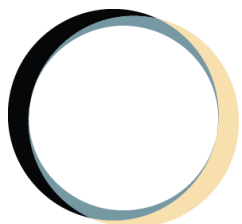


**THE NCS**<sup>TM</sup>  
The National Citizen Survey<sup>TM</sup>

## Hamilton, OH

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 Hamilton to its previous survey results in 2011. Additional reports and technical appendices are available under separate cover.

Trend data for Hamilton 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 2011 and 2015 surveys, otherwise the comparison between 2011 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 Hamilton for 2015 generally remained stable. Of the 88 items for which comparisons were available, 59 items were rated similarly in 2011 and 2015 and 29 showed an increase in ratings. None of the comparable items showed a decrease in ratings. Notable trends over time included the following:

- Within the pillar of Community Characteristics, 14 items increased from 2011 to 2015 in six facets. These included overall natural environment (Natural Environment), new development in Hamilton (Built Environment), employment opportunities and Hamilton as a place to work (Economy), recreational opportunities and availability of affordable quality health care (Recreation and Wellness), opportunities to attend cultural/arts/music activities and availability of affordable quality child care/preschool (Education and Enrichment), opportunities to participate in community matters, opportunities to volunteer, opportunities to participate in social events and activities (Community Engagement), as well as the overall appearance of Hamilton, the overall quality of life, and Hamilton as a place to live.
- Eleven aspects of Governance saw ratings increase in 2015 in the facets of Mobility (snow removal), Natural Environment (garbage collection and yard waste pick-up), Built Environment (sewer services, storm drainage, power utility), Economy (economic development), Recreation and Wellness (health services), Education and Enrichment (public libraries) and Community Engagement (overall direction the City is taking and the job Hamilton government does at welcoming at welcoming citizen involvement).
- Increases in ratings were also seen in the pillar of Participation. More residents stated that they recycled at home, had used Hamilton recreation centers and had voted in local elections, and more respondents indicated they were likely to remain in Hamilton for the next five years.

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Table 1: Community Characteristics General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)		2015 rating compared to 2011	Comparison to benchmark	
	2011	2015		2011	2015
Overall quality of life	40%	48%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower
Overall image	21%	24%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower
Place to live	47%	56%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower
Neighborhood	55%	61%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Place to raise children	40%	45%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower
Place to retire	31%	35%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower
Overall appearance	28%	39%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower

Table 2: Community Characteristics by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)		2015 rating compared to 2011	Comparison to benchmark	
		2011	2015		2011	2015
Safety	Overall feeling of safety	NA	45%	NA	NA	Much lower
	Safe in neighborhood	85%	78%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
	Safe downtown/commercial area	76%	75%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Mobility	Overall ease of travel	NA	56%	NA	NA	Lower
	Paths and walking trails	48%	49%	Similar	Lower	Lower
	Ease of walking	48%	52%	Similar	Lower	Similar
	Travel by bicycle	44%	46%	Similar	Lower	Similar
	Travel by public transportation	NA	19%	NA	NA	Much lower
	Travel by car	42%	44%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
	Public parking	NA	42%	NA	NA	Similar
Natural Environment	Traffic flow	25%	33%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
	Overall natural environment	37%	47%	Higher	Much lower	Lower
	Cleanliness	25%	27%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower
	Air quality	43%	49%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
	Overall built environment	NA	41%	NA	NA	Lower
	New development in Hamilton	31%	47%	Higher	Much lower	Similar
Built Environment	Affordable quality housing	36%	38%	Similar	Lower	Similar
	Housing options	33%	39%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
	Public places	NA	31%	NA	NA	Much lower
	Overall economic health	NA	21%	NA	NA	Much lower
Economy	Vibrant downtown/commercial area	NA	23%	NA	NA	Lower
	Business and services	31%	37%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
	Cost of living	NA	49%	NA	NA	Similar

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)		2015 rating compared to 2011	Comparison to benchmark	
		2011	2015		2011	2015
	Shopping opportunities	25%	28%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
	Employment opportunities	8%	22%	Higher	Much lower	Lower
	Place to visit	NA	30%	NA	NA	Much lower
	Place to work	23%	36%	Higher	Much lower	Lower
Recreation and Wellness	Health and wellness	NA	51%	NA	NA	Lower
	Mental health care	NA	38%	NA	NA	Similar
	Preventive health services	42%	48%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
	Health care	36%	47%	Higher	Much lower	Similar
	Food	47%	47%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
	Recreational opportunities	24%	39%	Higher	Much lower	Lower
	Fitness opportunities	NA	52%	NA	NA	Similar
	Religious or spiritual events and activities	NA	80%	NA	NA	Similar
	Cultural/arts/music activities	29%	58%	Higher	Much lower	Similar
	Adult education	NA	53%	NA	NA	Similar
Education and Enrichment	K-12 education	60%	60%	Similar	Lower	Lower
	Child care/preschool	29%	43%	Higher	Much lower	Similar
	Social events and activities	30%	41%	Higher	Much lower	Lower
Community Engagement	Neighborhood	NA	35%	NA	NA	Lower
	Openness and acceptance	33%	34%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower
	Opportunities to participate in community matters	33%	44%	Higher	Much lower	Lower
	Opportunities to volunteer	49%	58%	Higher	Much lower	Similar

Table 3: Governance General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)		2015 rating compared to 2011	Comparison to benchmark	
	2011	2015		2011	2015
Services provided by Hamilton	50%	56%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Customer service	63%	63%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Value of services for taxes paid	40%	48%	Similar	Much lower	Similar
Overall direction	27%	56%	Higher	Much lower	Similar
Welcoming citizen involvement	26%	38%	Higher	Much lower	Similar
Confidence in City government	NA	39%	NA	NA	Similar
Acting in the best interest of Hamilton	NA	41%	NA	NA	Similar
Being honest	NA	43%	NA	NA	Similar
Treating all residents fairly	NA	41%	NA	NA	Similar
Services provided by the Federal Government	29%	28%	Similar	Lower	Similar

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Table 4: Governance by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)		2015 rating compared to 2011	Comparison to benchmark	
		2011	2015		2011	2015
Safety	Police	64%	64%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
	Fire	80%	88%	Similar	Much lower	Similar
	Ambulance/EMS	81%	80%	Similar	Lower	Similar
	Crime prevention	40%	42%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
	Fire prevention	66%	66%	Similar	Much lower	Similar
	Animal control	36%	35%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
	Emergency preparedness	52%	48%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Mobility	Traffic enforcement	48%	52%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
	Street repair	17%	10%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower
	Street cleaning	43%	41%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
	Street lighting	48%	49%	Similar	Much lower	Similar
	Snow removal	44%	58%	Higher	Much lower	Similar
	Sidewalk maintenance	34%	34%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
	Traffic signal timing	34%	38%	Similar	Much lower	Similar
	Bus or transit services	NA	11%	NA	NA	Much lower
Natural Environment	Garbage collection	73%	82%	Higher	Lower	Similar
	Recycling	73%	76%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Yard waste pick-up	55%	69%	Higher	Much lower	Similar
	Drinking water	87%	94%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher
	Natural areas preservation	41%	35%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
Built Environment	Open space	NA	35%	NA	NA	Lower
	Storm drainage	50%	64%	Higher	Lower	Similar
	Sewer services	65%	77%	Higher	Lower	Similar
	Power utility	59%	78%	Higher	Much lower	Similar
	Utility billing	NA	68%	NA	NA	Similar
	Land use, planning and zoning	27%	28%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
	Code enforcement	16%	16%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower
Economy	Cable television	53%	53%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Economic development	16%	36%	Higher	Much lower	Similar
Recreation and Wellness	City parks	59%	61%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
	Recreation programs	46%	54%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
	Recreation centers	43%	38%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower
	Health services	42%	55%	Higher	Much lower	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Special events	NA	63%	NA	NA	Similar
	Public libraries	77%	89%	Higher	Lower	Similar
Community Engagement	Public information	52%	52%	Similar	Much lower	Lower

Table 5: Participation General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)		2015 rating compared to 2011	Comparison to benchmark	
	2011	2015		2011	2015
Sense of community	37%	32%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower
Recommend Hamilton	57%	59%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower
Remain in Hamilton	74%	83%	Higher	Much lower	Similar
Contacted Hamilton employees	51%	53%	Similar	Similar	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 2011	Comparison to benchmark	
		2011	2015		2011	2015
Safety	Stocked supplies for an emergency	NA	29%	NA	NA	Similar
	Did NOT report a crime	NA	77%	NA	NA	Similar
	Was NOT the victim of a crime	77%	82%	Similar	Much lower	Similar
Mobility	Used public transportation instead of driving	NA	7%	NA	NA	Much lower
	Carpooled instead of driving alone	NA	43%	NA	NA	Similar
	Walked or biked instead of driving	NA	47%	NA	NA	Similar
Natural Environment	Conserved water	NA	69%	NA	NA	Lower
	Made home more energy efficient	NA	76%	NA	NA	Similar
	Recycled at home	73%	82%	Higher	Much lower	Similar
Built Environment	Did NOT observe a code violation	NA	34%	NA	NA	Lower
	NOT under housing cost stress	65%	68%	Similar	Similar	Similar
Economy	Purchased goods or services in Hamilton	NA	96%	NA	NA	Similar
	Economy will have positive impact on income	14%	19%	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Work in Hamilton	NA	31%	NA	NA	Lower
Recreation and Wellness	Used Hamilton recreation centers	33%	48%	Higher	Much lower	Similar
	Visited a City park	74%	69%	Similar	Much lower	Lower
	Ate 5 portions of fruits and vegetables	NA	76%	NA	NA	Similar
	Participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity	NA	69%	NA	NA	Lower
	In very good to excellent health	NA	39%	NA	NA	Lower
Education and Enrichment	Used Hamilton public libraries	58%	61%	Similar	Much lower	Similar
	Participated in religious or spiritual activities	NA	45%	NA	NA	Similar
	Attended a City-sponsored event	NA	56%	NA	NA	Similar
Community Engagement	Campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate	NA	19%	NA	NA	Similar
	Contacted Hamilton elected officials	NA	21%	NA	NA	Similar
	Volunteered	33%	34%	Similar	Much lower	Similar
	Participated in a club	23%	28%	Similar	Much lower	Similar
	Talked to or visited with neighbors	NA	89%	NA	NA	Similar
	Done a favor for a neighbor	NA	88%	NA	NA	Similar
	Attended a local public meeting	16%	15%	Similar	Much lower	Similar
	Watched a local public meeting	NA	17%	NA	NA	Lower
	Read or watched local news	NA	85%	NA	NA	Similar
	Voted in local elections	65%	76%	Higher	Much lower	Similar