



# CHARLOTTE COUNTY, FL 2010



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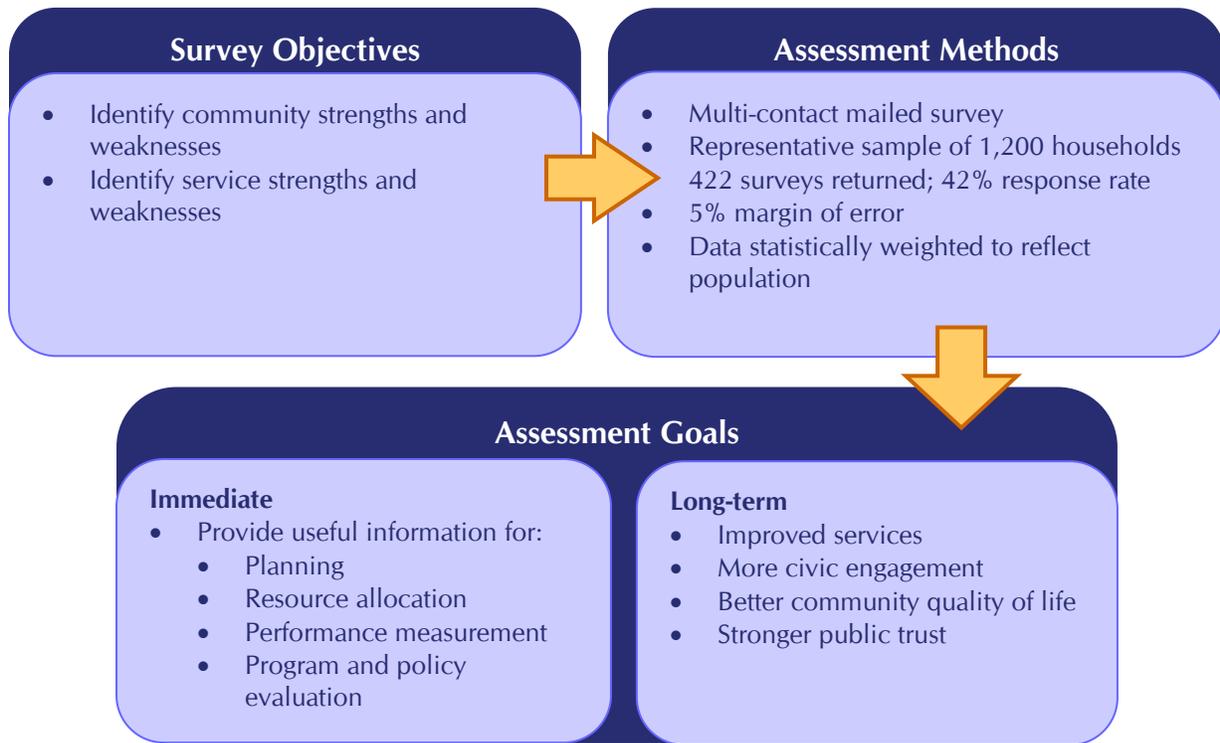
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## SURVEY BACKGROUND

### ABOUT THE NATIONAL CITIZEN SURVEY™

The National Citizen Survey™ (The NCS) is a collaborative effort between National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA). The NCS was developed by NRC to provide a statistically valid survey of resident opinions about community and services provided by local government. The survey results may be used by staff, elected officials and other stakeholders for community planning and resource allocation, program improvement and policy making.

FIGURE 1: THE NATIONAL CITIZEN SURVEY™ METHODS AND GOALS



The NCS focuses on a series of community characteristics and local government services, as well as issues of public trust. Resident behaviors related to civic engagement in the community also were measured in the survey.

FIGURE 2: THE NATIONAL CITIZEN SURVEY™ FOCUS AREAS



The survey and its administration are standardized to assure high quality research methods and directly comparable results across The National Citizen Survey™ jurisdictions. Participating households are selected at random and the household member who responds is selected without bias. Multiple mailings give each household more than one chance to participate with self-addressed and postage-paid envelopes. Results are statistically weighted to reflect the proper demographic composition of the entire community. A total of 422 completed surveys were obtained, providing an overall response rate of 42%. Typically, response rates obtained on citizen surveys range from 25% to 40%.

The National Citizen Survey™ customized for Charlotte County was developed in close cooperation with local jurisdiction staff. Charlotte County staff selected items from a menu of questions about services and community issues and provided the appropriate letterhead and signatures for mailings. Charlotte County staff also augmented The National Citizen Survey™ basic service through a variety of options including a custom set of benchmark comparisons, and several policy questions.

## UNDERSTANDING THE RESULTS

As shown in Figure 2, this report is based around respondents' opinions about eight larger categories: community quality, community design, public safety, environmental sustainability, recreation and wellness, community inclusiveness, civic engagement and public trust. Each section begins with residents' ratings of community characteristics and is followed by residents' ratings of service quality. For all evaluative questions, the percent of residents rating the service or community feature as "excellent" or "good" is presented. To see the full set of responses for each question on the survey, please see Appendix A: Complete Survey Frequencies.

### Margin of Error

The margin of error around results for the Charlotte County Survey (422 completed surveys) is plus or minus five percentage points. This is a measure of the precision of your results; a larger number of completed surveys gives a smaller (more precise) margin of error, while a smaller number of surveys yields a larger margin of error. With your margin of error, you may conclude that when 60% of survey respondents report that a particular service is "excellent" or "good," somewhere between 55-65% of all residents are likely to feel that way.

### Comparing Survey Results

Certain kinds of services tend to be thought better of by residents in many communities across the country. For example, public safety services tend to be received better than transportation services by residents of most American counties. Where possible, the better comparison is not from one service to another in Charlotte County, but from Charlotte County services to services like them provided by other jurisdictions.

### Interpreting Comparisons to Previous Years

This report contains comparisons with prior years' results. In this report, we are comparing this year's data with existing data in the graphs. Differences between years can be considered "statistically significant" if they are greater than seven percentage points. Trend data for your jurisdiction represent important comparison data and should be examined for improvements or declines. Deviations from stable trends over time, especially, represent opportunities for understanding how local policies, programs or public information may have affected residents' opinions.

### Benchmark Comparisons

NRC's database of comparative resident opinion is comprised of resident perspectives gathered in citizen surveys from approximately 500 jurisdictions whose residents evaluated local government services and gave their opinion about the quality of community life. The comparison evaluations are from the most recent survey completed in each jurisdiction; 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.

Charlotte County chose to have comparisons made to the entire database and a subset of similar jurisdictions from the database (Florida). A benchmark comparison (the average rating from all the comparison jurisdictions where a similar question was asked) has been provided when a similar question on the Charlotte County survey was included in NRC's database and there were at least five jurisdictions in which the question was asked. For most questions compared to the entire dataset, there were more than 100 jurisdictions included in the benchmark comparison.

Where comparisons for quality ratings were available, Charlotte County results were generally noted as being “above” the benchmark, “below” the benchmark or “similar” to the benchmark. For some questions – those related to resident behavior, circumstance or to a local problem – the comparison to the benchmark is designated as “more,” “similar” or “less” (for example, the percent of crime victims, residents visiting a park or residents identifying code enforcement as a problem.) In instances where ratings are considerably higher or lower than the benchmark, these ratings have been further demarcated by the attribute of “much,” (for example, “much less” or “much above”). These labels come from a statistical comparison of Charlotte County's rating to the benchmark.

### **“Don’t Know” Responses and Rounding**

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 body of the report. In other words, the tables and graphs display the responses from respondents who had an opinion about a specific item.

For some questions, respondents were permitted to select more than one answer. When the total exceeds 100% in a table for a multiple response question, it is because some respondents did select more than one response. When a table for a question that only permitted a single response does not total to exactly 100%, it is due to the customary practice of percentages being rounded to the nearest whole number.

For more information on understanding The NCS report, please see Appendix B: Survey Methodology.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report of Charlotte County survey provides the opinions of a representative sample of residents about community quality of life, service delivery, civic participation and unique issues of local interest. A periodic sounding of resident opinion offers staff, elected officials and other stakeholders an opportunity to identify challenges and to plan for and evaluate improvements and to sustain services and amenities for long-term success.

Most residents experienced a good quality of life in Charlotte County and believed the county was a good place to live. The overall quality of life in Charlotte County was rated as “excellent” or “good” by 69% of respondents. A majority reported they plan on staying in Charlotte County for the next five years.

A variety of characteristics of the community were evaluated by those participating in the study. Among the characteristics receiving the most favorable ratings were ease of car travel in Charlotte County, shopping opportunities, and the overall appearance of Charlotte County. The three characteristics receiving the least positive ratings were ease of bus travel in Charlotte County, employment opportunities, and the availability of affordable quality child care.

Ratings of community characteristics were compared to the benchmark database. Of the 19 characteristics for which comparisons were available, none were above the national benchmark comparison, six were similar to the national benchmark comparison and 13 were below.

Residents in Charlotte County were somewhat civically engaged. While 31% had attended a meeting of local elected public officials or other local public meeting in the previous 12 months, about half had volunteered their time to some group or activity in Charlotte County, which was similar to the benchmark.

In general, survey respondents demonstrated mild trust in local government. About one third rated the overall direction being taken by Charlotte County as “good” or “excellent.” This was lower than the benchmark. Those residents who had interacted with an employee of Charlotte County in the previous 12 months gave high marks to those employees. Most rated their overall impression of employees as “excellent” or “good.”

County services rated were able to be compared to the benchmark database. Of the 32 services for which comparisons were available, six were above the benchmark comparison, 18 were similar to the benchmark comparison and eight were below.

A Key Driver Analysis was conducted for Charlotte County which examined the relationships between ratings of each service and ratings of Charlotte County's services overall. Those key driver services that correlated most strongly with residents' perceptions about overall county service quality have been identified. By targeting improvements in key services, Charlotte County can focus on the services that have the greatest likelihood of influencing residents' opinions about overall service quality. Services found to be influential in ratings of overall service quality from the Key Driver Analysis were:

- Land use, planning and zoning
- Garbage collection
- Charlotte County open space
- County parks
- Health services
- Emergency preparedness
- Sheriff services

Of these services, those deserving the most attention may be those that have experienced declining ratings over time or those that were below or similar to the benchmark comparisons: land use, planning and zoning, Charlotte County open space, County parks, health services and sheriff services. For garbage collection and emergency preparedness services, Charlotte County was above the benchmark and should continue to ensure high quality performance.

## COMMUNITY RATINGS

### OVERALL COMMUNITY QUALITY

Overall quality of community life may be the single best indicator of success in providing the natural ambience, services and amenities that make for an attractive community. The National Citizen Survey™ contained many questions related to quality of community life in Charlotte County – not only direct questions about quality of life overall and in neighborhoods, but questions to measure residents’ commitment to Charlotte County. Residents were asked whether they planned to move soon or if they would recommend Charlotte County to others. Intentions to stay and willingness to make recommendations provide evidence that Charlotte County offers services and amenities that work.

Most of Charlotte County’s residents gave favorable ratings to their neighborhoods and the community as a place to live. Further, most reported they would recommend the community to others and plan to stay for the next five years. Ratings for the overall quality of life in Charlotte County and Charlotte County as a place to live had increased since 2007.

FIGURE 3: RATINGS OF OVERALL COMMUNITY QUALITY

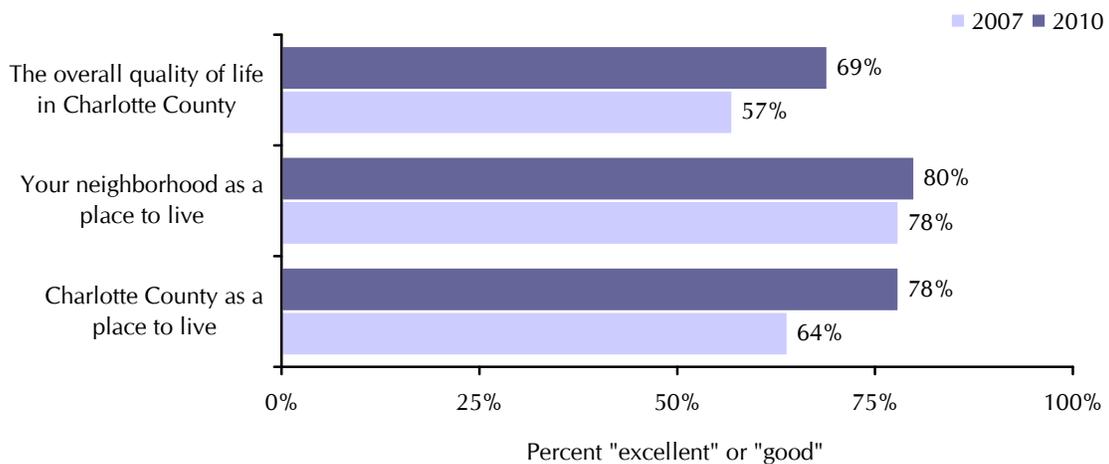
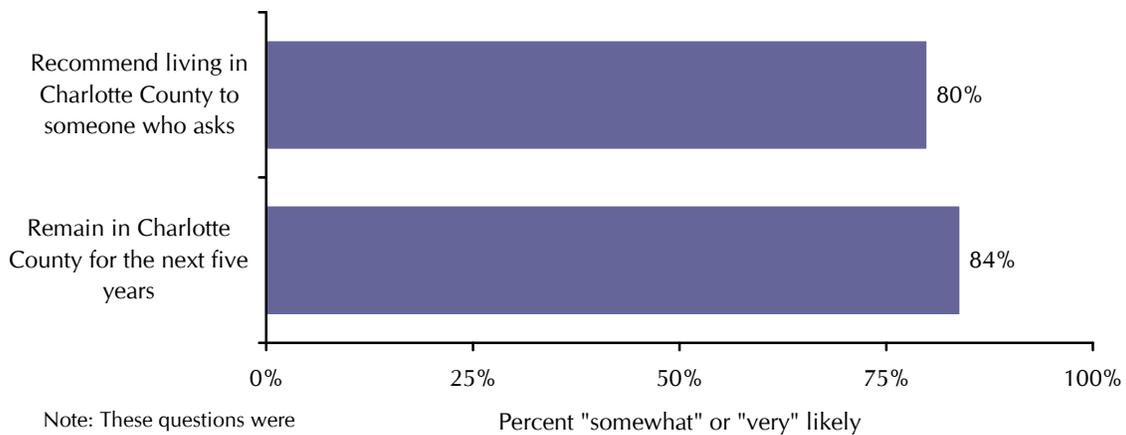


FIGURE 4: LIKELIHOOD OF REMAINING IN COMMUNITY AND RECOMMENDING COMMUNITY



Note: These questions were not asked in previous surveys.

FIGURE 5: OVERALL COMMUNITY QUALITY BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Overall quality of life in Charlotte County	Below	Similar
Your neighborhood as place to live	Similar	Similar
Charlotte County as a place to live	Below	Similar
Recommend living in Charlotte County to someone who asks	Below	Similar
Remain in Charlotte County for the next five years	Similar	Similar

## COMMUNITY DESIGN

### Transportation

The ability to move easily throughout a community can greatly affect the quality of life of residents by diminishing time wasted in traffic congestion and by providing opportunities to travel quickly and safely by modes other than the automobile. High quality options for resident mobility not only require local government to remove barriers to flow but they require government programs and policies that create quality opportunities for all modes of travel.

Residents responding to the survey were given a list of five aspects of mobility to rate on a scale of “excellent,” “good,” “fair” and “poor.” Ease of car travel in Charlotte County was given the most positive rating. These ratings tended to be lower than the benchmarks and the ratings for ease of car travel and ease of bicycle travel in Charlotte County had increased since the previous survey, while the rating for the availability of paths and walking trails had declined over time.

FIGURE 6: RATINGS OF TRANSPORTATION IN COMMUNITY BY YEAR

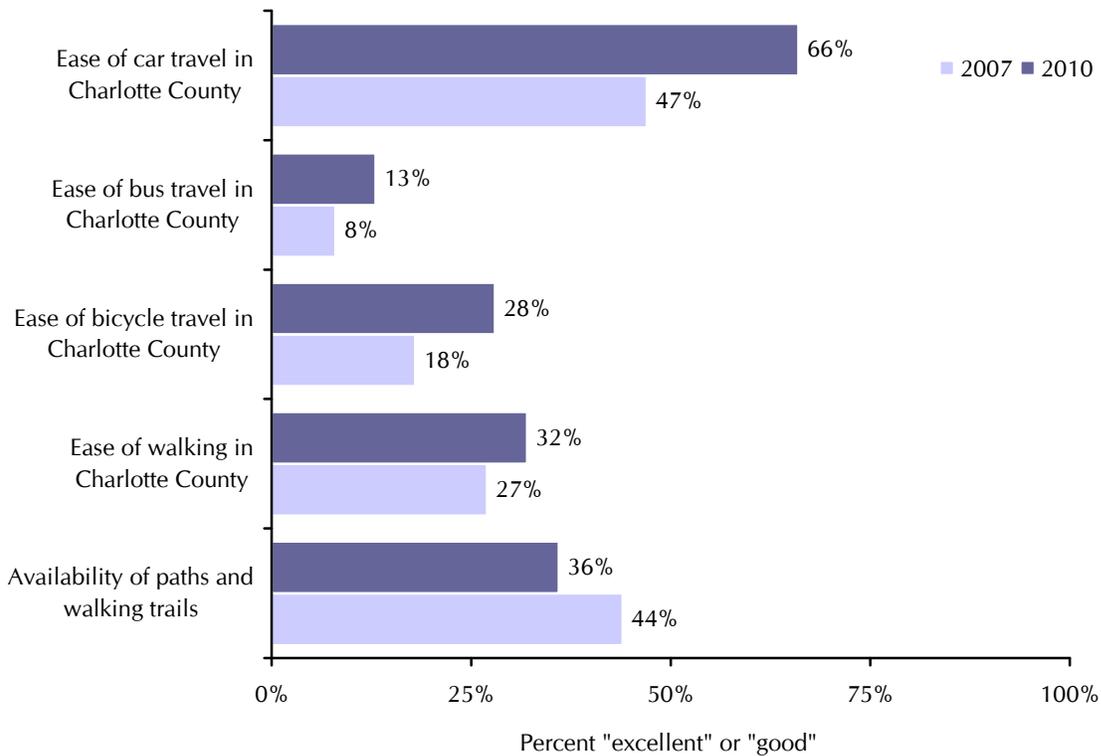


FIGURE 7: COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION BENCHMARKS BY YEAR

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Ease of car travel in Charlotte County	Similar	Above
Ease of bus travel in Charlotte County	Much below	Much below
Ease of bicycle travel in Charlotte County	Much below	Much below
Ease of walking in Charlotte County	Much below	Much below
Availability of paths and walking trails	Much below	Below

Two transportation services were rated in Charlotte County. The rating for road repair was similar to the benchmarks and bus or transit services were rated below the benchmarks. The rating for road repair was higher than the previous survey year, while the rating for bus or transit services had remained the same.

FIGURE 8: RATINGS OF TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING SERVICES BY YEAR

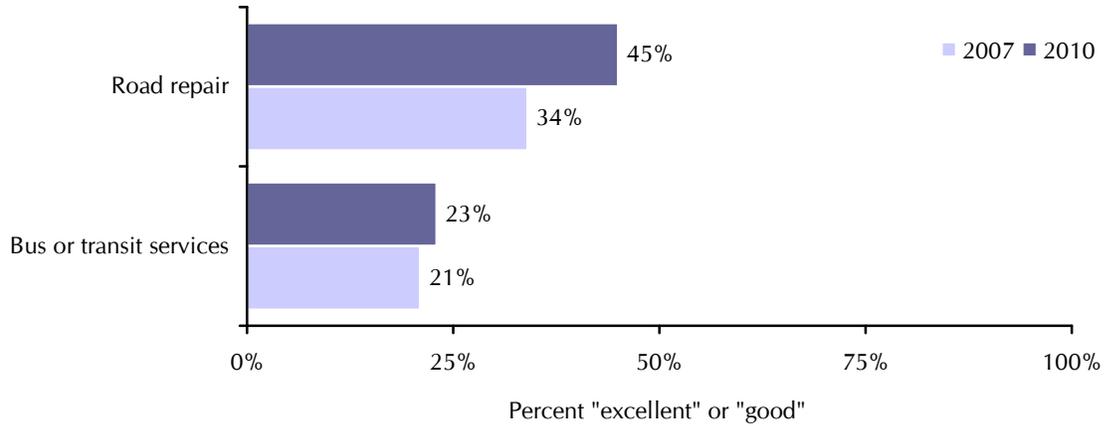


FIGURE 9: TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING SERVICES BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Road repair	Similar	Similar
Bus or transit services	Much below	Much below

By measuring choice of travel mode over time, communities can monitor their success in providing attractive alternatives to the traditional mode of travel, the single-occupied automobile. When asked how they typically traveled to work, single-occupancy (SOV) travel was the overwhelming mode of use.

FIGURE 10: FREQUENCY OF BUS USE IN LAST 12 MONTHS BY YEAR

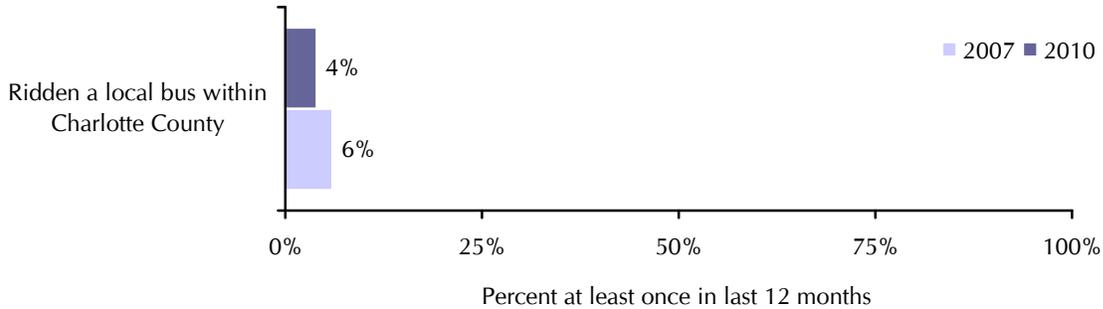


FIGURE 11: FREQUENCY OF BUS USE BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Ridden a local bus within Charlotte County	Much less	Much less

FIGURE 12: MODE OF TRAVEL USED FOR WORK COMMUTE

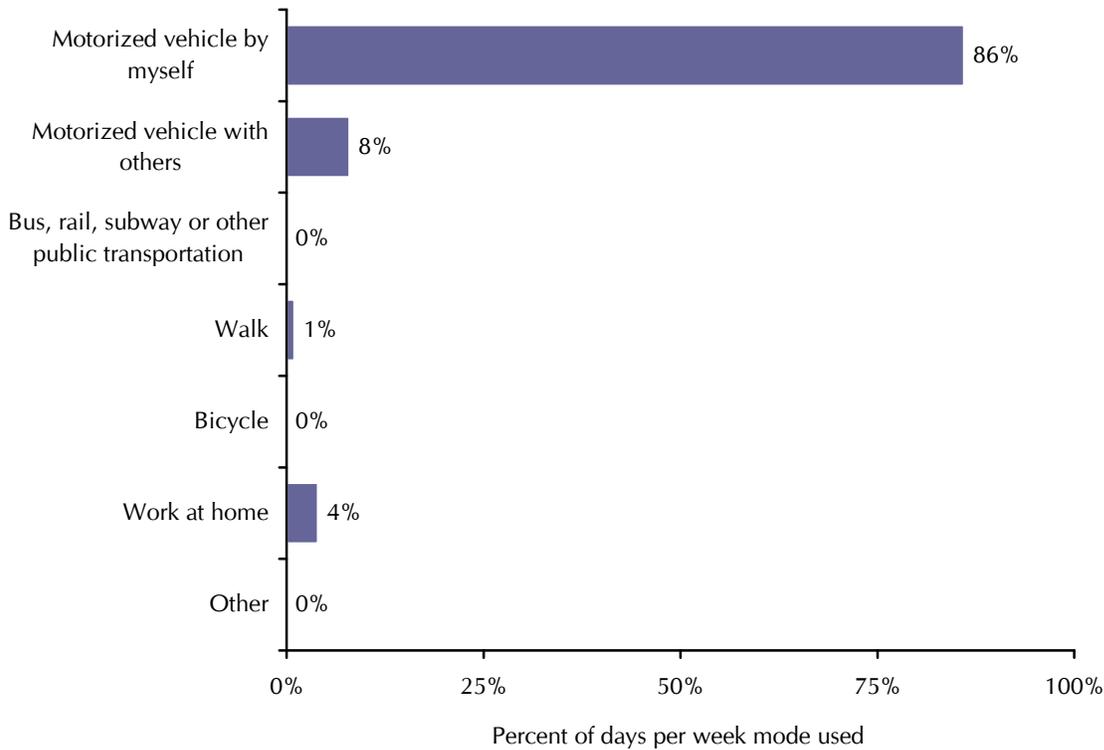


FIGURE 13: DRIVE ALONE BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Average percent of work commute trips made by driving alone	Much more	More

## Housing

Housing variety and affordability are not luxuries for any community. When there are too few options for housing style and affordability, the characteristics of a community tilt toward a single group, often of well-off residents. While this may seem attractive to a community, the absence of affordable townhomes, condominiums, mobile homes, single family detached homes and apartments means that in addition to losing the vibrancy of diverse thoughts and lifestyles, the community loses the service workers that sustain all communities – police officers, school teachers, house painters and electricians. These workers must live elsewhere and commute in at great personal cost and to the detriment of traffic flow and air quality. Furthermore lower income residents pay so much of their income to rent or mortgage that little remains to bolster their own quality of life or local business.

The survey of Charlotte County residents asked respondents to reflect on the availability of affordable housing as well as the variety of housing options. The availability of affordable housing was rated as “excellent” or “good” by 41% of respondents. The rating of perceived affordable housing availability was similar in Charlotte County to the ratings, on average, in comparison jurisdictions. This rating had improved over time.

FIGURE 14: RATINGS OF HOUSING IN COMMUNITY BY YEAR

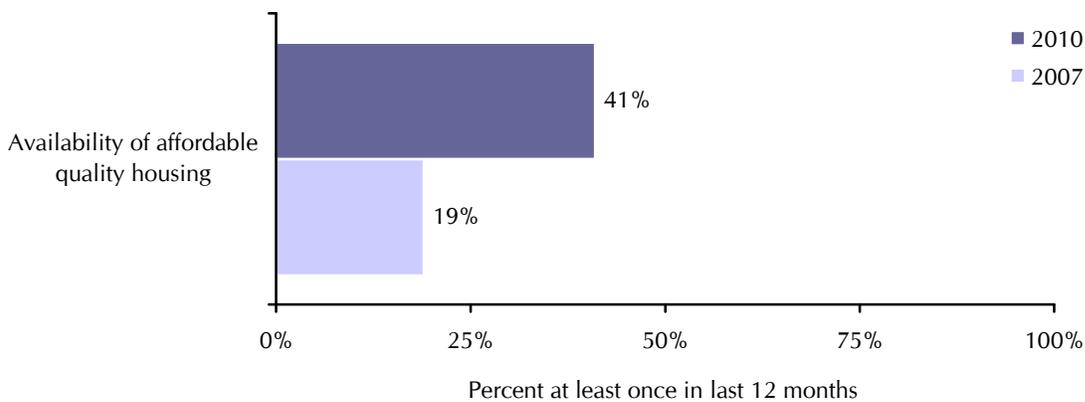
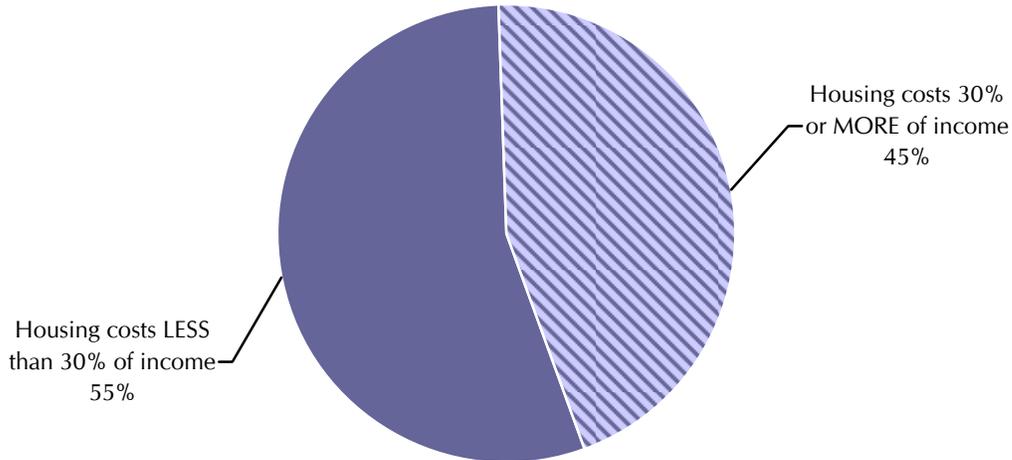


FIGURE 15: HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Availability of affordable quality housing	Similar	Similar

To augment the perceptions of affordable housing in Charlotte County, the cost of housing as reported in the survey was compared to residents' reported monthly income to create a rough estimate of the proportion of residents of Charlotte County experiencing housing cost stress. About 45% of survey participants were found to pay housing costs of more than 30% of their monthly household income.

FIGURE 16: PROPORTION OF RESPONDENTS WHOSE HOUSING COSTS ARE "AFFORDABLE"



Note: This question was not asked in previous surveys.

FIGURE 17: HOUSING COSTS BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Experiencing housing costs stress (housing costs 30% or MORE of income)	More	Similar

## Land Use and Zoning

Community development contributes to a feeling among residents and even visitors of the attention given to the speed of growth, the location of residences and businesses, the kind of housing that is appropriate for the community and the ease of access to commerce, green space and residences. Even the community’s overall appearance often is attributed to the planning and enforcement functions of the local jurisdiction. Residents will appreciate an attractive, well-planned community. The NCS questionnaire asked residents to evaluate the quality of new development, the appearance of Charlotte County and the speed of population growth. Problems with the appearance of property were rated, and the quality of land use planning, zoning and code enforcement services were evaluated.

The overall quality of new development in Charlotte County was rated as “excellent” or “good” by 44% of respondents. The overall appearance of Charlotte County was rated as “excellent” or “good” by 58% of respondents and was lower than the national benchmark and similar to the custom benchmark. When rating to what extent run down buildings, weed lots or junk vehicles were a problem in Charlotte County, 20% thought they were a “major” problem. Animal control was rated similar to benchmarks, code enforcement was rated below the benchmarks and the service of land use, planning and zoning was lower than the national average but similar to the custom benchmark. Ratings showed a varied pattern when compared to past years.

FIGURE 18: RATINGS OF THE COMMUNITY'S "BUILT ENVIRONMENT" BY YEAR

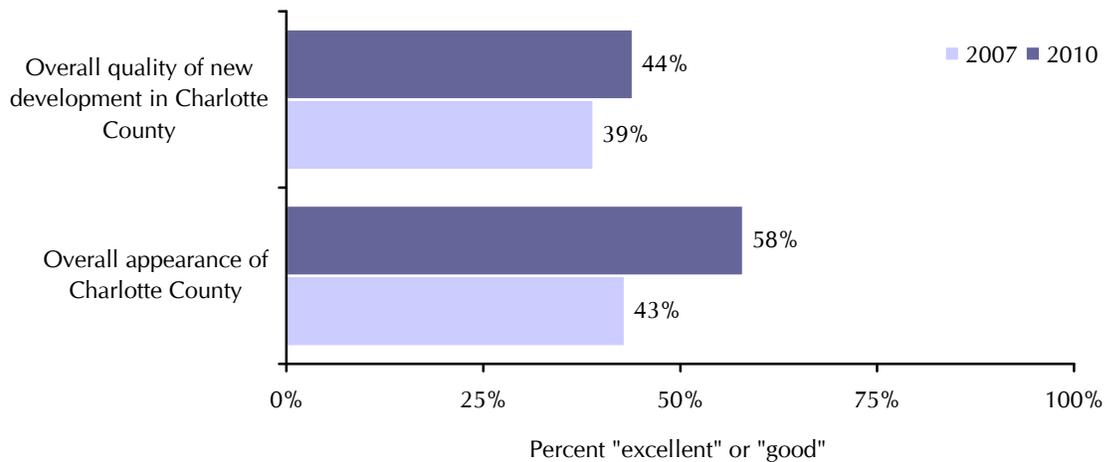


FIGURE 19: BUILT ENVIRONMENT BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Quality of new development in Charlotte County	Below	Below
Overall appearance of Charlotte County	Below	Similar

FIGURE 20: RATINGS OF POPULATION GROWTH BY YEAR

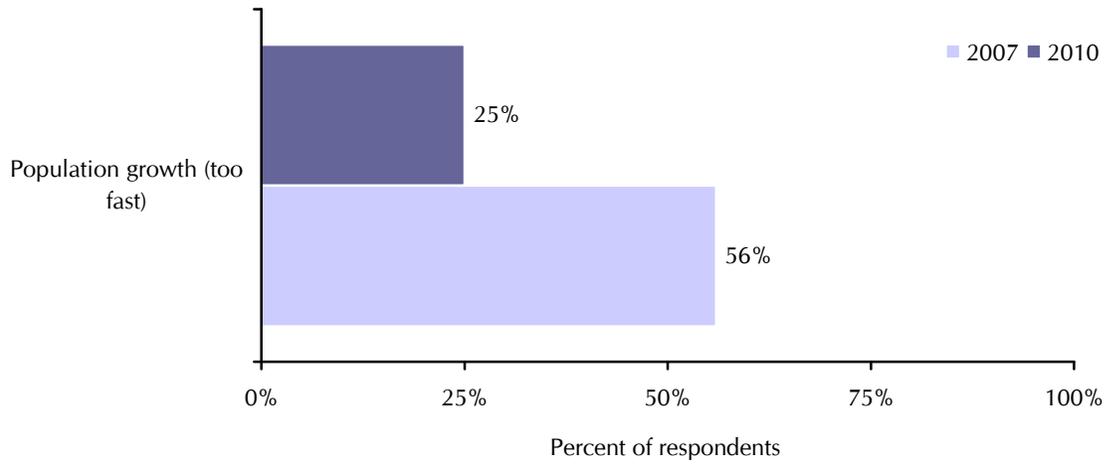


FIGURE 21: POPULATION GROWTH BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Population growth seen as too fast	Much less	Much less

FIGURE 22: RATINGS OF NUISANCE PROBLEMS BY YEAR

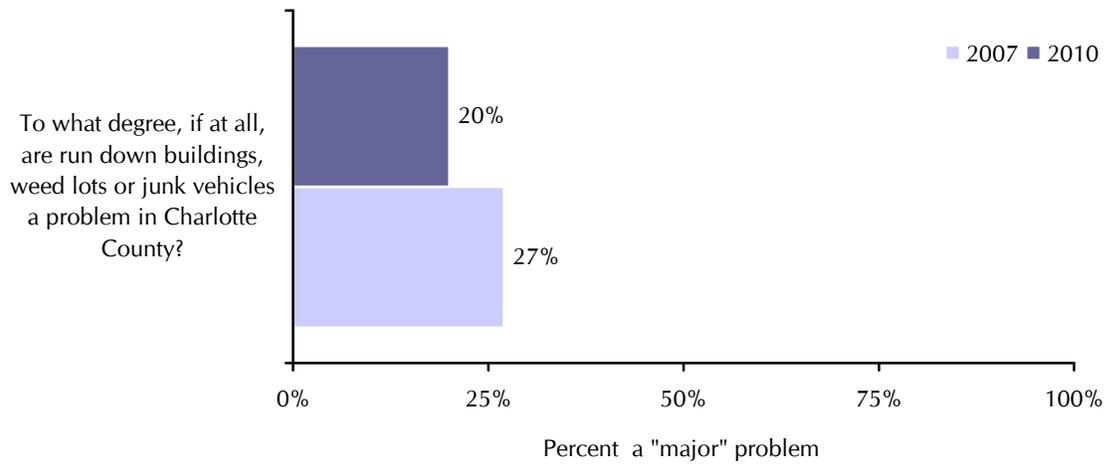


FIGURE 23: NUISANCE PROBLEMS BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Run down buildings, weed lots and junk vehicles seen as a "major" problem	More	Similar

FIGURE 24: RATINGS OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY CODE ENFORCEMENT SERVICES BY YEAR

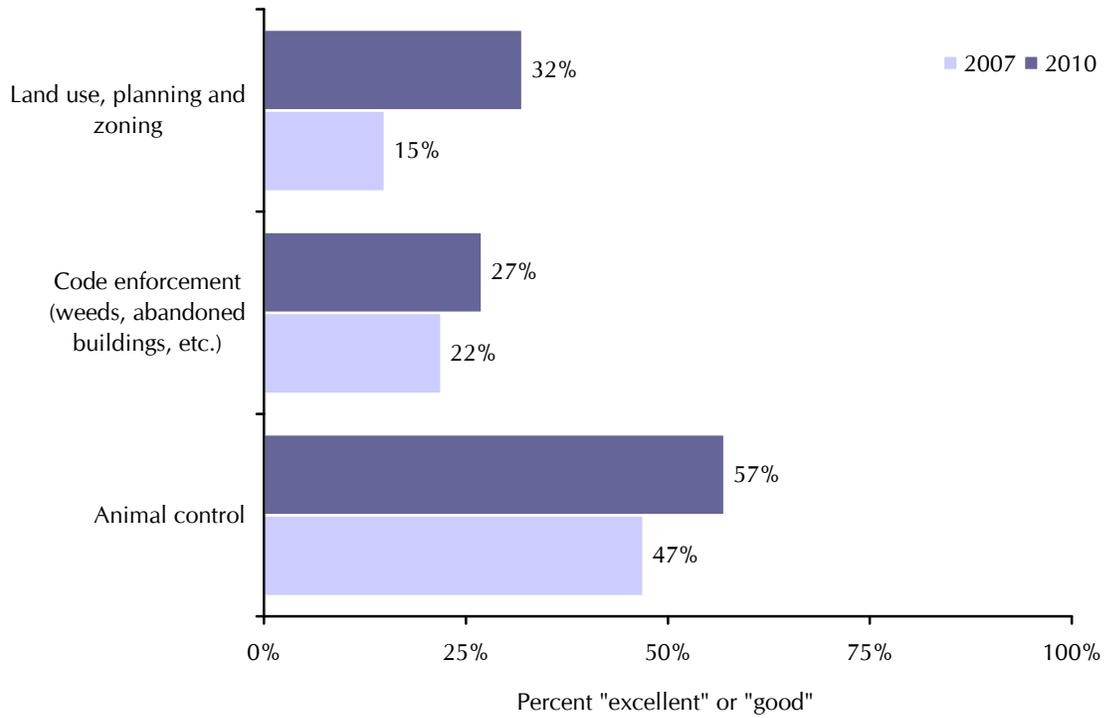


FIGURE 25: PLANNING AND COMMUNITY CODE ENFORCEMENT SERVICES BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Land use, planning and zoning	Below	Similar
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc.)	Much below	Much below
Animal control	Similar	Similar

## ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

The United States has been in recession since late 2007 with an accelerated downturn occurring in the fourth quarter of 2008. Officially we emerged from recession in the third quarter of 2009, but high unemployment lingers, keeping a lid on a strong recovery. Many readers worry that the ill health of the economy will color how residents perceive their environment and the services that local government delivers. NRC researchers have found that the economic downturn has chastened Americans' view of their own economic futures but has not colored their perspectives about community services or quality of life.

Survey respondents were asked to rate a number of community features related to economic opportunity and growth. The most positively rated features were shopping opportunities and the overall quality of business and service establishments in Charlotte County. Receiving the lowest rating was employment opportunities. Ratings were similar when compared to the previous survey.

FIGURE 26: RATINGS OF ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY AND OPPORTUNITIES BY YEAR

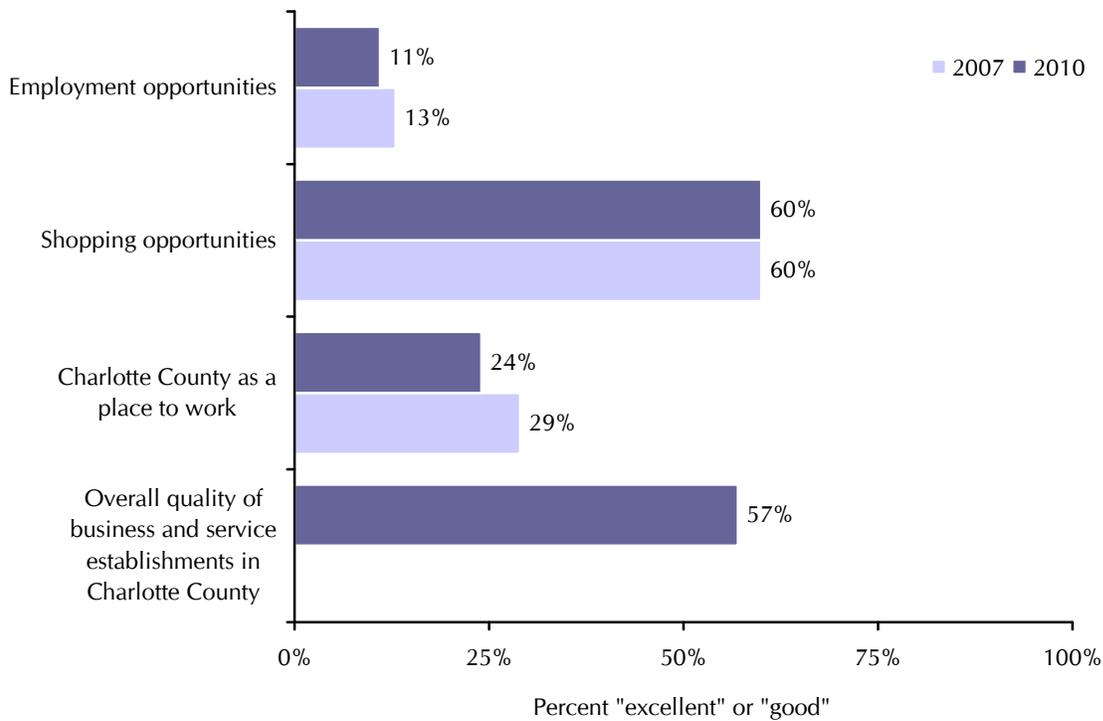


FIGURE 27: ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY AND OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Employment opportunities	Much below	Much below
Shopping opportunities	Similar	Similar
Charlotte County as a place to work	Much below	Much below
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Charlotte County	Similar	Similar

Residents were asked to evaluate the speed of jobs growth and retail growth on scale from “much too slow” to “much too fast.” When asked about the rate of jobs growth in Charlotte County, 90% responded that it was “too slow,” while 48% reported retail growth as “too slow.” Many more residents in Charlotte County compared to other jurisdictions believed that retail growth was too slow and many more residents believed that job growth was too slow.

FIGURE 28: RATINGS OF RETAIL AND JOB GROWTH BY YEAR

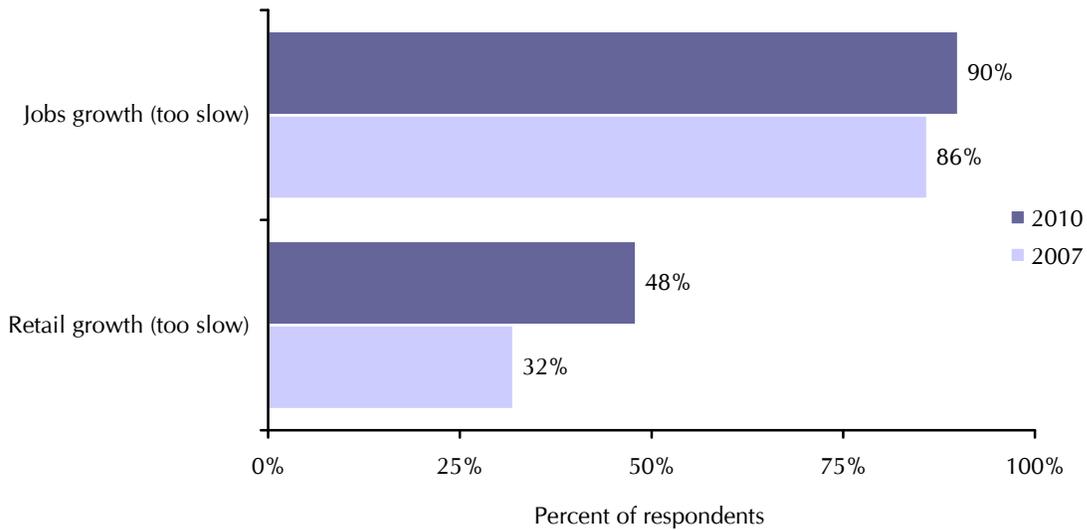


FIGURE 29: RETAIL AND JOB GROWTH BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Retail growth seen as too slow	Much more	Much more
Jobs growth seen as too slow	Much more	Much more

FIGURE 30: RATINGS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICES BY YEAR

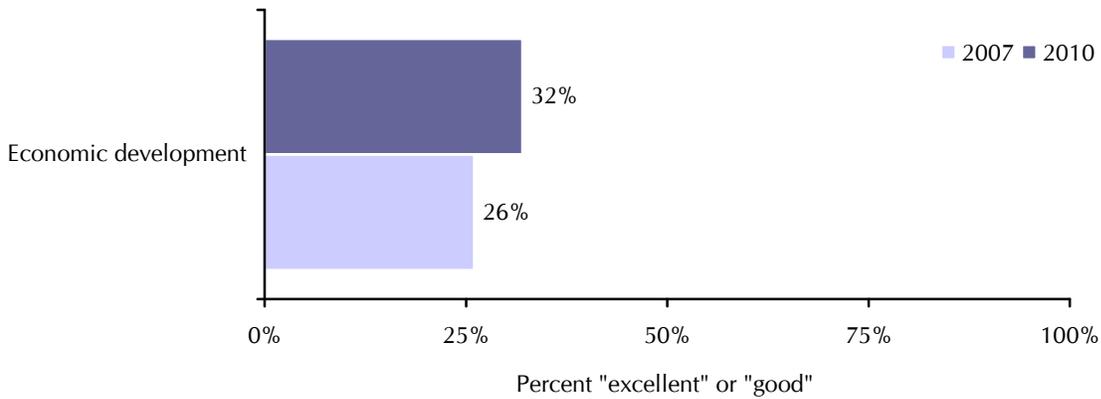


FIGURE 31: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICES BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Economic development	Much below	Below

Residents were asked to reflect on their economic prospects in the near term. Thirteen percent of Charlotte County residents expected that the coming six months would have a “somewhat” or “very” positive impact on their family. The percent of residents with an optimistic outlook on their household income was the same as the national comparison and lower than the custom comparison jurisdictions.

FIGURE 32: RATINGS OF PERSONAL ECONOMIC FUTURE BY YEAR

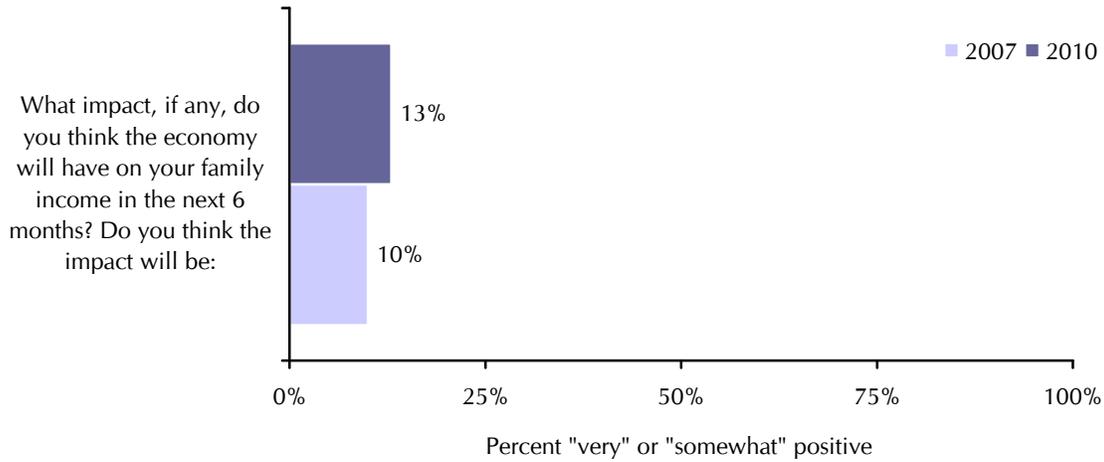


FIGURE 33: PERSONAL ECONOMIC FUTURE BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Positive impact of economy on household income	Similar	Below

## PUBLIC SAFETY

Safety from violent or property crimes creates the cornerstone of an attractive community. No one wants to live in fear of crime, fire or natural hazards and communities in which residents feel protected or unthreatened are communities that are more likely to show growth in population, commerce and property value.

Residents were asked to rate their feelings of safety from violent crimes, property crimes, fire and environmental dangers and to evaluate the local agencies whose main charge is to provide protection from these dangers. Most gave positive ratings of safety in Charlotte County. About 69% of those completing the questionnaire said they felt “very” or “somewhat” safe from violent crimes and 70% felt “very” or “somewhat” safe from environmental hazards. Daytime sense of safety was better than nighttime safety and neighborhoods felt safer than downtown. Ratings had remained stable or trended up when compared to the past survey year.

FIGURE 34: RATINGS OF COMMUNITY AND PERSONAL PUBLIC SAFETY BY YEAR

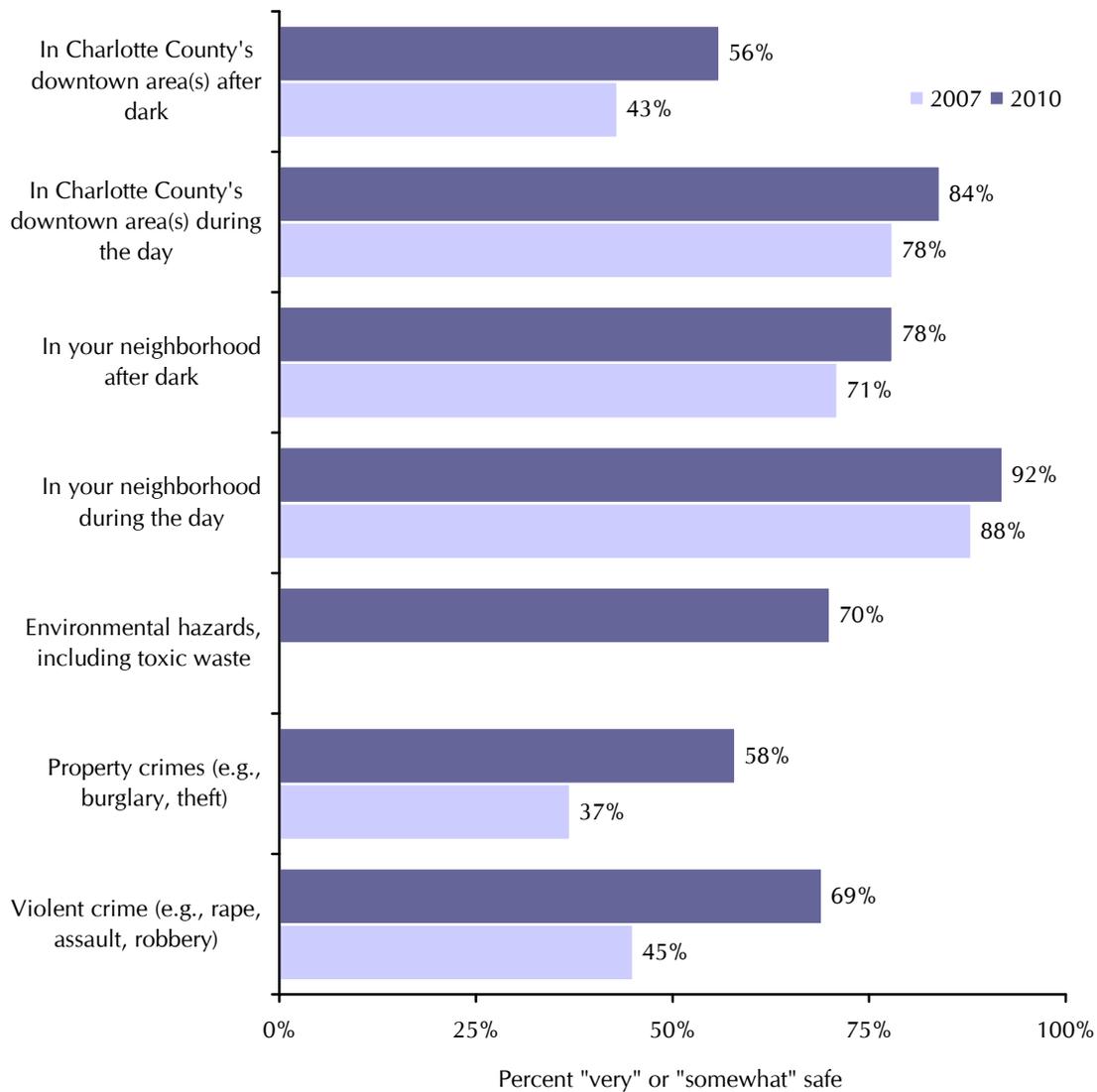


FIGURE 35: COMMUNITY AND PERSONAL PUBLIC SAFETY BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
In your neighborhood during the day	Similar	Similar
In your neighborhood after dark	Similar	Above
In Charlotte County's downtown area during the day	Similar	Similar
In Charlotte County's downtown area after dark	Similar	Similar
Violent crime (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	Similar	Similar
Property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	Similar	Similar
Environmental hazards, including toxic waste	Similar	Similar

As assessed by the survey, 14% of respondents reported that someone in the household had been the victim of one or more crimes in the past year. Of those who had been the victim of a crime, 90% had reported it to police. Compared to other jurisdictions about the same percent of Charlotte County residents had been victims of crime in the 12 months preceding the survey and many more residents had reported their most recent crime victimization to the police.

FIGURE 36: CRIME VICTIMIZATION AND REPORTING BY YEAR

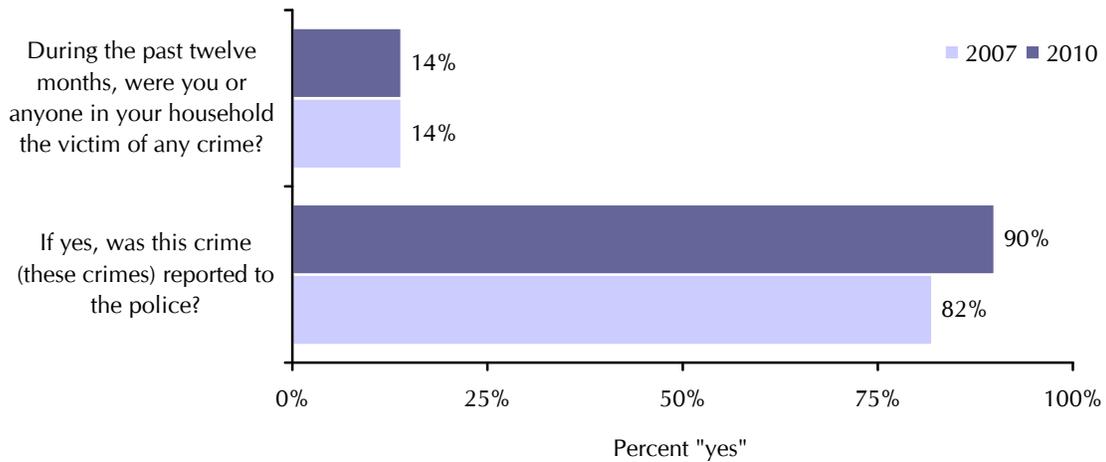


FIGURE 37: CRIME VICTIMIZATION AND REPORTING BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Victim of crime	Similar	Similar
Reported crimes	Much more	Much more

Residents rated six County public safety services; of these, five were rated similar to the benchmarks. Emergency preparedness was rated higher than the national comparison and similar to the custom benchmark. Fire services and ambulance or emergency medical services received the highest ratings, while fire prevention and education and crime prevention received the lowest ratings. Sheriff services and crime prevention had increased compared to the previous survey year.

FIGURE 38: RATINGS OF PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES BY YEAR

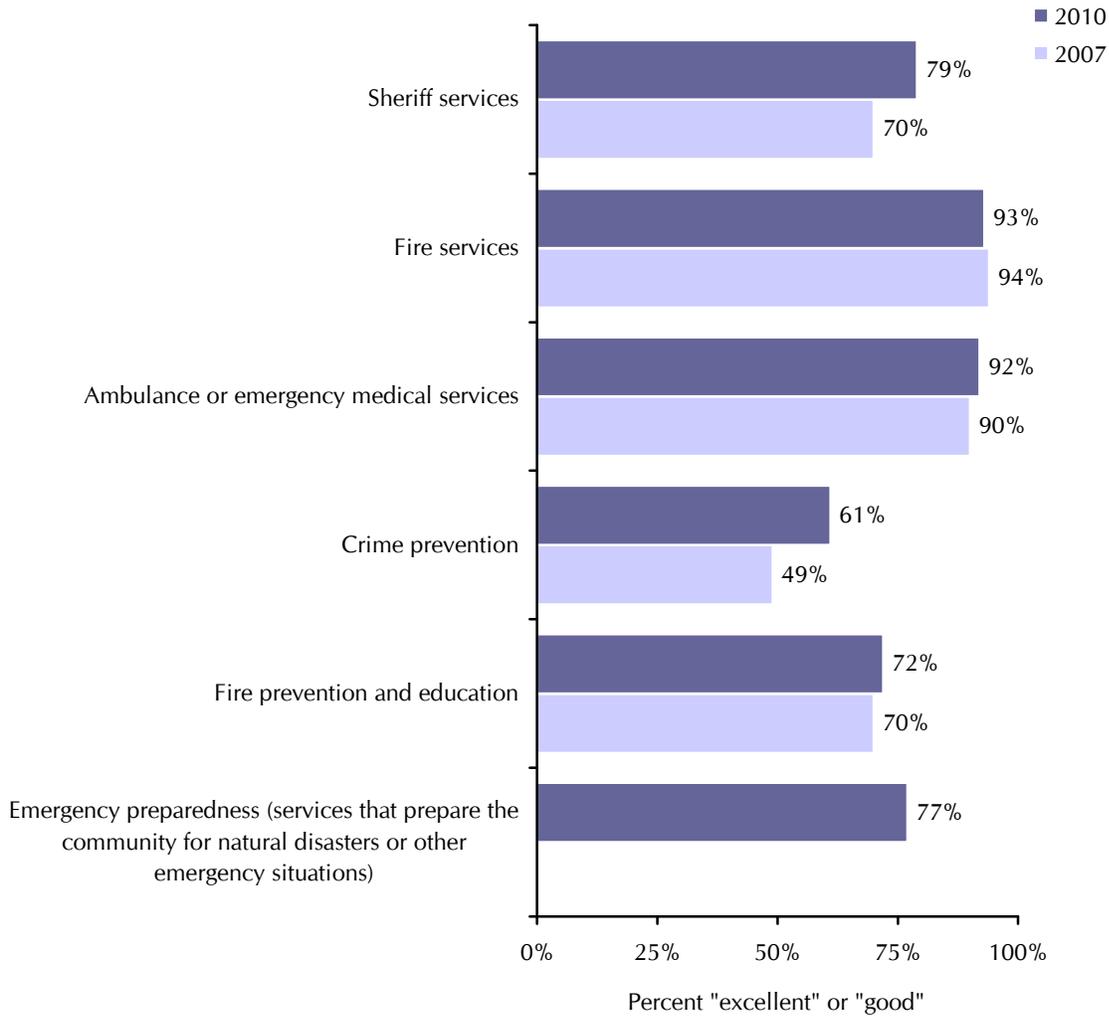


FIGURE 39: PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Sheriff services	Similar	Similar
Fire services	Similar	Similar
Ambulance or emergency medical services	Similar	Similar
Crime prevention	Similar	Similar
Fire prevention and education	Similar	Similar
Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations)	Above	Similar

## ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Residents value the aesthetic qualities of their hometowns and appreciate features such as overall cleanliness and landscaping. In addition, the appearance and smell or taste of the air and water do not go unnoticed. These days, increasing attention is paid to proper treatment of the environment. At the same time that they are attending to community appearance and cleanliness, cities, counties, states and the nation are going “Green.” These strengthening environmental concerns extend to trash haul, recycling, sewer services, the delivery of power and water and preservation of open spaces. Treatment of the environment affects air and water quality and, generally, how habitable and inviting a place appears.

Residents of Charlotte County were asked to evaluate their local environment and the services provided to ensure its quality. Preservation of natural areas was rated as “excellent” or “good” by 60% of survey respondents and was similar to the benchmarks.

FIGURE 40: RATINGS OF THE COMMUNITY'S NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

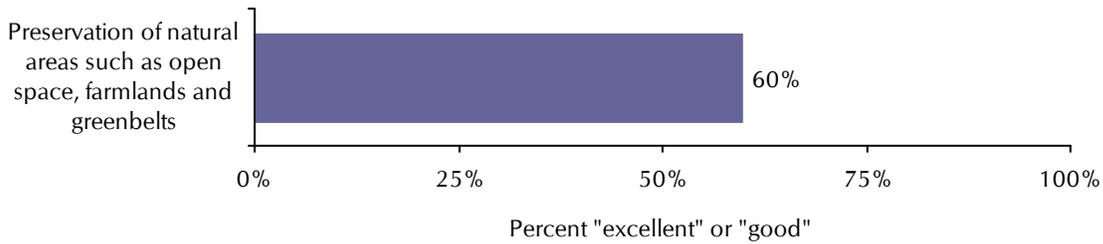


FIGURE 41: COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts	Similar	Similar

Resident recycling was much greater than recycling reported in comparison communities, and was similar to the amount of recycling reported in the previous survey year.

FIGURE 42: FREQUENCY OF RECYCLING IN LAST 12 MONTHS BY YEAR

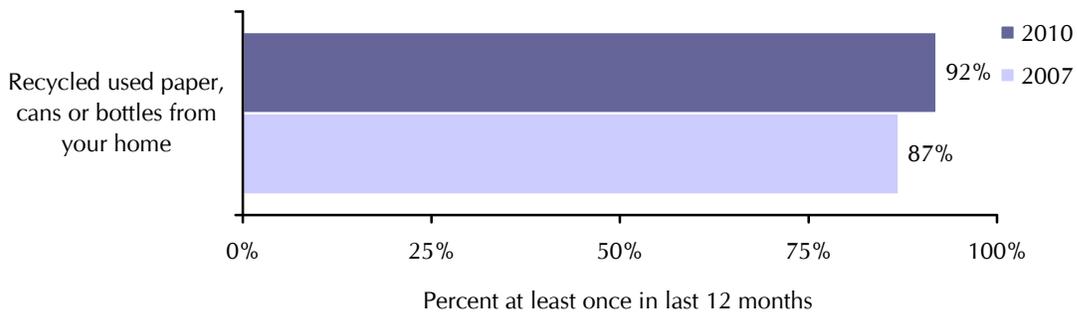


FIGURE 43: FREQUENCY OF RECYCLING BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Recycled used paper, cans or bottles from your home	Much more	Much more

Of the six utility services rated by those completing the questionnaire, three were higher than the benchmark comparisons and three were similar to the benchmark comparisons. The ratings for recycling and garbage collection services increased from 2007.

FIGURE 44: RATINGS OF UTILITY SERVICES BY YEAR

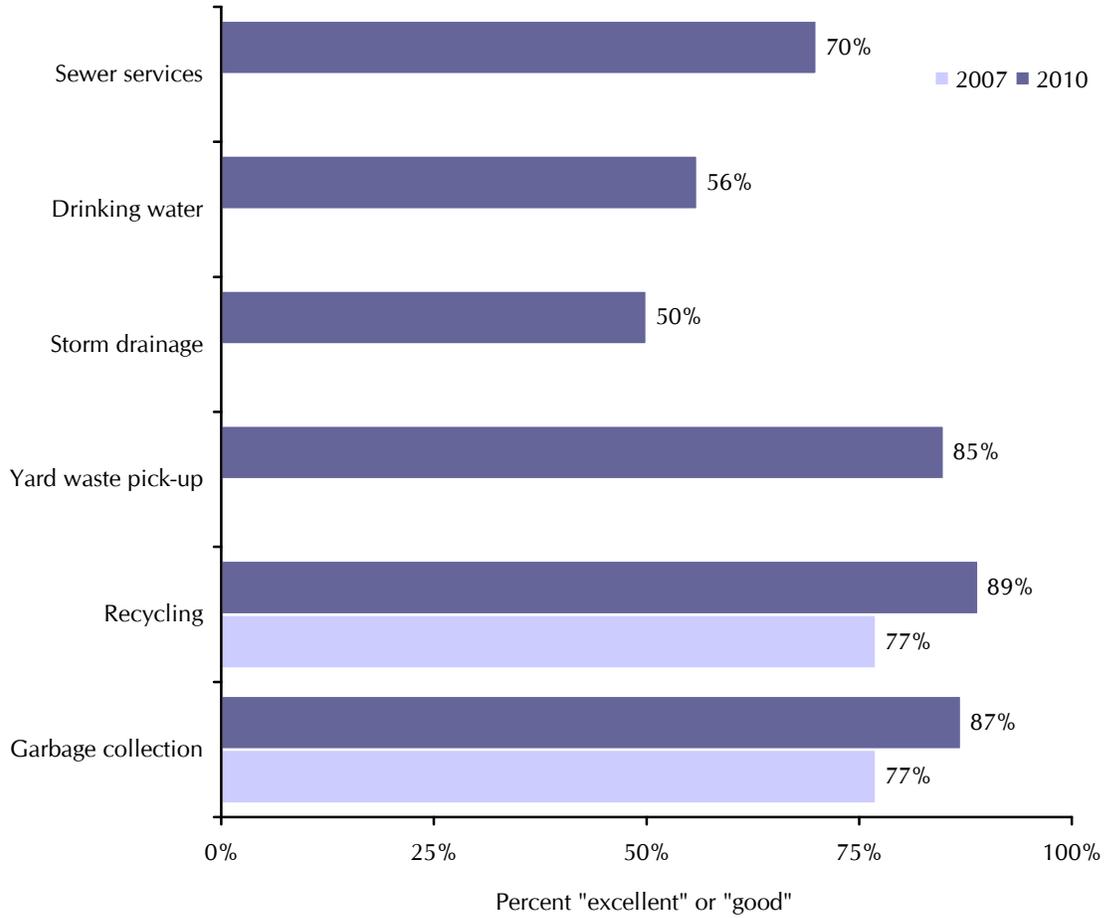


FIGURE 45: UTILITY SERVICES BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Sewer services	Similar	Similar
Drinking water	Similar	Similar
Storm drainage	Similar	Similar
Yard waste pick-up	Much above	Above
Recycling	Much above	Much above
Garbage collection	Above	Above

## RECREATION AND WELLNESS

### Parks and Recreation

Quality parks and recreation opportunities help to define a community as more than the grind of its business, traffic and hard work. Leisure activities vastly can improve the quality of life of residents, serving both to entertain and mobilize good health. The survey contained questions seeking residents' perspectives about opportunities and services related to the community's parks and recreation services.

Recreation opportunities in Charlotte County were rated somewhat positively as were services related to parks and recreation. Recreation centers or facilities, nature programs or classes and Charlotte County parks were rated similar to the benchmarks and recreation programs or classes were rated below the nation and similar to the custom benchmark. Parks and recreation ratings increased over time.

Resident use of County parks and recreation facilities tells its own story about the attractiveness and accessibility of those services. The percent of residents that used Charlotte County recreation centers was about the same as the percent of users in national comparison jurisdictions, while the rate of participation was higher than that reported in other Florida communities. Recreation program use in Charlotte County was about the same as use in comparison jurisdictions. These levels of participation had remained stable over time.

FIGURE 46: RATINGS OF COMMUNITY RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES BY YEAR

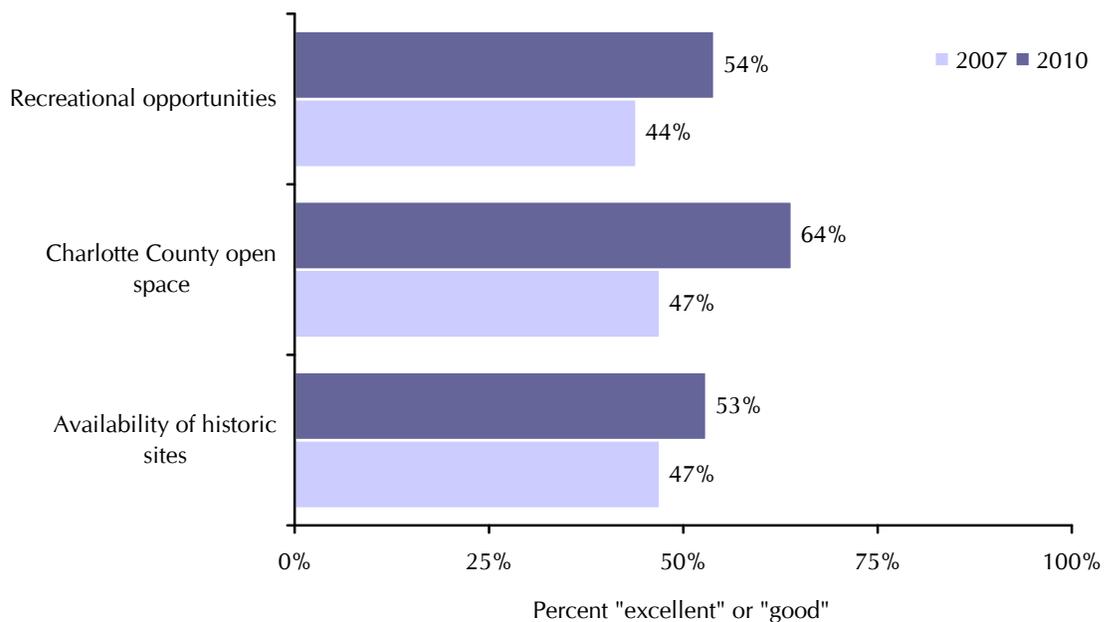


FIGURE 47: COMMUNITY RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Recreation opportunities	Below	Below
Charlotte County open space	Below	Similar
Availability of sites	Below	Not available

FIGURE 48: PARTICIPATION IN PARKS AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES BY YEAR

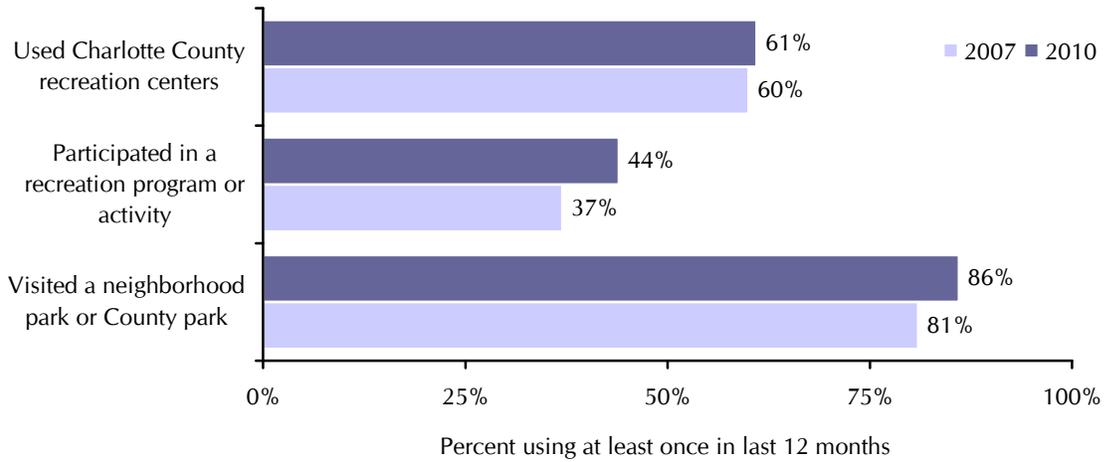


FIGURE 49: PARTICIPATION IN PARKS AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Used Charlotte County recreation centers	Similar	More
Participated in a recreation program or activity	Similar	Similar
Visited a neighborhood park or Charlotte County park	Similar	Similar

FIGURE 50: RATINGS OF PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES BY YEAR

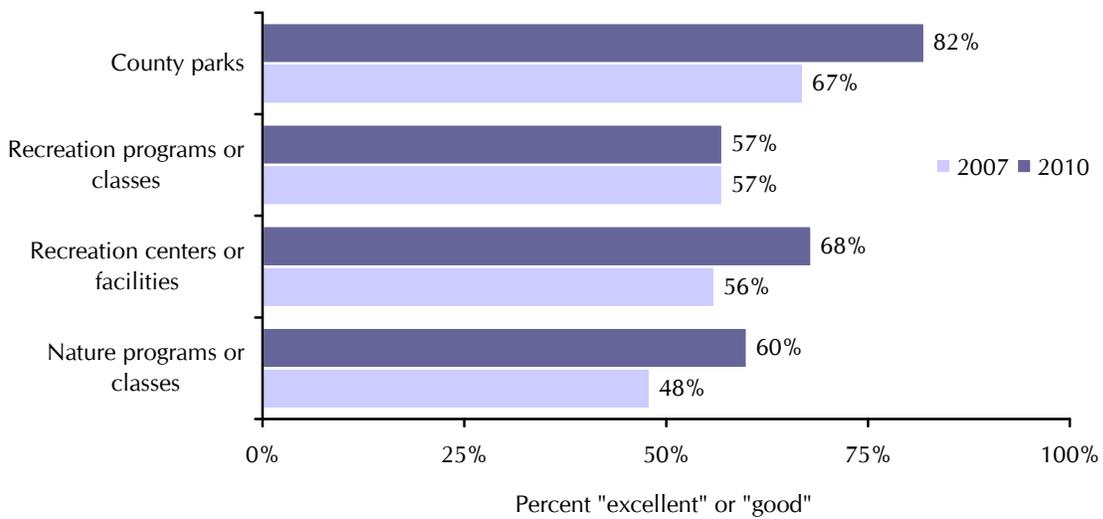


FIGURE 51: PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Charlotte County parks	Similar	Similar
Recreation programs or classes	Below	Similar
Recreation centers or facilities	Similar	Similar
Nature programs or classes	Similar	Not available

## Culture, Arts and Education

A full service community does not address only the life and safety of its residents. Like individuals who simply go to the office and return home, a community that pays attention only to the life sustaining basics becomes insular, dreary and uninspiring. In the case of communities without thriving culture, arts and education opportunities, the magnet that attracts those who might consider relocating there is vastly weakened. Cultural, artistic, social and educational services elevate the opportunities for personal growth among residents. In the survey, residents were asked about the quality of opportunities to participate in cultural and educational activities.

Opportunities to attend cultural activities were rated as “excellent” or “good” by 48% of respondents. Educational opportunities were rated as “excellent” or “good” by 44% of respondents. Compared to the benchmark data, educational opportunities were below the average of comparison jurisdictions, while cultural activity opportunities were rated similar to the benchmark comparison.

About 70% of Charlotte residents used a County library at least once in the 12 months preceding the survey. This participation rate for library use was similar to comparison jurisdictions. This rate of use was the same as the previous survey.

FIGURE 52: RATINGS OF CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES BY YEAR

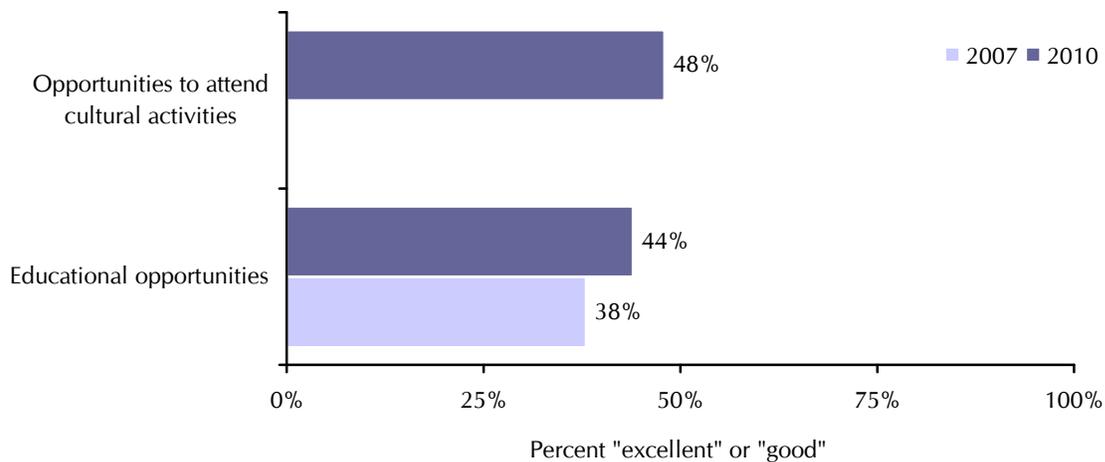


FIGURE 53: CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	Similar	Similar
Educational opportunities	Much below	Below

FIGURE 54: PARTICIPATION IN CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES BY YEAR

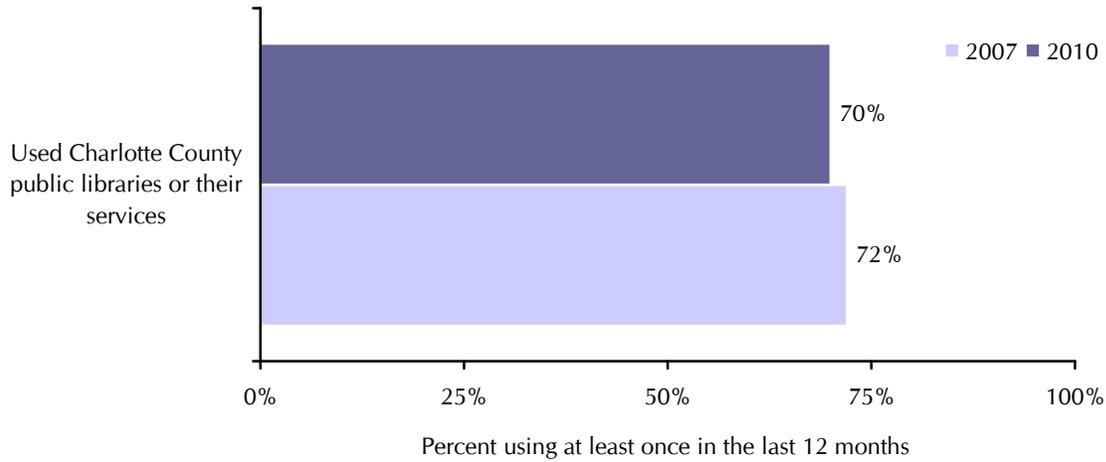


FIGURE 55: PARTICIPATION IN CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Public library services	Similar	Similar

FIGURE 56: PERCEPTION OF CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES BY YEAR

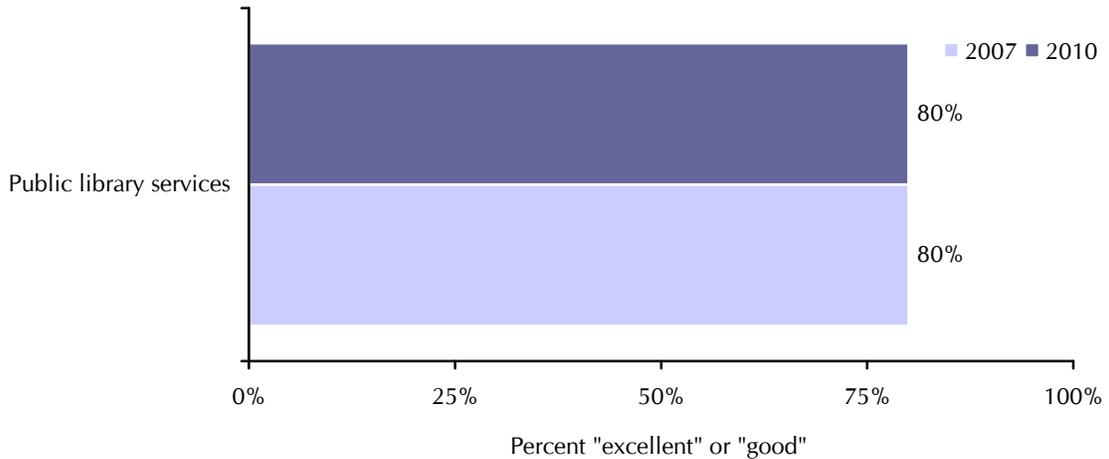


FIGURE 57: CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Used Charlotte County public libraries or their services	Similar	Similar

## Health and Wellness

Healthy residents have the wherewithal to contribute to the economy as volunteers or employees and they do not present a burden in cost and time to others. Although residents bear the primary responsibility for their good health, local government provides services that can foster that well being and that provide care when residents are ill.

Among Charlotte County residents, 37% rated affordable quality health care as “excellent” or “good.” Those ratings were below national ratings and similar to the ratings of the custom comparison communities.

FIGURE 58: RATINGS OF COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLNESS ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITIES BY YEAR

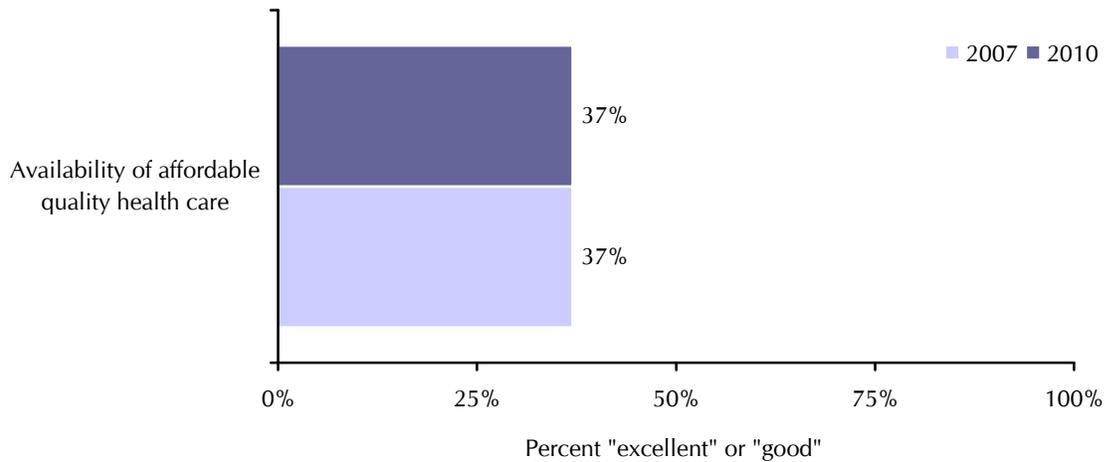


FIGURE 59: COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLNESS ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Availability of affordable quality health care	Below	Similar

Of the three health related services offered in Charlotte County, two were above the benchmarks and one was similar to the benchmarks.

FIGURE 60: RATINGS OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS SERVICES BY YEAR

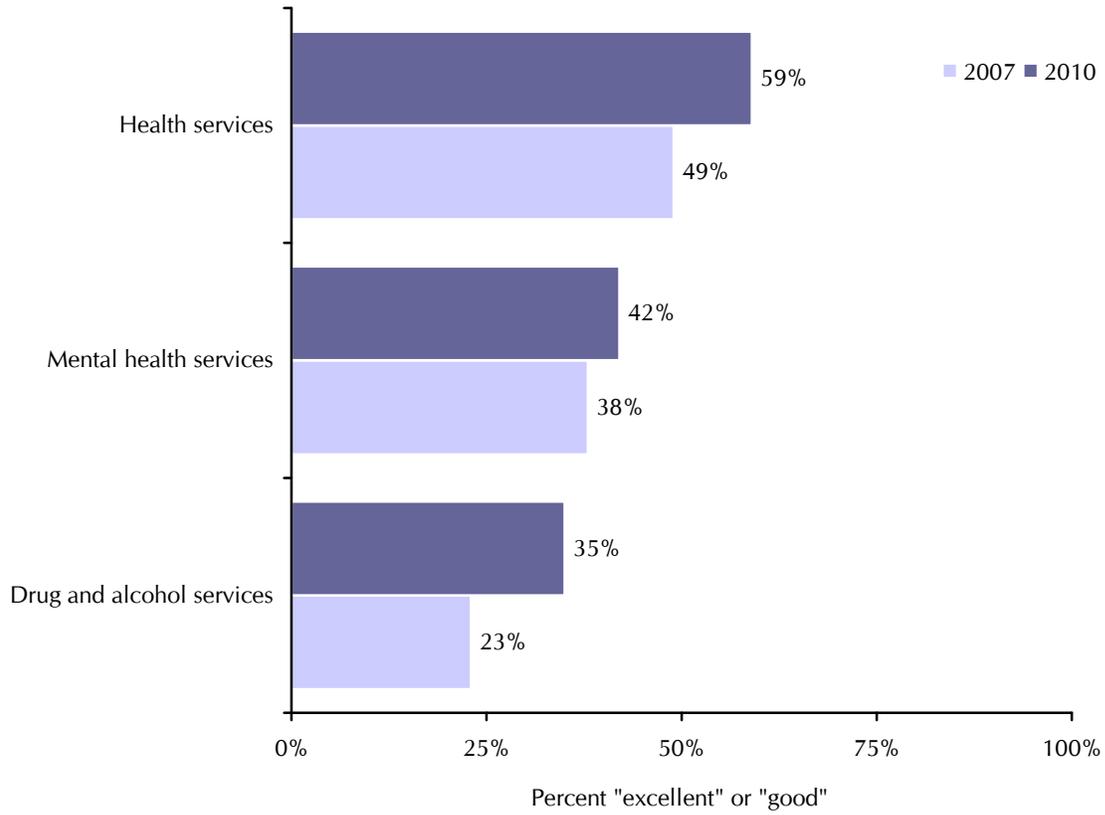


FIGURE 61: HEALTH AND WELLNESS SERVICES BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Health services	Similar	Similar
Mental health services	Above	Much above
Drug and alcohol services	Much above	Much above

## COMMUNITY INCLUSIVENESS

Diverse communities that include among their residents a mix of races, ages, wealth, ideas and beliefs have the raw material for the most vibrant and creative society. However, the presence of these features alone does not ensure a high quality or desirable space. Surveyed residents were asked about the success of the mix: the sense of community, the openness of residents to people of diverse backgrounds and the attractiveness of Charlotte County as a place to raise children or to retire. They were also questioned about the quality of services delivered to various population subgroups, including older adults, youth and residents with few resources. A community that succeeds in creating an inclusive environment for a variety of residents is a community that offers more to many.

About half of residents rated Charlotte County as an excellent or good place to raise kids and about eight in ten rated it as an “excellent” or “good” place to retire. A majority of residents felt that the local sense of community was “excellent” or “good.” The availability of affordable quality child care was rated the lowest by residents and was lower than the benchmarks. Ratings were similar to or higher than the previous survey.

FIGURE 62: RATINGS OF COMMUNITY QUALITY AND INCLUSIVENESS BY YEAR

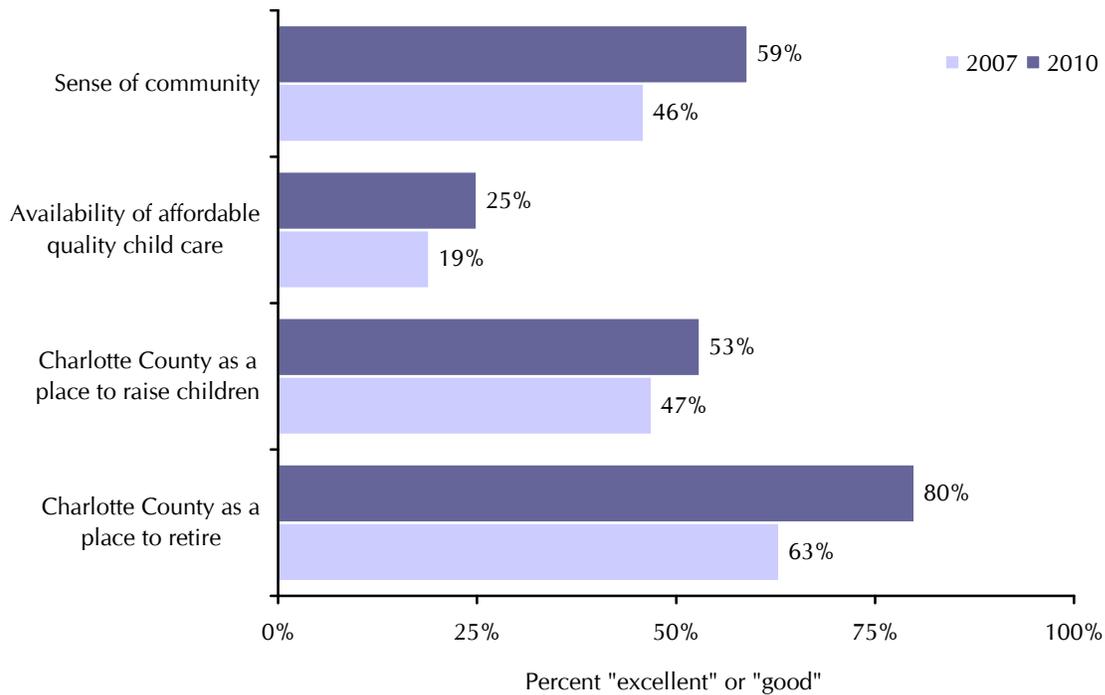


FIGURE 63: COMMUNITY QUALITY AND INCLUSIVENESS BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Sense of community	Similar	Similar
Availability of affordable quality child care	Much below	Below
Charlotte County as a place to raise kids	Much below	Below
Charlotte County as a place to retire	Much above	Above

Services to more vulnerable populations (e.g., seniors, youth or low-income residents) ranged from 29% to 68% with ratings of “excellent” or “good.”

FIGURE 64: RATINGS OF QUALITY OF SERVICES PROVIDED FOR POPULATION SUBGROUPS BY YEAR

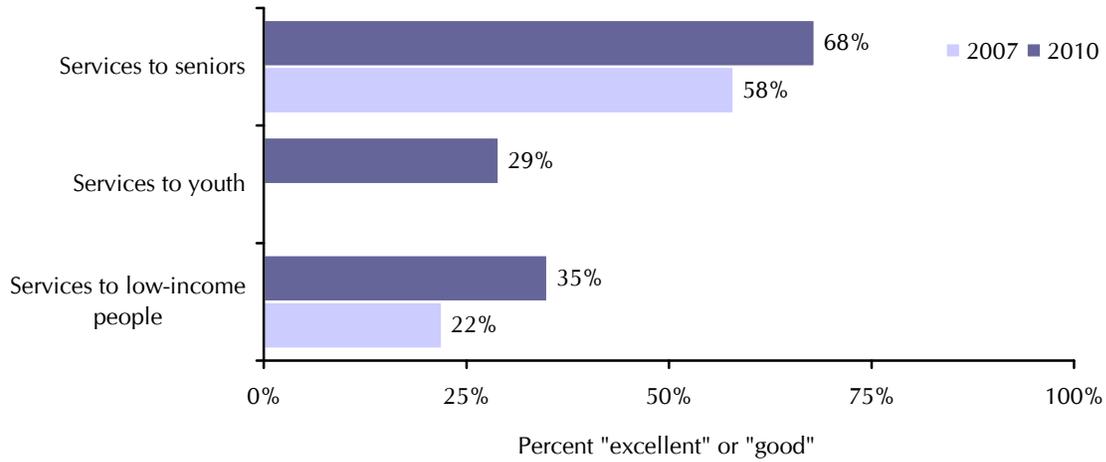


FIGURE 65: SERVICES PROVIDED FOR POPULATION SUBGROUPS BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Services to seniors	Similar	Above
Services to youth	Much below	Much below
Services to low income people	Below	Similar

## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Community leaders cannot run a jurisdiction alone and a jurisdiction cannot run effectively if residents remain strangers with little to connect them. Elected officials and staff require the assistance of local residents whether that assistance comes in tacit approval or eager help; and commonality of purpose among the electorate facilitates policies and programs that appeal to most and causes discord among few. Furthermore, when neighbors help neighbors, the cost to the community to provide services to residents in need declines. When residents are civically engaged, they have taken the opportunity to participate in making the community more livable for all. The extent to which local government provides opportunities to become informed and engaged and the extent to which residents take those opportunities is an indicator of the connection between government and populace. By understanding residents' level of connection to, knowledge of and participation in local government, the County can find better opportunities to communicate and educate citizens about its mission, services, accomplishments and plans. Communities with strong civic engagement may be more likely to see the benefits of programs intended to improve the quality of life of all residents and therefore would be more likely to support those new policies or programs..

### Civic Activity

Respondents were asked about their participation as citizens of Charlotte County. Opportunities to attend or participate in community matters was rated moderately, and was below the benchmark comparisons.

FIGURE 66: RATINGS OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

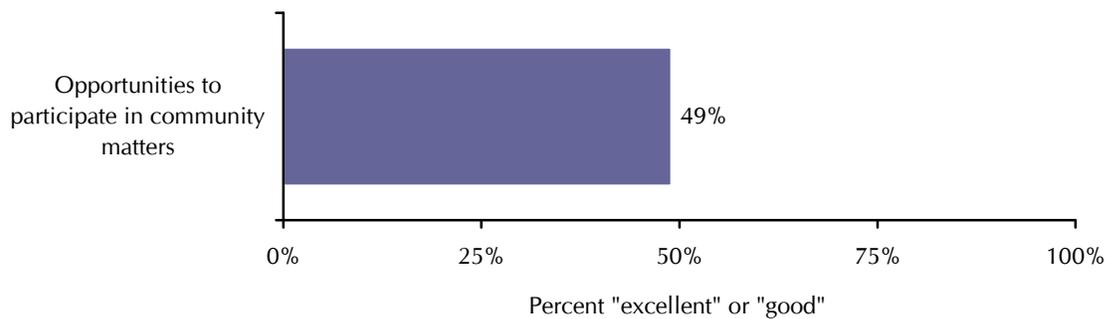


FIGURE 67: CIVIC ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Opportunities to participate in community matters	Below	Below

Most of the participants in this survey had not attended a public meeting in the 12 months prior to the survey. The participation rates of these civic behaviors were compared to the rates in other jurisdictions. Attendance of public meetings showed similar rates of involvement; while those who had watched a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting showed higher rates in comparison to the national benchmark. Volunteerism showed higher rates of community engagement than both benchmarks.

FIGURE 68: PARTICIPATION IN CIVIC ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES BY YEAR<sup>1</sup>

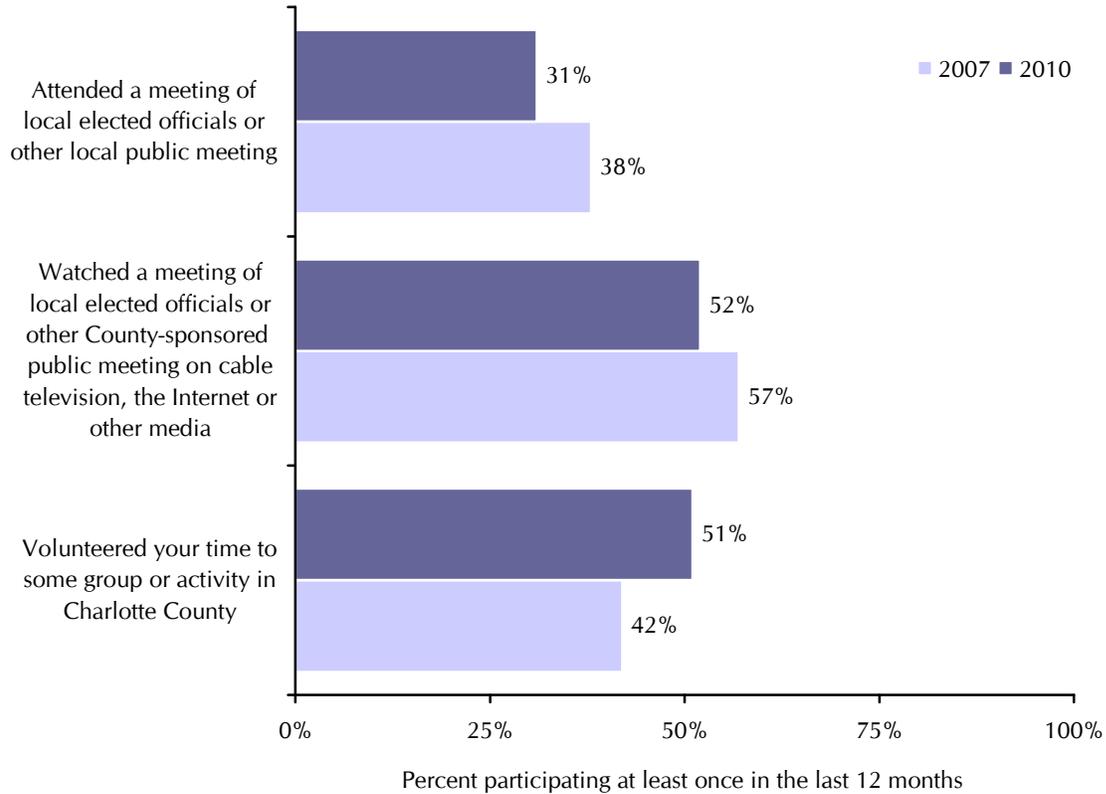
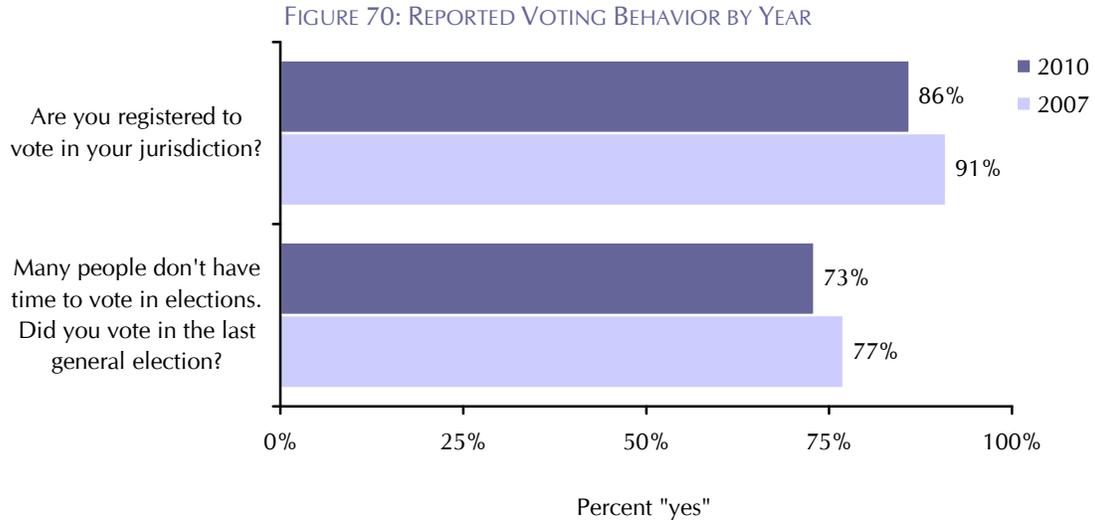


FIGURE 69: PARTICIPATION IN CIVIC ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting	Similar	Similar
Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other public meeting on cable television, the Internet or other media	More	Similar
Volunteered your time to some group or activity in Charlotte County	More	Much more

<sup>1</sup> Over the past few years, local governments have adopted communication strategies that embrace the Internet and new media. In 2010, the question, “Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting on cable television” was revised to include “the Internet or other media” to better reflect this trend.

Charlotte County residents showed the largest amount of civic engagement in the area of electoral participation. Eighty-six percent reported they were registered to vote and 73% indicated they had voted in the last general election. This rate of self-reported voting was about the same as that of national comparison communities, and lower than the custom comparison.



Note: In addition to the removal of “don’t know” responses, those who said “ineligible to vote” also have been omitted from this calculation. The full frequencies appear in Appendix A.

**FIGURE 71: VOTING BEHAVIOR BENCHMARKS**

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Registered to vote	Similar	Similar
Voted in last general election	Similar	Less

## Information and Awareness

Those completing the survey were asked about their use and perceptions of various information sources and local government media services. When asked whether they had visited the Charlotte County Web site in the previous 12 months, 59% reported they had done so at least once. Public information services were rated similarly compared to benchmark data.

FIGURE 72: USE OF INFORMATION SOURCES BY YEAR

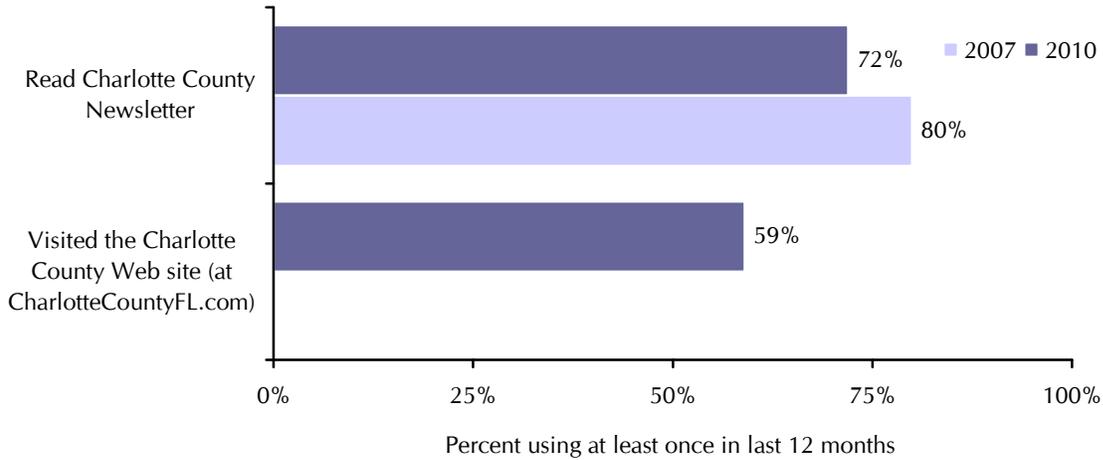


FIGURE 73: USE OF INFORMATION SOURCES BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Read Charlotte County Newsletter	Less	Less
Visited the Charlotte County Web site (at www.CharlotteCountyFL.com)	Similar	Similar

FIGURE 74: RATINGS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT MEDIA SERVICES AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION BY YEAR

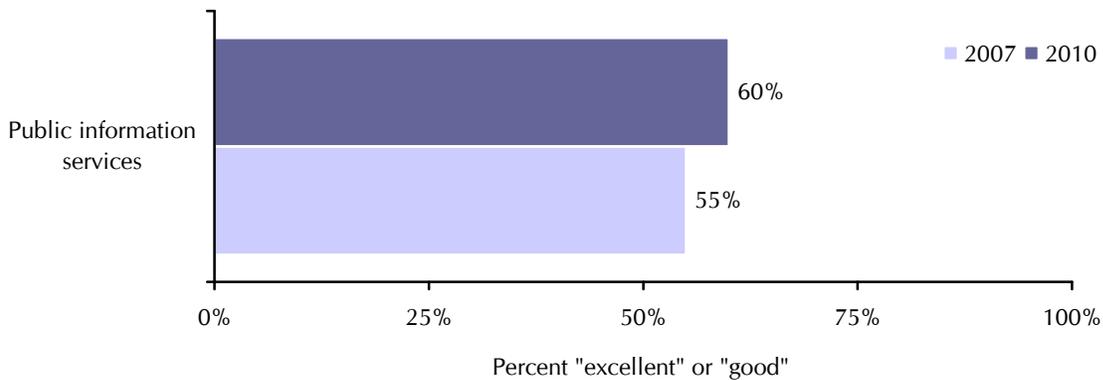


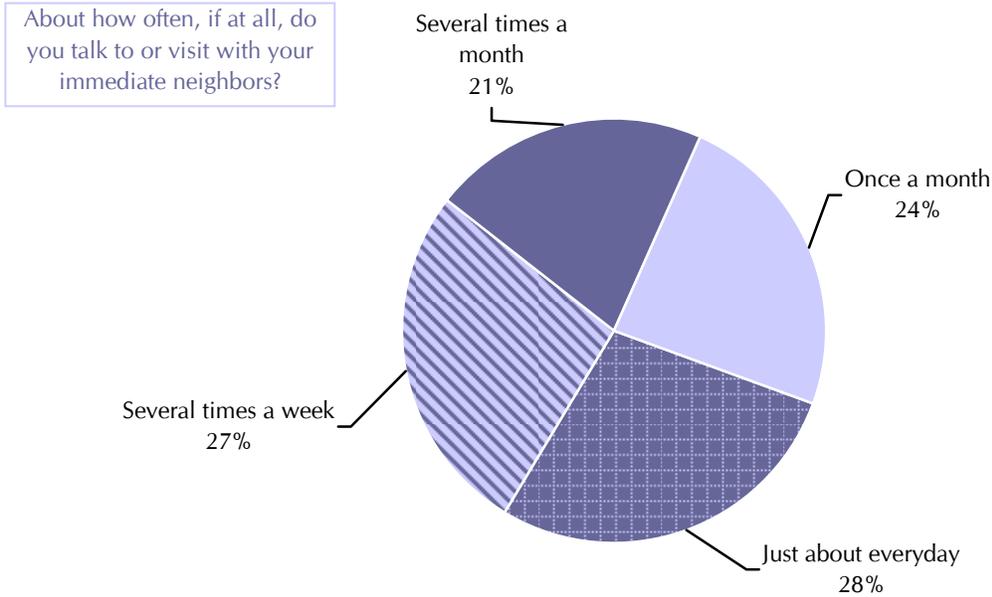
FIGURE 75: LOCAL GOVERNMENT MEDIA SERVICES AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Public information services	Similar	Similar

## Social Engagement

Residents in Charlotte County reported a strong amount of neighborliness. About 55% indicated talking or visiting with their neighbors at least several times a week. This amount of contact with neighbors was more than the amount of contact reported in other communities across the nation.

FIGURE 76: CONTACT WITH IMMEDIATE NEIGHBORS



Note: This question was not asked in previous surveys.

FIGURE 77: CONTACT WITH IMMEDIATE NEIGHBORS BENCHMARKS

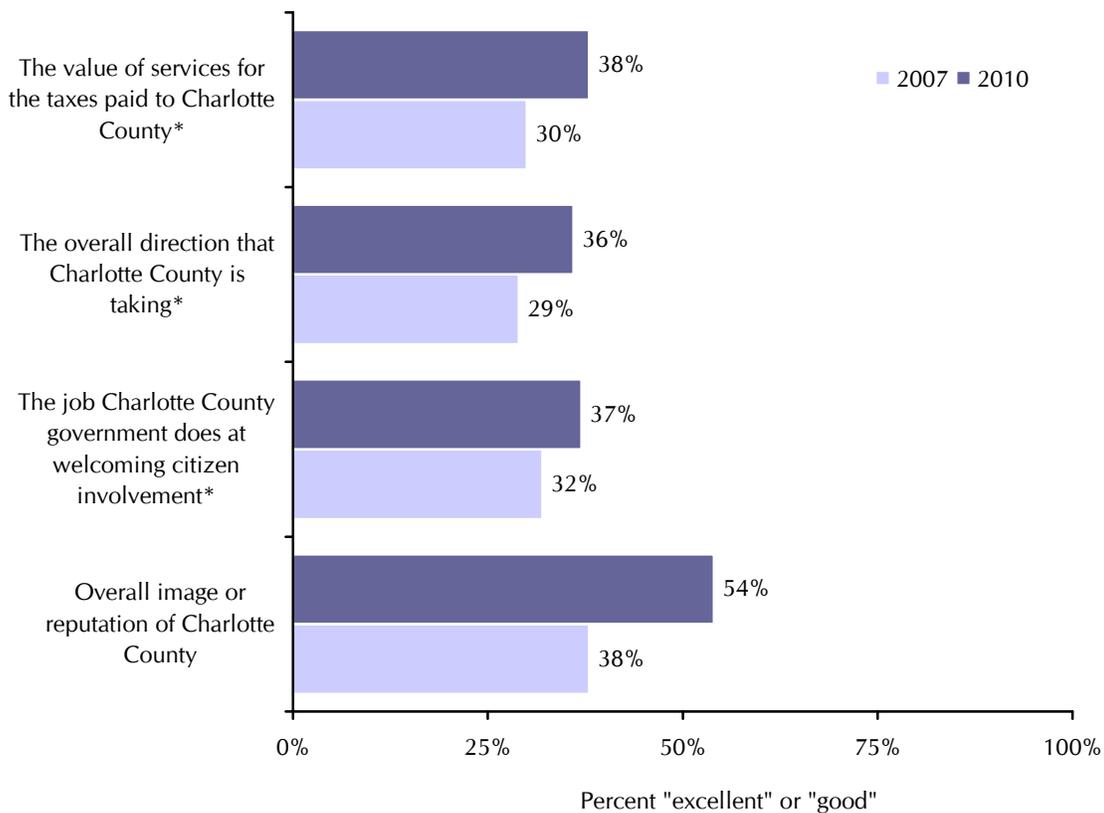
	National comparison	Florida comparison
Has contact with neighbors at least several times per week	More	Similar

## PUBLIC TRUST

When local government leaders are trusted, an environment of cooperation is more likely to surround all decisions they make. Cooperation leads to easier communication between leaders and residents and increases the likelihood that high value policies and programs will be implemented to improve the quality of life of the entire community. Trust can be measured in residents' opinions about the overall direction Charlotte County is taking, their perspectives about the service value their taxes purchase and the openness of government to citizen participation. In addition, resident opinion about services provided by Charlotte County could be compared their opinion about services provided by the state and federal governments. If residents find nothing to admire in the services delivered by any level of government, their opinions about Charlotte County may be colored by their dislike of what all levels of government provide.

Less than half of respondents felt that the value of services for taxes paid was "excellent" or "good." When asked to rate the job Charlotte County does at welcoming citizen involvement, 37% rated it as "excellent" or "good." Of these four ratings, three were below the benchmarks. The rating for the value of services for taxes paid to Charlotte County was below the national comparison but similar to the custom comparison.

FIGURE 78: PUBLIC TRUST RATINGS BY YEAR



\* For jurisdictions that have conducted The NCS prior to 2008, a change in the wording of response options may cause a decline in the percent of residents who offer a positive perspective on public trust. It is well to factor in the possible change due to question wording this way: if you show an increase, you may have found even more improvement with the same question wording; if you show no change, you may have shown a slight increase with the same question wording; if you show a decrease, community sentiment is probably about stable.

FIGURE 79: PUBLIC TRUST BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Value of services for the taxes paid to Charlotte County	Below	Similar
The overall direction that Charlotte County is taking	Much below	Below
Job Charlotte County government does at welcoming citizen involvement	Below	Below
Overall image or reputation of Charlotte County	Below	Below

On average, residents of Charlotte County gave the highest evaluations to their own local government and the lowest average rating to federal government. The overall quality of services delivered by Charlotte County was rated as “excellent” or “good” by 61% of survey participants. Charlotte County’s rating was below the benchmark when compared to other communities in the nation and similar when compared to other Florida jurisdictions. Ratings of overall County services had increased over the last four years.

FIGURE 80: RATINGS OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS BY YEAR

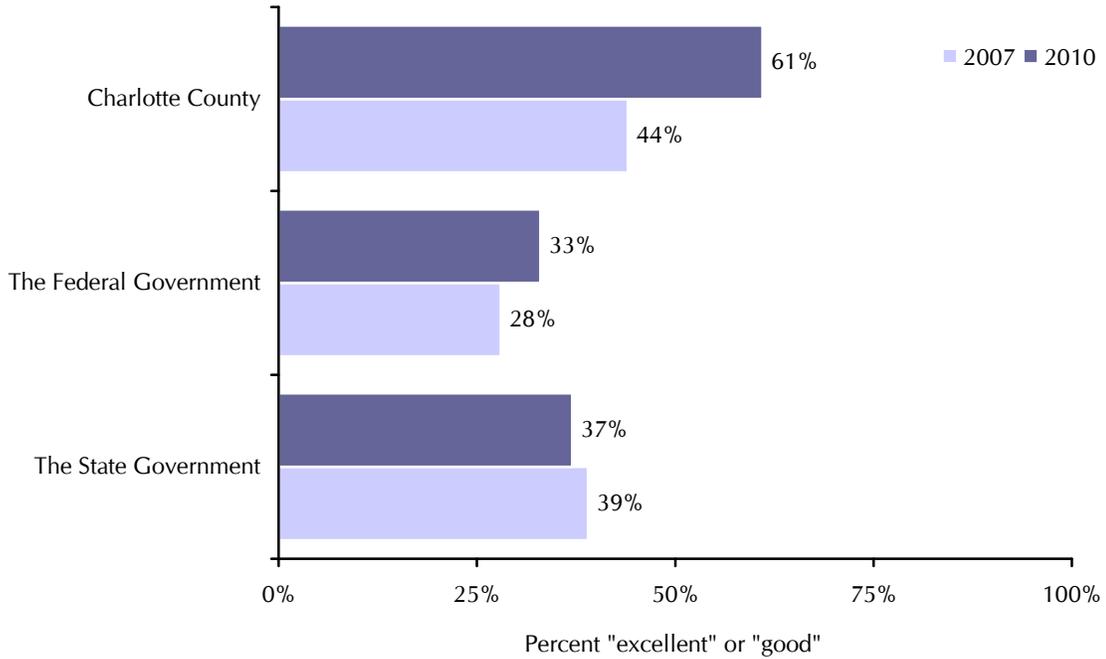


FIGURE 81: SERVICES PROVIDED BY LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Services provided by Charlotte County	Below	Similar
Services provided by the Federal Government	Similar	Similar
Services provided by the State Government	Similar	Similar

## Charlotte County Employees

The employees of Charlotte County who interact with the public create the first impression that most residents have of Charlotte County. Front line staff who provide information, assist with bill paying, collect trash, create service schedules, fight fires and crime and even give traffic tickets are the collective face of Charlotte County. As such, it is important to know about residents' experience talking with that "face." When employees appear to be knowledgeable, responsive and courteous, residents are more likely to feel that any needs or problems may be solved through positive and productive interactions with Charlotte County staff.

Those completing the survey were asked if they had been in contact with a County employee either in person or over the phone in the last 12 months; the 57% who reported that they had been in contact (a percent that is similar to the benchmark comparison) were then asked to indicate overall how satisfied they were with the employee in their most recent contact. County employees were rated highly; 80% of respondents rated their overall impression as "excellent" or "good." Employee ratings were higher or similar to the benchmark comparisons and had increased or remained the same since 2007.

FIGURE 82: PROPORTION OF RESPONDENTS WHO HAD CONTACT WITH COUNTY EMPLOYEES IN PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS BY YEAR

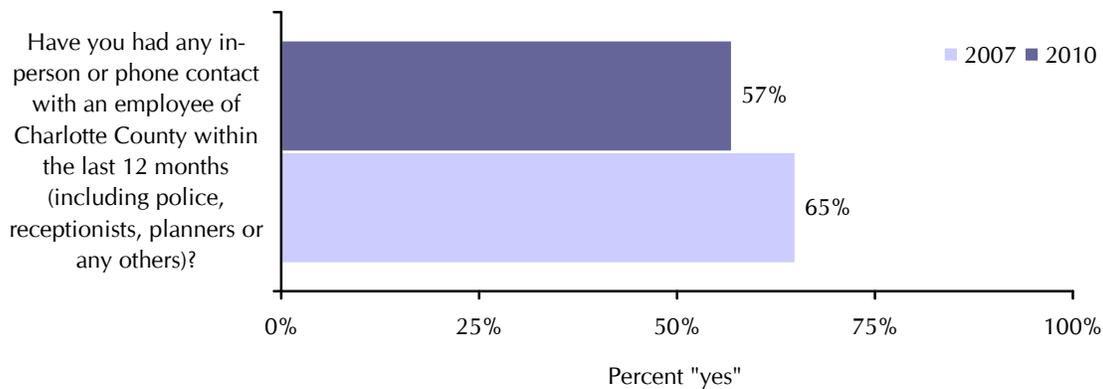


FIGURE 83: CONTACT WITH COUNTY EMPLOYEES BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Had contact with Charlotte County employee(s) in last 12 months	Similar	Similar

FIGURE 84: RATINGS OF COUNTY EMPLOYEES (AMONG THOSE WHO HAD CONTACT) BY YEAR

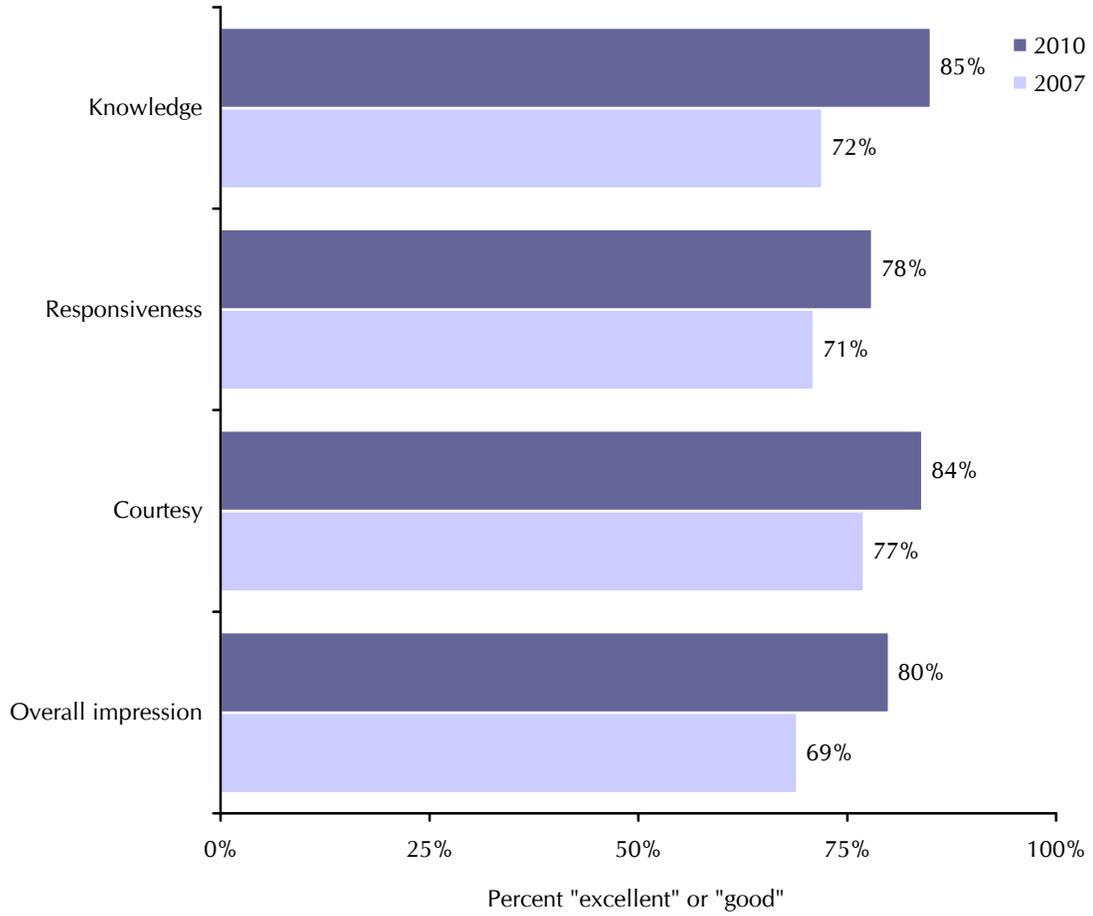


FIGURE 85: RATINGS OF COUNTY EMPLOYEES (AMONG THOSE WHO HAD CONTACT) BENCHMARKS

	National comparison	Florida comparison
Knowledge	Similar	Above
Responsiveness	Similar	Above
Courteousness	Above	Above
Overall impression	Above	Above

## FROM DATA TO ACTION

### RESIDENT PRIORITIES

Knowing where to focus limited resources to improve residents' opinions of local government requires information that targets the services that are most important to residents. However, when residents are asked what services are most important, they rarely stray beyond core services – those directed to save lives and improve safety.

In market research, identifying the most important characteristics of a transaction or product is called Key Driver Analysis (KDA). The key drivers that are identified from that analysis do not come from asking customers to self-report which service or product characteristic most influenced their decision to buy or return, but rather from statistical analyses of the predictors of their behavior. When customers are asked to name the most important characteristics of a good or service, responses often are expected or misleading – just as they can be in the context of a citizen survey. For example, air travelers often claim that safety is the primary consideration in their choice of an airline, yet key driver analysis reveals that frequent flier perks or in-flight entertainment predicts their buying decisions.

In local government core services – like fire protection – invariably land at the top of the list created when residents are asked about the most important local government services. And core services are important. But by using KDA, our approach digs deeper to identify the less obvious, but more influential services that are most related to residents' ratings of overall quality of local government services. Because services focused directly on life and safety remain essential to quality government, it is suggested that core services should remain the focus of continuous monitoring and improvement where necessary – but monitoring core services or asking residents to identify important services is not enough.

A KDA was conducted for Charlotte County by examining the relationships between ratings of each service and ratings of Charlotte County's overall services. Those Key Driver services that correlated most highly with residents' perceptions about overall County service quality have been identified. By targeting improvements in key services, Charlotte County can focus on the services that have the greatest likelihood of influencing residents' opinions about overall service quality. Because a strong correlation is not the same as a cause, there is no guarantee that improving ratings on key drivers necessarily will improve ratings. What is certain from these analyses is that key drivers are good predictors of overall resident opinion and that the key drivers presented may be useful focus areas to consider for enhancement of overall service ratings.

Services found to be most strongly correlated with ratings of overall service quality from the Charlotte County Key Driver Analysis were:

- Land use, planning and zoning
- Garbage collection
- Charlotte County open space
- County parks
- Health services
- Emergency preparedness
- Sheriff services

## CHARLOTTE COUNTY ACTION CHART

The 2010 Charlotte County Action Chart™ on the following page combines two dimensions of performance:

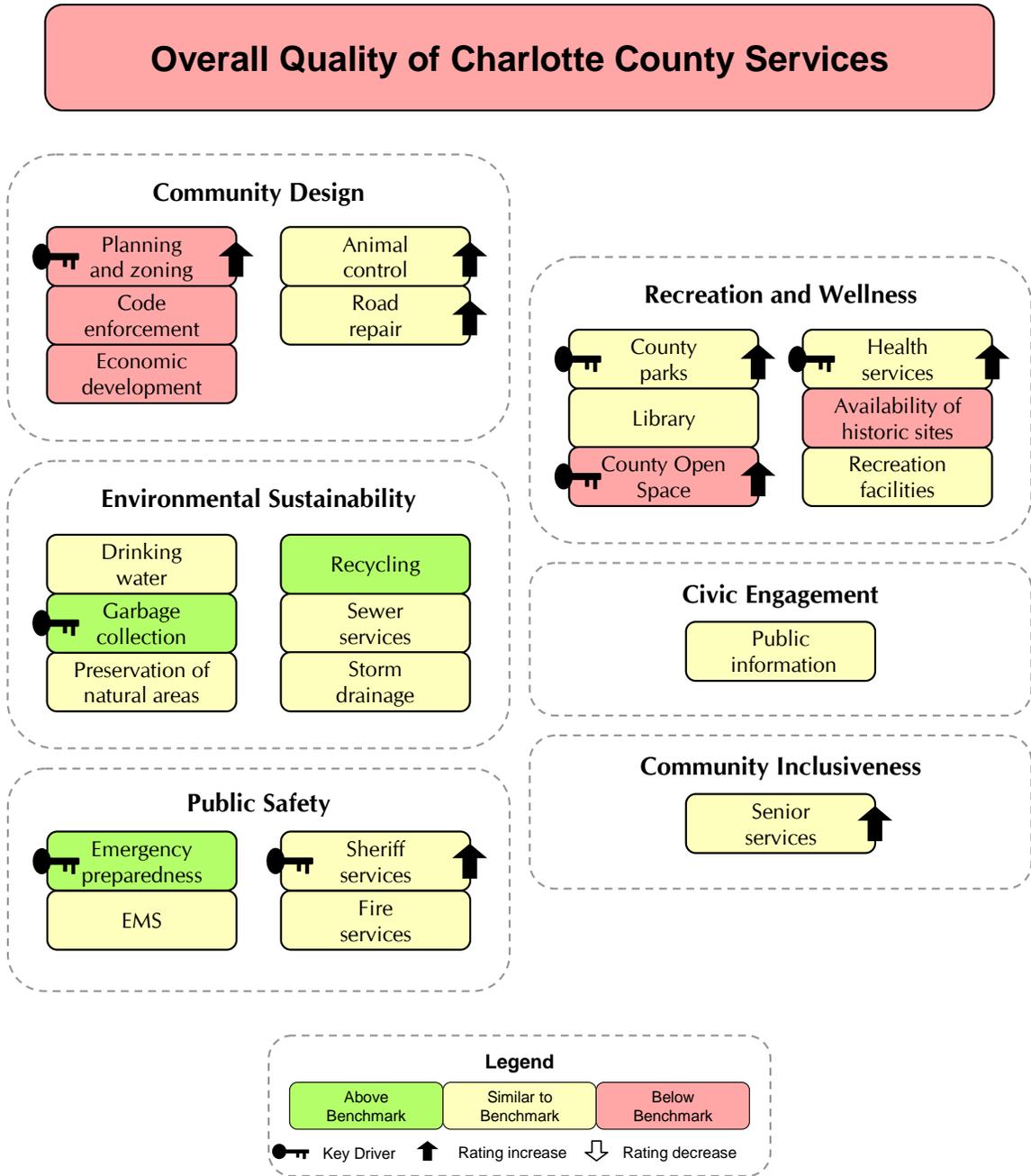
- Comparison to resident evaluations from other communities. When a comparison is available, the background color of each service box indicates whether the service is above the national benchmark (green), similar to the benchmark (yellow) or below the benchmark (red).
- Identification of key services. A black key icon (🔑) next to a service box indicates it as a key driver for the County.

Twenty-three services were included in the KDA for Charlotte County. Of these, three were above the benchmark, five were below the benchmark and fifteen were similar to the benchmark. Ratings for eight services were trending up and none were trending down, while eight remained similar to the previous survey (for seven services, a trend comparison was not available).

Considering all performance data included in the Action Chart, a jurisdiction typically will want to consider improvements to any key driver services that are trending down or that are not at least similar to the benchmark. In Charlotte County, land use, planning and zoning and Charlotte County open space were below the benchmark and health services, sheriff services and County parks were similar to the benchmark. More detail about interpreting results can be found in the next section.

Services with a high percent of respondents answering “don’t know” were excluded from the analysis and were considered services that would be less influential. See Appendix A: Complete Survey Frequencies, Frequencies Including “Don’t Know” Responses for the percent “don’t know” for each service.

FIGURE 86: CHARLOTTE COUNTY ACTION CHART™



## Using Your Action Chart™

The key drivers derived for Charlotte County provide a list of those services that are uniquely related to overall service quality. Those key drivers are marked with the symbol of a key in the action chart. Because key driver results are based on a relatively small number of responses, the relationships or correlations that define the key drivers are subject to more variability than is seen when key drivers are derived from a large national dataset of resident responses. To benefit Charlotte County, NRC lists the key drivers derived from tens of thousands of resident responses from across the country. This national list is updated periodically so that you can compare your key drivers to the key drivers from the entire NRC dataset. Where your locally derived key drivers overlap national key drivers, it makes sense to focus even more strongly on your keys. Similarly, when your local key drivers overlap your core services, there is stronger argument to make for attending to your key drivers that overlap with core services.

As staff review key drivers, not all drivers may resonate as likely links to residents' perspectives about overall service quality. For example, in Charlotte County, planning and zoning and sheriff services may be obvious links to overall service delivery (and each is a key driver from our national database), since it could be easy for staff to see how residents' view of overall service delivery could be colored by how well they perceive police and land use planning to be delivered. But animal control could be a surprise. Before rejecting a key driver that does not pass the first test of conventional wisdom, consider whether residents' opinions about overall service quality could reasonably be influenced by this unexpected driver. For example, in the case of animal control, was there a visible case of violation prior to the survey data collection? Do Charlotte County residents have different expectations for animal control than what current policy provides? Are the rare instances of violation serious enough to cause a word of mouth campaign about service delivery?

If, after deeper review, the "suspect" driver still does not square with your understanding of the services that could influence residents' perspectives about overall service quality (and if that driver is not a core service or a key driver from NRC's national research), put action in that area on hold and wait to see if it appears as a key driver the next time the survey is conducted.

In the following table, we have listed your key drivers, core services and the national key drivers and we have indicated (in bold typeface and with the symbol "•"), the Charlotte County key drivers that overlap core services or the nationally derived keys. In general, key drivers below the benchmark may be targeted for improvement. Additionally, we have indicated (with the symbol "°") those services that neither are local nor national key drivers nor are they core services. It is these services that could be considered first for resource reductions.

FIGURE 87: KEY DRIVERS COMPARED

Service	Charlotte County Key Driver	National Key Driver	Core Service
• <b>Sheriff services</b>	✓	✓	✓
Fire services			✓
Ambulance and emergency medical services			✓
Road repair			✓
• <b>Garbage collection</b>	✓		✓
◦ Recycling			
Storm drainage			✓
Drinking water			✓
Sewer services			✓
County parks	✓		
◦ Recreation centers or facilities			
Charlotte County open space	✓		
◦ Availability of historic sites			
• <b>Land use planning and zoning</b>	✓	✓	
Code enforcement			✓
◦ Animal control			
Economic development		✓	
Health services	✓		
◦ Services to seniors			
◦ Public library			
Public information services		✓	
Emergency preparedness	✓		
◦ Preservation of natural areas			

- Key driver overlaps with national and or core services
- Service may be targeted for reductions it is not a key driver or core service

## POLICY QUESTIONS

“Don’t know” responses have been removed from the following questions, when applicable.

Policy Question 1					
How important, if at all, are each of the following issues for the County in the next 5 years?	Essential	Very important	Somewhat important	Not at all important	Total
Water supply	54%	40%	5%	1%	100%
Crime	48%	42%	9%	0%	100%
Road conditions	31%	52%	15%	2%	100%
Traffic	29%	52%	18%	1%	100%
Environmental protection	33%	44%	19%	3%	100%
Growth management	26%	49%	21%	4%	100%

Policy Question 2	
How do you rate the job that Charlotte County is doing to manage growth and development?	Percent of respondents
Excellent	3%
Good	38%
Fair	42%
Poor	17%
Total	100%

Policy Question 3	
How do you usually learn about County news? Please check all that apply:	Percent of respondents
Local newspapers	82%
Network television news shows	62%
Word of mouth	59%
Brochures, flyers and handouts	26%
County Government Channel: CCTV-20	24%
County Web site	24%
Attend County meetings	8%
Charlotte Alert	6%
None of these	1%
Other	9%
Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one option	

## APPENDIX A: COMPLETE SURVEY FREQUENCIES

### FREQUENCIES EXCLUDING "DON'T KNOW" RESPONSES

Question 1: Quality of Life					
Please rate each of the following aspects of quality of life in Charlotte County:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Charlotte County as a place to live	21%	58%	19%	3%	100%
Your neighborhood as a place to live	31%	50%	14%	6%	100%
Charlotte County as a place to raise children	9%	43%	39%	8%	100%
Charlotte County as a place to work	6%	18%	34%	41%	100%
Charlotte County as a place to retire	28%	52%	15%	5%	100%
The overall quality of life in Charlotte County	13%	56%	29%	2%	100%

Question 2: Community Characteristics					
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Charlotte County as a whole:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Sense of community	11%	49%	30%	11%	100%
Overall appearance of Charlotte County	6%	52%	35%	7%	100%
Overall quality of new development in Charlotte County	6%	37%	38%	19%	100%
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Charlotte County	7%	50%	34%	9%	100%
Shopping opportunities	13%	47%	28%	12%	100%
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	10%	38%	34%	18%	100%
Recreational opportunities	11%	43%	33%	13%	100%
Employment opportunities	1%	10%	27%	62%	100%
Educational opportunities	4%	40%	44%	12%	100%
Opportunities to participate in community matters	10%	40%	40%	11%	100%
Ease of car travel in Charlotte County	13%	53%	26%	8%	100%
Ease of bus travel in Charlotte County	2%	11%	22%	66%	100%
Ease of bicycle travel in Charlotte County	6%	23%	37%	34%	100%
Ease of walking in Charlotte County	7%	25%	43%	24%	100%
Availability of paths and walking trails	9%	28%	39%	25%	100%
Availability of affordable quality housing	8%	33%	44%	16%	100%
Availability of affordable quality child care	5%	20%	43%	32%	100%
Availability of affordable quality health care	5%	32%	41%	22%	100%
Overall image or reputation of Charlotte County	7%	47%	39%	7%	100%

Question 3: Growth						
Please rate the speed of growth in the following categories in Charlotte County over the past 2 years:	Much too slow	Somewhat too slow	Right amount	Somewhat too fast	Much too fast	Total
Population growth	6%	19%	51%	21%	4%	100%
Retail growth (stores, restaurants, etc.)	14%	35%	45%	6%	1%	100%
Jobs growth	57%	33%	7%	2%	1%	100%

Question 4: Code Enforcement	
To what degree, if at all, are run down buildings, weed lots or junk vehicles a problem in Charlotte County?	Percent of respondents
Not a problem	9%
Minor problem	26%
Moderate problem	45%
Major problem	20%
Total	100%

Question 5: Community Safety						
Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel from the following in Charlotte County:	Very safe	Somewhat safe	Neither safe nor unsafe	Somewhat unsafe	Very unsafe	Total
Violent crime (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	24%	45%	15%	13%	2%	100%
Property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	15%	43%	18%	19%	6%	100%
Environmental hazards, including toxic waste	27%	43%	22%	8%	1%	100%

Question 6: Personal Safety						
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	58%	34%	4%	2%	1%	100%
In your neighborhood after dark	34%	45%	7%	10%	4%	100%
In Charlotte County's downtown area(s) during the day	40%	44%	10%	4%	2%	100%
In Charlotte County's downtown area(s) after dark	16%	40%	21%	16%	7%	100%

Question 7: Crime Victim	
During the past twelve months, were you or anyone in your household the victim of any crime?	Percent of respondents
No	86%
Yes	14%
Total	100%

Question 8: Crime Reporting	
If yes, was this crime (these crimes) reported to the police?	Percent of respondents
No	10%
Yes	90%
Total	100%

Question 9: Resident Behaviors						
In the last 12 months, about how many times, if ever, have you or other household members participated in the following activities in Charlotte County?	Never	Once or twice	3 to 12 times	13 to 26 times	More than 26 times	Total
Used Charlotte County public libraries or their services	30%	31%	27%	6%	5%	100%
Used Charlotte County recreation centers	39%	29%	20%	8%	3%	100%
Participated in a recreation program or activity	56%	25%	14%	4%	1%	100%
Visited a neighborhood park or County park	14%	31%	35%	13%	7%	100%
Ridden a local bus within Charlotte County	96%	3%	1%	0%	1%	100%
Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting	69%	21%	8%	2%	0%	100%
Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting on cable television	48%	26%	19%	4%	3%	100%
Read Charlotte County Newsletter	28%	25%	29%	8%	9%	100%
Visited the Charlotte County Web site (at <a href="http://www.CharlotteCountyFL.com">www.CharlotteCountyFL.com</a> )	41%	18%	22%	8%	10%	100%
Recycled used paper, cans or bottles from your home	8%	3%	9%	8%	72%	100%
Volunteered your time to some group or activity in Charlotte County	49%	21%	15%	7%	8%	100%

Question 10: Neighborliness	
About how often, if at all, do you talk to or visit with your immediate neighbors (people who live in the 10 or 20 households that are closest to you)?	Percent of respondents
Just about everyday	28%
Several times a week	27%
Several times a month	21%
Once a month	24%
Several times a year	0%
Once a year or less	0%
Never	0%
Total	100%

Question 11: Service Quality					
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Charlotte County:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Sheriff services	22%	57%	18%	3%	100%
Fire services	39%	54%	6%	1%	100%
Ambulance or emergency medical services	42%	50%	7%	1%	100%
Crime prevention	19%	42%	30%	9%	100%
Fire prevention and education	20%	53%	26%	2%	100%
Road repair	9%	36%	36%	19%	100%
Bus or transit services	6%	17%	18%	59%	100%
Garbage collection	43%	45%	10%	2%	100%
Recycling	41%	48%	8%	3%	100%
Yard waste pick-up	43%	42%	11%	4%	100%
Storm drainage	16%	34%	30%	21%	100%
Drinking water	14%	42%	33%	11%	100%
Sewer services	20%	49%	24%	6%	100%
County parks	24%	58%	16%	2%	100%
Recreation programs or classes	10%	48%	39%	3%	100%
Recreation centers or facilities	11%	57%	29%	3%	100%
Charlotte County open space	13%	51%	31%	5%	100%
Nature programs or classes	11%	49%	33%	7%	100%
Availability of historic sites	12%	41%	34%	13%	100%
Land use, planning and zoning	6%	26%	36%	32%	100%
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc.)	3%	24%	40%	33%	100%
Animal control	12%	45%	30%	13%	100%
Economic development	4%	28%	37%	32%	100%
Health services	12%	47%	36%	5%	100%
Services to seniors	14%	55%	26%	6%	100%
Services to youth	2%	27%	36%	35%	100%

Question 11: Service Quality					
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Charlotte County:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Services to low-income people	7%	28%	37%	28%	100%
Public library services	26%	54%	18%	2%	100%
Public information services	12%	48%	35%	5%	100%
Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations)	22%	55%	18%	5%	100%
Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts	8%	51%	31%	9%	100%
Mental health services	8%	34%	38%	20%	100%
Drug and alcohol services	9%	26%	46%	19%	100%

Question 12: Government Services Overall					
Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by each of the following?	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Charlotte County	8%	53%	35%	4%	100%
The Federal Government	2%	31%	46%	21%	100%
The State Government	2%	36%	46%	17%	100%

Question 13: Contact with County Employees	
Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of Charlotte County within the last 12 months (including police, receptionists, planners or any others)?	Percent of respondents
No	43%
Yes	57%
Total	100%

Question 14: County Employees					
What was your impression of the employee(s) of Charlotte County in your most recent contact?	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Knowledge	38%	46%	13%	3%	100%
Responsiveness	42%	36%	12%	9%	100%
Courtesy	48%	36%	14%	2%	100%
Overall impression	40%	39%	14%	6%	100%

Question 15: Government Performance					
Please rate the following categories of Charlotte County government performance:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
The value of services for the taxes paid to Charlotte County	5%	32%	46%	16%	100%
The overall direction that Charlotte County is taking	4%	32%	44%	20%	100%
The job Charlotte County government does at welcoming citizen involvement	4%	34%	39%	23%	100%

Question 16: Recommendation and Longevity					
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 Charlotte County to someone who asks	33%	47%	11%	9%	100%
Remain in Charlotte County for the next five years	57%	27%	8%	8%	100%

Question 17: Impact of the Economy	
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 of respondents
Very positive	3%
Somewhat positive	10%
Neutral	38%
Somewhat negative	33%
Very negative	16%
Total	100%

Question 18a: Policy Question 1					
How important, if at all, are each of the following issues for the County in the next 5 years?	Essential	Very important	Somewhat important	Not at all important	Total
Crime	48%	42%	9%	0%	100%
Environmental protection	33%	44%	19%	3%	100%
Growth management	26%	49%	21%	4%	100%
Traffic	29%	52%	18%	1%	100%
Road conditions	31%	52%	15%	2%	100%
Water supply	54%	40%	5%	1%	100%

Question 18b: Policy Question 2	
How do you rate the job that Charlotte County is doing to manage growth and development?	Percent of respondents
Excellent	3%
Good	38%
Fair	42%
Poor	17%
Total	100%

Question 18c: Policy Question 3	
How do you usually learn about County news? Please check all that apply:	Percent of respondents
Attend County meetings	8%
None of these	1%
Brochures, flyers and handouts	26%
County Government Channel: CCTV-20	24%
County Web site	24%
Charlotte Alert	6%
Local newspapers	82%
Network television news shows	62%
Word of mouth	59%
Other	9%
Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one option	

Question D1: Employment Status	
Are you currently employed for pay?	Percent of respondents
No	60%
Yes, full-time	32%
Yes, part-time	8%
Total	100%

Question D2: Mode of Transportation Used for Commute	
During a typical week, how many days do you commute to work (for the longest distance of your commute) in each of the ways listed below?	Percent of days mode used
Motorized vehicle (e.g., car, truck, van, motorcycle, etc.) by myself	86%
Motorized vehicle (e.g., car, truck, van, motorcycle, etc.) with other children or adults	8%
Bus, rail, subway or other public transportation	0%
Walk	1%
Bicycle	0%
Work at home	4%
Other	0%

Question D3: Length of Residency	
How many years have you lived in Charlotte County?	Percent of respondents
Less than 2 years	9%
2 to 5 years	11%
6 to 10 years	30%
11 to 20 years	22%
More than 20 years	28%
Total	100%

Question D4: Housing Unit Type	
Which best describes the building you live in?	Percent of respondents
One family house detached from any other houses	80%
House attached to one or more houses (e.g., a duplex or townhome)	3%
Building with two or more apartments or condominiums	10%
Mobile home	6%
Other	1%
Total	100%

Question D5: Housing Tenure (Rent/Own)	
Is this house, apartment or mobile home...	Percent of respondents
Rented for cash or occupied without cash payment	14%
Owned by you or someone in this house with a mortgage or free and clear	86%
Total	100%

Question D6: Monthly Housing Cost	
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 of respondents
Less than \$300 per month	8%
\$300 to \$599 per month	23%
\$600 to \$999 per month	29%
\$1,000 to \$1,499 per month	20%
\$1,500 to \$2,499 per month	14%
\$2,500 or more per month	6%
Total	100%

Question D7: Presence of Children in Household	
Do any children 17 or under live in your household?	Percent of respondents
No	85%
Yes	15%
Total	100%

Question D8: Presence of Older Adults in Household	
Are you or any other members of your household aged 65 or older?	Percent of respondents
No	51%
Yes	49%
Total	100%

Question D9: Household Income	
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 of respondents
Less than \$24,999	28%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	36%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	24%
\$100,000 to \$149,000	8%
\$150,000 or more	4%
Total	100%

Question D10: Ethnicity	
Are you Spanish, Hispanic or Latino?	Percent of respondents
No, not Spanish, Hispanic or Latino	97%
Yes, I consider myself to be Spanish, Hispanic or Latino	3%
Total	100%

Question D11: Race	
What is your race? (Mark one or more races to indicate what race(s) you consider yourself to be.)	Percent of respondents
American Indian or Alaskan Native	3%
Asian, Asian Indian or Pacific Islander	1%
Black or African American	4%
White	94%
Other	2%
Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one option	

Question D12: Age	
In which category is your age?	Percent of respondents
18 to 24 years	3%
25 to 34 years	9%
35 to 44 years	4%
45 to 54 years	24%
55 to 64 years	20%
65 to 74 years	23%
75 years or older	18%
Total	100%

Question D13: Gender	
What is your sex?	Percent of respondents
Female	51%
Male	49%
Total	100%

Question D14: Registered to Vote	
Are you registered to vote in your jurisdiction?	Percent of respondents
No	14%
Yes	84%
Ineligible to vote	2%
Total	100%

Question D15: Voted in Last General Election	
Many people don't have time to vote in elections. Did you vote in the last general election?	Percent of respondents
No	27%
Yes	71%
Ineligible to vote	2%
Total	100%

Question D16: Has Cell Phone	
Do you have a cell phone?	Percent of respondents
No	10%
Yes	90%
Total	100%

Question D17: Has Land Line	
Do you have a land line at home?	Percent of respondents
No	29%
Yes	71%
Total	100%

Question D18: Primary Phone	
If you have both a cell phone and a land line, which do you consider your primary telephone number?	Percent of respondents
Cell	18%
Land line	64%
Both	18%
Total	100%

### FREQUENCIES INCLUDING “DON’T KNOW” RESPONSES

These tables contain the percentage of respondents for each response category as well as the “n” or total number of respondents for each category, next to the percentage.

Question 1: Quality of Life												
Please rate each of the following aspects of quality of life in Charlotte County:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
	Charlotte County as a place to live	21%	86	57%	240	19%	80	3%	11	0%	1	100%
Your neighborhood as a place to live	31%	128	50%	208	14%	58	6%	24	0%	1	100%	419
Charlotte County as a place to raise children	7%	30	33%	137	30%	124	7%	27	22%	91	100%	408
Charlotte County as a place to work	5%	20	15%	59	28%	112	33%	135	19%	79	100%	406
Charlotte County as a place to retire	27%	109	49%	203	14%	57	5%	20	5%	22	100%	411
The overall quality of life in Charlotte County	13%	54	56%	234	29%	119	2%	9	0%	1	100%	416

Question 2: Community Characteristics												
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Charlotte County as a whole:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
	Sense of community	10%	42	47%	194	29%	120	10%	43	4%	16	100%
Overall appearance of Charlotte County	6%	25	52%	214	35%	144	7%	31	0%	1	100%	414
Overall quality of new development in Charlotte County	6%	24	35%	138	35%	141	17%	69	7%	27	100%	400
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Charlotte County	7%	29	49%	203	34%	138	9%	37	1%	4	100%	411
Shopping opportunities	13%	52	47%	195	28%	116	12%	49	0%	1	100%	413
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	10%	39	35%	142	31%	127	16%	66	8%	30	100%	405
Recreational opportunities	11%	43	41%	166	32%	128	13%	52	4%	17	100%	406
Employment opportunities	1%	3	8%	33	22%	88	49%	202	20%	83	100%	409
Educational opportunities	4%	15	33%	134	36%	148	10%	39	18%	74	100%	410
Opportunities to participate in community matters	8%	34	33%	138	34%	138	9%	37	16%	64	100%	411
Ease of car travel in Charlotte County	12%	50	53%	213	26%	104	8%	32	2%	6	100%	406
Ease of bus travel in Charlotte County	1%	4	6%	24	12%	49	37%	148	44%	175	100%	400
Ease of bicycle travel in Charlotte County	4%	17	18%	73	30%	119	27%	108	21%	83	100%	400

Question 2: Community Characteristics												
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Charlotte County as a whole:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
	Ease of walking in Charlotte County	6%	26	23%	94	40%	163	22%	92	9%	37	100%
Availability of paths and walking trails	8%	31	24%	98	34%	139	21%	87	13%	54	100%	409
Availability of affordable quality housing	7%	26	28%	113	38%	151	13%	54	15%	59	100%	403
Availability of affordable quality child care	2%	7	8%	31	17%	67	12%	49	61%	241	100%	396
Availability of affordable quality health care	4%	18	27%	108	34%	137	18%	75	17%	68	100%	406
Overall image or reputation of Charlotte County	7%	30	46%	190	38%	157	7%	30	2%	9	100%	416

Question 3: Growth														
Please rate the speed of growth in the following categories in Charlotte County over the past 2 years:	Much too slow		Somewhat too slow		Right amount		Somewhat too fast		Much too fast		Don't know		Total	
	Population growth	5%	19	15%	61	41%	169	17%	69	3%	12	20%	85	100%
Retail growth (stores, restaurants, etc.)	12%	50	31%	128	40%	165	5%	23	1%	4	11%	44	100%	414
Jobs growth	45%	184	26%	105	5%	22	2%	7	1%	3	22%	89	100%	410

Question 4: Code Enforcement		
To what degree, if at all, are run down buildings, weed lots or junk vehicles a problem in Charlotte County?	Percent of respondents	Count
Not a problem	8%	34
Minor problem	24%	99
Moderate problem	41%	170
Major problem	19%	78
Don't know	8%	31
Total	100%	412

Question 5: Community Safety														
Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel from the following in Charlotte County:	Very safe		Somewhat safe		Neither safe nor unsafe		Somewhat unsafe		Very unsafe		Don't know		Total	
	Violent crime (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	23%	98	45%	186	15%	63	13%	53	2%	9	2%	8	100%
Property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	15%	63	42%	175	17%	72	18%	76	6%	23	2%	10	100%	419
Environmental hazards, including toxic waste	23%	97	37%	155	19%	78	6%	27	1%	4	13%	56	100%	417

Question 6: Personal Safety														
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	58%	242	34%	140	4%	19	2%	10	1%	5	0%	1	100%
In your neighborhood after dark	34%	141	45%	187	7%	29	10%	42	4%	18	0%	2	100%	420
In Charlotte County's downtown area(s) during the day	37%	153	42%	171	10%	41	4%	15	2%	7	6%	25	100%	413
In Charlotte County's downtown area(s) after dark	14%	58	35%	144	18%	76	14%	57	6%	26	13%	52	100%	413

Question 7: Crime Victim		
During the past twelve months, were you or anyone in your household the victim of any crime?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	86%	357
Yes	14%	57
Don't know	0%	1
Total	100%	414

Question 8: Crime Reporting		
If yes, was this crime (these crimes) reported to the police?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	10%	5
Yes	89%	50
Don't know	2%	1
Total	100%	57

Question 9: Resident Behaviors												
In the last 12 months, about how many times, if ever, have you or other household members participated in the following activities in Charlotte County?	Never		Once or twice		3 to 12 times		13 to 26 times		More than 26 times		Total	
	Used Charlotte County public libraries or their services	30%	127	31%	129	27%	113	6%	26	5%	23	100%
Used Charlotte County recreation centers	39%	162	29%	122	20%	85	8%	35	3%	12	100%	415
Participated in a recreation program or activity	56%	229	25%	100	14%	57	4%	16	1%	5	100%	408
Visited a neighborhood park or County park	14%	59	31%	129	35%	142	13%	52	7%	27	100%	410
Ridden a local bus within Charlotte County	96%	395	3%	13	1%	2	0%	0	1%	3	100%	413
Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting	69%	288	21%	88	8%	35	2%	7	0%	0	100%	417
Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting on cable television	48%	199	26%	107	19%	77	4%	16	3%	12	100%	410
Read Charlotte County Newsletter	28%	113	25%	101	29%	117	8%	34	9%	36	100%	400
Visited the Charlotte County Web site (at www.CharlotteCountyFL.com)	41%	163	18%	70	22%	88	8%	33	10%	41	100%	395
Recycled used paper, cans or bottles from your home	8%	32	3%	12	9%	35	8%	33	72%	294	100%	407
Volunteered your time to some group or activity in Charlotte County	49%	203	21%	88	15%	60	7%	30	8%	31	100%	412

Question 10: Neighborliness		
About how often, if at all, do you talk to or visit with your immediate neighbors (people who live in the 10 or 20 households that are closest to you)?	Percent of respondents	Count
Just about everyday	28%	115
Several times a week	27%	114
Several times a month	21%	87
Once a month	24%	101
Several times a year	0%	0
Once a year or less	0%	0
Never	0%	0
Total	100%	416

Question 11: Service Quality												
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Charlotte County:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
Sheriff services	20%	82	52%	212	17%	68	2%	9	8%	34	100%	405
Fire services	33%	134	46%	187	5%	20	0%	2	16%	67	100%	410
Ambulance or emergency medical services	34%	139	41%	168	6%	25	0%	2	18%	72	100%	406
Crime prevention	16%	65	35%	139	25%	99	7%	29	17%	68	100%	400
Fire prevention and education	14%	55	38%	149	18%	72	1%	6	28%	109	100%	392
Road repair	9%	34	33%	134	34%	134	17%	69	7%	28	100%	399
Bus or transit services	3%	13	9%	36	10%	37	31%	122	47%	181	100%	390
Garbage collection	43%	174	44%	181	10%	41	2%	10	1%	3	100%	408
Recycling	39%	160	46%	188	7%	30	3%	12	5%	19	100%	409
Yard waste pick-up	40%	162	39%	161	10%	42	4%	17	6%	26	100%	408
Storm drainage	14%	57	30%	122	27%	107	19%	75	10%	41	100%	402
Drinking water	13%	54	39%	158	31%	123	10%	42	7%	28	100%	404
Sewer services	14%	56	34%	137	17%	68	4%	17	30%	121	100%	398
County parks	21%	84	52%	206	14%	56	2%	8	12%	47	100%	399
Recreation programs or classes	5%	22	26%	106	22%	87	2%	7	45%	179	100%	402

Question 11: Service Quality												
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Charlotte County:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
	Recreation centers or facilities	8%	32	40%	159	20%	80	2%	10	30%	118	100%
Charlotte County open space	8%	33	31%	126	19%	77	3%	13	38%	152	100%	401
Nature programs or classes	5%	21	23%	90	15%	60	3%	13	54%	213	100%	398
Availability of historic sites	8%	30	27%	105	22%	87	8%	33	36%	140	100%	395
Land use, planning and zoning	4%	16	18%	69	25%	95	22%	84	31%	117	100%	382
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc.)	3%	10	20%	81	33%	133	27%	109	17%	69	100%	402
Animal control	10%	38	34%	136	23%	93	10%	38	23%	94	100%	399
Economic development	3%	12	21%	85	28%	112	24%	97	23%	91	100%	397
Health services	10%	39	38%	152	29%	116	4%	17	19%	77	100%	400
Services to seniors	10%	40	39%	160	19%	76	4%	17	28%	112	100%	405
Services to youth	1%	5	14%	57	19%	76	19%	75	47%	187	100%	399
Services to low-income people	4%	14	14%	57	19%	76	15%	57	48%	188	100%	392
Public library services	21%	84	44%	176	14%	58	1%	6	19%	78	100%	403
Public information services	9%	35	35%	142	26%	102	4%	15	27%	106	100%	399
Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations)	17%	71	44%	179	15%	59	4%	17	19%	78	100%	404
Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts	6%	26	38%	155	23%	93	7%	27	25%	101	100%	402
Mental health services	3%	13	15%	61	17%	67	9%	35	56%	225	100%	401
Drug and alcohol services	4%	14	11%	43	19%	74	8%	32	59%	235	100%	398

Question 12: Government Services Overall												
Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by each of the following?	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
	Charlotte County	8%	34	51%	210	34%	139	4%	18	3%	10	100%
The Federal Government	2%	7	27%	109	39%	160	18%	72	14%	59	100%	406
The State Government	1%	6	31%	127	40%	164	14%	59	12%	50	100%	406

Question 13: Contact with County Employees		
Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of Charlotte County within the last 12 months (including police, receptionists, planners or any others)?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	43%	171
Yes	57%	230
Total	100%	401

Question 14: County Employees												
What was your impression of the employee(s) of Charlotte County in your most recent contact?	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
	Knowledge	38%	88	46%	106	13%	29	3%	7	0%	1	100%
Responsiveness	42%	97	36%	84	12%	28	9%	21	0%	1	100%	230
Courtesy	48%	111	36%	83	14%	31	2%	5	0%	0	100%	230
Overall impression	40%	93	39%	91	14%	33	6%	13	0%	0	100%	230

Question 15: Government Performance												
Please rate the following categories of Charlotte County government performance:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
	The value of services for the taxes paid to Charlotte County	5%	21	30%	123	43%	176	15%	60	7%	29	100%
The overall direction that Charlotte County is taking	3%	13	29%	117	40%	160	18%	73	10%	41	100%	404
The job Charlotte County government does at welcoming citizen involvement	3%	12	25%	101	29%	118	17%	70	25%	102	100%	403

Question 16: Recommendation and Longevity												
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 Charlotte County to someone who asks	33%	136	46%	192	11%	45	9%	36	2%	6	100%
Remain in Charlotte County for the next five years	55%	228	27%	110	8%	31	8%	33	2%	10	100%	413

Question 17: Impact of the Economy		
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 of respondents	Count
Very positive	3%	11
Somewhat positive	10%	41
Neutral	38%	157
Somewhat negative	33%	138
Very negative	16%	65
Total	100%	412

Question 18a: Policy Question 1												
How important, if at all, are each of the following issues for the County in the next 5 years?	Essential		Very important		Somewhat important		Not at all important		Don't Know		Total	
Crime	47%	195	42%	174	9%	39	0%	2	2%	6	100%	416
Environmental protection	33%	136	44%	181	19%	79	3%	13	1%	5	100%	415
Growth management	26%	106	48%	199	20%	84	4%	16	2%	8	100%	413
Traffic	29%	119	51%	212	18%	73	1%	4	1%	5	100%	413
Road conditions	31%	128	52%	215	15%	62	1%	6	1%	5	100%	415
Water supply	53%	220	40%	165	5%	19	1%	5	2%	7	100%	415

Question 18b: Policy Question 2		
How do you rate the job that Charlotte County is doing to manage growth and development?	Percent of respondents	Count
Excellent	2%	10
Good	32%	134
Fair	35%	146
Poor	14%	59
Don't know	16%	65
Total	100%	413

Question 18c: Policy Question 3		
How do you usually learn about County news? Please check all that apply:	Percent of respondents	Count
Attend County meetings	8%	34
None of these	1%	4
Brochures, flyers and handouts	26%	109
County Government Channel: CCTV-20	24%	102
County Web site	24%	100
Charlotte Alert	6%	24
Local newspapers	82%	343
Network television news shows	62%	260
Word of mouth	59%	245
Other	9%	37
Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one option		

Question D1: Employment Status		
Are you currently employed for pay?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	60%	246
Yes, full-time	32%	131
Yes, part-time	8%	34
Total	100%	411

Question D2: Mode of Transportation Used for Commute	
During a typical week, how many days do you commute to work (for the longest distance of your commute) in each of the ways listed below?	Percent of days mode used
Motorized vehicle (e.g., car, truck, van, motorcycle, etc.) by myself	86%
Motorized vehicle (e.g., car, truck, van, motorcycle, etc.) with other children or adults	8%
Bus, rail, subway or other public transportation	0%
Walk	1%
Bicycle	0%
Work at home	4%
Other	0%

Question D3: Length of Residency		
How many years have you lived in Charlotte County?	Percent of respondents	Count
Less than 2 years	9%	39
2 to 5 years	11%	45
6 to 10 years	30%	125
11 to 20 years	22%	93
More than 20 years	28%	117
Total	100%	419

Question D4: Housing Unit Type		
Which best describes the building you live in?	Percent of respondents	Count
One family house detached from any other houses	80%	336
House attached to one or more houses (e.g., a duplex or townhome)	3%	11
Building with two or more apartments or condominiums	10%	41
Mobile home	6%	27
Other	1%	3
Total	100%	419

Question D5: Housing Tenure (Rent/Own)		
Is this house, apartment or mobile home...	Percent of respondents	Count
Rented for cash or occupied without cash payment	14%	56
Owned by you or someone in this house with a mortgage or free and clear	86%	349
Total	100%	405

Question D6: Monthly Housing Cost		
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 of respondents	Count
Less than \$300 per month	8%	33
\$300 to \$599 per month	23%	88
\$600 to \$999 per month	29%	114
\$1,000 to \$1,499 per month	20%	80
\$1,500 to \$2,499 per month	14%	53
\$2,500 or more per month	6%	24
Total	100%	392

Question D7: Presence of Children in Household		
Do any children 17 or under live in your household?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	85%	355
Yes	15%	63
Total	100%	418

Question D8: Presence of Older Adults in Household		
Are you or any other members of your household aged 65 or older?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	51%	214
Yes	49%	206
Total	100%	420

Question D9: Household Income		
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 of respondents	Count
Less than \$24,999	28%	104
\$25,000 to \$49,999	36%	132
\$50,000 to \$99,999	24%	90
\$100,000 to \$149,000	8%	30
\$150,000 or more	4%	13
Total	100%	369

Question D10: Ethnicity		
Are you Spanish, Hispanic or Latino?	Percent of respondents	Count
No, not Spanish, Hispanic or Latino	97%	396
Yes, I consider myself to be Spanish, Hispanic or Latino	3%	12
Total	100%	408

Question D11: Race		
What is your race? (Mark one or more races to indicate what race(s) you consider yourself to be.)	Percent of respondents	Count
American Indian or Alaskan Native	3%	12
Asian, Asian Indian or Pacific Islander	1%	4
Black or African American	4%	16
White	94%	390
Other	2%	9
Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one option		

Question D12: Age		
In which category is your age?	Percent of respondents	Count
18 to 24 years	3%	12
25 to 34 years	9%	36
35 to 44 years	4%	19
45 to 54 years	24%	99
55 to 64 years	20%	84
65 to 74 years	23%	95
75 years or older	18%	75
Total	100%	419

Question D13: Gender		
What is your sex?	Percent of respondents	Count
Female	51%	206
Male	49%	195
Total	100%	400

Question D14: Registered to Vote		
Are you registered to vote in your jurisdiction?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	14%	59
Yes	84%	350
Ineligible to vote	2%	7
Don't know	0%	2
Total	100%	418

Question D15: Voted in Last General Election		
Many people don't have time to vote in elections. Did you vote in the last general election?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	27%	111
Yes	71%	295
Ineligible to vote	2%	8
Don't know	0%	0
Total	100%	414

Question D16: Has Cell Phone		
Do you have a cell phone?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	10%	43
Yes	90%	376
Total	100%	419

Question D17: Has Land Line		
Do you have a land line at home?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	29%	121
Yes	71%	297
Total	100%	418

Question D18: Primary Phone		
If you have both a cell phone and a land line, which do you consider your primary telephone number?	Percent of respondents	Count
Cell	18%	48
Land line	64%	171
Both	18%	47
Total	100%	266

## APPENDIX B: SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The National Citizen Survey™ (The NCS™) was developed to provide local jurisdictions an accurate, affordable and easy way to assess and interpret resident opinion about important community issues. While standardization of question wording and survey methods provide the rigor to assure valid results, each jurisdiction has enough flexibility to construct a customized version of The NCS™ that asks residents about key local services and important local issues.

Results offer insight into residents' perspectives about local government performance and as such provide important benchmarks for jurisdictions working on performance measurement. The NCS™ is designed to help with budget, land use and strategic planning as well as to communicate with local residents. The NCS™ permits questions to test support for local policies and answers to its questions also speak to community trust and involvement in community-building activities as well as to resident demographic characteristics.

### SURVEY VALIDITY

The question of survey validity has two parts: 1) how can a jurisdiction 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 jurisdiction. 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 jurisdiction to receive the survey. A random selection ensures that the households selected to receive the survey are similar to the entire population. A non-random sample may only include households from one geographic area, or from households of only one type.
- 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.
- Soliciting response on jurisdiction letterhead signed by the highest ranking elected official or staff member, thus appealing to the recipients' sense of civic responsibility.
- Providing a self-addressed, postage-paid return envelope.
- Offering the survey in Spanish when appropriate and requested by County officials.
- Using the most recent available information about the characteristics of jurisdiction residents to weight the data 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 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 tend to be ambiguous, 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). Whether or not some research confirms the relationship between what residents think about a community and what can be seen “objectively” in a community, NRC has argued that resident opinion is a perspective that cannot be ignored by government administrators. 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 survey recipients were chosen. All households within Charlotte County were eligible to participate in the survey; 1,200 were selected to receive the survey. These 1,200 households were randomly selected from a comprehensive list of all housing units within Charlotte County boundaries. The basis of the list of all housing units was a United States Postal Service listing of housing units within zip codes. Since some of the zip codes that serve Charlotte County households may also serve addresses that lie outside of the jurisdiction, the exact geographic location of each housing unit was compared to jurisdiction boundaries, using the most current municipal boundary file (updated on a quarterly basis), and addresses located outside of Charlotte County boundaries were removed from consideration.

To choose the 1,200 survey recipients, a systematic sampling method was applied to the list of households known to be within Charlotte County. Systematic sampling is a procedure whereby a complete list of all possible items is culled, selecting every Nth one until the appropriate amount of items 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 88: LOCATION OF SURVEY RECIPIENTS

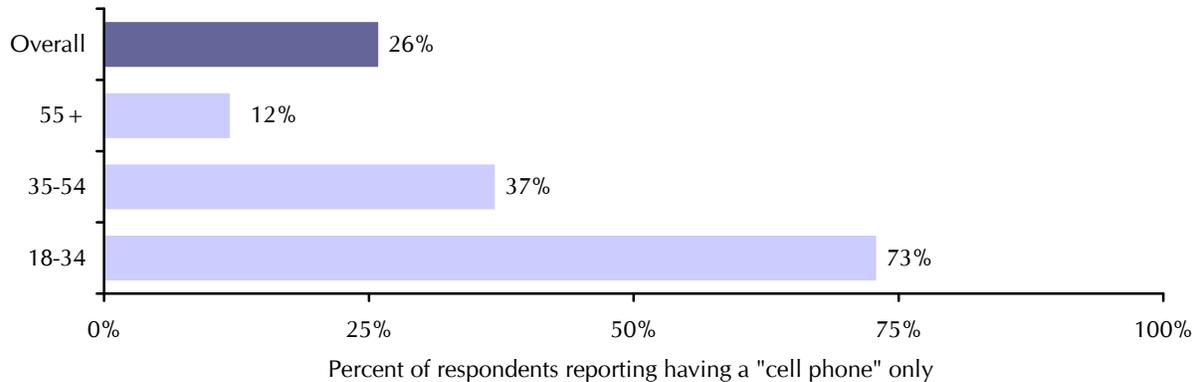
The National Citizen Survey™  
Charlotte County, FL 2010



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.

In response to the growing number of the cell-phone population (so-called “cord cutters”), which includes a large proportion of young adults, questions about cell phones and land lines are included on The NCS™ questionnaire. As of the middle of 2010 (the most recent estimates available as of the end of 2010), 26.6% of U.S. households had a cell phone but no landline.<sup>2</sup> Among younger adults (age 18-34), 53.7% of households were “cell-only.” Based on survey results, Charlotte County has a “cord cutter” population greater than the nationwide 2010 estimates

FIGURE 89: PREVALENCE OF CELL-PHONE ONLY RESPONDENTS IN CHARLOTTE COUNTY



## SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

Selected households received three mailings, one week apart, beginning December 3, 2010. The first mailing was a prenotification postcard announcing the upcoming survey. The next mailing contained a letter from the chairman of the board of County commissioners 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 have already done so to refrain from turning in another survey. Completed surveys were collected over the following five weeks.

## SURVEY RESPONSE RATE AND 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. The confidence interval for Charlotte County survey is no greater than plus or minus five percentage points around any given percent reported for the entire sample (422 completed surveys).

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 jurisdiction is between 71% and 79%. This source of

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhis/earlyrelease/wireless201012.pdf>

error 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.

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)

Completed surveys received by NRC 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; NRC staff would choose randomly two of the three selected items to be coded in the dataset.

Once all surveys were assigned a unique identification number, they were entered into an electronic dataset. This dataset was subject to a data entry protocol of “key and verify,” in which survey data were entered twice into an electronic dataset and then compared. Discrepancies were evaluated against the original survey form and corrected. 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 2006-2008 American Community Survey Census estimates for adults in Charlotte County. Sample results were weighted using the population norms to reflect the appropriate percent of those residents in each county's population. Other discrepancies between the whole population and the sample were also aided by the weighting due to the intercorrelation of many socioeconomic characteristics.

The variables used for weighting were housing unit type and sex and age. This decision was based on:

- The disparity between the survey respondent characteristics and the population norms for these variables
- The saliency of these variables in detecting differences of opinion among subgroups
- The historical use of the variables and the desirability of consistently representing different groups over the years

The primary objective of weighting survey data is to make the survey sample reflective of the larger population of the community. This is done by: 1) reviewing the sample demographics and comparing them to the population norms from the most recent Census or other sources and 2) comparing the responses to different questions for demographic subgroups. The demographic characteristics that are least similar to the Census and yield the most different results are the best candidates for data weighting. A third criterion sometimes used is the importance that the community places on a specific variable. For example, if a jurisdiction feels that accurate race representation is key to staff and public acceptance of the study results, additional consideration will be given in the weighting process to adjusting the race variable.

A special software program using mathematical algorithms is used to calculate the appropriate weights. Data weighting can adjust up to 5 demographic variables. Several different weighting "schemes" may be tested to ensure the best fit for the data.

The process actually begins at the point of sampling. Knowing that residents in single family dwellings are more likely to respond to a mail survey, NRC oversamples residents of multi-family dwellings to ensure their proper representation in the sample data. Rather than giving all residents an equal chance of receiving the survey, this is systematic, stratified sampling, which gives each resident of the jurisdiction a known chance of receiving the survey (and apartment dwellers, for example, a greater chance than single family home dwellers). As a consequence, results must be weighted to recapture the proper representation of apartment dwellers.

The results of the weighting scheme are presented in the following table

Charlotte County Citizen Survey Weighting Table			
Characteristic	Population Norm <sup>3</sup>	Unweighted Data	Weighted Data
<b>Housing</b>			
Rent home	19%	8%	14%
Own home	81%	92%	86%
Detached unit	84%	79%	87%
Attached unit	16%	21%	13%
<b>Race and Ethnicity</b>			
White	91%	93%	92%
Not white	9%	7%	8%
Not Hispanic	95%	99%	97%
Hispanic	5%	1%	3%
White alone, not Hispanic	88%	93%	90%
Hispanic and/or other race	12%	7%	10%
<b>Sex and Age</b>			
Female	53%	47%	51%
Male	47%	53%	49%
18-34 years of age	19%	2%	11%
35-54 years of age	28%	16%	28%
55+ years of age	53%	82%	61%
Females 18-34	9%	1%	5%
Females 35-54	14%	9%	15%
Females 55+	29%	37%	32%
Males 18-34	10%	1%	7%
Males 35-54	13%	7%	14%
Males 55+	24%	45%	28%

<sup>3</sup> Source: 2006-2008 American Community Survey

## SURVEY DATA ANALYSIS AND REPORTING

The survey dataset was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Frequency distributions were presented in the body of the report.

### Use of the “Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor” Response Scale

The scale on which respondents are asked to record their opinions about service and community quality is “excellent,” “good,” “fair” or “poor” (EGFP). This scale has important advantages over other scale possibilities (very good to very bad; very satisfied to very dissatisfied; strongly agree to strongly disagree, as examples). EGFP is used by the plurality of jurisdictions conducting citizen surveys across the U.S. The advantage of familiarity was one that NRC did not want to dismiss when crafting The National Citizen Survey™ questionnaire, because elected officials, staff and residents already are acquainted with opinion surveys measured this way. EGFP also has the advantage of offering three positive options, rather than only two, over which a resident can offer an opinion. While symmetrical scales often are the right choice in other measurement tasks, NRC has found that ratings of almost every local government service in almost every jurisdiction tend, on average, to be positive (that is, above the scale midpoint). Therefore, to permit finer distinctions among positively rated services, EGFP offers three options across which to spread those ratings. EGFP is more neutral because it requires no positive statement of service quality to judge (as agree-disagree scales require) and, finally, EGFP intends to measure absolute quality of service delivery or community quality (unlike satisfaction scales which ignore residents’ perceptions of quality in favor of their report on the acceptability of the level of service offered).

### “Don’t Know” Responses

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 body of the report. In other words, the tables and graphs display the responses from respondents who had an opinion about a specific item.

### Benchmark Comparisons

NRC has been leading the strategic use of surveys for local governments since 1991, when the principals of the company wrote the first edition of what became the classic text on citizen surveying. In *Citizen Surveys: how to do them, how to use them, what they mean*, published by ICMA, not only were the principles for quality survey methods articulated, but both the idea of benchmark data for citizen opinion and the method for gathering benchmark data were pioneered. The argument for benchmarks was called “In Search of Standards.” “What has been missing from a local government’s analysis of its survey results is the context that school administrators can supply when they tell parents how an 80 percent score on the social studies test compares to test results from other school systems...”

NRC’s database of comparative resident opinion is comprised of resident perspectives gathered in citizen surveys from approximately 500 jurisdictions whose residents evaluated local government services. Conducted with typically no fewer than 400 residents in each jurisdiction, opinions are intended to represent over 30 million Americans. NRC has innovated a method for quantitatively integrating the results of surveys that are conducted by NRC with those that others have conducted. The integration methods have been thoroughly described not only in the Citizen Surveys book, but also in *Public Administration Review, Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*. Scholars who specialize in the analysis of citizen surveys regularly have relied on this work (e.g., Kelly, J. &

Swindell, D. (2002). Service quality variation across urban space: First steps towards a model of citizen satisfaction. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 24, 271-288.; Van Ryzin, G., Muzzio, D., Immerwahr, S., Gulick, L. & Martinez, E. (2004). Drivers and consequences of citizen satisfaction: An application of the American Customer Satisfaction Index Model to New York City, *Public Administration Review*, 64, 331- 341). The method described in those publications is refined regularly and statistically tested on a growing number of citizen surveys in NRC's proprietary databases. NRC's work on calculating national benchmarks for resident opinions about service delivery and quality of life won the Samuel C. May award for research excellence from the Western Governmental Research Association.

The comparison evaluations are from the most recent survey completed in each jurisdiction; 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 Role of Comparisons

Benchmark comparisons are used for performance measurement. Jurisdictions use the comparative information to help interpret their own citizen survey results, to create or revise community plans, to evaluate the success of policy or budget decisions and to measure local government performance. Taking the pulse of the community has little meaning without knowing what pulse rate is too high and what is too low. When surveys of service satisfaction turn up "good" citizen evaluations, jurisdictions need to know how others rate their services to understand if "good" is good enough. Furthermore, in the absence of national or peer community comparisons, a jurisdiction is left with comparing its fire protection rating to its street maintenance rating. That comparison is unfair. Streets always lose to fire. More important and harder questions need to be asked; for example, how do residents' ratings of fire service compare to opinions about fire service in other communities?

A police department that provides the fastest and most efficient service – one that closes most of its cases, solves most of its crimes and keeps the crime rate low – still has a problem to fix if the residents in the community it intends to protect believe services are not very good compared to ratings given by residents to their own objectively "worse" departments. The benchmark data can help that police department – or any department – to understand how well citizens think it is doing. Without the comparative data, it would be like bowling in a tournament without knowing what the other teams are scoring. NRC recommends that citizen opinion be used in conjunction with other sources of data about budget, personnel and politics to help managers know how to respond to comparative results.

Jurisdictions in the benchmark database are distributed geographically across the country and range from small to large in population size. Most commonly, comparisons are made to the entire database. Comparisons may also be made to subsets of jurisdictions (for example, within a given region or population category). Despite the differences in jurisdiction characteristics, all are in the business of providing local government services to residents. Though individual jurisdiction circumstances, resources and practices vary, the objective in every community is to provide services that are so timely, tailored and effective that residents conclude the services are of the highest quality. High ratings in any jurisdiction, like SAT scores in any teen household, bring pride and a sense of accomplishment.

## Comparison of Charlotte County to the Benchmark Database

Charlotte County chose to have comparisons made to the entire database and a subset of similar jurisdictions from the database (Florida jurisdictions). A benchmark comparison (the average rating from all the comparison jurisdictions where a similar question was asked) has been provided when a similar question on the Charlotte County Survey was included in NRC's database and there were at least five jurisdictions in which the question was asked. For most questions compared to the entire dataset, there were more than 100 jurisdictions included in the benchmark comparison.

Where comparisons for quality ratings were available, Charlotte County's results were generally noted as being "above" the benchmark, "below" the benchmark or "similar" to the benchmark. For some questions – those related to resident behavior, circumstance or to a local problem – the comparison to the benchmark is designated as "more," "similar" or "less" (for example, the percent of crime victims, residents visiting a park or residents identifying code enforcement as a problem.) In instances where ratings are considerably higher or lower than the benchmark, these ratings have been further demarcated by the attribute of "much," (for example, "much less" or "much above"). These labels come from a statistical comparison of Charlotte County's rating to the benchmark where a rating is considered "similar" if it is within the margin of error; "above," "below," "more" or "less" if the difference between your jurisdiction's rating and the benchmark is greater the margin of error; and "much above," "much below," "much more" or "much less" if the difference between your jurisdiction's rating and the benchmark is more than twice the margin of error.

## APPENDIX C: SURVEY MATERIALS

The following pages contain copies of the survey materials sent to randomly selected households within Charlotte County.

Dear Charlotte County Resident,

Your household has been selected at random to participate in an anonymous citizen survey about Charlotte County. You will receive a copy of the survey next week in the mail with instructions for completing and returning it. Thank you in advance for helping us with this important project!

Sincerely,



Commissioner Bob Starr  
Chairman of the Board

Dear Charlotte County Resident,

Your household has been selected at random to participate in an anonymous citizen survey about Charlotte County. You will receive a copy of the survey next week in the mail with instructions for completing and returning it. Thank you in advance for helping us with this important project!

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**Charlotte County Government**  
Administration/PIO  
18500 Murdock Circle  
Suite 538  
Port Charlotte, FL 33948

Presorted  
First Class Mail  
US Postage  
PAID  
Boulder, CO  
Permit NO. 94



**Charlotte County Government**  
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# Charlotte County Government

"To exceed expectations in the delivery of public services."

[www.CharlotteCountyFL.com](http://www.CharlotteCountyFL.com)



December 2010

Dear Charlotte County Resident:

Charlotte County wants to know what you think about our community and municipal government. You have been randomly selected to participate in Charlotte County's 2010 Citizen Survey.

Please take a few minutes to fill out the enclosed Citizen Survey. Your feedback will help the County set benchmarks for tracking the quality of services provided to residents. Your answers will help Charlotte County Commissioners make decisions that affect our community. You should find the questions interesting and we will definitely find your answers useful. Please participate!

**To get a representative sample of Charlotte County residents, the adult (anyone 18 years or older) in your household who most recently had a birthday should complete this survey. Year of birth of the adult does not matter.**

Please have the appropriate member of the household spend a few minutes to answer all the questions and return the survey in the enclosed postage-paid envelope. **Your responses will remain completely anonymous.**

Your participation in this survey is very important – especially since your household is one of only a small number of households being surveyed. If you have any questions about the Citizen Survey please call 941-623-1092.

Please help us shape the future of Charlotte County. Thank you for your time and participation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Starr".

Commissioner Bob Starr  
Chairman of the Board

# Charlotte County Government

"To exceed expectations in the delivery of public services."

[www.CharlotteCountyFL.com](http://www.CharlotteCountyFL.com)



December 2010

Dear Charlotte County Resident:

About one week ago, you should have received a copy of the enclosed survey. **If you completed it and sent it back, we thank you for your time and ask you to discard this survey. Please do not respond twice.** If you have not had a chance to complete the survey, we would appreciate your response. Charlotte County wants to know what you think about our community and municipal government. You have been randomly selected to participate in Charlotte County's Citizen Survey.

Please take a few minutes to fill out the enclosed Citizen Survey. Your feedback will help the County set benchmarks for tracking the quality of services provided to residents. Your answers will help the County Commissioners make decisions that affect our community. You should find the questions interesting and we will definitely find your answers useful. Please participate!

**To get a representative sample of Charlotte County residents, the adult (anyone 18 years or older) in your household who most recently had a birthday should complete this survey. Year of birth of the adult does not matter.**

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Please help us shape the future of Charlotte County. Thank you for your time and participation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Starr". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Commissioner Bob Starr  
Chairman of the Board

# Charlotte County 2010 Citizen Survey

Please complete this questionnaire if you are the adult (age 18 or older) in the household who most recently had a birthday. The adult's year of birth does not matter. Please select the response (by circling the number or checking the box) that most closely represents your opinion for each question. Your responses are anonymous and will be reported in group form only.

**1. Please rate each of the following aspects of quality of life in Charlotte County:**

	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
Charlotte County as a place to live.....	1	2	3	4	5
Your neighborhood as a place to live.....	1	2	3	4	5
Charlotte County as a place to raise children .....	1	2	3	4	5
Charlotte County as a place to work.....	1	2	3	4	5
Charlotte County as a place to retire .....	1	2	3	4	5
The overall quality of life in Charlotte County.....	1	2	3	4	5

**2. Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Charlotte County as a whole:**

	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
Sense of community.....	1	2	3	4	5
Overall appearance of Charlotte County .....	1	2	3	4	5
Overall quality of new development in Charlotte County.....	1	2	3	4	5
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Charlotte County .....	1	2	3	4	5
Shopping opportunities.....	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunities to attend cultural activities.....	1	2	3	4	5
Recreational opportunities .....	1	2	3	4	5
Employment opportunities .....	1	2	3	4	5
Educational opportunities .....	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunities to participate in community matters.....	1	2	3	4	5
Ease of car travel in Charlotte County.....	1	2	3	4	5
Ease of bus travel in Charlotte County.....	1	2	3	4	5
Ease of bicycle travel in Charlotte County .....	1	2	3	4	5
Ease of walking in Charlotte County.....	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of paths and walking trails .....	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of affordable quality housing.....	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of affordable quality child care .....	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of affordable quality health care .....	1	2	3	4	5
Overall image or reputation of Charlotte County.....	1	2	3	4	5

**3. Please rate the speed of growth in the following categories in Charlotte County over the past 2 years:**

	<i>Much too slow</i>	<i>Somewhat too slow</i>	<i>Right amount</i>	<i>Somewhat too fast</i>	<i>Much too fast</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
Population growth .....	1	2	3	4	5	6
Retail growth (stores, restaurants, etc.).....	1	2	3	4	5	6
Jobs growth.....	1	2	3	4	5	6

**4. To what degree, if at all, are run down buildings, weed lots or junk vehicles a problem in Charlotte County?**

- Not a problem   
  Minor problem   
  Moderate problem   
  Major problem   
  Don't know

**5. Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel from the following in Charlotte County:**

	Very safe	Somewhat safe	Neither safe nor unsafe	Somewhat unsafe	Very unsafe	Don't know
Violent crime (e.g., rape, assault, robbery) .....	1	2	3	4	5	6
Property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft).....	1	2	3	4	5	6
Environmental hazards, including toxic waste.....	1	2	3	4	5	6

**6. Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel:**

	Very safe	Somewhat safe	Neither safe nor unsafe	Somewhat unsafe	Very unsafe	Don't know
In your neighborhood during the day.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
In your neighborhood after dark.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
In Charlotte County's downtown area(s) during the day .	1	2	3	4	5	6
In Charlotte County's downtown area(s) after dark .....	1	2	3	4	5	6

**7. During the past 12 months, were you or anyone in your household the victim of any crime?**

- No → Go to Question 9   
  Yes → Go to Question 8   
  Don't know → Go to Question 9

**8. If yes, was this crime (these crimes) reported to the police?**

- No   
  Yes   
  Don't know

**9. In the last 12 months, about how many times, if ever, have you or other household members participated in the following activities in Charlotte County?**

	Never	Once or twice	3 to 12 times	13 to 26 times	More than 26 times
Used Charlotte County public libraries or their services .....	1	2	3	4	5
Used Charlotte County recreation centers .....	1	2	3	4	5
Participated in a recreation program or activity .....	1	2	3	4	5
Visited a neighborhood park or County park .....	1	2	3	4	5
Ridden a local bus within Charlotte County .....	1	2	3	4	5
Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting .....	1	2	3	4	5
Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other County-sponsored public meeting on cable television, the Internet or other media .....	1	2	3	4	5
Read Charlotte County Newsletter .....	1	2	3	4	5
Visited the Charlotte County Web site (at www.CharlotteCountyFL.com).....	1	2	3	4	5
Recycled used paper, cans or bottles from your home.....	1	2	3	4	5
Volunteered your time to some group or activity in Charlotte County .....	1	2	3	4	5

**10. About how often, if at all, do you talk to or visit with your immediate neighbors (people who live in the 10 or 20 households that are closest to you)?**

- Just about every day  
 Several times a week  
 Several times a month  
 Less than several times a month

# Charlotte County 2010 Citizen Survey

## 11. Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Charlotte County:

	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
Sheriff services .....	1	2	3	4	5
Fire services .....	1	2	3	4	5
Ambulance or emergency medical services.....	1	2	3	4	5
Crime prevention .....	1	2	3	4	5
Fire prevention and education .....	1	2	3	4	5
Road repair .....	1	2	3	4	5
Bus or transit services.....	1	2	3	4	5
Garbage collection.....	1	2	3	4	5
Recycling.....	1	2	3	4	5
Yard waste pick-up .....	1	2	3	4	5
Storm drainage.....	1	2	3	4	5
Drinking water.....	1	2	3	4	5
Sewer services .....	1	2	3	4	5
County parks.....	1	2	3	4	5
Recreation programs or classes .....	1	2	3	4	5
Recreation centers or facilities.....	1	2	3	4	5
Charlotte County Open Space .....	1	2	3	4	5
Nature programs or classes .....	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of historic sites .....	1	2	3	4	5
Land use, planning and zoning .....	1	2	3	4	5
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc.) .....	1	2	3	4	5
Animal control .....	1	2	3	4	5
Economic development .....	1	2	3	4	5
Health services .....	1	2	3	4	5
Services to seniors.....	1	2	3	4	5
Services to youth.....	1	2	3	4	5
Services to low-income people .....	1	2	3	4	5
Public library services .....	1	2	3	4	5
Public information services .....	1	2	3	4	5
Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations) .....	1	2	3	4	5
Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts .....	1	2	3	4	5
Mental Health services.....	1	2	3	4	5
Drug and Alcohol services .....	1	2	3	4	5

## 12. Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by each of the following?

	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
Charlotte County.....	1	2	3	4	5
The Federal Government .....	1	2	3	4	5
The State Government .....	1	2	3	4	5

**13. Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of Charlotte County within the last 12 months (including sheriff, receptionists, planners or any others)?**

- No → Go to Question 15       Yes → Go to Question 14

**14. What was your impression of the employee(s) of Charlotte County in your most recent contact? (Rate each characteristic below.)**

	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
Knowledge.....	1	2	3	4	5
Responsiveness.....	1	2	3	4	5
Courtesy.....	1	2	3	4	5
Overall impression.....	1	2	3	4	5

**15. Please rate the following categories of Charlotte County government performance:**

	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
The value of services for the taxes paid to Charlotte County.....	1	2	3	4	5
The overall direction that Charlotte County is taking.....	1	2	3	4	5
The job Charlotte County government does at welcoming citizen involvement.....	1	2	3	4	5

**16. Please indicate how likely or unlikely you are to do each of the following:**

	<i>Very likely</i>	<i>Somewhat likely</i>	<i>Somewhat unlikely</i>	<i>Very unlikely</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
Recommend living in Charlotte County to someone who asks.....	1	2	3	4	5
Remain in Charlotte County for the next five years.....	1	2	3	4	5

**17. 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:**

- Very positive       Somewhat positive       Neutral       Somewhat negative       Very negative

**18. Please check the response that comes closest to your opinion for each of the following questions:**

**a. How important, if at all, are each of the following issues for the County in the next 5 years?**

	<i>Essential</i>	<i>Very important</i>	<i>Somewhat important</i>	<i>Not at all important</i>	<i>Don't Know</i>
Crime.....	1	2	3	4	5
Environmental protection.....	1	2	3	4	5
Growth management.....	1	2	3	4	5
Traffic.....	1	2	3	4	5
Road conditions.....	1	2	3	4	5
Water supply.....	1	2	3	4	5

**b. How do you rate the job that Charlotte County is doing to manage growth and development?**

- Excellent  
 Good  
 Fair  
 Poor  
 Don't know

**c. How do you usually learn about County news? Please check all that apply:**

- Attend County meetings  
 Brochures, flyers and handouts  
 County Government Channel: CCTV-20  
 County Web site  
 Charlotte Alert  
 Local newspapers  
 Network television news shows  
 Word of mouth  
 Other  
 None of these

# Charlotte County 2010 Citizen Survey

Our last questions are about you and your household. Again, all of your responses to this survey are completely anonymous and will be reported in group form only.

**D1. Are you currently employed for pay?**

- No → Go to Question D3
- Yes, full time → Go to Question D2
- Yes, part time → Go to Question D2

**D2. During a typical week, how many days do you commute to work (for the longest distance of your commute) in each of the ways listed below? (Enter the total number of days, using whole numbers.)**

- Motorized vehicle (e.g., car, truck, van, motorcycle, etc...) by myself ..... days
- Motorized vehicle (e.g., car, truck, van, motorcycle, etc...) with other children or adults ..... days
- Bus, Rail, Subway or other public transportation ..... days
- Walk ..... days
- Bicycle ..... days
- Work at home ..... days
- Other ..... days

**D3. How many years have you lived in Charlotte County?**

- Less than 2 years     11-20 years
- 2-5 years             More than 20 years
- 6-10 years

**D4. Which best describes the building you live in?**

- One family house detached from any other houses
- House attached to one or more houses (e.g., a duplex or townhome)
- Building with two or more apartments or condominiums
- Mobile home
- Other

**D5. Is this house, apartment or mobile home...**

- Rented for cash or occupied without cash payment?
- Owned by you or someone in this house with a mortgage or free and clear?

**D6. 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)?**

- Less than \$300 per month
- \$300 to \$599 per month
- \$600 to \$999 per month
- \$1,000 to \$1,499 per month
- \$1,500 to \$2,499 per month
- \$2,500 or more per month

**D7. Do any children 17 or under live in your household?**

- No                       Yes

**D8. Are you or any other members of your household aged 65 or older?**

- No                       Yes

**D9. 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.)**

- Less than \$24,999
- \$25,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$149,999
- \$150,000 or more

**Please respond to both question D10 and D11:**

**D10. Are you Spanish, Hispanic or Latino?**

- No, not Spanish, Hispanic or Latino
- Yes, I consider myself to be Spanish, Hispanic or Latino

**D11. What is your race? (Mark one or more races to indicate what race you consider yourself to be.)**

- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian, Asian Indian or Pacific Islander
- Black or African American
- White
- Other

**D12. In which category is your age?**

- 18-24 years             55-64 years
- 25-34 years             65-74 years
- 35-44 years             75 years or older
- 45-54 years

**D13. What is your sex?**

- Female                 Male

**D14. Are you registered to vote in your jurisdiction?**

- No                       Ineligible to vote
- Yes                      Don't know

**D15. Many people don't have time to vote in elections. Did you vote in the last general election?**

- No                       Ineligible to vote
- Yes                      Don't know

**D16. Do you have a cell phone?**

- No                       Yes

**D17. Do you have a land line at home?**

- No                       Yes

**D18. If you have both a cell phone and a land line, which do you consider your primary telephone number?**

- Cell                     Land line             Both

Thank you for completing this survey. Please return the completed survey in the postage paid envelope to: National Research Center, Inc., PO Box 549, Belle Mead, NJ 08502



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