



THE NCSTM
The National Citizen SurveyTM

Bettendorf, IA

Community Livability Report

2018



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About

The National Citizen Survey™ (The NCS) report is about the “livability” of Bettendorf. 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 497 residents of the City of Bettendorf. The margin of error around any reported percentage is 4% 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 Bettendorf

Almost all residents rated the quality of life in Bettendorf as excellent or good. This rating was higher than the national benchmark comparison (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.



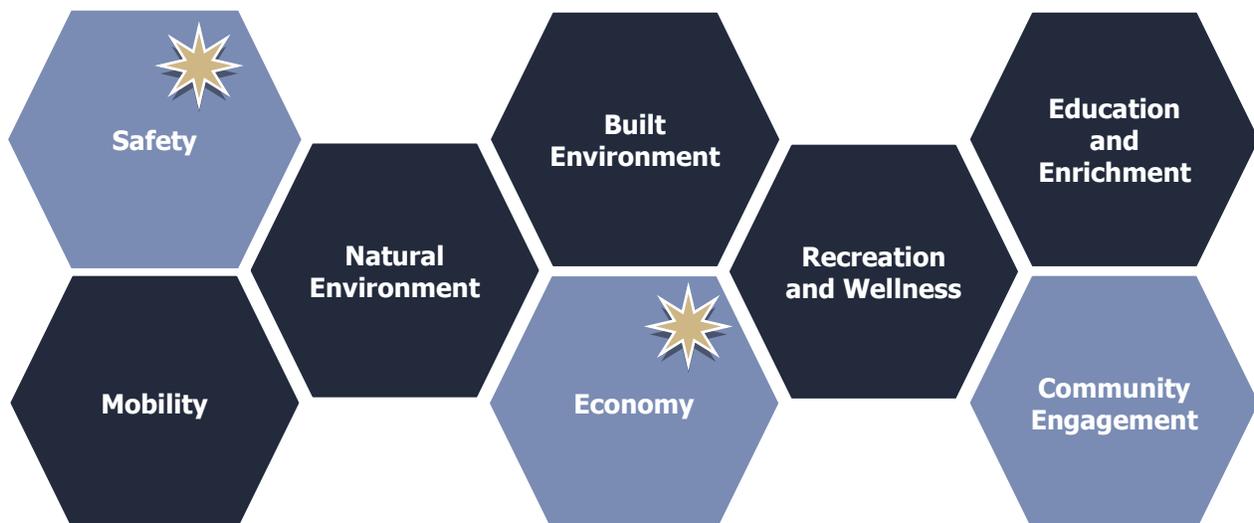
In addition to a summary of ratings, the image below includes one or more stars to indicate which community facets were the most important focus areas for the community. Residents identified Safety and Economy as priorities for the Bettendorf community in the coming two years. Ratings within the facets of Mobility, Natural Environment, Built Environment, Recreation and Wellness and Education and Enrichment tended to be higher than the national benchmarks. 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 Bettendorf'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 Bettendorf, 97% rated the City as an excellent or good place to live. Respondents' ratings of Bettendorf as a place to live were higher than 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 Bettendorf as a place to raise children and to retire, their neighborhood as a place to live, the overall image or reputation of Bettendorf and its overall appearance. About 9 in 10 residents gave excellent or good ratings to the overall image and appearance of Bettendorf, to their neighborhoods and to Bettendorf as a place to raise children; these ratings tended to be higher than ratings in comparison communities. About three-quarters gave favorable ratings to Bettendorf as a place to retire and this rating was higher than the national average.

Delving deeper into Community Characteristics, survey respondents rated over 40 features of the community within the eight facets of Community Livability. Almost all residents positively rated each aspect of Safety and these ratings were similar to the benchmarks. About half or more of respondents gave high marks to all aspects of Mobility, Natural Environment, Built Environment, Recreation and Wellness, Education and Enrichment and Community Engagement. All ratings within these facets were similar to or higher than the national benchmarks.

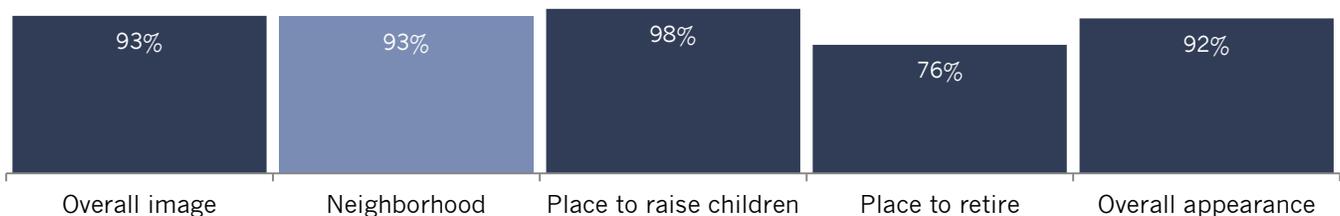
Ratings within Economy were mixed. About one-quarter of respondents gave high marks to Bettendorf's vibrant downtown/commercial area and this rating was the only aspect within the pillar of Community Characteristics that was lower than the benchmark. Conversely, about 9 in 10 residents gave high marks to the overall economic health of the city and this rating was higher than ratings observed elsewhere.



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

Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



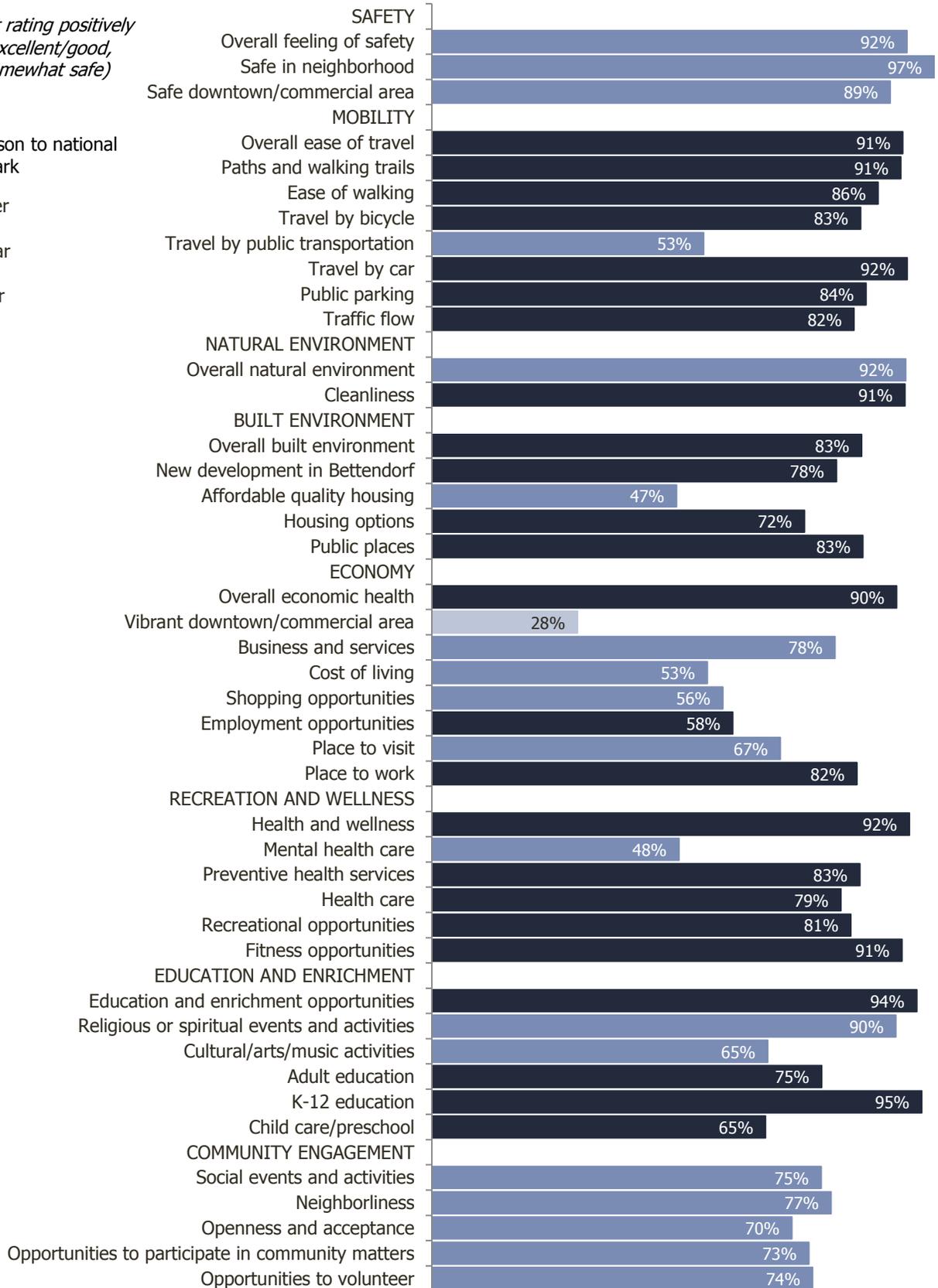
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Figure 1: Aspects of Community Characteristics

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



Governance

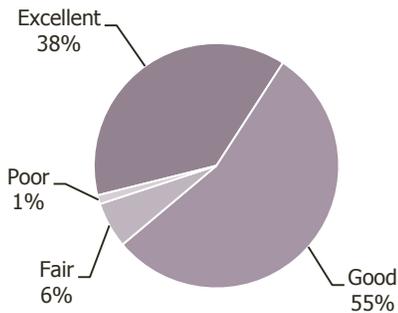
How well does the government of Bettendorf meet the needs and expectations of its residents?

The overall quality of the services provided by Bettendorf as well as the manner in which these services are provided is a key component of how residents rate their quality of life. Almost all residents gave high marks to the overall quality of services provided by the City while close to half gave high marks to the Federal Government. Ratings for the overall quality of City services were higher than ratings in comparison communities while ratings of the Federal Government were similar.

Survey respondents also rated various aspects of Bettendorf's leadership and governance. At least 7 in 10 respondents gave favorable marks to each aspect of leadership and governance and all ratings were higher than the national averages. Not only were these ratings higher than ratings observed elsewhere, but ratings for the overall direction the City is taking, the job Bettendorf government does at welcoming citizen involvement, overall confidence in Bettendorf government, generally acting in the best interest of the community, being honest and treating all residents fairly were among the highest ratings recorded in NRC's benchmarking database.

Respondents evaluated over 30 individual services and amenities available in Bettendorf. Broadly, ratings of services and amenities tended to be rated positively by a majority of respondents and all were similar to or higher than the national benchmarks. At least 4 in 5 residents had high regard for each aspect of Safety and ratings for police services, crime prevention and emergency preparedness were higher than the benchmarks. Within Mobility, all aspects were higher than the benchmark with the exception of street repair, which received ratings on par with comparison communities. All aspects of Economy, Recreation and Wellness and Community Engagement received ratings higher than those in other jurisdictions across the nation.

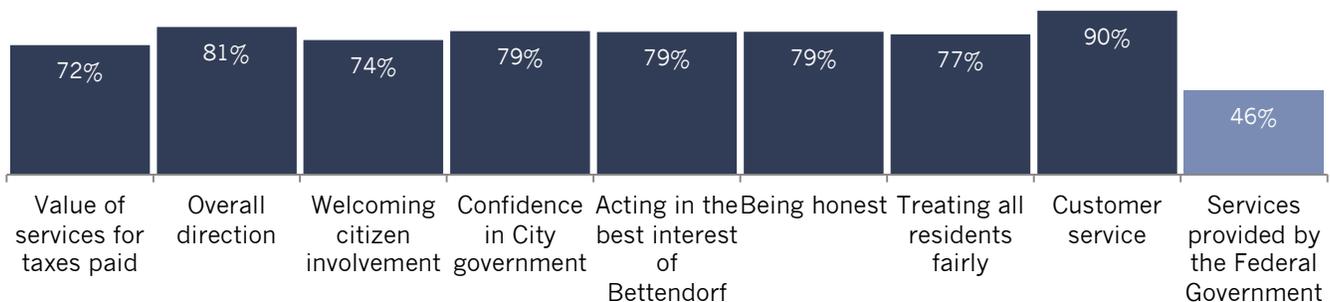
Overall Quality of City Services



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

Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



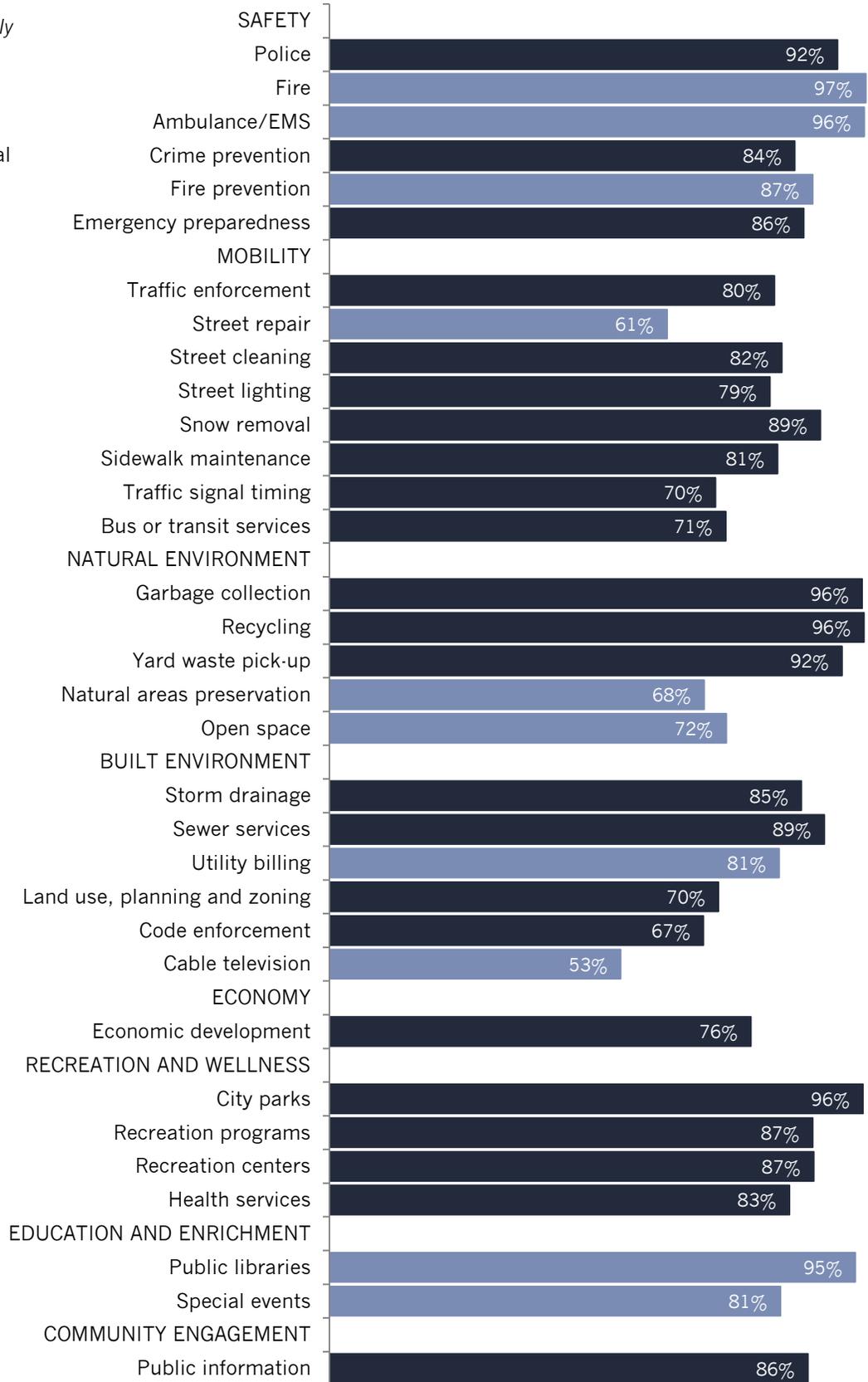
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Figure 2: Aspects of Governance

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



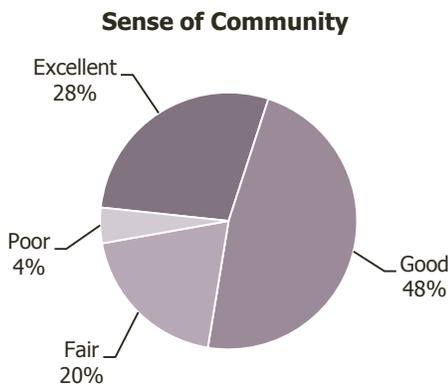
Participation

Are the residents of Bettendorf 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 three-quarters of respondents gave high marks to the overall sense of community in Bettendorf and this rating was similar to the national benchmark. Almost all residents were likely to recommend living in Bettendorf and planned to remain in Bettendorf, these rates were higher than those observed in comparison communities.

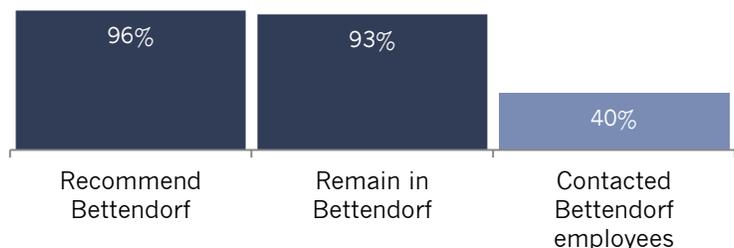
The survey included over 30 activities and behaviors for which respondents indicated how often they participated in or performed each, if at all. While reported rates of Participation varied widely, almost all reported rates were similar to the national averages. Only 4% of Bettendorf residents reported that they had used public transportation instead of driving in the last 12 months; this rate was lower than rates reported elsewhere. More Bettendorf residents were NOT under housing cost stress than residents in comparison communities and more respondents had used Bettendorf libraries in the last 12 months than seen elsewhere. While almost all respondents reported that they had recycled at home, purchased goods or services in Bettendorf or talked or visited with their neighbors, these rates were similar to the national averages.

When looking at reported rates of Participation over time (see the *Trends over Time* report under separate cover), the number of residents that had a positive personal economic outlook was at an all-time high in 2018 (the question was first asked on Bettendorf's first iteration of The NCS in 2006).



Percent rating positively (e.g., very/somewhat likely, yes) Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



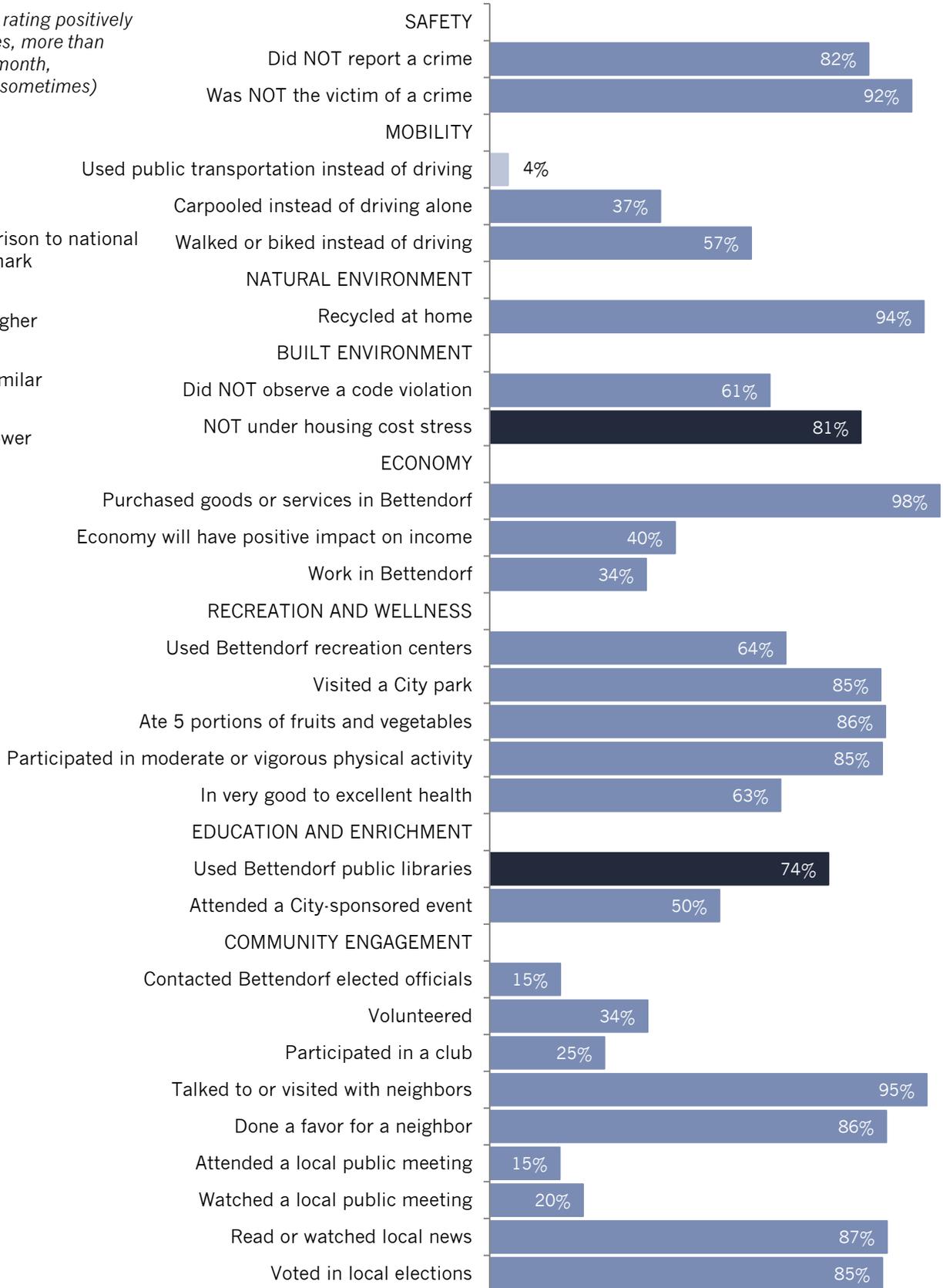
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Figure 3: Aspects of Participation

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower

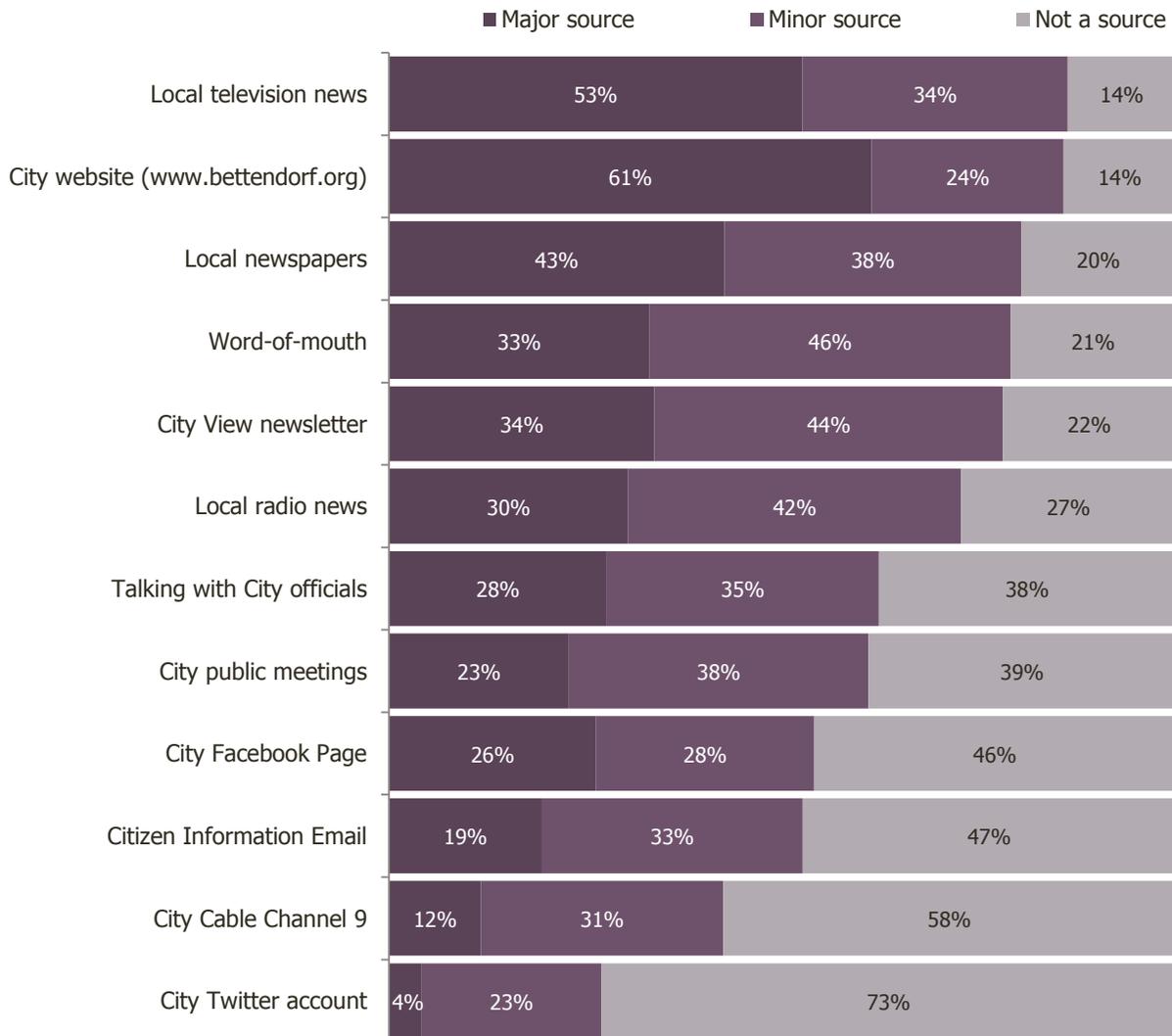


Special Topics

The City of Bettendorf included four questions of special interest on The NCS. Survey respondents were asked about information sources, social media use and City streets. Residents were first asked to rate how much of a source they considered several different types of information to be for obtaining information about the City government. A majority of residents considered most items to be at least a minor source of information. Fewer than half considered City Cable Channel 9 or the City Twitter account to be major or minor sources of information. The local television news, City website, local newspapers, word-of-mouth and the City View newsletter were considered to be major or minor sources of information by at least three-quarters of respondents.

Figure 4: Sources of City Information

Please indicate how much of a source, if at all, you consider each of the following to be for obtaining information about the City government and its activities, events and services:



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The next two questions had to do with social media use. Almost all respondents did not follow the City of Bettendorf on Twitter, and about three-quarters did not follow the City on Facebook. However, about 7 in 10 said that they do use social media for other purposes. When asked if they were likely to use NextDoor, Instagram or Snapchat to obtain information about the City government, a strong majority responded that they were not likely to use any of the platforms for that purpose.

Figure 5: Social Media Use

Please indicate whether or not you currently do any of the following:

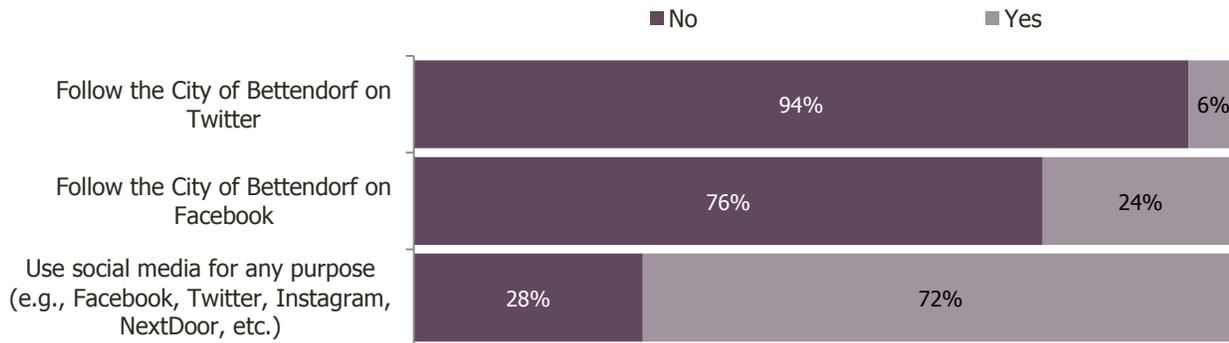
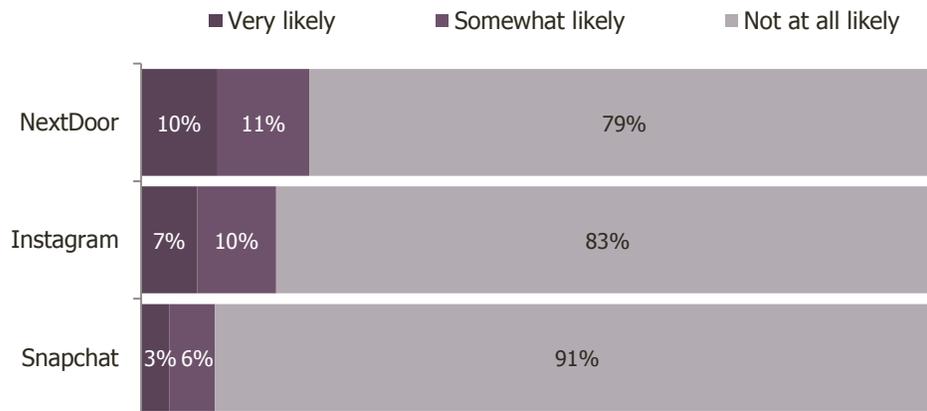


Figure 6: Obtaining Information about City Government via Social Media

Please indicate how likely, if at all, you would be to use each of the following to obtain information about the City government and its activities, events and services:

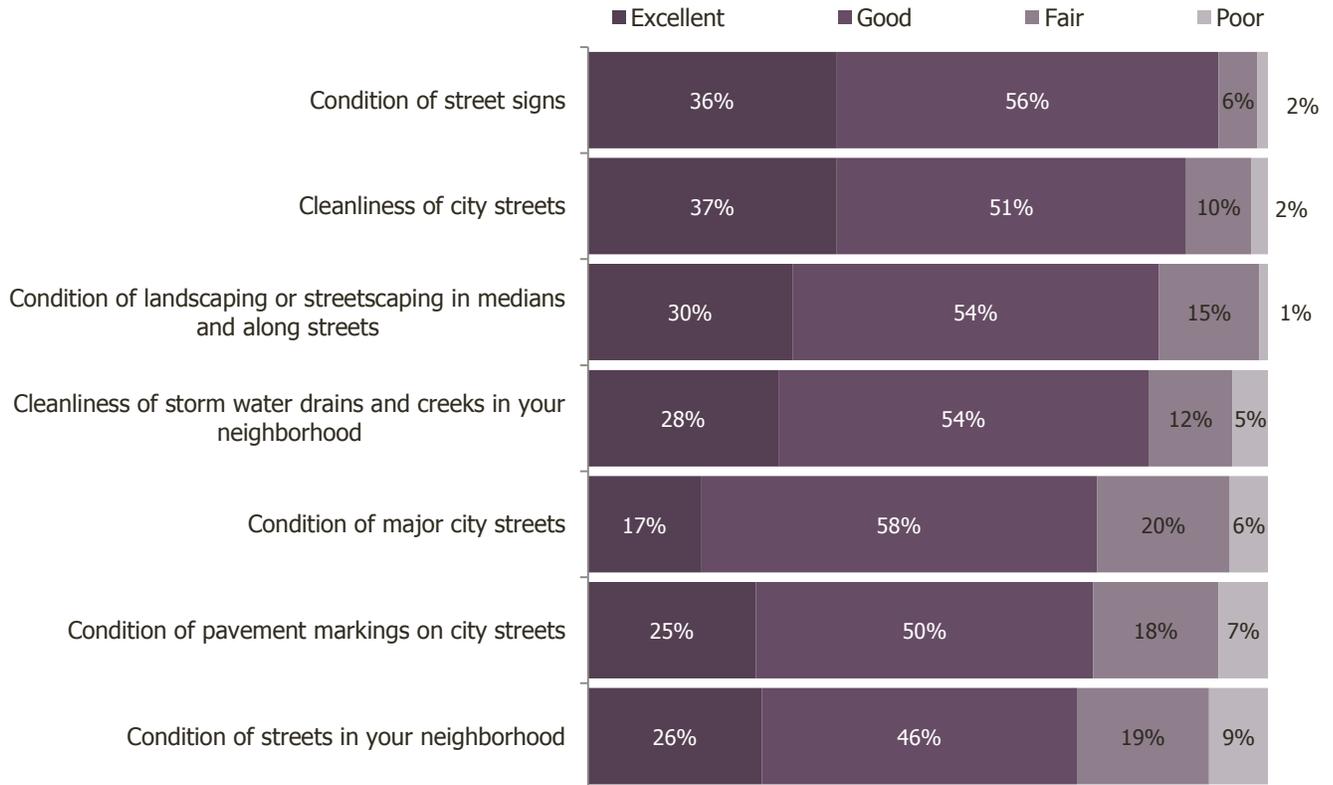


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The final question of special interest had to do with several different aspects of city streets. Overall, at least 7 in 10 gave excellent or good ratings to each aspect. The condition of street signs and cleanliness of city streets received the highest marks, with about 4 in 5 giving excellent or good ratings. These ratings tended to align with the high ratings Bettendorf residents gave to Mobility in other areas of the survey.

Figure 7: Aspects of City Streets

Please rate the quality of each of the following in Bettendorf:



Conclusions

Bettendorf continues to be a highly desirable and safe place to live.

Almost all survey respondents rated the overall quality of life in Bettendorf and the city as a place to live as excellent or good; these ratings remained stable over time and were higher than the benchmarks. Residents remained loyal to the community, with at least 9 in 10 being likely to recommend Bettendorf as a place to live and planning to remain in Bettendorf for the next five years. Further, about 9 in 10 gave high marks to the overall image of Bettendorf, Bettendorf as a place to raise children and to its overall appearance. Each of these ratings was higher than the national benchmark and remained stable from 2016 to 2018.

Residents again identified Safety as one of the most important focus areas for the community and the survey results showed that the City is meeting or exceeding resident expectations. Nearly all Bettendorf residents felt safe in their neighborhoods and in downtown and gave high marks to the overall feeling of safety. Safety-related services also received favorable ratings from the vast majority of respondents. Ratings for Safety services such as police, crime prevention and emergency preparedness were all higher than the national benchmarks.

Trust in City government is high, and City services are well-regarded.

At least 7 in 10 Bettendorf residents gave positive evaluations to each aspect of Bettendorf's leadership and governance and all ratings were higher than the benchmarks. Not only were most ratings higher than the benchmarks, but some of the ratings were among the highest ever recorded in NRC's benchmarking database.

Almost all residents gave excellent or good ratings to the overall quality of City services and to the customer service provided by City employees; these ratings were higher than the benchmarks and stable over time. Further, individual services were also rated highly by most residents. Most aspects of Governance were higher than the benchmarks and remained stable from 2016 to 2018.

Bettendorf is a well-planned, easily travelled community.

About 8 in 10 respondents rated the overall built environment of Bettendorf as excellent or good. Ratings of the overall quality of new development and public places where people like to spend time increased from 2016 to 2018. While the availability of affordable quality housing was scored less positively in 2018 compared to 2016, this rating was similar to the national average.

In terms of travel, about 91% of respondents gave high marks to the overall ease of travel in Bettendorf, as well as for the overall ease of car travel and the availability of paths and walking trails. These ratings were higher than the benchmarks. Further, Mobility-related services were strong with almost all services receiving ratings higher than the national comparison. Bettendorf also chose to ask some community-specific questions about street conditions; these aspects all received excellent or good ratings from a majority of residents.

Most aspects of Mobility remained stable over time; however ratings for traffic flow increased in 2018 and ratings for ease of travel by public transportation decreased. While less than 1 in 10 (4%) of Bettendorf residents reported that they had used public transportation in the last 12 months, which was lower than average, it doesn't appear that residents need or desire more transit options.