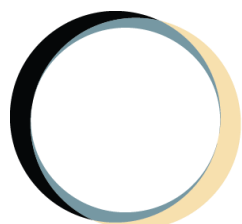


THE NCSTM
The National Citizen SurveyTM

Yakima, WA

Trends over Time

2015



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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 NCS communities. 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). This report discusses trends over time, comparing the 2015 ratings for the City of Yakima to its previous survey results in 2012, 2013 and 2014. 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 five percentage points between the 2014 and 2015 surveys, otherwise the comparison between 2014 and 2015 are noted as being "similar." Additionally, benchmark comparisons 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 2015 generally remained stable. Of the 128 items for which comparisons were available, 99 items were rated similarly in 2014 and 2015, 20 items showed a decrease in ratings and 9 showed an increase in ratings. Notable trends over time included the following:

- Several aspects of Community Characteristics decreased from 2014 to 2015. These included: travel by public transportation, public parking, affordable quality housing, housing options, overall built environment, availability of affordable quality mental health care, availability of affordable quality child care/preschool, openness and acceptance toward people of diverse backgrounds and neighborliness.
- Within the pillar of Governance, several items were trending down and several were trending up from 2014 to 2015. Ratings decreased for street repair, bus or transit services, land use, planning and zoning, the overall direction the City is taking, welcoming citizen involvement, confidence in City government, acting in the best interest of Yakima, being honest and treating all residents fairly. Ratings increased from 2014 to 2015 for police services, fire services, ambulance or emergency medical services, natural areas preservation, storm drainage and customer service.
- Within Participation, fewer residents in Yakima reported that they had walked or biked instead of driving or that they had recycled at home in 2015 compared to 2014. However, more residents indicated that they thought the economy would have a positive impact on their income, that they had eaten at least 5 portions of fruits and vegetables a day and that they planned to remain in Yakima in 2015 than in 2014.

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Table 1: Community Characteristics General

| | Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good) | | | | 2015 rating compared to 2014 | Comparison to benchmark | | | |
|-------------------------|--|------|------|------|------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
| Overall quality of life | 44% | 41% | 46% | 48% | Similar | Much lower | Much lower | Much lower | Much lower |
| Overall image | 19% | 21% | 21% | 19% | Similar | Much lower | Much lower | Much lower | Much lower |
| Place to live | 49% | 50% | 52% | 55% | Similar | Much lower | Much lower | Much lower | Much lower |
| Neighborhood | 60% | 60% | 61% | 65% | Similar | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |
| Place to raise children | 38% | 42% | 44% | 42% | Similar | Much lower | Much lower | Much lower | Much lower |
| Place to retire | 46% | 45% | 44% | 42% | Similar | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |
| Overall appearance | 29% | 28% | 30% | 28% | Similar | Much lower | Much lower | Much lower | Much lower |

Table 2: Community Characteristics by Facet

| | | Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe) | | | | 2015 rating compared to 2014 | Comparison to benchmark | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|--|------|------|------|------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
| Safety | Overall feeling of safety | NA | 23% | 29% | 31% | Similar | NA | Much lower | Much lower | Much lower |
| | Safe in neighborhood | 77% | 74% | 76% | 78% | Similar | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |
| | Safe downtown/commercial area | 62% | 60% | 60% | 63% | Similar | Much lower | Much lower | Much lower | Lower |
| | Overall ease of travel | NA | 69% | 69% | 67% | Similar | NA | NA | Similar | Similar |
| | Paths and walking trails | 49% | 52% | 52% | 48% | Similar | Much lower | Similar | Similar | Similar |
| | Ease of walking | 48% | 46% | 48% | 45% | Similar | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |
| | Travel by bicycle | 43% | 33% | 36% | 36% | Similar | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |
| | Travel by public transportation | NA | 51% | 52% | 44% | Lower | NA | Similar | Similar | Similar |
| Mobility | Travel by car | 64% | 64% | 67% | 69% | Similar | Higher | Similar | Similar | Similar |
| | Public parking | NA | 40% | 43% | 36% | Lower | NA | NA | Similar | Lower |
| | Traffic flow | 42% | 49% | 54% | 50% | Similar | Similar | Similar | Similar | Similar |
| | Overall natural environment | 49% | 56% | 54% | 50% | Similar | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |
| Natural Environment | Cleanliness | 31% | 29% | 31% | 28% | Similar | Much lower | Much lower | Much lower | Much lower |
| | Overall built environment | NA | 36% | 39% | 34% | Lower | NA | NA | Lower | Lower |
| Built Environment | New development in Yakima | 39% | 33% | 38% | 35% | Similar | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |
| | Affordable quality housing | 33% | 36% | 33% | 25% | Lower | Much lower | Similar | Similar | Lower |

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| | | Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe) | | | | 2015 rating compared to 2014 | Comparison to benchmark | | | |
|--------------------------|--|--|------|------|------|------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
| | Housing options | 46% | 37% | 36% | 29% | Lower | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |
| | Public places | NA | 35% | 30% | 27% | Similar | NA | NA | Much lower | Much lower |
| Economy | Overall economic health | NA | 24% | 26% | 25% | Similar | NA | NA | Much lower | Much lower |
| | Vibrant downtown/commercial area | NA | 21% | 22% | 20% | Similar | NA | NA | Lower | Lower |
| | Business and services | 43% | 40% | 40% | 41% | Similar | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |
| | Cost of living | NA | 35% | 39% | 40% | Similar | NA | NA | Similar | Similar |
| | Shopping opportunities | 39% | 37% | 33% | 33% | Similar | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |
| | Employment opportunities | 15% | 19% | 27% | 27% | Similar | Much lower | Similar | Similar | Similar |
| | Place to visit | NA | 36% | 37% | 33% | Similar | NA | Much lower | Much lower | Much lower |
| | Place to work | 38% | 40% | 44% | 42% | Similar | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |
| | Health and wellness | NA | 47% | 48% | 45% | Similar | NA | NA | Lower | Lower |
| | Mental health care | NA | 43% | 40% | 32% | Lower | NA | NA | Similar | Lower |
| Recreation and Wellness | Preventive health services | NA | 47% | 46% | 50% | Similar | NA | Similar | Similar | Similar |
| | Health care | NA | 45% | 45% | 47% | Similar | NA | Similar | Similar | Similar |
| | Food | NA | 53% | 50% | 53% | Similar | NA | Similar | Similar | Similar |
| | Recreational opportunities | 41% | 50% | 46% | 43% | Similar | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |
| | Fitness opportunities | NA | 55% | 57% | 54% | Similar | NA | NA | Similar | Lower |
| | Religious or spiritual events and activities | 62% | 71% | 66% | 67% | Similar | Much lower | Similar | Similar | Similar |
| Education and Enrichment | Cultural/arts/music activities | 41% | 43% | 44% | 42% | Similar | Much lower | Similar | Similar | Similar |
| | Adult education | NA | 47% | 43% | 45% | Similar | NA | NA | Lower | Similar |
| | K-12 education | 46% | 54% | 49% | 48% | Similar | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |
| | Child care/preschool | 27% | 50% | 43% | 37% | Lower | Much lower | Similar | Similar | Similar |
| | Social events and activities | 38% | 36% | 41% | 41% | Similar | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |
| Community Engagement | Neighborhoodness | NA | 36% | 40% | 35% | Lower | NA | NA | Lower | Lower |
| | Openness and acceptance | 35% | 33% | 37% | 32% | Lower | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |

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| | | Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe) | | | | 2015 rating compared to 2014 | Comparison to benchmark | | | |
|--|---|--|------|------|------|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------|---------|---------|
| | | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
| | Opportunities to participate in community matters | 45% | 41% | 47% | 43% | Similar | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |
| | Opportunities to volunteer | 65% | 56% | 59% | 62% | Similar | Much lower | Lower | Similar | Similar |

Table 3: Governance General

| | Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good) | | | | 2015 rating compared to 2014 | Comparison to benchmark | | | |
|---|--|------|------|------|------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
| Services provided by Yakima | 45% | 47% | 46% | 46% | Similar | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |
| Customer service | 60% | 48% | 43% | 53% | Higher | Much lower | Much lower | Much lower | Lower |
| Value of services for taxes paid | 27% | 26% | 32% | 27% | Similar | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |
| Overall direction | 28% | 31% | 38% | 30% | Lower | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |
| Welcoming citizen involvement | 29% | 32% | 33% | 22% | Lower | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |
| Confidence in City government | NA | 28% | 29% | 18% | Lower | NA | NA | Lower | Much lower |
| Acting in the best interest of Yakima | NA | 31% | 33% | 22% | Lower | NA | NA | Lower | Much lower |
| Being honest | NA | 32% | 33% | 24% | Lower | NA | NA | Lower | Much lower |
| Treating all residents fairly | NA | 29% | 32% | 24% | Lower | NA | NA | Lower | Much lower |
| Services provided by the Federal Government | 28% | 33% | 30% | 33% | Similar | Much lower | Similar | Similar | Similar |

Table 4: Governance by Facet

| | | Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good) | | | | 2015 rating compared to 2014 | Comparison to benchmark | | | |
|----------|------------------------|--|------|------|------|------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
| Safety | Police | 54% | 54% | 53% | 60% | Higher | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |
| | Fire | 84% | 83% | 82% | 87% | Higher | Much lower | Similar | Similar | Similar |
| | Ambulance/EMS | 83% | 79% | 79% | 85% | Higher | Much lower | Similar | Similar | Similar |
| | Crime prevention | 22% | 22% | 28% | 32% | Similar | Much lower | Much lower | Much lower | Much lower |
| | Fire prevention | 56% | 55% | 52% | 53% | Similar | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |
| | Animal control | 28% | 26% | 31% | 32% | Similar | Much lower | Much lower | Much lower | Much lower |
| | Emergency preparedness | 35% | 34% | 33% | 30% | Similar | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |
| Mobility | Traffic enforcement | 47% | 43% | 43% | 44% | Similar | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |
| | Street repair | 22% | 19% | 47% | 31% | Lower | Much lower | Much lower | Similar | Lower |
| | Street cleaning | 42% | 38% | 49% | 45% | Similar | Much lower | Lower | Similar | Lower |
| | Street lighting | 41% | 40% | 47% | 45% | Similar | Much lower | Lower | Similar | Lower |

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| | Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good) | | | | 2015 rating compared to 2014 | Comparison to benchmark | | | | |
|--------------------------|--|----------------------|------|------|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | |
| | Snow removal | 36% | 42% | 43% | 45% | Similar | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |
| | Sidewalk maintenance | 27% | 29% | 28% | 31% | Similar | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |
| | Traffic signal timing | 44% | 36% | 43% | 44% | Similar | Lower | Similar | Similar | Similar |
| | Bus or transit services | 62% | 59% | 61% | 56% | Lower | Much higher | Similar | Similar | Similar |
| Natural Environment | Garbage collection | 79% | 81% | 81% | 80% | Similar | Lower | Similar | Similar | Similar |
| | Recycling | 43% | 42% | 42% | 39% | Similar | Much lower | Much lower | Much lower | Much lower |
| | Yard waste pick-up | 58% | 61% | 63% | 64% | Similar | Much lower | Similar | Similar | Similar |
| | Drinking water | 64% | 61% | 58% | 62% | Similar | Lower | Similar | Similar | Similar |
| | Natural areas preservation | NA | 45% | 34% | 39% | Higher | NA | Similar | Lower | Lower |
| | Open space | NA | 39% | 30% | 33% | Similar | NA | Much lower | Lower | Lower |
| | Storm drainage | 46% | 37% | 42% | 47% | Higher | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |
| | Sewer services | 71% | 63% | 68% | 69% | Similar | Lower | Similar | Similar | Similar |
| | Utility billing | NA | 54% | 52% | 55% | Similar | NA | Lower | Similar | Similar |
| | Land use, planning and zoning | 28% | 27% | 28% | 22% | Lower | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |
| Built Environment | Code enforcement | 15% | 15% | 16% | 16% | Similar | Much lower | Much lower | Much lower | Much lower |
| | Cable television | NA | 47% | 43% | 45% | Similar | NA | Similar | Similar | Similar |
| | Economy | Economic development | 23% | 24% | 25% | 27% | Similar | Much lower | Lower | Lower |
| Recreation and Wellness | City parks | 56% | 57% | 54% | 54% | Similar | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |
| | Recreation programs | 43% | 40% | 45% | 45% | Similar | Much lower | Much lower | Lower | Lower |
| | Recreation centers | 43% | 37% | 41% | 37% | Similar | Much lower | Much lower | Lower | Much lower |
| | Health services | NA | 47% | 50% | 49% | Similar | NA | Lower | Similar | Lower |
| Education and Enrichment | Special events | NA | 41% | 38% | 40% | Similar | NA | Much lower | Lower | Lower |
| | Public libraries | 70% | 74% | 69% | 74% | Similar | Much lower | Similar | Lower | Similar |
| Community Engagement | Public information | 48% | 47% | 46% | 46% | Similar | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |

Table 5: Participation General

| | Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes) | | | | 2015 rating compared to 2014 | Comparison to benchmark | | | |
|--------------------|---|------|------|------|------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
| Sense of community | 34% | 31% | 28% | 27% | Similar | Much lower | Much lower | Much lower | Much lower |

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| | Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes) | | | | 2015 rating compared to 2014 | Comparison to benchmark | | | |
|----------------------------|---|------|------|------|------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
| Recommend Yakima | 59% | 55% | 54% | 56% | Similar | Much lower | Much lower | Much lower | Much lower |
| Remain in Yakima | 73% | 79% | 73% | 78% | Higher | Much lower | Similar | Lower | Similar |
| Contacted Yakima employees | 42% | 33% | 35% | 39% | Similar | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Similar |

Table 6: Participation by Facet

| | | Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes) | | | | 2015 rating compared to 2014 | Comparison to benchmark | | | |
|--------------------------|--|---|------|------|------|------------------------------|-------------------------|---------|------------|------------|
| | | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
| Safety | Stocked supplies for an emergency | NA | 32% | 33% | 32% | Similar | NA | NA | Similar | Similar |
| | Did NOT report a crime | NA | 58% | 65% | 67% | Similar | NA | NA | Lower | Lower |
| | Was NOT the victim of a crime | 74% | 29% | 75% | 73% | Similar | Much lower | Higher | Lower | Lower |
| Mobility | Used public transportation instead of driving | NA | 23% | 22% | 17% | Similar | NA | NA | Similar | Lower |
| | Carpooled instead of driving alone | NA | 51% | 49% | 48% | Similar | NA | NA | Similar | Similar |
| | Walked or biked instead of driving | NA | 52% | 52% | 47% | Lower | NA | NA | Similar | Similar |
| Natural Environment | Recycled at home | 78% | 71% | 73% | 68% | Lower | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |
| Built Environment | Did NOT observe a code violation | NA | 33% | 34% | 29% | Similar | NA | NA | Much lower | Much lower |
| | NOT under housing cost stress | 54% | 40% | 64% | 62% | Similar | Much lower | Similar | Similar | Similar |
| Economy | Purchased goods or services in Yakima | NA | 92% | 93% | 92% | Similar | NA | NA | Similar | Similar |
| | Economy will have positive impact on income | 17% | 24% | 22% | 28% | Higher | Similar | Similar | Similar | Similar |
| | Work in Yakima | NA | 62% | 63% | 61% | Similar | NA | NA | Higher | Higher |
| Recreation and Wellness | Used Yakima recreation centers | 60% | 60% | 58% | 60% | Similar | Higher | Similar | Similar | Similar |
| | Visited a City park | 87% | 83% | 80% | 82% | Similar | Similar | Similar | Similar | Similar |
| | Ate 5 portions of fruits and vegetables | NA | 79% | 79% | 85% | Higher | NA | NA | Similar | Similar |
| | Participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity | NA | 76% | 79% | 80% | Similar | NA | NA | Similar | Similar |
| | In very good to excellent health | NA | 52% | 50% | 52% | Similar | NA | NA | Similar | Similar |
| Education and Enrichment | Used Yakima public libraries | 60% | 57% | 56% | 51% | Similar | Much lower | Lower | Lower | Lower |

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| | | Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes) | | | | 2015 rating compared to 2014 | Comparison to benchmark | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|---|------|------|------|------------------------------|-------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| | | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
| Community Engagement | Attended a City-sponsored event | NA | 46% | 45% | 43% | Similar | NA | NA | Similar | Similar |
| | Contacted Yakima elected officials | NA | 16% | 14% | 16% | Similar | NA | NA | Similar | Similar |
| | Volunteered | 54% | 46% | 47% | 44% | Similar | Much higher | Similar | Similar | Similar |
| | Participated in a club | 38% | 34% | 35% | 31% | Similar | Much higher | Similar | Similar | Similar |
| | Talked to or visited with neighbors | NA | NA | 89% | 88% | Similar | NA | NA | Similar | Similar |
| | Done a favor for a neighbor | NA | NA | 83% | 81% | Similar | NA | NA | Similar | Similar |
| | Attended a local public meeting | 18% | 18% | 17% | 15% | Similar | Much lower | Similar | Similar | Similar |
| | Watched a local public meeting | 47% | 38% | 35% | 34% | Similar | Much higher | Similar | Similar | Similar |
| | Read or watched local news | NA | 86% | 86% | 89% | Similar | NA | NA | Similar | Similar |
| | Voted in local elections | 65% | 78% | 79% | 81% | Similar | Much lower | Similar | Similar | Similar |