

THE NCSTM
The National Community SurveyTM

Pearland, TX

Community Livability Report

2019



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The NCS™ is presented by NRC in collaboration with ICMA.

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About

The National Community Survey™ (The NCS™) report is about the “livability” of Pearland. 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 304 residents of the City of Pearland. 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 Pearland

Most residents (85%) rated the quality of life in Pearland as excellent or good, a rating that was similar to the benchmark (see Appendix B of the *Technical Appendices* provided under separate cover).

Overall Quality of Life



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.

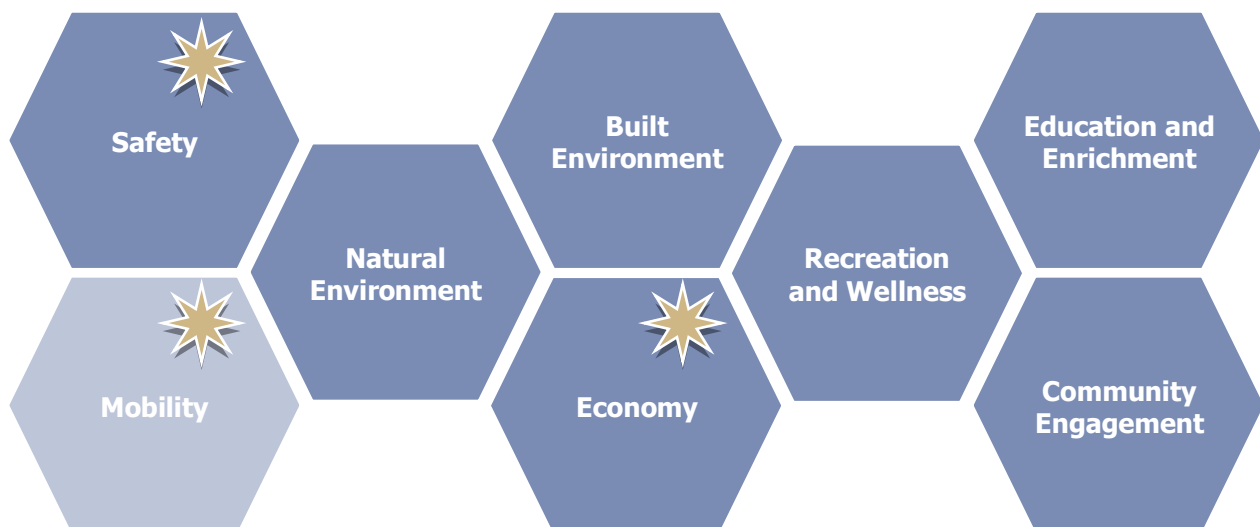
In addition to a summary of ratings, the image below includes one or more stars to indicate which community facets were the most important focus areas for the community. Residents identified Safety, Economy and Mobility as priorities for the Pearland community in the coming two years. All facets of community livability received ratings similar to the national benchmark comparisons except for Mobility, which was rated lower. 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 Pearland’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 Pearland, 90% rated the city as an excellent or good place to live. Respondents' ratings of Pearland 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 Pearland as a place to raise children and to retire, their neighborhood as a place to live, the overall image or reputation of Pearland and its overall appearance. About 9 in 10 residents rated Pearland as a place to raise children as excellent or good, which was higher than the national benchmark. About 9 in 10 positively rated their neighborhood as a place to live, three-quarters were pleased with the overall image and overall appearance of the city, and two-thirds gave favorable marks to Pearland as a place to retire. These ratings were similar to those given in other communities across the nation.

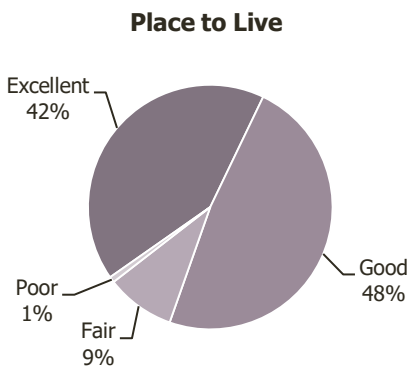
Delving deeper into Community Characteristics, survey respondents rated over 40 features of the community within the eight facets of Community Livability. Generally, most aspects of Community Characteristics received ratings similar to the national benchmarks. At least 8 in 10 residents gave positive reviews to the overall feeling of safety in the city and to feeling safe in their neighborhoods and in Pearland's downtown/commercial area.

Further, ratings for the availability of affordable quality housing, variety of housing options, and availability of affordable quality child care/preschool received ratings higher than those given in other communities. While the score for shopping opportunities declined since 2017, this rating was still higher than the benchmark comparison in 2019 (see the *Trends over Time* report under separate cover for more information on trends).

Ratings within the facet of Mobility lagged behind those within other facets: about half of residents awarded excellent or good marks to the overall ease of travel in Pearland and the availability of paths and walking trails, while about one-third or less were pleased with the ease of travel by car and

by bicycle, ease of walking and traffic flow on major streets. All of these ratings were lower than the national benchmarks.

Compared to 2017, ratings for several aspects declined, primarily within the facets of Built Environment, Economy, Recreation and Wellness, and Education and Enrichment.



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

Comparison to national benchmark
 ■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



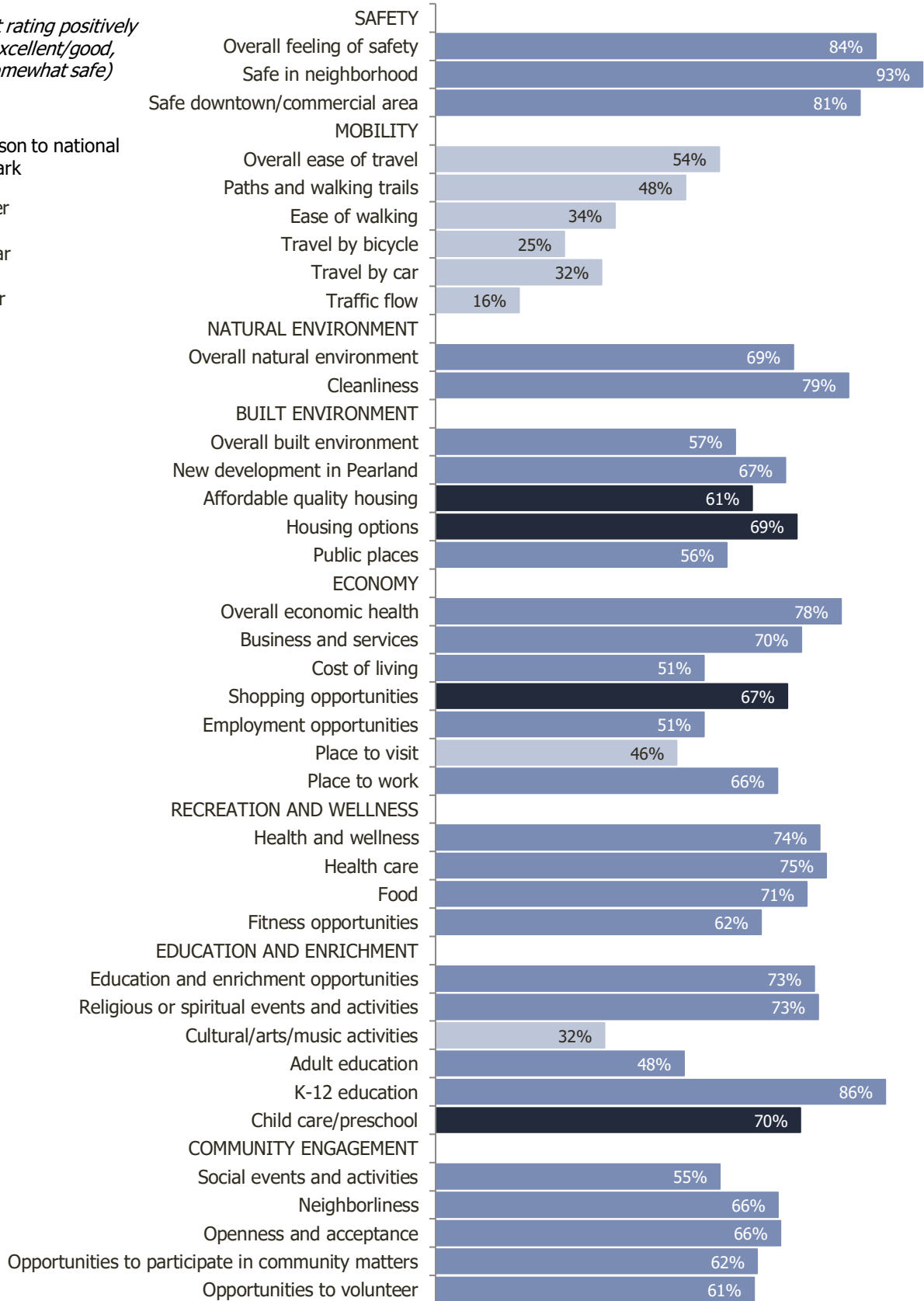
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Figure 1: Aspects of Community Characteristics

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower

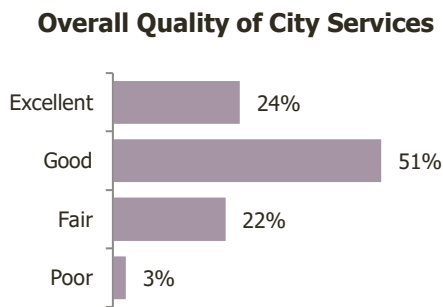


Governance

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

The overall quality of the services provided by Pearland as well as the manner in which these services are provided is a key component of how residents rate their quality of life. About three-quarters of survey respondents gave positive marks to the overall quality of City services, while half were pleased with the services provided by the Federal Government. Both of these ratings were similar to the benchmark comparisons.

Survey respondents also rated various aspects of Pearland’s leadership and governance. Eight in ten residents gave excellent or good scores to the customer service provided by the City, while roughly 6 in 10 gave high marks to the remaining aspects of government performance. All of these evaluations were similar to those given elsewhere across the country.



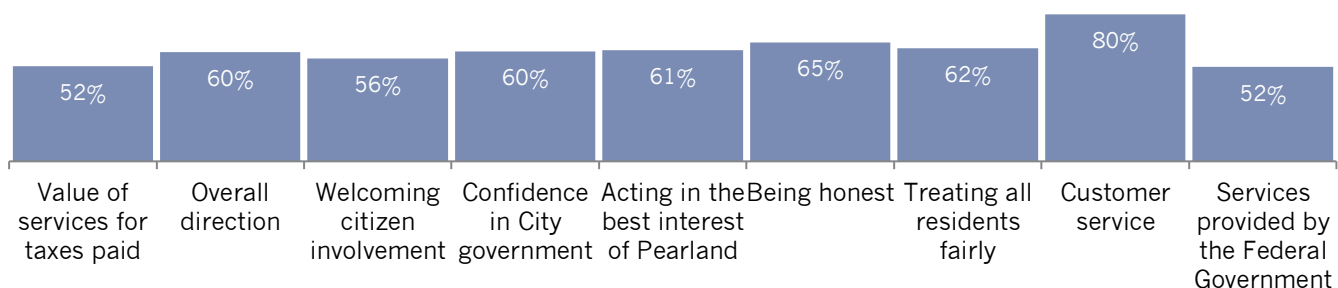
Respondents evaluated over 30 individual services and amenities available in Pearland. Almost all services received positive ratings from at least half of residents and were similar to the national benchmarks. The top-rated services, with at least 8 in 10 residents awarding high scores, were police, fire, ambulance/EMS, garbage collection, recycling, yard waste pick-up, sewer services, power utility, City parks and public libraries. Further, ratings for cable television and economic development were higher than the benchmark comparisons.

Compared to 2017, ratings in 2019 decreased for seven services: crime prevention, ambulance/EMS, traffic enforcement, street repair, street cleaning, storm drainage and recreation centers.

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

Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



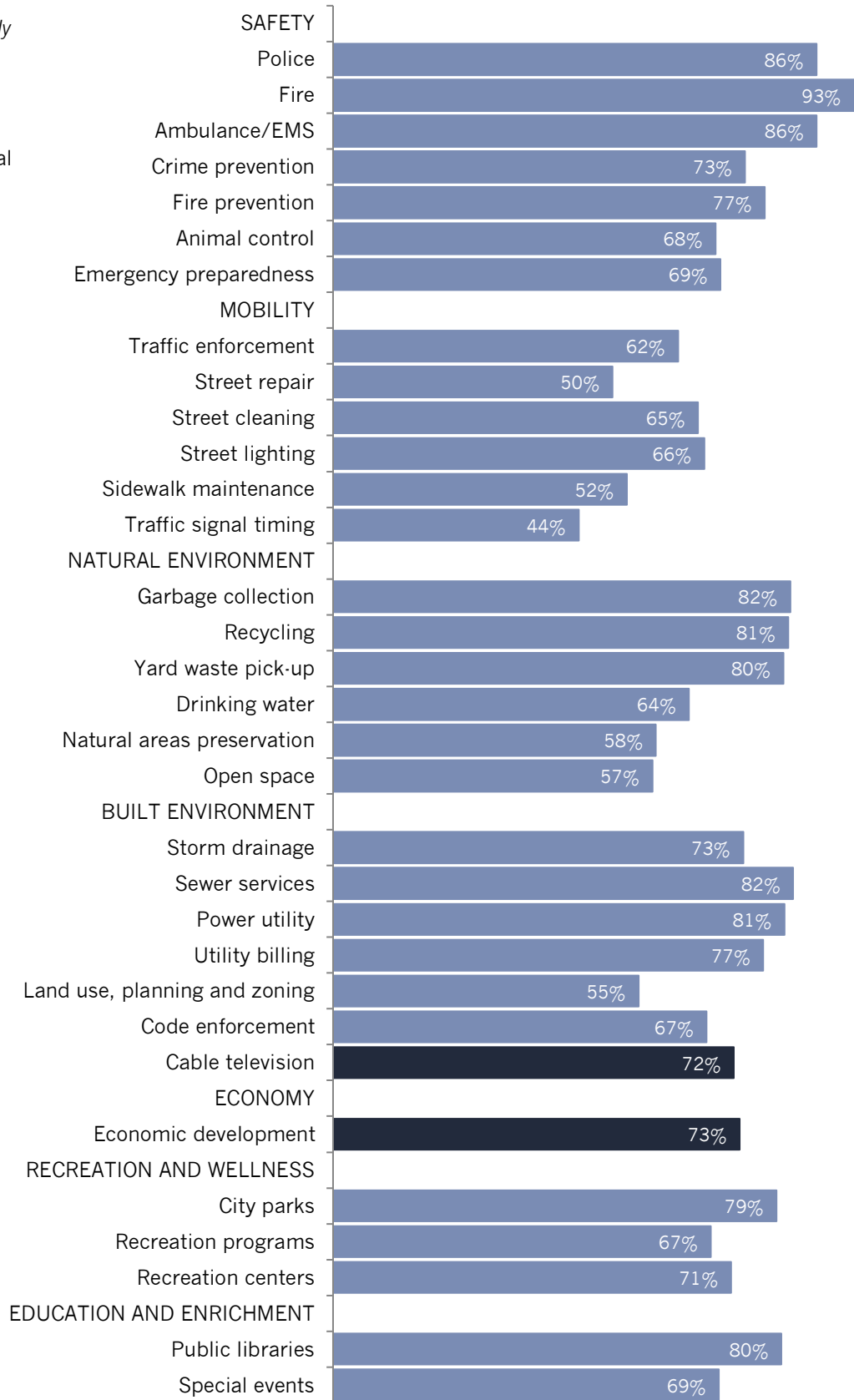
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Figure 2: Aspects of Governance

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower

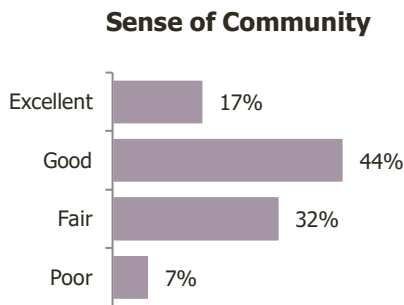


Participation

Are the residents of Pearland 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 6 in 10 residents gave favorable marks to the sense of community in Pearland, while 9 in 10 would recommend living in Pearland to someone who asked and more than 8 in 10 planned to remain in the city for the next five years. All of these ratings were similar to those given in other communities nationwide.

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 vary widely across the different facets of community livability, making the comparison to the benchmark, and to Pearland's trends over time, useful for interpreting the results. Most participation rates were similar to the national benchmarks. However, Pearland residents were less likely than those who lived elsewhere to have used alternate transportation modes, to work in the city, to have used City recreation centers, parks or libraries, or to have attended a City-sponsored event. However, they were more likely than residents in other communities to have stocked supplies for an emergency and this level increased by 20% since the previous survey iteration.

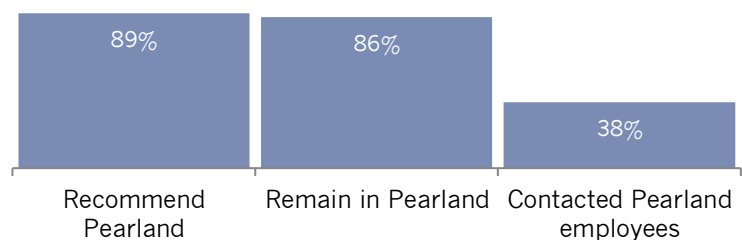


Compared to 2017, Pearland residents in 2019 were less likely to have used Pearland recreation centers, visited a City park, participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity, attended a City-sponsored event, voted in local elections or volunteered. They were also more likely to be under housing cost stress in 2019.

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

Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



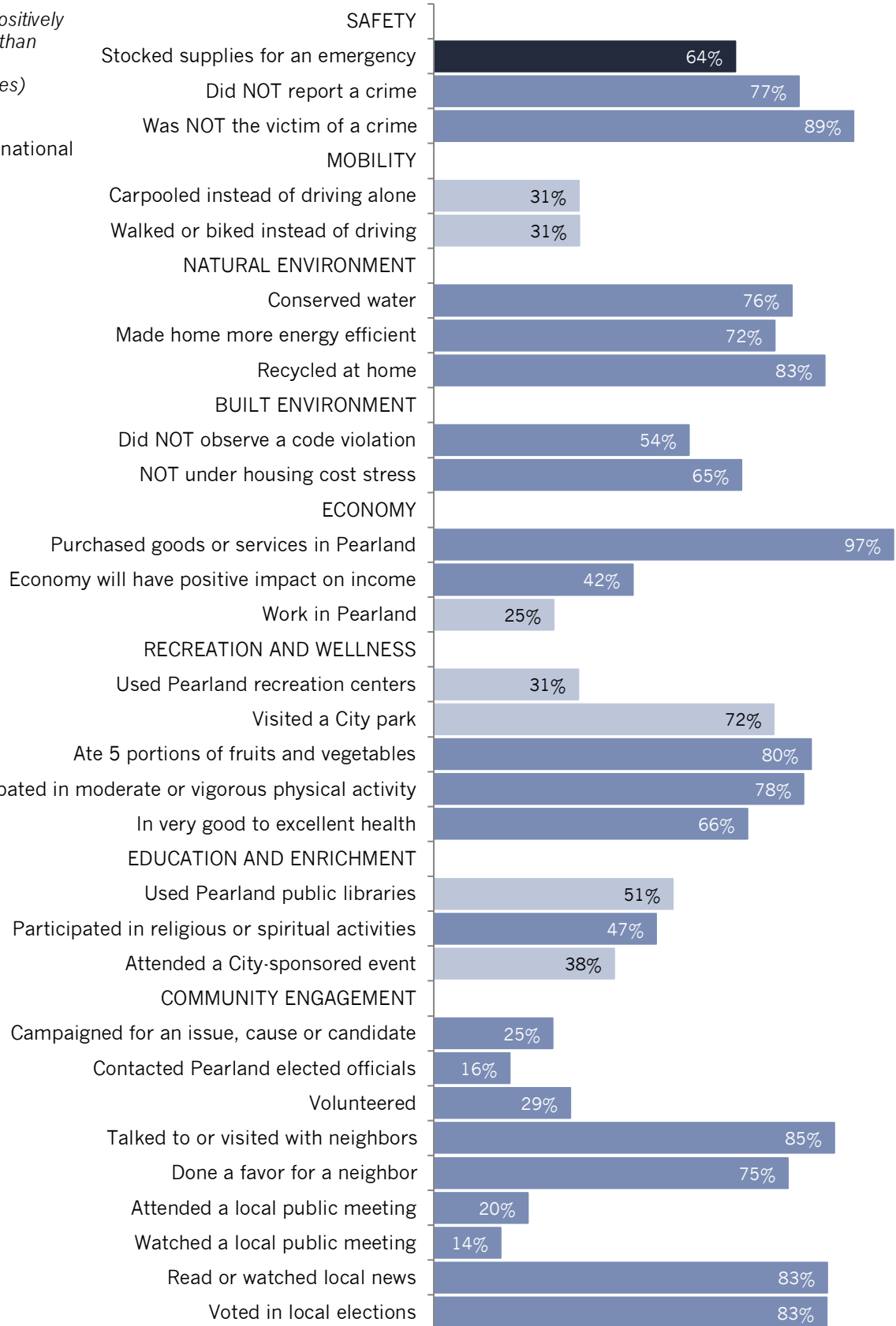
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Figure 3: Aspects of Participation

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 Pearland included two questions of special interest on The NCS as well as several line additions to a standard question. Topic areas included sources of City information and leadership by City elected officials.

When asked to rate the quality of services provided by different levels of their local government, about 6 in 10 respondents gave excellent or good ratings to the County and State government and to the Municipal Utility District. Only about 1 in 10 residents or less rated the services provided by each of these entities as poor. Ratings of the overall quality of services provided by the City of Pearland were higher (75% rating as excellent or good) than were the services of these other governmental organizations.

Figure 4: Line Additions to Question 11

Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by each of the following?

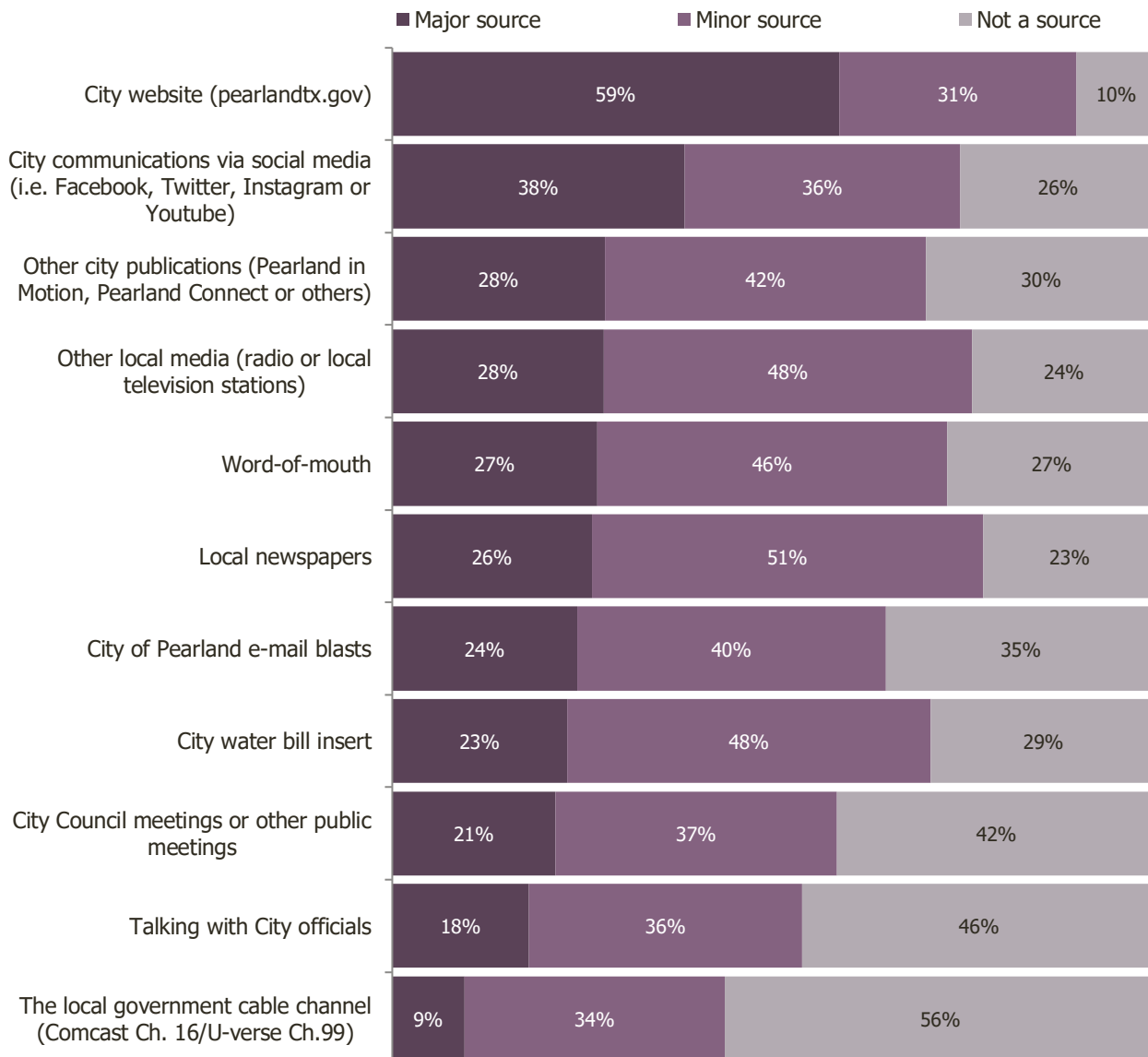


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Residents were asked to consider a list of potential sources of information about the City of Pearland indicate to what extent, if any, they used each. About 6 in 10 residents used the City website as a major source of information and another 3 in 10 used it as a minor source. About 4 in 10 respondents reported using City communications via social media as a major source and a similar proportion used these as a minor information source. Roughly three-quarters of respondents reported using other City publications, other local media, word-of-mouth, local newspapers or the City water bill insert as major or minor information sources. Residents were least likely to indicate talking to City officials or watching the local government cable channel as sources of City information; only about half of residents did so.

Figure 5: 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 government and its activities, events and services.

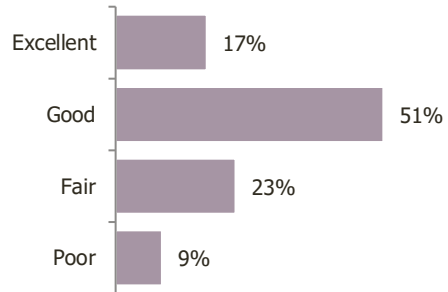


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Most survey respondents were pleased with the quality of leadership provided by the City's elected officials. About two-thirds of residents gave excellent or good marks to the City's leadership, one-quarter rated it as fair and only 9% rated it as poor.

Figure 6: Leadership by City Elected Officials

Please rate the leadership provided by the City's elected officials.



Conclusions

Pearland residents continue to enjoy a high quality of life.

More than 8 in 10 residents gave positive ratings to the overall quality of life in Pearland and the city as a place to live. About 9 in 10 residents rated Pearland as a place to raise children as excellent or good, which was higher than the national benchmark. About 9 in 10 positively rated their neighborhood as a place to live, three-quarters were pleased with the overall image and overall appearance of the city, and two-thirds gave favorable marks to Pearland as a place to retire. Nine in ten respondents would recommend living in Pearland to someone who asked and more than 8 in 10 planned to remain in the city for the next five years.

Safety and Economy are important focus areas, with some ratings declining since 2017.

Residents identified the facet of Safety as an important area of focus for the next two years, and ratings within this facet tended to be positive. At least 8 in 10 residents gave positive reviews to the overall feeling of safety in the city and to feeling safe in their neighborhoods and in Pearland's downtown/commercial area, as well as to police, fire and ambulance/EMS services. Roughly 7 in 10 residents were pleased with crime prevention, fire prevention, animal control and emergency preparedness services; however, evaluations declined from 2017 to 2019 for crime prevention and ambulance/EMS. However, 64% of residents reported stocking supplies for an emergency, which was higher than the national benchmark and a 20% increase since 2017.

Survey respondents also indicated that Economy would be an important focus area for the City. About three-quarters of residents positively rated the overall economic health of Pearland (which was similar to the national benchmark) and economic development (which was higher). At least two-thirds were pleased with the overall quality of business and service establishments and Pearland as a place to work. While the score for shopping opportunities (67% excellent or good) declined since 2017, this rating was still higher than the benchmark comparison in 2019. However, just under half of respondents gave favorable marks to the city as a place to visit, which was lower than average. This rating, as well as the rating for business and service establishments, decreased in 2019.

Challenges are noted within Mobility.

Mobility was identified by respondents as a third focus area for the next two years and ratings within this facet tended to be lower than the national benchmarks. About half of residents awarded excellent or good marks to the overall ease of travel in Pearland and the availability of paths and walking trails, while about one-third or less were pleased with the ease of travel by car and by bicycle, ease of walking and traffic flow on major streets (this latter rating declined since 2017). These ratings were all lower than the national benchmarks. While ratings for Mobility-related services were similar to national averages, evaluations for traffic enforcement, street repair and street cleaning also decreased from 2017 to 2019. Further, Pearland residents were less likely than those who lived elsewhere to have carpooled instead of driving alone or to have walked or biked instead of driving. Mobility thus remain an area of opportunity for the City.