# THE NCS™
## The National Citizen Survey™

# Billings, MT

Technical Appendices
FINAL
2016

**NRC**
National Research Center Inc

**ICMA**
*Leaders at the Core of Better Communities*

# Contents

# Appendix A: Complete Survey Responses

## Responses excluding "don't know"

The following pages contain a complete set of responses to each question on the survey, excluding the "don't know" responses. The percent of respondents giving a particular response is shown followed by the number of respondents (denoted with "N=").

### Table 1: Question 1

| Please rate each of the following aspects of quality of life in Billings: | Excellent | | Good | | Fair | | Poor | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Billings as a place to live | 24% | N=94 | 51% | N=201 | 22% | N=87 | 2% | N=9 | 100% | N=391 |
| Your neighborhood as a place to live | 32% | N=125 | 43% | N=167 | 19% | N=73 | 6% | N=25 | 100% | N=390 |
| Billings as a place to raise children | 23% | N=81 | 46% | N=161 | 26% | N=91 | 6% | N=21 | 100% | N=353 |
| Billings as a place to work | 17% | N=65 | 50% | N=189 | 22% | N=82 | 10% | N=39 | 100% | N=375 |
| Billings as a place to visit | 15% | N=58 | 40% | N=151 | 34% | N=127 | 11% | N=41 | 100% | N=377 |
| Billings as a place to retire | 18% | N=59 | 42% | N=137 | 28% | N=92 | 13% | N=42 | 100% | N=330 |
| The overall quality of life in Billings | 16% | N=62 | 58% | N=224 | 22% | N=84 | 5% | N=17 | 100% | N=388 |

### Table 2: Question 2

| Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Billings as a whole: | Excellent | | Good | | Fair | | Poor | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Overall feeling of safety in Billings | 7% | N=29 | 48% | N=188 | 33% | N=129 | 12% | N=45 | 100% | N=391 |
| Overall ease of getting to the places you usually have to visit | 18% | N=70 | 54% | N=212 | 22% | N=87 | 6% | N=23 | 100% | N=392 |
| Quality of overall natural environment in Billings | 16% | N=63 | 49% | N=188 | 30% | N=115 | 6% | N=21 | 100% | N=387 |
| Overall "built environment" of Billings (including overall design, buildings, parks and transportation systems) | 6% | N=24 | 37% | N=144 | 42% | N=164 | 15% | N=57 | 100% | N=390 |
| Health and wellness opportunities in Billings | 30% | N=116 | 48% | N=183 | 17% | N=66 | 5% | N=19 | 100% | N=384 |
| Overall opportunities for education and enrichment | 17% | N=65 | 46% | N=173 | 29% | N=109 | 8% | N=32 | 100% | N=378 |
| Overall economic health of Billings | 11% | N=40 | 50% | N=186 | 33% | N=120 | 6% | N=23 | 100% | N=369 |
| Sense of community | 9% | N=34 | 40% | N=154 | 38% | N=145 | 13% | N=51 | 100% | N=383 |
| Overall image or reputation of Billings | 11% | N=44 | 43% | N=167 | 33% | N=128 | 12% | N=45 | 100% | N=384 |

### Table 3: Question 3

| Please indicate how likely or unlikely you are to do each of the following: | Very likely | | Somewhat likely | | Somewhat unlikely | | Very unlikely | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Recommend living in Billings to someone who asks | 36% | N=138 | 46% | N=179 | 11% | N=41 | 7% | N=28 | 100% | N=386 |
| Remain in Billings for the next five years | 61% | N=233 | 22% | N=85 | 11% | N=40 | 6% | N=24 | 100% | N=381 |

### Table 4: Question 4

| Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel: | Very safe | | Somewhat safe | | Neither safe nor unsafe | | Somewhat unsafe | | Very unsafe | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| In your neighborhood during the day | 63% | N=245 | 30% | N=116 | 3% | N=11 | 4% | N=16 | 1% | N=3 | 100% | N=392 |
| In Billings' downtown/commercial area during the day | 24% | N=91 | 45% | N=173 | 12% | N=47 | 15% | N=59 | 4% | N=16 | 100% | N=386 |

## Table 5: Question 5

| Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Billings as a whole: | Excellent | | Good | | Fair | | Poor | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Traffic flow on major streets | 5% | N=21 | 38% | N=149 | 41% | N=159 | 16% | N=63 | 100% | N=391 |
| Ease of public parking | 7% | N=26 | 33% | N=126 | 42% | N=161 | 19% | N=72 | 100% | N=385 |
| Ease of travel by car in Billings | 16% | N=63 | 49% | N=189 | 28% | N=111 | 7% | N=26 | 100% | N=388 |
| Ease of travel by public transportation in Billings | 5% | N=12 | 22% | N=50 | 31% | N=70 | 41% | N=92 | 100% | N=224 |
| Ease of travel by bicycle in Billings | 5% | N=13 | 30% | N=84 | 39% | N=110 | 26% | N=71 | 100% | N=278 |
| Ease of walking in Billings | 12% | N=43 | 42% | N=154 | 32% | N=119 | 14% | N=52 | 100% | N=368 |
| Availability of paths and walking trails | 15% | N=51 | 43% | N=147 | 30% | N=103 | 12% | N=42 | 100% | N=343 |
| Air quality | 10% | N=40 | 54% | N=205 | 24% | N=93 | 12% | N=44 | 100% | N=382 |
| Cleanliness of Billings | 5% | N=21 | 34% | N=133 | 41% | N=160 | 20% | N=76 | 100% | N=390 |
| Overall appearance of Billings | 6% | N=23 | 42% | N=162 | 40% | N=153 | 13% | N=49 | 100% | N=387 |
| Public places where people want to spend time | 7% | N=27 | 44% | N=163 | 38% | N=139 | 11% | N=41 | 100% | N=369 |
| Variety of housing options | 9% | N=32 | 41% | N=144 | 33% | N=118 | 17% | N=61 | 100% | N=356 |
| Availability of affordable quality housing | 5% | N=18 | 27% | N=92 | 40% | N=139 | 28% | N=94 | 100% | N=343 |
| Fitness opportunities (including exercise classes and paths or trails, etc.) | 20% | N=74 | 51% | N=182 | 24% | N=85 | 5% | N=19 | 100% | N=360 |
| Recreational opportunities | 14% | N=53 | 44% | N=166 | 32% | N=122 | 9% | N=35 | 100% | N=375 |
| Availability of affordable quality food | 18% | N=68 | 46% | N=179 | 29% | N=111 | 7% | N=28 | 100% | N=387 |
| Availability of affordable quality health care | 26% | N=94 | 43% | N=156 | 20% | N=73 | 11% | N=41 | 100% | N=364 |
| Availability of preventive health services | 27% | N=94 | 42% | N=150 | 25% | N=89 | 6% | N=21 | 100% | N=355 |
| Availability of affordable quality mental health care | 13% | N=31 | 32% | N=78 | 33% | N=79 | 22% | N=53 | 100% | N=242 |

## Table 6: Question 6

| Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Billings as a whole: | Excellent | | Good | | Fair | | Poor | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Availability of affordable quality child care/preschool | 9% | N=17 | 39% | N=74 | 37% | N=71 | 15% | N=29 | 100% | N=190 |
| K-12 education | 16% | N=49 | 45% | N=134 | 33% | N=96 | 6% | N=16 | 100% | N=295 |
| Adult educational opportunities | 14% | N=43 | 47% | N=146 | 36% | N=110 | 4% | N=12 | 100% | N=311 |
| Opportunities to attend cultural/arts/music activities | 15% | N=54 | 50% | N=180 | 26% | N=94 | 8% | N=29 | 100% | N=358 |
| Opportunities to participate in religious or spiritual events and activities | 26% | N=86 | 55% | N=185 | 15% | N=48 | 4% | N=15 | 100% | N=334 |
| Employment opportunities | 9% | N=33 | 47% | N=166 | 30% | N=108 | 13% | N=46 | 100% | N=353 |
| Shopping opportunities | 18% | N=71 | 46% | N=179 | 27% | N=106 | 8% | N=32 | 100% | N=388 |
| Cost of living in Billings | 6% | N=24 | 35% | N=133 | 45% | N=173 | 14% | N=55 | 100% | N=385 |
| Overall quality of business and service establishments in Billings | 12% | N=47 | 52% | N=198 | 31% | N=116 | 5% | N=18 | 100% | N=379 |
| Vibrant downtown/commercial area | 7% | N=24 | 36% | N=131 | 44% | N=160 | 14% | N=50 | 100% | N=365 |
| Overall quality of new development in Billings | 7% | N=25 | 48% | N=169 | 38% | N=136 | 7% | N=23 | 100% | N=353 |
| Opportunities to participate in social events and activities | 15% | N=55 | 50% | N=182 | 28% | N=102 | 7% | N=27 | 100% | N=366 |
| Opportunities to volunteer | 23% | N=76 | 51% | N=173 | 23% | N=76 | 4% | N=12 | 100% | N=338 |
| Opportunities to participate in community matters | 15% | N=52 | 46% | N=157 | 30% | N=103 | 9% | N=29 | 100% | N=340 |
| Openness and acceptance of the community toward people of diverse backgrounds | 10% | N=36 | 33% | N=112 | 33% | N=111 | 24% | N=82 | 100% | N=341 |
| Neighborliness of residents in Billings | 10% | N=37 | 42% | N=160 | 37% | N=140 | 12% | N=45 | 100% | N=381 |

## Table 7: Question 7

| Please indicate whether or not you have done each of the following in the last 12 months. | No | | Yes | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Made efforts to conserve water | 24% | N=93 | 76% | N=295 | 100% | N=388 |
| Made efforts to make your home more energy efficient | 24% | N=92 | 76% | N=296 | 100% | N=388 |
| Observed a code violation or other hazard in Billings | 37% | N=141 | 63% | N=245 | 100% | N=386 |
| Household member was a victim of a crime in Billings | 79% | N=308 | 21% | N=80 | 100% | N=387 |
| Reported a crime to the police in Billings | 63% | N=244 | 37% | N=143 | 100% | N=387 |
| Stocked supplies in preparation for an emergency | 69% | N=266 | 31% | N=122 | 100% | N=387 |
| Campaigned or advocated for an issue, cause or candidate | 76% | N=296 | 24% | N=91 | 100% | N=388 |
| Contacted the City of Billings (in-person, phone, email or web) for help or information | 64% | N=250 | 36% | N=139 | 100% | N=389 |
| Contacted Billings elected officials (in-person, phone, email or web) to express your opinion | 83% | N=321 | 17% | N=67 | 100% | N=389 |

## Table 8: Question 8

| In the last 12 months, about how many times, if at all, have you or other household members done each of the following in Billings? | 2 times a week or more | | 2-4 times a month | | Once a month or less | | Not at all | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Used Billings recreation centers or their services | 11% | N=43 | 16% | N=61 | 33% | N=126 | 40% | N=152 | 100% | N=382 |
| Visited a neighborhood park or City park | 21% | N=81 | 30% | N=117 | 38% | N=146 | 11% | N=44 | 100% | N=388 |
| Used Billings public libraries or their services | 6% | N=21 | 17% | N=66 | 33% | N=128 | 44% | N=169 | 100% | N=384 |
| Participated in religious or spiritual activities in Billings | 17% | N=64 | 24% | N=91 | 17% | N=67 | 42% | N=162 | 100% | N=385 |
| Attended a City-sponsored event | 1% | N=5 | 9% | N=33 | 45% | N=174 | 45% | N=173 | 100% | N=385 |
| Used bus, rail, subway or other public transportation instead of driving | 4% | N=14 | 3% | N=11 | 4% | N=17 | 89% | N=345 | 100% | N=388 |
| Carpooled with other adults or children instead of driving alone | 9% | N=35 | 16% | N=63 | 17% | N=67 | 57% | N=220 | 100% | N=385 |
| Walked or biked instead of driving | 17% | N=65 | 14% | N=55 | 24% | N=95 | 44% | N=172 | 100% | N=387 |
| Volunteered your time to some group/activity in Billings | 13% | N=51 | 14% | N=54 | 25% | N=95 | 48% | N=186 | 100% | N=387 |
| Participated in a club | 8% | N=31 | 13% | N=51 | 17% | N=67 | 62% | N=240 | 100% | N=388 |
| Talked to or visited with your immediate neighbors | 47% | N=182 | 36% | N=140 | 13% | N=51 | 4% | N=16 | 100% | N=388 |
| Done a favor for a neighbor | 24% | N=92 | 29% | N=111 | 33% | N=129 | 15% | N=57 | 100% | N=388 |

## Table 9: Question 9

| Thinking about local public meetings (of local elected officials like City Council or County Commissioners, advisory boards, town halls, HOA, neighborhood watch, etc.), in the last 12 months, about how many times, if at all, have you or other household members attended or watched a local public meeting? | 2 times a week or more | | 2-4 times a month | | Once a month or less | | Not at all | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Attended a local public meeting | 1% | N=3 | 3% | N=11 | 15% | N=56 | 82% | N=314 | 100% | N=383 |
| Watched (online or on television) a local public meeting | 3% | N=10 | 8% | N=33 | 26% | N=101 | 63% | N=240 | 100% | N=384 |

## Table 10: Question 10

| Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Billings: | Excellent | | Good | | Fair | | Poor | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Police services | 19% | N=69 | 42% | N=150 | 27% | N=98 | 11% | N=41 | 100% | N=358 |
| Fire services | 32% | N=105 | 54% | N=176 | 13% | N=43 | 1% | N=4 | 100% | N=329 |
| Ambulance or emergency medical services | 31% | N=96 | 54% | N=166 | 12% | N=37 | 3% | N=10 | 100% | N=309 |
| Crime prevention | 5% | N=17 | 37% | N=120 | 38% | N=126 | 20% | N=65 | 100% | N=327 |
| Fire prevention and education | 14% | N=39 | 48% | N=137 | 30% | N=85 | 8% | N=21 | 100% | N=282 |
| Traffic enforcement | 8% | N=26 | 29% | N=99 | 32% | N=110 | 32% | N=110 | 100% | N=344 |

| Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Billings: | Excellent | | Good | | Fair | | Poor | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Street repair | 4% | N=16 | 29% | N=107 | 36% | N=136 | 31% | N=115 | 100% | N=374 |
| Street cleaning | 7% | N=28 | 43% | N=160 | 36% | N=133 | 14% | N=54 | 100% | N=375 |
| Street lighting | 8% | N=31 | 41% | N=154 | 33% | N=124 | 18% | N=67 | 100% | N=376 |
| Snow removal | 10% | N=37 | 28% | N=106 | 37% | N=142 | 25% | N=94 | 100% | N=378 |
| Sidewalk maintenance | 6% | N=22 | 29% | N=106 | 41% | N=149 | 24% | N=87 | 100% | N=364 |
| Traffic signal timing | 8% | N=30 | 36% | N=136 | 33% | N=123 | 23% | N=84 | 100% | N=372 |
| Bus or transit services | 12% | N=21 | 29% | N=53 | 36% | N=65 | 23% | N=41 | 100% | N=180 |
| Garbage collection | 31% | N=118 | 54% | N=202 | 12% | N=47 | 3% | N=10 | 100% | N=377 |
| Recycling | 9% | N=30 | 30% | N=98 | 27% | N=91 | 34% | N=113 | 100% | N=333 |
| Yard waste pick-up | 26% | N=80 | 43% | N=135 | 22% | N=69 | 9% | N=30 | 100% | N=314 |
| Storm drainage | 8% | N=28 | 42% | N=141 | 36% | N=122 | 13% | N=45 | 100% | N=336 |
| Drinking water | 24% | N=91 | 51% | N=190 | 20% | N=74 | 5% | N=19 | 100% | N=373 |
| Sewer services | 23% | N=79 | 51% | N=177 | 23% | N=81 | 2% | N=9 | 100% | N=346 |
| Utility billing | 14% | N=52 | 48% | N=175 | 33% | N=120 | 4% | N=16 | 100% | N=363 |
| City parks | 22% | N=82 | 53% | N=196 | 22% | N=80 | 3% | N=12 | 100% | N=371 |
| Recreation programs or classes | 14% | N=33 | 53% | N=128 | 28% | N=67 | 6% | N=14 | 100% | N=243 |
| Recreation centers or facilities | 12% | N=31 | 46% | N=119 | 34% | N=88 | 8% | N=21 | 100% | N=257 |
| Land use, planning and zoning | 6% | N=17 | 29% | N=79 | 46% | N=127 | 20% | N=54 | 100% | N=277 |
| Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc.) | 5% | N=14 | 19% | N=57 | 47% | N=142 | 29% | N=88 | 100% | N=301 |
| Animal control | 6% | N=20 | 43% | N=134 | 36% | N=112 | 14% | N=43 | 100% | N=308 |
| Economic development | 11% | N=35 | 43% | N=134 | 36% | N=111 | 10% | N=31 | 100% | N=311 |
| Health services | 32% | N=111 | 43% | N=148 | 21% | N=73 | 5% | N=16 | 100% | N=348 |
| Public library services | 31% | N=91 | 46% | N=134 | 20% | N=59 | 3% | N=9 | 100% | N=293 |
| Public information services | 10% | N=30 | 43% | N=123 | 39% | N=112 | 8% | N=22 | 100% | N=287 |
| Cable television | 9% | N=26 | 34% | N=104 | 29% | N=88 | 29% | N=91 | 100% | N=309 |
| Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations) | 9% | N=24 | 38% | N=103 | 42% | N=115 | 12% | N=33 | 100% | N=276 |
| Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts | 10% | N=29 | 34% | N=102 | 39% | N=117 | 17% | N=50 | 100% | N=298 |
| Billings open space | 10% | N=31 | 34% | N=109 | 41% | N=132 | 14% | N=46 | 100% | N=318 |
| City-sponsored special events | 9% | N=26 | 43% | N=132 | 41% | N=124 | 8% | N=23 | 100% | N=305 |
| Overall customer service by Billings employees (police, receptionists, planners, etc.) | 11% | N=39 | 50% | N=169 | 31% | N=106 | 8% | N=27 | 100% | N=340 |

## Table 11: Question 11

| Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by each of the following? | Excellent | | Good | | Fair | | Poor | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The City of Billings | 13% | N=49 | 52% | N=193 | 30% | N=110 | 5% | N=19 | 100% | N=370 |
| The Federal Government | 6% | N=20 | 31% | N=107 | 36% | N=125 | 27% | N=96 | 100% | N=348 |
| The State Government | 5% | N=19 | 39% | N=135 | 46% | N=158 | 10% | N=36 | 100% | N=347 |
| Yellowstone County Government | 9% | N=30 | 45% | N=156 | 35% | N=122 | 10% | N=36 | 100% | N=345 |

## Table 12: Question 12

| Please rate the following categories of Billings government performance: | Excellent | | Good | | Fair | | Poor | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The value of services for the taxes paid to Billings | 5% | N=17 | 39% | N=137 | 39% | N=138 | 17% | N=61 | 100% | N=353 |
| The overall direction that Billings is taking | 8% | N=29 | 44% | N=157 | 34% | N=122 | 14% | N=52 | 100% | N=360 |
| The job Billings government does at welcoming citizen involvement | 9% | N=28 | 34% | N=104 | 39% | N=120 | 18% | N=54 | 100% | N=307 |
| Overall confidence in Billings government | 6% | N=22 | 35% | N=125 | 44% | N=158 | 15% | N=56 | 100% | N=360 |
| Generally acting in the best interest of the community | 8% | N=28 | 40% | N=141 | 37% | N=132 | 15% | N=55 | 100% | N=356 |
| Being honest | 8% | N=27 | 38% | N=129 | 40% | N=136 | 14% | N=48 | 100% | N=341 |
| Treating all residents fairly | 8% | N=26 | 37% | N=126 | 35% | N=119 | 20% | N=68 | 100% | N=340 |

## Table 13: Question 13

| Please rate how important, if at all, you think it is for the Billings community to focus on each of the following in the coming two years: | Essential | | Very important | | Somewhat important | | Not at all important | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Overall feeling of safety in Billings | 50% | N=194 | 41% | N=161 | 8% | N=31 | 1% | N=3 | 100% | N=388 |
| Overall ease of getting to the places you usually have to visit | 22% | N=85 | 49% | N=188 | 27% | N=106 | 2% | N=8 | 100% | N=387 |
| Quality of overall natural environment in Billings | 25% | N=97 | 51% | N=198 | 22% | N=87 | 2% | N=7 | 100% | N=388 |
| Overall "built environment" of Billings (including overall design, buildings, parks and transportation systems) | 28% | N=109 | 43% | N=166 | 28% | N=110 | 1% | N=3 | 100% | N=388 |
| Health and wellness opportunities in Billings | 35% | N=135 | 46% | N=178 | 18% | N=69 | 1% | N=5 | 100% | N=388 |
| Overall opportunities for education and enrichment | 40% | N=154 | 40% | N=156 | 20% | N=76 | 1% | N=3 | 100% | N=388 |
| Overall economic health of Billings | 47% | N=182 | 42% | N=163 | 10% | N=39 | 0% | N=2 | 100% | N=385 |
| Sense of community | 30% | N=117 | 47% | N=183 | 20% | N=77 | 3% | N=10 | 100% | N=387 |

## Table 14: Question 14A

| Please rate how important, if at all, it is for the City to create a citizen committee: | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| Essential | 26% | N=86 |
| Very Important | 37% | N=120 |
| Somewhat important | 29% | N=96 |
| Not at all important | 8% | N=27 |
| Total | 100% | N=328 |

## Table 15: Question 14B

| Please select how important it would be, if at all, for the committee to review the current Charter articles: | Essential | | Very Important | | Somewhat important | | Not at all important | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Property tax limit of 74 mills for general purposes | 18% | N=46 | 53% | N=133 | 24% | N=60 | 4% | N=10 | 100% | N=250 |
| Five City wards, each represented by two Councilmembers | 14% | N=41 | 48% | N=139 | 32% | N=92 | 6% | N=18 | 100% | N=290 |
| Mayor elected at-large and votes on all issues | 24% | N=73 | 51% | N=155 | 21% | N=63 | 5% | N=14 | 100% | N=305 |
| Limit of two (2) consecutive four (4) year terms | 30% | N=94 | 42% | N=133 | 20% | N=63 | 9% | N=29 | 100% | N=319 |
| Council members must live in the Wards they represent | 57% | N=192 | 31% | N=103 | 10% | N=32 | 2% | N=8 | 100% | N=335 |
| City Administrator must be appointed to manage day-to-day city operations | 29% | N=90 | 49% | N=152 | 13% | N=39 | 8% | N=26 | 100% | N=306 |
| Mayor and Council have no administrative duties, cannot hire or remove City employees and must deal with employees through the City Administrator | 26% | N=73 | 41% | N=116 | 23% | N=65 | 11% | N=31 | 100% | N=285 |
| Boards and Commissions are advisory only and members may not be compensated | 29% | N=82 | 36% | N=102 | 29% | N=83 | 7% | N=19 | 100% | N=286 |

## Table 16: Question 15

| How important, if at all, do you believe it is for the City of Billings to have a Public Information Officer? | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| Essential | 19% | N=61 |
| Very Important | 32% | N=102 |
| Somewhat important | 35% | N=111 |
| Not at all important | 14% | N=44 |
| Total | 100% | N=318 |

## Table 17: Question 16

| Please indicate how important, if at all, it is for the City to contact you about the following types of information, news or announcements: | Essential | | Very Important | | Somewhat important | | Not at all important | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| City and employee awards or accomplishments | 5% | N=17 | 15% | N=56 | 45% | N=165 | 35% | N=128 | 100% | N=366 |
| Responses to text or email questions/concerns within 24 hours | 22% | N=80 | 51% | N=184 | 23% | N=82 | 5% | N=18 | 100% | N=364 |
| Downtown events | 13% | N=50 | 38% | N=144 | 36% | N=133 | 13% | N=48 | 100% | N=374 |
| Street closures, traffic accident locations or other current transportation news | 31% | N=117 | 48% | N=183 | 18% | N=69 | 3% | N=10 | 100% | N=379 |
| Elected officials' opinions on City issues or projects | 18% | N=64 | 44% | N=159 | 33% | N=121 | 5% | N=20 | 100% | N=364 |
| Police and Fire media announcements | 30% | N=115 | 45% | N=172 | 21% | N=79 | 3% | N=12 | 100% | N=378 |
| Council meeting results | 16% | N=60 | 41% | N=155 | 36% | N=136 | 6% | N=24 | 100% | N=373 |
| Zoning or other land use changes that may affect your neighborhood | 43% | N=163 | 42% | N=159 | 13% | N=50 | 2% | N=8 | 100% | N=380 |
| How the City sets its service rates | 26% | N=96 | 47% | N=174 | 22% | N=80 | 6% | N=22 | 100% | N=371 |
| Explaining Montana property tax system | 28% | N=103 | 43% | N=161 | 23% | N=86 | 6% | N=24 | 100% | N=375 |

## Table 18: Question 17

| In Montana, property tax is the only local government tax that voters are allowed to increase. To what extent would you support or oppose this restriction being lifted in Billings so that residents could vote on a 1%-4% selective sales tax, how to spend those taxes and that would reduce property taxes? | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| Strongly support | 34% | N=115 |
| Somewhat support | 24% | N=83 |
| Somewhat oppose | 10% | N=34 |
| Strongly oppose | 32% | N=111 |
| Total | 100% | N=343 |

## Table 19: Question D1

| How often, if at all, do you do each of the following, considering all of the times you could? | Never | | Rarely | | Sometimes | | Usually | | Always | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Recycle at home | 15% | N=59 | 14% | N=53 | 26% | N=101 | 24% | N=92 | 22% | N=84 | 100% | N=388 |
| Purchase goods or services from a business located in Billings | 0% | N=1 | 1% | N=3 | 10% | N=39 | 54% | N=209 | 35% | N=136 | 100% | N=389 |
| Eat at least 5 portions of fruits and vegetables a day | 4% | N=14 | 17% | N=67 | 40% | N=155 | 29% | N=112 | 11% | N=41 | 100% | N=390 |
| Participate in moderate or vigorous physical activity | 2% | N=7 | 11% | N=41 | 35% | N=137 | 36% | N=141 | 16% | N=62 | 100% | N=388 |
| Read or watch local news (via television, paper, computer, etc.) | 3% | N=10 | 11% | N=44 | 15% | N=59 | 29% | N=113 | 42% | N=163 | 100% | N=390 |
| Vote in local elections | 8% | N=30 | 8% | N=32 | 8% | N=29 | 19% | N=74 | 58% | N=226 | 100% | N=391 |

## Table 20: Question D2

| Would you say that in general your health is: | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| Excellent | 17% | N=65 |
| Very good | 40% | N=155 |
| Good | 34% | N=134 |
| Fair | 8% | N=32 |
| Poor | 1% | N=4 |
| Total | 100% | N=390 |

## Table 21: Question D3

| What impact, if any, do you think the economy will have on your family income in the next 6 months? Do you think the impact will be: | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| Very positive | 7% | N=28 |
| Somewhat positive | 21% | N=82 |
| Neutral | 46% | N=182 |
| Somewhat negative | 20% | N=78 |
| Very negative | 6% | N=22 |
| Total | 100% | N=391 |

## Table 22: Question D4

| What is your employment status? | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| Working full time for pay | 63% | N=247 |
| Working part time for pay | 9% | N=35 |
| Unemployed, looking for paid work | 3% | N=10 |
| Unemployed, not looking for paid work | 3% | N=12 |
| Fully retired | 22% | N=85 |
| Total | 100% | N=390 |

## Table 23: Question D5

| Do you work inside the boundaries of Billings? | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| Yes, outside the home | 69% | N=260 |
| Yes, from home | 4% | N=15 |
| No | 27% | N=102 |
| Total | 100% | N=377 |

## Table 24: Question D6

| How many years have you lived in Billings? | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| Less than 2 years | 7% | N=28 |
| 2 to 5 years | 17% | N=67 |
| 6 to 10 years | 10% | N=39 |
| 11 to 20 years | 16% | N=64 |
| More than 20 years | 49% | N=193 |
| Total | 100% | N=392 |

Table 25: Question D7

| Which best describes the building you live in? | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| One family house detached from any other houses | 67% | N=261 |
| Building with two or more homes (duplex, townhome, apartment or condominium) | 27% | N=106 |
| Mobile home | 3% | N=12 |
| Other | 2% | N=9 |
| Total | 100% | N=389 |

Table 26: Question D8

| Is this house, apartment or mobile home... | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| Rented | 36% | N=139 |
| Owned | 64% | N=249 |
| Total | 100% | N=388 |

Table 27: Question D9

| About how much is your monthly housing cost for the place you live (including rent, mortgage payment, property tax, property insurance and homeowners' association (HOA) fees)? | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| Less than $300 per month | 7% | N=28 |
| $300 to $599 per month | 19% | N=74 |
| $600 to $999 per month | 26% | N=101 |
| $1,000 to $1,499 per month | 26% | N=100 |
| $1,500 to $2,499 per month | 17% | N=65 |
| $2,500 or more per month | 5% | N=17 |
| Total | 100% | N=384 |

Table 28: Question D10

| Do any children 17 or under live in your household? | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| No | 71% | N=277 |
| Yes | 29% | N=113 |
| Total | 100% | N=390 |

Table 29: Question D11

| Are you or any other members of your household aged 65 or older? | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| No | 72% | N=280 |
| Yes | 28% | N=111 |
| Total | 100% | N=391 |

## Table 30: Question D12

| How much do you anticipate your household's total income before taxes will be for the current year? (Please include in your total income money from all sources for all persons living in your household.) | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| Less than $25,000 | 21% | N=79 |
| $25,000 to $49,999 | 25% | N=95 |
| $50,000 to $99,999 | 30% | N=113 |
| $100,000 to $149,999 | 14% | N=54 |
| $150,000 or more | 10% | N=38 |
| Total | 100% | N=379 |

## Table 31: Question D13

| Are you Spanish, Hispanic or Latino? | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| No, not Spanish, Hispanic or Latino | 97% | N=375 |
| Yes, I consider myself to be Spanish, Hispanic or Latino | 3% | N=12 |
| Total | 100% | N=387 |

## Table 32: Question D14

| What is your race? (Mark one or more races to indicate what race(s) you consider yourself to be.) | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| American Indian or Alaskan Native | 4% | N=14 |
| Asian, Asian Indian or Pacific Islander | 3% | N=12 |
| Black or African American | 1% | N=5 |
| White | 95% | N=369 |
| Other | 3% | N=10 |

Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one option.

## Table 33: Question D15

| In which category is your age? | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| 18 to 24 years | 5% | N=18 |
| 25 to 34 years | 26% | N=102 |
| 35 to 44 years | 14% | N=53 |
| 45 to 54 years | 20% | N=79 |
| 55 to 64 years | 13% | N=50 |
| 65 to 74 years | 12% | N=47 |
| 75 years or older | 11% | N=42 |
| Total | 100% | N=391 |

## Table 34: Question D16

| What is your sex? | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| Female | 52% | N=204 |
| Male | 48% | N=187 |
| Total | 100% | N=391 |

Table 35: Question D17

| Do you consider a cell phone or landline your primary telephone number? | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| Cell | 65% | N=250 |
| Land line | 19% | N=74 |
| Both | 16% | N=62 |
| Total | 100% | N=386 |

## Responses including "don't know"

The following pages contain a complete set of responses to each question on the survey, including the "don't know" responses. The percent of respondents giving a particular response is shown followed by the number of respondents (denoted with "N=").

Table 36: Question 1

| Please rate each of the following aspects of quality of life in Billings: | Excellent | | Good | | Fair | | Poor | | Don't know | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Billings as a place to live | 24% | N=94 | 51% | N=201 | 22% | N=87 | 2% | N=9 | 0% | N=1 | 100% | N=392 |
| Your neighborhood as a place to live | 32% | N=125 | 43% | N=167 | 19% | N=73 | 6% | N=25 | 0% | N=2 | 100% | N=392 |
| Billings as a place to raise children | 21% | N=81 | 41% | N=161 | 23% | N=91 | 5% | N=21 | 9% | N=37 | 100% | N=390 |
| Billings as a place to work | 17% | N=65 | 49% | N=189 | 21% | N=82 | 10% | N=39 | 3% | N=13 | 100% | N=388 |
| Billings as a place to visit | 15% | N=58 | 39% | N=151 | 32% | N=127 | 10% | N=41 | 4% | N=14 | 100% | N=391 |
| Billings as a place to retire | 15% | N=59 | 36% | N=137 | 24% | N=92 | 11% | N=42 | 14% | N=55 | 100% | N=385 |
| The overall quality of life in Billings | 16% | N=62 | 58% | N=224 | 22% | N=84 | 4% | N=17 | 0% | N=1 | 100% | N=389 |

Table 37: Question 2

| Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Billings as a whole: | Excellent | | Good | | Fair | | Poor | | Don't know | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Overall feeling of safety in Billings | 7% | N=29 | 48% | N=188 | 33% | N=129 | 11% | N=45 | 0% | N=2 | 100% | N=393 |
| Overall ease of getting to the places you usually have to visit | 18% | N=70 | 54% | N=212 | 22% | N=87 | 6% | N=23 | 0% | N=1 | 100% | N=393 |
| Quality of overall natural environment in Billings | 16% | N=63 | 48% | N=188 | 29% | N=115 | 5% | N=21 | 1% | N=4 | 100% | N=391 |
| Overall "built environment" of Billings (including overall design, buildings, parks and transportation systems) | 6% | N=24 | 37% | N=144 | 42% | N=164 | 15% | N=57 | 1% | N=2 | 100% | N=392 |
| Health and wellness opportunities in Billings | 30% | N=116 | 47% | N=183 | 17% | N=66 | 5% | N=19 | 2% | N=7 | 100% | N=391 |
| Overall opportunities for education and enrichment | 17% | N=65 | 44% | N=173 | 28% | N=109 | 8% | N=32 | 4% | N=14 | 100% | N=392 |
| Overall economic health of Billings | 10% | N=40 | 48% | N=186 | 31% | N=120 | 6% | N=23 | 6% | N=22 | 100% | N=391 |
| Sense of community | 9% | N=34 | 39% | N=154 | 37% | N=145 | 13% | N=51 | 1% | N=6 | 100% | N=389 |
| Overall image or reputation of Billings | 11% | N=44 | 43% | N=167 | 33% | N=128 | 12% | N=45 | 1% | N=5 | 100% | N=389 |

Table 38: Question 3

| Please indicate how likely or unlikely you are to do each of the following: | Very likely | | Somewhat likely | | Somewhat unlikely | | Very unlikely | | Don't know | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Recommend living in Billings to someone who asks | 35% | N=138 | 46% | N=179 | 10% | N=41 | 7% | N=28 | 1% | N=3 | 100% | N=389 |
| Remain in Billings for the next five years | 60% | N=233 | 22% | N=85 | 10% | N=40 | 6% | N=24 | 2% | N=8 | 100% | N=389 |

Table 39: Question 4

| Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel: | Very safe | | Somewhat safe | | Neither safe nor unsafe | | Somewhat unsafe | | Very unsafe | | Don't know | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| In your neighborhood during the day | 63% | N=245 | 30% | N=116 | 3% | N=11 | 4% | N=16 | 1% | N=3 | 0% | N=0 | 100% | N=392 |
| In Billings' downtown/commercial area during the day | 23% | N=91 | 44% | N=173 | 12% | N=47 | 15% | N=59 | 4% | N=16 | 1% | N=5 | 100% | N=392 |

Table 40: Question 5

| Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Billings as a whole: | Excellent | | Good | | Fair | | Poor | | Don't know | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Traffic flow on major streets | 5% | N=21 | 38% | N=149 | 40% | N=159 | 16% | N=63 | 0% | N=1 | 100% | N=393 |
| Ease of public parking | 7% | N=26 | 32% | N=126 | 41% | N=161 | 18% | N=72 | 2% | N=8 | 100% | N=393 |
| Ease of travel by car in Billings | 16% | N=63 | 48% | N=189 | 28% | N=111 | 7% | N=26 | 1% | N=4 | 100% | N=392 |
| Ease of travel by public transportation in Billings | 3% | N=12 | 13% | N=50 | 18% | N=70 | 24% | N=92 | 43% | N=166 | 100% | N=389 |

| Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Billings as a whole: | Excellent | | Good | | Fair | | Poor | | Don't know | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ease of travel by bicycle in Billings | 3% | N=13 | 22% | N=84 | 28% | N=110 | 18% | N=71 | 28% | N=110 | 100% | N=388 |
| Ease of walking in Billings | 11% | N=43 | 40% | N=154 | 31% | N=119 | 14% | N=52 | 5% | N=19 | 100% | N=387 |
| Availability of paths and walking trails | 13% | N=51 | 38% | N=147 | 27% | N=103 | 11% | N=42 | 11% | N=43 | 100% | N=386 |
| Air quality | 10% | N=40 | 53% | N=205 | 24% | N=93 | 11% | N=44 | 1% | N=5 | 100% | N=387 |
| Cleanliness of Billings | 5% | N=21 | 34% | N=133 | 41% | N=160 | 20% | N=76 | 0% | N=0 | 100% | N=390 |
| Overall appearance of Billings | 6% | N=23 | 42% | N=162 | 40% | N=153 | 13% | N=49 | 0% | N=0 | 100% | N=387 |
| Public places where people want to spend time | 7% | N=27 | 42% | N=163 | 36% | N=139 | 11% | N=41 | 4% | N=17 | 100% | N=386 |
| Variety of housing options | 8% | N=32 | 37% | N=144 | 30% | N=118 | 16% | N=61 | 9% | N=33 | 100% | N=389 |
| Availability of affordable quality housing | 5% | N=18 | 24% | N=92 | 36% | N=139 | 24% | N=94 | 12% | N=46 | 100% | N=389 |
| Fitness opportunities (including exercise classes and paths or trails, etc.) | 19% | N=74 | 47% | N=182 | 22% | N=85 | 5% | N=19 | 7% | N=27 | 100% | N=387 |
| Recreational opportunities | 14% | N=53 | 43% | N=166 | 31% | N=122 | 9% | N=35 | 3% | N=13 | 100% | N=389 |
| Availability of affordable quality food | 17% | N=68 | 46% | N=179 | 29% | N=111 | 7% | N=28 | 1% | N=2 | 100% | N=389 |
| Availability of affordable quality health care | 24% | N=94 | 40% | N=156 | 19% | N=73 | 11% | N=41 | 7% | N=26 | 100% | N=390 |
| Availability of preventive health services | 24% | N=94 | 39% | N=150 | 23% | N=89 | 6% | N=21 | 8% | N=32 | 100% | N=387 |
| Availability of affordable quality mental health care | 8% | N=31 | 20% | N=78 | 21% | N=79 | 14% | N=53 | 38% | N=145 | 100% | N=387 |

## Table 41: Question 6

| Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Billings as a whole: | Excellent | | Good | | Fair | | Poor | | Don't know | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Availability of affordable quality child care/preschool | 4% | N=17 | 19% | N=74 | 18% | N=71 | 7% | N=29 | 51% | N=197 | 100% | N=387 |
| K-12 education | 13% | N=49 | 35% | N=134 | 25% | N=96 | 4% | N=16 | 24% | N=91 | 100% | N=387 |
| Adult educational opportunities | 11% | N=43 | 38% | N=146 | 29% | N=110 | 3% | N=12 | 20% | N=76 | 100% | N=387 |
| Opportunities to attend cultural/arts/music activities | 14% | N=54 | 47% | N=180 | 25% | N=94 | 8% | N=29 | 7% | N=26 | 100% | N=384 |
| Opportunities to participate in religious or spiritual events and activities | 23% | N=86 | 48% | N=185 | 13% | N=48 | 4% | N=15 | 13% | N=49 | 100% | N=383 |
| Employment opportunities | 9% | N=33 | 43% | N=166 | 28% | N=108 | 12% | N=46 | 8% | N=29 | 100% | N=382 |
| Shopping opportunities | 18% | N=71 | 46% | N=179 | 27% | N=106 | 8% | N=32 | 0% | N=1 | 100% | N=388 |
| Cost of living in Billings | 6% | N=24 | 34% | N=133 | 45% | N=173 | 14% | N=55 | 1% | N=2 | 100% | N=387 |
| Overall quality of business and service establishments in Billings | 12% | N=47 | 51% | N=198 | 30% | N=116 | 5% | N=18 | 2% | N=8 | 100% | N=386 |
| Vibrant downtown/commercial area | 6% | N=24 | 34% | N=131 | 42% | N=160 | 13% | N=50 | 5% | N=20 | 100% | N=385 |
| Overall quality of new development in Billings | 7% | N=25 | 44% | N=169 | 35% | N=136 | 6% | N=23 | 9% | N=34 | 100% | N=387 |
| Opportunities to participate in social events and activities | 14% | N=55 | 47% | N=182 | 26% | N=102 | 7% | N=27 | 5% | N=21 | 100% | N=388 |
| Opportunities to volunteer | 20% | N=76 | 45% | N=173 | 20% | N=76 | 3% | N=12 | 12% | N=45 | 100% | N=382 |
| Opportunities to participate in community matters | 14% | N=52 | 41% | N=157 | 27% | N=103 | 8% | N=29 | 11% | N=41 | 100% | N=381 |
| Openness and acceptance of the community toward people of diverse backgrounds | 10% | N=36 | 30% | N=112 | 30% | N=111 | 22% | N=82 | 9% | N=34 | 100% | N=375 |
| Neighborliness of residents in Billings | 10% | N=37 | 41% | N=160 | 36% | N=140 | 12% | N=45 | 1% | N=5 | 100% | N=386 |

## Table 42: Question 7

| Please indicate whether or not you have done each of the following in the last 12 months. | No | | Yes | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Made efforts to conserve water | 24% | N=93 | 76% | N=295 | 100% | N=388 |
| Made efforts to make your home more energy efficient | 24% | N=92 | 76% | N=296 | 100% | N=388 |
| Observed a code violation or other hazard in Billings | 37% | N=141 | 63% | N=245 | 100% | N=386 |
| Household member was a victim of a crime in Billings | 79% | N=308 | 21% | N=80 | 100% | N=387 |
| Reported a crime to the police in Billings | 63% | N=244 | 37% | N=143 | 100% | N=387 |

| Please indicate whether or not you have done each of the following in the last 12 months. | No | | Yes | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Stocked supplies in preparation for an emergency | 69% | N=266 | 31% | N=122 | 100% | N=387 |
| Campaigned or advocated for an issue, cause or candidate | 76% | N=296 | 24% | N=91 | 100% | N=388 |
| Contacted the City of Billings (in-person, phone, email or web) for help or information | 64% | N=250 | 36% | N=139 | 100% | N=389 |
| Contacted Billings elected officials (in-person, phone, email or web) to express your opinion | 83% | N=321 | 17% | N=67 | 100% | N=389 |

## Table 43: Question 8

| In the last 12 months, about how many times, if at all, have you or other household members done each of the following in Billings? | 2 times a week or more | | 2-4 times a month | | Once a month or less | | Not at all | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Used Billings recreation centers or their services | 11% | N=43 | 16% | N=61 | 33% | N=126 | 40% | N=152 | 100% | N=382 |
| Visited a neighborhood park or City park | 21% | N=81 | 30% | N=117 | 38% | N=146 | 11% | N=44 | 100% | N=388 |
| Used Billings public libraries or their services | 6% | N=21 | 17% | N=66 | 33% | N=128 | 44% | N=169 | 100% | N=384 |
| Participated in religious or spiritual activities in Billings | 17% | N=64 | 24% | N=91 | 17% | N=67 | 42% | N=162 | 100% | N=385 |
| Attended a City-sponsored event | 1% | N=5 | 9% | N=33 | 45% | N=174 | 45% | N=173 | 100% | N=385 |
| Used bus, rail, subway or other public transportation instead of driving | 4% | N=14 | 3% | N=11 | 4% | N=17 | 89% | N=345 | 100% | N=388 |
| Carpooled with other adults or children instead of driving alone | 9% | N=35 | 16% | N=63 | 17% | N=67 | 57% | N=220 | 100% | N=385 |
| Walked or biked instead of driving | 17% | N=65 | 14% | N=55 | 24% | N=95 | 44% | N=172 | 100% | N=387 |
| Volunteered your time to some group/activity in Billings | 13% | N=51 | 14% | N=54 | 25% | N=95 | 48% | N=186 | 100% | N=387 |
| Participated in a club | 8% | N=31 | 13% | N=51 | 17% | N=67 | 62% | N=240 | 100% | N=388 |
| Talked to or visited with your immediate neighbors | 47% | N=182 | 36% | N=140 | 13% | N=51 | 4% | N=16 | 100% | N=388 |
| Done a favor for a neighbor | 24% | N=92 | 29% | N=111 | 33% | N=129 | 15% | N=57 | 100% | N=388 |

## Table 44: Question 9

| Thinking about local public meetings (of local elected officials like City Council or County Commissioners, advisory boards, town halls, HOA, neighborhood watch, etc.), in the last 12 months, about how many times, if at all, have you or other household members attended or watched a local public meeting? | 2 times a week or more | | 2-4 times a month | | Once a month or less | | Not at all | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Attended a local public meeting | 1% | N=3 | 3% | N=11 | 15% | N=56 | 82% | N=314 | 100% | N=383 |
| Watched (online or on television) a local public meeting | 3% | N=10 | 8% | N=33 | 26% | N=101 | 63% | N=240 | 100% | N=384 |

## Table 45: Question 10

| Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Billings: | Excellent | | Good | | Fair | | Poor | | Don't know | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Police services | 18% | N=69 | 39% | N=150 | 26% | N=98 | 11% | N=41 | 6% | N=24 | 100% | N=382 |
| Fire services | 27% | N=105 | 46% | N=176 | 11% | N=43 | 1% | N=4 | 14% | N=56 | 100% | N=384 |
| Ambulance or emergency medical services | 25% | N=96 | 43% | N=166 | 10% | N=37 | 3% | N=10 | 20% | N=75 | 100% | N=384 |
| Crime prevention | 5% | N=17 | 31% | N=120 | 33% | N=126 | 17% | N=65 | 14% | N=55 | 100% | N=382 |
| Fire prevention and education | 10% | N=39 | 36% | N=137 | 22% | N=85 | 6% | N=21 | 26% | N=101 | 100% | N=383 |
| Traffic enforcement | 7% | N=26 | 26% | N=99 | 29% | N=110 | 29% | N=110 | 10% | N=38 | 100% | N=383 |
| Street repair | 4% | N=16 | 28% | N=107 | 36% | N=136 | 30% | N=115 | 2% | N=10 | 100% | N=383 |
| Street cleaning | 7% | N=28 | 42% | N=160 | 35% | N=133 | 14% | N=54 | 2% | N=8 | 100% | N=383 |
| Street lighting | 8% | N=31 | 40% | N=154 | 32% | N=124 | 18% | N=67 | 2% | N=6 | 100% | N=382 |
| Snow removal | 10% | N=37 | 28% | N=106 | 37% | N=142 | 25% | N=94 | 1% | N=3 | 100% | N=382 |
| Sidewalk maintenance | 6% | N=22 | 28% | N=106 | 39% | N=149 | 23% | N=87 | 5% | N=20 | 100% | N=384 |
| Traffic signal timing | 8% | N=30 | 35% | N=136 | 32% | N=123 | 22% | N=84 | 3% | N=10 | 100% | N=382 |

| Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Billings: | Excellent | | Good | | Fair | | Poor | | Don't know | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bus or transit services | 6% | N=21 | 14% | N=53 | 17% | N=65 | 11% | N=41 | 52% | N=198 | 100% | N=378 |
| Garbage collection | 31% | N=118 | 53% | N=202 | 12% | N=47 | 3% | N=10 | 1% | N=3 | 100% | N=380 |
| Recycling | 8% | N=30 | 26% | N=98 | 24% | N=91 | 30% | N=113 | 13% | N=50 | 100% | N=382 |
| Yard waste pick-up | 21% | N=80 | 35% | N=135 | 18% | N=69 | 8% | N=30 | 18% | N=69 | 100% | N=383 |
| Storm drainage | 7% | N=28 | 37% | N=141 | 32% | N=122 | 12% | N=45 | 12% | N=46 | 100% | N=383 |
| Drinking water | 24% | N=91 | 50% | N=190 | 19% | N=74 | 5% | N=19 | 3% | N=10 | 100% | N=383 |
| Sewer services | 21% | N=79 | 46% | N=177 | 21% | N=81 | 2% | N=9 | 10% | N=38 | 100% | N=384 |
| Utility billing | 14% | N=52 | 46% | N=175 | 31% | N=120 | 4% | N=16 | 5% | N=21 | 100% | N=383 |
| City parks | 21% | N=82 | 51% | N=196 | 21% | N=80 | 3% | N=12 | 3% | N=13 | 100% | N=384 |
| Recreation programs or classes | 9% | N=33 | 34% | N=128 | 18% | N=67 | 4% | N=14 | 36% | N=136 | 100% | N=379 |
| Recreation centers or facilities | 8% | N=31 | 31% | N=119 | 23% | N=88 | 5% | N=21 | 32% | N=121 | 100% | N=379 |
| Land use, planning and zoning | 4% | N=17 | 21% | N=79 | 33% | N=127 | 14% | N=54 | 27% | N=103 | 100% | N=380 |
| Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc.) | 4% | N=14 | 15% | N=57 | 38% | N=142 | 23% | N=88 | 20% | N=77 | 100% | N=377 |
| Animal control | 5% | N=20 | 35% | N=134 | 29% | N=112 | 11% | N=43 | 19% | N=73 | 100% | N=381 |
| Economic development | 9% | N=35 | 35% | N=134 | 29% | N=111 | 8% | N=31 | 18% | N=68 | 100% | N=380 |
| Health services | 29% | N=111 | 39% | N=148 | 19% | N=73 | 4% | N=16 | 9% | N=34 | 100% | N=382 |
| Public library services | 24% | N=91 | 35% | N=134 | 16% | N=59 | 2% | N=9 | 23% | N=88 | 100% | N=382 |
| Public information services | 8% | N=30 | 33% | N=123 | 30% | N=112 | 6% | N=22 | 24% | N=90 | 100% | N=377 |
| Cable television | 7% | N=26 | 27% | N=104 | 23% | N=88 | 24% | N=91 | 19% | N=71 | 100% | N=380 |
| Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations) | 6% | N=24 | 27% | N=103 | 30% | N=115 | 9% | N=33 | 27% | N=103 | 100% | N=378 |
| Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts | 8% | N=29 | 27% | N=102 | 31% | N=117 | 13% | N=50 | 21% | N=81 | 100% | N=379 |
| Billings open space | 8% | N=31 | 29% | N=109 | 35% | N=132 | 12% | N=46 | 14% | N=53 | 100% | N=371 |
| City-sponsored special events | 7% | N=26 | 35% | N=132 | 33% | N=124 | 6% | N=23 | 19% | N=70 | 100% | N=375 |
| Overall customer service by Billings employees (police, receptionists, planners, etc.) | 10% | N=39 | 45% | N=169 | 28% | N=106 | 7% | N=27 | 10% | N=36 | 100% | N=376 |

## Table 46: Question 11

| Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by each of the following? | Excellent | | Good | | Fair | | Poor | | Don't know | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The City of Billings | 13% | N=49 | 51% | N=193 | 29% | N=110 | 5% | N=19 | 3% | N=11 | 100% | N=381 |
| The Federal Government | 5% | N=20 | 28% | N=107 | 33% | N=125 | 25% | N=96 | 9% | N=34 | 100% | N=381 |
| The State Government | 5% | N=19 | 35% | N=135 | 41% | N=158 | 9% | N=36 | 9% | N=34 | 100% | N=381 |
| Yellowstone County Government | 8% | N=30 | 41% | N=156 | 32% | N=122 | 9% | N=36 | 10% | N=37 | 100% | N=381 |

## Table 47: Question 12

| Please rate the following categories of Billings government performance: | Excellent | | Good | | Fair | | Poor | | Don't know | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The value of services for the taxes paid to Billings | 5% | N=17 | 36% | N=137 | 36% | N=138 | 16% | N=61 | 8% | N=29 | 100% | N=382 |
| The overall direction that Billings is taking | 8% | N=29 | 41% | N=157 | 32% | N=122 | 14% | N=52 | 6% | N=22 | 100% | N=382 |
| The job Billings government does at welcoming citizen involvement | 7% | N=28 | 27% | N=104 | 32% | N=120 | 14% | N=54 | 19% | N=74 | 100% | N=380 |
| Overall confidence in Billings government | 6% | N=22 | 33% | N=125 | 42% | N=158 | 15% | N=56 | 5% | N=18 | 100% | N=379 |
| Generally acting in the best interest of the community | 7% | N=28 | 37% | N=141 | 35% | N=132 | 14% | N=55 | 6% | N=25 | 100% | N=380 |
| Being honest | 7% | N=27 | 34% | N=129 | 36% | N=136 | 13% | N=48 | 10% | N=36 | 100% | N=377 |
| Treating all residents fairly | 7% | N=26 | 33% | N=126 | 31% | N=119 | 18% | N=68 | 11% | N=41 | 100% | N=381 |

## Table 48: Question 13

| Please rate how important, if at all, you think it is for the Billings community to focus on each of the following in the coming two years: | Essential | | Very important | | Somewhat important | | Not at all important | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Overall feeling of safety in Billings | 50% | N=194 | 41% | N=161 | 8% | N=31 | 1% | N=3 | 100% | N=388 |
| Overall ease of getting to the places you usually have to visit | 22% | N=85 | 49% | N=188 | 27% | N=106 | 2% | N=8 | 100% | N=387 |
| Quality of overall natural environment in Billings | 25% | N=97 | 51% | N=198 | 22% | N=87 | 2% | N=7 | 100% | N=388 |
| Overall "built environment" of Billings (including overall design, buildings, parks and transportation systems) | 28% | N=109 | 43% | N=166 | 28% | N=110 | 1% | N=3 | 100% | N=388 |
| Health and wellness opportunities in Billings | 35% | N=135 | 46% | N=178 | 18% | N=69 | 1% | N=5 | 100% | N=388 |
| Overall opportunities for education and enrichment | 40% | N=154 | 40% | N=156 | 20% | N=76 | 1% | N=3 | 100% | N=388 |
| Overall economic health of Billings | 47% | N=182 | 42% | N=163 | 10% | N=39 | 0% | N=2 | 100% | N=385 |
| Sense of community | 30% | N=117 | 47% | N=183 | 20% | N=77 | 3% | N=10 | 100% | N=387 |

## Table 49: Question 14A

| Please rate how important, if at all, it is for the City to create a citizen committee: | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| Essential | 23% | N=86 |
| Very Important | 32% | N=120 |
| Somewhat important | 25% | N=96 |
| Not at all important | 7% | N=27 |
| Don't know | 13% | N=50 |
| Total | 100% | N=378 |

## Table 50: Question 14B

| Please select how important it would be, if at all, for the committee to review the current Charter articles: | Essential | | Very Important | | Somewhat important | | Not at all important | | Don't know | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Property tax limit of 74 mills for general purposes | 12% | N=46 | 36% | N=133 | 16% | N=60 | 3% | N=10 | 33% | N=123 | 100% | N=374 |
| Five City wards, each represented by two Councilmembers | 11% | N=41 | 37% | N=139 | 25% | N=92 | 5% | N=18 | 23% | N=86 | 100% | N=376 |
| Mayor elected at-large and votes on all issues | 19% | N=73 | 41% | N=155 | 17% | N=63 | 4% | N=14 | 19% | N=73 | 100% | N=378 |
| Limit of two (2) consecutive four (4) year terms | 25% | N=94 | 35% | N=133 | 17% | N=63 | 8% | N=29 | 16% | N=59 | 100% | N=377 |
| Council members must live in the Wards they represent | 52% | N=192 | 27% | N=103 | 9% | N=32 | 2% | N=8 | 10% | N=38 | 100% | N=374 |
| City Administrator must be appointed to manage day-to-day city operations | 25% | N=90 | 42% | N=152 | 11% | N=39 | 7% | N=26 | 15% | N=53 | 100% | N=360 |
| Mayor and Council have no administrative duties, cannot hire or remove City employees and must deal with employees through the City Administrator | 20% | N=73 | 31% | N=116 | 18% | N=65 | 8% | N=31 | 23% | N=83 | 100% | N=369 |
| Boards and Commissions are advisory only and members may not be compensated | 22% | N=82 | 27% | N=102 | 22% | N=83 | 5% | N=19 | 23% | N=88 | 100% | N=373 |

## Table 51: Question 15

| How important, if at all, do you believe it is for the City of Billings to have a Public Information Officer? | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| Essential | 16% | N=61 |
| Very Important | 27% | N=102 |
| Somewhat important | 29% | N=111 |
| Not at all important | 12% | N=44 |
| Don't know | 17% | N=64 |
| Total | 100% | N=381 |

## Table 52: Question 16

| Please indicate how important, if at all, it is for the City to contact you about the following types of information, news or announcements: | Essential | | Very Important | | Somewhat important | | Not at all important | | Don't know | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| City and employee awards or accomplishments | 4% | N=17 | 15% | N=56 | 43% | N=165 | 34% | N=128 | 4% | N=17 | 100% | N=383 |
| Responses to text or email questions/concerns within 24 hours | 21% | N=80 | 48% | N=184 | 21% | N=82 | 5% | N=18 | 5% | N=19 | 100% | N=383 |
| Downtown events | 13% | N=50 | 38% | N=144 | 35% | N=133 | 12% | N=48 | 2% | N=7 | 100% | N=381 |
| Street closures, traffic accident locations or other current transportation news | 30% | N=117 | 48% | N=183 | 18% | N=69 | 3% | N=10 | 2% | N=6 | 100% | N=385 |
| Elected officials' opinions on City issues or projects | 17% | N=64 | 42% | N=159 | 32% | N=121 | 5% | N=20 | 5% | N=18 | 100% | N=382 |
| Police and Fire media announcements | 30% | N=115 | 45% | N=172 | 20% | N=79 | 3% | N=12 | 2% | N=8 | 100% | N=385 |
| Council meeting results | 16% | N=60 | 40% | N=155 | 35% | N=136 | 6% | N=24 | 2% | N=9 | 100% | N=383 |
| Zoning or other land use changes that may affect your neighborhood | 42% | N=163 | 41% | N=159 | 13% | N=50 | 2% | N=8 | 1% | N=6 | 100% | N=386 |
| How the City sets its service rates | 25% | N=96 | 45% | N=174 | 21% | N=80 | 6% | N=22 | 3% | N=12 | 100% | N=383 |
| Explaining Montana property tax system | 27% | N=103 | 42% | N=161 | 22% | N=86 | 6% | N=24 | 2% | N=9 | 100% | N=383 |

## Table 53: Question 17

| In Montana, property tax is the only local government tax that voters are allowed to increase. To what extent would you support or oppose this restriction being lifted in Billings so that residents could vote on a 1%-4% selective sales tax, how to spend those taxes and that would reduce property taxes? | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| Strongly support | 34% | N=115 |
| Somewhat support | 24% | N=83 |
| Somewhat oppose | 10% | N=34 |
| Strongly oppose | 32% | N=111 |
| Total | 100% | N=343 |

## Table 54: Question D1

| How often, if at all, do you do each of the following, considering all of the times you could? | Never | | Rarely | | Sometimes | | Usually | | Always | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Recycle at home | 15% | N=59 | 14% | N=53 | 26% | N=101 | 24% | N=92 | 22% | N=84 | 100% | N=388 |
| Purchase goods or services from a business located in Billings | 0% | N=1 | 1% | N=3 | 10% | N=39 | 54% | N=209 | 35% | N=136 | 100% | N=389 |
| Eat at least 5 portions of fruits and vegetables a day | 4% | N=14 | 17% | N=67 | 40% | N=155 | 29% | N=112 | 11% | N=41 | 100% | N=390 |
| Participate in moderate or vigorous physical activity | 2% | N=7 | 11% | N=41 | 35% | N=137 | 36% | N=141 | 16% | N=62 | 100% | N=388 |
| Read or watch local news (via television, paper, computer, etc.) | 3% | N=10 | 11% | N=44 | 15% | N=59 | 29% | N=113 | 42% | N=163 | 100% | N=390 |
| Vote in local elections | 8% | N=30 | 8% | N=32 | 8% | N=29 | 19% | N=74 | 58% | N=226 | 100% | N=391 |

## Table 55: Question D2

| Would you say that in general your health is: | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| Excellent | 17% | N=65 |
| Very good | 40% | N=155 |
| Good | 34% | N=134 |
| Fair | 8% | N=32 |
| Poor | 1% | N=4 |
| Total | 100% | N=390 |

## Table 56: Question D3

| What impact, if any, do you think the economy will have on your family income in the next 6 months? Do you think the impact will be: | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| Very positive | 7% | N=28 |
| Somewhat positive | 21% | N=82 |
| Neutral | 46% | N=182 |
| Somewhat negative | 20% | N=78 |
| Very negative | 6% | N=22 |
| Total | 100% | N=391 |

## Table 57: Question D4

| What is your employment status? | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| Working full time for pay | 63% | N=247 |
| Working part time for pay | 9% | N=35 |
| Unemployed, looking for paid work | 3% | N=10 |
| Unemployed, not looking for paid work | 3% | N=12 |
| Fully retired | 22% | N=85 |
| Total | 100% | N=390 |

## Table 58: Question D5

| Do you work inside the boundaries of Billings? | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| Yes, outside the home | 69% | N=260 |
| Yes, from home | 4% | N=15 |
| No | 27% | N=102 |
| Total | 100% | N=377 |

## Table 59: Question D6

| How many years have you lived in Billings? | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| Less than 2 years | 7% | N=28 |
| 2 to 5 years | 17% | N=67 |
| 6 to 10 years | 10% | N=39 |
| 11 to 20 years | 16% | N=64 |
| More than 20 years | 49% | N=193 |
| Total | 100% | N=392 |

## Table 60: Question D7

| Which best describes the building you live in? | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| One family house detached from any other houses | 67% | N=261 |
| Building with two or more homes (duplex, townhome, apartment or condominium) | 27% | N=106 |
| Mobile home | 3% | N=12 |
| Other | 2% | N=9 |
| Total | 100% | N=389 |

### Table 61: Question D8

| Is this house, apartment or mobile home... | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| Rented | 36% | N=139 |
| Owned | 64% | N=249 |
| Total | 100% | N=388 |

### Table 62: Question D9

| About how much is your monthly housing cost for the place you live (including rent, mortgage payment, property tax, property insurance and homeowners' association (HOA) fees)? | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| Less than $300 per month | 7% | N=28 |
| $300 to $599 per month | 19% | N=74 |
| $600 to $999 per month | 26% | N=101 |
| $1,000 to $1,499 per month | 26% | N=100 |
| $1,500 to $2,499 per month | 17% | N=65 |
| $2,500 or more per month | 5% | N=17 |
| Total | 100% | N=384 |

### Table 63: Question D10

| Do any children 17 or under live in your household? | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| No | 71% | N=277 |
| Yes | 29% | N=113 |
| Total | 100% | N=390 |

### Table 64: Question D11

| Are you or any other members of your household aged 65 or older? | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| No | 72% | N=280 |
| Yes | 28% | N=111 |
| Total | 100% | N=391 |

### Table 65: Question D12

| How much do you anticipate your household's total income before taxes will be for the current year? (Please include in your total income money from all sources for all persons living in your household.) | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| Less than $25,000 | 21% | N=79 |
| $25,000 to $49,999 | 25% | N=95 |
| $50,000 to $99,999 | 30% | N=113 |
| $100,000 to $149,999 | 14% | N=54 |
| $150,000 or more | 10% | N=38 |
| Total | 100% | N=379 |

### Table 66: Question D13

| Are you Spanish, Hispanic or Latino? | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| No, not Spanish, Hispanic or Latino | 97% | N=375 |
| Yes, I consider myself to be Spanish, Hispanic or Latino | 3% | N=12 |
| Total | 100% | N=387 |

## Table 67: Question D14

| What is your race? (Mark one or more races to indicate what race(s) you consider yourself to be.) | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| American Indian or Alaskan Native | 4% | N=14 |
| Asian, Asian Indian or Pacific Islander | 3% | N=12 |
| Black or African American | 1% | N=5 |
| White | 95% | N=369 |
| Other | 3% | N=10 |

Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one option.

## Table 68: Question D15

| In which category is your age? | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| 18 to 24 years | 5% | N=18 |
| 25 to 34 years | 26% | N=102 |
| 35 to 44 years | 14% | N=53 |
| 45 to 54 years | 20% | N=79 |
| 55 to 64 years | 13% | N=50 |
| 65 to 74 years | 12% | N=47 |
| 75 years or older | 11% | N=42 |
| Total | 100% | N=391 |

## Table 69: Question D16

| What is your sex? | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| Female | 52% | N=204 |
| Male | 48% | N=187 |
| Total | 100% | N=391 |

## Table 70: Question D17

| Do you consider a cell phone or landline your primary telephone number? | Percent | Number |
|---|---|---|
| Cell | 65% | N=250 |
| Land line | 19% | N=74 |
| Both | 16% | N=62 |
| Total | 100% | N=386 |

# Appendix B: Benchmark Comparisons

## Comparison Data

NRC's database of comparative resident opinion comprises resident perspectives gathered in surveys from over 500 communities whose residents evaluated the same kinds of topics on The National Citizen Survey™. The comparison evaluations are from the most recent survey completed in each community; most communities conduct surveys every year or in alternating years. NRC adds the latest results quickly upon survey completion, keeping the benchmark data fresh and relevant. The communities in the database represent a wide geographic and population range. The City of Billings chose to have comparisons made to the entire database and a subset of similar jurisdictions from the database (Western Region communities with populations between 85,000 and 115,000).

## Interpreting the Results

Ratings are compared when there are at least five communities in which a similar question was asked. Where comparisons are available, four columns are provided in the table. The first column is Billings' "percent positive." The percent positive is the combination of the top two most positive response options (i.e., "excellent" and "good," "very safe" and "somewhat safe," "essential" and "very important," etc.), or, in the case of resident behaviors/participation, the percent positive represents the proportion of respondents indicating "yes" or participating in an activity at least once a month. The second column is the rank assigned to Billings' rating among communities where a similar question was asked. The third column is the number of communities that asked a similar question. The final column shows the comparison of Billings' rating to the benchmark.

In that final column, Billings' results are noted as being "higher" than the benchmark, "lower" than the benchmark or "similar" to the benchmark, meaning that the average rating given by Billings residents is statistically similar to or different (greater or lesser) than the benchmark. More extreme differences are noted as "much higher" or "much lower."

| Benchmark Database Characteristics | |
|---|---|
| Region | Percent |
| New England | 3% |
| Middle Atlantic | 5% |
| East North Central | 15% |
| West North Central | 13% |
| South Atlantic | 22% |
| East South Central | 3% |
| West South Central | 7% |
| Mountain | 16% |
| Pacific | 16% |
| Population | Percent |
| Less than 10,000 | 10% |
| 10,000 to 24,999 | 22% |
| 25,000 to 49,999 | 23% |
| 50,000 to 99,999 | 22% |
| 100,000 or more | 23% |

# National Benchmark Comparisons

## Table 71: Community Characteristics General

|  | Percent positive | Rank | Number of communities in comparison | Comparison to benchmark |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| The overall quality of life in Billings | 74% | 310 | 409 | Similar |
| Overall image or reputation of Billings | 55% | 236 | 311 | Lower |
| Billings as a place to live | 75% | 279 | 354 | Similar |
| Your neighborhood as a place to live | 75% | 198 | 276 | Similar |
| Billings as a place to raise children | 68% | 263 | 346 | Similar |
| Billings as a place to retire | 59% | 223 | 326 | Similar |
| Overall appearance of Billings | 48% | 278 | 318 | Lower |

## Table 72: Community Characteristics by Facet

|  |  | Percent positive | Rank | Number of communities in comparison | Comparison to benchmark |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Safety | Overall feeling of safety in Billings | 55% | 231 | 257 | Lower |
|  | In your neighborhood during the day | 92% | 205 | 316 | Similar |
|  | In Billings' downtown/commercial area during the day | 68% | 251 | 268 | Lower |
| Mobility | Overall ease of getting to the places you usually have to visit | 72% | 115 | 176 | Similar |
|  | Availability of paths and walking trails | 58% | 178 | 277 | Similar |
|  | Ease of walking in Billings | 53% | 194 | 259 | Similar |
|  | Ease of travel by bicycle in Billings | 35% | 218 | 262 | Lower |
|  | Ease of travel by public transportation in Billings | 27% | 122 | 152 | Lower |
|  | Ease of travel by car in Billings | 65% | 144 | 267 | Similar |
|  | Ease of public parking | 39% | 108 | 144 | Similar |
|  | Traffic flow on major streets | 43% | 205 | 316 | Similar |
| Natural Environment | Quality of overall natural environment in Billings | 65% | 195 | 244 | Similar |
|  | Cleanliness of Billings | 39% | 227 | 243 | Much lower |
|  | Air quality | 64% | 190 | 224 | Lower |
| Built Environment | Overall "built environment" of Billings (including overall design, buildings, parks and transportation systems) | 43% | 141 | 167 | Lower |
|  | Overall quality of new development in Billings | 55% | 147 | 253 | Similar |
|  | Availability of affordable quality housing | 32% | 208 | 269 | Similar |
|  | Variety of housing options | 50% | 176 | 248 | Similar |
|  | Public places where people want to spend time | 51% | 127 | 161 | Similar |
| Economy | Overall economic health of Billings | 61% | 93 | 173 | Similar |
|  | Vibrant downtown/commercial area | 42% | 82 | 155 | Similar |
|  | Overall quality of business and service establishments in Billings | 65% | 117 | 241 | Similar |
|  | Cost of living in Billings | 41% | 100 | 170 | Similar |
|  | Shopping opportunities | 65% | 102 | 263 | Similar |
|  | Employment opportunities | 56% | 47 | 280 | Higher |
|  | Billings as a place to visit | 55% | 121 | 183 | Similar |
|  | Billings as a place to work | 68% | 158 | 324 | Similar |
| Recreation and Wellness | Health and wellness opportunities in Billings | 78% | 55 | 170 | Similar |
|  | Availability of affordable quality mental health care | 45% | 74 | 146 | Similar |
|  | Availability of preventive health services | 69% | 64 | 207 | Similar |
|  | Availability of affordable quality health care | 69% | 74 | 230 | Similar |
|  | Availability of affordable quality food | 64% | 122 | 207 | Similar |
|  | Recreational opportunities | 58% | 188 | 269 | Similar |
|  | Fitness opportunities (including exercise classes and paths or trails, etc.) | 71% | 81 | 162 | Similar |
|  | Overall opportunities for education and enrichment | 63% | 106 | 168 | Similar |

| | Percent positive | Rank | Number of communities in comparison | Comparison to benchmark |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Opportunities to participate in religious or spiritual events and activities | 81% | 91 | 179 | Similar |
| Opportunities to attend cultural/arts/music activities | 65% | 107 | 262 | Similar |
| Adult educational opportunities | 61% | 64 | 152 | Similar |
| K-12 education | 62% | 161 | 232 | Similar |
| Availability of affordable quality child care/preschool | 48% | 138 | 226 | Similar |
| Opportunities to participate in social events and activities | 65% | 103 | 229 | Similar |
| Neighborliness of Billings | 52% | 125 | 162 | Similar |
| Openness and acceptance of the community toward people of diverse backgrounds | 43% | 236 | 256 | Lower |
| Opportunities to participate in community matters | 61% | 134 | 243 | Similar |
| Opportunities to volunteer (Community Engagement) | 74% | 96 | 234 | Similar |

Table 73: Governance General

| | Percent positive | Rank | Number of communities in comparison | Comparison to benchmark |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Services provided by the City of Billings | 65% | 297 | 399 | Similar |
| Overall customer service by Billings employees (police, receptionists, planners, etc.) | 61% | 298 | 332 | Lower |
| Value of services for the taxes paid to Billings | 44% | 281 | 357 | Similar |
| Overall direction that Billings is taking | 52% | 199 | 288 | Similar |
| Job Billings government does at welcoming citizen involvement | 43% | 200 | 280 | Similar |
| Overall confidence in Billings government | 41% | 117 | 169 | Similar |
| Generally acting in the best interest of the community | 48% | 110 | 169 | Similar |
| Being honest | 46% | 110 | 163 | Similar |
| Treating all residents fairly | 45% | 118 | 168 | Similar |
| Services provided by the Federal Government | 37% | 160 | 220 | Similar |

Table 74: Governance by Facet

| | Percent positive | Rank | Number of communities in comparison | Comparison to benchmark |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Police services | 61% | 375 | 406 | Lower |
| Fire services | 86% | 287 | 330 | Similar |
| Ambulance or emergency medical services | 85% | 264 | 313 | Similar |
| Crime prevention | 42% | 300 | 320 | Lower |
| Fire prevention and education | 62% | 234 | 255 | Lower |
| Animal control | 50% | 258 | 305 | Similar |
| Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations) (Safety) | 46% | 215 | 253 | Similar |
| Traffic enforcement | 36% | 334 | 337 | Much lower |
| Street repair | 33% | 304 | 379 | Lower |
| Street cleaning | 50% | 229 | 289 | Similar |
| Street lighting | 49% | 237 | 281 | Similar |
| Snow removal | 38% | 247 | 265 | Lower |
| Sidewalk maintenance | 35% | 245 | 289 | Lower |
| Traffic signal timing | 44% | 174 | 229 | Similar |
| Bus or transit services (Mobility) | 41% | 143 | 195 | Similar |
| Garbage collection | 85% | 187 | 312 | Similar |
| Recycling | 39% | 319 | 323 | Much lower |
| Yard waste pick-up | 69% | 156 | 240 | Similar |
| Drinking water (Natural Environment) | 75% | 133 | 301 | Similar |

| | | Percent positive | Rank | Number of communities in comparison | Comparison to benchmark |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts | 44% | 200 | 231 | Lower |
| | Billings open space | 44% | 127 | 154 | Similar |
| | Storm drainage | 50% | 271 | 327 | Similar |
| | Sewer services | 74% | 161 | 288 | Similar |
| | Utility billing | 63% | 98 | 148 | Similar |
| | Land use, planning and zoning | 35% | 212 | 267 | Similar |
| Built Environment | Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc.) | 24% | 296 | 329 | Lower |
| | Cable television | 42% | 150 | 172 | Similar |
| Economy | Economic development | 54% | 112 | 255 | Similar |
| | City parks | 75% | 216 | 294 | Similar |
| | Recreation programs or classes | 67% | 219 | 311 | Similar |
| Recreation and Wellness | Recreation centers or facilities | 58% | 198 | 254 | Similar |
| | Health services | 75% | 35 | 179 | Similar |
| Education and Enrichment | City-sponsored special events | 52% | 148 | 182 | Similar |
| | Public library services | 77% | 236 | 308 | Similar |
| Community Engagement | Public information services | 53% | 214 | 261 | Similar |

## Table 75: Participation General

| | Percent positive | Rank | Number of communities in comparison | Comparison to benchmark |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sense of community | 49% | 223 | 275 | Similar |
| Recommend living in Billings to someone who asks | 82% | 173 | 252 | Similar |
| Remain in Billings for the next five years | 83% | 138 | 245 | Similar |
| Contacted Billings (in-person, phone, email or web) for help or information | 36% | 243 | 282 | Lower |

## Table 76: Participation by Facet

| | | Percent positive | Rank | Number of communities in comparison | Comparison to benchmark |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Stocked supplies in preparation for an emergency | 31% | 95 | 149 | Similar |
| | Did NOT report a crime to the police | 63% | 152 | 165 | Lower |
| Safety | Household member was NOT a victim of a crime | 79% | 226 | 242 | Similar |
| | Used bus, rail, subway or other public transportation instead of driving | 11% | 97 | 136 | Lower |
| | Carpooled with other adults or children instead of driving alone | 43% | 74 | 157 | Similar |
| Mobility | Walked or biked instead of driving | 56% | 81 | 162 | Similar |
| | Made efforts to conserve water | 76% | 121 | 151 | Similar |
| Natural Environment | Made efforts to make your home more energy efficient | 76% | 87 | 152 | Similar |
| | Recycle at home | 71% | 196 | 227 | Lower |
| | Did NOT observe a code violation or other hazard in Billings | 37% | 139 | 156 | Lower |
| Built Environment | NOT experiencing housing costs stress | 69% | 113 | 223 | Similar |
| | Purchase goods or services from a business located in Billings | 99% | 20 | 159 | Similar |
| | Economy will have positive impact on income | 28% | 99 | 225 | Similar |
| Economy | Work inside boundaries of Billings | 73% | 8 | 159 | Much higher |
| Recreation and | Used Billings recreation centers or their | 60% | 75 | 213 | Similar |

| | | Percent positive | Rank | Number of communities in comparison | Comparison to benchmark |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Wellness | services | | | | |
| | Visited a neighborhood park or City park | 89% | 61 | 245 | Similar |
| | Eat at least 5 portions of fruits and vegetables a day | 79% | 120 | 155 | Similar |
| | Participate in moderate or vigorous physical activity | 88% | 53 | 158 | Similar |
| | In very good to excellent health | 56% | 114 | 158 | Similar |
| Education and Enrichment | Used Billings public libraries or their services | 56% | 173 | 213 | Similar |
| | Participated in religious or spiritual activities in Billings | 58% | 43 | 177 | Higher |
| | Attended City-sponsored event | 55% | 72 | 162 | Similar |
| Community Engagement | Campaigned or advocated for an issue, cause or candidate | 24% | 52 | 148 | Similar |
| | Contacted Billings elected officials (in-person, phone, email or web) to express your opinion | 17% | 72 | 158 | Similar |
| | Volunteered your time to some group/activity in Billings | 52% | 47 | 233 | Higher |
| | Participated in a club | 38% | 34 | 212 | Higher |
| | Talked to or visited with your immediate neighbors | 96% | 19 | 159 | Similar |
| | Done a favor for a neighbor | 85% | 45 | 153 | Similar |
| | Attended a local public meeting | 18% | 149 | 233 | Similar |
| | Watched (online or on television) a local public meeting | 37% | 33 | 198 | Higher |
| | Read or watch local news (via television, paper, computer, etc.) | 86% | 86 | 159 | Similar |
| | Vote in local elections | 84% | 65 | 225 | Similar |

## Communities included in national comparisons

The communities included in Billings' comparisons are listed on the following pages along with their population according to the 2010 Census.

Adams County, CO....................................................441,603
Airway Heights city, WA ........................................... 6,114
Albany city, OR ..................................................... 50,158
Albemarle County, VA............................................. 98,970
Albert Lea city, MN................................................ 18,016
Alexandria city, VA................................................139,966
Algonquin village, IL.............................................. 30,046
Aliso Viejo city, CA ............................................... 47,823
Altoona city, IA ..................................................... 14,541
American Canyon city, CA........................................ 19,454
Ames city, IA ......................................................... 58,965
Andover CDP, MA.................................................... 8,762
Ankeny city, IA ...................................................... 45,582
Ann Arbor city, MI.................................................113,934
Annapolis city, MD ................................................ 38,394
Apache Junction city, AZ......................................... 35,840
Apple Valley town, CA ............................................ 69,135
Arapahoe County, CO..............................................572,003
Arkansas City city, AR............................................. 366
Arlington city, TX ..................................................365,438
Arlington County, VA..............................................207,627
Arvada city, CO......................................................106,433
Asheville city, NC .................................................. 83,393
Ashland city, OR ................................................... 20,078
Ashland town, VA................................................... 7,225
Aspen city, CO ...................................................... 6,658
Athens-Clarke County unified government ..............115,452
Auburn city, AL ..................................................... 53,380

Auburn city, WA..................................................... 70,180
Augusta CCD, GA....................................................134,777
Aurora city, CO ......................................................325,078
Austin city, TX .......................................................790,390
Bainbridge Island city, WA....................................... 23,025
Baltimore city, MD..................................................620,961
Bartonville town, TX............................................... 1,469
Battle Creek city, MI............................................... 52,347
Bay City city, MI..................................................... 34,932
Baytown city, TX..................................................... 71,802
Bedford city, TX..................................................... 46,979
Bedford town, MA .................................................. 13,320
Bellevue city, WA ...................................................122,363
Bellingham city, WA ............................................... 80,885
Beltrami County, MN .............................................. 44,442
Benbrook city, TX................................................... 21,234
Bend city, OR......................................................... 76,639
Bettendorf city, IA.................................................. 33,217
Billings city, MT......................................................104,170
Blaine city, MN...................................................... 57,186
Bloomfield Hills city, MI .......................................... 3,869
Bloomington city, MN ............................................ 82,893
Blue Springs city, MO ............................................ 52,575
Boise City city, ID ..................................................205,671
Boone County, KY ..................................................118,811
Boulder city, CO..................................................... 97,385
Bowling Green city, KY ........................................... 58,067
Bozeman city, MT ................................................... 37,280

| | |
|---|---|
| Brentwood city, MO | 8,055 |
| Brentwood city, TN | 37,060 |
| Brighton city, CO | 33,352 |
| Brighton city, MI | 7,444 |
| Bristol city, TN | 26,702 |
| Broken Arrow city, OK | 98,850 |
| Brookfield city, WI | 37,920 |
| Brookline CDP, MA | 58,732 |
| Broomfield city, CO | 55,889 |
| Brownsburg town, IN | 21,285 |
| Burien city, WA | 33,313 |
| Burleson city, TX | 36,690 |
| Cabarrus County, NC | 178,011 |
| Cambridge city, MA | 105,162 |
| Cannon Beach city, OR | 1,690 |
| Canton city, SD | 3,057 |
| Cape Coral city, FL | 154,305 |
| Cape Girardeau city, MO | 37,941 |
| Carlisle borough, PA | 18,682 |
| Carlsbad city, CA | 105,328 |
| Carroll city, IA | 10,103 |
| Cartersville city, GA | 19,731 |
| Cary town, NC | 135,234 |
| Casper city, WY | 55,316 |
| Castine town, ME | 1,366 |
| Castle Pines North city, CO | 10,360 |
| Castle Rock town, CO | 48,231 |
| Cedar Hill city, TX | 45,028 |
| Cedar Rapids city, IA | 126,326 |
| Centennial city, CO | 100,377 |
| Chambersburg borough, PA | 20,268 |
| Chandler city, AZ | 236,123 |
| Chanhassen city, MN | 22,952 |
| Chapel Hill town, NC | 57,233 |
| Charlotte city, NC | 731,424 |
| Charlotte County, FL | 159,978 |
| Charlottesville city, VA | 43,475 |
| Chattanooga city, TN | 167,674 |
| Chesterfield County, VA | 316,236 |
| Chippewa Falls city, WI | 13,661 |
| Citrus Heights city, CA | 83,301 |
| Clackamas County, OR | 375,992 |
| Clarendon Hills village, IL | 8,427 |
| Clayton city, MO | 15,939 |
| Clearwater city, FL | 107,685 |
| Cleveland Heights city, OH | 46,121 |
| Clinton city, SC | 8,490 |
| Clive city, IA | 15,447 |
| Clovis city, CA | 95,631 |
| College Park city, MD | 30,413 |
| College Station city, TX | 93,857 |
| Colleyville city, TX | 22,807 |
| Collinsville city, IL | 25,579 |
| Columbia city, MO | 108,500 |
| Columbia city, SC | 129,272 |
| Columbia Falls city, MT | 4,688 |
| Columbus city, WI | 4,991 |
| Commerce City city, CO | 45,913 |
| Concord city, CA | 122,067 |
| Concord town, MA | 17,668 |
| Coon Rapids city, MN | 61,476 |
| Copperas Cove city, TX | 32,032 |
| Coronado city, CA | 18,912 |
| Corvallis city, OR | 54,462 |
| Creve Coeur city, MO | 17,833 |
| Cross Roads town, TX | 1,563 |
| Dacono city, CO | 4,152 |
| Dade City city, FL | 6,437 |
| Dakota County, MN | 398,552 |
| Dallas city, OR | 14,583 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Dallas city, TX | 1,197,816 |
| Danville city, KY | 16,218 |
| Dardenne Prairie city, MO | 11,494 |
| Davenport city, IA | 99,685 |
| Davidson town, NC | 10,944 |
| Decatur city, GA | 19,335 |
| Del Mar city, CA | 4,161 |
| Delaware city, OH | 34,753 |
| Delray Beach city, FL | 60,522 |
| Denison city, TX | 22,682 |
| Denton city, TX | 113,383 |
| Denver city, CO | 600,158 |
| Derby city, KS | 22,158 |
| Des Peres city, MO | 8,373 |
| Destin city, FL | 12,305 |
| Dothan city, AL | 65,496 |
| Douglas County, CO | 285,465 |
| Dover city, NH | 29,987 |
| Dublin city, CA | 46,036 |
| Dublin city, OH | 41,751 |
| Duluth city, MN | 86,265 |
| Duncanville city, TX | 38,524 |
| Durham city, NC | 228,330 |
| Durham County, NC | 267,587 |
| Eagle town, CO | 6,508 |
| East Baton Rouge Parish, LA | 440,171 |
| East Grand Forks city, MN | 8,601 |
| East Lansing city, MI | 48,579 |
| Eau Claire city, WI | 65,883 |
| Eden Prairie city, MN | 60,797 |
| Edgerton city, KS | 1,671 |
| Edgewater city, CO | 5,170 |
| Edina city, MN | 47,941 |
| Edmond city, OK | 81,405 |
| Edmonds city, WA | 39,709 |
| El Cerrito city, CA | 23,549 |
| El Dorado County, CA | 181,058 |
| El Paso city, TX | 649,121 |
| Elk Grove city, CA | 153,015 |
| Elk River city, MN | 22,974 |
| Elko New Market city, MN | 4,110 |
| Elmhurst city, IL | 44,121 |
| Encinitas city, CA | 59,518 |
| Englewood city, CO | 30,255 |
| Erie town, CO | 18,135 |
| Escambia County, FL | 297,619 |
| Estes Park town, CO | 5,858 |
| Fairview town, TX | 7,248 |
| Farmington Hills city, MI | 79,740 |
| Fayetteville city, NC | 200,564 |
| Fishers town, IN | 76,794 |
| Flower Mound town, TX | 64,669 |
| Forest Grove city, OR | 21,083 |
| Fort Collins city, CO | 143,986 |
| Fort Smith city, AR | 86,209 |
| Fort Worth city, TX | 741,206 |
| Fountain Hills town, AZ | 22,489 |
| Franklin city, TN | 62,487 |
| Fredericksburg city, VA | 24,286 |
| Fremont city, CA | 214,089 |
| Friendswood city, TX | 35,805 |
| Fruita city, CO | 12,646 |
| Gahanna city, OH | 33,248 |
| Gaithersburg city, MD | 59,933 |
| Galveston city, TX | 47,743 |
| Gardner city, KS | 19,123 |
| Geneva city, NY | 13,261 |
| Georgetown city, TX | 47,400 |
| Gilbert town, AZ | 208,453 |
| Gillette city, WY | 29,087 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Glendora city, CA | 50,073 |
| Glenview village, IL | 44,692 |
| Globe city, AZ | 7,532 |
| Golden city, CO | 18,867 |
| Golden Valley city, MN | 20,371 |
| Goodyear city, AZ | 65,275 |
| Grafton village, WI | 11,459 |
| Grand Blanc city, MI | 8,276 |
| Grand Island city, NE | 48,520 |
| Grants Pass city, OR | 34,533 |
| Grass Valley city, CA | 12,860 |
| Greeley city, CO | 92,889 |
| Greenville city, NC | 84,554 |
| Greenwich town, CT | 61,171 |
| Greenwood Village city, CO | 13,925 |
| Greer city, SC | 25,515 |
| Guilford County, NC | 488,406 |
| Gunnison County, CO | 15,324 |
| Hailey city, ID | 7,960 |
| Haines Borough, AK | 2,508 |
| Hallandale Beach city, FL | 37,113 |
| Hamilton city, OH | 62,477 |
| Hanover County, VA | 99,863 |
| Harrisonburg city, VA | 48,914 |
| Harrisonville city, MO | 10,019 |
| Hayward city, CA | 144,186 |
| Henderson city, NV | 257,729 |
| Herndon town, VA | 23,292 |
| High Point city, NC | 104,371 |
| Highland Park city, IL | 29,763 |
| Highlands Ranch CDP, CO | 96,713 |
| Holland city, MI | 33,051 |
| Honolulu County, HI | 953,207 |
| Hooksett town, NH | 13,451 |
| Hopkins city, MN | 17,591 |
| Hopkinton town, MA | 14,925 |
| Hoquiam city, WA | 8,726 |
| Horry County, SC | 269,291 |
| Hudson city, OH | 22,262 |
| Hudsonville city, MI | 7,116 |
| Huntersville town, NC | 46,773 |
| Hurst city, TX | 37,337 |
| Hutchinson city, MN | 14,178 |
| Hutto city, TX | 14,698 |
| Hyattsville city, MD | 17,557 |
| Independence city, MO | 116,830 |
| Indian Trail town, NC | 33,518 |
| Indianola city, IA | 14,782 |
| Iowa City city, IA | 67,862 |
| Irving city, TX | 216,290 |
| Issaquah city, WA | 30,434 |
| Jackson County, MI | 160,248 |
| James City County, VA | 67,009 |
| Jefferson County, CO | 534,543 |
| Jefferson County, NY | 116,229 |
| Johnson City city, TN | 63,152 |
| Johnston city, IA | 17,278 |
| Jupiter town, FL | 55,156 |
| Kansas City city, KS | 145,786 |
| Kansas City city, MO | 459,787 |
| Keizer city, OR | 36,478 |
| Kenmore city, WA | 20,460 |
| Kennedale city, TX | 6,763 |
| Kennett Square borough, PA | 6,072 |
| Kettering city, OH | 56,163 |
| Key West city, FL | 24,649 |
| King County, WA | 1,931,249 |
| Kirkland city, WA | 48,787 |
| Kirkwood city, MO | 27,540 |
| Knoxville city, IA | 7,313 |
| La Mesa city, CA | 57,065 |
| La Plata town, MD | 8,753 |
| La Porte city, TX | 33,800 |
| La Vista city, NE | 15,758 |
| Lafayette city, CO | 24,453 |
| Laguna Beach city, CA | 22,723 |
| Laguna Hills city, CA | 30,344 |
| Laguna Niguel city, CA | 62,979 |
| Lake Oswego city, OR | 36,619 |
| Lake Stevens city, WA | 28,069 |
| Lake Worth city, FL | 34,910 |
| Lake Zurich village, IL | 19,631 |
| Lakeville city, MN | 55,954 |
| Lakewood city, CO | 142,980 |
| Lakewood city, WA | 58,163 |
| Lane County, OR | 351,715 |
| Larimer County, CO | 299,630 |
| Las Cruces city, NM | 97,618 |
| Las Vegas city, NV | 583,756 |
| Lawrence city, KS | 87,643 |
| Lee's Summit city, MO | 91,364 |
| Lehi city, UT | 47,407 |
| Lenexa city, KS | 48,190 |
| Lewis County, NY | 27,087 |
| Lewiston city, ID | 31,894 |
| Lewisville city, TX | 95,290 |
| Libertyville village, IL | 20,315 |
| Lincoln city, NE | 258,379 |
| Lindsborg city, KS | 3,458 |
| Littleton city, CO | 41,737 |
| Livermore city, CA | 80,968 |
| Lombard village, IL | 43,165 |
| Lone Tree city, CO | 10,218 |
| Long Grove village, IL | 8,043 |
| Longmont city, CO | 86,270 |
| Longview city, TX | 80,455 |
| Los Alamos County, NM | 17,950 |
| Louisville city, CO | 18,376 |
| Lynchburg city, VA | 75,568 |
| Lynnwood city, WA | 35,836 |
| Macomb County, MI | 840,978 |
| Manhattan Beach city, CA | 35,135 |
| Mankato city, MN | 39,309 |
| Maple Grove city, MN | 61,567 |
| Martinez city, CA | 35,824 |
| Maryland Heights city, MO | 27,472 |
| Marysville city, WA | 60,020 |
| Matthews town, NC | 27,198 |
| McAllen city, TX | 129,877 |
| McDonough city, GA | 22,084 |
| McMinnville city, OR | 32,187 |
| Menlo Park city, CA | 32,026 |
| Mercer Island city, WA | 22,699 |
| Meridian charter township, MI | 39,688 |
| Meridian city, ID | 75,092 |
| Merriam city, KS | 11,003 |
| Mesa County, CO | 146,723 |
| Miami Beach city, FL | 87,779 |
| Miami city, FL | 399,457 |
| Middleton city, WI | 17,442 |
| Midland city, MI | 41,863 |
| Milford city, DE | 9,559 |
| Milton city, GA | 32,661 |
| Minneapolis city, MN | 382,578 |
| Mission Viejo city, CA | 93,305 |
| Modesto city, CA | 201,165 |
| Monterey city, CA | 27,810 |
| Montgomery County, VA | 94,392 |
| Monticello city, UT | 1,972 |
| Monument town, CO | 5,530 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Mooresville town, NC | 32,711 |
| Morristown city, TN | 29,137 |
| Morrisville town, NC | 18,576 |
| Morro Bay city, CA | 10,234 |
| Mountain Village town, CO | 1,320 |
| Mountlake Terrace city, WA | 19,909 |
| Naperville city, IL | 141,853 |
| Napoleon city, OH | 8,749 |
| Needham CDP, MA | 28,886 |
| New Braunfels city, TX | 57,740 |
| New Brighton city, MN | 21,456 |
| New Hanover County, NC | 202,667 |
| New Orleans city, LA | 343,829 |
| New Smyrna Beach city, FL | 22,464 |
| Newberg city, OR | 22,068 |
| Newport city, RI | 24,672 |
| Newport News city, VA | 180,719 |
| Newton city, IA | 15,254 |
| Noblesville city, IN | 51,969 |
| Nogales city, AZ | 20,837 |
| Norfolk city, VA | 242,803 |
| North Port city, FL | 57,357 |
| North Richland Hills city, TX | 63,343 |
| Northglenn city, CO | 35,789 |
| Novato city, CA | 51,904 |
| Novi city, MI | 55,224 |
| O'Fallon city, IL | 28,281 |
| O'Fallon city, MO | 79,329 |
| Oak Park village, IL | 51,878 |
| Oakland city, CA | 390,724 |
| Oakley city, CA | 35,432 |
| Ogdensburg city, NY | 11,128 |
| Oklahoma City city, OK | 579,999 |
| Olathe city, KS | 125,872 |
| Old Town city, ME | 7,840 |
| Olmsted County, MN | 144,248 |
| Olympia city, WA | 46,478 |
| Orland Park village, IL | 56,767 |
| Oshkosh city, WI | 66,083 |
| Oshtemo charter township, MI | 21,705 |
| Otsego County, MI | 24,164 |
| Overland Park city, KS | 173,372 |
| Oviedo city, FL | 33,342 |
| Paducah city, KY | 25,024 |
| Palm Beach Gardens city, FL | 48,452 |
| Palm Coast city, FL | 75,180 |
| Palo Alto city, CA | 64,403 |
| Papillion city, NE | 18,894 |
| Paradise Valley town, AZ | 12,820 |
| Park City city, UT | 7,558 |
| Parker town, CO | 45,297 |
| Parkland city, FL | 23,962 |
| Pasadena city, CA | 137,122 |
| Pasco city, WA | 59,781 |
| Pasco County, FL | 464,697 |
| Pearland city, TX | 91,252 |
| Peoria city, AZ | 154,065 |
| Peoria city, IL | 115,007 |
| Peoria County, IL | 186,494 |
| Pflugerville city, TX | 46,936 |
| Phoenix city, AZ | 1,445,632 |
| Pinehurst village, NC | 13,124 |
| Piqua city, OH | 20,522 |
| Pitkin County, CO | 17,148 |
| Plano city, TX | 259,841 |
| Platte City city, MO | 4,691 |
| Plymouth city, MN | 70,576 |
| Pocatello city, ID | 54,255 |
| Polk County, IA | 430,640 |
| Pompano Beach city, FL | 99,845 |
| Port Orange city, FL | 56,048 |
| Portland city, OR | 583,776 |
| Post Falls city, ID | 27,574 |
| Prince William County, VA | 402,002 |
| Prior Lake city, MN | 22,796 |
| Pueblo city, CO | 106,595 |
| Queen Creek town, AZ | 26,361 |
| Radnor township, PA | 31,531 |
| Ramsey city, MN | 23,668 |
| Raymond town, ME | 4,436 |
| Raymore city, MO | 19,206 |
| Redmond city, WA | 54,144 |
| Rehoboth Beach city, DE | 1,327 |
| Reno city, NV | 225,221 |
| Reston CDP, VA | 58,404 |
| Richmond city, CA | 103,701 |
| Richmond Heights city, MO | 8,603 |
| Rifle city, CO | 9,172 |
| Rio Rancho city, NM | 87,521 |
| River Falls city, WI | 15,000 |
| Riverside city, CA | 303,871 |
| Riverside city, MO | 2,937 |
| Rochester Hills city, MI | 70,995 |
| Rock Hill city, SC | 66,154 |
| Rockville city, MD | 61,209 |
| Rogers city, MN | 8,597 |
| Rolla city, MO | 19,559 |
| Roselle village, IL | 22,763 |
| Rosemount city, MN | 21,874 |
| Rosenberg city, TX | 30,618 |
| Roseville city, MN | 33,660 |
| Round Rock city, TX | 99,887 |
| Royal Oak city, MI | 57,236 |
| Saco city, ME | 18,482 |
| Sahuarita town, AZ | 25,259 |
| Sammamish city, WA | 45,780 |
| San Anselmo town, CA | 12,336 |
| San Antonio city, TX | 1,327,407 |
| San Carlos city, CA | 28,406 |
| San Diego city, CA | 1,307,402 |
| San Francisco city, CA | 805,235 |
| San Jose city, CA | 945,942 |
| San Juan County, NM | 130,044 |
| San Marcos city, CA | 83,781 |
| San Marcos city, TX | 44,894 |
| San Rafael city, CA | 57,713 |
| Sanford city, FL | 53,570 |
| Sangamon County, IL | 197,465 |
| Santa Clarita city, CA | 176,320 |
| Santa Fe County, NM | 144,170 |
| Santa Monica city, CA | 89,736 |
| Sarasota County, FL | 379,448 |
| Savage city, MN | 26,911 |
| Schaumburg village, IL | 74,227 |
| Scott County, MN | 129,928 |
| Scottsdale city, AZ | 217,385 |
| Seaside city, CA | 33,025 |
| SeaTac city, WA | 26,909 |
| Sevierville city, TN | 14,807 |
| Shawnee city, KS | 62,209 |
| Sheboygan city, WI | 49,288 |
| Shoreview city, MN | 25,043 |
| Shorewood city, MN | 7,307 |
| Shorewood village, IL | 15,615 |
| Shorewood village, WI | 13,162 |
| Sierra Vista city, AZ | 43,888 |
| Sioux Center city, IA | 7,048 |
| Sioux Falls city, SD | 153,888 |
| Skokie village, IL | 64,784 |
| Snellville city, GA | 18,242 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Snowmass Village town, CO | 2,826 | Upper Arlington city, OH | 33,771 | |
| South Lake Tahoe city, CA | 21,403 | Urbandale city, IA | 39,463 | |
| Southborough town, MA | 9,767 | Vail town, CO | 5,305 | |
| Southlake city, TX | 26,575 | Vancouver city, WA | 161,791 | |
| Spokane Valley city, WA | 89,755 | Vernon Hills village, IL | 25,113 | |
| Spring Hill city, KS | 5,437 | Vestavia Hills city, AL | 34,033 | |
| Springboro city, OH | 17,409 | Victoria city, MN | 7,345 | |
| Springfield city, MO | 159,498 | Vienna town, VA | 15,687 | |
| Springville city, UT | 29,466 | Virginia Beach city, VA | 437,994 | |
| St. Augustine city, FL | 12,975 | Wake Forest town, NC | 30,117 | |
| St. Charles city, IL | 32,974 | Walnut Creek city, CA | 64,173 | |
| St. Cloud city, FL | 35,183 | Washington County, MN | 238,136 | |
| St. Cloud city, MN | 65,842 | Washington town, NH | 1,123 | |
| St. Joseph city, MO | 76,780 | Watauga city, TX | 23,497 | |
| St. Louis County, MN | 200,226 | Wauwatosa city, WI | 46,396 | |
| St. Louis Park city, MN | 45,250 | Waverly city, IA | 9,874 | |
| Stallings town, NC | 13,831 | Weddington town, NC | 9,459 | |
| State College borough, PA | 42,034 | West Carrollton city, OH | 13,143 | |
| Steamboat Springs city, CO | 12,088 | West Chester borough, PA | 18,461 | |
| Sterling Heights city, MI | 129,699 | West Des Moines city, IA | 56,609 | |
| Sugar Grove village, IL | 8,997 | Western Springs village, IL | 12,975 | |
| Sugar Land city, TX | 78,817 | Westerville city, OH | 36,120 | |
| Summit city, NJ | 21,457 | Westlake town, TX | 992 | |
| Summit County, UT | 36,324 | Westminster city, CO | 106,114 | |
| Sunnyvale city, CA | 140,081 | Weston town, MA | 11,261 | |
| Surprise city, AZ | 117,517 | Wheat Ridge city, CO | 30,166 | |
| Suwanee city, GA | 15,355 | White House city, TN | 10,255 | |
| Tacoma city, WA | 198,397 | Wichita city, KS | 382,368 | |
| Takoma Park city, MD | 16,715 | Williamsburg city, VA | 14,068 | |
| Tamarac city, FL | 60,427 | Willowbrook village, IL | 8,540 | |
| Temecula city, CA | 100,097 | Wilmington city, NC | 106,476 | |
| Tempe city, AZ | 161,719 | Wilsonville city, OR | 19,509 | |
| Temple city, TX | 66,102 | Winchester city, VA | 26,203 | |
| Texarkana city, TX | 36,411 | Windsor town, CO | 18,644 | |
| The Woodlands CDP, TX | 93,847 | Windsor town, CT | 29,044 | |
| Thornton city, CO | 118,772 | Winnetka village, IL | 12,187 | |
| Thousand Oaks city, CA | 126,683 | Winston-Salem city, NC | 229,617 | |
| Tigard city, OR | 48,035 | Winter Garden city, FL | 34,568 | |
| Tracy city, CA | 82,922 | Woodbury city, MN | 61,961 | |
| Trinidad CCD, CO | 12,017 | Woodland city, CA | 55,468 | |
| Tualatin city, OR | 26,054 | Wrentham town, MA | 10,955 | |
| Tulsa city, OK | 391,906 | Yakima city, WA | 91,067 | |
| Twin Falls city, ID | 44,125 | York County, VA | 65,464 | |
| Tyler city, TX | 96,900 | Yorktown town, IN | 9,405 | |
| Umatilla city, OR | 6,906 | Yountville city, CA | 2,933 | |

# Western Region Communities with Populations between 85,000 and 115,000 Benchmark Comparisons

## Table 77: Community Characteristics General

|  | Percent positive | Rank | Number of communities in comparison | Comparison to benchmark |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| The overall quality of life in Billings | 74% | 14 | 17 | Similar |
| Overall image or reputation of Billings | 55% | 10 | 13 | Similar |
| Billings as a place to live | 75% | 11 | 13 | Similar |
| Your neighborhood as a place to live | 75% | 6 | 10 | Similar |
| Billings as a place to raise children | 68% | 11 | 13 | Similar |
| Billings as a place to retire | 59% | 12 | 14 | Similar |
| Overall appearance of Billings | 48% | 9 | 11 | Similar |

## Table 78: Community Characteristics by Facet

|  |  | Percent positive | Rank | Number of communities in comparison | Comparison to benchmark |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Safety | Overall feeling of safety in Billings | 55% | 10 | 12 | Lower |
|  | In your neighborhood during the day | 92% | 9 | 13 | Similar |
|  | In Billings' downtown/commercial area during the day | 68% | 9 | 10 | Lower |
| Mobility | Overall ease of getting to the places you usually have to visit | 72% | 6 | 9 | Similar |
|  | Availability of paths and walking trails | 58% | 8 | 11 | Similar |
|  | Ease of walking in Billings | 53% | 6 | 10 | Similar |
|  | Ease of travel by bicycle in Billings | 35% | 8 | 10 | Similar |
|  | Ease of travel by public transportation in Billings | 27% | 6 | 7 | Lower |
|  | Ease of travel by car in Billings | 65% | 5 | 10 | Similar |
|  | Ease of public parking | 39% | 4 | 6 | Similar |
|  | Traffic flow on major streets | 43% | 8 | 12 | Similar |
| Natural Environment | Quality of overall natural environment in Billings | 65% | 9 | 10 | Similar |
|  | Cleanliness of Billings | 39% | 8 | 9 | Lower |
|  | Air quality | 64% | 8 | 9 | Similar |
| Built Environment | Overall "built environment" of Billings (including overall design, buildings, parks and transportation systems) | 43% | 6 | 8 | Lower |
|  | Overall quality of new development in Billings | 55% | 5 | 11 | Similar |
|  | Availability of affordable quality housing | 32% | 7 | 10 | Similar |
|  | Variety of housing options | 50% | 6 | 9 | Similar |
|  | Public places where people want to spend time | 51% | 4 | 7 | Similar |
| Economy | Overall economic health of Billings | 61% | 4 | 8 | Similar |
|  | Vibrant downtown/commercial area | 42% | 3 | 6 | Similar |
|  | Overall quality of business and service establishments in Billings | 65% | 4 | 9 | Similar |
|  | Cost of living in Billings | 41% | 5 | 7 | Similar |
|  | Shopping opportunities | 65% | 6 | 11 | Similar |
|  | Employment opportunities | 56% | 3 | 12 | Higher |
|  | Billings as a place to visit | 55% | 6 | 9 | Similar |
|  | Billings as a place to work | 68% | 7 | 14 | Similar |
| Recreation and Wellness | Health and wellness opportunities in Billings | 78% | 5 | 8 | Similar |
|  | Availability of affordable quality mental health care | 45% | 3 | 6 | Similar |
|  | Availability of preventive health services | 69% | 3 | 7 | Similar |
|  | Availability of affordable quality health care | 69% | 3 | 8 | Similar |
|  | Availability of affordable quality food | 64% | 3 | 6 | Similar |
|  | Recreational opportunities | 58% | 6 | 10 | Similar |
|  | Fitness opportunities (including exercise classes and paths or trails, etc.) | 71% | 3 | 6 | Similar |

| | | Percent positive | Rank | Number of communities in comparison | Comparison to benchmark |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Education and Enrichment | Overall opportunities for education and enrichment | 63% | 5 | 8 | Similar |
| | Opportunities to participate in religious or spiritual events and activities | 81% | 3 | 6 | Similar |
| | Opportunities to attend cultural/arts/music activities | 65% | 6 | 11 | Similar |
| | Adult educational opportunities | 61% | 3 | 5 | Similar |
| | K-12 education | 62% | 6 | 9 | Similar |
| | Availability of affordable quality child care/preschool | 48% | 4 | 8 | Similar |
| Community Engagement | Opportunities to participate in social events and activities | 65% | 3 | 8 | Similar |
| | Neighborliness of Billings | 52% | 6 | 8 | Similar |
| | Openness and acceptance of the community toward people of diverse backgrounds | 43% | 10 | 11 | Lower |
| | Opportunities to participate in community matters | 61% | 4 | 8 | Similar |
| | Opportunities to volunteer | 74% | 3 | 8 | Similar |

Table 79: Governance General

| | Percent positive | Rank | Number of communities in comparison | Comparison to benchmark |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Services provided by the City of Billings | 65% | 11 | 16 | Similar |
| Overall customer service by Billings employees (police, receptionists, planners, etc.) | 61% | 11 | 14 | Similar |
| Value of services for the taxes paid to Billings | 44% | 10 | 14 | Similar |
| Overall direction that Billings is taking | 52% | 8 | 12 | Similar |
| Job Billings government does at welcoming citizen involvement | 43% | 8 | 12 | Similar |
| Overall confidence in Billings government | 41% | 4 | 7 | Similar |
| Generally acting in the best interest of the community | 48% | 5 | 8 | Similar |
| Being honest | 46% | 4 | 7 | Similar |
| Treating all residents fairly | 45% | 4 | 7 | Similar |
| Services provided by the Federal Government | 37% | 6 | 8 | Similar |

Table 80: Governance by Facet

| | | Percent positive | Rank | Number of communities in comparison | Comparison to benchmark |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Safety | Police services | 61% | 11 | 14 | Similar |
| | Fire services | 86% | 9 | 10 | Similar |
| | Ambulance or emergency medical services | 85% | 7 | 11 | Similar |
| | Crime prevention | 42% | 12 | 13 | Lower |
| | Fire prevention and education | 62% | 9 | 11 | Similar |
| | Animal control | 50% | 10 | 11 | Similar |
| | Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations) | 46% | 7 | 10 | Similar |
| | Traffic enforcement | 36% | 13 | 13 | Lower |
| Mobility | Street repair | 33% | 9 | 14 | Similar |
| | Street cleaning | 50% | 9 | 13 | Similar |
| | Street lighting | 49% | 8 | 11 | Similar |
| | Snow removal | 38% | 13 | 13 | Lower |
| | Sidewalk maintenance | 35% | 8 | 11 | Similar |
| | Traffic signal timing | 44% | 8 | 10 | Similar |
| | Bus or transit services | 41% | 7 | 8 | Similar |
| Natural Environment | Garbage collection | 85% | 4 | 10 | Similar |
| | Recycling | 39% | 10 | 10 | Much lower |
| | Yard waste pick-up | 69% | 4 | 6 | Similar |

| | Percent positive | Rank | Number of communities in comparison | Comparison to benchmark |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Recreation and Wellness** | | | | |
| Used Billings recreation centers or their services | 60% | 2 | 7 | Similar |
| Visited a neighborhood park or City park | 89% | 3 | 8 | Similar |
| Eat at least 5 portions of fruits and vegetables a day | 79% | 6 | 6 | Similar |
| Participate in moderate or vigorous physical activity | 88% | 2 | 7 | Similar |
| In very good to excellent health | 56% | 4 | 7 | Similar |
| **Education and Enrichment** | | | | |
| Used Billings public libraries or their services | 56% | 4 | 7 | Similar |
| Participated in religious or spiritual activities in Billings | 58% | 2 | 6 | Similar |
| Attended City-sponsored event | 55% | 2 | 6 | Similar |
| **Community Engagement** | | | | |
| Campaigned or advocated for an issue, cause or candidate | 24% | 2 | 6 | Similar |
| Contacted Billings elected officials (in-person, phone, email or web) to express your opinion | 17% | 3 | 7 | Similar |
| Volunteered your time to some group/activity in Billings | 52% | 2 | 8 | Higher |
| Participated in a club | 38% | 1 | 7 | Higher |
| Talked to or visited with your immediate neighbors | 96% | 2 | 7 | Similar |
| Done a favor for a neighbor | 85% | 2 | 7 | Similar |
| Attended a local public meeting | 18% | 3 | 8 | Similar |
| Watched (online or on television) a local public meeting | 37% | 1 | 6 | Similar |
| Read or watch local news (via television, paper, computer, etc.) | 86% | 6 | 7 | Similar |
| Vote in local elections | 84% | 4 | 8 | Similar |

## Communities included in Western Region Jurisdictions with Populations between 85,000 and 115,000 comparisons

The communities included in Billings' custom comparisons are listed below along with their population according to the 2010 Census.

Arvada city, CO ................................................... 106,433
Billings city, MT .................................................. 104,170
Boulder city, CO .................................................... 97,385
Centennial city, CO .............................................. 100,377
Clovis city, CA ...................................................... 95,631
Davenport city, IA ................................................. 99,685
Duluth city, MN ..................................................... 86,265
Highlands Ranch CDP, CO ...................................... 96,713
Las Cruces city, NM .............................................. 97,618
Lawrence city, KS .................................................. 87,643

Lee's Summit city, MO ............................................ 91,364
Longmont city, CO ................................................. 86,270
Provo city, UT ...................................................... 112,488
Pueblo city, CO .................................................... 106,595
Rio Rancho city, NM .............................................. 87,521
Sparks city, NV ..................................................... 90,264
Spokane Valley city, WA ........................................ 89,755
Westminster city, CO ............................................ 106,114
Yakima city, WA ..................................................... 91,067

# Appendix C: Detailed Survey Methods

The National Citizen Survey (The NCS™), conducted by National Research Center, Inc., was developed to provide communities an accurate, affordable and easy way to assess and interpret resident opinion about important local topics. Standardization of common questions and survey methods provide the rigor to assure valid results, and each community has enough flexibility to construct a customized version of The NCS.

Results offer insight into residents' perspectives about the community as a whole, including local amenities, services, public trust, resident participation and other aspects of the community in order to support budgeting, land use and strategic planning and communication with residents. Resident demographic characteristics permit comparison to the Census as well as comparison of results for different subgroups of residents. The City of Billings funded this research. Please contact Bruce McCandless, Assistant City Administrator  at McCandlessB@ci.billings.mt.us if you have any questions about the survey.

## Survey Validity

The question of survey validity has two parts: 1) how can a community be confident that the results from those who completed the questionnaire are representative of the results that would have been obtained had the survey been administered to the entire population? and 2) how closely do the perspectives recorded on the survey reflect what residents really believe or do?

To answer the first question, the best survey research practices were used for the resources spent to ensure that the results from the survey respondents reflect the opinions of residents in the entire community. These practices include:

- Using a mail-out/mail-back methodology, which typically gets a higher response rate than phone for the same dollars spent. A higher response rate lessens the worry that those who did not respond are different than those who did respond.
- Selecting households at random within the community to receive the survey to ensure that the households selected to receive the survey are representative of the larger community.
- Over-sampling multi-family housing units to improve response from hard-to-reach, lower income or younger apartment dwellers.
- Selecting the respondent within the household using an unbiased sampling procedure; in this case, the "birthday method." The cover letter included an instruction requesting that the respondent in the household be the adult (18 years old or older) who most recently had a birthday, irrespective of year of birth.
- Contacting potential respondents three times to encourage response from people who may have different opinions or habits than those who would respond with only a single prompt.
- Inviting response in a compelling manner (using appropriate letterhead/logos and a signature of a visible leader) to appeal to recipients' sense of civic responsibility.
- Providing a pre-addressed, postage-paid return envelope.
- Offering the survey in Spanish or other language when requested by a given community.
- Weighting the results to reflect the demographics of the population.

The answer to the second question about how closely the perspectives recorded on the survey reflect what residents really believe or do is more complex. Resident responses to surveys are influenced by a variety of factors. For questions about service quality, residents' expectations for service quality play a role as well as the "objective" quality of the service provided, the way the resident perceives the entire community (that is, the context in which the service is provided), the scale on which the resident is asked to record his or her opinion and, of course, the opinion, itself, that a resident holds about the service. Similarly a resident's report of certain behaviors is colored by what he or she believes is the socially desirable response (e.g., reporting tolerant behaviors toward "oppressed groups," likelihood of voting for a tax increase for services to poor people, use of alternative modes of travel to work besides the single occupancy vehicle), his or her memory of the actual behavior (if it is not a question speculating about future actions, like a vote), his or her confidence that he or she can be honest without suffering any negative consequences (thus the need for anonymity) as well as the actual behavior itself.

How closely survey results come to recording the way a person really feels or behaves often is measured by the coincidence of reported behavior with observed current behavior (e.g., driving habits), reported intentions to behave with observed future behavior (e.g., voting choices) or reported opinions about current community quality

with objective characteristics of the community (e.g., feelings of safety correlated with rates of crime). There is a body of scientific literature that has investigated the relationship between reported behaviors and actual behaviors. Well-conducted surveys, by and large, do capture true respondent behaviors or intentions to act with great accuracy. Predictions of voting outcomes tend to be quite accurate using survey research, as do reported behaviors that are not about highly sensitive issues (e.g., family abuse or other illegal or morally sanctioned activities). For self-reports about highly sensitive issues, statistical adjustments can be made to correct for the respondents' tendency to report what they think the "correct" response should be.

Research on the correlation of resident opinion about service quality and "objective" ratings of service quality vary, with some showing stronger relationships than others. NRC's own research has demonstrated that residents who report the lowest ratings of street repair live in communities with objectively worse street conditions than those who report high ratings of street repair (based on road quality, delay in street repair, number of road repair employees). Similarly, the lowest rated fire services appear to be "objectively" worse than the highest rated fire services (expenditures per capita, response time, "professional" status of firefighters, breadth of services and training provided). Resident opinion commonly reflects objective performance data but is an important measure on its own. NRC principals have written, "If you collect trash three times a day but residents think that your trash haul is lousy, you still have a problem."
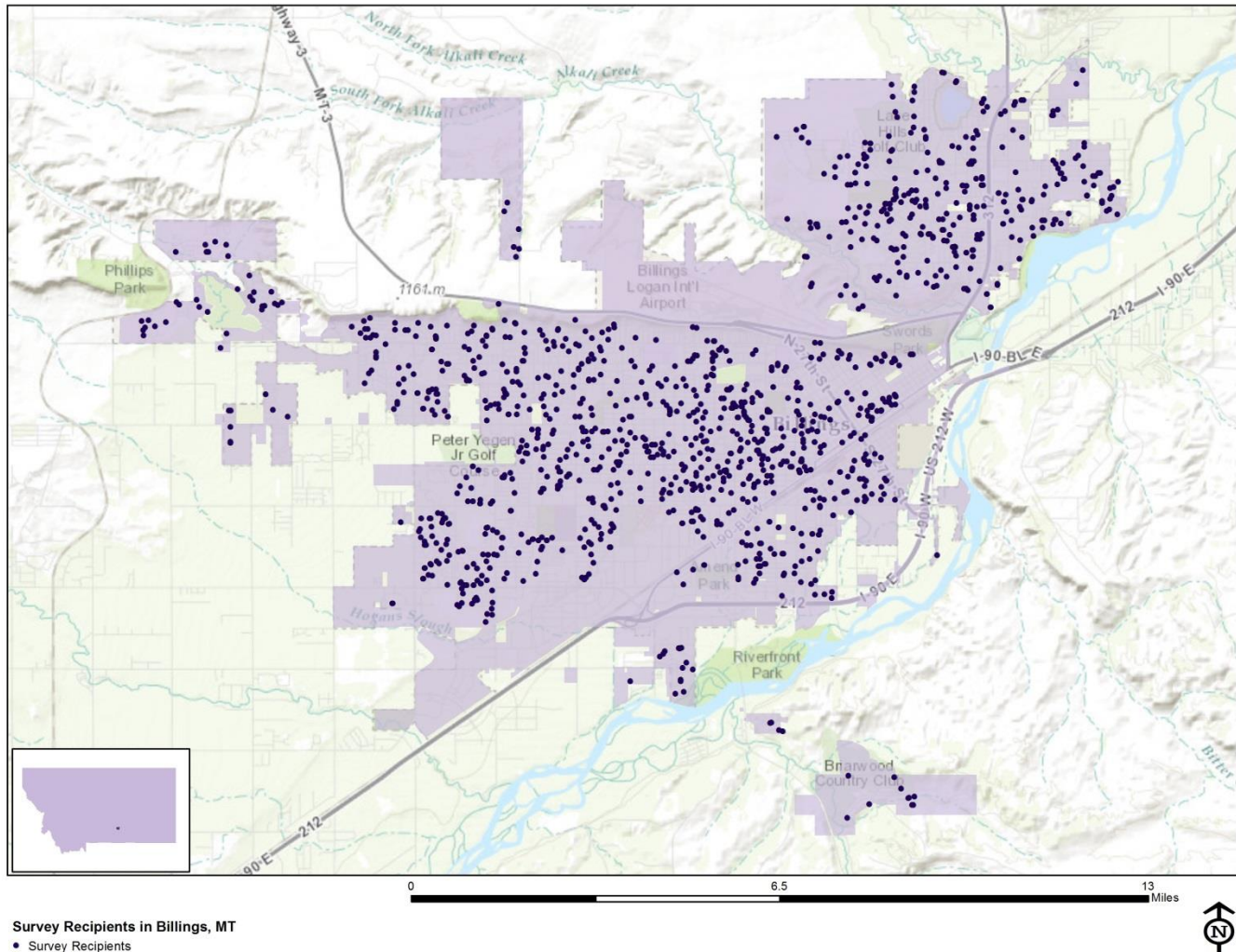
## Survey Sampling

"Sampling" refers to the method by which households were chosen to receive the survey. All households within the City of Billings were eligible to participate in the survey. A list of all households within the zip codes serving Billings was purchased based on updated listings from the United States Postal Service. Since some of the zip codes that serve the City of Billings households may also serve addresses that lie outside of the community, the exact geographic location of each housing unit was compared to community boundaries using the most current municipal boundary file (updated on a quarterly basis) and addresses located outside of the City of Billings boundaries were removed from consideration.

To choose the 1,400 survey recipients, a systematic sampling method was applied to the list of households previously screened for geographic location. Systematic sampling is a procedure whereby a complete list of all possible households  is culled, selecting every *Nth* one, giving each eligible household a known probability of selection, until the appropriate number of households is selected.  Multi-family housing units were over sampled as residents of this type of housing typically respond at lower rates to surveys than do those in single-family housing units. Figure 1 displays a map of the households selected to receive the survey. In general, because of the random sampling techniques used, the displayed sampling density will closely mirror the overall housing unit density (which may be different from the population density). While the theory of probability assumes no bias in selection, there may be some minor variations in practice (meaning, an area with only 15% of the housing units might be sampled at an actual rate that is slightly above or below that).

An individual within each household was selected using the birthday method. The birthday method selects a person within the household by asking the "person whose birthday has most recently passed" to complete the questionnaire. The underlying assumption in this method is that day of birth has no relationship to the way people respond to surveys. This instruction was contained in the cover letter accompanying the questionnaire.

Figure 1: Location of Survey Recipients



**Survey Recipients in Billings, MT**
• Survey Recipients

## Survey Administration and Response

Selected households received three mailings, one week apart, beginning on May 27, 2016. The first mailing was a prenotification postcard announcing the upcoming survey. The next mailing contained a letter from the Mayor inviting the household to participate, a questionnaire and a postage-paid return envelope. The final mailing contained a reminder letter, another survey and a postage-paid return envelope. The second cover letter asked those who had not completed the survey to do so and those who had already done so to refrain from turning in another survey. Completed surveys were collected over the following six weeks.

About 5% of the 1,400 surveys mailed were returned because the housing unit was vacant or the postal service was unable to deliver the survey as addressed. Of the remaining households that received the survey, 395 completed the survey, providing an overall response rate of 30%. Of the 395 completed surveys, 13 were completed online.

## Confidence Intervals

It is customary to describe the precision of estimates made from surveys by a "level of confidence" and accompanying "confidence interval" (or margin of error). A traditional level of confidence, and the one used here, is 95%. The 95% confidence interval can be any size and quantifies the sampling error or imprecision of the survey results because some residents' opinions are relied on to estimate all residents' opinions.[1]

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[1] A 95% confidence interval indicates that for every 100 random samples of this many residents, 95 of the confidence intervals created will include the "true" population response. This theory is applied in practice to mean that the "true" perspective of the target population lies within the confidence interval created for a single survey. For example, if 75% of residents rate a service as "excellent" or "good," then the 4% margin of error (for the 95% confidence interval) indicates that the range of likely responses for the entire community is between 71%

The margin of error for the City of Billings survey is no greater than plus or minus five percentage points around any given percent reported for the entire sample (395 completed surveys).

For subgroups of responses, the margin of error increases because the sample size for the subgroup is smaller. For subgroups of approximately 100 respondents, the margin of error is plus or minus 10 percentage points.

## Survey Processing (Data Entry)

Upon receipt, completed surveys were assigned a unique identification number. Additionally, each survey was reviewed and "cleaned" as necessary. For example, a question may have asked a respondent to pick two items out of a list of five, but the respondent checked three; in this case, NRC would use protocols to randomly choose two of the three selected items for inclusion in the dataset.

All surveys then were entered twice into an electronic dataset; any discrepancies were resolved in comparison to the original survey form. Range checks as well as other forms of quality control were also performed.

## Survey Data Weighting

The demographic characteristics of the survey sample were compared to those found in the 2010 Census and American Community Survey estimates for adults in the City of Billings. The primary objective of weighting survey data is to make the survey sample reflective of the larger population of the community. The characteristics used for weighting were housing tenure, housing unit type, sex and age. The results of the weighting scheme are presented in the following table.

Table 83: Billings, MT 2016 Weighting Table

| Characteristic | Population Norm | Unweighted Data | Weighted Data |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Housing** | | | |
| Rent home | 36% | 24% | 36% |
| Own home | 64% | 76% | 64% |
| Detached unit | 70% | 74% | 70% |
| Attached unit | 30% | 26% | 30% |
| **Race and Ethnicity** | | | |
| White | 92% | 93% | 91% |
| Not white | 8% | 7% | 9% |
| Not Hispanic | 96% | 98% | 97% |
| Hispanic | 4% | 2% | 3% |
| **Sex and Age** | | | |
| Female | 52% | 62% | 52% |
| Male | 48% | 38% | 48% |
| 18-34 years of age | 31% | 12% | 31% |
| 35-54 years of age | 34% | 23% | 34% |
| 55+ years of age | 35% | 65% | 36% |
| Females 18-34 | 16% | 7% | 16% |
| Females 35-54 | 17% | 16% | 17% |
| Females 55+ | 19% | 39% | 19% |
| Males 18-34 | 15% | 5% | 15% |
| Males 35-54 | 17% | 7% | 17% |
| Males 55+ | 16% | 26% | 16% |

and 79%. This source of uncertainty is called sampling error. In addition to sampling error, other sources of error may affect any survey, including the non-response of residents with opinions different from survey responders. Though standardized on The NCS, on other surveys, differences in question wording, order, translation and data entry, as examples, can lead to somewhat varying results.

## Survey Data Analysis and Reporting

The survey dataset was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). For the most part, the percentages presented in the reports represent the "percent positive." The percent positive is the combination of the top two most positive response options (i.e., "excellent" and "good," "very safe" and "somewhat safe," "essential" and "very important," etc.), or, in the case of resident behaviors/participation, the percent positive represents the proportion of respondents indicating "yes" or participating in an activity at least once a month.

On many of the questions in the survey respondents may answer "don't know." The proportion of respondents giving this reply is shown in the full set of responses included in Appendix A. However, these responses have been removed from the analyses presented in the reports. In other words, the tables and graphs display the responses from respondents who had an opinion about a specific item.

# Appendix D: Survey Materials