

THE NCSTM
The National Citizen SurveyTM

Shawnee, OK
Community Livability Report

2016



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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 Shawnee. 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 420 residents of the City of Shawnee. The margin of error around any reported percentage is 5% 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 Shawnee

A majority of residents rated the quality of life in Shawnee as excellent or good. This rating was lower in Shawnee than ratings provided in comparison 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.

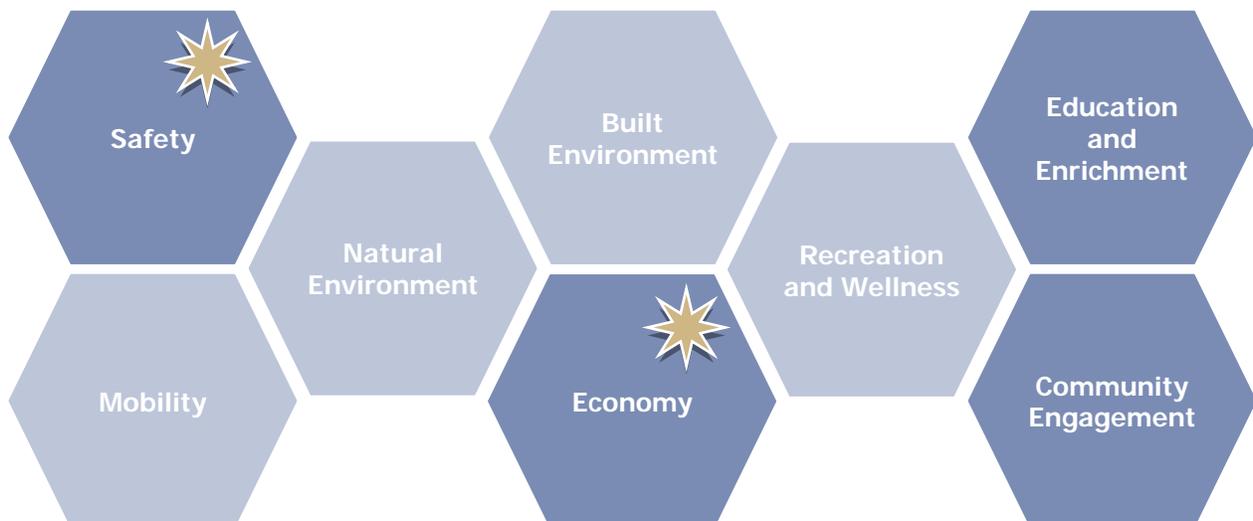
In addition to a summary of ratings, the image below includes one or more stars to indicate which community facets were the most important focus areas for the community. Residents identified Safety and Economy as priorities for the Shawnee community in the coming two years. Shawnee residents gave favorable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

Legend

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

- * Most important



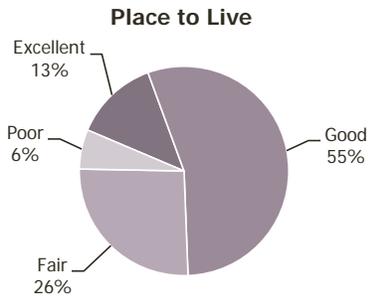
Community Characteristics

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 Shawnee, 68% rated the City as an excellent or good place to live. Respondents' ratings of Shawnee as a place to live were lower 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 Shawnee as a place to raise children and to retire, their neighborhood as a place to live, the overall image or reputation of Shawnee and its overall appearance. A majority of residents positively rated their neighborhood as a place to live while around half of residents or fewer rated Shawnee's overall image, the City as a place to raise children, as a place to retire and Shawnee's overall appearance as excellent or good.

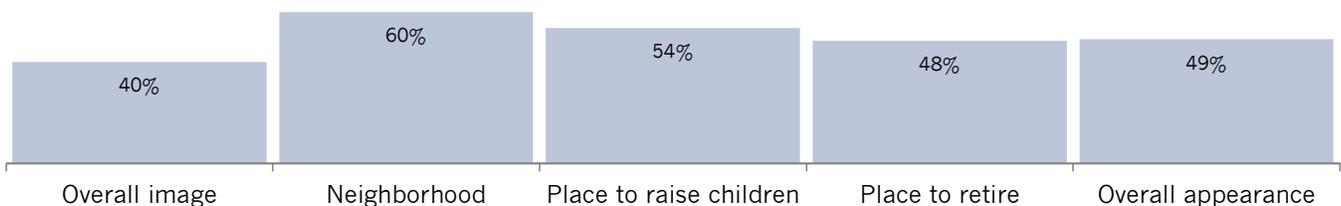
Delving deeper into Community Characteristics, survey respondents rated over 40 features of the community within the eight facets of Community Livability. These ratings tended to be similar to or lower than ratings in communities across the nation. Around 7 in 10 residents or more gave positive ratings to their feeling of safety in their neighborhood as well as in the downtown/commercial area, to ease of travel by car and to the opportunity to participate in religious or spiritual events and activities. A majority of residents also gave positive ratings to the overall ease of travel in Shawnee, public parking, traffic flow, air quality, new development in the City, business and services, cost of living, shopping opportunities, availability of affordable quality food, adult educational opportunities and opportunities to volunteer.



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

Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



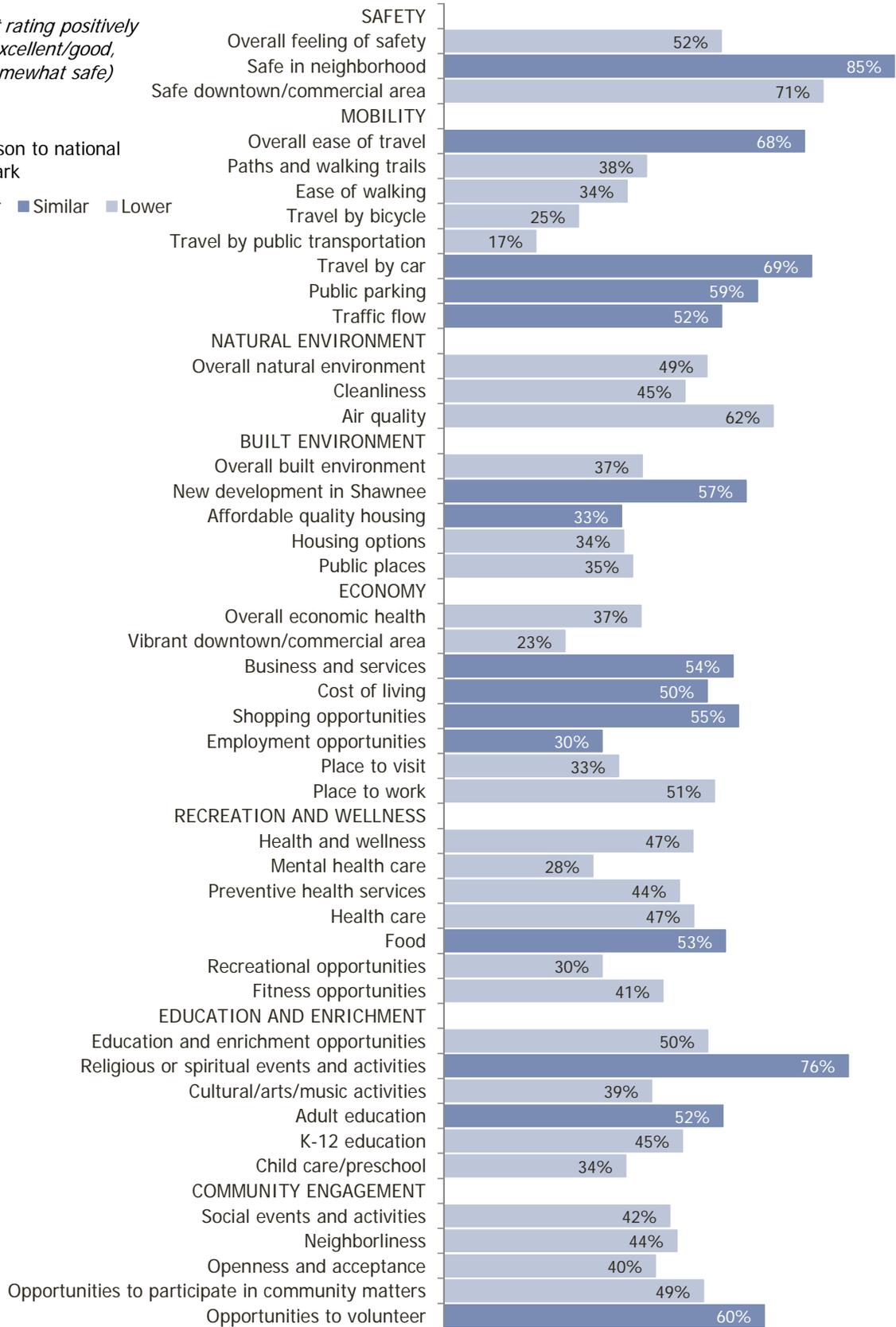
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Figure 1: Aspects of Community Characteristics

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



Governance

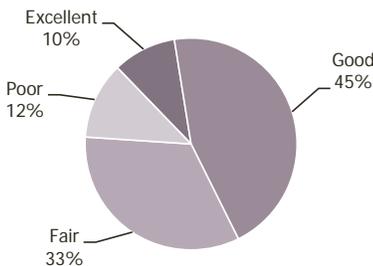
How well does the government of Shawnee meet the needs and expectations of its residents?

The overall quality of the services provided by Shawnee as well as the manner in which these services are provided are a key component of how residents rate their quality of life. About half of residents rated the overall quality of services in Shawnee as excellent or good. Residents rated the quality of services provided by their local government lower than what was seen in other communities, but higher than ratings given for services provided by the Federal Government.

Survey respondents also rated various aspects of Shawnee’s leadership and governance. Around 6 in 10 residents positively rated the overall customer service provided by Shawnee employees, a rating that was somewhat lower in the City than in comparison communities. About half of residents rated the overall direction the City is taking positively, which was similar to the national benchmark. The remaining aspects of Shawnee government performance were rated positively by about 3 in 10 residents or more.

Respondents evaluated over 30 individual services and amenities available in Shawnee. The highest rated services or amenities in Shawnee were police, fire and ambulance/EMS services, fire prevention, garbage collection, power utility and public libraries which were rated as excellent or good by around two-thirds of residents or more. Among the lowest rated aspects of Governance were street repair, bus or transit services, open space, code enforcement and cable television. Many aspects received ratings which were similar to the national benchmark such as police, fire, ambulance/EMS, fire prevention, traffic enforcement, traffic signal timing, garbage collection, recycling, power utility, utility billing, land use, planning and zoning and economic development; however, the remaining aspects of Governance were rated lower in Shawnee than in comparison communities.

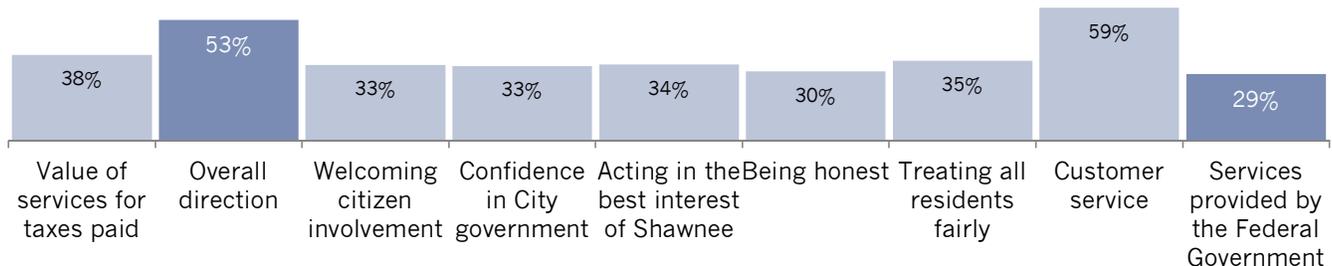
Overall Quality of City Services



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

Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



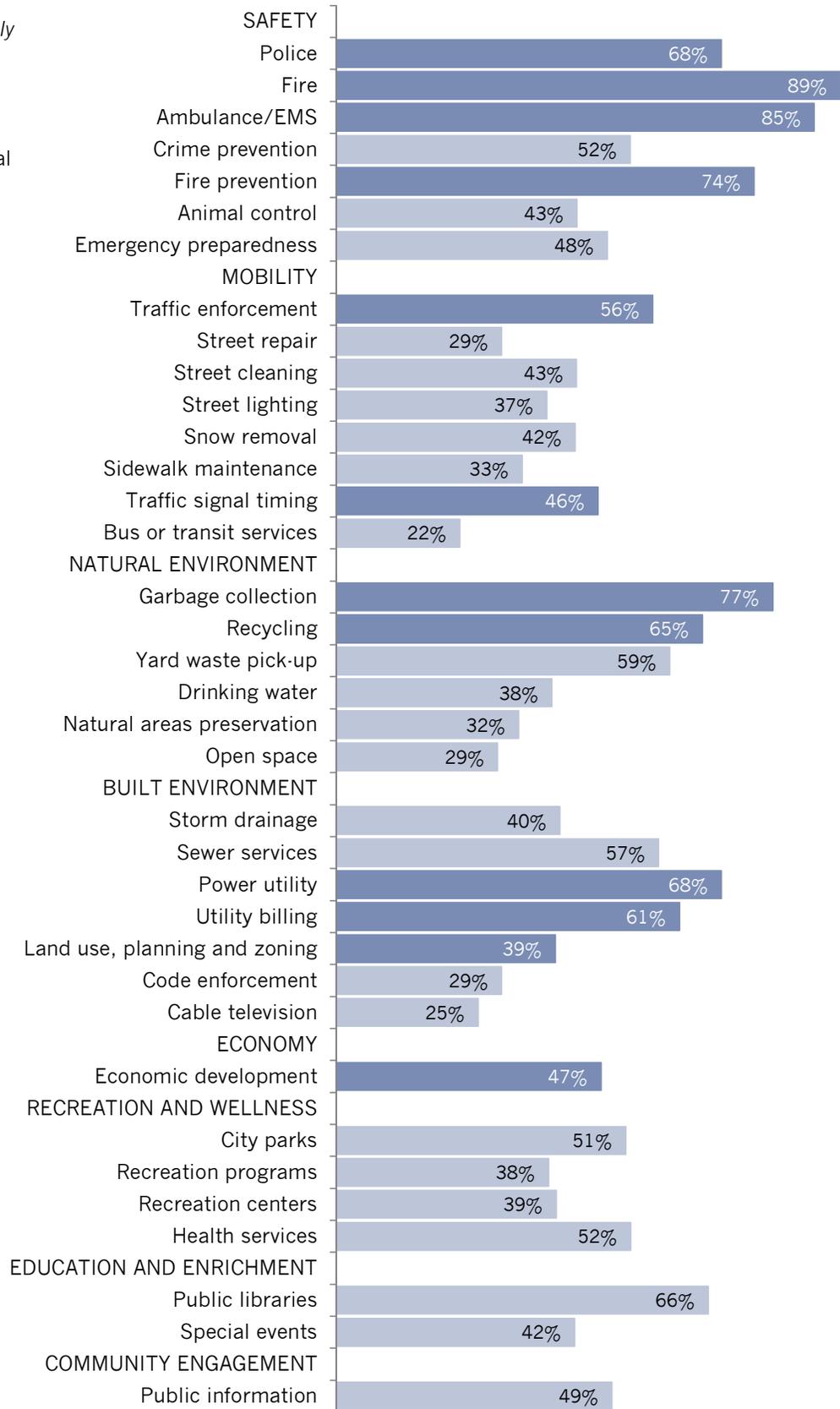
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Figure 2: Aspects of Governance

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower

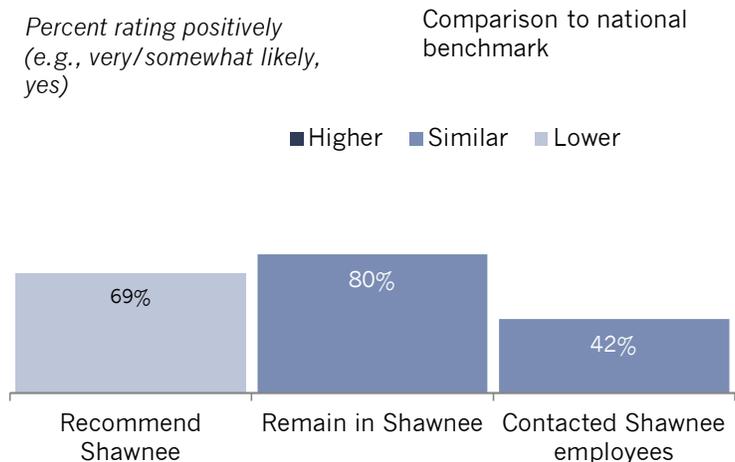
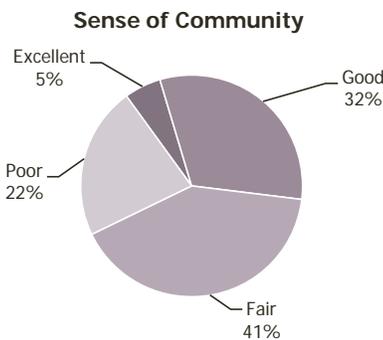


Participation

Are the residents of Shawnee 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. Four in 10 residents rated their overall sense of community as excellent or good. Around four in five reported that they planned on remaining in Shawnee for the next five years, which was similar to what was reported in other communities; however, around 7 in 10 reported they would recommend living in Shawnee to someone who asked which was lower in Shawnee than seen elsewhere.

The survey included over 30 activities and behaviors for which respondents indicated how often they participated in or performed each, if at all. In general, Shawnee residents reported mixed levels of participation when compared to the national benchmark communities. Among the activities or behaviors with the highest reported levels of Participation were: conserved water, purchased goods or services in Shawnee, talked to or visited with neighbors, done a favor for a neighbor, read or watched local news and voted in local elections. Additionally, 8 in 10 residents reported they were not the victim of a crime in the 12 months prior to the survey. More residents in Shawnee reported working within City limits and participating in religious or spiritual activities than did residents nationwide. Ratings of Participation within the facet of Community Engagement were the strongest and all similar to what was seen in comparison communities.



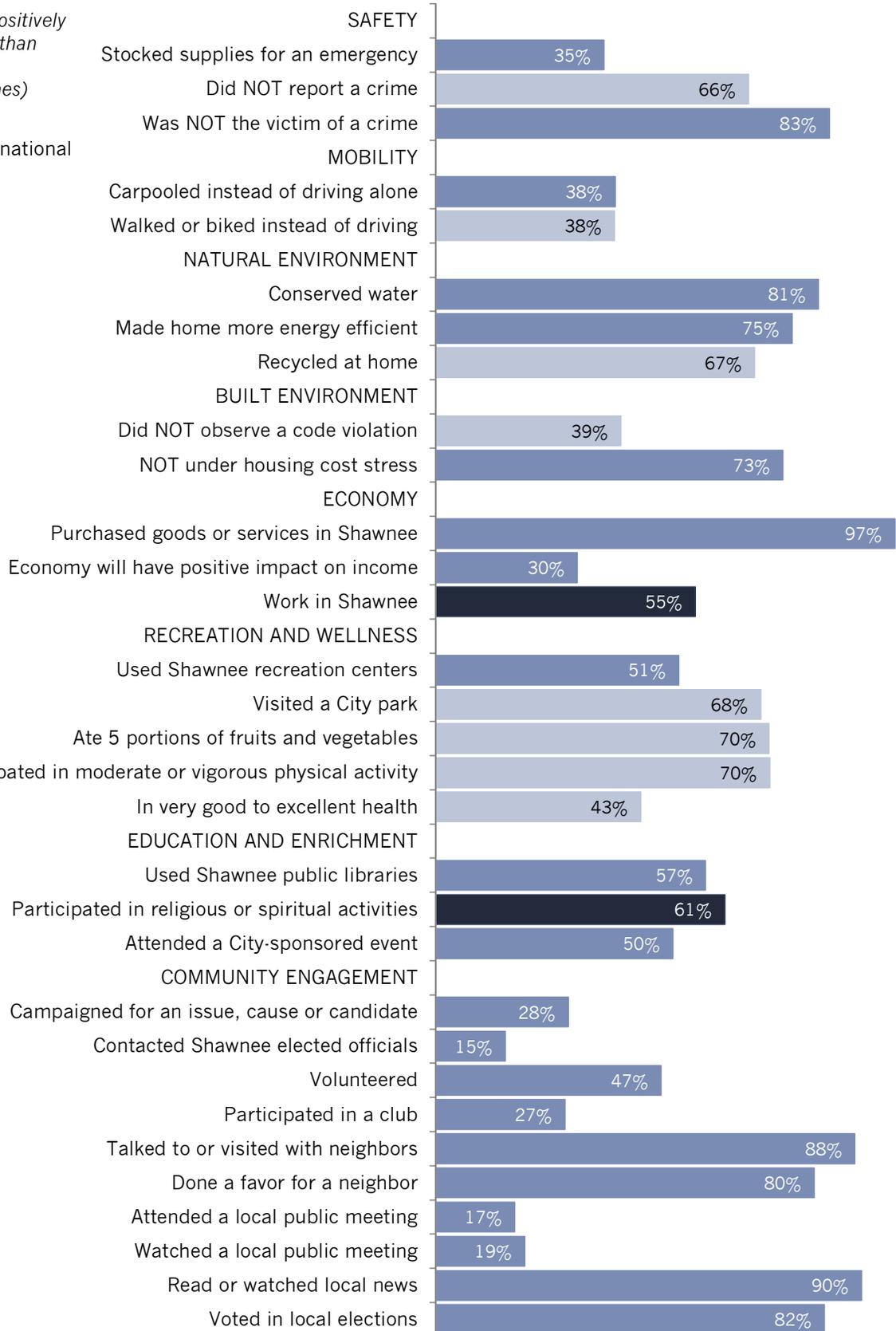
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Figure 3: Aspects of Participation

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower

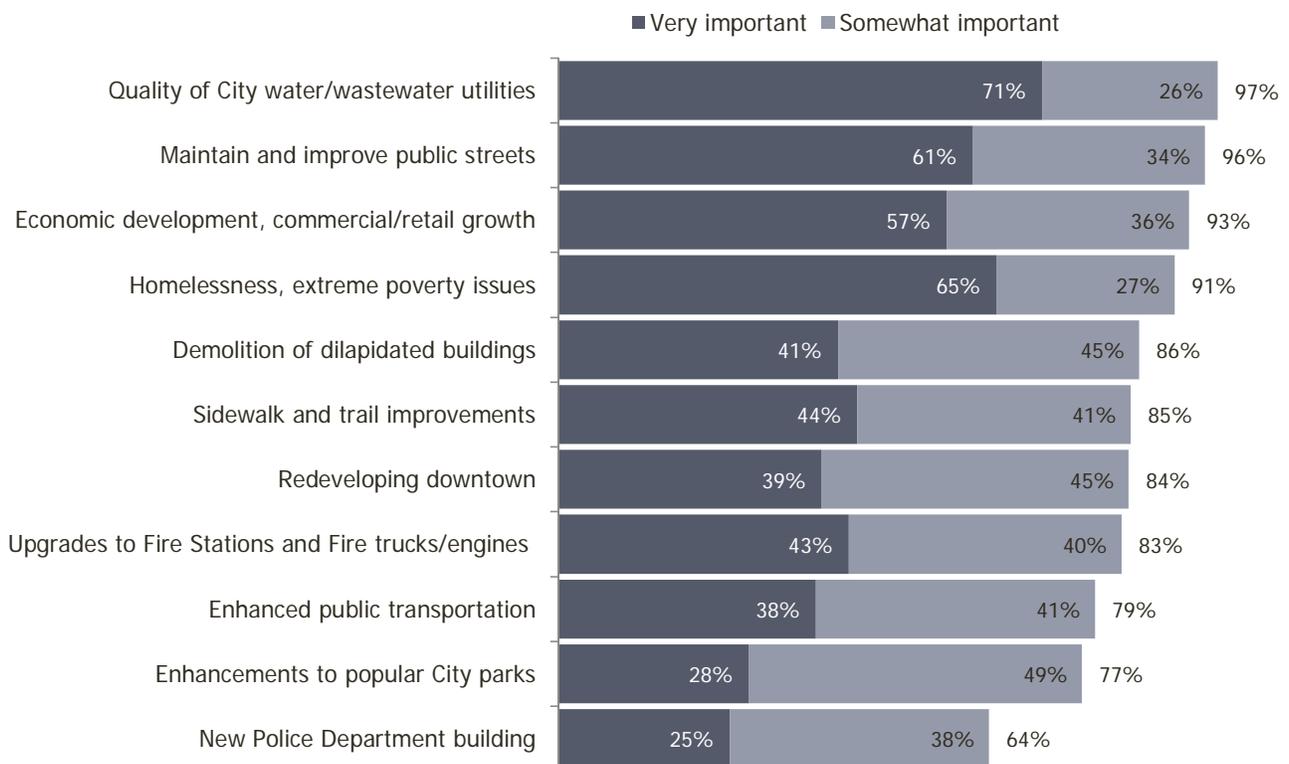


Special Topics

The City of Shawnee included four questions of special interest on The NCS. The first question asked residents to rate the importance of certain City projects or initiatives being addressed over the next 5 years. A large majority stated that all projects were at least somewhat important; however around 9 in 10 or more residents selected quality of City water/wastewater utilities, maintenance and improvements to public streets, economic development, commercial/retail growth and homelessness, extreme poverty issues as the top priorities among all of the projects listed.

Figure 4: Importance of City Projects

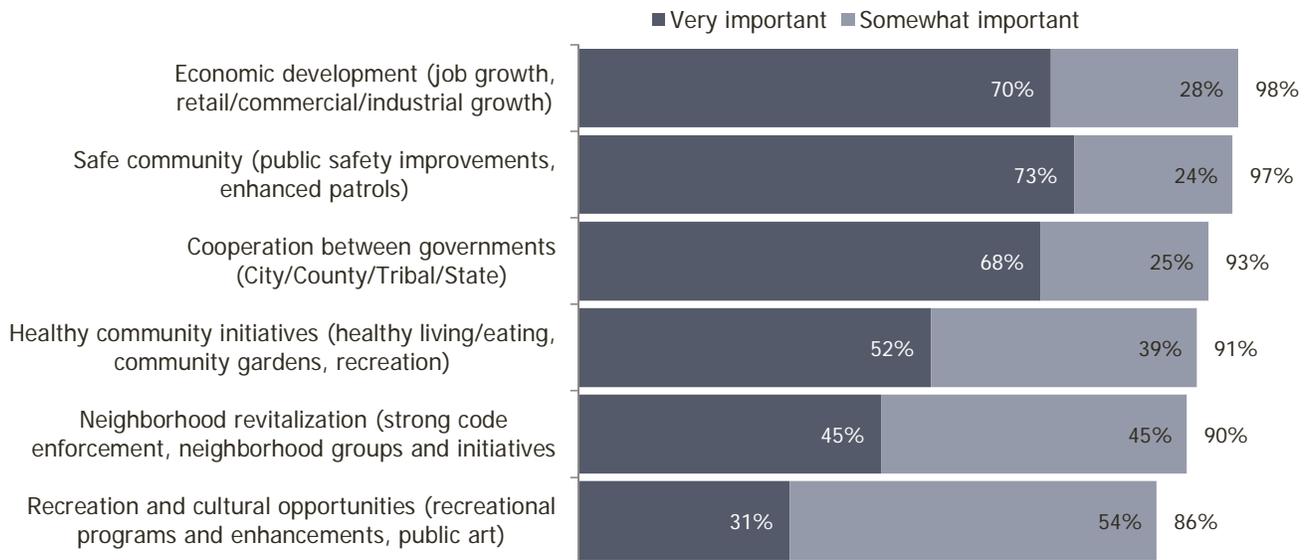
Please indicate how important, if at all, each of the following City projects or initiatives will be for the City to address over the next 5 years:



Another special interest question asked respondents the importance of various strategic planning areas to the overall quality of life in Shawnee. At least four in five reported that all strategic areas were at least somewhat important, but nearly all residents reported that economic development and a safe community were most important for quality of life in the City.

Figure 5: Importance of Strategic Planning Areas to Overall Quality of Life

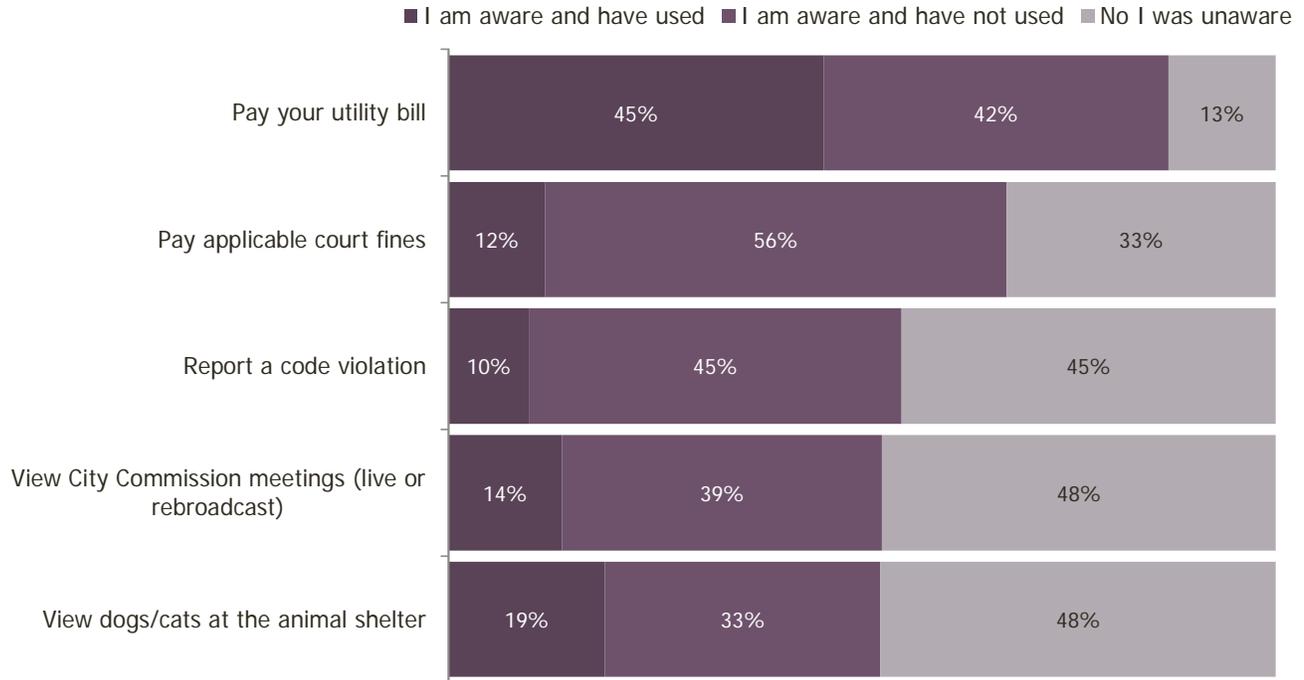
Please rate how important, if at all, each of the following strategic planning areas are to the overall quality of life in the City:



The City also sought to learn whether residents were aware of all the capabilities of the website and whether they were using them or not. A vast majority of residents were aware they could pay their utility bill online and roughly half reported they have used that feature. Around two-thirds reported being at least aware of the ability to pay their applicable court fines online, however, around 1 in 10 reported actually using that capability. Around half of residents reported they were unaware the City website could be used to report a code violation, view the City Commission meetings or view dogs/cats at the animal shelter.

Figure 6: City Website Capabilities

Are you aware that you can do the following activities online through the City's website?

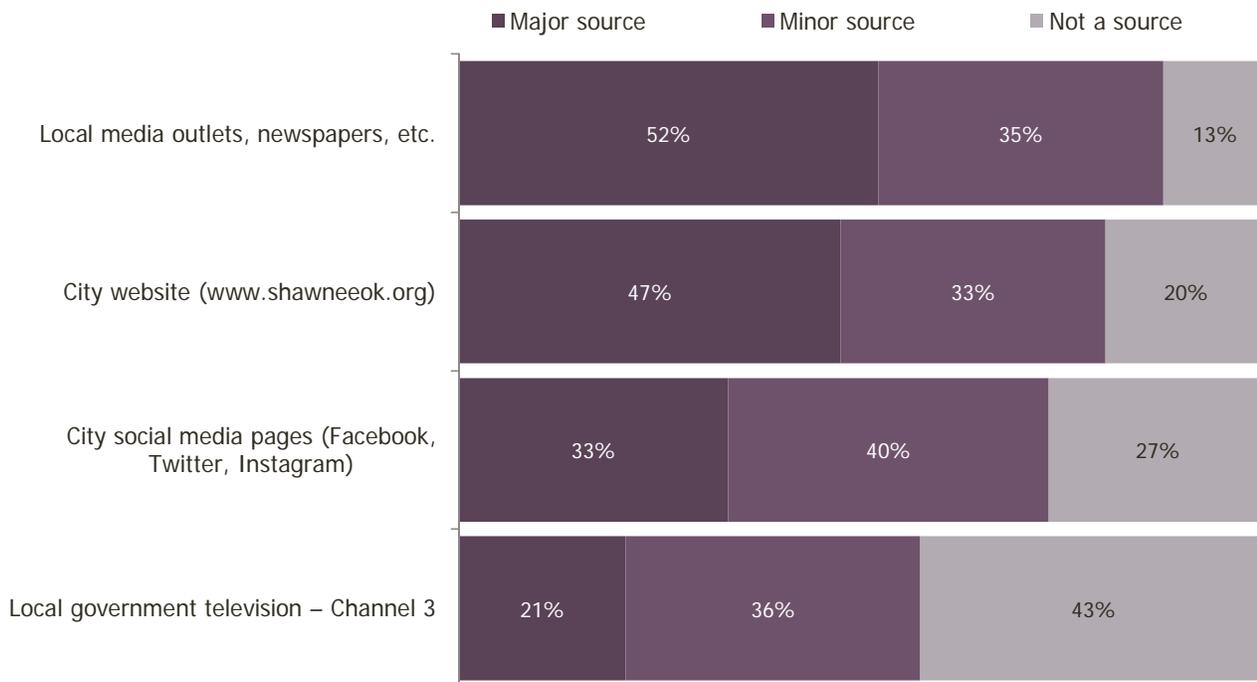


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In the final special interest question, respondents were asked which sources of information were utilized for obtaining information about the City government. Nearly 9 in 10 residents reported that local media outlets or newspapers were utilized at least as a minor source of information while around four in five reported the City website as being a major or minor source. All sources of information were utilized, at least as a minor source, by a majority of residents; however, around 4 in 10 reported that the local government television Channel 3 was not used as a source of information about the City at all.

Figure 7: Sources of Information

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



Conclusions

A majority of residents enjoy a good quality of life in Shawnee.

The overall quality of life in Shawnee was generally seen as excellent or good by at least half of the survey respondents. Around two-thirds of residents rated the City as a place to live as excellent or good and only slightly fewer provided similar ratings for their neighborhood as a place to live. Eight in 10 residents reported that they were likely to remain in Shawnee for the next five years.

Residents highlight safety as a top priority.

Safety was identified as a top community focus area by Shawnee residents and generally Safety related ratings were strong and similar in Shawnee than in communities across the nation. At least four in five residents reported feeling safe in their neighborhood and a similar percentage favorably rated fire and ambulance/EMS services. Overall feeling of safety and feeling of safety in the downtown/commercial area lagged in Shawnee compared to other communities. Also, nearly all residents reported that the strategic planning area of a safe community was somewhat or very important to the overall quality of life in the City.

Shawnee residents are engaged.

Many of the strongest ratings Shawnee received related to Community Engagement and Participation. Around 8 in 10 residents or more reported talking to or visiting with neighbors, doing a favor for a neighbor, reading or watching local news and voting in local elections. Furthermore, more residents in Shawnee reported working in the City limits and participating in religious or spiritual activities than in comparison communities.

Residents emphasize the importance of the Economy.

Shawnee residents also identified Economy as an important area to focus on in the next two years and ratings related to Economy were mixed. Aspects of Economy such as the overall economic health in Shawnee, vibrant downtown/commercial area and Shawnee as a place to visit, all received ratings which lagged behind comparison communities. However, economic development received positive ratings from about half of respondents and nearly all residents reported purchasing goods or services in Shawnee. Furthermore, more people in Shawnee reported working in the City limits than did residents elsewhere. Additionally, around 9 in 10 residents also identified economic development, commercial/retail growth as being somewhat or very important for the City to address in the next five years and economic development was listed as the top-most strategic planning area to the overall quality of life in Shawnee.