

THE NCSTM
The National Citizen SurveyTM

Lindsborg, KS
Community Livability Report

2017



2955 Valmont Road Suite 300
Boulder, Colorado 80301
n-r-c.com • 303-444-7863



777 North Capitol Street NE Suite 500
Washington, DC 20002
icma.org • 800-745-8780

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

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About

The National Citizen Survey™ (The NCS) report is about the “livability” of Lindsborg. 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 576 residents of the City of Lindsborg. 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 Lindsborg

Most residents (90%) rated the quality of life in Lindsborg as excellent or good. This was similar to ratings given in other communities across 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.

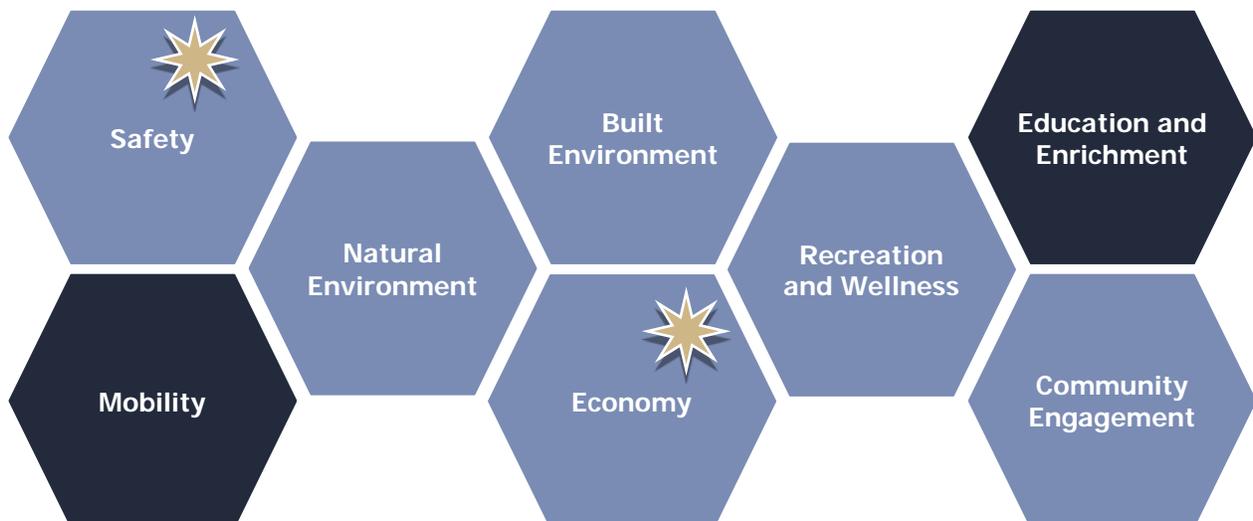
In addition to a summary of ratings, the image below includes one or more stars to indicate which community facets were the most important focus areas for the community. Residents identified Safety and Economy as priorities for the Lindsborg community in the coming two years and both of these facets received ratings that tended to be similar to the benchmark. It is also noteworthy that ratings for Mobility and Education and Enrichment were above average. 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 Lindsborg’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 Lindsborg, 94% rated the city as an excellent or good place to live. Respondents' ratings of Lindsborg 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 Lindsborg as a place to raise children and to retire, their neighborhood as a place to live, the overall image or reputation of Lindsborg and its overall appearance. Roughly 9 in 10 residents gave excellent or good evaluations to each aspect of community quality; further, ratings for the overall image and overall appearance of the city, as well as Lindsborg as a place to raise children and to retire, were higher than average.

Delving deeper into Community Characteristics, survey respondents rated over 40 features of the community within the eight facets of Community Livability. Overall, ratings were very strong and residents gave evaluations that were higher than the national benchmark to many aspects: out of 44 total aspects, residents gave above average marks to 23. At least 9 in 10 residents gave positive ratings to almost all aspects of Safety, Mobility and Natural Environment. Only three aspects (opportunities for employment, recreation and fitness) were rated lower than the benchmark.

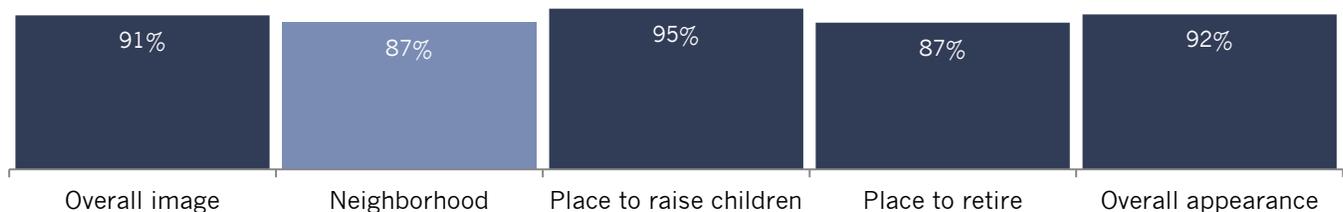


When compared to 2014, ratings for many aspects of Community Characteristics increased in 2017, particularly within the facets of Built Environment, Economy and Community Engagement (for more information see the *Trends Over Time* report under separate cover).

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

Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



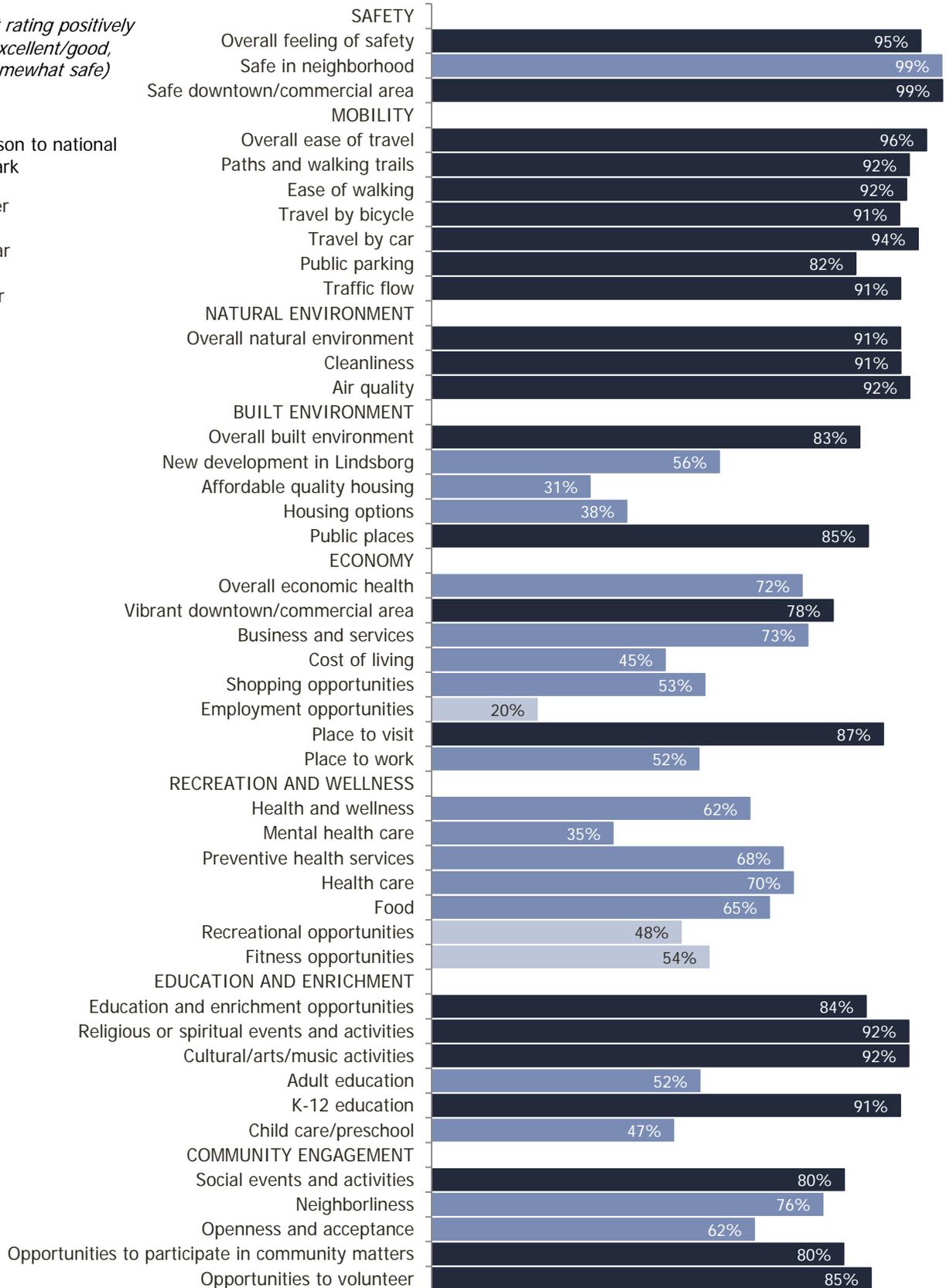
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Figure 1: Aspects of Community Characteristics

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



Governance

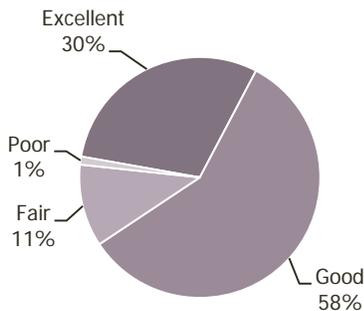
How well does the government of Lindsborg meet the needs and expectations of its residents?

The overall quality of the services provided by Lindsborg as well as the manner in which these services are provided is a key component of how residents rate their quality of life. In Lindsborg, about 9 in 10 residents rated the overall quality of City services as excellent or good, which was higher than the benchmark, and about 4 in 10 were pleased with the services provided by the Federal Government, which was similar to the rest of the country.

Survey respondents also rated various aspects of Lindsborg’s leadership and governance. Roughly 9 in 10 residents gave favorable ratings to the customer service provided by the City, and at least half positively rated the remaining aspects of government performance. Two of these items received ratings higher than the average in other communities: government acting in the best interest of Lindsborg and being honest. The remaining items were similar to the national benchmarks.

Respondents evaluated over 30 individual services and amenities available in Lindsborg. Nearly all City services were rated positively by at least half of survey respondents and were similar to the national comparison. About three-quarters or more of Lindsborg residents gave excellent or good ratings to police, fire, ambulance/EMS, crime prevention, fire prevention, traffic enforcement, street cleaning, garbage collection, recycling, sewer services, power utility, utility billing, City parks, health services, public libraries, special events and public information services. Ratings for street cleaning, recycling and special events were higher than the benchmark, while animal control, recreation programs and recreation facilities were lower.

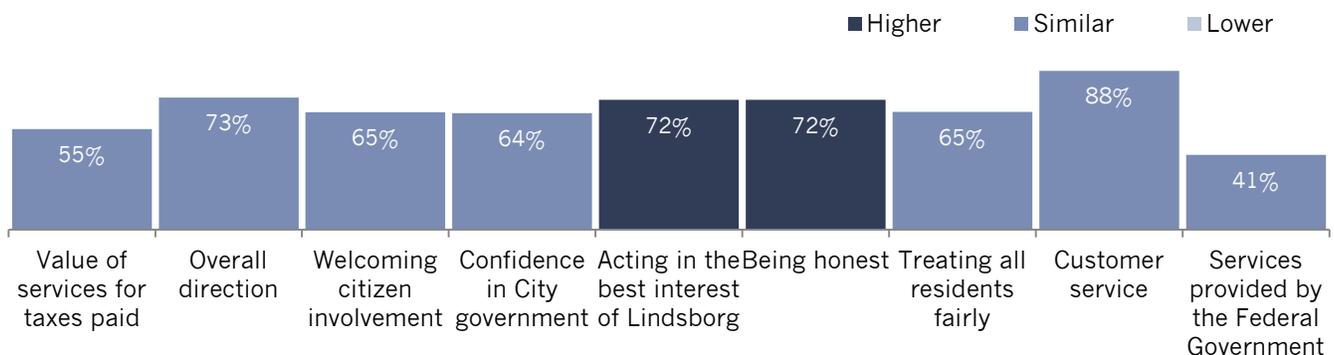
Overall Quality of City Services



Ratings for many City-provided services improved since 2014, especially within the facets of Mobility, Built Environment and Community Engagement.

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

Comparison to national benchmark



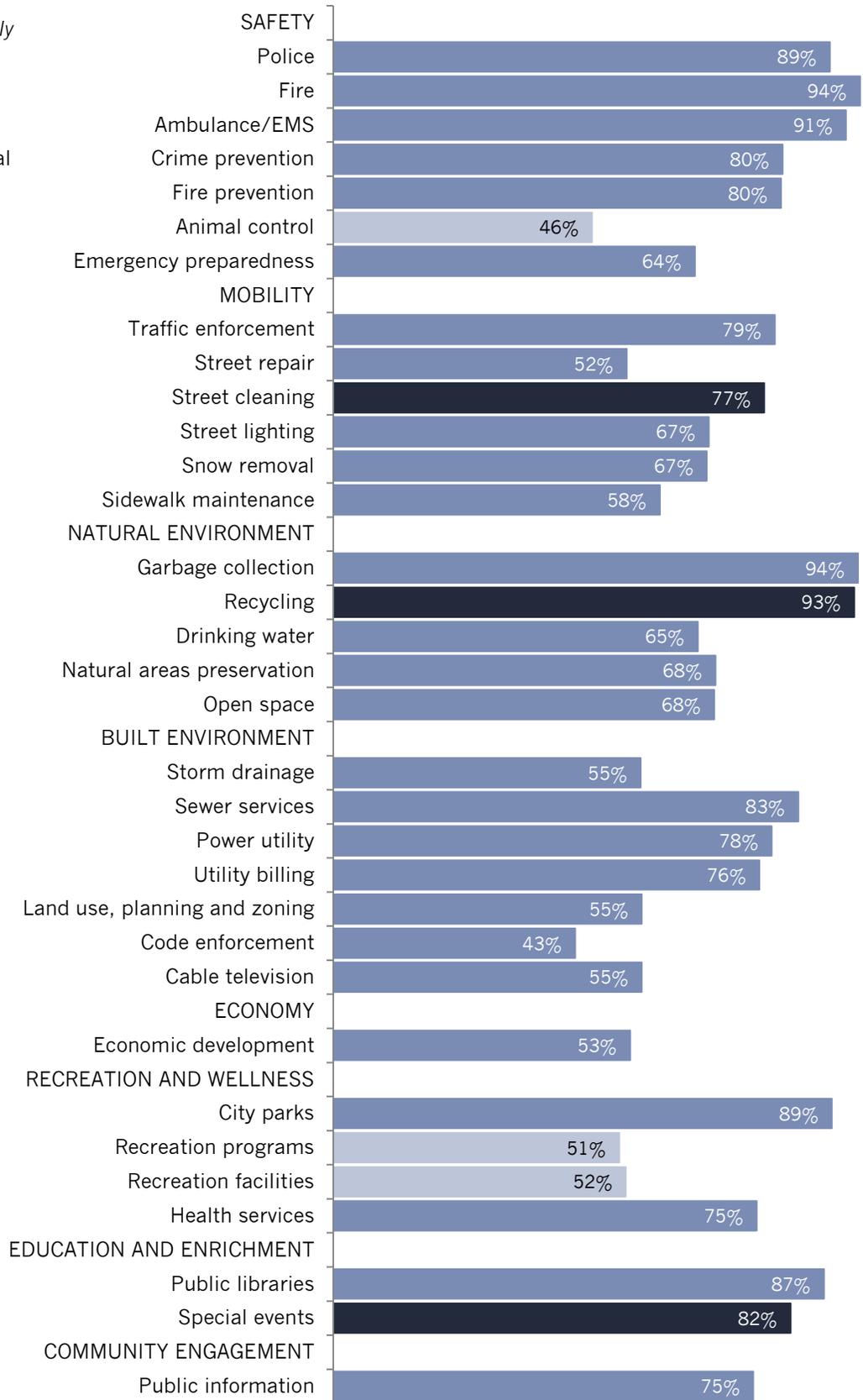
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Figure 2: Aspects of Governance

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



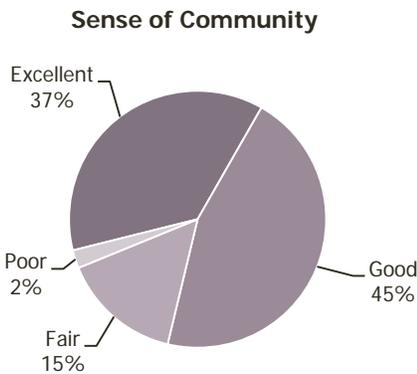
Participation

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

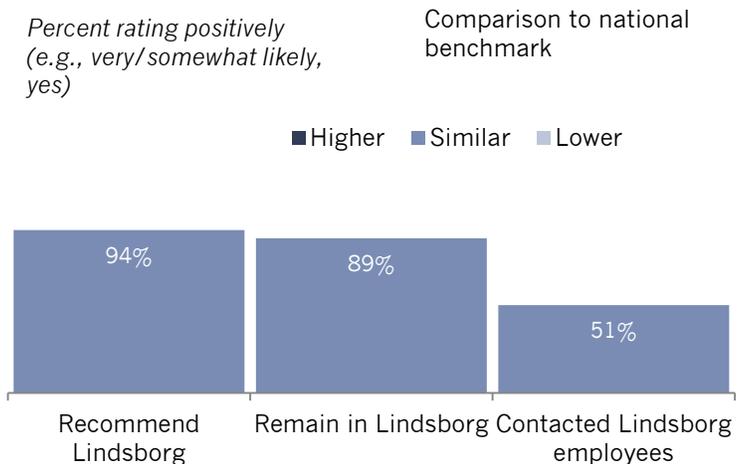
An engaged community harnesses its most valuable resource, its residents. The connections and trust among residents, government, businesses and other organizations help to create a sense of community, a shared sense of membership, belonging and history. About 8 in 10 residents described the sense of community in Lindsborg as excellent or good, which was higher than ratings given elsewhere and an increase since 2014. Most residents would recommend living in Lindsborg to someone who asked and planned to remain in the city for the next five years and half had contacted City employees in the 12 months prior to the survey. These ratings were similar to those given in other communities.

The survey included over 30 activities and behaviors for which respondents indicated how often they participated in or performed each, if at all. Participation rates varied widely across the different facets, making the benchmark comparison (and comparison to Lindsborg over time) helpful for understanding the results.

Overall, Lindsborg residents participated in most activities at rates similar to or higher than those found in other communities across the country. For example, about 8 in 10 residents had not reported a crime and 9 in 10 had not been the victim of a crime in the 12 months prior to the survey, on par with the rest of the country. Lindsborg residents were more likely than those who lived elsewhere to have walked or biked instead of driving, not be under housing cost stress, used Lindsborg recreation facilities, participated in religious or spiritual activities, attended a City-sponsored event, volunteered or participated in a club. Just one item was lower than the benchmark: the proportion of residents who had carpooled instead of driving alone.



Most levels of Participation remained stable from 2014 to 2017. Residents were more likely to have walked or biked instead of driving, to believe the economy would have a positive impact on their income in the next six months, to have used Lindsborg recreation facilities or to have attended a City-sponsored event. Residents were less likely in 2017 to have reported a crime in the 12 months prior to the survey.



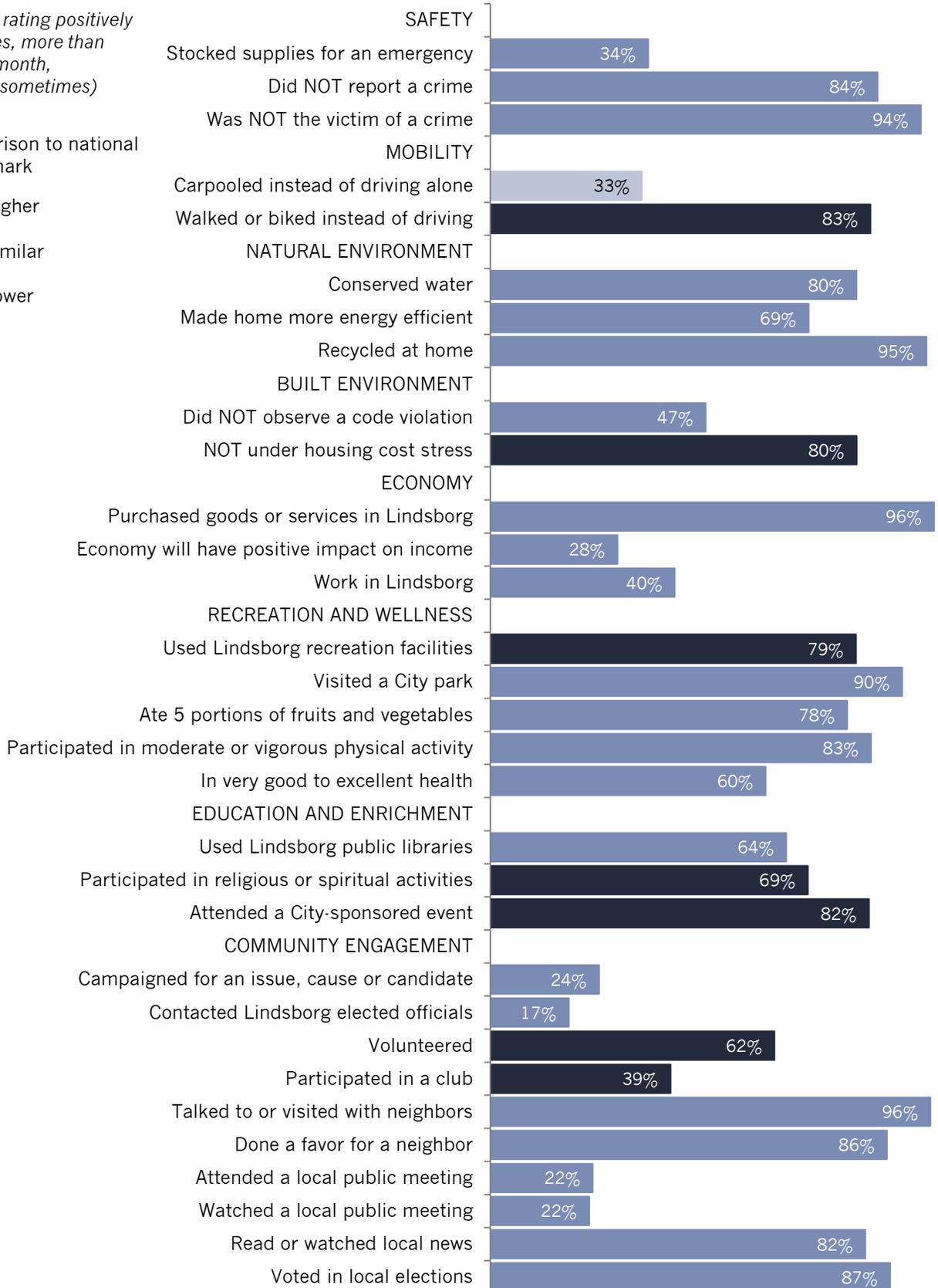
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Figure 3: Aspects of Participation

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



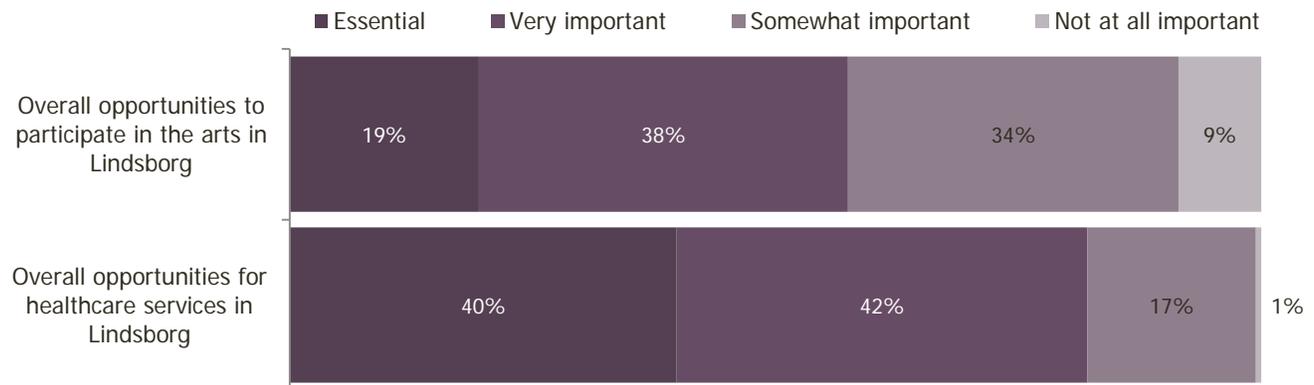
Special Topics

The City of Lindsborg included four questions of special interest on The NCS as well as line additions to one standard question set. Topic areas included sources of City information, housing priorities and strategic planning areas.

Residents were asked how important they felt it was for the City to focus on opportunities to participate in the arts and opportunities for healthcare services. About 6 in 10 thought opportunities for the arts were essential or very important and 8 in 10 thought opportunities for healthcare services were essential or very important.

Figure 4: Custom Line Additions to Question 13

Please rate how important, if at all, you think it is for the Lindsborg community to focus on each of the following in the coming two years:

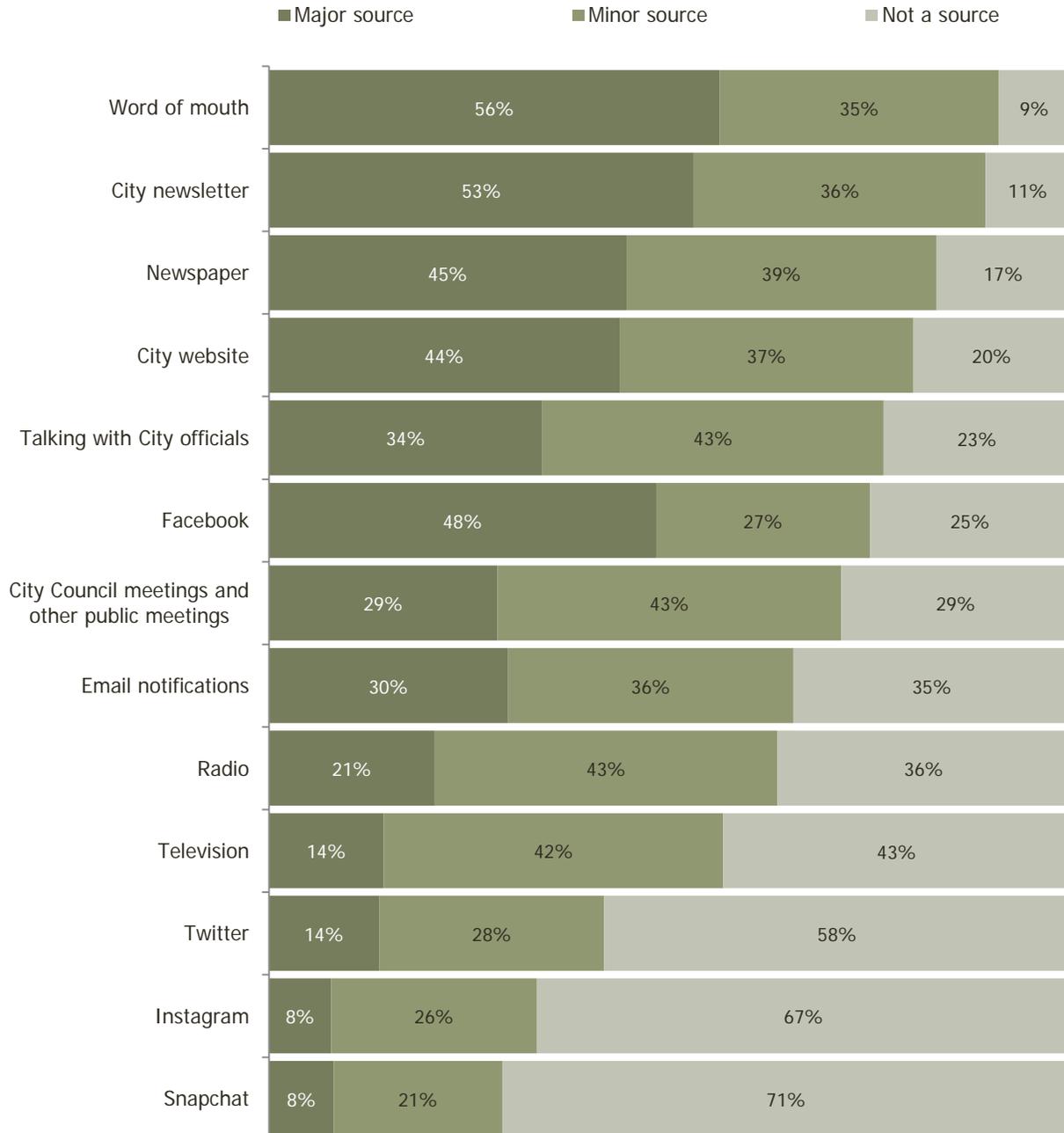


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Almost all residents utilized word of mouth or the City newsletter as major or minor sources of information about Lindsborg. At least three-quarters of respondents indicated that the newspaper, City website, talking with City officials or Facebook were sources of information for them (and about half indicated that Facebook was a major information source). Social media platforms Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat were the least-utilized sources of information about the City, but were a major source for about 1 in 10 respondents, and at least a minor source for 30% to 40% of respondents.

Figure 5: Sources of City Information

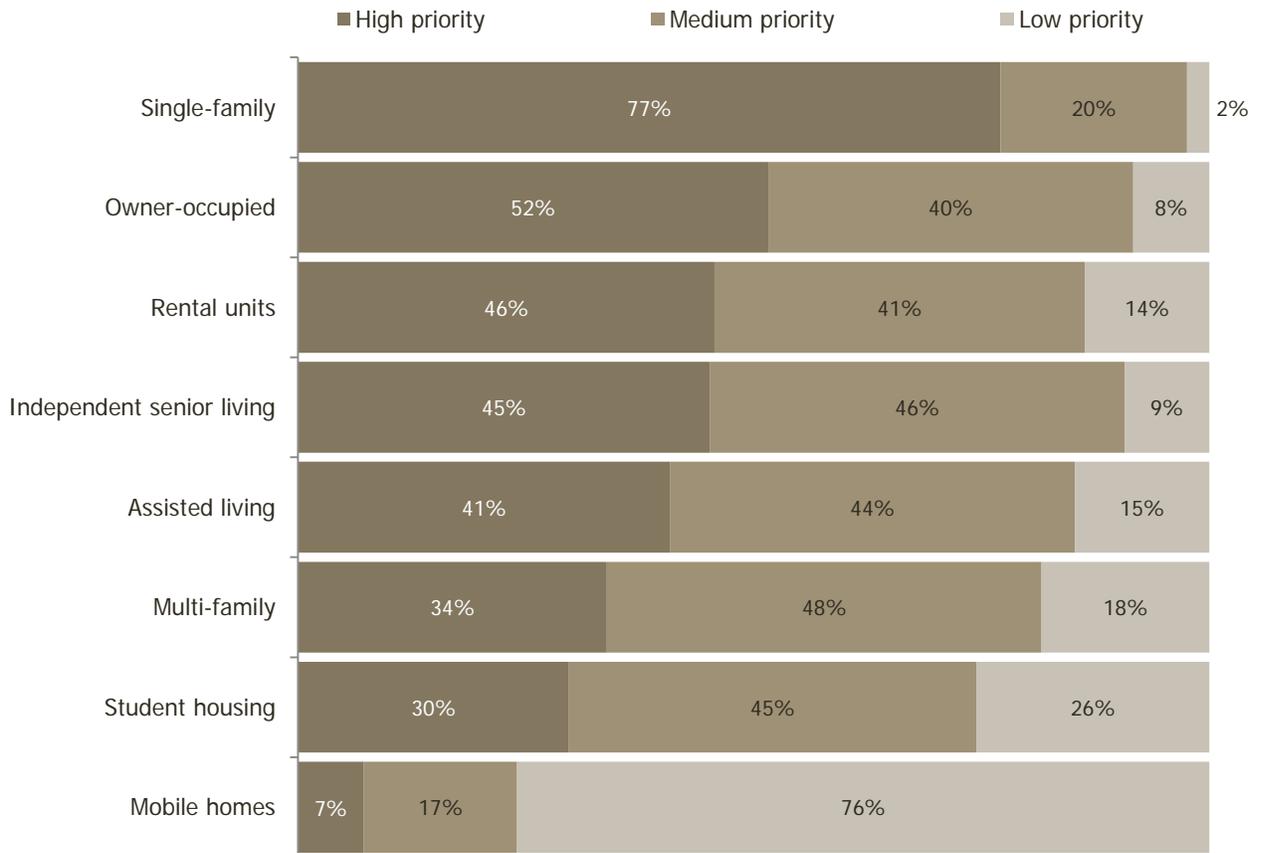
Please indicate how much of a source, if at all, you consider each of the following to be for obtaining information about the City government and its activities, events and services:



Thinking about how much of a priority they thought a variety of different housing types should be, three-quarters of residents felt that single-family homes should be a high priority and another 2 in 10 felt they were a medium priority. About half of residents thought that owner-occupied homes, rental units and independent senior living housing were high priorities. Most residents (76%) felt that mobile homes should be a low priority for the City.

Figure 6: Housing Priorities

As the City's population grows and new subdivisions are created, please indicate the level of priority the City should place on adding each of the following types of housing:

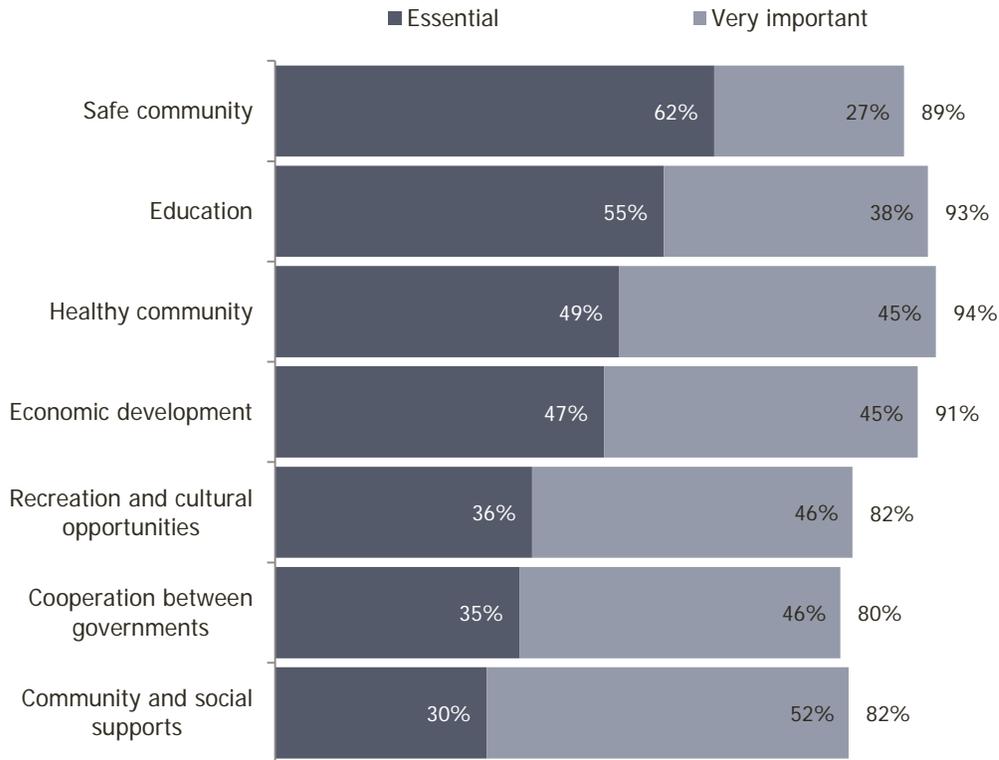


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Residents were asked to consider a list of potential strategic planning areas and indicate how important they felt each one was. About 9 in 10 residents felt that safe community, education, healthy community and economic development were important, and about 6 in 10 thought safe community was essential. About one-third of residents or fewer indicated that recreation and cultural opportunities, cooperation between governments or community and social supports were essential.

Figure 7: Strategic Planning Areas

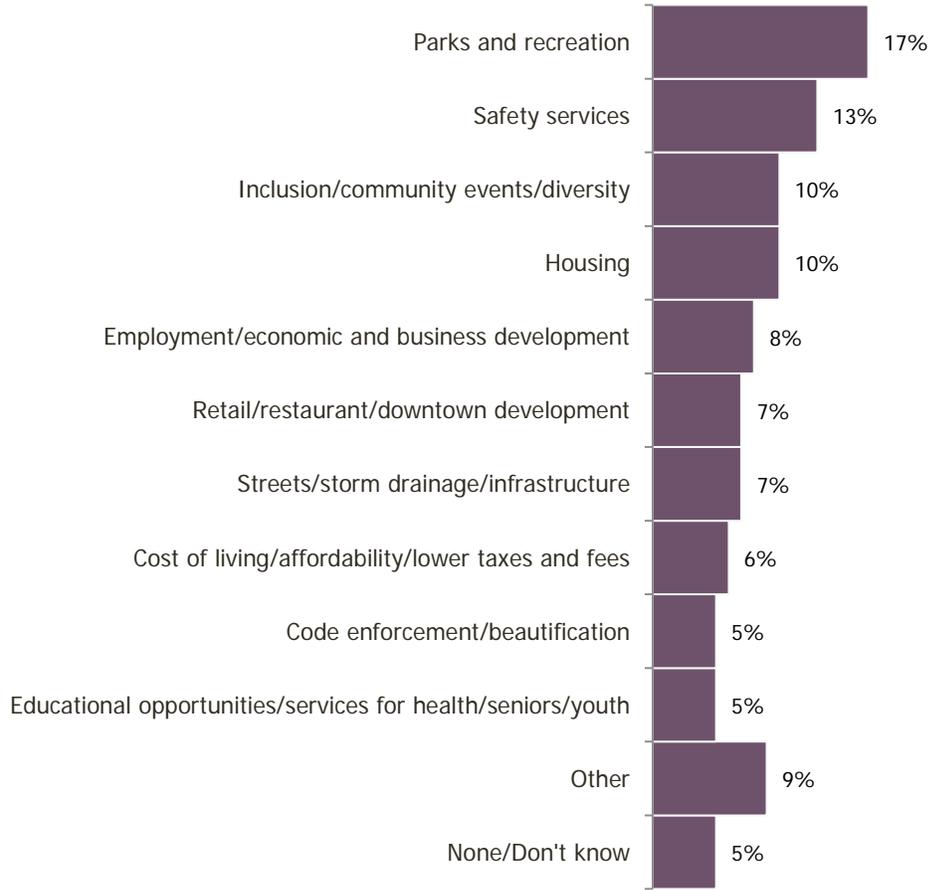
Please rate how important, if at all, you think it is for the Lindsborg community to focus on each of the following in the coming two years:



The final special-interest question asked residents to write, in their own words, what they thought was the single most important thing that would make Lindsborg their ideal community. The most commonly-mentioned responses were parks and recreation, safety services, inclusion/community events/diversity and housing (for more information see the *Open End Report* under separate cover).

Figure 8: Most Important for Ideal Community

What is the single most important thing that would make Lindsborg your ideal community?



Conclusions

Lindsborg continues to be a great place to live.

Almost all residents rated their quality of life positively in Lindsborg and think the city is an excellent or good place to live. About 9 in 10 residents gave positive ratings to the overall image and overall appearance of the city, Lindsborg as a place to raise children and as a place to retire; these ratings were all higher than observed elsewhere. About 8 in 10 survey participants rated the sense of community in the city as excellent or good, which was an increase since 2014. About 9 in 10 residents would recommend living in the city to someone who asked and planned to remain in Lindsborg for the next five years.

Safety is high in quality and in importance for residents.

Residents identified Safety as an important aspect of their quality of life. At least 9 in 10 residents gave positive ratings to the overall feeling of safety in Lindsborg, to feelings of safety in their neighborhoods as well as in the city's downtown/commercial area, and to police, fire and ambulance/EMS services. Further, the ratings for overall feeling of safety and feeling safe in the downtown/commercial area were above average. Most residents had not reported a crime nor been the victim of a crime, and a lower proportion of residents reported a crime in 2017 than in 2014. When asked to consider a list of potential strategic planning areas, about 6 in 10 thought safe community was essential and another 3 in 10 rated it as very important.

Economy is also a priority for residents.

Residents also see the Economy as an important aspect of their quality of life. At least 7 in 10 residents gave favorable evaluations to the overall economic health of the city, vibrant downtown/commercial area, overall quality of business and service establishments and Lindsborg as a place to visit. Additionally, ratings for vibrant downtown/commercial area and the city as a place to visit were higher than average. When thinking about strategic planning areas, about 9 in 10 rated economic development as essential or very important for the City to focus on in the coming two years.

Mobility is considered a positive feature of the community.

At least two-thirds of respondents rated positively many Mobility-related items were and these ratings tended to be higher than those seen elsewhere. Overall, Mobility features and services were among the strongest aspects of Lindsborg. Resident sentiment toward the overall ease of travel, paths and walking trails, ease of travel by car, by walking and by bicycle, public parking, traffic flow and street cleaning was higher than average. Further, residents' ratings of street repair, street cleaning, street lighting, snow removal and sidewalk maintenance improved from 2014 to 2017. Lindsborg residents were also more likely than those who lived elsewhere to have walked or biked instead of driving.