



**THE NCS**<sup>TM</sup>  
The National Community Survey<sup>TM</sup>

## Hutchinson, MN

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 Hutchinson to its previous survey results in 2007, 2011 and 2015. Additional reports and technical appendices are available under separate cover.

Trend data for Hutchinson 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 2015 and 2019 surveys, otherwise the comparisons between 2015 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.

Overall, ratings in Hutchinson for 2019 generally remained stable. Of the 134 items for which comparisons were available, 82 items were rated similarly in 2015 and 2019, three items showed a decrease in ratings and 49 showed an increase in ratings. Notable trends over time included the following:

- Among 52 total Community Characteristics ratings, residents assessed 19 aspects more positively in 2019 than in 2015 and only one decrease. Survey respondents felt more positively about the overall image or reputation of Hutchinson and the city as a place to retire. Areas with the highest increases (more than 10 percentage points) included public parking, new development in Hutchinson, public places, overall economic health, availability of affordable quality food, K-12 education and the openness and acceptance of the community toward people of diverse backgrounds. Fewer residents favorably rated shopping opportunities in 2019 compared to 2015.
- Over half of the Governance ratings increased since 2015. Evaluations of recreation centers or facilities and reviews of government performance (acting in the best interest of Hutchinson, being honest and treating all residents fairly) showed the greatest gains in ratings between survey administrations, each with positive increases of at least 15%. Scores for street repair were lower in 2019 than in 2015.
- Residents reported greater optimism about the local economy and were more likely to indicate they made efforts to make their home more energy efficient or used Hutchinson recreation centers in 2019. Conversely, respondents reported lower levels of reading or watching local news.

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Table 1: Community Characteristics General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)				2019 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark			
	2007	2011	2015	2019		2007	2011	2015	2019
Overall quality of life	79%	78%	79%	84%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Overall image	72%	73%	69%	77%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Place to live	82%	87%	84%	90%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Neighborhood	81%	84%	77%	80%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Place to raise children	80%	81%	83%	84%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Place to retire	57%	62%	60%	68%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Overall appearance	81%	84%	83%	89%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar

Table 2: Community Characteristics by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)				2019 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark			
		2007	2011	2015	2019		2007	2011	2015	2019
Safety	Overall feeling of safety	NA	NA	82%	88%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Safe in neighborhood	95%	97%	95%	97%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Safe downtown/commercial area	95%	96%	95%	96%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Overall ease of travel	NA	NA	85%	83%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Paths and walking trails	NA	NA	85%	84%	Similar	NA	NA	Higher	Higher
	Ease of walking	70%	78%	83%	85%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
	Travel by bicycle	61%	72%	73%	75%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Higher
	Travel by public transportation	NA	NA	42%	41%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Travel by car	67%	72%	74%	78%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Public parking	NA	NA	56%	68%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Traffic flow	56%	NA	49%	52%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Overall natural environment	NA	NA	87%	87%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Natural Environment	Cleanliness	NA	NA	80%	86%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Air quality	72%	70%	80%	79%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Overall built environment	NA	NA	70%	74%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Built Environment	New development in Hutchinson	65%	54%	48%	58%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Affordable quality housing	42%	55%	46%	43%	Similar	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Housing options	NA	NA	54%	59%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Public places	NA	NA	67%	78%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Economy	Overall economic health	NA	NA	57%	67%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)				2019 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark			
		2007	2011	2015	2019		2007	2011	2015	2019
	Vibrant downtown/commercial area	NA	NA	41%	42%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Business and services	NA	NA	59%	56%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Cost of living	NA	NA	39%	39%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Shopping opportunities	34%	43%	41%	34%	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Lower
	Employment opportunities	44%	20%	48%	55%	Higher	Much higher	Much lower	Similar	Similar
	Place to visit	NA	NA	57%	65%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Place to work	66%	50%	67%	75%	Higher	Higher	Lower	Similar	Similar
Recreation and Wellness	Health and wellness	NA	NA	73%	71%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Mental health care	NA	NA	53%	58%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Preventive health services	NA	NA	63%	63%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Health care	56%	55%	62%	59%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Food	NA	NA	61%	73%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Recreational opportunities	57%	64%	64%	72%	Higher	Lower	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Fitness opportunities	NA	NA	77%	82%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Education and enrichment opportunities	NA	NA	66%	73%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Religious or spiritual events and activities	NA	NA	85%	86%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Cultural/arts/music activities	39%	42%	59%	66%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Similar	Similar
	Adult education	NA	NA	58%	63%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	K-12 education	61%	69%	68%	82%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Child care/preschool	48%	57%	57%	51%	Similar	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Social events and activities	NA	NA	57%	63%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Neighborliness	NA	NA	52%	58%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Openness and acceptance	41%	49%	38%	50%	Higher	Much lower	Much lower	Lower	Similar
	Opportunities to participate in community matters	NA	NA	57%	65%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Opportunities to volunteer	NA	NA	71%	74%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar

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Table 3: Governance General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)				2019 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark			
	2007	2011	2015	2019		2007	2011	2015	2019
Services provided by Hutchinson	72%	72%	70%	78%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Customer service	73%	82%	71%	78%	Higher	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
Value of services for taxes paid	43%	41%	43%	52%	Higher	Much lower	Lower	Similar	Similar
Overall direction	49%	47%	49%	59%	Higher	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
Welcoming resident involvement	53%	42%	44%	53%	Higher	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
Confidence in City government	NA	NA	41%	55%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Acting in the best interest of Hutchinson	NA	NA	43%	58%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Being honest	NA	NA	47%	63%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Treating all residents fairly	NA	NA	43%	58%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Services provided by the Federal Government	41%	43%	36%	45%	Higher	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar

Table 4: Governance by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)				2019 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark				
		2007	2011	2015	2019		2007	2011	2015	2019	
Safety	Police	76%	84%	78%	87%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	
	Fire	93%	96%	94%	96%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	
	Ambulance/EMS	89%	92%	90%	88%	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	
	Crime prevention	67%	77%	70%	77%	Higher	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Similar	
	Fire prevention	83%	87%	80%	85%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar	
	Animal control	65%	61%	55%	66%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	
	Emergency preparedness	NA	NA	58%	68%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	
	Traffic enforcement	65%	65%	61%	71%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	
	Street repair	51%	26%	32%	26%	Lower	Higher	Much lower	Lower	Lower	
	Street cleaning	67%	62%	63%	58%	Similar	Much higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	
Mobility	Street lighting	60%	69%	68%	78%	Higher	Similar	Higher	Similar	Higher	
	Snow removal	73%	61%	68%	76%	Higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	
	Sidewalk maintenance	67%	63%	55%	66%	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar	
	Traffic signal timing	50%	57%	46%	57%	Higher	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar	
	Bus or transit services	65%	60%	47%	49%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar	
	Natural Environment	Garbage collection	87%	89%	88%	86%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)				2019 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark			
		2007	2011	2015	2019		2007	2011	2015	2019
	Recycling	88%	87%	89%	85%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Yard waste pick-up	80%	83%	85%	88%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Drinking water	53%	75%	79%	78%	Similar	Much lower	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Natural areas preservation	NA	NA	63%	70%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Open space	NA	NA	65%	65%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Storm drainage	73%	76%	76%	78%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Sewer services	75%	81%	83%	89%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Power utility	NA	NA	82%	89%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Utility billing	NA	NA	73%	80%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Land use, planning and zoning	52%	54%	53%	64%	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Code enforcement	57%	50%	38%	44%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Built Environment	Cable television	61%	60%	43%	50%	Higher	Much higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
Economy	Economic development	55%	46%	52%	61%	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
	City parks	85%	88%	88%	88%	Similar	Much higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Recreation programs	78%	80%	74%	78%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Recreation centers	72%	73%	61%	78%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Recreation and Wellness	Health services	72%	69%	69%	68%	Similar	Much higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Special events	NA	NA	64%	72%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Public libraries	87%	89%	83%	84%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Public information	65%	73%	69%	72%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar

Table 5: Participation General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)				2019 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark			
	2007	2011	2015	2019		2007	2011	2015	2019
Sense of community	60%	64%	58%	60%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Recommend Hutchinson	NA	83%	86%	87%	Similar	NA	Lower	Similar	Similar
Remain in Hutchinson	NA	79%	84%	88%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
Contacted Hutchinson employees	60%	53%	40%	40%	Similar	NA	Lower	Similar	Similar

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Table 6: Participation by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)				2019 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark			
		2007	2011	2015	2019		2007	2011	2015	2019
Safety	Stocked supplies for an emergency	NA	NA	21%	20%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower
	Did NOT report a crime	NA	NA	81%	85%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Was NOT the victim of a crime	13%	92%	87%	92%	Similar	NA	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Used public transportation instead of driving	NA	NA	9%	10%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower
	Carpooled instead of driving alone	NA	NA	39%	38%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Walked or biked instead of driving	NA	NA	65%	64%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Natural Environment	Conserved water	NA	NA	73%	78%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Similar
	Made home more energy efficient	NA	NA	70%	78%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Recycled at home	91%	93%	96%	94%	Similar	NA	Much higher	Higher	Similar
Built Environment	Did NOT observe a code violation	NA	NA	57%	56%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	NOT under housing cost stress	NA	73%	78%	77%	Similar	NA	Much higher	Higher	Similar
Economy	Purchased goods or services in Hutchinson	NA	NA	99%	98%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Economy will have positive impact on income	20%	11%	21%	28%	Higher	NA	Much lower	Similar	Similar
	Work in Hutchinson	NA	NA	58%	59%	Similar	NA	NA	Higher	Higher
Recreation and Wellness	Used Hutchinson recreation centers	62%	64%	54%	65%	Higher	NA	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Visited a City park	87%	89%	88%	83%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Ate 5 portions of fruits and vegetables	NA	NA	76%	80%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity	NA	NA	79%	81%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	In very good to excellent health	NA	NA	54%	58%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Used Hutchinson public libraries	72%	73%	53%	59%	Similar	NA	Similar	Lower	Similar
	Participated in religious or spiritual activities	NA	NA	64%	66%	Similar	NA	NA	Higher	Much higher
	Attended a City-sponsored event	NA	NA	62%	63%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate	NA	NA	16%	13%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Lower
	Contacted Hutchinson elected officials	NA	NA	15%	14%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Volunteered	63%	65%	49%	48%	Similar	NA	Much higher	Similar	Similar

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	Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)				2019 rating compared to 2015	Comparison to benchmark			
	2007	2011	2015	2019		2007	2011	2015	2019
Participated in a club	NA	NA	33%	29%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Talked to or visited with neighbors	NA	NA	95%	92%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Done a favor for a neighbor	NA	NA	83%	86%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Attended a local public meeting	27%	23%	14%	16%	Similar	NA	Much lower	Similar	Similar
Watched a local public meeting	61%	55%	33%	28%	Similar	NA	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Read or watched local news	NA	NA	88%	81%	Lower	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
Voted in local elections	73%	77%	84%	86%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar