

# The 2008 Andover Citizens Survey: Preliminary Report

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November 19, 2008

# Reporting Plan

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- Tonight's Presentation
  - Project Goal
  - Survey Methodology
  - Major Findings
  - Plan for Further Analysis
- Questions and Comments
- Written Report
  - More comparisons over time
  - Breakdowns by key demographics

Project Goal: To help town  
government and citizens better  
understand resident's opinions of  
their community

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- Collaboration Between Town and College
- Based on 2004 Andover Citizens Survey
- Community Life and Local Government

# Survey Methodology

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- 1200 randomly selected Andover households
- A pre-notification postcard was mailed to respondents the first week of September
- Surveys were sent out to these household approximately one week later
- A reminder letter and new copy of the survey were sent out approximately two weeks later
- We received 672 completed surveys
- Extremely high response rate of 56%, same as 2004
- Sampling error of approximately +/- 5%
- An accurate representation of the entire community

# The Survey Instrument

## 2008 TOWN OF ANDOVER CITIZENS SURVEY

Dear Andover Resident:

You have been randomly selected to participate in the 2008 Town of Andover Citizens Survey. We want to know what you think about your community and municipal government. Please take a few minutes to fill out this survey and then mail it back to us. Your participation is very important. The survey responses will help the Town better understand how a representative sampling of the community feels on a wide variety of issues and topics.

You will receive this survey twice in the mail over a two week period. The second mailing is a reminder. Please only respond to and mail back one copy of the survey. You may dispose of the other copy. Please mail back the completed survey in the enclosed return envelope (and remember to apply a first class postage stamp). If you have misplaced the return envelope, you can mail the completed survey back in a plain stamped business size envelope addressed to: 2008 Citizens Survey, Office of the Town Manager, 36 Bartlet Street, Andover, MA 01810. Thank you for your participation.

*The Andover Board of Selectmen*

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 circle the response that most closely represents your opinion for each question. Your responses are anonymous and will be reported in group form only.

**1. Please rate the quality of life in Andover in each of the following categories:**

|  | <i>excellent</i> | <i>good</i> | <i>fair</i> | <i>poor</i> | <i>not sure</i> |
|--|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Andover as a place to live.....                              | 1                | 2           | 3           | 4           | 5               |
| Andover as a place to raise children.....                    | 1                | 2           | 3           | 4           | 5               |
| Andover as a place to work.....                              | 1                | 2           | 3           | 4           | 5               |
| Andover as a place to shop and dine.....                     | 1                | 2           | 3           | 4           | 5               |
| Andover as a place to engage in recreational activities..... | 1                | 2           | 3           | 4           | 5               |
| Andover as a place to retire.....                            | 1                | 2           | 3           | 4           | 5               |
| Overall quality of life in Andover.....                      | 1                | 2           | 3           | 4           | 5               |

**2. Please rate each of the following community characteristics in Andover:**

|                                       | <i>excellent</i> | <i>good</i> | <i>fair</i> | <i>poor</i> | <i>not sure</i> |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Small town feel.....                  | 1                | 2           | 3           | 4           | 5               |
| Feeling safe.....                     | 1                | 2           | 3           | 4           | 5               |
| Openness/acceptance of diversity..... | 1                | 2           | 3           | 4           | 5               |
| Public transportation options.....    | 1                | 2           | 3           | 4           | 5               |
| Cultural opportunities.....           | 1                | 2           | 3           | 4           | 5               |
| Range of housing options.....         | 1                | 2           | 3           | 4           | 5               |
| Historical preservation.....          | 1                | 2           | 3           | 4           | 5               |
| Recreational opportunities.....       | 1                | 2           | 3           | 4           | 5               |
| Open space/conservation land.....     | 1                | 2           | 3           | 4           | 5               |
| Walk-ability.....                     | 1                | 2           | 3           | 4           | 5               |
| Overall appearance.....               | 1                | 2           | 3           | 4           | 5               |
| Overall sense of community.....       | 1                | 2           | 3           | 4           | 5               |

**3. To what degree do you feel the following things are problems in Andover:**

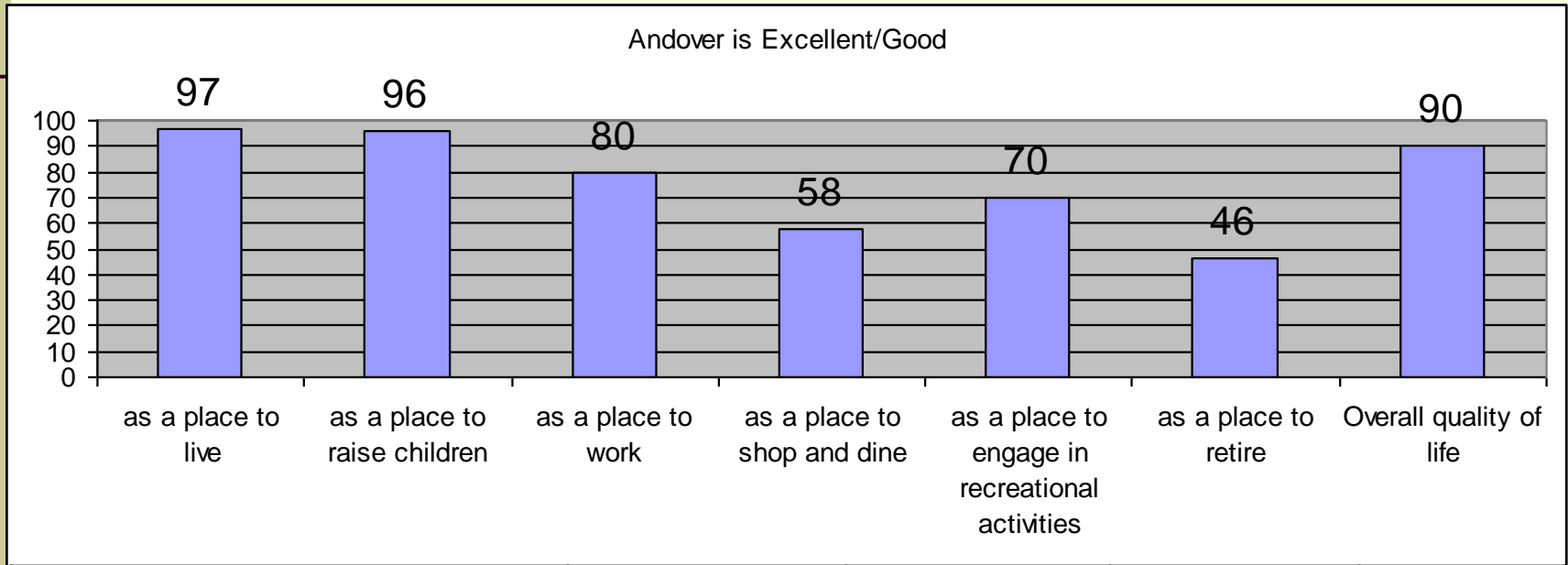
|   | <i>strongly agree</i> | <i>somewhat agree</i> | <i>somewhat disagree</i> | <i>strongly disagree</i> | <i>not sure</i> |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Violent crime.....                          | 1                     | 2                     | 3                        | 4                        | 5               |
| Property crime.....                         | 1                     | 2                     | 3                        | 4                        | 5               |
| Vice crime (drugs, prostitution, etc.)..... | 1                     | 2                     | 3                        | 4                        | 5               |
| Vandalism.....                              | 1                     | 2                     | 3                        | 4                        | 5               |
| Graffiti.....                               | 1                     | 2                     | 3                        | 4                        | 5               |
| Litter.....                                 | 1                     | 2                     | 3                        | 4                        | 5               |
| Unleashed dogs.....                         | 1                     | 2                     | 3                        | 4                        | 5               |
| Dog waste on sidewalks.....                 | 1                     | 2                     | 3                        | 4                        | 5               |
| Poorly maintained property.....             | 1                     | 2                     | 3                        | 4                        | 5               |
| Noise pollution.....                        | 1                     | 2                     | 3                        | 4                        | 5               |
| Automobile speeding.....                    | 1                     | 2                     | 3                        | 4                        | 5               |
| Unsupervised youth.....                     | 1                     | 2                     | 3                        | 4                        | 5               |

# Quality of Life

Excellent place to live and raise children

Shopping and dining fair

A place to retire uncertain – about 1 in 4 not sure



|   | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |
|---|-----------|------|------|------|
| as a place to live                              | 53        | 44   | 3    | 0    |
| as a place to raise children                    | 57        | 39   | 4    | 0    |
| as a place to work                              | 31        | 49   | 17   | 3    |
| as a place to shop and dine                     | 12        | 36   | 40   | 3    |
| as a place to engage in recreational activities | 19        | 51   | 25   | 5    |
| as a place to retire                            | 13        | 33   | 28   | 26   |
| Overall quality of life                         | 30        | 60   | 8    | 1    |

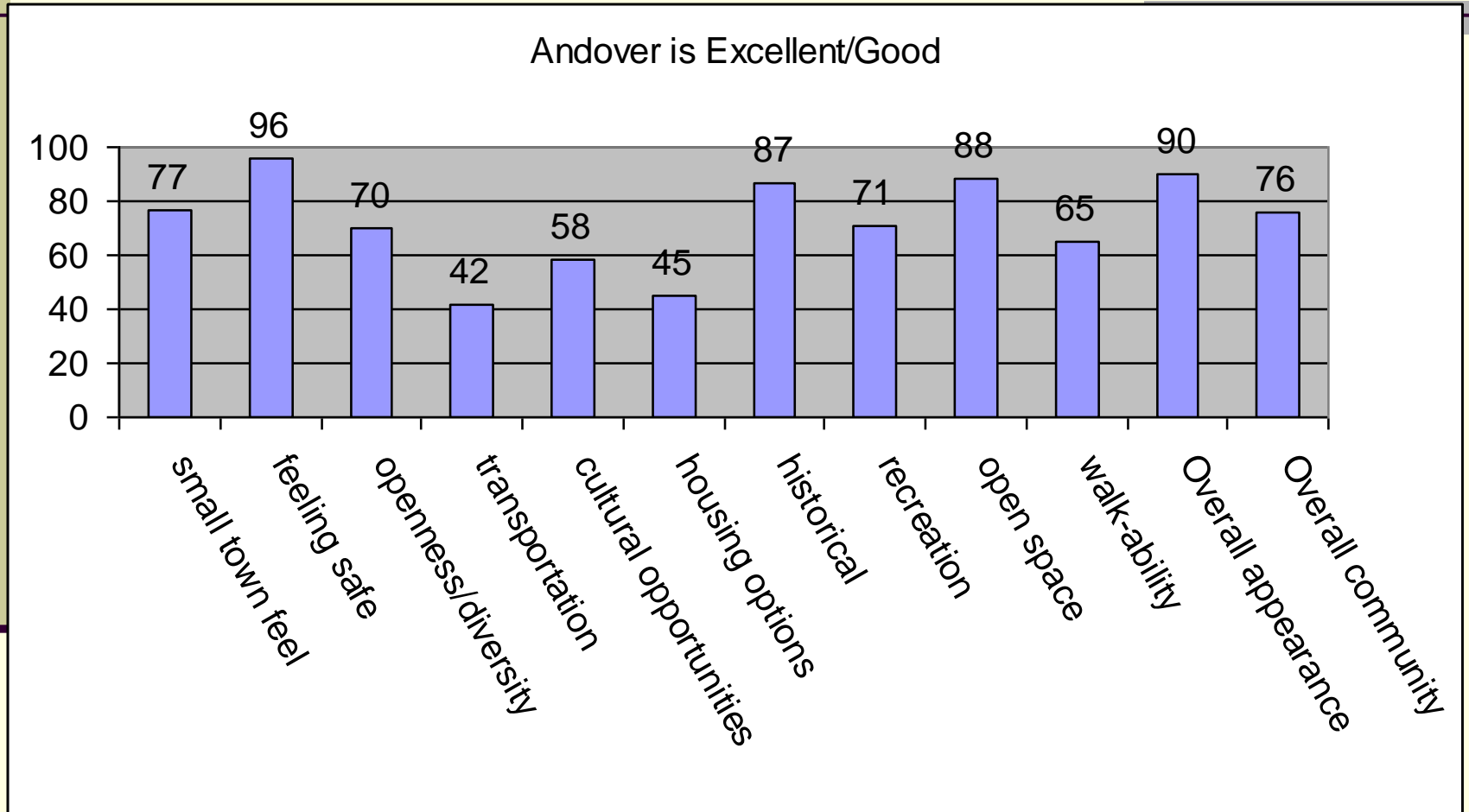
# Community Characteristics

High marks for safety & appearance

Transportation and housing options fair

|                                  | Excellent | Good      | Fair      | Poor      |
|----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| small town feel                  | 27        | 50        | 19        | 4         |
| feeling safe                     | <b>51</b> | <b>45</b> | 4         | 1         |
| openness/acceptance of diversity | 24        | 46        | 23        | 7         |
| public transportation options    | 9         | <b>33</b> | <b>32</b> | <b>26</b> |
| cultural opportunities           | 13        | 45        | 35        | 7         |
| range of housing options         | 7         | <b>38</b> | <b>40</b> | <b>14</b> |
| historical preservation          | 24        | 63        | 11        | 2         |
| recreational opportunities       | 17        | 54        | 25        | 5         |
| open space/conservation land     | 37        | 51        | 10        | 2         |
| walk-ability                     | 21        | 44        | 27        | 9         |
| Overall appearance               | <b>30</b> | <b>60</b> | 9         | 2         |
| Overall sense of community       | 20        | 56        | 21        | 3         |

# Community Characteristics



# Problems in Andover

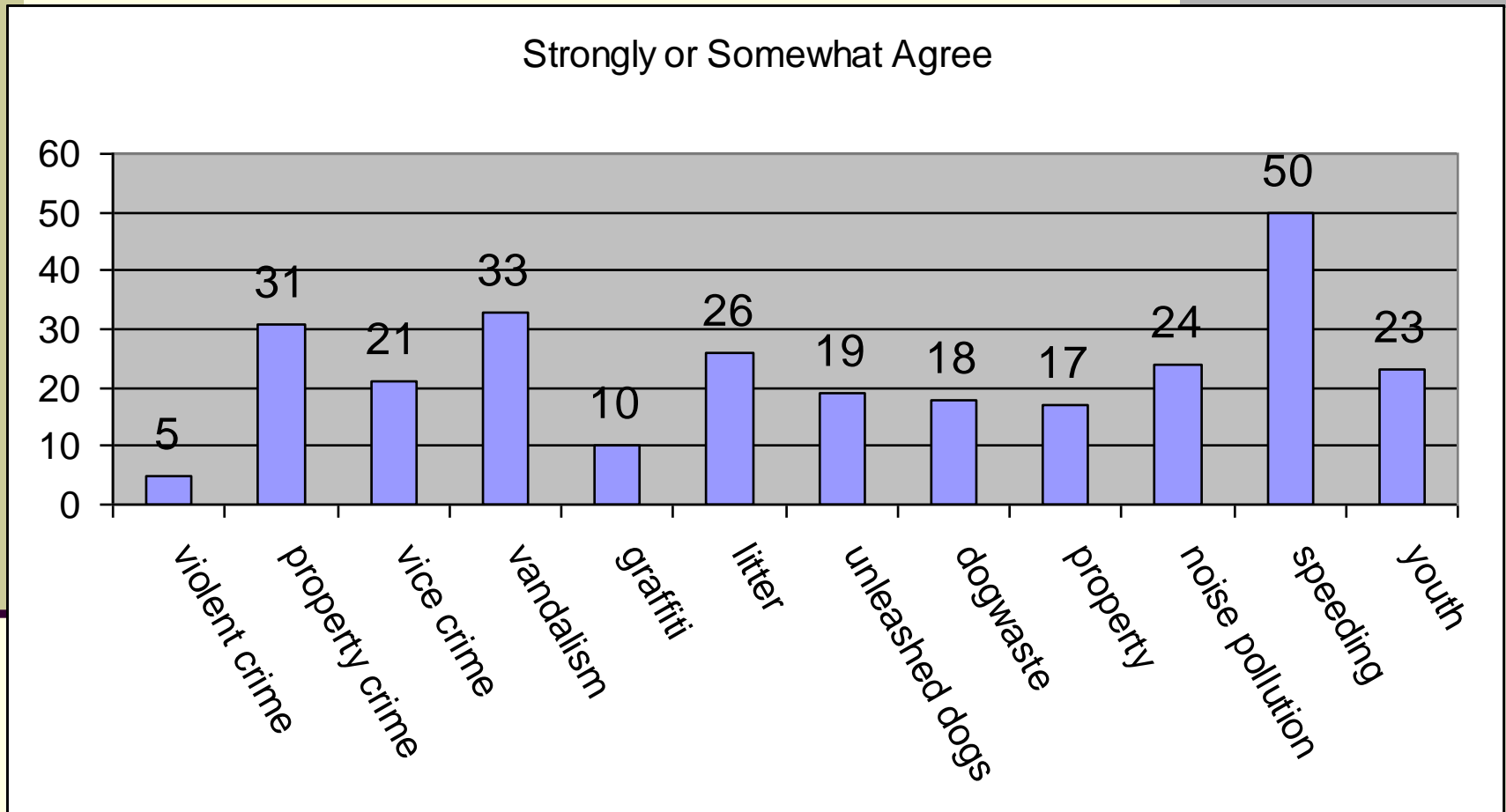
Violent crime no

Property crime and vandalism somewhat, but not graffiti

Speeding yes

|  | strongly agree | somewhat agree | somewhat disagree | strongly disagree |
|--|----------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| violent crime                          | 1              | 4              | 19                | <b>76</b>         |
| property crime                         | <b>4</b>       | <b>27</b>      | 36                | 32                |
| vice crime (drugs, prostitution, etc.) | <b>2</b>       | 19             | 32                | 47                |
| vandalism                              | <b>4</b>       | <b>29</b>      | 38                | 30                |
| graffiti                               | <b>1</b>       | <b>9</b>       | 34                | 56                |
| litter                                 | 4              | 22             | 38                | 38                |
| unleashed dogs                         | 5              | 14             | 31                | 51                |
| dog waste on sidewalks                 | 5              | 13             | 32                | 51                |
| poorly maintained property             | 2              | 15             | 40                | 43                |
| noise pollution                        | 4              | 20             | 31                | 44                |
| automobile speeding                    | <b>13</b>      | <b>37</b>      | 28                | 22                |
| unsupervised youth                     | 5              | 18             | 42                | 35                |

# Problems in Andover



# Importance in Moving to/Staying in Andover

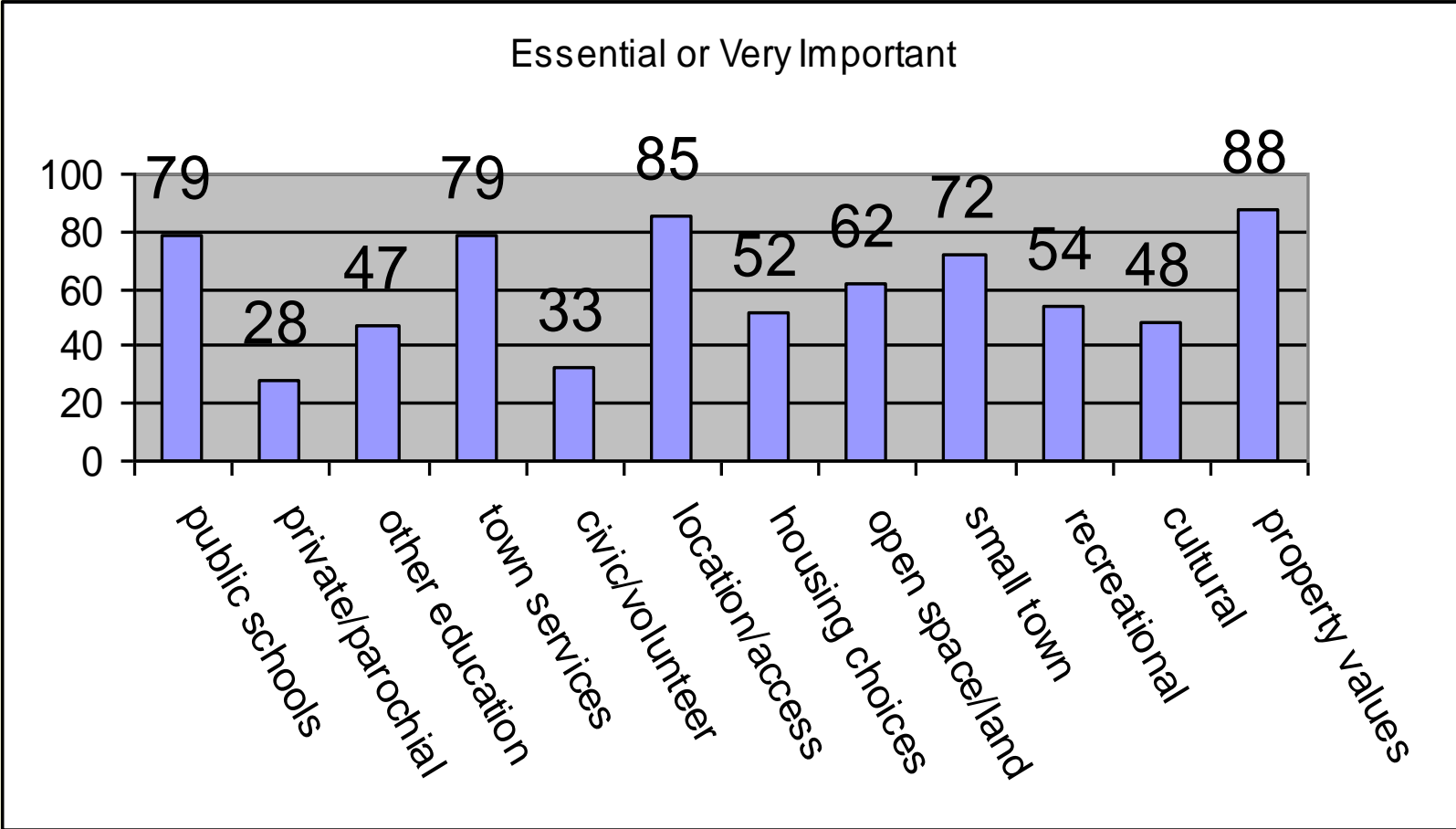
Public schools primarily

Civic/volunteer opportunities less important

Services, location, and property values important

|                                   | essential | very important | somewhat important | not at all important |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|----------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| public schools                    | <b>56</b> | <b>23</b>      | 9                  | 12                   |
| private/parochial schools         | 11        | 17             | 25                 | 47                   |
| other educational opportunities   | 16        | 31             | 26                 | 27                   |
| town services                     | <b>29</b> | <b>50</b>      | 19                 | 2                    |
| civic/volunteer opportunities     | 7         | 26             | <b>45</b>          | <b>23</b>            |
| geographic location/accessibility | <b>35</b> | <b>50</b>      | 14                 | 1                    |
| variety of housing choices        | 15        | 37             | 36                 | 13                   |
| open space/land conservation      | 20        | 42             | 29                 | 9                    |
| small town ambiance and lifestyle | 22        | 50             | 25                 | 3                    |
| recreational opportunities        | 16        | 39             | 38                 | 8                    |
| cultural opportunities            | 11        | 37             | 39                 | 13                   |
| property values/investment        | <b>45</b> | <b>43</b>      | 10                 | 2                    |

# Importance in Decision to Move to and/or Stay in Andover



# Andover's Current Mix of Property Use

Single family just about right

Divided opinion on multi and rental

Not enough open space

|                            | not enough | just about right | too much  |
|----------------------------|------------|------------------|-----------|
| single family houses       | 6          | <b>85</b>        | 8         |
| residential subdivisions   | 4          | 70               | 26        |
| multi-family housing       | <b>17</b>  | <b>60</b>        | <b>22</b> |
| rental housing             | <b>24</b>  | <b>57</b>        | <b>18</b> |
| office buildings           | 7          | 80               | 12        |
| large retail stores        | 22         | 70               | 9         |
| small shops and businesses | 31         | 65               | 4         |
| open space/farmland        | <b>41</b>  | <b>58</b>        | 1         |

# Community Life Summary

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- Excellent Quality of Life
- Safe and Attractive
- Some Limits in Transportation, Housing, Dining and Shopping
- Schools, Services, Location, and Property Values Make It Attractive

# Selected Changes in Community Life 2004 to 2008

| Andover rated as excellent or good | 2004      | 2008      | Change     | Essential or very important in decision to move to/stay in Andover | 2004      | 2008      | Change    |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| as a place to live                 | 97        | 97        | 0          | public schools   | 77        | 79        | 2         |
| as a place to raise children       | 95        | 96        | 1          | private/parochial schools  | 27        | 28        | 1         |
| as a place to retire               | 43        | 46        | 3          | other educational opportunities                                    | 44        | 47        | 3         |
| Overall quality of life            | 94        | 90        | -4         | town services  | 74        | 79        | 5         |
| sense of community*                | 76        | 76        | 0          | civic/volunteer opportunities                                      | 28        | 33        | 5         |
| openness/diversity                 | 65        | 70        | 5          | geographic location/accessibility                                  | 77        | 85        | 8         |
| Overall appearance                 | 89        | 90        | 1          | variety of housing choices   | <b>42</b> | <b>52</b> | <b>10</b> |
| cultural opportunities             | <b>71</b> | <b>58</b> | <b>-13</b> | natural resources/open space*                                      | 66        | 62        | -4        |
| recreational opportunities         | 72        | 71        | -1         | small town ambiance and lifestyle                                  | 75        | 72        | -3        |
| walkability*                       | 71        | 65        | -6         | recreational opportunities   | 54        | 54        | 0         |
|                                    |           |           |            | cultural opportunities   | 44        | 48        | 4         |
|                                    |           |           |            | property values/investment   | 87        | 88        | 1         |

\* minor wording change from 2004 to 2008

# Participation in the last 12 months

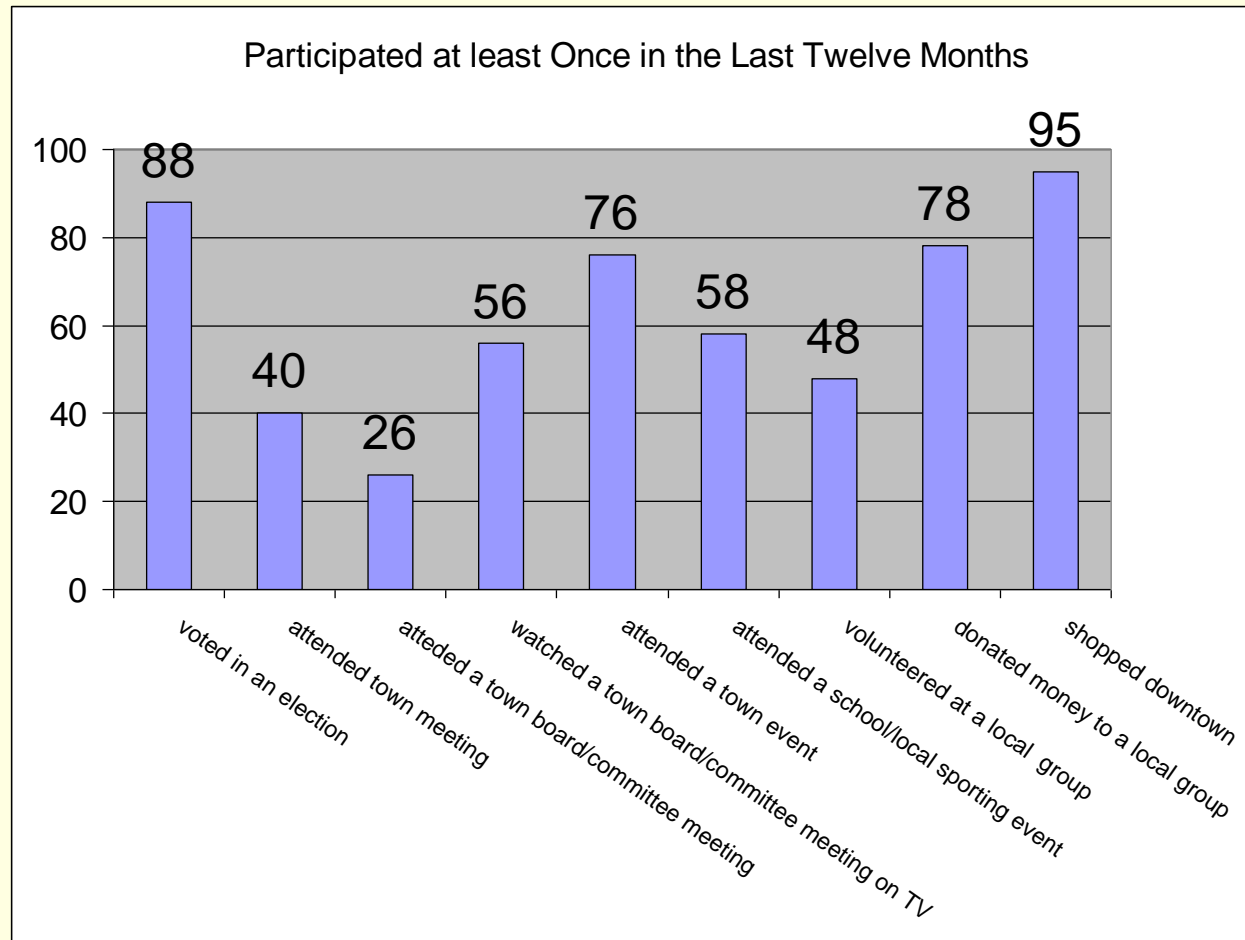
Voting rates much higher than town meeting attendance rates

In a separate question 43% reported attending town meeting in the past 3 years

Large numbers attend town events, give money, and support local businesses

|   | none      | once or twice | a number of times | many times |
|---|-----------|---------------|-------------------|------------|
| voted in an election                                      | <b>12</b> | 50            | 18                | 20         |
| attended town meeting                                     | <b>60</b> | 27            | 6                 | 6          |
| attended a meeting of a town board or committee           | 74        | 17            | 4                 | 4          |
| watched a town board or committee meeting on television   | 44        | 34            | 14                | 8          |
| attended a town event (e.g. July 4th, Andover Days, etc.) | 24        | <b>40</b>     | <b>24</b>         | <b>11</b>  |
| attended a school/local sporting event                    | 42        | 18            | 16                | 25         |
| volunteered at a local non-profit or civic group          | 52        | 19            | 11                | 18         |
| donated money to a local non-profit or civic group        | 22        | <b>34</b>     | <b>25</b>         | <b>19</b>  |
| shopped in the downtown business district                 | 5         | <b>13</b>     | <b>32</b>         | <b>51</b>  |

# Participation in the last 12 months



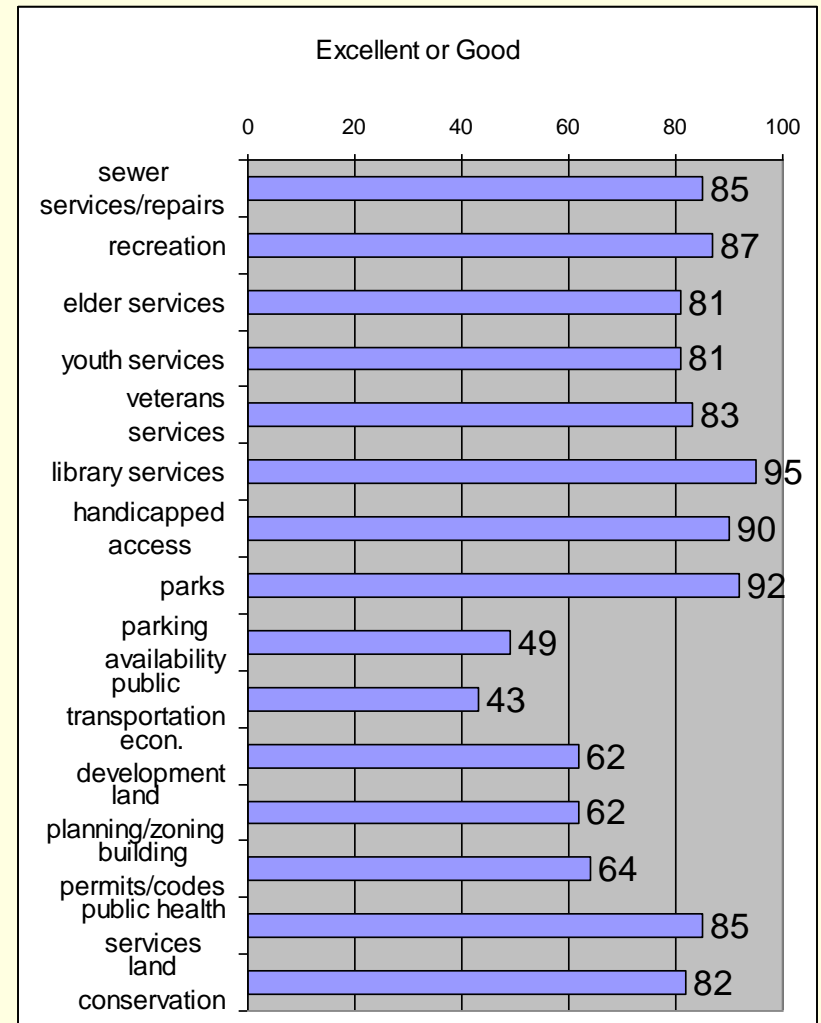
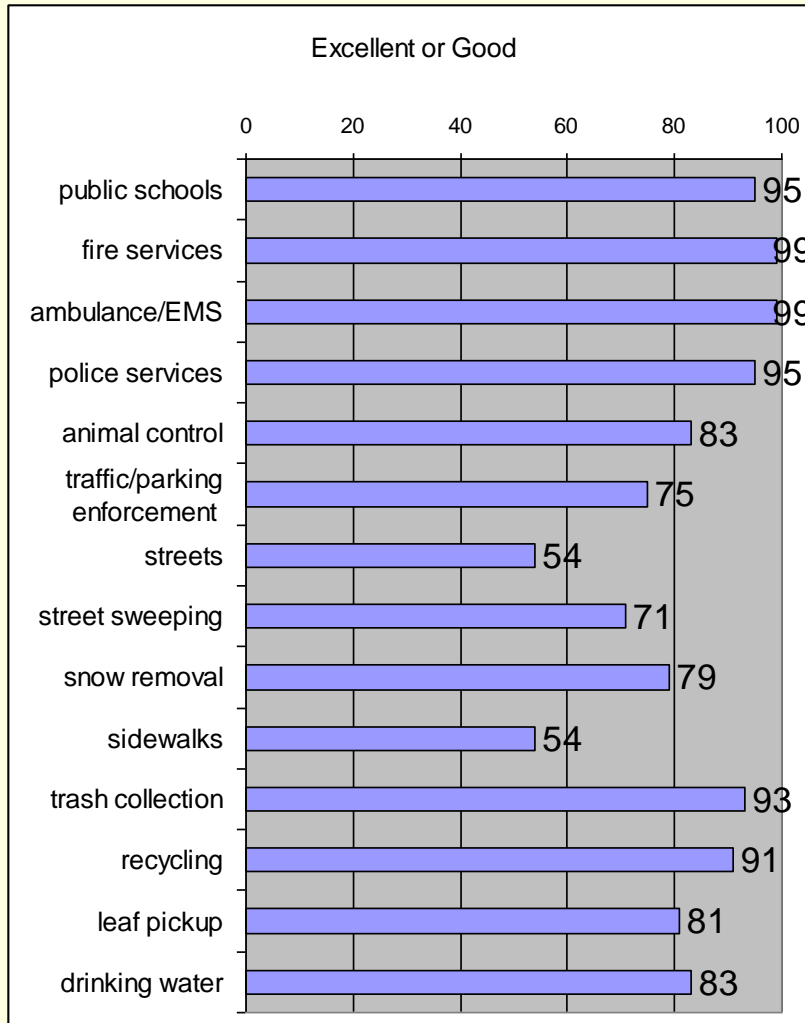
# Town Services

**Superior**  
 Schools  
 Police, Fire, EMS  
 Trash, Recycling  
 Library, Parks  
 Handicapped

**Fair**  
 Streets, Sidewalks  
 Parking  
 Transportation

|                             | excl.     | good      | fair      | poor      |   | excl.     | good      | fair      | poor      |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| public schools              | <b>45</b> | <b>50</b> | 4         | 2         | sewer services/repairs                    | 27        | 58        | 13        | 2         |
| fire services               | <b>59</b> | <b>40</b> | 1         | 0         | recreation programs/classes               | 30        | 57        | 11        | 2         |
| ambulance/EMS               | <b>62</b> | <b>37</b> | 1         | 0         | elder services                            | 28        | 53        | 16        | 3         |
| police services             | <b>49</b> | <b>45</b> | 5         | 1         | youth services                            | 31        | 50        | 14        | 5         |
| animal control              | 32        | 51        | 13        | 4         | veterans services                         | 30        | 53        | 13        | 4         |
| traffic/parking enforcement | 25        | 50        | 18        | 6         | library services                          | <b>53</b> | <b>42</b> | 5         | 0         |
| street maintenance/repair   | 14        | 40        | <b>34</b> | <b>12</b> | handicapped accessibility of facilities   | <b>31</b> | <b>59</b> | 8         | 2         |
| street sweeping             | 19        | 52        | 24        | 4         | maintenance/appearance of parks           | <b>33</b> | <b>59</b> | 7         | 1         |
| snow removal                | 28        | 53        | 14        | 5         | public parking availability               | 10        | 39        | <b>34</b> | <b>16</b> |
| sidewalk maintenance        | 12        | 42        | <b>33</b> | <b>12</b> | public transportation                     | 9         | 34        | <b>37</b> | <b>20</b> |
| trash collection            | <b>41</b> | <b>52</b> | 6         | 1         | economic development                      | 9         | 53        | 32        | 6         |
| recycling                   | <b>43</b> | <b>48</b> | 7         | 2         | land use planning, regulation and zoning  | 12        | 50        | 30        | 8         |
| curb-side leaf pickup       | 31        | 50        | 15        | 4         | building permits and code enforcement     | 13        | 51        | 27        | 9         |
| drinking water quality      | 38        | 46        | 13        | 4         | public health services                    | 19        | 66        | 13        | 2         |
| sewer services/repairs      | 27        | 58        | 13        | 2         | land conservation and wetlands protection | 27        | 55        | 14        | 4         |

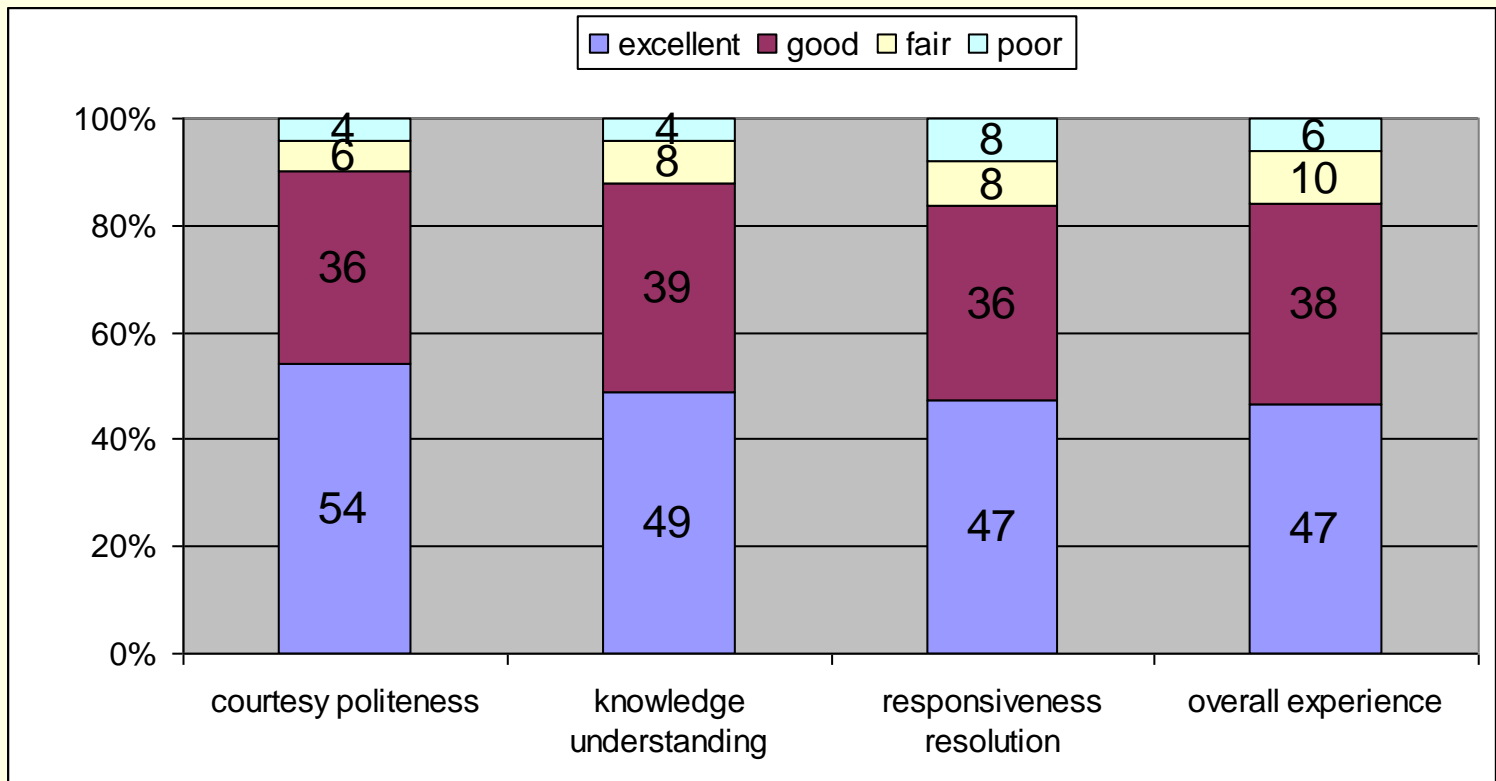
# Town Services



# Contact with Town Officials

Good to excellent across all categories

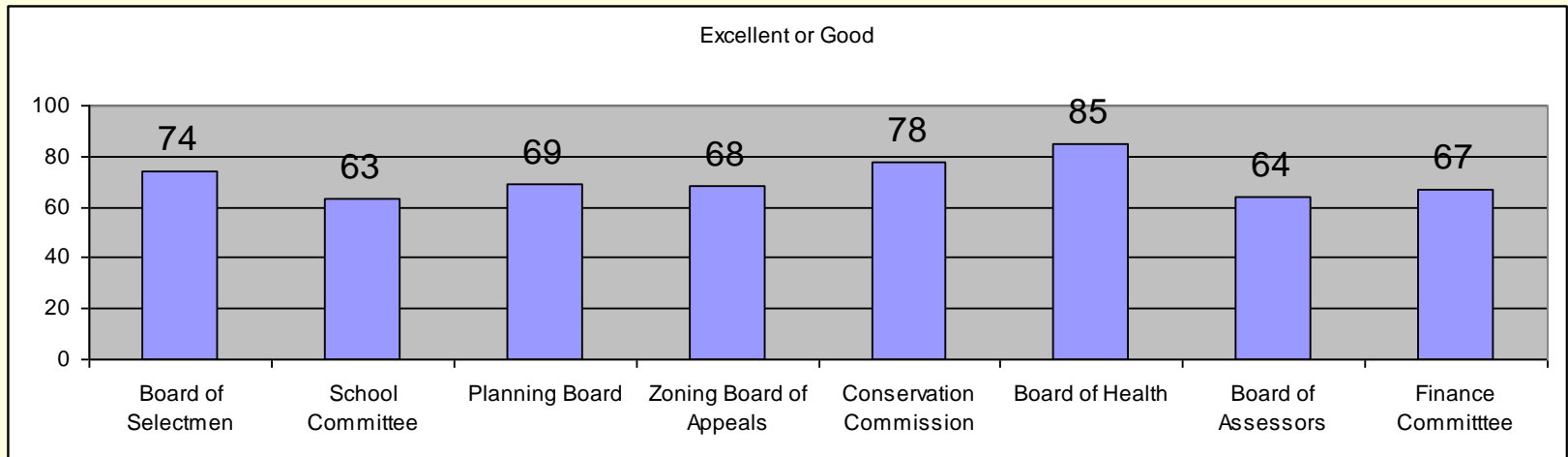
63% of respondents reported having had contact with a Town of Andover employee or official within the last year. That contact was rated as . . .



# Performance of Town Boards and Committees

High profile (selectmen) and low profile (conservation commission and board of health) rated highest

|                         | excellent | good      | fair | poor |
|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|------|------|
| Board of Selectmen      | <b>14</b> | <b>60</b> | 21   | 4    |
| School Committee        | 13        | 50        | 26   | 11   |
| Planning Board          | 13        | 56        | 26   | 6    |
| Zoning Board of Appeals | 13        | 55        | 25   | 7    |
| Conservation Commission | <b>21</b> | <b>57</b> | 16   | 5    |
| Board of Health         | <b>22</b> | <b>63</b> | 12   | 2    |
| Board of Assessors      | 13        | 51        | 30   | 6    |
| Finance Committee       | 19        | 48        | 26   | 8    |



# Sources of Andover News/Information

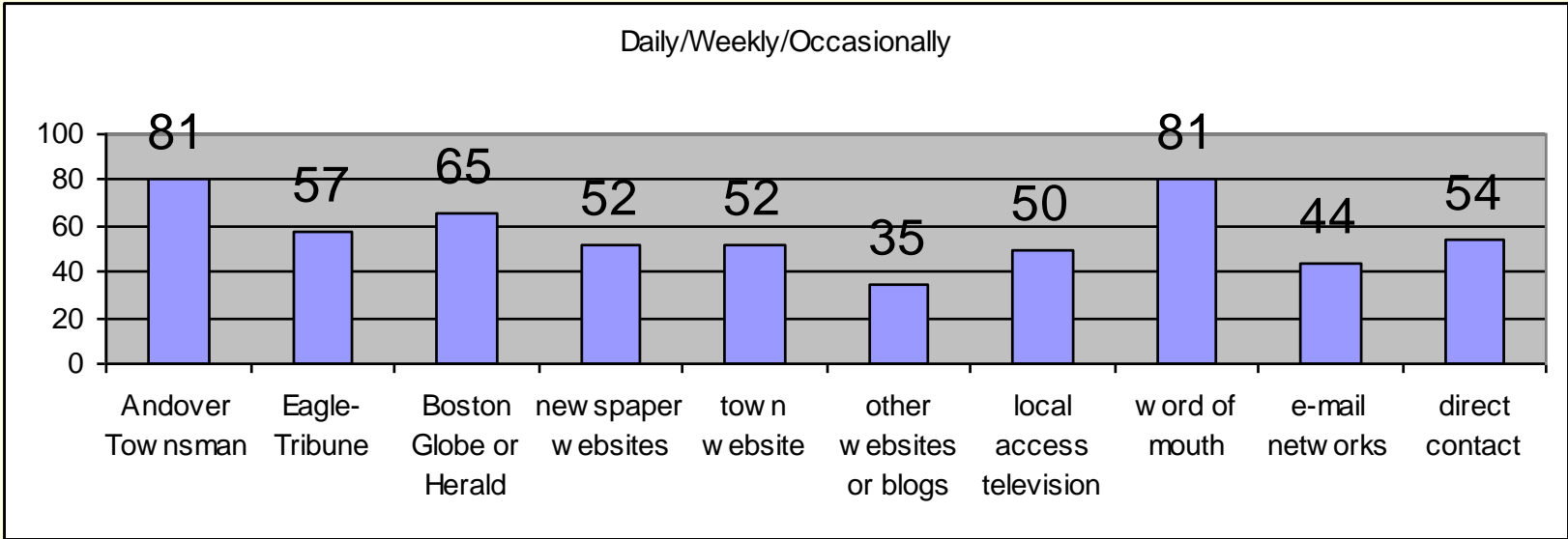
Andover Townsman & word of mouth primary

Some use of other newspapers (Eagle-Tribune, Globe and Herald)

Some use of town specific electronic sources

|                               | daily     | weekly    | occasionally | seldom | never |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|--------|-------|
| Andover Townsman              | <b>2</b>  | <b>65</b> | <b>14</b>    | 9      | 10    |
| Eagle-Tribune                 | 33        | 7         | 17           | 15     | 28    |
| Boston Globe or Boston Herald | 36        | 13        | 16           | 13     | 22    |
| newspaper websites            | 16        | 10        | 26           | 18     | 31    |
| town website                  | 2         | 8         | 42           | 20     | 27    |
| other websites or blogs       | 7         | 7         | 21           | 19     | 46    |
| local access television       | 7         | 9         | 34           | 22     | 29    |
| word of mouth                 | <b>12</b> | <b>28</b> | <b>41</b>    | 11     | 8     |
| e-mail networks               | 9         | 14        | 21           | 15     | 41    |
| direct contact                | 6         | 11        | 37           | 23     | 23    |

# Sources of Andover News/Information



# Local Government Summary

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- Voting and Community Engagement High
- Schools & Essential Services Highly Rated
- Service Issues: Streets and Transportation
- Contact with Town Officials Very Positive
- High and Low Profile Boards Rated Highest
- Local Sources of Local Information

# Selected Changes in Local Government Ratings 2004 to 2008

| Andover services rated as excellent or good | 2004      | 2008      | Change     | Andover services rated as excellent or good | 2004      | 2008      | Change    |
|---|-----------|-----------|------------|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| police                                      | 93        | 95        | 2          | appearance/maintenance of parks             | 84        | 92        | 8         |
| fire  | 97        | 99        | 2          | library services                            | 95        | 95        | 0         |
| EMS   | 98        | 99        | 1          | garbage collection                          | 92        | 93        | 1         |
| traffic enforcement                         | 79        | 75        | -4         | recycling                                   | 91        | 91        | 0         |
| street repair                               | <b>42</b> | <b>54</b> | <b>12</b>  | yard waste pickup*                          | <b>71</b> | <b>81</b> | <b>10</b> |
| street cleaning                             | 62        | 71        | 9          | sewer service*                              | 78        | 85        | 7         |
| snow removal                                | 79        | 79        | 0          | land use, planning, zoning                  | 53        | 62        | 9         |
| sidewalk maintenance                        | 49        | 54        | 5          | economic development                        | 67        | 62        | -5        |
| public parking*                             | <b>37</b> | <b>49</b> | <b>12</b>  | elder services*                             | <b>69</b> | <b>81</b> | <b>12</b> |
| transportation*                             | <b>56</b> | <b>43</b> | <b>-13</b> | youth services                              | <b>66</b> | <b>81</b> | <b>15</b> |
| recreation programs/classes                 | 81        | 87        | 6          | public schools                              | <b>85</b> | <b>95</b> | <b>10</b> |

| Impression of Town employee/official with whom you had contact excellent or good | 2004 | 2008 | Change |
|--|------|------|--------|
| knowledge*   | 90   | 88   | -2     |
| responsiveness*  | 85   | 83   | -2     |
| courtesy*  | 86   | 90   | 4      |
| overall impression*  | 86   | 85   | -1     |

\* minor wording change from 2004 to 2008

# Next Steps

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- Further analysis of trends and differences from 2004 survey
- Demographic breakdowns
- Final report expected year end
- Question and Comments