



**THE NCS**<sup>TM</sup>  
The National Citizen Survey<sup>TM</sup>

## Victoria, MN

Trends over Time

2018



**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. 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 Victoria to its previous survey results in 2015. Additional reports and technical appendices are available under separate cover.

Trend data for Victoria 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 six 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 Victoria for 2018 generally remained stable. Of the 134 items for which comparisons were available, 102 items were rated similarly in 2015 and 2018, 17 items showed a decrease in ratings and 15 showed an increase in ratings. Notable trends over time included the following:

- Significant ratings declines were noted in 2018 for several aspects of government performance, including overall confidence in City government, government acting in the best interest of Victoria, being honest and treating all residents fairly, among others.
- Decreases in ratings also were noted in the facet of Mobility, most notably for public parking, traffic flow and ease of travel by car.
- Several ratings within the facet of Economy increased from 2015 to 2018, including shopping opportunities, Victoria as a place to visit, the vibrancy of the downtown and the businesses and services in the city.
- Within Built Environment, ratings for land use, planning and zoning and code enforcement declined over time, while the rating for power utility increased.
- Increased resident scores of Community Engagement were found in the areas of neighborliness and the openness and acceptance of the community toward people of diverse backgrounds. Further, residents were more likely in 2018 than in 2015 to have attended or watched a local public meeting.

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Table 1: Community Characteristics General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)		2018 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark	
	2015	2018		2015	2018
Overall quality of life	92%	93%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Overall image	86%	75%	Lower	Similar	Similar
Place to live	95%	94%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Neighborhood	93%	95%	Similar	Higher	Higher
Place to raise children	94%	94%	Similar	Higher	Higher
Place to retire	59%	60%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Overall appearance	91%	91%	Similar	Higher	Higher

Table 2: Community Characteristics by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)		2018 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark	
		2015	2018		2015	2018
Safety	Overall feeling of safety	98%	96%	Similar	Higher	Higher
	Safe in neighborhood	98%	99%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Safe downtown/commercial area	98%	99%	Similar	Higher	Higher
Mobility	Overall ease of travel	85%	78%	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Paths and walking trails	84%	84%	Similar	Higher	Higher
	Ease of walking	83%	78%	Similar	Higher	Higher
	Travel by bicycle	75%	76%	Similar	Higher	Higher
	Travel by public transportation	16%	14%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower
	Travel by car	84%	72%	Lower	Higher	Similar
	Public parking	54%	30%	Lower	Similar	Lower
Natural Environment	Traffic flow	75%	61%	Lower	Higher	Similar
	Overall natural environment	92%	94%	Similar	Higher	Higher
	Cleanliness	97%	96%	Similar	Higher	Higher
Built Environment	Air quality	98%	96%	Similar	Much higher	Higher
	Overall built environment	67%	61%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	New development in Victoria	59%	61%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Affordable quality housing	53%	48%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Housing options	64%	62%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Public places	72%	77%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Economy	Overall economic health	67%	70%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Vibrant downtown/commercial area	35%	48%	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Business and services	50%	58%	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Cost of living	34%	34%	Similar	Similar	Similar

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)		2018 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark	
		2015	2018		2015	2018
	Shopping opportunities	10%	19%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower
	Employment opportunities	15%	14%	Similar	Lower	Lower
	Place to visit	61%	69%	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Place to work	30%	35%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Recreation and Wellness	Health and wellness	65%	61%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Mental health care	24%	27%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
	Preventive health services	29%	29%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower
	Health care	32%	32%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower
	Food	36%	40%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
	Recreational opportunities	72%	73%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Fitness opportunities	78%	78%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Education and enrichment opportunities	60%	64%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Religious or spiritual events and activities	73%	77%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Cultural/arts/music activities	44%	52%	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Adult education	48%	53%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	K-12 education	88%	88%	Similar	Higher	Higher
Community Engagement	Child care/preschool	61%	63%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Social events and activities	62%	67%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Neighborliness	72%	80%	Higher	Similar	Higher
	Openness and acceptance	55%	62%	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Opportunities to participate in community matters	62%	62%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Opportunities to volunteer	58%	62%	Similar	Similar	Similar

Table 3: Governance General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)		2018 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark	
	2015	2018		2015	2018
Services provided by Victoria	81%	73%	Lower	Similar	Similar
Customer service	85%	85%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Value of services for taxes paid	49%	46%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Overall direction	64%	44%	Lower	Similar	Lower
Welcoming citizen involvement	61%	43%	Lower	Similar	Similar

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	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)		2018 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark	
	2015	2018		2015	2018
Confidence in City government	58%	26%	Lower	Similar	Much lower
Acting in the best interest of Victoria	63%	31%	Lower	Similar	Lower
Being honest	66%	28%	Lower	Similar	Much lower
Treating all residents fairly	68%	40%	Lower	Similar	Lower
Services provided by the Federal Government	34%	46%	Higher	Similar	Similar

Table 4: Governance by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)		2018 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark		
		2015	2018		2015	2018	
Safety	Police	91%	90%	Similar	Similar	Similar	
	Fire	97%	98%	Similar	Similar	Similar	
	Ambulance/EMS	94%	97%	Similar	Similar	Similar	
	Crime prevention	89%	90%	Similar	Higher	Higher	
	Fire prevention	87%	90%	Similar	Similar	Similar	
	Animal control	75%	69%	Similar	Similar	Similar	
	Emergency preparedness	62%	63%	Similar	Similar	Similar	
Mobility	Traffic enforcement	78%	77%	Similar	Similar	Similar	
	Street repair	57%	62%	Similar	Similar	Higher	
	Street cleaning	71%	72%	Similar	Similar	Similar	
	Street lighting	63%	68%	Similar	Similar	Similar	
	Snow removal	65%	77%	Higher	Similar	Similar	
	Sidewalk maintenance	72%	71%	Similar	Higher	Higher	
	Traffic signal timing	71%	68%	Similar	Higher	Higher	
	Bus or transit services	22%	26%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	
	Natural Environment	Garbage collection	87%	76%	Lower	Similar	Similar
		Recycling	88%	76%	Lower	Similar	Similar
Yard waste pick-up		71%	68%	Similar	Similar	Similar	
Drinking water		78%	81%	Similar	Similar	Similar	
Natural areas preservation		68%	69%	Similar	Similar	Similar	
Open space		71%	71%	Similar	Similar	Similar	
Storm drainage		81%	79%	Similar	Higher	Similar	
Sewer services		88%	88%	Similar	Similar	Similar	
Built Environment	Power utility	71%	85%	Higher	Similar	Similar	
	Utility billing	77%	80%	Similar	Similar	Similar	
	Land use, planning and zoning	52%	46%	Lower	Similar	Similar	
	Code enforcement	67%	58%	Lower	Higher	Similar	
	Cable television	36%	34%	Similar	Lower	Lower	
Economy	Economic development	48%	50%	Similar	Similar	Similar	

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)		2018 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark	
		2015	2018		2015	2018
Recreation and Wellness	City parks	85%	90%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recreation programs	68%	74%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recreation centers	78%	76%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Health services	40%	45%	Similar	Lower	Lower
Education and Enrichment	Special events	75%	78%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Public libraries	71%	89%	Higher	Lower	Similar
Community Engagement	Public information	61%	66%	Similar	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	
		2015	2018		2015	2018
Sense of community		68%	64%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Recommend Victoria		92%	93%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Remain in Victoria		90%	90%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Contacted Victoria employees		48%	42%	Lower	Similar	Similar

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	
		2015	2018		2015	2018
Safety	Stocked supplies for an emergency	17%	16%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower
	Did NOT report a crime	92%	90%	Similar	Higher	Higher
	Was NOT the victim of a crime	95%	95%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Used public transportation instead of driving	3%	6%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower
	Carpooled instead of driving alone	36%	32%	Similar	Similar	Lower
	Walked or biked instead of driving	61%	66%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Natural Environment	Conserved water	80%	82%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Made home more energy efficient	74%	77%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recycled at home	99%	98%	Similar	Higher	Higher
Built Environment	Did NOT observe a code violation	76%	73%	Similar	Much higher	Higher
	NOT under housing cost stress	81%	82%	Similar	Higher	Higher
Economy	Purchased goods or services in Victoria	84%	85%	Similar	Lower	Lower
	Economy will have positive impact on income	37%	47%	Higher	Higher	Higher
	Work in Victoria	23%	26%	Similar	Lower	Lower
Recreation and	Used Victoria recreation centers	61%	62%	Similar	Similar	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	
		2015	2018		2015	2018
Wellness	Visited a City park	80%	85%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Ate 5 portions of fruits and vegetables	84%	87%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity	91%	94%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	In very good to excellent health	78%	78%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Used Victoria public libraries	23%	58%	Higher	Much lower	Similar
	Participated in religious or spiritual activities	42%	40%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Attended a City-sponsored event	64%	67%	Similar	Higher	Higher
Community Engagement	Campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate	20%	19%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Contacted Victoria elected officials	16%	20%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Volunteered	29%	26%	Similar	Lower	Lower
	Participated in a club	21%	17%	Similar	Similar	Lower
	Talked to or visited with neighbors	97%	97%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Done a favor for a neighbor	91%	93%	Similar	Higher	Higher
	Attended a local public meeting	21%	31%	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Watched a local public meeting	13%	23%	Higher	Lower	Similar
	Read or watched local news	91%	88%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Voted in local elections	94%	93%	Similar	Higher	Higher