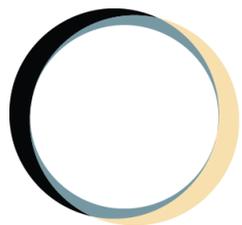


THE NCSTM
The National Citizen SurveyTM

Avon, IN

Community Livability Report

2017



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The National Citizen Survey™
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The NCS™ is presented by NRC in collaboration with ICMA.

NRC is a charter member of the AAPOR Transparency Initiative, providing clear disclosure of our sound and ethical survey research practices.

About

The National Citizen Survey™ (The NCS) report is about the “livability” of Avon. The phrase “livable community” is used here to evoke a place that is not simply habitable, but that is desirable. It is not only where people do live, but where they want to live.

Great communities are partnerships of the government, private sector, community-based organizations and residents, all geographically connected. The NCS captures residents’ opinions within the three pillars of a community (Community Characteristics, Governance and Participation) across eight central facets of community (Safety, Mobility, Natural Environment, Built Environment, Economy, Recreation and Wellness, Education and Enrichment and Community Engagement).

The Community Livability Report provides the opinions of a representative sample of 415 residents of the Town of Avon. The margin of error around any reported percentage is 5% for the entire sample. The full description of methods used to garner these opinions can be found in the *Technical Appendices* provided under separate cover.

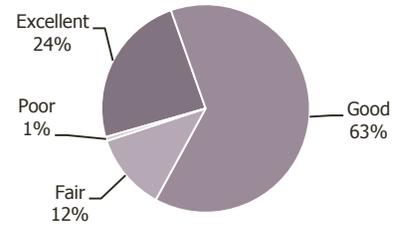


Quality of Life in Avon

Most residents rated the quality of life in Avon as excellent or good. This rating is similar when compared to other communities (see Appendix B of the *Technical Appendices* provided under separate cover).

Shown below are the eight facets of community. The color of each community facet summarizes how residents rated it across the three sections of the survey that represent the pillars of a community – Community Characteristics, Governance and Participation. When most ratings across the three pillars were higher than the benchmark, the color for that facet is the darkest shade; when most ratings were lower than the benchmark, the color is the lightest shade. A mix of ratings (higher and lower than the benchmark) results in a color between the extremes.

Overall Quality of Life



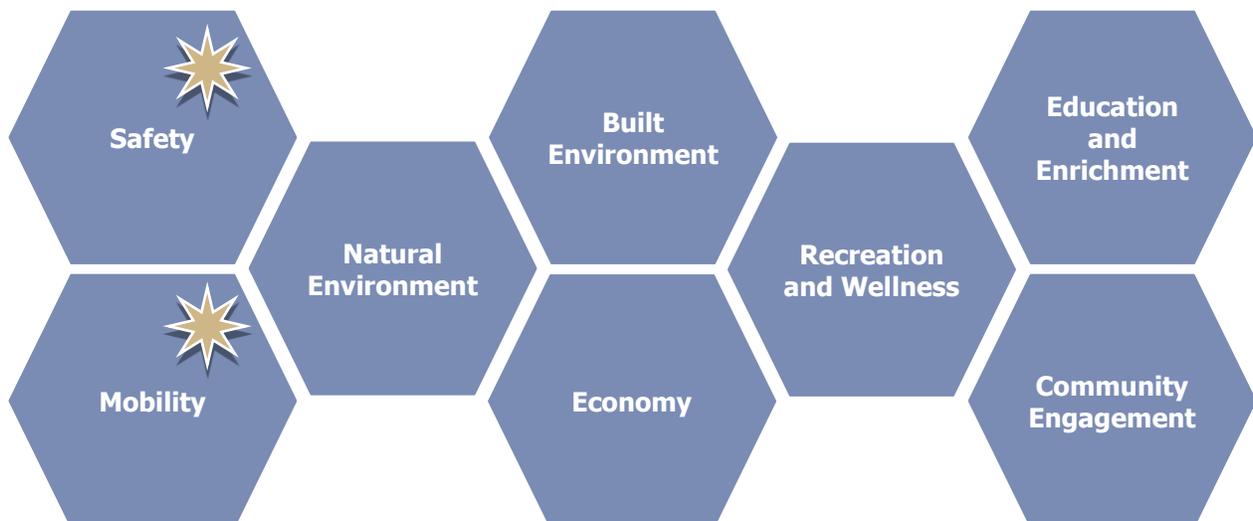
In addition to a summary of ratings, the image below includes one or more stars to indicate which community facets were the most important focus areas for the community in the coming two years, namely Safety and Mobility. Overall, Avon’s ratings across all eight facets of community livability emerged as similar to those of other communities across the nation. This overview of the key aspects of community quality provides a quick summary of where residents see exceptionally strong performance and where performance offers the greatest opportunity for improvement. Linking quality to importance offers community members and leaders a view into the characteristics of the community that matter most and that seem to be working best.

Details that support these findings are contained in the remainder of this Livability Report, starting with the ratings for Community Characteristics, Governance and Participation and ending with results for Avon’s unique questions.

Legend

- Higher than national benchmark
- Similar to national benchmark
- Lower than national benchmark

- * Most important



Community Characteristics

What makes a community livable, attractive and a place where people want to be?

Overall quality of community life represents the natural ambience, services and amenities that make for an attractive community. How residents rate their overall quality of life is an indicator of the overall health of a community. In the case of Avon, 90% rated the Town as an excellent or good place to live. Respondents' ratings of Avon as a place to live were similar to ratings in other communities across the nation.

In addition to rating the Town as a place to live, respondents rated several aspects of community quality including Avon as a place to raise children and to retire, their neighborhood as a place to live, the overall image or reputation of Avon and its overall appearance. Ratings for these aspects were similar to the national benchmark and were rated as excellent or good by at least 6 in 10 residents.

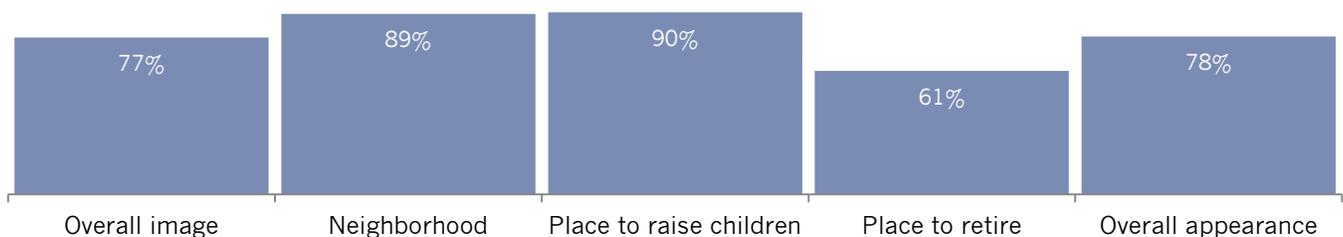
Delving deeper into Community Characteristics, survey respondents rated over 40 features of the community within the eight facets of Community Livability. Overall, ratings for Community Characteristics varied. The facets of Built Environment, Economy, Recreation and Wellness and Education and Enrichment tended to receive ratings that were similar to or higher than the national benchmark. Residents rated aspects of Mobility lower than in other communities. Ratings for Safety, Natural Environment and Community Engagement were all similar to the national benchmark.



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

Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



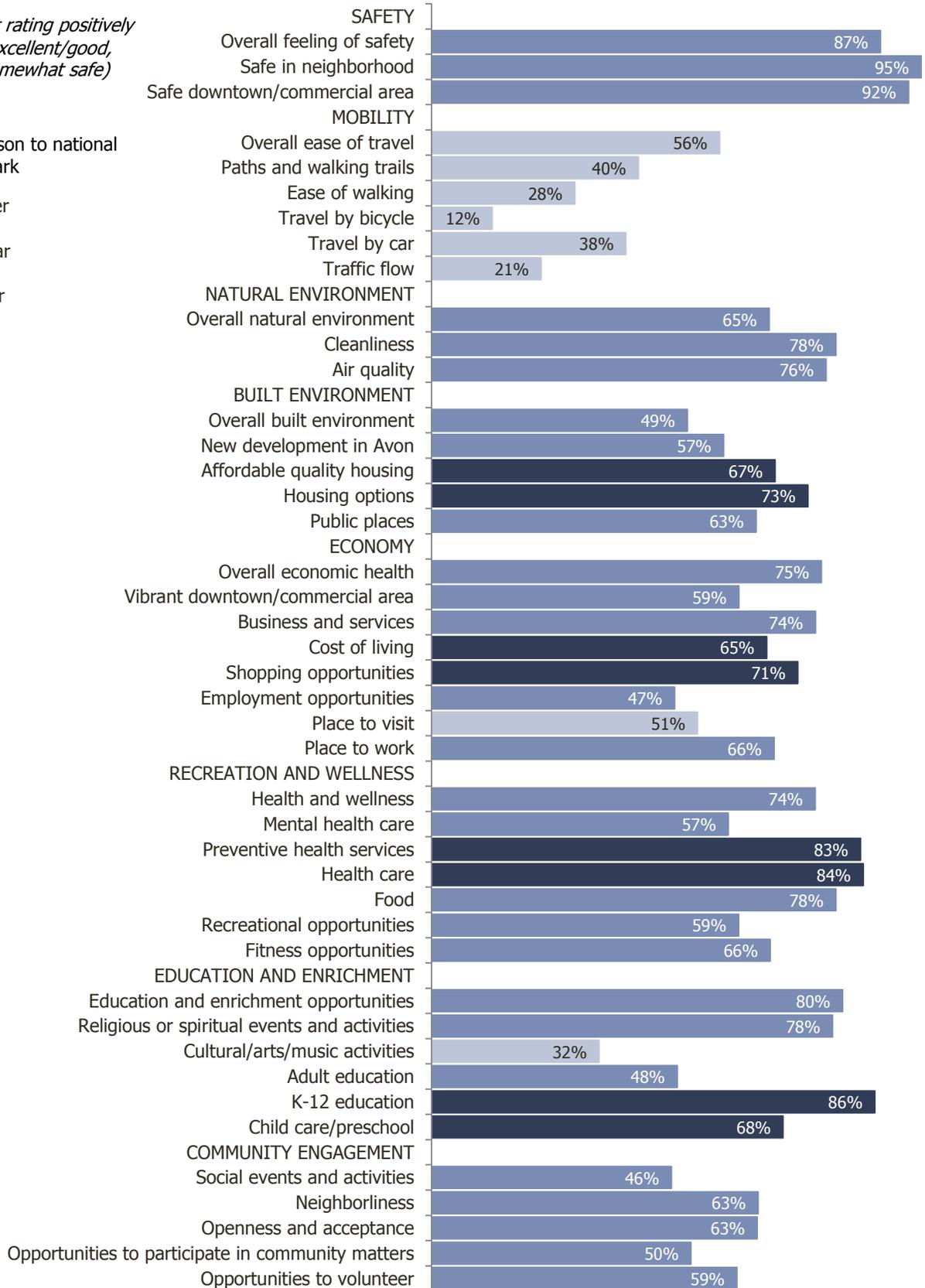
The National Citizen Survey™

Figure 1: Aspects of Community Characteristics

*Percent rating positively
(e.g., excellent/good,
very/somewhat safe)*

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



Governance

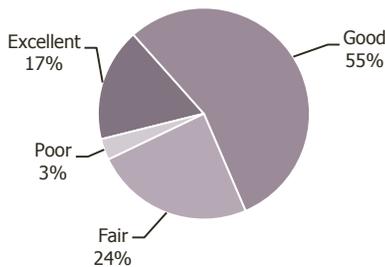
How well does the government of Avon meet the needs and expectations of its residents?

The overall quality of the services provided by Avon as well as the manner in which these services are provided are a key component of how residents rate their quality of life. About three-quarters of respondents rated the overall quality of services provided by the Town of Avon as excellent or good. Ratings for both quality of Town services and services provided by the Federal Government were similar to the national benchmark.

Survey respondents also rated various aspects of Avon’s leadership and governance, including the overall direction, confidence in local leaders and the value of services for the taxes paid. Generally, at least half of residents rated each aspect favorably; all ratings were similar to comparison communities.

Respondents evaluated over 30 individual services and amenities available in Avon. Overall, most of the amenities assessed received ratings similar to those of other communities in the U.S. Safety and Recreation and Wellness tended to be the more consistently favorably rated facets in Avon; at least three in five residents (often more) rated each aspect within these facets as excellent or good. Residents tended to be more critical of services related to the Natural Environment.

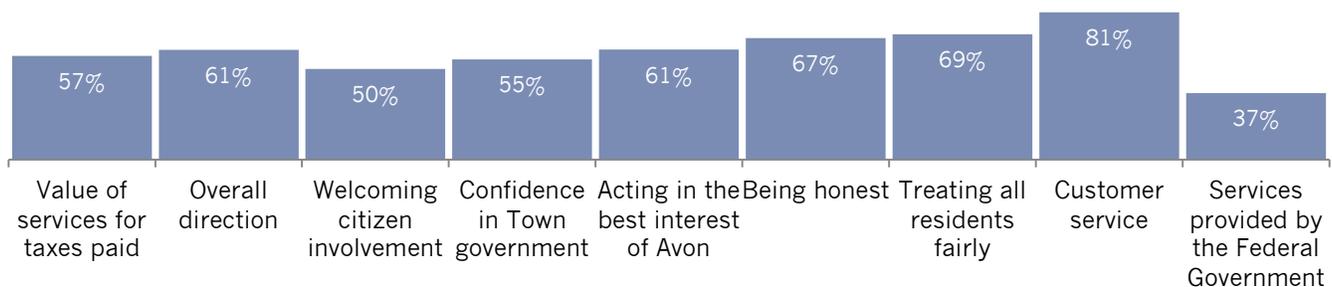
Overall Quality of Town Services



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

Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



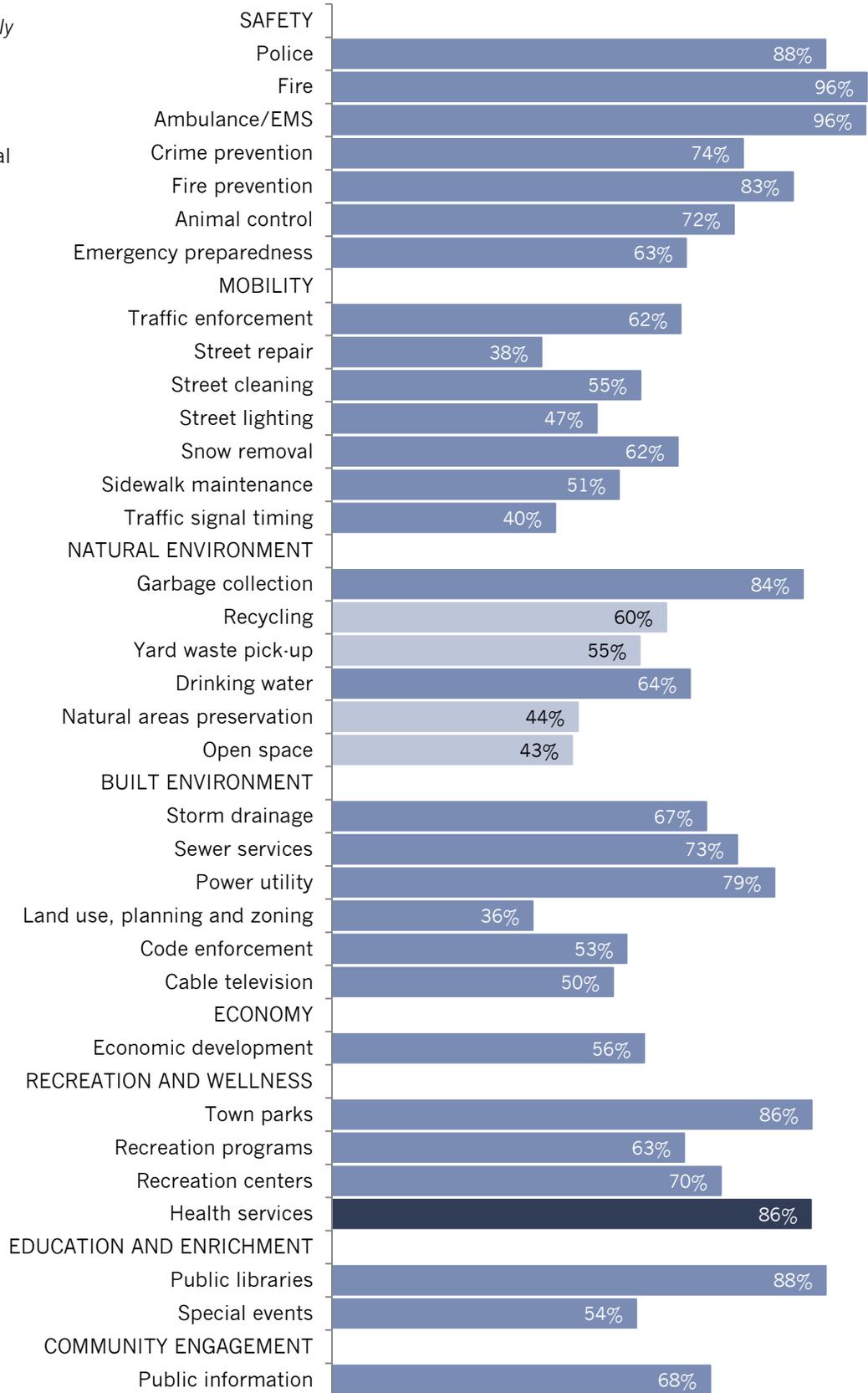
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Figure 2: Aspects of Governance

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

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



Participation

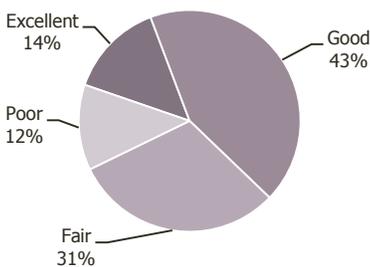
Are the residents of Avon connected to the community and each other?

An engaged community harnesses its most valuable resource, its residents. The connections and trust among residents, government, businesses and other organizations help to create a sense of community, a shared sense of membership, belonging and history. A majority of respondents reported the sense of community in Avon as excellent or good, a finding similar to other communities. Close to 9 in 10 residents also indicated they would recommend living in Avon to someone who asks and planned to remain in Avon for the next five years, both findings were similar to the national benchmark comparison. Compared to other communities, fewer Avon residents had contacted a Town employee.

The survey included over 30 activities and behaviors for which respondents indicated how often they participated in or performed each, if at all. Overall, the extent to which respondents participated in these activities varied and tended to be similar to the activity levels of residents in other communities.

A majority of residents reported having participated in Recreation and Wellness activities. While two-thirds or more of residents had engaged in activities related to the Natural Environment (e.g., conserved water or recycled), levels of participation were lower in Avon than elsewhere. Levels of Participation within Community Engagement in Avon were on par with peer communities with a notable exception: one-third of residents attended a local public meeting, a rating higher than the national benchmark. Finally, residents of Avon were less likely to have carpooled or walked or biked when compared to other communities across the nation.

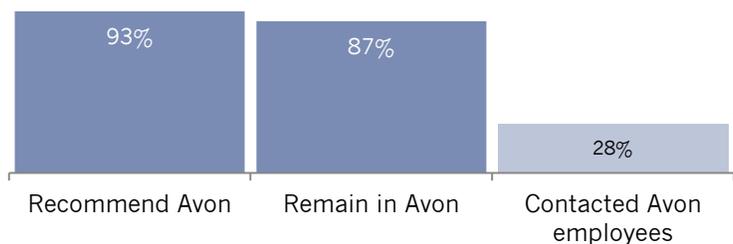
Sense of Community



*Percent rating positively
(e.g., very/somewhat likely,
yes)*

Comparison to national
benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



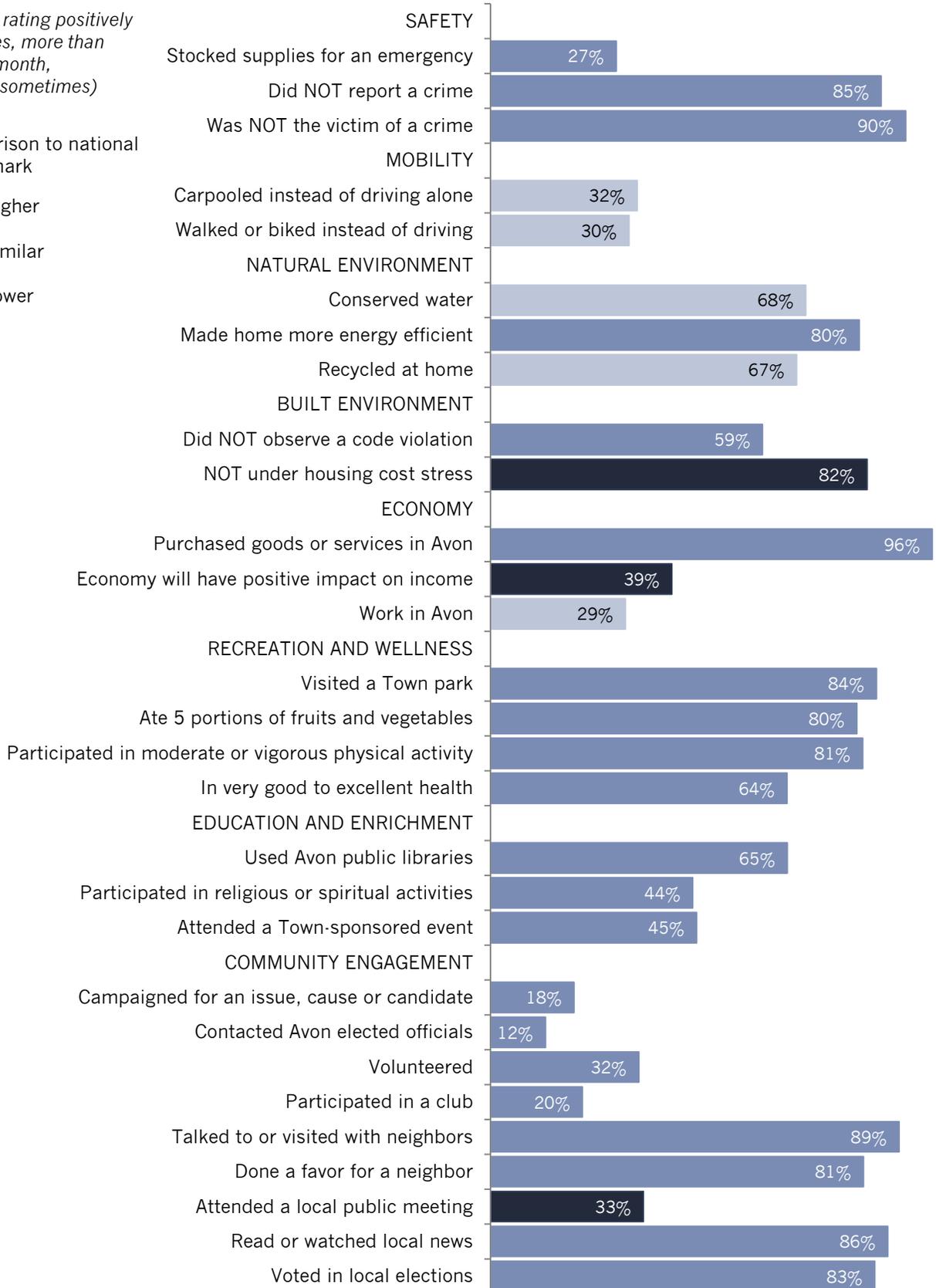
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Figure 3: Aspects of Participation

Percent rating positively
(e.g., yes, more than
once a month,
always/sometimes)

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



Special Topics

The Town of Avon included six questions of special interest on The NCS. Topics explored included support for consolidation with Washington Township, trash and recycling services, information sources and economic development.

The survey asked respondents under what conditions they supported consolidation of government between the Town of Avon and Washington Township. Overall, strong majorities of residents supported consolidation if there was no impact on Avon Schools or Avon-Washington Township Public Library, a layer of government would be eliminated or to prevent annexing from other towns. Residents did not support consolidation if there was a loss of revenue to schools or the library. Residents who opposed consolidation would like further study on the benefits and drawbacks of consolidation with Washington Township (see Figure 5, page 10).

Figure 4: Support for Consolidating Town of Avon and Washington Township
State law allows the Town of Avon and Washington Township to consolidate into one government unit. To what extent do you support or oppose the following:

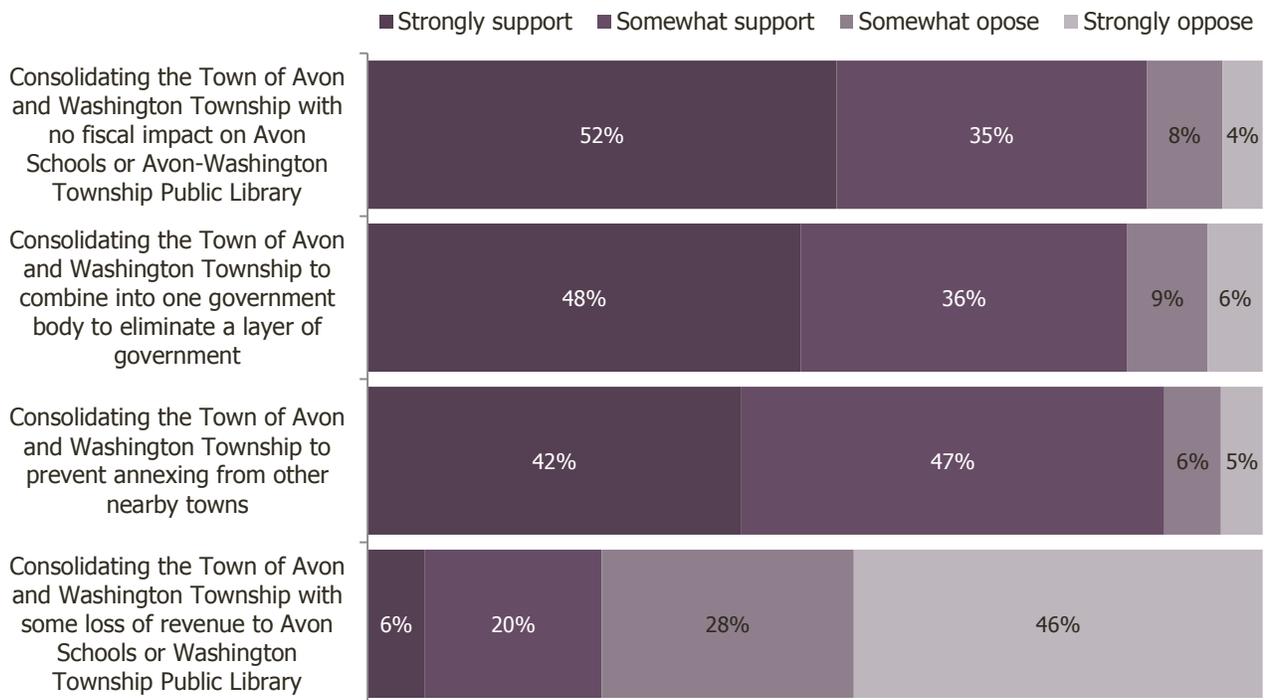
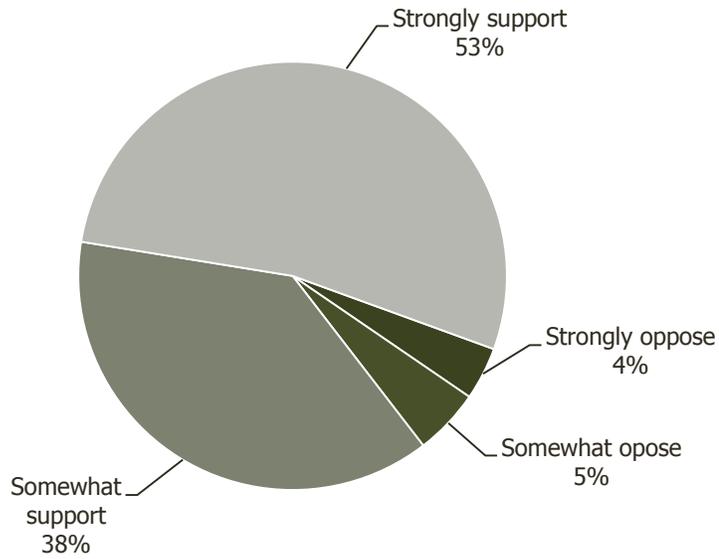


Figure 5: Support for Study on Consolidation

If you DO NOT support one or more of the above measures, please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statement: The Town of Avon should conduct a study on the benefits and drawbacks of a consolidation with Washington Township.



Town officials wished to explore the possibility of a single-trash haul company to service Avon residents. Currently, the vast majority of residents receive trash and recycling services from Ray's Trash (see Figure 6) and most residents supported contracting with a single vendor if it resulted in a lower bill or if their bill stayed the same (see Figure 7).

Figure 6: Trash and Recycling Services

From which company do you currently receive trash and recycling service?

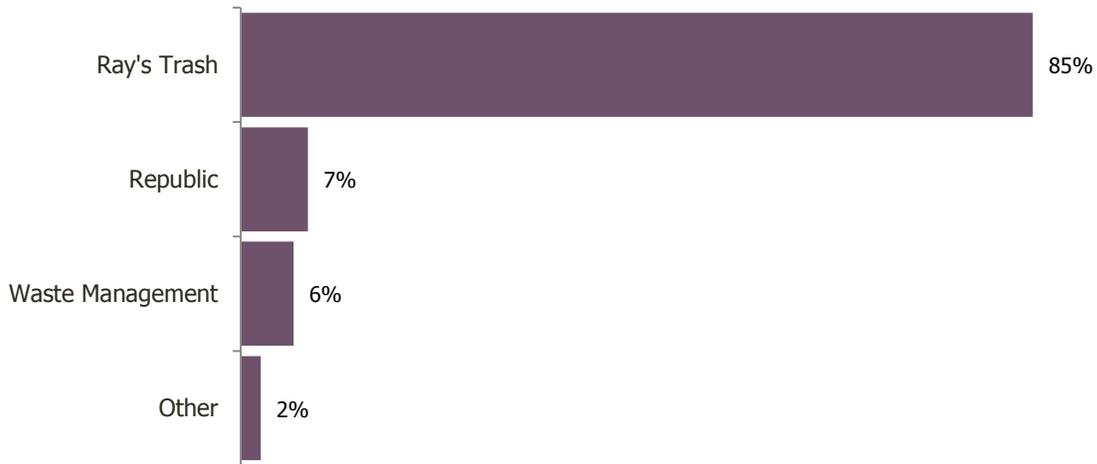
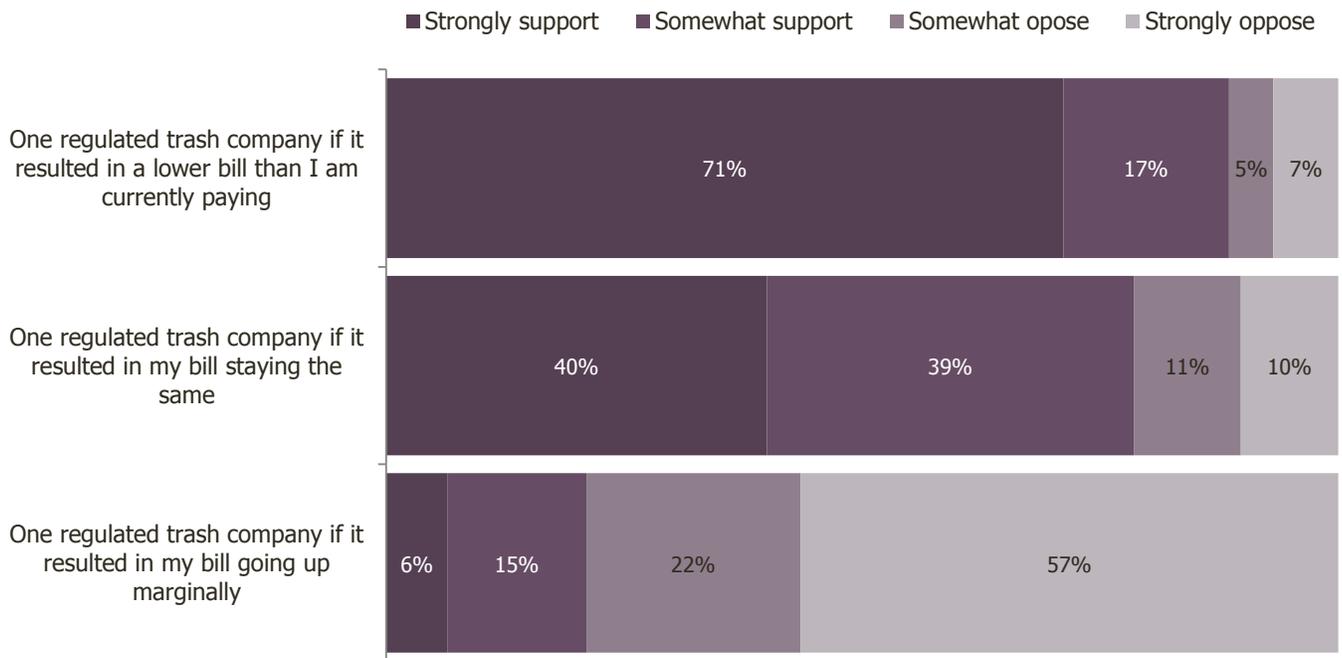


Figure 7: Support for Single Trash and Recycling Service

Contracting with a single trash and recycling service for the entire town can increase access for residents to those services and reduce wear and tear on roads caused by multiple trash and recycling trucks. To what extent would you support using each of the following:

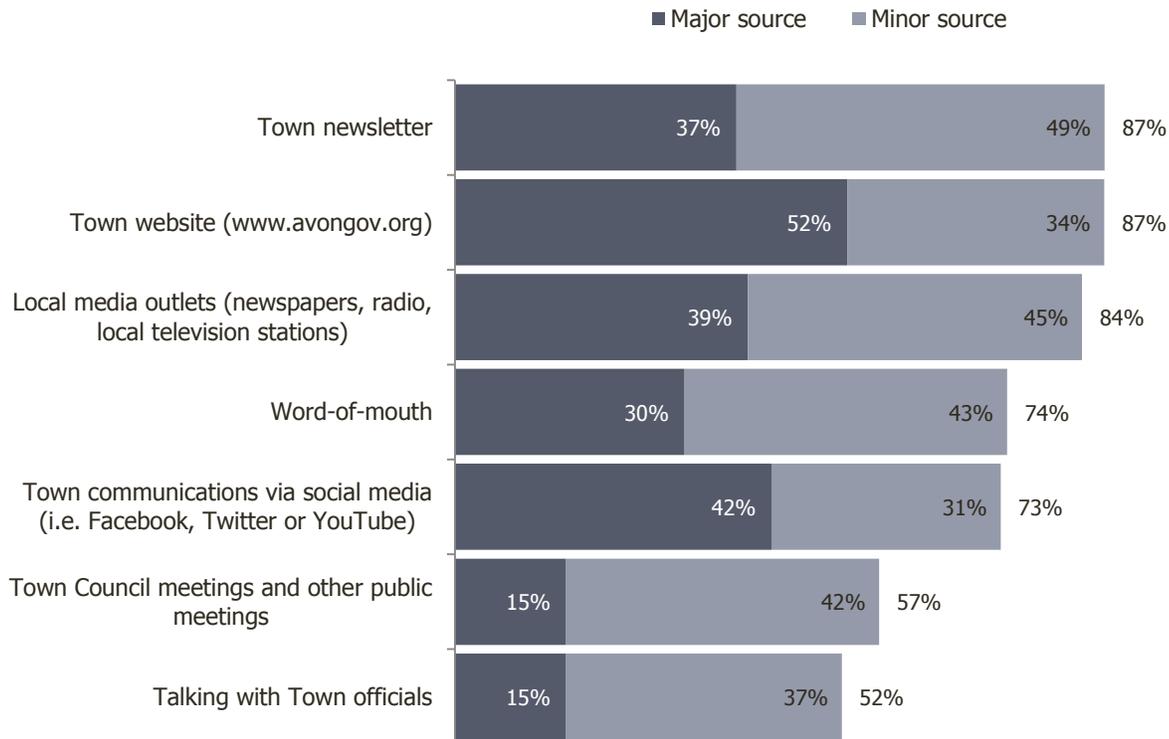


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Residents provided feedback on their preferred sources of information about the Town’s government, activities, events and services. At least 8 in 10 residents indicated that the Town newsletter, Town website and local media outlets (e.g., newspapers, radio and local television stations) were their biggest sources of Town information. Town Council meetings and Town officials were among the least cited sources.

Figure 8: Sources of Town Information

Please indicate how much of a source, if at all, you consider each of the following to be for obtaining information about the Town government and its activities, events and services:

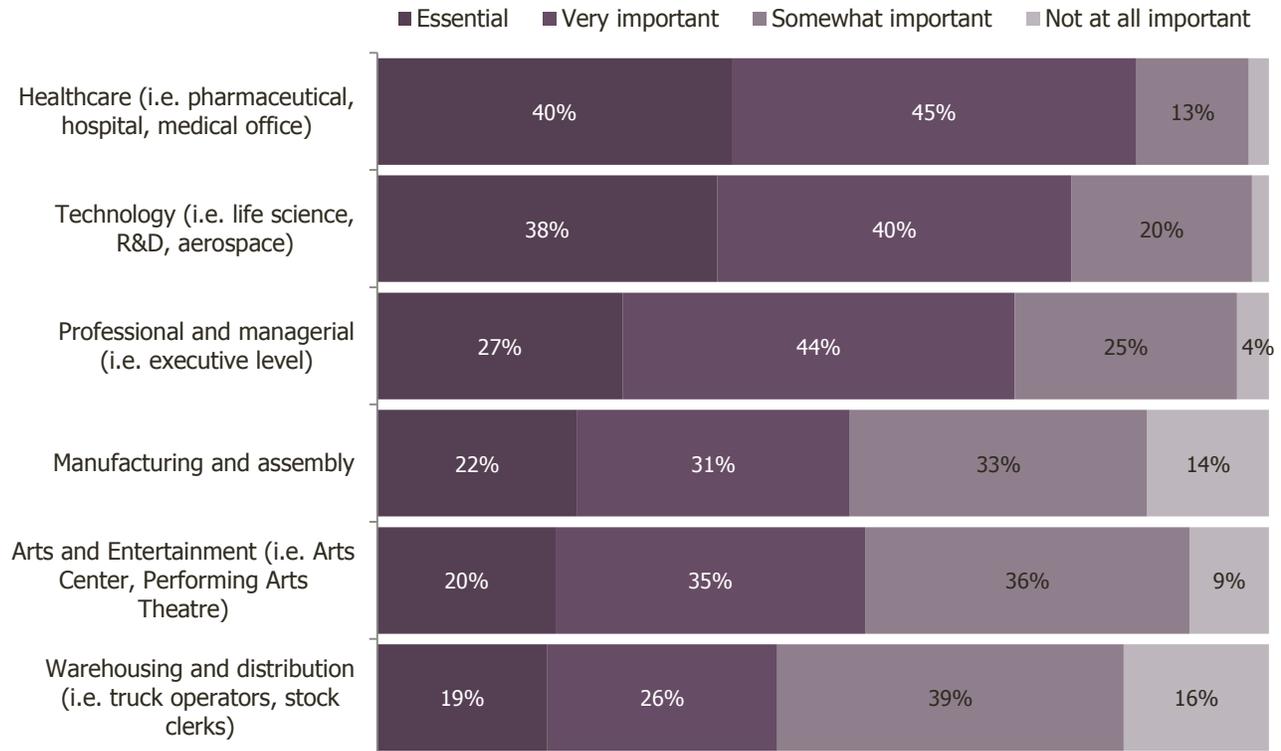


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When asked what kinds of industries the Town should attract as employers, residents expressed preferences for companies in the healthcare, technology and professional and managerial spheres over manufacturing, arts and entertainment and warehousing and distribution.

Figure 9: Potential Future Industries for Avon

Please rate how important, if at all, you think it is for the Town of Avon to attract primary employers in each of the following industries:



Conclusions

Residents in Avon enjoy a high quality of life.

Overall, residents felt Avon is a great place to live and raise children; they liked their neighborhoods and would recommend Avon as a place to live. Few residents experienced housing stress and many felt the economy would have a positive impact on their income. These ratings of livability in Avon tended to be similar to or higher than the ratings found in other communities across the U.S.

Residents value Mobility and emphasize its importance.

Mobility was identified as one of the most important focus areas for Avon in the next two years. Residents expressed frustration with the ease of travel (by any mode) in the community; travel by car, transit, foot and bike all received ratings lower than national benchmark comparisons. Additionally, residents in Avon were less likely than their national peers to have walked or biked or carpooled instead of driving alone. Despite these issues, the Town is doing a fine job of providing Mobility-related services (e.g., street and sidewalk maintenance, snow removal, etc.). Mobility services in Avon were on par with the same services offered by other jurisdictions.

Safety helps make Avon a livable community.

Overall, Avon residents felt quite safe in the community and want the Town to maintain these levels of safety by maintaining focus in this area over the coming two years. About four in five residents gave high marks to the overall safety in Avon and even more felt safe in their neighborhood and in Avon's commercial area. Safety services, such as police, fire and ambulance/EMS, were rated excellent or good by at least 9 in 10 residents. Most survey participants had not been the victim of a crime in the past 12 months.

Residents support consolidating Avon and Washington Township, but with no fiscal impact.

When asked on their support for consolidating Avon and Washington Township, many residents supported consolidation under three scenarios: 1) if there was no fiscal impact to Avon Schools or to the Washington Township Public Library, 2) if it reduced a layer of government or 3) prevented land being annexed by other towns. Support for consolidation dropped when respondents were presented with the possibility of losing revenue for Avon Schools or Washington Township's Public Library. Residents who opposed consolidation would like further study on the benefits and drawbacks of consolidation with Washington Township..