The National Citizen Survey™

CITY OF PALO ALTO, CA
2009

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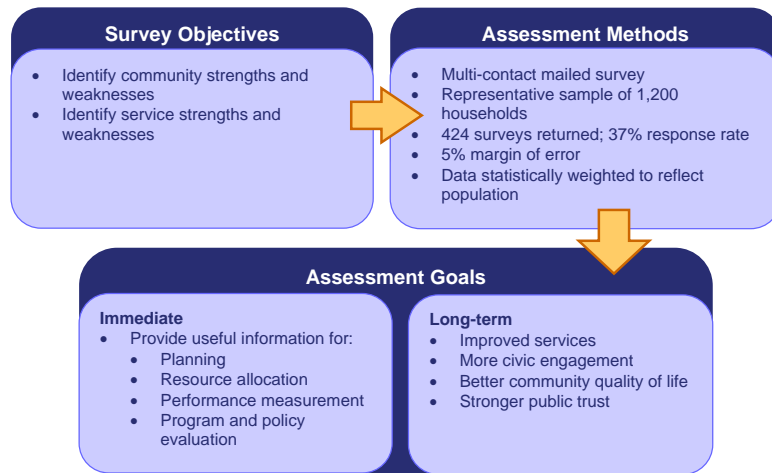
Contents

The National Citizen Survey™

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 NCS was developed by NRC to provide a statistically valid survey of resident opinions about community and services provided by local government. The survey results may be used by staff, elected officials and other stakeholders for community planning and resource allocation, program improvement and policy making.

FIGURE 1: THE NATIONAL CITIZEN SURVEY™ METHODS AND GOALS

Survey Objectives

- Identify community strengths and weaknesses
- Identify service strengths and weaknesses

Assessment Methods

- Multi-contact mailed survey
- Representative sample of 1,200 households
- 424 surveys returned; 37% response rate
- 5% margin of error
- Data statistically weighted to reflect population

Assessment Goals

Immediate
- Provide useful information for:
  - Planning
  - Resource allocation
  - Performance measurement
  - Program and policy evaluation

Long-term
- Improved services
- More civic engagement
- Better community quality of life
- Stronger public trust

The NCS focuses on a series of community characteristics and local government services, as well as issues of public trust. Resident behaviors related to civic engagement in the community also were measured in the survey.

FIGURE 2: THE NATIONAL CITIZEN SURVEY™ FOCUS AREAS

COMMUNITY QUALITY

Quality of life
Quality of neighborhood
Place to live

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Cleanliness
Air quality
Preservation of natural areas
Garbage and recycling services

COMMUNITY INCLUSIVENESS

Sense of community
Racial and cultural acceptance
Senior, youth and low-income services

COMMUNITY DESIGN

Transportation
Ease of travel, transit services, street maintenance

Housing
Housing options, cost, affordability

Land Use and Zoning
New development, growth, code enforcement

Economic Sustainability
Employment, shopping and retail, City as a place to work

RECREATION AND WELLNESS

Parks and Recreation
Recreation opportunities, use of parks and facilities, programs and classes

Culture, Arts and Education
Cultural and educational opportunities, libraries, schools

Health and Wellness
Availability of food, health services, social services

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Civic Activity
Volunteerism
Civic attentiveness
Voting behavior

Social Engagement
Neighborliness, social and religious events

Information and Awareness
Public information, publications, Web site

PUBLIC SAFETY

Safety in neighborhood and downtown
Crime victimization
Police, fire, EMS services
Emergency preparedness

PUBLIC TRUST

Cooperation in community
Value of services
Direction of community
Citizen involvement
Employees

The survey and its administration are standardized to assure high quality research methods and directly 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. A total of 424 completed surveys were obtained (371 mail and 53 web), providing an overall response rate of 37%. Typically, response rates obtained on citizen surveys range from 25% to 40%.

The National Citizen Survey™ customized for the City of Palo Alto was developed in close cooperation with local jurisdiction staff. Palo Alto staff selected items from a menu of questions about services and community problems and provided the appropriate letterhead and signatures for mailings. City of Palo Alto staff also augmented The National Citizen Survey™ basic service through a variety of options including crosstabulation of results, the option to complete the survey online, and several policy questions.

UNDERSTANDING THE RESULTS

As shown in Figure 2, this report is based around respondents' reports about eight larger categories: community quality, community design, public safety, environmental sustainability, recreation and wellness, community inclusiveness, civic engagement and public trust. Each section begins with residents' ratings of community characteristics and is followed by residents' ratings of service quality. For all evaluative questions, the percent of residents rating the service or community feature as "excellent" or "good" is presented. To see the full set of responses for each question on the survey, please see Appendix A: Complete Survey Frequencies.

Margin of Error

It is customary to describe the precision of estimates made from surveys by a "level of confidence" and accompanying "confidence interval" (or margin of error). A traditional confidence level, and the one used here, is 95%. The 95% confidence interval can be any size and quantifies the sampling error or imprecision of the estimates made from the survey results. The confidence interval for the City of Palo Alto survey is no greater than plus or minus five percentage points around any given percent reported for the entire sample (424 completed surveys). A 95% confidence interval indicates that for every 100 random samples of this many residents, the population response to that question would be within the stated interval 95 times. For example, if 75% of residents rate a service as "excellent" or "good," then the 5% margin of error (for the 95% confidence interval) indicates that the range of likely responses for the entire jurisdiction is between 70% and 80%.

Comparing Survey Results

Certain kinds of services tend to be thought better of by residents in many communities across the country. For example, public safety services tend to be received better than transportation services by residents of most American communities. Where possible, the better comparison is not from one service to another in the City of Palo Alto, but from City of Palo Alto services to services like them provided by other jurisdictions.

Interpreting Comparisons to Previous Years

This report contains comparisons with prior years' results. In this report, we are comparing this year's data with existing data in the graphs. Differences between years can be considered "statistically significant" if they are greater than six percentage points. Trend data for your jurisdiction 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.

Benchmark Comparisons

NRC's database of comparative resident opinion is comprised of resident perspectives gathered in citizen surveys from approximately 500 jurisdictions whose residents evaluated local government services and gave their opinion about the quality of community life. The City of Palo Alto chose to have comparisons made to the entire database. A benchmark comparison (the average rating from all the comparison jurisdictions where a similar question was asked) has been provided when a similar question on the City of Palo Alto Survey was included in NRC's database and there were at least five jurisdictions in which the question was asked. For most questions compared to the entire dataset, there were more than 100 jurisdictions included in the benchmark comparison.

Where comparisons were available, the City of Palo Alto results were noted as being "above" the benchmark, "below" the benchmark or "similar to" the benchmark. This evaluation of "above," "below" or "similar to" comes from a statistical comparison of the City of Palo Alto's rating to the benchmark.

"Don't Know" Responses and Rounding

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.

For some questions, respondents were permitted to select more than one answer. When the total exceeds 100% in a table for a multiple response question, it is because some respondents did select more than one response. When a table for a question that only permitted a single response does not total to exactly 100%, it is due to the customary practice of percentages being rounded to the nearest whole number.

For more information on understanding The NCS report, please see Appendix B: Survey Methodology.

Executive Summary

This report of the City of Palo Alto survey provides the opinions of a representative sample of residents about community quality of life, service delivery, civic participation and unique issues of local interest. A periodic sounding of resident opinion offers staff, elected officials and other stakeholders an opportunity to identify challenges and to plan for and evaluate improvements and to sustain services and amenities for long-term success.

Most residents experience a good quality of life in the City of Palo Alto and believe the City is a good place to live. The overall quality of life in the City of Palo Alto was rated as "excellent" or "good" by 93% of respondents. Almost all report they plan on staying in the City of Palo Alto for the next five years.

A variety of characteristics of the community was evaluated by those participating in the study. The two characteristics receiving the most favorable ratings were the overall image or reputation of Palo Alto and educational opportunities. The two characteristics receiving the least positive ratings were the availability of affordable quality housing and child care.

Ratings of community characteristics were compared to the benchmark database. Of the 30 characteristics for which comparisons were available, 25 were above the benchmark comparison, one was similar to the benchmark comparison and two were below.

Residents in the City of Palo Alto were very civically engaged. While about 28% had attended a meeting of local elected public officials or other local public meeting in the previous 12 months, 93% had provided help to a friend or neighbor. A majority had volunteered their time to some group or activity in the City of Palo Alto, which was higher than the benchmark.

In general, survey respondents demonstrated trust in local government. About half rated the overall direction being taken by the City of Palo Alto as "good" or "excellent." This was lower than the benchmark. Those residents who had interacted with an employee of the City of Palo Alto in the previous 12 months gave high marks to those employees. About eight in ten rated their overall impression of employees as "excellent" or "good."

On average, residents gave highly favorable ratings to a majority of local government services. City services rated were able to be compared to the benchmark database. Of the 31 services for which comparisons were available, 24 were above the benchmark comparison, seven were similar to the benchmark comparison and none were below.

A Key Driver Analysis was conducted for the City of Palo Alto which examined the relationships between ratings of each service and ratings of the City of Palo Alto's services overall. Those key driver services that correlated most strongly with residents' perceptions about overall City service quality have been identified. By targeting improvements in key services, the City of Palo Alto can focus on the services that have the greatest likelihood of influencing residents' opinions about overall service quality. Services found to be influential in ratings of overall service quality from the Key Driver Analysis were:

- Street tree maintenance
- Public information services

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Community Ratings

OVERALL COMMUNITY QUALITY

Overall quality of community life may be the single best indicator of success in providing the natural ambience, services and amenities that make for an attractive community. The National Citizen Survey™ contained many questions related to quality of community life in the City of Palo Alto – not only direct questions about quality of life overall and in neighborhoods, but questions to measure residents' commitment to the City of Palo Alto. Residents were asked whether they planned to move soon or if they would recommend the City of Palo Alto to others. Intentions to stay and willingness to make recommendations provide evidence that the City of Palo Alto offers services and amenities that work.

Almost all of the City of Palo Alto's residents gave high ratings to their neighborhoods and the community as a place to live. Further, most reported they would recommend the community to others and plan to stay for the next five years.

FIGURE 3: RATINGS OF OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE BY YEAR

Percent rating overall quality of life as "excellent" or "good"
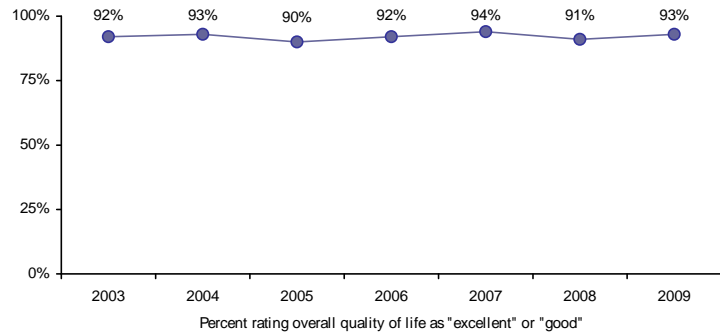
FIGURE 4: RATINGS OF OVERALL COMMUNITY QUALITY BY YEAR

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
The overall quality of life in Palo Alto	93%	91%	94%	92%	90%	93%	92%
Your neighborhood as a place to live	90%	91%	91%	91%	90%	91%	88%
Palo Alto as a place to live	94%	95%	96%	94%	94%	96%	95%
Percent "excellent" or "good"							

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FIGURE 5: LIKELIHOOD OF REMAINING IN COMMUNITY AND RECOMMENDING COMMUNITY BY YEAR

Percent "somewhat" or "very" likely
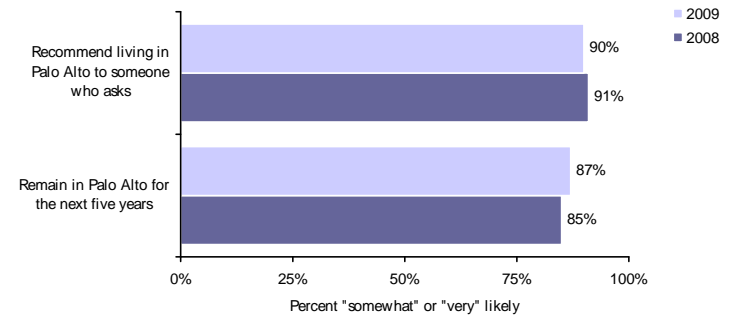
FIGURE 6: OVERALL COMMUNITY QUALITY BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Overall quality of life in Palo Alto	Above
Your neighborhood as place to live	Above
Palo Alto as a place to live	Above
Remain in Palo Alto for the next five years	Above
Recommend living in Palo Alto to someone who asks	Above

COMMUNITY DESIGN

Transportation

The ability to move easily throughout a community can greatly affect the quality of life of residents by diminishing time wasted in traffic congestion and by providing opportunities to travel quickly and safely by modes other than the automobile. High quality options for resident mobility not only require local government to remove barriers to flow but they require government programs and policies that create quality opportunities for all modes of travel.

Residents responding to the survey were given a list of seven aspects of mobility to rate on a scale of "excellent," "good," "fair" and "poor." Ease of walking was given the most positive rating, followed by ease of bicycle travel in Palo Alto. These ratings tended to be higher than the benchmarks and similar to years past.

FIGURE 7: RATINGS OF TRANSPORTATION IN COMMUNITY BY YEAR

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Ease of car travel in Palo Alto	65%	60%	65%	60%	61%	52%	55%
Ease of bus travel in Palo Alto	36%	34%	37%	44%	44%	43%	41%
Ease of rail or subway travel in Palo Alto	63%	52%	55%	60%	69%	64%	NA
Ease of bicycle travel in Palo Alto	79%	78%	84%	78%	79%	80%	84%
Ease of walking in Palo Alto	82%	86%	88%	87%	86%	85%	86%
Availability of paths and walking trails	75%	74%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Traffic flow on major streets	46%	38%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Percent "excellent" or "good"

FIGURE 8: COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Ease of bus travel in Palo Alto	Below
Ease of rail or subway travel by in Palo Alto	Above
Ease of car travel in Palo Alto	Above
Ease of walking in Palo Alto	Above
Ease of bicycle travel in Palo Alto	Above
Availability of paths and walking trails	Above
Traffic flow on major streets	Above

Seven transportation services were rated in Palo Alto. As compared to most communities across America, ratings tended to be favorable. Four were above the benchmark and three were similar to the benchmark.

FIGURE 9: RATINGS OF TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING SERVICES BY YEAR

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Street repair	42%	47%	47%	47%	48%	47%	50%
Street cleaning	73%	75%	77%	77%	74%	77%	75%
Street lighting	64%	64%	61%	66%	63%	65%	67%
Sidewalk maintenance	53%	53%	57%	53%	51%	50%	50%
Traffic signal timing	56%	56%	60%	55%	49%	57%	NA
Bus or transit services	50%	49%	57%	58%	NA	NA	NA
Amount of public parking	55%	52%	65%	58%	56%	56%	NA

Percent "excellent" or "good"

FIGURE 10: TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING SERVICES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Street repair /maintenance	Similar
Street cleaning	Above
Street lighting	Above
Sidewalk maintenance	Similar
Light timing	Above
Bus or transit services	Similar
Amount of public parking	Above

By measuring choice of travel mode over time, communities can monitor their success in providing attractive alternatives to the traditional mode of travel, the single-occupied automobile. When asked how they typically traveled to work, single-occupancy (SOV) travel was the overwhelming mode of use. However, 7% of work commute trips were made by transit, 9% by bicycle and 7% by foot.

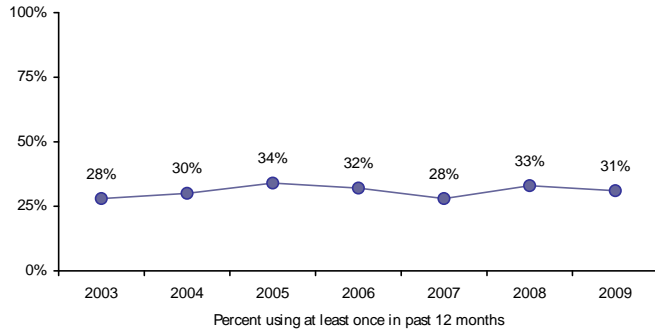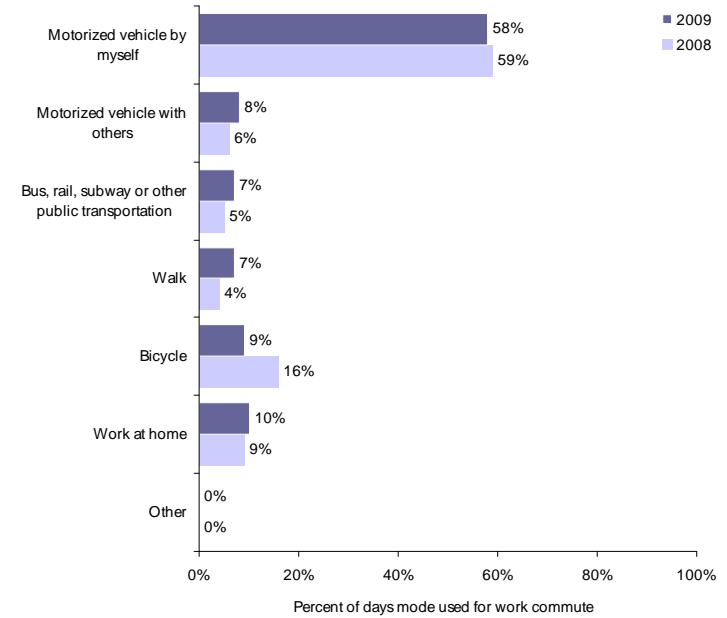FIGURE 11: FREQUENCY OF BUS USE IN LAST 12 MONTHS BY YEAR

FIGURE 12: FREQUENCY OF BUS USE BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Ridden a local bus within Palo Alto	More

FIGURE 13: MODE OF TRAVEL USED FOR WORK COMMUTE BY YEAR

Housing

Housing variety and affordability are not luxuries for any community. When there are too few options for housing style and affordability, the characteristics of a community tilt toward a single group, often of well-off residents. While this may seem attractive to a community, the absence of affordable townhomes, condominiums, mobile homes, single family detached homes and apartments means that in addition to losing the vibrancy of diverse thoughts and lifestyles, the community loses the service workers that sustain all communities – police officers, school teachers, house painters and electricians. These workers must live elsewhere and commute in at great personal cost and to the detriment of traffic flow and air quality. Furthermore lower income residents pay so much of their income to rent or mortgage that little remains to bolster their own quality of life or local business.

The survey of the City of Palo Alto residents asked respondents to reflect on the availability of affordable housing as well as the variety of housing options. The availability of affordable housing was rated as "excellent" or "good" by 17% of respondents, while the variety of housing options was rated as "excellent" or "good" by 39% of respondents. The rating of perceived affordable housing availability was worse in the City of Palo Alto than the ratings, on average, in comparison jurisdictions.

FIGURE 14: RATINGS OF HOUSING IN COMMUNITY BY YEAR

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Availability of affordable quality housing	17%	12%	10%	11%	8%	7%	6%
Variety of housing options	39%	34%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Percent "excellent" or "good"

FIGURE 15: HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Availability of affordable quality housing	Below
Variety of housing options	Below

To augment the perceptions of affordable housing in Palo Alto, the cost of housing as reported in the survey was compared to residents' reported monthly income to create a rough estimate of the proportion of residents of the City of Palo Alto experiencing housing cost stress. About 35% of survey participants were found to pay housing costs of more than 30% of their monthly household income.

FIGURE 16: PROPORTION OF RESPONDENTS WHOSE HOUSING COSTS ARE "AFFORDABLE" BY YEAR
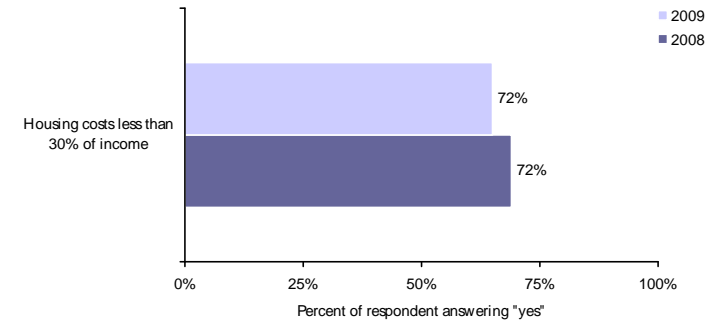
FIGURE 17: HOUSING COSTS BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Experiencing housing costs stress (housing costs 30% or more of income)	Similar

Land Use and Zoning

Community development contributes to a feeling among residents and even visitors of the attention given to the speed of growth, the location of residences and businesses, the kind of housing that is appropriate for the community and the ease of access to commerce, green space and residences. Even the community's overall appearance often is attributed to the planning and enforcement functions of the local jurisdiction. Residents will appreciate an attractive, well-planned community. The NCS questionnaire asked residents to evaluate the quality of new development, the appearance of the City of Palo Alto and the speed of population growth. Problems with the appearance of property were rated, and the quality of land use planning, zoning and code enforcement services were evaluated.

The overall quality of new development in the City of Palo Alto was rated as "excellent" or "good" by 55% of respondents. The overall appearance of Palo Alto was rated as "excellent" or "good" by 83% of respondents and was higher than the benchmark. When rating to what extent run down buildings, weed lots or junk vehicles were a problem in the City of Palo Alto, 4% thought they were a "major" or "moderate" problem. The services of code enforcement and animal control were rated above the benchmark, the service of land use, planning and zoning was rated similar to the benchmark. Ratings showed an flat pattern when compared to past years with the exception of the rating for code enforcement services, which was lower than in 2008.

FIGURE 18: RATINGS OF THE COMMUNITY'S "BUILT ENVIRONMENT" BY YEAR

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Overall quality of new development in Palo Alto	55%	57%	57%	62%	56%	NA	NA
Overall appearance of Palo Alto	83%	89%	86%	85%	85%	86%	87%
Percent "excellent" or "good"							

FIGURE 19: BUILT ENVIRONMENT BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Quality of new development in city	Similar
Overall appearance of Palo Alto	Above

FIGURE 20: RATINGS OF POPULATION GROWTH BY YEAR

Percent rating population growth "too fast"
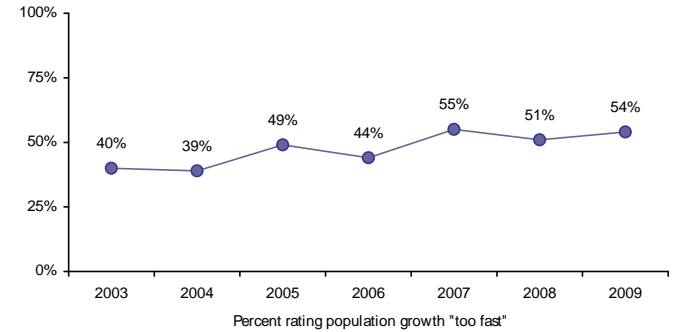
FIGURE 21: POPULATION GROWTH BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Population growth seen as too fast	More

FIGURE 22: RATINGS OF NUISANCE PROBLEMS BY YEAR

Percent rating run down buildings, weed lots or junk vehicles as a "major" problem
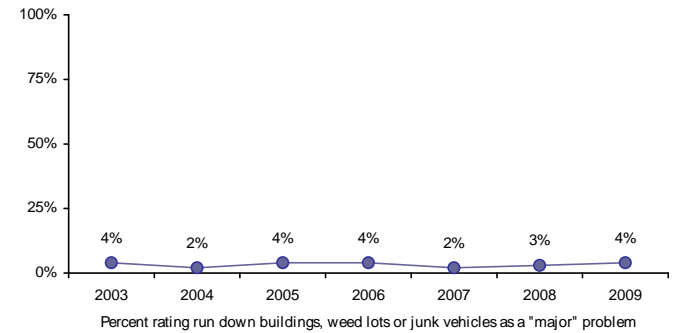
FIGURE 23: NUISANCE PROBLEMS BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Run down buildings, weed lots and junk vehicles are a "major" problem	Less

FIGURE 24: RATINGS OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY CODE ENFORCEMENT SERVICES BY YEAR

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Land use, planning and zoning	47%	47%	49%	50%	46%	48%	41%
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc)	50%	59%	59%	61%	56%	59%	55%
Animal control	78%	78%	79%	78%	79%	79%	79%
Percent "excellent" or "good"							

FIGURE 25: PLANNING AND COMMUNITY CODE ENFORCEMENT SERVICES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Land use, planning and zoning	Similar
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc)	Above
Animal control	Above

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

The health of the economy may color how residents perceive their environment and all the services that local government delivers. In particular, a strong or weak local economy will shape what residents think about job and shopping opportunities. Just as residents have an idea about the speed of local population growth, they have a sense of how fast job and shopping opportunities are growing.

Survey respondents were asked to rate a number of community features related to economic opportunity and growth. The most positively rated features were Palo Alto as a place to work and the overall quality of business and service establishments in Palo Alto. Receiving the lowest rating was employment opportunities.

FIGURE 26: RATINGS OF ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY AND OPPORTUNITIES BY YEAR

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Employment opportunities	51%	61%	61%	59%	45%	43%	33%
Shopping opportunities	70%	71%	79%	80%	75%	NA	NA
Palo Alto as a place to work	87%	90%	90%	84%	81%	NA	NA
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Palo Alto	73%	77%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Percent "excellent" or "good"							

FIGURE 27: ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY AND OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Employment opportunities	Above
Shopping opportunities	Above
Place to work	Above
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Palo Alto	Above

Residents were asked to evaluate the speed of jobs growth and retail growth on scale from "much too slow" to "much too fast." When asked about the rate of job growth in Palo Alto, 65% responded that it was "too slow," while 34% reported retail growth as "too slow." About the same number of residents in Palo Alto compared to other jurisdictions believed that retail growth was too slow and fewer residents believed that job growth was too slow.

FIGURE 28: RATINGS OF RETAIL AND JOB GROWTH BY YEAR

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Jobs growth (too slow)	65%	48%	38%	49%	63%	69%	76%
Retail growth (too slow)	34%	28%	29%	26%	25%	21%	18%
Percent of respondents of growth							

FIGURE 29: RETAIL AND JOB GROWTH BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Retail growth seen as too slow	Similar
Jobs growth seen as too slow	Less

FIGURE 30: RATINGS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICES BY YEAR

Percent "excellent" or "good"
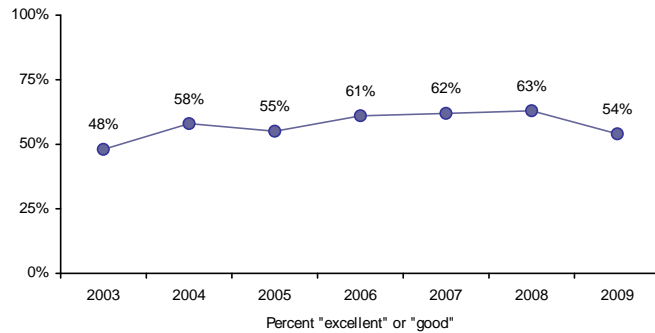
FIGURE 31: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Economic development	Above

Residents were asked to reflect on their economic prospects in the near term. Twelve percent of the City of Palo Alto residents expected that the coming six months would have a "somewhat" or "very" positive impact on their family. The percent of residents with an optimistic outlook on their household income was less than comparison jurisdictions.

FIGURE 32: RATINGS OF PERSONAL ECONOMIC FUTURE BY YEAR

Percent "very" or "somewhat" positive
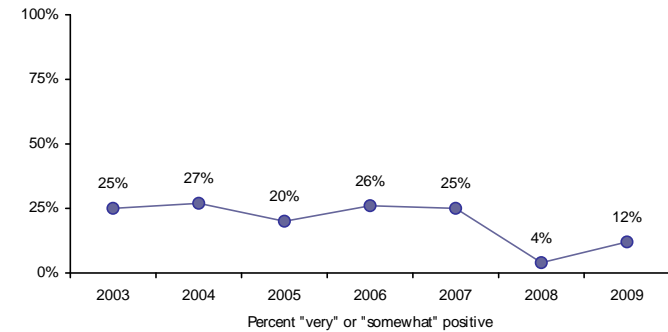
FIGURE 33: PERSONAL ECONOMIC FUTURE BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Positive impact of economy on household income	Below

PUBLIC SAFETY

Safety from violent or property crimes creates the cornerstone of an attractive community. No one wants to live in fear of crime, fire or natural hazards, and communities in which residents feel protected or unthreatened are communities that are more likely to show growth in population, commerce and property value.

Residents were asked to rate their feelings of safety from violent crimes, property crimes, fire and environmental dangers and to evaluate the local agencies whose main charge is to provide protection from these dangers. Many gave positive ratings of safety in the City Palo Alto. About 82% percent of those completing the questionnaire said they felt "very" or "somewhat" safe from violent crimes and 81% felt "very" or "somewhat" safe from environmental hazards. Daytime sense of safety was better than nighttime safety and neighborhoods felt safer than downtown after dark.

FIGURE 34: RATINGS OF COMMUNITY AND PERSONAL PUBLIC SAFETY BY YEAR

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Safety in your neighborhood during the day	95%	95%	98%	94%	98%	98%	97%
Safety in your neighborhood after dark	78%	78%	85%	79%	84%	82%	83%
Safety in Palo Alto's downtown area during the day	91%	96%	94%	91%	96%	94%	95%
Safety in Palo Alto's downtown area after dark	65%	65%	74%	69%	69%	76%	71%
Safety from violent crime	82%	85%	86%	75%	87%	84%	84%
Safety from property crimes	66%	74%	75%	62%	76%	71%	73%
Safety from environmental hazards	81%	80%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Percent "very" or "somewhat" safe							

FIGURE 35: COMMUNITY AND PERSONAL PUBLIC SAFETY BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Safety in your neighborhood during the day	Above
Safety in your neighborhood after dark	Above
Safety in Palo Alto's downtown area during the day	Above
Safety in Palo Alto's downtown area after dark	Above
Safety from violent crime (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	Above
Safety from property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	Above
Toxic waste or other environmental hazard(s)	Above

As assessed by the survey, 11% of respondents reported that someone in the household had been the victim of one or more crimes in the past year. Of those who had been the victim of a crime, 80% had reported it to police. Compared to other jurisdictions fewer Palo Alto residents had been victims of crime in the 12 months preceding the survey and more Palo Alto residents had reported their most recent crime victimization to the police.

FIGURE 36: CRIME VICTIMIZATION AND REPORTING BY YEAR

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
During the past twelve months, were you or anyone in your household the victim of any crime?	11%	10%	9%	12%	10%	11%	13%
If yes, was this crime (these crimes) reported to the police?	80%	73%	62%	62%	69%	62%	80%
Percent "yes"							

FIGURE 37: CRIME VICTIMIZATION AND REPORTING BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Victim of crime	Less
Reported crimes	More

Residents rated seven City public safety services; of these, five were rated above the benchmark comparison and two were rated similar to the benchmark comparison. Fire services and ambulance or emergency medical services received the highest ratings, while emergency preparedness and traffic enforcement received the lowest ratings. Most were rated similar compared to previous years.

FIGURE 38: RATINGS OF PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES BY YEAR

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Police services	84%	84%	91%	87%	87%	90%	89%
Fire services	95%	96%	98%	95%	94%	97%	96%
Ambulance or emergency medical services	91%	95%	94%	94%	95%	95%	95%
Crime prevention	73%	74%	83%	77%	86%	86%	NA
Fire prevention and education	80%	87%	86%	84%	82%	85%	NA
Traffic enforcement	61%	64%	72%	63%	63%	64%	64%
Emergency preparedness	62%	71%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Percent "excellent" or "good"

FIGURE 39: PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Police services	Above
Fire services	Above
EMS/ambulance	Above
Crime prevention	Above
Fire prevention and education	Similar
Traffic enforcement	Similar
Emergency preparedness	Above

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Residents value the aesthetic qualities of their hometowns and appreciate features such as overall cleanliness and landscaping. In addition, the appearance and smell or taste of the air and water do not go unnoticed. These days, increasing attention is paid to proper treatment of the environment. At the same time that they are attending to community appearance and cleanliness, cities, counties, states and the nation are going "Green". These strengthening environmental concerns extend to trash haul, recycling, sewer services, the delivery of power and water and preservation of open spaces. Treatment of the environment affects air and water quality and, generally, how habitable and inviting a place appears

Residents of the City of Palo Alto were asked to evaluate their local environment and the services provided to ensure its quality. The overall quality of the natural environment was rated as "excellent" or "good" by 84% of survey respondents. Cleanliness of Palo Alto received the highest rating and was above the benchmark.

FIGURE 40: RATINGS OF THE COMMUNITY'S NATURAL ENVIRONMENT BY YEAR

Ratings of the Community's Natural Environment by Year							
	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Cleanliness of Palo Alto	85%	88%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Quality of overall natural environment in Palo Alto	84%	85%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts	82%	78%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Air quality	73%	75%	79%	80%	NA	NA	NA

Percent "excellent" or "good"

FIGURE 41: COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Cleanliness of Palo Alto	Above
Quality of overall natural environment in Palo Alto	Above
Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts	Above
Air quality	Above

Resident recycling was greater than recycling reported in comparison communities.

FIGURE 42: FREQUENCY OF RECYCLING IN LAST 12 MONTHS

Percent using at least once in past 12 months
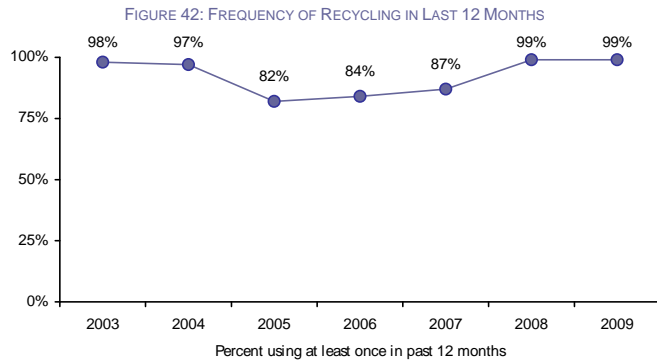
FIGURE 43: FREQUENCY OF RECYCLING BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Recycled used paper, cans or bottles from your home	More

Of the five utility services rated by those completing the questionnaire, all were higher than the benchmark comparison. Four of the utility service ratings trends were similar when compared to past surveys. The rating for drinking water was lower when compared to the last survey.

FIGURE 44: RATINGS OF UTILITY SERVICES BY YEAR

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Sewer services	81%	81%	83%	83%	82%	80%	84%
Drinking water	81%	87%	79%	80%	80%	74%	82%
Storm drainage	73%	70%	59%	61%	60%	57%	65%
Recycling	90%	90%	93%	92%	91%	90%	90%
Garbage collection	89%	92%	91%	92%	92%	91%	94%
Percent "excellent" or "good"							

FIGURE 45: UTILITY SERVICES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Sewer services	Above
Drinking water	Above
Storm drainage	Above
Recycling	Above
Garbage collection	Above

RECREATION AND WELLNESS

Parks and Recreation

Quality parks and recreation opportunities help to define a community as more than the grind of its business, traffic and hard work. Leisure activities vastly can improve the quality of life of residents, serving both to entertain and mobilize good health. The survey contained questions seeking residents' perspectives about opportunities and services related to the community's parks and recreation services.

Recreation opportunities in the City of Palo Alto were rated positively as were services related to parks and recreation. City parks, recreation programs or classes and recreation centers or facilities were rated higher than the benchmark. Recreational opportunities received the lowest rating and was higher than the national benchmark. Parks and recreation ratings have stayed constant over time.

Resident use of Palo Alto parks and recreation facilities tells its own story about the attractiveness and accessibility of those services. The percent of residents that used Palo Alto recreation centers was greater than the percent of users in comparison jurisdictions. Recreation program use in Palo Alto was about the same as use in comparison jurisdictions.

FIGURE 46: RATINGS OF COMMUNITY RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES BY YEAR

Percent "excellent" or "good"
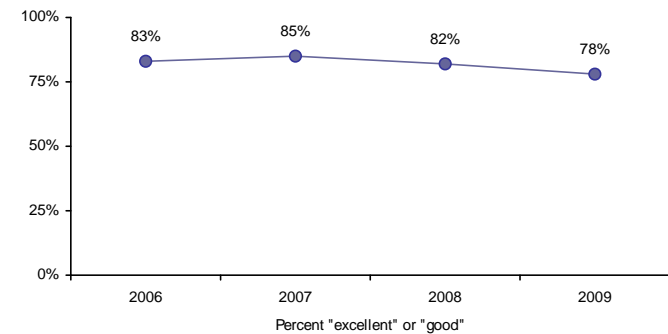
FIGURE 47: COMMUNITY RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Recreation opportunities	Above

FIGURE 48: PARTICIPATION IN PARKS AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES BY YEAR

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Used Palo Alto recreation centers	63%	68%	67%	63%	62%	60%	53%
Participated in a recreation program or activity	49%	56%	53%	54%	52%	50%	49%
Visited a neighborhood park or City park	94%	93%	92%	93%	93%	91%	92%
Percent using at least once in last 12 months							

FIGURE 49: PARTICIPATION IN PARKS AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Used Palo Alto recreation centers	More
Participated in a recreation program or activity	Similar
Visited a neighborhood park or City park	More

FIGURE 50: RATINGS OF PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES BY YEAR

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
City parks	92%	89%	91%	87%	92%	91%	90%
Recreation programs or classes	85%	87%	90%	85%	87%	85%	83%
Recreation centers or facilities	80%	77%	82%	81%	78%	84%	77%
Percent "excellent" or "good"							

FIGURE 51: PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
City parks	Above
Recreation programs or classes	Above
Recreation centers or facilities	Above

Culture, Arts and Education

A full service community does not address only the life and safety of its residents. Like an individual who simply goes to the office and returns home, a community that pays attention only to the life sustaining basics becomes insular, dreary and uninspiring to business and individuals. In the case of communities without thriving culture, arts and education opportunities, the magnet that attracts those who might consider relocating there is vastly weakened. Cultural, artistic, social and educational services elevate the opportunities for personal growth among residents. In the survey, residents were asked about the quality of opportunities to participate in cultural and educational activities.

Opportunities to attend cultural activities were rated as "excellent" or "good" by 74% of respondents. Educational opportunities were rated as "excellent" or "good" by 91% of respondents. Compared to the benchmark data, educational opportunities were above the average of comparison jurisdictions, as was cultural activity opportunities.

About 82% of Palo Alto residents used a City library at least once in the 12 months preceding the survey. This participation rate for library use was above comparison jurisdictions.

FIGURE 52: RATINGS OF CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES BY YEAR

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	74%	79%	81%	85%	77%	83%	NA
Educational opportunities	91%	93%	94%	93%	NA	NA	NA
Percent "excellent" or "good"							

FIGURE 53: CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	Above
Educational opportunities	Above

FIGURE 54: PARTICIPATION IN CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES BY YEAR

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Used Palo Alto public libraries or their services	82%	74%	79%	76%	79%	77%	80%
Percent using at least once in last 12 months							

FIGURE 55: PARTICIPATION IN CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Used Palo Alto public libraries or their services	More

FIGURE 56: PERCEPTION OF CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES BY YEAR

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Public library services	78%	75%	81%	78%	80%	81%	81%

Percent "excellent" or "good"

FIGURE 57: CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Public library services	Similar

Health and Wellness

Healthy residents have the wherewithal to contribute to the economy as volunteers or employees and they do not present a burden in cost and time to others. Although residents bear the primary responsibility for their good health, local government provides services that can foster that well being and that provide care when residents are ill.

Residents of the City of Palo Alto were asked to rate the community's health services as well as the availability of health care, high quality affordable food and preventive health care services. The availability of affordable quality health care and preventative health services were rated positively for the City of Palo Alto.

Among Palo Alto residents, 63% rated affordable quality health care as "excellent" or "good." Those ratings were above the ratings of comparison communities.

FIGURE 58: RATINGS OF COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLNESS ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITIES BY YEAR

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Availability of affordable quality health care	63%	57%	56%	57%	NA	NA	NA
Availability of preventive health services	67%	70%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Percent "excellent" or "good"

FIGURE 59: COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLNESS ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Availability of affordable quality health care	Above
Availability of preventive health services	Above

COMMUNITY INCLUSIVENESS

Diverse communities that include among their residents a mix of races, ages, wealth, ideas and beliefs have the raw material for the most vibrant and creative society. However, the presence of these features alone does not ensure a high quality or desirable space. Surveyed residents were asked about the success of the mix: the sense of community, the openness of residents to people of diverse backgrounds and the attractiveness of the City of Palo Alto as a place to raise children or to retire. They were also questioned about the quality of services delivered to various population subgroups, including older adults, youth and residents with few resources. A community that succeeds in creating an inclusive environment for a variety of residents is a community that offers more to many.

Almost all residents rated the City of Palo Alto as an "excellent" or "good" place to raise kids and about six in ten rated it as an excellent or good place to retire. A majority residents felt that the local sense of community was "excellent" or "good." Most survey respondents felt the City of Palo Alto was open and accepting towards people of diverse backgrounds. The availability of affordable quality child care was rated the lowest by residents and was lower than the benchmark.

FIGURE 60: RATINGS OF COMMUNITY QUALITY AND INCLUSIVENESS BY YEAR

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Sense of community	71%	70%	70%	66%	68%	69%	70%
Openness and acceptance of the community towards people of diverse backgrounds	78%	77%	79%	75%	72%	73%	73%
Availability of affordable quality child care	32%	28%	26%	35%	26%	25%	25%
Palo Alto as a place to raise children	91%	94%	92%	92%	92%	93%	90%
Palo Alto as a place to retire	64%	67%	61%	68%	60%	63%	62%

Percent "excellent" or "good"

FIGURE 61: COMMUNITY QUALITY AND INCLUSIVENESS BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Sense of community	Above
Openness and acceptance of the community toward people of diverse backgrounds	Above
Availability of affordable quality child care	Below
Palo Alto as a place to raise kids	Above
Palo Alto as a place to retire	Above

Services to more vulnerable populations (e.g., seniors, youth or low-income residents) ranged from 59% to 82% with ratings of "excellent" or "good." Services to seniors, youth and low-income people were above the benchmark. Services to low-income people were rated higher than in previous survey years.

FIGURE 62: RATINGS OF QUALITY OF SERVICES PROVIDED FOR POPULATION SUBGROUPS BY YEAR

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Services to seniors	82%	81%	79%	84%	78%	82%	77%
Services to youth	75%	73%	73%	70%	68%	68%	66%
Services to low-income people	59%	46%	46%	54%	45%	37%	NA

Percent "excellent" or "good"

FIGURE 63: SERVICES PROVIDED FOR POPULATION SUBGROUPS BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Services to seniors	Above
Services to youth	Above
Services to low income residents	Above

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Government leaders, elected or hired, cannot run a jurisdiction alone and a jurisdiction cannot run effectively if residents remain strangers with little to connect them. Elected officials and staff require the assistance of local residents whether that assistance comes in tacit approval or eager help; and commonality of purpose among the electorate facilitates policies and programs that appeal to most and causes discord among few. Furthermore, when neighbors help neighbors, the cost to the community to provide services to residents in need declines. When residents are civically engaged, they have taken the opportunity to participate in making the community more livable for all. The extent to which local government provides opportunities to become informed and engaged and the extent to which residents take those opportunities is an indicator of the connection between government and populace. By understanding your residents' level of connection to, knowledge of and participation in local government, the City can find better opportunities to communicate and educate citizens about its mission, services, accomplishments and plans. This survey information is essential for public communication and for helping local government staff to conceive strategies for reaching reluctant voters whose confidence in government may need boosting prior to important referenda.

Civic Activity

Respondents were asked about the perceived community volunteering opportunities and their participation as citizens of the City of Palo Alto. Survey participants rated the volunteer opportunities in the City of Palo Alto favorably. Opportunities to attend or participate in community matters were rated less favorably.

Ratings of civic engagement opportunities were above ratings from comparison jurisdictions where these questions were asked.

FIGURE 64: RATINGS OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES BY YEAR
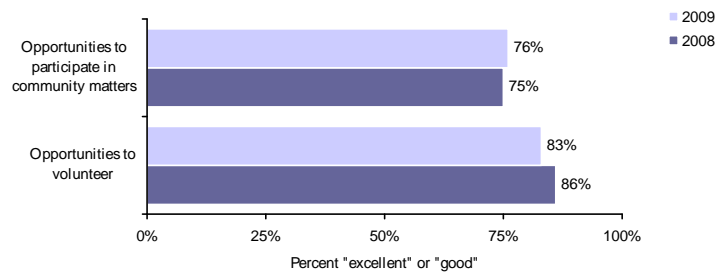
FIGURE 65: CIVIC ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Opportunities to participate in community matters	Above
Opportunities to volunteer	Above

Most of the participants in this survey had not attended a public meeting or participated in a club in the 12 months prior to the survey, but the vast majority had helped a friend. The participation rates of these civic behaviors were compared to the rates in other jurisdictions. Those who had attended a public meeting, participated in a club or civic group or provided help to a friend or neighbor showed similar rates of involvement; while volunteerism showed higher rates. Those who had watched a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting on cable television showed lower rates of community engagement.

FIGURE 66: PARTICIPATION IN CIVIC ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES BY YEAR

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting	28%	26%	26%	27%	30%	28%	30%
Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting on cable television	28%	26%	26%	31%	29%	27%	28%
Volunteered your time to some group or activity in Palo Alto	56%	51%	52%	53%	52%	52%	49%
Participated in a club or civic group in Palo Alto	33%	34%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Provided help to a friend or neighbor	93%	93%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Percent participating at least once in the last 12 months							

FIGURE 67: PARTICIPATION IN CIVIC ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting	Similar
Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting on cable television	Less
Volunteered your time to some group or activity in Palo Alto	More
Participated in a club or civic group in Palo Alto	Similar
Provided help to a friend or neighbor	Similar

City of Palo Alto residents showed the largest amount of civic engagement in the area of electoral participation. Ninety percent reported they were registered to vote and 87% indicated they had voted in the last general election. This rate of self-reported voting was higher than that of comparison communities.

FIGURE 68: REPORTED VOTING BEHAVIOR BY YEAR[1]

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Registered to vote	90%	89%	79%	77%	80%	83%	78%
Voted in the last general election	87%	87%	76%	70%	79%	78%	72%
Percent "yes"							

FIGURE 69: VOTING BEHAVIOR BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Registered to vote	Similar
Voted in last general election	More

Information and Awareness

Those completing the survey were asked about their use and perceptions of various information sources and local government media services. When asked whether they had visited the City of Palo Alto Web site in the previous 12 months, 75% reported they had done so at least once. Public information services were rated favorably compared to benchmark data.

FIGURE 70: USE OF INFORMATION SOURCES BY YEAR

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Visited the City of Palo Alto Web site (at www.cityofpaloalto.org)	75%	78%	62%	54%	52%	NA	NA
Percent using at least once in last 12 months							

FIGURE 71: USE OF INFORMATION SOURCES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Visited the City of Palo Alto Web site	More

FIGURE 72: RATINGS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT MEDIA SERVICES AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION BY YEAR

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Public information services	68%	76%	73%	72%	74%	77%	72%
Percent "excellent" or "good"							

FIGURE 73: LOCAL GOVERNMENT MEDIA SERVICES AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Public information services	Above

[1] Note: In addition to the removal of "don't know" responses, those who said "ineligible to vote" also have been omitted form this calculation. The full frequencies appear in Appendix A.

Social Engagement

Opportunities to participate in social events and activities were rated "excellent" or "good" by 80% of respondents and were higher than in comparison communities.

FIGURE 74: RATINGS OF SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES BY YEAR

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	80%	80%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Percent "excellent" or "good"							

FIGURE 75: SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	Above

Residents in Palo Alto reported a fair amount of neighborliness. More than 72% indicated talking or visiting with their neighbors once a month or more frequently. This amount of contact with neighbors was about the same as the amount of contact reported in other communities.

FIGURE 76: CONTACT WITH IMMEDIATE NEIGHBORS BY YEAR
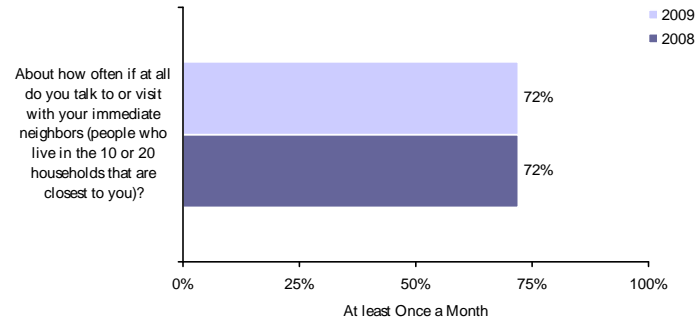
FIGURE 77: CONTACT WITH IMMEDIATE NEIGHBORS BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Has contact with neighbors at least once per month	Similar

PUBLIC TRUST

When local government leaders are trusted, an environment of cooperation is more likely to surround all decisions they make. Cooperation leads to easier communication between leaders and residents and increases the likelihood that high value policies and programs will be implemented to improve the quality of life of the entire community. Trust can be measured in residents' opinions about the overall direction the City of Palo Alto is taking, their perspectives about the service value their taxes purchase and the openness of government to citizen participation. In addition, resident opinion about services provided by the City of Palo Alto could be compared to their opinion about services provided by the state and federal governments. If residents find nothing to admire in the services delivered by any level of government, their opinions about the City of Palo Alto may be colored by their dislike of what all levels of government provide.

A majority of respondents felt that the value of services for taxes paid was "excellent" or "good." When asked to rate the job the City of Palo Alto does at listening to citizens, 51% rated it as "excellent" or "good." Of these five ratings, one was above the benchmark, three were similar to the benchmark and one was below the benchmark.

FIGURE 78: PUBLIC TRUST RATINGS BY YEAR

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
The value of services for the taxes paid to Palo Alto	58%	64%	67%	74%	70%	74%	69%
The overall direction that Palo Alto is taking	53%	63%	57%	62%	54%	63%	54%
The job Palo Alto government does at welcoming citizen involvement	56%	57%	68%	73%	59%	70%	65%
The job Palo Alto government does at listening to citizens	51%	52%	53%	59%	50%	60%	54%
Overall image or reputation of Palo Alto	92%	92%	93%	91%	NA	NA	NA

Percent "excellent" or "good"
Note: Prior to 2008, these questions were asked on an "agree/disagree" scale.

FIGURE 79: PUBLIC TRUST BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Value of services for the taxes paid to Palo Alto	Similar
The overall direction that Palo Alto is taking	Below
Job Palo Alto government does at welcoming citizen involvement	Similar
Job Palo Alto government does at listening to citizens	Similar
Overall image or reputation of Palo Alto	Above

On average, residents of the City of Palo Alto gave the highest evaluations to their own local government and the lowest average rating to state government. The overall quality of services delivered by the City of Palo Alto was rated as "excellent" or "good" by 80% of survey participants. The City of Palo Alto's rating was above the benchmark when compared to other communities. Ratings of overall City services have remained stable over the last year.

FIGURE 80: RATING OVERALL QUALITY OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE CITY OF PALO ALTO BY YEAR
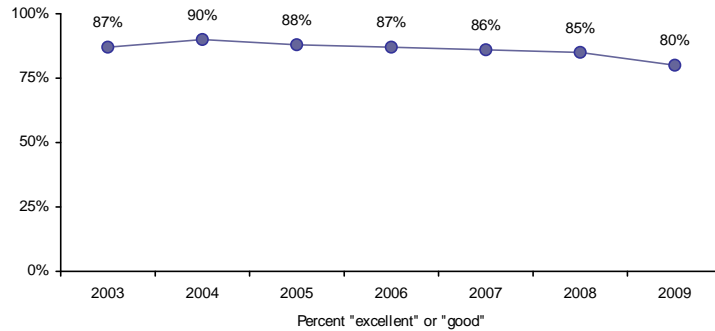
FIGURE 81: RATINGS OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS BY YEAR

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Services provided by City of Palo Alto	80%	85%	86%	87%	88%	90%	87%
Services provided by the Federal Government	41%	33%	33%	33%	32%	38%	32%
Services provided by the State Government	23%	34%	44%	38%	32%	35%	31%
Services provided by Santa Clara County Government	42%	54%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Percent "excellent" or "good"

FIGURE 82: SERVICES PROVIDED BY LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Services provided by the City of Palo Alto	Above
Services provided by the Federal Government	Similar
Services provided by the State Government	Below
Services provided by Santa Clara County Government	Below

City of Palo Alto Employees

The employees of the City of Palo Alto who interact with the public create the first impression that most residents have of the City of Palo Alto. Front line staff who provide information, assist with bill paying, collect trash, create service schedules, fight fires and crime and even give traffic tickets are the collective face of the City of Palo Alto. As such, it is important to know about residents' experience talking with that "face." When employees appear to be knowledgeable, responsive and courteous, residents are more likely to feel that any needs or problems may be solved through positive and productive interactions with the City of Palo Alto staff.

Those completing the survey were asked if they had been in contact with a City employee either in-person or over the phone in the last 12 months; the 58% who reported that they had been in contact (a percent that is similar to the benchmark comparison) were then asked to indicate overall how satisfied they were with the employee in their most recent contact. City employees were rated highly; 79% of respondents rated their overall impression as "excellent" or "good." Employee ratings were higher than the benchmark and were higher than past survey years.

FIGURE 83: PROPORTION OF RESPONDENTS WHO HAD CONTACT WITH CITY EMPLOYEES IN PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS BY YEAR
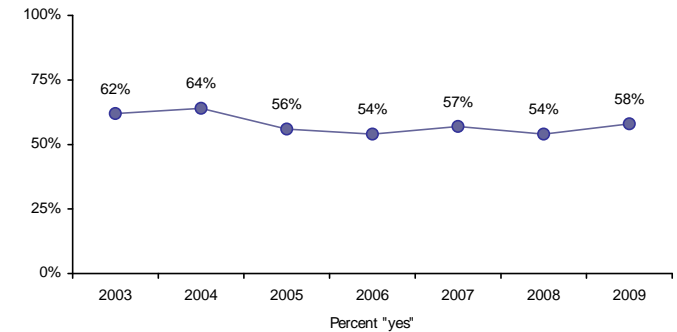
FIGURE 84: CONTACT WITH CITY EMPLOYEES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Had contact with city employee(s) in last 12 months	Similar

FIGURE 85: RATINGS OF CITY EMPLOYEES (AMONG THOSE WHO HAD CONTACT) BY YEAR

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Knowledge	84%	75%	85%	83%	84%	85%	85%
Responsiveness	78%	73%	80%	78%	77%	83%	74%
Courtesy	84%	78%	84%	83%	83%	84%	83%
Overall impression	79%	73%	79%	79%	79%	84%	78%
Percent "excellent" or "good"							

FIGURE 86: RATINGS OF CITY EMPLOYEES (AMONG THOSE WHO HAD CONTACT) BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
City employee knowledge	Above
City employee responsiveness	Similar
City employee courteousness	Above
Overall impression	Above

From Data to Action

RESIDENT PRIORITIES

Knowing where to focus limited resources to improve residents' opinions of local government requires information that targets the services that are most important to residents. However, when residents are asked what services are most important, they rarely stray beyond core services – those directed to save lives and improve safety.

In market research, identifying the most important characteristics of a transaction or product is called Key Driver Analysis. The key drivers that are identified from that analysis do not come from asking customers to self-report which service or product characteristic most influenced their decision to buy or return, but rather from statistical analyses of the predictors of their behavior. When customers are asked to name the most important characteristics of a good or service, responses often are expected or misleading – just as they can be in the context of a citizen survey. For example, air travelers often claim that safety is the primary consideration in their choice of an airline, yet key driver analysis reveals that frequent flier perks or in-flight entertainment predicts their buying decisions.

In local government core services – like fire protection – invariably land at the top of the list created when residents are asked about the most important local government services. And core services are important. But by using Key Driver Analysis, our approach digs deeper to identify the less obvious, but more influential services that are most related to residents' ratings of overall quality of local government services. Because services focused directly on life and safety remain essential to quality government, it is suggested that core services should remain the focus of continuous monitoring and improvement where necessary – but monitoring core services or asking residents to identify important services is not enough.

A Key Driver Analysis (KDA) was conducted for the City of Palo Alto by examining the relationships between ratings of each service and ratings of the City of Palo Alto's overall services. Those key driver services that correlated most highly with residents' perceptions about overall City service quality have been identified. By targeting improvements in key services, the City of Palo Alto can focus on the services that have the greatest likelihood of influencing residents' opinions about overall service quality.

Services found to be most strongly correlated with ratings of overall service quality from the Palo Alto Key Driver Analysis were:

- Street tree maintenance
- Public information services

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CITY OF PALO ALTO ACTION CHART

The 2009 City of Palo Alto Action Chart™ on the following page combines three dimensions of performance:

- Comparison to resident evaluations from other communities. When a comparison is available, the background color of each service box indicates whether the service is above the benchmark (green), similar to the benchmark (yellow) or below the benchmark (red).
- Identification of key services. A black key icon (⚷) next to a service box indicates that service is key (either core or key driver)
- Trendline icons (up and down arrows), indicating whether the current ratings are higher or lower than the previous survey.

Thirty-two services were included in the KDA for the City of Palo Alto. Of these, 19 were above the benchmark, none were below the benchmark and five were similar to the benchmark (no comparison was available for eight custom services). Ratings for three services were trending up and one was trending down, while 27 remained similar to the previous survey (for one service no pervious year comparison was available). A key icon (⚷) indicates the two key drivers.

Considering all performance data included in the Action Chart, a jurisdiction typically will want to consider improvements to any key driver services that are trending down or that are not at least similar to the benchmark. In the case of Palo Alto, no key drivers were below the benchmark or trending lower in the current survey. Because street tree maintenance does not have benchmark data, this is an area for watchful waiting and potential action following the next survey's results. More detail about interpreting results can be found in the next section.

Services with a high percent of respondents answering "don't know" were excluded from the analysis and were considered services that would be less influential. See Appendix A: Complete Survey Frequencies, Frequencies Including "Don't Know" Responses for the percent "don't know" for each service.

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FIGURE 87: CITY OF PALO ALTO ACTION CHART™
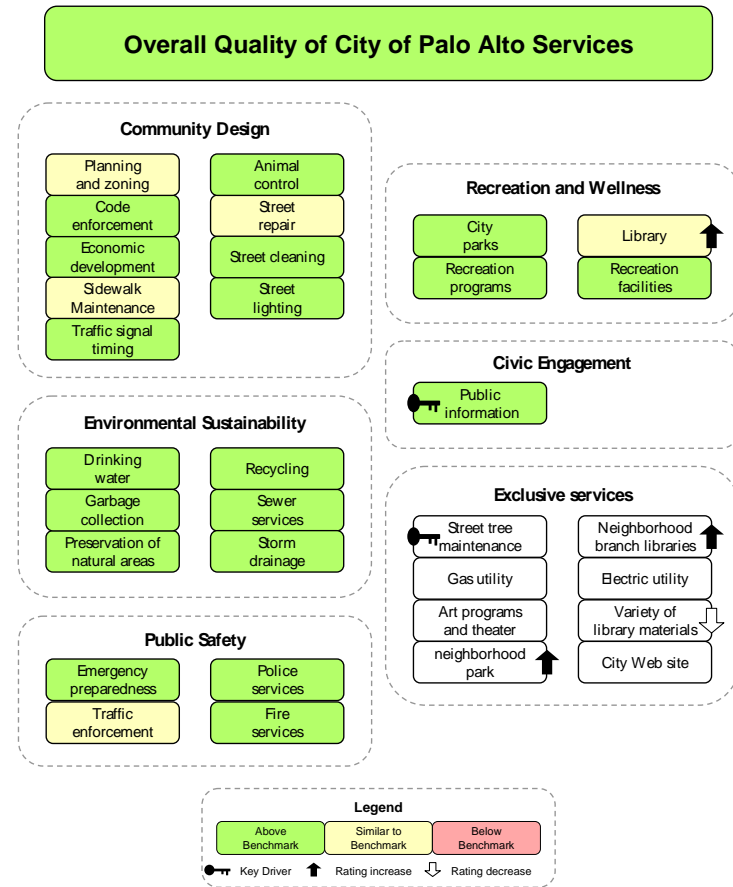
Using Your Action Chart™

The key drivers derived for City of Palo Alto provide a list of those services that are uniquely related to overall service quality. Those key drivers are marked with the symbol of a key in the action chart. Because key driver results are based on a relatively small number of responses, the relationships or correlations that define the key drivers are subject to more variability than is seen when key drivers are derived from a large national dataset of resident responses. To benefit City of Palo Alto, NRC lists the key drivers derived from tens of thousands of resident responses from across the country. This national list is updated periodically so that you can compare your key drivers to the key drivers from the entire NRC data set. Where your locally derived key drivers overlap national key drivers, it makes sense to focus even more strongly on your keys. Similarly, when your local key drivers overlap your core services, there is stronger argument to make for attending to your key drivers that overlap with core services. In the following table, we have listed your key drivers, core services and the national key drivers and we have indicated, with shaded rows, City of Palo Alto key drivers that overlap core services or the nationally derived keys.

FIGURE 88: KEY DRIVERS COMPARED

Service	City of Palo Alto Key Drivers	National Key Drivers	Core Services
Code enforcement			✓
Economic development		✓	
EMS			✓
Fire			✓
Garbage collection			✓
Land use planning and zoning		✓	
Police services		✓	✓
Public information services	✓	✓	
Public schools		✓	
Sewer			✓
Storm drainage			✓
Street repair			✓
Street tree maintenance	✓		
Water			✓

Policy Questions

"Don't know" responses have been removed from the following questions.

Policy Question 1	
During the past 12 months, did you or anyone in your household have contact with the Palo Alto Police Department?	Percent of respondents
Yes	35%
No	65%
Total	100%

Policy Question 2	
If yes, how do you rate the quality of your contact with the Palo Alto Police Department?	Percent of respondents
Excellent	31%
Good	41%
Fair	17%
Poor	11%
Total	100%

Policy Question 3					
Please rate the City of Palo Alto on each of the following:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Preservation of wildlife and native plants	28%	59%	12%	1%	100%
Water and energy preservation	26%	57%	16%	1%	100%
City's composting process and pickup services	36%	50%	11%	2%	100%
Infrastructure Investment (e.g., buildings, streets)	9%	47%	33%	11%	100%
Downtown shopping, dining and entertainment experience	23%	51%	21%	5%	100%
Promoting business growth and economic development	8%	38%	37%	17%	100%

Policy Question 4	
In the past 12 months, did you or anyone from your household apply for a permit(s) from the City's Development Center?	Percent of respondents
Yes	7%
No	93%
Total	100%

Policy Question 5					
If yes, how would you rate each of the following?	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Ease of the planning approval process	0%	21%	20%	59%	100%
Time required to review and issue the permit(s)	0%	26%	24%	50%	100%
Inspection timeliness	7%	45%	35%	13%	100%
Overall customer service	4%	24%	50%	22%	100%
Ease of the overall application process	0%	15%	36%	49%	100%

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Policy Question 6	
To what extent do you agree or disagree that the City's current fiscal condition will continue to provide valuable services?	Percent of respondents
Strongly agree	10%
Somewhat agree	54%
Somewhat disagree	30%
Strongly disagree	6%
Total	100%

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Appendix A: Complete Survey Frequencies
FREQUENCIES EXCLUDING "DON'T KNOW" RESPONSES

Question 1: Quality of Life					
Please rate each of the following aspects of quality of life in Palo Alto:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Palo Alto as a place to live	55%	40%	5%	1%	100%
Your neighborhood as a place to live	50%	39%	10%	1%	100%
Palo Alto as a place to raise children	53%	38%	8%	1%	100%
Palo Alto as a place to work	40%	47%	10%	3%	100%
Palo Alto as a place to retire	31%	33%	22%	14%	100%
The overall quality of life in Palo Alto	42%	50%	7%	0%	100%

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Question 2: Community Characteristics					
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Palo Alto as a whole:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Sense of community	23%	48%	24%	5%	100%
Openness and acceptance of the community towards people of diverse backgrounds	32%	46%	18%	4%	100%
Overall appearance of Palo Alto	35%	48%	16%	2%	100%
Cleanliness of Palo Alto	33%	52%	12%	2%	100%
Overall quality of new development in Palo Alto	13%	41%	32%	13%	100%
Variety of housing options	8%	31%	40%	21%	100%
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Palo Alto	22%	51%	21%	6%	100%
Shopping opportunities	29%	41%	22%	8%	100%
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	28%	46%	22%	4%	100%
Recreational opportunities	31%	48%	18%	3%	100%
Employment opportunities	14%	38%	37%	12%	100%
Educational opportunities	51%	39%	9%	1%	100%
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	23%	56%	18%	3%	100%
Opportunities to volunteer	34%	49%	14%	3%	100%
Opportunities to participate in community matters	28%	48%	19%	5%	100%
Ease of car travel in Palo Alto	16%	48%	29%	7%	100%
Ease of bus travel in Palo Alto	11%	25%	37%	27%	100%
Ease of rail travel in Palo Alto	21%	42%	28%	10%	100%
Ease of bicycle travel in Palo Alto	30%	48%	19%	2%	100%
Ease of walking in Palo Alto	36%	46%	15%	3%	100%
Availability of paths and walking trails	25%	49%	20%	5%	100%
Traffic flow on major streets	8%	38%	42%	12%	100%
Amount of public parking	15%	40%	34%	11%	100%
Availability of affordable quality housing	4%	13%	34%	49%	100%
Availability of affordable quality child care	4%	28%	40%	28%	100%
Availability of affordable quality health care	19%	44%	22%	15%	100%
Availability of preventive health services	23%	44%	22%	11%	100%
Air quality	20%	53%	25%	2%	100%
Quality of overall natural environment in Palo Alto	31%	53%	14%	1%	100%
Overall image or reputation of Palo Alto	49%	43%	7%	1%	100%
Availability of locally grown produce	30%	40%	22%	8%	100%
Opportunities to learn about City services through social networking Web sites such as: Twitter, Facebook and MySpace	19%	41%	26%	14%	100%

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Question 3: Growth					
Please rate the speed of growth in the following categories in Palo Alto over the past 2 years:	Much too slow	Somewhat too slow	Right amount	Somewhat too fast	Much too fast	Total
Population growth	1%	1%	43%	40%	14%	100%
Retail growth (stores, restaurants, etc.)	7%	27%	53%	11%	2%	100%
Jobs growth	15%	50%	31%	2%	1%	100%

Question 4: Code Enforcement	
To what degree, if at all, are run down buildings, weed lots or junk vehicles a problem in Palo Alto?	Percent of respondents
Not a problem	22%
Minor problem	52%
Moderate problem	22%
Major problem	4%
Total	100%

Question 5: Community Safety					
Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel from the following in Palo Alto:	Very safe	Somewhat safe	Neither safe nor unsafe	Somewhat unsafe	Very unsafe	Total
Violent crime (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	40%	41%	9%	9%	0%	100%
Property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	23%	43%	17%	15%	2%	100%
Environmental hazards, including toxic waste	42%	38%	14%	5%	0%	100%

Question 6: Personal Safety					
Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel:	Very safe	Somewhat safe	Neither safe nor unsafe	Somewhat unsafe	Very unsafe	Total
In your neighborhood during the day	72%	23%	4%	1%	0%	100%
In your neighborhood after dark	31%	47%	11%	10%	1%	100%
In Palo Alto's downtown area during the day	65%	25%	7%	2%	0%	100%
In Palo Alto's downtown area after dark	23%	42%	16%	16%	3%	100%

Question 7: Crime Victim	
During the past twelve months, were you or anyone in your household the victim of any crime?	Percent of respondents
No	89%
Yes	11%
Total	100%

Question 8: Crime Reporting	
If yes, was this crime (these crimes) reported to the police?	Percent of respondents
No	20%
Yes	80%
Total	100%

Question 9: Resident Behaviors						
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?	Never	Once or twice	3 to 12 times	13 to 26 times	More than 26 times	Total
Used Palo Alto public libraries or their services	18%	20%	29%	15%	19%	100%
Used Palo Alto recreation centers	37%	26%	25%	6%	6%	100%
Participated in a recreation program or activity	51%	22%	18%	5%	4%	100%
Visited a neighborhood park or City park	6%	15%	33%	21%	25%	100%
Ridden a local bus within Palo Alto	69%	18%	7%	3%	4%	100%
Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting	72%	20%	7%	1%	0%	100%
Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting on cable television	72%	16%	9%	2%	1%	100%
Visited the City of Palo Alto Web site (at www.cityofpaloalto.org)	25%	20%	37%	10%	8%	100%
Volunteered your time to some group or activity in Palo Alto	44%	22%	14%	8%	13%	100%
Participated in a club or civic group in Palo Alto	67%	13%	8%	5%	7%	100%
Provided help to a friend or neighbor	7%	21%	45%	15%	12%	100%
Used the City's Web site to conduct business or pay bills	75%	11%	9%	3%	2%	100%
Read a Palo Alto Newspaper	5%	7%	14%	18%	57%	100%

Question 10: Neighborliness	
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)?	Percent of respondents
Just about everyday	22%
Several times a week	27%
Several times a month	24%
Once a month	9%
Several times a year	12%
Once a year or less	3%
Never	4%
Total	100%

Question 11: Service Quality					
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Palo Alto:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Police services	32%	51%	12%	5%	100%
Fire services	51%	44%	5%	0%	100%
Ambulance or emergency medical services	48%	44%	8%	1%	100%
Crime prevention	19%	54%	21%	6%	100%
Fire prevention and education	24%	56%	18%	2%	100%
Traffic enforcement	14%	47%	32%	7%	100%
Street repair	9%	33%	38%	20%	100%
Street cleaning	22%	50%	23%	4%	100%
Street lighting	14%	50%	27%	9%	100%
Sidewalk maintenance	11%	42%	34%	13%	100%
Traffic signal timing	10%	46%	33%	11%	100%
Bus or transit services	11%	38%	34%	16%	100%
Garbage collection	38%	51%	10%	1%	100%
Recycling	42%	47%	8%	2%	100%
Storm drainage	19%	54%	21%	6%	100%
Drinking water	40%	41%	14%	5%	100%
Sewer services	30%	52%	16%	3%	100%
City parks	45%	47%	8%	0%	100%
Recreation programs or classes	34%	51%	14%	1%	100%
Recreation centers or facilities	23%	57%	18%	2%	100%
Land use, planning and zoning	9%	37%	32%	21%	100%
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc)	11%	39%	39%	11%	100%
Animal control	25%	53%	20%	2%	100%
Economic development	10%	43%	35%	11%	100%
Services to seniors	29%	53%	18%	0%	100%
Services to youth	24%	52%	20%	4%	100%
Services to low-income people	20%	40%	29%	12%	100%
Public library services	37%	42%	16%	6%	100%
Public information services	21%	47%	26%	7%	100%
Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations)	19%	43%	32%	6%	100%
Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts	27%	55%	16%	2%	100%
Neighborhood branch libraries	30%	45%	20%	6%	100%
Variety of library materials	26%	47%	23%	4%	100%
Your neighborhood park	38%	49%	12%	1%	100%
Street tree maintenance	22%	50%	21%	7%	100%
Electric utility	30%	53%	15%	2%	100%
Gas utility	31%	50%	16%	3%	100%

Question 11: Service Quality					
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Palo Alto:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
City's Web site	15%	40%	30%	15%	100%
Art programs and theater	25%	54%	19%	2%	100%

Question 12: Government Services Overall					
Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by each of the following?	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
The City of Palo Alto	24%	56%	16%	4%	100%
The Federal Government	5%	36%	44%	15%	100%
The State Government	2%	20%	45%	33%	100%
Santa Clara County Government	4%	38%	45%	13%	100%

Question 13: Contact with City Employees	
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)?	Percent of respondents
No	42%
Yes	58%
Total	100%

Question 14: City Employees					
What was your impression of the employee(s) of the City of Palo Alto in your most recent contact?	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Knowledge	34%	50%	10%	5%	100%
Responsiveness	33%	45%	14%	8%	100%
Courtesy	40%	44%	9%	6%	100%
Overall impression	33%	45%	15%	6%	100%

Question 15: Government Performance					
Please rate the following categories of Palo Alto government performance:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
The value of services for the taxes paid to Palo Alto	12%	47%	32%	10%	100%
The overall direction that Palo Alto is taking	7%	46%	37%	10%	100%
The job Palo Alto government does at welcoming citizen involvement	15%	41%	32%	12%	100%
The job Palo Alto government does at listening to citizens	10%	41%	33%	16%	100%

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Question 16: Recommendation and Longevity					
Please indicate how likely or unlikely you are to do each of the following:	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Somewhat unlikely	Very unlikely	Total
Recommend living in Palo Alto to someone who asks	52%	38%	7%	4%	100%
Remain in Palo Alto for the next five years	63%	24%	8%	5%	100%

Question 17: Impact of the Economy	
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:	Percent of respondents
Very positive	2%
Somewhat positive	10%
Neutral	47%
Somewhat negative	35%
Very negative	7%
Total	100%

Question 18a: Policy Question 1	
During the past 12 months, did you or anyone in your household have contact with the Palo Alto Police Department?	Percent of respondents
Yes	35%
No	65%
Total	100%

Question 18b: Policy Question 2	
If yes, how do you rate the quality of your contact with the Palo Alto Police Department?	Percent of respondents
Excellent	31%
Good	41%
Fair	17%
Poor	11%
Total	100%

Question 18c: Policy Question 3					
Please rate the City of Palo Alto on each of the following:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Preservation of wildlife and native plants	28%	59%	12%	1%	100%
Water and energy preservation	26%	57%	16%	1%	100%
City's composting process and pickup services	36%	50%	11%	2%	100%
Infrastructure Investment (e.g., buildings, streets)	9%	47%	33%	11%	100%
Downtown shopping, dining and entertainment experience	23%	51%	21%	5%	100%
Promoting business growth and economic development	8%	38%	37%	17%	100%

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Question 18d: Policy Question 4	
In the past 12 months, did you or anyone from your household apply for a permit(s) from the City's Development Center?	Percent of respondents
Yes	7%
No	93%
Total	100%

Question 18e: Policy Question 5					
If yes, how would you rate each of the following?	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Ease of the planning approval process	0%	21%	20%	59%	100%
Time required to review and issue the permit(s)	0%	26%	24%	50%	100%
Inspection timeliness	7%	45%	35%	13%	100%
Overall customer service	4%	24%	50%	22%	100%
Ease of the overall application process	0%	15%	36%	49%	100%

Question 18f: Policy Question 6	
To what extent do you agree or disagree that the City's current fiscal condition will continue to provide valuable services?	Percent of respondents
Strongly agree	10%
Somewhat agree	54%
Somewhat disagree	30%
Strongly disagree	6%
Total	100%

Question D1: Employment Status	
Are you currently employed for pay?	Percent of respondents
No	35%
Yes, full-time	51%
Yes, part-time	14%
Total	100%

Question D2: Mode of Transportation Used for Commute	
During a typical week, how many days do you commute to work (for the longest distance of your commute) in each of the ways listed below?	Percent of days mode used
Motorized vehicle (e.g., car, truck, van, motorcycle, etc…) by myself	58%
Motorized vehicle (e.g., car, truck, van, motorcycle, etc…) with other children or adults	8%
Bus, rail, subway or other public transportation	7%
Walk	7%
Bicycle	9%
Work at home	10%
Other	0%

Question D3: Length of Residency

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How many years have you lived in Palo Alto?	Percent of respondents
Less than 2 years	11%
2 to 5 years	23%
6 to 10 years	14%
11 to 20 years	18%
More than 20 years	34%
Total	100%

Question D4: Housing Unit Type	
Which best describes the building you live in?	Percent of respondents
One family house detached from any other houses	57%
House attached to one or more houses (e.g., a duplex or townhome)	4%
Building with two or more apartments or condominiums	37%
Mobile home	0%
Other	1%
Total	100%

Question D5: Housing Tenure (Rent/Own)	
Is this house, apartment or mobile home…	Percent of respondents
Rented for cash or occupied without cash payment	40%
Owned by you or someone in this house with a mortgage or free and clear	60%
Total	100%

Question D6: Monthly Housing Cost	
About how much is your monthly housing cost for the place you live (including rent, mortgage payment, property tax, property insurance and homeowners" association (HOA) fees)?	Percent of respondents
Less than $300 per month	5%
$300 to $599 per month	6%
$600 to $999 per month	9%
$1,000 to $1,499 per month	14%
$1,500 to $2,499 per month	26%
$2,500 or more per month	40%
Total	100%

Question D7: Presence of Children in Household	
Do any children 17 or under live in your household?	Percent of respondents
No	63%
Yes	37%
Total	100%

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Question D8: Presence of Older Adults in Household	
Are you or any other members of your household aged 65 or older?	Percent of respondents
No	70%
Yes	30%
Total	100%

Question D9: Household Income	
How much do you anticipate your household's total income before taxes will be for the current year? (Please include in your total income money from all sources for all persons living in your household.)	Percent of respondents
Less than $24,999	8%
$25,000 to $49,999	12%
$50,000 to $99,999	24%
$100,000 to $149,000	20%
$150,000 or more	37%
Total	100%

Question D10: Ethnicity	
Are you Spanish, Hispanic or Latino?	Percent of respondents
No, not Spanish, Hispanic or Latino	96%
Yes, I consider myself to be Spanish, Hispanic or Latino	4%
Total	100%

Question D11: Race	
What is your race? (Mark one or more races to indicate what race(s) you consider yourself to be.)	Percent of respondents
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1%
Asian, Asian Indian or Pacific Islander	29%
Black or African American	1%
White	68%
Other	4%
Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one option	

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Question D12: Age	
In which category is your age?	Percent of respondents
18 to 24 years	2%
25 to 34 years	17%
35 to 44 years	20%
45 to 54 years	25%
55 to 64 years	11%
65 to 74 years	10%
75 years or older	15%
Total	100%

Question D13: Gender	
What is your sex?	Percent of respondents
Female	52%
Male	48%
Total	100%

Question D14: Registered to Vote	
Are you registered to vote in your jurisdiction?	Percent of respondents
No	9%
Yes	83%
Ineligible to vote	8%
Total	100%

Question D15: Voted in Last General Election	
Many people don't have time to vote in elections. Did you vote in the last general election?	Percent of respondents
No	12%
Yes	79%
Ineligible to vote	9%
Total	100%

FREQUENCIES INCLUDING "DON'T KNOW" RESPONSES

These tables contain the percentage of respondents for each response category as well as the "n" or total number of respondents for each category, next to the percentage.

Question 1: Quality of Life											
Please rate each of the following aspects of quality of life in Palo Alto:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
Palo Alto as a place to live	55%	230	40%	167	5%	21	1%	3	0%	0	100%	421
Your neighborhood as a place to live	50%	210	39%	166	10%	41	1%	2	0%	0	100%	420
Palo Alto as a place to raise children	45%	189	32%	136	7%	29	1%	3	15%	62	100%	419
Palo Alto as a place to work	31%	130	36%	151	8%	34	2%	9	22%	92	100%	417
Palo Alto as a place to retire	25%	104	27%	112	18%	73	11%	46	20%	82	100%	417
The overall quality of life in Palo Alto	42%	177	50%	212	7%	30	0%	1	0%	0	100%	419

Question 2: Community Characteristics											
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Palo Alto as a whole:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
Sense of community	23%	94	46%	191	23%	97	5%	19	3%	13	100%	414
Openness and acceptance of the community towards people of diverse backgrounds	31%	128	43%	181	18%	73	4%	15	5%	20	100%	417
Overall appearance of Palo Alto	35%	146	47%	198	16%	65	2%	8	0%	1	100%	418
Cleanliness of Palo Alto	33%	139	52%	218	12%	51	2%	10	0%	1	100%	419
Overall quality of new development in Palo Alto	12%	48	36%	151	28%	117	12%	49	12%	50	100%	414
Variety of housing options	7%	31	30%	123	38%	159	19%	81	5%	22	100%	416
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Palo Alto	21%	86	50%	206	20%	84	6%	24	4%	15	100%	415
Shopping opportunities	29%	123	41%	170	21%	90	8%	34	1%	3	100%	420
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	27%	111	44%	183	20%	85	4%	17	5%	22	100%	418
Recreational opportunities	29%	121	45%	189	17%	72	3%	13	6%	25	100%	420
Employment opportunities	10%	40	27%	111	26%	109	8%	35	28%	117	100%	412
Educational opportunities	47%	196	36%	150	8%	34	1%	2	9%	37	100%	420
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	21%	88	51%	213	16%	67	2%	10	9%	40	100%	417

| Question 2: Community Characteristics | | | | | | | | | | | |
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Palo Alto as a whole:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
Opportunities to volunteer	28%	118	41%	171	11%	47	3%	11	17%	73	100%	419
Opportunities to participate in community matters	23%	96	40%	165	16%	65	4%	17	16%	67	100%	409
Ease of car travel in Palo Alto	16%	66	47%	196	28%	116	6%	26	2%	8	100%	413
Ease of bus travel in Palo Alto	7%	30	16%	68	24%	98	17%	72	35%	147	100%	415
Ease of rail travel in Palo Alto	18%	74	35%	146	23%	97	8%	35	15%	63	100%	415
Ease of bicycle travel in Palo Alto	27%	111	43%	177	17%	69	2%	9	12%	49	100%	415
Ease of walking in Palo Alto	35%	145	46%	188	15%	60	3%	12	1%	6	100%	411
Availability of paths and walking trails	24%	99	47%	193	19%	78	5%	21	5%	22	100%	413
Traffic flow on major streets	8%	33	38%	157	42%	174	12%	51	1%	3	100%	418
Amount of public parking	14%	59	39%	163	33%	137	11%	46	3%	12	100%	416
Availability of affordable quality housing	3%	13	11%	48	30%	123	42%	175	14%	58	100%	416
Availability of affordable quality child care	2%	7	13%	53	18%	75	13%	54	54%	224	100%	413
Availability of affordable quality health care	15%	60	35%	142	17%	71	12%	48	21%	85	100%	407
Availability of preventive health services	17%	70	32%	132	16%	65	8%	32	27%	111	100%	410
Air quality	20%	81	51%	211	25%	101	1%	6	3%	11	100%	409
Quality of overall natural environment in Palo Alto	31%	129	53%	219	14%	59	1%	5	1%	4	100%	416
Overall image or reputation of Palo Alto	48%	200	43%	178	7%	28	1%	5	1%	2	100%	414
Availability of locally grown produce	26%	89	35%	120	19%	65	6%	22	14%	50	100%	346
Opportunities to learn about City services through social networking Web sites such as: Twitter, Facebook and MySpace	8%	27	16%	56	10%	36	6%	19	60%	207	100%	345

Question 3: Growth													
Please rate the speed of growth in the following categories in Palo Alto over the past 2 years:	Much too slow		Somewhat too slow		Right amount		Somewhat too fast		Much too fast		Don't know		Total	
Population growth	1%	3	1%	4	32%	134	30%	124	11%	44	26%	110	100%	420
Retail growth (stores, restaurants, etc.)	6%	26	24%	98	46%	191	9%	38	2%	7	13%	56	100%	416
Jobs growth	8%	35	28%	117	17%	71	1%	6	1%	3	44%	185	100%	417

Question 4: Code Enforcement		
To what degree, if at all, are run down buildings, weed lots or junk vehicles a problem in Palo Alto?	Percent of respondents	Count
Not a problem	21%	88
Minor problem	49%	205
Moderate problem	21%	86
Major problem	4%	15
Don't know	6%	24
Total	100%	418

Question 5: Community Safety													
Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel from the following in Palo Alto:	Very safe		Somewhat safe		Neither safe nor unsafe		Somewhat unsafe		Very unsafe		Don't know		Total	
Violent crime (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	40%	167	41%	171	9%	39	9%	36	0%	2	1%	4	100%	419
Property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	23%	94	43%	179	17%	72	15%	61	2%	10	0%	1	100%	418
Environmental hazards, including toxic waste	39%	165	35%	148	13%	55	5%	19	0%	2	7%	30	100%	418

Question 6: Personal Safety														
Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel:	Very safe		Somewhat safe		Neither safe nor unsafe		Somewhat unsafe		Very unsafe		Don't know		Total	
In your neighborhood during the day	72%	302	23%	97	4%	16	1%	5	0%	0	0%	0	100%	420
In your neighborhood after dark	31%	128	46%	193	11%	46	10%	43	1%	3	1%	4	100%	417
In Palo Alto's downtown area during the day	63%	264	25%	103	7%	28	2%	9	0%	1	3%	14	100%	419
In Palo Alto's downtown area after dark	21%	90	38%	161	15%	63	14%	61	3%	12	8%	34	100%	420

Question 7: Crime Victim		
During the past twelve months, were you or anyone in your household the victim of any crime?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	88%	370
Yes	11%	45
Don't know	1%	3
Total	100%	419

Question 8: Crime Reporting		
If yes, was this crime (these crimes) reported to the police?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	20%	10
Yes	80%	38
Don't know	0%	0
Total	100%	47

Question 9: Resident Behaviors											
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?	Never		Once or twice		3 to 12 times		13 to 26 times		More than 26 times		Total	
Used Palo Alto public libraries or their services	18%	76	20%	82	29%	120	15%	62	19%	77	100%	418
Used Palo Alto recreation centers	37%	151	26%	108	25%	101	6%	26	6%	25	100%	411
Participated in a recreation program or activity	51%	207	22%	89	18%	75	5%	21	4%	17	100%	409
Visited a neighborhood park or City park	6%	25	15%	61	33%	136	21%	87	25%	105	100%	414
Ridden a local bus within Palo Alto	69%	285	18%	73	7%	30	3%	11	4%	15	100%	414
Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting	72%	300	20%	82	7%	29	1%	6	0%	1	100%	417
Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting on cable television	72%	300	16%	68	9%	37	2%	8	1%	3	100%	417
Visited the City of Palo Alto Web site (at www.cityofpaloalto.org)	25%	102	20%	84	37%	154	10%	40	8%	34	100%	414
Recycled used paper, cans or bottles from your home	1%	5	2%	9	5%	21	5%	21	87%	353	100%	408
Volunteered your time to some group or activity in Palo Alto	44%	184	22%	92	14%	57	8%	32	13%	53	100%	417
Participated in a club or civic group in Palo Alto	67%	275	13%	52	8%	32	5%	21	7%	30	100%	410
Provided help to a friend or neighbor	7%	28	21%	86	45%	185	15%	63	12%	49	100%	411
Used the City's Web site to conduct business or pay bills	75%	265	11%	40	9%	32	3%	11	2%	7	100%	355
Read a Palo Alto Newspaper	5%	17	7%	25	14%	48	18%	63	57%	203	100%	356

Question 10: Neighborliness		
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)?	Percent of respondents	Count
Just about everyday	22%	90
Several times a week	27%	110
Several times a month	24%	99
Once a month	9%	37
Several times a year	12%	51
Once a year or less	3%	11
Never	4%	16
Total	100%	414

Question 11: Service Quality											
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Palo Alto:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
Police services	27%	110	43%	174	10%	39	4%	15	17%	67	100%	407
Fire services	34%	137	29%	119	3%	14	0%	1	33%	136	100%	407
Ambulance or emergency medical services	27%	112	25%	102	4%	18	1%	3	42%	172	100%	407
Crime prevention	14%	55	38%	154	15%	59	5%	18	29%	119	100%	406
Fire prevention and education	13%	54	32%	127	10%	42	1%	3	44%	177	100%	402
Traffic enforcement	11%	46	39%	159	26%	106	6%	25	17%	68	100%	404
Street repair	8%	33	32%	129	37%	149	19%	78	4%	18	100%	408
Street cleaning	22%	89	49%	201	22%	91	4%	17	3%	11	100%	410
Street lighting	14%	57	49%	201	26%	107	9%	37	2%	6	100%	408
Sidewalk maintenance	11%	44	40%	163	33%	134	12%	50	4%	15	100%	406
Traffic signal timing	9%	38	44%	180	32%	130	11%	43	3%	14	100%	406
Bus or transit services	6%	25	21%	85	19%	76	9%	35	44%	174	100%	396
Garbage collection	37%	149	48%	198	10%	39	1%	6	4%	17	100%	409
Recycling	41%	167	45%	186	8%	32	2%	8	4%	15	100%	409
Storm drainage	15%	60	43%	172	17%	67	5%	18	21%	85	100%	402
Drinking water	39%	156	39%	158	13%	54	4%	18	5%	18	100%	404

Question 11: Service Quality											
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Palo Alto:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
Sewer services	25%	101	44%	177	13%	55	2%	9	16%	65	100%	407
City parks	44%	179	46%	185	8%	31	0%	1	2%	10	100%	406
Recreation programs or classes	22%	88	32%	130	9%	35	1%	3	37%	149	100%	405
Recreation centers or facilities	16%	63	39%	157	12%	50	2%	6	31%	122	100%	397
Land use, planning and zoning	7%	27	27%	108	23%	93	15%	62	28%	114	100%	403
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc)	7%	28	25%	101	25%	99	7%	29	36%	142	100%	400
Animal control	16%	64	34%	137	12%	50	1%	5	37%	150	100%	406
Economic development	7%	27	30%	118	24%	96	8%	30	32%	128	100%	399
Services to seniors	14%	56	25%	102	8%	34	0%	0	53%	215	100%	406
Services to youth	12%	48	26%	106	10%	42	2%	9	49%	195	100%	401
Services to low-income people	7%	28	14%	57	10%	41	4%	17	64%	253	100%	397
Public library services	32%	131	37%	149	14%	58	5%	20	11%	46	100%	404
Public information services	16%	64	35%	141	19%	77	5%	20	25%	103	100%	405
Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations)	12%	48	26%	107	20%	79	4%	16	38%	155	100%	407
Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts	23%	94	46%	188	14%	55	2%	7	15%	62	100%	406
Neighborhood branch libraries	25%	85	37%	128	17%	58	5%	16	17%	57	100%	343
Variety of library materials	21%	72	39%	133	18%	63	3%	12	18%	63	100%	343
Your neighborhood park	36%	125	47%	160	11%	39	1%	2	5%	16	100%	342
Street tree maintenance	21%	71	48%	164	21%	70	6%	22	4%	14	100%	341
Electric utility	28%	95	50%	170	14%	49	2%	7	6%	22	100%	343
Gas utility	27%	90	44%	149	14%	48	3%	8	13%	43	100%	339
City's Web site	11%	35	29%	95	22%	71	11%	36	28%	93	100%	331
Art programs and theater	19%	65	41%	139	14%	48	2%	6	25%	84	100%	342

Question 12: Government Services Overall											
Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by each of the following?	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
The City of Palo Alto	23%	95	55%	224	16%	65	4%	14	3%	11	100%	409
The Federal Government	4%	15	30%	120	36%	146	12%	50	18%	74	100%	406
The State Government	2%	8	16%	67	36%	149	27%	108	19%	76	100%	408
Santa Clara County Government	3%	11	27%	108	32%	129	9%	39	30%	122	100%	408

Question 13: Contact with City Employees		
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)?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	42%	174
Yes	58%	238
Total	100%	412

Question 14: City Employees											
What was your impression of the employee(s) of the City of Palo Alto in your most recent contact?	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
Knowledge	33%	80	48%	116	10%	24	5%	12	5%	11	100%	243
Responsiveness	32%	78	44%	108	14%	34	7%	18	2%	4	100%	242
Courtesy	40%	97	43%	105	9%	23	6%	16	1%	4	100%	244
Overall impression	33%	80	45%	109	15%	36	6%	15	1%	3	100%	243

Question 15: Government Performance											
Please rate the following categories of Palo Alto government performance:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
The value of services for the taxes paid to Palo Alto	10%	39	38%	157	26%	108	8%	32	17%	71	100%	409
The overall direction that Palo Alto is taking	6%	25	38%	156	31%	125	9%	35	16%	67	100%	409
The job Palo Alto government does at welcoming citizen involvement	10%	43	29%	120	23%	94	9%	35	28%	116	100%	408
The job Palo Alto government does at listening to citizens	7%	30	29%	118	23%	94	11%	46	30%	121	100%	409

Question 16: Recommendation and Longevity											
Please indicate how likely or unlikely you are to do each of the following:	Very likely		Somewhat likely		Somewhat unlikely		Very unlikely		Don't know		Total	
Recommend living in Palo Alto to someone who asks	51%	214	37%	155	7%	27	4%	15	1%	4	100%	415
Remain in Palo Alto for the next five years	61%	251	24%	97	7%	31	5%	21	3%	10	100%	410

Question 17: Impact of the Economy		
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:	Percent of respondents	Count
Very positive	2%	7
Somewhat positive	10%	41
Neutral	47%	194
Somewhat negative	35%	146
Very negative	7%	27
Total	100%	415

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Question 18a: Policy Question 1		
During the past 12 months, did you or anyone in your household have contact with the Palo Alto Police Department?	Percent of respondents	Count
Yes	34%	144
No	65%	270
Don't know	1%	3
Total	100%	417

Question 18b: Policy Question 2		
If yes, how do you rate the quality of your contact with the Palo Alto Police Department?	Percent of respondents	Count
Excellent	30%	43
Good	40%	58
Fair	17%	24
Poor	11%	16
Don't know	2%	3
Total	100%	145

Question 18c: Policy Question 3											
Please rate the City of Palo Alto on each of the following:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
Preservation of wildlife and native plants	23%	81	49%	170	10%	35	1%	2	17%	57	100%	345
Water and energy preservation	22%	78	49%	169	13%	46	1%	4	14%	50	100%	347
City's composting process and pickup services	29%	101	41%	142	9%	32	2%	7	18%	64	100%	345
Infrastructure Investment (e.g., buildings, streets)	7%	23	37%	129	26%	91	9%	30	21%	72	100%	345
Downtown shopping, dining and entertainment experience	22%	77	49%	169	21%	71	4%	15	4%	14	100%	347
Promoting business growth and economic development	6%	20	27%	93	27%	93	12%	42	28%	97	100%	345

Question 18d: Policy Question 4		
In the past 12 months, did you or anyone from your household apply for a permit(s) from the City's Development Center?	Percent of respondents	Count
Yes	7%	28
No	92%	380
Don't know	2%	7
Total	100%	415

Question 18e: Policy Question 5												
If yes, how would you rate each of the following:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
Ease of the planning approval process	0%	0	17%	6	16%	5	48%	16	18%	6	100%	33
Time required to review and issue the permit(s)	0%	0	19%	6	17%	6	36%	11	28%	9	100%	32
Inspection timeliness	5%	2	33%	11	26%	8	10%	3	27%	9	100%	33
Overall customer service	3%	1	21%	7	43%	14	19%	6	14%	4	100%	32
Ease of the overall application process	0%	0	13%	4	31%	10	43%	13	13%	4	100%	32

Question 18f: Policy Question 6		
To what extent do you agree or disagree that the City's current fiscal condition will continue to provide valuable services?	Percent of respondents	Count
Strongly agree	7%	27
Somewhat agree	35%	141
Somewhat disagree	19%	77
Strongly disagree	4%	16
Don't know	35%	143
Total	100%	405

Question D1: Employment Status		
Are you currently employed for pay?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	35%	146
Yes, full-time	51%	211
Yes, part-time	14%	58
Total	100%	414

Question D2: Mode of Transportation Used for Commute	
During a typical week, how many days do you commute to work (for the longest distance of your commute) in each of the ways listed below?	Percent of days mode used
Motorized vehicle (e.g., car, truck, van, motorcycle, etc…) by myself	58%
Motorized vehicle (e.g., car, truck, van, motorcycle, etc…) with other children or adults	8%
Bus, rail, subway or other public transportation	7%
Walk	7%
Bicycle	9%
Work at home	10%
Other	0%

Question D3: Length of Residency		
How many years have you lived in Palo Alto?	Percent of respondents	Count
Less than 2 years	11%	48
2 to 5 years	23%	97
6 to 10 years	14%	59
11 to 20 years	18%	76
More than 20 years	34%	143
Total	100%	423

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Question D4: Housing Unit Type		
Which best describes the building you live in?	Percent of respondents	Count
One family house detached from any other houses	57%	240
House attached to one or more houses (e.g., a duplex or townhome)	4%	19
Building with two or more apartments or condominiums	37%	157
Mobile home	0%	0
Other	1%	5
Total	100%	421

Question D5: Housing Tenure (Rent/Own)		
Is this house, apartment or mobile home…	Percent of respondents	Count
Rented for cash or occupied without cash payment	40%	161
Owned by you or someone in this house with a mortgage or free and clear	60%	245
Total	100%	406

Question D6: Monthly Housing Cost		
About how much is your monthly housing cost for the place you live (including rent, mortgage payment, property tax, property insurance and homeowners" association (HOA) fees)?	Percent of respondents	Count
Less than $300 per month	5%	21
$300 to $599 per month	6%	24
$600 to $999 per month	9%	35
$1,000 to $1,499 per month	14%	58
$1,500 to $2,499 per month	26%	104
$2,500 or more per month	40%	163
Total	100%	404

Question D7: Presence of Children in Household		
Do any children 17 or under live in your household?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	63%	263
Yes	37%	154
Total	100%	417

Question D8: Presence of Older Adults in Household		
Are you or any other members of your household aged 65 or older?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	70%	296
Yes	30%	125
Total	100%	421

Question D9: Household Income		
How much do you anticipate your household's total income before taxes will be for the current year? (Please include in your total income money from all sources for all persons living in your household.)	Percent of respondents	Count
Less than $24,999	8%	33
$25,000 to $49,999	12%	47
$50,000 to $99,999	24%	96
$100,000 to $149,000	20%	79
$150,000 or more	37%	147
Total	100%	402

Question D10: Ethnicity		
Are you Spanish, Hispanic or Latino?	Percent of respondents	Count
No, not Spanish, Hispanic or Latino	96%	393
Yes, I consider myself to be Spanish, Hispanic or Latino	4%	16
Total	100%	409

Question D11: Race		
What is your race? (Mark one or more races to indicate what race(s) you consider yourself to be.)	Percent of respondents	Count
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1%	3
Asian, Asian Indian or Pacific Islander	29%	121
Black or African American	1%	4
White	68%	281
Other	4%	17

Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one option

Question D12: Age		
In which category is your age?	Percent of respondents	Count
18 to 24 years	2%	9
25 to 34 years	17%	71
35 to 44 years	20%	82
45 to 54 years	25%	103
55 to 64 years	11%	48
65 to 74 years	10%	40
75 years or older	15%	63
Total	100%	416

Question D13: Gender		
What is your sex?	Percent of respondents	Count
Female	52%	216
Male	48%	200
Total	100%	416

Question D14: Registered to Vote		
Are you registered to vote in your jurisdiction?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	9%	37
Yes	82%	345
Ineligible to vote	8%	34
Don't know	1%	4
Total	100%	420

Question D15: Voted in Last General Election		
Many people don't have time to vote in elections. Did you vote in the last general election?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	12%	49
Yes	79%	332
Ineligible to vote	9%	38
Don't know	0%	1
Total	100%	420

Appendix B: Survey Methodology

The National Citizen Survey™ was developed to provide local jurisdictions an accurate, affordable and easy way to assess and interpret resident opinion about important community issues. While standardization of question wording and survey methods provide the rigor to assure valid results, each jurisdiction has enough flexibility to construct a customized version of The National Citizen Survey™ that asks residents about key local services and important local issues.

Results offer insight into residents' perspectives about local government performance and as such provide important benchmarks for jurisdictions working on performance measurement. The National Citizen Survey™ is designed to help with budget, land use and strategic planning as well as to communicate with local residents. The National Citizen Survey™ permits questions to test support for local policies and answers to its questions also speak to community trust and involvement in community-building activities as well as to resident demographic characteristics.

Survey Validity

The question of survey validity has two parts: 1) how can a jurisdiction be confident that the results from those who completed the questionnaire are representative of the results that would have been obtained had the survey been administered to the entire population? and 2) how closely do the perspectives recorded on the survey reflect what residents really believe or do?

To answer the first question, the best survey research practices were used for the resources spent to ensure that the results from the survey respondents reflect the opinions of residents in the entire jurisdiction. These practices include:

- Using a mail-out/mail-back methodology, which typically gets a higher response rate than phone for the same dollars spent. A higher response rate lessens the worry that those who did not respond are different than those who did respond.
- Selecting households at random within the jurisdiction to receive the survey. A random selection ensures that the households selected to receive the survey are similar to the entire population. A non-random sample may only include households from one geographic area, or from households of only one type.
- Over-sampling multi-family housing units to improve response from hard-to-reach, lower income, or younger apartment dwellers.
- Selecting the respondent within the household using an unbiased sampling procedure; in this case, the "birthday method." The cover letter included an instruction requesting that the respondent in the household be the adult (18 years old or older) who most recently had a birthday, irrespective of year of birth.
- Contacting potential respondents three times to encourage response from people who may have different opinions or habits than those who would respond with only a single prompt.
- Soliciting response on jurisdiction letterhead signed by the highest ranking elected official or staff member, thus appealing to the recipients' sense of civic responsibility.
- Providing a self-addressed, postage-paid return envelope.
- Offering the survey in Spanish when appropriate and requested by City officials.
- Using the most recent available information about the characteristics of jurisdiction residents to weight the data to reflect the demographics of the population.

The answer to the second question about how closely the perspectives recorded on the survey reflect what residents really believe or do is more complex. Resident responses to surveys are influenced by a variety of factors. For questions about service quality, residents' expectations for service quality play a role as well as the "objective" quality of the service provided, the way the

resident perceives the entire community (that is, the context in which the service is provided), the scale on which the resident is asked to record his or her opinion and, of course, the opinion, itself, that a resident holds about the service. Similarly a resident's report of certain behaviors is colored by what he or she believes is the socially desirable response (e.g., reporting tolerant behaviors toward "oppressed groups," likelihood of voting a tax increase for services to poor people, use of alternative modes of travel to work besides the single occupancy vehicle), his or her memory of the actual behavior (if it is not a question speculating about future actions, like a vote), his or her confidence that he or she can be honest without suffering any negative consequences (thus the need for anonymity) as well as the actual behavior itself.

How closely survey results come to recording the way a person really feels or behaves often is measured by the coincidence of reported behavior with observed current behavior (e.g., driving habits), reported intentions to behave with observed future behavior (e.g., voting choices) or reported opinions about current community quality with objective characteristics of the community (e.g., feelings of safety correlated with rates of crime). There is a body of scientific literature that has investigated the relationship between reported behaviors and actual behaviors. Well-conducted surveys, by and large, do capture true respondent behaviors or intentions to act with great accuracy. Predictions of voting outcomes tend to be quite accurate using survey research, as do reported behaviors that are not about highly sensitive issues (e.g., family abuse or other illegal or morally sanctioned activities). For self-reports about highly sensitive issues, statistical adjustments can be made to correct for the respondents' tendency to report what they think the "correct" response should be.

Research on the correlation of resident opinion about service quality and "objective" ratings of service quality tend to be ambiguous, some showing stronger relationships than others. NRC's own research has demonstrated that residents who report the lowest ratings of street repair live in communities with objectively worse street conditions than those who report high ratings of street repair (based on road quality, delay in street repair, number of road repair employees). Similarly, the lowest rated fire services appear to be "objectively" worse than the highest rated fire services (expenditures per capita, response time, "professional" status of firefighters, breadth of services and training provided). Whether or not some research confirms the relationship between what residents think about a community and what can be seen "objectively" in a community, NRC has argued that resident opinion is a perspective that cannot be ignored by government administrators. NRC principals have written, "If you collect trash three times a day but residents think that your trash haul is lousy, you still have a problem."

Survey Sampling

"Sampling" refers to the method by which survey recipients were chosen. All households within the City of Palo Alto were eligible to participate in the survey; 1,200 were selected to receive the survey. These 1,200 households were randomly selected from a comprehensive list of all housing units within the City of Palo Alto boundaries. The basis of the list of all housing units was a United States Postal Service listing of housing units within zip codes. Since some of the zip codes that serve the City of Palo Alto households may also serve addresses that lie outside of the jurisdiction, the exact geographic location of each housing unit was compared to jurisdiction boundaries, using the most current municipal boundary file (updated on a quarterly basis), and addresses located outside of the City of Palo Alto boundaries were removed from consideration.

To choose the 1,200 survey recipients, a systematic sampling method was applied to the list of households known to be within the City of Palo Alto. Systematic sampling is a procedure whereby a complete list of all possible items is culled, selecting every Nth one until the

appropriate amount of items is selected. Multi-family housing units were over sampled as residents of this type of housing typically respond at lower rates to surveys than do those in single-family housing units.

An individual within each household was selected using the birthday method. The birthday method selects a person within the household by asking the "person whose birthday has most recently passed" to complete the questionnaire. The underlying assumption in this method is that day of birth has no relationship to the way people respond to surveys. This instruction was contained in the cover letter accompanying the questionnaire.

SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

Selected households received three mailings, one week apart, beginning August 10, 2009. The first mailing was a prenotification postcard announcing the upcoming survey. The next mailing contained a letter from the city auditor inviting the household to participate, a questionnaire and a postage-paid return envelope. The final mailing contained a reminder letter, another survey and a postage-paid return envelope. The second cover letter asked those who had not completed the survey to do so and those who have already done so to refrain from turning in another survey. Completed surveys were collected over the following seven weeks. Additionally, the survey was made available online through a unique identifier printed on the cover letter. Fifty-three surveys were completed online in this manner.

SURVEY RESPONSE RATE AND CONFIDENCE INTERVALS

Of the 1,200 surveys mailed, 50 were returned because the housing unit was vacant or the postal service was unable to deliver the survey as addressed. Of the 1,150 households receiving the survey mailings, 424 completed the survey, providing a response rate of 37%. In general, response rates obtained on local government resident surveys range from 25% to 40%.

In theory, in 95 cases out of 100, the results based on the number of responses obtained will differ by no more than five percentage points in either direction from what would have been obtained had responses been collected from all City of Palo Alto adults. This difference from the presumed population finding is referred to as the sampling error (or the "margin of error" or 95% confidence interval"). For subgroups of responses, the margin of sampling error is larger. In addition to sampling error, the practical difficulties of conducting any survey of the public may introduce other sources of error. For example, the failure of some of the selected adults to participate in the sample or the difficulty of including all sectors of the population, such as residents of some institutions or group residences, may lead to somewhat different results.

In addition to sampling error, other sources of error may affect any survey, including the non-response of residents with opinions different from survey responders that may affect sample findings. Though standardized on The NCS, on other surveys, differences in question wording, order, translation and data entry, as examples, can lead to somewhat varying results.

SURVEY PROCESSING (DATA ENTRY)

Completed surveys received by NRC were assigned a unique identification number. Additionally, each survey was reviewed and "cleaned" as necessary. For example, a question may have asked a respondent to pick two items out of a list of five, but the respondent checked three; NRC staff would choose randomly two of the three selected items to be coded in the dataset.

Once all surveys were assigned a unique identification number, they were entered into an electronic dataset. This dataset was subject to a data entry protocol of "key and verify," in which

survey data were entered twice into an electronic dataset and then compared. Discrepancies were evaluated against the original survey form and corrected. Range checks as well as other forms of quality control were also performed. Also, the unique identifiers of the mail and web surveys were compared and any duplicate IDs were removed from the dataset.

SURVEY DATA WEIGHTING

The demographic characteristics of the survey sample were compared to those found in the 2007 ACS Census estimates for adults in the City of Palo Alto. Sample results were weighted using the population norms to reflect the appropriate percent of those residents. Other discrepancies between the whole population and the sample were also aided by the weighting due to the intercorrelation of many socioeconomic characteristics.

The variables used for weighting were housing tenure and gender/age. This decision was based on:

- The disparity between the survey respondent characteristics and the population norms for these variables
- The saliency of these variables in detecting differences of opinion among subgroups
- The historical use of the variables and the desirability of consistently representing different groups over the years

The primary objective of weighting survey data is to make the survey sample reflective of the larger population of the community. This is done by: 1) reviewing the sample demographics and comparing them to the population norms from the most recent Census or other sources and 2) comparing the responses to different questions for demographic subgroups. The demographic characteristics that are least similar to the Census and yield the most different results are the best candidates for data weighting. A third criterion sometimes used is the importance that the community places on a specific variable. For example, if a jurisdiction feels that accurate race representation is key to staff and public acceptance of the study results, additional consideration will be given in the weighting process to adjusting the race variable.

A special software program using mathematical algorithms is used to calculate the appropriate weights. A limitation of data weighting is that only 2-3 demographic variables can be adjusted in a single study. Several different weighting "schemes" are tested to ensure the best fit for the data.

The process actually begins at the point of sampling. Knowing that residents in single family dwellings are more likely to respond to a mail survey, NRC oversamples residents of multi-family dwellings to ensure their proper representation in the sample data. Rather than giving all residents an equal chance of receiving the survey, this is systematic, stratified sampling, which gives each resident of the jurisdiction a known chance of receiving the survey (and apartment dwellers, for example, a greater chance than single family home dwellers). As a consequence, results must be weighted to recapture the proper representation of apartment dwellers.

The results of the weighting scheme are presented in the table on the following page.

Palo Alto Citizen Survey Weighting Table			
Characteristic	Population Norm[2]	Unweighted Data	Weighted Data
Housing			
Rent home	40%	34%	40%
Own home	60%	66%	60%
Detached unit	64%	62%	57%
Attached unit	36%	38%	43%
Race and Ethnicity			
White alone, not Hispanic	67%	68%	63%
Hispanic and/or other race	33%	32%	37%
Sex and Age			
Female	51%	58%	52%
Male	49%	42%	48%
18-34 years of age	20%	13%	19%
35-54 years of age	44%	34%	44%
55+ years of age	35%	53%	36%
Females 18-34	10%	7%	10%
Females 35-54	22%	21%	22%
Females 55+	19%	31%	20%
Males 18-34	10%	6%	10%
Males 35-54	23%	14%	23%
Males 55+	16%	22%	16%

[2] Source: 2005-2007 ACS Census Estimates

SURVEY DATA ANALYSIS AND REPORTING

The survey dataset was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Frequency distributions were presented in the body of the report.

Use of the "Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor" Response Scale

The scale on which respondents are asked to record their opinions about service and community quality is "excellent," "good," "fair" or "poor" (EGFP). This scale has important advantages over other scale possibilities (very good to very bad; very satisfied to very dissatisfied; strongly agree to strongly disagree, as examples). EGFP is used by the plurality of jurisdictions conducting citizen surveys across the U.S. The advantage of familiarity was one that NRC did not want to dismiss when crafting The National Citizen Survey™ questionnaire, because elected officials, staff and residents already are acquainted with opinion surveys measured this way. EGFP also has the advantage of offering three positive options, rather than only two, over which a resident can offer an opinion. While symmetrical scales often are the right choice in other measurement tasks, NRC has found that ratings of almost every local government service in almost every jurisdiction tend, on average, to be positive (that is, above the scale midpoint). Therefore, to permit finer distinctions among positively rated services, EGFP offers three options across which to spread those ratings. EGFP is more neutral because it requires no positive statement of service quality to judge (as agree-disagree scales require) and, finally, EGFP intends to measure absolute quality of service delivery or community quality (unlike satisfaction scales which ignore residents' perceptions of quality in favor of their report on the acceptability of the level of service offered).

"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.

Benchmark Comparisons

NRC has been leading the strategic use of surveys for local governments since 1991, when the principals of the company wrote the first edition of what became the classic text on citizen surveying. In *Citizen Surveys: how to do them, how to use them, what they mean*, published by ICMA, not only were the principles for quality survey methods articulated, but both the idea of benchmark data for citizen opinion and the method for gathering benchmark data were pioneered. The argument for benchmarks was called "In Search of Standards." "What has been missing from a local government's analysis of its survey results is the context that school administrators can supply when they tell parents how an 80 percent score on the social studies test compares to test results from other school systems..."

NRC's database of comparative resident opinion is comprised of resident perspectives gathered in citizen surveys from approximately 500 jurisdictions whose residents evaluated local government services. Conducted with typically no fewer than 400 residents in each jurisdiction, opinions are intended to represent over 30 million Americans. NRC has innovated a method for quantitatively integrating the results of surveys that conducted by NRC with those that others have conducted. The integration methods have been thoroughly described not only in the Citizen Surveys book, but also in *Public Administration Review*, *Journal of Policy Analysis* and

Management. Scholars who specialize in the analysis of citizen surveys regularly have relied on this work (e.g., Kelly, J. & Swindell, D. (2002). Service quality variation across urban space: First steps towards a model of citizen satisfaction. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 24, 271-288.; Van Ryzin, G., Muzzio, D., Immerwahr, S., Gulick, L. & Martinez, E. (2004). Drivers and consequences of citizen satisfaction: An application of the American Customer Satisfaction Index Model to New York City, *Public Administration Review*, 64, 331- 341). The method described in those publications is refined regularly and statistically tested on a growing number of citizen surveys in NRC's proprietary databases. NRC's work on calculating national benchmarks for resident opinions about service delivery and quality of life won the Samuel C. May award for research excellence from the Western Governmental Research Association.

The Role of Comparisons

Benchmark comparisons are used for performance measurement. Jurisdictions use the comparative information to help interpret their own citizen survey results, to create or revise community plans, to evaluate the success of policy or budget decisions, to measure local government performance. Taking the pulse of the community has little meaning without knowing what pulse rate is too high and what is too low. When surveys of service satisfaction turn up "good" citizen evaluations, jurisdictions need to know how others rate their services to understand if "good" is good enough. Furthermore, in the absence of national or peer community comparisons, a jurisdiction is left with comparing its fire protection rating to its street maintenance rating. That comparison is unfair. Streets always lose to fire. More important and harder questions need to be asked; for example, how do residents' ratings of fire service compare to opinions about fire service in other communities?

A police department that provides the fastest and most efficient service—one that closes most of its cases, solves most of its crimes and keeps the crime rate low—still has a problem to fix if the residents in the community it intends to protect believe services are not very good compared to ratings given by residents to their own objectively "worse" departments. The benchmark data can help that police department – or any department – to understand how well citizens think it is doing. Without the comparative data, it would be like bowling in a tournament without knowing what the other teams are scoring. NRC recommends that citizen opinion be used in conjunction with other sources of data about budget, personnel and politics to help managers know how to respond to comparative results.

Jurisdictions in the benchmark database are distributed geographically across the country and range from small to large in population size. Most commonly, comparisons are made to the entire database. Comparisons may also be made to subsets of jurisdictions (for example, within a given region or population category). Despite the differences in jurisdiction characteristics, all are in the business of providing local government services to residents. Though individual jurisdiction circumstances, resources and practices vary, the objective in every community is to provide services that are so timely, tailored and effective that residents conclude the services are of the highest quality. High ratings in any jurisdiction, like SAT scores in any teen household, bring pride and a sense of accomplishment.

Comparison of Palo Alto to the Benchmark Database

The City of Palo Alto chose to have comparisons made to the entire database. A benchmark comparison (the average rating from all the comparison jurisdictions where a similar question was asked) has been provided when a similar question on the City of Palo Alto Survey was included in NRC's database and there were at least five jurisdictions in which the question was asked. For most questions compared to the entire dataset, there were more than 100 jurisdictions included in the benchmark comparison.

Where comparisons are available, Palo Alto results are noted as being "above" the benchmark, "below" the benchmark or "similar to" the benchmark. This evaluation of "above," "below" or "similar to" comes from a statistical comparison of Palo Alto's rating to the benchmark (the rating from all the comparison jurisdictions where a similar question was asked).

Appendix C: Survey Materials

The following pages contain copies of the survey materials sent to randomly selected households within the City of Palo Alto.

The National Citizen Survey™

CITY OF PALO ALTO, CA
2009

Benchmark Report

NATIONAL RESEARCH CENTER INC.
3005 30th Street
Boulder, CO 80301
ww.n-r-c.com • 303-444-7863

ICMA
777 North Capitol Street NE, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20002
www.icma.org • 202-289-ICMA

Contents

The National Citizen Survey™ by National Research Center, Inc.

The National Citizen Survey™

Understanding the Benchmark Comparisons
COMPARISON DATA

NRC's database of comparative resident opinion is comprised of resident perspectives gathered in citizen surveys from approximately 500 jurisdictions whose residents evaluated local government services and gave their opinion about the quality of community life. The City of Palo Alto chose to have comparisons made to the entire database. A benchmark comparison (the average rating from all the comparison jurisdictions where a similar question was asked) has been provided when a similar question on the City of Palo Alto Survey was included in NRC's database and there were at least five jurisdictions in which the question was asked. For most questions compared to the entire dataset, there were more than 100 jurisdictions included in the benchmark comparison.

The jurisdictions in the database represent a wide geographic and population range as shown in the table below.

Jurisdiction Characteristic	Percent of Jurisdictions
Region	
West Coast[1]	16%
West[2]	21%
North Central West[3]	10%
North Central East[4]	13%
South Central[5]	8%
South[6]	26%
Northeast West[7]	3%
Northeast East[8]	3%
Population	
Less than 40,000	42%
40,000 to 74,999	20%
75,000 to 149,000	16%
150,000 or more	22%

[1] Alaska, Washington, Oregon, California, Hawaii
[2] Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico
[3] North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Iowa, Missouri, Minnesota
[4] Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin
[5] Oklahoma, Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas
[6] West Virginia, Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina, Maryland, Delaware, Washington DC
[7] New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey
[8] Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, Maine

PUTTING EVALUATIONS ONTO THE 100-POINT SCALE

Although responses to many of the evaluative questions were made on a four point scale with 1 representing the best rating and 4 the worst, the benchmarks are reported on a common scale where 0 is the worst possible rating and 100 is the best possible rating. The 95 percent confidence interval around an average score on the 100-point scale is no greater than plus or minus three points based on all respondents.

The 100-point scale is not a percent. It is a conversion of responses to an average rating. Each response option is assigned a value that is used in calculating the average score. For example, "excellent"=100, "good"=67, "fair"=33 and "poor"=0. If everyone reported "excellent," then the average rating would be 100 on the 100-point scale. Likewise, if all respondents gave a "poor", the result would be 0 on the 100-point scale. If half the respondents gave a score of "excellent" and half gave a score of "poor," the average would be in the middle of the scale (like the center post of a teeter totter) between "fair" and "good." An example of how to convert survey frequencies into an average rating appears below.

Example of Converting Responses to the 100-point Scale

How do you rate the community as a place to live?					
Response option	Total with "don't know"	Step1: Remove the percent of "don't know" responses	Total without "don't know"	Step 2: Assign scale values	Step 3: Multiply the percent by the scale value	Step 4: Sum to calculate the average rating
Excellent	36%	=36÷(100-5)=	38%	100	=38% x 100 =	38
Good	42%	=42÷(100-5)=	44%	67	=44% x 67 =	30
Fair	12%	=12÷(100-5)=	13%	33	=13% x 33 =	4
Poor	5%	=5÷(100-5)=	5%	0	=5% x 0 =	0
Don't know	5%		--			
Total	100%		100%			**72**

How do you rate the community as a place to live?

5%	13%	44%	38%

| 0 Poor | 33 Fair | 67 Good | 72 | 100 Excellent |
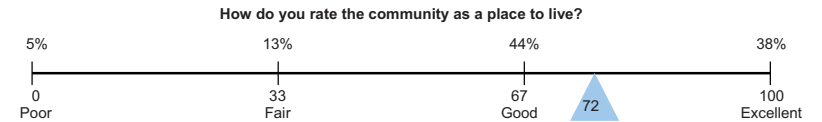
Interpreting the Results

Average ratings are compared when similar questions are included in NRC's database, and there are at least five jurisdictions in which the question was asked. Where comparisons are available, four numbers are provided in the table. The first column is your jurisdiction's rating on the 100-point scale. The second column is the rank assigned to your jurisdiction's rating among jurisdictions where a similar question was asked. The third column is the number of jurisdictions that asked a similar question. The fourth column is shows Palo Alto's percentile. The final column shows the comparison of your jurisdiction's average rating to the benchmark.

The comparison: "above," "below" or "similar" comes from a statistical comparison of your jurisdiction's rating to the benchmark (the average rating from all the comparison jurisdictions where a similar question was asked). Differences of more than three points on the 100-point scale between your jurisdiction's ratings and the average based on the appropriate comparisons from the database are considered "statistically significant," and thus are marked as "above" or "below" the benchmark. When differences between your jurisdiction's ratings and the benchmarks are three points or fewer, they are marked as "similar to" the benchmark.

This report contains benchmarks at the national level.

National Benchmark Comparisons

Overall Community Quality Benchmarks					
	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Overall quality of life in Palo Alto	78	27	344	92%	Above
Your neighborhood as place to live	80	17	223	93%	Above
Palo Alto as a place to live	83	20	284	93%	Above
Remain in Palo Alto for the next five years	81	27	89	70%	Above
Recommend living in Palo Alto to someone who asks	79	33	90	64%	Above

Community Transportation Benchmarks					
	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Ease of bus travel in Palo Alto	40	98	150	35%	Below
Ease of rail or subway travel by in Palo Alto	58	14	37	64%	Above
Ease of car travel in Palo Alto	58	62	214	71%	Above
Ease of walking in Palo Alto	72	15	212	93%	Above
Ease of bicycle travel in Palo Alto	69	8	213	97%	Above
Availability of paths and walking trails	65	21	89	77%	Above
Traffic flow on major streets	47	55	151	64%	Above

Frequency of Bus Use Benchmarks					
	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Ridden a local bus within Palo Alto	31	36	124	72%	More

Service Efforts and Accomplishments FY 2009

Transportation and Parking Services Benchmarks

	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Street repair /maintenance	43	186	336	45%	Similar
Street cleaning	64	35	242	86%	Above
Street lighting	56	93	251	63%	Above
Sidewalk maintenance	50	107	216	51%	Similar
Light timing	51	37	165	78%	Above
Bus or transit services	48	106	172	39%	Similar
Amount of public parking	53	40	152	74%	Above

Housing Characteristics Benchmarks

	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Availability of affordable quality housing	24	220	246	11%	Below
Variety of housing options	42	69	85	19%	Below

Housing Costs Benchmarks

	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Experiencing housing costs stress (housing costs 30% or more of income)	35	49	86	44%	Similar

Built Environment Benchmarks

	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Quality of new development in city	51	99	178	45%	Similar
Overall appearance of Palo Alto	72	32	262	88%	Above

Population Growth Benchmarks

	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Population growth seen as too fast	54	72	181	61%	More

Nuisance Problems Benchmarks

	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Run down buildings, weed lots and junk vehicles are a "major" problem	4	145	175	17%	Less

Planning and Community Code Enforcement Services Benchmarks

	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Land use, planning and zoning	45	84	222	62%	Similar
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc)	50	91	275	67%	Above
Animal control	67	9	243	97%	Above

Economic Sustainability and Opportunities Benchmarks

	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Employment opportunities	51	21	230	91%	Above
Shopping opportunities	64	36	219	84%	Above
Place to work	75	5	218	98%	Above
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Palo Alto	63	14	81	84%	Above

Economic Development Services Benchmarks

	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Economic development	51	69	218	69%	Above

Job and Retail Growth Benchmarks

	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Retail growth seen as too slow	34	86	181	53%	Similar
Jobs growth seen as too slow	65	118	182	35%	Less

Personal Economic Future Benchmarks

	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Positive impact of economy on household income	12	133	180	26%	Below

Community and Personal Public Safety Benchmarks

	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Safety in your neighborhood during the day	91	56	252	78%	Above
Safety in your neighborhood after dark	74	99	246	60%	Above
Safety in Palo Alto's downtown area during the day	88	72	211	66%	Above
Safety in Palo Alto's downtown area after dark	67	96	219	56%	Above
Safety from violent crime (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	78	78	215	64%	Above
Safety from property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	67	82	214	62%	Above
Toxic waste or other environmental hazard(s)	79	33	89	64%	Above

Crime Victimization and Reporting Benchmarks

	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Victim of crime	11	115	185	38%	Less
Reported crimes	80	68	183	63%	More

Public Safety Services Benchmarks

	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Police services	71	96	334	71%	Above
Fire services	82	45	273	84%	Above
EMS/ambulance	79	55	259	79%	Above
Crime prevention	62	84	244	66%	Above
Fire prevention and education	67	77	201	62%	Similar
Traffic enforcement	56	148	268	45%	Similar
Emergency preparedness	58	41	106	62%	Above

Community Environment Benchmarks

	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Cleanliness of Palo Alto	72	19	94	81%	Above
Quality of overall natural environment in Palo Alto	71	14	88	85%	Above
Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts	69	7	96	94%	Above
Air quality	64	56	153	64%	Above

Frequency of Recycling Benchmarks

	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Recycled used paper, cans or bottles from your home	99	2	168	99%	More

Utility Services Benchmarks

	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Sewer services	69	24	220	89%	Above
Drinking water	72	16	218	93%	Above
Storm drainage	62	30	269	89%	Above
Recycling	77	17	245	93%	Above
Garbage collection	75	47	274	83%	Above

Community Recreational Opportunities Benchmarks

	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Recreation opportunities	69	39	230	83%	Above

Participation in Parks and Recreation Opportunities Benchmarks

	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Used Palo Alto recreation centers	63	31	143	79%	More
Participated in a recreation program or activity	49	73	172	58%	Similar
Visited a neighborhood park or City park	94	11	180	94%	More

Parks and Recreation Services Benchmarks				
	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
City parks	79	15	244	94%	Above
Recreation programs or classes	73	26	263	90%	Above
Recreation centers or facilities	67	52	207	75%	Above

Cultural and Educational Opportunities Benchmarks				
	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	66	21	223	91%	Above
Educational opportunities	80	5	163	98%	Above

Participation in Cultural and Educational Opportunities Benchmarks				
	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Used Palo Alto public libraries or their services	82	19	155	88%	More

Cultural and Educational Services Benchmarks				
	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Public library services	70	137	240	43%	Similar

Community Health and Wellness Access and Opportunities Benchmarks				
	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Availability of affordable quality health care	56	27	171	85%	Above
Availability of preventive health services	60	10	66	86%	Above

Community Quality and Inclusiveness Benchmarks				
	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Sense of community	63	49	233	79%	Above
Openness and acceptance of the community toward people of diverse backgrounds	69	13	196	94%	Above
Availability of affordable quality child care	36	131	170	23%	Below
Palo Alto as a place to raise kids	81	31	281	89%	Above
Palo Alto as a place to retire	61	98	259	62%	Above

Services Provided for Population Subgroups Benchmarks				
	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Services to seniors	70	13	226	95%	Above
Services to youth	65	22	199	89%	Above
Services to low income residents	56	6	180	97%	Above

Civic Engagement Opportunities Benchmarks				
	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Opportunities to participate in community matters	66	6	83	94%	Above
Opportunities to volunteer	71	12	82	86%	Above

Participation in Civic Engagement Opportunities Benchmarks				
	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting	28	80	181	56%	Similar
Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting on cable television	28	124	138	10%	Less
Volunteered your time to some group or activity in Palo Alto	56	34	180	82%	More
Participated in a club or civic group in Palo Alto	33	31	65	53%	Similar
Provided help to a friend or neighbor	93	40	64	38%	Similar

Voter Behavior Benchmarks					
	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Registered to vote	83	104	192	46%	Similar
Voted in last general election	79	66	192	66%	More

Use of Information Sources Benchmarks					
	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Visited the City of Palo Alto Web site	75	5	78	95%	More

Local Government Media Services and Information Dissemination Benchmarks					
	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Public information services	61	76	226	67%	Above

Social Engagement Opportunities Benchmarks					
	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	67	10	83	89%	Above

Contact with Immediate Neighbors Benchmarks					
	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Has contact with neighbors at least once per month	81	40	76	48%	Similar

Public Trust Benchmarks					
	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Value of services for the taxes paid to Palo Alto	53	129	296	57%	Similar
The overall direction that Palo Alto is taking	50	150	240	38%	Below
Job Palo Alto government does at welcoming citizen involvement	53	158	254	38%	Similar
Job Palo Alto government	48	99	223	56%	Similar

Public Trust Benchmarks					
	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
does at listening to citizens					
Overall image or reputation of Palo Alto	80	4	204	99%	Above

Services Provided by Local, State and Federal Governments Benchmarks					
	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Services provided by the City of Palo Alto	67	80	325	76%	Above
Services provided by the Federal Government	43	65	198	68%	Similar
Services provided by the State Government	31	197	200	2%	Below
Services provided by Santa Clara County Government	44	58	76	24%	Below

Contact with City Employees Benchmarks					
	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
Had contact with city employee(s) in last 12 months	58	102	196	48%	Similar

Perceptions of City Employees (Among Those Who Had Contact) Benchmarks					
	Palo Alto average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison to benchmark
City employee knowledge	71	90	254	65%	Above
City employee responsiveness	68	94	250	63%	Similar
City employee courteousness	73	63	206	70%	Above
Overall impression	69	93	289	68%	Above

JURISDICTIONS INCLUDED IN NATIONAL BENCHMARK COMPARISONS

Valdez, AK 4,036	Redding, CA...80,865
Auburn, AL 42,987	Richmond, CA.......................................99,216
Gulf Shores, AL 5,044	San Francisco, CA.............................776,733
Tuskegee, AL 11,846	San Rafael, CA 56,063
Fayetteville, AR 58,047	San Ramon, CA 44,722
Avondale, AZ.. 35,883	Santa Barbara County, CA 399,347
Chandler, AZ...................................... 176,581	Santa Monica, CA................................84,084
Cococino County, AZ 116,320	South Lake Tahoe, CA 23,609
Dewey-Humboldt, AZ 6,295	Stockton, CA.......................................243,771
Flagstaff, AZ....................................... 52,894	Sunnyvale, CA 131,760
Florence, AZ....................................... 17,054	Visalia, CA 91,565
Goodyear, AZ...................................... 18,911	Walnut Creek, CA 64,296
Kingman, AZ 20,069	Calgary, Canada................................878,866
Marana, AZ 13,556	District of Saanich,Victoria, Canada 103,654
Peoria, AZ 108,364	Edmonton, Canada.............................666,104
Phoenix, AZ.................................... 1,321,045	Guelph, Ontario, Canada....................114,943
Prescott Valley, AZ.............................. 25,535	Kamloops, Canada 77,281
Queen Creek, AZ 4,316	Kelowna, Canada..................................96,288
Safford, AZ..9,232	North Vancouver, Canada 44,303
Scottsdale, AZ.................................... 202,705	Oakville, Canada.................................144,738
Sedona, AZ... 10,192	Prince Albert, Canada...........................34,291
Tempe, AZ.. 158,625	Thunder Bay, Canada.........................109,016
Yuma, AZ 77,515	Victoria, Canada 78,057
Yuma County, AZ............................... 160,026	Whitehorse, Canada 19,058
Agoura Hills, CA................................... 20,537	Winnipeg, Canada...............................619,544
Bellflower, CA...................................... 72,878	Yellowknife, Canada 16,541
Benicia, CA 26,865	Arapahoe County, CO 487,967
Brea, CA 35,410	Archuleta County, CO 9,898
Brisbane, CA 3,597	Arvada, CO 102,153
Burlingame, CA 28,158	Aspen, CO 5,914
Carlsbad, CA....................................... 78,247	Aurora, CO 276,393
Chula Vista, CA.................................. 173,556	Boulder, CO 94,673
Claremont, CA...................................... 33,998	Boulder County, CO............................291,288
Concord, CA....................................... 121,780	Breckenridge, CO 2,408
Cupertino, CA...................................... 50,546	Broomfield, CO 38,272
Davis, CA 60,308	Castle Rock, CO 20,224
Del Mar, CA 4,389	Colorado Springs, CO.........................360,890
Dublin, CA 29,973	Craig, CO 9,189
El Cerrito, CA 23,171	Crested Butte, CO..................................1,529
Galt, CA.. 19,472	Denver (City and County), CO.............554,636
La Mesa, CA 54,749	Douglas County, CO 175,766
Laguna Beach, CA 23,727	Durango, CO..13,922
Livermore, CA 73,345	Eagle County, CO.................................41,659
Lodi, CA 56,999	Englewood, CO.....................................31,727
Long Beach, CA 461,522	Fort Collins, CO 118,652
Lynwood, CA.. 69,845	Frisco, CO 2,443
Menlo Park, CA 30,785	Fruita, CO 6,478
Mission Viejo, CA 93,102	Georgetown, CO.....................................1,088
Morgan Hill, CA 33,556	Golden, CO 17,159
Mountain View, CA............................... 70,708	Grand County, CO 12,442
Newport Beach, CA.............................. 70,032	Grand Junction, CO 41,986
Palm Springs, CA................................. 42,807	Greenwood Village, CO 11,035
Poway, CA... 48,044	Gunnison County, CO..........................13,956
Rancho Cordova, CA 55,060	Highlands Ranch, CO 70,931

Hot Sulphur Springs, CO............................521	Palm Beach County, FL...................1,131,184
Jefferson County, CO......................... 527,056	Palm Beach Gardens, FL 35,058
Lakewood, CO 144,126	Palm Coast, FL 32,732
Larimer County, CO 251,494	Pasco County, FL 344,765
Lone Tree, CO 4,873	Pinellas County, FL............................921,482
Longmont, CO...................................... 71,093	Port Orange, FL 45,823
Louisville, CO 18,937	Port St. Lucie, FL 88,769
Loveland, CO 50,608	Sanford, FL...38,291
Mesa County, CO................................ 116,255	Sarasota, FL 52,715
Montrose, CO...................................... 12,344	Seminole, FL...10,890
Northglenn, CO.................................... 31,575	South Daytona, FL...............................13,177
Parker, CO 23,558	St. Cloud, FL...20,074
Pitkin County, CO................................ 14,872	Tallahassee, FL 150,624
Silverthorne, CO....................................3,196	Titusville, FL...40,670
Steamboat Springs, CO 9,815	Volusia County, FL.............................443,343
Sterling, CO.. 11,360	Walton County, FL 40,601
Summit County, CO 23,548	Winter Garden, FL 14,351
Thornton, CO 82,384	Winter Park, FL.....................................24,090
Vail, CO 4,531	Albany, GA...76,939
Westminster, CO 100,940	Alpharetta, GA 34,854
Wheat Ridge, CO 32,913	Cartersville, GA....................................15,925
Coventry, CT 11,504	Decatur, GA 18,147
Hartford, CT 121,578	Roswell, GA 79,334
Manchester, CT................................... 54,740	Sandy Springs, GA 85,781
Wethersfield, CT 26,271	Savannah, GA.....................................131,510
Windsor, CT 28,237	Smyrna, GA 40,999
Dover, DE.. 32,135	Suwanee, GA 8,725
Belleair Beach, FL..................................1,751	Valdosta, GA...43,724
Bonita Springs, FL............................... 32,797	Honolulu, HI 876,156
Brevard County, FL 476,230	Maui, HI 128,094
Cape Coral, FL................................... 102,286	Ames, IA 50,731
Charlotte County, FL 141,627	Ankeny, IA..27,117
Clearwater, FL 108,787	Bettendorf, IA 31,275
Collier County, FL 251,377	Cedar Falls, IA 36,145
Cooper City, FL 27,939	Davenport, IA 98,359
Coral Springs, FL 117,549	Des Moines, IA....................................198,682
Dania Beach, FL 20,061	Indianola, IA 12,998
Daytona Beach, FL 64,112	Marion, IA...7,144
Delray Beach, FL 60,020	Sheldahl, IA..336
Destin, FL 11,119	Slater, IA 1,306
Duval County, FL 778,879	Urbandale, IA 29,072
Escambia County, FL.......................... 294,410	Waukee, IA 5,126
Eustis, FL 15,106	West Des Moines, IA 46,403
Gainesville, FL 95,447	Boise, ID 185,787
Hillsborough County, FL..................... 998,948	Moscow, ID 21,291
Kissimmee, FL 47,814	Batavia, IL 23,866
Martin County, FL............................... 126,731	Centralia, IL..14,136
Melbourne, FL 71,382	Clarendon Hills, IL..................................7,610
Miami Beach, FL 87,933	Collinsville, IL 24,707
North Palm Beach, FL......................... 12,064	DeKalb, IL 39,018
North Port, FL...................................... 22,797	Elmhurst, IL..42,762
Oakland Park, FL 30,966	Evanston, IL 74,239
Oldsmar, FL 11,910	Gurnee, IL 28,834
Oviedo, FL... 26,316	Highland Park, IL 31,365
Palm Bay, FL....................................... 79,413	Lincolnwood, IL....................................12,359
Palm Beach, FL................................... 10,468	Naperville, IL 128,358

Normal, IL 45,386
Oak Park, IL 39,803
O'Fallon, IL 21,910
Palatine, IL 65,479
Park Ridge, IL 37,775
Peoria County, IL 183,433
Riverside, IL 8,895
Sherman, IL..2,871
Shorewood, IL 7,686
Skokie, IL 63,348
Sugar Grove, IL 3,909
Wilmington, IL 5,134
Woodridge, IL 30,934
Fishers, IN... 37,835
Munster, IN.. 21,511
Arkansas City, KS 11,963
Chanute, KS...9,411
Fairway, KS...3,952
Lawrence, KS....................................... 80,098
Lenexa, KS... 40,238
Merriam, KS 11,008
Mission, KS 9,727
Olathe, KS 92,962
Overland Park, KS 149,080
Salina, KS.. 45,679
Wichita, KS.. 344,284
Bowling Green, KY 49,296
Daviess County, KY 91,545
Jefferson Parish, LA........................... 455,466
New Orleans, LA 484,674
Orleans Parish, LA 484,674
Andover, MA 31,247
Barnstable, MA..................................... 47,821
Bedford, MA 12,595
Burlington, MA...................................... 22,876
Cambridge, MA 101,355
Needham, MA 28,911
Shrewsbury, MA.................................... 31,640
Worcester, MA 172,648
College Park, MD 24,657
Gaithersburg, MD................................. 52,613
La Plata, MD 6,551
Montgomery County, MD 873,341
Ocean City, MD.......................................7,173
Prince George's County, MD 801,515
Rockville, MD 47,388
Takoma Park, MD 17,299
Saco, ME.. 16,822
Ann Arbor, MI 114,024
Battle Creek, MI 53,364
Delhi Township, MI............................... 22,569
Escanaba, MI 13,140
Gladstone, MI 5,032
Howell, MI..9,232
Meridian Charter Township, MI............. 38,987
Novi, MI 47,386

Oakland Township, MI 13,071
Ottawa County, MI 238,314
Sault Sainte Marie, MI 16,542
South Haven, MI 5,021
Troy, MI..80,959
Village of Howard City, MI 1,585
Blue Earth, MN.......................................3,621
Carver County, MN 70,205
Chanhassen, MN 20,321
Dakota County, MN.............................355,904
Duluth, MN..86,918
Fridley, MN..27,449
Hutchinson, MN 13,080
Mankato, MN...32,427
Maple Grove, MN..................................50,365
Maplewood, MN....................................34,947
Mayer, MN 554
Medina, MN..4,005
Minneapolis, MN 382,618
North Branch, MN...................................8,023
Olmsted County, MN 124,277
Prior Lake, MN......................................15,917
Scott County, MN..................................89,498
St. Cloud, MN..59,107
St. Louis County, MN 200,528
Washington County, MN......................201,130
Woodbury, MN......................................46,463
Blue Springs, MO..................................48,080
Branson, MO...6,050
Clay County, MO.................................184,006
Creve Coeur, MO..................................16,500
Ellisville, MO 9,104
Grandview, MO 24,881
Independence, MO 113,288
Joplin, MO...45,504
Lee's Summit, MO 70,700
Maryland Heights, MO 25,756
Maryville, MO 10,581
O'Fallon, MO...46,169
Raymore, MO...11,146
Richmond Heights, MO...........................9,602
Starkville, MS 21,849
Billings, MT 89,847
Bozeman, MT 27,509
Missoula, MT...57,053
Asheville, NC 68,889
Cary, NC..94,536
Charlotte, NC 540,828
Concord, NC..55,977
Davidson, NC..7,139
Durham, NC 187,038
High Point, NC 85,839
Hudson, NC..3,078
Kannapolis, NC......................................36,910
Mooresville, NC.....................................18,823
Wilmington, NC 90,400

Winston-Salem, NC............................ 185,776
Wahpeton, ND..8,586
Cedar Creek, NE.......................................396
Kearney, NE... 27,431
La Vista, NE 11,699
Dover, NH... 26,884
Lebanon, NH 12,568
Lyme, NH 1,679
Willingboro Township, NJ..................... 33,008
Alamogordo, NM 35,582
Albuquerque, NM 448,607
Bloomfield, NM.......................................6,417
Farmington, NM 37,844
Rio Rancho, NM 51,765
San Juan County, NM......................... 113,801
Carson City, NV 52,457
Henderson, NV 175,381
North Las Vegas, NV 115,488
Sparks, NV 66,346
Washoe County, NV........................... 339,486
Beekman, NY 11,452
Canandaigua, NY................................. 11,264
New York City, NY 8,008,278
Village of Rye Brook, NY.......................8,602
Blue Ash, OH 12,513
Delaware, OH....................................... 25,243
Dublin, OH... 31,392
Hudson, OH 22,439
Kettering, OH 57,502
Lebanon, OH 16,962
Orange Village, OH 3,236
Sandusky, OH 27,844
Springboro, OH 12,380
Sylvania Township, OH......................... 44,253
Westerville, OH 35,318
Broken Arrow, OK 74,839
Edmond, OK... 68,315
Oklahoma City, OK 506,132
Stillwater, OK 39,065
Bend, OR... 52,029
Corvallis, OR 49,322
Eugene, OR 137,893
Gresham, OR 90,205
Hermiston, OR 13,154
Jackson County, OR 181,269
Keizer, OR... 32,203
Lane County, OR 322,959
Multnomah County, OR...................... 660,486
Portland, OR 529,121
Borough of Ebensburg, PA 3,091
Cranberry Township, PA...................... 23,625
Cumberland County, PA 213,674
Ephrata Borough, PA 13,213
Kutztown Borough, PA...........................5,067
Lower Providence Township, PA 22,390
Peters Township, PA............................ 17,556

Philadelphia, PA.............................1,517,550
State College, PA..................................38,420
Upper Merion Township, PA.................28,863
East Providence, RI 48,688
Newport, RI...26,475
Greenville, SC.......................................10,468
Mauldin, SC...15,224
Rock Hill, SC...49,765
Sioux Falls, SD 123,975
Johnson City, TN 55,469
Nashville, TN 545,524
Oak Ridge, TN 27,387
White House, TN.....................................7,220
Arlington, TX 332,969
Austin, TX 656,562
Benbrook, TX..20,208
Bryan, TX..34,733
Corpus Christi, TX..............................277,454
Dallas, TX 1,188,580
Duncanville, TX.....................................36,081
El Paso, TX 563,662
Fort Worth, TX 534,694
Grand Prairie, TX 127,427
Houston, TX 1,953,631
Hurst, TX..36,273
Hutto, TX 1,250
Irving, TX 191,615
McAllen, TX...106,414
Pasadena, TX......................................141,674
Plano, TX 222,030
Round Rock, TX....................................61,136
Rowlett, TX 44,503
San Marcos, TX 34,733
Shenandoah, TX.....................................1,503
Sugar Land, TX.....................................63,328
The Colony, TX 26,531
Tomball, TX..9,089
Farmington, UT.....................................12,081
Riverdale, UT..7,656
Saratoga Springs, UT 1,003
Springville, UT......................................20,424
Washington City, UT 8,186
Albemarle County, VA 79,236
Arlington County, VA 189,453
Blacksburg, VA 39,357
Botetourt County, VA 30,496
Chesapeake, VA..................................199,184
Chesterfield County, VA 259,903
Hanover County, VA 86,320
Hopewell, VA 22,354
James City County, VA.........................48,102
Lexington, VA..6,867
Lynchburg, VA 65,269
Newport News, VA..............................180,150
Northampton County, VA.....................13,093
Prince William County, VA..................280,813

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Roanoke, VA 94,911	Olympia, WA 42,514
Spotsylvania County, VA...................... 90,395	Pasco, WA 32,066
Stafford County, VA 92,446	Renton, WA..50,052
Staunton, VA 23,853	Richland, WA 38,708
Virginia Beach, VA 425,257	Snoqualmie, WA 1,631
Williamsburg, VA.................................. 11,998	Spokane Valley, WA 75,203
Chittenden County, VT....................... 146,571	Tacoma, WA 193,556
Auburn, WA.. 40,314	Vancouver, WA..................................143,560
Bellevue, WA...................................... 109,569	De Pere, WI 20,559
Bellingham, WA.................................... 67,171	Eau Claire, WI......................................61,704
Clark County, WA............................... 345,238	Marshfield, WI 18,800
Federal Way, WA 83,259	Merrill, WI...10,146
Gig Harbor, WA.......................................6,465	Milton, WI...5,132
Hoquiam, WA 9,097	Ozaukee County, WI............................82,317
Kent, WA 79,524	Suamico, WI...8,686
King County, WA............................ 1,737,034	Wausau, WI 38,426
Kirkland, WA 45,054	Whitewater, WI......................................13,437
Kitsap County, WA 231,969	Morgantown, WV 26,809
Lynnwood, WA 33,847	Cheyenne, WY......................................53,011
Mountlake Terrace, WA 20,362	Gillette, WY 19,646
Ocean Shores, WA 3,836	Teton County, WY.................................18,251

The National Citizen Survey™

The National Citizen Survey™

NATIONAL
RESEARCH
C E N T E R INC.

M E M O R A N D U M

Date: January 2010

To: Lynda Brouchoud <lynda.brouchoud@cityofpaloalto.org>

From: Damema Mann, Director, The National Citizen Survey™

Re: Updated Public Trust Benchmarks

Dear Lynda,

This is a report of a revised finding in The National Citizen Survey™ (The NCS) for jurisdictions' ratings of public trust. Like the Bureau of Economic Analysis that periodically publishes a revised GDP, NRC research professionals continuously examine our analyses to assure that findings are accurate and robust.

In the spring of 2008 we made a carefully-considered modification to the survey instrument, changing the response options for the four public trust questions from strongly agree-strongly disagree to excellent, good, fair, poor (EGFP). This revision of response options removed the need for a positive bias in the question wording itself and it created alignment with the most common scale used on the survey (EGFP). For the majority of The NCS jurisdictions, the ratings declined slightly, as anticipated. However, for some jurisdictions, we found a larger gap than expected between the old and new ratings. Because there were more lower ratings outside, rather than within, the margin of error than we anticipated, we have concluded that the change in wording is the likely culprit in the greater-than-expected decline. Not all jurisdictions were affected the same way, and your jurisdiction may have experienced no change at all.

For benchmarking results against other jurisdictions, the fairest comparison is to statistically account for this change in the survey instrument. As a consequence, we have recalculated your jurisdiction's relationship to the benchmark for each of the four public trust questions. Below, please find your prior benchmark comparisons as well as the revised comparison table.

NRC researchers take very seriously the job of providing each jurisdiction with accurate comparisons, both over time and to other jurisdictions. The core of our mission to provide The NCS, is our intention to help managers identify the right paths for quality local governance.

We apologize for any inconvenience this change may cause you and we appreciate our relationship with you.

Public Trust Benchmarks					
	Average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	New comparison to benchmark	Old comparison to benchmark
Value of services for the taxes paid	53	86	320	Above	Above
The overall direction that Palo Alto is taking	50	124	263	Similar	Similar
Job at welcoming citizen involvement	53	66	278	Above	Below
Job at listening to citizens	48	53	243	Above	Similar