



THE NCSTM
The National Citizen SurveyTM

Unincorporated Jefferson County, CO

Trends over Time

2015



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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 2015 ratings for Jefferson County to its previous survey results in 2010 and 2004. Additional reports and technical appendices are available under separate cover.

Trend data for Jefferson 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 four percentage points between the 2010 and 2015 surveys, otherwise the comparison between 2010 and 2015 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 Jefferson County for 2015 generally remained stable. Of the 61 items for which comparisons were available, 29 items were rated similarly in 2010 and 2015, 18 items showed a decrease in ratings and 14 showed an increase in ratings. Notable trends over time included the following:

- Within the pillar of Community Characteristics, eight aspects saw an increase in ratings from 2010 to 2015. These were: overall natural environment, air quality, employment opportunities, Jefferson County as a place to work, the availability of affordable quality health care, opportunities to attend cultural/arts/music activities and the availability of affordable quality child care/preschool. Four aspects of Community Characteristics decreased since 2010, which were ease of travel by car, availability of affordable quality housing, Jefferson County as a place to raise children and the overall image of Jefferson County.
- In Governance, aspects of Safety and Mobility saw the most decreases in ratings over time. Aspects for which ratings decreased included crime prevention, fire prevention, animal control, traffic enforcement, street repair, street cleaning, snow removal and sidewalk maintenance. Ratings for open space within the facet of Natural Environment also decreased. However, 2015 ratings for economic development and health services increased since 2010.
- Trend information was not available for most aspects of Participation. However, where trend information was available, six aspects were rated similarly in 2010 and 2015, five aspects decreased in ratings and four aspects increased in ratings. Aspects for which participation rates have decreased since 2010 included using Jefferson County recreation centers, using Jefferson County public libraries, attending local public meetings, volunteering and contacting Jefferson County employees. Aspects that saw an increase in rates of participation included not being under housing cost stress, believing that the economy would have a positive impact on income, voting in local elections and watching local public meetings.

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Table 1: Community Characteristics General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			2015 rating compared to 2010	Comparison to benchmark		
	2004	2010	2015		2004	2010	2015
Overall quality of life	90%	95%	92%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Similar
Overall image	NA	84%	76%	Lower	NA	Much higher	Similar
Place to live	91%	95%	94%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
Neighborhood	89%	92%	92%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
Place to raise children	86%	93%	88%	Lower	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
Place to retire	67%	71%	71%	Similar	Similar	Much higher	Similar
Overall appearance	NA	NA	86%	NA	NA	NA	Similar

Table 2: Community Characteristics by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)			2015 rating compared to 2010	Comparison to benchmark		
		2004	2010	2015		2004	2010	2015
Safety	Overall feeling of safety	NA	NA	87%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Safe in neighborhood	96%	96%	96%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Similar
	Safe downtown/commercial area	90%	88%	90%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Overall ease of travel	NA	NA	77%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Paths and walking trails	NA	NA	70%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Ease of walking	NA	56%	59%	Similar	NA	Lower	Similar
Mobility	Travel by bicycle	NA	51%	52%	Similar	NA	Higher	Similar
	Travel by car	62%	70%	64%	Lower	Higher	Much higher	Similar
	Traffic flow	36%	49%	51%	Similar	NA	Much higher	Similar
	Overall natural environment	NA	84%	91%	Higher	NA	Much higher	Higher
Natural Environment	Cleanliness	NA	NA	81%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Air quality	60%	69%	79%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Overall built environment	NA	NA	69%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Built Environment	New development in Jefferson County	NA	NA	49%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Affordable quality housing	21%	46%	28%	Lower	Much lower	Much higher	Lower
	Housing options	NA	NA	50%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Public places	NA	NA	75%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Overall economic health	NA	NA	70%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Vibrant downtown/commercial area	NA	NA	48%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Business and services	NA	NA	71%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Economy	Cost of living	NA	NA	41%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Shopping opportunities	NA	NA	68%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Employment opportunities	31%	38%	51%	Higher	Similar	Much higher	Higher
	Place to visit	NA	NA	82%	NA	NA	NA	Higher
	Place to work	NA	72%	76%	Higher	NA	Much higher	Similar
	Health and wellness	NA	NA	79%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Mental health care	NA	NA	45%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Preventive health services	NA	63%	69%	Higher	NA	Much higher	Similar
	Health care	47%	59%	65%	Higher	Similar	Much higher	Similar
	Food	NA	NA	77%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Recreation and Wellness	Recreational opportunities	87%	87%	86%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Higher
	Fitness opportunities	NA	NA	83%	NA	NA	NA	Similar

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)			2015 rating compared to 2010	Comparison to benchmark		
		2004	2010	2015		2004	2010	2015
Education and Enrichment	Cultural/arts/music activities	54%	NA	61%	Higher	Similar	NA	Similar
	Child care/preschool	29%	44%	48%	Higher	Much lower	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Social events and activities	NA	NA	63%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Neighborliness	NA	NA	68%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Openness and acceptance	NA	NA	53%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Opportunities to participate in community matters	NA	NA	61%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Opportunities to volunteer	NA	NA	73%	NA	NA	NA	Similar

Table 3: Governance General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			2015 rating compared to 2010	Comparison to benchmark		
	2004	2010	2015		2004	2010	2015
Services provided by Jefferson County	78%	78%	77%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar
Customer service	76%	80%	77%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar
Value of services for taxes paid	NA	54%	51%	Similar	NA	Higher	Similar
Overall direction	49%	52%	50%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Welcoming citizen involvement	47%	45%	47%	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar
Confidence in County government	NA	NA	44%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Acting in the best interest of Jefferson County	NA	NA	47%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Being honest	NA	NA	44%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Treating all residents fairly	NA	NA	51%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Services provided by the Federal Government	42%	32%	33%	Similar	Similar	Much lower	Similar

Table 4: Governance by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			2015 rating compared to 2010	Comparison to benchmark		
		2004	2010	2015		2004	2010	2015
Safety	Police	78%	84%	83%	Similar	Lower	Higher	Similar
	Fire	NA	NA	91%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Ambulance/EMS	NA	NA	89%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Crime prevention	66%	78%	71%	Lower	Similar	Much higher	Similar
	Fire prevention	68%	85%	79%	Lower	Much lower	Much higher	Similar
	Animal control	62%	68%	64%	Lower	Similar	Higher	Similar
	Emergency preparedness	NA	61%	60%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	Traffic enforcement	58%	73%	58%	Lower	Lower	Much higher	Similar
Mobility	Street repair	48%	44%	24%	Lower	Lower	Similar	Lower
	Street cleaning	59%	NA	47%	Lower	Similar	NA	Similar
	Street lighting	53%	NA	NA	NA	Lower	NA	NA
	Snow removal	72%	69%	62%	Lower	Similar	Much higher	Similar
	Sidewalk maintenance	63%	NA	51%	Lower	Higher	NA	Similar
	Traffic signal timing	NA	NA	46%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Bus or transit services	43%	49%	NA	NA	Much lower	Much lower	NA
	Recycling	42%	52%	NA	NA	Much lower	Much lower	NA
	Drinking water	71%	84%	NA	NA	Similar	Much higher	NA
	Natural areas preservation	NA	NA	74%	NA	NA	NA	Higher
Natural Environment	Open space	NA	93%	81%	Lower	NA	Much higher	Higher
	Storm drainage	64%	66%	65%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Similar
Built Environment	Land use, planning and zoning	46%	50%	54%	Similar	Similar	Much higher	Similar
	Code enforcement	42%	52%	49%	Similar	Lower	Higher	Similar
Economy	Economic development	46%	47%	56%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Recreation and Wellness	County parks	89%	NA	86%	Similar	Much higher	NA	Similar
	Recreation programs	NA	NA	79%	NA	NA	NA	Similar

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			2015 rating compared to 2010	Comparison to benchmark		
		2004	2010	2015		2004	2010	2015
	Recreation centers	NA	NA	85%	NA	NA	NA	Higher
	Health services	56%	59%	64%	Higher	Much lower	Similar	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Public libraries	89%	89%	86%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Similar
Community Engagement	Public information	59%	NA	NA	NA	Similar	NA	NA

Table 5: Participation General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)			2015 rating compared to 2010	Comparison to benchmark		
	2004	2010	2015		2004	2010	2015
Sense of community	53%	60%	58%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Recommend Jefferson County	NA	93%	93%	Similar	NA	Much higher	Similar
Remain in Jefferson County	NA	93%	90%	Similar	NA	Much higher	Similar
Contacted Jefferson County employees	63%	60%	47%	Lower	NA	Higher	Similar

Table 6: Participation by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)			2015 rating compared to 2010	Comparison to benchmark		
		2004	2010	2015		2004	2010	2015
Safety	Stocked supplies for an emergency	NA	NA	36%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Did NOT report a crime	NA	NA	84%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Was NOT the victim of a crime	89%	90%	93%	Similar	NA	Much higher	Similar
Mobility	Used public transportation instead of driving	NA	NA	50%	NA	NA	NA	Much higher
	Carpooled instead of driving alone	NA	NA	43%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Walked or biked instead of driving	NA	NA	54%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Natural Environment	Conserved water	NA	NA	92%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Made home more energy efficient	NA	NA	82%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Recycled at home	73%	80%	82%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
Built Environment	Did NOT observe a code violation	NA	NA	56%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	NOT under housing cost stress	NA	65%	71%	Higher	NA	Higher	Similar
Economy	Purchased goods or services in Jefferson County	NA	NA	99%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Economy will have positive impact on income	23%	13%	23%	Higher	NA	Much lower	Similar
	Work in Jefferson County	NA	NA	43%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Recreation and Wellness	Used Jefferson County recreation centers	68%	75%	69%	Lower	NA	Much higher	Higher
	Visited a County park	93%	96%	95%	Similar	NA	Much higher	Higher
	Ate 5 portions of fruits and vegetables	NA	NA	87%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity	NA	NA	91%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	In very good to excellent health	NA	NA	71%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Used Jefferson County public libraries	74%	81%	73%	Lower	NA	Much higher	Similar
Community Engagement	Campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate	NA	NA	26%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Contacted Jefferson County elected officials	NA	NA	15%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Volunteered	37%	49%	42%	Lower	NA	Much higher	Similar
	Participated in a club	NA	NA	30%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Talked to or visited with neighbors	NA	NA	98%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Done a favor for a neighbor	NA	NA	92%	NA	NA	NA	Higher

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	Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)			2015 rating compared to 2010	Comparison to benchmark		
	2004	2010	2015		2004	2010	2015
Attended a local public meeting	22%	31%	26%	Lower	NA	Higher	Similar
Watched a local public meeting	19%	22%	29%	Higher	NA	Much lower	Similar
Read or watched local news	NA	NA	86%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Voted in local elections	73%	85%	95%	Higher	NA	Much higher	Higher