



THE NCSTM
The National Community SurveyTM

Milford, DE

Trends over Time

2019



NRC

National Research Center Inc.

2955 Valmont Road Suite 300
Boulder, Colorado 80301
n-r-c.com • 303-444-7863

ICMA

Leaders at the Core of Better Communities

777 North Capitol Street NE Suite 500
Washington, DC 20002
icma.org • 800-745-8780

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 the City of Milford to its previous survey results in 2017. Additional reports and technical appendices are available under separate cover.

Trend data for Milford 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 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 Milford for 2019 generally remained stable. Of the 133 items for which comparisons were available, 111 items were rated similarly in 2017 and 2019, eight 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, ratings for seven aspects increased from 2017 to 2019, with most concentrated in the facet of Economy (employment opportunities, cost of living and Milford as a place to work). Other areas where improvements were seen in 2019 included new development in Milford, K-12 education, neighborliness of residents in Milford and the city as a place to retire. Decreases were seen for ratings of ease of walking in Milford, availability of paths and walking trails, overall natural environment and availability of affordable quality food.
- In Governance, assessments of yard waste pick-up and land use, planning and zoning improved from 2017 to 2019. Additionally, residents gave higher marks to two items related to government performance (acting in the best interest of Milford and treating all residents fairly) in 2019. Three decreases were seen, all in the facet of Mobility: traffic enforcement, street repair and street lighting.
- From 2017 to 2019, levels of Participation for most items remained stable in Milford. Fewer community members in 2019 were under housing cost stress. More residents believed the local economy would have a positive impact on their income or gave favorable ratings to the sense of community in Milford. Conversely, fewer residents had used Milford recreation facilities or their services in 2019.

The National Community Survey™

Table 1: Community Characteristics General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)		2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark	
	2017	2019		2017	2019
Overall quality of life	77%	76%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Overall image	62%	61%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Place to live	84%	83%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Neighborhood	78%	76%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Place to raise children	75%	72%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Place to retire	65%	75%	Higher	Similar	Similar
Overall appearance	69%	66%	Similar	Similar	Similar

Table 2: Community Characteristics by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)		2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark	
		2017	2019		2017	2019
Safety	Overall feeling of safety	70%	67%	Similar	Similar	Lower
	Safe in neighborhood	91%	93%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Safe in downtown area	89%	87%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Overall ease of travel	80%	84%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Paths and walking trails	61%	50%	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Ease of walking	74%	65%	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Travel by bicycle	58%	55%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Travel by public transportation	31%	36%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Travel by car	81%	76%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Public parking	61%	60%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Traffic flow	65%	65%	Similar	Higher	Higher
Natural Environment	Overall natural environment	79%	70%	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Cleanliness	64%	65%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Air quality	70%	69%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Built Environment	Overall built environment	55%	55%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	New development in Milford	49%	57%	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Affordable quality housing	41%	44%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Housing options	49%	42%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Public places	53%	51%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Economy	Overall economic health	49%	51%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Vibrant downtown/commercial area	44%	41%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Business and services	52%	57%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Cost of living	45%	54%	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Shopping opportunities	45%	46%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Employment opportunities	27%	34%	Higher	Similar	Similar

The National Community Survey™

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)		2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark	
		2017	2019		2017	2019
	Place to visit	49%	55%	Similar	Lower	Similar
	Place to work	46%	55%	Higher	Similar	Similar
Recreation and Wellness	Health and wellness	64%	61%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Mental health care	43%	38%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Preventive health services	61%	63%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Health care	64%	62%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Food	62%	54%	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Recreational opportunities	49%	44%	Similar	Lower	Lower
	Fitness opportunities	54%	54%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Education and enrichment opportunities	49%	49%	Similar	Lower	Lower
Education and Enrichment	Religious or spiritual events and activities	72%	73%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Cultural/arts/music activities	55%	50%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Adult education	29%	33%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
	K-12 education	58%	73%	Higher	Lower	Similar
	Child care/preschool	53%	58%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Social events and activities	53%	56%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Neighborliness	49%	60%	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Openness and acceptance	53%	58%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Opportunities to participate in community matters	55%	56%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Opportunities to volunteer	65%	65%	Similar	Similar	Similar

Table 3: Governance General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)		2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark	
	2017	2019		2017	2019
Services provided by Milford	76%	75%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Customer service	76%	75%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Value of services for taxes paid	51%	56%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Overall direction	61%	68%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Welcoming resident involvement	55%	54%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Confidence in City government	56%	60%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Acting in the best interest of Milford	54%	61%	Higher	Similar	Similar
Being honest	59%	61%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Treating all residents fairly	52%	61%	Higher	Similar	Similar
Services provided by the Federal Government	36%	43%	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	
		2017	2019		2017	2019
Safety	Police	80%	82%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Fire	96%	94%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Ambulance/EMS	92%	93%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Crime prevention	61%	65%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Fire prevention	73%	75%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Animal control	48%	51%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Emergency preparedness	63%	67%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Traffic enforcement	75%	68%	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Street repair	50%	42%	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Street cleaning	70%	66%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Street lighting	76%	66%	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Snow removal	65%	64%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Sidewalk maintenance	48%	46%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Traffic signal timing	56%	62%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Bus or transit services	46%	50%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Natural Environment	Garbage collection	80%	82%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recycling	79%	82%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Yard waste pick-up	75%	83%	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Drinking water	47%	45%	Similar	Lower	Lower
	Natural areas preservation	61%	60%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Built Environment	Open space	56%	55%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Storm drainage	56%	62%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Sewer services	73%	77%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Power utility	69%	73%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Utility billing	60%	61%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Land use, planning and zoning	42%	50%	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Code enforcement	39%	37%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Economy	Cable television	49%	50%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Economic development	45%	49%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Recreation and Wellness	City parks	72%	75%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recreation programs	56%	62%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recreation facilities	55%	60%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Health services	73%	68%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Special events	64%	70%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Public libraries	81%	87%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Public information	69%	71%	Similar	Similar	Similar

The National Community Survey™

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	
	2017	2019		2017	2019
Sense of community	55%	62%	Higher	Similar	Similar
Recommend Milford	84%	89%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Remain in Milford	81%	85%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Contacted Milford employees	52%	51%	Similar	Similar	Similar

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	
		2017	2019		2017	2019
Safety	Stocked supplies for an emergency	40%	35%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Did NOT report a crime	73%	79%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Was NOT the victim of a crime	81%	87%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Used public transportation instead of driving	7%	9%	Similar	Lower	Lower
	Carpooled instead of driving alone	35%	38%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Walked or biked instead of driving	56%	52%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Natural Environment	Conserved water	86%	82%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Made home more energy efficient	80%	75%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recycled at home	91%	91%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Built Environment	Did NOT observe a code violation	43%	48%	Similar	Lower	Similar
	NOT under housing cost stress	59%	68%	Higher	Similar	Similar
Economy	Purchased goods or services in Milford	95%	96%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Economy will have positive impact on income	26%	36%	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Work in Milford	34%	28%	Similar	Similar	Lower
Recreation and Wellness	Used Milford recreation facilities	62%	54%	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Visited a City park	76%	72%	Similar	Similar	Lower
	Ate 5 portions of fruits and vegetables	84%	81%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity	76%	76%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	In very good to excellent health	49%	51%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Used Milford public libraries	65%	62%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Participated in religious or spiritual activities	44%	44%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Attended a City-sponsored event	56%	56%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate	17%	21%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Contacted Milford elected officials	22%	20%	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	
	2017	2019		2017	2019
Volunteered	34%	34%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Participated in a club	18%	21%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Talked to or visited with neighbors	90%	88%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Done a favor for a neighbor	86%	82%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Attended a local public meeting	21%	25%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Read or watched local news	90%	86%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Voted in local elections	77%	75%	Similar	Similar	Similar