

Community Attitudes About Public Safety in Deschutes County



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Key Findings

- *The majority of community members surveyed indicated that they feel safe walking alone in Deschutes County during the daytime. Fewer felt safe walking alone at night.*
- *Residents expressed broad support for different efforts to improve public safety strategies including community crime prevention, rehabilitation, and delinquency prevention.*
- *A high degree of consensus was observed regarding the negative impact of illegal drugs on local public safety. Some residents expressed concerns about increasing availability of beer and marijuana and whether this is contributing to a local culture that encourages substance abuse.*
- *Most residents support treatment and diversion for juveniles and adults who possess alcohol or drugs illegally. They are less supportive of these options for people who are caught dealing drugs or people caught driving under the influence.*
- *Traffic safety was rated by many as a major public safety concern, especially by people living in Bend.*

Introduction

Deschutes County District Attorney (DA) John Hummel convened a county-wide advisory group in June 2015 to take a data-driven approach to improving public safety in Deschutes County. The group, DeschutesSafe, is made up of representatives from criminal justice, healthcare, social services, businesses, and local residents. Members are focused on using data to identify local crime problems and generating innovative solutions to address these issues.

DeschutesSafe's preliminary analysis of crime reports and input from criminal justice professionals suggested that offenses associated with illicit drug use were a significant and growing problem for the County. DA Hummel and the DeschutesSafe team wanted to add to this analysis by seeking input from the community-at-large. Partnering with Dr. Kris Henning from Portland State University, the team developed an online community survey to identify the public safety issues that are most relevant to County residents and explore community attitudes toward crime prevention strategies.

The county's voter registration database was used to generate a list of 10,000 randomly selected households to participate in the survey. Efforts were taken to ensure adequate sample sizes for smaller cities like Sisters and La Pine, as well as unincorporated areas of the County. Each identified household was mailed a postcard in September of 2016 inviting them to participate in the online survey. The questionnaire asked residents to identify their primary public safety concerns, whether they supported or opposed various public safety strategies for addressing these problems, and their ideas about improving community safety.

To increase participation and collect additional responses, the survey was opened up to all Deschutes County residents in October 2016. Residents were informed about the opportunity to complete the survey through social media (Facebook), as well as through regular print and on-air media channels.

A total of 941 people completed the survey. This report provides the findings of this effort.

Threats to Public Safety

As the first step, the DeschutesSafe team wanted to identify the public safety issues that are of greatest concern to local residents. Assessing public perceptions is important for two reasons. First, community members may be aware of problems that are not reflected in official statistics maintained by law enforcement. Crimes like sexual assault and minor property offenses, for example, are highly underreported. Second, people make decisions on where they live, work, attend school, shop, dine, recreate, etc. based largely on perceived safety. Sometimes these perceptions concur with official crime data, while other times there are discrepancies between the perceptions and the actual risk. The strategies DeschutesSafe might deploy to deal with situations where people feel unsafe in relatively safe locations would differ considerably from situations where people feel safe in a relatively unsafe environment. In short, efforts to assess residents' perceptions about local public safety will help the DeschutesSafe team determine where to focus their efforts in the coming year.

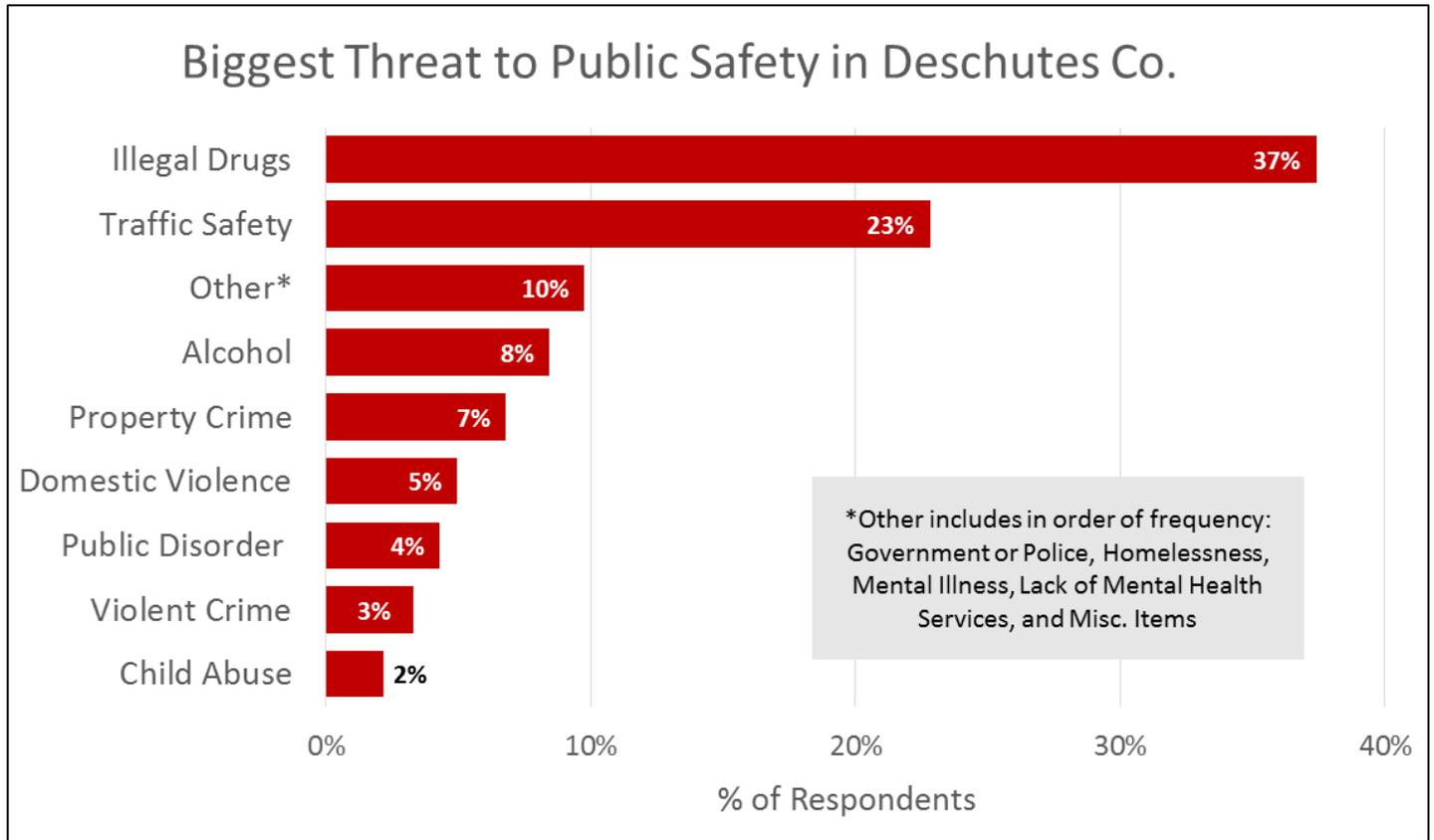
Residents completing the survey were asked how often they visited five distinct areas in the County over the past year. This included the cities of Bend, Redmond, Sisters and La Pine. The fifth area, "Other," combined the County's unincorporated communities with rural locations. Anyone who had visited a given location several times or more per month was asked for feedback on the city/area's public safety problems. Eight public safety categories were identified (see table below) and respondents were asked to evaluate each problem on a four-point scale: "not a problem," "minor problem," "moderate problem," or "major problem." A "don't know" option was also provided in case people felt they were unable to rate the items. The table below provides the percentage of respondents rating each topic as a moderate to major problem for the given city/area.

Public Safety Concerns by City/Area*					
Public Safety Topics	Bend	Redmond	Sisters	La Pine	Other Areas
Alcohol (use by minors, public drunkenness, DUI, etc.)	69.2%	70.9%	56.2%	68.8%	63.9%
Child Abuse (physical, emotional, sexual abuse, etc.)	64.4%	71.3%	50.6%	71.9%	66.4%
Domestic Violence (physical abuse, harassment, stalking)	61.3%	66.3%	37.5%	63.1%	59.8%
Illegal Drugs (using, selling, driving under influence, etc.)	79.8%	83.1%	50.8%	87.4%	80.0%
Property Crime (theft, burglary, car break-ins, etc.)	70.5%	72.9%	30.3%	70.5%	57.3%
Public Disorder (noise, squatters, trespass., panhandling, etc.)	67.3%	56.0%	24.0%	50.0%	48.7%
Traffic Safety (aggressive driving, speed, running red lights, etc.)	71.5%	61.9%	46.5%	51.7%	56.6%
Violent Crime (assault, robbery, rape, etc.)	46.1%	50.5%	16.8%	54.4%	43.7%

*Percent of survey respondents reporting city/area has "moderate" to "major" problem with given issue. Highest and lowest rated topics for each location identified in red and green respectively.

Looking across all of the cities/areas combined, the topics identified by the largest number of people as a moderate to major problem were illegal drugs, alcohol-related offenses, and child abuse. In four out of the five distinct locations, Sisters being the exception, illegal drugs was the most likely topic to be rated as a moderate to major problem. There was a similar degree of consensus regarding the lowest rated problem: in four out of five locations, with La Pine as the exception, violent crime was the topic least likely to be rated as a moderate to major problem.

Respondents were also asked to identify the issue they felt was the biggest threat to public safety for the county as a whole. This question was included to help DeschutesSafe prioritize their crime prevention efforts. The prior list of eight public safety topics was used along with the option to select “other” and provide a brief description. The chart below provides the results of this analysis.



Illegal drugs rose to the top again as the most significant threat to public safety with 37 percent of respondents selecting this problem. Traffic safety was the second highest rated threat, with 23 percent of the respondents. It is also worth noting that residents from four out of the five cities/areas selected illegal drugs as the top threat to public safety (Bend, Redmond, La Pine, Other areas). Residents in Sisters ranked traffic safety as their top threat, with illegal drugs ranked second.

Next, survey respondents were asked to provide additional details regarding their primary public safety concern(s) for the County. This open ended question provided community members with the opportunity to document their specific concerns.

These open-ended text responses aligned closely with the results from the previous survey questions, but did not match them exactly. When asked to provide details on their primary concern, the topic that generated the most discussion was **traffic safety** with 202 responses. Specific concerns communicated included speeding, aggressive/distracted driving, lack of police presence, and driving under the influence. Examples of respondents’ comments include:

- *“Traffic is absolutely crazy.....speeding, tailgating, aggressive driving, I still see people talking on their cell phones every single day.”*
- *“Distracted drivers, cell phone use etc. has increased as well as aggressive drivers who are angry at drivers who obey speed limits and driving rules.”*
- *“Need more traffic enforcement for distracted driving and speeding within our cities.”*

- *“With the legalization of marijuana people seem to take little thought about smoking marijuana and driving a vehicle. While under the influence they mistakenly believe that they are capable of driving a vehicle safely. This is not the case.”*
- *“Driving under the influence of alcohol and or drugs. Additionally, aggressive driving; speed, passing in restricted areas, tailgating and use of hand held devices seemed to have greatly increased over the past 12-24 months.”*

The second most frequently cited concern involved **alcohol and drugs** (199 responses). Comments provided about substance use were often tied to traffic safety, the recent changes (2015) to the marijuana laws, the beer culture and property crimes. Other respondents connected alcohol and drug use to increased criminal activity, particularly among people who are homeless.

- *“We have a high number of high speed, often fatal, crashes on our major highways (Highways 97, 20 and 126). These are often associated with alcohol and drug use...”*
- *“It's bad enough that we had to deal with alcohol abuse resulting in DUIs and accidents, we now have a worse problem by adding legal cannabis to the mix, resulting in more DUIs and accidents.”*
- *“We are concerned about the substantial publicity being given to beer and marijuana. It is difficult for us to think that this emphasis on increased public drinking and increased marijuana use will have a happy ending.”*
- *“We live in a community that broadly supports and often encourages the regular consumption of alcohol through our brewery and distillery scene, festivals, and events. I'm concerned about the regularity in which people are consuming alcohol and the broad social acceptance.”*
- *“The drug problem is a \$150-\$600/day habit. Either they're stealing or dealing or both. This need for drugs pushed those that use to commit crimes of items to trade or sell for drugs.”*
- *“The drug problems in our county are directly related to the homelessness issues and increase of criminal activity in our county and state. Drugs and alcohol issues are creating an epidemic of mental health issues that affect every citizen.”*

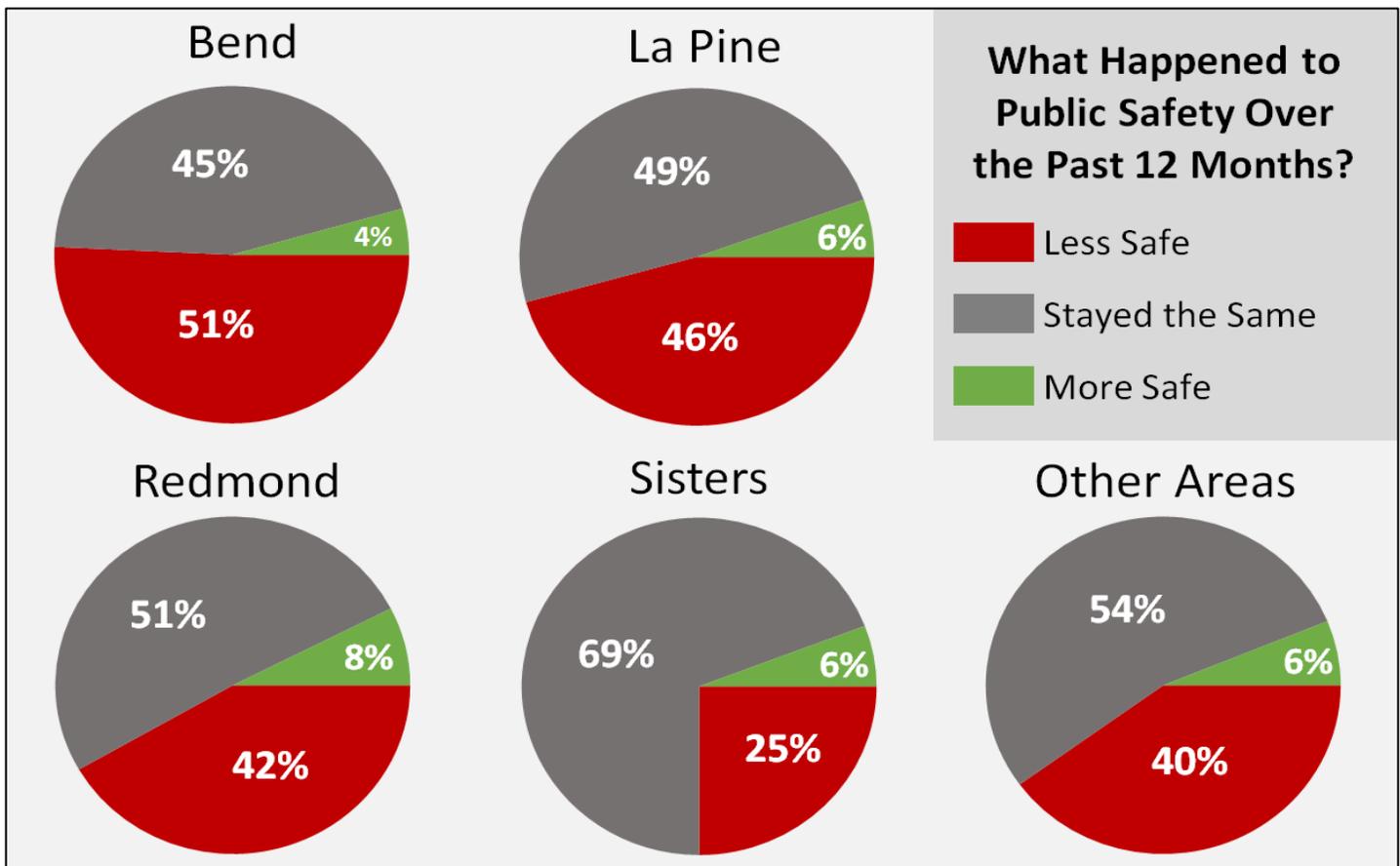
The third most common theme in the open-ended responses was **social disorder** (110 responses) which included issues such as homelessness, panhandling, substance use, harassment, and mental illness. Respondents often noted how these issues have impacted their decisions about where to spend time in the community, particularly when referring to Bend's downtown area.

- *“(I am) concerned about the number of homeless people and transients with mental health and drug and alcohol issues on our streets. Especially downtown Bend. I don't feel as safe as I did a year ago walking around downtown. I've been avoiding the area versus previously frequenting several times of week.”*
- *“I no longer take visitors to Drake Park and downtown after dark. I get tired of all the aggressive beggars demanding money. It's pretty discouraging to not to be able to enjoy Drake park anymore.”*
- *“Homelessness and panhandling are out of control here. Many homeless people have drug or alcohol problems and mental health issues. Funding for homeless shelters should be increased and the public should be encouraged to give to shelters, not to panhandlers.”*
- *“Transients are becoming a real problem and creating tons of garbage on public lands.”*
- *“Many living in motor homes/campers on our streets. Police do not control this. I have called in and nothing is done about it.”*
- *“How can Deschutes County allow all these homeless camps???? Pan handlers have totally gotten out of hand and I would like to [see] an ordinance against it. Our beautiful Deschutes County has become a mecca for filth, waste, drug paraphernalia, and a hide away for criminals in the very outskirts of town.”*

Perceived Safety in Deschutes County

DeschutesSafe also wanted to assess perceptions of safety, in addition to reviewing objective crime reports. As noted previously, perceived safety is important because fear of crime can result in deterioration of psychological well-being, community relationships, business sales, and even home values. Moreover, perceptions about crime are not always consistent with actual crime trends. Fear of crime may be high or rising during times when crime rates are low or falling and vice versa. This suggests a need for strategies to address fear of crime that may be independent of efforts to control actual crime rates.

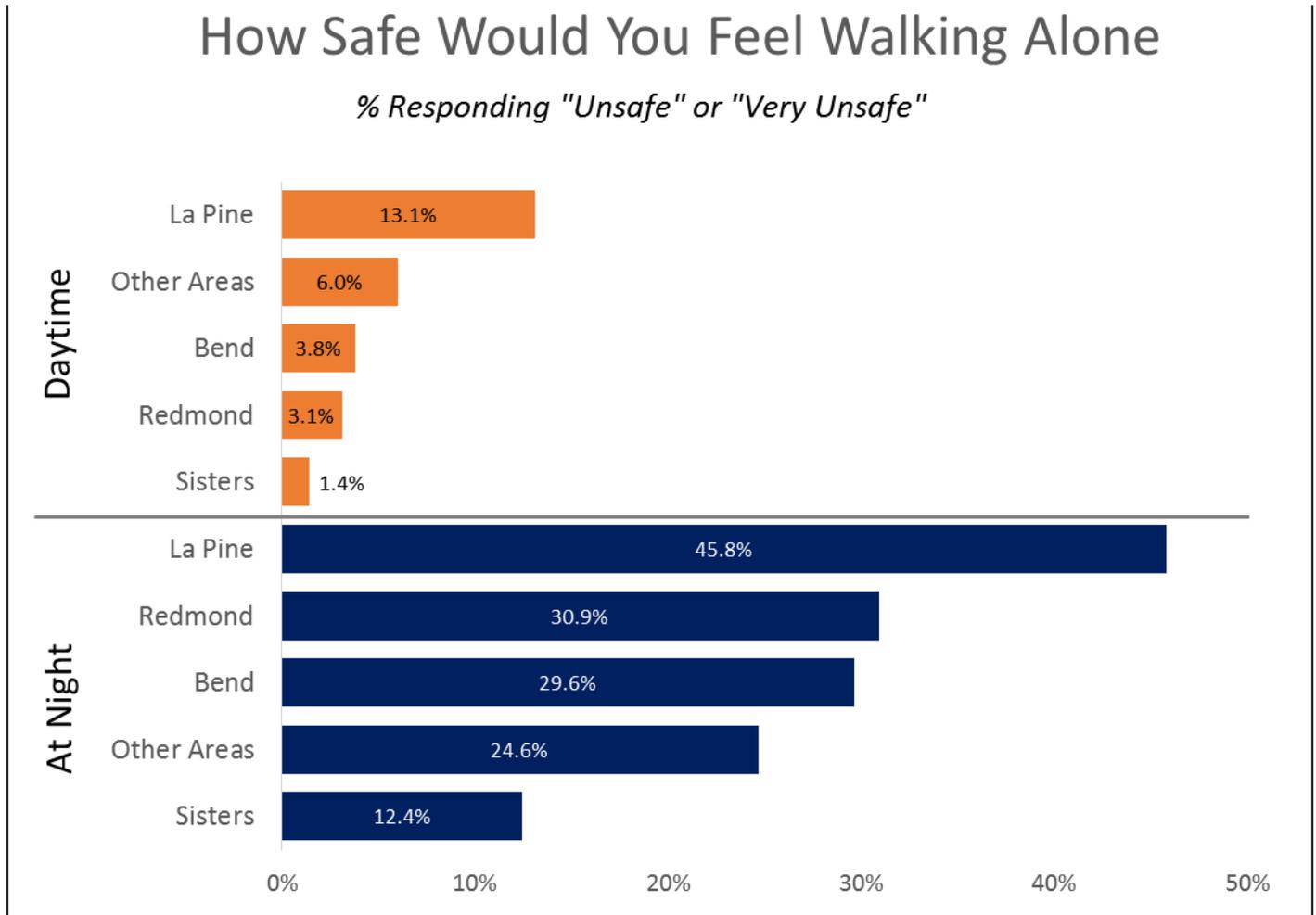
The first question in this area asked what happened to public safety in each of the five target cities/areas over the past 12 months (i.e., “stayed about the same,” “less safe,” or “more safe”). The twelve month period for the survey covered October 2015-September 2016 and respondents were only allowed to answer for a given city/area if they had visited there several times a month or more. For this question public safety was defined as property crimes, violent crime, domestic violence, child maltreatment, public disorder and traffic safety. The chart below provides the results of this analysis.



With the exception of Bend, the majority of participants reported that public safety in the given cities/areas has remained the same or improved over the last twelve months. In Bend, just over half (51 percent) of the respondents thought public safety had gotten worse.

To explore this issue deeper, questions were asked regarding each respondents' feelings of safety when walking alone in different areas of the county, during the daytime and after dark. The responses to this question are relevant because approaches to addressing public safety concerns can change based on the time of day and location.

Each respondent was asked to rate whether they felt "very safe," "safe," "neither safe nor unsafe," "unsafe," "very unsafe," or "don't know," when walking alone during the day and at night for each of the cities and areas within the county they visit. The graph below provides the percentage of respondents that rated walking during the daytime and at night as feeling "unsafe" or "very unsafe" for the given city/area.



Respondents reported high levels of perceived safety when walking alone during the day. Eighty-seven percent to 99 percent of the respondents felt safe or very safe walking in each city/area during daylight hours.

However, as the graph above illustrates, respondents' perceived level of safety significantly declined at night. After dark, a quarter to nearly half of the respondents indicated that they feel **unsafe** or **very unsafe** walking alone at night in four out of the five areas, the exception being Sisters.

Strategies to Address Public Safety

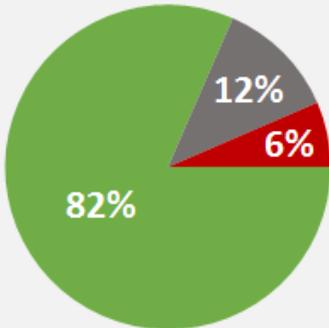
Support for Public Safety Strategies

Support

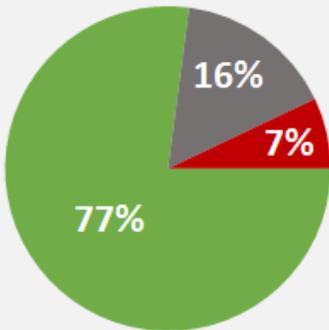
Neutral

Oppose

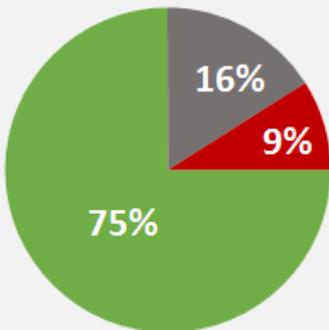
Delinquency Prevention



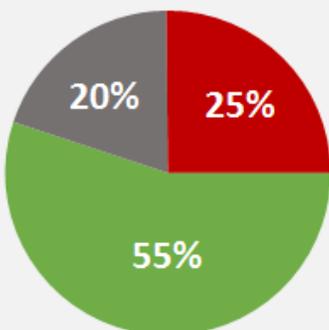
Community Prevention



Rehabilitation



Punishment



Since there are multiple ways to address crime and public safety issues, communities should consider local culture, current research, available resources, and the crime issue being addressed, when selecting a strategy to implement. Understanding community members' positions on different approaches to improve public safety is helpful when determining which new strategy to employ, as the effort will have enhanced legitimacy if it is supported by residents.

DeschutesSafe was interested in gauging public support for four general strategies for preventing/controlling crime. These were:

Delinquency Prevention – defined as efforts to prevent crime by targeting known risk factors for early delinquency (parenting classes, social skills training, family counseling, etc.)

Community Crime Prevention – defined as efforts to prevent crime by reducing opportunities, increasing the chances of getting caught, or by making crime more difficult (warning people to remove valuables from their vehicle, installation of security/CCTV cameras, stronger door locks, etc.)

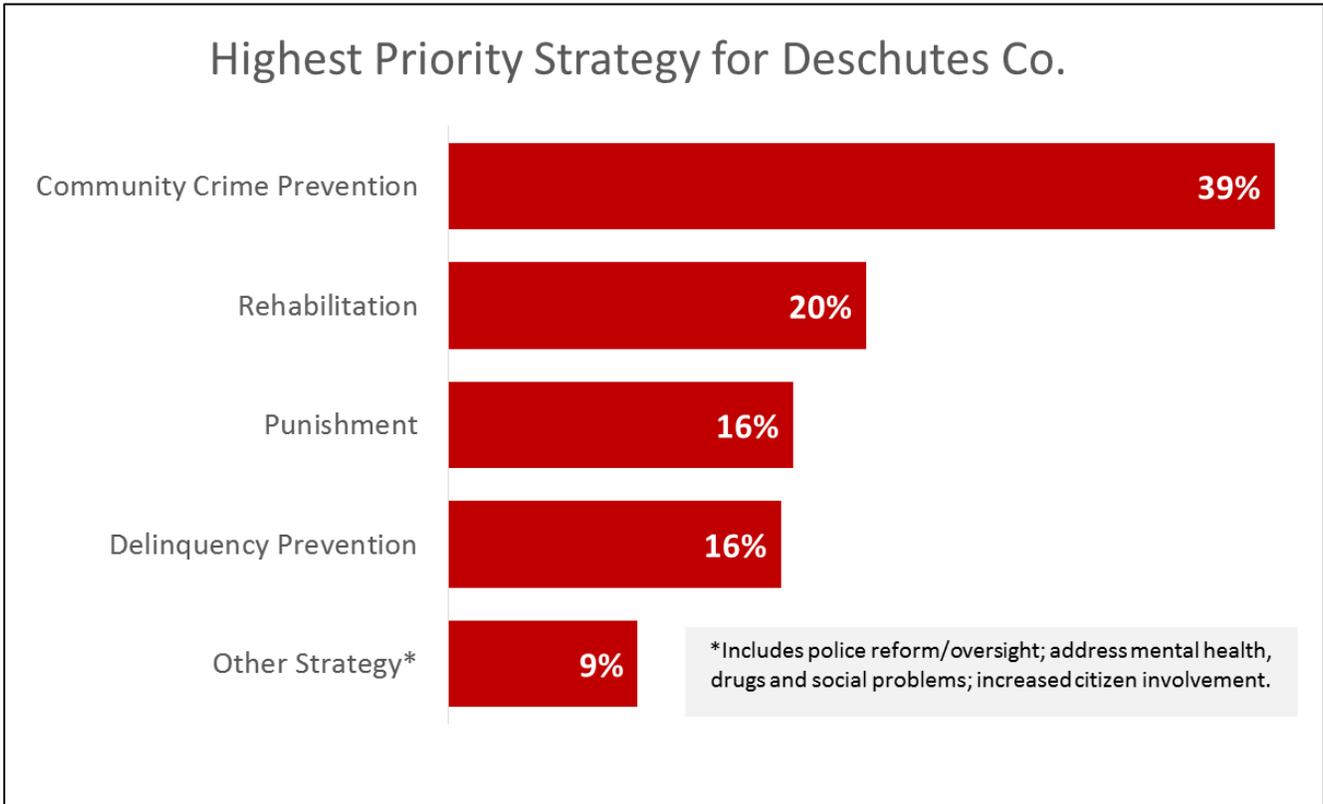
Rehabilitation – defined as efforts to prevent crime by providing offenders with counseling, treatment, or related services (substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, job skills training, etc.)

Punishment – defined as efforts to prevent crime by increasing the severity of punishments administered through the criminal justice system (higher fines, longer prison sentences, etc.)

Survey participants were asked to share whether they supported or opposed the county putting more resources into each of these four strategies in order to reduce or prevent crime. For each of the public safety strategies, respondents were asked to indicate whether they “strongly opposed,” “opposed,” “neutral/no opinion,” “supported,” or “strongly support” that strategy.

As shown in the chart on the left, survey respondents were largely supportive (supported or strongly supported) of the county putting additional resources into all of the proposed strategies in an effort to improve public safety. Delinquency prevention received the highest level of support at 82 percent. And while the majority of residents supported more resources for punishment (55 percent), this strategy also generated the most opposition with 25 percent of the respondents opposing or strongly opposing the county putting more resources toward this strategy.

Respondents were then asked to select the one strategy that should be the county’s highest priority over the next 12 months from the prior list of proposed strategies. As multiple crime prevention strategies can receive high levels of support, it is essential to understand the option community members feel should receive the most focus and/or resources.



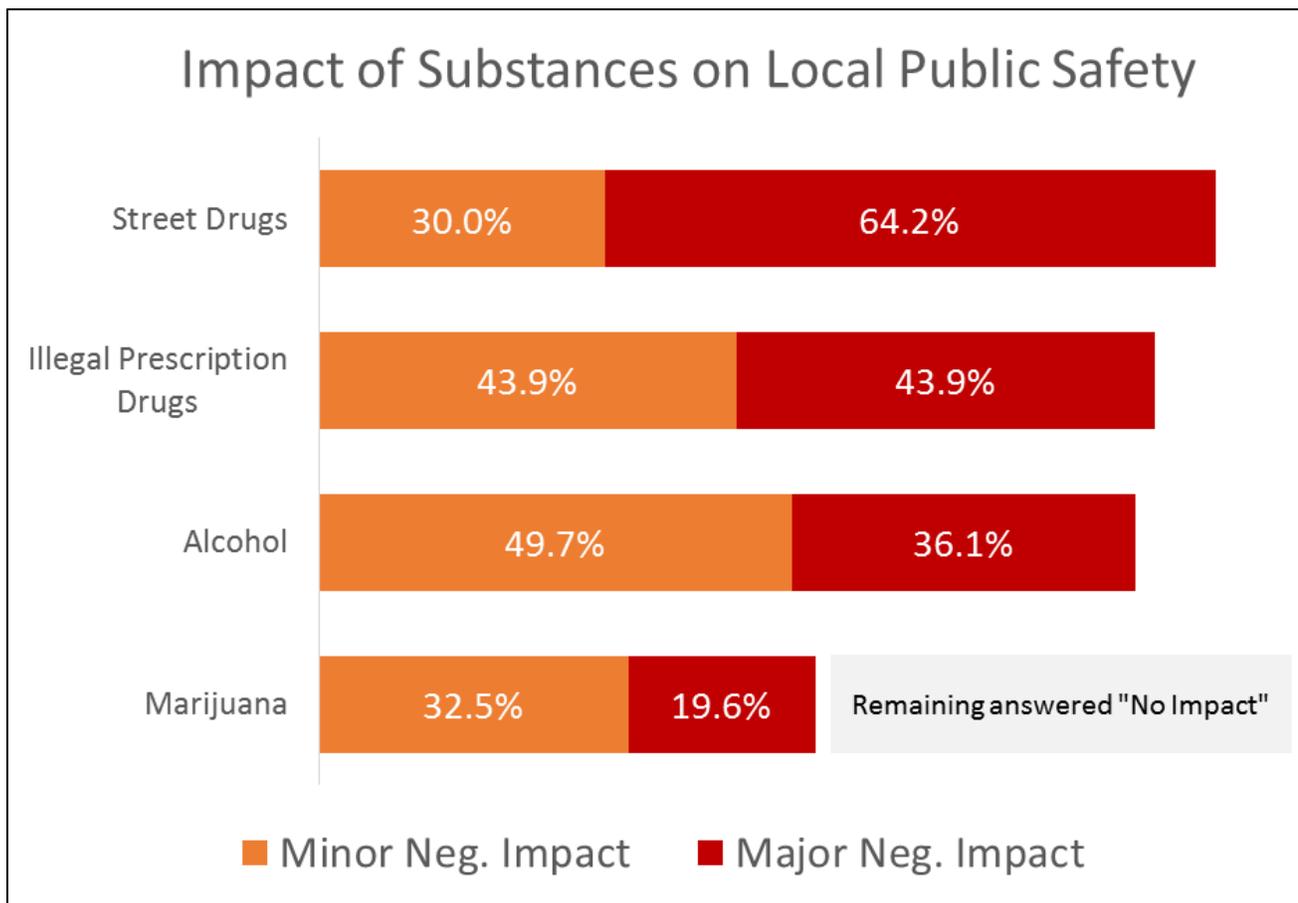
As illustrated in the graph above, when respondents were asked to just select just one strategy, community crime prevention was identified as the highest priority with 39 percent of respondents stating it was their top public safety strategy.

Perceptions on the best strategy for reducing crime can be impacted by the respondents view on the biggest public safety issue. The strategy that respondents feel might be most effective to reduce drug-related crimes may be completely different than what respondents feel would be most effective to improve traffic safety. Understanding which offense may have been weighing specifically on the minds of the respondents could indicate why delinquency prevention received the most support (82 percent) in the previous question, but only 16% of respondents selected it as their top choice under this question.

Impact of Substance Abuse on Public Safety

The next section of the survey focused specifically on the impact of substance abuse on public safety. This set of questions was particularly critical as local criminal justice data indicates that substance use is an issue impacting our community and its resources. DeschutesSafe wanted to know if community members were aware of or experiencing that impact, and if so what substance did they feel was having the greatest impact.

To determine this, respondents were asked if they thought each of the following four substances (marijuana, alcohol, prescription drugs and street drugs) were impacting public safety. Public safety was defined as issues related to property crime, violent crime, domestic violence, child maltreatment, public disorder and traffic safety. For each of the substances respondents were asked whether they thought public safety in the county was being negatively impacted by the use of the substance by selecting “no”, “yes-minor impact,” or “yes- major impact.” The graph below shows the percentage of respondents that feel each of the substances is either having a minor or major impact on public safety.



Ninety-four percent of respondents indicated that illegal drugs are negatively impacting public safety. In addition, a significant portion of the respondents also felt that illegal prescription drugs (88 percent) and alcohol (86 percent) are impacting public safety. For these three substances only 14 percent or less of the respondents felt that use of those substances was having no impact. In stark contrast; however, 47 percent of survey respondents indicated that marijuana is having no impact on public safety.

To explore this topic further, survey respondents were asked to provide examples of how public safety is being negatively impacted by these substances. Their open-ended responses were analyzed to identify recurring issues and themes.

The substances that generated the largest numbers of comments related to alcohol and marijuana use impacting public safety, and specifically their connection to **traffic accidents** (204 responses). Specific concerns also focused on impaired driving, the lack of alternative transportation, and a community culture that promotes substance use.

- *“The legalization of marijuana has increased the number of people driving under the influence without the ability to test their level of impaired-ness.”*
- *“Tourists and residents alike enjoy knocking back a few beers, and I feel there is a general lack of concern towards drunk driving in Bend. Few transportation options in the evening exacerbates this problem.”*
- *“Bend promotes microbreweries and beer in general, then acts surprised at the number of intoxicated drivers.”*

The second most frequently cited concern was on the impact of all the substances on public safety as related to **property crime** (189 responses). Comments provided were most often tied to an increase in crime, the homeless community, and youth experimenting.

- *“Minor crimes such as car break-ins have increased, many of these people are looking for either drugs, money or things to trade/sell for money to obtain drugs.”*
- *“You see more homeless people on the streets these days and those people have to find ways to get their drugs and alcohol. These people either pan handle or steal to get there drugs and alcohol.”*
- *“Youth get into experimenting with various drugs and then steal or vandalize to either support their habit or because they are high and think it's 'fun.’”*

The third most common theme under the open-ended responses was **substance abuse** (139 respondents) across all the substances. Respondents noted the impact of drug use on the individuals and their families, as well as its association with violent behavior, the transient population, and illegal prescription drug use.

- *“I am a medical provider in Central Oregon and oppose people using medical marijuana and opioids. I have worked in Deschutes Co and Jefferson Co and there are a lot of drug seekers and families negatively affected by drugs and alcohol. It affects health and families.”*
- *“Most violent crimes, property crimes, and domestic abuse involves at least one party that is impaired by alcohol or controlled substances.”*
- *“There are many meth issues in Deschutes County, many times also transient related. I do feel the police have done an outstanding job busting these individuals. Just seems like more and more keep popping up.”*
- *“I personally know many people who have had their lives destroyed by heroin, meth, and alcohol. Alcohol and illegal drug use are the two biggest public safety problems facing Deschutes County in 2016.”*
- *“Prescription drug abuse appears to be a big problem; it is very easy to get hooked on these drugs especially if your doctor is readily prescribing them. Prescription drugs are also easy for kids to obtain.”*

Options for Dealing with Substance-Related Crimes

As mentioned earlier in this report, there are many ways to prevent or reduce crime and DeschutesSafe wanted to better understand the community's opinions on the use of three public safety strategies as they related to drug offenses. This series of questions was important to gauge the community's interest specifically in the use of alternative strategies for dealing with individuals charged with drug-related crimes.

The three strategies provided for respondents to choose from were:

- **Diversion** - People arrested/cited for a substance-related crime would not be charged if they agreed to seek treatment in the community. Actual participation in treatment would be voluntary.
- **Drug Court** - People arrested/cited for a substance-related crime would have their criminal charges dropped if they participate in treatment in the community. Those failing to participate in treatment would be prosecuted.
- **Prosecution** - People arrested/cited for a substance-related crime would be aggressively prosecuted with the goal of obtaining maximum criminal penalties.

To assess this, respondents were asked to indicate which of the above strategies they preferred be used on individuals involved in specific drug offenses associated with one of the following substances: alcohol, marijuana, street drugs and illegal prescription drugs. The criminal offenses ranged from possessing or distributing substances, to committing other crimes while under the influence or to obtain money to acquire the substance. The table below provides the percent of respondents supporting each strategy based on the substance and crime.

SUBSTANCES & OFFENSES	PREFERRED STRATEGY		
	Diversion	Drug Court	Prosecution
ALCOHOL			
Distributing Alcohol to a Minor	17%	24%	59%
Minor in Possession of Alcohol	50%	41%	9%
Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol	13%	27%	60%
Property Crime to Get Money for Alcohol	7%	26%	67%
MARIJUANA			
Distributing Marijuana to a Minor	22%	24%	53%
Minor in Possession of Marijuana	50%	41%	9%
Driving Under the Influence of Marijuana	21%	36%	43%
Property Crime to Get Money for Marijuana	8%	26%	66%
ILLEGAL PRESCRIPTION DRUGS (e.g., Vicodin, OxyContin, Valium, Xanax, Ritalin)			
Distributing Illegal Presc. Drugs	8%	26%	66%
Possession of Illegal Presc. Drugs	21%	55%	24%
Driving Under Influence of Illegal Presc. Drugs	11%	36%	53%
Property Crime to Get Money for Presc. Drugs	4%	25%	71%
STREET DRUGS (e.g., cocaine, methamphetamines, heroin)			
Distributing Drugs	5%	18%	77%
Possession of Drugs	14%	50%	36%
Driving Under the Influence of Drugs	8%	30%	63%
Property Crime to Get Money for Drugs	4%	22%	74%

Respondents indicated that they were much more receptive to alternative strategies (i.e. diversion & drug court) for juveniles, specifically minors in possession of alcohol or marijuana, than they were for adults. Only nine percent of respondents felt juveniles should be prosecuted for possession offenses.

For adults, respondents were only receptive to alternative strategies when the individuals were in illegal possession of drugs, and not when they committed any other type of drug-related crime. With the exception of marijuana related crimes, 53 percent or more of the respondents stated that individuals distributing or manufacturing substances, driving under the influence, or involved in property crimes while under the influence of drugs should be prosecuted. For individuals driving under the influence of marijuana only 43% of the respondents selected prosecution as their preferred strategy.

In addition, respondents were more inclined to support a diversion or drug court option if the offender was engaged in the use of illegal prescription drugs verses the use of street drugs.

Summary

Respondents stated that they feel Deschutes County is a safe place to live. The vast majority of respondents indicated that they are comfortable walking alone during the day and more than half also indicated they feel safe walking alone at night. Some respondents stated that their perceived level of safety has changed with the increase in the homeless population and panhandling, to the point that they are avoiding areas that they once frequented. This issue was noted most frequently by Bend respondents, but overall across the county more than 40 percent of respondents reported that they feel public safety declined over the previous 12 months.

Respondents expressed strong support for the county putting more resources toward alternative strategies to prevent or reduce crime. There was specific interest in programs that focus more on preventative measures such as delinquency prevention (i.e. parenting classes) and community crime prevention (e.g. installation of security camera)s, over more punitive measures that use punishment such as fines or imprisonment.

Respondents clearly indicated that they believe illegal drug use is our county's top safety concern and that street drugs are having the biggest negative impact on our community's safety. Many of the comments associated the substance use issue with the homeless community and the reason for some of the property crime issues. However, when asked to provide specific examples, respondents primarily mentioned the use of alcohol and marijuana as the substances having an adverse effect on public safety, and frequently cited those substances as creating traffic safety issues. This inconsistency may be the result of the individuals responding to the survey not having direct experience with, or exposure to illegal drug use, making it difficult to provide specific examples; however, they may be aware of substance use issues due to media stories or through discussions with other community members. In addition, there is a sentiment from a number of respondents that the brewery scene, alcohol-focused festivals, and the availability of marijuana, has resulted in a culture, particularly in Bend, that is contributing to the substance-use issues our county is experiencing.

The second biggest concern identified by respondents, and the issue that generated the most commentary, was traffic safety. Driving under the influence is believed to be a major public safety issue by respondents, but there was also a high degree of consensus that the issues surrounding traffic safety also relate to drivers driving too fast, being distracted behind the wheel (phone use), and driving too aggressively. Respondents stated that they feel attitudes of drivers have changed and they are far less courteous and patient, which is causing an increase in traffic related incidences. They felt these issues are likely to increase unless there are more enforcement measures taken and the options for alternative transportation are improved.

When specifically responding to questions about strategies to address drug crimes, respondents were very supportive of diversion (treatment focused strategies), instead of punitive actions for juveniles. They were less supportive of these options for adults, but were open to them when the crime was only for possession. For individuals caught manufacturing or delivering drugs, respondents showed strong support for punitive strategies. If the criminal action directly and primarily impacts the offender or the offender is a minor, the community is open to helping those individuals get on the right path through treatment rather than fines or jail time. However, if the offender's crime involves illegal drugs and their actions directly impact others, the openness to alternative strategies is supported by far fewer community members, as more believe prosecution is the best strategy.

Overall, the results of the survey point toward a community that 1) feels they live in a safe place, 2) are aware of some current public safety issues, and 3) are interested in actions being taken to address these problems to prevent them from becoming worse. Based on the number of respondents that provided their email addresses for follow-up communication, and respondent's support of community crime prevention strategies (which often require active public participation to be successful); it is clear that community members are interested in staying informed and engaged in public safety measures. Enhanced communication with residents may help to improve residents' support for the criminal justice system and increase the community's perception of public safety, as well as their support for alternative strategies to address public safety issues.

Survey Methodology & Sample

The District Attorney's Office used the County's voter registration database to randomly identify 10,000 household addresses, in Deschutes County, to receive a postcard from DA John Hummel inviting them to complete the survey in September 2016. The postcard explained that the DA's Office, in partnership with local law enforcement, healthcare, social services, businesses, and community members was interested in learning more about the community's perceptions of public safety in Deschutes County. The purpose of the survey was to hear from community members on their ideas for what can be done to address their safety concerns. The letter requested that all adult occupants at the address complete the anonymous online survey. Two hundred and sixty-nine individuals completed the survey from the initial approach.

To increase the number of responses, the survey was opened up to all county residents in October 2016. Facebook notices, along with announcements in traditional print and radio media were used to encourage community members to participate. This method resulted in an additional 672 surveys being completed.

Data for the present report was downloaded from the two online survey sites after the survey closed on November 1, 2016. A total of 941 completed surveys were available at that time. It is not possible to accurately determine the response rate for the survey because we do not know the true number of people who heard about the survey through the second open solicitation that occurred after the mailed postcard approach.

We acknowledge that the current sample represents only a small proportion of the estimated 137,484 adults living in Deschutes County in 2016. We also know that the sample is not fully representative of all residents: whites, females, and those 35 to 44 years of age were over-represented as compared to the 2010 Census figures (Population estimates obtained from PSU's Population Research Center).

For more information about this report please contact Kathleen Meehan Coop at Deschutes County District Attorney's Office (541-317-3175, kathleen.meehancoop@dcdca.us) and for additional information about the survey methodology please contact Dr. Kris Henning at Portland State University, (khennig@pdx.edu).

Acknowledgements

DeschutesSafe Members

Bruce Abernethy, Bend La Pine School District
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Charla DeHate, La Pine Community Health Clinic
Andrew Doyle, Defense Attorney
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Chris Gardner, Juvenile Rights Attorney
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Sarah Hansen, Deschutes County District Attorney's Office
Deevy Holcomb, Juvenile Community Justice
Janet Huerta, Saving Grace
Jessica Jacks, Deschutes County Health Services
Tonya Karlowicz, La Pine High School
Naomi Mozelle, Home Street Mortgage
Mayor Mullenex, City of La Pine
Sophia Natherson, Oregon Institute of Technology
Sheriff Nelson, Deschutes County Sheriff's Office
Scott Patterson, Oregon Department of Corrections
Sally Pfeifer, Pfeifer and Associates Treatment Services
Chief Porter, Bend Police
Austin Purcell, Student
Julianne Repman, Bend-La Pine Schools
Terry Schroeder, Deschutes County Behavioral Health
Marney Smith, Les Schwab Amphitheater
Chief Tabet, Redmond Police
Cindy Tisher, Litigation Support Services
Gwenn Wysling, The Bethlehem Inn