

THE NCS™

The National Community Survey™

Batavia, IL

*Community Livability Report
2020*



POWERED BY POLCO

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The National Community Survey™
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The NCS™ is presented by NRC in collaboration with ICMA.

NRC is a charter member of the AAPOR Transparency Initiative, providing clear disclosure of our sound and ethical survey research practices.

About The NCS™

The National Community Survey™ (The NCS™) report is about the “livability” of Batavia. 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 considering ten central facets of a community:

- Economy
- Mobility
- Community Design
- Utilities
- Safety
- Natural Environment
- Parks and Recreation
- Health and Wellness
- Education, Arts and Culture
- Inclusivity & Engagement



The Community Livability Report provides the opinions of a representative sample of 1,157 residents of the City of Batavia. The margin of error around any reported percentage is 3% for all respondents and the response rate for the 2020 survey was 39%. The full description of methods used to garner these opinions can be found in the *Technical Appendices* provided under separate cover.

Overview of Results

Batavia is a desirable place to live and residents feel a strong sense of community.

About 9 in 10 residents rated their overall quality of life, their neighborhood as a place to live, Batavia as a place to raise children, and Batavia as a place to live as excellent or good and would be likely to recommend living in Batavia to others. These ratings were on par or higher than national benchmarks. Evaluations within the facet of Education, Arts, and Culture were strong, with at least 6 in 10 assigning positive reviews to community support for the arts, public library services, availability of affordable quality child care/preschool, and K-12 education. These ratings exceeded national benchmarks.

Additionally, three-quarters of Batavia residents gave ratings higher than national comparison communities to residents' connection and engagement with their community, sense of community, sense of civic/community pride, and neighborliness of Batavia. In evaluating Batavia governance, about 7 in 10 respondents positively rated Batavia for treating all residents fairly and with respect, overall customer service, Public information services, and the quality of services provided by the City of Batavia. All other aspects of governance were rated highly by majority. Respondent's assessments of government performance were on par with or higher than national averages.

Safety contributes to the overall quality of life in Batavia.

About 9 in 10 residents indicated that safety was an important focus for the Batavia community in the coming two years. Ratings within this facet tended to be strong and higher than national averages. Most residents gave excellent or good marks to the overall feeling of safety in Batavia (95%), which was higher than the national benchmark. Further, almost all respondents felt safe in their neighborhood and in Batavia's downtown/commercial area. About 9 in 10 Batavia residents also felt safe from property crime, violent crime, as well as fire, flood or other natural disasters. Residents' evaluations of safety-related services were strong and generally on par or higher than the national averages; about 9 in 10 gave high marks to police/sheriff services, crime prevention, ambulance/EMS, and fire services.

Residents are generally pleased with Mobility and enjoy the ease of biking and walking in the community.

Community members' assessments of ease of travel by bicycle, ease of walking, street cleaning, street lighting, snow removal, and sidewalk maintenance were outstanding and higher than the national benchmarks. Similar to comparison communities nationwide, at least two-thirds of respondents positively reviewed the overall quality of the transportation system in Batavia, and ease of travel by car. About 4 in 10 Batavia residents reported that they carpooled, a rating similar to national peers, while about 7 in 10 walked or biked instead of driving, which was higher than the national benchmark. Residents' assessment of the availability of paths and walking trails was also exceptional, with 9 in 10 giving high marks. When asked about areas where the City should focus in the next two years, 47% of residents indicated that improving walking in Batavia was essential or important, while 38% felt similarly about improving biking opportunities.

Batavia's Economy is a high priority for residents, especially in the current climate.

About 7 in 10 residents gave positive ratings to the overall economic health of Batavia, while 9 in 10 indicated this was an essential or very important focus area for the community. Ratings within this facet were generally on par with national comparisons; about 7 in 10 community members favorably rated the overall quality of business and service establishments in Batavia and Batavia as a place to work. About three-quarters of residents indicated that increasing downtown economic development was an essential or very important focus in the coming years.

The challenge, possibly highlighted by the COVID-19 crisis, was residents' perception of their own personal economic futures. This was the only area of the Economy facet which was lower than the national benchmark. Batavia entered this period of economic uncertainty with a strong economic foundation and positive resident perception on par with peers nationwide.

Facets of Livability

Ratings of importance were compared to ratings of quality to help guide City staff and officials with decisions on future resource allocation and strategic planning areas. When competition for limited resources demands that efficiencies or cutbacks be instituted, it is wise not only to know what facets are deemed most important to residents' quality of life, but which among the most important are perceived to be of relatively lower quality in your community. It is these facets of community livability – more important facets perceived as being of lower quality – to which attention needs to be paid first.

		QUALITY		
		LOWER	SIMILAR	HIGHER
IMPORTANCE	HIGHER			
	SIMILAR		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economy • Utilities • Natural Environment • Parks and Recreation • Health and Wellness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety
	LOWER		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobility • Community Design • Education, Arts and Culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusivity and Engagement

FIGURE 1: QUALITY OF FACETS OF LIVABILITY- SUMMARY

Percent excellent or good	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Overall economic health of Batavia	↔	69%
Overall quality of the transportation system in Batavia	↔	66%
Overall design or layout of Batavia's residential and commercial areas	↔	72%
Overall quality of the utility infrastructure in Batavia	↔	71%
Overall feeling of safety in Batavia	↑	95%
Quality of overall natural environment in Batavia	↔	89%
Overall quality of parks and recreation opportunities	↔	83%
Overall health and wellness opportunities in Batavia	↔	74%
Overall opportunities for education, culture, and the arts	↔	78%
Residents' connection and engagement with their community	↑	76%

FIGURE 2: IMPORTANCE OF FACETS OF LIVABILITY- SUMMARY

Percent essential or very important	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Overall economic health of Batavia	↔	94%
Overall quality of the transportation system in Batavia	↓↓	64%
Overall design or layout of Batavia's residential and commercial areas	↓	68%
Overall quality of the utility infrastructure in Batavia	↔	90%
Overall feeling of safety in Batavia	↔	89%
Quality of overall natural environment in Batavia	↔	80%
Overall quality of parks and recreation opportunities	↔	78%
Overall health and wellness opportunities in Batavia	↔	70%
Overall opportunities for education, culture, and the arts	↓	71%
Residents' connection and engagement with their community	↓	72%

Legend

↑↑ Much higher ↑ Higher ↔ Similar ↓ Lower ↓↓ Much lower * Not available

Quality of Life

Measuring community livability starts with assessing the quality of life of those who live there, and ensuring that the community is attractive, accessible, and welcoming to all.

OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE

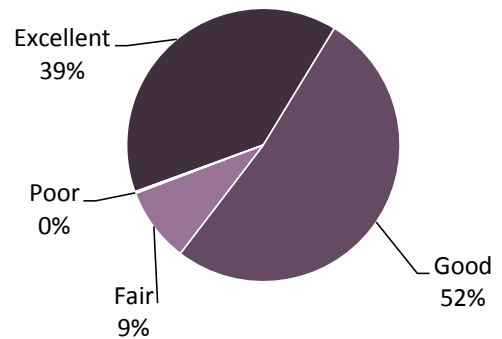


FIGURE 3: QUALITY OF LIFE IN BATAVIA

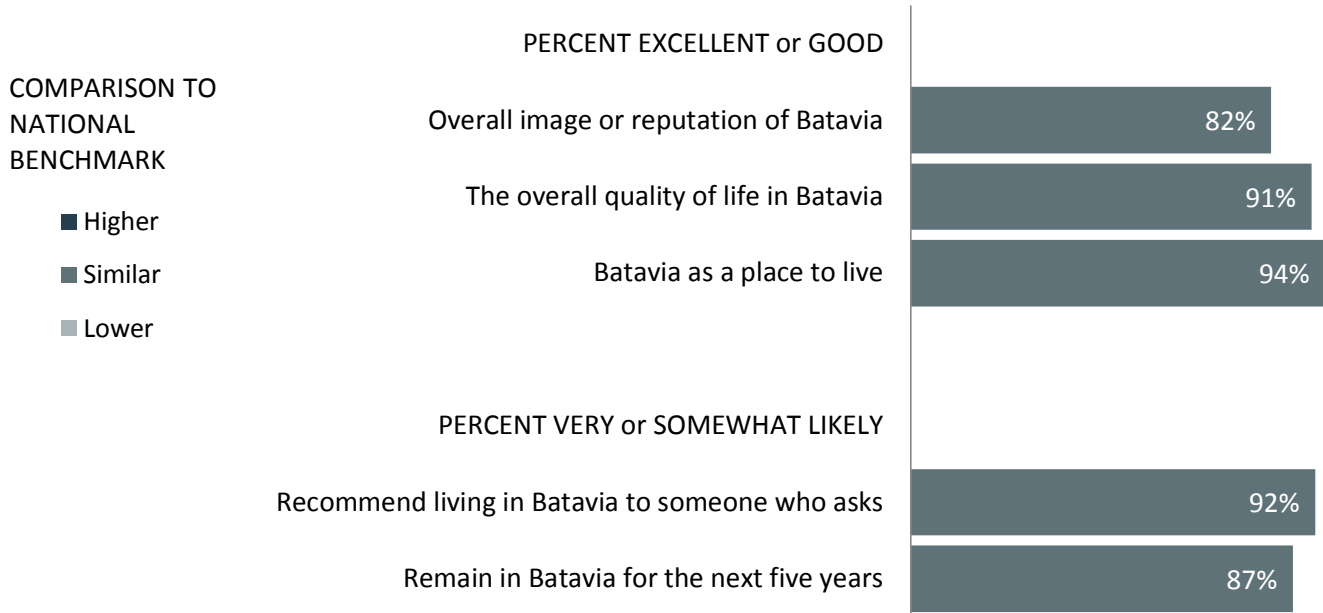


FIGURE 4: QUALITY OF LIFE IN BATAVIA - SUMMARY

Percent excellent or good	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Overall image or reputation of Batavia	↔	82%
The overall quality of life in Batavia	↔	91%
Batavia as a place to live	↔	94%

FIGURE 5: RECOMMEND BATAVIA - SUMMARY

Percent very or somewhat likely	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Recommend living in Batavia to someone who asks	↔	92%
Remain in Batavia for the next five years	↔	87%

Governance

Strong local governments produce results that meet the needs of residents while making the best use of available resources, and are responsive to the present and future needs of the community as a whole.

OVERALL CONFIDENCE IN GOVERNMENT

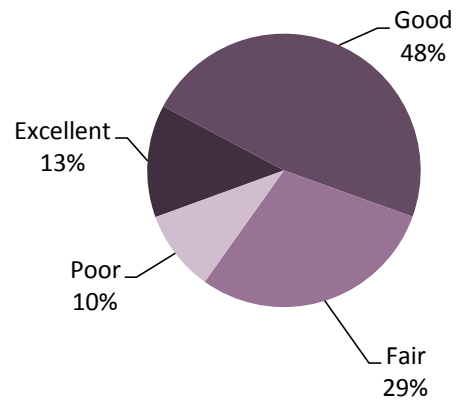


FIGURE 6: GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE AND SERVICES

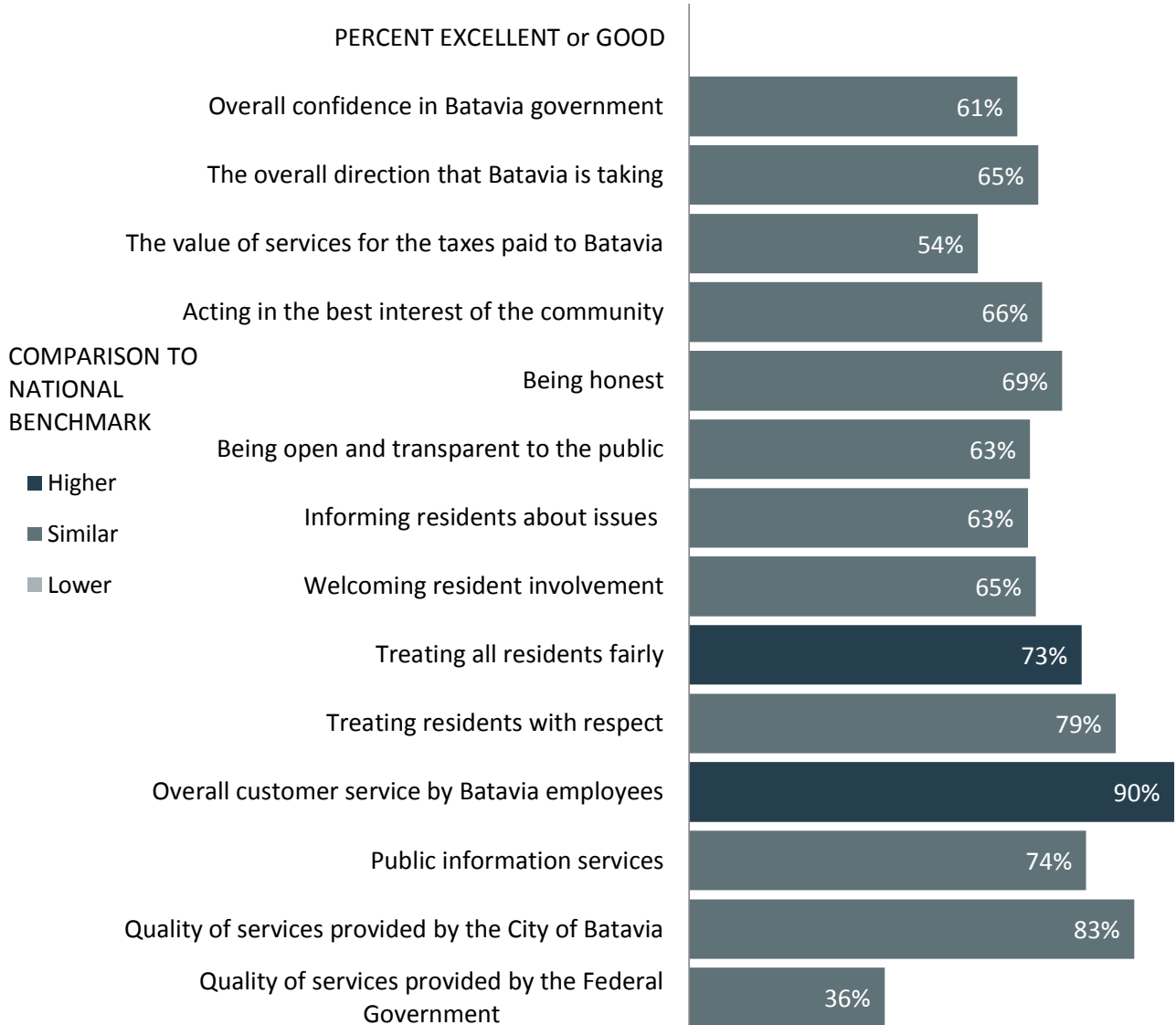


FIGURE 7: GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE AND SERVICES - SUMMARY

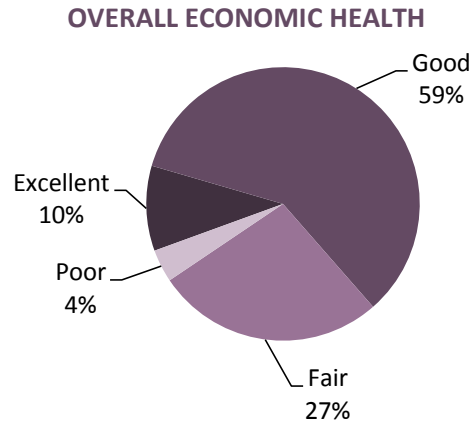
Percent excellent or good	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Overall confidence in Batavia government	↔	61%
The overall direction that Batavia is taking	↔	65%
The value of services for the taxes paid to Batavia	↔	54%
Generally acting in the best interest of the community	↔	66%
Being honest	↔	69%
Being open and transparent to the public	↔	63%
Informing residents about issues facing the community	↔	63%
The job Batavia government does at welcoming resident involvement	↔	65%
Treating all residents fairly	↑	73%
Treating residents with respect	↔	79%
Overall customer service by Batavia employees	↑	90%
Public information services	↔	74%
Quality of services provided by the City of Batavia	↔	83%
Quality of services provided by the Federal Government	↔	36%

Legend

↑↑ Much higher ↑ Higher ↔ Similar ↓ Lower ↓↓ Much lower * Not available

Economy

Local governments work together with private and nonprofit businesses, and with the community at large, to foster sustainable growth, create jobs, and promote a thriving local economy.



What impact, if any, do you think the economy will have on your family income in the next 6 months?

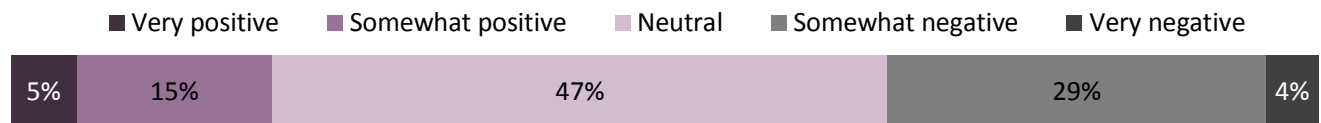


FIGURE 8: ECONOMIC HEALTH



FIGURE 9: ECONOMIC HEALTH - SUMMARY

Percent excellent or good	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Overall economic health of Batavia	↔	69%
Economic development	↔	53%
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Batavia	↔	73%
Variety of business and service establishments in Batavia	↔	54%
Vibrant downtown/commercial area	↔	44%
Shopping opportunities	↔	49%
Batavia as a place to visit	↔	57%
Batavia as a place to work	↔	69%
Employment opportunities	↔	40%
Cost of living in Batavia	↔	38%

FIGURE 10: ECONOMIC IMPACT - SUMMARY

Percent very or somewhat positive	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Economy will have positive impact on income	↓	20%

FIGURE 11: HOUSING COST - SUMMARY

Percent for whom housing costs are NOT 30% or more of household income	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
NOT experiencing housing costs stress	↔	69%

Legend

↑↑ Much higher ↑ Higher ↔ Similar ↓ Lower ↓↓ Much lower * Not available

Mobility

The ease with which residents can move about their communities, whether for commuting, leisure, or recreation, plays a major role in the quality of life for all who live, work and play in the community.

THE OVERALL QUALITY OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

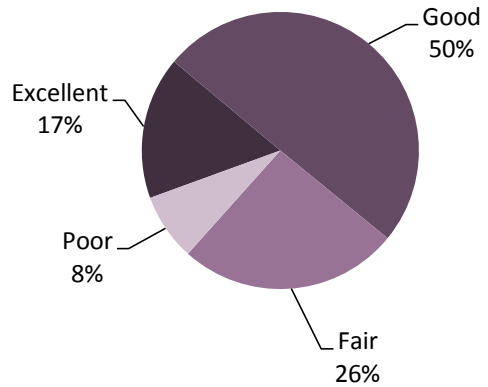


FIGURE 12: MOBILITY IN BATAVIA

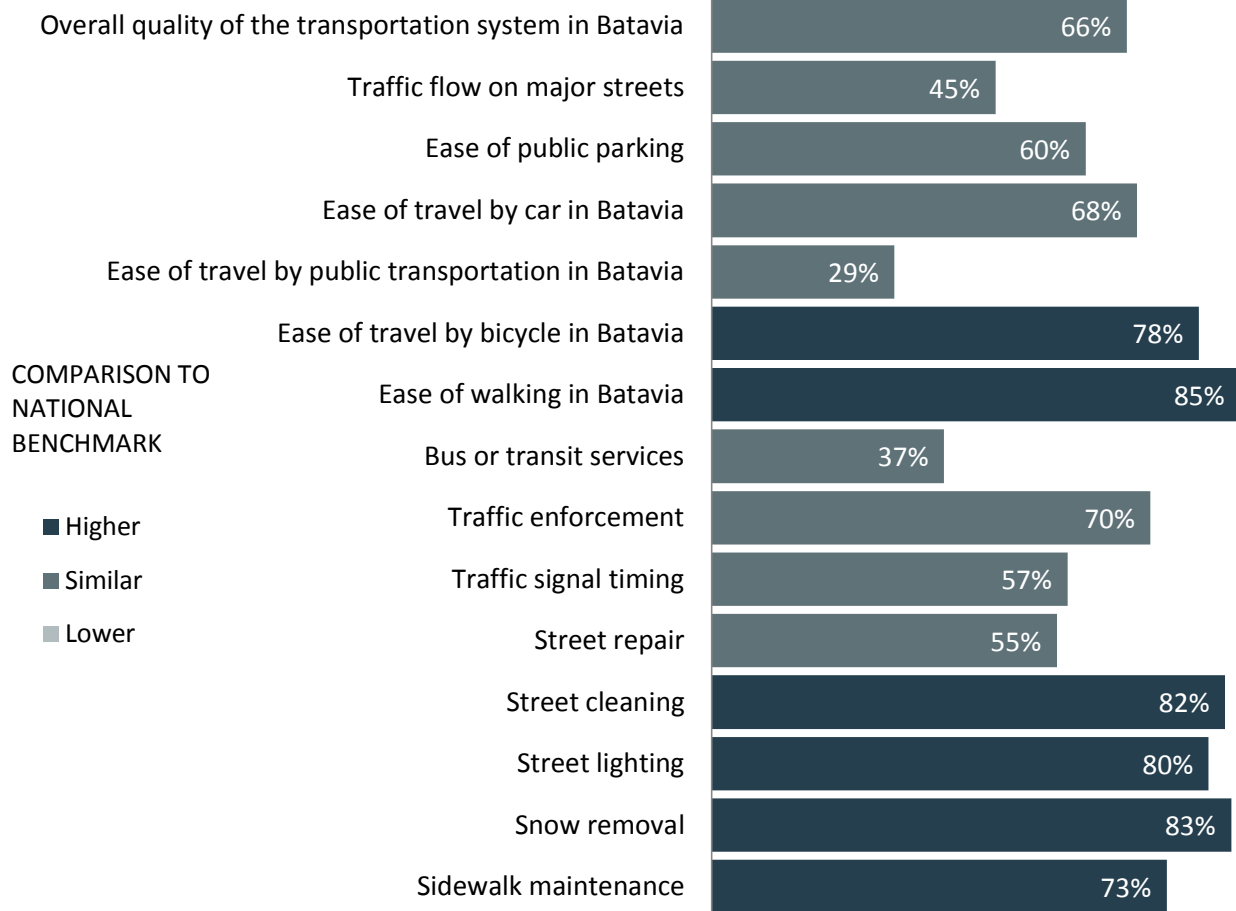


FIGURE 13: USE OF ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION MODES

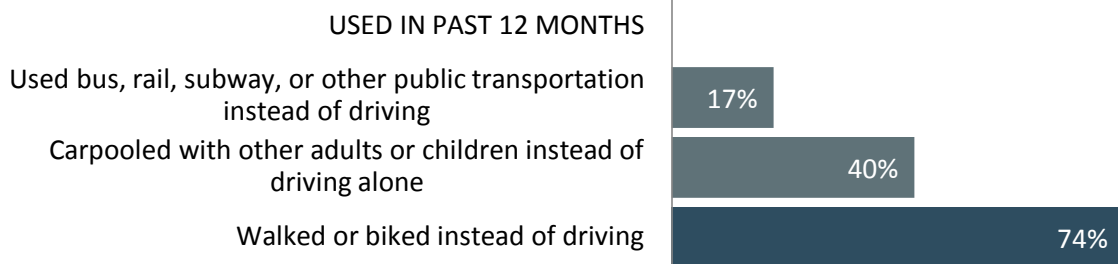


FIGURE 14: MOBILITY IN BATAVIA - SUMMARY

Percent excellent or good	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
The overall quality of the transportation system in Batavia	↔	66%
Traffic flow on major streets	↔	45%
Ease of travel by car in Batavia	↔	68%
Ease of travel by public transportation in Batavia	↔	29%
Ease of travel by bicycle in Batavia	↑	78%
Ease of walking in Batavia	↑	85%
Ease of public parking	↔	60%
Bus or transit services	↔	37%
Traffic enforcement	↔	70%
Traffic signal timing	↔	57%
Street repair	↔	55%
Street cleaning	↑	82%
Street lighting	↑	80%
Snow removal	↑	83%
Sidewalk maintenance	↑	73%

FIGURE 15: USE OF ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION MODES - SUMMARY

Percent who did this in past 12 months	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Used bus, rail, subway or other public transportation instead of driving	↔	17%
Carpooled with other adults or children instead of driving alone	↔	40%
Walked or biked instead of driving	↑	74%

Legend

↑↑ Much higher ↑ Higher ↔ Similar ↓ Lower ↓↓ Much lower * Not available

Community Design

A well-designed community enhances the quality of life for its residents by encouraging smart land use and zoning, ensuring that affordable housing is accessible to all, and providing access to parks and other green spaces.

THE OVERALL DESIGN OR LAYOUT OF RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL AREAS

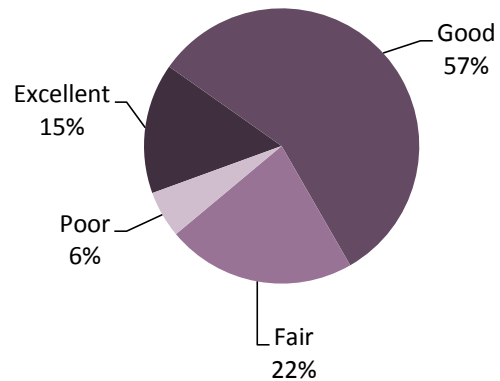


FIGURE 16: COMMUNITY DESIGN

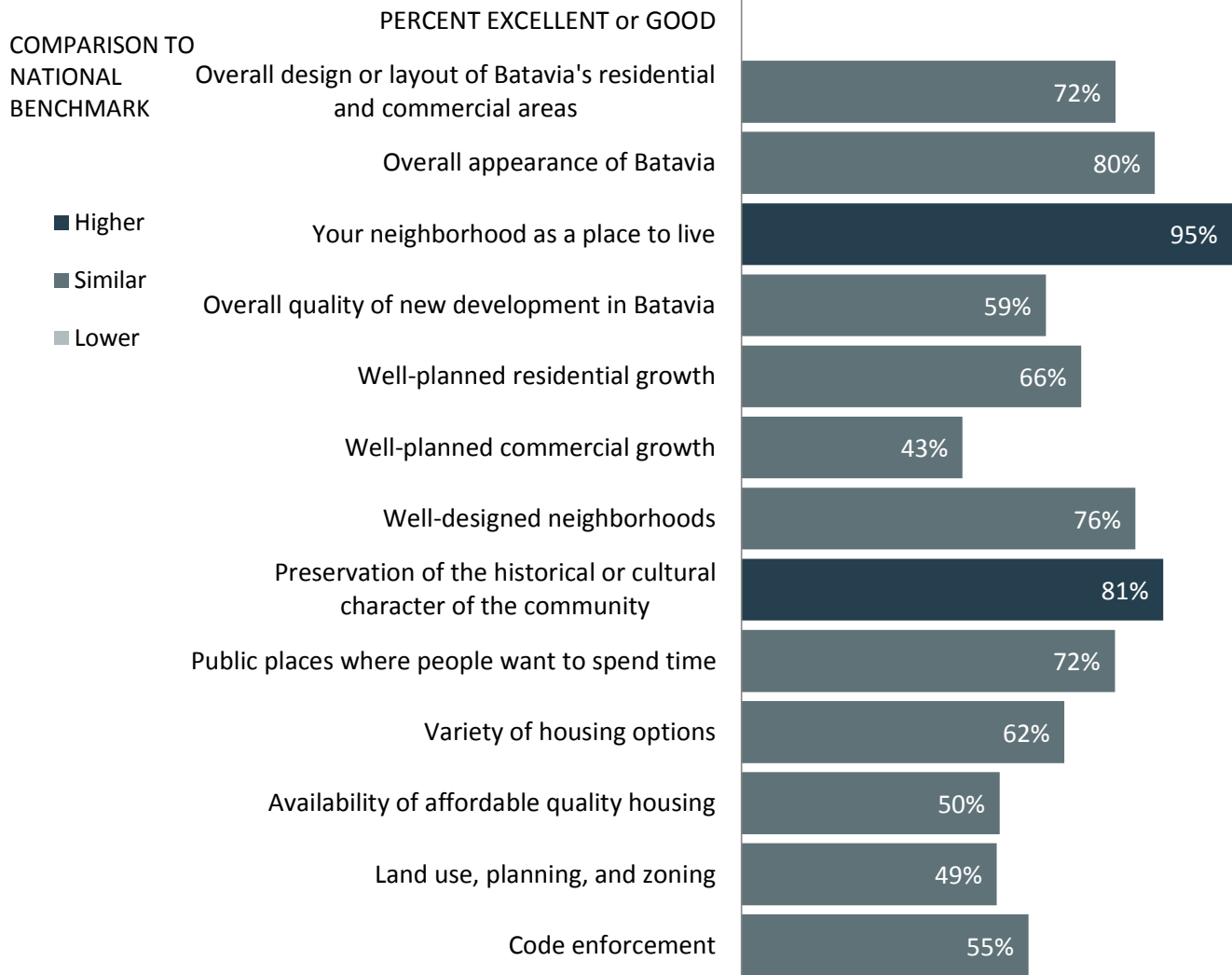


FIGURE 17: COMMUNITY DESIGN - SUMMARY

Percent excellent or good	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
The overall design or layout of Batavia’s residential and commercial areas	↔	72%
Overall appearance of Batavia	↔	80%
Your neighborhood as a place to live	↑	95%
Overall quality of new development in Batavia	↔	59%
Well planned residential growth	↔	66%
Well planned commercial growth	↔	43%
Well-designed neighborhoods	↔	76%
Preservation of the historical or cultural character of the community	↑	81%
Public places where people want to spend time	↔	72%
Variety of housing options	↔	62%
Availability of affordable quality housing	↔	50%
Land use, planning and zoning	↔	49%
Code enforcement	↔	55%

Legend

↑↑ Much higher ↑ Higher ↔ Similar ↓ Lower ↓↓ Much lower * Not available

Utilities

Services such as water, gas, electricity, and internet access play a vital role in ensuring the physical and economic health and well-being of the communities they serve.

THE OVERALL QUALITY OF THE UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE

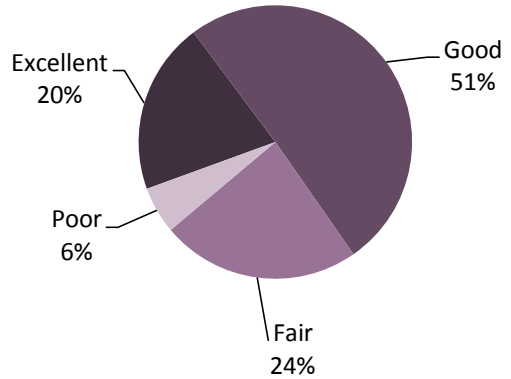


FIGURE 18: UTILITES

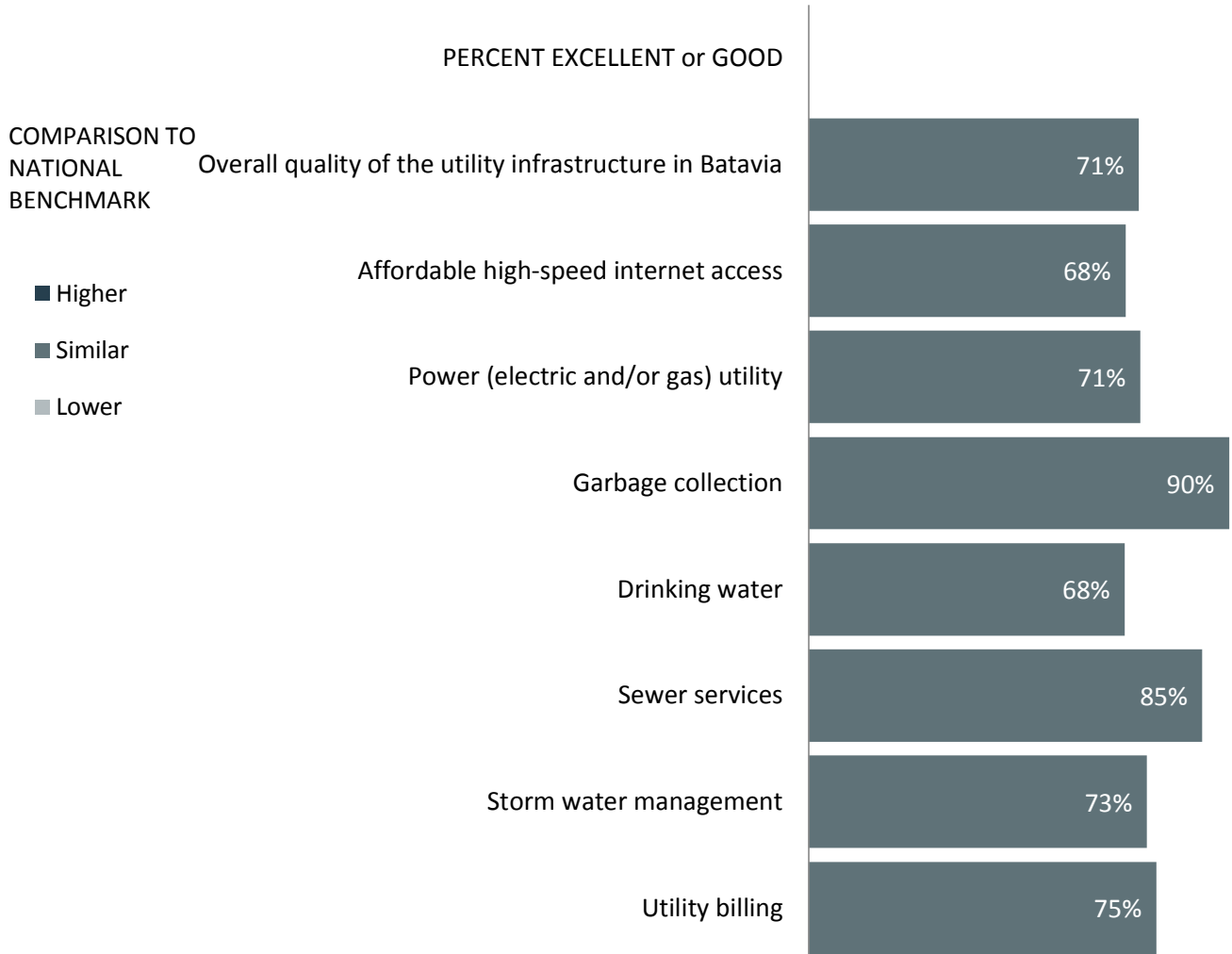


FIGURE 19: UTILITES - SUMMARY

Percent excellent or good	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
The overall quality of the utility infrastructure in Batavia	↔	71%
Affordable high-speed internet access	↔	68%
Power (electric and/or gas) utility	↔	71%
Garbage collection	↔	90%
Drinking water	↔	68%
Sewer services	↔	85%
Storm water management	↔	73%
Utility billing	↔	75%

Legend

↑↑ Much higher ↑ Higher ↔ Similar ↓ Lower ↓↓ Much lower * Not available

Safety

Public safety is often the most important task facing local governments. All residents should feel safe and secure in their neighborhoods and in the greater community, and providing robust Safety-related services is essential to residents' quality of life.

OVERALL FEELING OF SAFETY

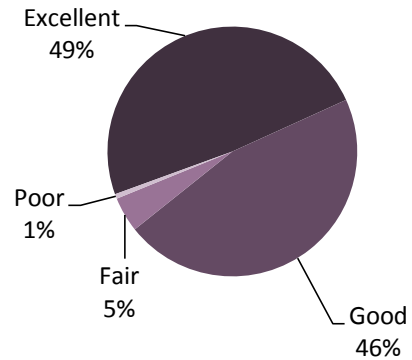


FIGURE 20: SAFETY IN BATAVIA

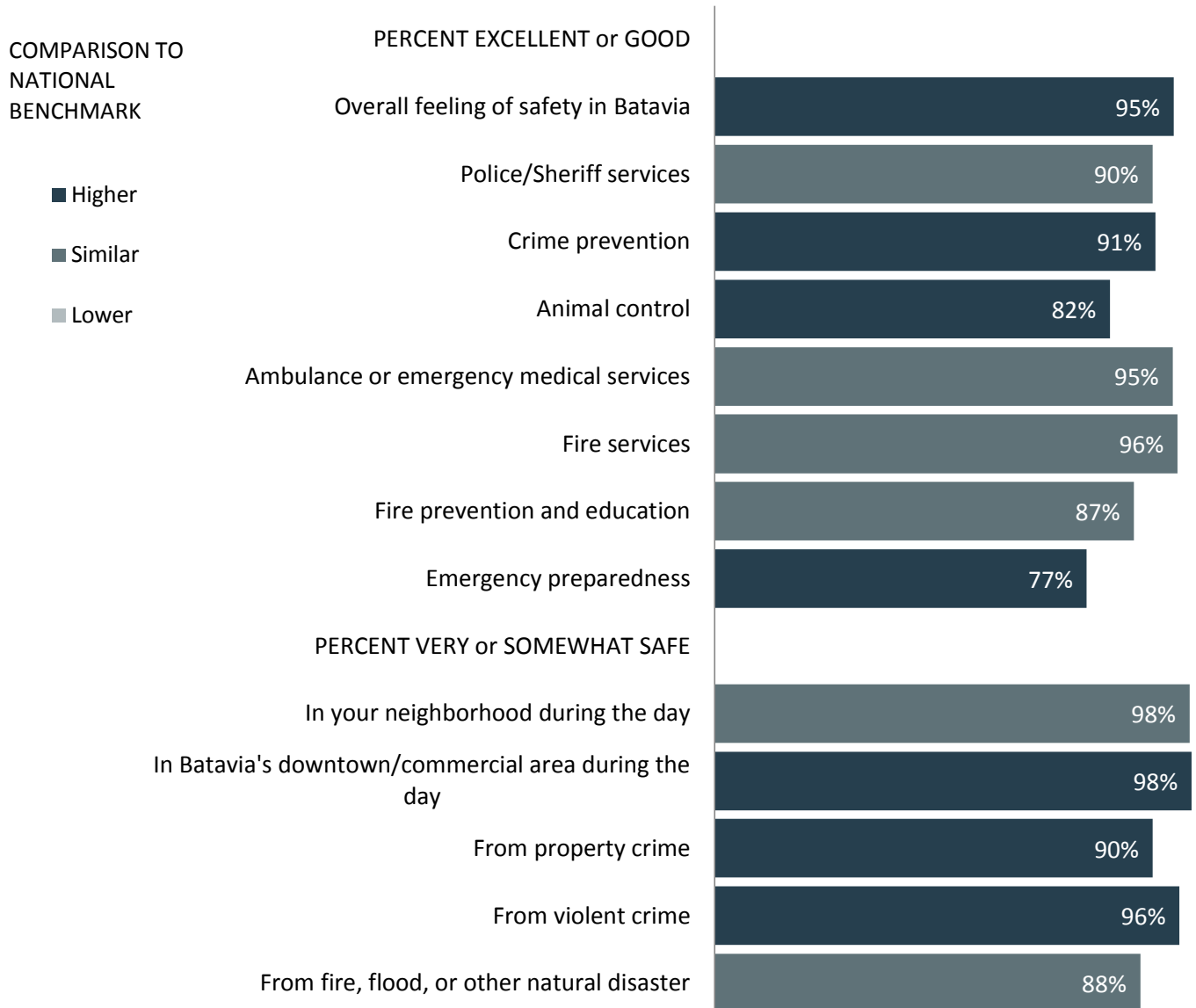


FIGURE 21: SAFETY-RELATED SERVICES - SUMMARY

Percent excellent or good	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Overall feeling of safety in Batavia	↑	95%
Police/Sheriff services	↔	90%
Crime prevention	↑	91%
Animal control	↑	82%
Ambulance or emergency medical services	↔	95%
Fire services	↔	96%
Fire prevention and education	↔	87%
Emergency preparedness	↑	77%

FIGURE 22: FEELINGS OF SAFETY- SUMMARY

Percent who feel very or somewhat safe	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
In your neighborhood during the day	↔	98%
In Batavia's downtown/commercial area during the day	↑	98%
From property crime	↑	90%
From violent crime	↑	96%
From fire, flood, or other natural disaster	↔	88%

Legend

↑↑ Much higher ↑ Higher ↔ Similar ↓ Lower ↓↓ Much lower * Not available

Natural Environment

The natural environment plays a vital role in the health and well-being of residents. The natural spaces in which residents live and experience their communities has a direct and profound effect on quality of life.

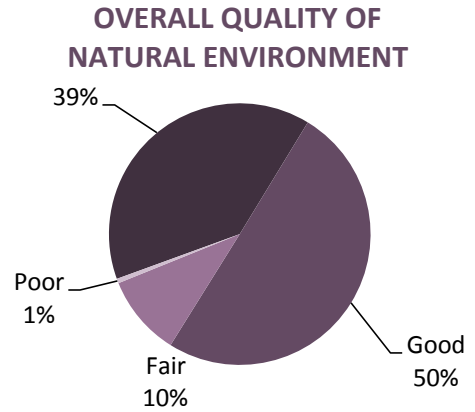


FIGURE 23: NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

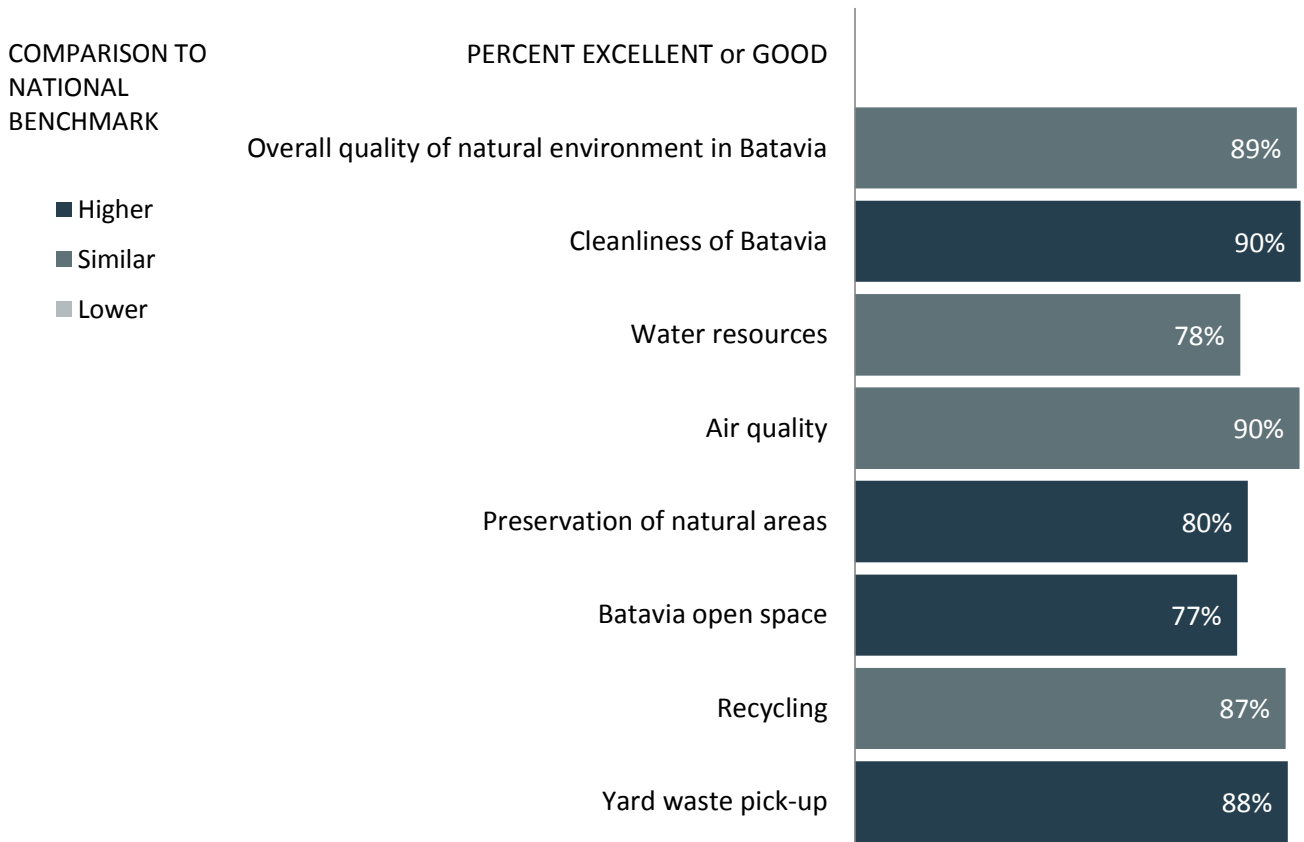


FIGURE 24: NATURAL ENVIRONMENT - SUMMARY

Percent excellent or good	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Overall quality of natural environment in Batavia	↔	89%
Cleanliness of Batavia	↑	90%
Water resources	↔	78%
Air quality	↔	90%
Preservation of natural areas	↑	80%
Batavia open space	↑	77%
Recycling	↔	87%
Yard waste pick-up	↑	88%

Legend

↑↑ Much higher ↑ Higher ↔ Similar ↓ Lower ↓↓ Much lower * Not available

Parks and Recreation

"There are no communities that pride themselves on their quality of life, promote themselves as a desirable location for businesses to relocate, or maintain that they are environmental stewards of their natural resources, without such communities having a robust, active system of parks and recreation programs for public use and enjoyment." - National Recreation and Park Association

THE OVERALL QUALITY OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

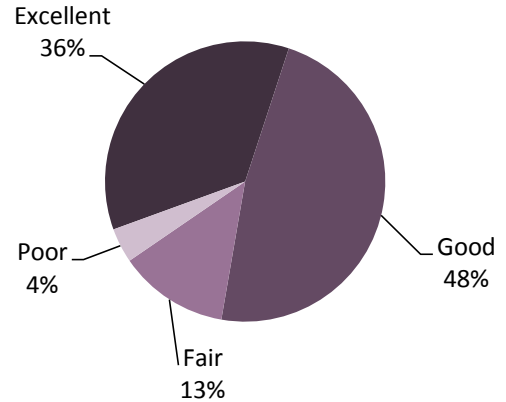


FIGURE 25: PARKS AND RECREATION



FIGURE 26: PARKS AND RECREATION - SUMMARY

Percent excellent or good	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Overall quality of parks and recreation opportunities in Batavia	↔	83%
Availability of paths and walking trails	↑↑	91%
City parks	↔	89%
Recreational opportunities	↔	70%
Recreation programs or classes	↔	74%
Recreation centers or facilities	↔	58%
Fitness opportunities	↔	75%

Legend

↑↑ Much higher ↑ Higher ↔ Similar ↓ Lower ↓↓ Much lower * Not available

Health and Wellness

The characteristics of and amenities available in the communities in which people live has a direct impact on the health and wellness of residents, and thus, on their quality of life overall.

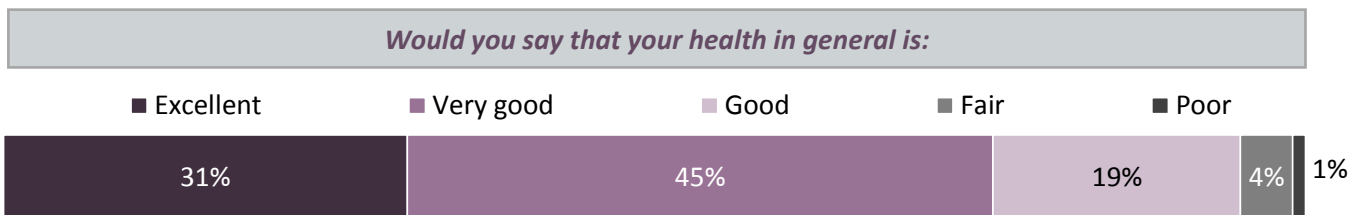
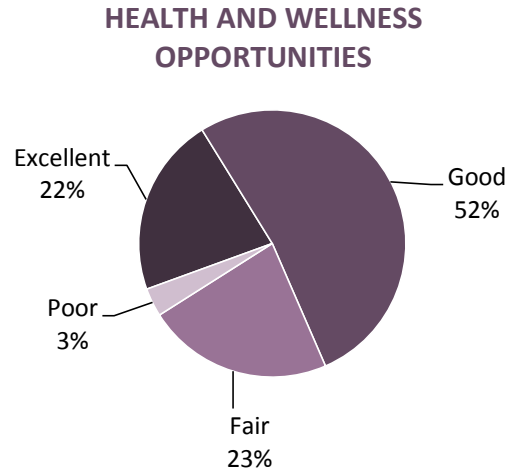


FIGURE 27: HEALTH AND WELLNESS



FIGURE 28: HEALTH AND WELLNESS - SUMMARY

Percent excellent or good	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Health and wellness opportunities in Batavia	↔	74%
Health services	↔	74%
Availability of affordable quality health care	↔	73%
Availability of preventive health services	↔	71%
Availability of affordable quality mental health care	↔	56%
Availability of affordable quality food	↔	77%
In very good to excellent health	↔	76%

Legend

↑↑ Much higher

↑ Higher

↔ Similar

↓ Lower

↓↓ Much lower

* Not available

Education, Arts, and Culture

Participation in the arts, in educational opportunities, and in cultural activities is linked to increased civic engagement, greater social tolerance, and enhanced enjoyment of the local community.

OVERALL OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATION, CULTURE, AND THE ARTS

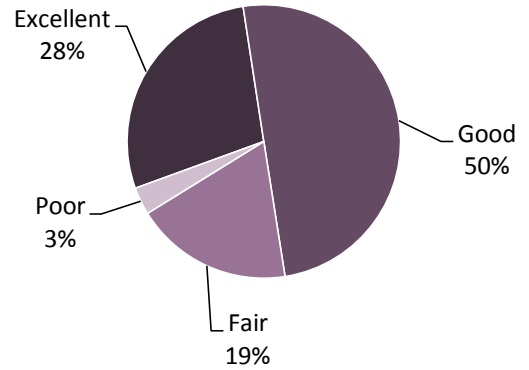


FIGURE 29: EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE

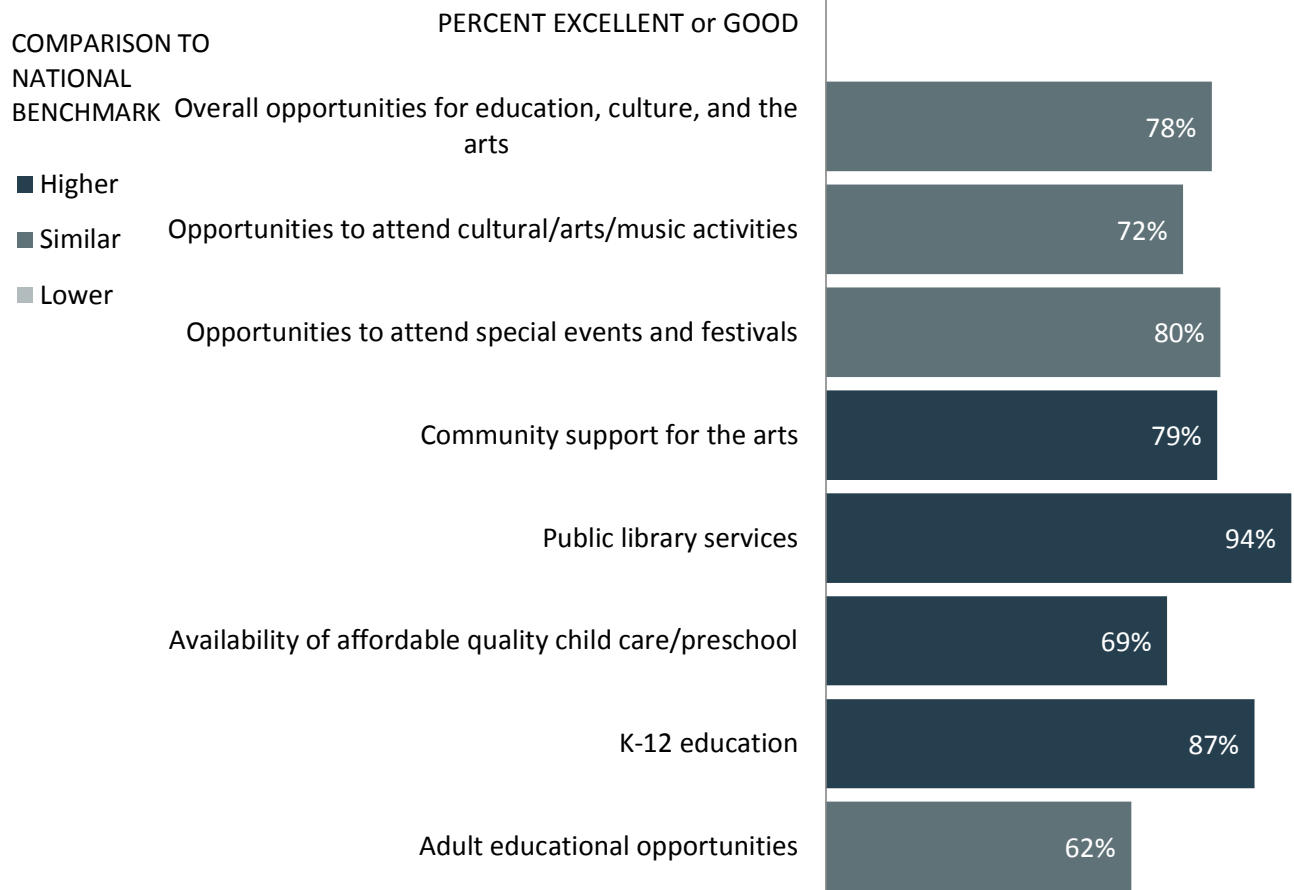


FIGURE 30: EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE - SUMMARY

Percent excellent or good	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Overall opportunities for education, culture and the arts in Batavia	↔	78%
Opportunities to attend cultural/arts/music activities	↔	72%
Opportunities to attend special events and festivals	↔	80%
Community support for the Arts	↑	79%
Public library services	↑	94%
Availability of affordable quality childcare/preschool	↑	69%
K-12 education	↑	87%
Adult educational opportunities	↔	62%

Legend

↑↑ Much higher ↑ Higher ↔ Similar ↓ Lower ↓↓ Much lower * Not available

Inclusivity and Engagement

Inclusivity refers to a cultural and environmental feeling of belonging; residents who feel invited to participate within their communities feel more included, involved, and engaged than those who do not.

RESIDENTS' CONNECTION AND ENGAGEMENT WITH THEIR COMMUNITY

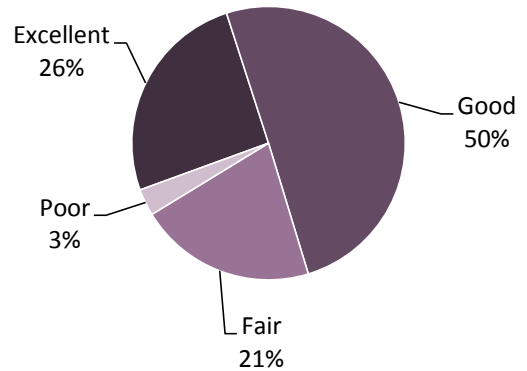


FIGURE 31: INCLUSIVITY & ENGAGEMENT

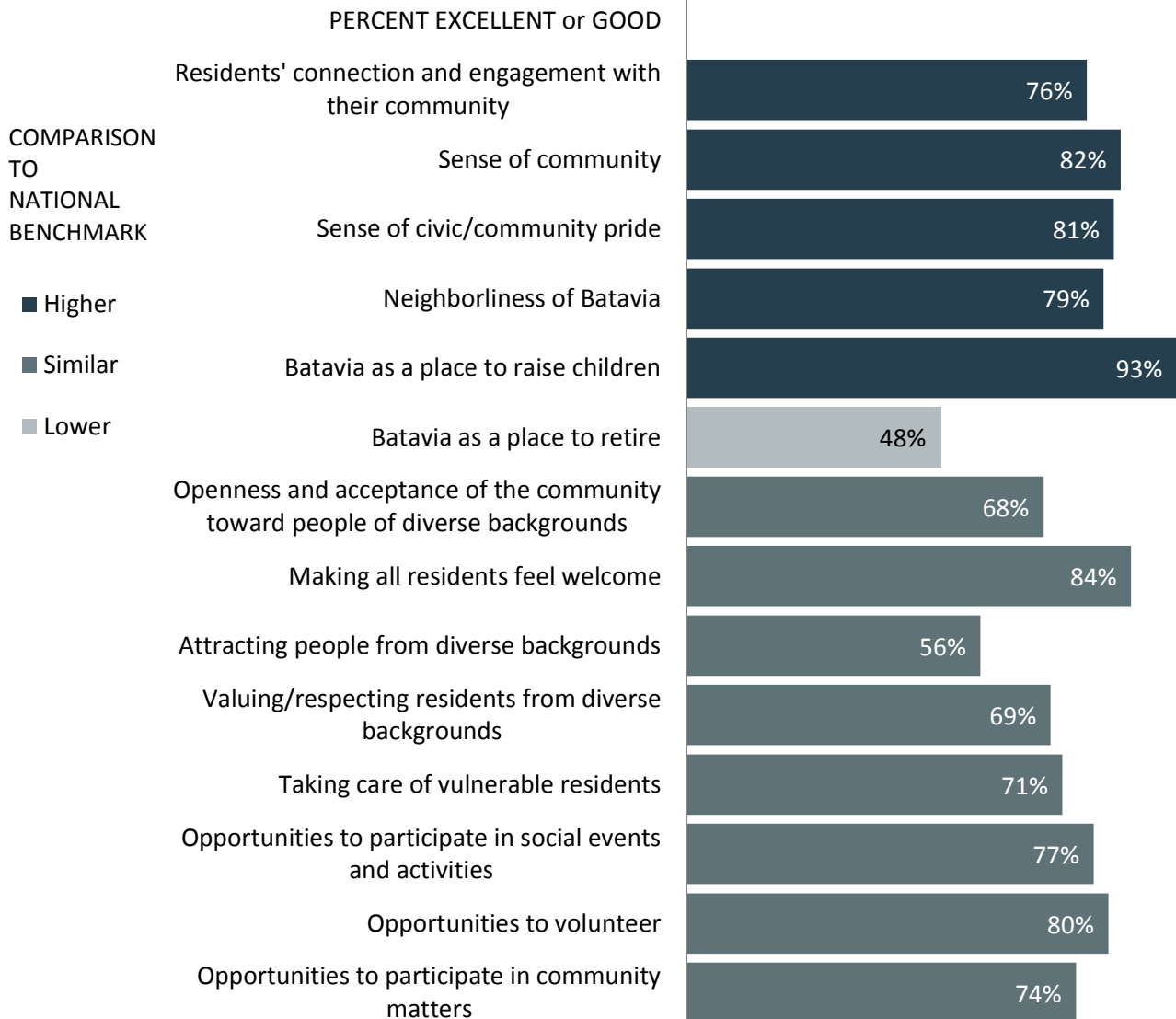


FIGURE 32: INCLUSIVITY & ENGAGEMENT - SUMMARY

Percent excellent or good	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Residents' connection and engagement with their community	↑	76%
Sense of community	↑	82%
Sense of civic/community pride	↑	81%
Neighborliness of residents in Batavia	↑	79%
Batavia as a place to raise children	↑	93%
Batavia as a place to retire	↓	48%
Openness and acceptance of the community toward people of diverse backgrounds	↔	68%
Making all residents feel welcome	↔	84%
Attracting people from diverse backgrounds	↔	56%
Valuing/respecting residents from diverse backgrounds	↔	69%
Taking care of vulnerable residents	↔	71%
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	↔	77%
Opportunities to volunteer	↔	80%
Opportunities to participate in community matters	↔	74%

Legend

↑↑ Much higher ↑ Higher ↔ Similar ↓ Lower ↓↓ Much lower * Not available

FIGURE 33: RESIDENTS' PARTICIPATION LEVELS

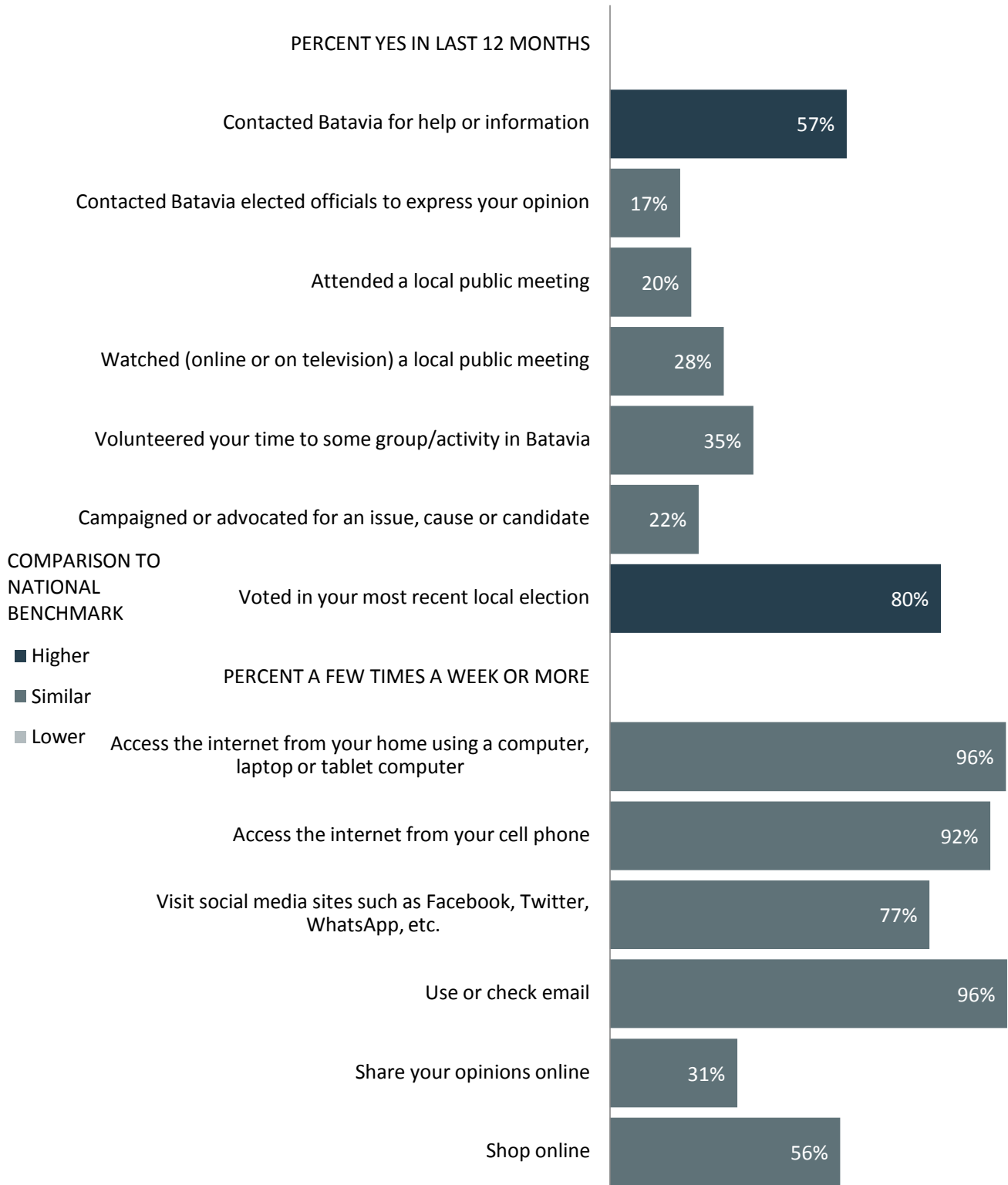


FIGURE 34: RESIDENTS’ PARTICIPATION IN LAST 12 MONTHS- SUMMARY

Percent who had done each in last 12 months	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Contacted the City of Batavia for help or information	↑	57%
Contacted Batavia elected officials to express your opinion	↔	17%
Attended a local public meeting	↔	20%
Watched (online or on television) a local public meeting	↔	28%
Volunteered your time to some group/activity in Batavia	↔	35%
Campaigned or advocated for a local issue, cause or candidate	↔	22%
Voted in your most recent local election	↑	80%

FIGURE 35: RESIDENTS’ GENERAL USE OF TECHNOLOGY- SUMMARY

Percent who report doing each at least a few times a week	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Access the internet from your home using a computer, laptop or tablet computer	↔	96%
Access the internet from your cell phone	↔	92%
Visit social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, etc.	↔	77%
Use or check email	↔	96%
Share your opinions online	↔	31%
Shop online	↔	56%

Legend

↑↑ Much higher ↑ Higher ↔ Similar ↓ Lower ↓↓ Much lower * Not available

Special Topics

FIGURE 36: SUPPORT FOR SECOND BRIDGE

The City is exploring the option to build a second bridge. To cover costs, the City would issue approximately \$20 million in municipal bonds (a lump sum, like a mortgage), which would require homeowners to pay an additional \$230 of property tax per year on a \$300,000 home for the next 20 years. How much would you support or oppose the City increasing property taxes to build a second bridge?

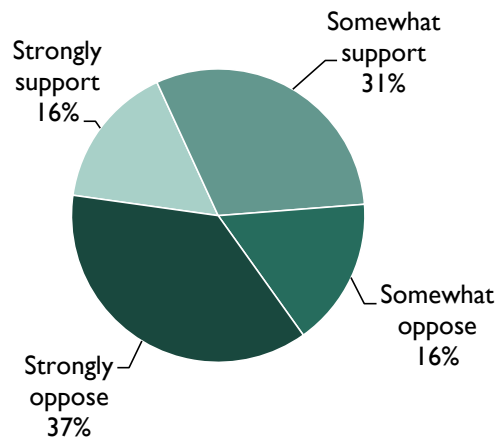


FIGURE 37: FOCUS AREAS FOR THE COMING TWO YEARS

Please rate how important, if at all, you think it is for the City of Batavia to focus on each of the following in the coming two years.

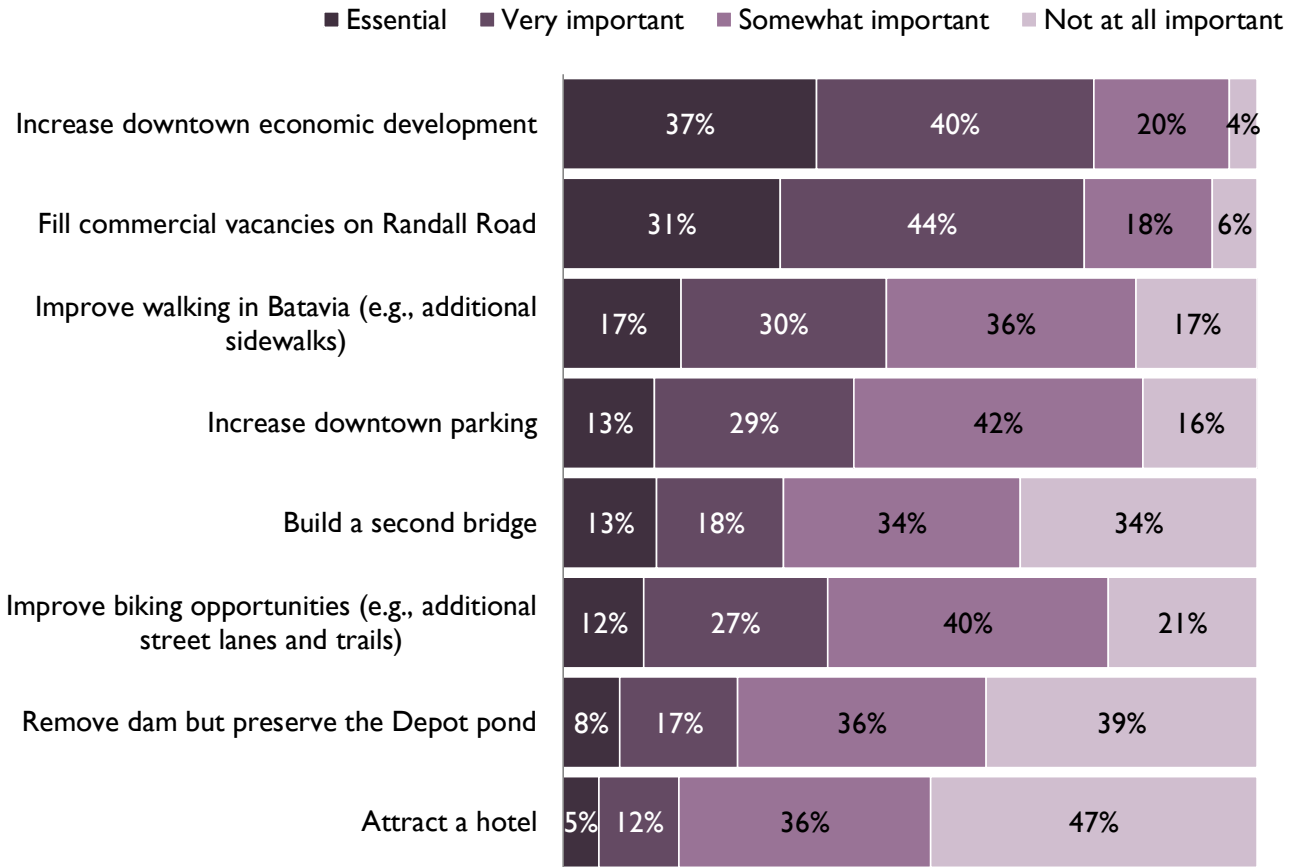


FIGURE 38: SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Please indicate how much of a source, if at all, you consider each of the following to be for obtaining information about the City government and its activities, events and services:

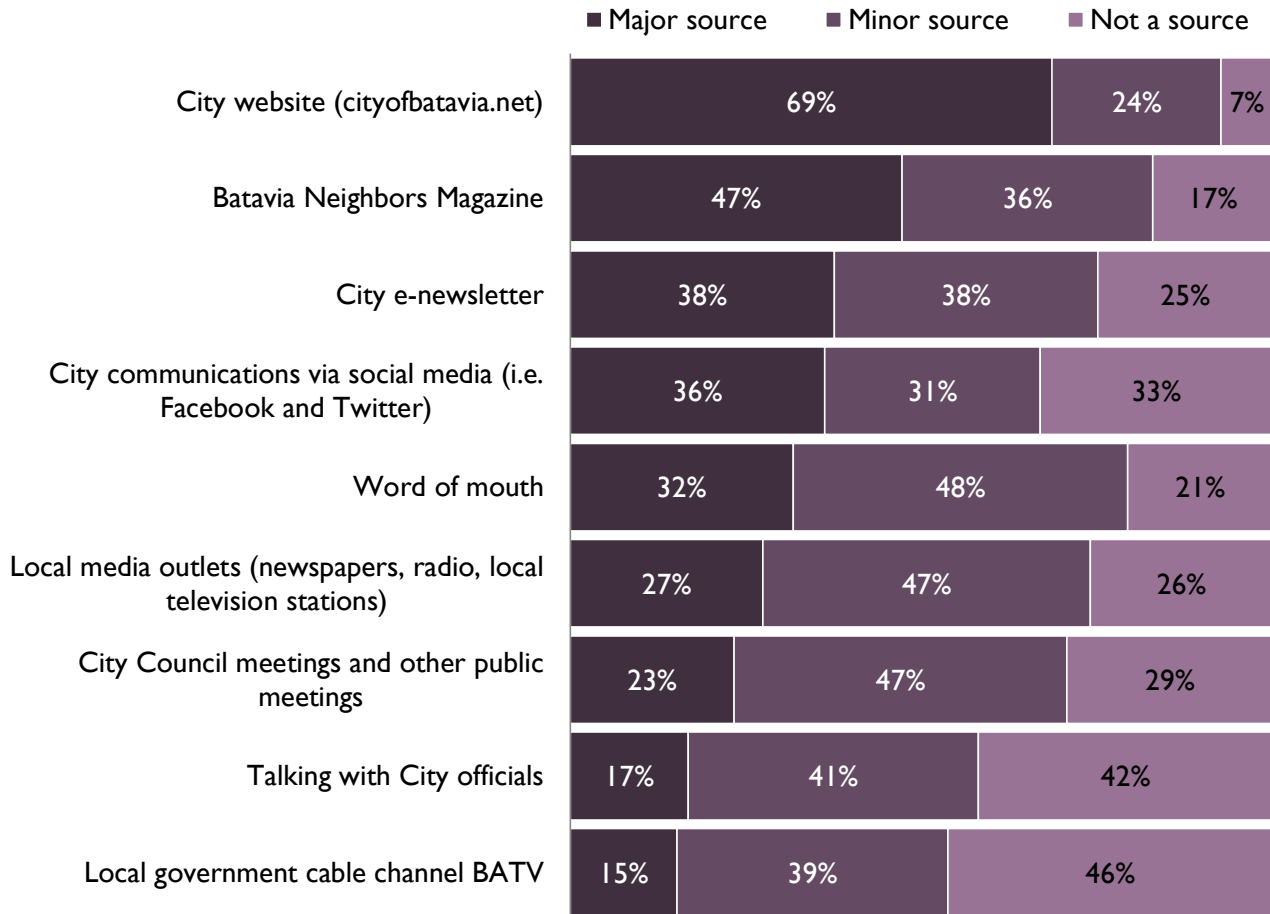


FIGURE 39: OPEN END

If you could change or add something to the City of Batavia to make it more attractive, what would it be?

