



The City of Fort Collins Community Survey 2025

Executive Summary

July 2025

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Summary of Survey Methods

The 2025 City of Fort Collins Community Survey provided residents with the opportunity to rate the quality of life in Fort Collins, as well as the quality-of-service delivery and overall workings of local government. The survey also permitted residents to provide feedback on parks and recreation satisfaction and needs, and to share their priorities for community planning and resource allocation.

Surveys were mailed to 4,400 randomly selected resident households in April 2025. A total of 548 surveys were completed, yielding a response rate of 13%. In addition to the scientific survey of randomly selected households, a link to an online, community-wide, open participation survey was publicized through various community channels. This open participation survey was identical to the scientific survey and open to all Fort Collins residents. A total of 373 online surveys were completed, yielding a total count of 921 survey responses.

Survey results were weighted so that respondent gender, age, housing type (attached or detached), housing tenure (rent or own), race, and council district were represented in proportions reflective of the entire adult population of the city. The margin of error is plus or minus three percentage points around any given percentage point reported for all survey respondents.

Because Fort Collins has administered resident surveys before, some comparisons could be made between 2025 responses and those from previous survey iterations. The body of the report presents data from 2013 to 2025.

Fort Collins also elected to have its results compared to those of other jurisdictions across the nation and in the Front Range of Colorado. Comparisons are made possible through a national benchmark database created and maintained by Polco. This database contains resident perspectives gathered in resident surveys from over 400 jurisdictions over the past five years.

Key Findings

Fort Collins residents enjoy an excellent quality of life, but housing affordability continues to be a concern.

- Fort Collins residents continue to rate the quality of life highly, with 87% of the respondents awarding very good or good marks in 2025. This rating, which had been slowly declining since 2013, showed an upward trend in 2025. The current 87% rating is similar to the national and Front Range benchmark comparisons.
- Residents also assessed other aspects related to quality of life in the city. About 9 in 10 respondents positively rated Fort Collins as a place to live and as a place to attend college, while about 8 in 10 gave high marks to the city as a place to raise children. About 7 in 10 residents rated the quality of public schools, Fort Collins as a place to retire, and the openness and acceptance of the community toward people of diverse backgrounds as either very good or good.
- As in previous years, ratings for affordability tended to be lower. Fewer than 2 in 10 residents gave very good or good ratings to the availability of affordable quality childcare, and just 1 in 10 positively rated Fort Collins in terms of the availability of affordable quality housing.
- In a question asking residents to identify in their own words the one item or focus area the city should work to improve upon in the next few years, housing issues (cost, availability, etc.) were, as in the previous surveys, the most frequently mentioned priority.
- Despite that, at least 9 in 10 residents indicated that they would be very or somewhat likely to remain in Fort Collins for the next five years and to recommend living in Fort Collins to someone who asked; both ratings were higher compared to previous years.

Residents feel generally safe in the city, and feelings of safety at night and while using Transfort have improved since 2024.

- About 9 in 10 respondents rated the overall feeling of safety in Fort Collins as very good or good, which was above the ratings of the previous three survey iterations. Fort Collins ranked similar to the Front Range and national averages for overall safety of community members.
- Survey respondents were also asked to rate how they felt in various areas in and around the community. At least 9 in 10 residents reported that they always or usually felt safe in their neighborhood during the day, in Fort Collins overall during the day, in downtown Fort Collins during the day and when visiting recreation facilities. Between 8 and 9 in 10 residents also indicated that they felt always or usually safe in parks, in natural areas/open spaces, on trails, and in their neighborhood at night.
- About 7 in 10 felt safe in Fort Collins overall at night and in downtown Fort Collins at night, while about two thirds of the participants felt at least usually safe while using Transfort/MAX.
- All ratings were on par or above those in 2024. The larger increases were recorded in Fort Collins overall at night (+8), Downtown Fort Collins at night (+7), and Transfort/MAX (+7).

Ease of travel by bicycle remains highly valued, while other transportation ratings show notable improvement.

- As in previous years, ease of travel by bicycle was the top-rated transportation item, with 85% rating it positively. Ease of walking, the Northern Colorado Regional Airport/Shuttle Service, and street maintenance were also well rated by two-thirds of respondents. About 6 in 10 residents gave positive marks to ease of travel by car, while about half praised safety from motor vehicle accidents, downtown parking availability, and accessibility for people with disabilities. Lastly, 4 in 10 residents gave positive ratings to public transportation, electric vehicle charging availability, and traffic flow.
- Some items, such as street maintenance (+10), the Northern Colorado Regional Airport/Shuttle Service (+13), ease of traveling by public transportation (+13), and availability of electric vehicle charging stations (+17) showed strong increases when compared to 2024.

Fort Collins as a place to work received its highest rating in recent years, but residents still want more job opportunities in the city.

- About three-fourths of residents rated Fort Collins favorably as a place to work—an improvement over previous years. The city ranked higher than the Front Range benchmark and similar to the national benchmark in this area.
- Survey participants were also asked to rate several community aspects of economic health. About two thirds of respondents positively rated the availability of quality healthcare, the quality of dining opportunities, and the quality of entertainment opportunities. About 6 in 10 praised the quality of shopping opportunities in the city while roughly one third positively rated the availability of job opportunities in Fort Collins. All ratings were mostly on par with 2023 and 2024 results.
- Additionally, community members evaluated the city's performance in supporting local businesses and promoting the economic health of Fort Collins. Just over 5 in 10 survey participants gave positive ratings for the city's support of businesses, while a slightly lower proportion rated the city's efforts to promote economic health as very good or good.

Residents appreciate city employees and many aspects of city services.

- About 8 in 10 survey respondents rated the overall quality of city services as either very good or good. This rating was similar to that in 2024 but slightly higher than in 2023.
- About 7 in 10 residents positively rated the city for respecting all community members regardless of background, and for creating a welcoming, inclusive environment. Meanwhile, 6 in 10 residents praised the city's overall direction, its efforts to encourage sustainability, the efficient operation of programs and services, and its openness to community member involvement. Lastly, about half of the residents gave positive ratings for the city's partnership with the community to address climate change and for listening to residents, while 4 in 10 praised its approach to managing and planning for growth. All ratings were higher than in 2024.
- Similar to 2024, about half of residents reported contact with a city employee in the past 12 months. Those who did were asked to rate the interaction, with nearly 9 in 10 rating employee courtesy as very good or good. About 8 in 10 gave positive ratings for promptness, knowledge, and overall impression, and roughly three-fourths felt valued during the interaction. Ratings were consistent with prior years, except for promptness, which improved by 5 points year over year.

Survey Background

The City of Fort Collins contracted with Polco to conduct a community-wide resident survey. The primary goal of the survey was to assess the attitudes and opinions of residents by:

- Evaluating city programs and services.
- Determining general perceptions of the quality of life in Fort Collins.
- Comparing survey results to other communities across the nation.
- Establishing trendlines to measure government performance over time.

The City of Fort Collins Community Survey serves as a consumer report card for Fort Collins by providing residents with the opportunity to rate the quality of life in the city, as well as the community's amenities, service delivery and their satisfaction with local government. Residents also provide feedback on what is working well and what is not and communicate their priorities for community planning and resource allocation.

Focus on quality-of-service delivery helps city leaders, staff, and the public to set priorities for budget decisions and lays the groundwork for tracking community opinions about the core responsibilities of the City of Fort Collins government, helping to assure maximum service quality over time.

This type of survey gets at the key services that local government controls to create a quality community. It is akin to private sector customer surveys that are used regularly by many corporations to monitor where there are weaknesses in product or service delivery before customers defect into competition or before other problems from dissatisfied customers arise.

This is the 16th iteration of the City of Fort Collins Community Survey since the baseline study conducted in 2001.

Survey Administration

A postcard was mailed to 4,400 Fort Collins households, selected at random, notifying residents that they had been chosen to participate in the survey. A paper copy of the survey followed in the mail after one week. Both mailings included a web link so that residents could take the survey online, if desired. The survey was also available online in Spanish. All mailing contained instructions in Spanish on how to access the online survey. There were 548 respondents to the mailed questionnaire, yielding a response rate of 13%. In addition to the scientific, random sample, a link to an online "opt-in" survey was publicized through various community channels. This opt-in survey was identical to the scientific survey and open to all Fort Collins residents. A total of 373 online surveys were completed, yielding a total count of 921 survey responses. There was one completed survey in Spanish. The margin of error is plus or minus three percentage points around any given percentage for all respondents.

Survey results were weighted so that respondent gender, age, housing type (attached or detached), housing tenure (rent or own), race, and council district were represented in proportions reflective of the entire adult population of the city. More information about the survey methodology can be found in *Appendix G: Survey Methodology*.

How the Results are Reported

For the most part, the full set of frequencies or the “percent positive” are presented in the body and narrative of the report. The percent positive is the combination of the top two most positive response options (i.e., “very good” and “good,” “very safe” and “somewhat safe,” “strongly support,” and “somewhat support,” etc.).

On many of the questions in the survey, respondents could give an answer of “don’t know.” The proportion of respondents giving this reply is shown in the full set of responses included in *Appendix B: Complete Survey Frequencies* and is noted in the body of this report if it is 30% or greater. However, these responses have been removed from the analyses presented in the body of the report, unless otherwise indicated. In other words, the majority of the tables and graphs in the body of the report display the responses from respondents who had an opinion about a specific item.

For some questions, respondents were permitted to select multiple responses. When the total exceeds 100% in a table for a multiple response question, it is because some respondents are counted in multiple categories. When a table for a question that only permitted, a single response does not total to exactly 100%, it is due to the customary practice rounding values to the nearest whole number.

Precision of Estimates

It is customary to describe the precision of estimates made from surveys by a “level of confidence” and accompanying “confidence interval” (or margin of error). The margin of error for this survey is generally no greater than plus or minus three percentage points around any given percentage reported for the entire sample (N=921).

Comparison of Results Over Time and by Subgroups

Because this survey was the 16th iteration of the Fort Collins Community Survey, the 2025 results are presented along with past ratings when available. To simplify, the body of the report presents data from 2013 to 2025, when available. The full set of trends can be found in *Appendix F: Comparisons of Survey Results by Year*. Differences between years can be considered “statistically significant” if they are plus or minus three points on the 100-point scale or are plus or minus five percentage points or more around any given percent.

This metric can sometimes be a bit confusing, so it’s worth noting that the average rating is not the percentage of respondents who rated the item as “excellent” or “good.” Instead, it’s an average on a 100-point scale. You can think of it like a United Way fundraising thermometer—the higher the average rating, the closer it is to 100.

Selected survey results were compared by respondent characteristics as well as two ways of subdividing the geographic location of respondent households: geographic area (Northeast, East Central, Southeast, Northwest, West Central, and Southwest) and Council Districts. The full set of results by demographic characteristics and geographic areas can be found in *Appendix D: Responses to Selected Survey Questions by Respondent Characteristics*. For each pair of subgroups that has a statistically significant difference, an upper-case letter denoting significance is shown in the category with the larger column proportion.

Comparing Survey Results to Other Communities

Polco's database of comparative resident opinion comprises resident perspectives gathered in resident surveys from approximately 400 communities whose residents evaluated their services. National benchmark comparisons and Front Range benchmark comparisons have been provided when similar questions on the Fort Collins survey are included in Polco's database, and there were at least five communities in which the question was asked.

Where comparisons for quality ratings were available, Fort Collins's results were generally noted as being "higher" than the benchmark, "lower" than the benchmark or "similar" to the benchmark. In instances where ratings are considerably higher or lower than the benchmark, these ratings have been further demarcated by the attribute of "much," (for example, "much lower" or "much higher"). These labels come from a comparison of Fort Collins' rating to the benchmark where a rating is considered 'similar' if it is within the standard margin of error (10 points or less on the 100-point scale); "higher" or "lower" if the difference between Fort Collins' rating and the benchmark is greater than 10 points but 20 points or less; and "much higher" or "much lower" if the difference between Fort Collins' rating and the benchmark is more than twice the standard margin of error (greater than 20 points). Comparisons for a number of items in the survey are not available in the benchmark database. These items are excluded from the benchmark tables.