



THE NCSTM
The National Community SurveyTM

Apache Junction, AZ

Trends over Time

2020



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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 2020 ratings for the City of Apache Junction to its previous survey results in 2015 and 2018. Additional reports and technical appendices are available under separate cover.

Trend data for Apache Junction 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 2018 and 2020 surveys, otherwise the comparisons between 2018 and 2020 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 Apache Junction for 2020 generally remained stable. Of the 121 items for which comparisons were available, 107 items were rated similarly in 2018 and 2020, 13 items showed a decrease in ratings and one showed an increase in ratings. Notable trends over time included the following:

- In Community Characteristics, ratings decreased for overall quality of new development, adult educational opportunities and opportunities to participate in community matters. Ratings for K-12 education increased from 2018 to 2020.
- In Governance, scores for animal control, storm drainage, code enforcement and the job City government does at welcoming residents involvement declined since 2018, as did ratings for several Natural Environment-related services.
- Levels of Participation decreased from 2018 to 2020 for walking or biking instead of driving, using City recreation centers and using public libraries.

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Table 1: Community Characteristics General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark		
	2015	2018	2020		2015	2018	2020
Overall quality of life	64%	70%	70%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
Overall image	28%	32%	34%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
Place to live	65%	72%	74%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower
Neighborhood	71%	72%	77%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
Place to raise children	44%	45%	43%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
Place to retire	75%	81%	77%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar
Overall appearance	46%	45%	45%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower

Table 2: Community Characteristics by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)			2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark		
		2015	2018	2020		2015	2018	2020
Safety	Overall feeling of safety	62%	61%	65%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Safe in neighborhood	92%	87%	93%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Safe downtown/commercial area	85%	80%	84%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Overall ease of travel	78%	74%	80%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Paths and walking trails	51%	46%	47%	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar
	Ease of walking	60%	50%	49%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Travel by bicycle	62%	40%	47%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Travel by car	83%	73%	79%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Public parking	75%	67%	70%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Higher
	Traffic flow	72%	60%	61%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Overall natural environment	74%	75%	72%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Natural Environment	Cleanliness	48%	46%	49%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Air quality	64%	59%	63%	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar
	Overall built environment	38%	40%	41%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower
Built Environment	New development in Apache Junction	29%	49%	42%	Lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Affordable quality housing	47%	47%	43%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Housing options	45%	44%	45%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Public places	40%	46%	49%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Overall economic health	31%	36%	40%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower
Economy	Vibrant downtown/commercial area	23%	27%	30%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Business and services	42%	49%	51%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Cost of living	47%	51%	51%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Shopping opportunities	38%	40%	45%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Employment opportunities	23%	23%	18%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Place to visit	59%	63%	64%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)			2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark		
		2015	2018	2020		2015	2018	2020
Recreation and Wellness	Place to work	29%	36%	35%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Lower
	Health and wellness	48%	57%	53%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Mental health care	44%	35%	37%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Preventive health services	53%	47%	51%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Health care	48%	50%	55%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Food	59%	62%	63%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recreational opportunities	53%	63%	60%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Fitness opportunities	57%	60%	62%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Education and enrichment opportunities	35%	46%	40%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Lower
	Cultural/arts/music activities	36%	40%	43%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Adult education	51%	51%	43%	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	K-12 education	38%	30%	38%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
	Child care/preschool	45%	34%	30%	Similar	Similar	Lower	Lower
Community Engagement	Social events and activities	42%	52%	49%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Neighborhoodliness	44%	52%	45%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Lower
	Openness and acceptance	48%	48%	43%	Similar	Similar	Lower	Lower
	Opportunities to participate in community matters	50%	53%	45%	Lower	Similar	Similar	Lower
	Opportunities to volunteer	57%	64%	58%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar

Table 3: Governance General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark		
	2015	2018	2020		2015	2018	2020
Services provided by Apache Junction	65%	58%	61%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Customer service	66%	61%	63%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Value of services for taxes paid	44%	40%	39%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Overall direction	51%	51%	49%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Welcoming resident involvement	48%	48%	37%	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
Confidence in City government	41%	43%	41%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Acting in the best interest of Apache Junction	46%	44%	41%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Being honest	47%	47%	44%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Treating all residents fairly	51%	45%	44%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Services provided by the Federal Government	29%	30%	31%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar

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Table 4: Governance by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark		
		2015	2018	2020		2015	2018	2020
Safety	Police	71%	71%	77%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Crime prevention	61%	59%	66%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Animal control	55%	57%	50%	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Emergency preparedness	46%	37%	39%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower
Mobility	Traffic enforcement	61%	59%	65%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Street repair	45%	37%	39%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Street cleaning	47%	46%	49%	Similar	Similar	Lower	Lower
	Street lighting	44%	42%	36%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Sidewalk maintenance	44%	44%	42%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Traffic signal timing	54%	40%	41%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Garbage collection	75%	76%	65%	Lower	Similar	Similar	Lower
	Recycling	69%	68%	54%	Lower	Similar	Similar	Lower
Natural Environment	Drinking water	36%	36%	32%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
	Open space	56%	59%	51%	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Storm drainage	43%	40%	31%	Lower	Lower	Lower	Much lower
Built Environment	Sewer services	61%	64%	58%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Land use, planning and zoning	39%	38%	37%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Code enforcement	35%	30%	22%	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Cable television	39%	30%	30%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower
Economy	Economic development	33%	35%	36%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower
Recreation and Wellness	City parks	69%	72%	70%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recreation programs	62%	67%	66%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recreation centers	69%	70%	67%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Health services	46%	49%	52%	Similar	Similar	Lower	Lower
Education and Enrichment	Special events	59%	54%	54%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Public libraries	79%	79%	82%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Public information	58%	59%	58%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar

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Table 5: Participation General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)			2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark		
	2015	2018	2020		2015	2018	2020
Sense of community	40%	51%	49%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
Recommend Apache Junction	71%	78%	83%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
Remain in Apache Junction	80%	83%	86%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Contacted Apache Junction employees	32%	32%	37%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Similar

Table 6: Participation by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)			2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark		
		2015	2018	2020		2015	2018	2020
Safety	Stocked supplies for an emergency	35%	27%	28%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Did NOT report a crime	73%	73%	74%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Was NOT the victim of a crime	83%	84%	85%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Carpooled instead of driving alone	41%	43%	37%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Walked or biked instead of driving	35%	42%	34%	Lower	Much lower	Lower	Much lower
Natural Environment	Conserved water	86%	88%	85%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Made home more energy efficient	77%	81%	75%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recycled at home	83%	88%	87%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Built Environment	Did NOT observe a code violation	33%	38%	34%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Much lower
	NOT under housing cost stress	68%	72%	70%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Economy	Purchased goods or services in Apache Junction	92%	97%	95%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Economy will have positive impact on income	25%	35%	39%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Work in Apache Junction	26%	23%	22%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower
Recreation and Wellness	Used Apache Junction recreation centers	55%	51%	36%	Lower	Similar	Similar	Much lower
	Visited a City park	65%	67%	61%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Much lower
	Ate 5 portions of fruits and vegetables	78%	73%	73%	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar
	Participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity	69%	82%	80%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
	In very good to excellent health	46%	46%	48%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Used Apache Junction public libraries	70%	59%	51%	Lower	Similar	Similar	Lower
	Attended a City-sponsored event	36%	44%	37%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower
Community Engagement	Campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate	18%	20%	15%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar

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	Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)			2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark		
	2015	2018	2020		2015	2018	2020
Contacted Apache Junction elected officials	14%	15%	15%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Volunteered	25%	28%	25%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower
Participated in a club	23%	22%	19%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Talked to or visited with neighbors	91%	93%	92%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Done a favor for a neighbor	81%	86%	85%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Attended a local public meeting	15%	16%	11%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Lower
Watched a local public meeting	21%	17%	13%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Read or watched local news	83%	83%	81%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Voted in local elections	78%	72%	73%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Lower