

THE NCS™

The National Community Survey™

Oakdale, MN

*Community Livability Report
2020*



POWERED BY POLCO

National Research Center, Inc.
2955 Valmont Road Suite 300
Boulder, Colorado 80301
n-r-c.com • 303-444-7863



Leaders at the Core of Better Communities

International City/County Management Association
777 North Capitol Street NE Suite 500
Washington, DC 20002
icma.org • 800-745-8780

Contents

- About The NCS™ 3
- Overview of Results 4
- Facets of Livability 5
- Quality of Life 7
- Governance 8
- Economy..... 10
- Mobility..... 12
- Community Design 14
- Utilities..... 16
- Safety 17
- Natural Environment..... 19
- Parks and Recreation 20
- Health and Wellness..... 21
- Education, Arts, and Culture 23
- Inclusivity and Engagement 25
- Special Topics 29



The National Community Survey™
© 2001-2020 National Research Center, Inc.

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 Oakdale. 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 496 residents of the City of Oakdale. The margin of error around any reported percentage is 4% for all respondents and the response rate for the 2020 survey was 30%. The full description of methods used to garner these opinions can be found in the *Technical Appendices* provided under separate cover.

Overview of Results

Oakdale residents enjoy a positive quality of life.

Residents' ratings for the livability of Oakdale and the city's quality of life were strong and tended to be similar to the national benchmarks. More than 8 in 10 residents gave excellent or good ratings to the overall quality of life in the City and to Oakdale as a place to live, and similar proportions indicated they planned to remain in Oakdale for the next five years and would recommend living in Oakdale to someone who asked.

Ratings for government performance and public trust are especially strong.

About two-thirds of residents or more gave positive marks to all aspects of Oakdale government performance. Further, ratings for overall confidence in Oakdale government, the value of services for taxes paid, generally acting in the best interest of the community, being honest, and treating all residents fairly were higher than national averages. Residents were also pleased with the overall customer service provided by Oakdale employees and the overall quality of services provided by the City, with about 8 in 10 awarding high scores to each.

Scores for Mobility in Oakdale are exceptional.

Notably, most aspects for Mobility received ratings that were above national averages. Items for which ratings were higher than the benchmarks, with about 8 in 10 residents awarding high marks to each, were traffic flow on major streets, ease of travel by car, ease of walking, ease of public parking, street cleaning, street lighting, snow removal, and sidewalk maintenance. Additionally, about 7 in 10 residents gave excellent or good ratings to the ease of travel by bicycle and 6 in 10 were pleased with street repair, and both of these evaluations were also higher than those given elsewhere. However, an area of opportunity exists for the City: the proportions of residents who used alternative means of transportation instead of driving alone were lower than those observed in other communities.

Oakdale's affordability and overall design are appreciated by residents.

About three-quarters of residents or more gave positive reviews to the overall design or layout of Oakdale's residential and commercial areas, the overall appearance of the city, and their neighborhoods as places to live. Further, ratings for variety of housing options, availability of affordable quality housing, land use, planning, and zoning, and cost of living, with about 6 in 10 residents or more giving positive scores, were higher than the national benchmarks.

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.

In Oakdale, the only facet of livability rated by residents as higher than the median importance rating (74%) and lower than the median quality rating (76%) was the overall quality of the transportation system (auto, bicycle, foot, bus) in Oakdale.

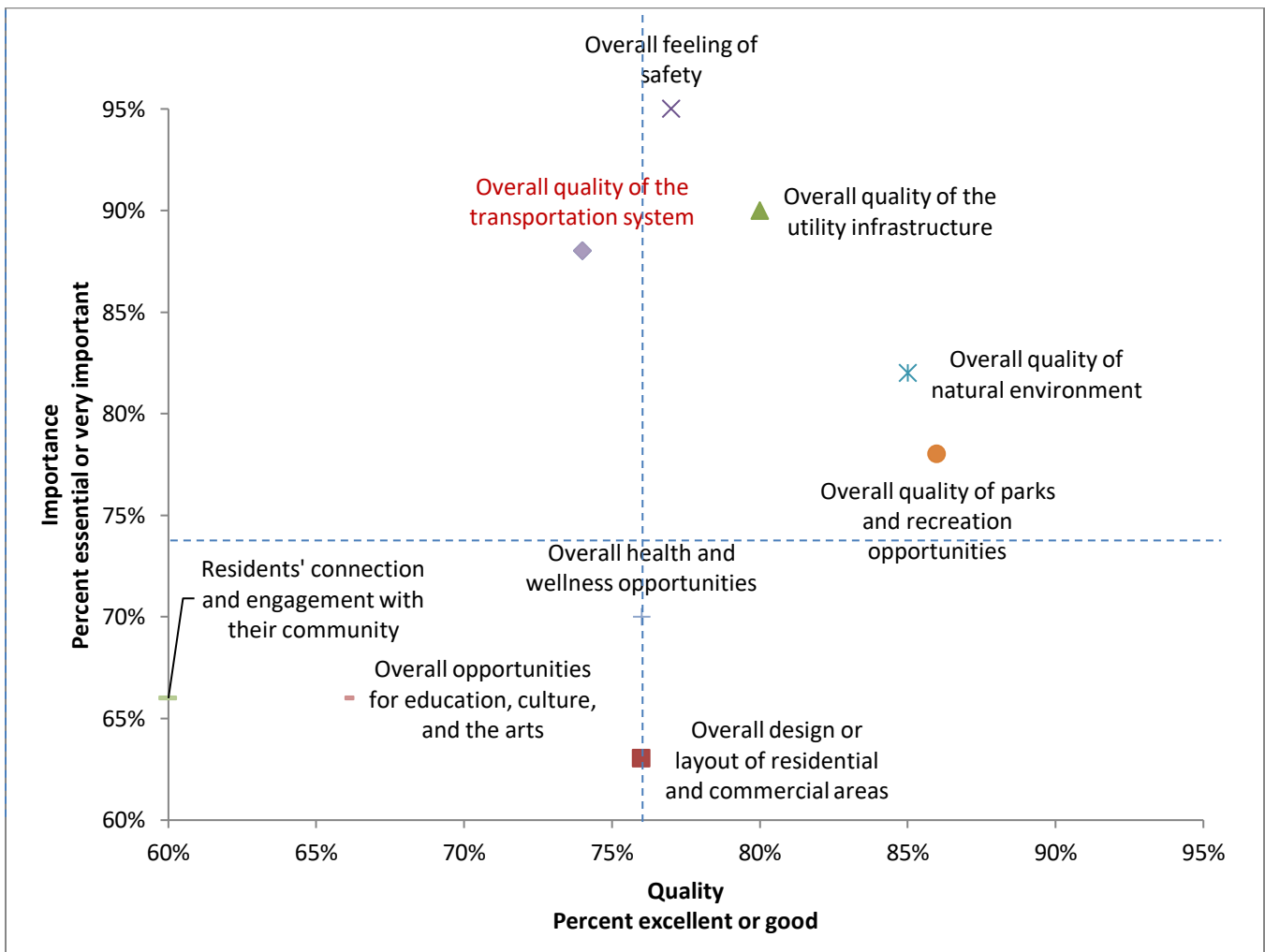


FIGURE 1: QUALITY OF FACETS OF LIVABILITY- SUMMARY

Percent excellent or good	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Overall economic health of Oakdale	↔	74%
Overall quality of the transportation system in Oakdale	↔	68%
Overall design or layout of Oakdale's residential and commercial areas	↔	76%
Overall quality of the utility infrastructure in Oakdale	↔	80%
Overall feeling of safety in Oakdale	↔	77%
Quality of overall natural environment in Oakdale	↔	85%
Overall quality of parks and recreation opportunities	↔	86%
Overall health and wellness opportunities in Oakdale	↔	76%
Overall opportunities for education, culture, and the arts	↔	66%
Residents' connection and engagement with their community	↔	60%

FIGURE 2: IMPORTANCE OF FACETS OF LIVABILITY- SUMMARY

Percent essential or very important	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Overall economic health of Oakdale	↔	88%
Overall quality of the transportation system in Oakdale	↓	69%
Overall design or layout of Oakdale's residential and commercial areas	↓↓	63%
Overall quality of the utility infrastructure in Oakdale	↔	90%
Overall feeling of safety in Oakdale	↔	95%
Quality of overall natural environment in Oakdale	↔	82%
Overall quality of parks and recreation opportunities	↔	78%
Overall health and wellness opportunities in Oakdale	↔	70%
Overall opportunities for education, culture, and the arts	↓	66%
Residents' connection and engagement with their community	↓	66%

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 IN OAKDALE

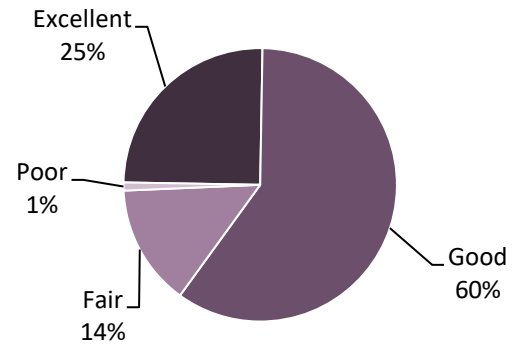


FIGURE 3: QUALITY OF LIFE IN OAKDALE

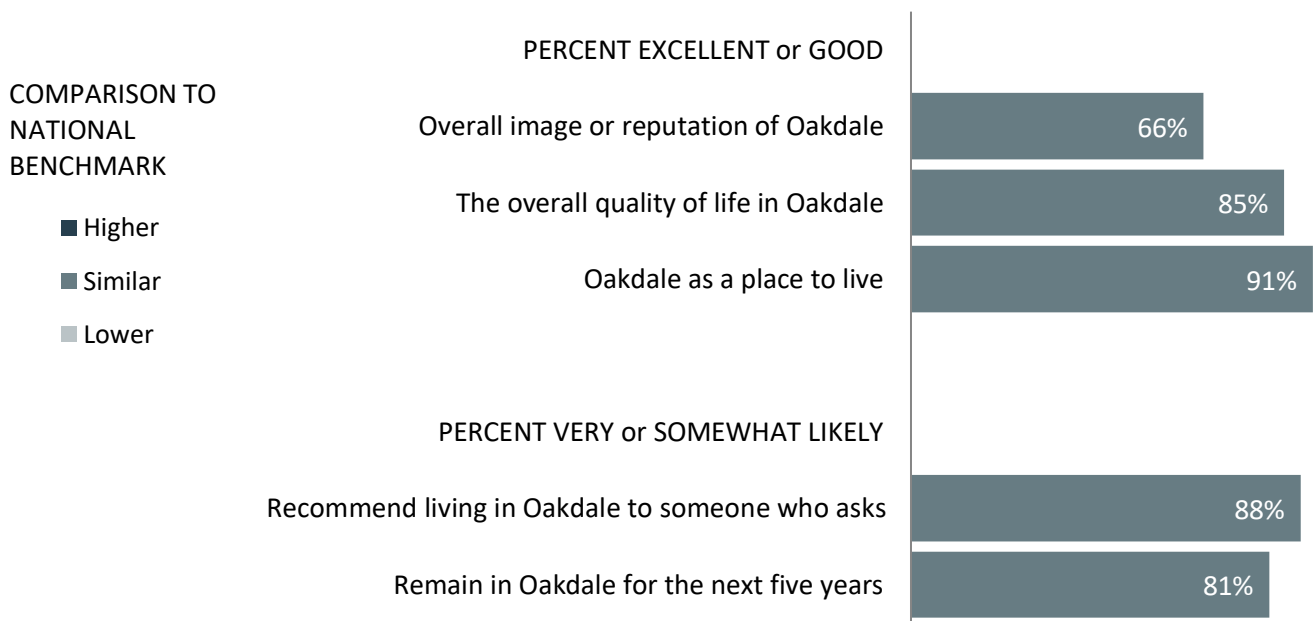


FIGURE 4: QUALITY OF LIFE IN OAKDALE - SUMMARY

Percent excellent or good	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Overall image or reputation of Oakdale	↔	66%
The overall quality of life in Oakdale	↔	85%
Oakdale as a place to live	↔	91%

FIGURE 5: RECOMMEND OAKDALE - SUMMARY

Percent very or somewhat likely	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Recommend living in Oakdale to someone who asks	↔	88%
Remain in Oakdale for the next five years	↔	81%

Legend

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

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 OAKDALE GOVERNMENT

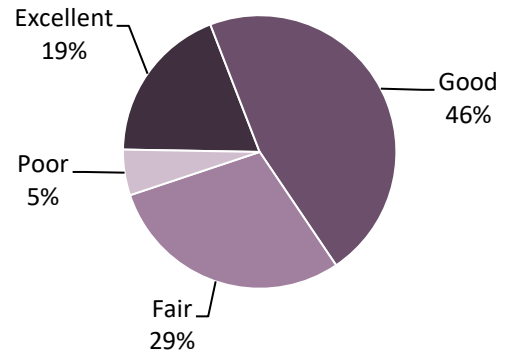


FIGURE 6: GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE AND SERVICES

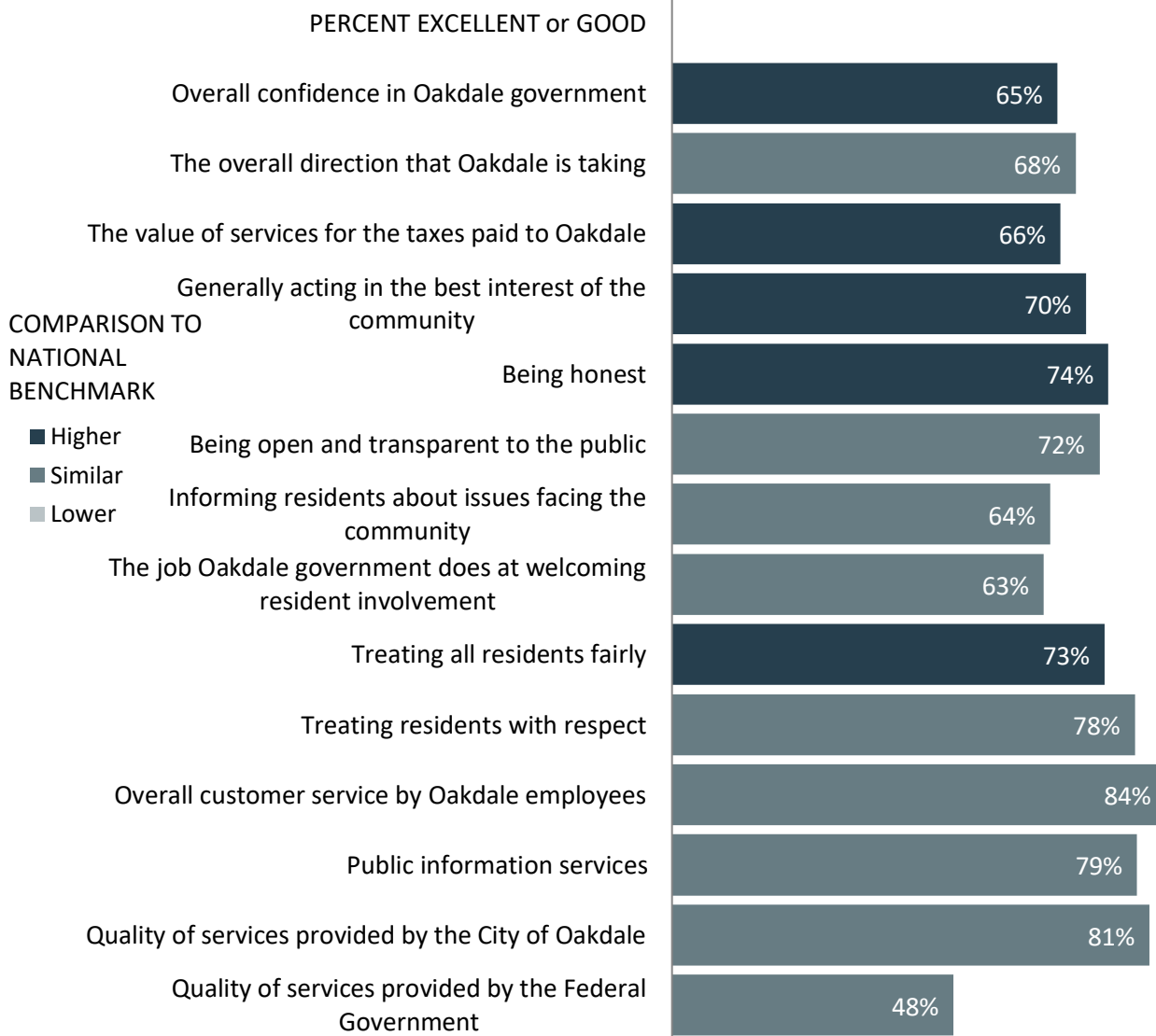


FIGURE 7: GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE AND SERVICES - SUMMARY

Percent excellent or good	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Overall confidence in Oakdale government	↑	65%
The overall direction that Oakdale is taking	↔	68%
The value of services for the taxes paid to Oakdale	↑	66%
Generally acting in the best interest of the community	↑	70%
Being honest	↑	74%
Being open and transparent to the public	↔	72%
Informing residents about issues facing the community	↔	64%
The job Oakdale government does at welcoming resident involvement	↔	63%
Treating all residents fairly	↑	73%
Treating residents with respect	↔	78%
Overall customer service by Oakdale employees	↔	84%
Public information services	↔	79%
Quality of services provided by the City of Oakdale	↔	81%
Quality of services provided by the Federal Government	↔	48%

Legend

↑↑ Much higher

↑ Higher

↔ Similar

↓ Lower

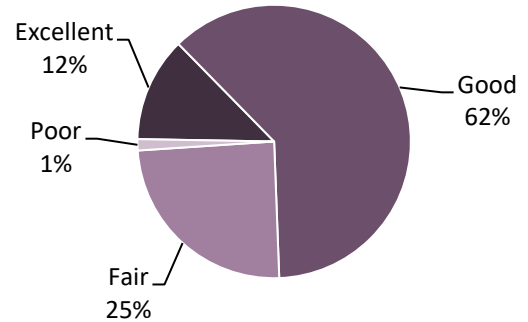
↓↓ Much lower

* 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.

OVERALL ECONOMIC HEALTH OF OAKDALE



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

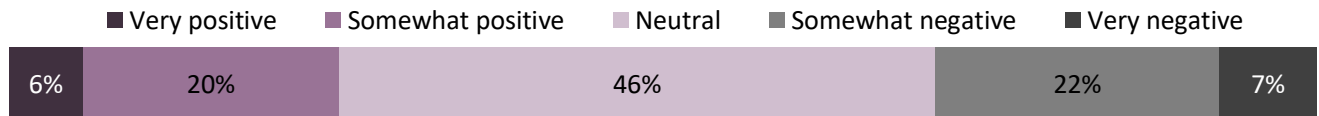


FIGURE 8: ECONOMIC HEALTH

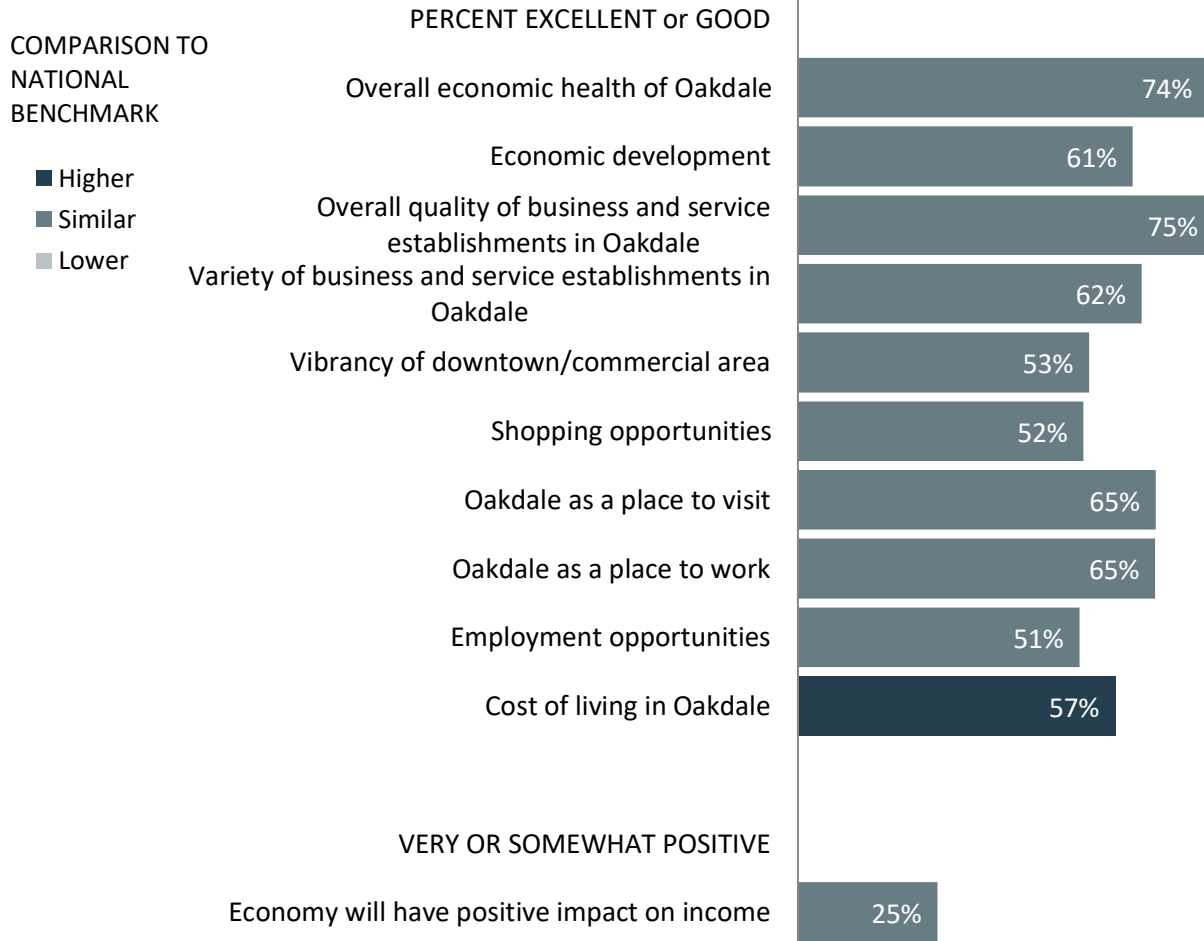


FIGURE 9: ECONOMIC HEALTH - SUMMARY

Percent excellent or good	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Overall economic health of Oakdale	↔	74%
Economic development	↔	61%
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Oakdale	↔	75%
Variety of business and service establishments in Oakdale	↔	62%
Vibrancy of downtown/commercial area	↔	53%
Shopping opportunities	↔	52%
Oakdale as a place to visit	↔	65%
Oakdale as a place to work	↔	65%
Employment opportunities	↔	51%
Cost of living in Oakdale	↑	57%

FIGURE 10: ECONOMIC IMPACT - SUMMARY

Percent very or somewhat positive	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Economy will have positive impact on income	↔	25%

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	↔	60%

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.

OVERALL QUALITY OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM IN OAKDALE

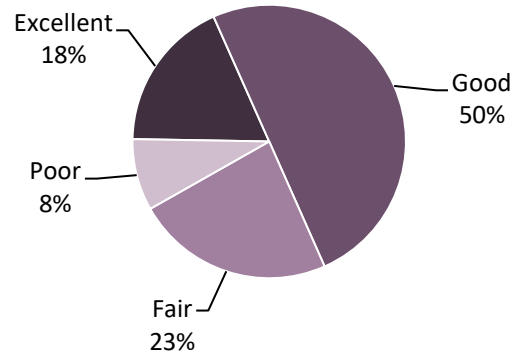


FIGURE 12: MOBILITY IN OAKDALE

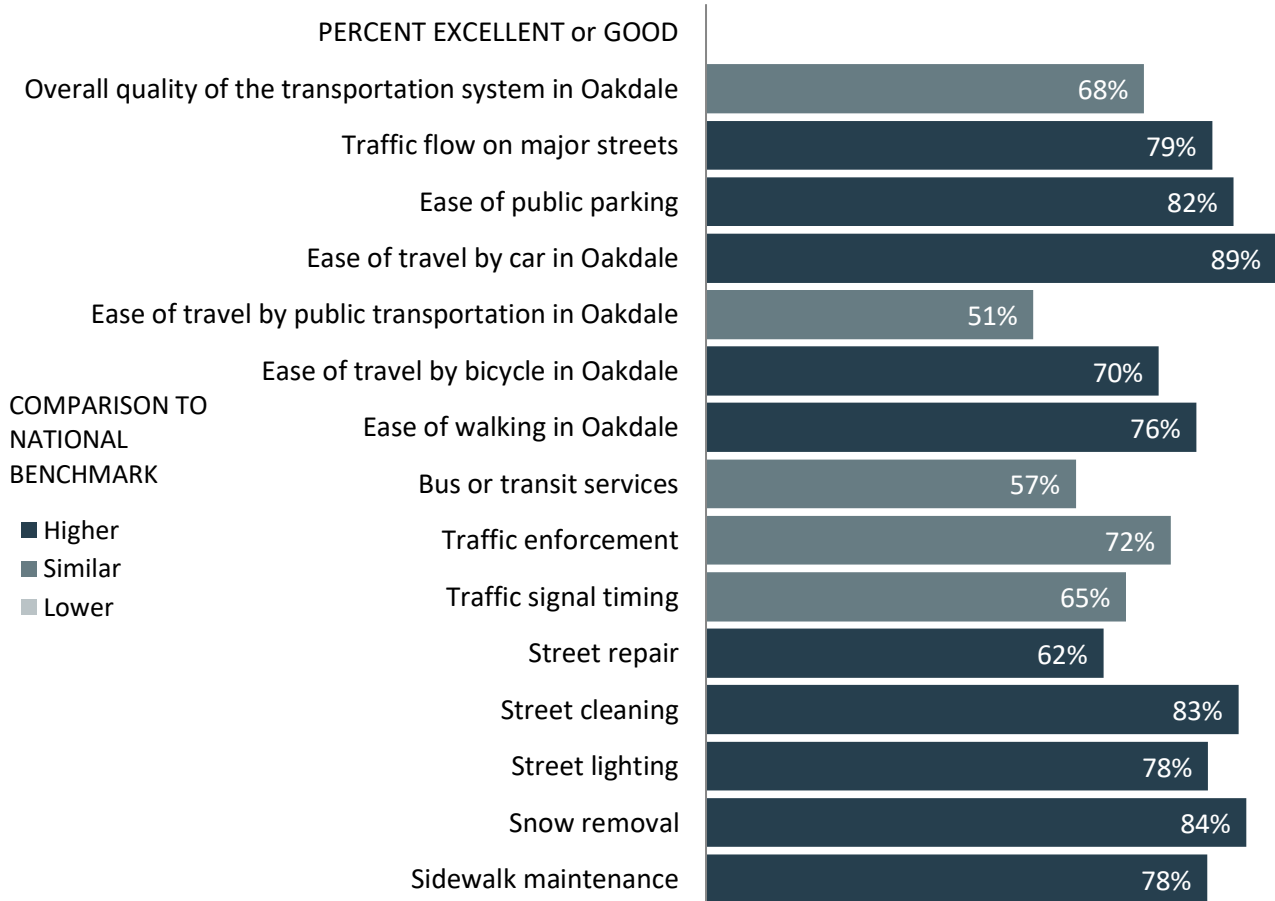


FIGURE 13: USE OF ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION MODES

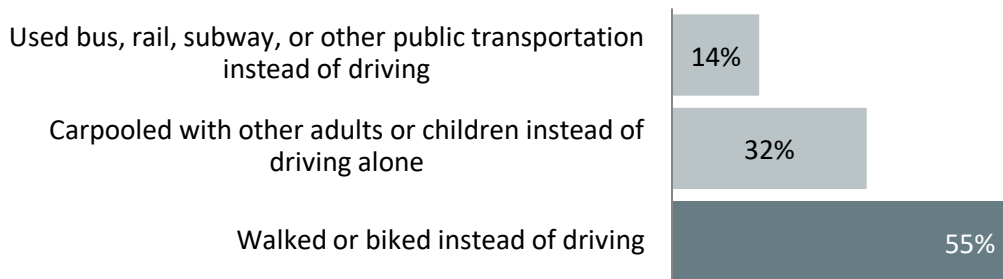


FIGURE 14: MOBILITY IN OAKDALE - SUMMARY

Percent excellent or good	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Overall quality of the transportation system in Oakdale	↔	68%
Traffic flow on major streets	↑↑	79%
Ease of travel by car in Oakdale	↑	89%
Ease of travel by public transportation in Oakdale	↔	51%
Ease of travel by bicycle in Oakdale	↑	70%
Ease of walking in Oakdale	↑	76%
Ease of public parking	↑	82%
Bus or transit services	↔	57%
Traffic enforcement	↔	72%
Traffic signal timing	↔	65%
Street repair	↑	62%
Street cleaning	↑	83%
Street lighting	↑	78%
Snow removal	↑	84%
Sidewalk maintenance	↑	78%

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	↓	14%
Carpooled with other adults or children instead of driving alone	↓	32%
Walked or biked instead of driving	↔	55%

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.

OVERALL DESIGN OR LAYOUT OF OAKDALE'S RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL AREAS

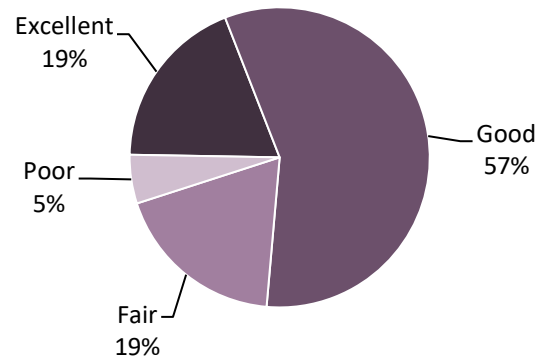


FIGURE 16: COMMUNITY DESIGN

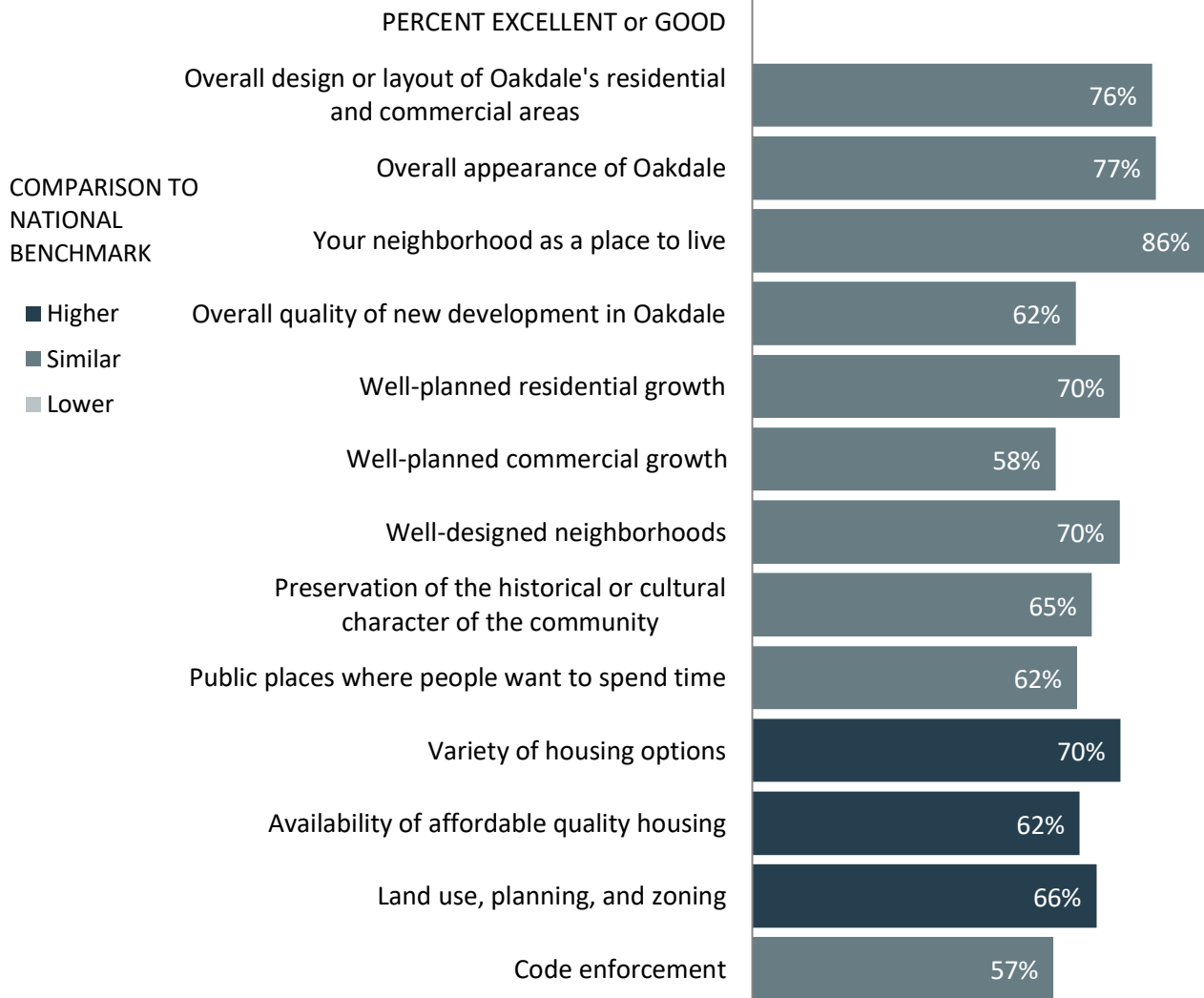


FIGURE 17: COMMUNITY DESIGN - SUMMARY

Percent excellent or good	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Overall design or layout of Oakdale's residential and commercial areas	↔	76%
Overall appearance of Oakdale	↔	77%
Your neighborhood as a place to live	↔	86%
Overall quality of new development in Oakdale	↔	62%
Well-planned residential growth	↔	70%
Well-planned commercial growth	↔	58%
Well-designed neighborhoods	↔	70%
Preservation of the historical or cultural character of the community	↔	65%
Public places where people want to spend time	↔	62%
Variety of housing options	↑	70%
Availability of affordable quality housing	↑	62%
Land use, planning, and zoning	↑	66%
Code enforcement	↔	57%

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.

OVERALL QUALITY OF THE UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE IN OAKDALE

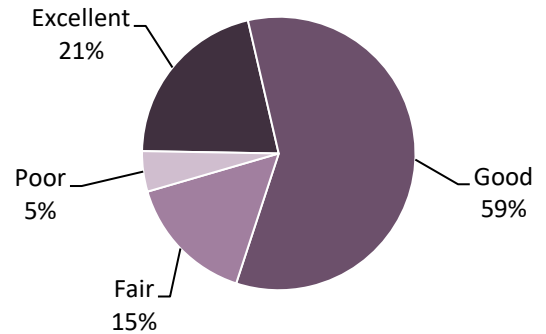


FIGURE 18: UTILITES

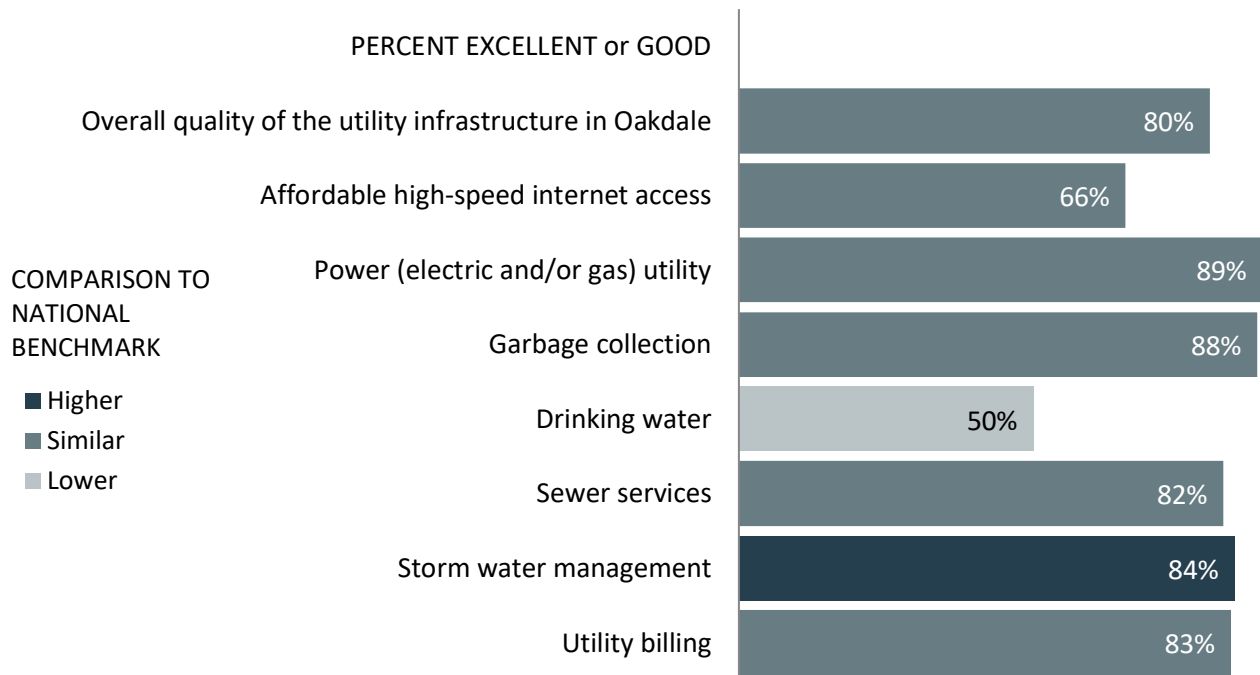


FIGURE 19: UTILITES - SUMMARY

Percent excellent or good	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Overall quality of the utility infrastructure in Oakdale	↔	80%
Affordable high-speed internet access	↔	66%
Power (electric and/or gas) utility	↔	89%
Garbage collection	↔	88%
Drinking water	↓	50%
Sewer services	↔	82%
Storm water management	↑	84%
Utility billing	↔	83%

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 IN OAKDALE

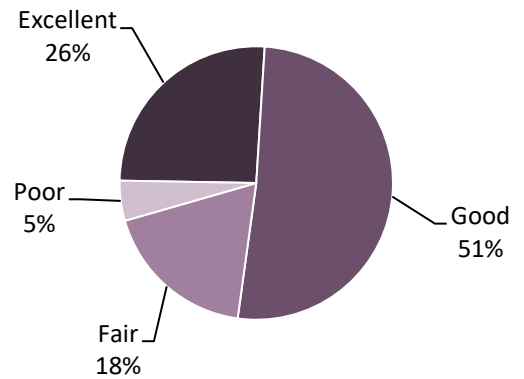


FIGURE 20: SAFETY IN OAKDALE

COMPARISON TO NATIONAL BENCHMARK

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower

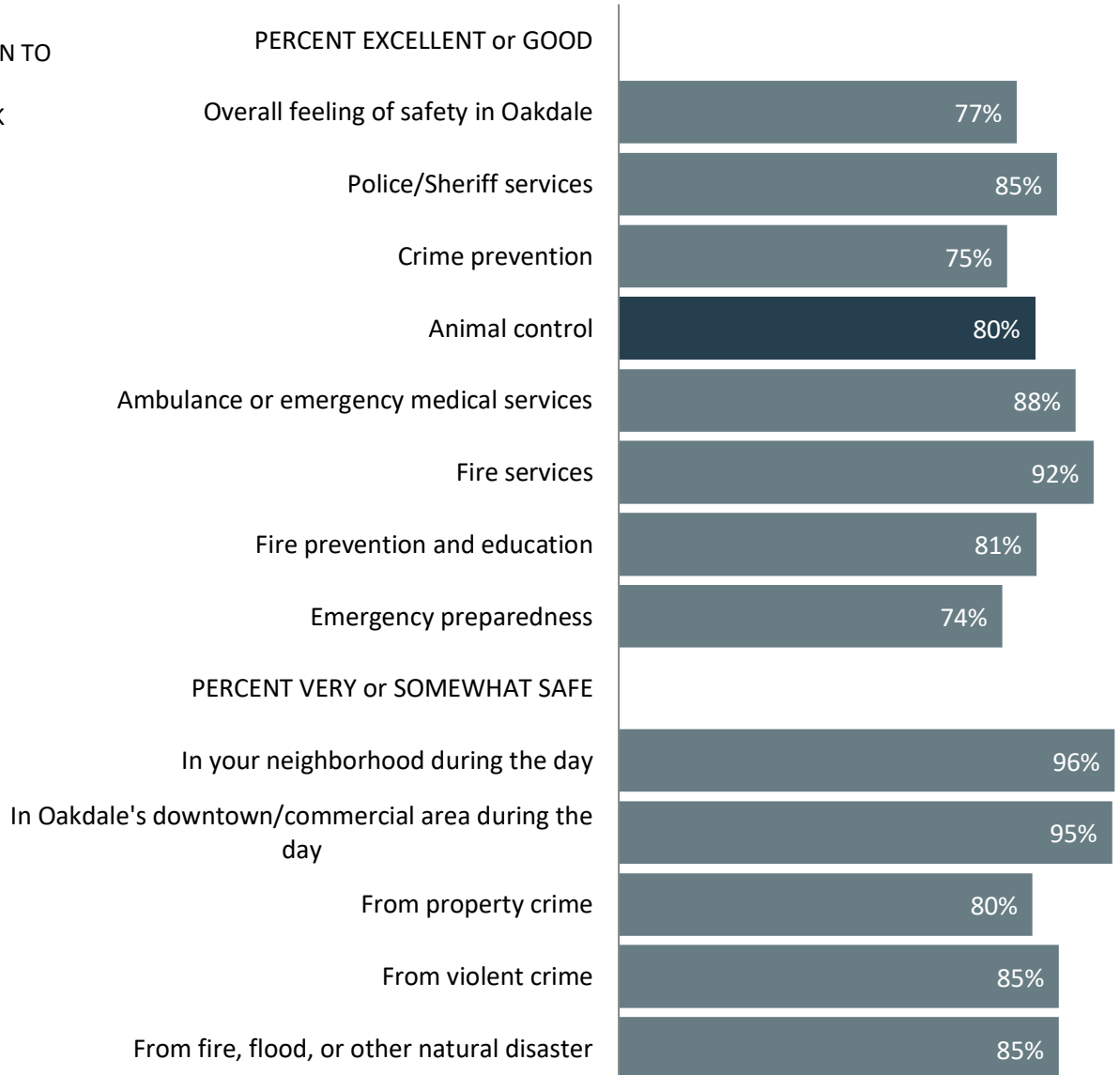


FIGURE 21: SAFETY-RELATED SERVICES - SUMMARY

Percent excellent or good	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Overall feeling of safety in Oakdale	↔	77%
Police/Sheriff services	↔	85%
Crime prevention	↔	75%
Animal control	↑	80%
Ambulance or emergency medical services	↔	88%
Fire services	↔	92%
Fire prevention and education	↔	81%
Emergency preparedness	↔	74%

FIGURE 22: FEELINGS OF SAFETY- SUMMARY

Percent who feel very or somewhat safe	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
In your neighborhood during the day	↔	96%
In Oakdale's downtown/commercial area during the day	↔	95%
From property crime	↔	80%
From violent crime	↔	85%
From fire, flood, or other natural disaster	↔	85%

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.

OVERALL QUALITY OF NATURAL ENVIRONMENT IN OAKDALE

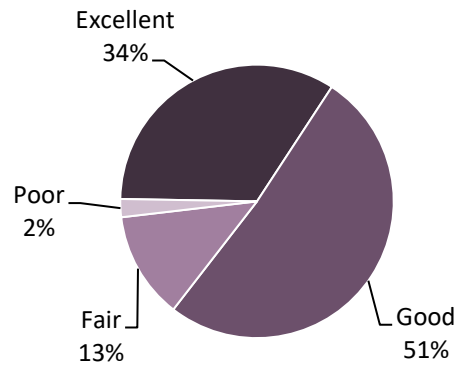


FIGURE 23: NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

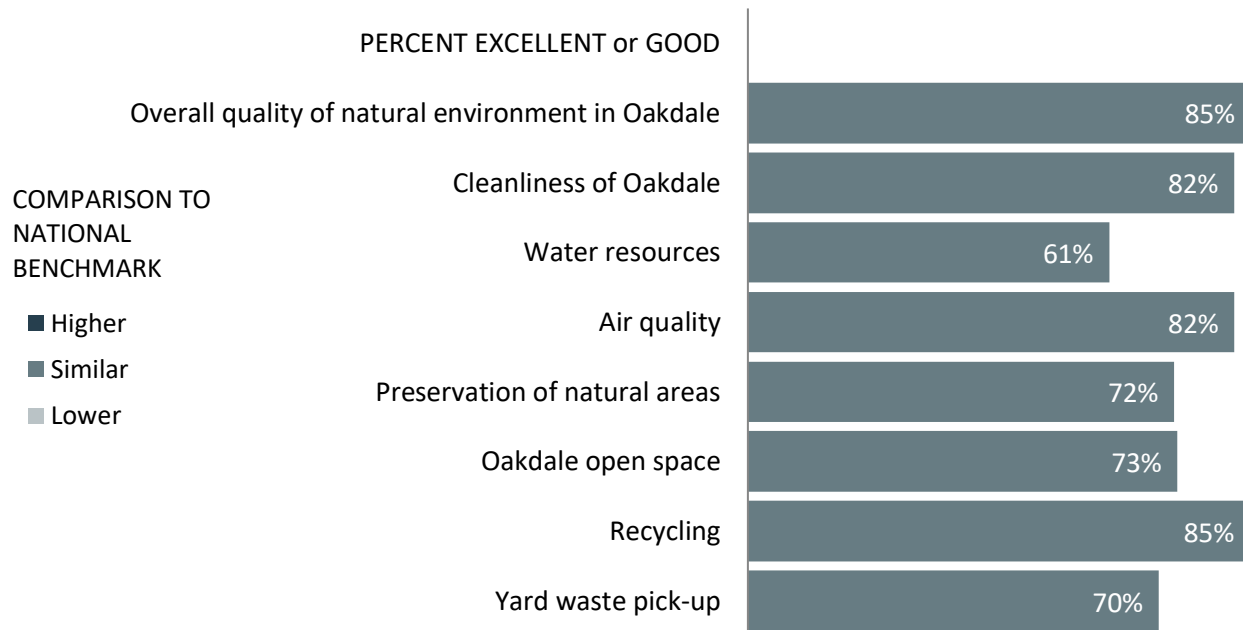


FIGURE 24: NATURAL ENVIRONMENT - SUMMARY

Percent excellent or good	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Overall quality of natural environment in Oakdale	↔	85%
Cleanliness of Oakdale	↔	82%
Water resources	↔	61%
Air quality	↔	82%
Preservation of natural areas	↔	72%
Oakdale open space	↔	73%
Recycling	↔	85%
Yard waste pick-up	↔	70%

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

OVERALL QUALITY OF PARKS AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES IN OAKDALE

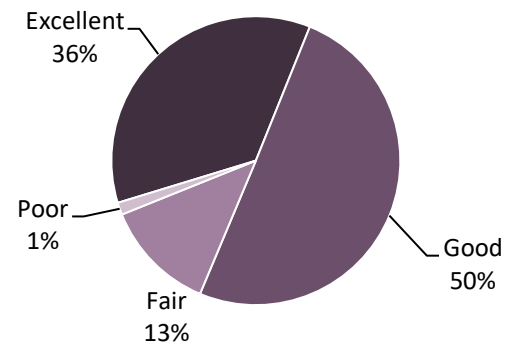


FIGURE 25: PARKS AND RECREATION



FIGURE 26: PARKS AND RECREATION - SUMMARY

Percent excellent or good	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Overall quality of parks and recreation opportunities	↔	86%
Availability of paths and walking trails	↑	77%
City parks	↔	86%
Recreational opportunities	↔	70%
Recreation programs or classes	↔	83%
Recreation centers or facilities	↔	79%
Fitness opportunities	↔	74%

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.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS OPPORTUNITIES IN OAKDALE

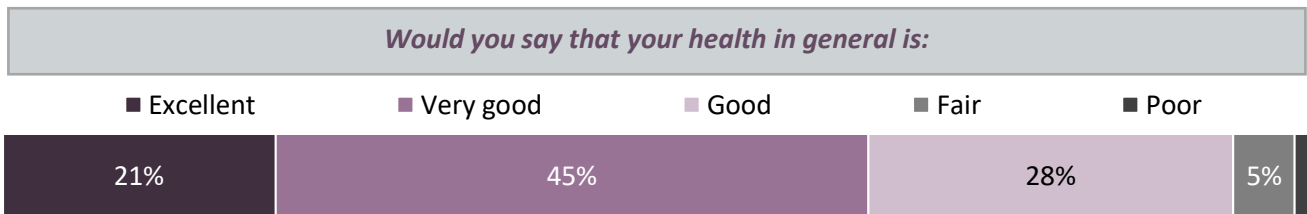
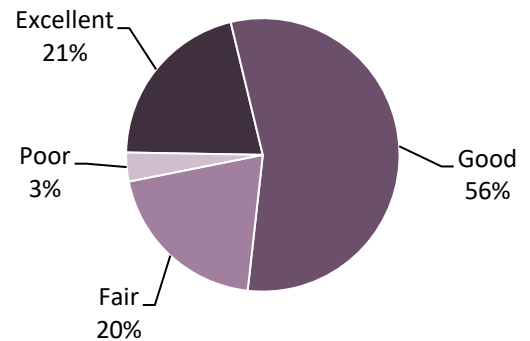


FIGURE 27: HEALTH AND WELLNESS



FIGURE 28: HEALTH AND WELLNESS - SUMMARY

Percent excellent or good	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Overall health and wellness opportunities in Oakdale	↔	76%
Health services	↔	76%
Availability of affordable quality health care	↔	67%
Availability of preventive health services	↔	66%
Availability of affordable quality mental health care	↔	61%
Availability of affordable quality food	↔	73%

FIGURE 29: PERSONAL HEALTH - SUMMARY

	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
In very good to excellent health	↔	66%

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 IN OAKDALE

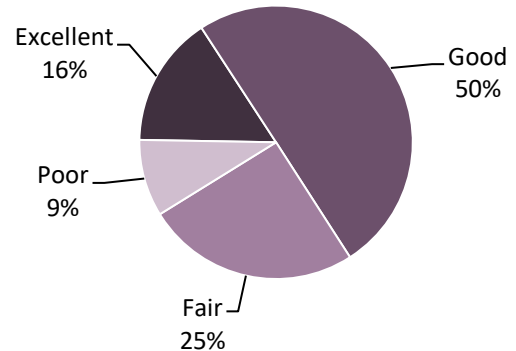


FIGURE 30: EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE

COMPARISON TO NATIONAL BENCHMARK

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower

PERCENT EXCELLENT or GOOD

- Overall opportunities for education, culture, and the arts
- Opportunities to attend cultural/arts/music activities
- Opportunities to attend special events and festivals
- Community support for the arts
- Public library services
- Availability of affordable quality child care/preschool
- K-12 education
- Adult educational opportunities

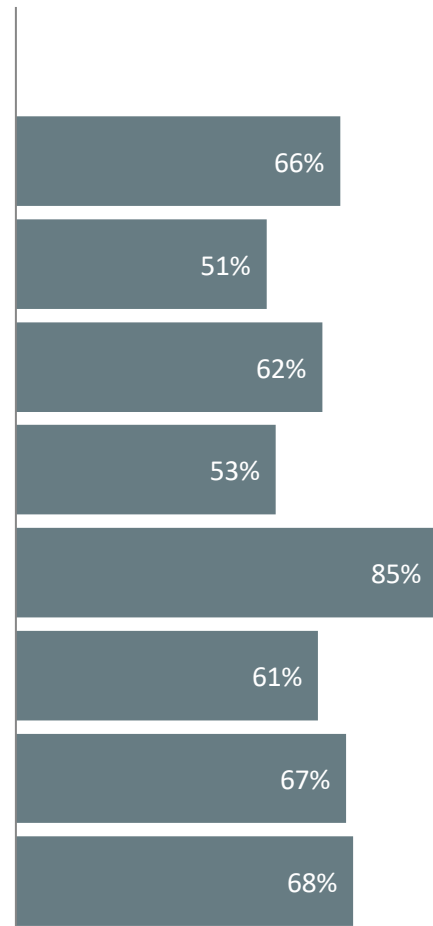


FIGURE 31: EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE - SUMMARY

Percent excellent or good	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Overall opportunities for education, culture, and the arts	↔	66%
Opportunities to attend cultural/arts/music activities	↔	51%
Opportunities to attend special events and festivals	↔	62%
Community support for the arts	↔	53%
Public library services	↔	85%
Availability of affordable quality child care/preschool	↔	61%
K-12 education	↔	67%
Adult educational opportunities	↔	68%

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

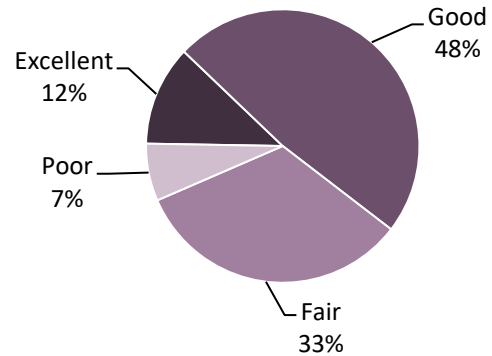


FIGURE 32: INCLUSIVITY & ENGAGEMENT

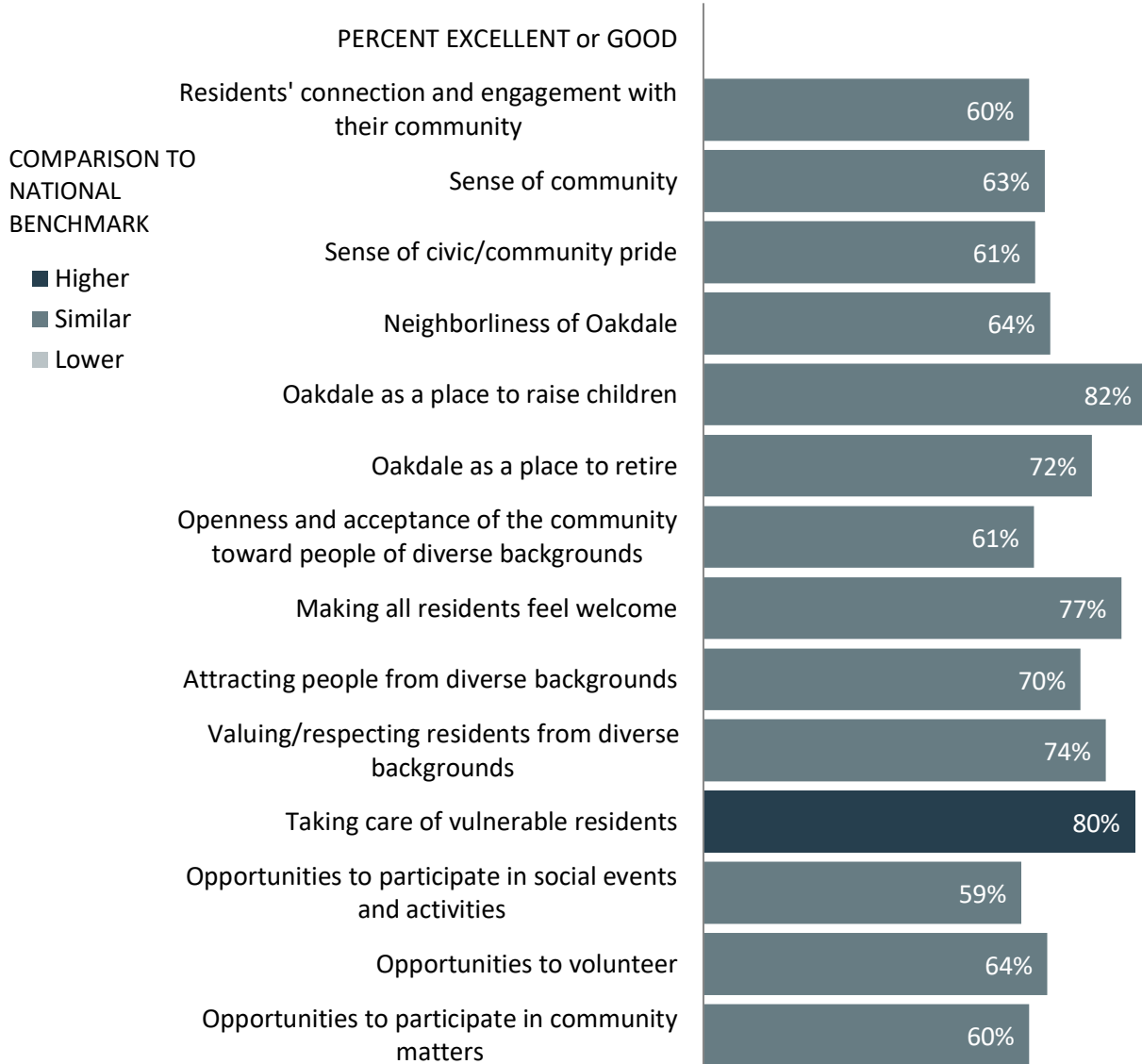


FIGURE 33: INCLUSIVITY & ENGAGEMENT - SUMMARY

Percent excellent or good	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Residents' connection and engagement with their community	↔	60%
Sense of community	↔	63%
Sense of civic/community pride	↔	61%
Neighborliness of Oakdale	↔	64%
Oakdale as a place to raise children	↔	82%
Oakdale as a place to retire	↔	72%
Openness and acceptance of the community toward people of diverse backgrounds	↔	61%
Making all residents feel welcome	↔	77%
Attracting people from diverse backgrounds	↔	70%
Valuing/respecting residents from diverse backgrounds	↔	74%
Taking care of vulnerable residents	↑	80%
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	↔	59%
Opportunities to volunteer	↔	64%
Opportunities to participate in community matters	↔	60%

Legend

↑↑ Much higher

↑ Higher

↔ Similar

↓ Lower

↓↓ Much lower

* Not available

FIGURE 34: RESIDENTS' PARTICIPATION LEVELS

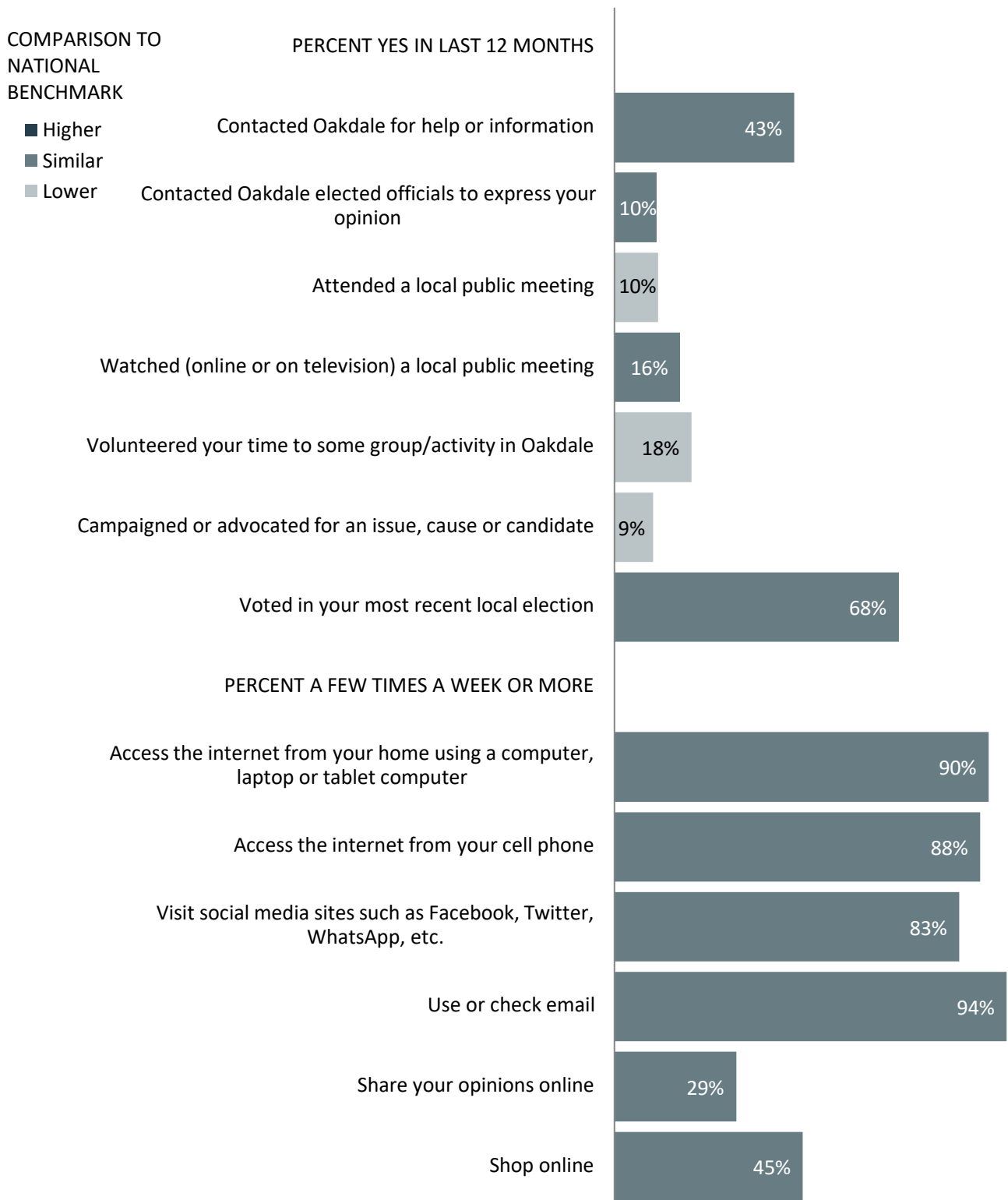


FIGURE 35: RESIDENTS’ PARTICIPATION IN LAST 12 MONTHS- SUMMARY

Percent who had done each in last 12 months	Comparison to benchmark	2020 rating
Contacted Oakdale for help or information	↔	43%
Contacted Oakdale elected officials to express your opinion	↔	10%
Attended a local public meeting	↓	10%
Watched (online or on television) a local public meeting	↔	16%
Volunteered your time to some group/activity in Oakdale	↓	18%
Campaigned or advocated for an issue, cause or candidate	↓	9%
Voted in your most recent local election	↔	68%

FIGURE 36: 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	↔	90%
Access the internet from your cell phone	↔	88%
Visit social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, etc.	↔	83%
Use or check email	↔	94%
Share your opinions online	↔	29%
Shop online	↔	45%

Legend

↑↑ Much higher

↑ Higher

↔ Similar

↓ Lower

↓↓ Much lower

* Not available

Special Topics

FIGURE 37: SOURCES OF CITY 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:

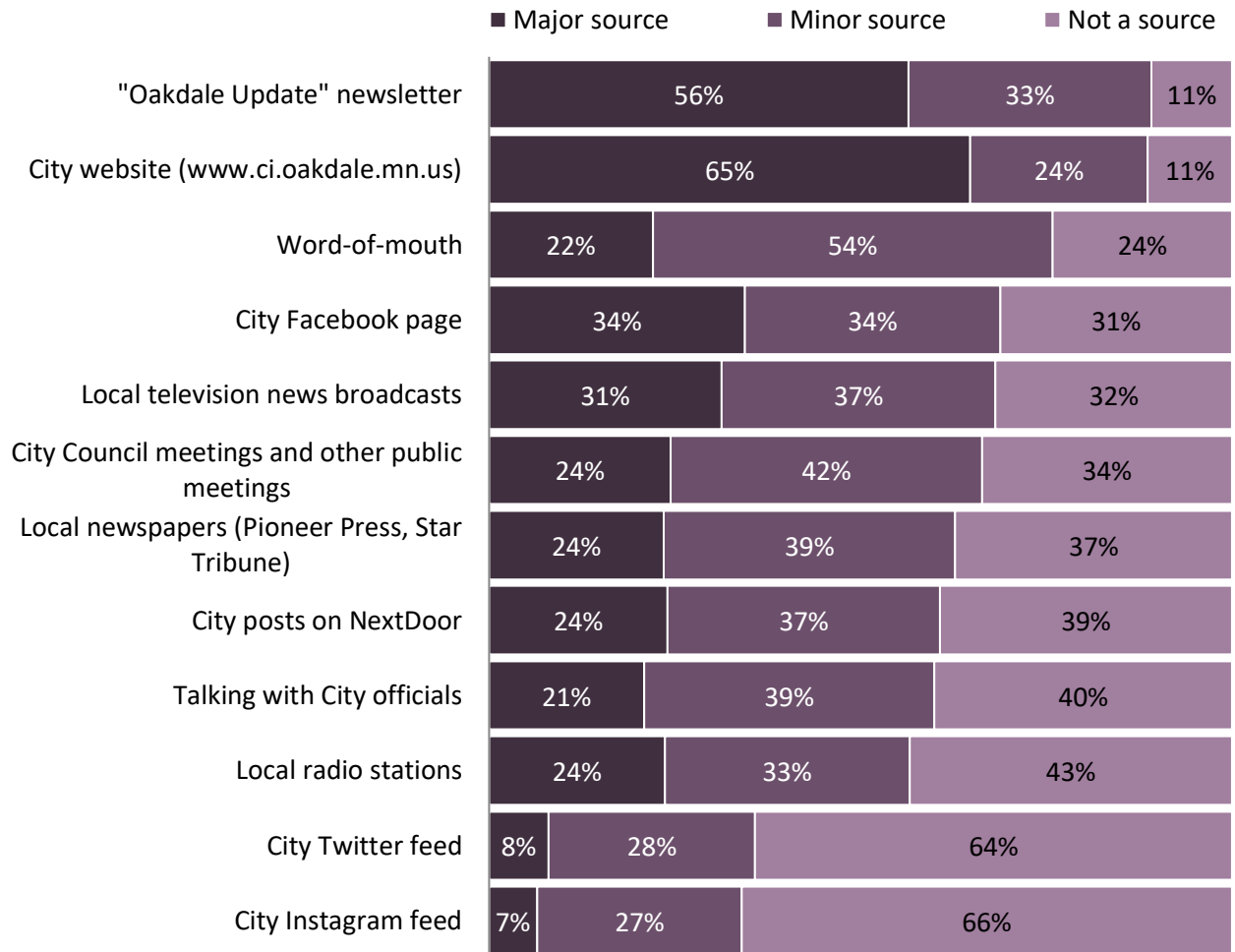


FIGURE 38: OAKDALE SUMMERFEST ATTENDANCE

Have you or a member of your household attended Oakdale Summerfest in the past three years?

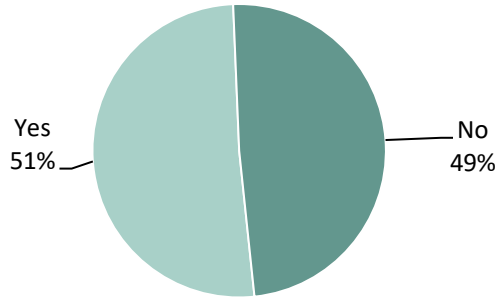


FIGURE 39: IMPORTANCE OF ASPECTS OF OAKDALE SUMMERFEST

PLEASE RATE HOW IMPORTANT, IF AT ALL, EACH OF THE FOLLOWING ASPECTS OF THE OAKDALE SUMMERFEST ARE TO YOU:

