

THE NCSTM
The National Citizen SurveyTM

Morrisville, NC
Community Livability Report

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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 National Citizen Survey™
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About

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

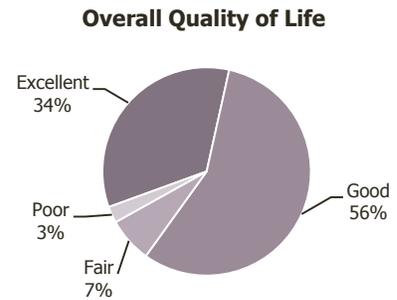
The Community Livability Report provides the opinions of a representative sample of 220 residents of the Town of Morrisville. The margin of error around any reported percentage is 7% for the entire sample. The full description of methods used to garner these opinions can be found in the *Technical Appendices* provided under separate cover.



Quality of Life in Morrisville

Almost all residents rated the quality of life in Morrisville as excellent or good. This rating was similar in comparison to the benchmark (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.



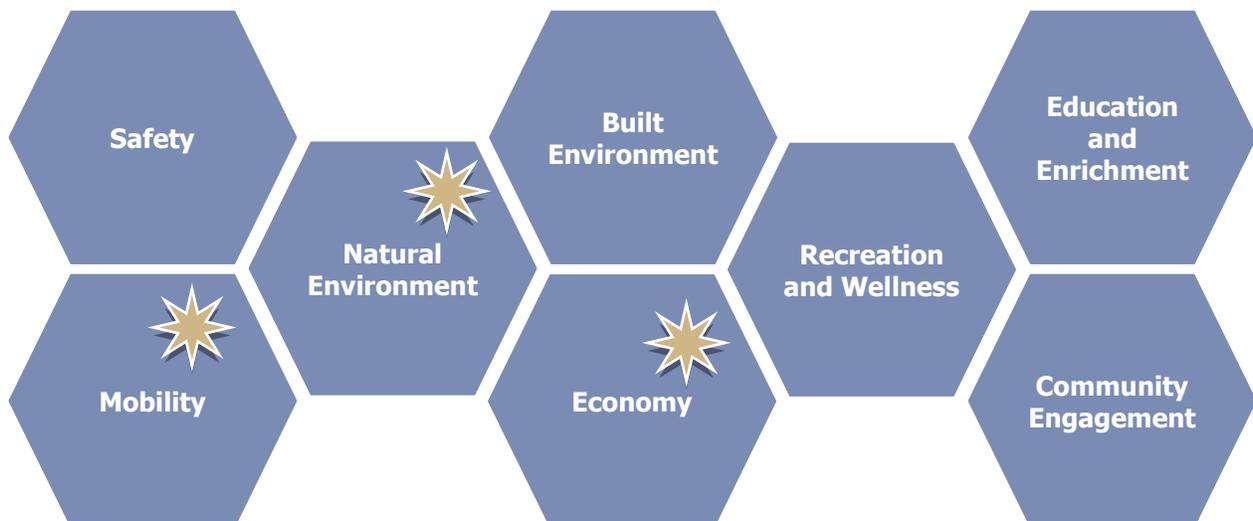
In addition to a summary of ratings, the image below includes one or more stars to indicate which community facets were the most important focus areas for the community. Residents identified Economy, Natural Environment and Mobility as priorities for the Morrisville community in the coming two years. Ratings for all facets (Safety, Mobility, 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 Morrisville’s unique questions.

Legend

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

- Most important



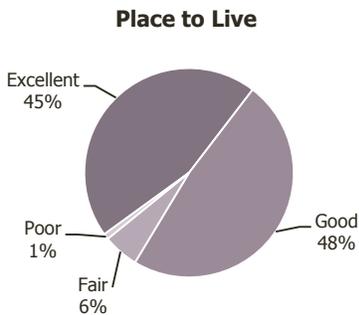
Community Characteristics

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 Morrisville, 93% rated the Town as an excellent or good place to live. Respondents' ratings of Morrisville as a place to live were similar to ratings in other communities across the nation.

In addition to rating the Town as a place to live, respondents rated several aspects of community quality including Morrisville as a place to raise children and to retire, their neighborhood as a place to live, the overall image or reputation of Morrisville and its overall appearance. Each measure received positive ratings from a majority of residents. Morrisville's overall image was rated excellent or good by over 8 in 10 residents, a rating higher than the national benchmark.

Delving deeper into Community Characteristics, survey respondents rated over 40 features of the community within the eight facets of Community Livability. Overall, most results were similar to other communities and most features had positive ratings from a majority of respondents. Aspects within the Facet of Natural Environment and Safety received positive ratings from at least 8 in 10 respondents and received ratings that were similar to the national benchmark. Other strong ratings with benchmark comparisons higher than the national average were clustered in the remaining facets of Mobility, Built Environment, Economy, Recreation and Wellness, Education and Enrichment and Community Engagement. Aspects whose ratings were higher than the national benchmark included public parking, affordable quality housing, overall economic health of Morrisville, shopping opportunities, employment opportunities, Morrisville as a place to work, the availability of affordable quality health care, the availability of affordable quality food, childcare/preschool and the openness and acceptance of Morrisville. All aspects of Community Characteristics that were rated higher than the national benchmark received positive ratings from 60% or more of respondents. Ratings for traffic flow and vibrant downtown/commercial area were given positive ratings by only 3 in 10 residents and were rated lower than the benchmark. Other items rated lower than in comparison communities were travel by public transportation (13%), Morrisville as a place to visit (45%) and opportunities to volunteer (56%).



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

Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



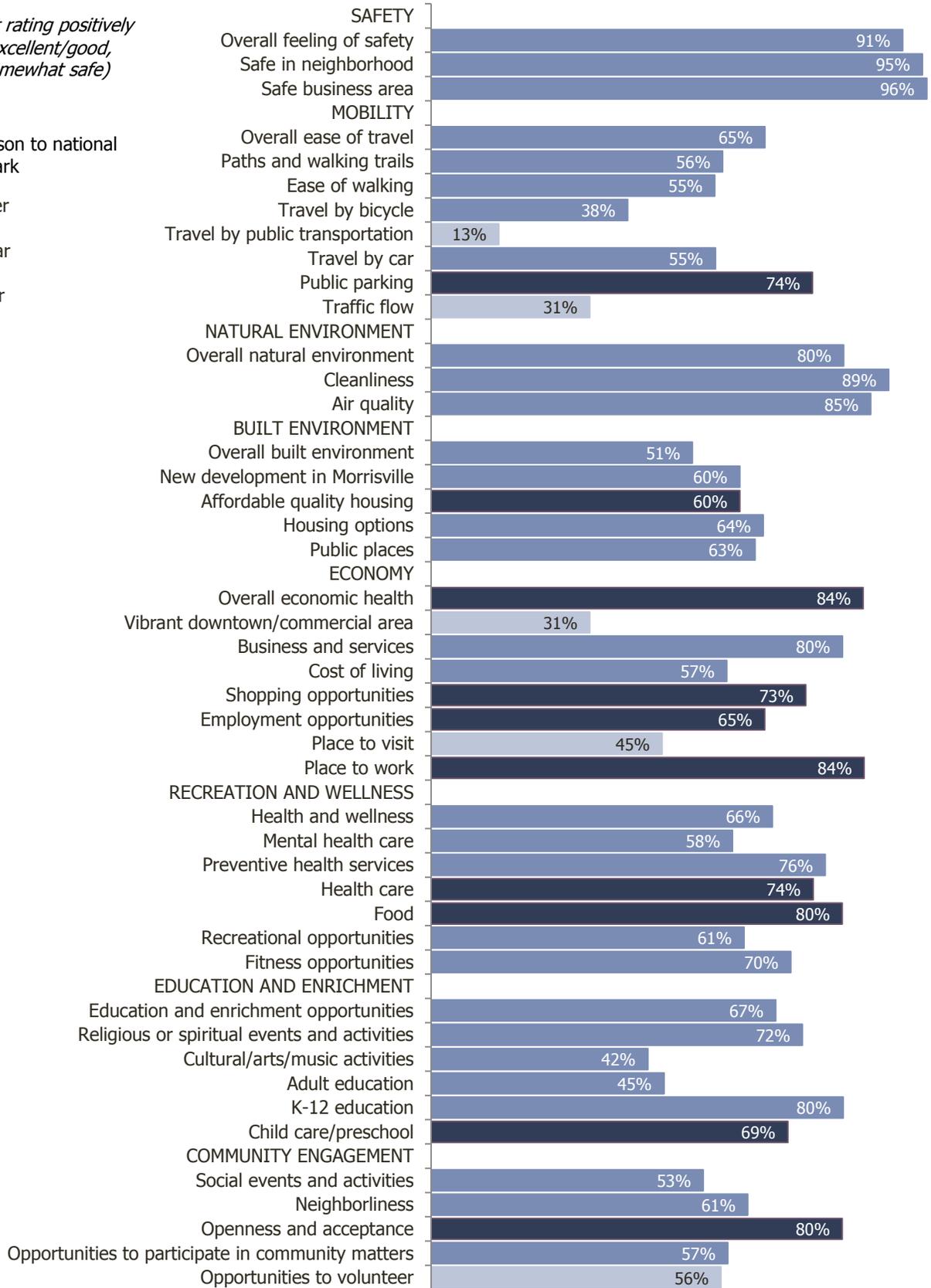
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Figure 1: Aspects of Community Characteristics

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



Governance

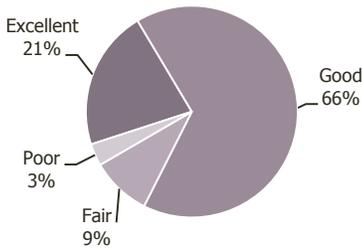
How well does the government of Morrisville meet the needs and expectations of its residents?

The overall quality of the services provided by Morrisville as well as the manner in which these services are provided are a key component of how residents rate their quality of life. Similar to other communities, the overall quality of services provided by the Town of Morrisville received excellent or good ratings by 87% of residents; while the Federal Government received positive ratings by 56%, a rating higher than the benchmark comparison.

Survey respondents also rated various aspects of Morrisville’s leadership and governance. At least 6 in 10 residents gave positive ratings to value of services for taxes paid, while more than 7 in 10 rated the overall direction of Morrisville, confidence in Town government, acting in the best interest of Morrisville, being honest and customer service of Town employees positively; all of these features were similar to the national benchmark. Respondents also gave high marks to welcoming citizen involvement and treating all residents fairly and these ratings were higher than those in communities across the nation.

Respondents evaluated over 30 individual services and amenities available in Morrisville. Most ratings for services in Morrisville were rated as excellent or good by at least two-thirds of residents and tended to be similar to the national benchmark. Police services within the Facet of Safety were rated positively by 9 in 10 residents and this ranking was higher than ratings seen in other communities. Other services that were given ratings higher than the benchmark were clustered within the facets of Natural Environment, Built Environment and Economy and included drinking water (88% excellent or good), code enforcement (71% excellent or good) and economic development (79% excellent or good). All of the aspects of Recreation and Wellness, Education and Enrichment and Community Engagement were similar to the benchmark and received positive ratings from at least two-thirds of residents. Morrisville’s bus or transit services was the only aspect that received a rating lower than comparison communities.

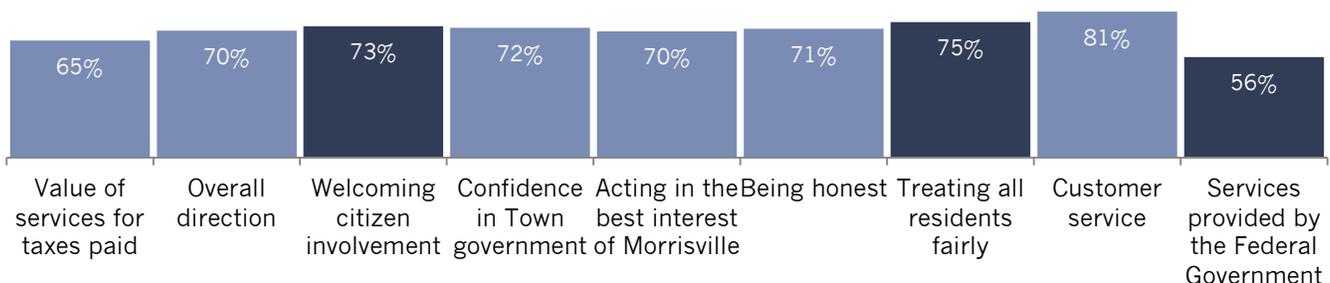
Overall Quality of Town Services



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

Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



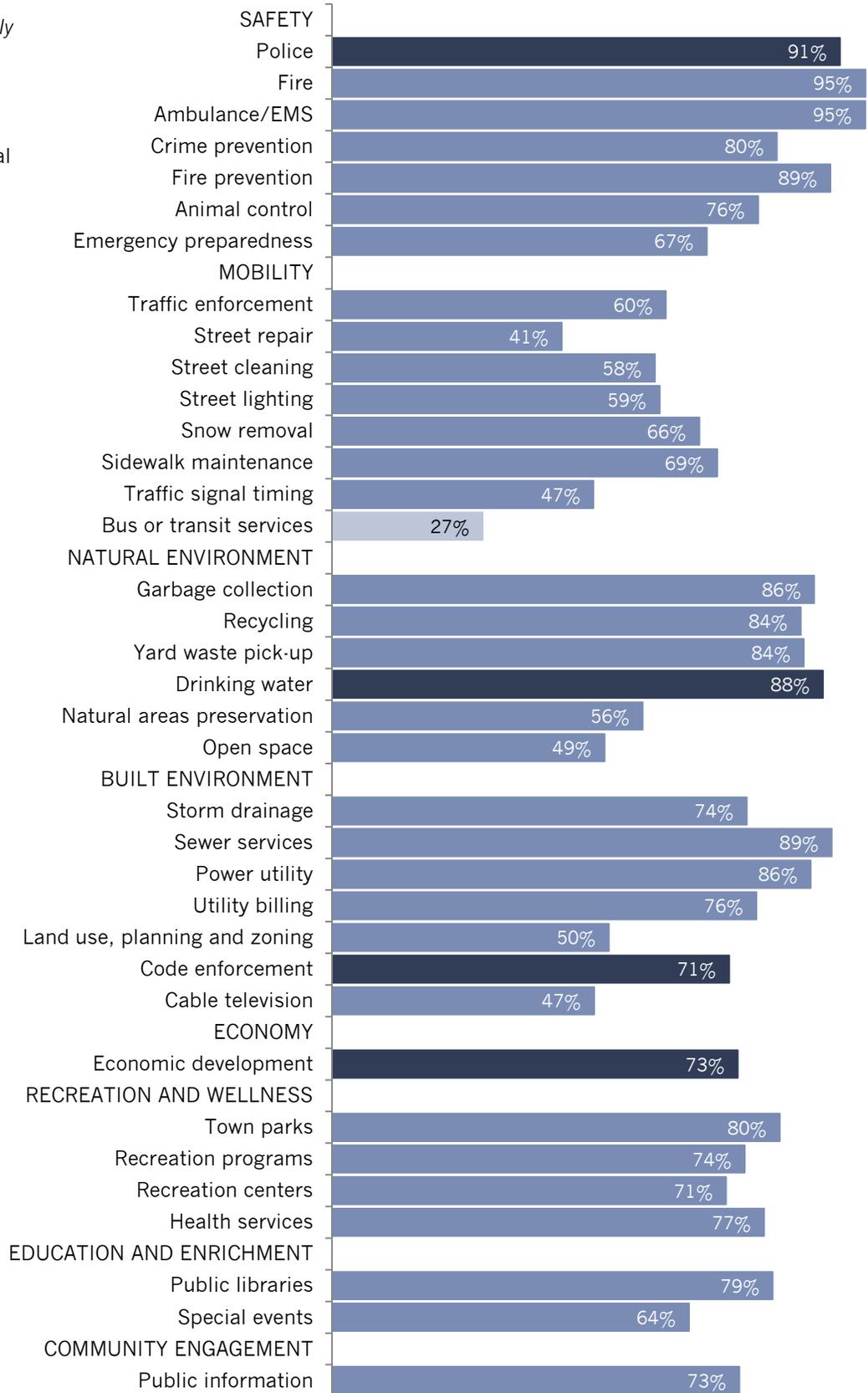
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Figure 2: Aspects of Governance

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower

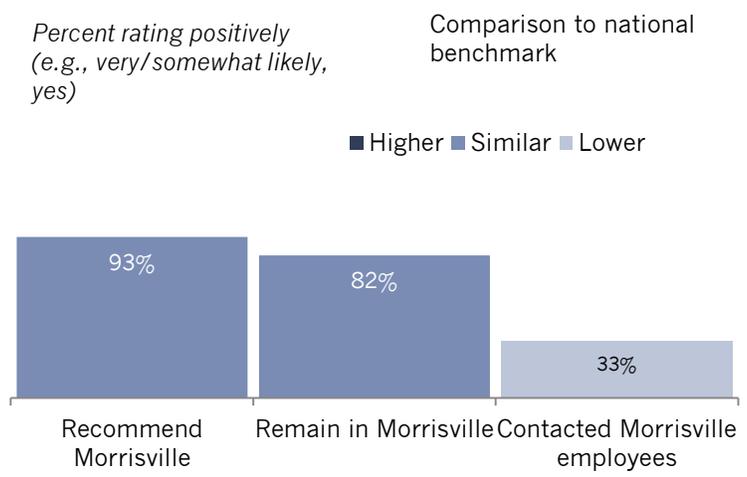
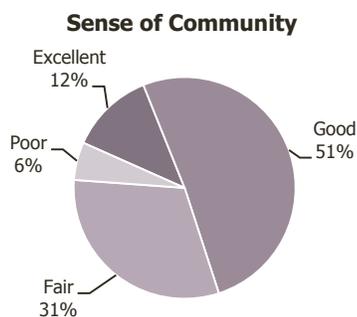


Participation

Are the residents of Morrisville 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. Sixty-three percent of residents gave a positive rating to the sense of community in Morrisville and this level was similar to ratings given in other communities across the nation. Over 9 in 10 residents would recommend Morrisville and about 8 in 10 were likely to remain in the Town for the next five years. Only one-third of residents had contacted Town of Morrisville employees, a level lower than levels reported in other communities.

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, but most of these behaviors or activities had similar rates of participation when compared to the national benchmark. At least 8 in 10 residents had made their homes more efficient, recycled and conserved water in Morrisville. Both aspects of Built Environment (respondents reporting they did NOT observe a code violation (75%) and are NOT under housing stress (78%)), were rated above the national benchmark. Ratings higher than the benchmark were also seen in the facets of Safety (did NOT report a crime) and Economy (economy will have a positive impact on income). Ratings were mixed in the facet of Community Engagement with more than three-quarters of respondents that reported that they talked or visited with neighbors, read or watched the local news, and voted in local elections; all of which were rated similarly to other communities. Conversely, Morrisville residents reported the lower rates of participation for volunteering (19%), participating in a club (11%), doing a favor for a neighbor (68%) and attending a local public meeting (12%), which were all lower rates of participation in Morrisville than in other communities. Other items that had participation levels lower than the national benchmark were in Mobility and Education and Enrichment and included using public transportation instead of driving (3%), carpooling instead of driving alone (26%), participating in spiritual or religious activities (34%) and attending a Town-sponsored event (38%).



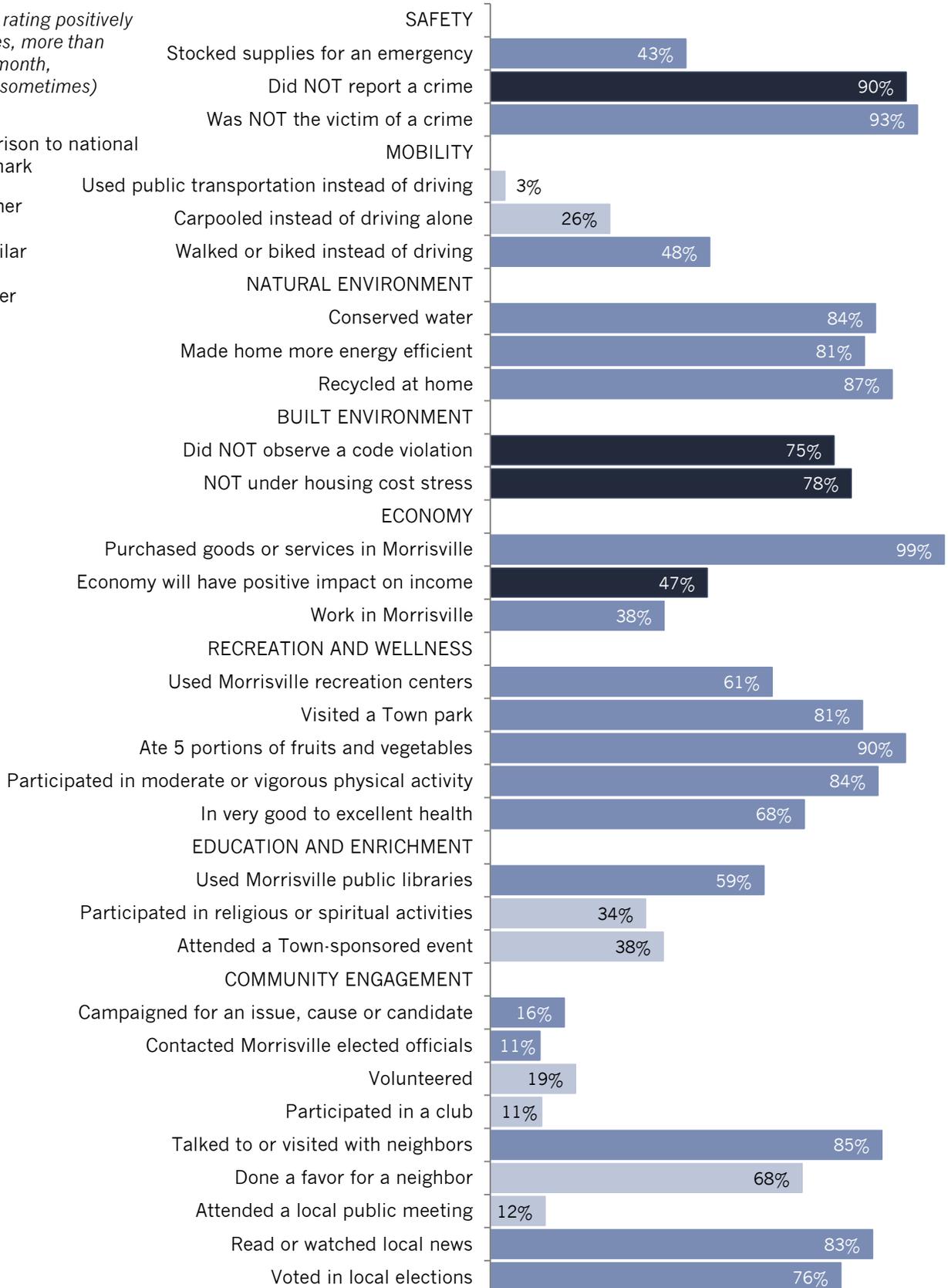
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Figure 3: Aspects of Participation

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower

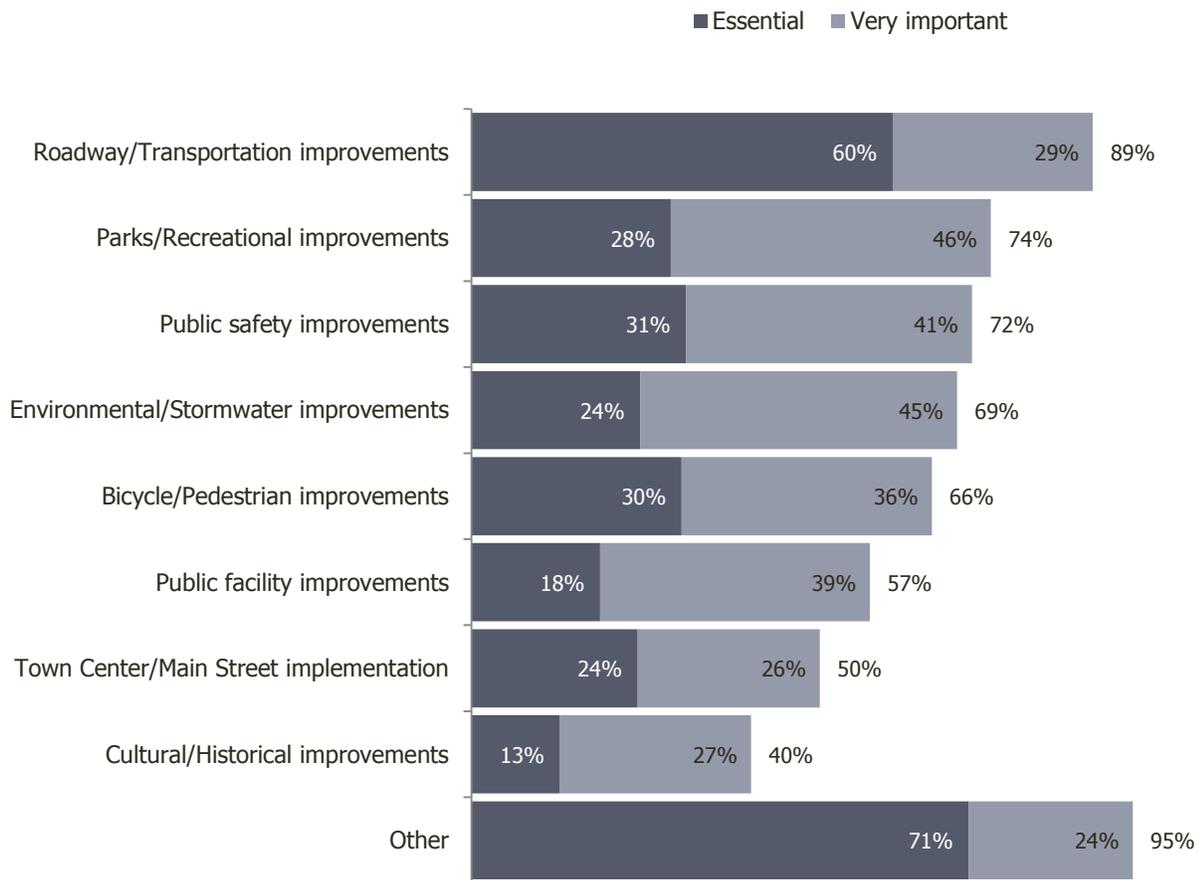


Special Topics

The Town of Morrisville included four questions of special interest on The NCS. The first question asked residents about the importance of funding various capital investment projects. Nearly 9 in 10 respondents indicated that roadway/transportation improvements would be the most important type of project to be funded. About three-quarters of residents felt that parks/recreational improvements and public safety improvements would be essential or very important. Less than half of citizens identified cultural/historical improvements as an important project for the future.

Figure 4: Importance of Funding Capital Investment Projects

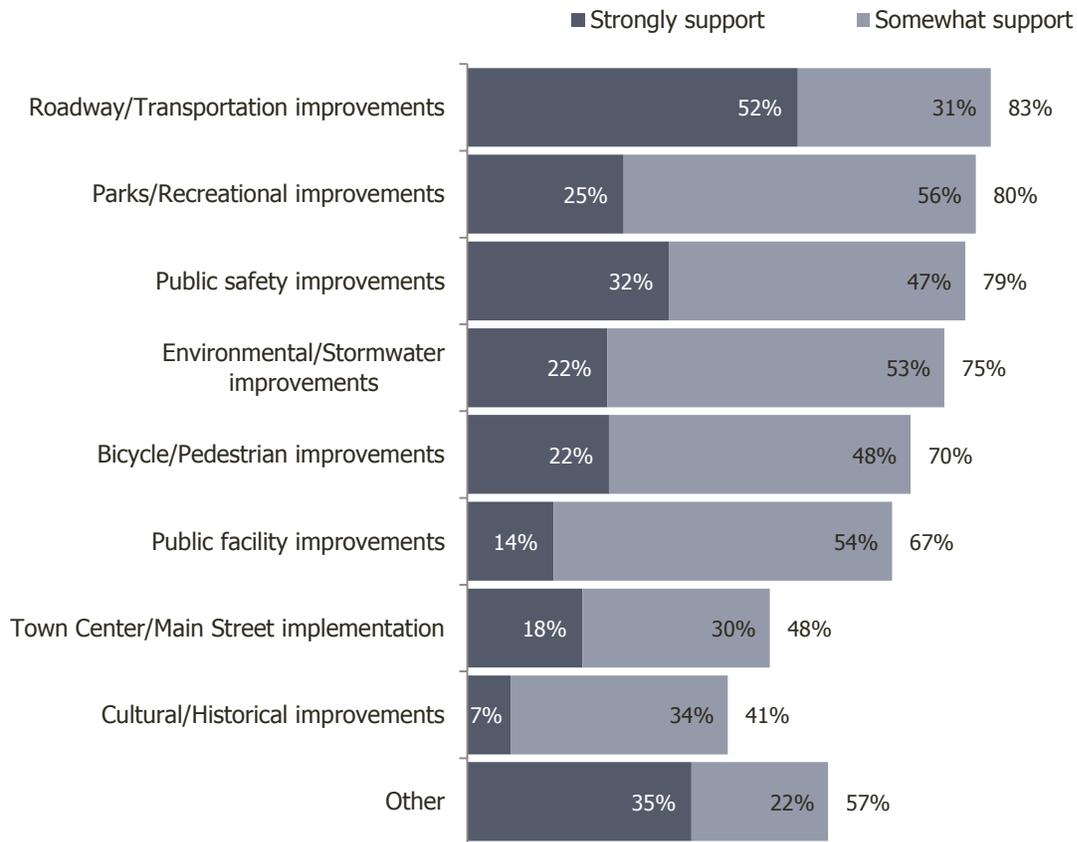
Planning for large capital investment projects can represent a challenge in aligning resources effectively to the needs valued by the community. To better gauge community support to plan for capital spending, please indicate how important, if at all, each of the following projects and issues will be for the Town to address over the next five years:



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Morrisville citizens were also asked to indicate their level of support for a tax rate increase to fund the each of the listed capital investment projects. About 8 in 10 residents would at least somewhat support a tax increase to pay for roadway/transportation, park/recreational and public safety improvements. Less support for funding was reported for Town Center/Main Street implementation (48% strongly or somewhat support) and cultural/historical improvements (41% strongly or somewhat support).

Figure 5: Support for Tax Increase to Fund Capital Investment Projects
The town operating budget does not have the capacity to pay for significant capital improvements without issuing debt. A tax rate increase is generally needed to pay debt service payments. Please indicate to what extent you would support or oppose a tax rate increase to fund each of the following capital investment projects:

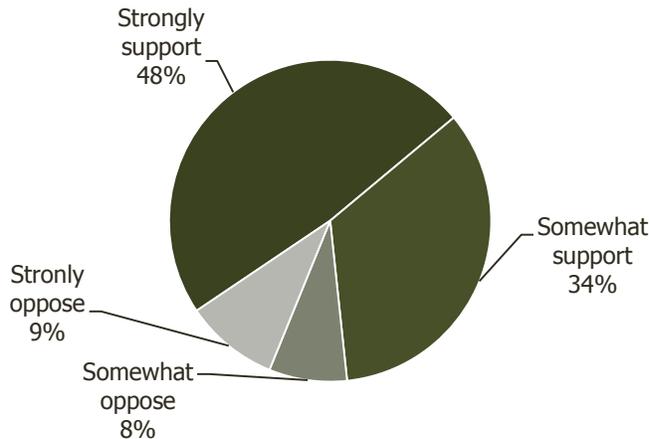


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Respondents from Morrisville were asked to report their level of support for using Town funds to improve State-owned roads. A vast majority of residents indicated that they would at least somewhat support using Town monies to improve roadways owned by the state of North Carolina. Only 17% of respondents opposed used Town funds to improve State-owned roads.

Figure 6: Support for Improving State-owned Roads

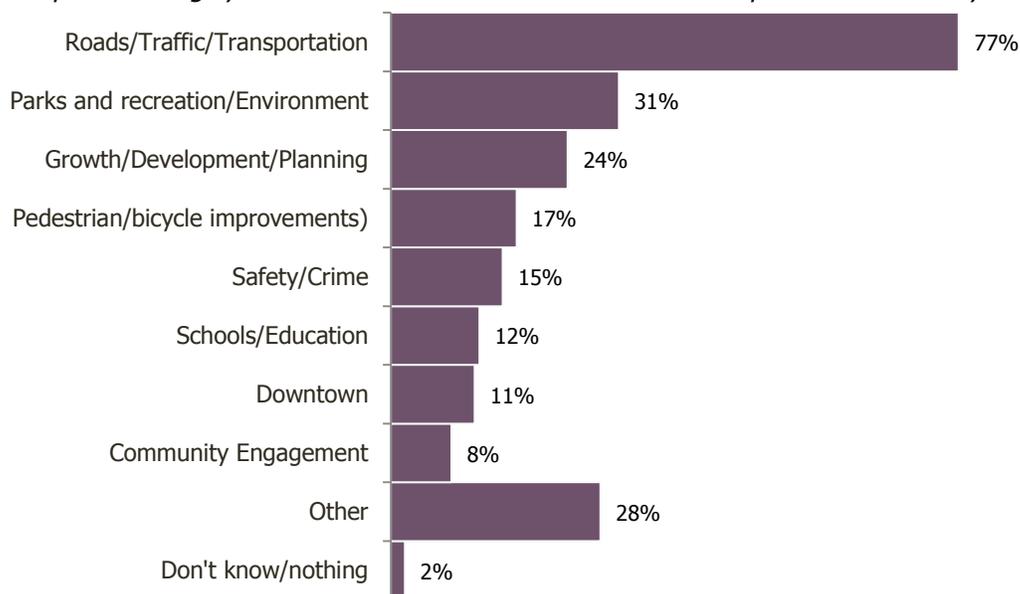
The majority of traffic issues in Morrisville occur on State-owned roads (NC54, Morrisville-Carpenter Road, Aviation Parkway, etc.). Typically State dollars fund any improvements on these roads, but may take many years to be prioritized for construction. Would you support using Town funds to improve State-owned roadways?



Morrisville residents were also given the opportunity to write in the top three things they would like to see the Town accomplish in the next five years. The most often cited priorities were related to roads, traffic, and transportation with over three quarters of the 158 respondents who wrote in responses indicating that these would be key issues for the Town. Close to 3 in 10 of respondents also reported that improvements to parks and recreation or the environment would be a priority for Morrisville. Only about 10% of respondents ranked schools/education, downtown related issues and community engagement as items for Morrisville to address in the next five years. The verbatim responses can be found in the *Open Ended Responses Report* provided under a separate cover.

Figure 7: Town Priorities

What are the top three things you would like to see Morrisville do or accomplish in the next 5 years?



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

Conclusions

Morrisville residents enjoy a high quality of life.

Nearly all residents rated their overall quality of life in Morrisville positively and at least 9 in 10 reported that the Town is an excellent or good place to live. Not only did respondents appreciate living in Morrisville, at least 8 in 10 residents gave high marks for the Town as a place to raise children and as a place to work. The Town's overall image was rated as excellent or good by 85% of participants, a rating higher than the national benchmark. Residents also valued the appearance of Morrisville and their neighborhoods as a place to live with at least 8 in 10 providing a positive ranking. Overall, most citizens would recommend living in Morrisville (93%) and are likely to remain in the Town (82%).

Mobility is an important area of focus for residents.

Survey participants indicated that Mobility is an important facet for Morrisville to focus on in the coming years. Three quarters of residents gave high ratings to public parking, which was a rating higher than the benchmark. Most aspects of Mobility were rated similar to the benchmark, but some measure were less favorably rated, including travel by public transportation, traffic flow, bus or transit services, using public transportation instead of driving and carpooling, all of which were rated lower than elsewhere in the nation. Roadway/transportation improvements were also identified as the most important capital investment project by residents with nearly 9 in 10 rating it as essential or very important. A large majority of respondents also said they would support more funding for roadway/transportation improvements when asked to consider tax increases for eight possible capital projects in Morrisville. Additionally, over 8 in 10 participants reported that they would support using Morrisville tax dollars to fund improvements to State-owned roads. When participants were asked to describe what they believe were the most important issues for Morrisville to accomplish in the next five years, issues with roads, transportation and traffic were cited the most often.

Economy is an important and positive feature of the community.

Morrisville residents identified the Town's Economy as a priority for the community and gave favorable ratings in this area. Morrisville performed especially well in overall economic health, which was rated positively by over 8 in 10 participants, a rating high than other communities across the nation. The Town also received higher ratings than other communities for Morrisville as a place to work, shopping opportunities, employment opportunities, economic development and the Town's economy having a positive impact on respondent's income. Potential areas for improvement were the vibrancy of downtown/commercial areas and Morrisville as a place to visit, which were rated less positively when compared to the national benchmark.