



THE NCSTM
The National Citizen SurveyTM

Surprise, AZ

Trends over Time

2018



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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 2018 ratings for the City of Surprise to its previous survey results in 2010, 2012 and 2015. Additional reports and technical appendices are available under separate cover.

Trend data for Surprise 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 eight percentage points between the 2015 and 2018 surveys, otherwise the comparisons between 2015 and 2018 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 Surprise for 2018 generally remained stable. Of the 132 items for which comparisons were available, 106 items were rated similarly in 2015 and 2018, 23 items showed a decrease in ratings and three showed an increase in ratings. Notable trends over time included the following:

- Ratings for several aspects of Mobility decreased from 2015 to 2018, including ease of travel by car and by public transportation, traffic signal timing and bus or transit services. However, residents were more likely in 2018 than in 2015 to have carpooled instead of driving alone.
- Several Safety-related services (crime prevention, fire prevention and emergency preparedness) also saw ratings decreases from 2015 to 2018; this year's ratings were more aligned with those observed in 2010 and 2012.
- Ratings declines within Built Environment were noted for the availability of affordable quality housing; the overall built environment of Surprise; power utility; and land use, planning and zoning.
- Ratings for several aspects of government performance also decreased since 2015, including the overall direction of the City and the value of services for taxes paid.

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Table 1: Community Characteristics General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)				2018 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark			
	2010	2012	2015	2018		2010	2012	2015	2018
Overall quality of life	87%	86%	85%	84%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
Overall image	73%	70%	76%	73%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Place to live	90%	90%	89%	89%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
Neighborhood	87%	88%	85%	80%	Similar	Much higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
Place to raise children	80%	82%	75%	78%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Place to retire	80%	85%	86%	89%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
Overall appearance	81%	87%	88%	84%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Similar

Table 2: Community Characteristics by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)				2018 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark			
		2010	2012	2015	2018		2010	2012	2015	2018
Safety	Overall feeling of safety	NA	NA	88%	86%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Safe in neighborhood	92%	92%	93%	95%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Safe downtown/commercial area	86%	88%	94%	93%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Overall ease of travel	NA	NA	72%	68%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Paths and walking trails	51%	58%	58%	57%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Ease of walking	58%	68%	68%	62%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Travel by bicycle	43%	44%	51%	44%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Travel by public transportation	NA	NA	27%	13%	Lower	NA	NA	Lower	Much lower
	Travel by car	40%	51%	67%	59%	Lower	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Public parking	NA	NA	74%	68%	Similar	NA	NA	Higher	Similar
	Traffic flow	29%	36%	46%	48%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
Natural Environment	Overall natural environment	68%	65%	80%	69%	Lower	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Cleanliness	86%	92%	88%	85%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Similar
	Air quality	62%	57%	68%	69%	Similar	Lower	Much lower	Similar	Lower
Built Environment	Overall built environment	NA	NA	81%	70%	Lower	NA	NA	Higher	Similar
	New development in Surprise	70%	67%	58%	62%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Affordable quality housing	71%	69%	76%	66%	Lower	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
	Housing options	77%	77%	78%	72%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)				2018 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark			
		2010	2012	2015	2018		2010	2012	2015	2018
Economy	Public places	NA	NA	69%	63%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Overall economic health	NA	NA	69%	65%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Vibrant downtown/commercial area	NA	NA	54%	55%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Business and services	65%	57%	67%	64%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Cost of living	NA	NA	69%	63%	Similar	NA	NA	Higher	Higher
	Shopping opportunities	51%	49%	60%	60%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Employment opportunities	23%	24%	31%	38%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Place to visit	NA	NA	66%	63%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Place to work	51%	55%	59%	48%	Lower	Lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Recreation and Wellness	Health and wellness	NA	NA	80%	73%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar
Mental health care		NA	NA	55%	50%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Preventive health services		69%	61%	76%	70%	Similar	Much higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
Health care		67%	54%	78%	69%	Lower	Much higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
Food		75%	68%	72%	69%	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Recreational opportunities		71%	65%	67%	60%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Fitness opportunities		NA	NA	65%	64%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Education and enrichment opportunities		NA	NA	57%	57%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Lower
Religious or spiritual events and activities		80%	78%	79%	75%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Cultural/arts/music activities		39%	42%	47%	43%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Similar	Lower
Education and Enrichment	Adult education	NA	NA	44%	45%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Lower
	K-12 education	58%	51%	57%	48%	Lower	Lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower
	Child care/preschool	57%	41%	58%	48%	Lower	Much higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Social events and activities	62%	62%	59%	56%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Neighborhoodness	NA	NA	60%	59%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Openness and acceptance	79%	71%	71%	71%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Opportunities to participate in community matters	63%	74%	63%	59%	Similar	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Opportunities to volunteer	74%	80%	73%	66%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar

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Table 3: Governance General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)				2018 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark			
	2010	2012	2015	2018		2010	2012	2015	2018
Services provided by Surprise	75%	81%	81%	77%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
Customer service	82%	88%	82%	75%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Value of services for taxes paid	56%	53%	66%	52%	Lower	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Overall direction	58%	59%	73%	61%	Lower	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Welcoming citizen involvement	52%	56%	58%	59%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
Confidence in City government	NA	NA	65%	53%	Lower	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Acting in the best interest of Surprise	NA	NA	63%	55%	Lower	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Being honest	NA	NA	63%	57%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Treating all residents fairly	NA	NA	67%	65%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Services provided by the Federal Government	38%	38%	35%	48%	Higher	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar

Table 4: Governance by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)				2018 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark			
		2010	2012	2015	2018		2010	2012	2015	2018
Safety	Police	82%	81%	89%	85%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Fire	94%	88%	98%	94%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Ambulance/EMS	91%	85%	95%	91%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Crime prevention	73%	68%	85%	76%	Lower	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Fire prevention	80%	71%	88%	77%	Lower	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Animal control	69%	71%	74%	71%	Similar	Much higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Emergency preparedness	56%	41%	69%	58%	Lower	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar
	Traffic enforcement	69%	71%	66%	67%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Street repair	44%	63%	66%	62%	Similar	Similar	Much higher	Higher	Higher
	Street cleaning	76%	78%	83%	79%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Similar
	Street lighting	69%	75%	84%	77%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Similar
Mobility	Sidewalk maintenance	68%	76%	82%	80%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
	Traffic signal timing	47%	53%	62%	50%	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Bus or transit services	23%	17%	33%	20%	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Much lower
Natural Environment	Garbage collection	92%	91%	93%	92%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)				2018 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark			
		2010	2012	2015	2018		2010	2012	2015	2018
	Recycling	86%	90%	87%	89%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Yard waste pick-up	72%	71%	77%	78%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Drinking water	63%	54%	66%	63%	Similar	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar
	Natural areas preservation	59%	53%	63%	63%	Similar	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar
Built Environment	Storm drainage	63%	83%	74%	71%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Sewer services	77%	86%	84%	83%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Power utility	80%	78%	84%	68%	Lower	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Utility billing	NA	NA	66%	65%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Land use, planning and zoning	54%	45%	57%	46%	Lower	Much higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Code enforcement	49%	53%	61%	63%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
Economy	Cable television	72%	60%	65%	60%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Economic development	44%	49%	65%	57%	Lower	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
	City parks	80%	78%	85%	82%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Recreation and Wellness	Recreation programs	75%	75%	77%	71%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Recreation centers	79%	80%	78%	77%	Similar	Much higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Health services	72%	72%	82%	76%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Special events	NA	NA	74%	62%	Lower	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Public libraries	85%	80%	88%	87%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Public information	72%	76%	81%	77%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar

Table 5: Participation General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)				2018 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark			
	2010	2012	2015	2018		2010	2012	2015	2018
Sense of community	68%	73%	61%	56%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
Recommend Surprise	90%	93%	88%	89%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Remain in Surprise	88%	94%	89%	88%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Contacted Surprise employees	44%	40%	46%	42%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar

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Table 6: Participation by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)				2018 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark			
		2010	2012	2015	2018		2010	2012	2015	2018
Safety	Stocked supplies for an emergency	NA	NA	23%	24%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower
	Did NOT report a crime	NA	NA	85%	81%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Was NOT the victim of a crime	93%	93%	92%	88%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Used public transportation instead of driving	NA	NA	7%	5%	Similar	NA	NA	Much lower	Much lower
	Carpooled instead of driving alone	NA	NA	38%	49%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Walked or biked instead of driving	NA	NA	43%	45%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower
Natural Environment	Conserved water	NA	NA	91%	90%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Made home more energy efficient	NA	NA	77%	73%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Recycled at home	90%	97%	93%	96%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Built Environment	Did NOT observe a code violation	NA	NA	50%	56%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	NOT under housing cost stress	63%	74%	71%	75%	Similar	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Purchased goods or services in Surprise	NA	NA	99%	98%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Economy	Economy will have positive impact on income	13%	26%	26%	38%	Higher	Lower	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Work in Surprise	NA	NA	30%	31%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower
	Used Surprise recreation centers	57%	60%	59%	63%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
Recreation and Wellness	Visited a City park	81%	83%	73%	81%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Ate 5 portions of fruits and vegetables	NA	NA	86%	81%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity	NA	NA	88%	86%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	In very good to excellent health	NA	NA	63%	65%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Used Surprise public libraries	70%	74%	67%	61%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Participated in religious or spiritual activities	46%	57%	50%	46%	Similar	Much lower	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Attended a City-sponsored event	NA	NA	45%	48%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate	NA	NA	12%	14%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Lower
	Contacted Surprise elected officials	NA	NA	11%	15%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Volunteered	30%	38%	24%	31%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Similar

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	Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)				2018 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark			
	2010	2012	2015	2018		2010	2012	2015	2018
Participated in a club	24%	21%	21%	28%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar
Talked to or visited with neighbors	NA	NA	91%	91%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Done a favor for a neighbor	NA	NA	78%	79%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Attended a local public meeting	21%	20%	18%	19%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar
Watched a local public meeting	46%	41%	24%	22%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Read or watched local news	NA	NA	90%	80%	Lower	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Voted in local elections	81%	74%	82%	83%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar