



CITY OF PALO ALTO OFFICE OF THE CITY AUDITOR

January 25, 2010

The Honorable City Council
Palo Alto, California

Geographic Subgroup Comparisons for the Service Efforts and Accomplishments Report for Fiscal Year 2009

In December 2009, the Auditor's Office issued the Service Efforts and Accomplishments Report for Fiscal Year 2009. Attached is supplemental information containing additional geographic subgroup comparisons for each of the survey questions contained in the 2009 National Citizen Survey™. The comparisons are delineated by zip code; the attached map shows the zip code locations. The survey company shaded statistically different responses in grey. Since there can be a variety of reasons for the differences in survey responses, we are providing this data for informational and discussion purposes only. Following is a list of the statistically different survey responses.

Survey Question	Zip Code		
<i>Ratings of "good" or "excellent"</i>	94301 and 94304	94303	94306
Palo Alto as a place to work	91%	90%	76%
Palo Alto as a place to retire	75%	65%	57%
Overall quality of new development in Palo Alto	57%	59%	41%
Amount of public parking	66%	52%	48%
Availability of affordable quality health care	78%	57%	52%
Quality of overall natural environment in Palo Alto	90%	85%	75%
Ambulance or emergency medical services	85%	91%	98%
Street cleaning	81%	72%	64%
Land use, planning ,and zoning	53%	53%	34%
The overall direction that Palo Alto is taking	65%	50%	43%
Water and energy preservation	76%	75%	63%
Infrastructure investment (e.g. buildings, streets)	46%	55%	34%
<i>Resident behavior: Ratings of participation at least once in the past 12 months)</i>			
Used Palo Alto libraries or their services	69%	87%	87%
Used Palo Alto recreation centers	56%	73%	62%
Participated in a recreation program or activity	43%	59%	44%
Visited a neighborhood park or City park	87%	96%	96%
Ridden a local bus within Palo Alto	24%	37%	20%
<i>Other Ratings</i>			
Population growth seen as "too fast"	37%	63%	58%
Percent feeling "very" or "somewhat" safe in Palo Alto's downtown after dark	73%	54%	66%
Would recommend living in Palo Alto to someone who asks	96%	84%	88%
To what extent do you agree or disagree the City's fiscal condition will continue to provide valuable services? (Percent "somewhat" or "strongly" agree)	36%	53%	39%

Respectfully submitted,

Lynda Flores Brouchoud

Lynda Flores Brouchoud
City Auditor

Attachments:

- National Citizen Survey Report of Geographic Subgroup Comparisons
- Zip Code Map



CITY OF PALO ALTO, CA 2009

Report of Geographic Subgroup Comparisons

CONTENTS

Survey Background.....	1
About The National Citizen Survey™	1
Understanding the Results	2
“Don’t Know” Responses	2
Understanding the Tables.....	2
Comparisons	3

SURVEY BACKGROUND

ABOUT THE NATIONAL CITIZEN SURVEY™

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 survey methods and comparable results across The National Citizen Survey™ jurisdictions. Participating households are selected at random and the household member who responds is selected without bias. Multiple mailings give each household more than one chance to participate with self-addressed and postage paid envelopes. Results are statistically weighted to reflect the proper demographic composition of the entire community.

The National Citizen Survey™ customized for this jurisdiction was developed in close cooperation with local jurisdiction staff. The City of Palo Alto staff selected items from a menu of questions about services and community problems; they defined the jurisdiction boundaries NRC used for sampling; and they provided the appropriate letterhead and signatures for mailings. City of Palo Alto staff also determined local interest in a variety of add-on options to The National Citizen Survey™ Basic Service.

UNDERSTANDING THE RESULTS

“DON’T KNOW” RESPONSES

On many of the questions in the survey respondents may answer “don’t know.” The proportion of respondents giving this reply is shown in the full set of responses included in Appendix A. However, these responses have been removed from the analyses presented in the body of the report. In other words, the tables and graphs display the responses from respondents who had an opinion about a specific item.

UNDERSTANDING THE TABLES

In this report, comparisons between geographic subgroups are shown¹. For most of the questions, we have shown only one number for each question. We have summarized responses 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 felt the rate of growth was “about right.”

ANOVA and chi-square tests of significance were applied to these comparisons of survey questions by geographic subgroups. A “p-value” of 0.05 or less indicates that there is less than a 5% probability that differences observed between subgroups 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 are marked in grey.

The 95 percent confidence level for this survey is generally no greater than plus or minus five percentage points around any given percent reported for the entire sample. For each Zip Code category (94301 combined with 94304, 94303 or 94306), the margin of error rises to approximately + or - 9% since sample sizes were approximately 109 for Zip Codes 94301 and 94304, 127 for Zip Code 94303 and 117 for Zip Code 94306.

¹ The comparisons of survey results by geographic subareas included in this report are displayed for only those responses that could be linked to one of the city’s zip codes. Therefore, there can be differences between the overall ratings (found in the main report of results, found under separate cover) and the ratings for subgroup comparisons.

COMPARISONS

Cells shaded grey indicate statistically significant differences between subgroups.

Question 1: Quality of Life (Percent "excellent" or "good")			
Please rate each of the following aspects of quality of life in Palo Alto:	Zip Code		
	94301 and 94304	94303	94306
Palo Alto as a place to live	95%	94%	93%
Your neighborhood as a place to live	91%	87%	91%
Palo Alto as a place to raise children	89%	95%	87%
Palo Alto as a place to work	91%	90%	76%
Palo Alto as a place to retire	75%	65%	57%
The overall quality of life in Palo Alto	95%	93%	89%

Question 2: Community Characteristics (Percent "excellent" or "good")			
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Palo Alto as a whole:	Zip Code		
	94301 and 94304	94303	94306
Sense of community	69%	77%	63%
Openness and acceptance of the community towards people of diverse backgrounds	74%	79%	74%
Overall appearance of Palo Alto	82%	86%	77%
Cleanliness of Palo Alto	84%	88%	78%
Overall quality of new development in Palo Alto	57%	59%	41%
Variety of housing options	37%	47%	32%
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Palo Alto	76%	75%	68%
Shopping opportunities	71%	75%	64%
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	71%	78%	69%
Recreational opportunities	80%	81%	76%
Employment opportunities	56%	48%	42%
Educational opportunities	90%	91%	93%
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	82%	82%	73%
Opportunities to volunteer	84%	86%	76%
Opportunities to participate in community matters	74%	79%	74%
Ease of car travel in Palo Alto	64%	66%	65%

Question 2: Community Characteristics (Percent "excellent" or "good")

Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Palo Alto as a whole:	Zip Code		
	94301 and 94304	94303	94306
Ease of bus travel in Palo Alto	33%	35%	41%
Ease of rail travel in Palo Alto	70%	59%	56%
Ease of bicycle travel in Palo Alto	84%	79%	78%
Ease of walking in Palo Alto	88%	82%	78%
Availability of paths and walking trails	75%	74%	75%
Traffic flow on major streets	45%	43%	45%
Amount of public parking	66%	52%	48%
Availability of affordable quality housing	15%	19%	17%
Availability of affordable quality child care	27%	39%	28%
Availability of affordable quality health care	78%	57%	52%
Availability of preventive health services	73%	70%	58%
Air quality	74%	73%	71%
Quality of overall natural environment in Palo Alto	90%	85%	75%
Overall image or reputation of Palo Alto	95%	92%	88%
Availability of locally grown produce	73%	67%	71%
Opportunities to learn about City services through social networking Web sites such as: Twitter, Facebook and MySpace	49%	62%	66%

Question 3: Growth (Percent "too fast")

Please rate the speed of growth in the following categories in Palo Alto over the past 2 years:	Zip Code		
	94301 and 94304	94303	94306
Population growth	37%	63%	58%
Retail growth (stores, restaurants, etc.)	10%	17%	12%
Jobs growth	5%	6%	3%

Question 4: Code Enforcement (Percent at least a "minor" problem)

	Zip Code		
	94301 and 94304	94303	94306
To what degree, if at all, are run down buildings, weed lots or junk vehicles a problem in Palo Alto?	74%	78%	82%

Question 5: Community Safety (Percent "very" or "somewhat" safe)			
Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel from the following in Palo Alto:	Zip Code		
	94301 and 94304	94303	94306
Violent crime (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	83%	77%	85%
Property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	72%	61%	62%
Environmental hazards, including toxic waste	87%	76%	78%

Question 6: Personal Safety (Percent "very" or "somewhat" safe)			
Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel:	Zip Code		
	94301 and 94304	94303	94306
In your neighborhood during the day	96%	94%	96%
In your neighborhood after dark	79%	72%	81%
In Palo Alto's downtown area during the day	95%	89%	91%
In Palo Alto's downtown area after dark	73%	54%	66%

Questions 7 and 8: Crime Victimization and Reporting (Percent "yes")			
	Zip Code		
	94301 and 94304	94303	94306
During the past twelve months, were you or anyone in your household the victim of any crime?	12%	11%	12%
If yes, was this crime (these crimes) reported to the police?	96%	80%	70%

Question 9: Resident Behaviors (Percent at least once in past 12 months)			
In the last 12 months, about how many times, if ever, have you or other household members participated in the following activities in Palo Alto?	Zip Code		
	94301 and 94304	94303	94306
Used Palo Alto public libraries or their services	69%	87%	87%
Used Palo Alto recreation centers	56%	73%	62%
Participated in a recreation program or activity	43%	59%	44%
Visited a neighborhood park or City park	87%	96%	96%
Ridden a local bus within Palo Alto	24%	37%	20%
Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting	27%	30%	27%
Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting on cable television	24%	35%	25%
Visited the City of Palo Alto Web site (at www.cityofpaloalto.org)	66%	78%	72%

Question 9: Resident Behaviors (Percent at least once in past 12 months)			
In the last 12 months, about how many times, if ever, have you or other household members participated in the following activities in Palo Alto?	Zip Code		
	94301 and 94304	94303	94306
Recycled used paper, cans or bottles from your home	99%	99%	98%
Volunteered your time to some group or activity in Palo Alto	53%	63%	50%
Participated in a club or civic group in Palo Alto	32%	39%	30%
Provided help to a friend or neighbor	92%	94%	92%
Used the City's Web site to conduct business or pay bills	24%	32%	21%
Read a Palo Alto Newspaper	94%	98%	94%

Question 10: Neighborliness (Percent at least once per month)			
About how often, if at all, do you talk to or visit with your immediate neighbors (people who live in the 10 or 20 households that are closest to you)?	Zip Code		
	94301 and 94304	94303	94306
	84%	83%	80%

Question 11: Service Quality (Percent "excellent" or "good")			
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Palo Alto:	Zip Code		
	94301 and 94304	94303	94306
Police services	82%	87%	84%
Fire services	91%	93%	99%
Ambulance or emergency medical services	85%	91%	98%
Crime prevention	65%	76%	79%
Fire prevention and education	73%	80%	86%
Traffic enforcement	56%	57%	65%
Street repair	36%	47%	40%
Street cleaning	81%	72%	64%
Street lighting	59%	68%	61%
Sidewalk maintenance	46%	53%	46%
Traffic signal timing	54%	57%	52%
Bus or transit services	38%	49%	48%

Question 11: Service Quality (Percent "excellent" or "good")			
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Palo Alto:	Zip Code		
	94301 and 94304	94303	94306
Garbage collection	89%	86%	85%
Recycling	87%	89%	88%
Storm drainage	67%	73%	73%
Drinking water	75%	83%	83%
Sewer services	75%	86%	77%
City parks	92%	90%	93%
Recreation programs or classes	82%	85%	86%
Recreation centers or facilities	77%	78%	78%
Land use, planning and zoning	53%	53%	34%
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc)	48%	56%	42%
Animal control	76%	78%	78%
Economic development	57%	53%	47%
Services to seniors	85%	84%	75%
Services to youth	72%	76%	73%
Services to low-income people	67%	63%	51%
Public library services	75%	84%	77%
Public information services	63%	70%	68%
Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations)	61%	62%	64%
Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts	77%	82%	86%
Neighborhood branch libraries	72%	78%	74%
Variety of library materials	69%	78%	71%
Your neighborhood park	82%	88%	91%
Street tree maintenance	70%	73%	71%
Electric utility	87%	82%	78%
Gas utility	85%	82%	77%
City's Web site	51%	61%	53%
Art programs and theater	80%	80%	77%

Question 12: Government Services Overall (Percent "excellent" or "good")			
Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by each of the following?	Zip Code		
	94301 and 94304	94303	94306
The City of Palo Alto	86%	79%	74%
The Federal Government	41%	36%	42%
The State Government	21%	24%	24%
Santa Clara County Government	40%	39%	41%

Question 13: Contact with City Employees (Percent "yes")			
	Zip Code		
	94301 and 94304	94303	94306
Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of the City of Palo Alto within the last 12 months (including police, receptionists, planners or any others)?	52%	59%	64%

Question 14: City Employees (Percent "excellent" or "good")			
What was your impression of the employee(s) of the City of Palo Alto in your most recent contact?	Zip Code		
	94301 and 94304	94303	94306
Knowledge	90%	84%	78%
Responsiveness	85%	76%	72%
Courtesy	91%	79%	80%
Overall impression	84%	77%	73%

Question 15: Government Performance (Percent "excellent" or "good")			
Please rate the following categories of Palo Alto government performance:	Zip Code		
	94301 and 94304	94303	94306
The value of services for the taxes paid to Palo Alto	62%	55%	58%
The overall direction that Palo Alto is taking	65%	50%	43%
The job Palo Alto government does at welcoming citizen involvement	63%	54%	48%
The job Palo Alto government does at listening to citizens	56%	47%	44%

Question 16: Recommendation and Longevity (Percent "somewhat" or "very" likely)			
Please indicate how likely or unlikely you are to do each of the following:	Zip Code		
	94301 and 94304	94303	94306
Recommend living in Palo Alto to someone who asks	96%	84%	88%
Remain in Palo Alto for the next five years	83%	90%	82%

Question 17: Impact of the Economy (Percent "somewhat" or "very" positive)			
	Zip Code		
	94301 and 94304	94303	94306
What impact, if any, do you think the economy will have on your family income in the next 6 months? Do you think the impact will be:	8%	17%	12%

Question 18a: Policy Question 1 (Percent "yes")			
	Zip Code		
	94301 and 94304	94303	94306
During the past 12 months, did you or anyone in your household have contact with the Palo Alto Police Department?	35%	35%	39%

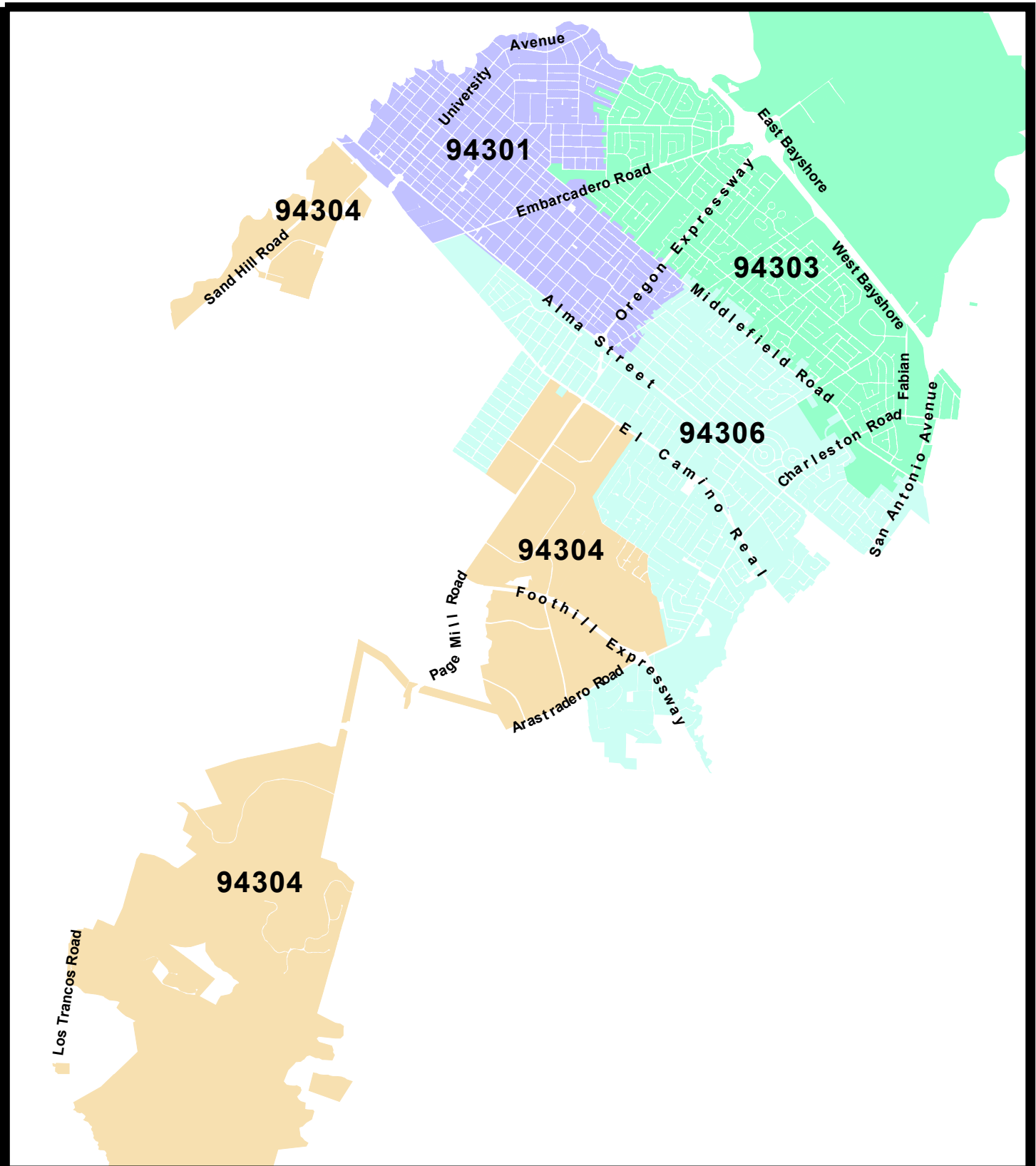
Question 18b: Policy Question 2 (Percent "excellent" or "good")			
	Zip Code		
	94301 and 94304	94303	94306
If yes, how do you rate the quality of your contact with the Palo Alto Police Department?	67%	76%	70%

Question 18c: Policy Question 3(Percent "excellent" or "good")			
Please rate the City of Palo Alto on each of the following:	Zip Code		
	94301 and 94304	94303	94306
Preservation of wildlife and native plants	91%	84%	87%
Water and energy preservation	91%	82%	76%
City's composting process and pickup services	85%	86%	88%
Infrastructure Investment (e.g., buildings, streets)	58%	63%	44%
Downtown shopping, dining and entertainment experience	77%	77%	68%
Promoting business growth and economic development	50%	43%	42%

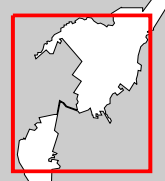
Question 18d: Policy Question 4 (Percent "yes")			
	Zip Code		
	94301 and 94304	94303	94306
In the past 12 months, did you or anyone from your household apply for a permit(s) from the City's Development Center?	6%	9%	7%

Question 18e: Policy Question 5 (Percent "excellent" or "good")			
If yes, how would you rate each of the following?	Zip Code		
	94301 and 94304	94303	94306
Ease of the planning approval process	0%	31%	24%
Time required to review and issue the permit(s)	16%	38%	17%
Inspection timeliness	52%	58%	39%
Overall customer service	33%	18%	39%
Ease of the overall application process	0%	17%	26%

Question 18f: Policy Question 6 (Percent "somewhat" or "strongly" agree)			
	Zip Code		
	94301 and 94304	94303	94306
To what extent do you agree or disagree that the City's current fiscal condition will continue to provide valuable services?	58%	69%	65%



The City of
Palo Alto



City of Palo Alto Zip Codes

This map is a product of the
City of Palo Alto GIS

