



2023 COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS



SURVEY INFORMATION

The National Community Survey (NCS) report captures the "livability" of Marion. Great communities are partnerships of the government, private sector, community-based organizations and residents of a particular area.

City of Marion/The NCS conducted a mailed survey of 3,000 randomly selected households.

593 responses

Sept.-Oct. 2023

21% response rate

Towards the end of data collection, a web-based survey was available to all residents. 272 opt-in surveys were completed.



SURVEY METHODS

Random sampling - each household had the same chance of being selected. The data was weighted to reflect the demographic characteristics of the community.

95% confidence interval when applying the results of this sample to the entire population - margin of error is no greater than +/- 4 percentage points for any question.

National Benchmarks - resident perspectives from over 500 communities - represents a wide geographic and population range - who evaluated the same kinds of topics.

Peer Community Benchmarks - Subset of the database, including secondary cities (those in a metro but not the primary city), with similar population and annual household income.



PEER COMMUNITIES

- Bozeman, MT
- Brooklyn Center, MN
- Charlottesville, VA
- Cleveland Heights, OH
- College Park, MD
- DeLand, FL
- El Mirage, AZ
- Englewood, CO
- Florence, AZ
- Greer, SC
- Kingman, AZ
- Lawrenceville, GA
- Lynnwood, WA
- Mankato, MN
- Marshalltown, IA
- Moline, IL
- Nilas, IL
- Northglenn, CO
- Palm Springs, CA
- Palm Springs, FL
- Portage, MI
- Richfield, MN
- South Portland, ME
- Twin Falls, ID
- West Bend, WI
- Wheat Ridge, CO

10 FACETS OF COMMUNITY



ECONOMY



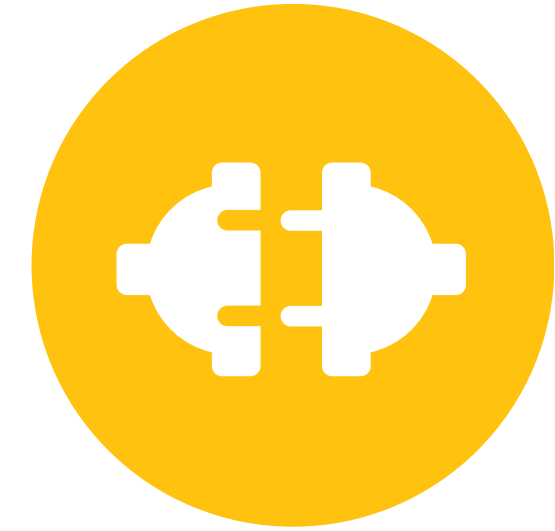
MOBILITY



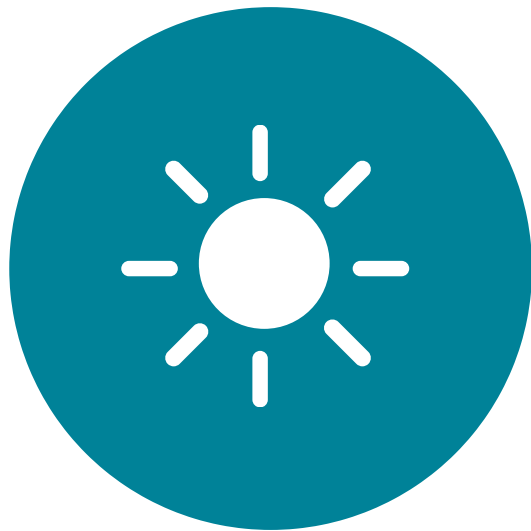
**COMMUNITY
DESIGN**



UTILITIES



SAFETY



**NATURAL
ENVIRONMENT**



**PARKS &
RECREATION**



**HEALTH &
WELLNESS**



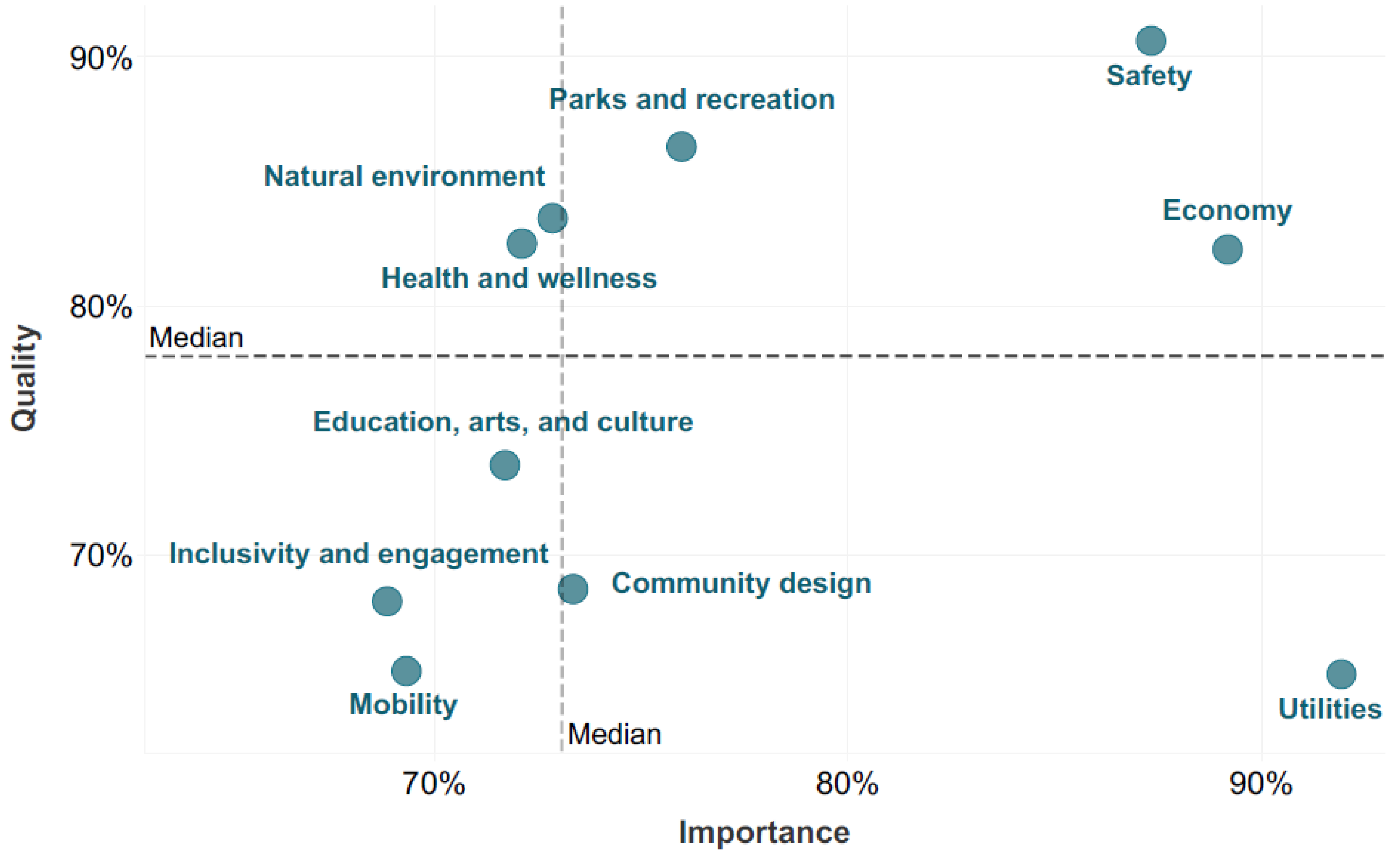
**EDUCATION,
ARTS & CULTURE**



**INCLUSIVITY &
ENGAGEMENT**

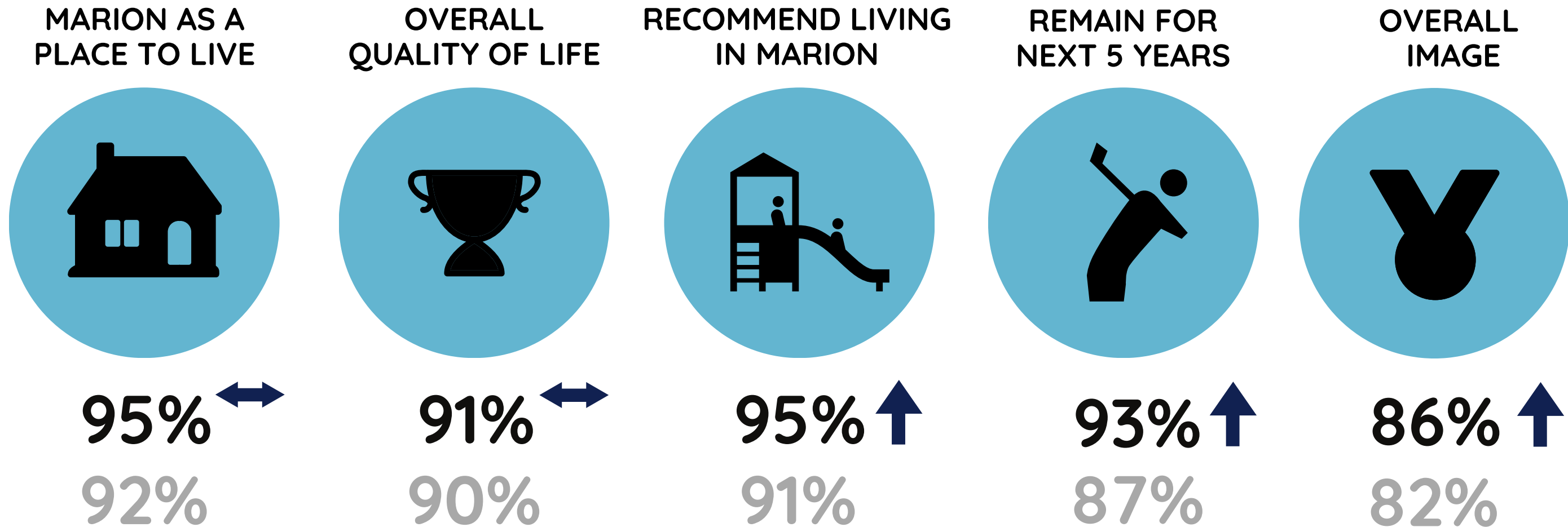


PERFORMANCE VS. IMPORTANCE



QUALITY OF LIFE

What makes a community attractive, accessible and welcoming to all



Percent rating positively (e.g. excellent/good)

Comparison to peer & national benchmarks:

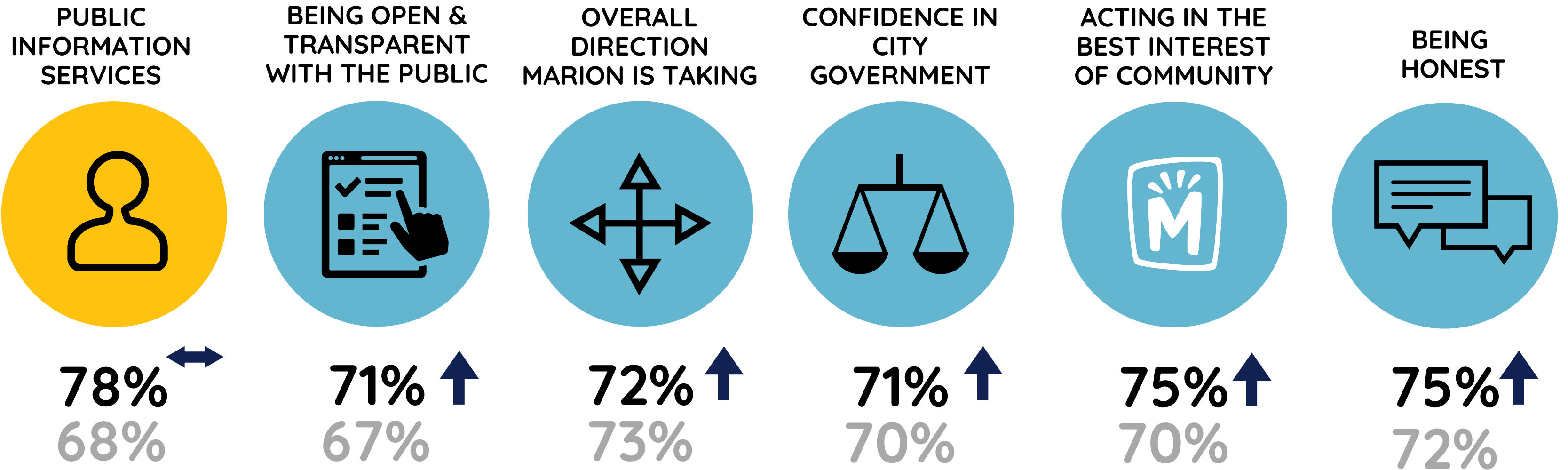
higher similar lower
↑ ↔ ↓

top number: 2023 data
bottom number: 2021 data

- improved by more than 12 points
- improved by more than 6 points
- consistent with previous survey
- declined by more than 6 points

GOVERNANCE

How well does the government of Marion meet the needs and expectations of its residents?



Percent rating positively (e.g. excellent/good)

Comparison to peer & national benchmarks:

higher similar lower
 ↑ ↔ ↓

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ECONOMY

Maintenance of a diverse economy (e.g., vibrant downtown, cost of living)

VARIETY OF BUSINESS/SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS



69% ↔
56%

VIBRANCY OF DOWNTOWN/COMMERCIAL AREA



77% ↑
55%

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES



61% ↔
45%

MARION AS A PLACE TO VISIT



68% ↔
53%

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



78% ↑
73%

OVERALL ECONOMIC HEALTH



82% ↑
77%

Percent rating positively (e.g. excellent/good)

Comparison to peer & national benchmarks:

higher similar lower
↑ ↔ ↓

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MOBILITY

Accessibility of community by motorized and non-motorized modes of transportation
(ease of travel, traffic flow, walking)

TRAFFIC FLOW
ON MAJOR
STREETS



71% ↑
64%

EASE OF TRAVEL
BY BICYCLE



72% ↑
52%

EASE OF PUBLIC
PARKING



52% ↔
43%

EASE OF TRAVEL
BY PUBLIC
TRANSPORTATION



44% ↔
29%

EASE OF
WALKING



78% ↑
67%

Percent rating positively (e.g. excellent/good)

Comparison to peer & national benchmarks:

higher similar lower
↑ ↔ ↓

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MOBILITY

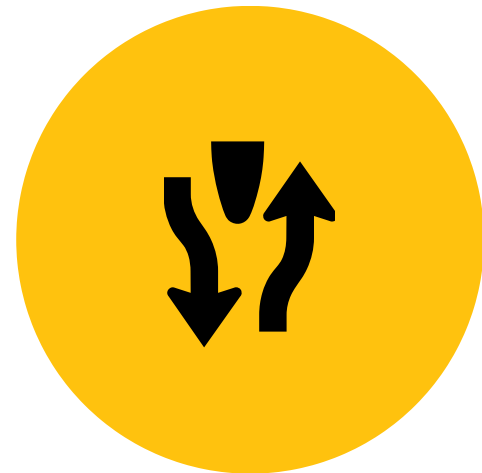
Accessibility of community by motorized and non-motorized modes of transportation
(ease of travel, traffic flow, walking)

TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT



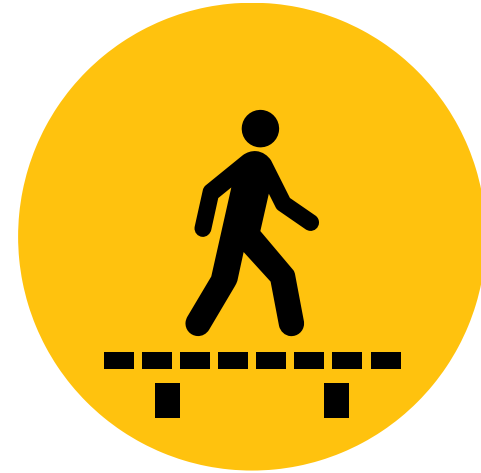
78% ↑
78%

STREET REPAIR



52% ↔
41%

SIDEWALK MAINTENANCE



71% ↔
60%

BUS OR TRANSIT SERVICES



52% ↔
41%

USED PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION INSTEAD OF DRIVING

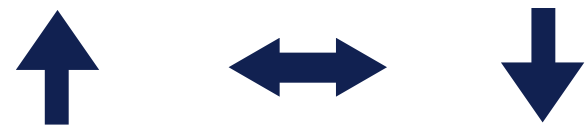


8% ↓
5%

Percent rating positively (e.g. excellent/good)

Comparison to peer & national benchmarks:

higher similar lower



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COMMUNITY DESIGN

Smart land use and zoning, ensuring that affordable housing is accessible to all, and providing access to parks and other green spaces.

OVERALL DESIGN/
LAYOUT OF
RESIDENTIAL &
COMMERCIAL AREAS



69% ↔
56%

WELL-PLANNED
RESIDENTIAL
GROWTH



73% ↑
66%

WELL-PLANNED
COMMERCIAL
GROWTH



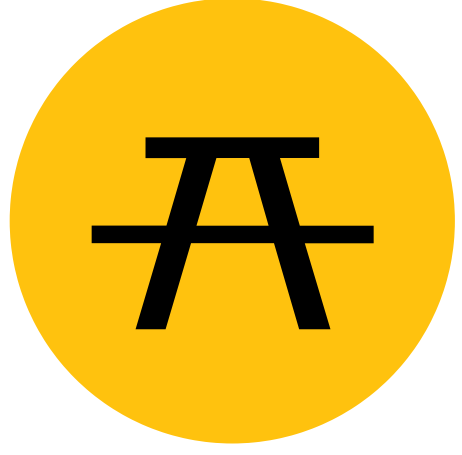
61% ↑
55%

PRESERVATION OF
HISTORICAL/
CULTURAL CHARACTER



75% ↔
69%

PUBLIC PLACES
PEOPLE WANT TO
SPEND TIME



73% ↔
62%

OVERALL
APPEARANCE



87% ↑
78%

Percent rating positively (e.g. excellent/good)

Comparison to peer & national benchmarks:

higher similar lower
↑ ↔ ↓

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UTILITIES

Services such as water, gas, electricity and internet access.

AFFORDABLE
HIGH-SPEED
INTERNET ACCESS



60%

53%



STORM WATER
MANAGEMENT



83%

75%



DRINKING
WATER



49%

47%



Percent rating positively (e.g. excellent/good)

Comparison to peer & national benchmarks:

higher similar lower

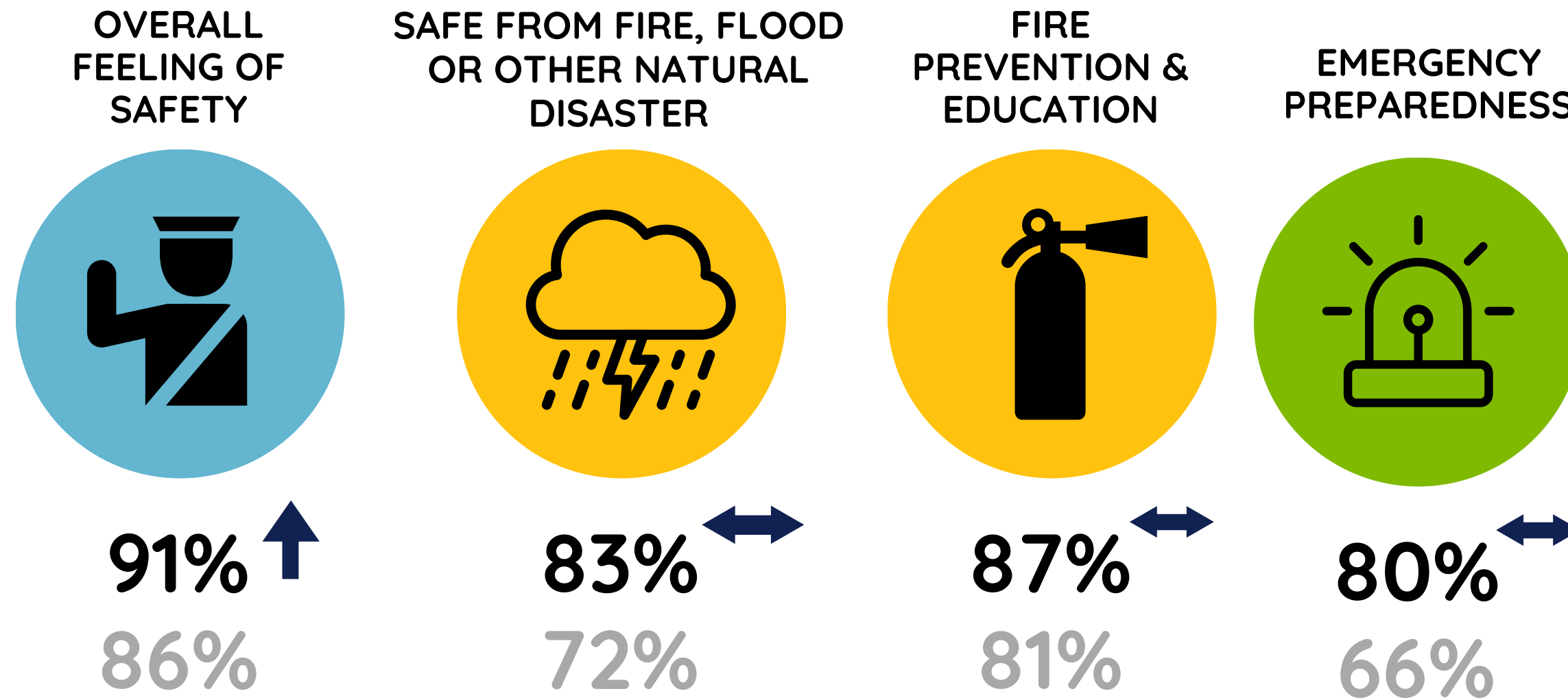


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SAFETY

Protection from danger or risk (public safety, personal security and welfare, emergency preparedness)



Percent rating positively (e.g. excellent/good)

Comparison to peer & national benchmarks:

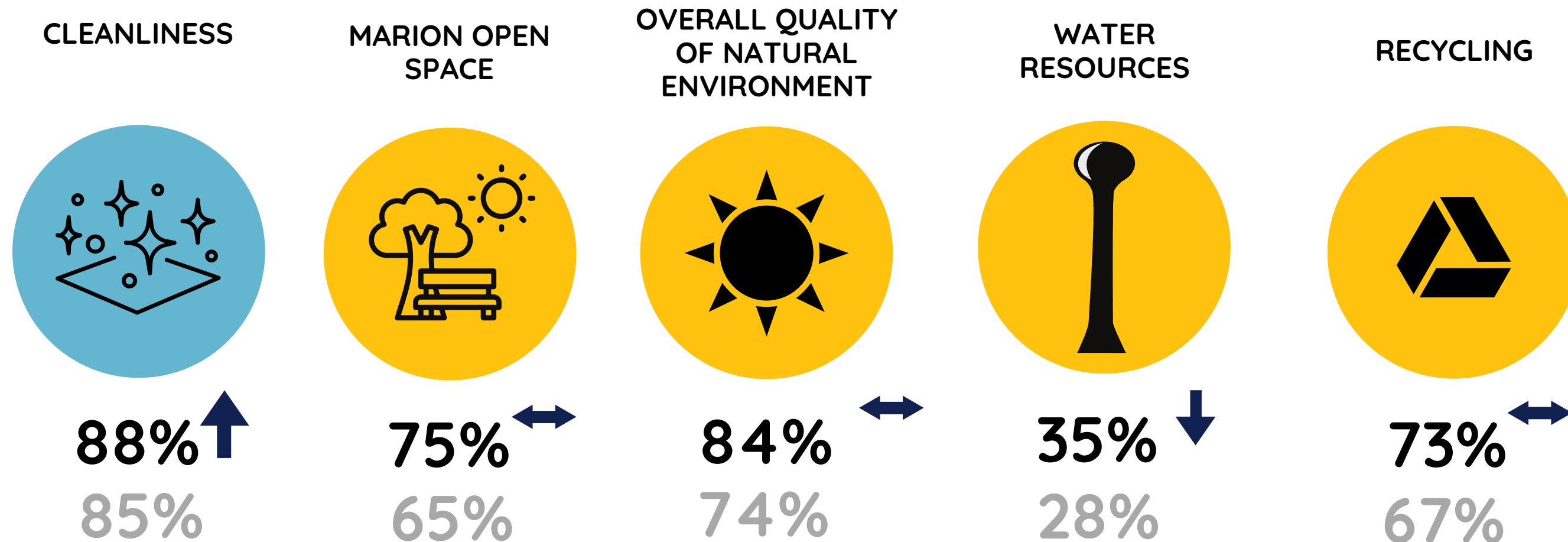
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NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

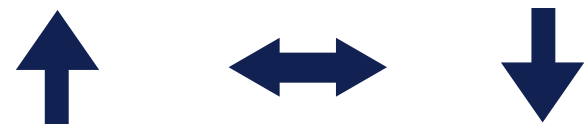
Natural spaces in which residents live and experience their community.



Percent rating positively (e.g. excellent/good)

Comparison to peer & national benchmarks:

higher similar lower



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PARKS & RECREATION

An active system of parks and recreation programs for public use.

QUALITY OF PARKS & REC OPPORTUNITIES



86%
79%



AVAILABILITY OF PATHS AND WALKING TRAILS



88%
72%



FITNESS OPPORTUNITIES



83%
74%



RECREATION PROGRAMS OR CLASSES



80%
73%



RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES



74%
67%



RECREATION CENTERS OR FACILITIES



79%
73%



Percent rating positively (e.g. excellent/good)

Comparison to peer & national benchmarks:

higher similar lower

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HEALTH & WELLNESS

Healthy lifestyles, preventive and curative healthcare, supportive services, etc.

OVERALL HEALTH AND WELLNESS OPPORTUNITIES



83% ↔
75%

AVAILABILITY OF AFFORDABLE QUALITY FOOD



67% ↔
70%

AVAILABILITY OF PREVENTATIVE HEALTH SERVICES



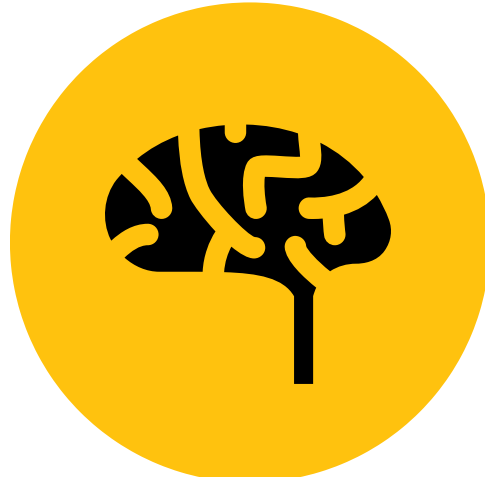
77% ↑
78%

AVAILABILITY OF AFFORDABLE QUALITY HEALTH CARE



75% ↔
72%

AVAILABILITY OF AFFORDABLE QUALITY MENTAL HEALTH CARE



50% ↔
40%

Percent rating positively (e.g. excellent/good)

Comparison to peer & national benchmarks:

higher ↑ similar ↔ lower ↓

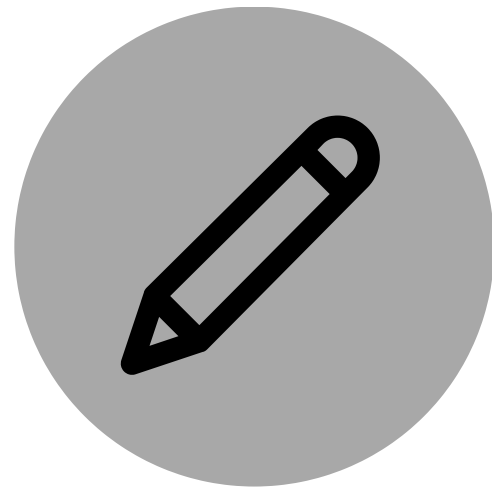
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EDUCATION, ARTS & CULTURE

Learning, enrichment and workforce readiness for children, youth and adults

K-12
EDUCATION



83% ↑
89%

PUBLIC LIBRARY
SERVICES



96% ↑
77%

OPPORTUNITIES
TO ATTEND
CULTURAL/ARTS/
MUSIC ACTIVITIES



76% ↑
62%

OPPORTUNITIES
TO ATTEND SPECIAL
EVENTS AND
FESTIVALS



82% ↑
68%

ADULT EDUCATIONAL
OPPORTUNITIES



60% ↔
51%

COMMUNITY
SUPPORT FOR THE
ARTS



77% ↑
70%

Percent rating positively (e.g. excellent/good)

Comparison to peer & national benchmarks:

higher similar lower
↑ ↔ ↓

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INCLUSIVITY & ENGAGEMENT

How well does the government of Marion meet the needs and expectations of its residents?

CONNECTION & ENGAGEMENT WITH COMMUNITY



68% ↔
56%

MARION AS A PLACE TO RETIRE



80% ↑
72%

OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE IN SOCIAL ACTIVITIES



77% ↑
65%

TAKING CARE OF VULNERABLE RESIDENTS



68% ↑
57%

MAKING ALL RESIDENTS FEEL WELCOME



81% ↔
72%

ATTRACTING PEOPLE FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS



66% ↔
57%

Percent rating positively (e.g. excellent/good)

Comparison to peer & national benchmarks:

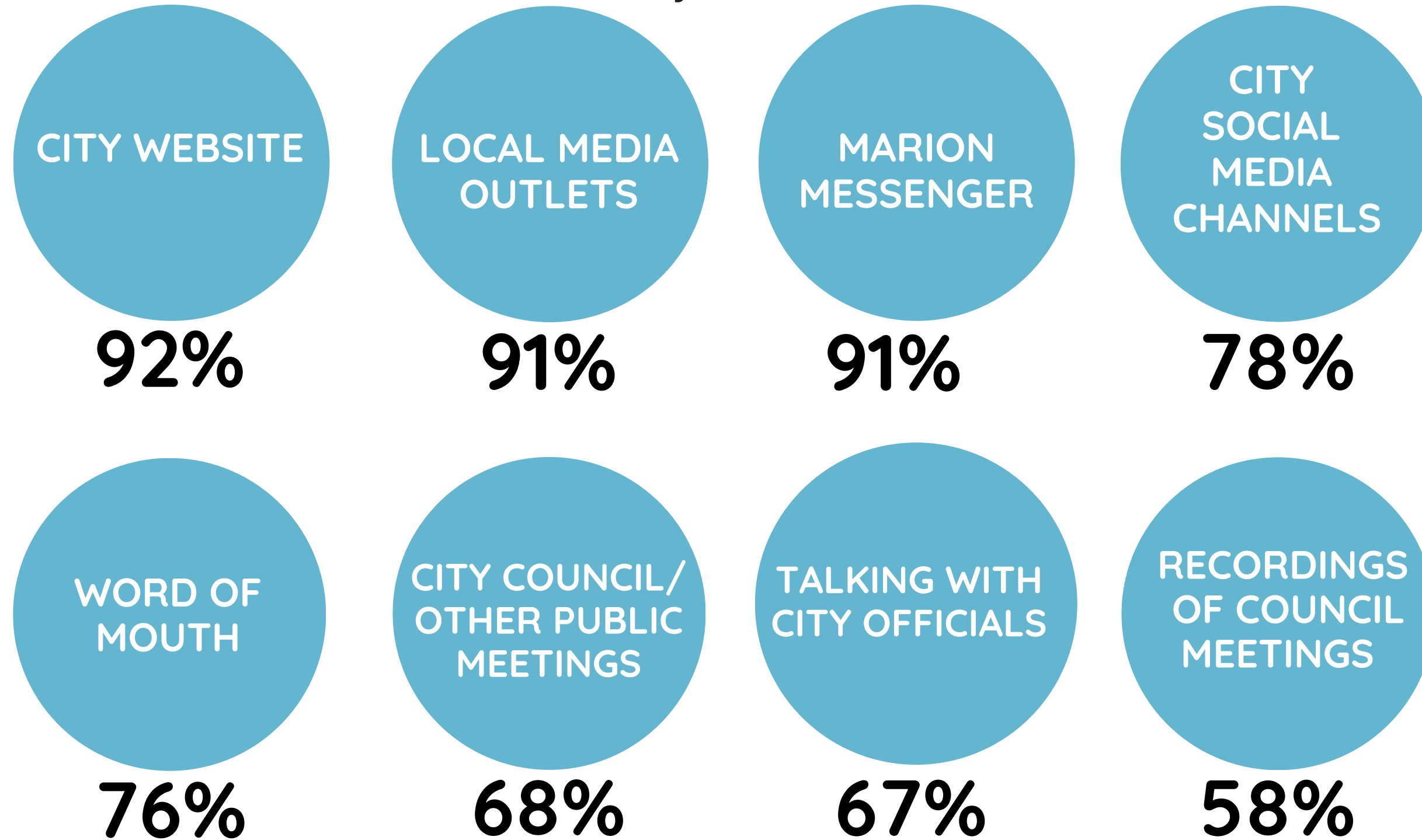
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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

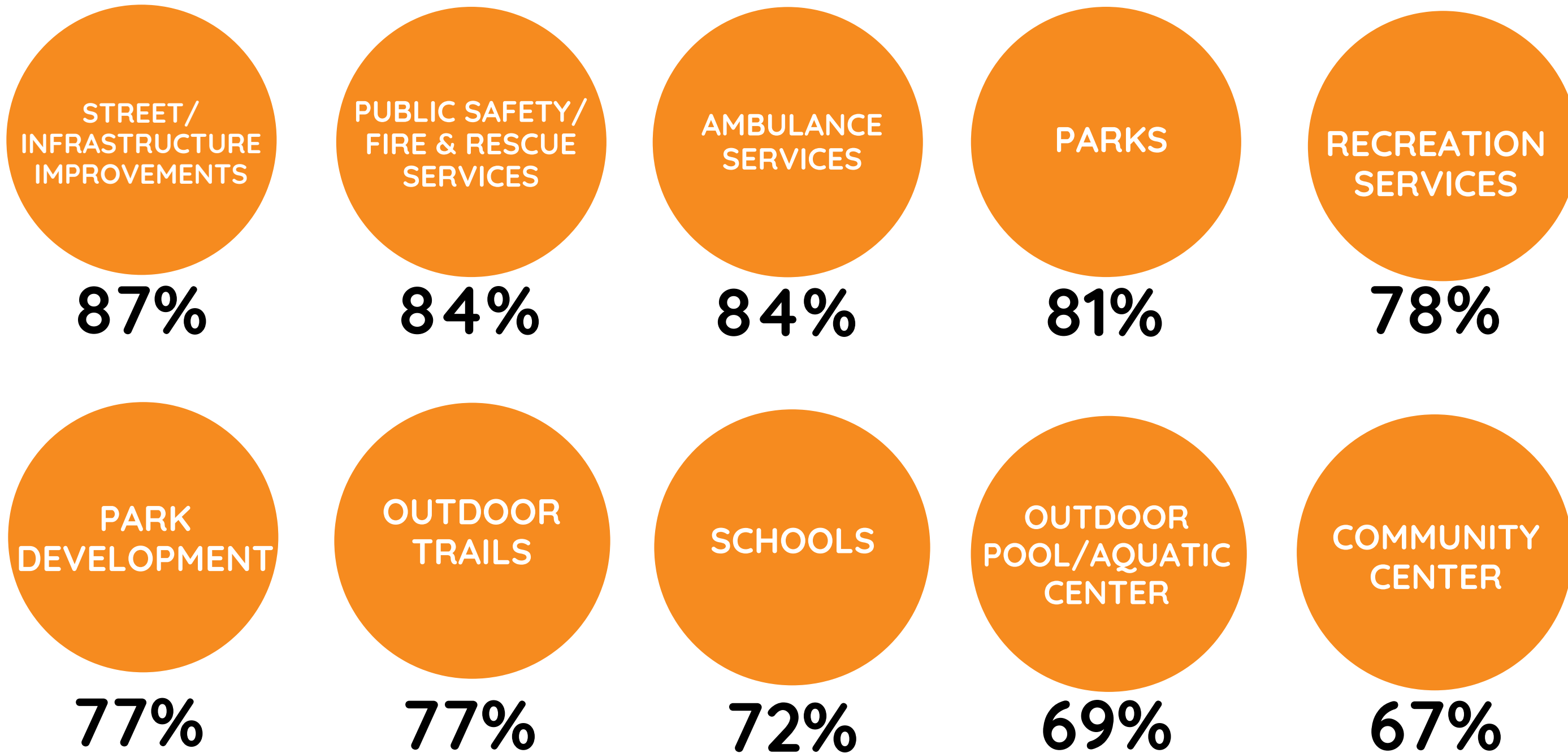
Source of City Information



Percent rating positively (e.g. major source/minor source)

SUPPORT FOR FEE INCREASES

Support for Property Tax or Fee Increases to Fund Facility and Service Improvements



Percent rating positively (e.g. strongly/somewhat support)

BRICK STREETS

The City is currently reviewing options for the future of some of its original brick streets. Understanding that saving and reusing the original brick increases the cost of reconstruction, to what extent do you support the reuse of original brick?

58%

A RECONSTRUCTED STREET IN HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOODS

76%

A CROSSWALK-LIKE BAND IN HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOODS

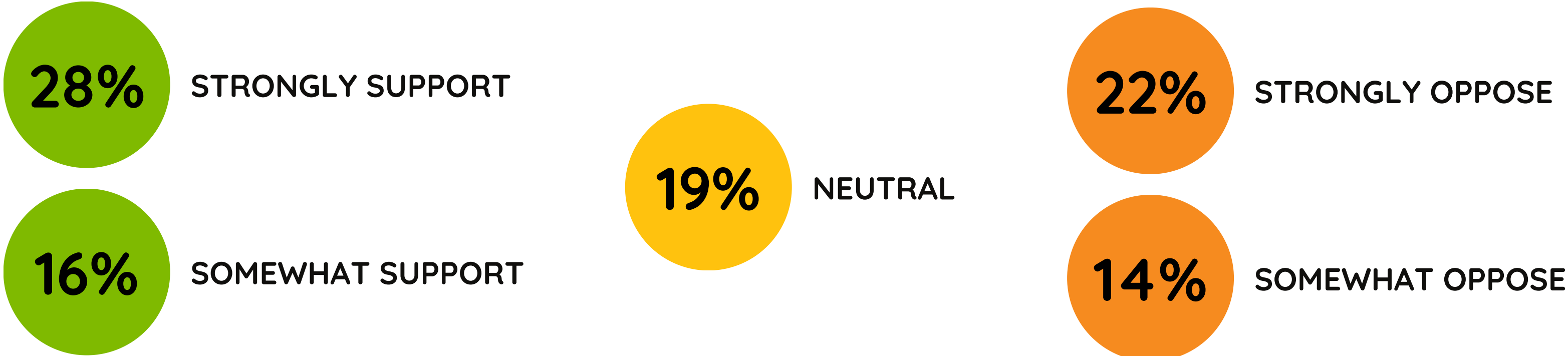
Percent rating positively (e.g. strongly/somewhat support)



FIREWORKS

The City of Marion is required by the State of Iowa to allow the sale of fireworks within city limits. City Council has authorized the use of fireworks on private property two days each year (July 4 and Dec. 31).

To what extent do you support or oppose the private use of fireworks within city limits?



**95% OF RESIDENTS
RATED THE CITY AS AN
EXCELLENT/GOOD
PLACE TO LIVE**

**9 IN 10 GAVE
EXCELLENT/GOOD
RATINGS TO THE
OVERALL APPEARANCE**

**8 IN 10
RESPONDENTS GAVE
POSITIVE RATINGS TO
OVERALL FEELINGS OF
SAFETY IN THE CITY**

TAKEAWAYS

**RESIDENTS CONTINUE TO
ENJOY AN EXCELLENT QUALITY
OF LIFE AND REPORT FEELING
SAFE IN THE COMMUNITY.**

01

**9 IN 10 RESIDENTS WERE
PLEASED WITH THE
CUSTOMER SERVICE
PROVIDED BY THE CITY**

**3/4 OF ALL RESIDENTS
GAVE POSITIVE REVIEWS
TO TREATING ALL
RESIDENTS WITH RESPECT,
BEING HONEST, TREATING
ALL RESIDENTS FAIRLY**

**7 IN 10 EXPRESSED
CONFIDENCE IN THE CITY
GOVERNMENT, THE
GENERAL DIRECTION AND
ITS EFFORTS TO BE OPEN
& TRANSPARENT**

TAKEAWAYS

**RATINGS FOR MARION
GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE
ARE STRONG AND ABOVE
NATIONAL AVERAGES**

02

**96% OF RESPONDENTS
GAVE HIGH MARKS TO
PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES**

**8 IN 10 RESIDENTS GAVE
POSITIVE SCORES TO
K-12 EDUCATION,
OPPORTUNITIES TO
ATTEND SPECIAL EVENTS
& SUPPORT FOR THE ARTS**

**7 IN 10 INDICATED THEY
WOULD BE IN SUPPORT OF
A TAX OR FEE INCREASE
TO FUND SCHOOLS, AN
AQUATIC CENTER OR A
COMMUNITY CENTER**

TAKEAWAYS

**EDUCATION, CULTURAL
OPPORTUNITIES AND THE
ARTS ARE FEATURES OF
THE COMMUNITY**

03

92%

**OVERALL QUALITY OF THE
UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE**

89%

**OVERALL ECONOMIC
HEALTH**

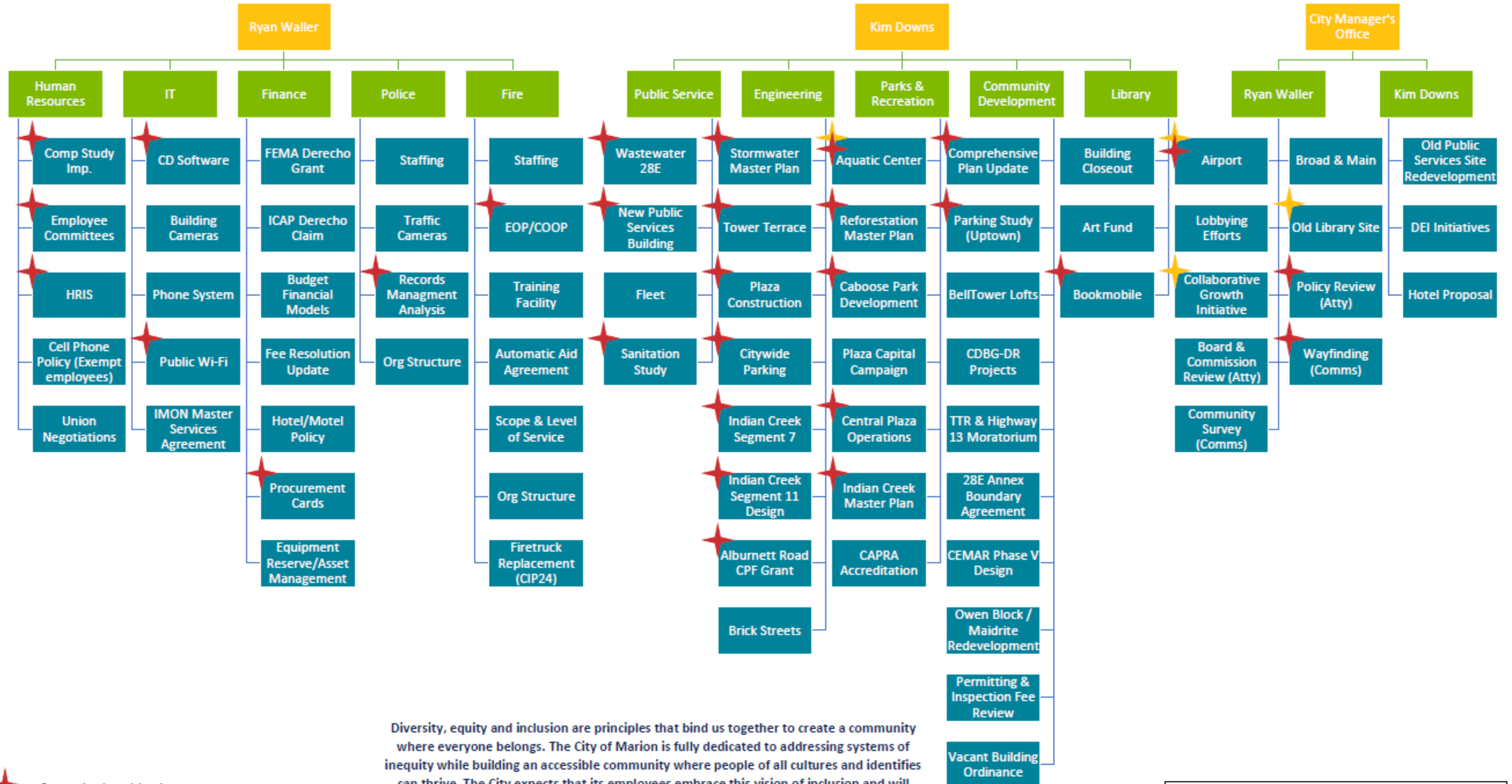
87%

**OVERALL FEELING OF
SAFETY**

FUTURE FOCUS

**WHAT SHOULD MARION
FOCUS ON IN THE NEXT
TWO YEARS?**

Percent rating positively (e.g. essential or very important)



Strategic plan objective
 Established performance goals from City Manager eval.

Diversity, equity and inclusion are principles that bind us together to create a community where everyone belongs. The City of Marion is fully dedicated to addressing systems of inequity while building an accessible community where people of all cultures and identifies can thrive. The City expects that its employees embrace this vision of inclusion and will strongly encourage its residents and community partners to do the same. By fulfilling this commitment, the City of Marion envisions a community that is inclusive and preserves the dignity of all people.

Disclaimer: This does not include day to day operations

DEBRIEFING THE RESULTS

WHAT
FINDINGS DID
YOU EXPECT?

WHAT
FINDINGS
WERE
SURPRISING?

ARE THERE
AREAS WHERE
WE NEED TO
DIG DEEPER?

IN WHAT
AREAS SHOULD
WE FOCUS?