

# City of Walla Walla Engagement and Priority Assessment

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January 2025

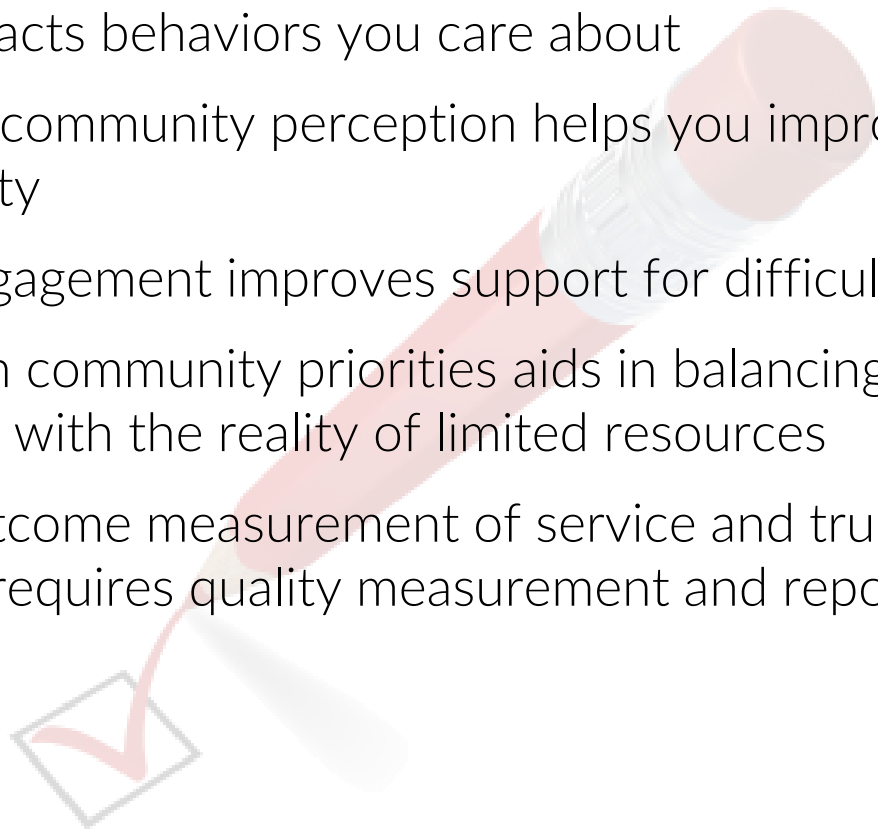


# Background on Cobalt Community Research

- 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

# Measuring Where You Are: Why Research Matters

- Understanding community values and priorities helps you plan and communicate more effectively about City decisions
- Perception impacts behaviors you care about
- Understanding community perception helps you improve and promote the City
- Community engagement improves support for difficult decisions
- Reliable data on community priorities aids in balancing demands of vocal groups with the reality of limited resources
- Bottom line outcome measurement of service and trust: Good administration requires quality measurement and reporting



# Study Goals

- Support budget and strategic planning decisions
- Explore service compared with baseline measures
- Identify which aspects of community provide the greatest leverage on Residents' overall satisfaction – and how satisfaction, in turn, influences the community's image and Resident behaviors such as volunteering, remaining in the community, recommending it to others and encouraging businesses to start up in the community
- Benchmark performance against a standardized performance index statewide, regionally and nationally
- Compare performance to 2013-2023 Resident surveys

# Bottom Line

- City continues to outperform benchmarks in most areas and generally held steady when compared to 2023
- 2024 ACSI Score = 66 (67 in 2023)
  - Washington (25,000-100,000 residents) = 63 (60 in 2023)
  - West = 63
  - National = 62
- 2024 Local Government Management Score = 71 (72 in 2023)
  - Washington (25,000-100,000 residents) = 65
  - West = 64
  - National = 63
- There are several areas where improvement can have significant impact on engagement:

## 2023 Drivers:

City Government Management  
Community Image  
City Services  
Economic Health  
Parks/Recreation

## 2024 Drivers:

City Government Management  
Community Image  
Economic Health  
Events  
Parks/Recreation

# Bottom Line

- First responders, library, parks and utilities had the highest scores, while perspectives on the economy, shopping, and transportation were lower scoring areas.
- In the comments, concerns were expressed about traffic enforcement and the general maintenance of city and private property.
- Consistent improvements in availability of services in Spanish.
- Top funding priorities include street maintenance, police services, fire services, ambulance services.
- A plurality of residents support the sales tax for 911 and levy lid lift for fire, but many would like more information.
- A plurality of residents do not support a property tax measure to fund parks and recreation facilities maintenance and improvements.
- Childcare issues do not seem to be a significant issue for most residents; however, younger residents and minorities report this to be a much more significant concern.

# American Customer Satisfaction Index: Sample of Private Sector Companies Measured



- Allstate
- Albertsons
- Apple, Inc.
- Bank of America
- Bell South (U.S.)
- Best Buy (U.S.)
- Blue Cross and Blue Shield
- Charter Communications
- Citibank
- Coca-Cola (U.S.)
- Comcast
- Dell
- DIRECTV
- Facebook
- FedEx
- Ford Motor Company
- General Electric
- General Motors
- Google
- Hilton
- Home Depot
- Kellogg
- McDonald's
- Microsoft
- MillerCoors
- Netflix
- Nike
- Sears Roebuck and Co.
- Southwest Airlines
- Sprint
- Starbucks
- Target
- Verizon
- Wal-Mart
- Yahoo!

# American Customer Satisfaction Index: Sample of Public Sector Agencies Measured



- Department of Education, Federal Student Aid
- Department of Energy
- Federal Emergency Management Administration
- Federal Trade Commission
- General Services Administration
- Health Resources and Services Administration
- Internal Revenue Service
- Municipal-owned Utilities
- National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- National Weather Service
- National Recreation Reservation Service
- Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation
- Small Business Administration
- Veterans Affairs

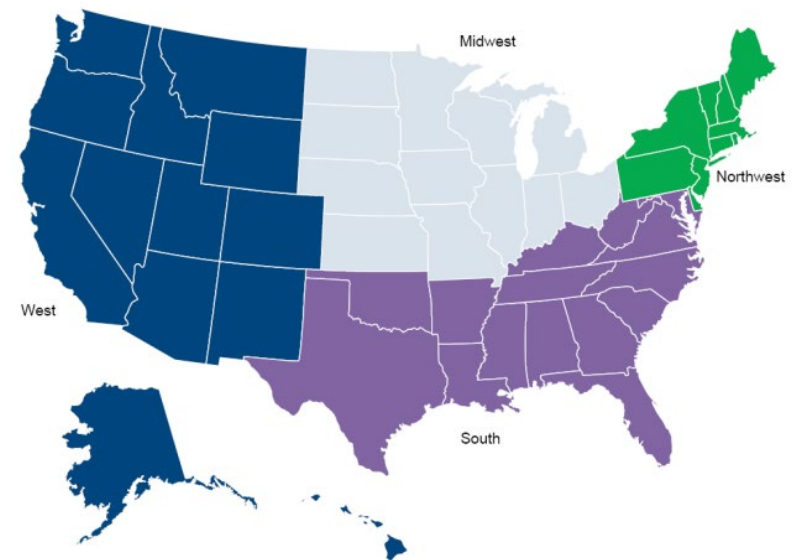
# Scores in Context

	2024 U.S. 25-100k	2024 U.S.	2024 West 25- 100k	2024 West	2024 WA 25-100k	2024 WA
Community ACSI	63	62	59	63	65	63
Local schools ACSI	63	62	62	61	63	62
County/parish government ACSI	59	59	58	58	61	58
State government ACSI	56	56	55	57	60	57
City of Walla Walla 66						

# Available Tools

- Detailed questions and responses broken by demographic group and “thermal mapped”, so lower scores are red and higher scores are blue
- Comparison scores with local governments in Washington, the West and across the nation
- Comparison scores with non-local government benchmarks (industries, companies, federal agencies)

**Census Bureau Regions**



# Methodology

- Random sample of 2,000 residents drawn from utility records
- Utilized [www.random.org](http://www.random.org), a well-respected utility to generate true random numbers
- Performed a random stratified sample based on ward, with an equal representation of 500 surveys sent to each
- Conducted using three mailings in November and December 2024
- Valid response from 350 residents, providing a solid response rate and a margin of error of +/- 5.15 percent
  - **Note:** National surveys with a margin of error +/- 5% require a sample of 384 responses to reflect a population of 330,000,000
- Results weighted to adjust ward representation to proportions in utility records
- In addition, 42 residents responded who were not part of the random sample, producing a total response of 392. These responses were not included in the statistical results, but are included as a row in the crosstab report

# Preserving Voice: Looking Into Detail

2024 Rating Questions City of Walla Walla Response: 350, Margin of Error +/-5.15%		Fire & Emergency Medical Service					Utilities							
		Fire and EMS Overall	Fire coverage for the community	Fire prevention education	Response time to fires	Response time to medical emergencies	Availability and quality of services in Spanish	Utilities Overall	Drinking water quality	Residential garbage collection service	Landfill services	Recycling service	Green waste collection	Availability and quality of services in Spanish
2013 Overall Satisfaction		85	88	78	87	87	-	77	83	84	69	81	67	-
2015 Overall Satisfaction		86	88	77	90	89	-	79	84	86	72	82	69	-
2016 Overall Satisfaction		87	89	78	90	90	-	80	83	85	83	75	74	-
2017 Overall Satisfaction		86	89	77	89	88	-	80	85	87	84	72	74	-
2018 Overall Satisfaction		85	89	78	89	90	78	76	82	86	82	64	64	74
2019 Overall Satisfaction		85	89	79	90	89	79	80	83	86	84	66	76	83
2020 Overall Satisfaction		83	89	73	89	89	74	77	82	87	84	61	73	76
2021 Overall Satisfaction		83	88	73	88	88	77	72	82	84	83	44	64	73
2022 Overall Satisfaction		86	90	79	92	91	79	77	83	87	86	50	72	82
2023 Overall Satisfaction		84	87	78	88	89	80	77	82	87	83	56	70	82
2024 Overall Satisfaction		<b>86</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>86</b>
Residency	One year or less <sup>†</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-	61	67	78	22	78	-	-
	1-5 years	84	91	77	90	84	78	79	78	86	90	60	69	94
	6-10 years	84	87	79	88	88	78	77	82	81	83	62	70	86
	10 years+	86	88	81	90	90	82	81	84	86	87	70	77	83

Consistent Scores  
Regardless of  
Demographics

Checked Scores  
that Vary by  
Demographics

# Results



# Comparing 2023 and 2024

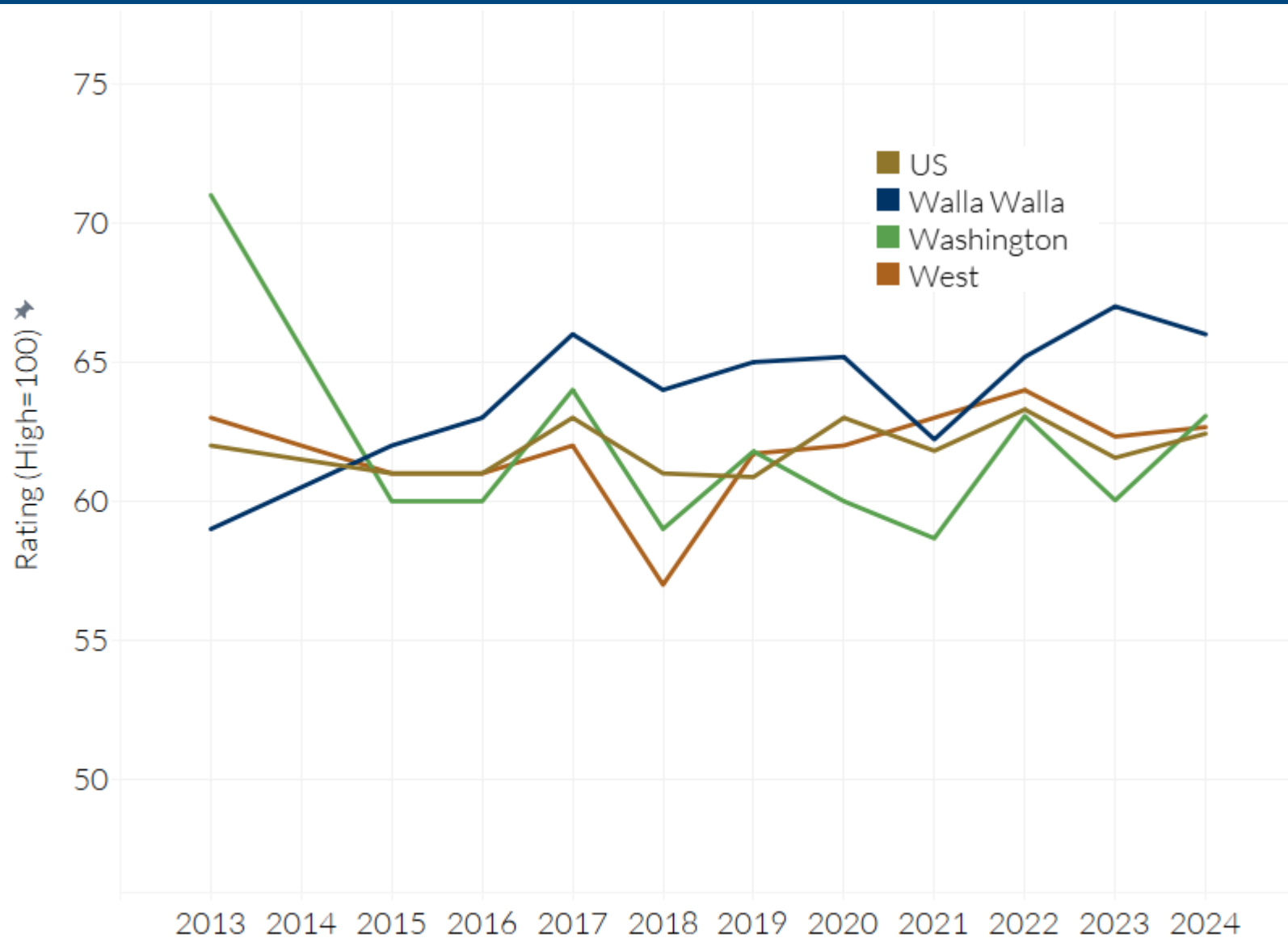
(High score = 100)

## 2024 areas with strong impact on overall engagement

	2024 U.S. 25-100	2024 U.S.	2024 West 25-100	2024 West	2024 WA 25-100	2024 WA	2023 Walla Walla	2024 Walla Walla	Change
Fire and EMS Overall	79	78	75	77	80	78	84	86	➔ 1.8
911 Overall							87	88	➔ 1.5
Transportation Overall	63	63	62	65	67	65	64	65	➔ 1.0
Utilities Overall	71	70	69	71	75	74	77	80	➔ 3.7
Police Overall	71						82	82	➔ 0.2
Shopping Overall	75	73	71	75	77	74	58	59	➔ 1.7
City Management Overall	62	63	62	64	65	62	72	71	➔ -0.8
Events Overall	66	65	64	67	69	68	72	71	➔ -0.9
Economy Overall	53	54	54	56	59	55	49	48	➔ -0.4
Parks Overall	68	69	63	66	71	71	80	80	➔ 0.7
Library Overall	74	73	67	71	76	76	84	84	➔ -0.7
Image Overall	66	65	64	66	66	64	73	70	➔ -2.2

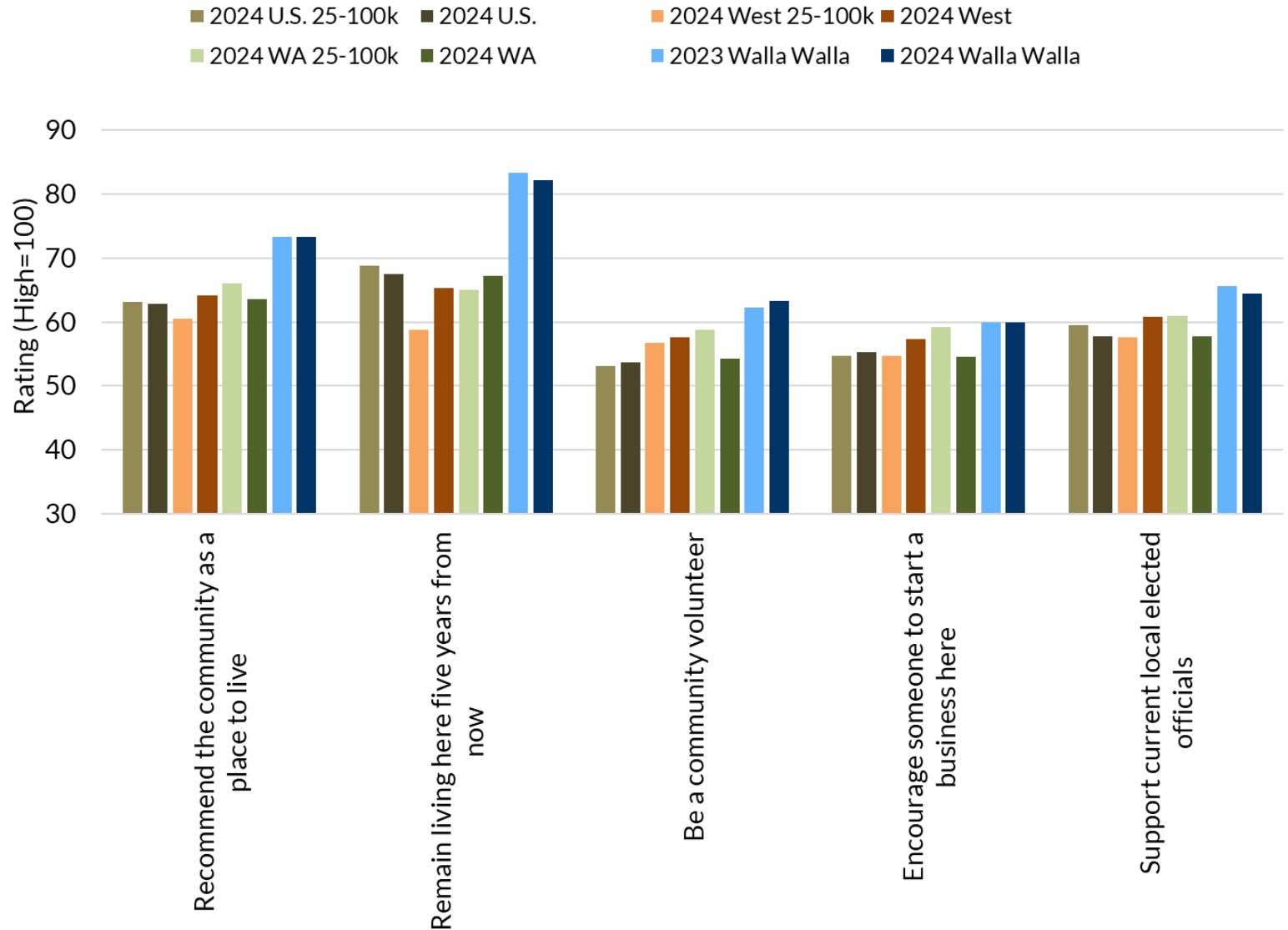
Note: Change is calculated from unrounded numbers

# Community Satisfaction to Benchmarks



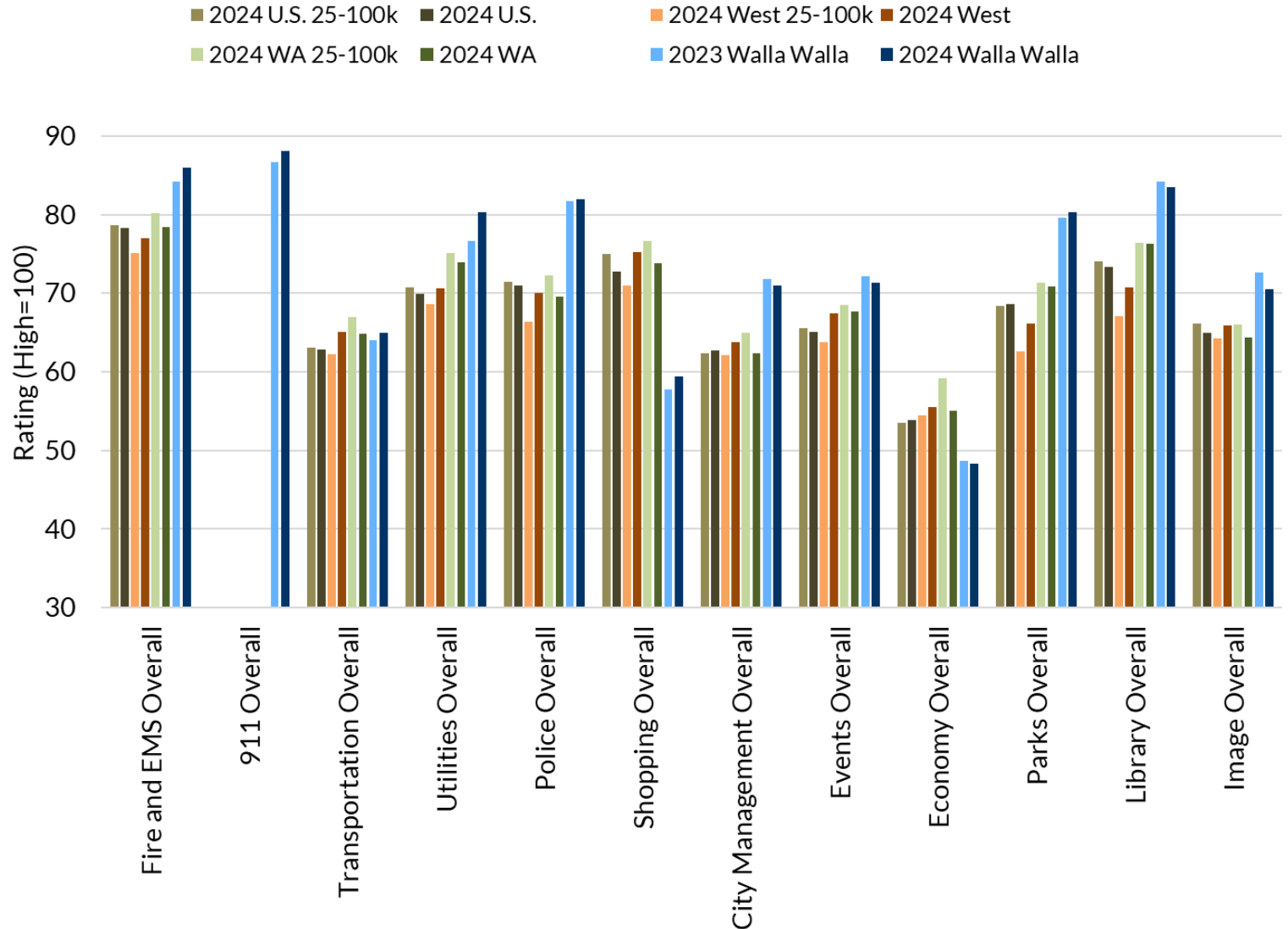
# Outcome Behaviors to Benchmarks

(High score = 100)

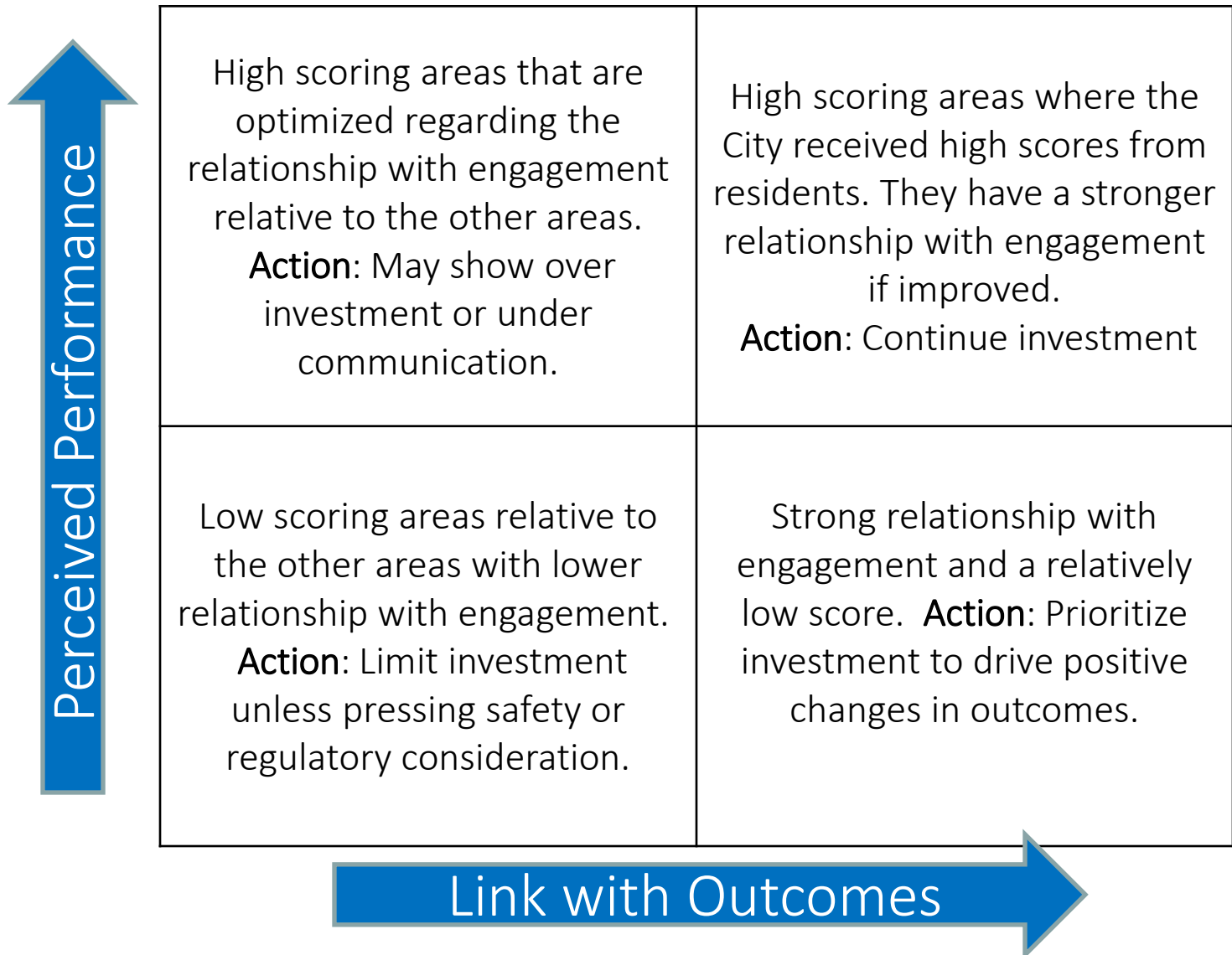


# Community Experience Components

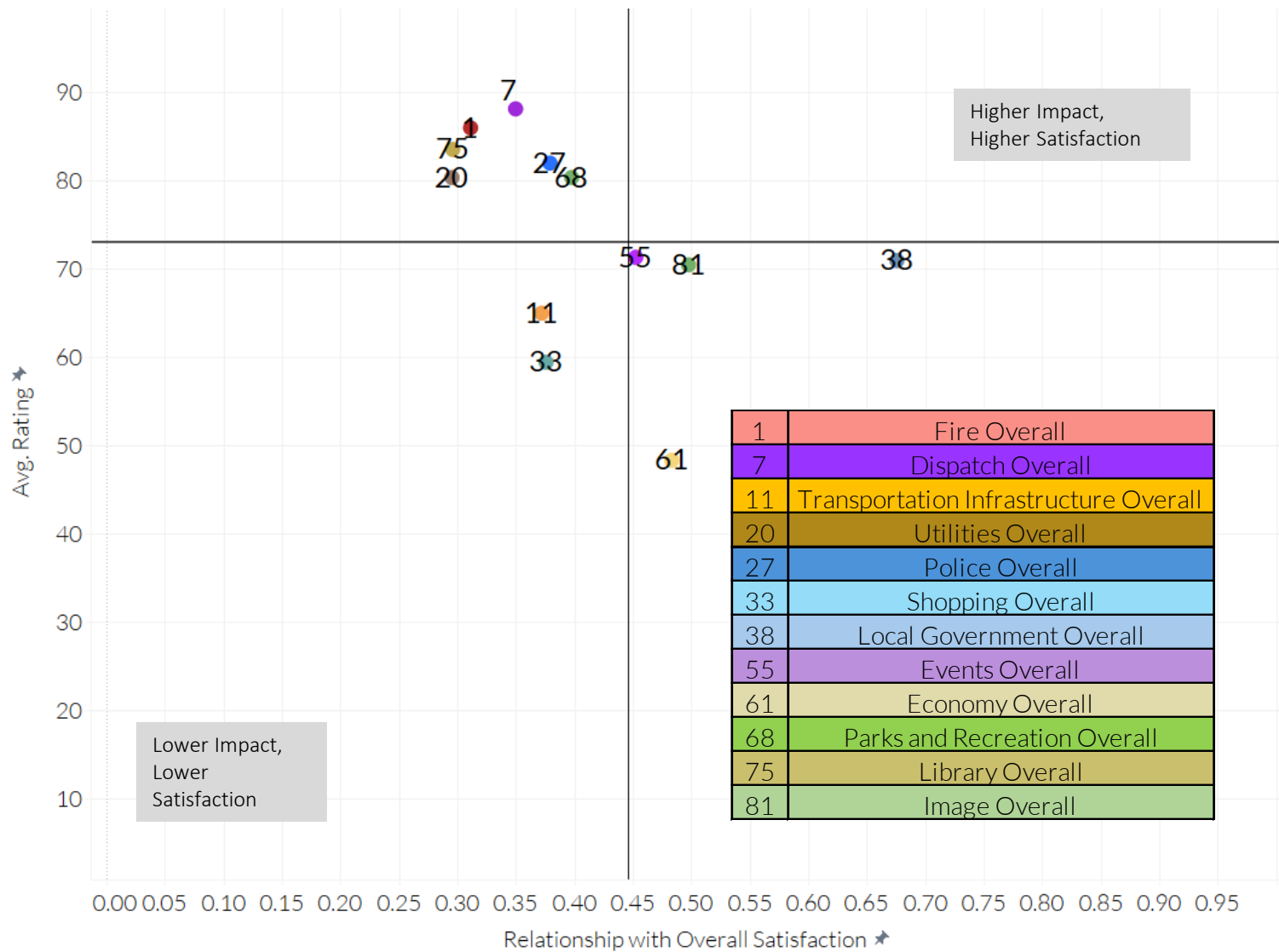
High score = 100)



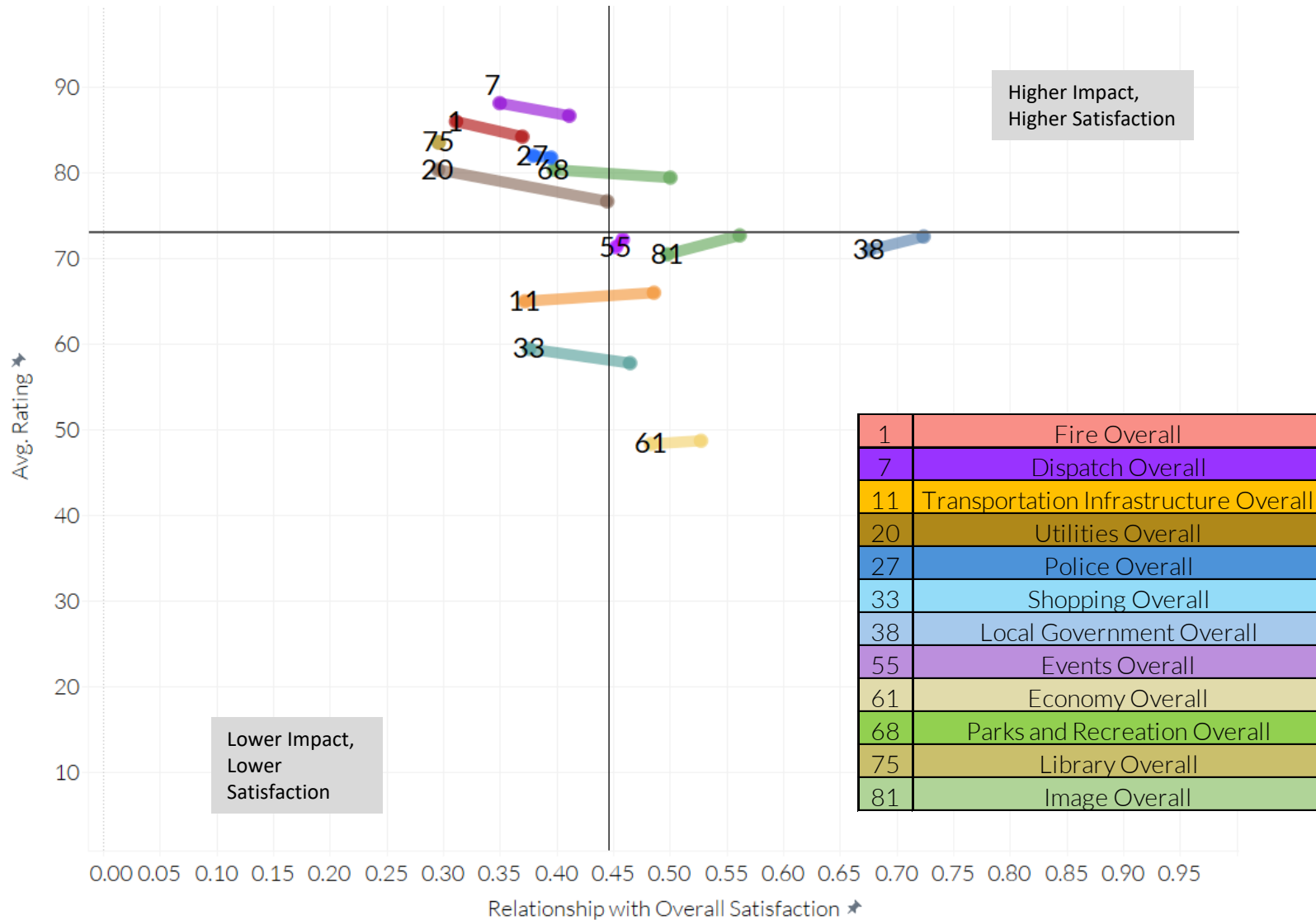
# Understanding the Charts: Community Questions – Long-term Drivers



# Drivers of Satisfaction and Behavior: Strategic Priorities

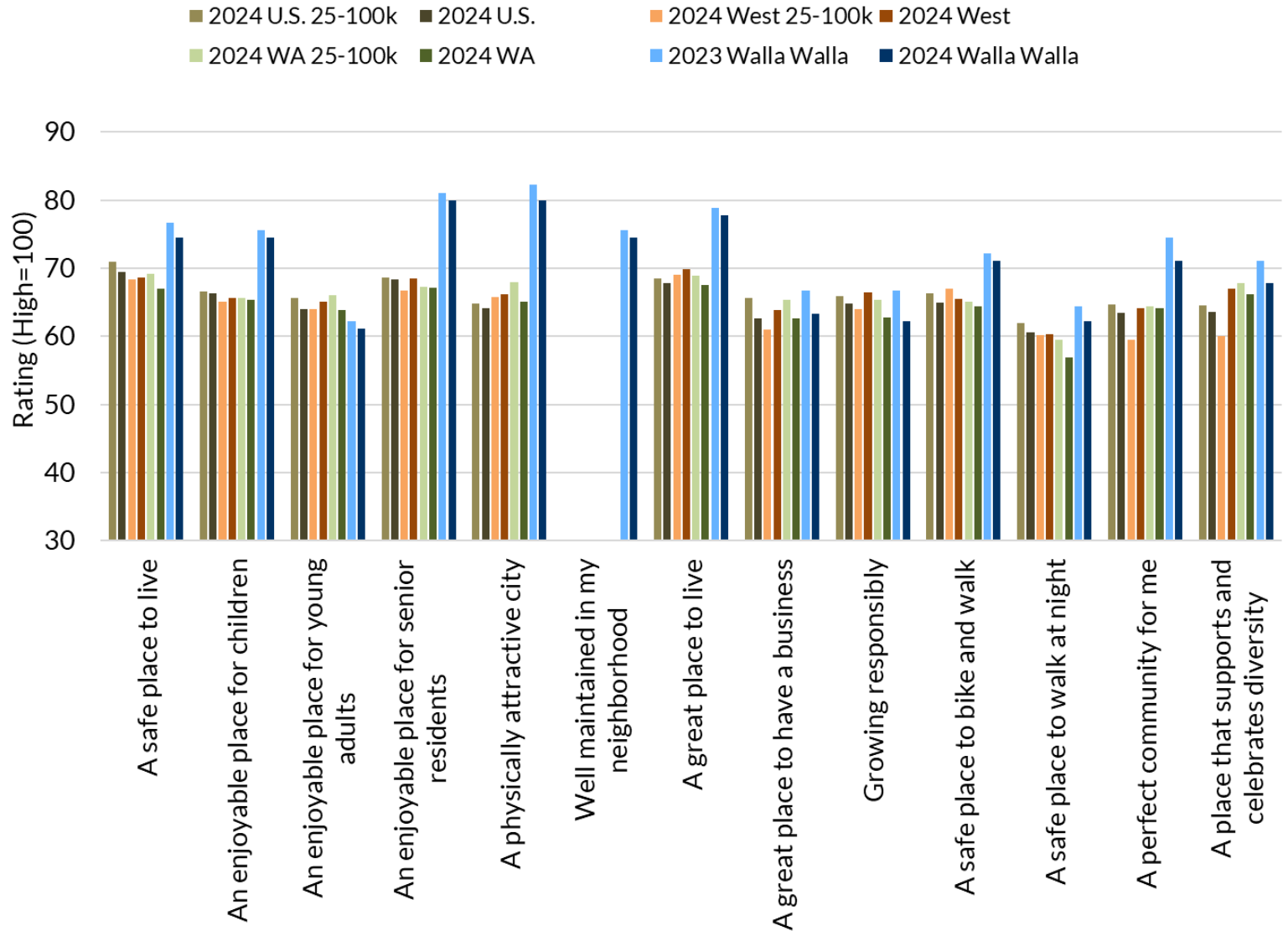


# Drivers of Satisfaction and Behavior: Strategic Priorities Compared to 2023

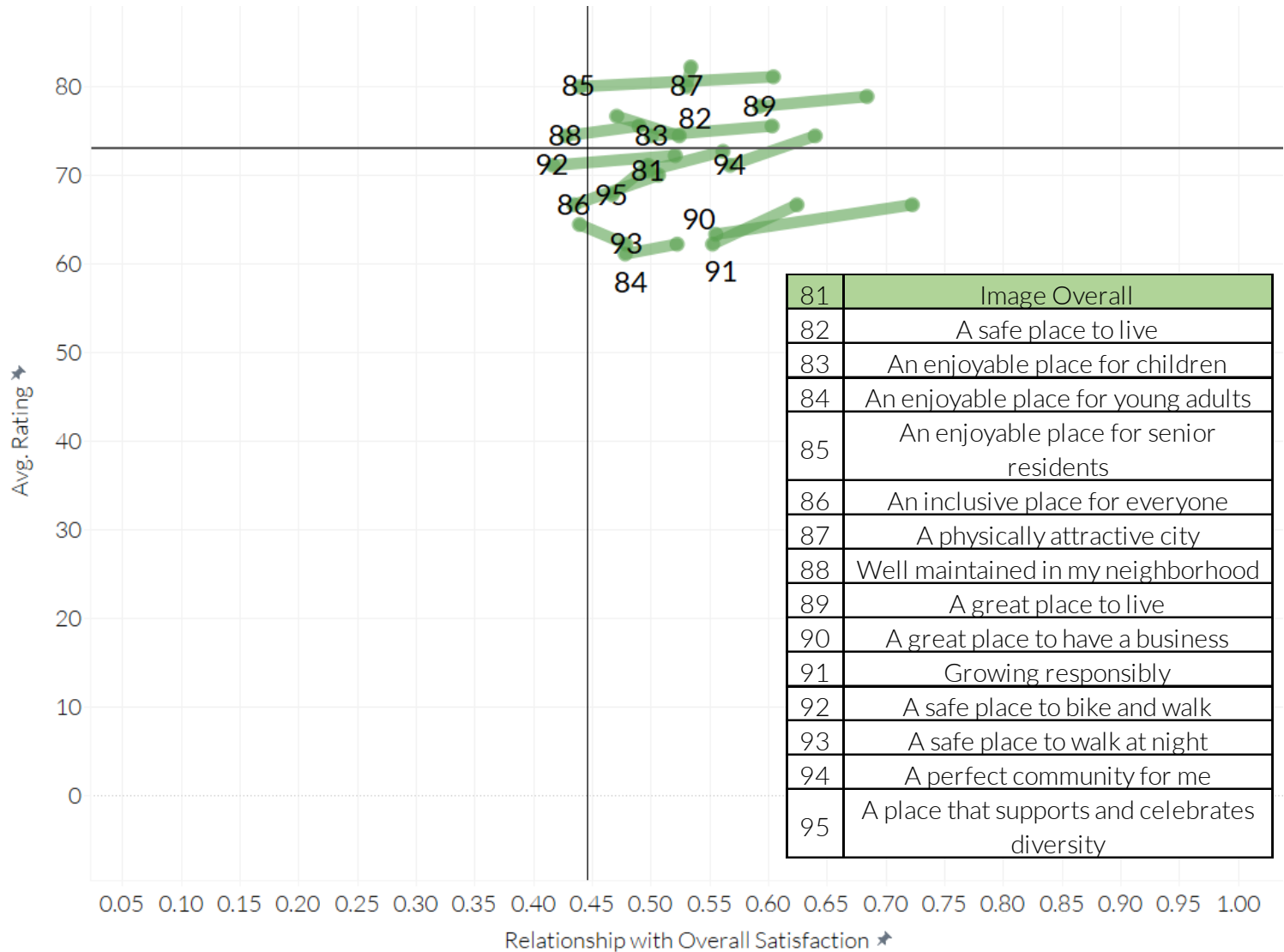


# Community Image to Benchmarks

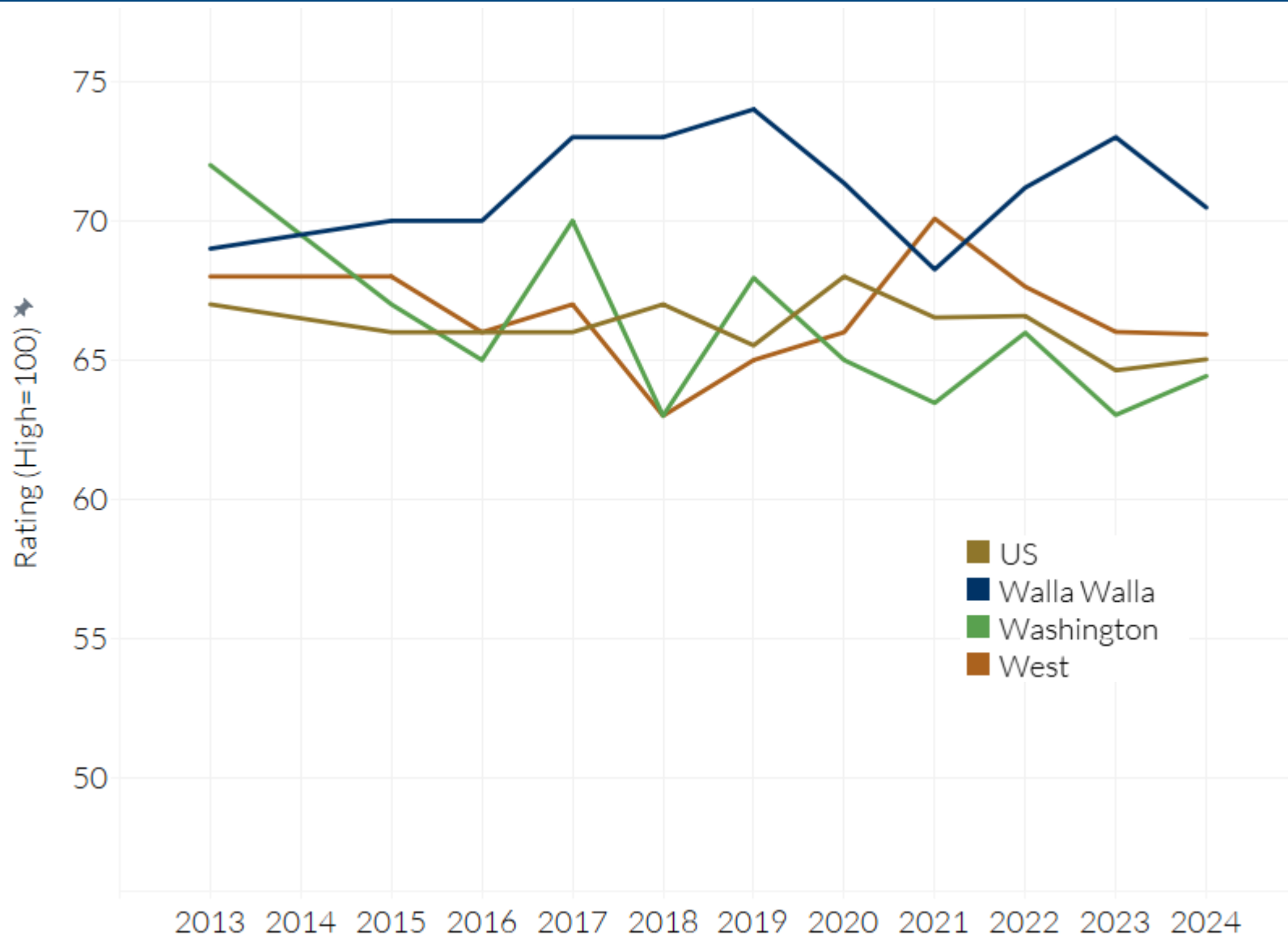
(High score = 100)



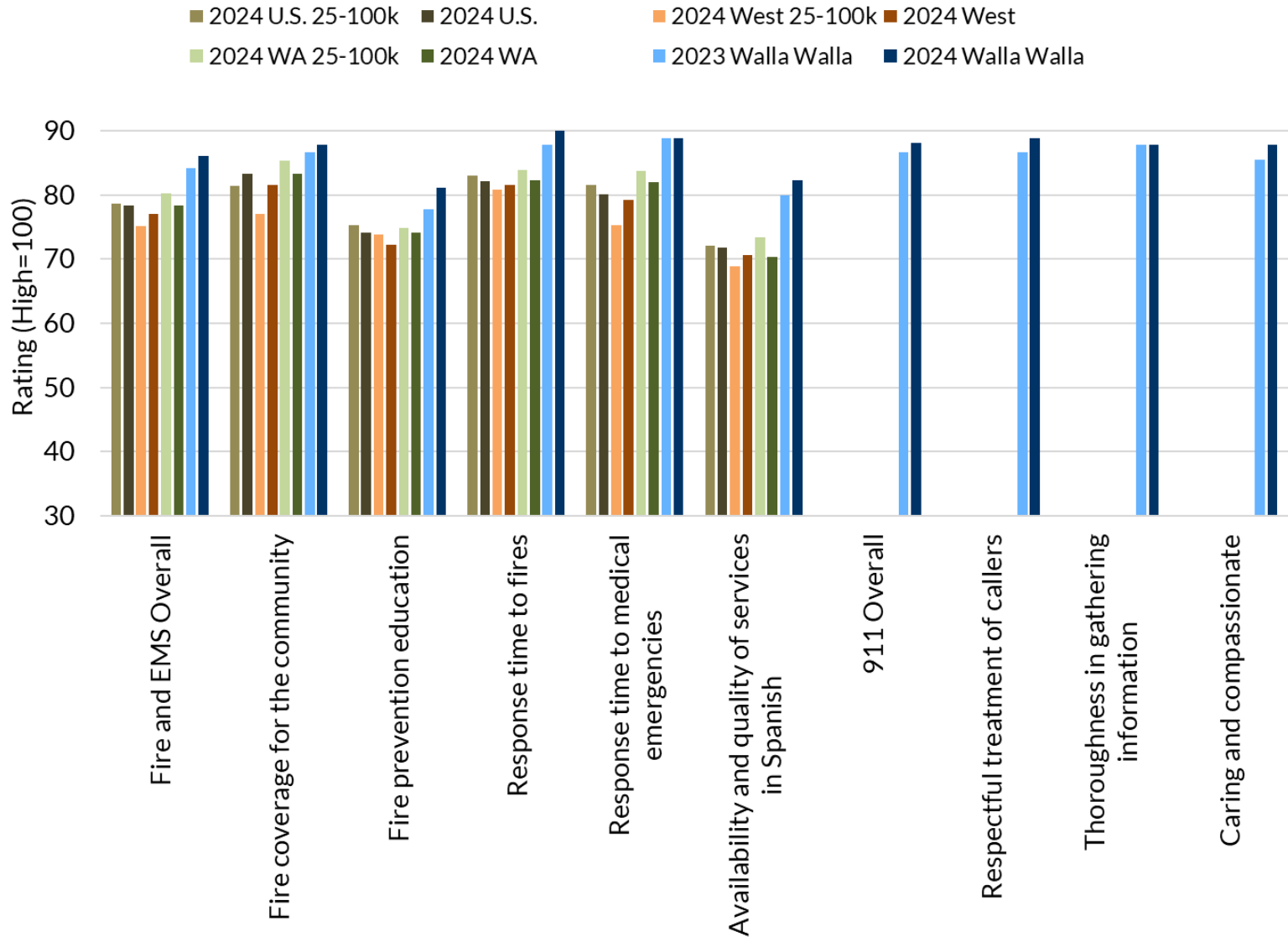
# City Image



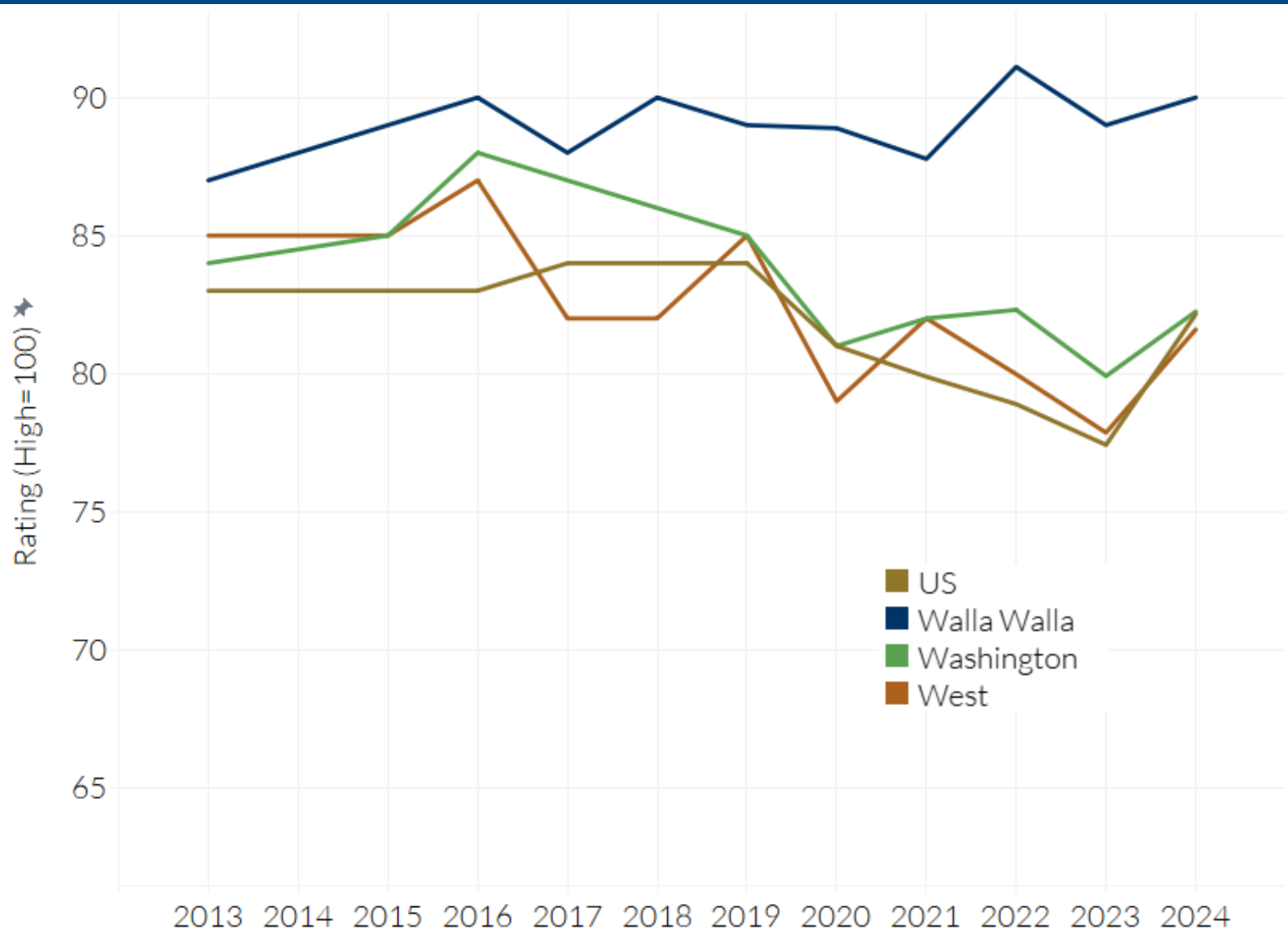
# Drivers of Satisfaction and Behavior: Community Image - Trends



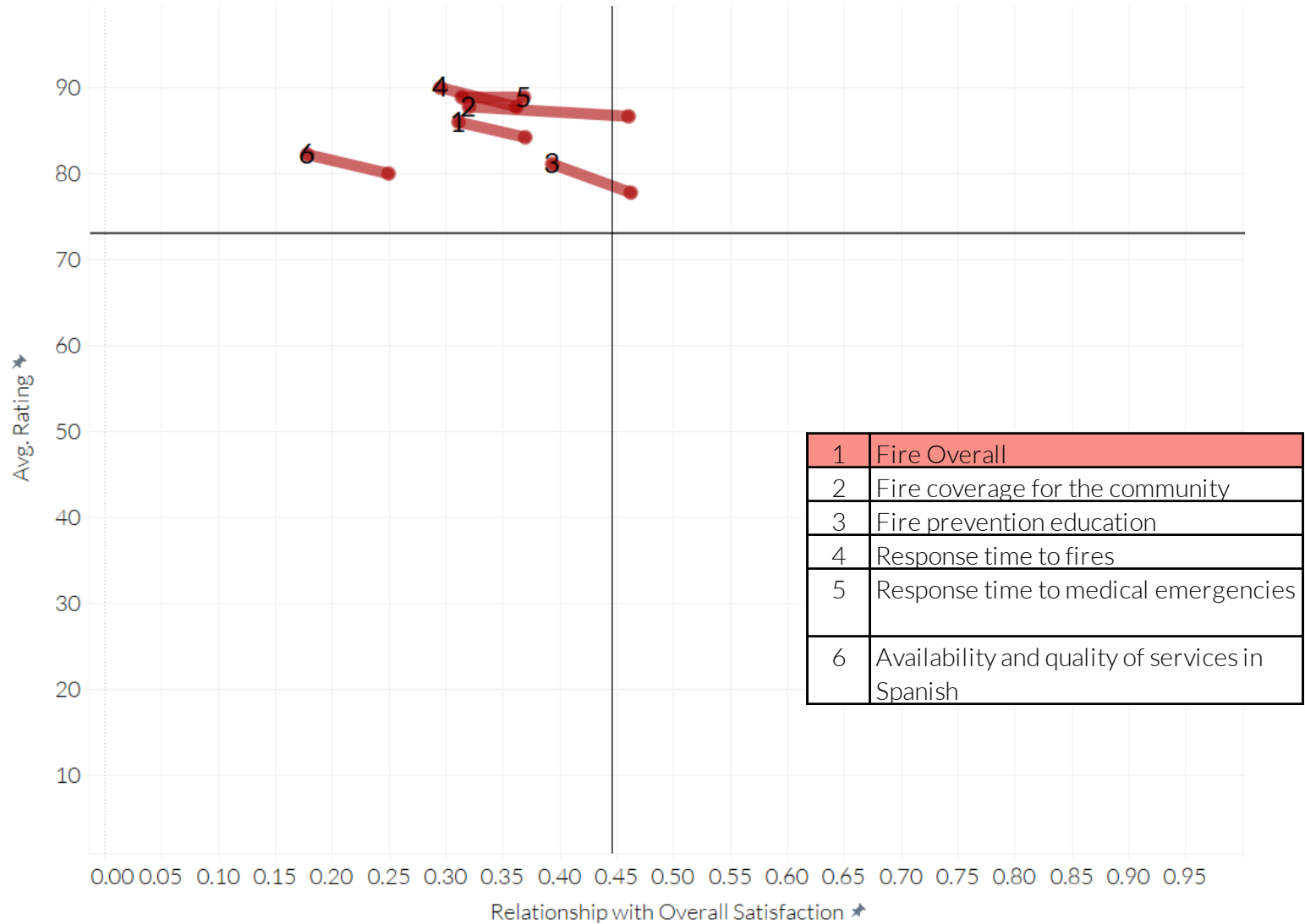
# Fire and Emergency Dispatch



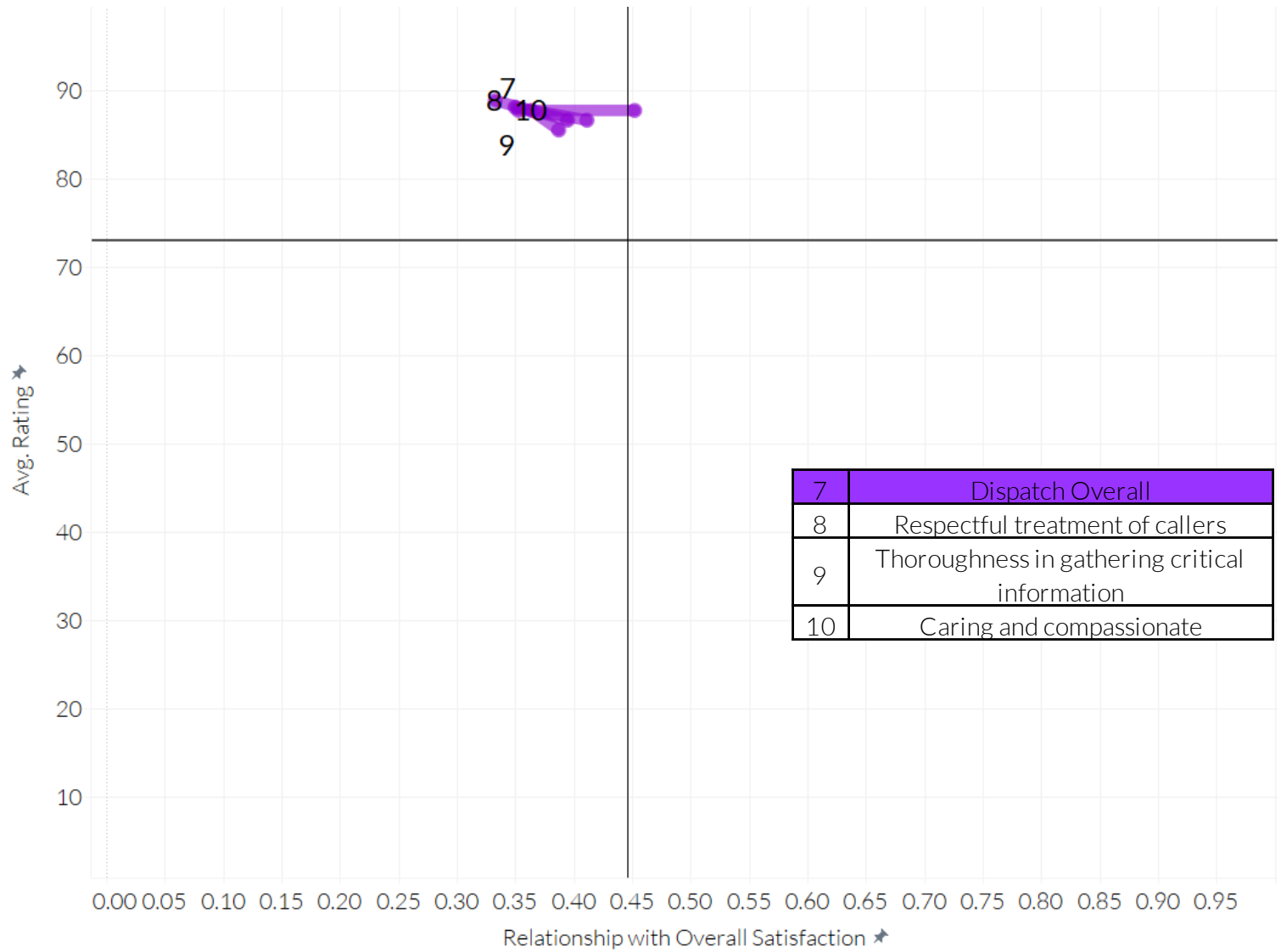
# Emergency Medical Response - Trends



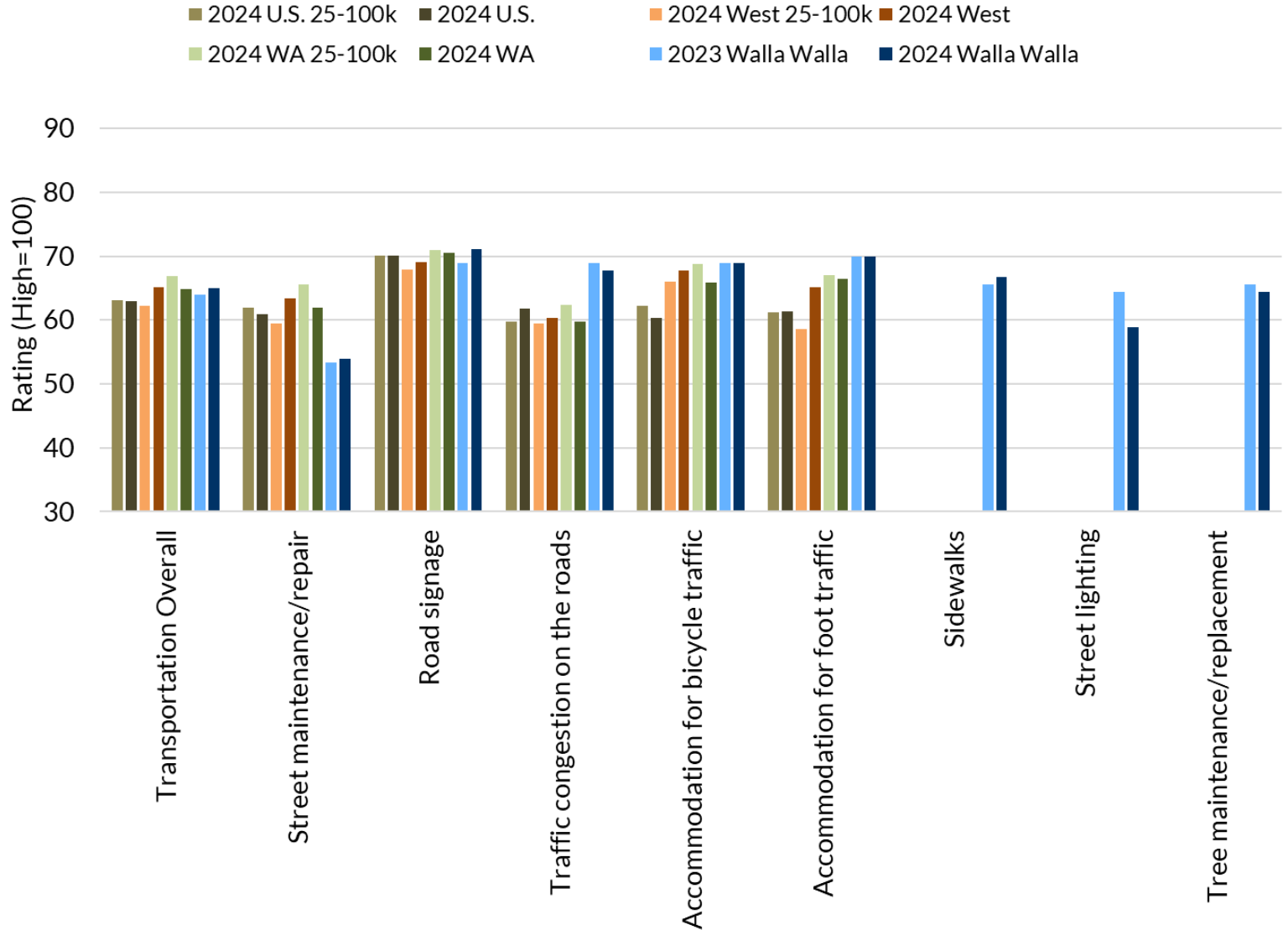
# Fire and Emergency Medical Services



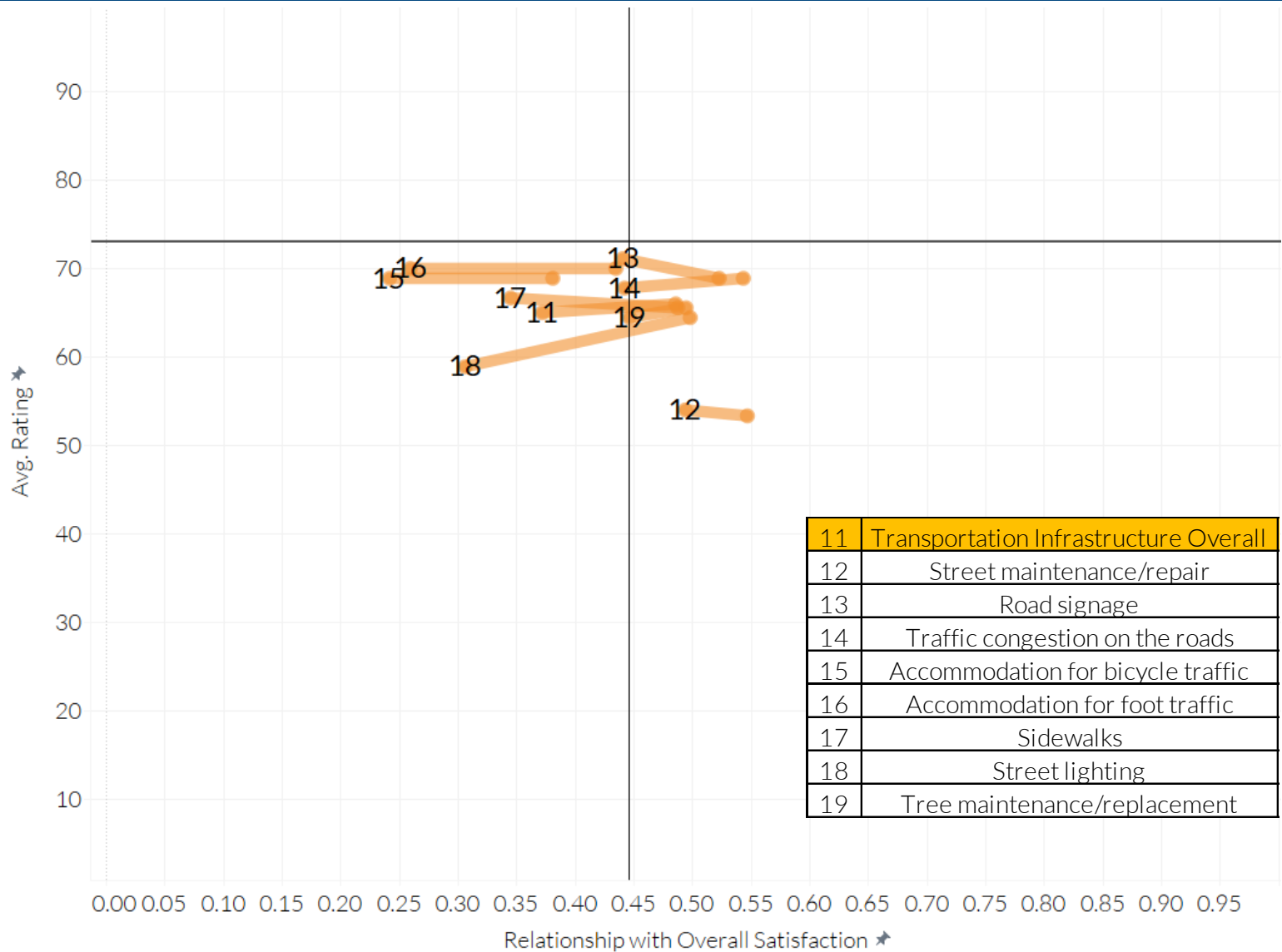
# 911 Fire and Police Dispatch



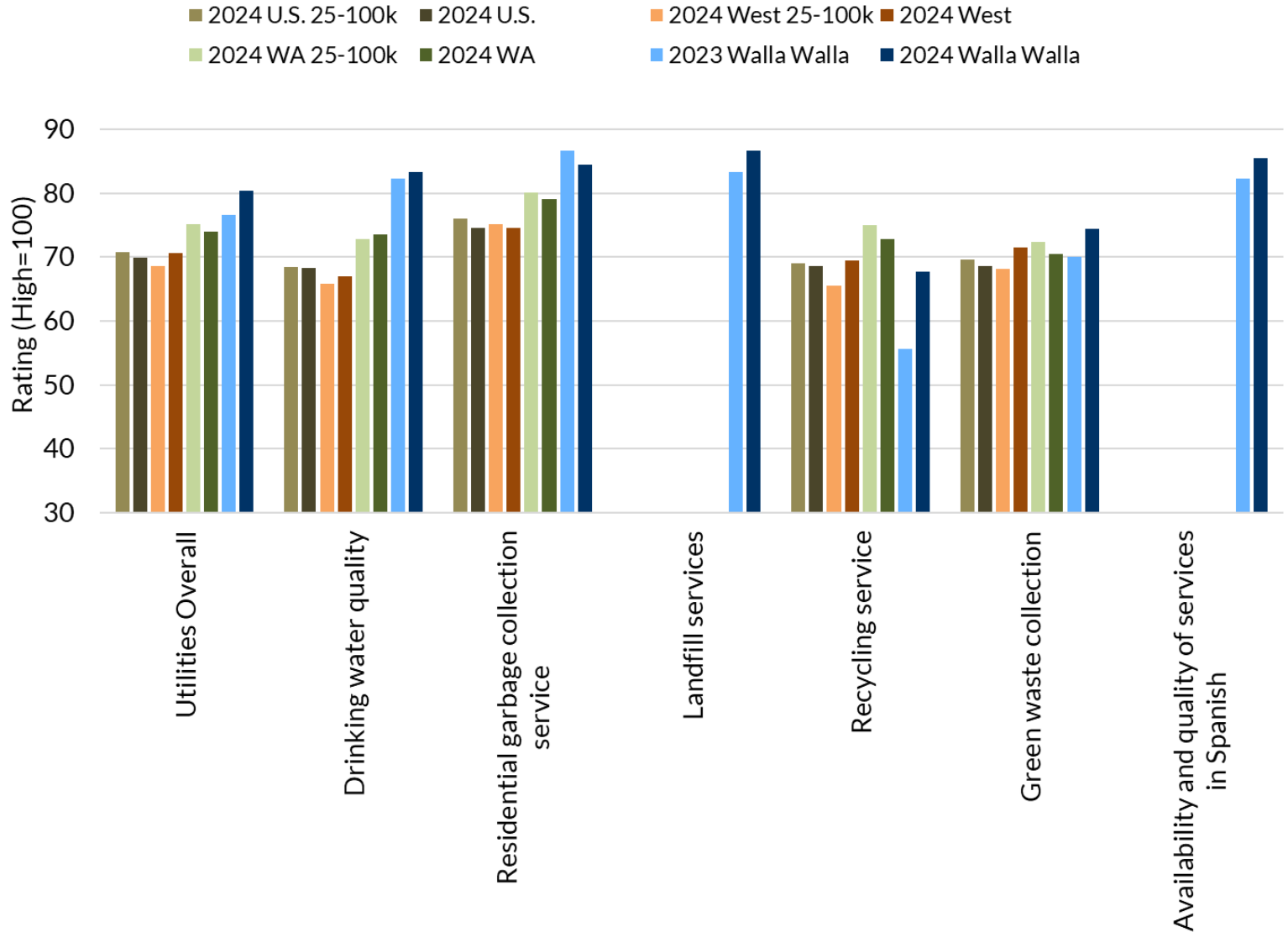
# Transportation Infrastructure



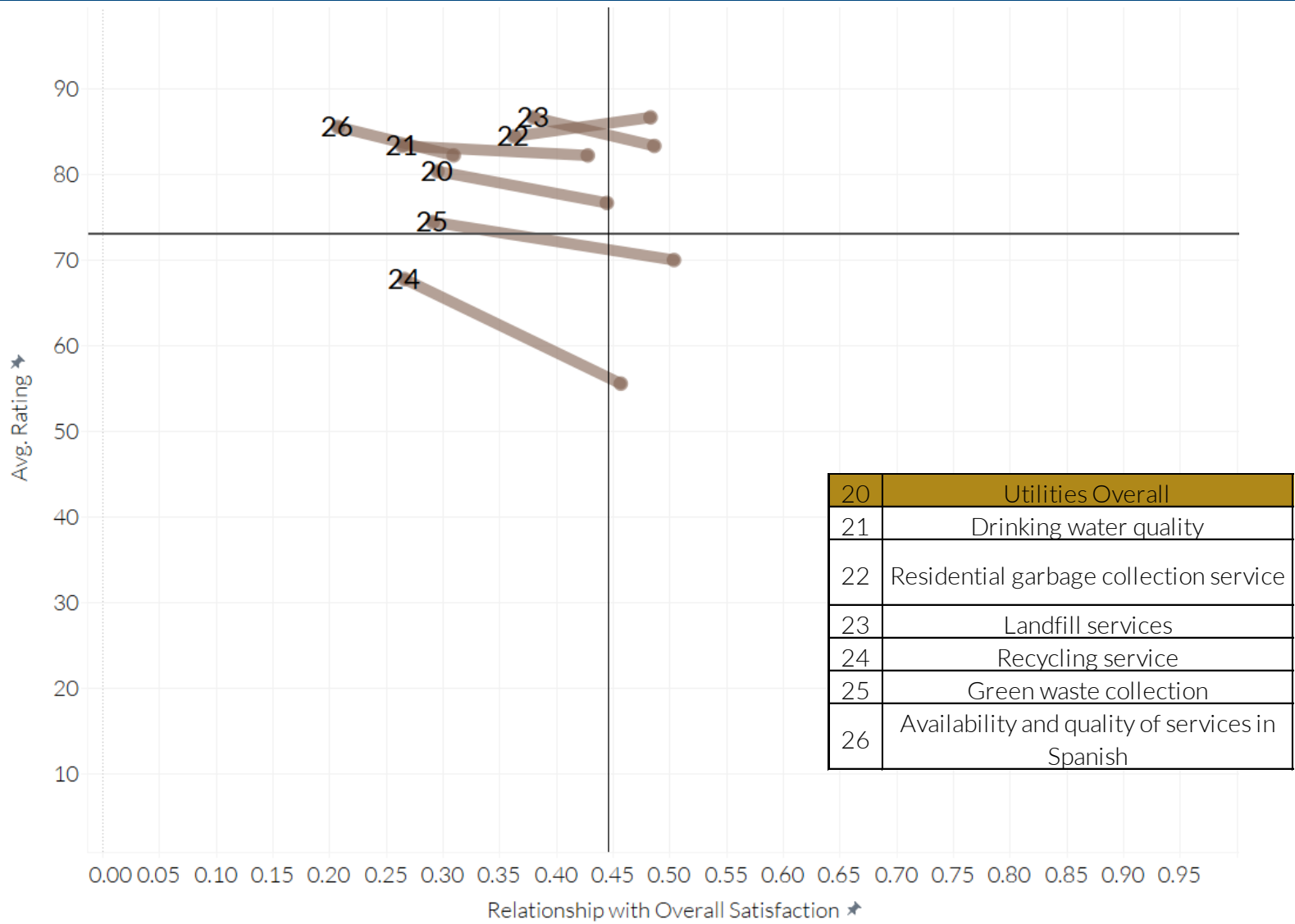
# Transportation Infrastructure



# Utility Services

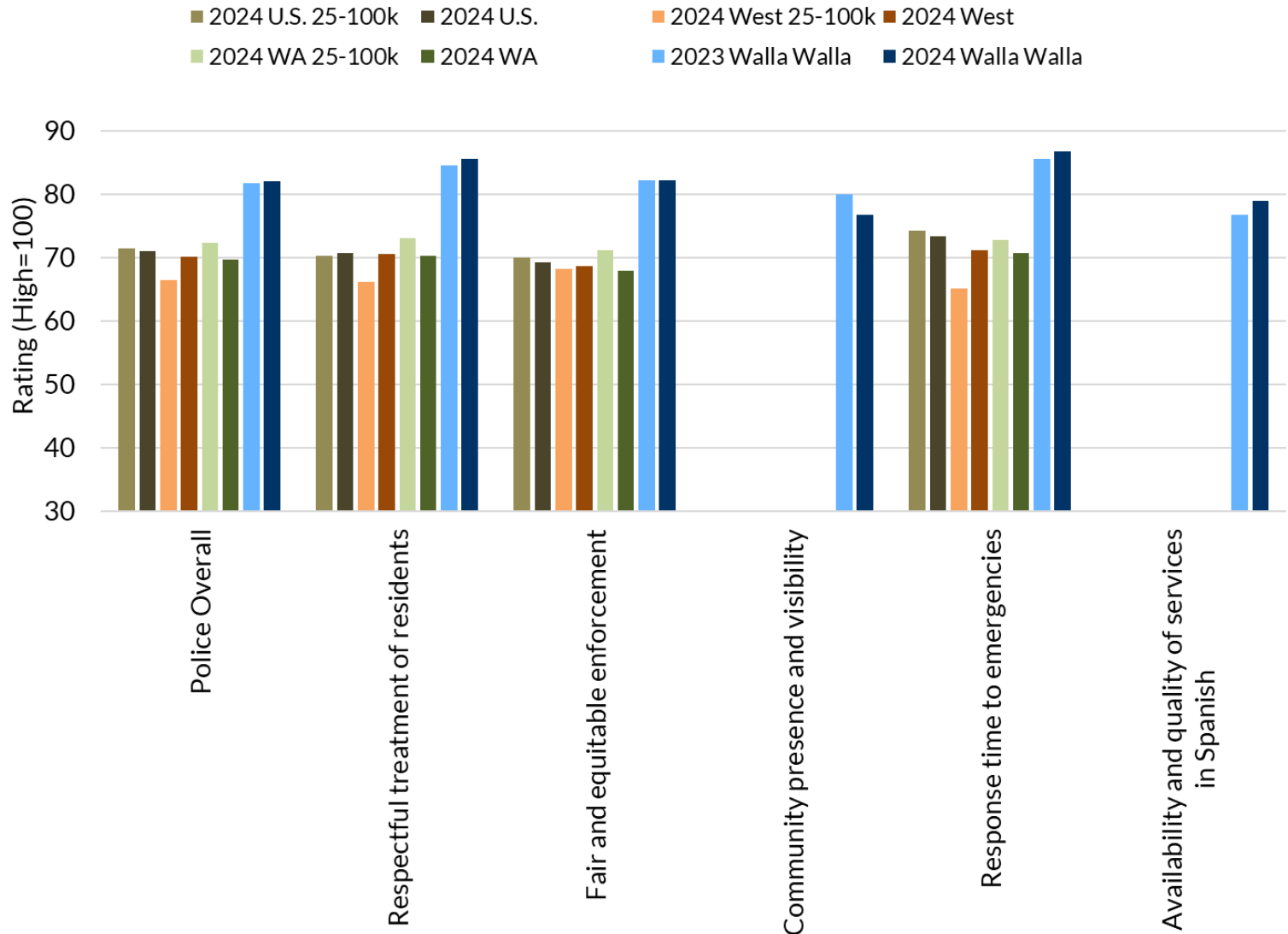


# Utility Services

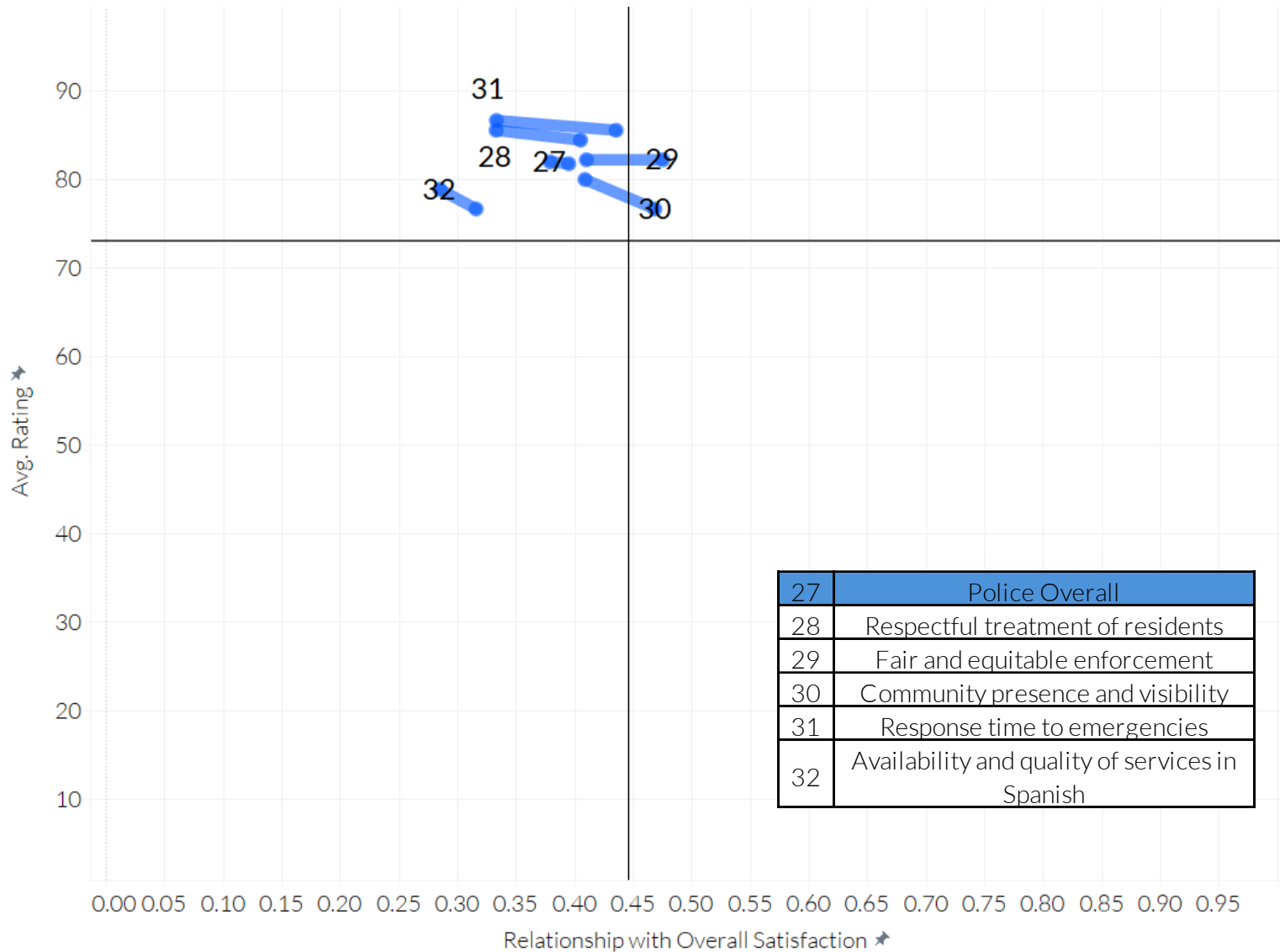


20	Utilities Overall
21	Drinking water quality
22	Residential garbage collection service
23	Landfill services
24	Recycling service
25	Green waste collection
26	Availability and quality of services in Spanish

# Police Services



# Law Enforcement



## Word Cloud:

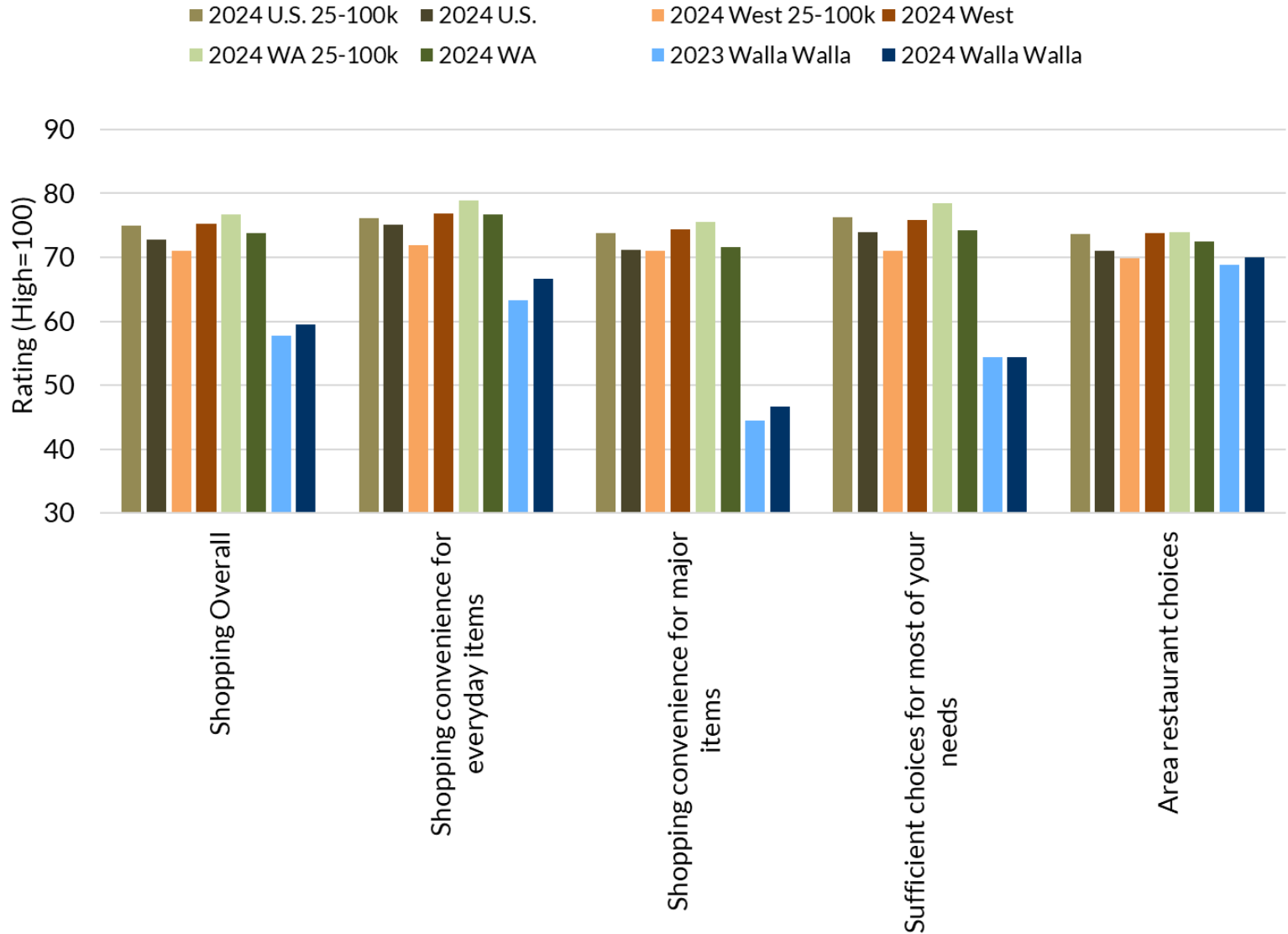
# What are ways the Walla Walla Police Department can continue to strengthen the services provided to the City?

### Top Themes:

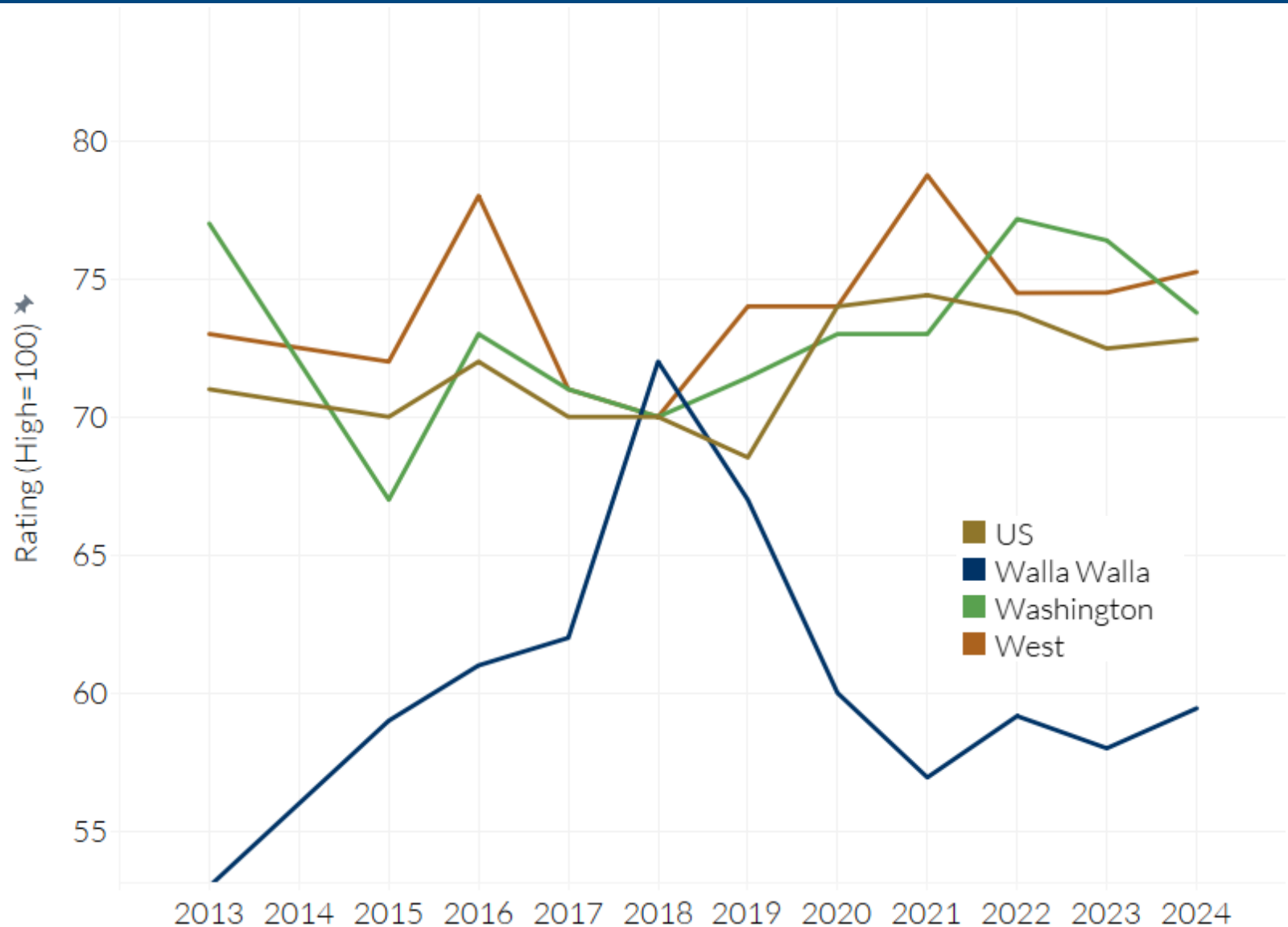
1. **Enforce** - Residents want to see more consistently enforced rules and more routine neighborhood patrols.
2. **Traffic** - Residents have seen an increase in traffic crimes. Some concern that the dark coloring of police vehicles makes it more difficult to see them.
3. **Speeding** - Residents feel that speeding down residential streets have increased, and they are concerned for their safety.



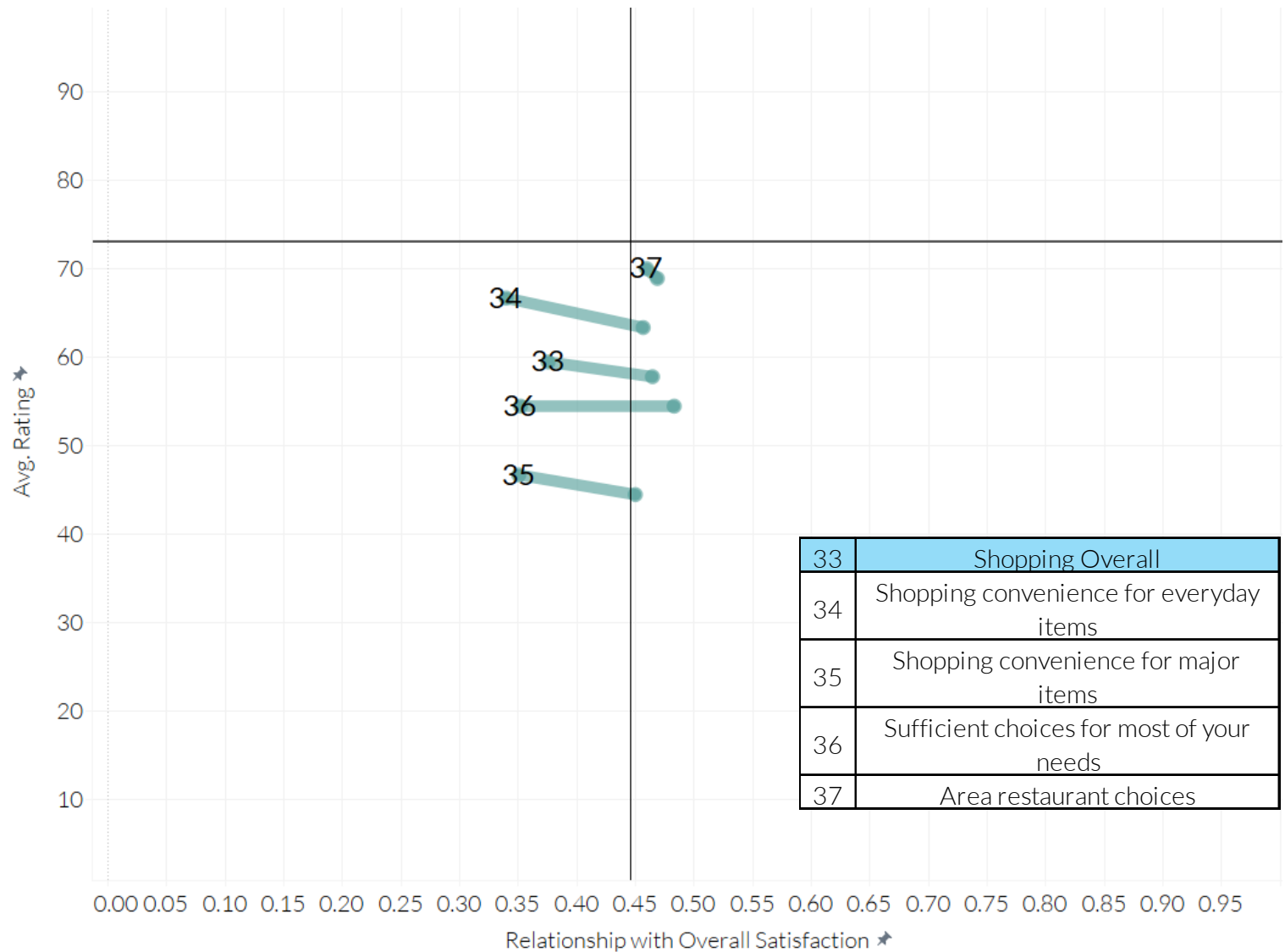
# Shopping



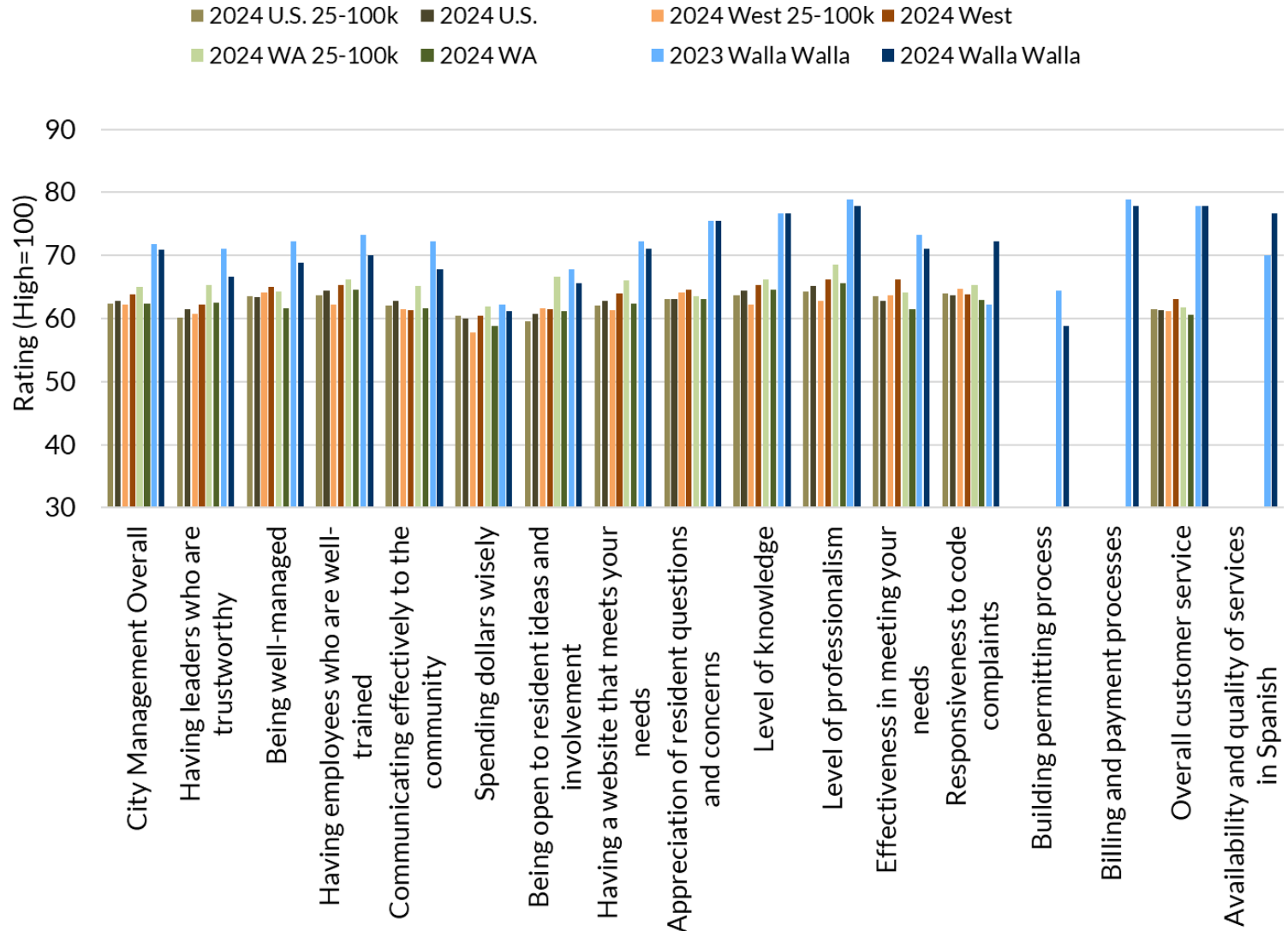
# Shopping Opportunities - Trends



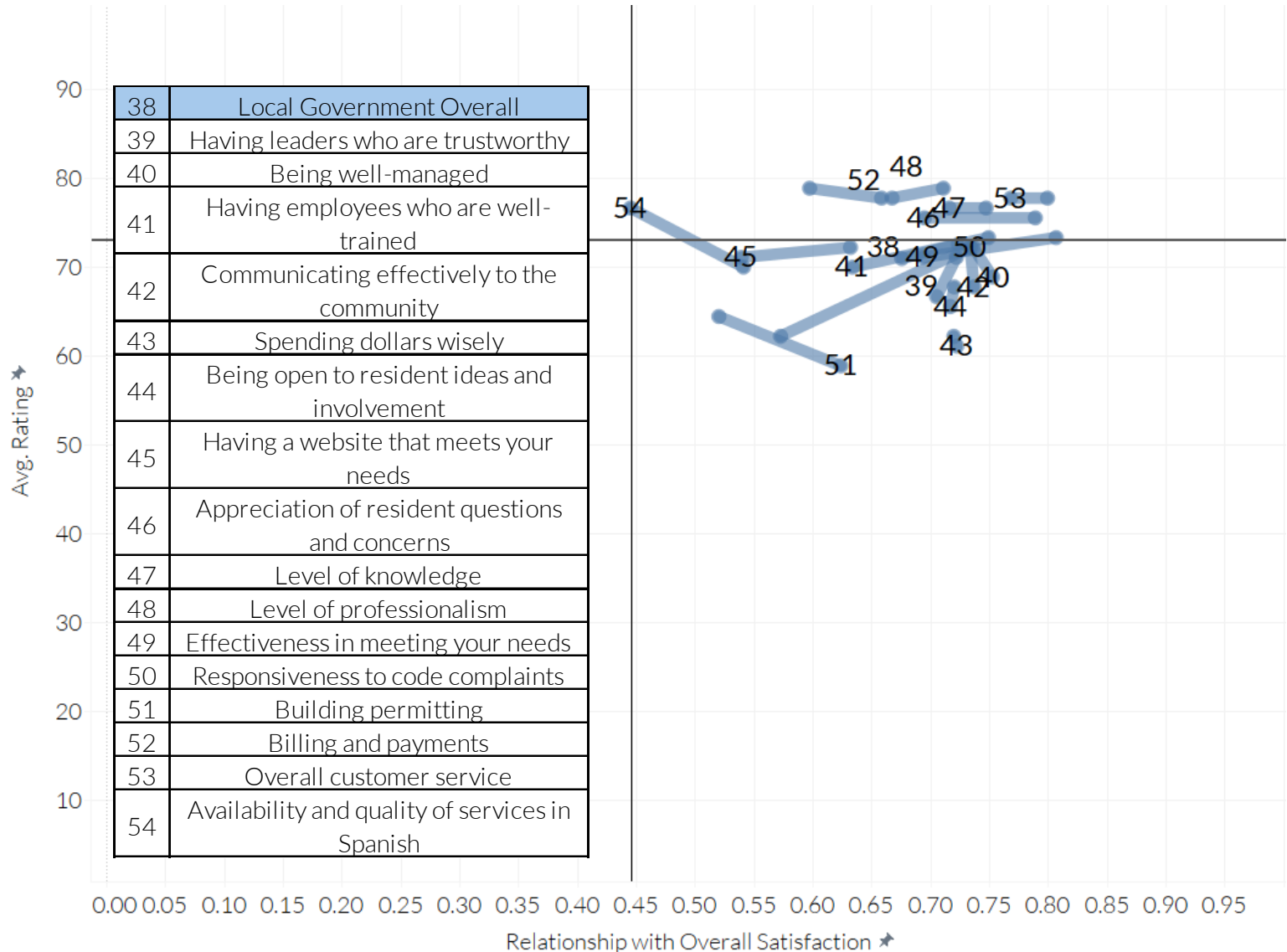
# Shopping Opportunities



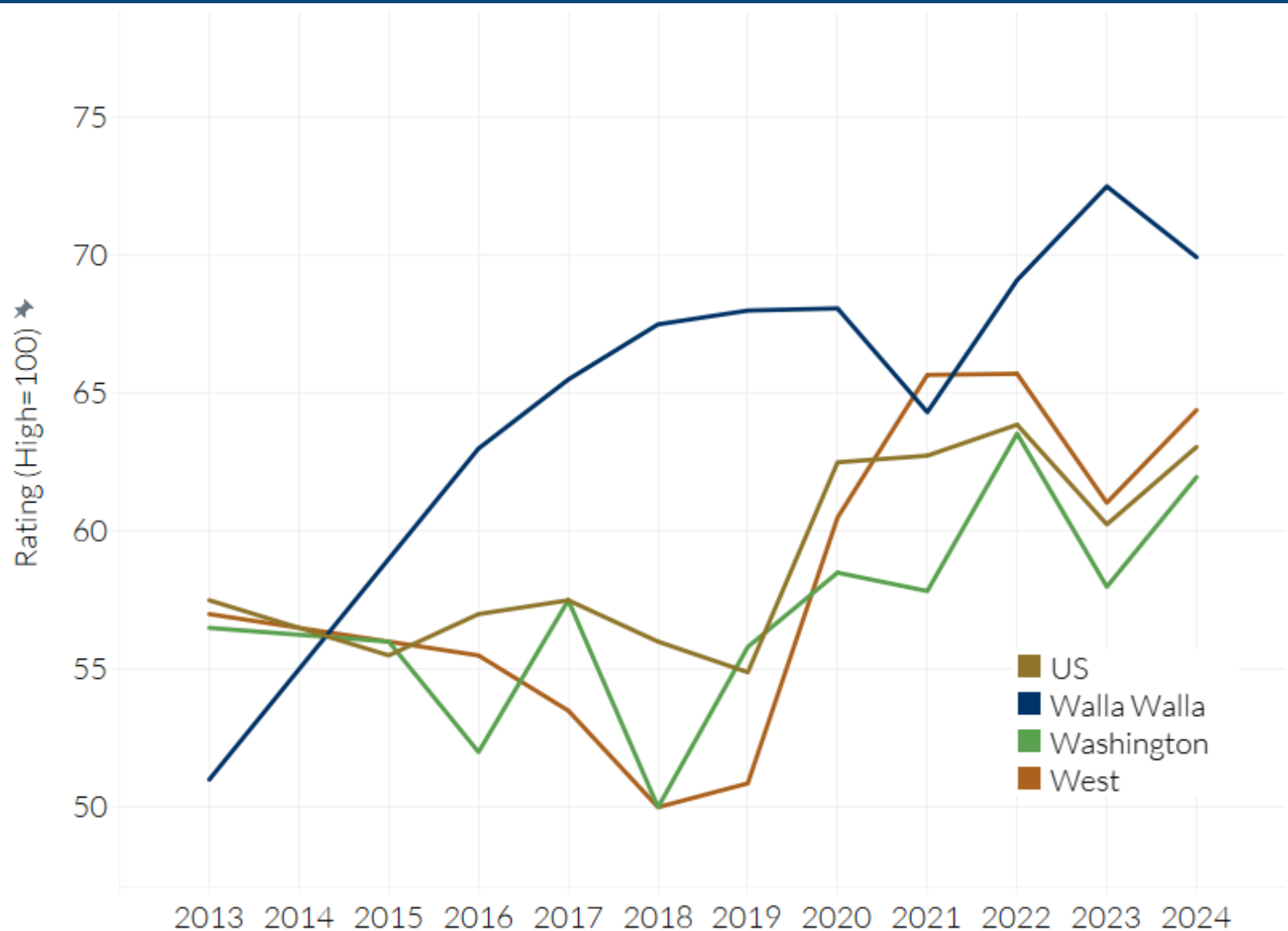
# Local Government



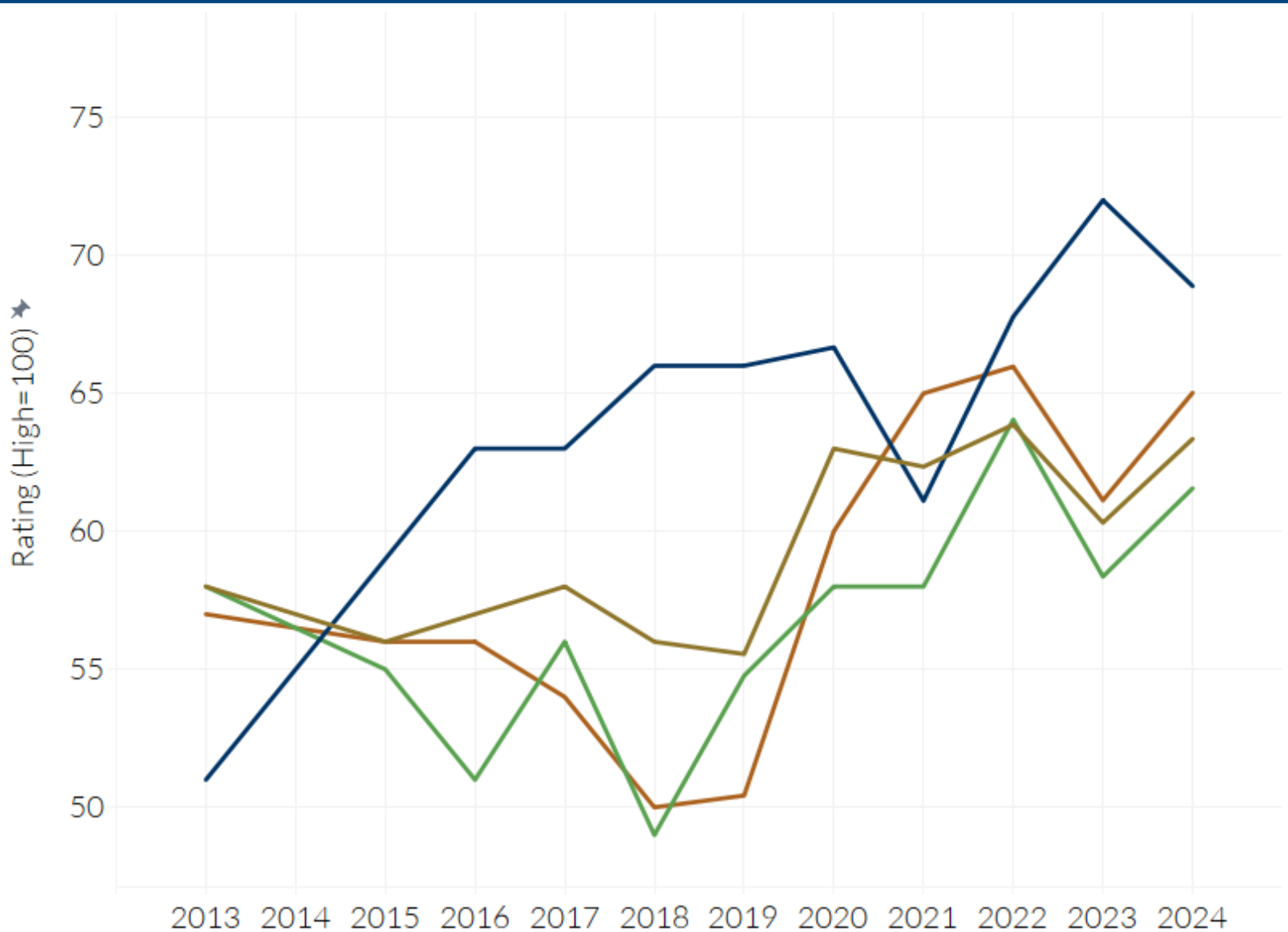
# Local Government



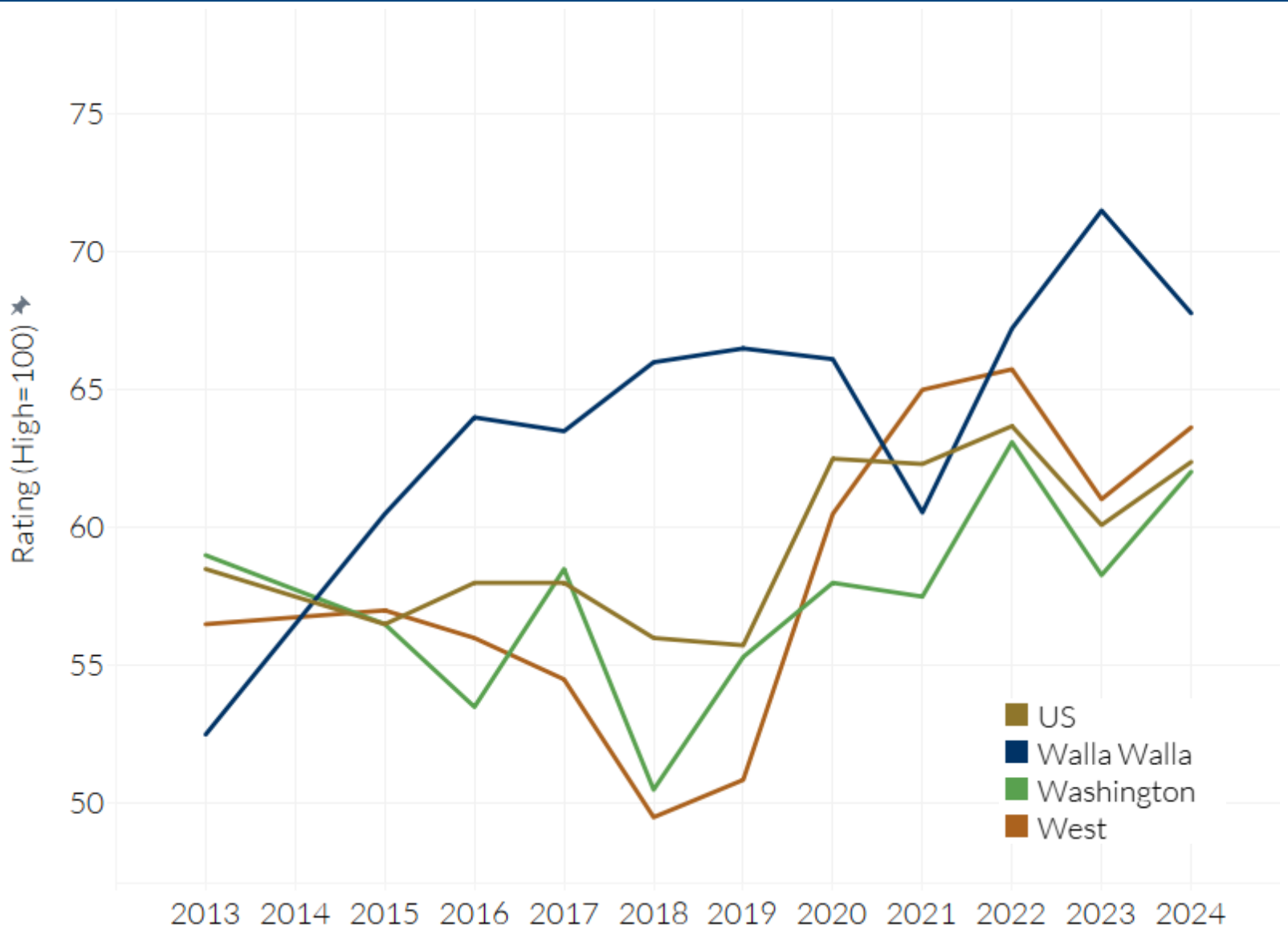
# Government Management - Overall



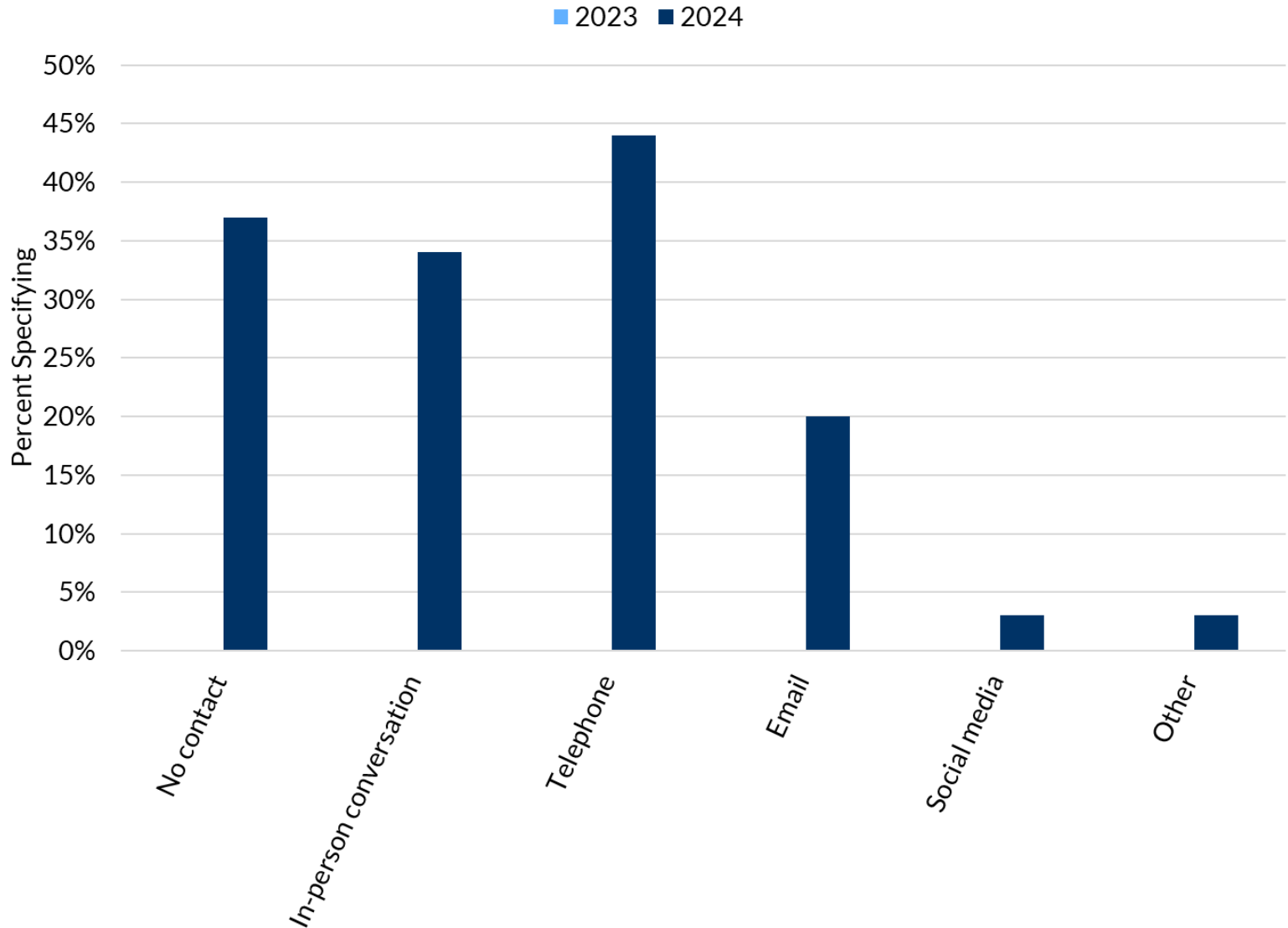
# Being Well Managed - Trends



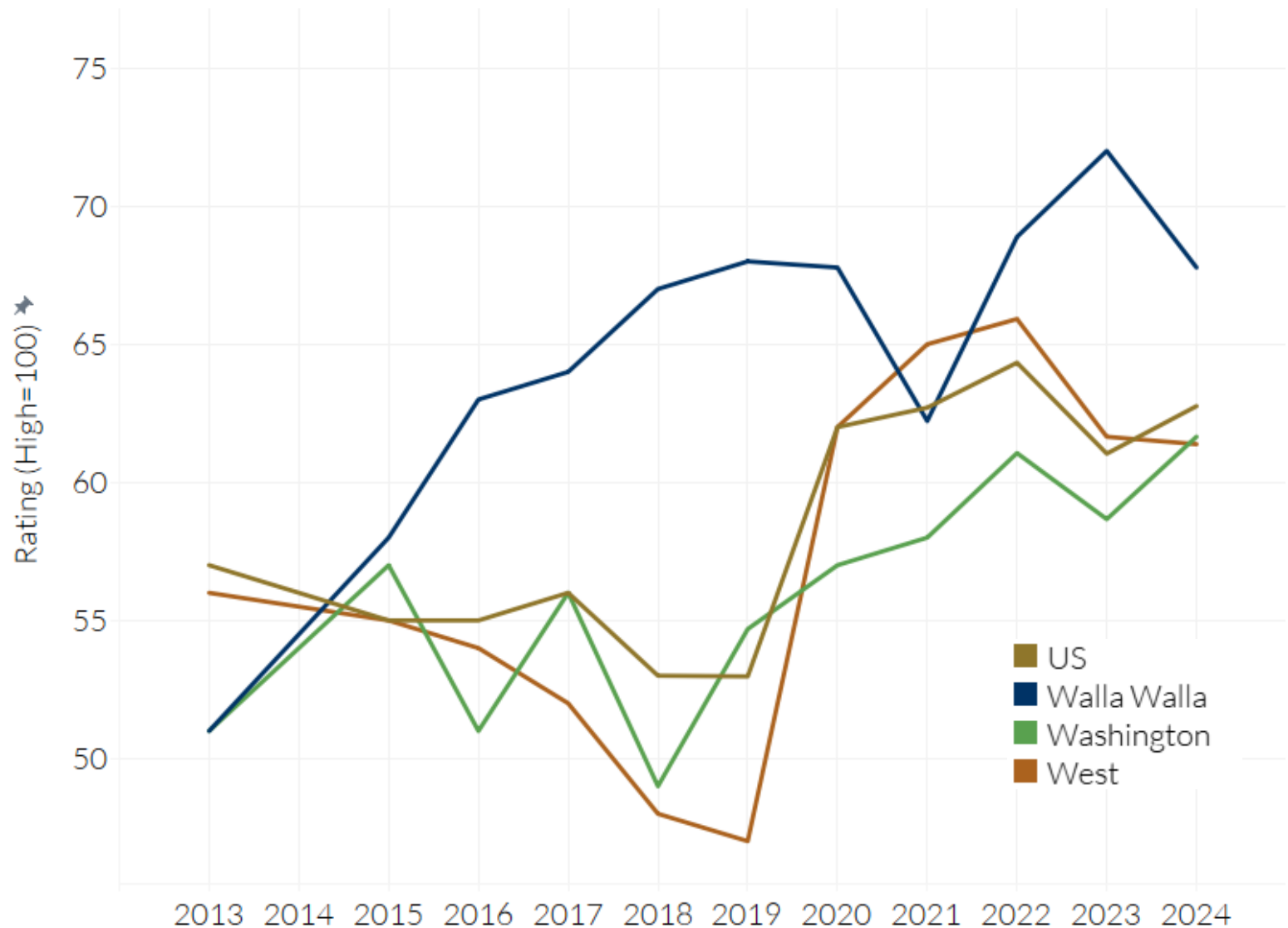
# Leaders are Trustworthy - Trends



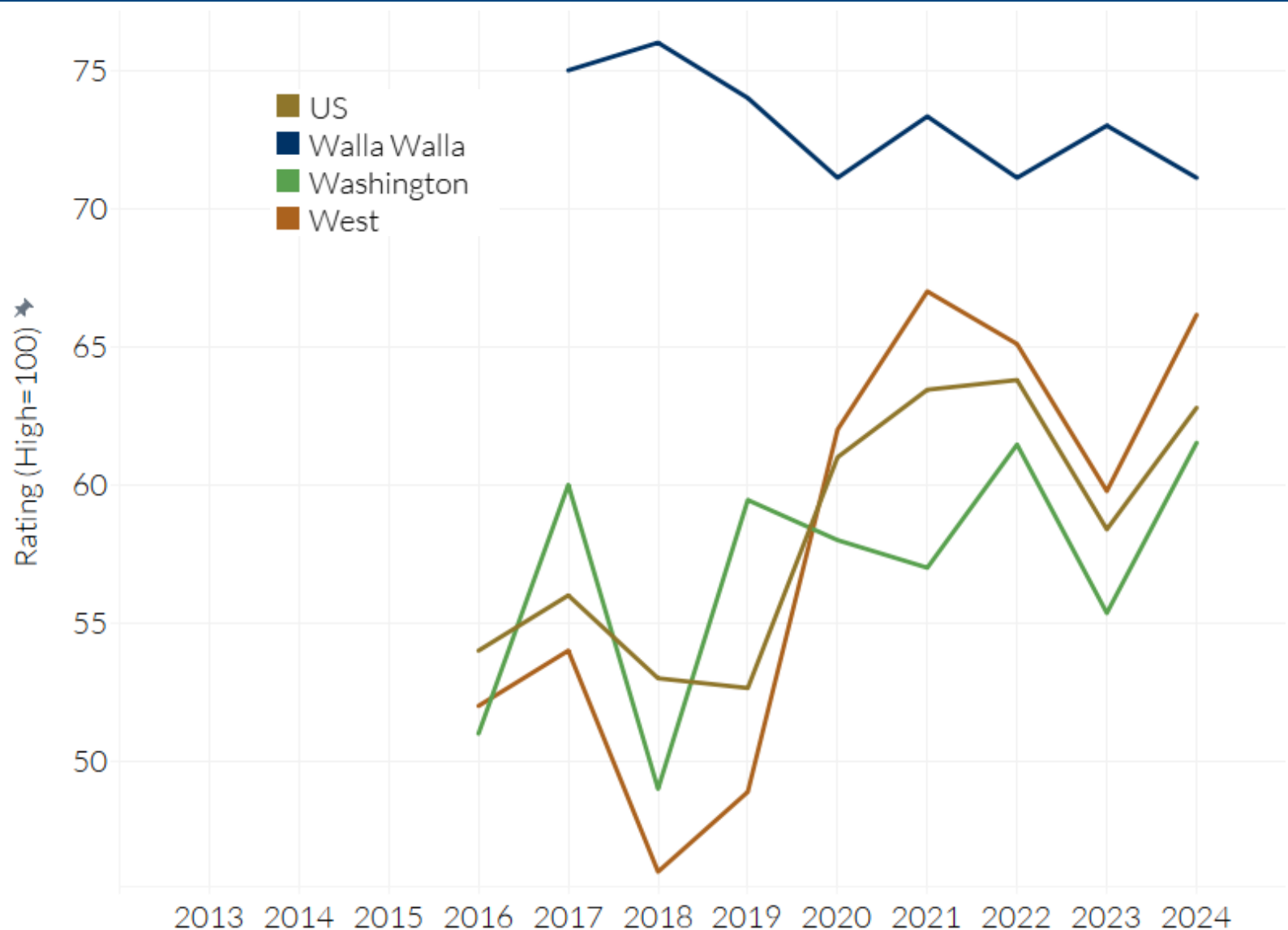
# How have you contacted a City employee or official in the past 12 months?



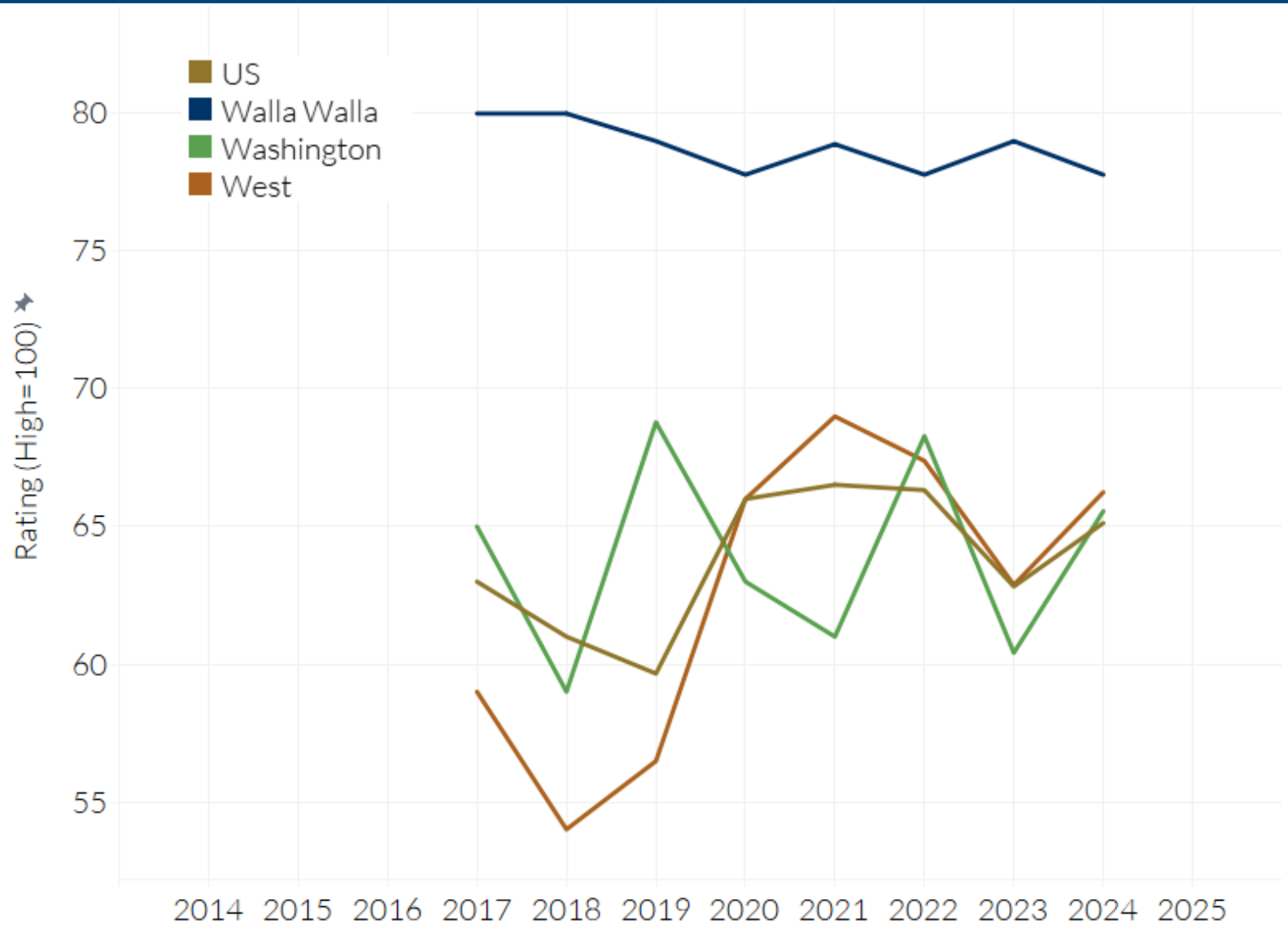
# Drivers of Satisfaction and Behavior: Communicating Effectively - Trends



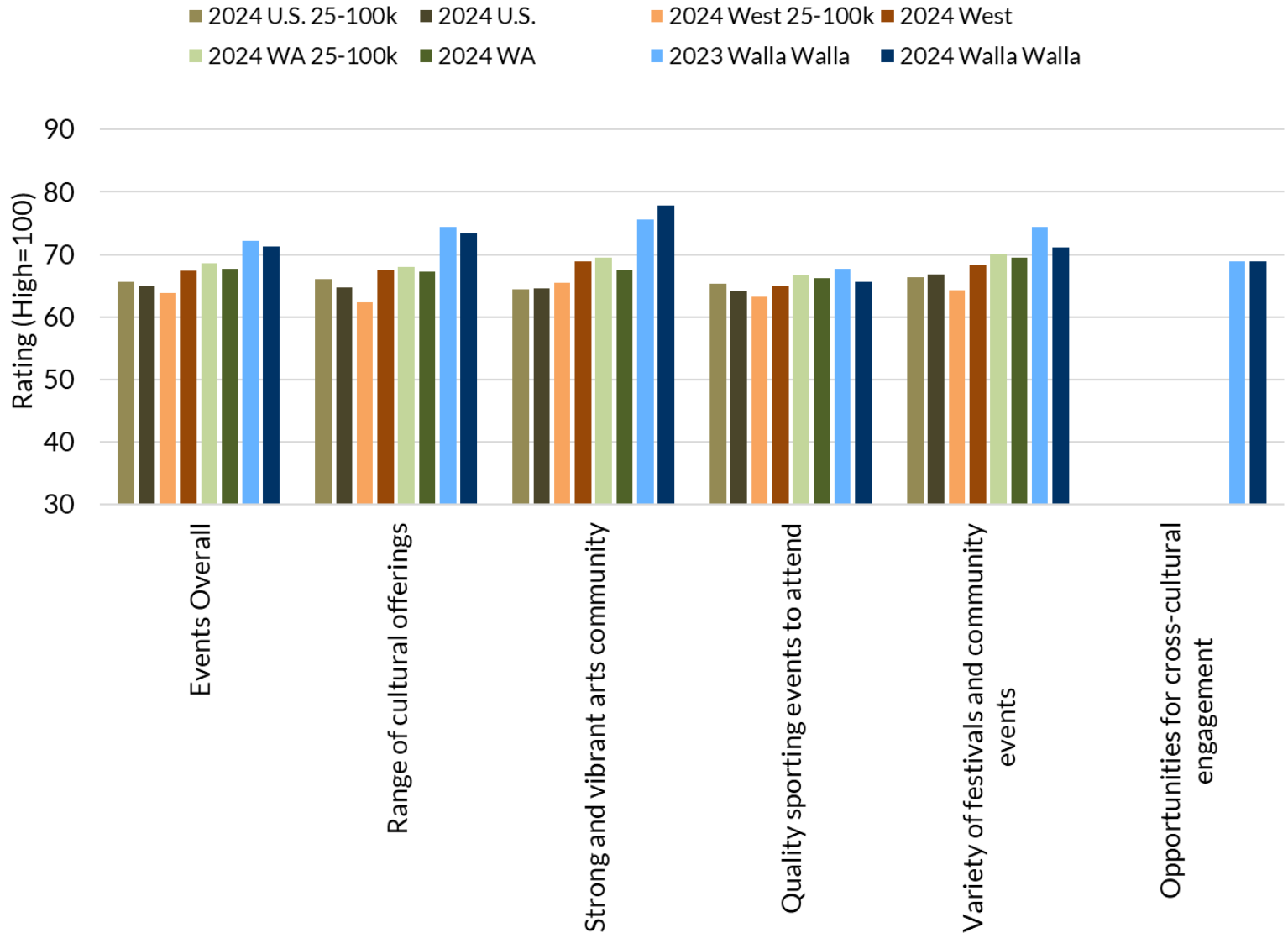
# Customer Service Meeting Your Needs



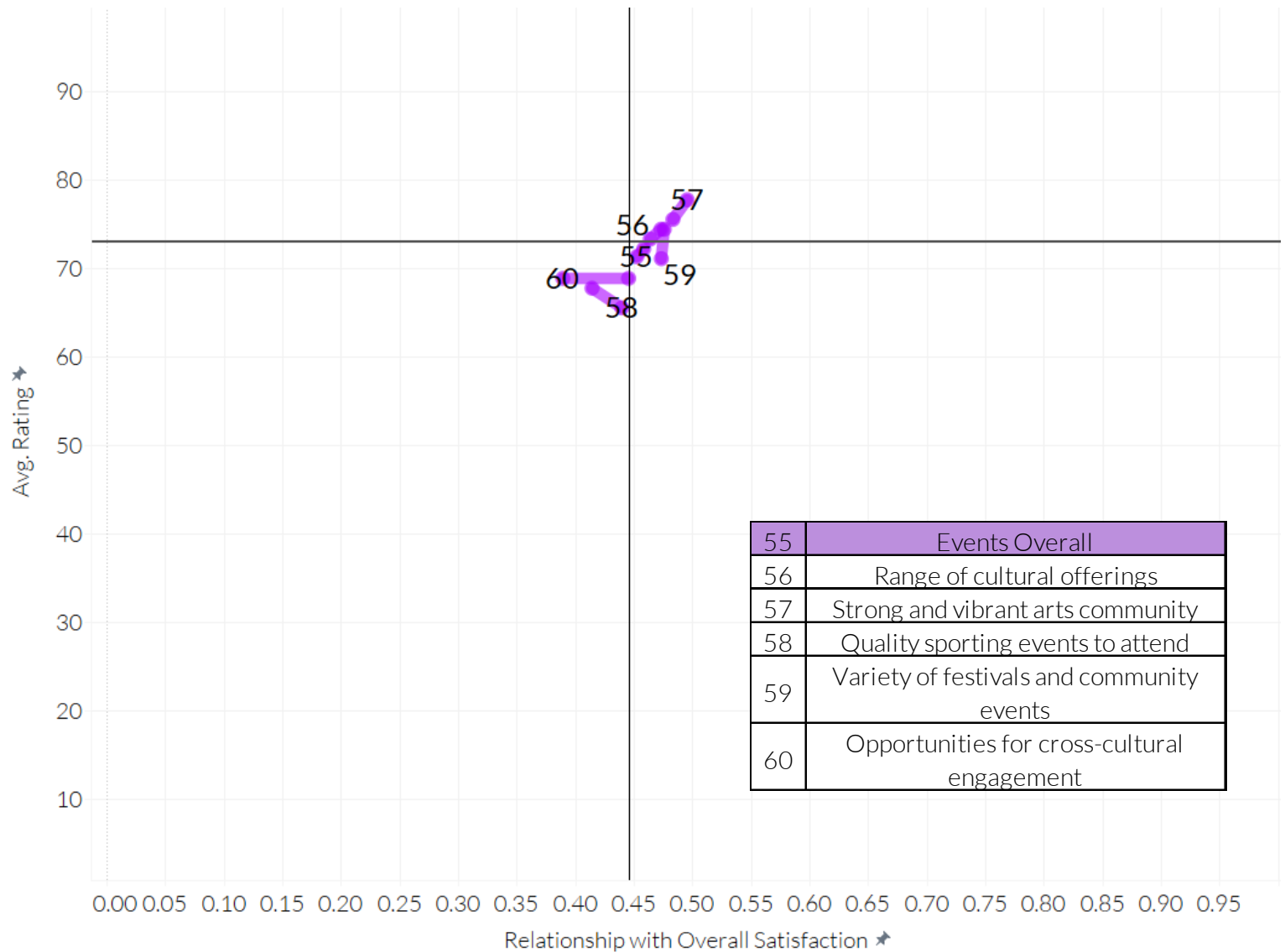
# Level of Professionalism - Trends



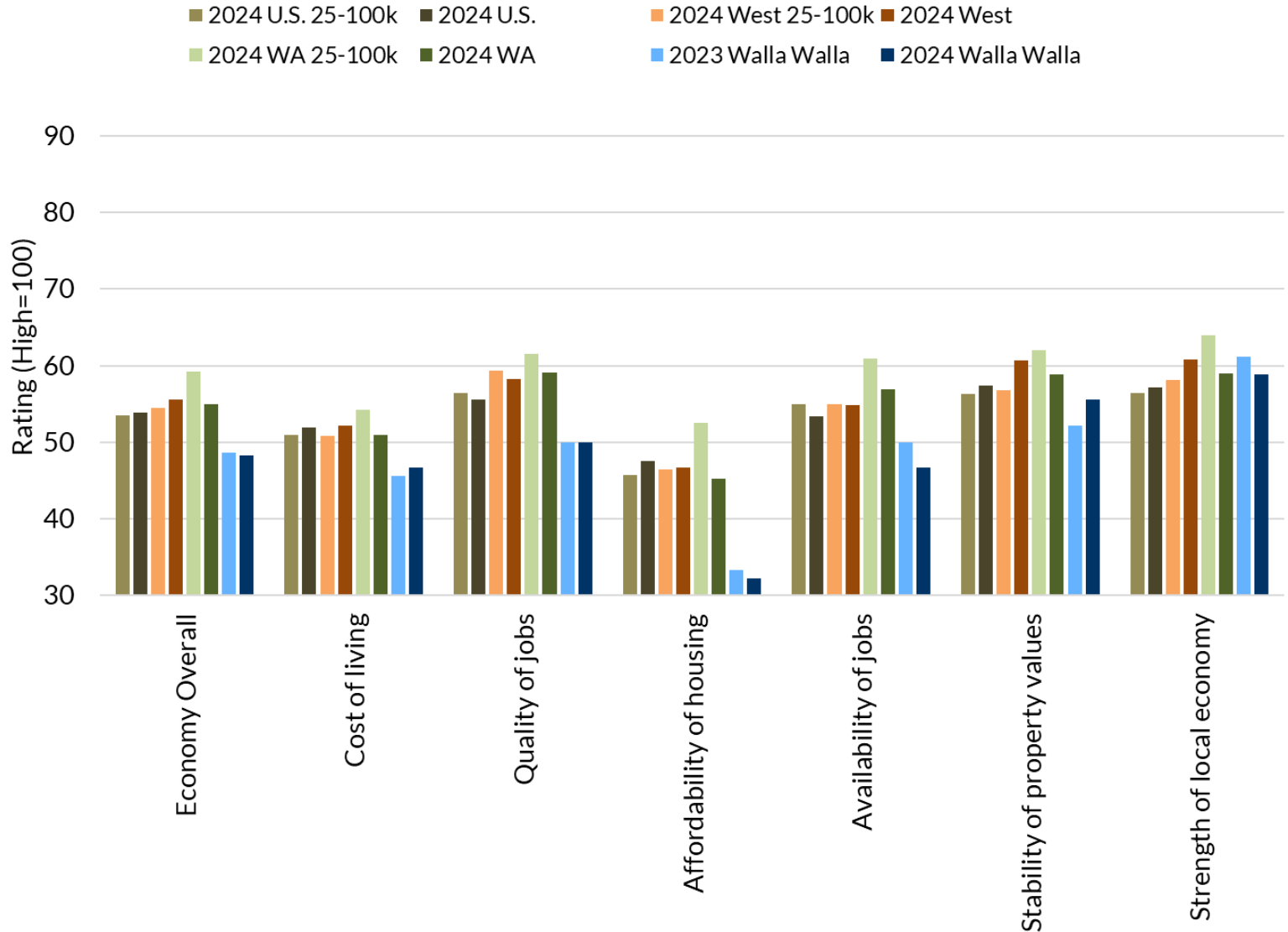
# Community Events



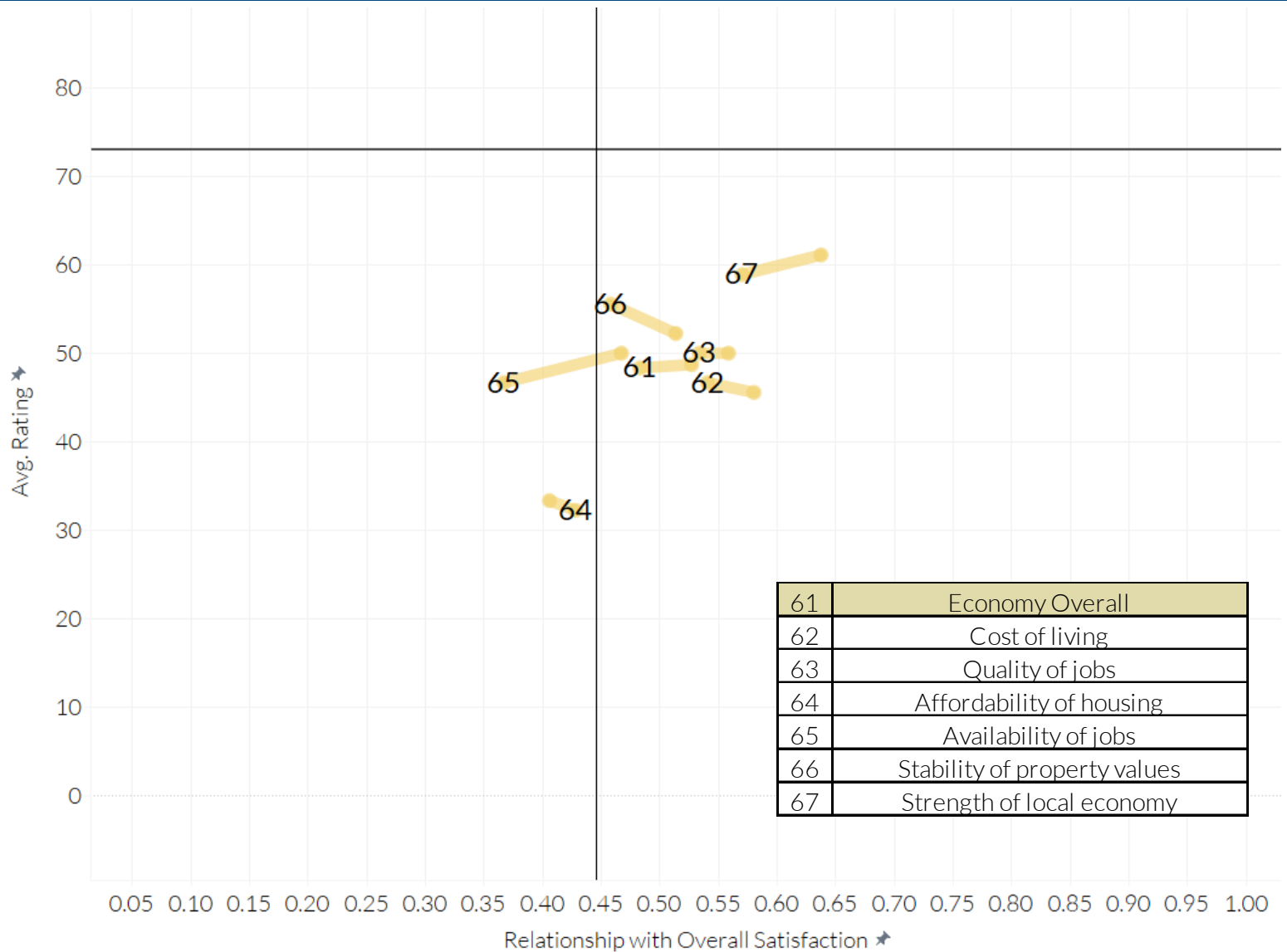
# Community Events



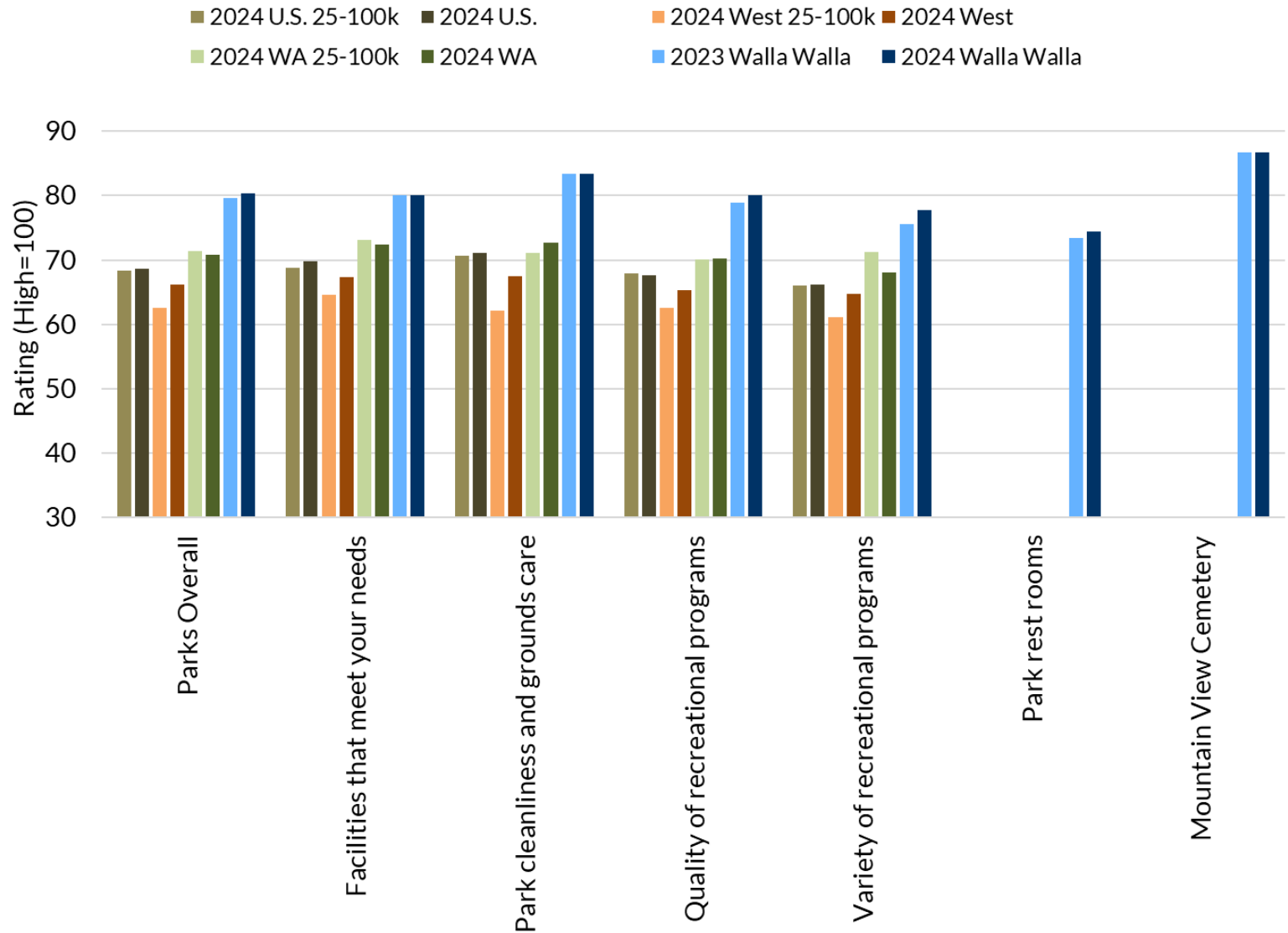
# Economic Health



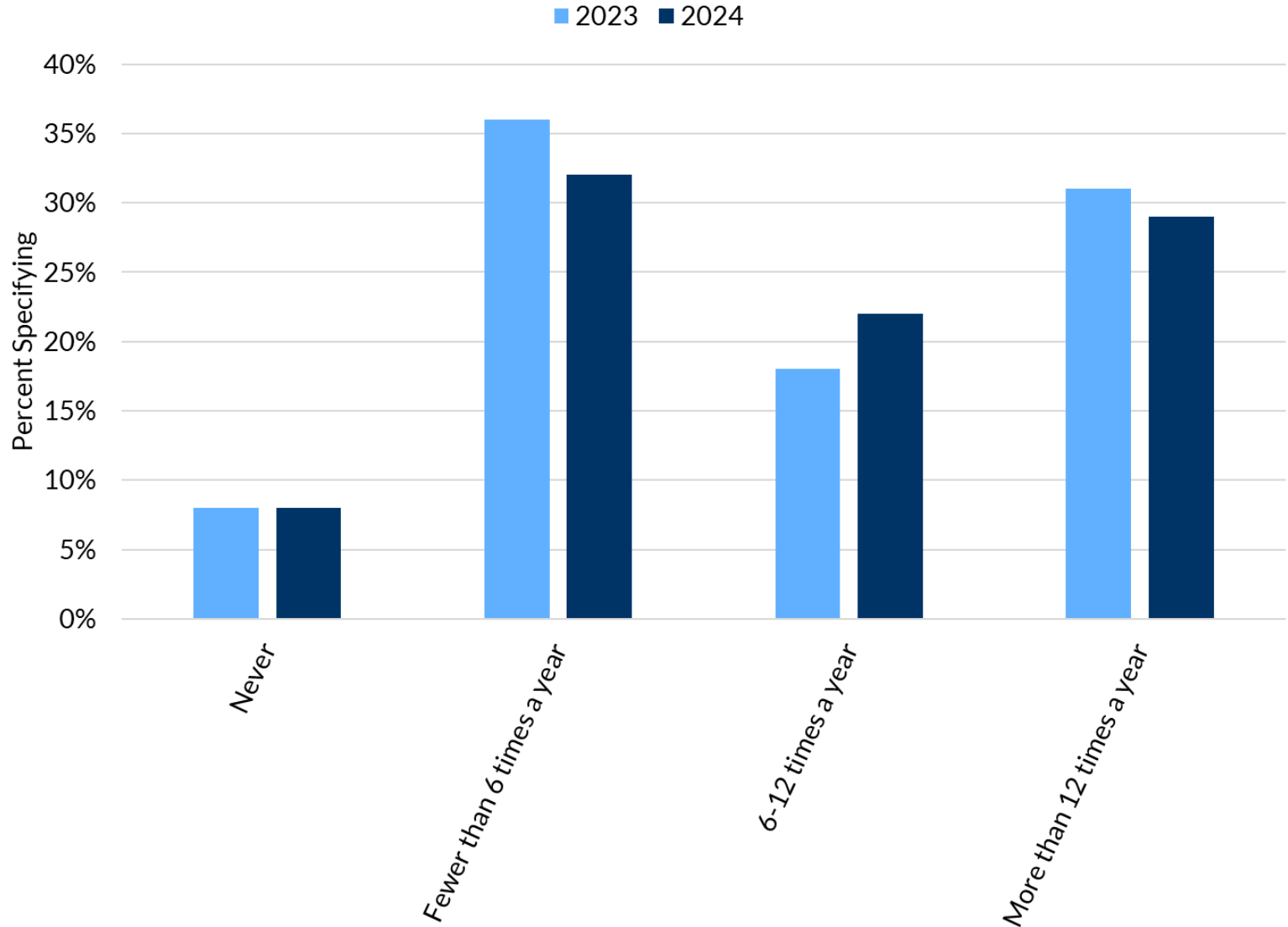
# Economic Health



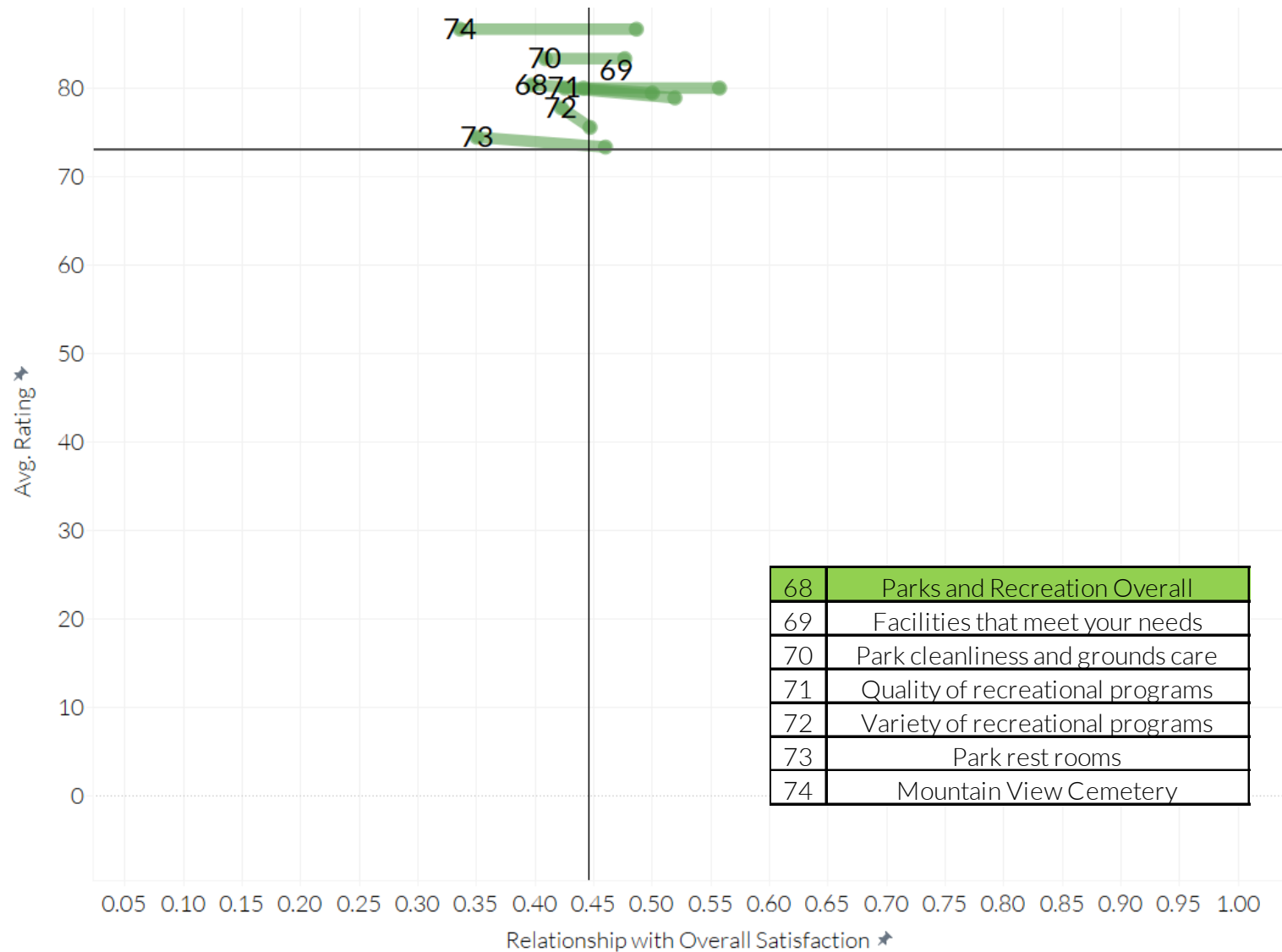
# Parks and Recreation



# How frequently do you use the parks and recreation facilities and programs?

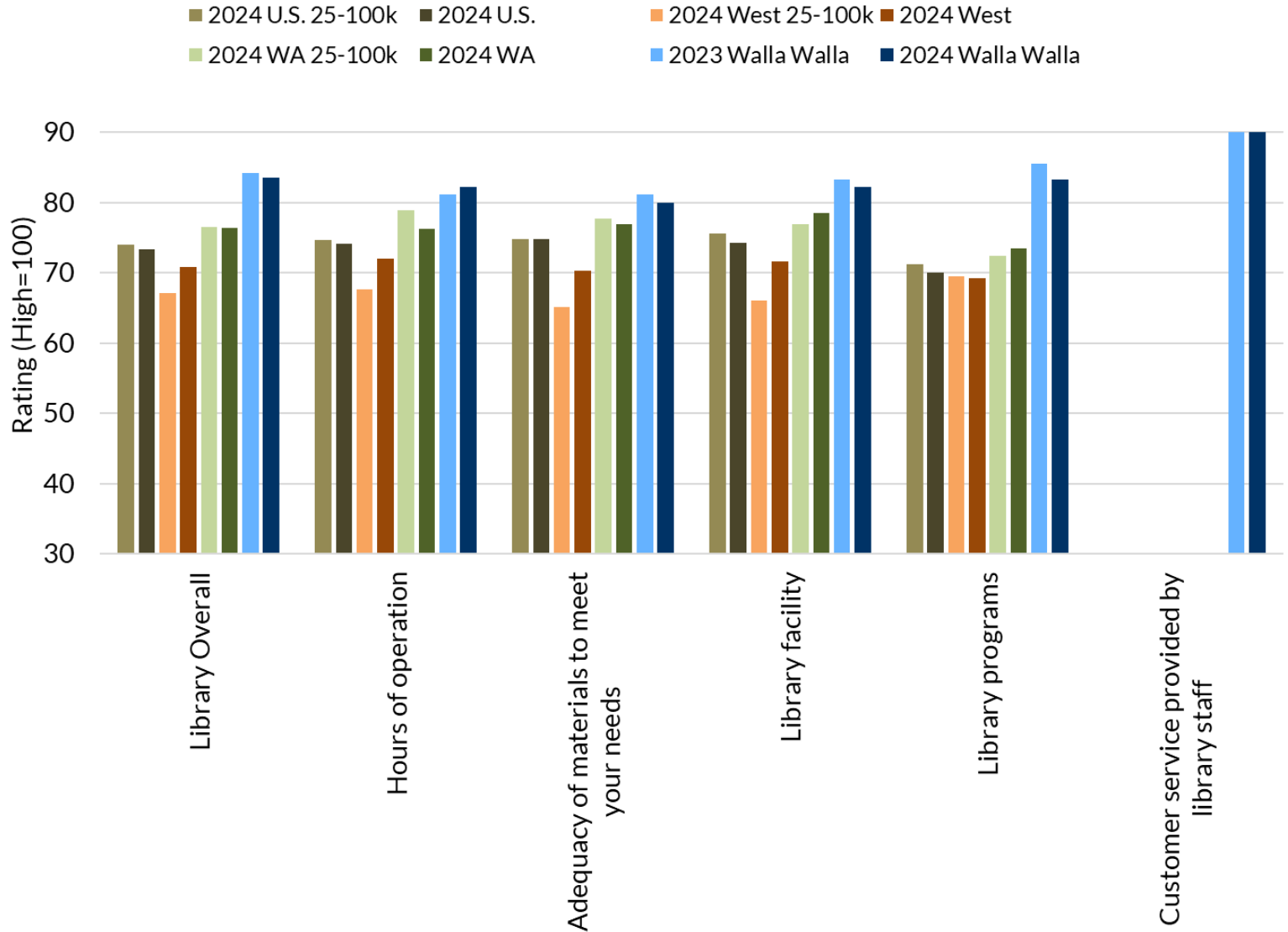


# Parks and Recreation

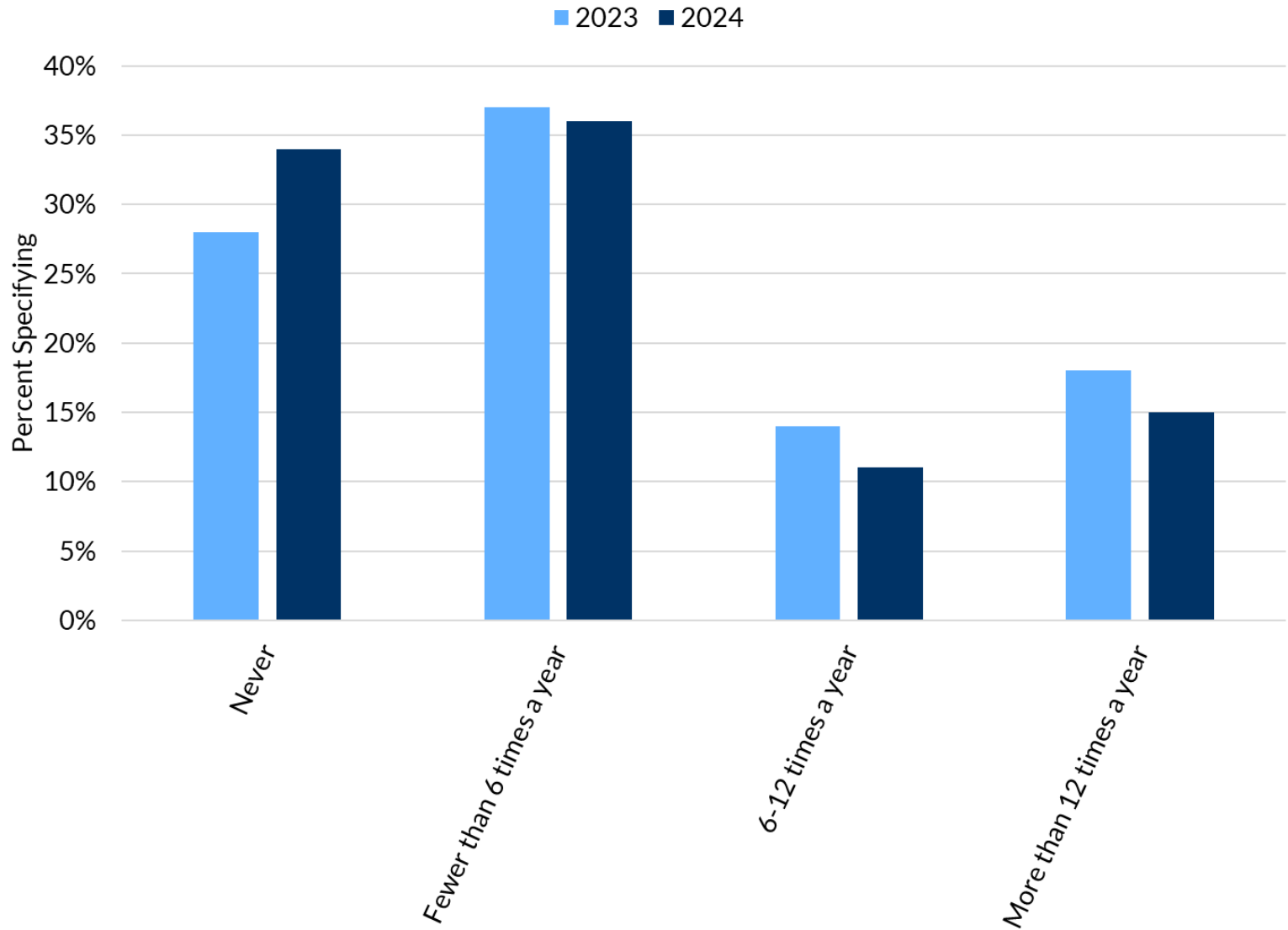


68	Parks and Recreation Overall
69	Facilities that meet your needs
70	Park cleanliness and grounds care
71	Quality of recreational programs
72	Variety of recreational programs
73	Park rest rooms
74	Mountain View Cemetery

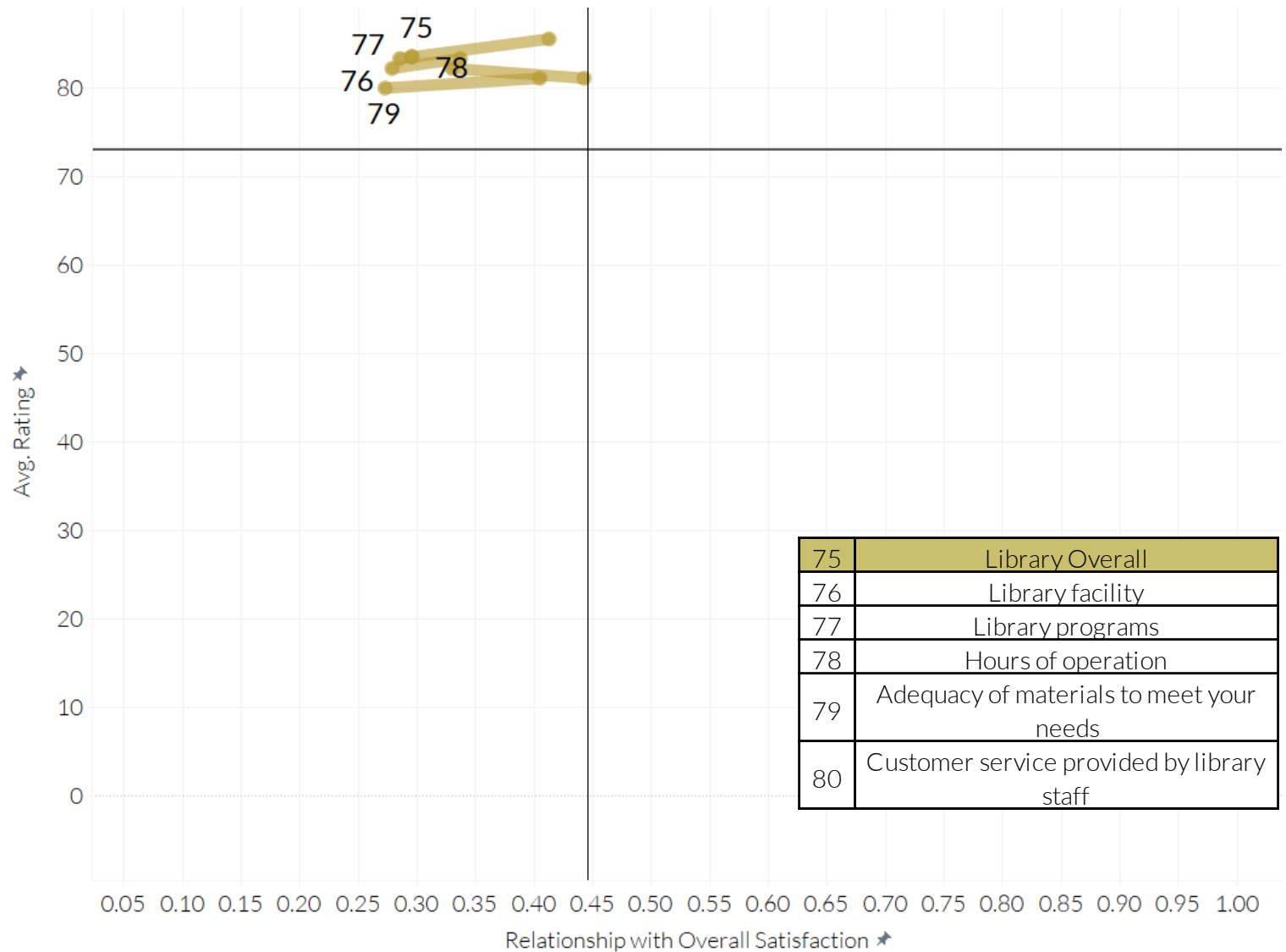
# Library Services



# How frequently do you use Walla Walla's local library?



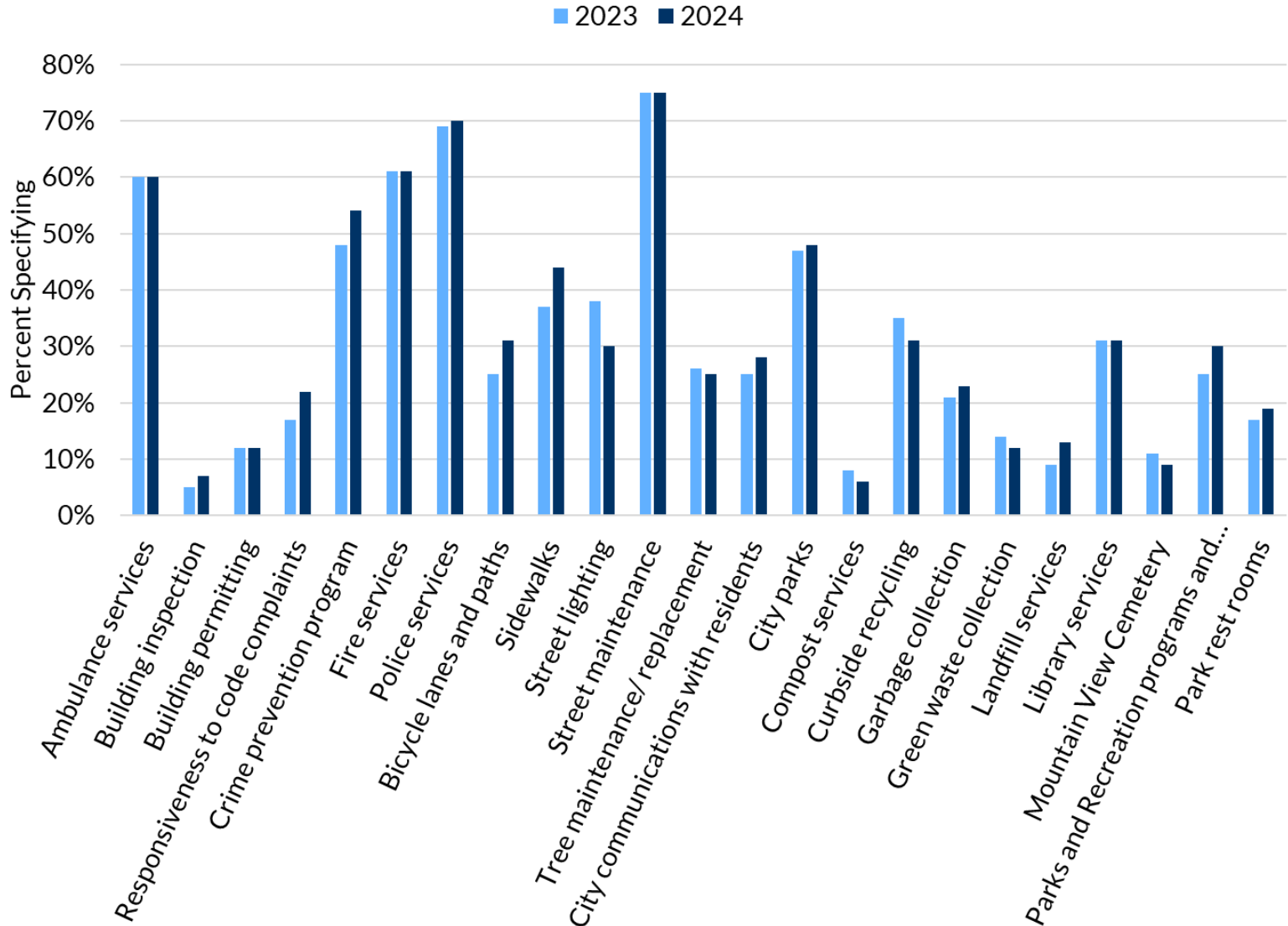
# Library Services



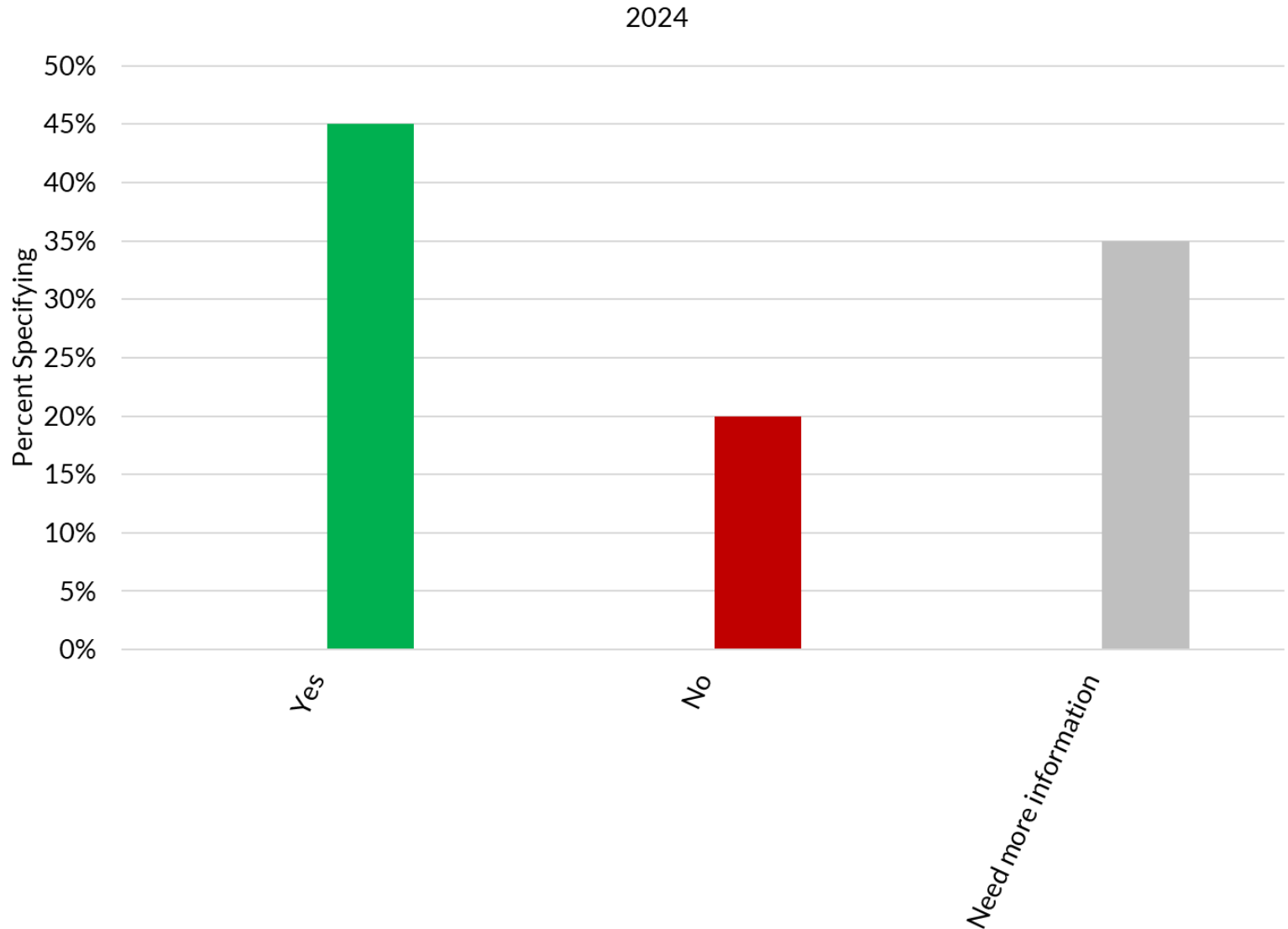


# Planning and Future Budget Considerations

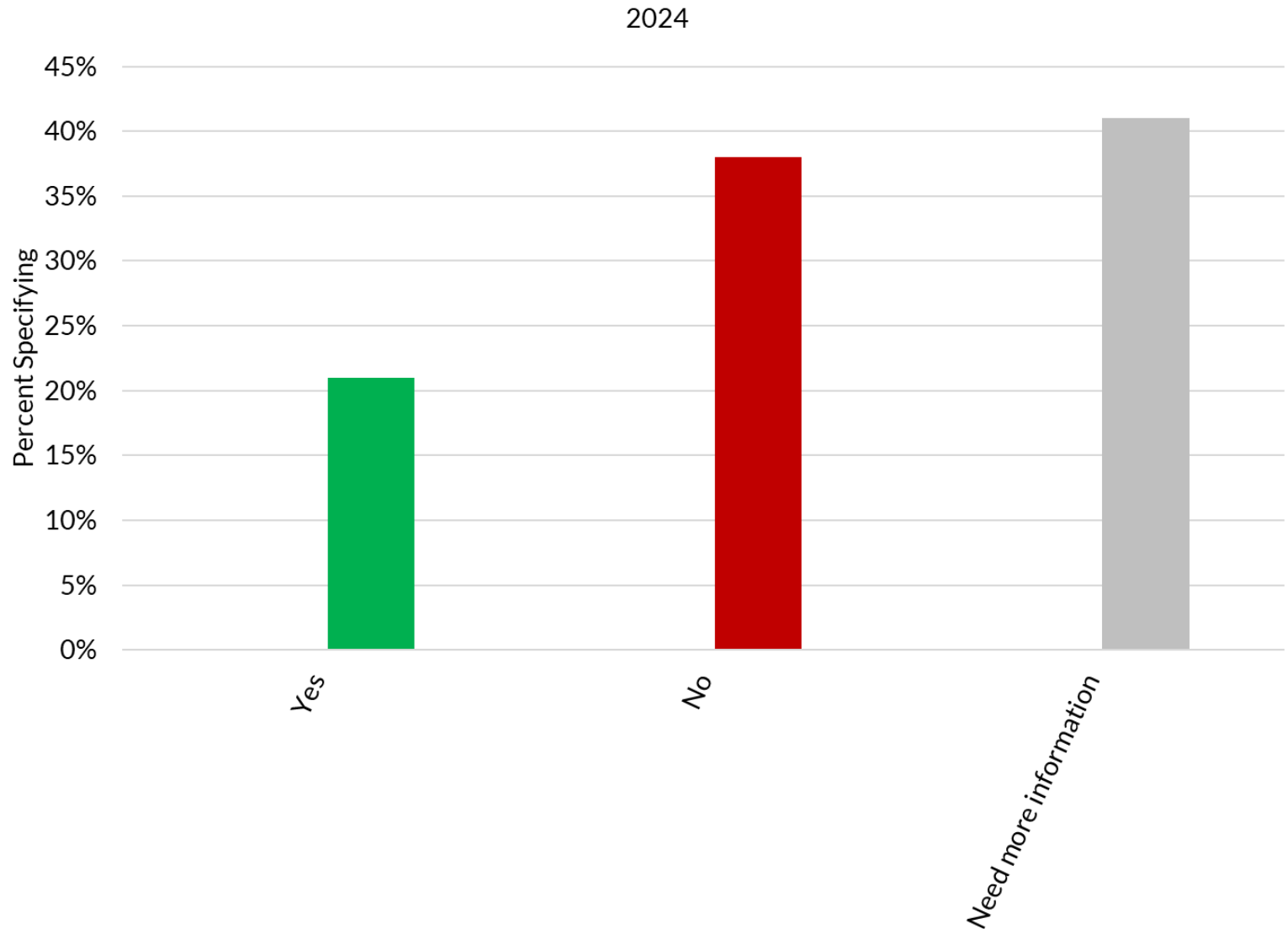
# City services that you believe should be the most important priorities to fund in the next few years.



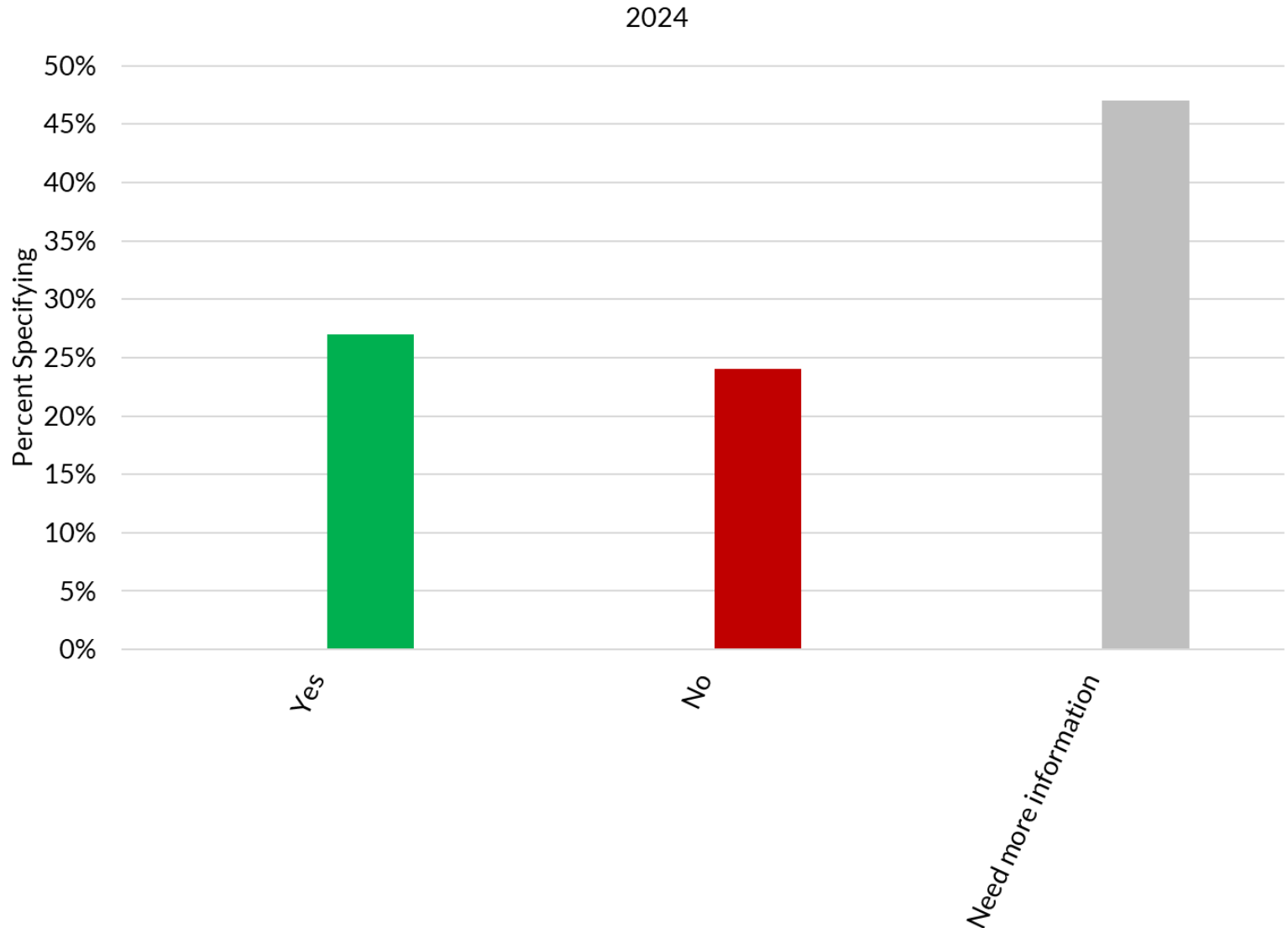
# Support for two tenths of 1% sales tax for 911 operations



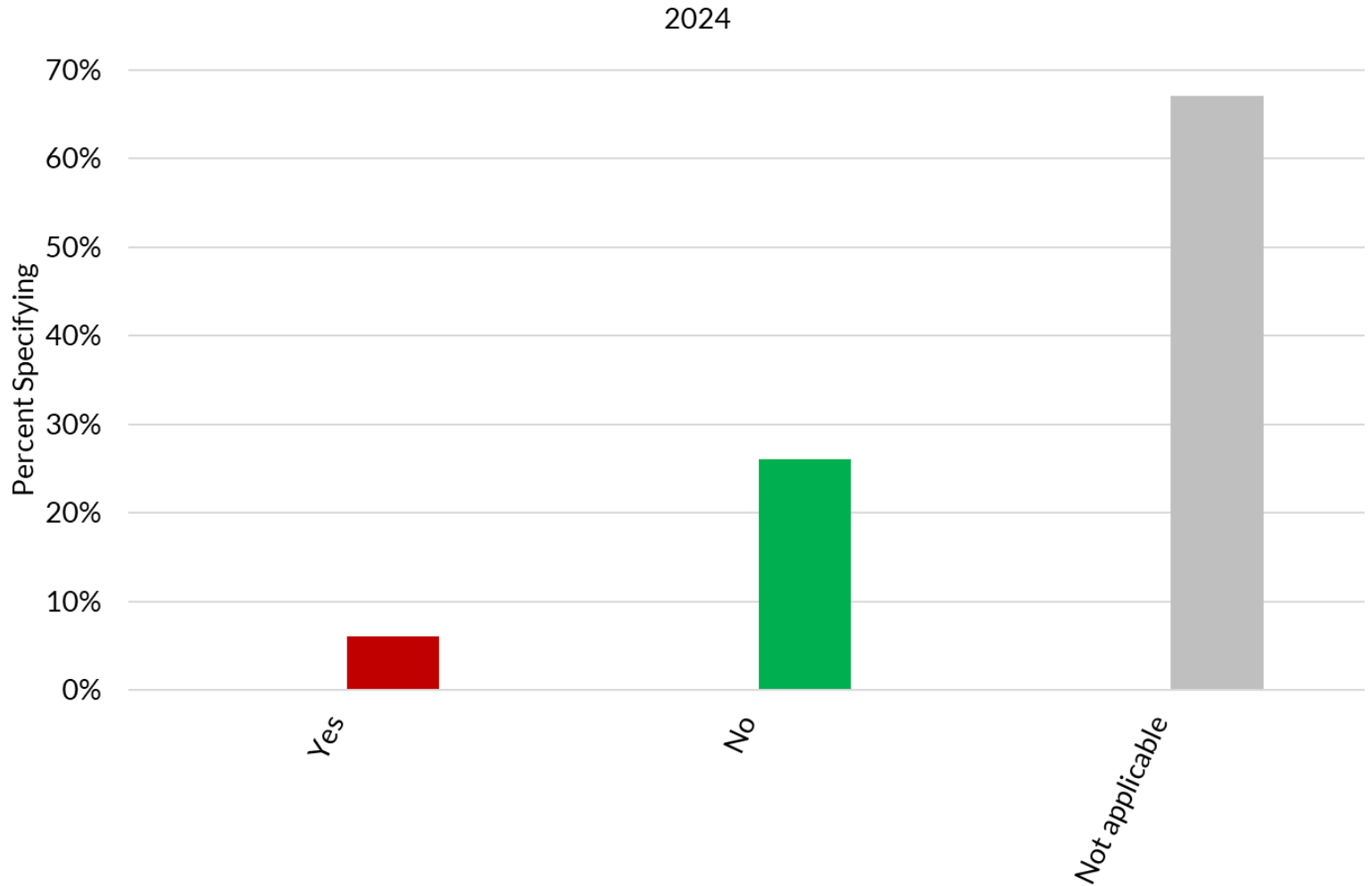
# Support for a property tax measure to fund parks and recreation facilities maintenance and improvements



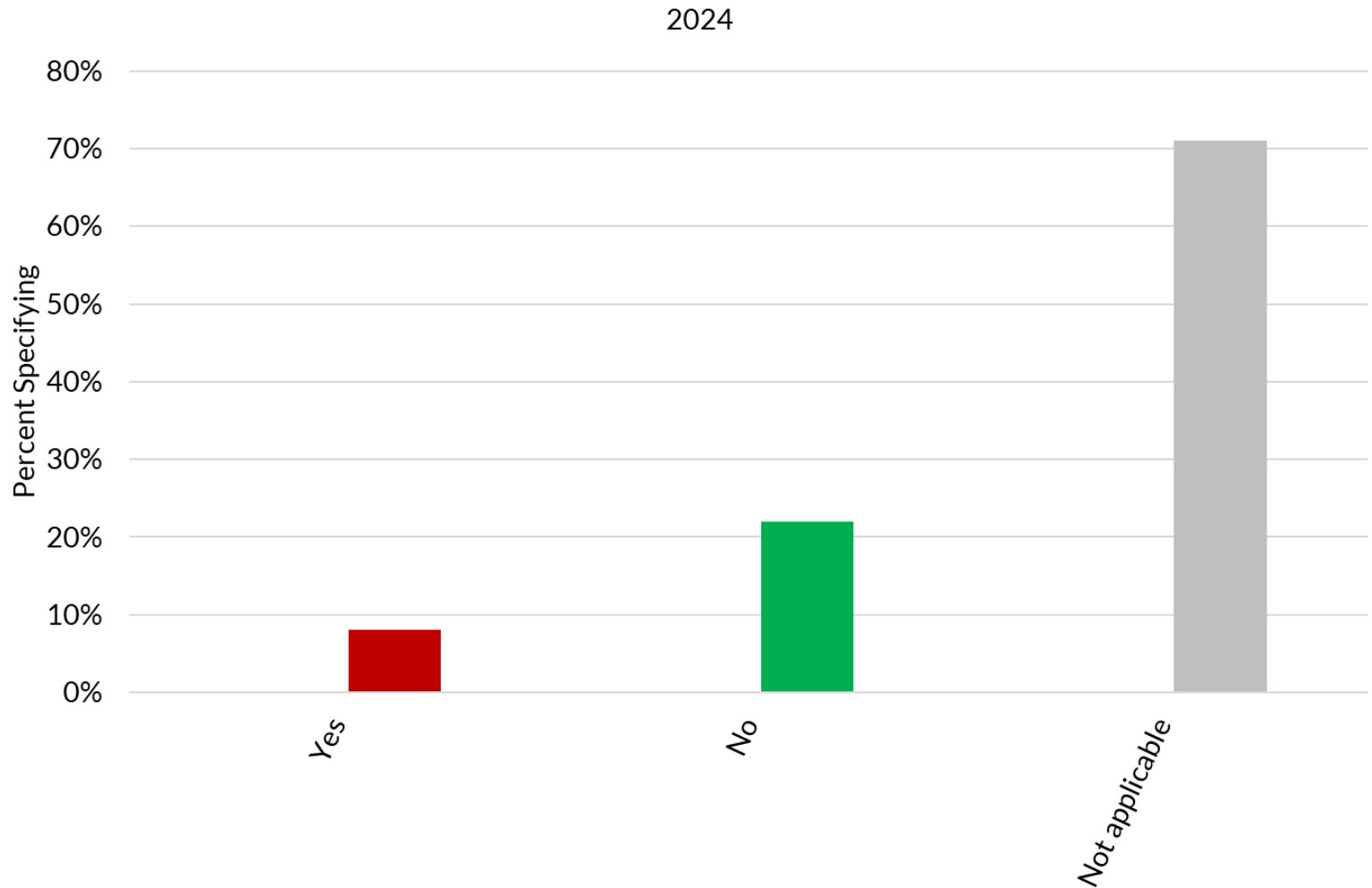
# Support for a levy lid lift for law enforcement and fire department



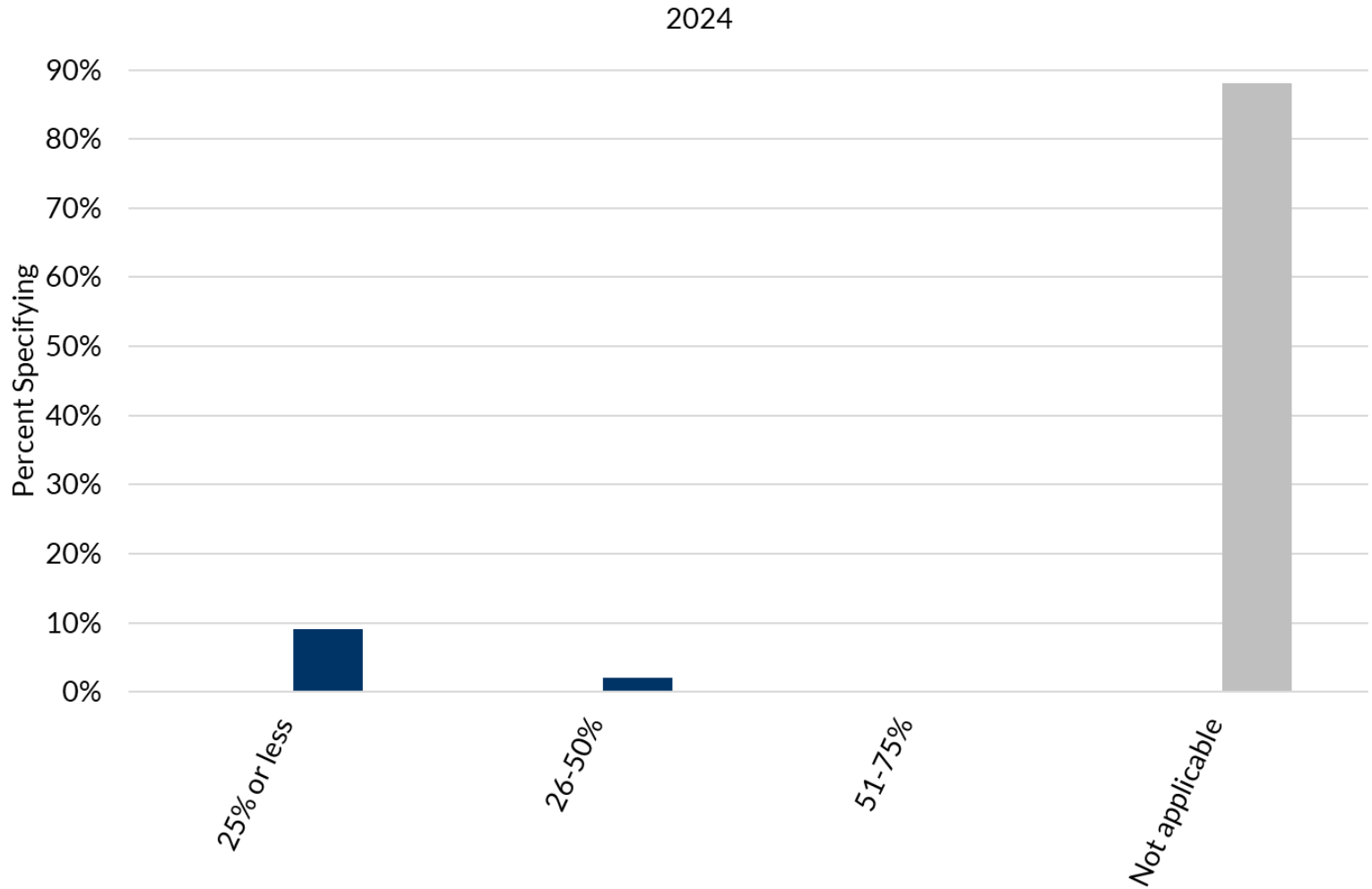
# Have childcare issues interfered with going to work or career advancement?



# Are childcare concerns a consideration in keeping you from expanding your family size?



# What percentage of your family income directed toward childcare?



# Questions