



THE NCSTM
The National Citizen SurveyTM

Honolulu, HI

Community Livability Report

2017



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About

The National Citizen Survey™ (The NCS) report is about the “livability” of Honolulu. 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 424 residents of the City and County of Honolulu. 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.

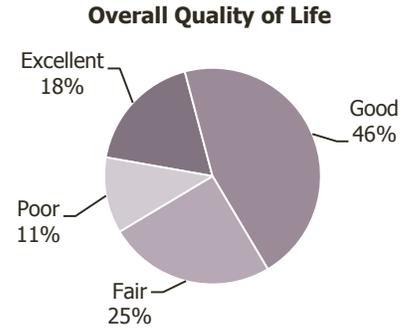


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Quality of Life in Honolulu

A majority of residents rated the quality of life in Honolulu as excellent or good. This proportion was lower than the national benchmark comparison (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.



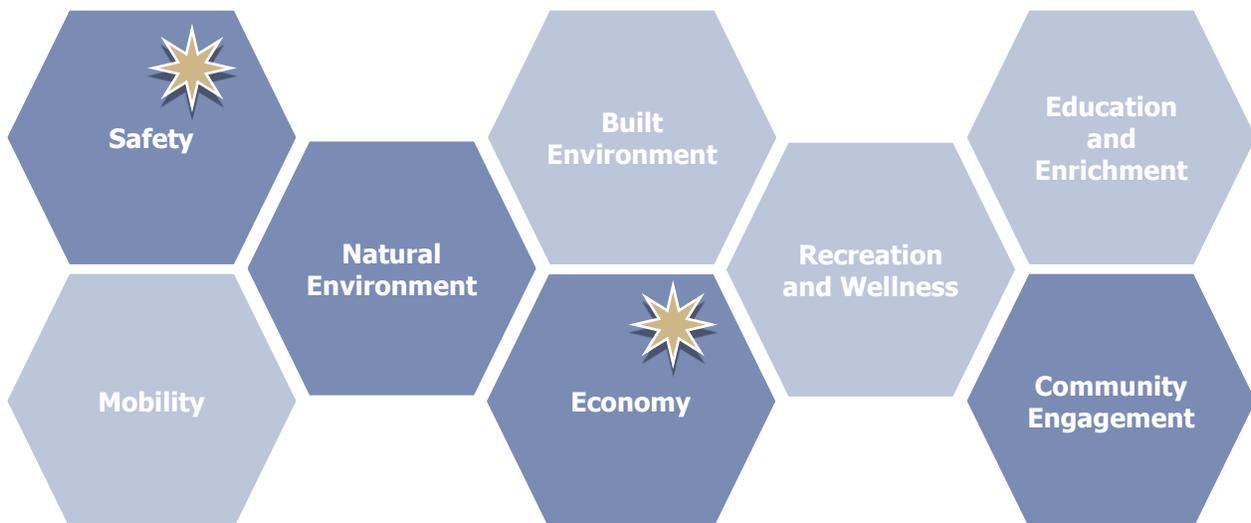
In addition to a summary of ratings, the image below includes one or more stars to indicate which community facets were the most important focus areas for the community. Residents identified Safety and Economy as priorities for the Honolulu community in the coming two years. Ratings for Safety, Natural Environment, Economy and Community Engagement were positive and similar to other communities. Ratings for Mobility, Built Environment, Recreation and Wellness and Education and Enrichment tended to be lower than the national benchmark. 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 Honolulu’s unique questions.

Legend

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

★ Most important



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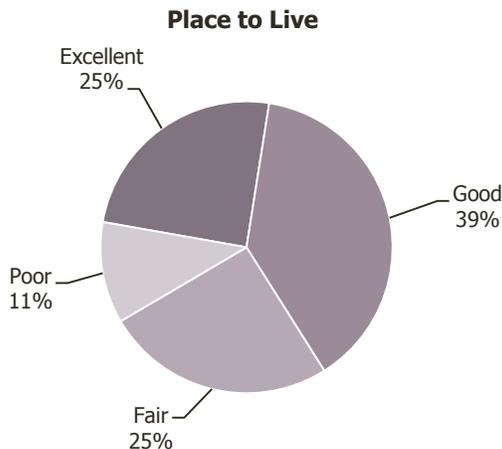
Community Characteristics

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 Honolulu, 64% rated the City and County as an excellent or good place to live. Respondents' ratings of Honolulu as a place to live were lower than ratings in other communities across the nation.

In addition to rating the City and County as a place to live, respondents rated several aspects of community quality including Honolulu as a place to raise children and to retire, their neighborhood as a place to live, the overall image or reputation of Honolulu and its overall appearance. These aspects were rated as excellent or good by at least one-third of respondents. Ratings for neighborhoods were similar to comparison communities, while ratings for the overall image or reputation of Honolulu, Honolulu as a place to raise children, place to retire and overall appearance were lower than 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. Aspects of Community Engagement were rated as excellent or good by a majority of respondents and were similar to the benchmark. The three aspects of Safety were rated as excellent or good by 6 in 10 respondents or more, although comparisons to the benchmark were mixed. Ratings for overall feeling of safety and safety in Honolulu's downtown/commercial area were lower than in comparison communities, while ratings for safety in neighborhoods were similar. Aspects within Mobility were rated less positively; fewer than half of all respondents rated each aspect as excellent or good, and 7 out of 8 aspects were lower than the benchmark comparisons (the rating for travel by public transportation was similar to the benchmark). Items within the Built Environment facet were rated positively by less than 4 in 10 residents; which was lower than the benchmarks. These ratings ranged from 5% excellent or good (availability of affordable quality housing) to 35% (new development in

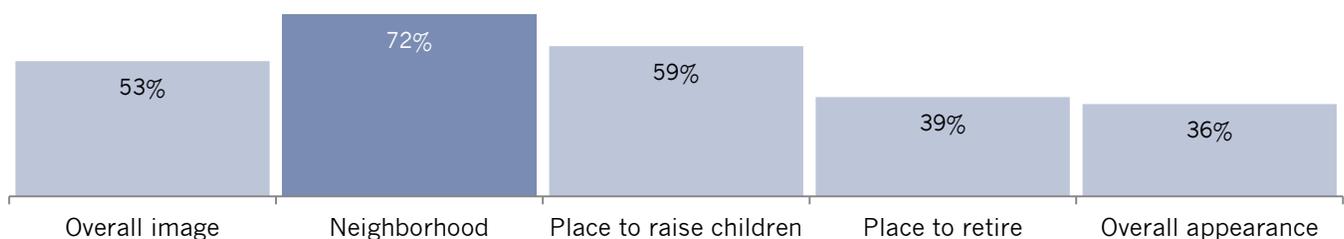


Honolulu). One of highest rated aspects across all facets of Community Characteristics was Honolulu as a place to visit, about 4 in 5 respondents rated it as excellent or good; this rating was higher than ratings in comparison communities.

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

Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



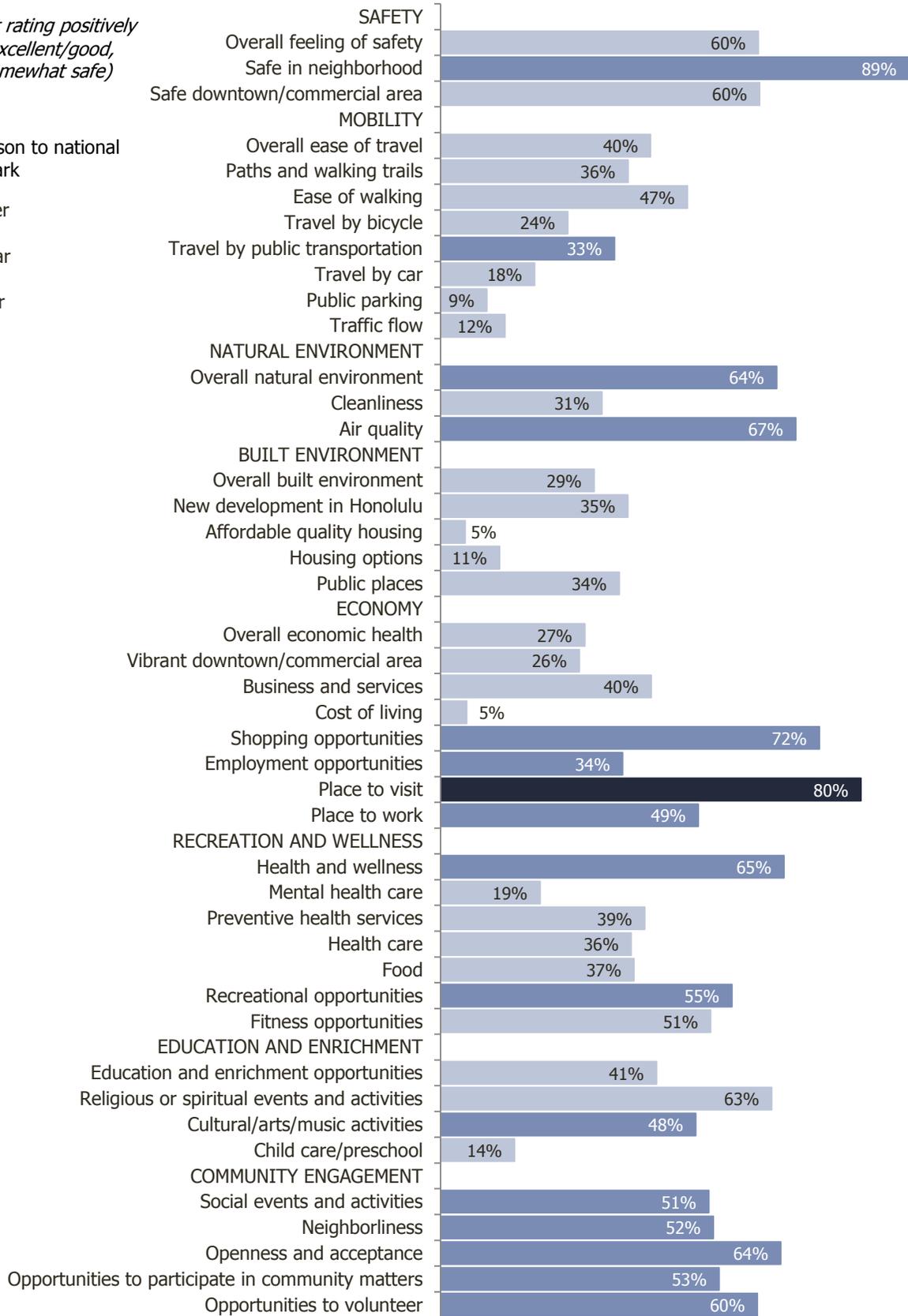
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Figure 1: Aspects of Community Characteristics

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



Governance

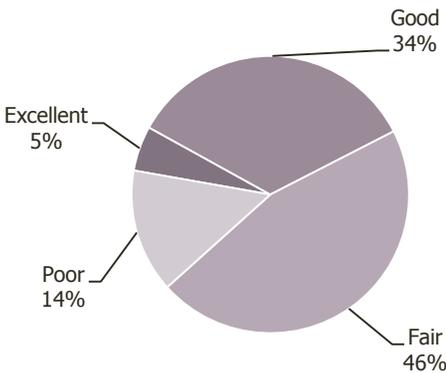
How well does the government of Honolulu meet the needs and expectations of its residents?

The overall quality of the services provided by Honolulu as well as the manner in which these services are provided is a key component of how residents rate their quality of life. Close to 2 in 5 residents gave excellent or good ratings to the overall quality of services provided by the City and County, as well as to the Federal Government. Ratings of the City and County were lower than the national benchmark while ratings of the Federal Government were similar to those observed elsewhere.

Survey respondents also rated various aspects of Honolulu’s leadership and governance. Most aspects of City and County government were rated as excellent or good by about one-quarter of respondents, and all ratings were lower than ratings in comparison communities. About 39% of Honolulu residents gave high marks to the customer service provided by City and County employees.

Respondents evaluated over 30 individual services and amenities available in Honolulu. Most aspects of Governance received ratings lower than the national benchmarks; however a handful of aspects received ratings similar to the benchmarks. A majority of Honolulu residents gave positive marks to fire services, ambulance/EMS and to drinking water and these ratings were all similar to those in other communities across the nation. While most aspects of Governance remained stable from 2016 to 2017 (see the *Trends over Time* report under separate cover), ratings declined for fire prevention, emergency preparedness and City and County parks, while ratings of police services improved during this same time period.

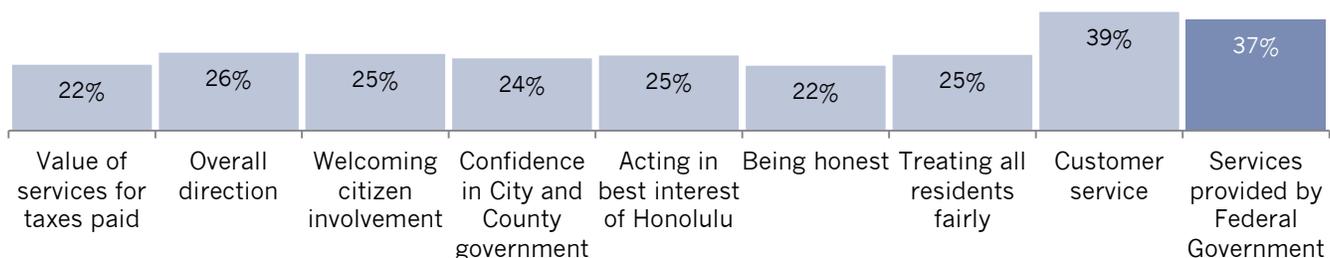
Overall Quality of City and County Services



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

Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



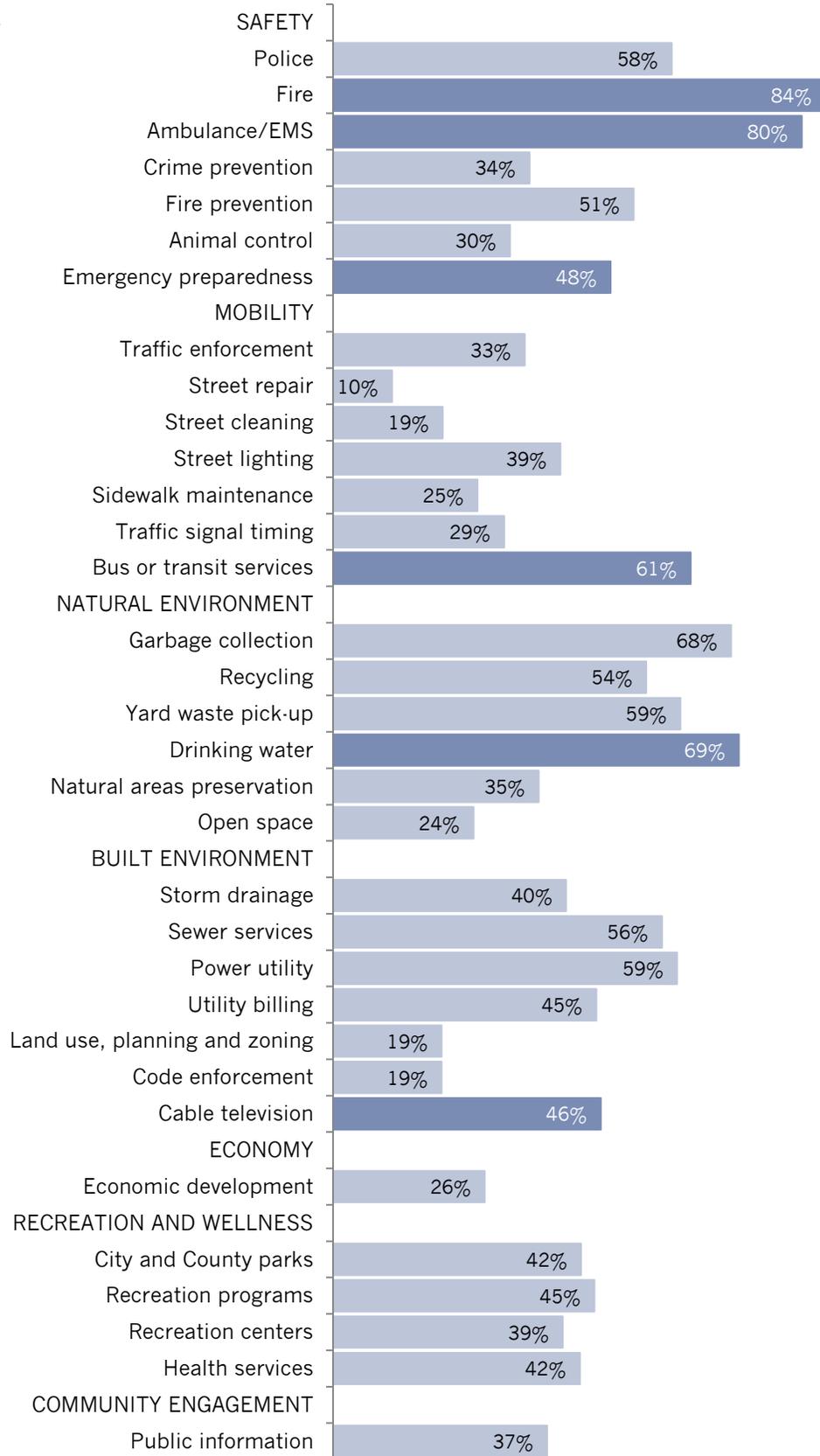
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Figure 2: Aspects of Governance

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower

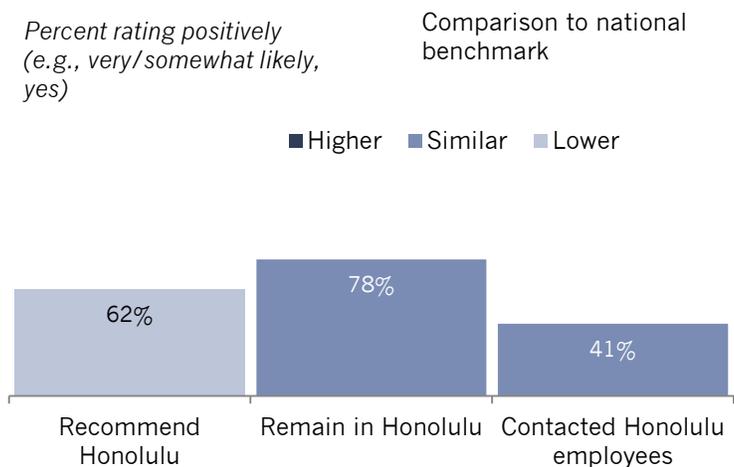
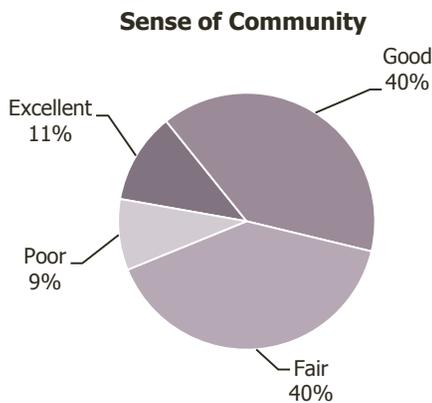


Participation

Are the residents of Honolulu 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 half of the survey respondents rated the sense of community in Honolulu as excellent or good; this rating was lower than ratings in other communities across the nation. A majority of respondents were likely to recommend living in Honolulu and about three-quarters planned to remain in Honolulu 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. Most rates of Participation were similar to the benchmarks; four aspects were higher than the benchmarks and six were lower. More Honolulu residents reported that they had stocked supplies for an emergency, used public transportation instead of driving, worked in Honolulu or watched a local public meeting than residents in other communities. Compared to participants from other communities in the U.S., fewer Honolulu residents believed the economy would have a positive impact on their income, had attended a City and County-sponsored event, done a favor for a neighbor or had attended a local public meeting. Further, more Honolulu residents had observed a code violation and were under housing cost stress.



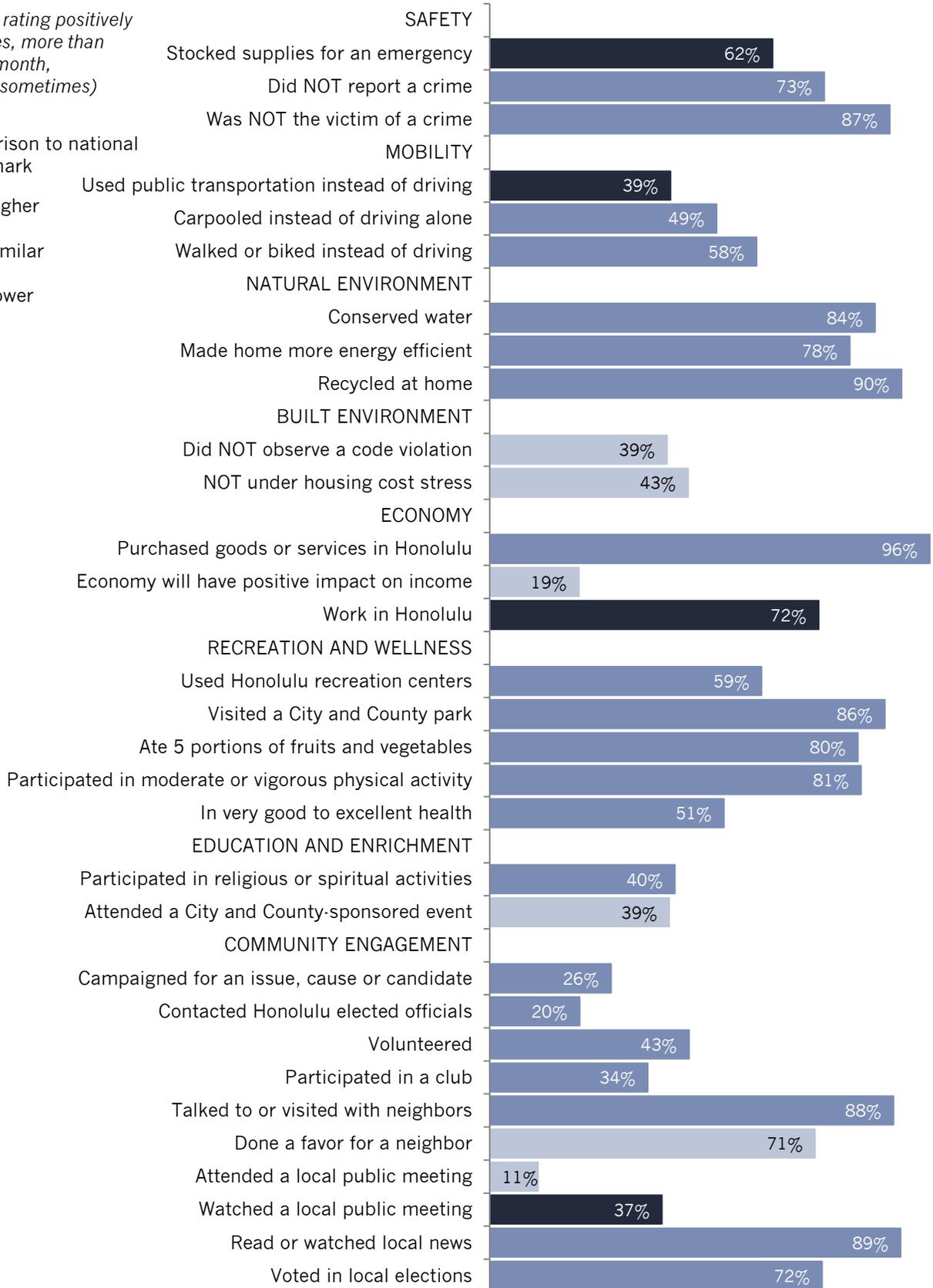
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Figure 3: Aspects of Participation

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower

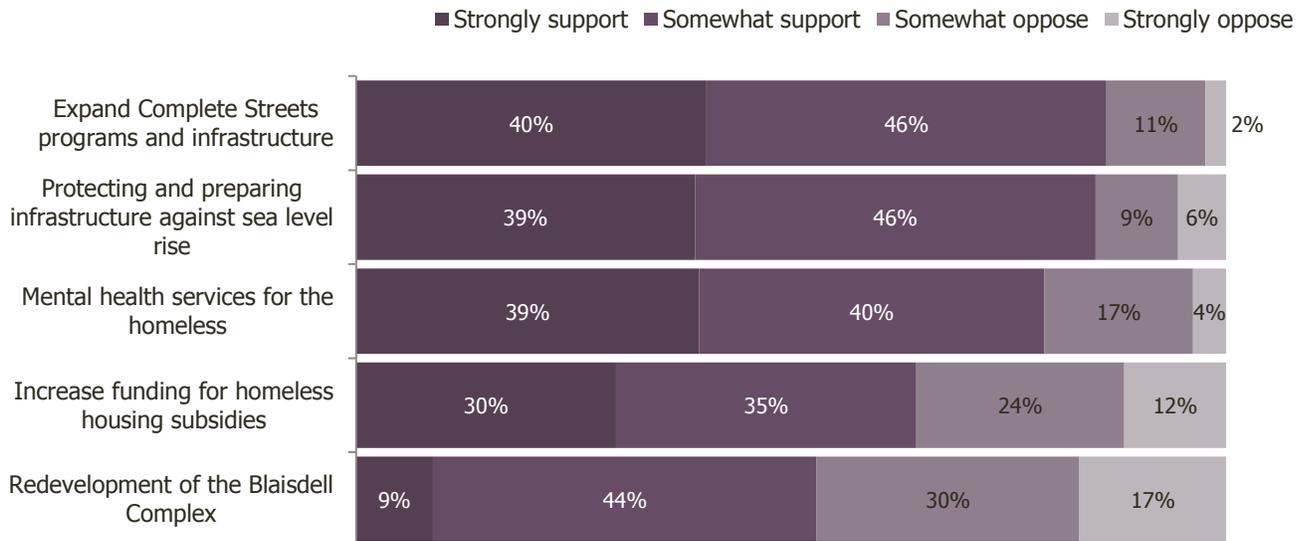


Special Topics

The City and County of Honolulu included six questions of special interest on The NCS. The first questions asked residents to rate their support or opposition for City and County funding items (even if it involved raising taxes or fees). A majority indicated that they would at least somewhat support each item listed. Expanding Complete Streets programs, protecting and preparing infrastructure against sea level rise and funding mental health services for the homeless received the strongest levels of resident support.

Figure 4: Support for Funding

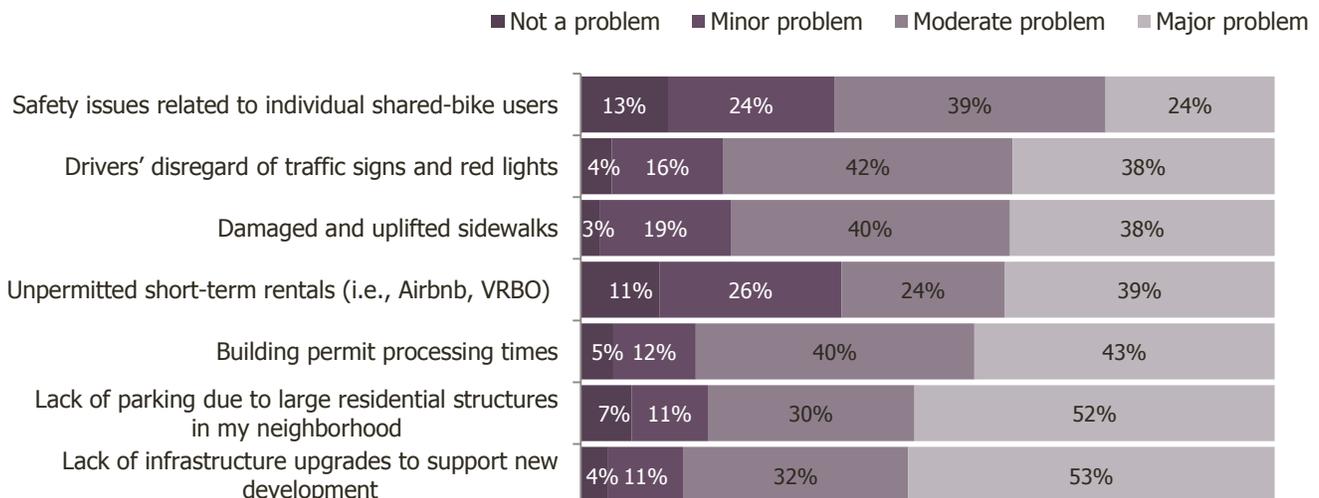
Please indicate to what extent you would support or oppose the City and County funding each of the following items, even if it involved raising taxes or fees:



The next question asked respondents to indicate the extent to which potential issues were problems in Honolulu. About half of respondents said that a lack of infrastructure upgrades to support new development and a lack of parking due to large residential structures in neighborhoods were major problems.

Figure 5: Problems in Honolulu

Please indicate the extent to which you think each of the following is a problem in the City and County of Honolulu:

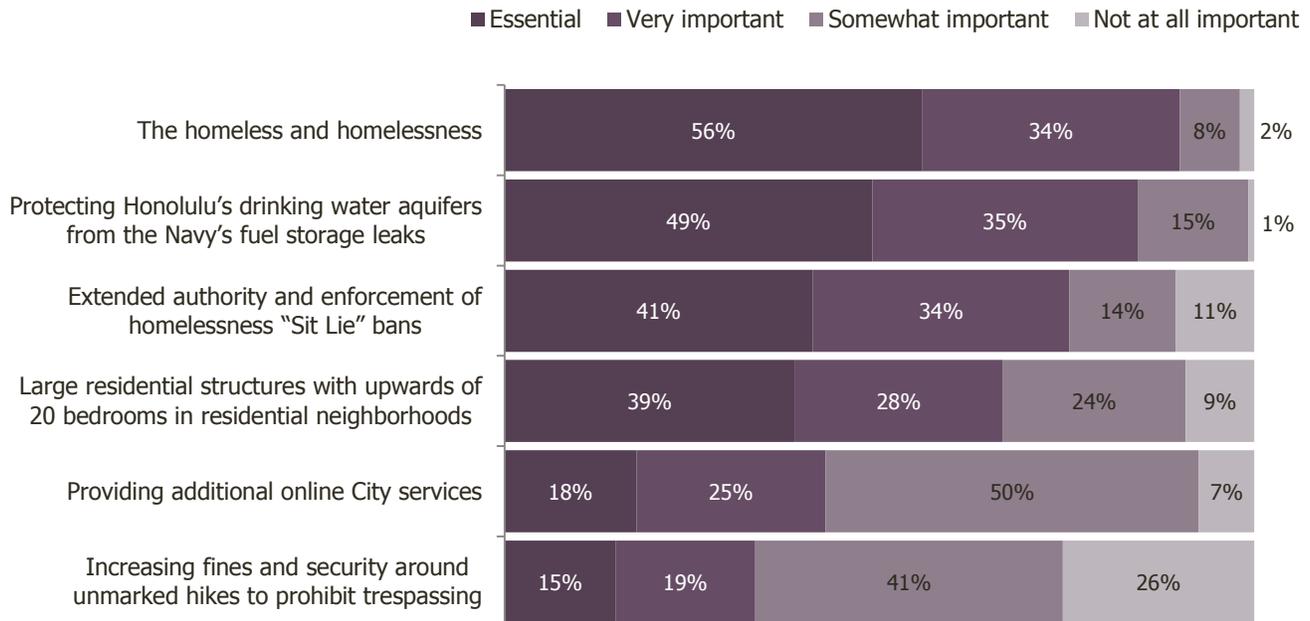


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Survey respondents were then asked to rate the importance of several issues for the City and County to address. About 8 in 10 or more rated the homeless and homelessness and protecting Honolulu’s drinking water aquifers from the Navy’s fuel storage leaks as essential or very important to address. Addressing issues related to extended authority and enforcement of homelessness “Sit Lie” bans and large residential structures in residential neighborhoods was thought to be essential or very important by a majority of residents.

Figure 6: Potential Priorities

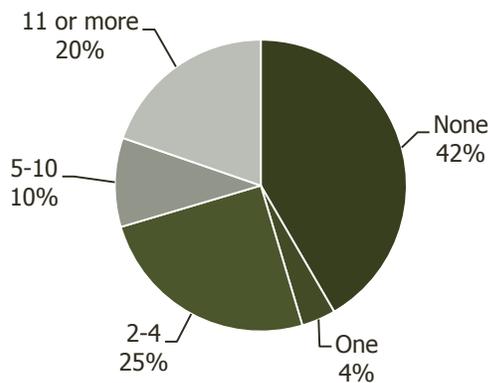
How important, if at all, are the following issues for the City to address in the next two years?



Residents were also asked how many short-term rentals were operating in their neighborhoods. About 4 in 10 didn’t think there were any in their neighborhoods, while about 3 in 10 thought there were 5 or more.

Figure 7: Number of Short Term Rentals

About how many short-term rentals (i.e., Airbnb, VRBO) are operating in your neighborhood?

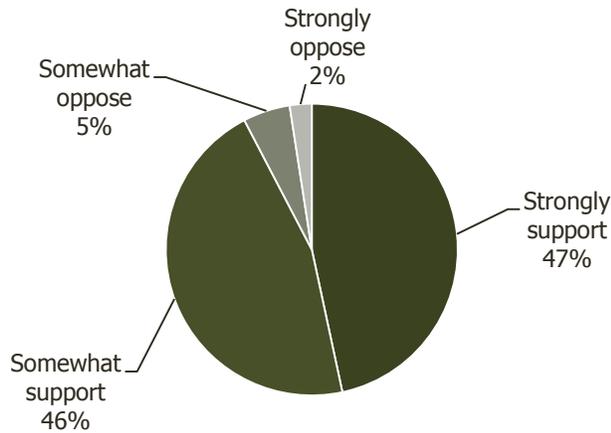


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Asked how they felt about changing solid waste disposal to sort waste into combustible and non-combustible waste, almost all residents indicated that they would strongly or somewhat support this change.

Figure 8: Changing Solid Waste Disposal

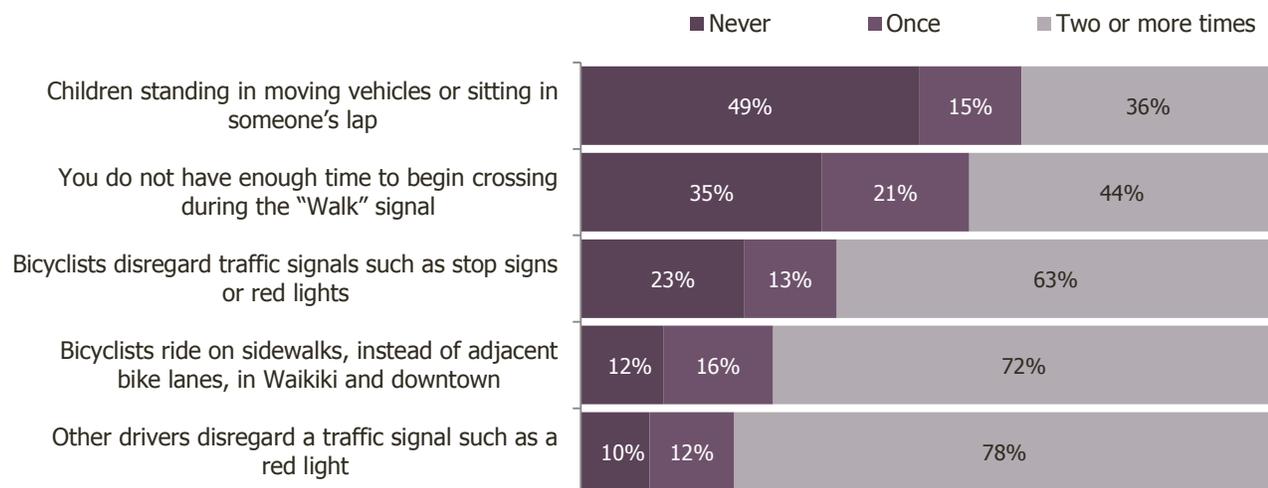
The market decline for recycled waste has made the blue-bin recycling program financially unsustainable. To what extent do you support or oppose changing the solid waste disposal to sort waste into combustible (can be burned at H-POWER to generate electricity) and non-combustible waste?



The final custom question asked respondents to indicate how often they'd observed a variety of traffic issues in the last 12 months. About half had never observed children standing or sitting in someone's lap in moving vehicles. More than half said they had observed bicyclists disregarding traffic signals, bicyclists riding on sidewalks and other drivers disregarding traffic signals at least twice in the prior 12 months.

Figure 9: Observations of Traffic Issues

In the last 12 months, how often, if ever, have you observed each of the following?



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Conclusions

Safety continues to be a priority for residents.

As in past surveys conducted for Honolulu, residents identified Safety as an important focus area for the Honolulu community in the next two years. About 4 in 5 residents reported feeling safe in their neighborhood and about 3 in 5 felt safe downtown and gave positive marks to the overall feel of safety in Honolulu. A majority of residents gave positive marks to fire prevention, ambulance/EMS, fire services and police services. Ratings for police services were lower than the national benchmark; however this rating improved from 2016 to 2017. Almost all safety ratings remained stable over time; however ratings for fire prevention and emergency preparedness saw declines in 2017. Fewer residents reported that they had stocked supplies for an emergency in 2017 compared to 2016.

Economy is also a continued area of focus.

Economy was also identified as an important area of focus in the coming years. As in past years, ratings for many aspects within this facet were lower than those given elsewhere, including the overall economic health of Honolulu, vibrancy of the downtown/commercial area, quality of business and service establishments, cost of living and economic development. However, ratings for Honolulu as a place to visit were higher than the benchmark, and ratings of Honolulu as a place to work, employment opportunities and shopping opportunities were all similar to the national benchmarks and remained stable over time.

Infrastructure is an area for improvement.

Ratings related to Built Environment (new development, affordable quality housing, housing options, overall built environment, public places, sewer services, storm drainage) and Mobility (traffic flow, travel by car, bicycle and walking, overall ease travel, and public parking, street repair, street cleaning, street lighting, sidewalk maintenance and traffic signal timing) were below the national benchmark, although generally stable from past years.

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