

THE NCSTM
The National Citizen SurveyTM

Surprise, AZ

Comparisons by Geographic Subgroups

2015



NRC
National Research Center Inc

2955 Valmont Road Suite 300
Boulder, Colorado 80301
n-r-c.com • 303-444-7863

ICMA

Leaders at the Core of Better Communities

777 North Capitol Street NE Suite 500
Washington, DC 20002
icma.org • 800-745-8780

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. This report discusses differences in opinion of survey respondents by City Council District.

Responses in the following tables show only the proportion of respondents giving a certain answer; for example, the percent of respondents who rated the quality of life as “excellent” or “good,” or the percent of respondents who attended a public meeting more than once a month. ANOVA and chi-square tests of significance were applied to these comparisons of survey questions. A “p-value” of 0.05 or less indicates that there is less than a 5% probability that differences observed between districts are due to chance; or in other words, a greater than 95% probability that the differences observed are “real.” Where differences were statistically significant, they have been shaded grey.

The margin of error for this report is generally no greater than plus or minus five percentage points around any given percent reported for the entire sample (322 completed surveys). For each district (District 1, District 2, District 3, District 4, District 5 and District 6), the margin of error rises to approximately plus or minus 17 percentage points since sample sizes were approximately 38 for District 1, 120 for District 2, 38 for District 3, 38 for District 4, 55 for District 5 and 33 for District 6. Notable differences between Council Districts included the following:

- Ratings for aspects of Community Characteristics varied by Council District. Residents of District 5 tended to give higher ratings for general aspects of Community Characteristics, including for the overall image of Surprise, their neighborhood as a place to live and Surprise as a place to raise children. District 6 residents tended to rate aspects of Mobility and Built Environment more positively than residents elsewhere; residents of District 1 tended to give lower ratings to these facets than their counterparts. Respondents who lived in District 2 tended to rate aspects of Recreation and Wellness more positively while District 1 residents generally gave lower ratings for these aspects.
- Few significant differences emerged for ratings of Governance by District. Where differences in opinion were observed, lower ratings tended to be given by residents of District 1 and higher ratings given by residents of District 5 (although respondents who lived in District 6 gave higher ratings for ambulance or emergency medical services, crime prevention and fire prevention and education than their counterparts).
- Rates of Participation across Council Districts also varied widely. District 5 residents reported walking or biking instead of driving more than their counterparts while residents of Districts 1 and 3 did this at a lower rate. Residents of District 1 were more likely to work in Surprise and to believe that the economy would have a positive impact on their income in the next six months. Respondents who lived in District 2 were less likely to have used Surprise recreation centers or visited a neighborhood park or City park while those who lived in District 6 were most likely to have done so.
- When asked to indicate their level of support for various funding sources for capital improvement projects, residents who lived in Districts 3 and 4 were least likely to support property or sales tax increases. Residents of District 3 were also less likely to support a public safety tax to pay for Police and Fire-Medical personnel than residents in other districts.

The National Citizen Survey™

Table 1: Community Characteristics - General

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
The overall quality of life in Surprise	79%	88%	86%	74%	90%	92%	85%
Overall image or reputation of Surprise	60%	78%	70%	76%	87%	83%	76%
Surprise as a place to live	85%	88%	84%	90%	95%	92%	89%
Your neighborhood as a place to live	87%	92%	74%	74%	94%	75%	85%
Surprise as a place to raise children	71%	61%	75%	60%	91%	89%	75%
Surprise as a place to retire	69%	96%	73%	77%	95%	88%	86%
Overall appearance of Surprise	92%	82%	87%	86%	94%	88%	88%

Table 2: Community Characteristics - Safety

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Overall feeling of safety in Surprise	85%	89%	83%	80%	95%	90%	88%
In your neighborhood during the day	96%	96%	76%	92%	97%	93%	93%
In Surprise's commercial areas during the day	92%	95%	93%	96%	96%	93%	94%

Table 3: Community Characteristics - Mobility

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Overall ease of getting to the places you usually have to visit	53%	79%	68%	77%	76%	75%	72%
Traffic flow on major streets	39%	55%	46%	27%	51%	55%	46%
Ease of public parking	66%	73%	74%	72%	72%	89%	74%
Ease of travel by car in Surprise	47%	71%	65%	68%	66%	87%	67%
Ease of travel by public transportation in Surprise	31%	18%	50%	14%	22%	35%	27%
Ease of travel by bicycle in Surprise	47%	46%	67%	45%	32%	81%	51%
Ease of walking in Surprise	63%	75%	81%	65%	56%	68%	68%
Availability of paths and walking trails	33%	61%	57%	62%	68%	61%	58%

Table 4: Community Characteristics - Natural Environment

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Quality of overall natural environment in Surprise	68%	84%	78%	74%	88%	86%	80%
Air quality	66%	64%	70%	60%	81%	62%	68%
Cleanliness of Surprise	85%	86%	90%	79%	99%	85%	88%

The National Citizen Survey™

Table 5: Community Characteristics - Built Environment

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Overall "built environment" of Surprise (including overall design, buildings and parks)	65%	83%	84%	88%	79%	86%	81%
Public places where people want to spend time	42%	72%	74%	71%	69%	84%	69%
Variety of housing options	57%	82%	70%	67%	93%	92%	78%
Availability of affordable quality housing	64%	79%	75%	75%	80%	81%	76%
Overall quality of new development in Surprise	35%	64%	63%	55%	61%	68%	58%

Table 6: Community Characteristics - Economy

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Overall economic health of Surprise	48%	80%	64%	66%	71%	78%	69%
Surprise as a place to work	58%	57%	61%	54%	67%	55%	59%
Surprise as a place to visit	55%	76%	53%	63%	71%	69%	66%
Employment opportunities	22%	35%	33%	35%	36%	24%	31%
Shopping opportunities	32%	65%	61%	62%	67%	66%	60%
Cost of living in Surprise	60%	64%	72%	66%	71%	86%	69%
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Surprise	56%	70%	63%	62%	75%	73%	67%
Vibrant commercial area	27%	55%	62%	60%	59%	54%	54%

Table 7: Community Characteristics - Recreation and Wellness

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Health and wellness opportunities in Surprise	64%	94%	81%	62%	84%	83%	80%
Fitness opportunities (including exercise classes and paths or trails, etc.)	40%	86%	63%	66%	55%	70%	65%
Recreational opportunities	58%	84%	59%	62%	61%	71%	67%
Availability of affordable quality food	61%	72%	73%	67%	81%	75%	72%
Availability of affordable quality health care	60%	87%	72%	73%	80%	90%	78%
Availability of preventive health services	55%	84%	76%	70%	81%	84%	76%
Availability of affordable quality mental health care	47%	59%	40%	61%	51%	71%	55%

Table 8: Community Characteristics - Education and Enrichment

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Overall opportunities for education and enrichment	32%	67%	48%	49%	69%	71%	57%
Availability of affordable quality child care/preschool	43%	62%	60%	33%	76%	59%	58%

The National Citizen Survey™

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
K-12 education	52%	42%	56%	59%	70%	64%	57%
Adult educational opportunities	43%	64%	41%	16%	36%	36%	44%
Opportunities to attend cultural/arts/music activities	26%	56%	40%	35%	59%	51%	47%
Opportunities to participate in religious or spiritual events and activities	71%	84%	76%	70%	86%	79%	79%

Table 9: Community Characteristics - Community Engagement

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	35%	74%	69%	39%	62%	59%	59%
Opportunities to volunteer	53%	77%	73%	64%	86%	72%	73%
Opportunities to participate in community matters	45%	72%	58%	44%	63%	83%	63%
Openness and acceptance of the community toward people of diverse backgrounds	58%	72%	66%	63%	85%	78%	71%
Neighborliness of residents in Surprise	54%	69%	43%	57%	59%	71%	60%

Table 10: Governance - General

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
The City of Surprise	70%	89%	74%	69%	89%	83%	81%
The value of services for the taxes paid to Surprise	56%	71%	59%	61%	72%	73%	66%
The overall direction that Surprise is taking	58%	77%	71%	68%	84%	71%	73%
The job Surprise government does at welcoming citizen involvement	55%	64%	55%	50%	52%	68%	58%
Overall confidence in Surprise government	59%	70%	55%	67%	73%	62%	65%
Generally acting in the best interest of the community	47%	72%	63%	58%	64%	65%	63%
Being honest	52%	71%	66%	45%	65%	70%	63%
Treating all residents fairly	45%	74%	67%	59%	77%	72%	67%
Overall customer service by Surprise employees (police, receptionists, planners, etc.)	79%	82%	73%	75%	90%	88%	82%
The Federal Government	34%	38%	41%	18%	27%	50%	35%

Table 11: Governance - Safety

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Police services	85%	93%	76%	89%	94%	91%	89%
Fire services	94%	100%	94%	100%	98%	100%	98%
Ambulance or emergency medical services	80%	99%	92%	95%	98%	100%	95%

The National Citizen Survey™

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Crime prevention	72%	93%	76%	75%	93%	100%	85%
Fire prevention and education	72%	94%	93%	72%	90%	100%	88%
Animal control	55%	81%	63%	67%	86%	82%	74%
Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations)	63%	71%	71%	72%	65%	71%	69%

Table 12: Governance - Mobility

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Traffic enforcement	55%	78%	73%	60%	60%	64%	66%
Street repair	57%	62%	54%	68%	77%	78%	66%
Street cleaning	84%	86%	73%	79%	89%	80%	83%
Street lighting	80%	86%	78%	76%	93%	84%	84%
Sidewalk maintenance	74%	78%	74%	78%	94%	90%	82%
Traffic signal timing	45%	58%	58%	62%	71%	75%	62%
Bus or transit services	22%	32%	44%	41%	29%	40%	33%

Table 13: Governance - Natural Environment

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Garbage collection	91%	98%	90%	89%	96%	84%	93%
Recycling	83%	92%	75%	92%	92%	82%	87%
Yard waste pick-up	55%	89%	69%	79%	87%	71%	77%
Drinking water	70%	68%	74%	60%	61%	59%	66%
Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts	52%	65%	57%	51%	80%	66%	63%

Table 14: Governance - Built Environment

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Storm water drainage	74%	71%	68%	82%	76%	75%	74%
Sewer services	79%	87%	73%	84%	95%	82%	84%
Power (electric and/or gas) utility	80%	93%	86%	72%	81%	87%	84%
Utility billing	56%	71%	77%	58%	64%	67%	66%
Land use, planning and zoning	35%	67%	53%	75%	51%	60%	57%

The National Citizen Survey™

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc.)	61%	74%	53%	60%	59%	56%	61%
Cable television	63%	70%	58%	59%	66%	72%	65%

Table 15: Governance - Economy

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Economic development	50%	67%	61%	66%	74%	66%	65%

Table 16: Governance - Recreation and Wellness

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
City parks	75%	85%	82%	90%	91%	86%	85%
Recreation programs or classes	65%	74%	88%	90%	79%	69%	77%
Recreation centers or facilities	65%	77%	82%	84%	80%	80%	78%
Health services	78%	91%	76%	74%	87%	75%	82%

Table 17: Governance - Education and Enrichment

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Public library services	90%	92%	86%	93%	87%	80%	88%
City-sponsored special events	65%	75%	74%	78%	75%	74%	74%

Table 18: Governance - Community Engagement

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Public information services	73%	83%	79%	80%	87%	82%	81%

Table 19: Participation General

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Sense of community	51%	67%	51%	58%	65%	72%	61%
Recommend living in Surprise to someone who asks	85%	95%	89%	83%	86%	88%	88%
Remain in Surprise for the next five years	85%	95%	84%	85%	86%	97%	89%
Contacted the City of Surprise (in-person, phone, email or web) for help or information	52%	38%	61%	35%	51%	38%	46%

The National Citizen Survey™

Table 20: Participation - Safety

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Was NOT the victim of a crime	94%	96%	93%	82%	92%	92%	92%
Did NOT report a crime	89%	90%	83%	71%	90%	83%	85%
Stocked supplies in preparation for an emergency	33%	17%	31%	30%	20%	8%	23%

Table 21: Participation - Mobility

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Walked or biked instead of driving	26%	39%	23%	45%	65%	54%	43%
Carpooled with other adults or children instead of driving alone	49%	31%	42%	45%	36%	35%	38%
Used bus or other public transportation instead of driving	2%	5%	14%	11%	6%	3%	7%

Table 22: Participation - Natural Environment

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Recycle at home	98%	93%	91%	88%	88%	100%	93%
Made efforts to make your home more energy efficient	71%	78%	92%	72%	82%	64%	77%
Made efforts to conserve water	96%	94%	95%	89%	88%	83%	91%

Table 23: Participation - Built Environment

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
NOT under housing cost stress	59%	69%	68%	79%	80%	68%	71%
Did NOT observe a code violation	43%	60%	36%	45%	55%	52%	50%

Table 24: Participation - Economy

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Purchase goods or services from a business located in Surprise	100%	98%	97%	100%	100%	100%	99%
Economy will have positive impact on income	45%	18%	15%	34%	27%	21%	26%
Work in Surprise	50%	17%	36%	29%	23%	36%	30%

The National Citizen Survey™

Table 25: Participation - Recreation and Wellness

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Used Surprise recreation centers or their services	63%	35%	60%	66%	67%	77%	59%
Visited a neighborhood park or City park	75%	44%	87%	81%	82%	94%	73%
Eat at least 5 portions of fruits and vegetables a day	91%	79%	82%	92%	89%	85%	86%
Participate in moderate or vigorous physical activity	87%	80%	92%	97%	86%	93%	88%
Reported being in "very good" or "excellent" health	54%	55%	78%	72%	60%	68%	63%

Table 26: Participation - Education and Enrichment

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Used Surprise public libraries or their services	62%	71%	62%	47%	74%	83%	67%
Participated in religious or spiritual activities in Surprise	56%	50%	57%	45%	52%	41%	50%
Attended a City-sponsored event	30%	36%	45%	40%	62%	58%	45%

Table 27: Participation - Community Engagement

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Campaigned or advocated for an issue, cause or candidate	15%	13%	11%	20%	10%	2%	12%
Contacted Surprise elected officials (in-person, phone, email or web) to express your opinion	15%	9%	21%	17%	5%	2%	11%
Volunteered your time to some group/activity in Surprise	15%	29%	25%	12%	32%	25%	24%
Participated in a club	17%	42%	8%	8%	19%	20%	21%
Talked to or visited with your immediate neighbors	83%	96%	89%	90%	93%	92%	91%
Done a favor for a neighbor	63%	88%	81%	81%	72%	77%	78%
Attended a local public meeting	10%	21%	12%	16%	21%	21%	18%
Watched (online or on television) a local public meeting	19%	24%	34%	30%	15%	27%	24%
Read or watch local news (via television, paper, computer, etc.)	82%	98%	94%	92%	83%	88%	90%
Vote in local elections	75%	84%	81%	66%	92%	90%	82%

Table 28: Community Focus Areas

Percent rating positively (e.g., essential/very important)	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Overall feeling of safety in Surprise	88%	97%	98%	89%	100%	93%	95%

The National Citizen Survey™

	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Percent rating positively (e.g., essential/very important)							
Overall ease of getting to the places you usually have to visit	91%	92%	92%	81%	95%	88%	90%
Quality of overall natural environment in Surprise	75%	91%	71%	84%	74%	81%	80%
Overall "built environment" of Surprise (including overall design, buildings, parks and transportation systems)	87%	87%	90%	70%	86%	82%	84%
Health and wellness opportunities in Surprise	83%	88%	63%	81%	66%	90%	78%
Overall opportunities for education and enrichment	78%	84%	73%	85%	72%	90%	80%
Overall economic health of Surprise	83%	92%	90%	83%	82%	95%	87%
Sense of community	85%	82%	91%	87%	75%	82%	83%

Table 29: Custom Line Items for Question 10

	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Surprise: (Percent rating as "excellent" or "good").							
Services to seniors	69%	86%	81%	80%	69%	87%	80%
Services to youth	71%	75%	73%	67%	67%	79%	72%
Services to low-income people	32%	71%	50%	49%	44%	54%	50%

Table 30: Priority of City Projects

	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
How much of a priority, if any, should the following projects be for the city to address in the next 3 years? (Percent rating as "high priority" or "medium priority").							
Connected trail system	66%	60%	62%	67%	64%	59%	63%
Completed streets	89%	93%	96%	98%	87%	97%	93%
Internal circulator system (public city-only bus/van service)	69%	72%	59%	67%	71%	64%	68%
Protecting White Tank Mountain Regional Park open space	82%	89%	81%	88%	83%	84%	85%
Investing in water resources	90%	92%	95%	99%	95%	94%	94%
Multi-purpose recreation complex w/ pool	67%	62%	68%	57%	72%	79%	67%
Build more parks	71%	57%	72%	76%	67%	66%	67%

Table 31: Funding Sources for Capital Improvement Projects

	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
With limited dollars in the General Fund (the city's checking account), to what degree would you support the following funding sources for capital improvement projects, such as street improvements, new parks, fire stations, recreation facilities and more? (Percent "strongly support" or "somewhat support").							
General Obligation Bonds (secondary property tax)	37%	38%	29%	24%	38%	34%	34%

The National Citizen Survey™

With limited dollars in the General Fund (the city’s checking account), to what degree would you support the following funding sources for capital improvement projects, such as street improvements, new parks, fire stations, recreation facilities and more? (Percent "strongly support" or "somewhat support").	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Property tax increase	19%	21%	15%	16%	40%	27%	24%
Sales tax increase	35%	20%	15%	17%	29%	41%	25%
Road tax (pay for road projects only)	46%	40%	34%	30%	51%	41%	41%
Recreation tax (pay for parks, pools, trails, etc. only)	41%	35%	37%	33%	48%	50%	40%
Special taxing district	27%	20%	9%	8%	18%	28%	18%

Table 32: Support for Public Safety Tax

	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
Currently, Public Safety Personnel are paid using General Fund dollars; the same fund used to pay for street repair, park maintenance, fire stations, etc. To increase funding to pay for more projects, to what degree would you support a public safety tax to pay for Police and Fire-Medical personnel?	80%	59%	40%	73%	53%	61%	60%

Table 33: Sources of City Information

Please indicate how much of a source you consider the following to be for obtaining information about city government, services and events: (Percent "major source" or "minor source").	City Council District						Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	
City website (www.surpriseaz.gov)	91%	79%	88%	94%	92%	88%	88%
Progress Magazine (mailed quarterly)	85%	94%	87%	87%	91%	92%	90%
Surprise 11 (local government TV channel)	52%	56%	53%	48%	46%	56%	51%
City Social Media (Twitter, Facebook, YouTube)	49%	43%	53%	57%	60%	56%	53%
City Council meetings	56%	61%	64%	53%	46%	53%	55%
Talking with City officials	52%	61%	39%	47%	37%	54%	49%
Local media (newspaper, radio, TV)	73%	90%	84%	71%	79%	83%	81%
Word-of-mouth	71%	67%	79%	68%	61%	62%	67%
City Notify Me email news releases; council newsletters	64%	65%	70%	62%	75%	56%	66%