

THE NCS™

The National Community Survey™

Bloomington, MN

Trends Over Time

2020



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About Trends Over Time

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 considering ten central facets of a community:

- Economy
- Mobility
- Community Design
- Utilities
- Safety
- Natural Environment
- Parks and Recreation
- Health and Wellness
- Education, Arts and Culture
- Inclusivity and Engagement

This report discusses trends over time, comparing the 2020 ratings for the City of Bloomington to its previous survey results in 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019. Additional reports and technical appendices are available under separate cover.



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The NCS™ is presented by NRC in collaboration with ICMA.

NRC is a charter member of the AAPOR Transparency Initiative, providing clear disclosure of our sound and ethical survey research practices.

Understanding the Tables

Trend data for Bloomington represent important comparison data and should be examined for improvements or declines¹. 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 2019 and 2020 surveys, otherwise the comparisons between 2019 and 2020 are noted as being "similar." Additionally, the benchmark comparisons for the current survey results are presented for reference.

Overall, ratings in Bloomington for 2020 generally remained stable. Of the 116 items for which comparisons were available, 67 items were rated similarly in 2019 and 2020, 24 items showed a decrease in ratings and 25 showed an increase in ratings. Notable trends over time included the following:

- In the area of Mobility, ratings for street repair, street cleaning, snow removal, sidewalk maintenance, and traffic flow increased from 2019 to 2020. Scores for ease of travel by car and by bicycle were higher in 2020 and residents reported higher rates of walking or biking in lieu of driving. Conversely, the overall quality of the transportation system in Bloomington decreased since 2019.
- The overall feeling of safety in Bloomington declined since 2019 and ratings for several services related to safety, including police, fire, and ambulance/EMS services, and crime prevention, trended downward in 2020. Scores for feelings of safety in Bloomington's downtown/commercial areas and ratings for animal control improved in 2020.
- In the facet of Natural Environment, recycling, yard waste pick-up, city open space, air quality, and the preservation of natural areas trended upwards in 2020.

¹ In 2020, The NCS survey was updated to include new and refreshed items. Consequently, some of the trends may be impacted due to wording modifications that could have potentially altered the meaning of the item for the respondent.

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Table 1: Quality of Life

Quality of Life Items Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat likely)	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2020 rating compared to 2019	Comparison to benchmark
Overall image or reputation of Bloomington	85%	85%	83%	83%	76%	81%	81%	80%	79%	Similar	Similar
The overall quality of life in Bloomington	90%	90%	88%	91%	85%	92%	89%	86%	88%	Similar	Similar
Bloomington as a place to live	93%	95%	94%	94%	90%	95%	93%	91%	92%	Similar	Similar
Recommend living in Bloomington to someone who asks	94%	94%	93%	95%	89%	95%	94%	91%	92%	Similar	Similar
Remain in Bloomington for the next five years	89%	89%	86%	89%	86%	89%	87%	85%	85%	Similar	Similar

Table 2: Governance

Governance Items Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2020 rating compared to 2019	Comparison to benchmark
Overall confidence in Bloomington government	NA	NA	68%	65%	65%	68%	68%	65%	66%	Similar	Similar
The overall direction that Bloomington is taking	74%	73%	74%	71%	70%	75%	72%	70%	70%	Similar	Similar
The value of services for the taxes paid to Bloomington	70%	72%	65%	65%	68%	73%	63%	63%	70%	Higher	Higher
Generally acting in the best interest of the community	NA	NA	72%	68%	66%	71%	68%	65%	68%	Similar	Similar
Being honest	NA	NA	74%	67%	67%	72%	70%	66%	67%	Similar	Similar
Being open and transparent to the public	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	65%	NA	Similar
Informing residents about issues facing the community	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	63%	NA	Similar
The job Bloomington government does at welcoming resident involvement	65%	65%	60%	57%	58%	66%	65%	62%	62%	Similar	Similar
Treating all residents fairly	NA	NA	70%	62%	68%	72%	67%	65%	66%	Similar	Similar
Treating residents with respect	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	73%	NA	Similar
Overall customer service by Bloomington employees	84%	83%	82%	81%	79%	85%	85%	82%	86%	Similar	Similar
Public information services	75%	76%	78%	75%	75%	78%	79%	75%	77%	Similar	Similar

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Governance Items Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2020 rating compared to 2019	Comparison to benchmark
Quality of services provided by the City of Bloomington	88%	87%	85%	86%	84%	86%	87%	82%	81%	Similar	Similar
Quality of services provided by the Federal Government	49%	51%	41%	49%	50%	46%	46%	41%	40%	Similar	Similar

Table 3: Economy

Economy Items Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat positive)	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2020 rating compared to 2019	Comparison to benchmark
Overall economic health of Bloomington	NA	NA	83%	81%	79%	84%	83%	83%	79%	Similar	Similar
Economic development	69%	70%	72%	73%	68%	77%	71%	71%	70%	Similar	Similar
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Bloomington	80%	79%	77%	80%	74%	78%	76%	77%	83%	Higher	Higher
Variety of business and service establishments in Bloomington	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	74%	NA	Similar
Vibrancy of shopping areas	NA	NA	70%	72%	70%	70%	66%	65%	64%	Similar	Higher
Shopping opportunities	84%	84%	88%	87%	84%	86%	84%	86%	79%	Lower	Higher
Bloomington as a place to visit	NA	NA	80%	80%	77%	79%	80%	78%	76%	Similar	Similar
Bloomington as a place to work	83%	84%	85%	82%	82%	87%	87%	83%	83%	Similar	Higher
Employment opportunities	62%	66%	63%	70%	64%	76%	73%	72%	71%	Similar	Higher
Cost of living in Bloomington	NA	NA	59%	61%	58%	64%	56%	54%	58%	Similar	Higher
Economy will have positive impact on income	25%	27%	29%	39%	28%	37%	33%	29%	15%	Lower	Lower
NOT experiencing housing costs stress	69%	70%	70%	69%	73%	71%	67%	67%	60%	Lower	Similar

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Table 4: Mobility

Mobility Items Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, yes in the last 12 months)	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2020 rating compared to 2019	Comparison to benchmark
Overall quality of the transportation system in Bloomington	NA	NA	82%	83%	84%	80%	84%	81%	71%	Lower	Similar
Traffic flow on major streets	62%	63%	65%	63%	64%	64%	64%	58%	73%	Higher	Higher
Ease of travel by car in Bloomington	76%	77%	76%	74%	77%	75%	77%	73%	84%	Higher	Higher
Ease of travel by public transportation in Bloomington	64%	66%	47%	44%	56%	56%	58%	53%	55%	Similar	Higher
Ease of travel by bicycle in Bloomington	68%	64%	57%	52%	56%	61%	60%	59%	65%	Higher	Similar
Ease of walking in Bloomington	74%	76%	70%	70%	72%	74%	72%	71%	74%	Similar	Similar
Bus or transit services	67%	66%	58%	67%	67%	70%	67%	65%	63%	Similar	Similar
Traffic enforcement	77%	78%	74%	74%	73%	78%	76%	73%	73%	Similar	Similar
Traffic signal timing	59%	59%	57%	61%	59%	64%	65%	61%	64%	Similar	Similar
Street repair	56%	47%	36%	51%	57%	56%	51%	46%	60%	Higher	Higher
Street cleaning	76%	73%	70%	76%	75%	79%	73%	73%	80%	Higher	Higher
Street lighting	71%	71%	69%	69%	72%	76%	71%	70%	73%	Similar	Similar
Snow removal	78%	78%	77%	84%	81%	82%	76%	77%	82%	Higher	Higher
Sidewalk maintenance	68%	57%	62%	65%	64%	72%	66%	64%	68%	Higher	Similar
Used bus, rail, subway, or other public transportation instead of driving	NA	NA	41%	37%	34%	38%	39%	37%	29%	Lower	Similar
Carpooled with other adults or children instead of driving alone	NA	NA	41%	43%	47%	46%	48%	46%	40%	Lower	Similar
Walked or biked instead of driving	NA	NA	54%	54%	54%	55%	51%	50%	58%	Higher	Similar

Prior to 2020, 'Overall quality of the transportation system' was 'Overall ease of getting to the places you usually have to visit.' Differences in ratings may be at least partially attributable to changes in question wording and should be interpreted cautiously

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Table 5: Community Design

Community Design Items Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2020 rating compared to 2019	Comparison to benchmark
Overall design or layout of Bloomington's residential and commercial areas	NA	NA	73%	76%	73%	76%	77%	76%	75%	Similar	Similar
Overall appearance of Bloomington	80%	79%	82%	80%	78%	84%	83%	81%	76%	Lower	Similar
Your neighborhood as a place to live	85%	86%	88%	86%	86%	90%	88%	87%	86%	Similar	Similar
Overall quality of new development in Bloomington	75%	75%	67%	63%	66%	69%	64%	65%	63%	Similar	Similar
Well-planned residential growth	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	66%	NA	Similar
Well-planned commercial growth	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	61%	NA	Similar
Well-designed neighborhoods	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	72%	NA	Similar
Public places where people want to spend time	NA	NA	78%	76%	72%	76%	76%	77%	69%	Lower	Similar
Variety of housing options	76%	74%	74%	76%	70%	73%	67%	69%	69%	Similar	Higher
Availability of affordable quality housing	61%	63%	62%	65%	58%	55%	52%	50%	48%	Similar	Similar
Land use, planning, and zoning	67%	65%	69%	66%	63%	71%	66%	64%	66%	Similar	Higher
Code enforcement	59%	60%	63%	62%	57%	60%	62%	58%	61%	Similar	Similar

Table 6: Utilities

Utilities Items Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2020 rating compared to 2019	Comparison to benchmark
Overall quality of the utility infrastructure in Bloomington	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	86%	NA	Similar
Affordable high-speed internet access	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	58%	NA	Similar
Garbage collection	89%	88%	85%	81%	86%	80%	80%	77%	80%	Similar	Similar
Drinking water	90%	89%	88%	91%	90%	91%	90%	91%	91%	Similar	Much higher
Sewer services	88%	88%	86%	89%	88%	90%	88%	88%	91%	Similar	Higher
Storm water management	80%	79%	78%	82%	80%	81%	80%	75%	87%	Higher	Higher
Utility billing	NA	NA	80%	81%	77%	77%	75%	75%	80%	Higher	Similar

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Table 7: Safety

Safety Items Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2020 rating compared to 2019	Comparison to benchmark
Overall feeling of safety in Bloomington	NA	NA	87%	87%	87%	87%	86%	87%	81%	Lower	Similar
Police services	89%	90%	89%	88%	90%	93%	90%	90%	85%	Lower	Similar
Crime prevention	84%	83%	83%	81%	84%	84%	82%	84%	79%	Lower	Similar
Animal control	78%	76%	73%	76%	73%	80%	76%	75%	82%	Higher	Higher
Ambulance or emergency medical services	95%	94%	93%	95%	95%	93%	94%	94%	90%	Lower	Similar
Fire services	95%	94%	95%	95%	96%	96%	96%	97%	92%	Lower	Similar
Fire prevention and education	86%	87%	88%	83%	85%	87%	87%	84%	82%	Similar	Similar
Emergency preparedness	75%	75%	75%	74%	72%	78%	76%	73%	74%	Similar	Similar
In your neighborhood during the day	96%	96%	97%	95%	94%	97%	94%	96%	96%	Similar	Similar
In Bloomington's downtown/commercial area during the day	92%	95%	93%	94%	91%	92%	93%	87%	92%	Higher	Similar
From property crime	75%	74%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	83%	NA	Similar
From violent crime	86%	84%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	87%	NA	Similar
From fire, flood, or other natural disaster	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	92%	NA	Similar

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Table 8: Natural Environment

Natural Environment Items Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2020 rating compared to 2019	Comparison to benchmark
Overall quality of natural environment in Bloomington	86%	88%	87%	90%	87%	89%	89%	87%	89%	Similar	Similar
Cleanliness of Bloomington	84%	82%	82%	79%	82%	84%	83%	81%	82%	Similar	Similar
Water resources	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	84%	NA	Higher
Air quality	81%	84%	87%	86%	85%	87%	86%	85%	91%	Higher	Similar
Preservation of natural areas (open space and greenbelts)	78%	78%	75%	79%	76%	80%	76%	77%	83%	Higher	Higher
Bloomington open space	NA	NA	73%	75%	72%	77%	73%	72%	82%	Higher	Higher
Recycling	89%	89%	86%	83%	86%	80%	80%	77%	84%	Higher	Similar
Yard waste pick-up	85%	85%	83%	81%	84%	78%	78%	77%	86%	Higher	Similar

Table 9: Parks and Recreation

Parks and Recreation Items Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2020 rating compared to 2019	Comparison to benchmark
Overall quality of parks and recreation opportunities	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	89%	NA	Similar
Availability of paths and walking trails	74%	77%	78%	74%	75%	79%	74%	76%	84%	Higher	Higher
City parks	91%	90%	87%	89%	87%	89%	88%	91%	89%	Similar	Similar
Recreational opportunities	81%	80%	78%	79%	79%	79%	79%	79%	79%	Similar	Similar
Recreation programs or classes	85%	86%	83%	78%	77%	79%	82%	79%	78%	Similar	Similar
Recreation centers or facilities	83%	83%	81%	76%	74%	77%	74%	75%	71%	Lower	Similar
Fitness opportunities	NA	NA	80%	81%	77%	80%	76%	77%	81%	Higher	Similar

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Table 10: Health and Wellness

Health and Wellness Items Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, excellent/very good)	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2020 rating compared to 2019	Comparison to benchmark
Overall health and wellness opportunities in Bloomington	NA	NA	81%	82%	79%	83%	81%	80%	82%	Similar	Similar
Health services	79%	82%	81%	82%	79%	81%	79%	78%	78%	Similar	Similar
Availability of affordable quality health care	72%	74%	76%	78%	78%	76%	75%	75%	74%	Similar	Similar
Availability of preventive health services	77%	80%	78%	78%	78%	79%	77%	77%	75%	Similar	Similar
Availability of affordable quality mental health care	NA	NA	62%	62%	64%	63%	63%	64%	63%	Similar	Higher
Availability of affordable quality food	75%	78%	75%	78%	74%	78%	75%	78%	78%	Similar	Similar
In very good to excellent health	NA	NA	66%	66%	65%	65%	65%	63%	69%	Higher	Similar

Table 11: Education, Arts, and Culture

Education, Arts, and Culture Items Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2020 rating compared to 2019	Comparison to benchmark
Overall opportunities for education, culture, and the arts	NA	NA	83%	83%	79%	83%	82%	81%	79%	Similar	Similar
Opportunities to attend cultural/arts/music activities	67%	72%	75%	70%	68%	74%	74%	74%	68%	Lower	Similar
Opportunities to attend special events and festivals	NA	NA	76%	71%	70%	75%	79%	74%	63%	Lower	Similar
Community support for the arts	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	72%	NA	Similar
Availability of affordable quality child care/preschool	62%	59%	71%	70%	66%	68%	58%	66%	61%	Lower	Similar
K-12 education	82%	83%	82%	83%	75%	83%	81%	81%	73%	Lower	Similar
Adult educational opportunities	NA	NA	81%	73%	72%	81%	79%	78%	74%	Similar	Higher

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Table 12: Inclusivity and Engagement

Inclusivity and Engagement Items Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2020 rating compared to 2019	Comparison to benchmark
Residents' connection and engagement with their community	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	59%	NA	Similar
Sense of community	72%	73%	64%	64%	59%	65%	66%	62%	62%	Similar	Similar
Sense of civic/community pride	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	64%	NA	Similar
Neighborliness of Bloomington	NA	NA	64%	64%	64%	68%	69%	68%	67%	Similar	Similar
Bloomington as a place to raise children	87%	87%	89%	89%	82%	88%	87%	86%	85%	Similar	Similar
Bloomington as a place to retire	76%	74%	69%	73%	69%	73%	72%	67%	74%	Higher	Similar
Openness and acceptance of the community toward people of diverse backgrounds	75%	77%	65%	68%	66%	74%	69%	67%	61%	Lower	Similar
Making all residents feel welcome	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	75%	NA	Similar
Attracting people from diverse backgrounds	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	71%	NA	Similar
Valuing/respecting residents from diverse backgrounds	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	72%	NA	Similar
Taking care of vulnerable residents	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	69%	NA	Similar
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	73%	72%	67%	62%	63%	69%	71%	67%	63%	Lower	Similar
Opportunities to volunteer	80%	78%	78%	74%	74%	79%	75%	73%	69%	Lower	Similar
Opportunities to participate in community matters	73%	73%	71%	64%	64%	71%	71%	68%	64%	Similar	Similar

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Table 13: Participation

Participation Items Percent having done each in last 12 months, or having done each a few times a week or more	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2020 rating compared to 2019	Comparison to benchmark
Contacted Bloomington for help or information	43%	42%	48%	42%	45%	47%	47%	45%	47%	Similar	Similar
Contacted Bloomington elected officials to express your opinion	NA	NA	15%	15%	17%	17%	17%	16%	14%	Similar	Similar
Attended a local public meeting	20%	18%	14%	15%	19%	17%	17%	17%	17%	Similar	Similar
Watched (online or on television) a local public meeting	37%	33%	24%	25%	27%	23%	25%	24%	36%	Higher	Higher
Volunteered your time to some group/activity in Bloomington	39%	40%	35%	35%	36%	33%	34%	31%	30%	Similar	Similar
Campaigned or advocated for an issue, cause or candidate	NA	NA	18%	19%	20%	22%	20%	19%	15%	Similar	Similar
Voted in your most recent local election	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	78%	NA	Similar
Access the internet from your home using a computer, laptop or tablet computer	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	92%	NA	Similar
Access the internet from your cell phone	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	87%	NA	Similar
Visit social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, etc.	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	76%	NA	Similar
Use or check email	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	94%	NA	Similar
Share your opinions online	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	30%	NA	Similar
Shop online	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	47%	NA	Similar

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Table 14: Focus Areas

Focus Areas Percent rating each as "essential" or "very important"	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2020 rating compared to 2019	Comparison to benchmark
Overall economic health of Bloomington	NA	NA	89%	89%	91%	90%	90%	89%	93%	Higher	Similar
Overall quality of the transportation system in Bloomington	NA	NA	82%	79%	79%	83%	81%	79%	73%	Lower	Similar
Overall design or layout of Bloomington's residential and commercial areas	NA	NA	76%	76%	75%	74%	76%	76%	65%	Lower	Lower
Overall quality of the utility infrastructure in Bloomington	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	87%	NA	Similar
Overall feeling of safety in Bloomington	NA	NA	93%	92%	91%	93%	93%	91%	93%	Similar	Similar
Overall quality of natural environment in Bloomington	NA	NA	83%	84%	84%	86%	88%	84%	84%	Similar	Similar
Overall quality of parks and recreation opportunities	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	81%	NA	Similar
Overall health and wellness opportunities in Bloomington	NA	NA	69%	75%	73%	73%	74%	70%	73%	Similar	Similar
Overall opportunities for education, culture, and the arts	NA	NA	75%	79%	75%	76%	78%	72%	72%	Similar	Similar
Residents' connection and engagement with their community	NA	NA	74%	76%	77%	76%	78%	73%	68%	Lower	Lower

Prior to 2020, 'Overall quality of the transportation system' was 'Overall ease of getting to the places you usually have to visit.' Differences in ratings may be at least partially attributable to changes in question wording and should be interpreted cautiously.