



THE NCSTM
The National Community SurveyTM

Jackson County, MI

Trends over Time

2019



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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 discusses trends over time, comparing the 2019 ratings for Jackson County to its previous survey results in 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, and 2017. 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 2017 and 2019 surveys, otherwise the comparisons between 2017 and 2019 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 2019 generally remained stable. Of the 134 items for which comparisons were available, 114 items were rated similarly in 2017 and 2019, eight items showed a decrease in ratings and 12 showed an increase in ratings. Notable trends over time included the following:

- Several ratings increases were noted from 2017 to 2019 within the pillar of Community Characteristics; these included safe downtown/commercial area, ease of travel by car, the overall ease of travel in Jackson County, employment opportunities, cultural/arts/music activities. Only one rating within this pillar, the overall appearance of the County, decreased since 2017.
- In Governance, ratings declined for several aspects: traffic enforcement, recycling, open space, natural areas preservation, recreation centers, and recreation programs. However, scores for crime prevention and land use, planning and zoning improved in 2019.
- Residents in 2019 were more likely than in 2017 to have used Jackson County recreation centers, participated in religious or spiritual activities, volunteered, or done a favor for a neighbor, but less likely to have observed a code violation or to work in Jackson County.

The National Community Survey™

Table 1: Community Characteristics General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)						2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark					
	2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019
Overall quality of life	48%	45%	50%	49%	51%	49%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Much lower
Overall image	27%	25%	23%	20%	19%	22%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
Place to live	58%	52%	59%	59%	54%	56%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
Neighborhood	75%	71%	79%	69%	72%	73%	Similar	Lower	Much lower	Similar	Lower	Lower	Similar
Place to raise children	62%	51%	53%	58%	50%	52%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Much lower	Much lower
Place to retire	36%	35%	31%	41%	32%	39%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
Overall appearance	40%	33%	37%	37%	47%	38%	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Much lower

Table 2: Community Characteristics by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)						2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark					
		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019
Safety	Overall feeling of safety	NA	NA	49%	51%	39%	40%	Similar	NA	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
	Safe in neighborhood	92%	84%	93%	83%	83%	88%	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Safe downtown/commercial area	77%	76%	79%	71%	62%	72%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower
Mobility	Overall ease of travel	NA	NA	68%	70%	45%	67%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar
	Paths and walking trails	55%	56%	57%	58%	57%	57%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Ease of walking	44%	49%	53%	50%	45%	49%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Travel by bicycle	NA	49%	40%	41%	29%	32%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Travel by public transportation	39%	NA	36%	41%	25%	25%	Similar	Lower	NA	Lower	Similar	Lower	Similar
	Travel by car	59%	59%	65%	65%	51%	62%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Public parking	NA	NA	49%	46%	38%	45%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Traffic flow	NA	49%	49%	56%	42%	46%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Overall natural environment	52%	55%	65%	59%	58%	56%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower
Natural Environment	Cleanliness	38%	31%	39%	37%	47%	40%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Much lower
	Air quality	NA	64%	66%	64%	65%	66%	Similar	NA	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Lower

The National Community Survey™

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)						2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark					
		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019
Built Environment	Overall built environment	NA	NA	37%	43%	39%	42%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	New development in Jackson County	15%	20%	22%	29%	42%	49%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Affordable quality housing	NA	39%	38%	39%	31%	37%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Housing options	NA	42%	41%	39%	34%	35%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Public places	NA	NA	43%	44%	40%	46%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
Economy	Overall economic health	NA	NA	13%	17%	24%	24%	Similar	NA	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
	Vibrant downtown/commercial area	NA	NA	19%	22%	32%	35%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower	Similar
	Business and services	39%	38%	38%	47%	42%	48%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Cost of living	NA	NA	40%	43%	43%	48%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Shopping opportunities	45%	43%	42%	42%	42%	45%	Similar	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Employment opportunities	7%	6%	12%	21%	27%	37%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Place to visit	NA	NA	32%	35%	32%	34%	Similar	NA	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
	Place to work	26%	26%	37%	44%	47%	50%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
Recreation and Wellness	Health and wellness	NA	NA	51%	52%	46%	50%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Mental health care	NA	NA	32%	37%	39%	33%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Similar	Similar	Lower
	Preventive health services	45%	47%	52%	51%	54%	54%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Health care	30%	40%	49%	50%	53%	47%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Food	55%	55%	51%	52%	61%	55%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Recreational opportunities	47%	48%	48%	46%	45%	52%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Fitness opportunities	NA	NA	55%	51%	50%	48%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
Education and Enrichment	Education and enrichment opportunities	NA	NA	47%	45%	43%	45%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Religious or spiritual events and activities	67%	64%	69%	72%	68%	72%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Cultural/arts/music activities	34%	37%	41%	39%	36%	45%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower	Similar
	Adult education	NA	NA	48%	46%	49%	44%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	K-12 education	NA	47%	51%	54%	58%	56%	Similar	NA	Much	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower

The National Community Survey™

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)						2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark					
	2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019
									lower				
Child care/preschool	NA	33%	40%	47%	34%	33%	Similar	NA	Lower	Similar	Similar	Lower	Lower
Social events and activities	39%	37%	36%	38%	41%	45%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower	Similar
Neighborliness	NA	NA	33%	46%	37%	42%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
Openness and acceptance	38%	37%	38%	40%	37%	41%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
Opportunities to participate in community matters	48%	48%	42%	49%	48%	54%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
Opportunities to volunteer	69%	73%	64%	61%	69%	64%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar

Table 3: Governance General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)						2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark					
	2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019
Services provided by Jackson County	39%	44%	45%	48%	47%	45%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
Customer service	72%	60%	50%	57%	55%	50%	Similar	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
Value of services for taxes paid	25%	29%	33%	36%	31%	28%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
Overall direction	19%	24%	30%	35%	45%	42%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Similar	Lower
Welcoming resident involvement	24%	26%	23%	30%	28%	29%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
Confidence in County government	NA	NA	23%	25%	33%	30%	Similar	NA	NA	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
Acting in the best interest of Jackson County	NA	NA	32%	32%	33%	32%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
Being honest	NA	NA	29%	25%	35%	34%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower
Treating all residents fairly	NA	NA	27%	29%	34%	35%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
Services provided by the Federal Government	23%	20%	20%	30%	32%	28%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar

The National Community Survey™

Table 4: Governance by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)						2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark					
		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019
Safety	Police	62%	66%	65%	74%	72%	65%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Lower
	Fire	NA	76%	76%	86%	82%	81%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Ambulance/EMS	NA	79%	79%	87%	83%	81%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Crime prevention	41%	43%	40%	47%	27%	42%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Much lower	Lower
	Fire prevention	NA	59%	58%	66%	58%	58%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Lower	Lower
	Animal control	32%	36%	31%	32%	41%	43%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower
	Emergency preparedness	40%	44%	32%	47%	40%	39%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
Mobility	Traffic enforcement	53%	53%	50%	60%	54%	43%	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Lower
	Street repair	12%	11%	7%	8%	7%	14%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
	Street cleaning	NA	NA	20%	17%	18%	20%	Similar	NA	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
	Street lighting	NA	NA	35%	31%	29%	29%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Snow removal	38%	36%	36%	37%	40%	44%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Sidewalk maintenance	NA	NA	26%	24%	26%	29%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Traffic signal timing	NA	NA	32%	41%	37%	39%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Similar	Similar	Lower
	Bus or transit services	40%	47%	44%	36%	46%	43%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Natural Environment	Garbage collection	NA	75%	67%	74%	76%	72%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Lower
	Recycling	56%	61%	45%	50%	51%	34%	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
	Yard waste pick-up	NA	38%	22%	30%	29%	23%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
	Drinking water	NA	57%	50%	57%	49%	52%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Natural areas preservation	NA	41%	40%	51%	51%	39%	Lower	NA	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Lower
	Open space	46%	55%	45%	43%	48%	39%	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower

The National Community Survey™

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)						2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark					
		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019
Built Environment	Storm drainage	48%	49%	36%	38%	41%	34%	Similar	Lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Sewer services	NA	65%	55%	58%	63%	61%	Similar	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Power utility	NA	67%	56%	67%	67%	71%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Utility billing	NA	NA	50%	55%	59%	65%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Land use, planning and zoning	NA	28%	20%	32%	30%	41%	Higher	NA	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower	Similar
	Code enforcement	NA	19%	11%	19%	24%	25%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower
	Cable television	NA	47%	44%	41%	44%	39%	Similar	NA	Lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
Economy	Economic development	9%	15%	14%	22%	35%	41%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Similar
Recreation and Wellness	County parks	78%	75%	65%	68%	65%	64%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower	Similar	Lower	Similar
	Recreation programs	60%	60%	46%	50%	57%	49%	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Recreation centers	54%	55%	45%	47%	58%	42%	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Health services	45%	49%	49%	54%	48%	53%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Similar	Lower	Lower	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Special events	NA	NA	40%	42%	49%	41%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Public libraries	NA	75%	72%	72%	76%	78%	Similar	NA	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Public information	35%	51%	44%	46%	44%	47%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower

Table 5: Participation General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)						2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark					
	2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019
Sense of community	35%	35%	26%	34%	28%	26%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
Recommend Jackson County	53%	61%	66%	56%	60%	65%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
Remain in Jackson County	73%	79%	83%	78%	78%	82%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Contacted Jackson County employees	49%	40%	31%	25%	29%	32%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower

The National Community Survey™

Table 6: Participation by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)						2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark					
		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019
Safety	Stocked supplies for an emergency	NA	NA	38%	42%	30%	30%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Did NOT report a crime	NA	NA	70%	79%	79%	74%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Was NOT the victim of a crime	85%	87%	79%	84%	90%	87%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Used public transportation instead of driving	NA	NA	13%	8%	2%	9%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Much lower	Lower
	Carpooled instead of driving alone	NA	NA	46%	33%	33%	37%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar
	Walked or biked instead of driving	NA	NA	41%	42%	33%	36%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Much lower	Much lower
Natural Environment	Conserved water	NA	NA	70%	71%	75%	68%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Similar	Lower
	Made home more energy efficient	NA	NA	86%	84%	81%	84%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recycled at home	72%	80%	74%	70%	74%	72%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
Built Environment	Did NOT observe a code violation	NA	NA	46%	47%	39%	47%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar
	NOT under housing cost stress	68%	70%	73%	68%	77%	79%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Higher
Economy	Purchased goods or services in Jackson County	NA	NA	98%	96%	96%	97%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Economy will have positive impact on income	10%	13%	22%	27%	27%	34%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Work in Jackson County	NA	NA	49%	55%	59%	49%	Lower	NA	NA	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar
Recreation and Wellness	Used Jackson County recreation centers	53%	50%	54%	44%	38%	49%	Higher	Lower	Much lower	Similar	Lower	Lower	Similar
	Visited a County park	86%	85%	75%	73%	77%	75%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Ate 5 portions of fruits and vegetables	NA	NA	80%	77%	73%	81%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar
	Participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity	NA	NA	84%	84%	74%	78%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar
	In very good to excellent health	NA	NA	56%	55%	50%	49%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar

The National Community Survey™

		Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)						2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark					
		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019
Education and Enrichment	Used Jackson County public libraries	69%	71%	61%	56%	54%	55%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Participated in religious or spiritual activities	57%	55%	55%	52%	36%	52%	Higher	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Attended a County-sponsored event	NA	NA	46%	40%	36%	38%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower
Community Engagement	Campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate	NA	NA	28%	16%	20%	25%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Contacted Jackson County elected officials	NA	NA	26%	10%	13%	18%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Volunteered	57%	51%	46%	38%	34%	42%	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Participated in a club	32%	34%	28%	22%	24%	26%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Talked to or visited with neighbors	NA	NA	95%	94%	84%	89%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Done a favor for a neighbor	NA	NA	85%	88%	72%	85%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Attended a local public meeting	31%	27%	21%	14%	16%	15%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Watched a local public meeting	42%	41%	27%	20%	17%	19%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Read or watched local news	NA	NA	89%	92%	74%	81%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar
	Voted in local elections	76%	71%	89%	81%	84%	87%	Similar	Similar	Lower	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar