About The NCS™

The National Community Survey™ (The NCS™) report is about the "livability" of Hanford. A livable community is a place that is not simply habitable, but that is desirable. It is not only where people do live, but where they want to live. The survey was developed by the experts from National Research Center at Polco.

Great communities are partnerships of the government, private sector, community-based organizations and residents, all geographically connected. The NCS captures residents' opinions considering ten central facets of a community:

• Economy
• Mobility
• Community Design
• Utilities
• Safety
• Natural Environment
• Parks and Recreation
• Health and Wellness
• Education, Arts, and Culture
• Inclusivity and Engagement

The dashboard provides the opinions of a weighted sample of 586 residents of the City of Hanford collected from March 13th, 2024 to April 16th, 2024. Because the survey was available to all residents, no traditional margin of error was calculated. Should traditional, randomized sampling procedures been used, a plus or minus four percentage point margin of error would have been calculated; however, we anticipate that the "range of uncertainty" is greater than four percent given the convenience sample used in for this project. Survey results were weighted so that the demographic profile of respondents was representative of the demographic profile of adults in Hanford.

Comparisons to Benchmarks

NRC's database of comparative resident opinion is comprised of resident perspectives gathered in surveys from over 600 communities whose residents evaluated the same kinds of topics on The National Community Survey. The comparison evaluations are from the most recent survey completed in each community in the last five years. NRC adds the latest results quickly upon survey completion, keeping the benchmark data fresh and relevant. The communities in the database represent a wide geographic and population range. In each tab, Hanford's results are noted as being "higher" than the benchmark, "lower" than the benchmark, or "similar" to the benchmark, meaning that the average rating given by Hanford residents is statistically similar to or different (greater or lesser) than the benchmark. Being rated as "higher" or "lower" than the benchmark means that Hanford average rating for a particular item was more than 10 points different than the benchmark. If a rating was "much higher" or "much lower," then Hanford average rating was more than 20 points different when compared to the benchmark.

Methods

Analyzing the Data

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

On many of the questions in the survey respondents may answer "don't know." However, these responses have been removed from the analyses presented in the reports. In other words, the tables and graphs display the responses from respondents who had an opinion about a specific item.

Weighting of Results

The demographics of the survey respondents were compared to those found in the 2020 Census and 2022 American Community Survey estimates for adults in Hanford. The primary objective of weighting survey data is to make the survey respondents reflective of the larger population of the community. The characteristics used for weighting are based on the battery of demographic questions at the end of the survey. No adjustments were made for design effects.

NRC aligns demographic labels with those used by the U.S. Census for reporting purposes, when possible. Some categories (e.g., age, race/Hispanic origin, housing type, and length of residency) are combined into smaller subgroups.

Study Limitations

All public opinion research is subject to unmeasured error. While the methodologies employed for this survey were designed to minimize this error as much as possible, these other sources of potential error should be acknowledged. **Non-response error** arises when those who were selected to participate in the survey did not do so, and may have different opinions or experiences than those who did respond. **Coverage error** refers to the possibility that some respondents that should have been included in the surveyed population were not (e.g., for a general resident survey, USPS mailing lists may exclude certain types of housing units, such as multi-family buildings where mail is delivered to a common area rather than to a specific unit (though this is rare), or where mail is received at a PO box instead of the at household's physical location. Finally, **recall bias** occurs when respondents may not perfectly remember their experiences in the past year (such as participation in social or civic events), and **social desirability bias** may cause respondents to answer in ways they think cast their responses in a more favorable light.

Contact

The City of Hanford funded this research. Please contact Brian T. Johnson of the City of Hanford at btjohnson@hanfordca.gov if you have any questions about the survey.

Survey Validity

See the Polco Knowledge Base article on survey validity at https://info.polco.us/knowledge/statistical-vali

1. See AAPOR's Standard Definitions for more information at
https://aapor.org/standards-and-ethics/standard-definitions/

2. Targets come from the 2020 Census and 2022 American Community Survey
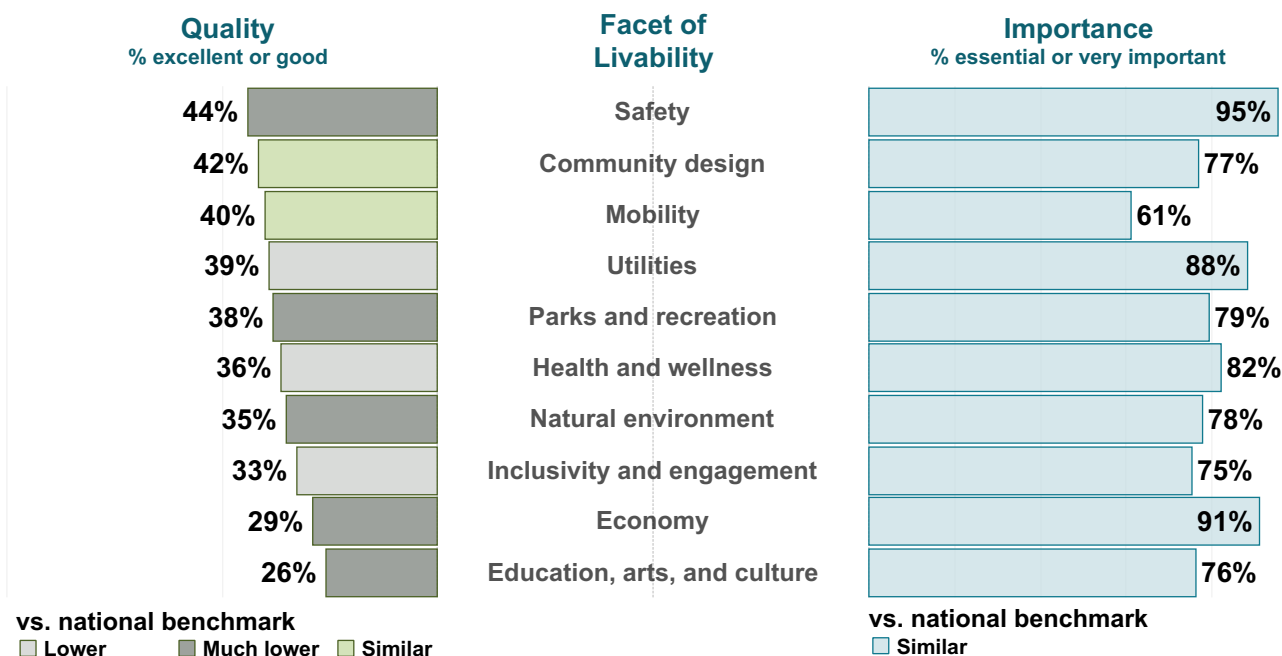
Facets of livability

Every jurisdiction must balance limited resources while meeting resident needs and striving to optimize community livability. To this end, it is helpful to know what aspects of the community are most important to residents and which they perceive as being of higher or lower quality. It is especially helpful to know when a facet of livability is considered of high importance but rated as lower quality, as this should be a top priority to address.

Quality and Importance by the Numbers

The table below shows the proportion of residents who rated the community facets positively for quality and the priority (importance) placed on each. Also displayed is whether local quality ratings were lower, similar, or higher than communities across the country (the national benchmark).

Quality % excellent or good	Facet of Livability	Importance % essential or very important
44%	Safety	95%
42%	Community design	77%
40%	Mobility	61%
39%	Utilities	88%
38%	Parks and recreation	79%
36%	Health and wellness	82%
35%	Natural environment	78%
33%	Inclusivity and engagement	75%
29%	Economy	91%
26%	Education, arts, and culture	76%

vs. national benchmark
☐ Lower   ☐ Much lower   ☐ Similar

vs. national benchmark
☐ Similar

Quality/Importance Gap Analysis

The gap analysis chart below shows the same data as above; however, this chart more clearly illustrates the comparative differences in quality and importance ratings for each facet, as well as the absolute ratings for each.

Facet	Metric	Value
Safety	Quality	44%
	Importance	95%
Economy	Quality	29%
	Importance	91%
Utilities	Quality	39%
	Importance	88%
Health and wellness	Quality	36%
	Importance	82%
Parks and recreation	Quality	38%
	Importance	79%
Natural environment	Quality	35%
	Importance	78%
Community design	Quality	42%
	Importance	77%
Education, arts, and cu..	Quality	26%
	Importance	76%
Inclusivity and engage..	Quality	33%
	Importance	75%
Mobility	Quality	40%
	Importance	61%

■ Quality   ■ Importance