



THE NCSTM
The National Citizen SurveyTM

Scottsdale, AZ

Community Livability Report

2018



NRC
National Research Center Inc.

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

ICMA

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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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 Scottsdale. 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 305 residents of the City of Scottsdale. The margin of error around any reported percentage is 6% 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 Scottsdale

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

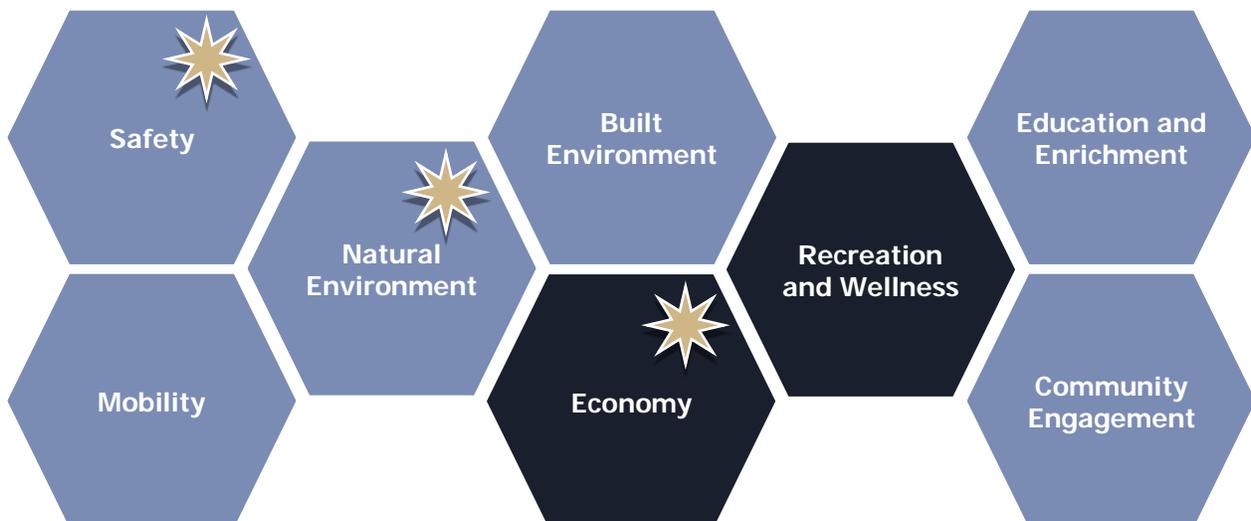
In addition to a summary of ratings, the image below includes one or more stars to indicate which community facets were the most important focus areas for the community. Residents identified Safety, Natural Environment and Economy as priorities for the Scottsdale community in the coming two years. The facets of Economy and Recreation and Wellness received ratings that were higher than the national benchmarks. All other facets had evaluations that were positive and similar to the national averages. 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 Scottsdale’s unique questions.

Legend

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

★ Most important



Community Characteristics

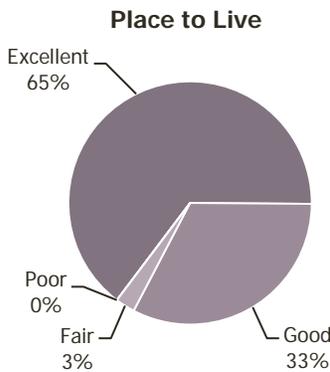
What makes a community livable, attractive and a place where people want to be?

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 Scottsdale, almost all citizens rated the city as an excellent or good place to live. Respondents' reviews of Scottsdale as a place to live were higher than observed 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 Scottsdale as a place to raise children and to retire, their neighborhood as a place to live, the overall image or reputation of Scottsdale and its overall appearance. Nine in 10 residents gave favorable marks to the overall image or reputation of Scottsdale, their neighborhood as a place to live, Scottsdale as a place to retire and the City's overall appearance; these ratings were higher than the national averages. Ratings for Scottsdale as a place to retire were exceptional and were among the highest ratings ever recorded in NRC's benchmarking database

Delving deeper into Community Characteristics, survey respondents rated over 40 features of the community within the eight facets of community livability. Evaluations of Economy were remarkably high, with scores higher than the national benchmark for overall economic health and overall quality of business and service establishments, and scores much higher than the national benchmark for vibrant downtown/commercial area,

shopping and employment opportunities, Scottsdale as a place to visit and Scottsdale as a place to work. Ratings for shopping opportunities were ranked 1st among all comparison communities.



All of the ratings for Recreation and Wellness were strong and higher than observed across the nation. Health and wellness opportunities received marks much higher than the national benchmark.

Residents gave above-average marks to their overall feelings of safety in Scottsdale, as well as to the overall natural environment and the overall built environment. Several other aspects received high marks, including the availability

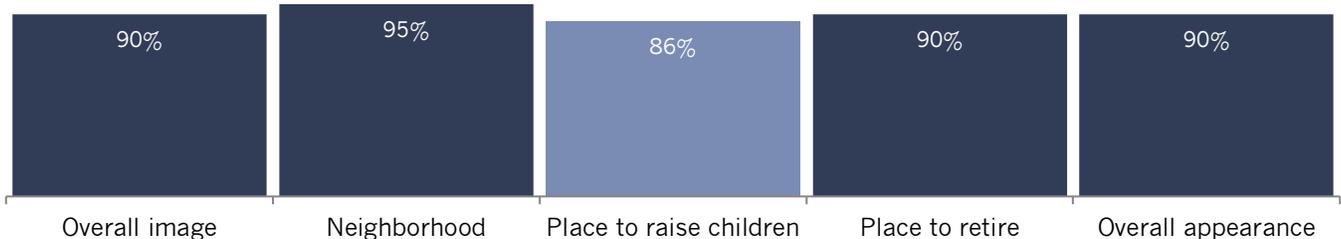
paths and walking trails, overall quality of new development in Scottsdale, overall opportunities for education and enrichment and opportunities to participate in social events and activities.

When compared to 2016, ratings in 2018 decreased for the availability of affordable quality housing, K-12 education, the availability of affordable quality child care/preschool and adult educational opportunities (for more information see the *Trends over Time* report under separate cover). All aspects of Community Characteristics remained stable from 2016 to 2018.

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

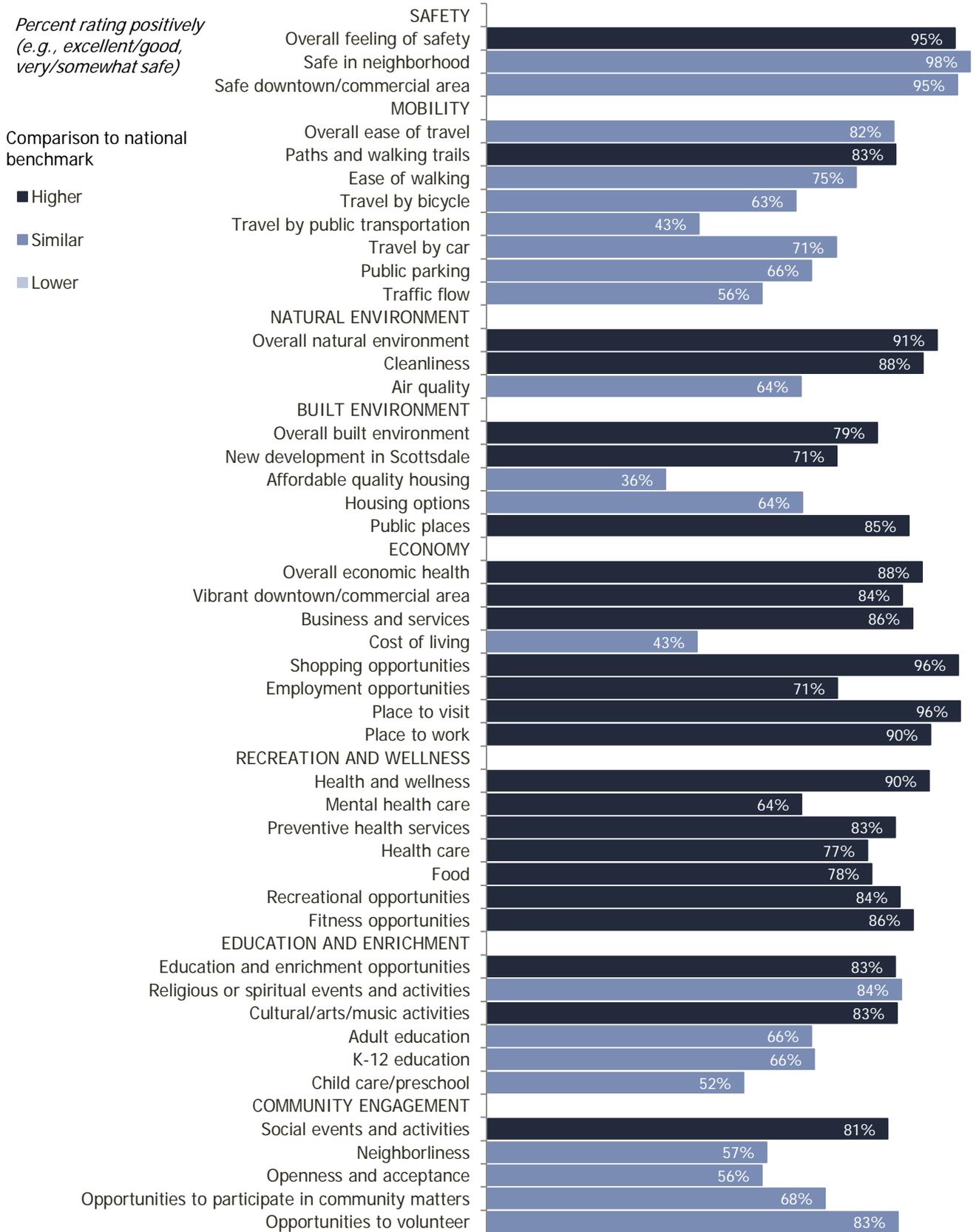
Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



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Figure 1: Aspects of Community Characteristics



Governance

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

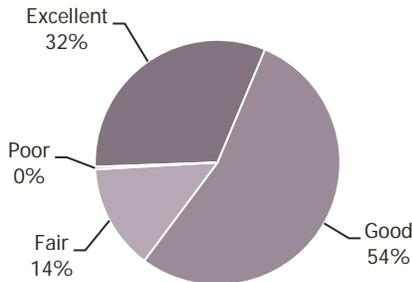
The overall quality of the services provided by Scottsdale as well as the manner in which these services are provided is a key component of how residents rate their quality of life. About 4 in 5 residents gave excellent or good ratings to the overall quality of City services, which was above-average. About one-third of respondents gave positive reviews to the Federal Government; this rating was on par with comparison communities nationwide.

Survey respondents also rated various aspects of Scottsdale’s leadership and governance. The overall customer service provided by Scottsdale employees received the highest marks, with 79% of respondents rating this aspect as excellent or good; however this rating decreased from 2016 to 2018. A majority of residents gave excellent or good ratings to all remaining aspects of government performance and these were similar to national averages.

Respondents evaluated over 30 individual services and amenities available in Scottsdale. All services related to Safety were positive and similar to the national benchmarks. Around 9 in 10 residents gave favorable marks to police services, fire services and ambulance or emergency medical services. Assessments of emergency preparedness decreased from 2016 to 2018.

Evaluations of Mobility were positive, with marks higher than the national averages for street repair, street cleaning and sidewalk maintenance. Assessments of traffic enforcement, street lighting, traffic signal timing and bus or transit services were similar to the national benchmarks.

Overall Quality of City Services



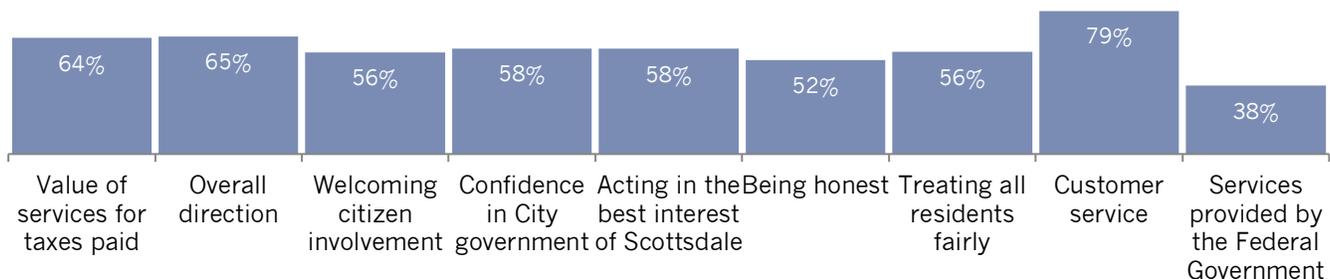
Scores for aspects of Natural Environment and Recreation and Wellness were favorable, with above-average ratings for yard waste pick-up, preservation of natural areas, open space (Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve), recreation programs or classes and recreation centers or facilities. Open space reviews were much higher than the national average. Assessments of yard waste pick-up improved from 2016 to 2018.

Ratings for code enforcement and public library services were strong and higher than the benchmarks. However, assessments of street cleaning and land use, planning and zoning declined from 2016 to 2018.

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

Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



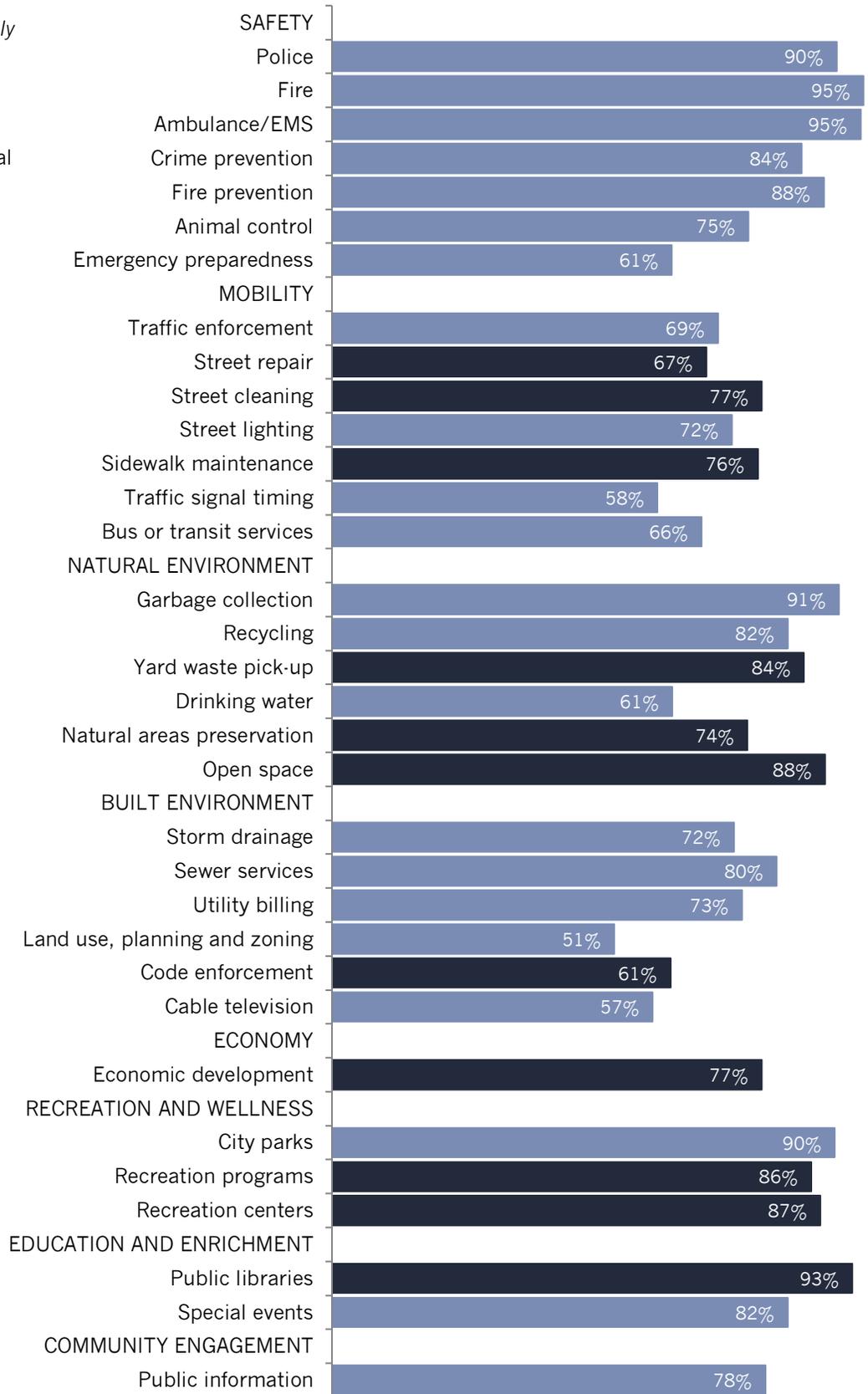
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Figure 2: Aspects of Governance

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



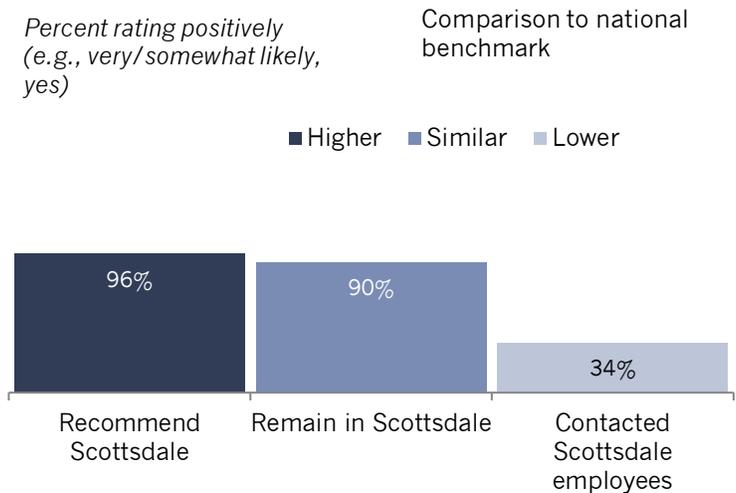
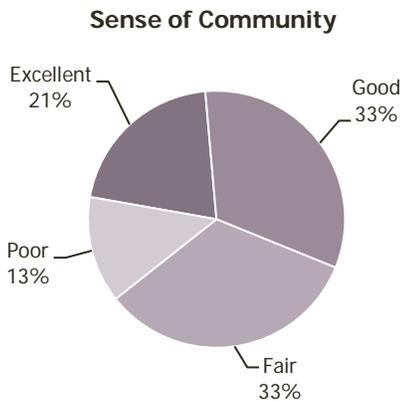
Participation

Are the residents of Scottsdale 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 half of Scottsdale residents gave high marks to the overall sense of community. This assessment was similar to what was observed in comparison communities across the nation.

Almost all residents were likely to recommend living in Scottsdale to someone who asked, which was higher than the national benchmark. About 9 in 10 residents planned to remain in Scottsdale for the next five years. About one-third of residents surveyed had contacted Scottsdale employees to ask for help or information in the 12 months prior to the survey; this rate of contact lower than the national averages and declined from 2016 to 2018.

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 within Scottsdale varied widely, making the comparison to the benchmarks useful for interpreting the results. Overall, levels of Participation in Scottsdale were on par with the national benchmarks. Fewer residents reported stocking supplies in preparation for an emergency in Scottsdale than in other communities.



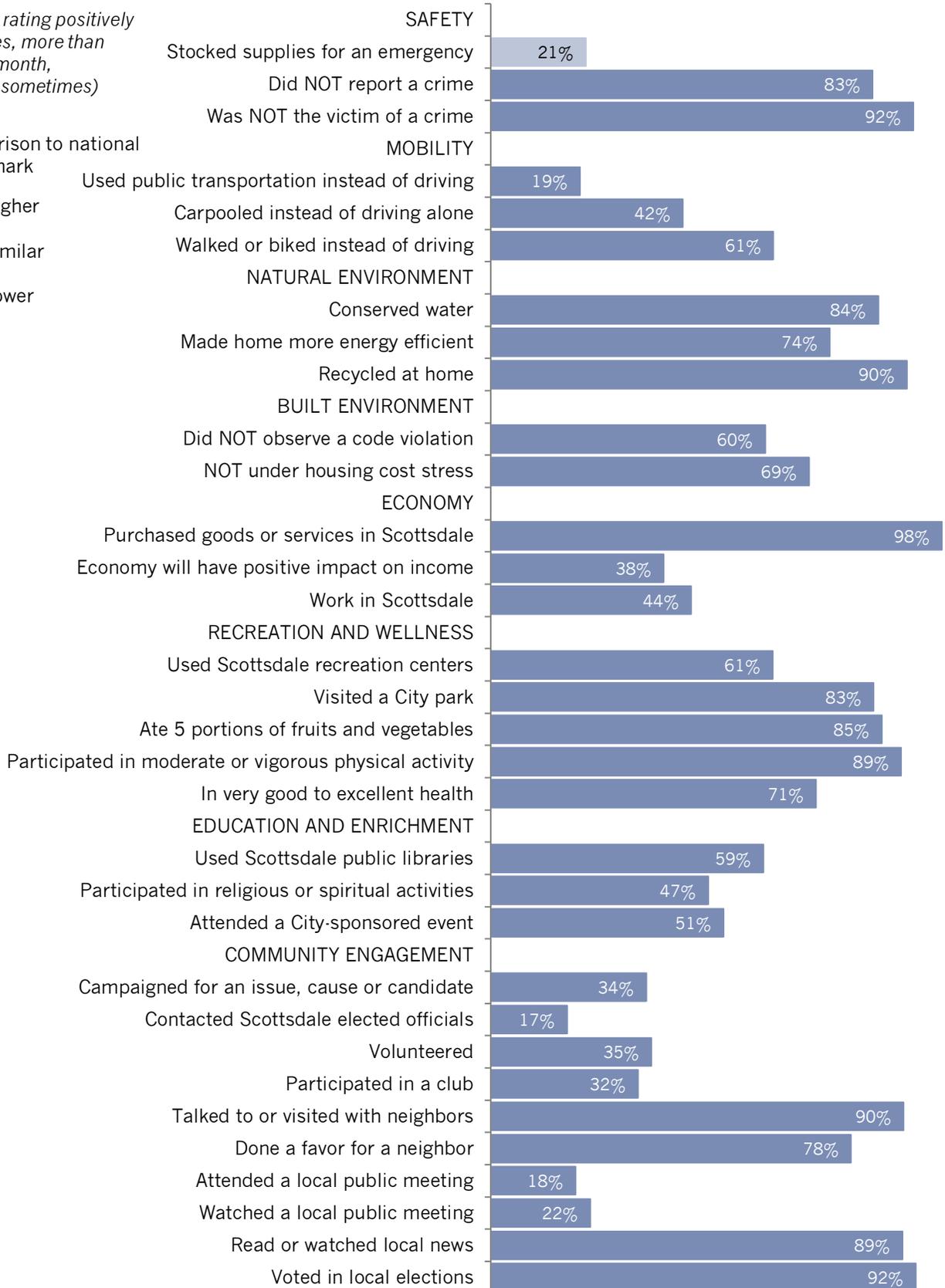
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Figure 3: Aspects of Participation

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



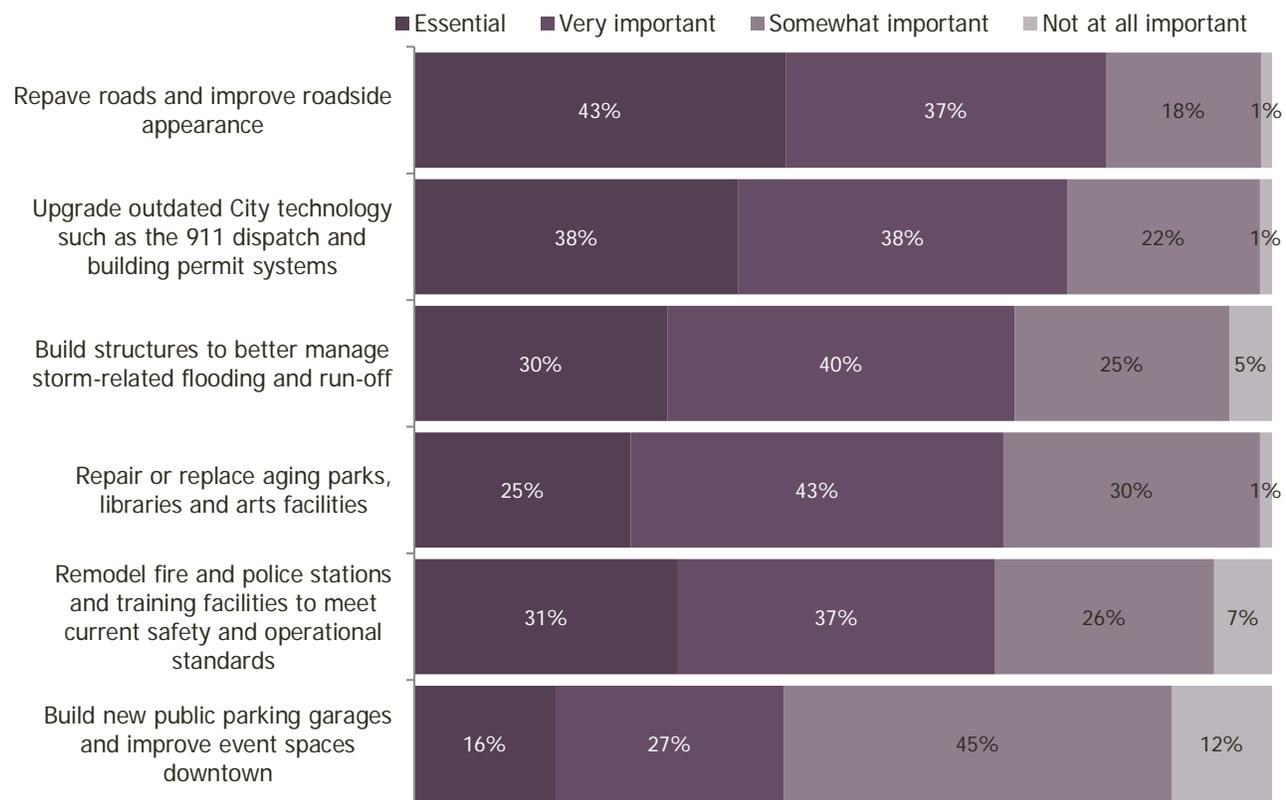
Special Topics

The City of Scottsdale included four questions of special interest on The NCS. Scottsdale residents rated the importance of City initiatives, their level of agreement regarding water conservation topics, reported their use of Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve and sources of City information.

Community members rated how important it was for the City to invest in various initiatives over the next 10 years. About 8 in 10 community members felt it was essential or very important that the City repave roads and improve roadside appearance and upgrade outdated City technology such as the 911 dispatch and building permit systems. The initiative assessed as least important was building new public parking garages and improving event spaces downtown, with 4 in 10 residents saying this was essential or very important and 1 in 10 residents saying this was not at all important.

Figure 4: Importance of City Initiatives

Please rate how important, if at all, you think it is for the City of Scottsdale to invest in each of the following over the next 10 years:

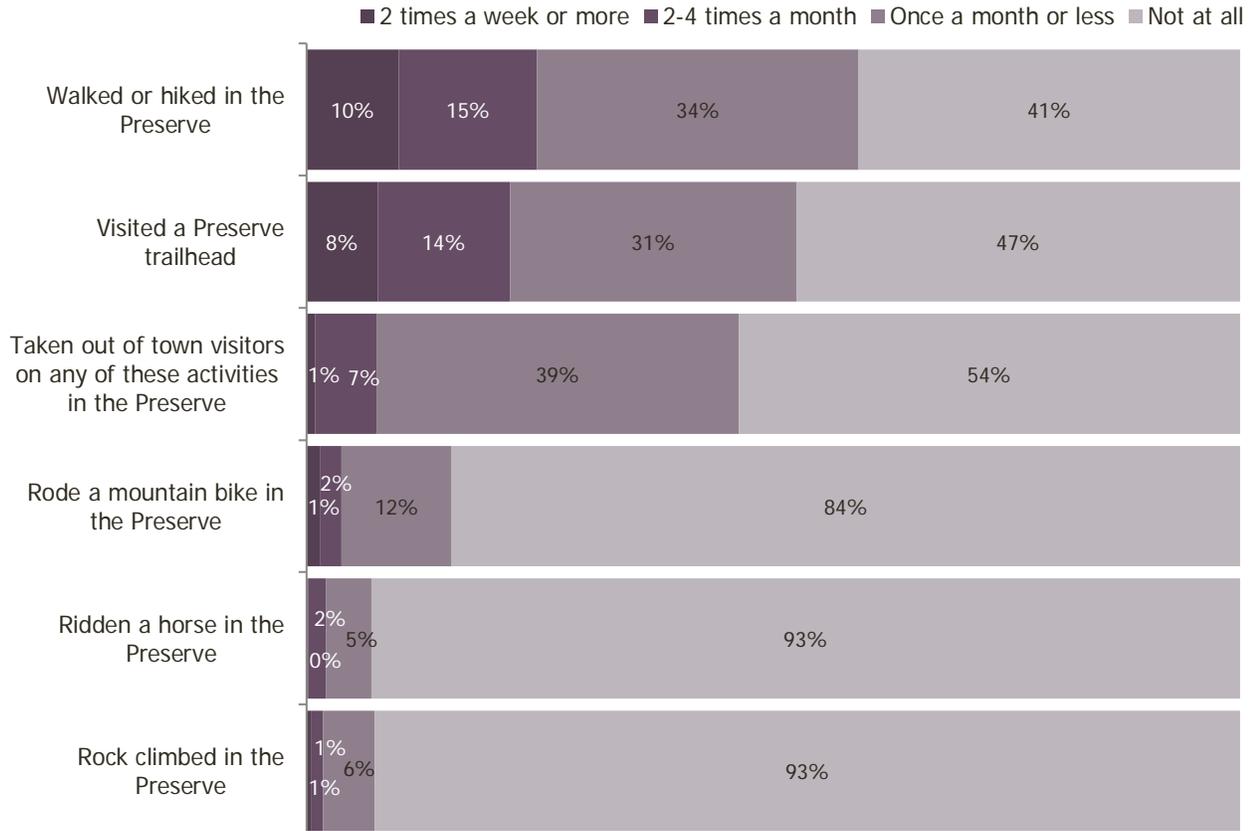


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Respondents were asked how often they used the Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve for different activities. The most common activities reported were walking or hiking in the Preserve and visiting a Preserve trailhead, with over half of residents using the Preserve for these activities in the 12 months prior to the survey. The least common activities reported were riding a horse and rock climbing in the Preserve.

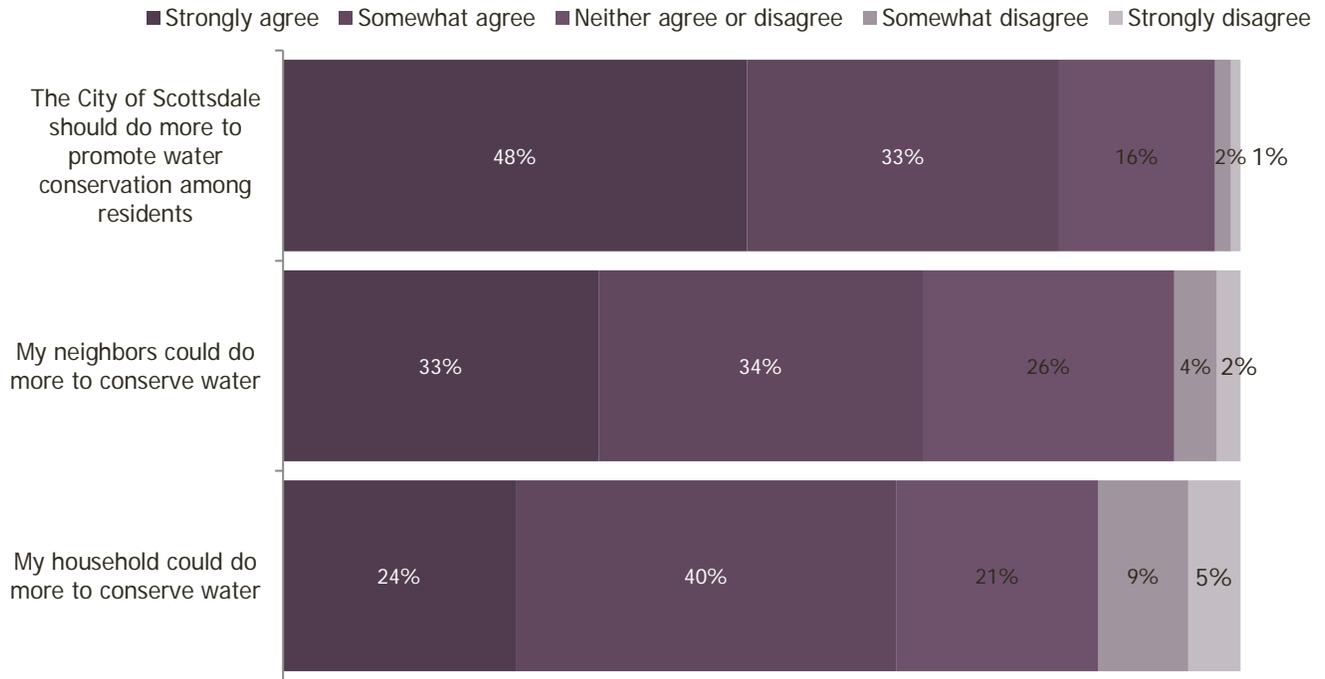
Figure 5: Activities in Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve

Please indicate how often, if at all, you have done each of the following in the last 12 months in the Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve.



Residents expressed their agreement or disagreement regarding water conservation topics. About 8 in 10 residents agreed that the City of Scottsdale should do more to promote water conservation among residents. About 7 in 10 residents agreed that their neighbors and their households could do more to conserve water.

Figure 6: Resident Opinion of Water Conservation Efforts
 To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

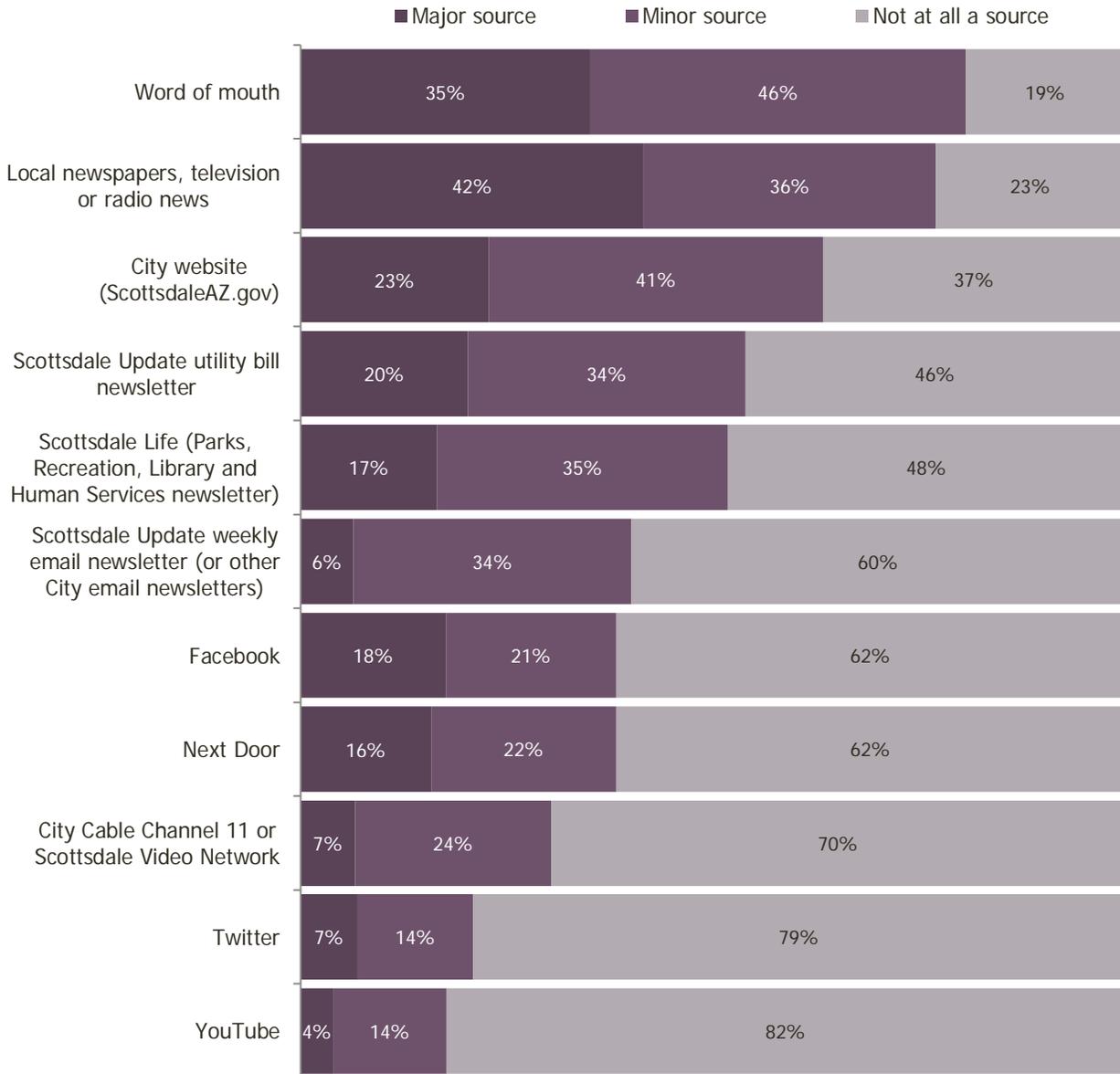


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When asked about sources used for obtaining information about Scottsdale, the most common sources of information were word of mouth and local newspapers, television or radio news; about 8 in 10 residents used these as a major or minor source. The least common sources of City information were Twitter and YouTube, with about 8 in 10 residents saying these were not at all a source.

Figure 7: Sources of City Information

Please indicate if each of the following is a major source, minor source or not a source of information for you about the City of Scottsdale and its activities:



Conclusions

Residents continue to enjoy a high quality of life and strong sense of safety.

Almost all community members gave high marks to the overall quality of life in Scottsdale and Scottsdale as a place to live. About 9 in 10 residents positively rated the overall image or reputation of Scottsdale, their neighborhood as a place to live and its overall appearance; ratings higher than the national averages. Evaluations of Scottsdale as a place to retire were exceptional and among the highest ever recorded in NRC's benchmarking database. The proportion of residents who were likely to recommend living in Scottsdale to someone who asked was above-average. About 9 in 10 residents planned to remain in Scottsdale for the next five years and about half positively rated the sense of community in the city. Safety was a top priority for residents. About 9 in 10 residents positively rated the overall feeling of safety in Scottsdale and felt safe in their neighborhoods and the downtown/commercial area. Evaluations of the overall feeling of safety were higher than observed elsewhere in the country. Assessments of emergency preparedness declined from 2016 to 2018 and residents' reported levels of stocking supplies in preparation for an emergency were lower than the national benchmark; highlighting a possible area of opportunity for Scottsdale.

Economy is a priority and residents applaud shopping and employment opportunities.

The economy was also identified as a priority for the community in the coming two years. Assessments within the facet of Economy were outstanding, with scores higher than the national averages for overall economic health, overall quality of business and service establishments and economic development. Residents' ratings of vibrant downtown/commercial area, shopping and employment opportunities, Scottsdale as a place to visit and Scottsdale as a place to work were much higher than what was observed elsewhere in the country. Additionally, reviews of shopping opportunities were ranked 1st among all comparison communities. About 4 in 10 residents believed the economy would have a positive impact on income, which was on par with other communities in the nation. Affordability was an asset in Scottsdale, with residents giving marks higher than the national benchmarks to availability of affordable quality food, health care and mental health care. About 4 in 10 community members gave high marks to cost of living, availability of affordable quality child care/preschool and availability of affordable quality housing; these rates were similar to the national averages. However, scores for availability of quality child care/preschool and housing declined from 2016 to 2018.

Scottsdale residents are pleased with health and wellness opportunities in their city.

Evaluations of Recreation and Wellness in Scottsdale were very strong. Assessments of availability of preventive health services, recreational opportunities and fitness opportunities were higher than the national benchmarks. About 9 in 10 community members gave high marks to recreation programs or classes and recreation centers or facilities; these scores were also above-average. Ratings for health and wellness opportunities were much higher than the national averages and were ranked 3rd among comparison communities. About half of respondents had visited and walked or hiked in Scottsdale McDowell Sonoran Preserve in the 12 months prior to the survey. Yet, about 9 in 10 had not used the Preserve at all for mountain biking, horseback riding and rock climbing.