

THE NCS™

The National Community Survey™

Scottsdale, AZ

Trends Over Time

2020



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About Trends Over Time

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 considering ten central facets of a community:

- Economy
- Mobility
- Community Design
- Utilities
- Safety
- Natural Environment
- Parks and Recreation
- Health and Wellness
- Education, Arts and Culture
- Inclusivity and Engagement

This report discusses trends over time, comparing the 2020 ratings for the City of Scottsdale to its previous survey results in 2003, 2004, 2006, 2010, 2013, 2016 and 2018. Additional reports and technical appendices are available under separate cover.



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The NCS™ is presented by NRC in collaboration with ICMA.

NRC is a charter member of the AAPOR Transparency Initiative, providing clear disclosure of our sound and ethical survey research practices.

Understanding the Tables

Trend data for Scottsdale represent important comparison data and should be examined for improvements or declines¹. 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 2018 and 2020 surveys, otherwise the comparisons between 2018 and 2020 are noted as being "similar." Additionally, the benchmark comparisons for the current survey results are presented for reference.

Overall, ratings in Scottsdale for 2020 generally remained stable. Of the 116 items for which comparisons were available, 93 items were rated similarly in 2018 and 2020, eight items showed a decrease in ratings and 15 showed an increase in ratings. Notable trends over time included the following:

- While the overall quality of the transportation system in Scottsdale decreased in 2020 compared to 2018 along with the rate of carpooling, the quality of street lighting, traffic flow and ease of travel by car increased.
- While fewer residents in 2020 compared to 2018 reported campaigning or advocating for an issue, cause or candidate, more reported voting in their most recent local election.
- Residents felt more positive about the overall quality of business and service establishments in Scottsdale in 2020 compared to 2018, but felt less positive about the impact of the economy on their household income.
- Ratings of various services were on the rise in 2020 compared to 2018 including drinking water, sewer services, storm water management and land use, planning and zoning.

¹ In 2020, The NCS survey was updated to include new and refreshed items. Consequently, some of the trends may be impacted due to wording modifications that could have potentially altered the meaning of the item for the respondent.

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Table 1: Quality of Life

Quality of Life Items Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat likely)	2003	2004	2006	2010	2013	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Overall image or reputation of Scottsdale	NA	NA	NA	92%	91%	89%	90%	94%	Similar	Much higher
The overall quality of life in Scottsdale	91%	93%	90%	94%	98%	96%	96%	97%	Similar	Higher
Scottsdale as a place to live	94%	95%	94%	96%	98%	98%	97%	96%	Similar	Higher
Recommend living in Scottsdale to someone who asks	NA	NA	NA	96%	96%	94%	96%	97%	Similar	Higher
Remain in Scottsdale for the next five years	NA	NA	NA	92%	94%	94%	90%	96%	Similar	Higher

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Table 2: Governance

Governance Items Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	2003	2004	2006	2010	2013	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Overall confidence in Scottsdale government	NA	NA	NA	NA	59%	63%	58%	61%	Similar	Similar
The overall direction that Scottsdale is taking	51%	67%	57%	64%	72%	70%	65%	65%	Similar	Similar
The value of services for the taxes paid to Scottsdale	66%	75%	69%	74%	70%	71%	64%	73%	Higher	Higher
Generally acting in the best interest of the community	NA	NA	NA	NA	60%	64%	58%	65%	Similar	Similar
Being honest	NA	NA	NA	NA	53%	59%	52%	58%	Similar	Similar
Being open and transparent to the public	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	54%	NA	Similar
Informing residents about issues facing the community	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	54%	NA	Similar
The job Scottsdale government does at welcoming resident involvement	54%	63%	51%	55%	52%	61%	56%	62%	Similar	Similar
Treating all residents fairly	NA	NA	NA	NA	57%	63%	56%	63%	Similar	Similar
Treating residents with respect	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	73%	NA	Similar
Overall customer service by Scottsdale employees	80%	80%	76%	83%	80%	90%	79%	84%	Similar	Similar
Public information services	74%	77%	73%	77%	82%	80%	78%	83%	Similar	Similar
Quality of services provided by the City of Scottsdale	83%	88%	81%	88%	87%	89%	86%	79%	Similar	Similar
Quality of services provided by the Federal Government	41%	47%	37%	43%	34%	40%	38%	45%	Similar	Similar

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Table 3: Economy

Economy Items Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat positive)	2003	2004	2006	2010	2013	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Overall economic health of Scottsdale	NA	NA	NA	NA	82%	85%	88%	90%	Similar	Higher
Economic development	57%	65%	72%	60%	72%	79%	77%	80%	Similar	Higher
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Scottsdale	NA	NA	NA	89%	89%	88%	86%	95%	Higher	Much higher
Variety of business and service establishments in Scottsdale	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	90%	NA	Much higher
Vibrancy of downtown/commercial area	NA	NA	NA	NA	85%	86%	84%	90%	Similar	Much higher
Shopping opportunities	93%	95%	95%	93%	96%	94%	96%	95%	Similar	Much higher
Scottsdale as a place to visit	NA	NA	NA	NA	94%	95%	96%	95%	Similar	Much higher
Scottsdale as a place to work	NA	NA	84%	88%	86%	92%	90%	92%	Similar	Much higher
Employment opportunities	47%	53%	62%	51%	67%	66%	71%	74%	Similar	Higher
Cost of living in Scottsdale	NA	NA	NA	NA	52%	48%	43%	47%	Similar	Similar
Economy will have positive impact on income	29%	38%	39%	15%	34%	38%	38%	25%	Lower	Similar
NOT experiencing housing costs stress	NA	NA	NA	67%	74%	71%	69%	NA	NA	NA

Table 4: Mobility

Mobility Items Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, yes in the last 12 months)	2003	2004	2006	2010	2013	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Overall quality of the transportation system in Scottsdale	NA	NA	NA	NA	87%	76%	82%	72%	Lower	Similar
Traffic flow on major streets	NA	NA	19%	57%	62%	55%	56%	66%	Higher	Higher
Ease of travel by car in Scottsdale	52%	51%	40%	69%	76%	70%	71%	84%	Higher	Higher
Ease of travel by public transportation in Scottsdale	NA	NA	12%	NA	40%	39%	43%	37%	Similar	Similar
Ease of travel by bicycle in Scottsdale	54%	59%	55%	68%	69%	65%	63%	69%	Similar	Higher
Ease of walking in Scottsdale	65%	68%	68%	73%	85%	78%	75%	76%	Similar	Higher
Ease of public parking	NA	NA	NA	NA	65%	65%	66%	68%	Similar	Similar
Bus or transit services	38%	35%	37%	57%	56%	64%	66%	62%	Similar	Similar
Traffic enforcement	61%	63%	58%	71%	76%	73%	69%	73%	Similar	Similar
Traffic signal timing	53%	54%	48%	57%	60%	62%	58%	60%	Similar	Similar
Street repair	63%	63%	60%	67%	66%	69%	67%	69%	Similar	Higher
Street cleaning	74%	76%	70%	82%	76%	85%	77%	81%	Similar	Higher
Street lighting	NA	NA	NA	75%	77%	77%	72%	83%	Higher	Higher
Sidewalk maintenance	70%	74%	66%	78%	75%	80%	76%	79%	Similar	Higher
Used bus, rail, subway, or other public transportation instead of driving	NA	NA	NA	NA	18%	13%	19%	13%	Similar	Lower
Carpooled with other adults or children instead of driving alone	NA	NA	NA	NA	45%	50%	42%	31%	Lower	Lower
Walked or biked instead of driving	NA	NA	NA	NA	55%	59%	61%	59%	Similar	Similar

Prior to 2020, “Overall quality of the transportation system” was “Overall ease of getting to the places you usually have to visit.” Differences in ratings may be at least partially attributable to changes in question wording and should be interpreted cautiously.

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Table 5: Community Design

Community Design Items Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	2003	2004	2006	2010	2013	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Overall design or layout of Scottsdale's residential and commercial areas	NA	NA	NA	NA	81%	81%	79%	85%	Similar	Higher
Overall appearance of Scottsdale	88%	90%	87%	94%	96%	93%	90%	88%	Similar	Higher
Your neighborhood as a place to live	87%	89%	90%	91%	93%	93%	95%	94%	Similar	Similar
Overall quality of new development in Scottsdale	NA	NA	NA	76%	78%	71%	71%	68%	Similar	Similar
Well-planned residential growth	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	64%	NA	Higher
Well-planned commercial growth	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	62%	NA	Higher
Well-designed neighborhoods	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	78%	NA	Higher
Preservation of the historical or cultural character of the community	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	74%	NA	Similar
Public places where people want to spend time	NA	NA	NA	NA	88%	88%	85%	83%	Similar	Higher
Variety of housing options	NA	NA	NA	70%	71%	72%	64%	64%	Similar	Higher
Availability of affordable quality housing	NA	NA	NA	NA	49%	45%	36%	32%	Similar	Similar
Land use, planning, and zoning	40%	52%	48%	60%	70%	61%	51%	60%	Higher	Similar
Code enforcement	57%	59%	59%	72%	74%	68%	61%	67%	Similar	Higher

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Table 6: Utilities

Utilities Items Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	2003	2004	2006	2010	2013	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Overall quality of the utility infrastructure in Scottsdale	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	84%	NA	Similar
Affordable high-speed internet access	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	59%	NA	Similar
Power (electric and/or gas) utility	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	78%	NA	Similar
Garbage collection	91%	89%	88%	92%	89%	95%	91%	91%	Similar	Similar
Drinking water	39%	39%	42%	52%	59%	56%	61%	69%	Higher	Similar
Sewer services	NA	NA	NA	83%	84%	83%	80%	88%	Higher	Similar
Storm water management	53%	51%	48%	70%	69%	69%	72%	84%	Higher	Higher
Utility billing	NA	NA	NA	NA	79%	70%	73%	73%	Similar	Similar

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Table 7: Safety

Safety Items Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	2003	2004	2006	2010	2013	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Overall feeling of safety in Scottsdale	NA	NA	NA	NA	94%	92%	95%	89%	Similar	Similar
Police services	83%	87%	82%	90%	90%	91%	90%	85%	Similar	Similar
Crime prevention	NA	NA	NA	84%	87%	85%	84%	81%	Similar	Similar
Animal control	70%	73%	73%	72%	79%	80%	75%	86%	Higher	Higher
Ambulance or emergency medical services	91%	93%	92%	95%	97%	98%	95%	96%	Similar	Similar
Fire services	91%	94%	96%	96%	97%	98%	95%	96%	Similar	Similar
Fire prevention and education	NA	NA	NA	88%	88%	87%	88%	89%	Similar	Similar
Emergency preparedness	NA	NA	NA	60%	71%	71%	61%	75%	Higher	Similar
In your neighborhood during the day	95%	95%	96%	98%	97%	97%	98%	99%	Similar	Similar
In Scottsdale's downtown/commercial area during the day	92%	93%	91%	91%	97%	94%	95%	93%	Similar	Similar
From property crime	57%	63%	58%	76%	NA	NA	NA	85%	NA	Similar
From violent crime	70%	78%	75%	88%	NA	NA	NA	91%	NA	Similar
From fire, flood, or other natural disaster	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	91%	NA	Similar

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Table 8: Natural Environment

Natural Environment Items Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	2003	2004	2006	2010	2013	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Overall quality of natural environment in Scottsdale	NA	NA	NA	82%	89%	88%	91%	87%	Similar	Similar
Cleanliness of Scottsdale	NA	NA	NA	93%	91%	92%	88%	91%	Similar	Higher
Water resources	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	65%	NA	Similar
Air quality	NA	NA	NA	60%	63%	69%	64%	63%	Similar	Similar
Preservation of natural areas	NA	NA	NA	78%	78%	77%	74%	79%	Similar	Higher
Scottsdale open space	NA	NA	NA	NA	95%	89%	88%	74%	Lower	Higher
Recycling	80%	82%	77%	87%	81%	87%	82%	80%	Similar	Similar
Yard waste pick-up	76%	78%	75%	86%	76%	76%	84%	86%	Similar	Higher

Table 9: Parks and Recreation

Parks and Recreation Items Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	2003	2004	2006	2010	2013	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Overall quality of parks and recreation opportunities	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	90%	NA	Similar
Availability of paths and walking trails	NA	NA	NA	82%	89%	84%	83%	86%	Similar	Higher
City parks	90%	89%	84%	93%	95%	90%	90%	92%	Similar	Similar
Recreational opportunities	81%	83%	85%	86%	89%	89%	84%	86%	Similar	Higher
Recreation programs or classes	88%	84%	80%	85%	91%	89%	86%	88%	Similar	Higher
Recreation centers or facilities	NA	NA	NA	86%	93%	87%	87%	89%	Similar	Higher
Fitness opportunities	NA	NA	NA	NA	89%	90%	86%	87%	Similar	Higher

Table 10: Health and Wellness

Health and Wellness Items Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, excellent/very good)	2003	2004	2006	2010	2013	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Overall health and wellness opportunities in Scottsdale	NA	NA	NA	NA	92%	92%	90%	83%	Similar	Higher
Health services	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	86%	NA	Higher
Availability of affordable quality health care	NA	NA	NA	NA	78%	80%	77%	78%	Similar	Higher
Availability of preventive health services	NA	NA	NA	NA	83%	85%	83%	85%	Similar	Higher
Availability of affordable quality mental health care	NA	NA	NA	NA	61%	68%	64%	65%	Similar	Higher
Availability of affordable quality food	NA	NA	NA	NA	81%	84%	78%	78%	Similar	Higher
In very good to excellent health	NA	NA	NA	NA	96%	95%	93%	94%	Similar	Similar

Table 11: Education, Arts, and Culture

Education, Arts, and Culture Items Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	2003	2004	2006	2010	2013	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Overall opportunities for education, culture, and the arts	NA	NA	NA	NA	82%	86%	83%	82%	Similar	Higher
Opportunities to attend cultural/arts/music activities	79%	77%	77%	80%	88%	85%	83%	82%	Similar	Higher
Opportunities to attend special events and festivals	NA	NA	NA	NA	81%	80%	82%	79%	Similar	Similar
Community support for the arts	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	84%	NA	Much higher
Public library services	90%	91%	88%	93%	94%	95%	93%	95%	Similar	Similar
Availability of affordable quality child care/preschool	NA	NA	NA	NA	63%	65%	52%	59%	Similar	Similar
K-12 education	NA	NA	NA	78%	77%	81%	66%	69%	Similar	Similar
Adult educational opportunities	NA	NA	NA	NA	76%	77%	66%	73%	Similar	Higher

Table 12: Inclusivity and Engagement

Inclusivity and Engagement Items Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	2003	2004	2006	2010	2013	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Residents' connection and engagement with their community	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	63%	NA	Similar
Sense of community	53%	57%	54%	59%	54%	62%	53%	66%	Higher	Similar
Sense of civic/community pride	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	75%	NA	Similar
Neighborliness of Scottsdale	NA	NA	NA	NA	58%	57%	57%	63%	Similar	Similar
Scottsdale as a place to raise children	80%	81%	78%	85%	92%	89%	86%	89%	Similar	Similar
Scottsdale as a place to retire	82%	86%	81%	91%	91%	92%	90%	93%	Similar	Much higher
Openness and acceptance of the community toward people of diverse backgrounds	NA	NA	NA	55%	58%	58%	56%	64%	Higher	Similar
Making all residents feel welcome	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	80%	NA	Similar
Attracting people from diverse backgrounds	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	61%	NA	Similar
Valuing/respecting residents from diverse backgrounds	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	68%	NA	Similar
Taking care of vulnerable residents	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	62%	NA	Similar
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	NA	NA	NA	79%	81%	76%	81%	76%	Similar	Similar
Opportunities to volunteer	NA	NA	NA	77%	79%	77%	83%	80%	Similar	Similar
Opportunities to participate in community matters	NA	NA	NA	67%	66%	66%	68%	70%	Similar	Similar

Table 13: Participation

Participation Items Percent having done each in last 12 months, or having done each a few times a week or more	2003	2004	2006	2010	2013	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Contacted Scottsdale for help or information	54%	53%	54%	50%	39%	54%	34%	50%	Higher	Similar
Contacted Scottsdale elected officials to express your opinion	NA	NA	NA	NA	11%	19%	17%	18%	Similar	Similar
Attended a local public meeting	22%	23%	25%	20%	15%	17%	18%	18%	Similar	Similar
Watched (online or on television) a local public meeting	48%	47%	54%	42%	20%	21%	22%	29%	Similar	Similar
Volunteered your time to some group/activity in Scottsdale	39%	40%	41%	47%	37%	36%	35%	29%	Similar	Similar
Campaigned or advocated for an issue, cause or candidate	NA	NA	NA	NA	21%	29%	34%	22%	Lower	Similar
Voted in your most recent local election	66%	79%	76%	76%	NA	NA	NA	86%	Higher	Similar
Access the internet from your home using a computer, laptop or tablet computer	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	93%	NA	Similar
Access the internet from your cell phone	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	92%	NA	Similar
Visit social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, etc.	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	69%	NA	Lower
Use or check email	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	97%	NA	Similar
Share your opinions online	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	27%	NA	Similar
Shop online	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	69%	NA	Higher

Table 14: Focus Areas

Focus Areas Percent rating each as "essential" or "very important"	2003	2004	2006	2010	2013	2016	2018	2020	2020 rating compared to 2018	Comparison to benchmark
Overall economic health of Scottsdale	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	95%	92%	94%	Similar	Higher
Overall quality of the transportation system in Scottsdale	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	85%	91%	74%	Lower	Similar
Overall design or layout of Scottsdale's residential and commercial areas	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	87%	86%	79%	Similar	Similar
Overall quality of the utility infrastructure in Scottsdale	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	91%	NA	Higher
Overall feeling of safety in Scottsdale	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	94%	95%	93%	Similar	Similar
Overall quality of natural environment in Scottsdale	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	90%	89%	89%	Similar	Higher
Overall quality of parks and recreation opportunities	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	87%	NA	Similar
Overall health and wellness opportunities in Scottsdale	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	81%	81%	83%	Similar	Higher
Overall opportunities for education, culture, and the arts	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	77%	84%	75%	Lower	Similar
Residents' connection and engagement with their community	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	79%	85%	69%	Lower	Lower

Prior to 2020, “Overall quality of the transportation system” was “Overall ease of getting to the places you usually have to visit.” Differences in ratings may be at least partially attributable to changes in question wording and should be interpreted cautiously.