



National Community Survey Review

May 9, 2022



What is the NCS?

- ▶ National Community Survey - a nationally benchmarked survey that is provided to residents of localities to gauge their satisfaction with municipal services and their opinions on priorities for new initiatives
- ▶ Used by Milford to inform our Strategic Plan Update
- ▶ Mailed to a random sample of 2,400 households in all four Wards of the city
 - ▶ Participants received either a postcard advertising the online version plus a paper copy, or two postcards advertising the online version
 - ▶ We received 432 responses total (286 online and 146 in paper)
 - ▶ Response rate of 19% and a 5% margin of error
 - ▶ Desired response rate is 15% with a margin of error between 4% and 6%
 - ▶ 3% of the mailings were returned due to vacant households or inability to deliver the mailings

Overview

- ▶ General Comments
 - ▶ The NCS covers 10 factors and all its questions are designed to fit into one of these areas: Economy, Mobility, Community Design, Utilities, Safety, Natural Environment, Parks and Recreation, Health and Wellness, Education Arts and Culture, Inclusivity and Engagement
- ▶ Almost all survey responses show a slight downturn from 2019 to 2022
- ▶ However, almost all survey responses are also consistent with the national benchmark
- ▶ We will review key aspects of the current strategic plan and our success/failure regarding those items

Public Safety and Preparedness

- ▶ Overall feeling of safety in the community was at 63% (below the benchmark)
- ▶ Strategic Goal: Create a reciprocal and trusting relationship between Milford residents and police officers through consistently proactive, responsive and visible policing throughout the City
 - ▶ 76% rated the Police services as good or excellent (down from 82% in 2019)
- ▶ Strategic Goal: Proactively plan for emergency events through regular meetings between all City departments and State, regional and local agencies to ensure plans are up-to-date and compatible
 - ▶ 67% rated emergency preparedness as good or excellent
 - ▶ 68% rated fire prevention and education as good or excellent (down from 75% in 2019)
 - ▶ 88% rated fire services as good or excellent (down from 94% in 2019)

Public Safety and Preparedness Cont.

- ▶ Strategic Goal: Make a meaningful reduction in violent crime in the City of Milford
 - ▶ Success rate: 61% rated crime prevention as good or excellent (down from 65% in 2019)
 - ▶ Success rate: 67% felt very or somewhat safe from violent crime (below benchmark)
 - ▶ Success rate: 89% felt very or somewhat safe in their neighborhood during the date (down from 93% in 2019)
 - ▶ Success rate: 84% felt very or somewhat safe in Milford's downtown/commercial area during the day (down from 87% in 2019)

Economic Health and Development

- ▶ Overall economic health in Milford was rated good or excellent by 46% (similar to benchmark, down from 51% in 2019)
- ▶ Strategic Goals: Enable growth of existing businesses, foster the establishment of new businesses,
 - ▶ Milford as a place to work was rated 57% (up from 55% in 2019)
 - ▶ Milford's economic development was rated good or excellent by 43% (down from 49% in 2019)
 - ▶ Economic impact in the future was considered very or somewhat positive by 24% (down from 30% in 2019)
- ▶ Strategic Goal: Meet the commercial needs of residents, businesses and visitors
 - ▶ Employment opportunities were considered excellent or good by 43% (up from 34%)
 - ▶ Overall quality of business and service establishments was considered good or excellent by 55% (down from 57% in 2019)
 - ▶ Variety of business and service establishments was considered good or excellent by 43% (lower than benchmark)

Mobility and Infrastructure

- ▶ Strategic Goals: Proactively maintain our utility infrastructure and address future growth by proactively making improvements to infrastructure
 - ▶ Overall utility infrastructure was considered good or excellent by 46% (lower than benchmark)
 - ▶ The following were good or excellent
 - ▶ Garbage collection: 74%
 - ▶ Affordable highspeed internet access: 43%
 - ▶ Drinking water: 50% (up from 45% in 2019 but below benchmark)
 - ▶ Sewer: 75%
 - ▶ Storm water management: 62%
 - ▶ Power: 66%

Mobility and Infrastructure Cont.

- ▶ Strategic Goals: Improve traffic management throughout the City, continue to develop a multi-modal, pedestrian-friendly framework throughout the City, and proactively maintain our streets
 - ▶ Overall quality of the transportation system is considered good or excellent by 48%
 - ▶ Ease of walking is considered good or excellent by 61% (down from 65% in 2019)
 - ▶ Ease of travel by car is considered good or excellent by 76%
 - ▶ Traffic flow on major streets is considered good or excellent by 67% (up from 65% in 2019 and higher than benchmark)
 - ▶ Fewer people walk/bike (46%) or use public transportation (10%) than the benchmark
 - ▶ Traffic, street, snow and sidewalk services were all rated close to the benchmark

Neighborhoods and Community Services

- ▶ Strategic Goals: Preserve and enhance the property values and quality of our neighborhoods, and encourage a balanced range of housing types and home-ownership opportunities for existing and future residents
 - ▶ Overall design or layout of residential commercial areas was considered good or excellent by 52% (down from 55% in 2019)
 - ▶ Their neighborhoods as places to live were considered good or excellent by 78% (up from 76% in 2019)
 - ▶ Variety of housing options was considered good or excellent by 38% (down from 42% in 2019)
 - ▶ Availability of affordable quality housing was considered good or excellent by 31% (down from 44% in 2019)
 - ▶ Overall quality of new development was considered good or excellent by 44% (down from 57% in 2019)
 - ▶ Well designed neighborhoods were considered good or excellent by 44% (lower than benchmark)

Neighborhoods and Community Services Cont.

- ▶ Strategic Goals: Promote a healthy community with recreational activities provided by the City and community partners and promote more tourism in Milford
 - ▶ Public places where people want to spend time were considered good or excellent by 39% (down from 51% in 2019 and below benchmark)
 - ▶ Overall quality of the natural environment was considered good or excellent by 67% (down from 70% in 2019 and below benchmark)
 - ▶ Overall quality of parks and recreation opportunities was considered good or excellent by 56% (lower than benchmark)
 - ▶ Fitness opportunities, recreation opportunities, city parks, recreation programs or classes, and recreation centers or facilities were all significantly down from 2019 and below the benchmark
 - ▶ Availability of paths and walking trails was 60% (up from 50% in 2019)
 - ▶ The overall quality of health and wellness opportunities was considered good or excellent by 65% (up from 61% in 2019)

Fiscal Responsibility and Public Engagement

- ▶ Strategic Goals: Operate in an efficient and responsible manner and review and update the Strategic Plan
 - ▶ Residents' connection and engagement with their community was rated good or excellent by 46%
 - ▶ Sense of community was considered good or excellent by 59% (down from 62% in 2019)
 - ▶ Resident's participation levels were generally down from 2019 but similar to the benchmark
 - ▶ The number of people to voted in the most recent election was 58% (lower than the benchmark)

Custom Questions

- ▶ Residents were asked how important various outdoor tourism opportunities were in Milford. The following areas were rated essential or very important by the following percentages of residents:
 - ▶ Additional recreation access points along the Mispillion River: 65%
 - ▶ More outdoor public events and festivals: 72%
 - ▶ Organized tours (bike tours, birding etc.): 47%
 - ▶ Shuttles to Slaughter Beach: 41%
 - ▶ Additional bike lanes: 52%
 - ▶ Overall quality of parks and recreation opportunities: 73%
- ▶ Residents were asked how they felt about public art in Milford:
 - ▶ Too much: 3%
 - ▶ The right amount: 46%
 - ▶ Would like more: 51%

Custom Questions Cont.

- ▶ Residents were asked how important the expansion of the following recreation opportunities in Milford are. The following said that these were essential or very important:
 - ▶ Parks and playgrounds: 81%
 - ▶ Bike trails and pedestrian paths: 74%
 - ▶ Hardcourt sports: 57%
 - ▶ Turf/softcourt sports: 52%
 - ▶ Swimming pool/splash pad: 57%
 - ▶ Indoor recreation center with sports, fitness and youth programming: 78%
 - ▶ Skate park: 38%
 - ▶ Amphitheater: 52%
- ▶ Residents were asked how much support they would have for a historic preservation ordinance that would establish a review board for building demolitions, alterations and new construction within historic districts.
 - ▶ 95% strongly or somewhat supported the ordinance

Questions?

