

The National  
**CITIZEN SURVEY™**

---

2 0 0 4

**Report of Results for the  
City of Palo Alto, California**

Submitted by:

---

NATIONAL RESEARCH CENTER, INC.  
3005 30<sup>th</sup> Street • Boulder, CO 80301  
tel. 303-444-7863 • fax. 303-441-1145  
e-mail: [ncs@n-r-c.com](mailto:ncs@n-r-c.com) • [www.n-r-c.com](http://www.n-r-c.com)

January 2005

## **Table of Contents**

---

Survey Background.....	1
About The National Citizen Survey™ .....	1
Understanding the Results.....	2
Community Life .....	7
Quality of Life .....	7
Ratings of Community Characteristics in Palo Alto .....	9
Perceptions of Safety .....	16
Community Participation .....	18
Local Government.....	20
Public Trust .....	20
Services Provided by Palo Alto .....	22
The City of Palo Alto Employees .....	30
Appendix I: Frequency of Responses to All Survey Questions .....	32
Appendix II: Survey Methodology .....	42
Sampling .....	42
Survey Administration .....	42
Response Rate and Confidence Intervals .....	43
Weighting and Analyzing the Data.....	44
Appendix III: Survey Materials .....	46



# **SURVEY BACKGROUND**

## **ABOUT THE NATIONAL CITIZEN SURVEY™**

The National Citizen Survey™ (The NCS™) is a collaborative effort between National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA).

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

The National Citizen Survey™ customized for this jurisdiction was developed in close cooperation with local jurisdiction staff. The City of Palo Alto staff selected items from a menu of questions about services and community problems; they defined the jurisdiction boundaries we used for sampling; and they provided the appropriate letterhead and signatures for mailings.

# UNDERSTANDING THE RESULTS

## ***Survey Administration***

Following the mailing of a pre-survey notification postcard to a random sample of 1,200 households, surveys were mailed to the same residences approximately one week later. A reminder letter and a 2004 survey were sent to the same households after two weeks. Of the mailed postcards, 52 were undeliverable due to vacant or “not found” addresses. Completed surveys were received from 582 residents, for a response rate of 51%. Typically, the response rates obtained on citizen surveys range from 25% to 40%.

It is customary to describe the precision of estimates made from surveys by a “level of confidence” (or margin of error). The 95 percent confidence level for this survey of 1,200 residents is generally no greater than plus or minus 5 percentage points around any given percent reported for the entire sample.

The results were weighted to reflect the demographic profile of all residents in the City of Palo Alto. (For more information on the survey methodology, see Appendix II. A copy of the survey materials can be found in Appendix III.)

## ***Survey Validity***

The question of survey validity has two parts: 1) how can we be confident that the results from our sample are representative of the results we would have gotten had we administered the survey 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, we use the best survey research practices for the resources spent to assure that the results from the sample reflect the opinions of residents in the entire jurisdiction. These practices include:

- 1) Using a mail-out/mail-back methodology, which typically gets a higher response rate than phone for the same dollars spent.
- 2) Selecting households at random within the jurisdiction.

- 3) Over-sampling attached units to improve response from hard-to-reach, lower income, or younger apartment dwellers.
- 4) Selecting the respondent within the household using an unbiased sampling procedure<sup>1</sup>.
- 5) 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.
- 6) Soliciting response on jurisdiction letterhead signed by the highest ranking elected official or staff member.
- 7) Providing a self-addressed, postage-paid return envelope.
- 8) Offering the survey in Spanish when appropriate and requested by city officials.
- 9) Using the most recent available information about the characteristics of jurisdiction residents to reweight 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 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), her memory of the actual behavior (if it is not a question speculating about future actions, like a vote), her confidence that she can be honest without suffering any

---

<sup>1</sup> The birthday method requests that the respondent in the household be the adult (18 years 2003 or older) who most recently had a birthday, irrespective of year of birth.

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 fire fighters, breadth of services and training provided). Whether some research confirms or disconfirms that relationship between what residents think about a community and what can be seen "objectively" in a community, we have argued that resident opinion is a perspective that cannot be ignored by government administrators. Elsewhere we have written, "If you collect trash three times a day but residents think that your trash haul is lousy, you still have a problem."

### ***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 is one we did not want to dismiss 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, we have 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 I. 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 two of the items related to crime victimization and crime reporting, “don’t know” responses were not removed. These questions were not evaluative; rather, respondents were asked if they or any member of their household had been a victim of a crime within the last year. If they were, they were then asked whether the crime had been reported to police.

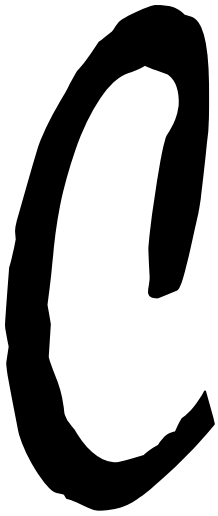
### ***Putting Evaluations Onto a 100-Point Scale***

Although responses to many of the evaluative questions were made on a 4 point scale with 4 representing the best rating and 1 the worst, many of the results in this summary are reported on a common scale where 0 is the worst possible rating and 100 is the best possible rating. If everyone reported “excellent,” then the result would be 100 on the 100-point scale. Likewise, if all respondents gave a “poor” rating, the result would be 0 on the 100-point scale. If the average rating for quality of life was “good,” then the result would be 67 on a 100-point scale; “fair” would be 33 on the 100-point scale. The 95 percent confidence interval around an average score on the 100-point scale is no greater than plus or minus 5 points based on all respondents.

### ***Interpreting Comparisons to Previous Years***

This report contains comparisons with prior years’ results. In this report, we are comparing 2004 data with 2003 data in the graphs. In the graphs, there are two separate representations labeled by year. The table following a graph contains 2004 data only, and is labeled accordingly.





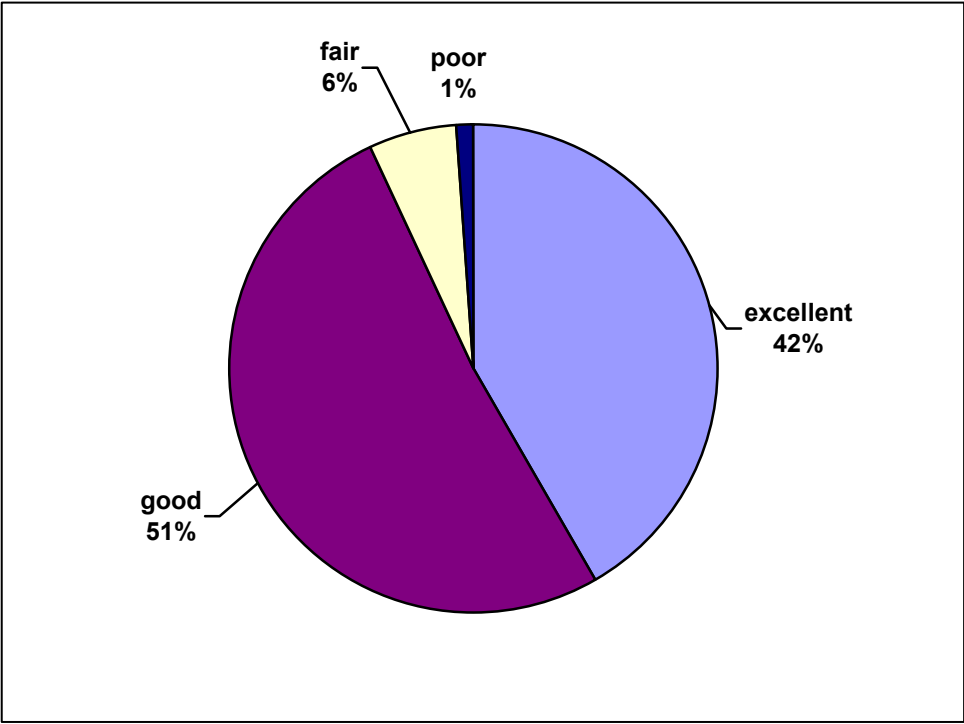
# COMMUNITY LIFE

The National Citizen Survey™ contained many questions related to the life of residents in the community. Survey participants were asked to rate their overall quality of life, as well as other aspects of quality of life in Palo Alto. They also evaluated characteristics of the community, and gave their perceptions of safety in the City of Palo Alto. The questionnaire assessed use of the amenities of the community and involvement by respondents in the civic and economic life of Palo Alto.

## QUALITY OF LIFE

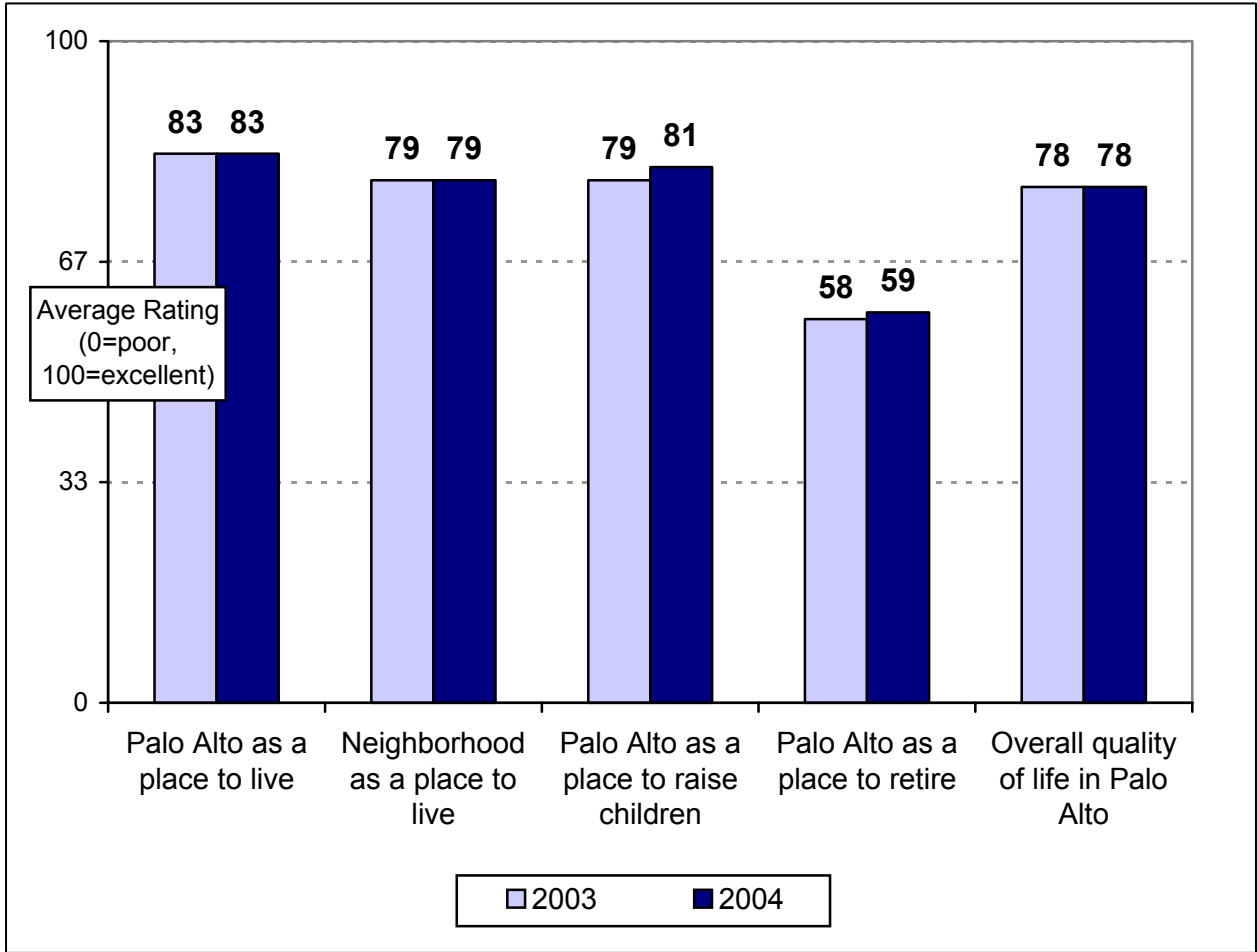
When asked to rate the overall quality of life in Palo Alto, 42% of respondents thought it was “excellent.” Only 1% rated overall quality of life as “poor.”

Figure 1: Overall Quality of Life in Palo Alto



The average rating of overall quality of life on a 100-point scale was 78 in 2003. In 2004, the rating was 78. Palo Alto as a place to raise children received an average rating of 79 on a 100-point scale in 2003, compared to 81 in 2004. Other ratings can be seen in the charts below.

**Figure 2: Quality of Life Ratings**



**Figure 2b: 2004 Quality of Life Ratings**

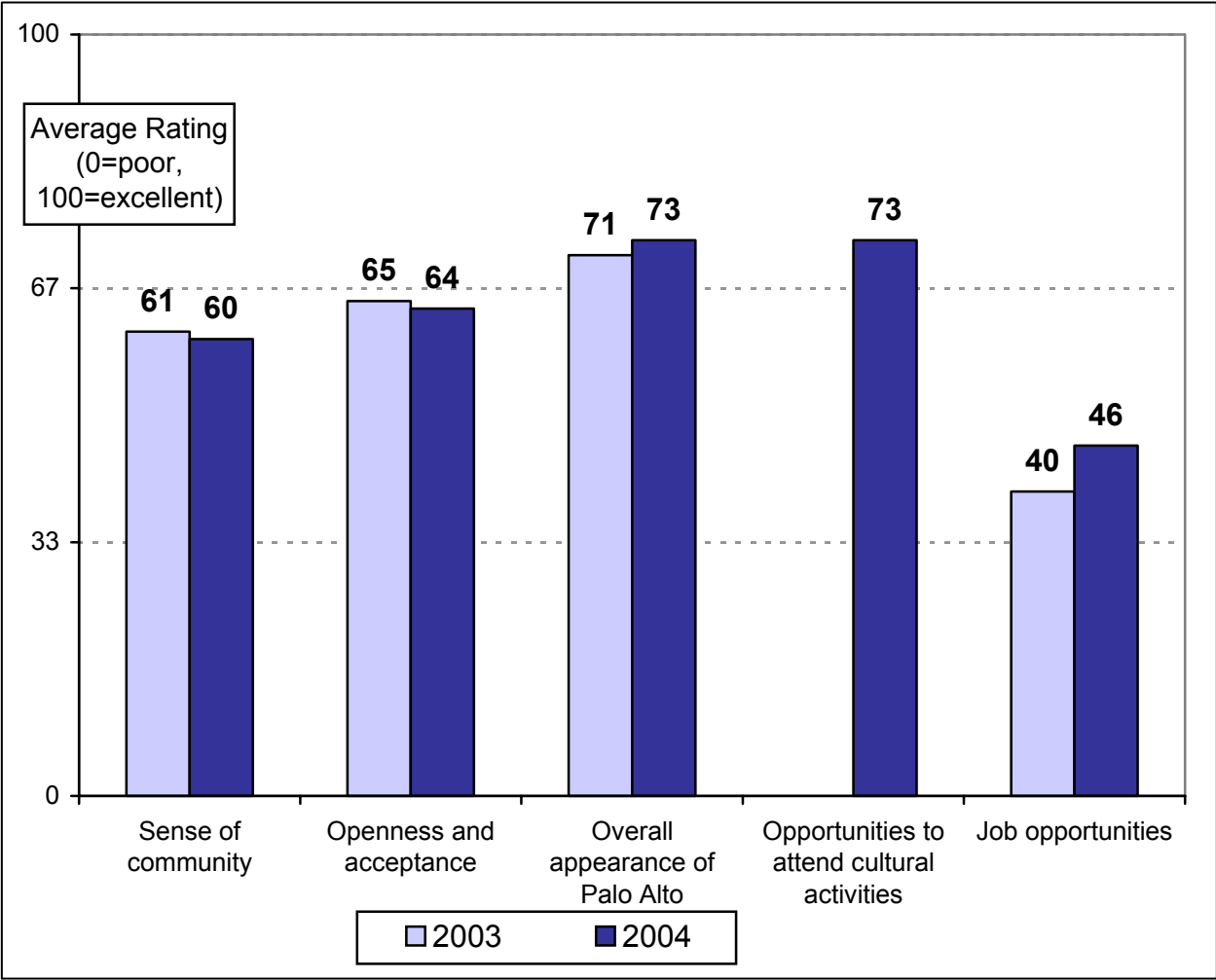
	excellent	good	fair	poor	Total
How do you rate Palo Alto as a place to live?	53%	43%	3%	0%	100%
How do you rate your neighborhood as a place to live?	48%	42%	8%	2%	100%
How do you rate Palo Alto as a place to raise children?	50%	43%	6%	1%	100%
How do you rate Palo Alto as a place to retire?	29%	34%	24%	13%	100%
How do you rate the overall quality of life in Palo Alto?	42%	52%	6%	1%	100%

Note: "Don't Know" responses are removed

# RATINGS OF COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS IN PALO ALTO

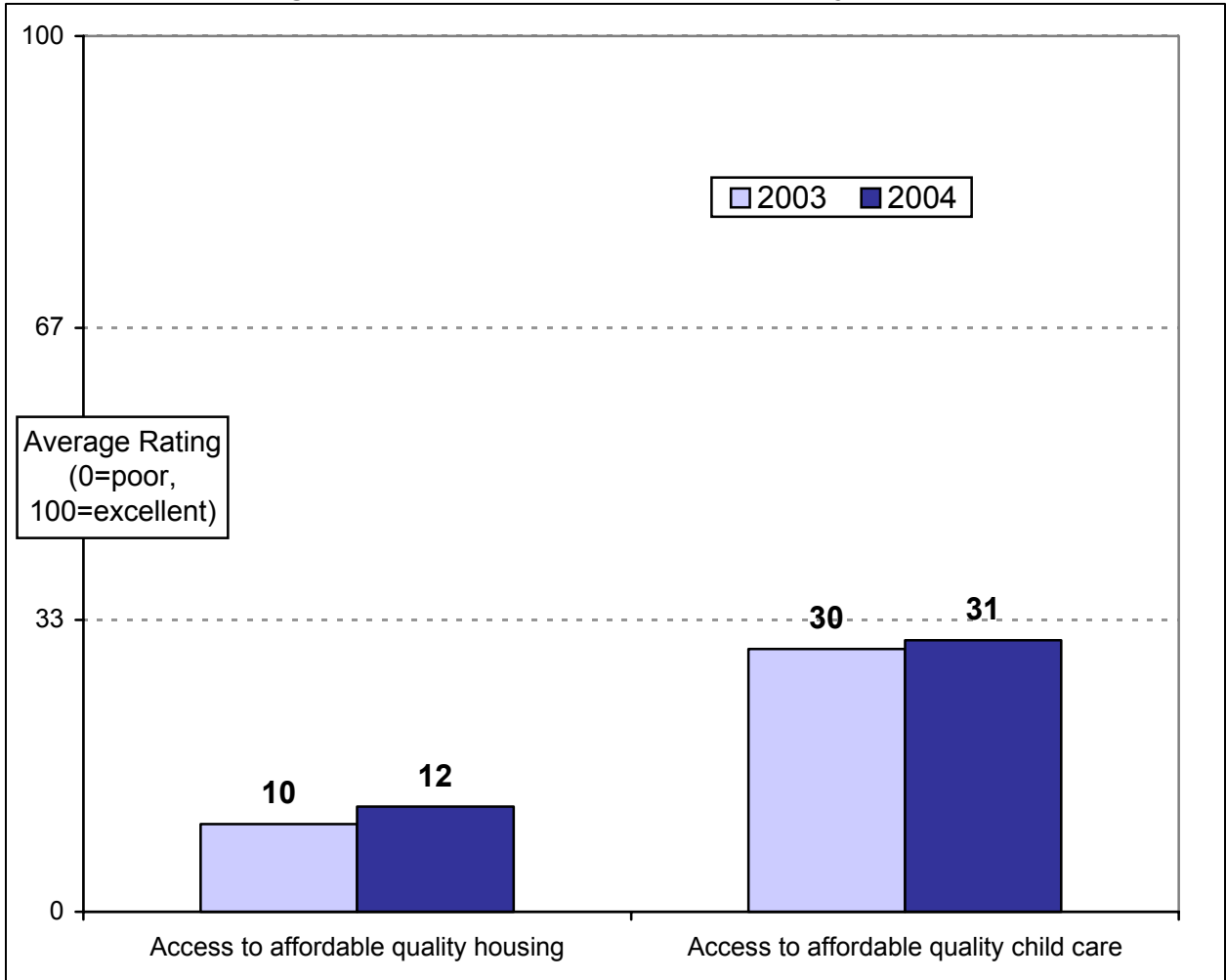
In 2004, the highest rated characteristics of Palo Alto were overall appearance of Palo Alto, opportunities to attend cultural events, and openness and acceptance. The average rating on a 100-point scale given to overall appearance of Palo Alto in 2004 was 73 compared to 71 in 2003. Average ratings given to all the characteristics are shown in Figures 3 and 4.

**Figure 3: Characteristics of the Community: General and Opportunities**



<b>Figure 3b: 2004 Characteristics of the Community: General and Opportunities</b>					
	<b>excellent</b>	<b>good</b>	<b>fair</b>	<b>poor</b>	<b>Total</b>
Sense of community	16%	53%	27%	4%	100%
Openness and acceptance of the community towards people of diverse backgrounds	24%	49%	22%	5%	100%
Overall appearance of Palo Alto	35%	51%	13%	1%	100%
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	39%	44%	15%	2%	100%
Job opportunities	9%	35%	42%	14%	100%
Note: "Don't Know" responses are removed					

**Figure 4: Characteristics of the Community: Access**

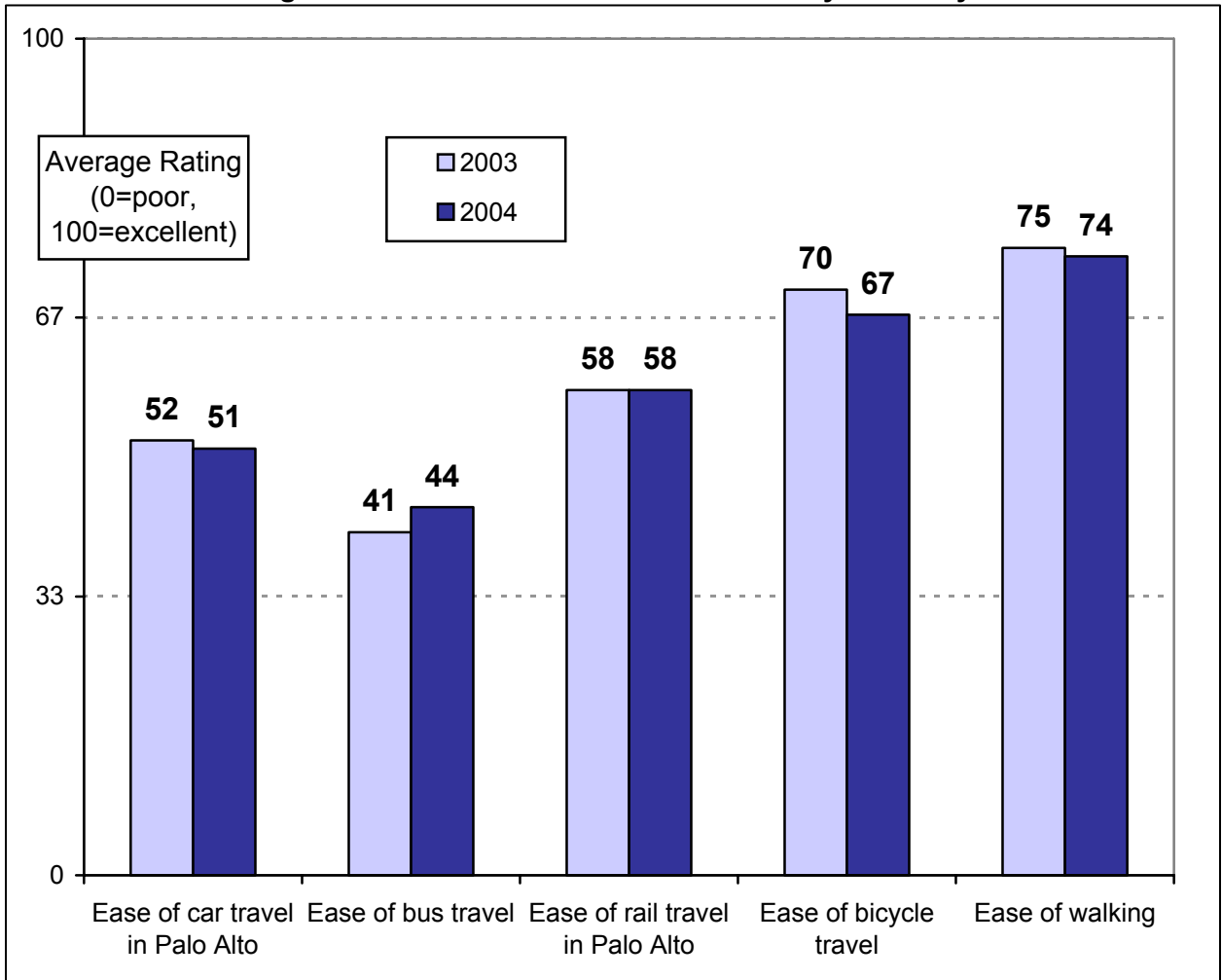


**Figure 4b: 2004 Characteristics of the Community: Access**

	excellent	good	fair	poor	Total
Access to affordable quality housing	1%	6%	21%	72%	100%
Access to affordable quality child care	4%	22%	38%	37%	100%

Note: "Don't Know" responses are removed

**Figure 5: Characteristics of the Community: Mobility**



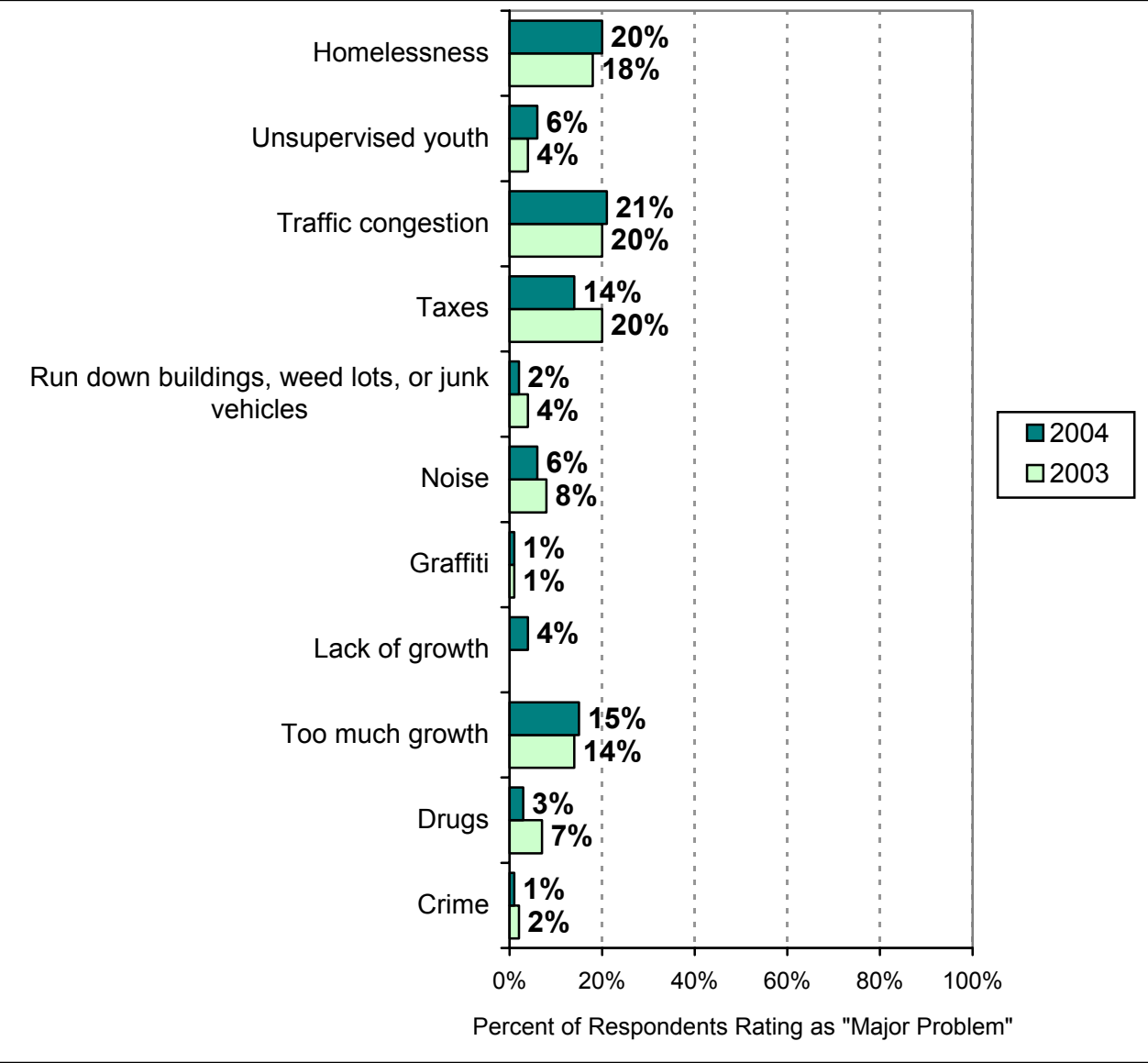
**Figure 5b: 2004 Characteristics of the Community: Mobility**

	excellent	good	fair	poor	Total
Ease of car travel in Palo Alto	9%	43%	38%	9%	100%
Ease of bus travel in Palo Alto	8%	35%	37%	20%	100%
Ease of rail travel in Palo Alto	18%	46%	27%	9%	100%
Ease of bicycle travel in Palo Alto	27%	53%	16%	4%	100%
Ease of walking in Palo Alto	38%	46%	14%	1%	100%

Note: "Don't Know" responses are removed

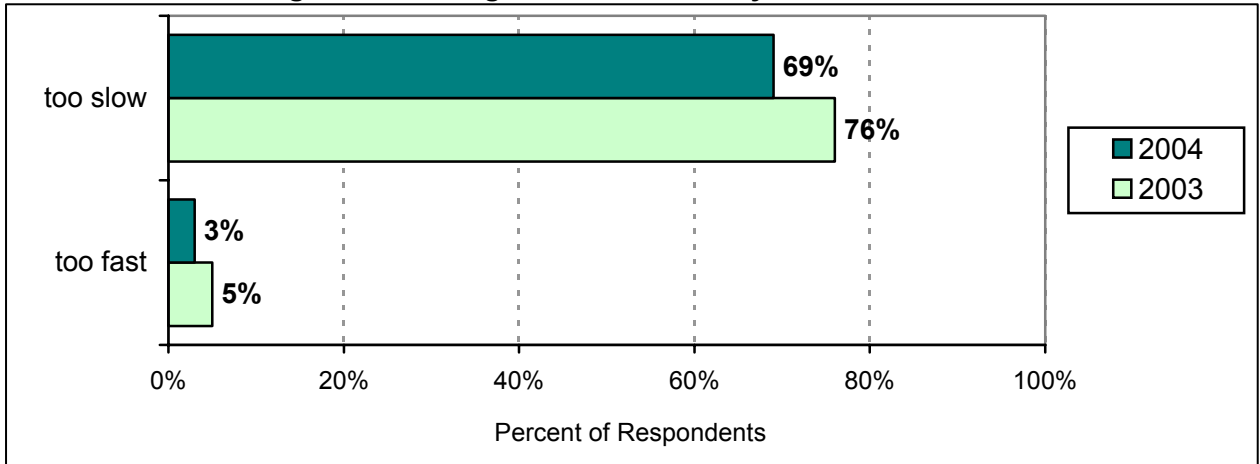
When asked about potential problems in Palo Alto, the three concerns rated by the highest proportion of respondents as a “major problem” in 2004 were traffic congestion, homelessness, and too much growth. In 2004 21% rated traffic congestion as a “major problem” compared to 20% in 2003.

**Figure 6: Ratings of Potential Problems in Palo Alto**



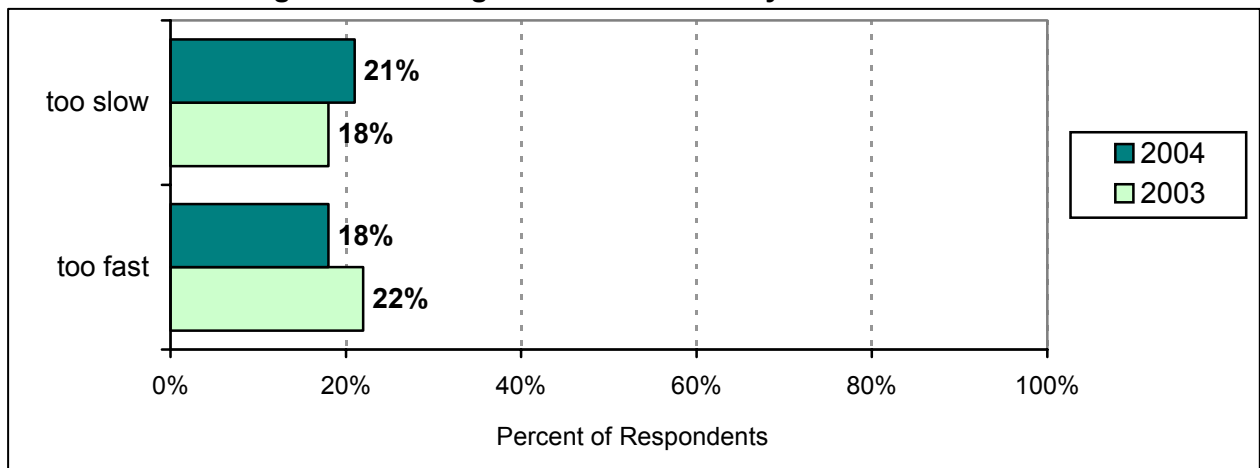
In 2004, the rate of population growth in Palo Alto was viewed as “too fast” by 39% of respondents, while 3% thought it was “too slow.”

**Figure 7a: Ratings of Job Growth by Year in Palo Alto**



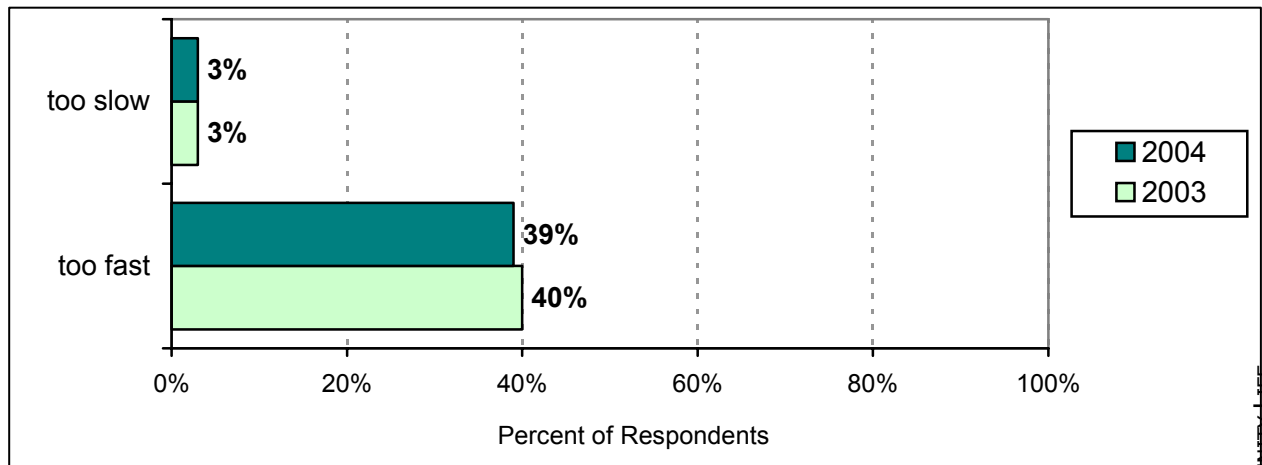
\*Note: Responses of “about right or don’t know” were omitted.

**Figure 7b: Ratings of Retail Growth by Year in Palo Alto**



\*Note: Responses of “about right or don’t know” were omitted.

**Figure 7c: Ratings of Population Growth by Year in Palo Alto**

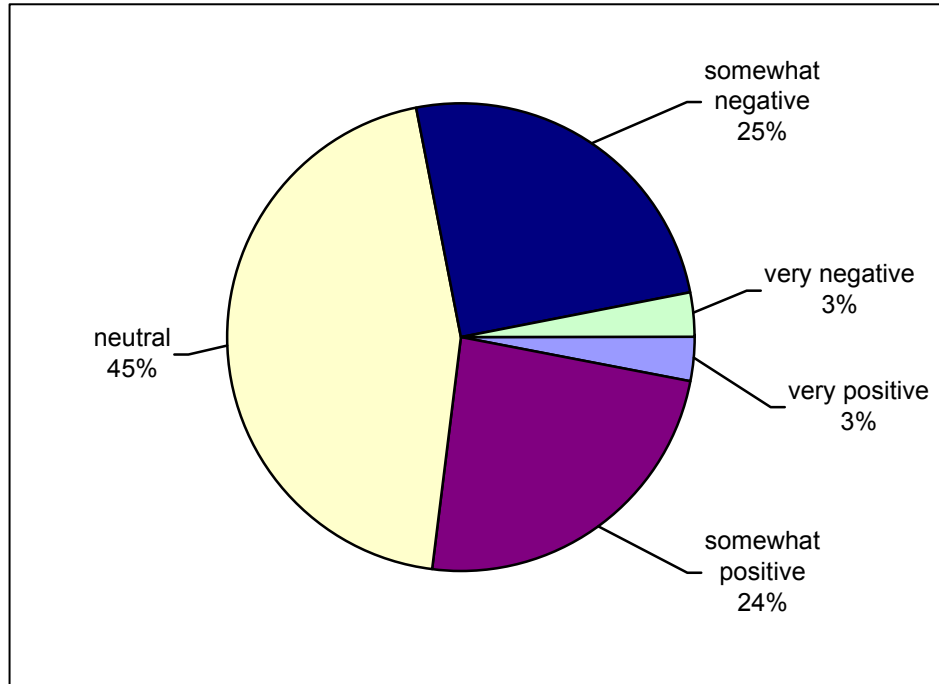


\*Note: Responses of “about right or don’t know” were omitted.

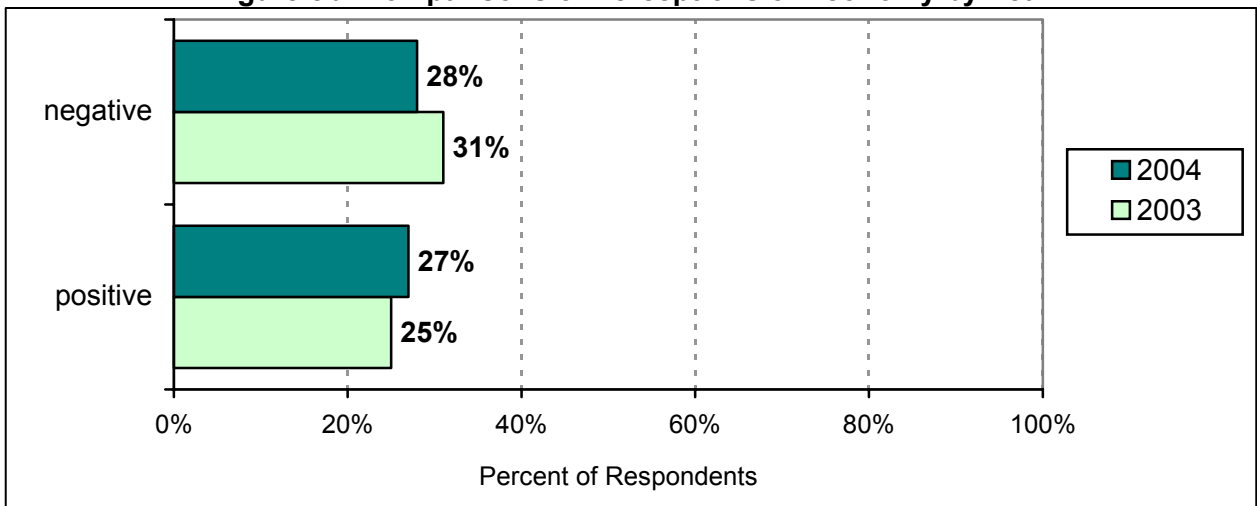


In 2004, 27% of respondents felt the impact of the economy would be positive on their family income in the next 12 months, while 28% felt it would be negative. In 2003, 25% of respondents felt the impact of the economy would be positive.

**Figure 8a: 2004 Perceptions of 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 . . .**



**Figure 8b: Comparisons of Perceptions of Economy by Year**



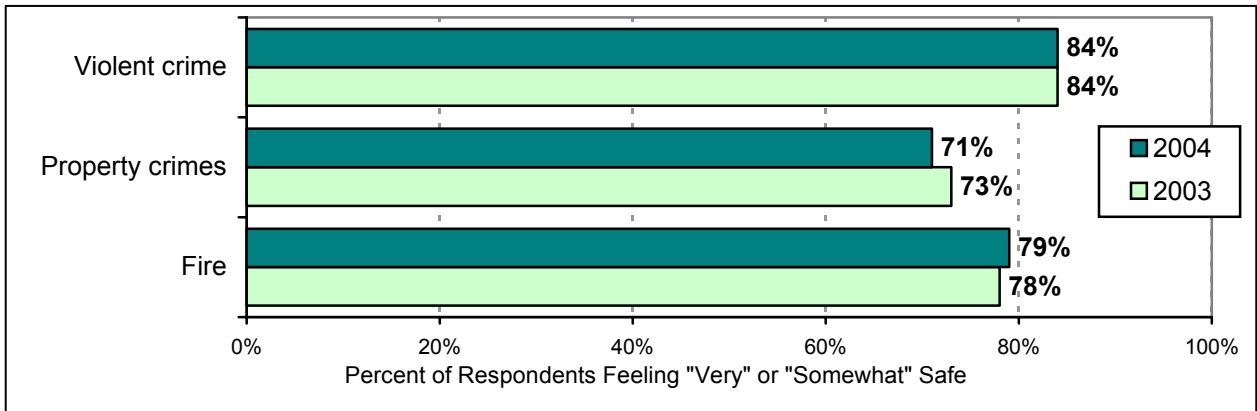
\*Note: Responses of "neutral" were omitted.

# PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY

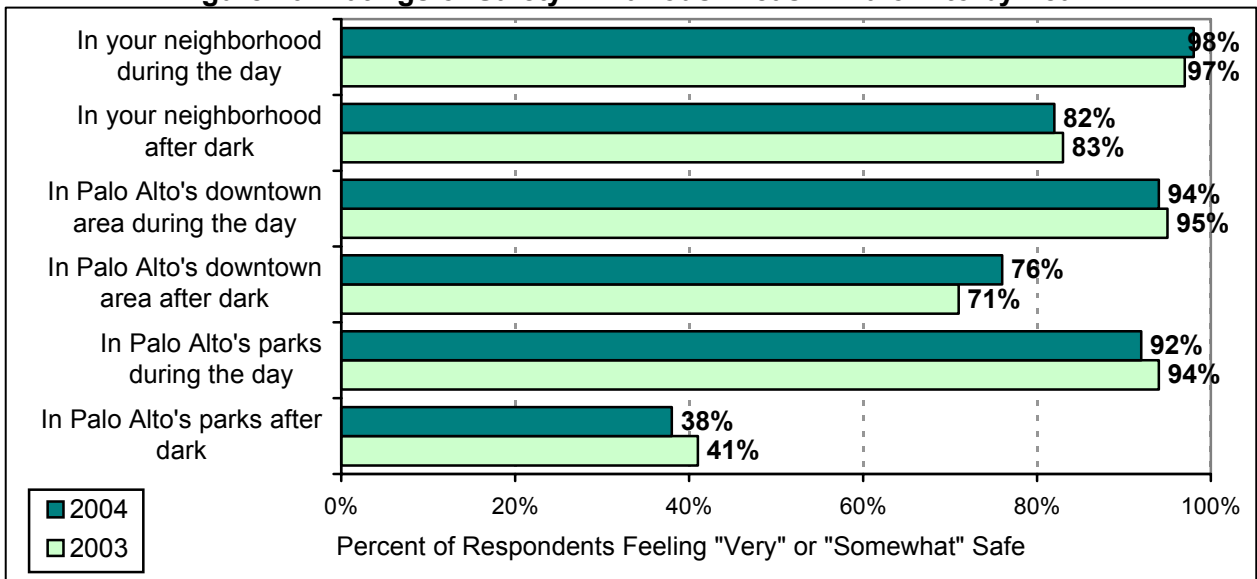
When evaluating safety in the community, 84% of respondents felt “somewhat” or “very safe” from violent crimes in Palo Alto in 2004, compared to 84% in 2003. In their neighborhood after dark, 82% of survey participants felt “somewhat” or “very safe” in 2004, compared to 83% in 2003.

In 2004, as assessed by the survey, 11% of households reported that at least one member had been the victim of one or more crimes in the past year. In 2003, 13% of households had reported that at least one member had been a crime victim. Of those who had been the victim of a crime in 2004, 59% had reported it to police.

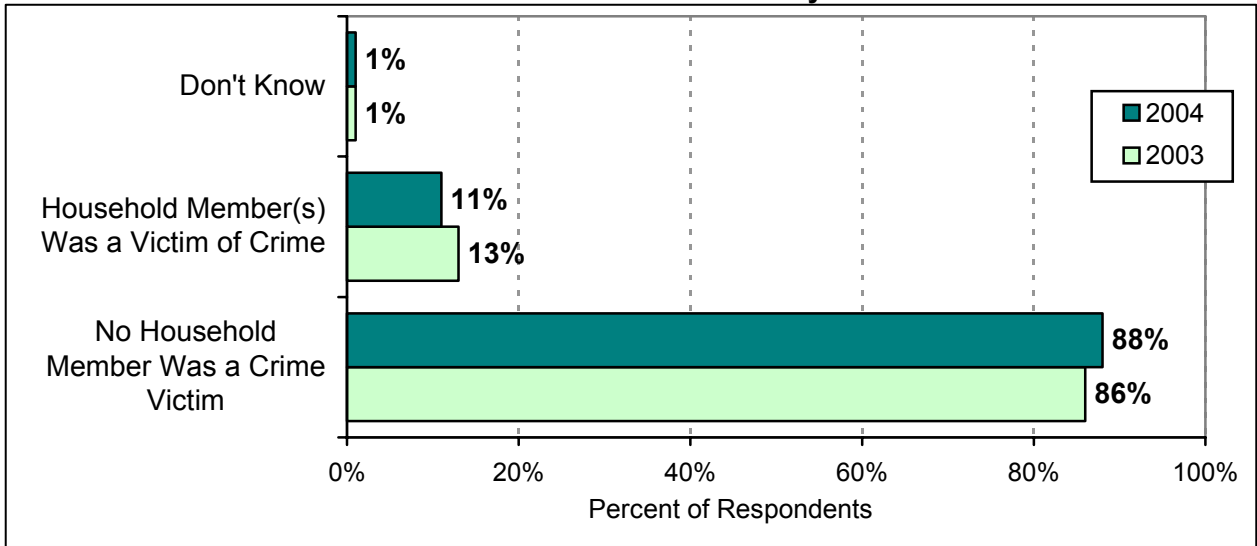
**Figure 9: Ratings of Safety from Various Problems in Palo Alto by Year**



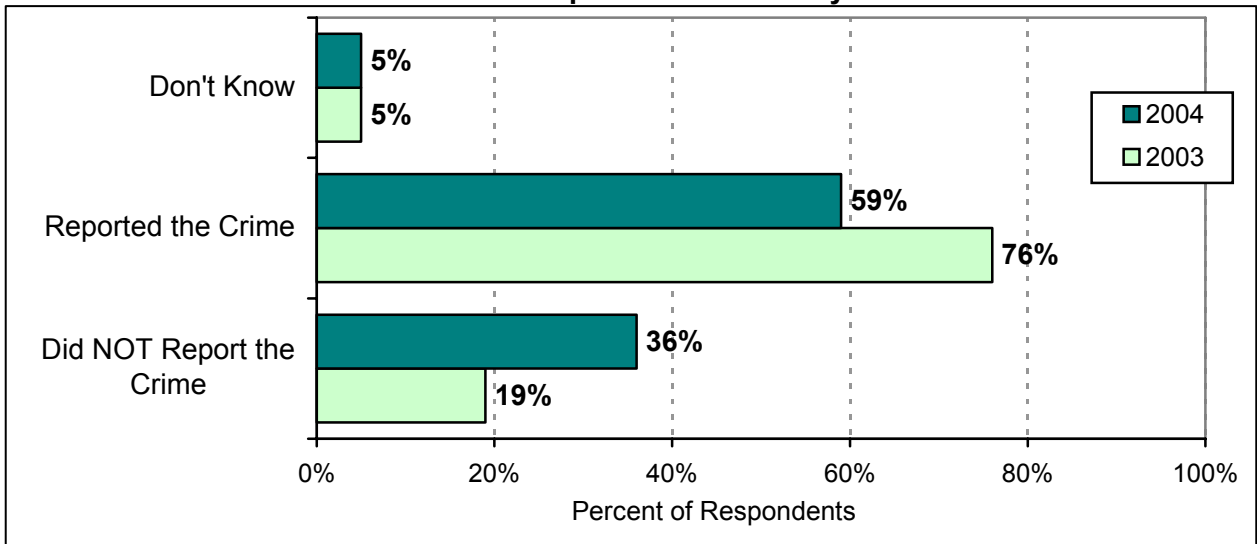
**Figure 10: Ratings of Safety in Various Areas in Palo Alto by Year**



**Figure 11: Percent of Respondents' Households That Were Victim of a Crime in the Last 12 Months by Year**



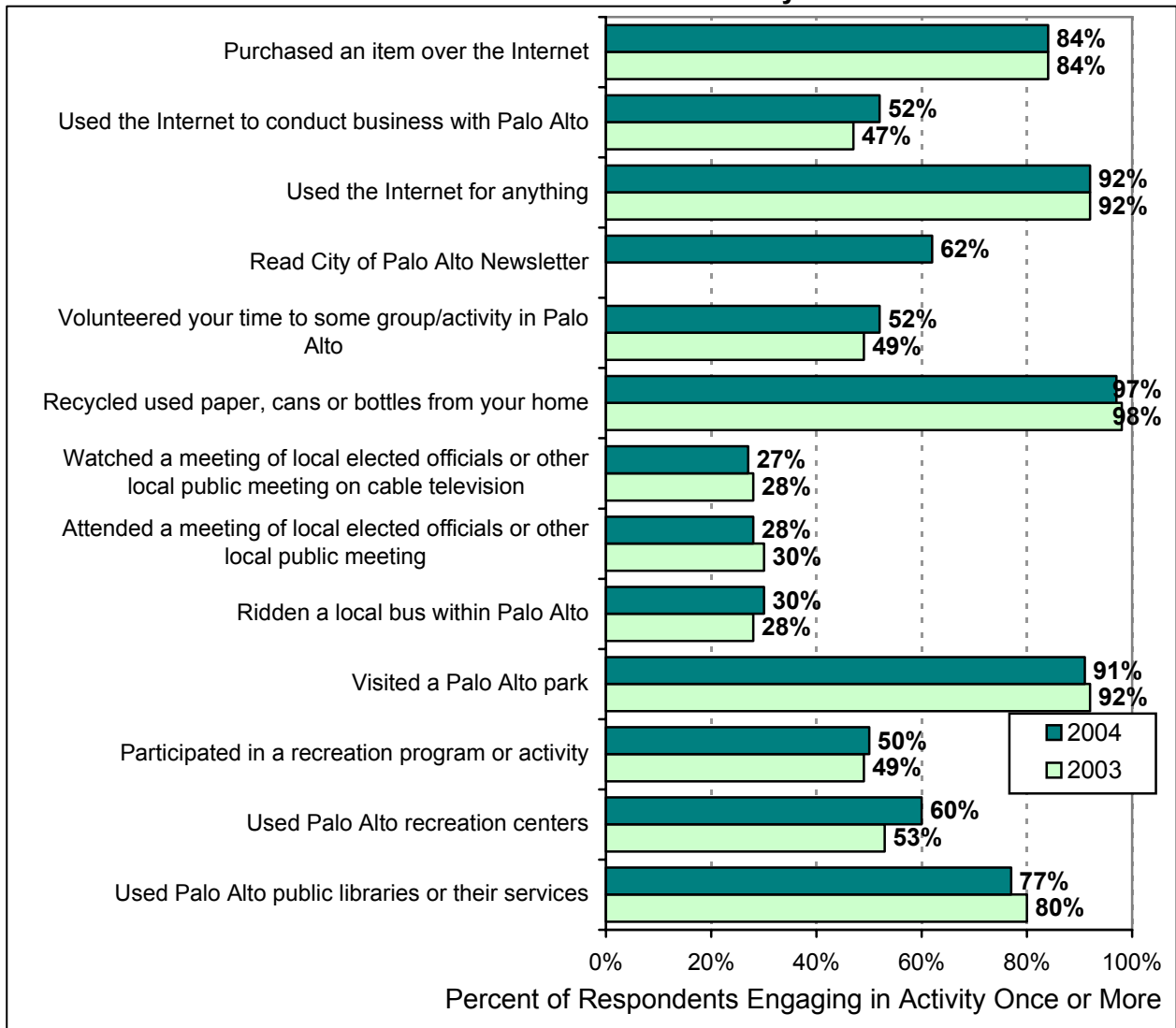
**Figure 12: Percent of Respondents' Households That Were Victim of a Crime Who Reported the Crime by Year**



# COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

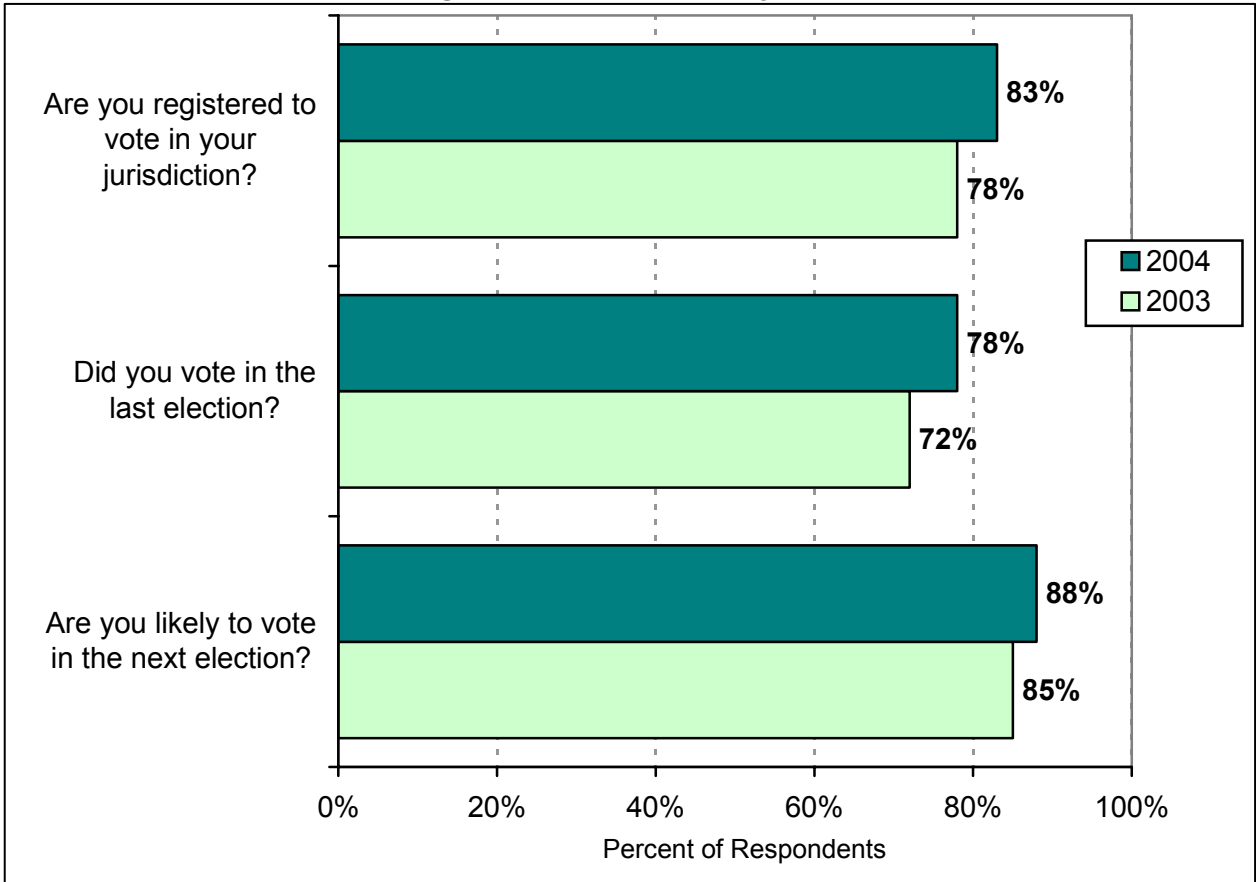
Participation in the civic, social and economic life of Palo Alto during the past year was assessed on the survey. The proportion of respondents engaging in various activities is shown in the chart below, with comparisons made between 2004 and 2003. Among those completing the questionnaire in 2004, 52% reported volunteering in the past year compared to 49% in 2003. Voter status was also estimated, and is shown on the next page.<sup>2</sup>

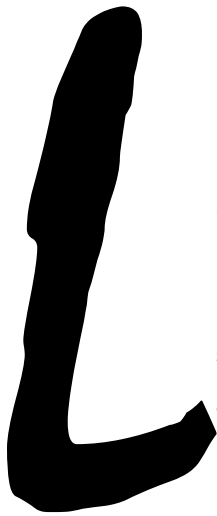
**Figure 13: Percent of Respondents Engaging in Various Activities in Palo Alto in the Last 12 Months by Year**



<sup>2</sup> In general on a survey, a greater proportion of people will report having voted, than actual voting records verify.

**Figure 14: Voter Status by Year**





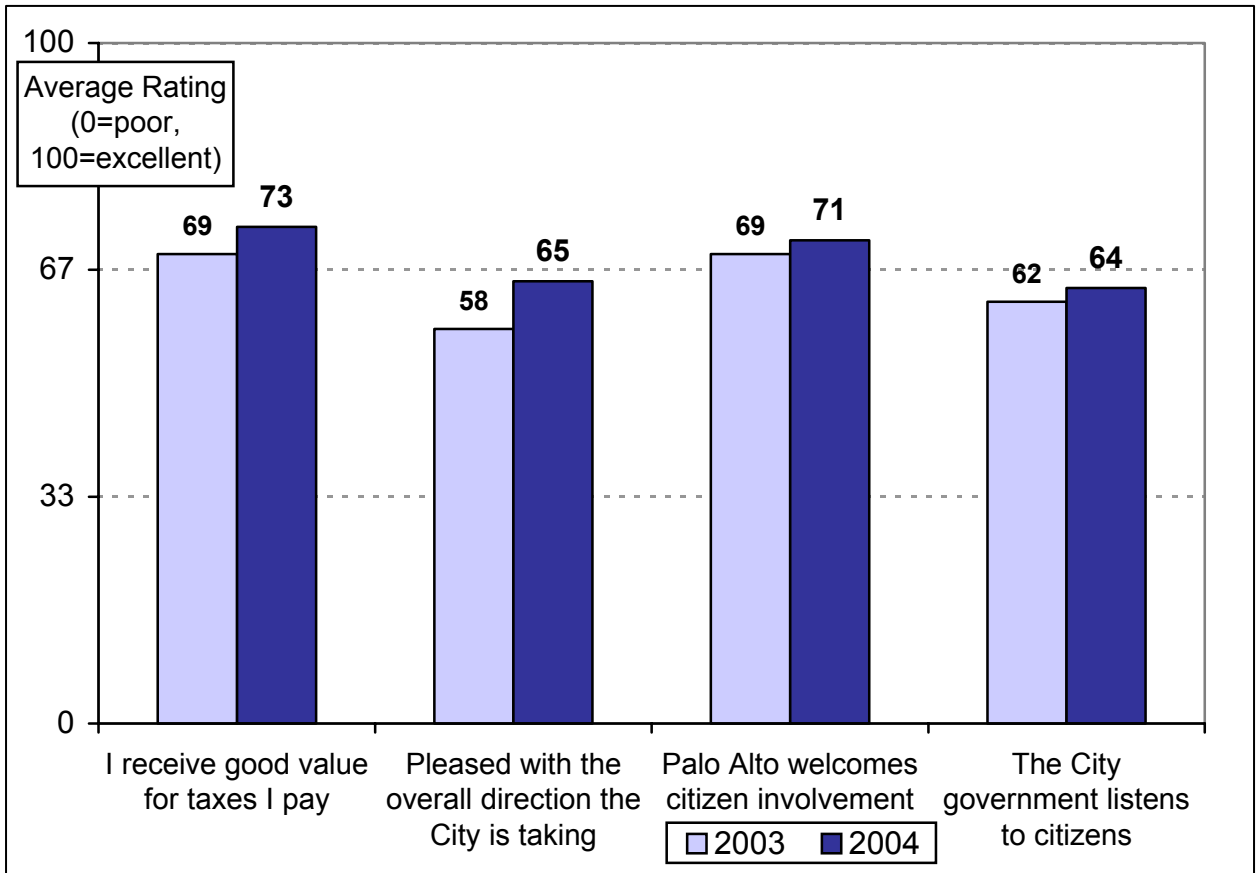
# LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Several aspects of the government of the City of Palo Alto were evaluated by residents completing The National Citizen Survey.™ They were asked how much trust they placed in their local government, and what they felt about the services they receive from the City of Palo Alto. Those who had any contact with a City of Palo Alto employee in the past year gave their impressions of the most recent encounter.

## PUBLIC TRUST

When asked to evaluate whether they were pleased with the overall direction taken by the City of Palo Alto, residents gave an average rating of 65 on a 100-point scale.

Figure 15: Ratings of Public Trust by Year



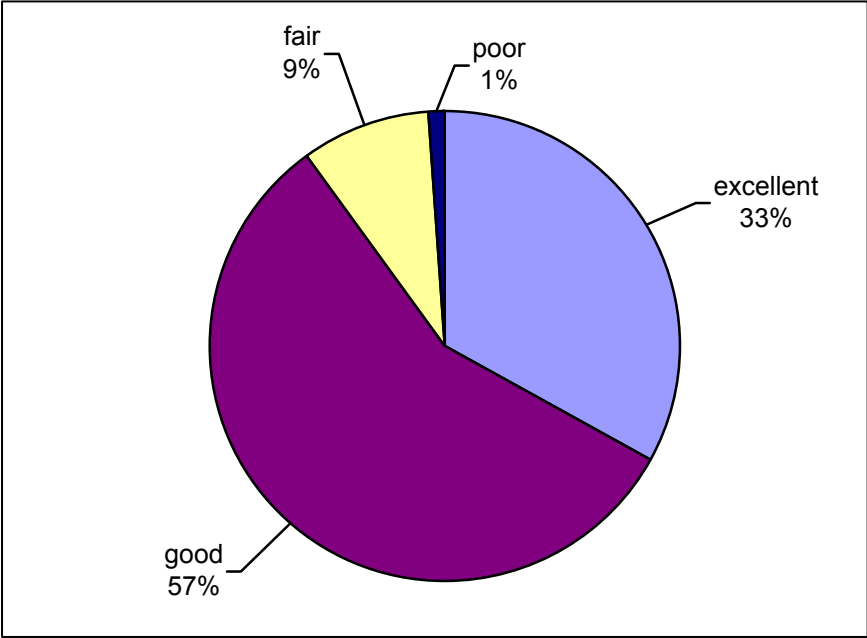
**Figure 15b: 2004 Public Trust Ratings**

	<b>strongly agree</b>	<b>somewhat agree</b>	<b>neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>somewhat disagree</b>	<b>strongly disagree</b>	<b>Total</b>
I receive good value for the City of Palo Alto taxes I pay	29%	46%	16%	6%	3%	100%
I am pleased with the overall direction that the City of Palo Alto is taking	16%	47%	21%	12%	4%	100%
The City of Palo Alto government welcomes citizen involvement	25%	45%	20%	7%	3%	100%
The City of Palo Alto government listens to citizens	17%	43%	24%	12%	5%	100%
Note: "Don't Know" responses are removed						

# SERVICES PROVIDED BY PALO ALTO

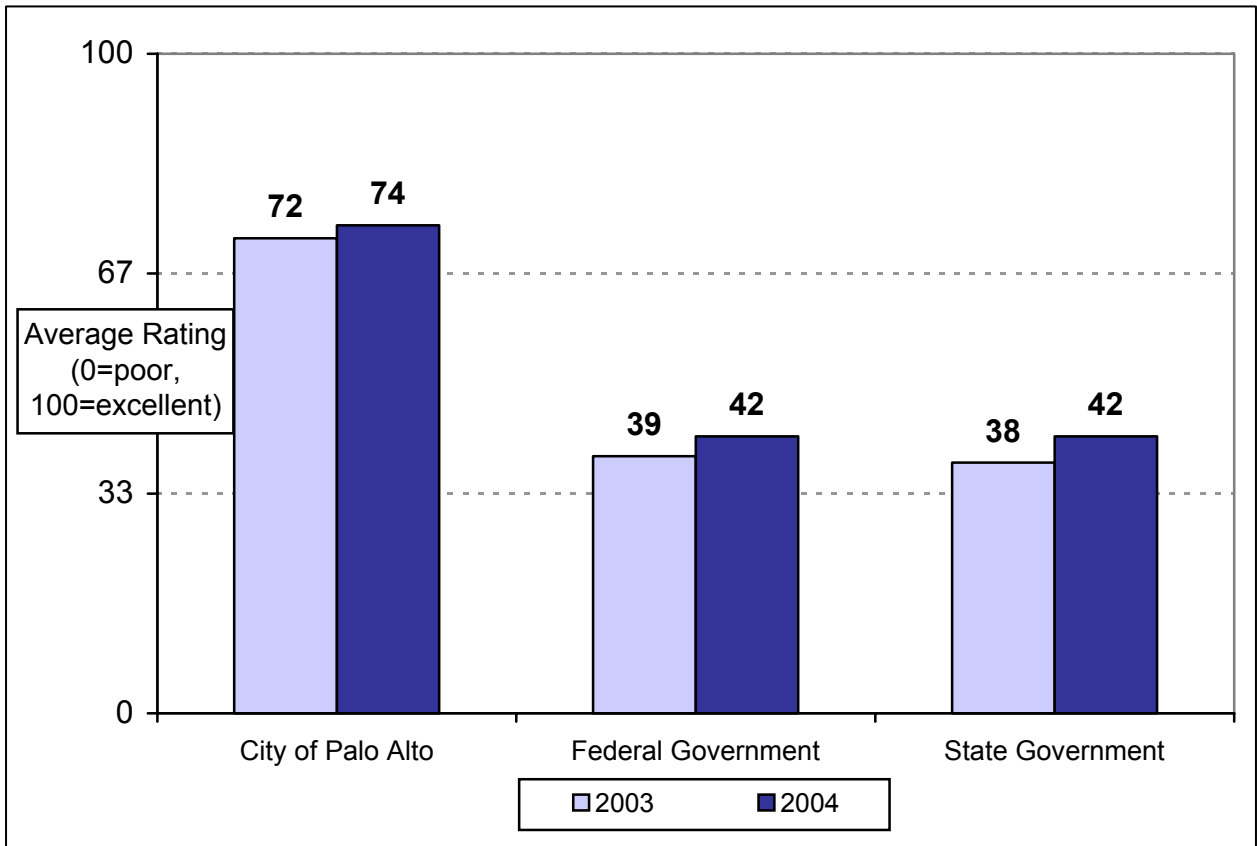
The overall quality of services provided by the City of Palo Alto was rated as 74 on a 100-point scale in 2004, compared to 72 in 2003. Ratings given to specific services are shown on the following pages.

**Figure 16: Overall Quality of Services Provided by the City of Palo Alto in 2004**





**Figure 17: Rating of Overall Quality of Services Provided by Various Levels of Government by Year**

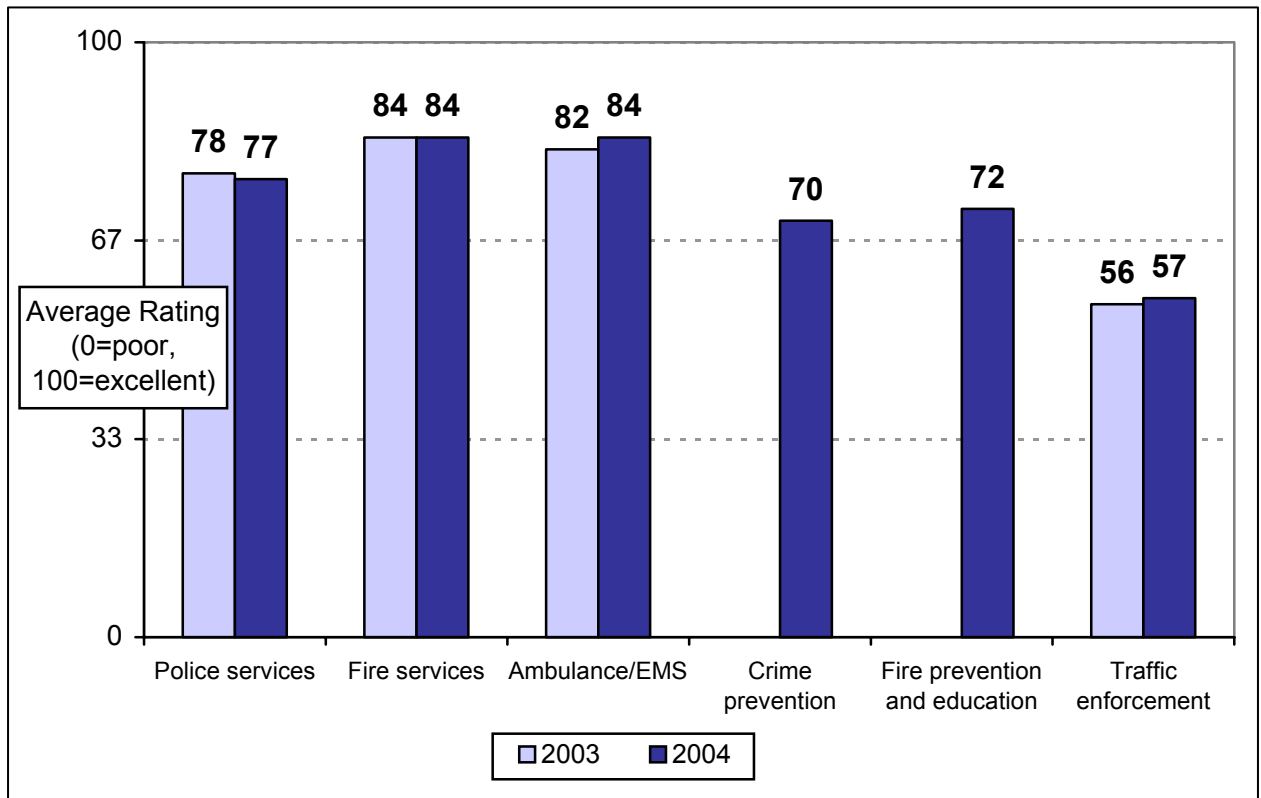


**Figure 17b: 2004 Overall Quality of Services: City of Palo Alto, Federal Government and State Government**

	excellent	good	fair	poor	Total
Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by the City of Palo Alto?	33%	57%	9%	1%	100%
Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by the Federal Government?	4%	34%	45%	17%	100%
Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by the State Government?	4%	32%	50%	14%	100%

Note: "Don't Know" responses are removed

**Figure 18: Quality of Public Safety Services by Year**

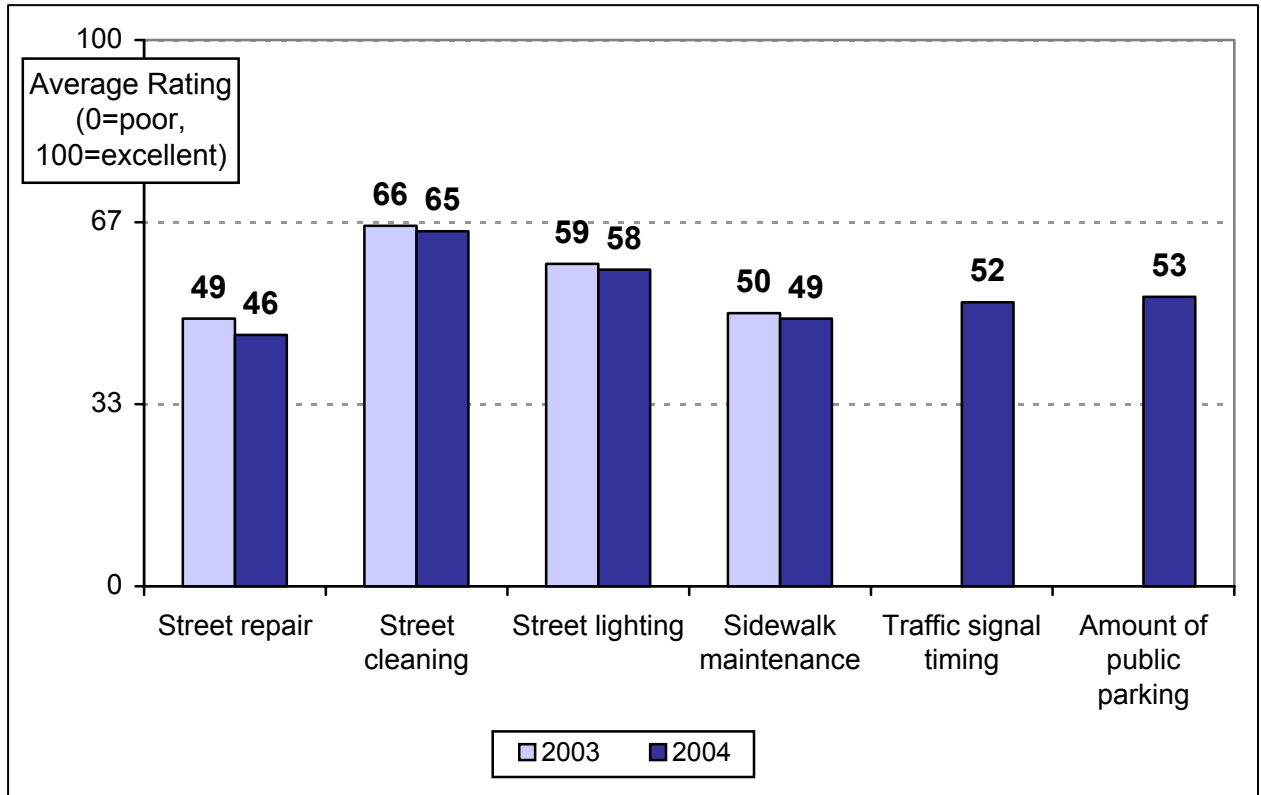


**Figure 18b: 2004 Quality of Public Safety Services**

	excellent	good	fair	poor	Total
Police services	43%	47%	8%	2%	100%
Fire services	56%	41%	3%	0%	100%
Ambulance/emergency medical services	56%	38%	5%	0%	100%
Crime prevention	26%	61%	13%	1%	100%
Fire prevention and education	31%	54%	14%	1%	100%
Traffic enforcement	16%	48%	27%	9%	100%

Note: "Don't Know" responses are removed

**Figure 19: Quality of Transportation Services by Year**

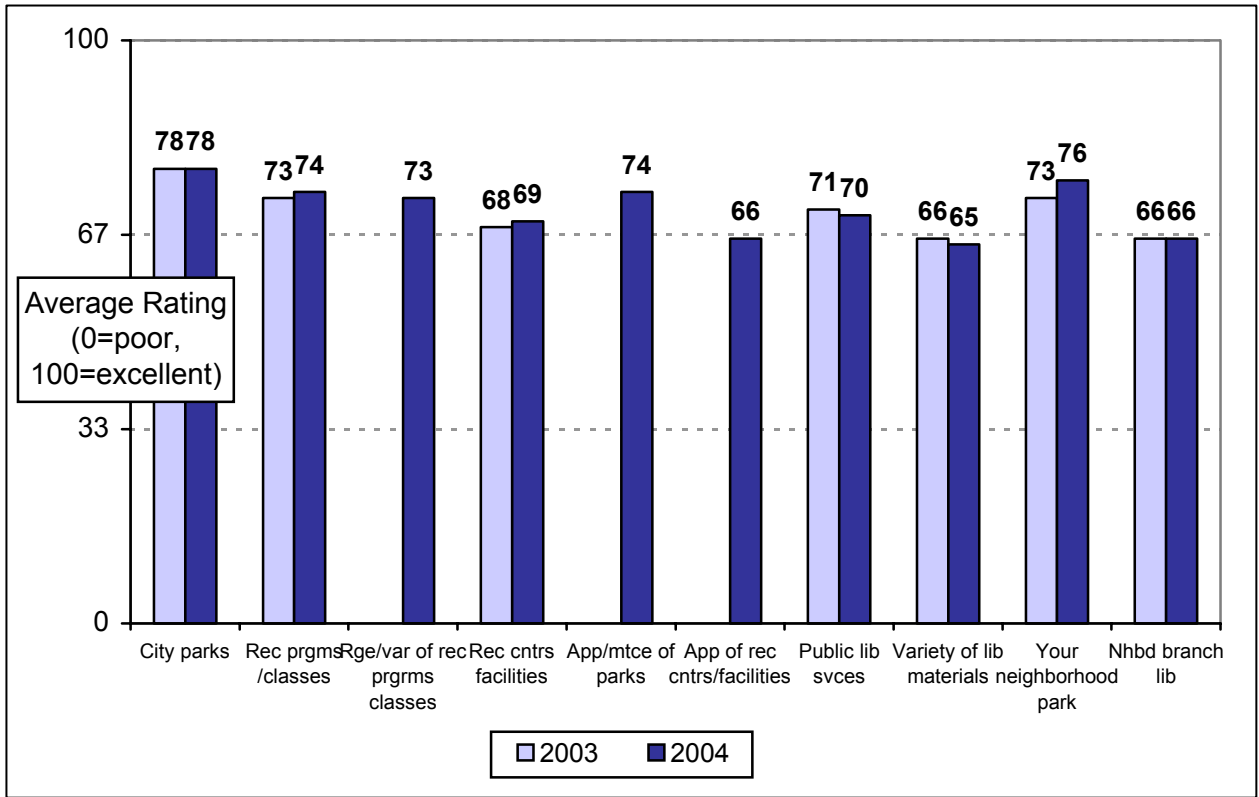


**Figure 19b: 2004 Quality of Transportation Services**

	excellent	good	fair	poor	Total
Street repair	7%	39%	36%	17%	100%
Street cleaning	22%	55%	18%	5%	100%
Street lighting	17%	48%	25%	10%	100%
Sidewalk maintenance	11%	39%	37%	13%	100%
Traffic signal timing	11%	47%	29%	14%	100%
Amount of public parking	14%	42%	33%	11%	100%

Note: "Don't Know" responses are removed

**Figure 20: Quality of Leisure Services by Year**

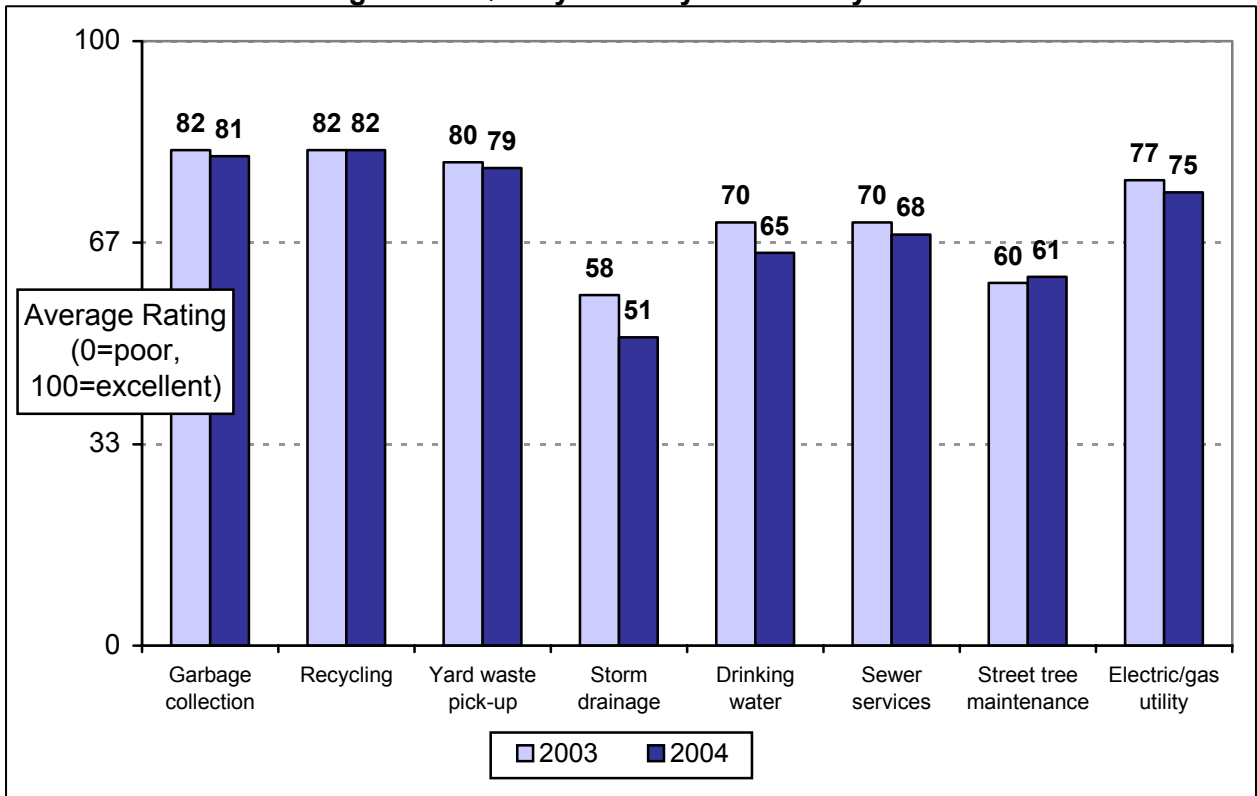


**Figure 20b: 2004 Quality of Leisure Services**

	excellent	good	fair	poor	Total
City parks	43%	48%	8%	1%	100%
Recreation programs or classes	39%	46%	11%	3%	100%
Range/variety of recreation programs and classes	38%	46%	13%	3%	100%
Recreation centers/facilities	25%	59%	14%	2%	100%
Appearance/maintenance of parks	35%	52%	11%	2%	100%
Appearance of recreation centers/facilities	22%	55%	20%	2%	100%
Public library services	32%	49%	15%	4%	100%
Variety of library materials	27%	47%	21%	5%	100%
Your neighborhood park	39%	51%	10%	1%	100%
Neighborhood branch libraries	28%	48%	18%	6%	100%

Note: "Don't Know" responses are removed

**Figure 21: Quality of Utility Services by Year**

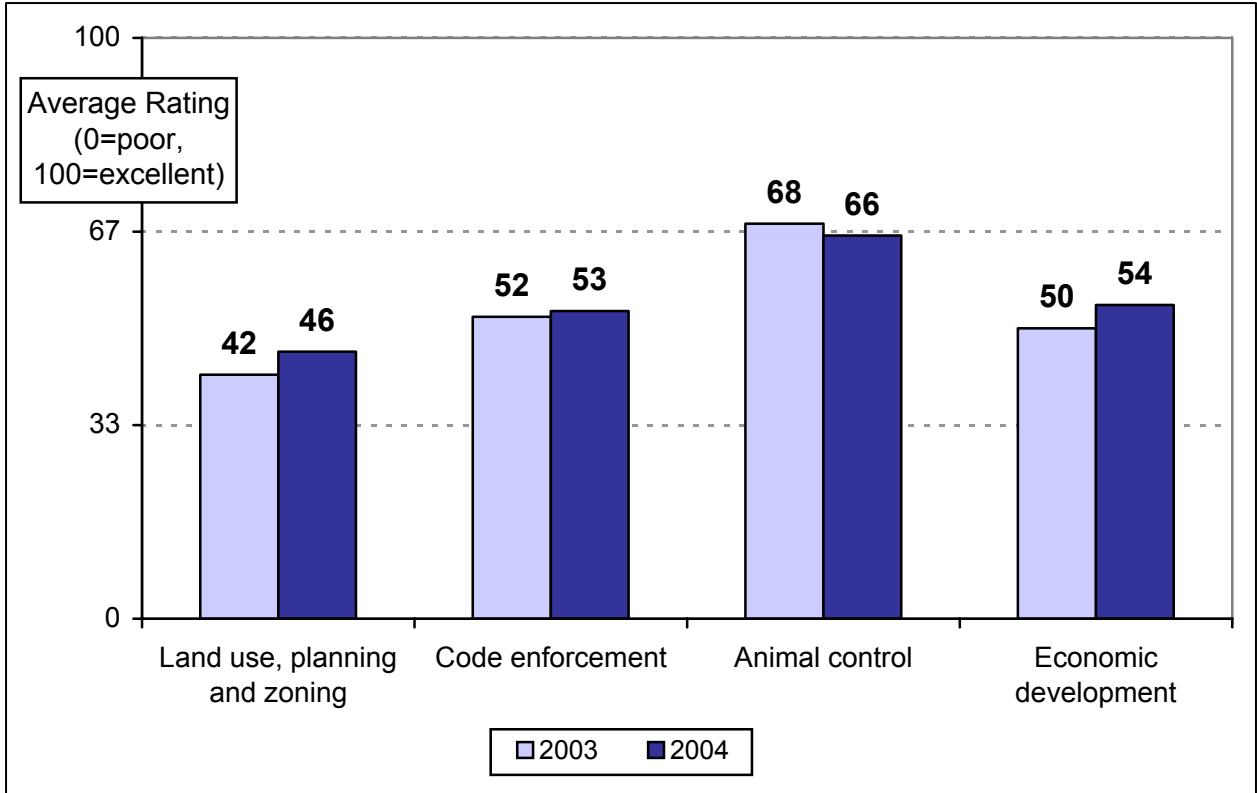


**Figure 21b: 2004 Quality of Utility Services**

	excellent	good	fair	poor	Total
Garbage collection	55%	37%	7%	2%	100%
Recycling	58%	32%	8%	2%	100%
Yard waste pick-up	53%	35%	9%	3%	100%
Storm drainage	10%	47%	30%	13%	100%
Drinking water	27%	48%	19%	7%	100%
Sewer services	27%	53%	16%	4%	100%
Street tree maintenance	19%	51%	22%	7%	100%
Electric/gas utility	37%	51%	10%	1%	100%

Note: "Don't Know" responses are removed

**Figure 22: Quality of Planning and Code Enforcement Services by Year**

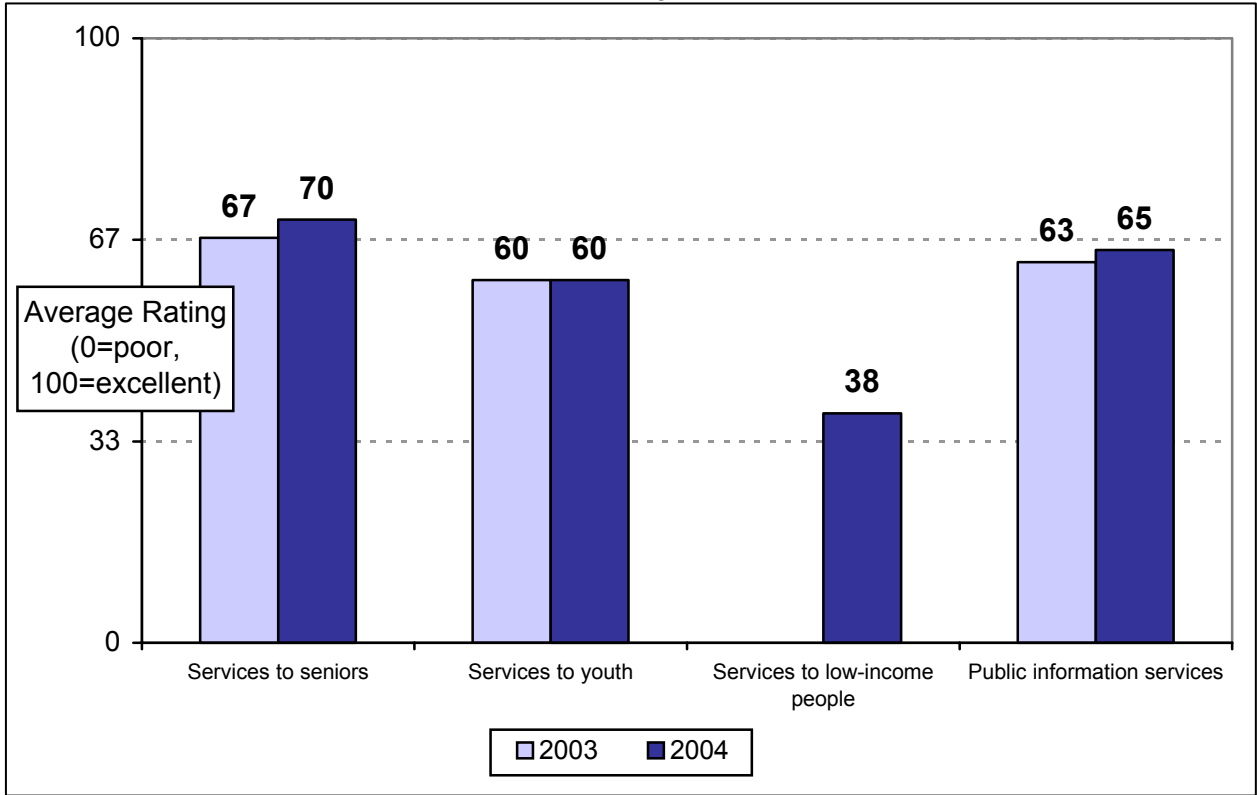


**Figure 22b: 2004 Quality of Planning and Code Enforcement Services**

	excellent	good	fair	poor	Total
Land use, planning and zoning	8%	40%	35%	18%	100%
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc)	11%	48%	31%	10%	100%
Animal control	24%	55%	17%	5%	100%
Economic development	12%	46%	34%	8%	100%

Note: "Don't Know" responses are removed

**Figure 23: Quality of Services to Special Populations and Other Services by Year**



**Figure 23b: 2004 Quality of Services to Special Populations and Other Services**

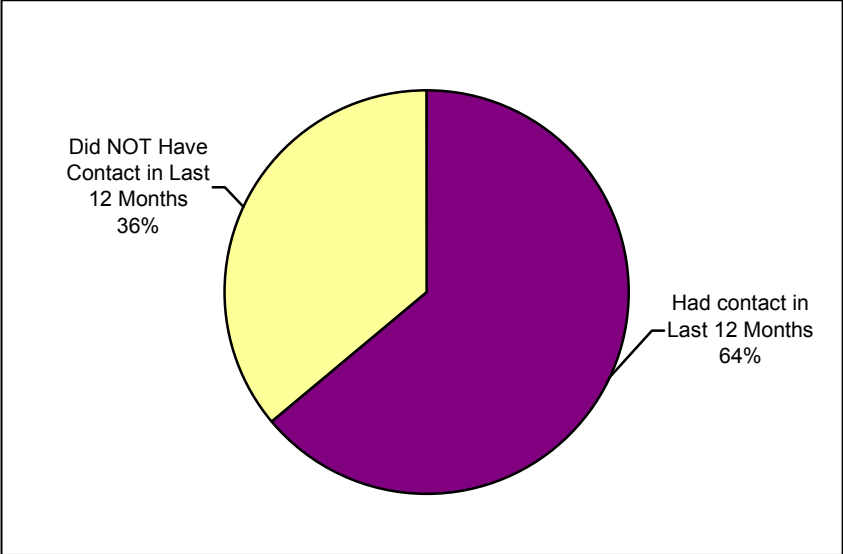
	excellent	good	fair	poor	Total
Services to seniors	31%	51%	14%	3%	100%
Services to youth	19%	49%	25%	7%	100%
Services to low-income people	10%	27%	30%	33%	100%
Public information services	19%	57%	21%	2%	100%

Note: "Don't Know" responses are removed

# THE CITY OF PALO ALTO EMPLOYEES

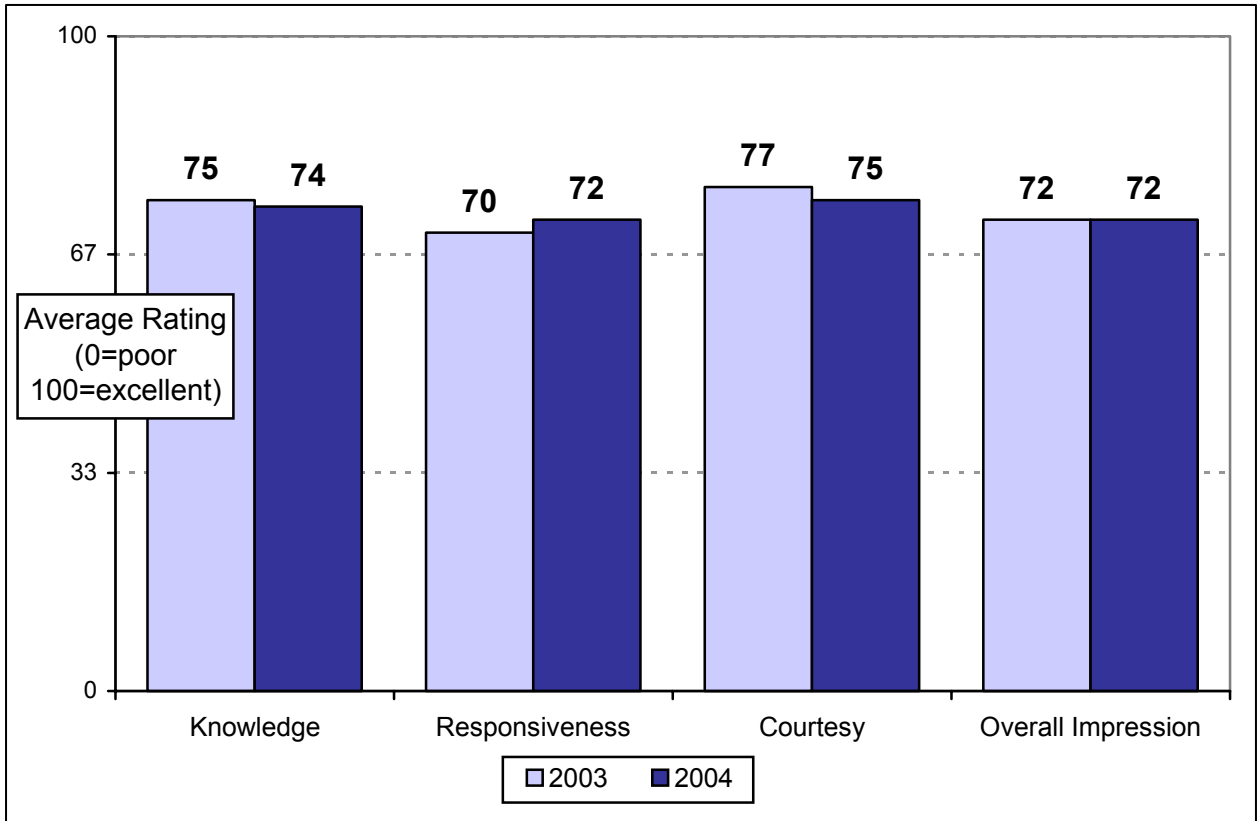
Impressions of the City of Palo Alto employees were assessed on the questionnaire. In 2004, those who had been in contact with a City of Palo Alto employee in the past year (36%) rated their overall impression as 72 on a 100-point scale, compared to an average rating of 72 received in 2003.

**Figure 24: Percent of Respondents Who Had Contact with a City of Palo Alto Employee in 2004**





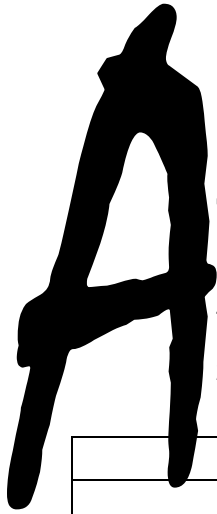
**Figure 25: Ratings of Contact with the City of Palo Alto Employees by Year**



**Figure 25b: 2004 Impression of Contact with Employees**

	excellent	good	fair	poor	Total
Knowledge	40%	46%	10%	4%	100%
Responsiveness	40%	44%	11%	6%	100%
Courtesy	46%	38%	11%	5%	100%
Overall Impression	38%	46%	9%	6%	100%

Note: "Don't Know" responses are removed



# APPENDIX I: FREQUENCY OF RESPONSES TO ALL SURVEY QUESTIONS

This Appendix displays the complete distribution of responses to questions in 2004. The “don’t know” responses are shown, where applicable.

Question #1: Quality of Life Ratings						
	excellent	good	fair	poor	don't know	Total
How do you rate Palo Alto as a place to live?	53%	43%	3%	0%	0%	100%
How do you rate your neighborhood as a place to live?	48%	42%	8%	2%	0%	100%
How do you rate Palo Alto as a place to raise children?	42%	36%	5%	1%	16%	100%
How do you rate Palo Alto as a place to retire?	23%	27%	19%	11%	19%	100%
How do you rate the overall quality of life in Palo Alto?	42%	52%	6%	1%	0%	100%

Question #2: 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	16%	51%	26%	4%	3%	100%
Openness and acceptance of the community towards people of diverse backgrounds	23%	47%	21%	4%	4%	100%
Overall appearance of Palo Alto	35%	51%	13%	1%	0%	100%
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	38%	42%	14%	2%	4%	100%
Job opportunities	6%	26%	32%	11%	26%	100%
Access to affordable quality housing	1%	6%	19%	67%	8%	100%
Access to affordable quality child care	2%	10%	18%	18%	52%	100%
Ease of car travel in Palo Alto	9%	42%	38%	9%	2%	100%
Ease of bus travel in Palo Alto	5%	20%	21%	12%	42%	100%
Ease of rail travel in Palo Alto	15%	38%	22%	7%	18%	100%
Ease of bicycle travel in Palo Alto	23%	46%	13%	4%	14%	100%
Ease of walking in Palo Alto	38%	46%	14%	1%	1%	100%

Question #3: Please rate the speed of growth in the following categories in Palo Alto over the past two years							
	much too slow	somewhat too slow	right amount	somewhat too fast	much too fast	don't know	Total
Population growth	1%	2%	40%	20%	7%	30%	100%
Retail growth (stores, restaurants etc.)	3%	15%	50%	12%	3%	18%	100%
Jobs growth	10%	30%	16%	1%	0%	43%	100%

<b>Question #4: To what degree are the following problems in Palo Alto</b>						
	<b>not a problem</b>	<b>minor problem</b>	<b>moderate problem</b>	<b>major problem</b>	<b>don't know</b>	<b>Total</b>
Crime	17%	50%	23%	1%	10%	100%
Drugs	15%	33%	21%	2%	29%	100%
Too much growth	24%	25%	21%	12%	18%	100%
Lack of growth	49%	18%	10%	4%	20%	100%
Graffiti	35%	46%	9%	1%	9%	100%
Noise	25%	41%	26%	6%	3%	100%
Run down buildings, weed lots, or junk vehicles	32%	47%	15%	2%	4%	100%
Taxes	19%	22%	33%	12%	13%	100%
Traffic congestion	7%	31%	39%	21%	2%	100%
Unsupervised youth	27%	37%	11%	5%	20%	100%
Homelessness	9%	34%	32%	19%	6%	100%

<b>Question #5: Please rate how safe you feel from the following occurring to you in Palo Alto</b>							
	<b>very safe</b>	<b>somewhat safe</b>	<b>neither safe nor unsafe</b>	<b>somewhat unsafe</b>	<b>very unsafe</b>	<b>don't know</b>	<b>Total</b>
Violent crime (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	41%	42%	11%	4%	0%	2%	100%
Property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	22%	48%	17%	11%	1%	1%	100%
Fire	39%	39%	18%	2%	0%	2%	100%

<b>Question #6: Please rate how safe you feel:</b>							
	<b>very safe</b>	<b>somewhat safe</b>	<b>neither safe nor unsafe</b>	<b>somewhat unsafe</b>	<b>very unsafe</b>	<b>don't know</b>	<b>Total</b>
In your neighborhood during the day	79%	19%	1%	1%	0%	1%	100%
In your neighborhood after dark	36%	45%	11%	6%	1%	1%	100%
In Palo Alto's downtown area during the day	68%	23%	4%	2%	0%	2%	100%
In Palo Alto's downtown area after dark	26%	44%	11%	9%	2%	7%	100%
In Palo Alto's parks during the day	59%	28%	5%	2%	0%	6%	100%
In Palo Alto's parks after dark	7%	24%	18%	25%	6%	20%	100%

<b>Question #7: During the past twelve months, were you or anyone in your household the victim of any crime?</b>		
		<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
During the past twelve months, were you or anyone in your household the victim of any crime?	no	88%
	yes	11%
	don't know	1%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>

<b>Question #8: If yes, was this crime (these crimes) reported to the police?</b>		
		<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
If yes, was this crime (these crimes) reported to the police?	no	36%
	yes	59%
	don't know	5%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>

<b>Question #9: In the last 12 months, about how many times, if ever, have you or other household members done the following things in the City of Palo Alto?</b>						
	<b>never</b>	<b>once or twice</b>	<b>3 to 12 times</b>	<b>13 to 26 times</b>	<b>more than 26 times</b>	<b>Total</b>
Used Palo Alto public libraries or their services	23%	17%	30%	15%	15%	100%
Used Palo Alto recreation centers	40%	27%	19%	6%	8%	100%
Participated in a recreation program or activity	50%	21%	17%	6%	6%	100%
Visited a Palo Alto park	9%	17%	34%	16%	24%	100%
Ridden a local bus within Palo Alto	70%	14%	9%	3%	5%	100%
Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting	72%	19%	8%	0%	0%	100%
Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting on cable television	73%	15%	9%	2%	1%	100%
Recycled used paper, cans or bottles from your home	3%	3%	7%	6%	81%	100%
Volunteered your time to some group/activity in Palo Alto	48%	18%	14%	7%	12%	100%
Read City of Palo Alto Newsletter	38%	24%	25%	6%	8%	100%
Used the Internet for anything	8%	2%	4%	4%	82%	100%
Used the Internet to conduct business with Palo Alto	48%	19%	17%	4%	12%	100%
Purchased an item over the Internet	16%	12%	27%	17%	28%	100%

<b>Question #10: How do you rate the quality of each of the following services in Palo Alto?</b>						
	<b>excellent</b>	<b>good</b>	<b>fair</b>	<b>poor</b>	<b>don't know</b>	<b>Total</b>
Police services	36%	39%	7%	2%	17%	100%
Fire services	40%	30%	2%	0%	28%	100%
Ambulance/emergency medical services	34%	23%	3%	0%	40%	100%
Crime prevention	18%	41%	9%	0%	32%	100%
Fire prevention and education	18%	31%	8%	1%	43%	100%
Traffic enforcement	14%	41%	23%	8%	14%	100%
Garbage collection	53%	35%	7%	2%	4%	100%
Recycling	56%	31%	7%	2%	5%	100%
Yard waste pick-up	40%	27%	7%	2%	24%	100%
Street repair	7%	37%	34%	16%	6%	100%
Street cleaning	21%	53%	17%	5%	5%	100%
Street lighting	17%	47%	25%	9%	2%	100%
Sidewalk maintenance	10%	37%	35%	13%	4%	100%
Traffic signal timing	10%	44%	28%	13%	5%	100%
Amount of public parking	13%	40%	32%	11%	5%	100%
Storm drainage	8%	36%	23%	10%	23%	100%
Drinking water	26%	45%	18%	7%	5%	100%
Sewer services	23%	44%	13%	4%	17%	100%
City parks	41%	46%	7%	1%	5%	100%
Recreation programs or classes	25%	29%	7%	2%	36%	100%
Range/variety of recreation programs and classes	25%	31%	8%	2%	34%	100%
Recreation centers/facilities	18%	42%	10%	1%	28%	100%
Appearance/maintenance of parks	33%	50%	11%	2%	5%	100%
Appearance of recreation centers/facilities	16%	40%	15%	2%	27%	100%
Land use, planning and zoning	5%	29%	25%	13%	27%	100%
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc)	7%	33%	21%	7%	33%	100%
Animal control	16%	37%	11%	3%	33%	100%
Economic development	7%	29%	21%	5%	37%	100%
Services to seniors	14%	24%	7%	2%	53%	100%
Services to youth	9%	23%	12%	3%	52%	100%
Services to low-income people	4%	10%	11%	12%	63%	100%
Public library services	26%	41%	13%	3%	17%	100%
Variety of library materials	22%	37%	17%	4%	20%	100%
Public information services	14%	41%	15%	2%	28%	100%
Street tree maintenance	18%	47%	20%	7%	9%	100%
Electric/gas utility	35%	48%	9%	1%	6%	100%
Your neighborhood park	36%	47%	9%	1%	8%	100%
Neighborhood branch libraries	22%	37%	14%	5%	22%	100%

<b>Question #11: Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by . . .</b>						
	<b>excellent</b>	<b>good</b>	<b>fair</b>	<b>poor</b>	<b>don't know</b>	<b>Total</b>
Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by the City of Palo Alto?	32%	56%	9%	1%	2%	100%
Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by the Federal Government?	3%	28%	36%	14%	20%	100%
Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by the State Government?	3%	26%	41%	12%	19%	100%

<b>Question #12: Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of the City of Palo Alto within the last 12 months?</b>		
		<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of the City of Palo Alto within the last 12 months?	no	36%
	yes	64%
	don't know	0%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>

<b>Question #13: What was your impression of the employees of the City of Palo Alto in your most recent contact?</b>						
	<b>excellent</b>	<b>good</b>	<b>fair</b>	<b>poor</b>	<b>don't know</b>	<b>Total</b>
Knowledge	39%	45%	10%	4%	2%	100%
Responsiveness	39%	43%	10%	6%	1%	100%
Courtesy	46%	38%	11%	5%	0%	100%
Overall Impression	38%	46%	9%	6%	0%	100%

<b>Question #14: Please rate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements.</b>							
	<b>strongly agree</b>	<b>somewhat agree</b>	<b>neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>somewhat disagree</b>	<b>strongly disagree</b>	<b>don't know</b>	<b>Total</b>
I receive good value for the City of Palo Alto taxes I pay	26%	41%	15%	6%	3%	10%	100%
I am pleased with the overall direction that the City of Palo Alto is taking	15%	42%	18%	11%	4%	11%	100%
The City of Palo Alto government welcomes citizen involvement	20%	34%	16%	5%	2%	23%	100%
The City of Palo Alto government listens to citizens	13%	32%	18%	9%	4%	26%	100%

<b>Question #15: What impact, if any, do you think the economy will have on your family income in the next 6 months?</b>		
		<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
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:	very positive	3%
	somewhat positive	24%
	neutral	45%
	somewhat negative	25%
	very negative	3%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>

<b>Question #16: Do you live within the City limits of the City of Palo Alto?</b>		
		<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
Do you live within the limits of the City of Palo Alto?	no	6%
	yes	94%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>

<b>Question #17: Employment Status</b>		
		<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
Are you currently employed?	no	32%
	yes	68%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>

<b>Question #17a: Usual Mode of Transportation to Work</b>		
		<b>Percent of Employed Respondents</b>
What one method of transportation do you usually use (for the longest distance of your commute) to travel to work?	Motorized vehicle	78%
	Bus, Rail, Subway, or other public transportation	5%
	Walk	4%
	Work at home	7%
	Other	7%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>

<b>Question #17b: Drive Alone or Carpool</b>		
		<b>Percent of Employed Respondents</b>
If you checked the motorized vehicle (e.g. car, truck, van, motorcycle, etc.) box in 18a, do other people usually ride with you to or from work?	no	86%
	yes	14%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>

<b>Usual Mode of Transportation to Work, Including Carpooling</b>		
		<b>Percent of Employed Respondents</b>
Usual mode of transportation to work	Motorized vehicle, no others (SOV)	68%
	Motorized vehicle, with others (MOV)	10%
	Bus, rail, subway, or other public transportation	5%
	walk	4%
	work at home	7%
	other	7%
Total		100%

<b>Question #18: Length of Residency</b>		
		<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
How many years have you lived in Palo Alto?	less than 2 years	18%
	2-5 years	18%
	6-10 years	15%
	11-20 years	17%
	more than 20 years	32%
Total		100%

<b>Question #19: Type of Housing Unit</b>		
		<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
Which best describes the building you live in?	one family house detached from any other houses	58%
	one family house attached to one or more houses	5%
	building with two or more apartments or condominiums	36%
	other	1%
Total		100%

<b>Question #20: Tenure Status</b>		
		<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
Is this house, apartment, or mobile home...	rented for cash or occupied without cash payment?	43%
	owned by you or someone in this house	57%
Total		100%



<b>Question #21: Presence of Children in Household</b>		
		<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
Do any children age 12 or under live in your household?	no	77%
	yes	23%
Total		100%

<b>Question #22: Presence of Teenagers in Household</b>		
		<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
Do any teenagers ages 13 through 17 live in your household?	no	85%
	yes	15%
Total		100%

<b>Question #23: Presence of Senior Adults in Household</b>		
		<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
Are you or any other members of your household aged 65 or older?	no	76%
	yes	24%
Total		100%

<b>Question #24: Presence of Persons with Disabilities in Household</b>		
		<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
Does any member of your household have a physical handicap or is anyone disabled?	no	89%
	yes	11%
Total		100%

<b>Question #25: Education</b>		
		<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed?	12th Grade or less, no diploma	1%
	high school diploma	3%
	some college, no degree	10%
	associate's degree (e.g. AA, AS)	2%
	bachelor's degree (e.g. BA, AB, BS)	31%
	graduate degree or professional degree	53%
Total		100%

<b>Question #26: Annual Household Income</b>		
		<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
How much do you anticipate your household's total income before taxes will be for the current year?	less than \$24,999	9%
	\$25,000 to \$49,999	16%
	\$50,000 to \$99,999	28%
	\$100,000 or more	47%
Total		100%

<b>Question #27: Ethnicity</b>		
		<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
Are you Spanish/Hispanic/Latino?	no	96%
	yes	4%
Total		100%

<b>Question #28: Race</b>		
		<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
What is your race?	American Indian or Alaskan Native	1%
	Asian or Pacific Islander	14%
	Black, African American	2%
	White/Caucasian	75%
	Other	5%
	Multi-Racial	4%
Total		100%

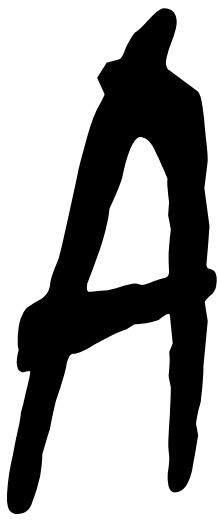
<b>Question #29: Age</b>		
		<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
In which category is your age?	18-24 years	2%
	25-34 years	23%
	35-44 years	19%
	45-54 years	23%
	55-64 years	12%
	65-74 years	10%
	75 years or older	11%
Total		100%

<b>Question #30: Gender</b>		
		<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
What is your gender?	Female	52%
	Male	48%
Total		100%

<b>Question #31: Voter Registration Status</b>		
		<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
Are you registered to vote in your jurisdiction?	no	16%
	yes	82%
	don't know	1%
Total		100%

<b>Question #32: Vote in Last Election?</b>		
		<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
Did you vote in the last election?	no	21%
	yes	78%
	don't know	1%
Total		100%

<b>Question #33: Likely to Vote in Next Election?</b>		
		<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
Are you likely to vote in the next election?	no	12%
	yes	85%
	don't know	3%
Total		100%



## APPENDIX II: 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.

### SAMPLING

Approximately 1,200 households were selected to participate in the survey using a stratified systematic sampling method.<sup>3</sup> An individual within each household was selected using the birthday method.<sup>4</sup>

### SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

Households received three mailings between the 13<sup>th</sup> and the 27<sup>th</sup> of September 2004. The first was a postcard notifying them they had been selected to participate in the City of Palo Alto 2004 Citizen Survey. The postcard was signed by the city auditor. About a week later a survey was mailed with a cover letter also signed by the city auditor. Approximately one week after the first survey was mailed, a second survey was mailed, with a cover letter asking those who

---

<sup>3</sup> Systematic sampling is a method that closely approximates random sampling by selecting every Nth address until the desired number of households is chosen.

<sup>4</sup> The birthday method is a process to remove bias in the selection of 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 but leaving selection of respondent to household members will lead to bias.

had not yet participated to do so, while informing those who had already completed the survey not to do so again. Subsequent to the first series of survey mailings, a small number of surveys (178) were sent out to compensate for a source list error from the postal service resulting in surveys delivered outside of City boundaries. The same method of three mailings was used in this case as well and the dates for those mailings were between October 25th and November 8<sup>th</sup> of 2004.

## RESPONSE RATE AND CONFIDENCE INTERVALS

Of the 1,148 eligible households, 582 completed the survey providing a response rate of 51%. Approximately 52 addresses sampled were “vacant” or “not found.”<sup>5</sup> In general, the response rates obtained on citizen surveys range from 25% to 40%. The sample of households was selected systematically and impartially from a list of residences in the United States maintained by the U.S. postal service and sold to NRC through an independent vendor. For each household, one adult, selected in an unbiased fashion, was asked to complete the survey.

In theory, in 95 cases out of 100, the results based on such samples will differ by no more than 5 percentage points in either direction from what would have been obtained had responses been collected from all Palo Alto adults. This difference is also called a “margin of error.”<sup>6</sup> This difference from the presumed population finding is referred to as the sampling error. 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.

---

<sup>5</sup> “Eligible” households refer to addresses that belong to residences that are not vacant within the City of Palo Alto.

<sup>6</sup> The margin of error was calculated using the following formula:  $1.96 * \text{square root}(0.25/400)$ . This margin of error is calculated in the most conservative way. The standard error was assumed to be the greatest for a binomial distribution: 50%/50%.

# WEIGHTING AND ANALYZING THE DATA

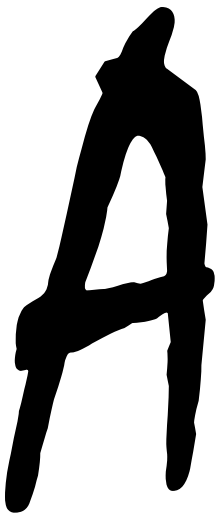
The surveys were analyzed using the SPSS statistical package. Frequency distributions and average (mean) ratings are presented in the body of the report.

The demographic characteristics of the sample were compared to those of the City of Palo Alto as reflected in the information sent by staff to National Research Center, Inc. When necessary, survey results were statistically adjusted to reflect the known population profile.

Generally, only two variables are used in a weighting scheme. Known population characteristics are compared to the characteristics of survey respondents. Generally, characteristics chosen as weighting variables are selected because they are not in proportion to what is shown in a jurisdiction's demographic profile and because differences in opinion are observed between subgroups of these characteristics. The two socioeconomic characteristics that were used to weight the survey results were tenure and gender/age. Other discrepancies between the whole population and the sample were also aided by the weighting due to the intercorrelation of many socioeconomic characteristics, although the percentages are not always identical in the sample compared to the population norms. The results of the weighting scheme are presented in the table on the next page.

<b>Weighting Scheme for the City of Palo Alto 2004 Citizen Survey</b>			
<b>Respondent Characteristics</b>	<b>Population Norm*</b>	<b>Unweighted Survey Data</b>	<b>Weighted Survey Data</b>
Tenure			
Rent Home	43%	30%	43%
Own Home	57%	70%	57%
Type of Housing Unit			
Single-Family Detached	59%	66%	58%
Attached	41%	34%	42%
Ethnicity			
Non-Hispanic	95%	96%	96%
Hispanic	5%	4%	4%
Race			
White/Caucasian	76%	77%	75%
Non-White	24%	23%	25%
Gender			
Female	52%	54%	52%
Male	48%	46%	48%
Age			
18-34	25%	14%	25%
35-54	43%	42%	43%
55+	32%	44%	32%
Gender and Age			
Females 18-34	12%	7%	12%
Females 35-54	22%	24%	22%
Females 55+	18%	23%	18%
Males 18-34	13%	7%	13%
Males 35-54	21%	18%	21%
Males 55+	14%	21%	14%

\* Source: 2000 Census



## APPENDIX III: SURVEY MATERIALS

The following pages contain copies of the survey materials sent to randomly selected households within the City of Palo Alto. All households selected for inclusion in the study were first sent a prenotification postcard informing them that they would be receiving a questionnaire within the following week. A week later, a cover letter and survey were sent, with a postage paid return envelope. Two weeks later a second cover letter and survey were sent. The second cover letter asked that those who had responded not do so again, while urging those who had not yet returned their surveys to please do so.



# The City of Palo Alto 2004 Citizen Survey

Please complete this questionnaire if you are the adult (age 18 or older) in the household who most recently had a birthday. The adult's year of birth does not matter. Please circle the response that most closely represents your opinion for each question. Your responses are anonymous and will be reported in group form only.

**1. Please circle the number that comes closest to your opinion for each of the following questions:**

	<u>excellent</u>	<u>good</u>	<u>fair</u>	<u>poor</u>	<u>don't know</u>
How do you rate Palo Alto as a place to live? .....	1	2	3	4	5
How do you rate your neighborhood as a place to live? .....	1	2	3	4	5
How do you rate Palo Alto as a place to raise children? .....	1	2	3	4	5
How do you rate Palo Alto as a place to retire? .....	1	2	3	4	5
How do you rate the overall quality of life in Palo Alto? .....	1	2	3	4	5

**2. Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Palo Alto as a whole:**

	<u>excellent</u>	<u>good</u>	<u>fair</u>	<u>poor</u>	<u>don't know</u>
Sense of community.....	1	2	3	4	5
Openness and acceptance of the community towards people of diverse backgrounds ...	1	2	3	4	5
Overall appearance of Palo Alto .....	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunities to attend cultural activities .....	1	2	3	4	5
Job opportunities.....	1	2	3	4	5
Access to affordable quality housing.....	1	2	3	4	5
Access to affordable quality child care .....	1	2	3	4	5
Ease of car travel in Palo Alto .....	1	2	3	4	5
Ease of bus travel in Palo Alto.....	1	2	3	4	5
Ease of rail travel in Palo Alto .....	1	2	3	4	5
Ease of bicycle travel in Palo Alto.....	1	2	3	4	5
Ease of walking in Palo Alto .....	1	2	3	4	5

**3. Please rate the speed of growth in the following categories in Palo Alto over the past 2 years:**

	<u>much too slow</u>	<u>somewhat too slow</u>	<u>right amount</u>	<u>somewhat too fast</u>	<u>much too fast</u>	<u>don't know</u>
Population growth.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
Retail growth (stores, restaurants etc.).....	1	2	3	4	5	6
Jobs growth.....	1	2	3	4	5	6

**4. To what degree, if at all, are the following problems in Palo Alto:**

	<u>not a problem</u>	<u>minor problem</u>	<u>moderate problem</u>	<u>major problem</u>	<u>don't know</u>
Crime .....	1	2	3	4	5
Drugs.....	1	2	3	4	5
Too much growth.....	1	2	3	4	5
Lack of growth.....	1	2	3	4	5
Graffiti .....	1	2	3	4	5
Noise.....	1	2	3	4	5
Run down buildings, weed lots, or junk vehicles.....	1	2	3	4	5
Taxes.....	1	2	3	4	5
Traffic congestion.....	1	2	3	4	5
Unsupervised youth .....	1	2	3	4	5
Homelessness.....	1	2	3	4	5

**5. Please rate how safe you feel from the following occurring to you in Palo Alto:**

	very <u>safe</u>	somewhat <u>safe</u>	neither safe <u>nor unsafe</u>	somewhat <u>unsafe</u>	very <u>unsafe</u>	don't <u>know</u>
Violent crime (e.g., rape, assault, robbery).....	1	2	3	4	5	6
Property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft).....	1	2	3	4	5	6
Fire.....	1	2	3	4	5	6

**6. Please rate how safe you feel:**

	very <u>safe</u>	somewhat <u>safe</u>	neither safe <u>nor unsafe</u>	somewhat <u>unsafe</u>	very <u>unsafe</u>	don't <u>know</u>
In your neighborhood during the day.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
In your neighborhood after dark.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
In Palo Alto's downtown area during the day.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
In Palo Alto's downtown area after dark.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
In Palo Alto's parks during the day.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
In Palo Alto's parks after dark.....	1	2	3	4	5	6

**7. During the past twelve months, were you or anyone in your household the victim of any crime?**

- no [go to question #9]     yes [go to question #8]     don't know

**8. If yes, was this crime (these crimes) reported to the police?**

- no                                     yes                                     don't know

**9. 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?**

	<u>never</u>	once or <u>twice</u>	3 to 12 <u>times</u>	13 to 26 <u>times</u>	more than <u>26 times</u>
Used Palo Alto public libraries or their services.....	1	2	3	4	5
Used Palo Alto recreation centers.....	1	2	3	4	5
Participated in a recreation program or activity.....	1	2	3	4	5
Visited a neighborhood or City park.....	1	2	3	4	5
Ridden a local bus within Palo Alto.....	1	2	3	4	5
Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting.....	1	2	3	4	5
Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting on cable television.....	1	2	3	4	5
Recycled used paper, cans or bottles from your home.....	1	2	3	4	5
Volunteered your time to some group/activity in Palo Alto.....	1	2	3	4	5
Read "City Pages".....	1	2	3	4	5
Used the Internet for anything.....	1	2	3	4	5
Used the Internet to conduct business with Palo Alto.....	1	2	3	4	5
Purchased an item over the Internet.....	1	2	3	4	5

**10. How do you rate the quality of each of the following services in Palo Alto?**

	<u>excellent</u>	<u>good</u>	<u>fair</u>	<u>poor</u>	<u>don't know</u>
Police services.....	1	2	3	4	5
Fire services.....	1	2	3	4	5
Ambulance/emergency medical services.....	1	2	3	4	5
Crime prevention.....	1	2	3	4	5
Fire prevention and education.....	1	2	3	4	5
Traffic enforcement.....	1	2	3	4	5
Garbage collection.....	1	2	3	4	5
Recycling.....	1	2	3	4	5
Yard waste pick-up.....	1	2	3	4	5
Street repair.....	1	2	3	4	5
Street cleaning.....	1	2	3	4	5
Street lighting.....	1	2	3	4	5
Sidewalk maintenance.....	1	2	3	4	5
Traffic signal timing.....	1	2	3	4	5
Amount of public parking.....	1	2	3	4	5
Storm drainage.....	1	2	3	4	5
Drinking water.....	1	2	3	4	5
Sewer services.....	1	2	3	4	5
City parks.....	1	2	3	4	5
Recreation programs or classes.....	1	2	3	4	5
Range/variety of recreation programs and classes.....	1	2	3	4	5
Recreation centers/facilities.....	1	2	3	4	5
Appearance/maintenance of parks.....	1	2	3	4	5
Appearance of recreation centers/facilities.....	1	2	3	4	5
Land use, planning and zoning.....	1	2	3	4	5
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc).....	1	2	3	4	5
Animal control.....	1	2	3	4	5
Economic development.....	1	2	3	4	5
Services to seniors.....	1	2	3	4	5
Services to youth.....	1	2	3	4	5
Services to low-income people.....	1	2	3	4	5
Public library services.....	1	2	3	4	5
Variety of library materials.....	1	2	3	4	5
Public information services.....	1	2	3	4	5
Street tree maintenance.....	1	2	3	4	5
Electric/gas utility.....	1	2	3	4	5
Your neighborhood park.....	1	2	3	4	5
Neighborhood branch libraries.....	1	2	3	4	5

**11. Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by...**

	<u>excellent</u>	<u>good</u>	<u>fair</u>	<u>poor</u>	<u>don't know</u>
The City of Palo Alto?.....	1	2	3	4	5
The Federal Government?.....	1	2	3	4	5
The State Government?.....	1	2	3	4	5

12. 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)?

- no [go to question #14]     yes [go to question #13]

13. What was your impression of employees of the City of Palo Alto in your most recent contact? (Rate each characteristic below.)

	<u>excellent</u>	<u>good</u>	<u>fair</u>	<u>poor</u>	<u>don't know</u>
Knowledge.....	1	2	3	4	5
Responsiveness.....	1	2	3	4	5
Courtesy .....	1	2	3	4	5
Overall impression .....	1	2	3	4	5

14. Please rate the following statements by circling the number that most clearly represents your opinion:

	<u>strongly agree</u>	<u>somewhat agree</u>	<u>neither agree nor disagree</u>	<u>somewhat disagree</u>	<u>strongly disagree</u>	<u>don't know</u>
I receive good value for the City of Palo Alto taxes I pay .....	1	2	3	4	5	6
I am pleased with the overall direction that the City of Palo Alto is taking .....	1	2	3	4	5	6
The City of Palo Alto government welcomes citizen involvement .....	1	2	3	4	5	6
The City of Palo Alto government listens to citizens.....	1	2	3	4	5	6

15. 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:

- very positive     somewhat positive     neutral     somewhat negative     very negative

**Our last questions are about you and your household. Again, all of your responses to this survey are completely anonymous and will be reported in group form only.**

**16. Do you live within the City limits of the City of Palo Alto?**

- no  yes

**17. Are you currently employed?**

- no [go to question #18]  yes [go to question #17a]

**17a. What one method of transportation do you usually use (for the longest distance of your commute) to travel to work?**

- Motorized vehicle (e.g. car, truck, van, motorcycle etc...)  
 Bus, Rail, Subway, or other public transportation  
 Walk  
 Work at home  
 Other

**17b. If you checked the motorized vehicle (e.g. car, truck, van, motorcycle, etc.) box in 18a, do other people (adults or children) usually ride with you to or from work?**

- no  yes

**18. How many years have you lived in Palo Alto?**

- less than 2 years  11-20 years  
 2-5 years  more than 20 years  
 6-10 years

**19. Which best describes the building you live in?**

- one family house detached from any other houses  
 house attached to one or more houses (e.g. a duplex or townhome)  
 building with two or more apartments or condominiums  
 mobile home  
 other

**20. Is this house, apartment, or mobile home...**

- rented for cash or occupied without cash payment?  
 owned by you or someone in this house with a mortgage or free and clear?

**21. Do any children 12 or under live in your household?**

- no  yes

**22. Do any teenagers aged between 13 and 17 live in your household?**

- no  yes

**23. Are you or any other members of your household aged 65 or older?**

- no  yes

**24. Does any member of your household have a physical handicap or is anyone disabled?**

- no  yes

**25. What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? (mark one box)**

- 12th Grade or less, no diploma  
 high school diploma  
 some college, no degree  
 associate's degree (e.g. AA, AS)  
 bachelor's degree (e.g. BA, AB, BS)  
 graduate degree or professional degree

**26. 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.)**

- less than \$24,999  
 \$25,000 to \$49,999  
 \$50,000 to \$99,999  
 \$100,000 or more

**27. Are you Spanish/Hispanic/Latino?**

- no  yes

**28. What is your race? (Mark one or more races to indicate what race you consider yourself to be)**

- American Indian or Alaskan native  
 Asian or Pacific Islander  
 Black, African American  
 White/Caucasian  
 Other

**29. In which category is your age?**

- 18-24 years  55-64 years  
 25-34 years  65-74 years  
 35-44 years  75 years or older  
 45-54 years

**30. What is your sex?**

- female  male

**31. Are you registered to vote in your jurisdiction?**

- no  yes  don't know

**32. Did you vote in the last election?**

- no  yes  don't know

**33. Are you likely to vote in the next election?**

- no  yes  don't know

**Thank you for completing this survey. Please return the completed survey in the postage paid envelope to: National Research Center, Inc., 3005 30th St., Boulder, CO 80301**

# City of Palo Alto

*Office of the City Auditor*

September 2004

Dear Palo Alto Resident:

The City of Palo Alto wants to know what you think about our community and municipal government. You have been randomly selected to participate in Palo Alto's 2004 Citizen Survey.

Please take a few minutes to fill out the enclosed Citizen Survey. Your answers will help the City Council make decisions that affect our community. You should find the questions interesting and we will definitely find your answers useful. Please participate!

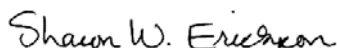
**To get a representative sample of Palo Alto residents, the adult (anyone 18 years or older) in your household who most recently had a birthday should complete this survey. Year of birth of the adult does not matter.**

Please have the appropriate member of the household spend a few minutes to answer all the questions and return the survey in the enclosed postage-paid envelope. **Your responses will remain completely anonymous.**

Your participation in this survey is very important – especially since your household is one of only a small number of households being surveyed. If you have any questions about the Citizen Survey please call 650.329.2667.

Please help us shape the future of Palo Alto. Thank you for your time and participation.

Sincerely,



Sharon W. Erickson  
City Auditor

P.O. Box 10250  
Palo Alto, CA 94303  
650.329.2667  
650.329.2297 fax

# City of Palo Alto

*Office of the City Auditor*

September 2004

Dear Palo Alto Resident:

About one week ago, you should have received a copy of the enclosed survey. **If you completed it and sent it back, we thank you for your time and ask you to discard this survey. Please do not respond twice.** If you have not had a chance to complete the survey, we would appreciate your response. The City of Palo Alto wants to know what you think about our community and municipal government. You have been randomly selected to participate in the City of Palo Alto Citizen Survey.

Please take a few minutes to fill out the enclosed Citizen Survey. Your answers will help the City Council make decisions that affect our community. You should find the questions interesting and we will definitely find your answers useful. Please participate!

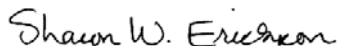
**To get a representative sample of Palo Alto residents, the adult (anyone 18 years or older) in your household who most recently had a birthday should complete this survey. Year of birth of the adult does not matter.**

Please have the appropriate member of the household spend a few minutes to answer all the questions and return the survey in the enclosed postage-paid envelope. **Your responses will remain completely anonymous.**

Your participation in this survey is very important – especially since your household is one of only a small number of households being surveyed. If you have any questions about the Citizen Survey please call 650.329.2667.

Please help us shape the future of Palo Alto. Thank you for your time and participation.

Sincerely,



Sharon W. Erickson  
City Auditor

P.O. Box 10250  
Palo Alto, CA 94303  
650.329.2667  
650.329.2297 fax

# City of Palo Alto

*Office of the City Auditor*

P.O. Box 10250  
Palo Alto, CA 94303

Presorted  
First Class Mail  
US Postage  
PAID  
Boulder, CO  
Permit NO.94

# City of Palo Alto

*Office of the City Auditor*

P.O. Box 10250  
Palo Alto, CA 94303

Presorted  
First Class Mail  
US Postage  
PAID  
Boulder, CO  
Permit NO.94

# City of Palo Alto

*Office of the City Auditor*

P.O. Box 10250  
Palo Alto, CA 94303

Presorted  
First Class Mail  
US Postage  
PAID  
Boulder, CO  
Permit NO.94

# City of Palo Alto

*Office of the City Auditor*

P.O. Box 10250  
Palo Alto, CA 94303

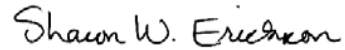
Presorted  
First Class Mail  
US Postage  
PAID  
Boulder, CO  
Permit NO.94



Dear City of Palo Alto Resident,

Your household has been selected at random to participate in an anonymous citizen survey about the City of Palo Alto. You will receive a copy of the survey next week in the mail with instructions for completing and returning it. Thank you in advance for helping us with this important project!

Sincerely,

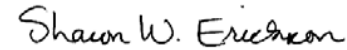


Sharon W. Erickson  
City Auditor

Dear City of Palo Alto Resident,

Your household has been selected at random to participate in an anonymous citizen survey about the City of Palo Alto. You will receive a copy of the survey next week in the mail with instructions for completing and returning it. Thank you in advance for helping us with this important project!

Sincerely,

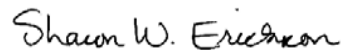


Sharon W. Erickson  
City Auditor

Dear City of Palo Alto Resident,

Your household has been selected at random to participate in an anonymous citizen survey about the City of Palo Alto. You will receive a copy of the survey next week in the mail with instructions for completing and returning it. Thank you in advance for helping us with this important project!

Sincerely,

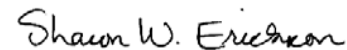


Sharon W. Erickson  
City Auditor

Dear City of Palo Alto Resident,

Your household has been selected at random to participate in an anonymous citizen survey about the City of Palo Alto. You will receive a copy of the survey next week in the mail with instructions for completing and returning it. Thank you in advance for helping us with this important project!

Sincerely,



Sharon W. Erickson  
City Auditor

# City of Palo Alto

*Office of the City Auditor*

P.O. Box 10250  
Palo Alto, CA 94303

Presorted  
First Class Mail  
US Postage  
PAID  
Boulder, CO  
Permit NO.94



The National  
**CITIZEN SURVEY™**

---

2 0 0 4

**Report of Normative Comparisons for  
the City of Palo Alto, California**

Submitted by:

---

NATIONAL RESEARCH CENTER, INC.  
3005 30th Street • Boulder, CO 80301  
tel. 303-444-7863 • fax. 303-441-1145  
e-mail: [ncs@n-r-c.com](mailto:ncs@n-r-c.com) • [www.n-r-c.com](http://www.n-r-c.com)

January 2005

## **Table of Contents**

---

Survey Background.....	1
About The National Citizen Survey™ .....	1
Understanding the Normative Comparisons .....	2
Comparisons .....	5
Appendix I: List of Jurisdictions Included in the Normative Comparisons .....	20
Appendix II: Frequently asked Questions about The Citizen Survey Database .....	28



# **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 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.

The survey and its administration are standardized to assure high quality survey methods and comparable results across The National Citizen Survey™ jurisdictions. Participating households are selected at random and the household member who responds is selected without bias. Multiple mailings give each household more than one chance to participate with self-addressed and postage paid envelopes. Results are statistically reweighted to reflect the proper demographic composition of the entire community. The National Citizen Survey™ customized for this jurisdiction was developed in close cooperation with local jurisdiction staff. The City of Palo Alto staff selected items from a menu of questions about services and community problems; they defined the jurisdiction boundaries NRC used for sampling; and they provided the appropriate letterhead and signatures for mailings.

Report of Normative Comparisons

---

The National CITIZEN SURVEY™

# UNDERSTANDING THE NORMATIVE COMPARISONS

## **Comparison Data**

National Research Center, Inc. has collected citizen surveys conducted in over 400 jurisdictions in the United States. Responses to over 4,000 survey questions dealing with resident perceptions about the quality of community life and services provided by local government were recorded, analyzed and stored in an electronic database.

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

<b>Jurisdiction Characteristic</b>	<b>Percent of Jurisdictions</b>
<i>Region</i>	
West Coast <sup>1</sup>	22%
West <sup>2</sup>	16%
North Central West <sup>3</sup>	10%
North Central East <sup>4</sup>	14%
South Central <sup>5</sup>	8%
South <sup>6</sup>	22%
Northeast West <sup>7</sup>	4%
Northeast East <sup>8</sup>	3%
<i>Population</i>	
less than 40,000	25%
40,000 to 74,999	26%
75,000 to 149,000	20%
150,000 or more	29%

<sup>1</sup>Alaska, Washington, Oregon, California, Hawaii

<sup>2</sup>Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico

<sup>3</sup>North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Iowa, Missouri, Minnesota

<sup>4</sup>Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin

<sup>5</sup>Oklahoma, Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas

<sup>6</sup>West Virginia, Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina, Maryland, Delaware, Washington DC

<sup>7</sup>New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey

<sup>8</sup>Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, Maine

### ***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 is one we did not want to dismiss 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, we have 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).

### ***Putting Evaluations Onto a 100-Point Scale***

Although responses to many of the evaluative questions were made on a 4 point scale with 4 representing the best rating and 1 the worst, many of the results in this summary are reported on a common scale where 0 is the worst possible rating and 100 is the best possible rating. If everyone reported “excellent,” then the result would be 100 on the 100-point scale. Likewise, if all respondents gave a “poor” rating, the result would be 0 on the 100-point scale. If the average rating for quality of life was “good,” then the result would be 67 on a 100-point scale; “fair” would be 33 on the 100-point scale. The 95 percent confidence interval around an average score on the 100-point scale is no greater than plus or minus 5 points based on all respondents.

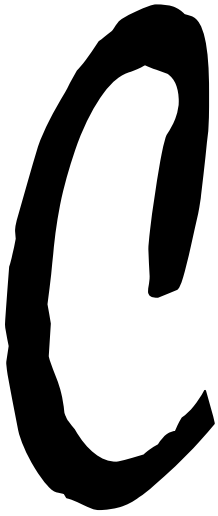


### ***Interpreting the Results***

Comparisons are provided when similar questions are included in our database, and there are at least five other jurisdictions in which the question was asked. Where comparisons are available, three numbers are provided in the table. The first is the rank assigned to your jurisdiction's rating among jurisdictions where a similar question was asked. The second is the number of jurisdictions that asked a similar question. Third, the rank is expressed as a percentile to indicate its distance from the top score. This rank (5th highest out of 25 jurisdictions' results, for example) translates to a percentile (the 80th percentile in this example). A percentile indicates the percent of jurisdictions with identical or lower ratings. Therefore, a rating at the 80th percentile would mean that your jurisdiction's rating is equal to or better than 80 percent of the ratings from other jurisdictions. Conversely, 20 percent of the jurisdictions where a similar question was asked had higher ratings.

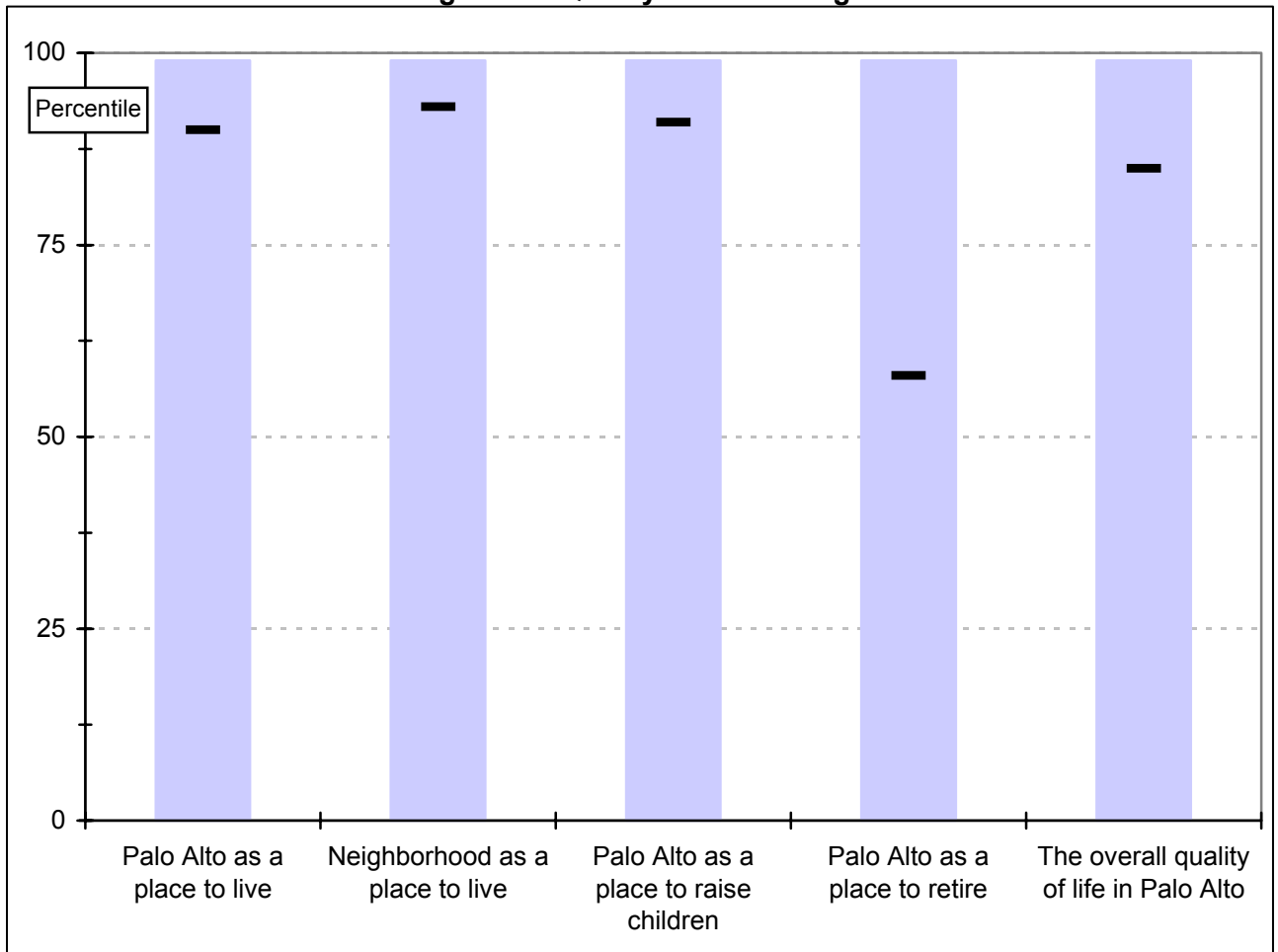
Alongside the rank and percentile appears a comparison: "above the norm," "below the norm" or "similar to the norm." This evaluation of "above," "below" or "similar to" comes from a statistical comparison of your jurisdiction's rating to the norm (the average rating from all the comparison jurisdictions where a similar question was asked). Differences of 3 or more 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 norm. When differences between your jurisdiction's ratings and the national norms are less than 3 points, they are marked as "similar to" the norm.

The data are represented visually in a chart that accompanies each table. Your jurisdiction's percentile for each compared item is marked with a black line on the chart.



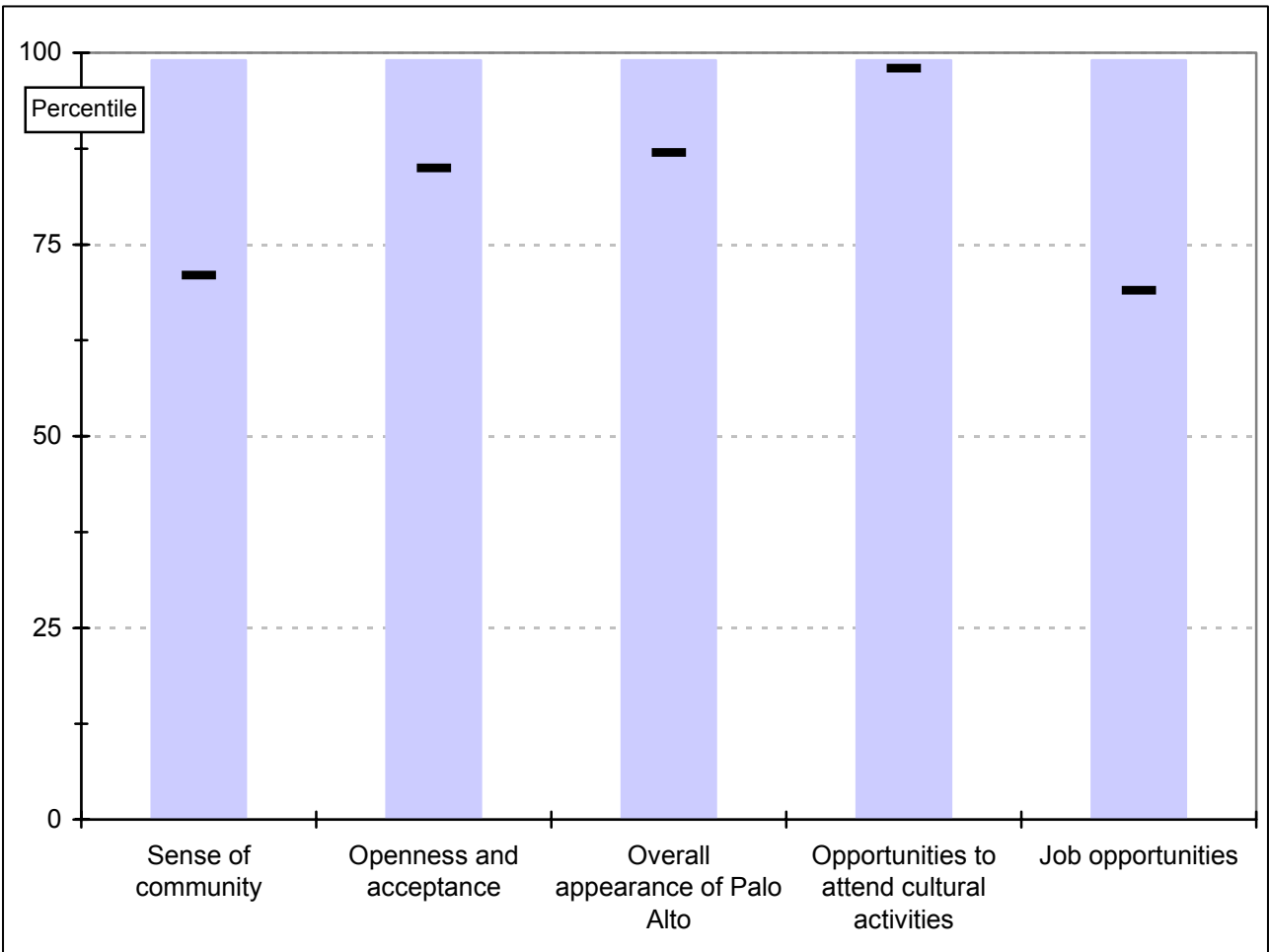
# COMPARISONS

Figure 1a: Quality of Life Ratings



<b>Figure 1b: Quality of Life Ratings</b>					
	<b>City of Palo Alto Rating</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison</b>	<b>City of Palo Alto Percentile</b>	<b>Comparison of Palo Alto Rating to Norm</b>
Palo Alto as a place to live	83	24	229	90%ile	above the norm
Neighborhood as a place to live	79	8	98	93%ile	above the norm
Palo Alto as a place to raise children	81	12	124	91%ile	above the norm
Palo Alto as a place to retire	59	43	100	58%ile	similar to the norm
The overall quality of life in Palo Alto	78	27	176	85%ile	above the norm

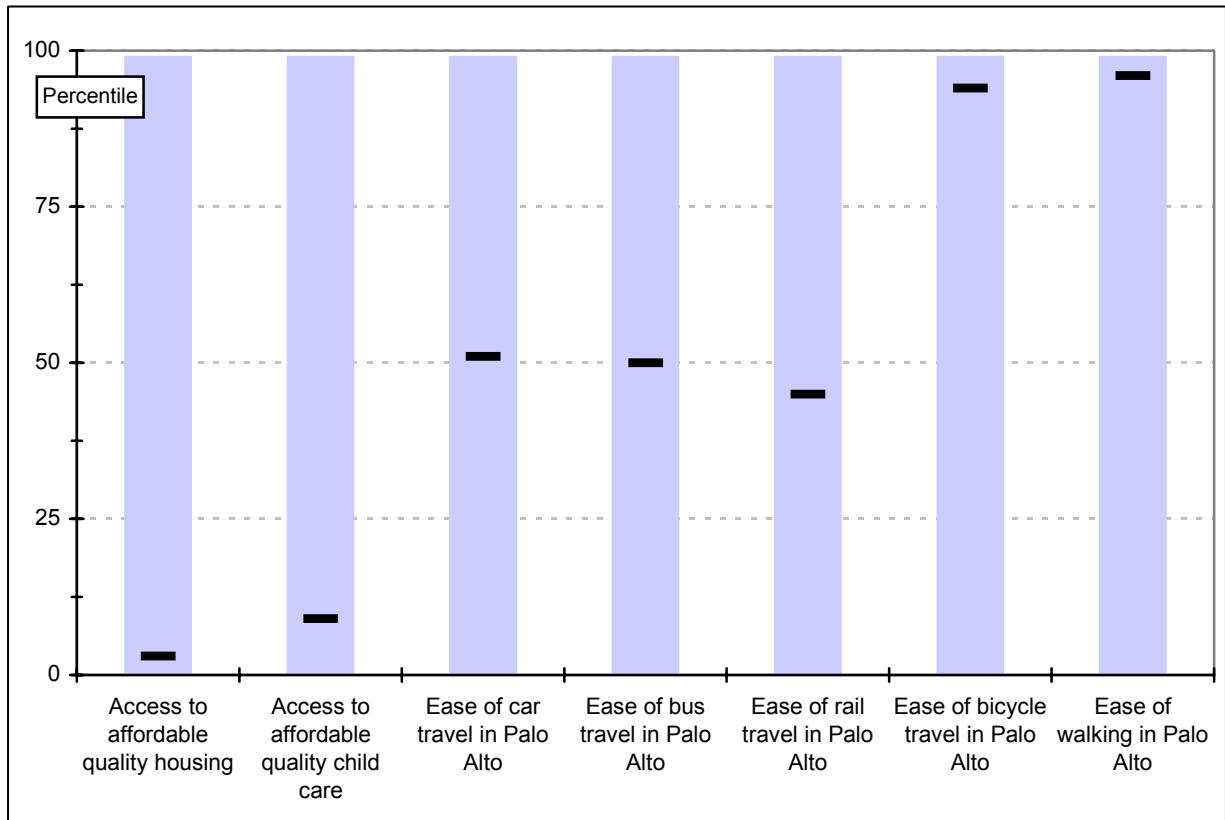
**Figure 2a: Characteristics of the Community: General and Opportunities**



**Figure 2b: Characteristics of the Community: General and Opportunities**

	City of Palo Alto Rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison of Palo Alto Rating to Norm
Sense of community	60	24	79	71%ile	above the norm
Openness and acceptance	64	10	61	85%ile	above the norm
Overall appearance of Palo Alto	73	15	109	87%ile	above the norm
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	73	3	87	98%ile	above the norm
Job opportunities	46	41	129	69%ile	above the norm

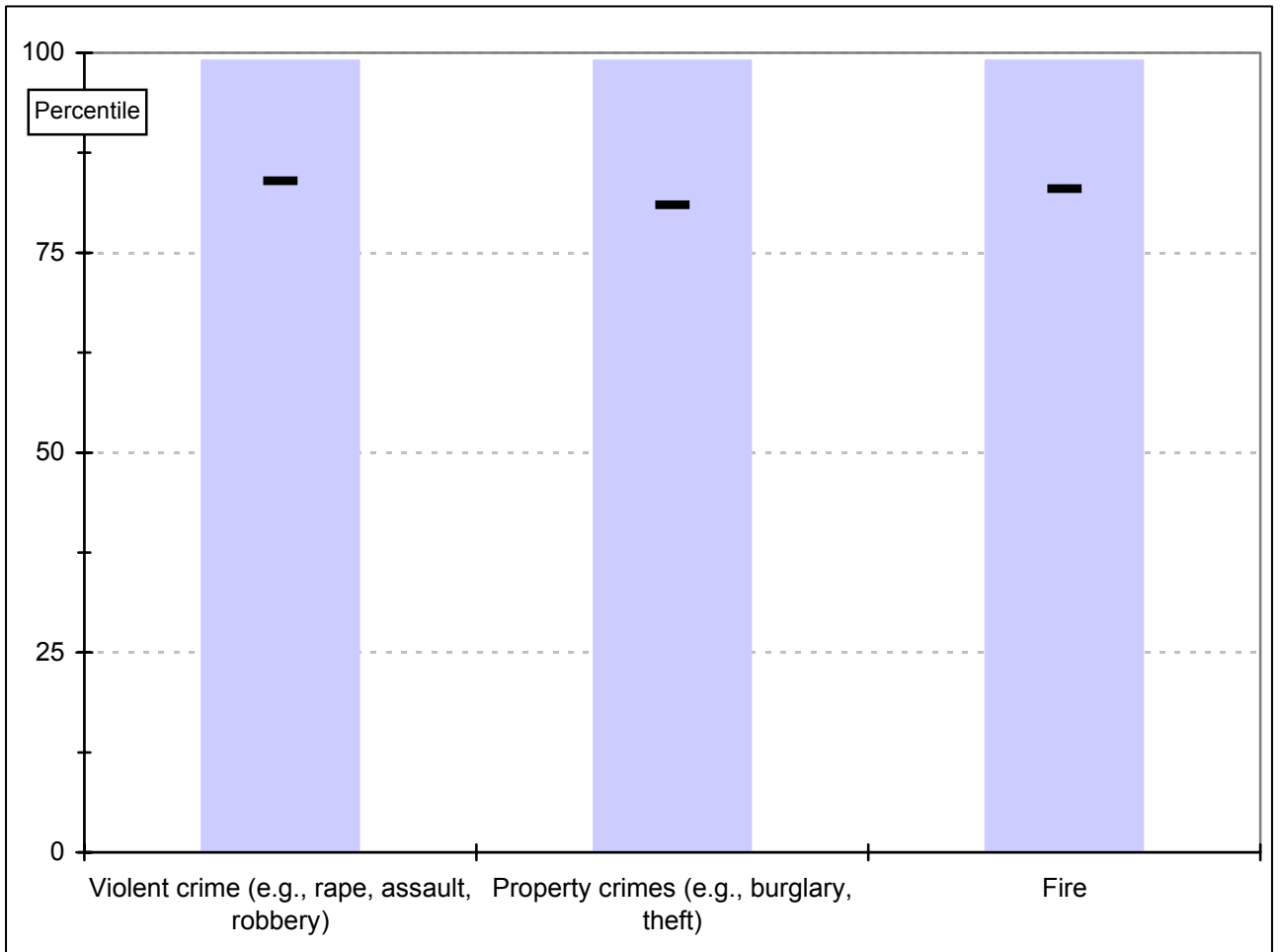
**Figure 3a: Characteristics of the Community: Access and Mobility**



**Figure 3b: Characteristics of the Community: Access and Mobility**

	City of Palo Alto Rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison of Palo Alto Rating to Norm
Access to affordable quality housing	12	136	139	3%ile	below the norm
Access to affordable quality child care	31	51	55	9%ile	below the norm
Ease of car travel in Palo Alto	51	42	83	51%ile	similar to the norm
Ease of bus travel in Palo Alto	44	20	38	50%ile	similar to the norm
Ease of rail travel in Palo Alto	58	7	11	45%ile	similar to the norm
Ease of bicycle travel in Palo Alto	67	5	68	94%ile	above the norm
Ease of walking in Palo Alto	74	3	54	96%ile	above the norm

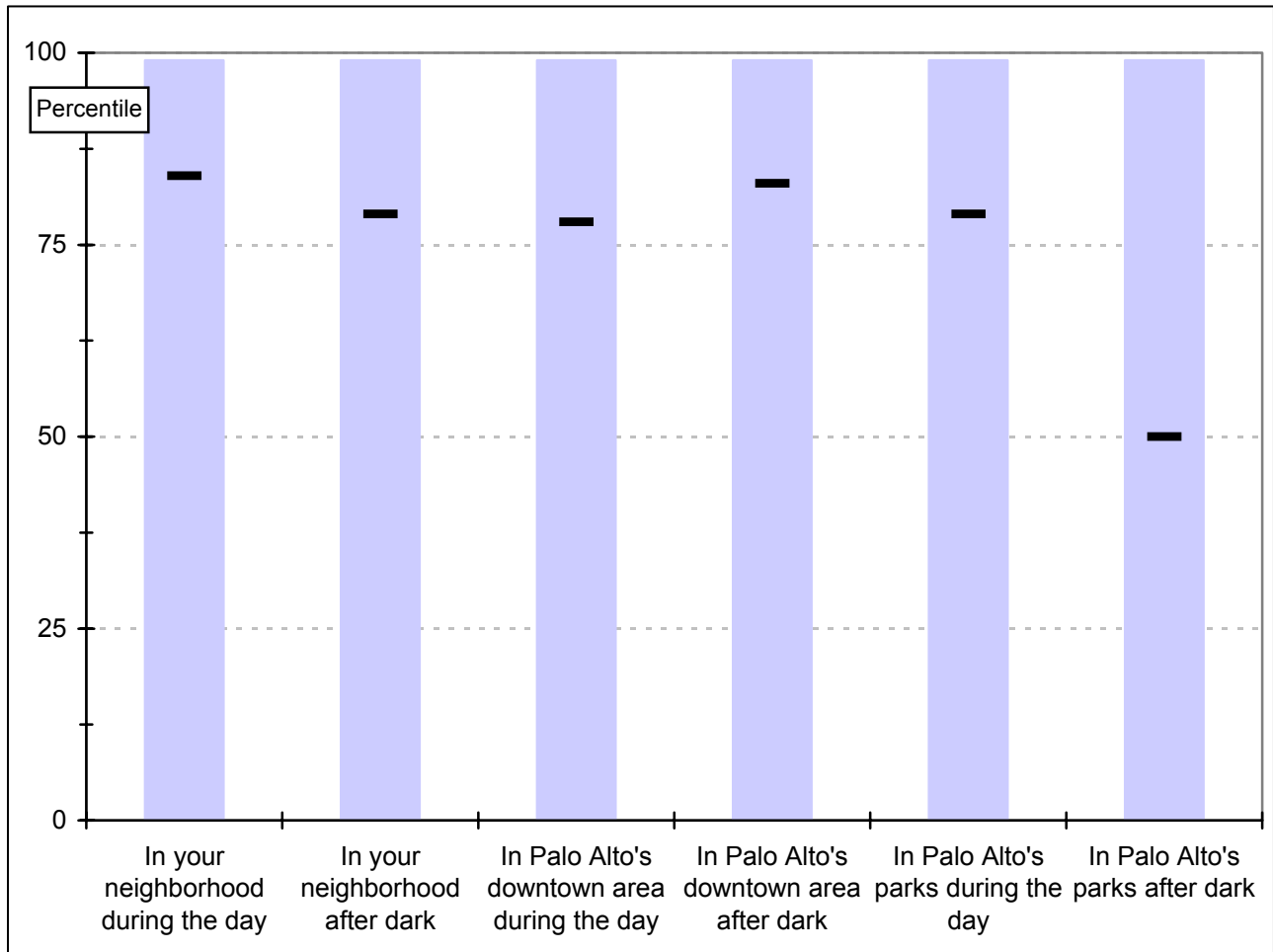
**Figure 4a: Ratings of Safety from Various Problems**



**Figure 4b: Ratings of Safety From Various Problems**

	City of Palo Alto Rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison of Palo Alto Rating to Norm
Violent crime (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	80	14	79	84%ile	above the norm
Property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	70	16	79	81%ile	above the norm
Fire	79	14	77	83%ile	above the norm

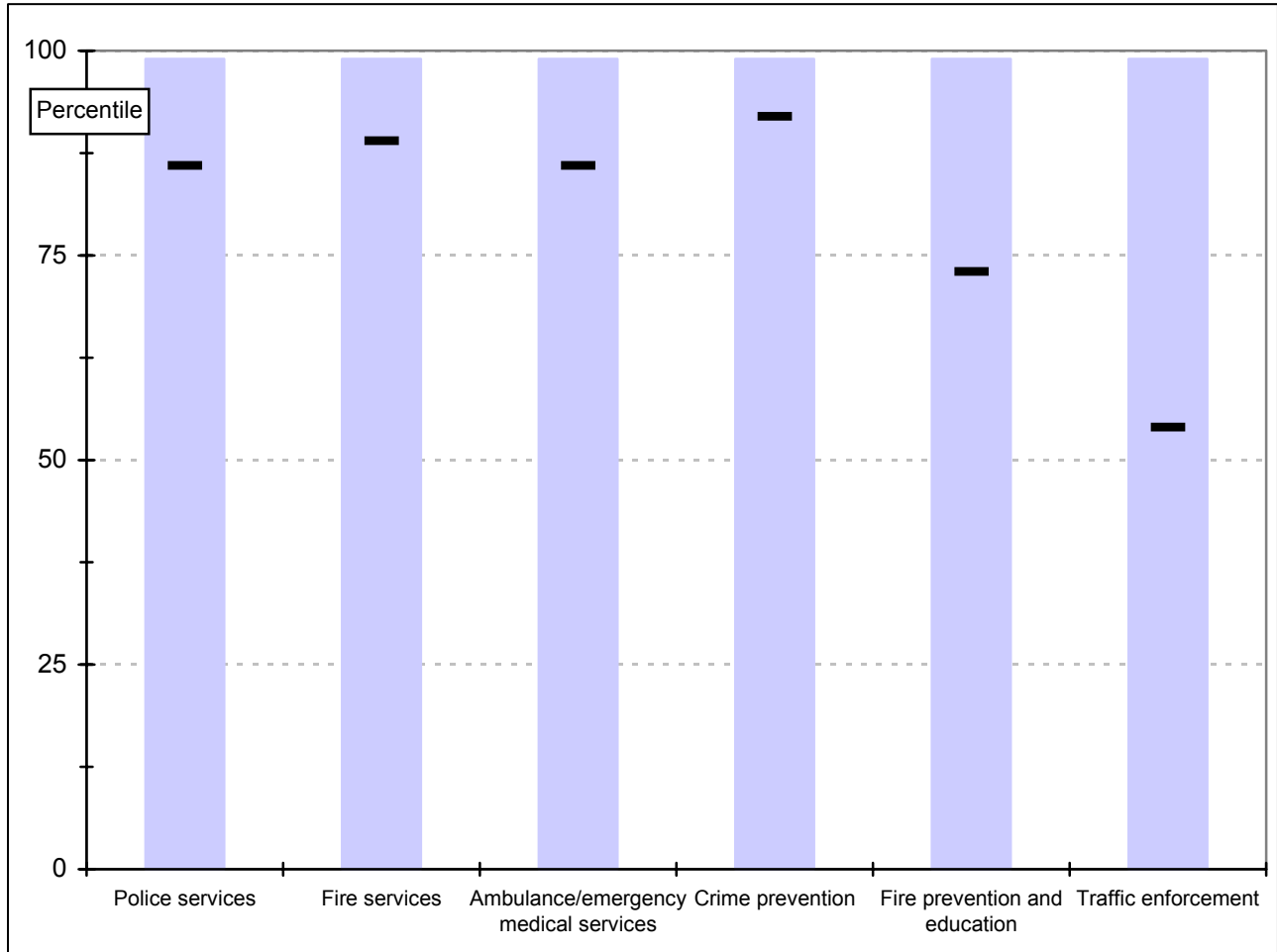
**Figure 5a: Ratings of Safety in Various Areas**



**Figure 5b: Ratings of Safety in Various Areas**

	City of Palo Alto Rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison of Palo Alto Rating to Norm
In your neighborhood during the day	94	15	88	84%ile	above the norm
In your neighborhood after dark	78	39	178	79%ile	above the norm
In Palo Alto's downtown area during the day	90	18	76	78%ile	above the norm
In Palo Alto's downtown area after dark	72	18	101	83%ile	above the norm
In Palo Alto's parks during the day	88	18	81	79%ile	above the norm
In Palo Alto's parks after dark	50	39	76	50%ile	similar to the norm

**Figure 6a: Quality of Public Safety Services**

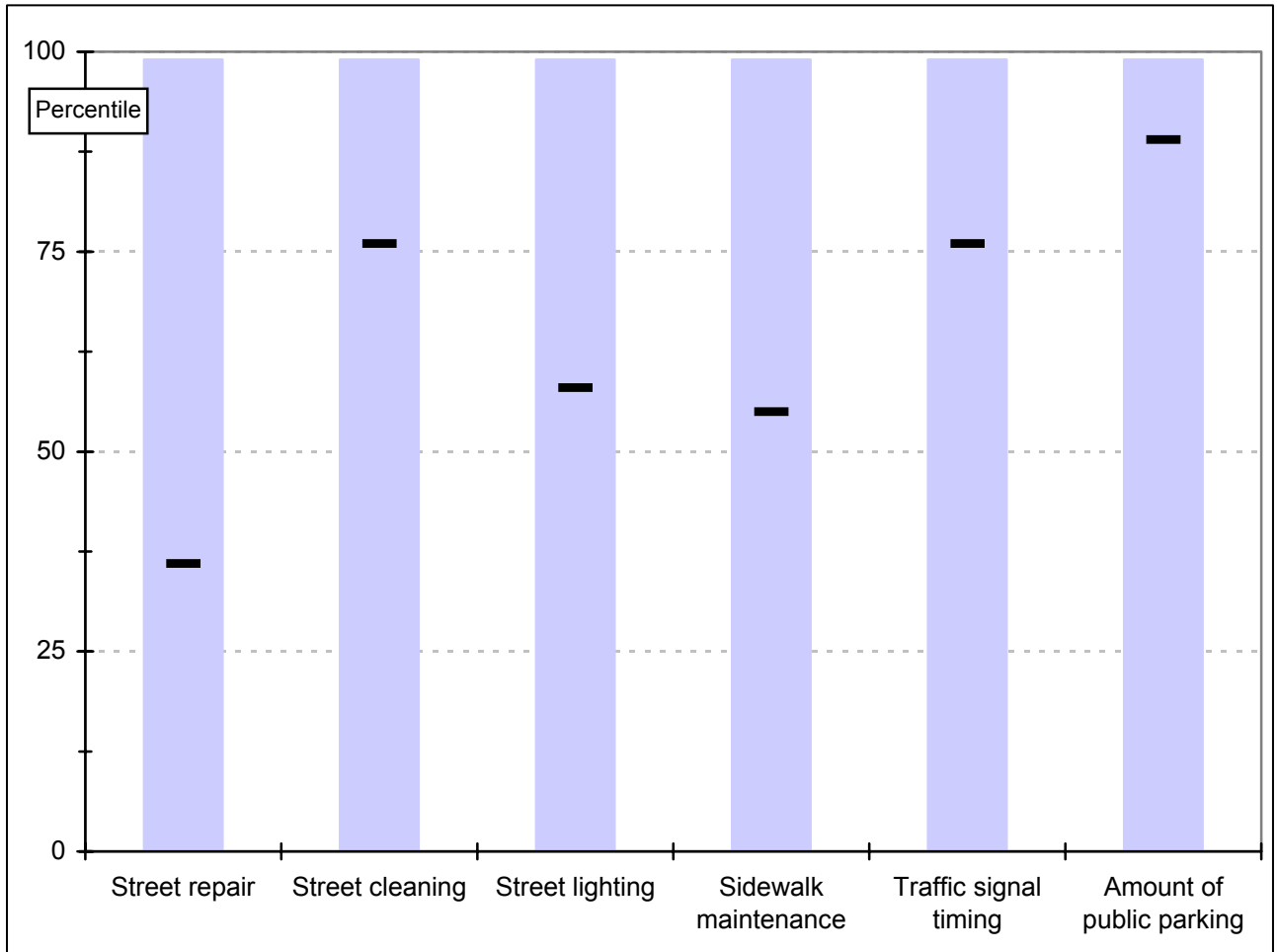


**Figure 6b: Quality of Public Safety Services**

	City of Palo Alto Rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison of Palo Alto Rating to Norm
Police services	77	49	339	86%ile	above the norm
Fire services	84	30	262	89%ile	above the norm
Ambulance/emergency medical services	84	24	170	86%ile	above the norm
Crime prevention	70	8	92	92%ile	above the norm
Fire prevention and education	72	21	73	73%ile	similar to the norm
Traffic enforcement	57	69	149	54%ile	similar to the norm



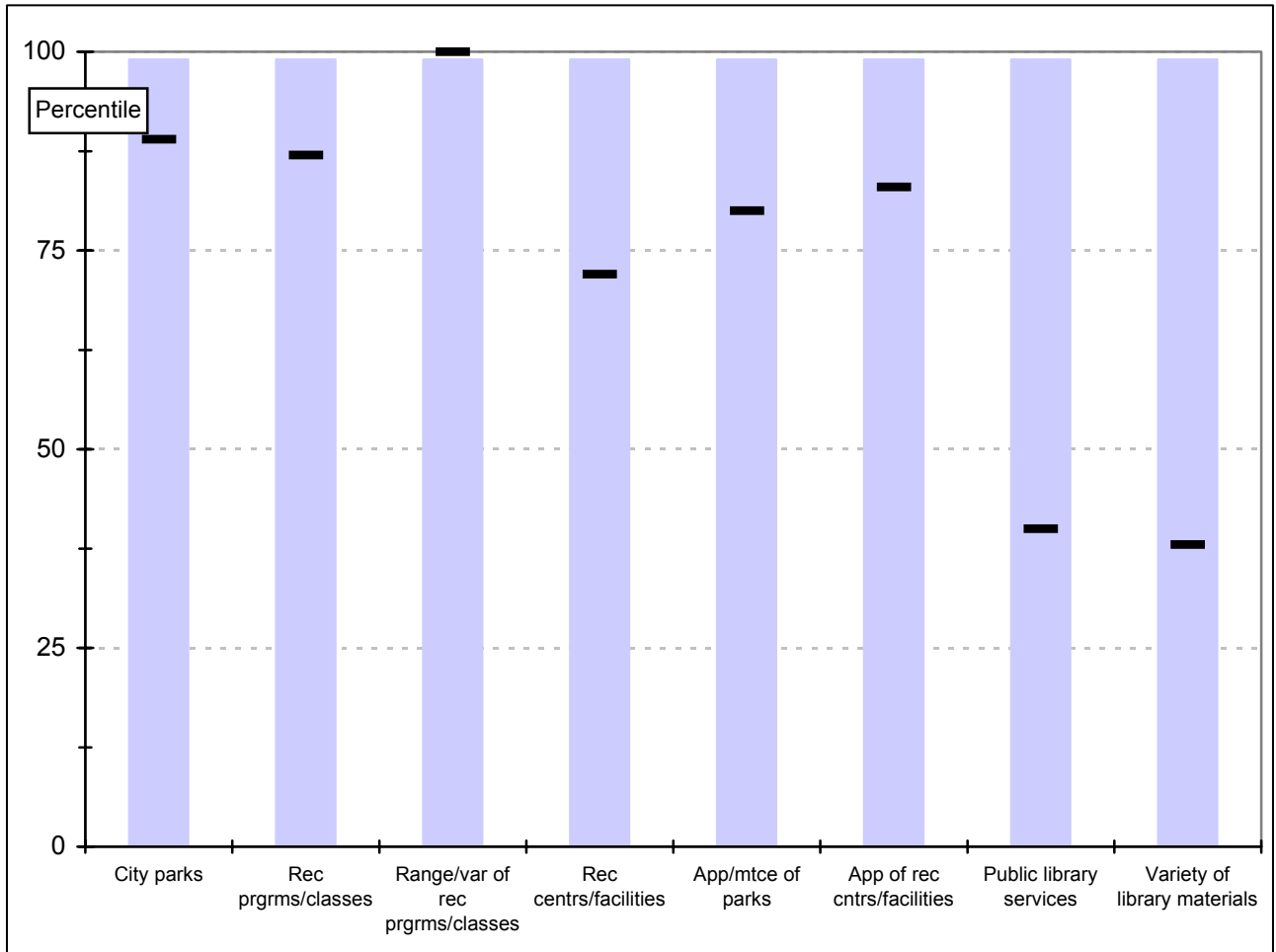
**Figure 7a: Quality of Transportation Services**



**Figure 7b: Quality of Transportation Services**

	City of Palo Alto Rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison of Palo Alto Rating to Norm
Street repair	46	164	254	36%ile	similar to the norm
Street cleaning	65	40	164	76%ile	above the norm
Street lighting	58	64	151	58%ile	similar to the norm
Sidewalk maintenance	49	45	97	55%ile	similar to the norm
Traffic signal timing	52	18	71	76%ile	above the norm
Amount of public parking	53	6	47	89%ile	above the norm

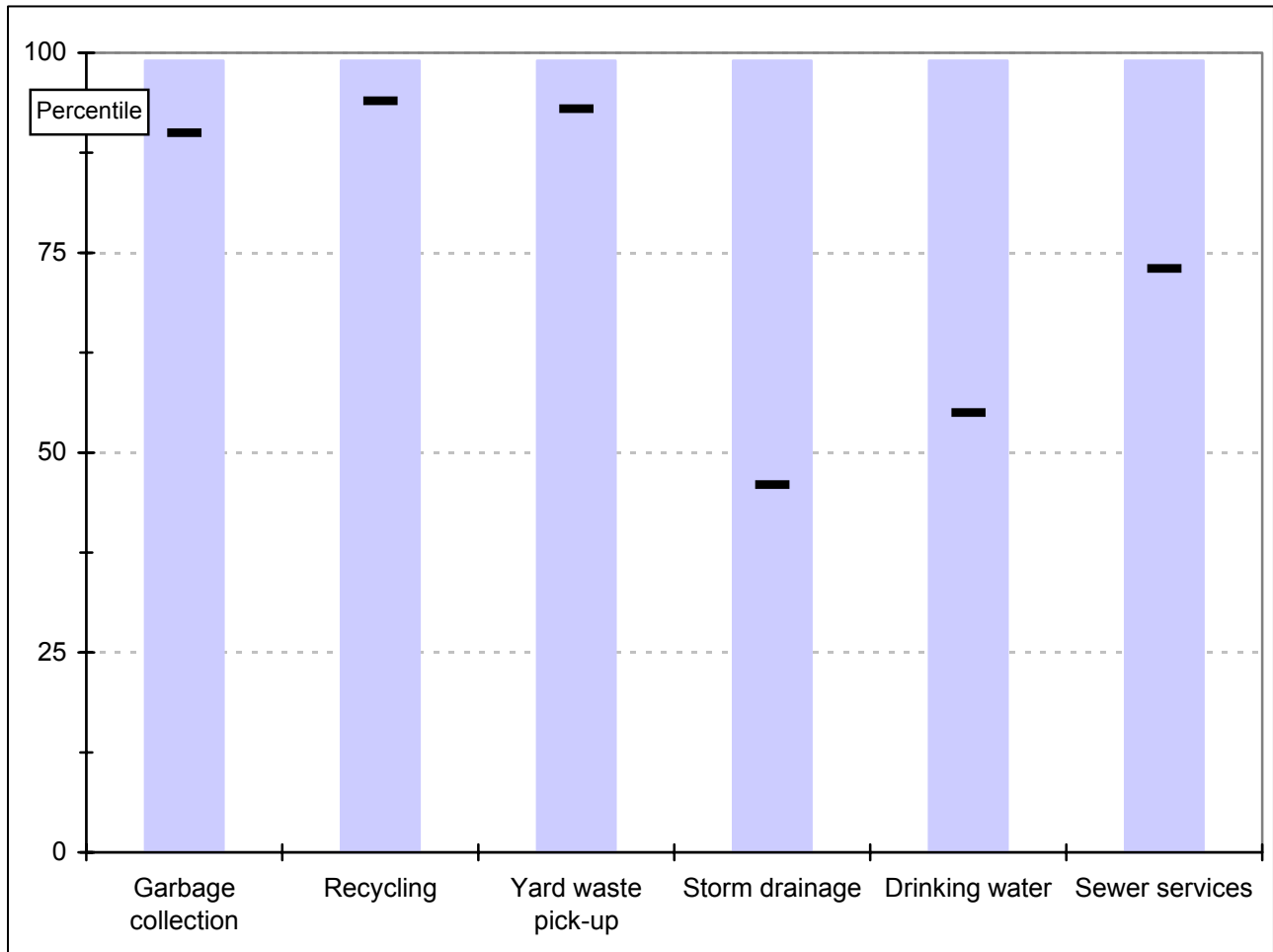
**Figure 8a: Quality of Leisure Services**



**Figure 8b: Quality of Leisure Services**

	City of Palo Alto Rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison of Palo Alto Rating to Norm
City parks	78	19	167	89%ile	above the norm
Recreation programs or classes	74	26	186	87%ile	above the norm
Range/variety of recreation programs and classes	73	1	53	100%ile	above the norm
Recreation centers/facilities	69	33	115	72%ile	above the norm
Appearance/maintenance of parks	74	36	173	80%ile	above the norm
Appearance of recreation centers/facilities	66	8	41	83%ile	above the norm
Public library services	70	136	224	40%ile	similar to the norm
Variety of library materials	65	33	52	38%ile	similar to the norm

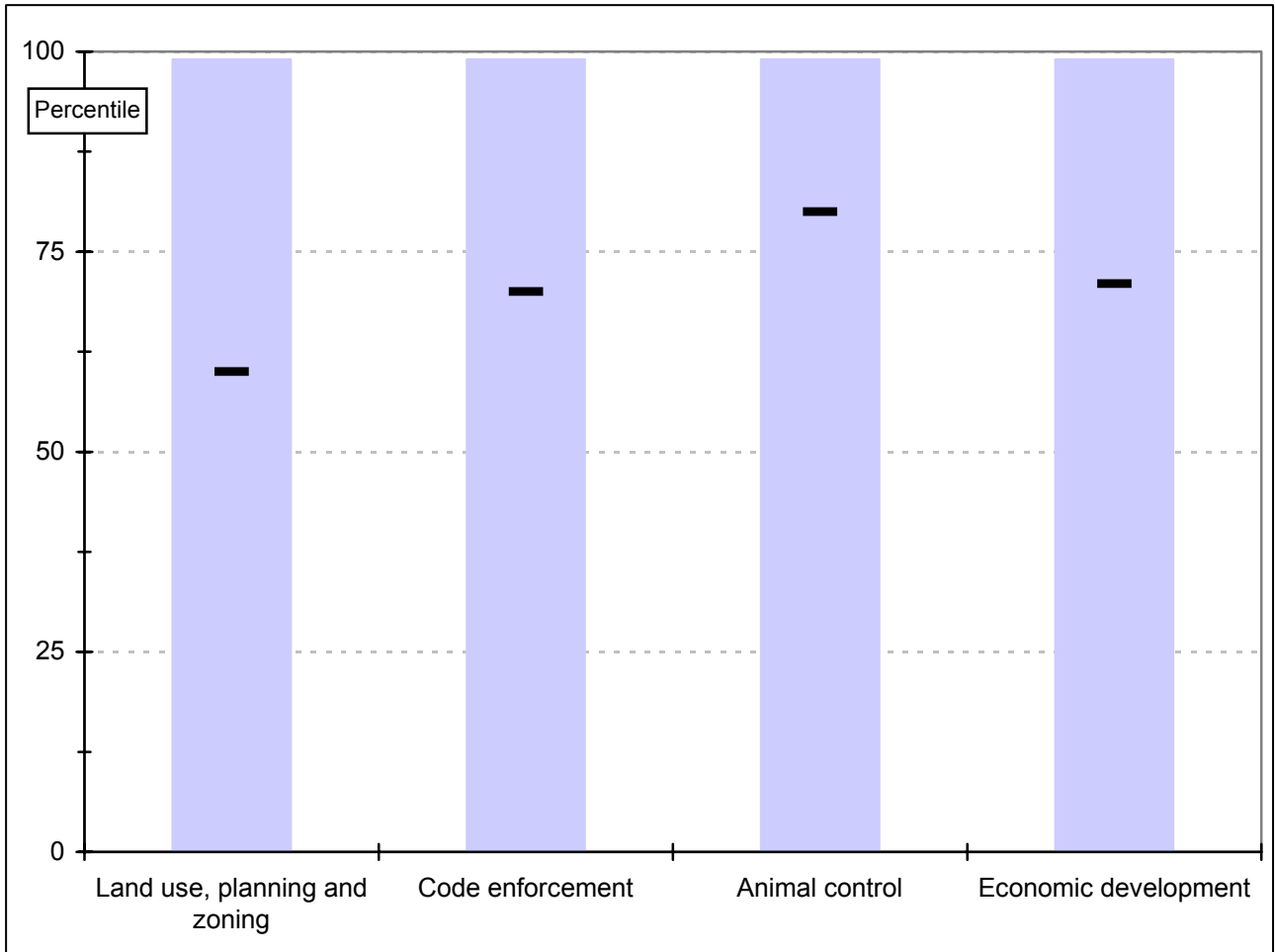
**Figure 9a: Quality of Utility Services**



**Figure 9b: Quality of Utility Services**

	City of Palo Alto Rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison of Palo Alto Rating to Norm
Garbage collection	81	23	214	90%ile	above the norm
Recycling	82	11	167	94%ile	above the norm
Yard waste pick-up	79	6	70	93%ile	above the norm
Storm drainage	51	76	138	46%ile	similar to the norm
Drinking water	65	59	130	55%ile	similar to the norm
Sewer services	68	32	116	73%ile	above the norm

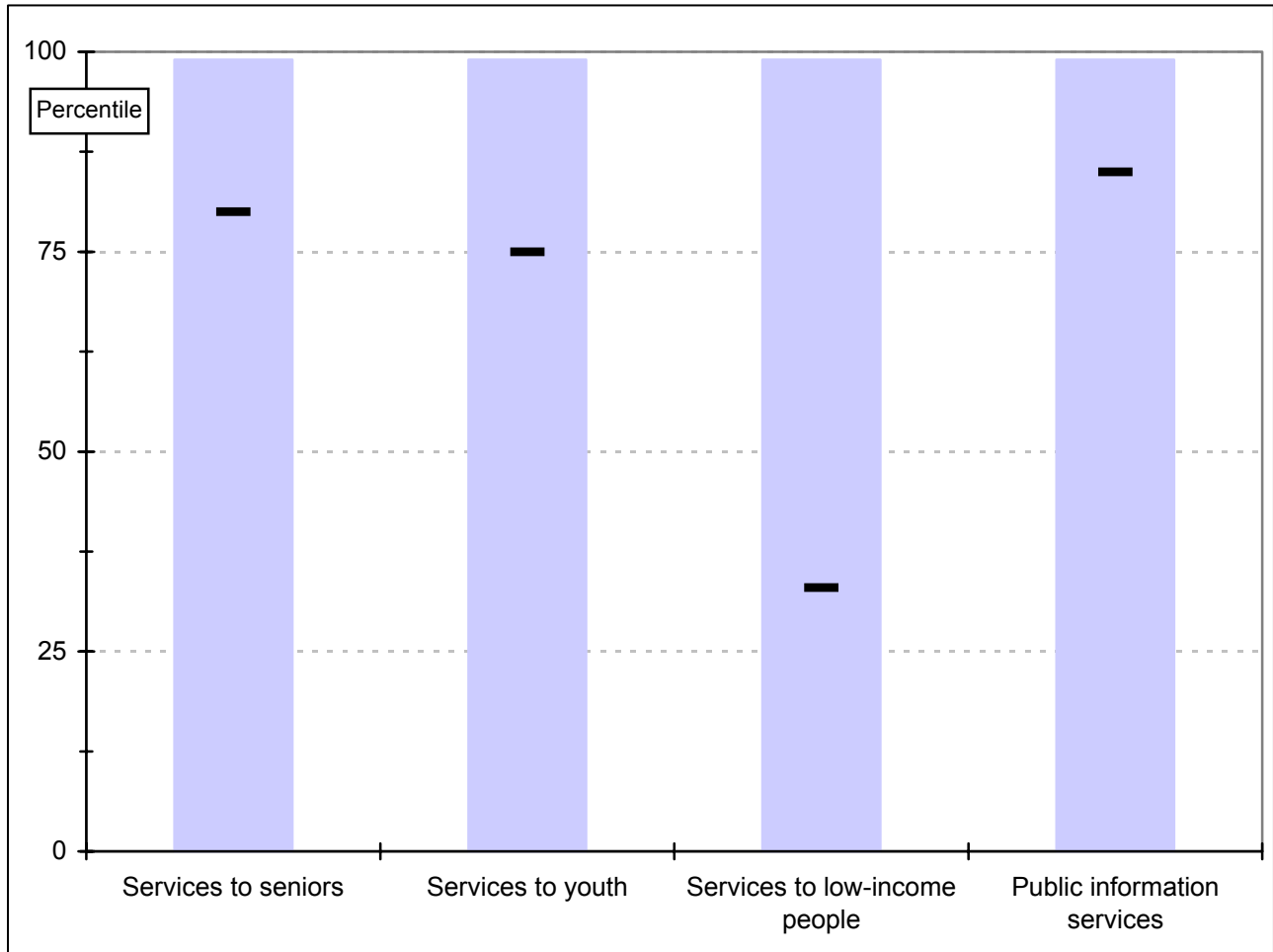
**Figure 10a: Quality of Planning and Code Enforcement Services**



**Figure 10b: Quality of Planning and Code Enforcement Services**

	City of Palo Alto Rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison of Palo Alto Rating to Norm
Land use, planning and zoning	46	42	102	60%ile	similar to the norm
Code enforcement	53	50	163	70%ile	above the norm
Animal control	66	29	137	80%ile	above the norm
Economic development	54	26	87	71%ile	above the norm

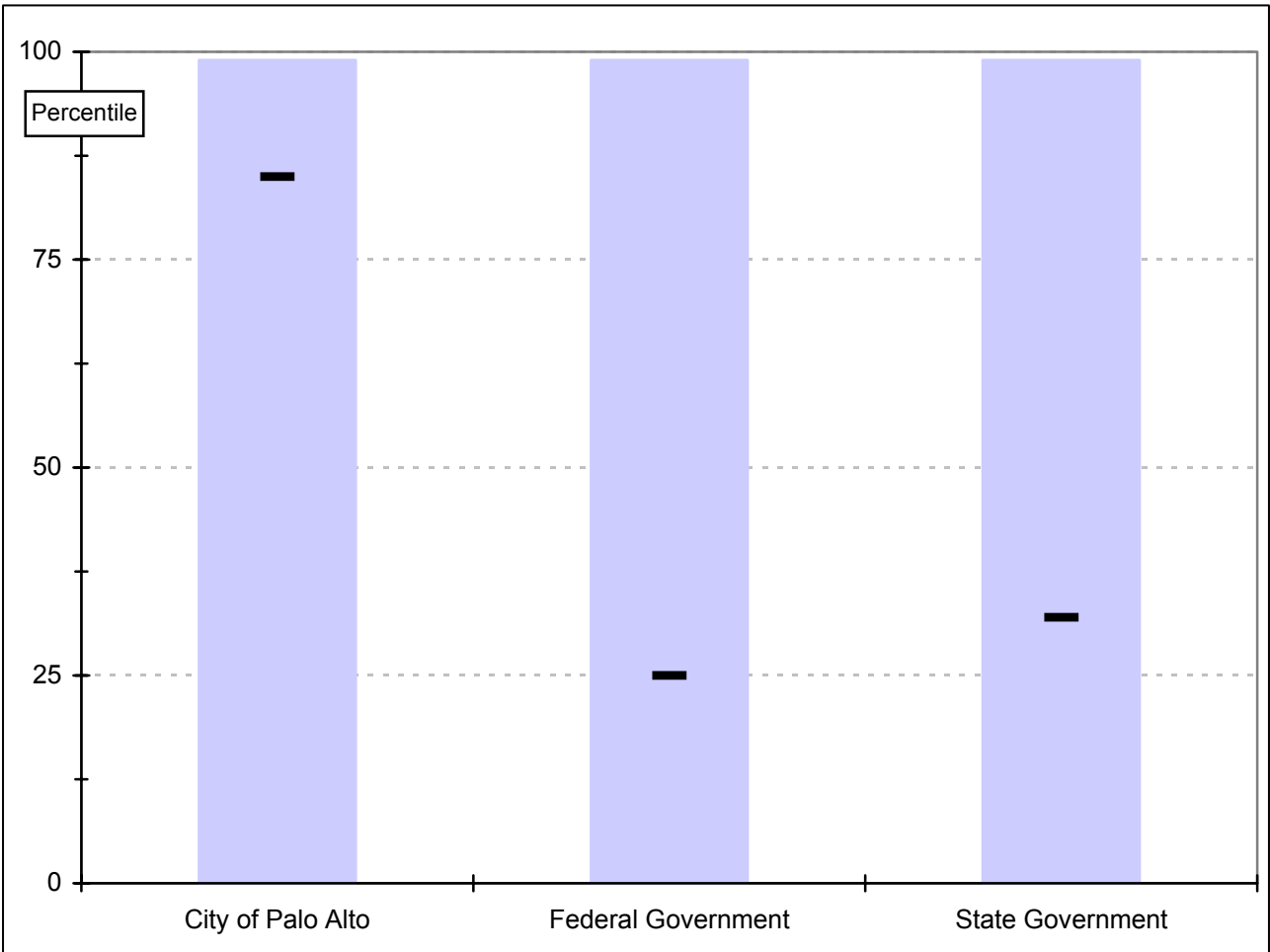
**Figure 11a: Quality of Services to Special Populations and Other Services**



**Figure 11b: Quality of Services to Special Populations and Other Services**

	City of Palo Alto Rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison of Palo Alto Rating to Norm
Services to seniors	70	25	123	80%ile	above the norm
Services to youth	60	29	110	75%ile	above the norm
Services to low-income people	38	39	57	33%ile	similar to the norm
Public information services	65	18	111	85%ile	above the norm

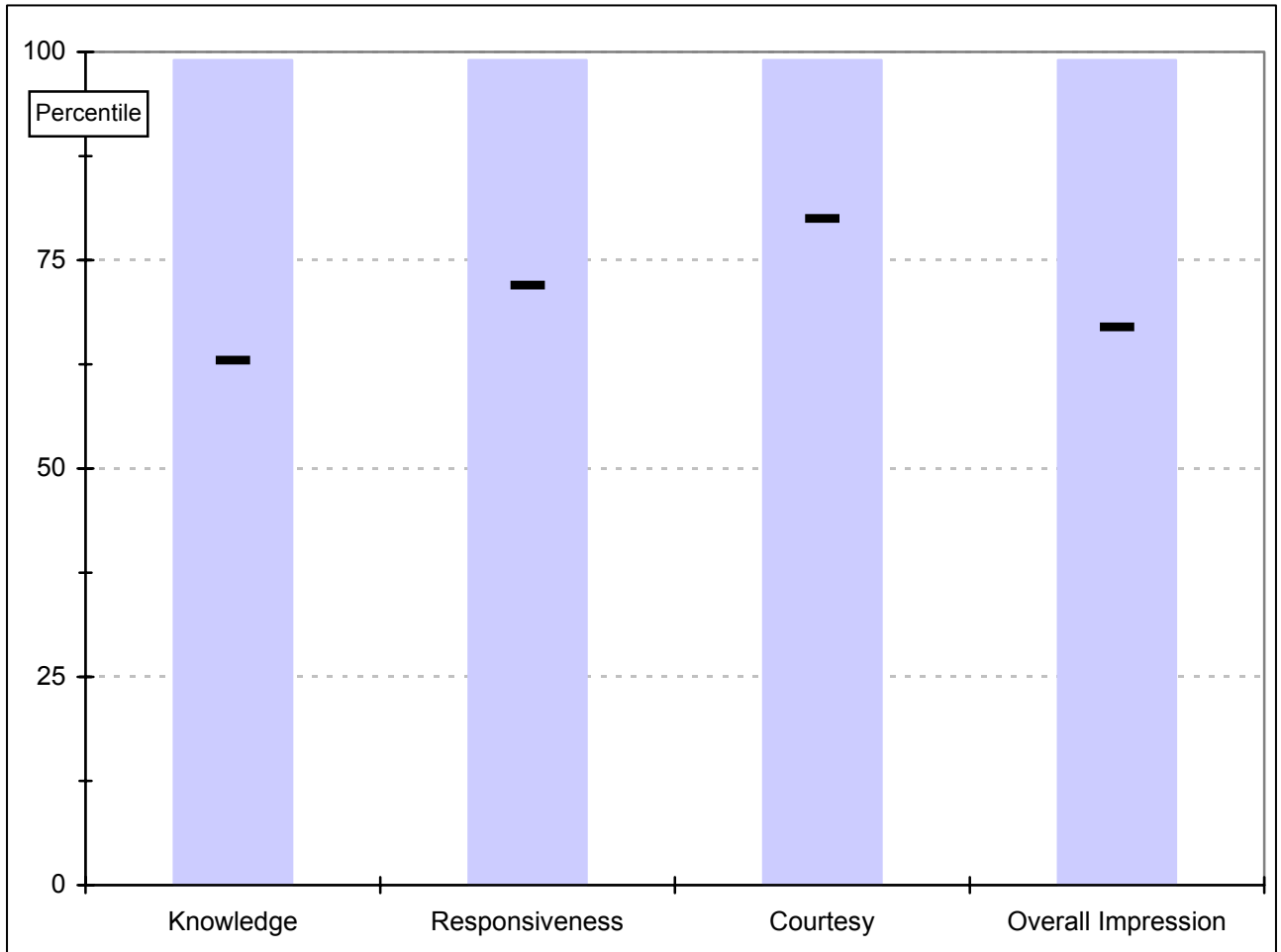
**Figure 12a: Overall Quality of Services**



**Figure 12b: Overall Quality of Services**

	City of Palo Alto Rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison of Palo Alto Rating to Norm
Services provided by the City of Palo Alto	74	29	188	85%ile	above the norm
Services provided by the Federal Government	42	52	68	25%ile	similar to the norm
Services provided by the State Government	42	47	68	32%ile	similar to the norm

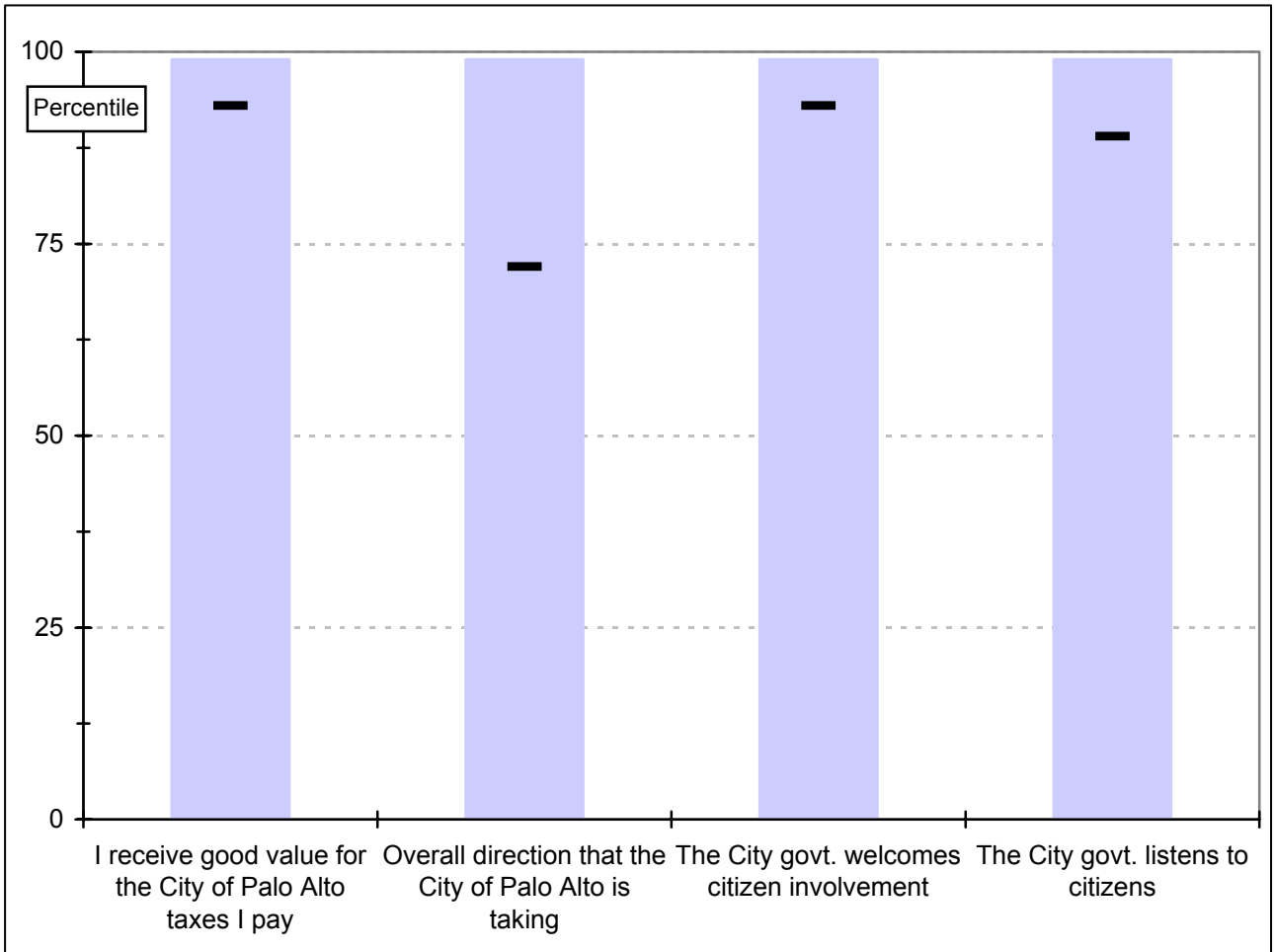
**Figure 13a: Ratings of Contact with City Employees**



**Figure 13b: Ratings of Contact with the City Employees**

	City of Palo Alto Rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison of Palo Alto Rating to Norm
Knowledge	74	44	117	63%ile	similar to the norm
Responsiveness	72	35	123	72%ile	similar to the norm
Courtesy	75	18	85	80%ile	above the norm
Overall Impression	72	50	149	67%ile	similar to the norm

**Figure 14a: Ratings of Public Trust**



**Figure 14b: Ratings of Public Trust**

	City of Palo Alto Rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Palo Alto Percentile	Comparison of Palo Alto Rating to Norm
I receive good value for the City of Palo Alto taxes I pay	73	4	43	93%ile	above the norm
Overall direction that the City of Palo Alto is taking	65	29	101	72%ile	above the norm
The City gov. welcomes citizen involvement	71	7	86	93%ile	above the norm
The City gov. listens to citizens	64	10	79	89%ile	above the norm



# APPENDIX I: LIST OF JURISDICTIONS INCLUDED IN NORMATIVE COMPARISONS

Jurisdiction Name	State	2000 Population
Homer	AK	3,946
Auburn	AL	42,987
Huntsville	AL	158,216
Phenix City	AL	28,265
Fayetteville	AR	58,047
Fort Smith	AR	80,268
Hot Springs	AR	35,613
Little Rock	AR	183,133
Siloam Springs	AR	10,000
Chandler	AZ	176,581
Gilbert	AZ	109,697
Mesa	AZ	396,375
Phoenix	AZ	1,321,045
Safford	AZ	9,232
Scottsdale	AZ	202,705
Sedona	AZ	10,192
Tempe	AZ	158,625
Tucson	AZ	486,699
Antioch	CA	90,532
Arcadia	CA	53,054
Bakersfield	CA	247,057
Berkeley	CA	102,743
Claremont	CA	33,998
Concord	CA	121,780
Coronado	CA	24,100
Cypress	CA	46,229
El Cerrito	CA	23,171
Encinitas	CA	54,014
Fremont	CA	203,413
Garden Grove	CA	165,196
Gilroy	CA	41,464
Hercules	CA	19,488
Highland	CA	44,605
La Mesa	CA	54,749
Lakewood	CA	79,345
Livermore	CA	73,345
Lompoc	CA	41,103
Long Beach	CA	461,522
Los Alamitos	CA	11,536
Los Gatos	CA	28,592
Menlo Park	CA	30,785
Monterey	CA	29,674

Report of Normative Comparisons

<b>Jurisdiction Name</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>2000 Population</b>
Mountain View	CA	70,708
Novato	CA	47,630
Oceanside	CA	161,029
Oxnard	CA	170,358
Palm Springs	CA	42,807
Pasadena	CA	133,936
Pleasanton	CA	63,654
Pomona	CA	149,473
Poway	CA	48,044
Redding	CA	80,865
Ridgecrest	CA	24,927
Riverside	CA	255,166
Rosemead	CA	53,505
Sacramento County	CA	1,223,499
San Francisco	CA	776,733
San Jose	CA	894,943
San Luis Obispo County	CA	247,900
San Mateo	CA	92,482
San Rafael	CA	56,063
San Ramon	CA	44,722
Santa Clara	CA	102,361
Santa Clarita	CA	151,088
Santa Monica	CA	84,084
Santa Rosa	CA	147,595
Simi Valley	CA	111,351
Solana Beach	CA	12,979
South Gate	CA	96,375
Sunnyvale	CA	131,760
Temecula	CA	57,716
Thousand Oaks	CA	117,005
Torrance	CA	137,946
Visalia	CA	91,565
Walnut Creek	CA	64,296
Yuba City	CA	36,758
Arvada	CO	102,153
Boulder	CO	94,673
Boulder County	CO	291,288
Broomfield	CO	38,272
Castle Rock	CO	20,224
Denver (City and County)	CO	554,636
Englewood	CO	31,727
Fort Collins	CO	118,652
Golden	CO	17,159
Greeley	CO	76,930
Greenwood Village	CO	11,035
Jefferson County	CO	527,056
Lafayette	CO	23,197
Lakewood	CO	144,126
Larimer County	CO	251,494

Report of Normative Comparisons

Jurisdiction Name	State	2000 Population
Littleton	CO	40,340
Longmont	CO	71,093
Louisville	CO	18,937
Loveland	CO	50,608
Northglenn	CO	31,575
Parker	CO	23,558
Thornton	CO	82,384
Vail	CO	4,531
Westminster	CO	100,940
Wheat Ridge	CO	32,913
Hartford	CT	121,578
Manchester	CT	54,740
New London	CT	25,671
Vernon	CT	28,063
West Hartford	CT	63,589
Wethersfield	CT	26,271
Dover	DE	32,135
Newark	DE	28,547
Altamonte Springs	FL	41,200
Boca Raton	FL	74,764
Bradenton	FL	49,504
Broward County	FL	1,623,018
Cape Coral	FL	102,286
Collier County	FL	251,377
Cooper City	FL	27,939
Coral Springs	FL	117,549
Deerfield Beach	FL	64,583
Delray Beach	FL	60,020
Fort Lauderdale	FL	152,397
Jacksonville	FL	735,617
Kissimmee	FL	47,814
Lee County	FL	454,918
Miami	FL	362,470
Miami-Dade County	FL	2,253,362
Ocoee	FL	24,391
Orange County	FL	896,344
Orlando	FL	185,951
Palm Bay	FL	79,413
Palm Beach County	FL	1,131,184
Palm Coast	FL	32,732
Pinellas County	FL	921,482
Pinellas Park	FL	45,658
Port Orange	FL	45,823
Port St. Lucie	FL	88,769
St. Petersburg	FL	248,232
Tallahassee	FL	150,624
Walton County	FL	40,601
Atlanta	GA	416,474
Cartersville	GA	15,925

Report of Normative Comparisons

Jurisdiction Name	State	2000 Population
Columbus	GA	185,781
Douglas County	GA	92,174
Macon	GA	97,255
Milledgeville	GA	18,757
Savannah	GA	131,510
Adams County	IA	4,482
Ames	IA	50,731
Ankeny	IA	27,117
Cedar Rapids	IA	120,758
Clarke County	IA	9,133
Des Moines County	IA	42,351
Fort Dodge	IA	25,136
Fort Madison	IA	10,715
Indianola	IA	12,998
Iowa County	IA	15,671
Louisa County	IA	12,183
Marion	IA	7,144
Newton	IA	15,579
Polk County	IA	374,601
West Des Moines	IA	46,403
Lewiston	ID	30,904
Moscow	ID	21,291
Twin Falls	ID	34,469
Addison Village	IL	35,914
Decatur	IL	81,860
Downers Grove	IL	48,724
Elmhurst	IL	42,762
Evanston	IL	74,239
Highland Park	IL	31,365
Homewood	IL	19,543
Park Ridge	IL	37,775
Peoria	IL	112,936
Skokie	IL	63,348
St. Charles	IL	27,896
Streamwood	IL	36,407
Urbana	IL	36,395
Village of Oak Park	IL	52,524
Wilmette	IL	27,651
Fort Wayne	IN	205,727
Gary	IN	102,746
Marion County	IN	860,454
Lawrence	KS	80,098
Overland Park	KS	149,080
Shawnee	KS	47,996
Wichita	KS	344,284
Ashland	KY	21,981
Bowling Green	KY	49,296
Lexington	KY	260,512
Jefferson Parish	LA	455,466

Report of Normative Comparisons

Jurisdiction Name	State	2000 Population
Orleans Parish	LA	484,674
Andover	MA	31,247
Barnstable	MA	47,821
Boston	MA	589,141
Brookline	MA	57,107
Worcester	MA	172,648
Greenbelt	MD	21,456
Rockville	MD	47,388
Ann Arbor	MI	114,024
Battle Creek	MI	53,364
Delhi Township	MI	22,569
Detroit	MI	951,270
East Lansing	MI	46,525
Grand Rapids	MI	197,800
Kentwood	MI	45,255
Meridian Charter Township	MI	38,987
Muskegon	MI	40,105
Novi	MI	47,386
Port Huron	MI	32,338
Rochester Hills	MI	68,825
Blaine	MN	44,942
Dakota County	MN	355,904
Duluth	MN	86,918
Eagan	MN	63,557
Golden Valley	MN	20,281
Grand Forks	MN	231
Mankato	MN	32,427
Maplewood	MN	34,947
Minnetonka	MN	51,301
Plymouth	MN	65,894
Polk County	MN	31,369
Richfield	MN	34,439
Roseville	MN	33,690
Scott County	MN	89,498
St. Clair Shores	MN	827
St. Paul	MN	287,151
Ballwin	MO	31,283
Columbia	MO	84,531
Ellisville	MO	9,104
Kansas City	MO	441,545
Kirkwood	MO	27,324
Platte County	MO	73,791
Saint Joseph	MO	73,990
Saint Peters	MO	51,381
Springfield	MO	151,580
Biloxi	MS	50,644
Pascagoula	MS	26,200
Great Falls	MT	56,690
Yellowstone County	MT	129,352

Report of Normative Comparisons

<b>Jurisdiction Name</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>2000 Population</b>
Cary	NC	94,536
Charlotte	NC	540,828
Durham	NC	187,038
Greensboro	NC	223,891
Hickory	NC	37,222
Hudson	NC	3,078
Rocky Mount	NC	55,893
Wilmington	NC	90,400
Wilson	NC	44,405
Fargo	ND	90,599
Grand Forks	ND	49,321
Kearney	NE	27,431
Dover	NH	26,884
Merrimack	NH	25,119
Salem	NH	28,112
Hackensack	NJ	42,677
Medford	NJ	22,253
Willingboro Township	NJ	33,008
Albuquerque	NM	448,607
Los Alamos County	NM	18,343
Rio Rancho	NM	51,765
Taos	NM	4,700
Henderson	NV	175,381
North Las Vegas	NV	115,488
Reno	NV	180,480
Sparks	NV	66,346
Genesee County	NY	60,370
New York City	NY	8,008,278
Ontario County	NY	100,224
Rochester	NY	219,773
Rye	NY	14,955
Watertown	NY	26,705
Akron	OH	217,074
Cincinnati	OH	331,285
Columbus	OH	711,470
Dayton	OH	166,179
Dublin	OH	31,392
Fairborn	OH	32,052
Huber Heights	OH	38,212
Kettering	OH	57,502
Shaker Heights	OH	29,405
Springfield	OH	65,358
Westerville	OH	35,318
Oklahoma City	OK	506,132
Albany	OR	40,852
Ashland	OR	19,522
Corvallis	OR	49,322
Eugene	OR	137,893
Gresham	OR	90,205

Report of Normative Comparisons

Jurisdiction Name	State	2000 Population
Jackson County	OR	181,269
Lake Oswego	OR	35,278
Multnomah County	OR	660,486
Portland	OR	529,121
Springfield	OR	52,864
Lower Merion Township	PA	59,850
Manheim	PA	4,784
Philadelphia	PA	1,517,550
State College	PA	38,420
Upper Merion Township	PA	28,863
Newport	RI	26,475
Columbia	SC	116,278
Mauldin	SC	15,224
Myrtle Beach	SC	22,759
Pickens County	SC	110,757
Rock Hill	SC	49,765
York County	SC	164,614
Aberdeen	SD	24,658
Cookville	TN	23,923
Franklin	TN	41,842
Knoxville	TN	173,890
Memphis	TN	650,100
Oak Ridge	TN	27,387
Arlington	TX	332,969
Austin	TX	656,562
Bedford	TX	47,152
Carrollton	TX	109,576
College Station	TX	67,890
Corpus Christi	TX	277,454
Dallas	TX	1,188,580
Denton	TX	80,537
DeSoto	TX	37,646
Fort Worth	TX	534,694
Garland	TX	215,768
Grand Prairie	TX	127,427
Lewisville	TX	77,737
Lubbock	TX	199,564
Lufkin	TX	32,709
McAllen	TX	106,414
McKinney	TX	54,369
Missouri City	TX	52,913
Mount Pleasant	TX	13,935
Nacogdoches	TX	29,914
Pasadena	TX	141,674
Plano	TX	222,030
Round Rock	TX	61,136
Sugar Land	TX	63,328
Temple	TX	54,514
Victoria	TX	60,603

Report of Normative Comparisons

<b>Jurisdiction Name</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>2000 Population</b>
Bountiful	UT	41,301
Ogden	UT	77,226
West Valley City	UT	108,896
Albemarle County	VA	79,236
Bedford County	VA	60,371
Blacksburg	VA	39,357
Chesapeake	VA	199,184
Chesterfield County	VA	259,903
Hampton	VA	146,437
Hopewell	VA	22,354
James City County	VA	48,102
Lynchburg	VA	65,269
Norfolk	VA	234,403
Northampton County	VA	13,093
Prince William County	VA	280,813
Richmond	VA	197,790
Roanoke County	VA	85,778
Stafford County	VA	92,446
Virginia Beach	VA	425,257
Williamsburg	VA	11,998
Bellevue	WA	109,569
Bothell	WA	30,150
Kent	WA	79,524
Kitsap County	WA	231,969
Lynnwood	WA	33,847
Marysville	WA	12,268
Olympia	WA	42,514
Redmond	WA	45,256
Renton	WA	50,052
Richland	WA	38,708
Seattle	WA	563,374
University Place	WA	29,933
Vancouver	WA	143,560
Walla Walla	WA	29,686
Appleton	WI	70,087
Eau Claire	WI	61,704
Janesville	WI	59,498
Kenosha	WI	90,352
Madison	WI	208,054
Marquette County	WI	15,832
Milton	WI	5,132
Superior	WI	27,368
Village of Brown Deer	WI	12,170
Wausau	WI	38,426
Winnebago County	WI	156,763
Laramie	WY	27,204



# APPENDIX II: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CITIZEN SURVEY DATABASE

## ***Q: What is in the citizen survey database?***

**A:** National Research Center's database includes the results from citizen surveys conducted in over 300 jurisdictions in the United States. These are public opinion polls answered by more than 250,000 residents around the country. We have recorded, analyzed and stored responses to over 6,000 survey questions dealing with resident perceptions about the quality of community life and public trust and residents' report of their use of public facilities. Respondents to these surveys are intended to represent over 40 million Americans.

## ***Q: What kinds of questions are included?***

**A:** Residents' ratings of the quality of virtually every kind of local government service are included – from police, fire and trash haul to animal control, planning and cemeteries. Many dimensions of quality of life are included such as feeling of safety and opportunities for dining, recreation and shopping as well as ratings of the overall quality of community life and community as a place to raise children and retire.

## ***Q: What is so unique about National Research Center's Citizen Survey database?***

**A:** It is the only database of its size that contains the people's perceptions about government service delivery and quality of life. For example, others use government statistics about crime to deduce the quality of police services or speed of pot hole repair to draw conclusions about the quality of street maintenance. Only National Research Center's database adds the opinion of service recipients themselves to the service quality equation. We believe that conclusions about service or community quality are made prematurely if opinions of the community's residents themselves are missing.

## ***Q: What is the database used for?***

**A:** Benchmarking. Our clients use the comparative information in the database 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. We don't know what is small or tall without comparing. Taking the pulse of the community has little meaning without knowing what pulse rate is too high and what is too low. So many surveys of service satisfaction turn up at least "good" citizen evaluations that we 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. We need to ask more important and harder questions. We need to know how our residents' ratings of fire service compare to opinions about fire service in other communities.

**Q: So what if we find that our public opinions are better or – for that matter – worse than opinions in other communities? What does it mean?**

**A:** 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 its clients believe services are not very good compared to ratings received by objectively “worse” departments.

National Research Center’s database can help that police department – or any city department – to understand how well citizens think it is doing. Without the comparative data from National Research Center’s database, it would be like bowling in a tournament without knowing what the other teams are scoring. We recommend that citizen opinion be used in conjunction with other sources of data to help managers know how to respond to comparative results.

**Q: Aren’t comparisons of questions from different surveys like comparing apples and oranges?**

**A:** It is true that you can’t simply take a given result from one survey and compare it to the result from a different survey. National Research Center, Inc. principals have pioneered and reported their methods for converting all survey responses to the same scale. Because scales responses will differ among types of survey questions, National Research Center, Inc. statisticians have developed statistical algorithms, which adjust question results based on many characteristics of the question, its scale and the survey methods. All results are then converted to the PTM (percent to maximum) scale with a minimum score of 0 (equaling the lowest possible rating) to a maximum score of 100 (equaling the highest possible rating). We then can provide a norm that not only controls for question differences, but also controls for differences in types of survey methods. This way we put all questions on the same scale and a norm can be offered for communities of given sizes or in various regions.

**Q: How can managers trust the comparability of results?**

**A:** Principals of National Research Center, Inc. have submitted their work to peer reviewed scholarly journals where its publication fully describes the rigor of our methods and the quality of our findings. We have published articles in *Public Administration Review*, *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* and *Governing*, and we wrote a book, *Citizen Surveys: How to do them, how to use them, what they mean*, that describes in detail how survey responses can be adjusted to provide fair comparisons for ratings among many jurisdictions. Our work on calculating national norms 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.