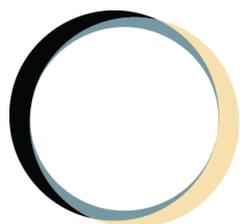


**THE NCS**<sup>TM</sup>  
The National Citizen Survey<sup>TM</sup>

**Chanhassen, MN**  
Community Livability Report

2016



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# About

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

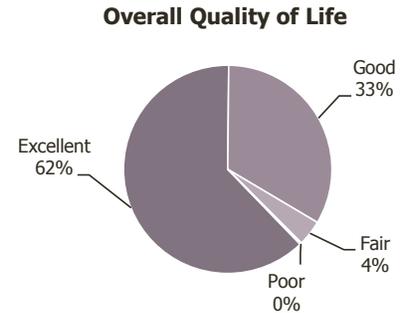
Great communities are partnerships of the government, private sector, community-based organizations and residents, all geographically connected. The NCS captures residents’ opinions within the three pillars of a community (Community Characteristics, Governance and Participation) across eight central 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 541 residents of the City of Chanhassen (the City received 541 returned surveys). The margin of error around any reported percentage is 4% 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 Chanhassen

Almost all residents rated the quality of life in Chanhassen as excellent or good. This rating is higher than quality of life ratings seen in other communities across the country (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.

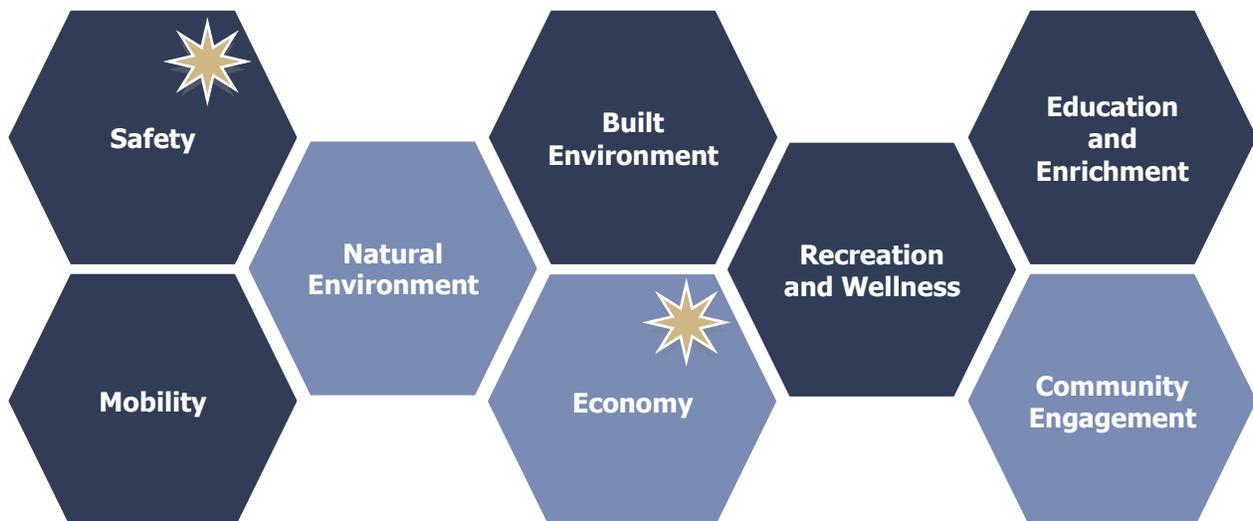
In addition to a summary of ratings, the image below includes one or more stars to indicate which community facets were the most important focus areas for the community. Residents identified Economy and Safety as priorities for the Chanhassen community in the coming two years. It is noteworthy that Chanhassen residents gave favorable ratings that tended to be higher than the national benchmarks to aspects of Safety, Mobility, Built Environment, Recreation and Wellness and Education and Enrichment. Ratings for aspects Natural Environment, Economy 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 Chanhassen’s unique questions.

## Legend

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

- Most important



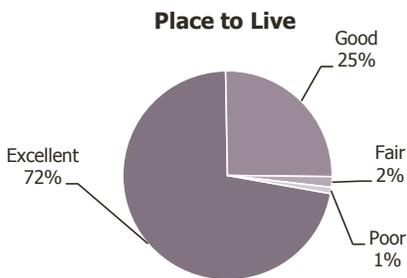
# Community Characteristics

*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 Chanhassen, 97% rated the City as an excellent or good place to live. Respondents' ratings of Chanhassen as a place to live were higher than 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 Chanhassen as a place to raise children and to retire, their neighborhood as a place to live, the overall image or reputation of Chanhassen and its overall appearance. At least 9 in 10 survey participants gave excellent or good ratings to the overall image and overall appearance of Chanhassen, their neighborhood as a place to live and to Chanhassen as a place to raise children; all of these aspects were higher than the national benchmark comparisons. Chanhassen as a place to retire was rated favorably by about three-quarters of respondents, which was similar to ratings seen in comparison communities.

Delving deeper into Community Characteristics, survey respondents rated over 40 features of the community within the eight facets of Community Livability. All aspects of Community Characteristics received ratings similar to or higher than the national benchmarks and were rated positively by at least half of respondents. Almost all residents awarded high marks to the overall feeling of safety in Chanhassen, the feeling of safety in their neighborhood and the feeling of safety in Chanhassen's downtown/commercial area. All aspects within the facet of Mobility were rated higher than the benchmarks. More than 9 in 10 respondents gave excellent or good ratings to all aspects of Natural Environment; every aspect within this facet received ratings that were higher than what is typically seen in comparison communities. Within Built Environment, about three-quarters of respondents or more gave favorable ratings to the overall built environment, the variety of housing options, and public places where people like to spend time. Aspects of Economy received a mix of ratings that were similar to and higher than the national benchmarks. Noteworthy ratings in Economy included the overall economic health of Chanhassen (rated excellent or good by 94% of respondents), the city as a place to visit (79%) and Chanhassen as a place to work (82%). Ratings for employment opportunities and the cost of living increased from 2013 to 2016 (see the *Trends over Time* report provided under a separate cover for more detail). All aspects within the facet of Recreation and Wellness were rated higher than the benchmarks. Ratings for Education and Enrichment were generally strong, and ranged from a low of 67% excellent or good for opportunities to attend cultural, arts and music activities to a high of 94% for K-12 education. About 6 in 10 respondents or more awarded high marks to all aspects of Community Engagement; the rating for the neighborliness of residents in Chanhassen was higher than ratings reported in other communities nationwide.



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

Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



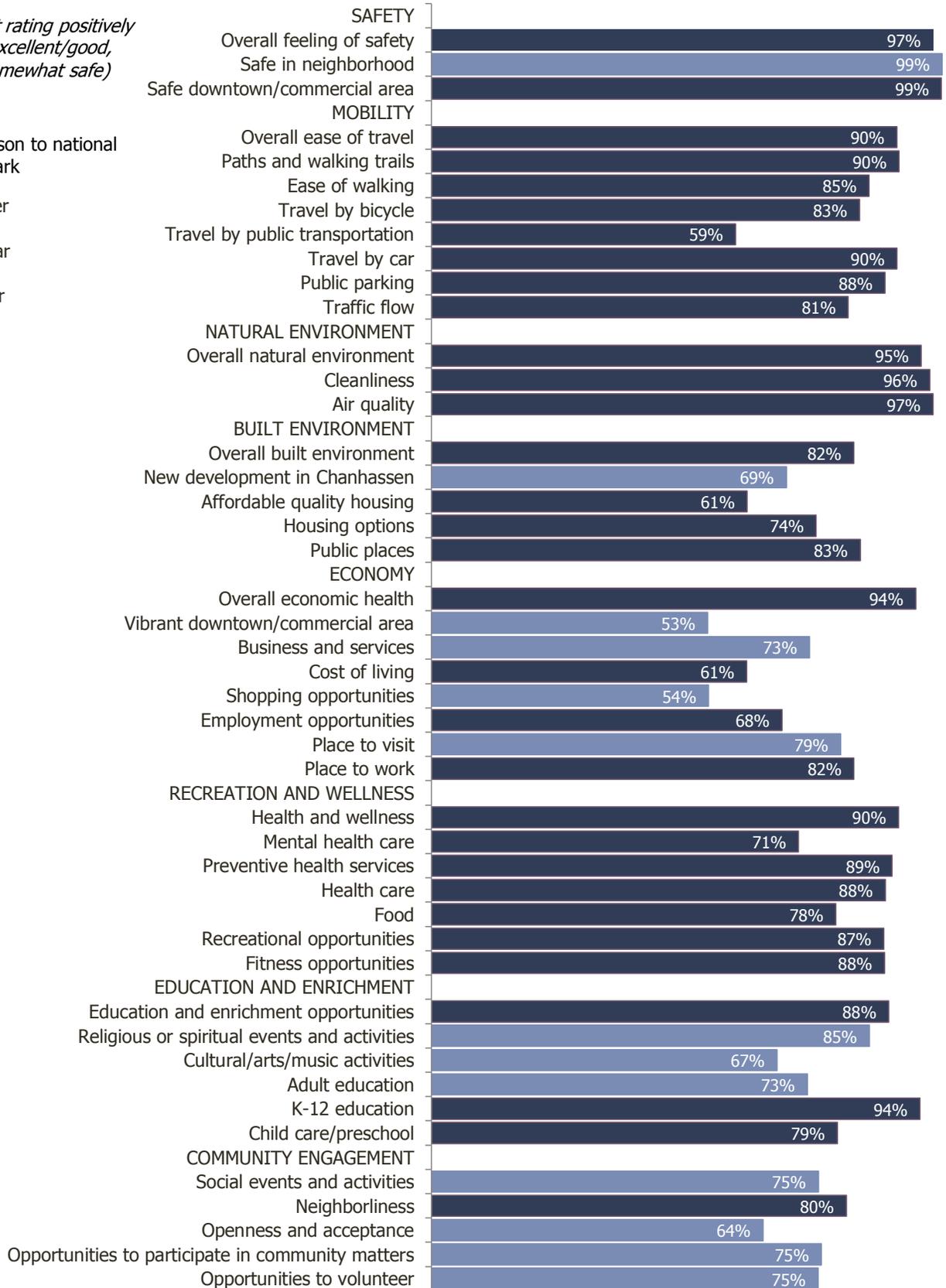
# The National Citizen Survey™

Figure 1: Aspects of Community Characteristics

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

Comparison to national  
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



# Governance

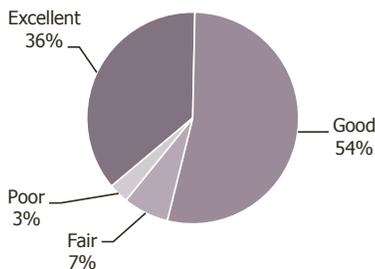
*How well does the government of Chanhassen meet the needs and expectations of its residents?*

The overall quality of the services provided by Chanhassen 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 City services were rated positively by about 9 in 10 respondents, which is higher than ratings typically seen in other communities across the country. In comparison, about half of respondents favorably rated services provided by the Federal Government; this rating is similar to the benchmark comparison.

Survey respondents also rated various aspects of Chanhassen’s leadership and governance. About 7 in 10 or more respondents gave excellent or good ratings to the overall direction Chanhassen is taking, the job the City does at welcoming citizen involvement, confidence in the City government, acting in the best interest of the community, being honest and treating all residents fairly; all of these aspects of leadership and governance were rated higher in Chanhassen than in other communities nationwide. Both the value of services for taxes paid and the customer service of Chanhassen employees were rated positively by at least two-thirds of respondents, and were similar to the benchmarks.

Respondents evaluated over 30 individual services and amenities available in Chanhassen. About 8 in 10 or more respondents awarded excellent or good ratings to all Safety-related services, including police, fire and ambulance/EMS services. Ratings for crime prevention, fire prevention, animal control and emergency preparedness were all higher than the benchmarks. Ratings within Mobility were similarly strong: a majority of residents gave favorable marks to all Mobility-related services, and street repair, street lighting, snow removal and bus or transit services were all rated higher in Chanhassen than elsewhere. All aspects of Natural Environment were rated positively by about three-quarters of residents or more and were similar to the benchmarks. Ratings within Built Environment tended to be more mixed: while at least 7 in 10 respondents gave high marks to storm drainage, sewer services and code enforcement (which are all higher than the benchmarks), only about 2 in 5 gave favorable ratings to cable television (which was lower than the benchmark comparison). Within Recreation and Wellness, about 9 in 10 respondents gave favorable ratings to city parks and the availability of affordable quality health services; both of these ratings are higher than ratings seen in other communities across the country. All aspects of Economy, Education and Enrichment and Community Engagement were rated positively by at least three-quarters of respondents. Ratings for all aspects in these three facets were higher than ratings seen in comparison communities.

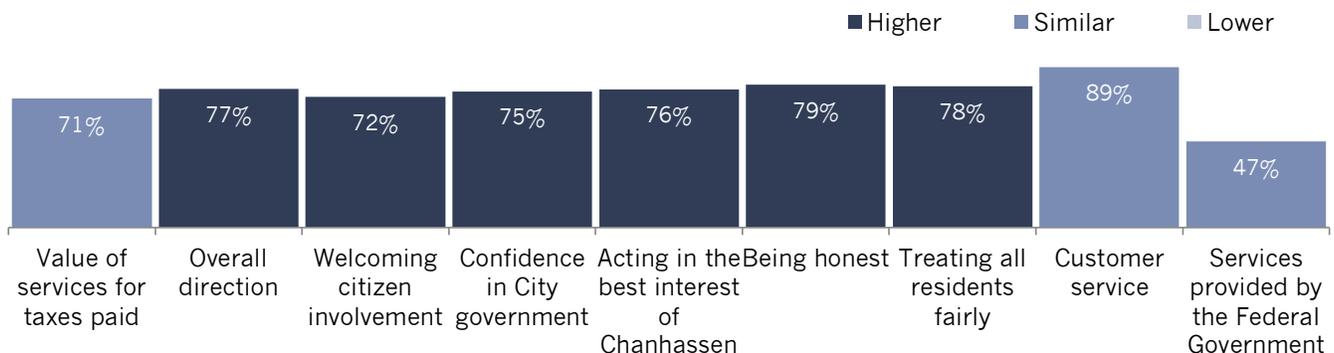
**Overall Quality of City Services**



Ratings declined from 2013 to 2016 for four Chanhassen services: police services, traffic signal timing, cable television and recreation centers.

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

*Comparison to national benchmark*



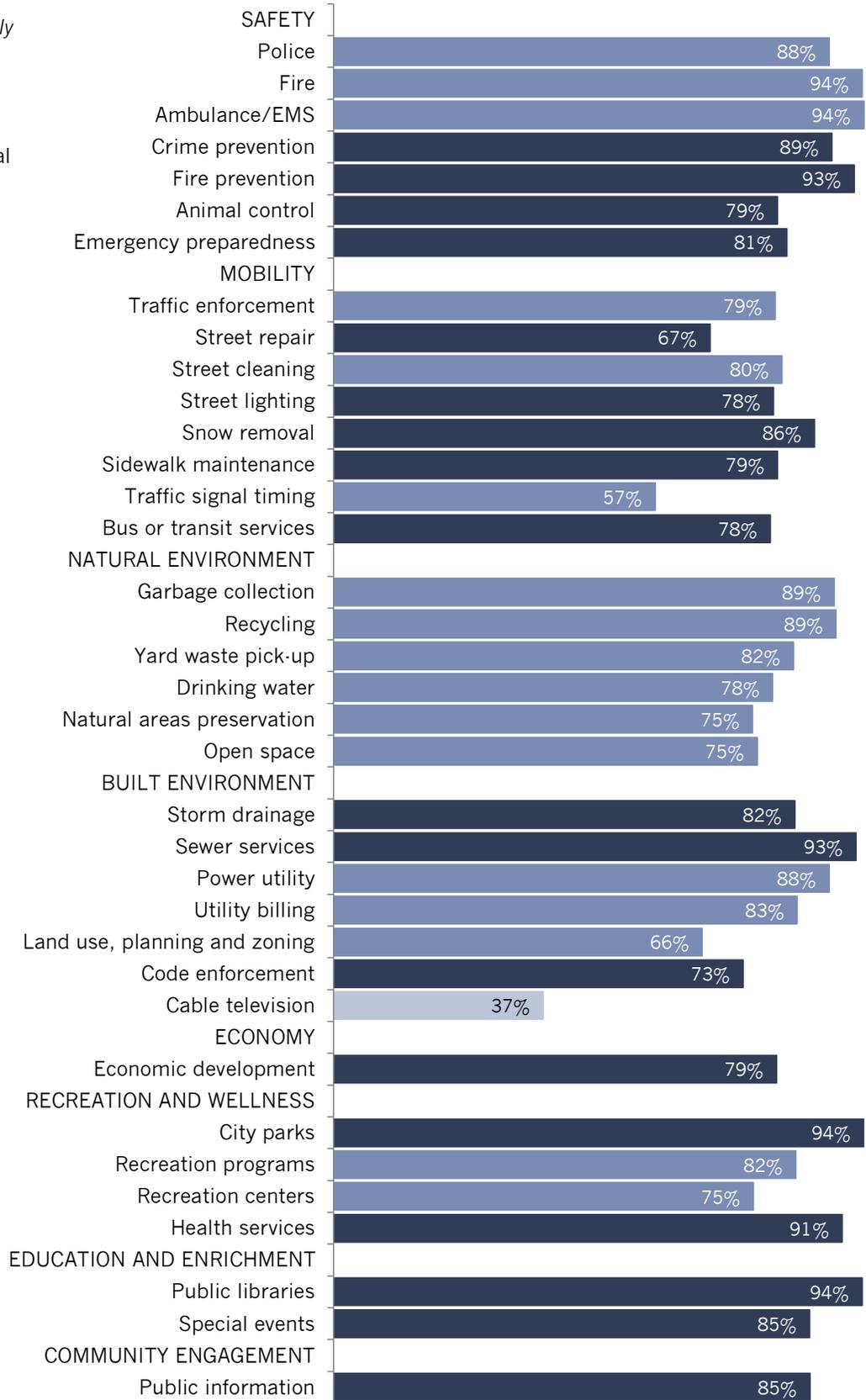
# The National Citizen Survey™

Figure 2: Aspects of Governance

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

Comparison to national  
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



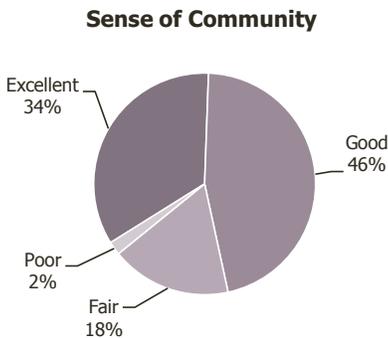
# Participation

## *Are the residents of Chanhassen 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 4 in 5 respondents gave favorable ratings to the sense of community in Chanhassen, which is higher than ratings seen in other communities. Almost all residents (97%) reported that they would recommend living in Chanhassen to someone who asked, and slightly fewer indicated that they plan to remain in Chanhassen in the coming 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. Levels of participation tended to be mixed across the different facets. Within the facet of Safety, about 9 in 10 residents had not been the victim of a crime and 87% of residents had not reported a crime in the 12 months prior to the survey. About two-thirds of participants had walked or biked instead of driving; rates of participation in Mobility were all similar to the benchmarks. Nearly all residents reported that they recycled at home (98%), a level that was higher than comparison communities, and about three-quarters of participants had conserved water. Within Built Environment, about three-quarters of participants had not observed a code violation, which is higher than the benchmark. Almost all residents reported purchasing goods or services in Chanhassen, but only about 1 in 4 reported working in the City (a rate that was lower than the national benchmark). It is noteworthy that the proportion of residents who reported that the economy will have a positive impact on their income in the next six months increased from 2013 to 2016. A majority of residents reported

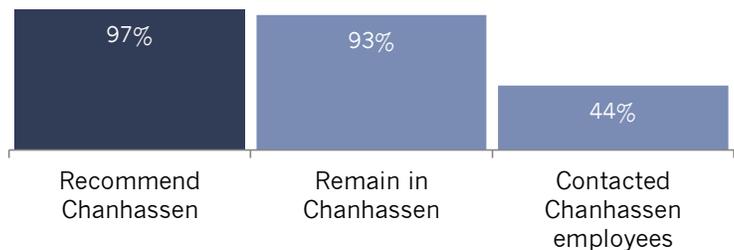
participating in most aspects of Recreation and Wellness and Education and Enrichment. More residents in Chanhassen reported that they visited a City park and attended a City-sponsored special event in the last 12 months than residents from comparison communities. Rates of participation in Community Engagement were mostly strong and similar to the benchmark comparisons; however, only about 1 in 10 respondents reported watching a local public meeting in the 12 months prior to the survey, a rate which decreased from 2013 to 2016 and was lower than the benchmarks.



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

Comparison to national  
benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



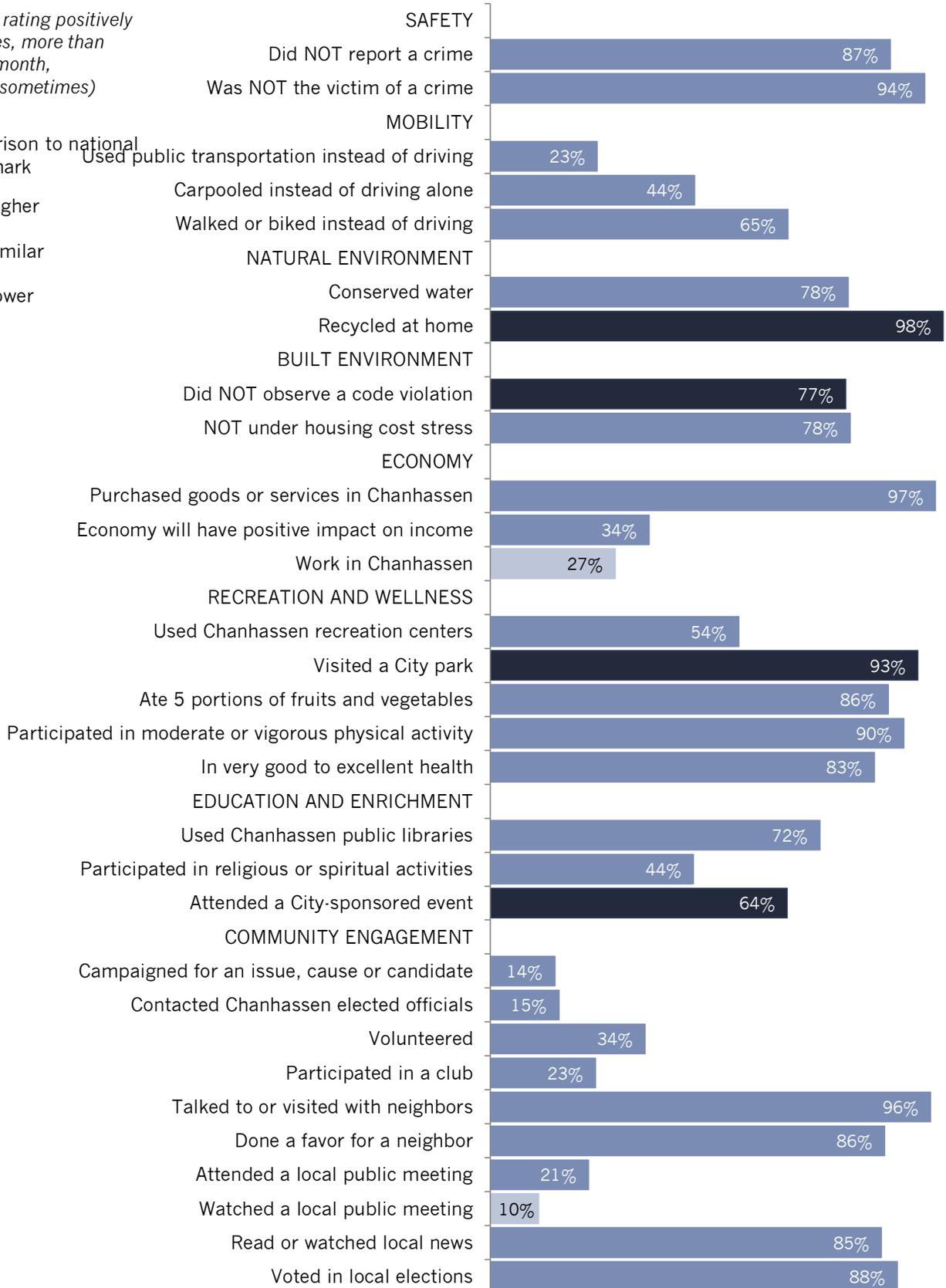
# The National Citizen Survey™

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

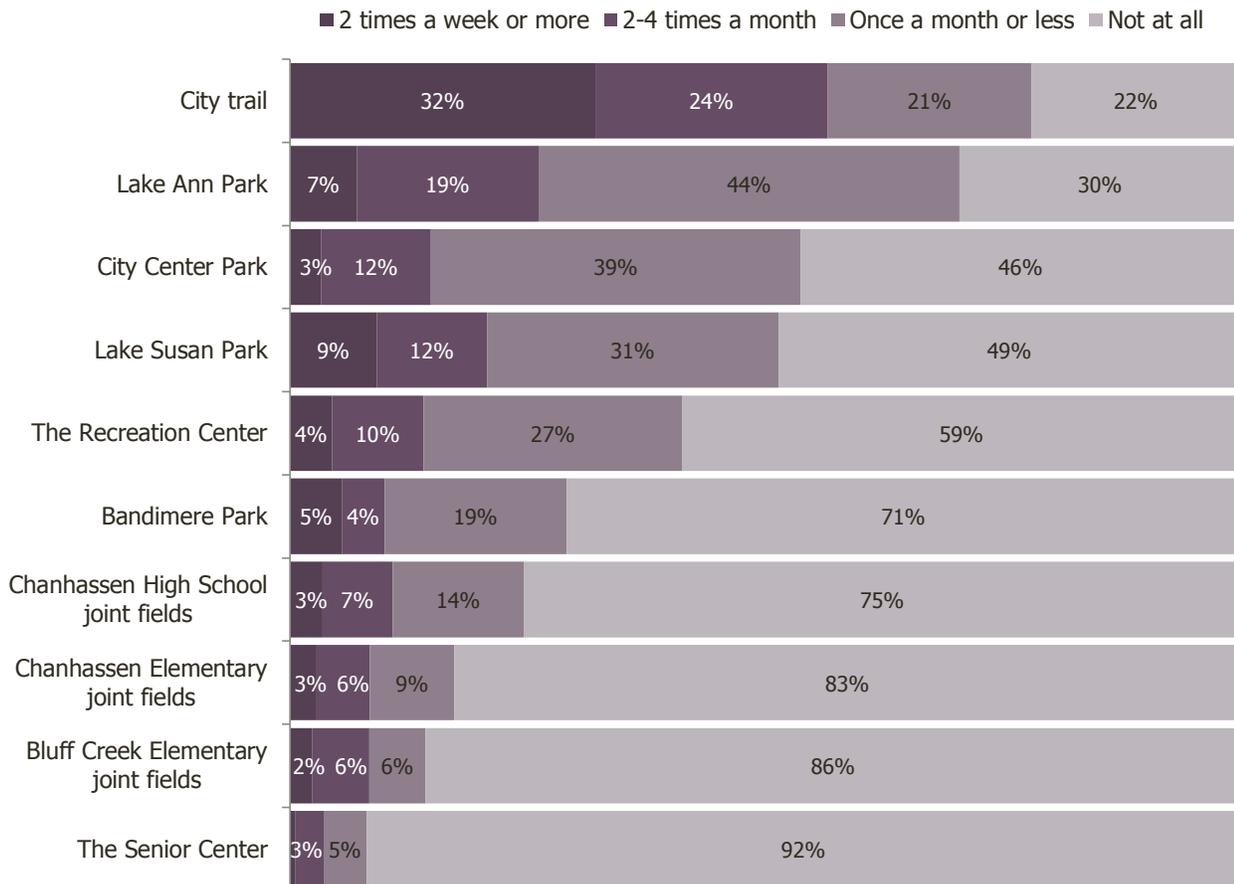


# Special Topics

The City of Chanhassen included four questions of special interest on The NCS, as well as one open-ended question where residents could write down a response in their own words. The first special-interest question asked residents how often they used various Chanhassen recreation areas and facilities. About 8 in 10 respondents reported using a City trail at least once in the past 12 months. A majority of respondents indicated using Lake Ann Park, City Center Park and Lake Susan Park at least once in the 12 months before the survey. All other recreational facilities and areas were used by less than half of Chanhassen residents.

Figure 4: Use of Recreational Amenities

*In the last 12 months, about how many times, if at all, have you or members of your household used each of the following in the City of Chanhassen?*

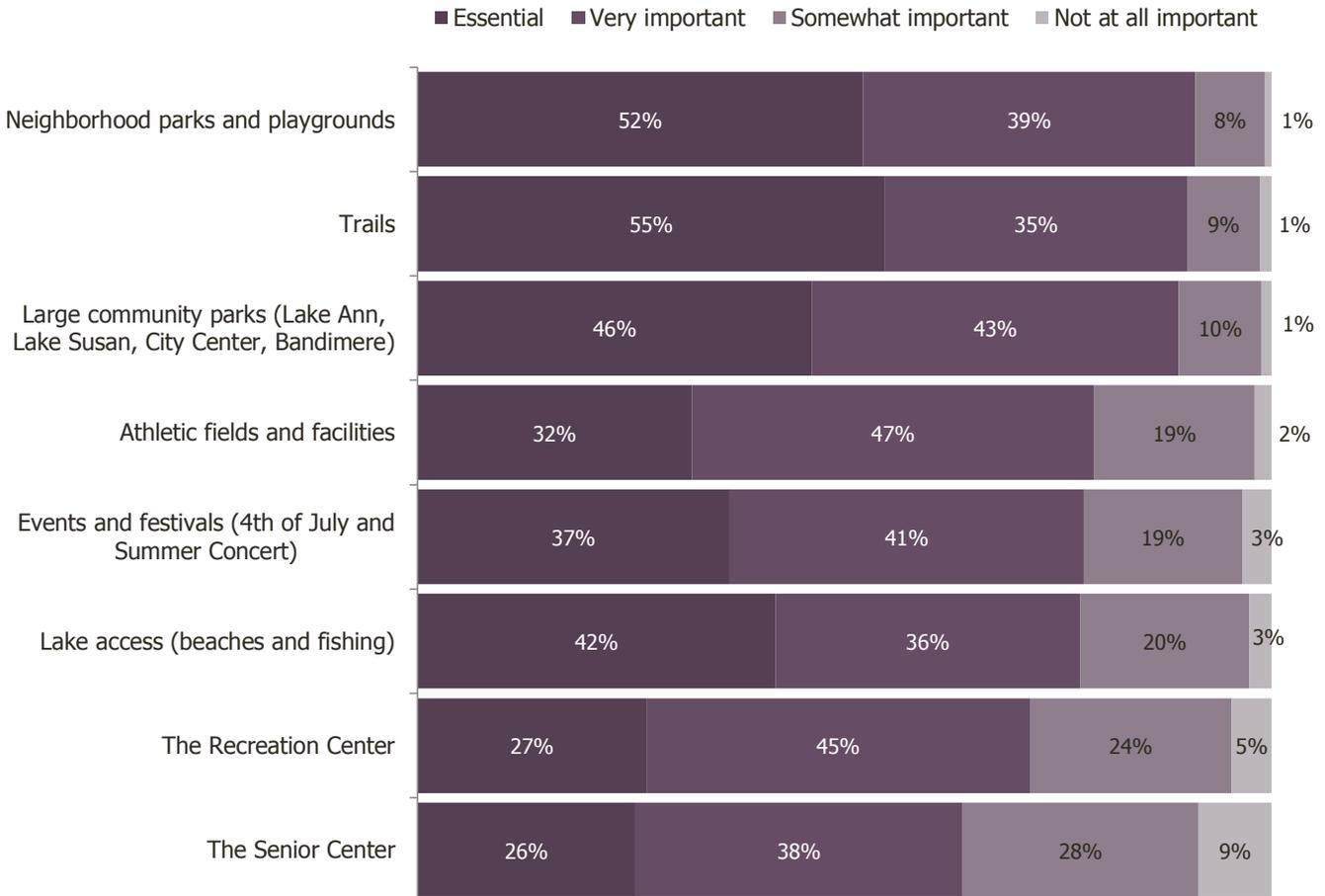


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Respondents were next asked to evaluate the importance of various components of Chanhassen’s parks and recreation system. About 9 in 10 survey participants indicated that neighborhood parks and playgrounds, trails and large community parks were essential or very important components of the parks and recreation system. At least 6 in 10 respondents thought it was essential or very important for Chanhassen to provide all other components of the parks and recreation system.

Figure 5: Importance of Recreation Amenities

*Please rate how important, if at all, each of the following components of Chanhassen’s parks and recreation system are for Chanhassen to provide:*

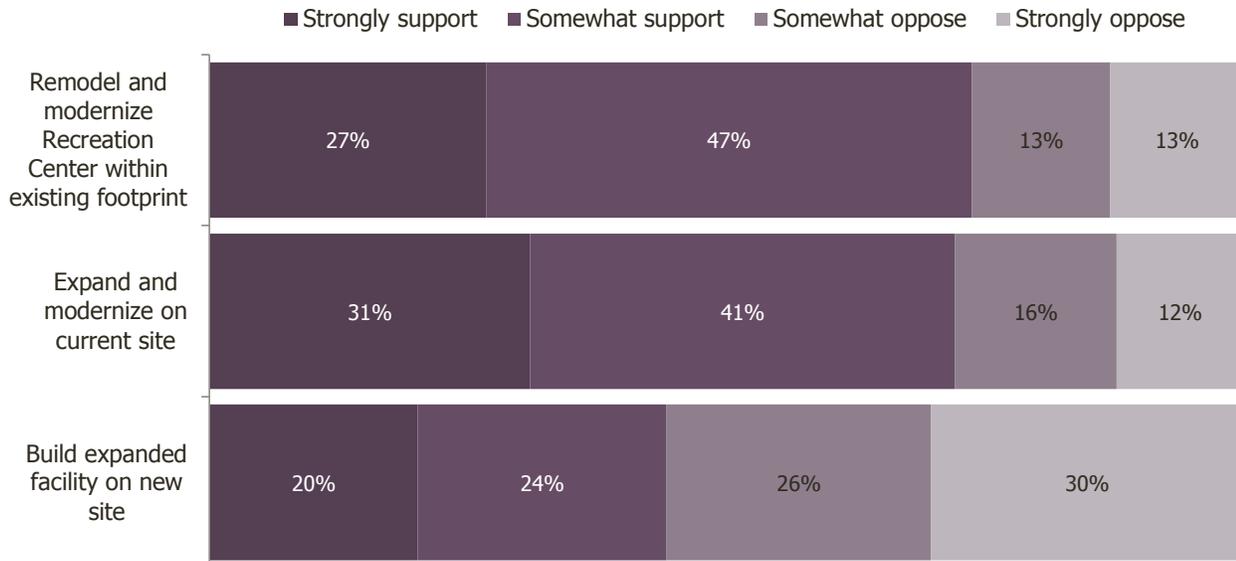


## The National Citizen Survey™

The third special-interest question asked residents to what extent they would support or oppose an additional property tax that would help fund renovations, expansions or replacements to Chanhassen’s Recreation Center. About three-quarters of respondents indicated support for an additional property tax that would help remodel and modernize the Recreation Center within its existing foot print, while about 72% would strongly or somewhat support expanding and modernizing on the current site. A majority of respondents (56%) opposed building an expanded facility on a new site.

Figure 6: Support for Tax to Fund Recreation Center

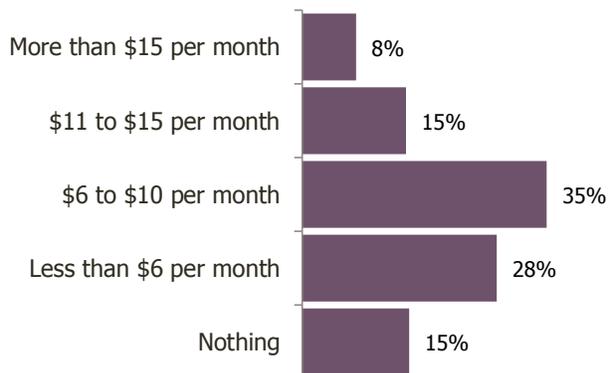
*Chanhassen is considering updates to the recreation center including renovations, expansion or a replacement of the current facility with a new larger facility. Please indicate the degree to which you would support or oppose the following improvements to the recreation center, funded by an additional property tax:*



Respondents were next asked how much additional monthly property tax they would be willing to pay to support the implementation of high priority projects. A majority of respondents (56%) said that they would be willing to pay at least \$6 a month to support implementation of these projects. About 3 in 10 indicated that they would be willing to pay less than \$6 per month, and 15% reported they were not willing to pay any additional property taxes.

Figure 7: Property Tax Support

*What would be the MAXIMUM amount in additional tax funding you would be willing to pay per month through property tax to support implementation of high priority projects?*

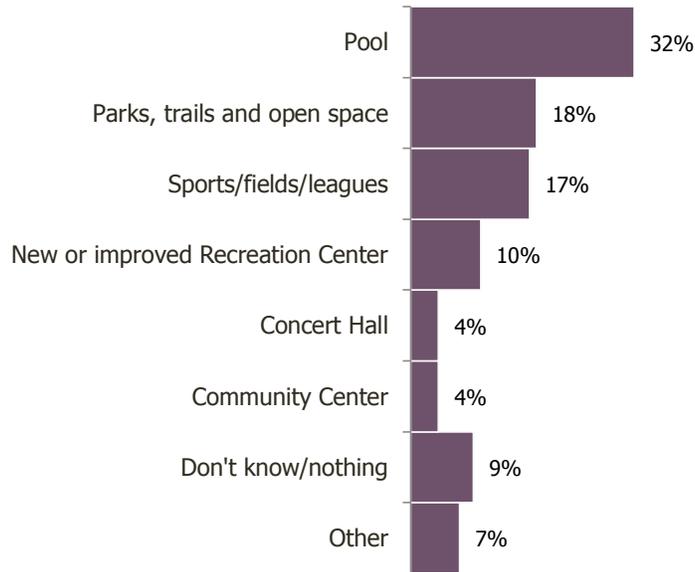


## The National Citizen Survey™

Chanhasen's open-ended question asked residents to write down the number one public recreation amenity they thought was missing in the City. The verbatim responses were categorized by topic area and those topics are reported in the chart below with the percent of responses given in each category. Of the respondents who wrote in a response, the most frequently cited missing recreation amenity was a pool (for the full verbatim responses, see the *Open End Report* under separate cover).

Figure 8: Number One Missing Recreation Amenity

*What is the number one public recreation amenity you think is missing from Chanhasen?*



# Conclusions

## **Chanhassen continues to be a great place to live.**

Almost all survey respondents rated the overall quality of life in Chanhassen and the city as a place to live as excellent or good; these ratings were higher than ratings reported in comparison communities and were stable over time. Several features that enhance quality of life, including Chanhassen as a place to raise children, the respondent's neighborhood as a place to live and the overall appearance of the city were rated positively by about 9 in 10 residents; these ratings were higher than ratings seen in other communities nationwide. Almost all survey participants (97%) would recommend living in Chanhassen to someone who asked, and only slightly fewer (93%) planned to remain in the city for the coming 5 years. Additionally, about 7 in 10 residents rated Chanhassen's sense of community as excellent or good, which was higher than ratings reported in comparison communities.

## **Safety is an important and positive feature of the community.**

Residents identified Safety as a priority for the Chanhassen community in the coming two years. Ratings in the facet of Safety tended to be strong and similar to or higher than ratings seen elsewhere. Almost all respondents gave excellent or good ratings to the overall feeling of safety in Chanhassen, and to the feeling of safety in their neighborhood. Safety-related services also tended to receive strong ratings from participants: police, fire, crime prevention, ambulance/EMS and fire prevention services were rated favorably by about 9 in 10 respondents. Ratings for Safety-related services were generally stable over time, except for police services, which decreased from 2013 to 2016. It is also noteworthy that about 9 in 10 residents had not been the victim of a crime and slightly fewer (87%) had not reported a crime in the 12 months prior to the survey.

## **The Economy is a priority for the Chanhassen community, and residents noted several improvements from 2013 to 2016.**

About 9 in 10 participants indicated that it is essential or very important for the Chanhassen community to focus on the overall economic health of the City in the coming two years. Further, about 9 in 10 respondents gave excellent or good ratings to the overall economic health of Chanhassen; this rating, and ratings for the cost of living, employment opportunities and the City as a place to work, were all higher in Chanhassen than in comparison communities. About 4 in 5 residents gave favorable ratings to economic development in the City, and almost all respondents reported purchasing goods or services in the City. However, only about one-quarter of respondents reported working in Chanhassen, a rate that was lower than the benchmark comparisons. Several ratings in the facet of Economy improved from 2013 to 2016. Ratings for employment opportunities and the cost of living in Chanhassen increased over time, and in 2016, more respondents reported that the economy will have a positive impact on their income in the next six months than in 2013.

## **Residents highly value Recreation and Wellness opportunities in Chanhassen.**

Chanhassen residents tended to give very high ratings to aspects of Recreation and Wellness in the City. About 9 in 10 respondents awarded high marks to overall health and wellness opportunities, the availability of preventive health care, fitness opportunities, City parks and health services; all of these aspects were rated higher in Chanhassen than in other communities across the country. Residents also reported frequently using recreation amenities in Chanhassen: about 9 in 10 residents reported using a City park, while a majority of residents indicated using a City trail, Lake Ann Park, City Center Park and Lake Susan Park at least once in the 12 months prior to the survey. Further, 9 in 10 participants reported that neighborhood parks and playgrounds, trails and large community parks were essential or very important for the City to provide. Residents also reported support for improving and expanding Chanhassen's recreation amenities. When asked about different ways to improve upon the City's recreation center, about three-quarters of respondents indicated support for an additional property tax that would help remodel and modernize the Recreation Center within its existing foot print, while about 7 in 10 would strongly or somewhat support expanding and modernizing on the current site. Additionally, about 3 in 10 participants indicated that the number one missing recreation amenity in Chanhassen was a pool.