Proposal to conduct
The National Community Survey™

Cocoa, FL
January 17, 2020

Polco N NRC

National Research Center

POWERED BY POLCO

Polco

Moving Communities Forward

Community perspectives that inspire change. National Research Center's gold-standard surveys and benchmarking data deliver reliable insights that guide you to action.

n-r-c.com

Let Every Voice Count

Smarter, more connected communities. Polco's online civic engagement platform provides the tools you need to bring community members and leaders together.

polco.us

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with a proposal to conduct Cocoa's Community Survey. We are happy to say that we feel the NRC/Polco team can meet and even exceed your needs.

We have a template survey, The National Community Survey™, which has been tried and tested in hundreds of communities with nothing but success. We recently revamped the survey, using our extensive experience, and all the knowledge our clients have shared, to create an updated model of community livability. This model, and the related questions on our survey should cover all of the topics you have listed in your request. However, if you find there is a specific area that you want to ask additional questions about, we also leave room for some custom questions (and we always provide our expertise in crafting those).

The NCS™ comes with the most extensive set of benchmarks available. In this proposal we outline the cities available to you for your custom comparisons. If you know of other Cities who have completed community surveys but are not in our database, we are happy to integrate their data into our benchmarks, as long as we can access their results.

We provide our reporting in layers, so you can easily share the overview or dig down into the details of each question part. We provide statistical testing, so you don't overinterpret small differences and we are happy to report your results by District.

You can find many of our reports online to view examples of our work, however do note that we have recently revised our reporting format to be even more visually interesting and easy to digest. We don't yet have published versions of these new reports to share.

THE NCS™
The National Community Survey™

CONNECT WITH RESIDENTS
MAKE DATA -DRIVEN DECISIONS

The National Community Survey™ (The NCS™) is the gold standard for gauging public opinion. Endorsed by ICMA, tested and trusted by hundreds of jurisdictions, The NCS provides an accurate assessment of quality of life, community livability and local government policies and services. The NCS allows you to compare your local results with benchmarks from hundreds of communities across the U.S. The best practices in scientific survey methods guarantee valid findings to produce the clear, unbiased and accurate results you need to take action.

Bring the voice of the people into your decision making processes.

- Evaluate services
- Measure quality of life
- Monitor performance
- Enhance communication
- Assist strategic planning
- Inform budgeting and plan capital investments
- Build trust

The NCS™ basic service includes all aspects of conducting the survey

Survey Instrument

Sampling

Implementation

Weighting and Analysis

Benchmark comparisons

Reports of Results

Survey Instrument

The NCS measures your community's livability.

NRC has conducted thousands of surveys for hundreds of jurisdictions in our 25 year history. In that process we have spent a lot of time thinking about local governments and their jurisdictions, talking with staff, residents and stakeholders, presenting survey results and facilitating discussions and strategic planning sessions. Combining this deep experience with extensive research on models of community livability we have honed The NCS to focus on ten key facets of community livability:

- ● Economy
- ● Mobility
- ● Community Design
- ● Utilities
- ● Safety
- ● Natural Environment
- ● Parks and Recreation
- ● Health and Wellness
- ● Education, Arts and Culture
- ● Inclusivity & Engagement

The NCS allows you to add custom questions

Uniformity is required to allow benchmark comparisons to other communities, but many jurisdictions have a few unique topics, projects, policies or planning processes for which they would like resident input. The NCS provides a space to add a few custom questions and the expert guidance from your project manager to ensure they are of the highest quality.

The XYZ of ABC 2019 Community Survey

Please complete this survey if you are the adult (age 18 or older) in the household who most recently had year of birth does not matter). Your responses are anonymous and will be reported in group form only.

1. Please rate each of the following aspects of quality of life in ABC.

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Po
ABC as a place to live	1	2	3	4
Your neighborhood as a place to live	1	2	3	4
ABC as a place to raise children	1	2	3	4
ABC as a place to work	1	2	3	4
ABC as a place to visit	1	2	3	4
ABC as a place to retire	1	2	3	4
The overall quality of life in ABC	1	2	3	4
Sense of community	1	2	3	4

2. Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to ABC as a whole.

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Po
Overall economic health of ABC	1	2	3	4
Overall quality of the transportation system (auto, bicycle, foot, bus) in ABC	1	2	3	4
Overall design or layout of ABC's residential and commercial areas (e.g., homes, buildings, streets, parks, etc.)	1	2	3	4
Overall quality of the utility infrastructure in ABC (water, sewer, storm water, electric/gas)	1	2	3	4
Overall feeling of safety in ABC	1	2	3	4

Sampling

Selecting households and residents

All Cocoa households will be eligible for the survey. We have found that United States Postal Service (USPS) lists, updated every three months, provide the best representation of all households in a specific geographies. We geocode each address location to assure it is within your City boundaries and identify each District for sub-sampling.

Multi-family housing units will be over sampled as these residents typically respond to surveys at lower rates and we want to hear from them! To further support scientific results, we also use an unbiased procedure to select a single individual within the household.

Using unbiased methods helps ensure the attitudes expressed by our respondents closely approximate the attitudes of all adult residents living in your community.

Number Mailed out	Returned with 20-30% response rate	Margin of Error
1,700 (425/District)	340-510 (85-130/District)	±4-5% (±9-11%/District)
The NCS Basic Service includes 1,700 households		

Selecting the right number

The relationship between the number of respondents and precision of estimates or margin of error (95% confidence level) is shown above. How many households we mail to is dependent on the level of precision you would like to see at the District level and our best estimates of expected response rates.
We can't guarantee response numbers but we work hard to maximize them.
A ±5% margin of error is the general standard for a City-wide survey.

We typically advise our clients to send to at least 400 households per district (and The NCS Basic Service meets that standard for 4 Districts).

Implementation

Mailed surveys receive the highest response rates

Using best practices, the survey will be administered by mail with three contacts. Residents will also have the option to complete the survey online if they prefer.

- First we send a postcard announcing the survey.
- The first survey mails a week later and a reminder survey one week after that.
- A postage paid envelope is always included to return the survey.
- To lend legitimacy, the cover letter uses your letterhead and the signature of your mayor or other City representative.
- The cover letter explains the importance of participation and gives instructions on completing and returning the survey.
- A web address and instructions on the cover letter allow for online completion.
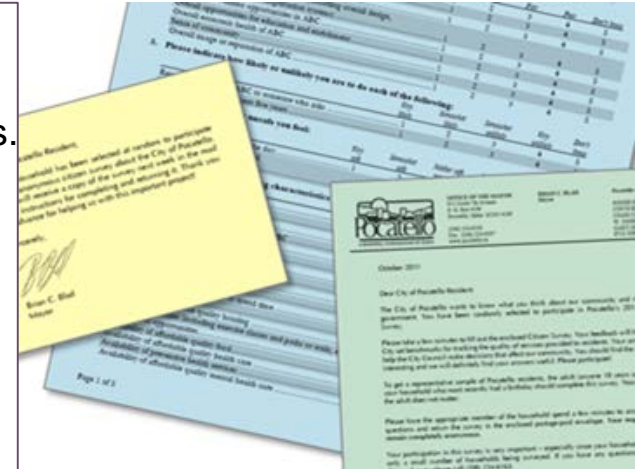
An additional opportunity for people to participate

While the random sample helps ensure representativeness, you may have residents who were not chosen for the mailed survey who want to participate. NRC will host your survey on Polco, *and once the main mailed survey data collection window is closed,* you may choose to open a new window to wider public participation.

In Polco we will have set up a City profile and you can use the platform to connect the survey to your social media account to send invitations for more people to "opt in" to provide input. We also have resources to guide you in sharing your survey through a variety of other communication channels. Results of this input survey will be reported under separate cover.

Once a respondent has completed the survey on Polco, they can have the opportunity to join your panel of resident respondents. You can continue to use Polco for free, in perpetuity, to ask residents follow up questions once this survey effort is complete. More info on this later in our proposal!

Weighting and Analysis

Would you say that your health in general is:

■ Excellent	■ Very good	■ Good	■ Fair	■ Poor
20%	15%	20%	30%	5%

HEALTH AND WELLNESS OPPORTUNITIES IN ABC

Excellent 25%
Good 45%
Poor 5%
Fair 25%

Survey Processing

Returned surveys are scanned electronically (and stored in case review is needed) and entered into an electronic dataset using "key and verify," to ensure accuracy. While we find very little cleaning is needed due to our expertise in question construction and survey formatting, completed surveys are always reviewed for inconsistencies both visually and through range checks and other dataset quality controls.

Data from the web surveys are automatically entered into an electronic dataset, downloaded, cleaned as necessary, and then merged with the data from the mailed surveys to create one complete dataset.

Weighting the Data

The first step in preparing the data for analysis will be to weight the data to reflect the demographic profile of the residents of Cocoa. This is a best practice in survey research which adjusts for potential non response bias.

In general, residents with certain characteristics (for example: those who are older or are homeowners) are more likely to participate in surveys. Weighting allows us to increase or decrease the weight of each respondent to mimic as closely as possible the demographic profile of Cocoa as described by the US Census.
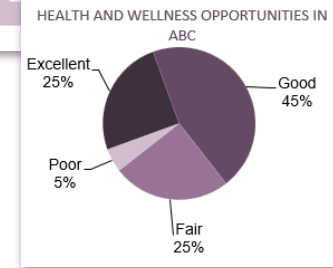
Analyzing the Data

For quantitative analysis, we rely on IBM Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS). We believe that analysis must be replicable, so we keep every label and command run in a syntax file available for audit and rerunning, as necessary.

In addition to providing a full set of responses to each survey question, analysis will include crosstabulation by District and comparison of results against benchmark communities.

We can also add comparisons by respondent sociodemographic characteristics.

Benchmark comparisons

NRC has the largest database of resident opinion of any firm, containing about 700 comparison communities across the nation. We innovated a method to quantitatively integrate the results of surveys conducted by us and others. We maintain normative comparisons for over 120 services: police, fire, EMS, garbage collection and recycling, utilities and billing, library services, street maintenance and repair, water quality, code enforcement, senior services, transportation, city employee ratings, job opportunities, public safety, economic development, public trust and many others. The NCS Basic Service includes benchmark comparisons to NRC full database (national benchmarks).

Florida Communities in NRC's Database

Cape Coral
Charlotte County
Clearwater
Coral Springs
DeLand
Destin
Escambia County
Fernandina Beach
Jupiter
Key West
Miami
North Port
Palm Beach Gardens
Palm Coast
Pasco County
Port Orange
Port St. Lucie
Royal Palm Beach
St. Augustine
St. Lucie County
Winter Garden

Reports of Results

Making results understood and actionable

Reports and presentations must serve staff, council members, appointed boards and commissions and the public while al
being documents that the media can understand and find robust should they wish to press their credibility. These are
challenges we accept enthusiastically! Our professionally designed graphics are engaging and pop with clear information.
report tells the story of the survey results in a stylish, colorful, informative and simple manner.

The NCS reporting

The NCS results are layered into multiple reports;
providing flexibility to provide different levels of
information to residents, the media, staff and key
decision makers. Most questions are presented in
charts with comparisons to national benchmarks.

- Community Livability Report
- Dashboard Report
- Geographic and Demographic
  subgroup comparisons
- Full technical appendices
  (description of the methods and
  frequency tables for every survey question)

Quality of Life

Measuring community livability
starts with assessing the quality of
life of those who live there, and
ensuring that the community is
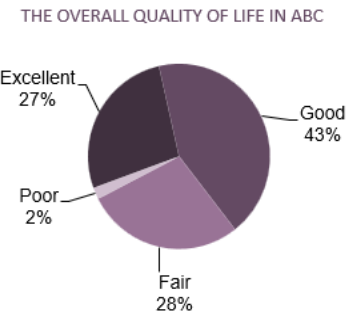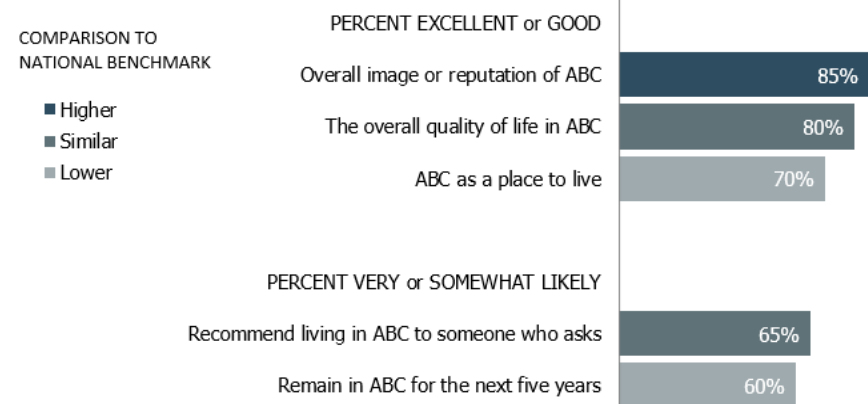attractive, accessible, and
welcoming to all.

THE OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE IN ABC

Excellent 27%
Good 43%
Poor 2%
Fair 28%

FIGURE 1: BENCHMARK COMPARISONS

COMPARISON TO NATIONAL BENCHMARK
- Higher
- Similar
- Lower

PERCENT EXCELLENT or GOOD

Overall image or reputation of ABC	85%
The overall quality of life in ABC	80%
ABC as a place to live	70%

PERCENT VERY or SOMEWHAT LIKELY

Recommend living in ABC to someone who asks	65%
Remain in ABC for the next five years	60%

FIGURE 2: QUALITY OF LIFE IN ABC - SUMMARY

| Percent excellent or good	2019 rating	Comparison to benchmark	Change 2017 to 2019
Overall image or reputation of ABC	↔	↓	4%
The overall quality of life in ABC			

Follow up with Polco

In 2019, NRC merged with Polco and now can happily provide
an online community engagement platform for free!

The platform combines the ease of online polls/micro-surveys with the verification and reliability of in-person engagement. Polco lets you build a "standing panel" of residents who are available to give their perspective on any number of items whenever the City wants to ask a question and receive that input.

- The online version of The NCS will be hosted on Polco.

- After completing The NCS online, residents will be asked if they would like to join your Polco panel (they, of course, can easily say no).

- You can then use the Polco platform to ask follow-up questions to your community survey or ask about hot topics or general conundrums as they arise.

- City staff or elected officials can post unlimited short surveys or single questions. Questions can include images (maps, pictures, and video) in addition to links to better inform respondents about more complex issues.

- To further build your panel, you can share new questions through social media, email, in-person events, local media, and other channels as appropriate (we can provide guidance on the best ways to communicate with residents about Polco).

- Polco responses are organized in visually compelling real-time dashboards and can be aggregated by districts.

- Polco is also able to provide aggregated demographic information (e.g., age, gender, etc.) for around 70% of the verified response group.
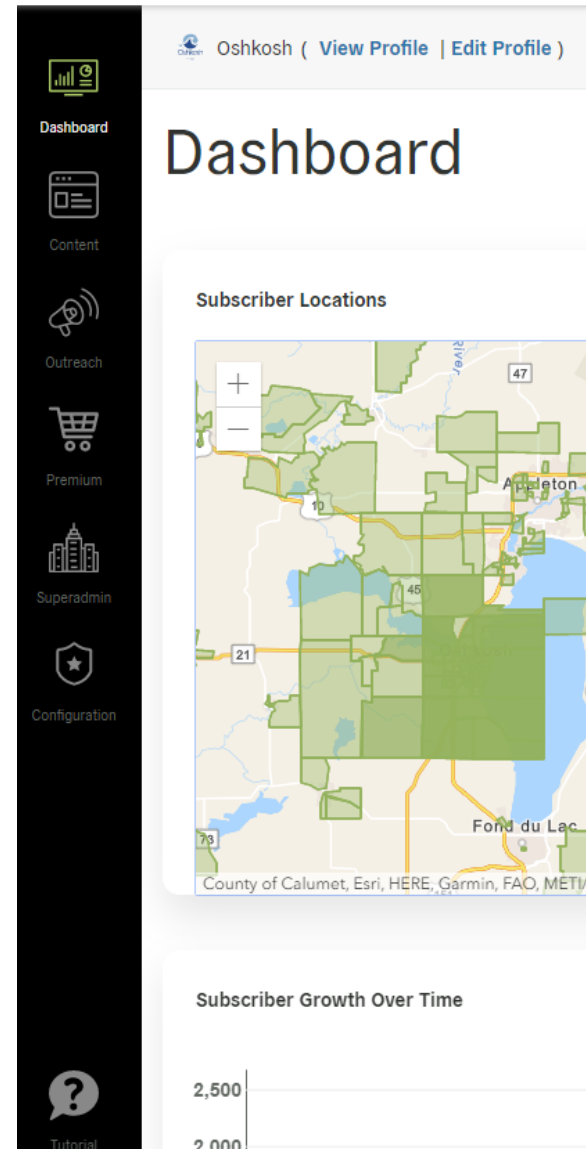
Timeline
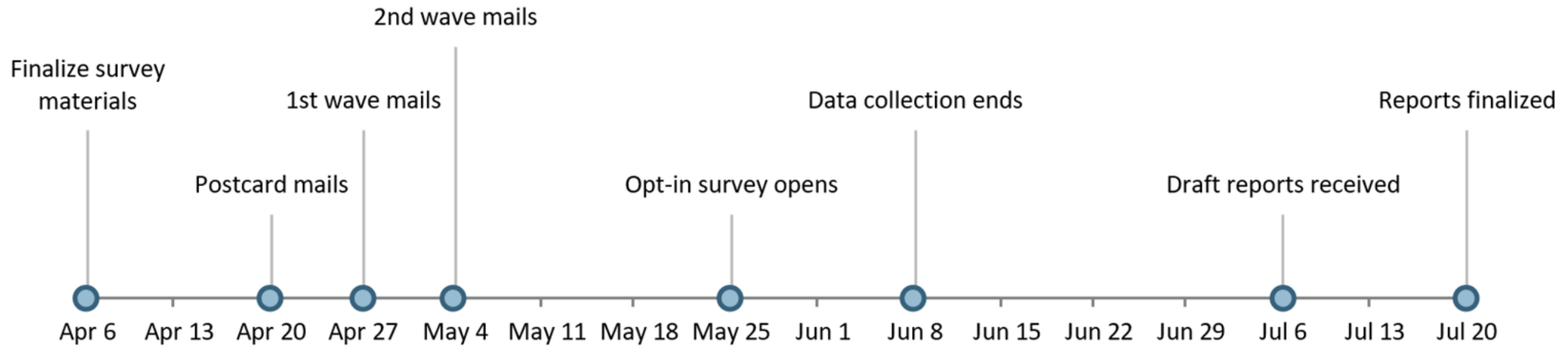
Above is an overview of a suggested timeline (based on a due date of "by September 30"). More detail can be found on the following page. This is an overview of our typical project flow, but our clients sometimes choose to expand or compress different aspects of the process. We are happy to discuss modifications to best meet your needs!

Sample Timeline

Item	Date
Preparing for the Survey	
The NCS survey process is initiated upon receipt of your first payment and signed contract	Jan 31
NRC emails you information to customize The NCS	Jan 31
Due to NRC: Selection of add-on options, Drafts of the optional custom questions to be included in the survey	Feb 14
Due to NRC: Zip code information and GIS boundary data	Feb 14
NRC finalizes the survey instrument and mailing materials and sends .pdf samples for your records	Feb 21
NRC generates the sample of households in your community	Feb 21 to Mar 6
NRC prints materials and prepares mailings	Mar 13
Due to NRC: Selection of custom benchmark profile(s) (if custom benchmark add-on selected)	Mar 13
Conducting the survey	
Survey materials are mailed	Mar 20 to Apr 3
Prenotification postcards sent	Mar 20
1st wave of surveys sent	Mar 27
2nd wave of surveys sent	Apr 4
Opt-in web survey link posted on your website and shared in communication channels (source link provided to you by NRC)	Apr 24
Data collection: surveys received and processed for your community	Mar 27 to May 8
During this time, you will receive postcards that were undeliverable due to bad addresses, or vacant housing units. This is normal. Please count all the postcards, as we will subtract the number of returned postcards from the total number mailed to estimate the number of "eligible" households in calculating the final response rate.	
Due to NRC: Final count of returned postcards	May 8
Survey analysis and report writing	May 8 to Jun 5
During this time, NRC will process the surveys, perform the data analysis, and produce a draft report for your community. The report will contain a description of the methodology, information on understanding the results, and graphs and tables of your results, as well as a description of NRC's database of normative data from across the U.S. and actual comparisons to your results, where appropriate.	
NRC emails draft report (in PDF format) along with invoice for balance due on The NCS Basic Service and any additional add-on options	Jun 5
Due to NRC: community feedback on the draft report (most final reports are identical to the draft reports, but we always accept input!)	Jun 12
NRC emails final report to you	Jun 19

Above is an overview of a suggested timeline. This is an overview of our typical project flow, but our clients sometimes choose to expand or compress different aspects of the process. We are happy to discuss modifications to best meet your needs!

Pricing

The NCS™ Basic Service

Assistance with crafting custom questions; three-contact mailing of 1,700 pieces each; all survey recipients will have the option to complete the survey online if they prefer; data entry and analysis of returned surveys; draft reports for review; electronic final reports with national benchmark comparisons, analysis and detailed methods; technical assistance in understanding survey results via phone and email with key staff of The NCS; and a community-wide opt-in web survey to be conducted on Polco after the majority of mail data collection has occurred

Subscription $15,695
Non-recurring $18,000

Above are the descriptions and costs for The NCS™ Basic Service.

On the following pages are descriptions and costs for add-on options.

We offer two price levels, one which uses our subscription contract and the second for single year (non-recurring) projects. Subscriptions can be set for one, two or three year cycles and may be canceled with no penalty.

We are offering Cocoa the 2019 discounted rates listed if the City is able to enter into a subscription contract.

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR YOUR PROJECT

	Subscription	Non-recurring
Basic Service (1,700 mailed) with web options	**$15,695**	$18,000
District cross-tabulations	**$910**	$1,015
Spanish online survey	**$910**	$980
Demographic cross-tabulations	**$910**	$1,015
Total with above options	**$18,425**	$21,010

Reporting

Custom Benchmark Comparisons   In addition to the national benchmarks (included with The NCS Basic Service), NRC can base custom benchmarks on region, population size or other criteria as requested (and available in our dataset).

Subscription $1,085 per custom group /   Non-recurring $1,175 per custom group

Demographic Comparison Report   Crosstabulations will be provided in a separate report for up to five demographic questions on the survey. Statistically significant differences will be noted in the tables.

Subscription $910 /   Non-recurring $1,015

Geographic Comparison Report   Comparisons will be provided in a separate report for geographic subgroups (as predetermined by NRC and jurisdiction staff) by questions on the survey responses, Statistically significant differences will be noted in the tables.

Subscription $910/   Non-recurring $1,015

As noted above, you can find many of our reports online to view examples of our work, however do note that we have recently revised our reporting format to be even more visually interesting and easy to digest. We don't yet have published versions of these reports to share.

We'd also be happy to provide contact information if you would like to check in with any of these clients.

Jupiter, FL   has conducted The NCS biennially from 2009 to 2019

They share their reports and accompanying presentations here:

https://www.jupiter.fl.us/248/Citizen-Survey

Fernandina Beach, FL   conducted The NCS in 2017 and 2019

Their reports can be found here:

http://www.fbfl.us/DocumentCenter/Index/1918

Cape Coral, FL   has conducted The NCS biennially from 2005 to 2019

Their reports can be found here:

https://www.capecoral.net/government/city_government/city_manager/citizen_survey.php

Palm Coast, FL   conducted The NCS annually from 2002-2015 and now biennially in 2017 and 2019

The NCS 2019 report has not been published yet, but their 2017 report can be found here:

http://docs.palmcoastgov.com/residents/citizen-survey/2017-citizen-survey.pdf

Contact

For further information on The NCS or this proposal:

Damema Mann
damema@n-r-c.com
303-226-6983

For further details on how communities are using Polco for free:

Matt Fulton
matt@polco.us
651-242-2422