







# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	<b>i</b>
<b>List of Tables</b> .....	<b>iii</b>
<b>List of Figures</b> .....	<b>iv</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
Purpose of Study .....	1
Statistical Significance .....	2
Overview of Methodology.....	2
Organization of Report.....	3
Acknowledgements .....	3
Disclaimer .....	3
About True North.....	3
<b>Just the Facts</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Quality of Life.....	4
City Services.....	4
Public Safety & Neighborhood Issues .....	4
Traffic .....	5
Parks & Recreation .....	5
Staff Interactions .....	5
Communication .....	5
<b>Conclusions</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Quality of Life</b> .....	<b>9</b>
Quality of Life.....	9
Question 2 .....	9
Ways to Improve Quality of Life .....	10
Question 3 .....	11
<b>City Services</b> .....	<b>12</b>
Overall Satisfaction.....	12
Question 4 .....	12
Specific Services.....	13
Question 5 .....	14
Question 6 .....	16
<b>Performance Needs &amp; Priorities</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>Public Safety &amp; Neighborhood Issues</b> .....	<b>20</b>
Perceived Safety .....	20
Question 7 .....	20
Neighborhood Watch .....	22
Question 8 .....	22
Code Enforcement .....	23
Question 9 .....	23
Question 10 .....	24
<b>Traffic</b> .....	<b>25</b>
Traffic Circulation .....	25
Question 11 .....	25
<b>Parks &amp; Recreation</b> .....	<b>28</b>
Facilities & Programs Ratings .....	28
Question 12 .....	28
Recreation Priorities .....	29
Question 13 .....	29
<b>Staff Interactions</b> .....	<b>31</b>
Question 14 .....	31
Question 15 .....	32
<b>Communication</b> .....	<b>33</b>

Overall Satisfaction . . . . . 33  
 Question 16 . . . . . 33  
 City’s Website . . . . . 36  
 Question 17 . . . . . 36  
**Background & Demographics . . . . . 38**  
**Methodology . . . . . 39**  
 Questionnaire Development . . . . . 39  
 Programming & Pre-Test . . . . . 39  
 Sample, Recruiting & Data Collection . . . . . 39  
 Margin of Error due to Sampling . . . . . 40  
 Data Processing & Weighting . . . . . 41  
 Rounding . . . . . 41  
**Questionnaire & Toplines . . . . . 42**



# LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	Top Changes to Improve La Mesa by Study Year .....	11
Table 2	Importance of Services by Study Year .....	15
Table 3	Satisfaction With Services by Study Year .....	16
Table 4	Resident Service Needs & Priorities Matrix .....	18
Table 5	Perceptions of Personal Safety by Study Year .....	21
Table 6	Perception of Traffic Circulation by Study Year .....	25
Table 7	Rating of Park & Recreation Facilities and Programs by Study Year (Among Those Who Provided Opinion) .....	29
Table 8	Recreation Priorities by Age & Child in Hsld (Showing % High Priority) .....	30
Table 9	Recreation Priorities by Quadrant of City & Gender (Showing % High Priority) .....	30
Table 10	Opinion of City Staff by Study Year (Showing % Very or Somewhat Among Those Who Provided Opinion) .....	32
Table 11	Demographics of Sample by Study Year .....	38



## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1	Quadrants Identified in Study	2
Figure 2	Overall Quality of Life by Study Year	9
Figure 3	Overall Quality of Life by Years in La Mesa, Child in Household & Home Ownership Status	10
Figure 4	Overall Quality of Life by Age & Quadrant of City	10
Figure 5	Changes to Improve La Mesa	11
Figure 6	Overall Satisfaction	12
Figure 7	Overall Satisfaction by Years in La Mesa, Child in Household & Home Ownership Status	13
Figure 8	Overall Satisfaction by Age & Quadrant of City	13
Figure 9	Importance of Services	14
Figure 10	Satisfaction with Services	16
Figure 11	Resident Service Needs & Priorities	19
Figure 12	Perceptions of Personal Safety	20
Figure 13	Perceptions of Personal Safety by Age & In Neighborhood Watch Program	21
Figure 14	Perceptions of Personal Safety by Quadrant of City & Gender	21
Figure 15	Involved in Neighborhood Watch Program	22
Figure 16	Involved in Neighborhood Watch Program by Years in La Mesa & Quadrant of City	22
Figure 17	Involved in Neighborhood Watch Program by Home Ownership Status & Age	23
Figure 18	Satisfaction with Code Enforcement by Study Year	23
Figure 19	Satisfaction with Code Enforcement by Home Ownership Status, Quadrant of City & Years in La Mesa	24
Figure 20	Reason for Dissatisfaction With Code Enforcement	24
Figure 21	Perception of Traffic Circulation	25
Figure 22	Perception of Traffic Circulation Overall by Quadrant of City	26
Figure 23	Perception of Traffic Circulation on Major Streets by Quadrant of City	26
Figure 24	Perception of Traffic Circulation in Residential Areas by Quadrant of City	27
Figure 25	Rating of Park & Recreation Facilities and Programs	28
Figure 26	Recreation Priorities	29
Figure 27	Contact With City Staff in Past 12 Months by Study Year	31
Figure 28	Contact With City Staff in Past 12 Months by Quadrant of City, Age & Home Ownership Status	31
Figure 29	Opinion of City Staff (Among Those Who Provided Opinion)	32
Figure 30	Satisfaction with Communication by Study Year	33
Figure 31	Satisfaction with Communication by Years in La Mesa, Visited City Website & Child in Household	34
Figure 32	Satisfaction with Communication by Age & Quadrant of City	34
Figure 33	Overall Satisfaction With City's Performance by Satisfaction With Communication	35
Figure 34	City Website Visit in Past 12 Months by Study Year	36
Figure 35	City Website in Past 12 Months by Years in La Mesa & Age	36
Figure 36	City Website in Past 12 Months by Child in Hsld, Home Ownership Status, Gender, Quadrant of City & Contact With City Staff	37
Figure 37	Maximum Margin of Error	41



## INTRODUCTION

Known as the *Jewel of the Hills*, the City of La Mesa encompasses approximately nine square miles in the rolling hills of southern San Diego County. Incorporated as a general law City in 1912, La Mesa has a rich and colorful history that extends more than a century from its agricultural origins in the late 1800s and has been well-preserved throughout the City with more than three-dozen historical landmarks. Today, La Mesa is home to an estimated 59,982 residents<sup>1</sup> and has a team of full-time and part-time employees that provides a full suite of services to the community through seven primary departments: City Manager’s Office, Community Development, Community Services, Finance, Fire, Police, and Public Works.

To monitor its progress in meeting residents’ needs, the City engages its residents on a daily basis and receives periodic *subjective* feedback regarding its performance. Although these informal feedback mechanisms are a valuable source of information for the City in that they provide timely and accurate information about the opinions of specific residents, it is important to recognize that they do not necessarily provide an accurate picture of the community as a whole. For the most part, informal feedback mechanisms rely on the resident to initiate feedback, which creates a self-selection bias. The City receives feedback only from those residents who are motivated enough to initiate the feedback process. Because these residents tend to be those who are either very pleased or very displeased with the service they have received, their collective opinions are not necessarily representative of the City’s resident population as a whole.

**PURPOSE OF STUDY** The motivation for the current study was to design and employ a methodology that would avoid the self-selection bias noted above and provide the City with a *statistically reliable* understanding of its residents’ satisfaction, priorities, and concerns as they relate to services and facilities provided by the City. Ultimately, the survey results and analyses presented in this report will provide Council and staff with information that can be used to make sound, strategic decisions in a variety of areas, including service improvements and enhancements, measuring and tracking internal performance, budgeting, policy, and planning. To assist in this effort, the City selected True North Research to design the research plan and conduct the study. Broadly defined, the study was designed to:

- Identify key issues of concern for residents, as well as their perceptions of the City.
- Measure residents’ overall satisfaction with the City’s efforts to provide municipal services, as well as their satisfaction with a variety of specific services.
- Determine the effectiveness of the City’s communication with residents.
- Gather opinions on specific topics, including public safety, traffic, code enforcement, and parks and recreation.
- Collect additional background and demographic data that is relevant to understanding residents’ perceptions, needs, and interests.

This is not the first statistically reliable ‘resident satisfaction’ survey conducted for the City—similar studies have been implemented in prior years dating back to 1989, with the most recent being completed by True North in 2006, 2011, 2013, and 2015. Because of the natural interest in tracking the City’s performance in meeting the evolving needs of its residents, where appro-

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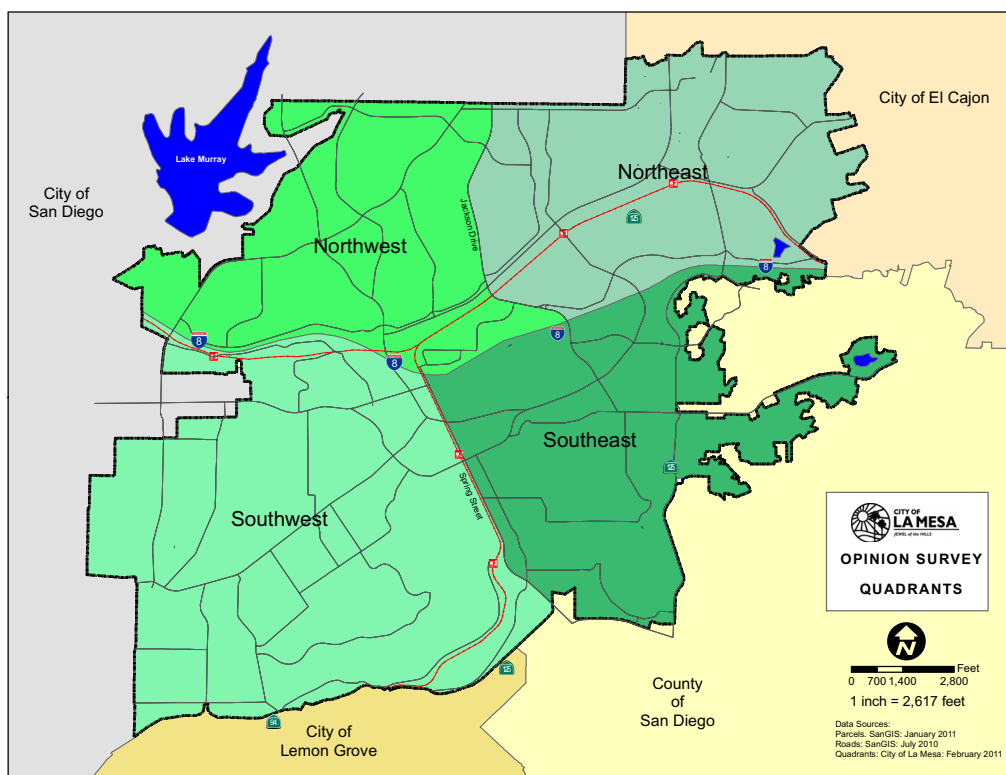
1. Source: California Department of Finance, City/County Population Estimates, 2016.

priate the results of the current study are compared with the results of identical questions included in previous studies.

**STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE** Many figures and tables in this report present the results of questions asked in 2017 alongside the results found in prior surveys for identical questions. In such cases, True North conducted the appropriate tests of statistical significance to identify changes that likely reflect actual changes in public opinion between the most recent prior survey (2015) and the current (2017)—as opposed to being due to chance associated with selecting two samples independently and at random. Differences between the two studies are identified as *statistically significant* if we can be 95% confident that the differences reflect an actual change in public opinion between the two studies. Statistically significant differences within response categories over time are denoted by the † symbol which appears in the figure next to the appropriate response value for 2017.

**OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY** A full description of the methodology used for the study is included later in this report (see *Methodology* on page 39). In brief, the study used a combination of mailed invitations, emailed invitations, and phone calls to recruit participation in the survey from 1,023 adult residents selected at random from La Mesa residences. Respondents were provided with the option to participate in the survey by telephone or online between January 19 and February 2, 2017. Four areas of the City were identified by major cross-streets (see Figure 1) into which respondents were grouped, with approximately the same number of surveys in each quadrant.

**FIGURE 1** QUADRANTS IDENTIFIED IN STUDY





**ORGANIZATION OF REPORT** This report is designed to meet the needs of readers who prefer a summary of the findings as well as those who are interested in the details of the results. For those who seek an overview of the findings, the sections titled *Just the Facts* and *Conclusions* are for you. They provide a summary of the most important factual findings of the survey in bullet-point format and a discussion of their implications. For the interested reader, this section is followed by a more detailed question-by-question discussion of the results from the survey by topic area (see *Table of Contents*), as well as a description of the methodology employed for collecting and analyzing the data. And, for the truly ambitious reader, the questionnaire used for the interviews is contained at the back of this report, and a complete set of crosstabulations for the survey results is contained in Appendix A, which is bound separately.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS** True North thanks the staff at the City of La Mesa who contributed their valuable input during the design stage of this study. Their collective experience, local knowledge, and insight improved the overall quality of the research presented here.

**DISCLAIMER** The statements and conclusions in this report are those of the authors—Dr. Timothy McLarney and Richard Sarles at True North Research—and not necessarily those of the City of La Mesa. Any errors and omissions are the responsibility of the authors.

**ABOUT TRUE NORTH** True North is a full-service survey research firm that is dedicated to providing public agencies with a clear understanding of the values, perceptions, priorities and concerns of their residents and customers. Through designing and implementing scientific surveys, focus groups and one-on-one interviews, as well as expert interpretation of the findings, True North helps its clients to move with confidence when making strategic decisions in a variety of areas—such as planning, policy evaluation, performance management, organizational development, establishing fiscal priorities, and developing effective public information campaigns.

During their careers, Dr. McLarney (President) and Mr. Sarles (Principal Researcher) have designed and conducted over 1,000 survey research studies for public agencies, including more than 350 studies for California municipalities and special districts.



## JUST THE FACTS

The following is an outline of the main factual findings from the survey. For the reader's convenience, we have organized the findings according to the section titles used in the body of this report. Thus, if you would like to learn more about a particular finding, simply turn to the appropriate report section.

### QUALITY OF LIFE

- The vast majority of respondents shared favorable opinions of the quality of life in La Mesa, with 30% reporting it is excellent and 61% stating it is good. Just 8% of residents indicated the quality of life in the City is fair, and less than 2% used poor or very poor to describe the quality of life in the City.
- When asked what city government can do to improve the quality of life in La Mesa, more than one-quarter of respondents said they could not think of anything to change (23%) or that no changes were needed (3%). Among specific changes mentioned, the most common was improving and repairing roads (12%), addressing the homeless issue (8%), improving police presence and response (5%), and improving public safety in general (4%). No other single improvement was mentioned by at least 4% of respondents overall.

### CITY SERVICES

- Eighty-seven percent (87%) of La Mesa residents indicated that they were satisfied with the City's efforts to provide municipal services, with 42% saying they were *very* satisfied. A small portion of residents (7%) reported that they were dissatisfied, and 5% were unsure or unwilling to state their opinion.
- Among 19 specific services tested, La Mesa residents rated maintaining a low crime rate as most important (94% extremely or very important), followed by two other public safety services: providing emergency medical services (94%) and providing fire protection services (93%). At the other end of the spectrum, providing special events like community festivals (46%), providing animal control services (46%), maintaining landscaped street medians (47%), and providing programs for adults (47%) were viewed as less important.
- When asked to rate their satisfaction with the same list of 19 services, residents were most satisfied with the City's efforts to provide fire protection services (99%), emergency medical services (94%), and adequate traffic signs and signals (92%). Respondents were less satisfied with the City's efforts to maintain and repair streets (67%), reduce stormwater pollution (69%), and create a pedestrian friendly, walkable community (71%).

### PUBLIC SAFETY & NEIGHBORHOOD ISSUES

- Residents' feelings of personal safety and security varied considerably depending on the setting. Nearly all residents who provided an opinion indicated that they feel safe walking alone in their neighborhood (96%) and in business and retail areas of the City (95%) during the day. After dark, however, the corresponding percentages dropped to 73% and 71%, respectively.
- Overall, 15% of residents indicated they were involved in a neighborhood watch program.
- More than one-third (36%) of La Mesa residents surveyed did not have an opinion about the City's code enforcement efforts. Among those with an opinion, approximately one-quarter (24%) said they were dissatisfied with the City's code enforcement efforts. The remaining respondents were either somewhat (40%) or very (36%) satisfied.

- When those who were dissatisfied with the City's code enforcement efforts were asked if their dissatisfaction was motivated by a particular issue or code violation, the most commonly cited issue was illegal parking, mentioned by 41% of respondents, followed by unmaintained properties and lawns (23%). Approximately 7% of those who were dissatisfied with the City's code enforcement efforts expressed concern about the perceived fairness of enforcement.

## TRAFFIC

- Eighty-six percent (86%) of residents surveyed rated traffic circulation in residential areas as excellent or good. Perceptions of traffic circulation overall (72%), as well as circulation on major streets (67%), were somewhat less positive.

## PARKS & RECREATION

- Eight-out-of-ten residents who provided an opinion chose *excellent* or *good* to describe the overall quality (80%) and appearance (81%) of the parks and recreation facilities provided by the City of La Mesa. Ratings of the availability of parking (77%), perceived safety at the sites (76%), and the variety of recreation programs (71%) were also generally positive.
- When asked to prioritize among eight possible improvements to parks and recreation facilities in La Mesa, residents were most interested in installing safety and security lighting at parks and recreation facilities (91% felt it should be a high or medium priority) and upgrading or replacing worn-out recreation and playground equipment at existing parks and sports fields (83%), followed further down the priority list by building sports fields for baseball, softball, soccer and other sports (64%) and expanding or replacing the Senior Center (64%).

## STAFF INTERACTIONS

- Thirty-one percent (31%) of residents indicated that they had contact with City staff in the 12 months prior to the interview.
- Approximately 96% of respondents who had interacted with staff in the past 12 months and provided an opinion felt staff were very (76%) or somewhat (20%) *professional*. Similarly, 94% felt staff was very or somewhat *responsive*, and 93% found them very or somewhat *helpful*.

## COMMUNICATION

- Overall, 64% of respondents indicated that they were satisfied with City's efforts to communicate with residents through newsletters, the Internet, or other means, 23% indicated they were dissatisfied with the City's efforts in this respect, and 12% were not sure or chose not to provide an opinion.
- Half (50%) of La Mesa residents surveyed indicated that they had visited the City's website in the 12 months prior to the interview.



## CONCLUSIONS

As noted in the *Introduction*, this study was designed to provide the City of La Mesa with a statistically reliable understanding of the opinions, priorities, and concerns of its residents. Operating from the philosophy that you can't manage what you don't measure, since 1989 La Mesa has periodically used the survey as a community needs assessment and performance measurement tool. In short, the study presents an opportunity to profile residents' needs and priorities, measure how well the City is performing in meeting these needs through existing services and facilities, and gather data on a variety of quality-of-life, issue, and policy-related matters. More than just a profiling exercise, the City has been a leader in using the information gained from the surveys to adjust and improve its services—all toward the goal of building and sustaining a high level of community satisfaction.

Whereas subsequent sections of this report are devoted to conveying the detailed results of the survey, in this section we attempt to 'see the forest through the trees' and note how the collective results of the survey answer the key questions that motivated the research.

*How well is the City performing in meeting the needs of La Mesa residents?*

La Mesa residents continue to be quite satisfied with the City's efforts to provide municipal services and facilities, as well as the quality of life in the City.

Overall, 87% of *all* residents surveyed in 2017 (and 92% of those with an opinion) indicated that they were satisfied with the City's general performance in providing municipal services, which is comparable to the figures recorded in 2015. The high level of satisfaction expressed with the City's performance *in general* was also mirrored in residents' assessments of the City's performance in providing specific services. For all 19 of the service areas tested, the City is meeting or exceeding the needs and expectations of at least two-thirds of residents, and for 14 of the 19 services tested the City is meeting the needs of at least 80% of residents (see *Performance Needs & Priorities* on page 17).

The City's performance in providing municipal services has also contributed to a high quality of life for residents. Ninety-one percent (91%) of residents surveyed in 2017 rated the quality of life in La Mesa as excellent or good, which is consistent with the 2015 survey findings (90%). This sentiment was also widespread, with at least 85% of respondents in *every* identified demographic subgroup rating the quality of life in La Mesa as excellent or good.

Another indicator of a well-managed city meeting its residents' needs is that when asked to indicate one thing that city government could do to make La Mesa a better place to live, by far the most common response from residents was a request that the City continue what it is already doing (i.e., no changes) or a shrug of the shoulders (i.e., not sure).

*Where should the City focus its efforts in the future?*

In addition to measuring the City's current performance, a key goal of this study is to look *forward* and identify opportunities to adjust services, improve facilities, and/or refine communications strategies to best meet the community's evolving needs and expectations. Although resident satisfaction in La Mesa is high (see above), there is always room for improvement. Below we note some of the areas that present the best opportunities in this regard.

Considering respondents' verbatim answers regarding what they feel city government could do to make La Mesa a better place to live and work (see *Ways to Improve Quality of Life* on page 10), as well as the list of services and their respective priority status for future city attention (see *Performance Needs & Priorities* on page 17), the top priorities for residents are maintaining and repairing local streets, addressing the homeless issue, reducing stormwater pollution, creating a pedestrian friendly, walkable community, providing neighborhood police patrols, and preparing the community for emergencies.

With the recommendation that the City focus on these areas, as in past years it is equally important to stress that when it comes to improving satisfaction in service areas, the appropriate strategy is often a combination of better communication and actual service improvements. That is, in some cases service improvements are needed to raise satisfaction with the City's performance. In other cases, particularly those that involve policies affecting services and facilities which are not readily apparent, the key may instead be to communicate better with residents about current efforts and future plans with respect to a particular service area. It may be, for example, that many residents are simply not aware that the City already has an effective emergency preparedness plan in place. Choosing the appropriate balance of actual service improvements and efforts to raise awareness on these matters will be a key to maintaining and improving the community's overall satisfaction in the short- and long-term.

It is also important to keep in mind that although these areas represent opportunities to improve resident satisfaction, the city should *not* oversteer. Indeed, the main message of this study is that the City does many things exceptionally well and the emphasis should be on continuing to perform at a high level in these areas. The vast majority of residents were pleased with the City's efforts to provide services, programs, and facilities and have a favorable opinion of the City's performance in virtually all areas. The *top priority* for the City should thus be to do what it takes to maintain the high quality of services that it currently provides.

*Is city-resident communication a growing challenge?*

Yes. Keeping up with the challenge of communicating with residents and local businesses has been difficult for many public agencies over the past five years. As the number of information sources/channels available to the public has dramatically increased, it creates greater diversity in *where* residents and local businesses turn for their information. Not only have entirely new channels arisen and become mainstream (e.g., social media), within these channels there is a proliferation of alternative services. Preferences with respect to information sources are also subject to change as new services are made available, which makes the challenge of communicating with residents and businesses a *moving* target.

The trends noted above likely underlie some of the changes in resident satisfaction with the City of La Mesa's communication efforts over the past decade. In 2006, for example, eight-in-ten residents (80%) indicated that they were generally satisfied with the City's efforts to communicate with them through newsletters, the Internet, and other means, with 45% stating that they were *very* satisfied. The corresponding figures in the 2017 survey were 64% and 25%, respectively. La Mesa is not alone in this area, as a number of other municipalities have displayed similar trends in satisfaction with city-resident communication. Based on these trends, the City of La Mesa—like other cities—should conduct a careful review of its current communications strategies and budget to ensure that both are evolving to meet this growing challenge.

Although not tested in La Mesa's community survey, providing city-related information via a smart phone app has been a particularly popular item in some communities. The ability of an app to *push* information to a respondent—including emergency notifications, public safety news, and information about special events—takes the burden off the resident to search for the information on their own. An app can also provide an easy means for residents to communicate information *to* the City, such as reporting potholes, graffiti, and other neighborhood concerns.

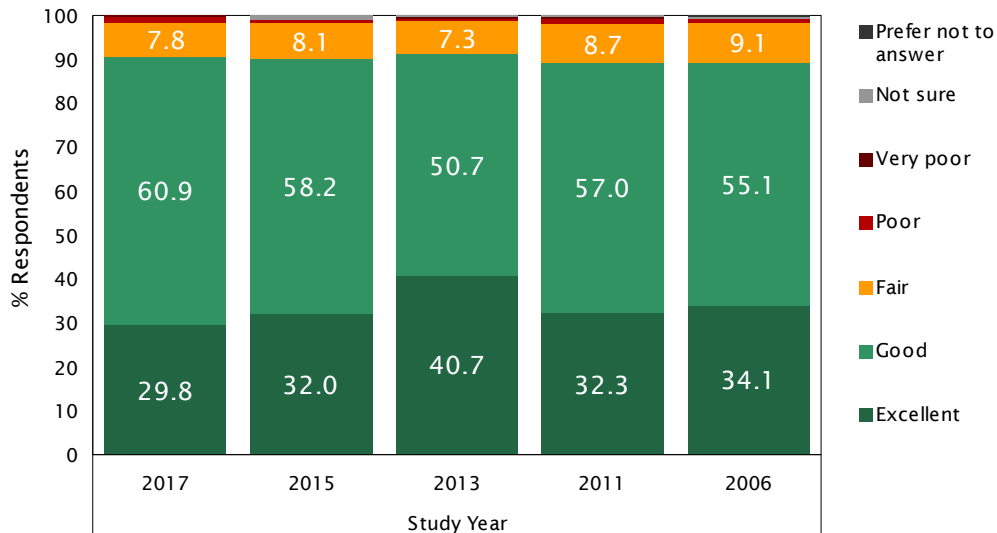
# QUALITY OF LIFE

The opening series of questions in the survey was designed to assess residents' top of mind perceptions about the quality of life in La Mesa, and what city government could do to improve the quality of life in the City, now and in the future.

**QUALITY OF LIFE** At the outset of the interview, respondents were asked to rate the quality of life in the City using a five-point scale of excellent, good, fair, poor, or very poor. As shown in Figure 1 below, the vast majority of respondents shared favorable opinions of the quality of life in La Mesa, with 30% reporting it is excellent and 61% stating it is good. Just 8% of residents indicated the quality of life in the City is fair, and less than 2% used poor or very poor to describe the quality of life in the City. There were no statistically significant changes from the 2015 study.

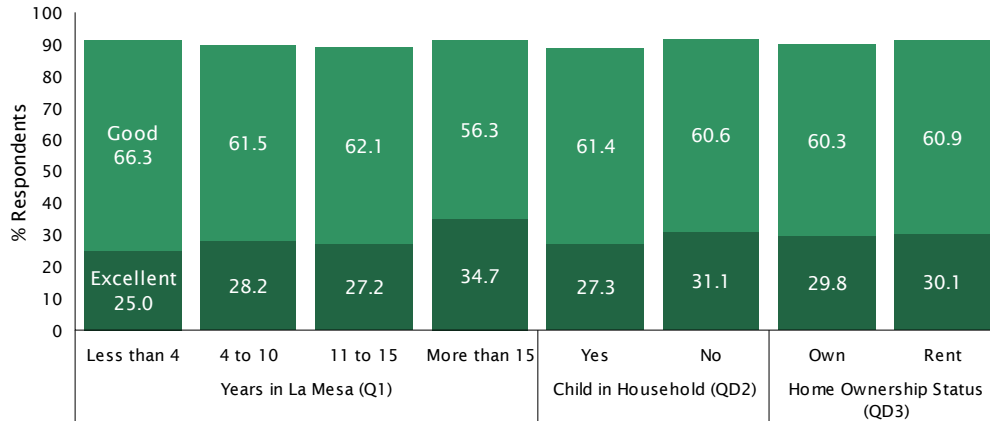
**Question 2** *How would you rate the overall quality of life in the City? Would you say it is excellent, good, fair, poor or very poor?*

**FIGURE 2 OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE BY STUDY YEAR**

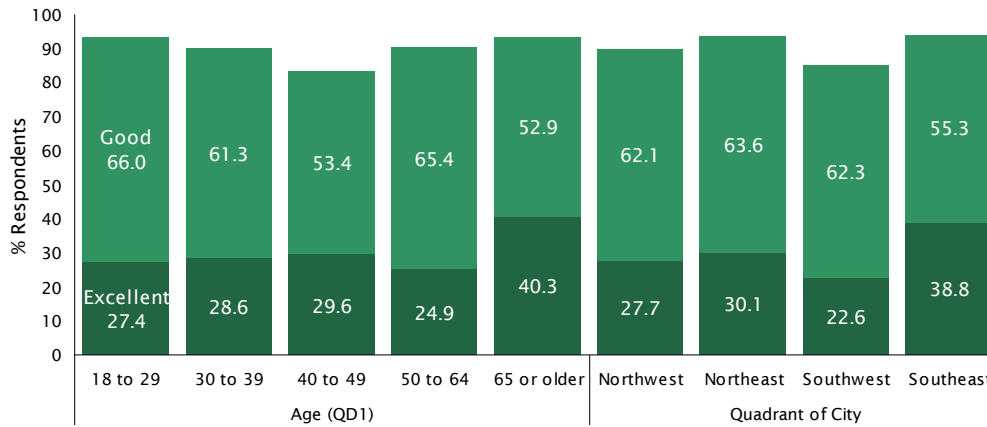


For the interested reader, figures 3 and 4 on the next page show how ratings of the quality of life in the City varied by years residing in La Mesa, presence of a child in the home, home ownership status, age of the respondent, and the quadrant of the City where the respondent resides. Although there were some differences in the perceived quality of life, the most striking pattern in the figures is the relative consistency of the results. Regardless of subgroup category, respondents generally held positive opinions of the quality of life in La Mesa, ranging from a low of 85% to a high of 94%.

**FIGURE 3 OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE BY YEARS IN LA MESA, CHILD IN HOUSEHOLD & HOME OWNERSHIP STATUS**



**FIGURE 4 OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE BY AGE & QUADRANT OF CITY**



**WAYS TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE** Respondents were next asked to indicate the one thing the City could change to make La Mesa a better place to live, now and in the future. Question 3 was asked in an open-ended manner, allowing respondents to mention any change that came to mind without being prompted by or restricted to a list of options. True North later reviewed the verbatim responses and grouped them into the categories shown in Figure 5 on the next page.

More than one-quarter of respondents said they could not think of anything to change (23%) or that no changes were needed (3%). Among specific changes mentioned, the most common was improving and repairing roads (12%), addressing the homeless issue (8%), improving police presence and response (5%), and improving public safety in general (4%). No other single improvement was mentioned by at least 4% of respondents overall.



**Question 3** *If the City government could change one thing to make La Mesa a better place to live now and in the future, what change would you like to see?*

**FIGURE 5 CHANGES TO IMPROVE LA MESA**

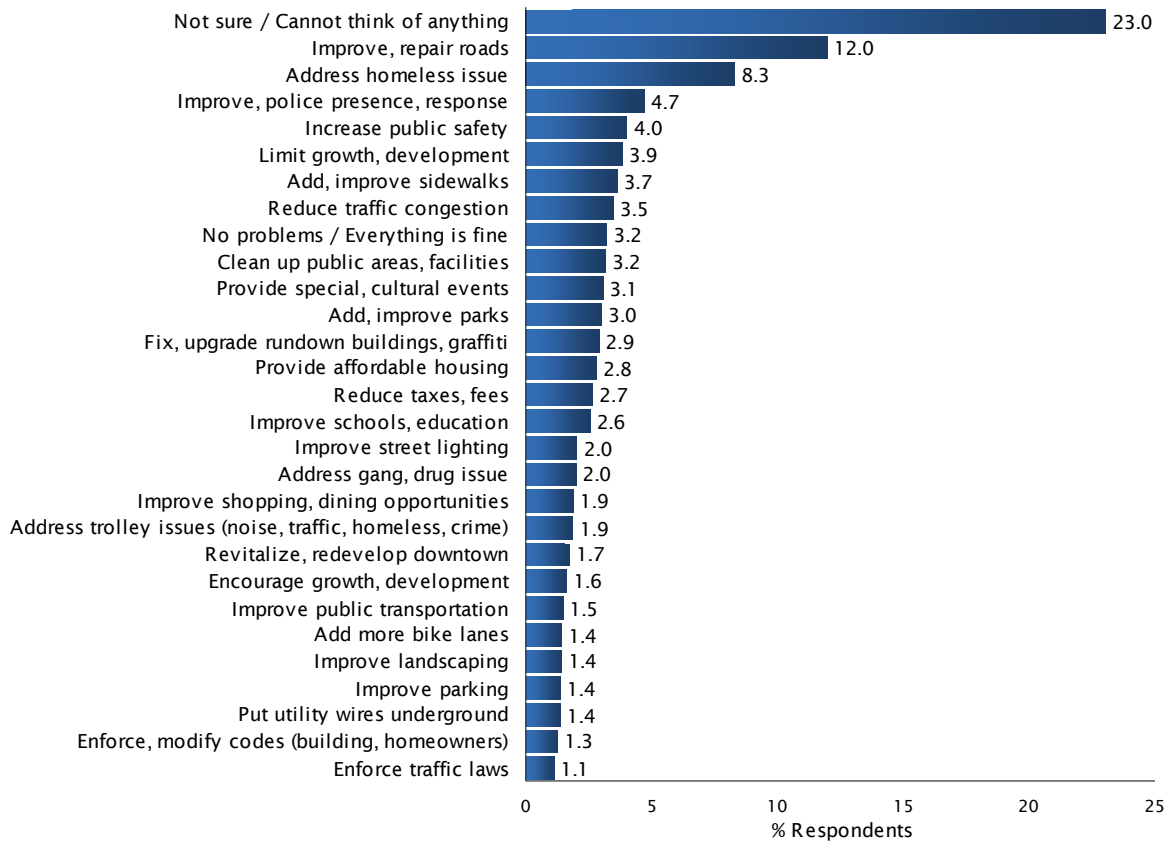


Table 1 below shows the top five categories from 2017, as well as the previous four studies. The qualitative nature of recording, categorizing, and coding verbatim responses limits the ability to perform statistical significance analyses of the findings between surveys, but for the most part the top responses and their relative ranking have changed little over the past decade. One exception is the homeless issue, which first appeared in 2015 and is ranked third in the list in 2017.

**TABLE 1 TOP CHANGES TO IMPROVE LA MESA BY STUDY YEAR**

	Study Year				
	2017	2015	2013	2011	2006
Not sure / Cannot think of anything	Not sure / Cannot think of anything	Not sure / Cannot think of anything	Not sure / Cannot think of anything	Not sure / Cannot think of anything	Not sure / Cannot think of anything
Improve, repair roads	Increase public safety	Increase public safety	Increase public safety	No problems / Everything is fine	
Address homeless issue	Improve, repair roads	Improve, repair roads	Improve, repair roads	Increase public safety	
Improve, police presence, response	Address homeless issues	No problems / Everything is fine	Reduce taxes, fees	Reduce traffic congestion	
Increase public safety	Add, Improve parks	Reduce taxes, fees	No problems / Everything is fine	Improve, repair roads	

# CITY SERVICES

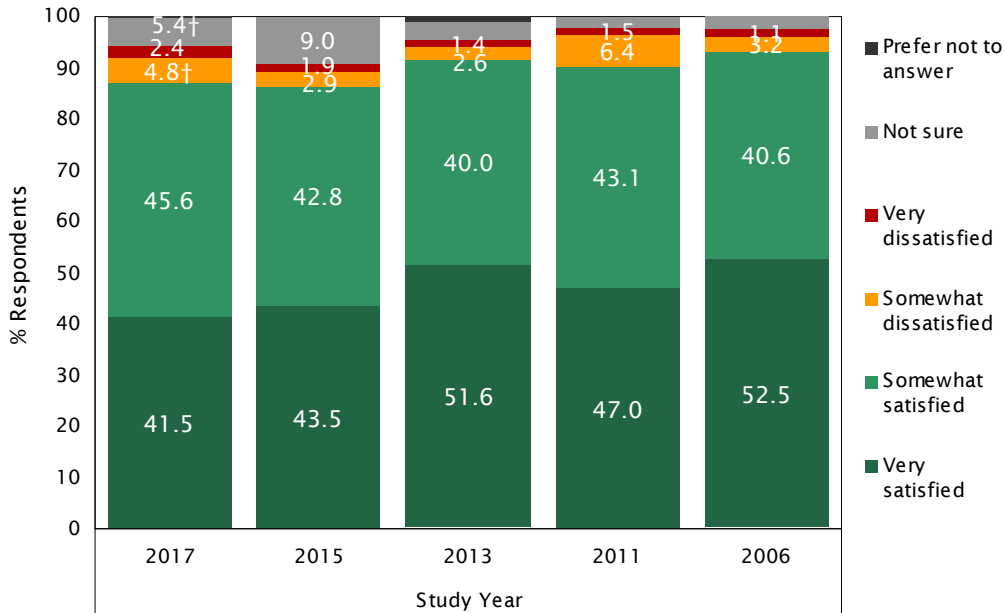
After measuring perceptions of the quality of life in La Mesa, the survey turned to assessing residents' opinions about the City's performance in providing various municipal services.

**OVERALL SATISFACTION** The first question in this series asked respondents to indicate if, overall, they were satisfied or dissatisfied with the job the City of La Mesa is doing to provide city services. Because this question does not reference a specific program, facility, or service and requested that the respondent consider the City's performance in general, the findings of this question may be regarded as an *overall performance rating* for the City.

As shown in Figure 6, 87% of La Mesa residents indicated that they were satisfied with the City's efforts to provide municipal services, with 42% saying they were *very* satisfied. A small portion of residents (7%) reported that they were dissatisfied, and 5% were unsure or unwilling to state their opinion. When compared with 2015, there was a significant decrease in the percentage of residents who were unsure or did not provide an opinion to this question (5% vs. 9%), and a small but significant increase in the percentage who reported being *somewhat dissatisfied* (5% vs. 3%).

**Question 4** *Generally speaking, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the job the City of La Mesa is doing to provide city services?*

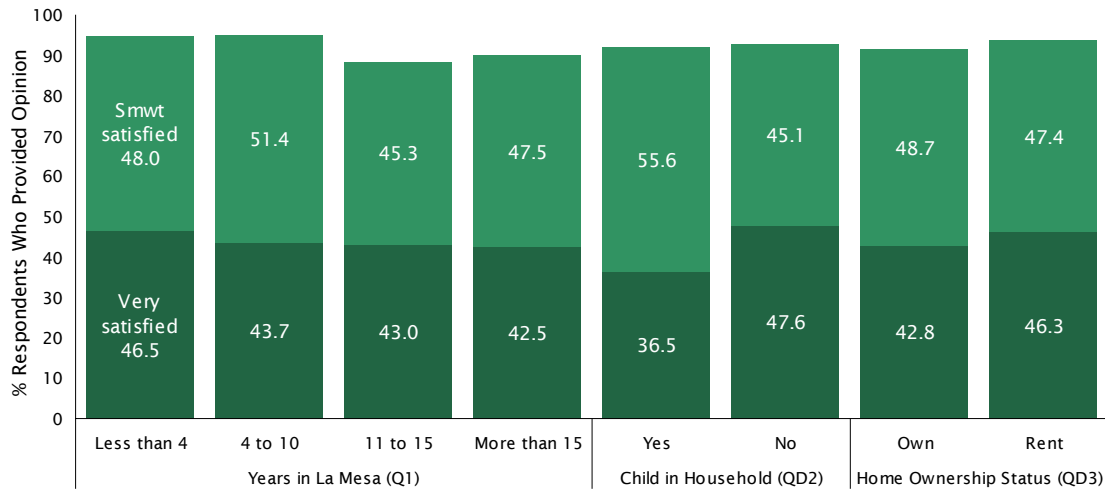
**FIGURE 6 OVERALL SATISFACTION**



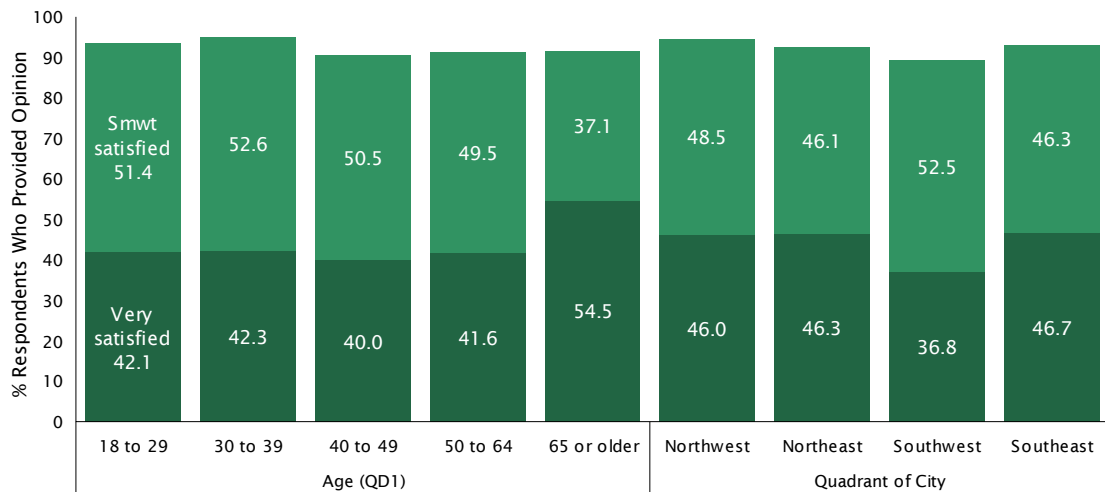
† Statistically significant change ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the 2015 and 2017 studies.

The next two figures display satisfaction levels with the City's performance among respondents who provided an opinion to the question. Overall satisfaction (among those who provided an opinion) was strikingly similar across all subgroups, although seniors were notably more likely than their counterparts to report being *very satisfied*.

**FIGURE 7 OVERALL SATISFACTION BY YEARS IN LA MESA, CHILD IN HOUSEHOLD & HOME OWNERSHIP STATUS**



**FIGURE 8 OVERALL SATISFACTION BY AGE & QUADRANT OF CITY**

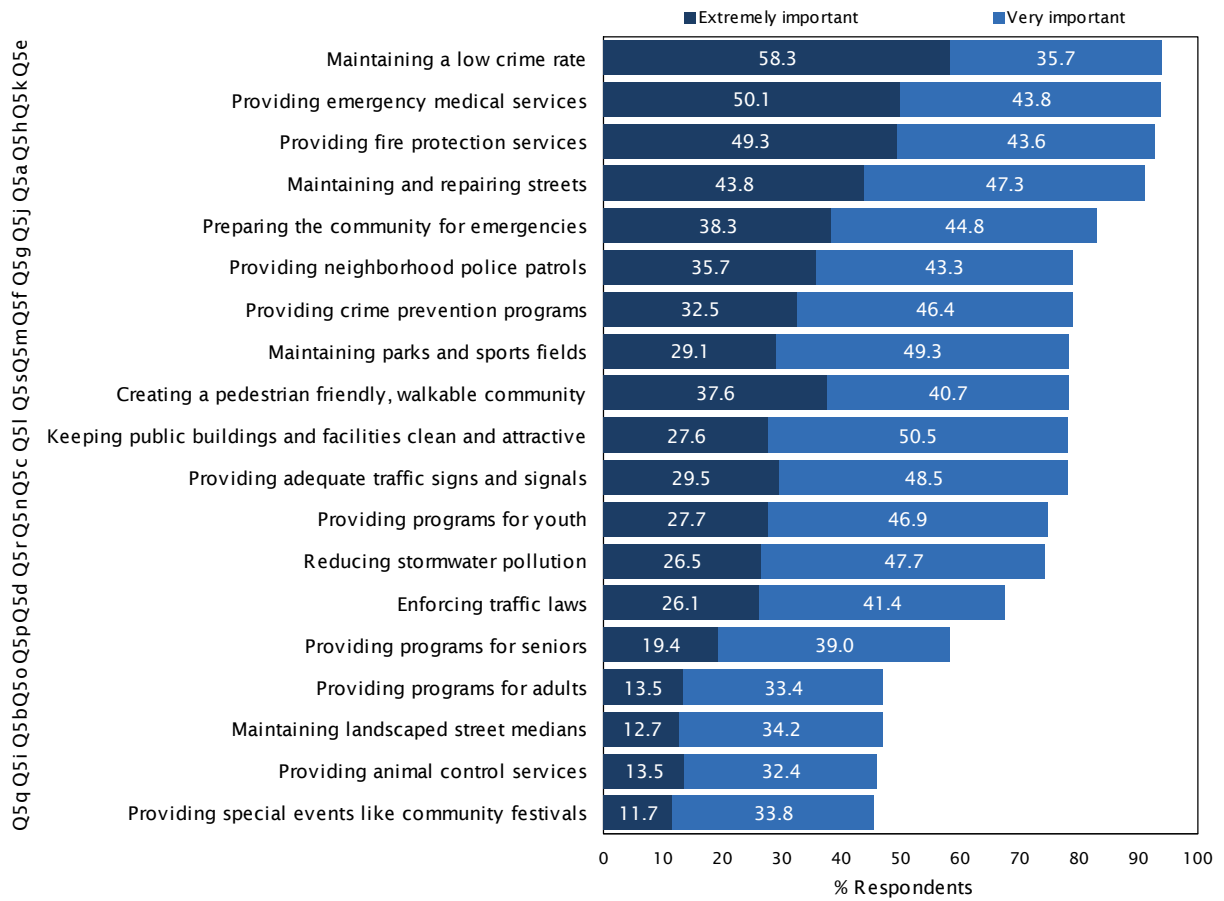


**SPECIFIC SERVICES** Whereas Question 4 addressed the City’s *overall* performance, the next series of questions asked respondents to rate the importance of *specific* services offered by the City, as well as their level of satisfaction with efforts to provide these services. For each service respondents were first asked if they thought a service was extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not at all important. Respondents were then asked about their satisfaction with these same services. The order of the items was randomized for each respondent to avoid a systematic position bias.

Figure 9 on the next page presents the services sorted by order of importance according to the percentage of respondents who rated a service as *at least* very important. Overall, La Mesa residents rated maintaining a low crime rate as most important (94% extremely or very important) among the 19 services tested, followed by two other public safety services: providing emergency medical services (94%) and providing fire protection services (93%). At the other end of the spectrum, providing special events like community festivals (46%), providing animal control services (46%), maintaining landscaped street medians (47%), and providing programs for adults (47%) were viewed as less important.

**Question 5** For each of the services I read, please tell me whether the service is extremely important to you, very important, somewhat important, or not at all important.

**FIGURE 9 IMPORTANCE OF SERVICES**



For the interested reader, Table 2 on the next page displays the percentage of respondents who viewed each service as extremely or very important for 2017, 2015, 2013, 2011, and 2006, as well as the difference between 2017 and 2015. When compared with the 2015 survey, there was a general trend of assigning higher importance to most services tested in 2017, with statistically significant increases for eight service areas. Two services, maintaining a low crime rate and providing programs for seniors, saw small but significant drops in importance (-4% and -8%, respectively).

**TABLE 2 IMPORTANCE OF SERVICES BY STUDY YEAR**

	Study Year					Change in Extremely + Very Important '15 to '17
	2017	2015	2013	2011	2006	
Maintaining parks and sports fields	78.4	71.5	70.3	67.1	71.2	+6.9†
Providing programs for adults	46.9	40.6	38.6	35.3	N/A	+6.4†
Reducing stormwater pollution	74.2	67.9	63.7	59.3	70.4	+6.3†
Providing programs for youth	74.7	68.5	69.9	66.4	N/A	+6.1†
Enforcing traffic laws	67.5	61.8	65.2	63.7	77.8	+5.7†
Keeping public buildings and facilities clean and attractive	78.1	72.6	69.8	62.3	75.8	+5.5†
Providing emergency medical services	93.9	89.1	91.4	91.3	87.9	+4.8†
Providing animal control services	45.9	41.5	46.6	46.1	61.0	+4.4
Providing crime prevention programs	78.8	75.3	74.5	74.6	82.9	+3.5
Providing special events like community festivals	45.6	43.0	38.9	33.9	57.7	+2.5
Maintaining and repairing streets	91.1	88.6	87.2	86.8	83.8	+2.5
Preparing the community for emergencies	83.1	81.0	73.1	71.3	N/A	+2.1
Creating a pedestrian friendly, walkable community	78.3	76.6	69.9	65.1	N/A	+1.7
Providing adequate traffic signs and signals	78.0	76.3	74.8	73.0	79.9	+1.7
Maintaining landscaped street medians	46.9	47.9	50.7	39.2	61.8	-1.0
Providing neighborhood police patrols	79.0	80.3	79.5	78.5	84.4	-1.3
Providing fire protection services	92.9	95.2	94.5	91.2	91.0	-2.4
Maintaining a low crime rate	93.9	98.1	93.6	94.2	91.1	-4.2†
Providing programs for seniors	58.4	66.4	59.5	52.0	N/A	-8.0†

† Statistically significant change (p < 0.05) between the 2015 and 2017 studies.

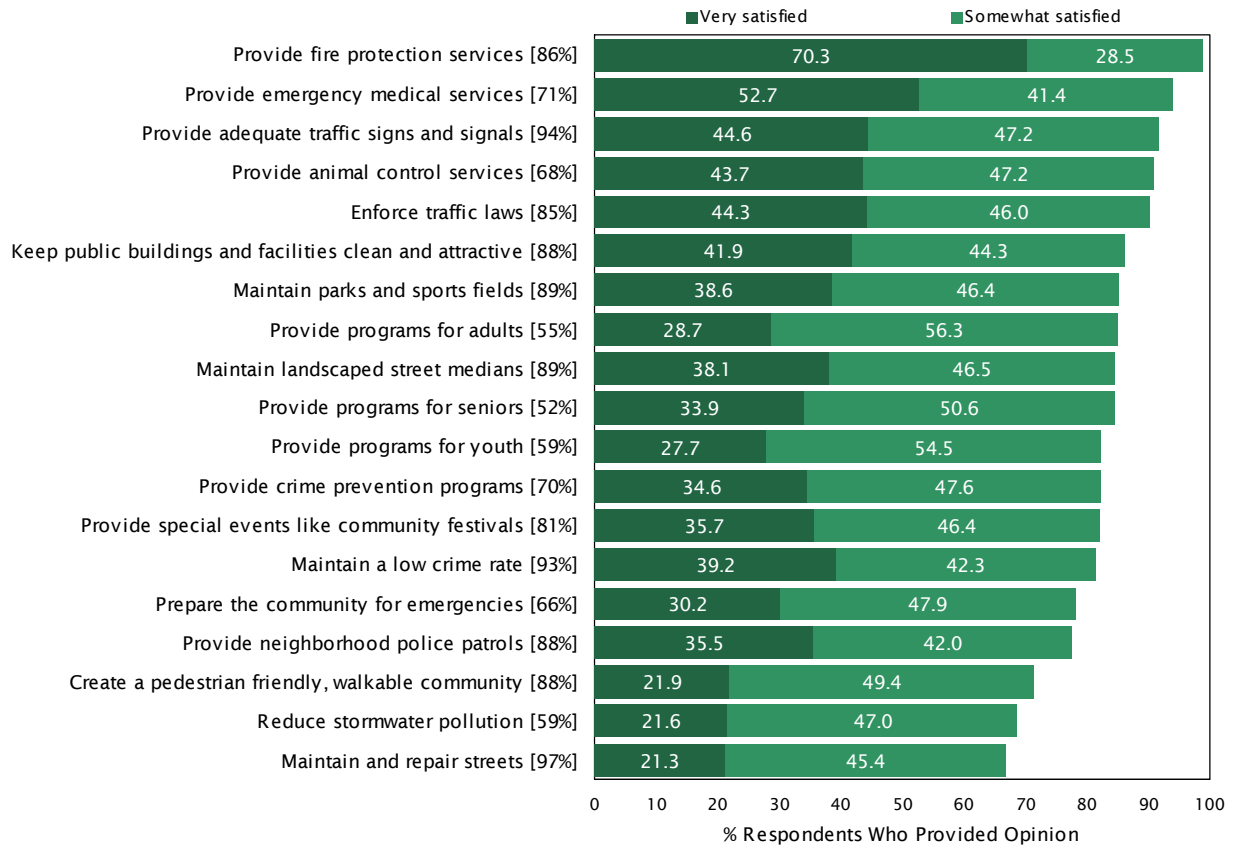
Turning to the satisfaction component, Figure 10 on the next page sorts the same list of 19 services according to the percentage of respondents who indicated they were either very or somewhat satisfied with the City’s efforts to provide the service.<sup>2</sup> Overall, respondents were most satisfied with the City’s efforts to provide fire protection services (99%), emergency medical services (94%), and adequate traffic signs and signals (92%). Respondents were less satisfied with the City’s efforts to maintain and repair streets (67%), reduce stormwater pollution (69%), and create a pedestrian friendly, walkable community (71%).

Table 3 at the bottom of the next page displays the percentage of respondents who were satisfied with each service in 2017, 2015, 2013, 2011, and 2006, and the difference between 2017 and 2015. Comparing the current survey with 2015, there were statistically significant decreases in satisfaction with fourteen of the services tested, most notably reducing stormwater pollution (-24%) and maintaining and repairing streets (-14%). There was one statistically significant increase, which was satisfaction with the City’s efforts to provide animal control services (+5%).

2. Note that to allow for an apples-to-apples comparison of the satisfaction ratings, only respondents who held an opinion (either satisfied or dissatisfied) are included in Figure 10. Those who did not have an opinion were removed from this analysis. The percentage who held an opinion for each service is shown to the right of the service label in brackets.

**Question 6** For the same list of services I just read I'd like you to tell me how satisfied you are with the job the City of La Mesa is doing to provide the service.

**FIGURE 10 SATISFACTION WITH SERVICES**



**TABLE 3 SATISFACTION WITH SERVICES BY STUDY YEAR**

	Study Year					Change in Satisfaction '15 to '17
	2017	2015	2013	2011	2006	
Provide animal control services	90.9	85.7	93.6	87.6	87.4	+5.2†
Enforce traffic laws	90.3	87.4	89.7	90.2	88.2	+3.0
Provide fire protection services	98.8	98.7	98.2	97.1	94.8	+0.1
Provide adequate traffic signs and signals	91.9	92.0	93.6	94.8	87.6	-0.1
Provide programs for adults	85.0	87.6	93.1	90.3	N/A	-2.6
Provide emergency medical services	94.1	98.8	98.1	97.1	93.0	-4.7†
Maintain a low crime rate	81.5	86.4	85.8	79.5	85.7	-4.9†
Maintain parks and sports fields	85.1	90.1	94.0	92.2	91.8	-5.0†
Provide crime prevention programs	82.2	87.4	88.9	84.7	86.5	-5.2†
Maintain landscaped street medians	84.6	90.7	94.4	91.1	89.1	-6.1†
Keep public buildings and facilities clean, attractive	86.2	93.4	96.7	94.9	90.2	-7.2†
Prepare the community for emergencies	78.1	85.8	86.1	84.0	N/A	-7.7†
Provide programs for seniors	84.5	92.6	93.2	93.4	N/A	-8.1†
Provide programs for youth	82.2	90.8	91.4	88.9	N/A	-8.6†
Create a pedestrian friendly, walkable community	71.3	80.2	84.8	84.8	N/A	-8.9†
Provide special events like community festivals	82.1	91.6	93.0	95.2	87.6	-9.5†
Provide neighborhood police patrols	77.5	87.1	87.1	83.5	83.7	-9.6†
Maintain and repair streets	66.7	80.5	79.7	72.0	80.6	-13.8†
Reduce stormwater pollution	68.7	92.7	91.1	86.1	85.2	-24.1†

† Statistically significant change (p < 0.05) between the 2015 and 2017 studies.



## PERFORMANCE NEEDS & PRIORITIES

With a measure of the importance of a service to residents as well as a measure of satisfaction with the City's efforts to provide the service, True North is able to examine the relationship between these two dimensions and identify areas where the City has the greatest opportunities to improve resident satisfaction—and identify for which services the City is meeting, and even exceeding, the majority of residents' needs.

Rather than rely on *averages* to conduct this analysis, True North has developed an *individualized* approach to identifying priorities. This approach is built on the recognition that opinions will vary from resident to resident and that understanding this variation is required for assessing how well the City is meeting residents' needs.<sup>3</sup> Table 4 on the next page presents a grid based on the importance and satisfaction scales. The horizontal axis corresponds to the four *importance* options, and the vertical scale corresponds to the four *satisfaction* options. The 16 cells within the grid are grouped into one of six categories based on how well the City is meeting, or not meeting, a resident's needs for a particular service. The six groups are as follows:

<i>Exceeding Needs</i>	The City is exceeding a respondent's needs if a respondent is satisfied and the level of expressed satisfaction is higher than the importance that the respondent assigned to the service.
<i>Meeting Needs, Moderately</i>	The City is moderately meeting a respondent's needs if the respondent is satisfied and the level of satisfaction is commensurate with the level of importance assigned to the service.
<i>Meeting Needs, Marginally</i>	The City is marginally meeting a respondent's needs if the respondent is satisfied with the City's efforts to provide the service, but their level of satisfaction is lower than the level of importance assigned to the service.
<i>Not Meeting Needs, Marginally</i>	The City is marginally <i>not</i> meeting a respondent's needs if the respondent is somewhat dissatisfied, but the service is also viewed as just somewhat or not at all important.
<i>Not Meeting Needs, Moderately</i>	The City is moderately <i>not</i> meeting a respondent's needs if a) a respondent is very dissatisfied with the City's efforts to provide the service, but the service is viewed somewhat or not at all important, or b) a respondent is somewhat dissatisfied and the service is very important.
<i>Not Meeting Needs, Severely</i>	The City is severely <i>not</i> meeting a respondent's needs if a) a respondent is dissatisfied and the service is viewed as extremely important, or b) a respondent is very dissatisfied and the service is viewed as very important.

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3. Any tool that relies on the opinions of the average respondent will provide a limited and occasionally distorted picture of how well an agency is performing. The simple fact is that a city is not comprised of average residents—it is comprised of unique individuals who vary substantially in their opinions of the City's performance in different service areas. Thus, although the arithmetic average of these individuals' opinions is a useful statistic, it does not capture the variation in opinions that occurs among residents, and it is this variation that is critical for truly assessing how well the City is meeting the needs of its residents.

**TABLE 4 RESIDENT SERVICE NEEDS & PRIORITIES MATRIX**

		Importance			
		Not at all important	Somewhat important	Very important	Extremely important
Satisfaction	Very satisfied	Exceeding needs	Exceeding needs	Meeting needs, moderately	Meeting needs, moderately
	Somewhat satisfied	Exceeding needs	Meeting needs, moderately	Meeting needs, marginally	Meeting needs, marginally
	Somewhat dissatisfied	Not meeting needs, marginally	Not meeting needs, marginally	Not meeting needs, moderately	Not meeting needs, severely
	Very dissatisfied	Not meeting needs, moderately	Not meeting needs, moderately	Not meeting needs, severely	Not meeting needs, severely

Using this framework, True North categorized each respondent individually for each of the 19 services tested in the study. Thus, for example, a respondent who indicated that providing maintaining and repairing streets was somewhat important and they were very satisfied with the City’s efforts in this service area would be categorized in the *exceeding needs* group for this service. The same respondent may be grouped in the *marginally not meeting needs* group for another service (e.g., reducing stormwater pollution) if they were somewhat dissatisfied with the City’s efforts to provide the service, but the service was viewed as only somewhat important.

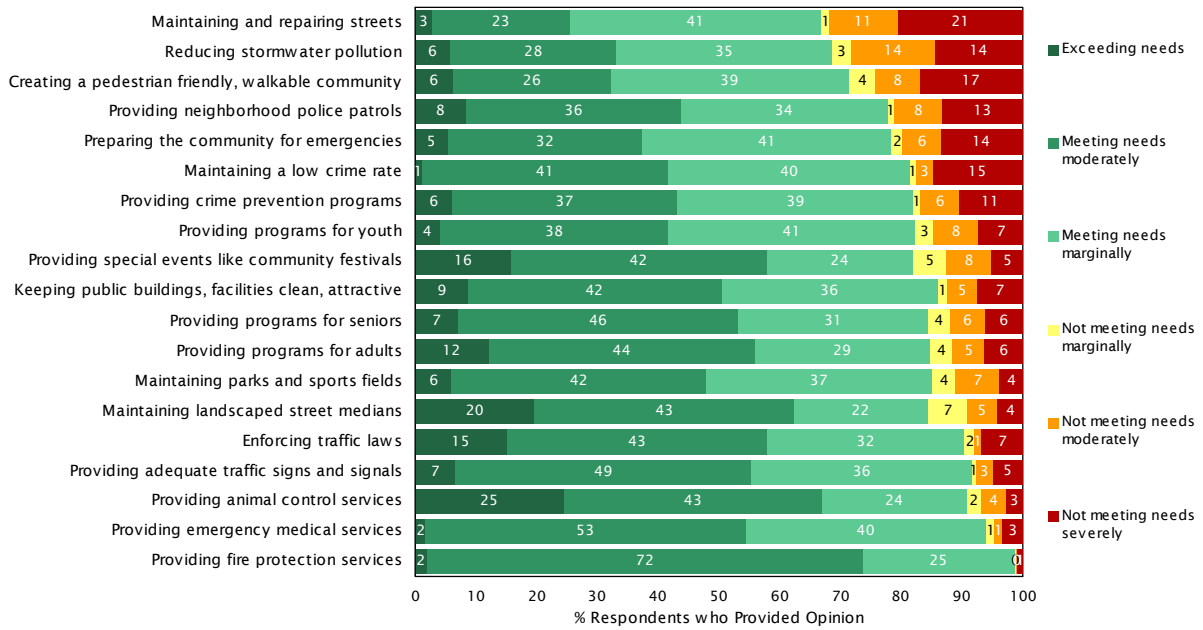
Figure 11 on the next page presents the 19 services tested, along with the percentage of respondents who were grouped into each of the six possible categories. For ease of interpretation, the color-coding in Figure 11 is consistent with that presented in Table 4. Thus, for example, in the service area of maintaining and repairing streets, the City is exceeding the needs of 3% of respondents, moderately meeting the needs of 23% of respondents, marginally meeting the needs of 41% of respondents, marginally not meeting the needs of 1% of respondents, moderately not meeting the needs of 11% of respondents, and severely not meeting the needs of 21% of respondents.

As shown in Figure 11, the City is meeting the needs of at least two-thirds of residents for all 19 services tested. Moreover, the City is meeting the needs of at least 80% of residents for 14 of the 19 services.

Operating from the management philosophy that, all other things being equal, the City should focus on improving those services that have the highest percentage of residents for which the City is moderately or severely not meeting their needs, the services have been sorted in order of priority. Thus, maintaining and repairing streets is the top priority, followed by reducing stormwater pollution, creating a pedestrian friendly, walkable community, providing neighborhood police patrols, and preparing the community for emergencies.



**FIGURE 11 RESIDENT SERVICE NEEDS & PRIORITIES**



## PUBLIC SAFETY & NEIGHBORHOOD ISSUES

Ensuring the personal safety of residents is the most basic function of local government. It is important to keep in mind, of course, that public safety is as much a matter of perceptions as it is a matter of reality. Regardless of actual crime statistics, if residents do not *feel* safe then they will not enjoy the many cultural, recreational, and shopping opportunities available in the City of La Mesa that will enhance their quality of life.

**PERCEIVED SAFETY** The survey included several questions designed to measure respondents' perceptions of safety and potential neighborhood issues. The first of these questions presented respondents with the four scenarios described at the bottom of Figure 12 and asked them to rate how safe they feel in each scenario, according to the scale shown to the right of the figure. As shown in the figure, residents' feelings of safety varied considerably depending on the setting. Nearly all residents who provided an opinion indicated that they feel safe walking alone in their neighborhood (96%) and in business and retail areas of the City (95%) during the day. After dark, however, the corresponding percentages dropped to 73% and 71%, respectively.

**Question 7** *Next, I'd like to ask a few questions about personal safety and security in the City of La Mesa. When you are: \_\_\_\_\_ would you say that you feel very safe, reasonably safe, somewhat unsafe, or very unsafe?*

**FIGURE 12 PERCEPTIONS OF PERSONAL SAFETY**

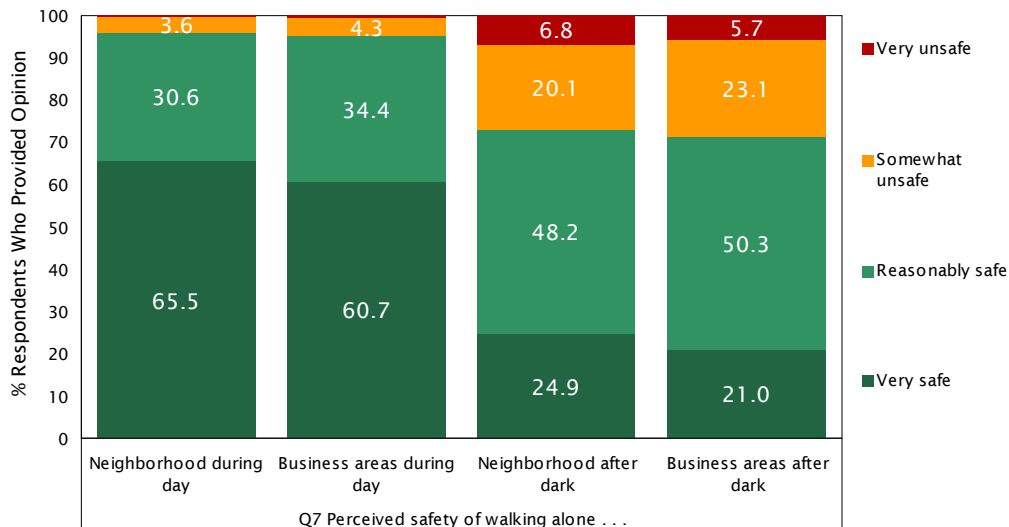


Table 5 on the next page displays the percentage of respondents who felt very or reasonably safe (among those who provided an opinion) in each scenario for 2017, 2015, 2013, 2011, and 2006, as well as the difference between 2017 and 2015. Between the two most recent studies there was a statistically significant increase in the percentage of survey respondents who said they felt very or reasonably safe in business areas after dark (+5%).

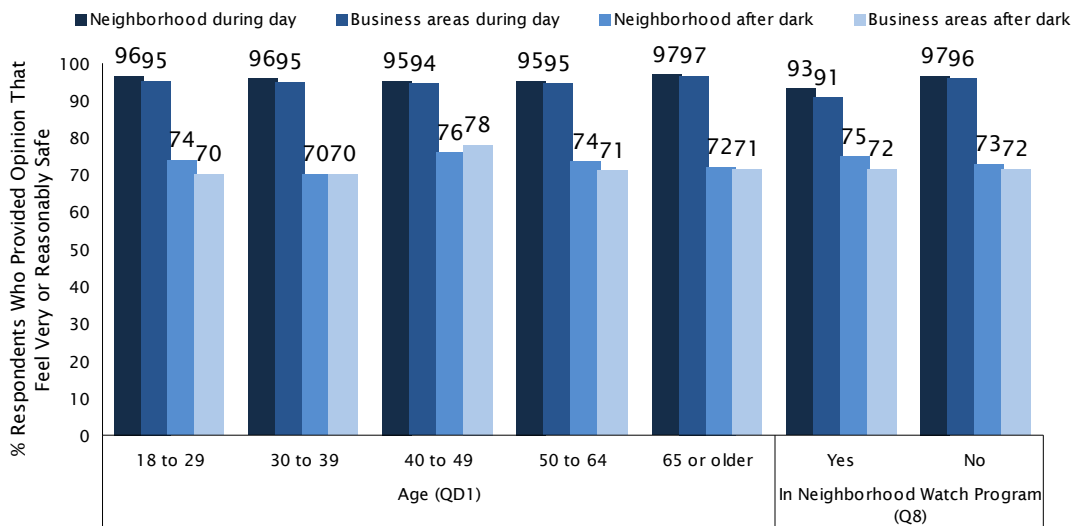
**TABLE 5 PERCEPTIONS OF PERSONAL SAFETY BY STUDY YEAR**

	Study Year					Change in Very + Reasonably Safe '15 to '17
	2017	2015	2013	2011	2006	
Business areas after dark	71.3	66.4	78.7	77.4	76.0	+4.9†
Neighborhood during day	96.1	94.4	97.1	96.8	97.5	+1.7
Neighborhood after dark	73.1	72.5	78.8	74.7	75.1	+0.5
Business areas during day	95.1	94.8	97.5	96.8	97.9	+0.2

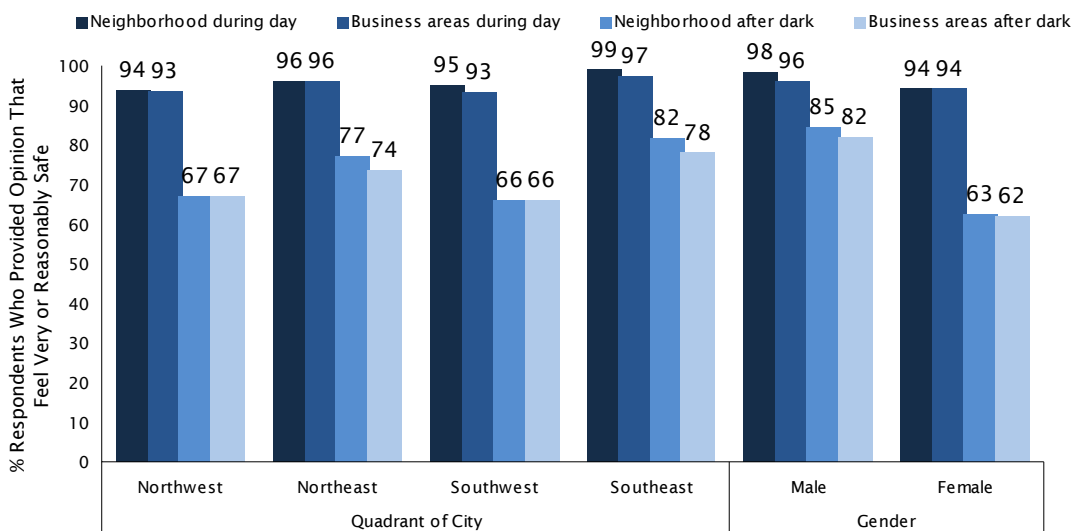
† Statistically significant change (p < 0.05) between the 2015 and 2017 studies.

For the interested reader, figures 13 and 14 display how perceived safety (showing percentage who were very or reasonably safe) varied by respondent age, participation in a neighborhood watch program, quadrant of the City, and gender.

**FIGURE 13 PERCEPTIONS OF PERSONAL SAFETY BY AGE & IN NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM**



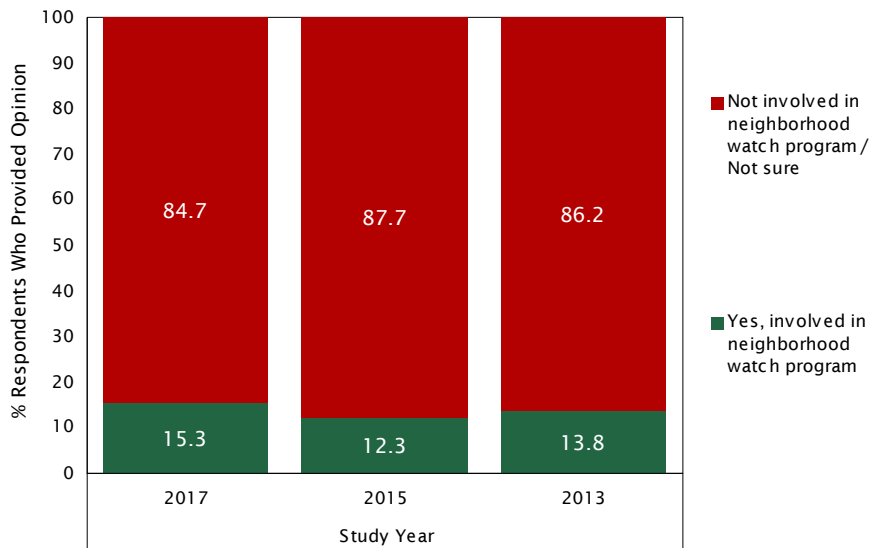
**FIGURE 14 PERCEPTIONS OF PERSONAL SAFETY BY QUADRANT OF CITY & GENDER**



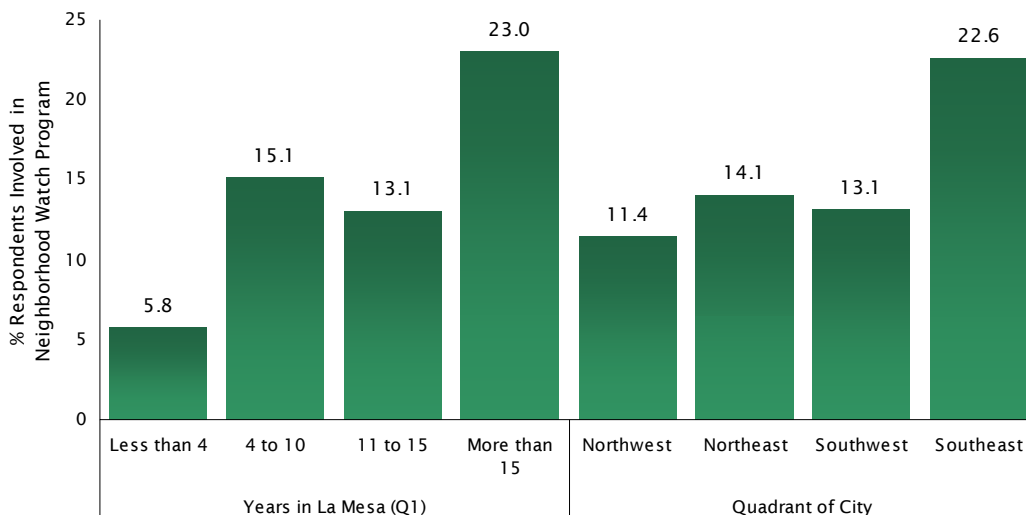
**NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH** Neighborhood watch is a crime prevention program that enlists the active participation of residents in cooperation with law enforcement and other community agencies to reduce crime, solve problems, and improve the quality of life in their area. The Police Department serves as one of many such resources, although ultimately program success requires sustained resident participation and effort. Added to the 2013 survey and included in 2015 and the current 2017 survey was a question that simply asked La Mesa residents if they were involved in a neighborhood watch program. As shown in Figure 15, 15% of survey respondents indicated that they were involved in a neighborhood watch program, similar to the percentage found in the previous two studies. As shown in figures 16 and 17, long-time residents, residents in the Southeast quadrant, home owners, and those at least 40 years of age were the most likely subgroups to report involvement in a neighborhood watch program.

**Question 8** Are you involved in a neighborhood watch program?

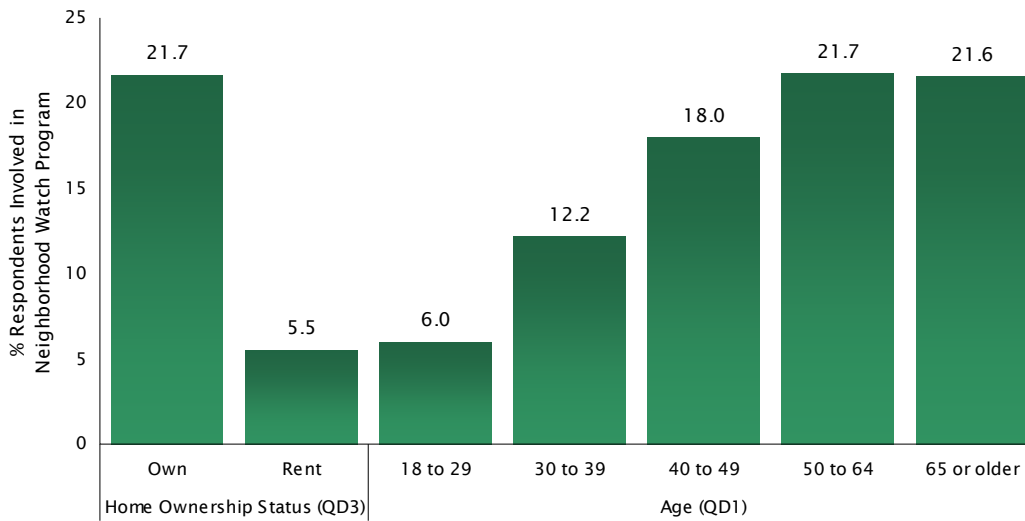
**FIGURE 15 INVOLVED IN NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM**



**FIGURE 16 INVOLVED IN NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM BY YEARS IN LA MESA & QUADRANT OF CITY**



**FIGURE 17 INVOLVED IN NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM BY HOME OWNERSHIP STATUS & AGE**



**CODE ENFORCEMENT** Respondents were next informed that the City has created codes to address and prevent a variety of issues that can affect a neighborhood, including illegal parking, abandoned vehicles, non-permitted construction, junk storage, and properties not being properly maintained. They were then asked if, in general, they are satisfied or dissatisfied with the City’s efforts to *enforce* code violations, or if they do not have an opinion on the matter.

**Question 9** *The City of La Mesa has created codes to address a variety of issues that can affect a neighborhood, such as illegal parking, abandoned vehicles, non-permitted construction, junk storage and properties not being properly maintained. Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the City's efforts to enforce code violations, or do you not have an opinion?*

**FIGURE 18 SATISFACTION WITH CODE ENFORCEMENT BY STUDY YEAR**

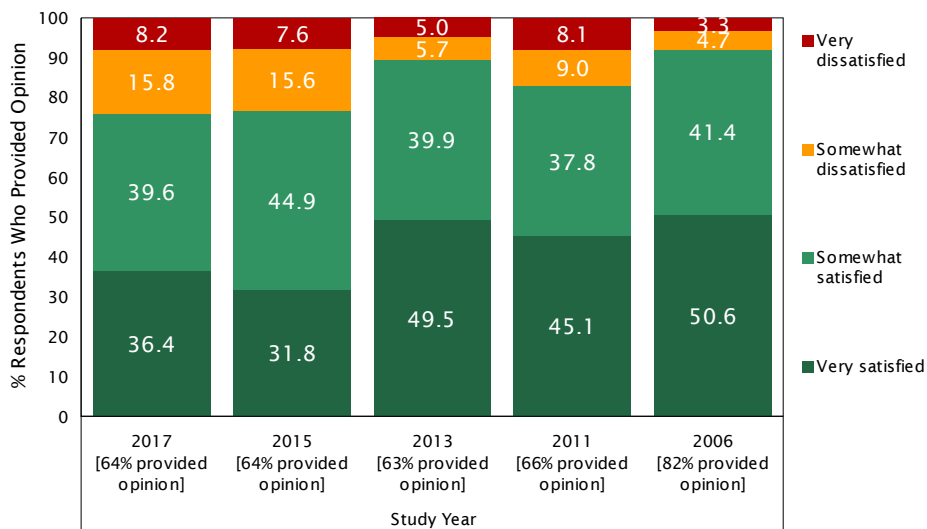
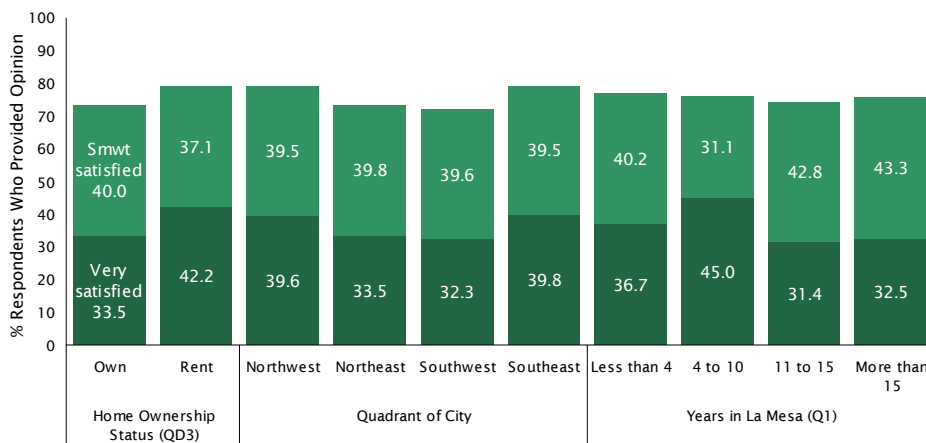


Figure 18 on the previous page provides the responses to Question 9 among those who provided an opinion. In 2017, more than one-third (36%) of residents surveyed did not have or provide an opinion. Among those with an opinion, approximately one-quarter (24%) indicated that they were dissatisfied with the City’s code enforcement efforts, virtually identical to the finding from the 2015 study. The remaining respondents were either somewhat (40%) or very (36%) satisfied. Below, Figure 19 shows how satisfaction with the City’s code enforcement efforts varied by the respondents’ home ownership status, quadrant of residence, and years in La Mesa.

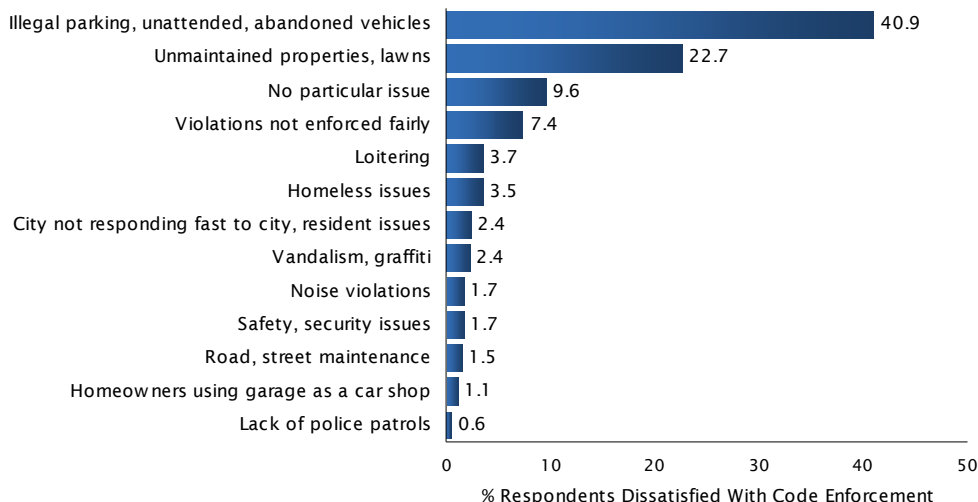
**FIGURE 19 SATISFACTION WITH CODE ENFORCEMENT BY HOME OWNERSHIP STATUS, QUADRANT OF CITY & YEARS IN LA MESA**



Respondents dissatisfied with code enforcement efforts were asked if their dissatisfaction was motivated by a particular issue or violation. As shown in Figure 20, illegal parking was cited by 41% of respondents dissatisfied with the City’s code enforcement efforts, followed by unmaintained properties and lawns (23%). Approximately 7% of those who were dissatisfied with the City’s code enforcement efforts expressed concern about the perceived fairness of enforcement.

**Question 10** *Is there a particular issue or code violation that the City isn't addressing that leads you to be dissatisfied?*

**FIGURE 20 REASON FOR DISSATISFACTION WITH CODE ENFORCEMENT**



# TRAFFIC

In nearly all southern California cities, traffic congestion ranks among the most pressing problems that residents would like local and regional governments to solve. In the 2006 survey, *reduced traffic congestion* was the second most commonly mentioned change cited by residents to make La Mesa a better place to live. Since then it has fallen out of the top-five mentions, but to look more closely at the issue and to compare current perceptions of traffic congestion with those from the prior studies, the survey measured residents' perceptions of traffic circulation in the City *overall*, on major streets, and in residential areas.

**TRAFFIC CIRCULATION** As shown in Figure 21, 86% of residents in 2017 rated traffic circulation in residential areas as excellent or good. Perceptions of overall circulation (72%), as well as circulation on major streets (67%), were somewhat less positive.

**Question 11** *Next, I'd like to ask you a few questions about traffic circulation. By traffic circulation, I mean the ability to drive around La Mesa without encountering long delays. Would you rate: \_\_\_\_\_ within the City of La Mesa as excellent, good, fair, poor or very poor?*

**FIGURE 21 PERCEPTION OF TRAFFIC CIRCULATION**

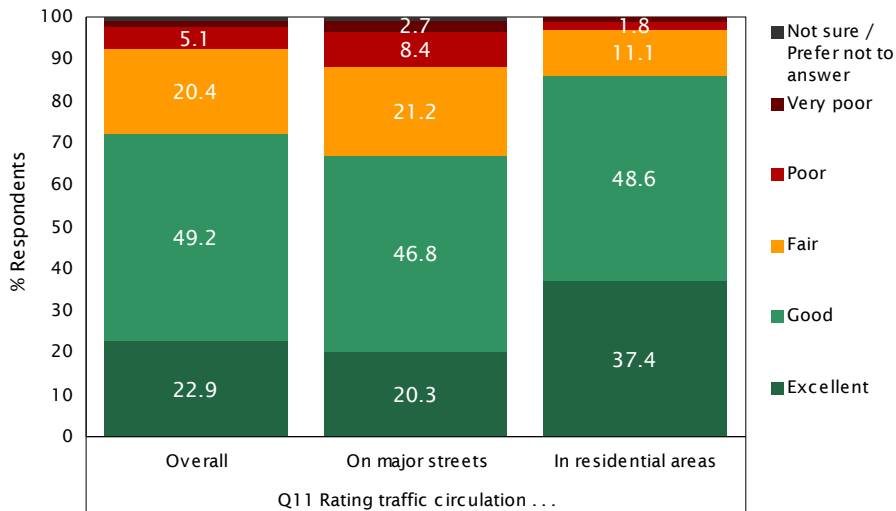


Table 6 provides the percentage of respondents in 2017, 2015, 2013, 2011, and 2006 who regarded traffic congestion as excellent or good *overall*, on major streets, and in residential areas. Compared with the 2015 survey, there was a statistically significant increase in the percentage of residents who rated traffic circulation on major streets as excellent or good, rebounding from a significant decrease identified in the previous study.

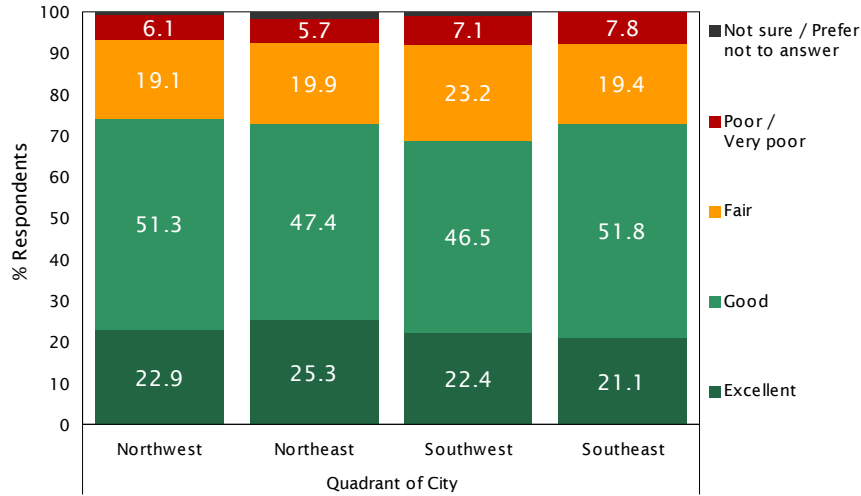
**TABLE 6 PERCEPTION OF TRAFFIC CIRCULATION BY STUDY YEAR**

	Study Year					Change in Excellent + Good '15 to '17
	2017	2015	2013	2011	2006	
Traffic on major streets	67.1	61.2	73.8	70.3	63.7	+5.9†
Traffic in residential areas	86.0	83.0	88.2	87.5	81.6	+3.1
Traffic overall	72.1	73.2	75.4	72.5	70.8	-1.1

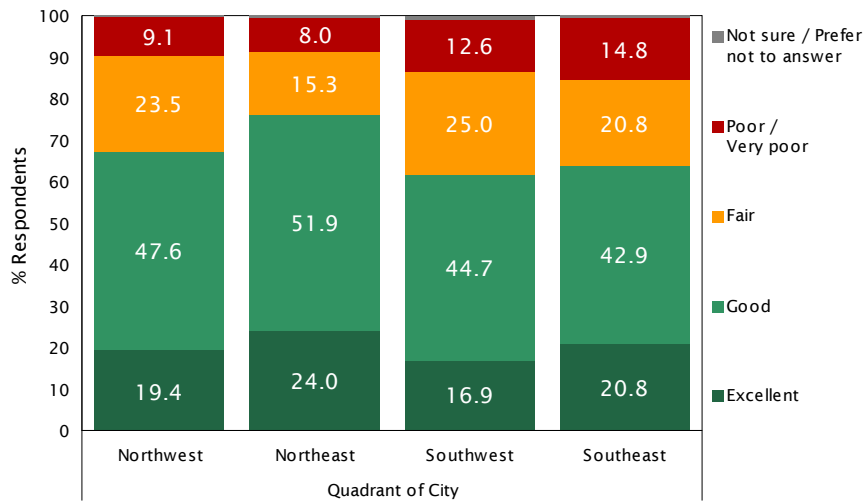
† Statistically significant change (p < 0.05) between the 2015 and 2017 studies.

Figures 22 through 24 present ratings of traffic circulation overall, on major streets, and in residential areas according to the quadrant of the City in which respondents reside.

**FIGURE 22 PERCEPTION OF TRAFFIC CIRCULATION OVERALL BY QUADRANT OF CITY**

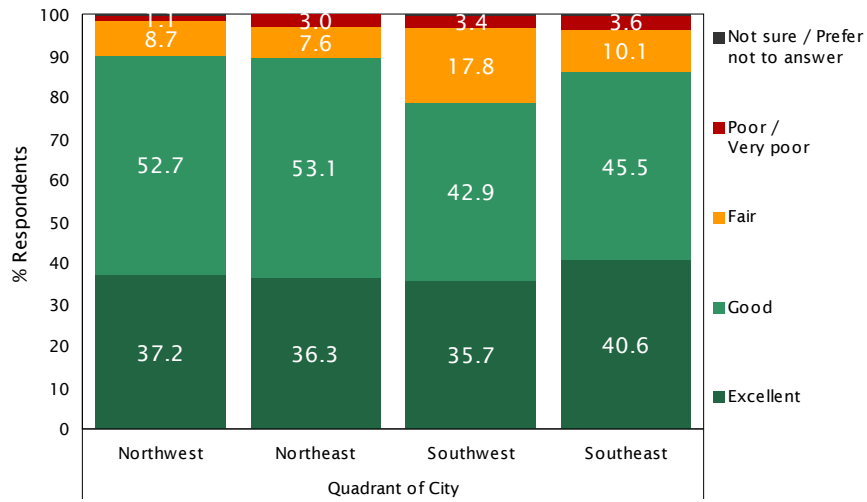


**FIGURE 23 PERCEPTION OF TRAFFIC CIRCULATION ON MAJOR STREETS BY QUADRANT OF CITY**





**FIGURE 24 PERCEPTION OF TRAFFIC CIRCULATION IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS BY QUADRANT OF CITY**



# PARKS & RECREATION

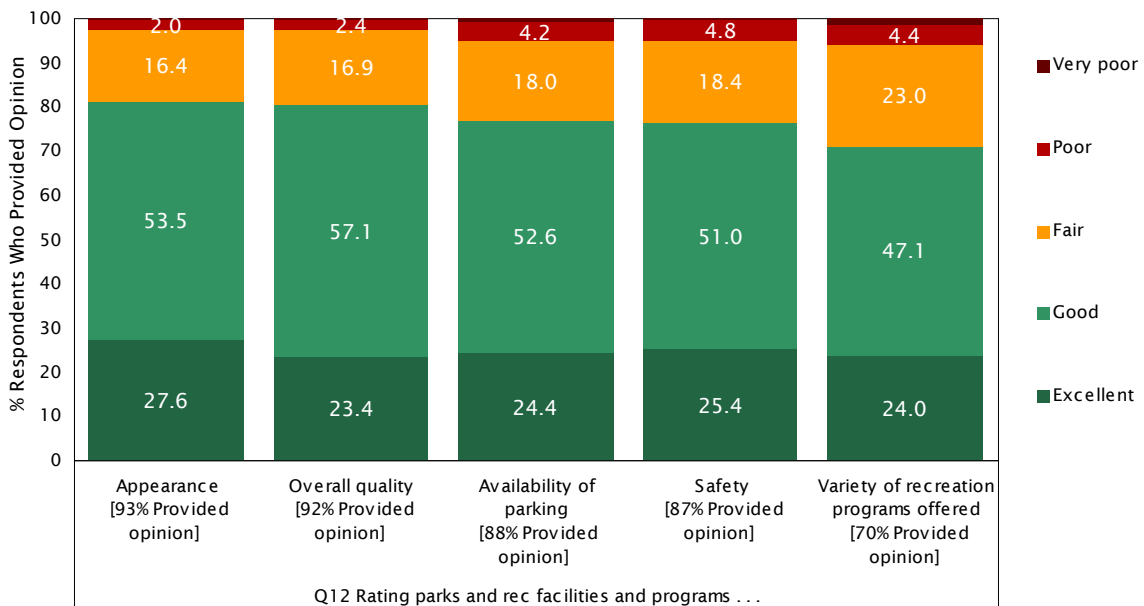
By providing areas and opportunities to recreate, relax, and play, the City of La Mesa’s parks, sports fields, trails, and recreation facilities promote a sense of community in the City, improve property values, enhance the business climate and local economy, and generally contribute to a higher quality of life for residents and visitors alike. Questions 12 and 13 in the survey sought to profile residents’ perceptions of these amenities, and identify their priorities for future recreation improvements.

**FACILITIES & PROGRAMS RATINGS** All respondents were asked to rate the overall quality, appearance, safety, and availability of parking at La Mesa’s parks and recreation facilities, as well as the variety of recreation programs offered using a five-point scale of excellent, good, fair, poor, or, very poor. As detailed in Figure 25, between 7% and 30% of respondents indicated they were *not sure* when asked to comment on a specific aspect of parks and recreation. Of those with an opinion, however, ratings were largely positive. Overall, eight-out-of-ten residents chose *excellent* or *good* to describe the overall quality (80%) and appearance (81%) of the parks and recreation facilities. Ratings of the availability of parking (77%), perceived safety at the sites (76%), and the variety of recreation programs (71%) were also generally positive.

Table 7 on the next page provides the percentage of respondents in 2017, 2015, 2013, 2011, and 2006 who rated each of the aspects of parks and recreation facilities as excellent or good, among those who provided an opinion. There were no statistically significant changes from 2015.

**Question 12** *How do you rate the: ..... La Mesa's parks and recreation facilities? Would you say it is excellent, good, fair, poor or very poor?*

**FIGURE 25 RATING OF PARK & RECREATION FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS**



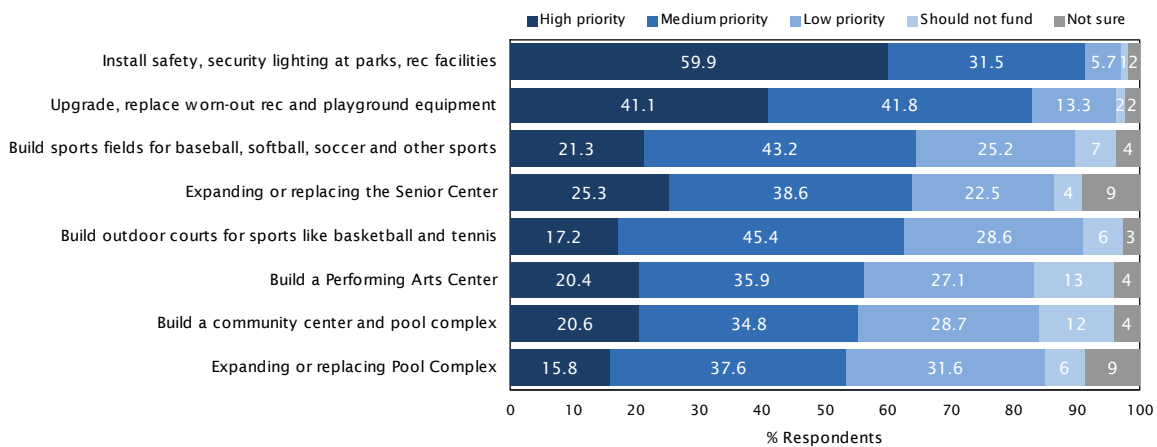
**TABLE 7 RATING OF PARK & RECREATION FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS BY STUDY YEAR (AMONG THOSE WHO PROVIDED OPINION)**

	Study Year					Change in Excellent + Good '15 to '17
	2017	2015	2013	2011	2006	
Safety	76.4	72.4	79.8	76.7	83.5	+4.0
Availability of parking	76.9	76.5	80.2	77.2	77.4	+0.5
Overall quality	80.5	81.2	88.5	85.0	86.6	-0.7
Variety of rec programs	71.0	71.9	N/A	N/A	N/A	-0.9
Appearance	81.1	82.8	87.2	84.3	89.7	-1.7

**RECREATION PRIORITIES** It is often the case that residents’ needs for public facilities and programs exceed a City’s financial resources. In such cases, a City must prioritize projects and programs based upon a variety of factors, including the preferences of its residents. The second question in this section of the survey was designed to give the City as well as the La Mesa Park and Recreation Foundation a better understanding of the types of parks and recreational facility improvements that residents would be most interested in having the City focus on in the future. Question 13 presented respondents with a list of eight possible improvements—shown on the left of Figure 26—and asked them to indicate whether each improvement should be a high, medium, or low priority for future City spending. Respondents were also offered the opportunity to indicate that the City should *not* spend any money on the facility. Respondents were instructed to keep in mind that not all of the facilities can be high priorities.

**Question 13** *As I read each of the following recreation improvements, I'd like you to indicate whether you think the City should make the item a high priority, a medium priority, or a low priority. If you feel the City should not spend any money on this item, just say so. Please keep in mind that not all of the items can be high priorities.*

**FIGURE 26 RECREATION PRIORITIES**



As shown in the figure, residents were most interested in installing safety and security lighting at parks and recreation facilities (91% felt it should be a high or medium priority) and upgrading or replacing worn-out recreation and playground equipment at existing parks and sports fields (83%), followed further down the priority list by building sports fields for baseball, softball, soccer and other sports (64%) and expanding or replacing the Senior Center (64%).

The next two tables present the percentage of respondents who considered each proposed improvement a *high priority* by their age, presence of a child in the home, quadrant in which they reside, and gender.

**TABLE 8 RECREATION PRIORITIES BY AGE & CHILD IN HSLD (SHOWING % HIGH PRIORITY)**

	Age (QD1)					Child in HslD (QD2)	
	18 to 29	30 to 39	40 to 49	50 to 64	65 or older	Yes	No
Install safety, security lighting at parks, rec facilities	64	65	56	56	57	58	61
Upgrade, replace worn-out rec and playground equipment	40	47	41	39	40	50	38
Expanding or replacing the Senior Center	24	21	19	28	32	21	27
Build sports fields for baseball, softball, soccer and other sports	21	23	24	21	17	25	20
Build a community center and pool complex	22	25	27	16	14	28	17
Build a Performing Arts Center	24	25	23	14	17	24	19
Build outdoor courts for sports like basketball and tennis	21	18	15	15	15	21	16
Expanding or replacing Pool Complex	10	21	22	16	14	25	12

**TABLE 9 RECREATION PRIORITIES BY QUADRANT OF CITY & GENDER (SHOWING % HIGH PRIORITY)**

	Quadrant of City				Gender	
	Northwest	Northeast	Southwest	Southeast	Male	Female
Install safety, security lighting at parks, rec facilities	59	64	58	59	53	66
Upgrade, replace worn-out rec and playground equipment	40	45	40	39	37	45
Expanding or replacing the Senior Center	24	31	23	22	20	30
Build sports fields for baseball, softball, soccer and other sports	17	22	23	23	25	18
Build a community center and pool complex	20	25	16	21	17	23
Build a Performing Arts Center	20	22	16	23	18	23
Build outdoor courts for sports like basketball and tennis	14	19	18	18	18	17
Expanding or replacing Pool Complex	14	15	17	17	14	17

## STAFF INTERACTIONS

Although much of the survey focused on residents' satisfaction with the City's efforts to provide services, like other progressive cities La Mesa recognizes there is more to good governance than simply providing satisfactory services and facilities. What percentage of residents have interacted with staff in the past year? Do they perceive that staff are responsive to their needs? Does staff serve their needs in a professional manner? Answers to questions like these are as important as service- or policy-related questions in measuring the City's performance in meeting the needs of its residents. Accordingly, they were the focus of the next section of the survey.

The first of these questions asked respondents if they had been in contact with City staff in the 12 months prior to the interview. As shown in Figure 27, 31% of residents indicated that they had contact with City staff in the 12 months prior to the interview, statistically similar to the finding from 2015. For the interested reader, Figure 28 provides the responses to Question 14 by respondents' area of residence, age, and home ownership status

### Question 14 *In the past 12 months, have you been in contact with City of La Mesa staff?*

FIGURE 27 CONTACT WITH CITY STAFF IN PAST 12 MONTHS BY STUDY YEAR

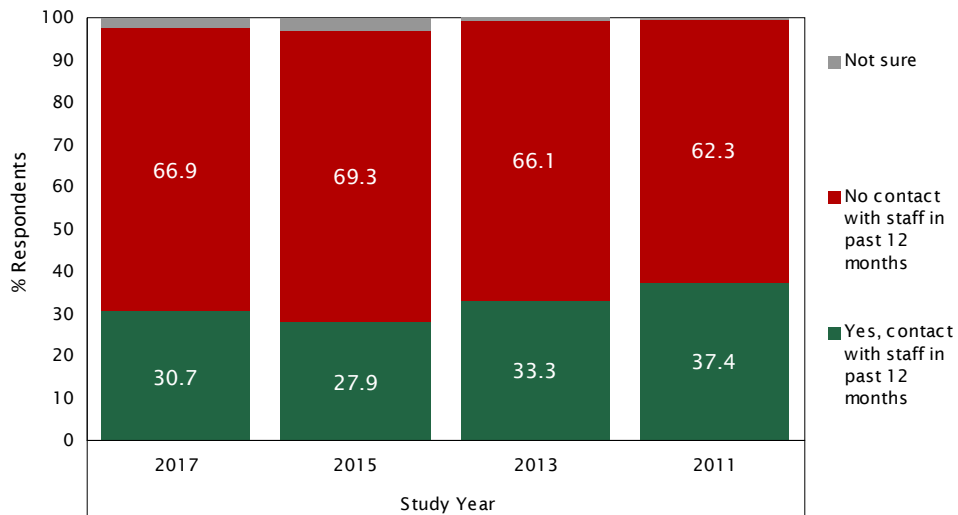
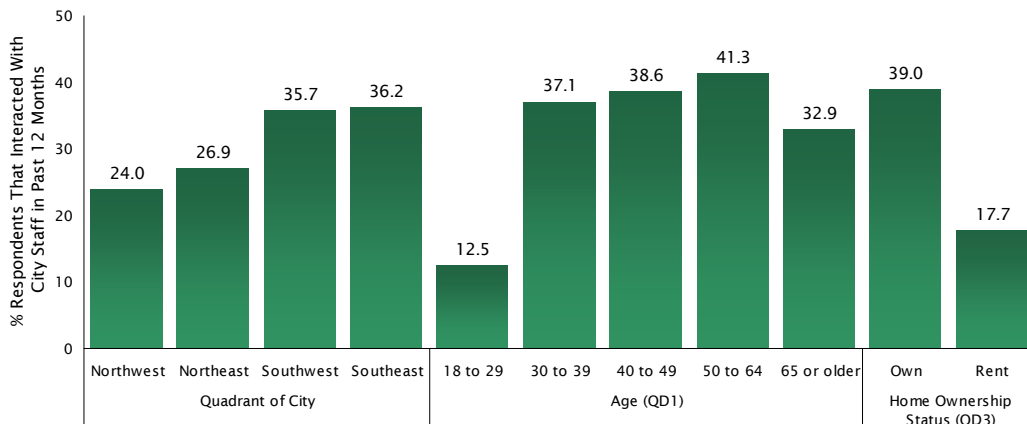


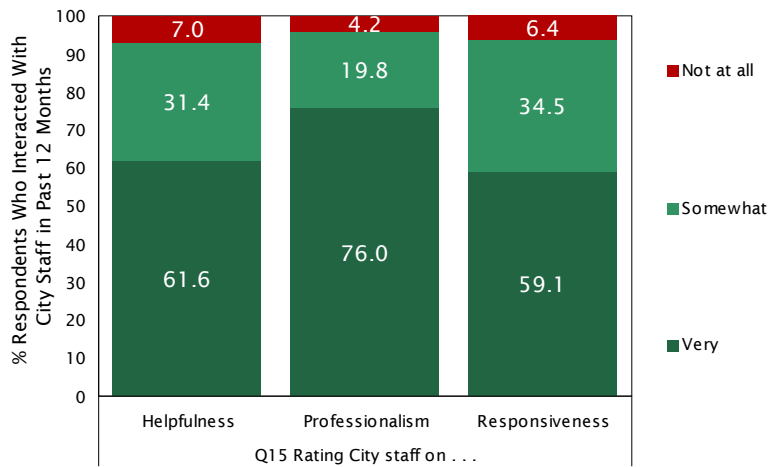
FIGURE 28 CONTACT WITH CITY STAFF IN PAST 12 MONTHS BY QUADRANT OF CITY, AGE & HOME OWNERSHIP STATUS



The next question in this section asked respondents who had been in contact with staff to rate staff members' helpfulness, professionalism, and responsiveness. The findings of this question are presented below in Figure 29, and show that staff received high ratings for all three dimensions tested. Approximately 96% of respondents who had interacted with staff in the past 12 months and provided an opinion felt staff were very (76%) or somewhat (20%) *professional*. Similarly, 94% felt staff was very or somewhat *responsive*, and 93% found them very or somewhat *helpful*. Table 10 below provides the responses to this question for the current study compared with 2015, and shows there were no significant changes.

**Question 15** *In your opinion, is the staff at the City very \_\_\_\_\_, somewhat \_\_\_\_\_, or not at all \_\_\_\_\_?*

**FIGURE 29 OPINION OF CITY STAFF (AMONG THOSE WHO PROVIDED OPINION)**



**TABLE 10 OPINION OF CITY STAFF BY STUDY YEAR (SHOWING % VERY OR SOMEWHAT AMONG THOSE WHO PROVIDED OPINION)**

	Study Year				Change in Very + Somewhat '15 to '17
	2017	2015	2013	2011	
Responsiveness	93.6	93.2	96.9	95.3	0.4
Helpfulness	93.0	93.6	96.9	94.4	-0.6
Professionalism	95.8	97.3	98.5	97.0	-1.4

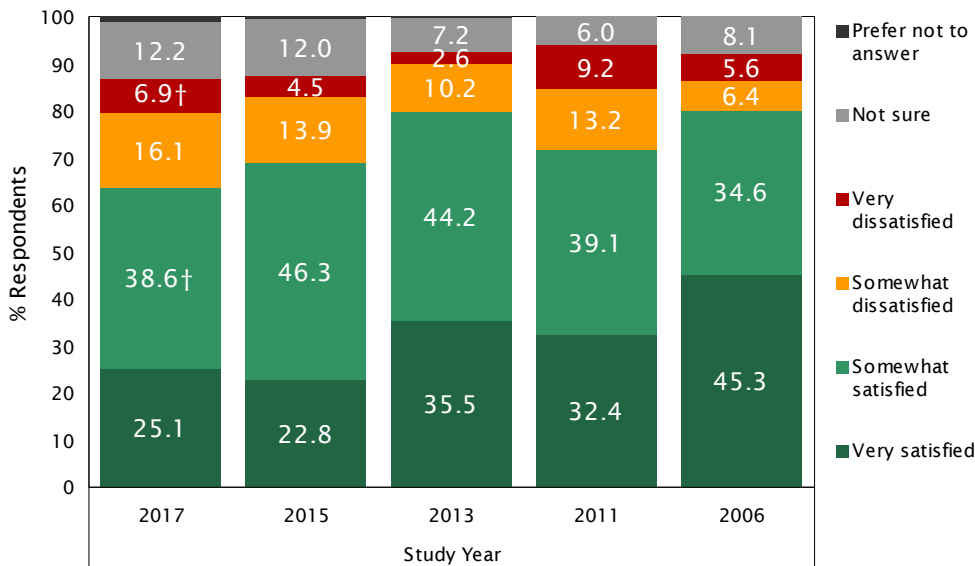
# COMMUNICATION

The importance of City communication with residents cannot be overstated. Much of a city’s success is shaped by the quality of information that is exchanged in both directions, from the City to the community and from the community to the City. This study is just one example of La Mesa’s efforts to enhance the information flow to the City to better understand the community’s concerns, perceptions, and needs. Some of La Mesa’s many efforts to communicate with its residents include its newsletters, timely press releases, and its website. In this section, we present the results of several communication-related questions.

**OVERALL SATISFACTION** Question 16 asked residents to report their overall satisfaction with city-resident communication in the City of La Mesa. Overall, 64% of respondents indicated that they were satisfied with City’s efforts to communicate with residents through newsletters, the Internet, or other means, 23% indicated they were dissatisfied with the City’s efforts in this respect, and 12% were not sure or chose not to provide an opinion (see Figure 30). Comparing the 2017 and 2015 surveys, we see a general decrease in satisfaction, with a small but statistically significant increase in the percentage of respondents who said they were *very dissatisfied* and an decrease in those who are *somewhat satisfied*.

**Question 16** *Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the City's efforts to communicate with residents through newsletters, the Internet, and other means?*

**FIGURE 30 SATISFACTION WITH COMMUNICATION BY STUDY YEAR**

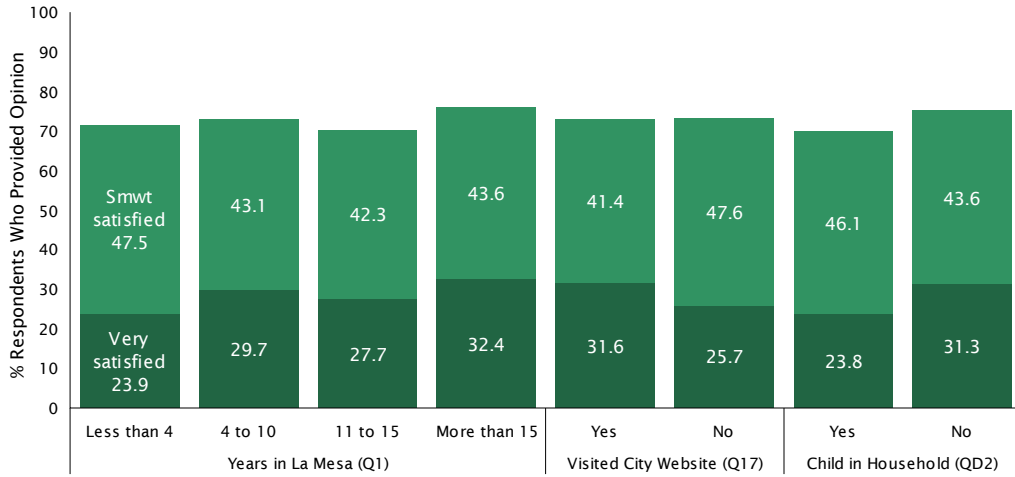


† Statistically significant change (p < 0.05) between the 2015 and 2017 studies.

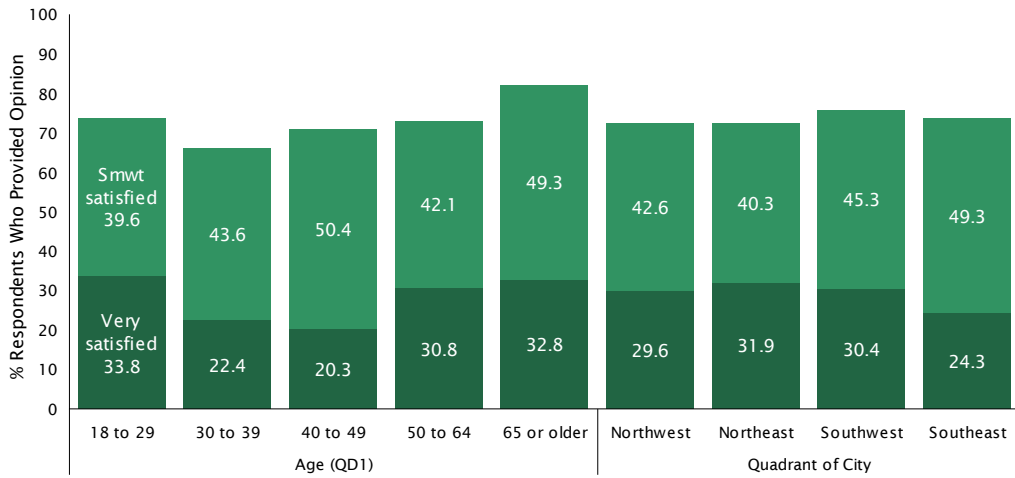
Figures 31 and 32 display how overall satisfaction with the City’s efforts to communicate with residents *among those who provided an opinion* varied by years of residence in La Mesa, City website visit in the past year, presence of a child in the home, age, and quadrant of the City. Those most likely to be *very satisfied* included long-time residents, those who had visited the City’s website in the past year, those without a child in the household, and residents under 30 and those at least 50 years of age. Figure 33 looks at satisfaction with the City’s performance

overall (Question 4) by residents' satisfaction with the City's efforts to communicate with them. Those satisfied with communication efforts were considerably more likely to report satisfaction with the City overall than those dissatisfied or unsure (93% vs. 76% and 79%).

**FIGURE 31 SATISFACTION WITH COMMUNICATION BY YEARS IN LA MESA, VISITED CITY WEBSITE & CHILD IN HOUSEHOLD**

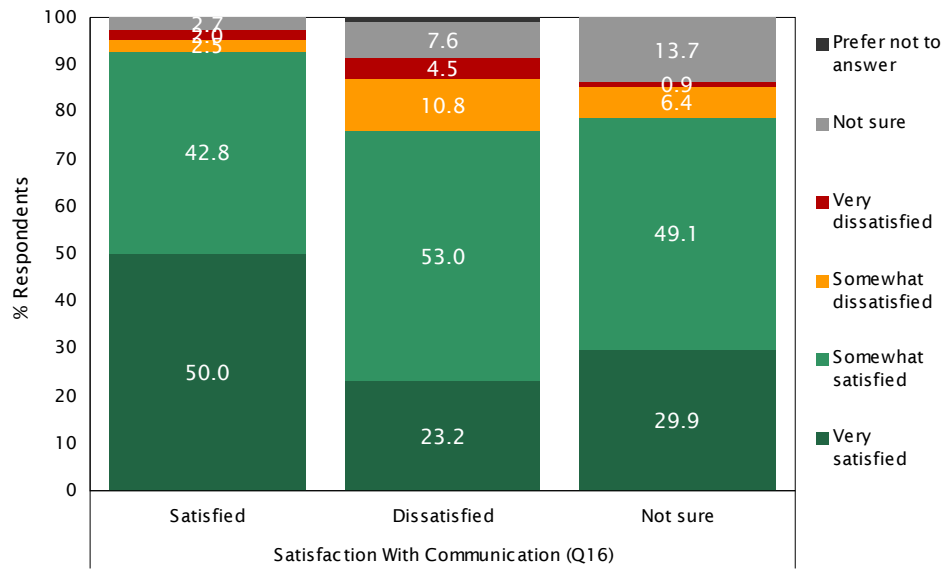


**FIGURE 32 SATISFACTION WITH COMMUNICATION BY AGE & QUADRANT OF CITY**





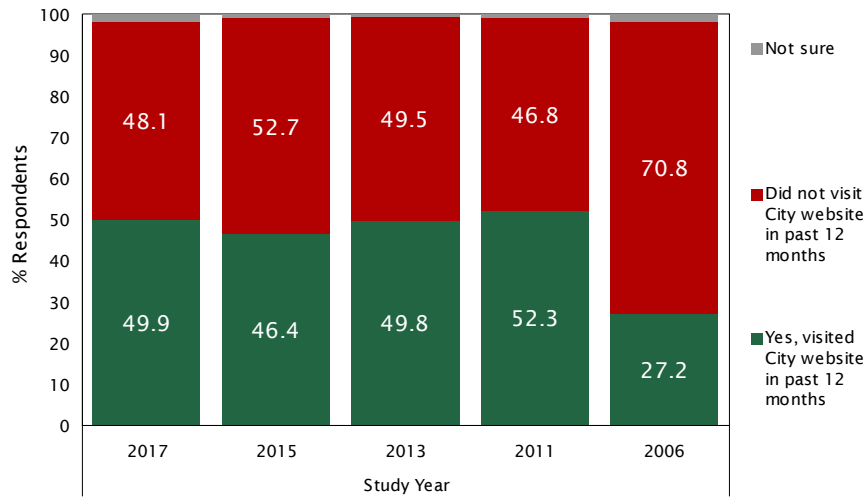
**FIGURE 33 OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH CITY'S PERFORMANCE BY SATISFACTION WITH COMMUNICATION**



**CITY'S WEBSITE** The final substantive question of the survey asked if, in the 12 months prior to the interview, the respondent had visited the City of La Mesa's website. As shown in Figure 34, half (50%) of respondents in 2017 indicated that they had visited the site during this period, which is statistically similar to the percentage (46%) that had visited the website in 2015, and largely unchanged since 2011.

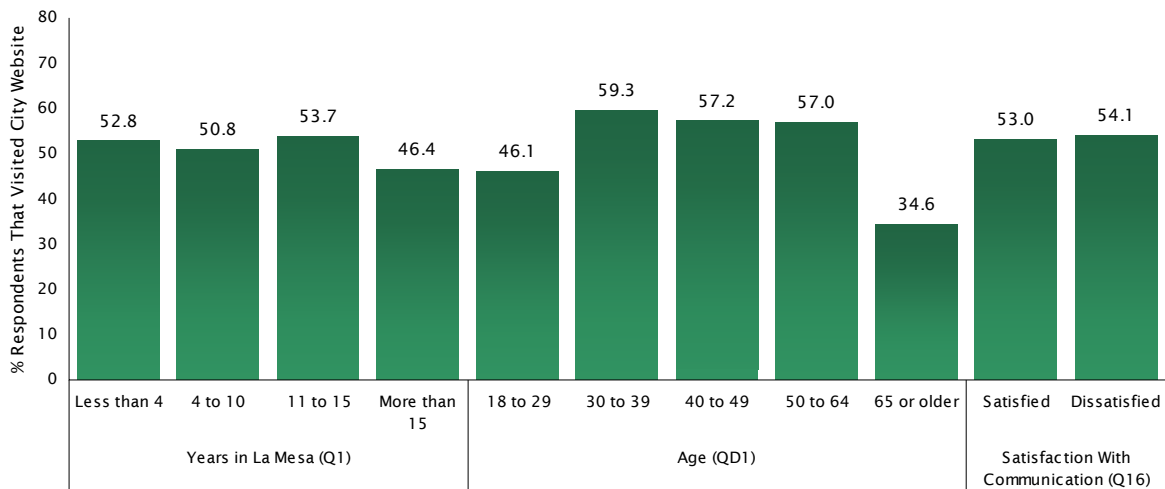
**Question 17** *In the past 12 months, have you visited the City of La Mesa's website?*

**FIGURE 34 CITY WEBSITE VISIT IN PAST 12 MONTHS BY STUDY YEAR**

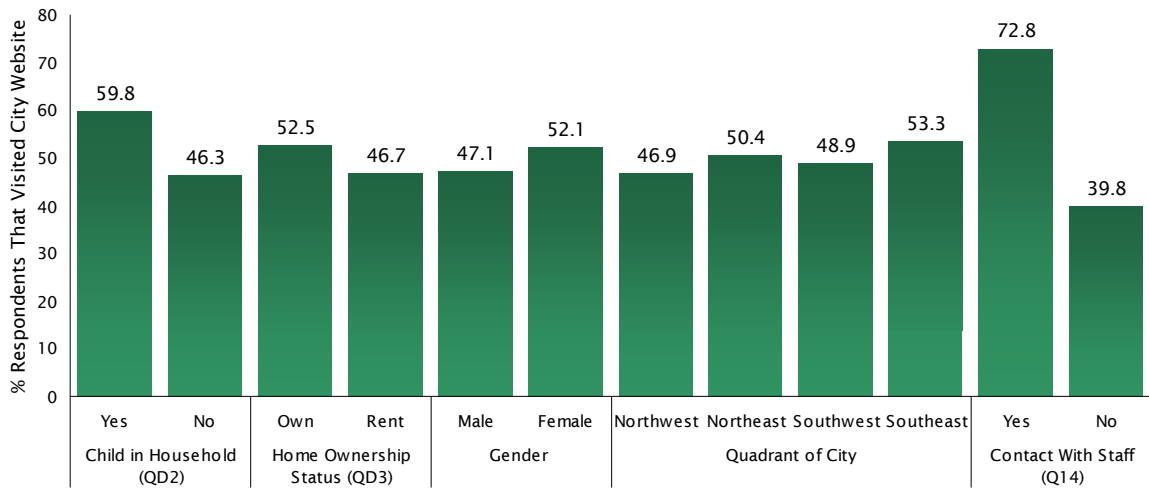


As displayed in figures 35 and 36, use of the City's website varied across demographic sub-groups. Those most likely to have visited the website in the past 12 months were residents between 30 and 64 years of age, respondents with a child in the home, homeowners, women, those in the Southeast quadrant, and those who have been in contact with City staff in the past year.

**FIGURE 35 CITY WEBSITE IN PAST 12 MONTHS BY YEARS IN LA MESA & AGE**



**FIGURE 36 CITY WEBSITE IN PAST 12 MONTHS BY CHILD IN HSLD, HOME OWNERSHIP STATUS, GENDER, QUADRANT OF CITY & CONTACT WITH CITY STAFF**





## BACKGROUND & DEMOGRAPHICS

**TABLE 11 DEMOGRAPHICS OF SAMPLE BY STUDY YEAR**

	Study Year				
	2017	2015	2013	2011	2006
<i>Total Respondents</i>	<i>1,023</i>	<i>825</i>	<i>800</i>	<i>800</i>	<i>800</i>
<b>QD1 Age</b>					
18 to 29	26.4	24.2	24.8	21.7	22.4
30 to 39	17.6	18.5	17.2	19.4	19.4
40 to 49	14.3	15.6	16.5	19.2	18.2
50 to 64	20.7	23.8	22.7	18.2	16.2
65 or older	19.7	17.4	17.4	21.3	20.5
Prefer not to answer	1.2	0.5	1.4	0.3	3.3
<b>QD2 Children under 18 in home</b>					
Yes	28.1	27.9	30.8	33.2	31.2
No	69.5	71.5	67.0	66.4	65.4
Prefer not to answer	2.4	0.6	2.2	0.4	3.3
<b>QD3 Home ownership status</b>					
Own	60.7	60.1	60.6	64.8	55.6
Rent	37.6	38.7	37.2	34.7	39.8
Prefer not to answer	1.8	1.2	2.1	0.5	4.6
<b>QD4 Gender</b>					
Male	47.0	46.6	51.5	50.5	46.3
Female	52.3	53.2	48.5	49.5	53.7
Prefer not to answer	0.7	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0

Table 11 presents the key demographic and background information collected during the survey. Because of the probability-based sampling methodology used in this study, the results shown in the table are representative of adult residents in the City of La Mesa. The primary motivation for collecting the background and demographic information was to provide a better insight into how results of the substantive questions of the survey vary by demographic characteristics.



## M E T H O D O L O G Y

The following sections outline the methodology used in the study, as well as the motivation for using certain techniques.

**QUESTIONNAIRE DEVELOPMENT** Dr. McLarney of True North Research worked closely with the City of La Mesa to develop a questionnaire that covered the topics of interest and avoided the many possible sources of systematic measurement error, including position-order effects, wording effects, response-category effects, scaling effects, and priming. Several questions included multiple individual items. Because asking items in a set order can lead to a systematic position bias in responses, the items were asked in a random order for each respondent.

Some questions asked in this study were presented only to a subset of respondents. For example, only respondents who had interacted with City staff in the past 12 months were asked to rate aspects of their experience with staff. The questionnaire included with this report (see *Questionnaire & Toplines* on page 42) identifies the skip patterns used during the interview to ensure that each respondent received the appropriate questions.

Most of the questions asked in the 2017 survey were tracked directly from the 2015, 2013, 2011, and 2006 surveys to allow the City to track its performance over time.

**PROGRAMMING & PRE-TEST** Prior to fielding the survey, the questionnaire was CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) programmed to assist interviewers when conducting the telephone interviews. The CATI program automatically navigates the skip patterns, randomizes the appropriate question items, and alerts the interviewer to certain types of keypunching mistakes should they happen during the interview. The survey was also programmed into a passcode-protected online survey application to allow online participation for sampled residents. The integrity of the questionnaire was pre-tested internally by True North and by dialing into random homes in the City of La Mesa prior to formally beginning the survey.

**SAMPLE, RECRUITING & DATA COLLECTION** A random selection of households within the City of La Mesa was initially selected for this study using a comprehensive database of households and stratified sampling methods. This approach ensured that all households in La Mesa had an equal probability of being selected for the survey, not just those that have land lines or published cell phone numbers.

Sampled households were recruited to participate in the survey using multiple recruiting methods. Using a combination of mailed and emailed invitations, sampled households were initially invited to participate in the survey online at a secure, passcode-protected website designed and hosted by True North. Each household was assigned a unique passcode to ensure that only La Mesa residents who received an invitation could access the online survey site, and that each household could complete the survey only one time. During the data collection period, email reminder notices were sent to encourage participation among those who had yet to take the survey. True North also placed telephone calls to land lines and cell phone numbers of sampled households throughout the City that had not yet participated in the online survey as a result of an emailed or a mailed invitation.

Telephone interviews averaged 15 minutes in length and were conducted during weekday evenings (5:30PM to 9PM) and on weekends (10AM to 5PM). It is standard practice not to call during the day on weekdays because most working adults are unavailable and thus calling during those hours would bias the sample. A total of 1,023 interviews were gathered online and by telephone between January 19 and February 2, 2017.

**MARGIN OF ERROR DUE TO SAMPLING** By using the probability-based sample as discussed above and monitoring the sample characteristics as data collection proceeded, True North ensured that the sample was representative of adult residents in the City of La Mesa. The results of the sample can thus be used to estimate the opinions of *all* adult residents in the City. Because not every adult in the City participated in the survey, however, the results have what is known as a statistical margin of error due to sampling. The margin of error refers to the difference between what was found in the survey of 1,023 adults for a particular question and what would have been found if all of the estimated 47,986 adults in the City<sup>4</sup> had been interviewed.

For example, in estimating the percentage of adults who have been in contact with City of La Mesa staff in the past 12 months (Question 14), the margin of error can be calculated if one knows the size of the population, the size of the sample, a desired confidence level, and the distribution of responses to the question. The appropriate equation for estimating the margin of error, in this case, is shown below.

$$\hat{p} \pm t \sqrt{\left(\frac{N-n}{N}\right) \frac{\hat{p}(1-\hat{p})}{n-1}}$$

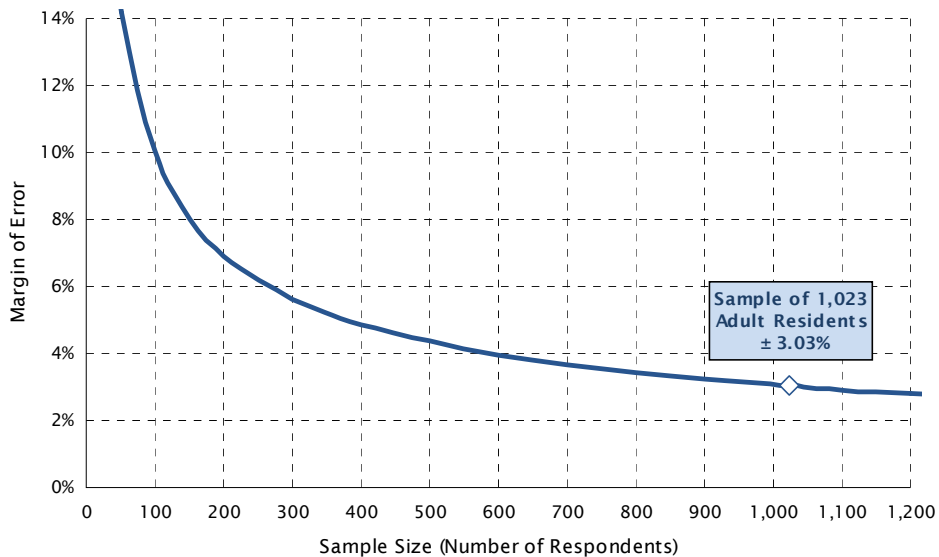
where  $\hat{p}$  is the proportion of adults who said had been in contact with staff (0.31 for 31% in this example),  $N$  is the population size of all adults (46,851),  $n$  is the sample size that received the question (1,023), and  $t$  is the upper  $\alpha/2$  point for the t-distribution with  $n - 1$  degrees of freedom (1.96 for a 95% confidence interval). Solving the equation using these values reveals a margin of error of  $\pm 2.80\%$ . This means that with 31% of survey respondents indicating they had been in contact with City staff in the past 12 months, we can be 95 percent confident that the actual percentage of *all* adult residents in La Mesa in contact with staff during this period is between 28% and 34%.

Figure 37 on the next page provides a plot of the *maximum* margin of error in this study. The maximum margin of error for a dichotomous percentage result occurs when the answers are evenly split such that 50% provide one response and 50% provide the alternative response (i.e.,  $\hat{p} = 0.5$ ). For this survey, the maximum margin of error is  $\pm 3.03\%$  for questions answered by all 1,023 respondents.

Within this report, figures and tables show how responses to certain questions varied by demographic characteristics such as quadrant of the City and age of the respondent. Figure 37 on the next page is thus useful for understanding how the maximum margin of error for a percentage estimate will grow as the number of individuals asked a question (or in a particular subgroup) shrinks. Because the margin of error grows exponentially as the sample size decreases, the reader should use caution when generalizing and interpreting the results for small subgroups.

4. Source: Derived from California Department of Finance City/County Population Estimates for 2016 and the age profile for La Mesa based on US Census data.

**FIGURE 37 MAXIMUM MARGIN OF ERROR**



**DATA PROCESSING & WEIGHTING** Data processing consisted of checking the data for errors or inconsistencies, coding and recoding responses, categorizing verbatim responses, and preparing frequency analyses and cross-tabulations. Where appropriate, tests of statistical significance were conducted to evaluate changes in responses between the 2017 and 2015 studies. The final data were weighted to balance the sample by age and geography according to Census estimates, as well as to achieve a distribution of completed phone and online surveys consistent with the profile of sampled households and proportion of email and mailing addresses among them.

**ROUNDING** Numbers that end in 0.5 or higher are rounded up to the nearest whole number, whereas numbers that end in 0.4 or lower are rounded down to the nearest whole number. These same rounding rules are also applied, when needed, to arrive at numbers that include a decimal place in constructing figures and charts. Occasionally, these rounding rules lead to small discrepancies in the first decimal place when comparing tables and figures for a given question.

# QUESTIONNAIRE & TOPLINES



City of La Mesa  
Resident Satisfaction Survey  
Final Toplines  
February 2017

## Section 1: Introduction to Study (phone version)

Hello, may I please speak to \_\_\_\_\_. Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm calling on behalf of TNR, a public opinion research company. We're conducting a survey about issues in La Mesa (la MAY-suh) and we would like to get your opinions.

*If needed:* This is a survey about important issues in your community - I'm NOT trying to sell anything and I won't ask for a donation.

*If needed:* The survey should take about 13 minutes to complete.

*If needed:* If now is not a convenient time, can you let me know a better time so I can call back?

*If the person says they are an elected official or is somehow associated with the survey, politely explain that this survey is designed to measure the opinions of those not closely associated with the study, thank them for their time, and terminate the interview.*

## Section 2: Phone Screener for Inclusion in the Study & Quadrants

For statistical reasons, I would like to speak to the youngest adult male currently at home that is at least 18 years of age. *(if there is no male currently at home that is at least 18 years of age, then ask):* Ok, then I'd like to speak to the youngest female currently at home that is at least 18 years of age.

*(If there is no adult currently available, then ask for a callback time.)*

*NOTE: Adjust this screener as needed to match sample quotas on gender & age.*

*Can skip geographic screening questions (SC1-SC7) if already matched on address in sample.*

SC1	To begin, I have a few screening questions. What is the zip code at your residence? <i>(Read zip code back to them to confirm correct)</i>		
	1	91941	Skip to SC3
	2	91942	Ask SC2
	3	Other ZIP code	Terminate
SC2	Do you live north or south of the 8 Freeway?		
	1	North	Skip to SC6
	2	South	Ask SC3
	99	Not sure/Refused	Skip to SC7
SC3	Do you live east or west of Spring Street?		
	1	East	Ask SC4
	2	West	Skip to SC7
	99	Not sure/Refused	Ask SC4



SC4	Do you live east or west of Highway 125? <i>If unsure, clarify:</i> Do you live on the Mount Helix (He-Licks) side of Highway 125 or the Grossmont Center side?		
	1	East/Mt. Helix side	Ask SC5
	2	West/Grossmont Center side	Skip to SC7
	99	Not sure/Refused	Terminate
SC5	Do you live <u>within</u> the City of La Mesa, or do you live just outside of the City in an area that is governed by the County?		
	1	Within City of La Mesa	Skip to SC7
	2	Outside/Governed by County	Terminate
	99	Not sure/Refused	Terminate
SC6	Do you live east or west of Jackson Drive?		
	1	East	Go to SC7
	2	West	Go to SC7
	99	Not sure/Refused	Go to SC7
SC7	Quadrants shown below based on SC1 through SC6 and address information available in resident database.		
	1	SC1=2 and SC2=1 and SC6=2	25% Northwest
	2	SC1=2 and SC2=1 and SC6=1	25% Northeast
	3	SC1=1 and SC3=2 <u>OR</u> SC1=2 and SC2=2 and SC3=2	25% Southwest
	4	SC1=1 and SC3=1 and SC4=2 <u>OR</u> SC1=1 and SC3=1 and SC4=1 and SC5=1 <u>OR</u> SC1=2 and SC2=2 and SC3=1 and SC4=2 <u>OR</u> SC1=2 and SC2=2 and SC3=1 and SC4=1 and SC5=1	25% Southeast
	5	Depends on status of missing info	0% North unspecified
	6	Depends on status of missing info	0% South unspecified
	7	Depends on status of missing info	0% Unspecified

Section 3: General Perceptions of City & Local Issues		
Q1	How long have you lived in the City of La Mesa?	
	1	Less than 1 year
	2	1 to 3 years
	3	4 to 5 years
	4	6 to 10 years
	5	11 to 15 years
	6	16 to 20 years
	7	More than 20 years
	99	Not sure / Prefer not to answer
Q2	How would you rate the overall quality of life in the City? Would you say it is excellent, good, fair, poor or very poor?	
	1	Excellent
	2	Good
	3	Fair
	4	Poor
	5	Very Poor
	98	Not sure
	99	Prefer not to answer
Q3	If the City government could change one thing to make La Mesa a better place to live now and in the future, what change would you like to see? Verbatim responses recorder and later grouped into categories shown below.	
	Not sure / Cannot think of anything	
	Improve, repair roads	
	Address homeless issue	
	Improve, police presence, response	
	Increase public safety	
	Add, improve sidewalks	
	Limit growth, development	
	Reduce taxes, fees	
	Reduce traffic congestion	
	Provide affordable housing	
	Add, improve parks	
	Improve schools, education	
	Clean up public areas, facilities	

Provide special, cultural events	3%
Fix, upgrade rundown buildings, graffiti	3%
No problems / Everything is fine	3%
Revitalize, redevelop downtown	2%
Improve street lighting	2%
Address gang, drug issue	2%
Encourage growth, development	2%
Improve shopping, dining opportunities	2%
Address trolley issues (noise, traffic, homeless, crime)	2%
Improve parking	1%
Improve public transportation	1%
Enforce traffic laws	1%
Improve landscaping	1%
Improve waste collection	1%
Improve stormwater, sewer	1%
Put utility wires underground	1%
Enforce, modify codes (building, homeowners)	1%
Reduce marijuana dispensers	1%
Add more bike lanes	1%
Improve environmental efforts	1%
Improve City-resident communication	1%
Improve traffic light synchronization	1%
Enforce noise regulation (barking dogs, blowing horns)	1%

#### Section 4: City Services

Next, I'm going to ask a series of questions about services provided by the City of La Mesa.

Q4	Generally speaking, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the job the City of La Mesa is doing to provide city services? ( <i>get answer, then ask</i> ): Would that be very (satisfied/dissatisfied) or somewhat (satisfied/dissatisfied)?		
	1	Very satisfied	41%
	2	Somewhat satisfied	46%
	3	Somewhat dissatisfied	5%
	4	Very dissatisfied	2%
	98	Not sure	5%
	99	Prefer not to answer	0%

<i>Split Sample for Q5 and 0. Even PINS receive items A-I, Odd PINS receive items J-S.</i>							
Q5	For each of the services I read, please tell me whether the service is extremely important to you, very important, somewhat important, or not at all important.						
	<b><i>Make sure respondent understands the 4 point scale.</i></b>						
	<i>Randomize</i>	Extremely Important	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not at all important	Not sure	Prefer not to answer
A	Maintaining and repairing streets	44%	47%	9%	0%	0%	0%
B	Maintaining landscaped street medians	13%	34%	45%	7%	1%	0%
C	Providing adequate traffic signs and signals	29%	49%	20%	1%	1%	0%
D	Enforcing traffic laws	26%	41%	28%	4%	0%	0%
E	Maintaining a low crime rate	58%	36%	5%	0%	1%	0%
F	Providing crime prevention programs	32%	46%	16%	2%	3%	0%
G	Providing neighborhood police patrols	36%	43%	17%	3%	1%	0%
H	Providing fire protection services	49%	44%	6%	0%	1%	0%
I	Providing animal control services	14%	32%	44%	8%	2%	0%
J	Preparing the community for emergencies	38%	45%	14%	2%	1%	0%
K	Providing emergency medical services	50%	44%	4%	1%	1%	0%
L	Keeping public buildings and facilities clean and attractive	28%	51%	19%	3%	0%	0%
M	Maintaining parks and sports fields	29%	49%	19%	2%	0%	0%
N	Providing programs for youth	28%	47%	20%	4%	1%	0%
O	Providing programs for adults	14%	33%	41%	11%	2%	0%
P	Providing programs for seniors	19%	39%	32%	7%	2%	0%
Q	Providing special events like community festivals	12%	34%	43%	11%	0%	0%
R	Reducing stormwater pollution	27%	48%	21%	3%	1%	0%
S	Creating a pedestrian friendly, walkable community	38%	41%	18%	3%	0%	0%

Q6		For the same list of services I just read I'd like you to tell me how satisfied you are with the job the City of La Mesa is doing to provide the service. Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the City's efforts to: _____, or do you not have an opinion? (Get answer. If 'satisfied' or 'dissatisfied', then ask): Would that be very (satisfied/dissatisfied) or somewhat (satisfied/dissatisfied)?					
	<i>Randomize</i>	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Not sure	Prefer not to answer
A	Maintain and repair streets	21%	44%	24%	9%	3%	0%
B	Maintain landscaped street medians	34%	41%	11%	3%	10%	1%
C	Provide adequate traffic signs and signals	42%	44%	6%	2%	6%	0%
D	Enforce traffic laws	38%	39%	5%	3%	14%	1%
E	Maintain a low crime rate	36%	39%	13%	4%	7%	0%
F	Provide crime prevention programs	24%	33%	9%	3%	29%	1%
G	Provide neighborhood police patrols	31%	37%	14%	5%	11%	1%
H	Provide fire protection services	61%	25%	1%	0%	14%	0%
I	Provide animal control services	30%	32%	5%	1%	32%	1%
J	Prepare the community for emergencies	20%	31%	10%	5%	34%	1%
K	Provide emergency medical services	37%	29%	3%	1%	29%	1%
L	Keep public buildings and facilities clean and attractive	37%	39%	10%	2%	12%	0%
M	Maintain parks and sports fields	34%	41%	12%	2%	11%	0%
N	Provide programs for youth	16%	32%	7%	3%	40%	1%
O	Provide programs for adults	16%	31%	5%	3%	45%	1%
P	Provide programs for seniors	18%	27%	5%	3%	46%	1%
Q	Provide special events like community festivals	29%	37%	8%	6%	19%	0%
R	Reduce stormwater pollution	13%	28%	12%	7%	41%	0%
S	Create a pedestrian friendly, walkable community	19%	44%	18%	8%	11%	0%

<b>Section 5: Public Safety &amp; Neighborhood Issues</b>								
Q7	Next, I'd like to ask a few questions about personal safety and security in the City of La Mesa. When you are: _____, would you say that you feel very safe, reasonably safe, somewhat unsafe, or very unsafe?							
	<i>Randomize</i>		Very Safe	Reasonably Safe	Somewhat Unsafe	Very Unsafe	Not sure	Prefer not to answer
A	Walking alone in your neighborhood during the day	65%	30%	4%	0%	0%	0%	
B	Walking alone in your neighborhood after dark	24%	47%	20%	7%	2%	0%	
C	Walking alone in business and retail areas during the day	60%	34%	4%	1%	1%	0%	
D	Walking alone in business and retail areas after dark	20%	48%	22%	5%	4%	0%	
Q8	Are you involved in a neighborhood watch program?							
	1	Yes						15%
	2	No						81%
	98	Not sure						3%
	99	Prefer not to answer						1%
Q9	The City of La Mesa has created codes to address a variety of issues that can affect a neighborhood, such as illegal parking, abandoned vehicles, non-permitted construction, junk storage and properties not being properly maintained. Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the City's efforts to <u>enforce</u> code violations, or do you not have an opinion? ( <i>Get answer. If 'satisfied' or 'dissatisfied', then ask</i> ): Would that be very (satisfied/dissatisfied) or somewhat (satisfied/dissatisfied)?							
	1	Very satisfied	23%		Skip to Q11			
	2	Somewhat satisfied	25%		Skip to Q11			
	3	Somewhat dissatisfied	10%		Ask Q10			
	4	Very dissatisfied	5%		Ask Q10			
	98	Not sure	35%		Skip to Q11			
	99	Prefer not to answer	1%		Skip to Q11			

Q10	Is there a particular issue or code violation that the City isn't addressing that leads you to be dissatisfied? <i>If yes, ask:</i> Please briefly describe it to me. Verbatim responses recorder and later grouped into categories shown below.	
	Illegal parking, unattended, abandoned vehicles	41%
	Unmaintained properties, lawns	23%
	No particular issue	10%
	Violations not enforced fairly	7%
	Loitering	4%
	Homeless issues	4%
	Road, street maintenance	2%
	Noise violations	2%
	Safety, security issues	2%
	Vandalism, graffiti	2%
	City not responding fast to city, resident issues	2%
	Lack of police patrols	1%
	Homeowners using garage as a car shop	1%

Section 6: Traffic								
Q11	Next, I'd like to ask you a few questions about traffic circulation. By <u>traffic circulation</u> , I mean the ability to drive around La Mesa <u>without</u> encountering <u>long</u> delays. Would you rate: _____ within the City of La Mesa as excellent, good, fair, poor or very poor?							
	<i>Read in Order</i>	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor	Not sure	Prefer not to answer
A	Overall traffic circulation	23%	49%	20%	5%	2%	1%	0%
B	Traffic circulation on major streets	20%	47%	21%	8%	3%	0%	0%
C	Traffic circulation in residential areas	37%	49%	11%	2%	1%	0%	0%

Section 7: Park, Recreation & Special Events								
Q12	How do you rate the: _____ La Mesa's parks and recreation facilities? Would you say it is excellent, good, fair, poor or very poor?							
	<i>Randomize</i>	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor	Not sure	Prefer not to answer
A	Safety of	22%	44%	16%	4%	0%	13%	0%
B	Appearance of	26%	50%	15%	2%	0%	6%	0%
C	Overall quality of	22%	52%	16%	2%	0%	8%	0%
D	Availability of parking at	22%	46%	16%	4%	1%	11%	1%
E	Variety of recreation programs offered at	17%	33%	16%	3%	1%	29%	1%
Q13	As I read each of the following recreation improvements, I'd like you to indicate whether you think the City should make the item a high priority, a medium priority, or a low priority. If you feel the City should not spend any money on this item, just say so. Please keep in mind that not all of the items can be high priorities.							
	Here is the (first/next) one: _____. Should this be a high, medium or low priority for the City - or should the City not spend any money on this item?							
	<i>Randomize</i>	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Should not fund	Not sure	Prefer not to answer	
A	Build sports fields for baseball, softball, soccer and other sports	21%	43%	25%	7%	3%	1%	
B	Build outdoor courts for sports like basketball and tennis	17%	45%	29%	6%	2%	0%	
C	Upgrade or replace worn-out recreation and playground equipment at existing parks and sports fields	41%	42%	13%	2%	2%	0%	
D	Install safety and security lighting at parks and recreation facilities	60%	32%	6%	1%	1%	0%	
E	Build a Performing Arts Center	20%	36%	27%	13%	3%	1%	
F	Build a community center and pool complex	21%	35%	29%	12%	4%	0%	
G	Expanding or replacing the Senior Center	25%	39%	23%	4%	8%	1%	
H	Expanding or replacing the Pool Complex	16%	38%	32%	6%	8%	1%	



Section 8: Staff Interactions							
Q14	In the past 12 months, have you been in contact with City of La Mesa staff?						
	1	Yes		31%	Ask Q15		
	2	No		67%	Skip to Q16		
	98	Not sure		2%	Skip to Q16		
	99	Prefer not to answer		0%	Skip to Q16		
Q15	In your opinion, is the <u>staff</u> at the City very _____, somewhat _____, or not at all _____. (Read one item at a time, continue until all items are read).						
	<b>Randomize</b>		Very	Somewhat	Not at all	Not sure	Prefer not to answer
A	Helpful		60%	31%	7%	2%	1%
B	Professional		75%	19%	4%	2%	0%
C	Responsive		58%	34%	6%	1%	0%

Section 9: Communication			
Q16	Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the City's efforts to communicate with residents through newsletters, the Internet, and other means? ( <i>get answer, then ask</i> ): Would that be very (satisfied/dissatisfied) or somewhat (satisfied/dissatisfied)?		
	1	Very satisfied	25%
	2	Somewhat satisfied	39%
	3	Somewhat dissatisfied	16%
	4	Very dissatisfied	7%
	98	Not sure	12%
	99	Prefer not to answer	1%
Q17	In the past 12 months, have you visited the City of La Mesa's website?		
	1	Yes	50%
	2	No	48%
	98	Not sure	2%
	99	Prefer not to answer	0%

**Section 10: Background & Demographics**

Thank you so much for your participation. I have just a few background questions for statistical purposes.

D1 Please stop me when I reach the category that includes your age.

1	18 to 29	26%
2	30 to 39	18%
3	40 to 49	14%
4	50 to 64	21%
5	65 or older	20%
99	Prefer not to answer	1%

D2 Do you currently have any children under the age of 18 living in your home?

1	Yes	28%
2	No	70%
99	Prefer not to answer	2%

D3 Do you own or rent your residence in the City of La Mesa?

1	Own	61%
2	Rent	38%
99	Prefer not to answer	2%

Those are all of the questions that I have for you! Thanks so much for participating in this important survey! This survey was conducted for the City of La Mesa.

**Post-Interview Items**

D4 Gender

1	Male	47%
2	Female	52%
3	Prefer not to answer (online survey)	1%