

Dedham, MA

The National Community Survey

Report of Results
2025

Report by:



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About The NCS™

The National Community Survey™ (The NCS™) report is about the “livability” of Dedham. 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 NCS was developed by the experts from National Research Center at Polco in partnership with the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) and has been administered in hundreds of communities across the United States.

Great communities are partnerships of the government, private sector, community-based organizations and residents, all geographically connected. The NCS focuses on the livability of Dedham by categorizing survey questions into the ten main “facets” of community livability shown below, which have been identified through years of extensive survey research as those that are most impactful to residents’ quality of life.

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

The report provides the opinions of a representative sample of 496 residents of the Town of Dedham collected from August 28, 2025 to October 9, 2025. The margin of error around any reported percentage is 4% for all respondents. Survey results were weighted so that the demographic profile of respondents was representative of the demographic profile of adults in Dedham.



How the results are reported

For the most part, the percentages presented in this report represent the “percent positive.” Most commonly, the percent positive is the combination of the top two most positive response options (i.e., excellent/good, very safe/somewhat safe, etc.). On many of the questions in the survey, respondents may answer “don’t know.” The proportion of respondents giving a “don’t know” response is shown in the full set of responses included in the “complete data” section; however, these responses have been removed from the analyses presented in the main body of the report. In other words, the tables and graphs display the responses from respondents who had an opinion about a specific item.

Comparisons to benchmarks

NRC's database of comparative resident opinion is comprised of resident perspectives gathered in surveys from over 500 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, Dedham'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 Dedham residents is statistically similar to or different (greater or lesser) than the benchmark. Being rated as "higher" or "lower" than the benchmark means that Dedham's 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 Dedham's average rating was more than 20 points different when compared to the benchmark.

Methods

Selecting survey recipients

All households within the Town of Dedham were eligible to participate in the survey. A list of all households within the zip codes serving Dedham was purchased from NRC's mailing vendor, Go-Dog Direct, based on updated listings from the United States Postal Service. Since some of the zip codes that serve the Town of Dedham households may also serve addresses that lie outside of the community, the exact geographic location of each housing unit was compared to community boundaries using the most current municipal boundary file. Addresses located outside of Dedham boundaries were removed from the list of potential households to survey. From that list, addresses were randomly selected as survey recipients, with multi-family housing units (defined as those with a unit number) sampled at a rate of 5:3 compared to single family housing units.

Conducting the survey

The 3,000 randomly selected households received mailings beginning on August 28, 2025 and data collection for the survey remained open for 6 weeks. The first mailing was a postcard inviting the household to participate in the survey. The next mailing contained a cover letter with instructions, the survey questionnaire, and a postage-paid return envelope. All mailings included a web link to give residents the opportunity to respond to the survey online, as well as QR codes to further encourage participation. All follow-up mailings asked those who had not completed the survey to do so, and those who had already done so to refrain from completing the survey again.

About 2% of the 2,936 mailed invitations or surveys were returned because the household address was vacant or the postal service was unable to deliver the survey as addressed. Of the remaining 2,936 households that received the invitations to participate, 496 completed the survey, providing an overall response rate of 17%. The response rate was calculated using AAPOR's response rate #2 for mailed surveys of unnamed persons.¹

It is customary to describe the precision of estimates made from surveys by a "level of confidence" and accompanying "confidence interval" (or margin of error). A traditional level of confidence, and the one used here, is 95%. The 95% confidence interval can be any size and quantifies the sampling error or imprecision of the survey results because some residents' opinions are relied on to estimate all residents' opinions. The margin of error for the Town of Dedham survey is no greater than plus or minus 4 percentage points around any given percent reported for all respondents (496 completed surveys).

In addition to the randomly selected "probability sample" of households, a link to an online open-participation survey was publicized by the Town of Dedham. The open-participation survey was identical to the random sample survey, with two small updates; it asked a question to confirm the respondent was a resident of Dedham and also a question about where they heard about the survey. The open-participation survey was open to all town residents and became available on September 25, 2025. The survey remained open for 2 weeks. The data presented in the following tabs exclude the open participation survey data, but a tab at the end provides the complete frequency of responses to questions by the open-participation respondents.

Analyzing the data

Responses from mailed surveys were entered into an electronic dataset using a “key and verify” method, where all responses are entered twice and compared to each other. Any discrepancies were resolved in comparison to the original survey form. Range checks as well as other forms of quality control were also performed. Responses from surveys completed on Polco were downloaded and merged with the mailed survey responses.

The demographics of the survey respondents were compared to those found in the 2020 Census and 2023 American Community Survey estimates for adults in the Town of Dedham. 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 were age, sex, race, Hispanic origin, housing type, housing tenure, and area. No adjustments were made for design effects. Weights were calculated using an iterative, multiplicative raking model known as the ANES Weighting Algorithm.² The results of the weighting scheme for the probability sample are presented in the following table.

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.

		Unweighted	Weighted	Target ⁴
Age	18-34	5%	20%	24%
	35-54	31%	35%	33%
	55+	63%	45%	43%
Hispanic origin	No, not of Hispanic, Latino/a/x, or Spanish origin	97%	93%	93%
	Yes, I consider myself to be of Hispanic, Latino/a/x, or Spanish origin	3%	7%	7%
Housing tenure	Own	89%	73%	73%
	Rent	11%	27%	27%
Housing type	Attached	18%	34%	34%
	Detached	82%	66%	66%
Race & Hispanic ori..	Not white alone	13%	20%	19%
	White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	87%	80%	81%
Sex	Man	40%	46%	49%
	Woman	60%	54%	51%
Sex/age	Man 18-34	2%	9%	13%
	Man 35-54	13%	17%	17%
	Man 55+	25%	20%	19%
	Woman 18-34	4%	11%	11%
	Woman 35-54	18%	17%	17%
	Woman 55+	38%	25%	24%

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.” The proportion of respondents giving this reply is shown in the full set of responses included in the “complete data” section. 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.

Contact

The Town of Dedham funded this research. Please contact Brady Winsten of the Town of Dedham at BWinsten@dedhamma.gov if you have any questions about the survey.

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, and can include non-response error, coverage error, recall bias and social desirability bias. 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 survey responders. For general resident surveys, where the results are meant to be generalized to the entire adult population living in households, the mailing lists based on the Delivery Sequence File from the United States Post Office may exclude certain types of housing units, such as those in multi-family buildings where mail is addressed to a named resident at the address rather than to a specific unit or where residents only receive their mail at a post office box and the geographic location of a residence cannot be determined, there may be a coverage error, although for most locations, this is minimal. Respondents may not perfectly remember their experiences in the past year (such as participation in social or civic events, for example), and for some survey items, they may answer in ways they think cast their responses in a more favorable light (recall bias and social desirability bias).

Survey Validity

See the Polco Knowledge Base article on survey validity at <https://blog.polco.us/polco-knowledgebase/margin-of-error-and-confidence-level-in-survey-results>

1. See AAPOR’s Standard Definitions for more information at <https://aapor.org/standards-and-ethics/standard-definitions/>
2. Pasek, J. (2014). ANES Weighting Algorithm. Retrieved from <https://surveyinsights.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Full-anesrake-paper.pdf>
3. Targets come from the 2020 Census and 2023 American Community Survey

Key Findings

Community Strengths

Residents enjoy a high quality of life

- About 9 in 10 residents rated Dedham as a place to live positively, and roughly 8 in 10 were pleased with the overall quality of life.
- Roughly 8 in 10 community members said they were likely to remain in Dedham for the next five years and would recommend living in the Town to someone who asks.
- The Town as a place to raise children also earned favorable marks (77% excellent or good).

Residents praise Dedham's business environment

- About 9 in 10 respondents positively rated the overall quality of business and service establishments, a result above the national average.
- Shopping opportunities (84%), the variety of businesses and service establishments (81%), and the vibrancy of the downtown/commercial area (77%) all scored above benchmark comparisons.
- About 7 in 10 residents positively viewed Dedham as a good place to work.

A strong sense of safety defines the community

- Nearly all residents reported feeling safe in their neighborhoods, and about 9 in 10 felt safe in the downtown area during the day.
- About 9 in 10 community members also felt well protected from violent and property crime as well as from fire, flood, and other natural disasters.
- Fire services (93%) and ambulance or emergency medical services (90%) received among the highest ratings in safety-related services.

Many residents feel welcome and engaged

- About 7 in 10 respondents said Dedham makes all residents feel welcome.
- Roughly two-thirds gave positive marks to opportunities to volunteer (66%) and participate in community matters (66%).
- A similar share (66%) positively rated the neighborliness of residents.

Focus Areas

Mobility could be improved

- About 4 in 10 residents offered less than positive ratings for the ease of travel by bicycle.
- Roughly 3 in 10 rated public transportation and traffic flow on major streets less favorably, with traffic flow falling below the national average.
- Street repair and the overall quality of the transportation system also drew lower marks from about 4 in 10 respondents.

Recreation and environmental services show room for growth

- About 6 in 10 residents gave favorable marks to the overall quality of parks and recreation opportunities, but results were below national averages.
- Just over half (51%) were satisfied with the availability of walking and biking trails.
- Yard waste pick-up (45%) and water resources (37%) received the lowest ratings within this facet.

Education and enrichment opportunities rated modestly

- The availability of affordable quality childcare/preschool (31%) and adult educational opportunities (41%) received the lowest scores in this area.
- K–12 education (48%) was rated below the national benchmark.

Other Notable Results

- About 6 in 10 residents felt they paid too much for the services they receive.
- When informed that services may need to be reduced without new funding, about 6 in 10 community members expressed willingness to increase taxes toward maintenance of town and school facilities (58%), school services (57%), and road maintenance (57%). While about half preferred reducing services on the construction of town facilities (49%).
- When asked about the Town's budget and the 2.5% property tax cap, residents strongly or somewhat supported the Town proposing a property tax override to maintain School Department services at current levels.

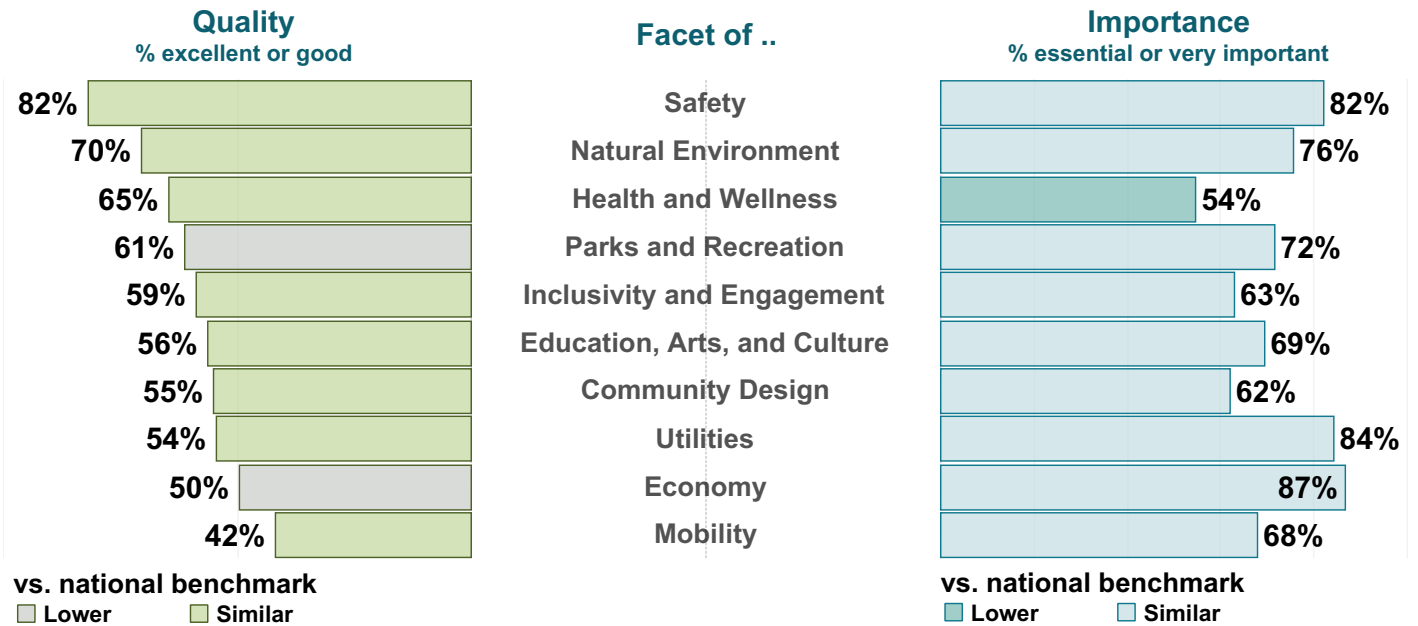
Facets of Livability



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.

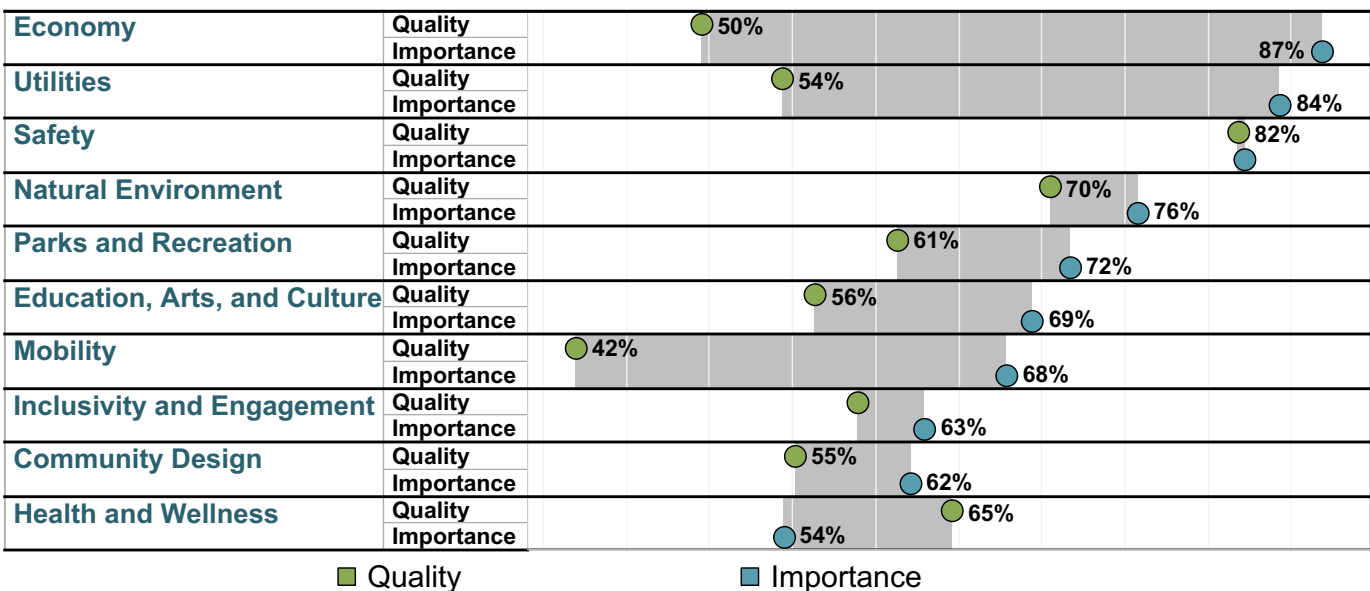
Quality and Importance by the Numbers

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).



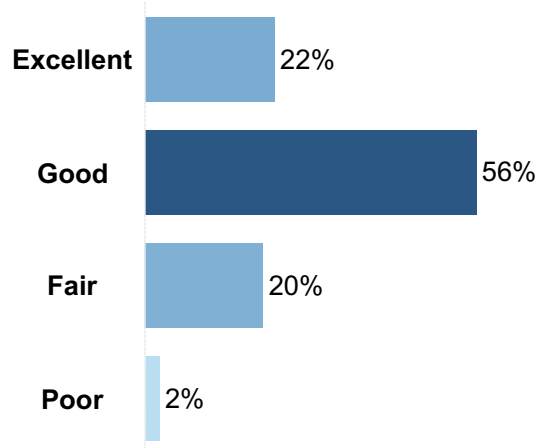
Quality/Importance Gap Analysis

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.





The overall quality of life in Dedham, 2025



Quality of Life

Measuring community livability starts with assessing the quality of life of those who live there, and ensuring that the community is attractive, accessible, and welcoming to all.

Please rate each of the following aspects of quality of life in Dedham.
(% excellent or good)

vs.national benchmark⁷

Dedham as a place to live	85%	Similar
The overall quality of life in Dedham	78%	Similar

Please indicate how likely or unlikely you are to do each of the following.
(% yes)

Remain in Dedham for the next five years	84%	Similar
Recommend living in Dedham to someone who asks	83%	Similar

Please rate each of the following in the Dedham community.
(% excellent or good)

Overall image or reputation of Dedham	62%	Similar
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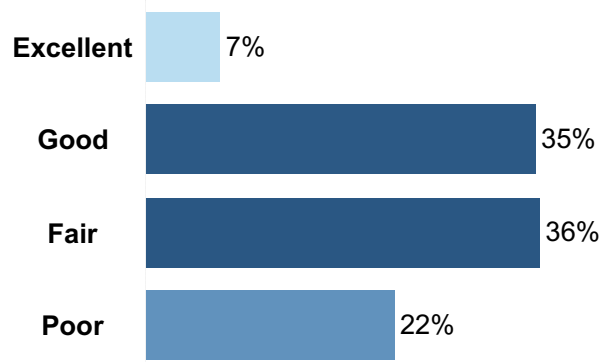
7. Comparison to the national benchmark is shown. If no comparison is available, this is left blank.



Governance

Strong local governments produce results that meet the needs of residents while making the best use of available resources, and are responsive to the present and future needs of the community as a whole.

Overall confidence in Dedham government, 2025



Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Dedham. (% excellent or good)

Service	Percentage	vs. national benchmark ^a
Overall customer service by Dedham employees (police, receptionists, planners, etc.)	77%	Similar
Public information services	64%	Similar

Please rate the following categories of Dedham government performance. (% excellent or good)

Treating residents with respect	69%	Similar
Treating all residents fairly	57%	Similar
Being honest	55%	Similar
The job Dedham government does at welcoming resident involvement	55%	Similar
Being open and transparent to the public	53%	Similar
Generally acting in the best interest of the community	49%	Similar
Informing residents about issues facing the community	49%	Similar
The overall direction that Dedham is taking	48%	Similar
Overall confidence in Dedham government	42%	Similar
The value of services for the taxes paid to Dedham	41%	Similar

Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by each of the following? (% excellent or good)

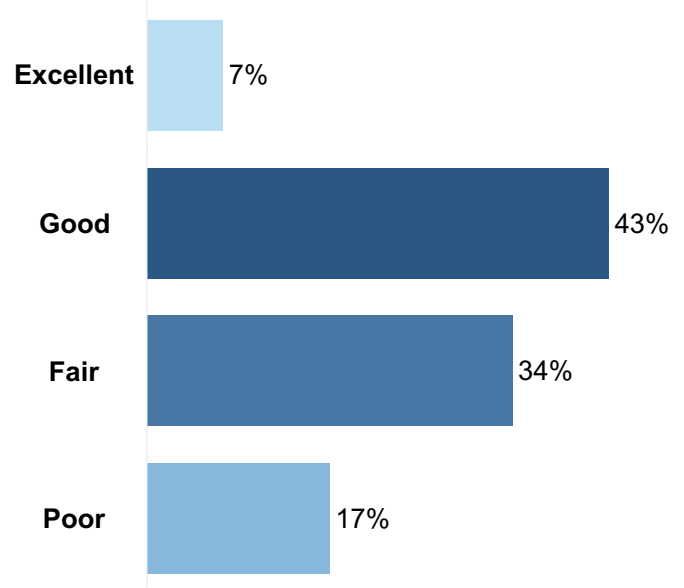
The Town of Dedham	63%	Similar
The Federal Government	31%	Similar

Please indicate whether or not you have done each of the following in the last 12 months.
 (% yes)

Contacted the Town of Dedham (in-person, phone, email, or web) for help or information	63%	Higher
Watched (online or on television) a local public meeting	34%	Similar
Attended a local public meeting (of local elected officials like Select Board, School Committee, Finance and Warrant Committee, Planning Board, Town Meeting, etc.)	26%	Similar
Contacted Dedham elected officials (in-person, phone, email, or web) to express your opinion	22%	Similar

8. Comparison to the national benchmark is shown. If no comparison is available, this is left blank.

Overall economic health of Dedham, 2025



Economy

Local governments work together with private and nonprofit businesses, and with the community at large, to foster sustainable growth, create jobs, and promote a thriving local economy.

Please rate each of the following aspects of quality of life in Dedham.
(% excellent or good)

		vs. benchmark ⁹
Dedham as a place to work	73%	Similar
Dedham as a place to visit	67%	Similar

Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Dedham as a whole.
(% excellent or good)

Overall economic health of Dedham	50%	Lower
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Please rate each of the following in the Dedham community.
(% excellent or good)

Overall quality of business and service establishments in Dedham	85%	Higher
Shopping opportunities	84%	Much higher
Variety of business and service establishments in Dedham	81%	Higher
Vibrancy of downtown/commercial area	77%	Higher
Employment opportunities	54%	Similar
Cost of living in Dedham	33%	Similar

Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Dedham.
(% excellent or good)

Economic development

A horizontal bar chart with a teal bar representing 57%.

Similar

What impact, if any, do you think the economy will have on your family income in the next 6 months? Do you think the impact will be:
(% very or somewhat positive)

What impact, if any, do you think the economy will have on your family income in the next 6 months? Do you think the impact will be:

A horizontal bar chart with a teal bar representing 15%.

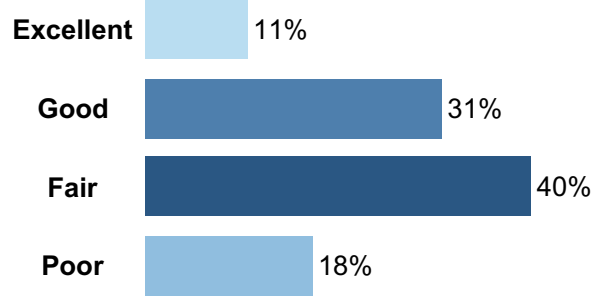
Similar

9. Comparison to the national benchmark is shown. If no comparison is available, this is left blank.

Overall quality of the transportation system in Dedham, 2025

Mobility

The ease with which residents can move about their communities, whether for commuting, leisure, or recreation, plays a major role in the quality of life for all who live, work, and play in the community.



Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Dedham as a whole. (% excellent or good)

		vs. benchmark ¹⁰
Overall quality of the transportation system (auto, bicycle, foot, bus) in Dedham	42%	Similar

Please also rate each of the following in the Dedham community. (% excellent or good)

Ease of public parking	56%	Similar
Ease of travel by car in Dedham	56%	Similar
Ease of walking in Dedham	54%	Similar
Ease of travel by bicycle in Dedham	35%	Similar
Ease of travel by public transportation in Dedham	34%	Similar
Traffic flow on major streets	31%	Lower

Please indicate whether or not you have done each of the following in the last 12 months. (% yes)

Walked or biked instead of driving	60%	Similar
Used bus, rail, subway, or other public transportation instead of driving	43%	Much higher
Carpooled with other adults or children instead of driving alone	39%	Similar

Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Dedham. (% excellent or good)

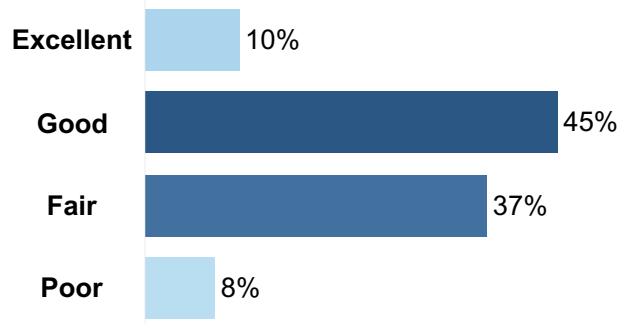
Snow removal	72%	Similar
Street lighting	67%	Similar
Street cleaning	59%	Similar
Traffic enforcement	56%	Similar
Traffic signal timing	49%	Similar
Bus or transit services	47%	Similar
Sidewalk maintenance	45%	Similar
Street repair	38%	Similar

10. Comparison to the national benchmark is shown. If no comparison is available, this is left blank.

Community Design

A well-designed community enhances the quality of life for its residents by encouraging smart land use and zoning, ensuring that affordable housing is accessible to all, and providing access to parks and other green spaces.

Overall design or layout of Dedham's residential and commercial areas, 2025



Please rate each of the following aspects of quality of life in Dedham. (% excellent or good)

		vs. benchmark ¹¹
Your neighborhood as a place to live	84%	Similar

Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Dedham as a whole. (% excellent or good)

Overall design or layout of Dedham's residential and commercial areas (e.g., homes, buildings, streets, parks, etc.)	55%	Similar
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Please also rate each of the following in the Dedham community. (% excellent or good)

Preservation of the historical or cultural character of the community	74%	Similar
Overall appearance of Dedham	69%	Similar
Public places where people want to spend time	61%	Similar
Well-designed neighborhoods	54%	Similar
Variety of housing options	48%	Similar
Overall quality of new development in Dedham	45%	Similar
Well-planned commercial growth	44%	Similar
Well-planned residential growth	38%	Similar
Availability of affordable quality housing	21%	Similar

Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Dedham. (% excellent or good)

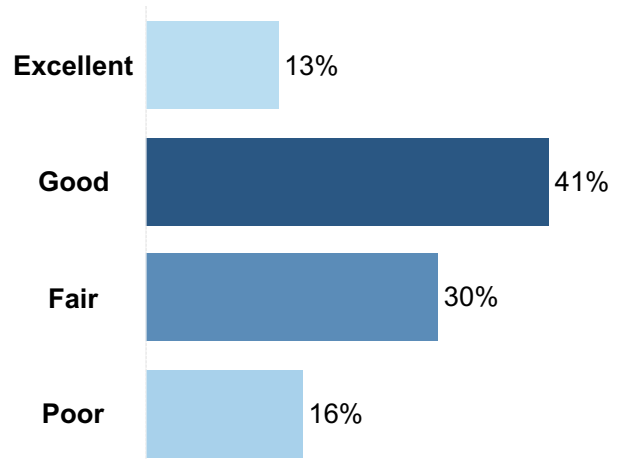
Land use, planning, and zoning	40%	Similar
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc.)	31%	Similar

11. Comparison to the national benchmark is shown. If no comparison is available, this is left blank.

Utilities

Services such as water, gas, electricity, and internet access play a vital role in ensuring the physical and economic health and well-being of the communities they serve.

Overall quality of the utility infrastructure in Dedham, 2025



Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Dedham.
(% excellent or good)

		vs. benchmark ¹²
Garbage collection	71%	Similar
Sewer services	70%	Similar
Affordable high-speed internet access	69%	Higher
Power (electric and/or gas) utility	67%	Similar
Storm water management (storm drainage, dams, levees, etc.)	66%	Similar
Drinking water	53%	Lower
Utility billing	51%	Lower

Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Dedham as a whole.
(% excellent or good)

Overall quality of the utility infrastructure in Dedham (water, sewer, storm water, electric/gas, broadband)	54%	Similar
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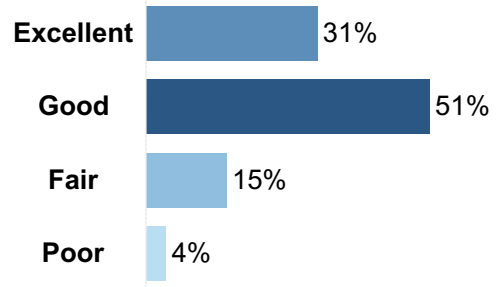
12. Comparison to the national benchmark is shown. If no comparison is available, this is left blank.



Safety

Public safety is often the most important task facing local governments. All residents should feel safe and secure in their neighborhoods and in the greater community, and providing robust safety-related services is essential to residents' quality of life.

Overall feeling of safety in Dedham, 2025



Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Dedham as a whole.
(% excellent or good)

vs.
benchmark¹³

Overall feeling of safety in Dedham	82%	Similar
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Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel:
(% very or somewhat safe)

In your neighborhood during the day	95%	Similar
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In Dedham's downtown/commercial area during the day	93%	Similar
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From violent crime	91%	Similar
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From fire, flood, or other natural disaster	90%	Similar
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From property crime	85%	Similar
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Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Dedham.
(% excellent or good)

Fire services	93%	Similar
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Ambulance or emergency medical services	90%	Similar
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Fire prevention and education	82%	Similar
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Crime prevention	81%	Similar
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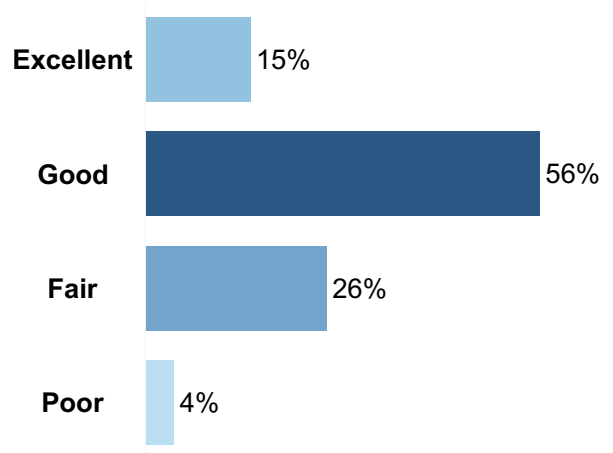
Animal control	80%	Similar
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Police services	79%	Similar
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Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations)	64%	Similar
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13. Comparison to the national benchmark is shown. If no comparison is available, this is left blank.

Overall quality of natural environment in Dedham, 2025



Natural Environment

The natural environment plays a vital role in the health and well-being of residents. The natural spaces in which residents live and experience their communities has a direct and profound effect on quality of life.

Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Dedham as a whole.
(% excellent or good)

vs. benchmark¹⁴

Overall quality of natural environment in Dedham	70%	Similar
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Please also rate each of the following in the Dedham community.
(% excellent or good)

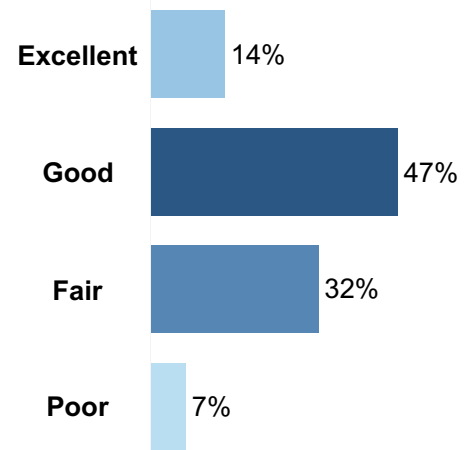
Air quality	79%	Similar
Cleanliness of Dedham	67%	Similar
Water resources (beaches, lakes, ponds, riverways, etc.)	37%	Lower

Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Dedham.
(% excellent or good)

Recycling	68%	Similar
Preservation of natural areas (open space, farmlands, and greenbelts)	59%	Similar
Dedham open space	56%	Similar
Yard waste pick-up	45%	Lower

14. Comparison to the national benchmark is shown. If no comparison is available, this is left blank.

Overall quality of the parks and recreation opportunities, 2025



Parks and Recreation

"There are no communities that pride themselves on their quality of life, promote themselves as a desirable location for businesses to relocate, or maintain that they are environmental stewards of their natural resources, without such communities having a robust, active system of parks and recreation programs for public use and enjoyment."

- National Recreation and Park Association

Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Dedham as a whole.
(% excellent or good)

		vs. benchmark ¹⁵
Overall quality of parks and recreation opportunities	61%	Lower

Please also rate each of the following in the Dedham community.
(% excellent or good)

Recreational opportunities	61%	Similar
Fitness opportunities (including exercise classes and paths or trails, etc.)	54%	Similar
Availability of paths and walking trails	51%	Lower

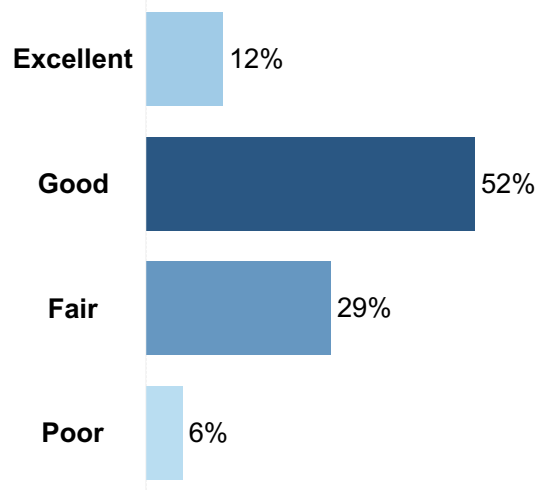
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Dedham.
(% excellent or good)

Town parks	65%	Similar
Recreation programs or classes	65%	Similar
Recreation centers or facilities	56%	Similar

¹⁵. Comparison to the national benchmark is shown. If no comparison is available, this is left blank.



Overall health and wellness opportunities in Dedham, 2025



Health and Wellness

The characteristics of and amenities available in the communities in which people live has a direct impact on the health and wellness of residents, and thus, on their quality of life overall.

Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Dedham as a whole.
(% excellent or good)

		vs. benchmark ¹⁶
Overall health and wellness opportunities in Dedham	65%	Similar

Please also rate each of the following in the Dedham community.
(% excellent or good)

Availability of affordable quality food	68%	Similar
Availability of preventive health services	66%	Similar
Availability of affordable quality health care	66%	Similar
Availability of affordable quality mental health care	54%	Similar

Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Dedham.
(% excellent or good)

Health services	66%	Similar
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Please rate your overall health.
(% excellent or very good)

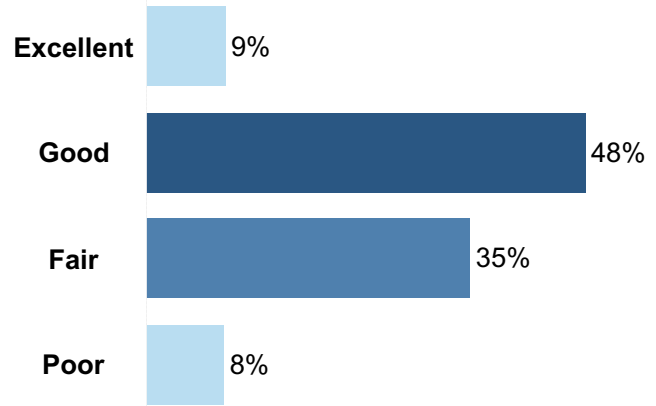
Please rate your overall health.	72%	Similar
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¹⁶ Comparison to the national benchmark is shown. If no comparison is available, this is left blank.

Overall opportunities for education, culture and the arts, 2025

Education, Arts, and Culture

Participation in the arts, in educational opportunities, and in cultural activities is linked to increased civic engagement, greater social tolerance, and enhanced enjoyment of the local community.



Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Dedham as a whole. (% excellent or good)

vs. benchmark¹⁷

Overall opportunities for education, culture, and the arts	56%	Similar
--	-----	---------

Please also rate each of the following in the Dedham community. (% excellent or good)

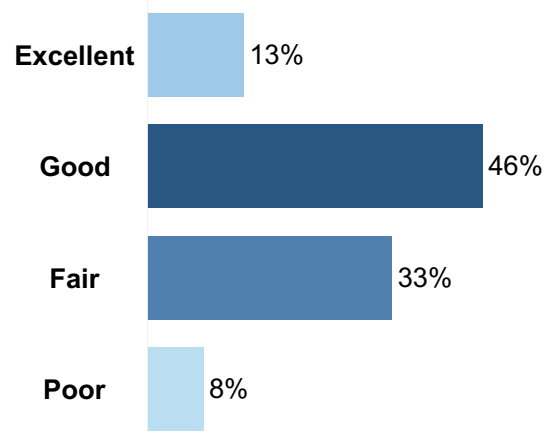
Opportunities to attend special events and festivals	65%	Similar
Community support for the arts	64%	Similar
Opportunities to attend cultural/arts/music activities	59%	Similar
K-12 education	48%	Lower
Adult educational opportunities	41%	Similar
Availability of affordable quality childcare/preschool	31%	Similar

Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Dedham. (% excellent or good)

Public library services	84%	Similar
-------------------------	-----	---------

17. Comparison to the national benchmark is shown. If no comparison is available, this is left blank.

Residents' connection and engagement with their community, 2025



Inclusivity and Engagement

Inclusivity refers to a cultural and environmental feeling of belonging; residents who feel invited to participate within their communities feel more included, involved, and engaged than those who do not.

Please rate each of the following aspects of quality of life in Dedham.
(% excellent or good)

		vs. benchmark ¹⁸
Dedham as a place to raise children	77%	Similar
Sense of community	67%	Similar
Dedham as a place to retire	54%	Similar

Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Dedham as a whole.
(% excellent or good)

Residents' connection and engagement with their community	59%	Similar
---	-----	---------

Please rate the job you feel the Dedham community does at each of the following.
(% excellent or good)

Making all residents feel welcome	70%	Similar
Valuing/respecting residents from diverse backgrounds	65%	Similar
Attracting people from diverse backgrounds	62%	Similar
Taking care of vulnerable residents (elderly, disabled, homeless, etc.)	51%	Similar

Please also rate each of the following in the Dedham community.
(% excellent or good)

Opportunities to volunteer	66%	Similar
Opportunities to participate in community matters	66%	Similar

Neighborliness of residents in Dedham	66%	Similar
Sense of civic/community pride	60%	Similar
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	60%	Similar
Openness and acceptance of the community toward people of diverse backgrounds	55%	Similar

Please indicate whether or not you have done each of the following in the last 12 months.
 (% yes)

Volunteered your time to some group/activity in Dedham	33%	Similar
Campaigned or advocated for a local issue, cause, or candidate	25%	Similar























18. Comparison to the national benchmark is shown. If no comparison is available, this is left blank.

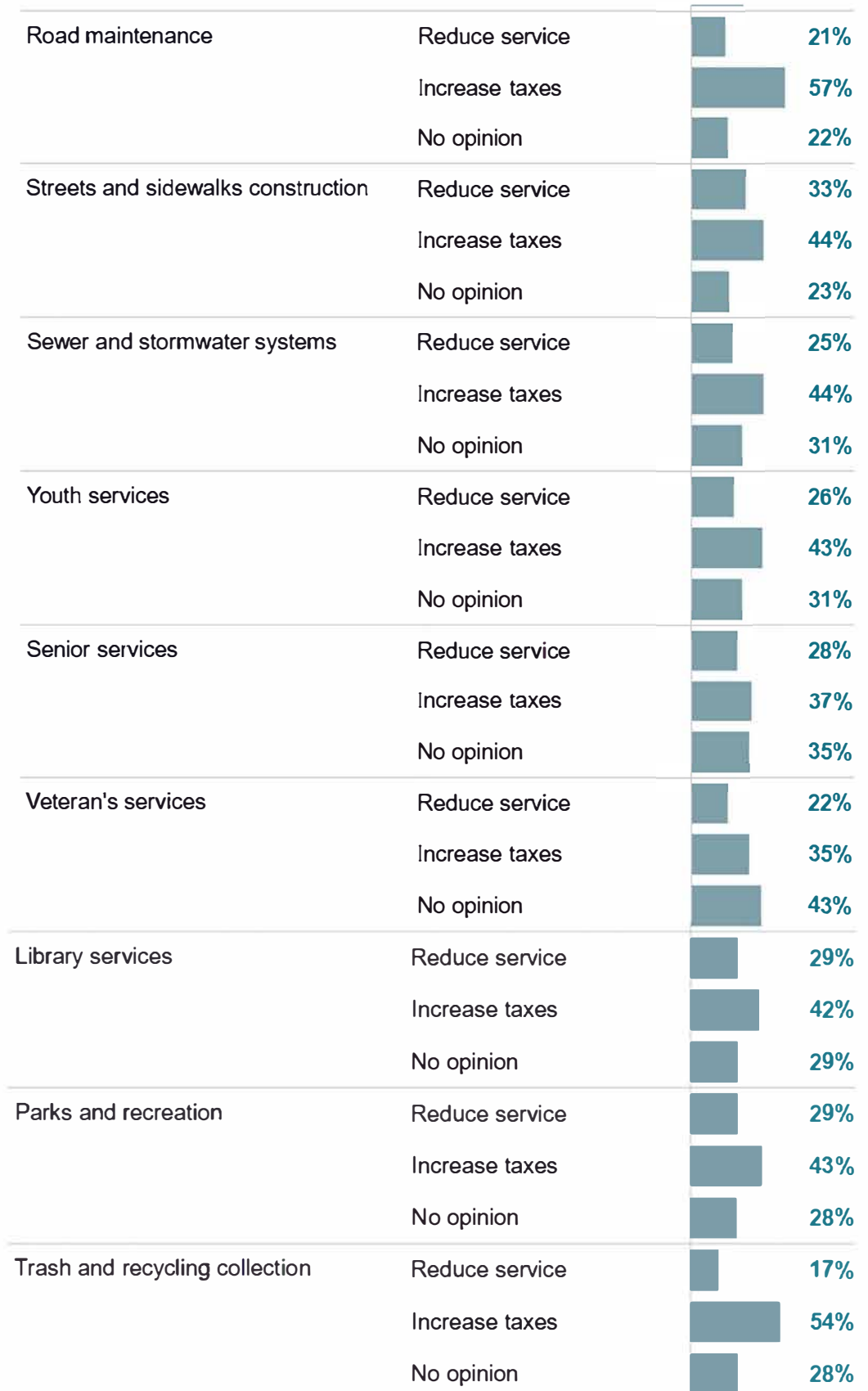
Custom Questions



Below are the complete set of responses to each custom question on the survey. By default, “don’t know” responses are excluded, but may be added to the table using the response filter below.

Include “don’t know”
No

Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the following statements about taxes in Dedham.	I am satisfied with the current level of taxes and services	Strongly agree		5%
		Somewhat agree		43%
		Somewhat disagree		27%
		Strongly disagree		26%
	I am willing to pay more taxes to get more services	Strongly agree		13%
		Somewhat agree		28%
		Somewhat disagree		22%
		Strongly disagree		37%
	I feel that I pay too much for the services I receive	Strongly agree		33%
		Somewhat agree		28%
		Somewhat disagree		23%
		Strongly disagree		17%
	I am willing to accept service reductions if it means lower taxes	Strongly agree		9%
		Somewhat agree		18%
		Somewhat disagree		21%
		Strongly disagree		52%
Without additional revenue, services provided by the Town may have to be reduced in the future. For each of the following list of municipal services, please indicate if you would prefer a service reduction or a tax increase.&nbsp;	Police Department services	Reduce service		29%
		Increase taxes		45%
		No opinion		26%
	Fire Department services	Reduce service		15%
		Increase taxes		54%
		No opinion		31%



School services	Reduce service		16%
	Increase taxes		57%
	No opinion		27%
Maintenance of town and school facilities	Reduce service		17%
	Increase taxes		58%
	No opinion		24%
Construction of town facilities	Reduce service		49%
	Increase taxes		23%
	No opinion		28%
Construction of school facilities	Reduce service		25%
	Increase taxes		50%

<p>Property taxes are the Town's primary way to fund essential services like police, fire, road maintenance, schools, and other public services. However, property tax increases are capped at 2.5% per year (plus new growth), while the cost of providing these services is increasing at a faster rate than 2.5%. This creates a budget deficit. To close this deficit, the Town may need to ask voters to approve a property tax override that would allow taxes to increase beyond the 2.5% limit. Which of the following best describes how you think the Town should balance its budget (revenues and expenditures):</p>	<p>The Town should propose a property tax override to maintain Town services (non-School related) at current levels</p>	Strongly support		14%
		Somewhat support		39%
		Somewhat oppose		19%
		Strongly oppose		29%
	<p>The Town should propose a property tax override to maintain School Department services at current levels</p>	Strongly support		31%
		Somewhat support		33%
		Somewhat oppose		13%
		Strongly oppose		22%
	<p>The Town should maintain current property tax levels and reduce services</p>	Strongly support		10%
		Somewhat support		30%
		Somewhat oppose		28%
		Strongly oppose		32%
	<p>The Town should use a combination of property tax increases and reduced service delivery</p>	Strongly support		22%
		Somewhat support		31%
		Somewhat oppose		22%
		Strongly oppose		26%

The Town of Dedham 2025 Community Survey

Please complete this survey if you are an adult (age 18 or older). Your responses are confidential and no identifying information will be shared.

1. Please rate each of the following aspects of quality of life in Dedham.

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Dedham as a place to live	1	2	3	4	5
Your neighborhood as a place to live	1	2	3	4	5
Dedham as a place to raise children	1	2	3	4	5
Dedham as a place to work.....	1	2	3	4	5
Dedham as a place to visit.....	1	2	3	4	5
Dedham as a place to retire.....	1	2	3	4	5
The overall quality of life in Dedham	1	2	3	4	5
Sense of community.....	1	2	3	4	5

2. Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Dedham as a whole.

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Overall economic health of Dedham.....	1	2	3	4	5
Overall quality of the transportation system (auto, bicycle, foot, bus) in Dedham.....	1	2	3	4	5
Overall design or layout of Dedham's residential and commercial areas (e.g., homes, buildings, streets, parks, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
Overall quality of the utility infrastructure in Dedham..... (water, sewer, storm water, electric/gas, broadband)	1	2	3	4	5
Overall feeling of safety in Dedham	1	2	3	4	5
Overall quality of natural environment in Dedham.....	1	2	3	4	5
Overall quality of parks and recreation opportunities.....	1	2	3	4	5
Overall health and wellness opportunities in Dedham	1	2	3	4	5
Overall opportunities for education, culture, and the arts.....	1	2	3	4	5
Residents' connection and engagement with their community	1	2	3	4	5

3. Please indicate how likely or unlikely you are to do each of the following.

	<u>Very likely</u>	<u>Somewhat likely</u>	<u>Somewhat unlikely</u>	<u>Very unlikely</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Recommend living in Dedham to someone who asks.....	1	2	3	4	5
Remain in Dedham for the next five years.....	1	2	3	4	5

4. Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel:

	<u>Very safe</u>	<u>Somewhat safe</u>	<u>Neither safe nor unsafe</u>	<u>Somewhat unsafe</u>	<u>Very unsafe</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
In your neighborhood during the day.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
In Dedham's downtown/commercial area during the day.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
From property crime.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
From violent crime.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
From fire, flood, or other natural disaster	1	2	3	4	5	6

5. Please rate the job you feel the Dedham community does at each of the following.

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Making all residents feel welcome	1	2	3	4	5
Attracting people from diverse backgrounds.....	1	2	3	4	5
Valuing/respecting residents from diverse backgrounds.....	1	2	3	4	5
Taking care of vulnerable residents (elderly, disabled, homeless, etc.).....	1	2	3	4	5

6. Please rate each of the following in the Dedham community.

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Dedham.....	1	2	3	4	5
Variety of business and service establishments in Dedham	1	2	3	4	5
Vibrancy of downtown/commercial area	1	2	3	4	5
Employment opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
Shopping opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
Cost of living in Dedham	1	2	3	4	5
Overall image or reputation of Dedham.....	1	2	3	4	5

7. Please also rate each of the following in the Dedham community.

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Traffic flow on major streets.....	1	2	3	4	5
Ease of public parking.....	1	2	3	4	5
Ease of travel by car in Dedham.....	1	2	3	4	5
Ease of travel by public transportation in Dedham.....	1	2	3	4	5
Ease of travel by bicycle in Dedham.....	1	2	3	4	5
Ease of walking in Dedham.....	1	2	3	4	5
Well-planned residential growth.....	1	2	3	4	5
Well-planned commercial growth.....	1	2	3	4	5
Well-designed neighborhoods.....	1	2	3	4	5
Preservation of the historical or cultural character of the community.....	1	2	3	4	5
Public places where people want to spend time.....	1	2	3	4	5
Variety of housing options.....	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of affordable quality housing.....	1	2	3	4	5
Overall quality of new development in Dedham.....	1	2	3	4	5
Overall appearance of Dedham.....	1	2	3	4	5
Cleanliness of Dedham.....	1	2	3	4	5
Water resources (beaches, lakes, ponds, riverways, etc.).....	1	2	3	4	5
Air quality.....	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of paths and walking trails.....	1	2	3	4	5
Fitness opportunities (including exercise classes and paths or trails, etc.)... ..	1	2	3	4	5
Recreational opportunities.....	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of affordable quality food.....	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of affordable quality health care.....	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of preventive health services.....	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of affordable quality mental health care.....	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunities to attend cultural/arts/music activities.....	1	2	3	4	5
Community support for the arts.....	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of affordable quality childcare/preschool.....	1	2	3	4	5
K-12 education.....	1	2	3	4	5
Adult educational opportunities.....	1	2	3	4	5
Sense of civic/community pride.....	1	2	3	4	5
Neighborliness of residents in Dedham.....	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities.....	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunities to attend special events and festivals.....	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunities to volunteer.....	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunities to participate in community matters.....	1	2	3	4	5
Openness and acceptance of the community toward people of diverse backgrounds.....	1	2	3	4	5

8. Please indicate whether or not you have done each of the following in the last 12 months.

	<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>
Contacted the Town of Dedham (in-person, phone, email, or web) for help or information.....	1	2
Contacted Dedham elected officials (in-person, phone, email, or web) to express your opinion.....	1	2
Attended a local public meeting (of local elected officials like Select Board, School Committee, Finance and Warrant Committee, Planning Board, Town Meeting, etc.).....	1	2
Watched (online or on television) a local public meeting.....	1	2
Volunteered your time to some group/activity in Dedham.....	1	2
Campaigned or advocated for a local issue, cause, or candidate.....	1	2
Voted in your most recent local election.....	1	2
Used bus, rail, subway, or other public transportation instead of driving.....	1	2
Carpooled with other adults or children instead of driving alone.....	1	2
Walked or biked instead of driving.....	1	2

The Town of Dedham 2025 Community Survey

9. Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Dedham.

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Public information services.....	1	2	3	4	5
Economic development.....	1	2	3	4	5
Traffic enforcement.....	1	2	3	4	5
Traffic signal timing.....	1	2	3	4	5
Street repair.....	1	2	3	4	5
Street cleaning.....	1	2	3	4	5
Street lighting.....	1	2	3	4	5
Snow removal.....	1	2	3	4	5
Sidewalk maintenance.....	1	2	3	4	5
Bus or transit services.....	1	2	3	4	5
Land use, planning, and zoning.....	1	2	3	4	5
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc.).....	1	2	3	4	5
Affordable high-speed internet access.....	1	2	3	4	5
Garbage collection.....	1	2	3	4	5
Drinking water.....	1	2	3	4	5
Sewer services.....	1	2	3	4	5
Storm water management (storm drainage, dams, levees, etc.).....	1	2	3	4	5
Power (electric and/or gas) utility.....	1	2	3	4	5
Utility billing.....	1	2	3	4	5
Police services.....	1	2	3	4	5
Crime prevention.....	1	2	3	4	5
Animal control.....	1	2	3	4	5
Ambulance or emergency medical services.....	1	2	3	4	5
Fire services.....	1	2	3	4	5
Fire prevention and education.....	1	2	3	4	5
Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations).....	1	2	3	4	5
Preservation of natural areas (open space, farmlands, and greenbelts).....	1	2	3	4	5
Dedham open space.....	1	2	3	4	5
Recycling.....	1	2	3	4	5
Yard waste pick-up.....	1	2	3	4	5
Town parks.....	1	2	3	4	5
Recreation programs or classes.....	1	2	3	4	5
Recreation centers or facilities.....	1	2	3	4	5
Health services.....	1	2	3	4	5
Public library services.....	1	2	3	4	5
Overall customer service by Dedham employees (police, receptionists, planners, etc.).....	1	2	3	4	5

10. Please rate the following categories of Dedham government performance.

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
The value of services for the taxes paid to Dedham.....	1	2	3	4	5
The overall direction that Dedham is taking.....	1	2	3	4	5
The job Dedham government does at welcoming resident involvement.....	1	2	3	4	5
Overall confidence in Dedham government.....	1	2	3	4	5
Generally acting in the best interest of the community.....	1	2	3	4	5
Being honest.....	1	2	3	4	5
Being open and transparent to the public.....	1	2	3	4	5
Informing residents about issues facing the community.....	1	2	3	4	5
Treating all residents fairly.....	1	2	3	4	5
Treating residents with respect.....	1	2	3	4	5

11. Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by each of the following?

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
The Town of Dedham.....	1	2	3	4	5
The Federal Government.....	1	2	3	4	5

12. Please rate how important, if at all, you think it is for the Dedham community to focus on each of the following in the coming two years.

	<u>Essential</u>	<u>Very important</u>	<u>Somewhat important</u>	<u>Not at all important</u>
Overall economic health of Dedham.....	1	2	3	4
Overall quality of the transportation system (auto, bicycle, foot, bus) in Dedham.....	1	2	3	4
Overall design or layout of Dedham’s residential and commercial areas (e.g., homes, buildings, streets, parks, etc.)	1	2	3	4
Overall quality of the utility infrastructure in Dedham (water, sewer, storm water, electric/gas, broadband)	1	2	3	4
Overall feeling of safety in Dedham	1	2	3	4
Overall quality of natural environment in Dedham.....	1	2	3	4
Overall quality of parks and recreation opportunities.....	1	2	3	4
Overall health and wellness opportunities in Dedham	1	2	3	4
Overall opportunities for education, culture, and the arts.....	1	2	3	4
Residents’ connection and engagement with their community	1	2	3	4

13. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the following statements about taxes in Dedham.

	<u>Strongly agree</u>	<u>Somewhat agree</u>	<u>Somewhat disagree</u>	<u>Strongly disagree</u>	<u>Don’t know</u>
I am satisfied with the current level of taxes and services.	1	2	3	4	5
I am willing to pay more taxes to get more services	1	2	3	4	5
I feel that I pay too much for the services I receive.....	1	2	3	4	5
I am willing to accept service reductions if it means lower taxes	1	2	3	4	5

14. Without additional revenue, services provided by the Town may have to be reduced in the future. For each of the following list of municipal services, please indicate if you would prefer a service reduction or a tax increase.

	<u>Reduce service</u>	<u>Increase taxes</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
Police Department services.....	1	2	3
Fire Department services.....	1	2	3
Road maintenance.....	1	2	3
Streets and sidewalks construction.....	1	2	3
Sewer and stormwater systems	1	2	3
Youth services	1	2	3
Senior services	1	2	3
Veteran’s services.....	1	2	3
Library services	1	2	3
Parks and recreation	1	2	3
Trash and recycling collection	1	2	3
School services.....	1	2	3
Maintenance of town and school facilities	1	2	3
Construction of town facilities	1	2	3
Construction of school facilities	1	2	3

The Town of Dedham 2025 Community Survey

15. Property taxes are the Town's primary way to fund essential services like police, fire, road maintenance, schools, and other public services. However, property tax increases are capped at 2.5% per year (plus new growth), while the cost of providing these services is increasing at a faster rate than 2.5%. This creates a budget deficit. To close this deficit, the Town may need to ask voters to approve a property tax override that would allow taxes to increase beyond the 2.5% limit. Which of the following best describes how you think the Town should balance its budget (revenues and expenditures):

	<u>Strongly support</u>	<u>Somewhat support</u>	<u>Somewhat oppose</u>	<u>Strongly oppose</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
The Town should propose a property tax override to maintain <u>Town services</u> (non-School related) at current levels.....	1	2	3	4	5
The Town should propose a property tax override to maintain <u>School Department services</u> at current levels.....	1	2	3	4	5
The Town should maintain current property tax levels and reduce services	1	2	3	4	5
The Town should use a combination of property tax increases and reduced service delivery.....	1	2	3	4	5

Our last questions are about you and your household.
Again, all of your responses to this survey are confidential and no identifying information will be shared.

D1. In general, how many times do you:	Several times a day	Once a day	A few times a week	Every few weeks	Less often or never	Don't know
Access the internet from your home using a computer, laptop, or tablet computer.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
Access the internet from your cell phone	1	2	3	4	5	6
Visit social media sites such as Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Nextdoor, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Use or check email.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
Share your opinions online.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
Shop online	1	2	3	4	5	6

D2. Please rate your overall health.

- Excellent Very good Good Fair Poor

D3. What impact, if any, do you think the economy will have on your family income in the next 6 months?

Do you think the impact will be:

- Very positive Somewhat positive Neutral Somewhat negative Very negative

D4. How many years have you lived in Dedham?

- Less than 2 years
 2-5 years
 6-10 years
 11-20 years
 More than 20 years

D5. Which best describes the building you live in?

- Single-family detached home
 Townhouse or duplex (may share walls but no units above or below you)
 Condominium or apartment (have units above or below you)
 Mobile home
 Other

D6. Do you rent or own your home?

- Rent
 Own

D7. About how much is your monthly housing cost for the place you live (including rent, mortgage payment, property tax, property insurance, and homeowners' association (HOA) fees)?

- Less than \$300 \$2,500 to \$3,999
 \$300 to \$599 \$4,000 to \$6,999
 \$600 to \$999 \$7,000 to \$9,999
 \$1,000 to \$1,499 \$10,000 or more
 \$1,500 to \$2,499

D8. Do any children 17 or under live in your household?

- No Yes

D9. Are you or any other members of your household aged 65 or older?

- No Yes

D10. How much do you anticipate your household's total income before taxes will be for the current year? (Please include in your total income money from all sources for all persons living in your household.)

- Less than \$25,000 \$100,000 to \$149,999
 \$25,000 to \$49,999 \$150,000 to \$199,999
 \$50,000 to \$74,999 \$200,000 to \$299,999
 \$75,000 to \$99,999 \$300,000 or more

D11. Are you of Hispanic, Latino/a/x, or Spanish origin?

- No Yes

D12. What is your race? (Mark one or more races to indicate what race you consider yourself to be.)

- American Indian or Alaskan Native
 Asian
 Black or African American
 Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 White
 A race not listed

D13. In which category is your age?

- 18-24 years 55-64 years
 25-34 years 65-74 years
 35-44 years 75 years or older
 45-54 years

D14. What is your gender?

- Woman
 Man
 Identify in another way → go to D14a

D14a. If you identify in another way, how would you describe your gender?

- Agender/I don't identify with any gender
 Genderqueer/gender fluid
 Non-binary
 Transgender man
 Transgender woman
 Two-spirit
 Identify in another way

Thank you! Please return the completed survey in the postage-paid envelope to:
National Research Center, Inc., PO Box 14050, Houston, TX 77221-9904