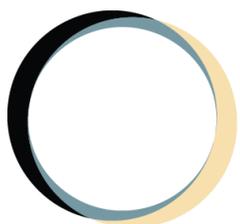


THE NCSTM
The National Citizen SurveyTM

La Vista, NE

Community Livability Report

FINAL
2016



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The National Citizen Survey™
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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 La Vista. 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 341 residents of the City of La Vista. 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 La Vista

A vast majority of residents rated the quality of life in La Vista 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.

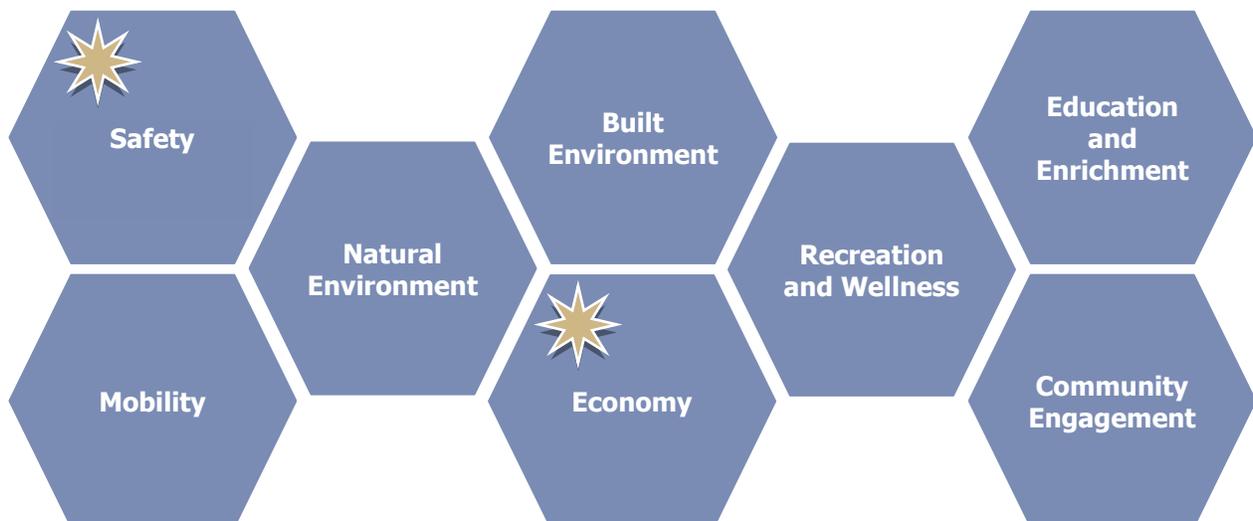
In addition to a summary of ratings, the image below includes one or more stars to indicate which community facets were the most important focus areas for the community. Residents identified Safety and Economy as priorities for the La Vista community in the coming two years. La Vista residents gave favorable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

Legend

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

- * Most important



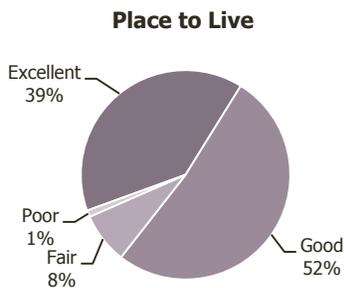
Community Characteristics

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 La Vista, 91% rated the City as an excellent or good place to live. Respondents' ratings of La Vista 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 La Vista as a place to raise children and to retire, their neighborhood as a place to live, the overall image or reputation of La Vista and its overall appearance. About 4 in 5 respondents gave positive ratings to their neighborhoods as places to live and to La Vista as a place to raise children. Additionally, about two-thirds of participants gave excellent or good marks to La Vista as a place to retire and the City's overall image and appearance. All of these ratings were similar to those given in comparison 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. Around 9 in 10 residents gave positive ratings to their overall feelings of safety and almost all residents gave favorable marks to their feelings of safety in their neighborhoods (97% excellent or good) and in the downtown/commercial area of La Vista (94%). Ratings for Mobility were strong with about 8 in 10 or more residents positively rating the overall ease of travel, ease of travel by car, public parking and traffic flow and all the aforementioned aspects received a rating higher than the national benchmarks. Within Built Environment, a majority of survey participants highly rated all aspects and availability of affordable quality housing received a rating higher than the national comparison. Ratings for Economy were mixed; about 3 in 5 residents positively evaluated the cost of living in La Vista (a rating higher than communities across the nation), as well as the overall economic health of the City and La Vista as a place to work. Ratings for La Vista's vibrant downtown/commercial area were lower than the national benchmark, with about one-quarter of participants awarding excellent or good scores. Most aspects of Education and Enrichment received positive ratings from a majority of respondents and K-12 education and availability of affordable quality child care/preschool were rated higher than levels seen in comparison communities. Aspects of Community Engagement were awarded high marks by at least half of participants and these evaluations were similar to municipalities elsewhere, with the exception of opportunities to volunteer which was rated lower than the national benchmark.

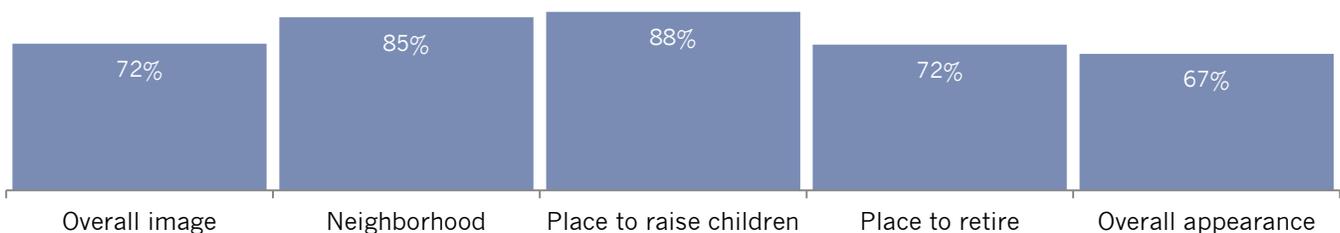


Compared to the 2013 survey, ratings decreased for overall quality of new development in La Vista, availability of affordable quality housing and variety of housing options in 2016. Meanwhile, ratings increased for traffic flow, cleanliness, employment opportunities, recreational opportunities, availability of affordable quality health care, opportunities to attend cultural/arts/music activities, availability of affordable quality child care/preschool and La Vista as a place to retire. 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



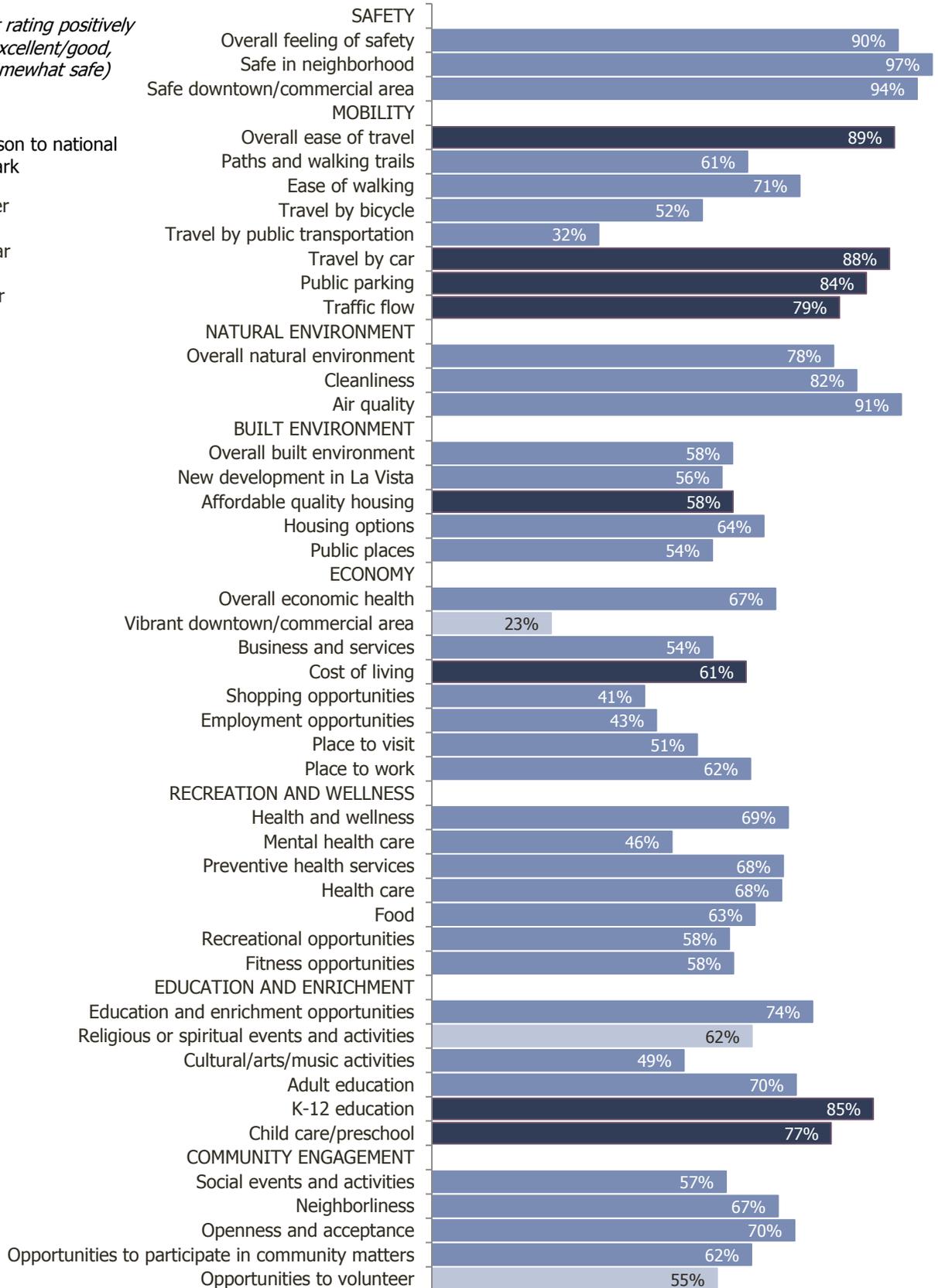
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Figure 1: Aspects of Community Characteristics

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



Governance

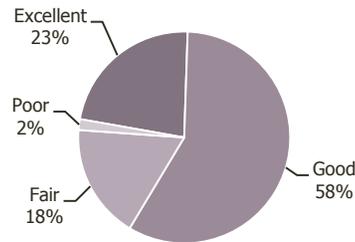
How well does the government of La Vista meet the needs and expectations of its residents?

The overall quality of the services provided by La Vista 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 La Vista received excellent or good ratings by around 8 in 10 residents, while the Federal Government received positive ratings by about one-third of respondents. Both of these ratings were similar to the national benchmark.

Survey respondents also rated various aspects of La Vista’s leadership and governance. Close to 7 in 10 or more residents gave favorable ratings to the overall direction the City was taking, confidence in City government, City government acting in the best interest of La Vista, the government being honest and treating all residents fairly. About 8 in 10 residents were pleased with the customer service provided by La Vista employees. All of these ratings were similar to other communities with the exception of the City treating all residents fairly, which was rated higher than the national benchmark.

Respondents evaluated over 30 individual services and amenities available in La Vista. A majority of residents gave positive ratings to most aspects of Governance, and ratings were similar to or higher than ratings in comparison communities. Within the facet of Safety, respondents rated La Vista’s crime prevention efforts higher than the national benchmark, with around 4 in 5 awarding high marks. The remaining Safety services were similar to the national benchmark and given positive scores by at least 6 in 10 residents. Within Mobility, about 8 in 10 residents positively rated traffic enforcement, a rating that was higher than seen in comparison communities. Within Natural Environment, about 8 in 10 residents favorably evaluated garbage collection, yard waste pick-up and drinking water. Close to 4 in 5 residents gave high marks to sewer services and power utility services within the facet of Built Environment. Of the remaining services and amenities, all were rated positively by a majority of residents and were similar to the national benchmark comparisons.

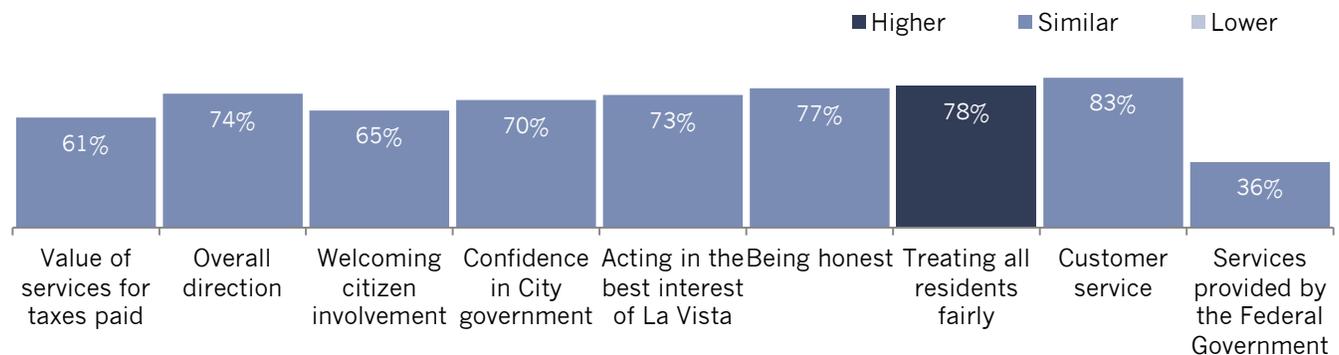
Overall Quality of City Services



Compared to the 2013 survey, ratings decreased for street repair, street cleaning, traffic signal timing, recreation centers and recreation programs. Meanwhile, ratings increased for economic development, overall direction that the City is taking and the government welcoming citizen involvement.

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

Comparison to national benchmark



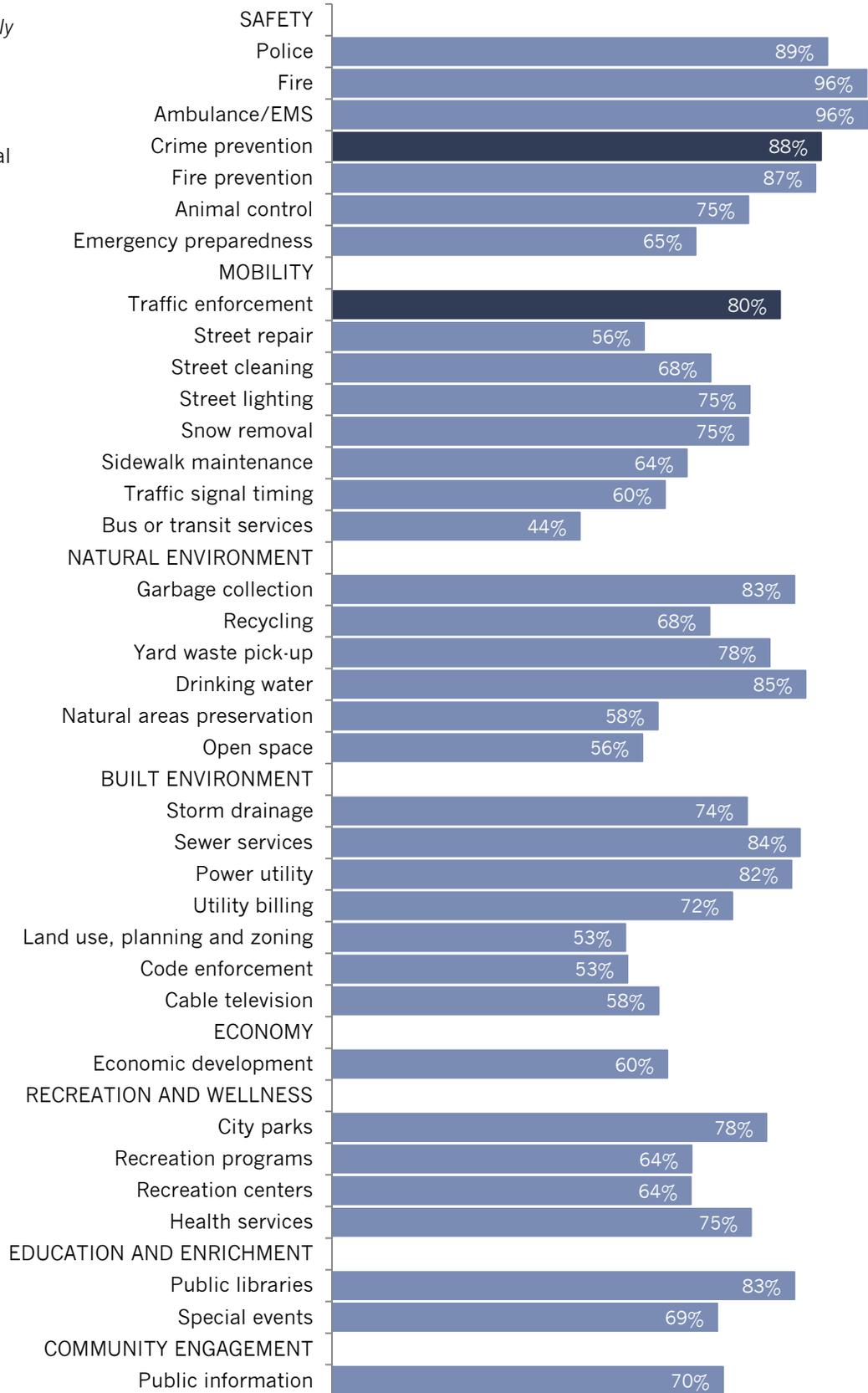
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Figure 2: Aspects of Governance

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower

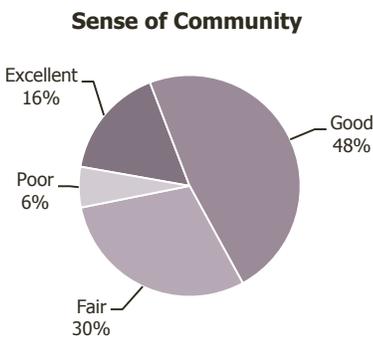


Participation

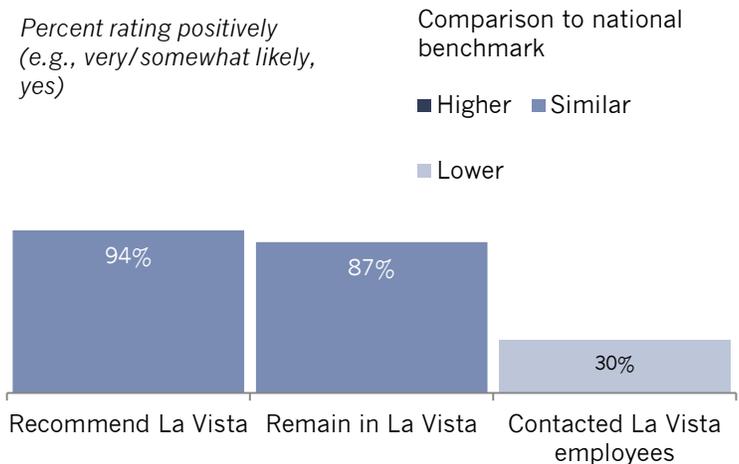
Are the residents of La Vista connected to the community and each other?

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. Almost two-thirds of residents gave a positive rating to the overall sense of community in La Vista and this level was similar to what was seen in benchmark communities. Almost all residents would recommend living in La Vista to others (94%) and around 4 in 5 planned to remain in La Vista for the next five years.

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 were mixed across the different facets; however, most aspects of Participation were similar to levels reported in other benchmark communities. Almost all residents had purchased goods or services in La Vista (96%). About 8 in 10 or more residents indicated that they had not reported a crime and were not the victim of a crime in the 12 months prior to the survey and a similar proportion reported that they were not under housing cost stress. Similarly, close to 8 in 10 or more respondents also indicated that they had participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity, talked to or visited with neighbors, read or watched local news or had voted in a local election. These levels of participation were similar to the national benchmark with the exception of the proportion of respondents who reported that they were not under housing cost, which was higher than the national benchmark. On the other hand, La Vista residents were less likely to report that they had used public transportation instead of driving, walked or biked instead of driving, recycled at home, worked in La Vista, used La Vista recreation centers or public libraries, participated in religious or spiritual activities, volunteered, participated in a club or had attended or watched a local public meeting than residents in communities across the nation.



Fewer residents report that they had used La Vista public libraries in 2016 compared to 2013. However, more residents reported that they had recycled at home in 2016.



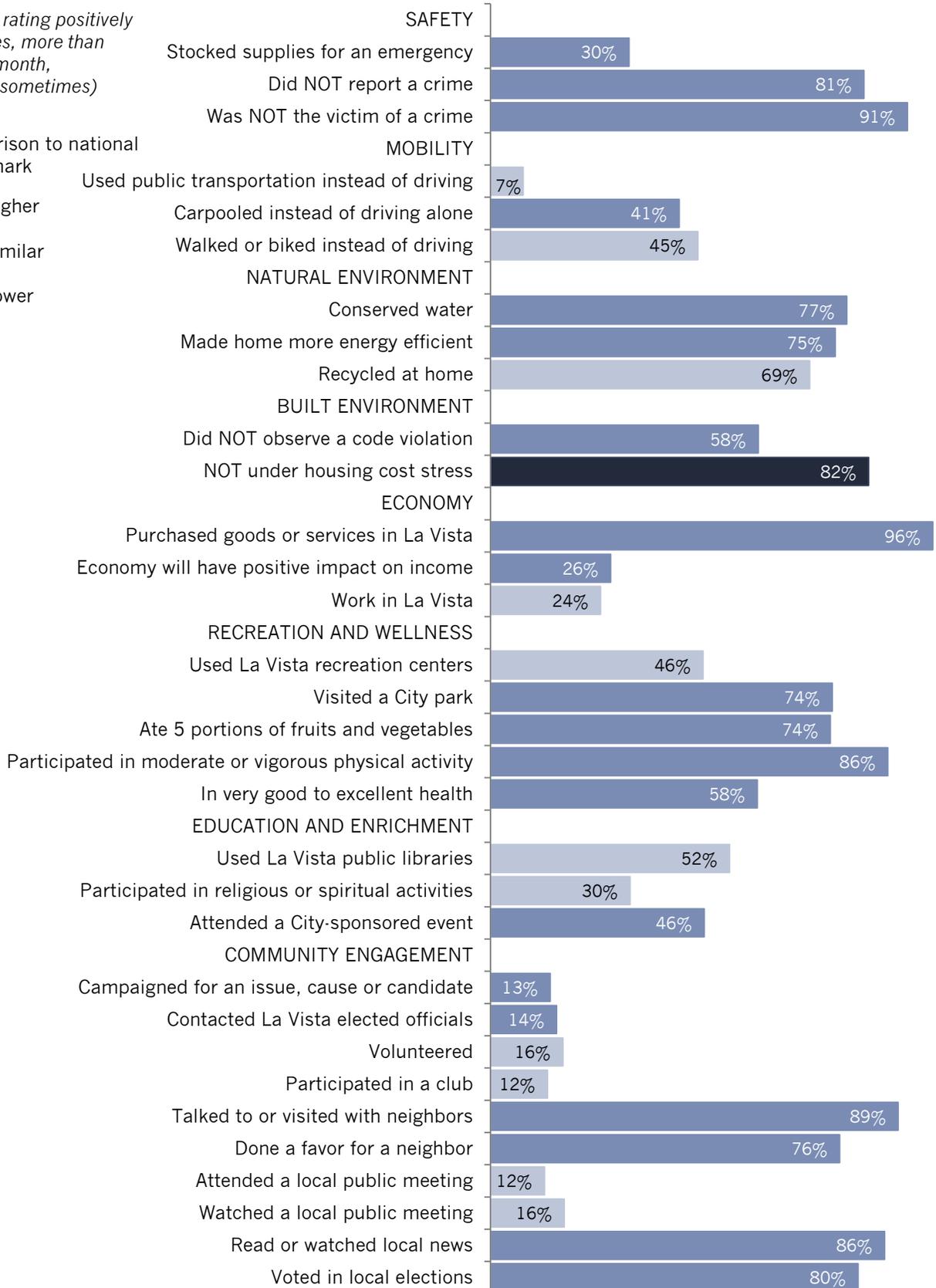
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Figure 3: Aspects of Participation

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower

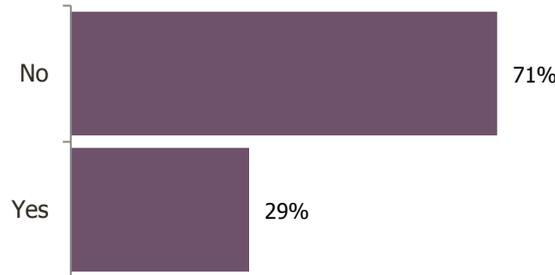


Special Topics

The City of La Vista included several questions of special interest on The NCS. The first question asked if the respondents or anyone in the respondents' households had participated in any of La Vista's parks and recreation programs or events in the 12 months prior to the survey. About three-quarters of residents reported that they had not participated in any of the programs or events in the past year.

Figure 4: La Vista Parks and Recreation Participation

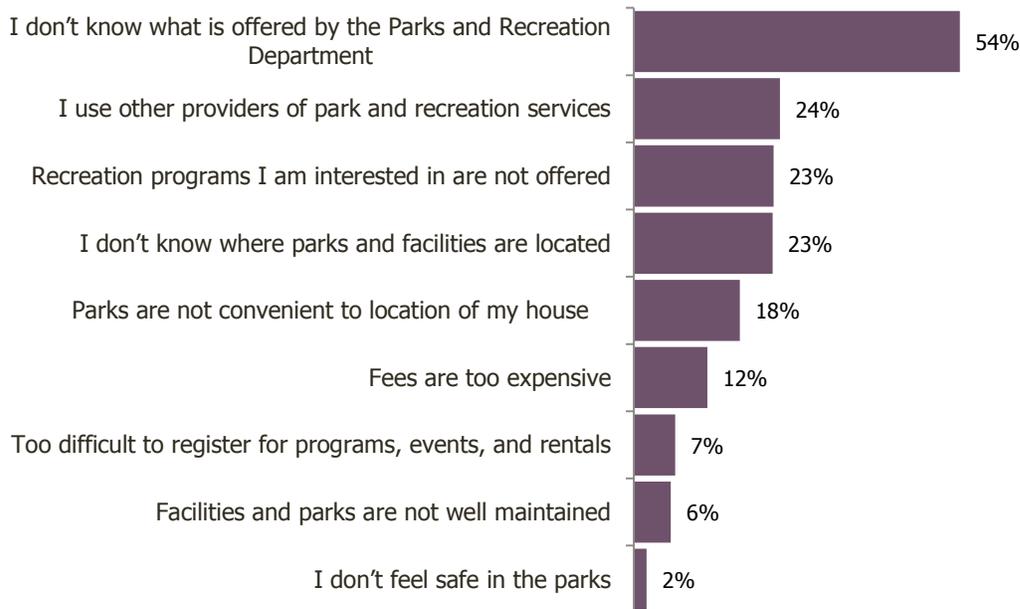
Have you or anyone in your household participated in any La Vista parks and recreation programs or events during the last 12 months?



Those who indicated that they had not participated in the City's parks and recreation programs were asked to select all the reasons why they had not participated or visited a program or park. More than half selected that they did not know what was offered by the Parks and Recreation Department. About 1 in 5 survey participants indicated that they used other providers of park and recreation centers, the recreation programs they were interested in were not offered or that they didn't know where parks and facilities were located. Respondents were least likely to report that they had not participated because they did not feel safe in La Vista parks.

Figure 5: Reasons for Not Participation in La Vista Parks and Recreation Programs

If you have not participated or visited a program or park, why not? (Select all that apply.)



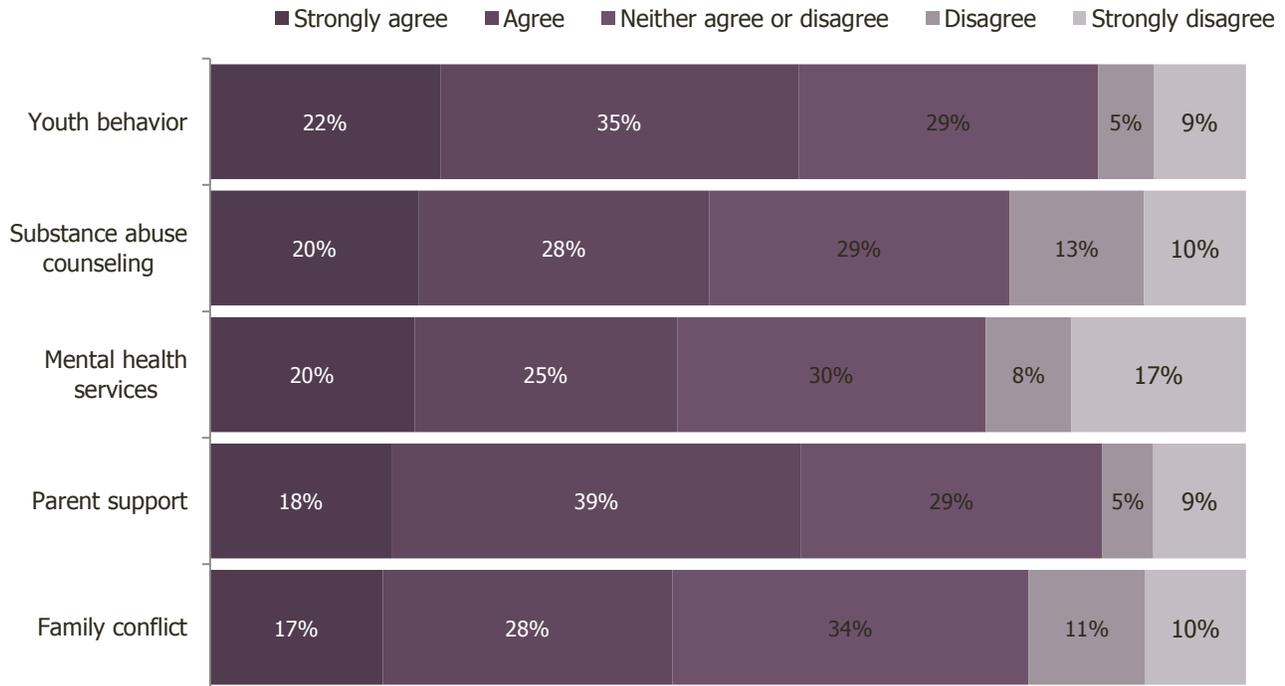
Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one option.

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The third special topics question asked residents about their level of agreement with the adequacy of several support services that were available within Sarpy County. A majority of residents reported that they agreed that youth behavior and parent support services were adequate. Less than half of respondents reported that they agreed that the other services including substance abuse counseling, mental health services and family conflict services were adequate. However, about 3 in 10 neither agreed nor disagreed that these services were adequate.

Figure 6: Adequacy of Support Services

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the adequacy of support services that are available to parents, families, and students through a variety of sources within Sarpy County:

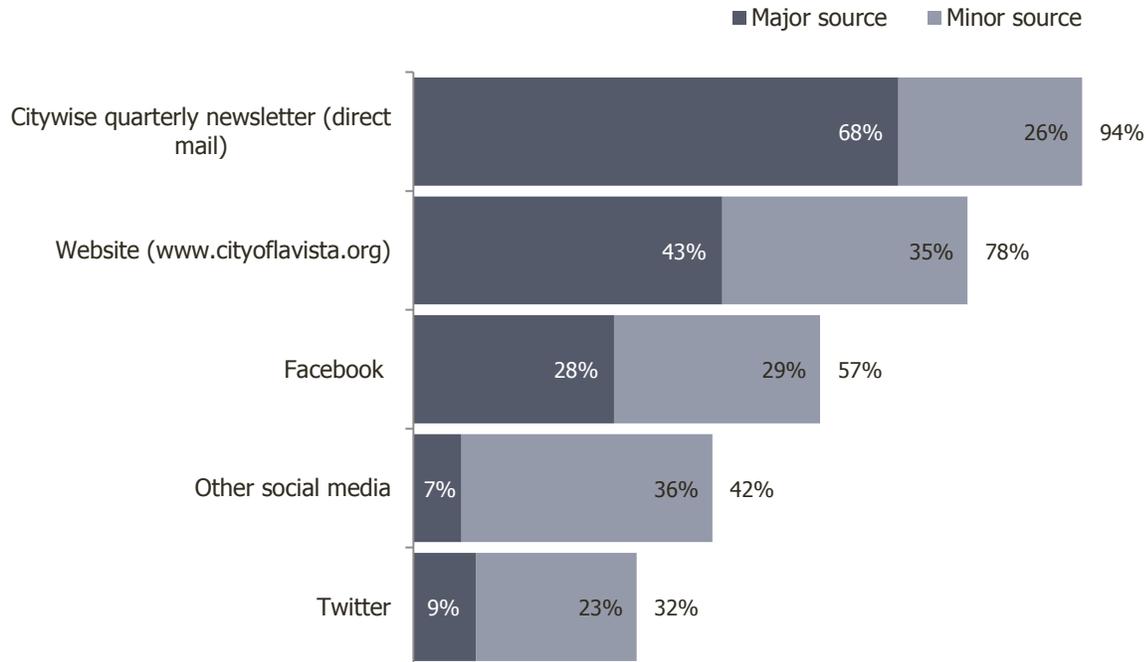


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La Vista residents were asked to indicate which methods they prefer to receive information about City government, its activities, events and services. Almost all respondents reported that the City quarterly newsletter was at least a minor source of information for them (94%). About three-quarters of residents considered the City website to be a source and over half indicated that Facebook was a major or minor source of information. Twitter was considered a major or minor source of information by 32% of residents and was the least likely source for obtaining information about the City government.

Figure 6: Sources of Information about the City

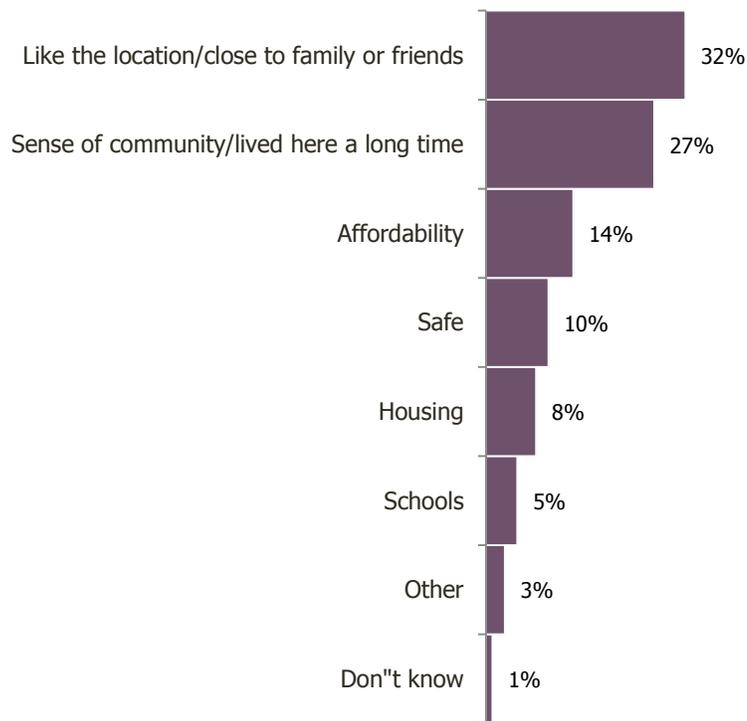
Please indicate how much of a source, if at all, you consider each of the following to be for obtaining information about the City government and its activities, events and services:



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Survey recipients were also asked to write in their own words why they chose to live in La Vista. Of the 292 residents who wrote in a response, the most common response was that residents like the location of La Vista or the City was close to family and friends (32% of respondents). About one-quarter of survey respondents enjoyed the sense of community or had lived in La Vista for a long period of time. Less than 1 in 10 residents indicated that they chose to live in La Vista due to housing or schools.

Figure 8: Life in La Vista
Why do you choose to live in La Vista?



Conclusions

La Vista continues to be a great place to live.

Nearly 9 in 10 survey respondents felt positively about the overall quality of life in La Vista and the City as a place to live. Roughly 8 in 10 residents favorably rated their neighborhood as places to live and La Vista as a place to raise children positively. La Vista's overall appearance and image and La Vista as a place to retire received high marks from about two-thirds of residents. Additionally, almost all residents would recommend living in La Vista to others and 8 in 10 planned to remain in the community for the next five years. Ratings for aspects of quality of life were similar to the ratings from the City's 2013 iteration of the survey.

Residents feel safe in the City.

Safety was identified an important feature of the community for residents in the future. Nearly all residents felt safe in their neighborhoods and in the downtown/commercial area of the city and about 9 in 10 residents gave positive ratings to their overall feeling of safety in La Vista. Close to 8 in 10 or more respondents gave high marks to safety services such as police, fire, ambulance/EMS, fire prevention services and crime prevention services (rated higher than seen in comparison communities). Moreover, about 8 in 10 residents or more had not reported a crime or were not the victim of a crime in the 12 months prior to the survey. Finally, when asked why they chose to live in La Vista, about 1 in 10 indicated they lived in the community because they felt safe.

Economy is a main focus area for the community.

Residents indicated that Economy was an important area for the La Vista community to focus on in the next two years. Many aspects of Economy were rated positively by a majority of residents. Residents especially appreciated the cost of living in La Vista, a rating that was higher than in other communities in the U.S with 6 in 10 rating this aspect as excellent or good, and almost all residents reported that they had purchased goods or services in La Vista. However, the vibrancy of La Vista's downtown and commercial area was not rated as favorably, with about one-quarter of respondents awarding high marks and was rated lower than communities across the nation. Economic development was positively rated by about 6 in 10 residents and this rating increased in 2016 compared to the 2013 survey iteration. About 1 in 10 residents also indicated that they chose to live in La Vista because of the affordability of the community.

Mobility ratings are strong, but there are still opportunities for improvement.

Overall, most measures for Mobility were positively rated by a majority of residents. La Vista performed exceptionally well in evaluations for overall ease of travel, ease of travel by car, public parking, traffic flow and traffic enforcement services with all of these aspects being scored as excellent or good by about 8 in 10 or more and each receiving higher ratings than other communities across the nation. Potential areas for improvement were in the area of Participation with fewer residents reporting that they had walked or biked or used public transportation instead of driving when compared to other communities.