

# THE NCS™

The National Citizen Survey™

## Tualatin, OR

Community Livability Report

FINAL  
2016



**NRC**  
National Research Center Inc

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



*Leaders at the Core of Better Communities*

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

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# About

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

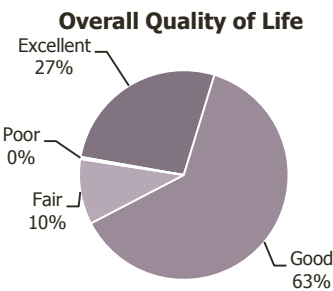
The Community Livability Report provides the opinions of a representative sample of 321 residents of the City of Tualatin. The margin of error around any reported percentage is 6% for the entire sample. The full description of methods used to garner these opinions can be found in the *Technical Appendices* provided under separate cover.



# Quality of Life in Tualatin

Most residents rated the quality of life in Tualatin as excellent or good. This rating was similar to those seen 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.



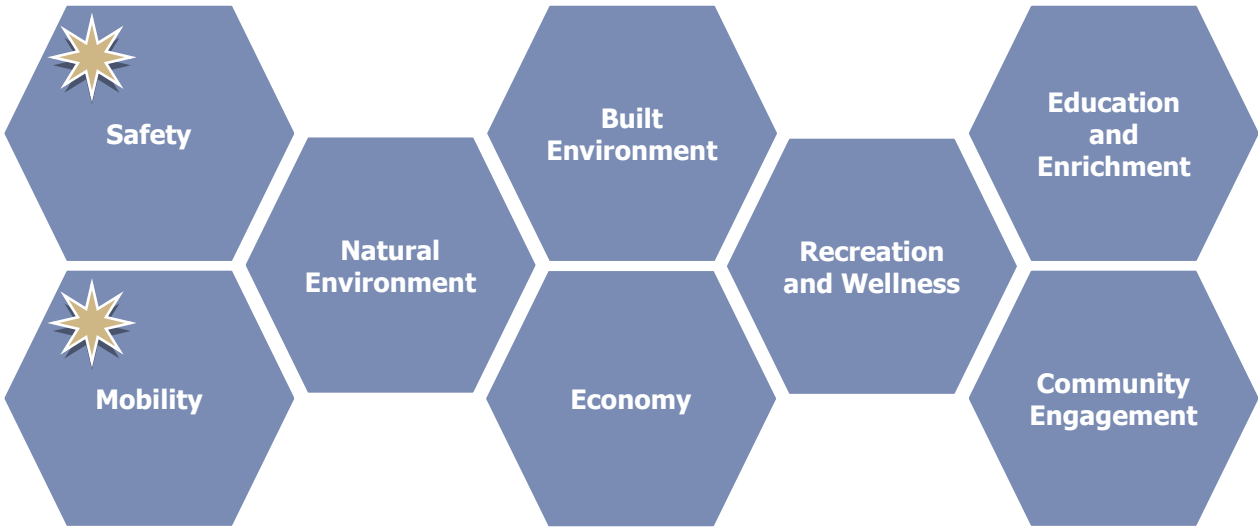
In addition to a summary of ratings, the image below includes one or more stars to indicate which community facets were the most important focus areas for the community. Residents identified Safety and Mobility as priorities for the Tualatin community. It is noteworthy that Tualatin residents gave favorable ratings to both of these facets of community. Ratings for Natural Environment, Built Environment, Economy, 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 Tualatin's unique questions.

## Legend

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

- Most important



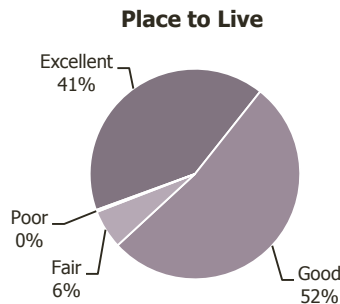
# Community Characteristics

*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 Tualatin, 94% rated the City as an excellent or good place to live. Respondents' ratings of Tualatin 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 Tualatin as a place to raise children and to retire, their neighborhood as a place to live, the overall image or reputation of Tualatin and its overall appearance. Most respondents favorably rated their neighborhood as a place to live, Tualatin as a place to raise children and to the overall appearance of Tualatin. Roughly 8 in 10 residents gave positive ratings to the overall image of Tualatin, while about two-thirds gave excellent or good ratings to Tualatin as a place to retire. All of these aspects received ratings similar to the benchmark comparison, with the exception of the overall appearance of Tualatin, which received ratings higher than in benchmark communities.

Delving deeper into Community Characteristics, survey respondents rated over 40 features of the community within the eight facets of Community Livability. Generally, ratings for aspects of Community Characteristics were strong across each of the eight facets. Almost all residents gave positive ratings to their feeling of safety in their neighborhoods, while around 9 in 10 felt safe overall in Tualatin and in the City's downtown/commercial area. Ratings within Mobility were mixed: at least 7 in 10 residents positively rated the availability of paths and walking trails (rated higher than the national benchmark), as well as the ease of walking in Tualatin. Around half of respondents or less, however, positively rated overall ease of travel, travel by public transportation or car, and traffic flow. Ratings for travel by car, overall ease of travel and traffic flow were lower than the national benchmark. Roughly 4 in 5 respondents rated all aspects of Natural Environment as excellent or good. Several aspects of Economy received positive ratings from a majority of respondents and shopping and employment opportunities were rated higher than seen in comparison communities. The remaining facets of Recreation and Wellness, Education and Enrichment and Community Engagement were similar to comparison communities and rated positively by a majority of respondents.

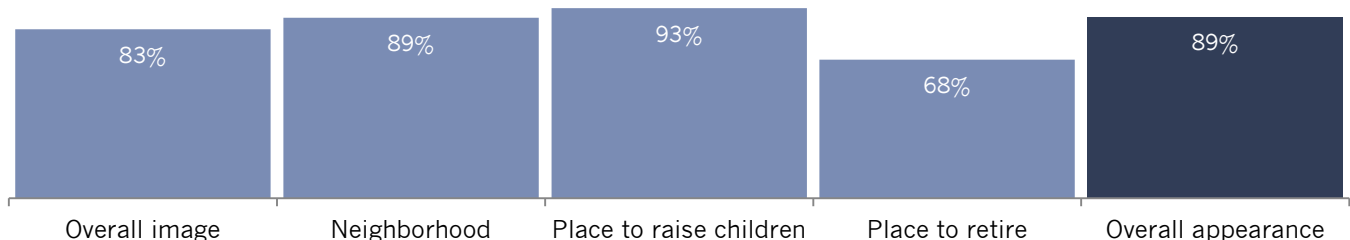


Compared to the 2013 survey, ratings decreased for traffic flow, travel by car and availability of affordable quality housing. Meanwhile, ratings increased for Tualatin's overall appearance and the City as a place to retire. Additionally, several aspects within the facets of Mobility, Natural Environment, Economy, Recreation and Wellness and Education and Enrichment also increased over time. For additional information regarding the trends please review the *Trends Report* under separate cover.

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

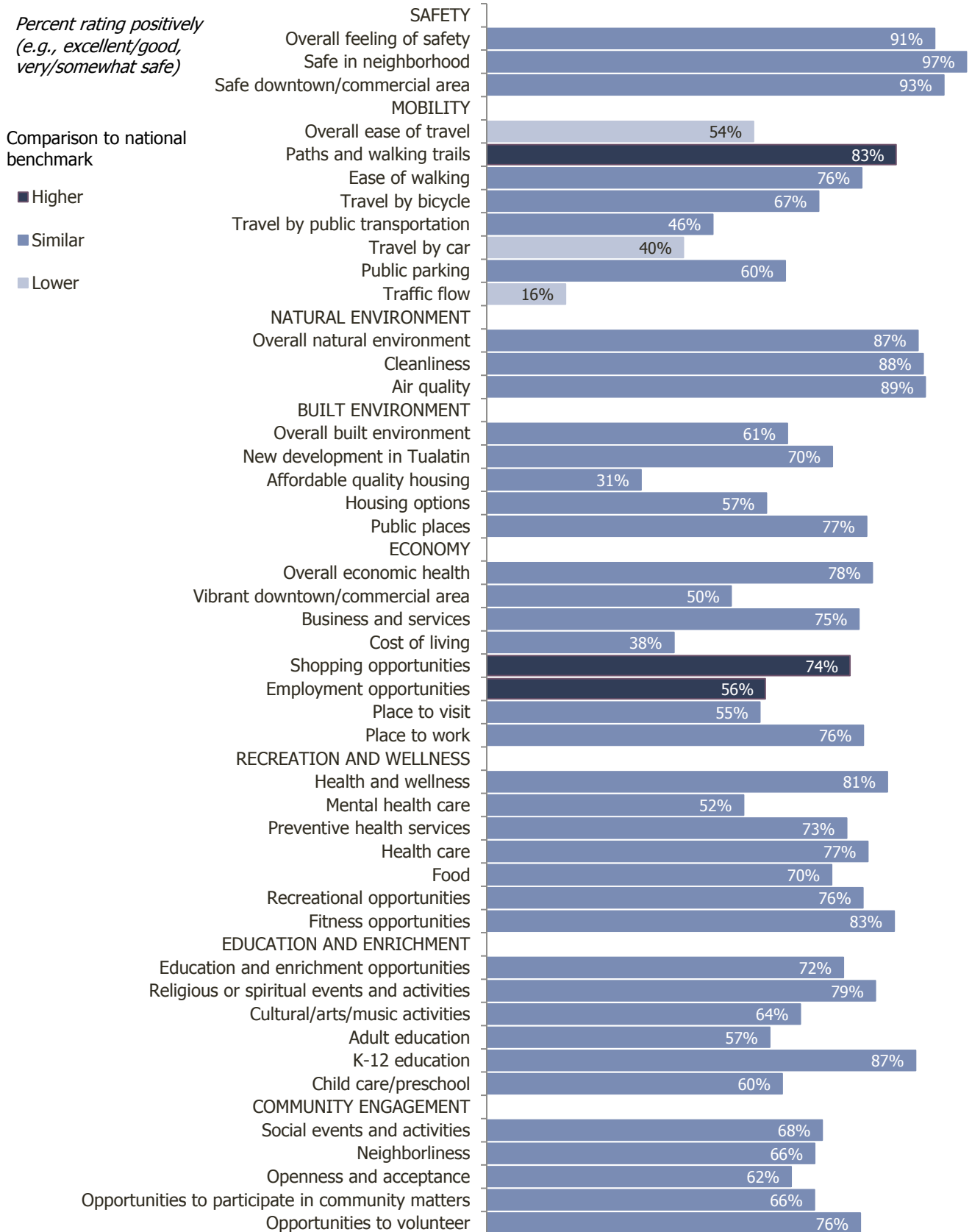
Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



# The National Citizen Survey™

Figure 1: Aspects of Community Characteristics



# Governance

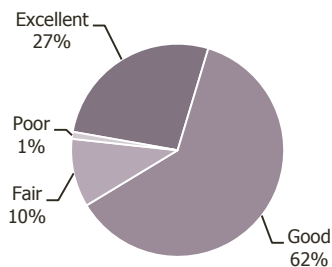
## *How well does the government of Tualatin meet the needs and expectations of its residents?*

The overall quality of the services provided by Tualatin as well as the manner in which these services are provided are a key component of how residents rate their quality of life. The overall quality of services provided by the City of Tualatin received excellent or good ratings by more than 8 in 10 residents.

Survey respondents also rated various aspects of Tualatin's leadership and governance. Roughly 8 in 10 residents gave excellent or good ratings to the overall customer service provided by Tualatin employees. Around 7 in 10 respondents gave positive ratings to the City government treating all residents fairly (a rating higher than in comparison communities) as well as to the City government acting in the best interest of Tualatin, resident confidence and the overall direction the City is taking. The remaining aspects of Tualatin's leadership and performance were awarded high ratings by around 6 in 10 residents or more and were similar to the benchmark.

Respondents evaluated over 30 individual services and amenities available in Tualatin. Most aspects of Governance were rated as excellent or good by a majority of respondents and tended to be similar to or higher than the national benchmark. Around 8 in 10 residents or more rated police, fire, ambulance/EMS, crime prevention and fire prevention services as excellent or good, similar to comparison communities. Half of the aspects within Mobility were rated higher than elsewhere including street repair, street cleaning, street lighting and bus or transit services. Exceptionally high marks were also given within the facets of Natural Environment (yard waste pick-up and drinking water), Built Environment (storm drainage) and Economy (economic development), with around two-thirds or more of respondents rating these items as excellent or good. The aforementioned aspects were rated higher than seen in comparison communities. A vast majority of respondents were pleased with all aspects of Recreation and Wellness and ratings for City parks and health services were rated higher than communities elsewhere. All measures of Education and Enrichment and Community Engagement were rated positively by around 7 in 10 residents or more and were similar to the national benchmark.

**Overall Quality of City Services**

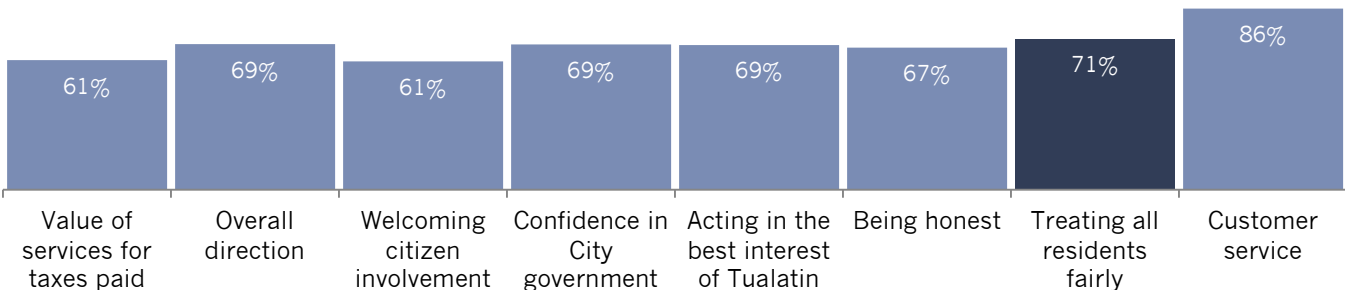


Compared to the 2013 survey, ratings decreased for traffic signal timing and public information in 2016. Meanwhile ratings increased for crime prevention, street repair, bus or transit services, economic development and overall customer service provided by Tualatin employees.

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

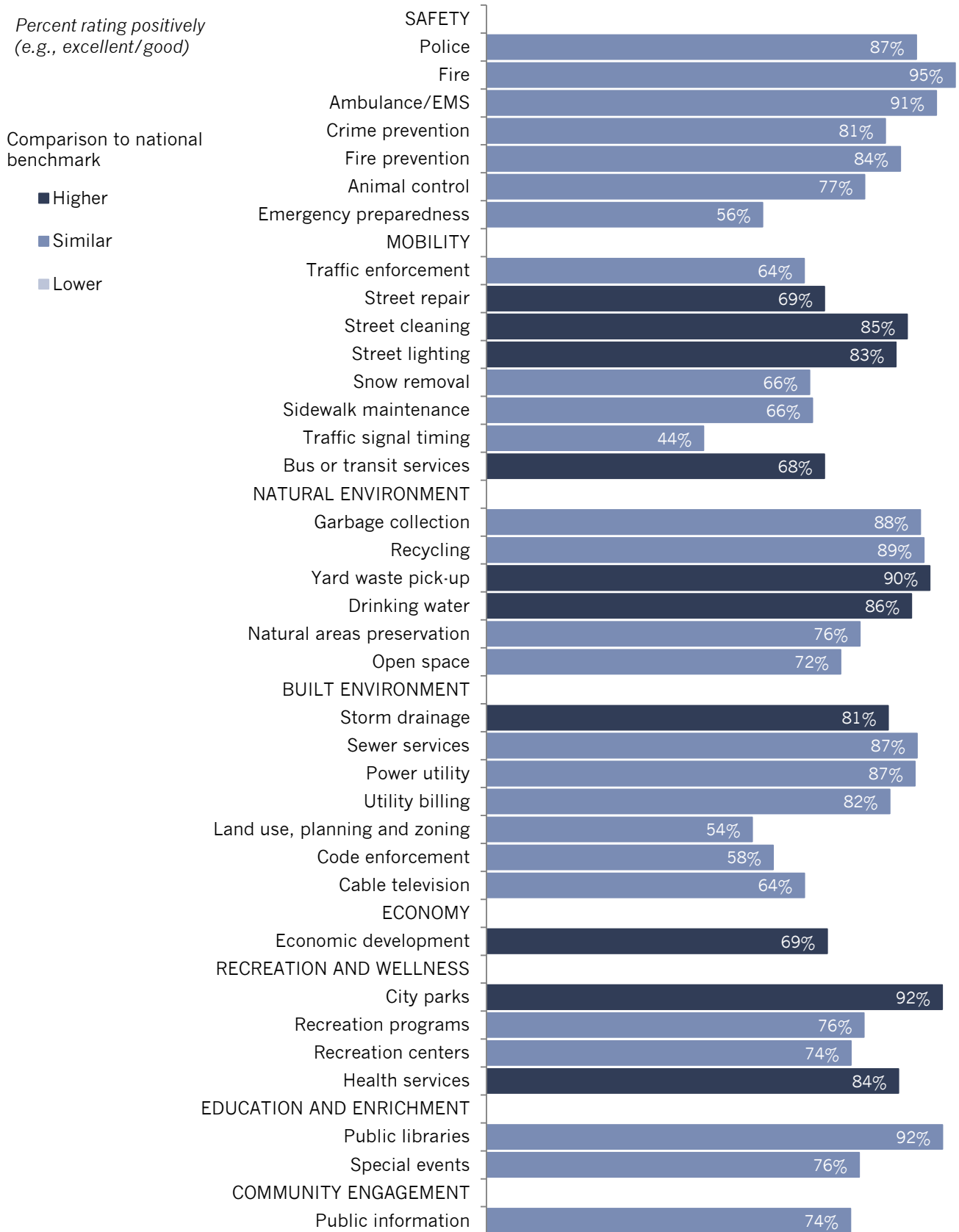
Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



## The National Citizen Survey™

Figure 2: Aspects of Governance





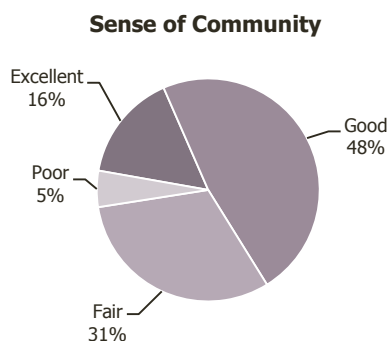
# Participation

## *Are the residents of Tualatin 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 Tualatin, 63% of survey respondents described the sense of community as excellent or good. About 8 in 10 residents reported that they were likely to remain in Tualatin for the next five years and around 9 in 10 would recommend living in the City.

The survey included over 30 activities and behaviors for which respondents indicated how often they participated in or performed each, if at all. Levels of participation measured in the survey varied widely, though most rates of Participation were similar to other benchmark communities. Within the facet of Safety, about 8 in 10 survey respondents had not been the victim of a crime or had not reported a crime, and about one-third had stocked supplies for an emergency. Within Natural Environment, almost all residents reported that they had recycled at home, a rate higher than the national benchmark. More than half of residents reported that they did not observe a code violation in the facet of Built Environment, a level higher than seen elsewhere. Within the facet of Recreation and Wellness, around 9 in 10 residents had visited a City park in the last twelve months, a level higher than the national benchmark. Within Community Engagement, around 4 in 5 residents or more had talked to, visited or had done a favor for their neighbors, read or watched local news or voted in local elections, similar to other communities. Fewer Tualatin residents reported that they had participated in religious or spiritual activities, volunteered, participated in a club or watched a local public meeting than residents in comparison communities.

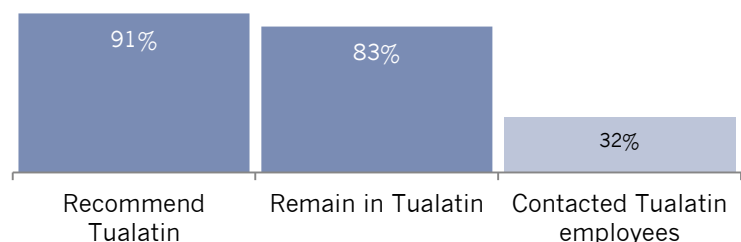
Fewer residents reported that they had used the Tualatin Public Library, watched a local public meeting or contacted a Tualatin employee in 2016 compared to 2013. However, more residents reported in 2016 that they had used Tualatin recreation centers and believed that the economy will have a positive impact on their income in the next six months.



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

Comparison to national  
benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



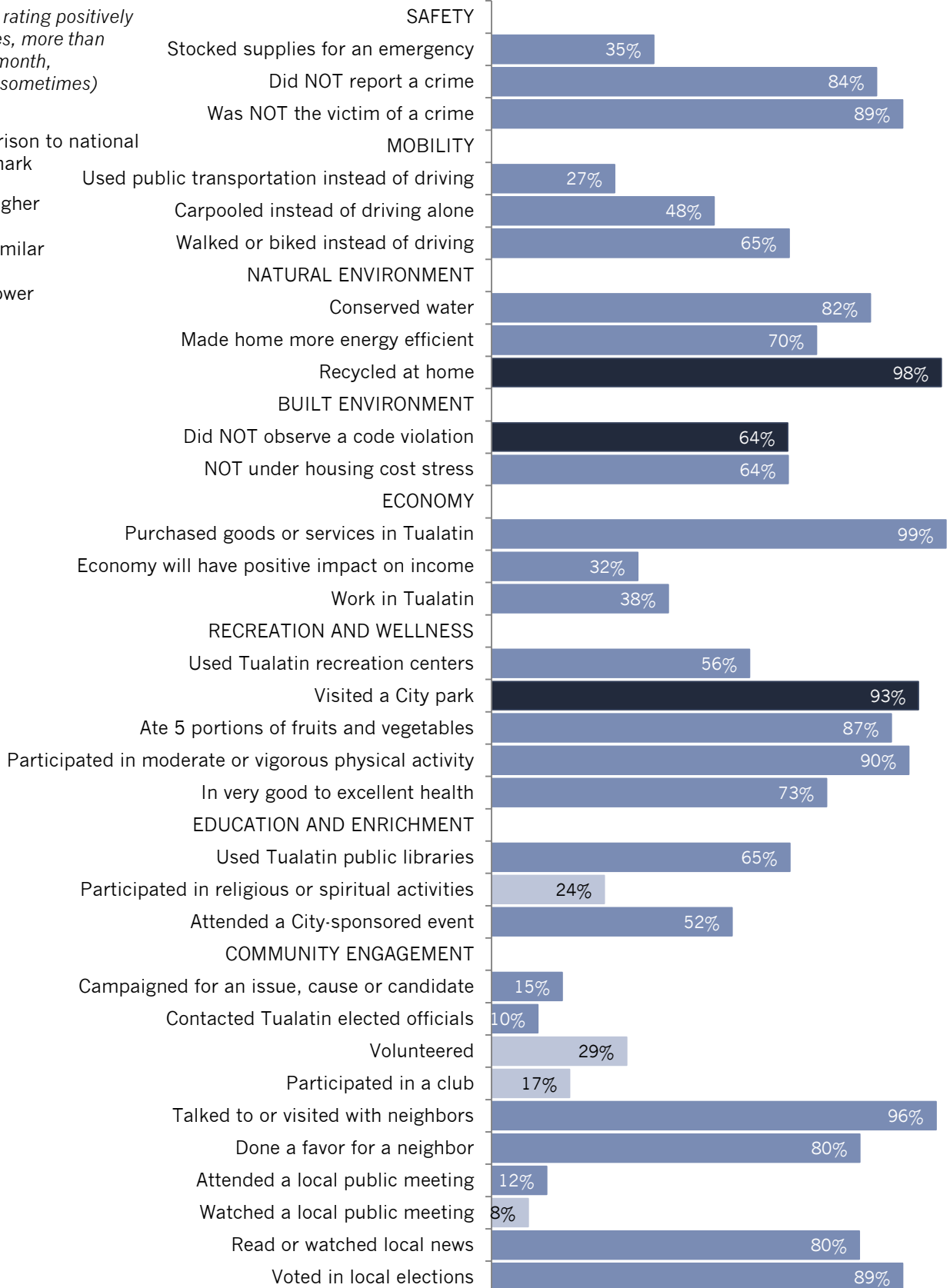
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Figure 3: Aspects of Participation

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

Comparison to national  
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower

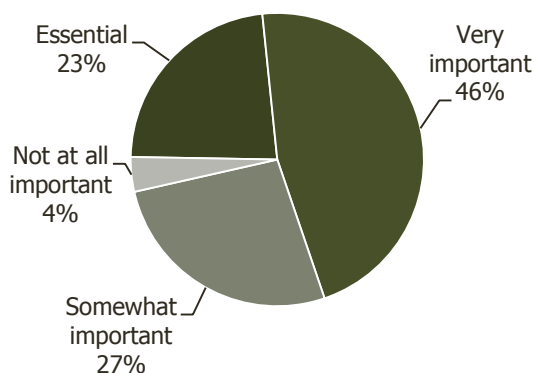


# Special Topics

The City of Tualatin included three questions of special interest on The NCS. The first question asked residents about the importance of the role of Citizen Involvement Organizations to the overall quality of public involvement in Tualatin. About two-thirds of survey participants indicated that the role of the organizations were at least very important or essential.

Figure 4: Role of Citizen Involvement Organizations

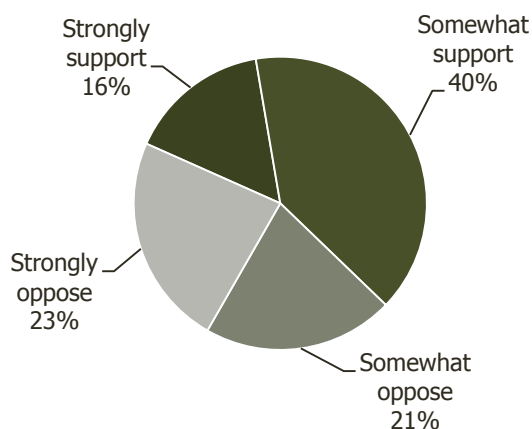
*Please indicate how important, if at all, the role of Citizen Involvement Organizations is to the overall quality of public involvement in Tualatin:*



Residents were also asked to specify their level of support for an increase in property tax to fund a new City Hall building and expand the Tualatin Public Library. Around half of residents at least somewhat supported the bond measure that would increase property taxes to residents by \$3-5 per month.

Figure 5: New City Hall Building and Library Expansions

*The City is considering building a new City Hall building and expanding the Library. The city estimates the cost of the project will range from \$24-32 million, depending on the location. Would you support a bond measure that would increase property taxes to residents by \$3-\$5 per month?*

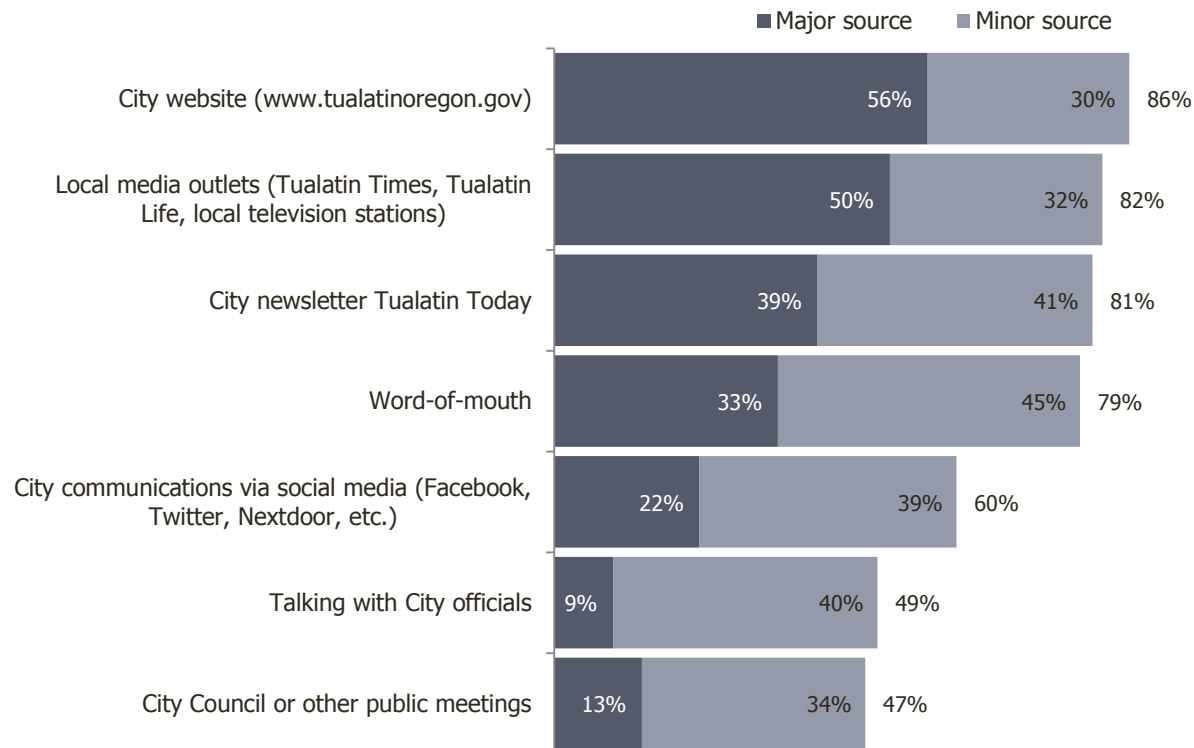


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Tualatin residents were asked to indicate which methods they prefer to receive information about City government, its activities, events and services. Roughly 80% or more of respondents reported that the City newsletter, local media outlets (Tualatin Times, Tualatin Life and local television stations) and the City website were at least a minor source of information. City Council or other public meetings were considered a major or minor source of information by 47% of residents and was rated the least likely source for obtaining information about the City government.

Figure 6: 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 of Tualatin and its activities, events, and services:*



# Conclusions

## **Tualatin residents continue to enjoy a high quality of life.**

A high number of survey respondents gave positive ratings to the overall quality of life in Tualatin (90% excellent or good) and the City as a place to live (94%). About 9 in 10 gave high ratings to Tualatin as a place to raise children and the overall appearance of the City, a rating higher than ratings in comparison communities. Not only did residents appreciate living in Tualatin, they also rated the sense of community positively, with more than half giving excellent or good ratings. Overall, around 9 in 10 residents would recommend living in Tualatin and about 4 in 5 planned to remain in the City for the next five years.

## **Mobility is a priority for residents.**

Survey participants indicated that Mobility is an important factor for Tualatin to focus on in the coming years. Two thirds of residents or more gave positive ratings to street repair, street cleaning, street lighting and bus or transit services, which were higher than communities elsewhere. Around 8 in 10 respondents were pleased with the paths and walking trails in Tualatin, a rating higher than given in other communities across the nation. Most of the remaining aspects of Mobility were rated similar to other communities, but some measures were less favorably rated including, traffic flow, ease of travel by car and overall ease of travel, all of which were rated lower than elsewhere in the nation. Ratings for traffic flow, ease of travel by car and traffic signal timing decreased compared to the 2013 survey iteration. However, ratings for travel by bicycle, ease of walking, paths and walking trails, street repair and bus or transit services improved since 2013.

## **Residents identified Safety as a main focus area.**

Overall, roughly 9 in 10 residents gave positive ratings to the overall feeling of safety in the City and reported that they felt safe in their neighborhoods and in Tualatin's downtown/commercial area. Safety services such as police, fire, ambulance/EMS, crime prevention and fire prevention were all rated highly by 80% or more of residents. Additionally, 89% of participants reported that they were NOT the victim of a crime. Ratings increased from 2013 to 2016 for crime prevention, while all other Safety aspects remained stable over time.