

City of Royal Oak Public Opinion Study

March 17, 2021



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

- Best practice to improve performance, management, and trust
- Enhances other engagement efforts to build context and help prioritize community requests
- Provides credible, independently-gathered data that quantifies community priorities and aids in balancing demands of vocal groups with the reality of limited resources
- Improves effectiveness of planning and communication
- Bottom line outcome measurement of service and trust: Good administration requires quality measurement and reporting

Study Goals

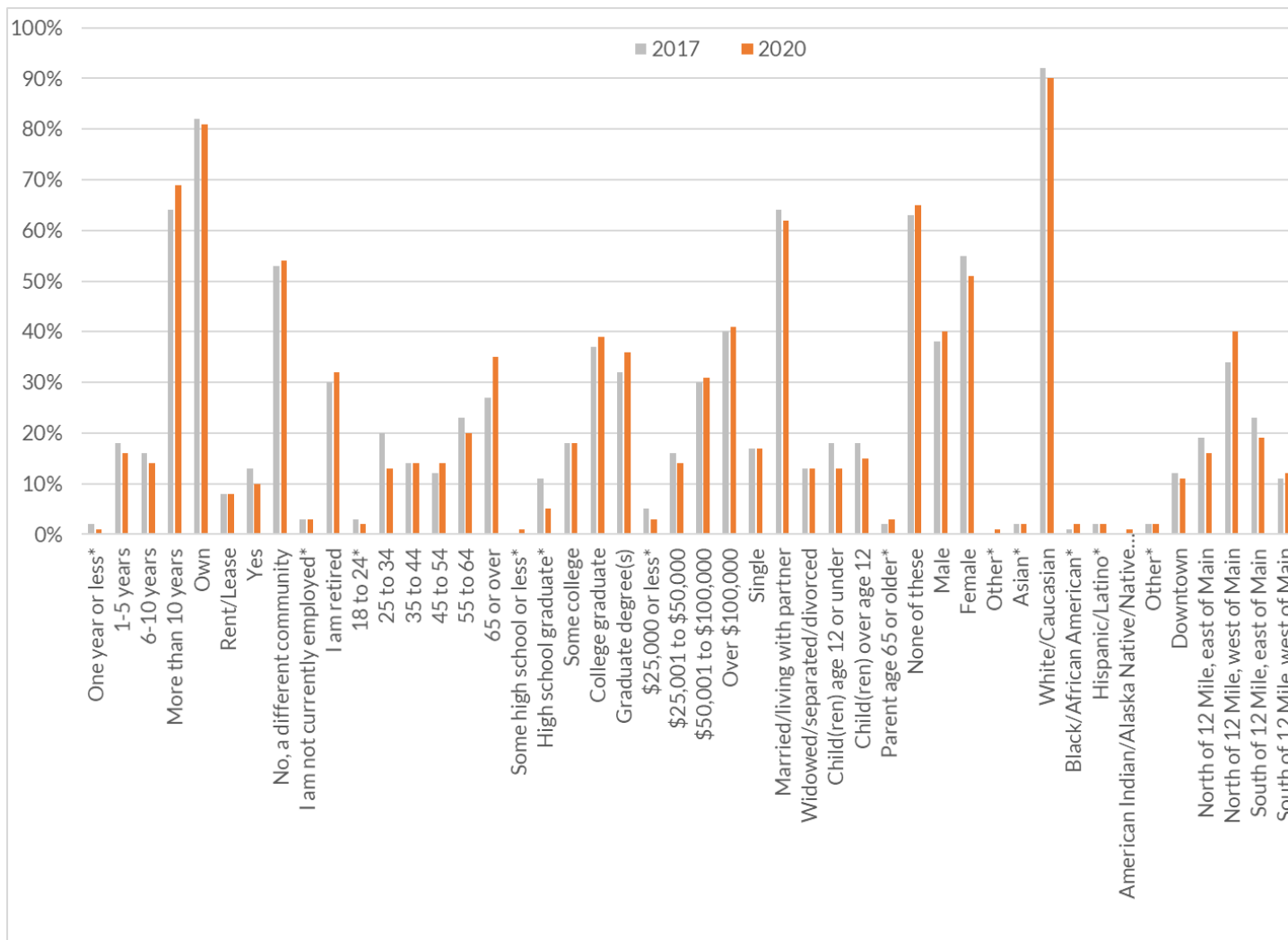
- Support budget and strategic planning decisions with additional community engagement
- Ensure baseline service measures are monitored to support improvements and transparency
- Identify which aspects of community provide the greatest leverage on residents' overall satisfaction and outcomes such as remaining in the community and recommending the community to others
- Understand results in context by benchmarking performance against statewide, regional and national indices that also measure industries and major organizations across the United States
- Compare performance to prior public opinion studies

Methodology

- Random sample of 1,500 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 three mailings in November 2020-January 2021
- Valid response from 389 residents, providing a conventional margin of error of +/- 5 percent in the raw data (95% confidence) and an ACSI margin of error of +/- 2.1 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

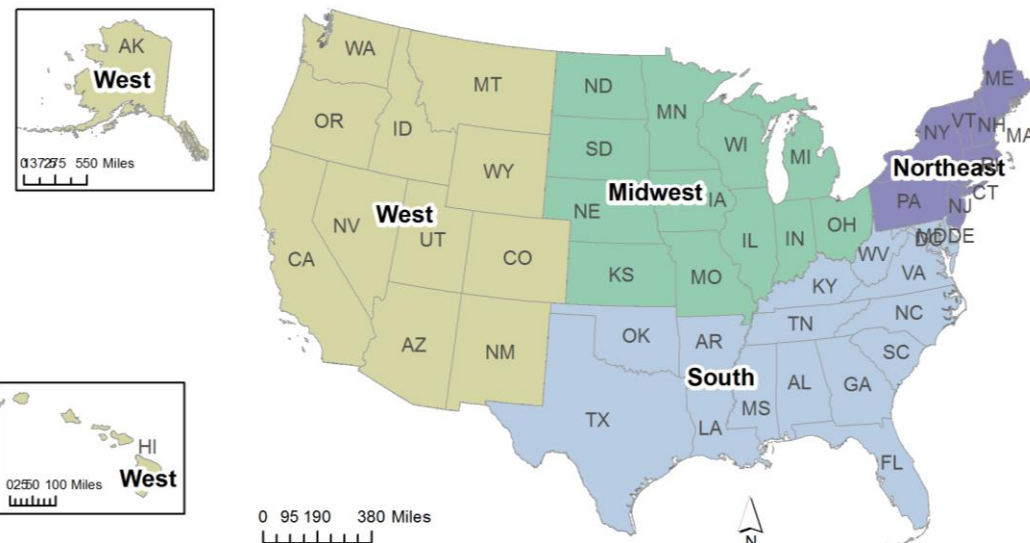
Note: Response collection was delayed because of postal service delivery challenges

Respondent Profile – Similar to 2017



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 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)



Bottom Line

- The City's overall American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) score softened to 67 from 69 (scale 1 to 100)
 - 2020 Royal Oak = 67 | 2017 Royal Oak = 69
 - 2020 Michigan = 63 | 2017 Michigan = 64
 - 2020 Midwest = 61 | 2017 Midwest = 63
 - 2020 National = 63 | 2017 National = 63
- As expected, scores softened for events, library and local schools
- Scores improved for transportation, customer service
- Areas with greatest leverage:
 - City Government Management
 - Economy
 - Parks and Recreation
 - Shopping/Dining
 - Schools

Bottom Line (cont.)

- About 70% felt safe using parks during COVID-19
- Residents considered the following to have been critical services during shutdown: park maintenance, police response, recycling, farmers' market
- Over 70% support online and curbside delivery of services
- Detailed information by specific demographic groups is available to aid in policy review
 - Detail by: years of residency, own/rent, employment, age, education, income, marital status, household composition, gender, ethnicity and area of town

Preserving Voice: Looking Into Detail

2020 Royal Oak, Michigan Distribution Questions Response Count 389		Information preference for city information												
		Cell phone	Internet	Text message	Landline telephone	Video chat/ Skype/ FaceTime	Email	Social media	Smart phone apps	Insight magazine	Newspapers	Mailings	City cable channels	Friends, family & neighbors
Overall - 2020		11%	51%	22%	3%	1%	52%	32%	12%	46%	39%	50%	9%	26%
Age	18 to 24*	33%	50%	17%	-	-	67%	50%	17%	17%	33%	33%	-	33%
	25 to 34	14%	63%	24%	-	-	57%	51%	16%	20%	39%	49%	-	35%
	35 to 44	13%	66%	36%	-	2%	70%	47%	23%	30%	23%	49%	-	23%
	45 to 54	8%	60%	25%	2%	2%	58%	45%	19%	42%	45%	42%	9%	26%
	55 to 64	8%	49%	19%	1%	1%	49%	23%	9%	64%	41%	49%	13%	19%
	65 or over	11%	39%	18%	7%	-	42%	18%	6%	56%	42%	54%	13%	29%

Consistent Scores Regardless
of Demographics

Checked Scores that
Vary by Demographics

Results



Comparing 2017 and 2020

(High score = 100)

Areas with strong impact on overall engagement

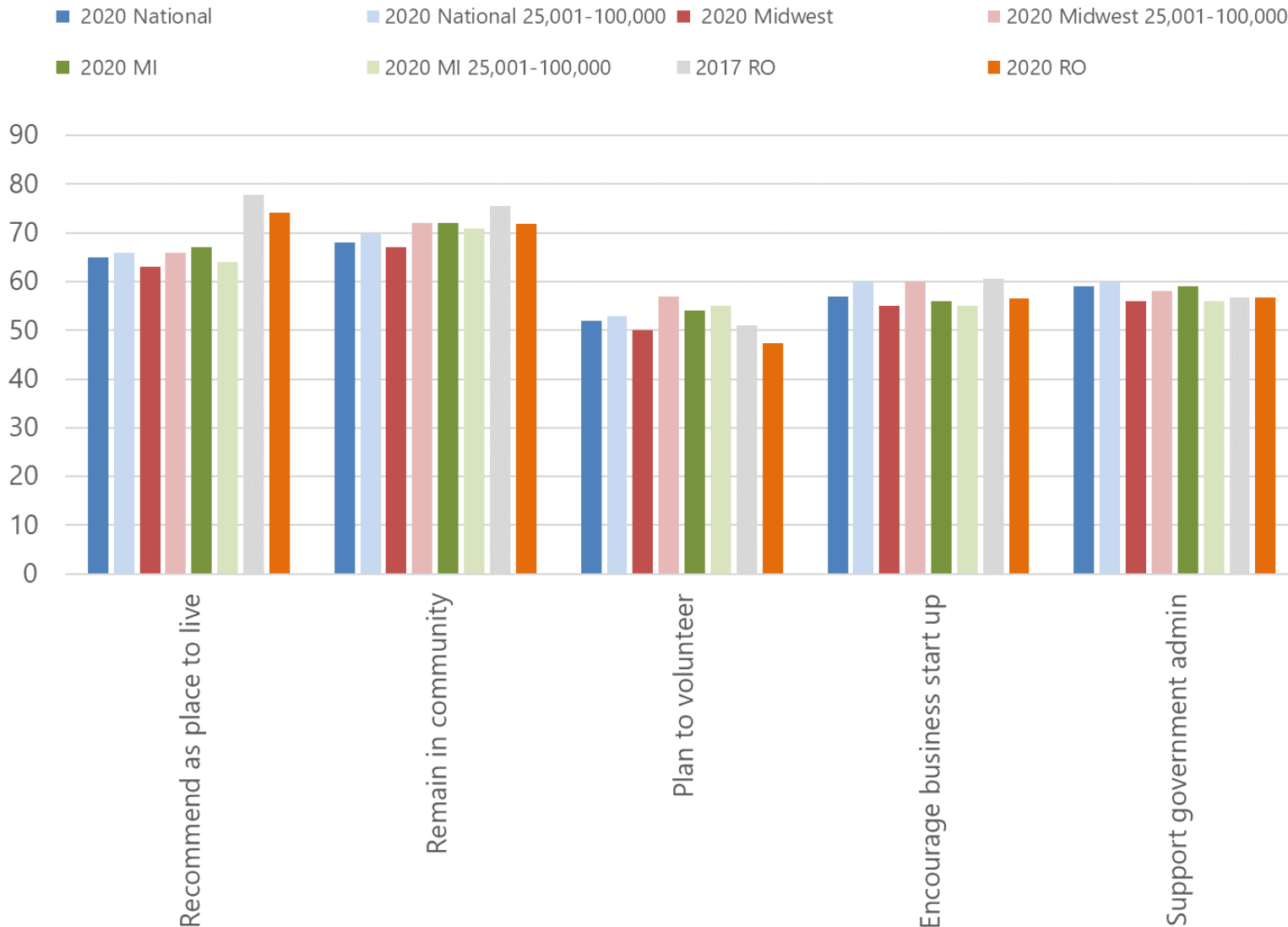
	2017 RO	2020 RO	Change
Fire and EMS Overall	90	89	→ 0
Public Schools Overall	73	67	↓ -6
Transportation Overall	63	63	→ 0
Utility Services Overall	87	85	↓ -2
Police Department Overall	81	81	→ -1
Property Taxes Overall	64	66	→ 2
Shopping Opportunities Overall	79	79	→ 0
Local Government Overall	65	64	→ 0
Community Events Overall	77	71	↓ -6
Economic Health Overall	69	70	→ 1
Diversity Overall	62	58	↓ -4
Parks and Recreation Overall	76	75	→ -1
Library Overall	85	80	↓ -5

Scores in Context

Cobalt Community Research Government Benchmarks	2020 U.S. Benchmark	2020 Midwest Benchmark (25k-100k)	2020 MI Benchmark (25k-100k)	2020 RO
Scale 0-100 (Perfect=100)	Overall	Overall	Overall	Overall
Local Government	62	66	59	64
Community Satisfaction	61	68	61	67
Professionalism of Staff	65	64	62	77
County Government Satisfaction	59	59	57	-
State Government Satisfaction	56	57	51	-
Federal Government Satisfaction	68	-	-	-
ACSI National Index Overall (includes private)	75	-	-	-
Royal Oak 2020	67			

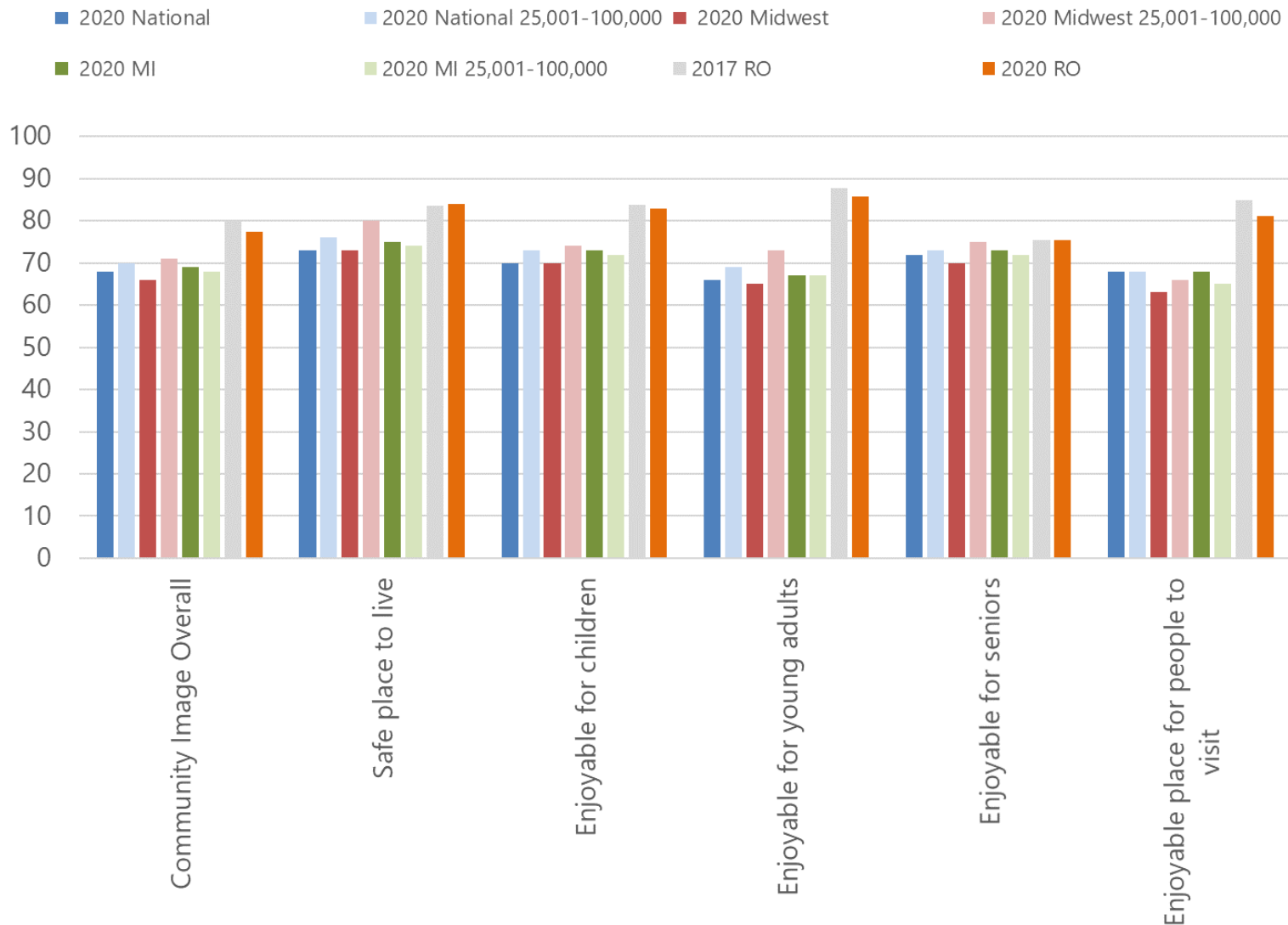
Outcome Behaviors to Benchmarks

(High score = 100)



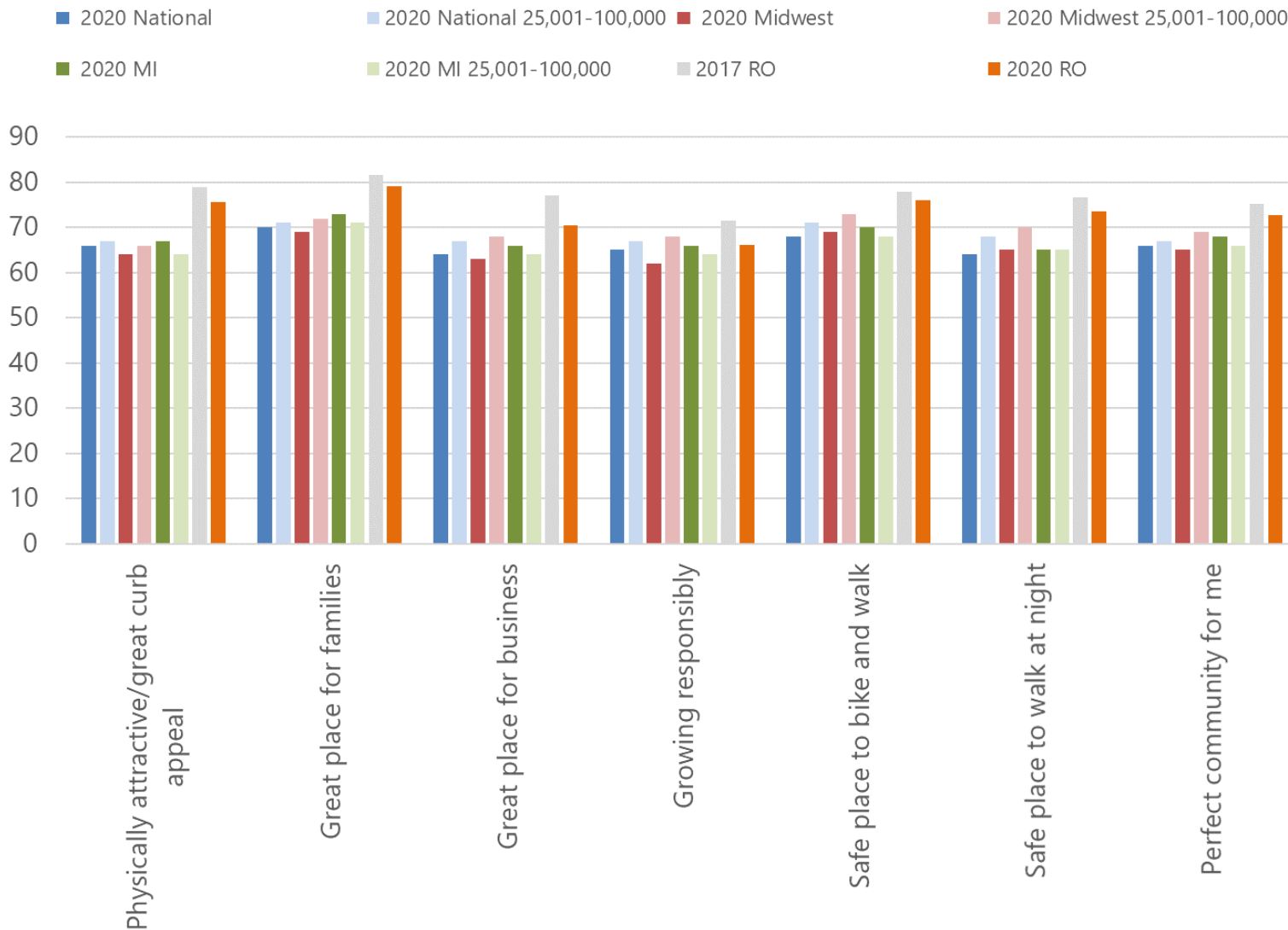
Community Image to Benchmarks

(High score = 100)



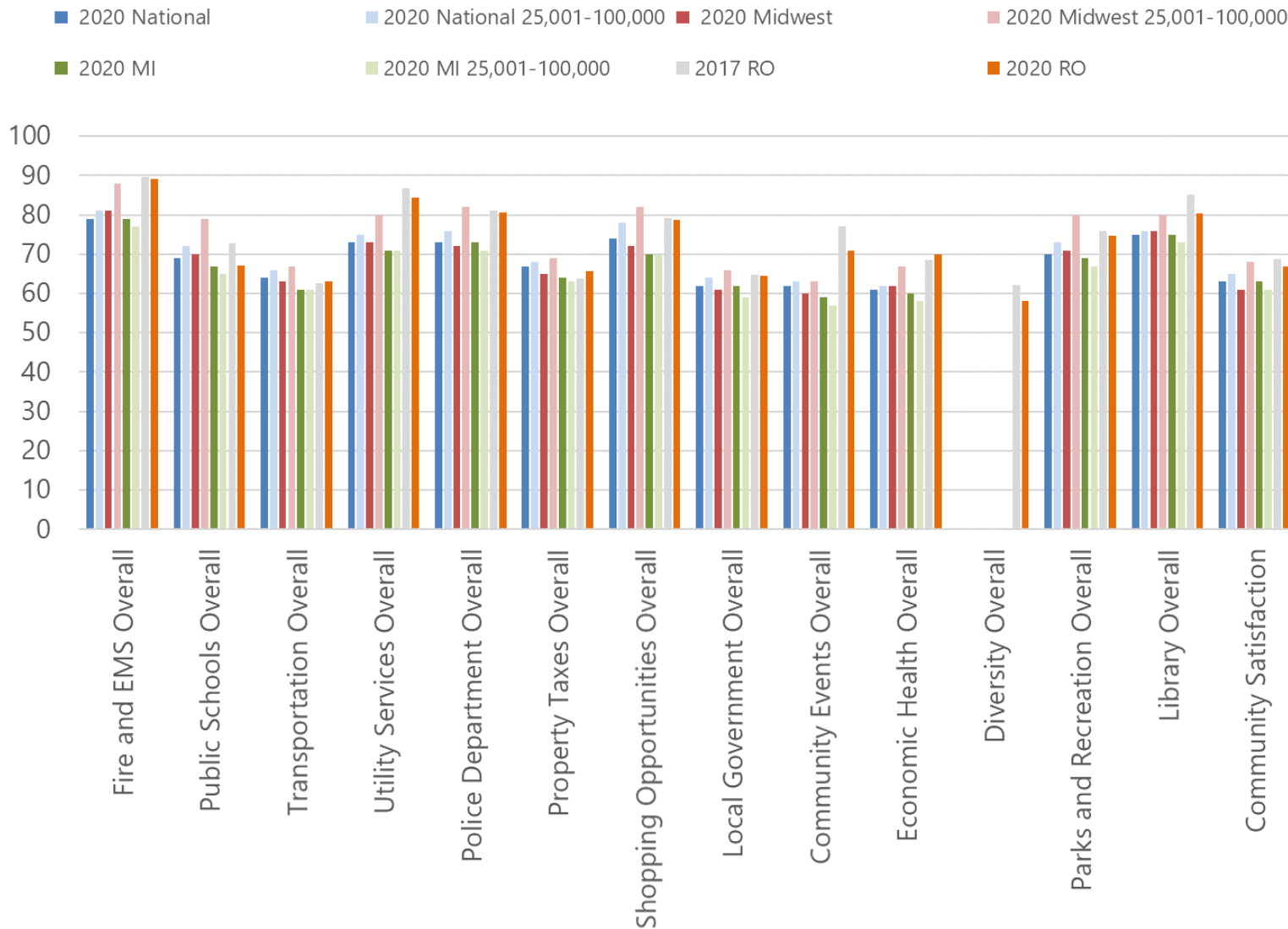
Community Image to Benchmarks

(High score = 100)

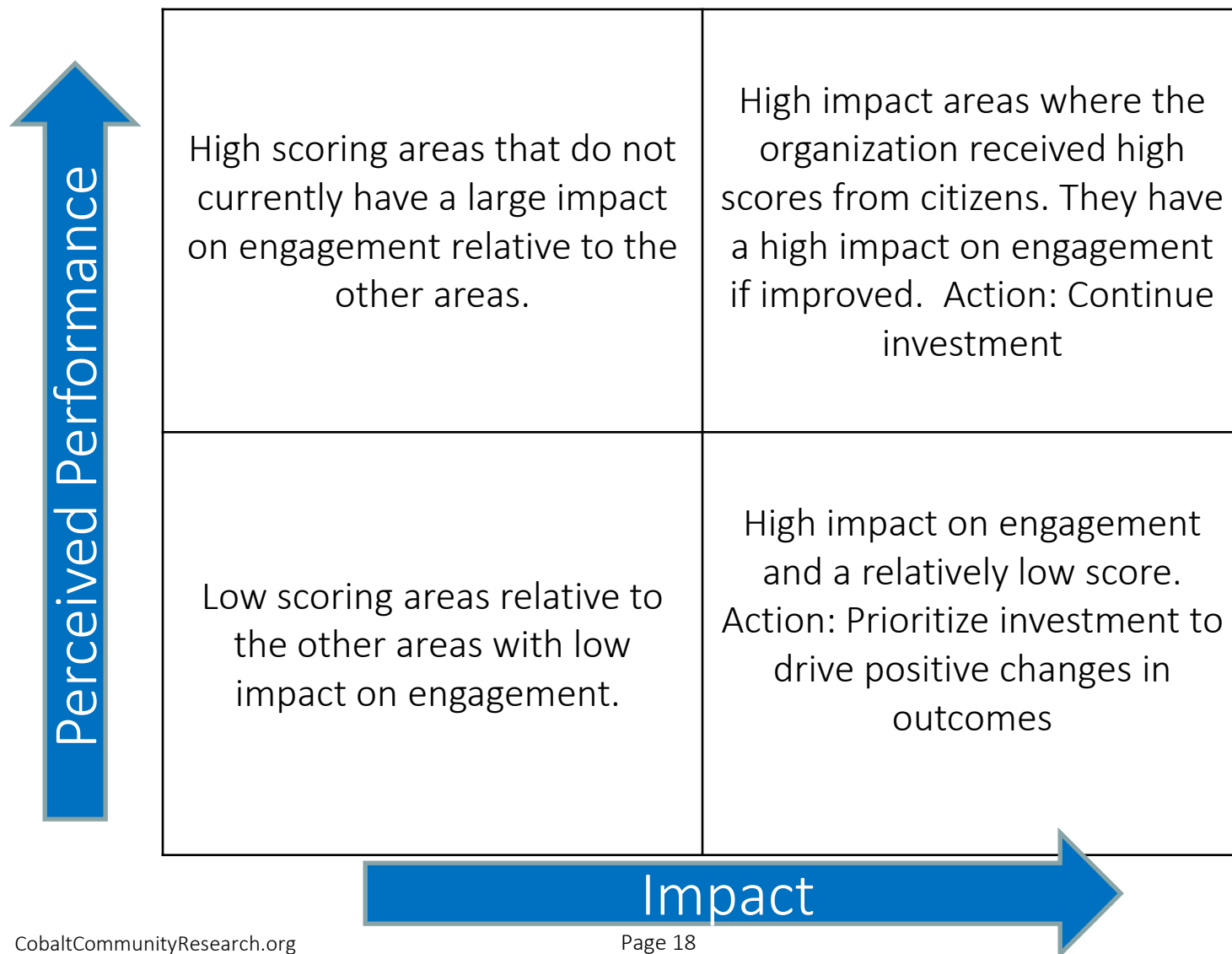


Community Experience Benchmarks

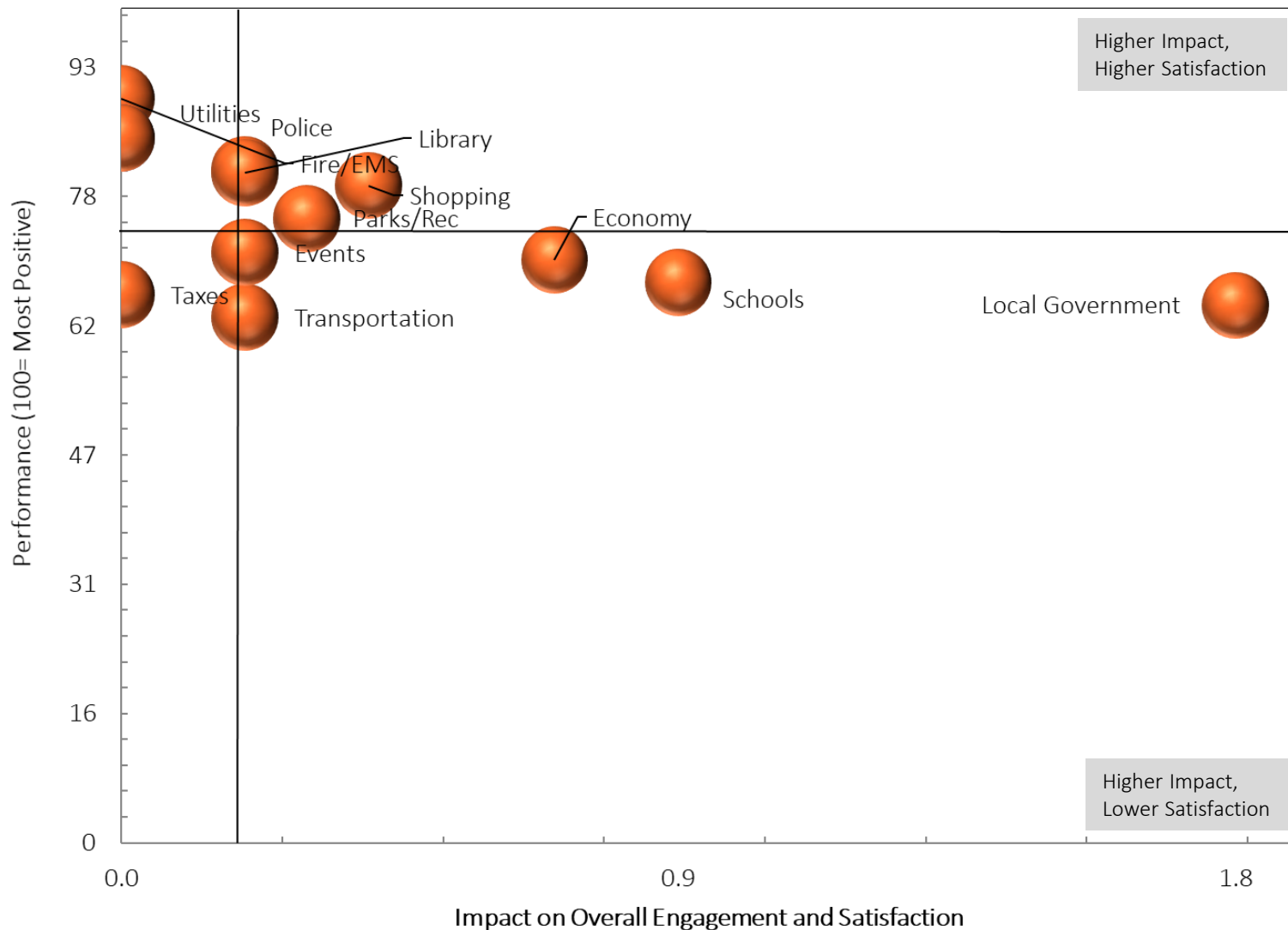
(High score = 100)



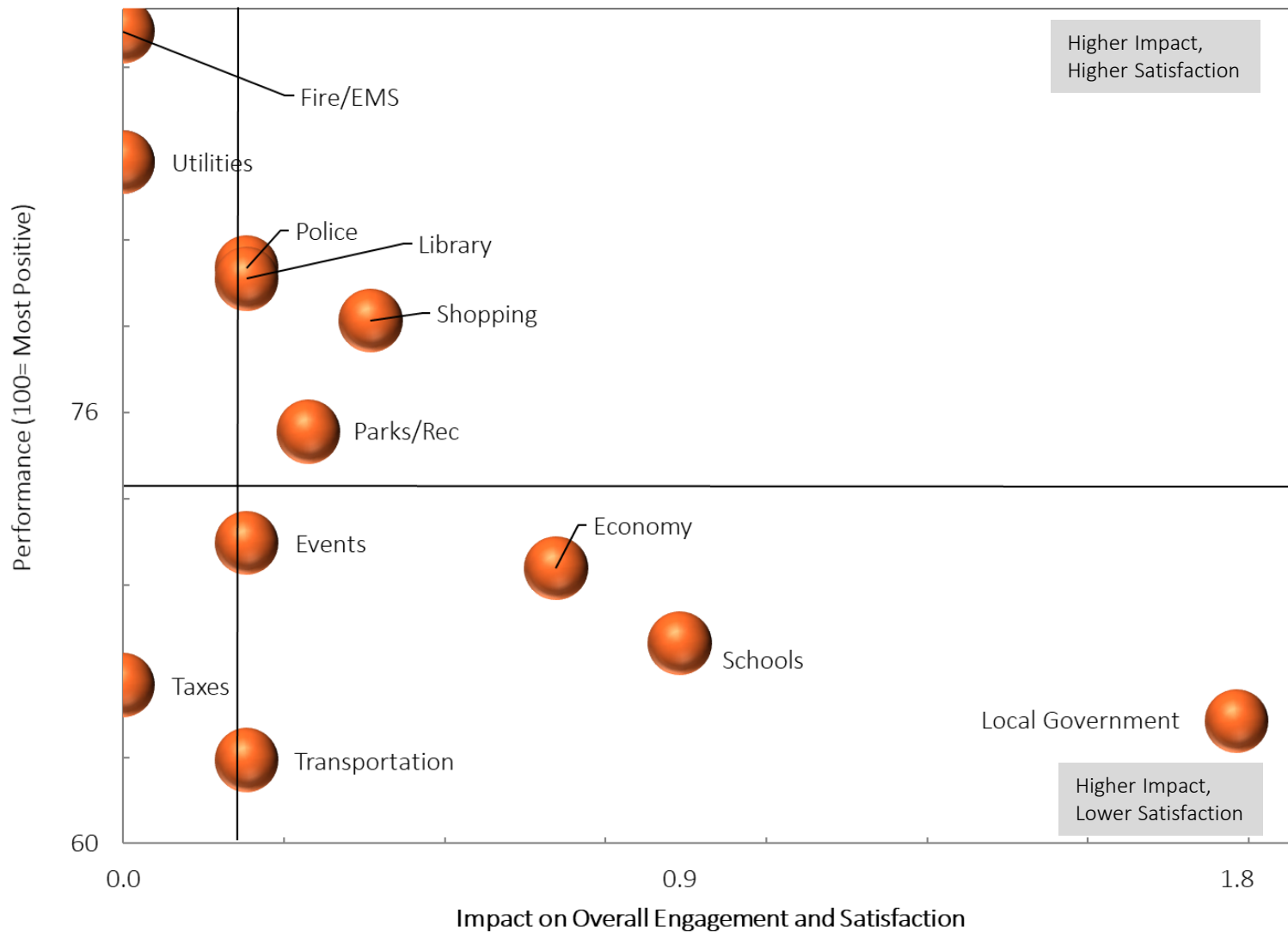
Community Questions – Long-term Drivers



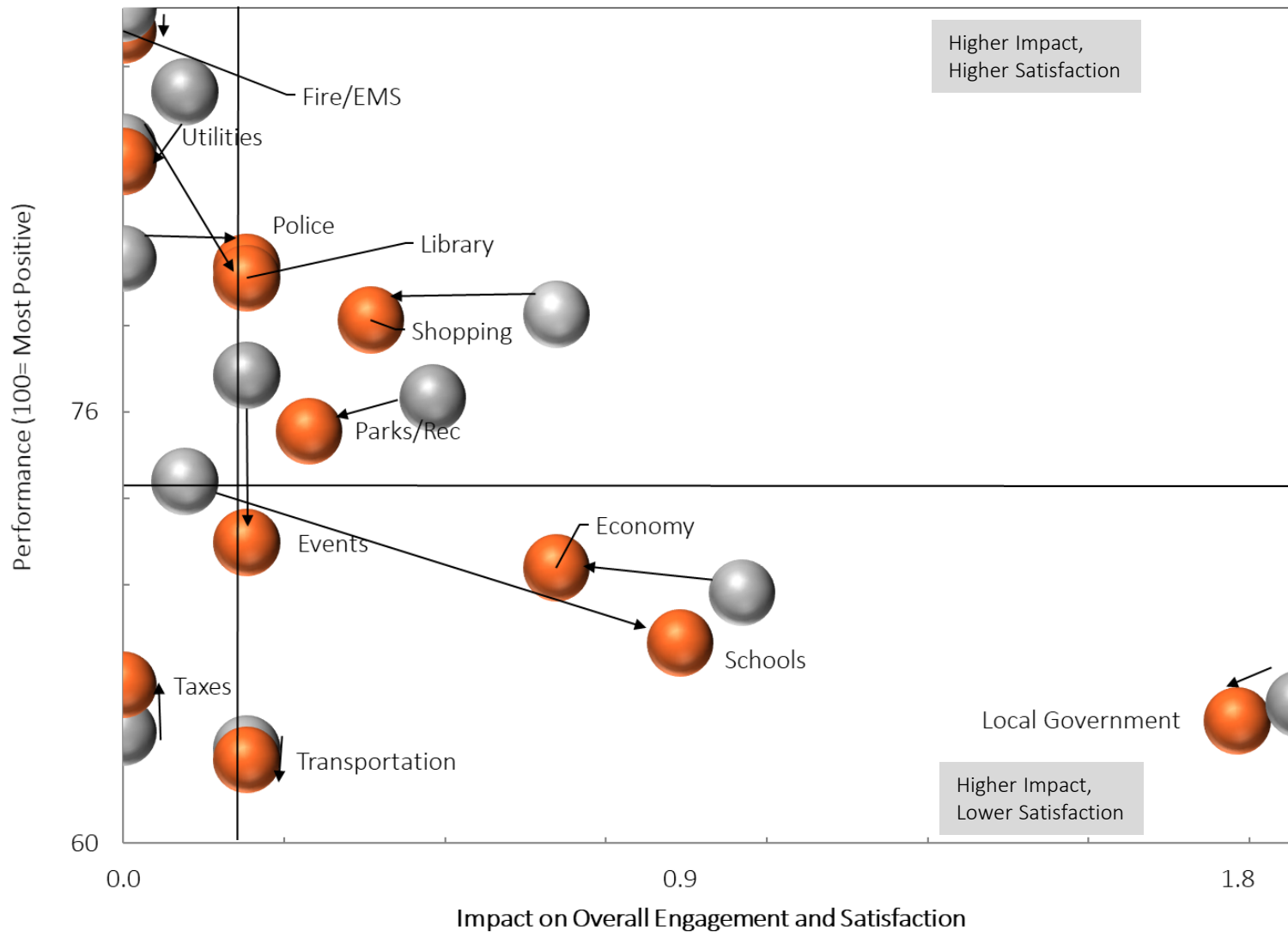
Drivers of Satisfaction and Behavior: Strategic Priorities



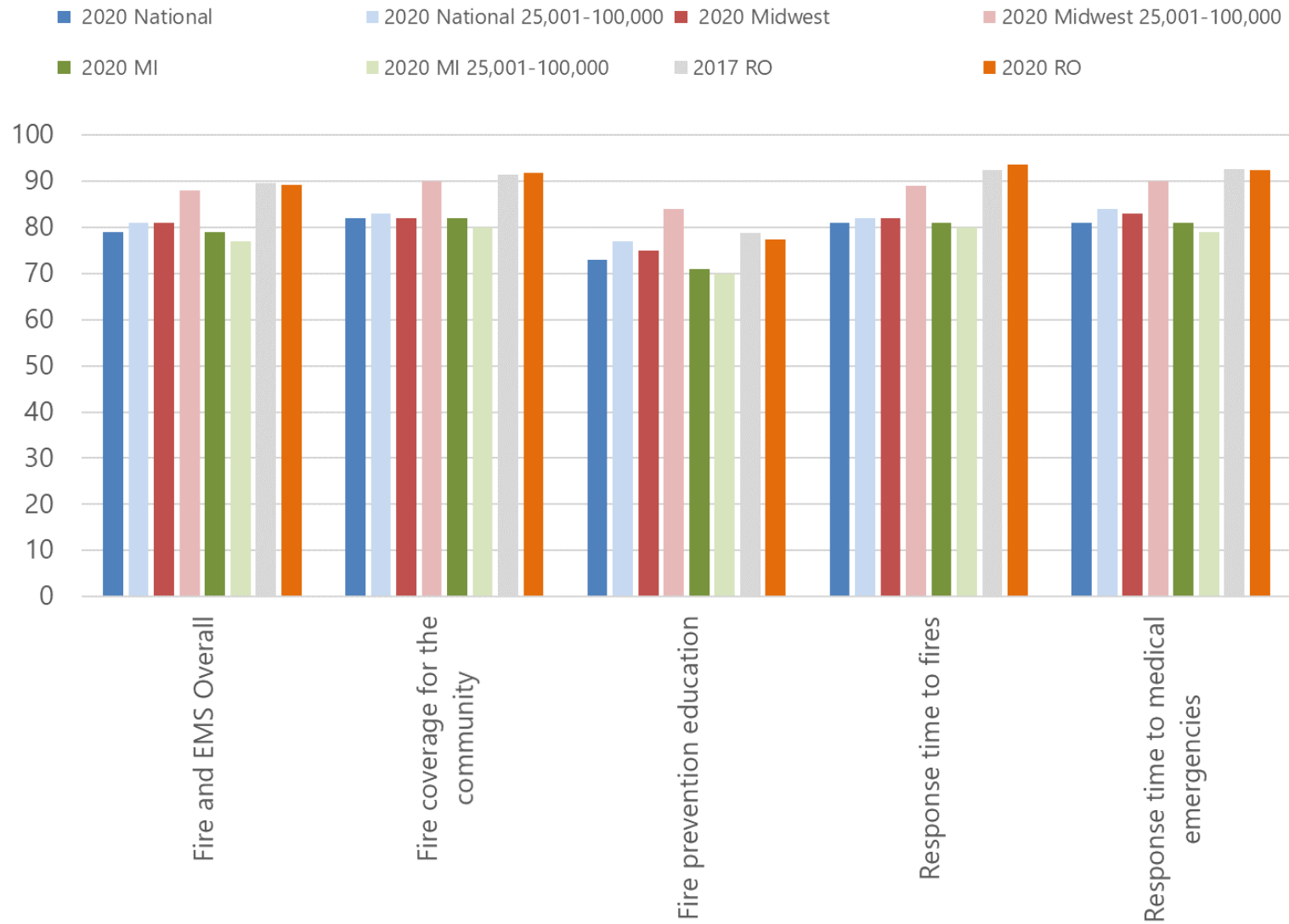
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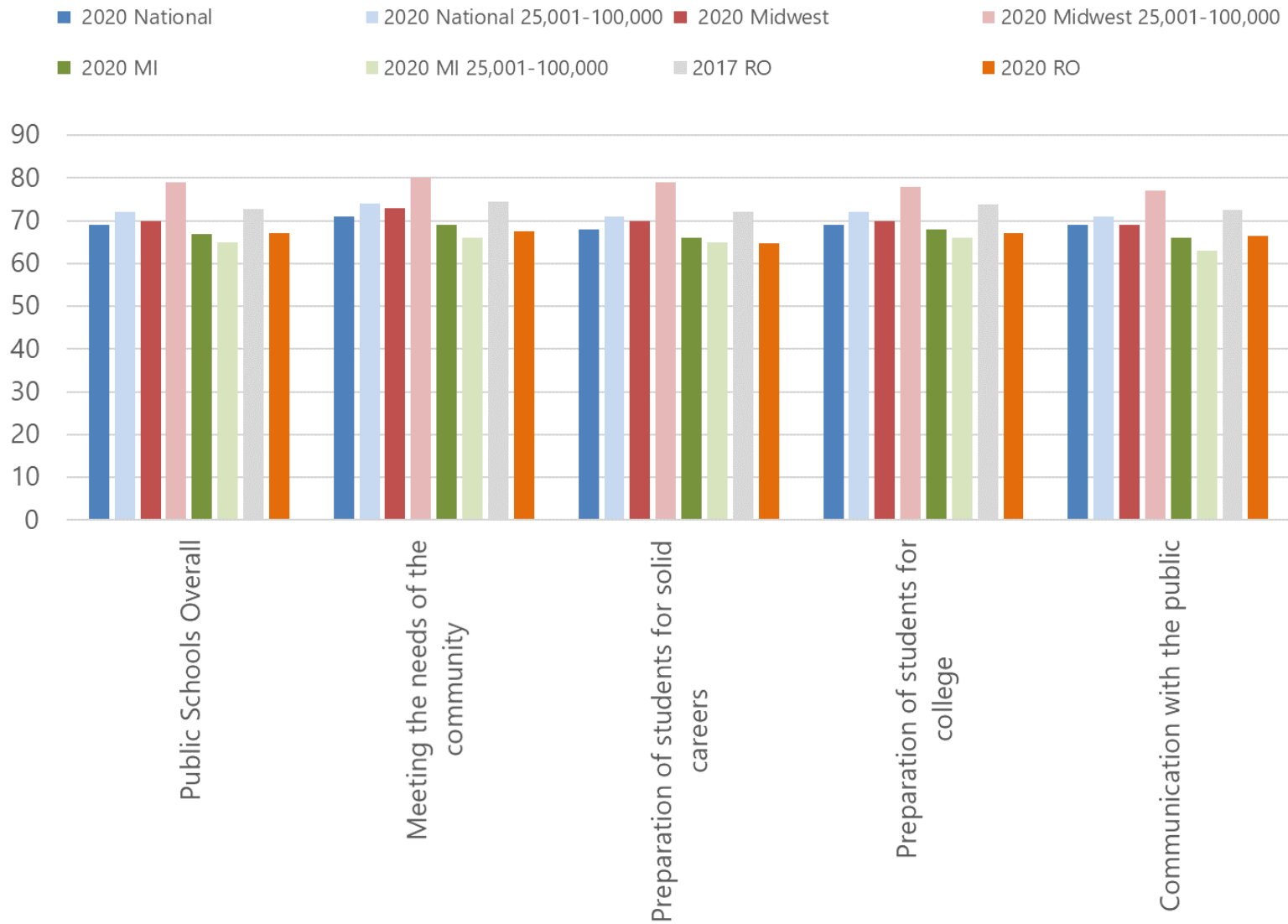
Strategic Priorities – Compared to 2017



Fire and EMS

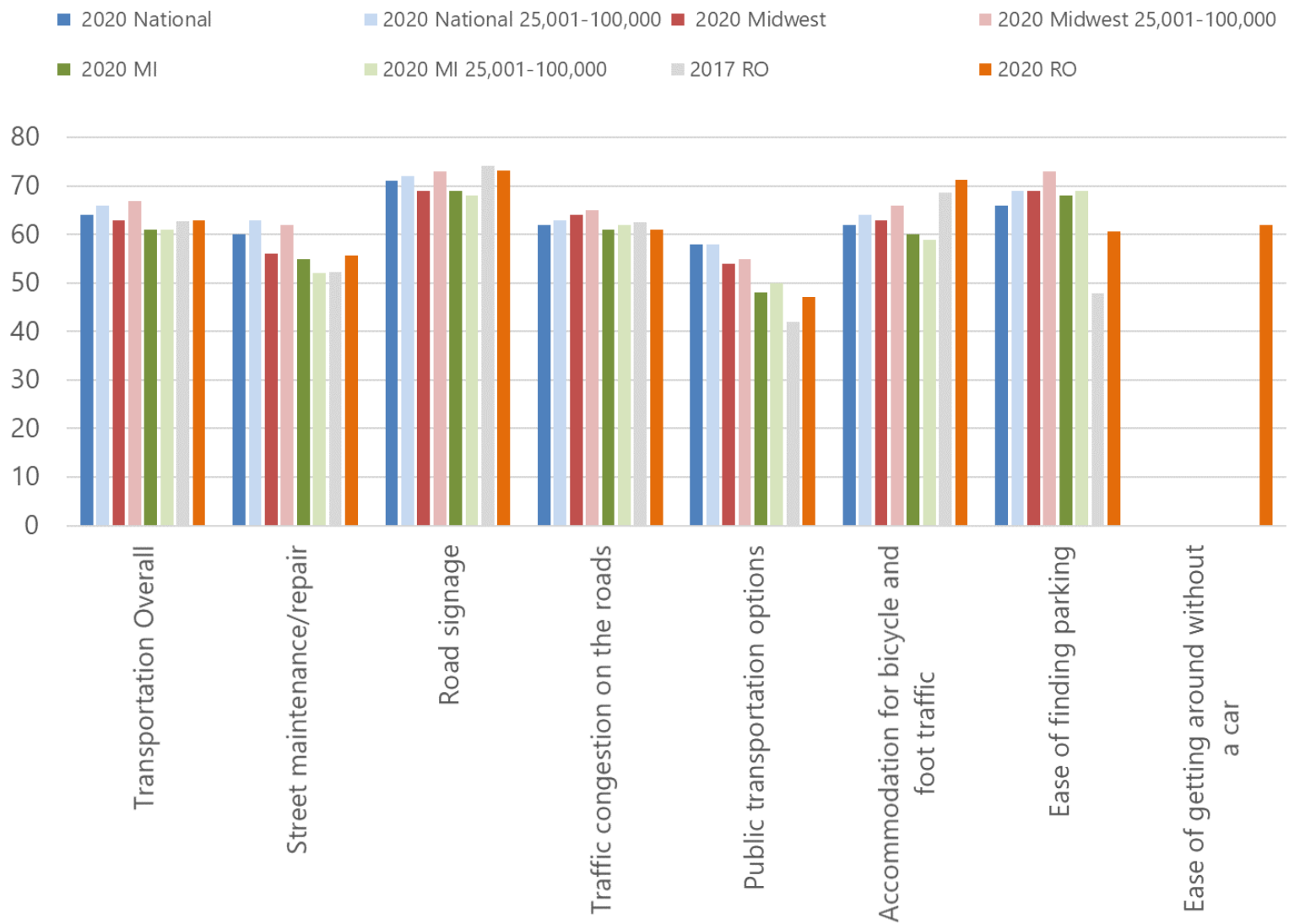


Public Schools

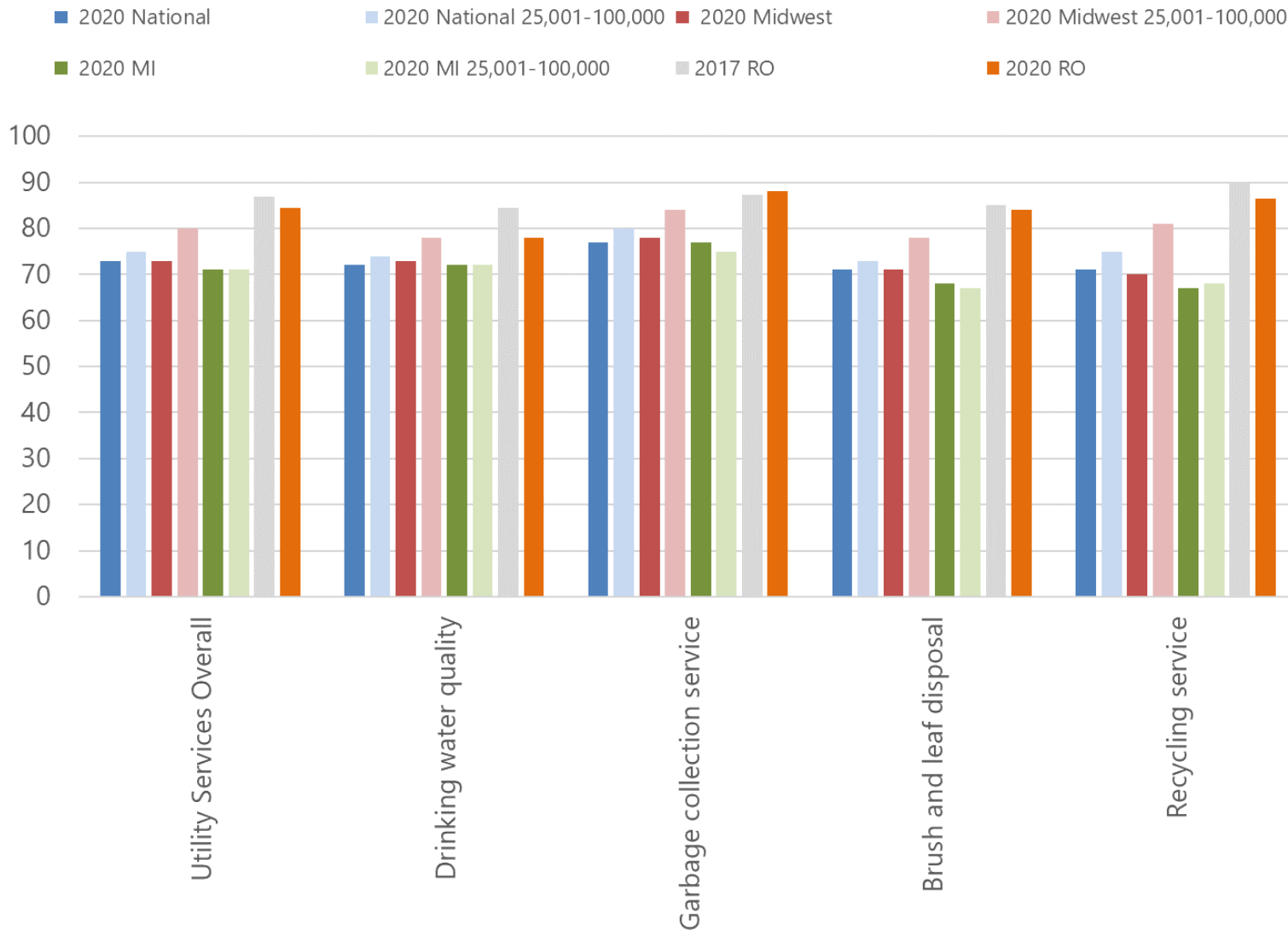


Driver

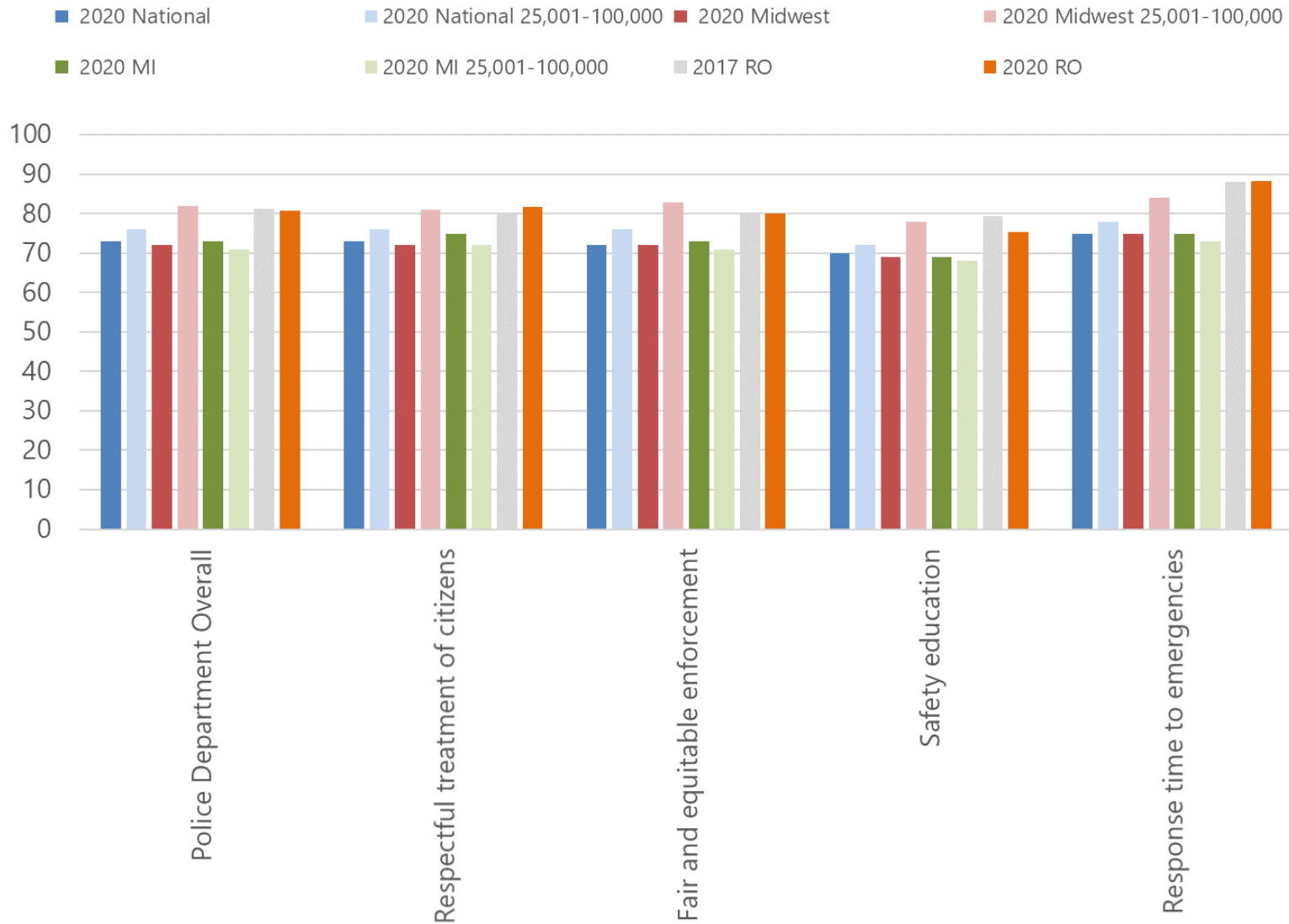
Transportation



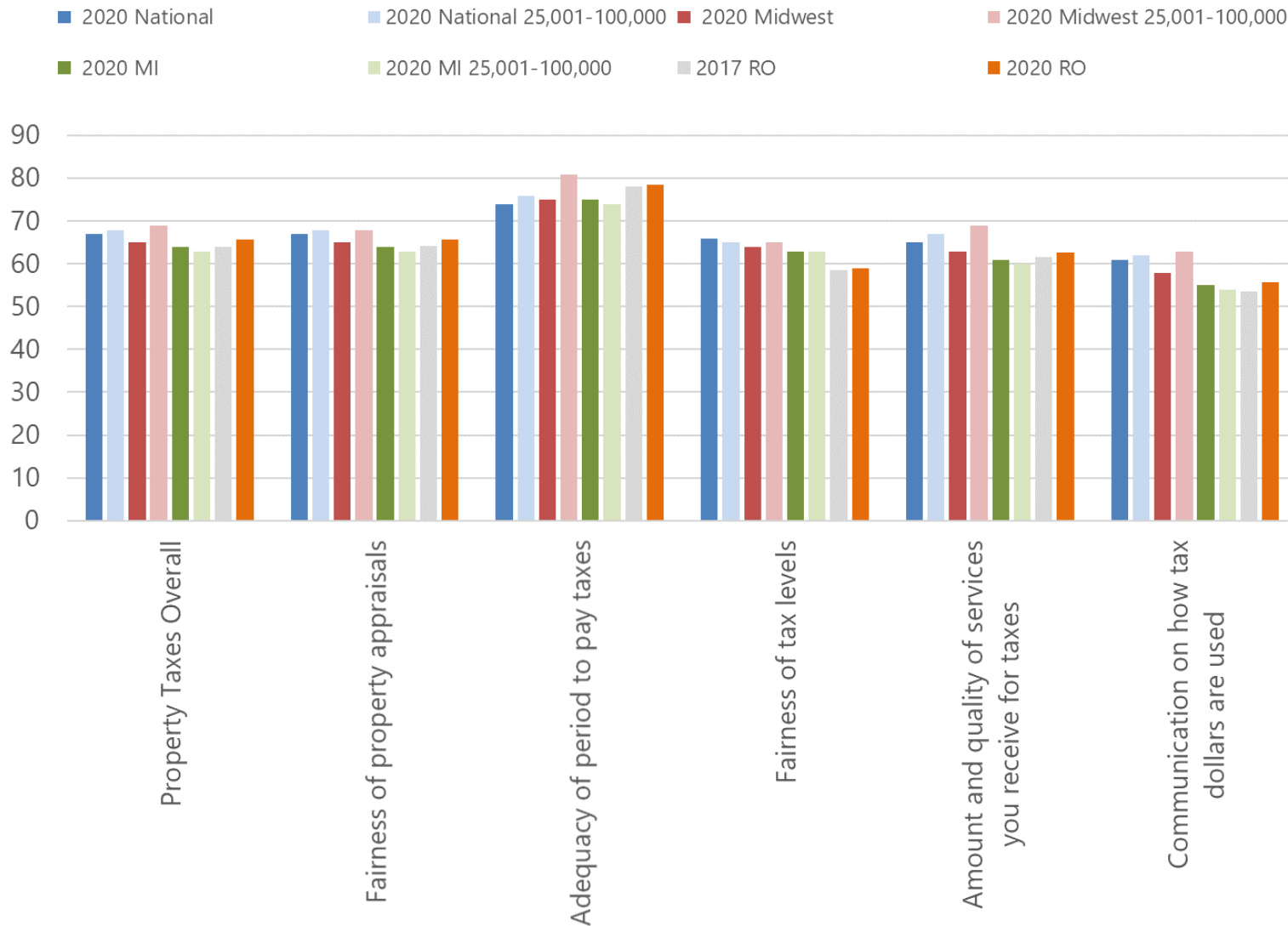
Utilities



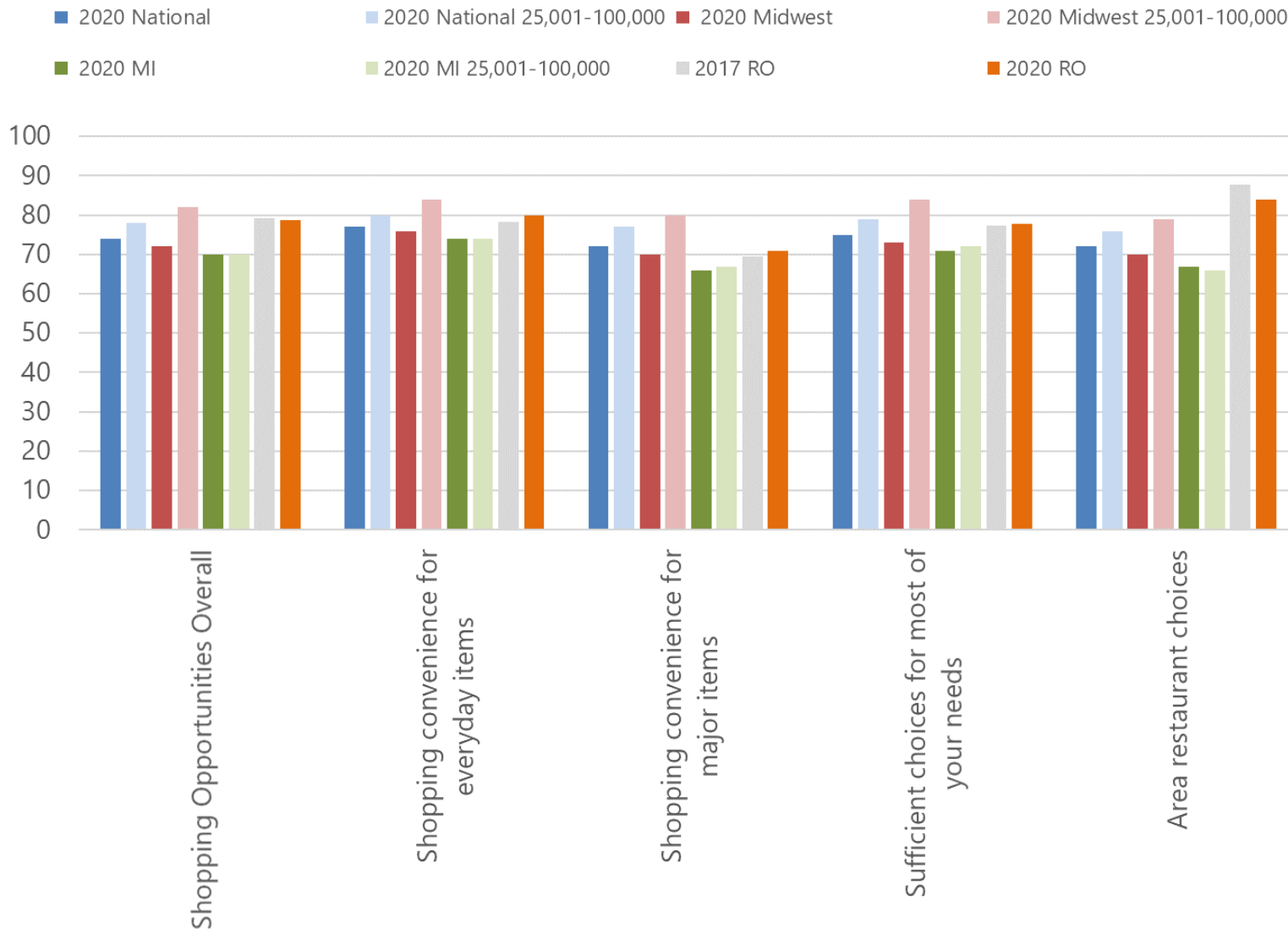
Police



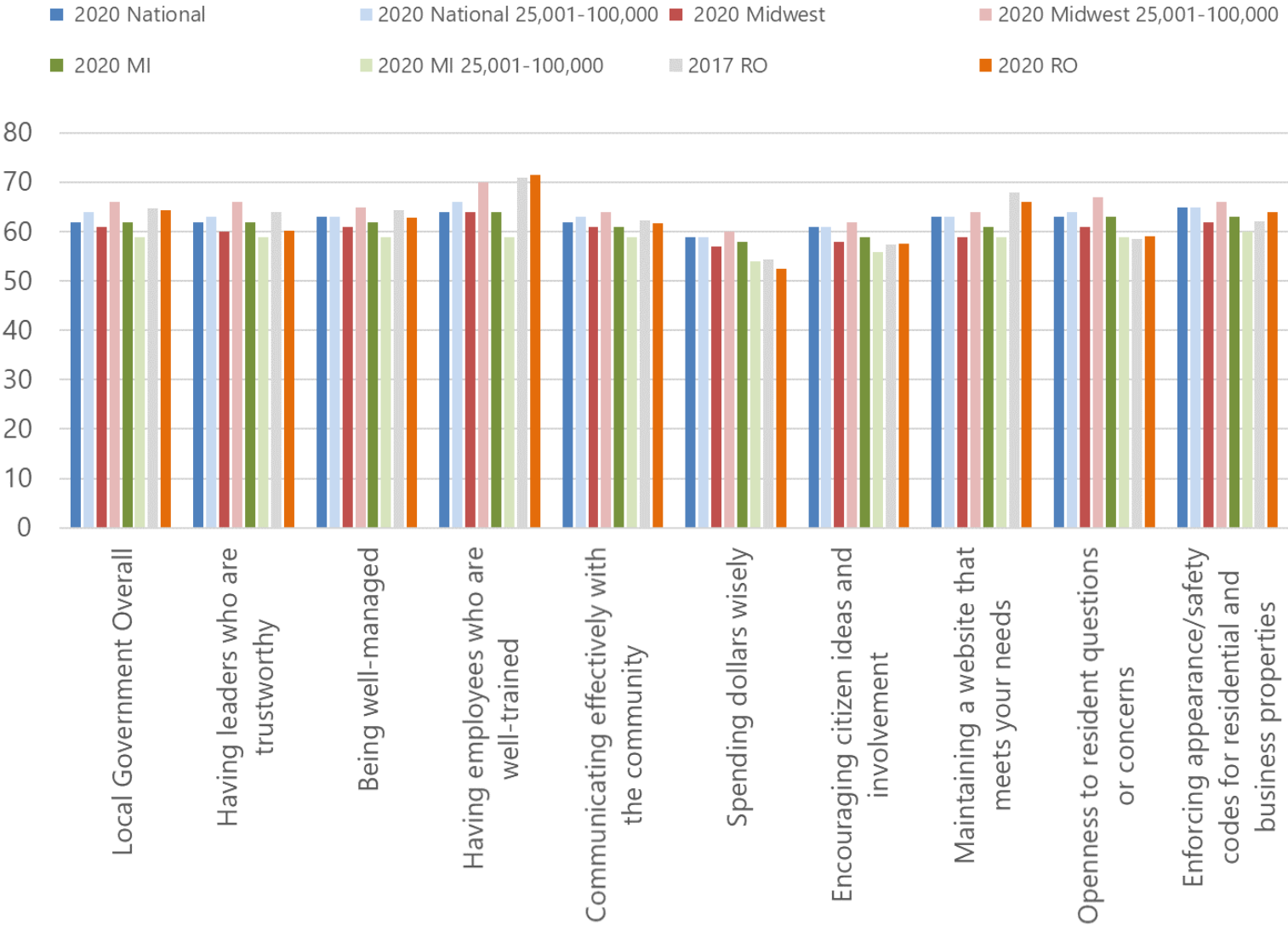
Taxes



Shopping and Dining

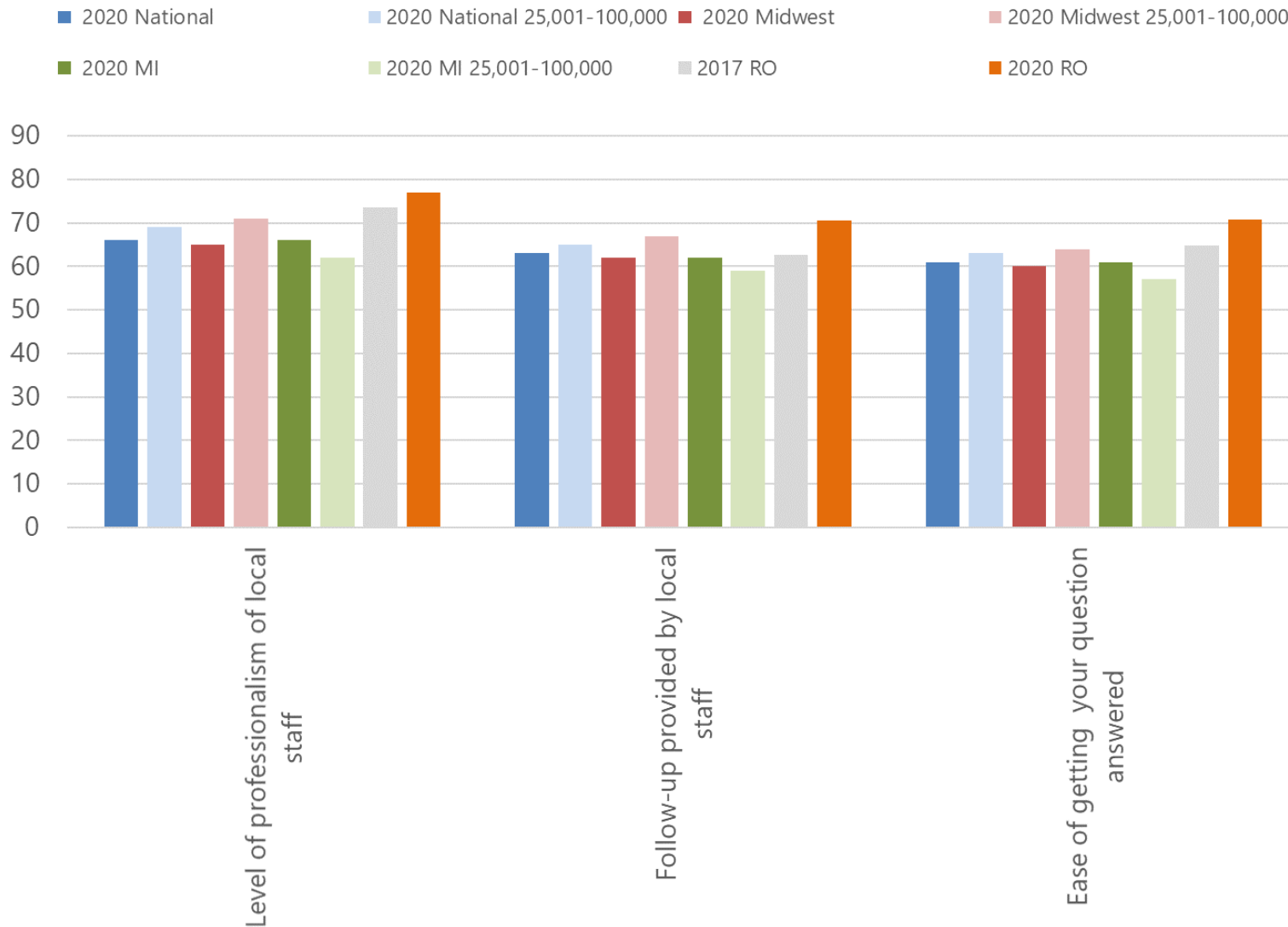


Driver



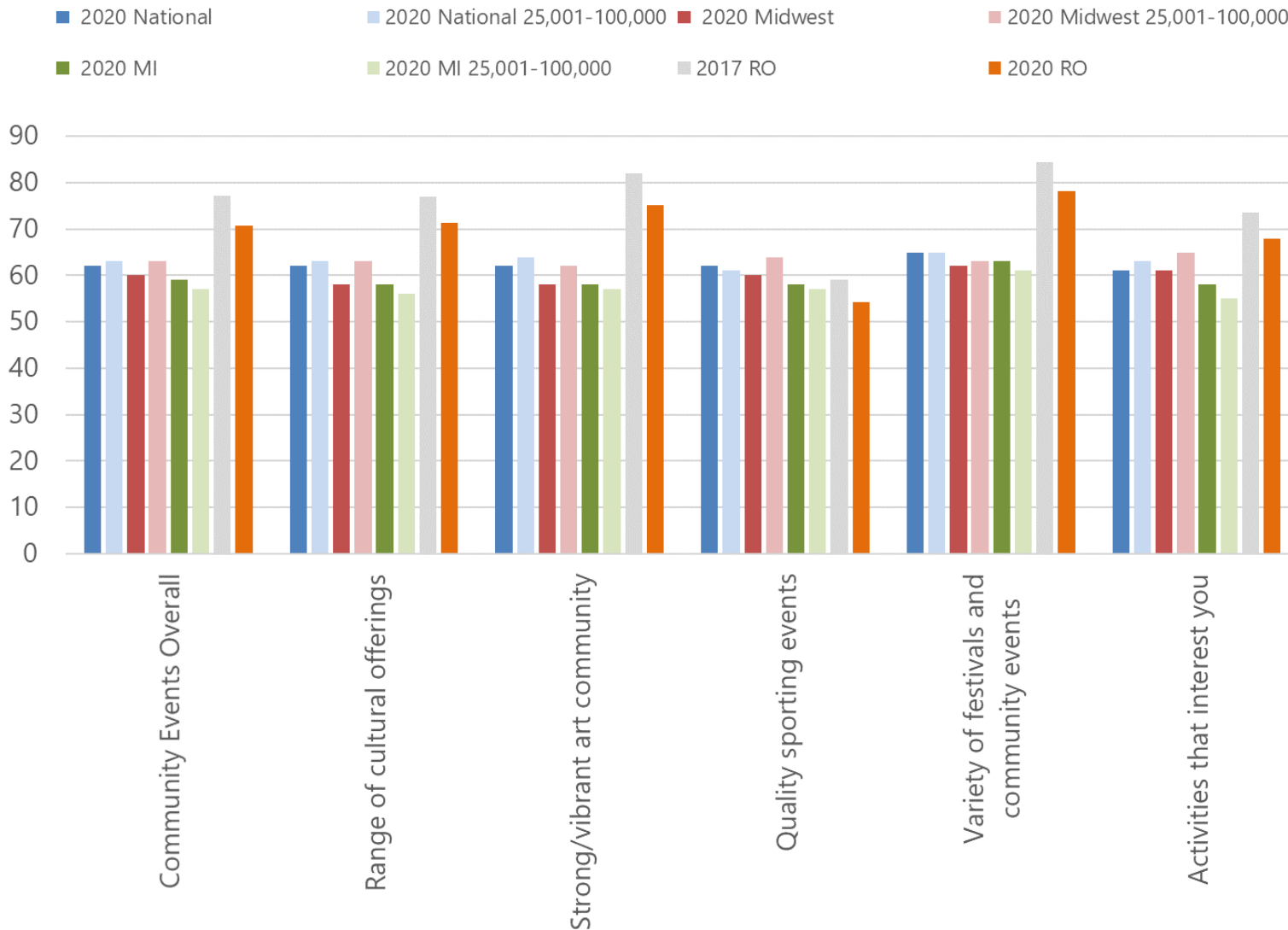
Driver

Customer Service

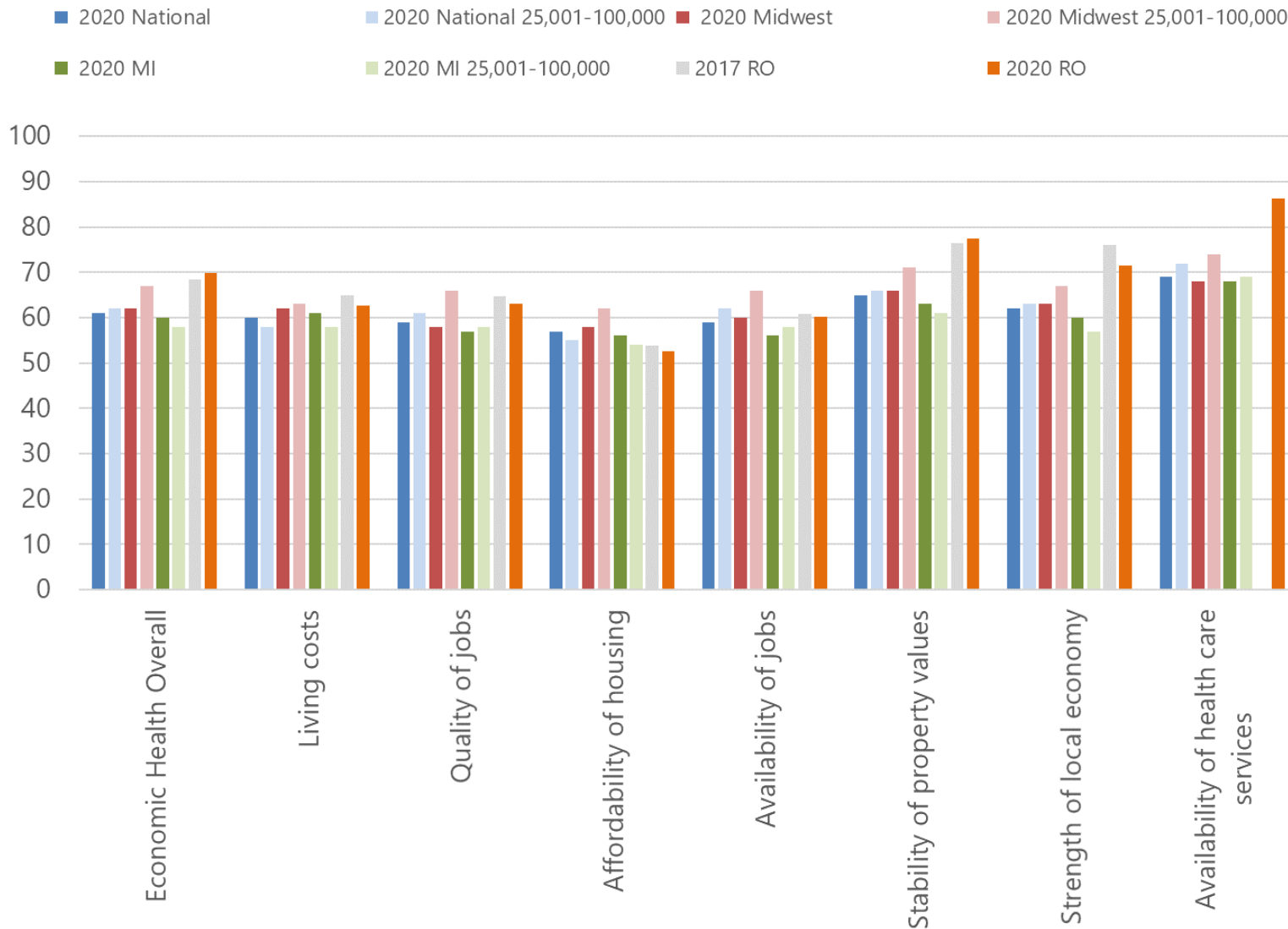


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Events

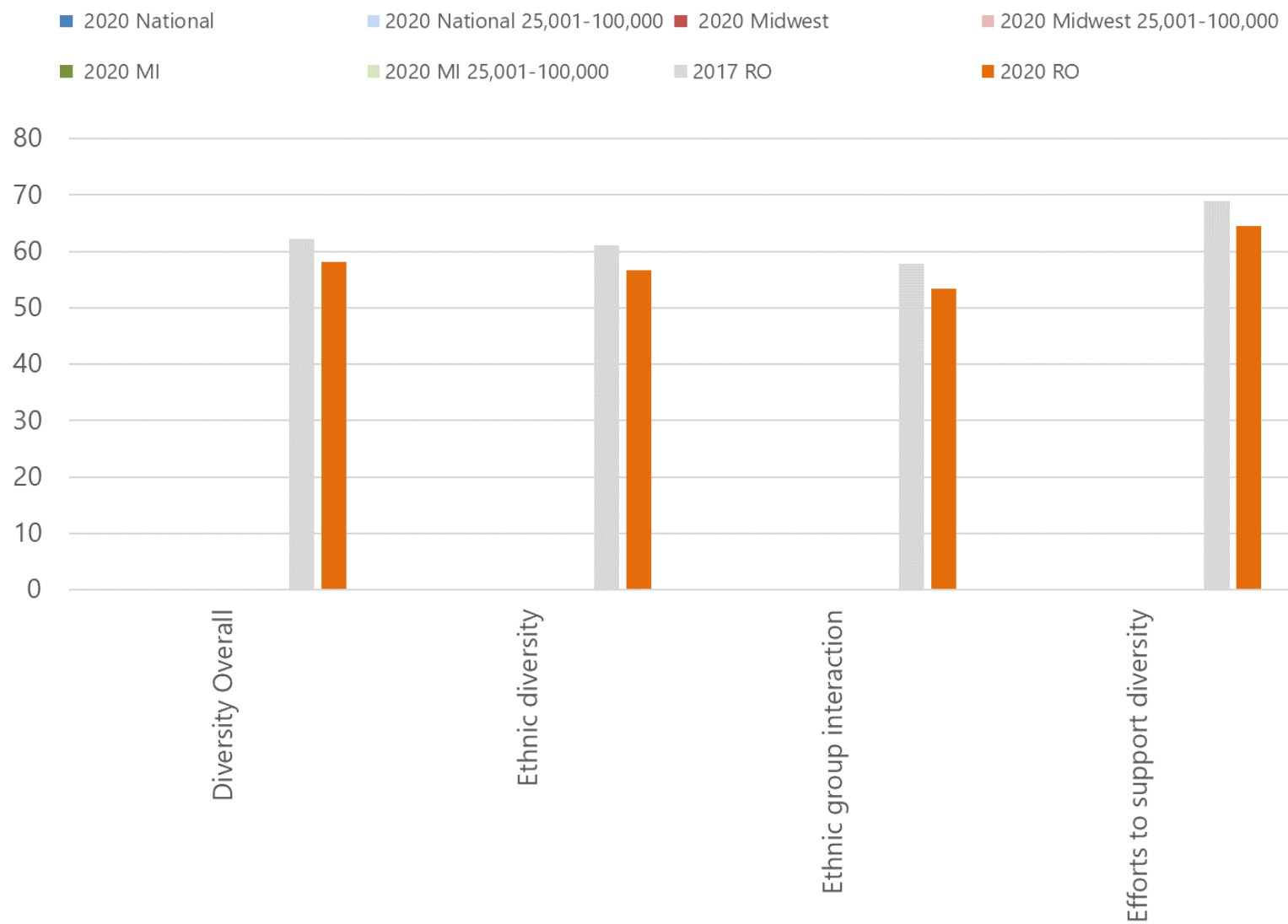


Economic Health

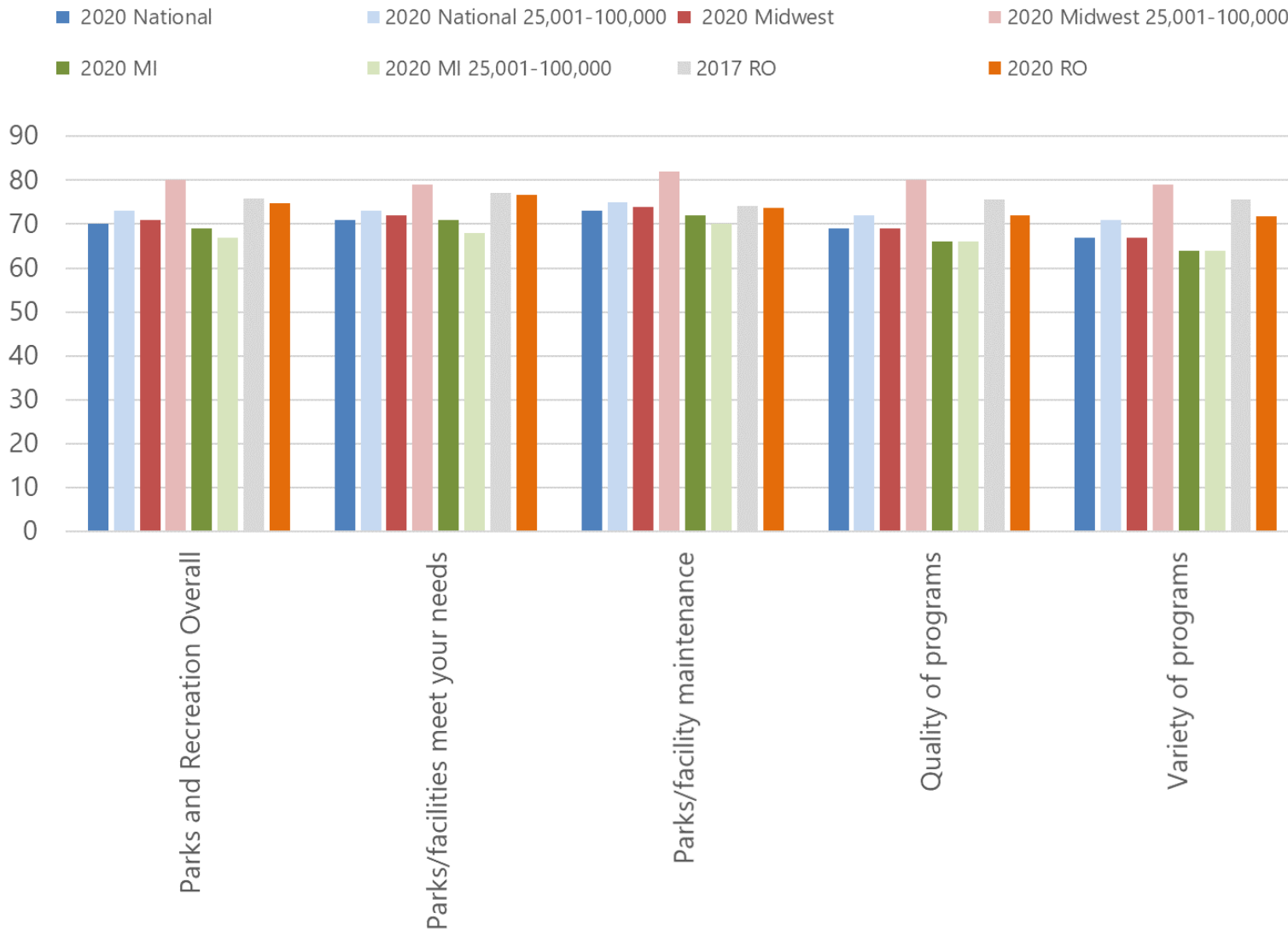


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Diversity

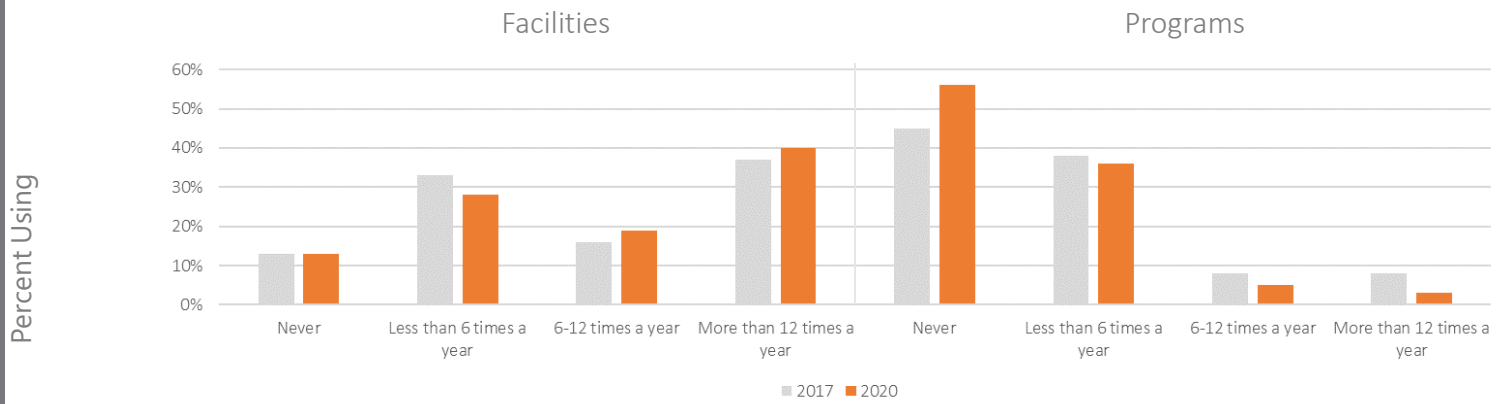
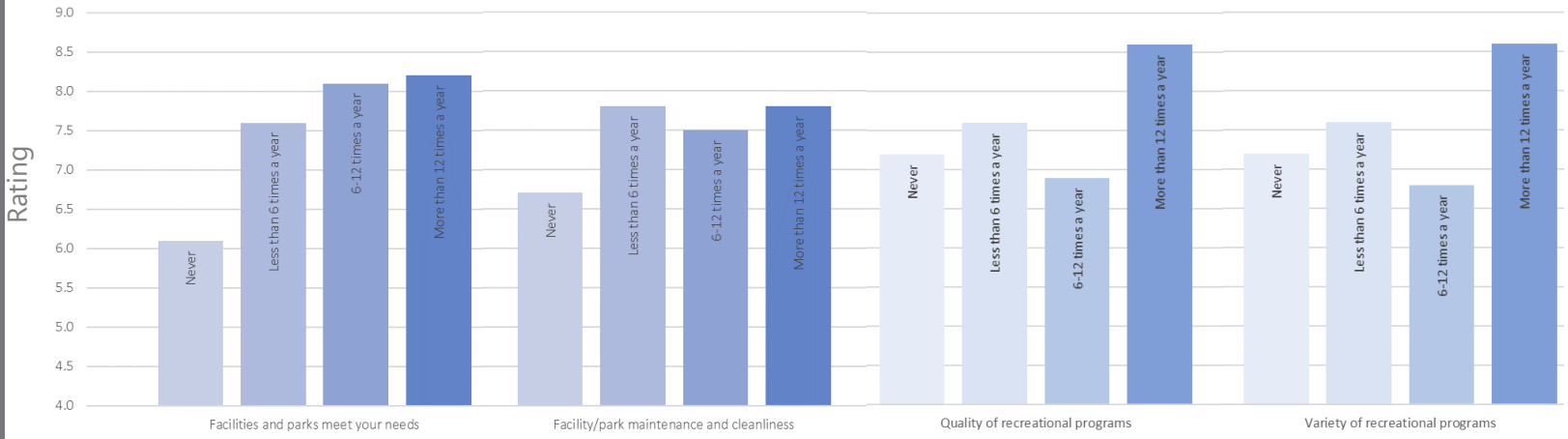


Parks and Recreation

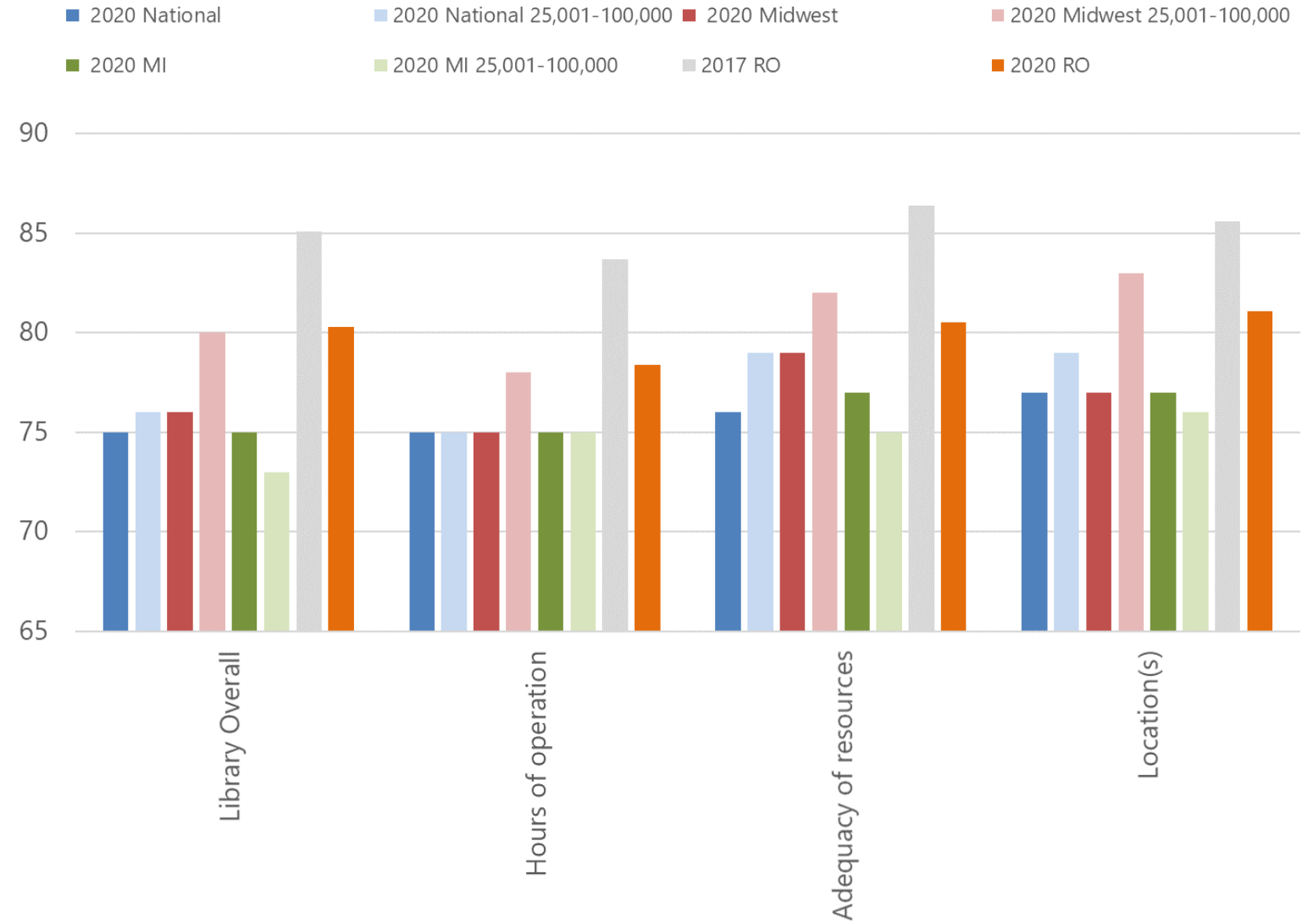


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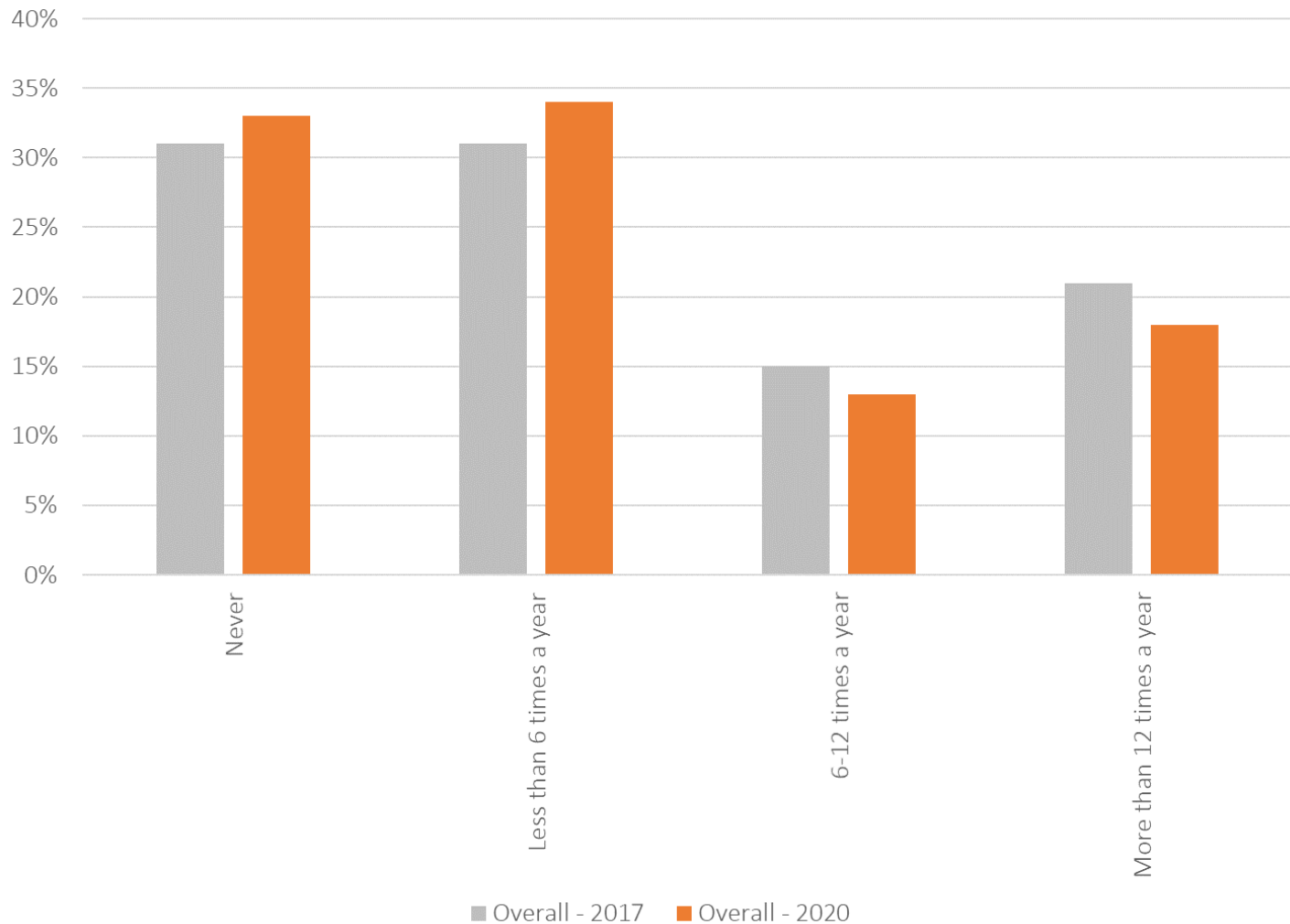
Parks and Rec Ratings by Use



Library

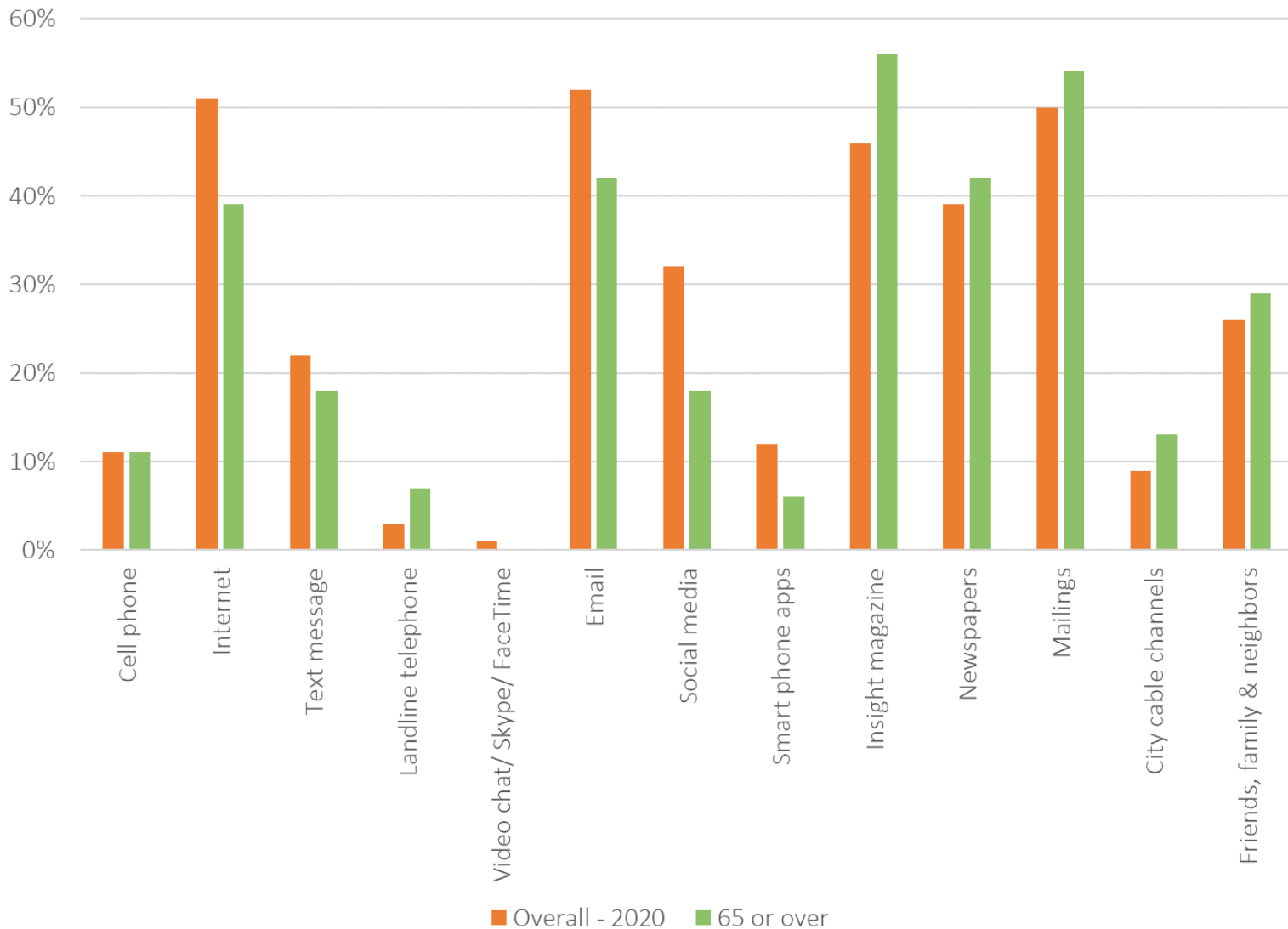


Library Use



Communication Preferences

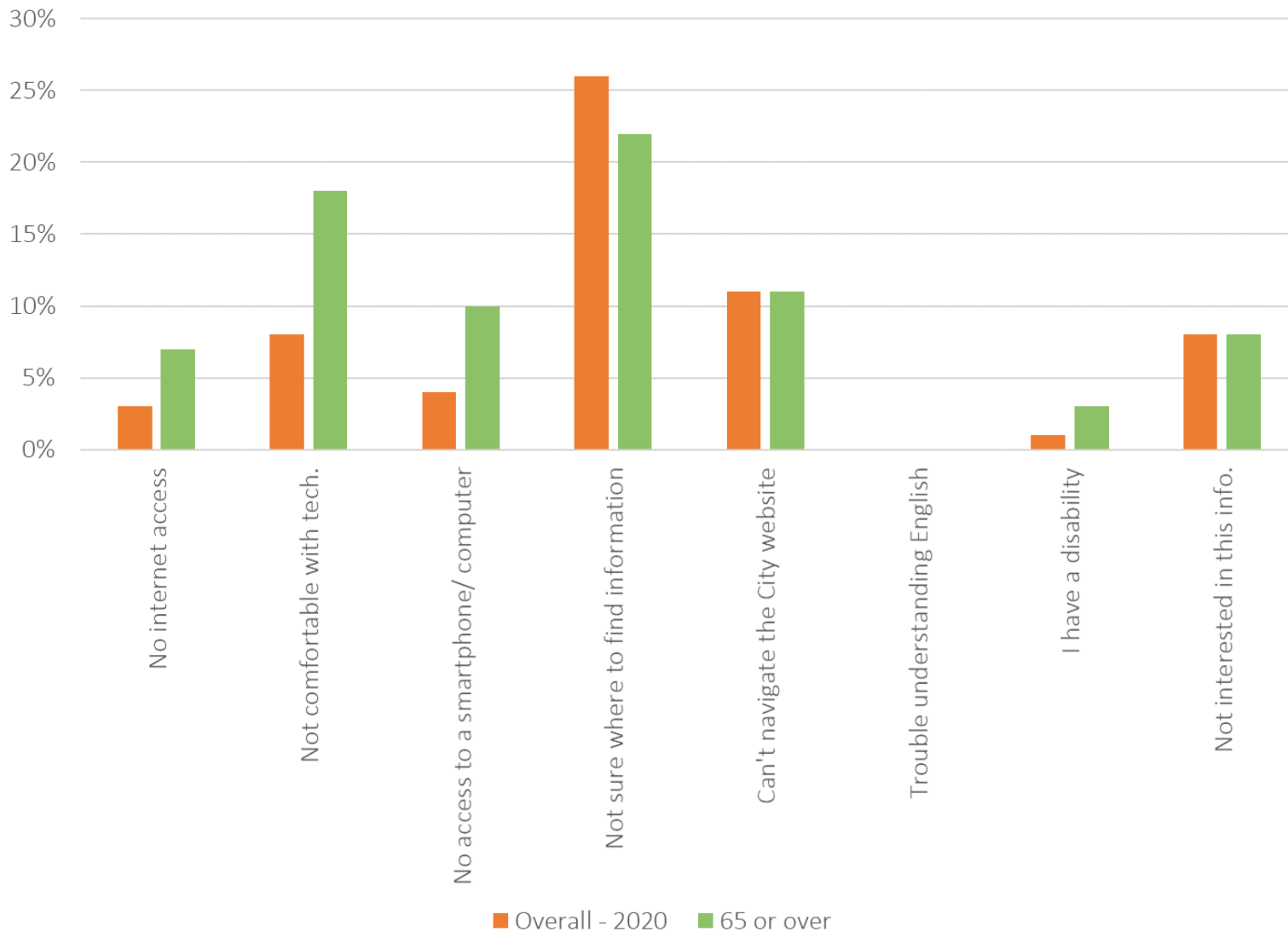
Preferred Source of Information



Preferred Source of Information by Age

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Information Barriers



COVID-19 and Planning

- 1) **Vote** - many individuals utilized the absentee ballot pickup and drop box.
- 2) **Drop** - the drop box for many services such as: dog registration, permit applications, and bill drop off.
- 3) **Library** - The online/pick-up services of the library were noted



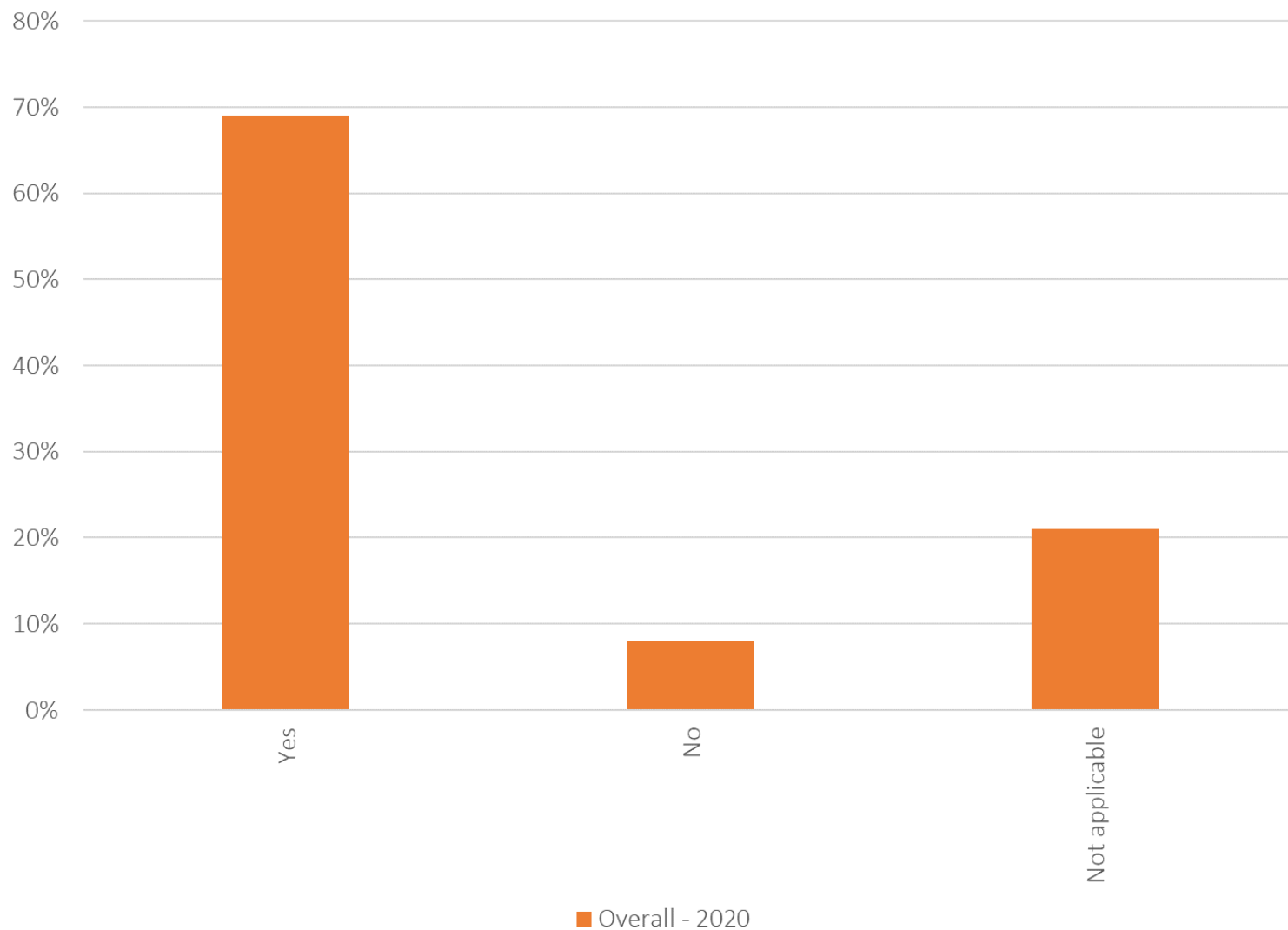
City Service Difficulty

Top Themes:

- 1) **Water** - Residents noted water quality/lead; some confusion with online bill pay.
- 2) **Call** – Resident calls were not returned.
- 3) **School** - Individuals were upset about no in-person schooling.



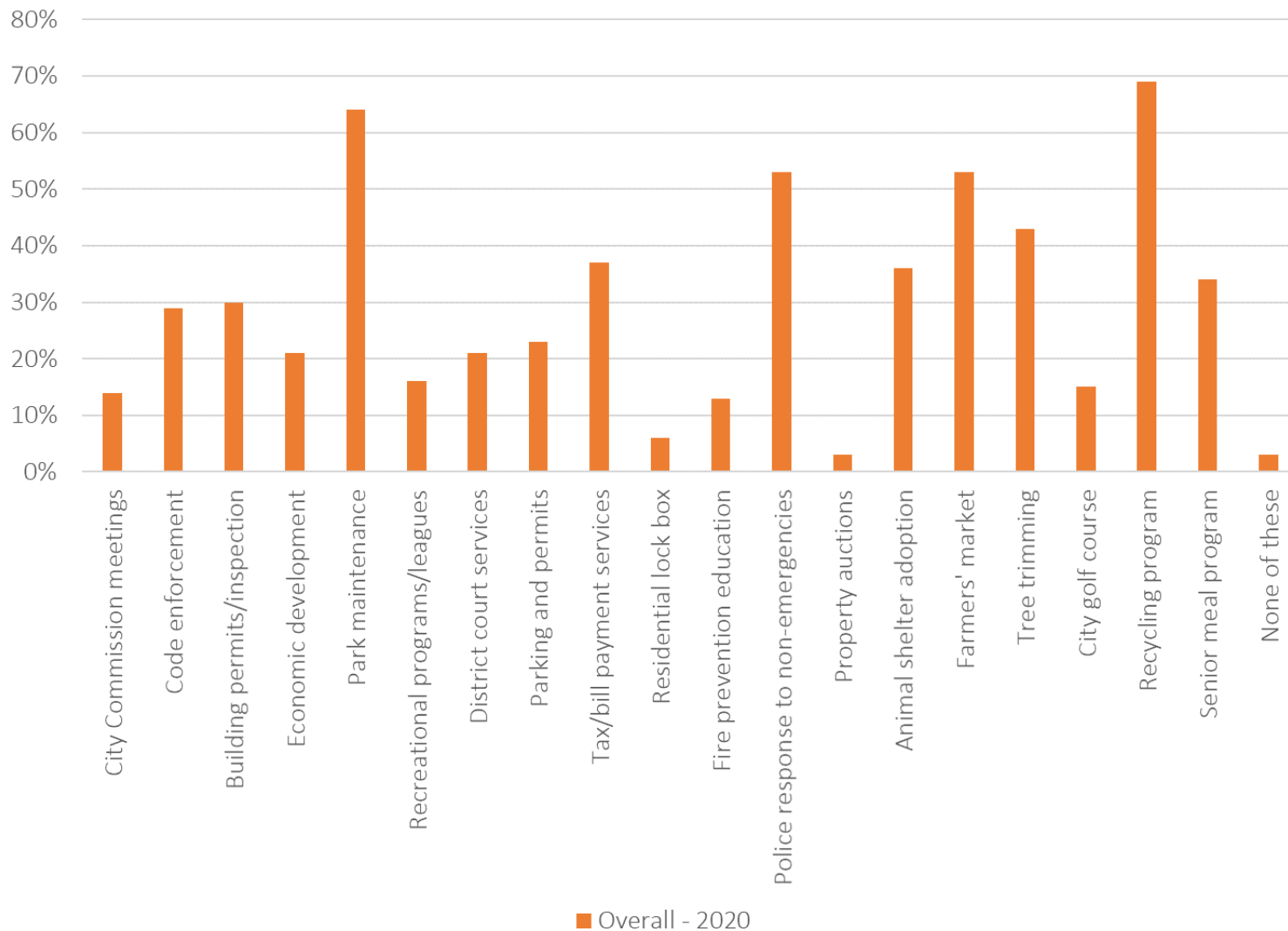
Did You Feel Safe Using City Parks



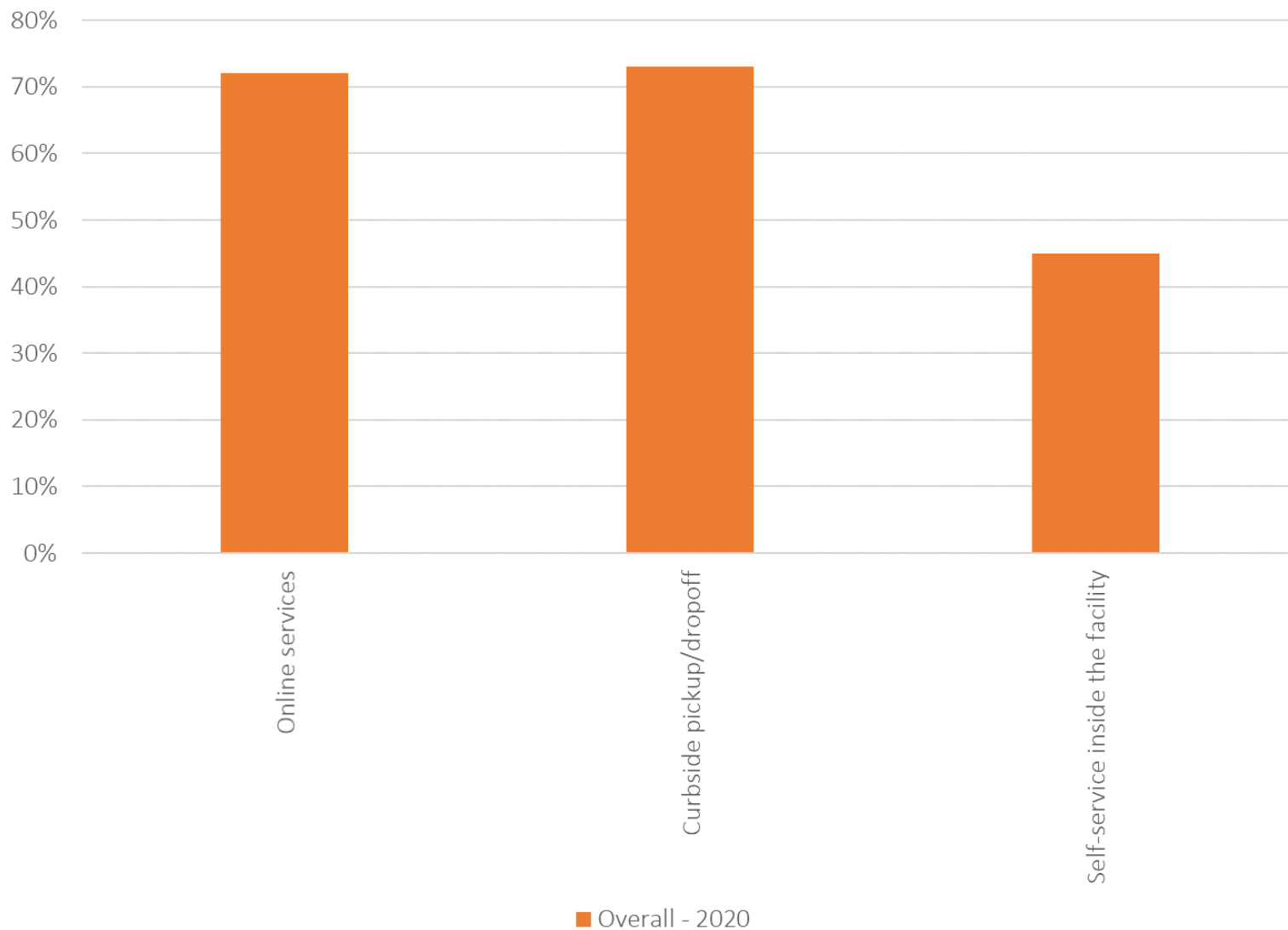
- 1) **Open** - Community members would love to see more information on what is open and what is closed; would like to see the senior center, library, and other City facilities open.
- 2) **Park** - People are looking for parks to have more access, maintenance.
- 3) **Service** - Community members noted more outbound information and improved phone service; more service hours.



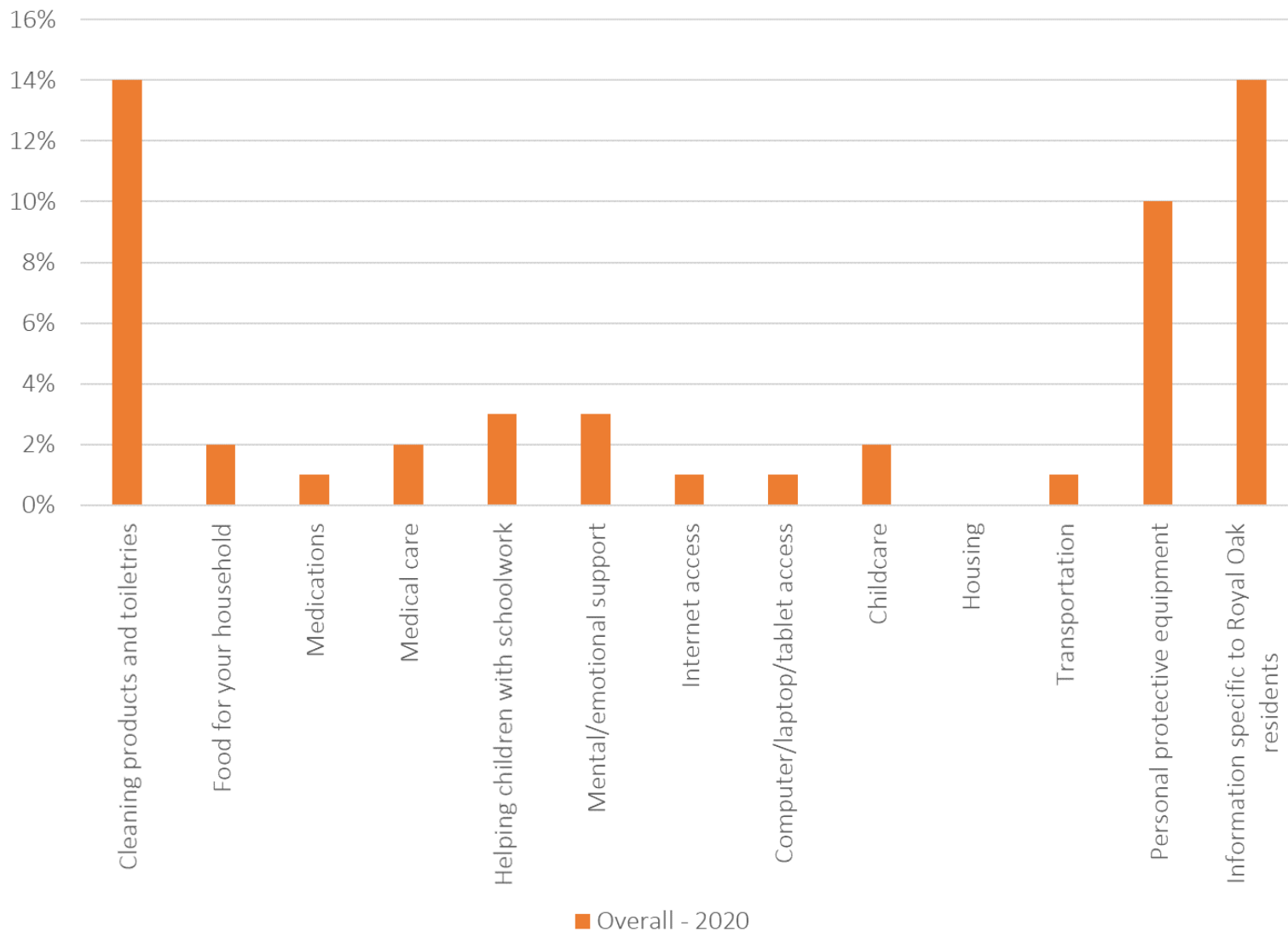
As the city prepares for future potential stay-at-home orders, which city services do you consider to be critical for you, your household, or your business?



Preferred Alternate Delivery Mode



What Were You Unable to Access?



Implementing Results

Perception v Reality: Minimize Distortion or Fix Real Performance Issues

Perception gap:

Respondents rated based on an inaccurate 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.

