

The National Citizen Survey™

Mountlake Terrace, WA

Trends over Time

2013

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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 2013 ratings for the City of Mountlake Terrace to its previous survey results in 2007, 2009 and 2011. Additional reports and technical appendices are available under separate cover.

Trend data for Mountlake Terrace 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 approximately eight percentage points between the 2011 and 2013 surveys, otherwise the comparison between 2011 and 2013 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 Mountlake Terrace for 2013 generally remained stable. Of the 86 items for which comparisons were available, 40 items were rated similarly in 2011 and 2013, 31 items showed a decrease in ratings and 15 showed an increase in ratings. Notable trends over time included the following:

- Most General Community Characteristics remained stable between 2011 and 2013, including overall quality of life in Mountlake Terrace. At the same time, ratings of the city's overall appearance and neighborhoods as a place to live increased in 2013.
- While trends were generally stable across all three pillars of Community Engagement in 2013, some measures experienced declining ratings, including openness and acceptance of the community toward people of diverse backgrounds, opportunities to volunteer, attendance at local public meetings, volunteering and participation in clubs. In addition, respondents perceived that the City was less welcoming of citizen involvement than in 2011 and rated the general sense of community lower.
- Trends were mixed in relation to Mobility in the city. While ratings were lower in 2013 relative to 2011 for Mobility services (traffic enforcement, traffic signal timing, street cleaning, street repair and bus or transit service), ratings of nearly all Mobility-related Community Characteristics improved (traffic flow, travel by car, travel by bicycle, travel by public transportation and paths and walking trails).
- Although Recreation and Wellness Participation declined, General Participation ratings improved (likelihood of recommending living in Mountlake Terrace and remaining in the city for the next 5 years). Other improvements were in the Economy facet (economic development services and economy would have a positive impact on income).

Table 1: Community Characteristics General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)				2013 compared to 2011	Comparison to benchmark			
	2007	2009	2011	2013		2007	2009	2011	2013
Overall quality of life	71%	73%	74%	75%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
Overall image	39%	41%	51%	48%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
Place to live	78%	84%	80%	84%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Neighborhood	69%	80%	74%	80%	Higher	Much lower	Similar	Lower	Similar
Place to raise children	65%	73%	72%	73%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Lower	Similar
Place to retire	51%	55%	61%	63%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
Overall appearance	36%	44%	47%	60%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Similar

Table 2: Community Characteristics by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)				2013 compared to 2011	Comparison to benchmark			
		2007	2009	2011	2013		2007	2009	2011	2013
Safety	Overall feeling of safety	NA	NA	NA	82%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Safe in neighborhood	91%	91%	93%	93%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar
	Safe downtown/commercial area	90%	90%	91%	93%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Higher	Similar
	Overall ease travel	NA	NA	NA	79%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Mobility	Paths and walking trails	NA	53%	69%	74%	Higher	NA	Similar	Much higher	Similar
	Ease of walking	63%	68%	74%	70%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Similar
	Travel by bicycle	49%	53%	58%	69%	Higher	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar
	Travel by public transportation	NA	11%	20%	64%	Higher	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Similar
	Travel by car	67%	81%	78%	85%	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher
	Public parking	NA	NA	NA	84%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Higher
	Traffic flow	72%	73%	66%	76%	Higher	NA	Much higher	Much higher	Higher
	Overall natural environment	NA	66%	67%	85%	Higher	NA	Similar	Lower	Similar
Natural Environment	Cleanliness	NA	NA	NA	72%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Air quality	NA	NA	NA	91%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Higher
Built Environment	Overall built environment	NA	NA	NA	55%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	New development in Mountlake Terrace	NA	NA	NA	48%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Affordable quality housing	41%	51%	53%	50%	Similar	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
	Housing options	NA	56%	54%	50%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Public places	NA	NA	NA	48%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Lower
	Overall economic health	NA	NA	NA	43%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Lower
Economy	Vibrant downtown/commercial area	NA	NA	NA	14%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Much lower
	Business and services	NA	39%	46%	36%	Lower	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Cost of living	NA	NA	NA	44%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Shopping opportunities	20%	28%	28%	22%	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
	Employment opportunities	16%	14%	16%	11%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)				2013 compared to 2011	Comparison to benchmark			
		2007	2009	2011	2013		2007	2009	2011	2013
	Place to visit	NA	NA	NA	32%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Much lower
	Place to work	36%	30%	39%	36%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
Recreation and Wellness	Health and wellness	NA	NA	NA	52%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Lower
	Mental health care	NA	NA	NA	33%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Lower
	Preventive health services	NA	39%	40%	37%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Health care	35%	39%	41%	42%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Similar
	Food	NA	50%	57%	49%	Lower	NA	Lower	Similar	Lower
	Recreational opportunities	55%	64%	58%	60%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Lower	Similar
	Fitness opportunities	NA	NA	NA	62%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Lower
Education and Enrichment	Religious or spiritual events and activities	NA	62%	64%	70%	Higher	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Similar
	Cultural/arts/music activities	26%	26%	30%	35%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Adult education	NA	NA	NA	36%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Lower
	K-12 education	NA	NA	NA	59%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Child care/preschool	41%	30%	37%	36%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Social events and activities	NA	49%	44%	44%	Similar	NA	Lower	Much lower	Lower
	Neighborliness	NA	NA	NA	55%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Openness and acceptance	61%	66%	71%	66%	Lower	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar
	Opportunities to participate in community matters	NA	61%	57%	53%	Similar	NA	Similar	Lower	Similar
	Opportunities to volunteer	NA	55%	59%	52%	Lower	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Lower

Table 3: Governance General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)				2013 compared to 2011	Comparison to benchmark			
	2007	2009	2011	2013		2007	2009	2011	2013
Services provided by Mountlake Terrace	65%	73%	75%	67%	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Customer service	87%	80%	89%	75%	Lower	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
Value of services for taxes paid	55%	59%	64%	51%	Lower	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
Overall direction	52%	56%	61%	63%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Higher	Similar
Welcoming citizen involvement	67%	56%	58%	38%	Lower	Much higher	Higher	Higher	Similar
Confidence in City government	NA	NA	NA	47%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Acting in the best interest of Mountlake Terrace	NA	NA	NA	52%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Being honest	NA	NA	NA	53%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Treating all residents fairly	NA	NA	NA	61%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Services provided by the Federal Government	29%	33%	35%	27%	Lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Similar

Table 4: Governance by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)				2013 compared to 2011	Comparison to benchmark				
		2007	2009	2011	2013		2007	2009	2011	2013	
Safety	Police	81%	89%	86%	82%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	
	Fire	91%	97%	92%	89%	Similar	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Similar	
	Ambulance/EMS	89%	98%	91%	91%	Similar	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Similar	
	Crime prevention	62%	73%	72%	64%	Lower	Similar	Much higher	Higher	Similar	
	Fire prevention	70%	83%	78%	64%	Lower	Lower	Higher	Similar	Similar	
	Animal control	54%	55%	61%	61%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	
	Emergency preparedness	NA	49%	54%	45%	Lower	NA	Lower	Much lower	Lower	
	Traffic enforcement	NA	68%	73%	67%	Lower	NA	Higher	Higher	Similar	
	Street repair	49%	53%	57%	51%	Lower	Higher	Higher	Much higher	Similar	
	Street cleaning	63%	70%	77%	68%	Lower	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	
	Street lighting	55%	57%	63%	61%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	
Mobility	Snow removal	50%	33%	49%	47%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	
	Sidewalk maintenance	51%	47%	53%	51%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	
	Traffic signal timing	54%	57%	68%	60%	Lower	Higher	Higher	Much higher	Similar	
	Bus or transit services	70%	73%	75%	65%	Lower	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	
	Natural Environment	Garbage collection	79%	81%	83%	80%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
		Recycling	82%	79%	82%	80%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Higher	Similar
		Yard waste pick-up	80%	77%	78%	81%	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Higher	Similar
		Drinking water	78%	85%	83%	88%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher
		Natural areas preservation	NA	55%	63%	58%	Lower	NA	Similar	Higher	Similar
		Open space	NA	NA	NA	57%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
		Built Environment	Storm drainage	60%	71%	76%	70%	Lower	Higher	Much higher	Much higher
Sewer services			78%	85%	83%	84%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Higher	Similar
Power utility			NA	NA	NA	80%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Utility billing			NA	NA	NA	66%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Land use, planning and zoning			35%	41%	55%	49%	Lower	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar
Code enforcement	35%		34%	36%	45%	Higher	Much lower	Lower	Much lower	Similar	
Cable television	NA		NA	NA	58%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar	
Economy	Economic development	25%	37%	35%	45%	Higher	Much lower	Lower	Lower	Similar	
Recreation and Wellness	City parks	71%	76%	76%	79%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	
	Recreation programs	77%	81%	77%	67%	Lower	Higher	Much higher	Higher	Similar	
	Recreation centers	73%	84%	77%	65%	Lower	Higher	Much higher	Higher	Similar	
	Health services	NA	NA	NA	50%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Lower	
Education and Enrichment	Special events	NA	NA	NA	64%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar	
	Public libraries	75%	83%	84%	82%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	
Community Engagement	Public information	61%	68%	67%	64%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar	

Table 5: Participation General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)				2013 compared to 2011	Comparison to benchmark			
	2007	2009	2011	2013		2007	2009	2011	2013
Sense of community	47%	55%	60%	47%	Lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
Recommend Mountlake Terrace	NA	73%	73%	88%	Higher	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
Remain in Mountlake Terrace	NA	77%	75%	84%	Higher	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
Contacted Mountlake Terrace employees	47%	53%	43%	47%	Similar	NA	Lower	Much lower	Similar

Table 6: Participation by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)				2013 compared to 2011	Comparison to benchmark			
		2007	2009	2011	2013		2007	2009	2011	2013
Safety	Stocked supplies for an emergency	NA	NA	NA	44%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Higher
	Did NOT report a crime	NA	NA	NA	73%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Was NOT the victim of a crime	16%	86%	89%	87%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Used public transportation instead of driving	NA	NA	NA	38%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Carpooled instead of driving alone	NA	NA	NA	48%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Walked or biked instead of driving	NA	NA	NA	52%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Natural Environment	Conserved water	NA	NA	NA	79%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Made home more energy efficient	NA	NA	NA	76%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Recycled at home	93%	95%	96%	95%	Similar	NA	Much higher	Much higher	Higher
Built Environment	Did NOT observe a code violation	NA	NA	NA	60%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	NOT under housing cost stress	NA	57%	52%	55%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
Economy	Purchased goods or services in Mountlake Terrace	NA	NA	NA	94%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Economy will have positive impact on income	18%	18%	10%	25%	Higher	NA	Similar	Much lower	Similar
	Work in Mountlake Terrace	NA	NA	NA	11%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Much lower
Recreation and Wellness	Used Mountlake Terrace recreation centers	46%	62%	58%	51%	Lower	NA	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Visited a City park	79%	87%	88%	81%	Lower	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Ate 5 portions of fruits and vegetables	NA	NA	NA	77%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity	NA	NA	NA	82%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	In very good to excellent health	NA	NA	NA	62%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)				2013 compared to 2011	Comparison to benchmark			
		2007	2009	2011	2013		2007	2009	2011	2013
Education and Enrichment	Used Mountlake Terrace public libraries	62%	74%	75%	64%	Lower	NA	Similar	Higher	Similar
	Participated in religious or spiritual activities	NA	32%	33%	21%	Lower	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
Community Engagement	Attended a City-sponsored event	NA	NA	NA	41%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Lower
	Campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate	NA	NA	NA	18%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Contacted Mountlake Terrace elected officials	NA	NA	NA	12%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Volunteered	23%	30%	31%	18%	Lower	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
	Participated in a club	NA	15%	19%	12%	Lower	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Talked to or visited with neighbors	NA	NA	NA	94%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Done a favor for a neighbor	NA	NA	NA	77%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Attended a local public meeting	19%	20%	22%	13%	Lower	NA	Much lower	Lower	Lower
	Watched a local public meeting	19%	16%	16%	15%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
	Read or watched local news	NA	NA	NA	87%	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Voted in local elections	64%	67%	71%	90%	Higher	NA	Much lower	Similar	Higher