

THE NCSTM
The National Citizen SurveyTM

Urbandale, IA

Comparisons by Geographic Subgroups

2018



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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. Communities conducting The NCS can choose from a number of optional services to customize the reporting of survey results. Urbandale’s 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 County (Polk County and Dallas County).

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 County. 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 A below, respondents in Districts 1 (A) and 2 (B) gave significantly lower ratings to overall quality of life than respondents in Districts 3 (C) and 4 (D), as denoted by the “A B” listed in the cell of the ratings for Districts 3 and 4. The overall quality of life rating in District 4 (D) also was significantly lower than that of District 3 (C) (as indicated by the “D” in the rating for District 3).

Figure 1: Community Characteristics – General (Example Only)

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	District				Overall (A)
	District 1 (A)	District 2 (B)	District 3 (C)	District 4 (D)	
The overall quality of life in ABC	73%	74%	79% A B D	76% A B	78%
Overall image or reputation of ABC	65%	66%	69% A B	71% A B C	70%
ABC as a place to live	80%	81%	85% A B D	82% A B	84%

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

Figure 2: Geographic Areas

County	Number of Completed Surveys
Polk County	378
Dallas County	139

Findings

Notable differences between Counties included the following:

- Residents in Polk County tended to give higher ratings than residents in Dallas County to aspects of Mobility, including the overall ease of getting to the places usually visited, traffic flow on major streets and ease of travel by car.
- Residents in Polk County were more likely to positively rate sense of community and recommend living in Urbandale to someone who asks. Further, residents in Polk County were more likely to have used the Urbandale public library or its services, have participated in religious or spiritual activities in Urbandale, attended a City-sponsored event or used Urbandale recreation centers or their services.
- Residents in Polk County tended to give higher ratings than residents in Dallas County to aspects of Governance; including the job Urbandale government does at welcoming citizen involvement, acting in the best interest of the community and treating all residents fairly.

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Table 1: Community Characteristics - General

	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	
	(A)	(B)	(A)
Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			
The overall quality of life in Urbandale	95%	96%	95%
Overall image or reputation of Urbandale	91%	89%	91%
Urbandale as a place to live	97%	96%	97%
Your neighborhood as a place to live	93%	99% A	94%
Urbandale as a place to raise children	98%	99%	98%
Urbandale as a place to retire	85% B	75%	83%
Overall appearance of Urbandale	92%	94%	92%

Table 2: Community Characteristics - Safety

	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	
	(A)	(B)	(A)
Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)			
Overall feeling of safety in Urbandale	93%	95%	94%
In your neighborhood during the day	97%	96%	97%
In Urbandale's downtown/commercial area during the day	95% B	86%	93%

Table 3: Community Characteristics - Mobility

	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	
	(A)	(B)	(A)
Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)			
Overall ease of getting to the places you usually have to visit	95% B	76%	90%
Traffic flow on major streets	81% B	69%	79%
Ease of travel by car in Urbandale	90% B	79%	88%
Ease of travel by public transportation in Urbandale	40%	22%	38%
Ease of travel by bicycle in Urbandale	71%	76%	73%
Ease of walking in Urbandale	83%	88%	85%
Availability of paths and walking trails	91%	91%	91%

Table 4: Community Characteristics - Natural Environment

	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	
	(A)	(B)	(A)
Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)			
Quality of overall natural environment in Urbandale	91%	88%	90%
Air quality	94%	97%	95%
Cleanliness of Urbandale	90%	96%	92%

Table 5: Community Characteristics - Built Environment

	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	
	(A)	(B)	(A)
Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)			
Overall "built environment" of Urbandale (including overall design, buildings, parks and transportation systems)	84%	82%	83%
Public places where people want to spend time	85% B	70%	82%
Variety of housing options	87%	89%	87%
Availability of affordable quality housing	71%	65%	70%
Overall quality of new development in Urbandale	77%	81%	78%

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Table 6: Community Characteristics - Economy

	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	
	(A)	(B)	(A)
Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)			
Overall economic health of Urbandale	90%	91%	91%
Urbandale as a place to work	92%	87%	91%
Urbandale as a place to visit	74% B	63%	71%
Employment opportunities	81%	83%	81%
Shopping opportunities	68% B	56%	65%
Cost of living in Urbandale	77%	72%	76%
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Urbandale	84%	81%	83%
Vibrant downtown/commercial area	48%	46%	48%

Table 7: Community Characteristics - Recreation and Wellness

	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	
	(A)	(B)	(A)
Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)			
Health and wellness opportunities in Urbandale	84%	83%	83%
Fitness opportunities (including exercise classes and paths or trails, etc.)	90%	88%	90%
Recreational opportunities	84%	79%	83%
Availability of affordable quality food	85%	81%	84%
Availability of affordable quality health care	84%	87%	85%
Availability of preventive health services	83%	87%	84%
Availability of affordable quality mental health care	53%	55%	54%

Table 8: Community Characteristics - Education and Enrichment

	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	
	(A)	(B)	(A)
Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)			
Overall opportunities for education and enrichment	82%	85%	83%
Availability of affordable quality child care/preschool	81%	68%	78%
K-12 education	90%	92%	90%
Adult educational opportunities	76%	76%	76%
Opportunities to attend cultural/arts/music activities	61%	60%	61%
Opportunities to participate in religious or spiritual events and activities	91%	88%	90%

Table 9: Community Characteristics - Community Engagement

	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	
	(A)	(B)	(A)
Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)			
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	73%	66%	72%
Opportunities to volunteer	82%	77%	82%
Opportunities to participate in community matters	80%	70%	78%
Openness and acceptance of the community toward people of diverse backgrounds	78%	68%	76%
Neighborliness of residents in Urbandale	78%	75%	77%

Table 10: Governance - General

	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	
	(A)	(B)	(A)
Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			
The City of Urbandale	91%	88%	91%
The value of services for the taxes paid to Urbandale	69%	64%	68%
The overall direction that Urbandale is taking	84%	77%	82%
The job Urbandale government does at welcoming citizen involvement	74% B	58%	71%
Overall confidence in Urbandale government	79%	71%	78%
Generally acting in the best interest of the community	81% B	70%	79%

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	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	
	(A)	(B)	(A)
Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			
Being honest	81%	80%	81%
Treating all residents fairly	82% B	70%	80%
Overall customer service by Urbandale employees (police, receptionists, planners, etc.)	91%	91%	91%
The Federal Government	50%	48%	50%

Table 11: Governance - Safety

	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	
	(A)	(B)	(A)
Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			
Police services	94%	90%	94%
Fire services	99%	98%	98%
Ambulance or emergency medical services	99%	98%	99%
Crime prevention	91%	82%	89%
Fire prevention and education	93%	93%	93%
Animal control	86%	87%	87%
Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations)	84%	76%	83%

Table 12: Governance - Mobility

	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	
	(A)	(B)	(A)
Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			
Traffic enforcement	84% B	71%	81%
Street repair	64%	67%	65%
Street cleaning	82%	84%	82%
Street lighting	81%	86%	82%
Snow removal	83%	79%	83%
Sidewalk maintenance	75%	73%	75%
Traffic signal timing	67%	65%	67%
Bus or transit services	53%	42%	53%

Table 13: Governance - Natural Environment

	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	
	(A)	(B)	(A)
Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			
Garbage collection	94%	96%	95%
Recycling	89%	90%	90%
Yard waste pick-up	92%	96%	93%
Drinking water	86%	85%	86%
Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts	74%	79%	75%
Urbandale open space	75%	85%	77%

Table 14: Governance - Built Environment

	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	
	(A)	(B)	(A)
Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			
Storm drainage	76%	76%	76%
Sewer services	88%	97% A	90%
Power (electric and/or gas) utility	91%	94%	92%
Water/garbage billing	80%	80%	80%
Land use, planning and zoning	75%	73%	75%
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc.)	67%	67%	67%

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Table 15: Governance - Economy

	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	(A)
	(A)	(B)	
Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			
Economic development	83%	84%	84%

Table 16: Governance - Recreation and Wellness

	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	(A)
	(A)	(B)	
Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			
City parks	90%	88%	90%
Recreation programs or classes	81%	81%	81%
Recreation centers or facilities	78%	82%	78%

Table 17: Governance - Education and Enrichment

	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	(A)
	(A)	(B)	
Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			
Public library services	97%	96%	97%
City-sponsored special events	81%	75%	81%

Table 18: Governance - Community Engagement

	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	(A)
	(A)	(B)	
Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			
Public information services	83%	92%	85%

Table 19: Participation General

	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	(A)
	(A)	(B)	
Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)			
Sense of community	81% B	62%	77%
Recommend living in Urbandale to someone who asks	97% B	93%	97%
Remain in Urbandale for the next five years	94%	93%	94%
Contacted the City of Urbandale (in-person, phone, email or web) for help or information	47%	45%	47%

Table 20: Participation - Safety

	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	(A)
	(A)	(B)	
Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)			
Was NOT the victim of a crime	95%	99%	96%
Did NOT report a crime	86%	92%	87%
Stocked supplies in preparation for an emergency	22%	21%	22%

Table 21: Participation - Mobility

	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	(A)
	(A)	(B)	
Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)			
Walked or biked instead of driving	54%	48%	52%
Carpooled with other adults or children instead of driving alone	30%	37%	31%
Used bus or other public transportation instead of driving	5%	2%	4%

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Table 22: Participation - Natural Environment

	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	
	(A)	(B)	(A)
Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)			
Recycle at home	92%	95%	92%
Made efforts to make your home more energy efficient	72%	74%	73%
Made efforts to conserve water	69%	77%	71%

Table 23: Participation - Built Environment

	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	
	(A)	(B)	(A)
Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)			
NOT under housing cost stress	84%	91%	86%
Did NOT observe a code violation	68%	67%	68%

Table 24: Participation - Economy

	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	
	(A)	(B)	(A)
Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)			
Purchase goods or services from a business located in Urbandale	97%	93%	96%
Economy will have positive impact on income	34%	43%	35%
Work in Urbandale	36%	37%	36%

Table 25: Participation - Recreation and Wellness

	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	
	(A)	(B)	(A)
Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)			
Used Urbandale recreation centers or their services	45% B	33%	43%
Visited a neighborhood park or City park	90%	89%	90%
Eat at least 5 portions of fruits and vegetables a day	81%	85%	82%
Participate in moderate or vigorous physical activity	84%	89%	85%
Reported being in "very good" or "excellent" health	63%	78% A	66%

Table 26: Participation - Education and Enrichment

	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	
	(A)	(B)	(A)
Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)			
Used Urbandale public library or their services	74% B	60%	71%
Participated in religious or spiritual activities in Urbandale	41% B	29%	38%
Attended a City-sponsored event	53% B	40%	50%

Table 27: Participation - Community Engagement

	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	
	(A)	(B)	(A)
Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)			
Campaigned or advocated for an issue, cause or candidate	30%	22%	28%
Contacted Urbandale elected officials (in-person, phone, email or web) to express your opinion	11%	13%	12%
Volunteered your time to some group/activity in Urbandale	30%	24%	29%
Participated in a club	19%	14%	18%
Talked to or visited with your immediate neighbors	92%	99% A	94%
Done a favor for a neighbor	83%	86%	84%
Attended a local public meeting	17%	15%	16%
Watched (online or on television) a local public meeting	13%	13%	13%
Read or watch local news (via television, paper, computer, etc.)	83%	84%	84%

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	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	(A)
	(A)	(B)	
Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)			
Vote in local elections	86%	89%	87%

Table 28: Community Focus Areas

	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	(A)
	(A)	(B)	
Percent rating positively (e.g., essential/very important)			
Overall feeling of safety in Urbandale	93%	93%	93%
Overall ease of getting to the places you usually have to visit	84%	84%	84%
Quality of overall natural environment in Urbandale	87% B	73%	84%
Overall "built environment" of Urbandale (including overall design, buildings, parks and transportation systems)	73%	67%	72%
Health and wellness opportunities in Urbandale	73%	66%	71%
Overall opportunities for education and enrichment	75%	70%	74%
Overall economic health of Urbandale	91%	88%	90%
Sense of community	82%	84%	82%

Table 29: Urbandale Police Department Ratings

	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	(A)
	(A)	(B)	
Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			
Enforcing the law	93%	88%	92%
Using appropriate (not excessive) force on suspects	90%	94%	91%
Protecting residents from violent crime	95%	95%	95%
Treating all residents fairly	87%	91%	88%
Customer service	93%	90%	92%

Table 30: Information Received from the City of Urbandale

	County		Overall
	Polk County	Dallas County	(A)
	(A)	(B)	
Percent rating positively (e.g., about the right amount)			
Educational and recreational classes, programs and activities (offered by Parks & Recreation and the Public Library)	74% B	62%	72%
General City events and programs (e.g., National Night Out, Kid's Fire Academy, Fourth of July)	68%	66%	68%
Parks, trails and rental facilities locations/availability	64%	57%	63%
City services (e.g., trash, permits, streets, library etc.)	80%	79%	80%
Street and utility construction projects	52%	50%	52%
City policies, codes and laws	63%	70%	64%
Residential and commercial development projects	48%	52%	48%
Business news (new businesses, expansions, etc.)	57%	56%	58%
City Council and Board meeting agendas and minutes	57%	59%	57%
Elections and voter information	73%	77%	74%
News and events happening in my neighborhood	60%	50%	58%
Messages from City leadership	59%	57%	59%
Profiles of Urbandale residents	69%	74%	70%
Volunteer opportunities	59%	54%	59%