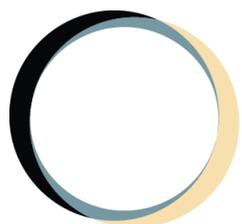


THE NCSTM
The National Citizen SurveyTM

Sunnyvale, CA
Community Livability Report

2015



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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 proud 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 Sunnyvale. 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 309 residents of the City of Sunnyvale. The margin of error around any reported percentage is 6% 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 Sunnyvale

More than three-quarters of residents rated the quality of life in Sunnyvale as excellent or good. This rating was similar to quality of life ratings in other communities (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.



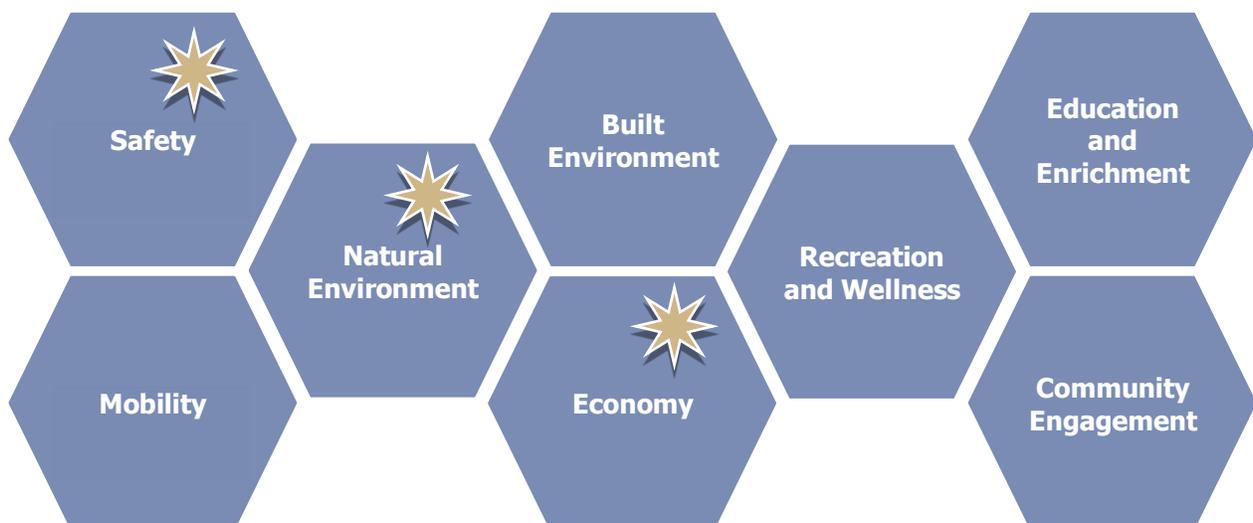
In addition to a summary of ratings, the image below includes one or more stars to indicate which community facets were the most important focus areas for the community. Residents identified Safety, Economy and Natural Environment as priorities for the Sunnyvale community in the coming two years. It is noteworthy that Sunnyvale residents gave favorable ratings to all of these facets of community. Ratings for Mobility, Built Environment, Recreation and Wellness, Education and Enrichment and Community Engagement were positive and similar to other 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 Sunnyvale’s unique questions.

Legend

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

- Most important



Community Characteristics

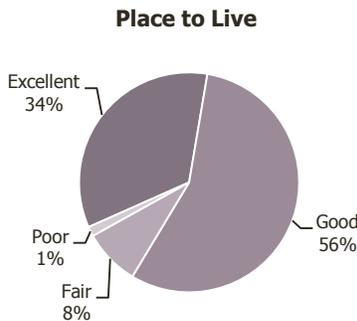
What makes a community livable, attractive and a place where people want to be?

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 Sunnyvale, 90% rated the City as an excellent or good place to live. Respondents' ratings of Sunnyvale as a place to live were similar to ratings given 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 Sunnyvale as a place to raise children and to retire, their neighborhood as a place to live, the overall image or reputation of Sunnyvale and its overall appearance. Ratings for overall image and appearance of Sunnyvale, their neighborhood as a place to live and Sunnyvale as a place to raise children were similar to ratings in other communities, while Sunnyvale as a place to retire was rated lower.

Delving deeper into Community Characteristics, survey respondents rated over 40 features of the community within the eight facets of Community Livability. A majority of residents gave positive ratings to all aspects of Safety, Mobility, Natural Environment and Education and Enrichment, with the exception of travel by public transportation, which was rated favorably by about one-third of residents; all of these aspects received ratings that were similar to ratings given in other communities across the nation. In the facet of Built Environment, about half of residents gave positive ratings to overall built environment, new development in Sunnyvale, and public places, which were all rated similar to the benchmark. About 4 in 10 rated housing options positively and 13% gave favorable ratings to affordable quality housing; both of these were given ratings lower than ratings given in other communities. In the facet of Economy, 8 in 10 respondents rated Sunnyvale as a place to work positively and two-thirds rated employment opportunities favorably, both of which were higher than the benchmark. Overall

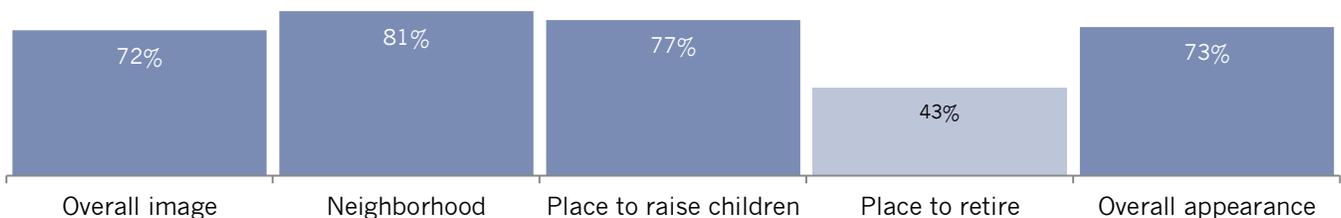
economic health of Sunnyvale was rated positively by three-quarters of residents while business and services and shopping opportunities were rated favorably by about half, and around a third of respondents rated vibrant downtown/commercial area favorably. These aspects were rated similar to ratings given in other communities. Four in 10 residents gave positive ratings to Sunnyvale as a place to visit and about 2 in 10 rated cost of living positively; both of these aspects were rated lower than the benchmark. Within the facets of Recreation and Wellness and Community Engagement, a majority of residents gave favorable ratings to all aspects except mental health care and social events and activities. These were rated similar to ratings given in other communities across the nation.



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

Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



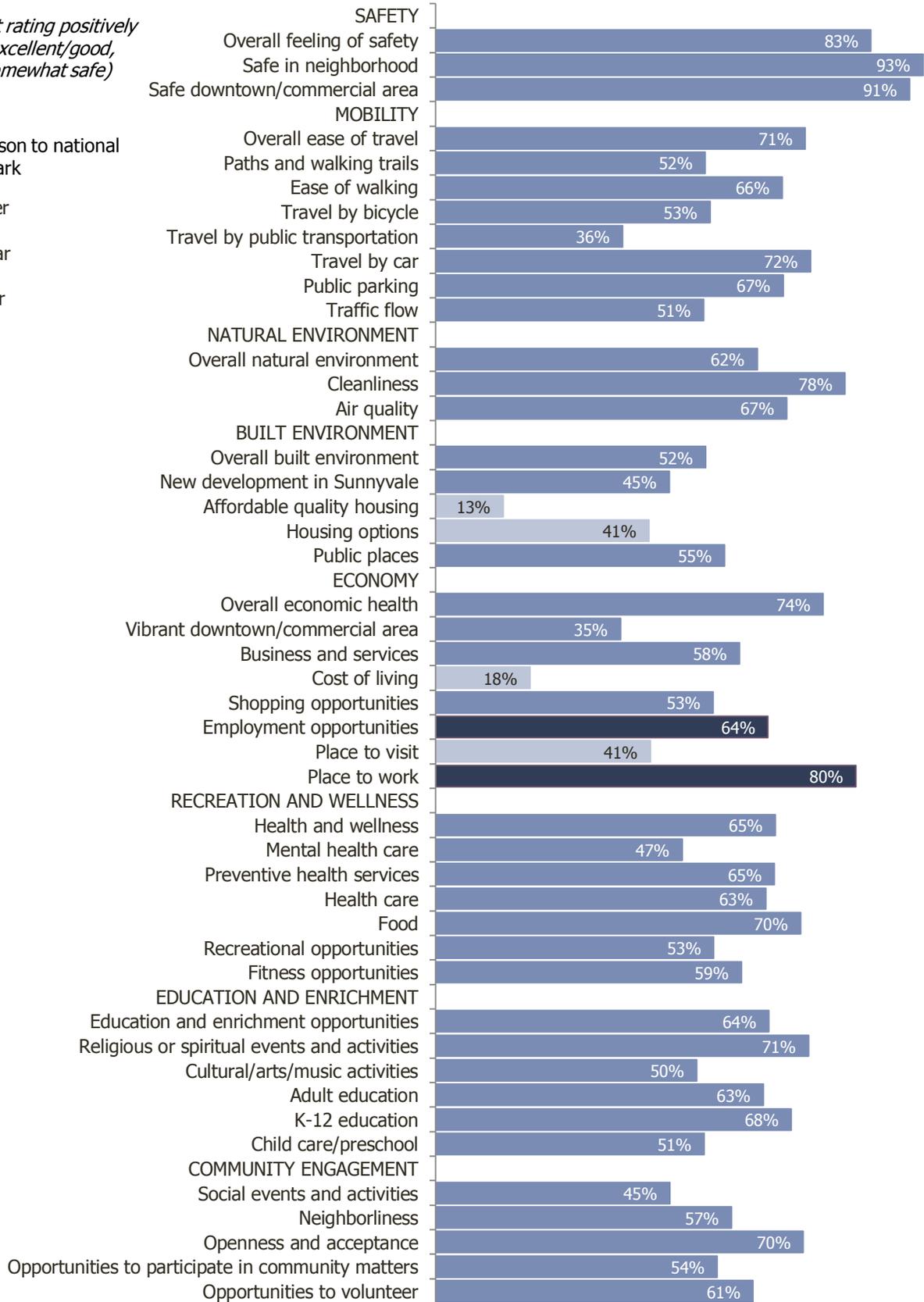
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Figure 1: Aspects of Community Characteristics

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



Governance

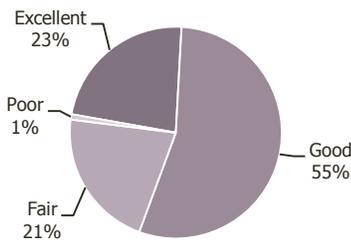
How well does the government of Sunnyvale meet the needs and expectations of its residents?

The overall quality of the services provided by Sunnyvale as well as the manner in which these services are provided are a key component of how residents rate their quality of life. In Sunnyvale, about 8 in 10 participants gave positive ratings to the overall quality of City services and about half gave positive ratings to the services provided by the Federal Government. Both of these ratings were similar to ratings given in other communities across the nation.

Survey respondents also rated various aspects of Sunnyvale’s leadership and governance. Nearly three-quarters of residents were pleased with Sunnyvale’s customer service and about two-thirds gave positive ratings for Sunnyvale government being honest and treating all residents fairly. Around 6 in 10 survey participants rated the value of services for taxes paid, overall direction, welcoming citizen involvement, confidence in City government and acting in the best interest of Sunnyvale positively. All of these aspects were rated similar to the national benchmark.

Respondents evaluated over 30 individual services and amenities available in Sunnyvale. All aspects of Safety, Built Environment, Recreation and Wellness, Education and Enrichment and Community Engagement were rated positively by at least a majority of participants and were rated similar to ratings given in other communities. Within the facet of Mobility, around two-thirds of residents rated traffic enforcement, street lighting and street cleaning positively, while about half rated street repair, sidewalk maintenance and traffic signal timing positively. About 4 in 10 respondents rated bus or transit services favorably; all aspects of Mobility were rated similar to the benchmark. In the facet of Natural Environment, more than 8 in 10 residents were pleased with garbage collection and yard waste pick-up, three-quarters gave positive ratings to recycling and drinking water, and about half rated open space favorably, all of which were rated similar to other communities. Forty-four percent of respondents gave positive ratings to natural areas preservation, which was lower than the benchmark. Within Economy, economic development was rated favorably by two-thirds of residents and was the only aspect of Governance that was rated higher than the national benchmark.

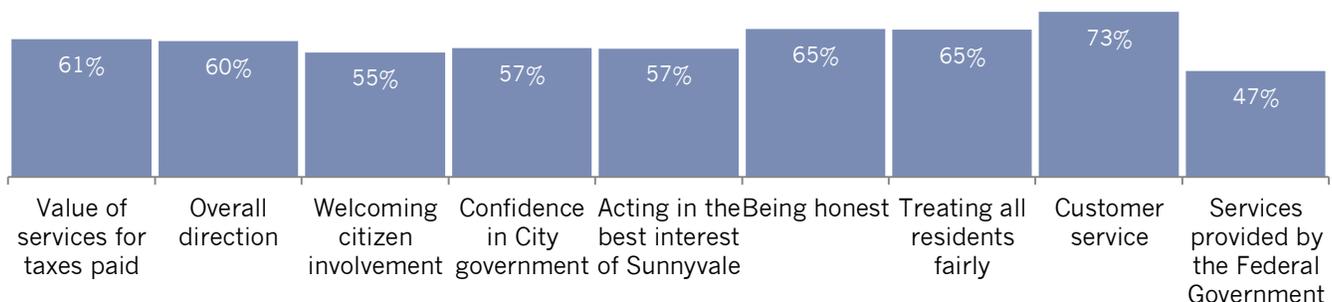
Overall Quality of City Services



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

Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



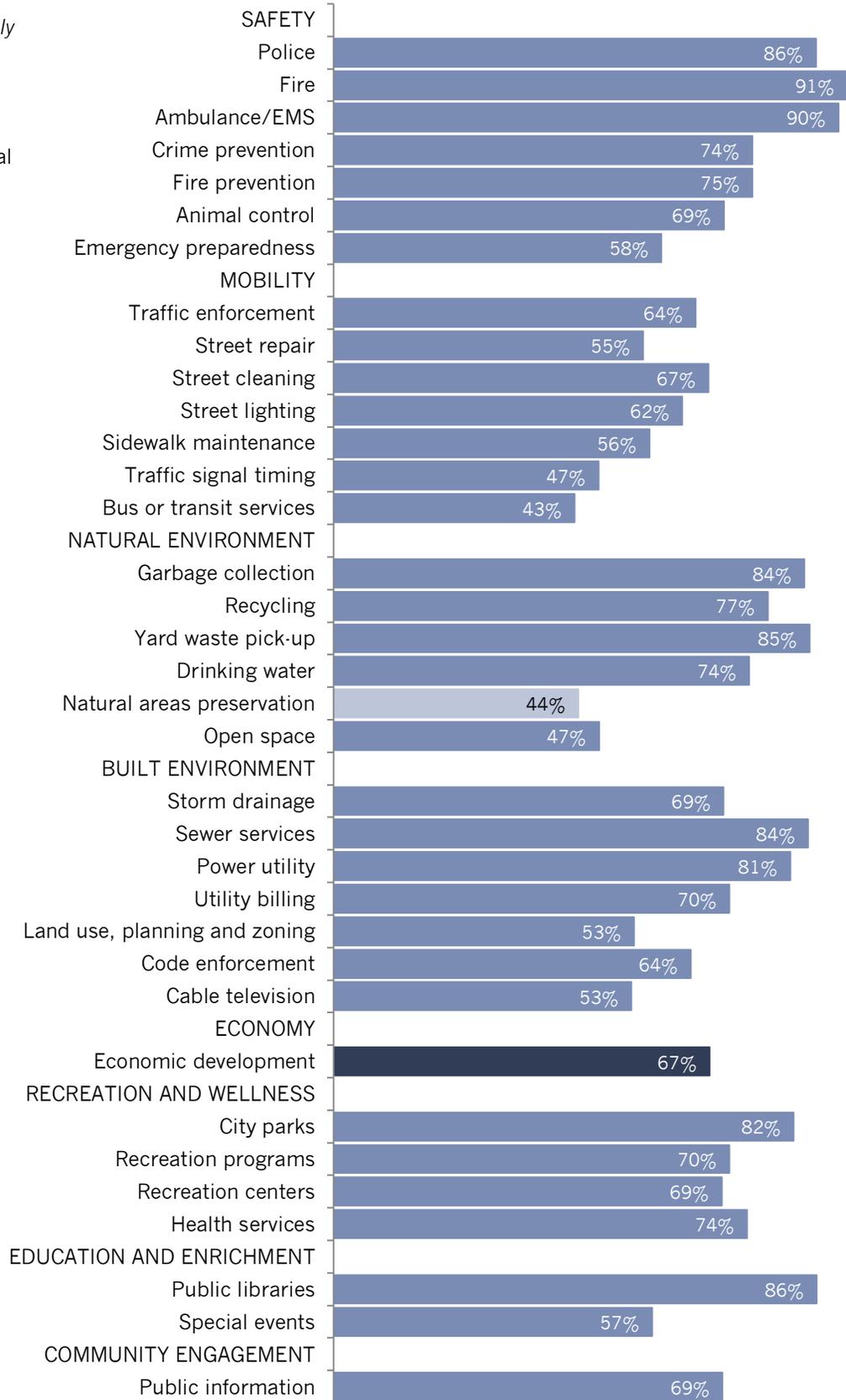
The National Citizen Survey™

Figure 2: Aspects of Governance

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



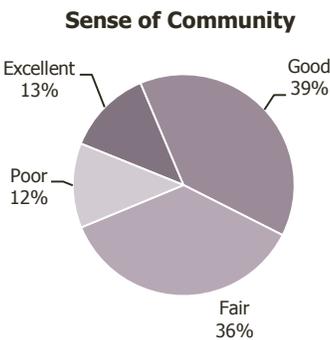
Participation

Are the residents of Sunnyvale 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. More than half of respondents gave excellent or good ratings to the sense of community in Sunnyvale, which was similar to ratings given in other communities nationwide. Nearly all residents would recommend living in Sunnyvale to others and 8 in 10 plan to remain in Sunnyvale for the next five years, while 39% said they had contacted Sunnyvale employees in the past 12 months. These rates were also similar to the national benchmark.

The survey included over 30 activities and behaviors for which respondents indicated how often they participated in or performed each, if at all. Rates of Participation across the various facets were mixed. In the facet of Safety, nearly 9 in 10 residents were not the victim of a crime and 8 in 10 did not report a crime, while about 4 in 10 had stocked supplies for an emergency; these rates of participation were similar to those reported in other communities. Within Mobility, around three-quarters of residents had walked or biked instead of driving and 4 in 10 had used public transportation instead of driving, both of which were higher than the benchmark. About half had carpooled instead of driving alone, which was a rate similar to that reported in other communities. Within the facet of Natural Environment, nearly all residents had conserved water (a rate higher than the benchmark), about 9 in 10 had recycled at home and about three-quarters had made their homes more energy efficient (both similar to the benchmark). Around two-thirds of respondents rated both aspects of Built Environment positively, but the rate of residents who had not observed a code violation was rated higher than ratings in other communities while the rate of residents who were not under housing cost stress was similar. Virtually all survey participants had purchased goods or services in Sunnyvale, a rate higher than the national benchmark; around 4 in 10 believed the economy would have a positive impact on their income, a rate higher than the benchmark; and 30% worked in

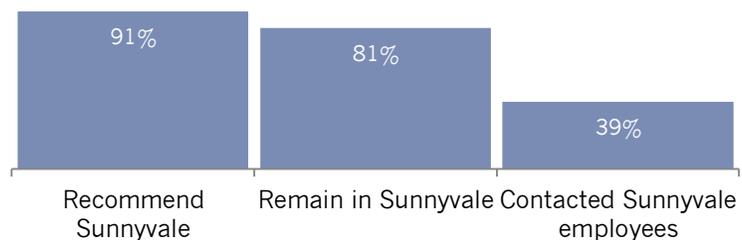
Sunnyvale, which was a rate lower than the benchmark. A majority of respondents participated in aspects of Recreation and Wellness, all of which were rated similar to other communities. Within the facet of Education and Enrichment, around two-thirds of respondents had used Sunnyvale public libraries (similar to the benchmark) and about a third had participated in religious or spiritual events and attended a City-sponsored event (both lower than the benchmark). In Community Engagement, around 8 in 10 residents had talked to or visited with neighbors and read or watched local news, 7 in 10 had done a favor for a neighbor and 61% had voted in local elections. Fewer than one-quarter of respondents had participated in the remaining aspects of Community Engagement. About half of these aspects were rated similar to ratings given in other communities and half were rated lower.



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

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



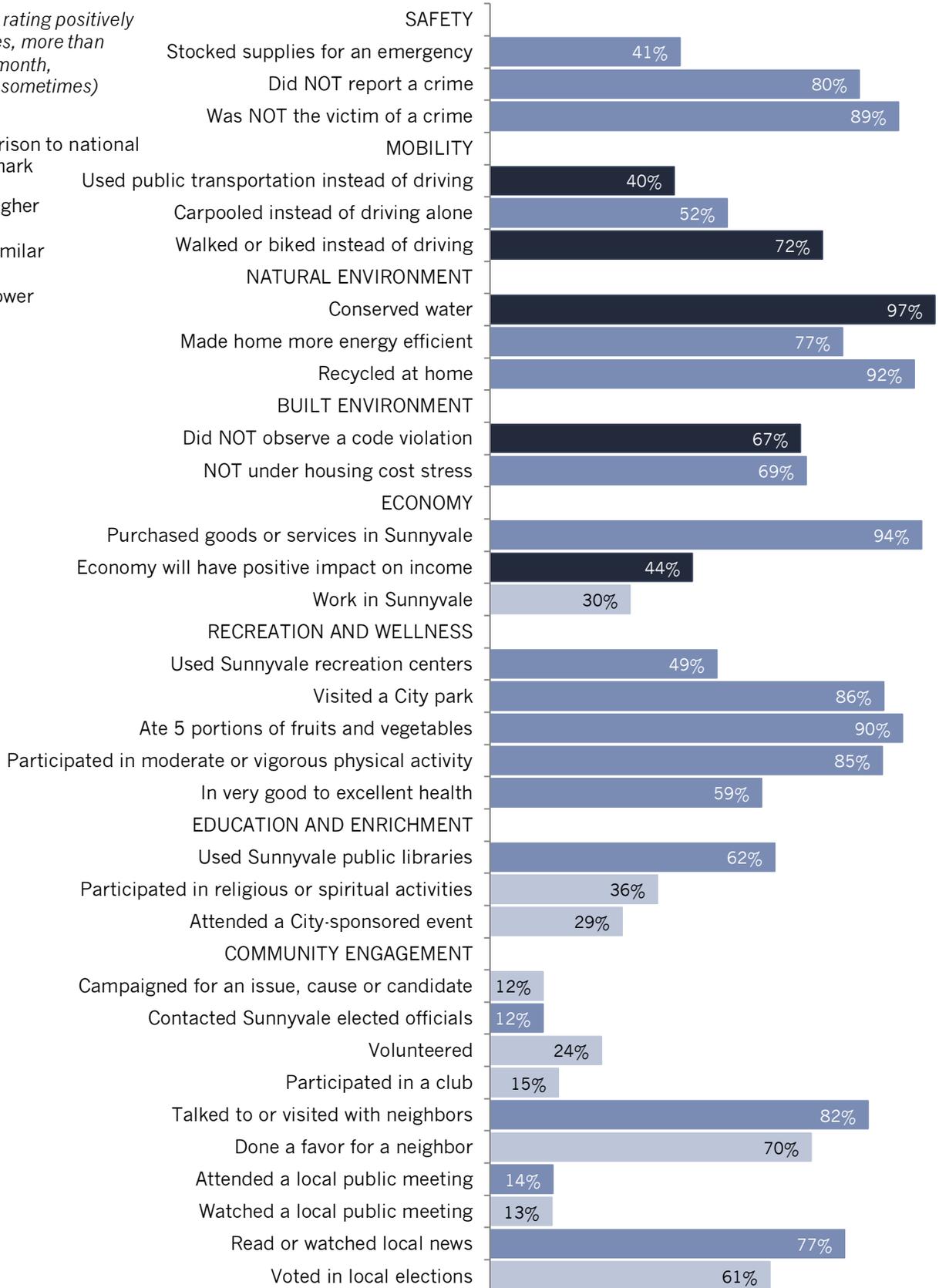
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Figure 3: Aspects of Participation

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

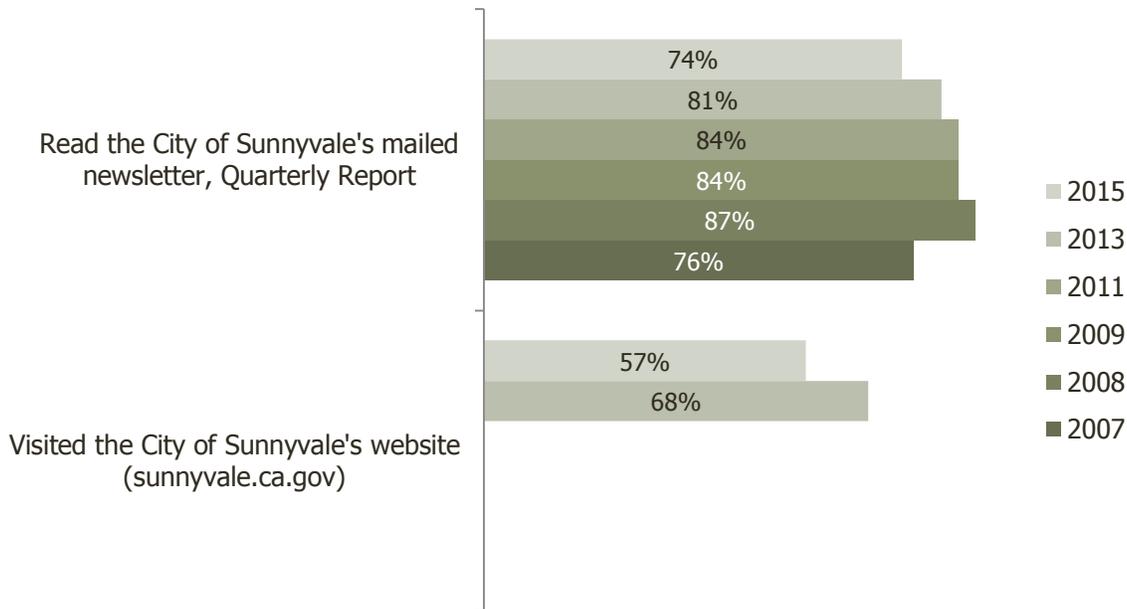
- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



Special Topics

The City of Sunnyvale included a number of questions of special interest on The NCS.

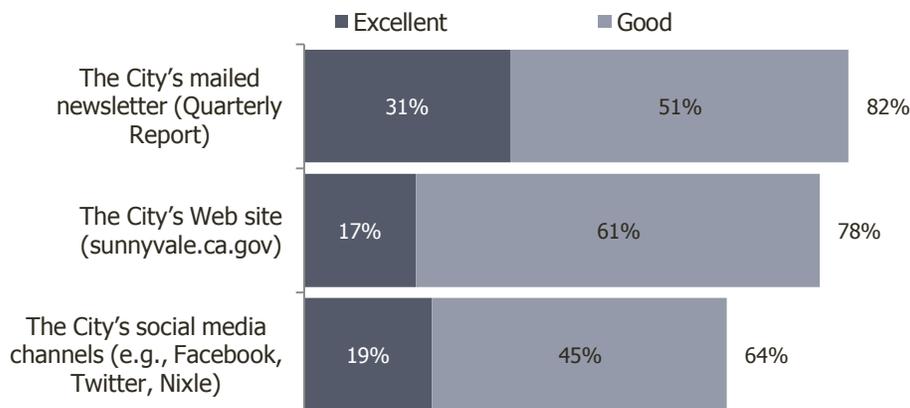
Residents were asked whether they had done a number of activities in the 12 months prior to the survey. About three-quarters of residents had read the City’s mailed newsletter, the *Quarterly Report*, in the past 12 months and about 3 in 5 had visited the City of Sunnyvale’s website. The proportion of residents who read the *Quarterly Report* declined since 2008, but is approximately equivalent to rates of readership in 2007. Respondents were only asked about their use of the City website in 2013 and 2015.



Residents were asked to rate the quality of different sources of information from the City. About two-thirds of residents rated the City’s social medial channels positively, while around 8 in 10 were pleased with the City’s website and mailed newsletter.

Figure 4: Information Sources

Please rate the overall quality of information available in each of the following City information sources:

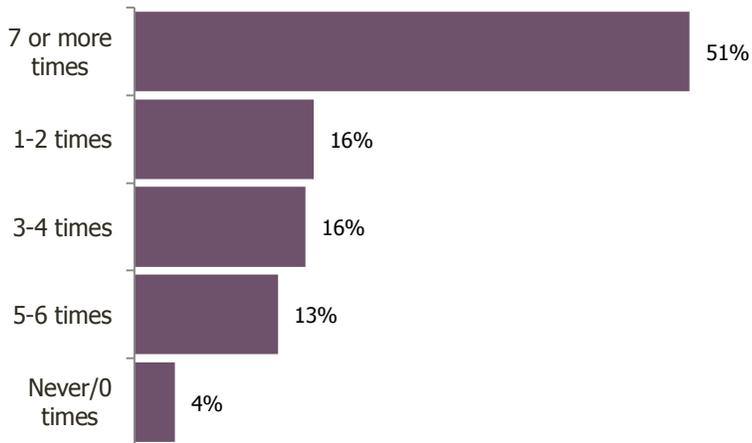


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Survey participants were asked to specify how many times they had visited downtown Sunnyvale in the 12 months prior to the survey. Virtually all residents had visited downtown Sunnyvale at least once, and half had visited at least seven times in the past year.

Figure 5: Visiting Downtown Sunnyvale

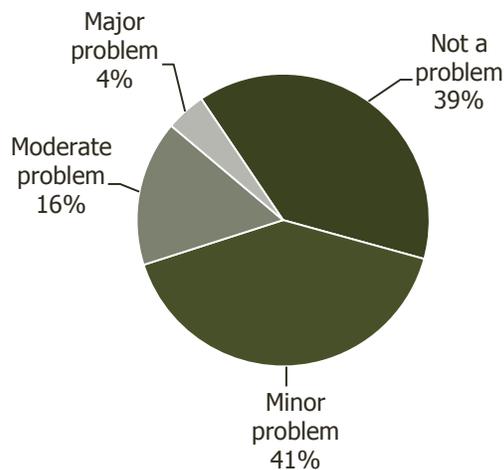
In the past 12 months, how many times, if at all, have you or another household member visited downtown Sunnyvale for shopping, dining or entertainment?



Respondents were asked to rate whether they felt code enforcement issues in Sunnyvale were a major problem, moderate problem, minor problem, or not a problem. Only 2 in 10 residents felt code enforcement issues were a major or moderate problem; 4 in 10 residents felt they were a minor problem and another 4 in 10 felt they were not a problem at all.

Figure 6: Code Enforcement

To what degree, if at all, are code enforcement issues a problem in Sunnyvale?

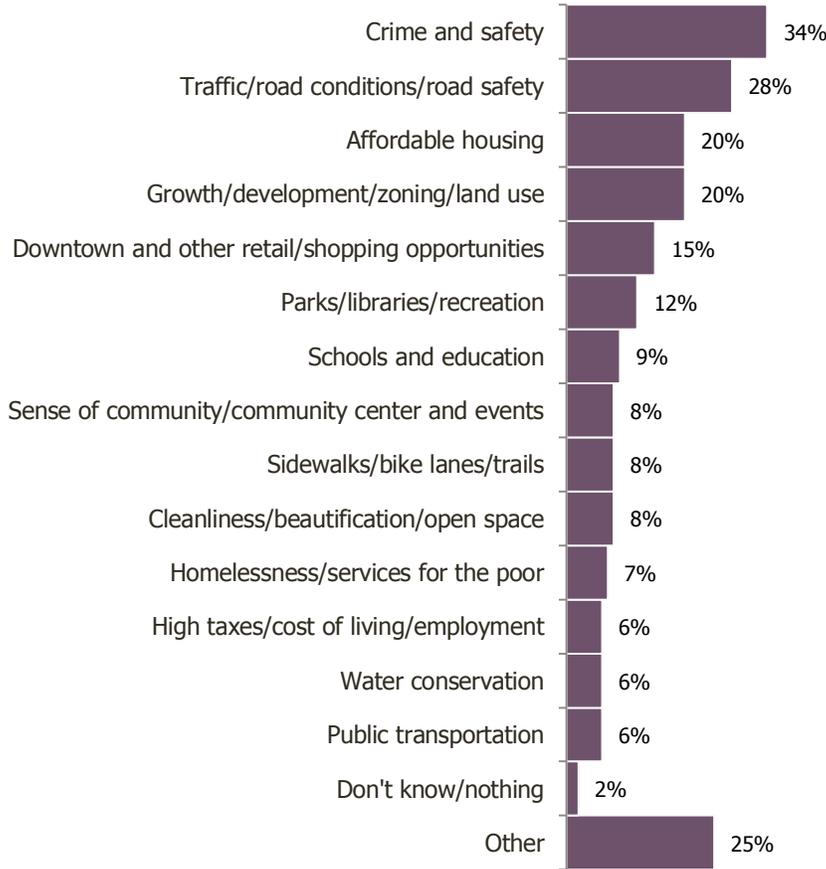


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Survey respondents were given the opportunity to write in the top three community issues that they wanted the City of Sunnyvale to focus on in the coming year. One-third of respondents felt that crime and safety issues should be an area of focus for the City in the next year. More than one-quarter thought that traffic and road safety was an important issue. About one in five respondents thought that affordable housing should be a focus and another one in five wrote in comments related to issues with growth, development, zoning and land use. For the full verbatim responses, see *The Open End Report* under separate cover.

Figure 7: Top Community Issues

What are the top three community issues you would like to see the City focus on in the coming year?



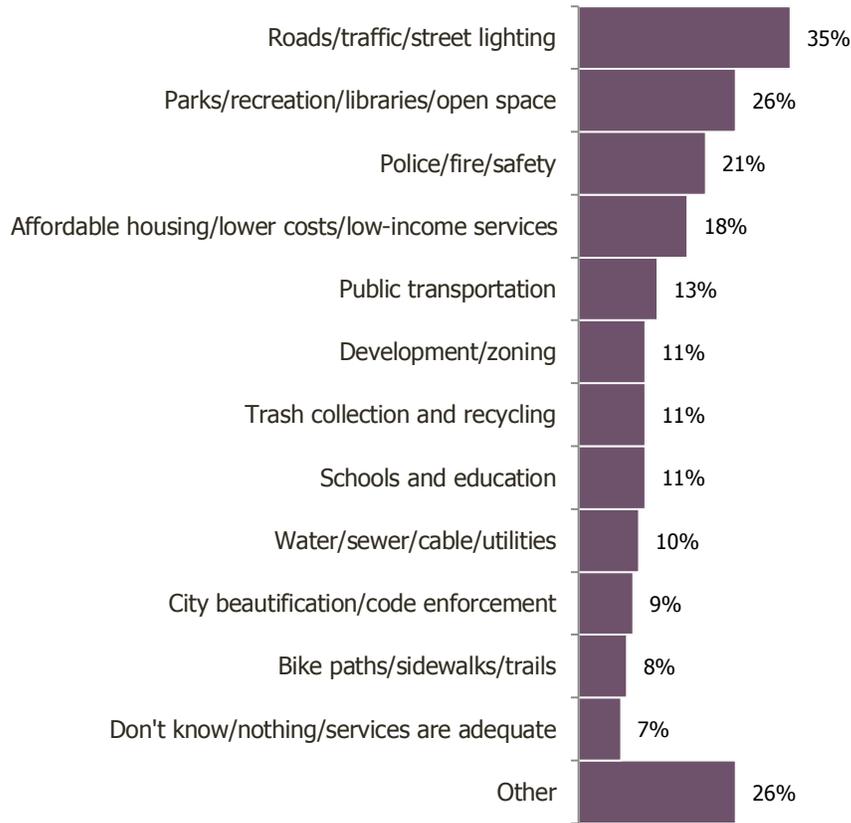
Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one option.

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Residents were given another opportunity to write in a response on the survey, this time about the top three City services that they wanted the City of Sunnyvale to focus on in the coming year. When asked which City services they would like the City of Sunnyvale to focus on in the next year, one-third of respondents wrote in comments related to road maintenance, traffic issues, or street lighting. One-quarter of respondents thought parks, recreation, libraries and open space were important areas of focus. About one in five residents wanted the City to focus on police, fire and safety services and another one in five wrote in comments about affordable housing, lowering costs and services for low-income residents. For the full verbatim responses, see *The Open End Report* under separate cover.

Figure 8: Top City Services

What are the top three City services you would like to see the City focus on in the coming year?



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

Conclusions

Sunnyvale residents enjoy a high quality of life.

Most residents rated their quality of life positively and think Sunnyvale is an excellent or good place to live. Most survey participants gave positive ratings for the overall image and overall appearance of Sunnyvale and most also think Sunnyvale is an excellent or good place to raise children. About 8 in 10 survey participants plan on remaining in Sunnyvale and 9 in 10 would recommend living in Sunnyvale to others.

Economy is important to residents and received high ratings.

Economy was identified as an important area of focus in the coming years, and many aspects of Economy were rated positively by a majority of residents, including overall economic health, business and services, shopping opportunities and economic development. Several aspects of Economy, including employment opportunities, Sunnyvale as a place to work, economic development and perceptions of positive economic impact on income, were rated higher than ratings given in other communities across the nation.

Safety is a priority to residents and focus area for the City.

Residents indicated that Safety is an important facet for Sunnyvale to focus on in the coming two years. Ratings for Safety across the different pillars were generally positive and similar to other communities across the nation, and around 9 in 10 residents gave favorable ratings to feelings of safety in their neighborhood and in the downtown/commercial area as well as to police, fire and ambulance services. However, when asked about the top three most important community issues and top three City services for Sunnyvale to focus on the coming year, one-third of residents mentioned crime and safety as an important community issue and one in five mentioned police, fire and safety as important services to focus on. Crime and safety-related topics were the most-commonly cited community issue and the third most-commonly cited City service.

Residents value the Natural Environment in Sunnyvale and indicate areas for improvement.

Residents also identified Natural Environment as an important area of focus in the next two years. Most aspects of Natural Environment received positive ratings from a majority of participants and were rated similar to the benchmark, including overall natural environment, cleanliness, air quality, garbage collection, recycling and drinking water. Virtually all residents had conserved water and did so at a rate higher than reported in other communities; however, only 4 in 10 residents gave positive ratings to natural areas preservation, which was a rate lower than the benchmark. When asked which three City services Sunnyvale should focus on in the coming year, one-quarter of respondents mentioned services related to parks, recreation, libraries and open space. These were the second most-commonly cited City services.