City of Walla Walla Engagement and Priority Assessment

January 2022 – City Council

**City of Walla Walla**

2021011

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
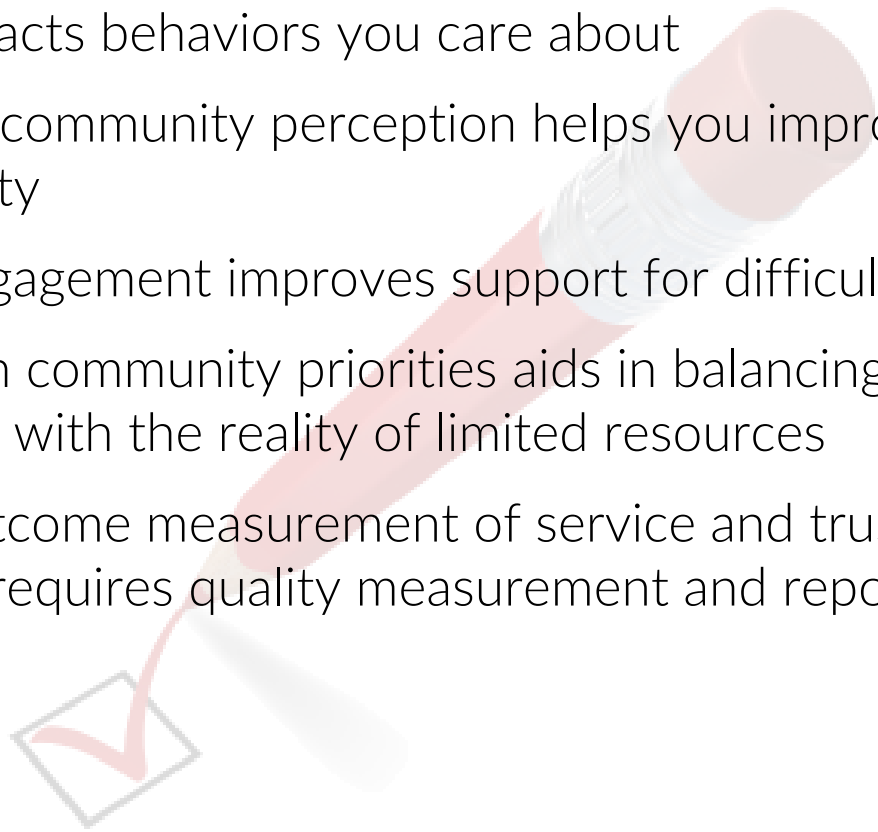
Study Goals

- 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 regionally and nationally
- Compare performance to 2013-2020 Resident surveys

Bottom Line

- City continues to outperform benchmarks in most areas and generally held steady when compared to 2020
- 2021 ACSI Score = 62 (65 in 2020)
  - Washington (25,000-100,000 residents) = 60
  - West = 63
  - National = 62
- 2021 Local Government Management Score = 68 (69 in 2020)
  - Washington (25,000-100,000 residents) = 62
  - West = 66
  - National = 63
- There are several areas where improvement can have significant impact on engagement.

2021 Drivers:
City Government Management
Economic Health
Transportation Infrastructure
Shopping
Parks/Recreation

2020 Drivers:
City Government Management
Economic Health
Fire and Emergency Medical Services
Shopping
Parks/Recreation

Bottom Line

- Almost 60% support police non-emergency response changes; only 15% oppose
- Resident scores showed solid progress for availability of services in Spanish
- Only 6% of residents say they did not use parks/recreation services
- Top funding priorities: Street maintenance, police services, fire services, ambulance

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!

View more: www.theacsi.org

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

View more: www.theacsi.org

Scores in Context

Cobalt Community Research Government Benchmarks	2021 U.S. Benchmark	2021 West Benchmark	2021 WA Benchmark
Scale 0-100 (Perfect=100)	Overall	Overall	Overall
Local Government	63	66	58
Community Satisfaction	62	63	59
School Satisfaction	61	62	58
County Government Satisfaction	59	61	54
State Government Satisfaction	55	58	52
Federal Government Satisfaction	65	-	-
ACSI National Index Overall (includes private)	74	-	-
Walla Walla 2021 Local Government Overall	68		

Methodology

- Random sample of 2,000 residents drawn from utility billing records and consumer records
- Utilized www.random.org, a well-respected utility used internationally by many universities and researchers 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 two mailings in September and October 2021
- Valid response from 416 residents, providing a solid response rate and a conventional margin of error of +/- 4.7 percent in the raw data and an ACSI margin of error of +/- 1.9 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 are weighted to adjust ward representation to proportions in utility billing records

Preserving Voice: Looking Into Detail

2021 Walla Walla Resident Study Rating Questions Response Count 416 +/- 4.7% (+/-1.7% ACSI)	911 Fire and Police Dispatch				Community Events					
	Dispatch Overall	Respectful treatment of callers	Thoroughness in gathering critical information	Caring and compassionate	Events Overall	Range of cultural offerings	Strong and vibrant arts community	Quality sporting events to attend	Variety of festivals and community events	Opportunities for cross-cultural engagement
2013 Overall Satisfaction	85	86	86	83	74	74	76	69	74	-
2015 Overall Satisfaction	86	86	86	85	76	77	79	69	78	-
2016 Overall Satisfaction	87	88	87	86	73	74	77	70	75	68
2017 Overall Satisfaction	87	89	88	84	76	77	80	74	78	72
2018 Overall Satisfaction	87	88	87	86	74	76	78	71	76	70
2019 Overall Satisfaction	87	88	88	87	75	77	79	71	76	71
2020 Overall Satisfaction	87	88	89	86	66	69	73	60	67	61
2021 Overall Satisfaction	**87**	**88**	**88**	**84**	**66**	**68**	**72**	**61**	**69**	**62**
Age — 18 to 24*	67	67	67	67	56	56	56	0	89	78
Age — 25 to 34*	78	78	83	73	44	47	51	38	40	43
Age — 35 to 44	86	90	87	82	60	60	67	56	60	57
Age — 45 to 54	90	90	92	88	64	64	76	61	62	57
Age — 55 to 64	84	84	86	82	68	70	73	63	69	66
Age — 65+	88	89	89	87	70	72	74	64	74	64

Consistent Scores Regardless of Demographics

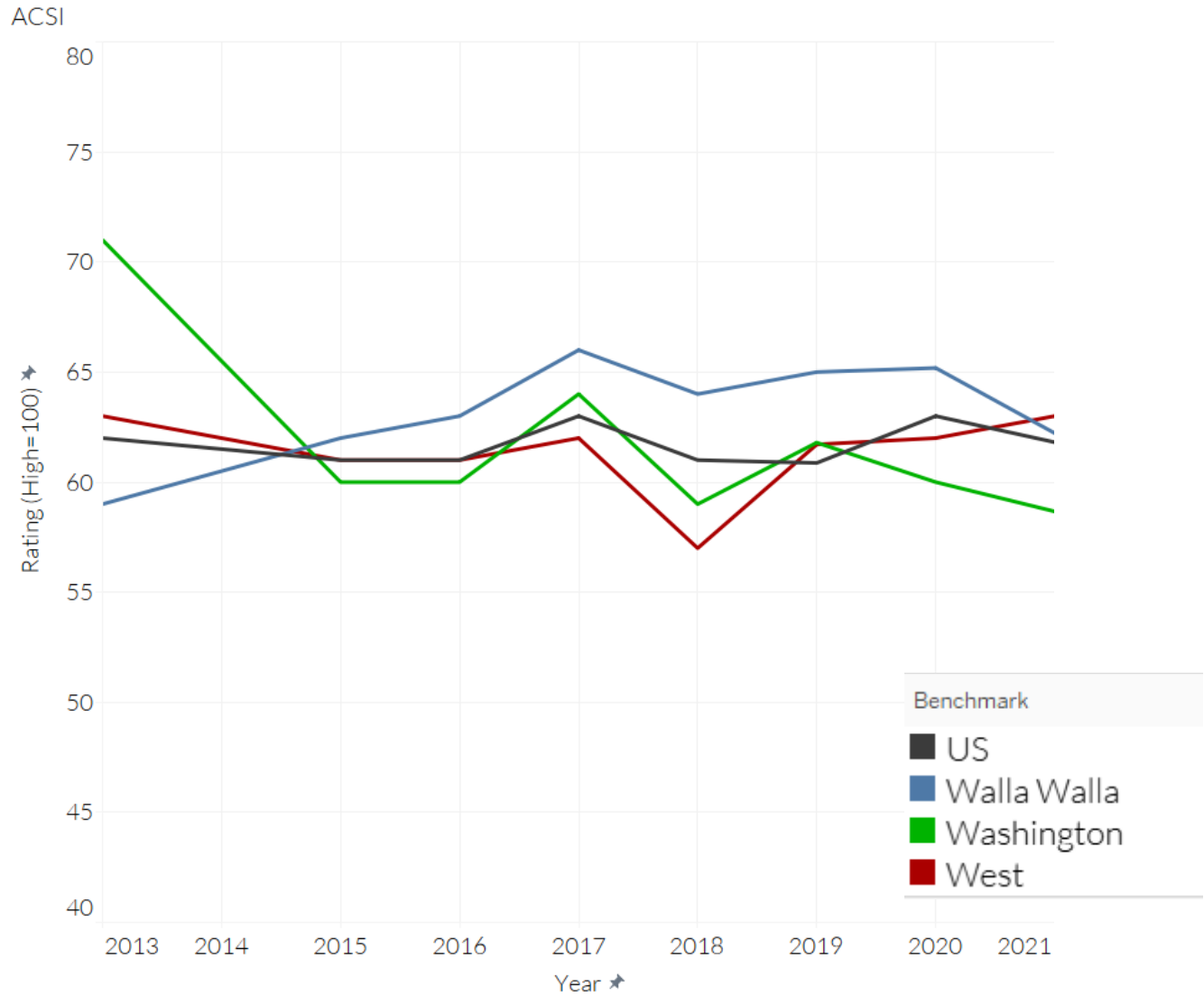Checkered Scores that Vary by Demographics

Comparing 2020 and 2021
(High score = 100)

	2021 areas with strong impact on overall engagement							

	2021 U.S. 25-100k	2021 U.S.	2021 West 25-100k	2021 West	2021 WA 25-100k	2021 WA	2020 Walla Walla	2021 Walla Walla	Change
	25,001-	Overall	25,001-	Overall	25,001-	Overall	2020	2021	
Fire and Emergency Medical Services	83.00	78.88	85.50	80.00	82.50	81.25	82.89	82.67	⇨ -0.22
Transportation Overall	64.83	63.01	69.00	65.33	65.33	61.83	65.11	61.56	⬇ -3.56
Utility Services Overall	76.50	71.15	81.50	75.75	75.00	73.00	77.22	72.04	⬇ -5.19
Police Department Overall	73.50	70.85	81.00	73.75	73.75	68.50	79.78	79.78	⇨ 0.00
Shopping Opportunities Overall	80.00	74.41	83.75	78.75	75.00	73.00	60.00	56.94	⬇ -3.06
Local Government Overall	64.92	63.14	72.08	66.33	61.67	57.67	69.49	67.52	⇨ -1.97
Community Events Overall	64.80	63.11	65.40	65.80	66.00	62.40	66.00	66.44	⇨ 0.44
Economic Health Overall	63.57	60.99	64.43	60.43	60.29	55.43	53.15	48.33	⬇ -4.81
Parks and Recreation Overall	75.75	69.65	76.00	71.50	71.50	68.50	77.22	78.33	➡ 1.11
Library Overall	76.00	73.00	79.75	75.50	76.25	73.50	80.67	78.89	⇨ -1.78

Note: Change is calculated from unrounded numbers
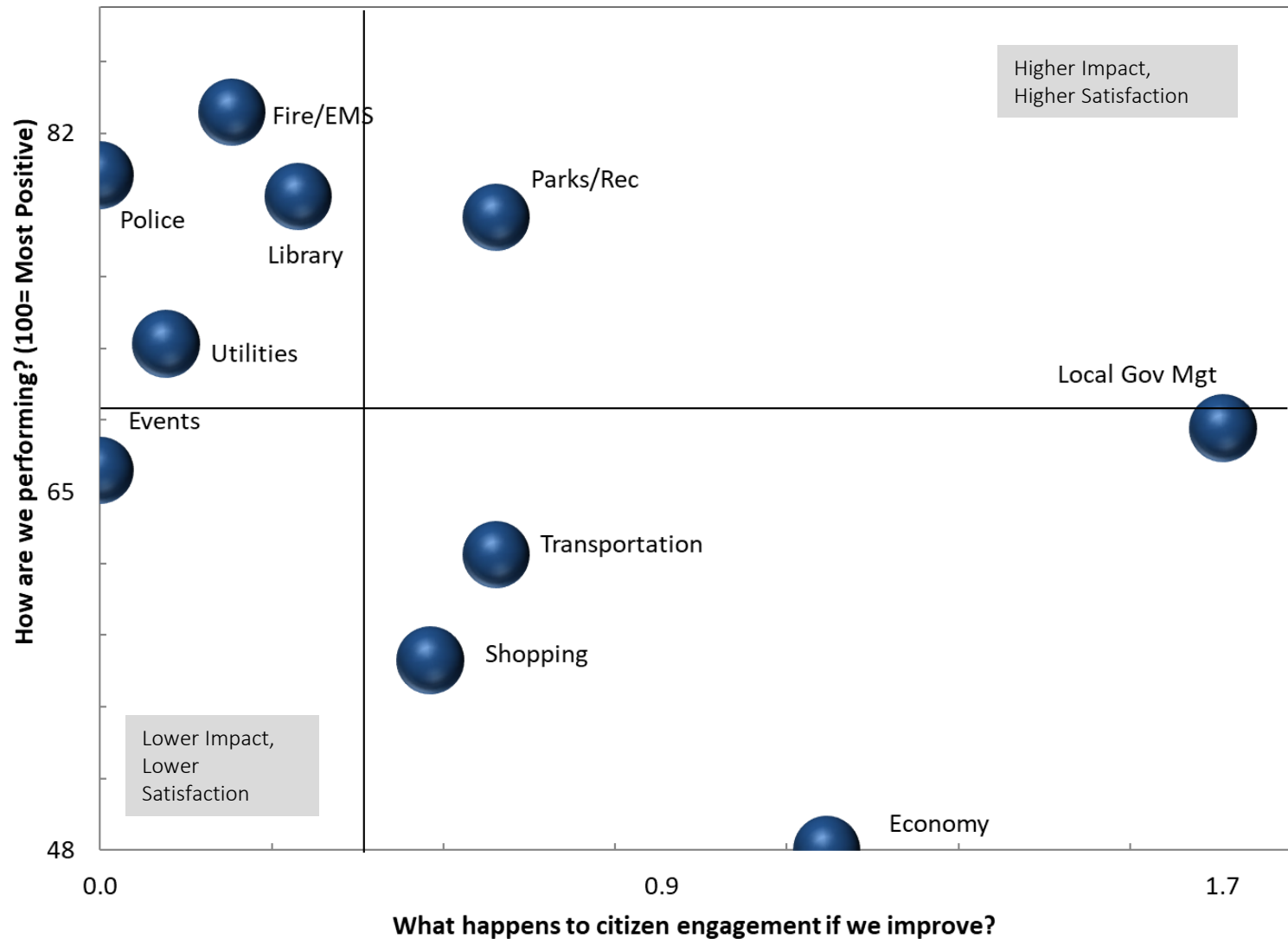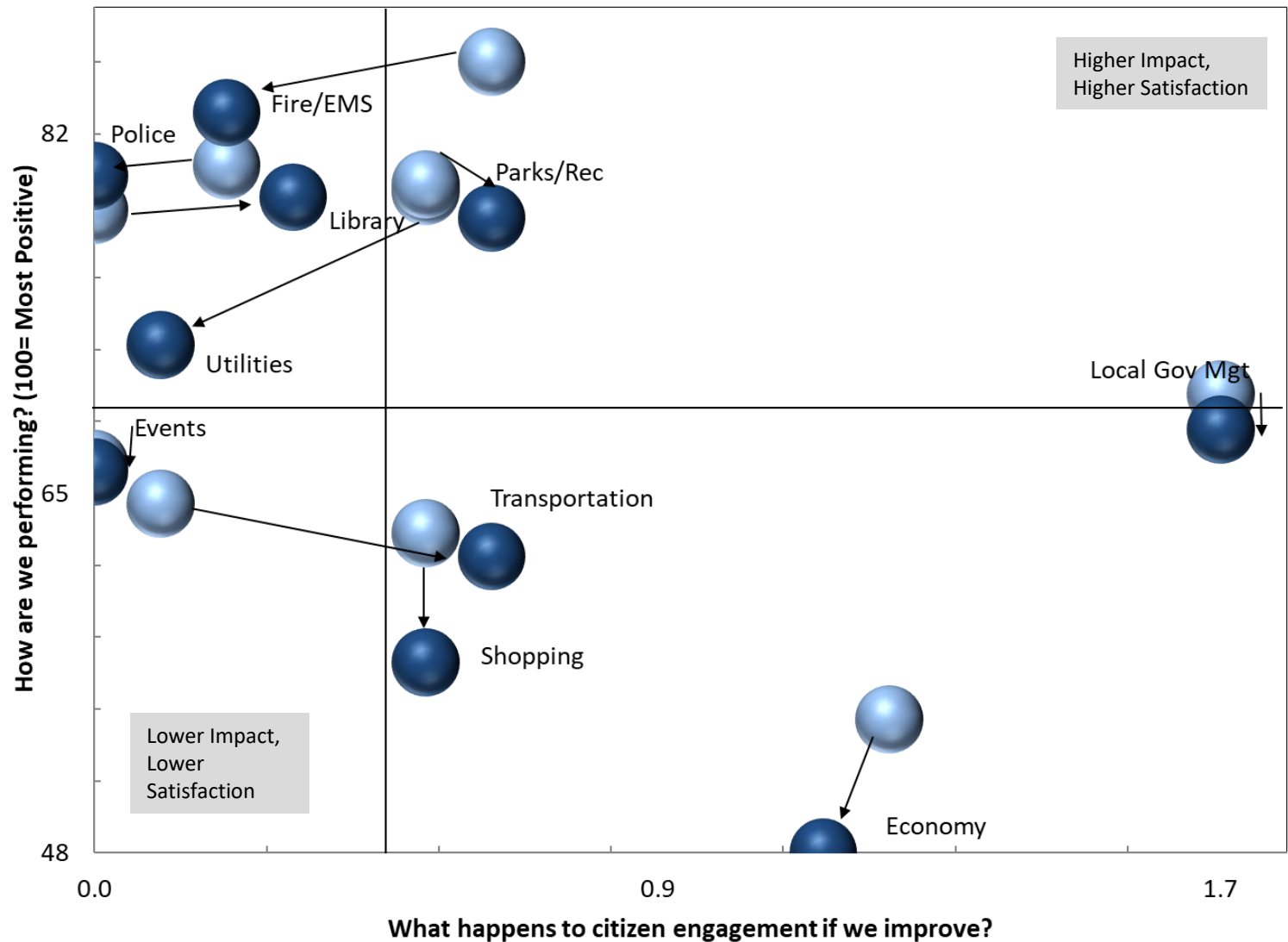
Community Satisfaction to Benchmarks
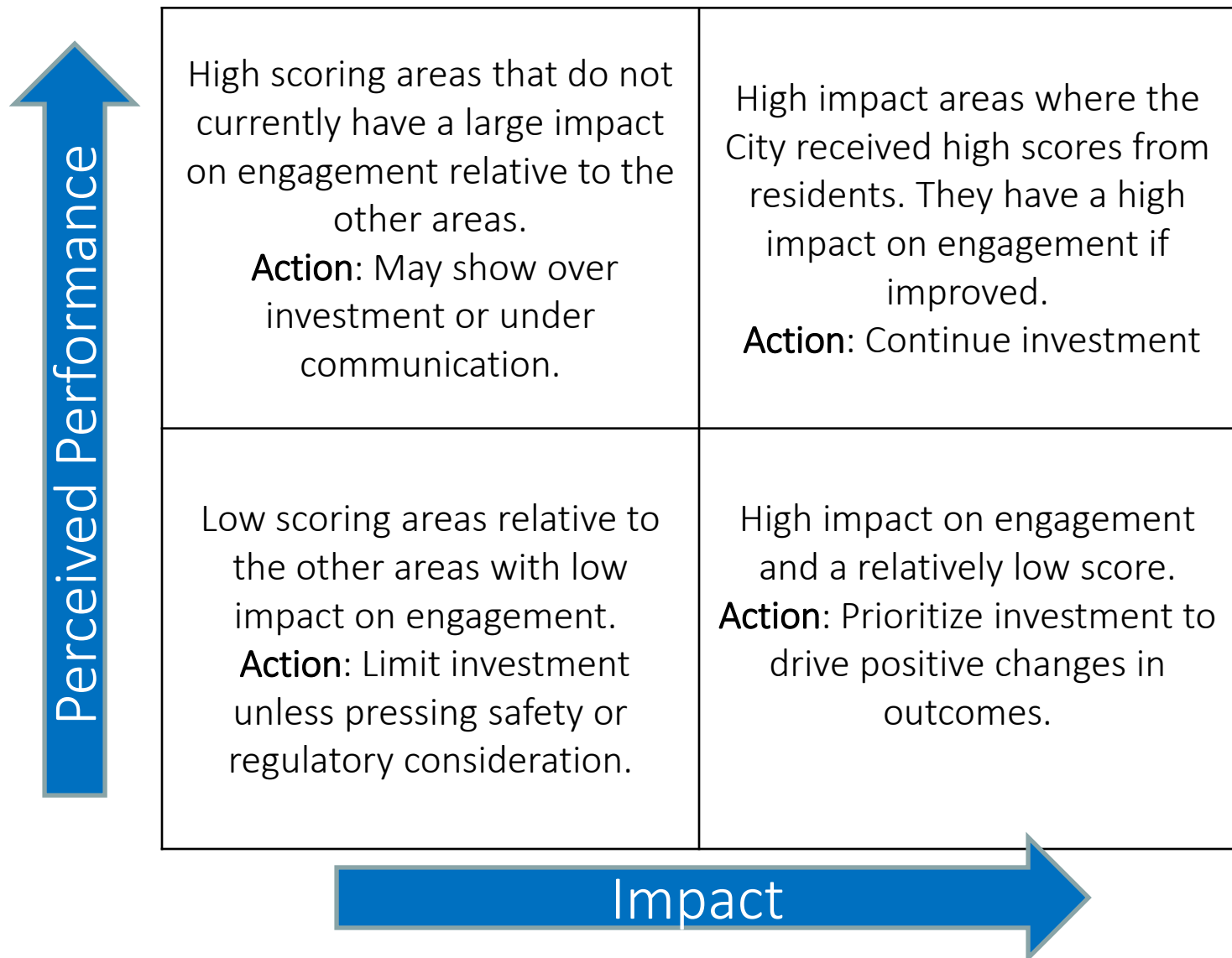
Perceived Performance (vertical axis)

High scoring areas that do not currently have a large impact on engagement relative to the other areas. **Action**: May show over investment or under communication.	High impact areas where the City received high scores from residents. They have a high impact on engagement if improved. **Action**: Continue investment
Low scoring areas relative to the other areas with low impact on engagement. **Action**: Limit investment unless pressing safety or regulatory consideration.	High impact on engagement and a relatively low score. **Action**: Prioritize investment to drive positive changes in outcomes.

Impact (horizontal axis)

Support Public Safety Approach on Non-Violent Calls

Chart legend: ■ 2021

Percentage Specifying by category:
- Yes: ~57%
- No: ~15%
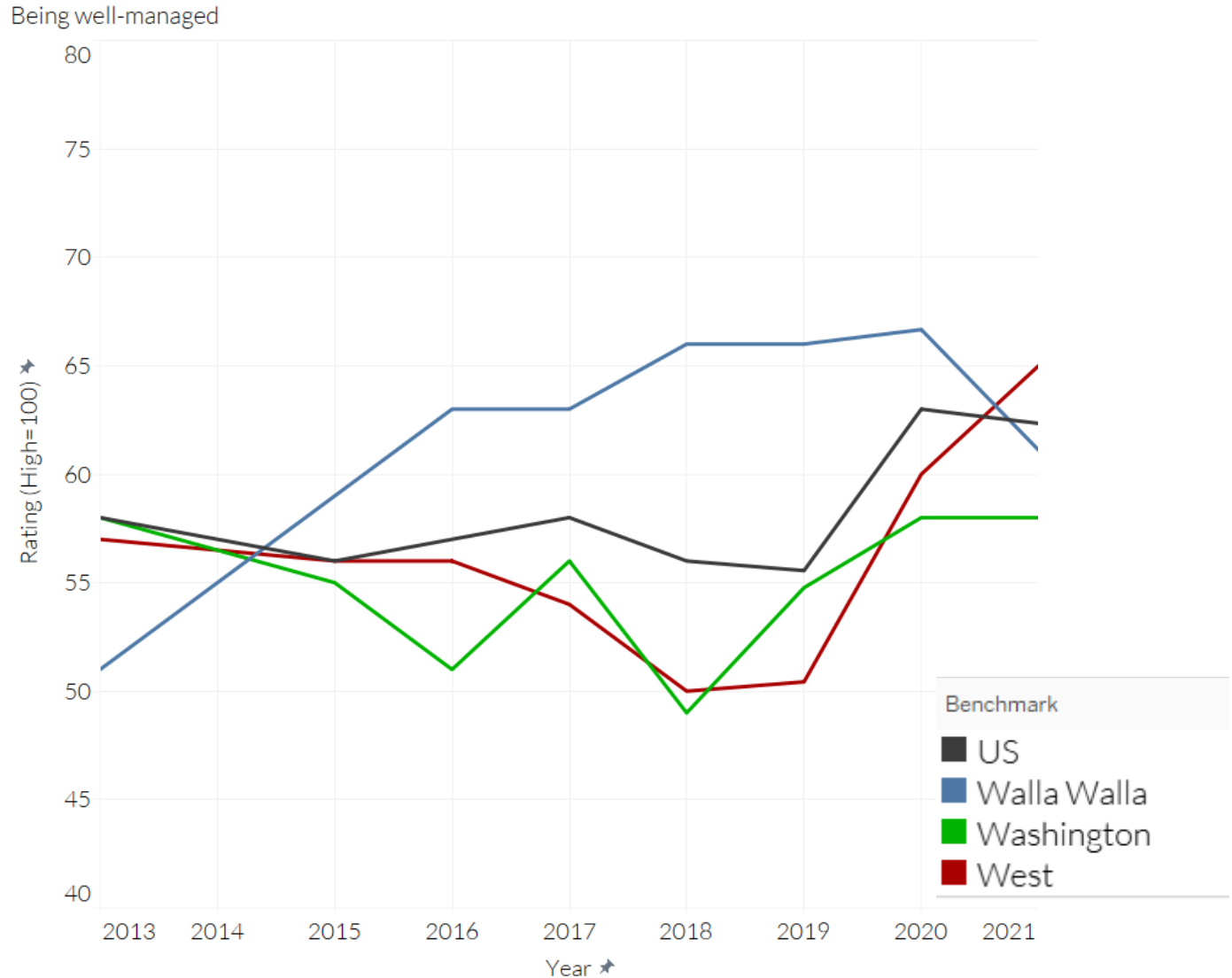- Need more information: ~23%
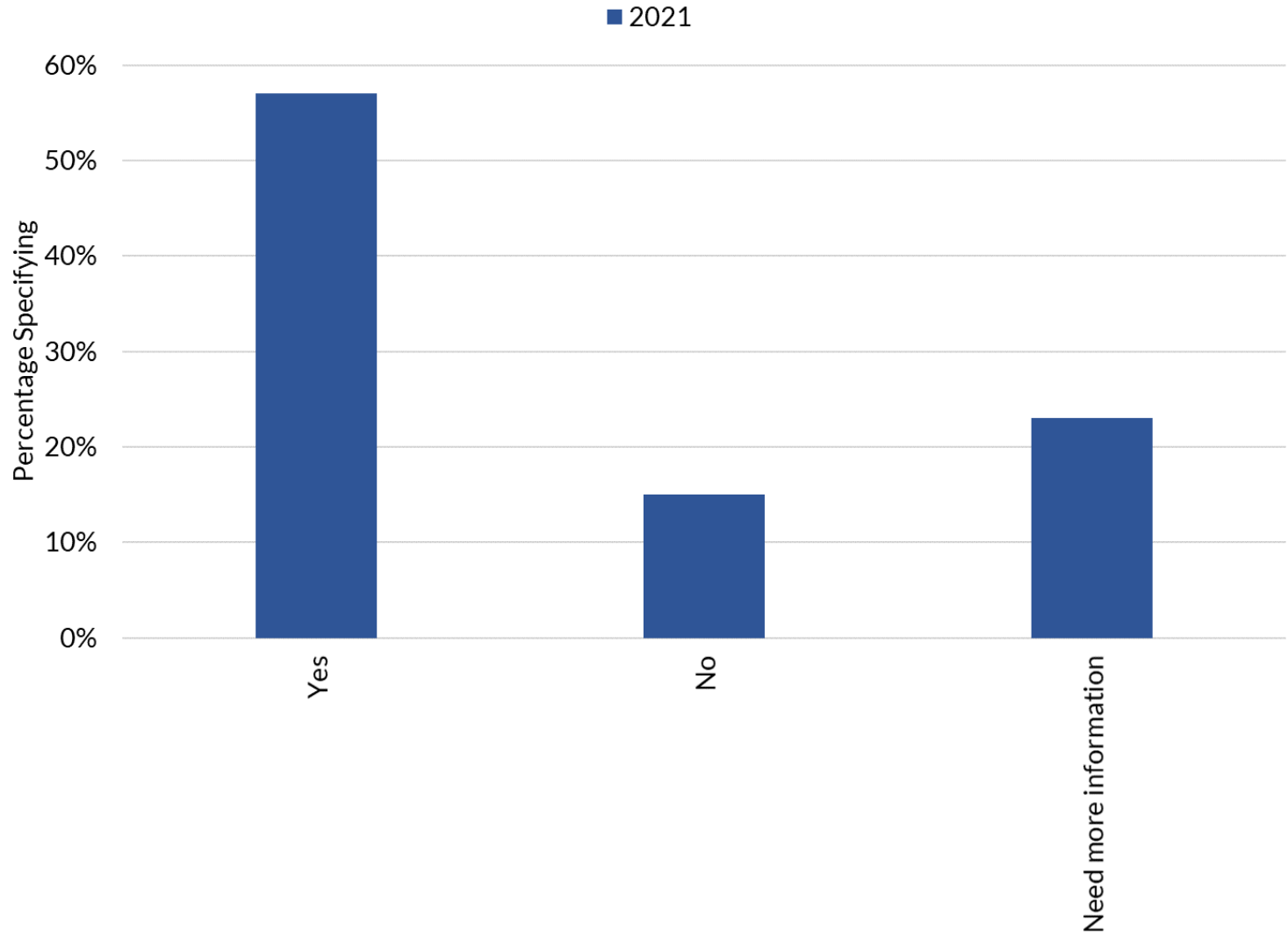
Government Management - Overall

Local Government
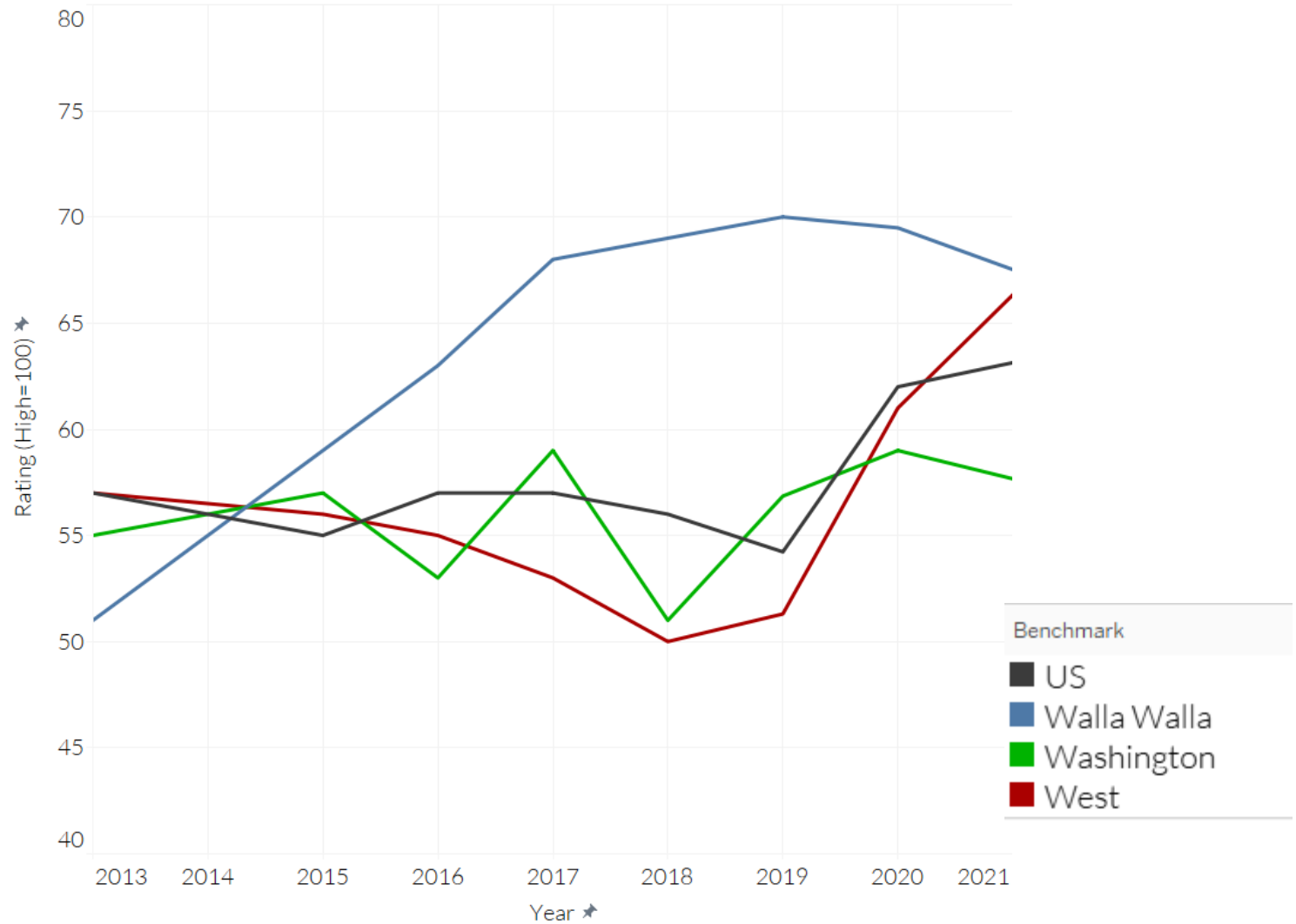
Being Well Managed - Trends

Leaders are Trustworthy - Trends

Leaders are trustworthy

Benchmark
- US
- Walla Walla
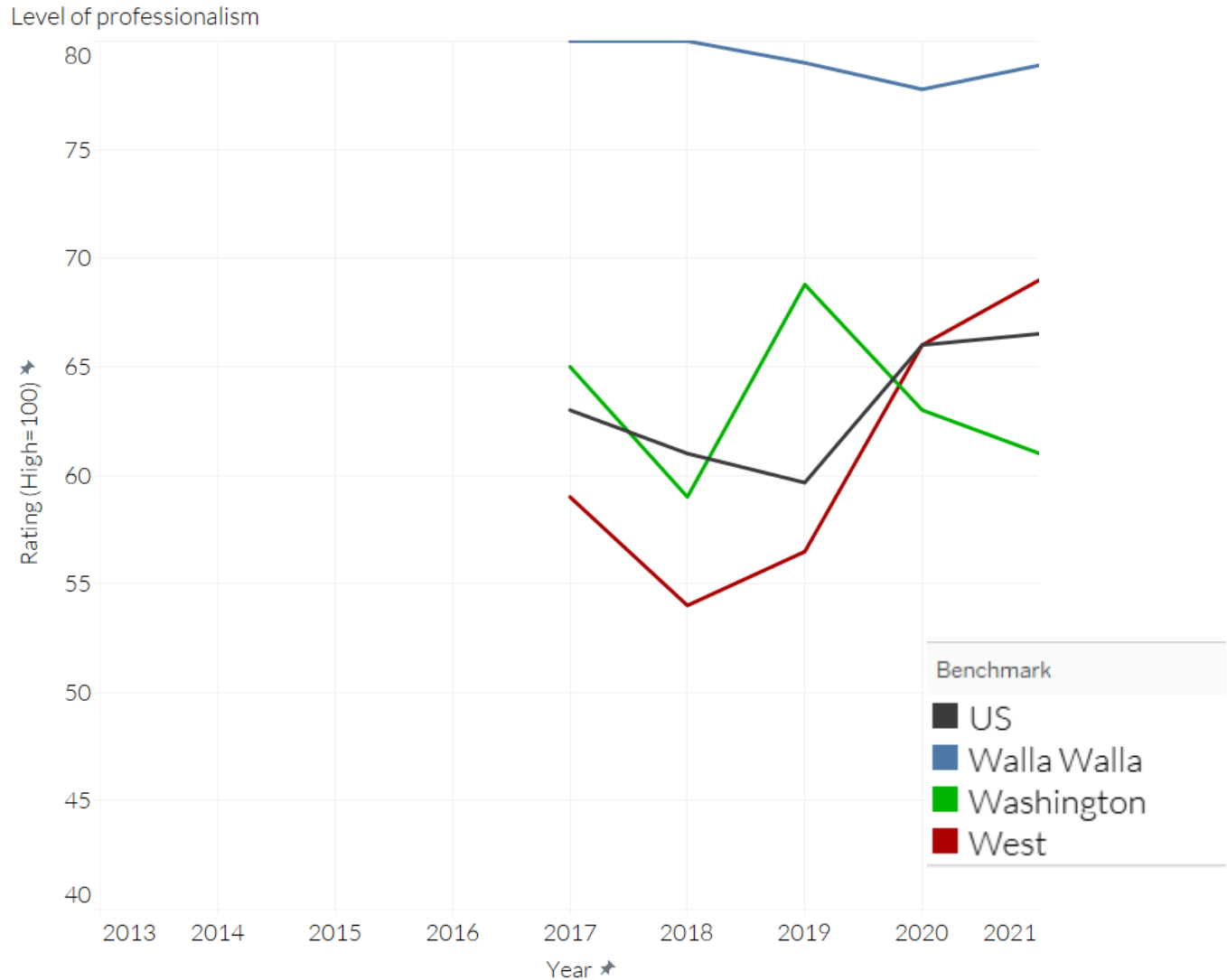- Washington
- West
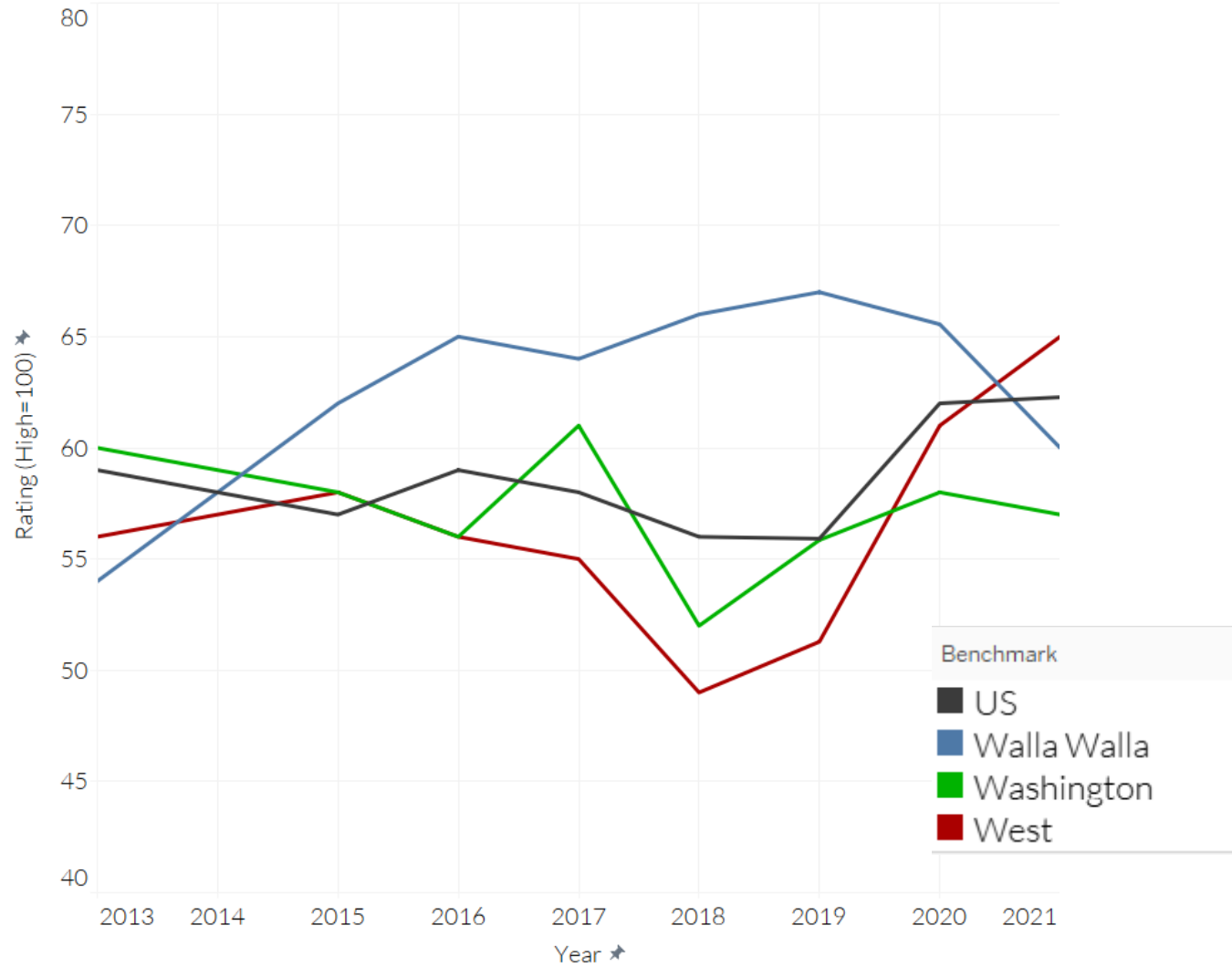
Customer Service Meeting Your Needs

Effectiveness in meeting your needs
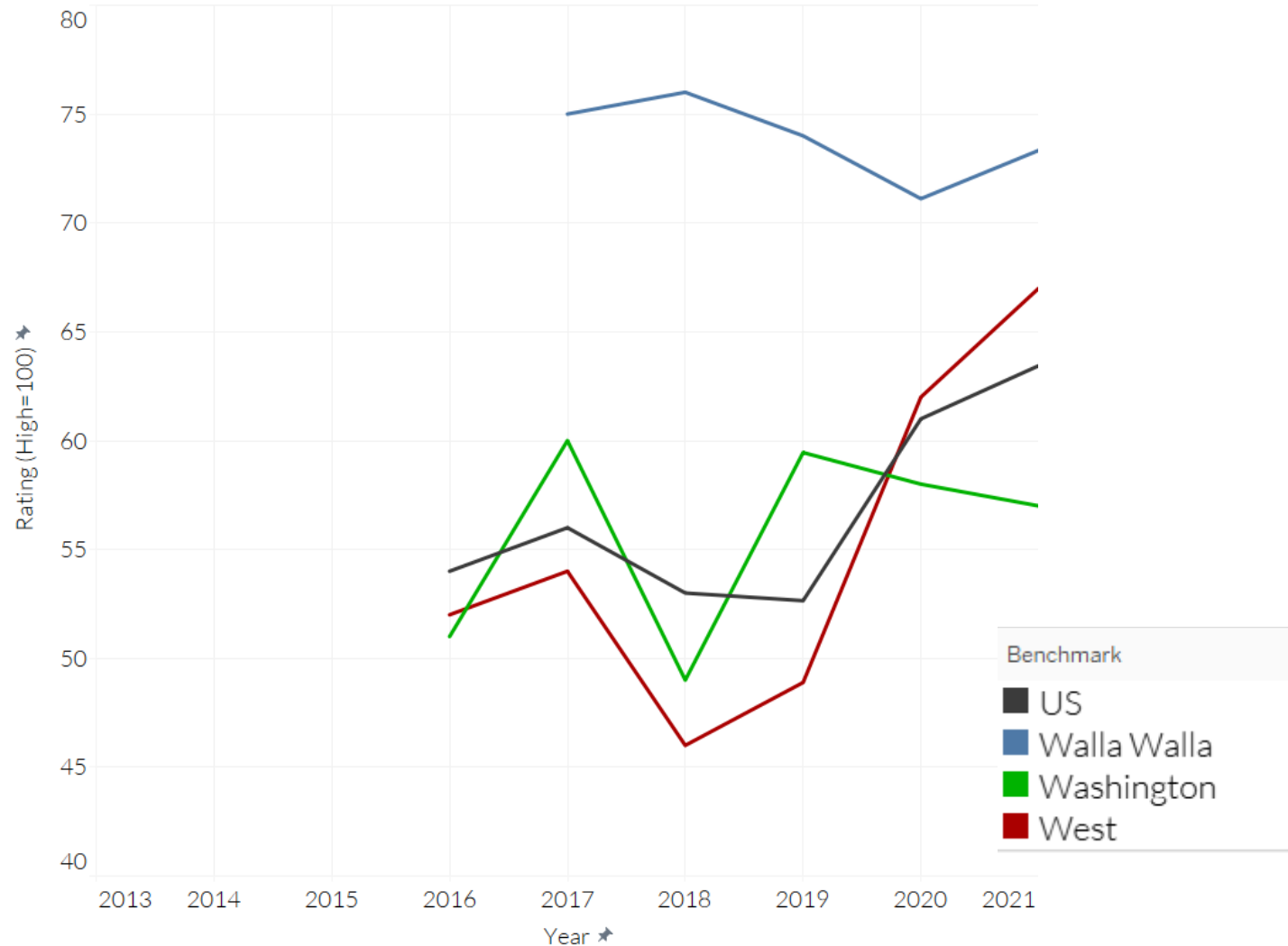
Level of Professionalism - Trends

What are two improvements you would like to see the City implement to improve your satisfaction?

Top Themes:
1. **Street:** People continue to express concerns with current road conditions: removing potholes and making safer travel routes for traffic; Safe bike lanes.
2. **Repair:** Continue repairs to streets and sidewalks.
3. **Afford:** People are looking for affordable housing and dining.

Note: See full list of comments for context

Areas of Opportunity for Consideration

- Develop and push key messaging now that election is over
- Drive awareness and use of street maintenance website, and make the metrics and messaging on progress more pervasive
- Build awareness and understanding of key management practices and metrics being used internally to drive decisions
- Highlight how residents have shared ideas that have been applied – great source of human interest and ground for key messages
- Consider additional messaging on the strength of the local economy and the visibility of good jobs – "More good news on our economic stability"