Cobalt CommunityResearch

Supporting Decisions I Inspiring Ideas

Hartland Township Citizen Engagement and Priority Assessment

January 2015

2015162

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Background on Cobalt Community Research

- 501c3 not for profit research coalition
- Mission to provide research and education
- Developed to meet the research needs of schools, local governments and nonprofit organizations
- Partnered with Township on 2012 citizen survey and 2014 business survey

Measuring Where You Are:
Why Research Matters

- Understanding community values and priorities helps you plan and communicate more effectively about Township decisions
- Perception impacts behaviors you care about
- Understanding community perception helps you improve and promote the Township
- Community engagement improves support for difficult decisions
- Bottom line outcome measurement of service and trust: Good administration requires quality measurement and reporting

Study Goals

- Support budget and strategic planning decisions
- Gauge support or opposition for potential millage and public safety options
- Gather public feedback on planning and zoning issues
- Identify which aspects of community provide the greatest leverage on citizens' overall satisfaction
- Measure improvements by tracking performance from 2012 survey
- Benchmark performance against a standardized performance index statewide, regionally and nationally

Bottom Line

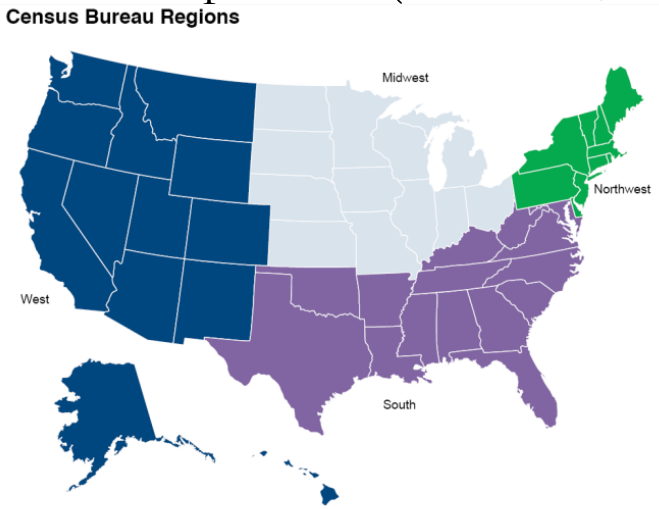
- The Township has strong performance and exceeds state, regional and national benchmarks in many dimensions
- 2012 Hartland ACSI Score = 72
- 2015 Hartland ACSI Score = 74
  - 2015 Michigan = 60
  - 2015 Midwest = 61
  - 2015 National = 61
- Areas where efforts to improve will further strengthen scores:

2015 Drivers:	**2012 Drivers:**
Economic Health	Parks and Recreation
Local Government Management	Public Schools
Property Taxes	Local Government Management
Parks and Recreation	Economic Health

- Top 4 service/program funding priorities (same as 2012):
  - Road maintenance, Law enforcement, Fire response, Emergency medical response
- Detailed information by demographic groups available to aid in policy review
  - Detail by: years of residency, own/rent, age, education, income level, marital status, household composition, gender, type of home and zip code

Available Tools

- Detailed questions and responses broken by demographic group and "thermal mapped" so lower scores are red and higher scores are blue
- Online portal to allow side-by-side comparisons of groups and subgroups (for example, breaking down the benchmarked scores of individuals divided by age, gender, etc.)
- Online portal allowing download of data into MS Excel
- Comparison scores with local governments in Michigan, the Midwest and across the nation
- Comparison scores with non-local government comparables (industries, companies, federal agencies)



Preserving Voice: Looking Into Detail

Sample:

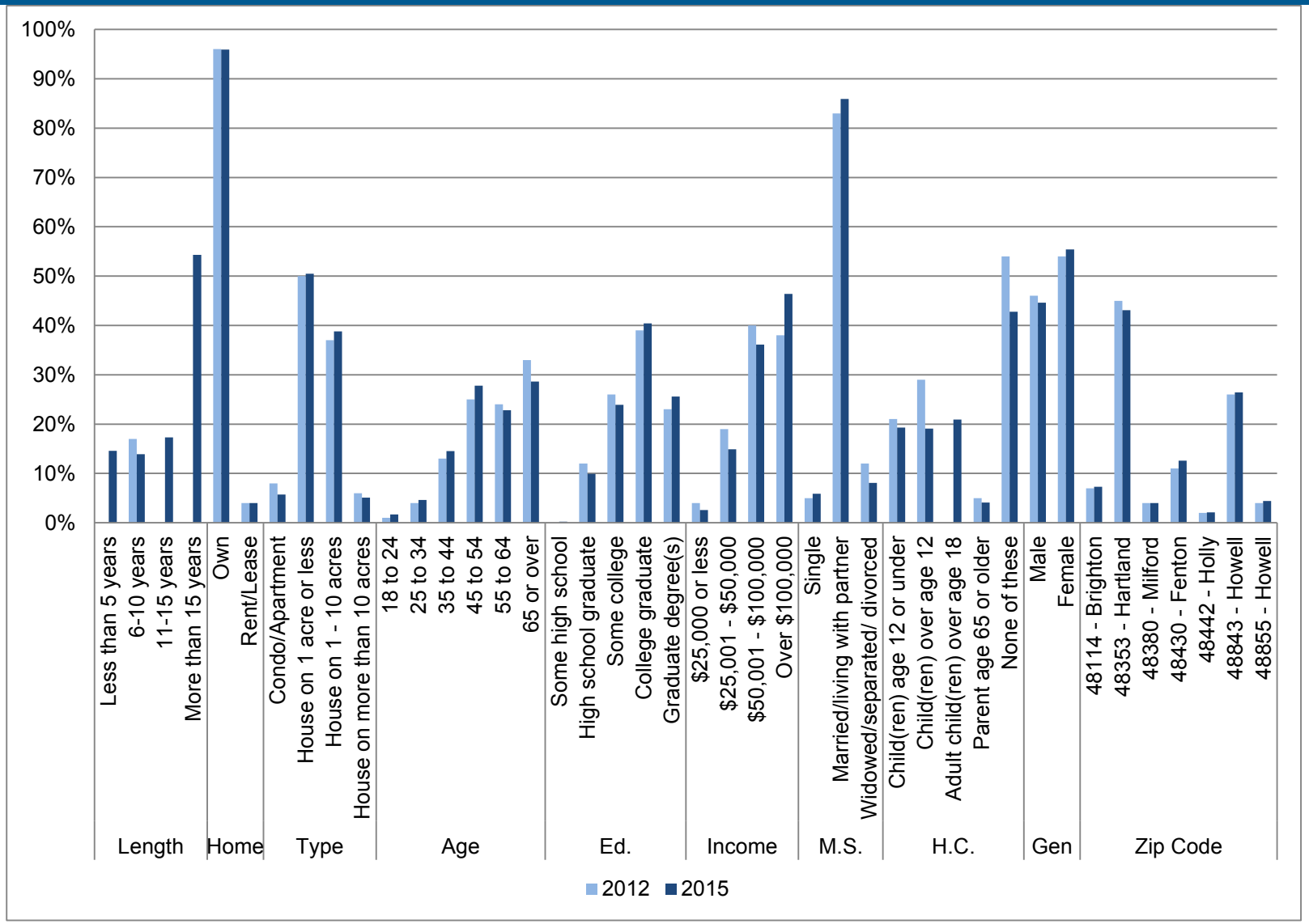
Hartland Township
2015 Public Safety Questions

		Current Public Safety Services in Township			
		Level of safety you feel in the community	Level of police protection in Hartland Township	Level of police protection provided by the Livingston County Sheriff's Department	Level of police protection by the Michigan State Police
2015 Overall		**8.4**	**6.8**	**7.1**	**6.8**
Length of Residency	Less than 5 years	8.8	7.3	7.3	6.9
	6-10 years	8.7	7.3	7.3	6.9
	11-15 years	8.4	6.4	6.9	6.6
	More than 15 years	8.3	6.8	7.0	6.8
Do you own or rent/lease your residence?	Own	8.4	6.8	7.0	6.8
	Rent/Lease	8.9	7.2	7.6	7.0
Age	18 to 24	8.6	7.9	7.9	7.7
	25 to 34	8.8	7.3	7.4	7.4
	35 to 44	8.8	6.8	6.9	6.3
	45 to 54	8.5	6.8	7.1	6.6
	55 to 64	8.2	6.9	7.0	7.1
	65 or over	8.2	6.6	6.9	6.7
Zip Code	48114 - Brighton	8.5	6.8	6.9	6.9
	48353 - Hartland	8.4	6.8	7.1	6.7
	48380 - Milford	8.8	6.6	7.3	6.7
	48430 - Fenton	8.3	6.8	6.8	6.8
	48442 - Holly	9.0	8.2	8.4	7.8
	48843 - Howell	8.4	6.9	7.0	6.9
	48855 - Howell	8.5	6.6	7.2	7.2

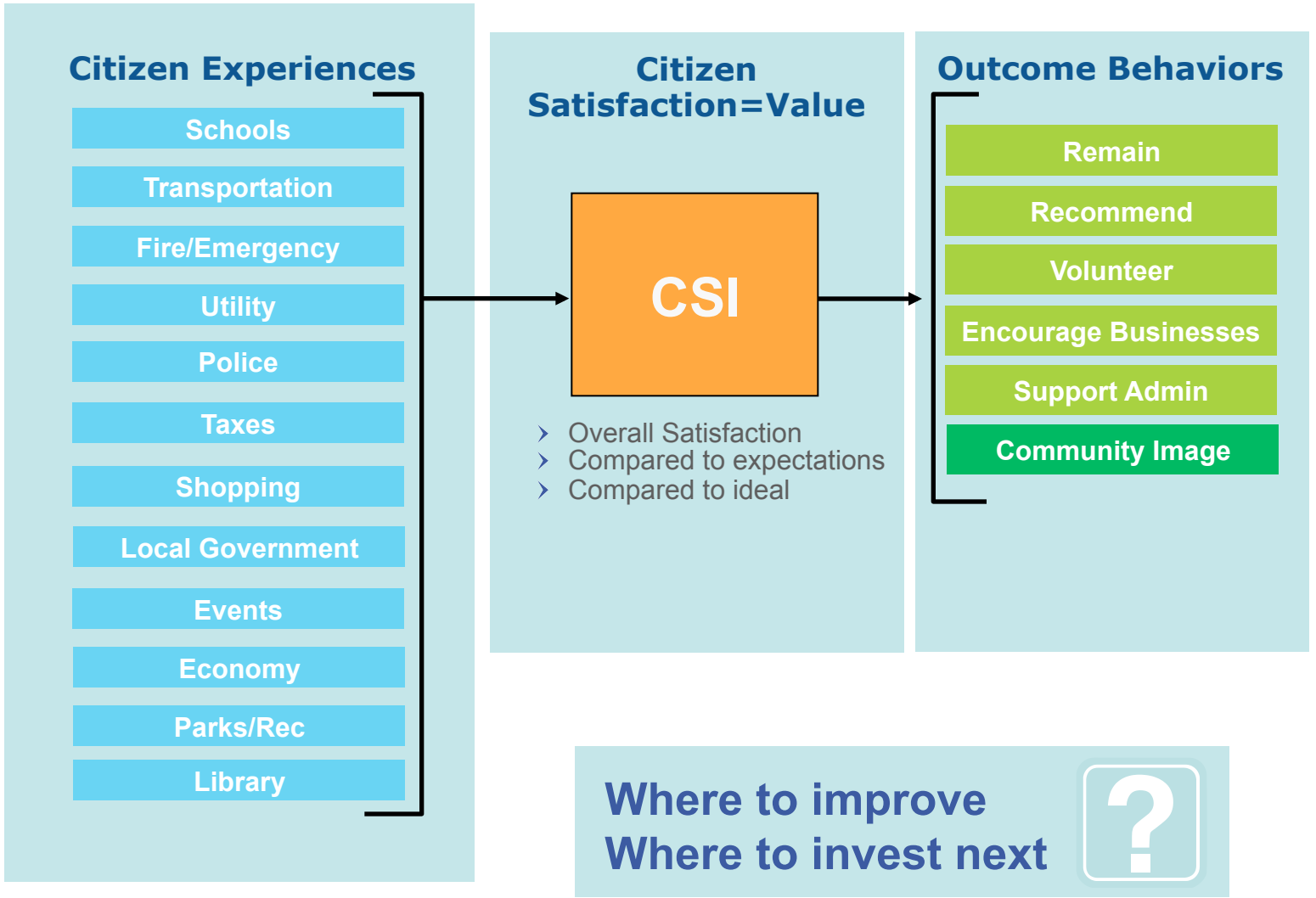
Methodology

- Random sample of 1,860 residents drawn from voter records
- Utilized www.random.org, a well-respected utility used internationally by many universities and researchers to generate true random numbers
- Conducted using two mailings in November and December 2015 (same time frame as 2012)
- Used survey identification number to ensure valid response
- Exceptional response from 540 residents, providing a response rate of 29%, a conventional margin of error of +/- 4.1 percent in the raw data and an ACSI margin of error of +/- 1.7 percent (95% confidence)
  - 2012 = 758 responses, +/- 2.6 percent and +/- 1.5 percent (95% confidence)
  - Note: National surveys with a margin of error +/- 5% require a sample of 384 responses to reflect a population of 330,000,000
  - Compared gender of respondents to Census and voter list, small skew towards males, but within 1% of Census and 3% of voter list

Respondent Profile – similar to 2012



Citizen Engagement Model



Where to improve
Where to invest next

Results

Comparing 2012 and 2015

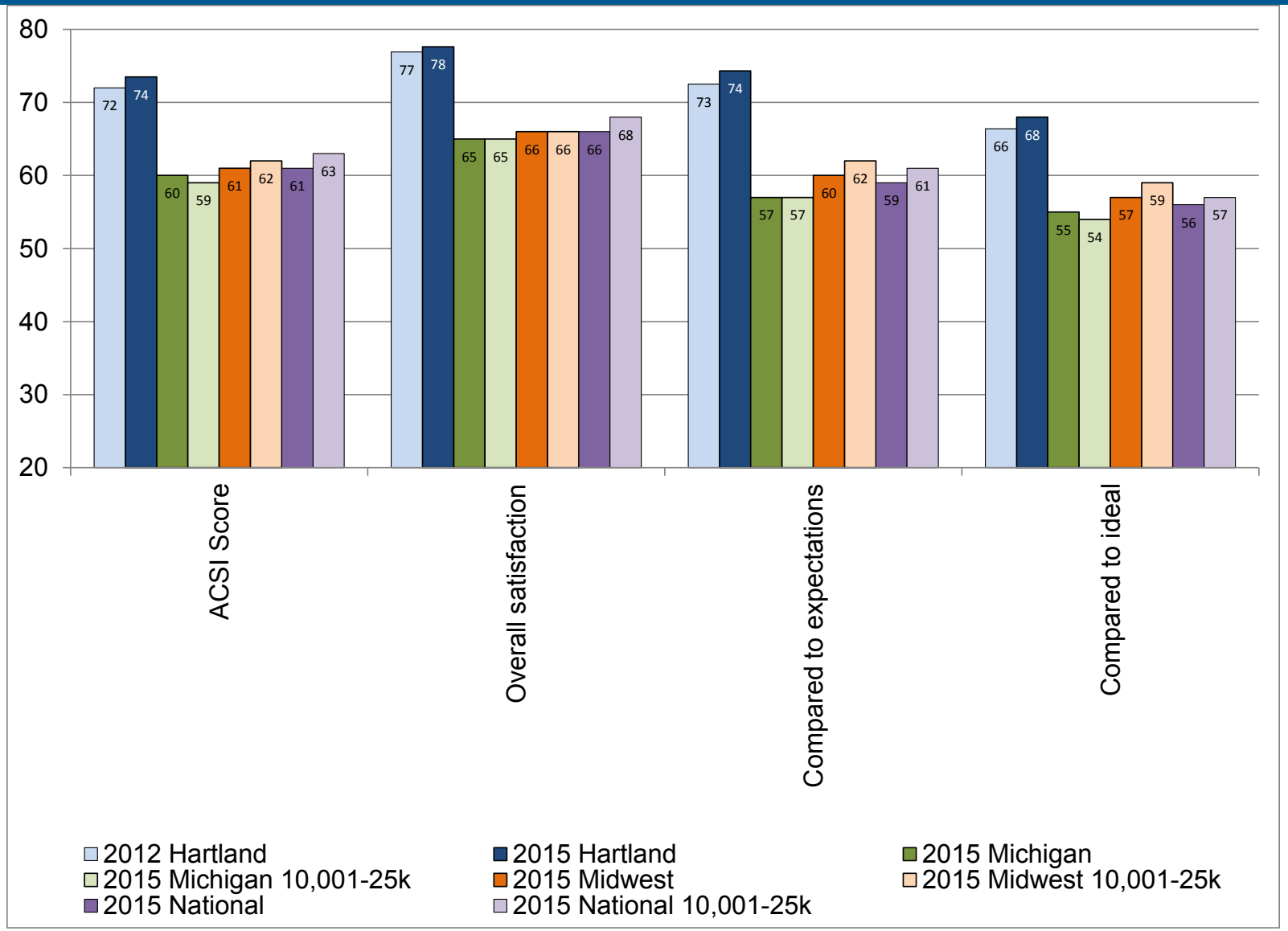
(High score = 100)

Areas with strong impact on overall engagement

	2012 Hartland	2015 Hartland	Change from '12 to '15
Transportation Infrastructure	55	45	-10
Fire and Emergency Medical Services	78	82	4
Utility Services	72	70	-2
Police Department	74	80	6
Property Taxes	63	62	-1
Public Schools	77	83	6
Local Government	65	67	2
Community Events	57	58	1
Economic Health	56	64	8
Parks and Recreation	73	74	1
Library	86	83	-3
ACSI Score	72	74	2
Community Image	74	75	1

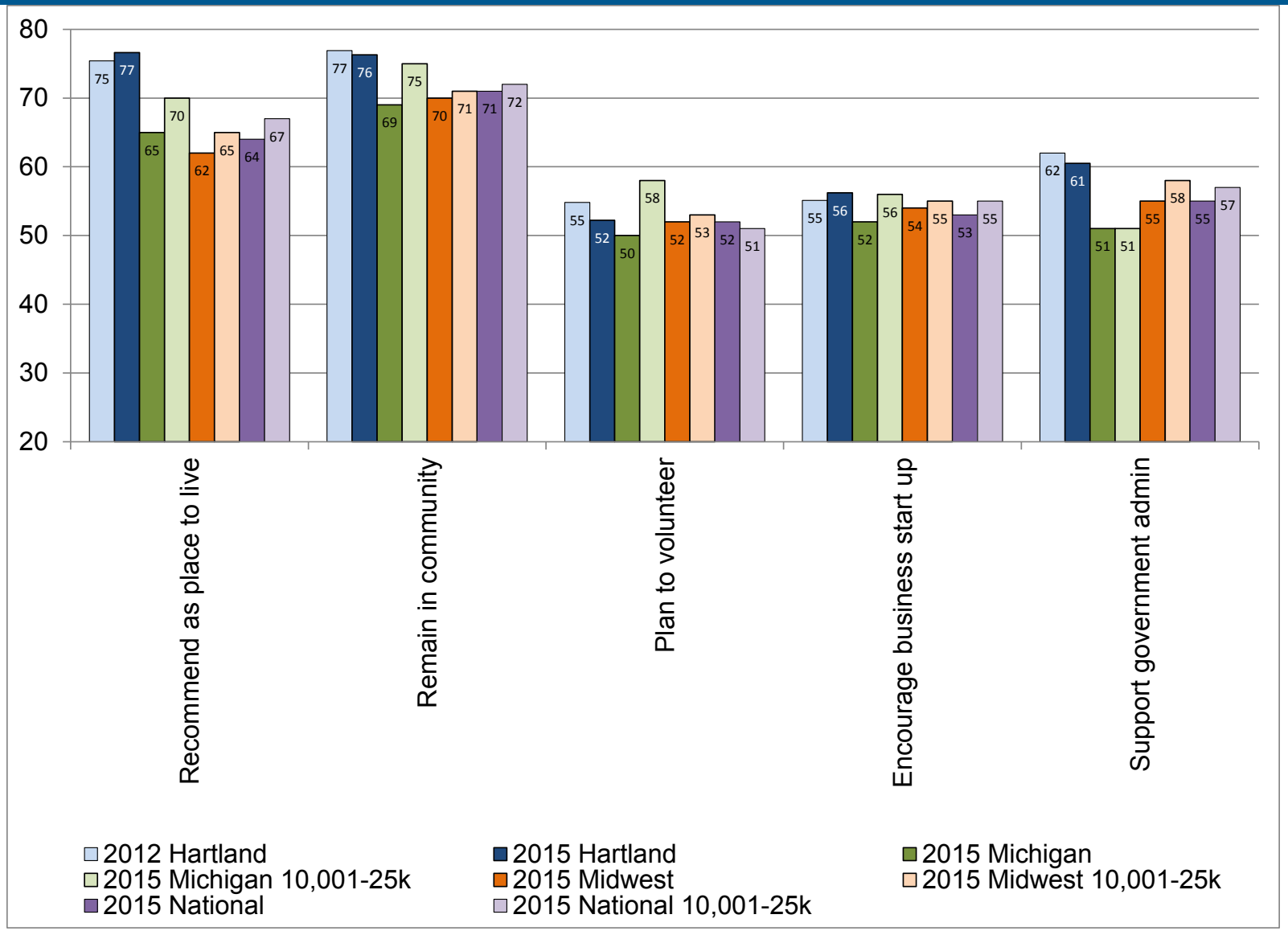
Community Satisfaction to Benchmarks

(High score = 100)



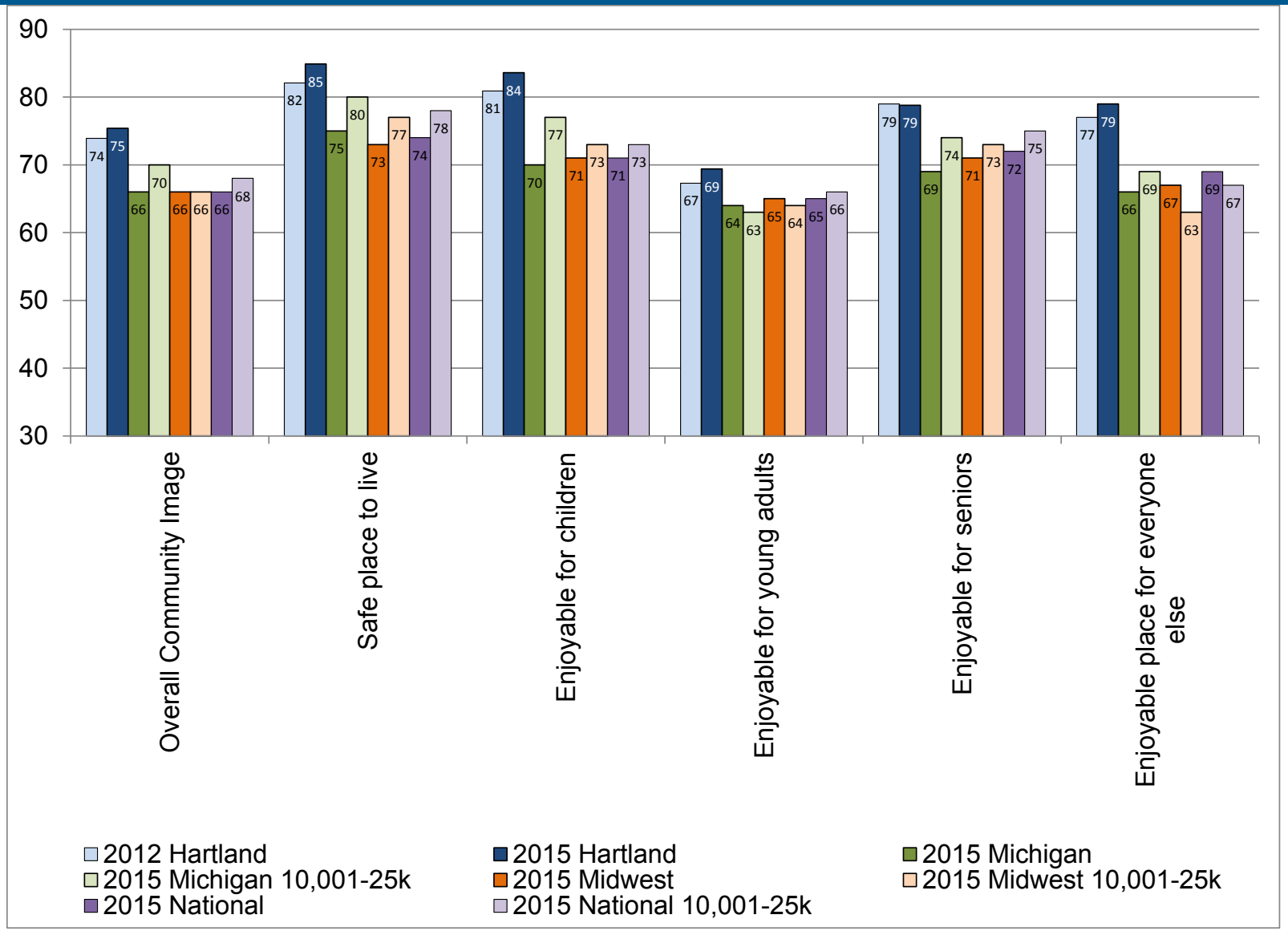
Outcome Behaviors to Benchmarks

(High score = 100)



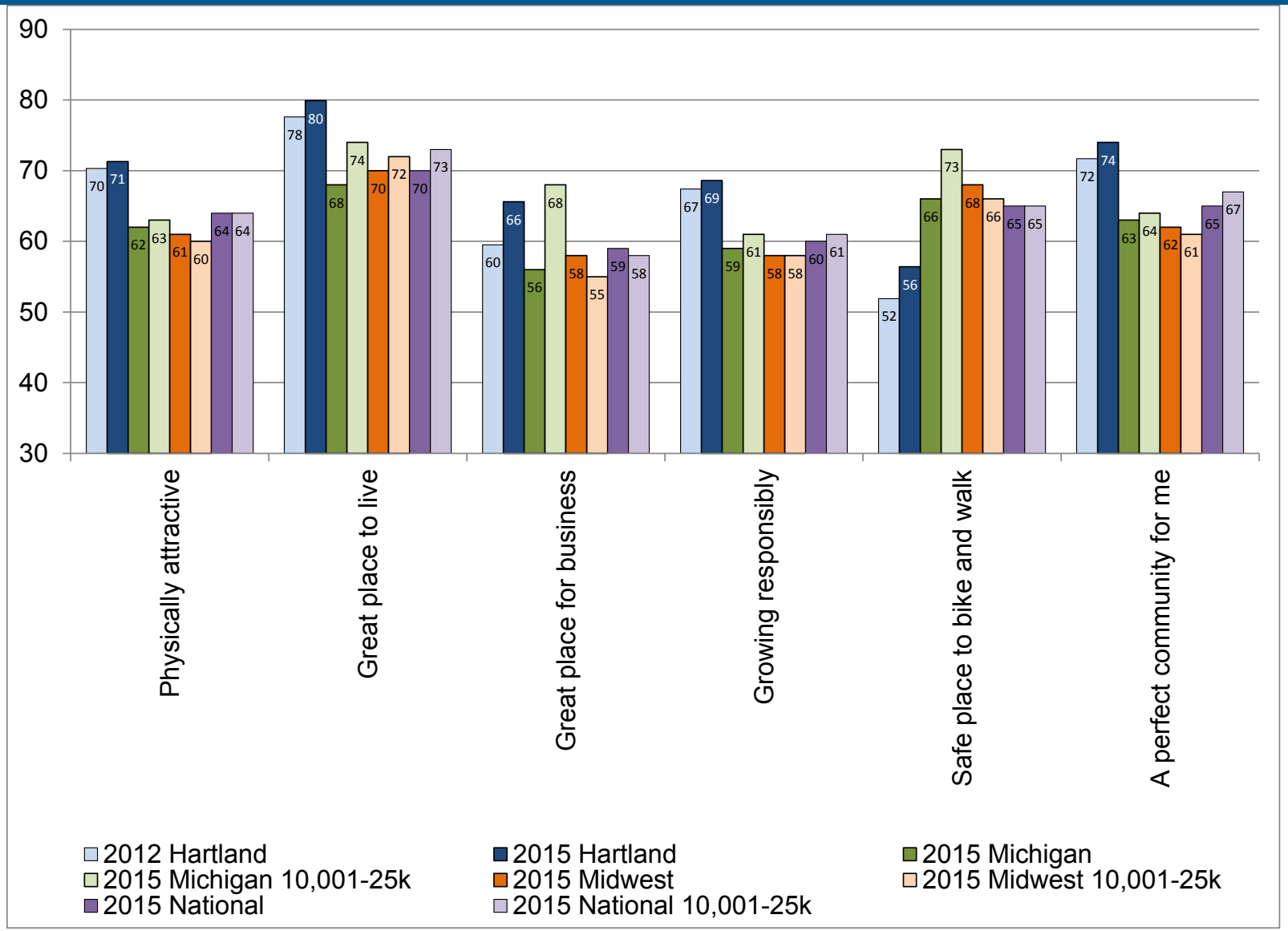
Community Image to Benchmarks

(High score = 100)



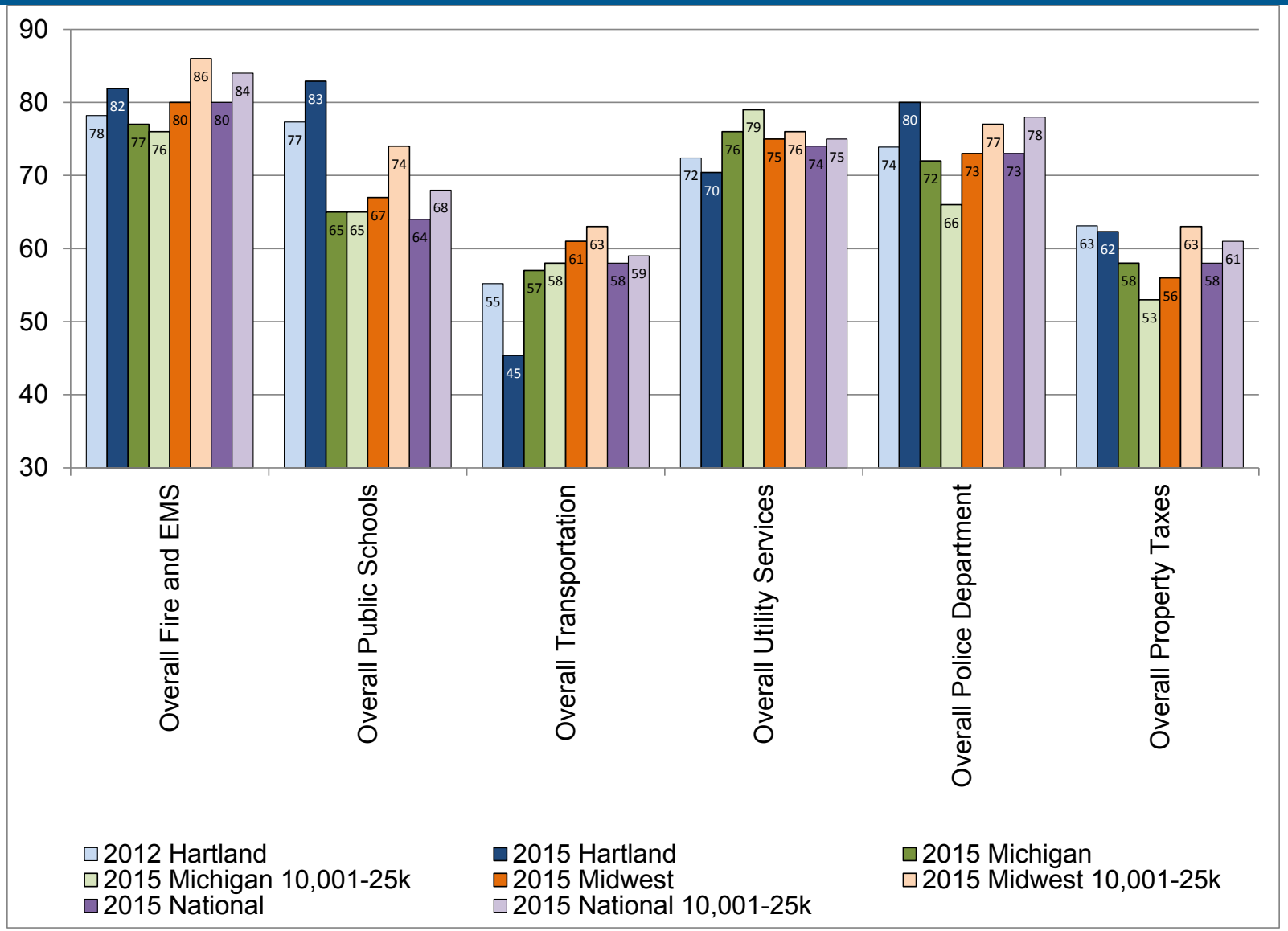
Community Image to Benchmarks *(cont.)*

(High score = 100)



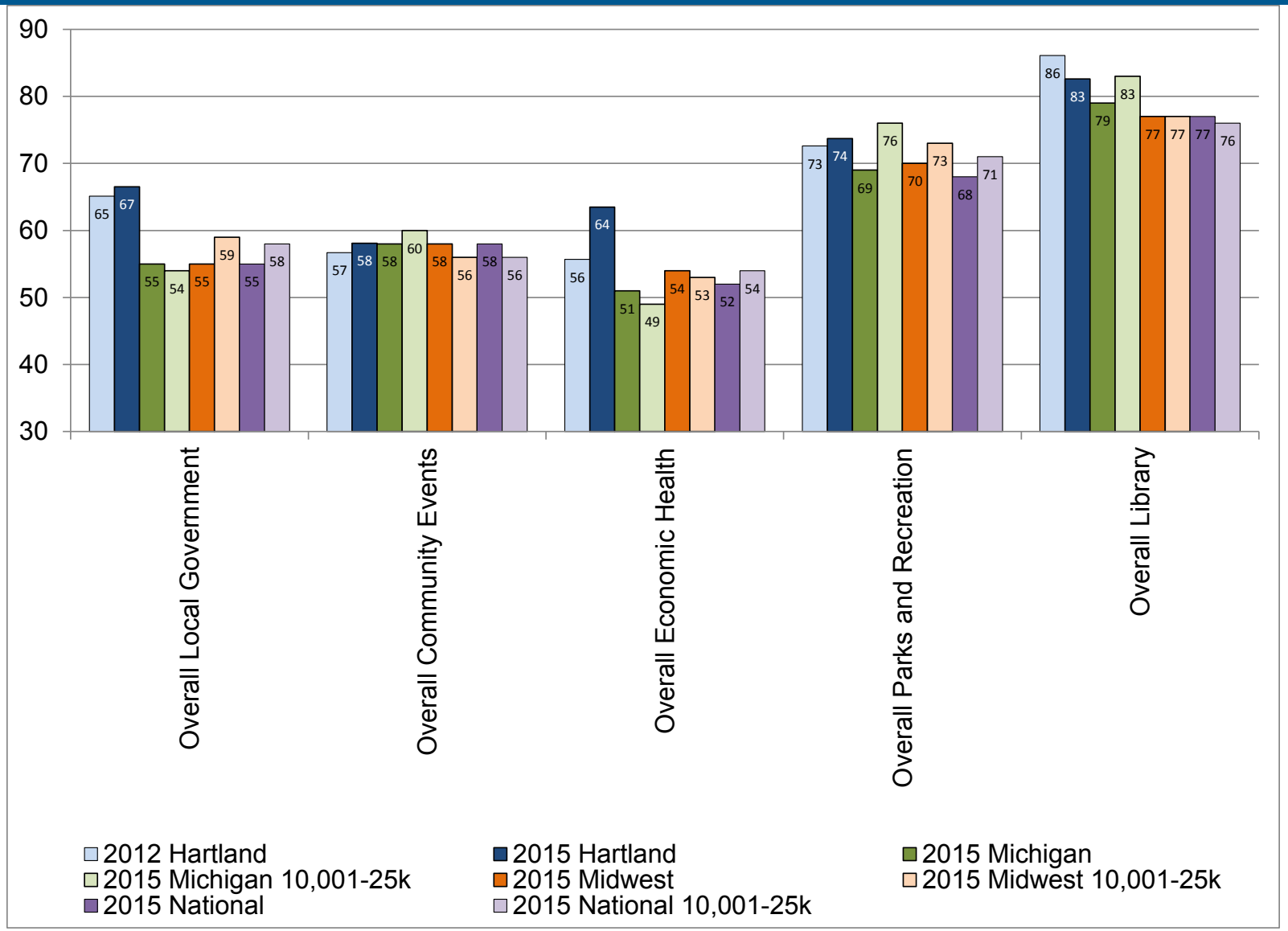
Quality of Life Components to Benchmarks

(High score = 100)

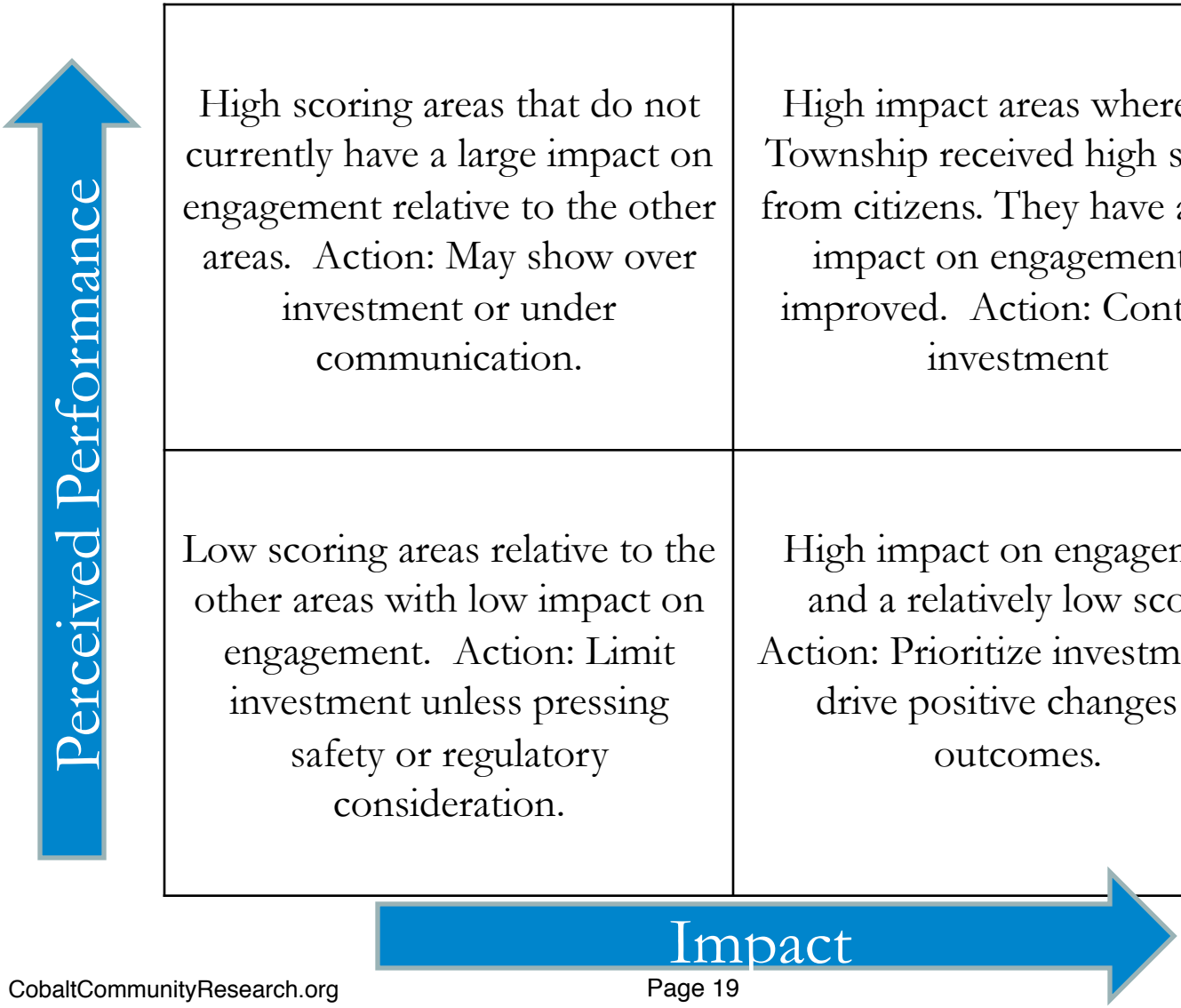


Quality of Life to Benchmarks *(cont.)*

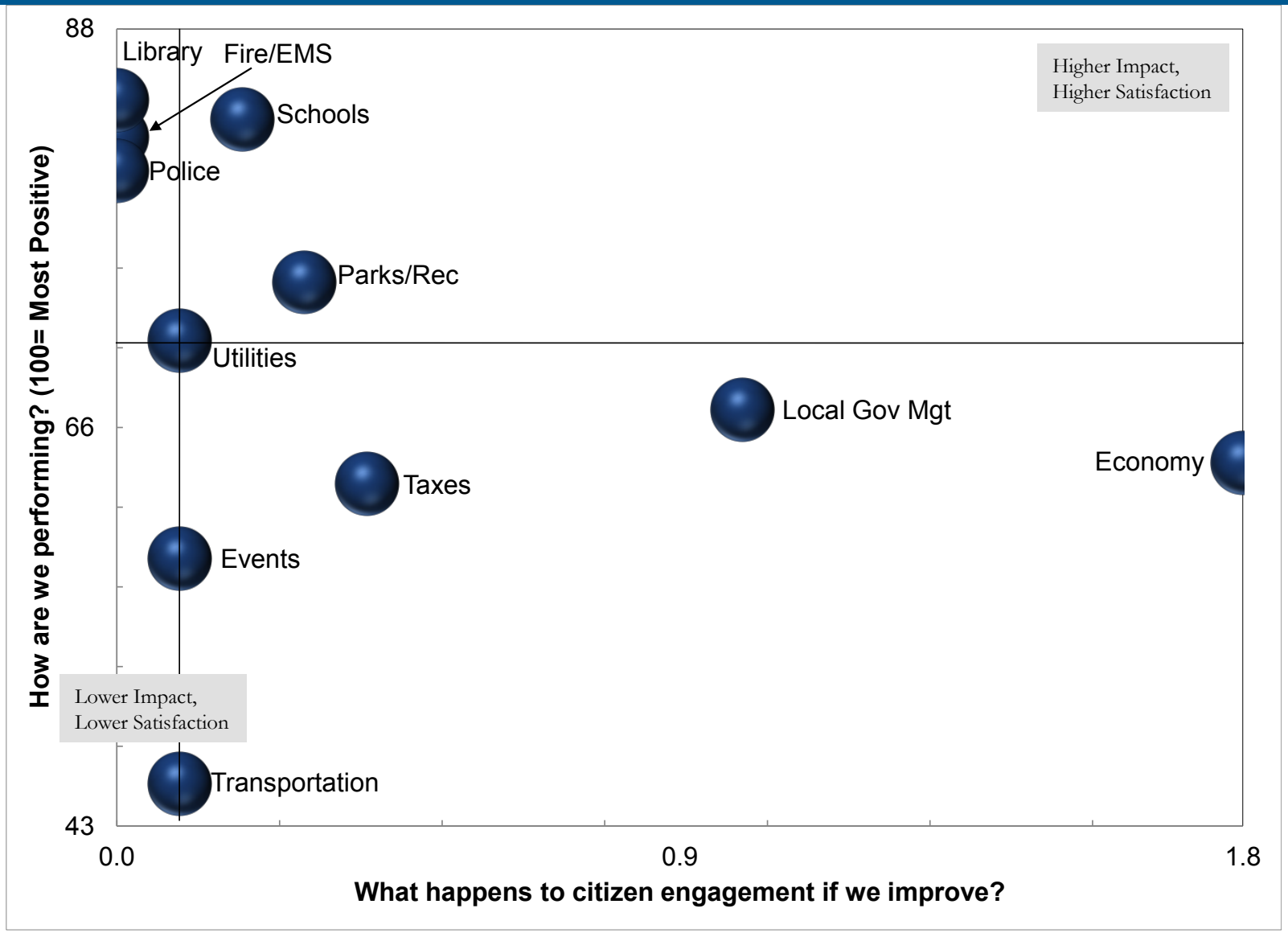
(High score = 100)



Understanding the Charts:
Community Questions – Long-term Drivers

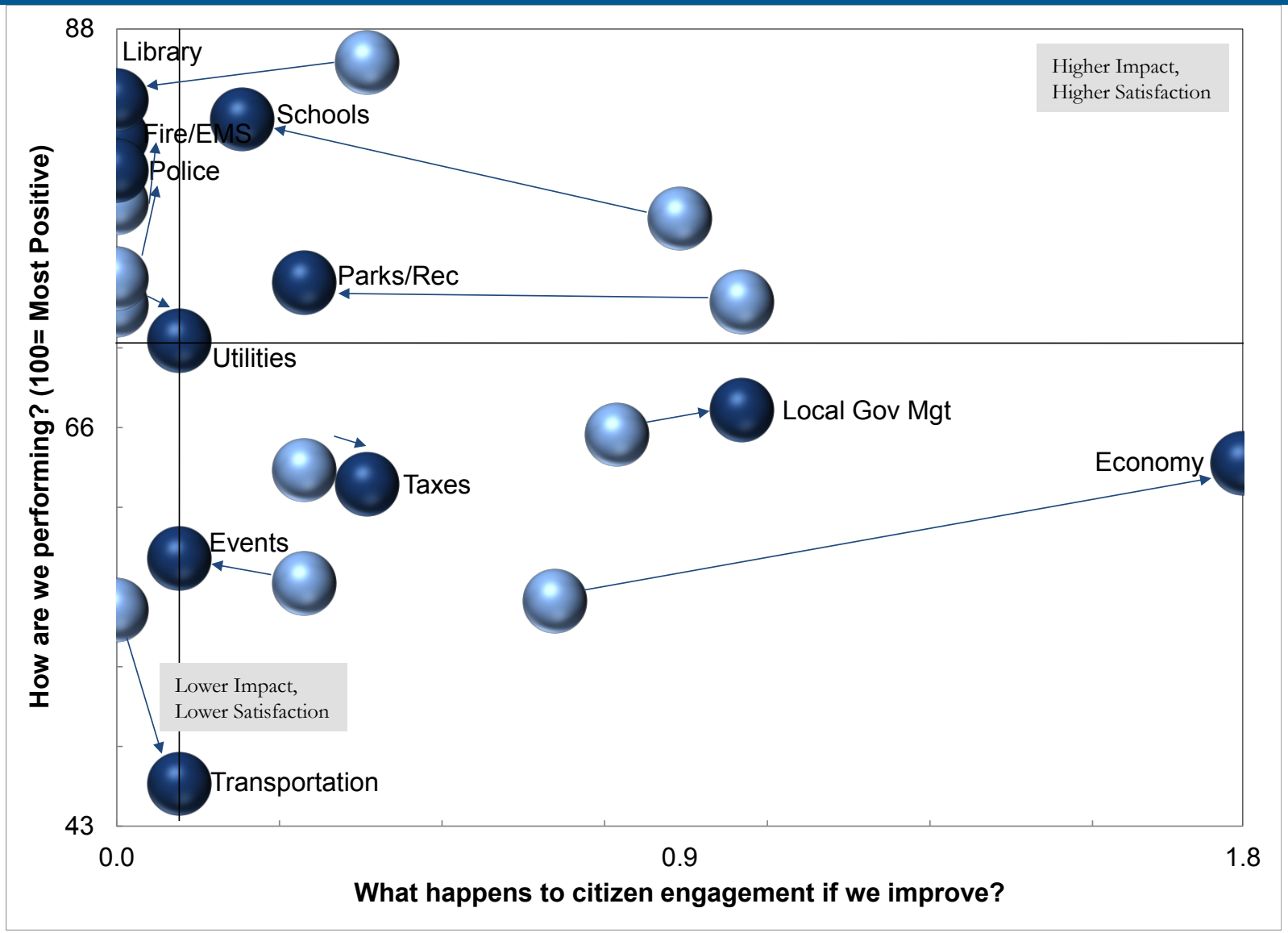


Drivers of Satisfaction and Behavior:
Strategic Priorities



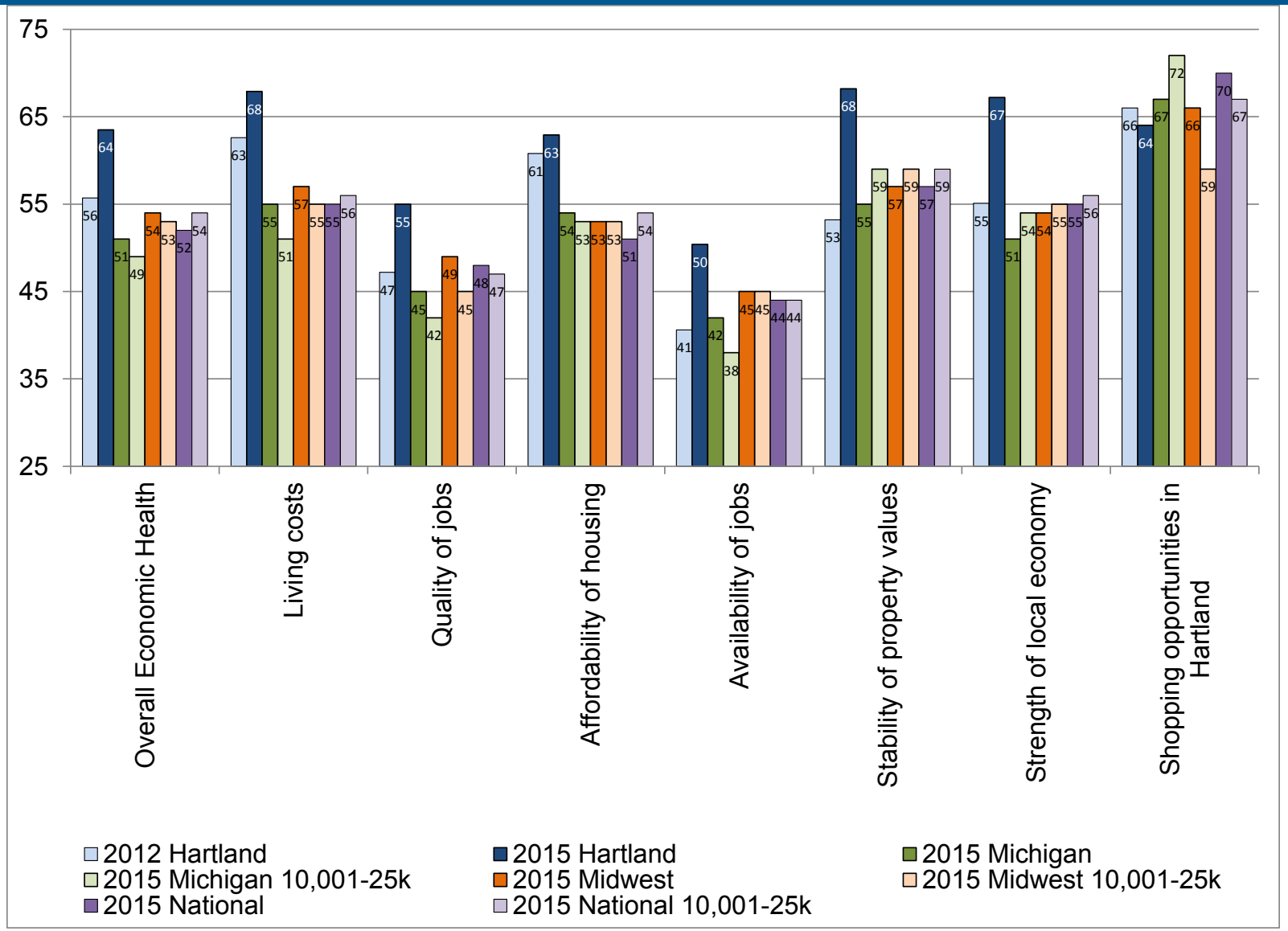
Drivers of Satisfaction and Behavior:

Strategic Priorities compared to 2012



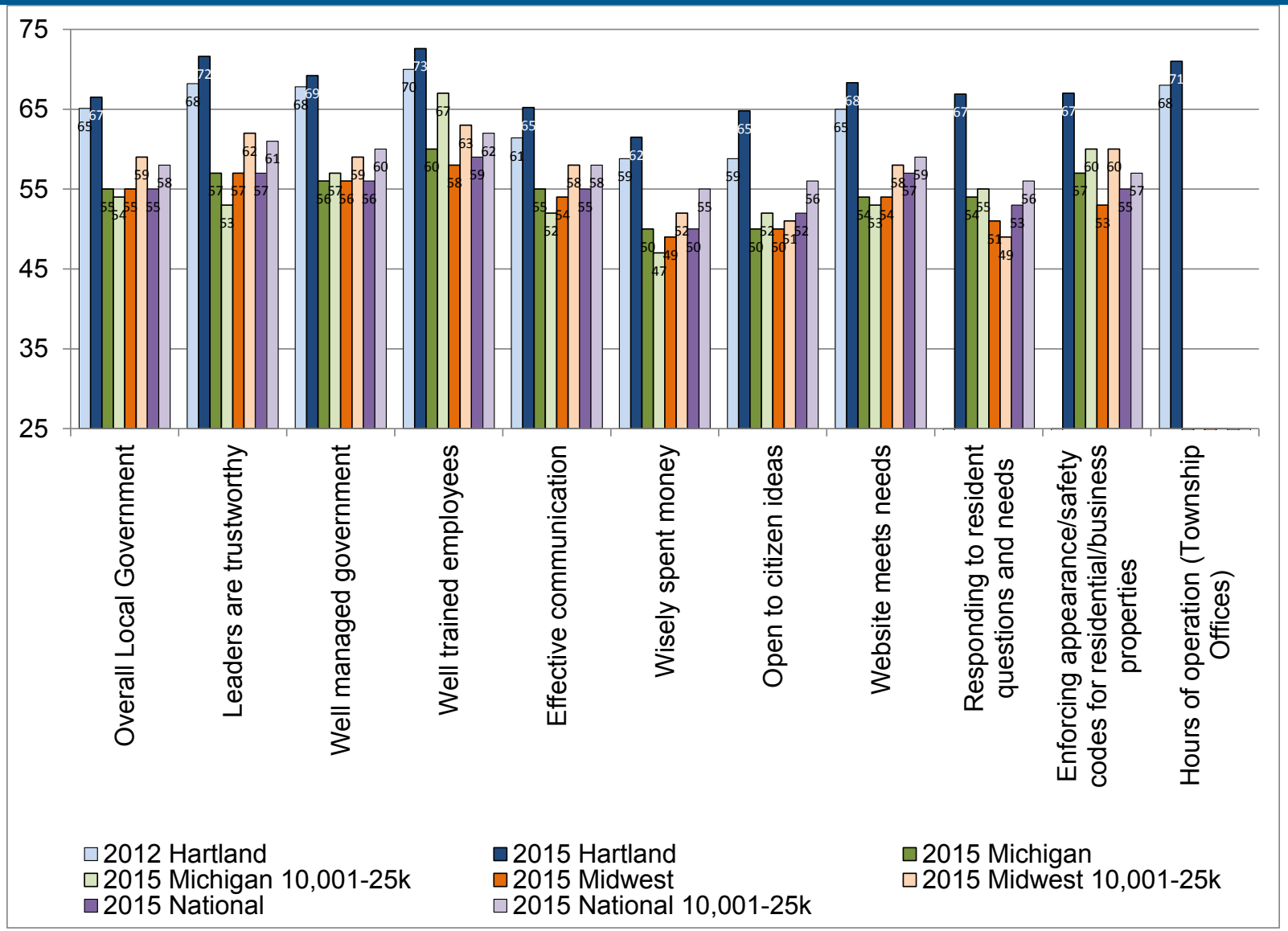
Drivers of Satisfaction and Behavior:

Economic Health



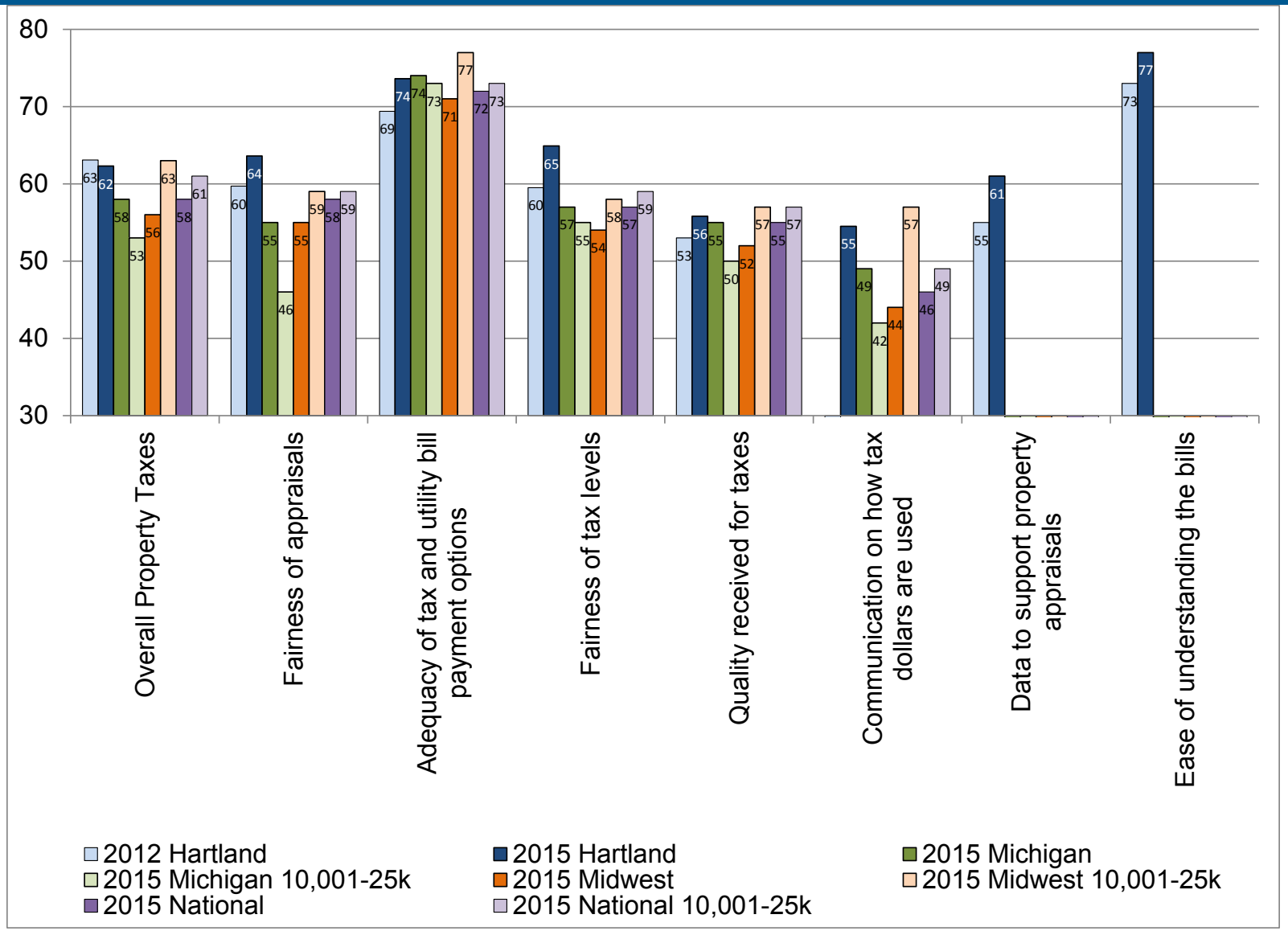
Drivers of Satisfaction and Behavior:

Local Government Management

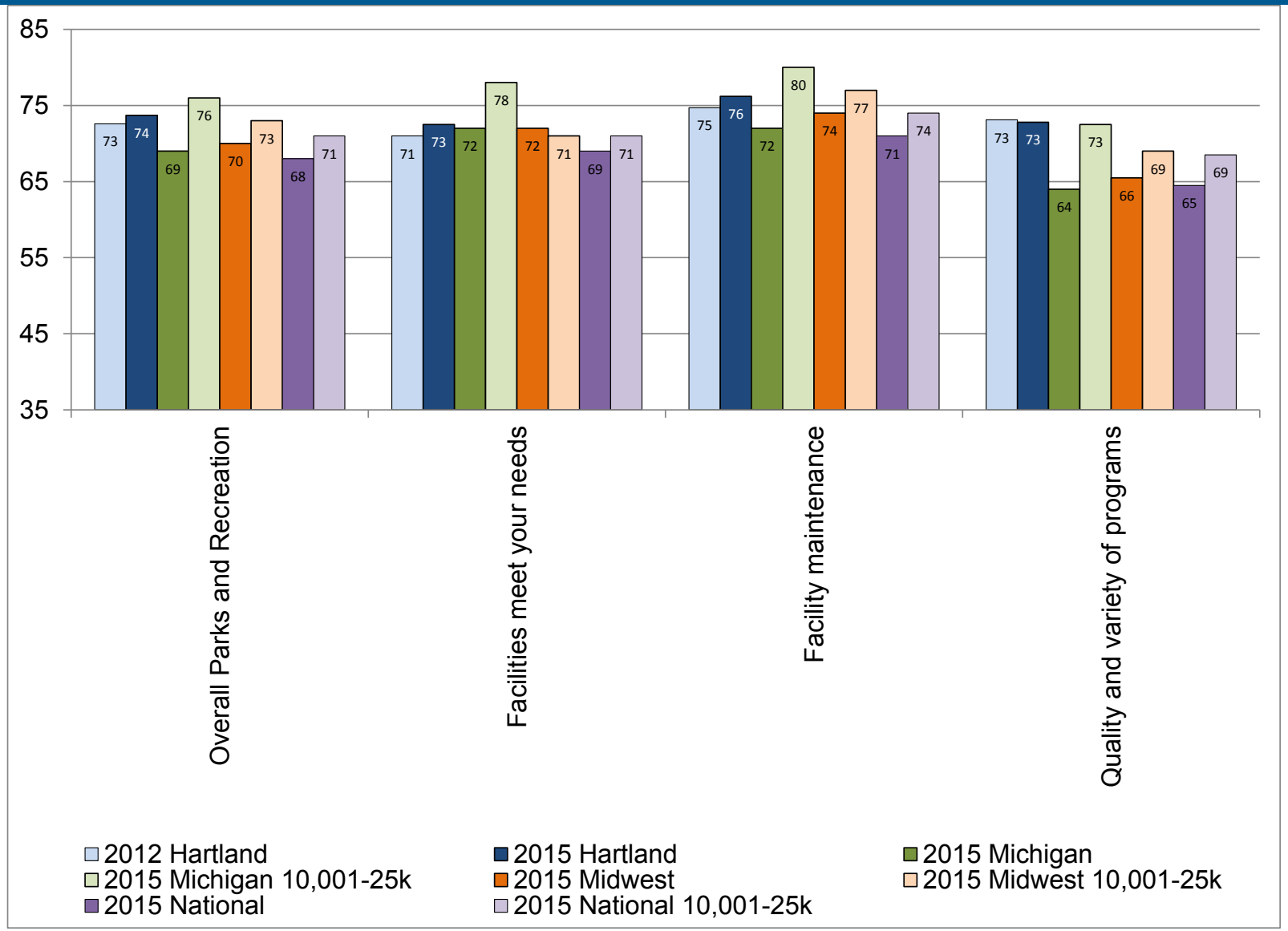


Drivers of Satisfaction and Behavior:

Property Taxes



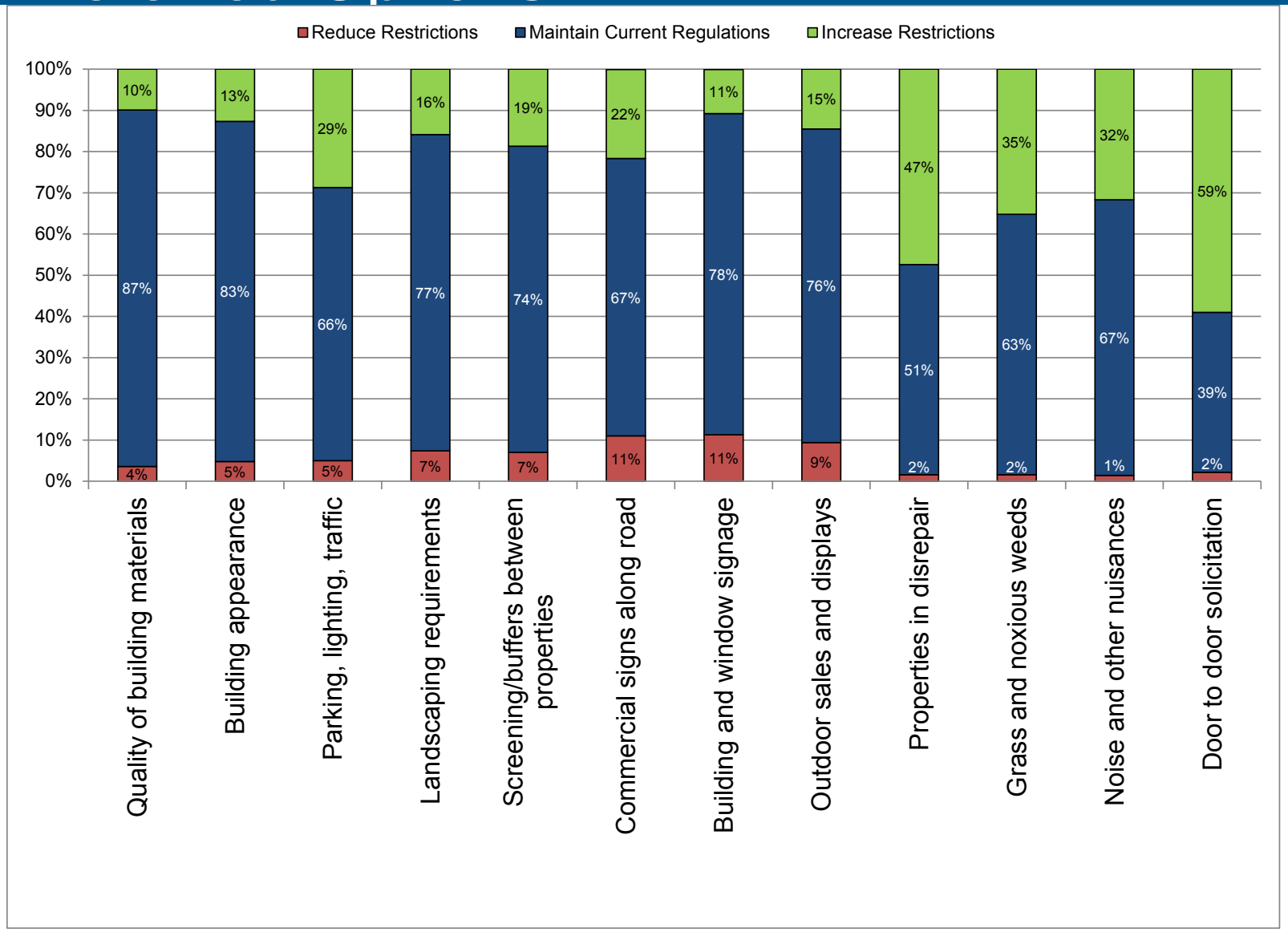
Drivers of Satisfaction and Behavior:
Parks and Recreation



Planning & Budget Direction

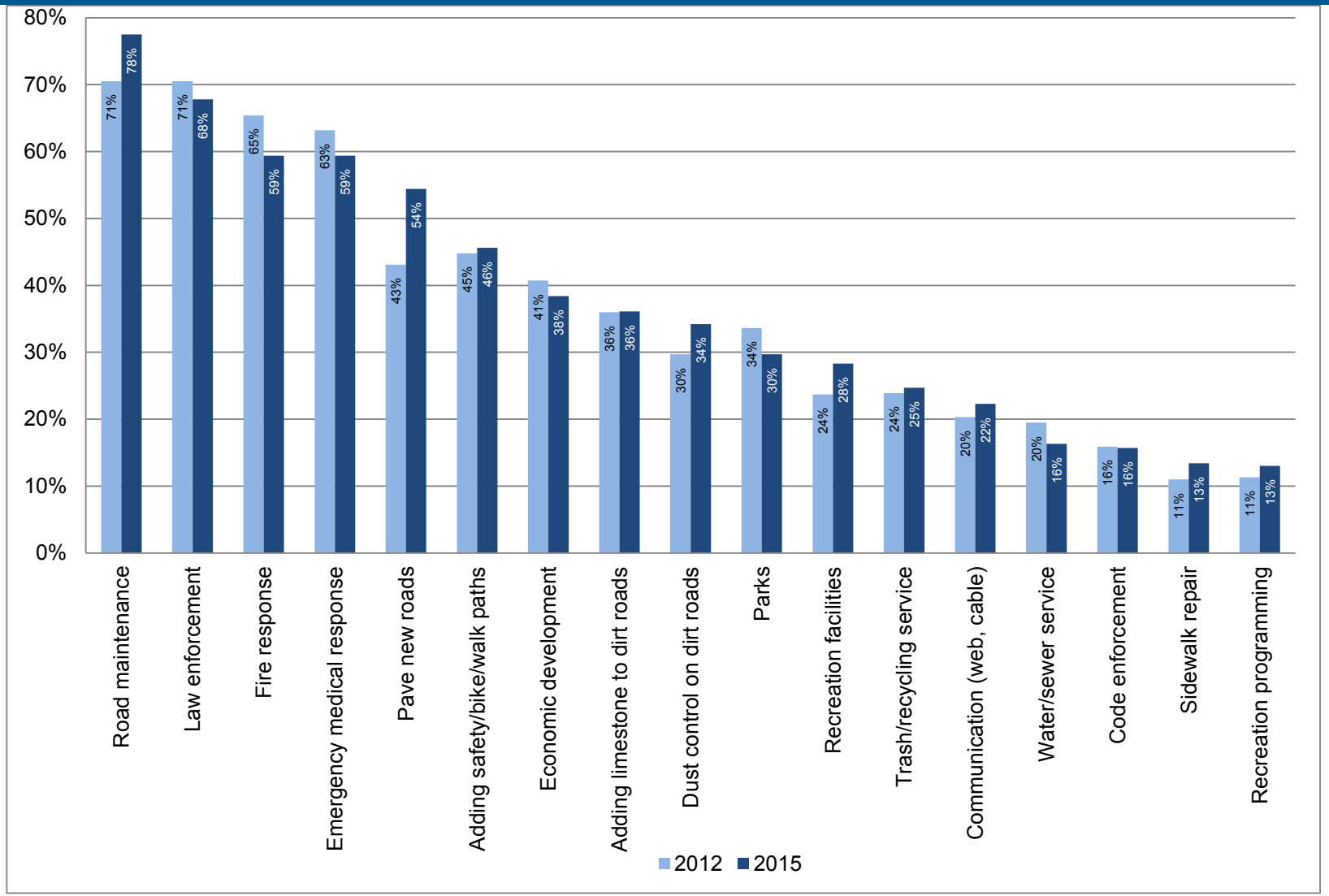
Support for Planning and Zoning Regulations

Preferred Options



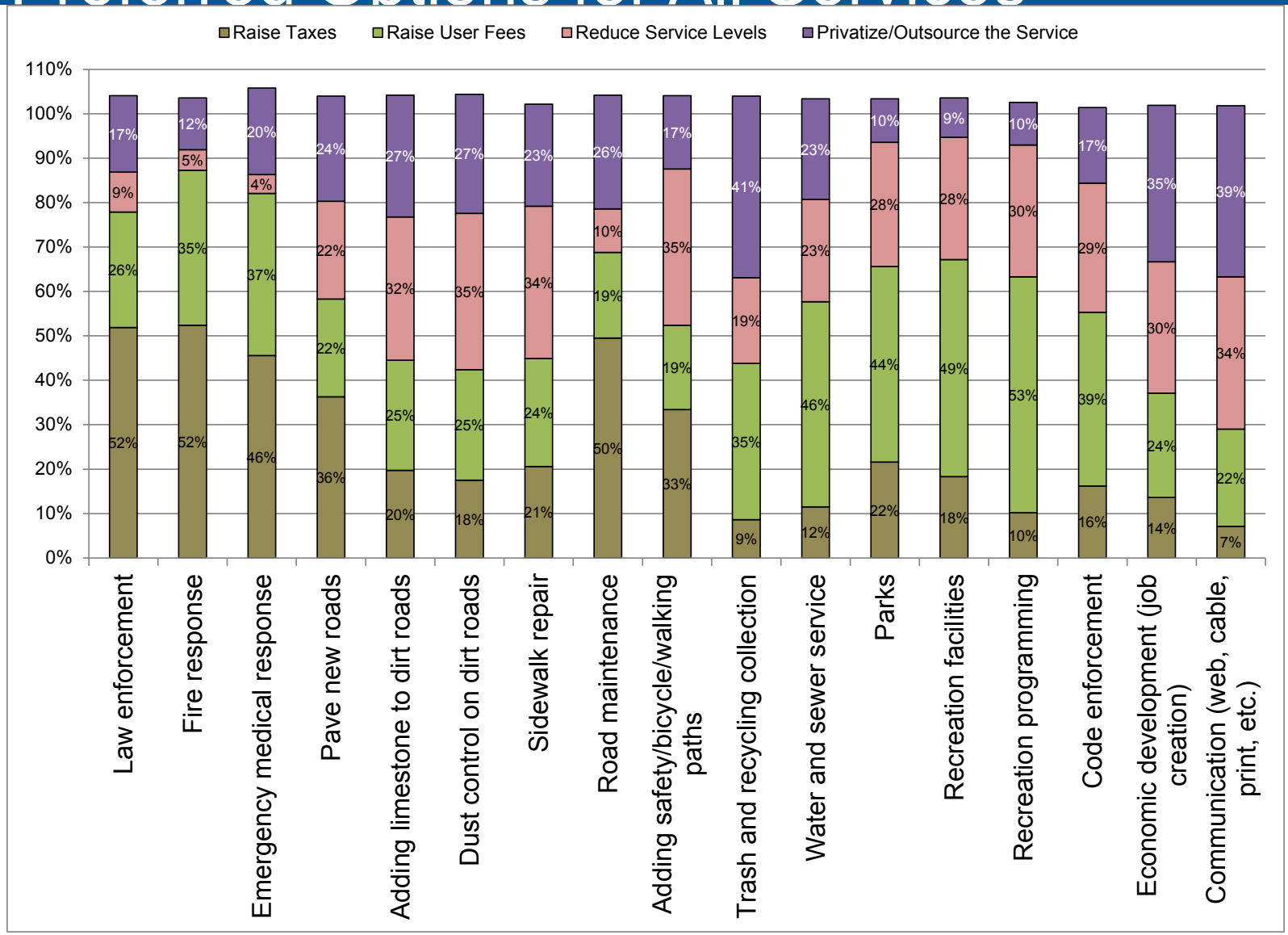
Budget Priorities

Percent selecting, select top seven (7) for prioritization



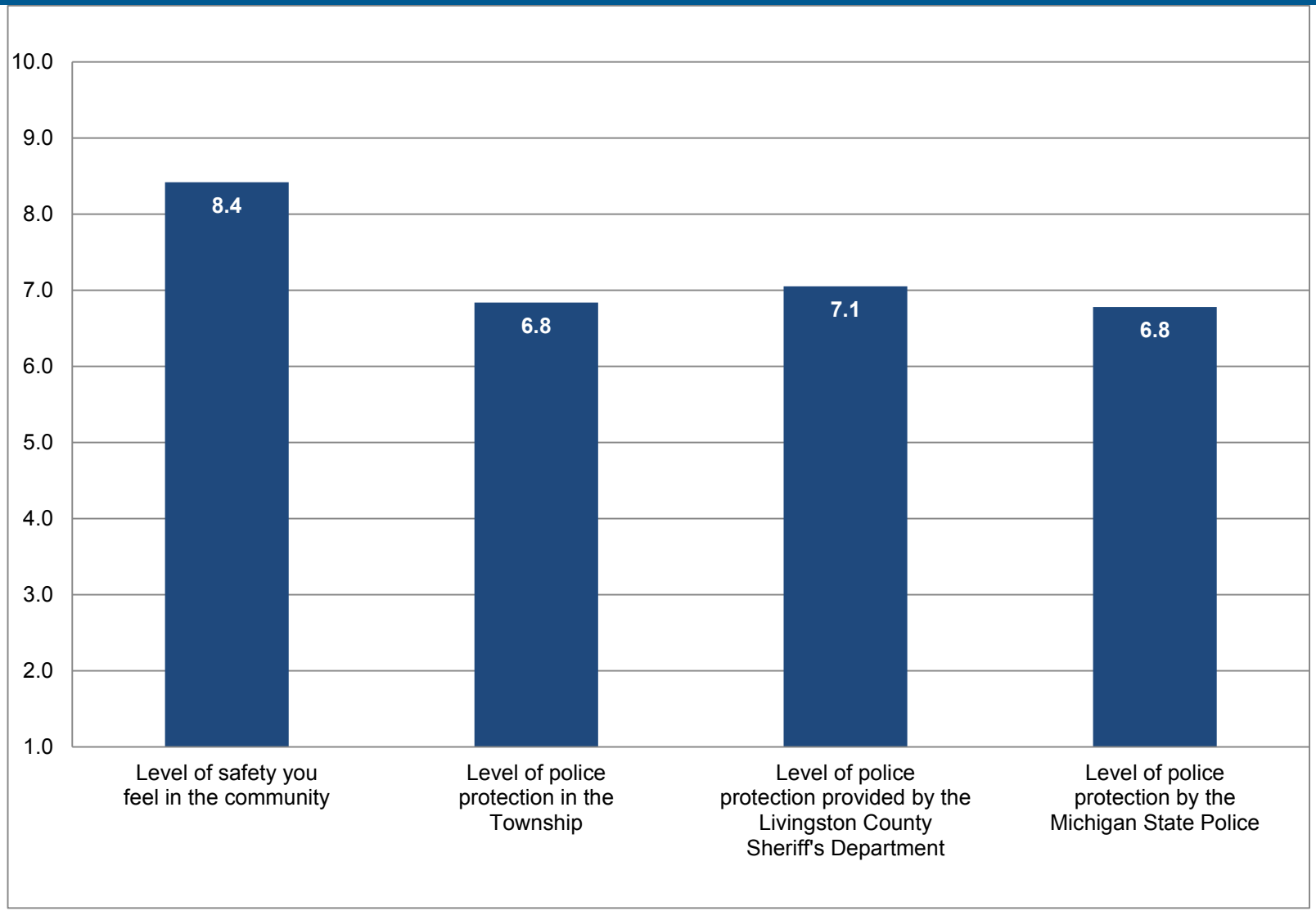
Support for Budgetary Actions if Revenues Not Adequate to Maintain Current Service Levels

Preferred Options for All Services

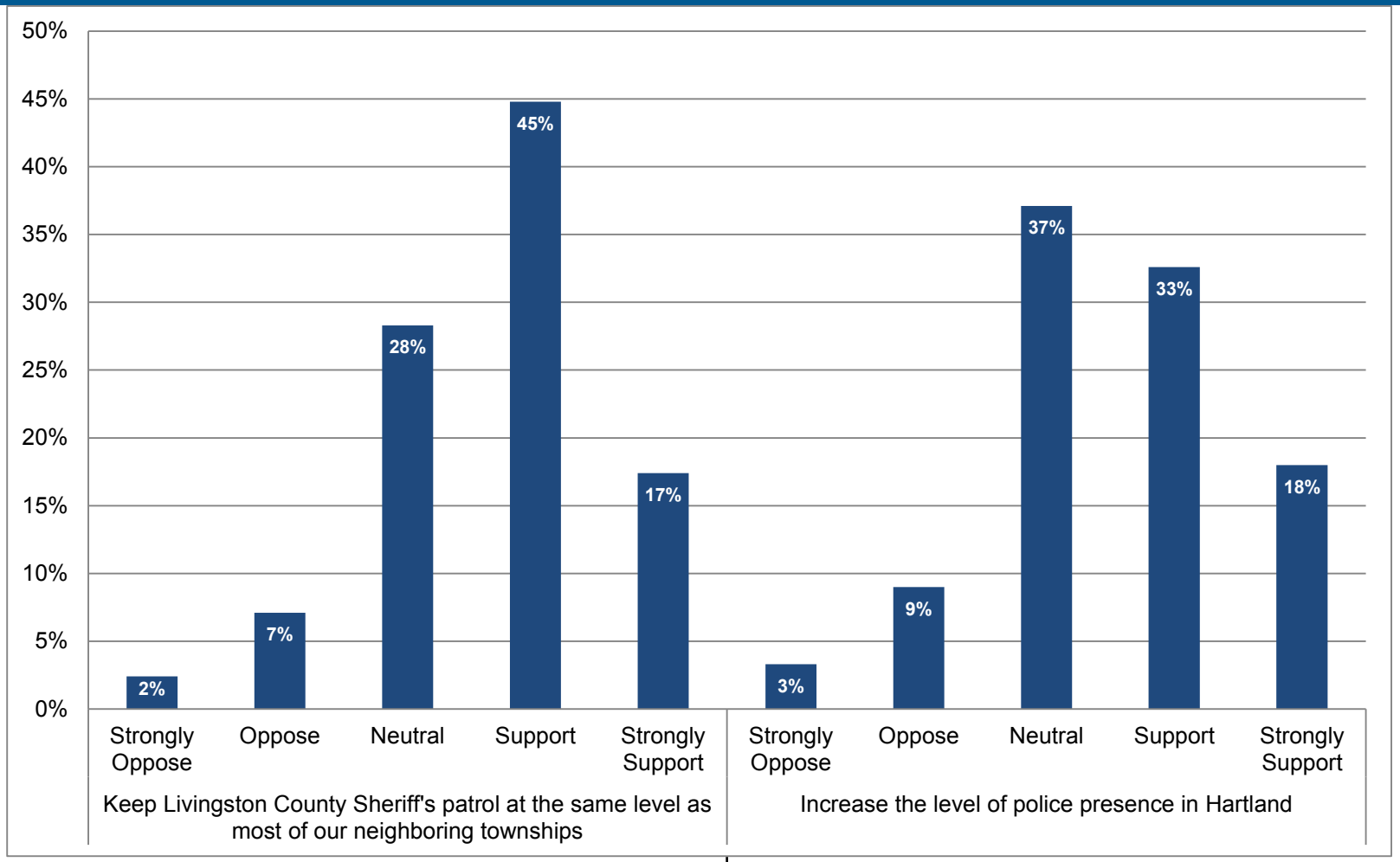


Public Safety

Rating the ***current*** public safety levels in the Township



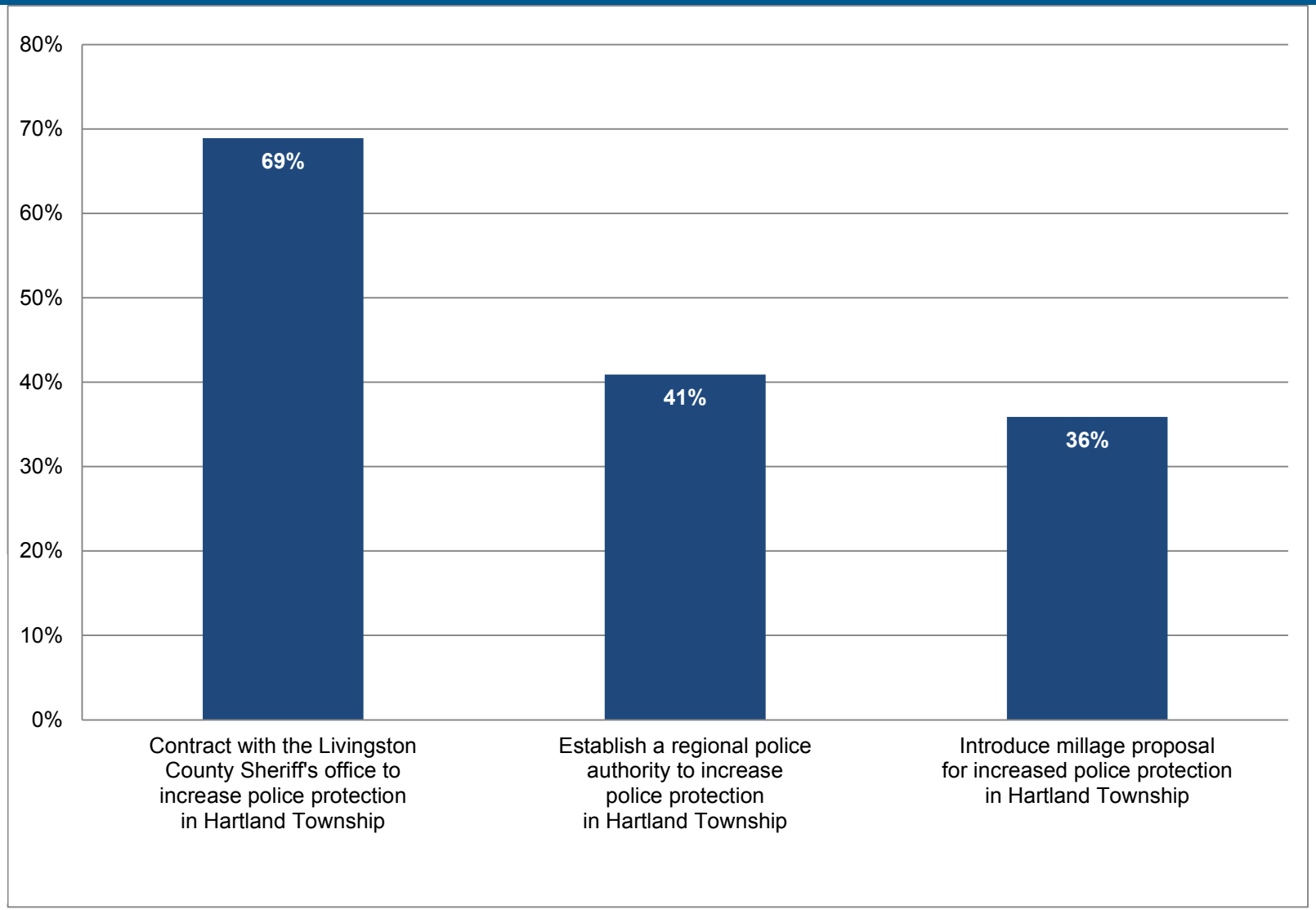
Level of support for public safety options



62% support or strongly support

51% support or strongly support

If you "*Support*" or "*Strongly Support*", how would you like to see the Township increase the police presence?

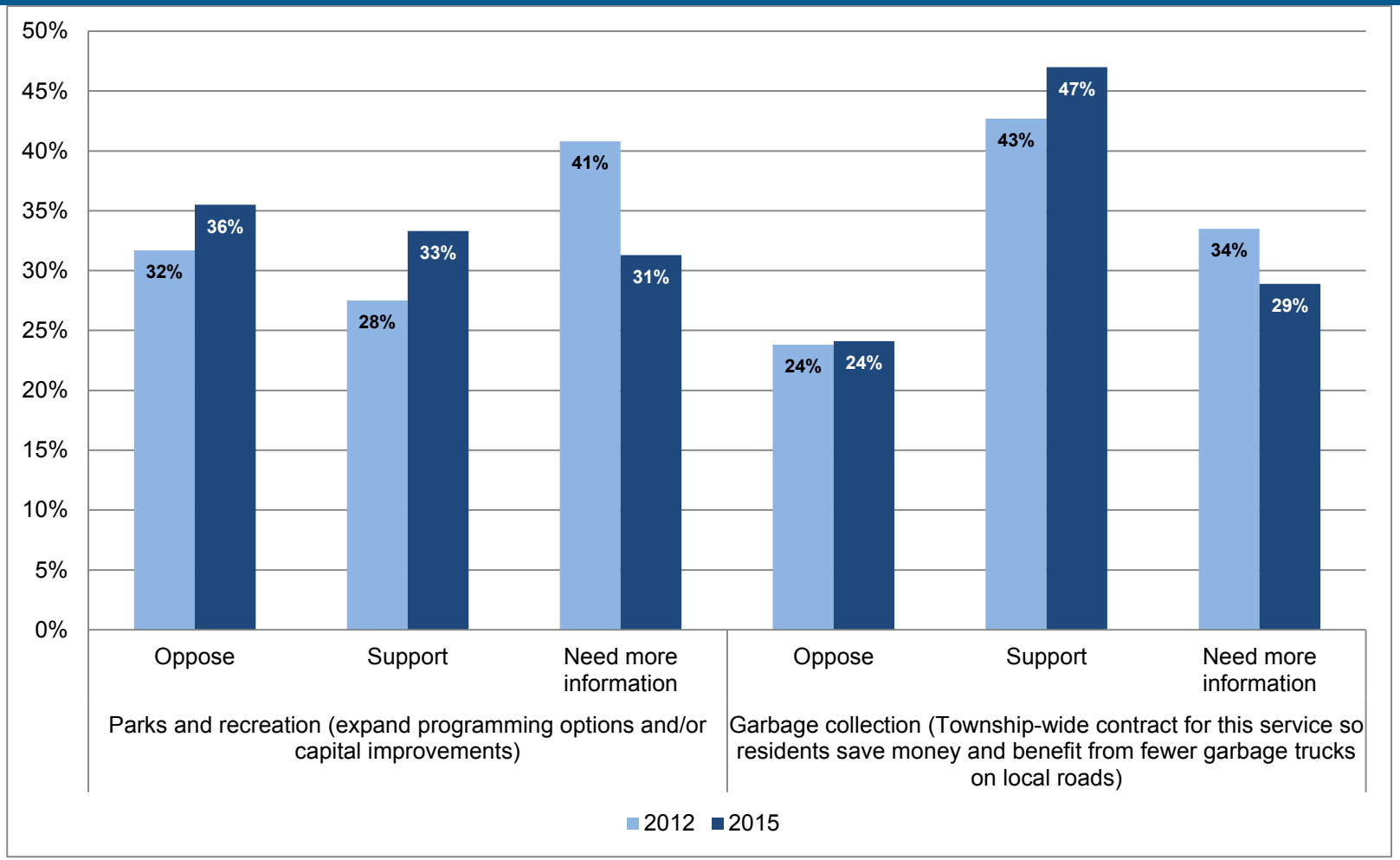


Regardless of support or opposition: 72% contract with LCS, 40% establish authority, 33% introduce millage

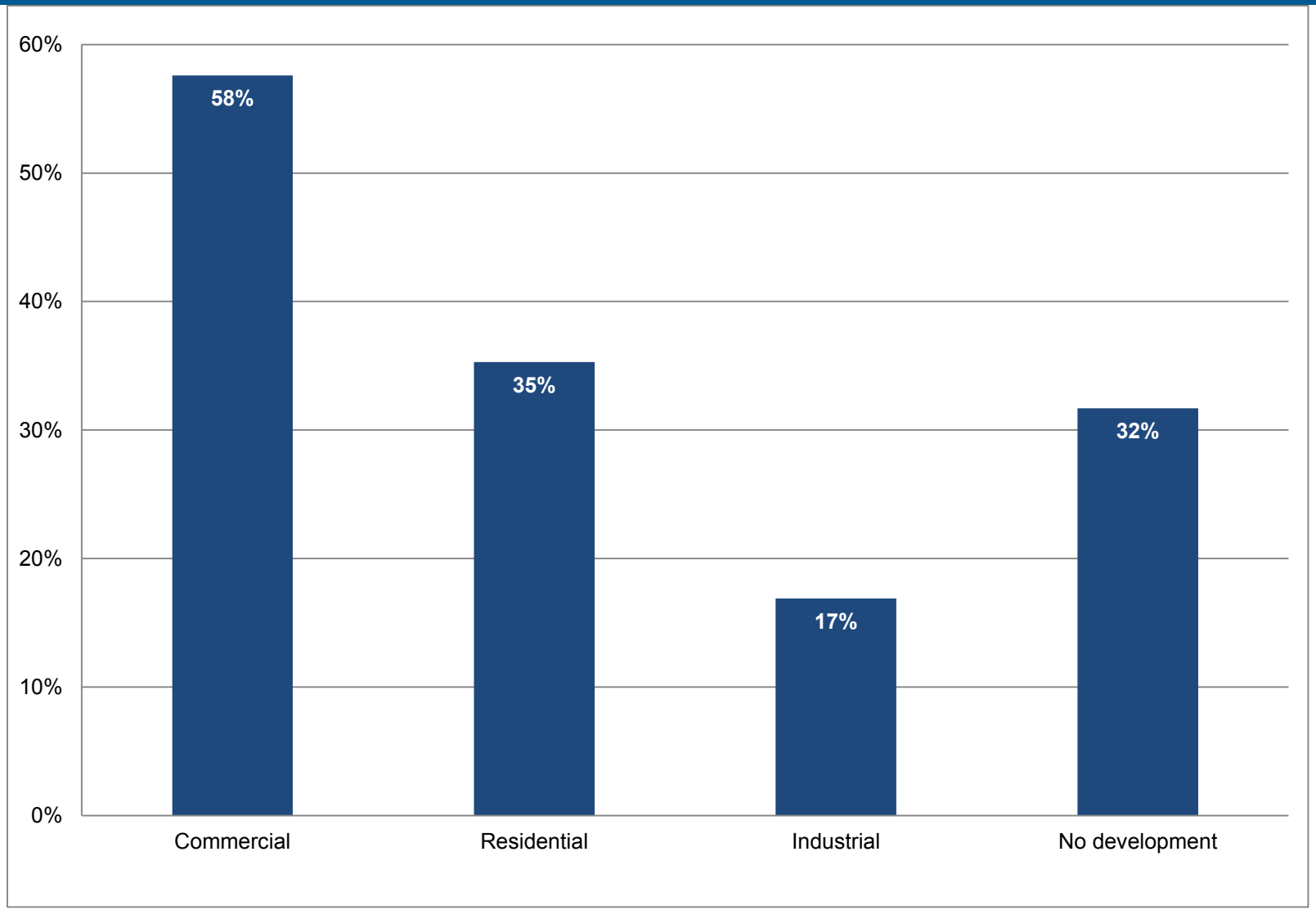
N = 264

Future Options

Support for new millage or user fee for potential service improvements

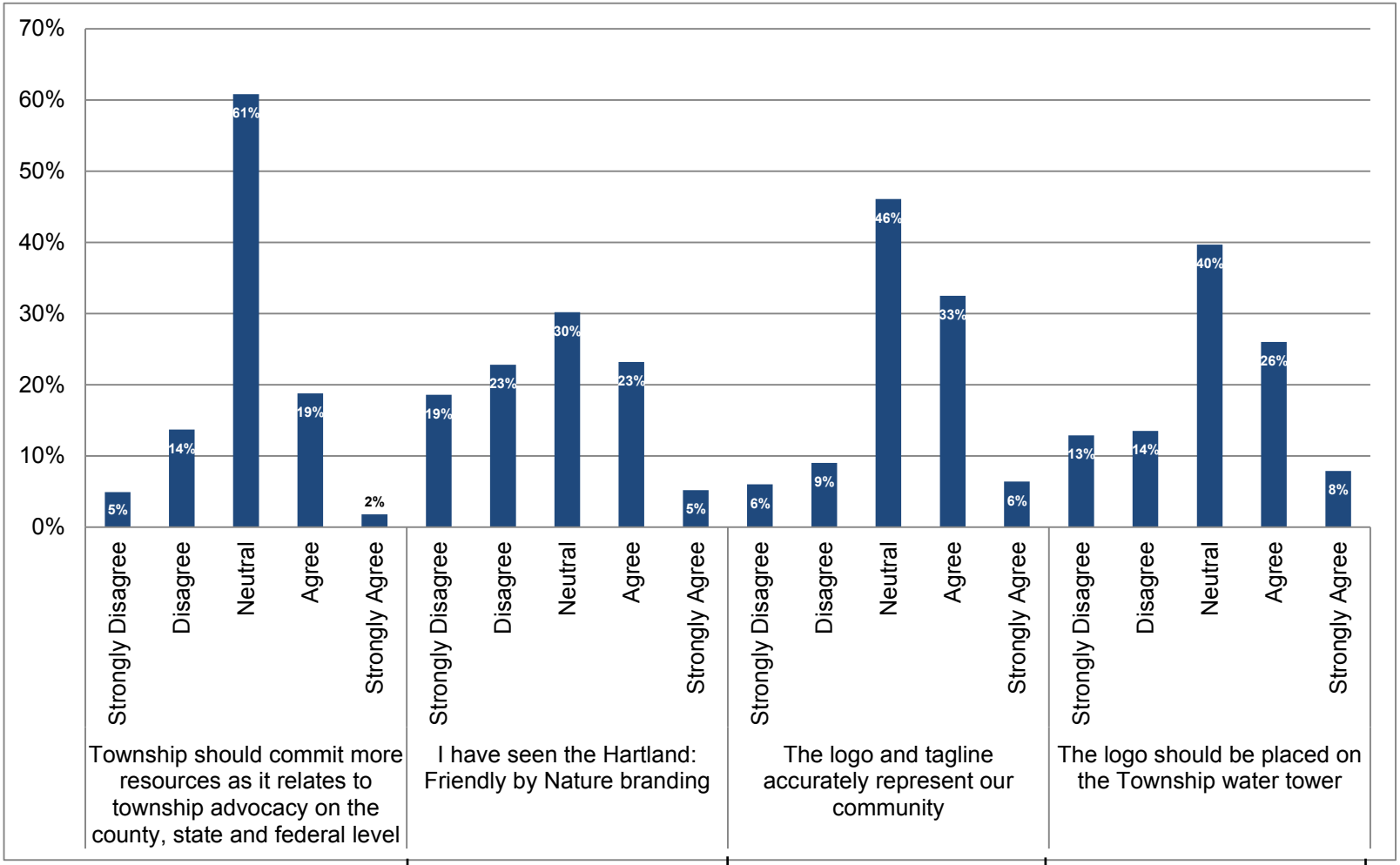


In which area(s) should the Township focus for development?

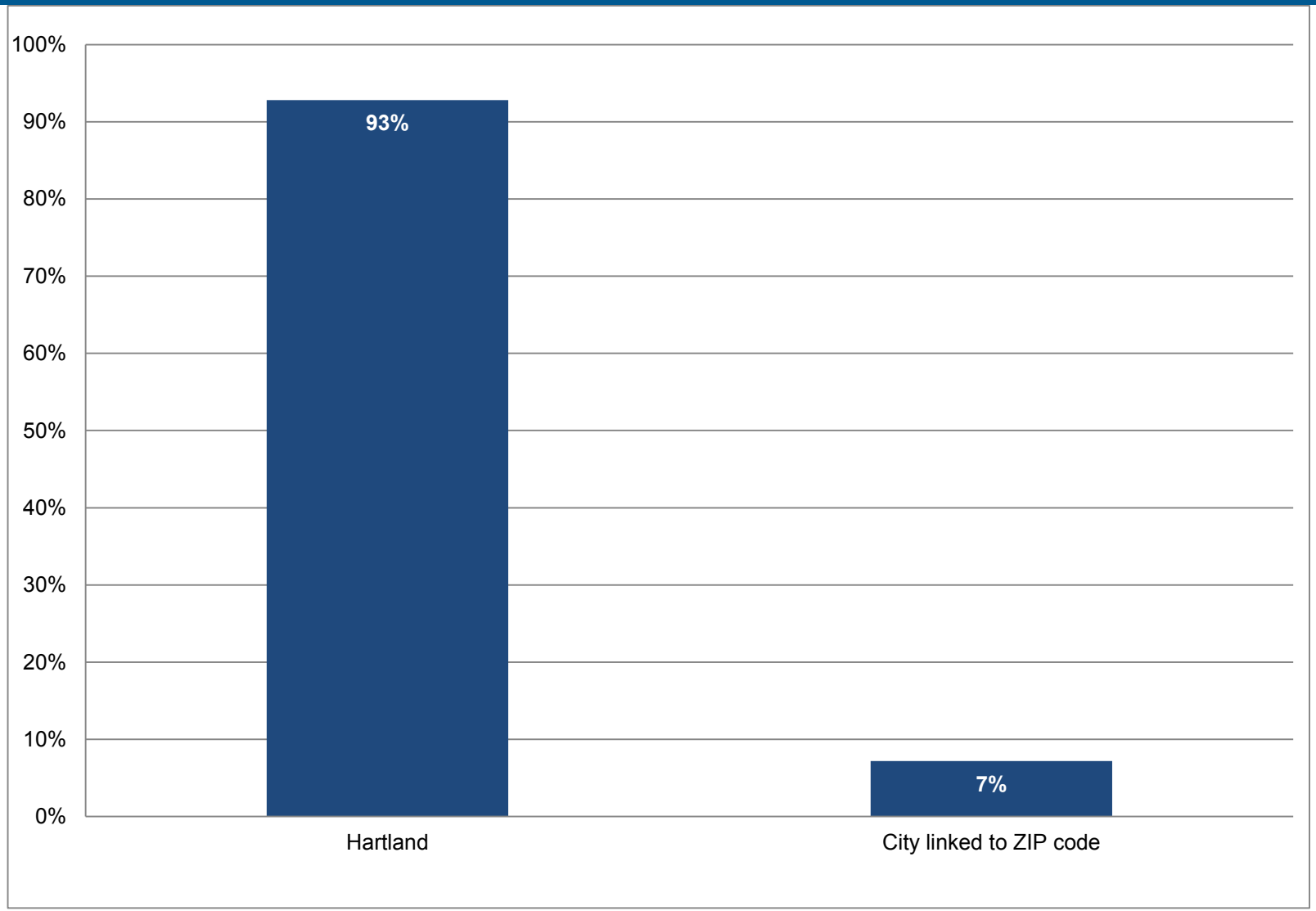


Community Brand

Level of agreement with community branding questions

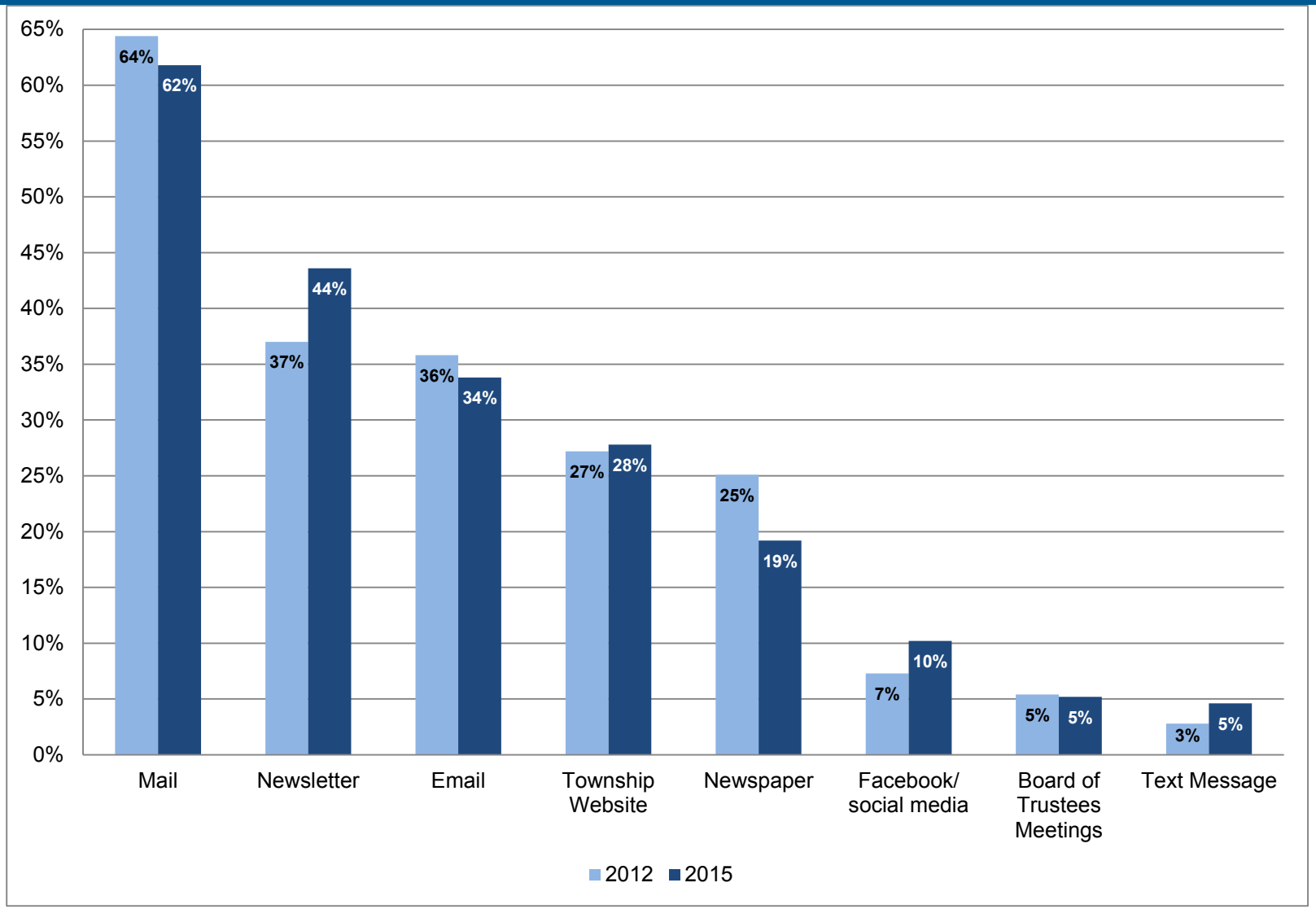


Which do you call home?

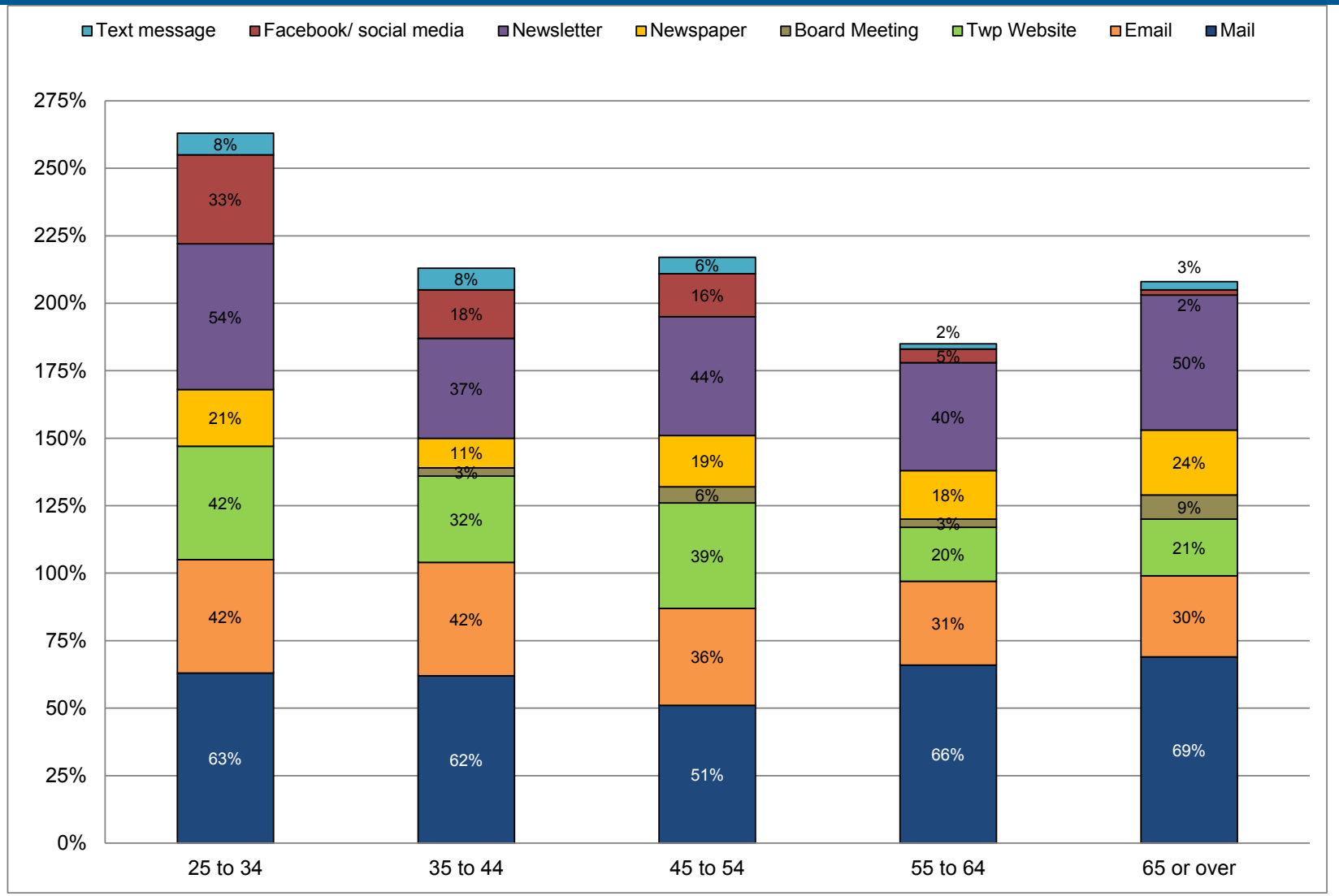


Communications

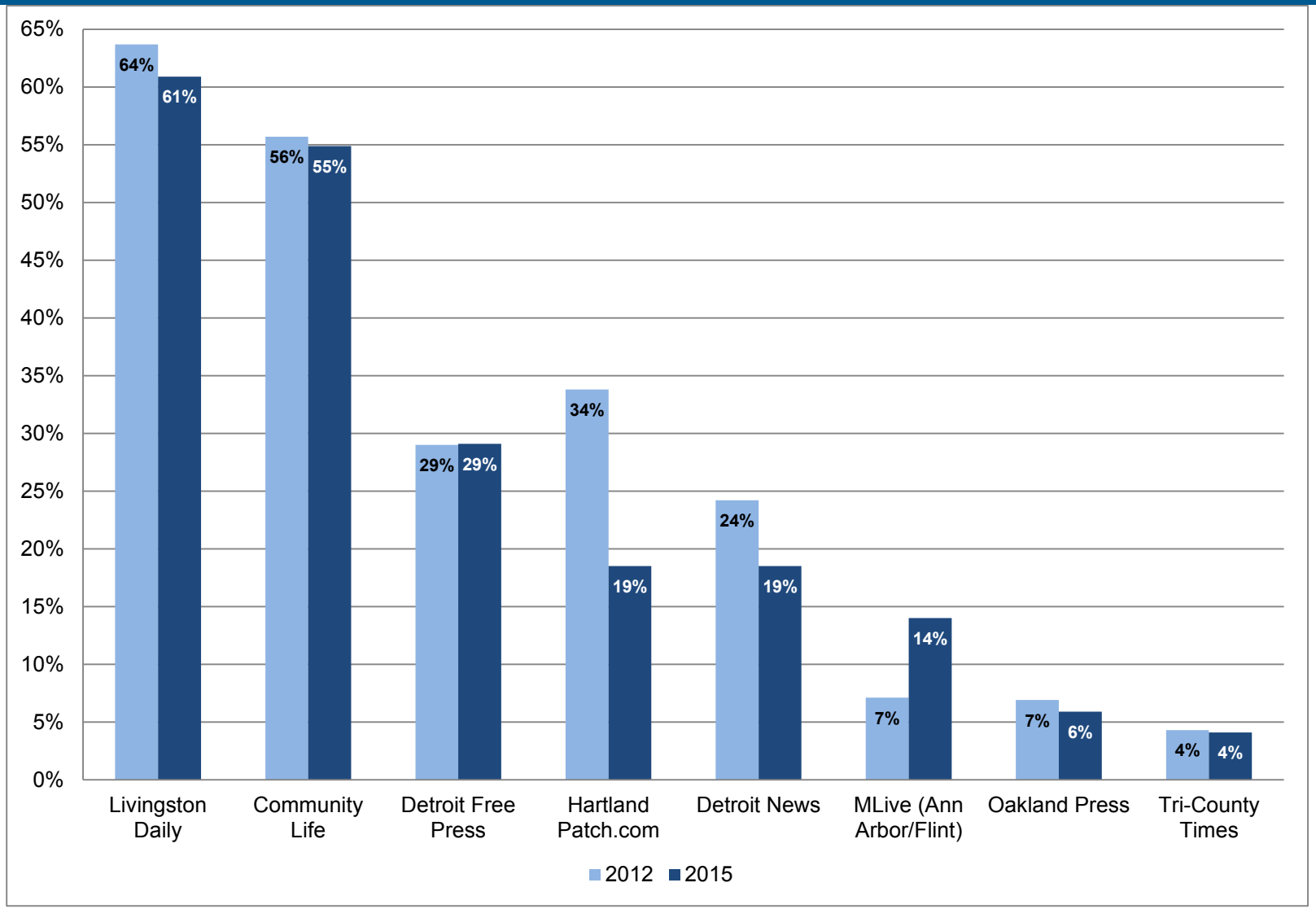
How do you prefer to receive information from the Township?



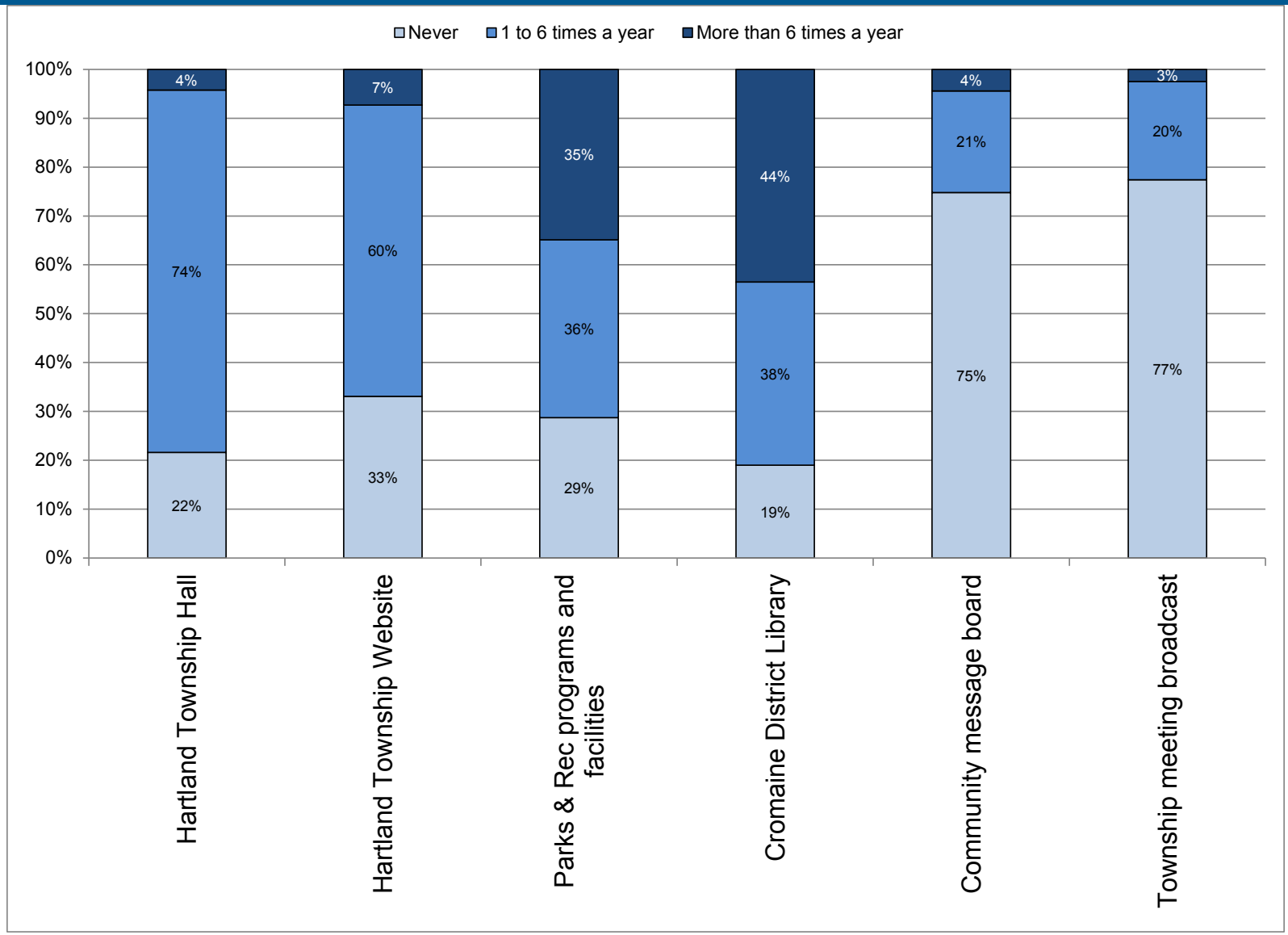
Communication Preference by Age



What newspaper/website do you read for local news?

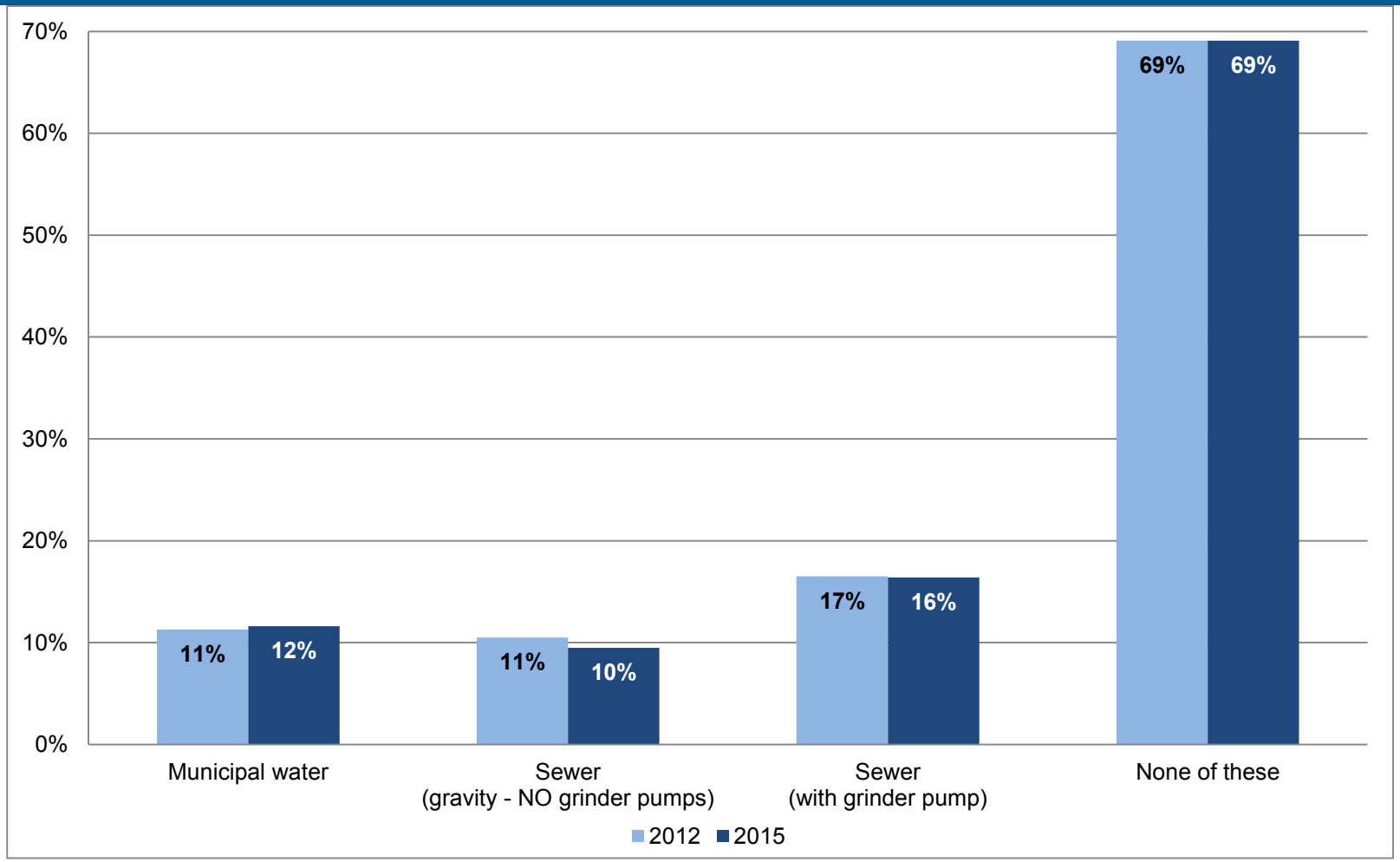


Community Assets Usage

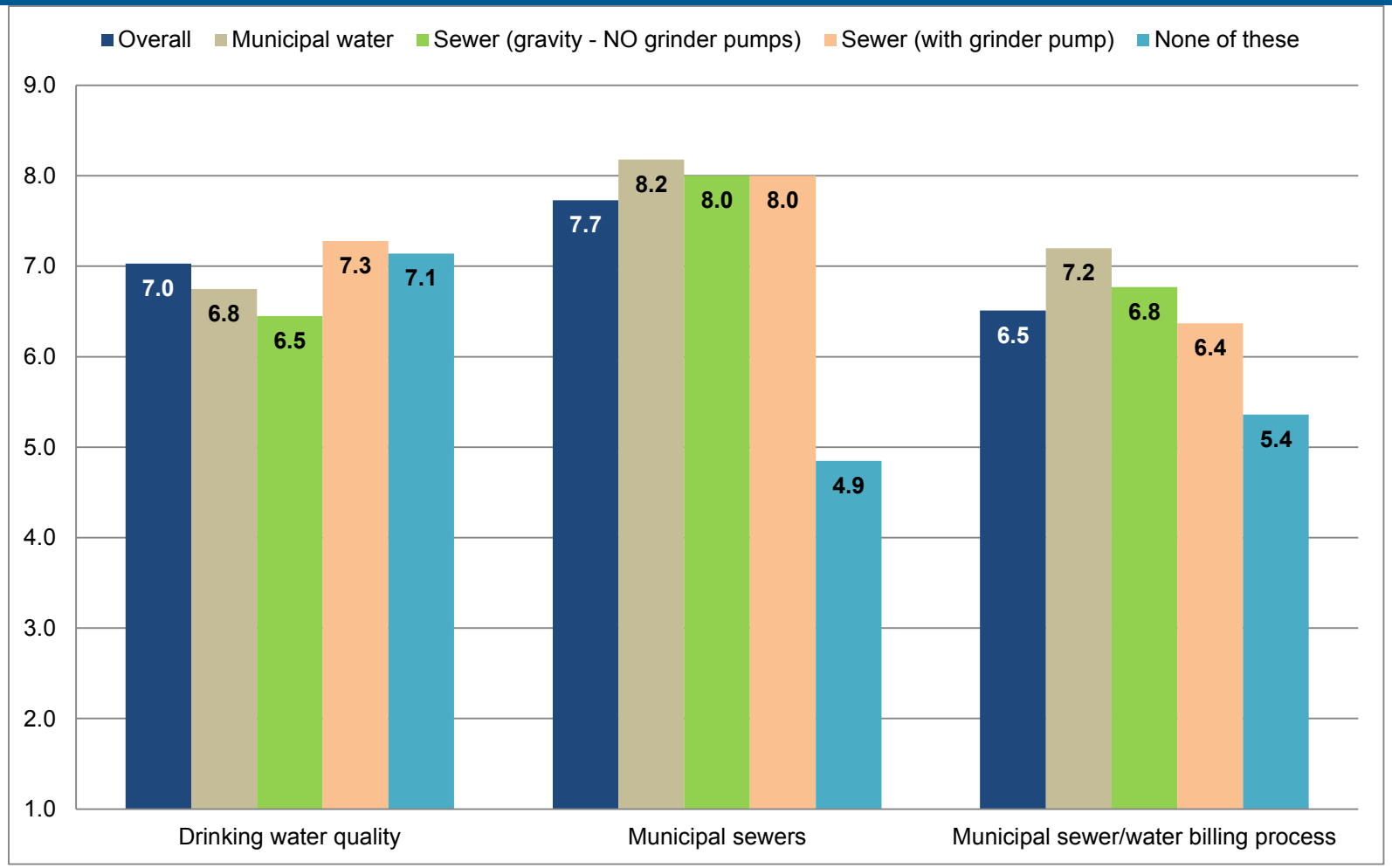


Utilities

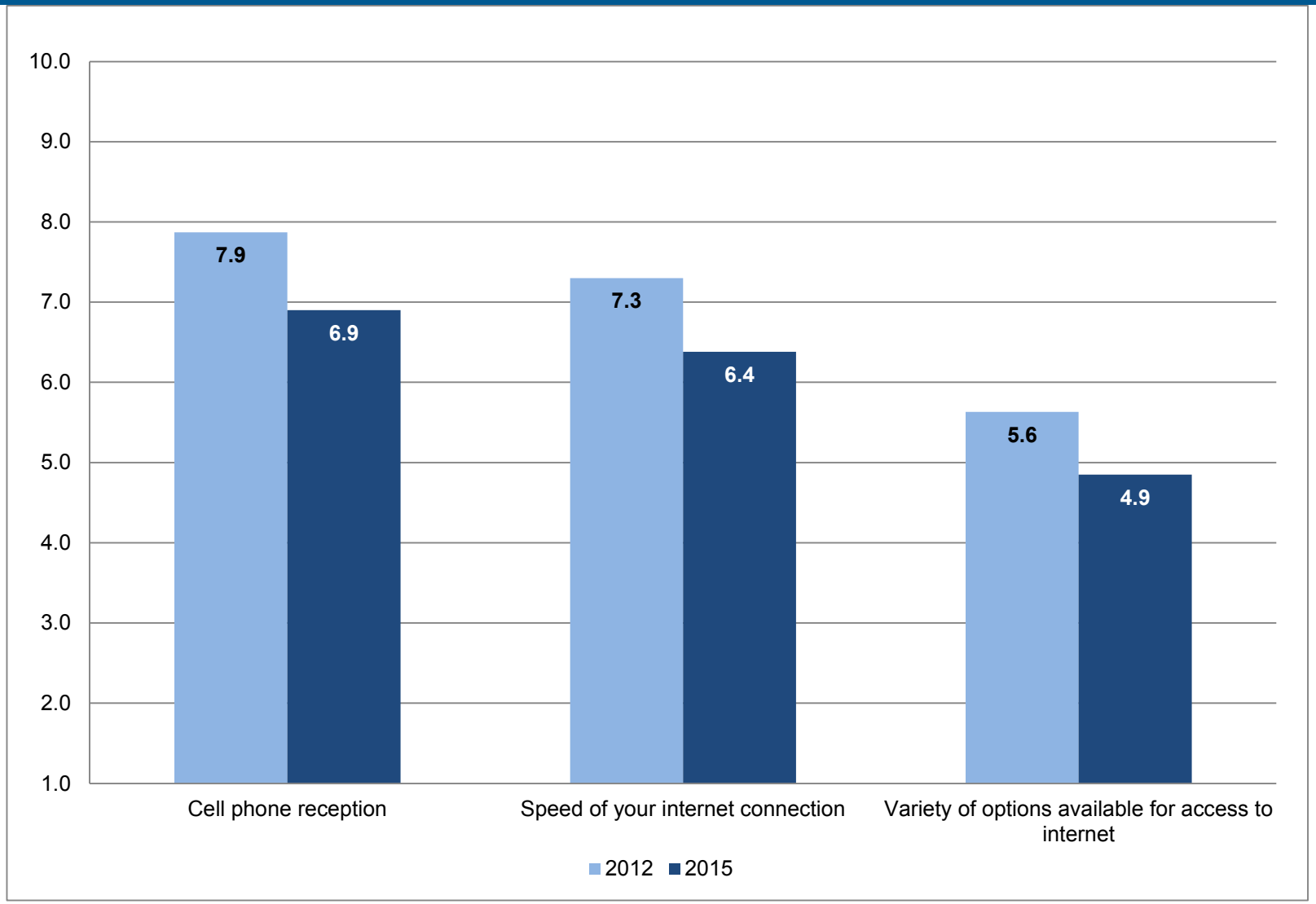
Utility services from Hartland Township



Rating utilities by type provided by Township



Telecommunications in Hartland Township



Word Cloud:
Additional comments

Themes:

1. **Roads –**
   fix and repair, re-pave roads
2. **Community –**
   good community, small town charm, great place to live
3. **Taxes –**
   taxes are high, expand tax base – more businesses
4. **Restaurants –**
   more restaurants in downtown area, upscale/sit down, no more fast food

Note: See full list of comments for context

Implementing Results

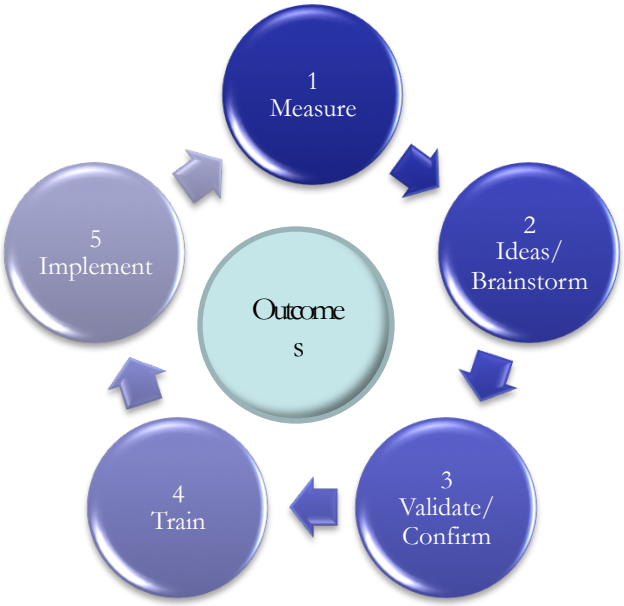
Perception v Reality: Minimize Distortion or Fix Real Performance Issues

Perception gap:
Respondents rated based on a false idea or understanding. Address with communication strategy to change that perception.

Real performance issue:
Address with an improvement plan. When performance improves, it becomes a perception gap to address with a communication strategy.

Strategy is About Action:

Improve Performance to Improve Outcomes

The diagram at the right provides a framework for following up on this survey.

- The first step (measurement) is complete. This measurement helps prioritize resources and create a baseline against which progress can be measured.
- The second step is to use internal teams to further analyze the results and form ideas about why respondents answered as they did and potential actions in response.
- The third step is to validate ideas and potential actions through conversations with residents and line staff – do the ideas and actions make sense. Focus groups, short special-topic surveys and benchmarking are helpful.
- The fourth step is to provide staff with the skills and tools to effectively implement the actions.
- The fifth step is to execute the actions.
- The final step is to re-measure to ensure progress was made and track changes in resident needs.