

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

**Brownsburg, IN**  
Community Livability Report

2017



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# About

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

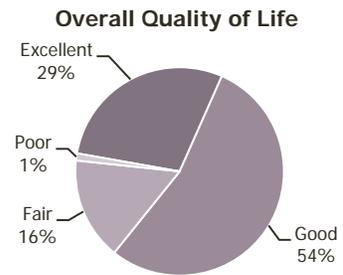
Great communities are partnerships of the government, private sector, community-based organizations and residents, all geographically connected. The NCS captures residents’ opinions within the three pillars of a community (Community Characteristics, Governance and Participation) across eight central 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 423 residents of the Town of Brownsburg. The margin of error around any reported percentage is 5% 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 Brownsburg

Most residents (83%) rated the quality of life in Brownsburg as excellent or good. This rating was similar to ratings 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.

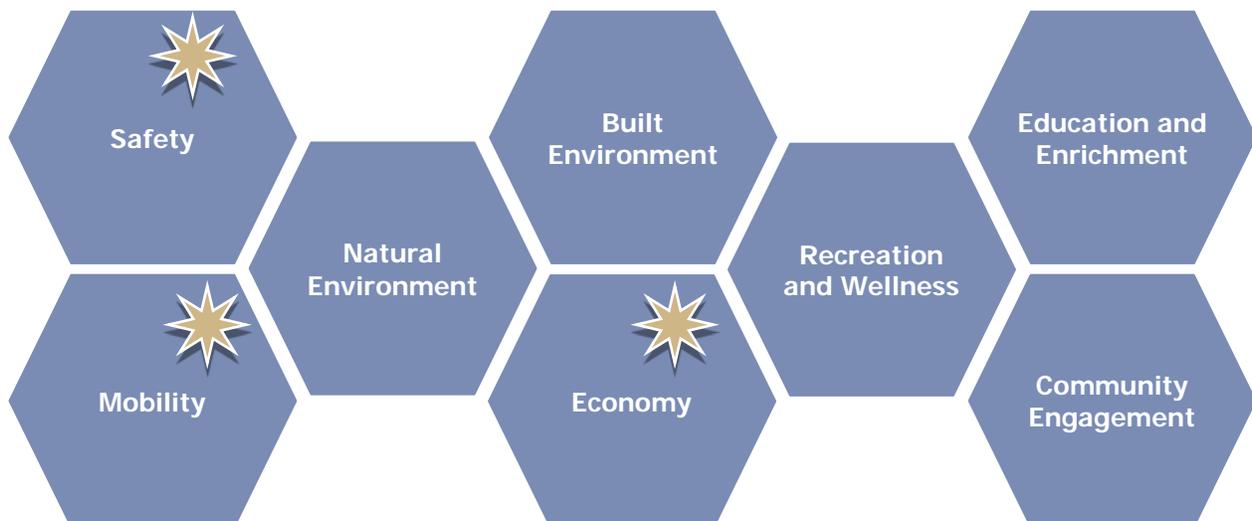
In addition to a summary of ratings, the image below includes one or more stars to indicate which community facets were the most important focus areas for the community. As in 2015, residents identified Safety, Mobility and Economy as priorities for the Brownsburg community in the coming two years. Ratings for these and all other facets of community livability 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 Brownsburg’s unique questions.

## Legend

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

- Most important



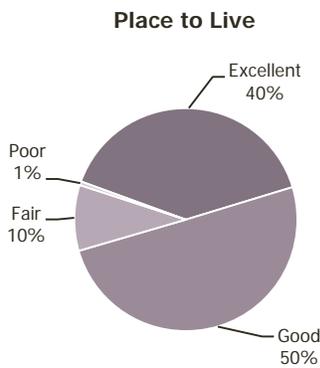
# Community Characteristics

*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 Brownsburg, 9 in 10 rated the Town as an excellent or good place to live. Respondents' ratings of Brownsburg 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 Brownsburg as a place to raise children and to retire, their neighborhood as a place to live, the overall image or reputation of Brownsburg and its overall appearance. Ratings for Brownsburg as a place to raise children and for the resident's neighborhood as a place to live were particularly strong, and most residents were pleased with the overall image and overall appearance of Brownsburg as well as the Town as a place to retire.

Delving deeper into Community Characteristics, survey respondents rated over 40 features of the community within the eight facets of Community Livability. Generally, aspects of Safety, Natural Environment, Built Environment, Recreation and Wellness and Community Engagement all received ratings similar to or higher than the benchmark. Economy evaluations revealed a higher-than-average rating for cost of living, but some challenges around the downtown/commercial area and the Town as a place to visit. Mobility ratings were similar to the benchmark except for items related to vehicle travel, which, while lower than the benchmark, improved since 2015.

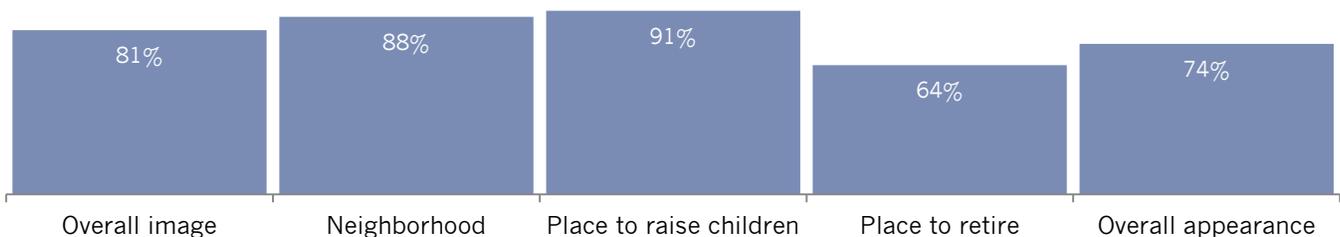


Since 2015, ratings increased for about one-quarter of all items related to Community Characteristics. Many of these increases occurred within the facets of Mobility and Recreation and Wellness (see the *Trends Over Time* report available under separate cover for more detail).

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

Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



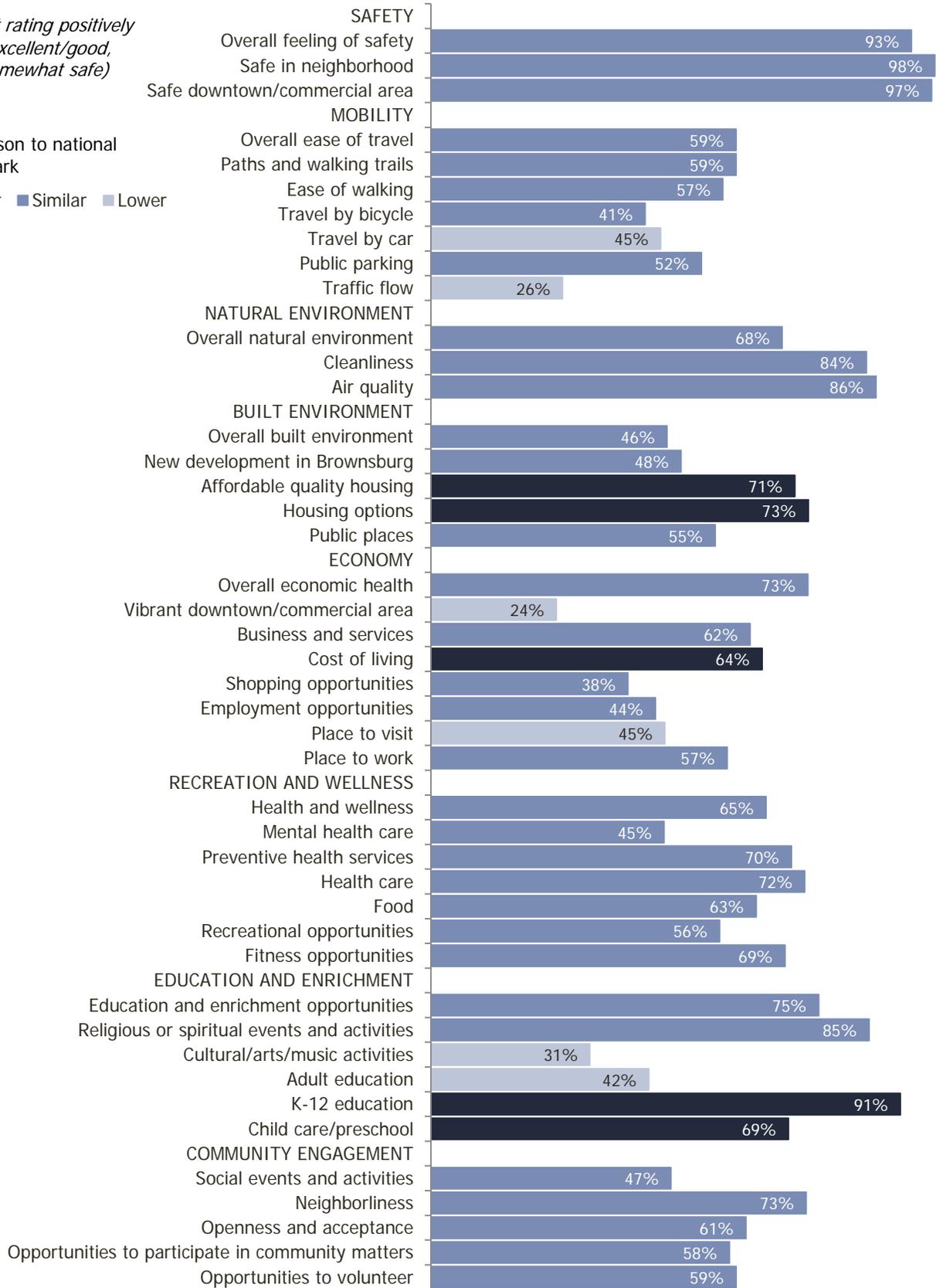
# The National Citizen Survey™

Figure 1: Aspects of Community Characteristics

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

Comparison to national  
benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



# Governance

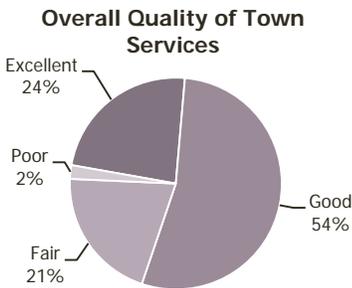
*How well does the government of Brownsburg meet the needs and expectations of its residents?*

The overall quality of the services provided by Brownsburg as well as the manner in which these services are provided are a key component of how residents rate their quality of life. About three-quarters of residents positively rated the overall quality of City services and about 4 in 10 approved of the services provided by the Federal Government; both of these ratings were similar to those observed elsewhere.

Survey respondents also rated various aspects of Brownsburg’s leadership and governance. Most residents were pleased with the customer service provided by the Town 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 comparison.

Respondents evaluated 28 individual services and amenities available in Brownsburg. Most aspects of Governance received positive ratings from at least half of residents and all but one, drinking water, received ratings similar to or higher than the benchmark. Residents recognized the high quality of Safety-related services with about 9 in 10 rating these services favorably; ratings for police services and crime prevention were above national averages.

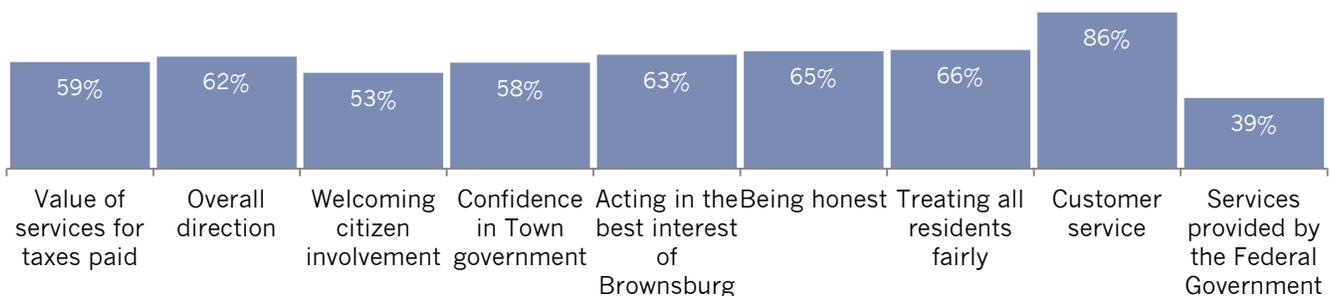
When compared to 2015, ratings improved for many aspects of Governance. Most of the increases occurred within the facets of Mobility, Built Environment and Community Engagement. Ratings also improved for yard waste pick-up, economic development, the overall quality of customer service by Town employees and the services provided by the Federal Government.



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

Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



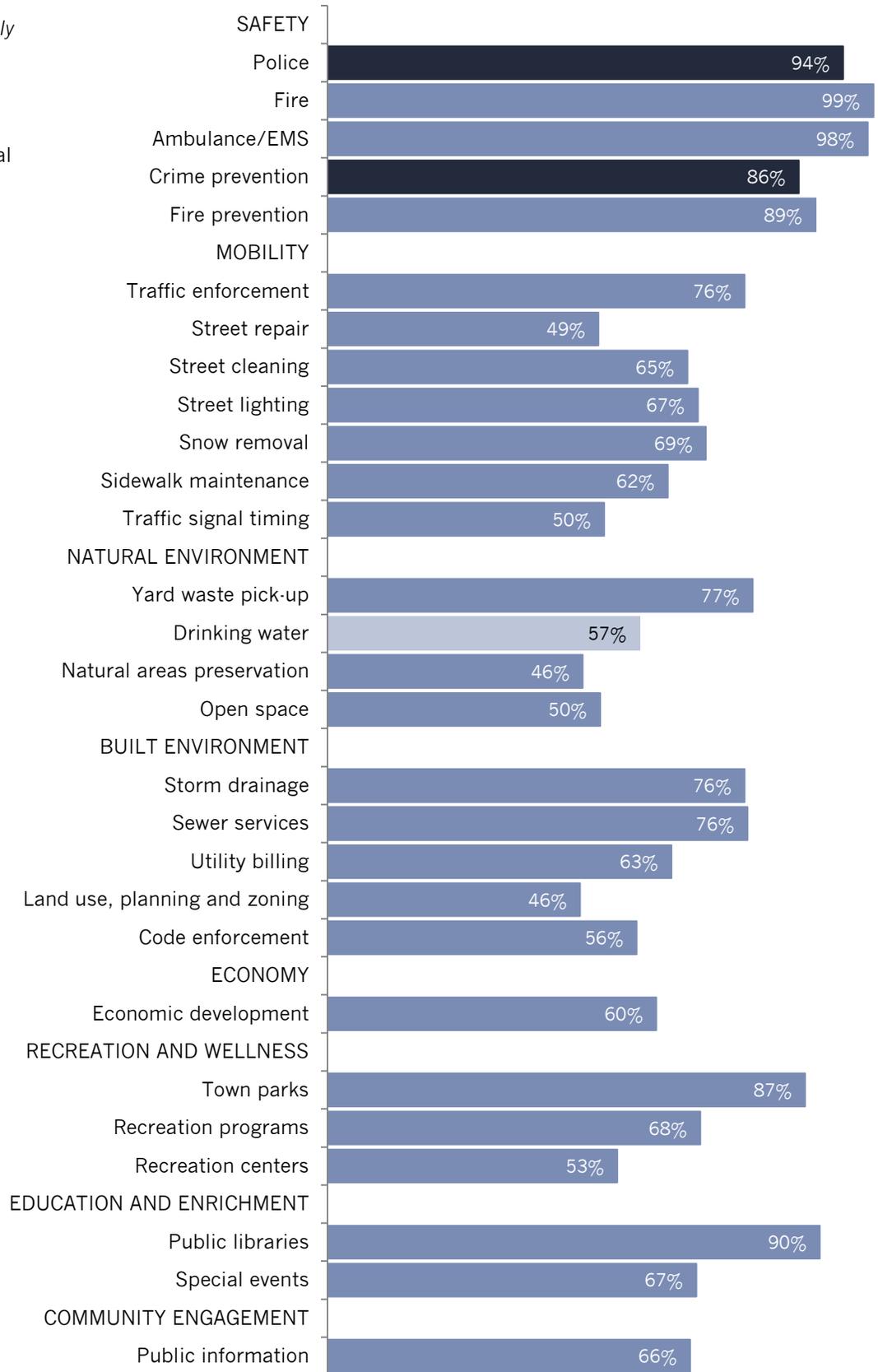
# The National Citizen Survey™

Figure 2: Aspects of Governance

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

Comparison to national  
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



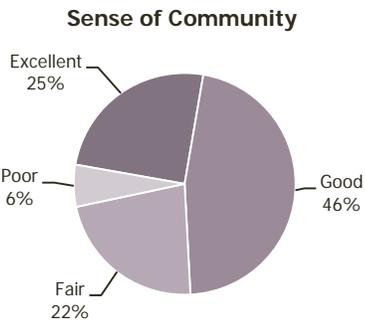
# Participation

*Are the residents of Brownsburg connected to the community and each other?*

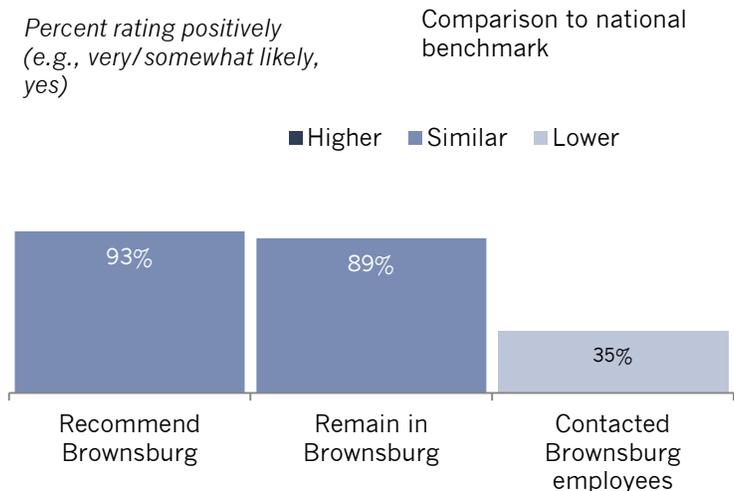
An engaged community harnesses its most valuable resource, its residents. The connections and trust among residents, government, businesses and other organizations help to create a sense of community, a shared sense of membership, belonging and history. About 7 in 10 residents gave favorable reviews to the sense of community in Brownsburg; further, about 9 in 10 would recommend living in the Town to someone who asked and planned to remain in Brownsburg for the next five years. These ratings were similar to the ratings seen in other communities across the U.S. About one-third of residents had contacted Brownsburg in the 12 months prior to the survey and this rate was lower than typically seen 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. Participation rates varied widely across the different facets, making the benchmark comparison (and comparison to Brownsburg over time) helpful for understanding the results.

Overall, residents of Brownsburg participated in most activities at rates similar to those found in other communities across the country. For example, about 9 in 10 residents had not reported a crime or been the victim of a crime in the 12 months prior to the survey (on par with the rest of the country) and about one-quarter of respondents had stocked supplies for an emergency (lower than the rest of the country). Brownsburg residents were less likely than residents elsewhere to carpool instead of driving alone, to recycle at home, to work in Brownsburg or to have watched a public meeting. Residents were more likely than residents in other communities to report not being under housing stress or to have used Town libraries.



Fewer residents in 2017 reported having attended a Town-sponsored event or campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate than in 2015. However, respondents were more likely in 2017 to believe that the economy would have a positive impact on their income.



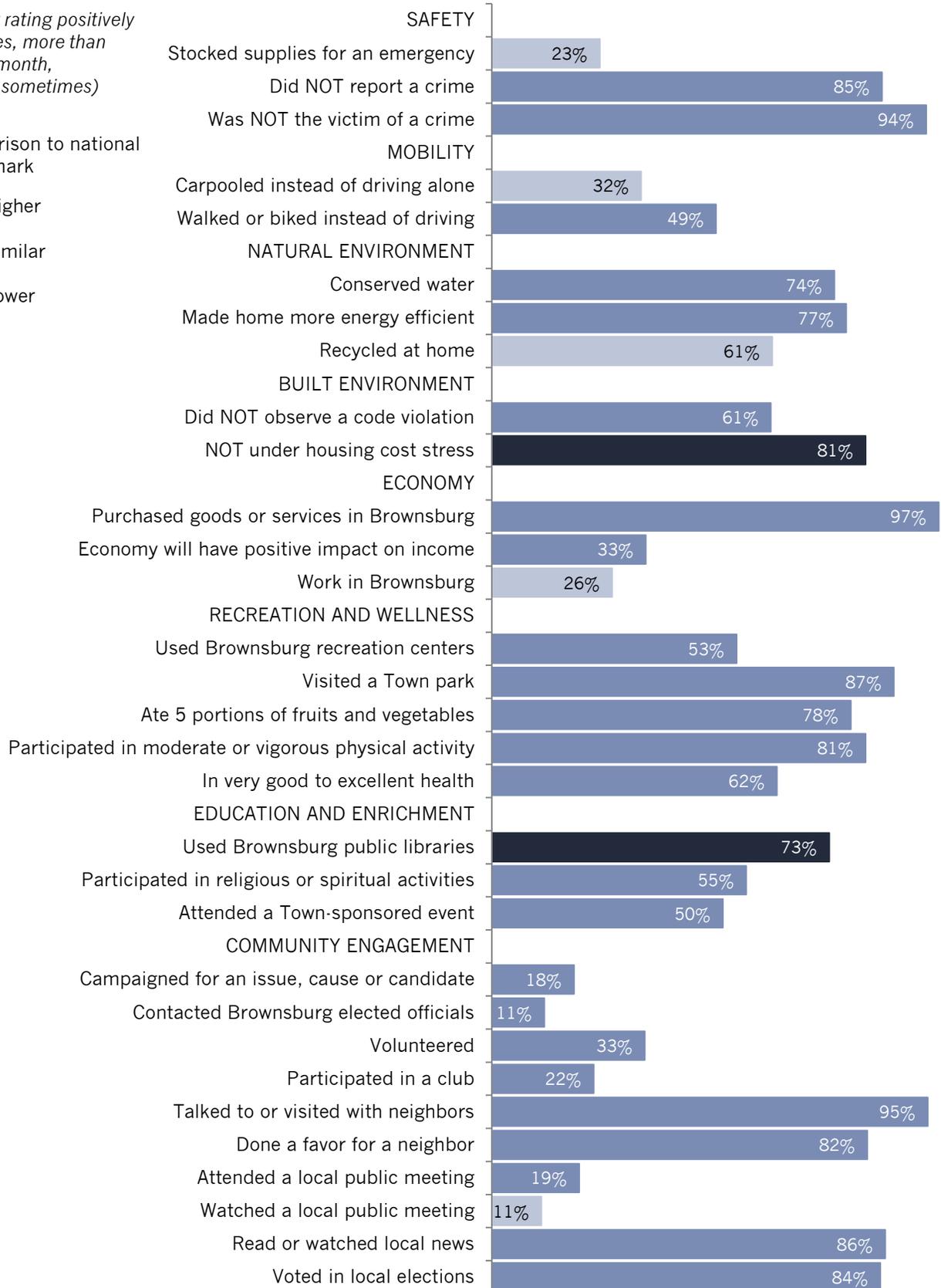
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Figure 3: Aspects of Participation

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

Comparison to national  
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



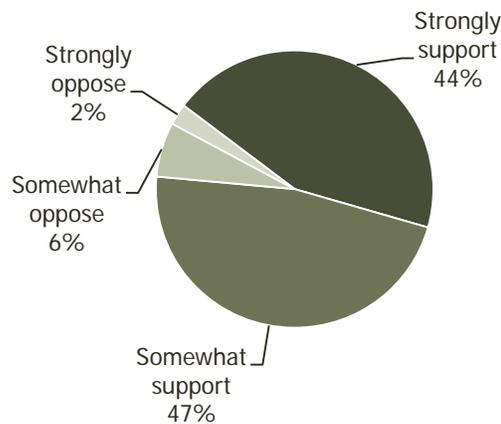
# Special Topics

The Town of Brownsburg included nine questions of special interest on The NCS. Topics included potential future Town programs, Town events, water treatment issues and sources of Town information.

The first question asked residents to indicate their level of support for the Town implementing an Adopt-a-Roadway program. Almost all residents strongly or somewhat supported the program, and less than 1 in 10 opposed it.

Figure 4: Support for Adopt-a-Roadway Program

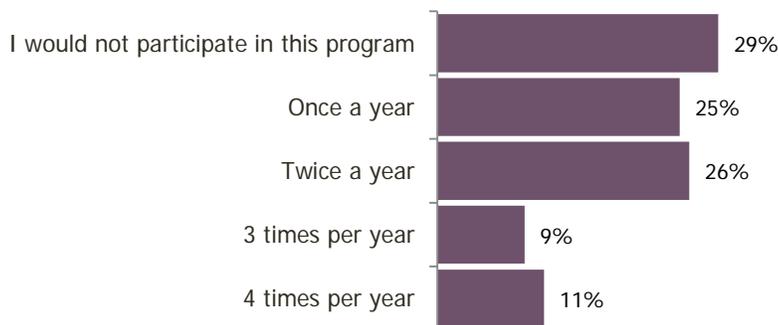
*The Town is considering the launch of an Adopt-a-Roadway Program wherein residents can form teams to clean "adopted" segments of Town roadways. The teams would be responsible for picking up litter along their adopted segment 2-4 times per year. Trash bags, gloves and safety vests would be provided and the Town would haul away the collected trash. To what extent do you support or oppose the Town launching this type of program?*



When asked how frequently, if at all, they would participate in the Adopt-a-Roadway program, about half of residents indicated that they would participate once or twice a year and about 2 in 10 would participate more frequently. Almost one-third of respondents indicated that they would not participate in the program.

Figure 5: Frequency of Participation in Adopt-a-Roadway Program

*If you support this program, please indicate the most you would be willing to participate in a clean-up event:*

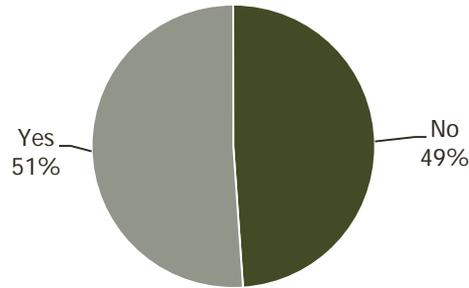


Note: Only asked of respondents who supported the program.

The next set of special-interest questions related to the Brownsburg Farmer's Market. About half of survey respondents indicated that they typically attended the Market and the other half did not.

Figure 6: Brownsburg Farmer's Market Attendance

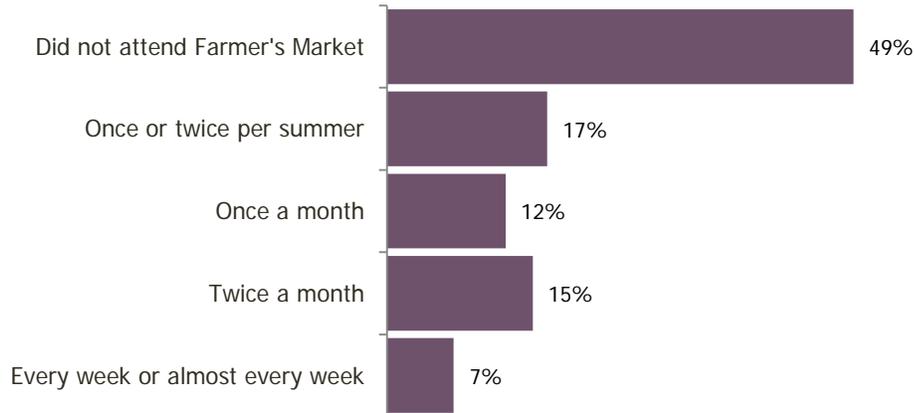
*Do you typically attend the Brownsburg Farmer's Market that is held on Thursdays 4-7pm on the Town Hall Green from early June to early September?*



About 2 in 10 survey respondents indicated that they usually attended the Farmer's Market once or twice per summer, and about one-quarter attended it once or twice per month. Fewer than 1 in 10 attended more frequently.

Figure 7: Frequency of Brownsburg Farmer's Market Attendance

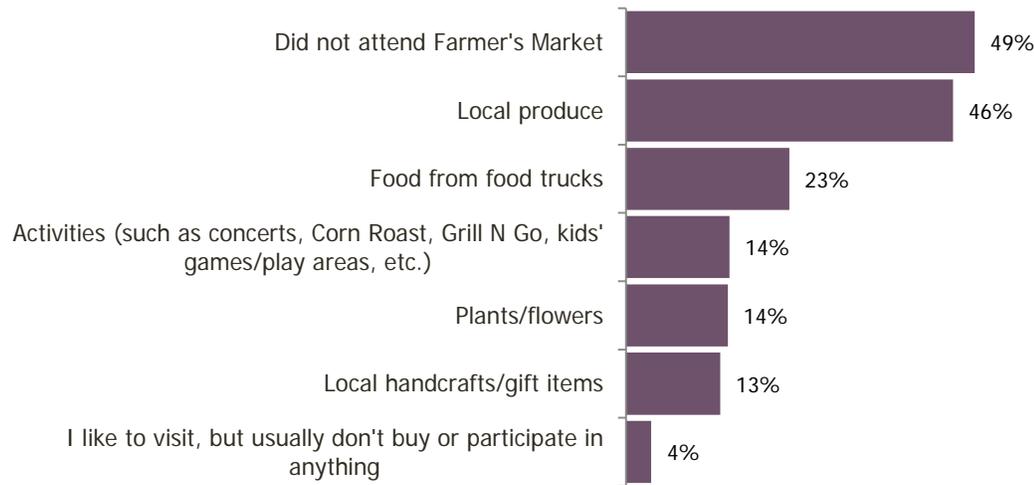
*About how often do you usually attend the Brownsburg Farmer's Market?*



When asked about their purchases and participation in activities at the Farmer’s Market, about half of survey respondents (46%) had purchased local produce and about one-quarter had purchased food from food trucks. About 1 in 10 residents had participated in various activities, purchased plants and/or flowers or had purchased local handcrafts/gift items. Very few (4%) indicated that they liked to visit the Market but didn’t usually purchase items or participate in activities.

Figure 8: Farmer’s Market Purchases and Activities

*Which of the following do you usually buy or participate in at the Farmer’s Market? (Select all that apply.)*

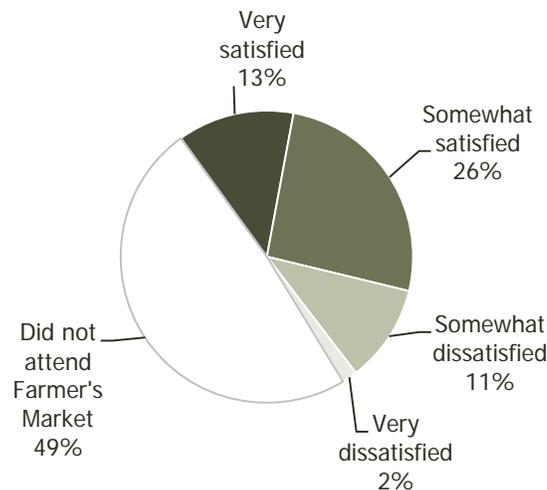


Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one option.

When evaluating the availability of parking at the Farmer’s Market, the majority of respondents who attended the Farmer’s Market were satisfied with the availability of parking.

Figure 9: Satisfaction with Farmer’s Market Parking

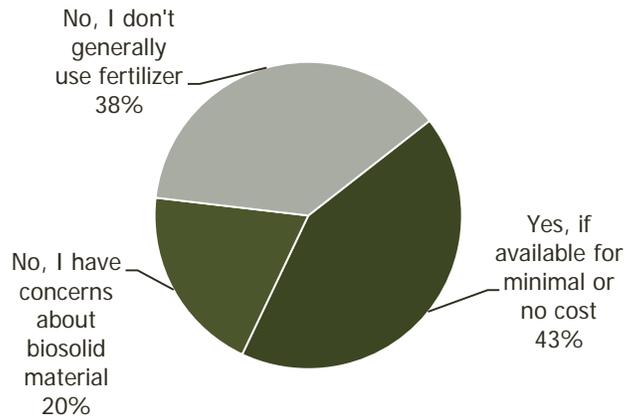
*How satisfied are you with the availability of parking at the Farmer’s Market?*



The next special-interest question asked residents about their willingness to use biosolid materials as fertilizer in their home gardens or business landscaping. Roughly equal proportions of residents (about 4 in 10) indicated that they would either use biosolids as fertilizer or generally did not use fertilizer at all; about 2 in 10 had concerns about biosolids and would not use them as fertilizer.

Figure 10: Willingness to Use Biosolid Material

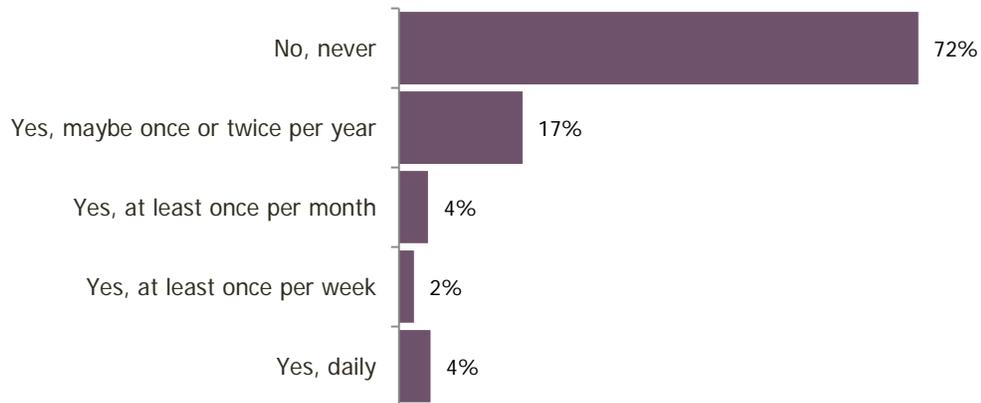
*Would you use a biosolid material (sludge from wastewater plant) that met the federal requirements on your garden or business landscaping as a fertilizer supplement/replacement?*



Residents indicated how noticeable sewer odors were in their area of the community. Most residents said that they never noticed sewer odors in their area and about 2 in 10 said that they noticed odors once or twice a year.

Figure 11: Noticeability of Sewer Odors

*Do you notice sewer odors in the area of the community in which you live?*

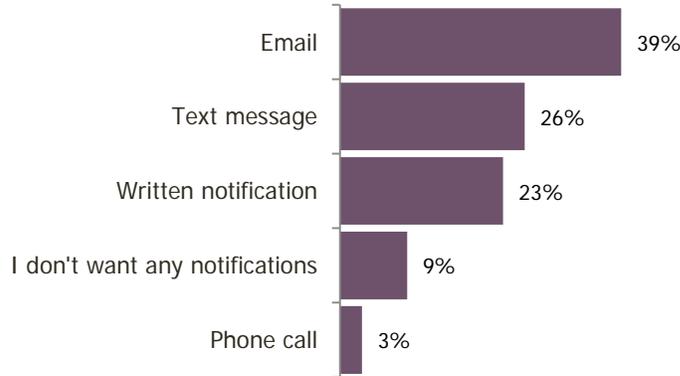


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Survey respondents provided their preferences for receiving electronic notifications about the sewer system from the Town. Most respondents preferred email notifications followed by text messages or written notifications.

Figure 12: Preferred Method of Town Notifications

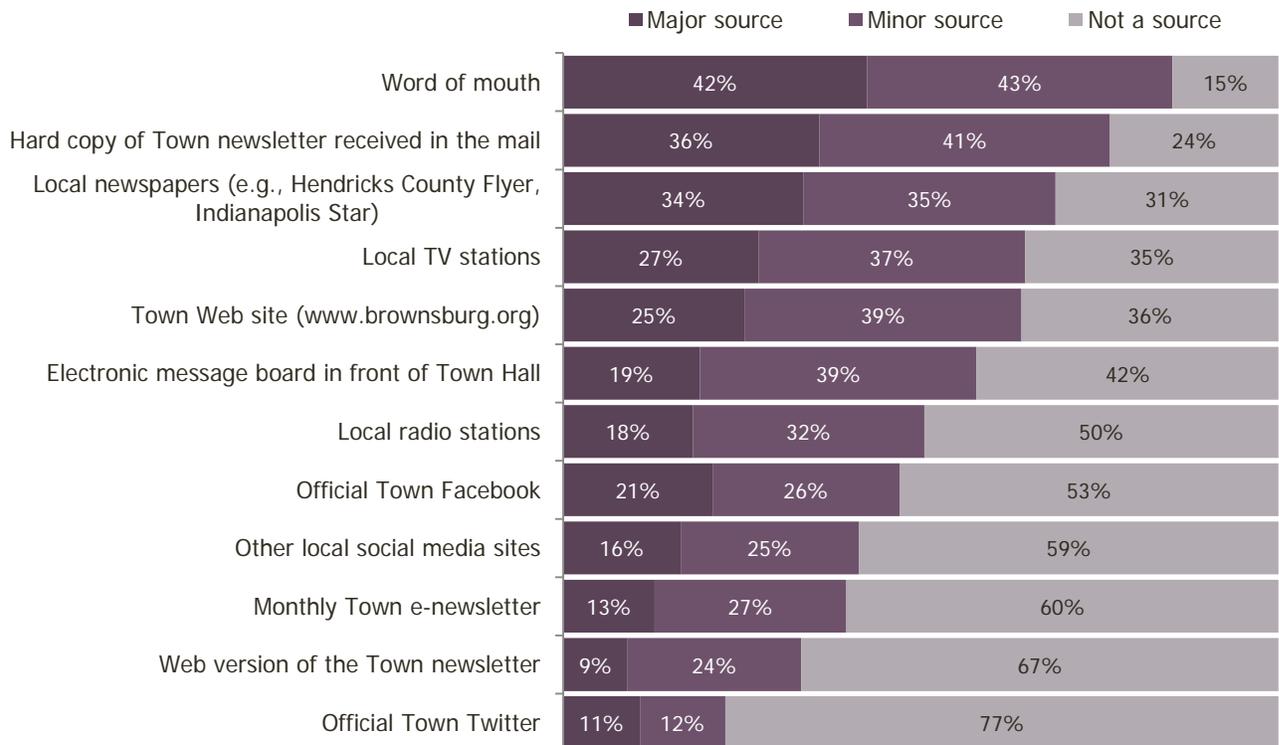
The Town is considering providing an electronic notification of combined sewer overflow events or system maintenance to subscribers. Please indicate the one type of notification you most prefer:



The final special-interest question asked residents about their preferences for getting information about the Town of Brownsburg. Most residents (85%) relied on word of mouth as a major or minor source of information about the Town and about three-quarters relied on the Town newsletter. Residents were least likely to use the official Town Twitter account as an information source (about one-quarter of residents considered it a source).

Figure 13: Sources of Town Information

Please indicate whether you use each of the following as a major source, minor source or not a source of information to find out about news and events in the Town of Brownsburg:



# Conclusions

## **Brownsburg's affordability compliments its high quality of life.**

Many residents rated highly several aspect of the quality of life in Brownsburg. These included not only the overall quality of life but also Brownsburg as a place to raise children and to retire, neighborhood as a place to live, overall image and appearance. Strong majorities of residents felt positively about the cost of living, housing quality and housing options in Brownsburg, providing ratings higher than those in other communities across the nation. Additionally, few residents experienced housing cost stress. These aspects of affordability coupled with high quality of life make Brownsburg an attractive Indianapolis suburb.

## **Getting around town is getting easier.**

Two years ago, Brownsburg residents expressed some dissatisfaction with mobility in the community, specifically in the areas of overall ease of travel and traffic flow. The Town listened and residents noticed. Many mobility-related ratings increased since the previous survey iteration. Residents' positive assessments of overall ease of travel, traffic flow, travel by bicycle, paths and walking trails, traffic enforcement, street repair, snow removal, sidewalk maintenance and traffic signal timing have all increased since 2015. While progress has been made, residents would like the Town to continue its focus on Mobility for the coming two years.

## **Residents take advantage of the locally produced goods at the Farmer's Market.**

Nearly all residents supported the local economy by purchasing goods or services within Brownsburg and about half visited the Farmer's Market each year. Most residents visited the Market multiple times per year if not multiple times a month, commonly purchasing local produce and food from food trucks. Not surprisingly, a majority of residents felt they had good access to quality food and most reported eating at least five portions of fruits and vegetables regularly being in good physical health.