

THE NBS™

The National Business Survey™

Bloomington, MN

Trends Over Time
2020



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About Trends Over Time

The National Business Survey™ (The NBS™) is standardized to assure high quality research methods and directly comparable results across The NBS communities. The NBS captures the opinions of businesses and employers across six core indicators of the business climate in the community:

- Community amenities
- Business climate
- Employment opportunities and workforce supports
- Workforce readiness
- Business growth
- Governance

This report discusses trends over time, comparing the 2020 ratings for the City of Bloomington to its previous survey results in 2015, 2018, and 2020. Additional reports and technical appendices are available under separate cover.

Understanding the Tables

Trend data for Bloomington represent important comparison data and should be examined for improvements or declines¹. Deviations from stable trends over time, especially, represent opportunities for understanding how local policies, programs or public information may have affected the opinions of Bloomington business owners and managers.

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 2018 and 2020 surveys, otherwise the comparisons between 2018 and 2020 are noted as being “similar.” Additionally, the benchmark comparisons for the current survey results are presented for reference.

Overall, ratings in Bloomington for 2020 generally remained stable or declined. Of the 69 items for which comparisons were available, 46 items were rated similarly in 2018 and 2020, 21 items showed a decrease in ratings and two showed an increase in ratings. Notable trends over time included the following:

- Bloomington business owners and managers were more likely in 2020 than in 2018 to give positive ratings to Bloomington as a place for older adults and the ease of travel by car in the city.
- Ratings tended to remain stable in 2020 for most items related to government performance and the quality of government services.
- Ratings for certain aspects of government support of the business community (e.g., supporting or creating new jobs or attracting new business) declined from 2018 to 2020, as did ratings for various other economy and employment-related aspects (e.g., overall economic health of the city, quality of employment opportunities, and variety of education/training opportunities to build work skills).
- It is important to note that the COVID-19 pandemic has likely had a negative impact on business owners’ and managers’ opinions for the 2020 survey.

¹ In 2020, The NBS survey was updated to include new and refreshed items. Consequently, some of the trends may be impacted due to wording modifications that could have potentially altered the meaning of the item for the respondent.

TABLE 1: QUALITY OF LIFE

Percent excellent or good	2015	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Bloomington as a place for young adults	NA	NA	NA	59%	NA	NA
Bloomington as a place for older adults	61%	66%	62%	79%	Higher	Higher
Bloomington as a place for children and families	NA	NA	NA	76%	NA	NA
The overall quality of life in Bloomington	89%	90%	89%	83%	Similar	Similar

TABLE 2: QUALITY OF FACETS OF LIVABILITY

Percent excellent or good	2015	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Residents' connection and engagement with their community	68%	68%	66%	58%	Similar	Lower
Overall opportunities for education, culture and the arts	85%	84%	88%	77%	Lower	Lower
Overall health and wellness opportunities in Bloomington	86%	84%	87%	81%	Similar	Lower
Overall quality of parks and recreation opportunities	NA	NA	NA	87%	NA	NA
Overall quality of natural environment in Bloomington	84%	86%	88%	85%	Similar	Similar
Overall feeling of safety in Bloomington	90%	86%	88%	66%	Lower	Lower
Overall quality of the utility infrastructure	NA	NA	NA	86%	NA	NA
Overall design or layout of residential and commercial areas	78%	77%	74%	71%	Similar	Similar
Overall quality of the transportation system	84%	86%	79%	66%	Lower	Similar
Overall economic health of Bloomington	85%	85%	85%	65%	Lower	Lower

TABLE 3: SAFETY IN COMMERCIAL AREAS

Percent very or somewhat safe	2015	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Safety in Bloomington's commercial areas after dark	77%	74%	73%	53%	Lower	Lower
Safety in Bloomington's commercial areas during the day	96%	94%	92%	88%	Similar	Lower

TABLE 4: COMMUNITY AMENITIES IN BLOOMINGTON

Percent excellent or good	2015	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Coverage of internet connection	NA	NA	NA	74%	NA	NA
Quality of internet connection	NA	NA	NA	74%	NA	NA
Opportunities to attend cultural/arts/music activities	NA	NA	NA	66%	NA	NA
Hotel and lodging options	NA	NA	NA	89%	NA	NA
Historical preservation in Bloomington	NA	NA	NA	61%	NA	NA
Public places where people want to spend time	78%	82%	77%	66%	Lower	Lower
Overall appearance of Bloomington	83%	83%	81%	84%	Similar	Similar
Cleanliness of Bloomington	82%	86%	83%	86%	Similar	Similar
Overall image or reputation of Bloomington	83%	83%	78%	75%	Similar	Lower
Bloomington as a place to visit	88%	89%	90%	80%	Lower	Lower

TABLE 5: BUSINESS AND SERVICE AMENITIES IN BLOOMINGTON

Percent excellent or good	2015	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Variety of service establishments	NA	NA	NA	71%	NA	NA
Quality of service establishments	NA	NA	NA	81%	NA	NA
Variety of restaurants and places to eat	NA	NA	NA	68%	NA	NA
Quality of restaurants and places to eat	NA	NA	NA	71%	NA	NA
Variety of shopping opportunities	NA	NA	NA	81%	NA	NA
Quality of shopping opportunities	94%	95%	91%	84%	Similar	Similar
Opportunities for tourism	NA	NA	NA	63%	NA	NA
Overall opportunity for business growth and expansion	NA	NA	NA	58%	NA	NA
Overall quality of commercial development in Bloomington	81%	81%	78%	66%	Lower	Lower
Vibrancy of downtown/commercial area	73%	76%	73%	65%	Similar	Lower

TABLE 6: DISRUPTIVE, NUISANCE, AND ILLEGAL BEHAVIORS

Percent not at all a problem	2015	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Disruptive, nuisance, or illegal behaviors a problem for business	NA	NA	NA	45%	NA	NA

TABLE 7: GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Percent excellent or good	2015	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Supporting or creating new jobs	58%	61%	58%	46%	Lower	Lower
Attracting new businesses	57%	62%	57%	47%	Lower	Lower
Retaining existing businesses	60%	61%	64%	47%	Lower	Lower
Welcoming business involvement	55%	56%	58%	57%	Similar	Similar
Communicating during City construction	NA	NA	NA	58%	NA	NA
Informing businesses of community issues and values	61%	62%	65%	57%	Similar	Lower
Bloomington as a place to do business	85%	83%	81%	78%	Similar	Similar

TABLE 8: RECOMMEND AND INTENTION TO STAY

Percent very or somewhat likely	2015	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Keep your business in Bloomington for the next five years	93%	93%	90%	82%	Similar	Lower
Recommend operating a business in Bloomington to someone who asks	88%	87%	86%	76%	Lower	Lower
Recommend working in Bloomington	NA	NA	NA	88%	NA	NA
Recommend living in Bloomington	NA	NA	NA	82%	NA	NA

TABLE 9: EMPLOYMENT IN BLOOMINGTON

Percent excellent or good	2015	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Availability of jobs that pay a livable wage	NA	NA	NA	62%	NA	NA
Variety of employment opportunities	NA	NA	NA	74%	NA	NA
Quality of employment opportunities	82%	87%	88%	75%	Lower	Higher
Bloomington as a place to work	94%	92%	91%	86%	Similar	Similar

TABLE 10: WORKFORCE SUPPORTS IN BLOOMINGTON

Percent excellent or good	2015	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Ease of parking at workplaces	NA	NA	NA	88%	NA	NA
Variety of transportation options for people who work in Bloomington	NA	NA	NA	60%	NA	NA
Affordability of childcare	NA	NA	NA	52%	NA	NA
Quality of childcare	NA	NA	NA	67%	NA	NA
Cost of living in Bloomington	NA	NA	NA	57%	NA	NA
Affordability of housing for people who work in Bloomington	NA	NA	NA	59%	NA	NA
Variety of housing options for people who work in Bloomington	85%	82%	81%	75%	Similar	Higher

TABLE 11: WORKFORCE EDUCATION AND SKILL SUPPORTS IN BLOOMINGTON

Percent excellent or good	2015	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Overall quality of education/training opportunities in your community	NA	NA	NA	60%	NA	NA
Affordability of education/training opportunities to build work skills	NA	NA	NA	48%	NA	NA
Variety of education/training opportunities to build work skills	75%	77%	77%	54%	Lower	Lower
Access to trade schools	NA	NA	NA	64%	NA	NA
Access to institutions of higher education	NA	NA	NA	76%	NA	NA
Public school system producing college-ready graduates	NA	NA	NA	65%	NA	NA
Public school system producing career-ready graduates	NA	NA	NA	62%	NA	NA

TABLE 12: WORKFORCE READINESS IN BLOOMINGTON

Percent fully or mostly possess	2015	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
The skills needed	NA	NA	NA	82%	NA	NA
The educational qualifications	NA	NA	NA	81%	NA	NA

TABLE 13: WORKFORCE CHALLENGES IN BLOOMINGTON

Percent major or moderate challenge	2015	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Failed drug tests	NA	NA	NA	8%	NA	NA
Lack of community amenities to attract employees seeking higher paying/higher skill level jobs	NA	NA	NA	12%	NA	NA
Cost of living	NA	NA	NA	27%	NA	NA
Lack of affordable, quality housing	NA	NA	NA	23%	NA	NA
Lack of affordable, reliable public transportation	NA	NA	NA	18%	NA	NA
Lack of childcare opportunities	NA	NA	NA	14%	NA	NA
Too few applicants/employees who speak a language other than English	NA	NA	NA	18%	NA	NA
Too few applicants/employees who do not speak a language other than English	NA	NA	NA	17%	NA	NA
Too many workers without a high school degree or equivalent	NA	NA	NA	7%	NA	NA
Lack of quality public schools	NA	NA	NA	15%	NA	NA
Lack of trade schools and other adult training programs	NA	NA	NA	23%	NA	NA
Lack of higher education opportunities	NA	NA	NA	8%	NA	NA
Too many overqualified employees/applicants	NA	NA	NA	15%	NA	NA
Too many under-qualified employees/applicants	NA	NA	NA	59%	NA	NA

TABLE 14: EXPECTED BUSINESS GROWTH

Percent large or small increase	2015	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Increase expected in the NEXT five years	NA	NA	NA	65%	NA	NA
Increased over the PAST five years	NA	NA	NA	58%	NA	NA

TABLE 15: IMPACT OF ECONOMY ON BUSINESS REVENUE IN NEXT 6 MONTHS

Percent very or somewhat positive	2015	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Economy will have POSITIVE impact on revenues in the next 6 months	56%	54%	57%	29%	Lower	Lower

TABLE 16: BUSINESS PLANS TO HIRE IN NEXT 6-12 MONTHS

Percent yes or not sure	2015	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Hiring in 6 to 12 months	49%	50%	64%	55%	Similar	Similar

TABLE 17: TYPES OF JOBS BUSINESSES PLAN TO ADD

Percent yes	2015	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Highly skilled jobs	NA	NA	NA	24%	NA	NA
Skilled jobs	NA	NA	NA	44%	NA	NA
Semi-skilled jobs	NA	NA	NA	37%	NA	NA
Unskilled jobs	NA	NA	NA	25%	NA	NA

TABLE 18: GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE

Percent excellent or good	2015	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Being honest	71%	67%	69%	64%	Similar	Similar
Acting in the best interest of community	70%	71%	69%	62%	Similar	Similar
Overall confidence in Bloomington government	70%	68%	71%	57%	Lower	Lower
Overall direction Bloomington is taking	73%	69%	71%	56%	Lower	Lower
Value of services for the taxes paid to Bloomington	65%	67%	66%	59%	Similar	Similar
Federal Government	45%	40%	51%	52%	Similar	Higher
City of Bloomington	87%	86%	85%	78%	Similar	Similar

TABLE 19: QUALITY OF GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Percent excellent or good	2015	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Overall customer service by Bloomington employees	85%	89%	89%	82%	Similar	Similar
City-sponsored special events	82%	85%	83%	73%	Lower	Similar
Emergency preparedness	85%	87%	88%	78%	Lower	Similar

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Public information services	87%	87%	82%	74%	Similar	Similar
Economic development	84%	82%	78%	63%	Lower	Similar
Code enforcement	70%	68%	69%	61%	Similar	Similar
Building permits and inspections	75%	77%	68%	63%	Similar	Similar
Land use, planning, and zoning	74%	78%	72%	65%	Similar	Similar
Utility billing	88%	84%	84%	79%	Similar	Similar
Power (electric and/or gas) utility	90%	89%	90%	86%	Similar	Similar
Storm drainage	87%	89%	89%	82%	Similar	Similar
Recycling	90%	85%	81%	80%	Similar	Similar
Garbage collection	93%	85%	80%	82%	Similar	Lower
Traffic management during construction	NA	NA	NA	62%	NA	NA
Ease of walking in Bloomington	70%	76%	77%	72%	Similar	Higher
Ease of travel by bicycle in Bloomington	66%	65%	59%	67%	Similar	Similar
Ease of travel by car in Bloomington	83%	80%	76%	87%	Higher	Higher
Amount of public parking in commercial areas	89%	86%	85%	88%	Similar	Higher
Traffic flow on major streets	69%	69%	62%	67%	Similar	Higher
Bus or transit services	77%	75%	76%	67%	Similar	Higher
Sidewalk maintenance	81%	79%	75%	76%	Similar	Similar
Snow removal	91%	91%	84%	83%	Similar	Higher
Street lighting	88%	86%	86%	81%	Similar	Similar
Street cleaning	82%	80%	83%	79%	Similar	Higher
Street repair	62%	58%	67%	67%	Similar	Higher
Traffic enforcement	85%	86%	83%	76%	Similar	Similar
Crime prevention	91%	87%	87%	76%	Lower	Lower
Fire services	98%	96%	98%	99%	Similar	Similar
Police services	93%	94%	95%	92%	Similar	Higher