2014
Summary of Findings
The National Citizen Survey is:

- A collaborative effort between National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA)
- A statistically valid compilation of resident opinions about community and services provided by local government
Study Methods:

- Mailed survey to approximately 1,200 households (late April)
- 546 surveys returned; 47% response rate (typical response rates range 25 – 40%)
- 4% margin of error
- 4th time survey has been conducted – last time in 2012, and before that in 2010, and the first time in 2008
- Benchmark to 500 communities nation-wide
Results can be used for:

- Planning
- Resource Allocation
- Performance Measurement
- Program and Policy Evaluation
- Spending
- Monitor Trends in Resident Opinion
Needham as a Place to Live

97%
“Excellent” or “Good”

Quality of Life in Needham

93%
“Excellent” or “Good”
AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM EXCEEDED NATIONAL BENCHMARK COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS

SAFEY
Overall feeling of safety 97%
Ranked #6 of 127

MOBILITY
Ease of walking 84%
Ranked #23 of 236
AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM EXCEEDED NATIONAL BENCHMARK COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Cleanliness 89%
Ranked #52 of 221

Air Quality 91%
Ranked #21 of 206

ECONOMY

Overall economic health 84%
Ranked #11 of 46
AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM EXCEEDED NATIONAL BENCHMARK COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS

RECREATION & WELLNESS

Mental Health Care 65%
Ranked #10 of 41

Preventive Health Services 82%
Ranked #17 of 175

Healthcare 82%
Ranked #17 of 210

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Neighborliness 78%
Ranked #4 of 42
AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM EXCEEDED NATIONAL BENCHMARK COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS

EDUCATION & ENRICHMENT

Education & Enrichment Opportunities 85%
Ranked #9 of 43
K-12 Education 91%
Ranked #29 of 201
AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM EXCEEDED NATIONAL BENCHMARK
GOVERNANCE

SAFETY

Police Services  92%
Ranked #12 of 342

Crime Prevention  91%
Ranked #8 of 280
AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM EXCEEDED NATIONAL BENCHMARK
GOVERNANCE

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT
Drinking Water 85%
Ranked #35 of 262

RECREATION & WELLNESS
Health Services 87%
Ranked #17 of 161
AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM EXCEEDED NATIONAL BENCHMARK
GOVERNANCE

GENERAL
Sense of Community  85%
Ranked #19 of 247
AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM EXCEEDED NATIONAL BENCHMARK
ASPECTS OF PARTICIPATION

SAFETY
Did NOT report a crime 91%
Ranked #2 of 42

MOBILITY
Used public transportation instead of driving 50%
Ranked #9 of 38
Walked or biked instead of driving 73%
Ranked #8 of 42
Areas Where Needham Exceeded National Benchmark
Aspects of Participation

Natural Environment
Recycled at Home  95%
Ranked #36 of 209

Built Environment
Did not observe a code violation  69%
Ranked #8 of 42
AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM EXCEEDED NATIONAL BENCHMARK
ASPECTS OF PARTICIPATION

ECONOMY
Believe economy will have positive impact on income 34%
Ranked #7 of 205

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
Voted in local elections 87%
Ranked 22 of 205
AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM EXCEEDED NATIONAL BENCHMARK
ASPECTS OF PARTICIPATION

EDUCATION AND ENRICHMENT

Used Needham Public Library
83%
Ranked #17 of 192

Attended a Town sponsored event
62%
Ranked 7 of 41
AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM IS BELOW THE NATIONAL BENCHMARK

COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Affordable Quality Housing

25%
Ranked #226 of 248

Variety of Housing Options

42%
Ranked 184 of 214
AREAS WHERE NEEDHAM IS BELOW THE NATIONAL BENCHMARK
COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS

ECONOMY
Shopping Opportunities 39%
Ranked #188 of 235
SPECIALTY QUESTIONS

CURRENT SOCIAL MEDIA SOURCES

INDICATE HOW MUCH OF A SOURCE, IF AT ALL, EACH OF THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF SOCIAL MEDIA IS FOR YOU TO OBTAIN NEWS

- **Online News Sites**
  - Not: 15%
  - Major: 60%
  - Minor: 25%

- **Facebook**
  - Not: 50%
  - Major: 24%
  - Minor: 27%

- **Blogs**
  - Not: 65%
  - Major: 8%
  - Minor: 28%

- **Twitter**
  - Not: 78%
  - Major: 7%
  - Minor: 14%
**SPECIALTY QUESTIONS**

**POTENTIAL SOCIAL MEDIA SOURCES**

Indicate how likely you would be to use each of the following methods to obtain news about the Town of Needham:

- Town of Needham Website: 52% Very Likely, 24% Somewhat Likely, 8% Somewhat Unlikely, 6% Very Unlikely, 10% Don't Know
- Town Facebook Page: 46% Very Likely, 18% Somewhat Likely, 15% Somewhat Unlikely, 11% Very Unlikely, 11% Don't Know
SPECIALTY QUESTIONS

POTENTIAL SOCIAL MEDIA SOURCES

INDICATE HOW LIKELY YOU WOULD BE TO USE EACH OF THE FOLLOWING METHODS TO OBTAIN NEWS ABOUT THE TOWN OF NEEDHAM

Town Blogs

- Very Likely: 43%
- Somewhat Likely: 12%
- Somewhat Unlikely: 8%
- Very Unlikely: 17%
- Don't Know: 6%

Town Twitter Feed

- Very Likely: 61%
- Somewhat Likely: 13%
- Somewhat Unlikely: 9%
- Very Unlikely: 11%
- Don't Know: 6%
SPECIALTY QUESTIONS

CLOSING OR REDUCING HOURS FOR THE RECYCLING TRANSFER STATION

The RTS is currently open to the public Tues – Sat 7:30am-4:00pm. The Town is considering closing or reducing hours on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday or Friday in order to reduce costs. (Sat hours would not be affected.) If such changes are needed to reduce costs, to what extent would you support or oppose each of the following options.

Close or limit hours on Tuesday

- Don't Know: 20%
- Somewhat Opposed/Strongly Opposed: 10% / 33%
- Strongly Support/Somewhat Support: 19% / 18%

Close or limit hours on Wednesday

- Don't Know: 21%
- Somewhat Opposed/Strongly Opposed: 13% / 16%
- Strongly Support/Somewhat Support: 22% / 28%
SPECIALTY QUESTIONS

CLOSING OR REDUCING HOURS FOR THE RECYCLING TRANSFER STATION

The RTS is currently open to the public Tues – Sat 7:30am-4:00pm. The Town is considering closing or reducing hours on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday or Friday in order to reduce costs. (Sat hours would not be affected.) If such changes are needed to reduce costs, to what extent would you support or oppose each of the following options.

**Close or limit hours on Thursday**

- Don't Know: 20%
- Somewhat Opposed/Strongly Opposed: 17% / 16%
- Strongly Support/Somewhat Support: 21% / 27%

**Close or limit hours on Friday**

- Don't Know: 20%
- Somewhat Opposed/Strongly Opposed: 13% / 38%
- Strongly Support/Somewhat Support: 14% / 15%
**TRENDS COMPARISON: 2008 to 2014**

Percent rating positively: Ratings of “Excellent/Good” Characteristics with a change of 6% or greater

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>2008 Rating</th>
<th>2014 Rating</th>
<th>Percent change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>Believe economy will have positive impact on income</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>386%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education &amp; Enrichment</td>
<td>Cultural / arts / music activities</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education &amp; Enrichment</td>
<td>Childcare / preschool</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>Paths &amp; walking trails</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>Street repair</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>Shopping opportunities</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education &amp; Enrichment</td>
<td>Opportunities for education and enrichment</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>Needham’s overall appearance</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>Traffic flow</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Environment</td>
<td>Overall natural environment</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
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TRENDS COMPARISON: 2008 to 2014

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<th>2014 Rating</th>
<th>Percent change</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Governance</td>
<td>Services provided by the Federal Government</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>Street cleaning</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation &amp; Wellness</td>
<td>Health care</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>Economic development</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Environment</td>
<td>Cleanliness of Needham</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Built Environment</td>
<td>Affordable quality housing</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Governance</td>
<td>Overall direction of the Town</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>Ease of walking</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>Travel by bicycle</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
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TRENDS COMPARISON: 2008 to 2014

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<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>Employment opportunities</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>Traffic signal timing</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>Street lighting</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>Sidewalk maintenance</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Environment</td>
<td>Natural areas preservation</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Built Environment</td>
<td>NOT under housing cost stress</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Built Environment</td>
<td>Sewer services</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Built Environment</td>
<td>Land use, planning and zoning</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Community Engagement</td>
<td>Watched a local public meeting</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>(39%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>Travel by public transportation</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>(35%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Engagement</td>
<td>Attended a local public meeting</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>(34%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Participation</td>
<td>Contacted Needham employees</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>(22%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>Place to work</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>(10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Emergency preparedness</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>(10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Engagement</td>
<td>Opportunities to volunteer</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>(7%)</td>
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**TRENDS COMPARISON: 2008 to 2014**

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education &amp; Enrichment</td>
<td>Used Needham Public Library</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>(6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation &amp; Wellness</td>
<td>Visited a Town park</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>(6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Built Environment</td>
<td>Storm drainage</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>(6%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NEXT STEPS