

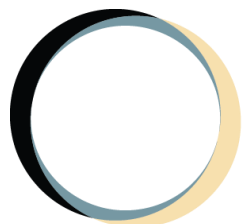


THE NCSTM
The National Citizen SurveyTM

Walnut Creek, CA

Trends over Time

DRAFT
2017



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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 2017 ratings for the City of Walnut Creek to its previous survey results in 2007, 2012 and 2017. Additional reports and technical appendices are available under separate cover.

Trend data for Walnut Creek 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 five percentage points between the 2012 and 2017 surveys, otherwise the comparison between 2012 and 2017 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 Walnut Creek for 2017 generally remained stable. Of the 89 items for which comparisons were available, 51 items were rated similarly in 2012 and 2017, 29 items showed a decrease in ratings and nine showed an increase in ratings. Notable trends over time included the following:

- While many aspects within the pillar of Community Characteristics were not eligible for trend analysis, the majority of ratings that were eligible remained stable from 2012 to 2017. Ratings decreased for over time for traffic flow, ease of travel by car, travel by bicycle, ease of walking, ease of travel by public transportation, the availability of paths and walking trails, new development in Walnut Creek, the availability of affordable quality housing, housing options, the overall quality of business and services establishments, the availability of affordable quality food, the overall quality of life, the City as a place to retire and the overall image of Walnut Creek. However, ratings increased for air quality, the availability of preventive health services and the availability of affordable child care/preschool since 2012.
- Within the pillar of Governance, ratings decreased from 2012 to 2017 for traffic enforcement, street repair, bus or transit services, recycling, storm drainage, land use, planning and zoning, cable television, the overall direction the City is taking, the value of services for taxes paid, the job the City does at welcoming citizen involvement and the overall services provided by Walnut Creek. Ratings for public information services increased during this time period.
- Within Participation, more measures increased than decreased from 2012 to 2017. This year, more residents were optimistic that the economy would have a positive impact on their income in the next six months. Additionally, more Walnut Creek participants reported they had used Walnut Creek recreation centers, voted in local elections, attended public meetings and participated in clubs. Ratings trended down in 2017 for the overall sense of community and fewer residents indicated they had watched a local public meeting. Additionally, this year fewer respondents reported that they would recommend living in Walnut Creek and would remain in the City for the next five years.

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Table 1: Community Characteristics General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			2017 rating compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark		
	2007	2012	2017		2007	2012	2017
Overall quality of life	95%	96%	91%	Lower	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
Overall image	95%	95%	88%	Lower	Much higher	Much higher	Higher
Place to live	97%	97%	94%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
Neighborhood	89%	93%	91%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
Place to raise children	94%	93%	93%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Higher
Place to retire	81%	82%	70%	Lower	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
Overall appearance	95%	94%	90%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Higher

Table 2: Community Characteristics by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)			2017 rating compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark		
		2007	2012	2017		2007	2012	2017
Safety	Overall feeling of safety	NA	NA	92%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Safe in neighborhood	97%	97%	96%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
	Safe downtown/commercial area	96%	97%	95%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
	Overall ease of travel	NA	NA	57%	NA	NA	NA	Lower
	Paths and walking trails	NA	89%	83%	Lower	NA	Much higher	Higher
	Ease of walking	83%	84%	77%	Lower	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
	Travel by bicycle	72%	76%	55%	Lower	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
	Travel by public transportation	NA	49%	36%	Lower	NA	Much higher	Similar
Mobility	Travel by car	45%	46%	37%	Lower	Similar	Much lower	Lower
	Public parking	NA	NA	30%	NA	NA	NA	Lower
	Traffic flow	24%	32%	23%	Lower	NA	Much lower	Lower
	Overall natural environment	NA	89%	86%	Similar	NA	Much higher	Similar
Natural Environment	Cleanliness	NA	92%	88%	Similar	NA	Much higher	Similar
	Air quality	80%	77%	86%	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
Built Environment	Overall built environment	NA	NA	64%	NA	NA	NA	Similar

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)			2017 rating compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark		
		2007	2012	2017		2007	2012	2017
	New development in Walnut Creek	74%	76%	62%	Lower	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
	Affordable quality housing	17%	33%	16%	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
	Housing options	NA	62%	43%	Lower	NA	Higher	Similar
	Public places	NA	NA	84%	NA	NA	NA	Higher
Economy	Overall economic health	NA	NA	87%	NA	NA	NA	Higher
	Vibrant downtown/commercial area	NA	NA	87%	NA	NA	NA	Much higher
	Business and services	NA	89%	83%	Lower	NA	Much higher	Higher
	Cost of living	NA	NA	23%	NA	NA	NA	Lower
	Shopping opportunities	95%	92%	90%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher
	Employment opportunities	56%	47%	50%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
	Place to visit	NA	NA	83%	NA	NA	NA	Higher
	Place to work	87%	81%	79%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Higher
	Health and wellness	NA	NA	86%	NA	NA	NA	Higher
	Mental health care	NA	NA	62%	NA	NA	NA	Higher
Recreation and Wellness	Preventive health services	NA	75%	82%	Higher	NA	Much higher	Higher
	Health care	74%	74%	77%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Higher
	Food	81%	81%	71%	Lower	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
	Recreational opportunities	83%	87%	84%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Higher
	Fitness opportunities	NA	NA	85%	NA	NA	NA	Higher
	Cultural/arts/music activities	80%	78%	79%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Higher
	Adult education	NA	NA	77%	NA	NA	NA	Higher
Education and Enrichment	K-12 education	NA	80%	85%	Similar	NA	Much higher	Similar
	Child care/preschool	40%	41%	57%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Social events and activities	NA	76%	75%	Similar	NA	Much higher	Similar
	Neighborliness	NA	NA	64%	NA	NA	NA	Similar

The National Citizen Survey™

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)			2017 rating compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark		
	2007	2012	2017		2007	2012	2017
Openness and acceptance	67%	NA	62%	Similar	Higher	NA	Similar
Opportunities to participate in community matters	NA	68%	70%	Similar	NA	Much higher	Similar
Opportunities to volunteer	NA	78%	77%	Similar	NA	Higher	Similar

Table 3: Governance General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			2017 rating compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark		
	2007	2012	2017		2007	2012	2017
Services provided by Walnut Creek	86%	89%	82%	Lower	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
Customer service	85%	83%	81%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
Value of services for taxes paid	77%	73%	60%	Lower	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
Overall direction	70%	72%	51%	Lower	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
Welcoming citizen involvement	65%	64%	56%	Lower	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
Confidence in City government	NA	NA	54%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Acting in the best interest of Walnut Creek	NA	NA	54%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Being honest	NA	NA	57%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Treating all residents fairly	NA	NA	58%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Services provided by the Federal Government	31%	37%	40%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar

Table 4: Governance by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			2017 rating compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark		
		2007	2012	2017		2007	2012	2017
Safety	Police	88%	91%	87%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
	Fire	NA	97%	96%	Similar	NA	Much higher	Similar
	Ambulance/EMS	NA	98%	94%	Similar	NA	Much higher	Similar
	Crime prevention	84%	78%	76%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
	Animal control	NA	77%	76%	Similar	NA	Much higher	Similar
	Emergency preparedness	NA	69%	72%	Similar	NA	Higher	Similar
	Traffic enforcement	65%	67%	60%	Lower	Higher	Higher	Similar
	Street repair	60%	60%	53%	Lower	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
	Street cleaning	79%	73%	75%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
	Street lighting	76%	72%	67%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
Mobility	Sidewalk maintenance	66%	62%	63%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
	Traffic signal timing	49%	49%	47%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Bus or transit services	NA	62%	55%	Lower	NA	Much higher	Similar
Natural Environment	Garbage collection	NA	89%	87%	Similar	NA	Higher	Similar
	Recycling	NA	90%	82%	Lower	NA	Much higher	Similar

The National Citizen Survey™

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			2017 rating compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark			
		2007	2012	2017		2007	2012	2017	
	Yard waste pick-up	NA	88%	84%	Similar	NA	Much higher	Similar	
	Drinking water	NA	87%	84%	Similar	NA	Much higher	Higher	
	Natural areas preservation	NA	84%	80%	Similar	NA	Much higher	Higher	
	Open space	NA	NA	84%	NA	NA	NA	Higher	
Built Environment	Storm drainage	73%	80%	74%	Lower	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	
	Sewer services	NA	87%	88%	Similar	NA	Much higher	Similar	
	Power utility	NA	83%	82%	Similar	NA	Higher	Similar	
	Land use, planning and zoning	64%	61%	52%	Lower	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	
	Code enforcement	72%	66%	65%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	
	Cable television	NA	70%	64%	Lower	NA	Much higher	Similar	
	Economy	Economic development	76%	71%	70%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Higher
	Recreation and Wellness	City parks	92%	94%	91%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
Recreation programs		91%	85%	86%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	
Recreation centers		89%	84%	80%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	
Health services		NA	87%	86%	Similar	NA	Much higher	Higher	
Education and Enrichment	Special events	NA	NA	77%	NA	NA	NA	Similar	
	Public libraries	NA	91%	89%	Similar	NA	Much higher	Similar	
Community Engagement	Public information	63%	NA	77%	Higher	Similar	NA	Similar	

Table 5: Participation General

		Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)			2017 rating compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark		
		2007	2012	2017		2007	2012	2017
Sense of community		72%	76%	66%	Lower	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
Recommend Walnut Creek		NA	97%	91%	Lower	NA	Much higher	Similar
Remain in Walnut Creek		NA	93%	87%	Lower	NA	Much higher	Similar
Contacted Walnut Creek employees		42%	32%	37%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Similar

Table 6: Participation by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)			2017 rating compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark		
		2007	2012	2017		2007	2012	2017
Safety	Stocked supplies for an emergency	NA	NA	48%	NA	NA	NA	Higher
	Did NOT report a crime	NA	NA	80%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Was NOT the victim of a crime	14%	88%	88%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar

The National Citizen Survey™

		Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)			2017 rating compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark		
		2007	2012	2017		2007	2012	2017
Mobility	Used public transportation instead of driving	NA	NA	57%	NA	NA	NA	Much higher
	Carpooled instead of driving alone	NA	NA	52%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Walked or biked instead of driving	NA	NA	70%	NA	NA	NA	Higher
Natural Environment	Conserved water	NA	NA	95%	NA	NA	NA	Higher
	Made home more energy efficient	NA	NA	80%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Recycled at home	94%	97%	97%	Similar	NA	Much higher	Higher
Built Environment	Did NOT observe a code violation	NA	NA	65%	NA	NA	NA	Higher
	NOT under housing cost stress	NA	64%	63%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
Economy	Purchased goods or services in Walnut Creek	NA	NA	97%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Economy will have positive impact on income	28%	22%	34%	Higher	NA	Higher	Similar
	Work in Walnut Creek	NA	NA	33%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Recreation and Wellness	Used Walnut Creek recreation centers	42%	44%	64%	Higher	NA	Much lower	Similar
	Visited a City park	83%	88%	87%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	Ate 5 portions of fruits and vegetables	NA	NA	91%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity	NA	NA	91%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	In very good to excellent health	NA	NA	75%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Used Walnut Creek public libraries	60%	73%	69%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	Attended a City-sponsored event	NA	NA	56%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Community Engagement	Campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate	NA	NA	37%	NA	NA	NA	Higher
	Contacted Walnut Creek elected officials	NA	NA	20%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Volunteered	39%	42%	40%	Similar	NA	Lower	Similar
	Participated in a club	NA	32%	39%	Higher	NA	Similar	Higher
	Talked to or visited with neighbors	NA	NA	91%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Done a favor for a neighbor	NA	NA	82%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Attended a local public meeting	18%	20%	26%	Higher	NA	Much lower	Similar
	Watched a local public meeting	40%	37%	25%	Lower	NA	Lower	Similar
	Read or watched local news	NA	NA	89%	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Voted in local elections	82%	82%	93%	Higher	NA	Much higher	Higher