



THE NCSTM
The National Citizen SurveyTM

Meridian Township, MI

Trends over Time

2015



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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. 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 2015 ratings for Meridian Township to its previous survey results in 2003, 2006, 2009 and 2012. Additional reports and technical appendices are available under separate cover.

Trend data for Meridian Township 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 eight percentage points between the 2012 and 2015 surveys, otherwise the comparison between 2012 and 2015 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 Meridian Township for 2015 generally remained stable. Of the 79 items for which comparisons were available, 64 items were rated similarly in 2012 and 2015; five items showed a decrease in ratings and 10 showed an increase in ratings. Notable trends over time included the following:

- Seven Community Characteristics received a higher rating in 2015 compared to 2012 while three received a lower rating. Increases were seen for traffic flow; paths and walking trails; overall natural environment; shopping opportunities; employment opportunities; overall image and the township as a place to work. Decreased ratings were seen for new development in the township, opportunities to volunteer and social events and activities.
- More residents in 2015 felt the economy will have a positive impact on their income compared to 2012 and more gave positive ratings to economic development.
- Residents gave more positive ratings to services provided by Meridian Township overall in 2015 compared to 2012, but the rating for storm drainage decreased while most individual service ratings remained stable overtime.

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Table 1: Community Quality General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)					2015 rating compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark				
	2003	2006	2009	2012	2015		2003	2006	2009	2012	2015
Overall quality of life	89%	90%	88%	87%	87%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Higher	Similar
Overall image	NA	NA	76%	79%	91%	Higher	NA	NA	Much higher	Higher	Higher
Place to live	91%	92%	90%	93%	93%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Higher	Higher	Similar
Neighborhood	88%	87%	88%	84%	89%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
Place to raise children	89%	94%	90%	91%	93%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher
Place to retire	56%	58%	58%	65%	66%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Overall appearance	80%	75%	72%	76%	82%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar

Table 2: Community Characteristics by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)					2015 rating compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark				
		2003	2006	2009	2012	2015		2003	2006	2009	2012	2015
Safety	Overall feeling of safety	NA	NA	NA	NA	92%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Safe in neighborhood	97%	97%	99%	95%	98%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Much higher	Higher	Similar
	Safe downtown/commercial area	94%	93%	96%	94%	96%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Much higher	Higher	Similar
	Overall ease of travel	NA	NA	NA	NA	88%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Higher
	Paths and walking trails	NA	NA	63%	69%	78%	Higher	NA	NA	Higher	Higher	Similar
	Ease of walking	NA	63%	65%	68%	70%	Similar	NA	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Travel by bicycle	54%	53%	53%	59%	54%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar
	Travel by public transportation	NA	NA	NA	NA	57%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Mobility	Travel by car	64%	65%	64%	74%	81%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Higher	Much higher	Higher
	Public parking	NA	NA	NA	NA	86%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Much higher
	Traffic flow	50%	54%	55%	61%	70%	Higher	NA	NA	Much higher	Much higher	Higher
	Overall natural environment	NA	NA	72%	77%	88%	Higher	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Higher
Natural Environment	Cleanliness	NA	NA	78%	80%	87%	Similar	NA	NA	Higher	Higher	Higher
	Air quality	NA	NA	NA	NA	91%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Higher
	Overall built environment	NA	NA	NA	NA	67%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Built Environment	New development in Meridian Township	NA	NA	53%	56%	47%	Lower	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Affordable quality housing	40%	42%	50%	61%	56%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Higher
	Housing options	NA	NA	63%	70%	75%	Similar	NA	NA	Higher	Much higher	Higher

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)					2015 rating compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark				
		2003	2006	2009	2012	2015		2003	2006	2009	2012	2015
Economy	Public places	NA	NA	NA	NA	68%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Overall economic health	NA	NA	NA	NA	73%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Vibrant downtown/commercial area	NA	NA	NA	NA	30%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Lower
	Business and services	NA	NA	69%	69%	71%	Similar	NA	NA	Much higher	Higher	Similar
	Cost of living	NA	NA	NA	NA	55%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Shopping opportunities	83%	81%	71%	69%	79%	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher
	Employment opportunities	NA	NA	22%	40%	51%	Higher	NA	NA	Lower	Higher	Higher
	Place to visit	NA	NA	NA	NA	58%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Place to work	NA	70%	66%	67%	76%	Higher	NA	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher
	Recreation and Wellness	Health and wellness	NA	NA	NA	NA	78%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Mental health care		NA	NA	NA	NA	58%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Higher
Preventive health services		NA	NA	NA	NA	76%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Health care		NA	NA	NA	NA	75%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Higher
Food		NA	NA	NA	NA	81%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Higher
Recreational opportunities		64%	66%	65%	70%	68%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar	Higher	Similar
Fitness opportunities		NA	NA	NA	NA	80%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Religious or spiritual events and activities	NA	NA	NA	76%	76%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Cultural/arts/music activities	NA	54%	50%	56%	55%	Similar	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Adult education	NA	NA	NA	NA	72%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	K-12 education	NA	NA	NA	NA	95%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Much higher
	Child care/preschool	NA	NA	NA	NA	71%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Higher
Community Engagement	Social events and activities	NA	NA	61%	61%	52%	Lower	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Neighborliness	NA	NA	NA	NA	69%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Openness and acceptance	69%	68%	73%	76%	70%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
	Opportunities to participate in community matters	NA	NA	59%	66%	59%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Opportunities to volunteer	NA	NA	63%	73%	64%	Lower	NA	NA	Lower	Similar	Similar

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Table 3: Governance General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)					2015 rating compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark				
	2003	2006	2009	2012	2015		2003	2006	2009	2012	2015
Services provided by Meridian Township	81%	77%	73%	74%	85%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Customer service	83%	84%	82%	80%	83%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
Value of services for taxes paid	NA	57%	47%	57%	54%	Similar	NA	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
Overall direction	47%	48%	48%	57%	59%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
Welcoming citizen involvement	57%	56%	47%	49%	48%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Similar
Confidence in Township government	NA	NA	NA	NA	50%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Acting in the best interest of Meridian Township	NA	NA	NA	NA	55%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Being honest	NA	NA	NA	NA	66%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Treating all residents fairly	NA	NA	NA	NA	61%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Services provided by the Federal Government	49%	30%	39%	45%	42%	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar	Higher	Similar

Table 4: Governance by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)					2015 rating compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark				
		2003	2006	2009	2012	2015		2003	2006	2009	2012	2015
Safety	Police	89%	87%	91%	84%	90%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Similar
	Fire	96%	96%	96%	90%	97%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Ambulance/EMS	96%	94%	97%	94%	96%	Similar	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Similar
	Crime prevention	83%	85%	82%	81%	82%	Similar	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
	Fire prevention	86%	82%	87%	82%	83%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Higher	Similar
	Animal control	NA	NA	NA	NA	65%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Emergency preparedness	NA	NA	64%	59%	62%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Traffic enforcement	75%	66%	77%	72%	74%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Much higher	Higher	Similar
	Street repair	32%	32%	9%	26%	30%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Street cleaning	49%	47%	32%	49%	53%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Similar
	Street lighting	NA	51%	52%	55%	52%	Similar	NA	Similar	Lower	Lower	Similar
	Snow removal	58%	56%	49%	49%	56%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Much lower	Much lower	Similar

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)					2015 rating compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark				
		2003	2006	2009	2012	2015		2003	2006	2009	2012	2015
	Sidewalk maintenance	59%	56%	54%	55%	57%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Traffic signal timing	57%	58%	NA	54%	55%	Similar	Similar	Higher	NA	Similar	Similar
	Bus or transit services	NA	64%	69%	61%	67%	Similar	NA	Similar	Much higher	Higher	Similar
Natural Environment	Garbage collection	NA	NA	NA	NA	89%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Recycling	53%	NA	67%	67%	62%	Similar	Much lower	NA	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Yard waste pick-up	NA	NA	NA	NA	51%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Lower
	Drinking water	81%	74%	85%	86%	87%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher
	Natural areas preservation	NA	NA	67%	71%	71%	Similar	NA	NA	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
	Open space	NA	NA	NA	NA	68%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Storm drainage	71%	63%	59%	71%	61%	Lower	Higher	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar
	Sewer services	87%	79%	85%	85%	84%	Similar	Much higher	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar
	Power utility	NA	NA	NA	NA	78%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Utility billing	NA	NA	NA	NA	74%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Built Environment	Land use, planning and zoning	35%	42%	47%	51%	52%	Similar	Much lower	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Code enforcement	64%	63%	59%	51%	55%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Similar	Similar
	Cable television	52%	44%	58%	58%	60%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
Economy	Economic development	52%	43%	34%	41%	53%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
Recreation and Wellness	Township parks	87%	88%	89%	90%	89%	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Much higher	Higher	Similar
	Recreation programs	79%	85%	83%	79%	75%	Similar	Similar	Higher	Much higher	Higher	Similar
	Recreation centers	NA	NA	NA	74%	71%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar
	Health services	NA	NA	NA	NA	76%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Special events	NA	NA	NA	NA	60%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Public libraries	77%	81%	84%	86%	88%	Similar	Lower	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Public information	NA	NA	NA	68%	63%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	Similar	Similar

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Table 5: Participation General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)					2015 rating compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark				
	2003	2006	2009	2012	2015		2003	2006	2009	2012	2015
Sense of community	58%	59%	62%	66%	60%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Recommend Meridian Township	NA	NA	92%	94%	93%	Similar	NA	NA	Higher	Higher	Similar
Remain in Meridian Township	NA	NA	77%	85%	81%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Similar	Similar
Contacted Meridian Township employees	54%	52%	51%	46%	40%	Similar	NA	NA	Much lower	Lower	Similar

Table 6: Participation by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)					2015 rating compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark				
		2003	2006	2009	2012	2015		2003	2006	2009	2012	2015
Safety	Stocked supplies for an emergency	NA	NA	NA	NA	26%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Lower
	Did NOT report a crime	NA	NA	NA	NA	89%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Higher
	Was NOT the victim of a crime	88%	92%	92%	93%	96%	Similar	NA	NA	Much higher	Higher	Similar
Mobility	Used public transportation instead of driving	NA	NA	NA	NA	28%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Carpooled instead of driving alone	NA	NA	NA	NA	42%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Walked or biked instead of driving	NA	NA	NA	NA	58%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Natural Environment	Conserved water	NA	NA	NA	NA	73%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Made home more energy efficient	NA	NA	NA	NA	81%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Recycled at home	73%	64%	79%	77%	79%	Similar	NA	NA	Similar	Lower	Similar
Built Environment	Did NOT observe a code violation	NA	NA	NA	NA	68%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Higher
	NOT under housing cost stress	NA	NA	72%	73%	81%	Similar	NA	NA	Much higher	Much higher	Higher
Economy	Purchased goods or services in Meridian Township	NA	NA	NA	NA	97%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Economy will have positive impact on income	20%	19%	11%	20%	29%	Higher	NA	NA	Much lower	Similar	Similar
	Work in Meridian Township	NA	NA	NA	NA	25%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Lower
Recreation and Wellness	Used Meridian Township recreation centers	56%	54%	NA	NA	56%	Similar	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Visited a Township park	90%	85%	89%	87%	82%	Similar	NA	NA	Higher	Similar	Similar

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		Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)					2015 rating compared to 2012	Comparison to benchmark				
		2003	2006	2009	2012	2015		2003	2006	2009	2012	2015
	Ate 5 portions of fruits and vegetables	NA	NA	NA	NA	76%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity	NA	NA	NA	NA	84%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	In very good to excellent health	NA	NA	NA	NA	72%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Used Meridian Township public libraries	62%	71%	68%	69%	68%	Similar	NA	NA	Lower	Lower	Similar
	Participated in religious or spiritual activities	NA	NA	NA	NA	33%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Lower
	Attended a Township-sponsored event	NA	NA	NA	NA	44%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
Community Engagement	Campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate	NA	NA	NA	NA	15%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Contacted Meridian Township elected officials	NA	NA	NA	NA	11%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Volunteered	35%	34%	32%	32%	28%	Similar	NA	NA	Much lower	Much lower	Lower
	Participated in a club	NA	NA	NA	NA	26%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Talked to or visited with neighbors	NA	NA	NA	NA	88%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Done a favor for a neighbor	NA	NA	NA	NA	73%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Attended a local public meeting	24%	22%	20%	20%	16%	Similar	NA	NA	Much lower	Lower	Similar
	Watched a local public meeting	51%	50%	46%	34%	24%	Lower	NA	NA	Similar	Lower	Similar
	Read or watched local news	NA	NA	NA	NA	79%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Similar
	Voted in local elections	78%	66%	88%	74%	78%	Similar	NA	NA	Much higher	Similar	Similar