



CITY OF THORNTON, CO 2011



3005 30th Street
Boulder, CO 80301
www.n-r-c.com • 303-444-7863



777 North Capitol Street NE, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20002
www.icma.org • 202-289-ICMA

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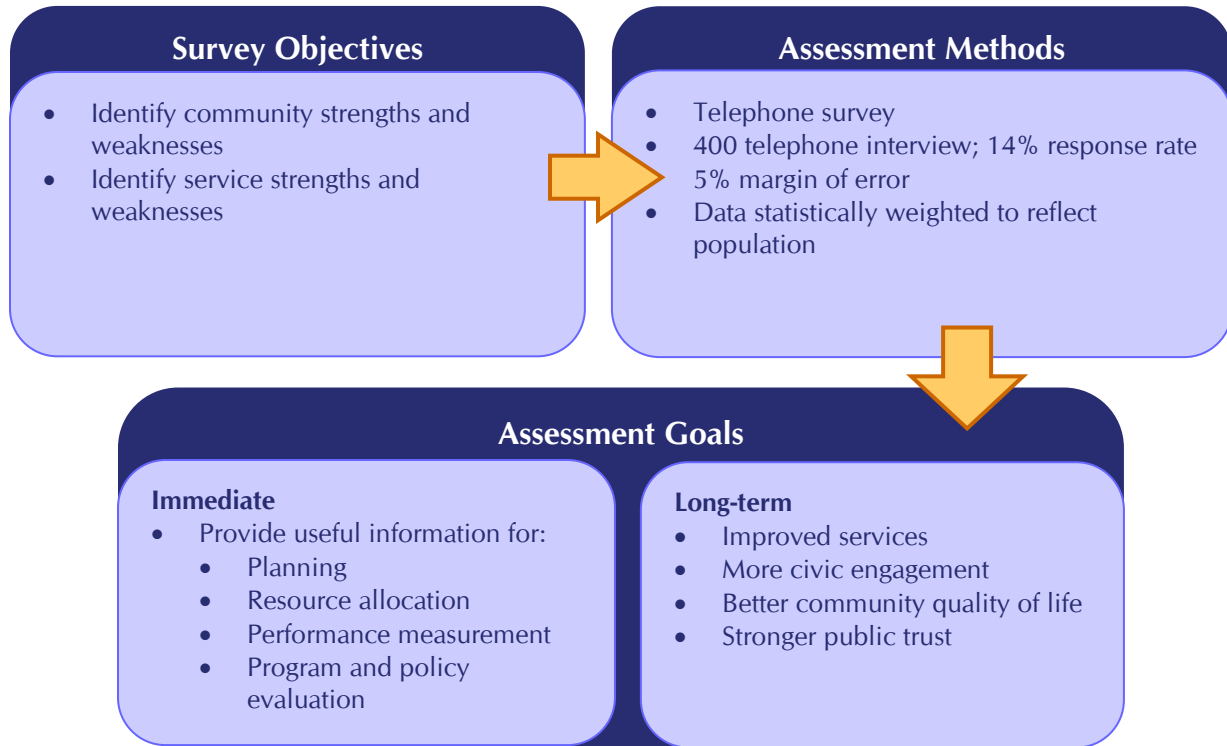
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SURVEY BACKGROUND

ABOUT THE NATIONAL CITIZEN SURVEY™

The National Citizen Survey™ (The NCS) is a collaborative effort between National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA). The NCS was developed by NRC to provide a statistically valid survey of resident opinions about community and services provided by local government. The survey results may be used by staff, elected officials and other stakeholders for community planning and resource allocation, program improvement and policy making.

FIGURE 1: THE NATIONAL CITIZEN SURVEY™ METHODS AND GOALS



The NCS focuses on a series of community characteristics and local government services, as well as issues of public trust. Resident behaviors related to civic engagement in the community also were measured in the survey.

FIGURE 2: THE NATIONAL CITIZEN SURVEY™ FOCUS AREAS



The survey and its administration are standardized to assure high quality research methods and directly comparable results across The National Citizen Survey™ jurisdictions. Participating households are selected at random and the household member who responds is selected without bias. Multiple mailings give each household more than one chance to participate with self-addressed and postage-paid envelopes. Results are statistically weighted to reflect the proper demographic composition of the entire community. A total of 400 completed telephone surveys were obtained, providing an overall response rate of 14%.

The National Citizen Survey™ customized for the City of Thornton was developed in close cooperation with local jurisdiction staff. Thornton staff selected items from a menu of questions about services and community problems. City of Thornton staff also augmented The National Citizen Survey™ basic service through a variety of options including a custom set of benchmark comparisons, crosstabulation of results, and several policy questions.

UNDERSTANDING THE RESULTS

As shown in Figure 2, this report is based around respondents' opinions about eight larger categories: community quality, community design, public safety, environmental sustainability, recreation and wellness, community inclusiveness, civic engagement and public trust. Each report section begins with residents' ratings of community characteristics and is followed by residents' ratings of service quality. For all evaluative questions, the percent of residents rating the service or community feature as "excellent" or "good" is presented. To see the full set of responses for each question on the survey, please see Appendix A: Complete Survey Frequencies.

Margin of Error

The margin of error around results for the City of Thornton Survey (400 completed surveys) is plus or minus five percentage points. This is a measure of the precision of your results; a larger number of completed surveys gives a smaller (more precise) margin of error, while a smaller number of surveys yields a larger margin of error. With your margin of error, you may conclude that when 60% of survey respondents report that a particular service is "excellent" or "good," somewhere between 55-65% of all residents are likely to feel that way.

Comparing Survey Results

Certain kinds of services tend to be thought better of by residents in many communities across the country. For example, public safety services tend to be received better than transportation services by residents of most American communities. Where possible, the better comparison is not from one service to another in the City of Thornton, but from City of Thornton services to services like them provided by other jurisdictions.

Benchmark Comparisons

NRC's database of comparative resident opinion is comprised of resident perspectives gathered in citizen surveys from approximately 500 jurisdictions whose residents evaluated local government services and gave their opinion about the quality of community life. The comparison evaluations are from the most recent survey completed in each jurisdiction; most communities conduct surveys every year or in alternating years. NRC adds the latest results quickly upon survey completion, keeping the benchmark data fresh and relevant.

The City of Thornton chose to have comparisons made to two subsets of similar jurisdictions from the database (other northern Colorado front-range communities and national communities identified as economic competitors). A benchmark comparison (the average rating from all the comparison jurisdictions where a similar question was asked) has been provided when a similar question on the City of Thornton survey was included in NRC's database and there were at least five jurisdictions in which the question was asked. For most questions compared to the entire dataset, there were more than 100 jurisdictions included in the benchmark comparison.

Where comparisons for quality ratings were available, the City of Thornton results were generally noted as being "above" the benchmark, "below" the benchmark or "similar" to the benchmark. For some questions – those related to resident behavior, circumstance or to a local problem – the comparison to the benchmark is designated as "more," "similar" or "less" (for example, the percent of crime victims, residents visiting a park or residents identifying code enforcement as a problem.) In instances where ratings are considerably higher or lower than the benchmark, these ratings have been further demarcated by the attribute of "much," (for example, "much less" or "much above"). These labels come from a statistical comparison of the City of Thornton's rating to the benchmark.

“Don’t Know” Responses and Rounding

On many of the questions in the survey respondents may answer “don’t know.” The proportion of respondents giving this reply is shown in the full set of responses included in Appendix A. However, these responses have been removed from the analyses presented in the body of the report. In other words, the tables and graphs display the responses from respondents who had an opinion about a specific item.

For some questions, respondents were permitted to select more than one answer. When the total exceeds 100% in a table for a multiple response question, it is because some respondents did select more than one response. When a table for a question that only permitted a single response does not total to exactly 100%, it is due to the customary practice of percentages being rounded to the nearest whole number.

For more information on understanding The NCS report, please see Appendix B: Survey Methodology.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report of the City of Thornton survey provides the opinions of a representative sample of residents about community quality of life, service delivery, civic participation and unique issues of local interest. A periodic sounding of resident opinion offers staff, elected officials and other stakeholders an opportunity to identify challenges and to plan for and evaluate improvements and to sustain services and amenities for long-term success.

Most residents experienced a good quality of life in the City of Thornton and believed the City was a good place to live. The overall quality of life in the City of Thornton was rated as “excellent” or “good” by 90% of respondents. Almost all reported they plan on staying in the City of Thornton for the next five years.

A variety of characteristics of the community was evaluated by those participating in the study. The two characteristics receiving the most favorable ratings were the opportunities to participate in religious or spiritual events and activities and the openness and acceptance of the community towards people of diverse backgrounds. The two characteristics receiving the least positive ratings were traffic flow on major streets and employment opportunities.

Ratings of community characteristics were compared to the benchmark database. Of the 17 characteristics for which comparisons were available, five were above the regional benchmark comparison, 10 were similar to the regional benchmark comparison and two were below.

Residents in the City of Thornton were somewhat civically engaged. While only 26% had attended a meeting of local elected public officials or other local public meeting in the previous 12 months, 95% had provided help to a friend or neighbor. Less than half had volunteered their time to some group or activity in the City of Thornton.

In general, survey respondents demonstrated moderate trust in local government. A majority rated the overall direction being taken by the City of Thornton as “good” or “excellent.” This was similar to the regional benchmark. Those residents who had interacted with an employee of the City of Thornton in the previous 12 months gave high marks to those employees. Nearly all rated their overall impression of employees as “excellent” or “good.”

On average, residents gave generally favorable ratings to most local government services. City services rated were able to be compared to the benchmark database. Of the 30 services for which regional comparisons were available, 13 were above the benchmark comparison, 15 were similar to the benchmark comparison and two were below.

Respondents were asked to rate how frequently they participated in various activities in Thornton. The most popular activities included providing help to a neighbor or friend and visiting a City or neighborhood park; while the least popular activities were participation in a club or civic group in Thornton and riding a local bus within Thornton.

A Key Driver Analysis was conducted for the City of Thornton which examined the relationships between ratings of each service and ratings of the City of Thornton's services overall. Those key driver services that correlated most strongly with residents' perceptions about overall City service quality have been identified. By targeting improvements in key services, the City of Thornton can focus on the services that have the greatest likelihood of influencing residents' opinions about overall service quality. Services found to be influential in ratings of overall service quality from the Key Driver Analysis were:

- Drinking water
- Land use, planning and zoning
- Recreation programs or classes
- Services to youth
- Traffic signal timing

Of these services, those deserving the most attention may be those that were below or similar to the benchmark comparisons: drinking water, land use, planning and zoning, recreation programs and services to youth. For traffic signal timing services the City of Thornton was above the regional benchmark and should continue to ensure high quality performance.

COMMUNITY RATINGS

OVERALL COMMUNITY QUALITY

Overall quality of community life may be the single best indicator of success in providing the natural ambience, services and amenities that make for an attractive community. The National Citizen Survey™ contained many questions related to quality of community life in the City of Thornton – not only direct questions about quality of life overall and in neighborhoods, but questions to measure residents’ commitment to the City of Thornton. Residents were asked whether they planned to move soon or if they would recommend the City of Thornton to others. Intentions to stay and willingness to make recommendations provide evidence that the City of Thornton offers services and amenities that work.

Most of the City of Thornton’s residents gave favorable ratings to their neighborhoods and the community as a place to live. Further, most reported they would recommend the community to others and plan to stay for the next five years.

FIGURE 3: RATINGS OF OVERALL COMMUNITY QUALITY

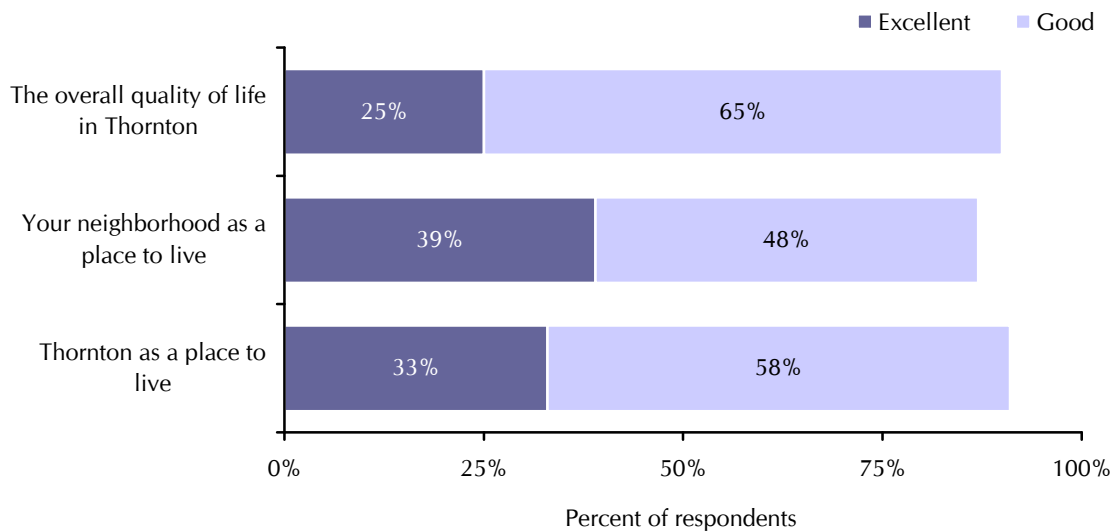


FIGURE 4: LIKELIHOOD OF REMAINING IN COMMUNITY AND RECOMMENDING COMMUNITY

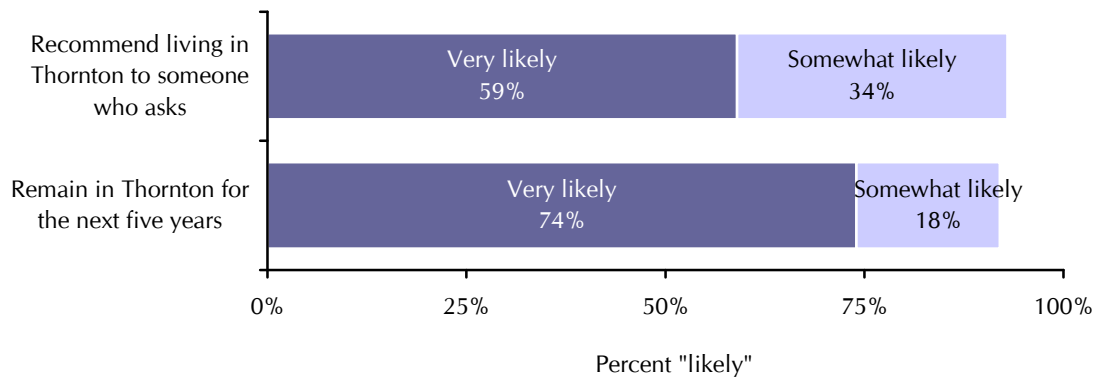


FIGURE 5: OVERALL COMMUNITY QUALITY BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Overall quality of life in Thornton	Similar	Similar
Your neighborhood as place to live	Similar	Above
Thornton as a place to live	Below	Similar
Recommend living in Thornton to someone who asks	Not available	Not available
Remain in Thornton for the next five years	Not available	Not available

COMMUNITY DESIGN

Transportation

The ability to move easily throughout a community can greatly affect the quality of life of residents by diminishing time wasted in traffic congestion and by providing opportunities to travel quickly and safely by modes other than the automobile. High quality options for resident mobility not only require local government to remove barriers to flow but they require government programs and policies that create quality opportunities for all modes of travel.

Residents responding to the survey were given a list of six aspects of mobility to rate on a scale of “excellent,” “good,” “fair” and “poor.” The availability of walking paths was given the most positive rating, followed by ease of car travel.

FIGURE 6: RATINGS OF TRANSPORTATION IN COMMUNITY

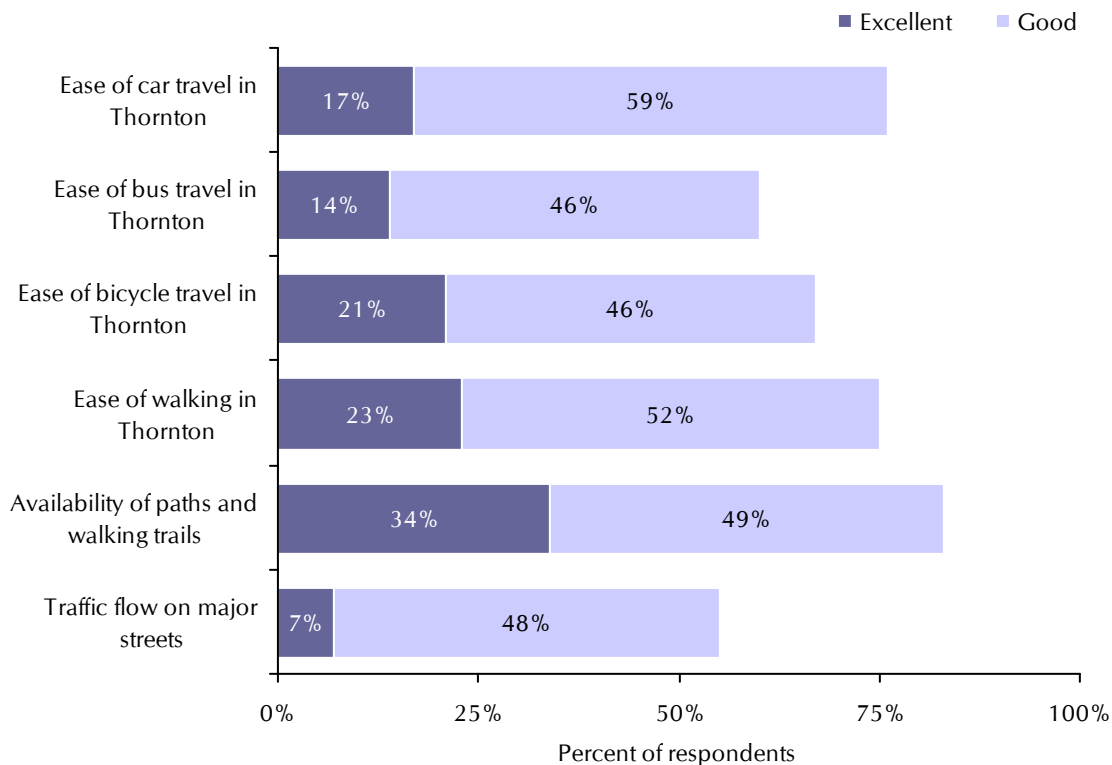


FIGURE 7: COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Ease of car travel in Thornton	Similar	Similar
Ease of bus travel in Thornton	Above	Above
Ease of bicycle travel in Thornton	Below	Much above
Ease of walking in Thornton	Similar	Much above
Availability of paths and walking trails	Not available	Not available
Traffic flow on major streets	Similar	Above

Eight transportation services were rated in Thornton. As compared to communities included in the benchmarks, ratings tended to be favorable. Street cleaning, sidewalk maintenance and traffic signal timing were rated above the regional benchmark, while street repair, street lighting and snow removal were similar to the regional benchmark.

FIGURE 8: RATINGS OF TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING SERVICES

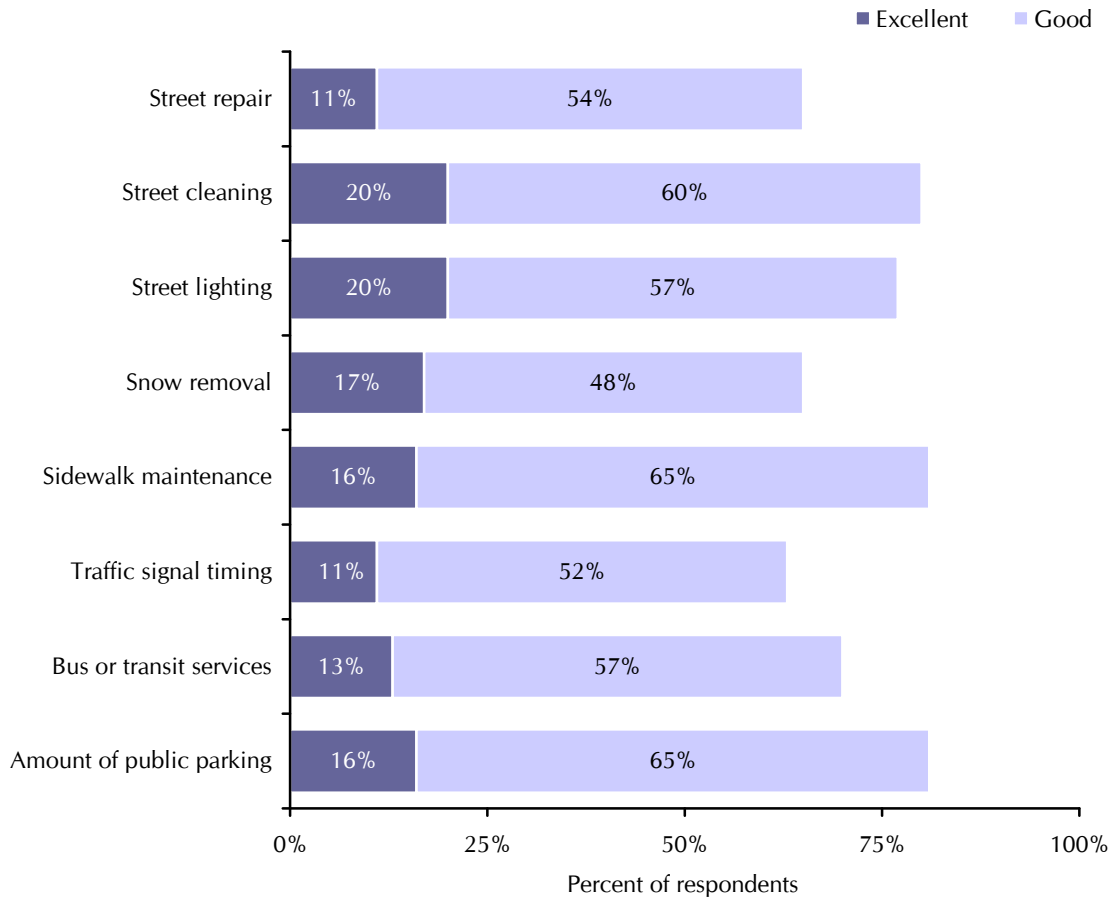


FIGURE 9: TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING SERVICES BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Street repair	Similar	Much above
Street cleaning	Much above	Much above
Street lighting	Similar	Much above
Snow removal	Similar	Similar
Sidewalk maintenance	Much above	Much above
Traffic signal timing	Above	Above
Bus or transit services	Not available	Similar
Amount of public parking	Not available	Much above

By measuring choice of travel mode over time, communities can monitor their success in providing attractive alternatives to the traditional mode of travel, the single-occupied automobile. When asked how they typically traveled to work, single-occupancy (SOV) travel was the overwhelming mode of use. However, 3% of work commute trips were made by transit, 1% by bicycle and 2% by foot.

FIGURE 10: FREQUENCY OF BUS USE IN LAST 12 MONTHS

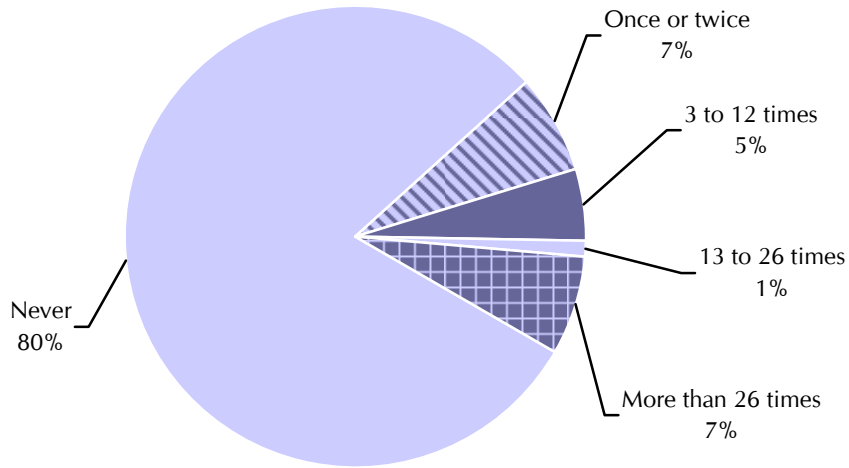


FIGURE 11: FREQUENCY OF BUS USE BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Ridden a local bus within Thornton	Not available	Much less

FIGURE 12: MODE OF TRAVEL USED FOR WORK COMMUTE

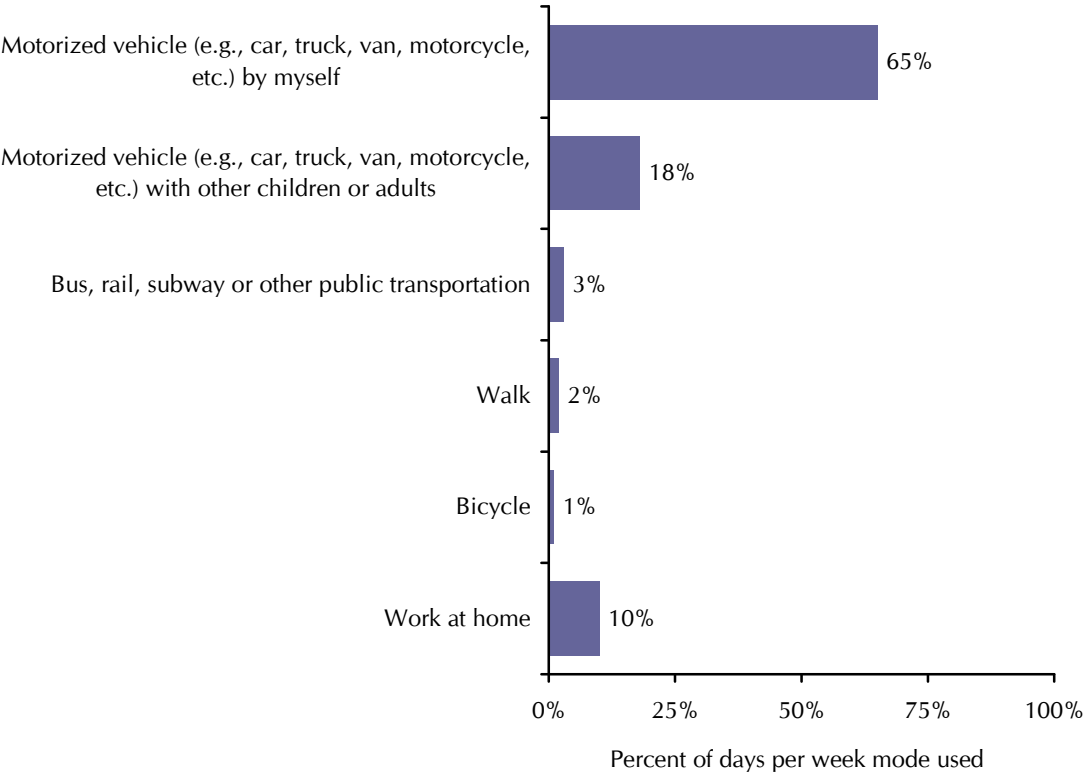


FIGURE 13: DRIVE ALONE BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Average percent of work commute trips made by driving alone	Not available	Not available

Housing

Housing variety and affordability are not luxuries for any community. When there are too few options for housing style and affordability, the characteristics of a community tilt toward a single group, often of well-off residents. While this may seem attractive to a community, the absence of affordable townhomes, condominiums, mobile homes, single family detached homes and apartments means that in addition to losing the vibrancy of diverse thoughts and lifestyles, the community loses the service workers that sustain all communities – police officers, school teachers, house painters and electricians. These workers must live elsewhere and commute in at great personal cost and to the detriment of traffic flow and air quality. Furthermore lower income residents pay so much of their income to rent or mortgage that little remains to bolster their own quality of life or local business.

The survey of the City of Thornton residents asked respondents to reflect on the availability of affordable housing as well as the variety of housing options. The availability of affordable housing was rated as “excellent” or “good” by 80% of respondents, while the variety of housing options was rated as “excellent” or “good” by 81% of respondents. The rating of perceived affordable housing availability was better in the City of Thornton than the ratings, on average, in comparison jurisdictions.

FIGURE 14: RATINGS OF HOUSING IN COMMUNITY

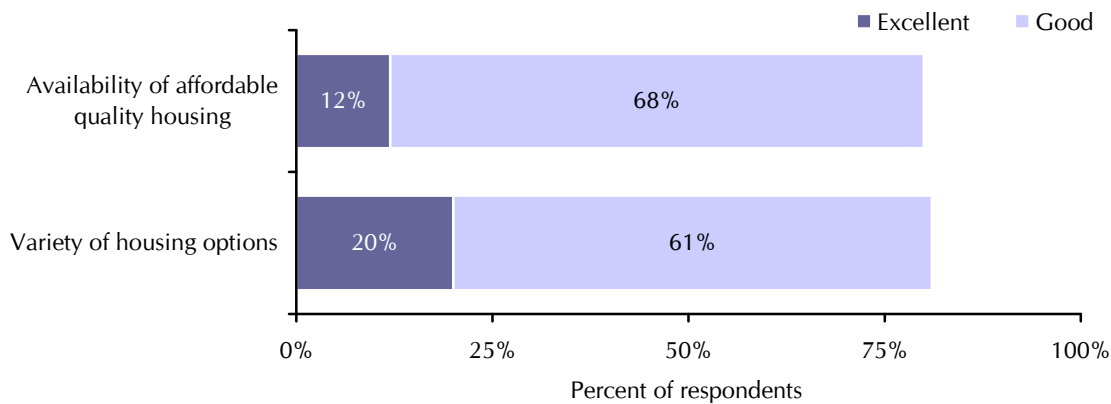


FIGURE 15: HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Availability of affordable quality housing	Much above	Much above
Variety of housing options	Not available	Not available

To augment the perceptions of affordable housing in Thornton, the cost of housing as reported in the survey was compared to residents’ reported monthly income to create a rough estimate of the proportion of residents of the City of Thornton experiencing housing cost stress. Almost 30% of survey participants were found to pay housing costs of more than 30% of their monthly household income.

FIGURE 16: PROPORTION OF RESPONDENTS EXPERIENCING HOUSING COST STRESS

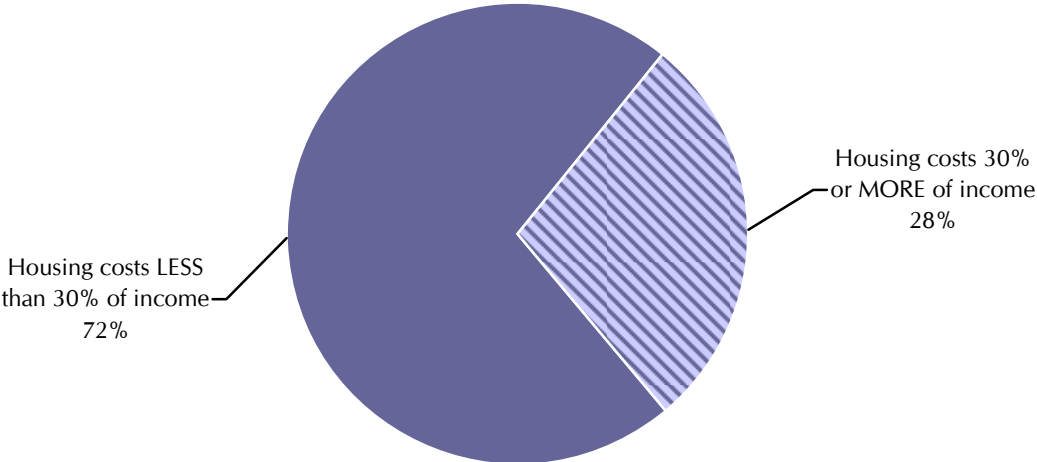


FIGURE 17: HOUSING COSTS BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Experiencing housing costs stress (housing costs 30% or MORE of income)	Not available	Not available

Land Use and Zoning

Community development contributes to a feeling among residents and even visitors of the attention given to the speed of growth, the location of residences and businesses, the kind of housing that is appropriate for the community and the ease of access to commerce, green space and residences. Even the community’s overall appearance often is attributed to the planning and enforcement functions of the local jurisdiction. Residents will appreciate an attractive, well-planned community. The NCS questionnaire asked residents to evaluate the quality of new development, the appearance of the City of Thornton and the speed of population growth. Problems with the appearance of property were rated, and the quality of land use planning, zoning and code enforcement services were evaluated.

The overall quality of new development in the City of Thornton was rated as “excellent” by 15% of respondents and as “good” by an additional 56%. The overall appearance of Thornton was rated as “excellent” or “good” by 80% of respondents and was higher than the national comparison benchmark and similar to regional comparison. When rating to what extent run down buildings, weed lots or junk vehicles were a problem in the City of Thornton, 8% thought they were a “major” problem. Compared to regional communities land use, planning and zoning services and code enforcement services were rated similar to the benchmark, while animal control was rated higher.

FIGURE 18: RATINGS OF THE COMMUNITY'S "BUILT ENVIRONMENT"

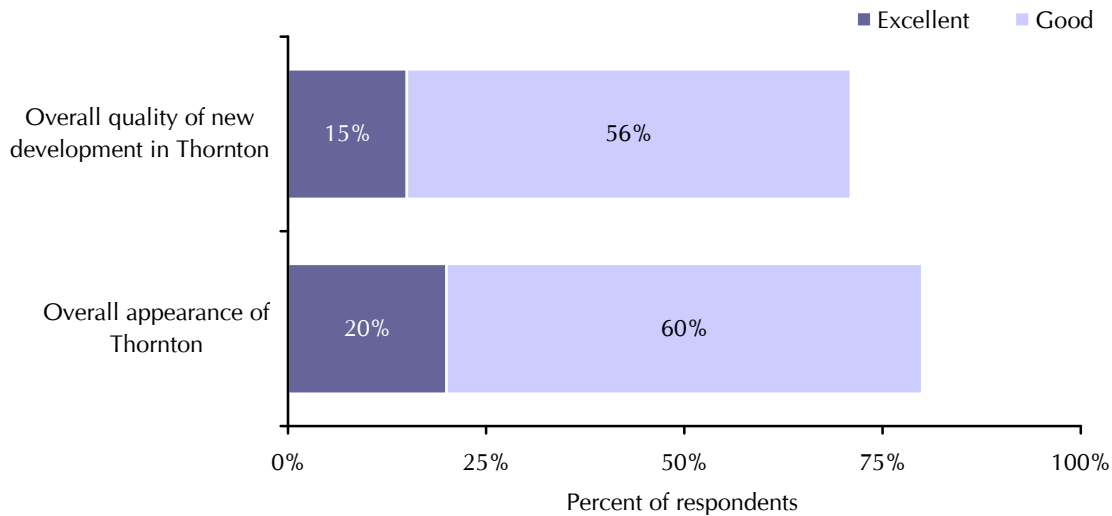


FIGURE 19: BUILT ENVIRONMENT BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Quality of new development in Thornton	Not available	Similar
Overall appearance of Thornton	Similar	Above

FIGURE 20: RATINGS OF POPULATION GROWTH

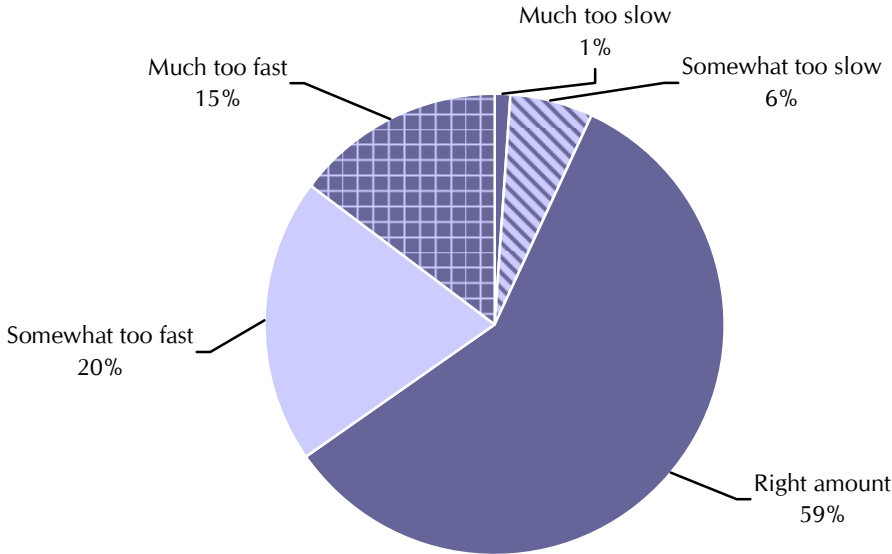


FIGURE 21: POPULATION GROWTH BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Population growth seen as too fast	Not available	Much less

FIGURE 22: RATINGS OF NUISANCE PROBLEMS

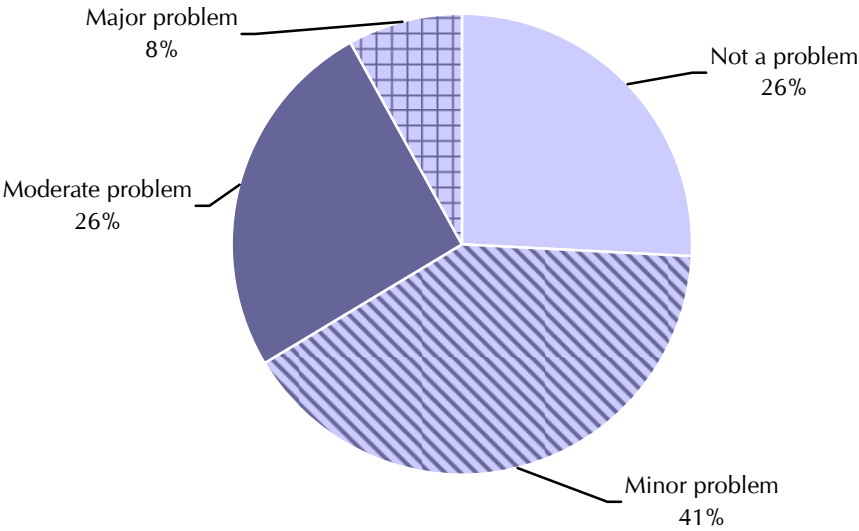


FIGURE 23: NUISANCE PROBLEMS BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Run down buildings, weed lots and junk vehicles seen as a "major" problem	Not available	Much less

The National Citizen Survey™ by National Research Center, Inc.

FIGURE 24: RATINGS OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY CODE ENFORCEMENT SERVICES

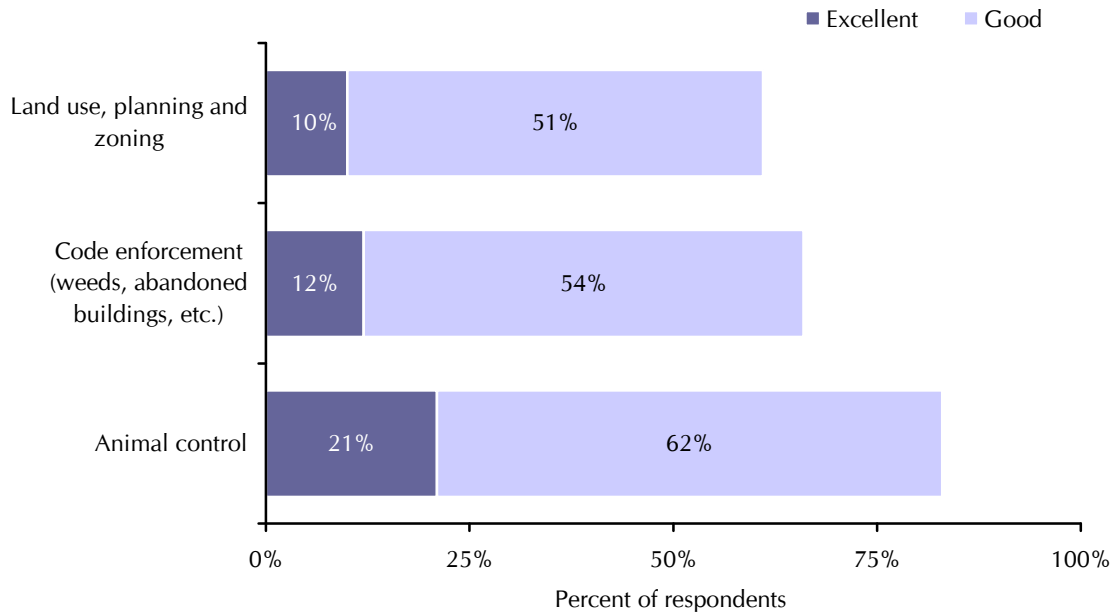


FIGURE 25: PLANNING AND COMMUNITY CODE ENFORCEMENT SERVICES BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Land use, planning and zoning	Similar	Much above
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc.)	Similar	Much above
Animal control	Much above	Much above

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

The United States has been in recession since late 2007 with an accelerated downturn occurring in the fourth quarter of 2008. Officially we emerged from recession in the third quarter of 2009, but high unemployment lingers, keeping a lid on a strong recovery. Many readers worry that the ill health of the economy will color how residents perceive their environment and the services that local government delivers. NRC researchers have found that the economic downturn has chastened Americans' view of their own economic futures but has not colored their perspectives about community services or quality of life.

Survey respondents were asked to rate a number of community features related to economic opportunity and growth. The most positively rated features were the overall quality of business and service establishments and shopping opportunities. Receiving the lowest rating was employment opportunities.

FIGURE 26: RATINGS OF ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY AND OPPORTUNITIES

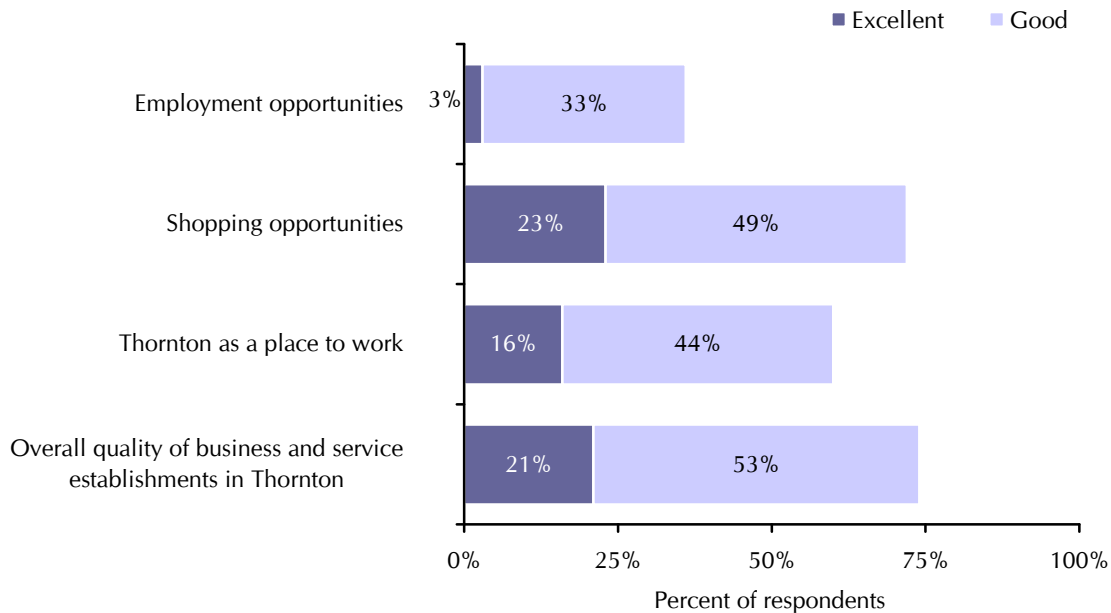


FIGURE 27: ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY AND OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Employment opportunities	Similar	Much below
Shopping opportunities	Above	Not available
Thornton as a place to work	Below	Much below
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Thornton	Not available	Not available

Residents were asked to evaluate the speed of jobs growth and retail growth on a scale from “much too slow” to “much too fast.” When asked about the rate of jobs growth in Thornton, 78% responded that it was “too slow,” while 40% reported retail growth as “too slow.” More residents in Thornton compared to other national jurisdictions believed that retail growth was too slow and about the same number of residents believed that jobs growth was too slow.

FIGURE 28: RATINGS OF RETAIL AND JOBS GROWTH

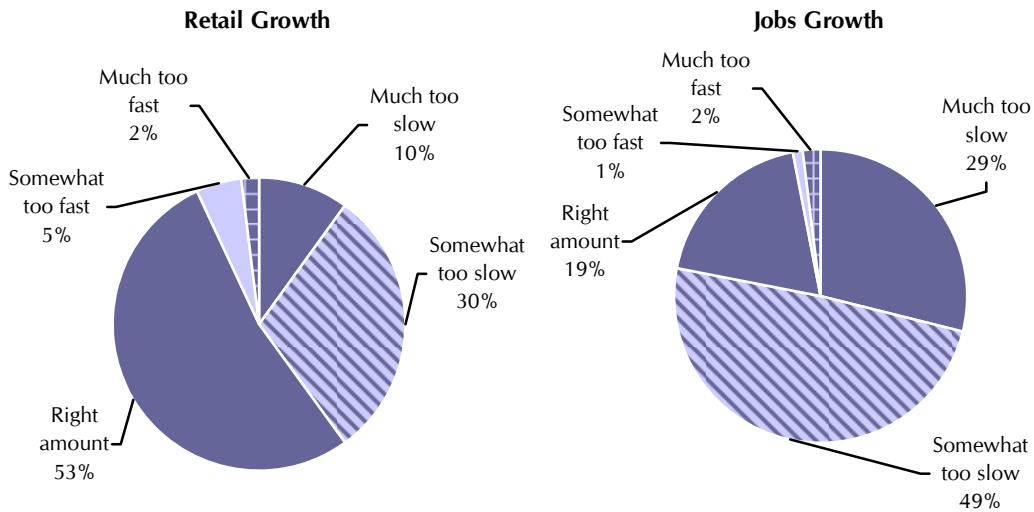


FIGURE 29: RETAIL AND JOBS GROWTH BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Retail growth seen as too slow	Not available	Much more
Jobs growth seen as too slow	Not available	Similar

FIGURE 30: RATINGS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

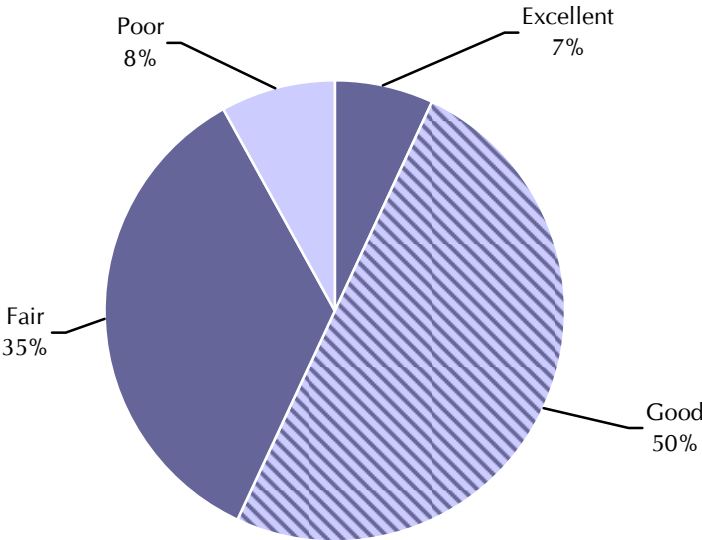


FIGURE 31: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICES BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Economic development	Similar	Similar

Residents were asked to reflect on their economic prospects in the near term. Twenty-four percent of the City of Thornton residents expected that the coming six months would have a “somewhat” or “very” positive impact on their family, while 29% felt that the economic future would be “somewhat” or “very” negative. The percent of residents with an optimistic outlook on their household income was the same as national comparison jurisdictions.

FIGURE 32: RATINGS OF PERSONAL ECONOMIC FUTURE

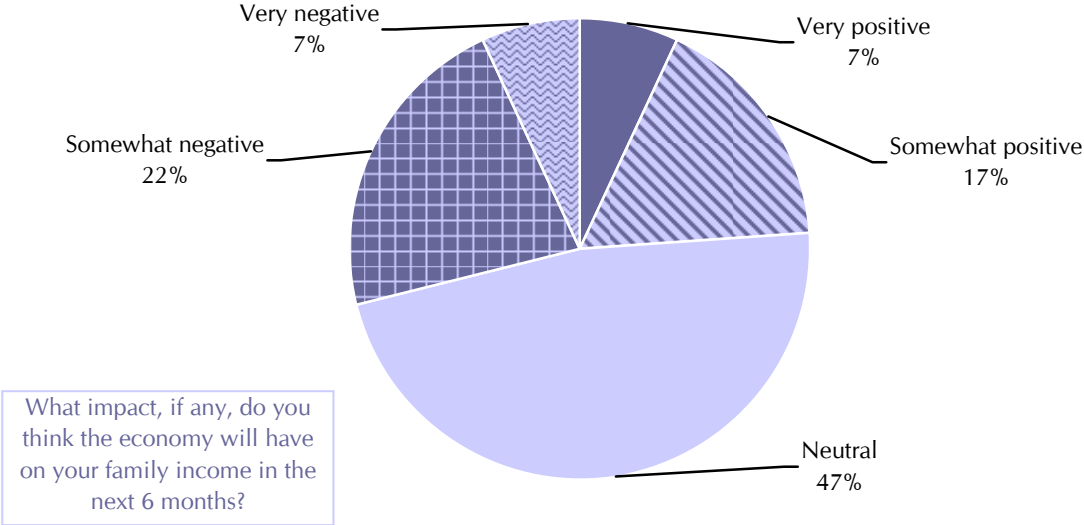


FIGURE 33: PERSONAL ECONOMIC FUTURE BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Positive impact of economy on household income	Not available	Similar

PUBLIC SAFETY

Safety from violent or property crimes creates the cornerstone of an attractive community. No one wants to live in fear of crime, fire or natural hazards, and communities in which residents feel protected or unthreatened are communities that are more likely to show growth in population, commerce and property value.

Residents were asked to rate their feelings of safety from violent crimes, property crimes, fire and environmental dangers and to evaluate the local agencies whose main charge is to provide protection from these dangers. Most gave positive ratings of safety in the City of Thornton. About 88% of those completing the questionnaire said they felt “very” or “somewhat” safe from violent crimes and 90% felt “very” or “somewhat” safe from environmental hazards. Daytime sense of safety was better than nighttime safety and neighborhoods felt safer than downtown. When comparisons were available, most ratings were similar to those provided by other communities on the front-range.

FIGURE 34: RATINGS OF COMMUNITY AND PERSONAL PUBLIC SAFETY

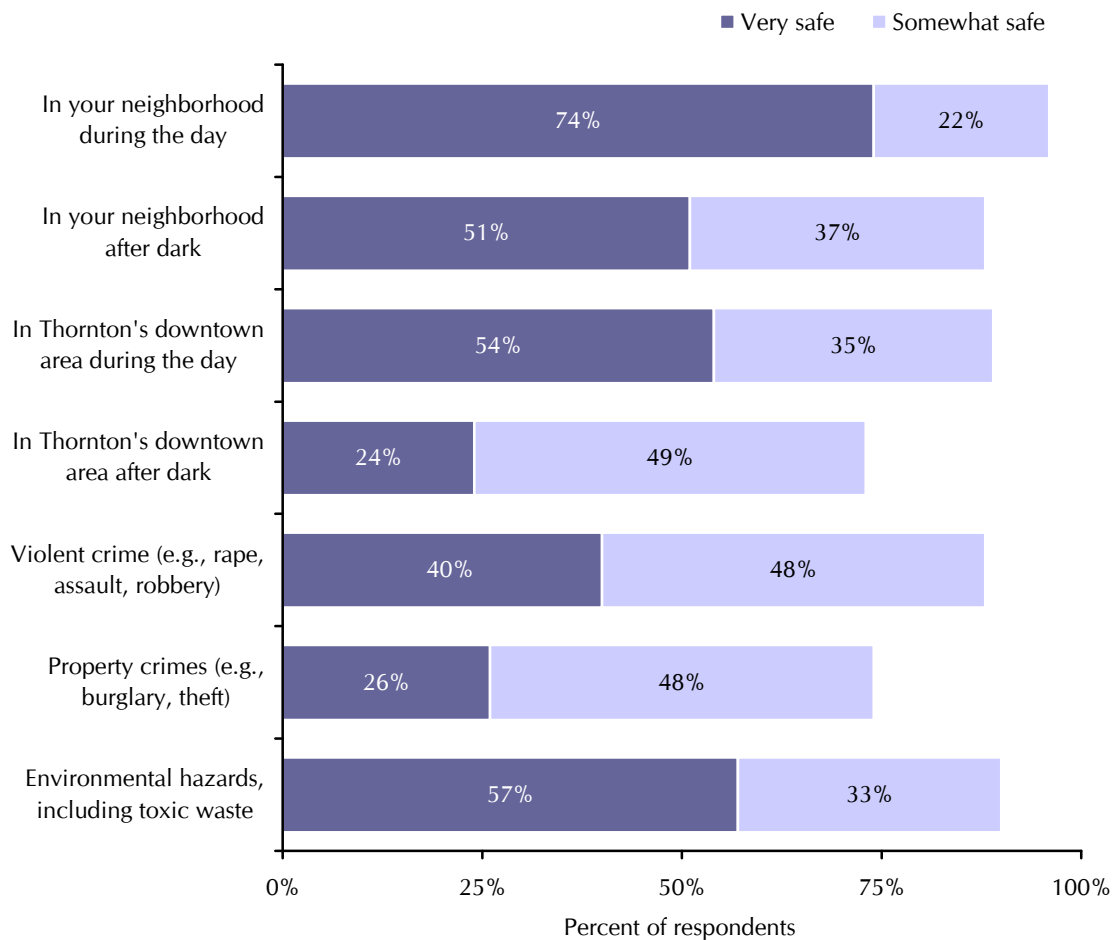


FIGURE 35: COMMUNITY AND PERSONAL PUBLIC SAFETY BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
In your neighborhood during the day	Similar	Much above
In your neighborhood after dark	Above	Much above
In Thornton's downtown area during the day	Not available	Above
In Thornton's downtown area after dark	Not available	Much above
Violent crime (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	Similar	Much above
Property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	Similar	Much above
Environmental hazards, including toxic waste	Not available	Not available

As assessed by the survey, 13% of respondents reported that someone in the household had been the victim of one or more crimes in the past year. Of those who had been the victim of a crime, 80% had reported it to police. Compared to other national jurisdictions fewer Thornton residents had been victims of crime in the 12 months preceding the survey and more Thornton residents had reported their most recent crime victimization to the police.

FIGURE 36: CRIME VICTIMIZATION AND REPORTING

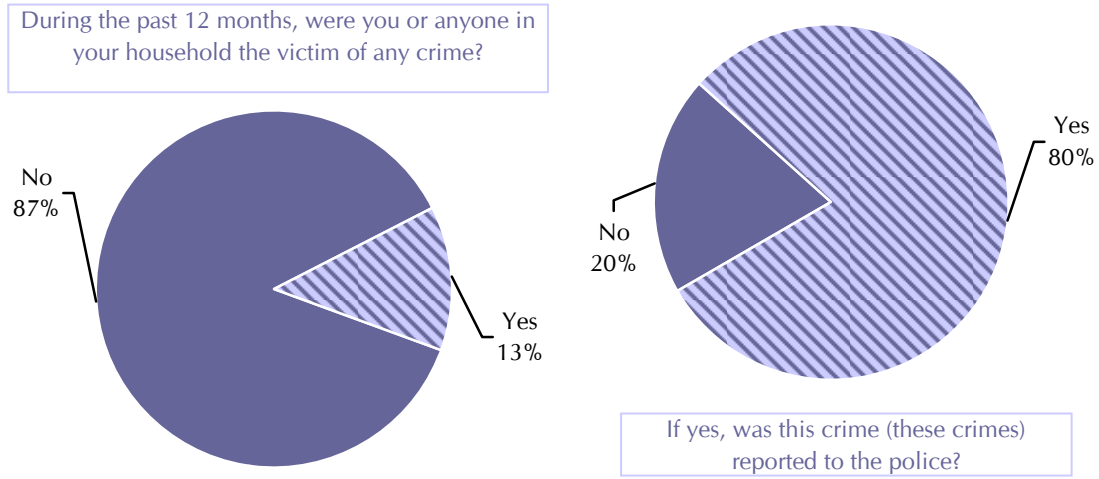
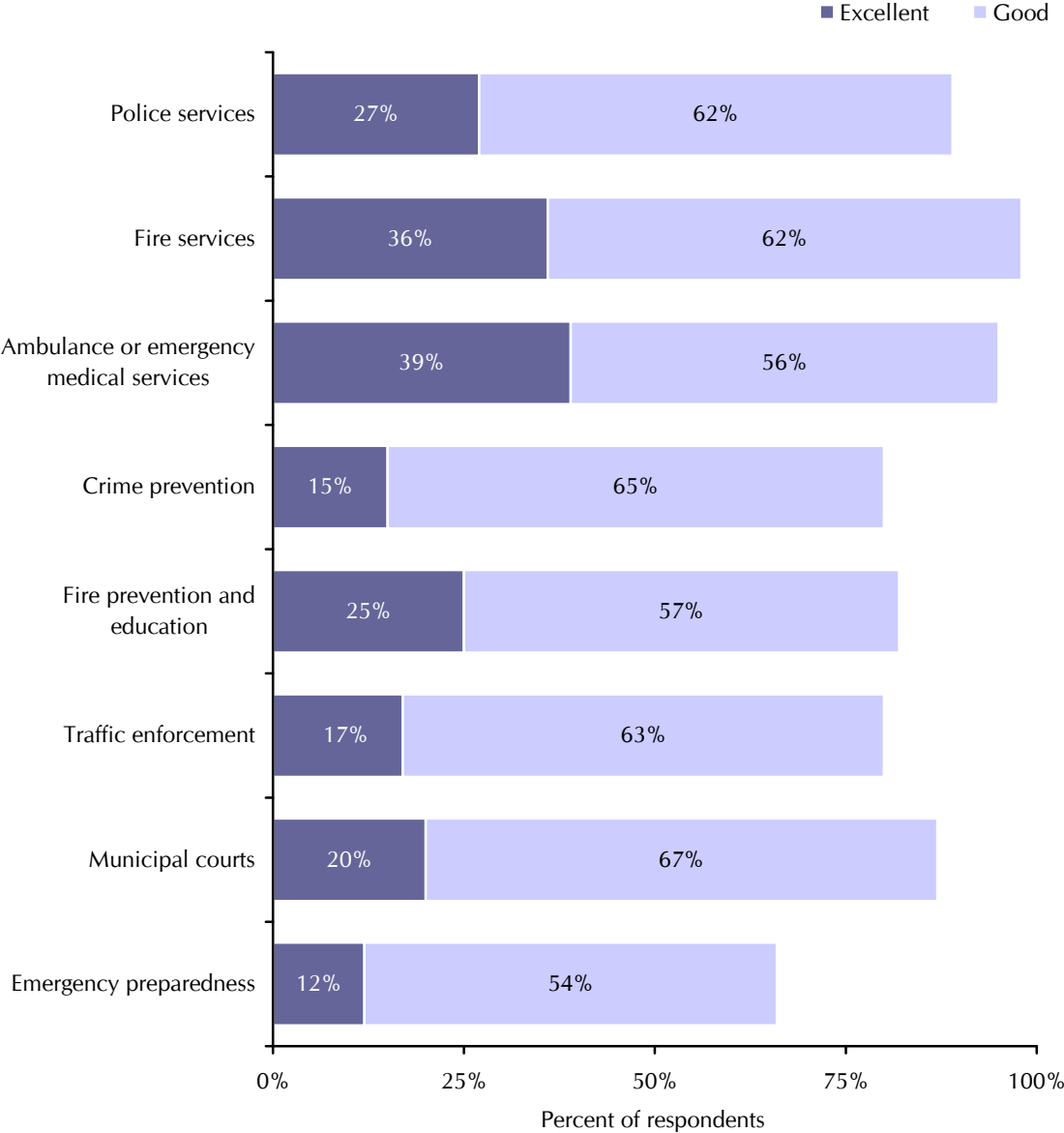


FIGURE 37: CRIME VICTIMIZATION AND REPORTING BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Victim of crime	Not available	Less
Reported crimes	Not available	More

Residents rated eight City public safety services; of these, two were rated above the regional benchmark comparison, four were rated similar to the benchmark comparison and one was rated below the benchmark comparison. Fire services and EMS received the highest ratings, while emergency preparedness received the lowest ratings.

FIGURE 38: RATINGS OF PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES



The National Citizen Survey™ by National Research Center, Inc.

FIGURE 39: PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Police services	Similar	Much above
Fire services	Below	Similar
Ambulance or emergency medical services	Similar	Similar
Crime prevention	Much above	Much above
Fire prevention and education	Similar	Similar
Traffic enforcement	Similar	Much above
Courts	Much above	Much above
Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations)	Not available	Not available

FIGURE 40: CONTACT WITH POLICE DEPARTMENT

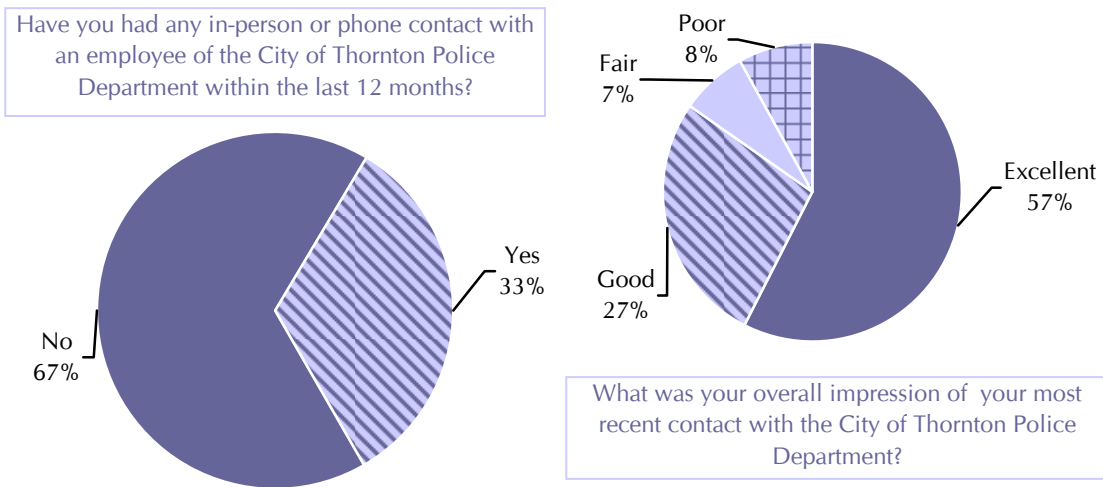


FIGURE 41: CONTACT WITH FIRE DEPARTMENT

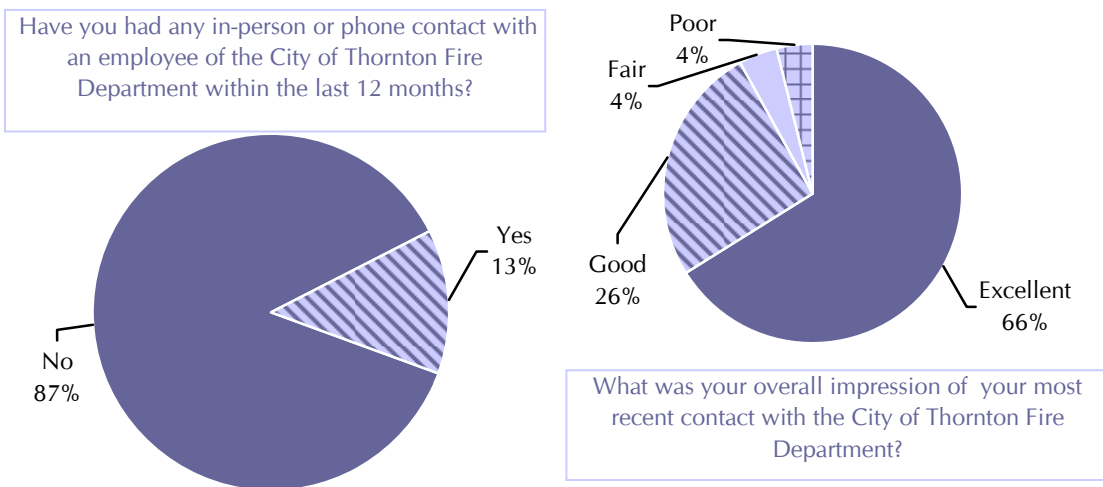


FIGURE 42: CONTACT WITH POLICE AND FIRE DEPARTMENTS BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Had contact with the City of Thornton Police Department	Not available	Not available
Overall impression of most recent contact with the City of Thornton Police Department	Not available	Not available
Had contact with the City of Thornton Fire Department	Not available	Not available
Overall impression of most recent contact with the City of Thornton Fire Department	Not available	Not available

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Residents value the aesthetic qualities of their hometowns and appreciate features such as overall cleanliness and landscaping. In addition, the appearance and smell or taste of the air and water do not go unnoticed. These days, increasing attention is paid to proper treatment of the environment. At the same time that they are attending to community appearance and cleanliness, cities, counties, states and the nation are going “Green”. These strengthening environmental concerns extend to trash haul, recycling, sewer services, the delivery of power and water and preservation of open spaces. Treatment of the environment affects air and water quality and, generally, how habitable and inviting a place appears.

Residents of the City of Thornton were asked to evaluate their local environment and the services provided to ensure its quality. The overall quality of the natural environment was rated as “excellent” or “good” by 77% of survey respondents. Air quality received the highest rating, and it was similar to the regional benchmark.

FIGURE 43: RATINGS OF THE COMMUNITY'S NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

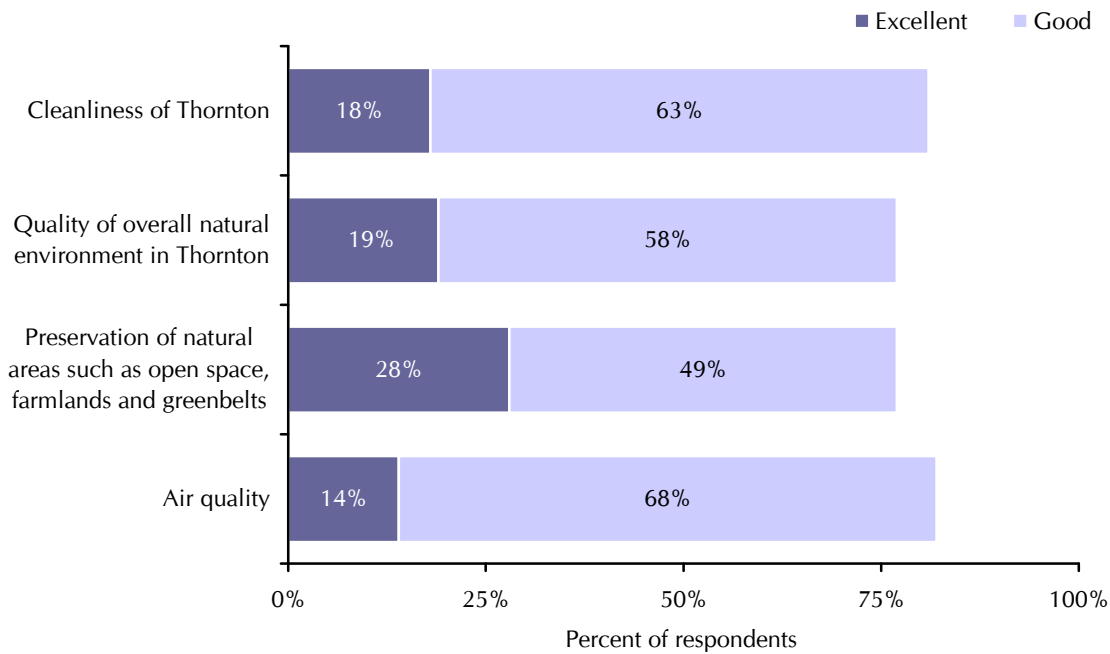


FIGURE 44: COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Cleanliness of Thornton	Not available	Above
Quality of overall natural environment in Thornton	Not available	Not available
Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts	Not available	Not available
Air quality	Similar	Much above

Resident recycling was greater than recycling reported in national comparison communities.

FIGURE 45: FREQUENCY OF RECYCLING IN LAST 12 MONTHS

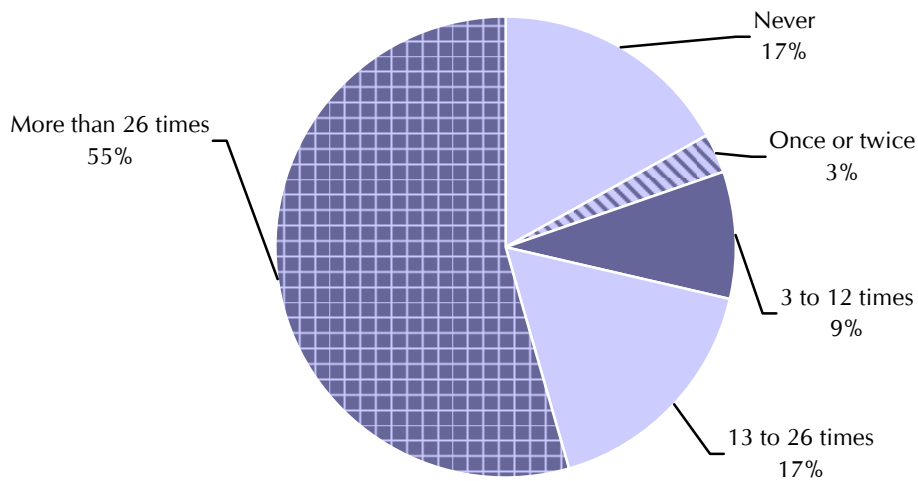


FIGURE 46: FREQUENCY OF RECYCLING BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Recycled used paper, cans or bottles from your home	Not available	More

Of the seven utility services rated by those completing the questionnaire, three were higher than the regional benchmark comparison, one was similar and one was below the benchmark comparison.

FIGURE 47: RATINGS OF UTILITY SERVICES

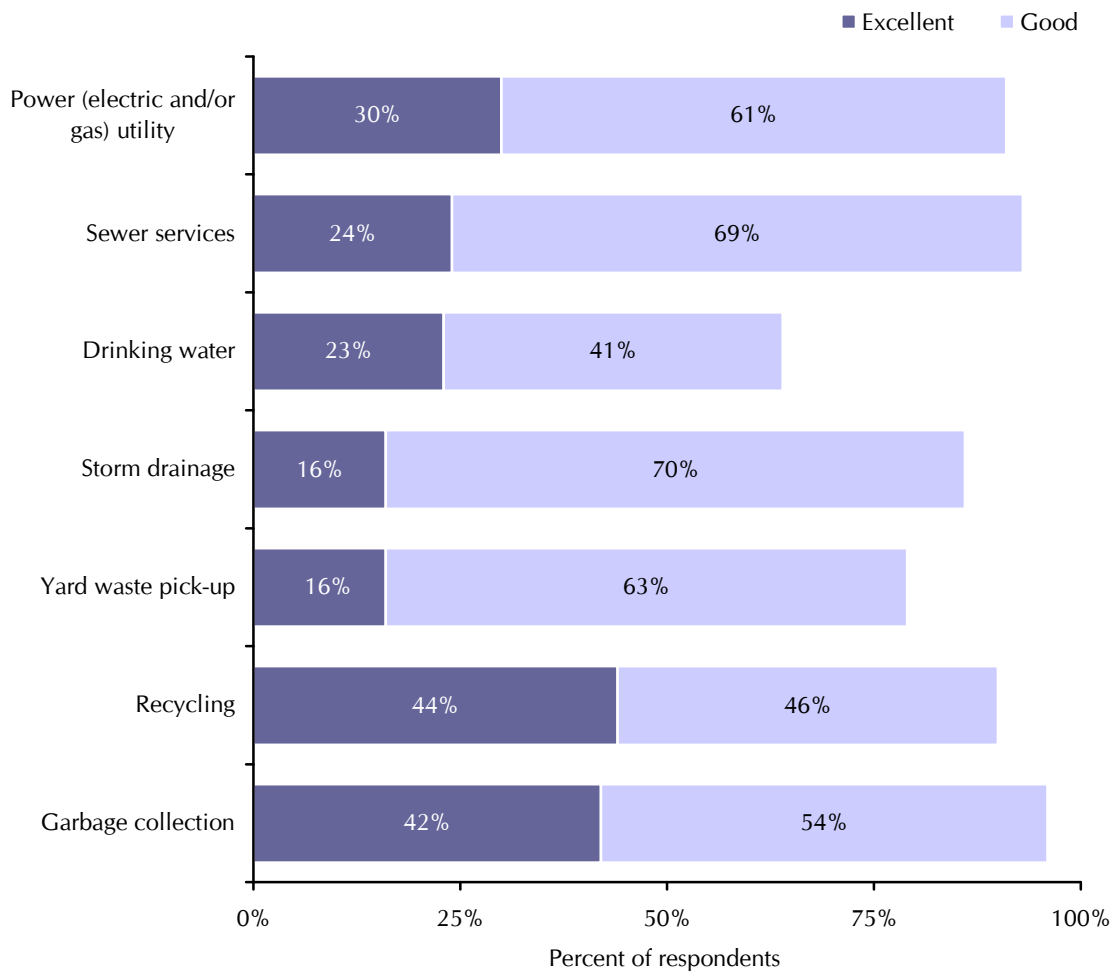


FIGURE 48: UTILITY SERVICES BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Power (electric and/or gas) utility	Not available	Not available
Sewer services	Similar	Above
Drinking water	Much below	Much below
Storm drainage	Above	Much above
Yard waste pick-up	Not available	Similar
Recycling	Much above	Much above
Garbage collection	Above	Much above

RECREATION AND WELLNESS

Parks and Recreation

Quality parks and recreation opportunities help to define a community as more than the grind of its business, traffic and hard work. Leisure activities vastly can improve the quality of life of residents, serving both to entertain and mobilize good health. The survey contained questions seeking residents' perspectives about opportunities and services related to the community's parks and recreation services.

Recreation opportunities in the City of Thornton were rated positively. City parks and recreation programs were rated similar to the regional benchmark and recreation centers or facilities were rated much above the regional benchmark. All recreations services were rated much higher than the national comparisons.

Resident use of Thornton parks and recreation facilities tells its own story about the attractiveness and accessibility of those services. The percent of residents that used Thornton recreation centers was much greater than the percent of users in national comparison jurisdictions. Similarly, recreation program use in Thornton was much higher than use in national comparison jurisdictions.

FIGURE 49: RATINGS OF COMMUNITY RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

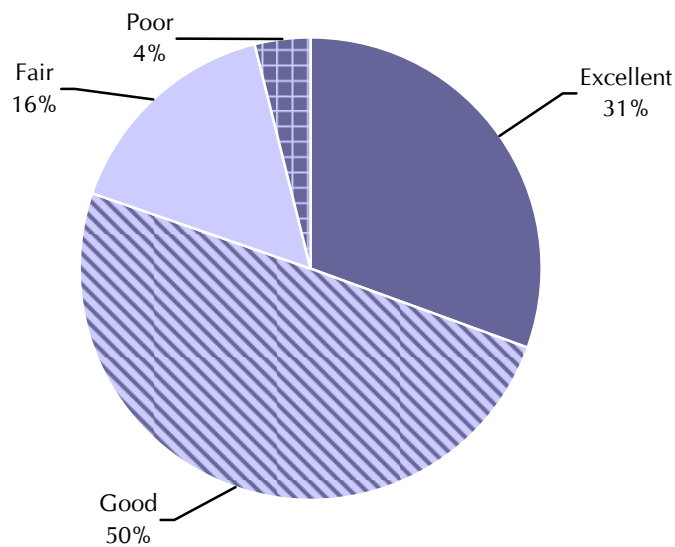


FIGURE 50: COMMUNITY RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Recreation opportunities	Similar	Above

FIGURE 51: PARTICIPATION IN PARKS AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

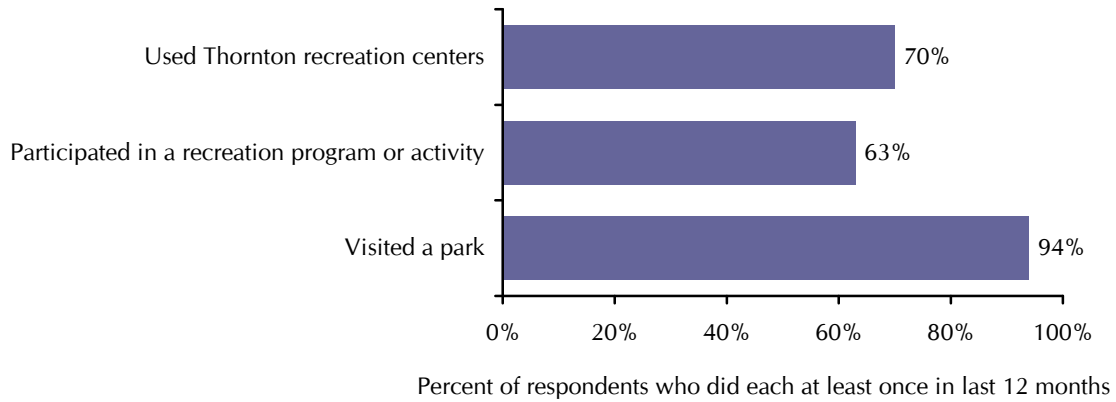


FIGURE 52: PARTICIPATION IN PARKS AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Used Thornton recreation centers	Not available	Much more
Participated in a recreation program or activity	Not available	Much more
Visited a neighborhood park or City park	Not available	Much more

FIGURE 53: RATINGS OF PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES

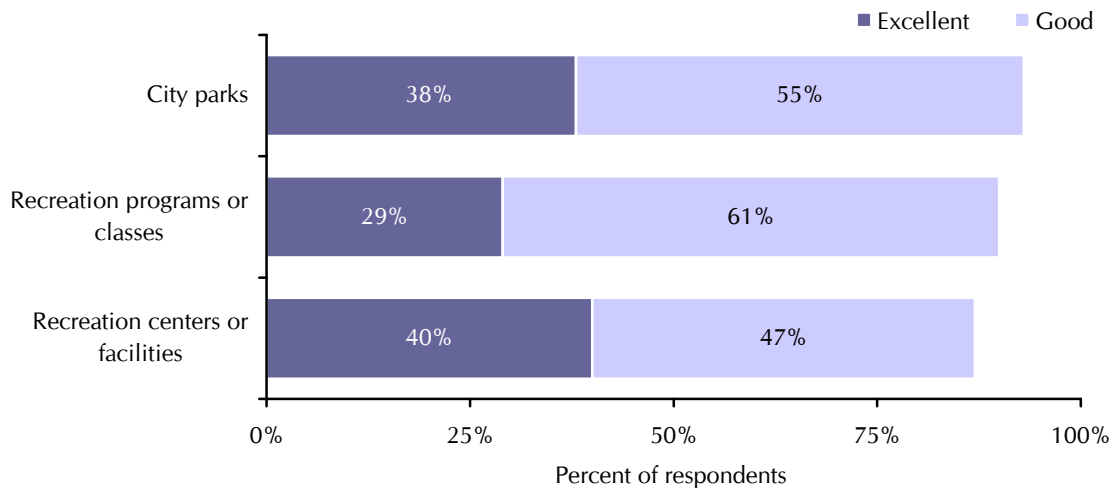


FIGURE 54: PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
City parks	Similar	Much above
Recreation programs or classes	Similar	Much above
Recreation centers or facilities	Much above	Much above

Culture, Arts and Education

A full service community does not address only the life and safety of its residents. Like individuals who simply go to the office and return home, a community that pays attention only to the life sustaining basics becomes insular, dreary and uninspiring. In the case of communities without thriving culture, arts and education opportunities, the magnet that attracts those who might consider relocating there is vastly weakened. Cultural, artistic, social and educational services elevate the opportunities for personal growth among residents. In the survey, residents were asked about the quality of opportunities to participate in cultural and educational activities.

Opportunities to attend cultural activities was rated as “excellent” or “good” by 62% of respondents. Educational opportunities were rated as “excellent” or “good” by 66% of respondents. Compared to the benchmark data, educational opportunities were similar to the average of national comparison jurisdictions, while cultural activity opportunities were rated below both regional and national benchmark comparison.

About 72% of Thornton residents used a City library at least once in the 12 months preceding the survey. Public library services were rated highly, with 93% of respondents rating them as “excellent” or “good.” These ratings were higher than ratings in the regional and national comparison jurisdictions.

FIGURE 55: RATINGS OF CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

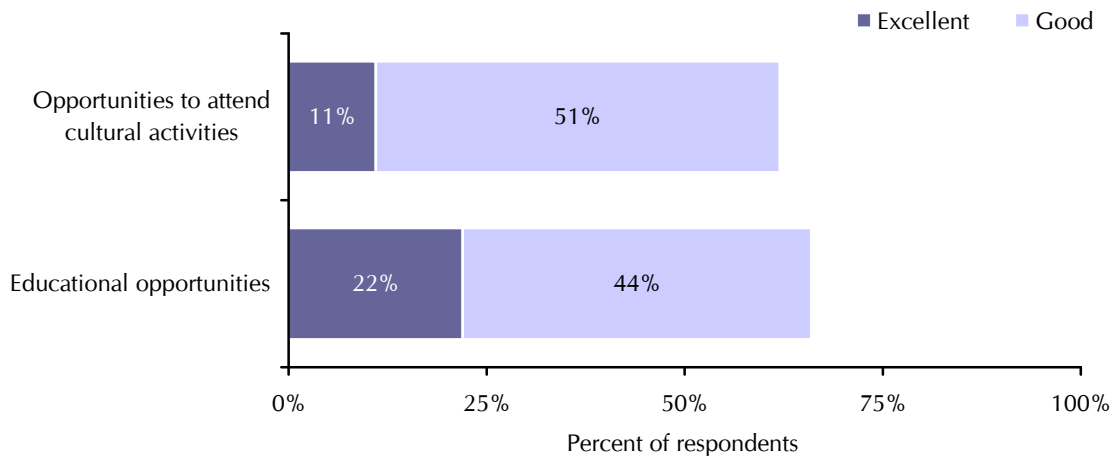


FIGURE 56: CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	Much below	Much below
Educational opportunities	Not available	Similar

FIGURE 57: PARTICIPATION IN CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

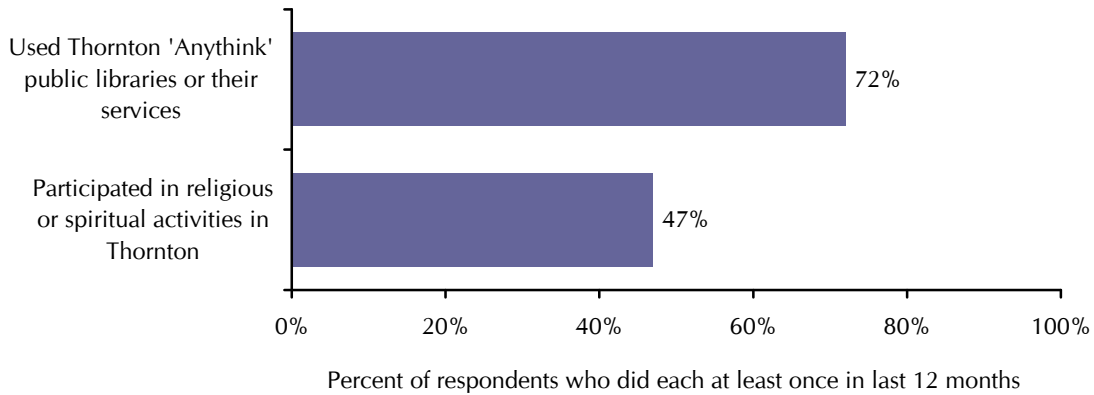


FIGURE 58: PARTICIPATION IN CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Used Thornton public libraries or their services	Not available	Not available
Participated in religious or spiritual activities in Thornton	Not available	Not available

FIGURE 59: PERCEPTION OF CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

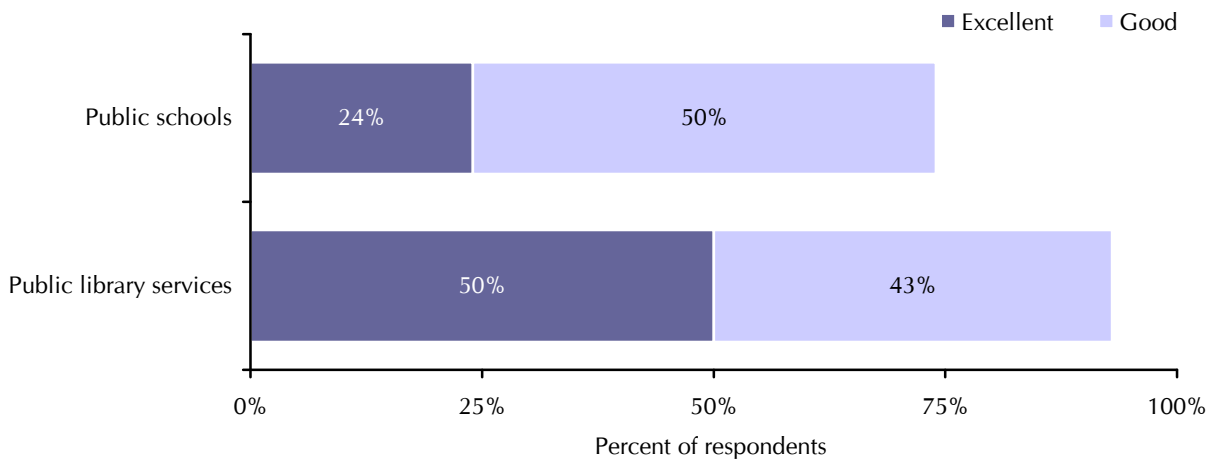


FIGURE 60: CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Public schools	Similar	Not available
Public library services	Above	Much above

Health and Wellness

Healthy residents have the wherewithal to contribute to the economy as volunteers or employees and they do not present a burden in cost and time to others. Although residents bear the primary responsibility for their good health, local government provides services that can foster that well being and that provide care when residents are ill.

Residents of the City of Thornton were asked to rate the community’s health services as well as the availability of health care, high quality affordable food and preventive health care services. The availability of affordable quality food was rated most positively for the City of Thornton, while the availability of affordable quality health care and preventative health services were rated less favorably by residents.

Among Thornton residents, 10% rated affordable quality health care as “excellent” while 56% rated it as “good.” Those ratings were similar to the ratings of comparison communities.

FIGURE 61: RATINGS OF COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLNESS ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITIES

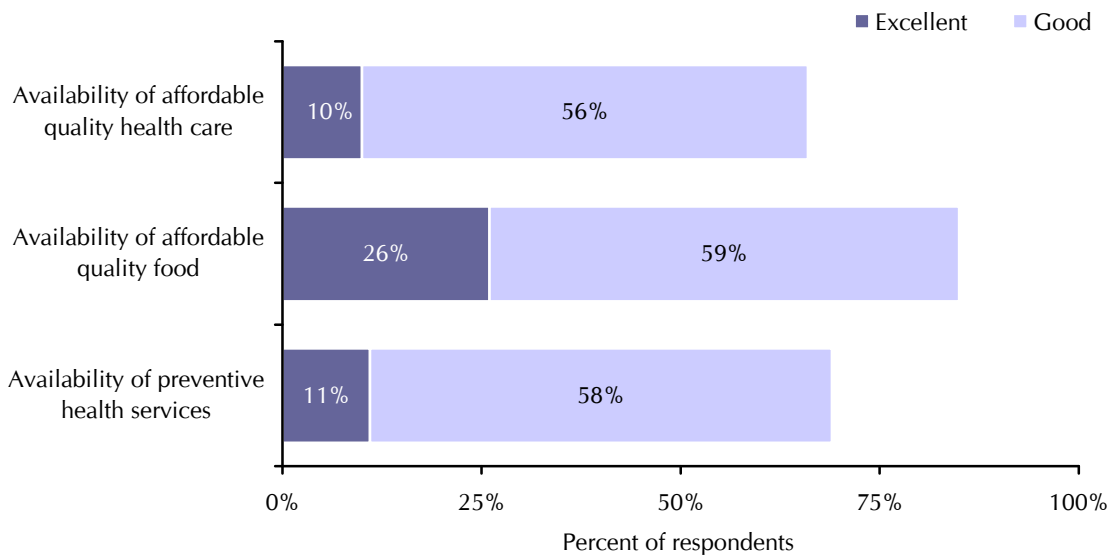


FIGURE 62: COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLNESS ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Availability of affordable quality health care	Similar	Similar
Availability of affordable quality food	Not available	Not available
Availability of preventive health services	Not available	Not available

Health services in Thornton were rated “excellent” or “good” by 81% of respondents and were much above the national benchmark.

FIGURE 63: RATINGS OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS SERVICES

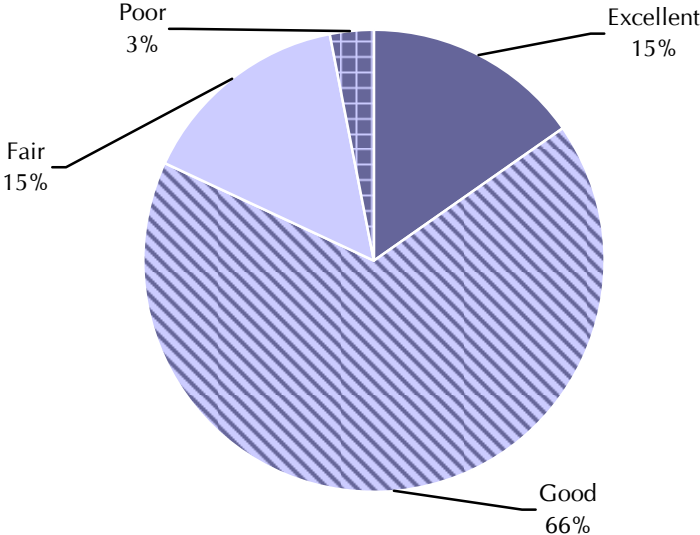


FIGURE 64: HEALTH AND WELLNESS SERVICES BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Health services	Not available	Much above

COMMUNITY INCLUSIVENESS

Diverse communities that include among their residents a mix of races, ages, wealth, ideas and beliefs have the raw material for the most vibrant and creative society. However, the presence of these features alone does not ensure a high quality or desirable space. Surveyed residents were asked about the success of the mix: the sense of community, the openness of residents to people of diverse backgrounds and the attractiveness of the City of Thornton as a place to raise children or to retire. They were also questioned about the quality of services delivered to various population subgroups, including older adults, youth and residents with few resources. A community that succeeds in creating an inclusive environment for a variety of residents is a community that offers more to many.

A high percentage of residents rated the City of Thornton as an “excellent” or “good” place to raise kids while slightly fewer rated it as an excellent or good place to retire. Many residents felt that the local sense of community was “excellent” or “good.” Most survey respondents felt the City of Thornton was open and accepting towards people of diverse backgrounds. The availability of affordable quality childcare was rated the lowest by residents but was similar to the regional benchmark and was above the national comparison.

FIGURE 65: RATINGS OF COMMUNITY QUALITY AND INCLUSIVENESS

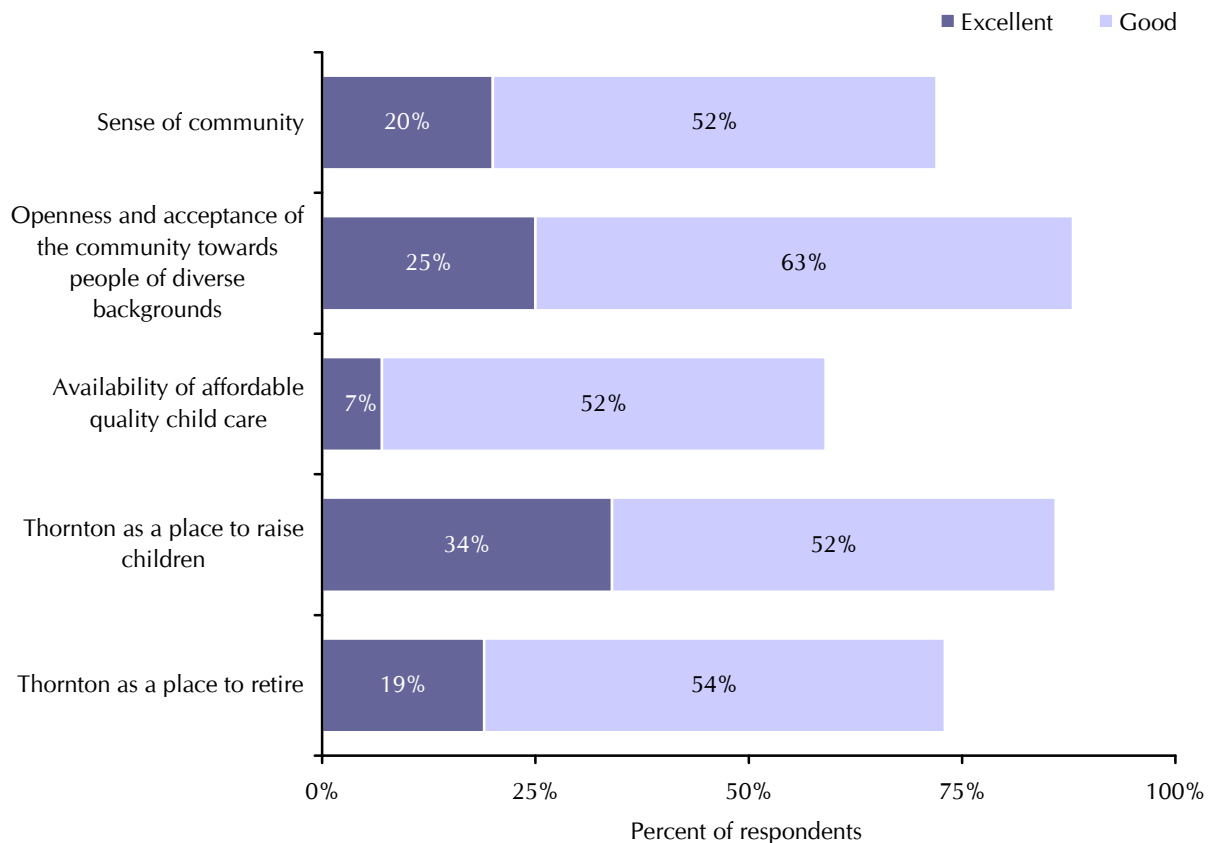


FIGURE 66: COMMUNITY QUALITY AND INCLUSIVENESS BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Sense of community	Similar	Above
Openness and acceptance of the community toward people of diverse backgrounds	Much above	Much above
Availability of affordable quality child care	Similar	Above
Thornton as a place to raise kids	Similar	Above
Thornton as a place to retire	Similar	Similar

Services to more vulnerable populations (e.g., seniors, youth or low-income residents) ranged from 66% to 83% with ratings of “excellent” or “good.” Services to youth were rated similar to the regional comparison while services to seniors and low income people were rated above the regional benchmark. All services to population subgroups were rated much higher than the national comparison communities.

FIGURE 67: RATINGS OF QUALITY OF SERVICES PROVIDED FOR POPULATION SUBGROUPS

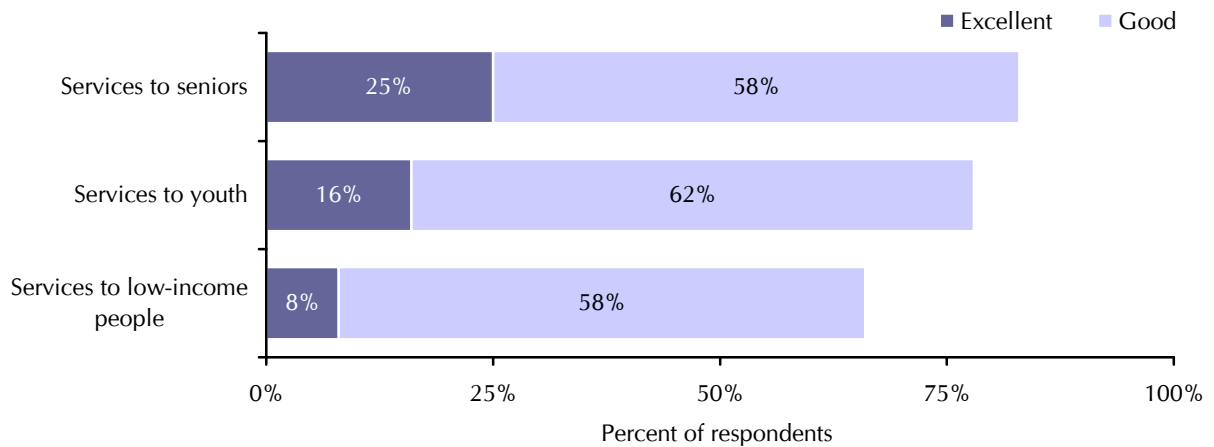


FIGURE 68: SERVICES PROVIDED FOR POPULATION SUBGROUPS BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Services to seniors	Above	Much above
Services to youth	Similar	Much above
Services to low income people	Much above	Much above

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Community leaders cannot run a jurisdiction alone and a jurisdiction cannot run effectively if residents remain strangers with little to connect them. Elected officials and staff require the assistance of local residents whether that assistance comes in tacit approval or eager help; and commonality of purpose among the electorate facilitates policies and programs that appeal to most and causes discord among few. Furthermore, when neighbors help neighbors, the cost to the community to provide services to residents in need declines. When residents are civically engaged, they have taken the opportunity to participate in making the community more livable for all. The extent to which local government provides opportunities to become informed and engaged and the extent to which residents take those opportunities is an indicator of the connection between government and populace. By understanding your residents' level of connection to, knowledge of and participation in local government, the City can find better opportunities to communicate and educate citizens about its mission, services, accomplishments and plans. Communities with strong civic engagement may be more likely to see the benefits of programs intended to improve the quality of life of all residents and therefore would be more likely to support those new policies or programs.

Civic Activity

Respondents were asked about the perceived community volunteering opportunities and their participation as citizens of the City of Thornton. Survey participants rated the volunteer opportunities in the City of Thornton favorably. Opportunities to attend or participate in community matters were rated similarly.

FIGURE 69: RATINGS OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

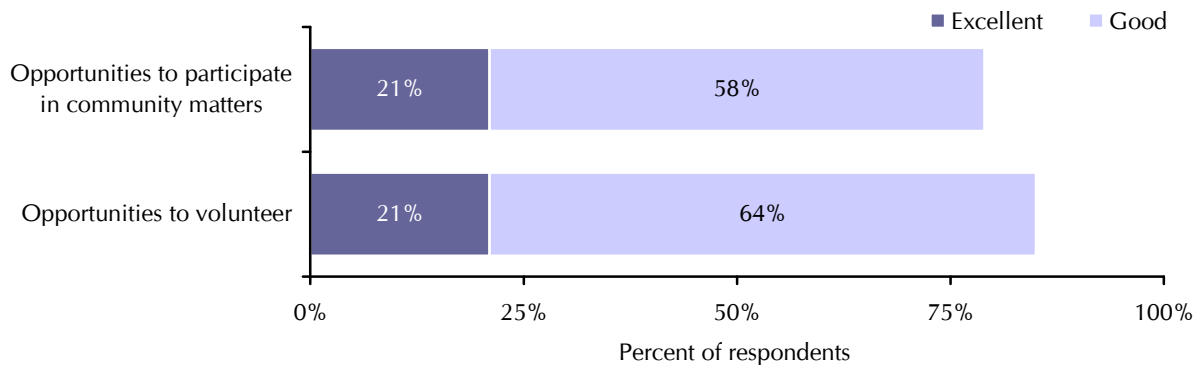
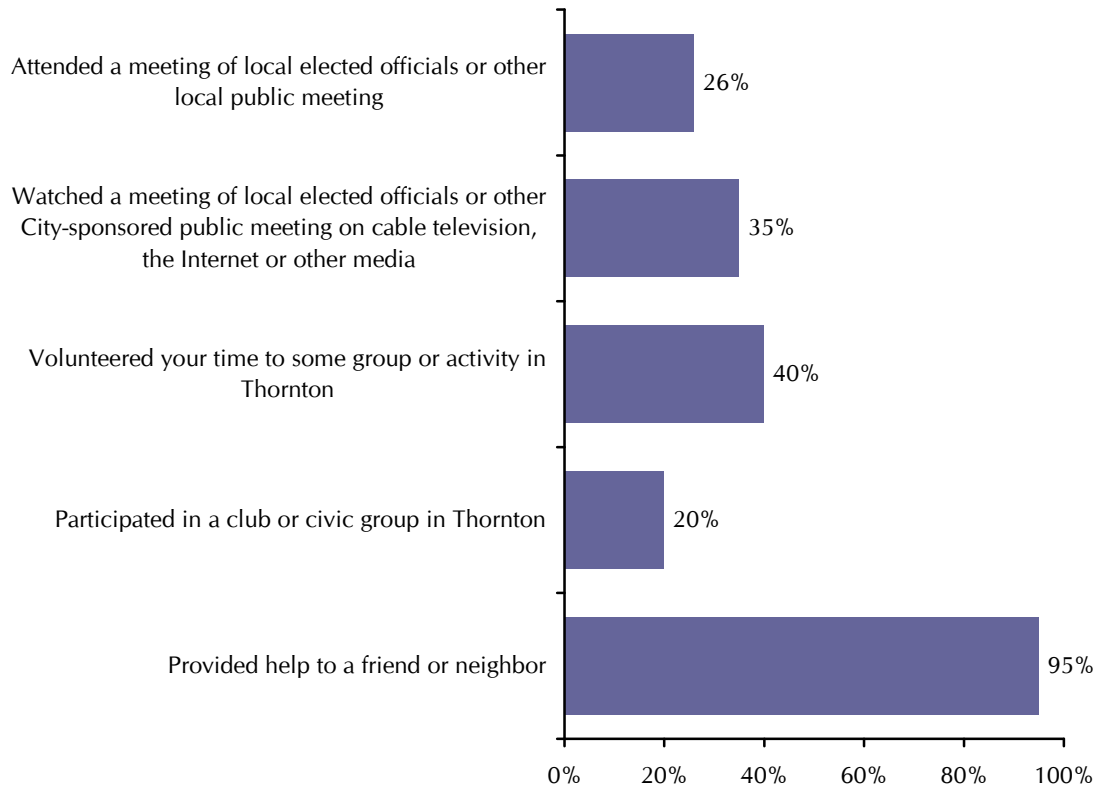


FIGURE 70: CIVIC ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Opportunities to participate in community matters	Not available	Not available
Opportunities to volunteer	Not available	Not available

Most of the participants in this survey had not attended a public meeting, volunteered time to a group or participated in a club in the 12 months prior to the survey, but the vast majority had helped a friend. The participation rates of these civic behaviors were compared to the rates in other national jurisdictions. Meeting attendance showed similar rates of involvement; while watching a public meeting on TV and volunteering showed lower rates.

FIGURE 71: PARTICIPATION IN CIVIC ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES



Percent of respondents who did each at least once in last 12 months

FIGURE 72: PARTICIPATION IN CIVIC ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting	Not available	Similar
Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other public meeting on cable television, the Internet or other media	Not available	Much less
Volunteered your time to some group or activity in Thornton	Not available	Much less
Participated in a club or civic group in Thornton	Not available	Not available
Provided help to a friend or neighbor	Not available	Not available

Information and Awareness

Those completing the survey were asked about their use and perceptions of various information sources and local government media services. When asked whether they had visited the City of Thornton Web site in the previous 12 months, 73% reported they had done so at least once. Public information services were rated favorably compared to national benchmark data.

FIGURE 73: USE OF INFORMATION SOURCES

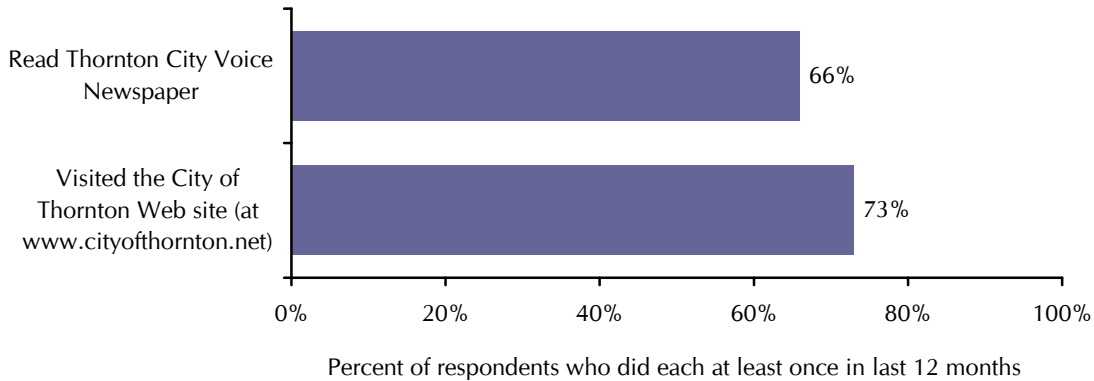


FIGURE 74: USE OF INFORMATION SOURCES BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Read Thornton Newsletter	Not available	Not available
Visited the City of Thornton Web site	Not available	Not available

FIGURE 75: RATINGS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT MEDIA SERVICES AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

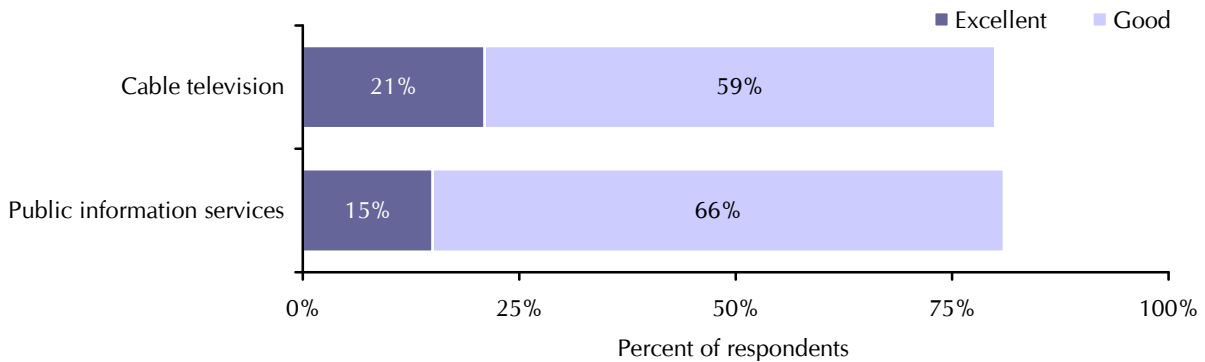


FIGURE 76: LOCAL GOVERNMENT MEDIA SERVICES AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Cable television	Not available	Not available
Public information services	Not available	Above

Social Engagement

Opportunities to participate in social events and activities were rated as “excellent” or “good” by 75% of respondents, while even more rated opportunities to participate in religious or spiritual events and activities as “excellent” or “good.”

FIGURE 77: RATINGS OF SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

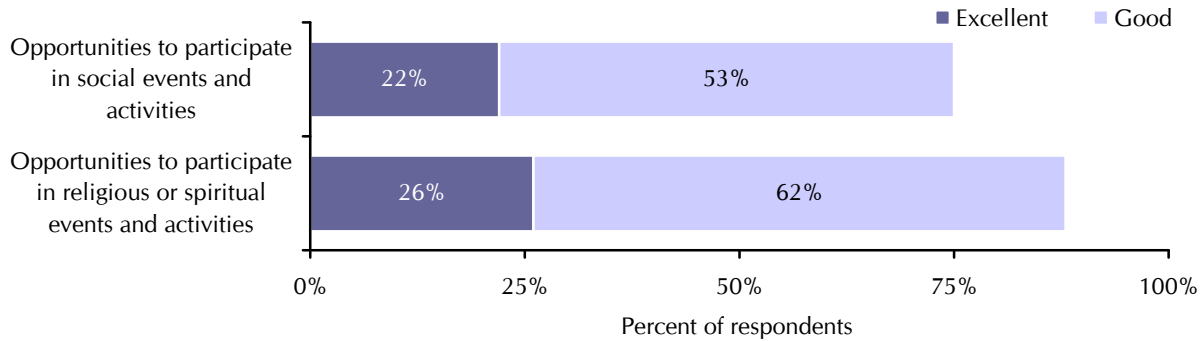


FIGURE 78: SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	Not available	Not available
Opportunities to participate in religious or spiritual events and activities	Not available	Not available

Residents in Thornton reported a strong amount of neighborliness. More than 60% indicated talking or visiting with their neighbors at least several times a week.

FIGURE 79: CONTACT WITH IMMEDIATE NEIGHBORS

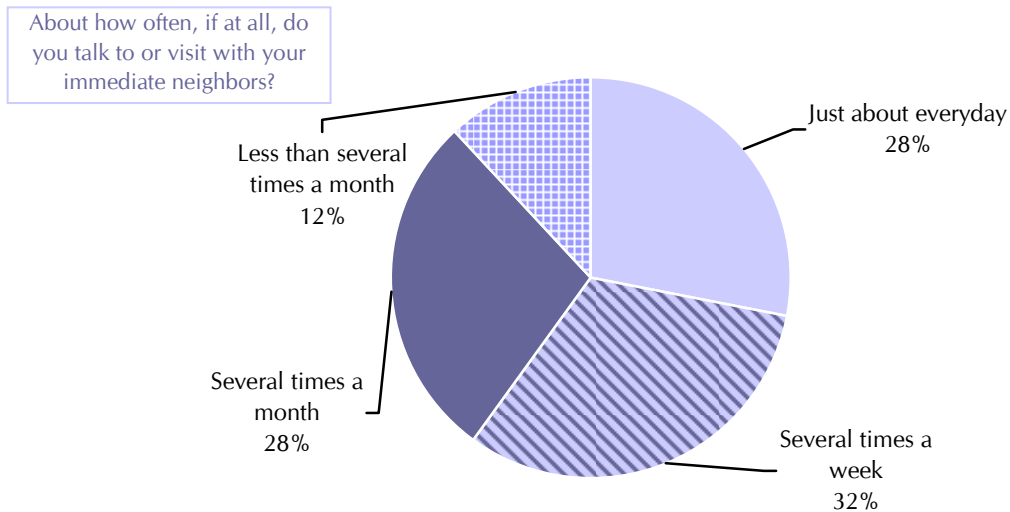


FIGURE 80: CONTACT WITH IMMEDIATE NEIGHBORS BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Has contact with neighbors at least several times per week	Not available	Not available

PUBLIC TRUST

When local government leaders are trusted, an environment of cooperation is more likely to surround all decisions they make. Cooperation leads to easier communication between leaders and residents and increases the likelihood that high value policies and programs will be implemented to improve the quality of life of the entire community. Trust can be measured in residents' opinions about the overall direction the City of Thornton is taking, their perspectives about the service value their taxes purchase and the openness of government to citizen participation. In addition, resident opinion about services provided by the City of Thornton could be compared to their opinion about services provided by the state and federal governments. If residents find nothing to admire in the services delivered by any level of government, their opinions about the City of Thornton may be colored by their dislike of what all levels of government provide.

A majority of respondents felt that the value of services for taxes paid was "excellent" or "good." When asked to rate the job the City of Thornton does at welcoming citizen involvement, 64% rated it as "excellent" or "good." Of these four ratings, one was above the regional benchmark, and three were similar to the regional benchmark. Results were even more favorable compared to national benchmark communities.

FIGURE 81: PUBLIC TRUST RATINGS

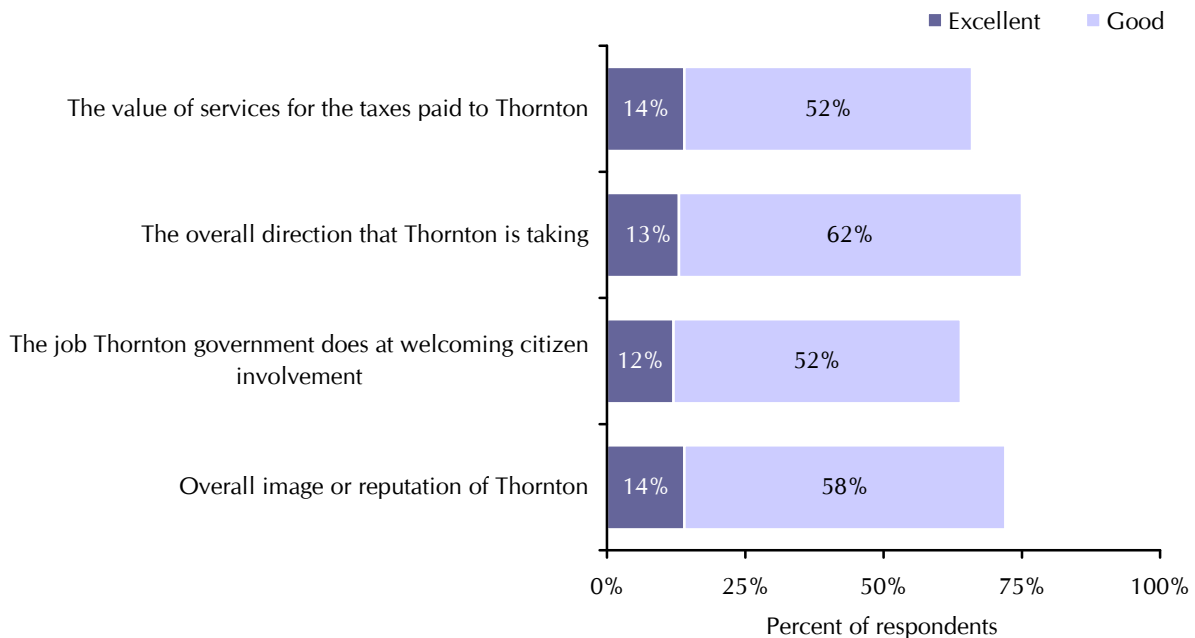


FIGURE 82: PUBLIC TRUST BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Value of services for the taxes paid to Thornton	Similar	Much above
The overall direction that Thornton is taking	Similar	Much above
Job Thornton government does at welcoming citizen involvement	Similar	Much above
Overall image or reputation of Thornton	Above	Similar

On average, residents of the City of Thornton gave the highest evaluations to their own local government and the lowest average rating to the Federal Government. The overall quality of services delivered by the City of Thornton was rated as “excellent” or “good” by 83% of survey participants. The City of Thornton’s rating was similar to the regional benchmark and above the national comparison.

FIGURE 83: RATINGS OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS

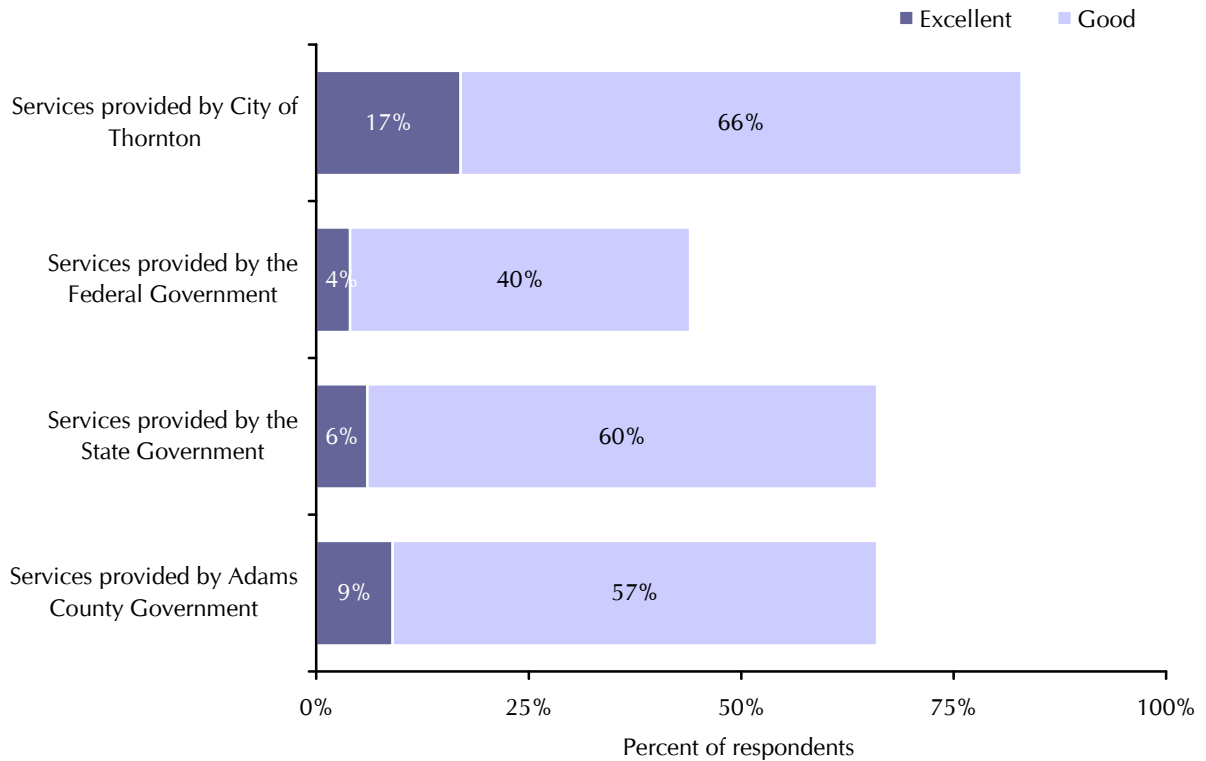


FIGURE 84: SERVICES PROVIDED BY LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Services provided by the City of Thornton	Similar	Above
Services provided by the Federal Government	Not available	Similar
Services provided by the State Government	Not available	Above
Services provided by Adams County Government	Not available	Not available

City of Thornton Employees

The employees of the City of Thornton who interact with the public create the first impression that most residents have of the City of Thornton. Front line staff who provide information, assist with bill paying, collect trash, create service schedules, fight fires and crime and even give traffic tickets are the collective face of the City of Thornton. As such, it is important to know about residents' experience talking with that "face." When employees appear to be knowledgeable, responsive and courteous, residents are more likely to feel that any needs or problems may be solved through positive and productive interactions with the City of Thornton staff.

Those completing the survey were asked if they had been in contact with a City employee either in-person, over the phone or via email in the last 12 months; the 47% who reported that they had been in contact (a percent that is lower than the national benchmark comparison) were then asked to indicate overall how satisfied they were with the employee in their most recent contact. City employees were rated highly; 90% of respondents rated their overall impression as "excellent" or "good."

FIGURE 85: PROPORTION OF RESPONDENTS WHO HAD CONTACT WITH CITY EMPLOYEES IN PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS

Have you had any in-person, phone or email contact with an employee of Thornton within the last 12 months?

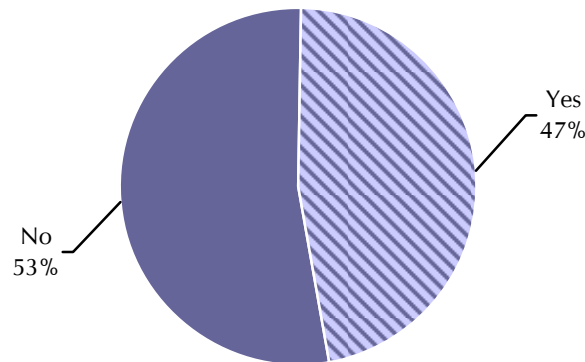


FIGURE 86: CONTACT WITH CITY EMPLOYEES BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Had contact with City employee(s) in last 12 months	Not available	Less

FIGURE 87: RATINGS OF CITY EMPLOYEES (AMONG THOSE WHO HAD CONTACT)

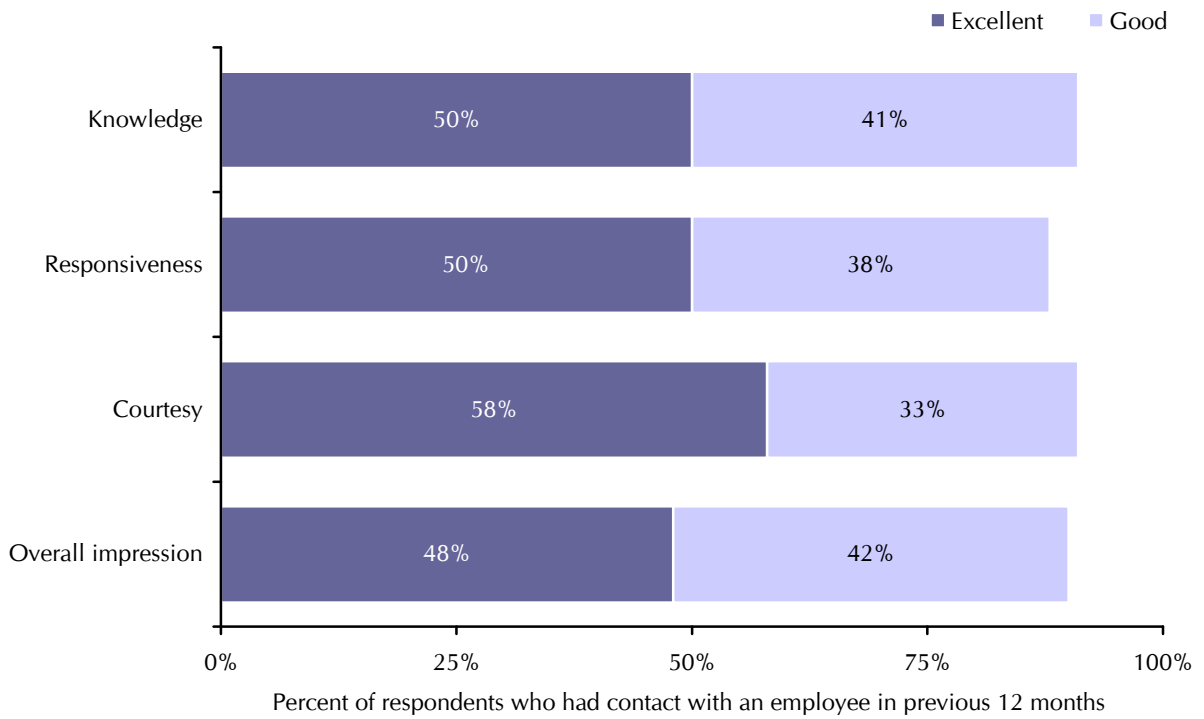


FIGURE 88: RATINGS OF CITY EMPLOYEES (AMONG THOSE WHO HAD CONTACT) BENCHMARKS

	Regional comparison	Economic development competitor comparison
Knowledge	Above	Much above
Responsiveness	Above	Much above
Courteousness	Not available	Much above
Overall impression	Above	Much above

FROM DATA TO ACTION

RESIDENT PRIORITIES

Knowing where to focus limited resources to improve residents' opinions of local government requires information that targets the services that are most important to residents. However, when residents are asked what services are most important, they rarely stray beyond core services – those directed to save lives and improve safety.

In market research, identifying the most important characteristics of a transaction or product is called Key Driver Analysis (KDA). The key drivers that are identified from that analysis do not come from asking customers to self-report which service or product characteristic most influenced their decision to buy or return, but rather from statistical analyses of the predictors of their behavior. When customers are asked to name the most important characteristics of a good or service, responses often are expected or misleading – just as they can be in the context of a citizen survey. For example, air travelers often claim that safety is the primary consideration in their choice of an airline, yet key driver analysis reveals that frequent flier perks or in-flight entertainment predicts their buying decisions.

In local government core services – like fire protection – invariably land at the top of the list created when residents are asked about the most important local government services. And core services are important. But by using KDA, our approach digs deeper to identify the less obvious, but more influential services that are most related to residents' ratings of overall quality of local government services. Because services focused directly on life and safety remain essential to quality government, it is suggested that core services should remain the focus of continuous monitoring and improvement where necessary – but monitoring core services or asking residents to identify important services is not enough.

A KDA was conducted for the City of Thornton by examining the relationships between ratings of each service and ratings of the City of Thornton's overall services. Those Key Driver services that correlated most highly with residents' perceptions about overall City service quality have been identified. By targeting improvements in key services, the City of Thornton can focus on the services that have the greatest likelihood of influencing residents' opinions about overall service quality. Because a strong correlation is not the same as a cause, there is no guarantee that improving ratings on key drivers necessarily will improve ratings. What is certain from these analyses is that key drivers are good predictors of overall resident opinion and that the key drivers presented may be useful focus areas to consider for enhancement of overall service ratings.

Services found to be most strongly correlated with ratings of overall service quality from the Thornton Key Driver Analysis were:

- Drinking water
- Land use, planning and zoning
- Recreation programs or classes
- Services to youth
- Traffic signal timing

CITY OF THORNTON ACTION CHART™

The 2011 City of Thornton Action Chart™ on the following page combines two dimensions of performance:

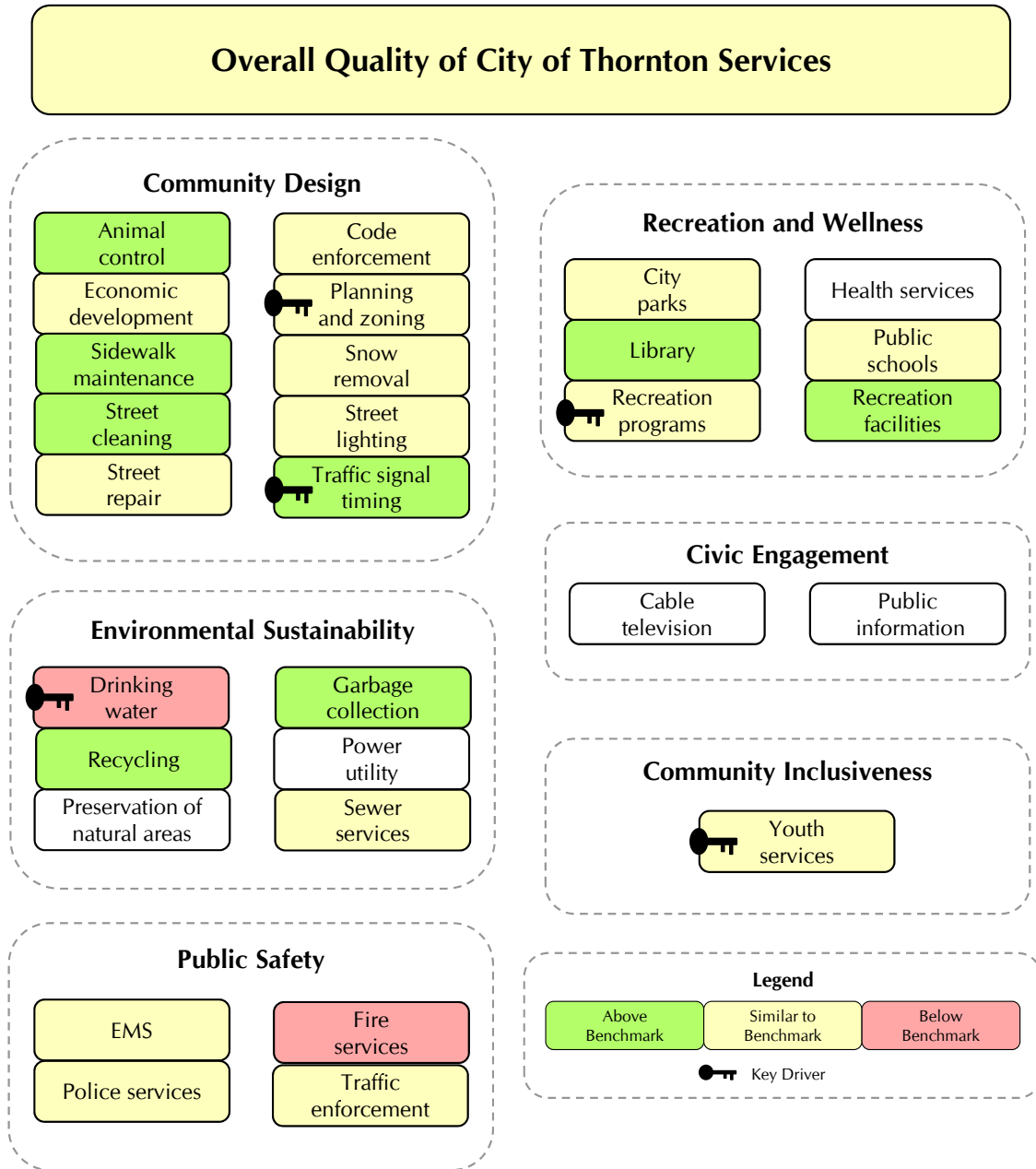
- Comparison to resident evaluations from other regional communities. When a comparison is available, the background color of each service box indicates whether the service is above the benchmark (green), similar to the benchmark (yellow) or below the benchmark (red).
- Identification of key services. A black key icon (🔑) next to a service box indicates it as a key driver for the City.

Thirty services were included in the KDA for the City of Thornton. Of these, 9 were above the regional benchmark, two were below the regional benchmark and 14 were similar to the regional benchmark (no comparison was available for five services).

Considering all performance data included in the Action Chart, a jurisdiction typically will want to consider improvements to any key driver services that are not at least similar to the benchmark. In the case of Thornton, drinking water was below the benchmark and planning and zoning, recreation programs and services to youth received ratings similar to other regional benchmark jurisdictions. More detail about interpreting results can be found in the next section.

Services with a high percent of respondents answering “don’t know” were excluded from the analysis and were considered services that would be less influential. See Appendix A: Complete Survey Frequencies, Frequencies Including “Don’t Know” Responses for the percent “don’t know” for each service.

FIGURE 89: CITY OF THORNTON ACTION CHART



Using Your Action Chart™

The key drivers derived for the City of Thornton provide a list of those services that are uniquely related to overall service quality. Those key drivers are marked with the symbol of a key in the action chart. Because key driver results are based on a relatively small number of responses, the relationships or correlations that define the key drivers are subject to more variability than is seen when key drivers are derived from a large national dataset of resident responses. To benefit the City of Thornton, NRC lists the key drivers derived from tens of thousands of resident responses from across the country. This national list is updated periodically so that you can compare your key drivers to the key drivers from the entire NRC dataset. Where your locally derived key drivers overlap national key drivers, it makes sense to focus even more strongly on your keys. Similarly, when your local key drivers overlap your core services, there is stronger argument to make for attending to your key drivers that overlap with core services.

As staff review key drivers, not all drivers may resonate as likely links to residents' perspectives about overall service quality. For example, in Thornton, planning and zoning and police services may be obvious links to overall service delivery (and each is a key driver from our national database), since it could be easy for staff to see how residents' view of overall service delivery could be colored by how well they perceive police and land use planning to be delivered. But animal control could be a surprise. Before rejecting a key driver that does not pass the first test of conventional wisdom, consider whether residents' opinions about overall service quality could reasonably be influenced by this unexpected driver. For example, in the case of animal control, was there a visible case of violation prior to the survey data collection? Do Thornton residents have different expectations for animal control than what current policy provides? Are the rare instances of violation serious enough to cause a word of mouth campaign about service delivery?

If, after deeper review, the "suspect" driver still does not square with your understanding of the services that could influence residents' perspectives about overall service quality (and if that driver is not a core service or a key driver from NRC's national research), put action in that area on hold and wait to see if it appears as a key driver the next time the survey is conducted.

In the following table, we have listed your key drivers, core services and the national key drivers and we have indicated (in bold typeface and with the symbol "•"), the City of Thornton key drivers that overlap core services or the nationally derived keys. In general, key drivers below the benchmark may be targeted for improvement. Additionally, we have indicated (with the symbol "°") those services that neither are local nor national key drivers nor are they core services. It is these services that could be considered first for resource reductions.

FIGURE 90: KEY DRIVERS COMPARED

Service	City of Thornton Key Driver	National Key Driver	Core Service
Police services		✓	✓
Fire services			✓
Ambulance and emergency medical services			✓
°Traffic enforcement			
Street repair			✓
°Street cleaning			
°Street lighting			
°Snow removal			
°Sidewalk maintenance			
Traffic signal timing	✓		
Garbage collection			✓
°Recycling			
•Drinking water	✓		✓
Sewer services			✓
Power (electric and/or gas) utility			✓
°City parks			
Recreation programs or classes	✓		
°Recreation centers or facilities			
•Land use planning and zoning	✓	✓	
Code enforcement			✓
°Animal control			
Economic development		✓	
Health services			✓
Services to youth	✓		
°Public library			
Public information services		✓	
Public schools		✓	
°Cable television			
°Preservation of natural areas			

- Key driver overlaps with national and or core services
- ° Service may be targeted for reductions it is not a key driver or core service

CUSTOM QUESTIONS

“Don’t know” responses have been removed from the following questions, when applicable.

Custom Question 1	
Some people have suggested that the City of Thornton and Adams County have competing interests and that the City should consider leaving Adams County and becoming a separate City and County of Thornton. As a separate City and County, Thornton would have a separate tax base and be responsible for providing services citizens receive from the City as well as Adams County. To what degree would you support or oppose Thornton further exploring this suggestion?	Percent of respondents
Strongly support	15%
Somewhat support	30%
Somewhat oppose	29%
Strongly oppose	26%
Total	100%

Custom Question 2	
If an election were held today by RTD for an additional four-tenths-of-a-cent sales tax, or four cents for every 10 dollars, to finish FasTracks by 2020, including the North Metro Line, would you vote yes or no?	Percent of respondents
No	40%
Yes	60%
Total	100%

Custom Question 3	
If an election were held today to renew and extend the City’s quarter-of-a-cent sales tax, or two and a half cents for every 10 dollars, dedicated to Parks and Open Space, which is set to expire in 2018, would you vote yes or no?	Percent of respondents
No	30%
Yes	70%
Total	100%

APPENDIX A: COMPLETE SURVEY FREQUENCIES

FREQUENCIES EXCLUDING "DON'T KNOW" RESPONSES

Question 1: Quality of Life					
Please rate each of the following aspects of quality of life in Thornton:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Thornton as a place to live	33%	58%	8%	1%	100%
Your neighborhood as a place to live	39%	48%	9%	4%	100%
Thornton as a place to raise children	34%	52%	13%	2%	100%
Thornton as a place to work	16%	44%	30%	9%	100%
Thornton as a place to retire	19%	54%	22%	6%	100%
The overall quality of life in Thornton	25%	65%	9%	1%	100%

Question 2: Community Characteristics					
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Thornton as a whole:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Sense of community	20%	52%	24%	5%	100%
Openness and acceptance of the community towards people of diverse backgrounds	25%	63%	10%	3%	100%
Overall appearance of Thornton	20%	60%	19%	1%	100%
Cleanliness of Thornton	18%	63%	16%	2%	100%
Overall quality of new development in Thornton	15%	56%	22%	7%	100%
Variety of housing options	20%	61%	17%	2%	100%
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Thornton	21%	53%	22%	3%	100%
Shopping opportunities	23%	49%	24%	4%	100%
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	11%	51%	31%	8%	100%
Recreational opportunities	31%	50%	16%	4%	100%
Employment opportunities	3%	33%	48%	15%	100%
Educational opportunities	22%	44%	30%	4%	100%
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	22%	53%	21%	5%	100%
Opportunities to participate in religious or spiritual events and activities	26%	62%	11%	1%	100%
Opportunities to volunteer	21%	64%	14%	1%	100%
Opportunities to participate in community matters	21%	58%	19%	2%	100%
Ease of car travel in Thornton	17%	59%	20%	4%	100%
Ease of bus travel in Thornton	14%	46%	31%	8%	100%
Ease of bicycle travel in Thornton	21%	46%	26%	6%	100%
Ease of walking in Thornton	23%	52%	22%	3%	100%
Availability of paths and walking trails	34%	49%	14%	3%	100%
Traffic flow on major streets	7%	48%	31%	14%	100%

Question 2: Community Characteristics					
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Thornton as a whole:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Amount of public parking	16%	65%	16%	2%	100%
Availability of affordable quality housing	12%	68%	18%	3%	100%
Availability of affordable quality child care	7%	52%	33%	8%	100%
Availability of affordable quality health care	10%	56%	28%	6%	100%
Availability of affordable quality food	26%	59%	12%	3%	100%
Availability of preventive health services	11%	58%	25%	5%	100%
Air quality	14%	68%	16%	2%	100%
Quality of overall natural environment in Thornton	19%	58%	20%	4%	100%
Overall image or reputation of Thornton	14%	58%	24%	5%	100%

Question 3: Growth						
Please rate the speed of growth in the following categories in Thornton over the past 2 years:	Much too slow	Somewhat too slow	Right amount	Somewhat too fast	Much too fast	Total
Population growth	1%	6%	59%	20%	15%	100%
Retail growth (stores, restaurants, etc.)	10%	30%	53%	5%	2%	100%
Jobs growth	29%	49%	19%	1%	2%	100%

Question 4: Code Enforcement	
To what degree, if at all, are run down buildings, weed lots or junk vehicles a problem in Thornton?	Percent of respondents
Not a problem	26%
Minor problem	41%
Moderate problem	26%
Major problem	8%
Total	100%

Question 5: Community Safety						
Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel from the following in Thornton:	Very safe	Somewhat safe	Neither safe nor unsafe	Somewhat unsafe	Very unsafe	Total
Violent crime (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	40%	48%	4%	6%	2%	100%
Property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	26%	48%	10%	11%	5%	100%
Environmental hazards, including toxic waste	57%	33%	5%	3%	2%	100%

Question 6: Personal Safety						
Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel:	Very safe	Somewhat safe	Neither safe nor unsafe	Somewhat unsafe	Very unsafe	Total
In your neighborhood during the day	74%	22%	3%	1%	1%	100%
In your neighborhood after dark	51%	37%	4%	5%	2%	100%
In Thornton's downtown area during the day	54%	35%	6%	3%	3%	100%
In Thornton's downtown area after dark	24%	49%	8%	14%	5%	100%

Question 7: Contact with Police Department		
Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of the City of Thornton Police Department within the last 12 months?	No	Yes
Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of the City of Thornton Police Department within the last 12 months?	67%	33%

Question 8: Ratings of Contact with Police Department				
What was your overall impression of your most recent contact with the City of Thornton Police Department?	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
What was your overall impression of your most recent contact with the City of Thornton Police Department?	57%	27%	7%	8%

Question 9: Crime Victim	
During the past 12 months, were you or anyone in your household the victim of any crime?	Percent of respondents
No	87%
Yes	13%
Total	100%

Question 10: Crime Reporting	
If yes, was this crime (these crimes) reported to the police?	Percent of respondents
No	20%
Yes	80%
Total	100%

Question 11: Resident Behaviors						
In the last 12 months, about how many times, if ever, have you or other household members participated in the following activities in Thornton?	Never	Once or twice	3 to 12 times	13 to 26 times	More than 26 times	Total
Used Thornton 'Anythink' public libraries or their services	28%	11%	27%	11%	23%	100%
Used Thornton recreation centers	30%	13%	29%	8%	20%	100%
Participated in a recreation program or activity	37%	20%	22%	5%	16%	100%
Visited a park	6%	8%	31%	22%	34%	100%
Ridden a local bus within Thornton	80%	7%	5%	1%	7%	100%
Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting	74%	16%	8%	1%	0%	100%
Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other City-sponsored public meeting on cable television, the Internet or other media	65%	17%	14%	2%	2%	100%
Read Thornton City Voice Newspaper	34%	19%	33%	5%	8%	100%
Visited the City of Thornton Web site (at www.cityofthornton.net)	27%	26%	31%	13%	3%	100%
Recycled used paper, cans or bottles from your home	17%	3%	9%	17%	55%	100%
Volunteered your time to some group or activity in Thornton	60%	12%	16%	3%	9%	100%
Participated in religious or spiritual activities in Thornton	53%	8%	13%	4%	23%	100%
Participated in a club or civic group in Thornton	80%	6%	8%	3%	3%	100%
Provided help to a friend or neighbor	5%	15%	36%	17%	26%	100%
Participated in a Senior Center program or activity	85%	8%	3%	2%	1%	100%
Attended a Thornton Arts & Cultural Center event	63%	21%	15%	0%	1%	100%

Question 12: Neighborliness	
About how often, if at all, do you talk to or visit with your immediate neighbors (people who live in the 10 or 20 households that are closest to you)?	Percent of respondents
Just about everyday	28%
Several times a week	32%
Several times a month	28%
Less than several times a month	12%
Total	100%

Question 13: Service Quality					
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Thornton:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Police services	27%	62%	9%	3%	100%
Fire services	36%	62%	1%	0%	100%
Ambulance or emergency medical services	39%	56%	5%	1%	100%
Crime prevention	15%	65%	17%	3%	100%
Fire prevention and education	25%	57%	14%	4%	100%
Municipal courts	20%	67%	10%	3%	100%
Traffic enforcement	17%	63%	15%	5%	100%
Street repair	11%	54%	26%	9%	100%
Street cleaning	20%	60%	16%	3%	100%
Street lighting	20%	57%	17%	6%	100%
Snow removal	17%	48%	28%	7%	100%
Sidewalk maintenance	16%	65%	14%	5%	100%
Traffic signal timing	11%	52%	23%	13%	100%
Bus or transit services	13%	57%	22%	8%	100%
Garbage collection	42%	54%	2%	2%	100%
Recycling	44%	46%	7%	3%	100%
Yard waste pick-up	16%	63%	12%	9%	100%
Storm drainage	16%	70%	13%	2%	100%
Drinking water	23%	41%	25%	12%	100%
Sewer services	24%	69%	6%	1%	100%
Power (electric and/or gas) utility	30%	61%	7%	2%	100%
City parks	38%	55%	6%	0%	100%
Recreation programs or classes	29%	61%	9%	1%	100%
Recreation centers or facilities	40%	47%	11%	1%	100%
Land use, planning and zoning	10%	51%	33%	7%	100%
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc.)	12%	54%	26%	9%	100%
Animal control	21%	62%	14%	3%	100%
Economic development	7%	50%	35%	8%	100%
Health services	15%	66%	15%	3%	100%

Question 13: Service Quality					
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Thornton:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Services to seniors	25%	58%	15%	2%	100%
Services to youth	16%	62%	20%	3%	100%
Services to low-income people	8%	58%	28%	5%	100%
Public library services	50%	43%	6%	1%	100%
Public information services	15%	66%	16%	2%	100%
Public schools	24%	50%	18%	8%	100%
Cable television	21%	59%	15%	5%	100%
Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations)	12%	54%	22%	12%	100%
Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts	28%	49%	16%	6%	100%

Question 14: Government Services Overall					
Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by each of the following?	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
The City of Thornton	17%	66%	15%	2%	100%
The Federal Government	4%	40%	41%	16%	100%
The State Government	6%	60%	29%	5%	100%
Adams County Government	9%	57%	27%	7%	100%

Question 15: Recommendation and Longevity					
Please indicate how likely or unlikely you are to do each of the following:	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Somewhat unlikely	Very unlikely	Total
Recommend living in Thornton to someone who asks	59%	34%	4%	3%	100%
Remain in Thornton for the next five years	74%	18%	3%	4%	100%

Question 16: Impact of the Economy	
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:	Percent of respondents
Very positive	7%
Somewhat positive	17%
Neutral	47%
Somewhat negative	22%
Very negative	7%
Total	100%

Question 17: Contact with Fire Department		
Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of the City of Thornton Fire Department within the last 12 months?	No	Yes
Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of the City of Thornton Fire Department within the last 12 months?	87%	13%

Question 18: Ratings of Contact with Fire Department				
What was your overall impression of your most recent contact with the City of Thornton Fire Department?	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
What was your overall impression of your most recent contact with the City of Thornton Fire Department?	66%	26%	4%	4%

Question 19: Contact with City Employees	
Have you had any in-person, phone or email with an employee of the City of Thornton within the last 12 months (including police, receptionists, planners or any others)?	Percent of respondents
No	53%
Yes	47%
Total	100%

Question 20: City Employees					
What was your impression of the employee(s) of the City of Thornton in your most recent contact?	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Knowledge	50%	41%	5%	4%	100%
Responsiveness	50%	38%	9%	3%	100%
Courtesy	58%	33%	5%	3%	100%
Overall impression	48%	42%	4%	6%	100%

Question 21: Government Performance					
Please rate the following categories of Thornton government performance:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
The value of services for the taxes paid to Thornton	14%	52%	27%	7%	100%
The overall direction that Thornton is taking	13%	62%	20%	5%	100%
The job Thornton government does at welcoming citizen involvement	12%	52%	29%	7%	100%

Question 22a: Custom Question 1	
Some people have suggested that the City of Thornton and Adams County have competing interests and that the City should consider leaving Adams County and becoming a separate City and County of Thornton. As a separate City and County, Thornton would have a	Percent of respondents
Strongly support	15%
Somewhat support	30%
Somewhat oppose	29%
Strongly oppose	26%

Question 22a: Custom Question 1	
Some people have suggested that the City of Thornton and Adams County have competing interests and that the City should consider leaving Adams County and becoming a separate City and County of Thornton. As a separate City and County, Thornton would have a	Percent of respondents
Total	100%

Question 22b: Custom Question 2	
If an election were held today by RTD for an additional four-tenths-of-a-cent sales tax, or four cents for every 10 dollars, to finish FasTracks by 2020, including the North Metro Line, would you vote yes or no?	Percent of respondents
No	40%
Yes	60%
Total	100%

Question 22c: Custom Question 3	
If an election were held today to renew and extend the City's quarter-of-a-cent sales tax, or two and a half cents for every 10 dollars, dedicated to Parks and Open Space, which is set to expire in 2018, would you vote yes or no?	Percent of respondents
No	30%
Yes	70%
Total	100%

Question D1: Employment Status	
Are you currently employed for pay?	Percent of respondents
No	29%
Yes, full-time	58%
Yes, part-time	12%
Total	100%

Question D2: Mode of Transportation Used for Commute	
During a typical week, how many days do you commute to work (for the longest distance of your commute) in each of the ways listed below?	Percent of days mode used
Motorized vehicle (e.g., car, truck, van, motorcycle, etc.) by myself	65%
Motorized vehicle (e.g., car, truck, van, motorcycle, etc.) with other children or adults	18%
Bus, rail, subway or other public transportation	3%
Walk	2%
Bicycle	1%
Work at home	10%
Other	1%

Question D3: Length of Residency	
How many years have you lived in Thornton?	Percent of respondents
Less than 2 years	4%
2 to 5 years	15%
6 to 10 years	24%
11 to 20 years	25%
More than 20 years	32%
Total	100%

Question D4: Housing Unit Type	
Which best describes the building you live in?	Percent of respondents
One family house detached from any other houses	80%
House attached to one or more houses (e.g., a duplex or townhome)	11%
Building with two or more apartments or condominiums	7%
Mobile home	2%
Other	0%
Total	100%

Question D5: Housing Tenure (Rent/Own)	
Is this house, apartment or mobile home...	Percent of respondents
Rented for cash or occupied without cash payment	10%
Owned by you or someone in this house with a mortgage or free and clear	90%
Total	100%

Question D6: Monthly Housing Cost	
About how much is the total monthly housing cost for the place you live (including rent, mortgage payment, property tax, property insurance and homeowners' association (HOA) fees)?	Percent of respondents
Less than \$300 per month	5%
\$300 to \$599 per month	8%
\$600 to \$999 per month	20%
\$1,000 to \$1,499 per month	34%
\$1,500 to \$2,499 per month	28%
\$2,500 or more per month	5%
Total	100%

Question D7: Presence of Children in Household	
Do any children 17 or under live in your household?	Percent of respondents
No	56%
Yes	44%
Total	100%

Question D8: Presence of Older Adults in Household	
Are you or any other members of your household aged 65 or older?	Percent of respondents
No	83%
Yes	17%
Total	100%

Question D9: Household Income	
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.)	Percent of respondents
Less than \$24,999	6%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	22%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	45%
\$100,000 to \$149,000	19%
\$150,000 or more	8%
Total	100%

Question D10: Ethnicity	
Are you Spanish, Hispanic or Latino?	Percent of respondents
No	79%
Yes	21%
Total	100%

Question D11: Race	
What is your race?	Percent of respondents
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1%
Asian, Asian Indian or Pacific Islander	3%
Black or African American	0%
White	79%
Other	17%
Total	100%

Question D12: Age	
In which category is your age?	Percent of respondents
18 to 24 years	6%
25 to 34 years	25%
35 to 44 years	20%
45 to 54 years	23%
55 to 64 years	14%
65 to 74 years	8%
75 years or older	3%
Total	100%

Question D13: Gender	
What is your sex?	Percent of respondents
Female	52%
Male	48%
Total	100%

Question D16: Has Cell Phone	
Do you have a cell phone?	Percent of respondents
No	6%
Yes	94%
Total	100%

Question D17: Has Land Line	
Do you have a land line at home?	Percent of respondents
No	28%
Yes	72%
Total	100%

Question D18: Primary Phone	
If you have both a cell phone and a land line, which do you consider your primary telephone number?	Percent of respondents
Cell	24%
Land line	68%
Both	8%
Total	100%

Question D19: Has Land Line	
Do you have a computer in your home that you access the Internet with?	Percent of respondents
No	10%
Yes	90%
Total	100%

FREQUENCIES INCLUDING “DON’T KNOW” RESPONSES

These tables contain the percentage of respondents for each response category as well as the “n” or total number of respondents for each category, next to the percentage.

Question 1: Quality of Life												
Please rate each of the following aspects of quality of life in Thornton:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know/refused		Total	
	Thornton as a place to live	33%	132	58%	230	8%	33	1%	4	0%	0	100%
Your neighborhood as a place to live	39%	157	48%	193	9%	35	4%	14	0%	0	100%	400
Thornton as a place to raise children	31%	126	48%	193	12%	47	2%	9	6%	25	100%	400
Thornton as a place to work	11%	45	30%	122	21%	83	6%	25	31%	124	100%	400
Thornton as a place to retire	17%	68	49%	198	20%	79	5%	21	8%	34	100%	400
The overall quality of life in Thornton	25%	98	65%	259	9%	37	1%	5	0%	0	100%	400

Question 2: Community Characteristics												
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Thornton as a whole:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know/refused		Total	
	Sense of community	19%	77	51%	202	24%	94	4%	18	2%	8	100%
Openness and acceptance of the community towards people of diverse backgrounds	23%	93	59%	237	9%	37	3%	10	6%	23	100%	400
Overall appearance of Thornton	20%	80	60%	238	19%	75	1%	5	0%	0	100%	400
Cleanliness of Thornton	18%	74	63%	252	16%	65	2%	8	0%	0	100%	400
Overall quality of new development in Thornton	14%	55	52%	206	21%	82	6%	25	8%	31	100%	400
Variety of housing options	19%	76	58%	231	16%	63	1%	6	6%	23	100%	400
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Thornton	21%	84	53%	211	22%	88	3%	14	1%	3	100%	400
Shopping opportunities	23%	91	48%	194	24%	97	4%	16	1%	2	100%	400
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	10%	38	46%	184	28%	111	7%	28	10%	39	100%	400
Recreational opportunities	30%	120	49%	194	16%	63	4%	15	2%	8	100%	400
Employment opportunities	3%	10	25%	98	35%	141	11%	45	26%	105	100%	400
Educational opportunities	20%	80	40%	159	28%	111	3%	13	9%	36	100%	400

Question 2: Community Characteristics												
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Thornton as a whole:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know/refused		Total	
	Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	20%	82	49%	198	19%	77	4%	17	6%	26	100%
Opportunities to participate in religious or spiritual events and activities	24%	95	56%	224	10%	38	1%	4	10%	39	100%	400
Opportunities to volunteer	17%	66	51%	203	11%	45	1%	4	20%	81	100%	400
Opportunities to participate in community matters	19%	76	53%	211	17%	70	2%	9	9%	34	100%	400
Ease of car travel in Thornton	17%	66	59%	236	20%	80	4%	16	0%	2	100%	400
Ease of bus travel in Thornton	9%	37	30%	119	20%	81	5%	21	35%	141	100%	400
Ease of bicycle travel in Thornton	18%	70	38%	153	22%	87	5%	21	17%	69	100%	400
Ease of walking in Thornton	23%	90	50%	202	22%	86	3%	13	2%	9	100%	400
Availability of paths and walking trails	33%	133	48%	191	14%	56	3%	10	2%	9	100%	400
Traffic flow on major streets	7%	28	48%	191	31%	125	14%	55	0%	1	100%	400
Amount of public parking	16%	62	62%	247	15%	61	2%	8	5%	22	100%	400
Availability of affordable quality housing	10%	42	60%	240	16%	63	2%	9	11%	45	100%	400
Availability of affordable quality child care	3%	13	26%	102	16%	64	4%	16	51%	204	100%	400
Availability of affordable quality health care	8%	31	43%	173	22%	88	5%	19	22%	89	100%	400
Availability of affordable quality food	26%	103	59%	236	12%	47	3%	14	0%	0	100%	400
Availability of preventive health services	9%	38	49%	194	21%	84	4%	17	17%	67	100%	400
Air quality	14%	56	67%	268	16%	63	2%	8	1%	4	100%	400
Quality of overall natural environment in Thornton	19%	75	57%	228	19%	77	4%	16	1%	4	100%	400
Overall image or reputation of Thornton	14%	55	56%	226	23%	92	4%	18	2%	9	100%	400

Question 3: Growth														
Please rate the speed of growth in the following categories in Thornton over the past 2 years:	Much too slow		Somewhat too slow		Right amount		Somewhat too fast		Much too fast		Don't know/refused		Total	
	Population growth	1%	3	5%	20	54%	216	19%	74	13%	53	8%	33	100%
Retail growth (stores, restaurants, etc.)	10%	39	29%	115	52%	206	5%	19	2%	8	3%	12	100%	400
Jobs growth	24%	97	41%	162	15%	61	1%	2	2%	6	18%	71	100%	400

Question 4: Code Enforcement		
To what degree, if at all, are run down buildings, weed lots or junk vehicles a problem in Thornton?	Percent of respondents	Count
Not a problem	25%	101
Minor problem	40%	160
Moderate problem	25%	102
Major problem	8%	32
Don't know/refused	1%	5
Total	100%	400

Question 5: Community Safety														
Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel from the following in Thornton:	Very safe		Somewhat safe		Neither safe nor unsafe		Somewhat unsafe		Very unsafe		Don't know/refused		Total	
	Violent crime (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	39%	155	47%	189	4%	16	6%	24	2%	6	2%	9	100%
Property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	25%	101	47%	190	10%	41	11%	45	5%	20	1%	4	100%	400
Environmental hazards, including toxic waste	55%	218	31%	125	5%	19	3%	12	2%	8	4%	18	100%	400

Question 6: Personal Safety														
Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel:	Very safe		Somewhat safe		Neither safe nor unsafe		Somewhat unsafe		Very unsafe		Don't know/refused		Total	
	In your neighborhood during the day	74%	297	22%	87	3%	11	1%	3	1%	3	0%	0	100%
In your neighborhood after dark	51%	203	37%	148	4%	18	5%	20	2%	9	0%	1	100%	400
In Thornton's downtown area during the day	46%	183	30%	121	5%	19	2%	9	3%	11	14%	57	100%	400
In Thornton's downtown area after dark	20%	78	40%	158	7%	26	11%	44	4%	17	19%	75	100%	400

Question 7: Contact with Police Department													
Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of the City of Thornton Police Department within the last 12 months?						No		Yes		Don't know/refused		Total	
Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of the City of Thornton Police Department within the last 12 months?						66%	264	33%	131	1%	5	100%	400

Question 8: Ratings of Contact with Police Department																	
What was your overall impression of your most recent contact with the City of Thornton Police Department?						Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know/refused		Total	
What was your overall impression of your most recent contact with the City of Thornton Police Department?						57%	75	27%	36	7%	10	8%	10	0%	0	100%	131

Question 9: Crime Victim			
During the past 12 months, were you or anyone in your household the victim of any crime?		Percent of respondents	Count
No		87%	350
Yes		13%	50
Don't know/refused		0%	0
Total		100%	400

Question 10: Crime Reporting		
If yes, was this crime (these crimes) reported to the police?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	20%	10
Yes	80%	40
Don't know/refused	0%	0
Total	100%	50

Question 11: Resident Behaviors														
In the last 12 months, about how many times, if ever, have you or other household members participated in the following activities in Thornton?	Never		Once or twice		3 to 12 times		13 to 26 times		More than 26 times		Don't know/refused		Total	
	Used Thornton 'Anythink' public libraries or their services	28%	110	11%	45	27%	107	11%	45	23%	91	0%	1	100%
Used Thornton recreation centers	30%	120	13%	51	29%	117	8%	33	20%	78	0%	0	100%	400
Participated in a recreation program or activity	37%	147	20%	81	22%	89	5%	19	16%	63	0%	1	100%	400
Visited a park	6%	24	8%	30	31%	122	22%	87	34%	136	0%	0	100%	400
Ridden a local bus within Thornton	80%	321	7%	26	5%	21	1%	5	7%	27	0%	1	100%	400
Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting	74%	295	16%	66	8%	34	1%	6	0%	0	0%	0	100%	400
Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other City-sponsored public meeting on cable television, the Internet or other media	65%	259	17%	68	14%	58	2%	8	2%	7	0%	1	100%	400
Read Thornton City Voice Newspaper	33%	133	19%	76	32%	130	5%	20	8%	31	2%	10	100%	400
Visited the City of Thornton Web site (at www.cityofthornton.net)	27%	106	25%	101	31%	124	13%	52	3%	11	1%	4	100%	400
Recycled used paper, cans or bottles from your home	17%	67	2%	10	9%	36	17%	68	55%	219	0%	0	100%	400
Volunteered your time to some group or activity in Thornton	60%	240	12%	48	16%	62	3%	12	9%	36	0%	1	100%	400

Question 11: Resident Behaviors														
In the last 12 months, about how many times, if ever, have you or other household members participated in the following activities in Thornton?	Never		Once or twice		3 to 12 times		13 to 26 times		More than 26 times		Don't know/refused		Total	
	Participated in religious or spiritual activities in Thornton	52%	209	8%	31	12%	50	4%	18	22%	90	1%	3	100%
Participated in a club or civic group in Thornton	80%	320	6%	25	8%	30	3%	10	3%	13	0%	1	100%	400
Provided help to a friend or neighbor	5%	22	15%	61	36%	144	17%	68	26%	104	0%	2	100%	400
Participated in a Senior Center program or activity	85%	341	8%	31	3%	13	2%	8	1%	6	0%	0	100%	400
Attended a Thornton Arts & Cultural Center event	63%	251	21%	84	15%	59	0%	2	1%	4	0%	0	100%	400

Question 12: Neighborliness		
About how often, if at all, do you talk to or visit with your immediate neighbors (people who live in the 10 or 20 households that are closest to you)?	Percent of respondents	Count
Just about everyday	28%	113
Several times a week	32%	127
Several times a month	28%	111
Less than several times a month	12%	48
Don't know/refused	0%	1
Total	100%	400

Question 13: Service Quality												
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Thornton:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know/refused		Total	
	Police services	25%	100	58%	233	8%	32	3%	10	6%	24	100%
Fire services	34%	135	58%	230	1%	4	0%	1	7%	30	100%	400
Ambulance or emergency medical services	32%	130	47%	186	4%	16	1%	4	16%	64	100%	400
Crime prevention	14%	57	60%	240	16%	63	3%	11	7%	29	100%	400
Fire prevention and education	21%	83	47%	188	12%	47	3%	12	17%	68	100%	400
Municipal courts	12%	46	40%	161	6%	25	2%	6	40%	162	100%	400
Traffic enforcement	16%	64	61%	245	15%	58	5%	19	3%	14	100%	400
Street repair	11%	45	53%	213	26%	105	9%	35	0%	2	100%	400
Street cleaning	19%	78	60%	238	16%	65	3%	14	1%	5	100%	400
Street lighting	20%	81	56%	225	16%	66	6%	26	0%	2	100%	400
Snow removal	17%	67	47%	189	28%	110	7%	29	1%	4	100%	400
Sidewalk maintenance	15%	61	63%	252	14%	54	5%	18	3%	14	100%	400
Traffic signal timing	11%	43	52%	208	23%	93	13%	53	1%	3	100%	400
Bus or transit services	9%	37	40%	159	16%	62	6%	23	30%	119	100%	400
Garbage collection	41%	165	53%	210	2%	6	2%	8	2%	10	100%	400
Recycling	43%	170	44%	177	7%	27	2%	10	4%	16	100%	400
Yard waste pick-up	13%	52	50%	201	10%	39	7%	27	20%	80	100%	400
Storm drainage	15%	60	66%	266	12%	49	2%	7	4%	18	100%	400
Drinking water	22%	90	41%	162	24%	98	12%	47	1%	3	100%	400
Sewer services	23%	93	66%	265	6%	25	1%	2	3%	14	100%	400
Power (electric and/or gas) utility	30%	118	59%	237	7%	27	2%	9	2%	9	100%	400
City parks	37%	149	54%	216	6%	24	0%	0	3%	11	100%	400
Recreation programs or classes	24%	98	52%	206	8%	32	1%	4	15%	60	100%	400
Recreation centers or facilities	37%	147	43%	173	10%	41	1%	4	9%	36	100%	400
Land use, planning and zoning	8%	34	44%	177	29%	115	6%	23	13%	50	100%	400
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc.)	11%	45	49%	197	24%	94	8%	32	8%	32	100%	400

Question 13: Service Quality												
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Thornton:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know/refused		Total	
	Animal control	19%	77	57%	228	13%	50	3%	12	8%	33	100%
Economic development	6%	24	45%	180	31%	126	7%	29	10%	41	100%	400
Health services	12%	50	54%	215	12%	49	3%	10	19%	76	100%	400
Services to seniors	16%	62	36%	142	9%	37	1%	4	38%	154	100%	400
Services to youth	12%	47	47%	187	15%	60	2%	8	24%	97	100%	400
Services to low-income people	5%	19	34%	135	16%	65	3%	12	42%	169	100%	400
Public library services	43%	171	37%	148	5%	20	1%	3	14%	57	100%	400
Public information services	13%	52	58%	231	14%	57	2%	9	13%	50	100%	400
Public schools	20%	81	43%	174	15%	62	7%	28	14%	55	100%	400
Cable television	18%	71	49%	198	13%	50	4%	15	17%	66	100%	400
Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations)	9%	35	40%	158	16%	65	9%	34	27%	107	100%	400
Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts	28%	110	48%	192	16%	63	6%	23	3%	12	100%	400

Question 14: Government Services Overall												
Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by each of the following?	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know/refused		Total	
	The City of Thornton	17%	68	65%	260	15%	59	2%	7	2%	6	100%
The Federal Government	4%	15	37%	146	37%	149	14%	57	8%	32	100%	400
The State Government	5%	21	57%	227	28%	112	5%	21	5%	18	100%	400
Adams County Government	9%	35	54%	217	26%	104	7%	28	4%	16	100%	400

Question 15: Recommendation and Longevity												
Please indicate how likely or unlikely you are to do each of the following:	Very likely		Somewhat likely		Somewhat unlikely		Very unlikely		Don't know/refused		Total	
	Recommend living in Thornton to someone who asks	59%	236	34%	136	4%	17	3%	10	0%	1	100%
Remain in Thornton for the next five years	74%	295	18%	73	3%	13	4%	17	0%	1	100%	400

Question 16: Impact of the Economy		
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:	Percent of respondents	Count
Very positive	7%	27
Somewhat positive	16%	66
Neutral	46%	185
Somewhat negative	21%	85
Very negative	7%	27
Don't know/refused	2%	9
Total	100%	400

Question 17: Contact with Fire Department								
Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of the City of Thornton Fire Department within the last 12 months?	No		Yes		Don't know/refused		Total	
	Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of the City of Thornton Fire Department within the last 12 months?	86%	344	13%	53	1%	3	100%

Question 18: Ratings of Contact with Fire Department												
What was your overall impression of your most recent contact with the City of Thornton Fire Department?	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know/refused		Total	
	What was your overall impression of your most recent contact with the City of Thornton Fire Department?	65%	34	25%	13	4%	2	4%	2	2%	1	100%

Question 19: Contact with City Employees		
Have you had any in-person, phone or email with an employee of the City of Thornton within the last 12 months (including police, receptionists, planners or any others)?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	53%	213
Yes	46%	186
Don't know/refused	0%	1
Total	100%	400

Question 20: City Employees												
What was your impression of the employee(s) of the City of Thornton in your most recent contact?	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know/refused		Total	
	Knowledge	49%	91	40%	75	5%	10	4%	8	1%	3	100%
Responsiveness	50%	92	38%	70	9%	17	3%	6	0%	0	100%	186
Courtesy	58%	109	33%	62	5%	10	3%	6	0%	0	100%	186
Overall impression	48%	90	42%	77	4%	7	6%	11	0%	0	100%	186

Question 21: Government Performance												
Please rate the following categories of Thornton government performance:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know/refused		Total	
	The value of services for the taxes paid to Thornton	13%	53	50%	198	26%	103	7%	26	5%	19	100%
The overall direction that Thornton is taking	12%	48	59%	234	19%	76	4%	18	6%	24	100%	400
The job Thornton government does at welcoming citizen involvement	10%	40	45%	181	25%	99	6%	25	14%	54	100%	400

Question 22a: Custom Question 1		
Some people have suggested that the City of Thornton and Adams County have competing interests and that the City should consider leaving Adams County and becoming a separate City and County of Thornton. As a separate City and County, Thornton would have a	Percent of respondents	Count
Strongly support	13%	53
Somewhat support	26%	103
Somewhat oppose	25%	99
Strongly oppose	23%	91
Don't know	13%	51
Refused	0%	1
Total	100%	400

Question 22b: Custom Question 2		
If an election were held today by RTD for an additional four-tenths-of-a-cent sales tax, or four cents for every 10 dollars, to finish FasTracks by 2020, including the North Metro Line, would you vote yes or no?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	38%	153
Yes	58%	234
Don't know	3%	13
Refused	0%	0
Total	100%	400

Question 22c: Custom Question 3		
If an election were held today to renew and extend the City's quarter-of-a-cent sales tax, or two and a half cents for every 10 dollars, dedicated to Parks and Open Space, which is set to expire in 2018, would you vote yes or no?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	29%	116
Yes	68%	270
Don't know	3%	12
Refused	0%	1
Total	100%	400

Question D1: Employment Status		
Are you currently employed for pay?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	29%	117
Yes, full-time	58%	231
Yes, part-time	12%	49
Don't know/refused	1%	2
Total	100%	400

Question D2: Mode of Transportation Used for Commute	
During a typical week, how many days do you commute to work (for the longest distance of your commute) in each of the ways listed below?	Percent of days mode used
Motorized vehicle (e.g., car, truck, van, motorcycle, etc.) by myself	65%
Motorized vehicle (e.g., car, truck, van, motorcycle, etc.) with other children or adults	18%
Bus, rail, subway or other public transportation	3%
Walk	2%
Bicycle	1%
Work at home	10%
Other	1%

Question D3: Length of Residency		
How many years have you lived in Thornton?	Percent of respondents	Count
Less than 2 years	4%	16
2 to 5 years	15%	58
6 to 10 years	24%	97
11 to 20 years	25%	100
More than 20 years	32%	129
Don't know/refused	0%	0
Total	100%	400

Question D4: Housing Unit Type		
Which best describes the building you live in?	Percent of respondents	Count
One family house detached from any other houses	80%	321
House attached to one or more houses (e.g., a duplex or townhome)	11%	43
Building with two or more apartments or condominiums	7%	27
Mobile home	2%	9
Other	0%	0
Don't know/refused	0%	1
Total	100%	400

Question D5: Housing Tenure (Rent/Own)		
Is this house, apartment or mobile home...	Percent of respondents	Count
Rented for cash or occupied without cash payment	10%	39
Owned by you or someone in this house with a mortgage or free and clear	89%	357
Don't know/refused	1%	3
Total	100%	400

Question D6: Monthly Housing Cost		
About how much is the total monthly housing cost for the place you live (including rent, mortgage payment, property tax, property insurance and homeowners" association (HOA) fees)?	Percent of respondents	Count
Less than \$300 per month	5%	20
\$300 to \$599 per month	7%	28
\$600 to \$999 per month	18%	73
\$1,000 to \$1,499 per month	31%	123
\$1,500 to \$2,499 per month	26%	103
\$2,500 or more per month	4%	17
Don't know/refused	9%	36
Total	100%	400

Question D7: Presence of Children in Household		
Do any children 17 or under live in your household?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	56%	223
Yes	43%	172
Don't know/refused	1%	4
Total	100%	400

Question D8: Presence of Older Adults in Household		
Are you or any other members of your household aged 65 or older?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	83%	332
Yes	17%	66
Don't know/refused	0%	2
Total	100%	400

Question D9: Household Income		
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.)	Percent of respondents	Count
Less than \$24,999	6%	23
\$25,000 to \$49,999	19%	77
\$50,000 to \$99,999	40%	160
\$100,000 to \$149,000	17%	68
\$150,000 or more	7%	29
Don't know/refused	11%	42
Total	100%	400

Question D11: Ethnicity		
What is your race?	Percent of respondents	Count
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1%	4
Asian, Asian Indian or Pacific Islander	3%	11
Black or African American	0%	1
White	75%	301
Other	16%	64
Don't know/refused	4%	16
14	0%	0
41	0%	0
45	1%	2
Total	100%	400

Question D12: Age		
In which category is your age?	Percent of respondents	Count
18 to 24 years	6%	24
25 to 34 years	25%	100
35 to 44 years	20%	79
45 to 54 years	23%	90
55 to 64 years	14%	57
65 to 74 years	8%	33
75 years or older	3%	13
Don't know/refused	1%	3
Total	100%	400

Question D13: Gender		
What is your sex?	Percent of respondents	Count
Female	52%	208
Male	48%	192
Total	100%	400

Question D16: Has Cell Phone		
Do you have a cell phone?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	6%	25
Yes	93%	372
Don't know/refused	1%	3
Total	100%	400

Question D17: Has Land Line		
Do you have a land line at home?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	28%	111
Yes	71%	285
Don't know/refused	1%	3
Total	100%	400

Question D18: Primary Phone		
If you have both a cell phone and a land line, which do you consider your primary telephone number?	Percent of respondents	Count
Cell	24%	62
Land line	68%	176
Both	8%	22
Don't know/refused	0%	0
Total	100%	259

Question D19: Has Computer with Internet Access at Home		
Do you have a computer in your home that you access the Internet with?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	10%	38
Yes	90%	361
Don't know/refused	0%	1
Total	100%	400

APPENDIX B: SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The National Citizen Survey™ (The NCS™) was developed to provide local jurisdictions an accurate, affordable and easy way to assess and interpret resident opinion about important community issues. While standardization of question wording and survey methods provide the rigor to assure valid results, each jurisdiction has enough flexibility to construct a customized version of The NCS™ that asks residents about key local services and important local issues.

Results offer insight into residents' perspectives about local government performance and as such provide important benchmarks for jurisdictions working on performance measurement. The NCS™ is designed to help with budget, land use and strategic planning as well as to communicate with local residents. The NCS™ permits questions to test support for local policies and answers to its questions also speak to community trust and involvement in community-building activities as well as to resident demographic characteristics.

SURVEY VALIDITY

The question of survey validity has two parts: 1) how can a jurisdiction be confident that the results from those who completed the questionnaire are representative of the results that would have been obtained had the survey been administered to the entire population? and 2) how closely do the perspectives recorded on the survey reflect what residents really believe or do?

To answer the first question, the best survey research practices were used for the resources spent to ensure that the results from the survey respondents reflect the opinions of residents in the entire jurisdiction. These practices include:

- Selecting households at random within the jurisdiction.
- Selecting the respondent within the household using an unbiased sampling procedure¹.
- Calling all households at least three times, at different times of the day in order to get a response.
- Offering the survey in Spanish when appropriate and requested by City officials.
- Using the most recent available information about the characteristics of jurisdiction residents to weight the data to reflect the demographics of the population.

The answer to the second question about how closely the perspectives recorded on the survey reflect what residents really believe or do is more complex. Resident responses to surveys are influenced by a variety of factors. For questions about service quality, residents' expectations for service quality play a role as well as the "objective" quality of the service provided, the way the resident perceives the entire community (that is, the context in which the service is provided), the scale on which the resident is asked to record his or her opinion and, of course, the opinion, itself, that a resident holds about the service. Similarly a resident's report of certain behaviors is colored by what he or she believes is the socially desirable response (e.g., reporting tolerant behaviors toward "oppressed groups," likelihood of voting a tax increase for services to poor people, use of alternative modes of travel to work besides the single occupancy vehicle), his or her memory of the actual behavior (if it is not a question speculating about future actions, like a vote), his or her confidence that he or she can be honest without suffering any negative consequences (thus the need for anonymity) as well as the actual behavior itself.

¹ The birthday method requests that the respondent in the household be the adult (18 years old or older) who most recently had a birthday, irrespective of year of birth.

How closely survey results come to recording the way a person really feels or behaves often is measured by the coincidence of reported behavior with observed current behavior (e.g., driving habits), reported intentions to behave with observed future behavior (e.g., voting choices) or reported opinions about current community quality with objective characteristics of the community (e.g., feelings of safety correlated with rates of crime). There is a body of scientific literature that has investigated the relationship between reported behaviors and actual behaviors. Well-conducted surveys, by and large, do capture true respondent behaviors or intentions to act with great accuracy. Predictions of voting outcomes tend to be quite accurate using survey research, as do reported behaviors that are not about highly sensitive issues (e.g., family abuse or other illegal or morally sanctioned activities). For self-reports about highly sensitive issues, statistical adjustments can be made to correct for the respondents' tendency to report what they think the "correct" response should be.

Research on the correlation of resident opinion about service quality and "objective" ratings of service quality tend to be ambiguous, some showing stronger relationships than others. NRC's own research has demonstrated that residents who report the lowest ratings of street repair live in communities with objectively worse street conditions than those who report high ratings of street repair (based on road quality, delay in street repair, number of road repair employees). Similarly, the lowest rated fire services appear to be "objectively" worse than the highest rated fire services (expenditures per capita, response time, "professional" status of firefighters, breadth of services and training provided). Whether or not some research confirms the relationship between what residents think about a community and what can be seen "objectively" in a community, NRC has argued that resident opinion is a perspective that cannot be ignored by government administrators. NRC principals have written, "If you collect trash three times a day but residents think that your trash haul is lousy, you still have a problem."

SURVEY SAMPLING

"Sampling" refers to the method by which survey recipients are chosen. The "sample" refers to all those who were given a chance to participate in the survey. The 6,696 households were randomly selected from a list of registered voters. Some of these numbers are considered ineligible for the survey. Disconnected, fax/data line, or business phone numbers were not included as eligible households. For 3,371 phone numbers where the eligibility status of the household was unknown, 44% were estimated to be eligible. This proportion was assumed to hold for those households not contacted, or where the household refused, and therefore prevented knowing the eligibility status, and only 44% of these numbers were included in the final response rate calculation. Of the approximately 2,931 eligible households, 400 completed interviews providing a response rate of 14%. Approximately 144 households refused the survey.

An individual within each household was selected using the birthday method. The birthday method selects a person within the household by asking the "person whose birthday has most recently passed" to complete the questionnaire. The underlying assumption in this method is that day of birth has no relationship to the way people respond to surveys.

SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

Phone calls were made from December 1, to December 11, 2011 using a Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing system². The survey was administered and the data were recorded electronically. A majority of the interviews were completed on week days, although calls were made on the weekend. All phone numbers were dialed at least three times before replacing with another number, with at least one of the attempts on either a weekend or weekday. The dispositions of the numbers dialed during the survey are listed in the table below.

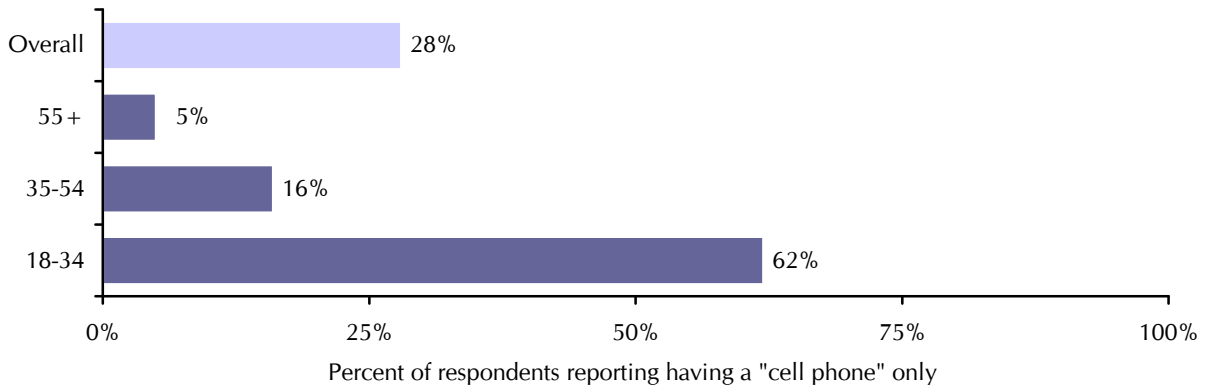
Disposition of All Numbers Called for the 2010 Benicia National Citizen Survey	
Complete	400
Refusal	144
Respondent never available	715
Language problem	63
Always busy	33
No answer	3,326
Call blocking	12
Fax/data line	54
Disconnected number	1,514
Cell phone	16
Business, government office, other organizations	29
Total phone numbers used	6,696
I = Complete Interviews	400
R = Refusal and break off	144
NC = Non Contact	778
O = Other	126
e ³	44%
UH = Unknown household	3,371
Response rate: $I / (I + R + NC + O) + (e(UH))$	14%

² CATI is a software program that automatically dials phone numbers, logs dispositions and records responses to completed interviews.

³ Estimate of e is based on proportion of eligible households among all numbers for which a definitive determination of status was obtained (a very conservative estimate).

In response to the growing number of the cell-phone population (so-called “cord cutters”), which includes a large proportion of young adults, questions about cell phones and land lines are included on The NCS™ questionnaire. As of the middle of 2010 (the most recent estimates available as of the end of 2010), 26.6% of U.S. households had a cell phone but no landline.⁴ Among younger adults (age 18-34), 53.7% of households were “cell-only.” Based on survey results, Thornton has a “cord cutter” population similar to the nationwide 2010 estimates

FIGURE 91: PREVALENCE OF CELL-PHONE ONLY RESPONDENTS IN THORNTON



SURVEY RESPONSE RATE AND CONFIDENCE INTERVALS

It is customary to describe the precision of estimates made from surveys 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 can be any size and quantifies the sampling error or imprecision of the survey results because some residents' opinions are relied on to estimate all residents' opinions. The confidence interval for the City of Thornton survey is no greater than plus or minus five percentage points around any given percent reported for the entire sample (400 completed surveys).

A 95% confidence interval indicates that for every 100 random samples of this many residents, 95 of the confidence intervals created will include the “true” population response. This theory is applied in practice to mean that the “true” perspective of the target population lies within the confidence interval created for a single survey. For example, if 75% of residents rate a service as “excellent” or “good,” then the 4% margin of error (for the 95% confidence interval) indicates that the range of likely responses for the entire jurisdiction is between 71% and 79%. This source of error is called sampling error. In addition to sampling error, other sources of error may affect any survey, including the non-response of residents with opinions different from survey responders. Though standardized on The NCS, on other surveys, differences in question wording, order, translation and data entry, as examples, can lead to somewhat varying results.

For subgroups of responses, the margin of error increases because the sample size for the subgroup is smaller. For subgroups of approximately 100 respondents, the margin of error is plus or minus 10 percentage points

⁴ <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhis/earlyrelease/wireless201012.pdf>

SURVEY DATA WEIGHTING

The demographic characteristics of the survey sample were compared to the current registered voter profile for the city. Sample results were weighted using the population norms to reflect the appropriate percent of those residents. Other discrepancies between the whole population and the sample were also aided by the weighting due to the intercorrelation of many socioeconomic characteristics.

The variables used for weighting were respondent age, gender and ward. This decision was based on:

- The disparity between the survey respondent characteristics and the population norms for these variables
- The saliency of these variables in detecting differences of opinion among subgroups

The primary objective of weighting survey data is to make the survey sample reflective of the larger population of the community. This is done by: 1) reviewing the sample demographics and comparing them to the population norms from the most recent sources and 2) comparing the responses to different questions for demographic subgroups. The demographic characteristics that are least similar to the known demographic profile and yield the most different results are the best candidates for data weighting.

A special software program using mathematical algorithms is used to calculate the appropriate weights. The results of the weighting scheme follow.

Thornton, CO Citizen Survey Weighting Table			
	Population Norm	Unweighted	Weighted
Gender			
Female	52%	51%	52%
Male	48%	49%	48%
Age			
18-34	31%	13%	31%
35-54	43%	36%	43%
55+	26%	51%	26%
Gender and Age			
Female 18-34	17%	7%	18%
Female 35-54	22%	14%	18%
Female 55+	14%	30%	16%
Male 18-34	15%	6%	13%
Male 35-54	21%	22%	25%
Male 55+	12%	21%	10%
Ward			
Ward 1	19%	25%	19%
Ward 2	24%	25%	24%
Ward 3	29%	25%	29%
Ward 4	28%	25%	28%

SURVEY DATA ANALYSIS AND REPORTING

The survey dataset was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Frequency distributions were presented in the body of the report.

Use of the “Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor” Response Scale

The scale on which respondents are asked to record their opinions about service and community quality is “excellent,” “good,” “fair” or “poor” (EGFP). This scale has important advantages over other scale possibilities (very good to very bad; very satisfied to very dissatisfied; strongly agree to strongly disagree, as examples). EGFP is used by the plurality of jurisdictions conducting citizen surveys across the U.S. The advantage of familiarity was one that NRC did not want to dismiss when crafting The National Citizen Survey™ questionnaire, because elected officials, staff and residents already are acquainted with opinion surveys measured this way. EGFP also has the advantage of offering three positive options, rather than only two, over which a resident can offer an opinion. While symmetrical scales often are the right choice in other measurement tasks, NRC has found that ratings of almost every local government service in almost every jurisdiction tend, on average, to be positive (that is, above the scale midpoint). Therefore, to permit finer distinctions among positively rated services, EGFP offers three options across which to spread those ratings. EGFP is more neutral because it requires no positive statement of service quality to judge (as agree-disagree scales require) and, finally, EGFP intends to measure absolute quality of service delivery or community quality (unlike satisfaction scales which ignore residents’ perceptions of quality in favor of their report on the acceptability of the level of service offered).

“Don’t Know” Responses

On many of the questions in the survey respondents may answer “don’t know.” The proportion of respondents giving this reply is shown in the full set of responses included in Appendix A. However, these responses have been removed from the analyses presented in the body of the report. In other words, the tables and graphs display the responses from respondents who had an opinion about a specific item.

Benchmark Comparisons

NRC has been leading the strategic use of surveys for local governments since 1991, when the principals of the company wrote the first edition of what became the classic text on citizen surveying. In *Citizen Surveys: how to do them, how to use them, what they mean*, published by ICMA, not only were the principles for quality survey methods articulated, but both the idea of benchmark data for citizen opinion and the method for gathering benchmark data were pioneered. The argument for benchmarks was called “In Search of Standards.” “What has been missing from a local government’s analysis of its survey results is the context that school administrators can supply when they tell parents how an 80 percent score on the social studies test compares to test results from other school systems...”

NRC’s database of comparative resident opinion is comprised of resident perspectives gathered in citizen surveys from approximately 500 jurisdictions whose residents evaluated local government services. Conducted with typically no fewer than 400 residents in each jurisdiction, opinions are intended to represent over 30 million Americans. NRC has innovated a method for quantitatively integrating the results of surveys that are conducted by NRC with those that others have conducted. The integration methods have been thoroughly described not only in the *Citizen Surveys* book, but also in *Public Administration Review, Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*. Scholars who specialize in the analysis of citizen surveys regularly have relied on this work (e.g., Kelly, J. &

Swindell, D. (2002). Service quality variation across urban space: First steps towards a model of citizen satisfaction. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 24, 271-288.; Van Ryzin, G., Muzzio, D., Immerwahr, S., Gulick, L. & Martinez, E. (2004). Drivers and consequences of citizen satisfaction: An application of the American Customer Satisfaction Index Model to New York City, *Public Administration Review*, 64, 331- 341). The method described in those publications is refined regularly and statistically tested on a growing number of citizen surveys in NRC's proprietary databases. NRC's work on calculating national benchmarks for resident opinions about service delivery and quality of life won the Samuel C. May award for research excellence from the Western Governmental Research Association.

The comparison evaluations are from the most recent survey completed in each jurisdiction; most communities conduct surveys every year or in alternating years. NRC adds the latest results quickly upon survey completion, keeping the benchmark data fresh and relevant.

The Role of Comparisons

Benchmark comparisons are used for performance measurement. Jurisdictions use the comparative information to help interpret their own citizen survey results, to create or revise community plans, to evaluate the success of policy or budget decisions and to measure local government performance. Taking the pulse of the community has little meaning without knowing what pulse rate is too high and what is too low. When surveys of service satisfaction turn up "good" citizen evaluations, jurisdictions need to know how others rate their services to understand if "good" is good enough. Furthermore, in the absence of national or peer community comparisons, a jurisdiction is left with comparing its fire protection rating to its street maintenance rating. That comparison is unfair. Streets always lose to fire. More important and harder questions need to be asked; for example, how do residents' ratings of fire service compare to opinions about fire service in other communities?

A police department that provides the fastest and most efficient service – one that closes most of its cases, solves most of its crimes and keeps the crime rate low – still has a problem to fix if the residents in the community it intends to protect believe services are not very good compared to ratings given by residents to their own objectively "worse" departments. The benchmark data can help that police department – or any department – to understand how well citizens think it is doing. Without the comparative data, it would be like bowling in a tournament without knowing what the other teams are scoring. NRC recommends that citizen opinion be used in conjunction with other sources of data about budget, personnel and politics to help managers know how to respond to comparative results.

Jurisdictions in the benchmark database are distributed geographically across the country and range from small to large in population size. Most commonly, comparisons are made to the entire database. Comparisons may also be made to subsets of jurisdictions (for example, within a given region or population category). Despite the differences in jurisdiction characteristics, all are in the business of providing local government services to residents. Though individual jurisdiction circumstances, resources and practices vary, the objective in every community is to provide services that are so timely, tailored and effective that residents conclude the services are of the highest quality. High ratings in any jurisdiction, like SAT scores in any teen household, bring pride and a sense of accomplishment.

Comparison of Thornton to the Benchmark Database

The City of Thornton chose to have comparisons made to two different subsets of similar jurisdictions from the database (other northern front-range Colorado communities and a selection of

national economic competitor communities). A benchmark comparison (the average rating from all the comparison jurisdictions where a similar question was asked) has been provided when a similar question on the City of Thornton Survey was included in NRC's database and there were at least five jurisdictions in which the question was asked. For most questions compared to the entire dataset, there were more than 100 jurisdictions included in the benchmark comparison.

Where comparisons for quality ratings were available, the City of Thornton's results were generally noted as being "above" the benchmark, "below" the benchmark or "similar" to the benchmark. For some questions – those related to resident behavior, circumstance or to a local problem – the comparison to the benchmark is designated as "more," "similar" or "less" (for example, the percent of crime victims, residents visiting a park or residents identifying code enforcement as a problem.) In instances where ratings are considerably higher or lower than the benchmark, these ratings have been further demarcated by the attribute of "much," (for example, "much less" or "much above"). These labels come from a statistical comparison of the City of Thornton's rating to the benchmark where a rating is considered "similar" if it is within the margin of error; "above," "below," "more" or "less" if the difference between your jurisdiction's rating and the benchmark is greater the margin of error; and "much above," "much below," "much more" or "much less" if the difference between your jurisdiction's rating and the benchmark is more than twice the margin of error.

APPENDIX C: SURVEY MATERIALS

The following pages contain the survey used for the phone interviews.

The City of Thornton 2011 Citizen Survey

TEXT IN CAPS IS INTERVIEWER INSTRUCTIONS ONLY AND IS NOT TO BE READ ALOUD.

Hello, I'm calling on behalf of the City of Thornton. Thornton wants to know what you think about your community and municipal government. We are not trying to sell you anything. Your responses are anonymous and will be reported in group form only. We need to complete this questionnaire if you are the Thornton registered voter in the household who most recently had a birthday. Is that you? May I speak with that person?

[REPEAT FIRST PARAGRAPH WITH NEW PERSON.]

A. Do you live within the City limits of the City of Thornton?

- 1. YES
- 2. NO [THANK AND TERMINATE]
- 98. DON'T KNOW [THANK AND TERMINATE]
- 99. REFUSED [THANK AND TERMINATE]

1. First, I'm going to ask you some questions about the quality of life in Thornton. How do you rate... [ROTATE A-F. ALWAYS ASK F LAST.] Would you say it is excellent, good, fair or poor?

- a. Thornton as a place to live
- b. Your neighborhood as a place to live
- c. Thornton as a place to raise children
- d. Thornton as a place to work
- e. Thornton as a place to retire
- f. The overall quality of life in Thornton

[READ SCALE AS NECESSARY]

- 1. Excellent
- 2. Good
- 3. Fair
- 4. Poor
- 5. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

The City of Thornton 2011 Citizen Survey

2. Please tell me if you think each of the following characteristics as it relates to Thornton as a whole is excellent, good, fair or poor. How about [ROTATE A-FF.]?

- a. Sense of community
- b. Openness and acceptance of the community toward people of diverse backgrounds
- c. Overall appearance of Thornton
- d. Cleanliness of Thornton
- e. Overall quality of new development in Thornton
- f. Variety of housing options
- g. Overall quality of business and service establishments in Thornton
- h. Shopping opportunities
- i. Opportunities to attend cultural activities
- j. Recreational opportunities
- k. Employment opportunities
- l. Educational opportunities
- m. Opportunities to participate in social events and activities
- n. Opportunities to participate in religious or spiritual events and activities
- o. Opportunities to volunteer
- p. Opportunities to participate in community matters
- q. Ease of car travel in Thornton
- r. Ease of bus travel in Thornton
- t. Ease of bicycle travel in Thornton
- u. Ease of walking in Thornton
- v. Availability of paths and walking trails
- w. Traffic flow on major streets
- x. Amount of public parking
- y. Availability of affordable quality housing
- z. Availability of affordable quality child care
- aa. Availability of affordable quality health care
- bb. Availability of affordable quality food
- cc. Availability of preventive health services
- dd. Air quality
- ee. Quality of overall natural environment in Thornton
- ff. Overall image or reputation of Thornton

[READ SCALE AS NECESSARY]

- 1. Excellent
- 2. Good
- 3. Fair
- 4. Poor
- 5. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED

[DO NOT READ]

The City of Thornton 2011 Citizen Survey

3. **Please tell me if you think the speed of growth in the following categories in Thornton over the past 2 years is much too slow, somewhat too slow, the right amount, somewhat too fast or much too fast. How about [ROTATE A-C]...**

- a. Population growth
- b. Retail growth, including stores, restaurants, etc.
- c. Jobs growth

[READ SCALE AS NECESSARY]

1. Much too slow
2. Somewhat too slow
3. Right amount
4. Somewhat too fast
5. Much too fast
6. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

4. **To what degree, if at all, are run down buildings, weed lots or junk vehicles a problem in Thornton? Would you say [READ SCALE]...**

1. Not a problem
2. Minor problem
3. Moderate problem
4. Major problem
5. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

5. **Please rate how safe you feel from the following occurring to you in Thornton. Do you feel very safe, somewhat safe, neither safe nor unsafe, somewhat unsafe or very unsafe? How about [ROTATE A-C]...**

- a. Violent crime, such as rape, assault or robbery
- b. Property crimes, such as burglary or theft
- c. Environmental hazards, including toxic waste

[READ SCALE AS NECESSARY]

1. Very safe
2. Somewhat safe
3. Neither safe nor unsafe
4. Somewhat unsafe
5. Very unsafe
6. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

6. **Please rate how safe you feel [ROTATE IN PAIRS – A + B, C + D]... Do you feel very safe, somewhat safe, neither safe nor unsafe, somewhat unsafe or very unsafe?**

- a. In your neighborhood during the day
- b. In your neighborhood after dark
- c. In Thornton's downtown area during the day
- d. In Thornton's downtown area after dark

[READ SCALE AS NECESSARY]

1. Very safe
2. Somewhat safe
3. Neither safe nor unsafe
4. Somewhat unsafe
5. Very unsafe
6. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

The City of Thornton 2011 Citizen Survey

7. **Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of the City of Thornton Police Department within the last 12 months?**
1. No [SKIP TO Q9]
 2. Yes [ASK Q8]
 3. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ] [SKIP TO Q9]
8. **What was your overall impression of your most recent contact with the City of Thornton Police Department?**
1. Excellent
 2. Good
 3. Fair
 4. Poor
 5. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ]
9. **During the past 12 months, were you or anyone in your household the victim of any crime?**
1. No [SKIP TO Q11]
 2. Yes [ASK Q10]
 3. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ] [SKIP TO Q11]
10. **Was this crime or these crimes reported to the police?**
1. No
 2. Yes
 3. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ]
11. **In the last 12 months, about how many times, if ever, have you or other household members participated in the following activities in Thornton? Was it never, once or twice, 3 to 12 times, 13 to 26 times or more than 26 times? How about [ROTATE A-t2]...**
- a. Used Thornton "Anythink" public libraries or their services
 - b. Used Thornton recreation centers
 - c. Participated in a recreation program or activity
 - d. Visited a park
 - e. Ridden a local bus within Thornton
 - f. Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting
 - g. Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other City-sponsored public meeting on cable television, the Internet or other media
 - h. Read Thornton City Voice Newspaper
 - i. Visited the City of Thornton Web site at www.cityofthornton.net
 - j. Recycled used paper, cans or bottles from your home
 - k. Volunteered your time to some group or activity in Thornton
 - l. Participated in religious or spiritual activities in Thornton
 - m. Participated in a club or civic group in Thornton
 - n. Provided help to a friend or neighbor
 - t1. Participated in a Senior Center program or activity
 - t2. Attended a Thornton Arts & Cultural Center event

[READ SCALE AS NECESSARY]

1. Never
2. Once or twice
3. 3 to 12 times
4. 13 to 26 times
5. More than 26 times
6. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

The City of Thornton 2011 Citizen Survey

12. About how often, if at all, do you talk to or visit with your immediate neighbors? These are the people who live in the 10 or 20 households that are closest to you. Would you say [READ SCALE]...

1. Just about everyday
2. Several times a week
3. Several times a month
4. Less than several times a month
5. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED

[DO NOT READ]

13. Now I'm going to ask you some questions about the quality of Thornton services. Tell me whether you think each service is excellent, good, fair or poor? How about [ROTATE A-LL.]...

- a. Police services
- b. Fire services
- c. Ambulance or emergency medical services
- d. Crime prevention
- e. Fire prevention and education
- f. Municipal courts
- g. Traffic enforcement
- h. Street repair
- i. Street cleaning
- j. Street lighting
- k. Snow removal
- l. Sidewalk maintenance
- m. Traffic signal timing
- n. Bus or transit services
- o. Garbage collection
- p. Recycling
- q. Leaf pick-up
- r. Storm drainage
- s. Drinking water
- t. Sewer services
- u. Power utility, including electric and/or gas
- v. City parks
- w. Recreation programs or classes
- x. Recreation centers or facilities
- y. Land use, planning and zoning
- z. Code enforcement, including weeds, abandoned buildings, etc.
- aa. Animal control
- bb. Economic development
- cc. Health services
- dd. Services to seniors
- ee. Services to youth
- ff. Services to low-income people
- gg. Public library services
- hh. Public information services
- ii. Public schools
- jj. Cable television
- kk. Emergency preparedness – these are services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations
- ll. Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts

The City of Thornton 2011 Citizen Survey

[READ SCALE AS NECESSARY]

1. Excellent
2. Good
3. Fair
4. Poor
5. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

14. Would you say that the overall quality of services provided by [RANDOMLY INSERT A, B, C or D] is excellent, good, fair or poor? How about the overall quality of services provided by [ROTATE REMAINING]...

- a. The City of Thornton
- b. The Federal Government
- c. The State Government
- d. Adams County Government

[READ SCALE AS NECESSARY]

1. Excellent
2. Good
3. Fair
4. Poor
5. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

15. How likely are you to [INSERT A OR B]? Would you say very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely or very unlikely? And how likely are you to [ASK REMAINING]?

- a. Recommend living in Thornton to someone who asks
- b. Remain in Thornton for the next five years

[READ SCALE AS NECESSARY]

1. Very likely
2. Somewhat likely
3. Somewhat unlikely
4. Very unlikely
5. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

16. Can you tell me what impact, if any, 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 or very negative?

1. Very positive
2. Somewhat positive
3. Neutral
4. Somewhat negative
5. Very negative
6. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

The City of Thornton 2011 Citizen Survey

17. Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of the City of Thornton Fire Department within the last 12 months?

- 1. No [SKIP TO Q19]
- 2. Yes [ASK Q18]
- 3. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ] [SKIP TO Q19]

18. What was your overall impression of your most recent contact with the City of Thornton Fire Department?

- 1. Excellent
- 2. Good
- 3. Fair
- 4. Poor
- 5. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

19. I'm going to ask you a couple of questions about City employees. Have you had any in-person, phone or email contact with an employee of the City of Thornton within the last 12 months? This includes police, receptionists, planners or any others.

- 1. No [SKIP TO Q21]
- 2. Yes [ASK Q20]
- 3. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ][SKIP TO Q21]

20. Can you tell me what your impression was of City employees in your most recent contact? Would you rate them as excellent, good, fair or poor in the following areas [ROTATE A-C, ASK D LAST]?

- a. Knowledge
- b. Responsiveness
- c. Courtesy
- d. Overall impression

[READ SCALE AS NECESSARY]

- 1. Excellent
- 2. Good
- 3. Fair
- 4. Poor
- 5. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

21. Now I'm going to ask you some questions about your impression of the City government. Tell me whether you think each of the following is excellent, good, fair or poor. How about [ROTATE A-C]?

- a. The value of services for the taxes paid to Thornton
- b. The overall direction that Thornton is taking
- c. The job Thornton government does at welcoming citizen involvement

[READ SCALE AS NECESSARY]

- 1. Excellent
- 2. Good
- 3. Fair
- 4. Poor
- 5. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

The City of Thornton 2011 Citizen Survey

CUSTOM QUESTIONS

22a. Some people have suggested that the City of Thornton and Adams County have competing interests and that the City should consider leaving Adams County and becoming a separate City and County of Thornton. As a separate City and County, Thornton would have a separate tax base and be responsible for providing services citizens receive from the City as well as Adams County. To what degree would you support or oppose Thornton further exploring this suggestion?

[READ SCALE AS NECESSARY]

- 1. Strongly support
- 2. Somewhat support
- 3. Somewhat oppose
- 4. Strongly oppose
- 5. DON'T KNOW [DO NOT READ]
- 6. REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

22b. If an election were held today by RTD for an additional four-tenths-of-a-cent sales tax, or four cents for every 10 dollars, to finish FasTracks by 2020, including the North Metro Line, would you vote yes or no?

[READ SCALE AS NECESSARY]

- 1. No
- 2. Yes
- 3. DON'T KNOW [DO NOT READ]
- 4. REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

22c. If an election were held today to renew and extend the City's quarter-of-a-cent sales tax, or two and a half cents for every 10 dollars, dedicated to Parks and Open Space, which is set to expire in 2018, would you vote yes or no?

[READ SCALE AS NECESSARY]

- 1. No
- 2. Yes
- 3. DON'T KNOW [DO NOT READ]
- 4. REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

The City of Thornton 2011 Citizen Survey

DEMOGRAPHICS

Our last questions are about you and your household. Again, all of your responses to this survey are completely anonymous and will be reported in group form only.

D1. Are you currently employed for pay?

1. No [SKIP TO D3]
2. Yes, full time [ASK D2]
3. Yes, part time [ASK D2]
4. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ][SKIP TO D3]

D2. During a typical week, how many days do you commute to work by each of the following? [ROTATE A-F, G ALWAYS LAST]

- a. A motorized vehicle such as a car, truck, van or motorcycle by yourself
- b. A motorized vehicle such as a car, truck, van or motorcycle with other children or adults
- c. Bus, rail, subway or other public transportation
- d. Walking
- e. Bicycling
- f. Working from home
- g. Some other mode of transportation

_____ DAYS[ENTER WHOLE NUMBERS – VALUES 0-7 OR 99 FOR DK]
[ENTER "0" FOR "NONE/NO DAYS"]
99. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

D3. How many years have you lived in Thornton?

1. Less than 2 years
2. 2-5 years
3. 6-10 years
4. 11-20 years
5. More than 20 years
6. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

D4. Which best describes the building you live in?

1. One family house detached from any other houses
2. House attached to one or more houses, such as a duplex or townhome
3. Building with two or more apartments or condominiums
4. Mobile home
5. Other
6. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

D5. Is this house, apartment or mobile home...

1. Rented for cash or occupied without cash payment?
2. Owned by you or someone in this house with a mortgage or free and clear?
3. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

The City of Thornton 2011 Citizen Survey

D6. 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?

1. Less than \$300 per month
2. \$300 to \$599 per month
3. \$600 to \$999 per month
4. \$1,000 to \$1,499 per month
5. \$1,500 to \$2,499 per month
6. \$2,500 or more per month
7. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

D7. Do any children 17 or under live in your household?

1. No
2. Yes
3. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

D8. Are you or any other members of your household aged 65 or older?

1. No
2. Yes
3. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

D9. Please stop me when I reach the category that includes your anticipated total household income before taxes for the current year:

1. Less than \$25,000
2. \$25,000 to less than \$50,000
3. \$50,000 to less than \$100,000
4. \$100,000 to less than \$150,000
5. \$150,000 or more
6. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

D10. Are you Spanish, Hispanic or Latino?

1. No
2. Yes
3. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

D11. What is your race? [MULTIPLE RESPONSE. PROBE]

1. American Indian or Alaskan Native
2. Asian, Asian Indian or Pacific Islander
3. Black or African American
4. White
5. Other
6. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

D12. Please stop me when I read the correct age category. Are you...

1. 18-24 years
2. 25-34 years
3. 35-44 years
4. 45-54 years
5. 55-64 years
6. 65-74 years
7. 75 years or older
8. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

The City of Thornton 2011 Citizen Survey

D16. Do you have a cell phone?

1. No
2. Yes
3. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

D17. Do you have a land line at home?

1. No
2. Yes
3. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

D18. If you have both a cell phone and a land line, which do you consider your primary telephone number?

1. Cell
2. Land
3. Both
4. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

D19. Do you have a computer in your home that you access the Internet with?

1. No
2. Yes
3. DON'T KNOW/REFUSED [DO NOT READ]

D13. RESPONDENT GENDER [DO NOT ASK]

1. FEMALE
2. MALE

Thank you very much for your time. Your answers will help the City of Thornton make decisions that affect your community.

[TERMINATE INTERVIEW]