



The 2014 Concord Citizen Survey was conducted from early October through late November 2014 by Research and Training Specialists. With over 2,000 daily visitors to the City's website it was decided to use a web-based survey as the primary source of respondents and to complement that by providing multiple opportunities to complete the survey using printed versions. 385 persons responded to the survey. **The final valid sample size of 362 gives 95 percent confidence that the study findings are within  $\pm 5.1$  percent of the true population parameters for a given question.**

### **Overview of results (percentages are approximate)**

#### ***General perceptions of Concord***

About 98 percent of the Concord residents who responded believe that the City is a good place to live, and 97 percent believe it is a good place to raise children. 96 percent believe Concord is a safe place to live (highest percent since 2006).

About 73 percent of citizens were positive about Concord's decisions on development and nearly 69 percent thought tax dollars are being spent wisely. Both measures are down from 2012 but higher than most past surveys.

The proportion agreeing with the statement that Concord is responsive to the needs of its citizens decreased from 88.1 percent in 2012 to 82.4 percent in 2014.

Over 91 percent now support the development of greenways – up from 72 percent in 2008 and about 90 percent in 2010 and 2012.

#### ***Perceptions of City decision-making***

86 percent think the City is making good decisions about the environment. Those who have been residents for 1 to 5 years are the most likely to disagree with the statement that the city is making good decisions about the environment, while 100 percent of those moving within the last year agreed with the statement.

More than 75 percent see Concord as providing good employment opportunities—continuing the increase since 2008. 85 percent believe the City has a good environment for business.

#### ***Perceptions of staff interactions and departmental performance***

At least 90 percent of the respondents assess all departments, except the Planning and Neighborhood Development Department and the Transportation Department (both rated at 84 percent), as being professional in their interaction with customers. Although still rated highly, the survey indicates a decreased perception of professionalism and courtesy since 2012. However, the Finance (both professionalism and courtesy) and Electric Systems (professionalism) improved their scores since the last survey. When controlling for contact in the last year, all departments' ratings of professionalism were decreased to varying degrees.

In nearly all instances, the percent indicating a department is courteous is near 90 percent. All but Parks and Recreation and Police had decreased courteousness scores after contact. The departments with the biggest negative difference between overall "yes" responses to being courteous and "yes" responses by those who had contact within the past year are Planning and Neighborhood Development (-8.7 percent) and the City Manager's Office (-7.9 percent).

**This suggests the Finance and Electric Departments as good models for generally improving customer service, and that Parks and Recreation and Police may have good examples of how to deal with specific customer interactions or challenges in a way that improves perception.**

All departments' processes and procedures were rated as user-friendly by at least 80 percent of respondents, with an average score of 87 percent. Ratings of user-friendliness were down across the board since 2012, but the highest-rated

departments in this area include Fire, Parks and Recreation, and Electric. When controlling for departmental contact, the average score drops to about 80 percent. Solid Waste has the smallest difference in scores after contact between 2012 and 2014.

All departments had over 83 percent of respondents indicating they are satisfied with the job performance, and most were rated satisfactorily by 90 percent. In 2014 all departments received fewer evaluations of “satisfied” if respondents had had direct contact with the department. When it comes to job performance ratings after contact, the departments with the highest scores include Fire, Electric, Parks and Recreation, and Finance. Several departments improved their scores between 2012 and 2014, including Finance, Police, Fire, Solid Waste and Recycling, and Electric.

**Put together, it becomes evident that departments scoring the best in areas of professionalism, courtesy, and user-friendliness are also perceived as performing the best. These departments should be emulated across the organization.**

### ***Perceptions of various services and facilities***

Roughly 8 out of every 10 respondents are either satisfied or very satisfied with garbage and recycling collection, and 7 of every 10 highly rate yard waste collection. 38.4 percent feel that curbside service is better than it was in 2012 and 43.5 percent feel it is the same.

4.5 percent say they place bulky waste curbside every week – up from 2.4 percent in 2012. 62.2 percent indicate that they do so only a few times per year – down from 71.8 percent in 2012. 12 percent say they never use the service.

36.3 percent indicate that they do not have yard waste for pickup. Of the 165 who placed yard waste curbside, 75.8 percent indicate that it had always been picked up within 24 hours of the regular pick up day. 13.9 percent say it was not picked up once and 10.3 percent say it was not picked up more than once.

The proportion of respondents indicating they have visited a City park has remained around 85 percent since 2008. 87.2 percent of those who visit parks feel they are safe – this is lower than 97.6 percent in 2012 but about the same as 90.5 percent in 2010. 33.1 percent indicate that they visit a city recreation center at least once a year. 84 percent of those who visit recreation centers feel they are safe, up from 79 percent in 2012 and 72 percent in 2010.

91.4 percent feel the streets in their neighborhoods are either good or mostly good. This is the highest percent since the first study in 2002. In previous years there was a variance in street condition by geographical area (measured by trash collection day). This year there are no differences. There has been an increase in the evaluation of streets in general (generally inferred to as rating of NCDOT facilities). 85.9 percent rate the overall road conditions in Concord as either excellent or good (70.9 percent in 2012; 64.0 percent in 2010).

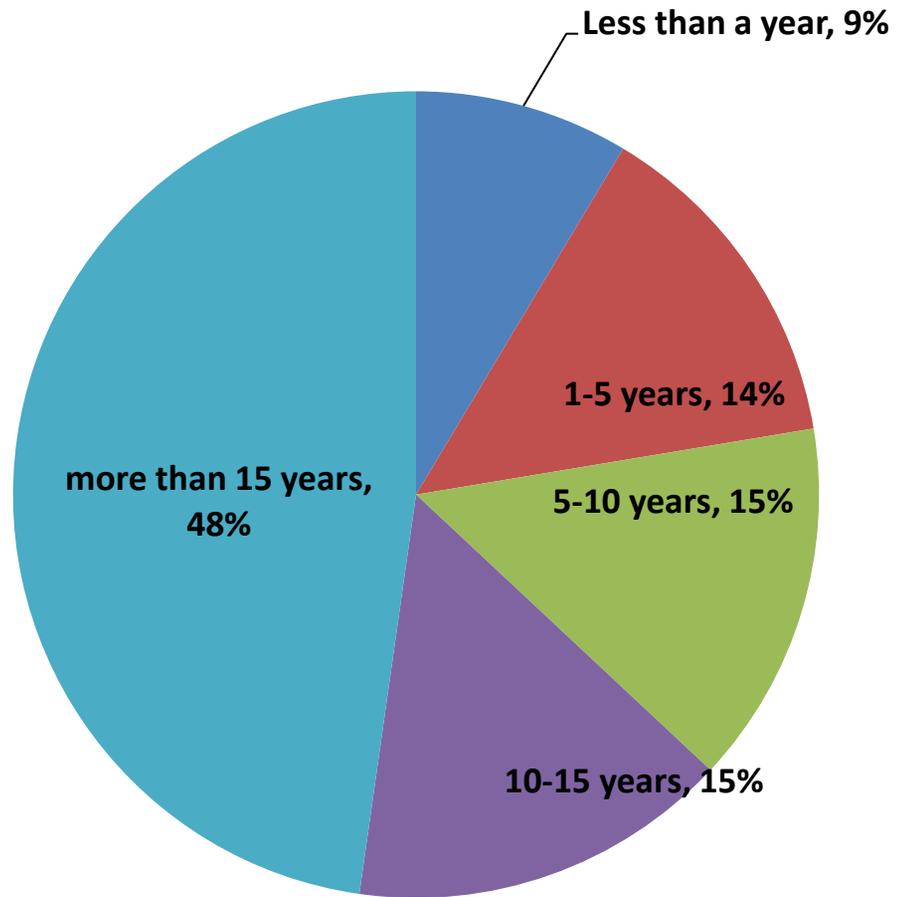
Similar to 2012, about half of respondents said they called the Customer Care Center for assistance. 80.2 percent say that their concerns were resolved the first time if a call was made after September 1 (when staffing levels were improved). 72.4 percent say that their concerns were resolved the first time if they had called, but before September 1. This difference, however, is not statistically significant.

About 75 percent of respondents feel informed about the City and its services, down from 85 percent in 2012. However, only 2.2 percent feel completely uninformed. The two most preferred methods of communicating with the City were concordnc.gov and direct mailings such as the *City Circular*.

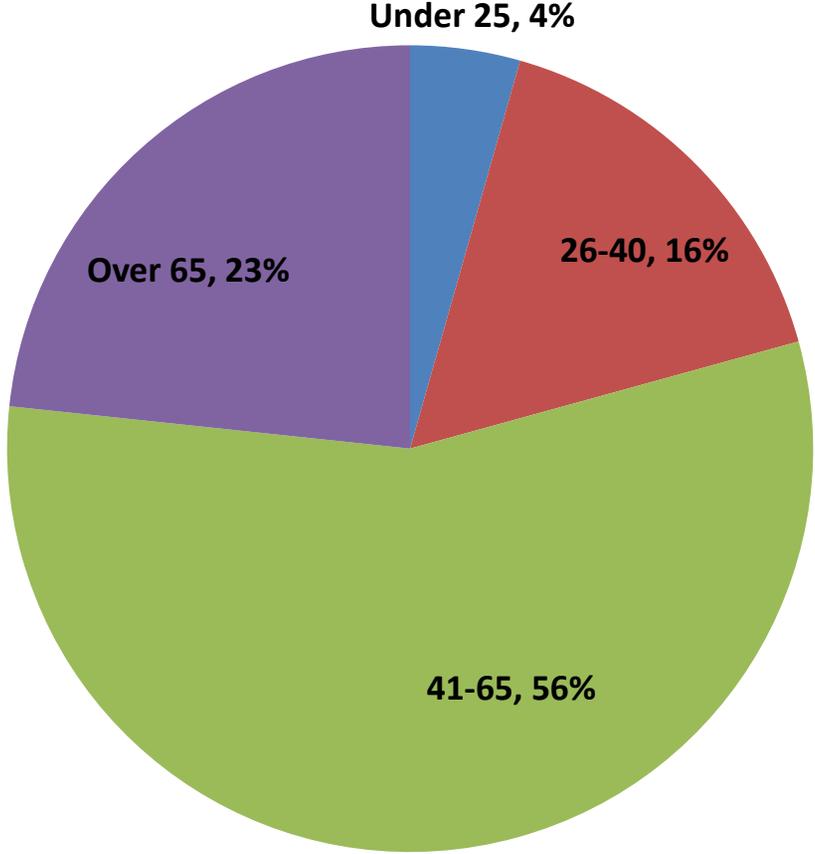
### ***Issues facing Concord in the future***

Jobs/employment opportunities was the most frequently cited issue residents see facing Concord in the future, followed by development/management of growth and road maintenance.

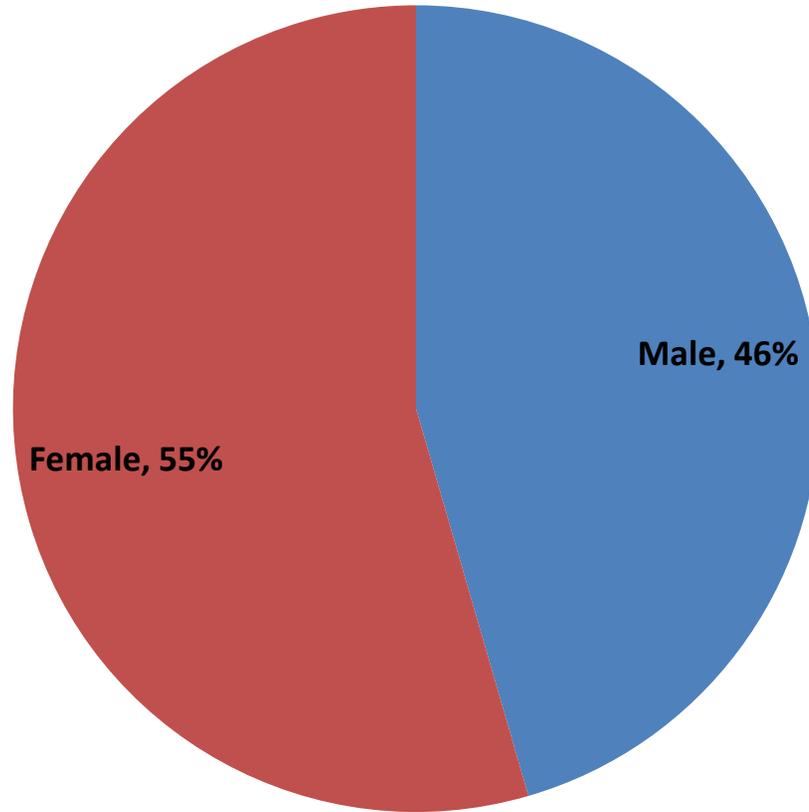
## Length of Residence



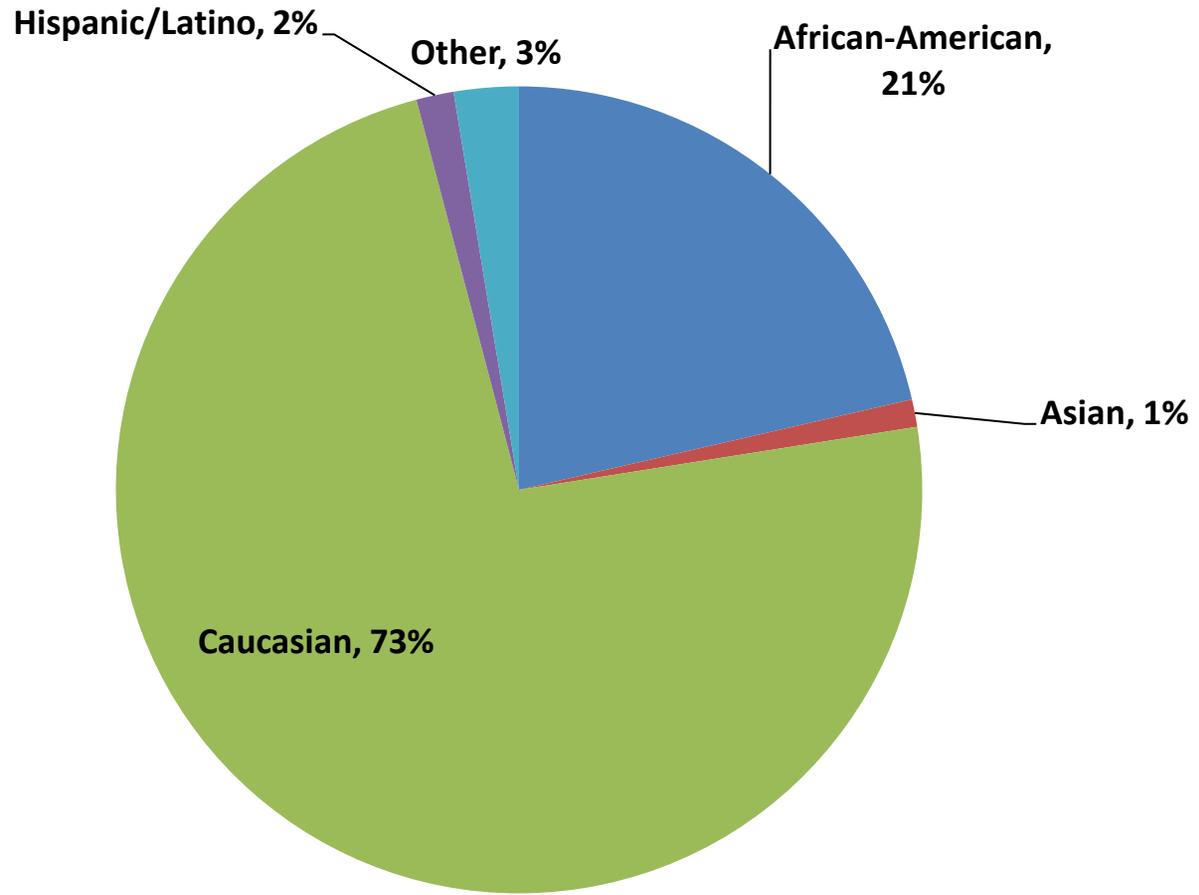
# Age



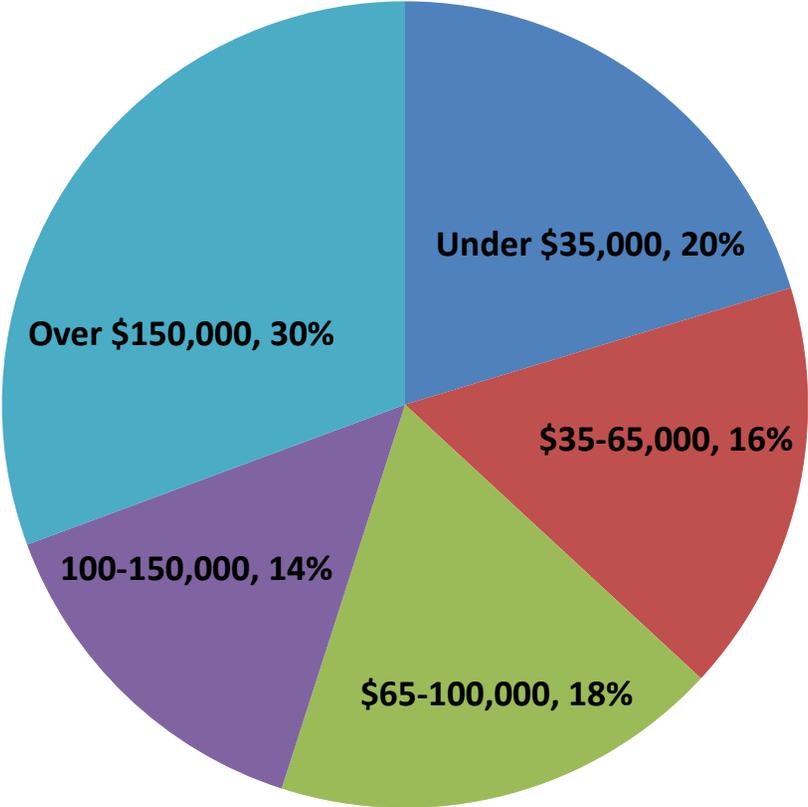
## Gender



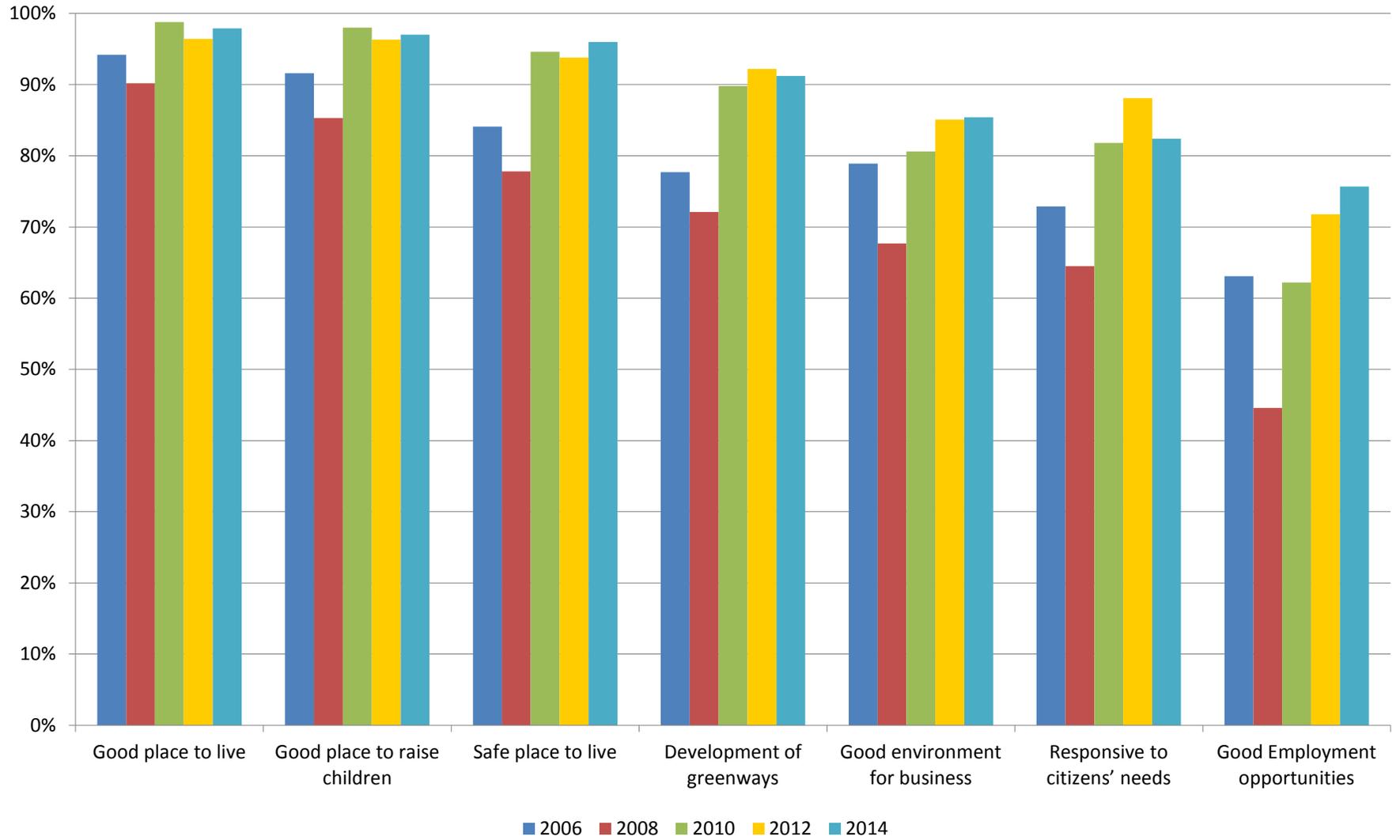
### Race/ethnicity



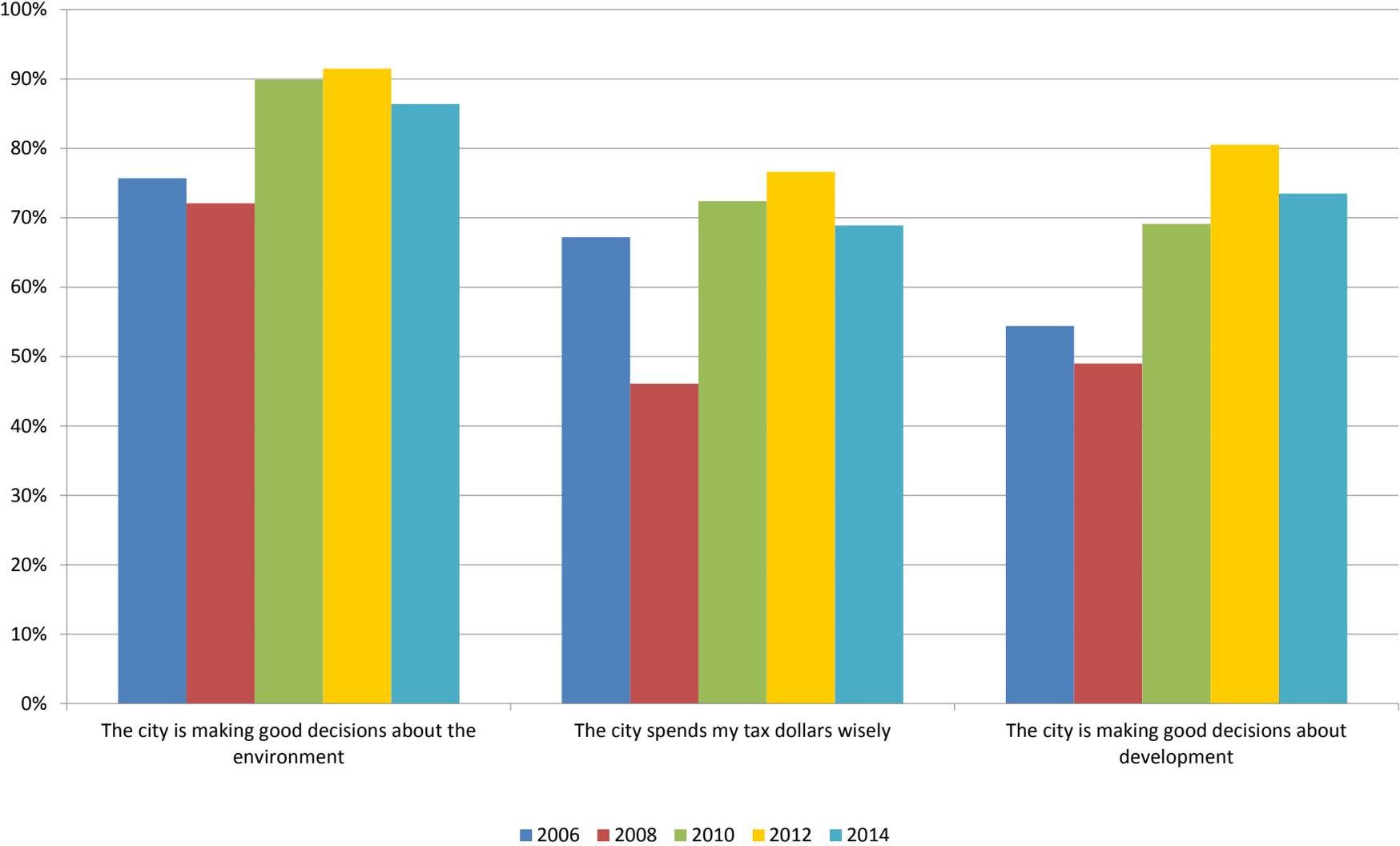
# Annual income



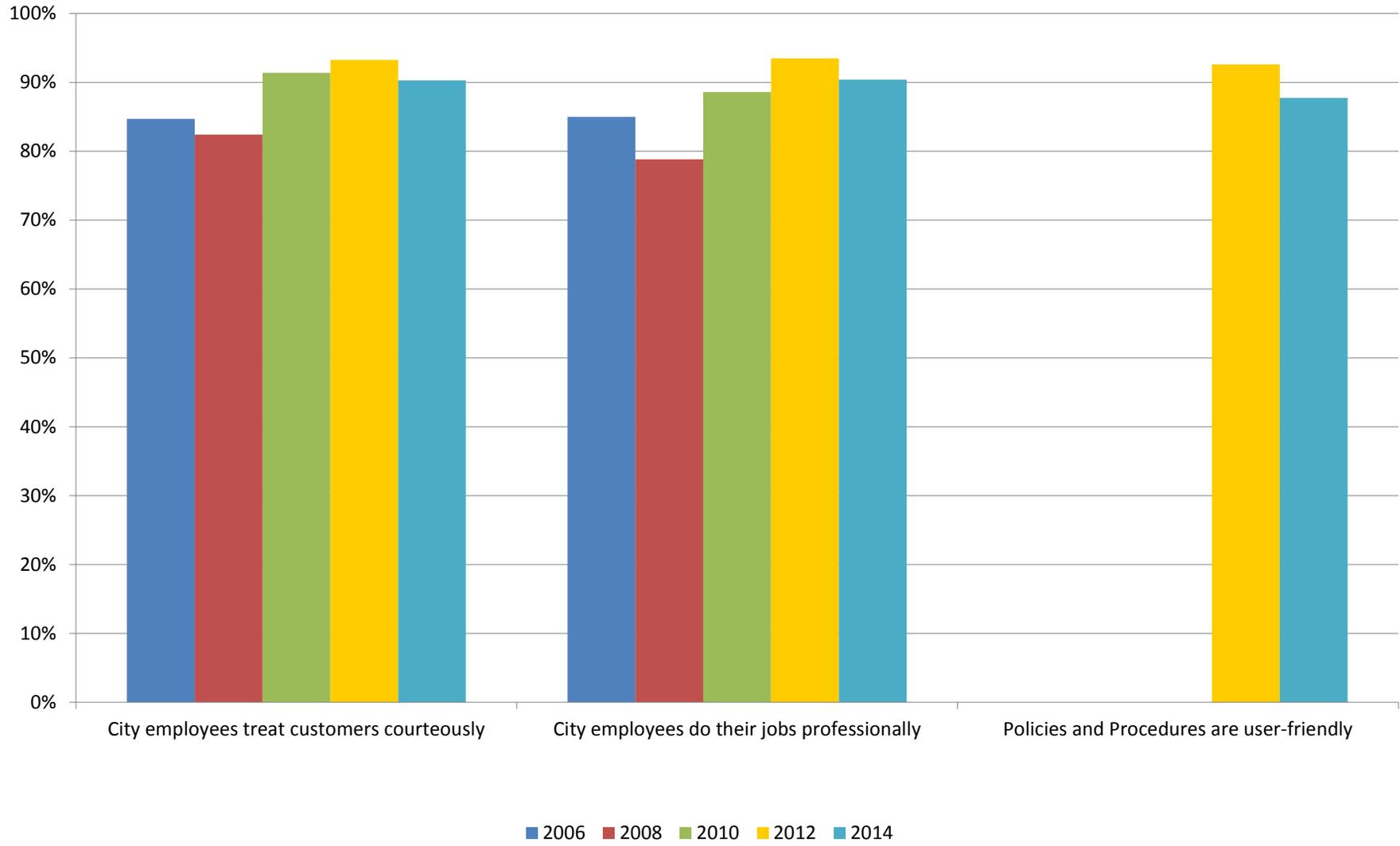
Positive Perception of Concord, 2006-2014



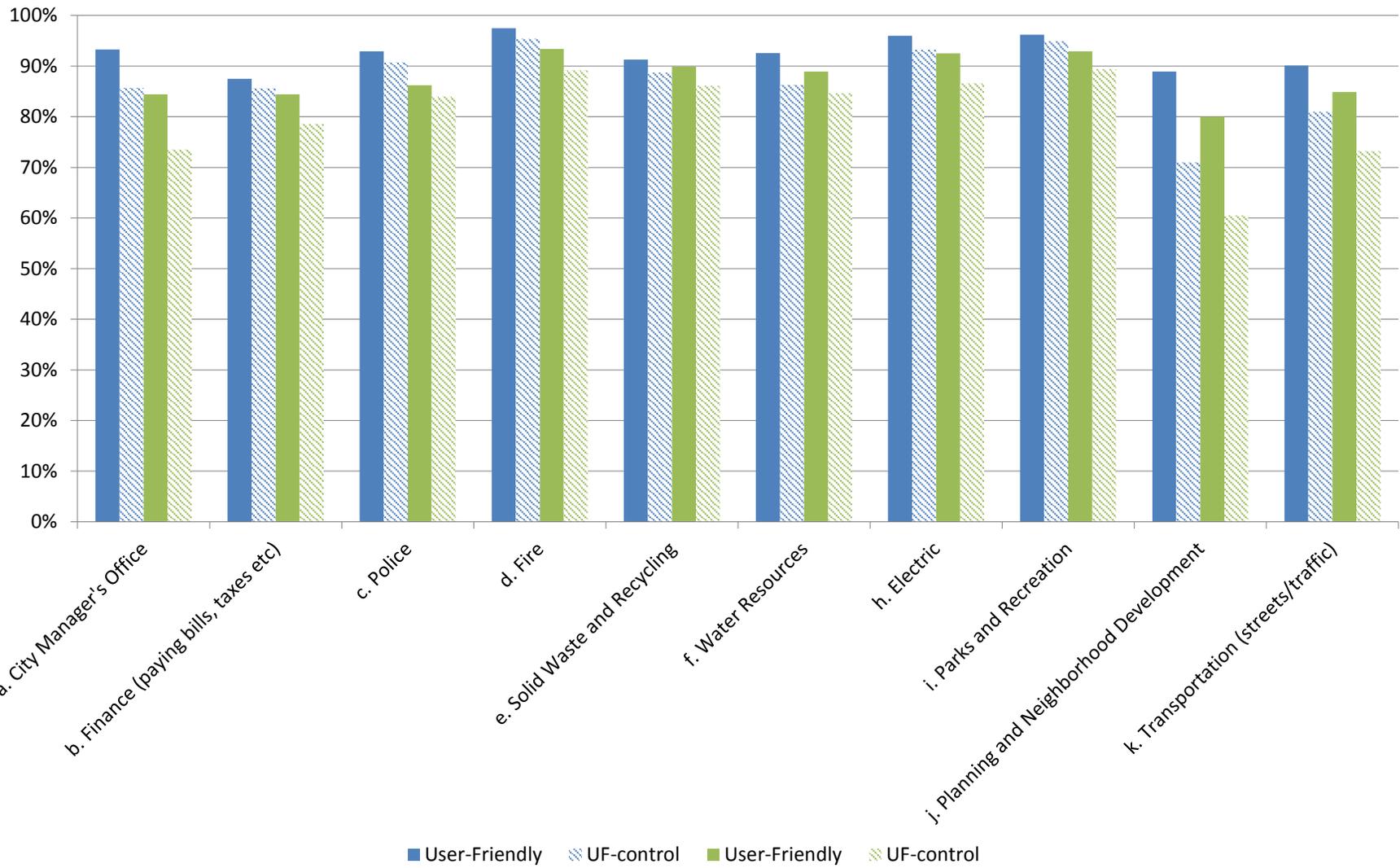
Positive Perception of City Decision Making, 2006-2014



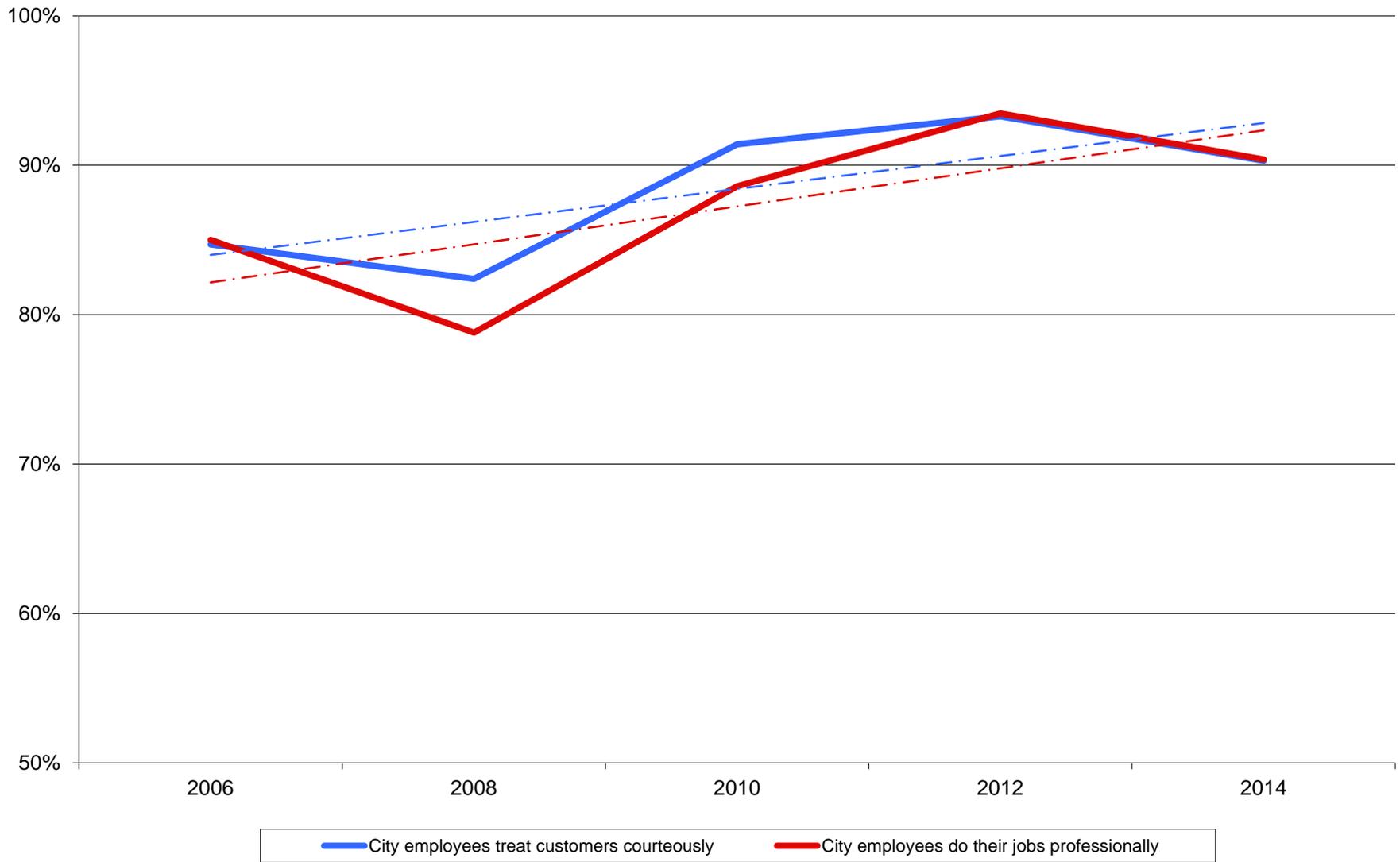
Positive perception of interacting with the City, 2006-2014



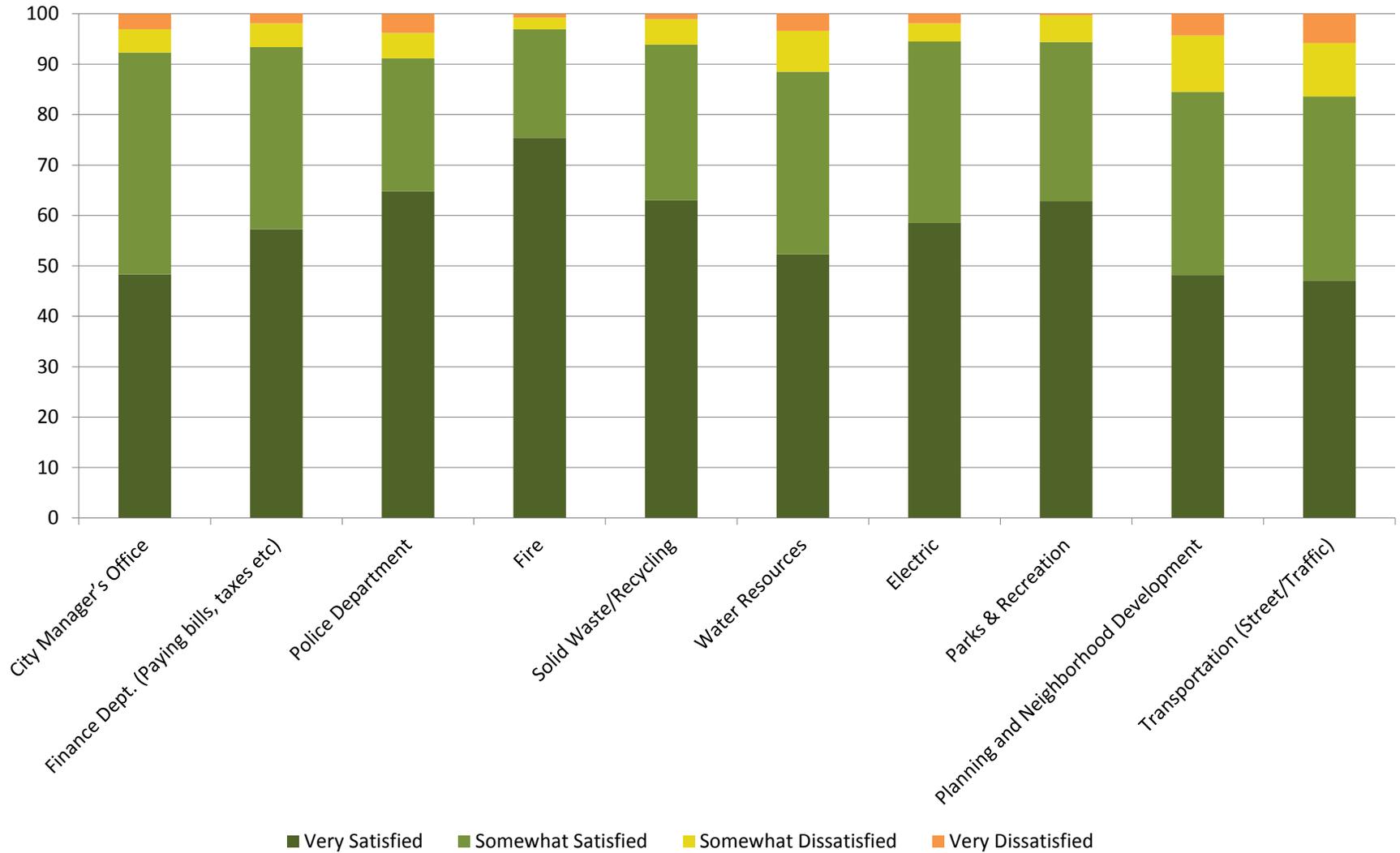
## Perception of User Friendliness 2012-2014



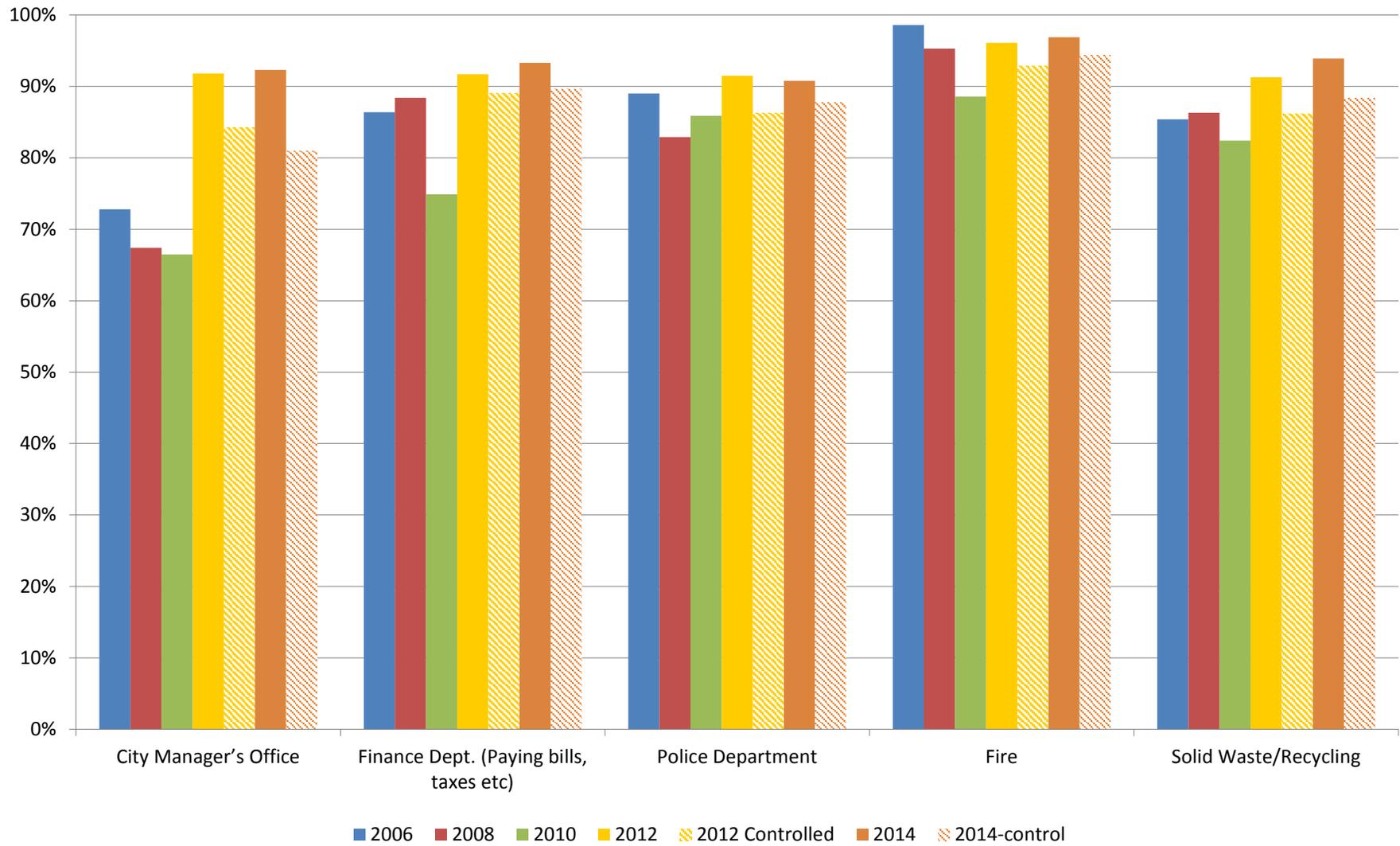
### Customer Service, 2006-2014



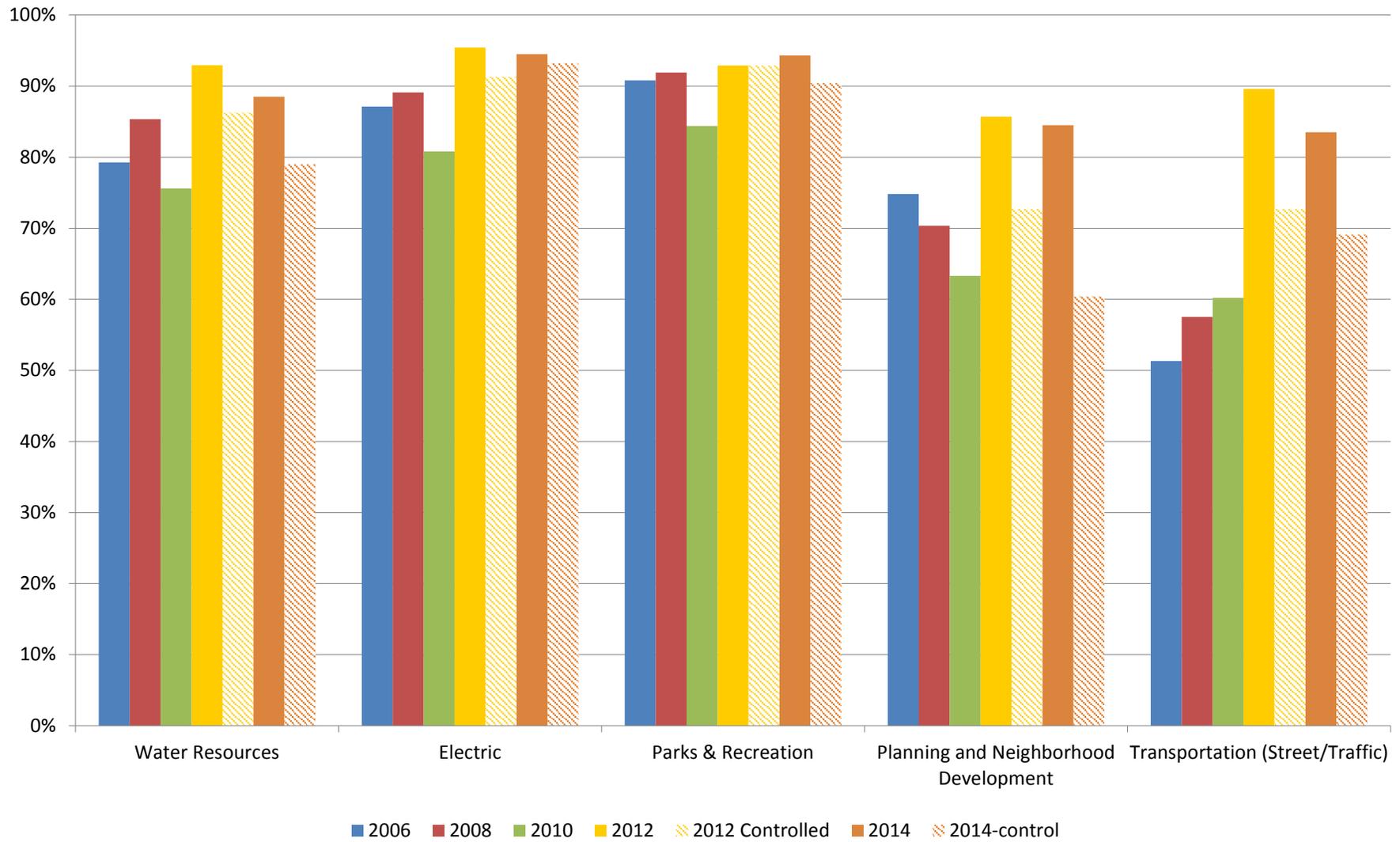
## Perception of City Departments in 2014



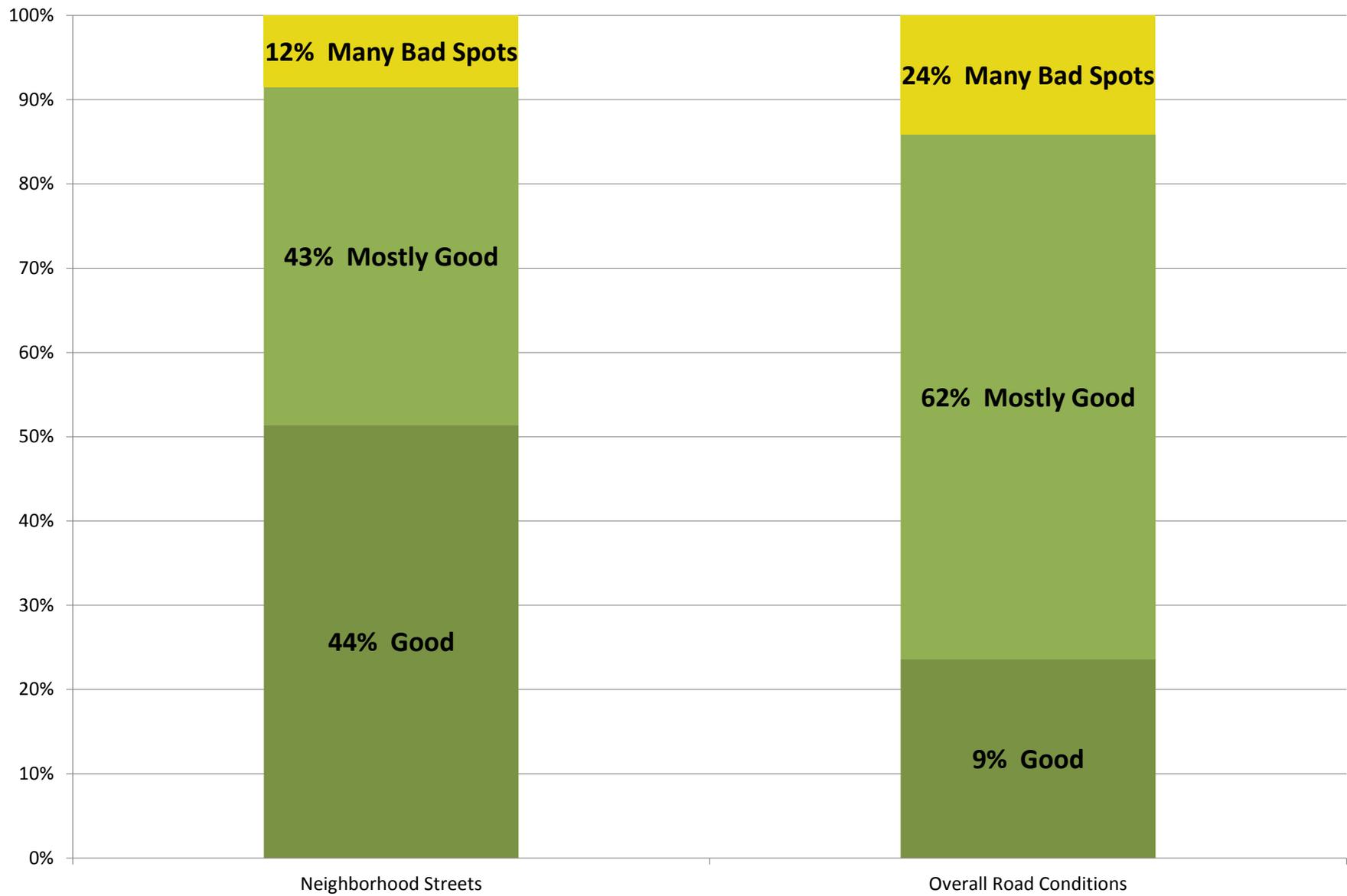
## Positive Perceptions of City Departments



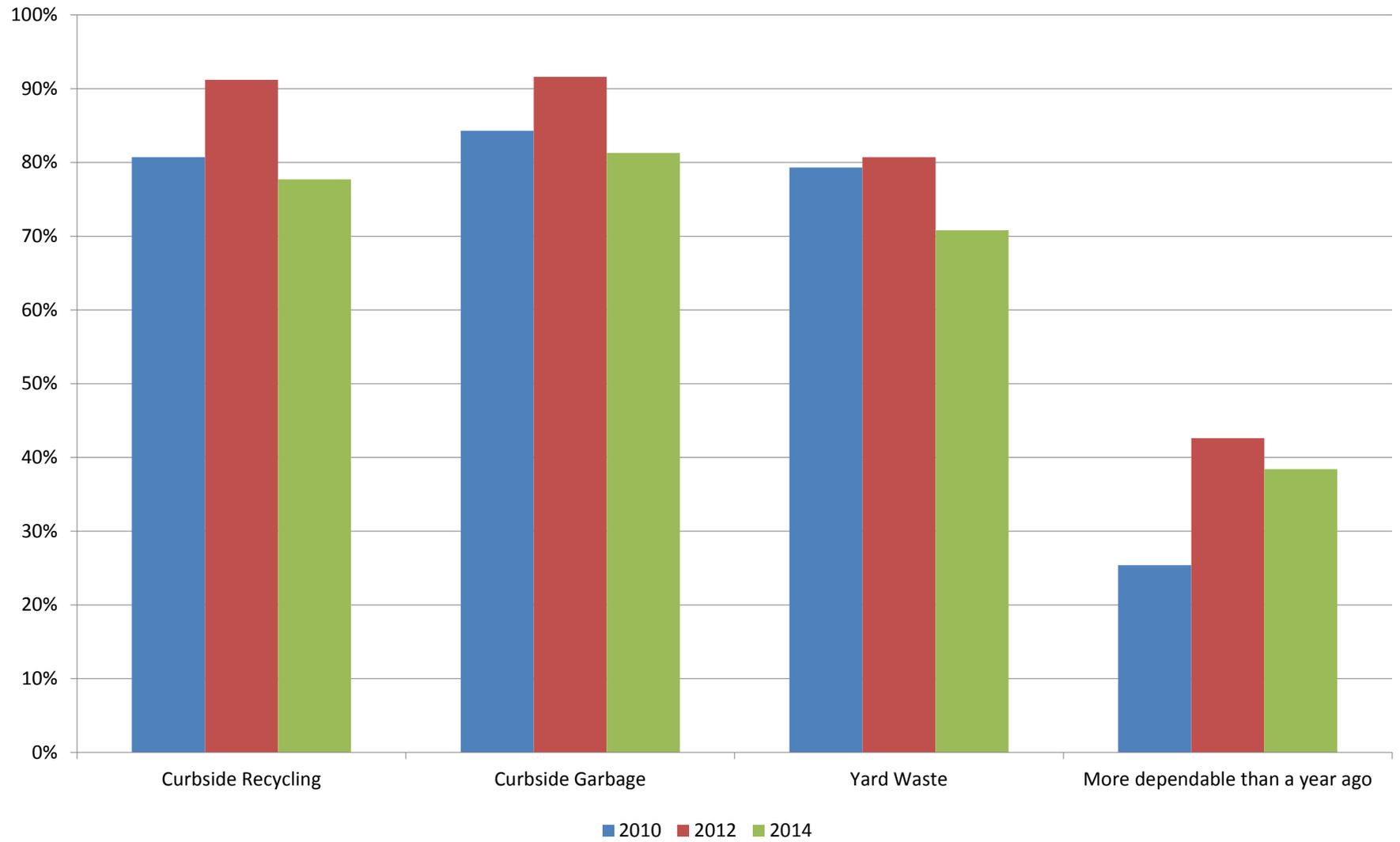
## Positive Perceptions of City Departments



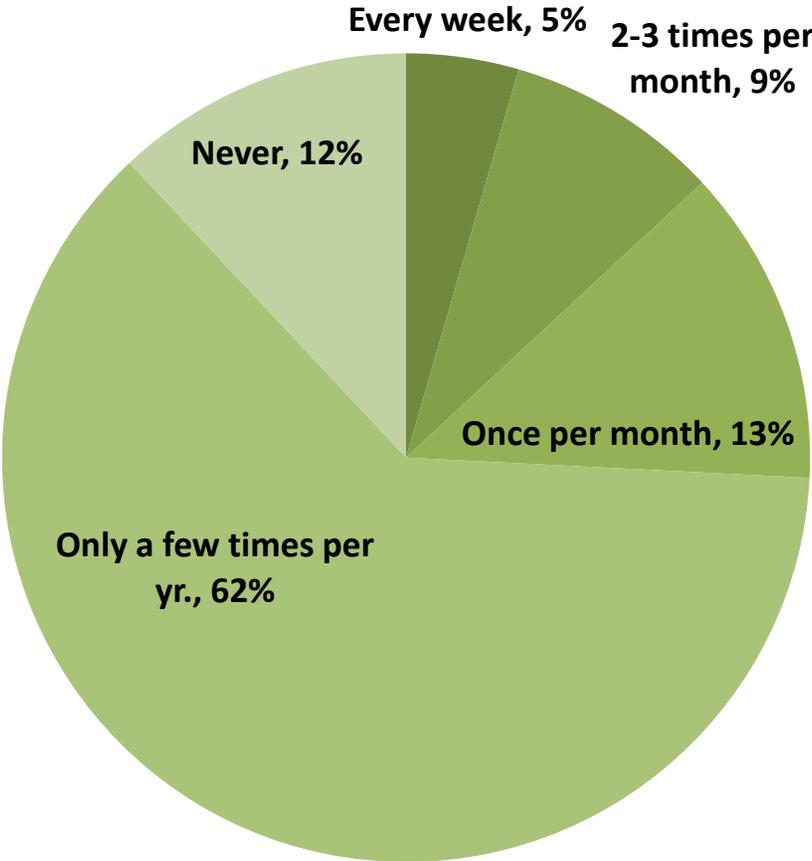
## Perception of Street and Road Surfaces, 2014



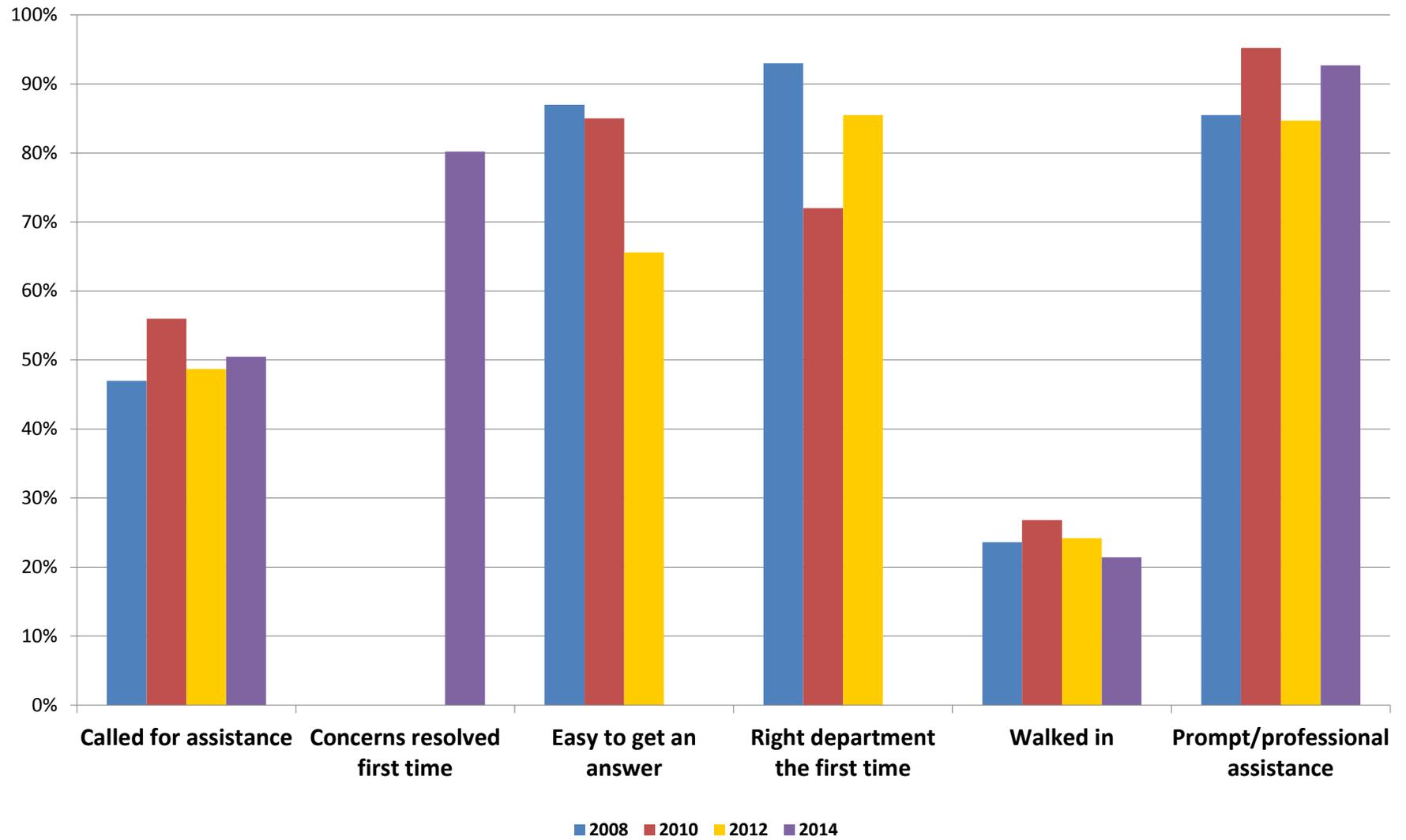
## Positive Perceptions of Solid Waste Services



# Bulky Waste Frequency



## Customer Service



## Frequency of selecting Concord's "biggest issues"

