# THE NCS™
## The National Community Survey™

# Montgomery County, MD
Dashboard Summary of Findings

2019

**NRC**
National Research Center Inc.

**ICMA**
Leaders at the Core of Better Communities

# Summary

The National Community 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 summarizes Montgomery County's performance in the eight facets of community livability with the "General" rating as a summary of results from the overarching questions not shown within any of the eight facets. The "Overall" represents the community pillar in its entirety (the eight facets and general).

By summarizing resident ratings across the eight facets and three pillars of a livable community, a picture of Montgomery County's community livability emerges. Below, the color of each community facet summarizes how residents rated each of the pillars that support it – Community Characteristics, Governance and Participation. When most ratings were higher than the benchmark, the color is the darkest shade; when most ratings were lower than the benchmark, the color is the lightest shade. A mix of ratings (higher and lower than the benchmark) results in a color between the extremes.

Broadly, ratings across all three pillars of community livability tended to be positive and similar to the national benchmarks. Within Community Characteristics, assessments of Education and Enrichment were particularly strong and Montgomery County residents also gave higher than average ratings to Recreation and Wellness within Governance. Further, survey respondents reported strong rates of participation within Built Environment. This information can be helpful in identifying the areas that merit more attention.

Figure 1: Dashboard Summary

| | Community Characteristics | | | Governance | | | Participation | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Higher | Similar | Lower | Higher | Similar | Lower | Higher | Similar | Lower |
| Overall | 9 | 41 | 2 | 3 | 43 | 0 | 3 | 33 | 0 |
| General | 0 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Safety | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Mobility | 1 | 7 | 0 | 1 | 7 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Natural Environment | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Built Environment | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Economy | 4 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Recreation and Wellness | 0 | 7 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Education and Enrichment | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Community Engagement | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 11 | 0 |

| National Benchmark | |
|---|---|
| | Higher |
| | Similar |
| | Lower |

## Figure 2: Detailed Dashboard

| | Community Characteristics | Trend[1] | Benchmark | Percent positive | Governance | Trend | Benchmark | Percent positive | Participation | Trend | Benchmark | Percent positive |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| General | Overall appearance | ↔ | ↔ | 81% | Customer service | ↑ | ↔ | 77% | Recommend Montgomery County | ↔ | ↔ | 88% |
| | Overall quality of life | ↔ | ↔ | 85% | Services provided by Montgomery County | ↔ | ↔ | 84% | Remain in Montgomery County | ↔ | ↔ | 84% |
| | Place to retire | ↔ | ↓ | 43% | Services provided by the Federal Government | ↑ | ↔ | 53% | Contacted Montgomery County employees | ↔ | ↔ | 47% |
| | Place to raise children | ↔ | ↔ | 86% | | | | | | | | |
| | Place to live | ↔ | ↔ | 90% | | | | | | | | |
| | Neighborhood | ↑ | ↔ | 87% | | | | | | | | |
| | Overall image | ↔ | ↔ | 84% | | | | | | | | |
| Safety | Overall feeling of safety | ↔ | ↔ | 84% | Police | ↔ | ↔ | 84% | Was NOT the victim of a crime | ↔ | ↔ | 89% |
| | Safe in neighborhood | ↔ | ↔ | 94% | Crime prevention | ↔ | ↔ | 72% | Did NOT report a crime | ↔ | ↔ | 86% |
| | Safe downtown/commercial area | ↔ | ↔ | 91% | Fire | ↔ | ↔ | 96% | Stocked supplies for an emergency | ↔ | ↔ | 38% |
| | | | | | Fire prevention | ↔ | ↔ | 83% | | | | |
| | | | | | Ambulance/EMS | ↔ | ↔ | 94% | | | | |
| | | | | | Emergency preparedness | ↑ | ↔ | 71% | | | | |
| | | | | | Animal control | ↔ | ↔ | 69% | | | | |
| Mobility | Traffic flow | ↑ | ↔ | 32% | Traffic enforcement | ↔ | ↔ | 62% | Carpooled instead of driving alone | ↔ | ↔ | 44% |
| | Travel by car | ↔ | ↔ | 48% | Street repair | ↔ | ↔ | 42% | Walked or biked instead of driving | ↔ | ↔ | 60% |
| | Travel by bicycle | ↔ | ↔ | 43% | Street cleaning | ↑ | ↔ | 63% | Used public transportation instead of driving | ↔ | ↑↑ | 70% |
| | Ease of walking | ↑ | ↔ | 58% | Street lighting | ↑ | ↔ | 70% | | | | |
| | Travel by public transportation | ↑ | ↑ | 51% | Snow removal | ↑ | ↔ | 72% | | | | |
| | Overall ease travel | ↑ | ↔ | 67% | Sidewalk maintenance | ↑ | ↔ | 65% | | | | |
| | Public parking | ↑ | ↔ | 49% | Traffic signal timing | ↑ | ↔ | 57% | | | | |
| | Paths and walking trails | ↑ | ↔ | 66% | Bus or transit services | ↑ | ↑ | 79% | | | | |
| Natural Environment | Overall natural environment | ↔ | ↔ | 82% | Garbage collection | ↑ | ↔ | 86% | Recycled at home | ↔ | ↔ | 97% |
| | Air quality | ↔ | ↔ | 71% | Recycling | ↑ | ↔ | 86% | Conserved water | ↔ | ↔ | 80% |
| | Cleanliness | ↔ | ↔ | 78% | Yard waste pick-up | ↑ | ↔ | 85% | Made home more energy efficient | ↔ | ↔ | 76% |
| | | | | | Drinking water | ↔ | ↔ | 78% | | | | |
| | | | | | Open space | ↑ | ↔ | 67% | | | | |
| | | | | | Natural areas preservation | ↑ | ↔ | 69% | | | | |
| Built Environment | New development in Montgomery County | ↔ | ↔ | 66% | Sewer services | ↑ | ↔ | 87% | NOT experiencing housing cost stress | ↔ | ↔ | 59% |
| | Affordable quality housing | ↔ | ↔ | 25% | Storm drainage | ↔ | ↔ | 75% | Did NOT observe a code violation | ↔ | ↑ | 67% |
| | Housing options | ↔ | ↔ | 54% | Power utility | ↑ | ↔ | 83% | | | | |
| | Overall built environment | ↑ | ↔ | 71% | Utility billing | ↑ | ↔ | 70% | | | | |
| | Public places | ↑ | ↔ | 77% | Land use, planning and zoning | ↑ | ↔ | 55% | | | | |
| | | | | | Code enforcement | ↑ | ↔ | 58% | | | | |
| | | | | | Cable television | ↑ | ↔ | 62% | | | | |

[1] "Trend" refers to the data from Montgomery County's 2017 iteration of The NCS compared to 2019

**Legend**

↑↑ Much higher  ↑ Higher  ↔ Similar  ↓ Lower  ↓↓ Much lower  * Not available

| | Community Characteristics | Trend | Benchmark | Percent positive | Governance | Trend | Benchmark | Percent positive | Participation | Trend | Benchmark | Percent positive |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Economy** | Overall economic health | ↔ | ↔ | 78% | Economic development | ↔ | ↔ | 62% | Economy will have positive impact on income | ↓ | ↔ | 27% |
| | Shopping opportunities | ↑ | ↑↑ | 85% | | | | | Purchased goods or services in Montgomery County | ↔ | ↔ | 98% |
| | Employment opportunities | ↔ | ↑ | 66% | | | | | Work in Montgomery County | ↔ | ↔ | 51% |
| | Place to visit | ↑ | ↔ | 70% | | | | | | | | |
| | Cost of living | ↔ | ↓ | 22% | | | | | | | | |
| | Vibrant downtown/commercial area | ↑ | ↑ | 75% | | | | | | | | |
| | Place to work | ↔ | ↑ | 80% | | | | | | | | |
| | Business and services | ↑ | ↔ | 75% | | | | | | | | |
| **Recreation and Wellness** | Fitness opportunities | ↔ | ↔ | 74% | County parks | ↑ | ↔ | 90% | In very good to excellent health | ↔ | ↔ | 66% |
| | Recreational opportunities | ↔ | ↔ | 77% | Recreation centers | ↑ | ↑ | 85% | Used Montgomery County recreation centers | ↔ | ↔ | 62% |
| | Health care | ↔ | ↔ | 64% | Recreation programs | ↑ | ↑ | 86% | Visited a County park | ↔ | ↔ | 89% |
| | Food | ↔ | ↔ | 72% | Health services | ↔ | ↔ | 77% | Ate 5 portions of fruits and vegetables | ↔ | ↔ | 90% |
| | Mental health care | ↓ | ↔ | 53% | | | | | Participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity | ↔ | ↔ | 88% |
| | Health and wellness | ↑ | ↔ | 82% | | | | | | | | |
| | Preventive health services | ↔ | ↔ | 72% | | | | | | | | |
| **Education and Enrichment** | K-12 education | ↔ | ↔ | 82% | Public libraries | ↑ | ↔ | 92% | Used Montgomery County public libraries | ↔ | ↑ | 74% |
| | Cultural/arts/music activities | ↔ | ↑ | 76% | Special events | ↑ | ↔ | 74% | Participated in religious or spiritual activities | ↔ | ↔ | 48% |
| | Child care/preschool | ↓ | ↔ | 44% | | | | | Attended a County-sponsored event | ↔ | ↔ | 45% |
| | Religious or spiritual events and activities | ↔ | ↔ | 85% | | | | | | | | |
| | Adult education | ↑ | ↑ | 76% | | | | | | | | |
| | Overall education and enrichment | ↔ | ↑ | 85% | | | | | | | | |
| **Community Engagement** | Opportunities to participate in community matters | ↑ | ↔ | 74% | Public information | ↑ | ↔ | 82% | Sense of community | ↑ | ↔ | 60% |
| | Opportunities to volunteer | ↔ | ↔ | 79% | Overall direction | ↔ | ↔ | 57% | Voted in local elections | ↔ | ↔ | 83% |
| | Openness and acceptance | ↔ | ↑ | 75% | Value of services for taxes paid | ↑ | ↔ | 57% | Talked to or visited with neighbors | ↔ | ↔ | 87% |
| | Social events and activities | ↔ | ↔ | 71% | Welcoming resident involvement | ↑ | ↔ | 57% | Attended a local public meeting | ↔ | ↔ | 24% |
| | Neighborliness | ↑ | ↔ | 62% | Confidence in County government | ↑ | ↔ | 62% | Watched a local public meeting | ↔ | ↔ | 25% |
| | | | | | Acting in the best interest of Montgomery County | ↑ | ↔ | 61% | Volunteered | ↔ | ↔ | 40% |
| | | | | | Being honest | ↔ | ↔ | 59% | Participated in a club | ↔ | ↔ | 26% |
| | | | | | Treating all residents fairly | ↔ | ↔ | 55% | Campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate | ↔ | ↔ | 26% |
| | | | | | | | | | Contacted Montgomery County elected officials | ↔ | ↔ | 22% |
| | | | | | | | | | Read or watched local news | ↔ | ↔ | 85% |
| | | | | | | | | | Done a favor for a neighbor | ↔ | ↔ | 78% |

**Legend**

↑↑  Much higher   ↑  Higher   ↔  Similar   ↓  Lower   ↓↓  Much lower   *  Not available