



THE NCSTM
The National Community SurveyTM

Elk Grove, CA

Trends over Time

2019



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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. 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 2019 ratings for the City of Elk Grove to its previous survey results in 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, and 2017. Additional reports and technical appendices are available under separate cover.

Trend data for Elk Grove 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 six percentage points between the 2017 and 2019 surveys, otherwise the comparisons between 2017 and 2019 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. A rating of “NA” in any given year indicates that that question was not asked in that year.

Overall, ratings in Elk Grove for 2019 generally remained stable. Of the 129 items for which comparisons were available, 108 items were rated similarly in 2017 and 2019, eight items showed a decrease in ratings and 13 showed an increase in ratings. Notable trends over time included the following:

- In Community Characteristics, ratings for six aspects increased since the previous survey iteration (overall feeling of safety, ease of travel by bicycle, overall ease of travel, air quality, affordable quality mental health care and Elk Grove as a place to retire). Only one aspect within Community Characteristics, the availability of affordable quality housing, decreased from 2017 to 2019.
- In Governance, residents' scores for crime prevention and emergency preparedness improved over time, while ratings for open space and land use, planning and zoning declined. Residents were also more likely in 2019 than in 2017 to give positive ratings to the job Elk Grove government does at welcoming resident involvement as well as being honest.
- Residents were less likely in 2019 to have participated in several aspects of Community Engagement (including campaigning for an issue, cause or candidate or doing a favor for a neighbor); most other rates of participation in Elk Grove remained stable since 2017.
- Looking at longer-term trends, many ratings in Elk Grove have showed an upward trend in the past ten years. Items for which positive ratings increased by at least ten percentage points included Elk Grove as a place to retire, place to raise children, quality of overall natural environment, employment opportunities, recreational opportunities, the job Elk Grove does at welcoming resident involvement, the overall direction of the City, and economic development, among others.

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Table 1: Community Characteristics General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)						2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark					
	2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019
Overall quality of life	73%	74%	81%	81%	77%	80%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Overall image	64%	64%	74%	70%	70%	72%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Place to live	80%	82%	88%	87%	83%	84%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Neighborhood	79%	83%	82%	83%	84%	87%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Place to raise children	74%	80%	86%	86%	83%	84%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Place to retire	49%	60%	69%	65%	55%	61%	Higher	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Overall appearance	78%	81%	79%	75%	75%	79%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar

Table 2: Community Characteristics by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)						2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark					
		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019
Safety	Overall feeling of safety	NA	NA	79%	72%	64%	75%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar
	Safe in neighborhood	88%	91%	93%	90%	88%	93%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Safe downtown/commercial area	84%	85%	83%	92%	83%	86%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Overall ease of travel	NA	NA	75%	67%	57%	63%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar
	Paths and walking trails	59%	59%	73%	66%	65%	70%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Ease of walking	61%	62%	71%	66%	67%	66%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Travel by bicycle	57%	52%	57%	58%	46%	54%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Travel by public transportation	NA	NA	41%	44%	40%	37%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Travel by car	52%	54%	58%	59%	56%	59%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Public parking	NA	NA	NA	68%	62%	65%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Traffic flow	39%	37%	48%	35%	35%	32%	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
Natural Environment	Overall natural environment	59%	64%	77%	74%	70%	72%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Cleanliness	77%	80%	80%	74%	73%	74%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Air quality	54%	58%	73%	69%	61%	71%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar
Built Environment	Overall built environment	NA	NA	65%	63%	64%	66%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	New development in Elk Grove	53%	57%	52%	49%	50%	50%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Affordable quality housing	49%	44%	50%	48%	47%	37%	Lower	Much higher	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Housing options	62%	56%	63%	57%	58%	52%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Public places	NA	NA	58%	62%	56%	61%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)						2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark					
		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019
Economy	Overall economic health	NA	NA	63%	68%	63%	69%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Vibrant downtown/commercial area	NA	NA	30%	31%	29%	32%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Business and services	55%	58%	59%	62%	59%	58%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Cost of living	NA	NA	43%	45%	39%	38%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Shopping opportunities	47%	52%	50%	55%	57%	51%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Employment opportunities	14%	22%	32%	33%	35%	35%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Place to visit	NA	NA	45%	41%	43%	44%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Place to work	49%	42%	59%	55%	51%	51%	Similar	Lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Recreation and Wellness	Health and wellness	NA	NA	74%	68%	68%	73%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Mental health care	NA	NA	57%	50%	45%	52%	Higher	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Preventive health services	51%	58%	70%	68%	70%	69%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Health care	53%	59%	73%	68%	66%	69%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Food	65%	67%	66%	65%	65%	66%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recreational opportunities	50%	59%	69%	58%	58%	63%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Fitness opportunities	NA	NA	77%	74%	69%	68%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Education and enrichment opportunities	NA	NA	67%	69%	68%	73%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Religious or spiritual events and activities	66%	64%	65%	74%	70%	71%	Similar	Lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Cultural/arts/music activities	38%	44%	44%	45%	49%	54%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Adult education	NA	NA	59%	67%	59%	62%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	K-12 education	78%	NA	78%	86%	80%	80%	Similar	Much higher	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Child care/preschool	39%	39%	60%	57%	54%	49%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Social events and activities	49%	58%	52%	49%	52%	51%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Neighborliness	NA	NA	59%	46%	62%	58%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Openness and acceptance	73%	69%	63%	66%	70%	65%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Opportunities to participate in community matters	55%	60%	54%	50%	56%	55%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Opportunities to volunteer	51%	62%	62%	60%	61%	59%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar

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Table 3: Governance General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)						2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark					
	2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019
Services provided by Elk Grove	66%	67%	70%	75%	67%	72%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Customer service	66%	67%	66%	66%	68%	72%	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Value of services for taxes paid	45%	48%	48%	52%	44%	45%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Overall direction	35%	43%	52%	52%	46%	51%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Welcoming resident involvement	41%	40%	52%	38%	46%	53%	Higher	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Confidence in City government	NA	NA	49%	44%	43%	45%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Acting in the best interest of Elk Grove	NA	NA	55%	50%	46%	51%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
Being honest	NA	NA	53%	46%	40%	52%	Higher	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
Treating all residents fairly	NA	NA	56%	49%	47%	51%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
Services provided by the Federal Government	30%	31%	39%	37%	34%	37%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar

Table 4: Governance by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)						2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark					
		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019
Safety	Police	76%	77%	71%	74%	79%	82%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Crime prevention	58%	61%	62%	68%	60%	68%	Higher	Lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Animal control	58%	64%	58%	71%	63%	63%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Emergency preparedness	47%	62%	57%	39%	42%	53%	Higher	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Lower	Lower	Similar
Mobility	Traffic enforcement	59%	61%	62%	63%	64%	59%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Street repair	53%	57%	62%	62%	56%	53%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Street cleaning	59%	65%	66%	61%	69%	66%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Street lighting	70%	67%	72%	69%	74%	71%	Similar	Much higher	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Sidewalk maintenance	67%	66%	67%	67%	66%	66%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Traffic signal timing	43%	53%	50%	48%	55%	50%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Bus or transit services	53%	56%	56%	53%	56%	52%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)						2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark					
		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019
Natural Environment	Garbage collection	89%	79%	83%	87%	87%	87%	NA	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recycling	88%	81%	84%	87%	86%	82%	Similar	Much higher	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Yard waste pick-up	84%	80%	79%	86%	84%	85%	Similar	Much higher	Higher	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Drinking water	50%	NA	NA	NA	NA	62%	Higher	Much lower	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Natural areas preservation	50%	53%	61%	60%	53%	53%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Open space	NA	NA	59%	51%	62%	51%	Lower	NA	NA	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
Built Environment	Storm drainage	68%	71%	68%	80%	75%	73%	Similar	Much higher	Higher	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Sewer services	72%	NA	NA	NA	NA	78%	NA	Similar	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Power utility	75%	NA	NA	NA	NA	78%	NA	Similar	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Utility billing	NA	NA	59%	56%	59%	64%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Land use, planning and zoning	38%	50%	53%	46%	50%	42%	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Code enforcement	39%	49%	47%	50%	41%	43%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Cable television	60%	61%	56%	47%	50%	51%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Economy	Economic development	33%	37%	47%	45%	48%	49%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Recreation and Wellness	City parks	89%	NA	NA	NA	NA	83%	NA	Much higher	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Recreation programs	81%	NA	NA	NA	NA	73%	NA	Higher	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Recreation centers	80%	NA	NA	NA	NA	77%	NA	Much higher	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Health services	62%	NA	NA	NA	NA	71%	NA	Similar	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Special events	NA	NA	59%	57%	65%	65%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Public libraries	74%	74%	79%	79%	80%	82%	Similar	Lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Public information	60%	60%	64%	66%	66%	65%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar

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Table 5: Participation General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)						2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark					
	2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019
Sense of community	55%	62%	66%	51%	57%	58%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Recommend Elk Grove	76%	85%	88%	91%	84%	88%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Remain in Elk Grove	82%	81%	87%	87%	85%	86%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Contacted Elk Grove employees	37%	37%	39%	39%	47%	37%	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar

Table 6: Participation by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)						2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark					
		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019
Safety	Stocked supplies for an emergency	NA	NA	31%	45%	35%	44%	Higher	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Did NOT report a crime	NA	NA	74%	74%	70%	75%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Was NOT the victim of a crime	82%	90%	86%	86%	80%	89%	Higher	Lower	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Used public transportation instead of driving	NA	NA	91%	20%	15%	16%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Lower	Similar
	Carpooled instead of driving alone	NA	NA	49%	62%	56%	58%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Higher	Higher	Higher
	Walked or biked instead of driving	NA	NA	57%	59%	59%	58%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
Natural Environment	Conserved water	NA	NA	89%	96%	92%	91%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Higher	Higher	Higher
	Made home more energy efficient	NA	NA	79%	79%	75%	77%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recycled at home	94%	96%	96%	98%	96%	97%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
Built Environment	Did NOT observe a code violation	NA	NA	60%	41%	44%	51%	Higher	NA	NA	NA	Lower	Similar	Similar
	NOT under housing cost stress	52%	43%	57%	64%	64%	55%	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Lower
Economy	Purchased goods or services in Elk Grove	NA	NA	97%	99%	99%	97%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Economy will have positive impact on income	14%	18%	30%	29%	37%	32%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Work in Elk Grove	NA	NA	28%	29%	32%	31%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Lower	Similar	Lower

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)						2019 rating compared to 2017	Comparison to benchmark						
		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019		2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	
Recreation and Wellness	Visited a City park	91%	NA	NA	NA	NA	91%	NA	Higher	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Ate 5 portions of fruits and vegetables	NA	NA	88%	86%	87%	85%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity	NA	NA	79%	90%	89%	89%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	In very good to excellent health	NA	NA	58%	60%	63%	62%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Used Elk Grove public libraries	63%	61%	56%	57%	55%	53%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Participated in religious or spiritual activities	44%	50%	45%	50%	46%	43%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Attended a City-sponsored event	NA	NA	47%	55%	55%	53%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate	NA	NA	20%	14%	22%	15%	Lower	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Contacted Elk Grove elected officials	NA	NA	13%	9%	20%	15%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Volunteered	36%	43%	32%	39%	39%	37%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Participated in a club	23%	23%	21%	26%	25%	25%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Talked to or visited with neighbors	NA	NA	NA	94%	92%	92%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Done a favor for a neighbor	NA	NA	NA	82%	85%	79%	Lower	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Attended a local public meeting	22%	19%	19%	18%	22%	16%	Similar	Lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Watched a local public meeting	28%	22%	18%	21%	25%	23%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Read or watched local news	NA	NA	92%	90%	89%	83%	Lower	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Voted in local elections	80%	78%	81%	85%	88%	89%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar