THE NCS™
The National Community Survey™

Grand Rapids, MI
Comparisons by Geographic Subgroups

DRAFT
2019
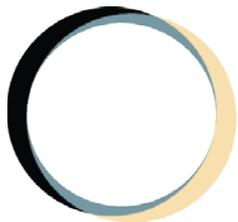
NRC
National Research Center Inc

ICMA
Leaders at the Core of Better Communities

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. Communities conducting The NCS can choose from a number of optional services to customize the reporting of survey results. Grand Rapids' Comparisons by Geographic Subgroups is part of a larger project for the City and additional reports are available under separate cover. This report discusses differences in opinion of survey respondents by Ward.

Three Wards were tracked for comparison and the number of completed surveys for each are in the figure below.

Figure 1: Geographic Areas

Ward	Number of Completed Surveys
Ward 1	116
Ward 2	161
Ward 3	121

Understanding the Tables

For most of the questions, one number appears for each question. Responses have been summarized to show only the proportion of respondents giving a certain answer; for example, the percent of respondents who rated the quality of life as "excellent" or "good," or the percent of respondents who participated in an activity at least once. It should be noted that when a table that does include all responses (not a single number) for a question that only permitted a single response does not total to exactly 100%, it is due to the common practice of percentages being rounded to the nearest whole number.

The subgroup comparison tables contain the crosstabulations of survey questions by Ward. Chi-square or ANOVA tests of significance were applied to these breakdowns of survey questions. A "p-value" of 0.05 or less indicates that there is less than a 5% probability that differences observed between groups are due to chance; or in other words, a greater than 95% probability that the differences observed in the selected categories of the sample represent "real" differences among those populations. As subgroups vary in size and each group (and each comparison to another group) has a unique margin of error, statistical testing is used to determine whether differences between subgroups are statistically significant. Statistical testing was not performed on multiple response questions.

Each column in the following tables is labeled with a letter for each subgroup being compared. The "Overall" column, which shows the ratings for all respondents, also has a column designation of "(A)", but no statistical tests were done for the overall rating.

For each pair of subgroup ratings within a row (a single question item) that has a statistically significant difference, an upper case letter denoting significance is shown in the cell with the larger column proportion. The letter denotes the subgroup with the smaller column proportion from which it is statistically different. Subgroups that have no upper case letter denotation in their column and that are also not referred to in any other column were not statistically different.

For example, in Table 1 below, respondents in Ward 1 (A) gave significantly lower ratings to overall quality of life, their neighborhoods as places to live, and the overall appearance of Grand Rapids than respondents in Ward 2 (B), as denoted by the "A" listed in the cell of the ratings for Ward 2. The Grand Rapids as a place to raise children rating in Wards 1 (A) and 3 (C) were also significantly lower than that of Ward 2 (B) (as indicated by the "A C" in the rating for Ward 2).

Table 1: Community Characteristics - General

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
The overall quality of life in Grand Rapids	70%	84% A	78%	78%
Overall image or reputation of Grand Rapids	73%	81%	76%	77%
Grand Rapids as a place to live	85%	90%	86%	87%
Your neighborhood as a place to live	65%	79% A	70%	71%
Grand Rapids as a place to raise children	70%	85% A C	71%	75%
Grand Rapids as a place to retire	61%	58%	55%	58%
Overall appearance of Grand Rapids	73%	83% A	77%	78%

Table 2: Community Characteristics - Safety

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Overall feeling of safety in Grand Rapids	52%	70% A	65% A	63%
In your neighborhood during the day	90%	91%	88%	90%
In Grand Rapids' downtown area during the day	88%	87%	81%	85%
In your neighborhood at night	68%	75%	71%	72%
In Grand Rapids' downtown area at night	56%	55%	57%	56%

Table 3: Community Characteristics - Mobility

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Overall ease of getting to the places you usually have to visit	64%	58%	65%	62%
Traffic flow on major streets	43% B	27%	46% B	38%
Ease of public parking	32%	25%	37% B	31%
Ease of travel by car in Grand Rapids	48%	51%	63% A	54%
Ease of travel by public transportation in Grand Rapids	60% B C	36%	39%	45%
Ease of travel by bicycle in Grand Rapids	62%	54%	54%	57%
Ease of walking in Grand Rapids	69%	74%	71%	72%
Availability of paths and walking trails	61%	60%	63%	61%
Availability of alternative transportation options	60% B	40%	48%	49%
Availability of downtown parking	30%	21%	36% B	28%

Table 4: Community Characteristics - Natural Environment

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Quality of overall natural environment in Grand Rapids	72% C	68%	58%	66%
Air quality	73%	74%	72%	73%
Cleanliness of Grand Rapids	55%	68% A	60%	61%

Table 5: Community Characteristics - Built Environment

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Overall "built environment" of Grand Rapids (including overall design, buildings, parks and transportation systems)	65% B	52%	66% B	60%
Public places where people want to spend time	72%	74%	65%	71%
Variety of housing options	38%	49%	50%	46%
Availability of affordable quality housing	28%	29%	27%	28%
Overall quality of new development in Grand Rapids	76%	70%	75%	74%

Table 6: Community Characteristics - Economy

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Overall economic health of Grand Rapids	58%	74% A	67%	66%
Grand Rapids as a place to work	78%	82%	73%	78%
Grand Rapids as a place to visit	83%	87%	83%	84%
Employment opportunities	70%	77%	66%	71%
Shopping opportunities	82%	78%	75%	78%
Cost of living in Grand Rapids	50%	47%	51%	49%
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Grand Rapids	68%	81% A	75%	75%
Vibrant downtown area	77%	68%	76%	73%
Grand Rapids as a place to start, own or operate a business	60%	79% A C	52%	64%

Table 7: Community Characteristics - Recreation and Wellness

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Health and wellness opportunities in Grand Rapids	72%	80%	72%	75%
Fitness opportunities (including exercise classes and paths or trails, etc.)	71%	73%	68%	71%
Recreational opportunities	69%	75%	65%	70%
Availability of affordable quality food	71%	70%	64%	68%
Availability of affordable quality health care	63%	67%	63%	64%
Availability of preventive health services	67%	71%	60%	66%
Availability of affordable quality mental health care	50%	48%	44%	47%

Table 8: Community Characteristics - Education and Enrichment

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Overall opportunities for education and enrichment	72%	66%	76%	71%
Availability of affordable quality child care/preschool	55%	44%	38%	46%
K-12 education	46%	53%	43%	47%
Adult educational opportunities	60%	62%	51%	58%
Opportunities to attend cultural/arts/music activities	72%	85% A	80%	79%
Opportunities to participate in religious or spiritual events and activities	78%	83%	84%	82%

Table 9: Community Characteristics - Community Engagement

	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	74%	73%	77%	74%
Opportunities to volunteer	82%	81%	82%	81%
Opportunities to participate in community matters	65%	68%	64%	65%
Openness and acceptance of the community toward people of diverse backgrounds	52%	45%	40%	46%
Neighborliness of residents in Grand Rapids	45%	57%	54%	52%

Table 10: Governance - General

	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
The City of Grand Rapids	69%	66%	69%	68%
The value of services for the taxes paid to Grand Rapids	34%	53% A	54% A	48%
The overall direction that Grand Rapids is taking	66%	74%	64%	68%
The job Grand Rapids government does at welcoming citizen involvement	53% C	51%	37%	47%
Overall confidence in Grand Rapids government	57%	58%	60%	58%
Generally acting in the best interest of the community	54%	65%	60%	60%
Being honest	51%	62%	50%	54%
Treating all residents fairly	41%	49% C	35%	42%
Overall customer service by Grand Rapids employees (police, receptionists, planners, etc.)	66%	64%	66%	65%
The Federal Government	38%	26%	27%	30%
The State of Michigan	47%	40%	42%	43%
Providing timely, relevant information on City services and activities	47%	55%	54%	52%

Table 11: Governance - Safety

	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Police services	59%	63%	68%	63%
Fire services	93%	90%	89%	91%
Ambulance or emergency medical services	97% B C	86%	80%	89%
Crime prevention	45%	53%	45%	48%
Fire prevention and education	79% C	74%	62%	72%
Animal control	44%	67% A C	41%	50%
Emergency preparedness and response (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations)	73% C	59%	53%	62%

Table 12: Governance - Mobility

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Traffic enforcement	56%	46%	47%	50%
Street repair	19%	23%	16%	19%
Street cleaning	30%	45% A C	25%	34%
Street lighting	39%	52% A	48%	47%
Snow removal	43%	46%	43%	44%
Sidewalk maintenance	39%	51%	39%	43%
Traffic signal timing	48%	40%	56% B	47%
Bus or transit services	67% B	52%	60%	60%

Table 13: Governance - Natural Environment

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Garbage collection	83% C	81%	71%	79%
Recycling	80%	85% C	73%	80%
Yard waste pick-up	58%	79% A C	57%	65%
Drinking water	63%	68%	68%	67%
Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts	49%	43%	57% B	49%

Table 14: Governance - Built Environment

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Storm drainage	54%	59%	56%	56%
Sewer services	63%	78% A	69%	70%
Utility billing	62%	66%	65%	65%
Land use, planning and zoning	51%	49%	42%	47%
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc.)	36%	39%	30%	35%

Table 15: Governance - Economy

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Economic development	65%	65%	62%	64%

Table 16: Governance - Recreation and Wellness

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
City parks	75%	75%	68%	73%
Recreation programs or classes	69%	65%	64%	66%
Recreation centers or facilities	66%	64%	54%	61%
Health services	67%	76% C	60%	68%

Table 17: Governance - Education and Enrichment

	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Public library services	85%	88%	83%	86%
City-sponsored special events	66%	64%	69%	66%

Table 18: Governance - Community Engagement

	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Public information services	75%	66%	69%	69%
Community outreach and engagement	58%	53%	50%	54%

Table 19: Participation General

	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Sense of community	53%	58%	64%	58%
Recommend living in Grand Rapids to someone who asks	86%	93%	89%	89%
Remain in Grand Rapids for the next five years	85%	87%	93%	88%
Contacted the City of Grand Rapids (in-person, phone, email or web) for help or information	55% B	37%	66% B	52%

Table 20: Participation - Safety

	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Was NOT the victim of a crime	84%	78%	85%	82%
Did NOT report a crime	65%	77% A	66%	70%
Stocked supplies in preparation for an emergency	39% B	18%	30% B	28%

Table 21: Participation - Mobility

	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Walked or biked instead of driving	73%	77% C	64%	72%
Carpooled with other adults or children instead of driving alone	52%	57%	47%	52%
Used public transportation instead of driving	49% C	38%	31%	39%

Table 22: Participation - Natural Environment

	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Recycle at home	95%	88%	87%	90%
Made efforts to make your home more energy efficient	82%	74%	79%	78%
Made efforts to conserve water	74%	75%	80%	76%

Table 23: Participation - Built Environment

	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
NOT under housing cost stress	72%	78%	77%	76%
Did NOT observe a code violation	47%	58%	49%	51%

Table 24: Participation - Economy

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Purchase goods or services from a business located in Grand Rapids	96%	99%	96%	97%
Economy will have positive impact on income	31%	25%	28%	28%
Work in Grand Rapids	60%	64%	60%	62%

Table 25: Participation - Recreation and Wellness

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Visited a neighborhood park or City park	91% C	90%	82%	88%
Eat at least 5 portions of fruits and vegetables a day	75%	68%	81% B	75%
Participate in moderate or vigorous physical activity	87% C	80%	73%	80%
Reported being in "very good" or "excellent" health	63%	62%	59%	62%

Table 26: Participation - Education and Enrichment

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Used Grand Rapids public libraries or their services	70%	73%	71%	72%
Attended a City-sponsored event	51%	62%	65% A	59%

Table 27: Participation - Community Engagement

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Campaigned or advocated for an issue, cause or candidate	29%	28%	31%	29%
Contacted Grand Rapids elected officials (in-person, phone, email or web) to express your opinion	15%	20%	27% A	21%
Volunteered your time to some group/activity in Grand Rapids	51%	56%	57%	55%
Talked to or visited with your immediate neighbors	88%	91%	93%	91%
Done a favor for a neighbor	87% B	78%	81%	81%
Attended a local public meeting	18%	24%	26%	23%
Watched (online or on television) a local public meeting	37% B	26%	28%	30%
Read or watch local news (via television, paper, computer, etc.)	78%	73%	74%	75%
Vote in local elections	80%	82%	91% A B	84%
Called 3-1-1 for help or information	32% B	17%	40% B	29%
Used Grand Rapids community centers or their services	39% B C	17%	22%	25%
Participated in a club, neighborhood group or civic organization	47%	47%	41%	45%

Table 28: Community Focus Areas

Percent rating positively (e.g., essential/very important)	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Overall feeling of safety in Grand Rapids	93% C	89%	85%	89%
Overall ease of getting to the places you usually have to visit	77%	77%	80%	78%
Quality of overall natural environment in Grand Rapids	80%	86% C	70%	79%
Overall "built environment" of Grand Rapids (including overall design, buildings, parks and transportation systems)	72%	68%	67%	69%
Health and wellness opportunities in Grand Rapids	89% B C	75%	75%	79%
Overall opportunities for education and enrichment	87%	85%	87%	86%
Overall economic health of Grand Rapids	96% B C	85%	87%	89%
Sense of community	85% B	73%	83% B	80%

Table 29: Strategic Planning Areas

Please rate how important, if at all, you think each of the following strategic planning areas are to the overall quality of life in Grand Rapids: (Percent rating as "essential" or "very important").	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Providing equitable, innovative, high-quality public services	85%	82%	85%	84%
Building resident awareness of and involvement in the City's decision-making processes.	85% B	75%	76%	79%
Investing in innovative, efficient and equitable mobility solutions	74%	74%	71%	73%
Creating pathways to financial growth and security for residents, employees and businesses	84%	78%	88% B	83%
Creating opportunities for education and enrichment for residents of all ages	89% B	80%	85%	85%
Investing in healthy communities and the natural environment	84%	88%	83%	85%
Ensuring that all people feel safe and are safe in our community	99% B	94%	96%	96%

Table 30: Familiarity with Mobility Options

How familiar, if at all, are you with the following types of mobility-related options? (Percent rating as "very familiar" or "moderately familiar").	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Modes of transportation used as an alternative to driving a car	66%	64%	74%	68%
Locations of available parking options in Grand Rapids.	74%	69%	66%	69%
Bikeshare	28% B	17%	20%	22%
Rideshare	33%	38%	32%	34%
The Grand Rapids Autonomous Vehicles Initiative (self-driving public transportation)	36% B C	13%	14%	21%

Table 31: Resident Contact with the City

(Percent rating "yes").	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Have you contacted the City of Grand Rapids for information or services in the past six months?	33%	31%	49% A B	38%

Table 32: Satisfaction with City Interaction

	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
(Percent rating as "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied").	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Thinking about your most recent contact with the City, please rate your satisfaction with the outcome of the interaction:	77%	91%	81%	83%

Only asked of respondents who had contacted the City.

Table 33: Resident Contact with Justice System

	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
(Percent rating "yes").	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Have you had an interaction with either the police department or municipal courts in Grand Rapids in the past six months?	34%	31%	47% A B	37%

Table 34: Perceptions of Interaction with Justice System

	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
(Percent rating as "strongly agree" or "somewhat agree").	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: 'In my interaction with the police and/or municipal courts in Grand Rapids, I felt I was treated with fairness and respect.'	85%	83%	83%	84%

Only asked of respondents who had contact with the police department and/or municipal courts.

Table 35: Participation in Collection Service

	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
(Percent rating "yes").	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Do you currently receive solid waste (trash, recycling, yard waste collection) services from the City of Grand Rapids?	73%	85% A	79%	79%

Table 36: Satisfaction with Collection Service

	Ward			Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	
(Percent rating as "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied").	(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)
Please rate your level of satisfaction with the current 'pay as you throw' system of payment for solid waste:	92%	94%	89%	92%

Only asked of respondents who indicated they receive solid waste services.

Table 37: Preference for Collection Service Payment Schedule

		Ward			
		Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	Overall
How would you prefer to pay for your solid waste collection service?	Standard monthly fee	61%	18%	21%	100%
	Standard quarterly fee	20%	44%	36%	100%
	Annually as part of my taxes	26%	48%	26%	100%
	No change	27%	39%	34%	100%
	I do not pay the collection fee for solid waste	14%	53%	32%	100%

Significance testing not performed.