



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

# Issaquah, WA

Trends over Time

2019



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# Summary

The National Community 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 2019 ratings for the City of Issaquah to its previous survey results in 2015 and 2017. Additional reports and technical appendices are available under separate cover.

Trend data for Issaquah 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 2017 and 2019 surveys, otherwise the comparisons between 2017 and 2019 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 Issaquah for 2019 generally remained stable. Of the 134 items for which comparisons were available, 113 items were rated similarly in 2017 and 2019, 19 items showed a decrease in ratings and two showed an increase in ratings. Notable trends over time included the following:

- Ratings for several aspects of Community Engagement declined from 2017 to 2019. These included opportunities to participate in community matters and to volunteer, openness and acceptance of the community toward people of diverse backgrounds and the job Issaquah government does at treating all residents fairly. Survey respondents were also less likely in 2019 than in 2017 to have campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate or to have read or watched local news.
- Residents gave lower ratings in 2019 than in 2017 to five aspects of Built Environment: overall quality of new development in Issaquah, power utility, utility billing and cable television. However, residents in 2019 were less likely to be under housing cost stress than in 2017.
- In the facet of Economy, lower scores were given in 2019 to employment opportunities and economic development; further, residents were less likely in 2019 to have a positive economic outlook on the future.
- Other ratings that declined since the previous survey iteration included health and wellness opportunities, adult educational opportunities, emergency preparedness and traffic signal timing, among others. However, residents in 2019 gave higher marks to natural areas preservation than in 2017.

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Table 1: Community Characteristics General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark		
	2014	2017	2019		2014	2017	2019
Overall quality of life	91%	90%	90%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Overall image	87%	83%	85%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
Place to live	95%	92%	93%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Neighborhood	92%	89%	89%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Place to raise children	92%	90%	93%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Higher
Place to retire	68%	63%	62%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Overall appearance	90%	86%	89%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Higher

Table 2: Community Characteristics by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)			2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark		
		2014	2017	2019		2014	2017	2019
Safety	Overall feeling of safety	91%	90%	91%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Safe in neighborhood	98%	96%	98%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Safe downtown/commercial area	94%	94%	96%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Overall ease of travel	61%	56%	56%	Similar	Similar	Lower	Lower
	Paths and walking trails	80%	80%	83%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Higher
	Ease of walking	72%	72%	73%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Travel by bicycle	59%	52%	51%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Travel by public transportation	49%	42%	39%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Travel by car	50%	39%	42%	Similar	Similar	Lower	Lower
	Public parking	49%	44%	49%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Traffic flow	24%	18%	19%	Similar	Lower	Much lower	Lower
Natural Environment	Overall natural environment	86%	89%	89%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Higher
	Cleanliness	90%	90%	88%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar
	Air quality	94%	92%	89%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Higher
Built Environment	Overall built environment	68%	58%	61%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	New development in Issaquah	64%	47%	42%	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Affordable quality housing	34%	20%	16%	Similar	Similar	Lower	Lower
	Housing options	55%	44%	44%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Public places	77%	75%	75%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Economy	Overall economic health	79%	84%	82%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Higher
	Vibrant downtown/commercial area	55%	61%	60%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Business and services	80%	74%	71%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Cost of living	32%	21%	17%	Similar	Similar	Lower	Lower
	Shopping opportunities	71%	70%	66%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)			2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark		
		2014	2017	2019		2014	2017	2019
	Employment opportunities	42%	44%	38%	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Place to visit	72%	67%	71%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Place to work	70%	63%	63%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Recreation and Wellness	Health and wellness	79%	88%	82%	Lower	Similar	Higher	Similar
	Mental health care	68%	60%	58%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Preventive health services	79%	82%	80%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Higher
	Health care	75%	80%	77%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Higher
	Food	73%	73%	72%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recreational opportunities	74%	79%	80%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Higher
	Fitness opportunities	82%	80%	80%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Education and enrichment opportunities	73%	78%	75%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Religious or spiritual events and activities	72%	74%	74%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Cultural/arts/music activities	64%	64%	65%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Adult education	47%	46%	37%	Lower	Similar	Lower	Lower
	K-12 education	86%	90%	87%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Higher
Community Engagement	Child care/preschool	57%	46%	46%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Social events and activities	63%	64%	60%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Neighborhoodness	60%	64%	60%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Openness and acceptance	72%	75%	64%	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Opportunities to participate in community matters	69%	67%	60%	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Opportunities to volunteer	78%	74%	67%	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar

Table 3: Governance General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark		
	2014	2017	2019		2014	2017	2019
Services provided by Issaquah	84%	81%	84%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Customer service	84%	83%	77%	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
Value of services for taxes paid	63%	55%	54%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Overall direction	64%	48%	48%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Welcoming resident involvement	58%	55%	52%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Confidence in City government	64%	52%	52%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Acting in the best interest of Issaquah	63%	54%	57%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Being honest	71%	60%	63%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Treating all residents fairly	73%	67%	62%	Lower	Higher	Similar	Similar
Services provided by the Federal Government	44%	37%	39%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar

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Table 4: Governance by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark		
		2014	2017	2019		2014	2017	2019
Safety	Police	85%	90%	90%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Fire	97%	97%	97%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Ambulance/EMS	95%	96%	96%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Crime prevention	74%	72%	67%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Fire prevention	82%	82%	81%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Animal control	74%	74%	71%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Emergency preparedness	60%	65%	51%	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Traffic enforcement	69%	60%	55%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Street repair	70%	55%	55%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Street cleaning	74%	72%	75%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Street lighting	64%	70%	71%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Snow removal	71%	67%	59%	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Sidewalk maintenance	68%	65%	64%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Traffic signal timing	54%	52%	47%	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Bus or transit services	63%	66%	63%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Higher
Natural Environment	Garbage collection	86%	89%	84%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recycling	88%	88%	84%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Yard waste pick-up	88%	90%	87%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar
	Drinking water	82%	81%	82%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Higher
	Natural areas preservation	64%	59%	66%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Built Environment	Open space	68%	60%	62%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Storm drainage	80%	78%	81%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Higher
	Sewer services	88%	91%	86%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Power utility	82%	84%	76%	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Utility billing	68%	75%	67%	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Land use, planning and zoning	47%	34%	35%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Code enforcement	56%	57%	54%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Economy	Cable television	57%	63%	57%	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Economic development	71%	63%	58%	Lower	Higher	Similar	Similar
Recreation and Wellness	City parks	86%	89%	90%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recreation programs	75%	78%	74%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recreation centers	69%	74%	76%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Health services	84%	86%	85%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Higher
Education and Enrichment	Special events	82%	73%	75%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Public libraries	90%	94%	92%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Public information	77%	75%	71%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar

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Table 5: Participation General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)			2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark		
	2014	2017	2019		2014	2017	2019
Sense of community	64%	64%	60%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Recommend Issaquah	94%	90%	92%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Remain in Issaquah	90%	82%	85%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Contacted Issaquah employees	31%	34%	34%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower

Table 6: Participation by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)			2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark		
		2014	2017	2019		2014	2017	2019
Safety	Stocked supplies for an emergency	51%	49%	53%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Higher
	Did NOT report a crime	83%	81%	81%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Was NOT the victim of a crime	91%	88%	86%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Used public transportation instead of driving	48%	51%	48%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Much higher
	Carpooled instead of driving alone	60%	61%	57%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Higher
	Walked or biked instead of driving	60%	61%	62%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Natural Environment	Conserved water	85%	80%	79%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Made home more energy efficient	82%	76%	73%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recycled at home	95%	97%	98%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Higher
Built Environment	Did NOT observe a code violation	74%	74%	70%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Higher
	NOT under housing cost stress	70%	56%	71%	Higher	Similar	Lower	Similar
Economy	Purchased goods or services in Issaquah	99%	98%	98%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Economy will have positive impact on income	41%	36%	31%	Lower	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Work in Issaquah	33%	34%	33%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Recreation and Wellness	Used Issaquah recreation centers	51%	56%	55%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Visited a City park	86%	90%	90%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Ate 5 portions of fruits and vegetables	89%	90%	87%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity	85%	90%	86%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	In very good to excellent health	67%	71%	70%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Used Issaquah public libraries	66%	71%	66%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Participated in religious or spiritual activities	28%	26%	26%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Attended a City-sponsored event	55%	54%	55%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)			2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark		
		2014	2017	2019		2014	2017	2019
Community Engagement	Campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate	18%	27%	19%	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Contacted Issaquah elected officials	13%	16%	15%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Volunteered	38%	37%	34%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Participated in a club	19%	23%	20%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Talked to or visited with neighbors	85%	89%	87%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Done a favor for a neighbor	69%	79%	74%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Attended a local public meeting	15%	25%	23%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Watched a local public meeting	14%	22%	18%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Read or watched local news	80%	79%	73%	Lower	Similar	Similar	Lower
	Voted in local elections	82%	84%	84%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar