

# The National Citizen Survey™

## Weston, MA

Dashboard Summary of  
Findings

2014

# 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 summarizes Weston’s performance in the eight facets of community livability with the “General” rating as a summary of results from the overarching questions not shown within any of the eight facets. The “Overall” represents the community pillar in its entirety (the eight facets and general).

By summarizing resident ratings across the eight facets and three pillars of a livable community, a picture of Weston’s community livability emerges. Below, the color of each community facet summarizes how residents rated each of the pillars that support it – Community Characteristics, Governance and Participation. When most ratings were higher than the benchmark, the color is the darkest shade; when most ratings were lower than the benchmark, the color is the lightest shade. A mix of ratings (higher and lower than the benchmark) results in a color between the extremes.

In general, across each facet and within each pillar, Weston’s ratings tended to be a mix of similar or higher when compared to other communities across the nation. Ratings for facets within Participation were mostly similar while almost all facets within Governance were higher than in comparison communities. Community Characteristics received a majority of similar ratings for facets with a few receiving higher ratings (General, Safety, Natural Environment and Education and Enrichment). This information can be helpful in identifying the areas that merit more attention.

Figure 1: Dashboard Summary

	Community Characteristics			Governance			Participation		
	Higher	Similar	Lower	Higher	Similar	Lower	Higher	Similar	Lower
Overall	20	25	7	30	10	0	13	19	4
General	6	1	0	2	1	0	1	2	0
Safety	2	1	0	7	0	0	1	2	0
Mobility	3	4	1	3	4	0	0	3	0
Natural Environment	3	0	0	3	1	0	1	2	0
Built Environment	1	2	2	3	2	0	2	0	0
Economy	1	4	3	0	0	0	1	0	2
Recreation and Wellness	0	6	1	3	1	0	1	3	1
Education and Enrichment	3	3	0	2	0	0	2	0	1
Community Engagement	1	4	0	7	1	0	4	7	0

Legend	
	Higher
	Similar
	Lower
	Not available

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Figure 2: Detailed Dashboard

	Community Characteristics	Benchmark	Percent positive	Governance	Benchmark	Percent positive	Participation	Benchmark	Percent positive
General	Overall appearance	↑↑	96%	Customer service	↑	91%	Recommend Weston	↔	95%
	Overall quality of life	↑	94%	Services provided by Weston	↑	90%	Remain in Weston	↔	89%
	Place to retire	↔	51%	Services provided by the Federal Government	↔	37%	Contacted Weston employees	↑	63%
	Place to raise children	↑	95%						
	Place to live	↑	97%						
	Neighborhood	↑	91%						
Safety	Overall image	↑↑	91%						
	Overall feeling of safety	↑↑	99%	Police	↑	95%	Was NOT the victim of a crime	↔	93%
	Safe in neighborhood	↔	98%	Crime prevention	↑↑	96%	Did NOT report a crime	↔	87%
	Safe downtown/commercial area	↑	98%	Fire	↑	98%	Stocked supplies for an emergency	↑	49%
				Fire prevention	↑	93%			
				Ambulance/EMS	↑	97%			
Mobility				Emergency preparedness	↑	83%			
				Animal control	↑	80%			
	Traffic flow	↔	49%	Traffic enforcement	↑	79%	Carpooled instead of driving alone	↔	39%
	Travel by car	↑	81%	Street repair	↔	55%	Walked or biked instead of driving	↔	50%
	Travel by bicycle	↔	42%	Street cleaning	↔	73%	Used public transportation instead of driving	↔	27%
	Ease of walking	↔	62%	Street lighting	↔	48%			
	Travel by public transportation	↓↓	16%	Snow removal	↑	82%			
	Overall ease travel	↔	81%	Sidewalk maintenance	↔	62%			
Natural Environment	Public parking	↑	83%	Traffic signal timing	↑	70%			
	Paths and walking trails	↑	79%	Recycling	↔	89%			
	Overall natural environment	↑↑	95%	Drinking water	↑↑	94%	Recycled at home	↑	94%
	Air quality	↑↑	97%	Open space	↑↑	91%	Conserved water	↔	77%
Built Environment	Cleanliness	↑↑	96%	Natural areas preservation	↑↑	91%	Made home more energy efficient	↔	77%
	New development in Weston	↔	45%	Storm drainage	↔	72%	NOT experiencing housing cost stress	↑	82%
	Affordable quality housing	↓	24%	Utility billing	↔	86%	Did NOT observe a code violation	↑↑	78%
	Housing options	↓	30%	Land use, planning and zoning	↑	73%			
	Overall built environment	↑	77%	Code enforcement	↑↑	77%			
	Public places	↔	69%	Cable television	↑	79%			

Legend

↑↑ Much higher    ↑ Higher    ↔ Similar    ↓ Lower    ↓↓ Much lower    \* Not available

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	Community Characteristics	Benchmark	Percent positive	Governance	Benchmark	Percent positive	Participation	Benchmark	Percent positive
Economy	Overall economic health	↑↑	92%				Economy will have positive impact on income	↑	34%
	Shopping opportunities	↓↓	20%				Purchased goods or services in Weston	↓	86%
	Employment opportunities	↔	23%				Work in Weston	↓	27%
	Place to visit	↔	66%						
	Cost of living	↓	25%						
	Vibrant downtown/commercial area	↓	26%						
	Place to work	↔	55%						
Recreation and Wellness	Business and services	↔	49%						
	Fitness opportunities	↔	74%	Town parks	↔	89%	In very good to excellent health	↑	79%
	Recreational opportunities	↔	78%	Recreation centers	↑	89%	Used Weston recreation centers	↔	65%
	Health care	↔	62%	Recreation programs	↑	87%	Visited a Town park	↓	74%
	Food	↓	46%	Health services	↑	84%	Ate 5 portions of fruits and vegetables	↔	89%
	Mental health care	↔	41%				Participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity	↔	89%
	Health and wellness	↔	77%						
Education and Enrichment	Preventive health services	↔	57%						
	K-12 education	↑↑	96%	Public libraries	↑	97%	Used Weston public libraries	↑	83%
	Cultural/arts/music activities	↔	62%	Special events	↑	87%	Participated in religious or spiritual activities	↓	37%
	Child care/preschool	↑	72%				Attended a Town-sponsored event	↑	71%
	Religious or spiritual events and activities	↔	84%						
	Adult education	↔	69%						
Community Engagement	Overall education and enrichment	↑	87%						
	Opportunities to participate in community matters	↑	80%	Public information	↑	87%	Sense of community	↔	66%
	Opportunities to volunteer	↔	81%	Overall direction	↔	73%	Voted in local elections	↑	91%
	Openness and acceptance	↔	70%	Value of services for taxes paid	↑	70%	Talked to or visited with neighbors	↔	90%
	Social events and activities	↔	64%	Welcoming citizen involvement	↑	66%	Attended a local public meeting	↑↑	46%
	Neighborhoodliness	↔	60%	Confidence in Town government	↑	67%	Watched a local public meeting	↔	37%
				Acting in the best interest of Weston	↑	75%	Volunteered	↔	51%
				Being honest	↑	79%	Participated in a club	↑	40%
				Treating all residents fairly	↑	74%	Campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate	↑	35%
							Contacted Weston elected officials	↔	23%
						Read or watched local news	↔	89%	
						Done a favor for a neighbor	↔	80%	

**Legend**

↑↑ Much higher    ↑ Higher    ↔ Similar    ↓ Lower    ↓↓ Much lower    \* Not available