



TOWN OF NEEDHAM, MA

**2014**

**Summary of  
Findings**



## The National Citizen Survey is:

- A collaborative effort between National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA)
- A statistically valid compilation of resident opinions about community and services provided by local government

## Study Methods:

- Mailed survey to approximately 1,200 households (late April)
- **546** surveys returned; **47%** response rate  
(typical response rates range 25 – 40%)
- 4% margin of error
- 4th time survey has been conducted – last time in **2012**, and before that in **2010**, and the first time in **2008**
- Benchmark to **500** communities nation-wide

## Results can be used for:

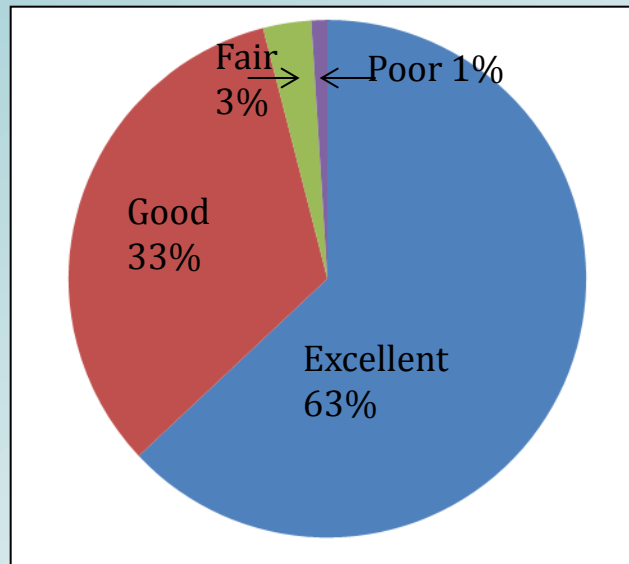
- Planning
- Resource Allocation
- Performance Measurement
- Program and Policy Evaluation
- Spending
- Monitor Trends in Resident Opinion

# COMMUNITY LIVABILITY

## Needham as a Place to Live

**97%**

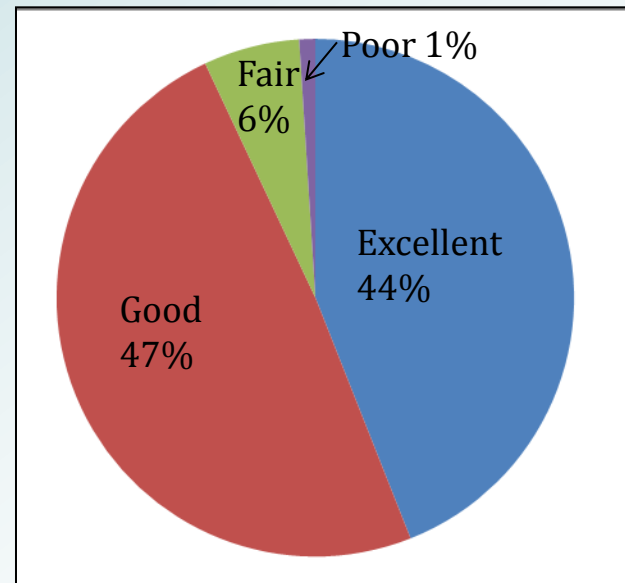
“Excellent” or “Good”



## Quality of Life in Needham

**93%**

“Excellent” or “Good”



**AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM  
EXCEEDED NATIONAL BENCHMARK  
COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS**

**SAFETY**

Overall feeling of safety      97%  
*Ranked #6 of 127*

**MOBILITY**

Ease of walking      84%  
*Ranked #23 of 236*

**AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM  
EXCEEDED NATIONAL BENCHMARK  
COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS**

**NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

Cleanliness 89%

*Ranked #52 of 221*

Air Quality 91%

*Ranked #21 of 206*

**ECONOMY**

Overall economic health 84%

*Ranked #11 of 46*

**AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM  
EXCEEDED NATIONAL BENCHMARK  
COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS**

**RECREATION & WELLNESS**

Mental Health Care 65%

*Ranked #10 of 41*

Preventive Health Services 82%

*Ranked #17 of 175*

Healthcare 82%

*Ranked #17 of 210*

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Neighborliness 78%

*Ranked #4 of 42*



***AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM  
EXCEEDED NATIONAL BENCHMARK  
COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS***

**EDUCATION & ENRICHMENT**

Education & Enrichment

Opportunities 85%

*Ranked #9 of 43*

K-12 Education 91%

*Ranked #29 of 201*

***AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM  
EXCEEDED NATIONAL BENCHMARK  
GOVERNANCE***

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**SAFETY**

Police Services 92%

*Ranked #12 of 342*

Crime Prevention 91%

*Ranked #8 of 280*

***AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM  
EXCEEDED NATIONAL BENCHMARK  
GOVERNANCE***

**NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

Drinking Water 85%

*Ranked #35 of 262*

**RECREATION & WELLNESS**

Health Services 87%

*Ranked #17 of 161*

***AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM  
EXCEEDED NATIONAL BENCHMARK  
GOVERNANCE***

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**GENERAL**

Sense of Community                      85%  
*Ranked #19 of 247*

**AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM  
EXCEEDED NATIONAL BENCHMARK  
ASPECTS OF PARTICIPATION**

**SAFETY**

Did NOT report a crime      91%  
*Ranked #2 of 42*

**MOBILITY**

Used public transportation  
instead of driving      50%  
*Ranked #9 of 38*

Walked or biked instead  
of driving      73%  
*Ranked #8 of 42*

***AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM  
EXCEEDED NATIONAL BENCHMARK  
ASPECTS OF PARTICIPATION***

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**NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

Recycled at Home 95%

*Ranked #36 of 209*

**BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

Did not observe a  
code violation 69%

*Ranked #8 of 42*

***AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM  
EXCEEDED NATIONAL BENCHMARK  
ASPECTS OF PARTICIPATION***

**ECONOMY**

Believe economy will  
have positive impact  
on income 34%  
*Ranked #7 of 205*

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Voted in local elections 87%  
*Ranked 22 of 205*

***AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM  
EXCEEDED NATIONAL BENCHMARK  
ASPECTS OF PARTICIPATION***

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**EDUCATION AND ENRICHMENT**

Used Needham Public

Library 83%

*Ranked #17 of 192*

Attended a Town sponsored

event 62%

*Ranked 7 of 41*



***AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM  
IS BELOW THE NATIONAL BENCHMARK***  
**COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS**

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**BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

Affordable Quality

Housing 25%

*Ranked #226 of 248*

Variety of Housing

Options 42%

*Ranked 184 of 214*

***AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM  
IS BELOW THE NATIONAL BENCHMARK***  
**COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS**

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**ECONOMY**

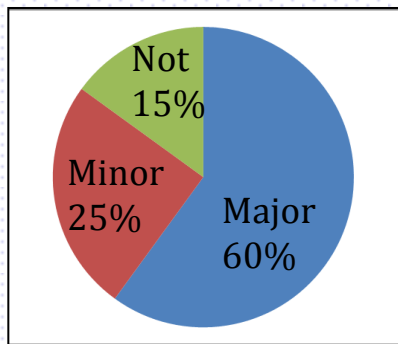
Shopping Opportunities      39%

*Ranked #188 of 235*

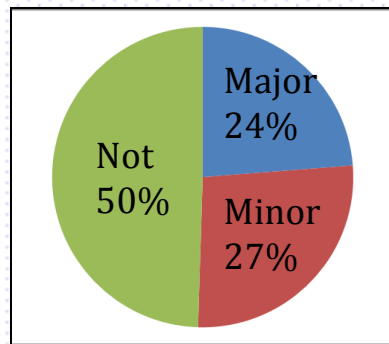
## ***SPECIALTY QUESTIONS***

# **CURRENT SOCIAL MEDIA SOURCES**

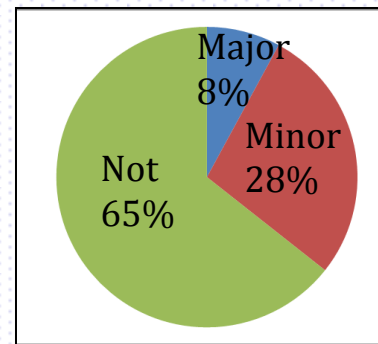
**INDICATE HOW MUCH OF A SOURCE, IF AT ALL,  
EACH OF THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF SOCIAL MEDIA  
IS FOR YOU TO **OBTAIN NEWS****



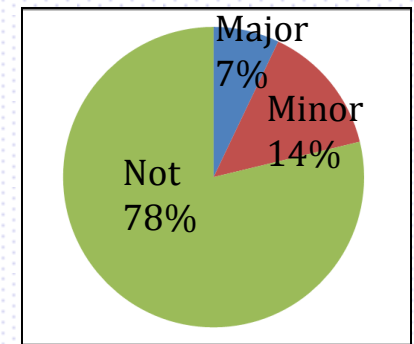
Online News Sites



Facebook



Blogs

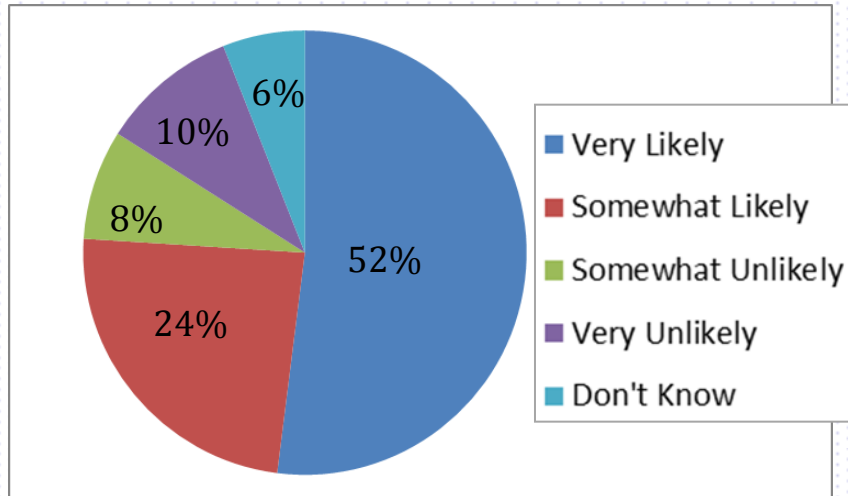


Twitter

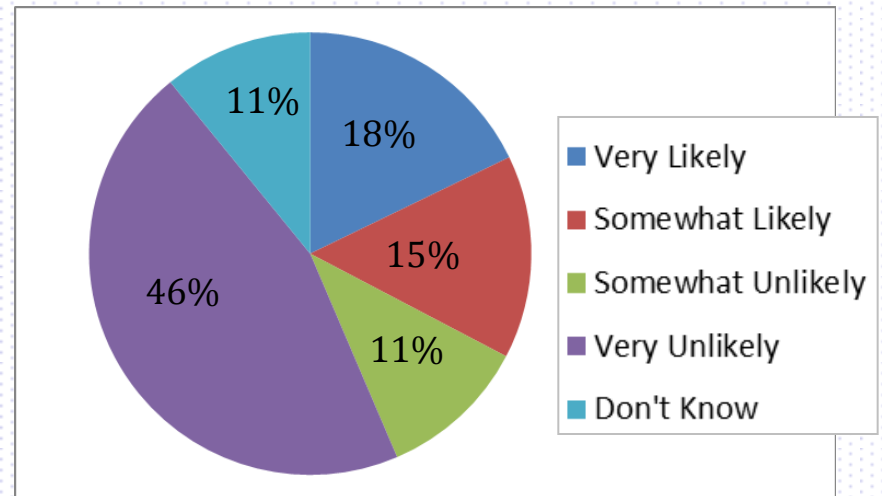
## ***SPECIALTY QUESTIONS***

# **POTENTIAL SOCIAL MEDIA SOURCES**

**INDICATE HOW LIKELY YOU WOULD BE TO USE EACH OF THE FOLLOWING METHODS TO OBTAIN NEWS ABOUT THE TOWN OF NEEDHAM**



Town of Needham Website

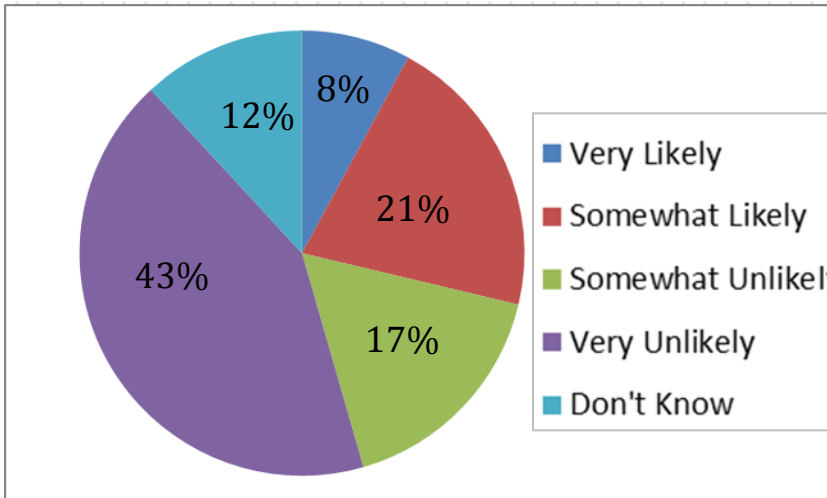


Town Facebook Page

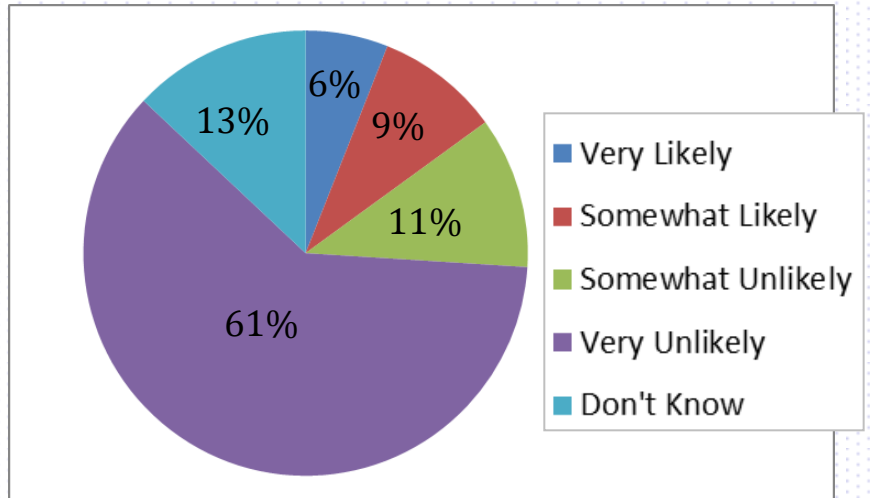
***SPECIALTY QUESTIONS***

**POTENTIAL SOCIAL MEDIA SOURCES**

**INDICATE HOW LIKELY YOU WOULD BE TO USE EACH OF THE FOLLOWING METHODS TO OBTAIN NEWS ABOUT THE TOWN OF NEEDHAM**



Town Blogs



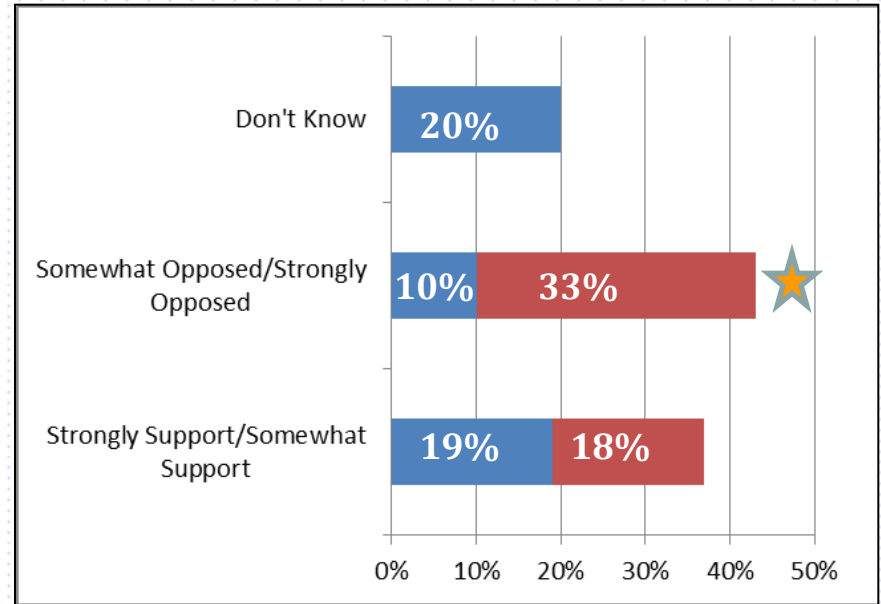
Town Twitter Feed

## SPECIALTY QUESTIONS

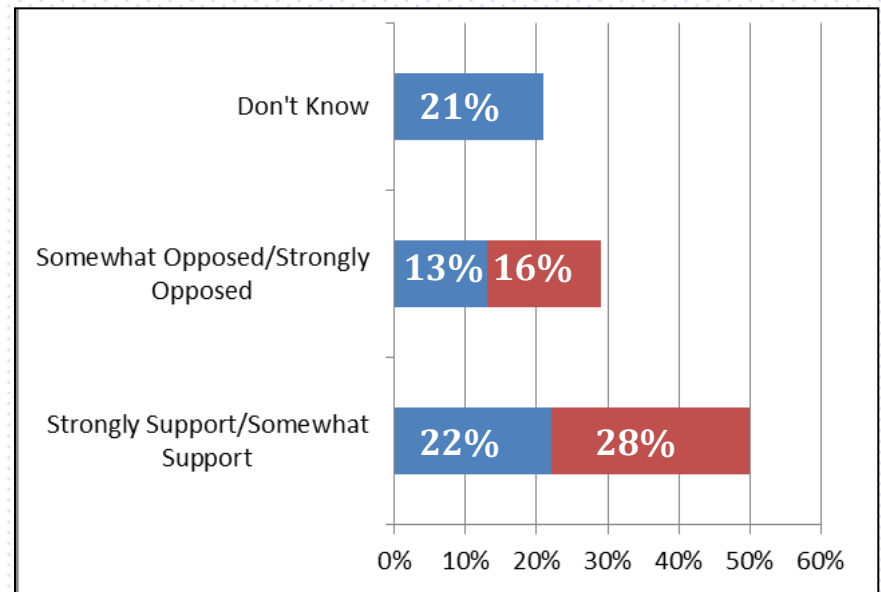
# CLOSING OR REDUCING HOURS FOR THE RECYCLING TRANSFER STATION

The RTS is currently open to the public Tues – Sat 7:30am-4:00pm. The Town is considering closing or reducing hours on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday or Friday in order to reduce costs. (Sat hours would not be affected.) If such changes are needed to reduce costs, to what extent would you support or oppose each of the following options.

### Close or limit hours on Tuesday



### Close or limit hours on Wednesday

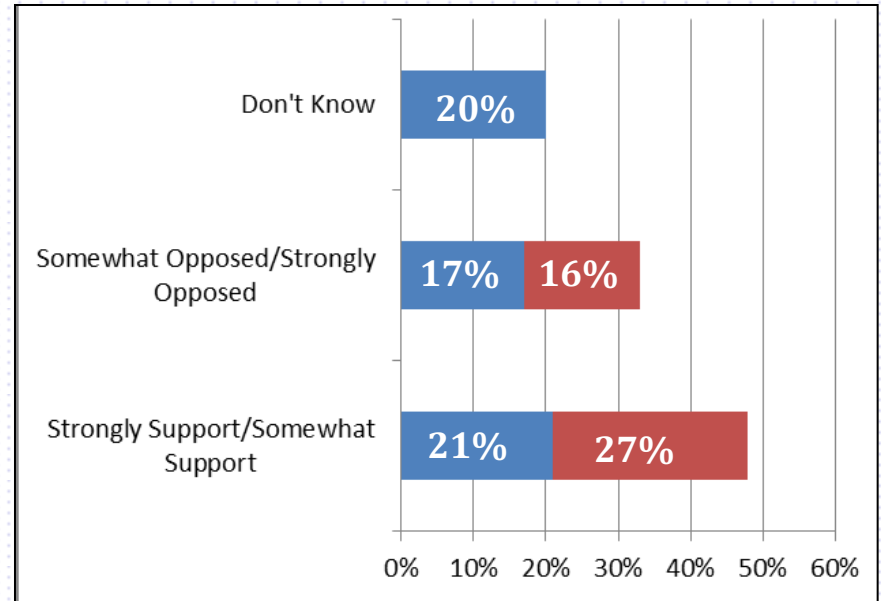


## SPECIALTY QUESTIONS

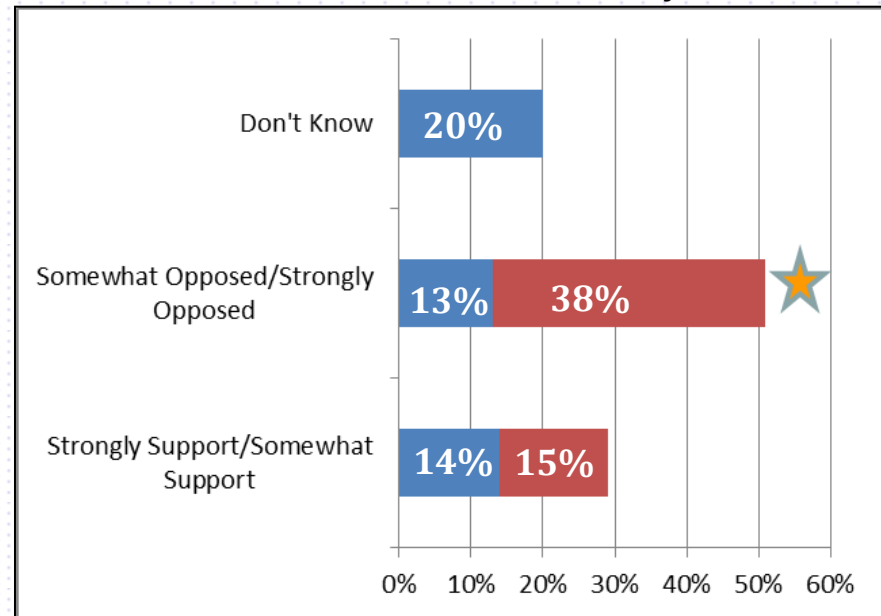
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### Close or limit hours on Thursday



### Close or limit hours on Friday



# TRENDS COMPARISON: 2008 to 2014

Percent rating positively: Ratings of “Excellent/Good”  
 Characteristics with a change of 6% or greater

Category	Characteristic	2008 Rating	2014 Rating	Percent change
Economy	Believe economy will have positive impact on income	7%	34%	386%
Education & Enrichment	Cultural / arts / music activities	42%	62%	48%
Education & Enrichment	Childcare / preschool	44%	62%	41%
Mobility	Paths & walking trails	44%	61%	39%
Mobility	Street repair	32%	43%	34%
Economy	Shopping opportunities	30%	39%	30%
Education & Enrichment	Opportunities for education and enrichment	69%	85%	23%
General	Needham’s overall appearance	73%	88%	21%
Mobility	Traffic flow	48%	58%	21%
Natural Environment	Overall natural environment	72%	86%	19%



# ***TRENDS COMPARISON: 2008 to 2014***

Percent rating positively: Ratings of “Excellent/Good”  
Characteristics with a change of 6% or greater

<b>Category</b>	<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>2008 Rating</b>	<b>2014 Rating</b>	<b>Percent change</b>
General Governance	Services provided by the Federal Government	43%	50%	16%
Mobility	Street cleaning	55%	64%	16%
Recreation & Wellness	Health care	71%	82%	15%
Economy	Economic development	52%	60%	15%
Natural Environment	Cleanliness of Needham	78%	89%	14%
Built Environment	Affordable quality housing	22%	25%	14%
General Governance	Overall direction of the Town	60%	67%	12%
Mobility	Ease of walking	76%	84%	11%
Mobility	Travel by bicycle	50%	55%	10%

# ***TRENDS COMPARISON: 2008 to 2014***

Percent rating positively: Ratings of “Excellent/Good”  
 Characteristics with a change of 6% or greater

<b>Category</b>	<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>2008 Rating</b>	<b>2014 Rating</b>	<b>Percent change</b>
Economy	Employment opportunities	34%	37%	9%
Mobility	Traffic signal timing	56%	61%	9%
Mobility	Street lighting	56%	60%	7%
Mobility	Sidewalk maintenance	41%	44%	7%
Natural Environment	Natural areas preservation	60%	64%	7%
Built Environment	NOT under housing cost stress	70%	74%	6%
Built Environment	Sewer services	83%	88%	6%
Built Environment	Land use, planning and zoning	47%	50%	6%

## ***TRENDS COMPARISON: 2008 to 2014***

Percent rating positively: Ratings of “Excellent/Good”  
Characteristics with a change of 6% or greater

<b>Category</b>	<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>2008 Rating</b>	<b>2014 Rating</b>	<b>Percent change</b>
Community Engagement	Watched a local public meeting	51%	31%	(39%)
Mobility	Travel by public transportation	78%	51%	(35%)
Community Engagement	Attended a local public meeting	35%	23%	(34%)
General Participation	Contacted Needham employees	74%	58%	(22%)
Economy	Place to work	72%	65%	(10%)
Safety	Emergency preparedness	83%	75%	(10%)
Community Engagement	Opportunities to volunteer	85%	79%	(7%)

## ***TRENDS COMPARISON: 2008 to 2014***

Percent rating positively: Ratings of “Excellent/Good”  
Characteristics with a change of 6% or greater

<b>Category</b>	<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>2008 Rating</b>	<b>2014 Rating</b>	<b>Percent change</b>
Education & Enrichment	Used Needham Public Library	88%	83%	(6%)
Recreation & Wellness	Visited a Town park	85%	80%	(6%)
Built Environment	Storm drainage	70%	66%	(6%)

NEXT  
STEPS