

THE NCSTM
The National Citizen SurveyTM

Sammamish, WA
Community Livability Report

2016



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About

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

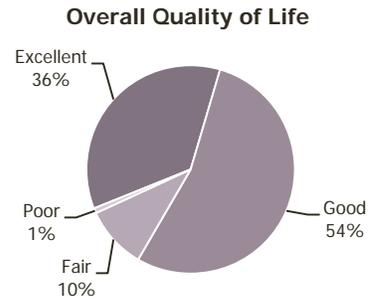
Great communities are partnerships of the government, private sector, community-based organizations and residents, all geographically connected. The NCS captures residents’ opinions within the three pillars of a community (Community Characteristics, Governance and Participation) across eight central 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 641 residents of the City of Sammamish. 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 Sammamish

Almost all residents rated the quality of life in Sammamish as excellent or good. For comparisons of results to 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.

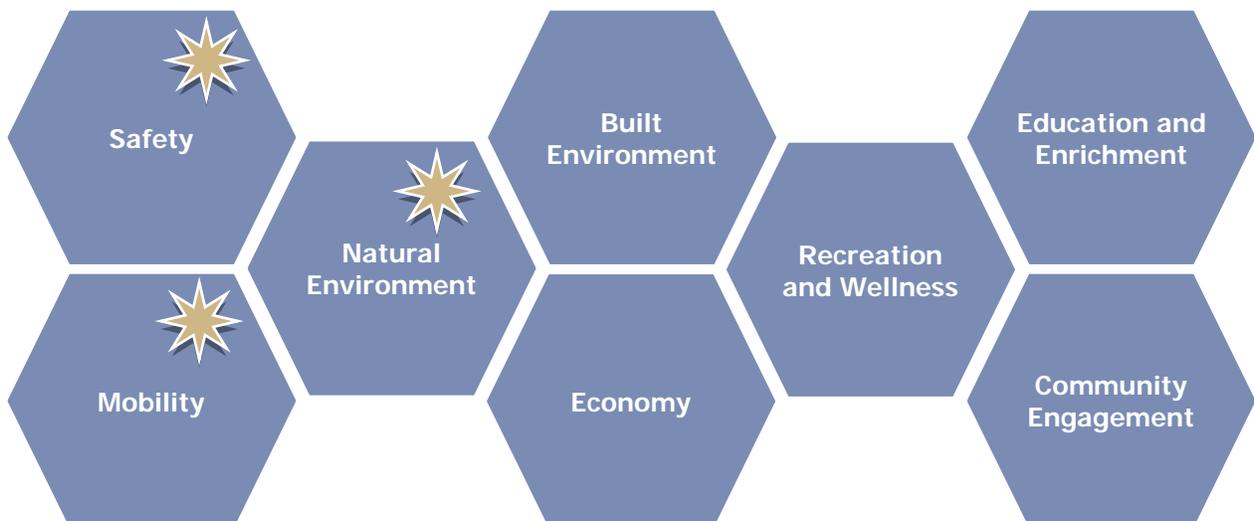
In addition to a summary of ratings, the image below includes one or more stars to indicate which community facets were the most important focus areas for the community. Residents identified Safety, Mobility, and Natural Environment as priorities for the Sammamish community in the coming two years. Sammamish residents gave favorable ratings to each of these facets of community as well as to all other facets of community livability. 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 Sammamish’s unique questions.

Legend

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

- Most important



Community Characteristics

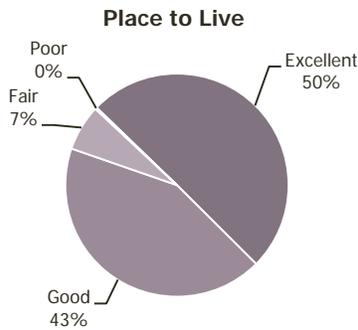
What makes a community livable, attractive and a place where people want to be?

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 Sammamish, 93% rated the City as an excellent or good place to live.

In addition to rating the city as a place to live, respondents rated several aspects of community quality including Sammamish as a place to raise children and to retire, their neighborhood as a place to live, the overall image or reputation of Sammamish and its overall appearance. Around 9 in 10 residents or more positively rated the overall image and overall appearance of Sammamish, their neighborhood as a place to live and Sammamish as a place to raise children, and all of these aspects received ratings that were higher than the benchmark. However, fewer than half of respondents gave positive ratings to the city as a place to retire, and this rating was lower than the national benchmark.

Delving deeper into Community Characteristics, survey respondents rated over 40 features of the community within the eight facets of Community Livability. Broadly, ratings across the eight facets of Community Livability tended to vary. Nearly all residents gave positive ratings to all aspects of Safety, and the overall feeling of safety in Sammamish was rated higher than the national comparison. Likewise, virtually all residents gave favorable evaluations to cleanliness and air quality, and these were also higher than seen in communities elsewhere. Within the facets of Education and Enrichment and Community Engagement, all aspects were rated positively by at least a majority of respondents and were similar to or higher than the benchmark with the exception of adult educational opportunities, which was lower. Ratings within the facets of Mobility, Built Environment and Economy tended to be more mixed. In Mobility, while about 7 in 10 residents were pleased with the availability of paths and walking trails and ease of public parking, only about half positively rated the overall ease of travel in Sammamish, about a third gave excellent or good ratings to traffic flow and about 1 in 10 gave favorable ratings to ease of travel by public transportation. These latter items were rated lower than the benchmark comparison. In

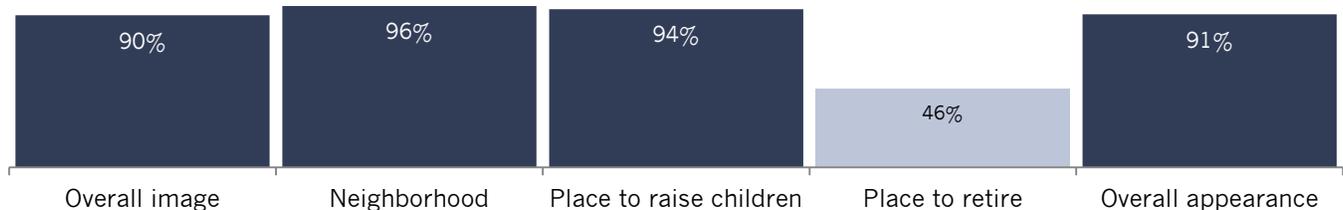
Built Environment, about 7 in 10 residents gave positive evaluations to public places where people like to spend time, which was similar to the benchmark; however, fewer residents gave favorable ratings to the overall quality of new development in Sammamish (39% excellent or good) and the availability of affordable quality housing (23%), and both of these were lower than the benchmark. In Economy, more than 8 in 10 residents were pleased with the overall economic health of Sammamish, and this rating was higher than seen in communities elsewhere. However, almost all other aspects of Economy received positive ratings from fewer than half of survey respondents and were rated lower than the national comparison.



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

Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



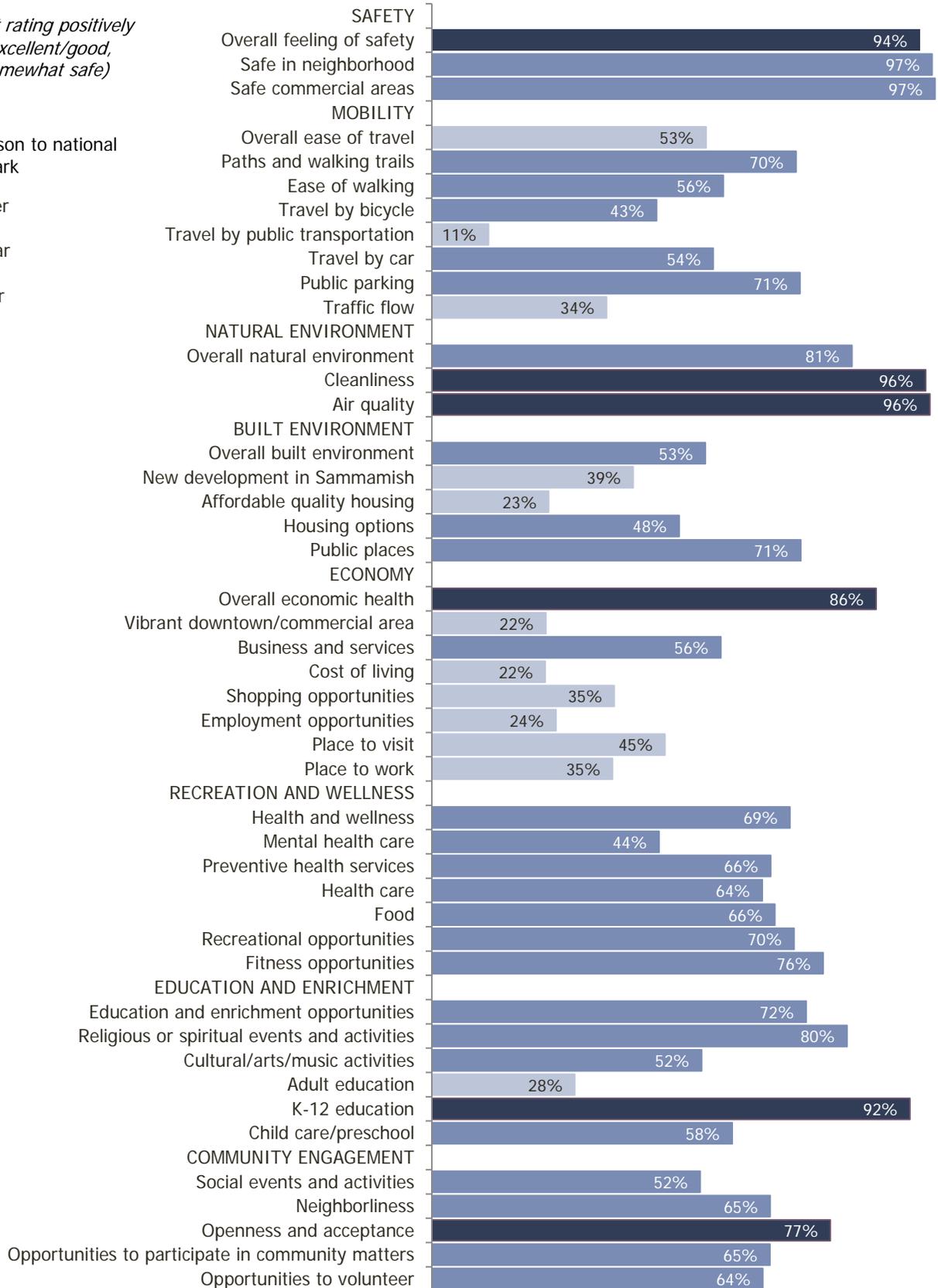
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Figure 1: Aspects of Community Characteristics

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



Governance

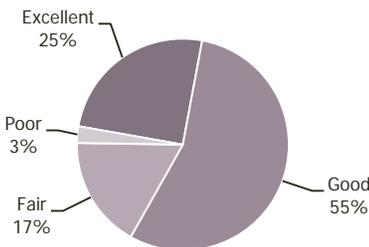
How well does the government of Sammamish meet the needs and expectations of its residents?

The overall quality of the services provided by Sammamish as well as the manner in which these services are provided are a key component of how residents rate their quality of life. In Sammamish, about 8 in 10 residents positively rated the overall quality of City services and about 4 in 10 gave favorable marks to the services provided by the Federal Government; both of these ratings were similar to the national benchmark.

Survey respondents also rated various aspects of Sammamish’s leadership and governance. About 8 in 10 residents gave excellent or good ratings to customer service provided by Sammamish employees (rated similar to the benchmark) and about three-quarters were pleased with City government treating all residents fairly (rated higher than the benchmark). Roughly 6 in 10 survey participants gave positive ratings to the value of services for taxes paid, the job City government does at welcoming citizen involvement, overall confidence in City government and being honest. Ratings for all of these indicators of government performance were similar to the national comparison.

Respondents evaluated over 30 individual services and amenities available in Sammamish. Generally, most City services were rated favorably by at least a majority of respondents and were similar to the national benchmark. Services that received ratings higher than those seen elsewhere included sidewalk maintenance (74% excellent or good), drinking water (88%) and City parks (92%). Three services were rated lower than the benchmark; these were bus or transit services (26%), natural areas preservation (47%) and land use, planning and zoning (27%).

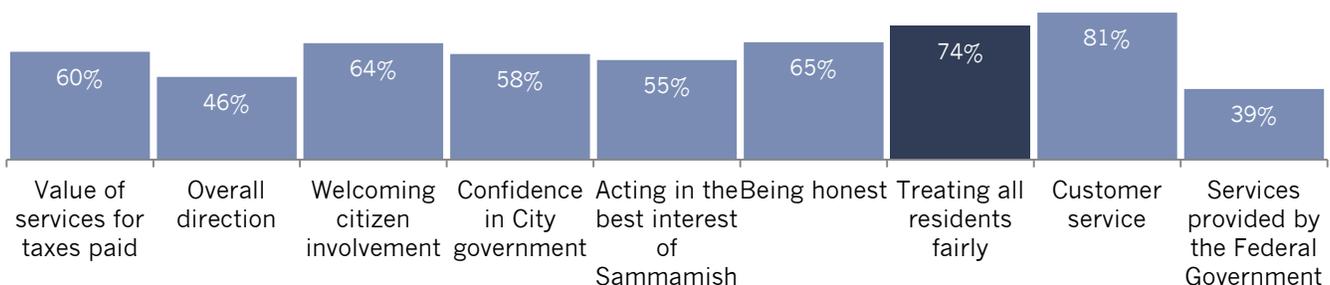
Overall Quality of City Services



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

Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



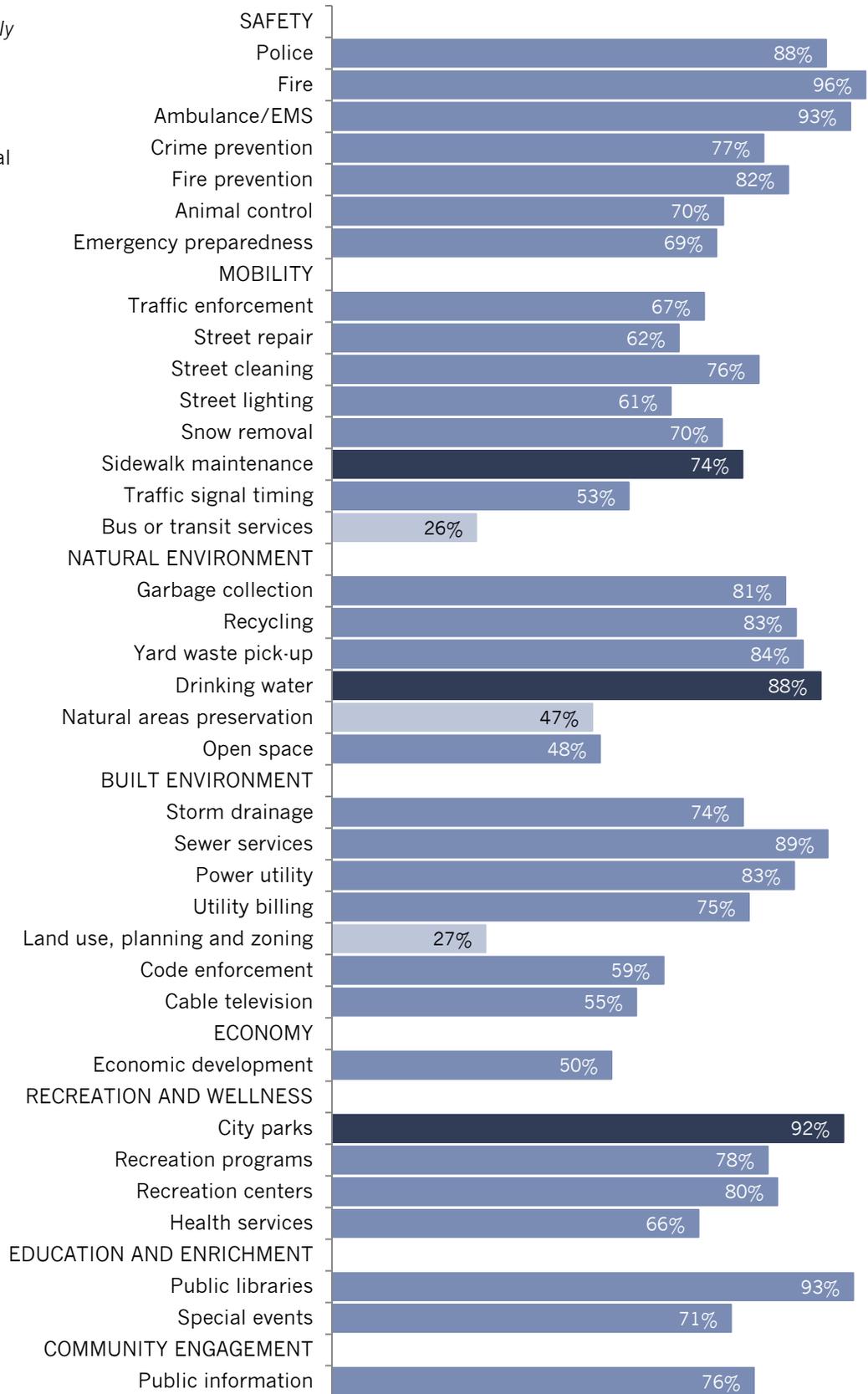
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Figure 2: Aspects of Governance

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower

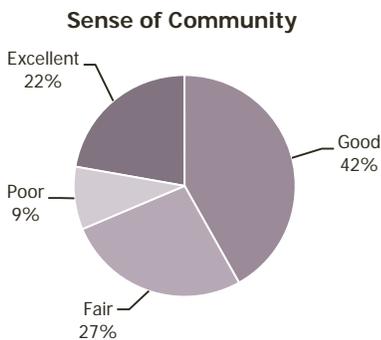


Participation

Are the residents of Sammamish 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. In Sammamish, about two-thirds of residents positively rated the sense of community in the City, nearly 9 in 10 would recommend living in Sammamish to someone who asked and about 8 in 10 planned to remain in the City for the next 5 years. These ratings were similar to the national comparison.

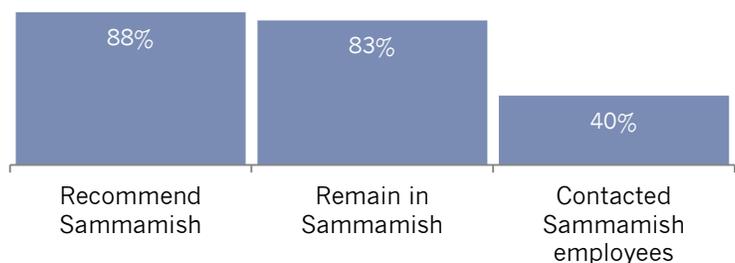
The survey included over 30 activities and behaviors for which respondents indicated how often they participated in or performed each, if at all. Rates of participation tended to be strong and similar to or higher than the benchmarks across all eight facets of community livability. Levels of participation for the following items were higher in Sammamish than those observed in communities elsewhere: those who had stocked supplies for an emergency (53% at least once in the 12 months prior to the survey), had not reported a crime (87%), carpooled instead of driving alone (57%), recycled at home (99%), had not observed a code violation (76%), and visited a City park (94%). Only one item, the proportion of residents who worked in Sammamish, was lower than the benchmark.



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

*Comparison to national
benchmark*

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



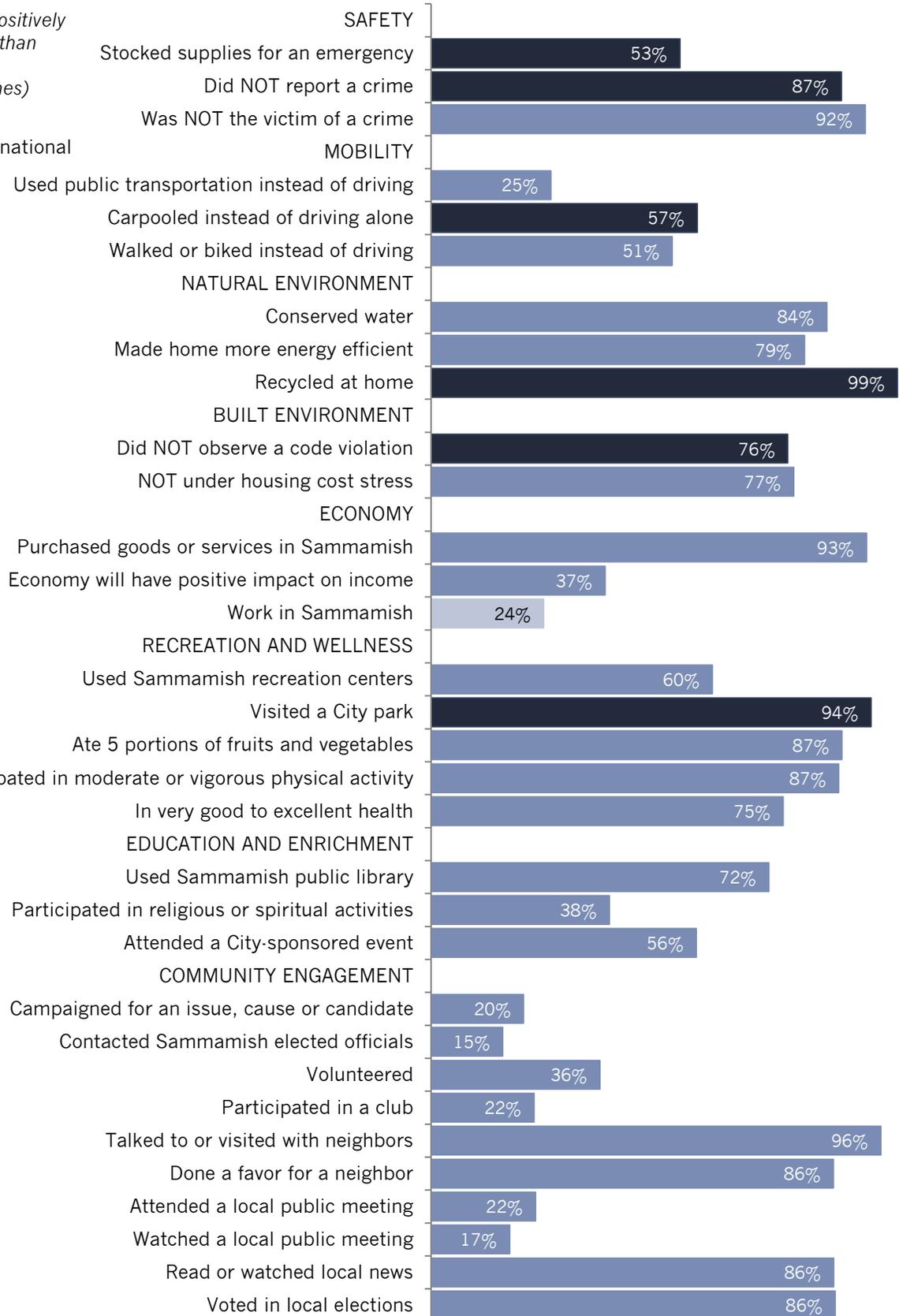
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Figure 3: Aspects of Participation

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower

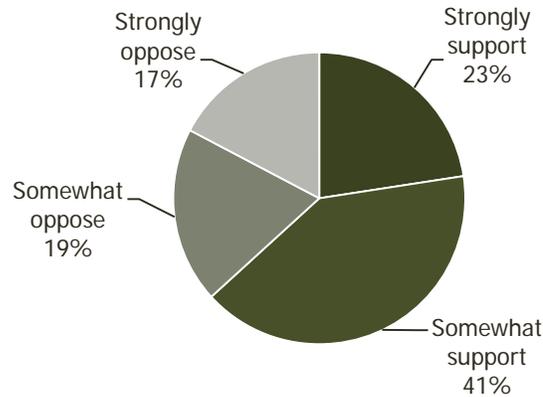


Special Topics

The City of Sammamish included three questions of special interest on The NCS. The first question asked residents to indicate whether they supported or opposed a tax increase to pay for new roads and road improvements. About two-thirds of respondents supported a tax increase and only about 2 in 10 strongly opposed an increase.

Figure 4: Support for Tax Increase for Road Improvements

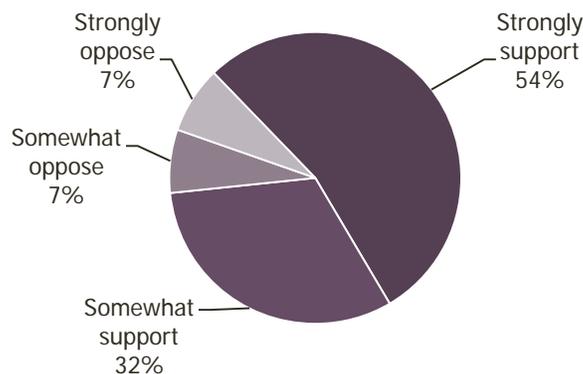
The City is building new roads and improving existing ones. Please indicate the extent to which you support or oppose the raising of taxes if it allowed the City to complete these roads and improvements sooner.



The next question asked residents about their level of support for the use of tax revenue if the funds were used to buy land, preserve trees and protect open space. More than 8 in 10 residents strongly or somewhat supported the use of tax revenue for this purpose and only 7% strongly opposed it.

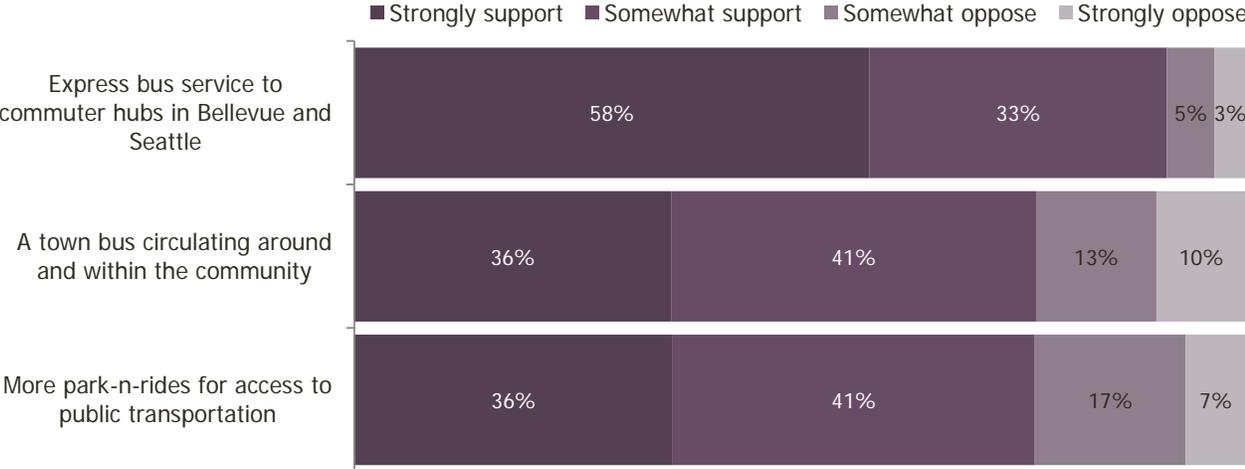
Figure 5: Support for Use of Taxes to Purchase Land and Open Space

Please indicate to what extent you would support or oppose the City's use of tax revenue to buy land, preserve trees and protect open space:



The final special-interest question asked residents to indicate their level of support for a variety of public transportation-related items. Almost all residents voiced support for an express bus service to commuter hubs in Bellevue and Seattle, and about three-quarters of respondents strongly or somewhat supported a town bus circulating around and within the community and more park-n-rides for access to public transportation.

Figure 6: Support for Methods of Public Transportation
 Please rate to what extent you would support or oppose the following:



Conclusions

Sammamish residents rate their quality of life positively.

Almost all residents rated the quality of life in Sammamish, and Sammamish as a place to live, as excellent or good. Around 9 in 10 residents or more positively rated the overall image and overall appearance of Sammamish, their neighborhood as a place to live and Sammamish as a place to raise children, and all of these aspects received ratings higher than those given in other communities nationwide. Nearly 9 in 10 reported that they would recommend living in Sammamish to someone who asked and about 8 in 10 planned to remain in the City for the next 5 years.

Economy is important to residents and may be an area of opportunity for the City.

Residents identified Economy as a top priority for the Sammamish community. More than 8 in 10 residents were pleased with the overall economic health of Sammamish, and this rating was higher than seen in communities elsewhere. However, many other aspects of Economy received positive ratings from fewer than half of survey respondents and were rated lower in Sammamish than in comparison communities, including shopping opportunities, employment opportunities, the City as a place to visit, the cost of living in Sammamish, vibrancy of the downtown/commercial area and Sammamish as a place to work. Further, only about one-quarter of residents reported working in Sammamish, which was also lower than the rate observed elsewhere.

Mobility is also an area of focus.

Ratings within the facet of Mobility across the three pillars of community livability tended to be mixed. While about 7 in 10 residents were pleased with the availability of paths and walking trails and ease of public parking, only about half positively rated the overall ease of travel in Sammamish, about a third gave excellent or good ratings to traffic flow and about 1 in 10 gave favorable ratings to ease of travel by public transportation. These latter items were rated lower than the national comparison.

In a series of special-interest questions, when asked to indicate whether they supported or opposed a tax increase to pay for new roads and road improvements, about two-thirds of respondents were in support; only about 2 in 10 strongly opposed an increase. When asked about their level of support for a series of public transportation-related items, almost all residents voiced support for an express bus service to commuter hubs in Bellevue and Seattle, and about three-quarters of respondents strongly or somewhat supported a town bus circulating around and within the community and more park-n-rides for access to public transportation.

Residents value the natural environment in Sammamish.

Most residents gave excellent or good ratings to the overall natural environment in Sammamish. Virtually all residents gave favorable evaluations to cleanliness and air quality, and these ratings were higher than seen in communities elsewhere. About 8 in 10 residents or more gave positive ratings to services related to Natural Environment, including garbage collection, recycling, yard waste pick-up and drinking water, and drinking water was rated higher than the national comparison.

However, the rating for natural areas preservation, at 47% excellent or good, was lower than ratings elsewhere. When asked about their level of support for the use of tax revenue if the funds were used to buy land, preserve trees and protect open space, more than 8 in 10 residents strongly or somewhat supported the use of tax revenue, and only 7% strongly opposed it.