

Opinion Leader Survey

Camden Reports 2005



SECTOR	CIVIC
PHASE—I	DRAFT
DATE	December 15, 2005



Camden Reports 2005: Online Opinion Leader Survey



CAMConnect is a partnership committed to sharing and using information that will lead to informed decisions and better policy making to improve the quality of life of all Camden citizens. CAMConnect is based on a model for the use of advanced neighborhood level information systems in policy making and local capacity building. Our partnership includes community and neighborhood groups, government, community-based organizations, hospitals, educational institutions, businesses, and other organizations that use and collect information.

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose: To measure views of Camden opinion leaders regarding the State recovery and to provide input to the transition team for the Governor-elect.

Data Sources: Primary data collection online November 2005

Future Work: The survey data will be reviewed and shared with policy makers so that they may have more complete information about the views of Camden opinion leaders.

CAMConnect developed this survey independently with the goal of gathering more complete information about perceptions of the State recovery act to date. This survey was conducted online using surveymonkey.com, and was intended to provide a snapshot of the views of Camden opinion leaders. The online survey instrument was used because of the ease of survey administration and analysis, and because most of the intended respondents would have internet access.

Questions were developed by CAMConnect staff and board members. Eleven databases of Camden opinion leaders, provided by CAMConnect board members, were merged by CAMConnect staff to create the mailing list for the survey. Over 360 leaders in business, non-profits, institutions, the public sector, and the community were included on this list.

Each person on the mailing list received a letter notifying them of the survey and providing instructions for completion online. The 191 intended recipients for whom an e-mail address was known also received two e-mail notices with links to the surveys. The survey was also advertised on CAMConnect's website and via the *Camden Matters* online newsletter. Potential respondents received instructions for completing a paper version of the survey if they were not able to complete it online.

Eighty-one opinion leaders accessed the survey online, but six did not complete the survey beyond the first question. So, the sample size / response for this survey can be considered as 75.

The last 15 pages of this report (the Appendix) contain the open-ended responses for some of the questions.

The online survey technique was more effective for those potential respondents whose e-mail address was known. Over 75% of the 75 respondents accessed the survey via the e-mail link sent by CAMConnect. Future online survey efforts in Camden should be cognizant of the importance of having e-mail addresses for potential recipients. Also, more widespread online surveys are probably not feasible, recognizing the reality that many Camden residents do not have regular access to a computer or internet connection

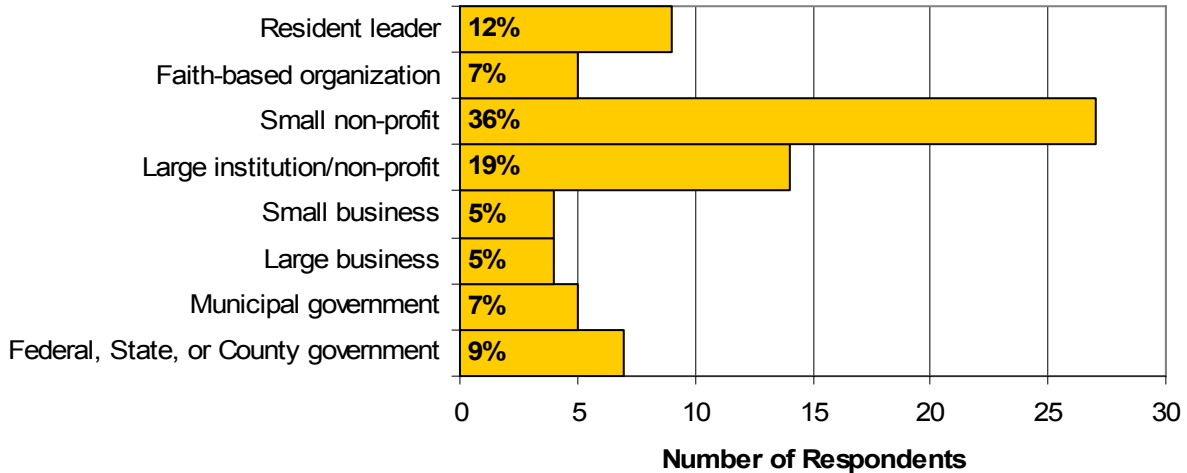
1. Please enter your ID code assigned by CAMConnect.

2. What is your home zip code?

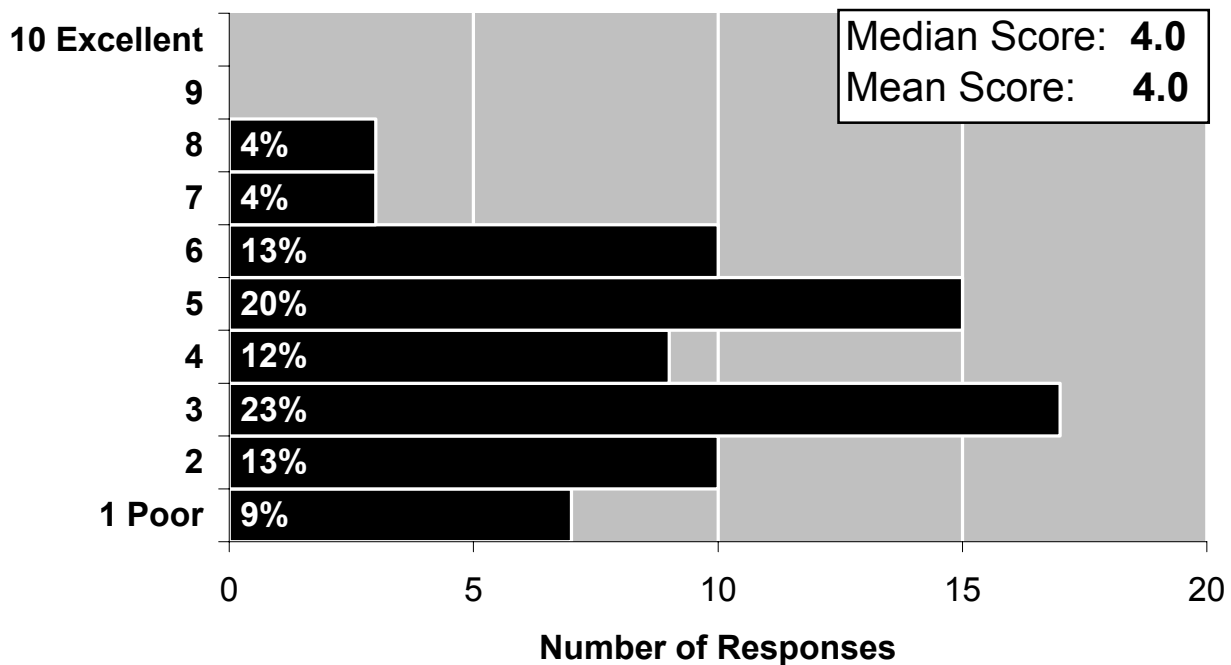
Camden resident: 39 responses (53%)

Non-Camden resident: 35 responses (47%)

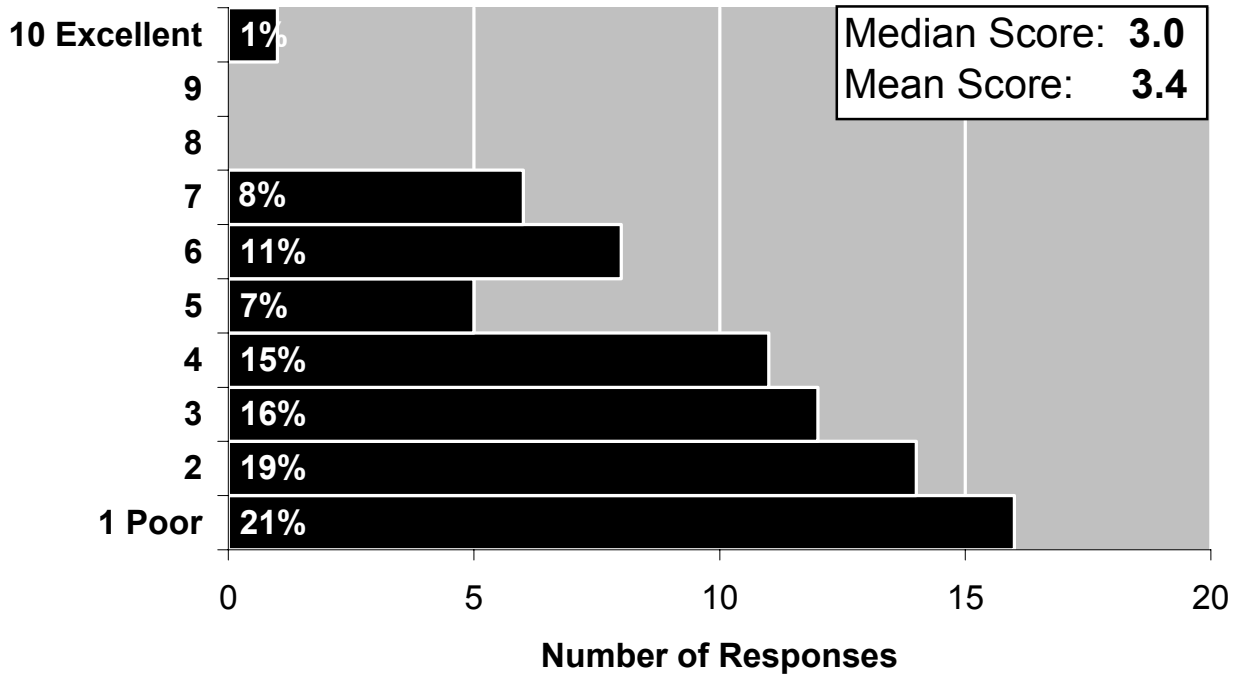
3. I identify the sector you are in:



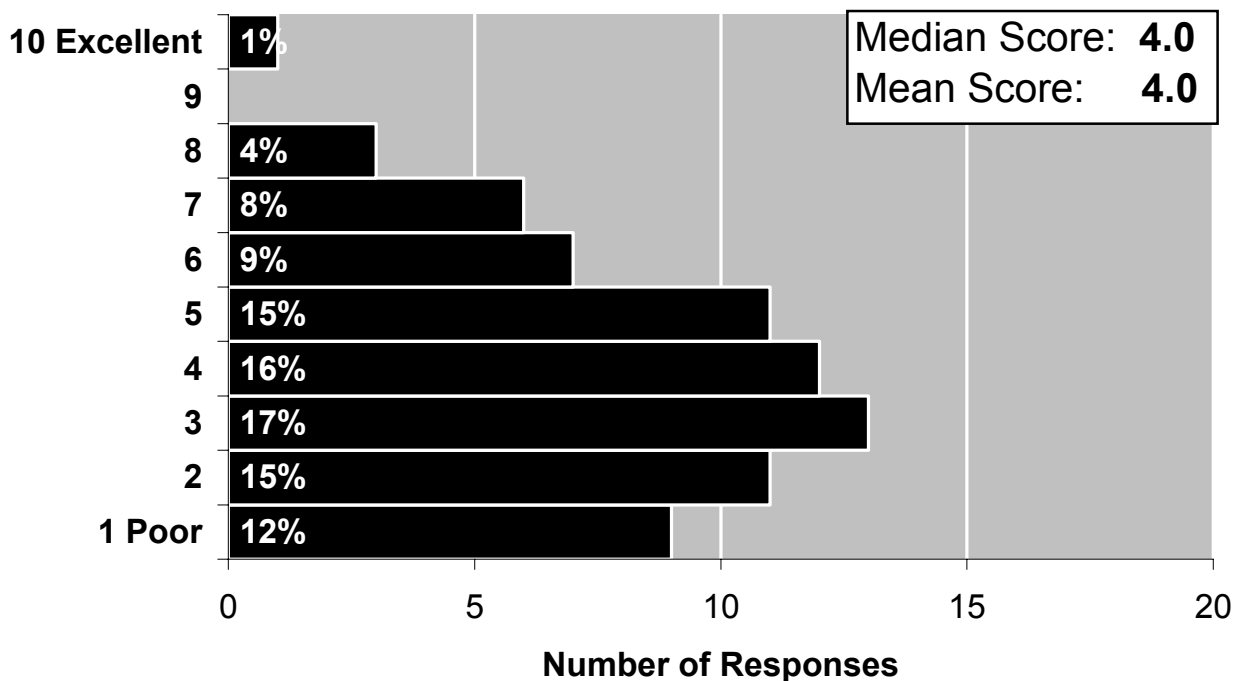
4. On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate the success of the Recovery Act so far on economic revitalization?



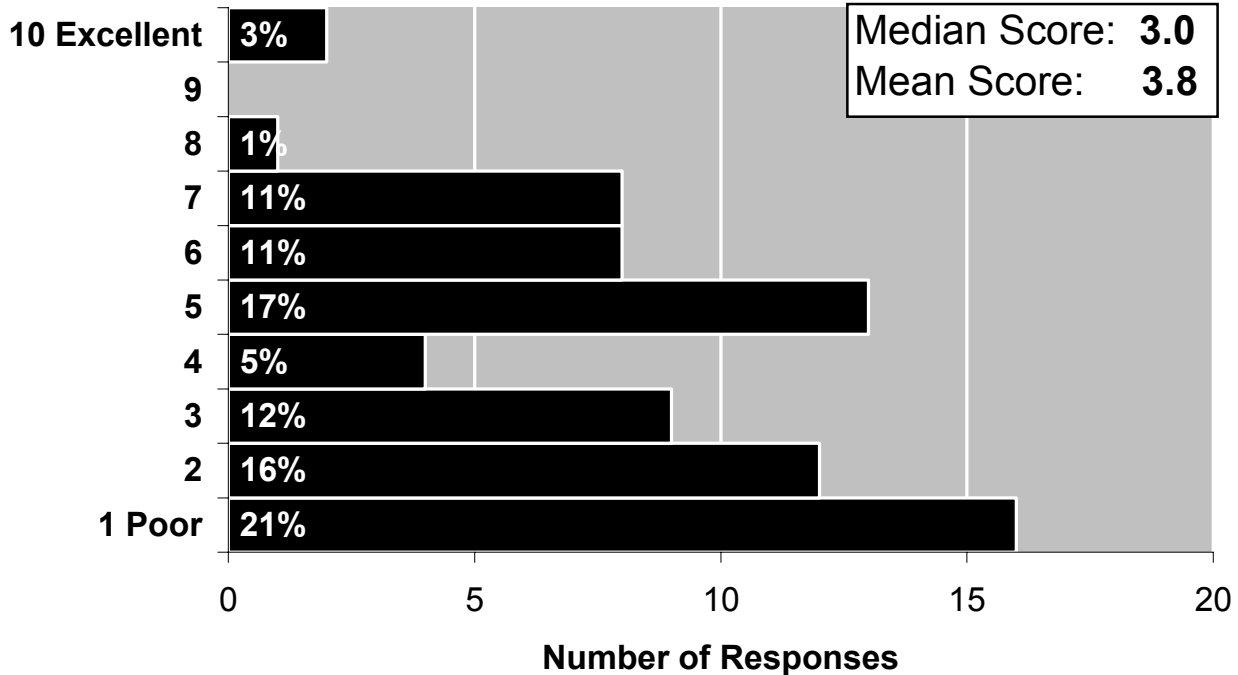
5. On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate the success of the Recovery Act so far on municipal government enhancement?



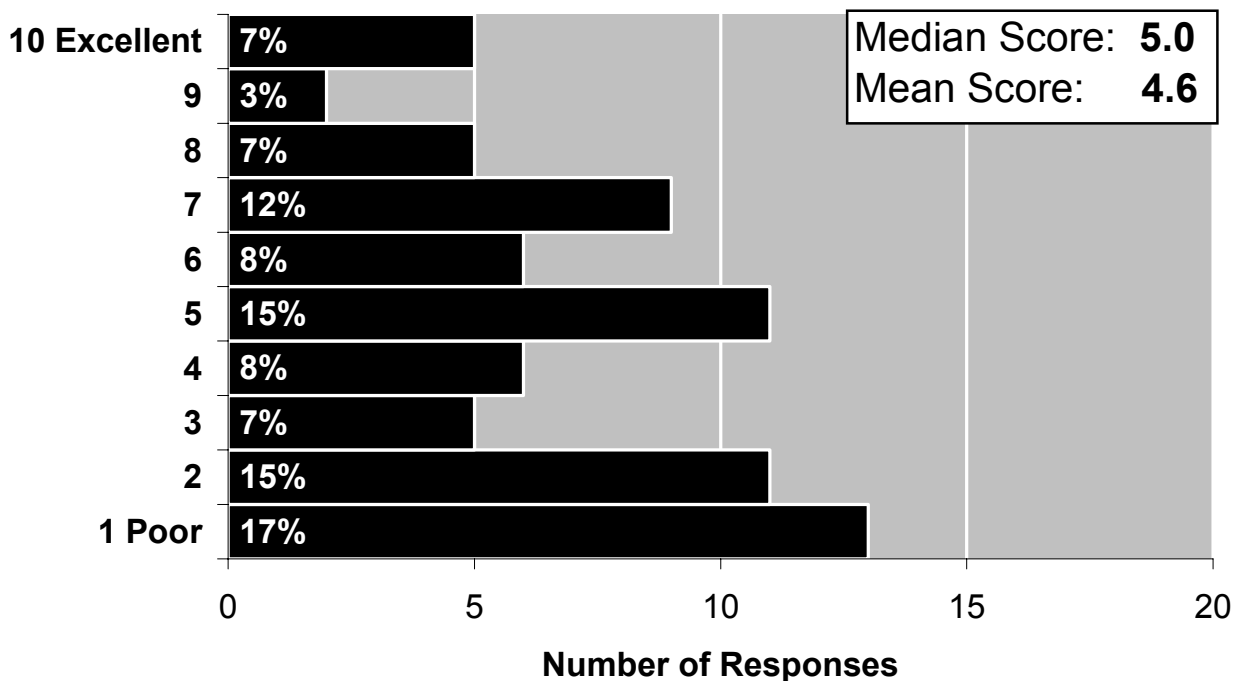
6. On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate the Recovery Act's chances of launching a sustainable recovery in Camden?



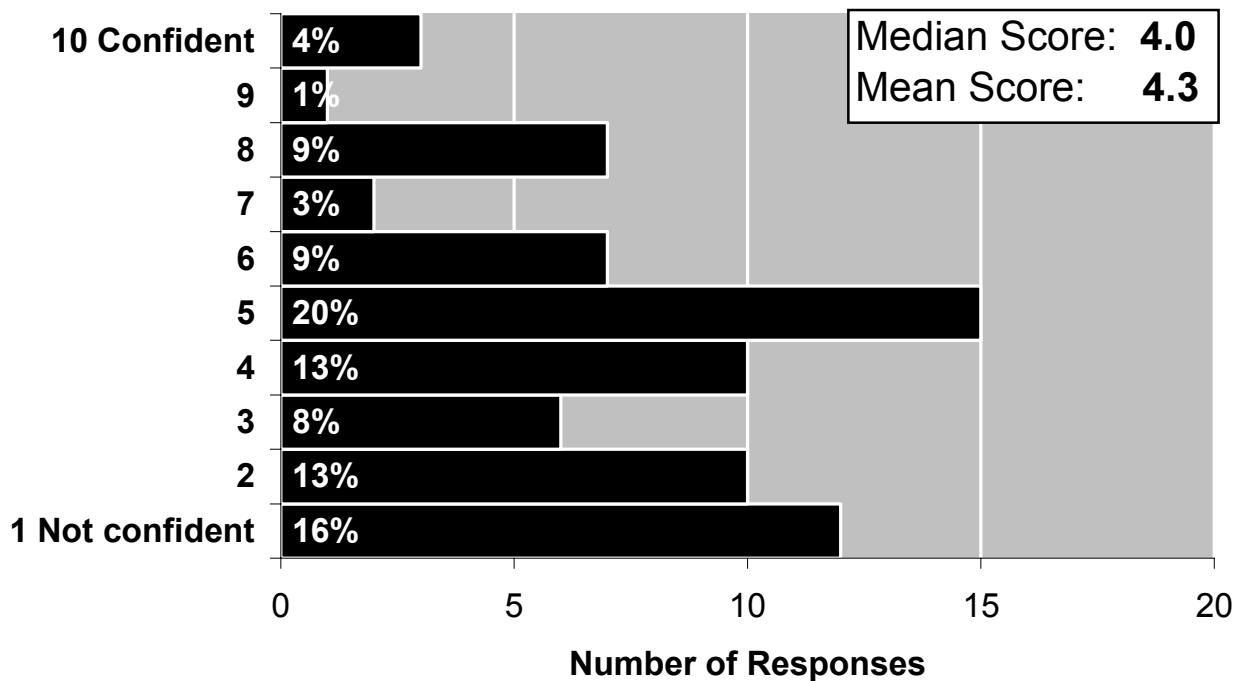
7. On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate the performance of the Camden Redevelopment Agency (CRA)?



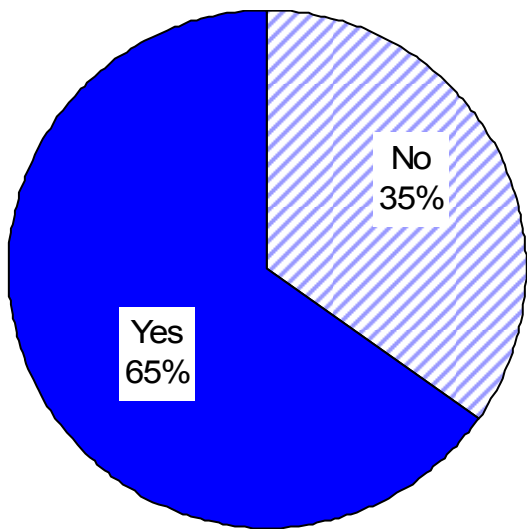
8. On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate the performance of the Chief Operating Officer (COO), Randy Primas?



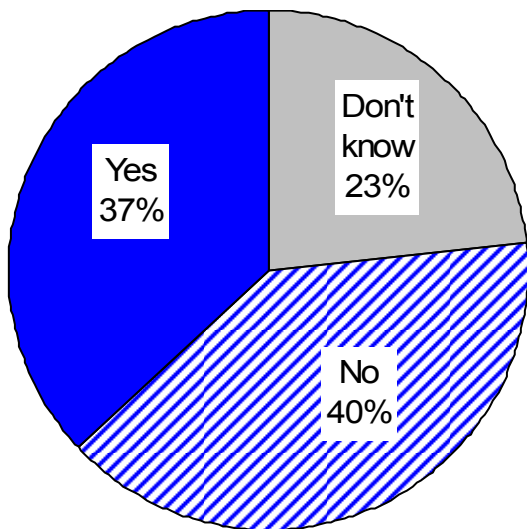
9. How confident are you, on a scale of 1-10, that the Cherokee Cramer Hill Redevelopment Project will be completed?



10. Do you know roughly how the \$175 million in State funds have been spent thus far?



11. Do you consider the distribution of funds as outlined in the Recovery Act to be appropriate for Camden?



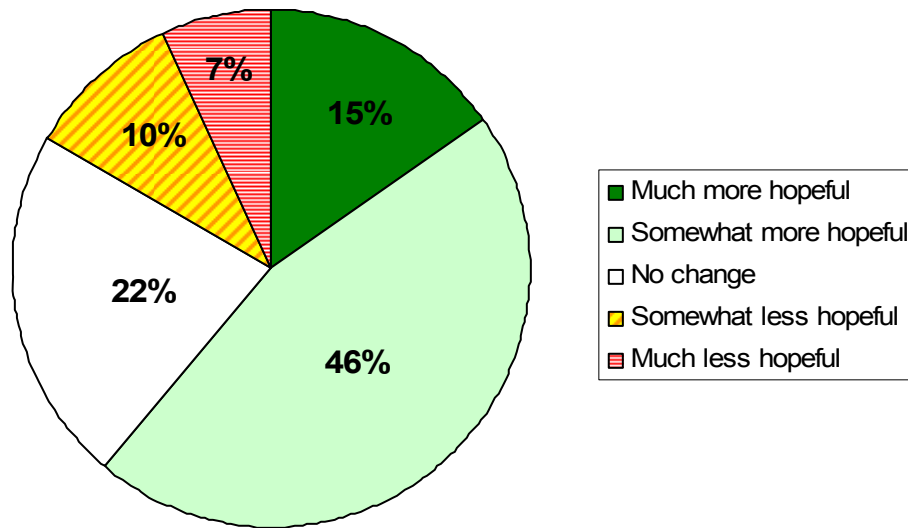
12. How would you change the distribution of the \$175 million in State funds?

See Appendix for responses (page 10)

13. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Agree	Disagree	Total Responses
The Recovery Act will benefit primarily the large institutions in Camden, not the neighborhoods or the residents.	70% (50)	30% (21)	71
The Recovery Act is a bold step in trying to turn around the City of Camden.	72% (52)	28% (20)	72
Investing in downtown hospitals and universities is a good strategy to revitalize Camden and ultimately benefit community residents.	66% (47)	34% (24)	71
The primary beneficiaries of the Recovery Act are outsiders who are politically connected.	55% (38)	45% (31)	69
The community has had real opportunities to communicate with the COO and CRA.	36% (25)	64% (45)	69

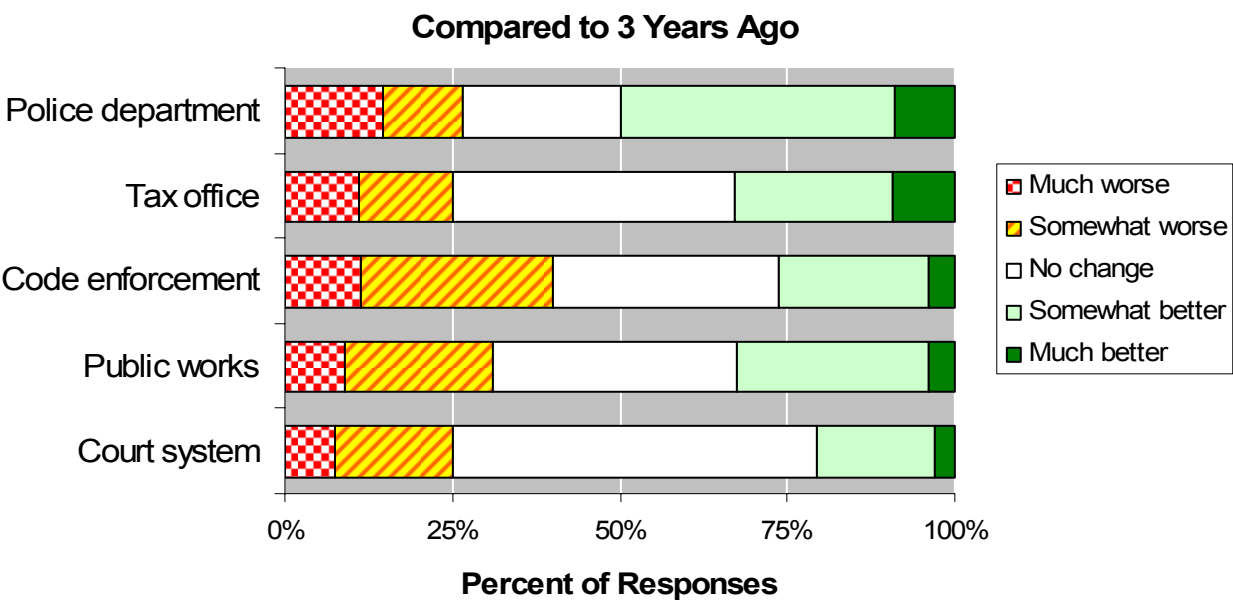
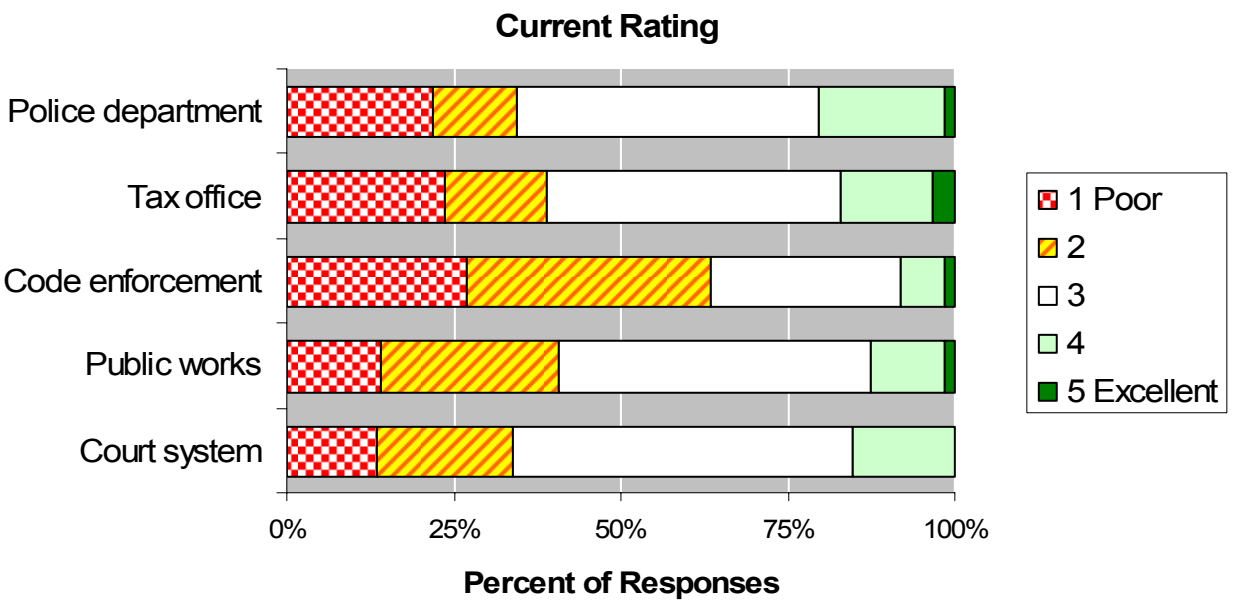
14. Do you feel more or less hopeful about the future of Camden than you did 3 years ago?



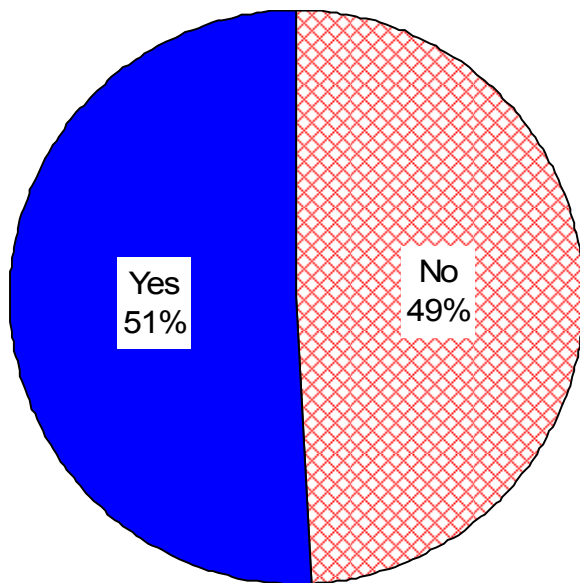
15. Why are you more or less hopeful?

See Appendix for responses (page 12)

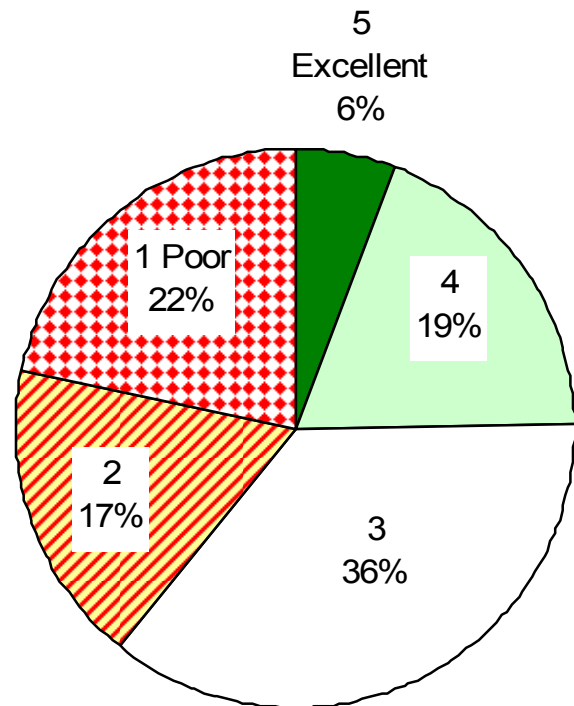
16. Please rate the following Camden city services from 1-5. Also, please assess the current performance compared to that of 3 years ago.



17. Do you have confidence in the Chief Operating Officer, Randy Primas to continue leading the recovery period?

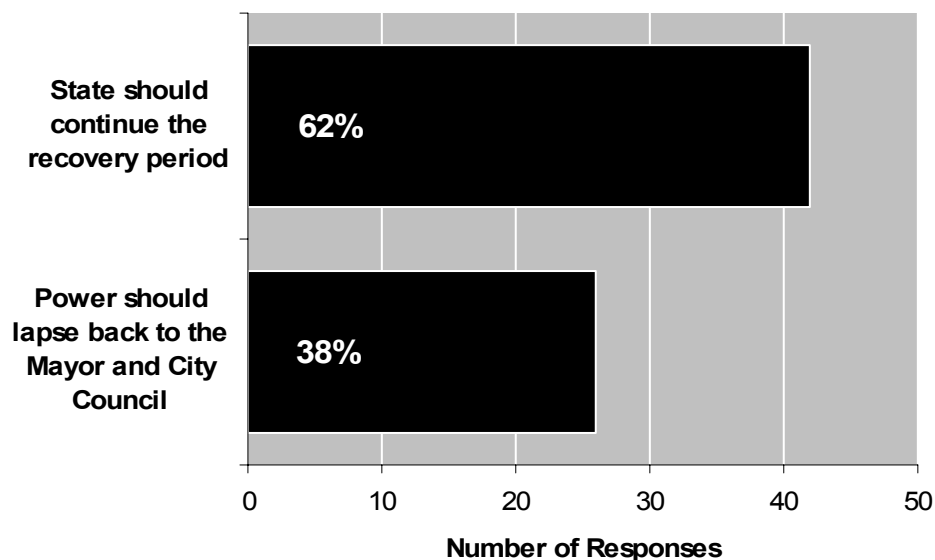


18. How would you rate the COO's response to public safety issues in Camden?



Mean Score:	2.7
Median Score:	3.0

19. In 2007, when the initial period of the recovery ends, should the state continue the recovery period or should power lapse back to the Mayor and City Council?



20. What are the biggest successes of the recovery period?

See Appendix for responses (page 15)

21. What are the biggest failures of the recovery period?

See Appendix for responses (page 17)

21. What would your top three priorities be over the next 2 years?

See Appendix for responses (page 20)

23. Please provide any other comments you may have about the Recovery period?

See Appendix for responses (page 23)

APPENDIX: DETAILED RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

12. How would you change the distribution of \$175 million in State funds?

Employment / Job Training

I would prefer to have seen more of the money go toward preparing local adults for work and a little less to infrastructure improvement.

While the distribution of funds addresses redevelopment from a small business viewpoint, more should be done to address unemployment and redevelopment in those areas of the city not blighted as much as those areas more renown such as north camden or parkside. Particularly, unemployment and training has to be available for any type of redevelopment to take hold. We can have a the most beautiful city in the world but if opportunity is not available to all, its only a pipedream.

Address the job training and creation issue. Certain awards should be tied to job creation.

More of the money needs to be put into educational programming and school improvements that serve younger children. More money needs to be put into supporting agencies, businesses, CBOs and the faith based community (including job development programs) that will become the infrastructure for lasting economic recovery.

Neighborhood/ Community Projects

Possibly more neighborhood-based projects with citizen involvement and decision-making process more weighted; at least input from focus groups of residents, needs assessments, neighborhood outreach prior to funding decisions. On the whole, the ERB board members appear to represent a fair balance, although that may not be apparent at meetings where the staff make most of the presentations. Efforts to bring more neighborhood residents to visible participation would give them a more proactive role.

More money for neighborhood revitalization and job training.

I would probably allocate more funds to the Neighborhoods

The larger percentage of funds should have gone into neighborhood revitalization projects, such as resotation of existing commercial corridors. This would involve providing a funding vehicle to assist business in relocating to those corridors and/or helping existing businesses to strengthen their economic footing.

I would give more money to the neighborhoods

I find it hard to say yes or no. There should definitely be investment into the downtown and the corporations/ organizations there. Without a downtown, there may be nothing. However, more needs to be invested elsewhere in the City.

Too much of the money went to fund projects for the existing instutions, such as Rutgers and Cooper Hospital. Improvements to these organizations will not directly benefit those who live in the city. There are so many other projects that are in need of funding, that would improve life in the city for some of the residents.

Monies should be allocated specifically for programs providing low interest loans to first time home buyers in the city (with an emphasis on those who have a poor credit history). It appears that we are building and rebuilding; yet, the majority of our population, hence renters, do not seem to have access to mortgages.

would provide more funding to non profits for affordable housing

More funds allocated towards the social and supportive services needs of the city residents.

The money would go to Faith Based and non- profit organizations through a grant process.

Personally, it makes little sense to bring Rowan to the university district. Why bring them here and add even more to the parking woes that besiege us? The campus should be somewhere else, also quite accessible, but not right in the downtown area. Possibly nearer to the Ferry PATCO station or in Fairview? We need to distribute the educational resources rather than concentrate competing programs in the center of town where there's not enough parking for anyone now. As for the other funds, organize the distribution of funds before dispersing any to maximize their impact. We need impact in Camden, lots of it.

APPENDIX: DETAILED RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

12. How would you change the distribution of \$175 million in State funds? cont'd

Business Development

Spend less money on the colleges/universities -- I know they are a draw, but with the tuitions on a rise they can afford Camden on their own. Give monies to businesses who are displaced by the current plan. Help them to establish their business in another area or work around them.

Greater focus on incentives and benefits for existing businesses to expand. More strategic approach to the issue of business relocation with a focus on retention and growth of ratables. Moratorium on the use of dollars for consulting contracts so redundancy can be eliminated.

More to neighborhoods. More to small non-profits and small businesses that employ Camden residents. More to port. I'm OK with amount going to hospitals, but that's all. Rutgers Law could finance its own expansion without recovery money.

I would make the application process more open, engaging, and inviting for residents and small businesses.

more money give to existing businesses in the city to improve and or expand. too much money to development corps

Infrastructure

use more of the funds to fix the infrastructure of the city, i.e. streets, lights, etc. Shore up Public Works and Code Enforcement.

More money should have been allocated to increasing the capacity of Camden to deliver basic government services, improving the police department, repairing streets, and demolishing vacant buildings.

I would have put more into just infrastructure so we can get clean water.

Government Capacity

These funds needed to go to project that would jump start the economy here in Camden. it is too early to determine if that has happened. more funds are needs for a sustainable city government beyond the recovery period.

City government needs cleaned up and professionalized.

The city has to be completely changed before anything new can be accomplished.

more money for job training to create employment less money for institutional development (i.e., hospitals and universities) and more investment in infrastructure needed to support institutions (water, sewer, roads) more funds to recruit and pay highly-skilled professionals needed to sustain Camden's recovery and improve the government's operations

Stop hiring all your family and friends. All of the money goes in the larger salaries and we still don't get anything done. Let the people who are qualified for the job do it and stop getting paid for nothing. Fix up all the boarded up houses and you could get some tax money.

No Change in Distribution

I trust the officials of Camden City to do what is best for their residents as well as the residents of Camden County.

I would not change the distribution. It is not enough to rehabilitate the entire City! I believe that the COO is doing the best he can with limited resources.

Would not

It's okay.

Other

To complicated an answer to provide in a short space.

I first have to update myself on how the funds thus far have been spent before honestly answering this question

APPENDIX: DETAILED RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

15. Why are you more or less hopeful?

Much more hopeful

I am hopeful because I have been exposed to leaders from inside and outside of the city who have a strong commitment to revitalizing the city. What is broken cannot be fixed in 3-5 years. There has to be patience while a foundation is developed that will sustain success for the long-term.

More hopeful with crime statistics improving

I see construction happening and more national attention being focused on the plight of Camden's residents.

Just look around. This city is improving. When I moved here in 1996, I was amazed at how downtrodden the city is. Now, there are projects everywhere. Even if they don't do much, I'm glad to see neighborhood associations and service agencies trying to improve the city!

The Recovery Act serves as a catalyst to bring additional investment and development into Camden

there is a growing sense of hope among some residents and more collaborative approaches to inform and impact issues

because of what I see

Because of the changes that are visible throughout the city.

Somewhat more hopeful

Improving the colleges, universities and downtown area will help Camden but the Recovery Act doesn't do enough to help the average citizen of Camden find good employment.

i believe that development is both necessary and that it takes time. Without the Recovery Act we would still be in the same boat. Now those in the government who have invested in this recovery have much at stake and much to both gain and lose.

more hopeful because there is state engagement and investment; and because there is attention being paid to increasing govt. capacity cautious because more decisive action on govt. reform has not happened and because funding was not frontloaded to execute many MRERA requirements, so COO has had to scrounge for staff & operational resources (for studies and hiring and technology upgrades)

I'm more hopeful because I do see a reduction in crime, I do see improvements in the overall appearance throughout the city and I do see residents becoming more actively involved in trying to find out info concerning what's happening. While improvements in east Camden have been few and far between, I'm somewhat confident that what's needed in our section (road repair, curb repair and street amenities) will ultimately be performed.

The crime rate is down significantly from past years; there are efforts underway in many neighborhoods that will improve conditions for existing residents; while the school recovery dollars are totally insufficient to do the job here, at least some schools are being rebuilt although it is difficult to balance that against the mismanagement of those funds; there are beginnings of infrastructure improvements that will at the least give a more immediate upgraded appearance to the downtown area. Enrollment by residents in higher education and in training is increasing and will ensure upward mobility.

I am excited to see that monies are available; however, I am concerned that the money will not effect or reach the 'real' targets, the citizens.

1. Most of the questions in #13 are not yes or no, but should be rated 1-5. 2. More hopeful because the investment in well run hospitals and educational institutions assures that funds will be properly applied. 3. Less hopeful because city insiders will skim a portion of the funds for inappropriate projects that benefit favored investors rather than the city; and less hopeful because the city labor pool will remain ravaged by a secondary school system that fails to produce work-ready prospects for local businesses.

The signs are good for recovery working, but there are only a few visible results of the massive influx of state funds so far.

there seems to be an influx of people choosing to move here, buying houses and getting involved in their community. Forward momentum seems to be building and there are signs of improvement in pockets of the city.

APPENDIX: DETAILED RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

15. Why are you more or less hopeful? cont'd

Somewhat more hopeful (continued)

\$175 million has to do some good for Camden. I'm very optimistic about Downtown Camden, including Cooper-Grant, and the Waterfront. We must end drug prohibition for adults to save the rest of Camden. 150 open-air drug markets, and the violence that results, is destroying the city block-by-block.

Because I have joined the battle.

I believe that an economic/social recovery is desperately needed. While I am uncertain that the redevelopment plan as set forth by city officials is the most effective or equitable method of accomplishing this goal, I am convinced that it is an important starting point. However, to ensure that the entire process is carried out fairly, it is my hope that the city will focus on community involvement and ideas in an effort to revitalize and rebuild - not only the appearance of the city, but also the damaged relationship between the people and its officials.

Investment in cities infrastructure makes it possible to increase the land use options, improve water quality and improve environmental health conditions in the city. Private investment may lead to new employment opportunities for residents. emphasis on public safety makes Camden a safer place for residents

I am somewhat hopeful, because a lot of attention is being paid to the needs of Camden, and it seemed at first that the interest from outside the city and state might start the ball rolling. But I feel that so much of the redevelopment process has been grossly mismanaged by the CRA that it seems as though they just keep shooting themselves in the foot. I think their scope is just way too broad. If they had focused on one or two areas (downtown and waterfront, for instance), instead of tackling the WHOLE city at once, their chances of affecting real change would be so much better.

The investments being made will make a LONG TERM impact whereas previous attempts were only short term band aids.

There continues to be new development as well as new interest in revitalizing the city. There has been a remarkable improvement on Cooper St. over the past 5 years in both appearance and sense of community.

Politicians have to listen to those who elected them; the need for affordable housing and jobs in Camden should be the primary concern; how many Camden residents can afford the admission fee to the Adventure Aquarium?; you take care of your residents first, then make Camden a destination for others; tout the port as the economic engine that drives this city as it has for the past 50 to 60 years

The \$175 million is a starting point. If there was no ERB, then CDCs and residents would be fighting over a smaller group of resources.

Government seems incapable of good planning if any planning and there is too much politics keeping things from moving forward. Residents are not heard.

Because I still can't see how this is helping the residents of Camden. And getting more jobs for those who need it in Camden.

In spite of the misappropriation of funds and the shortcomings of the takeover's structure, the attention created by the MRERA legislation and the mandates spelled out in the bill constitute an historic opportunity for Camden. Where there's opportunity, there's hope.

I am much more hopeful because more people have been brought into the process to make an effective change. The fact that Camden City has been sited by the State and the Federal government makes me more hopeful. Also, the fact that more efforts have been placed on increasing the police both with the State assistance and local assistance. Finally, the emphasis on education is paramount. Also the State and Federal government have placed an increase in need for the city.

APPENDIX: DETAILED RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

15. Why are you more or less hopeful? cont'd

No change

During the last five years I have financed several of the larger projects on the waterfront and some of the residential developments in the neighborhoods. The problem with City Hall is still the same and I have not seen any changes.

Nothing has really changed. People run around responding to symptoms while the underlying problems are ignored. The wrong questions are being answered.

I would have to say about the same, that while there are some more funds at play for the city, there are more barriers or challenges that seem to hinder momentum and clarity.

Camden is in a socio-economic and political continuum. Things have not changed much over the past thirty years with the exception of a gradual decline in the quality of life for residents. Consequently, there is no reason to expect any real change, especially since the same personalities who lorded over Camden's decline are expected to lead its recovery. P.S We still don't have any acceptable answers for why three children were allowed to perish in the trunk of a car under the noses of our police department.

Downtown looks great. Neighborhoods look like crap.

I see changes in certain parts of the city, waterfront area, university, hospital areas but not the neighborhoods. If this was seen then I would feel more hopeful

Things will not change until we have a revolution. Who shall lead this revolution? No one has stepped up to the plate - they are too busy trying to coach.

Ambivalent because there is such a feeling of despair still among residents who feel that big business is benefitting from the opportunity for growth that does not include jobs or training opportunities for residents.

We never get anything done. All the politicians think about is downtown. Most of the business don't pay any taxes to us. Street cleaner don't come around, but they go clear Cooper St. Trash men leave trash in the street, they won't pick it up. The Police don't come when you call them. You can ride around Camden all day and don't see a policeman. All they care about is downtown waterfront. For the outsiders, they come and go.

Somewhat less hopeful

Politics as usual. Too much infighting and an awful mayor.

I thought city services would improve, but they seem to have just stayed the same. Business as usual at city hall... no one wants to help you.

The neighborhood redevelopment plans and bureaucracy set up by CRA has managed to stall business development and the CRA bureaucracy also prevents small development or real estate sales from moving forward. All plans no action.

The lack of progress and the lack of good decisions made by the CRA. There is not an organized effort carried out by CRA and community development stakeholders.

They are trying to take away the neighborhoods from the residents who want to stay and turn Camden around

Much less hopeful

For the last 3 years we've had unqualified, disorganized, and incompetent State appointees run the City into the ground. We were better off before they arrived. The appointments were based on political connections not qualifications. The State should have done a national search to find highly qualified personnel to lead and administer the recovery. With the extra layer of government created by the COO's Office and rebuilt CRA it is much harder to get anything done. No one in the COO's Office and CRA is able to follow through on details. They have lots of vision and plans with no ability to implement. In the midst of being the most dangerous city in the country the COO failed to oversee an appropriate negotiation for a new police contract. The COO renewed a 200 page contract in 6 pages and failed to change archaic and outdated work rules. He gave away the store and got nothing in return. The City has continued to fall apart with only increasing frustration, anger, and mistrust amongst the residents towards government.

Now neighborhoods face destruction. Now residents are not being heard; government is much more arrogant. Now many services are poorer. Now budget deficit is greater than when takeover started. Now City is less democratic.

The Recovery period has been a wasted opportunity so far. The focus on large scale redevelopment projects has overshadowed the need to make City Hall work better and to get more competent people into leadership positions at the City.

Because 3 years have elapsed and there has only been investment in and attention paid to development and redevelopment. What about City services, policing and other areas that directly impact Camden residents' lives.

APPENDIX: DETAILED RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

20. What are the biggest successes of the recovery period?

University / institutional development

Nurturing the Dranoff projects and support for the hospitals and Rutgers. The expansion of Lourdes is a major positive for the city and for its residents. The Rutgers incubator for businesses and its expansion are a strong positive manifestation of opportunity within the city. The Aquarium expansion and change of management is a major improvement.

Leveraging investment by the big downtown institutions to create a university district downtown.

The addition to Lourdes.

Investment into the hospitals and higher education

Hospitals able to expand.

Planned renewal of neighborhoods and investment in our institutional assets

some of the funds were used on valuable projects.

Downtown projects

Creating a more attractive downtown area. Bringing increased economic activity to the downtown area.

Downtown looks better.

The redevelopment of central areas, specifically the downtown area.

Expansion of universities and waterfront.

CAMCARE building; Downtown Special Services District; funding market-rate housing (Cooper-Grant Homes); Aquarium expansion; Hi-tech campus; saving 301 Market St.

The investments in the large institutions and the waterfront.

The waterfront and Coopers Morgan areas--although I think they actually pre-date the recovery period.

investment into downtown

The improvement of Central Business District and the Waterfront.

Private sector interest

The plan has attracted non-public dollars to be invested.

economic development

A response from the private sector to what they view as a market opportunity must be considered a success in a place where investment has been so scarce in recent history. Although the Cramer Hill Project's future is uncertain, the fact that there is developer interest is significant and is certainly related to the presence of state funds in the city.

I think that one of the biggest successes of recovery is that is turning Camden around and bring some of the businesses back to city.

Infusion of business and commerce in Camden City.

More individuals are looking in to the availability of what Camden might have to offer. That includes corporations, companies, and other entities that are searching for opportunities to relocate to Camden.

APPENDIX: DETAILED RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

20. What are the biggest successes of the recovery period? cont'd

Improved public attitudes / more attention to problems

generating initial enthusiasm about Camden's prospects (both residents and external investors) focusing state resources on the City

Public attention is now drawn to Camden's future. in a positive way the negative publicity of the Cherokee plan and the Morgan Quinto reports have gotten the attention. there also is development happening downtown and that is important.

Bringing residents together on a common goal. Identifying keys areas for redevelopment. Revitalization of the waterfront.

Bringing the problems to public view and generating conversation about how to improve them; providing funding to begin to address problems and to provide new incentives in appearance, neighborhood improvements, training, in general visibility.

Awakening the public.

The number of residents who have become involved and interested in the City and its Recovery.

given hope to the people in camden

A lot plans have been developed

Housing Development Economic Development Plans for Business Development Community Involvement Re-development Plans

Public safety / government enhancement

re-organization of the police department Randy Primas promise of private investment in the city Camden Special Services District

Safer Streets/Reduction in Crime New Construction throughout city

as a small business we have worked for cra, the project for cra have allowed us to purchase new equipment, bid larger projects and put our company on the right road to recovery.

reducing crime, attracting development to downtown

The police department Adoption of Redevelopment plans Hospital and College expansions Waterfront improvements

The building of government capacity in terms of creating updated tax and building condition information. The new decision making model to evaluate all work proposed for the city. The new use of GIS to connect all the city departments and their data to each other.

Anti-crime initiatives and positive change in the police department to reduce crime. We have a long way to go, but the situation is improving. Dranoff's Victor building is a good change, too.

The willingness to communicate

Physical improvements

Infrasstructure improvements to water and sewer sysytem neighborhood development plan and housing development in parkside

The infrastructure development

The visible revitalization throughout the city. The construction of new and rehabed houses. The clean up of the city.

Settlement Music school, areas of physical improvements

New places for Camden residents to live.

No intended benefits realized

The residents of Cramer Hill section being awakened to the abuses imposed by a one party form of goverment. Perhaps the rest of the Camden community will sit up and take notice and then follow suit?

I cannot name any

None I can think of.

none

can't answer that since I don't think that there have been any

I dont see any. They don't us the truth. The people in Camden don't know what is going on. They tell only a few. The one's that are in there click.

APPENDIX: DETAILED RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

21. What are the biggest failures of the recovery period?

Municipal government functioning and capacity

increasing performance in city hall (insufficient investment in systems change and performance evaluation) bringing in top flight professional staff to support COO coherent redevelopment strategy organized around building off of EDs and MEDs investment (Why Cramer Hill as a first big focus?)

Too politicized. Too much corruption in government, which makes the citizens distrustful of all changes. They automatically wonder, 'Who's benefiting from this?'

No effect on creating a more efficient City Hall. Still a 'what's in it for me' culture and a 'if I don't get mine, I will keep you from getting yours' mentality.

The biggest failure of the recovery period was the lack of attention paid to improving the basic functioning of city government. City Hall is more dysfunctional than before the recovery. The recovery just created more layers of chaos to climb through. The State needed to hire personnel who are excellent administrators with a passion for details. Instead we have lots of vision with no ability to execute or implement. The City has only gotten more dangerous during the recovery period and the COO has failed to devote the necessary attention to this problem. This has occurred despite the loss of private redevelopment projects after the announcement of being the most dangerous city in the country. One example was the COO's lack of attention to the renegotiation of the Police Contract. A 200 page contract was renegotiated in 6 pages. It gave significant salary increases with almost nothing in return. It left the City stuck with archaic work rules for another four years. No other major City in the country uses rotating shifts in their police department. Is there any wonder we continue to top the Morgan-Quinto list?

The fact that city services and infrastructure did not improve. In fact the only service to improve any was the police department and that was only because the residents got involved. In fact the COO paid no attention to public safety. This improved despite him. For instance he never implemented steady shifts as part of the contract.

lack of leadership, transparency, and yet another layer of Bureaucracy. It feels like no matter where you look there is yet another road block that gets in the way of progress.

The single biggest failure thus far appears to be the lack of progress on improving the efficiency and capacity of Camden's government. A highly functioning professional government is key to both ensuring the sustainability of the substantial investment made by the state as well as inducing future investment, and one wonders why this has not been more of a priority for the COO and the state--particularly since improved government capacity will be a primary barometer by which Camden's ability to assume local control will be measured. On that score, one also wonders why the mayor is not pushing for greater progress on this front since it will be key to her regaining her powers and assuming new, unprecedented ones. Lastly, in light of their vocal opposition to the takeover, one wonders why the community is not asking for information on the progress of implementing government reform that will allow them to return to choosing their own leadership again.

Poorer services. Poor redevelopment planning, insensitive to residents. Poor fiscal performance. Continued focus on waterfront. Poor performance on Abbott initiative. Cramer Hill's treatment. Very little training for City employees who must run city after State is gone. Loss of democracy in both City and School Board governance.

Getting the police to do a better job. Having the citizens of Camden trusting the police again.

Public Safety Downtown Drug Dealing Downtown(Business District) City Hall Employees being more customer intensive.

Management of CRA

The operation of the CRA has been the givvest failure. Arijit De is the wrong person to lead it. He is too controlling and unpredictable. Instead of creating a more friendly agency for developers to work with, they have made it more difficult. Some have walked away. they have dragged their feet. They have hired the wrong people. Camden will not get better until it realizes that it must look outside of the box to find competent leaders.

The CRA

The camden redevelopment agency and its leadership The handling of the Cramer hill project

The CRA and its strategies & policies. Lack of job creation for residents.

APPENDIX: DETAILED RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

21. What are the biggest failures of the recovery period? cont'd

Government transparency and communication

Need for more direct resident/neighborhood based input and participation; more rapid response to remediation that is agreed to by all parties; administration that takes too much of the dollars over too long a time period for salaries and operating expense.

Communications

Communication on the Cherokee Project was ineffective. The attempt to convert profitable ratable business real estate at the port to subsidized housing was awful economics and felt like cronyism. The continued inability to bring the broader business community (not just the major players) in to the process is reminiscent of previous failed efforts at city revitalization. The absurd effort to attract a hotel conference center to a city where security is still a hope rather than a reality, where parking is scarce and must be paid for, where a walkable downtown with viable retailers is still a long term objective, and where there are multiple hotel options with none of those negatives within a 5 minute drive east is a great example of development by government officials rather than business professionals.

Failure to involve residents in the process.

Lack of openness

Lack of broad participation from residents and other stakeholders

While COO Primas has done a good job at being accessible to government and business, he still is a step removed from the wishes of residents of Camden and is inaccessible to them.

explanation to residents in laymans terms of how this revitalization will help them

The people of Camden who pay there property tax don't know where all the money went.

foolish redevelopment proposal for Kramer Hill alienating residents, convincing them its going to be the same old same old

The reality is with an redevelopment there will be dislocation. There needs to be a better plan to deal with the dislocation issues.

Lack of visible progress

The progress, considering the funding, is too slow. The plans do not take into account the people who are unable to afford more expensive housing, or an increase in rent. If the recovery plans include building on sites already occupies by small business owners -- who protects the rights of the owners?

No approved low to moderate housing developments. No new school construction. The lack of proper chain of command and accountability for the designated redevelopment leaders. Lack of communication from City officials to residents. Lack of community input.

Very little on-the-ground activity

Residential revitalization has been very slow. Not many new jobs or ratables created so far.

Stalemate over redevelopment plans in Cramer Hill Development and implementation of a strategy to Failure to create jobs and grow businesses owned by Camden Residents Ineffective communication with the community

The failure to actually begin one major redevelopment project in the city. The mishandling of the Cramer Hill project. The failure to try to build on areas and organizations that were already successful in the city: i.e. St. Joe's Carpenter Society. The shortsightedness of many of the redevelopment plans, which provide for moving homes and businesses to fulfill some arbitrary planning goals instead of trying to build on existing strengths.

Stagnation of the business community and no perceivable progress in the recovery process. Any steps forward have been done outside

Not one house has been knocked down. Not one house has been built. The corners are filled with illegal pharmacies that have plenty of patients who only need dollars as a prescription.

What's different?

In my opinion the entire process is taking too long and that people/residents are expecting results too soon. The Recovery Act has not been given a chance to prove its validity. Too many persons are interested in their own agendas rather than being concerned with the well-being of the city. Expectations of \$175 million are too high for such little money.!

APPENDIX: DETAILED RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

21. What are the biggest failures of the recovery period? cont'd

Wrong focus

Lack of investment in local people. All the miscommunication and setbacks in both the Waterfront South plans and the Cramer Hill plans.

Too much money to large institutions downtown and not in the neighborhoods where the city's tax-base resides. Still too many city services performing poorly.

The recovery Act itself is a failure in that it was imposed in a manner that violated the constitutional rights of Camden's residents. Very simply, the only entity that can strip the people of their right to select their representation is the people who would be so affected. This has not been the case in Camden where the people's rights were traded for a few dollars that they had no control over.

more effort should be made to involve local vendors and city residents in projects. when employers are allowed to bring in there own employees, at the end of the day all we get is a new street (wow) we must put money in the pockets of city residents.

lack of public safety issues being addressed, the worse move that they made was getting rid of Chief Allenbach who had crime down almost 60 % in favor of figueroa, who was politically connected

failure to fix up the neighborhoods, more jobs

lack of affordable housing and jobs for Camden residents; too many politically connected people and entities are reaping the benefits; not the average citizen

Failure to disbursed any funds to Waterfront South.

that no attention is being paid to the actual City residents

The city is still too polarized between the neighborhoods. Residents have to be able to grasp the big picture and support what brings the greatest long-term benefits to the city. At the same time, there has to be a balance of downtown development and quality of life improvements (and sometimes just enforcement) in the neighborhoods.

Lack of concrete opportunity for ALL Camden residents; Not enough attention paid to all the neighborhoods(every street wants to look nice, it shouldn't only be those that have lobbied or have good political connections); Not enough emphasis on jobs, (or job training, I remember the COO making a comment concerning the overall educational level of the Camden population)You see a lot of construction going on but I rarely see anyone working them who could possibly be a city resident!

Trying to move too quickly

The opportunity to develop programs to assist renters in becoming homw owners.

Demolishing vacant homes that are being utilized in drug trade and causing public health concerns such as rodent problems and other issues.

Litigation over redevelopment Lack of resources for neighborhood revitalization Lack of resources for job training Slow pace of school improvements

APPENDIX: DETAILED RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

22. What would your top three priorities be over the next two years?

Improving the Public Schools Making the new (yet again) police reorganization work for residents. Helping residents find good jobs.

Better roads -- if people cannot drive, or walk, safely to and from jobs, homes, etc. it is difficult to maintain confidence in public works. More improved police presence -- perhaps walking the neighborhoods rather than just driving around. Getting to know the residents and business owners. Instead of tearing down to rebuild -- how about remodeling existing structures. For example, putting some money into re-gentrification for Haddon Avenue -- rebuild some of the houses and businesses along this main road. I think that most any prospective resident, or business owner, would feel more positive if one of the main roads looks clean and active, rather than desolate and distressed.

1. A new CRA director with a good knowledge of development, a track record beyond Camden, a set of working relationship skills. We need to get moving on some of the development in the neighborhoods. 2. We need to upgrade our public works and code enforcement departments to meet the needs of a Camden where the quality of life is able to happen. 3. The public safety issue is still the number one concern. we must continue to intervene in the department, choose an outsider to lead it (one with previous successful experience), and involve departments and agencies in the problem solving methodology.

Better State control of revitalization process and accountability of all funds. New School Construction Better housing for existing residents. Better Communication with residents.

Replace the CRA Director Replace the Mayor Replace most of city Council

Public safety Public Health Job creation luring new business investment

upgrade municipal govt. systems including IT and reorganizing City Hall and with regular performance evaluation Institute a real job development strategy with critical employment partners fix the leadership problem in the Police Dept.

Road/street/curb repair throughout the city Job training initiative (to ensure that all future construction hires some city residents. Continue working with Police to keep our city safe.

Complete projects that have been agreed upon. Streamline administrative expenses. Bring local residents to the table not only for discussion but for a level of decision-making. (not those already on boards, etc. but residents, families who are/will be affected by changes.

Safety of streets Elimination of Methadone Center on Broadway Cleaner neighborhoods and streets in the downtown area

1. Development of programs that will assist first time home buyers. 2. Redevelopment of each ward. 3. Redevelopment of central commerce areas.

Provide resources to the City's Department of Public Works Job Training Job creation

Continue to develop the District Councils and push through the reforms called for under the Police Reorganization. Build the capacity of Public Works and Code Enforcement Connect the city to the surrounding regions and begin to demand more accountability on their part to advance the causes of regional equity

Support and track the recent changes relative to the Police Department reorganization. Disband any 'Board' made up primarily of government officials and reorganize with business and neighborhood stakeholders in leadership positions with government officials invited to attend in a non-voting role. Prohibit any government official in a decision making role from investing in/or profiting from any phase of the revitalization other than the purchase of a primary residence.

1. Crime initiatives (we gotta get off the Morgan Quitno list as #1). Two years as #1 in a row is terrible and will scare off investors. 2. Transparency in government. Too much corruption or perception of corruption exists. This scares off investors, too, and angers residents. 3. Clean-up- get rid of unsafe buildings and replace them with livable structures.

APPENDIX: DETAILED RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

22. Priorities over next 3 years, continued

1) Modernize City Hall. It still takes a long time to get a new business license approved and who really knows how many taxes are delinquent. 2) Work closer with the non-profits who have tried to do something, but hit road blocks at City Hall. 3) Communicate better with neighborhoods.

1. Jobs for Camden residents 2. Improve public safety 3. Improve the housing stock
Infrastructure! Complete razing of all dilapidated homes/buildings. Infrastructure!

1. End drug prohibition for adults. 2. Establish needle exchange program. 3. Support more market-rate ownership housing.

1. Do a national search for a new COO. 2. Do a national search for a new director for the CRA. 3. Do a national search for all of the department directors and the business administrator.

Improve City Services-- code enforcement, trash collection, vacant house demolition and board up, lot clearing, tax office, etc. Fix the City Infrastructure -- water, sewer, electric, sidewalk repair, street repair Police Dept reform -- make our city safer by holding the dept accountable.

Set up groups in each area (Cramer Hill, Cooper Grant etc.) to participate in the process. Revise the methods used to take property and to decide which properties to take. Keep public advised about what is happening in a timely manner.

Government Capacity & Public Safety are an absolute must...they have to be improved and built upon and find ways to become more efficient and effective. Neighborhood development and enhancement is also necessary to help build moral within the city and citizenry.

Please speak more about the steps for relocation Please satisfy the concerns about financial compensation for homes and businesses How can we ensure that every resident is treated fairly?

I will not answer this question because it is my opinion that this information can be used by personalities such as Camden's COO to had his deficiencies and/or fill in the gaps in the recovery sieve.

Communication with Communities Work force and Local Business development strategy Continued Improvement in Public safety

seeding small redevelopment projects to spur infill areas in sound neighborhoods, and then spreading to more deteriorated neighborhoods, systematic job creation via this construction drive, strategy to attract new residents to Camden on a 'weave into existing neighborhood' basis, follow up with small business promotion to serve them, groceries, corner stores, restaurants, coffee shops, internet cafes, and tie this into the job creation efforts established for construction of homes.

1. supermarket 2. build industrial park of Admiral Wilson Blvd. 3. attract new business, car dealer, gas station and other business.

1. New affordable housing for city residents. 2. Attract new businesses to downtown area to provide jobs and services. 3. Work with existing businesses to help them expand and grow instead of trying to move them around like pieces on a chess board, because they don't fit in with the proposed redevelopment goal for the area.

More housing for dislocated residents Improve public safety Allow for faster, more efficient take over of properties that are delinquent on taxes and/or upkeep

~ Identify and bring in additional investors/developers into Camden ~ Ensure the community has a say in the progress & development in Camden ~ Get qualified leadership into elected offices

employment opportunities improving neighborhoods with cooperation of Camden PD improving city services

APPENDIX: DETAILED RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

22. Priorities over next 3 years, continued

Public Education Public Safety Jobs & Job Training

Public Safety Code enforcement middle income housing strengthened.

1. Living wage jobs for Camden residents. 2. Neighborhood strengthening, capacity building, and organizing. 3. Port expansion and improvement.

Bring in new leadership to the CRA which a track record of successful implementation. Undertake small redevelopment projects to prove capacity and build trust before threatening to relocate 1000 families. Shift the focus largely to getting police, code enforcement and public works working at an acceptable level. A more qualified business administrator and finance director are needed as well.

1- Job training 2- Job creation for residents. 3- Acquiring companies to Camden.

Provide more jobs for Camden residents in the city...somehow connected to the re-building of the city. Provide more after school programs for all children (including teenagers) that would provide recreation, health care, nutritious snacks and tutoring...and most importantly a safe place to hang out. Provide a super market for the citizens of the city.

Schools they should be restructured. More affordable housing, not so much rental but for sale. Enforcement of laws and codes throughout the city.

jobs, public school system, neighborhoods

employment housing getting the tax base back on track

investment in human capital, neighborhood redevelopment, concentration on environment (water and air)

1. Expand property tax base 2. Improve the existing infrastructure (roads, utilities, parks) 3. Provide greater housing options (specifically market rate)

Involving residents in the process and decision making. Cleaning out those who are unproductive. Making something happen that people can see and believe in.

3) Jobs and job training for City residents 2) Programs to retain students in high schools to address drop out rates and instances of juvenile delinquency 1) Housing - affordable and in the neighborhood that people grew up in; board up or tear down abandoned homes to address safety concerns and drug dealing

1 fixing the abandon house in the city 2 getting the drug off the street 3 better schools

Waterfront Development Housing Development Plans Resolved & implemented More local hirings More Evidence of Camden residents working.

crime/policing sewer systems paving streets

1)improving government in terms of personnel, structure and service delivery 2)using the Citizens Advisory Board mandated by the MRERA legislation to engage the community in redevelopment projects, government reform efforts and all other activities associated with the recovery period 3)create a functioning Regional Impact Council--also mandated in MRERA--to assist Camden in implementing its recovery and sustaining it after the Recovery period ends

unless the crime stats go down people will not want to live in the 'most dangerous city in america'

1. Create jobs 2. Work with community to prioritize further planning 3. Improve education in City schools with the parents buy in.

1. Cleaning the city (cleanliness). 2. Abatement of crime. 3. Providing jobs i.e. training, education and vocational training.

Better teachers for the children Do something with all the boarded up houses to get more tax money for the city. fix up the houses and rent them out.

APPENDIX: DETAILED RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

23. Please provide any other comments you may have about the Recovery period.

I think that the needs of the actual residents are overlooked by this alleged Recovery period. Residents are concerned about jobs, healthcare, poverty, etc. Perhaps if we offer jobs, small business loans, etc. the residents will feel as if they have accomplished something during their day.

it is difficult in this climate to be patient; but patience is important. However, leadership must give us hope and presently that is not happening. The leaders are defensive and over-controlling. They have not been able to rally the community behind them. There are too many insiders being given important jobs and not enough effort in finding the best and brightest. Camden needs radical surgery, not cosmetic.

The planning process has been an insult to many neighborhoods and residents

The recovery has to be for all residents. Everyone has to feel that they have a place at the table. Currently, I think some may feel a bit disenfranchised from the growth and opportunity that's presently here and, also, soon to come. I don't think enough is being done to calm residents fears that they won't be excluded from any future city benefits.

There definitely needs to be a general clean-up of administrative functions, where whether valid or not, the appearance of impropriety causes residents to feel that this is just one more case of 'outsiders' and greedy 'insiders' taking the lion's share of the funding. Until local citizens become vested in the process itself, there will be discontent (even if perceived, becomes a real issue). At the level of decision-making there needs to be a reinvestment in the opinions of residents, with a bottoms-up approach rather than 'this is what is going to happen' after the fact. The whole fiasco with school construction has not helped. How can we leave a school with trailers (Powell) standing?

While a recovery is clearly under way, the ability to sustain it will be a function of reversing the real and perceived safety issues, and those are tied inextricably to the quality of education and whether the current culture of hopelessness for Camden youth can be reversed.

Needs a slogan that explains the need to put an end to the segregation. Everyone in Camden is secretly fighting each other.

We need in people in office that care about the tax payers. The people who whole offices dont care because they dont live here. the chief operating officer don't live here.

Major reform of the school system

In order to attract new businesses/residents, the city must improve the 'look'-crumbling block after block, streets that are almost un-drivable and dark swaths of streets do NOT provide a sense of confidence in the city's future:why would anyone live or open a business here?

The school board should go back to being completely elected, not appointed!

If the recover is extended and a new bill is passed I would make the following recommendation: 1. Civil service should be completely suspended in Camden with a generous severance package available for anyone who is laid off. 2. The Police Chief position in Camden should be changed to a State appointed position for the next 10 years 3. A significant investment should be made in equipment and training for City Hall. 4. The municipal court needs to be expanded. 5. Criteria should be set down for how hiring is done in Camden with a mandate for national searches for all managerial and leadership positions. A committee of academics from the field of Public Administration and a few City residents should interview the candidates and make the hiring decisions. 6. Existing non-profits in Camden should be utilized to advise and implement the revitalization projects.

APPENDIX: DETAILED RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

23. Other comments, continued

I do not believe the city has the resources to improve itself. The legislation was an opportunity for Camden to really fix itself up through strong leadership. Unfortunately the state selected the wrong leader. This leader has focused only on development and forgot that people make up a city and that we needed to focus on the basics. Unfortunately it looks like we squandered our opportunity

The recovery period has seen abuses by the COO, vis-a-vis, conflicts of interest chairman of the CRA and COO. Massive funding to not for profit entities, when a first year college student can tell us that those entities will not spur any sustainable or meaningful economic synergy. The CRA has used funds from the Cherokee escrow account to pay the salaries of municipal employees. Hmmm, seems like Cherokee has the inside track on whatever it plans to do. Quite frankly, \$175 million is not enough to bring about a meaningful recovery for Camden. A real recovery will necessitate the application of \$500 million to start and a changing of the guard so we are not stuck with the same tired ideas coming from the minds of political cronies and hacks. The people of Camden deserve much better than the window dressing they've been served via the Recovery Act. But, it is requisite upon us to fix that which is broken, failing to do so we have only ourselves to blame for the end result.

as a small contractor i believe the key to recovery again is finding a way to get some of the dollar in the pockets of city residents.

I think that we are getting very close to the tipping point, and yet have nothing on that side of the scale to show real progress. There are virtually no success stories, and you need some of those to build momentum and show that the Recovery is really moving forward.

Basically a debacle. Needs to be stopped now.

We need some outside talent to come in and show us how a functional, efficient, competent, professional city runs.

Camden needs a Mayor that will sing the praises, good or bad, of Camden just as Mayor O'Malley does for Baltimore, MD; need a stronger voice for the citizens; better schools because the children of Camden are truly the future of this City

I this is a recovery period, then the civil war was civil.

1. Relocate the Port - allow for neighborhoods to grow to the river 2. Relocate the State Prison in North Camden

Resident involvement is key to the success of the Recovery of Camden. This involvement has to come from residents (and persons interested in the rebirth of the City) of all ages, races, socio-economic backgrounds and faiths. Both the infra structure of the City and the ability of residents to feel safe, housed and employed in the City needs to be rebuilt.

Show the residents that someone is actually paying attention to them rather than trying to redevelop the City without residents

Many of the problems with implementing Camden's recovery as mandated by the MRERA legislation stem from fundamental flaws in the bill. The Federal Government's takeover of Washington D.C. offers some instructive lessons on how to go undertake a bona fide receivership arrangement--independent financial auditing and balanced budget requirements are chief among them. While a balanced budget is not realistic right now in Camden, this type of requirement speaks to the effectiveness of tying the end of the takeover to measurable results as opposed to an arbitrary time frame. Improved government functioning is something that can be measured in Camden and is perhaps the best way to gauge when the recovery period should expire.

as in most cases where politics and business partner, the citizens get the raw end of the deal large corporations are in the business to make money not necessarily help the poor and indigent of camden

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