Bonner Springs, KS
Community Livability Report
2017
Contents

About ................................................................................................................. 1
Quality of Life in Bonner Springs ...................................................................... 2
Community Characteristics ............................................................................... 3
Governance ....................................................................................................... 5
Participation ..................................................................................................... 7
Special Topics .................................................................................................. 9
Conclusions ...................................................................................................... 11
The National Citizen Survey™ (The NCS) report is about the “livability” of Bonner Springs. The phrase “livable community” is used here to evoke a place that is not simply habitable, but that is desirable. It is not only where people do live, but where they want to live.

Great communities are partnerships of the government, private sector, community-based organizations and residents, all geographically connected. 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).

The Community Livability Report provides the opinions of a representative sample of 356 residents of the City of Bonner Springs. The margin of error around any reported percentage is 5% for the entire sample. The full description of methods used to garner these opinions can be found in the Technical Appendices provided under separate cover.
Quality of Life in Bonner Springs

Most residents rated the quality of life in Bonner Springs as excellent or good. This rating was similar to the national benchmark (see Appendix B of the Technical Appendices provided under separate cover).

Shown below are the eight facets of community. The color of each community facet summarizes how residents rated it across the three sections of the survey that represent the pillars of a community – Community Characteristics, Governance and Participation. When most ratings across the three pillars were higher than the benchmark, the color for that facet 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 addition to a summary of ratings, the image below includes one or more stars to indicate which community facets were the most important focus areas for the community in the coming two years, namely Safety and Economy. Ratings for all eight facets of community livability were positive and similar to other communities across the nation. This overview of the key aspects of community quality provides a quick summary of where residents see exceptionally strong performance and where performance offers the greatest opportunity for improvement. Linking quality to importance offers community members and leaders a view into the characteristics of the community that matter most and that seem to be working best.

Details that support these findings are contained in the remainder of this Livability Report, starting with the ratings for Community Characteristics, Governance and Participation and ending with results for Bonner Springs's unique questions.
Community Characteristics

What makes a community livable, attractive and a place where people want to be?

Overall quality of community life represents the natural ambience, services and amenities that make for an attractive community. How residents rate their overall quality of life is an indicator of the overall health of a community. In the case of Bonner Springs, 86% rated the City as an excellent or good place to live. Respondents’ ratings of Bonner Springs as a place to live were similar to ratings in other communities across the nation.

In addition to rating the City as a place to live, respondents rated several aspects of community quality including Bonner Springs as a place to raise children and to retire, their neighborhood as a place to live, the overall image or reputation of Bonner Springs and its overall appearance. Ratings for each of these aspects were similar to the national benchmark with positive ratings from at least three in five residents.

Delving deeper into Community Characteristics, survey respondents rated over 40 features of the community within the eight facets of Community Livability. Overall, ratings for Community Characteristics varied. The facet of Mobility tended to receive ratings higher than the national benchmark. Notably, almost 9 in 10 residents rated overall ease of travel as excellent or good. Ratings for Safety, Built Environment and Community Engagement all tended to be similar to comparison communities. Ratings for Natural Environment, Economy, Recreation and Wellness, and Education and Enrichment tended to be similar to or lower than the national benchmark.
Figure 1: Aspects of Community Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Comparison to National Benchmark</th>
<th>Percent Rating Positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SAFETY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall feeling of safety</td>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe in neighborhood</td>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe downtown/commercial area</td>
<td>Similar</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MOBILITY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall ease of travel</td>
<td>Similar</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paths and walking trails</td>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ease of walking</td>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel by bicycle</td>
<td>Similar</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel by public transportation</td>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel by car</td>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public parking</td>
<td>Similar</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic flow</td>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NATURAL ENVIRONMENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall natural environment</td>
<td>Similar</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleanliness</td>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BUILT ENVIRONMENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall built environment</td>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New development in Bonner Springs</td>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordable quality housing</td>
<td>Similar</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing options</td>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public places</td>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ECONOMY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall economic health</td>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vibrant downtown/commercial area</td>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business and services</td>
<td>Similar</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of living</td>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping opportunities</td>
<td>Similar</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment opportunities</td>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place to visit</td>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place to work</td>
<td>Similar</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RECREATION AND WELLNESS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and wellness</td>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preventive health services</td>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health care</td>
<td>Similar</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EDUCATION AND ENRICHMENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational opportunities</td>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitness opportunities</td>
<td>Similar</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and enrichment opportunities</td>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural/arts/music activities</td>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult education</td>
<td>Similar</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-12 education</td>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child care/preschool</td>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social events and activities</td>
<td>Similar</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborliness</td>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness and acceptance</td>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities to participate in community matters</td>
<td>Similar</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities to volunteer</td>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How well does the government of Bonner Springs meet the needs and expectations of its residents?

The overall quality of the services provided by Bonner Springs as well as the manner in which these services are provided are key components of how residents rate their quality of life. Close to three-quarters of residents rated the overall quality of services provided by the City of Bonner Springs as excellent or good. Ratings for City services as well as services provided by the Federal Government were similar to the national benchmark.

Survey respondents also rated various aspects of Bonner Springs’s leadership and governance, including overall direction of Bonner Springs, confidence in local leaders and the value of services for taxes paid. In general, about half of residents rated each aspect positively. All ratings were similar to other communities nationwide.

Respondents evaluated over 30 individual services and amenities available in Bonner Springs. By and large, residents rated these services similarly to other communities across the nation. Within the facet of Natural Environment however, ratings tended to be similar to or lower than the national benchmark. Among the highest rated services in Bonner Springs were Safety services including fire and ambulance/EMS as well as Recreation and Wellness services. Additionally, almost all residents rated services related to public libraries positively.
Figure 2: Aspects of Governance

The National Citizen Survey™

Percent rating positively
e.g., excellent/good

Comparison to national benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower

SAFETY
- Police: 77%
- Fire: 86%
- Ambulance/EMS: 83%
- Crime prevention: 63%
- Fire prevention: 68%
- Animal control: 60%
- Emergency preparedness: 61%

MOBILITY
- Traffic enforcement: 64%
- Street repair: 33%
- Street cleaning: 44%
- Street lighting: 57%
- Snow removal: 52%
- Sidewalk maintenance: 41%
- Traffic signal timing: 56%
- Bus or transit services: 58%

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT
- Garbage collection: 61%
- Recycling: 62%
- Drinking water: 40%
- Natural areas preservation: 54%
- Open space: 54%

BUILT ENVIRONMENT
- Storm drainage: 67%
- Sewer services: 61%
- Power utility: 72%
- Utility billing: 62%
- Land use, planning and zoning: 45%
- Code enforcement: 41%
- Cable television: 53%

ECONOMY
- Economic development: 42%

RECREATION AND WELLNESS
- Bonner Springs parks: 75%
- Recreation programs: 72%
- Recreation centers: 67%
- Health services: 40%

EDUCATION AND ENRICHMENT
- Public libraries: 93%
- Special events: 65%

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
- Public information: 62%
Participation

Are the residents of Bonner Springs connected to the community and each other?

An engaged community harnesses its most valuable resource, its residents. The connections and trust among residents, government, businesses and other organizations help to create a sense of community, a shared sense of membership, belonging and history. About 7 in 10 residents rated the sense of community in Bonner Springs as excellent or good. A strong majority of residents reported they would recommend living in Bonner Springs and plan to live in Bonner Springs for the next five years. Additionally, about half of residents reported having contacted a Bonner Springs employee within the last 12 months. All these levels of participation were similar to the national benchmark.

The survey included over 30 activities and behaviors for which respondents indicated how often they participated in or performed each, if at all. Overall, the extent to which respondents participated in these activities tended to be similar to the activity levels of residents in other communities.

Levels of participation in Bonner Springs were highest within the facets of Natural Environment and Recreation and Wellness. Participation was varied within the facets of Mobility and Economy. Residents of Bonner Springs tended to participate in all other activities at levels similar to the national benchmark.

![Sense of Community Pie Chart]

**Sense of Community**

- Excellent: 21%
- Good: 48%
- Fair: 26%
- Poor: 5%

**Percent rating positively (e.g., very/somewhat likely, yes)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Positive Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recommend Bonner Springs</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remain in Bonner Springs</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contacted Bonner Springs</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comparison to national benchmark**

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower
Figure 3: Aspects of Participation

Percent rating positively
(e.g., yes, more than once a month, always/sometimes)

Comparison to national benchmark
- Higher
- Similar
- Lower

SAFETY
- Did NOT report a crime 68%

MOBILITY
- Used public transportation instead of driving 9%
- Walked or biked instead of driving 59%

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT
- Conserved water 78%
- Made home more energy efficient 71%
- Recycled at home 76%

BUILT ENVIRONMENT
- Did NOT observe a code violation 45%
- NOT under housing cost stress 75%

ECONOMY
- Purchased goods or services in Bonner Springs 98%
- Economy will have positive impact on income 34%
- Work in Bonner Springs 30%

RECREATION AND WELLNESS
- Used Bonner Springs recreation centers 57%
- Visited a Bonner Springs park 80%
- Ate 5 portions of fruits and vegetables 80%
- Participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity 81%
- In very good to excellent health 58%

EDUCATION AND ENRICHMENT
- Used Bonner Springs public libraries 72%
- Attended a Bonner Springs-sponsored event 62%

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
- Campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate 20%
- Contacted Bonner Springs elected officials 26%
- Volunteered 37%
- Participated in a club 25%
- Talked to or visited with neighbors 93%
- Done a favor for a neighbor 83%
- Attended a local public meeting 21%
- Watched a local public meeting 12%
- Read or watched local news 88%
- Voted in local elections 83%
Special Topics

The City of Bonner Springs included three questions of special interest on The NCS. Topics included sources of information, focus areas for City projects and blight in the city. When asked for their preferred source of information about the City’s government, activities, events and services, at least four in five residents preferred word-of-mouth and the City website over other available sources of information.

Figure 4: Sources of Information
Please indicate how much of a source, if at all, you consider each of the following to be for obtaining information about the City government and its activities, events and services:

- Word-of-mouth
  - Major source: 51%
  - Minor source: 37%
  - Total: 88%
- City website (www.bonnersprings.org)
  - Major source: 57%
  - Minor source: 26%
  - Total: 83%
- City communications via social media (i.e. Facebook, Twitter or Nextdoor)
  - Major source: 42%
  - Minor source: 30%
  - Total: 72%
- Local media outlets (newspapers, radio, local television stations)
  - Major source: 34%
  - Minor source: 36%
  - Total: 69%
- Town Council meetings and other public meetings
  - Major source: 26%
  - Minor source: 40%
  - Total: 66%
- Talking with City officials
  - Major source: 27%
  - Minor source: 37%
  - Total: 64%
- City electronic newsletter
  - Major source: 27%
  - Minor source: 37%
  - Total: 63%

Residents identified projects and issues that would be important for the City to address in the next five years. Maintaining and improving streets and City owned utilities were among the highest rated projects with close to 9 in 10 residents indicating each was “essential” or “very important.”

Figure 5: Future City Projects
Please indicate how important, if at all, each of the following projects and issues will be for the City to address over the next five years:

- Maintaining and improving streets
  - Essential: 54%
  - Very important: 38%
  - Total: 92%
- Maintaining and improving City owned utilities (water, sewer, and storm water)
  - Essential: 52%
  - Very important: 37%
  - Total: 89%
- Maintaining and improving aging City facilities (City Hall, Police Station, etc.)
  - Essential: 28%
  - Very important: 39%
  - Total: 67%
- Building walking and bicycle trails in Bonner Springs
  - Essential: 33%
  - Very important: 30%
  - Total: 64%
- Beautification efforts / public art
  - Essential: 23%
  - Very important: 34%
  - Total: 57%
- Increasing recreation program offerings
  - Essential: 25%
  - Very important: 32%
  - Total: 57%
Finally, residents indicated the extent to which run-down buildings, weed lots and junk vehicles were a problem in Bonner Springs. While few felt blight was a “major” problem in the city, about three-quarters of respondents felt it was a “moderate” or “minor” problem.

Figure 6: Blight in Bonner Springs
To what degree, if at all, are run-down buildings, weed lots or junk vehicles a problem in Bonner Springs?
Conclusions

Invest in utility services to maintain the high quality of life in Bonner Springs.

At least four in five residents rated Bonner Springs as an excellent or good place to live. A similar number of residents also rated positively their neighborhood as a place to live and Bonner Springs as a place to raise children. These positive ratings were reinforced by the strong majority of residents’ decision to remain in Bonner Springs and recommend Bonner Springs as a place to live to someone who asks. Overall, the City did a good job of providing services; only a few services received ratings lower than those in other communities (garbage, recycling, water, street cleaning and health services). As a strong majority of residents felt the City should address maintaining and improving City-owned utilities over the next five years, leaders may wish to tackle these lower-rated services first.

The Economy of Bonner Springs may be an area in which to focus improvements.

Residents identified economy as one of the most important focus areas for the community in the coming two years. While, nearly all respondents had purchased goods or services in Bonner Springs, residents were disappointed in the shopping opportunities available to them. Residents viewed the quality of job opportunities in Bonner Springs similar to that of other communities, yet they did not view the city as a place to work as favorably. Thus, the proportion of residents who worked in the city was lower in Bonner Springs than elsewhere. Further, about one-third of residents felt positive about their economic futures.

Residents find it easy to get around town – and they want to keep it that way.

The facet of Mobility received some of the highest ratings for Bonner Springs with nine in ten residents rating the overall ease of travel and travel by car in Bonner Springs as excellent or good. Traffic flows well and there are plenty of places to park. All these aspects of the community were better in Bonner Springs than in other communities. Additionally, residents felt it important for the City to invest in maintaining and improving streets over the next five years. While residents tended to favor motorized transportation over other modes, a majority of residents identified building bicycle and walking paths as another area of investment for the City, indicating a desire for more Mobility options.