



City of Cincinnati Resident Survey Findings

Presented by ETC Institute

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City of Cincinnati Resident Survey Overview

Purpose

- To objectively assess and collect opinions and feedback on city programs and services
- To gather input that will be used to develop priorities to improve and expand existing programs and services
- To track the City's performance against itself over time as well as national and regional benchmarks

Methodology

- Administered by mail, phone, and online with follow-ups by text, email, and social media
- Sample designed to ensure 1,200 completed surveys that are statistically valid based on the City's population according to the U.S. Census with goals for geographic sub areas
- 1,234 completed surveys collected
- MOE: +/-2.78% at 95% level of confidence

Survey Respondent Demographics

Q38. Gender	City of Cincinnati Survey	U.S. Census for Cincinnati
Male	49.5%	48.4%
Female	50.3%	51.6%
Prefer to Self-Describe*	0.2%	-
<i>*Not comparable to US Census</i>		

Q36. Income	City of Cincinnati Survey	U.S. Census for Cincinnati
Under \$30k	26.4%	Mean: \$52,909
\$30k - \$59,999	24.9%	
\$60k - \$99,999	22.8%	
\$100k +	25.9%	
<i>*Census provides mean</i>		

Q35. Race/Ethnicity	City of Cincinnati Survey	U.S. Census for Cincinnati
Asian or Asian Indian	2.1%	2.7%
Black or African American	34.9%	36.5%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.6%	0.2%
White	51.3%	49.0%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.2%	0.0%
Hispanic or Latino	5.0%	6.1%
Other*	1.2%	-
<i>*Not comparable to US Census</i>		

A Citywide Shift in Perceptions

- Largest declines in positive satisfaction occurred primarily in perception-based measures
- These items saw relatively stable results in 2021 and 2023, with a larger decline in positive satisfaction between 2023 and 2025

Question	2025	2023	2021 (Baseline)
Overall image of the City	42% ●	65% ●	57%
As a place to live	64% ●	81% ●	79%
As a place to raise children	53% ●	70% ●	67%
As a place to work	60% ●	77% ●	75%
Overall quality of life in the City	48% ●	65% ●	65%
Overall quality of services provided by the City	45% ●	61% ●	60%
As a place where I feel welcome	58% ●	74% ●	67%
Overall value you receive for your City tax dollars and fees	31% ●	41% ●	38%
Overall feeling of safety in the City	32% ●	40% ●	42%

The Role of Expectations in Large Cities

- Evolving expectations can influence satisfaction
- Residents will compare your services to peer cities, past performance, media and community narratives
- Highly visible services can carry greater weight in shaping perceptions

Question	Cincinnati 2025	Large-City Benchmark (250k+ pop.)	Difference
Condition of sidewalks in the City (broken, cracked, uneven, etc.)	18%	41%	-23%
Condition of city streets (potholes)	12%	35%	-23%
Overall feeling of safety in the City	32%	53%	-21%
How safe you feel in your neighborhood	50%	70%	-20%
Condition of streets in your neighborhood (potholes)	19%	37%	-19%
The City's overall efforts to prevent crime	25%	41%	-16%
Fees for water services	27%	42%	-15%
Enforcing the exterior maintenance of residential, commercial, and business property	27%	40%	-13%
Overall cleanliness of City streets and other public areas	28%	40%	-12%
Snow removal on residential streets	24%	36%	-12%
Adequacy of city street lighting	40%	52%	-12%

Cincinnati in the Context of Large Cities

- Most core services remain competitive with large-city benchmarks
- Highly visible services will carry greater weight in shaping perceptions
- Gaps within the Benchmark ratings can be indicative of other issues

Question	Cincinnati 2025	Large-City Benchmark (250k+ pop.)	Difference
Overall quality of curbside recycling services	71%	44%	27%
City parks and recreation programs/facilities	68%	45%	23%
Overall quality of bulky item pick-up services	61%	42%	19%
Overall quality of trash collection services	68%	53%	15%
As a place to live	64%	49%	15%
Trash, recycling, bulky items, leaf, and brush collection	66%	51%	15%
Overall quality of local fire protection and rescue services	78%	63%	15%
How quickly emergency medical personnel respond to emergencies	75%	60%	15%
Quality of local emergency medical service	76%	62%	14%
How quickly fire and rescue personnel respond to emergencies	79%	65%	14%
Overall quality of leaf and brush pick-up services	57%	43%	14%
Overall quality of recycling drop-off centers	52%	39%	13%
Fire and ambulance services	76%	63%	13%

Services Most Strongly Linked to Overall Perception

- Maintenance of streets, sidewalks, and infrastructure
- Public safety services
- Code enforcement and neighborhood services

Category of Service	I-S Ratings		
	2025	2023	2021
Maintenance of City streets, sidewalks, & infrastructure	0.53 ●	0.58 ●	0.55 ●
Police Services	0.34 ●	0.25 ●	0.23 ●
Code enforcement/neighborhood services	0.24 ●	0.22 ●	0.22 ●
Overall effectiveness of City communication with the public	0.16 ●	0.13 ●	0.10 ●
Health Department services	0.08 ●	0.06 ●	0.06 ●
City's stormwater runoff/stormwater management system	0.06 ●	0.07 ●	0.09 ●
City water utilities	0.06 ●	0.03 ●	0.04 ●
City parks & recreation programs/facilities	0.05 ●	0.06 ●	0.04 ●
Fire & ambulance services	0.04 ●	0.03 ●	0.03 ●
Trash, recycling, bulky item, leaf, & brush collection	0.04 ●	0.05 ●	n/a
Customer service you receive from City employees	0.04 ●	0.02 ●	0.02 ●
City's Customer Service Call Center (311)	0.02 ●	0.01 ●	0.01 ●

What These Findings Mean for Decision-Makers



Managing expectations is as critical as consistent service delivery



Communication and visibility of improvements matter



Continued focus on high-priority core services



Data should guide resource allocation and messaging



Continue to monitor your trends over time

Summary

Improving overall resident satisfaction will require sustained investment in high-priority services - especially public safety and infrastructure.

Increased visibility of City efforts and clearer communication about improvements are essential to shifting perceptions

Benchmarking shows Cincinnati's challenges are consistent with other large cities - but are most pronounced in essential, quality-of-life services

Key concern areas include - public safety, streets and sidewalks, neighborhood conditions, and code enforcement

Despite perception challenges, Cincinnati performs at or above peer averages in core operational services such as parks, fire, EMS, and trash collection

Questions?

Thank you!

Get In Touch

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