



THE NCSTM
The National Citizen SurveyTM

Jackson County, MI

Trends over Time

2017



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Summary

The National Citizen Survey™ (The NCS™) is a collaborative effort between National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA). The survey and its administration are standardized to assure high quality research methods and directly comparable results across The NCS communities. The NCS captures residents' opinions within the three pillars of a community (Community Characteristics, Governance and Participation) across eight central facets of community (Safety, Mobility, Natural Environment, Built Environment, Economy, Recreation and Wellness, Education and Enrichment and Community Engagement). This report discusses trends over time, comparing the 2017 ratings for the County of Jackson County to its previous survey results in 2009, 2011, 2013 and 2015. Additional reports and technical appendices are available under separate cover.

Trend data for Jackson County represent important comparison data and should be examined for improvements or declines. Deviations from stable trends over time, especially, represent opportunities for understanding how local policies, programs or public information may have affected residents' opinions.

Meaningful differences between survey years have been noted within the following tables as being "higher" or "lower" if the differences are greater than eight percentage points between the 2015 and 2017 surveys, otherwise the comparisons between 2015 and 2017 are noted as being "similar." Additionally, benchmark comparisons for all survey years are presented for reference. Changes in the benchmark comparison over time can be impacted by various trends, including varying survey cycles for the individual communities that comprise the benchmarks, regional and national economic or other events, as well as emerging survey methodologies.

Overall, ratings in Jackson County for 2017 generally remained stable. Of the 134 items for which comparisons were available, 99 items were rated similarly in 2015 and 2017, 21 items showed a decrease in ratings and 14 showed an increase in ratings. Notable trends over time included the following:

- Ratings for several aspects of Safety decreased in 2017. These included the overall feeling of safety in Jackson County, feelings of safety in the downtown/commercial area, crime prevention and fire prevention. The proportion of residents in 2017 who had stocked supplies for an emergency also decreased since 2015, while the rating for animal control improved.
- Many Mobility ratings also declined since 2015, including traffic flow, ease of travel by car and overall ease of travel; however, the rating for bus or transit services increased in 2017.
- Within Community Engagement, ratings for several aspects of government performance improved since 2015 (the overall direction the County is taking, confidence in County government and being honest). Levels of Participation for several aspects within this facet declined in 2017, however: residents were less likely to have talked to or visited with their neighbors, read or watched local news or done a favor for a neighbor.
- Jackson County residents were more likely in 2017 than in 2015 to positively rate the vibrancy of the downtown/commercial area and economic development.

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Table 1: Community Characteristics General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)					2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark				
	2009	2011	2013	2015	2017		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017
Overall quality of life	48%	45%	50%	49%	51%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
Overall image	27%	25%	23%	20%	19%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
Place to live	58%	52%	59%	59%	54%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
Neighborhood	75%	71%	79%	69%	72%	Similar	Lower	Much lower	Similar	Lower	Lower
Place to raise children	62%	51%	53%	58%	50%	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Much lower
Place to retire	36%	35%	31%	41%	32%	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
Overall appearance	40%	33%	37%	37%	47%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower

Table 2: Community Characteristics by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)					2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark				
		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017
Safety	Overall feeling of safety	NA	NA	49%	51%	39%	Lower	NA	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
	Safe in neighborhood	92%	84%	93%	83%	83%	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Safe downtown/commercial area	77%	76%	79%	71%	62%	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Similar	Lower	Lower
Mobility	Overall ease of travel	NA	NA	68%	70%	45%	Lower	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Lower
	Paths and walking trails	55%	56%	57%	58%	57%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Ease of walking	44%	49%	53%	50%	45%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Similar	Lower	Lower
	Travel by bicycle	NA	49%	40%	41%	29%	Lower	NA	Similar	Similar	Lower	Lower
	Travel by public transportation	39%	NA	36%	41%	25%	Lower	Lower	NA	Lower	Similar	Lower
	Travel by car	59%	59%	65%	65%	51%	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Public parking	NA	NA	49%	46%	38%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Traffic flow	NA	49%	49%	56%	42%	Lower	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Natural Environment	Overall natural environment	52%	55%	65%	59%	58%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Similar	Lower	Lower
	Cleanliness	38%	31%	39%	37%	47%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Air quality	NA	64%	66%	64%	65%	Similar	NA	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
Built Environment	Overall built environment	NA	NA	37%	43%	39%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower
	New development in Jackson County	15%	20%	22%	29%	42%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Similar
	Affordable quality housing	NA	39%	38%	39%	31%	Lower	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Housing options	NA	42%	41%	39%	34%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Public places	NA	NA	43%	44%	40%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower
Economy	Overall economic health	NA	NA	13%	17%	24%	Similar	NA	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
	Vibrant downtown/commercial area	NA	NA	19%	22%	32%	Higher	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Business and services	39%	38%	38%	47%	42%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Cost of living	NA	NA	40%	43%	43%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)					2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark				
		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017
	Shopping opportunities	45%	43%	42%	42%	42%	Similar	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Employment opportunities	7%	6%	12%	21%	27%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Similar
	Place to visit	NA	NA	32%	35%	32%	Similar	NA	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
	Place to work	26%	26%	37%	44%	47%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
Recreation and Wellness	Health and wellness	NA	NA	51%	52%	46%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Mental health care	NA	NA	32%	37%	39%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Preventive health services	45%	47%	52%	51%	54%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Health care	30%	40%	49%	50%	53%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Food	55%	55%	51%	52%	61%	Higher	Lower	Lower	Similar	Lower	Similar
	Recreational opportunities	47%	48%	48%	46%	45%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Fitness opportunities	NA	NA	55%	51%	50%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Religious or spiritual events and activities	67%	64%	69%	72%	68%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Cultural/arts/music activities	34%	37%	41%	39%	36%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
Education and Enrichment	Adult education	NA	NA	48%	46%	49%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Similar	Similar
	K-12 education	NA	47%	51%	54%	58%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Child care/preschool	NA	33%	40%	47%	34%	Lower	NA	Lower	Similar	Similar	Lower
	Social events and activities	39%	37%	36%	38%	41%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
Community Engagement	Neighborliness	NA	NA	33%	46%	37%	Lower	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Openness and acceptance	38%	37%	38%	40%	37%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Opportunities to participate in community matters	48%	48%	42%	49%	48%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Opportunities to volunteer	69%	73%	64%	61%	69%	Higher	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar

Table 3: Governance General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)					2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark				
	2009	2011	2013	2015	2017		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017
Services provided by Jackson County	39%	44%	45%	48%	47%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
Customer service	72%	60%	50%	57%	55%	Similar	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower
Value of services for taxes paid	25%	29%	33%	36%	31%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
Overall direction	19%	24%	30%	35%	45%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Similar
Welcoming citizen involvement	24%	26%	23%	30%	28%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower
Confidence in County government	NA	NA	23%	25%	33%	Higher	NA	NA	Much lower	Lower	Lower
Acting in the best interest of Jackson County	NA	NA	32%	32%	33%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower
Being honest	NA	NA	29%	25%	35%	Higher	NA	NA	Lower	Much lower	Lower
Treating all residents fairly	NA	NA	27%	29%	34%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower
Services provided by the Federal Government	23%	20%	20%	30%	32%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar

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Table 4: Governance by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)					2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark				
		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017
Safety	Police	62%	66%	65%	74%	72%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Fire	NA	76%	76%	86%	82%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Ambulance/EMS	NA	79%	79%	87%	83%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Crime prevention	41%	43%	40%	47%	27%	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Much lower
	Fire prevention	NA	59%	58%	66%	58%	Lower	NA	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Lower
	Animal control	32%	36%	31%	32%	41%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Much lower	Lower
	Emergency preparedness	40%	44%	32%	47%	40%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Traffic enforcement	53%	53%	50%	60%	54%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Street repair	12%	11%	7%	8%	7%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
	Street cleaning	NA	NA	20%	17%	18%	Similar	NA	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
	Street lighting	NA	NA	35%	31%	29%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Snow removal	38%	36%	36%	37%	40%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Sidewalk maintenance	NA	NA	26%	24%	26%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Traffic signal timing	NA	NA	32%	41%	37%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Bus or transit services	40%	47%	44%	36%	46%	Higher	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Garbage collection	NA	75%	67%	74%	76%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
Natural Environment	Recycling	56%	61%	45%	50%	51%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
	Yard waste pick-up	NA	38%	22%	30%	29%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
	Drinking water	NA	57%	50%	57%	49%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Natural areas preservation	NA	41%	40%	51%	51%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Open space	46%	55%	45%	43%	48%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Storm drainage	48%	49%	36%	38%	41%	Similar	Lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
Built Environment	Sewer services	NA	65%	55%	58%	63%	Similar	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower	Similar
	Power utility	NA	67%	56%	67%	67%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Utility billing	NA	NA	50%	55%	59%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Similar
	Land use, planning and zoning	NA	28%	20%	32%	30%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Code enforcement	NA	19%	11%	19%	24%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Cable television	NA	47%	44%	41%	44%	Similar	NA	Lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
Economy	Economic development	9%	15%	14%	22%	35%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower
Recreation and Wellness	County parks	78%	75%	65%	68%	65%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower	Similar	Lower
	Recreation programs	60%	60%	46%	50%	57%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Recreation centers	54%	55%	45%	47%	58%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Health services	45%	49%	49%	54%	48%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Similar	Lower	Lower
Education and Enrichment	Special events	NA	NA	40%	42%	49%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Public libraries	NA	75%	72%	72%	76%	Similar	NA	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)					2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark				
		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017
Community Engagement	Public information	35%	51%	44%	46%	44%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower

Table 5: Participation General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)					2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark				
	2009	2011	2013	2015	2017		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017
Sense of community	35%	35%	26%	34%	28%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
Recommend Jackson County	53%	61%	66%	56%	60%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
Remain in Jackson County	73%	79%	83%	78%	78%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Contacted Jackson County employees	49%	40%	31%	25%	29%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Much lower	Lower

Table 6: Participation by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)					2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark				
		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017
Safety	Stocked supplies for an emergency	NA	NA	38%	42%	30%	Lower	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Did NOT report a crime	NA	NA	70%	79%	79%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Was NOT the victim of a crime	85%	87%	79%	84%	90%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	
Mobility	Used public transportation instead of driving	NA	NA	13%	8%	2%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Much lower
	Carpooled instead of driving alone	NA	NA	46%	33%	33%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Lower
	Walked or biked instead of driving	NA	NA	41%	42%	33%	Lower	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Much lower
Natural Environment	Conserved water	NA	NA	70%	71%	75%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Similar
	Made home more energy efficient	NA	NA	86%	84%	81%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recycled at home	72%	80%	74%	70%	74%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower
Built Environment	Did NOT observe a code violation	NA	NA	46%	47%	39%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Lower
	NOT under housing cost stress	68%	70%	73%	68%	77%	Higher	Higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Economy	Purchased goods or services in Jackson County	NA	NA	98%	96%	96%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Economy will have positive impact on income	10%	13%	22%	27%	27%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Work in Jackson County	NA	NA	49%	55%	59%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Higher	Higher
Recreation and Wellness	Used Jackson County recreation centers	53%	50%	54%	44%	38%	Similar	Lower	Much lower	Similar	Lower	Lower

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)					2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark				
		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017
	Visited a County park	86%	85%	75%	73%	77%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Ate 5 portions of fruits and vegetables	NA	NA	80%	77%	73%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Lower
	Participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity	NA	NA	84%	84%	74%	Lower	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Lower
	In very good to excellent health	NA	NA	56%	55%	50%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Used Jackson County public libraries	69%	71%	61%	56%	54%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Participated in religious or spiritual activities	57%	55%	55%	52%	36%	Lower	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Attended a County-sponsored event	NA	NA	46%	40%	36%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Lower	Lower
Community Engagement	Campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate	NA	NA	28%	16%	20%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Contacted Jackson County elected officials	NA	NA	26%	10%	13%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Volunteered	57%	51%	46%	38%	34%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Participated in a club	32%	34%	28%	22%	24%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Talked to or visited with neighbors	NA	NA	95%	94%	84%	Lower	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Done a favor for a neighbor	NA	NA	85%	88%	72%	Lower	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Attended a local public meeting	31%	27%	21%	14%	16%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Watched a local public meeting	42%	41%	27%	20%	17%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Read or watched local news	NA	NA	89%	92%	74%	Lower	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Lower
	Voted in local elections	76%	71%	89%	81%	84%	Similar	Similar	Lower	Higher	Similar	Similar