

THE NCSTM
The National Citizen SurveyTM

Morristown, TN

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 Morristown to its previous survey results in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014. Additional reports and technical appendices are available under separate cover.

Trend data for Morristown 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 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 Morristown for 2015 generally remained stable. Of the 131 items for which comparisons were available, 114 items were rated similarly in 2014 and 2015, 6 items showed a decrease in ratings and 11 showed an increase in ratings. Notable trends over time included the following:

- Within the pillar of Community Characteristics, trends between 2014 and 2015 generally remained stable, but there were a few exceptions. In the facet of Mobility ratings in 2015 for travel by car improved, while ratings for ease of walking and travel by bicycle were lower in comparative years. Other items with higher ratings in 2015 compared to 2014 were the quality of new development in Morristown, availability of affordable quality housing, overall economic health, vibrant downtown/commercial area, shopping opportunities and adult educational opportunities.
- Trends between 2014 and 2015 within the pillar of Governance tended to be similar in 2015. The only items with higher ratings between comparative survey years were mainly within the facet of Safety and included fire prevention and animal control. Recreation centers also received higher ratings in 2015 than in 2014.
- The majority of items within the pillar of Participation received similar ratings between 2014 and 2015; however one item trended up and four items declined in 2015. More residents reported that they participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity in 2015 compared to 2014. Meanwhile, fewer residents reported that they recycled at home, attended a City-sponsored event, volunteered, or attended a local public meeting in 2015 compared to 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				
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Overall quality of life	62%	66%	63%	62%	67%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
Overall image	54%	52%	44%	54%	57%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Similar
Place to live	73%	72%	70%	70%	73%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Similar
Neighborhood	65%	69%	72%	68%	68%	Similar	Lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
Place to raise children	60%	65%	65%	65%	68%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Similar
Place to retire	55%	50%	59%	55%	60%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
Overall appearance	52%	50%	51%	56%	51%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Similar	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				
		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Safety	Overall feeling of safety	NA	NA	69%	66%	68%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Similar
	Safe in neighborhood	87%	91%	89%	92%	92%	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Safe downtown/commercial area	83%	91%	85%	92%	85%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Overall ease of travel	NA	NA	70%	68%	70%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Paths and walking trails	46%	48%	38%	50%	49%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Ease of walking	43%	46%	42%	54%	43%	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Travel by bicycle	29%	32%	22%	38%	28%	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower
	Travel by car	62%	54%	60%	57%	65%	Higher	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Public parking	NA	NA	57%	56%	61%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Traffic flow	42%	40%	47%	46%	51%	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Overall natural environment	55%	60%	76%	71%	70%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
Natural Environment	Cleanliness	54%	54%	50%	51%	52%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Air quality	44%	53%	49%	54%	52%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Overall built environment	NA	NA	41%	51%	52%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Similar	Similar
Built Environment	New development in Morristown	42%	53%	35%	47%	58%	Higher	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Affordable quality housing	42%	47%	42%	41%	49%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Housing options	49%	54%	48%	45%	51%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Public places	NA	NA	38%	48%	44%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower
Economy	Overall economic health	NA	NA	35%	39%	49%	Higher	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Similar

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)					2015 rating compared to 2014	Comparison to benchmark				
		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
	Vibrant downtown/commercial area	NA	NA	24%	26%	41%	Higher	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Similar
	Business and services	47%	56%	42%	54%	56%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Cost of living	NA	NA	41%	44%	47%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Shopping opportunities	40%	52%	42%	43%	53%	Higher	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Employment opportunities	23%	26%	23%	37%	43%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Place to visit	NA	NA	41%	44%	43%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Place to work	42%	57%	40%	51%	53%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
Recreation and Wellness	Health and wellness	NA	NA	58%	61%	58%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Mental health care	NA	NA	30%	40%	44%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Preventive health services	55%	47%	43%	50%	54%	Similar	Lower	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Health care	41%	45%	41%	48%	54%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Food	49%	48%	50%	51%	55%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Similar
	Recreational opportunities	58%	50%	43%	56%	57%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Fitness opportunities	NA	NA	47%	57%	58%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Similar	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Religious or spiritual events and activities	77%	77%	78%	77%	79%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Cultural/arts/music activities	41%	42%	33%	42%	48%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Adult education	NA	NA	53%	50%	63%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	K-12 education	61%	63%	69%	70%	73%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Child care/preschool	41%	46%	56%	51%	57%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Social events and activities	50%	55%	37%	41%	46%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower	Similar
	Neighborhoodliness	NA	NA	47%	53%	57%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Openness and acceptance	46%	44%	39%	44%	45%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Similar
	Opportunities to participate in community matters	51%	56%	44%	45%	48%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Similar
	Opportunities to volunteer	74%	73%	60%	57%	62%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar

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Table 3: Governance General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)					2015 rating compared to 2014	Comparison to benchmark				
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Services provided by Morristown	59%	68%	63%	64%	63%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
Customer service	81%	80%	62%	63%	66%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Lower	Lower	Similar
Value of services for taxes paid	44%	51%	35%	47%	42%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
Overall direction	31%	45%	43%	49%	57%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
Welcoming citizen involvement	30%	42%	39%	41%	44%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
Confidence in City government	NA	NA	30%	34%	38%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Similar	Similar
Acting in the best interest of Morristown	NA	NA	35%	41%	41%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Similar	Similar
Being honest	NA	NA	33%	38%	42%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower
Treating all residents fairly	NA	NA	32%	41%	37%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Similar	Similar
Services provided by the Federal Government	37%	42%	35%	44%	38%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar

Table 4: Governance by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)					2015 rating compared to 2014	Comparison to benchmark				
		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Safety	Police	73%	82%	65%	75%	72%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Fire	87%	93%	88%	89%	88%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Ambulance/EMS	84%	87%	83%	83%	89%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Crime prevention	52%	59%	54%	64%	65%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Fire prevention	71%	79%	66%	68%	77%	Higher	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Animal control	42%	41%	39%	34%	45%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Much lower	Lower
	Emergency preparedness	45%	64%	42%	52%	59%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Traffic enforcement	59%	65%	59%	67%	64%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Street repair	26%	35%	31%	31%	34%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Street cleaning	45%	50%	45%	46%	47%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower	Similar
Mobility	Street lighting	56%	68%	52%	63%	62%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Snow removal	49%	58%	48%	51%	54%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Sidewalk maintenance	48%	51%	44%	43%	46%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Traffic signal timing	45%	49%	38%	44%	48%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Natural Environment	Garbage collection	79%	83%	85%	84%	88%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recycling	75%	78%	70%	75%	73%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)					2015 rating compared to 2014	Comparison to benchmark				
		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
	Yard waste pick-up	61%	69%	66%	58%	63%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar
	Drinking water	54%	59%	58%	61%	59%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Natural areas preservation	46%	59%	41%	48%	51%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Open space	NA	NA	40%	47%	46%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Similar
	Storm drainage	58%	54%	62%	57%	59%	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Sewer services	64%	66%	63%	62%	63%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Power utility	71%	78%	73%	76%	76%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Utility billing	NA	NA	61%	65%	63%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Land use, planning and zoning	39%	44%	42%	48%	46%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Code enforcement	25%	27%	31%	38%	37%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
Built Environment	Cable television	56%	59%	56%	62%	58%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Economy	Economic development	34%	35%	34%	46%	49%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	City parks	83%	78%	71%	76%	80%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recreation programs	67%	57%	52%	55%	61%	Similar	Lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Similar
Recreation and Wellness	Recreation centers	61%	49%	46%	51%	59%	Higher	Lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Similar
	Health services	61%	54%	60%	64%	64%	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Special events	NA	NA	46%	44%	50%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Public libraries	82%	82%	79%	75%	74%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Public information	55%	56%	59%	55%	54%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar

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				
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Sense of community	57%	61%	48%	50%	53%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower	Similar
Recommend Morristown	74%	78%	72%	76%	76%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
Remain in Morristown	79%	81%	82%	86%	83%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Contacted Morristown employees	37%	41%	38%	34%	32%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Lower

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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				
		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Safety	Stocked supplies for an emergency	NA	NA	36%	29%	30%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Did NOT report a crime	NA	NA	79%	73%	79%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Was NOT the victim of a crime	88%	89%	83%	85%	88%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Carpooled instead of driving alone	NA	NA	38%	41%	37%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Walked or biked instead of driving	NA	NA	36%	29%	27%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Much lower	Much lower
Natural Environment	Conserved water	NA	NA	86%	77%	82%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Made home more energy efficient	NA	NA	81%	77%	79%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recycled at home	63%	60%	70%	67%	55%	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Much lower
Built Environment	Did NOT observe a code violation	NA	NA	39%	32%	35%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Much lower	Lower
	NOT under housing cost stress	56%	59%	65%	69%	67%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
Economy	Purchased goods or services in Morristown	NA	NA	92%	94%	94%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Economy will have positive impact on income	17%	19%	14%	24%	27%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Work in Morristown	NA	NA	48%	52%	53%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Higher
Recreation and Wellness	Used Morristown recreation centers	54%	48%	58%	52%	54%	Similar	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Visited a City park	81%	78%	79%	76%	77%	Similar	Lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Ate 5 portions of fruits and vegetables	NA	NA	76%	73%	79%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Lower	Similar
	Participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity	NA	NA	69%	65%	73%	Higher	NA	NA	Lower	Much lower	Lower
	In very good to excellent health	NA	NA	44%	44%	44%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower
Education and Enrichment	Used Morristown public libraries	64%	62%	61%	47%	49%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Similar	Much lower	Lower
	Participated in religious or spiritual activities	68%	72%	71%	61%	67%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
	Attended a City-sponsored event	NA	NA	40%	39%	29%	Lower	NA	NA	Lower	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				
		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Community Engagement	Campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate	NA	NA	20%	18%	17%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Contacted Morristown elected officials	NA	NA	19%	16%	15%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Volunteered	50%	45%	48%	41%	32%	Lower	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Participated in a club	31%	27%	25%	29%	24%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Talked to or visited with neighbors	NA	NA	86%	89%	88%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Done a favor for a neighbor	NA	NA	84%	84%	89%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Attended a local public meeting	18%	19%	15%	19%	8%	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Lower
	Watched a local public meeting	NA	NA	37%	35%	27%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Read or watched local news	NA	NA	91%	85%	92%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Voted in local elections	61%	62%	64%	71%	65%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Lower