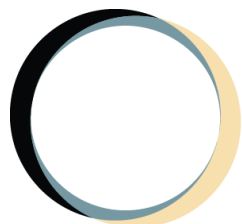# THE NCS™
The National Citizen Survey™

Oak Park, IL
Comparisons by Geographic Subgroups

2017

NRC
National Research Center Inc

ICMA
Leaders at the Core of Better Communities

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. This report discusses differences in opinion of survey respondents by geographic quadrant.

Responses in the following tables 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 attended a public meeting more than once a month. ANOVA and chi-square tests of significance were applied to these comparisons of survey questions. A "p-value" of 0.05 or less indicates that there is less than a 5% probability that differences observed between quadrants are due to chance; or in other words, a greater than 95% probability that the differences observed are "real." Where differences were statistically significant, they have been shaded grey.

The margin of error for all respondents (476 completed surveys) is generally no greater than plus or minus five percentage points around any given percent. The margin of error for subgroups is less precise. For subgroups of approximately 100 respondents, the margin of error is plus or minus 10 percentage points. Four quadrants were tracked for comparison and the number of completed surveys for each are in the figure below. (Please see *Technical Appendices* provided under separate cover for a map of the four quadrants.)

Figure 1: Geographic Areas

Quadrant	Number of Completed Surveys
Northwest	116
Northeast	122
Southeast	122
Southwest	116

Notable differences between quadrants included the following:

- Residents living in the Southwest quadrant of Oak Park tended to give lower quality ratings than residents in other quadrants to various characteristics of the community such as overall quality of life, overall image or reputation of Oak Park, Oak Park as a place to raise children and as a place to retire.
- Few differences emerged related to aspects of local leadership and governance; however, those residing in the Northeast quadrant offered the strongest ratings for the value of services for the taxes paid to Oak Park and to the overall direction that Oak Park is taking.
- Participation ratings were mixed across geographic quadrants; residents living in the Southeast quadrant were least likely to have reported a crime or feel the economy would have a positive impact on their income but most likely to have participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity.

Table 1: Community Characteristics - General

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Quadrant				Overall
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	
The overall quality of life in Oak Park	86%	89%	92%	74%	84%
Overall image or reputation of Oak Park	86%	93%	88%	77%	85%
Oak Park as a place to live	89%	94%	92%	85%	90%
Your neighborhood as a place to live	94%	86%	85%	82%	87%
Oak Park as a place to raise children	94%	93%	94%	82%	90%
Oak Park as a place to retire	54%	60%	44%	36%	47%
Overall appearance of Oak Park	90%	91%	89%	81%	87%

Table 2: Community Characteristics - Safety

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	Quadrant				Overall
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	
Overall feeling of safety in Oak Park	81%	76%	71%	80%	77%
In your neighborhood during the day	98%	91%	93%	84%	91%
In Oak Park's downtown/commercial area during the day	94%	95%	95%	90%	93%
In your neighborhood after dark	78%	56%	66%	71%	69%
In Oak Park's downtown/commercial area after dark	73%	78%	80%	72%	75%

Table 3: Community Characteristics - Mobility

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	Quadrant				Overall
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	
Overall ease of getting to the places you usually have to visit	69%	70%	67%	75%	71%
Traffic flow on major streets	25%	30%	35%	37%	32%
Ease of public parking	30%	26%	23%	27%	26%
Ease of travel by car in Oak Park	40%	41%	50%	47%	45%
Ease of travel by bicycle in Oak Park	62%	64%	70%	65%	66%
Ease of walking in Oak Park	89%	87%	86%	88%	87%
Availability of paths and walking trails	54%	61%	50%	60%	56%
Ease of travel by bus in Oak Park	60%	74%	55%	52%	59%
Ease of travel by rail in Oak Park	92%	92%	82%	86%	87%

Table 4: Community Characteristics - Natural Environment

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	Quadrant				Overall
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	
Quality of overall natural environment in Oak Park	84%	90%	86%	81%	85%
Air quality	71%	83%	66%	73%	73%
Cleanliness of Oak Park	83%	91%	85%	70%	81%

Table 5: Community Characteristics - Built Environment

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	Quadrant				Overall
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	
Overall "built environment" of Oak Park (including overall design, buildings, parks and transportation systems)	75%	76%	67%	71%	72%
Public places where people want to spend time	79%	87%	86%	82%	83%
Variety of housing options	51%	61%	43%	61%	54%
Availability of affordable quality housing	32%	22%	17%	22%	23%
Overall quality of new development in Oak Park	53%	63%	51%	48%	52%

Table 6: Community Characteristics - Economy

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	Quadrant				Overall
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	
Overall economic health of Oak Park	66%	78%	67%	66%	68%
Oak Park as a place to work	59%	62%	57%	51%	57%
Oak Park as a place to visit	93%	90%	76%	78%	83%
Employment opportunities	39%	36%	22%	39%	33%
Shopping opportunities	64%	69%	61%	72%	67%
Cost of living in Oak Park	16%	23%	11%	17%	16%
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Oak Park	70%	74%	67%	61%	67%
Vibrant downtown/commercial area	63%	77%	76%	70%	71%

Table 7: Community Characteristics - Recreation and Wellness

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	Quadrant				Overall
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	
Health and wellness opportunities in Oak Park	83%	89%	81%	80%	83%
Fitness opportunities (including exercise classes and paths or trails, etc.)	67%	82%	59%	63%	66%
Recreational opportunities	69%	80%	72%	66%	71%
Availability of affordable quality food	79%	84%	73%	67%	75%
Availability of affordable quality health care	81%	77%	66%	69%	73%
Availability of preventive health services	79%	78%	70%	76%	76%
Availability of affordable quality mental health care	66%	65%	52%	58%	60%

Table 8: Community Characteristics - Education and Enrichment

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	Quadrant				Overall
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	
Overall opportunities for education and enrichment	86%	92%	80%	78%	83%
Availability of affordable quality child care/preschool	51%	64%	61%	47%	54%
Adult educational opportunities	69%	78%	61%	59%	65%
Opportunities to attend cultural/arts/music activities	77%	87%	73%	77%	78%
Opportunities to participate in religious or spiritual events and activities	91%	96%	83%	84%	88%

Table 9: Community Characteristics - Community Engagement

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)	Quadrant				Overall
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	80%	84%	81%	82%	82%
Opportunities to volunteer	83%	88%	79%	80%	82%
Opportunities to participate in community matters	77%	89%	82%	74%	79%
Openness and acceptance of the community toward people of diverse backgrounds	85%	84%	72%	65%	75%
Neighborliness of residents in Oak Park	79%	80%	66%	67%	72%

Table 10: Governance - General

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Quadrant				Overall
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	
The Village of Oak Park	77%	76%	77%	73%	76%
The value of services for the taxes paid to Oak Park	44%	55%	42%	34%	43%
The overall direction that Oak Park is taking	44%	60%	47%	35%	45%
The job Oak Park government does at welcoming citizen involvement	58%	64%	47%	50%	54%
Overall confidence in Oak Park government	49%	56%	40%	42%	46%
Generally acting in the best interest of the community	52%	56%	44%	49%	50%
Being honest	45%	57%	44%	42%	46%
Treating all residents fairly	57%	61%	56%	50%	56%
Overall customer service by Oak Park employees (police, receptionists, planners, etc.)	71%	77%	66%	74%	72%
The Federal Government	25%	35%	34%	25%	29%

Table 11: Governance - Safety

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Quadrant				Overall
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	
Police services	93%	87%	85%	83%	87%
Fire services	96%	96%	95%	88%	94%
Ambulance or emergency medical services	94%	96%	97%	87%	93%
Crime prevention	75%	72%	62%	64%	68%
Fire prevention and education	83%	87%	73%	78%	80%
Animal control	69%	87%	73%	67%	72%
Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations)	60%	59%	56%	58%	58%

Table 12: Governance - Mobility

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Quadrant				Overall
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	
Traffic enforcement	49%	60%	54%	48%	52%
Street repair	45%	61%	54%	43%	50%
Street cleaning	72%	76%	81%	58%	71%
Street lighting	69%	64%	74%	67%	69%
Snow removal	69%	64%	71%	64%	67%
Sidewalk maintenance	61%	63%	66%	57%	61%
Traffic signal timing	51%	58%	64%	44%	54%
Bus or transit services	69%	76%	73%	74%	73%

Table 13: Governance - Natural Environment

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Quadrant				Overall
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	
Garbage collection	88%	85%	79%	81%	83%
Recycling	83%	87%	78%	79%	81%
Yard waste pick-up	77%	81%	80%	73%	77%
Drinking water	79%	80%	84%	79%	81%
Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts	55%	63%	50%	50%	53%
Oak Park open space	66%	72%	53%	53%	60%

Table 14: Governance - Built Environment

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Quadrant				Overall
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	
Storm drainage	53%	51%	63%	50%	54%
Sewer services	78%	64%	74%	67%	71%
Power (electric and/or gas) utility	87%	85%	75%	79%	81%
Utility billing	84%	79%	69%	67%	74%
Land use, planning and zoning	43%	62%	48%	36%	46%
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc.)	59%	56%	65%	42%	56%
Cable television	65%	66%	64%	62%	64%

Table 15: Governance - Economy

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Quadrant				Overall
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	
Economic development	57%	56%	51%	50%	53%

Table 16: Governance - Recreation and Wellness

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Quadrant				Overall
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	
Village parks	90%	93%	91%	84%	89%
Recreation centers or facilities	85%	91%	92%	82%	87%
Health services	76%	84%	83%	78%	80%

Table 17: Governance - Education and Enrichment

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Quadrant				Overall
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	
Public library services	94%	96%	95%	89%	93%
Village-sponsored special events	80%	83%	79%	70%	77%

Table 18: Governance - Community Engagement

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)	Quadrant				Overall
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	
Public information services	74%	83%	82%	74%	78%

Table 19: Participation General

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	Quadrant				Overall
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	
Sense of community	81%	80%	77%	70%	76%
Recommend living in Oak Park to someone who asks	85%	92%	89%	85%	87%
Remain in Oak Park for the next five years	78%	90%	71%	84%	80%
Contacted the Village of Oak Park (in-person, phone, email or web) for help or information	70%	73%	72%	58%	67%

Table 20: Participation - Safety

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	Quadrant				Overall
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	
Was NOT the victim of a crime	92%	91%	86%	88%	89%
Did NOT report a crime	81%	71%	63%	74%	72%
Stocked supplies in preparation for an emergency	24%	20%	23%	17%	21%
Called for police service in Oak Park	29%	34%	40%	31%	34%
Called for Oak Park fire/EMS	12%	6%	8%	13%	10%

Table 21: Participation - Mobility

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	Quadrant				Overall
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	
Walked or biked instead of driving	87%	87%	87%	85%	87%
Carpooled with other adults or children instead of driving alone	47%	46%	43%	54%	48%
Used bus, rail, subway or other public transportation instead of driving	75%	74%	88%	77%	79%

Table 22: Participation - Natural Environment

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	Quadrant				
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	Overall
Recycle at home	92%	87%	90%	95%	91%
Made efforts to make your home more energy efficient	78%	76%	85%	71%	77%
Made efforts to conserve water	80%	79%	83%	73%	78%

Table 23: Participation - Built Environment

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	Quadrant				
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	Overall
NOT under housing cost stress	69%	72%	54%	66%	65%
Did NOT observe a code violation	72%	66%	56%	73%	67%

Table 24: Participation - Economy

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	Quadrant				
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	Overall
Purchase goods or services from a business located in Oak Park	95%	93%	96%	91%	94%
Economy will have positive impact on income	26%	24%	13%	26%	22%
Work in Oak Park	37%	30%	30%	20%	28%

Table 25: Participation - Recreation and Wellness

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	Quadrant				
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	Overall
Used Oak Park recreation centers or their services	53%	64%	62%	56%	59%
Visited a neighborhood park or Village park	92%	89%	88%	85%	88%
Eat at least 5 portions of fruits and vegetables a day	90%	83%	85%	87%	86%
Participate in moderate or vigorous physical activity	88%	74%	92%	87%	86%
Reported being in "very good" or "excellent" health	79%	70%	70%	64%	70%

Table 26: Participation - Education and Enrichment

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	Quadrant				
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	Overall
Used Oak Park public libraries or their services	83%	82%	86%	84%	84%
Participated in religious or spiritual activities in Oak Park	46%	40%	41%	44%	43%
Attended a Village-sponsored event	65%	69%	63%	55%	62%

Table 27: Participation - Community Engagement

Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)	Quadrant				Overall
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	
Campaigned or advocated for an issue, cause or candidate	33%	37%	38%	27%	33%
Contacted Oak Park elected officials (in-person, phone, email or web) to express your opinion	19%	30%	24%	24%	24%
Volunteered your time to some group/activity in Oak Park	43%	47%	46%	46%	45%
Participated in a club	33%	22%	20%	34%	28%
Talked to or visited with your immediate neighbors	92%	90%	89%	86%	89%
Done a favor for a neighbor	91%	79%	82%	83%	84%
Attended a local public meeting	31%	24%	32%	22%	27%
Watched (online or on television) a local public meeting	18%	22%	18%	23%	21%
Read or watch local news (via television, paper, computer, etc.)	88%	88%	84%	88%	87%
Vote in local elections	81%	87%	93%	88%	88%

Table 28: Community Focus Areas

Percent rating positively (e.g., essential/very important)	Quadrant				Overall
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	
Overall feeling of safety in Oak Park	93%	93%	93%	86%	90%
Overall ease of getting to the places you usually have to visit	80%	73%	83%	79%	79%
Quality of overall natural environment in Oak Park	81%	84%	80%	78%	80%
Overall "built environment" of Oak Park (including overall design, buildings, parks and transportation systems)	85%	63%	81%	72%	76%
Health and wellness opportunities in Oak Park	55%	75%	64%	63%	64%
Overall opportunities for education and enrichment	66%	85%	84%	76%	78%
Overall economic health of Oak Park	86%	96%	91%	77%	87%
Sense of community	77%	85%	82%	82%	81%

Table 29: Oak Park Specific Services

Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Oak Park (Percent rating as "excellent" or "good").	Quadrant				Overall
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	
Services to low-income people	45%	34%	40%	38%	40%
Leaf pick-up	72%	72%	69%	59%	67%
Care of trees along the parkway	76%	75%	79%	69%	74%
Alley maintenance	61%	56%	47%	52%	54%
Parking services	38%	44%	41%	35%	39%
Online Village services	68%	69%	66%	56%	64%
Building permit review	38%	43%	52%	23%	40%
Oak Park adjudication court	48%	38%	50%	28%	41%

Table 30: Importance of Maintaining Service levels

Please rate how important, if at all, it is for the Village of Oak Park to maintain each of the following services at least at current levels, as compared with cutting the levels of service (Percent rating as "essential" or "very important").	Quadrant				
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	Overall
Business retention, development, and attraction	84%	84%	83%	80%	82%
Care of trees and landscaping in the parkways	86%	80%	86%	81%	83%
Maintenance of the public way, street cleaning, snow plowing	86%	96%	97%	96%	94%
Fire and emergency medical assistance	89%	98%	95%	95%	94%
Housing programs	47%	76%	65%	71%	65%
Operation and administration of parking services	57%	62%	67%	60%	61%
Partner agencies that promote or support tourism, housing and the arts in Oak Park	47%	61%	57%	50%	53%
Police protection	95%	95%	93%	92%	94%
Public health services	72%	88%	77%	81%	79%
Environmental sustainability programs and events	69%	83%	75%	73%	74%

Table 31: Problems in Oak Park

To what degree, if at all, are each of the following a problem in Oak Park? (Percent rating as "minor" to "major problem").	Quadrant				
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	Overall
Crime	83%	90%	90%	88%	88%
Disorderly youth	78%	70%	72%	77%	75%
Drugs	84%	80%	84%	81%	82%
Graffiti	72%	51%	50%	62%	59%
Homelessness	87%	76%	79%	83%	82%
Noise	66%	49%	59%	67%	61%
Panhandling	91%	68%	72%	86%	80%
Run-down buildings and houses	63%	52%	68%	65%	63%
Traffic in Oak Park	99%	93%	94%	85%	92%

Table 32: Information Sources

How much information about Oak Park, if any, do you get from each of the following sources? (Percent rating as "a lot" or "some").	Quadrant				
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	Overall
Village of Oak Park website	76%	81%	81%	77%	78%
Village of Oak Park Facebook & Twitter pages	27%	23%	26%	21%	24%
Friends and neighbors	91%	90%	90%	87%	89%
Local newspapers	84%	78%	83%	78%	81%
Village of Oak Park email news ("e-News")	47%	44%	34%	32%	38%
Village of Oak Park OP/FYI newsletter and other Village mailings	86%	85%	82%	81%	83%
VOP-TV, the Village's cable TV channel	17%	20%	16%	18%	18%
Local online news sources	59%	51%	54%	44%	52%

Table 33: Value of Services for Taxes Paid

Please rate the value of services for the taxes paid to each of the following taxing bodies/percent of your tax bill (Percent rating as "excellent" or "good").	Quadrant				
	Northwest	Northeast	Southeast	Southwest	Overall
Elementary School District (38.88%)	76%	78%	69%	74%	74%
OPRF High School District (24.59%)	79%	82%	67%	64%	72%
Village of Oak Park (10.27%)	66%	67%	61%	53%	61%
Oak Park Fire & Police Pensions (5.46%)	81%	76%	60%	69%	71%
Oak Park Public Library (4.51%)	90%	88%	83%	85%	86%
Park District of Oak Park (4.55%)	89%	85%	84%	75%	83%
Cook County (4.15%)	26%	46%	30%	26%	30%
Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (2.83%)	55%	70%	51%	51%	55%
Oak Park Township (2.35%)	62%	69%	57%	56%	60%
Triton Community College District (2.30%)	51%	62%	48%	41%	49%
Mosquito Abatement District (.12%)	60%	69%	61%	50%	59%