

The National Citizen Survey™

Yakima, WA

Trends over Time

2013

Contents

Summary	1
---------------	---

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 National Citizen Survey communities. This report discusses trends over time, comparing the 2013 ratings for the City of Yakima to its previous survey results in 2012. Additional reports and technical appendices are available under separate cover.

Trend data for Yakima represent important comparison data and should be examined for improvements or declines. Deviations from stable trends over time, especially, represent opportunities for understanding how local policies, programs or public information may have affected residents' opinions.

Meaningful differences between survey years have been noted within the following tables as being "higher" or "lower" if the differences are greater than six percentage points, otherwise the comparison between 2012 and 2013 are noted as being "similar." Additionally benchmark comparison for all survey years are presented for reference. Changes in the benchmark comparison over time can be impacted by various trends, including varying survey cycles for the individual communities that comprise the benchmarks; regional and national economic or other events; as well as emerging survey methodologies.

Overall, ratings in Yakima for 2013 generally remained stable. Of the 91 items for which comparisons were available, 66 items were rated similarly in 2012 and 2013, 16 items showed a decrease in ratings and 9 showed an increase in ratings. Notable trends over time included the following:

- Aspects of Community Quality showing an increase in ratings included traffic flow on major streets, the overall natural environment and recreational opportunities. Decreases were seen in ease of travel by bicycle, opportunities to volunteer and the variety of housing options.
- Aspects of Governance saw decreases in ratings between survey years in the areas of traffic signal timing, sewer services, storm drainage, power utility, recreation centers and the customer service provided by City employees. Other ratings within Governance were similar to 2012; no meaningful increases in ratings were noted.
- Overall, levels of Engagement and Participation in various activities available in Yakima were lower in 2013 when compared to 2012. Fewer respondents reported having contacted City employees, using public transportation, volunteering, recycling at home or watching a public meeting in 2013 than in 2012. They did, however, report having talked or visited with their neighbors with greater frequency.

Table 1: Community Quality Overall

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)		2013 compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark	
	2012	2013		2012	2013
Overall quality of life	44%	41%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower
Overall image	19%	21%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower
Place to live	49%	50%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower
Neighborhood	60%	60%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Place to raise children	38%	42%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower
Place to retire	46%	45%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Overall appearance	29%	28%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower

Table 2: Community Quality by Domain

Safety	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)		2013 compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark	
	2012	2013		2012	2013
Overall feeling of safety	NA	23%	NA	NA	Much lower
Safe in neighborhood	77%	74%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Safe downtown	62%	60%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower

Mobility	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)		2013 compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark	
	2012	2013		2012	2013
Overall ease travel	NA	69%	NA	NA	NA
Paths and walking trails	49%	52%	Similar	Much lower	Similar
Ease of walking	48%	46%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Travel by bicycle	43%	33%	Lower	Much lower	Lower
Travel by public transportation	NA	51%	NA	NA	Similar
Travel by car	64%	64%	Similar	Higher	Similar
Public parking	NA	40%	NA	NA	NA
Traffic flow	42%	49%	Higher	Similar	Similar

Natural Environment	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)		2013 compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark	
	2012	2013		2012	2013
Overall natural environment	49%	56%	Higher	Much lower	Lower
Cleanliness	31%	29%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower
Air quality	50%	53%	Similar	Much lower	Similar

The National Citizen Survey™

Built Environment	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)		2013 compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark	
	2012	2013		2012	2013
Overall built environment	NA	36%	NA	NA	NA
New development in Yakima	39%	33%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Affordable quality housing	33%	36%	Similar	Much lower	Similar
Housing options	46%	37%	Lower	Much lower	Lower
Public places	NA	35%	NA	NA	NA

Economy	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)		2013 compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark	
	2012	2013		2012	2013
Overall economic health	NA	24%	NA	NA	NA
Vibrant downtown	NA	21%	NA	NA	NA
Business and services	43%	40%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Cost of living	NA	35%	NA	NA	NA
Shopping opportunities	39%	37%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Employment opportunities	15%	19%	Similar	Much lower	Similar
Place to visit	NA	36%	NA	NA	Much lower
Place to work	38%	40%	Similar	Much lower	Lower

Recreation and Wellness	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)		2013 compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark	
	2012	2013		2012	2013
Health and wellness	NA	47%	NA	NA	NA
Mental health care	NA	43%	NA	NA	NA
Preventive health services	NA	47%	NA	NA	Similar
Health care	NA	45%	NA	NA	Similar
Food	NA	53%	NA	NA	Similar
Recreational opportunities	41%	50%	Higher	Much lower	Lower
Fitness opportunities	NA	55%	NA	NA	NA

The National Citizen Survey™

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)		2013 compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark	
	2012	2013		2012	2013
Education and Enrichment					
Education and enrichment	46%	42%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Religious or spiritual events and activities	62%	71%	Higher	Much lower	Similar
Cultural/arts/music activities	41%	43%	Similar	Much lower	Similar
Adult education	NA	47%	NA	NA	NA
K-12 education	46%	54%	Higher	Much lower	Lower
Child care/preschool	27%	50%	Higher	Much lower	Similar

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)		2013 compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark	
	2012	2013		2012	2013
Community Engagement					
Social events and activities	38%	36%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Neighborhoodliness	NA	36%	NA	NA	NA
Openness and acceptance	35%	33%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Opportunities to participate in community matters	45%	41%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Opportunities to volunteer	65%	56%	Lower	Much lower	Lower

Table 3: Governance Overall

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)		2013 compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark	
	2012	2013		2012	2013
Services provided by Yakima	45%	47%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Customer service	60%	48%	Lower	Much lower	Much lower
Value of services	27%	26%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Overall direction	28%	31%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Welcoming citizen involvement	29%	32%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Confidence in Yakima	NA	28%	NA	NA	NA
Acting in the best interest of Yakima	NA	31%	NA	NA	NA
Being honest	NA	32%	NA	NA	NA
Treating all residents fairly	NA	29%	NA	NA	NA
Services provided by the federal government	28%	33%	Similar	Much lower	Similar

Table 4: Governance by Domain

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)		2013 compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark	
	2012	2013		2012	2013
Safety					
Police	54%	54%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Fire	84%	83%	Similar	Much lower	Similar
Ambulance/EMS	83%	79%	Similar	Much lower	Similar
Crime prevention	22%	22%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower
Fire prevention	56%	55%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Animal control	28%	26%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower
Emergency preparedness	35%	34%	Similar	Much lower	Lower

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)		2013 compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark	
	2012	2013		2012	2013
Mobility					
Traffic enforcement	47%	43%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Street repair	22%	19%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower
Street cleaning	42%	38%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Street lighting	41%	40%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Snow removal	36%	42%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Sidewalk maintenance	27%	29%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Traffic signal timing	44%	36%	Lower	Lower	Similar
Bus or transit services	62%	59%	Similar	Much higher	Similar

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)		2013 compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark	
	2012	2013		2012	2013
Natural Environment					
Garbage collection	79%	81%	Similar	Lower	Similar
Recycling	43%	42%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower
Yard waste pick-up	58%	61%	Similar	Much lower	Similar
Drinking water	64%	61%	Similar	Lower	Similar
Natural areas preservation	NA	45%	NA	NA	Similar
Open space	NA	39%	NA	NA	Much lower

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)		2013 compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark	
	2012	2013		2012	2013
Built Environment					
Storm drainage	46%	37%	Lower	Much lower	Lower
Sewer services	71%	63%	Lower	Lower	Similar
Power utility	73%	67%	Lower	Lower	Similar
Utility billing	NA	54%	NA	NA	Lower
Land use, planning and zoning	28%	27%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Code enforcement	15%	15%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower

The National Citizen Survey™

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)		2013 compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark	
	2012	2013		2012	2013
Economy					
Economic development	23%	24%	Similar	Much lower	Lower

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)		2013 compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark	
	2012	2013		2012	2013
Recreation and Wellness					
City parks	56%	57%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Recreation programs	43%	40%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower
Recreation centers	43%	37%	Lower	Much lower	Much lower
Health services	NA	47%	NA	NA	Lower

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)		2013 compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark	
	2012	2013		2012	2013
Education and Enrichment					
Special events	NA	41%	NA	NA	Much lower
Public libraries	70%	74%	Similar	Much lower	Similar

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)		2013 compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark	
	2012	2013		2012	2013
Community Engagement					
Public information	48%	47%	Similar	Much lower	Lower

Table 5: Engagement and Participation Overall

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat likely, yes)		2013 compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark	
	2012	2013		2012	2013
Sense of community	34%	31%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower
Recommend Yakima	59%	55%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower
Remain in Yakima	73%	79%	Similar	Much lower	Similar
Contacted Yakima employees	42%	33%	Lower	Much lower	Lower

Table 6: Engagement and Participation by Domain

	Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)		2013 compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark	
	2012	2013		2012	2013
Safety					
Stocked supplies for an emergency	NA	32%	NA	NA	NA
Reported a crime	NA	42%	NA	NA	NA
Was the victim of a crime	26%	29%	Similar	Much higher	Higher

The National Citizen Survey™

Mobility	Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)		2013 compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark	
	2012	2013		2012	2013
Used public transportation instead of driving	32%	23%	Lower	Much higher	Similar
Carpooled instead of driving alone	NA	51%	NA	NA	NA
Walked or biked instead of driving	NA	52%	NA	NA	NA

Natural Environment	Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)		2013 compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark	
	2012	2013		2012	2013
Conserved water	NA	82%	NA	NA	NA
Made home more energy efficient	NA	80%	NA	NA	NA
Recycled at home	78%	71%	Lower	Much lower	Lower

Built Environment	Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)		2013 compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark	
	2012	2013		2012	2013
Observed a code violation	NA	67%	NA	NA	NA
Housing costs 30% or more of income	46%	40%	Similar	Much higher	Similar

Economy	Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)		2013 compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark	
	2012	2013		2012	2013
Purchased goods or services in Yakima	NA	92%	NA	NA	NA
Economy will have positive impact on income	17%	24%	Higher	Similar	Similar
Work in Yakima	NA	62%	NA	NA	NA

The National Citizen Survey™

Recreation and Wellness	Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)		2013 compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark	
	2012	2013		2012	2013
Used Yakima recreation centers	60%	60%	Similar	Higher	Similar
Visited a City park	87%	83%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Used Yakima public libraries	60%	57%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Ate 5 portions of fruits and vegetables	NA	79%	NA	NA	NA
Participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity	NA	76%	NA	NA	NA
In good to excellent health	NA	86%	NA	NA	NA

Education and Enrichment	Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)		2013 compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark	
	2012	2013		2012	2013
Participated in religious or spiritual activities	60%	61%	Similar	Much higher	Similar
Attended a City-sponsored event	NA	46%	NA	NA	NA

Community Engagement	Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)		2013 compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark	
	2012	2013		2012	2013
Campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate	NA	23%	NA	NA	NA
Contacted Yakima elected officials	NA	16%	NA	NA	NA
Volunteered	54%	46%	Lower	Much higher	Similar
Participated in a club	38%	34%	Similar	Much higher	Similar
Talked to or visited with neighbors	56%	87%	Higher	Much higher	Much higher
Done a favor for a neighbor	97%	83%	Lower	Higher	Lower
Attended a local public meeting	18%	18%	Similar	Much lower	Similar
Watched a local public meeting	47%	38%	Lower	Much higher	Similar
Read or watched local news	NA	86%	NA	NA	NA
Voted in local elections	65%	78%	Higher	Much lower	Similar