5.65*	2.71
Non-injury Accident Investigations	33.9	5.56*	2.65	50.5	6.77*	2.28
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>Ave Chosen Tax Change</i>		-\$4.04*	3.35		+\$4.56*	3.39

Notes: * $p < .05$, for comparisons between groups, i.e., between group comparisons of the %Fund values or the *M* ranks. Total $ns = 650-727$. Average chosen taxes are averages across individuals based on their choices of programs to fund. % Fund = percentage of persons in the group choosing to fund the item, *M* = Mean, *SD* = Standard Deviation.

The average tax change was significantly different between these two groups, as expected by their grouping. These two groups also had significant differences in both funding and ranking preferences for Handi-van & Midday StarTran services, Foster Grandparent & Senior Companion services, and library services, as people who were willing to raise taxes apparently were more willing to fund these programs or rank them higher than those who wished not to raise taxes. In addition, those willing to raise taxes ranked the fire station implementation plan significantly higher, but ranked economic development and non-injury accident investigations significantly lower than those who were not willing to raise taxes.

♦ WHY DO PEOPLE WANT WHAT THEY WANT?

As they were answering the simulated budgeting questions, participants were asked to explain why they chose to prioritize certain programs over others. Almost 300 people offered comments on the survey. A total of 273 persons commented on their reasons for their choices, resulting in more than 60 pages of comments (see Appendix B for the full set of all comments pertaining to specific programs on the survey). As shown in the comments, and in the summary below, a variety of reasons were given for wanting to fund, continue funding, cut, or not fund certain programs. In addition, many comments focused on the choices themselves, complaining that the choices were too limited, too black and white, and not innovative enough.

With regard to the **fire station implementation plan**, common issues raised included:

- ♦ The importance of safety.
- ♦ The role of insurance, with those further from fire stations paying more insurance, and perhaps needing more insurance.
- ♦ The possibility that people who benefit more from the new stations might pay more of the costs of the stations, and the fact that people can choose to live within certain ranges of fire stations or not (such as those who live in rural areas).
- ♦ The importance of planning for the future.

Common themes related to **libraries** included:

- ♦ Proposals of other solutions or refinements to the current solution of cutting a half or full day of library services.
- ♦ Voiced support for the proposed solutions.
- ♦ Voiced support for the social importance of libraries.
- ♦ Questioning of the importance of libraries given the availability of information electronically (e.g., via the internet).

Common themes related to **StarTran & Handi-Van services** included:

- ♦ Requests that the two services be discussed and considered separately, not together.
- ♦ The moral importance of the services given the disproportionate need for the services by lower-income and vulnerable populations.
- ♦ The importance of public transportation for conserving energy.
- ♦ Other solutions to increase bus use rather than adapting service to low use.

Common themes related to the **Pioneers Park Nature Center** included:

- ♦ The proposal of other savings solutions that would not result in the closing of the Nature Center, such as shortening its hours, charging for admission, or staffing the center using volunteers.
- ♦ The importance of the Nature Center for children and society in general due to its value for recreation and education, as well as being one of Lincoln's attractions.

- ♦ The idea that the Nature Center, though valuable, is not an essential service.

Common themes related to **non-injury accident reporting** included:

- ♦ The importance of the reports for determining fault in accidents, keeping insurance rates lower, and making sure those not at fault are protected.
- ♦ Suggestions of other options, such as billing drivers in accidents for the service.
- ♦ The greater importance of other services and other tasks that the police could focus on instead of this service.

Common themes related to **economic development** included:

- ♦ Statements of support for the need for economic development funds.
- ♦ Statements of doubt that there is much payoff from investing the money in economic development.
- ♦ Lack of public understanding of what the money for economic development is used for.
- ♦ Mention of the arena as being an example of something that will draw businesses to Lincoln, or as an example of a bad economic investment.

Common themes related to the **swimming pool season** included:

- ♦ The importance of pools as providing activity that can work against the obesity epidemic.
- ♦ The importance of pools as providing productive activities for kids so that kids stay out of trouble.
- ♦ The idea that pools are not essential services, and should be self-supporting businesses.
- ♦ Proposals of other options such as raising fees, closing one or more days or evenings of the week, or closing some pools but not others.

Common themes pertaining to **senior programs** included:

- ♦ The need and importance of the programs for the elderly and the youth with whom they work.
- ♦ The good cost/benefit ratio of the programs.
- ♦ Proposals that other non-profits or volunteers assist with the programs to cut costs.
- ♦ Doubts about the importance of the program or the importance of providing stipends to the elderly who are employed in the programs.

Finally, common themes related to **workforce investment** included:

- ♦ A desire not to return the federal funds that are available, and the fiscal benefits of keeping the program.
- ♦ The importance of helping people get work, including the idea that working people will then also pay taxes.

- ♦ Lack of familiarity with the program and services.
- ♦ Proposal of other solutions such as having the business community provide funding for the service.

QUALITY CONTROL AND SURVEY REPRESENTATIVENESS

While online survey methods are relatively inexpensive and deliberative methods allow one to delve deeper into the reasons that residents offer for their choices, neither approach has the advantage of more expensive random sample surveys in terms of ensuring that the data is representative of the larger population. Other concerns sometimes expressed about online surveys involve “ballot stuffing”—the potential for individuals or subgroups to take a survey repeatedly so that their voices and opinions have more weight than those of others.

To estimate the likely impact of changes in representativeness, this report has already presented data broken out by certain variables (zip code and knowledge levels) to examine the stability of the results across different groups of people. In addition, analyses were performed to estimate the impact of potential “ballot stuffing” through taking the survey multiple times. To make this estimation, we examined the results using the total data (previously reported) compared to the results if all multiple use computer surveys were omitted (i.e., omitting different surveys that came from the same computers).

Omitting all multiple use computers (see Appendix A for the full list of frequencies data) resulted in a sample size of 1,091 instead of 1,404, as 313 surveys were from multiple-use computers. Table 6 shows the comparison of the results of the rankings of programs based on each group of responses. As shown, very few differences were observed between the single and multiple use computers.

- ♦ **Most of the single use responses are in exactly the same order as the overall responses, indicating that the responses from multiple use computers did not change the overall results.**

The only observable difference between the overall ranking and the ranking from single use computers is the switched order of library and fire station services. However the difference in ranking between these two services is small (and not statistically significant). There also was only one significant difference between the preferences expressed via multiple use computers and single use computers:

- ♦ **Multiple use survey responses resulted in a mean rank for economic services that was significantly higher (less important) than responses from single use computers.**

These results, however, do not necessarily imply that the differences are due to ballot stuffing. In our prior surveys, we have seen considerable variability in responses pertaining to economic development. It is possible that persons who are more likely to use multiple use computers in public places value economic development less than some

of the other available services, such as libraries and bus services, resulting in the lower ranking for economic development.

Table 7: Combined Funding Preferences Compared to Results from Single or Multiple Use Computer Surveys

Programs	Combined		Single Use		Multiple Use	
	Mean Rank	SD	Mean Rank	SD	Mean Rank	SD
Library Services	4.08	2.40	4.12	2.40	3.92	2.38
Fire Station Implementation	4.11	2.74	4.10	2.75	4.15	2.69
Swimming Pool Season	4.56	2.36	4.60	2.37	4.43	2.30
Handi-van & Midday StarTran	4.71	2.37	4.69	2.37	4.78	2.34
Pioneer’s Park Nature Center	4.89	2.56	4.93	2.57	4.73	2.52
Economic Development	5.31	2.76	5.21*	2.75	5.66*	2.76
Workforce Investment	5.40	2.40	5.39	2.39	5.43	2.44
Foster Grandparent & Senior Companion Programs	5.73	2.27	5.73	2.25	5.72	2.35
Non-injury Accident Investigations	6.20	2.53	6.21	2.55	6.18	2.49

Notes: *p < .05 difference between single and multiple use computer results. Total *ns* = 1,404 (combined), 1,091 (single use) and 313 (multiple use). % Fund = percentage of persons in the group choosing to fund the item, *SD* = Standard Deviation.

CONCLUSION

Lincoln’s residents are concerned about continuing to reduce or eliminate the city’s programs and services after several years of cutting. Nevertheless, they identified a few programs and services they would prefer to target if reductions are necessary. Non-injury accident investigations and workforce investment and economic development programs were specified over other programs as ones to eliminate. More highly valued, and less preferred for cuts, were fire, library and bus services. In addition, a majority of Lincolnites did not want to close pools earlier in the season.

There is significant consensus around a number of the resident priorities, yet the community does not speak in one voice: There were some differences in preferences as a function of where the respondent lives, and there were some differences related to whether the respondent answered the online survey only versus participated in the community conversation. Notably, as people learned more about the fire station issue, more were supportive of implementing the fire station relocation plan.

For the past several years, residents—particularly those who have attended the Community Conversations—have asked the city to increase revenues rather than reduce or eliminate the city’s programs and services. The discussion again this year reflected an interest from some of the participants to raise revenues rather than reducing or

eliminating services. Despite the reluctance of residents to recommend drastic cuts to the budget, they did indicate the programs and services they would sacrifice if budget realities require cuts.

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Appendix A

Frequencies of Multiple Use Computer Surveys

The frequencies for the number of times surveys were submitted either once from a single computer, or from a multiple use computer, are listed in the table below. A total of 313 of the surveys included in the overall analyses in the report were from multiple use computers.

Frequency of different levels of multiple completions of the online survey

Total times viewed	Valid Sample (used in this report)		
	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	1091	77.7	77.7
2	138	9.8	87.5
3	33	2.4	89.9
4	20	1.4	91.3
5	15	1.1	92.4
6	18	1.3	93.7
7	7	.5	94.2
8	8	.6	94.7
11	11	.8	95.5
16	16	1.1	96.7
17	17	1.2	97.9
30	30	2.1	100.0
Total	1404	100.0	

- where would the coverage from the north corner station be absorbed?????
- When you need them & you never know when you will, It's a god send that they are there.
- We need to keep our city a safe place to live.
- We have a great fire department, but I feel you are trying meet some standard. Each is city is different because the way the street are laid out. If we were to plan a community we would be making the streets wider and easier to get around.
- We all make choices about where to live. When I bought a house I took this into account as it impacts my insurance. This slow growth approach seems to match where current development is occurring. I think another option here is to let those areas served provide an increase in funding as it would be a discount to their personal insurance.
- to much caters the South end of Lincoln, all 70th & 84th primarily
- This makes perfect sense and an important role of government is fire protection and safety. Moreover, I trust former Chief Casady's recommendations.
- this is undoubtedly the most important city govt function and must be supported.
- This is something that needs to be done sooner than later. It is at the cheapest that it will ever be now.
- This is one of the most sensible new proposals. It adds significant service for reasonable on-going costs. It may be optional this year but more costly in the future if we don't do it.
- This is of critical importance to everyone living in Lincoln. This would help make our excellent fire department even better.
- These are newer built structures with better fire protection built in. When was the last time a home built in the last 10 years was lost? Besides, that what insurance is for.

The Fire dept. should take over the sites of the Southeast Rural Fire Deprtments at Hwy 2 & Pine Lake, and at 86th and Holdrege. Both these stations are now in the city limits and should be moved further out into the rural areas.

Also because of the high percentage of Govt, non-profit, etc. properties in the town that are ot paying property tax. The city needs to bill these entities for services rendered; fire, medical, police. Or charge them an inleu of tax fee. Additionally out of town/state residents should be billed for these services as well. Once again that's wha insurance is for.

And all new city employees or current ones who move should have to live in the

city limits(seward county does it). How much of our taxpayer dollars paid to employees leave the city and pay property/sales taxes else where?

- There is no doubt in my mind that most Lincoln Firemen are individually fine people. However, the Fireman's union has a reputation of incompetence and corruption. This union appears to lobby the City effectively for policy decisions that benefit the union and the politicians that support them.

Therefore neither can be trusted on this subject.

- There are several people through out the state that live in areas that are not in a 4 minute response time. But they choose to live there. Im not saying that we have to not build, just we don't have to jump into it and kill off some important assets to he lincoln community while doing it.
- there are existing fire stations that were occupied by the rural fire departments in the areas that are now part of lincoln. can we buy those buildings for less then a new building would cost?
- The news said it would cost 4-7 million to build a new fire station. what is the actual cost, You have \$375k. Why the big difference.
- The city took over ambulance service and promised greater efficiency and cheaper costs, now they want to relocate?
- Should be able to recoup some of the cost in the sale of the old properties.
- Safety First!
- Safety and health of city residents needs to be a priority. This item is a high ticket, but high priority, one.
- Relocation of fire station will save money in the long run.
- Placing a fire station within a 4 minute response time from each home is a great goal. However, 4min 30 seconds or 6 minutes is still a good response time. It is still better than. 0 response at all. This is also not a good time to be funding new projects We should focus on doing well with what we ha e and making a plan to SAVE money for this project in the future. Then if the money is already there taxes wouldn't have to be increased at all.
- Moving the 84 & south st firestation down to Pioneers, Please. It's as stupid as the Antelope Valley money pit currently being wasted on tax money.
- Making this change now will avoid having to make changes in the future when costs will be higher. Also we would be using the existng staff and resources in a much more productive way.
- Long overdue!

- Let the public know what the plans are for vacating the current fire stations , Will they be sold to private investors to develop into neighborhood business as has been done in the past, or will the city develop them for use such as a a local community enter which will not put them on the tax rolls.
- It's disappointing that, once again, the closing and/or relocation of fire department stations is even being considered. For those who live in the airport area, we have only been appeased with short-term approval to keep the station nearby open. Is it conceivable that you would think we would forget about the proposal or change our stance? We believe all stations in all areas should remain open. Please reconsider your cuts and remember that all life matters.
- It seems to me that as the City of Lincoln looks to the future, the growth patterns of the city should be reviewed in light of emergency responders and other factors. A more deliberate approach to planning the city's growth could help alleviate, or at the very least, prepare us for, issues like this in the future. Smarter growth at a slower rate is better than rapid growth that later costs more taxpayer dollars as we play catch-up.
- Improved fire-rescue services are an investment for the public good. With >8,000 people outside the best-practices range of a 4-minute response time, I would be willing to pay additional tax for full implementation of this plan. This proposal seems very logical. Does the city have any ideas of how the "closed" station buildings might be used? Would these be sold to raise additional funds, or would the city make use of the facilities in other ways?
- If we relocate these fire stations, we need to close others. I don't want more money spent on more fire stations. I actually want less fire stations in more strategic places.
- If response times decrease will there be a higher rating for insurance purposes on the average home? If so how much will the average home owner save. If not why not? Better response time should decrease the costs associated with structure damage and result in savings to the insurance companies.
- If new homes and businesses are being built, then the property taxes from those locations should be paying for the building/relocation of fire stations.
- I've read newspaper stories about this proposal and I think it's a great way to stretch our dollars.
- I would have to have more information on the response times and what projected losses would be by adding 1 minute to response time. My common sense tells me we don't have enough calls or losses to worry about a saving of 1 minute in a response time. If you want to save some money for the fire department I would think we need to relook at how we are responding to calls now, and I am thinking

mostly of seeing a large fire truck at every little fender bender or minor event happening in the city.

- I believe the implementation of the Fire Station Relocation Plan would be a good use of tax money as the benefits to the city's population as a whole outweigh the potential cost savings.
- How soon would the construction begin and what is the expected completion date.
- How about funding one fire station per year to stretch out the cost on this project?
- Growth patterns should better reflect the infrastructure we have with a greater emphasis on the urban core with infill development.
- Get more smaller trucks for use in medical calls.
- Distance and travel time from the nearest fire station could certainly be among the factors considered when people make the choice of where to buy or build a home. How many of the people who bought or built at the 8,469 addresses outside of the four-minute travel time actually took that into consideration? My guess: not many. Is it therefore up to the majority of the population to support the choice that these people made? I think not. We already do that on many levels. Now some want to add this. Tough times call for tough choices. This is one of them. Wait to implement the relocation plan until the city can afford it.
- 90% of the residents are within 4 minutes. That's pretty good to me. But you don't say how long it is to the remaining 10%.
- why fix what's not broken?

- Think of a city with all these great libraries but you can never enjoy them because they are never open. We are a University town, we have pride in schools, so why cut the tools necessary for student to succeed?
- There are more than enough library hours available.
- the half day cut should be different so not all libraries are closed at the same time
- The full day cut could be two half days, allowing some access to services each weekday.
- Survey actual library users to see what exactly they are using there. couldn't be available on internet, etc?
- Please increase evening library hours Downtown.
- People will adjust to the new hours and plan accordingly.
- People who want these services can go when the library is open. Rotate hours at each branch for a broader coverage of hours open, eg not all closed on Monday. Rotating schedules of closed every other Monday. Be creative.
- Make UNL Library available to the public. It is state funded so has a tax payer they could help out.
- Library services benefit all segments of society. I would like to see library services expanded, and I am willing to pay more taxes to help provide extended hours at all branches.
- Library services are of vital importance to the public!
- Library services are key to educated citizens. I prefer to check out books and movies from the library rather than purchasing them from a retail store.
- Libraries are very important to me, but there is another reason I chose to spend my imaginary allowance here. The statistics listed in the general information and in each of the three responses do not address the loss to the librarians and staff who work at these branches. Cutting back on hours does not just affect patrons. It also directly affects the economic opportunity of librarians. I would hate to create even more financial hardship on oft-overlooked civil servants who connect with community members on a daily basis, inspire children to read and explore, and have followed their passions to a career that serves so many.
- Libraries are important piece of the good life that we have in Lincoln. Not everyone can afford a Nook, or a computer, moreover, books will always have a viable part in our society for the near future. Keep the libraries open with no further cuts.
- Libraries are a lifeline for many of our poorest citizens. I wish that Bennett Martin got the support, especially in hours of use and Internet services, that has

gone to branch libraries in more affluent parts of town. It was ill thought out, imo, in the way that the collection of periodicals was non-optimally disposed of such that people could sell what they bought for a song shortly afterwards on eBay.

- Keeping libraries open is an important equity issue.
- It appears to me that the Libraries are very top heavy with administration. The Library personnel do a fine job operating a very archaic system. If the city can not find a way to remedy this situation, then it should be allowed to privatize.
- Instead of hitting every library with the same cuts, could the cuts be strategically targeted to shave hours, perhaps daily, off the lowest usage hours? Hopefully the data is available to make this determination.
- Increase library services—they are not open enough hours.
- If the half day of service cut was staggered throughout the system, access to a library would be available all during the week even though it might not be as handy as the local neighborhood.
- If a full or half day of library services are cut, could there be one day at each quadrant library that is open later? The later hours could be spread throughout the week and be at a different library each night so that it is equally divided and allows later hours services for those who need it.

example: Monday-Gere open later; Tuesday-Anderson open later; Wednesday-Eiseley-open later; Thursday-Walt open later.

Are there shorter hours in the summer?

- I would rather the Quadrant library hours be saved. Our family lives 2 blocks from South Street branch but never go there.
- I work full time (I'm underemployed, but in this economy consider myself lucky to have a job at all) & can't afford the internet at home. Sat. & Sun. are the only days I can spend more than 1 appt at the internet computers at Bennett Martin Library. Many people want to close or severely limit Bennett Martin hours; this would be a big disservice to the many people for whom this is the best option to access a library.
- I use the libraries quite a bit. I go to most of the branches. I would not be upset if they were closed on Sundays.
- I think the public responds better to incremental change. If option 2 works and we need further cuts in the future, full day service elimination could be considered without as much difficulty.

- I notice lots and lots of lights on inside our libraries throughout the night. I don't see vehicles near the building or see cleaning crews working. Why are all the lights on? Couldn't some energy \$ be saved by bringing this to a minimum? They have "goe green" with the drought tolerant plantings outside the buildings and promotion of the rain barrel projects. What about unnecessary energy waste?
- I love library's but unfortunately I think almost anything you can find in a brick and mortar libray you can find on the internet. I don't know all the details to make an informed decision but I would think the usage has dropped substancially and will coninue to drop as the internet becomes more and more valuable to our population. Trying to determine what percentage of our population has internet access would probably be very beneficial in trying to figure the numbers.
- I hate to see library hours cut, but if we must I would prefer shortening the hours during the week rather than the weekend.

Another suggestion, cut back on the DVD's, magazine subscriptions, and CD's which the library purchases.

- I don't like the idea of cutting any library services, but limited service is better than none at all. Please remember there are low-income people in Lincoln who can't afford books or computer services. Someday, when the economy improves, I'd like to se extended library services.
- I believe the services are too important to cut.
- have books sent out like netflix where a single monthly rate is paid by private citizens and the books are mailed to them. also have the catalog online and the choice of w here to pick up and drop off books and the books can be circulated to those places allow buisiness to rent part of the library to sell coffee or snacks.
- Hardest impact on those in the lower income brackets.
- Everything you need from a book, the internet has and more. and it's almost FREE!
- Even as Internet access reaches more and more households, libraries are still among the primary venues a city can offer its citizens for opportunities to learn. Cutting library services means dumbing down the populace. Never a good idea when so many of he populace are already close to the point of no return!
- Do to the Tier system which prioritizes services, the Tier 2 and 3 items have already been cut. Further cuts eat at the meat of the libraries. There is nothing more to cut. Restoring the libraries hours should be a greater priority.

- Develop a more comprehensive volunteer program, not to supplant but to enhance services: more collaboration with neighborhoods, faith-based organizations, service clubs, educational institutions, etc.
- Cutting one day of the library services would be any acceptable compromise. I would rather see each library open one day less than have to close an entire library.
- Cutting a half day seems to be a very good way to save money. While our libraries are a valuable resource it could be beneficial to save money by cutting one half day. Libraries will still be available each day, but limiting only one day slightly.
- could the cutting of one day (friday) of service be coupled with increasing hours on some days to offset the loss in visits and availability?
- Assign specific closed different day to the different branches so there is always one open somewhere
- Again, access to the public library serves the common good. Without data to underpin the suggestions slated above, I would say don't cut hours/services. Our library system is a gem (I've lived in larger metro areas with much weaker library services), and our libraries are relied upon by many in the community. The PL staff already has been reduced (too) significantly - let's not undermine the PL any further.
- Access to libraries and educational tools should never be considered when it comes to budget cuts. Libraries are tried-and-true assets to the community and to our future of our livelihood. Please take this cut proposal off of the table.
- A quality life in the city depends on the number of city services. These services are extremely valuable and are some of the reasons Lincoln is regarded highly in national services.
- sunday seems like a good day to close.

StarTran & Handi-Van: 52 comments



- You are putting 2 separate programs in the same category which is problematic. Provided that bus services were available at crucial areas, like, Kawasaki, the hospital and other major businesses, mid day service might be an appropriate cut. However, du to the cuts of the past 6 or more years, reorganizing routes might be a better investment.
- Why is it an all or nothing choice here? I would encourage decision makers to look at other options--for instance, how about increasing the cost to consumers who are not low income? I rode the HandiVan for a couple of months after surgery and was very gateful for the service but I was only charged \$3.00 per trip, if I remember correctly. Why not charge, say \$5 or \$6.00 per trip? It still would be incredibly cheaper than a taxi, would be affordable and yet provide the service people with disabilities ned.

I also heard feedback from a couple of drivers who indicated there were people who appeared very capable of using the regular bus system but they somehow qualified for the Handivan. Maybe there ought to be stiffer requirements in being able to qulify. How often are people's applications reviewed for need after they've been using the service for quite some time? What are the ramifications of people with severe disabilities to be productive citizens if their only source of transportation is takenaway? What are the additonal costs of covering living expenses for these folks if they cannot work?

- Why didn't you split up the Handivan and Startran question? I think providing bus service to handicapped people is more important than StarTran service to able-bodied people but you don't give me the option of funding one and not the other. Another loaded question.
- Why are the hours limited. I know someone who needs this service but sometimes has to go by his electric wheel chair. Can't go straight home after Dr. appointment cause he has to recharge his battery.
- While some of the data above might lead me to decide "do not fund," I don't see any data on how these cuts would impact StarTran drivers. Would there be layoffs at StarTran?
- While many people may be unhappy with my opinion, I think the reduction in hours would be good overall for the community. On the same topic if new cab companies are able to operate in Lincoln at cheaper rates and better availability than the current provider, then the reduction in city funded van service can be offset. I would like to see a cost analysis between funding the Handi-Van service versus a per ride contact with a private transportation provider servicing the same group. I would expect the private provider could provide appropriate services at a reduced cost as it would be on an as needed basis rather than running constantly. They would also be free to continue their normal service as well.
- While I do see the value of these services, I think the funds could be better spent on services that will address needs for a much larger portion of the population.
- What options are available for the affected individuals if they require transportation during the mid day hours? Can the handivan be made available on an on-call basis only?
- we as a people have a moral obligation to care for those who can not care for themselves due to physical or mental disability.
- to many people NEED this service.
- This is a moral issue. We are compelled to provide for those unable to help themselves.
- The city has a lot of low-income and disabled people who need good bus service on a regular basis. Now that I am retired, I'm using the bus on a regular basis including Saturdays and at mid-day. I am paying \$45.00 for a monthly pass. I would be willing to pay more in order to save the service.
- Since it is low income people who likely ride the bus, cutting services would be an extreme hardship
- Service should be expanded, not cut. The "O" St/SCC route is packed with riders during midday. We need to have 2 buses on that route throughout the day. SCC is currently expanding at 8800 "O" St. This will mean even more riders on a route

that is busting out at the seams. Cutting midday service would make it so that a lot of students would not be able to get to class at a reasonable time frame or they would have to wait around once they finish class. What could be done to make best use of the system is to move some assets around. We could trim a trip or 2 off of routes with lower ridership (such as 45/46, 42/43 or 47/48) and put that time onto a route like "O" St/SCC. This would help the riders per hour numbers on the routes that are trimmed and allow "O" t/SCC to continue to grow in numbers of riders.

- Public transportation should be increased as a viable option. Creating a downtown pedestrian only zone, as in some larger cities, would help encourage more people to use it. This is a long-term environmental priority.
- Public transportation saves energy.
- Please no more cuts to Startran. Unless they are in management.
- Perhaps a single car with driver could be budgeted for much less money to provide the desired transportation. Using a Volt could reduce the cost of fuel.
- People with disabilities are already limited by their disabilities and financial status, don't make them "second class citizens" when it comes to accessing public transportation and being able to work, go to school, get medical care, shop, interact with family & friends...and just lead a normal life!
- Our bus system presently is barely serviceable, with little service on the weekends, and no late hours. This would unfairly impact those people in our community who have disabilities. To do what is minimally required for those who are disabled is not what Lincoln is all about. Please note I come from the perspective that a transit system is not a money maker and rarely will it ever break even. It provides transportation for those who don't have. In a nutshell, no further reductions in any of the service provided by StarTran.
- not only should we fund this we should encourage the bus by not building more parking downtown, making large swaths of no traffic areas and encourage people to ride or walk from by having park and ride areas that serve all of Lincoln. make the busses run smaller more frequent runs where you transfer to get where you want to go instead of having to ride all the way downtown.
- Need to redevelop the "model" to identify the true "hubs" from which people can migrate throughout the city via the StarTran system more efficiently.
- Lincoln needs to expand its bus service to include evenings and Sundays.
- Let's face it here. Downtown needs to no longer be the central hub for bus routes. Set up Express runs from shopping centers where parking is available to downtown (like football Saturdays) for the work day morning and evening. Set up

a center spoke at 46 & P/Q area just west of Sherwin Williams and run into and out of there in all directions.

- Keep the handi bus but eliminate the star tran hours frrom 12-2pm.
- It would be a "SHAME" to cut any bus service, there is not enough as is. Lincoln is growing fast. I depend on the bus and have no other way to go to work.
- In order to further the economic prosperity of the city, public transportation is a must. When access to public transportation is reduced, those most often affected are those who cannot afford other modes of transportation to work. When lower income familes cannot get to a job or cannot get to the best-paying job, they are more likely to depend on other taxpayer-funded services. In fact, I would recommend expanding public transportation services. Just like Bike to Work Week and the Bike Commuter Challenge public transportation is another way that Lincoln can go green and encourage citizens to drive less.
- If this is a federally required standard why aren't there grants or assistance from the federal government to help cities with providing this assistance?
- If anything, the bus system needs to be expanded, not cut. With services currently stopping early in the evening, it is very had to find suitable employment opportunities, and as a student at the University of Nebraska, it is difficult to be involved in etracurricular activities.
- I would suggest keeping the Handivan service but discontinuing the regular midday routes. The survey didn't allow for this option.
- I would like to recomend that the Handi-Van service contiue as normal but elimatte the Midday bus service.
- I work for General Assistance. So many of our clients rely on busses to get to work and doctors appointments. I believe a healthy city has ample public transportation. If anything, as the economic situation worsens, public transportation needs to be mae available to more people and running more hours.
- I try to look at cost and number of people impacted. This does not really help a wide range of people, or provide a greater good to the community. It truly impacts 12 people.
- I see the empty busses running all of the time. Don't we have better options like smaller vehicles? Let the new taxi service provide this service as a part of their licensing fees. Again medical/shopping trips can be planned around the hours of operatin.
- I see city busses running all the time with 1 or less passengers in them. Is this worth the money spent?!? Not in my opinion!

- I realize the numbers don't work from a financial perspective but this is one we need to bite the bullet on and continue.
- I like the service the Handi-Van provides so that area should not be cut, but there are just too many buses empty or near-empty to justify running them all over the city.
- I have only one yes/no choice. Maybe I missed something. Is it not possible for the city to reduce StarTran bus service but leave the Handi-Van service as is? Regular bus riders with no disabilities can adjust their schedules or find alternate means of transportation to access shopping, medical care, and work places (that's one of the reasons people have jobs after all). But despite the needs of the many outweighing the needs of the few, a society is judged based on how it treats its disadvantaged citizens. So if it's to be all or none, then I guess it's all. Bring on the tax increases...
- I have in the past relied on startran bus service for my transportation. Two hours is a lot of time to have to wait for a bus, especially in the middle of the day when medical appointments are made.
- I could support eliminating funding for mid-day bus routes, but am hesitant to cut the services for disabled persons who can least cope with the changes.
- I believe the bus services are at or below the minimum already.
- Hopefully, increased competition of taxi service will provide a lower cost alternate means of transportation to the community. That could pick up the slack in available midday service.
- Handi-Van's should be replaced by Handi-Prius cars getting 45 - 50 MPG. Should save many \$.
- Government has made it very clear that they do not do very many things well. This system can be improved. However, It is imperative to me that support our citizens that need the Handi-van for transportation.

Since we now will have additional taxi service, it might be interesting to see if one or more of those vendors can provide this service rather than the city; perhaps with some incentive support from the City.

- Funnel some of the funds to underwrite or assist with other handicapped transportation options such as cabs
- Fund this program but do away with the bus and reimburse the individual through a Taxi service. I know this is problem with the Taxi business, but if they had on call service available they would provide it.

- For years and years we see these giant gas using buses with 1-2 people riding throughout Lincoln. This is a waste. Replace buses with smaller vans or look at eliminating minimally used routes.
- Cutting services to people with disabilities is a horrible thing to even consider. People who use the Handi-Vans, and many people who use other StarTran bus services, have no other transportation options. They need these services to access their jobs. Preventing people from getting to their jobs is bad for them personally, and bad for economic growth in Lincoln. The bus service in Lincoln is already extremely limited, and people already have to wait an hour or two if they miss a bus. The total lack of bus service on Sundays already seriously limits the ability of many people to get to potential jobs. As a frequent StarTran bus rider, I feel that bus hours of operation should be extended, not cut.
- Continue funding until alternate solutions can be provided. Adding diversity in the taxi service may be one solution.
- Check and see where the services are really needed and fill them. Empty buses only waste tax money.
- Can taxi services be provided at a lower rate for the 12 people? Can we choose to fund one and not the other?
- Bus service should be expanded, not reduced. If buses ran more frequently, into the night hours, and on weekends more people could use them.

Nature Center: 60 comments



- Why not model the Nature Center on a not-for-profit endeavor, and receive grant funds and corporate support to help it thrive along. I would partially fund until the fundraising system is implemented and operational. C'mon, the Parks Foundation can do this easily.
- Why not charge \$1 per vehicle for entrance to the park. Pioneers Park is a unique park and I think people would drop \$1 in a bucket to visit the park. Still pretty cheap entertainment and encourage some accountability for its use.
- Why not add a couple of bucks to ticket fees at Pinewood Bowl to help support it?
- Why is there not an option to only have the Nature Center open in the spring / summer and closed during the fall and winter? That would save on operation costs, but also allow it to be opened for summer programs.
- Why are city decision makers such black and white thinkers? There are a NUMBER of choices between YES and NO! Why not start charging a small fee for use of the Nature Center and grounds? Why not reduce the number of hours/days the center is open, say only M-W and Weekends? Have you thought about recruiting volunteers for this program to supplement the budget?
- Who wants to live in a city without a nice park. It would be a shame to let this great park and investment in our wellness, to lose this beautiful park.

- While the nature center is nice, it isn't necessary. Bus service, libraries, police and fire departments are. We seem to be managing without the Star City Parade. We can get along without the nature center too.
- WE MUST keep this program available to our children and families! SO important for developing an understanding of our essential connection to our natural environment.
- We have done several of the classes at Pioneers Park - so I would recommend increasing fees
- We have been disappointed by the accessibility of the park for wheelchairs.
- This is such a valuable resource to Lincoln families and children; it receives many out of town visitors, too.
- This is service that is educational, informative, inspirational and important in keeping us all in touch with nature and our environment. And....as a community, we simply can afford and should have this and other quality of life organizations and institutions.
- This is one of those programs that is not a high priority.
- This is one of the jewels of the city of Lincoln. This center is a valuable resource for the schools and the education of our children. I would place the nature center as one of the highest priorities to keep in the budget.
- This is one of the quality of life programs that makes Lincoln attractive. Keep it.
- This also would be a "shame" what a waste if it was taken from us and our family's.
- The nature center is nice, but closing it wouldn't have a big impact on public quality of life.
- The Nature Center is an extremely important part of keeping children and families outdoors and active. It is currently the only way I know of where children can get up close with native wildlife and nature. My children have been going to camps there since they were old enough. It has taught them to respect nature and be mindful of its care.
- The nature center is a wonderful place to still take children during the day and weekends. I've been to wonderful birthday parties there and kids get to learn so much and interact with nature.
- The Nature Center appears to be able to serve a wide number of the population
- The city government needs to start thinking like a business. If the city can find a way to increase the cost recovery percentage from the Pioneers Park Nature Center then I could possibly change my mind on supporting the center. At this

time I think a 3% cost recovery is too low. As a tax payer I would like to know what the projected implications would be if the registrations fees were reevaluated, or a nominal fee was implemented for the public. If one dollar was per person was charged at the current visitor rate then the cost recovery would be in the neighborhood of 84%, reducing the funding needed to \$80,000. Assuming the public usage may drop due to a use fee, then the city could still possibly cut the out of pocket expenses in half.

- The "Nature Class", as our 3 year old calls it, is a great joy for our son.
- Start charging a nominal fee for use of the facility to offset some of the expense. Although a wonderful resource it is not necessary to the health and well being of our citizens. Hopefully, if cut, it could be reinstated in healthier financial times.
- Some of these projects are not needed to survive day to day. Bring them back when financial times are better
- Seem like there could be a middle ground: shorten hours/days opened? Ask for an entry donation/fee of \$2 per vehicle?
- Retain the Nature Center only if it is self-supporting (No Tax dollars).
- Please keep the Nature Center open! It is an irreplaceable asset to our city and, if anything, deserves more funding than it gets.
- Pioneers Park offers many wonderful programs to all ages. My children have participated in the preschool programs - its a much needed program for children with wonderful teachers. So many children have the chance to SEE, TOUCH and FEEL nature at Pioneers Park, something that the world is slowly losing. Please keep the Nature Center open, it's a part of Lincoln's history, we all have so much to learn from the facility.
- Pioneers Park Nature Center is a wonderful place where my children & I have experienced nature through school field trips, Girl & Boy Scout outings, and family excursions. This is an absolute gem in our city and to close it would be a travesty! Even thinking that that is a possibility is heart-wrenching! Countless children (and adults) have learned about nature first-hand at Pioneers Park Nature Center, and there is no other place like it to have such an experience. Children seem to have fewer & fewer opportunities to experience the natural world outdoors, so it's vital that we keep any opportunities for them to learn about and truly experience nature, such as Pioneers Park Nature Center. Perhaps the hours of operation could be cut, or a small fee imposed, etc., but please, PLEASE, don't close it!
- Pioneers Park is my favorite Lincoln City Park. Please do not let the Nature Center close. One of the reasons Lincoln is a great city is because of its great parks.

- Pioneers Park is a great place. But it is managed very poorly. In addition, some of the employees at the Park appear to push political agendas on their visitors.

There is a better way, the City does not appear to have the desire to find it.

- Pioneer Park serves educational, cultural, and recreational purposes. What other facilities fulfill such a role? I was pleased to be able to host a naturalist from Pioneers Park at Calvert Recreation After School Program and all of the kids loved seeing and touching the animals and learning- even outside of school. The Nature Center educates visitors on the history of the Great Plains and allows many visitors to enjoy themselves on a daily basis.
- People, particularly children, are not getting outdoors enough as it is! Learning about and enjoying our environment is important. With a quarter of a million visitors annually, I'm surprised that closing the Nature Center is even being considered - that's comparable to everyone in the city visiting the Center once a year. Again, I'm willing to pay for the Center to remain open.
- Outdoor recreation and education are very important services for a healthy and progressive city to provide.
- No way this would be allowed to happen. Look for creative ways to gain financial support from those entities using/visiting this Icon of Lincoln.
- Might be worth charging a nominal admission charge of \$1 per person
- Let a non-profit pick up the slack if this is truly a necessary service or start charging more. You could easily put up a suggested donation with depository by the main gate across from the parking lot. It does not need to be all or nothing here. There are likely more fee-for-service & earned income opportunities. The hay rack rides, for example, seem very popular. Run more fee programs like that. What happens to the animals if the nature center closes?
- It's funny there's no option for partial funding here. As I recall from survey classes, this is called a forced choice and may result in inaccurate representations of the true intent of those being surveyed. Just sayin'.
- Is there not an option to close their doors one or two days a week? Will that save any money?
- Increase/start fees for using like the Game & Parks. Out of the total population, these are small percentages and how many are "repeat" visitors?
- If you can, keep it open and charge a flat rate admission.
- i, and my child love to explore the park, and nature center bldgs,
- I would like to see the Nature Center stay open, however, shorten the hours when it is staffed and charge more to visiting classes and organizations.

- I would keep funding at the present level for the future with allowances for increased costs, but not any expansion in the program at this time.
- I went to the annual fundraiser and didn't really spend any money at the center. People were spread out everywhere. It would seem that the children's band should have been in the same location as the silent auction items, vendors, and raffle. I would hve spent more to support the center. There should also be an "optional" visitors' fee that suggests to visitors that it does cost to operate the facilities.
- I think we need to fund this but why not implement a minimal park pass fee which would suggest that the users of the park would also pay for a portion of its costs to maintain. I am thinking of maybe a \$1.00 a month or something relatively inexpensive fo the user so as not to raise a big fuss.
- I support increasing funding for the Pioneers Park Nature Center
- I have a large family and we homeschool. We have used the center often. Tell us how many of the users are apart of the public school system. Next be honest in the uses for the center and think about how the zoo can handle the same type of services. Thi is a fluffy benefit that we can do without until better days come again.
- I am one of the people who uses the Nature Center regularly -- so this is a personal priority.
- Have them charge more for there services. Or charge a \$1 a day per car for public use of the park.
- git it down ypu can save money by just open in summer time only and person can but a permit like the state park use to get into it this can be a big plus
- Cost/benefit here is very good. Maintain funding and access for the community.
- Consider charging 2 or 3 dollars per person for admittance to help with the cost.
- Connections with nature are essential for city residents. Funding for the Nature Center and its programs are vital to our citizen's overall health and well being.
- Close the Nature Center? It's one of the things that sets Lincoln apart from its contemporaries! Without the Nature Center, Pioneers Park would move closer to being just another city park with lots of grass and trees and a pond here and there. Just lik any other plain-vanilla park in any other city the size of Lincoln. Closing the Nature Center shouldn't even be on the list! Why is the only option to close it? Why no option to reduce hours of operation? Who's the moron behind this item?
- Charge fees for use to recover costs of operation. Solicit private donations and consider fund raising.

- Again these services make Lincoln a great place to live.
- Again due to the Tier structure, PPNC has been cuts time and time and again. PPNC is one of the few activities in Lincoln that is free of charge to young families, immigrants, and others who do not have extra money to spend on activities.
The Chet Ager Nature center was renovated w/ a sizable investment. Why would the city choose to shut it down?
- A better solution would be to implement a small fee for people who can afford it, or accept voluntary donations at the door. Eliminating the Nature Center would deprive people, especially children, of an important resource for environmental education that they do not receive anywhere else. If it were closed, what would happen to the 670 acres of wildlife habitat? Nebraska is home to several endangered animals, and they are already suffering from habitat loss.
- 250,000 visitors not served - that amounts to the entire population of Lincoln. Fund we must.

Non-injury Accidents: 36 comments



- You are already reliant on insurance companies and they basically do what they want anyway.
- Without this, how would the insurance companies know who was at fault. Sure it is not very much but if I am in an accident and don't have to report it and the insurance companies will not have a report to go off of and no matter who is at fault, they will split the cost or take forever figuring out the story in a he said she said manner. No one should have their mandatory car insurance go up because someone crashed into them.
- why does it cost more when the police officer is doing his job or just riding round in his car . It seem it is part of his job to check out traffic parmises
- When traffic crashes occur it is a tramatic event and people need an Officer to help and guide them. Most have no idea what to do.
- Undecided on this one.
- This seems rather stupid not to fund. Are the implications that whichever insurance company argues better determines the causality? Perhaps the city could bill the insurance companies for the accident reports?

- This is an area where officer time can be better used and allocated. There should be a report on file somewhere which I believe would indicate that officer reports will have little impact on our insurance coverage and rates.
- This fund keeps drivers not at fault for accidents from having their insurance rates go up. It's a good cost to the community. I could imagine paying for it by adding a mandatory fee for the police report to the driver at fault.
- The unintended consequences of this action might be an increase in personal automobile insurance, but that would affect drivers rather than property owners in general.
- The insurance have long taken a stance of trying to have all accidents be a shared fault resolution so I am not sure why it is very important for an officer to complete the form. The main advantage I see is that it is a disinterested third party opinion which in a lot of cases helps to be the deciding factor in an argument over fault. I am pretty sure most drivers will fill out the form to show as much fault for the other party as possible.
- The fact that the officers are responding and make sure the area is safe and impairment was not an issue is enough. Now with cellphone cameras and new technology we no longer need to rely on the officer to bring those items to the scene.
- That's what police officers are for. This is part of their job. If you take this away then drop their pay. Less pay for less responsibility.
- So it's still going to cost money to send these officers out to direct traffic, protect the scene issue tickets when necessary, yet the fines that the city collects on tickets such as failing to yield, reckless driving, would probably lower the amount of revenue. I don't really see how not funding it isn't the only option to save money. We still have to pay for them to respond to the scene.
- Protecting the citizens is one of the essential requirements of the City. And even if there might not be an injury, I consider this to be a part of the protection the citizens should get.

I've been involved in four accidents in my life time. In each case the other driver was at fault and received a ticket. My insurance rates would have increased if that other driver did not receive a ticket. It's been at least 15 years since I've been in an accident, so maybe things have changed; but that is my experience.

- People would get away with hitting other cars much more easily.
- Most likely an overall savings to Lincoln citizens if legal costs are minimized.
- Maintain funding to ensure public safety by punishing bad drivers, easing insurance claim process for citizens, and hopefully identifying problematic

intersections. Relatively small cost, good public service. Insurance companies do not share the citizen' best interests.

Could some costs be saved by utilizing public works or parking enforcement for traffic control and/or could investigation costs be charged to at-fault driver? (Not sure if this could be done by city code or whether state code would need changed.)

- Lots of accident victims would be hurt if this service were curtailed. Conflicting information would not finger the guilty.
- Lincoln continues to have the lowest per capita police coverage in the state and the manner in which the citizens drive in this town is evidence of the lack of traffic enforcement. Lincoln Police funding should be increased substantially. Traffic enforcement and overall police protection should be increased. Fines for traffic offenses should be increased and the distribution of those funds should be changed in favor of the police department; not the schools. Additionally, traffic enforcement cameras should be approved by the city council and installed throughout Lincoln. Study after study shows that where traffic cameras are installed, traffic accidents are reduced and city revenues increase. The city of Houston, Texas has had such positive outcomes that they can not install traffic cameras fast enough.
- Just cut it! People who still want this to happen don't really understand the issue.
- It takes officers up to two hours to respond anyway. If they responded in a timely fashion I'd fund it.
- It seems that not too long ago we had many police officers that were not doing their job and watching movies, sports games and not policing the streets. It appears to me that there may be some additional money saved by not staffing so the officers had this excess time on their hands for these bad habits. ALSO we were promised by the Mayor that we would see savings by having Casidy as a public safety director. He should have made these cuts already to recognize these savings.
- If you need a police report for insurance or other, you or insurance should pay for it
- If this means no more "negligent driving" tickets for non-injury, one car accidents (like hitting a pole when the road is icy) I am ALL FOR IT!
- I would much rather have police spending time on crime, not fender benders. Most people have cell phones with cameras. They can do their own reporting to insurance etc. Most of the time there are witnesses to accidents. Drivers could get statements with video on their phones.
- I think this falls into the idea of public good, like the fire station relocation plan.

- i think this could save a lot and can save from doing the reports keep the office in service for more items that come up like being by the school more to stop speeding or going to fast in a school zone
- I lived in another state, in an unincorporated area that had this policy. After one car accident, I realized how valuable it is to have the police involved to document the scene and assess the condition(s) of those involved. This is potentially a serious public safety issue, given the numbers of non-injury accidents in the city each year. Again, willing to pay for additional service!
- I feel strongly that this is a waste of taxpayer's money when non-injury traffic accidents are civil in nature and can be handled via insurance companies, as is done in almost every other large city.
- Everything is not "yes/no" choices. Respond and bill the insurance companies for reports to pay the costs--take the blinders off!
- charge the insurance companies
- Chaos would ensue!
- As long as the police still keep the scene safe and ticket for the mentioned offenses, I don't think we need the additional investigation.
- As long as Officers would still respond to traffic crashes when summoned and would protect the scene until the vehicles are moved; would confirm that the drivers are licensed, insured, and sober; would assist citizens in arranging for a wrecker and transportation, That is more than sufficient service.
- Are we helping the department or Insurance companies in this service?
- Another ridiculous suggestion! 2.5 police officers? Please! How many police officers are accounted for by the amount of time officers spend not doing much of anything? I'm not saying they waste time on purpose... I have nothing but respect for LPD. But any job includes time when employees aren't being productive. How about looking for ways to increase productivity and efficiency in traffic accident responses? And what about the huge downside of cutting response to non-injury accidents? Think of the finger pointing that would result from lack of a police report when it comes time for the insurance companies to get involved. Think about the loss of "economic stimulus" that comes from law firms combing the police reports looking for accidents to drum up business (and -- I'm being serious -- the loss of tax revenues that would result)? And think of this... an accident occurs at 56th and Hwy 2. There's no injury, so no police show up... no police to block, divert, or direct traffic safely around the area of the accident, no police to direct those involved on moving their vehicles to safety... no police on hand when another driver slams into the scene of the accident and ends up severely injured or dead. Possibly along with others at the scene. Think of the litigation against the city! Not a good option.

office(the One Stop) to find out how MANY people have been affected by loss of employment due to these reasons in the past 3-5 years.

- raise my property tax
- New development is needed. The City population will continue to grow and business development needs to keep pace. This is one way to improve everyone's standard of living.
- Must be helping, low unemployment, good growth in the construction industry around Lincoln.
- Maintaining and increasing jobs and economic development in the long run offsets the expenses as people have money to spend in the city and improve their homes (increasing taxable value).
- Lincoln economic development is a joke. Grand Island, North Platte and Kearney are eating Lincoln's lunch. This area should be funded but first, it should undergo extensive study and changes so that we may compete as least as well as those smaller cities that continually get the better of Lincoln.
- Let LIBA fund it via a corporate bake sale.
- Leave it up to the Chamber and private businesses, the university to encourage business growth.
- Isn't this what the "job creators" are already doing?
- If people want to start their own business, they should put in the work, effort, and personal finances/time into it. If I truly believe something will be successful, I will find a way to make it happen.
- If big corp. want to come to our city they should pay like all the citizens do. I don't get a tax break just because I moved to Lincoln. Why should they. Look what happened in Grand Island a company receive tax break and then closed their doors and left. they lost money. Make it more difficult for them to qualify if you want to keep it. Make them put matching funds in an account that can not be touched for the time frame they are to build and hire and retain the amount of employees they promised if they do then they keep the money if not the city takes it back.
- I've yet to see where the job creation, retention, and support for the public has come from this privatization of support.
- I'm still not convinced that this investment really pays off for the City. It would be helpful to see more detailed data, and examples of recent success stories. I'd sooner cut in this area than in essential public services.
- I would fund with the caveat, that the economic development department needs to be reviewed, strategies updated and eventually more funding made available

to recruit, expand and attract businesses. I am not convinced this arrangement is the best way to develop existing/expand present private enterprises and recruit new businesses.

- I wholly support economic development, especially the fostering of entrepreneurship and small business. While I selected not to fund the extra \$200K, I think the remaining contracted funds should be spent for maximum impact. I'd encourage a survey of local business owners, especially in the downtown business district to see what initiatives from the city would most encourage business growth. I'd also look to the Center for Entrepreneurship at UNL to gather data from both seasoned and amateur entrepreneurs about their business needs.
- I voted FOR this last year, and this year we could lay off. With the opening of the new arena, rely on the CofC and name acts to drive the economic development that will be naturally associated with a new draw in town.
- I support economic development initiatives that attract additional private sector funds -- though I do urge better oversight of some of the proposals. I'm still unhappy with the current arena development project, which I voted against.
- I don't see the point in this. The city has so many ordinances that stifle businesses it is ridiculous. The movie theater one is a prime example. Why spend the money when the city itself blocks progress.

What was the cost to remove peaceful protests in front of the capital? Now that is a HUGE waste of tax dollars and infringement on people's first amendment rights.

- I do not understand what this economic development funding does. I would like to see cost/benefit statistics for any programs funded by this money. However, if it were cut I do not think it would affect me.
- I believe you can spur economic development by reducing regulations and operating in a business friendly environment. The data is mixed as to whether this investment even truly pays off over time -- that it really makes a long-term difference in a company's decision-making process.
- I actually believe this is one area we could increase funding keeping in mind if we are successful in bringing events and business to Lincoln the dollars spent turn over 7 times and are beneficial to everyone in the City.
- Hate to admit it but govt and business need to work together to bring new business to the city.
- Fund this even more.

- Face it, no business in its right mind is going to locate in this hole. We can't even afford to run nice parks.

How is that 9 lane expansion to nowhere on Old Cheney going?

- Education, infrastructure and quality of life issues keep the economy moving and expanding. Subsidies are generally unfair and subject to political manipulation. X'em.
- Economic development will occur as long as govt is efficient, demographics fit the business's needs, and policies are fair.
- Economic Development when done correctly should help the citizens of the city. It should more than pay for itself. So, I think it should be funded.

However, the City has proven to be very corrupt with the economic dollars spent in recent years. They appear to favor unions over local businesses. Despite all of the construction going on in the city, most local contractors are suffering. This is because the city prefers out of state union contractors to local open shop contractors. It's a real shame. There is a tremendous amount of taxpayer dollars being used for political purposes.

For this reason, the City leaders are corrupt and need to be replaced with honest people.

- Economic Development is not accountable for the funds they use, there is no tangible gain for the investment made in inviting new business to town. Do the tax breaks etc. pay off when business relocate after a few years? Show the tax payer solid evidence the \$600K spent last year benefited the city /tax payers.
- Despite the description, I'm unsure what this program is exactly. An example of what a public-private venture looks like (or an historical example) would be helpful. Is there priority given to certain business sectors? For instance, is there priority given to environmentally sustainable businesses or businesses that bring in young, exciting, conscientious entrepreneurs or employees? Because I don't know these cases, I selected not to fund the program. If these types of considerations were part of the private-public funding, I might opt differently.
- Cut this to half
- Cut the money that's lining the pockets of some of those in this so-called "joint public-private partnership." You want to increase jobs? Cut taxes on small businesses that are the backbone of economic growth... then they can hire more people and be more productive.

- Business will provide economic stimulation if there is a demand. Government stimulation doesn't work.
- business can afford to take care of its self
- Are you kidding, we need to double the amount of money for this category, otherwise we shall slowly slide into mediocrity.

- The season is way too short as it is.
- The season is already a month too short. Kids need opportunities for positive recreation now more than ever. A penny of recreation now saves dollars in health costs later.
- The pools should be funded but fees should be increased so that the pools operate at least at a break even point overall. If this can't be done, then defund the pools. They are a luxury, not a day care service.
- The pools are nice, but they too are a luxury. One compromise might be to not open the pools on days when the temp is below ninety. People don't go to pools on cool days.
- The pool is not a babysitter. Isn't there a pool in the Devaney can't the swim team practice there? Or one of the tax funded schools?
- The LPS calendar starts before the 16th, therefore some of the reduced time would be accounted for by schooling. Parents concerned about leaving minors at home have many summer camp options to pursue, and all of these camps have scholarships available.
- The City does not manage the pools well at all. The City should not be in this business at all. If the City was not providing this service, then private enterprise would be able to do it well.
- That is the hottest time of the summer, and the last few weeks before school starts. Keep the pools open.
- Right, close them as the hottest time of the year arrives in Lincoln. Why not open them two weeks later. Look at the past four year weather history. This spring is an exception to the norm.
- Retain only those pools which are self-supporting. Do NOT use Tax dollars to fund public "baby sitting" while "many parents are at work".
- Reducing the swim season to August 1st is a practical approach and still provides services for the majority of the summer season.
- Questions on the summary above:

"The Parks and Recreation swim team program ends in late July. "

--What is the Parks and Recreation swim team program?

"Attendance information collected over a period of years indicates that daily attendance is less n August than in June. "

--How much is attendance lowered by during August?

- Public pools are part of what makes a city a good place to live. I've lived in cities with few or no city services...they are rather bleak and not the kind of place I would chose to raise my children.
- Pools should be open from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend, with limited hours after August 16.
- Pool season should go through Labor Day. Note; : I do not use them, but they add to the quality of life.
- Or you could spend some money and build pools that could be used year round
- Not only should this be funded, but why can't Lincoln figure out that the pool should be open everytime it is over 72 degrees. We close too early and open too late. Get over that stupid out of date mindset. Adults use pools too.
- Much like the Pioneers Park Nature Center, the five neighborhood pools do not recovery enough to justify the expense to the taxpayer. In the long run I would like to see information on potential cost savings associated with replacing neighborhood pools wth splash parks or the development of a private venture for aquatic entertainment. When we look at the region we don't have a water park to go to. Star City Shores is the closest we come. With the growth of the Haymarket area, could a private or joint ublic/private venture to build a water attraction be floated around city hall? When traveling to places like Pigeon Forge you find a combination of water parks, miniature golf, go-carts, etc. I know that part of the issue in Lincoln is the winter weathe. Instead of seemingly playing catch-up with Omaha,we ventured out and tried to create something to draw people from Omaha other than Husker football.
- LPS starts school on Aug. 14th so there is no need to keep pools open until the 16th. I think Aug. 1st is too early. A compromise would be Aug. 10th or 12th. It may save a few dollars.
- Kids need access to libraries and recreation within walking/biking distance.
- Kids love pools!! Let's keep them active. Also, it would be nice if the Highlands pool had a family night (rate) like Woods pool does.
- Keep's kids off the streets.
- It's important to provide children with healthy, positive opportunities that are in the community. The pool is a great way for them to do that. Also, the pools provide jobs for many people & other organizations such as the Red Cross use these pools.
- It was FREEZING in June last summer, so we didn't even go to the pools until July and August.
- It is pathetic that you would even consider this cut!

- Is there a way to recover more of the costs for the neighborhood pools by pool fees?
- In addition to concerns about the lack of alternatives for positive activities for children to engage in when pools are closed, I also have serious concerns about the health and safety implications of reducing pool access. Many people without air conditioning use public pools to stay cool in severe hot weather, and for the last two years the month of August has included several days above 100 degrees. People will be at increased risk of heat stroke if they have no pools and no air conditioning. Rather than cutting pool access, the city ought to discuss extending the pool season, especially if August weather continues to be so hot.
- If you take this away less middle and low class families will be able to access pools during the summer, creating yet another privilege for the rich and a dream for the poor.
- If you do decide to fund it, I would increase admission fees and shorten daily operation hours or open every other day.
- If you cut pool hours or the season short, you'll have more juvenile delinquents running around with nothing to do and parents at work.
- If a person likes to see it open more hrs then they should buy a permit to help pay for it
- If Lincoln Public Schools start earlier in the summer, the two or so weeks of pool closure won't hurt as much.
- I would ask that you look at not funding neighborhood pools. Take the worst performing one and close it or alternate open days. August is often the hottest month, it is also the month with detassling, those kids deserve a cool swim.
- I see more pools in back yards. Save the money.
- How about a third option? Close the pools one day a week the entire season but still keep it open the hottest month of the summer. How about increasing pool entrance fees by 30 or 50 cents?
- Do not close pools Aug.1. That is one of our hottest months. Give moms a break!
- Did Scrooge suggest this one be an option?
- Could swimming pools be open a little later...maybe to August 5, 6, 7? Not sure if that would save much money or not.
- consider the option of closing the neighborhood pools Aug 1 and the quadrant pools Aug 16
- Along with public libraries, one of the last things that should be cut. Not the first.

- All pools should be self supporting.
- Again, such cuts in services hit at the fabric of this community. We should continue to provide opportunities for exercise and fun in our community. With childhood obesity and very few opportunities for low moderate income kids, I am totally opposed to any cuts in the swimming hours.
- Again, not yer/no answer. Close pools one week before school starts but not Aug. 1. Kids need this recreation. Put a suchage fee on health clubs with pools who compete with the city.
- Again, is there not an option for the pools to close once a week to save costs? We swim ALL the time and would be okay with it closing once a week.
- Again due to the Tier structure another entity of Parks and Rec has hit bottom. Tier 2 & 3 items have already been cut. The voices of the public have let the city know pools are a priority. Closing the pools in August will greatly effect those who do nothave air conditioning w/ no place for respite from the heat.

Reorganize the Tier structure, it no longer services the people of Lincoln, if it ever did.

- A very low price tag for the community benefit. Those two weeks in August are hot and kids should have access to the pools.
- would be awesome if the pools could stay open longer for the season. there are MANY days that its very hot in town, and the kids could still swim. its just crazy that the pools are only open for a short time and theres plenty of days left in the season hen i, and others can swim.
- Why can't the neighborhood pools close the first of August, leaving the larger pools opened until school starts?

the United Way program to where they can receive donated funds to help offset the cost?

- This is a quality-of-life matter - we say that Lincoln has a high quality of life, so let's put the money out there to support our elders, as well as kids who need extra help that they're clearly not getting in school.
- This has to be worthwhile and socially beneficially valuable activity that we can certainly afford.
- There simply is no benefit to cutting these programs. It would hurt at-risk children and vulnerable elderly people. This is exactly the sort of thing we ought to be using public money to support.
- There are other non-profits that can take this program. Volunteer Partners for one.
- There are many community support agencies that provide these services in other capacities, if the city was to end funding of this program, other community agencies should be encouraged to pick up the program and apply for grant funding as available. This should be a private endeavor not a city funded program
- The city had better be thinking about the needs of older and disabled adults. That population is growing all the time. If this program isn't funded, the most vulnerable citizens would lose out. Incidentally, older and disabled folks need bus and library service. I would be willing to pay more property taxes to support bus service, libraries and the foster grandparent program.
- Priceless!
- Please continue to fund this program, with one stipulation. DO NOT continue the Foster Grandparent program in schools. I have worked in one of these schools and was not impressed. I know that one bad experience should not taint the entire program, however, for me it did. I would rather see the funding (100%) go toward Senior Companions - seniors assisting seniors!
- Pay me now or pay me later. Frail elderly will end up in nursing homes at great expense. At risk students may end up in the justice system at a huge cost to the community.
- Our 60K generates \$350K in outside money for these programs? This is a great investment for very good programs.
- No other options? No middle ground? Why not look at individual programs to cut?
- Make more use of volunteers to save money.,
- It is in everyone's best interest to keep elderly in their homes or we will be covering the cost of them being in a medical facility like a retirement home. It is

owrth the money for 186 adults. Much more would be spent if we had to pay for them to be in retirement homes.

- In our society some one has to do this, but in time the Federal government will do it for us.
- If this were a necessary service, private enterprise would do it, if the City did not get in their way. The City should get out of the way.
- If people can't choke up a paltry few more dollars a year in property taxes to fund worthy programs like this, then they ought not live in Lincoln. They should move to a big coastal city where people care only about themselves.
- If it comes down to making tax cut people happy we can cut this, but I'm willing to pay \$.60 a year for this.
- I've always wondered why people are paid for most of these positions. Wouldn't recruiting for volunteers make sense? To be paid to do this kind of work seems odd to me. How about accessing the college students who are studying to work with these populatons to set up internships/work studies (unpaid) or asking for volunteers? Have you contacted churches to see if there are people who might want to volunteer?
- I'm a firm believer in volunteer work. The Corporation for National Service has done a great job with these projects, but committed volunteers could continue these tasks even without a stipend. I would like to see private interests and other non-profit grups partner to provide and organization and training to the Aging Partners programs, as well as funding where necessary.
- I would urge the Mayor to find another program to cut. Assisting the elderly should be a priority and helping protect our youth from negative societal influences can only benefit all of us. Bringing together young and old is beneficial to all generatios.
- I would be in support of funding the senior companion program , but not the foster grandparent program. However, since there is no selection for this I will not fund it.
- I think this is a very important program. I have worked at an Elementary school for 18 years and out Foster Grandma is a vital part of our Kindergarten team. We would not know what to do without her.
- I believe to few are helped her and the wording of the third bullet point is factless with "Many of these volunteers need this money to meet their basic needs." How many need the money and are other jobs available. This does not change the need to help reak the poverty cycle nor does it change the need of some folks to have social interactions. Again I would ask that you take a hard look at this and find ways to impact this with community support.

- Foster Grandparent should be a parent responsibility. Government can't do everything and must make people be responsible--pull yourself up by your own bootstraps.

Cancel aging partners and put pressure on local health business to pick up the slack.

- Don't take funding from the poor or elderly. Welfare or other programs would just have to pick up the slack so where's the savings?
- As a Senior who is not involved in this Program --I think this is another Govt waste of time & money, needlessly _I am 62.yrs old
- Again, our community should provide opportunities for elders and for our young. This touches , again, on what is Lincoln all about and how we treat our members. Opportunities are scarce for our elders and nothing can be more important to a young person, senior or a person with a disability, then to have a Senior Companion. It is a program which really demonstrates how we care for those who need that support.
- again we have a moral obligation to take care of people in need, don't throw them away during the last years of their lives.
- a stipend of \$2.65/hour???
- A must for our quality of life in Lincoln.
- A great venture for the YMCA, Family Services, etc.
- \$60K to benefit more than 300 people seems worth it.

Workforce Investment: 37 comments



- Why would the city return this amount of money to Washington? That makes no sense. Those dollars are not only helping our local colleges, but more importantly they are helping laid off and low income individuals obtain new job skills so that they can go to work or back to work and be TAX PAYERS!

Why not reduce how much the city is funding this, but not completely cut the budget? By spending even a quarter or a third of what the city has been spending, the rest of the federal funding would still go to Lincoln.

I would urge you to look at what it costs us as a community to have workers who cannot work because they don't have the skills needed. They can support our economy by paying taxes when they are gainfully employed but are a draw on services for the poor when they cannot.

Consider allowing the WIA program staff to move out of the One Stop and quit having to pay for more than their share of the rent. They can operate the WIA program without having to run the One Stop. The state is currently trying to make all of their services at the One Stop virtual, so it makes sense for WIA to run their program solo.

- Where does the rest of the money go if they only get \$150k?????????????
- We don't need more homeless or destitute. So, yes, fund this!
- This program seems to be one that will pay for itself.
- This program helps people get to work and learn to take care of themselves.

- This is also an important service that should be funded. Under this scenario this option does not fit in the budget. A strong city govt with appropriate services should include those for all residents - even those without means.
- This is a tough call, because so many people are out of work. However, it is the government policies that are putting so many people out of work.

There are plenty of private companies that do a better job of finding jobs for people than any government agency.

- This is a no-brainer. Spend 150k and get \$1.5 million in Fed money or don't fund and give up the Fed \$. Again, a no-brainer.
- This is a no brainer. If we don't take the money , someone else will. More importantly, in these economic times, having a Center assist our community members in finding a job is something which at this time would seem foolish to discontinue.
- There are other options to help workers in Lincoln find a job.
- The state of nebraska has workforce development here, we dont need to duplicate.
- The continued economic well-being of Lincoln is dependent on a competent skilled workforce. This is an investment in the future that helps all residents.
- perhaps the business community should fund this item.
- Never heard of it and doesn't the unemployment office have the same in the Gold's building and when my son was looking for work, none of this was available unless he was an immigrant.
- Lincoln probably has one of the greatest amount of under-employment than any other city in Nebraska.. We need all the funding we can get to get people to work.
- It would not make fiscal sense to cut this program and lose the federal funds. These additional funds are an added benefit that most be considered.
- If we have to invest a little to secure what little funding DC does divert to "fly over states," then so be it.
- If this is funded by federal money what exactly are we paying for out of pocket?
- If the program is being used and producing resutts, it makes economic sense and should be maintained.
- If the money has to be returned if not used for this purpose, I would rather fund the program. However, if the money may be used elsewhere I would prefer other programs be funded in place of this program.

- I was under the impression the State provides this job service or is this duplication.
- I know it is in everyone's best interest to have the lower class employed, but at some point they have to pick up their boot straps and make it happen themselves.
- I feel many people use this service just to keep their unemployment going. LIBA / local businesses should help fund this, then yes the City can contribute.
- I am not too familiar with the workforce program
- I am looking for a job I have tried using this service but unfortunately -- employers only seem to care about my age, not my expertise.
- How many work force centers do we need offering the same jobs?
- Great opportunity for individuals to gain on the job work experience, increasing their ability for future employment.
- Give the funds to the state unemployment office to provide this service as they do not. Give some to Community Colleges to develop measurements for future workers.
- Eliminating a contribution of \$150,000 to make almost \$1.5 million available under local control for our community.....why is this even being considered as a spending cut? Do we really want Federal entities or the State of Nebraska to make descisions tht should be local?
- Cutting this program would hurt economic growth and result in the loss of substantial federal money. It just would not make any sense.
- Are we really considering closing a Center that's successful, and links employers with workers - in this economy?!
- Another must for our quality of life.
- Allow federal money to be given to the other programs in the State of Nebraska for them to administer.
- Again, something to be handled by the non-profit and for-profit sectors, not government.
- again we have internet that post's jobs daily.
- A strong and active workforce is the lifeblood of a vibrant city.
- A possible reason Lincoln has such a low unemployment percentage.

Comments from those completing the activity on one page with clickable boxes:

- You are showing programs that are either vital to the aging sector or a place for the younger generation to be. Lincoln doesn't have a great deal of activities, for a reasonable cost, for the teens outside of the school year. The aging sector also needs encouragement during the last season of their lives. Everybody wants reduced taxes but no one wants the programs to be cut. Those that want them cut have no connection/ties with that group. Responsible management of the budget in each department falls heavily on the appointed individual. Oversight of those individuals needs to be closely monitored.
- Why don't they charge a small fee for the Nature Center to help make up some of the costs? Even if it is only \$2 for adults and \$1 for kids? Or do a free will donation?
- We need to keep the pool in the air park open! It is a long drive into town to another pool and most filies can't afford it.
- These are all pretty important qualify of life issues. The workforce investment and economic development items are particularly important. Defunding those programs would qualify for my late Mother's proverb, "Don't cut off your nose to spite your own fae." But the other programs are also important. I would like to see pool hours expanded, and the season lengthened a bit on the week-ends after Labor Day if possible. I would also like to see library hours expanded if possible. The savings from not funing some of these programs, such as the foster grandparent program, are really miniscule in the grand scheme of the budget.
- There are many other options that can be easily cut from the budget but this Mayor and city council refuses to present them to the public.. The items listed above, which you bring out every year are so lame. My husband and I travel a great deal, and vsit other cities that didn't cut their budgets in recent years and now have almost no city services whatsoever, and are in horrible condidtion. Nebraska is lucky to have such low unemployment rates, but 3/4 are underemployed and most would be shocked atthe number of formerly comfortable families, who are now in line at the Food Bank. I volunteer at Clinic with a Heart, Center for People in Need and Matt Talbott. Tax our citizens, (and the wealthy) any more, and they will no longer be able to give enerously to ANY of the important causes in this city. Then when the bottom drops out, what will you do then Mr. Mayor? Our citizens enjoy many benefits of living here, but so were the citizenenes of many towns in Michigan, and now those cities and townssit totally empty. We need to buckle down and live with a tightened budget.
- There are many budget options not listed; the one's you do cite are hard for average citizens not to want continued. They have "face validity." However, continued use of the fire department to provide ambulance service, particularly where more personnel nd equipment is activated than a single ambulance should be on the table. The pay packages and work hours, retirement and medical benefits

for city workers should be detailed and compared. The significant expenditure of funds for property acquisition, maintenance of park like grounds behind condos across the city should also be examined. So far your "survey" has been an information "enlightenment" package than a real survey?

- The services to poor, low-income families repeatedly appear on these lists. These services should not be negotiable. Pioneers Park Nature Center is one of the greatest gems in our City, the staff and facilities allow for VITAL education to children, for fee. This is an important service for all families, but especially low-income groups. It is also a tourist attraction, which ultimately brings revenue to our City.

If our City was to invest in a better public transit system, many groups would benefit, and maybe we would not have to spend so much time replacing roads. The City must be a leader when it comes to public transportation. We need to invest money in helping StarTran update its role in Lincoln, and educate citizens on riding the bus. The City should look to revamp the routes so they are more convenient- run a bus on the main streets every 10 minutes- 10th, 17th, 27th, etc. & then up and down O St.-- then people will take the bus. At least try some new things as pilots. This is another service many low income families rely on.

- The non-injury accident item is bogus, the police department will not be reduced, this is creative accounting.
- The Nature Center is an important part of Lincoln life. I'd rather see admission charged than see it go away completely. Where would the employees go? Where would the animals go? You just spent a bunch of money to re-vamp the Chet Ager building, why would you want to close it now? The Nature Center offers important services for grade-schoolers and Scouts.
- The Mayor's Chief of Staff makes too much money.
- The Foster Grandparent program is very important to our school children. As an employee of LPS, I am very grateful to have the opportunity to work with many Foster Grandparents. If the program is cut, the children and the teachers would greatly miss these valuable volunteers.
- The Fire Stations should be built, Chief Cassidy has shown informed and bold leadership on this issue.

But, much of the funding for the infrastructure should come directly from savings through renegotiating salaries and pensions of the Fire Department staff.

Profession MORE dangerous (in order) than firefighting include: Fisherman, Logger, Farmer/Rancher, Construction Worker, Airplane Pilot, Roofer, Coal Miner, Merchant Mariner, Miner, Power Line Installer and Police Officer.

This reality should be presented to the citizens of Lincoln as well as the Fire Department staff, and negotiations should then commence.

The \$460K saved in Library funding should be invested on an annual basis in a "One Laptop Per Child" type program.

- The City could BEGIN the swimming season 7 to 15 days later, thereby saving money, but making the pool available during Lincoln's hottest season. Why close pools when it's beastly hot?

Could hours at the Pioneer Park Nature Center be cut back in order to save some of its budget?

- STOP BUILDING ATHLETIC ARENAS USED ONLY A FEW TIMES A YEAR, ALLOW THE MARKET TO PAY FOR GRANDIOSE DREAMS
- Regarding the swimming pool issue, I believe it is important to also take into consideration the return on investment to the city by the salaries paid to pool employees. There are many high school and college age youth who staff these pools, earn their only income for the year, and very likely spend that income in Lincoln. That, to me, represents a return on investment that should be accounted for with these smaller pools.
- Quit paying for so many consultant studies and then not using what they suggest.
- Please don't cut programs designed to help keep our community healthy--especially those that involve children. If you need to get "creative" (additional "perks" at the swimming pool for an additional charge, etc.), please do so--reach out to the community for ideas! After all--you were ELECTED TO SERVE YOUR CONSTITUENTS--take some time and MEET WITH THEM!!!! We are seeing more crime and violence in our city, and if there are programs to keep young adults "busy," studies have shown some of this can be prevented. Keep maintaining the parks and trails--PLEASE MOW THE PARKS!!! We live in a nice neighborhood near a BEAUTIFUL park (Densmore) that unfortunately is often so overgrown children do not want to play there.
- Personally, I feel City and County Offices that have more employees than needed should be cut. Many city offices have people not doing their jobs and really are not needed. Too many people employed does not make for better service! I see people in office standing around or having "coffee breaks" (extended) out in the field.

Question: Why are we spending money on having this survey when the money could be used for City Services??

Also, why not raise the sales tax or occupation tax so everyone has to pay more other than the homeowners. Adding the real estate taxes makes no sense, we are taxed to death. People are moving from Lincoln to lower taxed States. More people are moving into Lincoln for the "welfare" benefits. Crime is going up, security is going down. Raise a tax that everyone that buys groceries has to pay.

Also, fix the roads in Lincoln with our \$55.00 wheel taxes. Where in the world does that money go??

- Perhaps Star Tran could offer smaller, more fuel-efficient vehicles (vans?) and expand routes to enable all public school students to have access to transportation to school. Currently, we live too far South of Pine Lake for our student to reach a bus stop and have transportation to school. Perhaps cut daytime routes back except for "commuting hours"?
- Out of the 150K approximately 88K is refunded through One Stop Career Center partner rental. The net amount provided through City general funds is actually 74K.
- Once again a bogus survey. Choices are limited and poor. The perfect example is the handi bus and startran midday. The choice there is keep handibus and cut star tran but this simple option is not available. BOGUS!!!
- need a better balanced city council or at least more with some common sense
- My main suggestion is to increase the funding of public buses. Adding more routes and more frequent times would greatly increase the use of this service. Currently the hours the bus runs doesn't allow anyone working after 7pm to get a ride home, eliminatig anyone working a second shift job and most food and retail service workers. These are the people who are most likely to use public transportation as they tend to be younger and less well off. It is just like the issue with the cab companies, if they aren't convenient they will not be used. I have heard people from all walks of life say time and again that they wish they could take mass transit but they would be either an hour early or 5 minutes late. Try running bus service to 12am and you would increase number flow while reducing cars on the road (pollution, wear and tear). Run them till 3am or 24 hours and you decrease drunk driving and increase public safety, needing less officers to pull over drunk drivers. The initial loss would be compensated by the long term benefits. The current set-up doesn't give you an accurate popularity reading. Just my opinion.
- Most programs could be cut back except for anything for handicapped - Handi-van services - Foster Grandparents and Senior Companion programs - and swimming for summer, these should not be cut at all! Workforce could be cut back, the nature center could be cut back - neither one completely cut.
- Maybe cut back on some of the Parks and Recreation.
- Last year there were several good ideas to hold down spending but I don't think any of them were adopted. The breakout groups were loaded with city employees and sympathizers. I have tried to convince some of my friends to participate in this process but they all say that it is a farce and the mayor will just get what he wants anyway so they do not choose to waste their time. I hope that appropriate actions can be taken so that taxes are not increased again.

- It's time for our leaders to have the guts to say it's time to raise taxes and if I'm not reelected for saying that, so be it.
- It seems to me that the only people who should be answering these poll questions are people that are funding them and not those who pay no taxes, but continue to enjoy the benefits.
- It seems to me that the "private businesses always do things better" contingent could be appeased by offering the sale of ALL the city's public pools to see if a private business could operate them, either profitably or at least at break-even. This might e a place to see if the city retained ownership of the pools but bid pools management/operation to a private entity might be feasible.

I am now convinced by Director Casady that non-injury accident traffic reporting is probably a good item to jettison But, if say, an uninsured motorist runs a red light and broadsides another, will the police still be called and issue citations even if no one is injured? I can see this having ramifications for insurance reporting.

- is there any particular reason by the nature center keeps showing up on this cut list. Is it less used than other parks programs? Is it pricier?
- If we want to continue having services that benefit people, then we have to be willing to pay for them. I support a tax increase if it means the services continue.
- If we cant afford it than we need to cut services.
- If citizens want Lincoln to continue to be a progressive community, we must look at additional tax revenues.
- I've seen many reports about how we're trying to lower the crime rate among young kids, however by cutting library, Pioneers, or pool services I don't see how that is helping kids have something to do so they don't get bored and get into trouble. Also, cutting library services says to me that the city does not care about furthering the education of children or anybody, for that matter by providing a place where people can go to read or get materials. Many people also use libraries for the computers to do hmework or other things. If we cut these two, I think we'll just be spending money either on other child/teen services or child diversion programs. I see plenty of kids complain enough already about nothing to do for fun in Lincoln, especially over the winer and I also see those same kids end up in some kind of trouble or pregnant, etc. The senior programs would also be detrimental to our seniors in Nebraska, because those were made to help many people. 185 special needs or at-risk students will not receiv training or encouragement? Most of these budget cuts say to me that the city does not care about students, special needs, or seniors. I don't think that's what the city wants to be telling their citizens.

- I'm concerned about the continuing cuts of city programs that provide good quality of life to residents of all ages. Small increases in property taxes are certainly worth it to continue these programs, and to add new improvements as well.
- I would love to see evening hours restored to Pioneers Park Nature Center, particularly Friday, Saturday and Sunday. By limiting the hours, you limit the access to people and then attendance falls. It is a great resource to the community, but currently it is only accessible during the work day, when most families can't take advantage of it.
- I vote for eliminating or cutting most of these programs. Almost all are under utilized, and I am tired of the city raising my taxes. It's the same sad story every year. The City needs to live within the budget and the current tax dollars collected. The City needs to quit complaining and raising taxes all the time.

How come there are no choices for things people would really like to cut like Mayor's staff, cuts to the VERY generous benefits city staff get, and cuts to directors pay. Add those to the list of choices and the vast majority of people would vote to cut those, but I guess that is why they are not listed as choices.

- I think this whole survey process, while seemingly democratic, is scientifically flawed in terms of generating good outcomes. Further, by putting the same programs, such as the PPNC on the chopping block, year after year, you undermine the long-term viability of these organizations, as people who are interested in using their services (e.g. the Pioneers Park's Nature Preschool) begin to pull back because they are not sure if these services would be available in the coming year. So, consider the unintended consequences of this "feel good" survey. Talk to organizations like Gallup to figure out better ways to get the same kind of feedback in ways that are not destructive of the entities being put for vote on the survey with only very limited background information.
- I think the city should look at other ways to balance the budget than cutting services, such as: reducing retirement plan match further, cutting administrative staff and salaries.
- I think the City needs to look at soliciting donations from Lincoln citizens to contribute to the new fire dept bldg(s) and for new equipment. This should be extended to all City departments. Police, parks etc. Every dollar donated would be tax dollars saved, and tax increases avoided or even reduced. We need to start meeting new strategies to avoid tax increases with all the inflation that is starting up and the losses in the stock market
- I think that library hours should be increased, not decreased, and that staffing, which is very thin, should be increased. When library staff is sick, other staff often have to work in buildings alone and this is not safe or good public service, as one person cannot help all library visitors efficiently. Staffing has been decreased so

much over the past few years and, of course, if hours are decreased, staffing will be even further decreased.

- I suggest that we stop spending so much money on useless roundabouts that are not needed. The road construction is costing everyone time and money. There is not a single route that will take me to work without running into road construction. It is utterly ridiculous. The roundabouts were not needed or wanted by the citizens of this city. Perhaps you should have listened to those opinions and saved some money in that aspect.
- I suggest that they keep the Handi Van at its normal routes, but decrease the Star Tran bus during the non-peak hours.
- I resent giving businesses tax breaks to come here and tax incentives to stay so they are not contributing to the services in the city leaving the tax burden on the middle class.
- I recently bought a house, and after having paid property taxes for the first time in my life, I am baffled as to why people are always complaining about their property taxes as it was a very small amount of money. I would be perfectly happy to pay double the rate if it meant improved city services such as better funded libraries, more programs through parks and, rec, longer hours for swimming pools etc.
- I hate to suggest anything that would raise taxes, but my total ended up being slightly over \$1.3 million. Is it possible for some of these other options to be decreased without being completely cut, such as the funding for economic development? And although I would hate to see all the libraries closed one day a week, I would rather that happen than for Lincoln to lose the jewel that is Pioneers Park Nature Center. If the libraries did have to close one day a week, could the days be staggered, so that at least one branch would be open somewhere in Lincoln on any given day of the week? If the logistics of that are too complicated, then I would suggest just closing on Sundays as another city I lived in had to do. Also, is it possible for the Nature Center to raise the cost of their programs to help offset the cost of running it? Again, hate to suggest that, but I do not want to see it close.
- I FOR ONE DO NOT BELIEVE WE NEED TO FUND SO MUCH MONEY TO THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA. I THINK THEY SPEND TOO MUCH IN ADMINISTRATION SALARIES. WHY CAN'T WE JOIN PERLMAN AND THE PRESIDENT'S JOB AS ONE.

THE LPS ADMINISTRATION BUILDING A NEW FACILITY IS NOT NECESSARY. WE HAVE PLENTY OF OFFICE SPACE THAT COULD BE USED. THIS ADMINISTRATION IS SOMETHING I THINK SHOULD BE CUT BACK ON AND PUT THE MONEY INTO TEACHERS AND MORE CLASS ROOMS (CHILDREN ARE OUR FUTURE). THE

DAYS OF COMPUTERS SHOULD REQUIRE LESS PEOPLE IN THE ADMINISTRATION THESE DAYS. WHAT DO THEY DO? THAT THEY CAN'T DO IN A LESS EXPENSIVE FACILITY.

- I feel that the transit is vital for anyone who gets around. That do not drive, without that other programs that need for people to go to would not have the programs available within the city. People that don't drive rely on public transit to get around

I feel that a lot of accidents that if people are careless while driving they should be charged extra for an accident that they caused. They should not be allowed to drive if people have seizure disorders. Driving while talking on cellular phones SHOULD BE PROHIBITED AT ALL TIMES. If an accident is caused due to distraction with phone call, the driver should pay a stiff penalty.

How come it is that every year some of the citizens who ride the public transportation ALWAYS have to fight to be able to keep the bus service going? There are more people than you think that ride the bus. Just because some are empty at times doesn't mean nothing. The Vet's Hospital is always full, the "O" Street shuttle is always full. The other buses depends on work hours and school hours. Standing on an already crowded bus should be eliminated. It is considered a safety hazard. How about a bus that goes out to 56th and Pine Lake Road. Several doctors are out there and churches as well. Campbell's nursery is also out there as well as residential areas.

- I do not see the rationale to even consider cutting the funding to the Pioneers Park Nature Center. The park and center provide an immeasurable service to our community. It is used by both the citizens of Lincoln and the surrounding communities on a year-round basis. As I regularly visit the Nature Center I can attest to the volumes of people that are coming and utilizing the Center year round. I personally have had myself and my children enrolled in programs the Nature Center offers for the last 3 years. I have watched both the young and old enjoy the benefits of the Center. The staff, which I would consider minimal, puts their heart and soul into maintaining a wonderful and educational experience for the patrons, while providing an excellent level of maintaining and caring for the animals they are entrusted with. I will never be able to repay the Nature Center for the education and experiences with nature that my family has received and it greatly pains me that the city would consider denying these opportunities to countless other children and adults.
- I can't see why keeping the same level of service requires an increase in funding. My salary did not increase last year and I had to live within my means. Why can't the govt?
- I can't believe that Lincolnites would vote to cut programs that help citizens with disabilities, economic development, health and wellbeing of our seniors, and the

education of our youth to save a measly \$11 per year--just 3 cents per day--in property taxes on an average home.

Isn't the health of our citizens and our local economy worth 3 cents per day? Lincoln City Council, listen up: Fund the programs we need--not just the programs we need in order to survive, but the programs we need in order to LIE!

- I believe that cutting hours out of a program and perhaps staffing some duties with volunteer help should also be considered. There has to be many off hours that could be effectively cut as opposed to completely eliminating a day or a service completely. Also you could enhance the program by installing or increasing user revenues.
- I believe that an \$11 increase on an average priced home is an appropriate increase to keep and support these programs.
- I am reducing 460K and adding 1740K. This would be 1260K added.
- Fund everything!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
- Eliminating StarTran services would drastically affect both the handicapped and low income patrons, as well as student use. As someone who has used both regular bus service and the Handi-Van I am ashamed of how drastically reduced the service area already is. I remember once upon a time Startran serviced the entire city and I was proud of its reach and accessibility. Limiting Handi-Van service time would further stress the system and riders who rely on it to get to appointments, medical and otherwise. Already patrons can wait for 30 minutes or more to try to schedule rides, hoping that the time they need a ride will be available. Otherwise they have to either cancel and reschedule appointments or wait long periods of time before and/or after they are read.

Senior center services and locations have already been minimized. Our elderly are important and need to be treated well.

- Don't see anything about cutting the mayor's staff or their pay.
- Cut worker salaries/wages or at least lower wages for new hires. The city seems to pay workers way higher than average.
- Consider Keeping the pools open through August until the normal closing date, but don't open them so early. It is often still too cold for swimming when the pools open.
- Confidence in government needs to be broken down between politicians and workforce. There is a difference in confidence between the two in my opinion.
- Closing the swimming pools is a further blow to the great parks system that is already reeling from past cuts. We risk gutting a major benefit to living in this city.

- All of these options are public service options that I care about. But when faced with the decision I would side with public safety. I want to know that when I need police and fire protection they are funded. These areas are not important to most until they pick up the phone in need. Well rounded public safety if managed correctly requires large up front funding that in the long run is worth it.

Comments from those completing the activity on one page with a PDF download:

- You should have had park maintenance on the survey. Once you have a park, you need to take care of the grounds!
- You have to spend money on what you have now -- residents, i.e. protect their property, provide community resources such as the libraries, and help with assistive services such as senior programs and pools. The bus system just gave grant money away that it did not need, more grants are easily obtained, and fares can increase slightly -- this is an essential program but it should be more self-sustaining if managed better. Economic development is way out-of-line in Lincoln. State economic development is available and LIBA and the Chamber should fund this.
- You have benefits to city employees that are way beyond what the average tax payer receives. Deal with this first. My company did away with its defined benefit plan and pays 50% 401(k) match up to 6% of my salary. I have to fund city employees who get a 200% match.

You're a democrat, does that sound "fair" to you?

- You absolutely must fund the Pioneers Park Nature Center.
- Yes to midday bus cuts - no cuts to handi-van services if there is a need. Not sure what is meant by swimming pool season cuts. Workforce investment amount seems VERY high. Foster grandparent and senior companion programs are important. But can this need be turned over to local area churches or schools and employ volunteers instead?
- Would the \$200K for economic development actually stimulate economic development and job growth? If it really does, it probably shouldn't be cut...but if it is just a nice bonus for a couple local business groups or organizations, it can be cut.
I've heard that the Omaha workforce investment office isn't very helpful - has anyone looked into the quality of services provided there? (based on actual experiences of real people, not statistics and studies that say 'this is the best resource center ever') If it isn't helping, let the money go. If people are relying on it, the city should do its part to keep the services (and federal funding) in town.

I saw the FAQ section, but I still wonder:

Could the Handi-Van services be cut back, while keeping the midday StarTran bus service? Neither should be eliminated.

Can the funding to Pioneers Park Nature Center be reduced? Cut hours one day a week, possibly?

- Would suggest to lessen the hours available for handi=van and midday Star Tran bus service rather than cut completely.
- While recognizing this is a simulation, there are obvious solutions to some of these questions that are not options here. The most obvious is the Nature Center. If it's true that 250,000 people visit there each year and it costs \$510K - then charging an nominal \$2 fee would recover most of the cost and I believe most people would be willing to pay that. I think it should stay open, but by charging people to go, not by use of tax dollars.

I believe you have cut back on the pools enough. The 1-6 hours at the neighborhood pools means that families can't come swim together after parents get off work.

I believe these services are important and would be willing to pay more for them.

- We need to maintain wholesome places for our youth to visit during the summer. We pay high insurance premiums so the companies can make the decision on who was at fault, etc. Citizens need to be more responsible about taking pictures, mapping out the scene and taking names of witnesses. I think foster grandparents and companion programs should function like Teammates. I'm sure they would not have any trouble raising the funds and getting church and senior groups to provide manpower.
- We need to have bus service and Handi-vans for people to get to their interests and not just when the city wants to provide the service. The pools are important too and foster grandparent!!! All the services are important and the city needs to come up with the funds to provide the services, not cut!
- We need to face the reality that this city is growing. Cutting taxes and services IS NOT going to make Lincoln a better place to live. It is because of things like the libraries, swimming pools and the social services that the city provides that makes it a great city.
- We Live in a beautiful City. In order to keep it this way, we need to have our services, You get what You pay for, I would rather pay more in taxes than have a city that is faltering, The idea that You will never need an increase in taxes, is just not practice. I do think that Property Taxes should not carry the Brunt of it all. I

would be for a small increase in Sales Tax, as this spreads it to all who use the Roads, Parks, ect...

- We definitely need to get rid of the police investigating non injury accidents. They are doing the job the insurance company should be doing. It is a complete waste of time for them to respond to those type of calls.
- these yes and no question are really black or white, Think you could of had more options
- These are all very important programs to maintain the quality of life in Lincoln. These mostly help low income people
- The swimming season is so short anyway, please don't close the pools early, we enjoy the family time we get at the pool. We also enjoy going to the library to borrow books as they are so expensive to buy. It is hard enough to get there during the week wen I work till 5 and they close so early. When I was a student I used to spend time at the library doing homework aned I am sad my kids may not be able to do this when they are in high school. We enjoy pioneers park and many kids would not know how to trat nature if it were to close. We enjoy our family walks out there and the schools out programs.
- The quality of life in Lincoln is high because of programs such as these. It is important to maintain existing services wherever possible rather than dismissing them as "low priority." Do not allow narrow minded individuals to bully budget workers into cuting services that will help low-income, disabled, and young citizens of Lincoln.
- The Nature Center is so important for the growth of a child, both educationally and pure enjoyment. Cutting the Handi-Van services would be unfair to those who are unable to drive due to physical limitations, and that could result in losing a job, not beig able to go to their various dr. appts., or even just grocery shopping. However, I do feel some bus services could be cut. perhaps all it would take is cutting the hours of operation. I do not feel you should cut routes. Too many people have either no ca or unreliable cars and need to go to work. A non-injury accident report is incredibly important when a person files with the insurance for the damages. It won't be a he said she said issue, it would be a police said report, and it will also get the infomation on witnesses. The Foster Grandparent issue shouldn't even be an issue. Too often the elderly are the ones on the chopping blocks, and they are usually the ones that need the most attention when it comes to plain old companionship. We need more workorce investment, but funding for the economic development is a little too pricey, with no real return. Pools could be closed the week before school opens, but not as early as Aug. 1st. It would mean the pool workers would lose their jobs earlier than necessary, and you are trying to create jobs. I realize pool jobs are temporary, but when someone counts on a full summer paycheck, who are we to deny that? With schools starting so early now, keeping them open past Aug. 1st really isn't all that more costly.

- The Handi-Van Services and midday StarTran bus Services should be separated. I would support continuation of the Handi-Van service, but would cut back the use of the StarTran lines during midday hours.
- The city should use americorp /vista to assist with pioneers park. Use a larger volunteer program to help with under funded areas
- The city of Lincoln has been growing, cutting back services such as bus and handivan services would make LIncoln look less desirable to new commers. We need to keep those services and the library systems. What would Lincoln do if we cut the pool services Would there be more problems because there are more kids getting into trouble? Parents have to pick and choose between programs and the pool is cheaper than some of the other activities in Lincoln, especially any program that requires travel to get to te program location.
- Stop spending so much money on the stupid Antelope project. Bums don't need a nice place to sleep. The majority of the Lincoln population does not live in that area, nor do they frequent that area.
- Start working for the citizens of Lincoln instead of for the large business community and economic development. The citizens are the ones who are providing the funds and were are entitled to some services such as library and swimming pools, as well as prviding transportation through StarTran for those citizens who do not have a car.
- Sr services, including transportation, are vital as Boomer's age. Lincoln's population is growing and these services are necessary.
- Spend money on areas that are investments for the future and that could or should create new jobs and growth, and cut spending on items that are more expense related, even though there will always be those who want them.
- Seems like the only way the city of lincoln knows how to raise money is to tax the hell out of the property owners! why don't you just raise the sales tax 1 percent so every one can help pay instead of just property owners. LPS is the biggest money munchr we have.
- Please stop spending so much of our money on new roads. These should be developer costs. Impact Fees for new growth areas are not high enough. Exempt Impact Fees for redevelopment where we already have infrastructure in place. We need more money spenton rehab of existing roads, sidewalks, and trails. We need to be smarter with our money; we get more return with smart growth.
- Please separate out the Handi Van Services and the Mid Day services and those are 2 different programs within transportation
- Please leave the libraries alone! Every year we must defend these vital resources. They are especially important educational tools for children. Also, in this

economy people rely on their libraries for books, cds, dvds, and computers that they could no otherwise afford. Pioneers Park Nature Center is also a useful educational tool and provides a great service to families. With rising gas prices, many in Lincoln rely on the bus to get to work, stores, and doctors. A city this size needs public transprtation.

- Please emphasize places where our investment in public spending either brings money INTO our community (Workforce Investment 10:1 federal match)

and/or give detail on how cutback in public spending may increase cost to the citizens who lost that servie/data.

Example - what has been the experience in other communities with longer than 4-minute response times- \$+lives lost due to 'delayed' response,

example - no police accident investigation - do auto insurance rates rise due to need to litigate fult more often?

example - loss of Star Tran service mid-day would mean my learning disabled child would need taxi service to get to and from college. Either that OR she has to drop out of school.

- Please cut library hours on Sundays. The full day on Sunday is such a waste of city resources as the library is never busy, especially right when they open and after about 5. The only people who are in the building after 5 are the staff members and a fe people on the computers, who would be there at 4 in the morning if you let them.
- Pioneers Park Nature Center attracts people, including many youth groups from across the state who stop and spend money in Lincoln. It is a unique place that should be fully funded. Many people from outside of Lincoln visit this park and stop to eat andshop in addition to visiting this park. This park was mentioned in a popular magazine last year because of its many attractions for the public. This park brings in money from across the state and should be full funded.
- More fund raising needs to be done for the Nature Center plus grants, I don't see how 330k is needed. But close it? That's extreme. The city can lower this amount. There are many, many foundations available to help fund this center. I also believe tht the Companion Program can benefit from some of these foundation grants too. This is why I say "No" to both- I'm not given an option to reduce the amount. There is someone in my household that is currently using a workforce program. I'm not sure how i helps someone who WANTS a job and is ABLE to perform a job when the program he's using pays for 6 months of his pay and then the company can let him go. Sounds like free employees to me. I don't want to go into specifics, but neither the city not state ant to hire him either. All they have done for him is help him with his resume.

- LPD should use available resources to fight crime and not to stalk high school and college kids. It does not take 5 officers to respond to 5 teenagers hanging out at someone's house. For example, they should monitor apartments like the one at 17th and L.
- Libraries have improved culture and society for thousands of years...we must continue to provide consistent daily hours to the patrons of the libraries. The library system in Lincoln is an important part of a healthy city.
- It would be nice to know if you can attribute retention or attraction of new business to Lincoln with the economic development plan. There is not enough information here to really make a decision.
Also, by cutting Library hours, are we saving money by cutting employment hours? Does that in turn affect the economy?
I don't want to see the Nature Center close but it would be nice if support came from other funds. Even a minimal charge to visit would be acceptable.
- Investing in "economic development," and community redevelopment programs is ridiculous if there are no services for the workers you're trying to entice or displace.
- In regards to the swimming pool season, why not close the pools for the summer after Labor Day? I know students are in class a couple weeks before Labor Day, but it's still hot and kids need to do something after school or on the weekends. Why not cut back on hours at the pool once school starts? Open the pools from 4pm to 8pm.
- In general, I would pay the extra \$11 a year on my taxes to ensure all of these are funded. I think it is unfortunate that citizens aren't educated enough about taxes and services to agree. Perhaps the mayor and city council can educate us?
- If you need more money, why don't you start enforcing a few of the laws you have now???? For example, people who ride with boom boxes at full volume, people who park on the wrong side of the street, people who block drive ways, people who drive through intersections in residential neighborhoods at fifty miles an hour, people who let their animals wander through the neighborhood, and if you insist on having those ice cream trucks flying through the city, take them off the streets, put them in places where they can generate income and tax them. Lastly, pizza and food delivery trucks, stop them, slow them down, fine them, they are a danger, one lady was killed. Try hanging out at the intersection of 28th and Garfield.
- If economic development is a goal, why are you cutting workforce investment and economic development?
- I've said "no" to Workforce investment primarily because I have no idea what it is intended to accomplish.

- I'm not sure that an investment of nearly 1.5 million dollars for 12,000 jobs is worth the expense (workforce investment). Also think the Pioneer's Park nature center could be more cost effective through sales of native plants, sales of elk antlers. I love the return of summer concerts at Pioneer's Park!

Swimming pools: Lincoln could actually use a couple more. The Uni Place pool is so over crowded we won't swim there.

Library hours: I depend upon Lincoln's public libraries for continued learning, hobby info, etc. I can adjust my usage schedule if the library is closed a half day.

- I'm fine with the increase in property taxes, I would rather pay the extra \$11 a year than lose these valuable services.
- I would be more likely to fund economic development/job retention programs if I was confident that smaller, locally based businesses are getting a lion's share of the funds. My sense is that large companies based elsewhere do little for the local economy and create lower quality jobs.
- I work in a non-profit organization. Our retirement plan was reduced from 7% to 5% and in our health insurance staff need to pick up an additional 10% of the cost and the insurance went up an additional 4.9%. I realize staff- employees are the biggest cost. Like all corporations faced with budget concerns tough choices must be made, please make some instead of passing this onto tax payers.
- I use the libraries and Pioneer's Park Nature Center regularly, and they are two amenities that make me love living in Lincoln. My family has used the pools and they are fantastic. What would all those kids and families who go regularly do without it? It is money well spent to give kids a positive place to go in the summer, promote physical activity and semi-supervised socializing. Crime may go up if we close the pools early. Senior programs are critical for the well being of our older population. Workforce investment is critical in these economic times. It is money well spent, a good investment. We must continue to fund economic development for those same reasons. Bus service is so important to the people who use it. I grew up relying on buses and know how important they are to their riders. Traffic accident reporting of all kinds seems important so problem areas can be tracked and issues can be addressed based on empirical data. I am absolutely willing to pay more in property taxes for all of these services
- I thought that LPD already didn't respond to non-injury accidents. That was my experience once during a snowstorm.
- I think you need to balance the funding versus number of users. Can we do something for the benefit of many rather than spending money on a few.

- I think you could cut back on the nature center, swimming pool and senior companion programs a day a week and save money but I don't want the programs cut completely.
- I think the pools should be open later than the start of school, at least weekends. August is the hottest month of the year and closing the pools in early to mid August seems silly.
- I prefer compromising. Raising taxes a bit, cutting where services times are not utilized well so overall services are still available. Do some creative thinking and see if some of the services can't be changed or combined in better ways. This doesn't mean spend money for people outside the area to tell us how to do things. I think we should be able to come up with ideas and ways to do things ourselves. We definitely have the knowledge and the people -- use them.
- I just can't get something. Every year Lincoln grows in population I just don't understand why we go through this every year. I can understand if Lincoln was losing population year after year but that is not the case. Where I live there are 4 bus stops in four blocks just from that alone I can tell you that that should not happen. As I lived in Germany for four years and have seen first hand how a good bus system operates. Also please tell me why on O street or any other street there is not a bus lane at bus stops. Can't tell you how many times I have to slam on my breaks to not rear end a bus.
- I have noticed that in the midday, there are not a lot of people if any on the big busses. At that time of day why not use some of the smaller busses/van until the busier time of the day on all of the routes. This would probably take someone to check how many riders are on the busses.
- I have no problem paying the extra \$11.
- I feel the swimming pools are a great benefit to families and youth. They are a safe and fun neighborhood place for youth and families to have fun and for youth to stay off the streets and out of crime related activities. We always hear that Lincoln is a great place to raise a family and neighborhood pools support this statement. The parks in this town already look terrible from lack of mowing which limits the use of them by the public so let's not have our neighborhood follow in their lead. My out of town guests made fun of our parks last year when they visited....a bit embarrassing for a Lincolnite to explain our city spends more money on arena building and rich neighborhoods getting new streets than our parks!
- I feel that the Handi-Van services are vitally important for our neighbors who live with mobility access issues due to their disability status. Not everyone is able bodied in Lincoln and some of our family, friends and neighbors would likely not get around Lincoln if the Handi van services or the Star Tran bus service were to be cut. People utilize what we already have for almost every single function

people with cars who can drive take for granted. Like commuting to work, school, day care services, meeting up with their health care provider or physician and shopping for groceries or clothes.

- I feel that all of these programs are beneficial to the community. A small increase in the property taxes will go a long way. People need these programs. I do not figure out how politicians can say they are going to lower tax rates and promise all of these programs. They have to be paid for somehow. That is so stupid. Get real and tell the people like it is. We can't lower taxes. Maybe politicians should promise just not to raise taxes. Everything is getting more and more expensive.
- I don't believe that the city has the knowledge of how to stimulate the economy of Lincoln. This type of stimulation tends to favor the needs of politicians rather than the needs of the local economy. If businesses can't exist in our town without government assistance then they won't have the customer support to exist far into the future.
- I do not like YOUR choices. As my uncle once told me, "Everybody should have to run a business and this would be a better world to live in!" The methods of cutting spending that you use are not proper and do not address the real problems. Take out the police, fire department, libraries, etc. is what we hear (fear factor tactics) What about taking out the three or more guys leaning on a shovel watching one guy work or similar situations in other areas. If nothing else send work crews out with one shovel so they have an excuse for standing around at least we will save the money on those that are used as leaning post! Re-negotiate union contracts! Use Common Sense!
- I believe strongly that we need to continue to be willing to pay taxes to support the things about Lincoln we like and for which (partly) we continue to live here. I reject politicians' attempts to garner votes by promising to lower taxes - which, of course, they seldom really do; if they do, we suffer losses of important/necessary services and quality-of-life benefits.
- I am willing to pay more taxes for these services. Each area is important to someone in the community and the actual cost to the taxpayer is very manageable. If the taxpayer misses the \$4.40 each year needed to fund these programs, they are mis-managing their finances.
- I am fine with paying more taxes. If I expect the city to provide services, I expect to have to pay for them. Most people get a cost of living increase in their salary because... well, the cost of things goes up. To expect the city to provide the same services for the same (or less) money is irrational.
- I am disappointed that the Air Park fire station is under consideration yet again to be closed/relocated. Their service and quick response time for our area is very important and the thought of having to wait for help from a station that is further away were seconds could mean lives is ridiculous.

- How about instead of cutting library hours, you reduce management and personnel. The branches I use, there will be 3 or 4 people sitting behind a desk the whole time I am there. They never move. If there is this much paper associated with running a library branch, you need to streamline operations and stop paying people to sit. In private business, this is called increasing productivity. How about instead of raising prices (taxes) or cutting service, you increase efficiencies in the the library system?
- Good bus service is essential so that seniors, the disabled, those who can't afford a car or master driving can go about their everyday business of work, doctors appointments, shopping, and leisure trips. In fact, service should be expanded to include Sudays and evenings every day of the week. Also, a grid system would work better for Lincoln. For example, if you want to go from extreme Northeast to extreme Southeast Lincoln it would nearly 1 1/2 hours BUT with a grid system you would just head straight South and probably make it in 35-45 minutes or less. Our bus system is messed up as our streets are already laid out in a grid so why not take advantage of it and serve the public better as well?
- Fund services for citizens, not additional handouts for businesses.
- From the document provided, I couldn't understand well enough what the funding for economic development entails, where the money actually goes, who benefits most from it, and how effective this funding has been in the past in achieving specifically define goals in terms of job creation or business retention. I wonder whether there's a more affordable way to provide rides for the riders who would be displaced by reducing the Handi-Van services. Could some Senior Companions or other volunteers help with tht?
- For the Pioneers Park Nature Center, charge admiiision to cover the cost. For swimming pools, raise the admission to cover the cost.
- For less than \$1 a month on a \$150,000 home, we cut these valuable programs. I find it hard to believe that Lincolnites would sacrifice some of the things that make this a wonderful city in order to keep some spare change in their pocket.
- Economic development is fine, but I would like to see the business' that benefit be more willing to contribute. Ex. when we spend som much to revitalize the downtown, we should be requiring property owners and business' to be more willing to help fund tose types of programs. the rest of us fund those programs by participating in down town events, parking, eating, etc,.
- Cutting the Pioneers Park Nature Center would be a travesty and huge loss to our community.
- Although the Pioneer's Park Nature Center seems like an expensive investment, it is truly an incredible resource to our community and the surrounding area. I have

taken new immigrants to the area and they are amazed by the open space of the park "Looks like home...." and intrigued by the information provided at the Nature Center by the capable staff. Countless school groups have connected with nature in ways they would have missed, if it were not for the Nature Center.

As a long-time teacher in a low-income area school, I saw the wonderful benefits of the Foster Grandparent program for both children and seniors. The volunteer hours provided to students can be life-changing.

Maybe the economic development budget could be tweaked a bit, and perhaps to charge for pools could increase to help cover the season's cost?

It seems very unfair to limit access to transportation for those who need it most. We should all be riding the bus more, but it's hard to use the system if the hours are erratic.

- Along the Pioneers Park situation is always a maintenance problem. The city does a poor job in maintaining trees and mowing the city property. I.E. Walk path that run from Holmes Lake going South to 84 th Street.
- Property taxes are soooooo high now... have the people vote on the city sales tax! then EVERYONE pays...
NOT JUST THE HOMEOWNER. Have you looked at how low some states property taxes are???
the Homeowners in Lincoln are taxed enough. Real Estate taxes are terrible...and they always go up
whenever this city wants to do anything, the homeowner is the one who pays for it.

Appendix C

Comments from Community Conversation



COMMENTS FROM THE COMMUNITY CONVERSATION

- Please consider keeping programs that impact quality of life. Also programs that are positive for youth and will benefit us all long term. Libraries, pools (exercise and good fun and swim safety), mentoring.
- Thank you for putting this together. We need both sides to attend these programs. Appeared to have 95% liberals attend.
- Needed to have a more multi-cultural group on age and race. Kind of old and white.
- Make the handout available before this group meeting online or available elsewhere.
- Thank you!
- Please continue this program. It is my hope that the city will listen to our opinions.
- *Still too few choices. * too many social thinking people in my group. They were very stiff in their views
- Thank you!
- This was a good event. Thanks for organizing this. Please consider the economic trade offs of any future tax rate hike.
- I feel this was a day well spent.
- Most of the proposed cuts are highly regressive by affecting low income groups the most. Honestly, fire coverage for most of the city is good. In the outlying, wealthier south and east parts of the city, they should be willing and better able to pay their property taxes to cover the costs of fire relocation/expansion. I would like more info/data on benefits, ROI, etc. of the economic development program made available on city website.
- Put LB357 to work for citizens of Lincoln. Get it on the ballot for next election. Raise sales tax by 1/2 for local use. Very disappointed that moderator(s) for our group DID NOT understand that members of our group DID NOT understand what we were voting on and did not get it or did not want to get it when brought to their attention. Moderator good at getting ?s answered and asking clarifying ?s but at times too opinionated. I believe city government can and should be more creative/willing to generate \$ by charging fees (ability to pay scale used) and look at new ways to do that...users of interest help subsidize cost of interest. i.e.: 1) charge for accident reports. Require change in laws/statutes/ordinances to allow \$250/accident report (to cover cost of investigation together information to generate report). 2) Change for Handi Van Transport outside Federally required area. i.e.: \$25/ride or \$12.50/one way trip. 3) Increase bus passes. ex: Denver

\$85/mo. Look at advertisement program (could pay for self). Increase service so every 15-20 minutes can get bus. Develop long term plan to utilize implement transportation hubs. Recommend all mayor's office and department heads to read "Ask and It Is Given: by Jerry & Esther Hicks. We need to start operating from glass 1/2 full mentality, PLEASE.

- I feel the results were fixed. We did not have accurate information compared to the speech and handouts.
- Needed more in depth info. Some items would have helped with decision making. Enjoyed the process and hope to do it again. Sylvia Kessel was wonderful as moderator.
- Too many questions.
- I thought the process was/is pretty good. I would like to see more input from citizens general reallocation of funding, not just programs chosen by city to possibly cut. One of our facilitators was ill prepared, loud, kept interpreting things/directions in ways that were confusing. Thank-you for inviting me.

Appendix D

Knowledge Questions

*Note: highlighted choices are correct answers

Fire Station Q1. If Lincoln were to build the new fire stations according to the plan described in this survey, how much equipment and personnel would be needed to equip and staff the new stations?

- None. The new stations would be entirely staffed and equipped by moving fire fighters and trucks from other stations to the new stations. (Correct)
- Approximately 5-10 new fire fighters and two new fire trucks.
- Approximately 20-30 new fire fighters and six new fire trucks.
- Each fire station would need a full new staff and all new equipment, because all current equipment and fire fighting staff are needed for old existing stations.

Fire Station Q2. Currently, how many Lincoln addresses are outside of the range of the 4-minute recommended distance from a fire station?

- Fewer than 1,000
- Between 1,000 and 2,000
- Between 4,000 and 5,000
- Between 8,000 and 10,000 (Correct)
- Between 15,000 and 20,000
- More than 20,000

Library Q1. Which of the following Lincoln City libraries, if any, would be affected if the cuts proposed in this survey were made to library services? (Check all that would be affected, as mentioned in the budgeting exercise.)

(All are Correct)

- Anderson
- Arnold Heights
- Bennett Martin
- Bethany
- Eiseley
- South
- Gere
- Walt
- Williams

Library Q2. Currently, how many of Lincoln's Libraries are open seven days per week?

- None of them
- One or two??
- Three or four??
- Five or six (Correct)
- Seven or eight
- All of them

Handi-van Q. Federal law requires public transportation for the disabled to cover the same territory within ¼ miles of the regular bus service. Currently, what percentage of the territory covered by the StarTran bus routes does Lincoln's Handi-Van service for people with disabilities cover?

- About 70-80%, Lincoln is severely out of compliance with federal law
- About 80-90%, Lincoln currently is not meeting this federal mandate
- about 90-95%, Lincoln almost but not quite meets this federal mandate
- 100%, Lincoln is in compliance with federal law
- More than 100%, Lincoln meets and exceeds federal requirements (Correct)

Startran Q. At what time of day are StarTran services used the least?

- Between 6-8 a.m..
- Between 8-10 a.m.
- Between 10 a.m. and 12 noon (Correct)
- Between 12 noon and 2 p.m.
- Between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m.
- Between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m.
- Between 6 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Pioneer Park Q1. Approximately how many visitors are there to the Pioneers Park Nature Center each year?

- Less than 100,000
- 100,000 to 200,000
- 200,000 to 300,000 (Correct)
- 300,000 to 400,000
- More than 400,000

Pioneer Park Q2. About how much of its total operating costs is the Pioneers Park Nature Center able to recover from revenue generated from class and program fees?

- Zero (0%) because Nature Center programs are free.
- About one-quarter (25%). (Correct)
- About half (50%).
- About three-quarters (75%).
- Almost all (100%).

Non-injury Accident Q1. Which of the following is one of the consequences if police officers stop investigating non-injury vehicle accidents?

- Drivers would have to rely on their insurance companies to determine cause and contributing factors, and for claims adjustment. (Correct)
- If drivers called to report the accident, police officers would complete the Investigators Motor Vehicle Accident Report over the phone instead of in person.
- Police officers would only come to the scene of accidents if someone was injured.
- If one person in the accident had no insurance, no driver's license, or was drinking under the influence, no traffic ticket could be issued.
- All of the above

Non-injury Accident Q2. How much time does it take for police officers to investigate and complete non-injury accident reports each year?

- About the same amount of time as a half-time police officer spends on the job in a year
- About the same amount of time as one full-time employed police officer spends on the job
- About the same as 2 to 3 full-time police officers (Correct)
- About the same as 3 to 4 full-time police officers
- About the same amount of time as 5 full-time police officers

Economic Development Q. Which of the following is TRUE about the funding Lincoln provides for economic development? (Check all that apply.)

- Its purpose is to encourage economic development and job growth. (Correct)
- It has supported job creation and business retention projects. (Correct)
- It supports a partnership between the City of Lincoln and the private sector. (Correct)
- None of the above.

Swimming Pool Q1. Which swimming pools in Lincoln, if any, would be affected if the cuts proposed in this survey were made to swimming pools? (Check all that apply.)

(All are Correct)

- Airpark
- Ballard
- Belmont
- Eden
- Highlands
- Irvingdale
- Star City Shores
- University Place
- Woods

Swimming Pool Q2. In 2011, how much of the cost of Lincoln swimming pool operation was recovered by pool fees?

- The quadrant pools recovered more than 90% of their costs, and the neighborhood pools recovered about 50% of their costs. (Correct)
- The quadrant pools recovered less than 50% of their costs, and the neighborhood pools recovered about 90% of their costs.
- Both the quadrant pools and the neighborhood pools recovered about 50% of their costs.
- Both the quadrant pools and the neighborhood pools recovered more than 90% of their costs.

Senior Companion Q. What is the main function of the Senior Companion Program?

- To provide assistance that helps other older residents remain independent in their own homes. (Correct)
- To help students stay out of trouble.
- To provide companionship to animals at rescue shelters.
- None of the above.

Foster Grandparent Q. What is the main function of the Foster Grandparents Program?

- To provide assistance that helps other older residents remain independent in their own homes.
- To help students with literacy in their schools. (Correct)
- To provide companionship to animals at rescue shelters.
- None of the above.

Workforce Q. What is the purpose of the money the City currently uses for workforce investment?

- To operate a center that disperses almost \$1.5 million of federal money for job training and job finding
- To supplement inadequate amounts of federal money used to help residents train for and find jobs
- To help entities across Nebraska and Iowa improve their workforces and economies
- All of the above



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