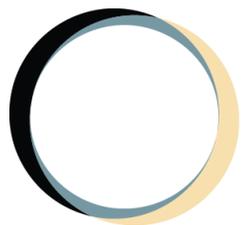


THE NCSTM
The National Citizen SurveyTM

Canandaigua, NY
Community Livability Report

2018



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The National Citizen Survey™
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The NCS™ is presented by NRC in collaboration with ICMA.

NRC is a charter member of the AAPOR Transparency Initiative, providing clear disclosure of our sound and ethical survey research practices.

About

The National Citizen Survey™ (The NCS) report is about the “livability” of Canandaigua. 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.

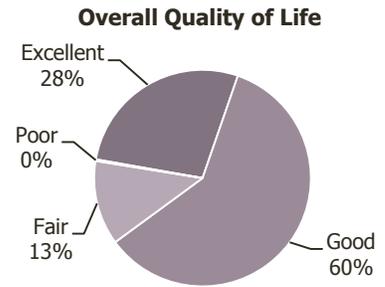
Great communities are partnerships of the government, private sector, community-based organizations and residents, all geographically connected. The NCS captures residents’ opinions within the three pillars of a community (Community Characteristics, Governance and Participation) across eight central 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 465 residents of the City of Canandaigua. The margin of error around any reported percentage is 5% for all respondents. 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 Canandaigua

A majority of residents rated the quality of life in Canandaigua as excellent or good. This rating was similar to the national benchmark (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.

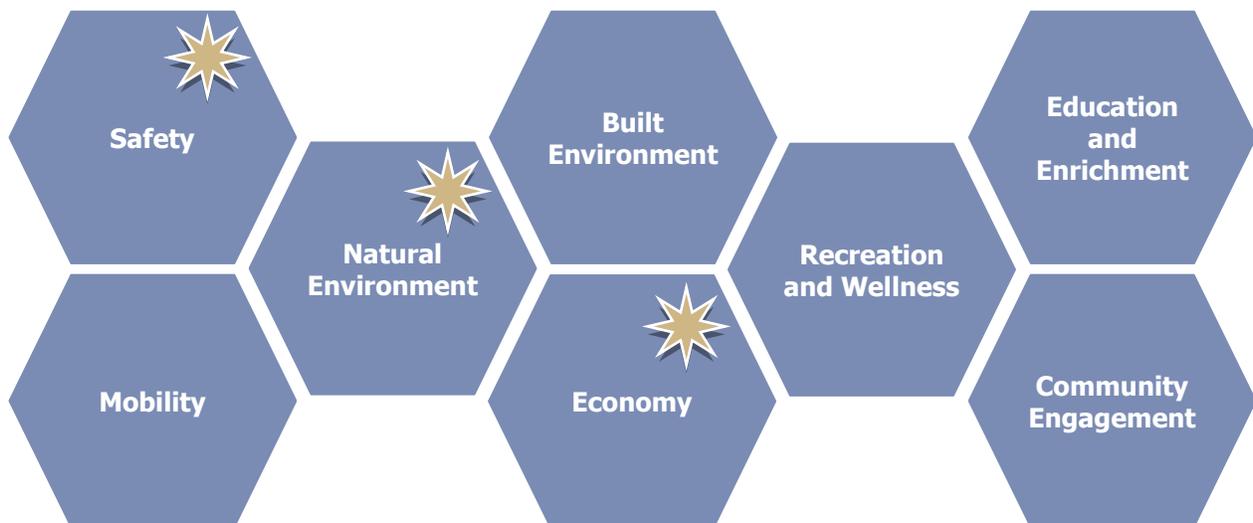
In addition to a summary of ratings, the image below includes one or more stars to indicate which community facets were the most important focus areas for the community. Residents identified Safety, Natural Environment and Economy as priorities for the Canandaigua community in the coming two years. Ratings for all facets tended to be positive and similar to ratings in comparison communities. This overview of the key aspects of community quality provides a quick summary of where residents see exceptionally strong performance and where performance offers the greatest opportunity for improvement. 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 Canandaigua’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 Canandaigua, 91% rated the City as an excellent or good place to live. Respondents' ratings of Canandaigua 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 Canandaigua as a place to raise children and to retire, their neighborhood as a place to live, the overall image or reputation of Canandaigua and its overall appearance. More than 70% of respondents gave high marks to each aspect (sometimes much more, with 87% rating Canandaigua as an excellent or good place to raise children). All of these ratings were similar to the national averages.

Delving deeper into Community Characteristics, survey respondents rated over 40 features of the community within the eight facets of Community Livability. Almost all aspects were similar to the benchmark. Residents gave notably higher ratings to the ease of walking in Canandaigua and to the city as a place to visit. All aspects of Safety, Natural Environment, Recreation and Wellness, Education and Enrichment and Community Engagement received excellent or good ratings from a majority of respondents.



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

Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



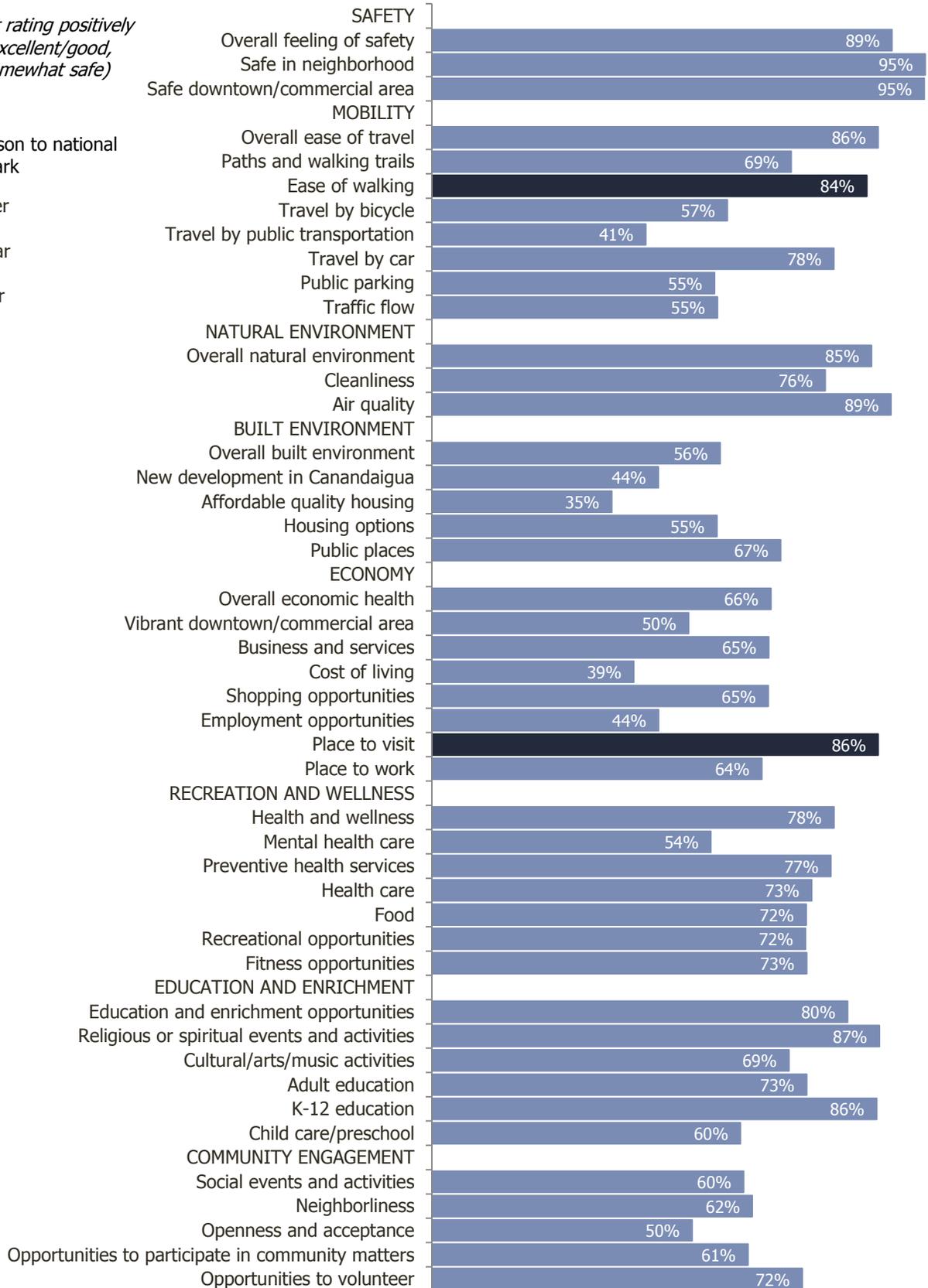
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Figure 1: Aspects of Community Characteristics

*Percent rating positively
(e.g., excellent/good,
very/somewhat safe)*

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



Governance

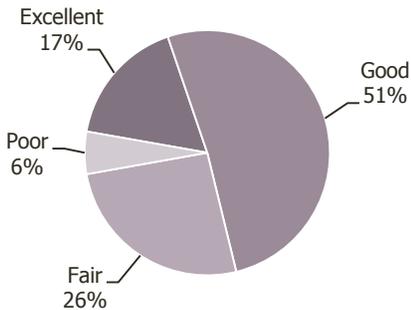
How well does the government of Canandaigua meet the needs and expectations of its residents?

The overall quality of the services provided by Canandaigua as well as the manner in which these services are provided is a key component of how residents rate their quality of life. About two-thirds of respondents gave excellent or good ratings to the overall quality of services provided by the City Government while about one-third gave excellent or good ratings to the overall quality of services provided by the Federal Government. Ratings for both levels of government were similar to ratings in comparison communities.

Survey respondents also rated various aspects of Canandaigua’s leadership and governance. While less than half of respondents gave positive ratings to many of these items, these ratings were similar to what has been observed on average in other communities across the nation. The overall quality of the customer service provided by Canandaigua employees received the highest ratings; about 8 in 10 respondents rated this as excellent or good.

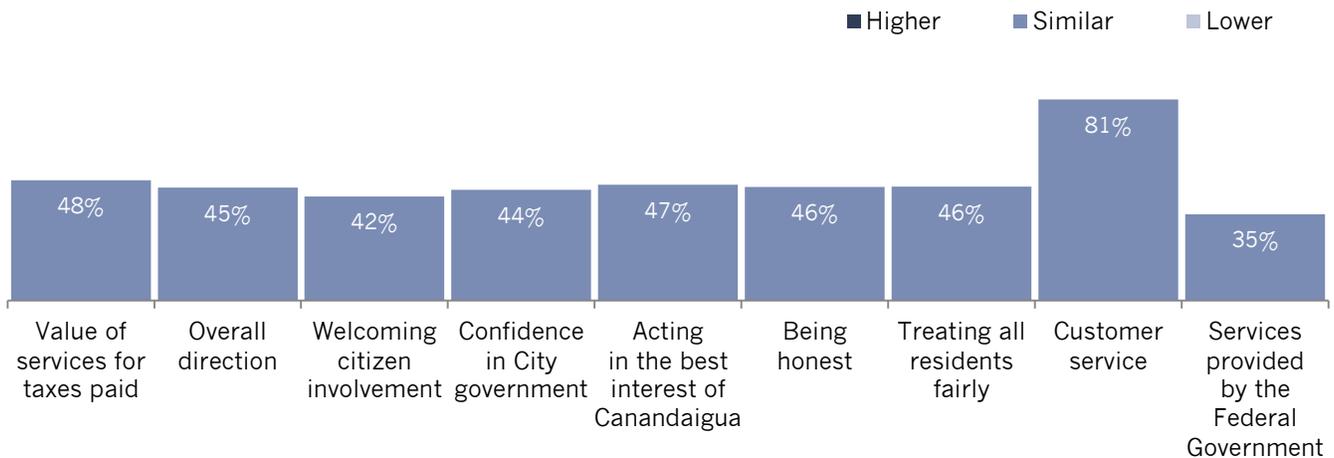
Respondents evaluated over 30 individual services and amenities available in Canandaigua. Most of these were rated positively by respondents in all facets and were similar to the national benchmarks. Two items received evaluations higher than the benchmark comparisons: street lighting and Canandaigua’s drinking water. While not higher than the national benchmarks, ratings of garbage collection and recycling were given high marks, with over 80% rating these positively. A few items were rated as excellent or good by fewer than half of respondents, but these items are also held in lower esteem in other communities as the ratings were similar to the benchmark comparisons. These items included street repair, sidewalk maintenance, economic development, land use, planning and zoning, code enforcement and cable television.

Overall Quality of City Services



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

Comparison to national benchmark



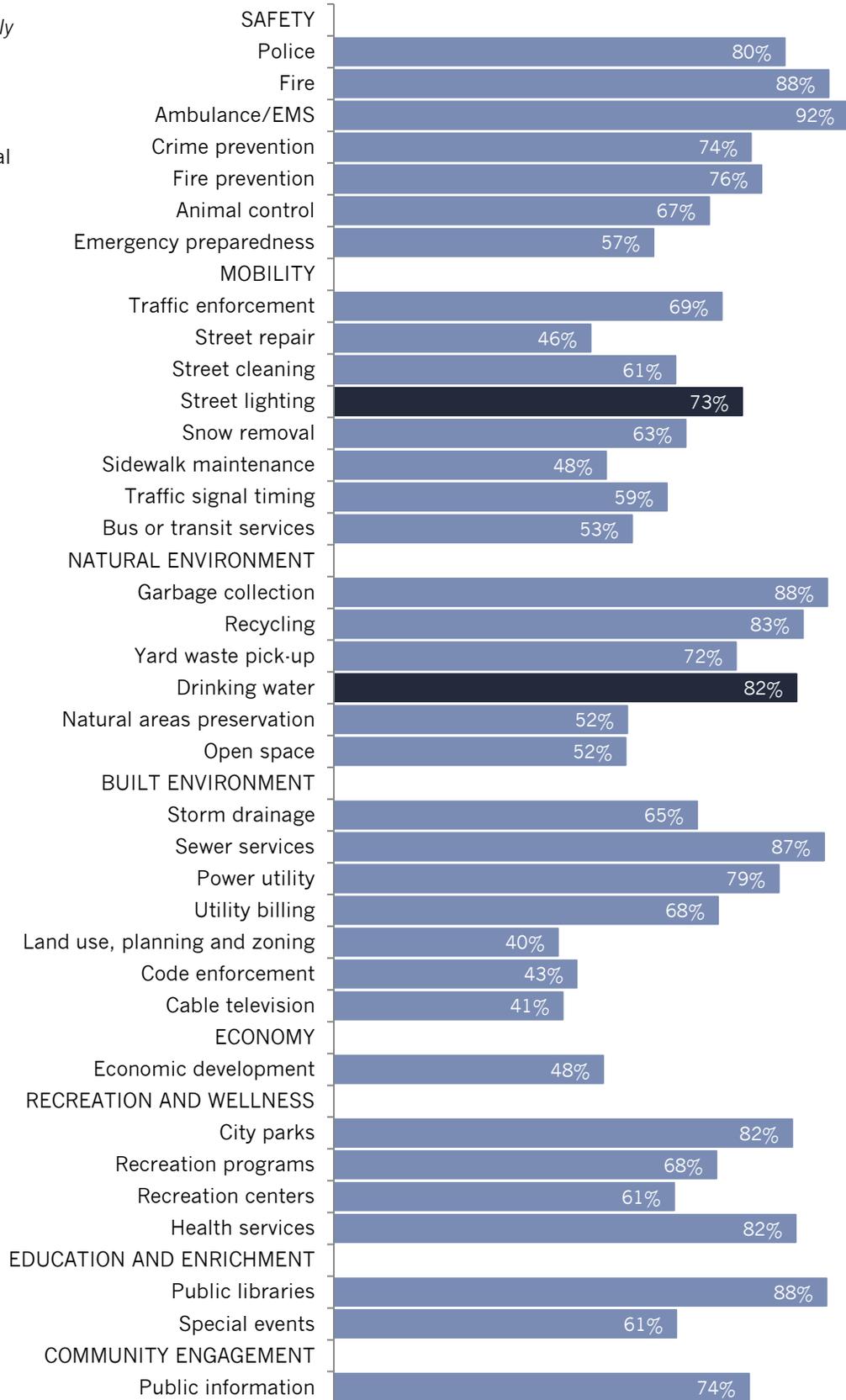
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Figure 2: Aspects of Governance

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



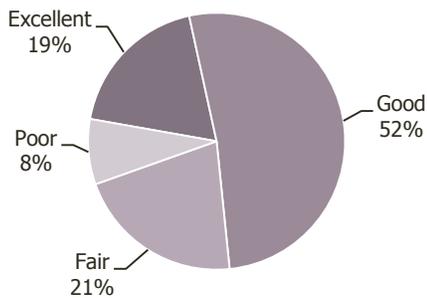
Participation

Are the residents of Canandaigua 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 7 in 10 respondents gave positive ratings to the sense of community in Canandaigua and this rating was similar to the national benchmark. When asked if they were likely to recommend living in Canandaigua or if they planned to remain in Canandaigua, about 9 in 10 residents indicated they were like to do both.

The survey included over 30 activities and behaviors for which respondents indicated how often they participated in or performed each, if at all. While reported rates of Participation varied widely in Canandaigua; almost all rates were similar to those reported in other communities across the nation. There were only two exceptions to this and both items had to do with Mobility. Fewer Canandaigua residents reported that they had used public transportation instead of driving and more reported that they had walked or biked instead of driving compared to residents in comparison communities.

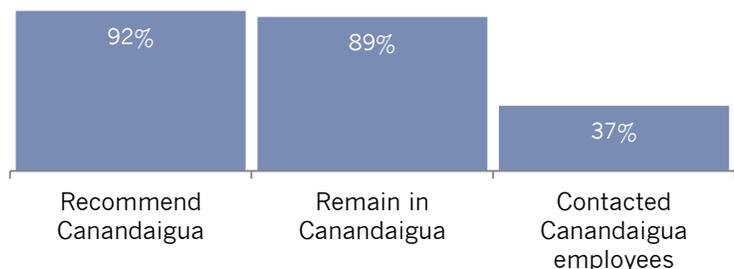
Sense of Community



*Percent rating positively
(e.g., very/somewhat likely,
yes)*

Comparison to national
benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



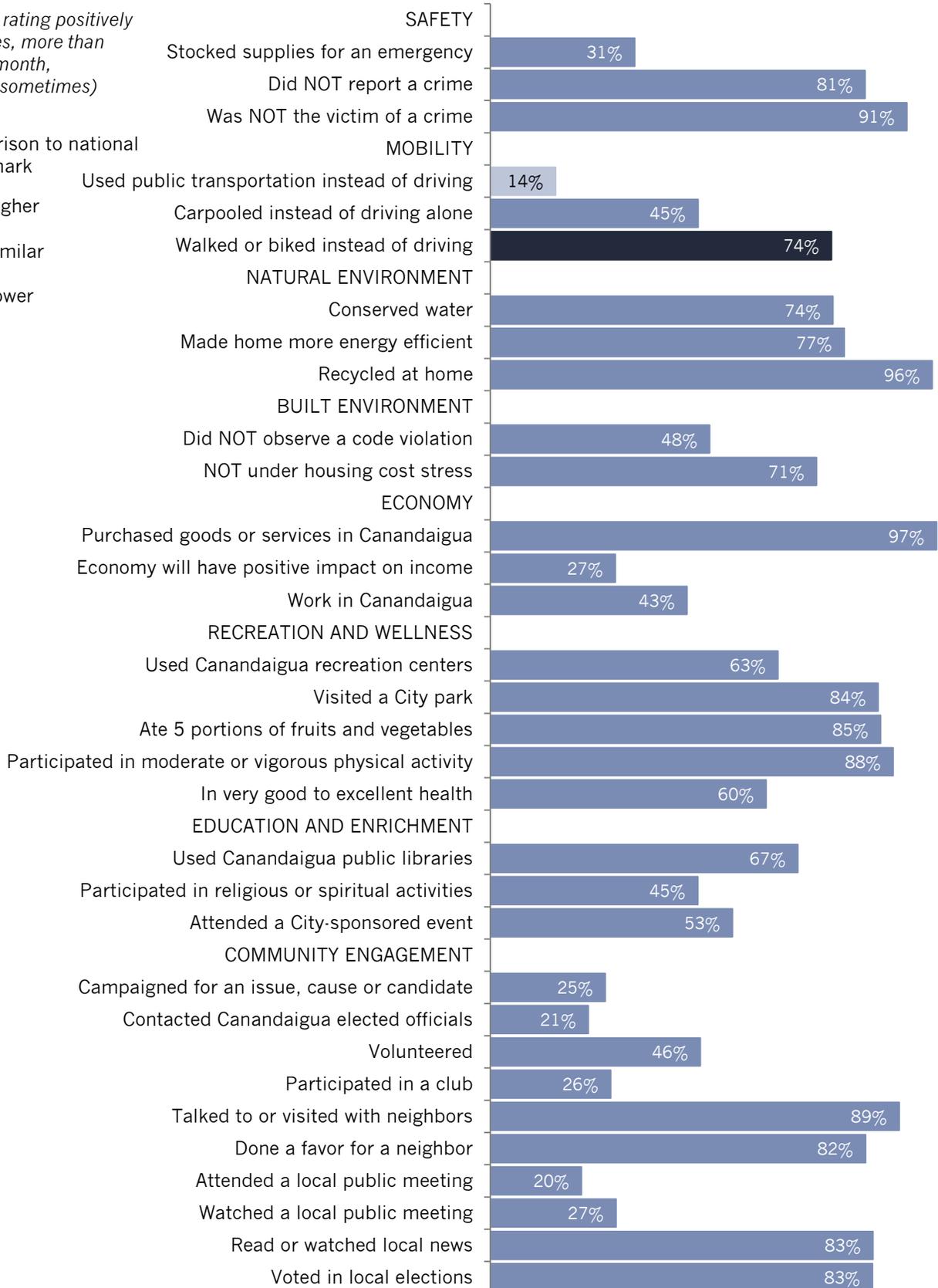
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Figure 3: Aspects of Participation

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



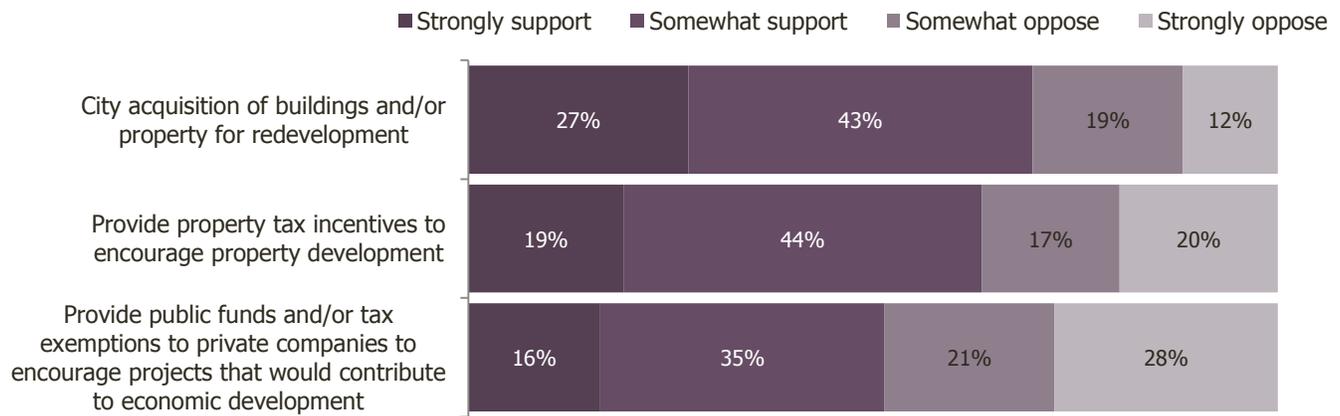
Special Topics

The City of Canandaigua included seven questions of special interest on The NCS. The questions covered a wide range of topics including potential development, questions about the police and fire departments, City policies and an open-ended question.

Resident support for or opposition to potential actions the City could take to encourage development and/or redevelopment was assessed. A majority of residents supported two of the three potential actions, with nearly 7 in 10 residents supporting City acquisition of buildings and/or property for redevelopment and just over 6 in 10 supporting providing property tax incentives to encourage property development. Respondents were split over the whether to provide public funds and/or tax exemptions to encourage projects that would contribute to economic development. About half supported and half opposed it, but 28% strongly opposed it compared to only 16% who strongly supported it.

Figure 4: Potential City Actions

Please indicate the extent to which you support or oppose each of the following potential actions the City of Canandaigua could take to encourage development (including redevelopment):



Respondents were asked to rate the quality of aspects of both the Canandaigua Police Department and the Fire Department. At least 7 in 10 residents rated each aspect of the Police Department as excellent or good (see Figure 5 below), while about 9 in 10 rated each aspect of the Fire Department as excellent or good (see Figure 6 on the next page).

Figure 5: Quality of Police Department

Please rate each of the following aspects of Canandaigua’s Police Department.

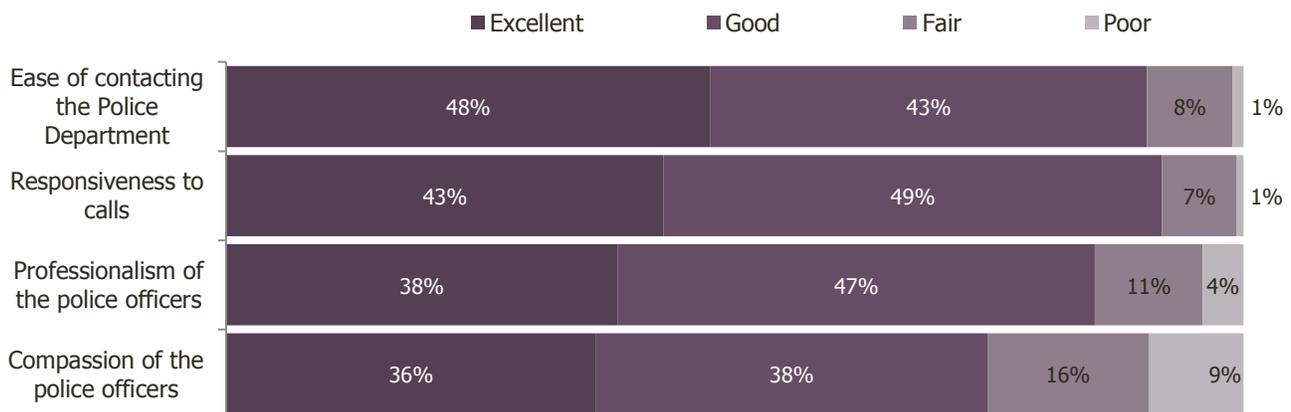
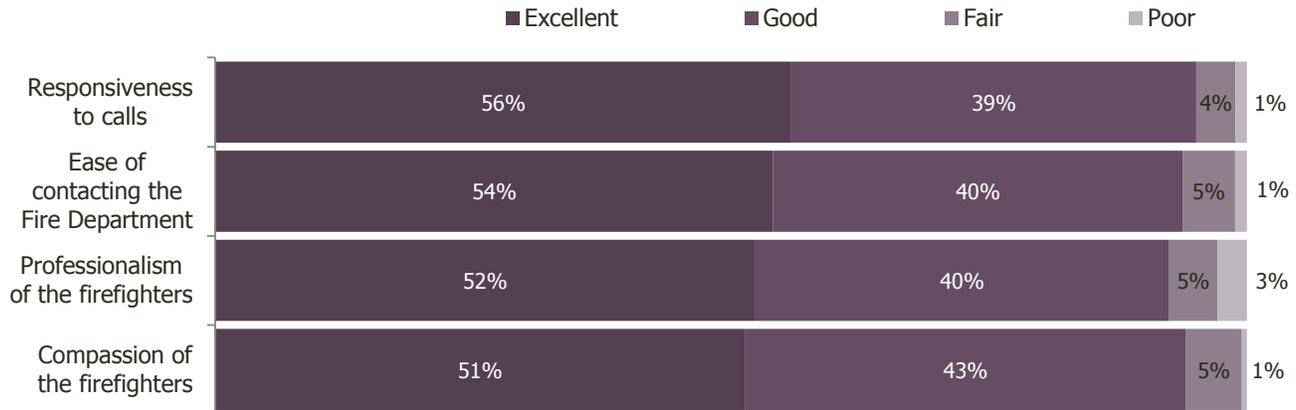


Figure 6: Quality of Fire Department

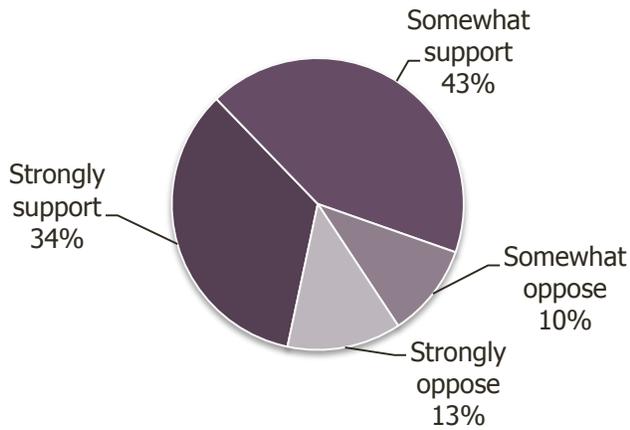
Please rate each of the following aspects of Canandaigua's Fire Department.



When asked if they would support or oppose a substantial property tax levy increase to fund increased staffing levels for the fire department, about three-quarters of respondents indicated that they would support it, with about a third saying they would “strongly” support it.

Figure 7: Property Tax Levy Increase to Fund Increased Fire Department Staffing

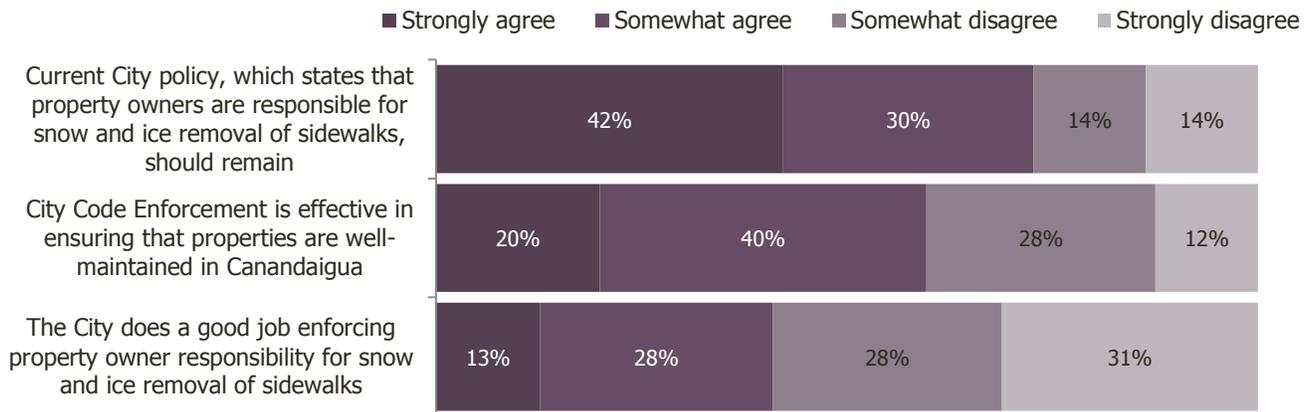
The City is considering hiring additional firefighters to increase staffing levels. How much would you support or oppose a substantial property tax levy increase to fund increased staffing levels for the fire department?



The City of Canandaigua garnered resident input on City Code Enforcement. About 7 in 10 residents agreed that current City policy that property owners are responsible for snow and ice removal of sidewalks should remain, however only about 4 in 10 agreed that the City was doing a good job enforcing this policy. About 6 in 10 agreed that City Code Enforcement is effective in ensuring that properties are well-maintained in Canandaigua.

Figure 8: City Code Enforcement

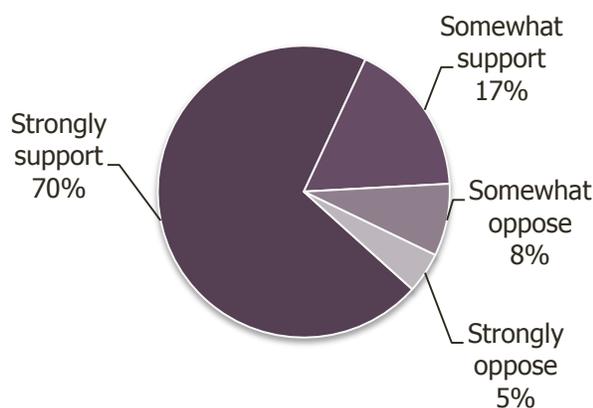
Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following:



Feedback was sought about the City parks’ “Carry in- Carry out” policy in which visitors are supposed to take out of the park what they bring in, including their generated trash. At least 4 in 5 residents indicated that they supported the continuation of this policy.

Figure 9: City Parks Policy

City parks have a “Carry in – Carry out” policy, which means that all trash brought into the park should be taken with visitors when they leave. How much do you support or oppose the continuation of this policy in Canandaigua Parks?

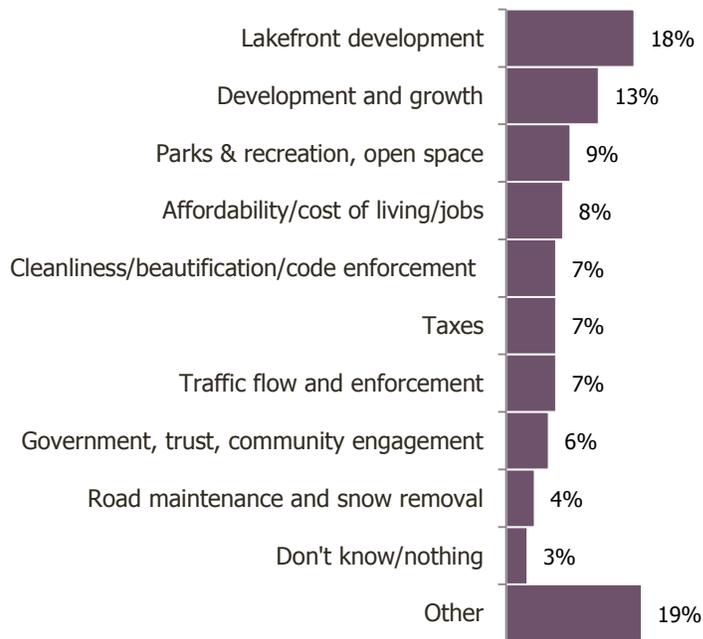


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Included on the survey was an open-ended question where residents could answer, in their own words what they felt was the most important thing the City of Canandaigua could do to improve the overall quality of life in the city. A total of 465 surveys were completed by Canandaigua residents; of these 331 respondents wrote in responses for this question. Survey respondents had a wide variety of ideas to improve the quality of life in Canandaigua. The most commonly cited themes included lakefront development and general development and growth. Residents also expressed desire to more recreational opportunities, employment opportunities, city beautification, lower taxes and improved traffic flow. (See the *Open-end Report* under separate cover for the full set of the responses as provided by respondents.)

Figure 10: Open-Ended Question

What is the most important thing the City of Canandaigua could do to improve the overall quality of life in the city?



Conclusions

Residents value the quality of life in Canandaigua and would recommend living in this community to someone who asked.

About 9 in 10 residents rated their overall quality of life as excellent or good and would be likely to remain in Canandaigua and recommend the community as a place to live. Positive ratings were given to Canandaigua as a place to live and their neighborhood as a place to live, the overall image of the City and to Canandaigua as a place to raise children; each of these ratings were similar to the national comparisons. About 7 in 10 respondents considered the sense of community in Canandaigua to be excellent or good, and about 6 in 10 respondents felt that social events and activities and the neighborliness of residents in Canandaigua were excellent or good. However, fewer rated as excellent or good the openness and acceptance of the community to people of diverse backgrounds. All of these ratings, though, were similar to the national benchmarks.

The Natural Environment in Canandaigua is an important attribute to the quality of life in the city and received high marks.

Nearly 9 in 10 residents (86%) identified Natural Environment as an essential or very important community focus area for the Canandaigua community in the next two years. Overall, residents' ratings for aspects of Natural Environment were similar to or higher than national comparisons. Reviews for the drinking water quality in Canandaigua were notably positive and higher than those reported elsewhere. Additionally, about 1 in 5 respondents who provided a response in their own words about the most important thing the City could do to improve overall quality of life cited the Lakefront area as an important area of the City to focus on (development, recreation opportunities, etc.).

Canandaigua is a safe community and residents want to keep it that way.

About 8 in 10 residents considered Safety a priority focus area for Canandaigua in the next two years. Almost all residents gave positive reviews to the overall feeling of safety in the city and about 9 in 10 favorably rated feelings of safety in their neighborhoods and in Canandaigua's downtown/commercial area. Further, at least 8 in 10 residents gave positive reviews to public safety services such as police, fire and ambulance/EMS.

Some of the specialized questions on the survey asked about specific aspects of the Police and Fire Departments. About 8 in 10 rated each aspect of the Canandaigua Police Department positively while about 9 in 10 rated each aspect of the Fire Department positively. Three-quarters of residents voiced support for a tax increase to fund additional fire fighters.

Residents support some development/redevelopment actions, but were divided about using public funds to encourage economic development projects

A majority of residents supported two of three potential actions about which their opinion was solicited, with nearly 7 in 10 residents supporting City acquisition of buildings and/or property for redevelopment and just over 6 in 10 supporting providing property tax incentives to encourage property development. Respondents were split over the whether to provide public funds and/or tax exemptions to encourage projects that would contribute to economic development. About half supported and half opposed it, but 28% strongly opposed it compared to only 16% who strongly supported it.

When asked in their own words, to name the most important thing the City could do to improve quality of life, development and redevelopment of the Lakefront and of downtown were the most commonly cited themes.