

THE NCSTM
The National Citizen SurveyTM

Montgomery County, MD

Comparisons by Geographic Subgroups by Regional Service Center

2017



NRC

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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. This report discusses differences in opinion of survey respondents by Regional Service Center.

Responses in the following tables show only the proportion of respondents giving a certain answer; for example, the percent of respondents who rated the quality of life as “excellent” or “good,” or the percent of respondents who attended a public meeting more than once a month. ANOVA and chi-square tests of significance were applied to these comparisons of survey questions. A “p-value” of 0.05 or less indicates that there is less than a 5% probability that differences observed between Regional Service Centers are due to chance; or in other words, a greater than 95% probability that the differences observed are “real.” Where differences were statistically significant, they have been shaded grey.

The margin of error for all respondents (1,075 completed surveys) is generally no greater than plus or minus three percentage points around any given percent. The margin of error for subgroups is less precise. For subgroups of approximately 100 respondents, the margin of error is plus or minus 10 percentage points. Five Regional Service Centers were tracked for comparison and the number of completed surveys for each are in the figure below.

Figure 1: Reginal Service Centers

Regional Service Center	Number of Completed Surveys
Upcounty	298
Eastern Montgomery	86
Silver Spring	124
Mid-County	221
B-CC	337

Notable differences between Regional Service Centers included the following:

- When differences were observed between Regional Service Centers, several aspects of Community Characteristics received the highest ratings from residents in B-CC.
- Silver Spring residents tended often gave higher ratings to Governance than residents in other Regional Service Centers.
- Reported rates of Participation varied among Regional Service Centers. Survey respondents from Silver Spring reported the highest rates of Participation within Mobility.

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Table 1: Community Characteristics - General

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
The overall quality of life in Montgomery County	78%	80%	82%	80%	88%	82%
Overall image or reputation of Montgomery County	78%	76%	80%	78%	86%	80%
Montgomery County as a place to live	84%	84%	86%	87%	93%	88%
Your neighborhood as a place to live	77%	77%	86%	81%	88%	82%
Montgomery County as a place to raise children	80%	81%	85%	81%	91%	84%
Montgomery County as a place to retire	36%	39%	45%	40%	50%	42%
Overall appearance of Montgomery County	78%	74%	81%	73%	84%	79%

Table 2: Community Characteristics - Safety

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Overall feeling of safety in Montgomery County	77%	70%	86%	78%	87%	81%
In your neighborhood during the day	91%	88%	96%	93%	95%	93%
In Montgomery County's downtowns/commercial areas during the day	85%	86%	93%	85%	92%	88%

Table 3: Community Characteristics - Mobility

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Overall ease of getting to the places you usually have to visit	63%	49%	64%	56%	59%	60%
Traffic flow on major streets	27%	23%	30%	21%	27%	26%
Ease of public parking	48%	40%	55%	36%	41%	44%
Ease of travel by car in Montgomery County	51%	41%	53%	45%	43%	47%
Ease of travel by public transportation in Montgomery County	46%	45%	53%	48%	39%	45%
Ease of travel by bicycle in Montgomery County	40%	39%	40%	36%	44%	40%
Ease of walking in Montgomery County	54%	48%	61%	51%	50%	53%
Availability of paths and walking trails	61%	57%	65%	59%	63%	62%

Table 4: Community Characteristics - Natural Environment

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Quality of overall the natural environment in Montgomery County	78%	71%	73%	75%	84%	78%
Air quality	75%	62%	72%	73%	74%	73%
Cleanliness of Montgomery County	76%	64%	78%	71%	82%	76%

Table 5: Community Characteristics - Built Environment

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Overall "built environment" of Montgomery County (including overall design, buildings, parks and transportation systems)	72%	55%	58%	64%	62%	64%
Public places where people want to spend time	73%	73%	66%	68%	76%	72%

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Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Variety of housing options	51%	68%	44%	51%	52%	52%
Availability of affordable quality housing	28%	32%	29%	26%	25%	27%
Overall quality of new development in Montgomery County	61%	57%	67%	55%	67%	62%

Table 6: Community Characteristics - Economy

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Overall economic health of Montgomery County	72%	73%	83%	74%	86%	78%
Montgomery County as a place to work	79%	72%	81%	81%	83%	80%
Montgomery County as a place to visit	61%	57%	65%	66%	68%	64%
Employment opportunities	56%	50%	68%	59%	72%	62%
Shopping opportunities	80%	70%	75%	72%	81%	77%
Cost of living in Montgomery County	22%	7%	27%	22%	19%	21%
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Montgomery County	64%	60%	62%	67%	77%	68%
Vibrant downtowns/commercial areas	61%	58%	67%	67%	76%	68%

Table 7: Community Characteristics - Recreation and Wellness

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Health and wellness opportunities in Montgomery County	74%	67%	74%	73%	79%	75%
Fitness opportunities (including exercise classes and paths or trails, etc.)	70%	61%	74%	67%	75%	71%
Recreational opportunities	70%	71%	74%	74%	77%	74%
Availability of affordable quality food	64%	66%	72%	68%	74%	69%
Availability of affordable quality health care	61%	62%	73%	64%	72%	66%
Availability of preventive health services	69%	54%	79%	62%	73%	69%
Availability of affordable quality mental health care	58%	46%	68%	52%	58%	57%

Table 8: Community Characteristics - Education and Enrichment

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Overall opportunities for education and enrichment	80%	86%	78%	80%	92%	84%
Availability of affordable quality child care/preschool	48%	45%	50%	42%	53%	49%
K-12 education	81%	71%	89%	72%	91%	82%
Adult educational opportunities	71%	69%	68%	65%	78%	71%
Opportunities to attend cultural/arts/music activities	74%	66%	80%	77%	77%	76%
Opportunities to participate in religious or spiritual events and activities	80%	76%	91%	81%	86%	83%

Table 9: Community Characteristics - Community Engagement

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	65%	64%	81%	68%	74%	70%

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Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Opportunities to volunteer	71%	71%	84%	80%	77%	76%
Opportunities to participate in community matters	64%	66%	76%	68%	73%	69%
Openness and acceptance of the community toward people of diverse backgrounds	75%	57%	87%	71%	77%	75%
Neighborliness of residents in Montgomery County	59%	51%	63%	54%	56%	57%

Table 10: Governance - General

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Montgomery County	79%	75%	80%	76%	86%	81%
The value of services for the taxes paid to Montgomery County	45%	38%	62%	41%	55%	49%
The overall direction that Montgomery County is taking	53%	53%	74%	53%	61%	58%
The job Montgomery County government does at welcoming resident involvement	52%	52%	64%	43%	50%	52%
Overall confidence in Montgomery County government	55%	53%	65%	52%	60%	57%
Generally acting in the best interest of the community	53%	56%	72%	50%	59%	57%
Being honest	56%	49%	70%	53%	64%	59%
Treating all residents fairly	62%	49%	61%	46%	64%	58%
Overall customer service by Montgomery County employees (police, receptionists, planners, etc.)	66%	61%	69%	77%	73%	70%
The Federal Government	54%	44%	46%	39%	49%	48%

Table 11: Governance - Safety

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Police services	81%	71%	86%	87%	91%	85%
Fire services	96%	81%	93%	95%	96%	95%
Ambulance or emergency medical services	94%	83%	98%	96%	94%	94%
Crime prevention	64%	63%	70%	72%	80%	70%
Fire prevention and education	78%	68%	79%	78%	87%	80%
Animal control	65%	58%	81%	69%	77%	70%
Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations)	64%	66%	60%	65%	64%	64%

Table 12: Governance - Mobility

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Traffic enforcement	61%	46%	69%	54%	57%	58%
Street repair	46%	29%	50%	33%	39%	41%
Street cleaning	63%	44%	63%	45%	60%	57%
Street lighting	59%	55%	77%	51%	64%	61%
Snow removal	63%	54%	62%	53%	62%	60%

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Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Sidewalk maintenance	61%	42%	64%	48%	58%	57%
Traffic signal timing	52%	46%	54%	43%	50%	50%
Bus or transit services	61%	47%	66%	61%	63%	61%

Table 13: Governance - Natural Environment

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Garbage collection	80%	86%	86%	83%	77%	81%
Recycling	82%	88%	79%	83%	76%	80%
Yard waste pick-up	74%	86%	89%	81%	79%	79%
Drinking water	75%	83%	73%	73%	74%	75%
Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts	60%	58%	61%	53%	61%	59%
Montgomery County open space	64%	63%	60%	57%	61%	61%

Table 14: Governance - Built Environment

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Storm drainage	77%	71%	77%	70%	70%	73%
Sewer services	81%	78%	89%	76%	78%	80%
Power (electric and/or gas) utility	79%	74%	73%	72%	71%	74%
Utility billing	61%	48%	66%	62%	62%	61%
Land use, planning and zoning	55%	42%	50%	47%	50%	50%
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc.)	56%	34%	59%	44%	60%	53%
Cable television	55%	58%	69%	44%	61%	56%

Table 15: Governance - Economy

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Economic development	60%	53%	71%	58%	71%	64%

Table 16: Governance - Recreation and Wellness

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
County parks	85%	72%	90%	85%	85%	85%
Montgomery County recreation programs or classes	76%	73%	89%	77%	81%	79%
Montgomery County recreation centers or facilities	78%	74%	83%	80%	79%	79%
Health services	70%	76%	73%	73%	78%	74%

Table 17: Governance - Education and Enrichment

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Public library services	83%	77%	90%	85%	88%	86%

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Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
County-sponsored special events	68%	59%	82%	64%	70%	69%

Table 18: Governance - Community Engagement

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Public information services	70%	66%	80%	73%	79%	74%

Table 19: Participation General

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Sense of community	54%	46%	53%	53%	60%	55%
Recommend living in Montgomery County to someone who asks	83%	83%	88%	86%	92%	87%
Remain in Montgomery County for the next five years	82%	83%	76%	86%	85%	83%
Contacted Montgomery County (in-person, phone, email or web) for help or information	42%	61%	51%	50%	44%	47%

Table 20: Participation - Safety

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Was NOT the victim of a crime	89%	84%	91%	90%	89%	89%
Did NOT report a crime	82%	69%	79%	84%	86%	82%
Stocked supplies in preparation for an emergency	35%	32%	35%	43%	32%	35%

Table 21: Participation - Mobility

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Walked or biked instead of driving	50%	47%	81%	52%	64%	58%
Carpooled with other adults or children instead of driving alone	45%	26%	51%	39%	42%	42%
Used Ride On bus, Metrobus, Metro, MARC or other public transportation instead of driving	56%	53%	81%	63%	74%	66%

Table 22: Participation - Natural Environment

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Recycle at home	96%	97%	99%	94%	97%	96%
Made efforts to make your home more energy efficient	83%	79%	67%	75%	77%	77%
Made efforts to conserve water	83%	79%	75%	78%	79%	80%

Table 23: Participation - Built Environment

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
NOT under housing cost stress	55%	49%	59%	60%	67%	60%
Did NOT observe a code violation	68%	53%	61%	54%	74%	65%

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Table 24: Participation - Economy

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Purchase goods or services from a business located in Montgomery County	98%	100%	98%	97%	98%	98%
Economy will have positive impact on income	31%	26%	39%	28%	33%	32%
Work in Montgomery County	61%	50%	35%	53%	44%	50%

Table 25: Participation - Recreation and Wellness

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Used Montgomery County recreation centers or their services	57%	60%	55%	63%	59%	59%
Visited a neighborhood park or County park	91%	82%	90%	89%	88%	89%
Eat at least 5 portions of fruits and vegetables a day	89%	87%	95%	94%	89%	90%
Participate in moderate or vigorous physical activity	89%	88%	91%	89%	90%	90%
Reported being in "very good" or "excellent" health	63%	50%	80%	71%	74%	69%

Table 26: Participation - Education and Enrichment

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Used Montgomery County public libraries or their services	71%	75%	78%	73%	65%	71%
Participated in religious or spiritual activities in Montgomery County	51%	60%	39%	48%	51%	50%
Attended a County-sponsored event	48%	42%	62%	43%	45%	48%

Table 27: Participation - Community Engagement

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Campaigned or advocated for an issue, cause or candidate	17%	31%	35%	28%	28%	26%
Contacted Montgomery County elected officials (in-person, phone, email or web) to express your opinion	15%	29%	31%	20%	17%	20%
Volunteered your time to some group/activity in Montgomery County	38%	43%	39%	41%	50%	43%
Participated in a club	27%	33%	26%	31%	32%	30%
Talked to or visited with your immediate neighbors	84%	89%	79%	83%	91%	85%
Done a favor for a neighbor	74%	89%	69%	81%	80%	78%
Attended a local public meeting	26%	32%	28%	21%	21%	25%
Watched (online or on television) a local public meeting	27%	31%	22%	25%	25%	26%
Read or watch local news (via television, paper, computer, etc.)	82%	84%	77%	94%	90%	86%
Vote in local elections	76%	93%	84%	86%	76%	80%

Table 28: Community Focus Areas

Percent rating positively (e.g., essential/very important)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Overall feeling of safety in Montgomery County	94%	88%	85%	91%	92%	91%

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Percent rating positively (e.g., essential/very important)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Overall ease of getting to the places you usually have to visit	90%	95%	87%	87%	89%	89%
Quality of the overall natural environment in Montgomery County	87%	88%	93%	83%	87%	87%
Overall "built environment" of Montgomery County (including overall design, buildings, parks and transportation systems)	77%	81%	89%	75%	81%	80%
Health and wellness opportunities in Montgomery County	85%	74%	68%	81%	74%	78%
Overall opportunities for education and enrichment	86%	83%	83%	81%	83%	84%
Overall economic health of Montgomery County	89%	89%	90%	88%	88%	88%
Sense of community	78%	64%	77%	71%	66%	72%

Table 29: Montgomery County Aspects

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
MC311 non-emergency services and information line	64%	69%	69%	76%	82%	72%
Services for seniors	66%	74%	77%	77%	75%	73%
Services for youth	62%	60%	78%	71%	78%	70%
Election/voter services	77%	72%	85%	75%	83%	79%
Permitting services	59%	51%	68%	59%	66%	61%
Consumer protection	63%	54%	76%	51%	60%	60%
Alcohol distribution and sales	59%	55%	31%	43%	50%	50%
The State of Maryland	68%	58%	58%	61%	66%	64%

Table 30: Potential County Focus Areas

Thinking now about some more specific potential areas of focus, please indicate the level of effort you would like Montgomery County to place on making changes to each of the following in the coming two years? (Percent high or medium effort)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Affordable housing	82%	83%	87%	88%	83%	84%
Crime	94%	92%	89%	96%	95%	94%
The environment	86%	90%	89%	90%	92%	89%
The pace of growth	81%	75%	80%	73%	76%	77%
Public schools (K-12)	93%	95%	93%	94%	92%	93%
Social services for those in need	83%	87%	93%	87%	91%	88%
Taxes	86%	83%	77%	84%	80%	83%
Traffic	92%	93%	84%	93%	91%	91%
Jobs and business growth	89%	89%	81%	85%	79%	84%
Quality of life areas (recreation, libraries, arts and culture)	86%	82%	85%	84%	88%	86%

Table 31: Aspects of Montgomery County K-12 Public Schools

Please rate each of the following aspects of Montgomery County K-12 public schools. Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Class size	56%	44%	61%	55%	47%	53%

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Please rate each of the following aspects of Montgomery County K-12 public schools. Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
Teacher/student ratio	53%	46%	49%	51%	47%	50%
Student safety	65%	52%	68%	67%	75%	68%
School facilities	73%	60%	65%	69%	73%	70%
Food/cafeteria	50%	36%	38%	42%	41%	44%
Accessibility of teachers and administrators	70%	59%	65%	66%	79%	71%
Overall education	74%	72%	75%	69%	83%	76%

Table 32: Potential Information Sources

Please indicate the extent to which you use each of the following potential sources for information about County services, activities and events. Percent rating major or minor source	Regional Service Center					Overall
	Upcounty	Eastern Montgomery	Silver Spring	Mid-County	B-CC	
County website (www.montgomerycountymd.gov)	81%	79%	80%	81%	81%	81%
MC311	47%	55%	31%	57%	41%	46%
Local newspapers and/or their websites	68%	74%	70%	73%	74%	71%
Radio (e.g., WTOP, etc.)	73%	66%	58%	75%	66%	69%
"Mosaic" radio program	20%	12%	8%	17%	10%	14%
"Montgomery al Día" radio program	21%	18%	7%	15%	9%	14%
Local television stations	67%	58%	41%	71%	55%	60%
County cable television (Verizon ch. 30, Comcast and RCN ch. 6)	45%	32%	17%	39%	29%	34%
Civic association, homeowner association newsletters, or community listservs	57%	40%	49%	54%	63%	56%
Nextdoor app or website	34%	24%	23%	36%	30%	31%
Montgomery County's social network sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, etc.)	43%	29%	34%	34%	27%	34%
Alert Montgomery	62%	41%	44%	52%	51%	53%
Blog websites	29%	17%	31%	24%	18%	24%
Publications from County government or elected officials (mailings, publications, online e newsletters, Paperless Airplane)	56%	44%	57%	53%	48%	53%
Town hall meetings or other public meetings	35%	30%	29%	34%	26%	31%
Word of mouth	79%	68%	84%	77%	78%	78%