

Grand Rapids, MI

The National Community Survey

Report of Results
2026

Report by:



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About The NCS™

The National Community Survey™ (The NCS™) report is about the “livability” of Grand Rapids. A livable community is 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. The NCS was developed by the experts from National Research Center at Polco in partnership with the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) and has been administered in hundreds of communities across the United States.



Great communities are partnerships of the government, private sector, community-based organizations, and residents, all geographically connected. The NCS focuses on the livability of Grand Rapids by categorizing survey questions into the ten main “facets” of community livability shown below, in addition to ratings for quality of life and local governance. These facets have been identified through years of extensive survey research as those that are most impactful to residents’ quality of life.

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

The report provides the opinions of a representative sample of 381 residents of the City of Grand Rapids collected from March 9th, 2026 to April 20th, 2026. The margin of error around any reported percentage is 5% for all respondents. Survey results were weighted so that the demographic profile of respondents was representative of the demographic profile of adults in Grand Rapids.

Reporting Results

For the most part, the percentages presented in this report represent the “percent positive.” Most commonly, the percent positive is the combination of the top two most positive response options (excellent/good, very safe/somewhat safe, etc.). On many of the questions in the survey, respondents may answer “don’t know.” The proportion of respondents giving a “don’t know” response is shown in the full set of responses included in the “Complete Data” section; however, these responses have been removed from the analyses presented in the main body of the report. Therefore, the tables and graphs display the responses from respondents who had an opinion about a specific item.

Benchmark Comparisons

Polco's database of comparative resident opinion is comprised of resident perspectives gathered in surveys from over 400 communities whose residents evaluated the same kinds of topics on The NCS. The comparison evaluations include surveys from the past five years. If a jurisdiction has conducted multiple efforts in the past five years, only the most recent survey is included in the benchmark database. Polco adds the latest results quickly upon survey completion, keeping the benchmark data fresh and relevant. The communities in the database represent a wide geographic and population range.

In each tab, Grand Rapids's results are noted as being "higher" than the benchmark, "lower" than the benchmark, or "similar" to the benchmark, meaning that the average rating given by Grand Rapids residents. Being rated as "higher" or "lower" than the benchmark means that Grand Rapids's average rating for a particular item was more than 10 points different than the benchmark. If a rating was "much higher" or "much lower," then Grand Rapids's average rating was more than 20 points different when compared to the benchmark.

In addition to these national benchmarks, comparisons were also made to a smaller cohort of communities that align more closely to the demographics in Grand Rapids. This cohort included Cape Coral, Charlotte County and Okaloosa County (Florida), Glendale, Scottsdale and Tempe (Arizona), Corona, Elk Grove, Escondido, Fremont and Sunnyvale (California), Fort Collins and Lakewood (Colorado), Maui County (Hawaii), Kansas City (Kansas), Charles County (Maryland), Jackson County (Michigan), Olmsted County, Scott County and St. Louis County (Minnesota), Santa Fe County (New Mexico), Rochester (New York), Fayetteville and Winston-Salem (North Carolina), Salem (Oregon), Sioux Falls (South Dakota), Chattanooga (Tennessee), Comal County and McKinney (Texas), Alexandria, Richmond and Stafford County (Virginia). Comparisons to these communities can be found throughout the report and in the Custom Benchmarks tab.

Trends over time

Trend data for Grand Rapids represent important comparison data and should be examined for improvements or declines.¹ Deviations from stable trends over time represent opportunities for understanding how local policies, programs, or public information may have affected residents' opinions. Changes between survey years have been noted with an arrow and the percent difference. If the difference is greater than six percentage points between the 2024 and 2026 surveys, the change is statistically significant.

1. In 2020 and 2025, The NCS survey was updated to include new and refreshed items. Consequently, some of the trends may be impacted due to wording modifications that could have potentially altered the meaning of the item for the respondent.

Methods

Selecting Survey Recipients

All households within the City of Grand Rapids were eligible to participate in the survey. A list of all households within the zip codes serving Grand Rapids was purchased from Polco's mailing vendor, based on updated listings from the United States Postal Service.

Since some of the zip codes that serve Grand Rapids households may also serve addresses that lie outside of the community, the exact geographic location of each housing unit was compared to community boundaries using the most current municipal boundary file. Addresses located outside of Grand Rapids boundaries were removed from the list of potential households to survey. Each address identified as being within City boundaries was further identified as being within one of the three areas. From that list, addresses were randomly selected as survey recipients, with multi-family housing units sampled at a rate of 5:3 compared to single family housing units.

Conducting the Random Sample Survey

The 4,000 randomly selected households received mailings beginning on March 9th, 2026 and data collection for the survey remained open for six weeks. The first mailing was a postcard inviting the household to participate in the survey online. The next mailing contained a cover letter with instructions, the survey questionnaire, and a postage-paid return envelope. All mailings included a web link to give residents the opportunity to respond to the survey online, as well as QR codes to further encourage participation.

The survey was available in English and Spanish. All mailings contained paragraphs in both languages instructing participants on how to access the survey in their preferred language.

About 5% of the 4,000 mailed invitations were returned because the household address was vacant or the postal service was unable to deliver the survey as addressed. Of the remaining 3,815 households that received the invitations to participate, 381 completed the survey, providing an overall response rate of 10%. Of the 381 responses, 375 were completed in English and 6 were completed in Spanish. The response rate was calculated using AAPOR's response rate #2 for mailed surveys of unnamed persons.¹

It is customary to describe the precision of estimates by a "level of confidence" and accompanying "confidence interval" (or margin of error). A traditional level of confidence, and the one used here, is 95%. The 95% confidence interval quantifies the sampling error or imprecision of the survey results based on the total number of responses received. This is because *some* residents' opinions are relied on to estimate *all* residents' opinions. The margin of error for the City of Grand Rapids survey is no greater than plus or minus five percentage points around any given percent reported for all respondents (381 completed surveys).

Conducting the Open Participation Survey

In addition to the randomly selected "probability sample" of households, a link to an online open-participation survey was publicized by the City of Grand Rapids. The open-participation survey was identical to the random sample survey, with two small updates; it asked a question to confirm the respondent was a resident of Grand Rapids and also a question about where they heard about the survey.

The open-participation survey was open to all city residents and became available on April 6th, 2026. The survey remained open for two weeks and 393 responses were received. The data presented in the following report excludes the open participation survey data, but the online report includes a tab which provides the complete open participation results.

Analyzing the Data

Responses from mailed surveys were entered into an electronic dataset using a “key and verify” method, where all responses are entered twice and compared to each other. Any discrepancies were resolved in comparison to the original survey form. Range checks as well as other forms of quality control were also performed. Responses from surveys completed on Polco were downloaded and merged with the mailed survey responses.

The survey datasets were analyzed using all or some of a combination of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), R, Python, and Tableau.

The demographics of the survey respondents were compared to those found in the 2020 Census and 2024 American Community Survey estimates for adults in the City of Grand Rapids. The primary objective of weighting survey data is to make the survey respondents reflective of the larger population of the community. The characteristics used for weighting were age, sex, race, Hispanic origin, housing type, housing tenure, and area. No adjustments were made for design effects. Weights were calculated using an iterative, multiplicative raking model known as the ANES Weighting Algorithm.² The results of the weighting scheme for the probability sample are presented in the following table.

Polco aligns demographic labels with those used by the U.S. Census for reporting purposes, when possible. Some categories (age, race/Hispanic origin, housing type, and length of residency) are combined into smaller subgroups.

		Unweighted	Weighted	Target ³
Age	18-34	15%	43%	43%
	35-54	25%	28%	28%
	55+	61%	29%	29%
Area	Area 1	32%	34%	34%
	Area 2	41%	36%	36%
	Area 3	27%	30%	30%
Hispanic origin	No	92%	86%	86%
	Yes	8%	14%	14%
Housing tenure	Own	75%	55%	55%
	Rent	25%	45%	45%
Housing type	Attached	28%	42%	42%
	Detached	72%	58%	58%
Race & Hispanic ori..	Not white alone	22%	37%	37%
	White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	78%	63%	63%
Sex	Man	44%	49%	49%
	Woman	56%	51%	51%
Sex/age	Man 18-34	6%	21%	21%
	Man 35-54	11%	14%	14%
	Man 55+	27%	13%	13%
	Woman 18-34	8%	22%	22%
	Woman 35-54	14%	14%	14%
	Woman 55+	33%	16%	16%

Study Limitations

All public opinion research is subject to unmeasured error. While the methodologies employed for this survey were designed to minimize this error as much as possible, these other sources of potential error should be acknowledged, and can include non-response error, coverage error, recall bias, and social desirability bias.

Non-response error arises when those who were selected to participate in the survey did not do so, and may have different opinions or experiences than survey responders. For general resident surveys, where the results are meant to be generalized to the entire adult population living in households, the mailing lists based on the Delivery Sequence File from the United States Post Office may exclude certain types of housing units, such as those in multi-family buildings where mail is addressed to a named resident at the address rather than to a specific unit or where residents only receive their mail at a post office box and the geographic location of a residence cannot be determined, there may be a *coverage error*, although for most locations, this is minimal. Respondents may not perfectly remember their experiences in the past year (such as participation in social or civic events, for example), and for some survey items, they may answer in ways they think cast their responses in a more favorable light (*recall bias* and *social desirability bias*).

Survey Validity

See the Polco Knowledge Base article on survey validity at <https://blog.polco.us/polco-knowledgebase/margin-of-error-and-confidence-level-in-survey-results>

Contact

The City of Grand Rapids funded this research. Please contact David Green of the City of Grand Rapids at dgreen@grand-rapids.mi.us if you have any questions about the survey.

1. See AAPOR's Standard Definitions for more information at <https://aapor.org/standards-and-ethics/standard-definitions/>
2. Pasek, J. (2014). ANES Weighting Algorithm. Retrieved from <https://surveyinsights.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Full-anesrake-paper.pdf>
3. Targets come from the 2020 Census and 2024 American Community Survey

Key Findings

Community Strengths

Residents view Grand Rapids as a great place to live and recommend.

- About 8 in 10 community members gave positive reviews to the overall quality of life (81%).
- Roughly 8 in 10 residents positively rated Grand Rapids (85%) and their neighborhood (80%) as a place to live.
- About 9 in 10 respondents said they were likely to recommend living in Grand Rapids to someone who asks (91%).
- Most respondents said they were likely to remain in Grand Rapids for the next five years (83%).

Parks and recreation opportunities are well-regarded, with several ratings above benchmarks.

- Roughly 7 in 10 respondents gave positive ratings to recreational opportunities (71%) and recreation programs or classes (71%).
- Nearly three-fourths positively rated Grand Rapids' city parks (74%) and fitness opportunities (74%).
- Resident ratings of Grand Rapids' recreation centers or facilities increased from 2024 (70% compared to 64% in 2024).

Education, culture, and arts offerings are a community asset, with several results above benchmarks.

- Roughly 7 in 10 residents rated overall opportunities for education, culture, and the arts positively (71%), higher than the custom benchmark.
- About 7 in 10 residents gave positive ratings to opportunities to attend cultural/arts/music activities (73%) and community support for the arts (72%); both were higher than national and custom benchmarks, even though each decreased from 2024.
- Roughly 8 in 10 community members offered positive reviews of opportunities to attend special events and festivals (75%), higher than the custom benchmark.
- Nearly all residents rated public library services positively (93%).

Focus Areas

Some safety and emergency readiness measures indicate room for growth.

- While perceptions of safety were generally positive, fewer than 7 in 10 rated the overall feeling of safety positively (64%), lower than the national benchmark.
- Ratings for key public safety services suggested opportunities for growth, including police/sheriff services (51% excellent or good) and crime prevention (50%), both lower than the benchmarks.
- Fewer residents felt safe from fire, flood, or other natural disaster than in 2024 (79%), although similar to national and custom benchmarks.
- Positive ratings of fire services were still strong overall (87% excellent or good), but they were lower than 2024.

Economic confidence in Grand Rapids remains strong but shows some declines.

- About two-thirds rated the overall economic health favorably (65%).
- Roughly 7 in 10 residents gave positive ratings to Grand Rapids as a place to work (67%) and visit (73%), the

former was lower than 2024.

- About half of respondents gave positive ratings to employment opportunities (55%), which was lower than 2024.
- About 6 in 10 residents rated shopping opportunities positively (63%), which was lower than 2024.

Transportation and street maintenance results indicate opportunities for improvement.

- Fewer than half of respondents gave positive ratings to the overall quality of the transportation system (48%), although this was similar to the national and custom benchmarks.
- About 4 in 10 residents rated traffic flow on major streets positively (42%), a decrease from 2024.
- About 3 in 10 community members offered positive reviews of ease of public parking (33%), which was lower than the national and custom benchmarks.
- Ratings for core maintenance services suggested room for growth, including street repair (22%, lower than national and custom benchmarks), street cleaning (41%, a decrease from 2024 and lower than the national benchmark), and sidewalk maintenance (39%, a decrease from 2024).

Other Notable Results

Residents shared feedback on nighttime safety and how well the City keeps the community informed.

- About 8 in 10 respondents said they felt safe in their neighborhood during the night (76%), while about half felt safe in Grand Rapids's downtown/commercial area during the night (52%).
- Roughly 6 in 10 residents gave positive ratings to the quality of information provided to them by the City regarding local construction or roadwork projects (61%) and how effective current notifications about construction impacts were (62%).
- About 7 in 10 community members said they had never received an invitation to participate or provide feedback in planning for a project in their neighborhood (69%).
- Fewer than half of respondents gave positive ratings to City communication about road construction or closures (46%), traffic reports (48%), and police updates (40%), indicating opportunities to strengthen routine updates in these areas.
- The top types of projects residents are most interested in knowing about are projects affecting their local neighborhood streets (84%), followed by new/updated facilities that provide service to their neighborhood (58%).

Areas of Greatest Change

Of the evaluative questions included on both the 2024 and 2026 survey iterations, 90 were statistically similar to previous results. Upward trends were seen in 2 items, while 31 ratings decreased since 2024. The most significant of those trends are listed below.

Increases

- Recreation centers or facilities (+7%)
- Overall resident health (+7%)

Decreases

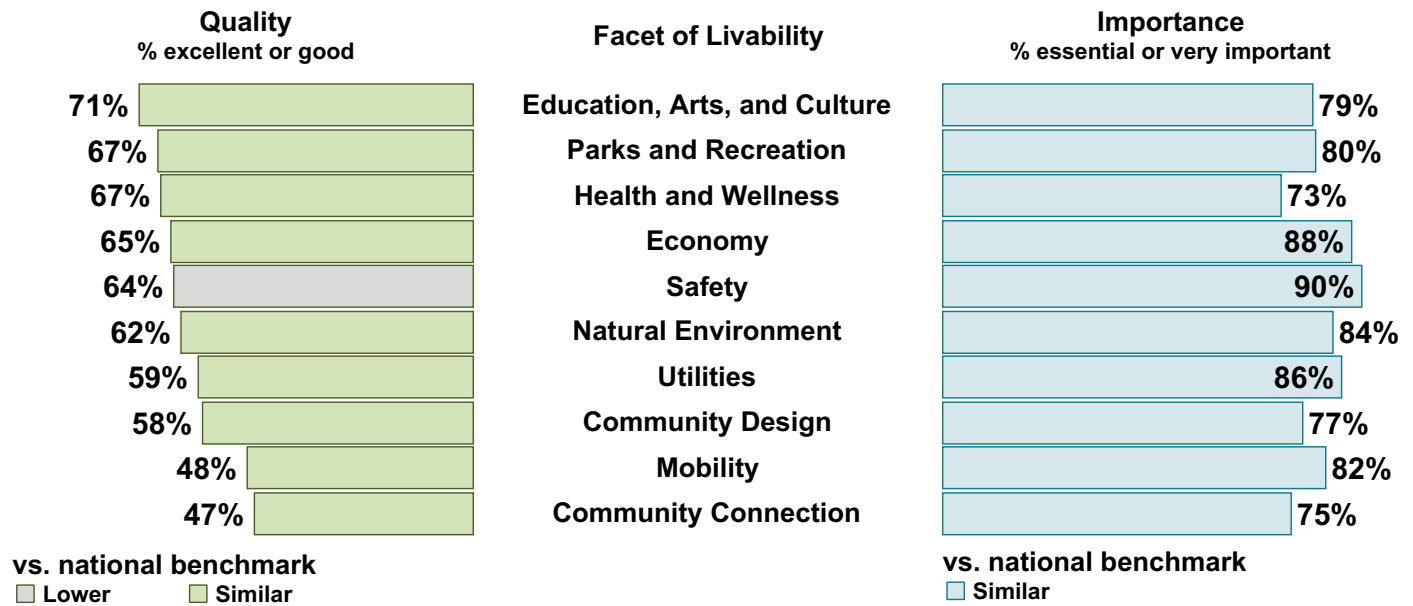
- Storm water management (storm drainage, dams, levees, etc.) (-20%)
- The Federal Government (-18%)
- Attracting people from diverse backgrounds (-15%)
- Utility billing (-15%)

Facets of Livability

Every jurisdiction must balance limited resources while meeting resident needs and striving to optimize community livability. To this end, it is helpful to know what aspects of the community are most important to residents and which they perceive as being of higher or lower quality. It is especially helpful to know when a facet of livability is considered of high importance but rated as lower quality, as this should be a top priority to address.

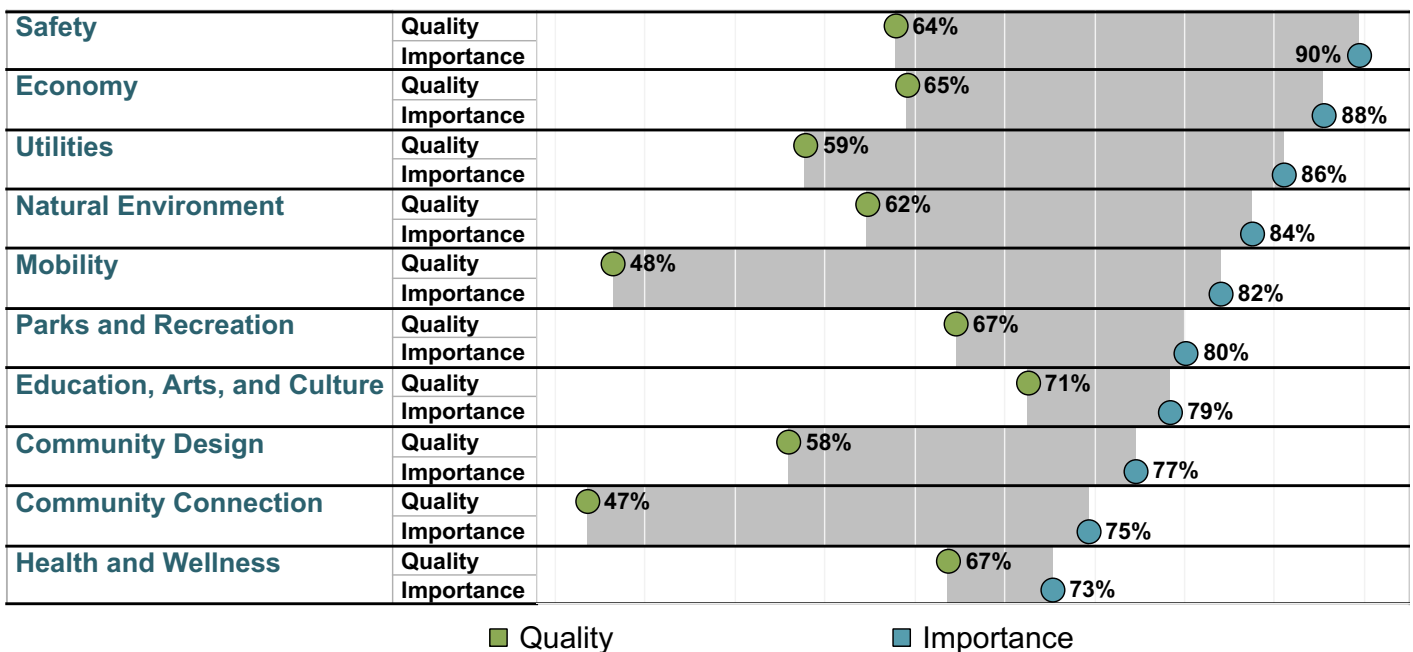
Quality and Importance by the Numbers

The table below shows the proportion of residents who rated the community facets positively for quality and the priority (importance) placed on each. Also displayed is whether local quality ratings were lower, similar, or higher than communities across the country (the national benchmark).



Quality/Importance Gap Analysis

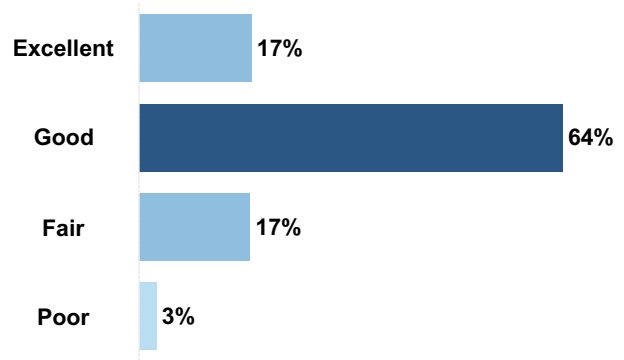
The gap analysis chart below shows the same data as above; however, this chart more clearly illustrates the comparative differences in quality and importance ratings for each facet, as well as the absolute ratings for each.



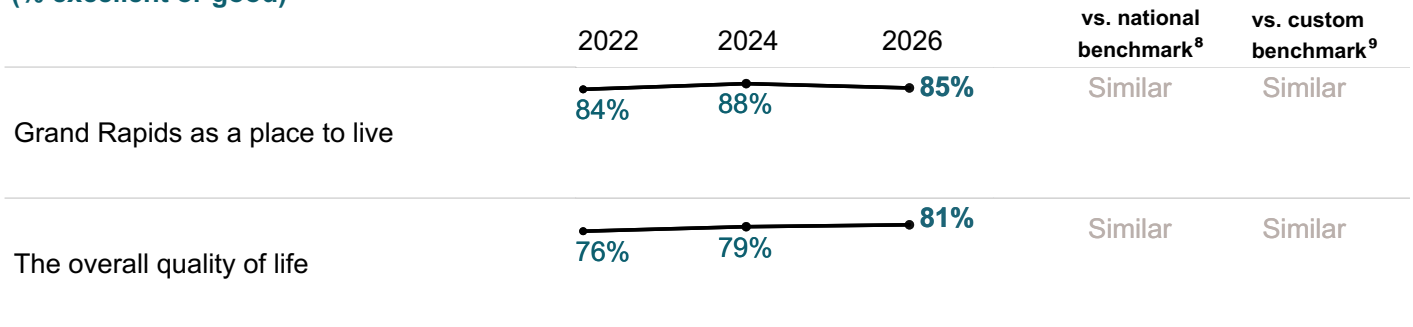
Quality of Life

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.

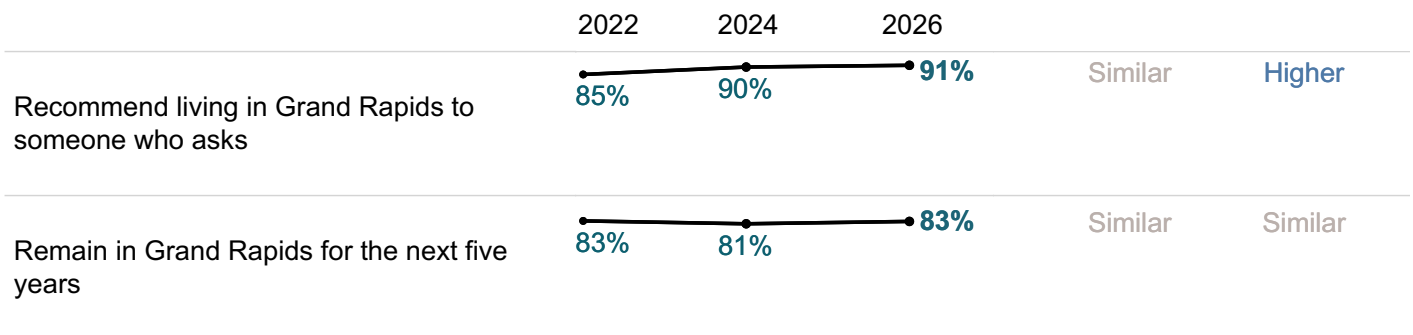
The overall quality of life in Grand Rapids



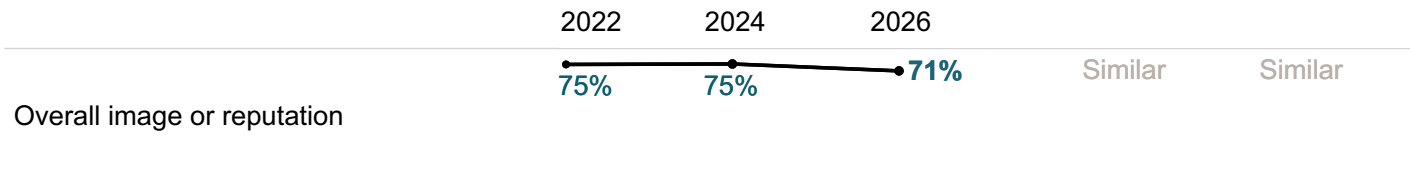
Please rate each of the following aspects of quality of life in Grand Rapids.
(% excellent or good)



Please indicate how likely or unlikely you are to do each of the following.
(% very or somewhat likely)



Please rate each of the following in the Grand Rapids community.
(% excellent or good)



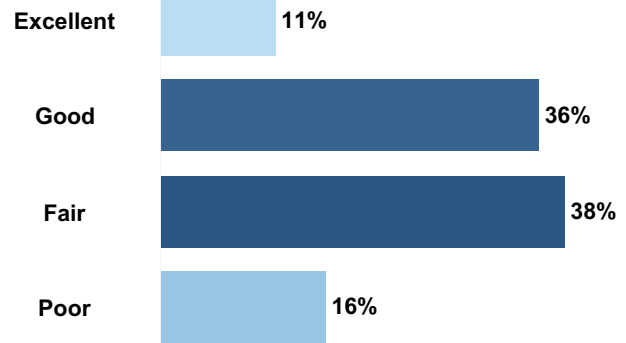
8. Comparison to the national benchmark is shown. If no comparison is available, this is left blank.

9. Comparison to the custom benchmark is shown. A description of the custom benchmark cohort can be found in the About section of the report. If no comparison is available, this is left blank.

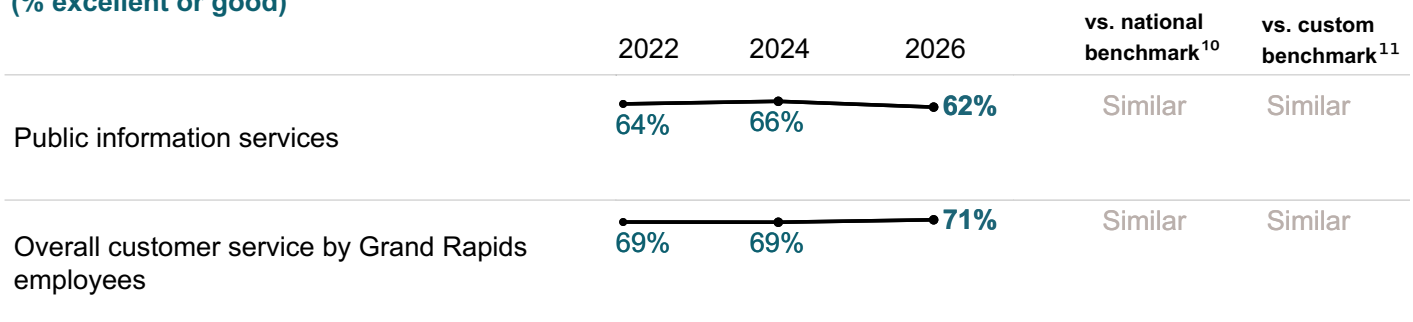
Governance

Strong local governments deliver results that meet residents' needs, use resources effectively, and respond to both current and future community priorities.

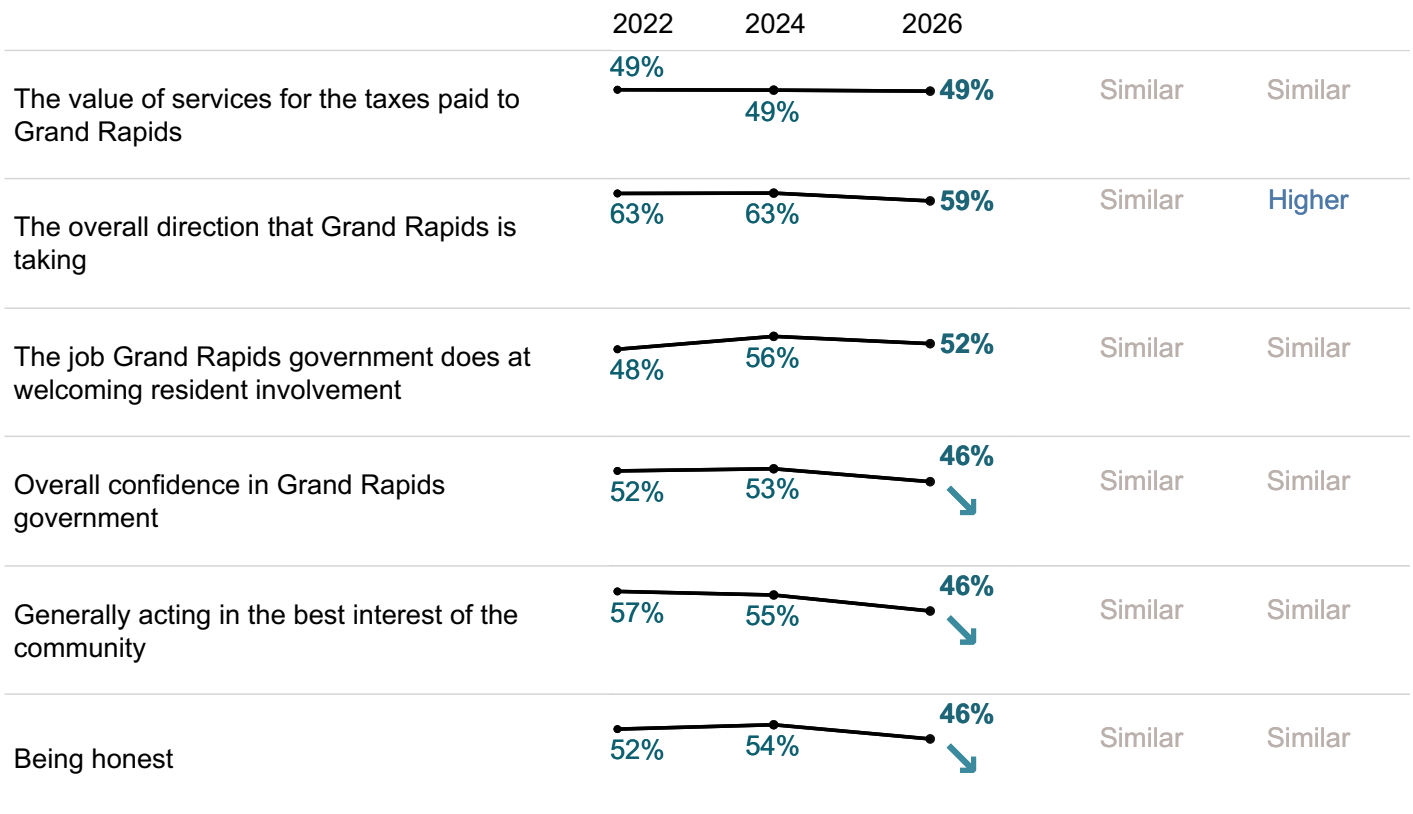
Overall confidence in Grand Rapids government

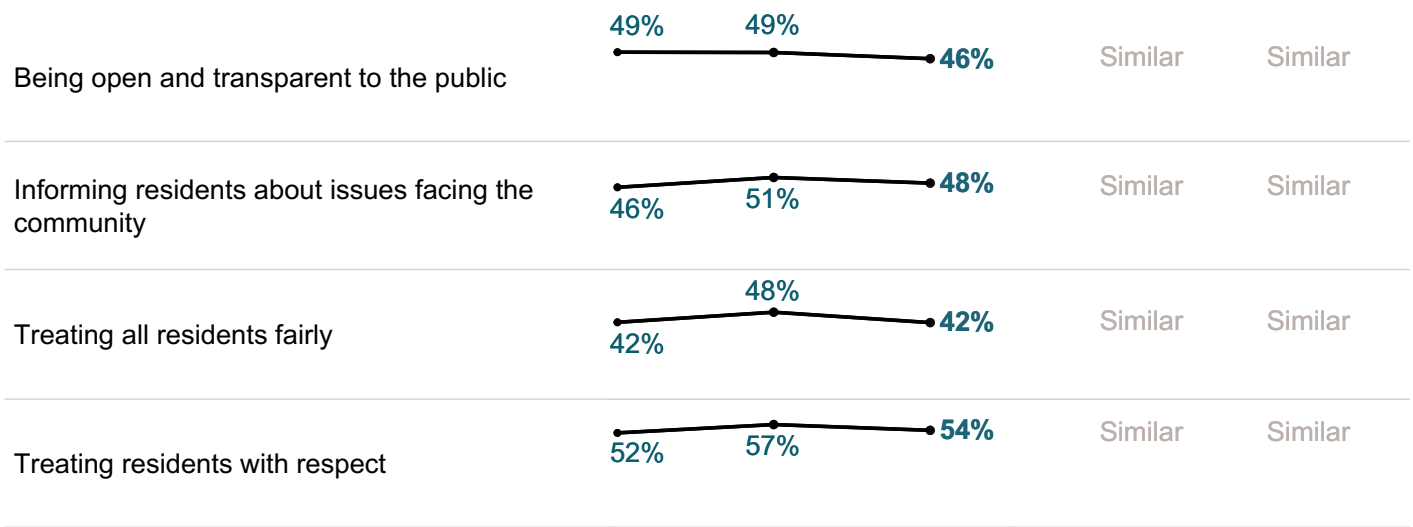


Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Grand Rapids.
(% excellent or good)

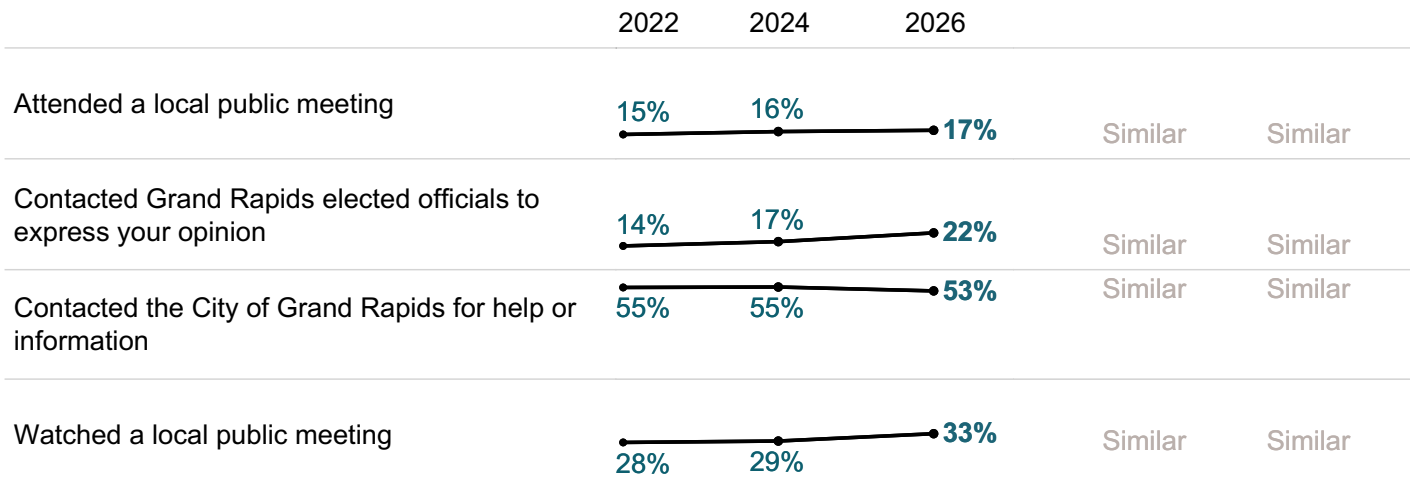


Please rate the following categories of Grand Rapids government performance.
(% excellent or good)

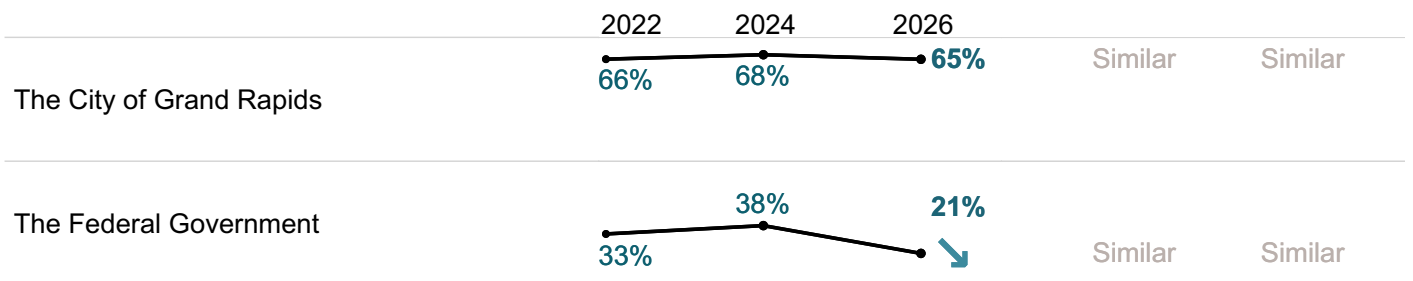




Please indicate whether or not you have done each of the following in the last 12 months.
(% yes)



Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by each of the following?
(% excellent or good)



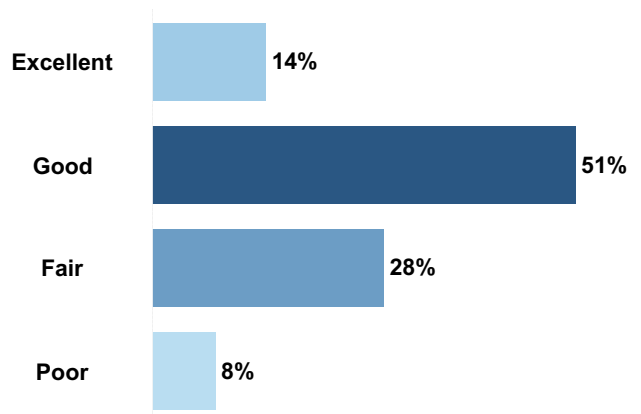
10. Comparison to the national benchmark is shown. If no comparison is available, this is left blank.

11. Comparison to the custom benchmark is shown. A description of the custom benchmark cohort can be found in the About section of the report. If no comparison is available, this is left blank.

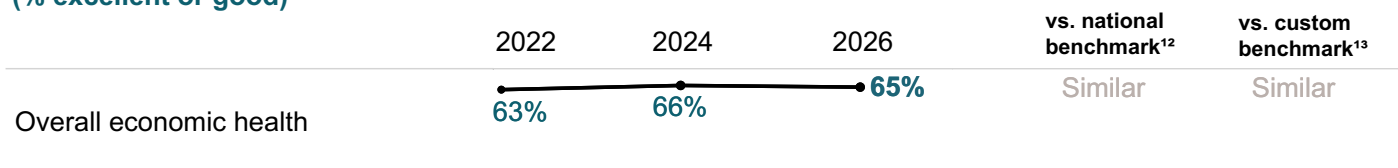
Economy

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.

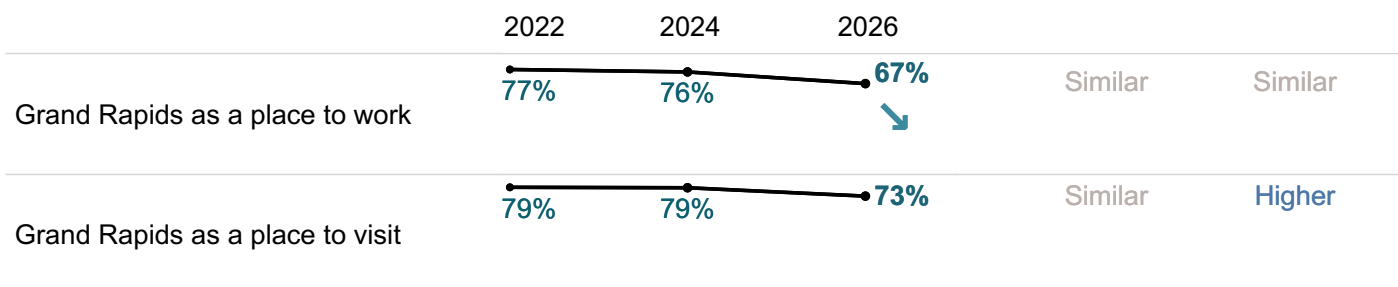
Overall economic health of Grand Rapids



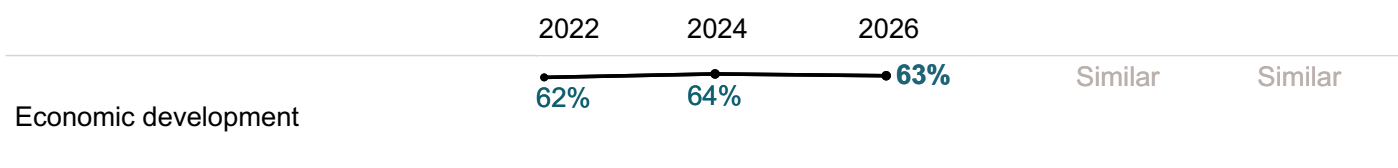
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Grand Rapids as a whole.
(% excellent or good)



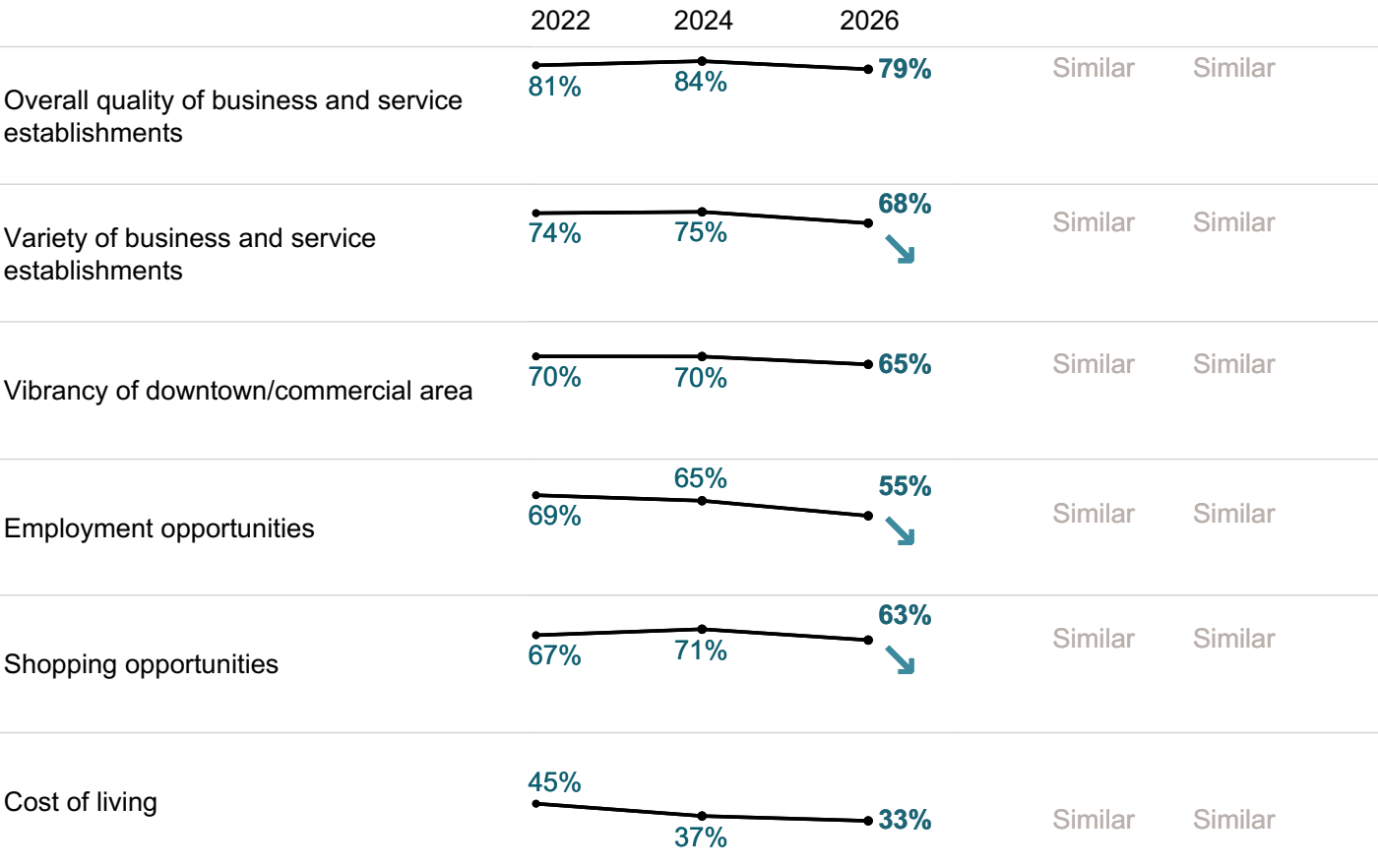
Please rate each of the following aspects of quality of life in Grand Rapids.
(% excellent or good)



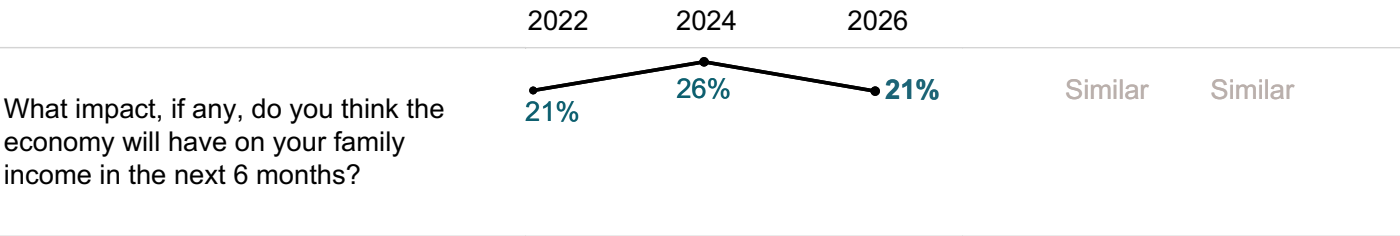
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Grand Rapids.
(% excellent or good)



Please rate each of the following in the Grand Rapids community.
 (% excellent or good)



What impact, if any, do you think the economy will have on your family income in the next 6 months? Do you think the impact will be:
 (% very or somewhat positive)

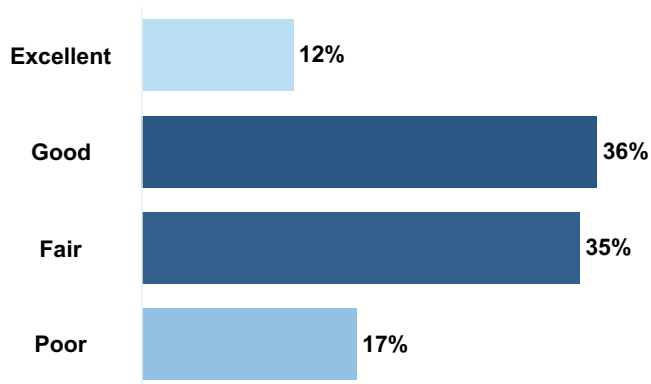


12. Comparison to the national benchmark is shown. If no comparison is available, this is left blank.
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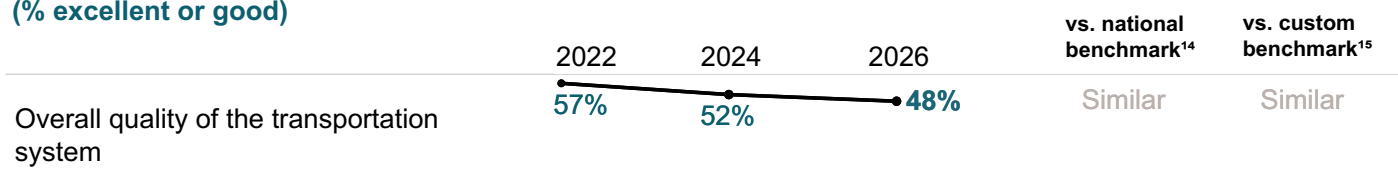
Mobility

The ability of residents to move about their community with ease plays an important role in the overall quality of life for everyone who lives, works, and spends time there.

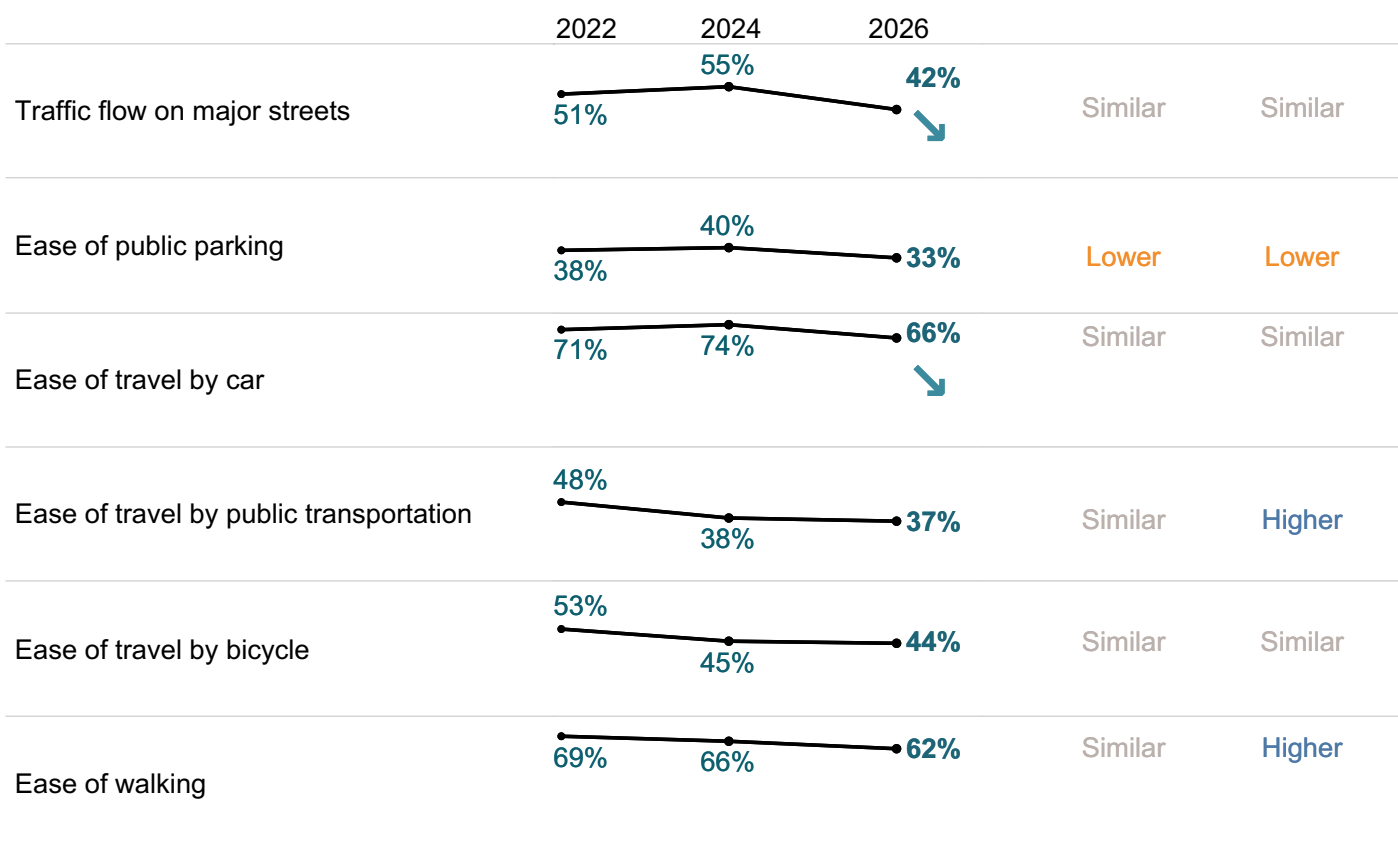
Overall quality of the transportation system in Grand Rapids



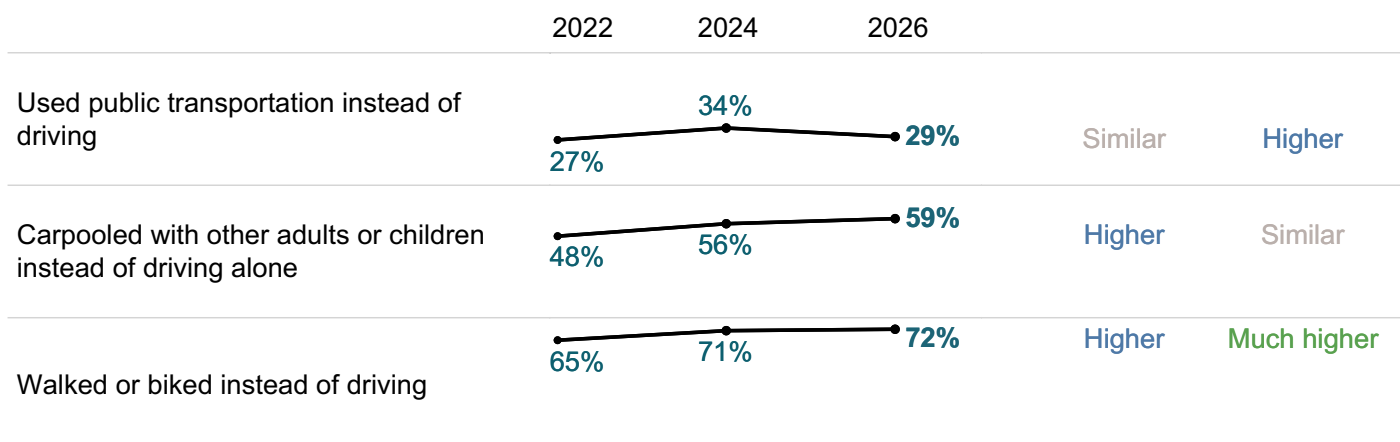
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Grand Rapids as a whole.
(% excellent or good)



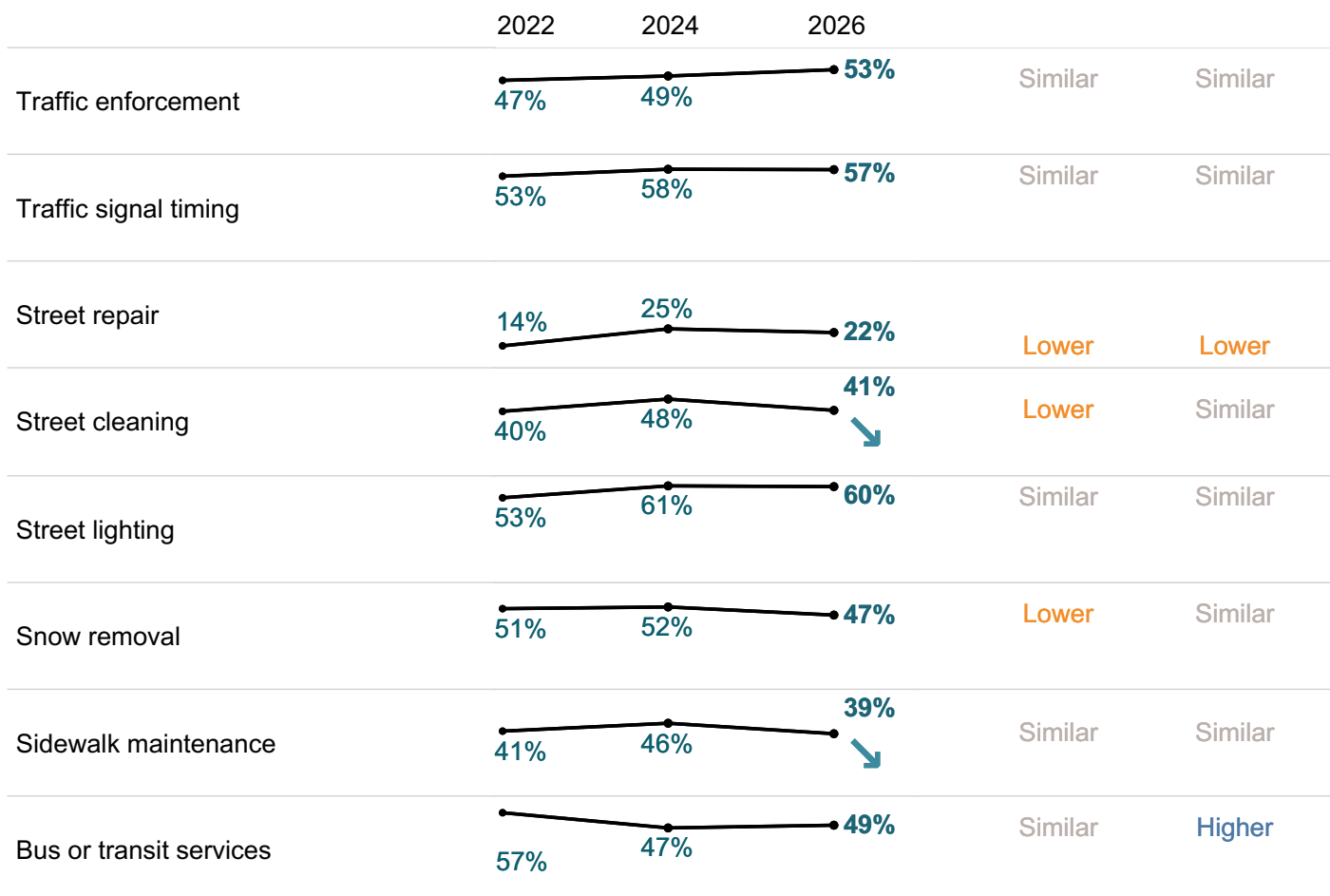
Please also rate each of the following in the Grand Rapids community.
(% excellent or good)



Please indicate whether or not you have done each of the following in the last 12 months.
 (% yes)



Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Grand Rapids.
 (% excellent or good)



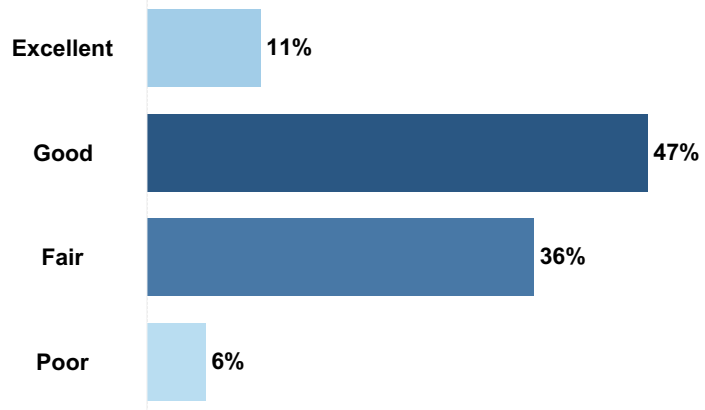
14. Comparison to the national benchmark is shown. If no comparison is available, this is left blank.

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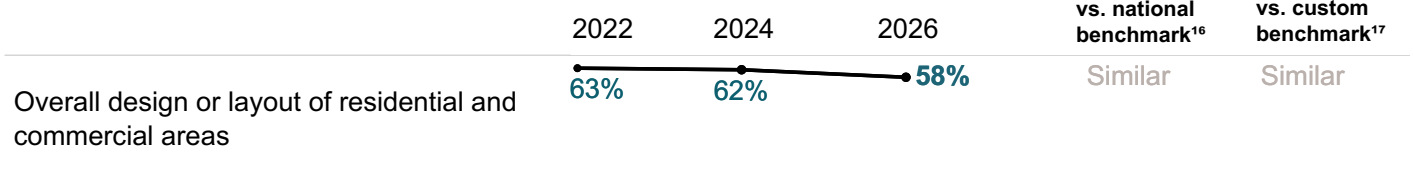
Overall design or layout of Grand Rapids's residential and commercial areas

Community Design

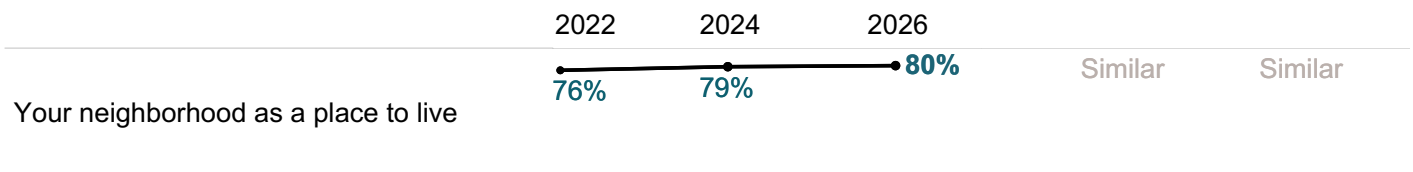
A well-designed community enhances the quality of life for its residents by encouraging smart land use and zoning, ensuring that affordable housing is accessible to all, and supporting development that suits residents' needs.



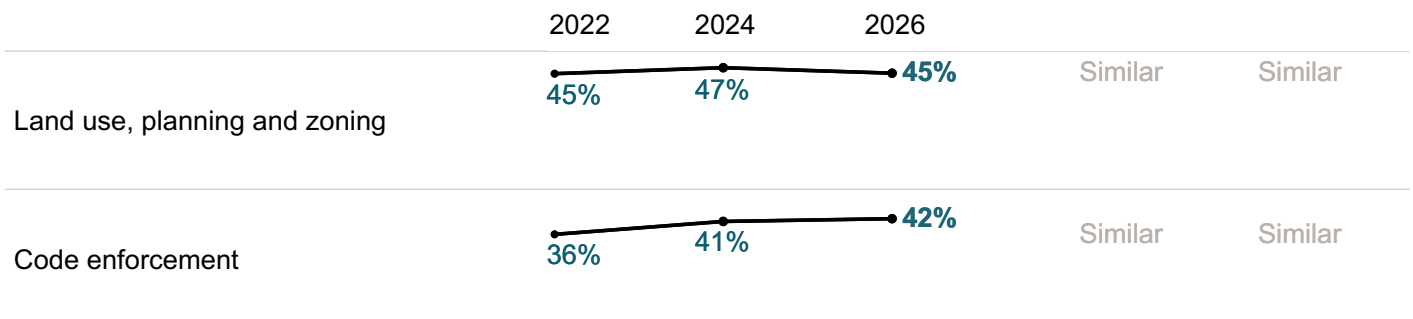
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Grand Rapids as a whole.
(% excellent or good)



Please rate each of the following aspects of quality of life in Grand Rapids.
(% excellent or good)



Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Grand Rapids.
(% excellent or good)



Please also rate each of the following in the Grand Rapids community.
 (% excellent or good)

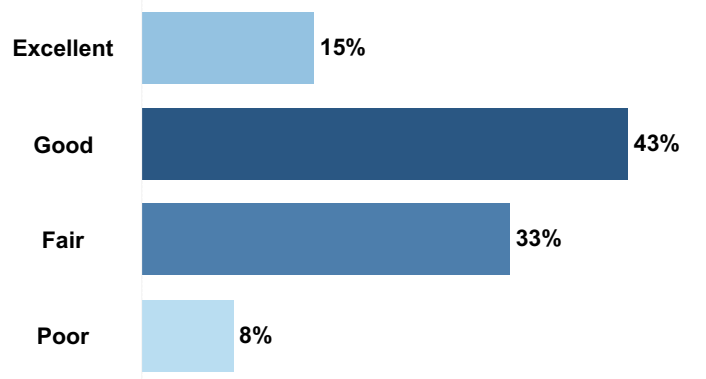


16. Comparison to the national benchmark is shown. If no comparison is available, this is left blank.
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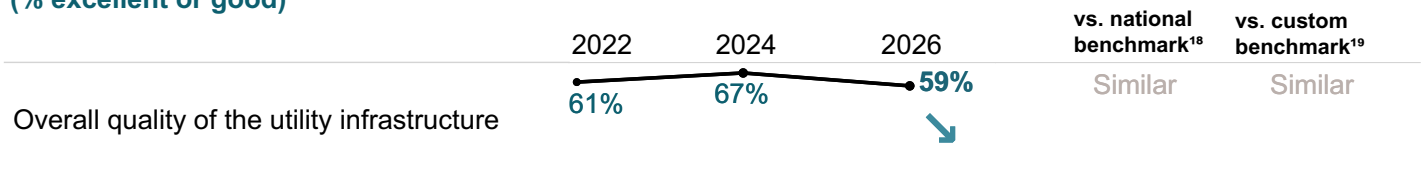
Utilities

Access to essential services like water, gas, electricity, and internet is crucial for safeguarding the physical health, economic stability, and overall well-being of the communities they support.

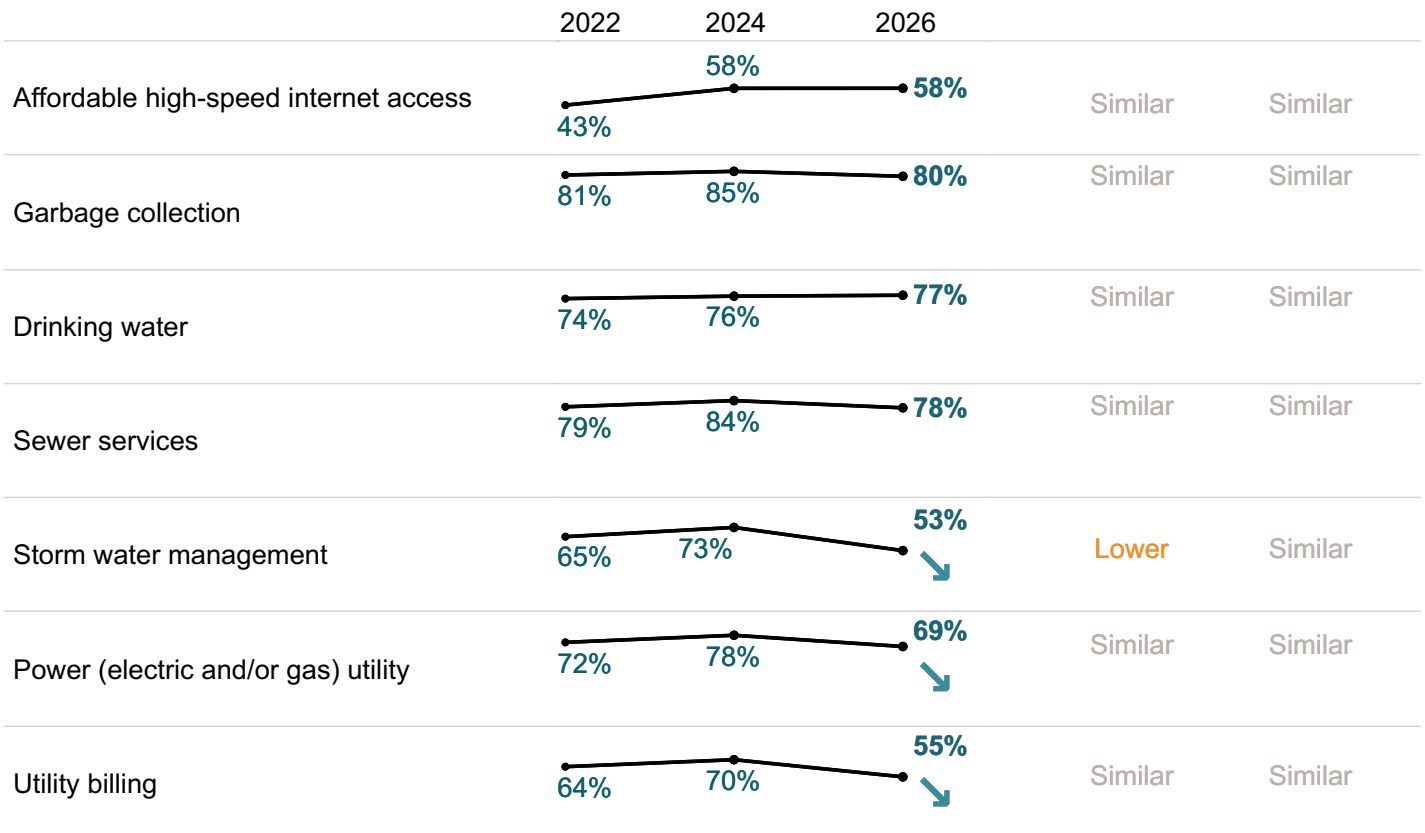
Overall quality of the utility infrastructure in Grand Rapids



Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Grand Rapids as a whole.
(% excellent or good)



Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Grand Rapids.
(% excellent or good)



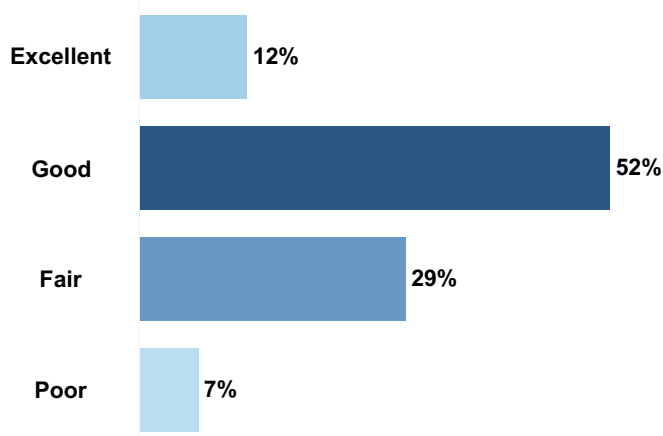
¹⁸. Comparison to the national benchmark is shown. If no comparison is available, this is left blank.

¹⁹. Comparison to the custom benchmark is shown. A description of the custom benchmark cohort can be found in the About section of the report. If no comparison is available, this is left blank.

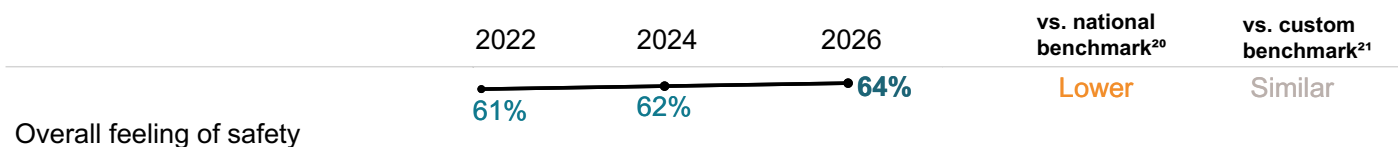
Safety

Public safety is one of the most important responsibilities of local governments, as every resident deserves to feel safe and secure both in their neighborhoods and across the wider community. The provision of strong, reliable safety services is essential to ensuring a high quality of life.

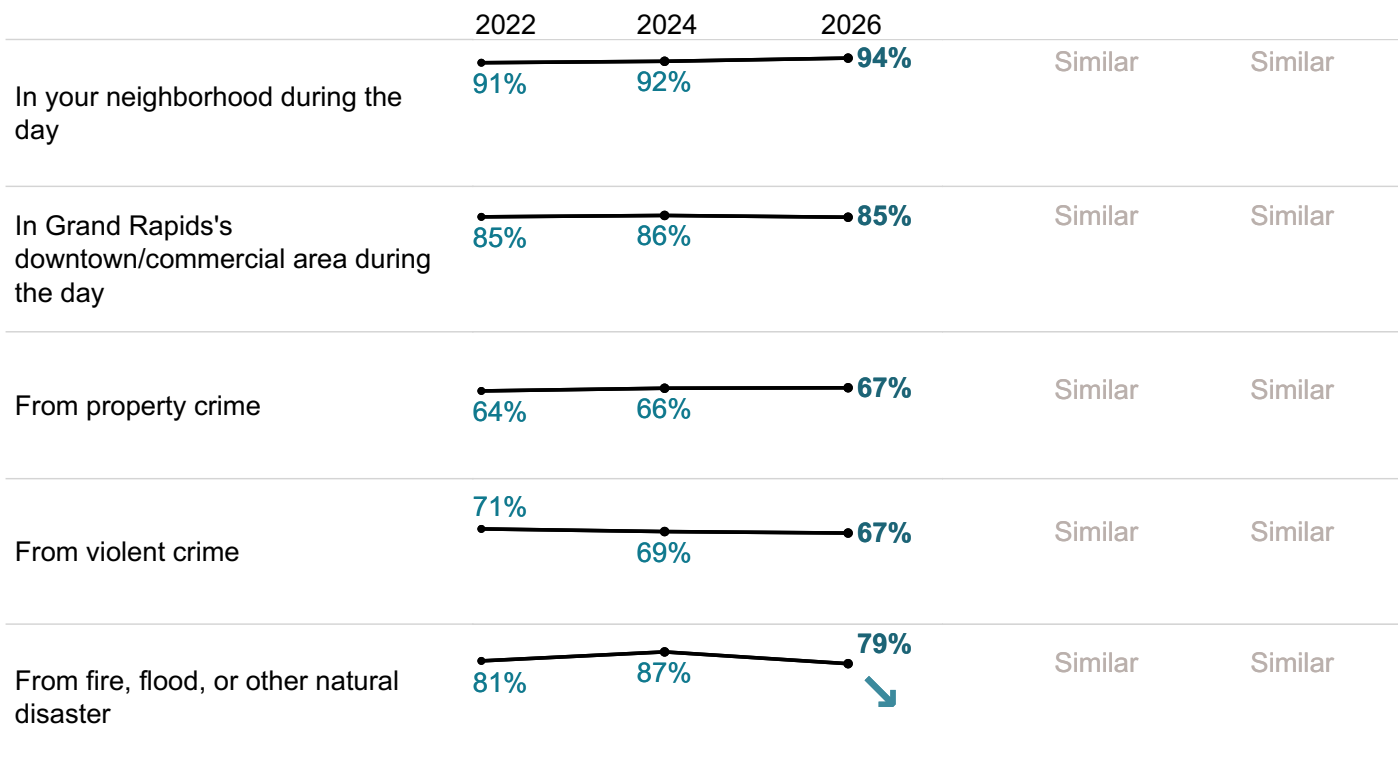
Overall feeling of safety in Grand Rapids



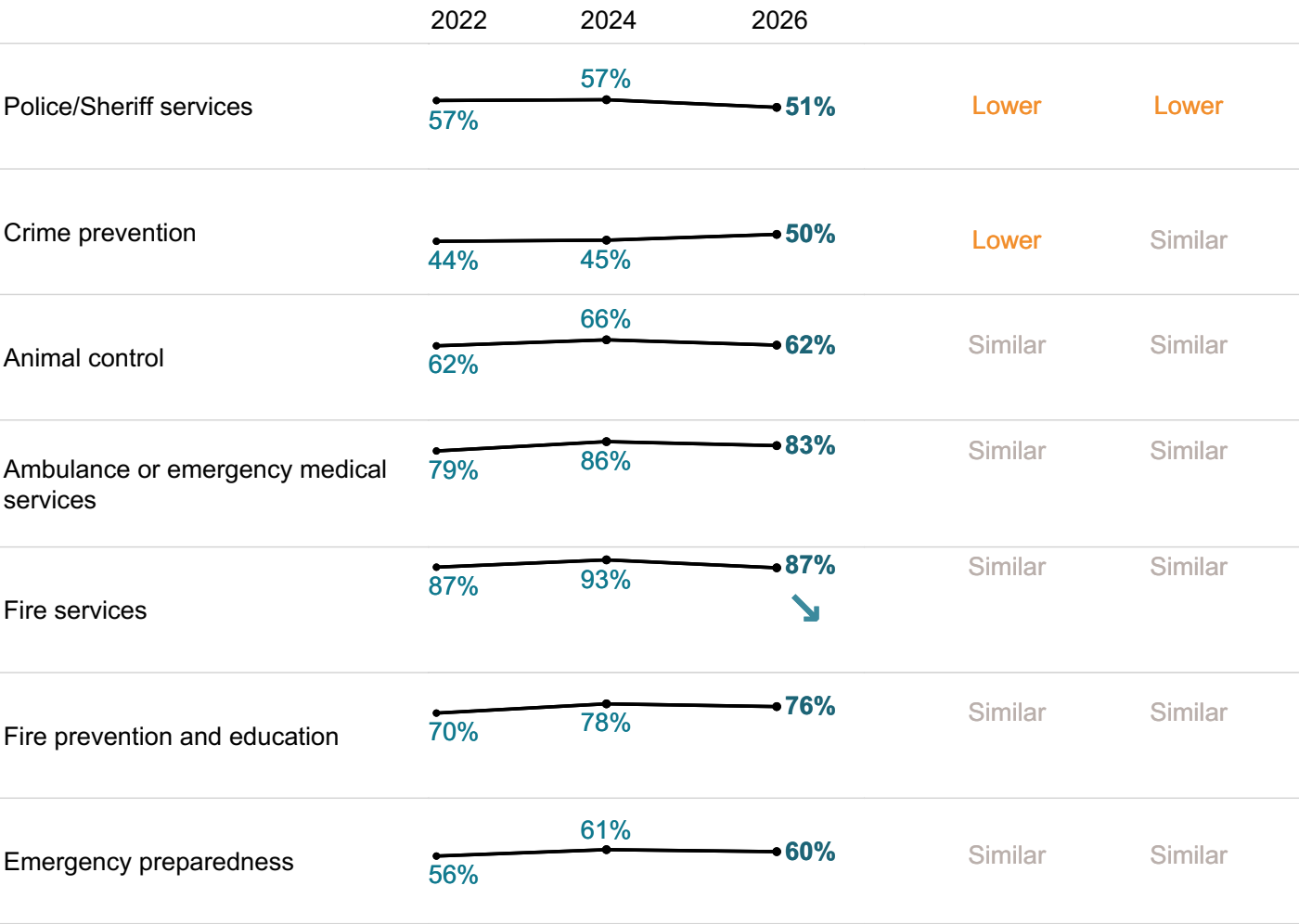
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Grand Rapids as a whole.
(% excellent or good)



Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel:
(% very or somewhat safe)



Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Grand Rapids.
 (% excellent or good)

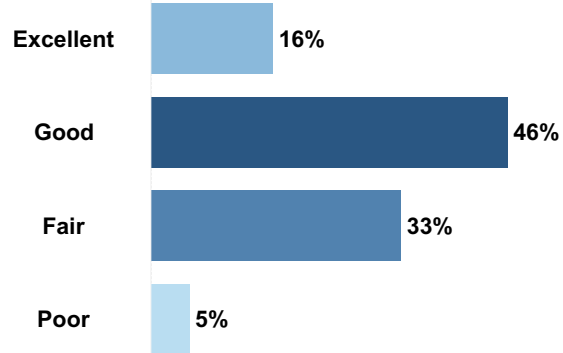


20. Comparison to the national benchmark is shown. If no comparison is available, this is left blank.
21. Comparison to the custom benchmark is shown. A description of the custom benchmark cohort can be found in the About section of the report.
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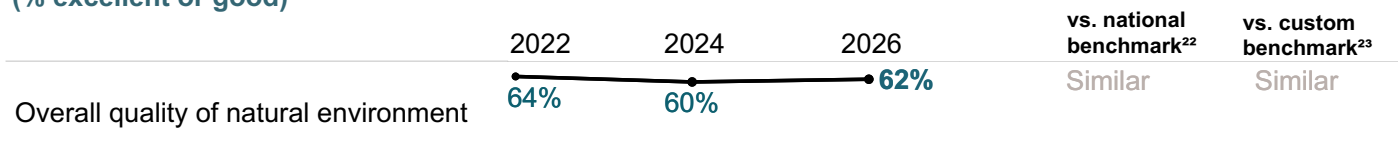
Natural Environment

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

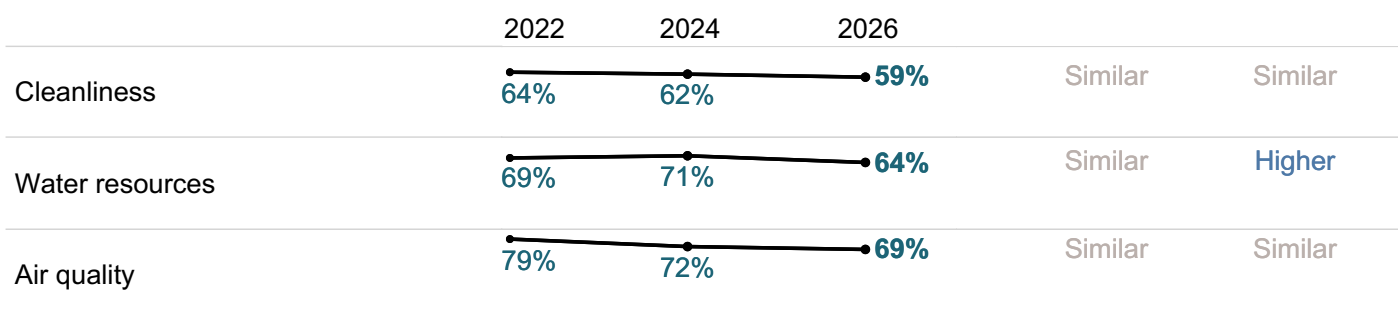
Overall quality of natural environment in Grand Rapids



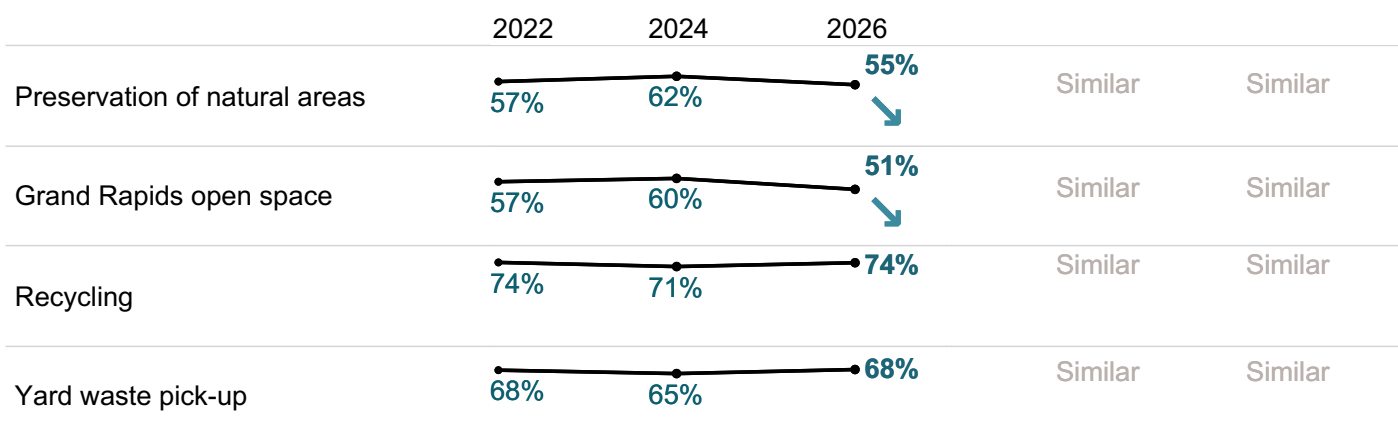
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Grand Rapids as a whole.
(% excellent or good)



Please also rate each of the following in the Grand Rapids community.
(% excellent or good)



Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Grand Rapids.
(% excellent or good)



22. Comparison to the national benchmark is shown. If no comparison is available, this is left blank.

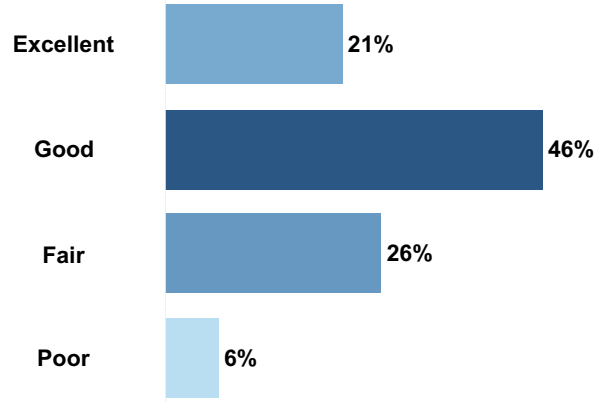
23. Comparison to the custom benchmark is shown. A description of the custom benchmark cohort can be found in the About section of the report.

Parks and Recreation

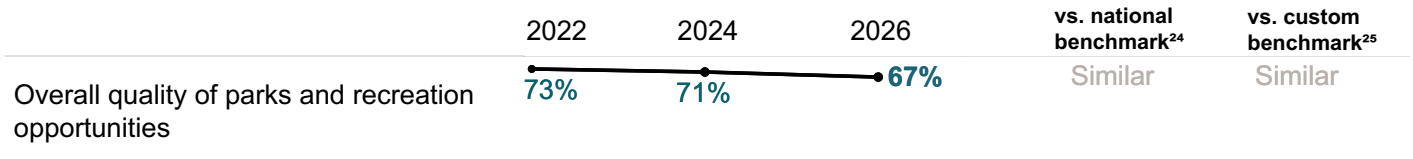
"There are no communities that pride themselves on their quality of life, promote themselves as a desirable location for businesses to relocate, or maintain that they are environmental stewards of their natural resources, without such communities having a robust, active system of parks and recreation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

- National Recreation and Park Association

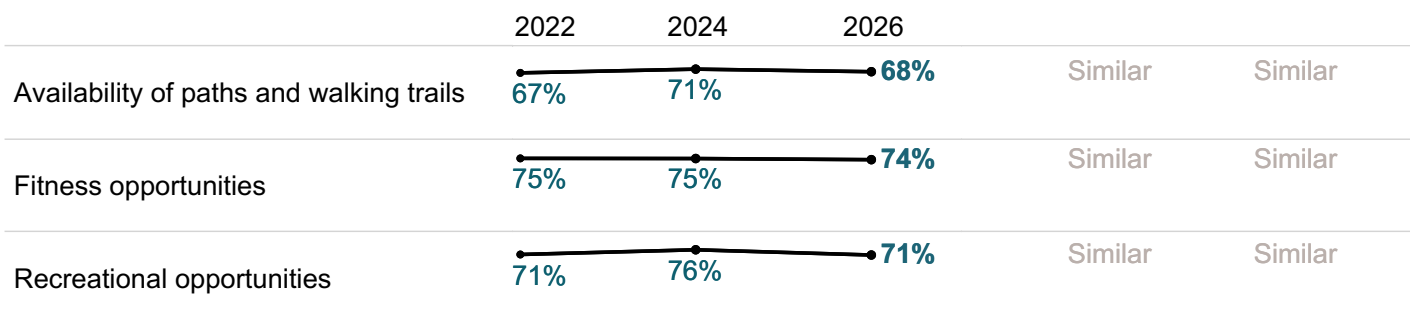
Overall quality of parks and recreation opportunities



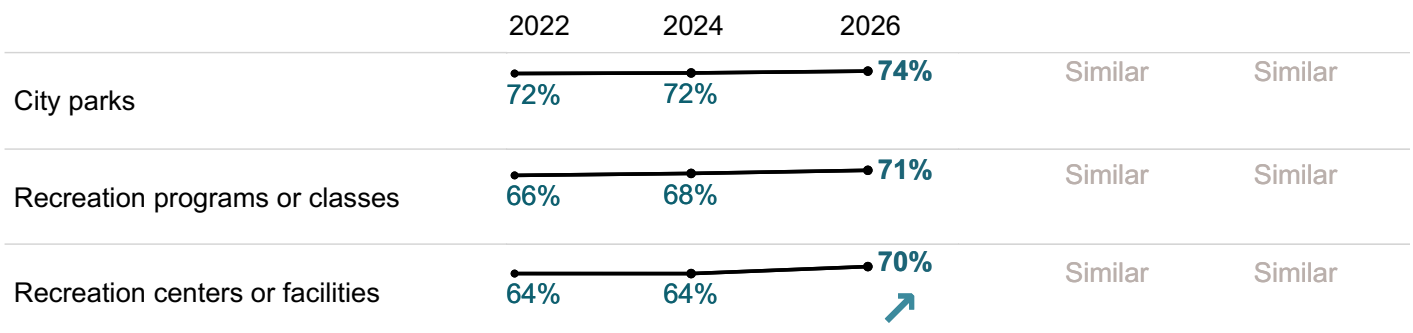
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Grand Rapids as a whole.
(% excellent or good)



Please also rate each of the following in the Grand Rapids community.
(% excellent or good)



Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Grand Rapids.
(% excellent or good)



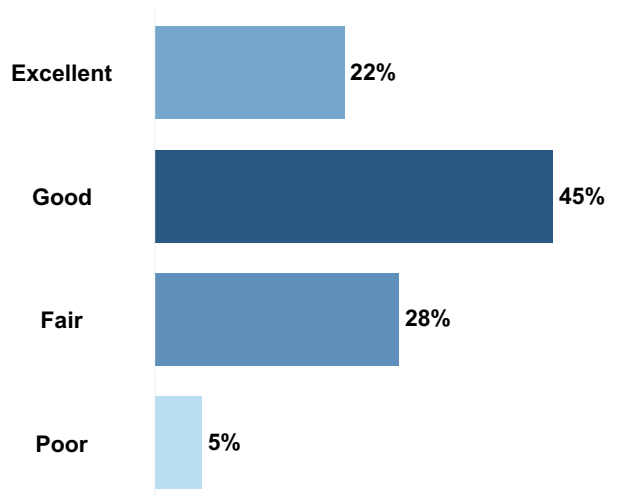
²⁴. Comparison to the national benchmark is shown. If no comparison is available, this is left blank.

²⁵. Comparison to the custom benchmark is shown. A description of the custom benchmark cohort can be found in the About section of the report.

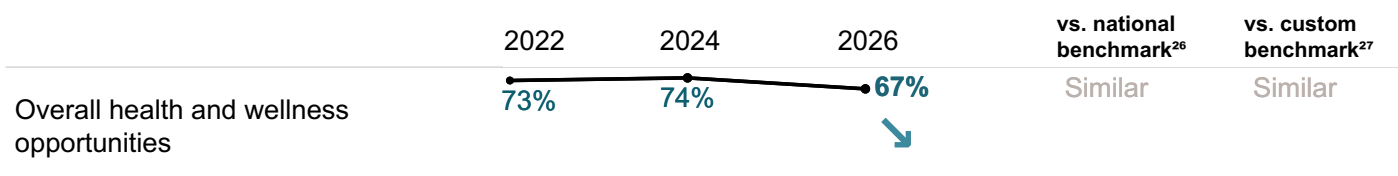
Health and Wellness

The features and amenities of a community directly influence residents' health and well-being, shaping their overall quality of life.

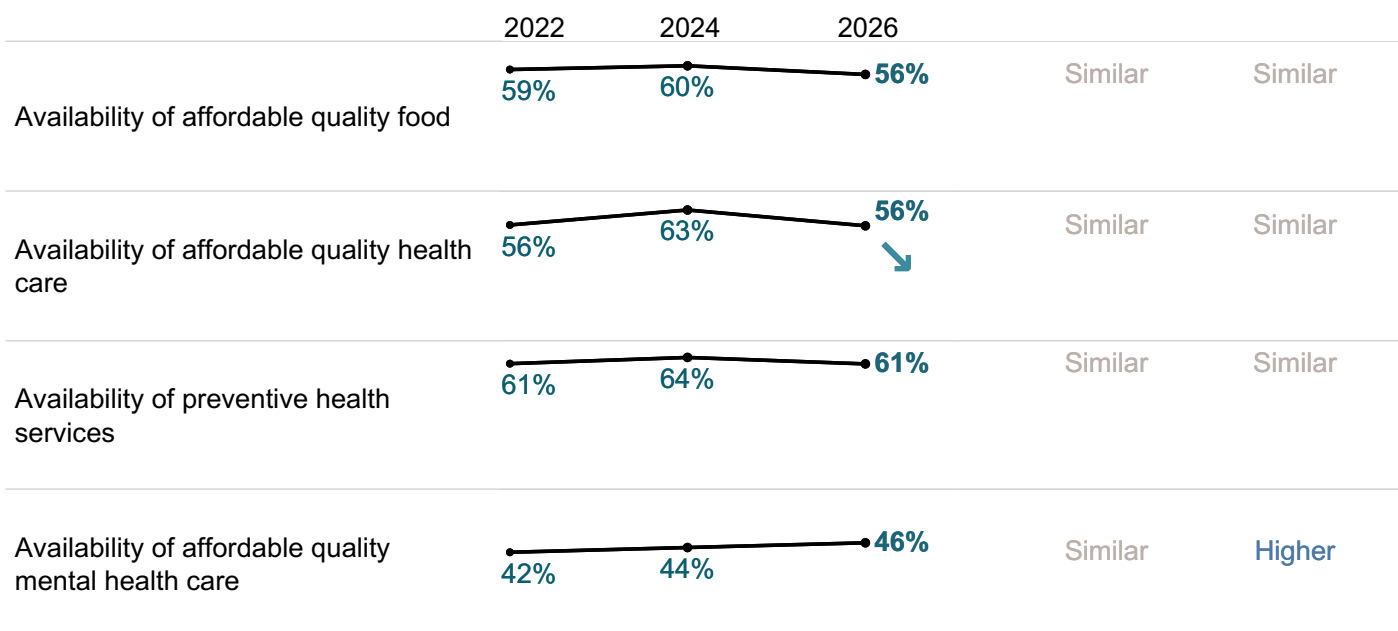
Overall health and wellness opportunities in Grand Rapids



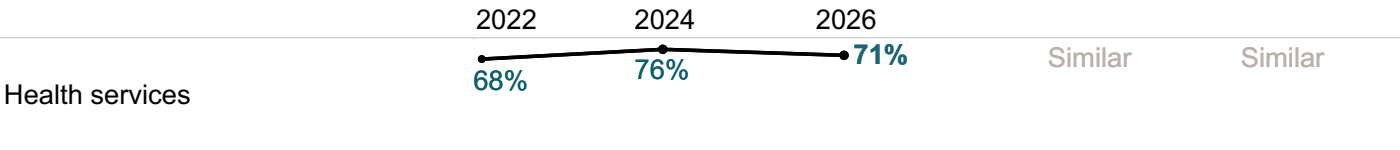
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Grand Rapids as a whole.
(% excellent or good)



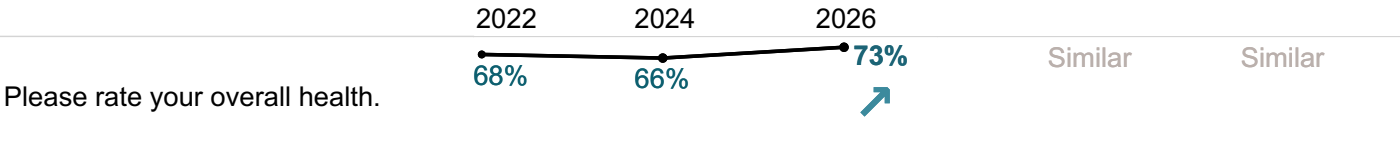
Please also rate each of the following in the Grand Rapids community.
(% excellent or good)



Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Grand Rapids.
(% excellent or good)



Please rate your overall health.
(% excellent or very good)

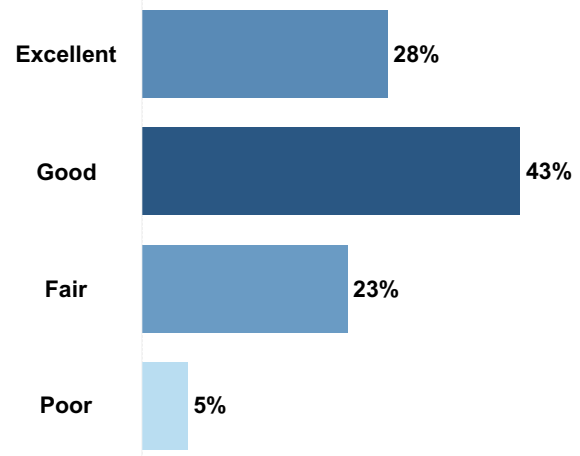


26. Comparison to the national benchmark is shown. If no comparison is available, this is left blank.
27. Comparison to the custom benchmark is shown. A description of the custom benchmark cohort can be found in the About section of the report. If no comparison is available, this is left blank.

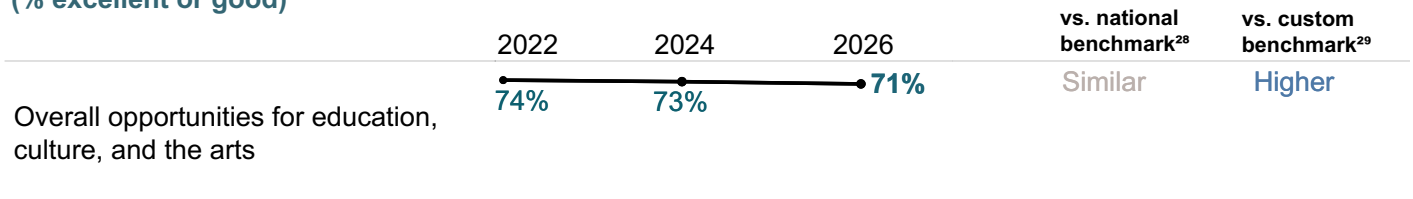
Education, Arts, and Culture

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.

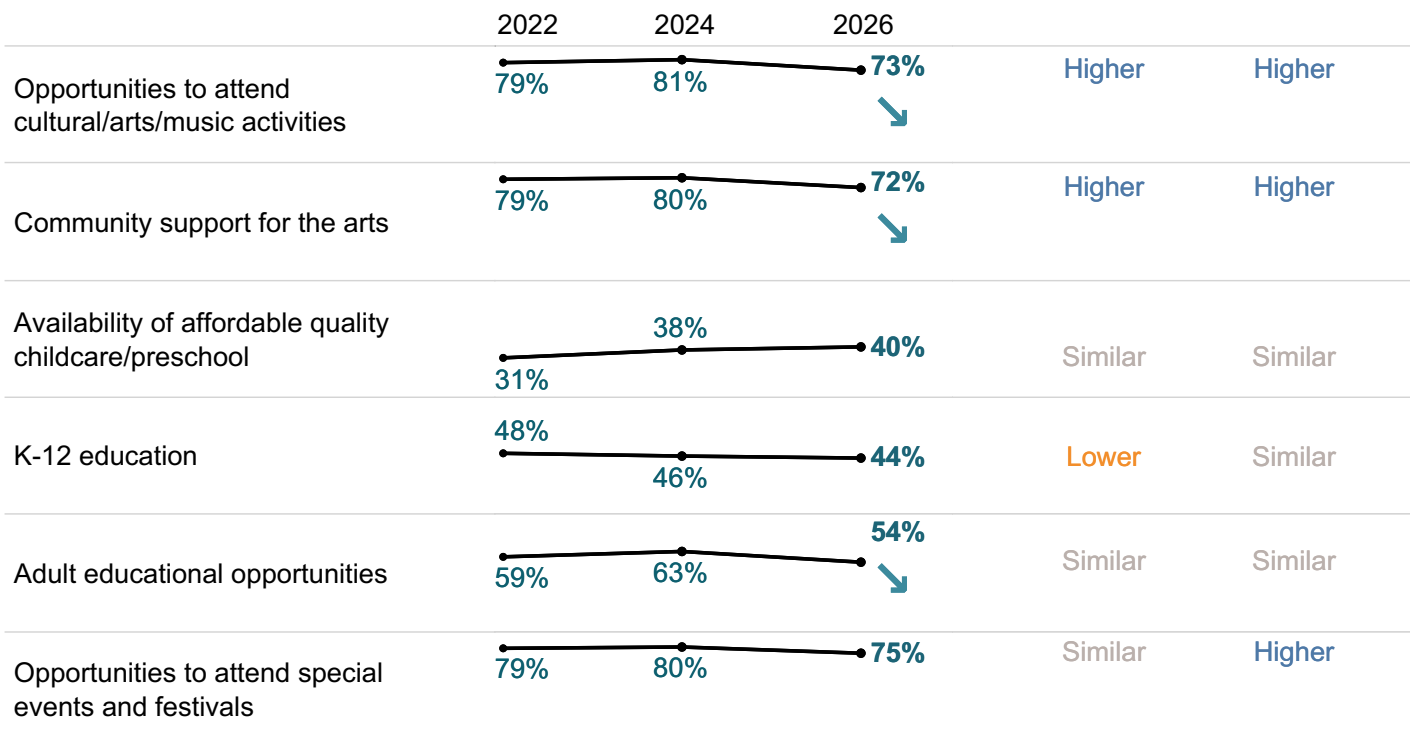
Overall opportunities for education, culture and the arts



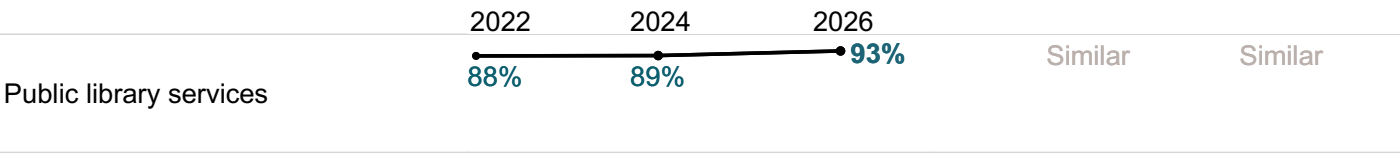
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Grand Rapids as a whole.
(% excellent or good)



Please also rate each of the following in the Grand Rapids community.
(% excellent or good)



Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Grand Rapids.
(% excellent or good)

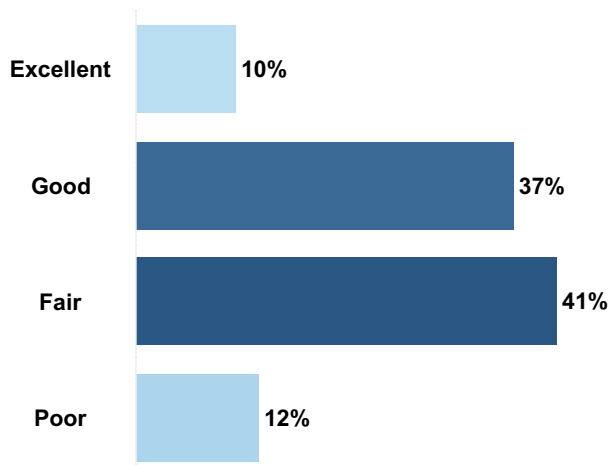


28. Comparison to the national benchmark is shown. If no comparison is available, this is left blank.
29. Comparison to the custom benchmark is shown. A description of the custom benchmark cohort can be found in the About section of the report.
If no comparison is available, this is left blank.

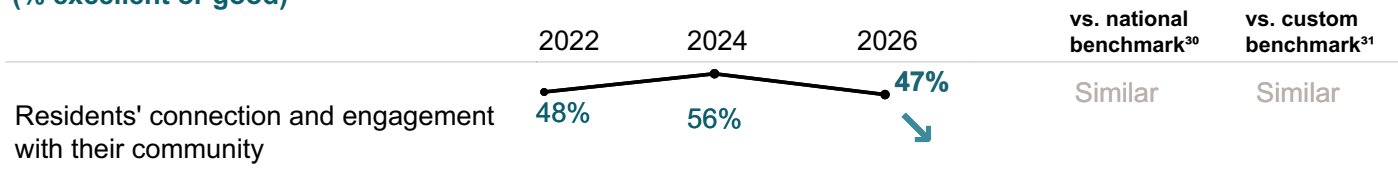
Community Connection

Community connection reflects residents' sense of belonging. When residents feel welcomed and encouraged to participate, they are more likely to feel engaged and connected to their community.

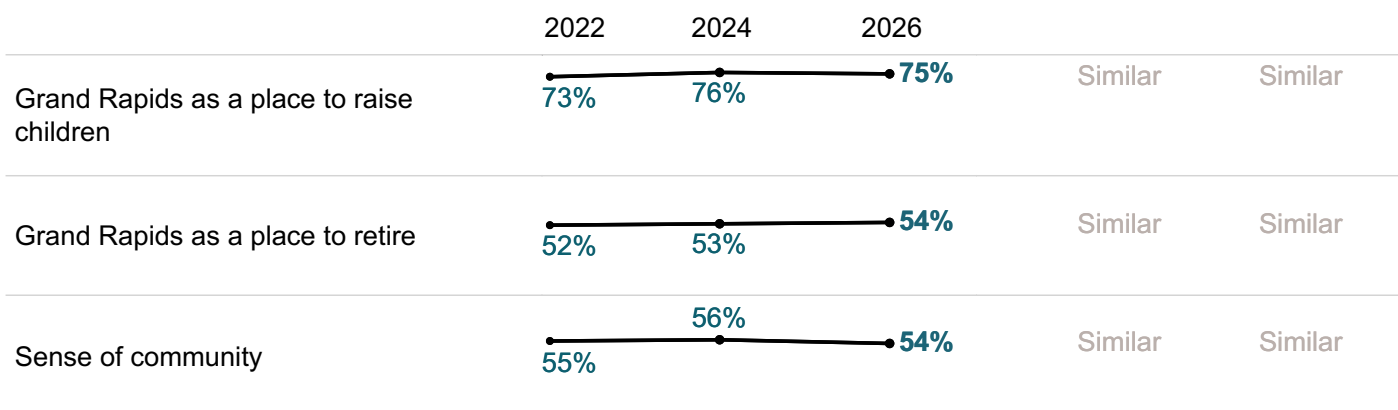
Residents' connection and engagement with their community



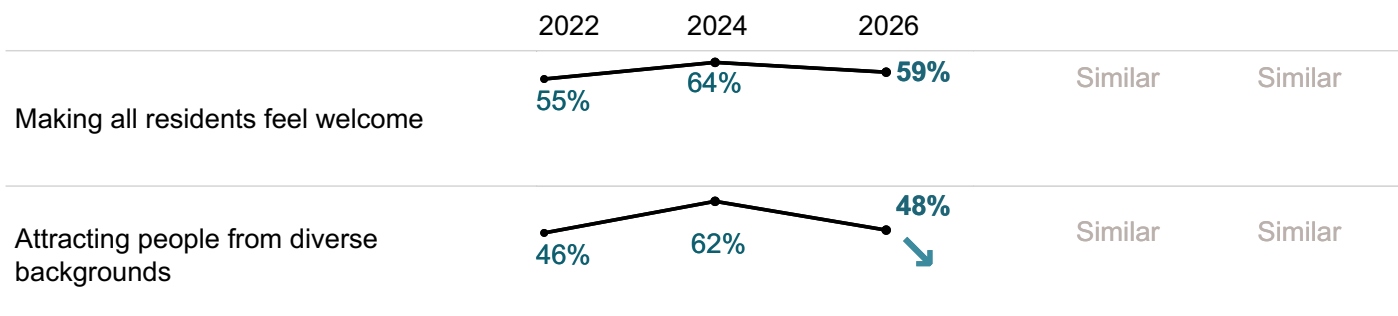
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Grand Rapids as a whole.
(% excellent or good)

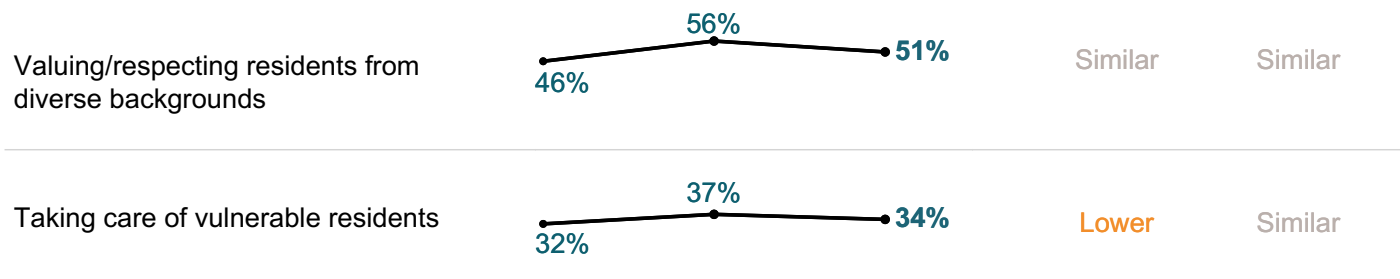


Please rate each of the following aspects of quality of life in Grand Rapids.
(% excellent or good)

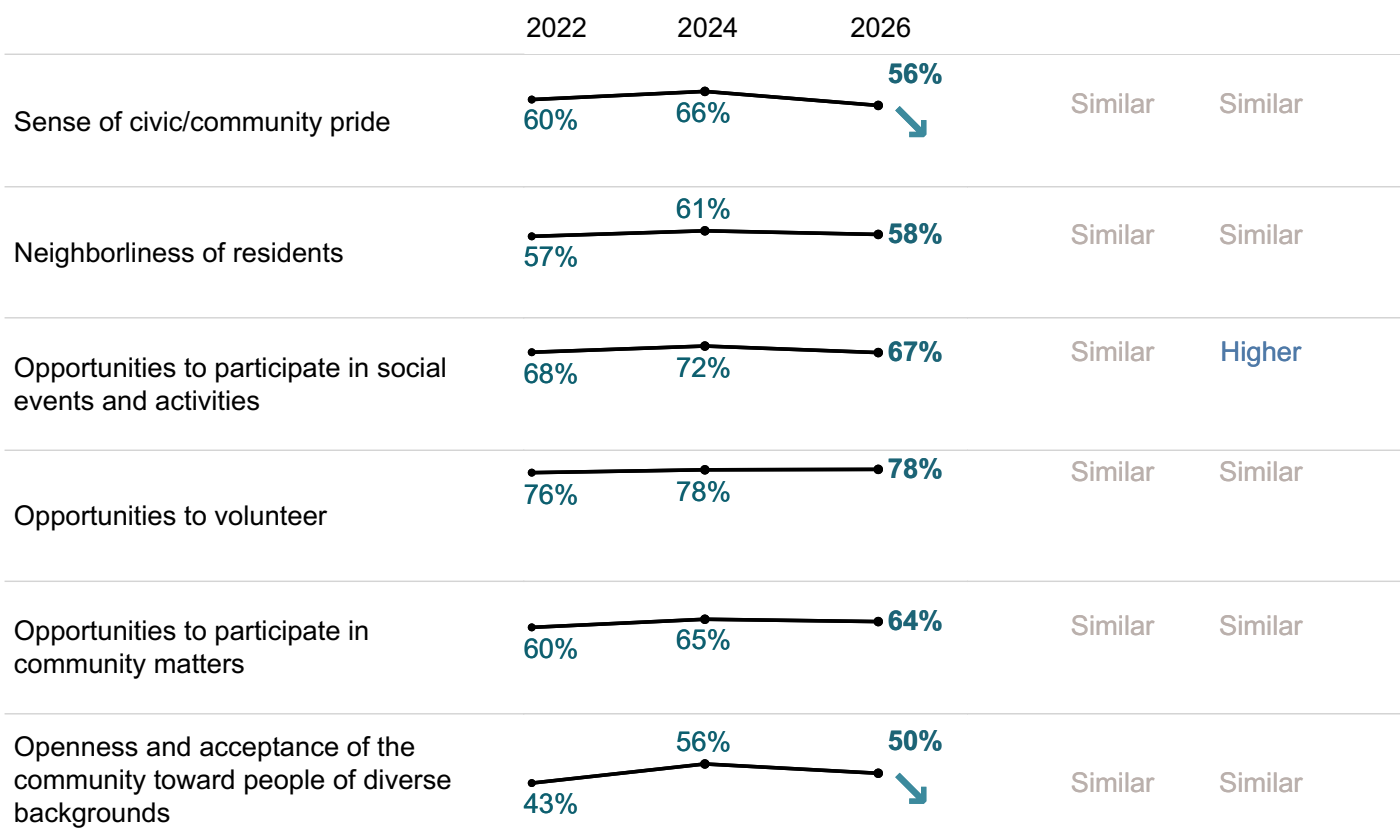


Please rate the job you feel the Grand Rapids community does at each of the following.
(% excellent or good)

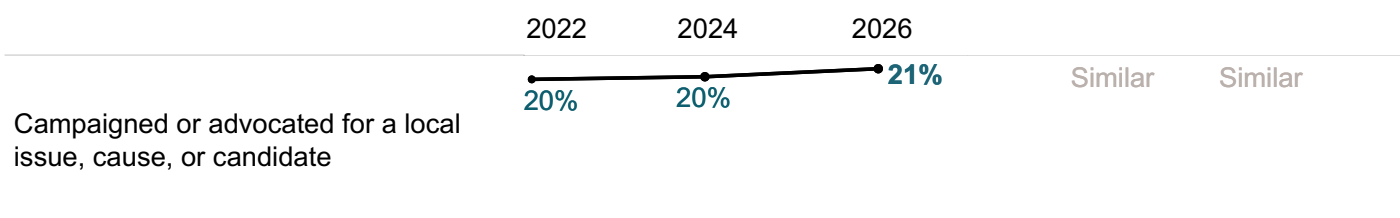




Please also rate each of the following in the Grand Rapids community.
 (% excellent or good)



Please indicate whether or not you have done each of the following in the last 12 months.
 (% yes)

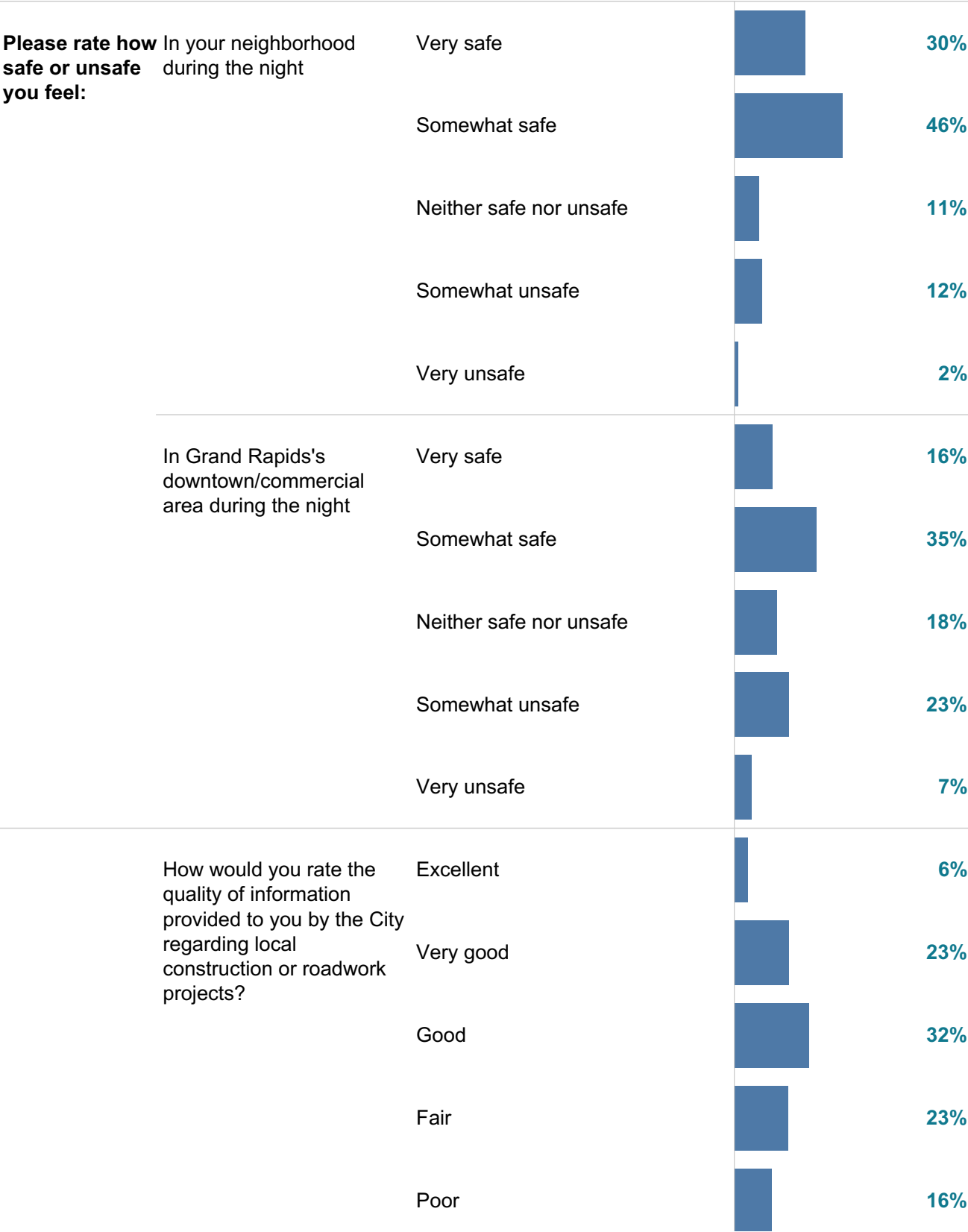


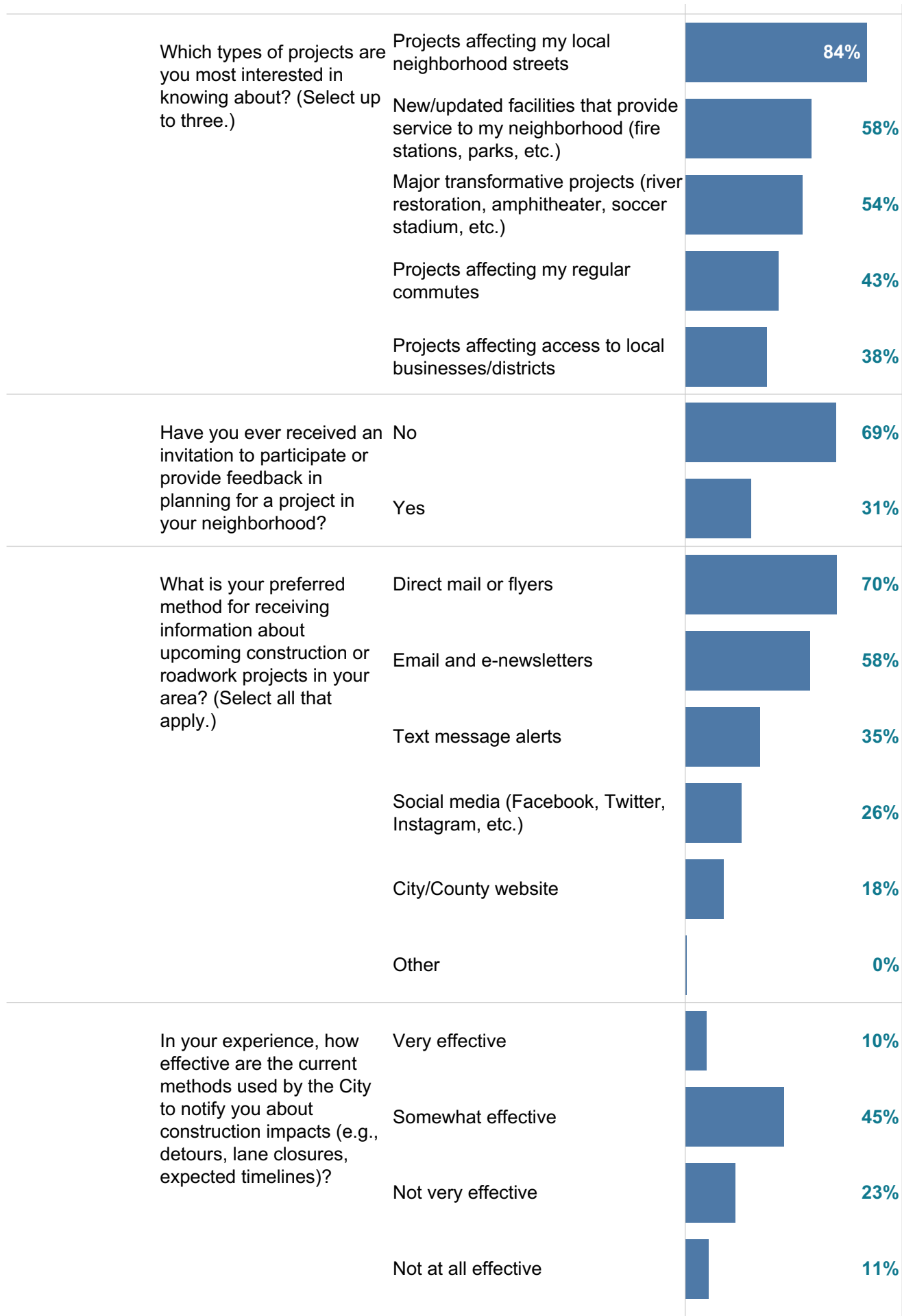
30. Comparison to the national benchmark is shown. If no comparison is available, this is left blank.

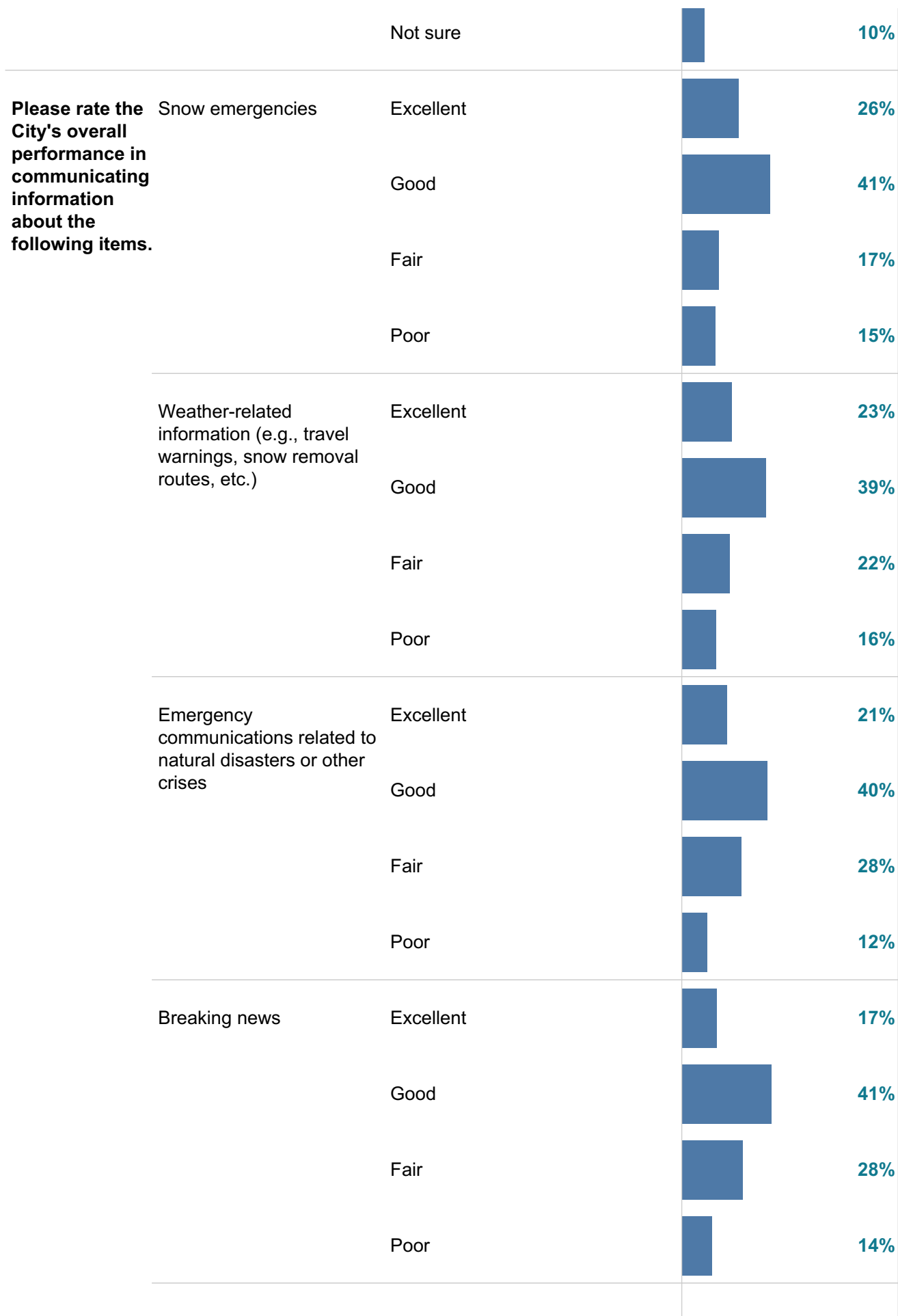
31. Comparison to the custom benchmark is shown. A description of the custom benchmark cohort can be found in the About section of the report. If no comparison is available, this is left blank.

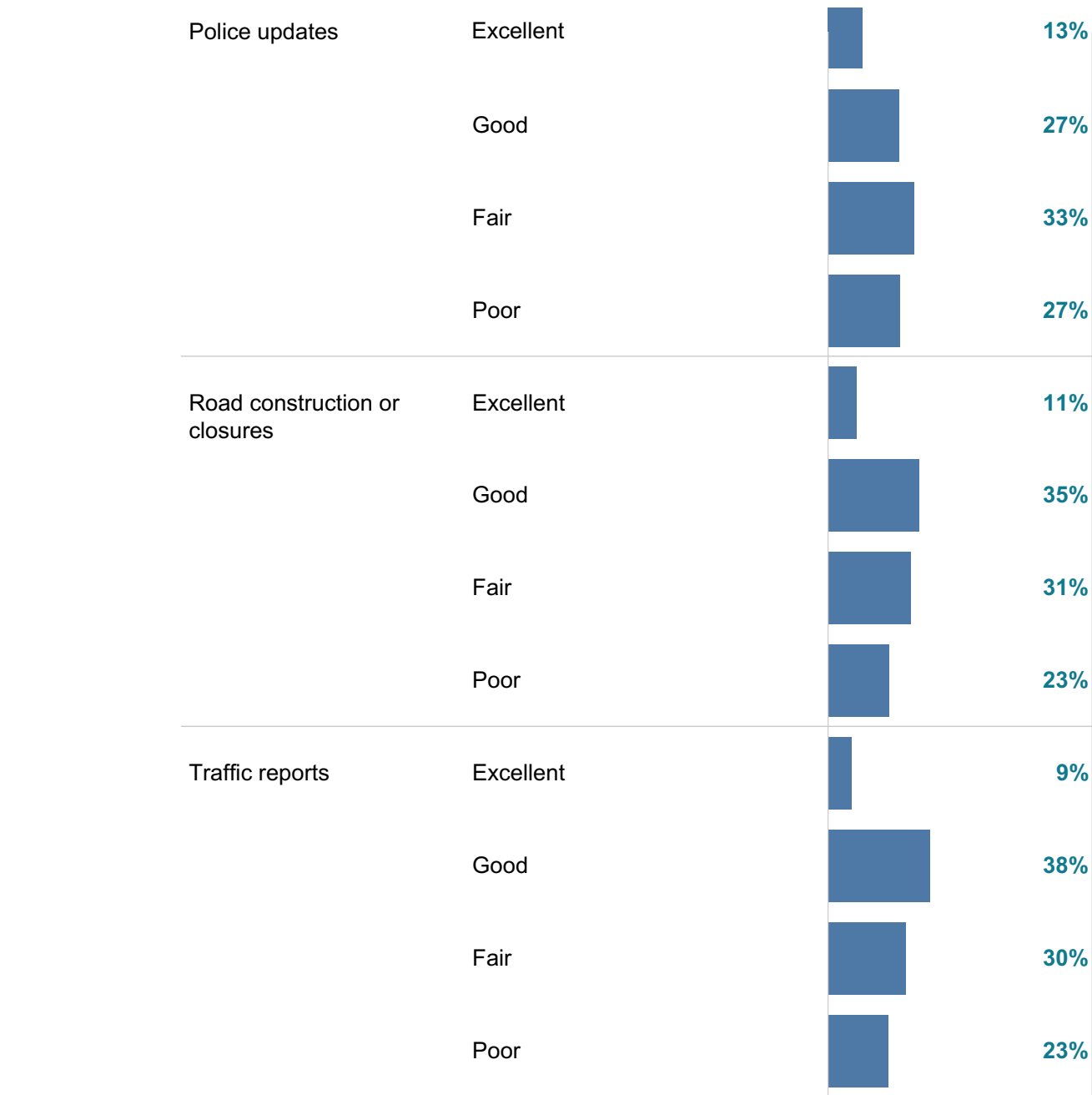
Custom Questions

Below are the complete set of responses to each custom question on the survey. By default, “don’t know” responses are excluded.









The City of Grand Rapids 2026 Community Survey

Please complete this survey if you are an adult (age 18 or older). Your responses are confidential and no identifying information will be shared.

1. Please rate each of the following aspects of quality of life in Grand Rapids.

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Grand Rapids as a place to live	1	2	3	4	5
Your neighborhood as a place to live	1	2	3	4	5
Grand Rapids as a place to raise children	1	2	3	4	5
Grand Rapids as a place to work.....	1	2	3	4	5
Grand Rapids as a place to visit.....	1	2	3	4	5
Grand Rapids as a place to retire	1	2	3	4	5
The overall quality of life in Grand Rapids	1	2	3	4	5
Sense of community	1	2	3	4	5

2. Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Grand Rapids as a whole.

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Overall economic health of Grand Rapids.....	1	2	3	4	5
Overall quality of the transportation system (auto, bicycle, foot, bus) in Grand Rapids.....	1	2	3	4	5
Overall design or layout of Grand Rapids's residential and commercial areas (e.g., homes, buildings, streets, parks, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
Overall quality of the utility infrastructure in Grand Rapids (water, sewer, storm water, electric/gas, broadband)	1	2	3	4	5
Overall feeling of safety in Grand Rapids	1	2	3	4	5
Overall quality of natural environment in Grand Rapids.....	1	2	3	4	5
Overall quality of parks and recreation opportunities.....	1	2	3	4	5
Overall health and wellness opportunities in Grand Rapids	1	2	3	4	5
Overall opportunities for education, culture, and the arts	1	2	3	4	5
Residents' connection and engagement with their community	1	2	3	4	5

3. Please indicate how likely or unlikely you are to do each of the following.

	<u>Very likely</u>	<u>Somewhat likely</u>	<u>Somewhat unlikely</u>	<u>Very unlikely</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Recommend living in Grand Rapids to someone who asks.....	1	2	3	4	5
Remain in Grand Rapids for the next five years.....	1	2	3	4	5

4. Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel:

	<u>Very safe</u>	<u>Somewhat safe</u>	<u>Neither safe nor unsafe</u>	<u>Somewhat unsafe</u>	<u>Very unsafe</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
In your neighborhood during the day	1	2	3	4	5	6
In Grand Rapids's downtown/commercial area during the day.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
From property crime.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
From violent crime.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
From fire, flood, or other natural disaster	1	2	3	4	5	6

5. Please rate the job you feel the Grand Rapids community does at each of the following.

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Making all residents feel welcome	1	2	3	4	5
Attracting people from diverse backgrounds.....	1	2	3	4	5
Valuing/respecting residents from diverse backgrounds	1	2	3	4	5
Taking care of vulnerable residents (elderly, disabled, homeless, etc.).....	1	2	3	4	5

6. Please rate each of the following in the Grand Rapids community.

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Grand Rapids.....	1	2	3	4	5
Variety of business and service establishments in Grand Rapids	1	2	3	4	5
Vibrancy of downtown/commercial area	1	2	3	4	5
Employment opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
Shopping opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
Cost of living in Grand Rapids	1	2	3	4	5
Overall image or reputation of Grand Rapids	1	2	3	4	5

7. Please also rate each of the following in the Grand Rapids community.

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Traffic flow on major streets	1	2	3	4	5
Ease of public parking	1	2	3	4	5
Ease of travel by car in Grand Rapids	1	2	3	4	5
Ease of travel by public transportation in Grand Rapids	1	2	3	4	5
Ease of travel by bicycle in Grand Rapids	1	2	3	4	5
Ease of walking in Grand Rapids.....	1	2	3	4	5
Well-planned residential growth.....	1	2	3	4	5
Well-planned commercial growth.....	1	2	3	4	5
Well-designed neighborhoods.....	1	2	3	4	5
Preservation of the historical or cultural character of the community	1	2	3	4	5
Public places where people want to spend time	1	2	3	4	5
Variety of housing options.....	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of affordable quality housing.....	1	2	3	4	5
Overall quality of new development in Grand Rapids.....	1	2	3	4	5
Overall appearance of Grand Rapids.....	1	2	3	4	5
Cleanliness of Grand Rapids.....	1	2	3	4	5
Water resources (beaches, lakes, ponds, riverways, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
Air quality	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of paths and walking trails.....	1	2	3	4	5
Fitness opportunities (including exercise classes and paths or trails, etc.)....	1	2	3	4	5
Recreational opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of affordable quality food	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of affordable quality health care	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of preventive health services.....	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of affordable quality mental health care.....	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunities to attend cultural/arts/music activities	1	2	3	4	5
Community support for the arts	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of affordable quality childcare/preschool	1	2	3	4	5
K-12 education.....	1	2	3	4	5
Adult educational opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
Sense of civic/community pride	1	2	3	4	5
Neighborliness of residents in Grand Rapids	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities.....	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunities to attend special events and festivals	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunities to volunteer.....	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunities to participate in community matters.....	1	2	3	4	5
Openness and acceptance of the community toward people of diverse backgrounds.....	1	2	3	4	5

8. Please indicate whether or not you have done each of the following in the last 12 months.

	<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>
Contacted the City of Grand Rapids (in-person, phone, email, or web) for help or information.....	1	2
Contacted Grand Rapids elected officials (in-person, phone, email, or web) to express your opinion	1	2
Attended a local public meeting (of local elected officials like City Council or County Commissioners, advisory boards, town halls, HOA, neighborhood watch, etc.)	1	2
Watched (online or on television) a local public meeting	1	2
Volunteered your time to some group/activity in Grand Rapids	1	2
Campaigned or advocated for a local issue, cause, or candidate	1	2
Voted in your most recent local election.....	1	2
Used bus, rail, subway, or other public transportation instead of driving.....	1	2
Carpooled with other adults or children instead of driving alone.....	1	2
Walked or biked instead of driving.....	1	2

The City of Grand Rapids 2026 Community Survey

9. Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Grand Rapids.

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Public information services	1	2	3	4	5
Economic development.....	1	2	3	4	5
Traffic enforcement	1	2	3	4	5
Traffic signal timing.....	1	2	3	4	5
Street repair	1	2	3	4	5
Street cleaning	1	2	3	4	5
Street lighting.....	1	2	3	4	5
Snow removal.....	1	2	3	4	5
Sidewalk maintenance.....	1	2	3	4	5
Bus or transit services	1	2	3	4	5
Land use, planning, and zoning	1	2	3	4	5
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
Affordable high-speed internet access	1	2	3	4	5
Garbage collection	1	2	3	4	5
Drinking water.....	1	2	3	4	5
Sewer services	1	2	3	4	5
Storm water management (storm drainage, dams, levees, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
Power (electric and/or gas) utility	1	2	3	4	5
Utility billing	1	2	3	4	5
Police/Sheriff services.....	1	2	3	4	5
Crime prevention	1	2	3	4	5
Animal control	1	2	3	4	5
Ambulance or emergency medical services.....	1	2	3	4	5
Fire services.....	1	2	3	4	5
Fire prevention and education	1	2	3	4	5
Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations)	1	2	3	4	5
Preservation of natural areas (open space, farmlands, and greenbelts).....	1	2	3	4	5
Grand Rapids open space	1	2	3	4	5
Recycling	1	2	3	4	5
Yard waste pick-up	1	2	3	4	5
City parks	1	2	3	4	5
Recreation programs or classes	1	2	3	4	5
Recreation centers or facilities	1	2	3	4	5
Health services.....	1	2	3	4	5
Public library services	1	2	3	4	5
Overall customer service by Grand Rapids employees (police, receptionists, planners, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5

10. Please rate the following categories of Grand Rapids government performance.

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
The value of services for the taxes paid to Grand Rapids	1	2	3	4	5
The overall direction that Grand Rapids is taking.....	1	2	3	4	5
The job Grand Rapids government does at welcoming resident involvement	1	2	3	4	5
Overall confidence in Grand Rapids government.....	1	2	3	4	5
Generally acting in the best interest of the community	1	2	3	4	5
Being honest	1	2	3	4	5
Being open and transparent to the public	1	2	3	4	5
Informing residents about issues facing the community	1	2	3	4	5
Treating all residents fairly	1	2	3	4	5
Treating residents with respect.....	1	2	3	4	5

11. Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by each of the following?

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
The City of Grand Rapids.....	1	2	3	4	5
The Federal Government.....	1	2	3	4	5

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

	<u>Essential</u>	<u>Very important</u>	<u>Somewhat important</u>	<u>Not at all important</u>
Overall economic health of Grand Rapids.....	1	2	3	4
Overall quality of the transportation system (auto, bicycle, foot, bus) in Grand Rapids.....	1	2	3	4
Overall design or layout of Grand Rapids's residential and commercial areas (e.g., homes, buildings, streets, parks, etc.)	1	2	3	4
Overall quality of the utility infrastructure in Grand Rapids (water, sewer, storm water, electric/gas, broadband)	1	2	3	4
Overall feeling of safety in Grand Rapids	1	2	3	4
Overall quality of natural environment in Grand Rapids.....	1	2	3	4
Overall quality of parks and recreation opportunities.....	1	2	3	4
Overall health and wellness opportunities in Grand Rapids	1	2	3	4
Overall opportunities for education, culture, and the arts	1	2	3	4
Residents' connection and engagement with their community	1	2	3	4

13. Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel:

	<u>Very safe</u>	<u>Somewhat safe</u>	<u>Neither safe nor unsafe</u>	<u>Somewhat unsafe</u>	<u>Very unsafe</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
In your neighborhood during the night.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
In Grand Rapids's downtown/commercial area during the night.....	1	2	3	4	5	6

14. How would you rate the quality of information provided to you by the City regarding local construction or roadwork projects?

☐ Excellent ☐ Very good ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor ☐ Don't know

15. Which types of projects are you most interested in knowing about? (Select up to three.)

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Projects affecting my local neighborhood streets | ☐ New/updated facilities that provide service to my neighborhood (fire stations, parks, etc.) |
| ☐ Projects affecting my regular commutes | ☐ Major transformative projects (river restoration, amphitheater, soccer stadium, etc.) |
| ☐ Projects affecting access to local businesses/districts | |

16. Have you ever received an invitation to participate or provide feedback in planning for a project in your neighborhood?

☐ No ☐ Yes

17. What is your preferred method for receiving information about upcoming construction or roadwork projects in your area? (Select all that apply.)

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Email and e-newsletters | ☐ Direct mail or flyers |
| ☐ City/County website | ☐ Text message alerts |
| ☐ Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) | ☐ Other: _____ |

18. In your experience, how effective are the current methods used by the City to notify you about construction impacts (e.g., detours, lane closures, expected timelines)?

☐ Very effective ☐ Somewhat effective ☐ Not very effective ☐ Not at all effective ☐ Not sure

19. Please rate the City's overall performance in communicating information about the following items.

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Road construction or closures	1	2	3	4	5
Traffic reports	1	2	3	4	5
Weather-related information (e.g., travel warnings, snow removal routes, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
Snow emergencies.....	1	2	3	4	5
Breaking news.....	1	2	3	4	5
Police updates	1	2	3	4	5
Emergency communications related to natural disasters or other crises...	1	2	3	4	5

The City of Grand Rapids 2026 Community Survey

Our last questions are about you and your household.

Again, all of your responses to this survey are confidential and no identifying information will be shared.

D1. In general, how many times do you:

	Several times a day	Once a day	A few times a week	Every few weeks	Less often or never	Don't know
Access the internet from your home using a computer, laptop, or tablet computer	1	2	3	4	5	6
Access the internet from your cell phone	1	2	3	4	5	6
Visit social media sites such as Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Nextdoor, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Use or check email.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
Share your opinions online	1	2	3	4	5	6
Shop online.....	1	2	3	4	5	6

D2. Please rate your overall health.

☐ Excellent ☐ Very good ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor

D3. What impact, if any, do you think the economy will have on your family income in the next 6 months?

Do you think the impact will be:

☐ Very positive ☐ Somewhat positive ☐ Neutral ☐ Somewhat negative ☐ Very negative

D4. How many years have you lived in Grand Rapids?

☐ Less than 2 years
☐ 2-5 years
☐ 6-10 years
☐ 11-20 years
☐ More than 20 years

D5. Which best describes the building you live in?

☐ Single-family detached home
☐ Townhouse or duplex (may share walls but no units above or below you)
☐ Condominium or apartment (have units above or below you)
☐ Mobile home
☐ Other

D6. Do you rent or own your home?

☐ Rent
☐ Own

D7. About how much is your monthly housing cost for the place you live (including rent, mortgage payment, property tax, property insurance, and homeowners' association (HOA) fees)?

☐ Less than \$300 ☐ \$2,500 to \$3,999
☐ \$300 to \$599 ☐ \$4,000 to \$6,999
☐ \$600 to \$999 ☐ \$7,000 to \$9,999
☐ \$1,000 to \$1,499 ☐ \$10,000 or more
☐ \$1,500 to \$2,499

D8. Do any children 17 or under live in your household?

☐ No ☐ Yes

D9. Are you or any other members of your household aged 65 or older?

☐ No ☐ Yes

D10. How much do you anticipate your household's total income before taxes will be for the current year? (Please include in your total income money from all sources for all persons living in your household.)

☐ Less than \$25,000 ☐ \$100,000 to \$149,999
☐ \$25,000 to \$49,999 ☐ \$150,000 to \$199,999
☐ \$50,000 to \$74,999 ☐ \$200,000 to \$299,999
☐ \$75,000 to \$99,999 ☐ \$300,000 or more

D11. Are you of Hispanic, Latino/a/x, or Spanish origin?

☐ No ☐ Yes

D12. What is your race? (Mark one or more races to indicate what race you consider yourself to be.)

☐ American Indian or Alaskan Native
☐ Asian
☐ Black or African American
☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
☐ White
☐ A race not listed

D13. In which category is your age?

☐ 18-24 years ☐ 55-64 years
☐ 25-34 years ☐ 65-74 years
☐ 35-44 years ☐ 75 years or older
☐ 45-54 years

D14. What is your gender?

☐ Woman
☐ Man
☐ Identify in another way → go to D14a

D14a. If you identify in another way, how would you describe your gender?

☐ Agender/I don't identify with any gender
☐ Genderqueer/gender fluid
☐ Non-binary
☐ Transgender man
☐ Transgender woman
☐ Two-spirit
☐ Identify in another way

Thank you!

Please return the completed survey in the postage-paid envelope to:
National Research Center, Inc., PO Box 14050, Houston, TX 77221-9904