

**THE NCS**<sup>TM</sup>  
The National Citizen Survey<sup>TM</sup>

# Suwanee, GA

Trends over Time

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 Suwanee to its previous survey results in 2008, 2010, 2012 and 2014. Additional reports and technical appendices are available under separate cover.

Trend data for Suwanee 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 nine percentage points between the 2014 and 2017 surveys, otherwise the comparison between 2014 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 Suwanee for 2017 generally remained stable. Of the 123 items for which comparisons were available, 113 items were rated similarly in 2014 and 2017, six items showed a decrease in ratings and four showed an increase in ratings. Notable trends over time included the following:

- Ratings were generally stable over time within the pillar of Community Characteristics; however, ratings declined from 2014 to 2017 for Suwanee as a place to work and the cost of living.
- Within the pillar of Governance, respondents reported higher levels of satisfaction with services provided by the Federal Government as well as City snow removal services, cable television and recreation programs in 2017 than in 2014. Street lighting saw a decrease in ratings over time.
- When compared to 2014, fewer residents had made efforts to make their homes more energy efficient, attended a City-sponsored event and voted in local elections in 2017.

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Table 1: Community Characteristics General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)					2017 rating compared to 2014	Comparison to benchmark				
	2008	2010	2012	2014	2017		2008	2010	2012	2014	2017
Overall quality of life	95%	95%	97%	96%	92%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
Overall image	95%	93%	98%	94%	96%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher
Place to live	98%	98%	100%	98%	95%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
Neighborhood	90%	92%	92%	91%	94%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Place to raise children	97%	96%	97%	97%	95%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
Place to retire	71%	72%	79%	78%	75%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
Overall appearance	92%	92%	94%	94%	94%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher

Table 2: Community Characteristics by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)					2017 rating compared to 2014	Comparison to benchmark				
		2008	2010	2012	2014	2017		2008	2010	2012	2014	2017
Safety	Overall feeling of safety	NA	NA	NA	94%	96%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Higher	Higher
	Safe in neighborhood	97%	97%	96%	97%	98%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Safe downtown/commercial area	96%	95%	93%	96%	97%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Overall ease of travel	NA	NA	NA	80%	75%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Paths and walking trails	87%	84%	90%	85%	86%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher
	Ease of walking	61%	63%	75%	67%	68%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Travel by bicycle	50%	57%	65%	65%	60%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Travel by car	54%	65%	68%	71%	72%	Similar	Lower	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Public parking	NA	NA	NA	70%	68%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Higher	Similar
	Traffic flow	38%	47%	51%	48%	40%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
Natural Environment	Overall natural environment	89%	90%	94%	94%	94%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
	Cleanliness	95%	94%	93%	94%	91%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
	Air quality	78%	81%	86%	90%	88%	Similar	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Similar
Built Environment	Overall built environment	NA	NA	NA	87%	80%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Much higher	Higher
	New development in Suwanee	83%	78%	87%	81%	82%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)					2017 rating compared to 2014	Comparison to benchmark				
		2008	2010	2012	2014	2017		2008	2010	2012	2014	2017
	Affordable quality housing	73%	72%	73%	71%	63%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
	Housing options	83%	78%	75%	83%	75%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
	Public places	NA	NA	NA	88%	87%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Much higher	Higher
Economy	Overall economic health	NA	NA	NA	89%	86%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Much higher	Higher
	Vibrant downtown/commercial area	NA	NA	NA	81%	80%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Much higher	Much higher
	Business and services	81%	77%	78%	81%	78%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Similar
	Cost of living	NA	NA	NA	67%	52%	Lower	NA	NA	NA	Higher	Similar
	Shopping opportunities	61%	58%	66%	61%	60%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Employment opportunities	50%	45%	52%	51%	53%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
	Place to visit	NA	NA	NA	78%	78%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Higher	Similar
	Place to work	81%	71%	83%	83%	72%	Lower	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
Recreation and Wellness	Health and wellness	NA	NA	NA	83%	83%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Higher	Similar
	Mental health care	NA	NA	NA	64%	67%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Higher
	Preventive health services	71%	67%	70%	72%	75%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Health care	66%	65%	70%	69%	75%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Higher
	Food	83%	79%	81%	79%	75%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Similar
	Recreational opportunities	88%	90%	86%	85%	86%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
Education and Enrichment	Fitness opportunities	NA	NA	NA	89%	88%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Higher	Higher
	Religious or spiritual events and activities	83%	81%	79%	84%	84%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Cultural/arts/music activities	76%	74%	75%	75%	79%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
	Adult education	NA	NA	NA	62%	68%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	K-12 education	90%	92%	93%	95%	92%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher
Child care/preschool	77%	71%	75%	83%	82%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)					2017 rating compared to 2014	Comparison to benchmark				
		2008	2010	2012	2014	2017		2008	2010	2012	2014	2017
Community Engagement	Social events and activities	81%	84%	84%	82%	86%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Much higher
	Neighborhoodliness	NA	NA	NA	79%	81%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Higher	Higher
	Openness and acceptance	87%	87%	85%	88%	80%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
	Opportunities to participate in community matters	79%	79%	78%	79%	80%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
	Opportunities to volunteer	83%	81%	77%	83%	82%	Similar	Similar	Much higher	Higher	Higher	Similar

Table 3: Governance General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)					2017 rating compared to 2014	Comparison to benchmark				
	2008	2010	2012	2014	2017		2008	2010	2012	2014	2017
Services provided by Suwanee	94%	87%	94%	91%	92%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
Customer service	91%	84%	85%	87%	86%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Higher
Value of services for taxes paid	77%	71%	76%	76%	70%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
Overall direction	86%	79%	89%	91%	82%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher
Welcoming citizen involvement	80%	80%	77%	81%	80%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher
Confidence in City government	NA	NA	NA	83%	75%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Much higher	Higher
Acting in the best interest of Suwanee	NA	NA	NA	86%	78%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Much higher	Higher
Being honest	NA	NA	NA	85%	80%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Much higher	Higher
Treating all residents fairly	NA	NA	NA	83%	79%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Much higher	Higher
Services provided by the Federal Government	49%	32%	40%	37%	49%	Higher	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar

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Table 4: Governance by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)					2017 rating compared to 2014	Comparison to benchmark				
		2008	2010	2012	2014	2017		2008	2010	2012	2014	2017
Safety	Police	91%	86%	90%	86%	90%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Higher
	Fire	97%	95%	98%	92%	94%	Similar	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Ambulance/EMS	96%	94%	97%	95%	93%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Crime prevention	87%	88%	88%	84%	85%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
	Fire prevention	85%	85%	83%	82%	87%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Animal control	79%	77%	76%	71%	79%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Higher
Mobility	Traffic enforcement	80%	73%	73%	75%	75%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Street repair	76%	69%	74%	68%	68%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
	Street cleaning	79%	78%	80%	80%	76%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
	Street lighting	74%	68%	70%	79%	70%	Lower	Higher	Higher	Much higher	Higher	Similar
	Snow removal	78%	63%	52%	53%	76%	Higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Higher
	Sidewalk maintenance	74%	68%	72%	73%	79%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
	Traffic signal timing	55%	54%	56%	58%	63%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
Natural Environment	Garbage collection	83%	87%	87%	83%	86%	Similar	Lower	Much higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Recycling	76%	86%	87%	81%	78%	Similar	Lower	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Yard waste pick-up	72%	76%	84%	82%	80%	Similar	Much lower	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Drinking water	84%	79%	82%	83%	80%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
	Natural areas preservation	83%	86%	89%	84%	80%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
	Open space	NA	NA	NA	86%	84%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Higher	Higher
Built Environment	Storm drainage	82%	74%	79%	78%	79%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Higher

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)					2017 rating compared to 2014	Comparison to benchmark				
		2008	2010	2012	2014	2017		2008	2010	2012	2014	2017
	Sewer services	88%	82%	88%	83%	85%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Higher
	Land use, planning and zoning	71%	64%	77%	72%	81%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Much higher
	Code enforcement	70%	66%	72%	74%	76%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Much higher
	Cable television	57%	55%	57%	53%	66%	Higher	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar	Higher
Economy	Economic development	78%	67%	77%	83%	83%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher
Recreation and Wellness	City parks	97%	95%	97%	96%	97%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
	Recreation programs	89%	83%	80%	79%	89%	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Higher
	Recreation centers	92%	86%	87%	85%	89%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
	Health services	76%	76%	81%	72%	80%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Higher
Education and Enrichment	Special events	NA	NA	NA	90%	91%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Much higher	Much higher
	Public libraries	92%	93%	87%	90%	93%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Similar	Higher
Community Engagement	Public information	85%	82%	86%	84%	83%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher

Table 5: Participation General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)					2017 rating compared to 2014	Comparison to benchmark				
	2008	2010	2012	2014	2017		2008	2010	2012	2014	2017
Sense of community	91%	86%	87%	86%	80%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
Recommend Suwanee	96%	96%	99%	97%	97%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
Remain in Suwanee	92%	91%	91%	91%	89%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
Contacted Suwanee employees	52%	47%	35%	32%	31%	Similar	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower

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Table 6: Participation by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)					2017 rating compared to 2014	Comparison to benchmark				
		2008	2010	2012	2014	2017		2008	2010	2012	2014	2017
Safety	Stocked supplies for an emergency	NA	NA	NA	31%	29%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Did NOT report a crime	NA	NA	NA	84%	84%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Was NOT the victim of a crime	92%	94%	94%	91%	93%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Carpooled instead of driving alone	NA	NA	NA	39%	38%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Walked or biked instead of driving	NA	NA	NA	49%	44%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Lower
Natural Environment	Conserved water	NA	NA	NA	83%	81%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Made home more energy efficient	NA	NA	NA	79%	70%	Lower	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Recycled at home	72%	81%	86%	88%	82%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Built Environment	Did NOT observe a code violation	NA	NA	NA	67%	61%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Higher	Similar
	NOT under housing cost stress	68%	73%	76%	74%	68%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Economy	Purchased goods or services in Suwanee	NA	NA	NA	98%	94%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Economy will have positive impact on income	10%	18%	26%	50%	48%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Higher
	Work in Suwanee	NA	NA	NA	29%	36%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Lower	Similar
Recreation and Wellness	Used Suwanee recreation centers	74%	73%	67%	78%	75%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher
	Visited a City park	95%	94%	97%	96%	98%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
Education and Enrichment	Participated in religious or spiritual activities	46%	42%	44%	37%	36%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower
	Attended a City-sponsored event	NA	NA	NA	82%	72%	Lower	NA	NA	NA	Much higher	Higher
Community Engagement	Campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate	NA	NA	NA	13%	15%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Contacted Suwanee elected officials	NA	NA	NA	9%	13%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Volunteered	33%	37%	39%	27%	29%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Participated in a club	24%	23%	23%	25%	20%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar



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	Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)					2017 rating compared to 2014	Comparison to benchmark				
	2008	2010	2012	2014	2017		2008	2010	2012	2014	2017
Talked to or visited with neighbors	NA	NA	NA	91%	90%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Done a favor for a neighbor	NA	NA	NA	81%	79%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Attended a local public meeting	34%	28%	22%	28%	27%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
Read or watched local news	NA	NA	NA	84%	82%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Voted in local elections	84%	70%	75%	80%	69%	Lower	Much higher	Lower	Similar	Similar	Lower