

THE NCSTM
The National Citizen SurveyTM

Dover, NH

Trends over Time

DRAFT
2017



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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 2017 ratings for the City of Dover to its previous survey results in 2015, 2013, 2011 and 2009. Additional reports and technical appendices are available under separate cover.

Trend data for Dover 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 seven percentage points between the 2015 and 2017 surveys, otherwise the comparison between 2015 and 2017 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 Dover for 2017 generally remained stable. Of the 134 items for which comparisons were available, 112 items remained stable between 2015 and 2017, six items decreased in ratings and 16 items increased in ratings. Notable trends over time included the following:

- Among the 16 ratings that increased in 2017, nine occurred in the pillar of Governance. Residents expressed greater trust and confidence in the City (e.g., welcoming citizen involvement, acting in the best interest of the city, treating residents with respect) and noted improvements in Mobility-related services (e.g., street cleaning and lighting, snow removal and sidewalk maintenance).
- While most characteristics of the community received ratings similar to those in 2015, residents expressed some dissatisfaction with the Built Environment; ratings for affordable housing and variety of housing options declined between survey administrations.
- Travel by public transportation has declined steadily since the baseline survey in 2011, while aspects of the Economy (e.g., shopping opportunities, employment opportunities, the City as a place to work) have increased steadily.

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Table 1: Community Characteristics General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)				2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark			
	2011	2013	2015	2017		2011	2013	2015	2017
Overall quality of life	84%	83%	86%	88%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Overall image	74%	72%	72%	79%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Place to live	90%	92%	91%	94%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Neighborhood	79%	79%	81%	82%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Place to raise children	80%	83%	83%	86%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Place to retire	57%	62%	57%	56%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
Overall appearance	79%	78%	75%	84%	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar

Table 2: Community Characteristics by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)				2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark			
		2011	2013	2015	2017		2011	2013	2015	2017
Safety	Overall feeling of safety	NA	NA	86%	92%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Safe in neighborhood	94%	95%	95%	98%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Safe downtown/commercial area	97%	95%	95%	96%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Overall ease of travel	NA	NA	73%	75%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Paths and walking trails	51%	57%	60%	58%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Ease of walking	72%	71%	77%	80%	Similar	Much higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Travel by bicycle	48%	48%	52%	49%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Travel by public transportation	72%	66%	54%	44%	Lower	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Travel by car	55%	61%	56%	58%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Public parking	NA	NA	44%	56%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Traffic flow	38%	42%	41%	42%	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Natural Environment	Overall natural environment	72%	76%	79%	78%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Cleanliness		78%	73%	70%	80%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Air quality		78%	81%	84%	86%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Built Environment	Overall built environment	NA	NA	64%	65%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	New development in Dover	55%	66%	63%	67%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Affordable quality housing	41%	43%	44%	36%	Lower	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Housing options	59%	64%	61%	52%	Lower	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Public places	NA	NA	65%	70%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Overall economic health	NA	NA	61%	72%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Vibrant downtown/commercial area	NA	NA	63%	69%	Similar	NA	NA	Higher	Higher
Economy	Business and services	62%	73%	70%	74%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Cost of living	NA	NA	44%	37%	Lower	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Shopping opportunities	45%	54%	55%	60%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Employment opportunities	35%	37%	45%	50%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)				2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark			
		2011	2013	2015	2017		2011	2013	2015	2017
	Place to visit	NA	NA	68%	68%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Place to work	61%	75%	70%	72%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Recreation and Wellness	Health and wellness	NA	NA	78%	81%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Mental health care	NA	NA	50%	58%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Preventive health services	NA	NA	76%	78%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Higher
	Health care	62%	67%	77%	77%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Higher
	Food	NA	NA	79%	77%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Recreational opportunities	61%	64%	62%	62%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Fitness opportunities	NA	NA	66%	69%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Religious or spiritual events and activities	NA	NA	79%	79%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Cultural/arts/music activities	56%	61%	62%	65%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Adult education	NA	NA	65%	62%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	K-12 education	69%	71%	69%	76%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Child care/preschool	47%	47%	67%	60%	Lower	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Social events and activities	66%	68%	63%	70%	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Neighborhoodness	NA	NA	62%	67%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Openness and acceptance	NA	NA	68%	71%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Opportunities to participate in community matters	61%	68%	64%	65%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Opportunities to volunteer	74%	69%	74%	69%	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar

Table 3: Governance General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)				2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark			
	2011	2013	2015	2017		2011	2013	2015	2017
Services provided by Dover	78%	83%	80%	83%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
Customer service	80%	81%	77%	82%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Value of services for taxes paid	46%	46%	46%	50%	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
Overall direction	57%	63%	69%	72%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Welcoming citizen involvement	55%	54%	54%	61%	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Confidence in City government	NA	NA	50%	61%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Acting in the best interest of Dover	NA	NA	58%	68%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Being honest	NA	NA	60%	66%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Treating all residents fairly	NA	NA	57%	66%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Services provided by the Federal Government	38%	41%	44%	40%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar

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Table 4: Governance by Facet

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)				2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark				
	2011	2013	2015	2017		2011	2013	2015	2017	
Safety	Police	88%	89%	90%	91%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Higher
	Fire	96%	98%	97%	97%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Ambulance/EMS	94%	97%	95%	97%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Crime prevention	79%	82%	85%	86%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Higher
	Fire prevention	88%	88%	91%	89%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Animal control	71%	79%	69%	80%	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Emergency preparedness	65%	69%	70%	71%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Traffic enforcement	71%	76%	69%	70%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Street repair	37%	37%	37%	37%	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Street cleaning	59%	59%	50%	58%	Higher	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Street lighting	62%	63%	56%	67%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Snow removal	64%	67%	61%	70%	Higher	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Sidewalk maintenance	50%	52%	46%	54%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Traffic signal timing	58%	60%	53%	55%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Bus or transit services	76%	70%	66%	66%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Garbage collection	85%	85%	82%	81%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recycling	83%	86%	84%	85%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Yard waste pick-up	NA	NA	69%	62%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Lower
	Drinking water	71%	74%	75%	71%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Natural areas preservation	62%	64%	67%	60%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Natural Environment	Open space	NA	NA	58%	58%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Storm drainage	71%	77%	71%	67%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Built Environment	Sewer services	79%	84%	79%	85%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Power utility	NA	NA	74%	78%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Utility billing	NA	NA	70%	68%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Land use, planning and zoning	48%	56%	51%	51%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Code enforcement	48%	52%	41%	47%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Cable television	63%	62%	52%	51%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Economy	Economic development	50%	61%	61%	66%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
Recreation and Wellness	City parks	72%	76%	76%	82%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Recreation programs	75%	74%	72%	76%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recreation centers	73%	75%	74%	78%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Health services	74%	81%	75%	79%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Special events	NA	NA	70%	75%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Public libraries	87%	90%	89%	92%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Public information	75%	76%	72%	75%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar

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Table 5: Participation General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)				2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark			
	2011	2013	2015	2017		2011	2013	2015	2017
Sense of community	70%	72%	65%	68%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Recommend Dover	88%	89%	91%	92%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Remain in Dover	82%	84%	82%	81%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Contacted Dover employees	54%	66%	53%	52%	Similar	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Similar

Table 6: Participation by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)				2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark			
		2011	2013	2015	2017		2011	2013	2015	2017
Safety	Stocked supplies for an emergency	NA	NA	38%	29%	Lower	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Did NOT report a crime	NA	NA	83%	85%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Was NOT the victim of a crime	93%	88%	93%	92%	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Used public transportation instead of driving	NA	NA	30%	31%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Carpooled instead of driving alone	NA	NA	47%	46%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Walked or biked instead of driving	NA	NA	63%	66%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Natural Environment	Conserved water	NA	NA	80%	82%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Made home more energy efficient	NA	NA	76%	74%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Recycled at home	89%	91%	93%	94%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Built Environment	Did NOT observe a code violation	NA	NA	59%	66%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Higher
	NOT under housing cost stress	61%	66%	66%	74%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Economy	Purchased goods or services in Dover	NA	NA	96%	97%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Economy will have positive impact on income	14%	23%	29%	29%	Similar	Lower	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Work in Dover	NA	NA	38%	34%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Recreation and Wellness	Used Dover recreation centers	52%	55%	52%	52%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Visited a City park	80%	82%	80%	78%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Ate 5 portions of fruits and vegetables	NA	NA	87%	91%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity	NA	NA	84%	91%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	In very good to excellent health	NA	NA	69%	70%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Used Dover public libraries	71%	77%	70%	69%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Participated in religious or spiritual activities	NA	NA	32%	33%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower
	Attended a City-sponsored event	NA	NA	61%	55%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate	NA	NA	23%	27%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Contacted Dover elected officials	NA	NA	19%	21%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Volunteered	38%	36%	39%	38%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar
	Participated in a club	25%	24%	24%	22%	Similar	Lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar
	Talked to or visited with neighbors	NA	NA	89%	88%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar

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	Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)				2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark			
	2011	2013	2015	2017		2011	2013	2015	2017
Done a favor for a neighbor	NA	NA	78%	79%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Attended a local public meeting	27%	28%	19%	18%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Watched a local public meeting	51%	45%	36%	32%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Read or watched local news	NA	NA	84%	79%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Voted in local elections	72%	85%	84%	84%	Similar	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Similar