



TOWN OF NEEDHAM, MA

**2016 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 **1,500** households (late April); an increase of 300 households from prior survey years
- **563** surveys returned; **39%** response rate
(1,454 eligible households, typical response rates range 25 – 40%)
- 4% margin of error
- 5th time survey has been conducted – last time in 2014, and before that in 2012, 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

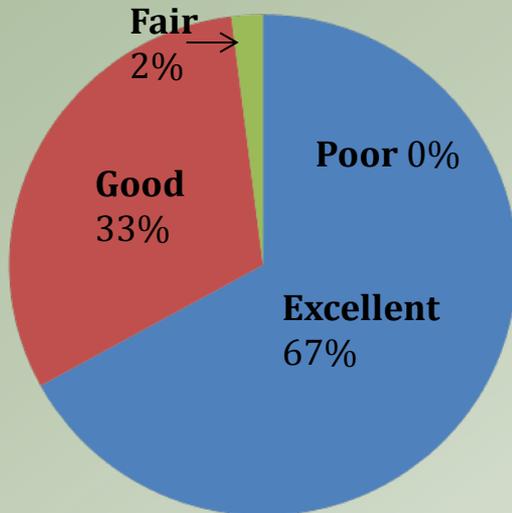


COMMUNITY LIVABILITY

Needham as a Place to Live

98%

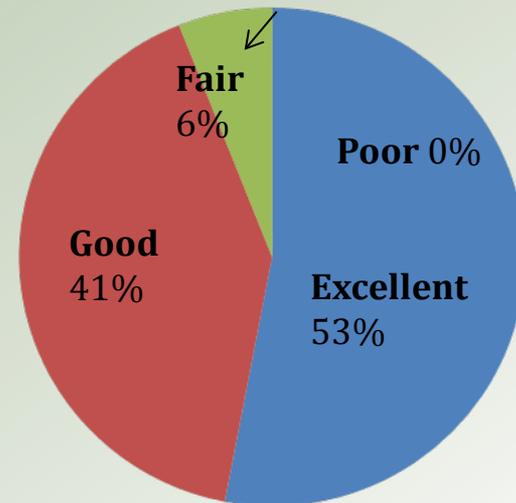
“Excellent” or “Good”



Quality of Life in Needham

94%

“Excellent” or “Good”



AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM EXCEEDED NATIONAL BENCHMARK

COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS BY FACET

SAFETY	Percent Positive	Ranked
Overall feeling of safety in Needham	98%*	6 of 259
In Needham's downtown/commerical area during the day	98%	11 of 279

MOBILITY	Percent Positive	Ranked
Ease of Walking	85%	27 of 267
Overall ease of getting to places usually visited	89%	11 of 170

** Indicates MUCH HIGHER than National Benchmark*



AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM EXCEEDED NATIONAL BENCHMARK

COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS BY FACET

ECONOMY	Percent Positive	Ranked
Overall economic health of Needham	87%	20 of 166
Employment opportunities	52%	49 of 287
Needham as a place to work	77%	53 of 335

RECREATION & WELLNESS	Percent Positive	Ranked
Health & wellness opportunities in Needham	84%	32 of 163
Availability of affordable quality mental health care	68%	10 of 140
Availability of preventive health services	85%	6 of 210
Availability of affordable quality health care	86%	7 of 236

AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM EXCEEDED NATIONAL BENCHMARK

COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS BY FACET

EDUCATION & ENRICHMENT	Percent Positive	Ranked
Overall opportunities for education & enrichment	88%	21 of 162
Adult educational opportunities	83%	13 of 146
K-12 education	93%	19 of 241

AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM EXCEEDED NATIONAL BENCHMARK

GOVERNANCE BY FACET

GOVERNANCE GENERAL	Percent Positive	Ranked
Being honest	72%	25 of 157

SAFETY	Percent Positive	Ranked
Police services	94%	6 of 426
Fire services	98%	6 of 342
Ambulance or emergency medical services	96%	11 of 324
Crime prevention	93%	3 of 332
Fire prevention & education	88%	18 of 265
Animal control	77%	27 of 318

AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM EXCEEDED NATIONAL BENCHMARK

GOVERNANCE BY FACET

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT	Percent Positive	Ranked
Drinking water	90%	16 of 315

BUILT ENVIRONMENT	Percent Positive	Ranked
Cable television	76%	3 of 178

RECREATION & WELLNESS	Percent Positive	Ranked
Health services	88%	9 of 185

EDUCATION & ENRICHMENT	Percent Positive	Ranked
Public library services	93%	26 of 322

AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM EXCEEDED NATIONAL BENCHMARK

PARTICIPATION BY FACET

PARTICIPATION GENERAL	Percent Positive	Ranked
Sense of community	83%	16 of 283
Recommend living in Needham to someone who asks	96%	35 of 259
Contacted Needham (in-person, phone, email or web) for help or information	59%	28 of 291

SAFETY	Percent Positive	Ranked
Did NOT report a crime to police	89%	10 of 159

AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM EXCEEDED NATIONAL BENCHMARK

PARTICIPATION BY FACET

MOBILITY	Percent Positive	Ranked
Used bus, rail, subway or other public transportation instead of driving	53%*	21 of 130
Walked or biked instead of driving	69%	37 of 156

BUILT ENVIRONMENT	Percent Positive	Ranked
Did NOT observe a code violation or other hazard in Needham	74%*	8 of 150

EDUCATION & ENRICHMENT	Percent Positive	Ranked
Used Needham public library or its services	85%	5 of 218

* Indicates MUCH HIGHER than National Benchmark

AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM FELL BELOW NATIONAL BENCHMARK

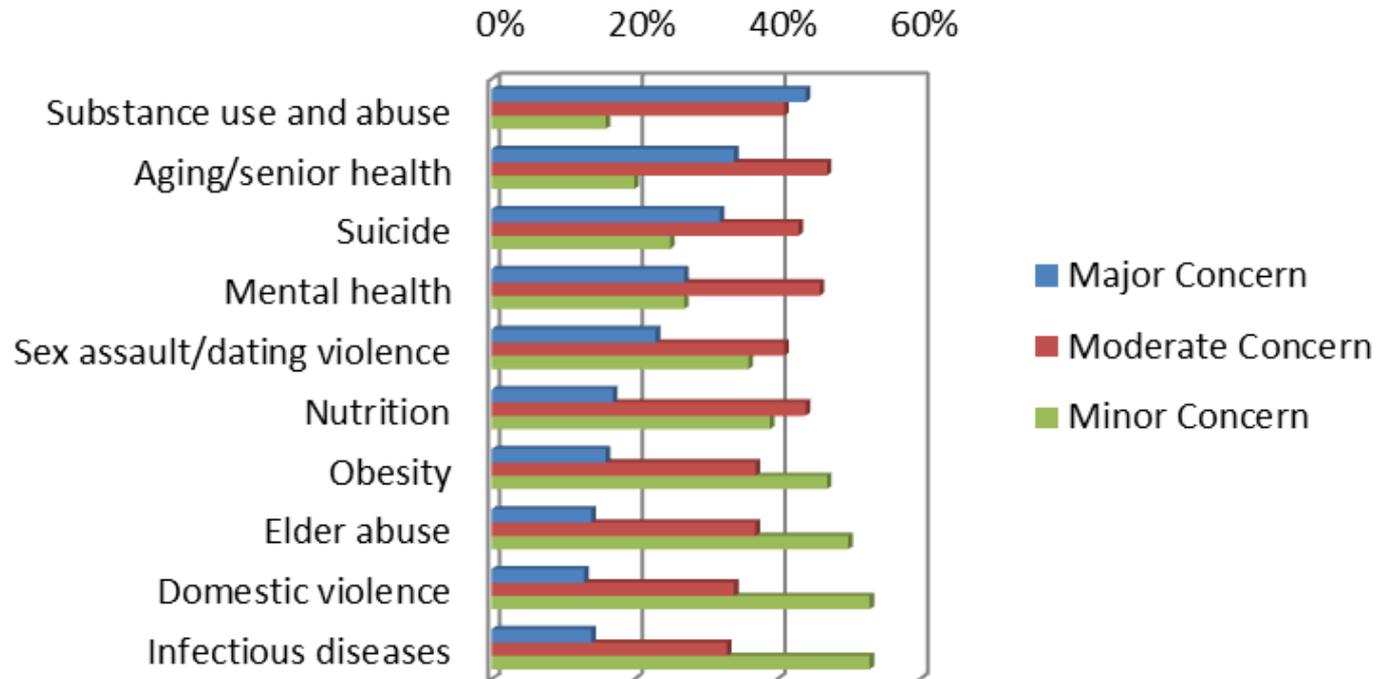
COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS BY FACET

BUILT ENVIRONMENT	Percent Positive	Ranked
Availability of affordable quality housing	19%	249 of 278
Variety of housing options	38%	219 of 254

SPECIALTY QUESTIONS: CONCERN OVER HEALTH ISSUES

To what extent, if at all, do you think each of these health issues is a current concern in Needham?

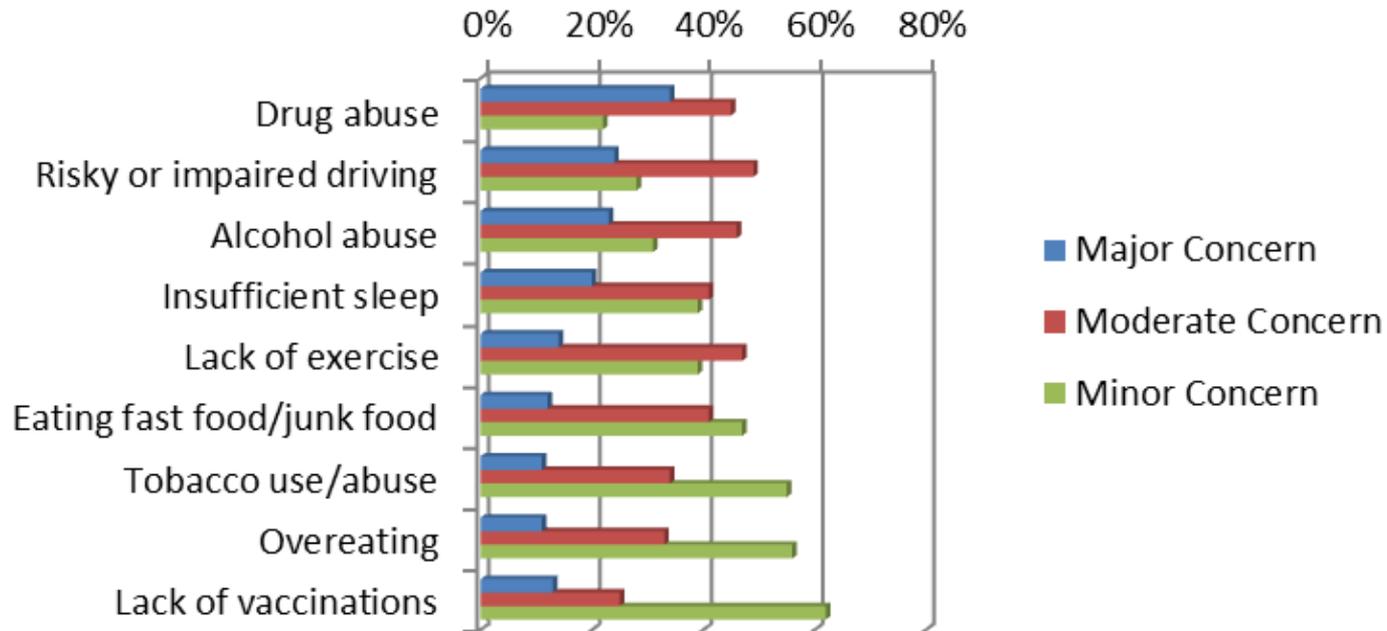
Health Issue Concerns



SPECIALTY QUESTIONS: CONCERN OVER HEALTH BEHAVIORS

To what extent, if at all, do you think each of these health behaviors is a current concern in Needham?

Health Behavior Concerns



SPECIALTY QUESTIONS: EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Thinking about your family's preparedness for a natural disaster or man-made emergency, please indicate whether you have done each of the following. Have you....

	Yes	No
Stockpiled a small cache of food, water and medicine?	40%	60%
Made an emergency plan to allow you to communicate with your family members?	33%	67%
Tested your personal preparedness efforts to make sure your family knows what to do?	18%	82%

SPECIALTY QUESTIONS: EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INFORMATION

How much more information, if any, does your family need regarding emergency preparedness?

Need some more information	38%
Need a little more information	23%
Need a lot more information	19%
No more/have enough information	19%

SPECIALTY QUESTIONS: SOURCES OF TOWN INFORMATION

How likely, if at all, would you be to use each of the following sources of information to learn about various Town information (including health, safety and services?)

	Very Likely	Somewhat Likely	Not Likely At All
Materials mailed out to residences	55%	34%	10%
Materials on Town website	51%	32%	17%
Materials on Social Media (Town Facebook & Twitter)	18%	29%	53%
In-person trainings and demonstrations	6%	37%	57%
Short video segments on the Needham Channel	8%	21%	72%

TRENDS COMPARISON: 2008 to 2016

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

Category	Characteristic	2008 Rating	2016 Rating	Percent change
Economy	Believe economy will have positive impact on income	7%	28%	300%
Education & Enrichment	Cultural / arts / music activities	42%	69%	64%
Economy	Employment opportunities	34%	52%	53%
Economy	Shopping opportunities	30%	44%	47%
Mobility	Paths and walking trails	44%	64%	45%
Mobility	Street repair	32%	46%	44%
Education & Enrichment	Childcare / preschool	44%	63%	43%
Mobility	Sidewalk maintenance	41%	54%	32%
Mobility	Street cleaning	55%	69%	25%
General	Needham’s overall appearance	73%	90%	23%

TRENDS COMPARISON: 2008 to 2016

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

Category	Characteristic	2008 Rating	2016 Rating	Percent change
Economy	Economic development	52%	63%	21%
Recreation & Wellness	Health care	71%	86%	21%
General Governance	Services provided by the Federal Government	43%	52%	21%
Mobility	Snow removal	63%	76%	21%
Mobility	Street lighting	56%	67%	20%
Natural Environment	Cleanliness of Needham	78%	91%	17%
Natural Environment	Overall natural environment	72%	83%	15%
Built Environment	Storm drainage	70%	80%	14%
Mobility	Ease of walking	76%	85%	12%

TRENDS COMPARISON: 2008 to 2016

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

Category	Characteristic	2008 Rating	2016 Rating	Percent change
Mobility	Traffic Signal Timing	56%	62%	11%
Mobility	Travel by bicycle	50%	55%	10%
Recreation & Wellness	Recreational opportunities	65%	71%	9%
Built Environment	Sewer services	83%	90%	8%
Natural Environment	Drinking water	83%	90%	8%
Mobility	Traffic flow	48%	52%	8%
Built Environment	NOT under housing stress	70%	75%	7%
Economy	Place to work	72%	77%	7%
General	Needham’s overall image	89%	95%	7%

TRENDS COMPARISON: 2008 to 2016

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

Category	Characteristic	2008 Rating	2016 Rating	Percent change
Recreation & Wellness	Visited a Town park	85%	80%	-6%
Community Engagement	Opportunities to volunteer	85%	79%	-7%
Safety	Emergency preparedness	83%	77%	-7%
Community Engagement	Volunteered	51%	47%	-8%
General	Welcoming citizen involvement	62%	57%	-8%
Community Engagement	Openness and acceptance	69%	63%	-9%
Built Environment	Land use, planning and zoning	47%	41%	-13%
Education & Enrichment	Participated in religious or spiritual activities	59%	51%	-14%

TRENDS COMPARISON: 2008 to 2016

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

Category	Characteristic	2008 Rating	2016 Rating	Percent change
Built Environment	Affordable quality housing	22%	19%	-14%
Community Engagement	Participated in a club	37%	31%	-16%
General Participation	Contacted Needham employees	74%	59%	-20%
Community Engagement	Attended a local public meeting	35%	26%	-26%
Mobility	Travel by public transportation	78%	54%	-31%
Community Engagement	Watched a local public meeting	51%	26%	-49%

NEXT STEPS