



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

# Snoqualmie, WA

Community Livability Report

2017



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# About

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

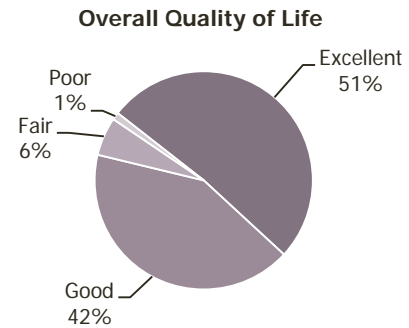
Great communities are partnerships of the government, private sector, community-based organizations and residents, all geographically connected. The NCS captures residents’ opinions within the three pillars of a community (Community Characteristics, Governance and Participation) across eight central 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 535 residents of the City of Snoqualmie. The margin of error around any reported percentage is 4% 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 Snoqualmie

Almost all residents (93%) rated the quality of life in Snoqualmie as excellent or good. This rating was higher than those given in other communities across the nation (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.

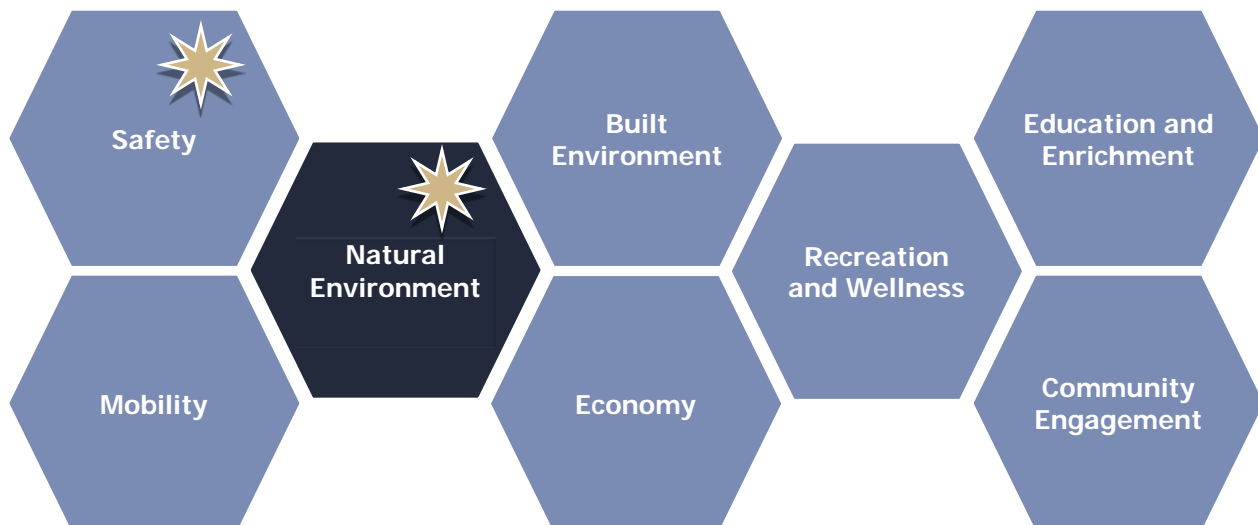
In addition to a summary of ratings, the image below includes one or more stars to indicate which community facets were the most important focus areas for the community. Residents identified Safety and Natural Environment as priorities for the Snoqualmie community in the coming two years. This is noteworthy since ratings for Natural Environment were higher than the benchmark comparison. Evaluations of Safety, as well as ratings for all other facets of community livability, were similar to those observed in 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 Snoqualmie’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?*

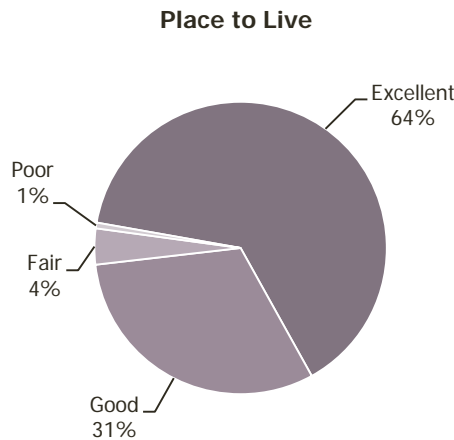
Overall quality of community life represents the natural ambience, services and amenities that make for an attractive community. How residents rate their overall quality of life is an indicator of the overall health of a community. In the case of Snoqualmie, 95% rated the City as an excellent or good place to live. Respondents' ratings of Snoqualmie 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 Snoqualmie as a place to raise children and to retire, their neighborhood as a place to live, the overall image or reputation of Snoqualmie and its overall appearance. At least 9 in 10 residents gave positive ratings to the overall image and overall appearance of the City, their neighborhood as a place to live and Snoqualmie as a place to raise children; these ratings were all higher than the benchmark comparison. About 6 in 10 residents were pleased with the City as a place to retire, which was on par with ratings given in other communities.

Delving deeper into Community Characteristics, survey respondents rated over 40 features of the community within the eight facets of Community Livability. Generally, residents provided strong ratings for most aspects of Safety, Natural Environment, Built Environment and Recreation and Wellness: almost all items were higher than or similar to the benchmark.

Residents were pleased with almost all aspects of Mobility, and those related to car, bicycle and foot travel were rated higher than the benchmark. However, ease of travel by public transportation received lower-than-average ratings.

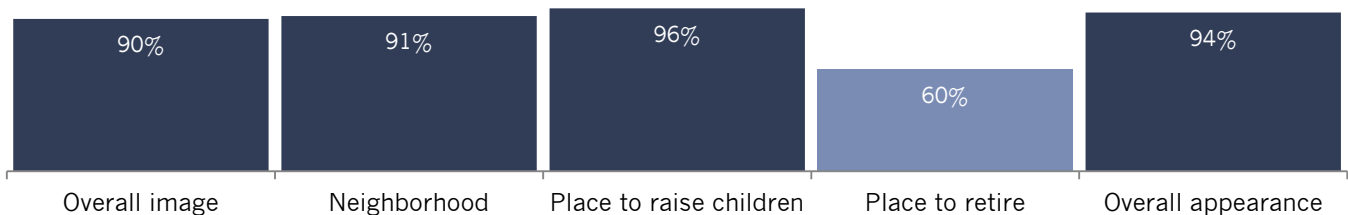
Economy evaluations revealed an above-average rating for the City as a place to visit, but some challenges around employment and shopping opportunities as well as Snoqualmie as a place to work.



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

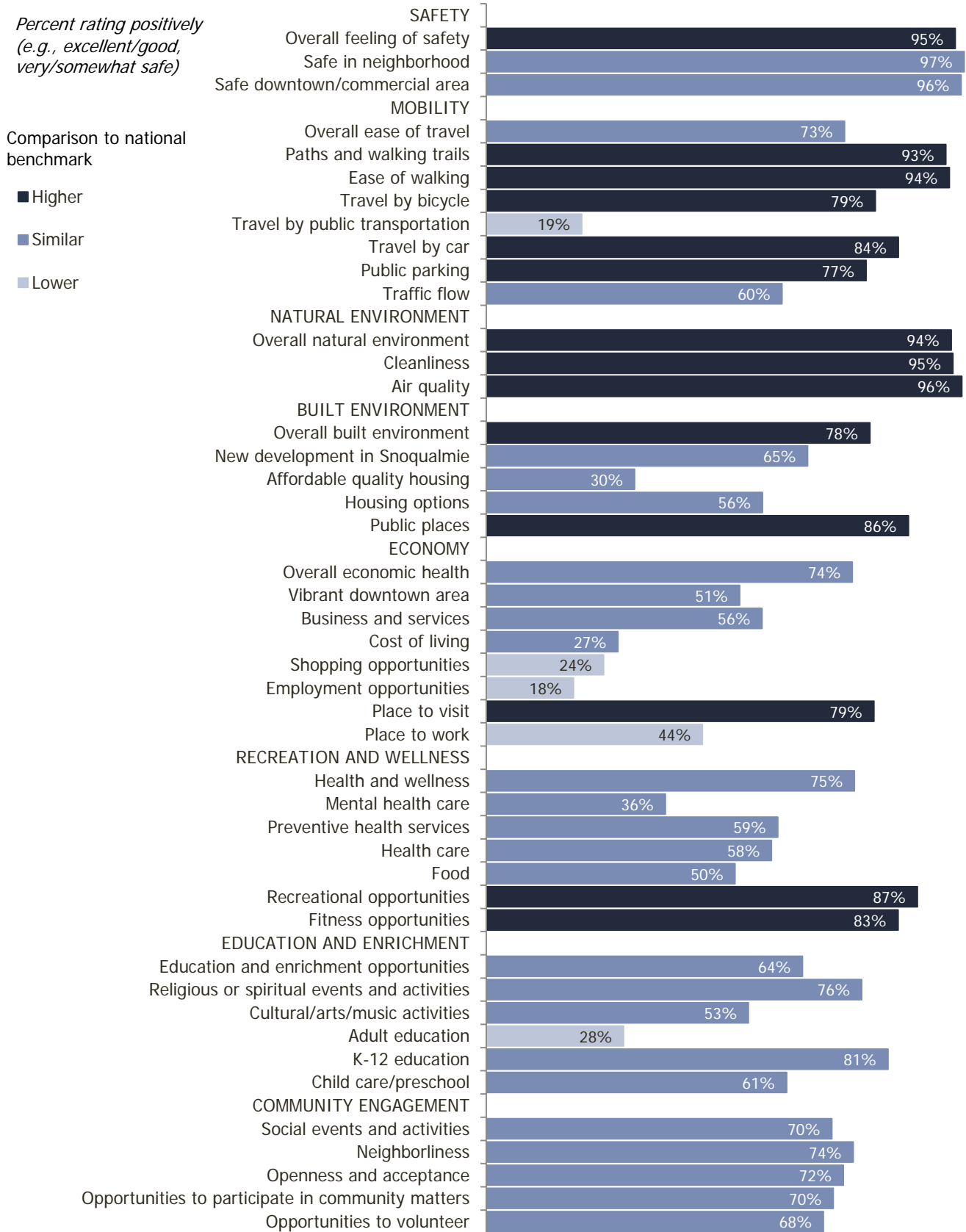
Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



# The National Citizen Survey™

Figure 1: Aspects of Community Characteristics



# Governance

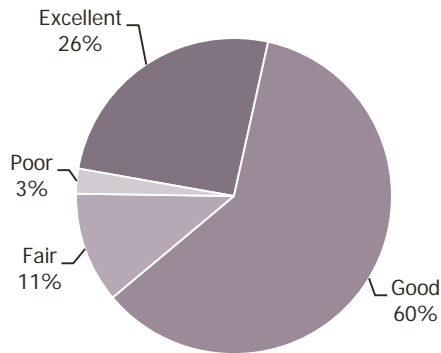
*How well does the government of Snoqualmie meet the needs and expectations of its residents?*

The overall quality of the services provided by Snoqualmie as well as the manner in which these services are provided is a key component of how residents rate their quality of life. In Snoqualmie, more than 8 in 10 residents gave positive ratings to the overall quality of City services and about 4 in 10 were pleased with the services provided by the Federal Government. Both of these were similar to the benchmark comparison.

Survey respondents also rated various aspects of Snoqualmie’s leadership and governance. Most residents were pleased with the customer service provided by the City and roughly 6 in 10 residents gave excellent or good marks to the remaining aspects of government performance. All aspects were similar to the national benchmark.

Respondents evaluated over 30 individual services and amenities available in Snoqualmie. Ratings for City services were strong; Mobility and Natural Environment emerged as areas of exceptional performance. Overall, many services were positively rated by three-quarters or more of respondents and all but one, bus or transit services, received marks higher than or similar to the benchmark comparison.

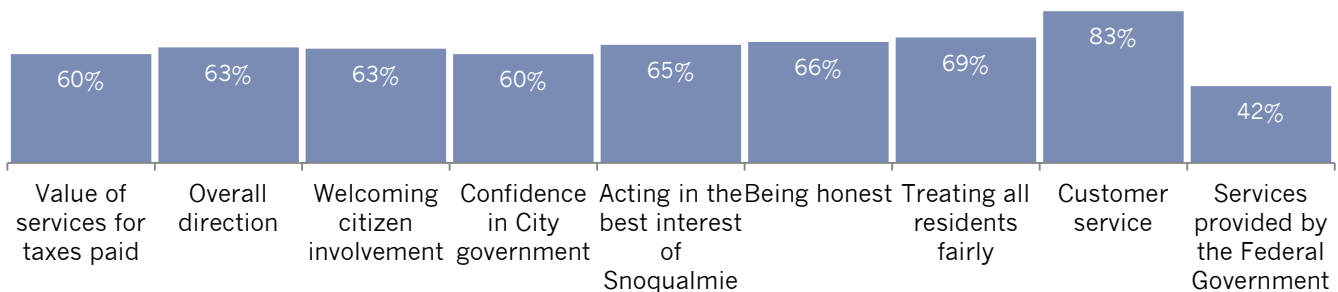
Overall Quality of City Services



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

Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



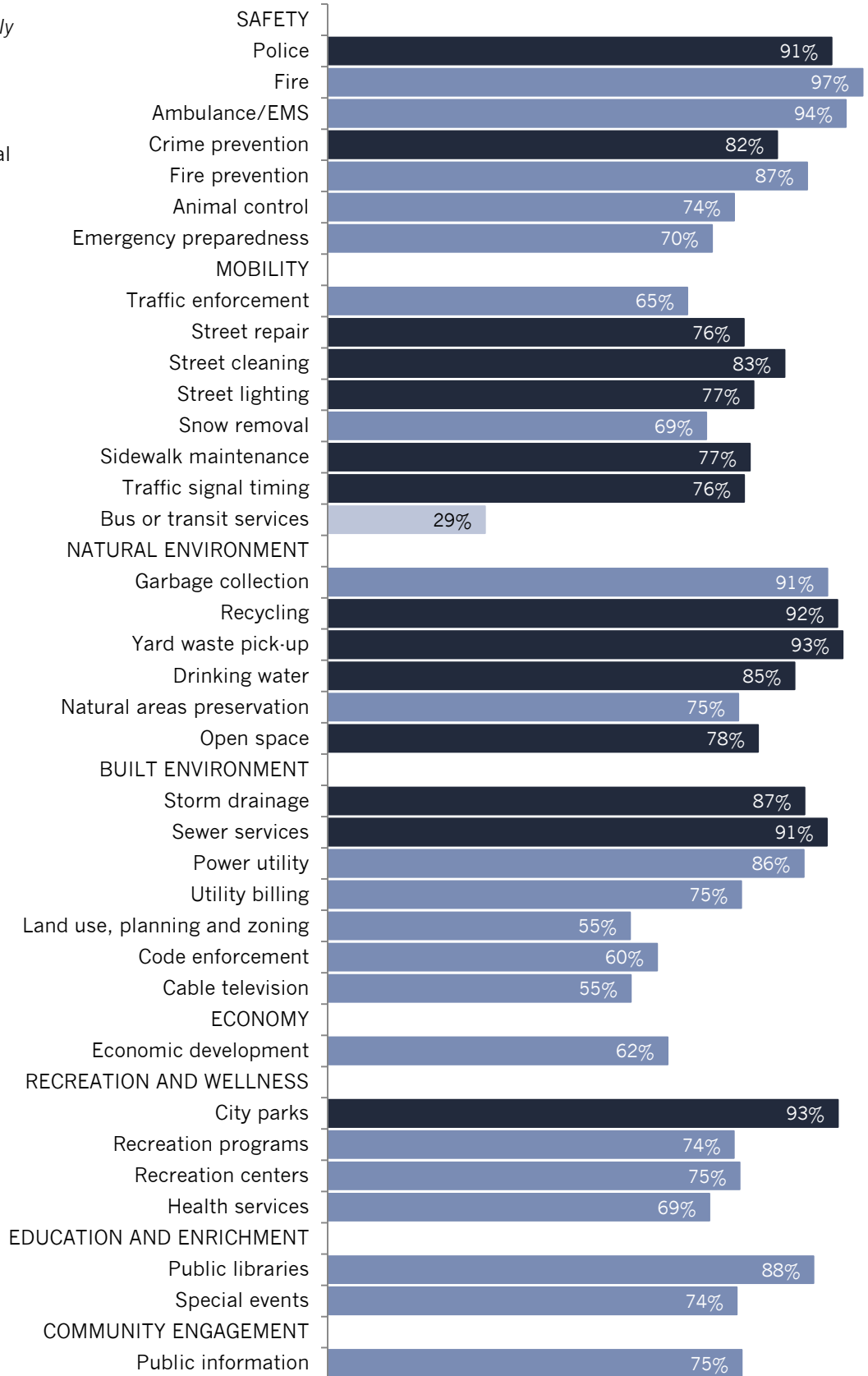
# The National Citizen Survey™

Figure 2: Aspects of Governance

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

Comparison to national  
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower





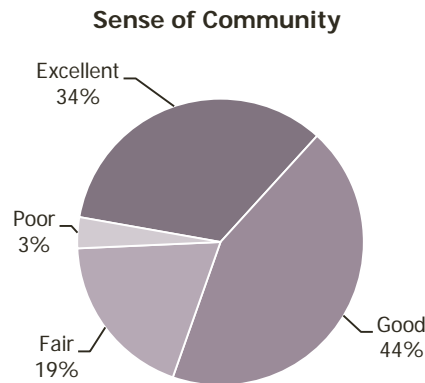
# Participation

*Are the residents of Snoqualmie 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 three-quarters of residents gave favorable reviews to the sense of community in Snoqualmie; further, about 9 in 10 would recommend living in the City to someone who asked and planned to remain in Snoqualmie for the next five years. About 4 in 10 residents had contacted Snoqualmie in the 12 months prior to the survey. These ratings were similar to the ratings seen in other communities across the U.S.

The survey included over 30 activities and behaviors for which respondents indicated how often they participated in or performed each, if at all. Participation rates varied widely across the different facets, making the benchmark comparisons helpful for understanding the results.

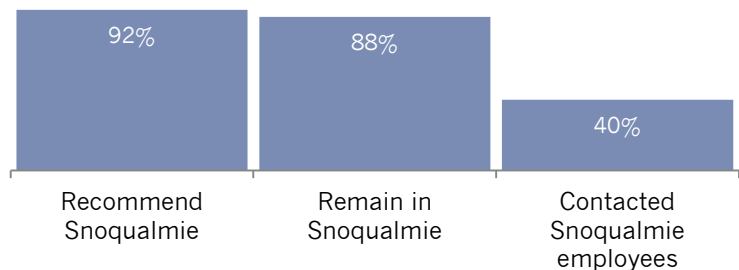
Overall, residents participated in the various activities at levels similar to or higher than the rates seen in other communities across the U.S. Snoqualmie residents were more likely than residents elsewhere to have recycled at home, believe the economy would have a positive impact on their income in the next six months, used Snoqualmie recreation centers, visited a City park or attended a City-sponsored event. However, Snoqualmie residents were less likely than residents in other communities to work in the City, to have attended a religious or spiritual event or to have attended a local public meeting. Within Mobility, while about 8 in 10 residents reported walking or biking instead of driving (a higher-than-average rate), only about 1 in 10 reported using public transportation instead of driving (a lower-than-average rate).



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

Comparison to national  
benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



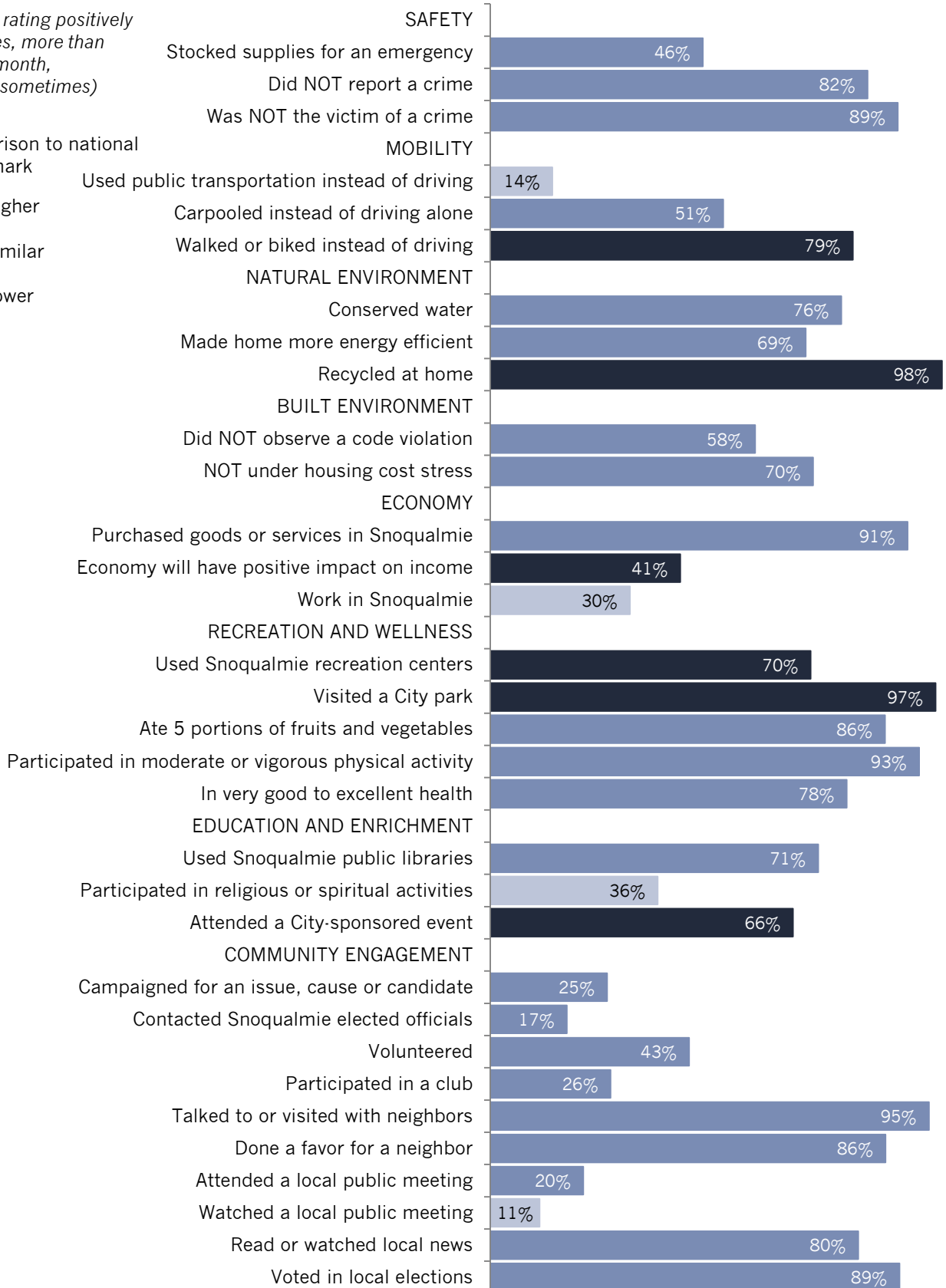
## The National Citizen Survey™

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



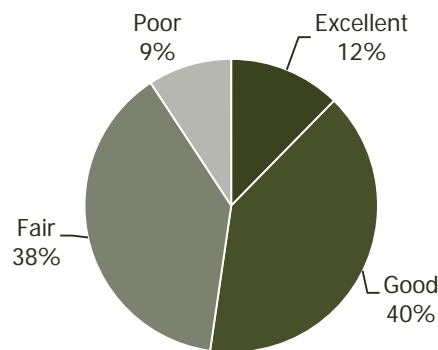
# Special Topics

The City of Snoqualmie included five questions of special interest on The NCS as well as several line item additions to the template survey questions. Topics included the speed of growth in the City, types of future development, Fire Department goals and environmental sustainability.

When asked to rate the vibrancy of the Snoqualmie Ridge commercial district, about half rated it as excellent or good, another 4 in 10 rated it as fair and about 1 in 10 thought it was poor.

Figure 4: Line Item Addition to Question 6

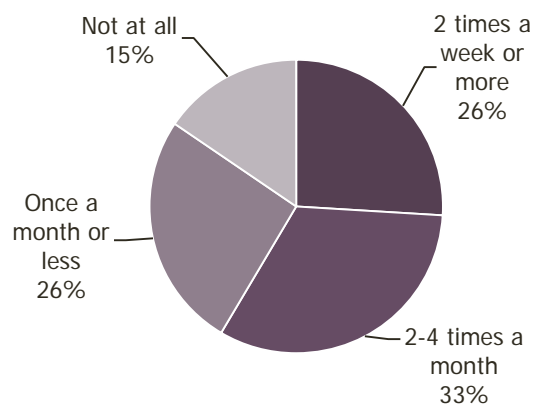
*Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Snoqualmie as a whole: Vibrant Snoqualmie Ridge commercial district*



About 6 in 10 residents had used the City of Snoqualmie trail system at least a few times a month in the 12 months prior to the survey. Another one-quarter used it once a month or less and roughly 1 in 10 had not used it at all.

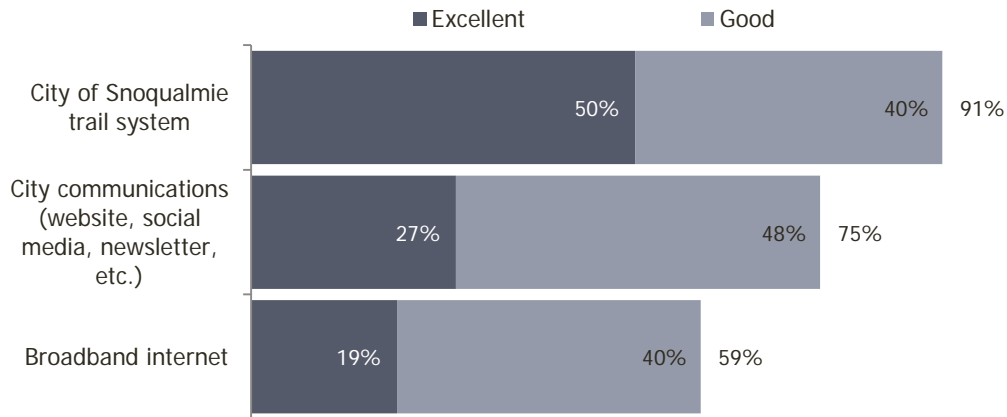
Figure 5: Line Item Addition to Question 8

*In the last 12 months, about how many times, if at all, have you or other household members done each of the following in Snoqualmie? - Used the City of Snoqualmie trail system*



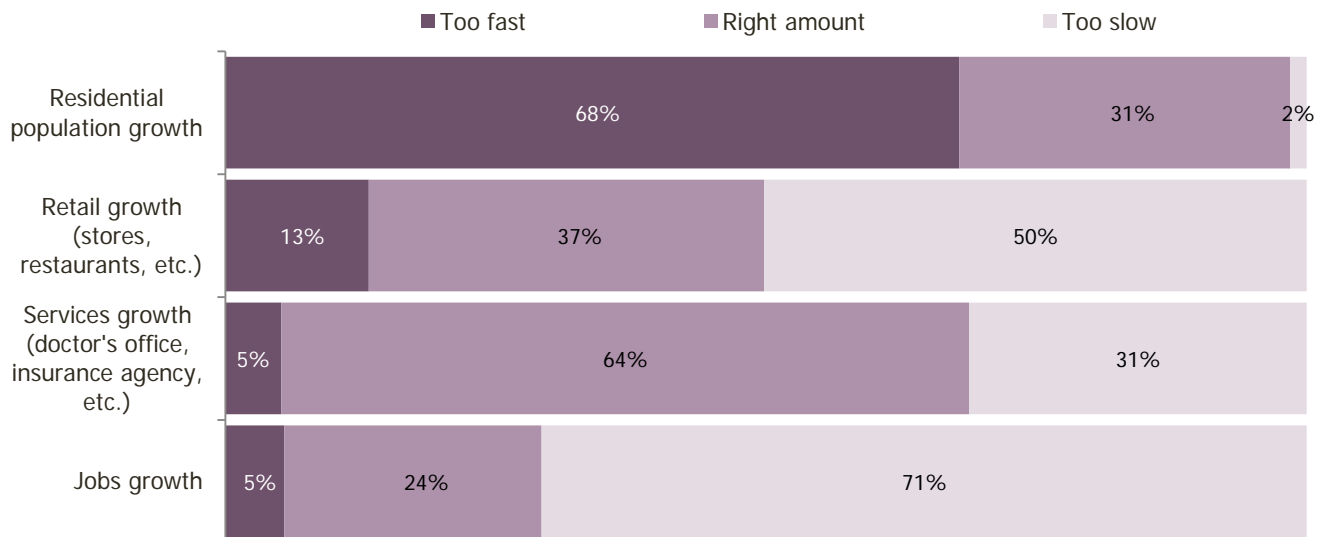
Almost all residents gave favorable ratings to the quality of the City trail system; about three-quarters gave excellent or good marks to City communications and about 6 in 10 were pleased with the quality of broadband internet.

Figure 6: Line Item Additions to Question 10  
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Snoqualmie:



When rating aspects of growth in the community over the past five years, residents expressed some frustration with the amount of population growth (too fast) and jobs growth (too slow). Growth in services seemed on-target to residents and they were split on their feelings toward retail growth.

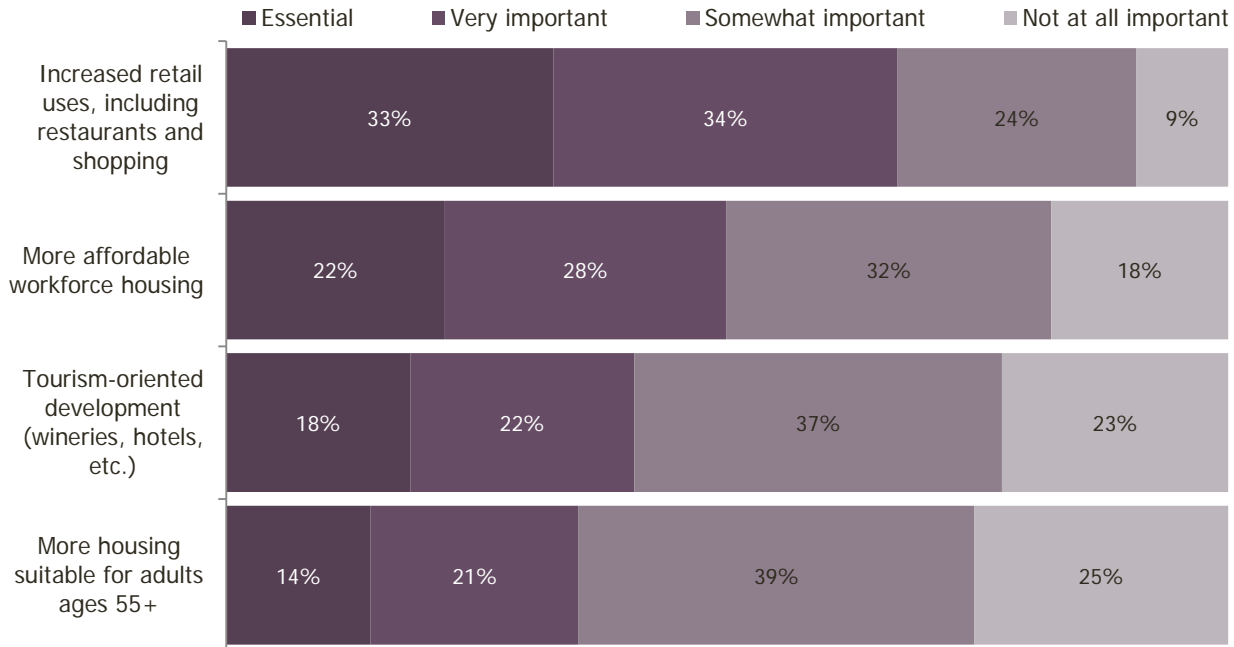
Figure 7: Speed of Growth in Snoqualmie  
Please rate the speed of growth in the following categories in Snoqualmie over the past 5 years:



When asked about the importance of different types of future development, a strong majority of residents felt that increased retail uses were essential or very important and about half felt that more affordable workforce housing was important. Roughly 4 in 10 residents thought that tourism-oriented development or more older adult housing was essential or very important.

Figure 8: Importance of Types of Development

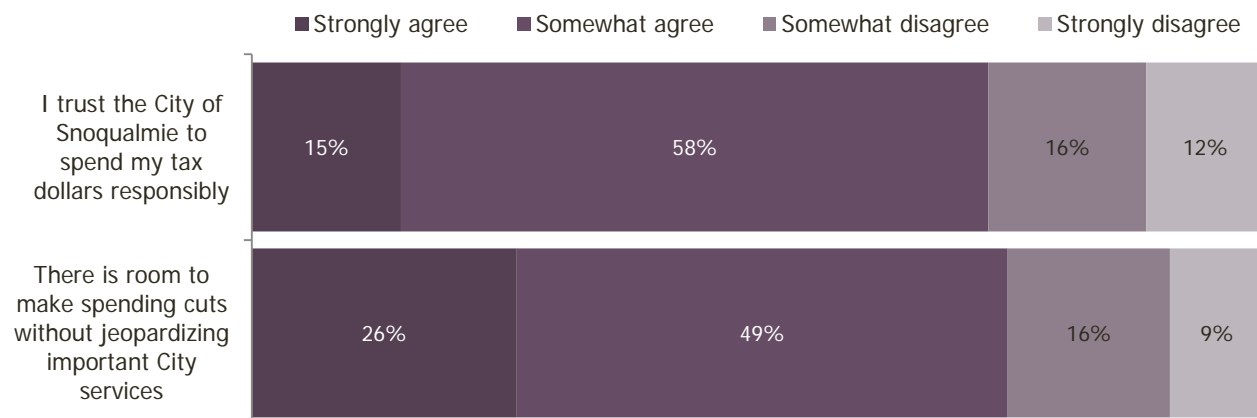
Please rate how important, if at all, the following types of development will be for the City to focus on in the future:



About three-quarters of residents trusted the City to spend their tax dollars responsibly. A similar proportion agreed that there is room for the City to make spending cuts without jeopardizing important City services; however, almost one-third of respondents answered “don’t know” to this item (see the *Technical Appendices Report* provided under separate cover).

Figure 9: City Spending

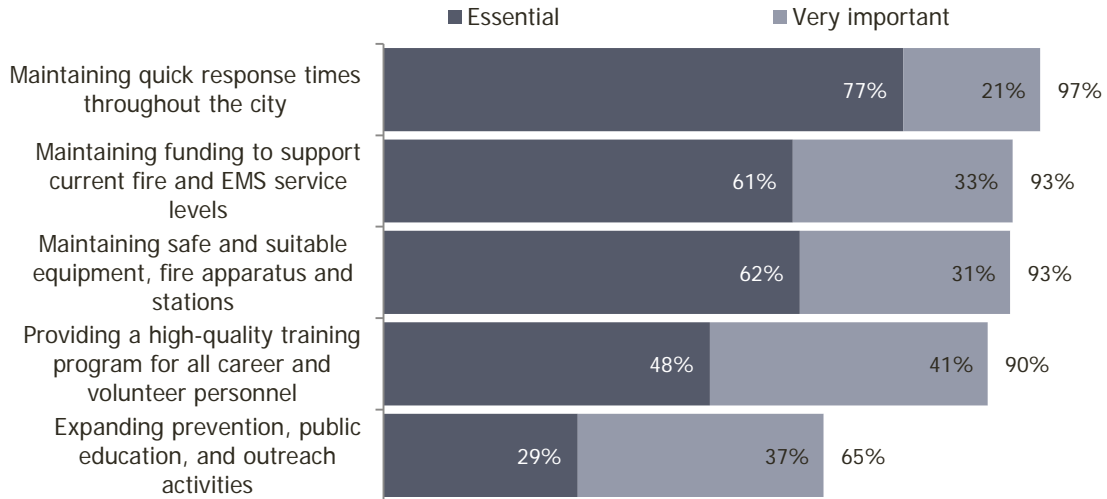
Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:



When evaluating the importance of Fire Department goals, almost all residents felt that maintaining quick response times, maintaining funding to support current service levels and maintaining safe and suitable equipment, fire apparatus and stations, as well as providing high-quality training, were essential or very important. Residents placed less importance on expanding prevention, public education and outreach activities.

Figure 10: Importance of Fire Department Goals

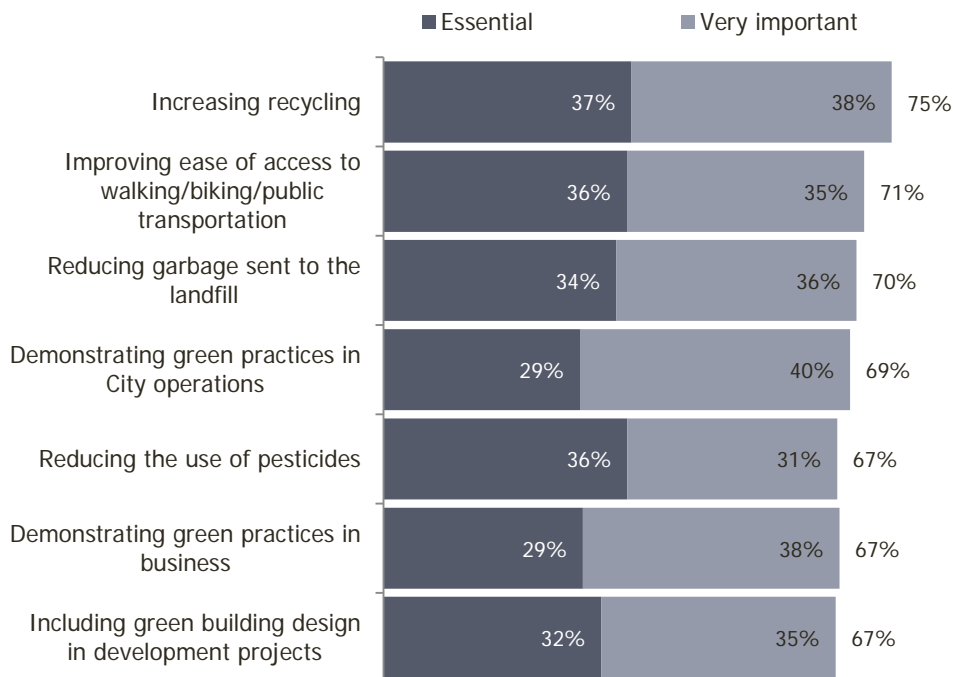
Please rate how important, if at all, you think it is for the Snoqualmie Fire Department to focus on each of the following goals in the next four years:



Thinking about the importance of several strategies related to environmental sustainability, at least two-thirds of Snoqualmie residents felt each of the strategies were essential or very important.

Figure 11: Importance of Environmental Sustainability Strategies

Please rate how important, if at all, each of the following strategies are to improving environmental sustainability in Snoqualmie:



# Conclusions

## Snoqualmie residents enjoy a high quality of life.

Most residents rated their quality of life positively in Snoqualmie and think the City is an excellent or good place to live. At least 9 in 10 residents gave positive ratings to the overall image and overall appearance of the City, their neighborhood as a place to live and Snoqualmie as a place to raise children; these ratings were all higher than observed elsewhere. About 9 in 10 residents would recommend living in the City to someone who asked and planned to remain in Snoqualmie for the next five years.

## Residents place a high priority on Safety and are pleased with Safety-related aspects.

Residents identified Safety as an important aspect of community livability to their quality of life. At least 9 in 10 residents gave positive ratings to the overall feeling of safety in Snoqualmie, to feelings of safety in their neighborhoods and in the City's downtown/commercial area, and to police, fire and ambulance/EMS services. Further, ratings for overall feeling of safety, police services and crime prevention were higher than average. Most residents had not reported a crime or been the victim of a crime. While a majority of residents felt there was room for the City to make spending cuts without jeopardizing important City services, resident would probably not tolerate cuts within the Fire Department. When evaluating the importance of Fire Department goals, almost all residents felt it essential or very important to maintain current response times, funding levels and equipment, as well as provide high-quality training for personnel.

## The Natural Environment is a valued asset to residents.

Residents see the Natural Environment as an important aspect of their quality of life. Ratings for the overall natural environment in Snoqualmie, cleanliness, air quality, recycling, yard waste pick-up, drinking water and open space were higher than those typically given in other communities. Further, nearly all residents recycled at home, which was a higher rate than observed elsewhere. When asked about the importance of several strategies related to environmental sustainability, at least two-thirds of Snoqualmie residents felt each of the strategies were essential or very important (e.g., increasing recycling, improving ease of access to walking/biking/public transportation, demonstrating green practices in City operations and in business, reducing the use of pesticides and reducing garbage sent to the landfill).

## Residents are happy with the ease of getting around town, but public transportation presents an opportunity for improvement.

Ratings for most Mobility-related aspects were higher than those seen in other communities; these included ease of travel by car, public parking, paths and walking trails, ease of travel by walking and by bicycle, street repair, street cleaning, street lighting, sidewalk maintenance and traffic signal timing. A higher-than-average proportion of residents (79%) reported walking or biking instead of driving in the past 12 months. Further, almost all residents gave excellent or good marks to the quality of the City of Snoqualmie trail system and about 6 in 10 residents reported using the City trail system at least a few times a month in the past year. However, ratings for ease of travel by public transportation and bus or transit services were lower than those given in other communities, and only about 1 in 10 residents reported using public transportation instead of driving, which was also below average. Thus, the City might consider focusing more resources on public transportation services in the future.