

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

**Paducah, KY**  
Community Livability Report

2018



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# About

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

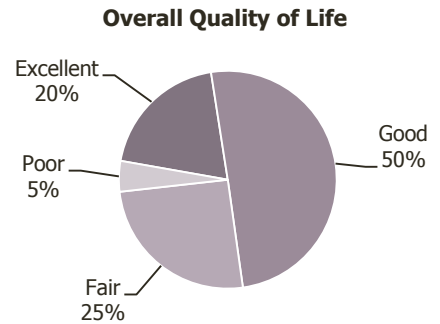
Great communities are partnerships of the government, private sector, community-based organizations and residents, all geographically connected. The NCS captures residents’ opinions within the three pillars of a community (Community Characteristics, Governance and Participation) across eight central 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 360 residents of the City of Paducah. The margin of error around any reported percentage is 5% 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 Paducah

A majority of residents rated the quality of life in Paducah as excellent or good. When compared to the national benchmark, this rating was similar (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.

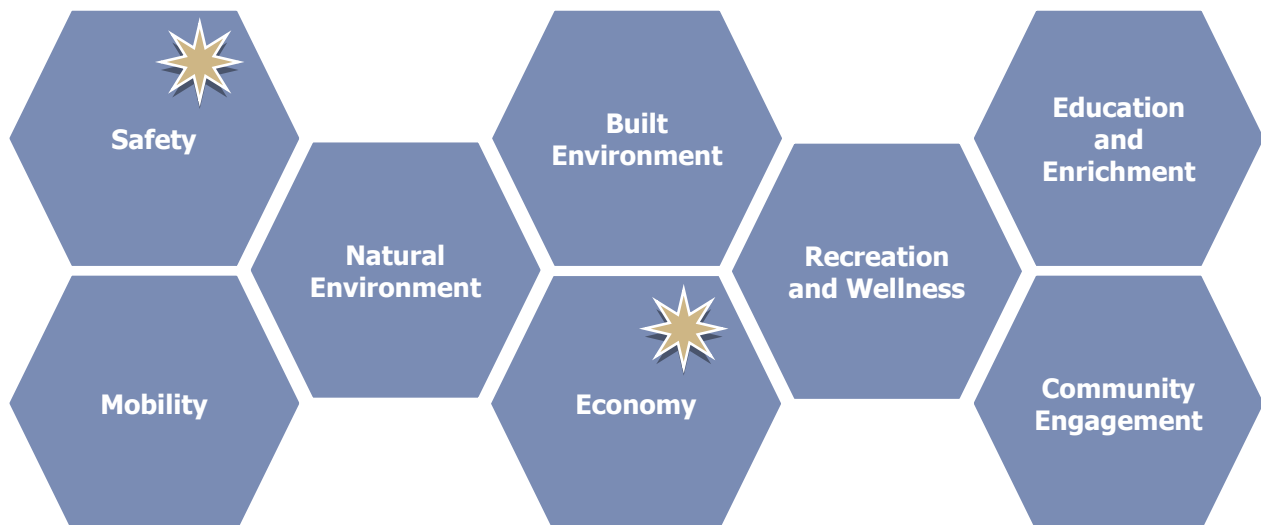
In addition to a summary of ratings, the image below includes one or more stars to indicate which community facets were the most important focus areas for the community. Residents identified Safety and Economy as priorities for the Paducah community in the coming two years. Ratings for all facets were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

## Legend

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

- Most important



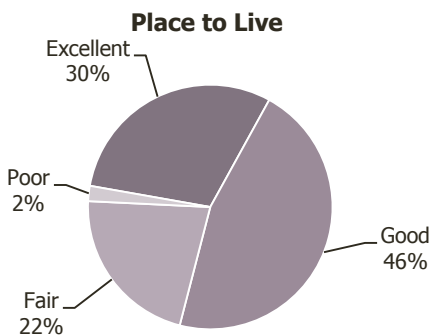
# Community Characteristics

*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 Paducah, 76% rated the City as an excellent or good place to live. Respondents' ratings of Paducah as a place to live were similar to ratings in other communities across the nation.

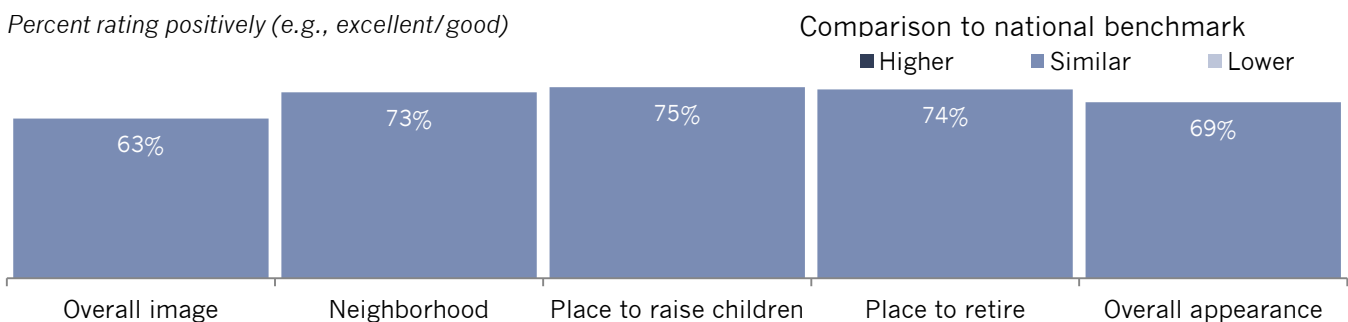
In addition to rating the City as a place to live, respondents rated several aspects of community quality including Paducah as a place to raise children and to retire, their neighborhood as a place to live, the overall image or reputation of Paducah and its overall appearance. At least 6 in 10 residents offered positive ratings to each characteristic listed; these ratings were all similar to the national comparisons.

Delving deeper into Community Characteristics, survey respondents rated over 40 features of the community within the eight facets of Community Livability. Most of the community characteristics rated in the survey were rated positively by a majority of residents. The highest rated characteristics related to safety, religious/spiritual opportunities, overall ease of travel and quality of K-12 education. The characteristics receiving a minority of positive ratings fell into various categories (employment opportunities and overall economic health within Economy; ease of travel by public transportation within Mobility; and affordable quality housing within Built Environment). While nearly all Community Characteristics were rated similar to the national comparisons, two were rated lower (overall economic health and cleanliness) and two were rated higher (vibrant downtown area and cultural/arts/music activities).



When compared to 2016, several ratings for Community Characteristics increased in 2018, particularly within the facet of Community Engagement (for more information see the *Trends over Time* report under separate cover).

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



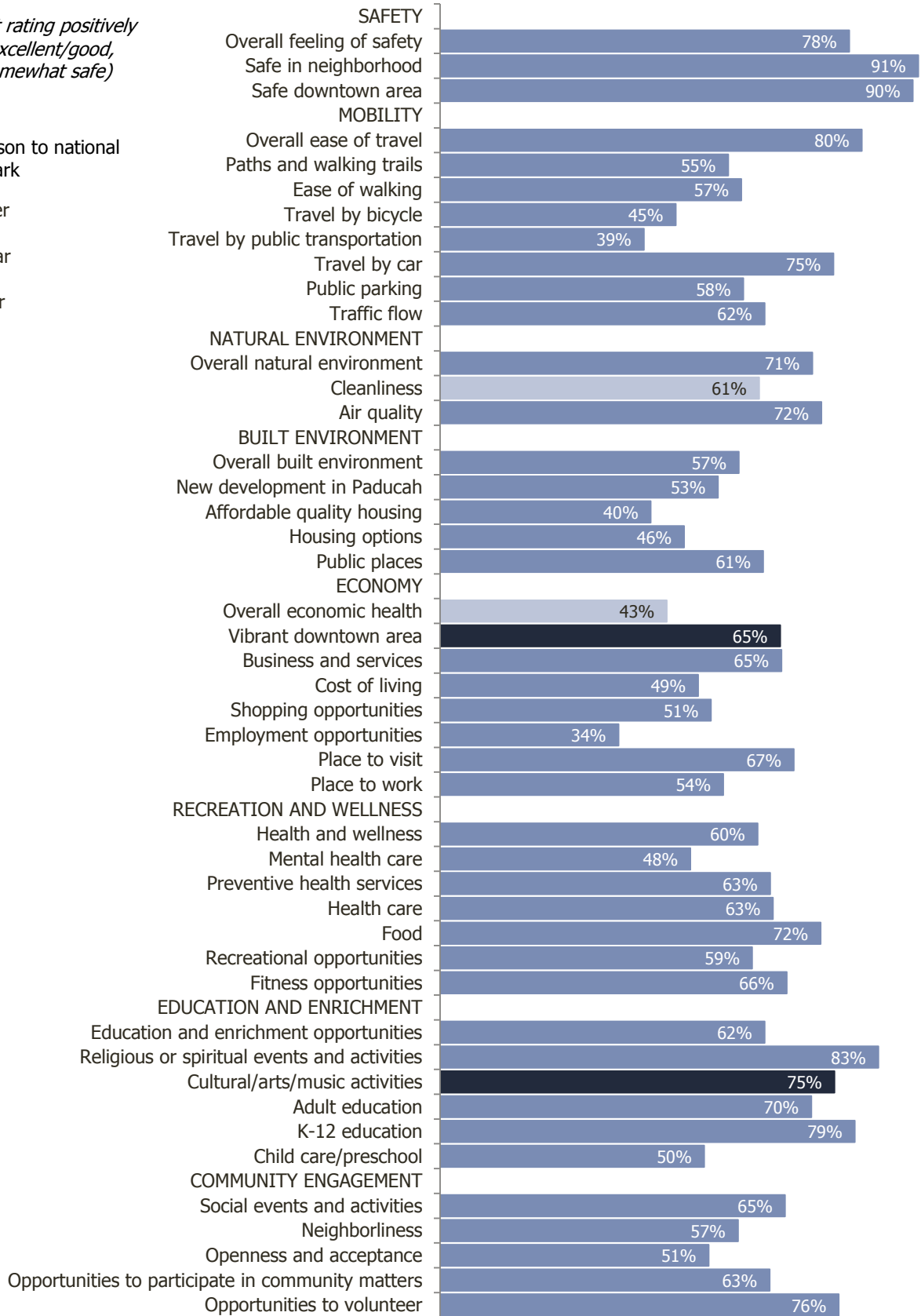
# The National Citizen Survey™

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 Paducah meet the needs and expectations of its residents?*

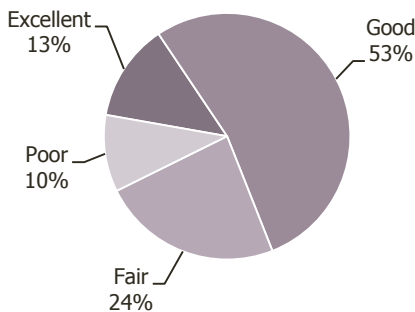
The overall quality of the services provided by Paducah as well as the manner in which these services are provided is a key component of how residents rate their quality of life. About two-thirds of residents gave excellent or good ratings to the overall quality of City services; this score was similar to ratings in comparison communities across the country.

Survey respondents also rated various aspects of Paducah’s leadership and governance. All ratings were similar to the national comparisons with between 4 in 10 and 7 in 10 residents offering positive evaluations to each listed item. Further, several of these evaluations improved from 2016 to 2018.

Respondents evaluated over 30 individual services and amenities available in Paducah. Of the 36 services compared, most (27) were similar to national comparisons. The services receiving lower ratings were clustered within the Built Environment facet (storm drainage, power utility, utility billing and cable television), Mobility (street repair, snow removal and sidewalk maintenance) and the facet of Natural Environment (recycling and yard waste pick-up). Services or amenities related to the facets of Safety, Recreation and Wellness and Education and Enrichment tended to house the most positive ratings.

Compared to 2016, ratings increased in 2018 for several services, particularly within the facets of Built Environment, Natural Environment and Community Engagement.

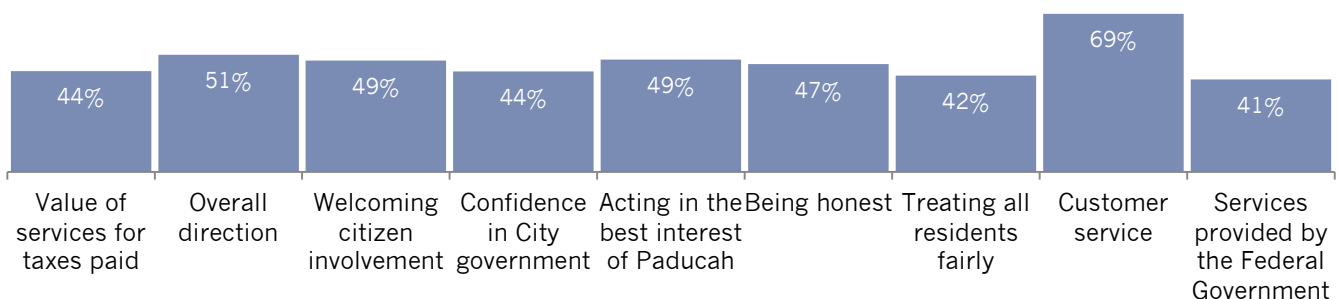
## Overall Quality of City Services



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

Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



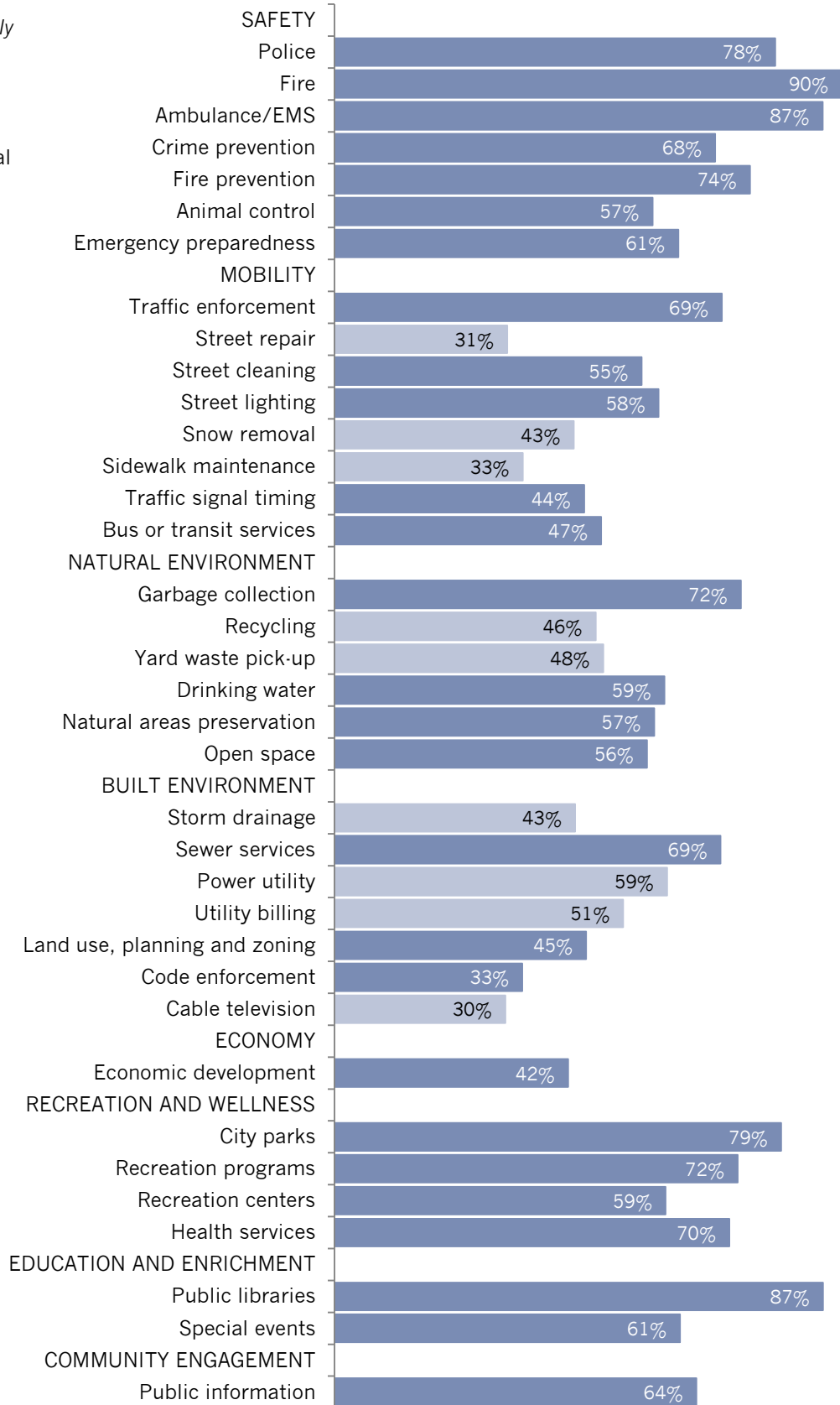
# The National Citizen Survey™

Figure 2: Aspects of Governance

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

Comparison to national  
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower





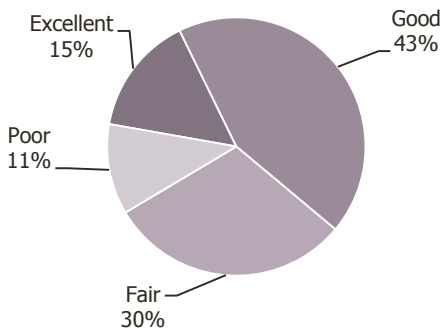
# Participation

## *Are the residents of Paducah 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 58% of respondents gave high marks to the sense of community in Paducah. Most respondents were likely to recommend living in Paducah and planned to remain in the city. These ratings were all similar to the national comparison.

The survey included over 30 activities and behaviors for which respondents indicated how often they participated in or performed each, if at all. Residents in Paducah were more likely than their national peers to work in the city, to have participated in religious or spiritual activities and to report not being under housing cost stress (a rating which also increased from 2016 to 2018). Residents reported lower rates of recycling at home, conserving water, walking or biking instead of driving and using public transportation instead of driving compared to residents in other communities across the country. Nearly all residents had purchased goods or services in Paducah, a level of Participation that was similar when compared to the national averages.

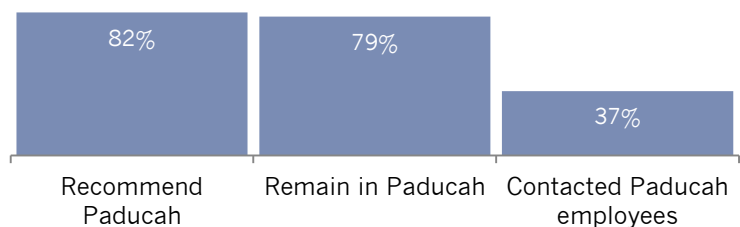
**Sense of Community**



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

Comparison to national  
benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



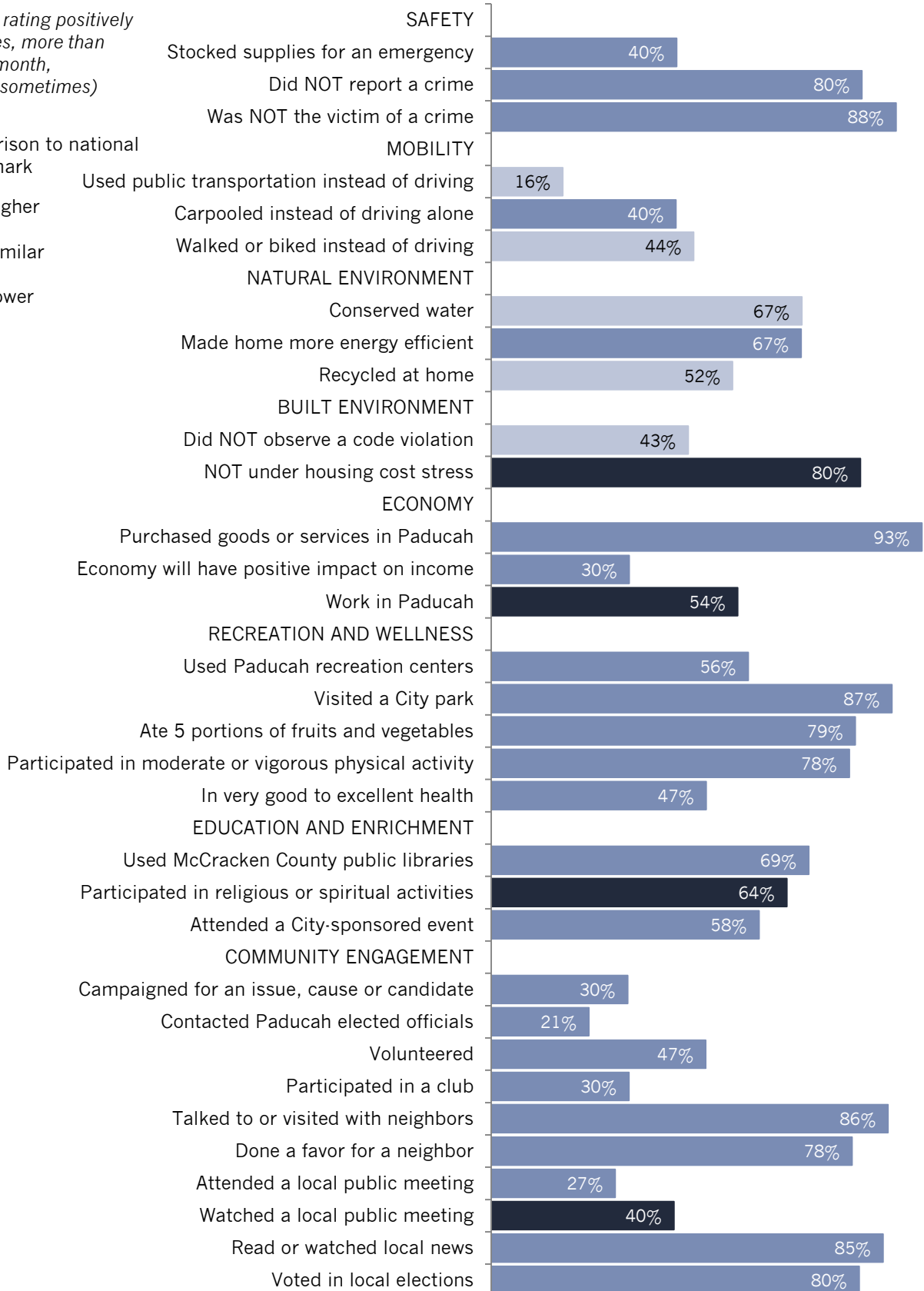
## The National Citizen Survey™

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



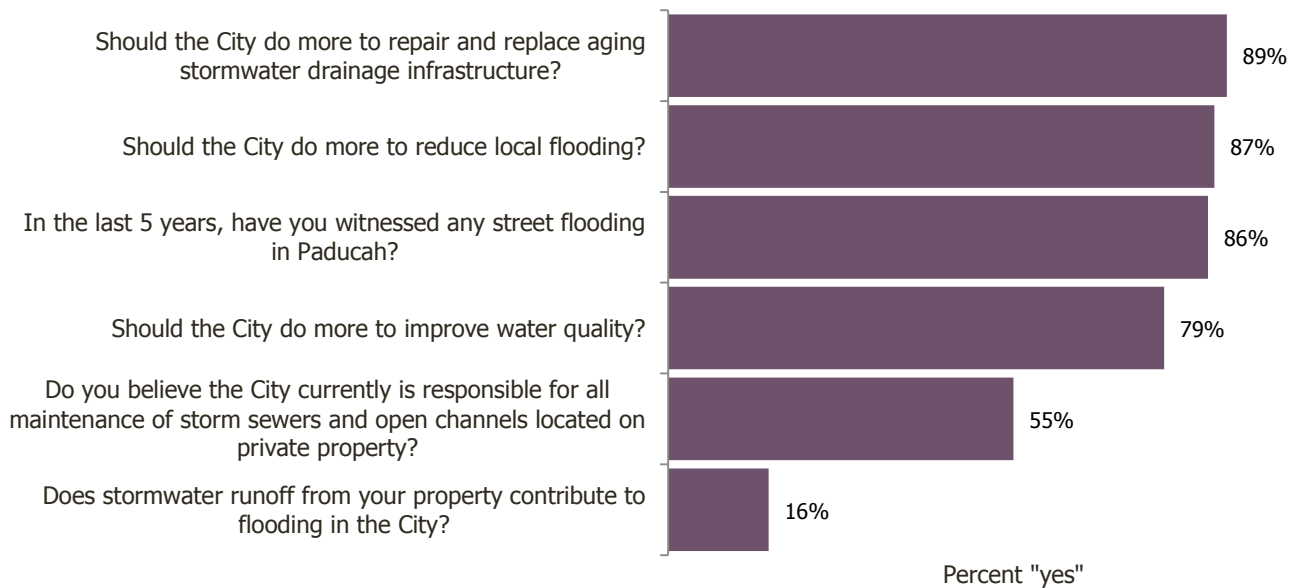
# Special Topics

The City of Paducah included a variety of questions of special interest on The NCS. Topics covered by these questions included stormwater, improvements to walkability and important neighborhood features.

Residents were asked a variety of questions related to their experience and impressions of stormwater in Paducah. At least 8 in 10 residents answered yes to four of the six questions listed, including agreeing that the City should do more to repair and replace aging stormwater drainage infrastructure, reduce local flooding and to improve water quality. About half of respondents believed that the City is responsible for all maintenance of storm sewers and open channels located on private property and fewer than 2 in 10 indicated that stormwater runoff from their property contributes to local flooding.

Figure 4: Stormwater in Paducah

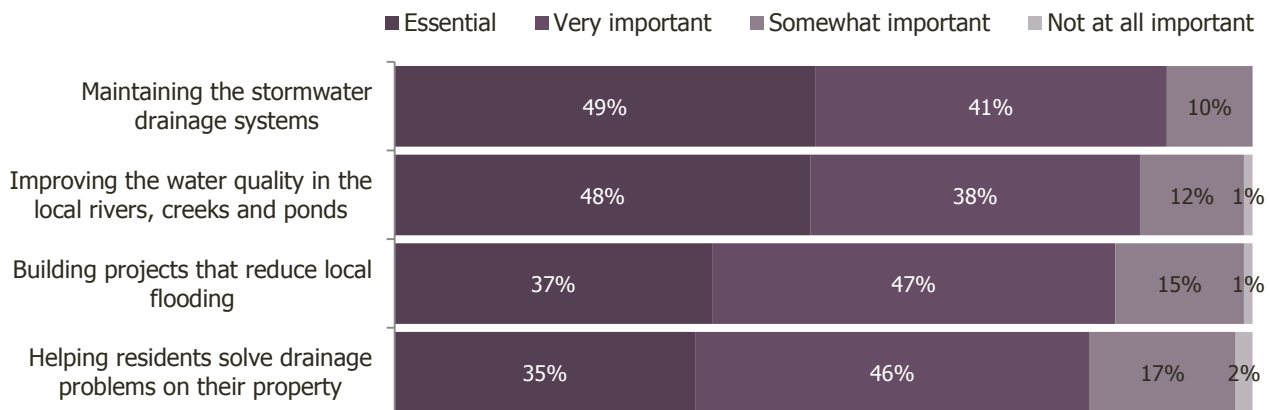
Please answer either no or yes to each of the following questions related to stormwater in Paducah.



When asked about the importance of various initiatives related to stormwater in Paducah, most residents indicated that each listed initiative was essential or very important with maintenance of the stormwater drainage system at the top of the list and helping residents solve drainage problems on their property at the bottom.

Figure 5: Importance of Stormwater Initiatives

Please rate how important, if at all, you think it is for the City to work on each of the following stormwater initiatives.



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About 4 in 10 respondents indicated that they would be willing to pay a monthly fee to provide funding for improvements to the stormwater drainage system within the City to reduce flooding. Of those that indicated yes, about two-thirds would be willing to pay at least four dollars a month.

Figure 6: Willingness to Pay Fee for Stormwater Drainage Improvements

*Would you be willing to pay a monthly fee to provide funding for improvements to the stormwater drainage system within the City to reduce flooding?*

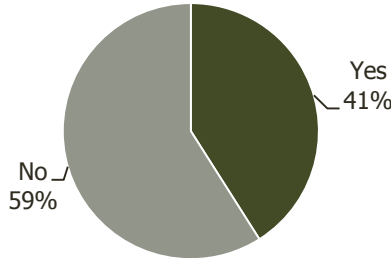
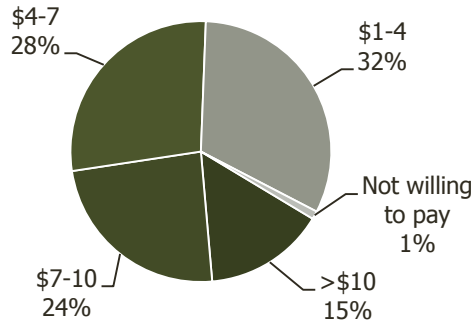


Figure 7: Amount Willing to Pay for Stormwater Drainage Improvements

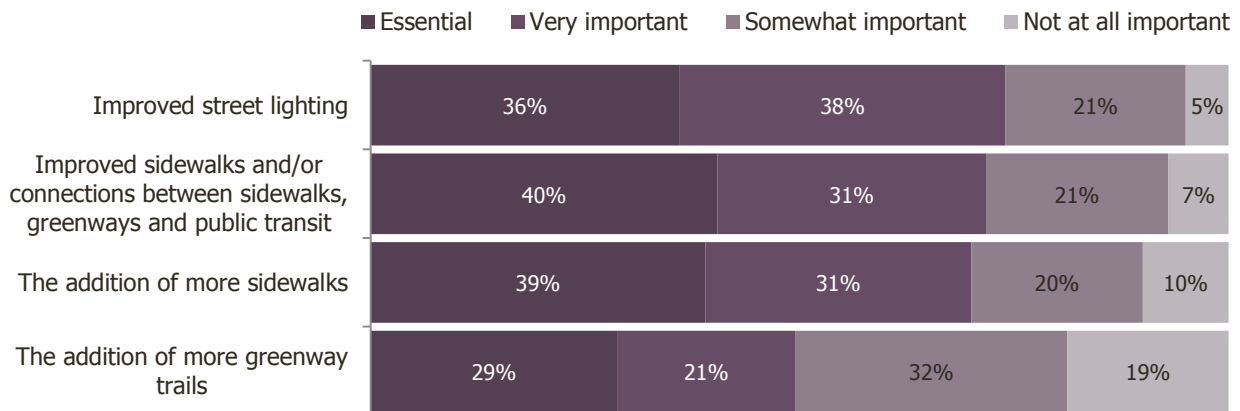
*If yes, how much would you be willing to pay per month?*



When asked to consider the importance of improvements that would make them more likely to walk in Paducah, improved street lighting and improved sidewalks greenways and public transit topped the list. At the bottom of the list, with about half of respondents indicating this as essential or very important, was the addition of more greenway trails.

Figure 8: Improvements to Walkability in Paducah

*Please rate how important, if at all, do you think the following improvements would be in increasing your likelihood to walk in Paducah.*

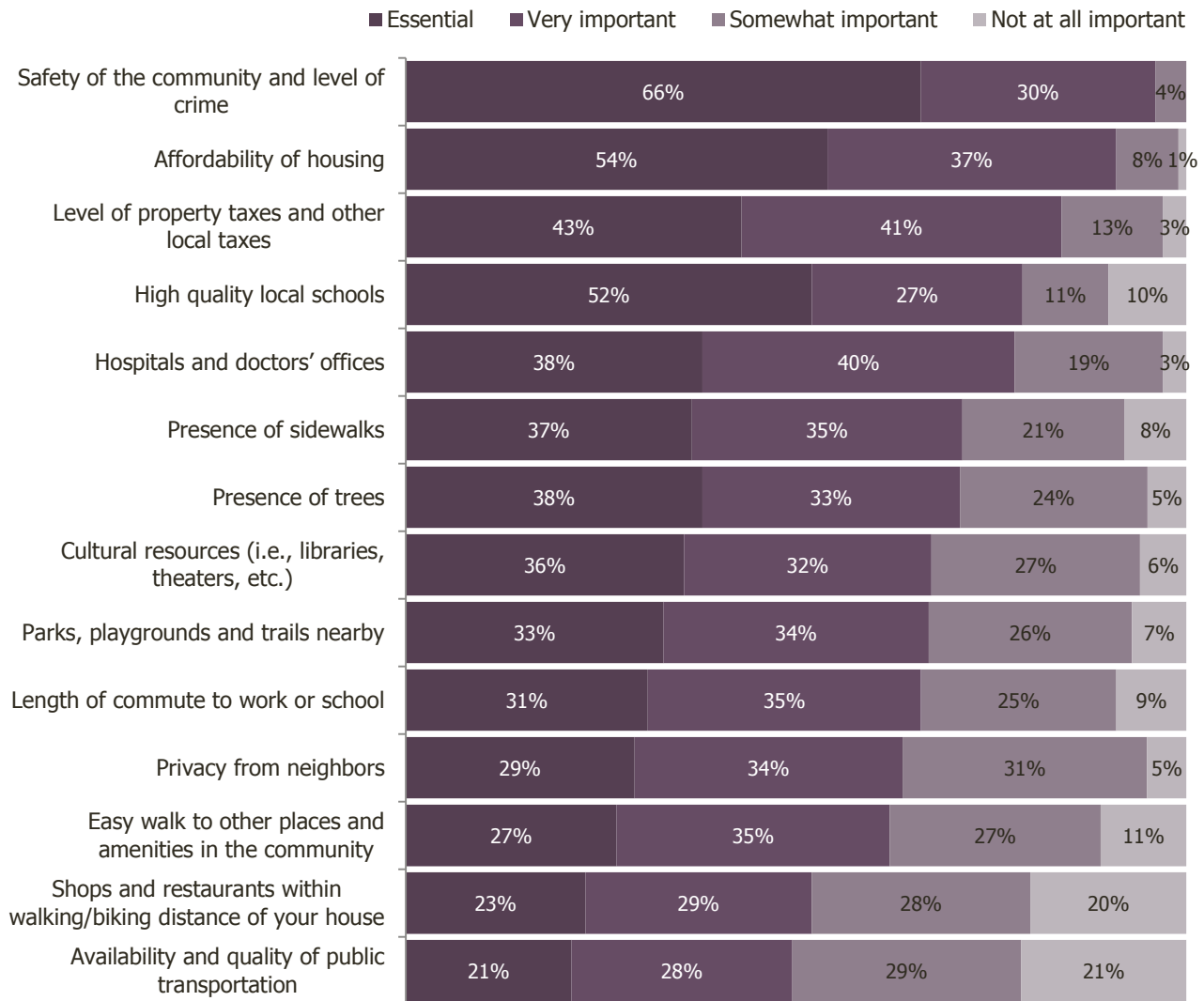


## The National Citizen Survey™

When deciding where to live, safety of the community and level of crime was identified as the most important neighborhood feature followed by affordability of housing, level of property taxes and other local taxes, high quality local schools and hospitals and doctors' offices. At the bottom of the list were shops and restaurants within walking/biking distance of home and availability and quality of public transportation.

Figure 9: Important Neighborhood Features

*Please rate how important, if at all, the following neighborhood features and qualities are to you when deciding where to live.*



# Conclusions

## **Paducah residents continue to enjoy a high quality of life and feel more positively about Paducah as a place to retire than in past survey years.**

As in 2016, the overall quality of life in Paducah was generally seen as excellent or good by about 7 in 10 residents. When rating the city as a place to live as well as several aspects of community quality including Paducah as a place to raise children and to retire, their neighborhood as a place to live, the overall image or reputation of Paducah and its overall appearance, at least 6 in 10 residents offered positive ratings to each characteristic listed; these ratings were all similar to the national comparisons. Moreover, the rating for Paducah as a place to retire increased in 2018 compared to 2016 (65% excellent or good in 2016 compared to 74% in 2018).

## **Economic outlook is improving and Paducah's Economy continues to be a focus area.**

Survey participants indicated that Economy is an important facet for Paducah to focus on in the coming years. While overall economic health was rated lower than the national comparison, the rating for economic development increased in 2018 compared to 2016 and has been on the rise since 2013 when the first survey was conducted. Further, more residents indicated that they felt the economy would have a positive impact on their income in 2018 compared to 2016 and more residents indicated that they were not under housing cost stress.

## **Residents support the City doing more to improve stormwater drainage but fewer than half of respondents are willing to pay a fee for improvements.**

Within Governance, storm drainage was rated positively by 43% of residents, a rating lower than the national average. When asked a variety of special interest questions related to stormwater drainage, most residents answered yes to four of the six questions listed including agreeing that the City should do more to repair and replace aging stormwater drainage infrastructure, reduce local flooding and to improve water quality. Further, about 9 in 10 residents indicated that maintenance of the stormwater drainage system was essential or very important; however, only 4 in 10 respondents indicated that they would be willing to pay a monthly fee to provide funding for improvements to the stormwater drainage system within the City to reduce flooding.