

# THE NCS™

THE NATIONAL COMMUNITY SURVEY™

## San Marcos, TX

The National Community Survey™

2025 Results





## Civic Communication & Analytics Platform

Smarter, better-connected communities. A civic surveying, policy polling, and constituent communication tech platform.

Visit us online at  
**polco.us**



## Advanced Survey Science & Performance Analytics

Data insights to help communities move forward. The premiere provider of professional civic surveys and performance benchmarking analyses.

Partners with:



# Resident Surveys in Local Governance



**Monitor trends  
in resident  
opinion**



**Measure  
government  
performance**



**Inform budget,  
land use,  
strategic  
planning  
decisions**



**Benchmark  
against other  
communities**

# The NCS™ Facets of Community Livability



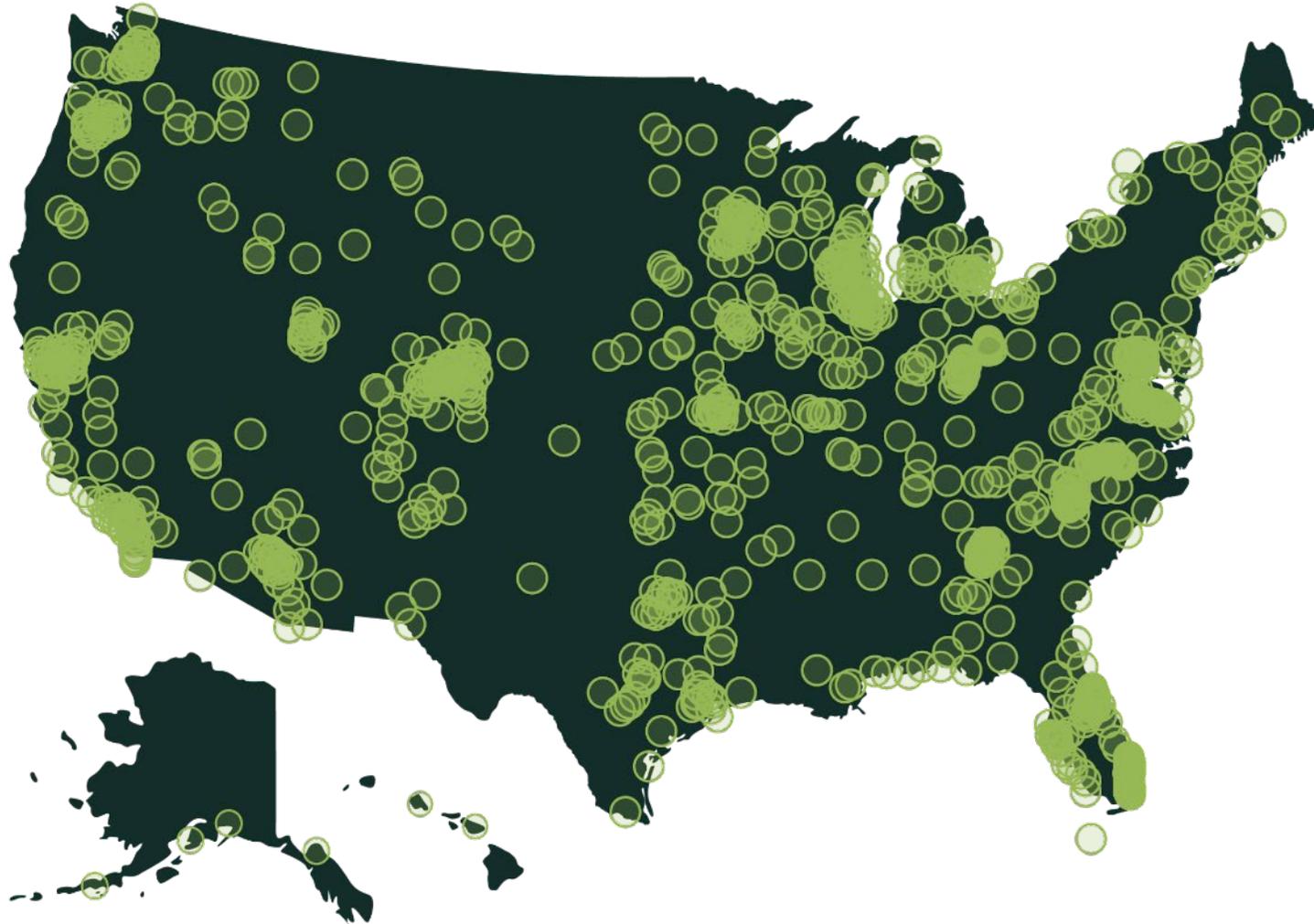
# The National Community Survey™ in San Marcos



## The NCS™ for San Marcos, TX

- Second time conducting The NCS (previous survey in 2022)
- Survey conducted from September 29<sup>th</sup> 2025 – November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025
- Mailing approach employed:
  - Probability-based sample of 3,500 randomly selected households
  - 225 total responses received
  - 7% overall response rate
  - Non-probability, open-participation survey: 1,095 responses
- Results statistically weighted to reflect San Marcos overall
- 95% confidence interval with a +/- 6.5% margin of error

# Polco's Benchmarking Database



About  
**400**  
comparison  
communities  
across the  
nation.

Representing  
the opinions of  
more than **50**  
**million**  
residents.



# Overview of Survey Results

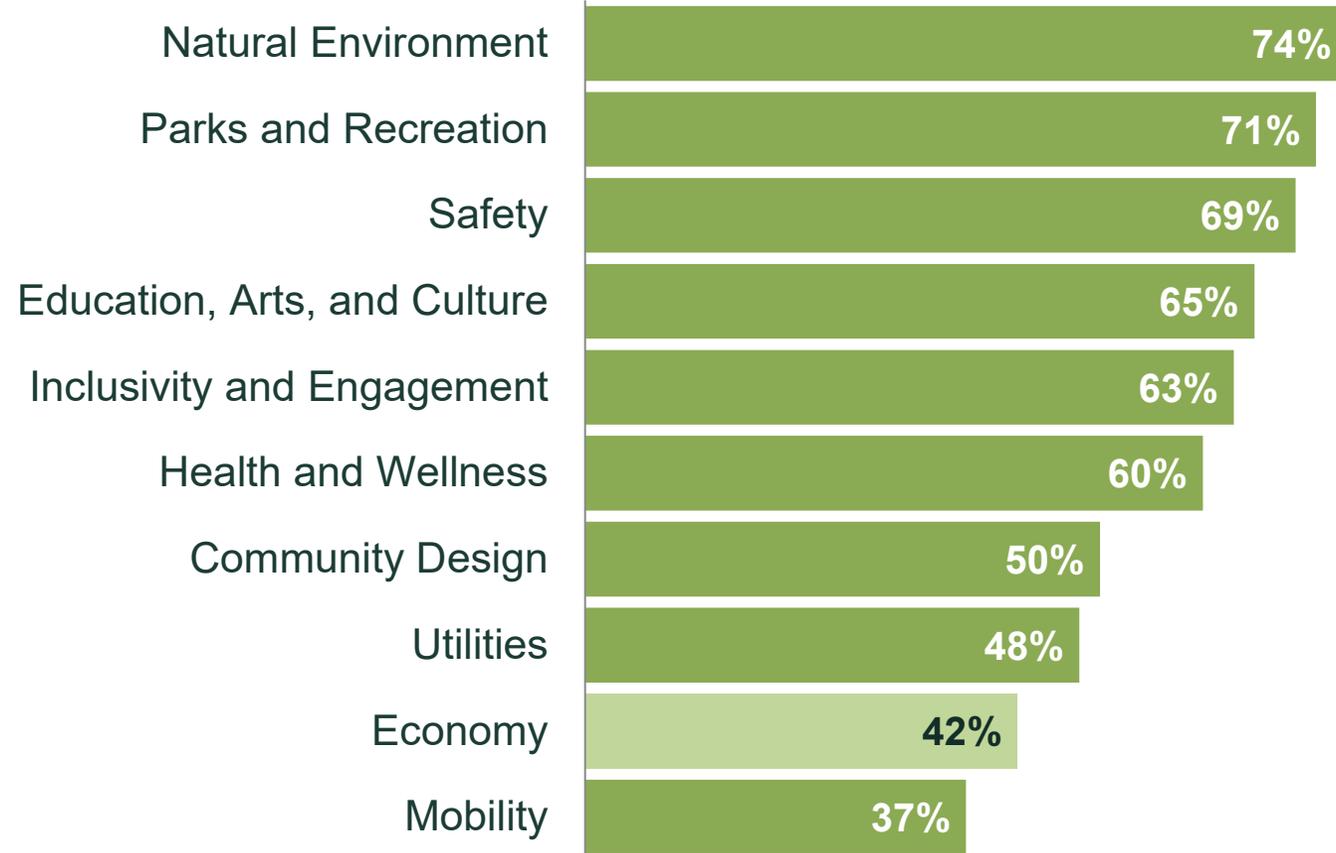


# Facets of Community Livability: Quality



## National Benchmark Comparisons:

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



*Percent excellent or good*



# Facets of Community Livability: Importance



## National Benchmark Comparisons:

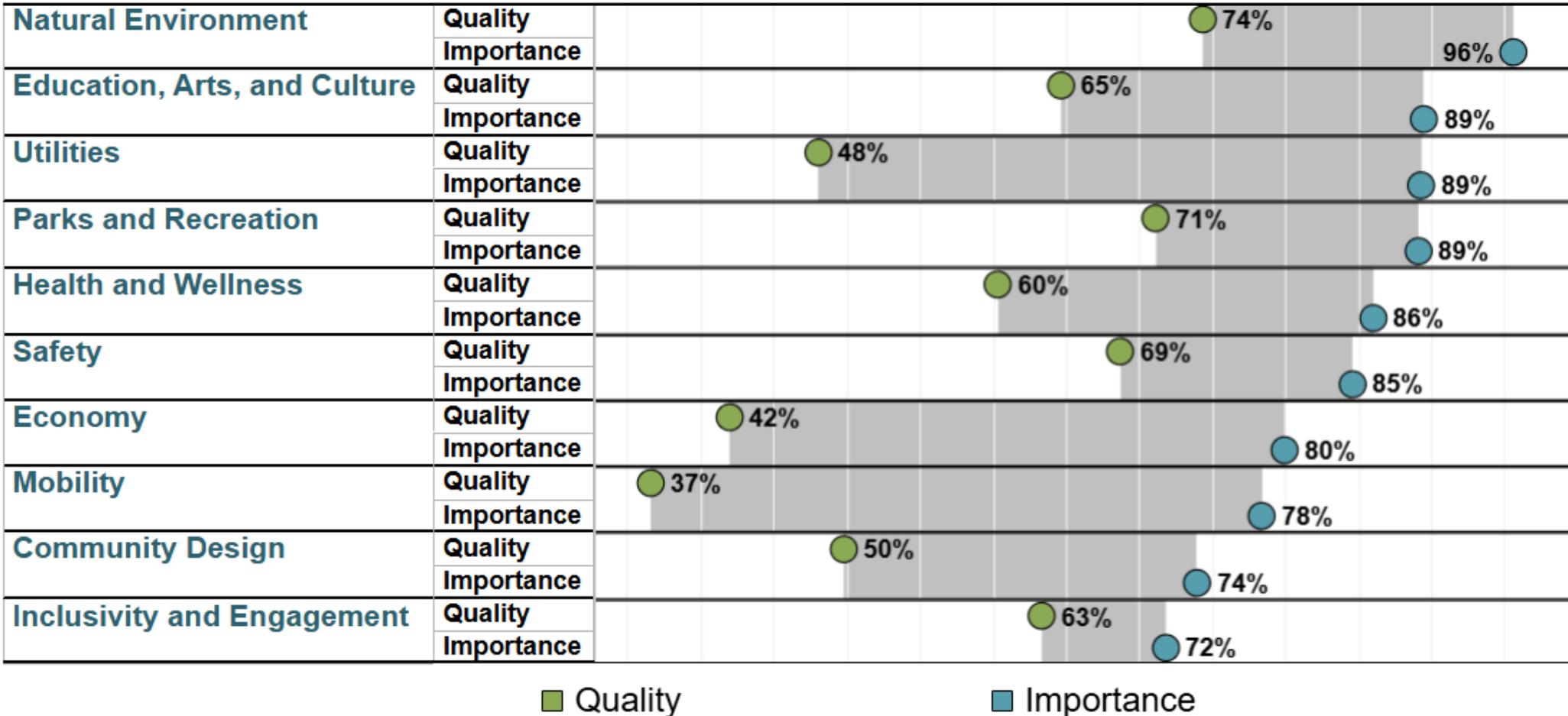
- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



*Percent essential or very important*



# Balancing Quality and Importance





# Comparisons to National Benchmarks

4 received **higher** ratings

100 received **similar** ratings

18 received **lower** ratings





# Comparisons to Custom Benchmarks



9 received **higher** ratings

105 received **similar** ratings

8 received **lower** ratings





## Comparisons to Previous Survey (2022)



34 received **higher** ratings

82 received **similar** ratings

6 received **lower** ratings





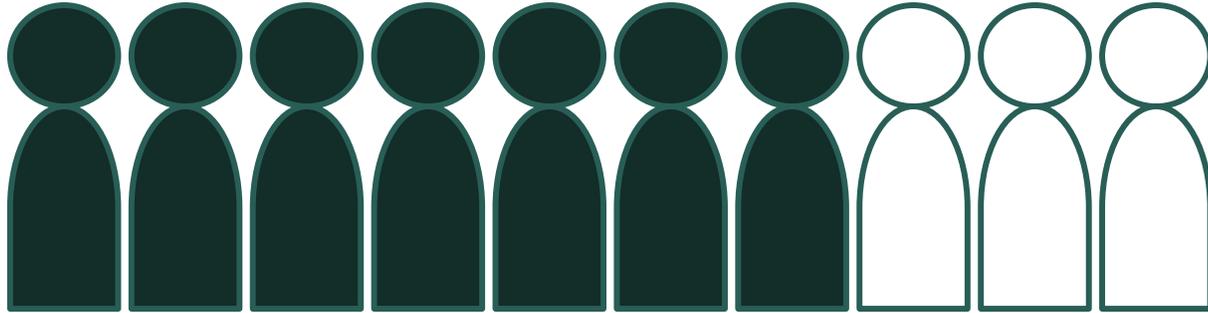


San Marcos is recognized as a desirable place to live, visit, and raise families.

1



# Overall Community Quality



About

**8 in 10**

residents gave **excellent** or **good** ratings to:

- San Marcos as a place to live
- The overall quality of life in San Marcos

**8 in 10 residents**

- Plan to remain in San Marcos for the next five years
- Would recommend living in San Marcos to someone who asked



Results indicate that residents feel safe across the community.

2



# Safety in San Marcos



Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel:

**National Benchmark Comparison**

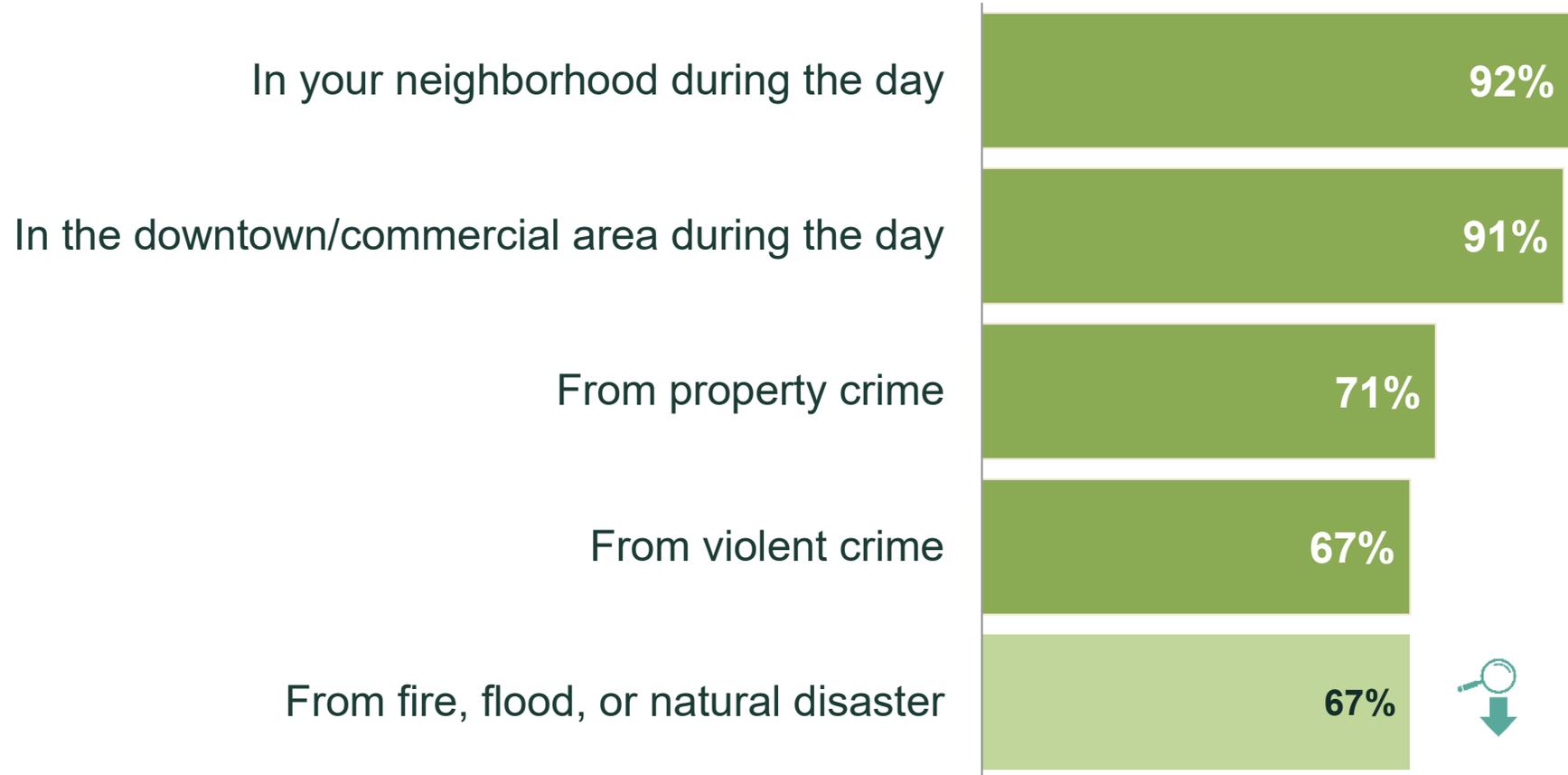
- Higher
- Similar
- Lower

**Custom Benchmark**

Higher/Lower than

**2025 vs 2022:**

Increasing/Decreasing



Percent very or somewhat safe

# Safety Services in San Marcos



Please rate the quality of the following services in San Marcos.

**National Benchmark Comparison**

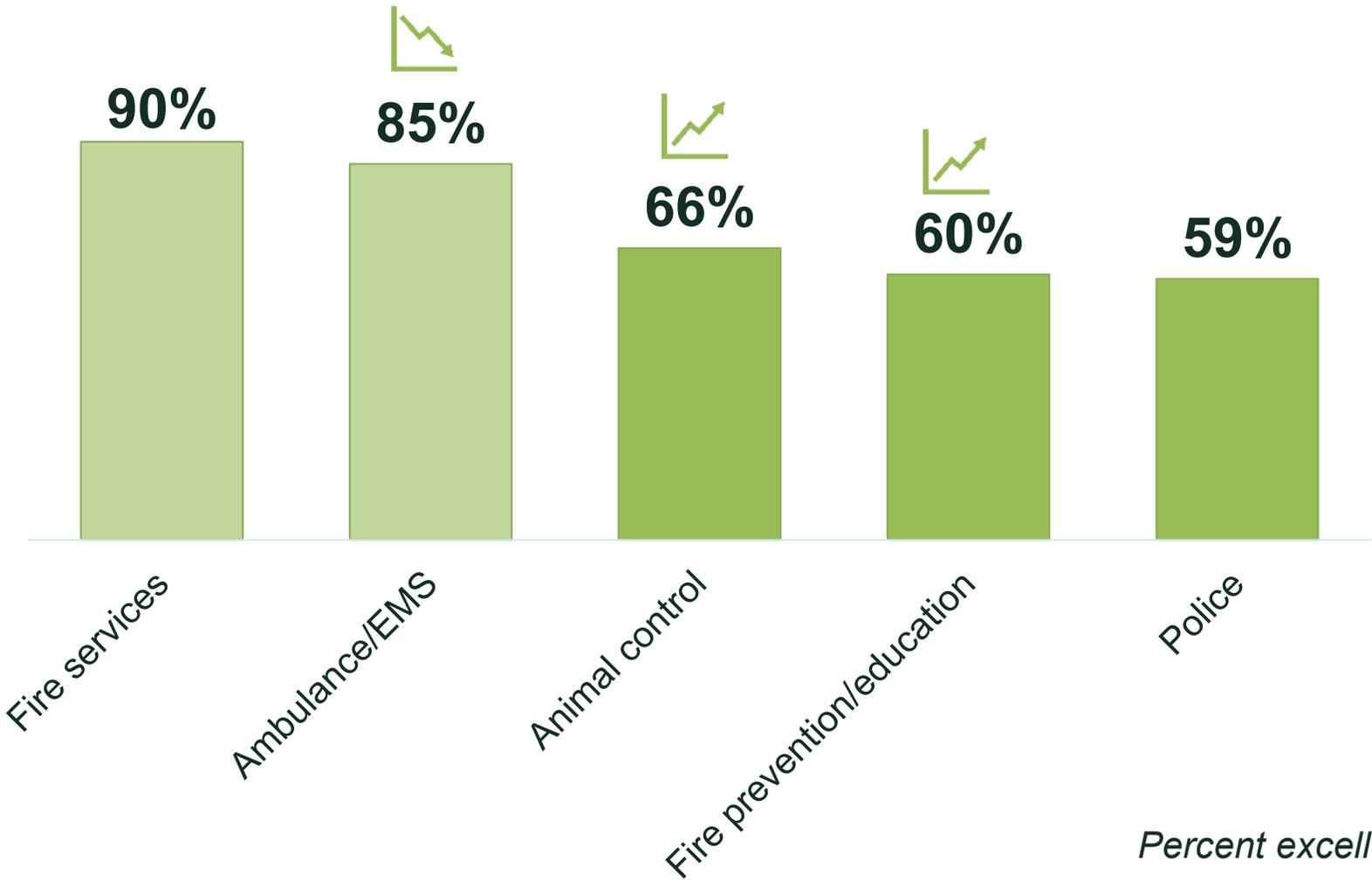
- Higher
- Similar
- Lower

**Custom Benchmark**

Higher/Lower than

**2025 vs 2022:**

Increasing/Decreasing



Percent excellent or good



# The Economy in San Marcos



Please rate each of the following in the San Marcos community:

## National Benchmark Comparison

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower

## Custom Benchmark

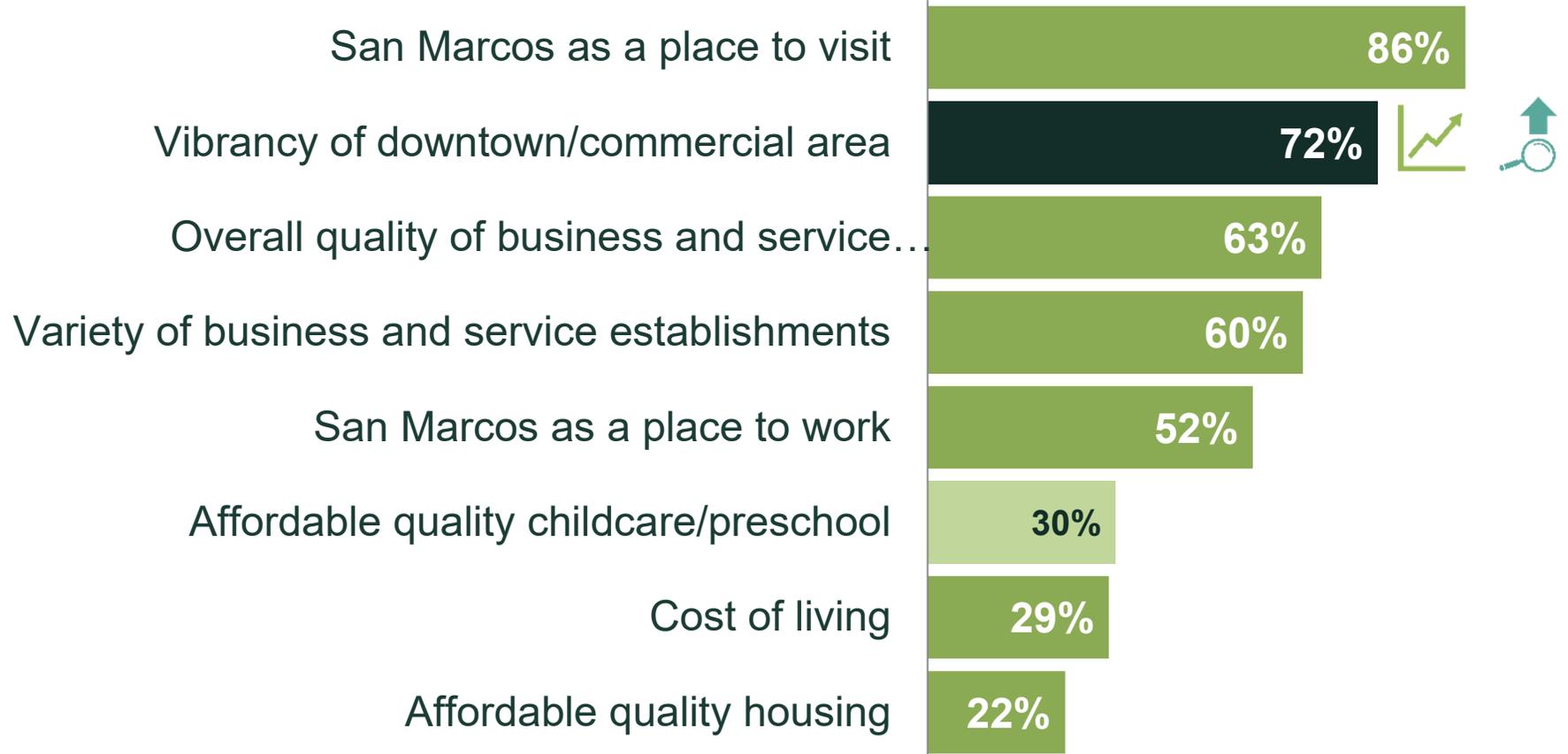


Higher/Lower than

## 2025 vs 2022:



Increasing/Decreasing



Percent excellent or good



**Mobility experiences vary across modes, reflecting both gains and declines.**

4



# Mobility in San Marcos



Please rate each of the following in the San Marcos community:

## National Benchmark Comparison

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower

## Custom Benchmark

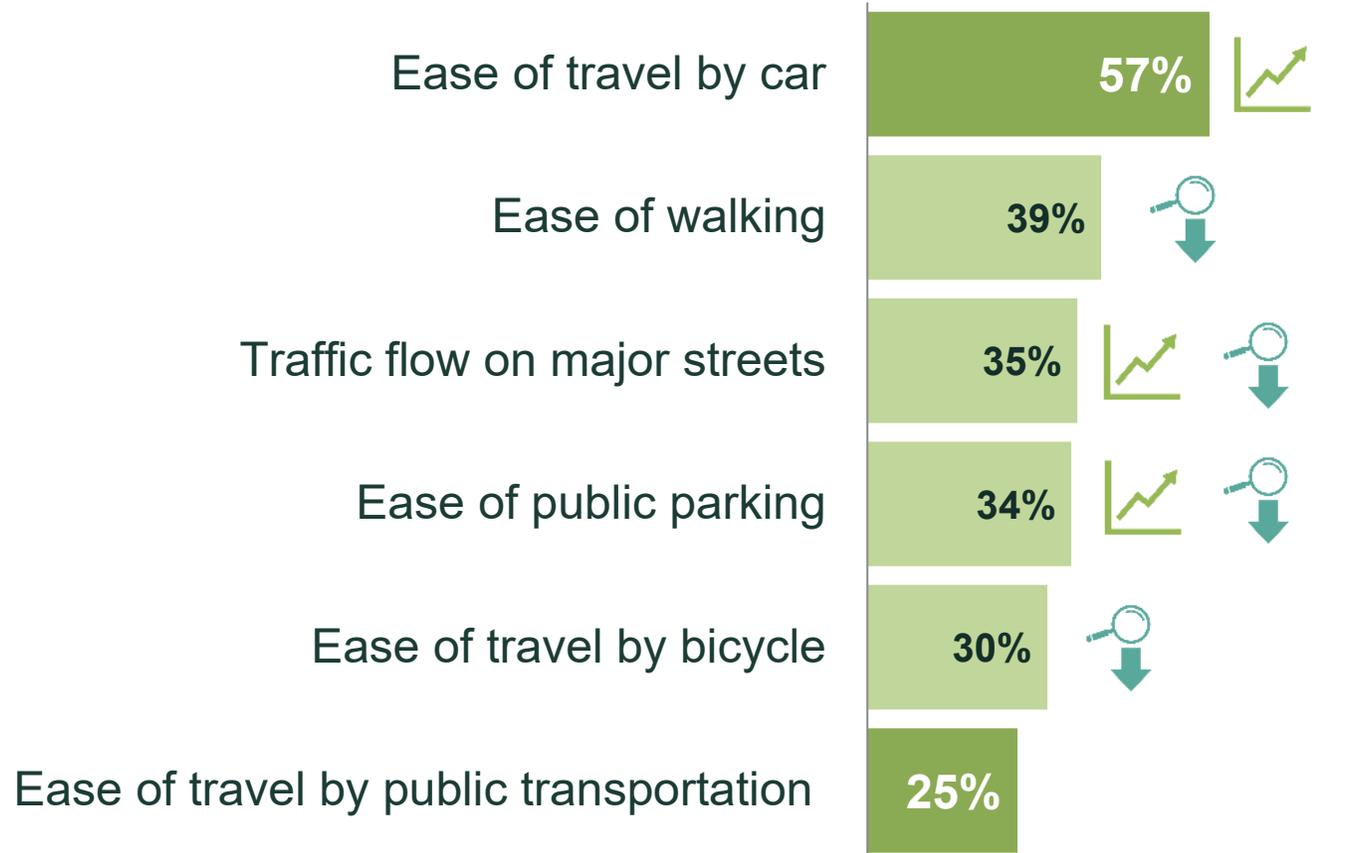


Higher/Lower than

## 2025 vs 2022:



Increasing/Decreasing



Percent excellent or good

# Mobility Services in San Marcos



## National Benchmark Comparison

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower

## 2025 vs 2022:

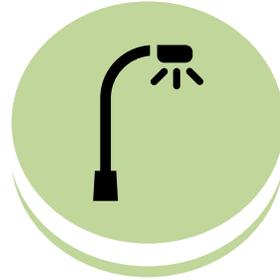


Increasing/Decreasing



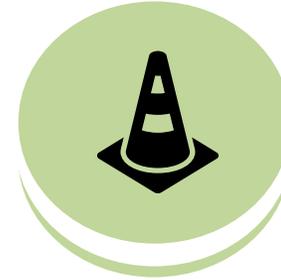
**59%**

Street cleaning



**58%**

Street lighting



**48%**

Sidewalk maintenance



**47%**

Traffic enforcement



**41%**

Traffic signal timing

Percent excellent or good



Civic engagement, pride, and government services show significant gains.

5



# Community Engagement



Please rate each of the following in the San Marcos community:

## National Benchmark Comparison

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower

## Custom Benchmark



Higher/Lower than

## 2025 vs 2022:



Increasing/Decreasing

Overall customer service by city employees

84%



Attracting people from diverse backgrounds

76%



Sense of civic/community pride

68%



Public information services

63%



Making all residents feel welcome

62%

Neighborliness of residents

57%

*Percent excellent or good*



# Additional Special Topics

13. First, please indicate how often, if at all, do you leave San Marcos to frequent each of the following types of businesses in nearby communities. Then, please indicate whether you think the City of San Marcos should actively pursue attracting more of each type of business.

	2 times a week or more	Weekly	A few times a month	Never	No	Yes
Grocery stores (H-E-B plus!, Trader Joe's, Whole Foods, etc.).....	1	2	3	4	1	2
Club or wholesale retailers (Costco) .....	1	2	3	4	1	2
Fast food restaurants .....	1	2	3	4	1	2
Casual dine-in restaurants.....	1	2	3	4	1	2
Upscale/fine dining restaurants.....	1	2	3	4	1	2
Bars/nightlife .....	1	2	3	4	1	2
Boutique/private retail shopping opportunities .....	1	2	3	4	1	2
Large-scale/big box retail shopping opportunities .....	1	2	3	4	1	2
Personal services (e.g., salons, spas, fitness centers, etc.).....	1	2	3	4	1	2
Family entertainment .....	1	2	3	4	1	2

14. The City is considering introducing paid parking in the downtown area. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose
Paid parking would help address parking availability downtown.....	1	2	3	4
Paid parking would help make parking spaces available more often, so more people can access businesses downtown .....	1	2	3	4
Paid parking would discourage long-term use of high-demand spaces near businesses.....	1	2	3	4
Paid parking would provide a necessary source of revenue for the City .....	1	2	3	4
Paid parking would negatively impact downtown businesses .....	1	2	3	4
Overall, paid parking would be an effective tool for managing downtown parking concerns.....	1	2	3	4

15. How much of a source, if at all, are each of the following for you for getting information about the City of San Marcos government and its activities, events, and services?

	Major source	Minor source	Not a source
City website (www.sanmarcostx.gov) .....	1	2	3
Regional media outlets (Austin or San Antonio tv, radio, newspapers, etc.) .....	1	2	3
Government access channel (Spectrum 10 or Grande 16) .....	1	2	3
San Marcos Council meetings and other public meetings.....	1	2	3
Talking with San Marcos officials and/or San Marcos employees .....	1	2	3
City of San Marcos communications via social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) .....	1	2	3
Word-of-mouth (friends, family members, community organizations) .....	1	2	3
Direct mailings (postcards and flyers) .....	1	2	3
Utility bill stuffers .....	1	2	3
City newsletter/San Marcos News Hub.....	1	2	3
Portable messaging signs (Digital information boards in neighborhoods).....	1	2	3
Other:.....	1	2	3

16. When thinking about ways to engage with the City of San Marcos, what is your preferred way to participate?

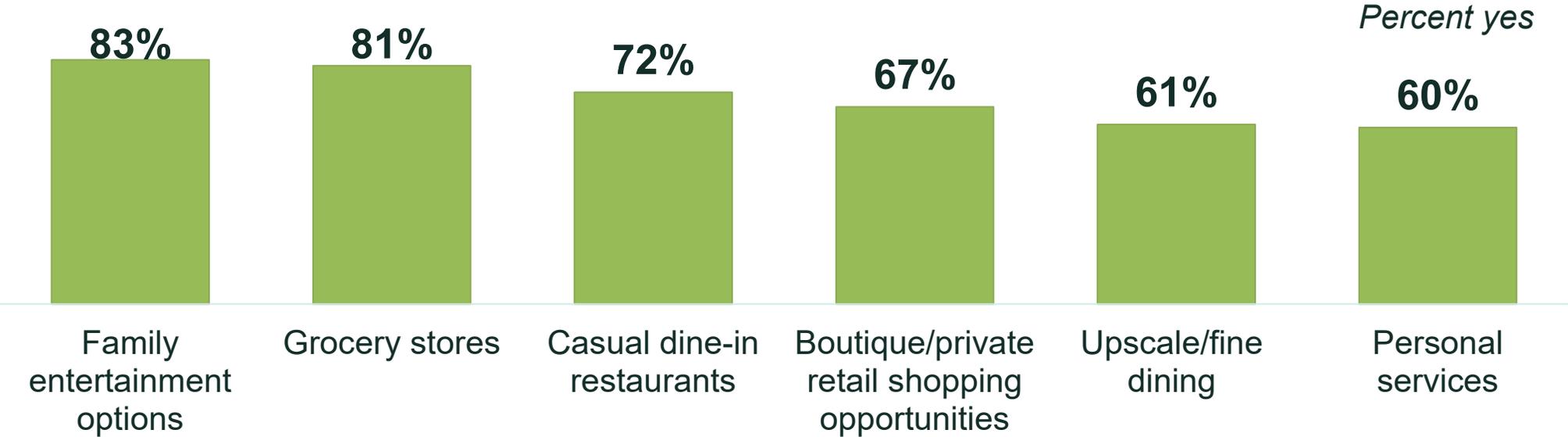
- Virtual meetings
- In-person Town Halls
- Community events
- Neighborhood meetings
- Online platforms (e.g., City website, social media, discussion boards)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

# Business Exploration



First, please indicate how often, if at all, do you leave San Marcos to frequent each of the following types of businesses in nearby communities.

Then, please indicate whether you think the City of San Marcos should actively pursue attracting more of each type of business.

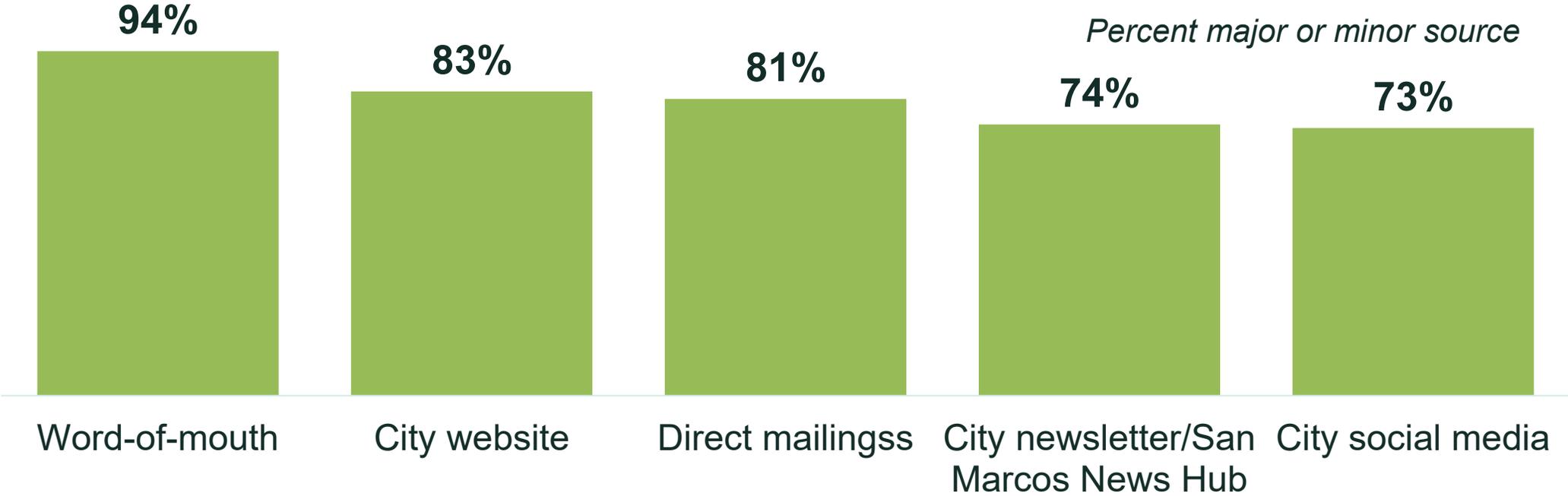


# Citizen Participation



How much of a source are each of the following for getting information about the City of San Marcos government and its activities, events, and services?

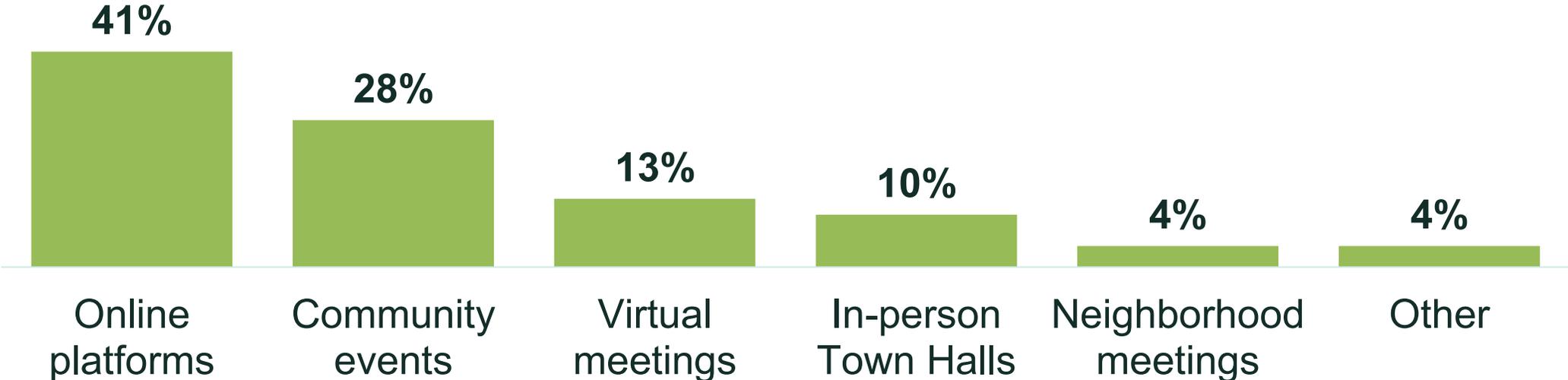
## Top Sources



# Citizen Participation



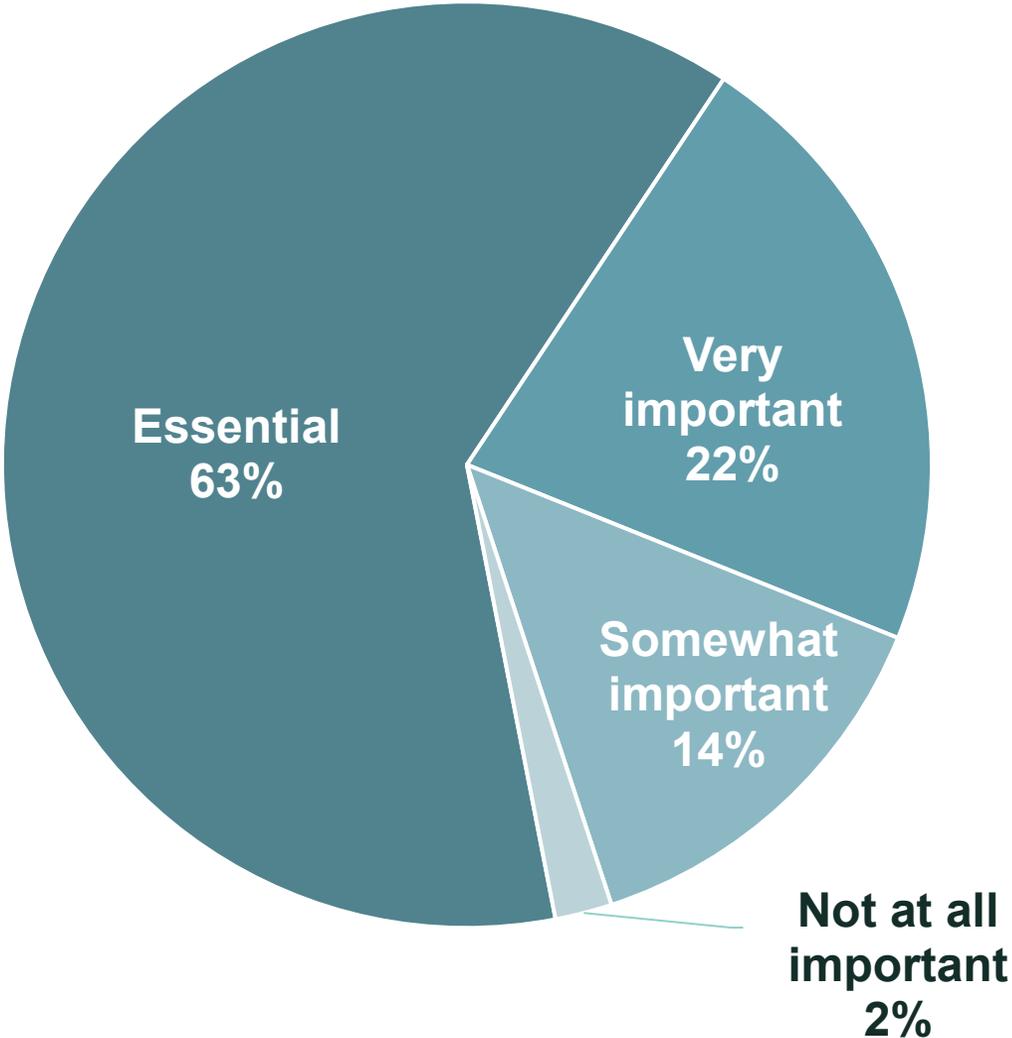
When thinking about ways to engage with the City of San Marcos, what is your preferred way to participate?



# River Recreation Impacts



**How important, if at all, is it for the City of San Marcos to focus on assessing/addressing the impacts of river recreation on our city's natural resources?**





# Summary of Conclusions

1. San Marcos is recognized as a desirable place to live, visit, and raise families
2. Results indicate that residents feel safe across the community
3. Mixed reviews for economy-related items may merit additional research.
4. Mobility experiences vary across modes, reflecting both gains and declines
5. Civic engagement, pride, and government services show significant gains



# Questions?

# Thank you!

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