

# THE NCS<sup>TM</sup>

The National Citizen Survey<sup>TM</sup>

## La Plata, MD

Dashboard Summary of Findings

2014



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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 summarizes La Plata’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 La Plata’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.

Across all facets of Community Characteristics, Governance and Participation, ratings were positive and similar to other communities across the nation. 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	0	41	11	0	34	1	2	30	3
General	0	6	1	0	3	0	1	2	0
Safety	0	3	0	0	5	0	0	3	0
Mobility	0	4	4	0	6	0	0	1	1
Natural Environment	0	3	0	0	6	0	0	3	0
Built Environment	0	4	1	0	5	0	0	2	0
Economy	0	6	2	0	0	0	0	2	1
Recreation and Wellness	0	5	2	0	1	0	0	4	1
Education and Enrichment	0	6	0	0	1	0	0	3	0
Community Engagement	0	4	1	0	7	1	1	10	0

Legend	
	Higher
	Similar
	Lower
	NA

# The National Citizen Survey™

Figure 2: Detailed Dashboard

	Community Characteristics	Trend	Benchmark	Percent positive	Governance	Trend	Benchmark	Percent positive	Participation	Trend	Benchmark	Percent positive
General	Overall appearance	↔	↔	79%	Customer service	↔	↔	78%	Recommend La Plata	↔	↔	82%
	Overall quality of life	↔	↔	76%	Services provided by La Plata	↓	↔	71%	Remain in La Plata	↔	↔	76%
	Place to retire	↔	↓	44%	Services provided by the Federal Government	↓	↔	33%	Contacted La Plata employees	↔	↑	59%
	Place to raise children	↔	↔	82%								
	Place to live	↔	↔	85%								
	Neighborhood	↔	↔	83%								
Safety	Overall image	↓	↔	65%								
	Overall feeling of safety	*	↔	75%	Police	↓	↔	79%	Was NOT the victim of a crime	↔	↔	91%
	Safe in neighborhood	↔	↔	91%	Crime prevention	↓	↔	68%	Did NOT report a crime	*	↔	81%
	Safe downtown/commercial area	↔	↔	88%	Fire prevention	*	↔	78%	Stocked supplies for an emergency	*	↔	39%
					Ambulance/EMS	↔	↔	87%				
Mobility					Emergency preparedness	↓	↔	66%				
	Traffic flow	↔	↔	38%	Traffic enforcement	↓	↔	59%	Carpooled instead of driving alone	*	↔	39%
	Travel by car	↔	↔	57%	Street repair	↓	↔	40%	Walked or biked instead of driving	*	↓	43%
	Travel by bicycle	↓	↓↓	23%	Street cleaning	↓	↔	62%				
	Ease of walking	↔	↓	47%	Street lighting	↓	↔	55%				
	Travel by public transportation	*	↓	28%	Snow removal	↓	↔	66%				
	Overall ease travel	*	↔	72%	Sidewalk maintenance	↔	↔	52%				
Natural Environment	Public parking	*	↔	57%								
	Paths and walking trails	↔	↓	39%								
	Overall natural environment	↔	↔	72%	Garbage collection	↔	↔	88%	Recycled at home	↑	↔	91%
	Air quality	↔	↔	73%	Recycling	↔	↔	85%	Conserved water	*	↔	84%
	Cleanliness	↔	↔	79%	Yard waste pick-up	↔	↔	80%	Made home more energy efficient	*	↔	84%
Built Environment					Drinking water	↔	↔	72%				
					Open space	*	↔	48%				
					Natural areas preservation	↓	↔	52%				
	New development in La Plata	↓	↓	37%	Sewer services	↔	↔	72%	NOT experiencing housing cost stress	↔	↔	64%
	Affordable quality housing	↔	↔	36%	Storm drainage	↔	↔	64%	Did NOT observe a code violation	*	↔	63%
				Utility billing	*	↔	56%					
				Overall built environment	*	↔	59%	Land use, planning and zoning	↑	↔	45%	
				Public places	*	↔	50%	Code enforcement	↔	↔	48%	

**Legend**

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

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	Community Characteristics	Trend	Benchmark	Percent positive	Governance	Trend	Benchmark	Percent positive	Participation	Trend	Benchmark	Percent positive
Economy	Overall economic health	*	↔	55%					Economy will have positive impact on income	↔	↔	20%
	Shopping opportunities	↓	↔	44%					Purchased goods or services in La Plata	*	↔	97%
	Employment opportunities	↓	↔	18%								
	Place to visit	*	↓	46%								
	Cost of living	*	↓	28%								
	Vibrant downtown/commercial area	*	↔	34%								
	Place to work	↔	↔	51%								
Recreation and Wellness	Business and services	↓	↔	54%								
	Fitness opportunities	*	↓	53%	Town parks	↔	↔	79%	In very good to excellent health			
	Recreational opportunities	↔	↓	50%					Used La Plata recreation centers			
	Health care	↔	↔	56%					Visited a Town park			
	Food	↔	↔	60%					Ate 5 portions of fruits and vegetables			
	Mental health care	*	↔	42%					Participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity			
	Health and wellness	*	↔	62%								
Education and Enrichment	Preventive health services	↔	↔	55%								
	K-12 education	↔	↔	79%	Special events	*	↔	73%	Used La Plata public libraries	↓	↔	61%
	Cultural/arts/music activities	↔	↔	51%					Participated in religious or spiritual activities	↔	↔	48%
	Child care/preschool	↔	↔	48%					Attended a Town-sponsored event	*	↔	60%
	Religious or spiritual events and activities	↔	↔	69%								
	Adult education	*	↔	61%								
Community Engagement	Overall education and enrichment	*	↔	66%								
	Opportunities to participate in community matters	↔	↔	59%	Public information	↔	↔	69%	Sense of community	↓	↔	55%
	Opportunities to volunteer	↓	↔	62%	Overall direction	↔	↔	48%	Voted in local elections	↑	↑	90%
	Openness and acceptance	↓	↓	45%	Value of services for taxes paid	↓	↓	36%	Talked to or visited with neighbors	*	↔	93%
	Social events and activities	↓	↔	50%	Welcoming citizen involvement	↓	↔	46%	Attended a local public meeting	↔	↔	23%
	Neighborhoodliness	*	↔	56%	Confidence in Town government	*	↔	43%	Watched a local public meeting	↓	↔	28%
					Acting in the best interest of La Plata	*	↔	48%	Volunteered	↔	↔	38%
					Being honest	*	↔	43%	Participated in a club	↔	↔	29%
					Treating all residents fairly	*	↔	45%	Campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate	*	↔	30%
									Contacted La Plata elected officials	*	↔	21%
								Read or watched local news	*	↔	86%	
								Done a favor for a neighbor	*	↔	80%	

**Legend**

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