

THE NCSTM
The National Citizen SurveyTM

Richmond, CA

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 Richmond to its previous survey results in 2007, 2009, 2011 and 2013. Additional reports and technical appendices are available under separate cover.

Trend data for Richmond 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 seven percentage points between the 2013 and 2015 surveys, otherwise the comparison between 2013 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 Richmond for 2015 generally remained stable. Of the 90 items for which comparisons were available, 66 items were rated similarly in 2013 and 2015, 8 items showed a decrease in ratings and 16 showed an increase in ratings. Notable trends over time included the following:

- Within the pillar of Community Characteristics, most aspects remained stable over time; however, two aspects were trending down (affordable quality housing and opportunities to volunteer). Community Characteristics also saw a variety of increased ratings; these items were feelings of safety in Richmond's downtown/commercial area, traffic flow, ease of travel by car, ease of walking, overall natural environment, availability of cultural/arts/music activities and Richmond as a place to work.
- Three aspects of Governance decreased from 2013 to 2015 while six increased. The ratings that decreased were found for street cleaning, customer service and residents' perceptions of the value of services for taxes paid. Ratings for the six aspects of Governance that increased from 2013 to 2015 included crime prevention, fire services, fire prevention, yard waste pick-up, code enforcement and public libraries.
- For Participation, most aspects remained stable over time; however, three items within the facet of Community Engagement decreased from 2013 to 2015 (fewer residents had attended or watched a local public meeting and participated in a club). More residents in 2015 compared to 2013 indicated that they felt the economy would have a positive impact on their income, had voted in local elections and had contacted Richmond employees.

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Table 1: Community Quality General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)					2015 rating compared to 2013	Comparison to benchmark				
	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
Overall quality of life	17%	18%	21%	30%	31%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
Overall image	4%	6%	6%	6%	8%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
Place to live	20%	25%	32%	36%	41%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
Neighborhood	50%	50%	59%	53%	57%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
Place to raise children	9%	12%	13%	14%	19%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
Place to retire	15%	18%	17%	27%	28%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
Overall appearance	8%	14%	18%	18%	17%	Similar	Much lower	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 2013	Comparison to benchmark				
		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
Safety	Overall feeling of safety	NA	NA	NA	NA	21%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Much lower
	Safe in neighborhood	64%	68%	70%	70%	74%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Safe downtown/commercial area	25%	29%	34%	37%	48%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
Mobility	Overall ease of travel	NA	NA	NA	NA	60%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Lower
	Paths and walking trails	NA	34%	33%	36%	38%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Ease of walking	20%	24%	24%	30%	41%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Travel by bicycle	28%	35%	32%	32%	37%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Similar
	Travel by public transportation	49%	52%	47%	44%	48%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar	Lower	Similar
	Travel by car	41%	47%	48%	58%	73%	Higher	Much lower	Lower	Much lower	Lower	Similar
	Public parking	NA	NA	NA	NA	69%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Traffic flow	47%	36%	36%	34%	49%	Higher	NA	Similar	Lower	Much lower	Similar
	Natural Environment	Overall natural environment	NA	23%	25%	23%	39%	Higher	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
Cleanliness		NA	12%	15%	16%	15%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
Air quality		20%	20%	24%	24%	29%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)					2015 rating compared to 2013	Comparison to benchmark				
		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
Built Environment	Overall built environment	NA	NA	NA	NA	35%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Lower
	New development in Richmond	25%	31%	31%	23%	28%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Affordable quality housing	19%	29%	31%	34%	25%	Lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Much lower	Lower
	Housing options	NA	27%	31%	28%	23%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
	Public places	NA	NA	NA	NA	25%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Much lower
Economy	Overall economic health	NA	NA	NA	NA	14%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Much lower
	Vibrant downtown/commercial area	NA	NA	NA	NA	12%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Much lower
	Business and services	NA	23%	24%	23%	26%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
	Cost of living	NA	NA	NA	NA	30%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Shopping opportunities	19%	27%	28%	30%	27%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Employment opportunities	10%	12%	10%	9%	16%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Place to visit	NA	NA	NA	NA	26%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Much lower
	Place to work	24%	22%	23%	22%	34%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
	Recreation and Wellness	Health and wellness	NA	NA	NA	NA	34%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Mental health care		NA	NA	NA	NA	19%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Lower
Preventive health services		NA	25%	27%	34%	31%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
Health care		25%	24%	27%	27%	31%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
Food		32%	32%	29%	36%	30%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
Recreational opportunities		20%	23%	25%	28%	34%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
Fitness opportunities		NA	NA	NA	NA	36%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Much lower
Education and Enrichment	Religious or spiritual events and activities	NA	NA	44%	56%	53%	Similar	NA	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Lower

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)					2015 rating compared to 2013	Comparison to benchmark				
		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
	Cultural/arts/music activities	22%	24%	29%	22%	29%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Adult education	NA	NA	NA	NA	33%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Lower
	K-12 education	14%	18%	20%	20%	22%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
	Child care/preschool	23%	18%	26%	25%	20%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Social events and activities	NA	21%	26%	24%	29%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
Community Engagement	Neighborhoodliness	NA	NA	NA	NA	29%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Lower
	Openness and acceptance	37%	39%	42%	47%	44%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Opportunities to participate in community matters	NA	37%	42%	43%	38%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Opportunities to volunteer	NA	35%	43%	54%	43%	Lower	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower

Table 3: Governance General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)					2015 rating compared to 2013	Comparison to benchmark				
	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
Services provided by Richmond	17%	26%	29%	34%	34%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
Customer service	52%	52%	61%	61%	41%	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
Value of services for taxes paid	18%	19%	20%	35%	24%	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
Overall direction	27%	28%	30%	36%	42%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Similar
Welcoming citizen involvement	41%	23%	31%	31%	25%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
Confidence in City government	NA	NA	NA	NA	25%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Lower
Acting in the best interest of Richmond	NA	NA	NA	NA	33%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Lower
Being honest	NA	NA	NA	NA	29%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Lower
Treating all residents fairly	NA	NA	NA	NA	31%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Lower
Services provided by the Federal Government	17%	27%	29%	29%	29%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Similar

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Table 4: Governance by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)					2015 rating compared to 2013	Comparison to benchmark				
		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
Safety	Police	38%	54%	51%	57%	59%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Fire	70%	79%	71%	69%	79%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Similar
	Ambulance/EMS	66%	78%	71%	NA	72%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	NA	Lower
	Crime prevention	11%	19%	22%	27%	36%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
	Fire prevention	41%	45%	39%	46%	59%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Animal control	31%	NA	30%	25%	30%	Similar	Much lower	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Emergency preparedness	NA	28%	28%	37%	32%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
Mobility	Traffic enforcement	34%	36%	34%	38%	44%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Street repair	9%	14%	15%	15%	13%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
	Street cleaning	20%	29%	31%	43%	36%	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Street lighting	20%	25%	25%	36%	34%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Sidewalk maintenance	14%	24%	20%	31%	27%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Traffic signal timing	36%	40%	37%	40%	35%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Similar
	Bus or transit services	48%	50%	42%	42%	42%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Lower	Much lower	Similar
Natural Environment	Garbage collection	70%	73%	69%	67%	72%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Similar
	Recycling	71%	70%	68%	70%	70%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar
	Yard waste pick-up	61%	64%	59%	NA	70%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	NA	Similar
	Natural areas preservation	NA	32%	30%	35%	39%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Open space	NA	NA	NA	NA	39%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Lower
Built Environment	Storm drainage	31%	42%	41%	51%	53%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Similar
	Sewer services	41%	45%	46%	51%	52%	Similar	Much	Much	Much	Much	Lower

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	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)					2015 rating compared to 2013	Comparison to benchmark					
	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015	
							lower	lower	lower	lower		
	Power utility	NA	NA	56%	NA	63%	Similar	NA	NA	Much lower	NA	Similar
	Utility billing	NA	NA	NA	NA	52%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Land use, planning and zoning	13%	20%	21%	24%	22%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Code enforcement	9%	10%	19%	15%	22%	Higher	Much lower				
Economy	Economic development	13%	11%	15%	21%	19%	Similar	Much lower				
	City parks	30%	39%	43%	46%	45%	Similar	Much lower				
	Recreation programs	24%	30%	37%	44%	39%	Similar	Much lower				
	Recreation centers	23%	33%	34%	42%	37%	Similar	Much lower				
Recreation and Wellness	Health services	31%	30%	28%	31%	34%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Special events	NA	NA	NA	NA	31%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Lower
Education and Enrichment	Public libraries	35%	51%	48%	52%	61%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
Community Engagement	Public information	20%	31%	38%	41%	46%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower

Table 5: Participation General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)					2015 rating compared to 2013	Comparison to benchmark				
	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
Sense of community	17%	27%	27%	27%	22%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
Recommend Richmond	NA	41%	49%	55%	53%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
Remain in Richmond	NA	60%	67%	68%	66%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
Contacted Richmond employees	48%	47%	43%	35%	42%	Higher	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Similar

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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 2013	Comparison to benchmark				
		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
Safety	Stocked supplies for an emergency	NA	NA	NA	NA	47%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Did NOT report a crime	NA	NA	NA	NA	62%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Lower
	Was NOT the victim of a crime	70%	72%	73%	78%	72%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
Mobility	Used public transportation instead of driving	NA	NA	NA	NA	63%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Much higher
	Carpooled instead of driving alone	NA	NA	NA	NA	46%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Walked or biked instead of driving	NA	NA	NA	NA	60%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Natural Environment	Conserved water	NA	NA	NA	NA	96%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Higher
	Made home more energy efficient	NA	NA	NA	NA	76%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Recycled at home	93%	93%	94%	90%	95%	Similar	NA	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher
Built Environment	Did NOT observe a code violation	NA	NA	NA	NA	40%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Lower
	NOT under housing cost stress	NA	40%	43%	49%	51%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
Economy	Purchased goods or services in Richmond	NA	NA	NA	NA	92%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Economy will have positive impact on income	16%	10%	18%	22%	48%	Higher	NA	Much lower	Similar	Higher	Much higher
	Work in Richmond	NA	NA	NA	NA	35%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Recreation and Wellness	Used Richmond recreation centers	37%	44%	40%	40%	45%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Visited a City park	76%	78%	73%	71%	78%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Similar
	Ate 5 portions of fruits and vegetables	NA	NA	NA	NA	86%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity	NA	NA	NA	NA	85%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	In very good to excellent health	NA	NA	NA	NA	50%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Used Richmond public libraries	55%	59%	59%	52%	47%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Participated in religious or spiritual activities	NA	41%	43%	42%	41%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Similar

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)					2015 rating compared to 2013	Comparison to benchmark				
		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015		2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
Community Engagement	Attended a City-sponsored event	NA	NA	NA	NA	35%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Lower
	Campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate	NA	NA	NA	NA	26%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Contacted Richmond elected officials	NA	NA	NA	NA	22%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Volunteered	35%	37%	34%	29%	27%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Participated in a club	NA	24%	20%	24%	17%	Lower	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Talked to or visited with neighbors	NA	NA	NA	NA	91%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Done a favor for a neighbor	NA	NA	NA	NA	84%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Attended a local public meeting	36%	37%	31%	32%	25%	Lower	NA	Much higher	Higher	Much higher	Similar
	Watched a local public meeting	60%	52%	47%	37%	28%	Lower	NA	Much higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Read or watched local news	NA	NA	NA	NA	87%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Voted in local elections	73%	73%	70%	68%	79%	Higher	NA	Similar	Lower	Much lower	Similar