

The National Citizen Survey™

Lynnwood, WA

Community Livability Report

2014

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The National Citizen Survey™
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About

The National Citizen Survey™ (The NCS) report is about the “livability” of Lynnwood. The phrase “livable community” is used here to evoke a place that is not simply habitable, but that is desirable. It is not only where people do live, but where they want to live.

Great communities are partnerships of the government, private sector, community-based organizations and residents, all geographically connected. The NCS captures residents’ opinions within the three pillars of a community (Community Characteristics, Governance and Participation) across eight central facets of community (Safety, Mobility, Natural Environment, Built Environment, Economy, Recreation and Wellness, Education and Enrichment and Community Engagement).

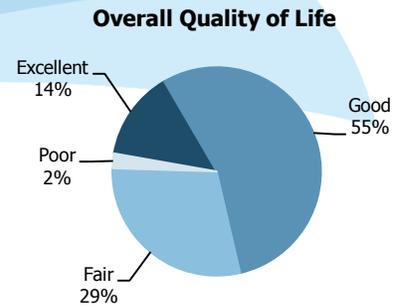
The Community Livability Report provides the opinions of a representative sample of 586 residents of the City of Lynnwood. The margin of error around any reported percentage is 4% for the entire sample. The full description of methods used to garner these opinions can be found in the *Technical Appendices* provided under separate cover.



Quality of Life in Lynnwood

Most residents rated the quality of life in Lynnwood as excellent or good. This level was similar to other communities in the nation (see Appendix B of the *Technical Appendices* provided under separate cover).

Shown below are the eight facets of community. The color of each community facet summarizes how residents rated it across the three sections of the survey that represent the pillars of a community – Community Characteristics, Governance and Participation. When most ratings across the three pillars were higher than the benchmark, the color for that facet is the darkest shade; when most ratings were lower than the benchmark, the color is the lightest shade. A mix of ratings (higher and lower than the benchmark) results in a color between the extremes.



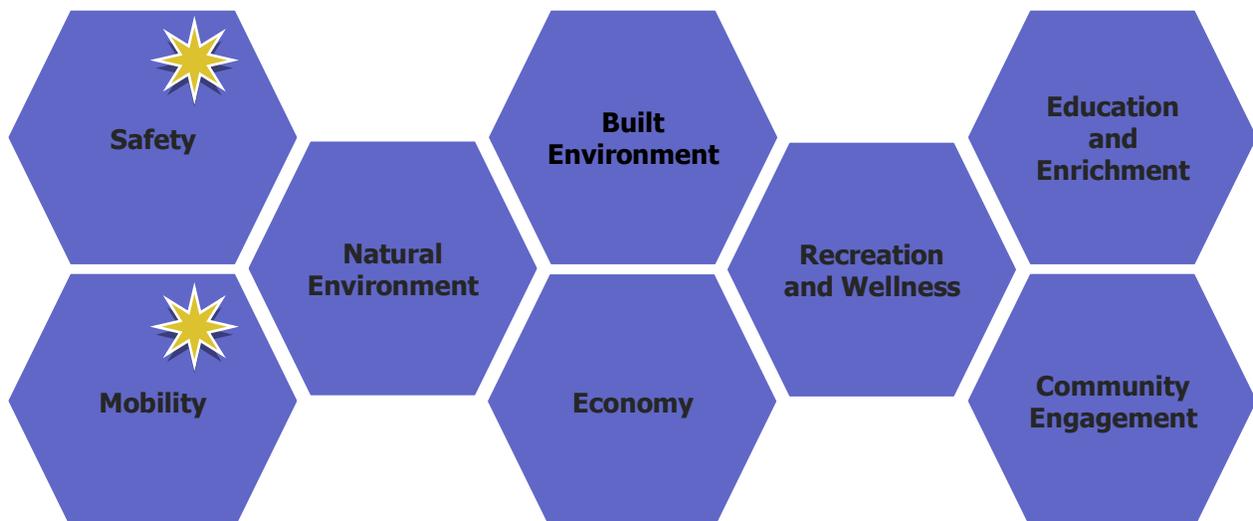
In addition to a summary of ratings, the image below includes one or more stars to indicate which community facets were the most important focus areas for the community. Residents identified Safety and Mobility as priorities for the Lynnwood community in the coming two years. It is noteworthy that Lynnwood residents gave favorable ratings to both of these facets of community as well as to the other six facets. All eight facets received positive ratings and were similar to other communities. Linking quality to importance offers community members and leaders a view into the characteristics of the community that matter most and that seem to be working best.

Details that support these findings are contained in the remainder of this Livability Report, starting with the ratings for Community Characteristics, Governance and Participation and ending with results for Lynnwood’s unique questions.

Legend

- Higher than national benchmark
- Similar to national benchmark
- Lower than national benchmark

★ Most important



Community Characteristics

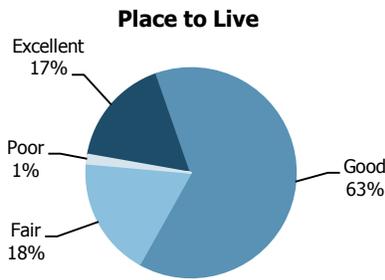
What makes a community livable, attractive and a place where people want to be?

Overall quality of community life represents the natural ambience, services and amenities that make for an attractive community. How residents rate their overall quality of life is an indicator of the overall health of a community. In the case of Lynnwood, 80% rated the City as an excellent or good place to live. Respondents' ratings of Lynnwood as a place to live were similar to ratings in other communities across the nation.

In addition to rating the City as a place to live, respondents rated several aspects of community quality including Lynnwood as a place to raise children and to retire, their neighborhood as a place to live, the overall image or reputation of Lynnwood and its overall appearance. The City as a place to raise children, the overall appearance of the City and their neighborhood as a place to live received ratings similar to other communities across the nation, while ratings for the overall image and the City as a place to retire were lower.

Delving deeper into Community Characteristics, survey respondents rated over 40 features of the community within the eight facets of Community Livability. Most aspects were rated similar to the national benchmark, one was higher and five were lower than the benchmark. Across most facets, ratings tended to be positive. Recreation and Wellness received positive ratings from a majority of residents for six out of the seven aspects. While only 7 in 10 gave positive ratings for their overall feeling of safety, nearly 9 in 10 gave positive ratings for their feelings of safety in their neighborhood and in downtown/commercial areas. Within Economy, shopping opportunities was the highest rated aspect with 85% indicating an excellent or good rating and was rated higher than the national benchmark. The lowest rated aspect within the facet of Economy was employment opportunities with 35%

indicating an excellent or good rating; however this rating was similar to the benchmark comparison. Within Mobility, ratings were all similar to the benchmark and ranged from 42% to 64% excellent or good. Over time, Mobility saw a variety of increases within the pillar of Community Characteristics including increases in the ratings for traffic flow, ease of walking and paths and walking trails (see *Trends over Time Report* under separate cover).



Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)

Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower

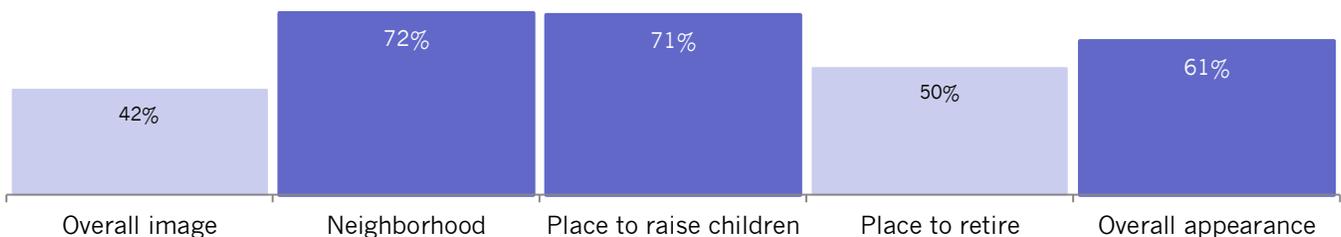
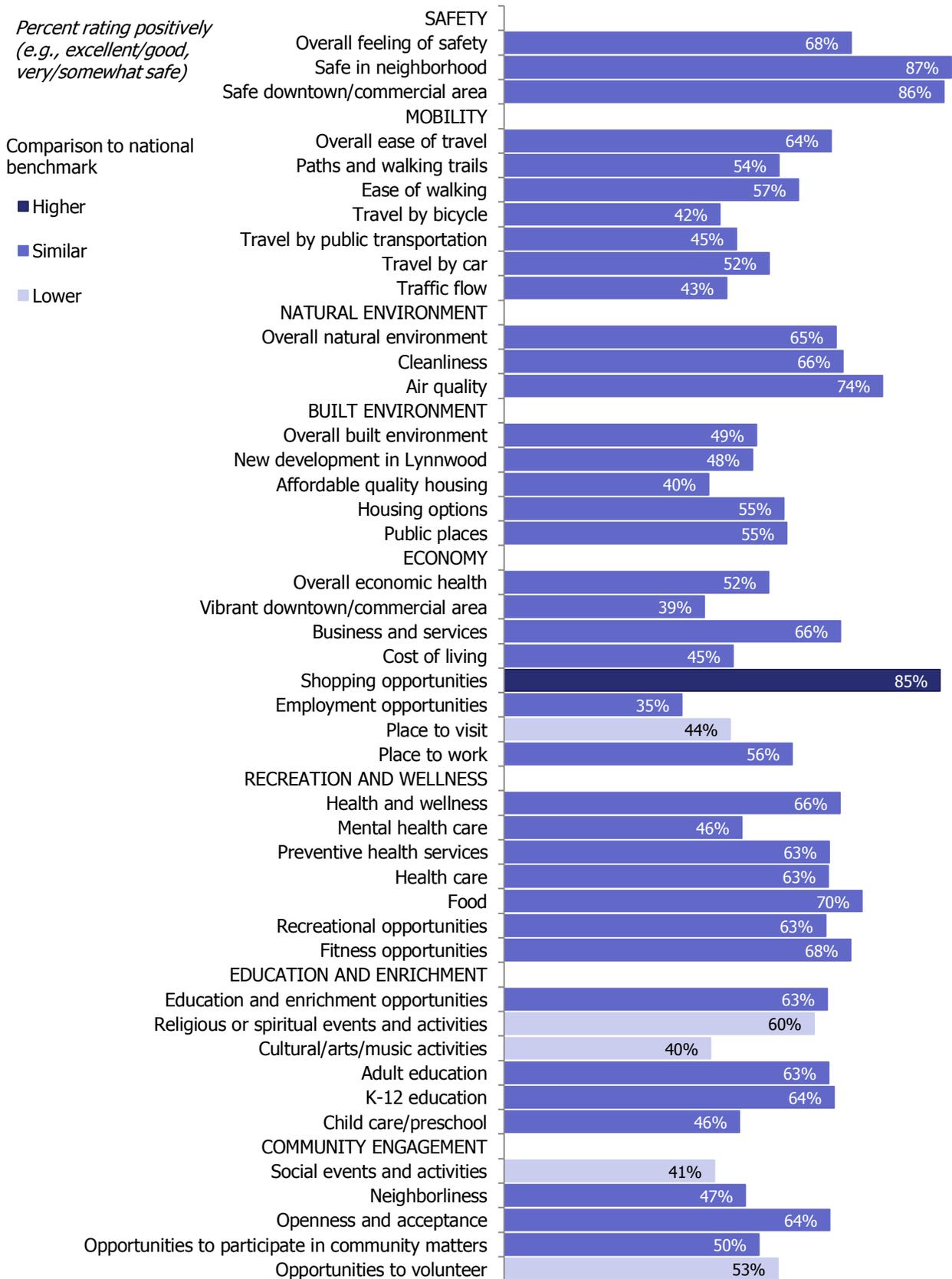


Figure 1: Aspects of Community Characteristics



Governance

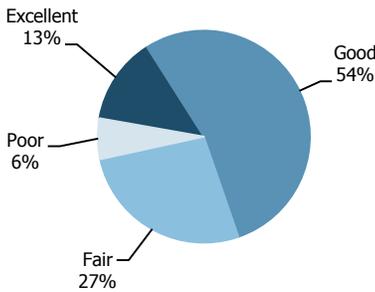
How well does the government of Lynnwood meet the needs and expectations of its residents?

The overall quality of the services provided by Lynnwood as well as the manner in which these services are provided are a key component of how residents rate their quality of life. Similar to other communities, a majority of residents (67%) described the overall quality of City services in Lynnwood as excellent or good. Only 38% of residents rated services provided by the Federal Government favorably.

Survey respondents also rated various aspects of Lynnwood’s leadership and governance. Ratings for each aspect of government performance were positive and similar to the national benchmark. About 7 in 10 residents rated customer service as excellent or good and this was the highest rated government performance measure.

Respondents evaluated over 30 individual services and amenities available in Lynnwood. Almost all ratings were similar to the national benchmark and only two were below the national benchmark (open space and special events). Safety received a wide range of positive ratings from 90% excellent or good for fire services and ambulance/EMS services to 47% excellent or good for emergency preparedness. As seen in Community Characteristics, Mobility ratings within Governance were all similar to the benchmark and ranged from 42% to 66% excellent or good. Over time, Mobility saw a variety of increases within the pillar of Governance including increases in the ratings for street lighting, snow removal and sidewalk maintenance. Recreation and Wellness ratings were generally strong with at least 63% rating each aspect as excellent or good.

Overall Quality of City Services



Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)

Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower

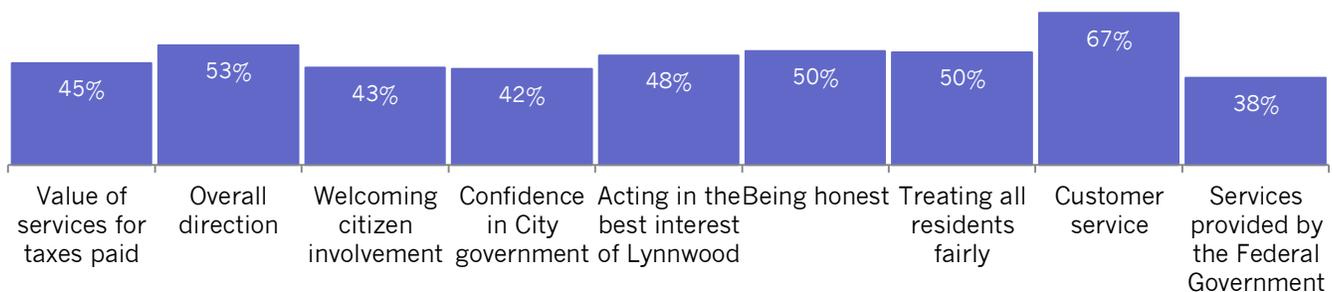
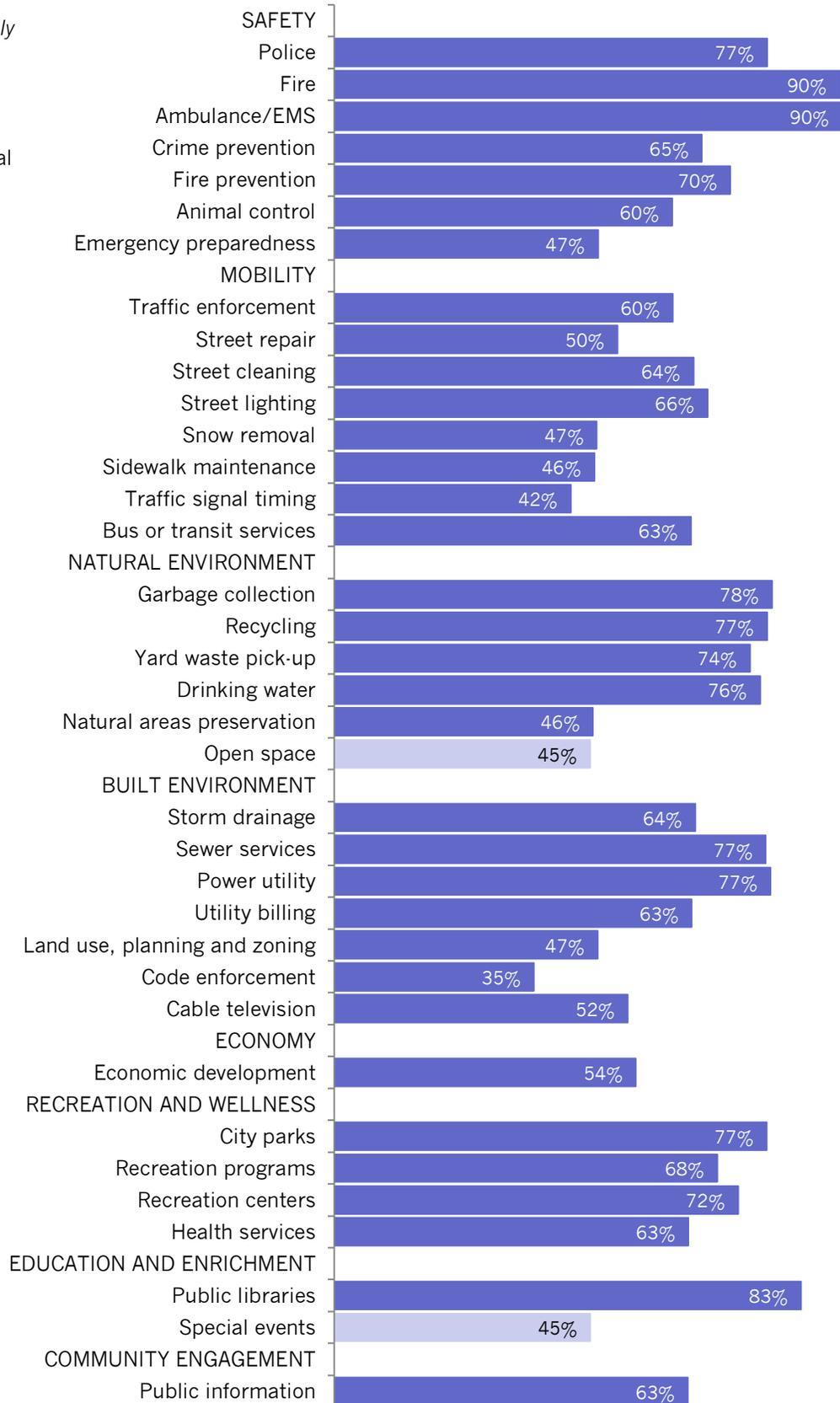


Figure 2: Aspects of Governance

Percent rating positively
(e.g., excellent/good)

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



Participation

Are the residents of Lynnwood connected to the community and each other?

An engaged community harnesses its most valuable resource, its residents. The connections and trust among residents, government, businesses and other organizations help to create a sense of community; a shared sense of membership, belonging and history. About 4 in 10 respondents gave excellent or good ratings to the overall sense of community in Lynnwood and this rating was lower than the national benchmark and decreased from 2009 to 2014. Most residents (80%) would recommend living in Lynnwood and a similar percent (83%) indicated they would remain in Lynnwood for the next five years. These ratings were similar to the national benchmark comparison.

The survey included over 30 activities and behaviors for which respondents indicated how often they participated in or performed each, if at all. A majority of rates of participation were similar to those in other communities across the nation. More Lynnwood residents reported that they used public transportation instead of driving and felt the economy would have a positive impact on their future. Fewer Lynnwood residents indicated they were not under housing cost stress, worked in the City, participated in religious or spiritual events, attended a City-sponsored event, volunteered, participated in a club or watched a local public meeting. At least 85% of respondents reported that they were not the victim of a crime, that they conserved water, recycled at home, purchased goods or services in Lynnwood, ate five portions of fruits or vegetables daily, and talked to or visited with neighbors. Less than 1 in 5 indicated that they campaigned for an issue, contacted Lynnwood elected officials, participated in a club or watched or attended a local public meeting.

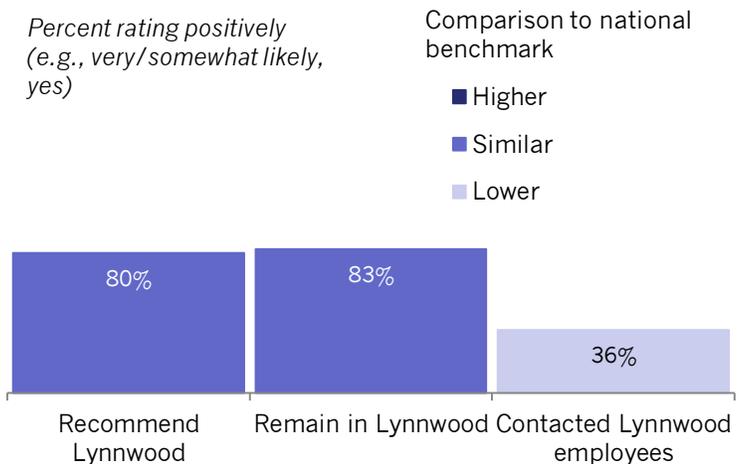
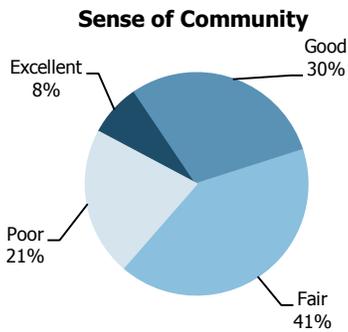
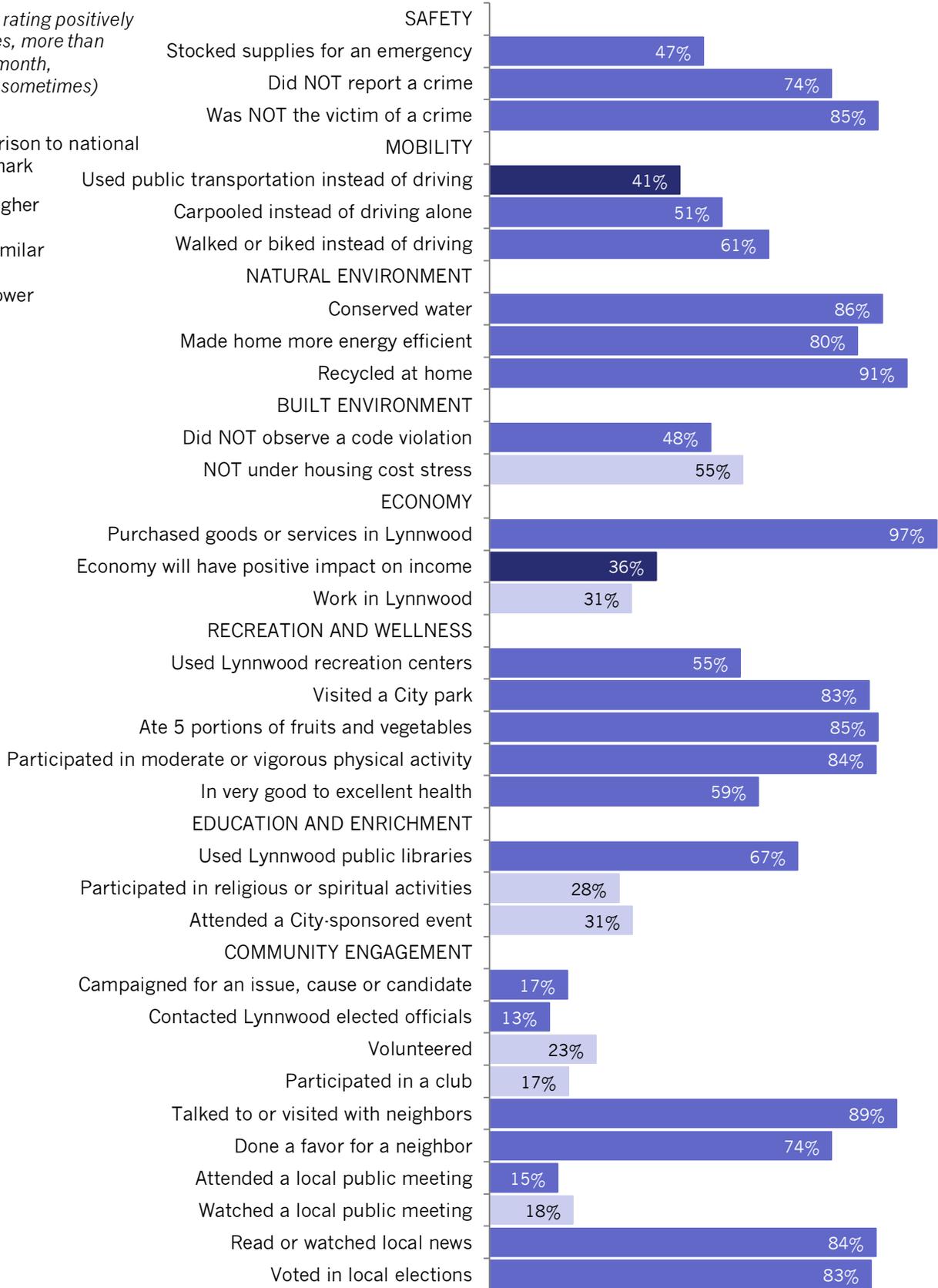


Figure 3: Aspects of Participation

Percent rating positively
(e.g., yes, more than
once a month,
always/sometimes)

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



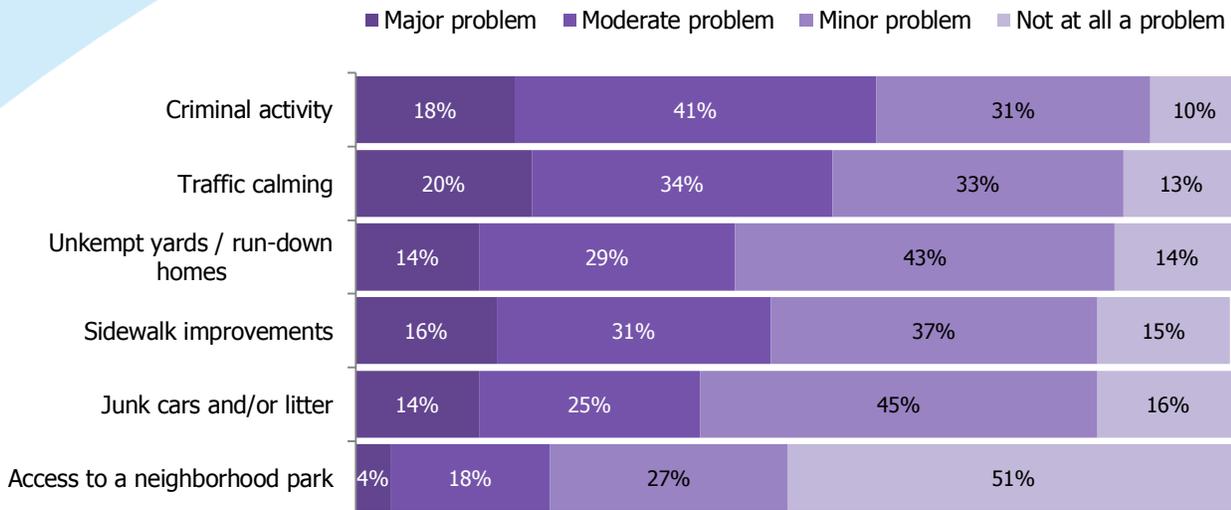
Special Topics

The City of Lynnwood included four questions of special interest on The NCS.

When asked to indicate how much of a problem six potential issues were in Lynnwood neighborhoods, a majority indicated criminal activity and traffic calming were at least moderate problems. Least problematic were access to neighborhood parks with a majority indicating this was not at all a problem.

Figure 4: Neighborhood Problems

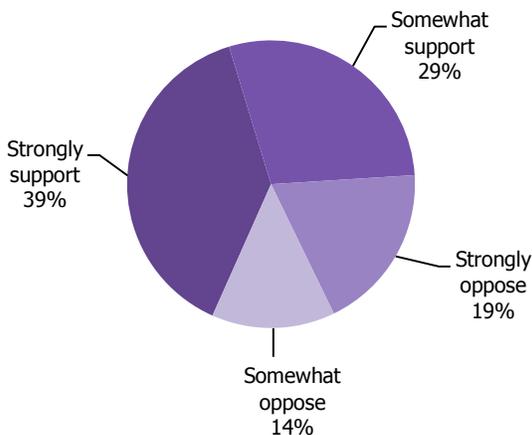
We understand that quality neighborhoods are very important to Lynnwood residents. To what extent do you think each of the following is a problem in Lynnwood neighborhoods?



Survey respondents were asked to indicate their level of support for the City to institute mandatory garbage service. About 4 in 10 indicated strong support and an additional 3 in 10 indicated somewhat supporting this measure. Two in 10 indicated strong opposition.

Figure 5: Mandatory Garbage Service

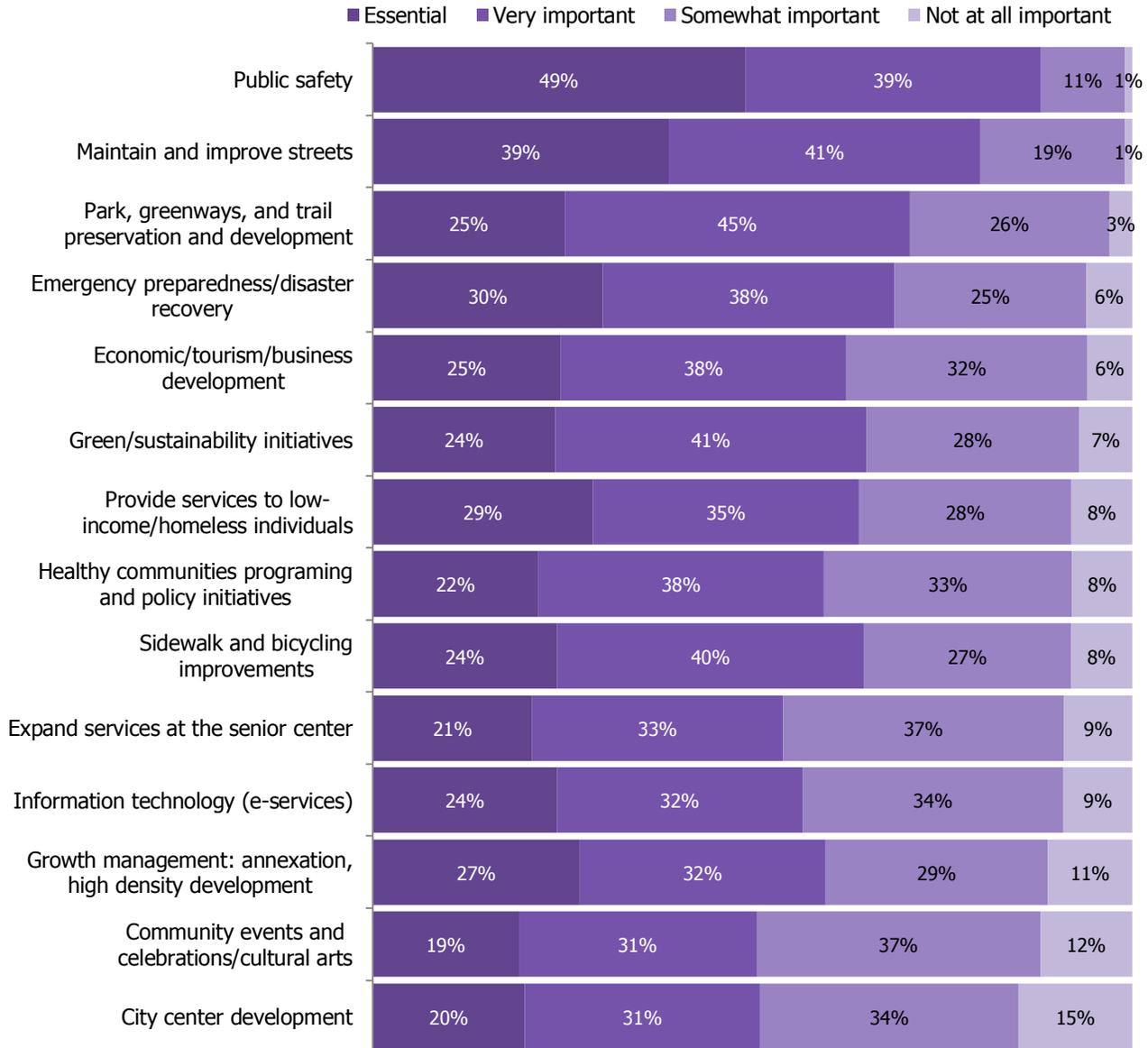
The City does not currently require residential garbage service. To what extent do you support or oppose the City instituting mandatory garbage service?



Survey respondents were asked to indicate how important they felt a list of 14 issues would be for the City over the next five years. The top rated issues included public safety, maintenance and improvement of streets and parks, greenways, and trail preservation and development. Each of these three potential issues were rated at least very important by 7 in 10 survey respondents. The lowest rated issues were city center development and community events and celebrations/cultural arts with about half indicating they were at least very important.

Figure 6: Important Issues for the Community

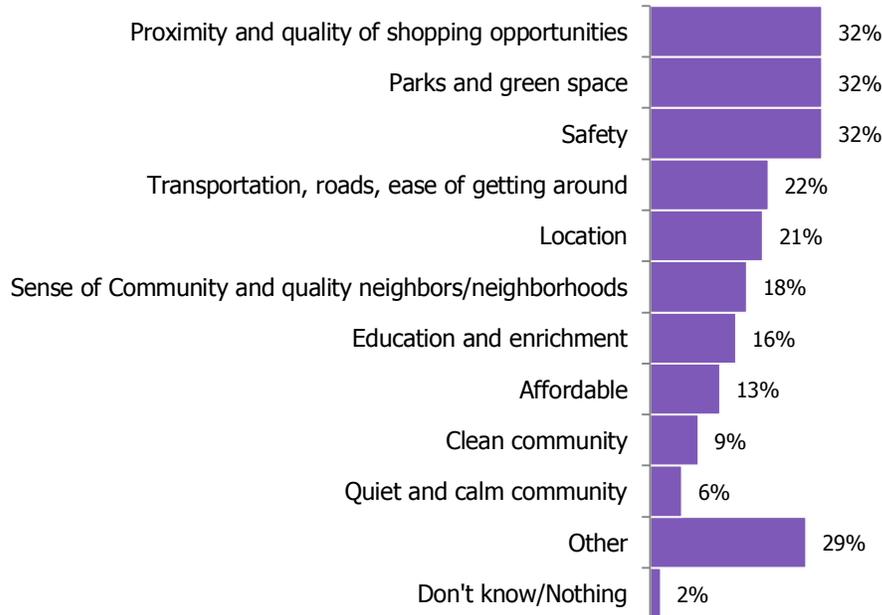
How important, if at all, do you think the following issues will be to the City of Lynnwood over the next five years:



Survey respondents were also asked to write, in their own words, what three qualities make Lynnwood a great community. These written-in responses were grouped into categories. About one-third of respondents indicated each of the following: safety; parks and green space; and proximity and quality of shopping opportunities. About one in five respondents indicated transportation, roads and ease of getting around as a top quality of the community. Please see *Open End Report*, under separate cover, for more details as well as the verbatim responses.

Figure 7: Top Community Qualities

What are the top three qualities of the City of Lynnwood that make it a great community?



Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one option.

Conclusions

Lynnwood residents continue to enjoy an exceptional quality of life.

Most residents rated their overall quality of life as excellent or good and most residents (80%) would be likely to recommend Lynnwood as a place to live to someone who asks. About 80% gave excellent or good ratings to the City as a place to live. Lynnwood as a place to raise children, the overall appearance and their neighborhood as a place to live were all given high ratings by at least 6 in 10 residents and were similar to ratings seen in other communities across the nation. Many of the aspects that contribute to community livability were rated positively and remained stable from 2009 to 2014.

Mobility is a top priority.

Mobility was identified as a top priority for the community to focus on in the coming two years. Mobility ratings were generally positive across each of the three pillars of a community and all Mobility ratings were similar to the benchmark comparison, except one: more residents indicated they had used public transportation instead of driving compared to the benchmark. Compared to 2009, the rating for the quality of bus or transit services decreased in 2014; this was the only decrease over time for aspects within the facet of Mobility. Compared to 2009 ratings, a variety of Mobility aspects saw increases in ratings in 2014. These increases include traffic flow, ease of walking, paths and walking trails, street lighting, snow removal and sidewalk maintenance. About 8 in 10 respondents indicated that maintaining roads and improving streets will be an important issue for the community over the next five years. When asked to indicate what three qualities make Lynnwood a great community, about one in five indicated that transportation, roads and ease of getting around were one of the top three qualities of the community.

Residents feel safe in Lynnwood but improvements could be made.

Safety was an important feature of the community for residents and most residents wanted the City to continue to provide excellent safety services and amenities. While only 7 in 10 gave positive ratings for their overall feeling of safety, nearly 9 in 10 gave positive ratings for their feelings of safety in their neighborhood and in downtown/commercial areas. Residents rated safety services highly and a vast majority of survey participants were not a victim of a crime or did not report a crime. Ratings for most aspects of Safety remained stable from 2009 to 2014; exceptions included decreased ratings for fire prevention and animal control. Nearly 9 in 10 survey respondents indicated that public safety would be an important issue for the community over the next five years. A special interest question asked residents to indicate the extent of a variety of problems in neighborhoods in Lynnwood; criminal activity was the highest rated problem, with 6 in 10 indicating it was at least a moderate problem.