



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

## Las Cruces, NM

Trends over Time

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 Las Cruces to its previous survey results in 2012 and 2015. Additional reports and technical appendices are available under separate cover.

Trend data for Las Cruces 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 2015 and 2017 surveys, otherwise the comparison between 2015 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 Las Cruces for 2017 generally remained stable. Of the 131 items for which comparisons were available, 115 items were rated similarly in 2015 and 2017, 11 items showed a decrease in ratings and 5 showed an increase in ratings. Notable trends over time included the following:

- Within the pillar of Community Characteristics, most aspects remained stable over time; however, a few aspects saw a change in rating. Items trending down were the quality of business and service establishments and K-12 education. Items trending up were the ease of walking in the City, overall natural environment, Las Cruces as a place to visit and the cost of living.
- Eight aspects of Governance decreased from 2015 to 2017. Ratings that declined included: fire services; ambulance/EMS services; emergency preparedness; street cleaning; storm drainage; land use, planning and zoning; code enforcement and economic development. All other Governance ratings remained stable between the survey iterations.
- For Participation, most aspects remained stable over time, however, one aspect increased and one decreased in 2017 compared to 2015. Fewer residents in 2017 than 2015 indicated they contacted Las Cruces employees and more indicated they had attended a City-sponsored event in the 12 months prior to the survey.

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Table 1: Community Characteristics General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark		
	2012	2015	2017		2012	2015	2017
Overall quality of life	67%	69%	73%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar
Overall image	56%	55%	58%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
Place to live	75%	73%	79%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar
Neighborhood	71%	76%	73%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar
Place to raise children	58%	64%	62%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Lower
Place to retire	70%	78%	82%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Higher
Overall appearance	45%	61%	60%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar

Table 2: Community Characteristics by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)			2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark		
		2012	2015	2017		2012	2015	2017
Safety	Overall feeling of safety	NA	64%	70%	Similar	NA	Lower	Similar
	Safe in neighborhood	87%	85%	89%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Safe downtown/commercial area	78%	81%	86%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Overall ease of travel	NA	69%	70%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	Paths and walking trails	49%	57%	54%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar
	Ease of walking	47%	49%	60%	Higher	Much lower	Lower	Similar
	Travel by bicycle	35%	38%	40%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Similar
	Travel by public transportation	NA	36%	35%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	Travel by car	56%	63%	68%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Public parking	NA	51%	56%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	Traffic flow	29%	40%	41%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar
	Overall natural environment	62%	67%	75%	Higher	Lower	Similar	Similar
Natural Environment	Cleanliness	47%	55%	53%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Lower
	Air quality	64%	75%	73%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Built Environment	Overall built environment	NA	42%	46%	Similar	NA	Lower	Lower
	New development in Las Cruces	56%	41%	38%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Lower
	Affordable quality housing	41%	46%	45%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Housing options	53%	56%	48%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Public places	NA	44%	48%	Similar	NA	Lower	Lower
Economy	Overall economic health	NA	37%	31%	Similar	NA	Lower	Much

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)			2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark		
		2012	2015	2017		2012	2015	2017
								lower
	Vibrant downtown/commercial area	NA	31%	28%	Similar	NA	Lower	Lower
	Business and services	47%	55%	44%	Lower	Much lower	Similar	Lower
	Cost of living	NA	48%	56%	Higher	NA	Similar	Similar
	Shopping opportunities	42%	40%	41%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Lower
	Employment opportunities	21%	21%	17%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Lower
	Place to visit	NA	54%	64%	Higher	NA	Similar	Similar
	Place to work	34%	36%	41%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Lower
	Health and wellness	NA	53%	53%	Similar	NA	Lower	Lower
	Mental health care	NA	33%	28%	Similar	NA	Lower	Lower
	Preventive health services	41%	53%	46%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Lower
	Health care	41%	46%	39%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Lower
Recreation and Wellness	Recreational opportunities	41%	53%	52%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar
	Fitness opportunities	NA	64%	63%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	Cultural/arts/music activities	43%	50%	50%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar
	Adult education	NA	65%	59%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
Education and Enrichment	K-12 education	47%	47%	38%	Lower	Much lower	Lower	Much lower
	Child care/preschool	35%	48%	42%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Social events and activities	46%	48%	45%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Lower
	Neighborliness	NA	52%	52%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	Openness and acceptance	68%	58%	55%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Opportunities to participate in community matters	49%	51%	56%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Opportunities to volunteer	66%	68%	64%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar

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Table 3: Governance General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark		
	2012	2015	2017		2012	2015	2017
Services provided by Las Cruces	60%	59%	64%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar
Customer service	70%	55%	58%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Similar
Value of services for taxes paid	49%	42%	40%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Overall direction	49%	48%	47%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Welcoming citizen involvement	33%	41%	35%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar
Confidence in City government	NA	36%	36%	Similar	NA	Lower	Similar
Acting in the best interest of Las Cruces	NA	42%	42%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
Being honest	NA	40%	38%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
Treating all residents fairly	NA	38%	43%	Similar	NA	Lower	Similar
Services provided by the Federal Government	51%	42%	45%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar

Table 4: Governance by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark		
		2012	2015	2017		2012	2015	2017
Safety	Police	67%	64%	61%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Lower
	Fire	89%	88%	79%	Lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Ambulance/EMS	77%	82%	72%	Lower	Much lower	Similar	Lower
	Crime prevention	48%	47%	46%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Lower
	Fire prevention	61%	67%	60%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Lower
	Animal control	49%	52%	47%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Lower
	Emergency preparedness	42%	46%	35%	Lower	Much lower	Similar	Lower
Mobility	Traffic enforcement	41%	46%	43%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Lower
	Street repair	30%	26%	24%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Lower
	Street cleaning	43%	51%	43%	Lower	Much lower	Similar	Lower
	Street lighting	45%	50%	48%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar
	Snow removal	34%	47%	45%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Lower
	Sidewalk maintenance	40%	39%	37%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar
	Traffic signal timing	29%	33%	34%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Lower
Natural Environment	Bus or transit services	37%	40%	41%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar
	Garbage collection	80%	79%	83%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recycling	71%	72%	74%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Yard waste pick-up	67%	67%	59%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Drinking water	43%	52%	52%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Lower
	Natural areas preservation	45%	54%	47%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar
	Open space	NA	51%	54%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
Built Environment	Storm drainage	42%	48%	32%	Lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower
	Sewer services	64%	68%	66%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark		
		2012	2015	2017		2012	2015	2017
	Power utility	65%	66%	63%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar
	Utility billing	NA	59%	56%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	Land use, planning and zoning	35%	36%	25%	Lower	Much lower	Similar	Lower
	Code enforcement	27%	39%	29%	Lower	Much lower	Similar	Lower
	Cable television	37%	38%	40%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Lower
Economy	Economic development	35%	39%	28%	Lower	Much lower	Similar	Lower
Recreation and Wellness	City parks	70%	63%	60%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Lower
	Recreation programs	56%	55%	48%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Lower
	Recreation centers	55%	50%	45%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Lower
	Health services	53%	52%	47%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Lower
Education and Enrichment	Special events	NA	52%	49%	Similar	NA	Lower	Lower
Community Engagement	Public libraries	70%	63%	64%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Lower
	Public information	52%	50%	46%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar

Table 5: Participation General

		Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)			2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark		
		2012	2015	2017		2012	2015	2017
	Sense of community	54%	46%	51%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Similar
	Recommend Las Cruces	79%	74%	78%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Similar
	Remain in Las Cruces	77%	75%	79%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar
	Contacted Las Cruces employees	52%	53%	44%	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar

Table 6: Participation by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)			2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark		
		2012	2015	2017		2012	2015	2017
Safety	Stocked supplies for an emergency	NA	32%	35%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	Did NOT report a crime	NA	71%	73%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	Was NOT the victim of a crime	90%	79%	85%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Used public transportation instead of driving	NA	14%	10%	Similar	NA	Lower	Lower
	Carpooled instead of driving alone	NA	42%	44%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	Walked or biked instead of driving	NA	45%	46%	Similar	NA	Lower	Lower
Natural Environment	Conserved water	NA	91%	90%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	Made home more energy efficient	NA	81%	77%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	Recycled at home	90%	88%	94%	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Built Environment	Did NOT observe a code violation	NA	39%	33%	Similar	NA	Lower	Much lower

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)			2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark		
		2012	2015	2017		2012	2015	2017
Economy	NOT under housing cost stress	66%	68%	67%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Purchased goods or services in Las Cruces	NA	93%	98%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	Economy will have positive impact on income	19%	27%	22%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Work in Las Cruces	NA	55%	58%	Similar	NA	Higher	Higher
Recreation and Wellness	Used Las Cruces recreation centers	56%	52%	59%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Visited a City park	89%	79%	83%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Ate 5 portions of fruits and vegetables	NA	80%	81%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	Participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity	NA	84%	81%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
Education and Enrichment	In very good to excellent health	NA	54%	55%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	Used Las Cruces public libraries	67%	50%	57%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Similar
	Attended a City-sponsored event	NA	50%	59%	Higher	NA	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate	NA	23%	28%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	Contacted Las Cruces elected officials	NA	21%	23%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	Volunteered	54%	41%	42%	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Participated in a club	42%	34%	29%	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Talked to or visited with neighbors	NA	90%	86%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	Done a favor for a neighbor	NA	77%	76%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	Attended a local public meeting	29%	17%	18%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Watched a local public meeting	46%	26%	30%	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Read or watched local news	NA	82%	86%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	Voted in local elections	76%	78%	80%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar