

THE NCSTM
The National Citizen SurveyTM

Erie, CO

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 Town of Erie to its previous survey results in 2013 and 2015. Additional reports and technical appendices are available under separate cover.

Trend data for Erie 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 four 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 Erie for 2017 generally remained stable. Of the 124 items for which comparisons were available, 76 items were rated similarly in 2015 and 2017, 33 items showed an increase in ratings and 15 showed a decrease in ratings. Notable trends over time included the following:

- The pillar of Community Characteristics included 18 increases, 20 stable ratings and eight declines over the 2015 results.
 - The overall image or reputation of Erie continued to trend up in 2017, as it did in 2015.
 - Half the aspects of Mobility remained stable while the other half trended down from 2015 to 2017 (traffic flow, ease of travel by car, travel by public transportation and public parking).
 - All but one aspect of Economy increased from 2015 to 2017. Ratings improved for the overall economic health of Erie, shopping opportunities, employment opportunities, Erie as a place to visit, the vibrant downtown, Erie as a place to work and the overall quality of businesses and services in Erie. However, ratings for the cost of living in Erie decreased during this same time period.
 - Several aspects of Community Engagement and Education and Enrichment also showed improvement in 2017 compared to 2015. Erie residents gave higher marks to: K-12 education, cultural/arts/music activities, education and enrichment opportunities, opportunities to participate in community matters, opportunities to volunteer, openness and acceptance and social events and activities.
- Within the pillar of Governance, five aspects were trending down from 2015 to 2017 and 12 showed improvement during that time period, while the remaining 27 were stable.
 - There were improvements in General aspects of Governance, including; the overall quality of services provided by Erie, customer service, confidence in Town government, acting in the best interest of Erie, being honest and treating all residents fairly. Erie residents also gave higher marks to economic development, special events and public information services.
 - Ratings decreased from 2015 to 2017 for traffic signal timing, recycling, yard waste pick-up, natural areas preservation and utility billing.
- Almost all aspects of Participation remained stable from 2015 to 2017 (29 were stable, three increased and three declined). More respondents in 2017 than in 2015 indicated that they had purchased good or services in Erie attended a Town-sponsored event and felt more positively about the overall sense of community in Erie, while fewer Erie residents reported that they had watched a local public meeting or contacted Erie employees in 2017 compared to 2015.

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Table 1: Community Characteristics General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark		
	2013	2015	2017		2013	2015	2017
Overall quality of life	85%	86%	88%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Overall image	54%	63%	74%	Higher	Much lower	Similar	Similar
Place to live	89%	90%	92%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Neighborhood	91%	92%	94%	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Place to raise children	93%	93%	94%	Similar	Much higher	Higher	Higher
Place to retire	60%	65%	64%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
Overall appearance	59%	73%	76%	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			
		2013	2015	2017		2013	2015	2017	
Safety	Overall feeling of safety	NA	94%	94%	Similar	NA	Higher	Higher	
	Safe in neighborhood	98%	97%	97%	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Similar	
	Safe downtown/commercial area	92%	91%	95%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar	
Mobility	Overall ease of travel	NA	78%	76%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar	
	Paths and walking trails	74%	80%	81%	Similar	Much higher	Higher	Higher	
	Ease of walking	70%	77%	79%	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Higher	
	Travel by bicycle	68%	72%	74%	Similar	Much higher	Higher	Higher	
	Travel by public transportation	NA	28%	23%	Lower	NA	Lower	Lower	
	Travel by car	81%	85%	80%	Lower	Much higher	Higher	Higher	
	Public parking	NA	77%	71%	Lower	NA	Higher	Higher	
	Traffic flow	78%	74%	68%	Lower	Much higher	Higher	Higher	
	Natural Environment	Overall natural environment	61%	73%	69%	Lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar
Cleanliness		70%	82%	84%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	
Air quality		62%	78%	76%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar	
Built Environment	Overall built environment	NA	54%	54%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar	
	New development in Erie	67%	47%	53%	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar	
	Affordable quality housing	59%	48%	33%	Lower	Much higher	Similar	Similar	
	Housing options	61%	61%	52%	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	
	Overall economic health	NA	54%	59%	Higher	NA	Similar	Similar	
Economy	Vibrant downtown/commercial area	NA	16%	34%	Higher	NA	Much lower	Similar	
	Business and services	20%	28%	42%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	
	Cost of living	NA	39%	35%	Lower	NA	Similar	Similar	
	Shopping opportunities	3%	6%	13%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	
	Employment opportunities	5%	7%	11%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	
	Place to visit	NA	33%	40%	Higher	NA	Much lower	Lower	
	Place to work	22%	25%	31%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	
	Recreation and	Health and wellness	NA	67%	67%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)			2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark		
		2013	2015	2017		2013	2015	2017
Wellness	Health care	34%	37%	42%	Higher	Much lower	Lower	Lower
	Food	15%	24%	42%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Recreational opportunities	71%	77%	75%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Cultural/arts/music activities	21%	33%	38%	Higher	Much lower	Lower	Lower
	K-12 education	79%	76%	80%	Higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Child care/preschool	39%	56%	54%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Social events and activities	51%	52%	62%	Higher	Much lower	Similar	Similar
	Neighborliness	NA	71%	72%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	Openness and acceptance	NA	63%	67%	Higher	NA	Similar	Similar
	Opportunities to participate in community matters	59%	54%	60%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Opportunities to volunteer	53%	48%	59%	Higher	Much lower	Lower	Similar

Table 3: Governance General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark		
	2013	2015	2017		2013	2015	2017
Services provided by Erie	76%	74%	79%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Customer service	88%	77%	82%	Higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Value of services for taxes paid	57%	51%	53%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Overall direction	50%	45%	49%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
Welcoming citizen involvement	48%	52%	58%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Confidence in Town government	NA	41%	51%	Higher	NA	Similar	Similar
Acting in the best interest of Erie	NA	46%	52%	Higher	NA	Similar	Similar
Being honest	NA	51%	58%	Higher	NA	Similar	Similar
Treating all residents fairly	NA	58%	65%	Higher	NA	Similar	Similar
Services provided by the Federal Government	37%	35%	39%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar

Table 4: Governance by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark		
		2013	2015	2017		2013	2015	2017
Safety	Police	84%	84%	86%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Fire	95%	92%	95%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Ambulance/EMS	91%	89%	92%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Crime prevention	79%	83%	83%	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Fire prevention	77%	80%	83%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Animal control	56%	61%	63%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Emergency preparedness	51%	52%	56%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Traffic enforcement	65%	70%	67%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Street repair	56%	50%	51%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Street cleaning	65%	62%	66%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Street lighting	63%	63%	64%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Snow removal	52%	54%	51%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar
	Sidewalk maintenance	60%	59%	59%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Traffic signal timing	64%	60%	52%	Lower	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Natural Environment	Bus or transit services	40%	34%	33%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Lower
	Garbage collection	87%	83%	82%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recycling	88%	79%	75%	Lower	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Yard waste pick-up	52%	52%	46%	Lower	Much lower	Lower	Much lower

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			2017 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark		
		2013	2015	2017		2013	2015	2017
	Drinking water	69%	79%	79%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Natural areas preservation	57%	55%	51%	Lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
Built Environment	Storm drainage	79%	68%	74%	Higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Sewer services	85%	84%	83%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Power utility	85%	80%	80%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Utility billing	NA	74%	69%	Lower	NA	Similar	Similar
	Land use, planning and zoning	38%	35%	37%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar
	Code enforcement	39%	42%	46%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar
	Cable television	67%	NA	NA	NA	Much higher	NA	NA
	Economic development	28%	29%	40%	Higher	Much lower	Lower	Similar
Recreation and Wellness	Town parks	86%	84%	85%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recreation programs	89%	83%	84%	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Higher
	Recreation centers	88%	89%	87%	Similar	Much higher	Higher	Higher
	Health services	40%	42%	45%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Lower
Education and Enrichment	Special events	NA	73%	79%	Higher	NA	Similar	Similar
	Public libraries	94%	89%	92%	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Public information	69%	66%	75%	Higher	Similar	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		
	2013	2015	2017		2013	2015	2017
Sense of community	67%	64%	70%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Recommend Erie	90%	88%	90%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
Remain in Erie	88%	87%	90%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
Contacted Erie employees	52%	53%	48%	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		
		2013	2015	2017		2013	2015	2017
Safety	Stocked supplies for an emergency	NA	28%	24%	Similar	NA	Similar	Lower
	Did NOT report a crime	NA	88%	87%	Similar	NA	Higher	Higher
	Was NOT the victim of a crime	96%	94%	93%	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Used public transportation instead of driving	NA	11%	13%	Similar	NA	Lower	Lower
	Carpooled instead of driving alone	NA	40%	43%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	Walked or biked instead of driving	NA	64%	67%	Similar	NA	Similar	Higher
Natural Environment	Conserved water	NA	88%	87%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	Recycled at home	96%	96%	97%	Similar	Much higher	Higher	Higher
Built Environment	NOT under housing cost stress	73%	77%	75%	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Purchased goods or services in Erie	NA	82%	90%	Higher	NA	Lower	Similar
Economy	Economy will have positive impact on income	30%	39%	42%	Similar	Much higher	Higher	Higher
	Work in Erie	NA	27%	30%	Similar	NA	Lower	Lower
Recreation and Wellness	Used Erie recreation centers	82%	76%	75%	Similar	Much higher	Higher	Higher
	Visited a Town park	91%	89%	89%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Ate 5 portions of fruits and vegetables	NA	88%	88%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	Participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity	NA	94%	92%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	In very good to excellent health	NA	80%	78%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
Education and	Used Erie public libraries	77%	70%	73%	Similar	Much	Similar	Higher

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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		
		2013	2015	2017		2013	2015	2017
Enrichment						higher		
	Participated in religious or spiritual activities	21%	22%	21%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
	Attended a Town-sponsored event	NA	67%	73%	Higher	NA	Higher	Higher
	Campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate	NA	23%	25%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	Contacted Erie elected officials	NA	19%	17%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	Volunteered	28%	27%	27%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Lower
	Participated in a club	16%	18%	18%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Similar
	Talked to or visited with neighbors	NA	97%	97%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	Done a favor for a neighbor	NA	86%	87%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
	Attended a local public meeting	24%	25%	22%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Watched a local public meeting	26%	19%	14%	Lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower
	Read or watched local news	NA	86%	84%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Voted in local elections	94%	91%	93%	Similar	Much higher	Higher	Higher