

The National Citizen Survey™

Urbandale, IA

Dashboard Summary of Findings

2013

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 summarizes Urbandale’s performance in the eight facets of community livability with the “General” rating as a summary of results from the overarching questions not shown within any of the eight facets. The “Overall” represents the community pillar in its entirety (the eight facets and general).

By summarizing resident ratings across the eight facets and three pillars of a livable community, a picture of Urbandale’s community livability emerges. Below, the color of each community facet summarizes how residents rated each of the pillars that support it – Community Characteristics, Governance and Participation. When most ratings were higher than the benchmark, the color is shaded dark; when most ratings were lower than the benchmark, the color is the lightest shade. A mix of ratings (higher and lower than the benchmark) results in a color between the extremes.

Broadly, ratings of Community Characteristics across most of the facets were stronger than ratings of Governance or Participation. Overall, most facets within Community Characteristics saw high ratings, but for Participation, many facets were not as strong. Economy, Natural Environment, Built Environment and Recreation and Wellness emerged as the strongest community facets when compared to other places. This information can be helpful in identifying the areas that merit more attention.

Figure 1: Dashboard Summary

	Community Characteristics			Governance			Participation		
	Higher	Similar	Lower	Higher	Similar	Lower	Higher	Similar	Lower
Overall	29	23	0	14	30	0	4	22	9
General	7	0	0	0	3	0	1	2	0
Safety	0	3	0	1	6	0	1	1	1
Mobility	6	1	0	2	6	0	0	1	2
Natural Environment	3	0	0	2	4	0	0	3	0
Built Environment	3	2	0	2	4	0	2	0	0
Economy	4	4	0	1	0	0	0	2	1
Recreation and Wellness	4	3	0	0	3	0	0	6	0
Education and Enrichment	2	4	0	0	2	0	0	0	1
Community Engagement	0	6	0	6	2	0	0	5	4

Legend	
Higher	Higher
Similar	Similar
Lower	Lower

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Figure 2: Detailed Dashboard

	Community Characteristics	Trend	Benchmark	Percent positive	Governance	Trend	Benchmark	Percent positive	Participation	Trend	Benchmark	Percent positive
General	Overall appearance	↔	↑	92%	Customer service	↔	↔	85%	Recommend Urbandale	↑	↑	97%
	Overall quality of life	↔	↑	93%	Services provided by Urbandale	↔	↔	89%	Remain in Urbandale	↑	↔	91%
	Place to retire	↔	↑	82%	Services provided by the Federal Government	↓	↔	32%	Contacted Urbandale employees	↔	↔	41%
	Place to raise children	↔	↑	92%								
	Place to live	↔	↑	97%								
	Neighborhood	↔	↑	95%								
	Overall image	↔	↑	90%								
Safety	Overall feeling of safety	*	↔	94%	Police	↔	↔	90%	Was NOT the victim of a crime	↔	↔	94%
	Safe in neighborhood	↔	↔	98%	Crime prevention	↔	↑	88%	Did NOT report a crime	*	↑	87%
	Safe downtown/commercial area	↔	↔	96%	Fire	↔	↔	97%	Stocked supplies for an emergency	*	↓	23%
					Fire prevention	↔	↔	88%				
					Ambulance/EMS	↔	↔	96%				
					Emergency preparedness	↔	↔	76%				
				Animal control	↔	↔	75%					
Mobility	Traffic flow	↔	↑	77%	Traffic enforcement	↓	↔	76%	Carpooled instead of driving alone	*	↓	30%
	Travel by car	↔	↑	85%	Street repair	↔	↑	60%	Walked or biked instead of driving	*	↔	51%
	Travel by bicycle	↔	↑	72%	Street cleaning	↔	↔	75%	Used public transportation instead of driving	*	↓↓	5%
	Ease of walking	↔	↑	89%	Street lighting	↔	↔	77%				
	Travel by public transportation	*	↔	45%	Snow removal	↔	↔	77%				
	Overall ease travel	*	↑	90%	Sidewalk maintenance	↔	↑	71%				
	Paths and walking trails	↔	↑↑	92%	Traffic signal timing	↔	↔	63%				
				Bus or transit services	↔	↔	59%					
Natural Environment	Overall natural environment	↔	↑	91%	Garbage collection	↔	↔	93%	Recycled at home	↔	↔	91%
	Air quality	↔	↑	96%	Recycling	↔	↔	89%	Conserved water	*	↔	79%
	Cleanliness	↔	↑	93%	Yard waste pick-up	↓	↑	89%	Made home more energy efficient	*	↔	82%
					Drinking water	↔	↑	86%				
					Open space	*	↔	71%				
				Natural areas preservation	↔	↔	69%					
Built Environment	New development in Urbandale	↓	↔	75%	Sewer services	↔	↔	89%	NOT experiencing housing cost stress	↔	↑	81%
	Affordable quality housing	↔	↑↑	78%	Storm drainage	↔	↔	81%	Did NOT observe a code violation	*	↑	71%
	Housing options	↔	↑	85%	Power utility	↔	↔	88%				
	Overall built environment	*	↑	81%	Utility billing	*	↔	84%				
	Public places	*	↔	81%	Land use, planning and zoning	↔	↑	74%				
					Code enforcement	↔	↑	69%				

Legend

↑↑ Much higher ↑ Higher ↔ Similar ↓ Lower ↓↓ Much lower * Not available

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	Community Characteristics	Trend	Benchmark	Percent positive	Governance	Trend	Benchmark	Percent positive	Participation	Trend	Benchmark	Percent positive
Economy	Overall economic health	*	↑	87%	Economic development	↑	↑↑	81%	Economy will have positive impact on income	↔	↔	20%
	Shopping opportunities	↔	↔	64%					Purchased goods or services in Urbandale	*	↔	98%
	Employment opportunities	↑	↑↑	63%					Work in Urbandale	*	↓↓	26%
	Place to visit	*	↔	68%								
	Cost of living	*	↑	67%								
	Vibrant downtown/commercial area	*	↔	43%								
	Place to work	↔	↑	86%								
Recreation and Wellness	Business and services	↔	↔	75%								
	Fitness opportunities	*	↔	85%	City parks	↔	↔	91%	In very good to excellent health	*	↔	65%
	Recreational opportunities	↔	↔	78%	Recreation centers	↔	↔	78%	Used Urbandale public libraries	↔	↔	71%
	Health care	↔	↑	84%	Recreation programs	↔	↔	78%	Used Urbandale recreation centers	↔	↔	51%
	Food	↔	↑	84%					Visited a City park	↔	↔	80%
	Mental health care	*	↑	73%					Ate 5 portions of fruits and vegetables	*	↔	81%
	Health and wellness	*	↔	82%					Participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity	*	↔	83%
Education and Enrichment	Preventive health services	↔	↑	83%								
	K-12 education	↔	↑	91%	Public libraries	↔	↔	95%	Participated in religious or spiritual activities	↔	↓	39%
	Cultural/arts/music activities	↑	↔	53%	Special events	*	↔	72%				
	Child care/preschool	↔	↑	72%								
	Religious or spiritual events and activities	↔	↔	85%								
	Adult education	*	↔	67%								
Community Engagement	Overall education and enrichment	*	↔	80%								
	Opportunities to participate in community matters	↓	↔	70%	Public information	↔	↔	83%	Talked to or visited with neighbors	*	*	44%
	Opportunities to volunteer	↔	↔	73%	Overall direction	↔	↑	81%	Voted in local elections	↔	↔	83%
	Sense of community	↔	↔	74%	Value of services for taxes paid	↔	↔	72%	Attended a local public meeting	↔	↓	11%
	Openness and acceptance	↓	↔	70%	Welcoming citizen involvement	↔	↑	69%	Watched a local public meeting	↔	↓↓	12%
	Social events and activities	↔	↔	63%	Confidence in City government	*	↑	76%	Volunteered	↓	↓	25%
	Neighborliness	*	↔	71%	Acting in the best interest of Urbandale	*	↑	76%	Participated in a club	↔	↓	19%
					Being honest	*	↑	79%	Done a favor for a neighbor	*	*	85%
					Treating all residents fairly	*	↑	77%	Campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate	*	↔	17%
									Contacted Urbandale elected officials	*	↔	12%
								Attended a City-sponsored event	*	↔	47%	
								Read or watched local news	*	↔	89%	

Legend

↑↑ Much higher ↑ Higher ↔ Similar ↓ Lower ↓↓ Much lower * Not available