



RESIDENT SATISFACTION & CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

SURVEY REPORT

CONDUCTED FOR THE
CITY OF VENTURA

MARCH 5, 2009



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INTRODUCTION

Located in Ventura County, the City of San Buenaventura (hereafter referred to as “Ventura”) is currently home to an estimated 108,261 residents.¹ Founded in 1782 and incorporated in 1866, the City’s team of full-time and part-time employees provides a full suite of services through nine departments: City Attorney, City Manager, Community Development, Community Services, Finance & Technology, Fire/Inspection Services, Human Resources, Police, and Public Works.

As part of its commitment to provide high quality services that meet the varied needs of its residents, the City of Ventura engages its residents on a daily basis and receives constant feedback on issue, policy and performance matters. 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 the 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 primary motivation for the current study was two-fold. The first was to design and employ a methodology that would avoid the self-selection bias noted above and thereby 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. The City of Ventura also recognized, however, that there is much more to good local governance than simply providing satisfactory services. Do residents view Council and staff as trustworthy? Wasteful? Accountable? Responsive? Fiscally responsible? Do residents perceive that City leaders have a vision for the future of Ventura and are providing the necessary leadership to realize the vision? In what areas do residents feel that Council and staff can improve the way they engage and serve the community? Answers to questions like these are as important as service or policy-related questions in helping the City understand how it can best meet the community’s existing and emerging needs. Accordingly, they formed the second main research interest for the survey.

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, civic engagement, measuring and tracking internal performance, budgeting, policy and planning.

To assist it 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.
- Assess perceptions of public safety and neighborhood issues.

1. California Department of Finance estimate, January 2008.

- Gauge residents' past experiences and current opinions about parks and recreation.
- Evaluate perceptions of local government and attitudes concerning community involvement.
- Collect additional background and demographic data that is relevant to understanding residents' perceptions, needs, and interests.

It should be noted that this is not the first statistically reliable resident 'satisfaction' study conducted for the City. Similar studies were conducted in 2005, 2006, and 2007.² Because there is a natural interest in tracking the City's performance in meeting the evolving needs of its residents, where appropriate the results of the current study are compared with the results of identical questions used in the prior surveys.

OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY A full description of the methodology used for this study is included later in this report (see *Methodology* on page 48). In brief, a total of 420 randomly selected adult residents participated in the survey between January 24 and February 4, 2009. The interviews, which were administered in English and Spanish to randomly selected residents via telephone and the Internet, averaged 21 minutes in length.

STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE Many of the figures and tables in this report present the results of questions asked in 2009 alongside the results found in the prior 2005, 2006, and 2007 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 during this period—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 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 2009.

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, a complete set of crosstabulations for the survey results is contained in Appendix A, and verbatim responses to select open-ended questions are contained in Appendix B. Both appendices are bound separately.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS True North thanks the staff at the City of Ventura 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.

2. See *Resident Satisfaction & Civic Engagement*, reports prepared in 2005, 2006, and 2007 for the City of Ventura by True North Research.

DISCLAIMER The statements and conclusions in this report are those of the authors (Dr. Timothy McLarney and Richard Sarles) at True North Research, Inc. and not necessarily those of the City of Ventura. 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 500 survey research studies for public agencies, including more than 250 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.

GENERAL PERCEPTIONS OF CITY

- An overwhelming majority of respondents shared favorable opinions of the quality of life in Ventura in 2009, with 40% reporting it is *excellent* and 52% stating it is *good*. An additional 7% of residents indicated that the quality of life in the City is *fair*, just 1% used *poor* to describe the quality of life in the City, and not a single respondent said *very poor*.
- When asked what one change the City could implement to make Ventura a better place to live, now and in the future, the most common response to this question was 'not sure' (17%), followed by improving and maintaining streets and roads (12%), limiting growth and preserving open space (8%), improving public safety (7%), and developing and improving the downtown area (7%).

CITY SERVICES

- The vast majority (86%) of Ventura residents indicated they were satisfied with the City's efforts to provide municipal services in 2009, with 42% stating they were *very* satisfied. Approximately 11% of residents reported dissatisfaction, and 3% were unsure or unwilling to state their opinion.
- Residents were asked to rate the importance of 31 specific services provided by the City. Overall, residents ranked public safety services as the most important among those tested, including providing fire protection services, maintaining a low crime rate, and providing emergency medical services.
- The survey also asked about satisfaction with the City's efforts to provide the same 31 services. Although residents were generally satisfied with every service tested, they were most satisfied with the City's efforts to provide emergency paramedic services, and fire protection and prevention services.

PUBLIC SAFETY & NEIGHBORHOOD ISSUES

- Almost all residents (95%) indicated they feel safe while walking alone in commercial and retail areas of Ventura during the day, and 68% feel safe walking alone in commercial and retail areas of Ventura after dark. Eight-out-of-ten (80%) respondents said they feel safe walking alone in their neighborhood after dark.
- Two-thirds (66%) of residents felt that Ventura is as safe today as it was three years ago, whereas 14% felt that the City is safer today and 18% indicated it is less safe.
- Respondents felt quite safe in their neighborhoods and were generally not concerned with being a victim of any of the violent and non-violent crimes tested in the survey. It is worth noting, however, that several crimes did concern a sizeable minority of respondents—particularly car theft and vandalism.
- When asked to identify the relative priority that the Ventura Police Department should place on addressing specific crimes and services, residents identified gang enforcement as the top priority, then follow-up investigation of crimes, and preventing juvenile crime.

- Almost one-third (29%) of respondents did not have an opinion regarding the City's code enforcement efforts. Among those who did, however, opinions were decidedly favorable, with 81% of residents indicating they were satisfied with the City's performance in this area.
- Of those who were dissatisfied with the City's code enforcement efforts, the most common reasons cited were related to illegally-parked vehicles (30%) and abandoned vehicles (12%).

PARKS & RECREATION

- Eighty-nine (89%) of respondents reported that at least one member of their household had visited a City park in the 12 months prior to the interview.
- Thirty-eight percent (38%) of residents reported that their household visits a park at least once per week, and 17% stated that they visit a park two to three times per month.
- Overall, Ventura's parks were rated favorably. More than three-quarters (77%) of respondents chose *excellent* or *good* to describe the parks' overall quality, appearance, and safety.
- Thirty-five percent (35%) of households had participated in one or more recreational or cultural programs offered by the City of Ventura in the 12 months prior to the interview.
- Programs for adults and children were the most commonly attended, followed by programs designed for families, seniors, and teens.
- Among those who had participated in a recreational or cultural program offered by the City, 95% rated the quality as either excellent (44%) or good (51%).

PERCEPTIONS OF VENTURA

- More than eight-in-ten residents agreed that Ventura is a city that embraces the cultural arts (92%) and has many opportunities in the City to further one's education (82%).
- Regarding City government and Council, more than three-quarters of residents agreed that the City is trustworthy (79%), accountable to residents (77%), and responsive to residents' needs (76%).
- Although 74% agreed that the City is fiscally responsible, 58% also felt that too often the City wastes taxpayers' money or spends it on its own pet projects.
- Among those with an opinion, more than two-thirds (68%) correctly believed that most of the property taxes that residents pay go to the State and schools rather than the City.
- Half (50%) of respondents said they had volunteered time or resources to a community cause during the past three years.
- When asked how much attention they pay to the issues, decisions and activities of Ventura's City government, 17% of respondents claimed they are very attentive, 54% somewhat attentive, and 22% slightly attentive. An additional 7% of respondents stated that they do not pay any attention to the decisions and activities of the City of Ventura.

SPENDING PRIORITIES

- When asked to prioritize among thirteen projects and programs that could be funded by the City, providing fire protection, emergency medical response, and preparing for natural disasters was assigned the highest priority (84% *high* priority), followed by improving providing police patrols and preventing crime (72%), and promoting economic development (56%).



CONCLUSIONS

As noted in the *Introduction*, this study was designed to provide the City of Ventura with a statistically reliable understanding of its residents' perceptions of local government, as well as their satisfaction, priorities and needs as they relate to services and facilities provided by the City. As such, it can provide the City with information needed to make sound, strategic decisions in a variety of areas—including service improvements and enhancements, measuring and tracking internal performance, civic engagement, budgeting, policy development and planning. 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 some of the key questions that motivated the research.

The following conclusions are based on the True North's interpretations of the results, as well as the firm's experience conducting similar studies for government agencies throughout the State.

How well is the City performing in meeting the needs of Ventura residents?

Ventura residents continue to be largely satisfied with the City's efforts to provide municipal services and facilities, as well as with the overall quality of life in the City. Moreover, the results of the 2009 study indicate that the City has continued the general trend of improving its performance in meeting the community's needs and expectations since 2005.

In 2005, 84% of residents indicated that they were generally satisfied with the job the City of Ventura is doing to provide municipal services. Although the overall satisfaction level in 2009 was slightly higher at 85%, the *intensity* of satisfaction has improved substantially over the past four years. The percentage of residents who indicated that they were *very* satisfied with the City's overall performance has increased from 33% in 2005 to 40% in 2009.

The high level of satisfaction expressed with the City's performance in general was in almost all cases echoed when residents were asked to comment on the City's efforts to provide 31 specific services. For every service tested, the City is meeting the needs of at least two-thirds (67%) of residents, and for most of the services the City is meeting the needs of more than 85% of residents. This is another area that has shown improvement over the past four years, as the corresponding figures in 2005 were 60% and 80%, respectively.

To the extent that the survey results can be viewed as a report card on the City's performance, the City once again receives A's and B's for all service areas. When compared to similar studies that True North's research team has conducted for California municipalities, the scores found in this study place the City of Ventura comfortably within the top 25% of municipalities in terms of service performance.

Where should the City focus its efforts in the future?

The most important recommendation—one that is occasionally overlooked in customer satisfaction research—is for the City to recognize the many things that it does well and to focus on continuing to perform at a high level in these areas. As noted throughout this report, residents were generally pleased with the City’s efforts to provide services and facilities, and have a high opinion of the City’s performance in most 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.

Nevertheless, in the spirit of constant improvement, the results of the survey do suggest several opportunities to increase resident satisfaction even further. Considering the detailed list of services and their respective priority status for future City attention provided in the body of this report (see *Performance Needs & Priorities* on page 22), as well as residents’ open-ended responses about ways that the City can improve the quality of life in the City (see Figure 5 on page 12), the top priorities are: maintaining local streets and roads, providing recreation programs for teens, reducing traffic congestion on city streets, promoting economic development, limiting growth and development/preserving open space, and improve public safety.

Considering the perceived importance of these service areas to residents, they are among the best candidates for the City’s attention as they represent the best opportunities for increasing residents’ overall satisfaction in the short and long-term. It is worth noting, moreover, that the list of top priorities in 2009 is quite similar to those identified by residents in 2006 and 2007—although the perceived need to improve economic development efforts has clearly increased in the past year.

Having recommended that the City focus on these service areas, we feel it is equally important to stress that the appropriate strategy for improving resident satisfaction in these areas would likely be a combination of better communication and actual service improvements. It may be, for example, that many residents are simply not aware of the City’s plans (or constraints) with respect to economic development. Choosing the appropriate balance of actual service improvements and efforts to raise public awareness on these matters will be a key to maintaining and improving residents’ overall satisfaction in the future.

How do residents prioritize among municipal services in an era of declining revenues?

Like many cities in California, Ventura is facing some very difficult choices due to the economic recession, declining tax revenues, and increasing costs for providing municipal services. Despite being efficient and fiscally responsible, the City simply does not have the funding required to adequately address many of the basic needs of Ventura residents in areas such as public safety, street maintenance, and environmental protection.

To help establish what services should be the top candidates for future funding in this era of declining revenues and increasing costs, the survey asked residents to prioritize among a list of 13 services ranging from public safety services, to infrastructure maintenance, to social and cultural programs. Overall, the top priorities were public safety services, including providing fire protection, emergency medical response, preparing for natural disasters, providing police patrols, and preventing crime. Given the poor state of the economy, it's perhaps not surprising that promoting economic development was also among the top priorities from residents' perspective, followed by protecting Ventura's environment.

At the other end of the spectrum, residents assigned substantially lower priorities to providing art and cultural events, maintaining parks and city trees, and providing services to senior citizens.

How is City government perceived, and how can it impact civic engagement?

As noted in the *Introduction*, the City of Ventura recognizes that there is much more to good local governance than simply providing satisfactory services. Do residents view Council and/or staff as trustworthy? Wasteful? Accountable? Responsive? Fiscally responsible? Do residents perceive that City leaders have a vision for the future of Ventura and are providing the necessary leadership to realize the vision? Answers to questions like these are just as important as service or policy-related questions to helping the City understand how it can best meet the community's existing and emerging needs and expectations.

On the positive side, residents continue to hold quite favorable opinions of the City on many of the dimensions that define good local governance, including responsiveness, accountability and trustworthiness. Thus, it does not appear that frustration with the City or lack of access is a cause for current levels of engagement—which were found to be modest. In fact, when asked in 2005 why they do not pay more attention to the issues, decisions and activities of City government, the most common reason was simply lack of time.

Nevertheless, most residents who were not very attentive to matters of local government in past surveys did express an interest in becoming more engaged civically—and they noted that the City could improve their level of engagement by increasing outreach efforts, improving the frequency and content of direct mail materials/newsletters, and increasing the frequency and accessibility of City meetings. City-managed communication appears to be a key to not only improving the amount and quality of information residents have about the City, but also inspiring a greater level of engagement on their part in the affairs of City government.

Although there is a tendency to focus on *methods* of communication when attempting to improve civic engagement and communication, message *content* is arguably an even more important factor in shaping a City's success in this respect. Put simply, in an age of information overload and limited time, the challenge is less about how to get a message to an audience than it is about how to peak their interest so that they choose to read/view/listen to the message. Focusing on topics that are relevant to residents is arguably the single most effective strategy for improving city-resident communication. Based on the current survey as well as those conducted in the past, residents are chiefly interested in topics that they view as being particularly important to the quality of life in the City, including public safety, growth and development, environmental issues, and economic development

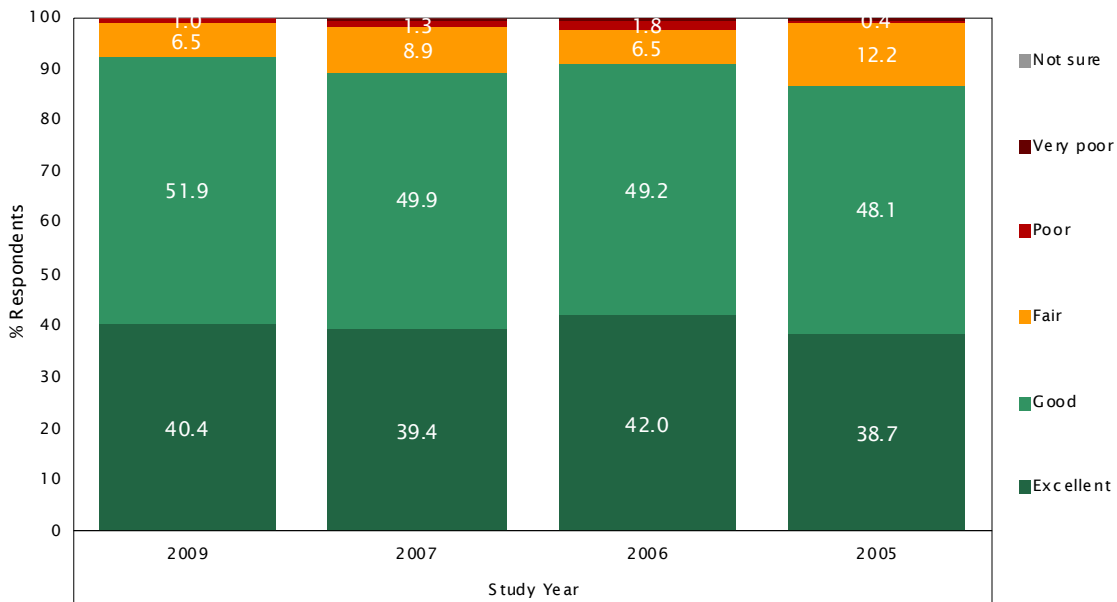
GENERAL PERCEPTIONS OF CITY

The opening series of questions in the survey was designed to assess residents' perceptions of the quality of life in Ventura, as well as what local 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 overwhelming majority (92%) of respondents shared favorable opinions of the quality of life in Ventura in 2009, with 40% reporting it is excellent and 52% stating it is good. An additional 7% of residents indicated that the quality of life in the City is fair, just 1% used *poor* to describe the quality of life in the City, and not a single respondent said *very poor*. When compared with the 2007 results, assessments of the quality of life in the City display a trend of improvement, although the change between the two years is not statistically significant.

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 1 QUALITY OF LIFE (2005 TO 2009)



For the interested reader, figures 2 through 4 show how ratings of the quality of life in the City varied by a host of demographic variables. Although there was some variation in opinion—for example, long-time residents were more likely than those who have lived in the City less than 5 years to view the quality of life as excellent—the most striking pattern in these figures is the consistency of opinion. Regardless of subgroup category, respondents generally held a considerably positive assessment of the quality of life in the City. More than 75% of residents in *every* subgroup rated the quality of life as excellent or good.

FIGURE 2 QUALITY OF LIFE BY YEARS IN VENTURA & AGE

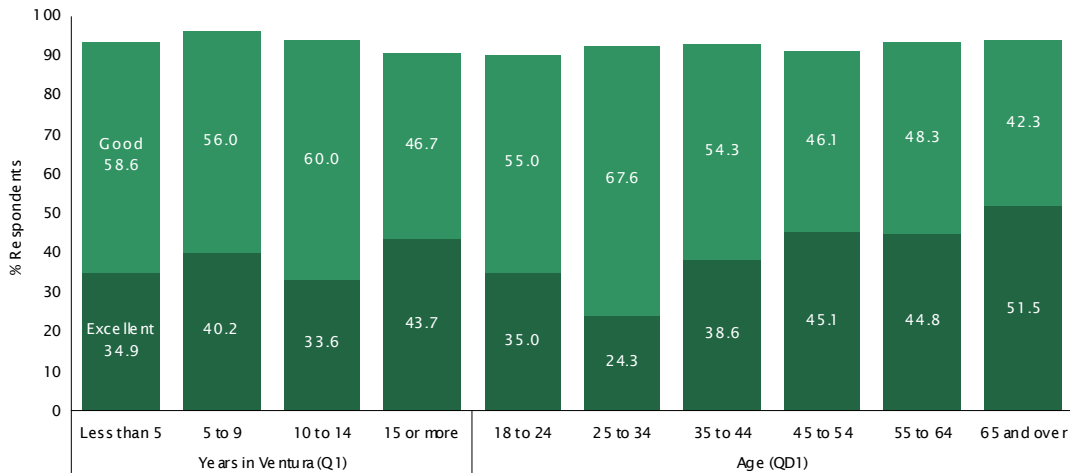


FIGURE 3 QUALITY OF LIFE BY CHILD IN HOME, EMPLOYMENT STATUS & GENDER

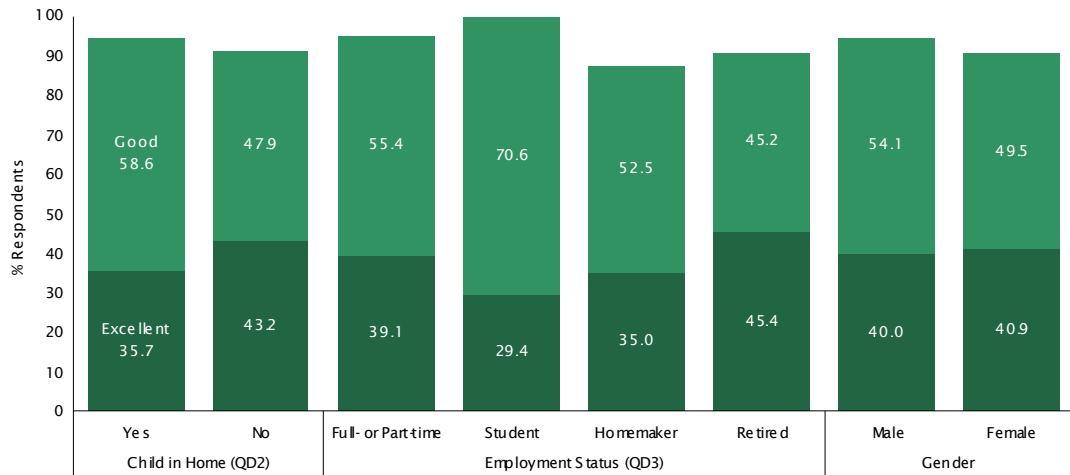
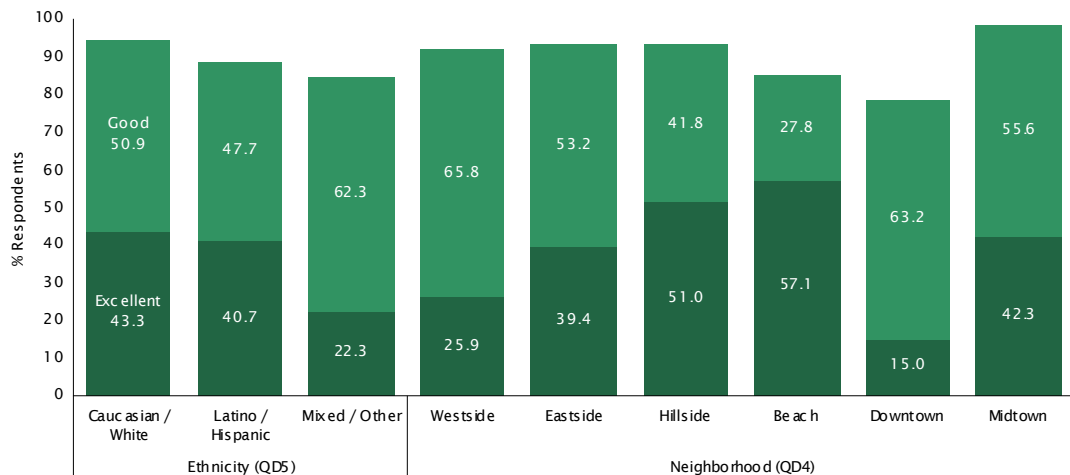


FIGURE 4 QUALITY OF LIFE BY ETHNICITY & NEIGHBORHOOD



WAYS TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE Respondents were next asked to indicate the one thing that the City could change to make Ventura a better place to live, now and in the future. Question 3 was asked in an open-ended manner, which allowed respondents to mention any change that came to mind without be prompted by or restricted to a particular list of options. True North later reviewed the verbatim responses and grouped them into the categories shown in Figure 5. The most common response to this question was ‘not sure’ (17%), followed by improving and maintaining streets and roads (12%), limiting growth and preserving open space (8%), improving public safety (7%), and developing and improving the downtown area (7%). On the next page, Table 1 presents the most commonly cited responses from 2007 and 2009. Aside from minor shifting in relative order, the top issues were virtually identical between the two studies.

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

FIGURE 5 CHANGES TO IMPROVE VENTURA

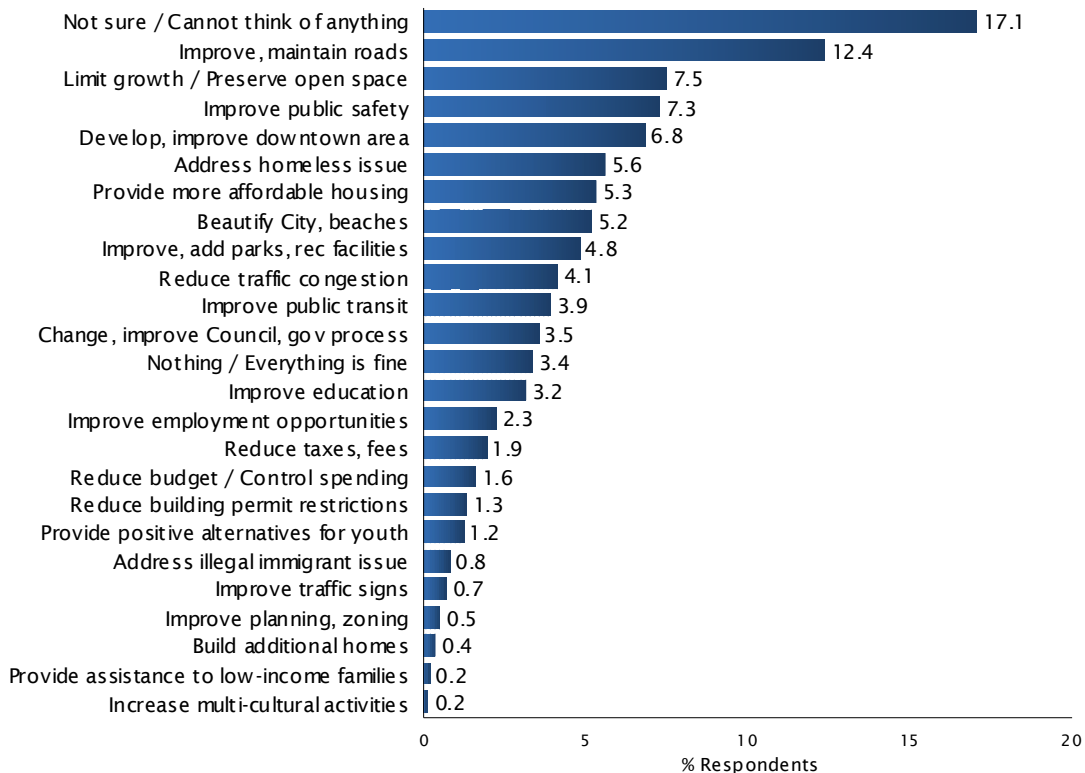


TABLE 1 TOP CHANGES TO IMPROVE VENTURA (2007 TO 2009)

Study Year	
2009	2007
Not sure / Cannot think of anything	Not sure / Cannot think of anything
Improve, maintain roads	Improve public safety
Limit growth / Preserve open space	Provide more affordable housing
Improve public safety	Limit growth / Preserve open space
Develop, improve downtown area	Reduce traffic congestion
Address homeless issue	Improve, maintain roads
Provide more affordable housing	Beautify City, beaches
Beautify City, beaches	Develop, improve downtown area
Improve, add parks, rec facilities	Nothing / Everything is fine
Reduce traffic congestion	Improve employment opportunities

CITY SERVICES

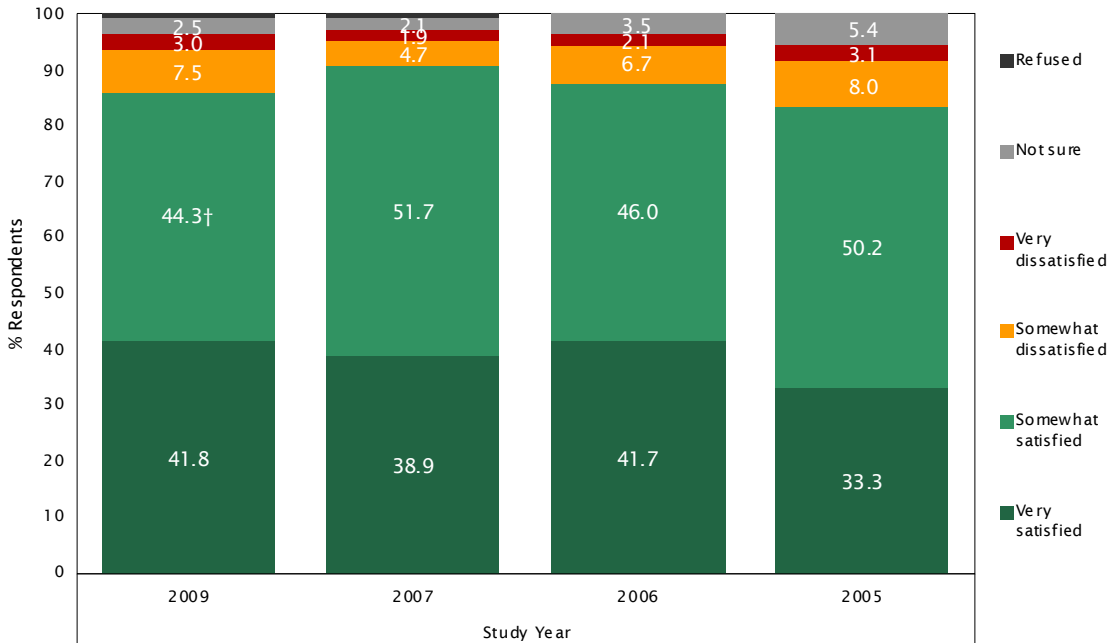
After measuring respondents' perceptions of the quality of life in Ventura, the survey turned to assessing their opinions about the City's performance in providing various municipal services.

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 Ventura 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.

Figure 6 presents the results to this question for 2009 alongside the results from the 2007, 2006, and 2005 resident surveys. As shown in the figure, the vast majority (86%) of Ventura residents indicated they were satisfied with the City's efforts to provide municipal services in 2009, with 42% saying they were *very* satisfied. Approximately 11% of residents reported dissatisfaction, and 3% were unsure or unwilling to state their opinion. When compared with 2007 there was a decrease in overall satisfaction (from 91% to 86%), with a statistically significant decrease in the percentage of respondents who were *somewhat satisfied* (from 52% to 44%). Since the City began conducting the surveys in 2005, however, there has been a general trend toward increasing satisfaction.

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

FIGURE 6 OVERALL SATISFACTION (2005 TO 2009)



† Statistically significant change (p < 0.05) between the 2007 and 2009 studies.

The next three figures display how residents' opinions about the City's overall performance in providing municipal services varied across key subgroups. The high levels of satisfaction exhibited by respondents as a whole (see Figure 6) were shared by nearly all subcategories of residents.

FIGURE 7 OVERALL SATISFACTION BY YEARS IN VENTURA & AGE

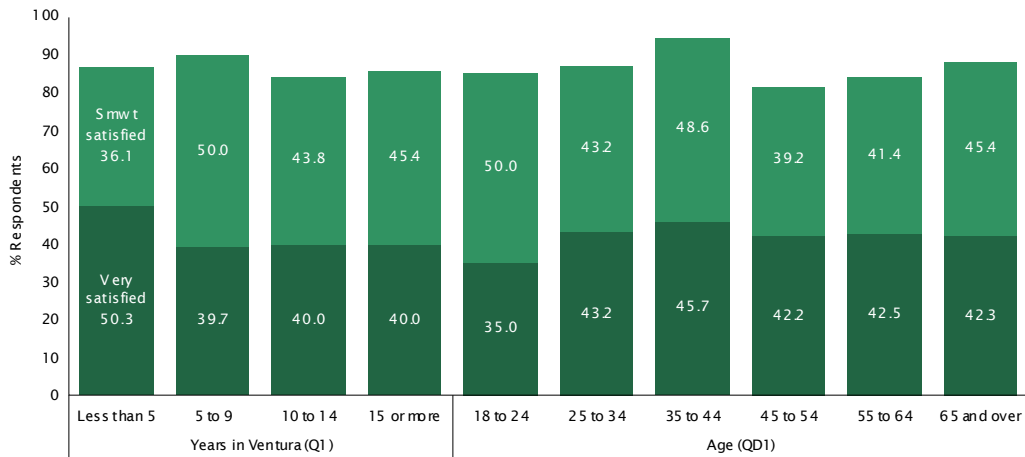


FIGURE 8 OVERALL SATISFACTION BY CHILD IN HOME, EMPLOYMENT STATUS & AGE

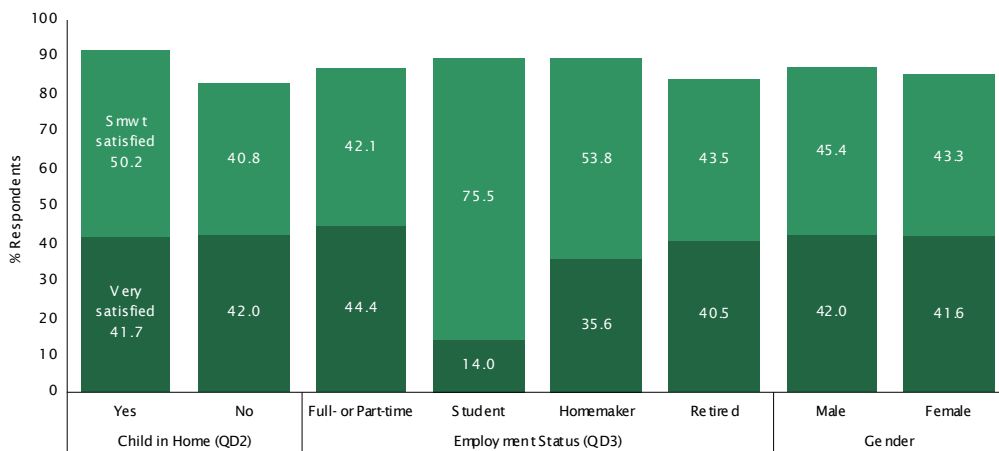
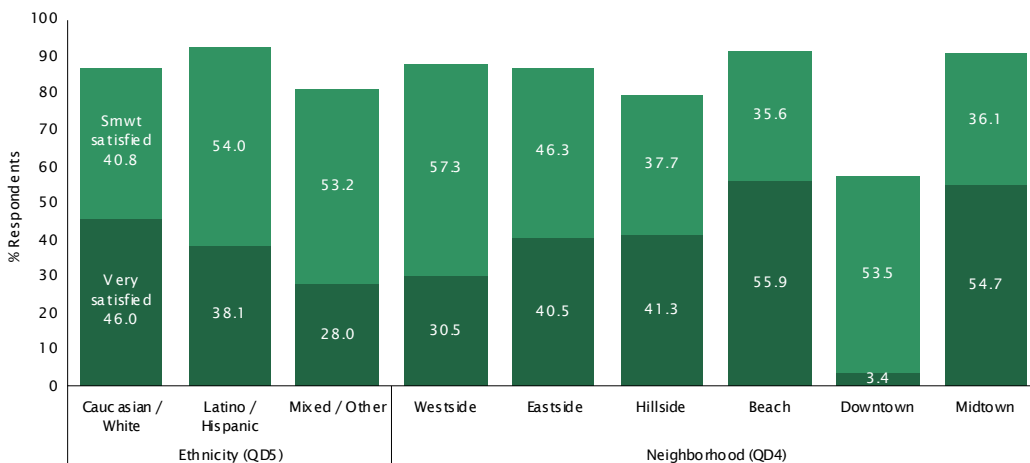


FIGURE 9 OVERALL SATISFACTION BY ETHNICITY & NEIGHBORHOOD



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. To minimize respondent fatigue that can occur with lengthy lists in a survey, the services were divided into two sets of 15 and 16 items, with half of the respondents receiving one set and half receiving the other. The order of the items was randomized for each respondent to avoid a systematic position bias. For each service, respondents were first asked whether they thought a service was extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not at all important. Respondents were then asked about their level of satisfaction with these same services.

Figures 10 and 11 present the services in order of importance according to the proportion of respondents who rated a service as *at least* very important. Overall, public safety services were ranked as the most important among those tested, including providing fire protection services, (92% extremely or very important), maintaining a low crime rate (91%), and providing emergency medical services (90%). At the other end of the spectrum (see Figure 11), enforcing parking laws (17%), providing art in public places (31%), and providing recreational programs for adults (38%) were viewed as comparatively less important.

Questions 5 & 7 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 10 IMPORTANCE OF SERVICES: FIRST TIER

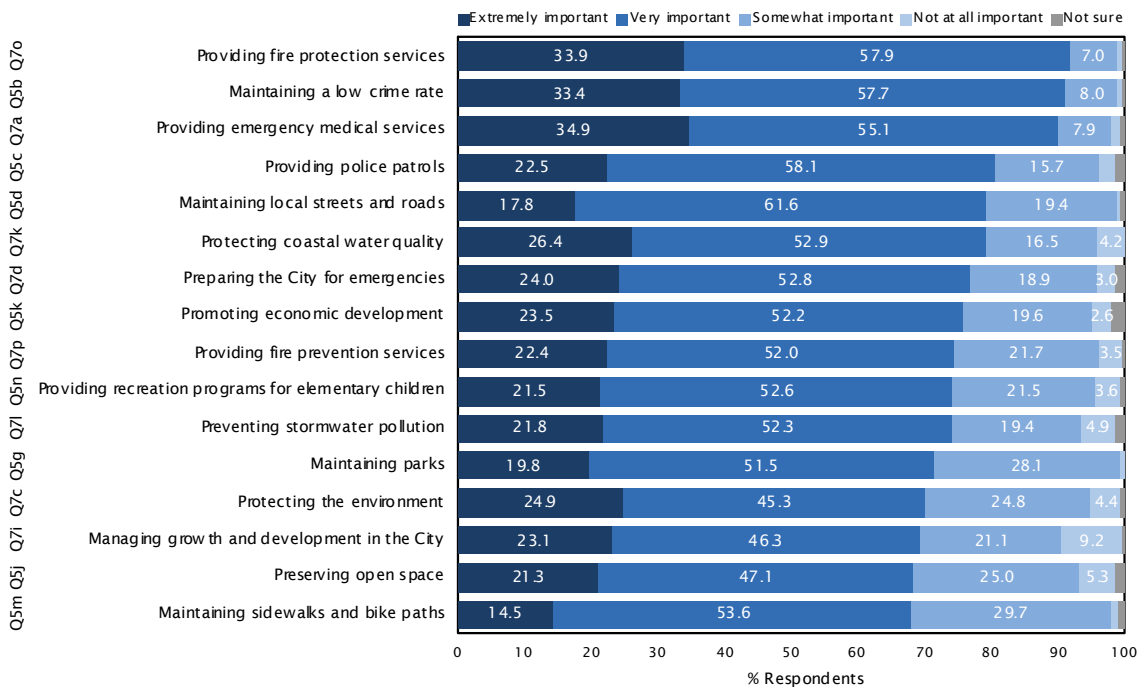
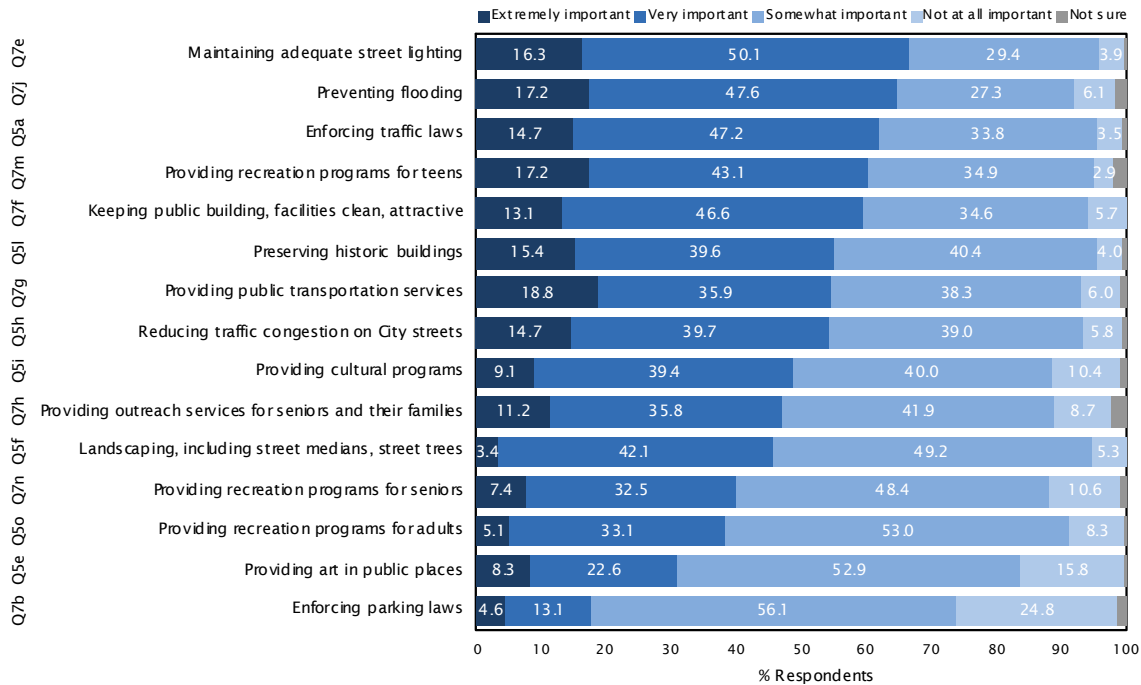


FIGURE 11 IMPORTANCE OF SERVICES: SECOND TIER



For the interested reader, Table 2 on the next page lists each of the services tested in 2009 along with the proportion of residents who considered the service extremely or very important in 2009 and 2007. The services are sorted from high to low based on the magnitude of the increase or decrease in importance since 2007. Eight services saw statistically significant changes between the two studies, with *efforts to promote economic development* leading the list with the greatest increase in importance.

TABLE 2 IMPORTANCE OF SERVICES (2007 TO 2009)

	Study Year		Difference in Importance (Extremely + Very) 2007 to 2009
	2009	2007	
Promoting economic development	75.7	56.2	+19.5†
Providing cultural programs	48.5	38.3	+10.2†
Preserving open space	68.3	58.4	+9.9†
Providing recreation programs for adults	38.3	34.6	+3.7
Providing art in public places	31.0	27.6	+3.4
Providing recreation programs for elementary children	74.2	71.2	+3.0
Maintaining a low crime rate	91.1	89.6	+1.5
Managing growth and development in the City	69.4	68.1	+1.3
Providing fire protection services	91.8	90.9	+0.9
Preserving historic buildings	55.1	54.4	+0.7
Protecting coastal water quality	79.3	80.2	-0.9
Maintaining sidewalks and bike paths	68.1	69.1	-1.0
Preventing stormwater pollution	74.2	75.3	-1.1
Maintaining parks	71.3	73.0	-1.7
Providing police patrols	80.6	82.4	-1.9
Providing emergency medical services	90.0	92.0	-1.9
Enforcing traffic laws	61.9	64.4	-2.5
Maintaining adequate street lighting	66.4	69.3	-2.9
Landscaping, including street medians, street trees	45.5	48.5	-3.1
Providing fire prevention services	74.4	77.8	-3.4
Preparing the City for emergencies	76.8	80.4	-3.6
Maintaining local streets and roads	79.4	83.9	-4.5
Preventing flooding	64.8	69.5	-4.7
Protecting the environment	70.2	76.6	-6.4
Providing recreation programs for teens	60.3	68.3	-8.0
Providing public transportation services	54.7	63.8	-9.2
Keeping public building, facilities clean, attractive	59.7	70.5	-10.8†
Reducing traffic congestion on City streets	54.4	66.2	-11.8†
Providing recreation programs for seniors	40.0	54.4	-14.4†
Providing outreach services for seniors and their families	47.0	63.1	-16.1†
Enforcing parking laws	17.6	34.1	-16.5†

† Statistically significant change ($p < 0.05$) between the 2007 and 2009 studies.

Turning to the satisfaction component, Figures 12 and 13 sort the same list of services according to the proportion of respondents who indicated they were either very or somewhat satisfied with the City's efforts to provide the service.³ Overall, respondents were most satisfied with the City's efforts to provide emergency paramedic services (96%), fire protection services (96%), and fire protection services (94%).

Although respondents were comparatively less satisfied with the City's efforts to manage growth and development (67%), maintain local streets and roads (71%), and reduce traffic congestion on City streets (74%), even these services received positive satisfaction ratings from at least two-thirds of respondents who provided an opinion (see Figure 13).

3. To allow apples-to-apples comparisons of the satisfaction ratings, only respondents who provided an opinion were included in the figures. 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 parentheses.

Questions 6 & 8 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 Ventura is doing to provide the service. Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the City's efforts to: _____, or do you not have an opinion?

FIGURE 12 SATISFACTION WITH SERVICES: FIRST TIER

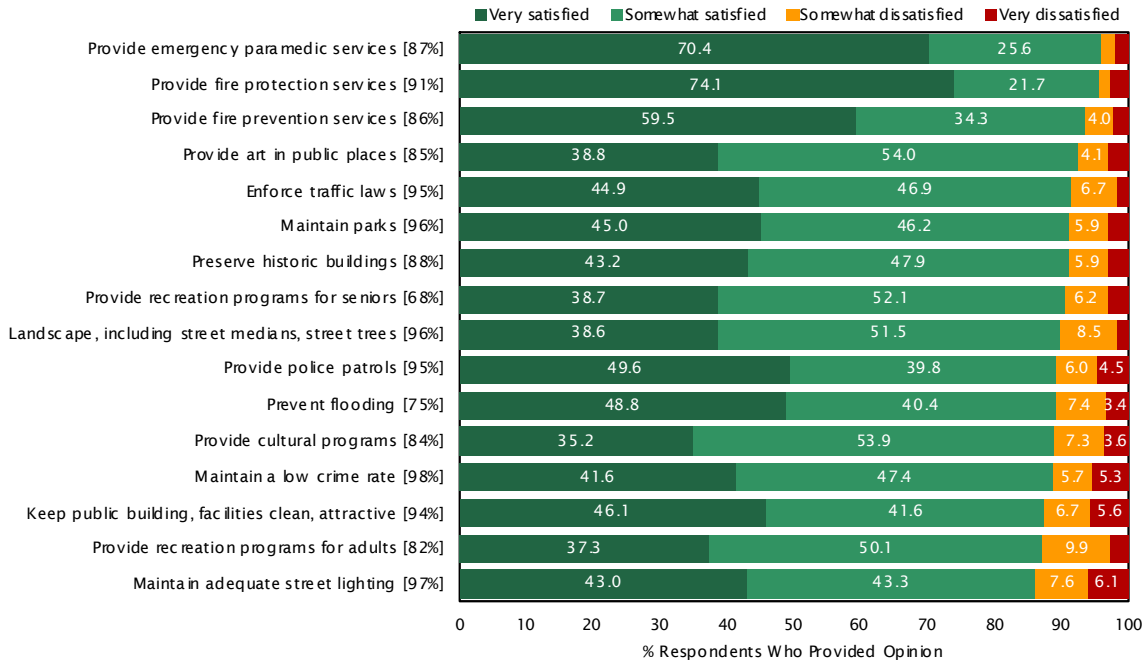


FIGURE 13 SATISFACTION WITH SERVICES: SECOND TIER

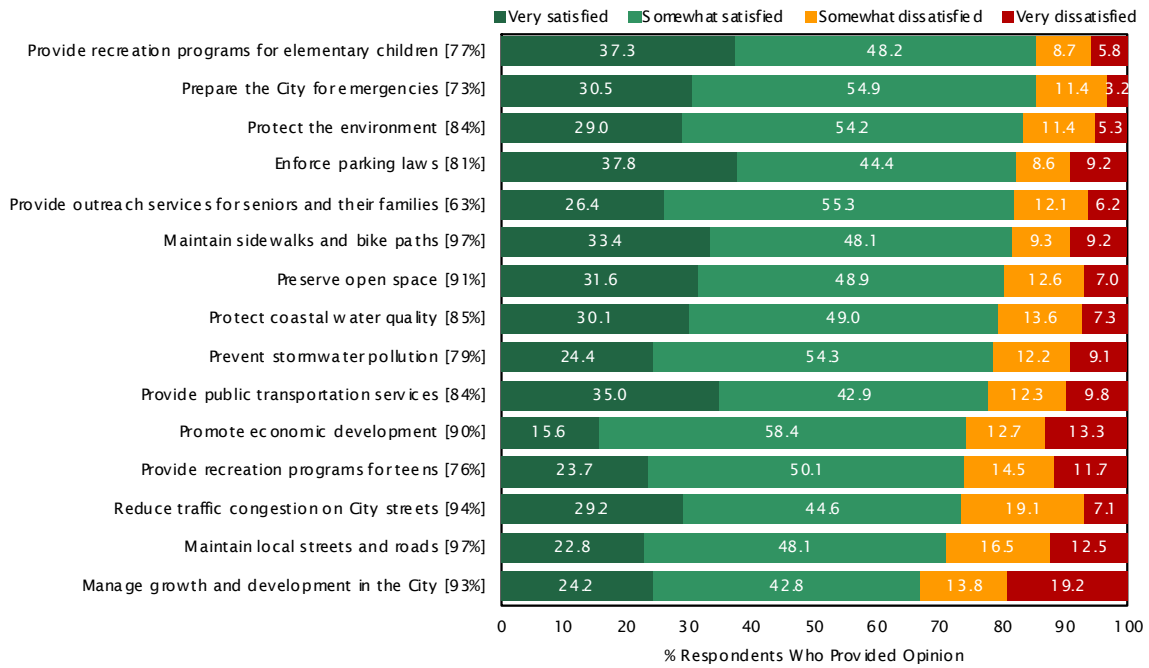


Table 3 lists each of the services tested in 2009 along with the proportion of residents who indicated that they were satisfied with the City's efforts to provide the service in 2009 and 2007. The services are sorted from high to low based on the magnitude of the change in satisfaction since 2007. Notably, satisfaction increased significantly with regards to providing art in public places and reducing traffic on City streets. Satisfaction with providing recreation programs for teens and providing outreach services for seniors and their families decreased significantly.

TABLE 3 SATISFACTION WITH SERVICES (2007 TO 2009)

	Study Year		Difference in Satisfaction 2007 to 2009
	2009	2007	
Providing art in public places	92.8	78.8	+14.0†
Reducing traffic congestion on City streets	73.8	63.8	+10.0†
Enforcing traffic laws	91.8	87.0	+4.8
Providing fire protection services	95.8	93.6	+2.2
Promoting economic development	74.0	72.0	+2.0
Maintaining a low crime rate	89.0	87.3	+1.7
Providing emergency medical services	96.0	94.6	+1.4
Maintaining adequate street lighting	86.3	85.1	+1.2
Landscaping, including street medians, street trees	90.0	89.0	+1.0
Providing police patrols	89.4	88.8	+0.7
Providing recreation programs for elementary children	85.5	84.8	+0.6
Providing fire prevention services	93.8	93.2	+0.6
Preparing the City for emergencies	85.4	85.6	-0.2
Preserving historic buildings	91.1	91.5	-0.4
Maintaining parks	91.2	91.6	-0.4
Providing cultural programs	89.0	89.9	-0.9
Providing recreation programs for adults	87.4	88.5	-1.1
Providing public transportation services	77.9	79.5	-1.6
Enforcing parking laws	82.2	84.1	-1.9
Preserving open space	80.5	82.7	-2.2
Maintaining local streets and roads	70.9	74.6	-3.7
Preventing stormwater pollution	78.7	82.4	-3.7
Providing recreation programs for seniors	90.8	94.5	-3.7
Maintaining sidewalks and bike paths	81.5	85.8	-4.3
Managing growth and development in the City	67.0	71.9	-4.9
Preventing flooding	89.2	94.1	-4.9
Protecting the environment	83.2	88.2	-5.0
Keeping public building, facilities clean, attractive	87.7	93.1	-5.4
Protecting coastal water quality	79.1	85.1	-6.0
Providing outreach services for seniors and their families	81.7	91.0	-9.3†
Providing recreation programs for teens	73.8	87.2	-13.4†

† Statistically significant change ($p < 0.05$) between the 2007 and 2009 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 service 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 sample *averages* to conduct this analysis, True North has developed and refined 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 the needs of its residents.⁴ Table 4 on the next page presents a two-dimensional grid based on the importance and satisfaction scales. The horizontal axis corresponds to the four *importance* response options, whereas the vertical scale corresponds to the four *satisfaction* response 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 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 just somewhat or not at all important, or b) a respondent is somewhat dissatisfied and the service is viewed as very important.

4. Any tool that relies solely 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.

Not Meeting Needs, Severely

The City is severely *not* 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.

TABLE 4 NEEDS & PRIORITY 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

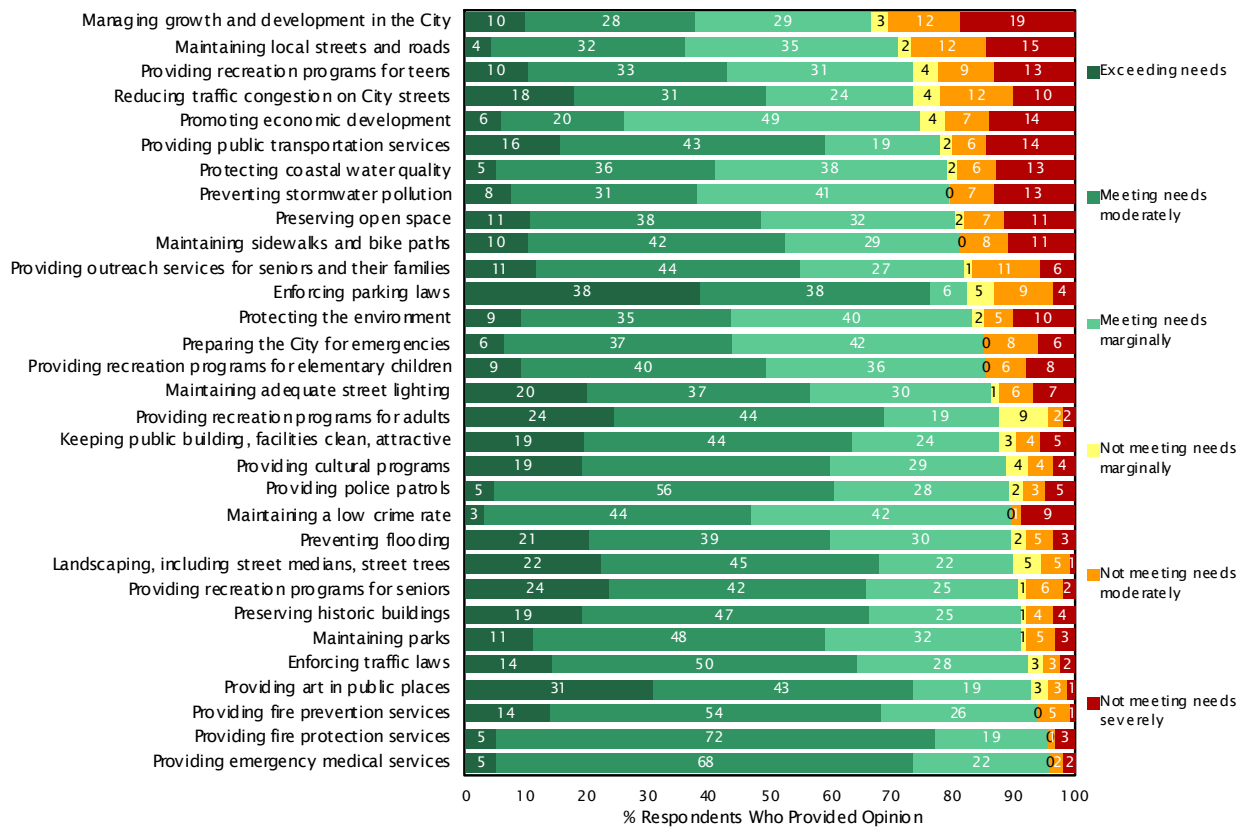
Using this framework, True North categorized respondents individually for each of the 31 services tested. For example, a respondent who indicated that managing growth and development in the City was somewhat important and they were very satisfied with the City’s efforts in this service area would be 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 if they were somewhat dissatisfied with the City’s efforts to provide the service, but the service was viewed as only somewhat important.

Figure 14 on the next page presents each of the 31 services, along with the percentage of respondents grouped into each of the six possible categories. For ease of interpretation, the color-coding in Figure 14 is consistent with that presented in Table 4. For example, in the service area of managing growth and development in the City, the City is exceeding the needs of 10% of respondents, moderately meeting the needs of 28% of respondents, marginally meeting the needs of 29% of respondents, marginally not meeting the needs of 3% of respondents, moderately not meeting the needs of 12% of respondents, and severely not meeting the needs of 19% of respondents.

Operating from the management philosophy that, all other things being equal, the City should focus on improving services that have the highest percentage of residents for which the City is currently *not* meeting their needs, the services have been sorted by order of priority. Thus, managing growth and development in the City is the top priority, followed by maintaining local streets and roads, providing recreation programs for teens, reducing traffic congestion on City streets, and promoting economic development.

Perhaps the most important pattern that is shown in Figure 14 is that for every service tested the City is meeting the needs of at least two-thirds (67%) of its residents, which compares favorably to the corresponding number found in 2007 (64%).

FIGURE 14 RESIDENT SERVICE NEEDS



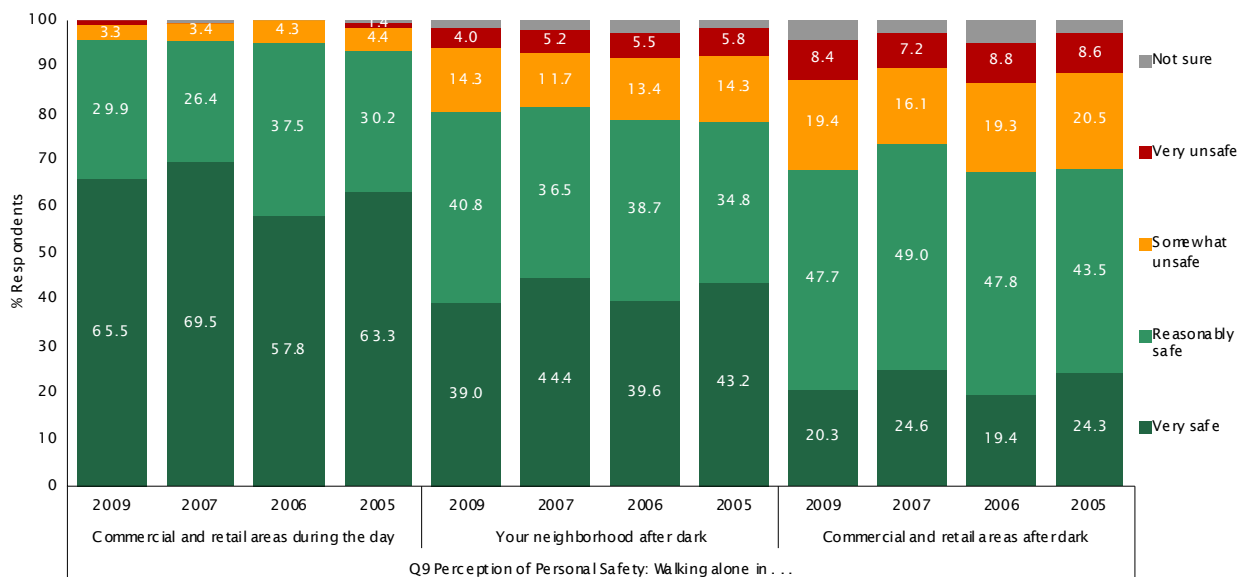
PUBLIC SAFETY & NEIGHBORHOOD ISSUES

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 don't *feel* safe then they will not enjoy the many cultural, recreational, and shopping opportunities available in the City of Ventura 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 three scenarios described at the bottom of Figure 15 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. In 2009, nearly all (95%) residents indicated they felt safe walking alone in commercial and retail areas of Ventura during the day, although the percentage drops to 68% when walking alone in commercial and retail areas after dark. Eight-out-of-ten (80%) respondents said they feel safe walking alone in their neighborhood after dark. There were no significant changes in perceived safety between the 2007 and 2009 studies.

Question 9 *Next, I'd like to ask a few questions about personal safety and security in the City of Ventura. When you are _____, would you say that you feel very safe, reasonably safe, somewhat unsafe, very unsafe, or not sure?*

FIGURE 15 PERCEPTION OF PUBLIC SAFETY (2005 TO 2009)



As one might expect, feelings of safety were related to respondent age and gender. Figure 16 presents the percentage of respondents who indicated that they felt *very safe* in each scenario by their age and gender group. Women were consistently less likely than their male counterparts to feel very safe in each of the three settings, whereas age varied across the scenarios. At the bottom of the page, Figure 17 examines perceptions of safety in one’s neighborhood after dark. Residents who live in the Westside and Downtown areas were the least likely to feel very safe after dark in their neighborhood.

FIGURE 16 PERCEPTION OF PUBLIC SAFETY BY AGE & GENDER

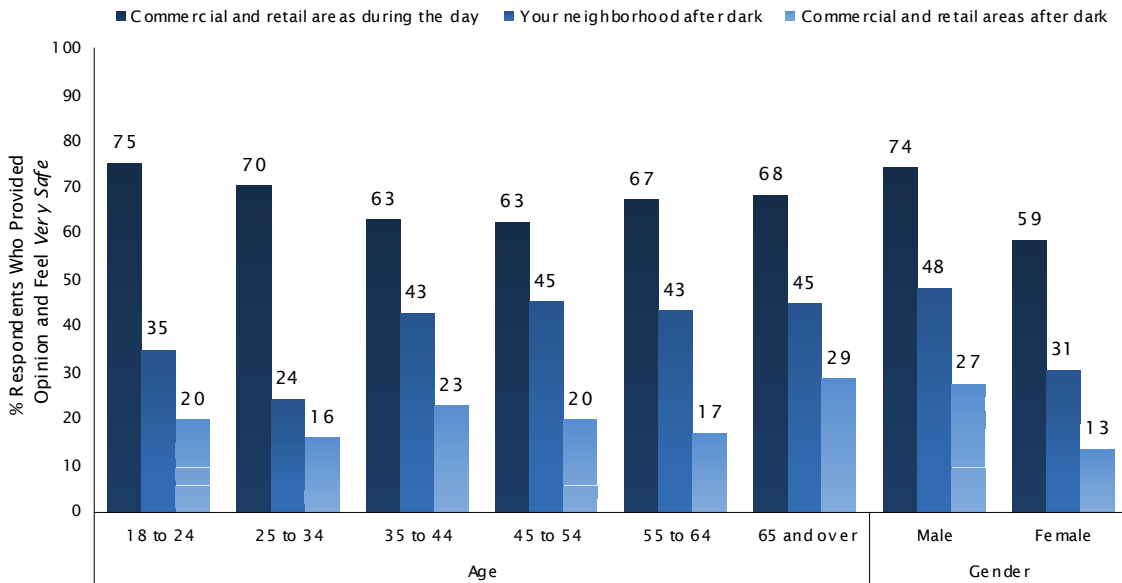
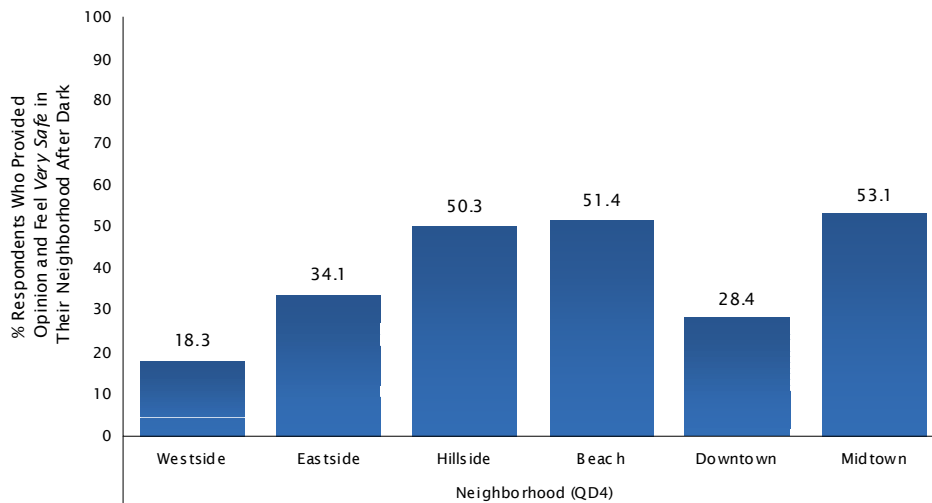


FIGURE 17 PERCEPTION OF PUBLIC SAFETY IN NEIGHBORHOOD AFTER DARK BY NEIGHBORHOOD

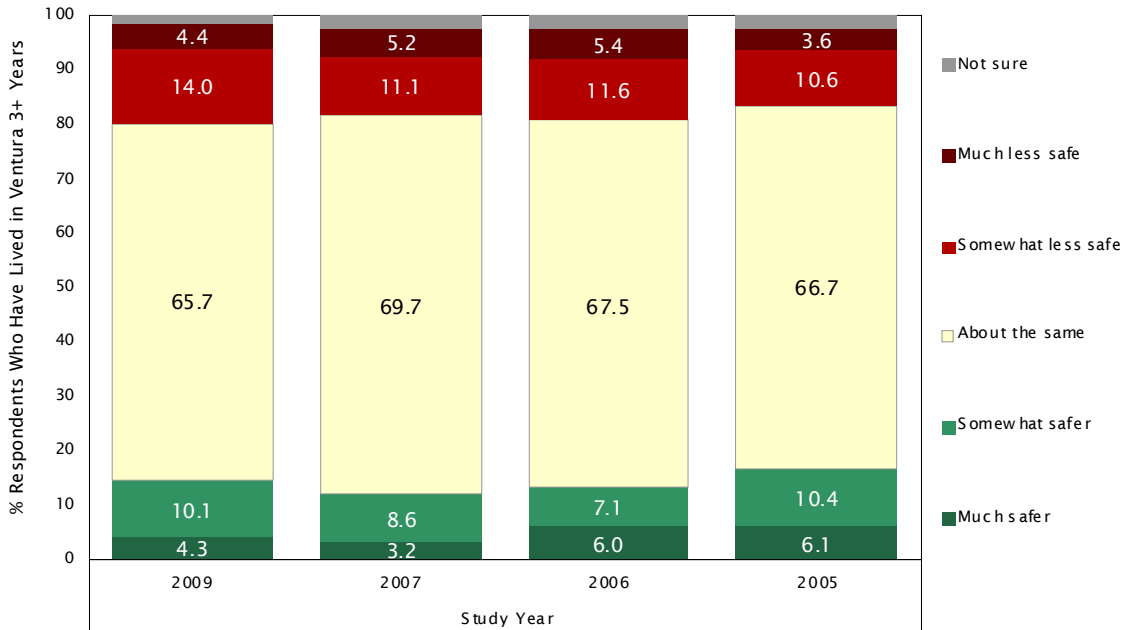


Respondents who had lived in the City at least three years were next asked to compare the safety of Ventura today with that of three years ago. As shown in Figure 18, two-thirds (66%) indicated that things have not changed during that past three years—that is, Ventura is as safe today as it was three years ago. Among those who perceived a change in safety during this period, opinions

were split between those who felt that the City has become more safe (14%) and those who felt that the City is comparatively less safe now (18%). The findings in 2009 for this question were statistically similar to those in the previous studies.

Question 10 *When compared with three years ago, would you say that the City of Ventura is safer now, is less safe, or is about the same as it was before?*

FIGURE 18 PERCEPTION OF SAFETY IN PAST THREE YEARS: (2005 TO 2009)



Figures 19 and 20 display how responses to Question 10 varied by a host of demographic variables. When compared with their respective counterparts, those who had resided in the City less than 10 years, younger residents, households with children, residents who lived in the Downtown area, residents of mixed/other ethnicities, and male respondents were the *most* likely to perceive that the City had become safer during the past three years.

FIGURE 19 PERCEPTION OF SAFETY IN PAST THREE YEARS BY YEARS IN VENTURA, AGE & CHILD IN HOME

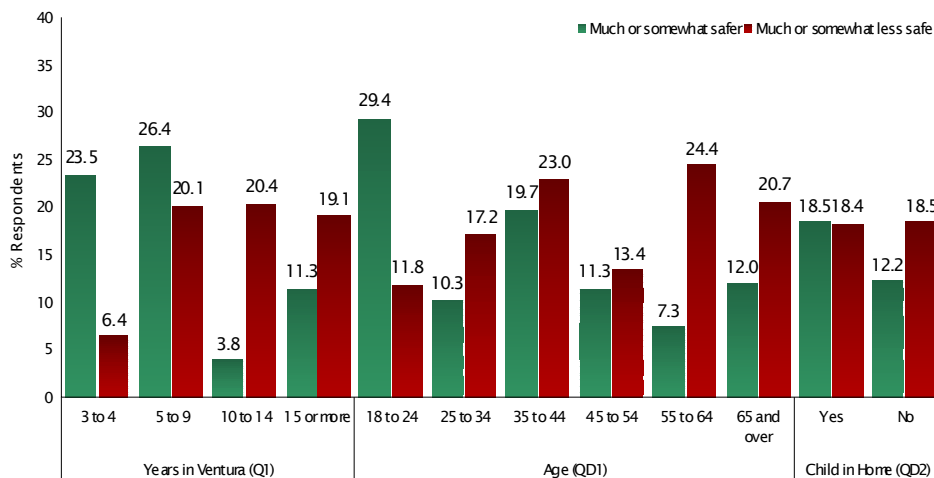
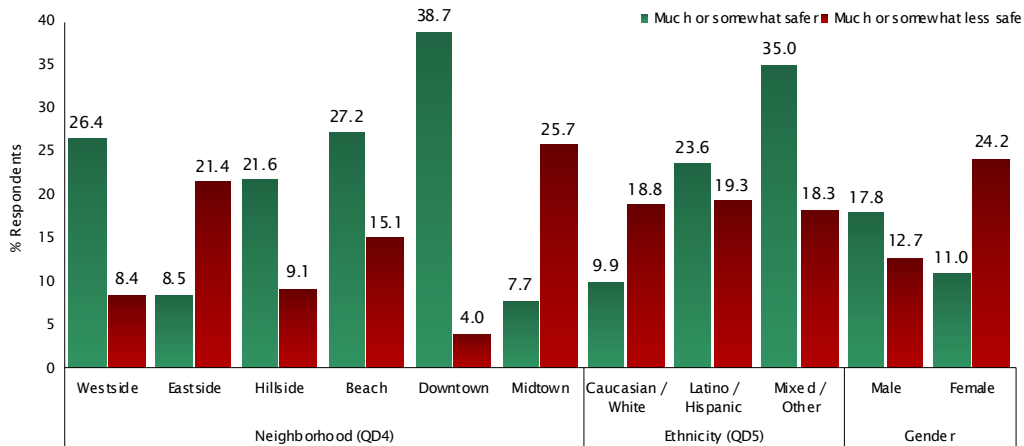


FIGURE 20 PERCEPTION OF SAFETY IN PAST THREE YEARS BY NEIGHBORHOOD, ETHNICITY & GENDER



CONCERNS ABOUT BEING VICTIMIZED All respondents were next asked to rate their level of concern about being victimized in various ways, including violent and non-violent crimes. The seven crimes tested are shown in Figure 21, and respondents’ level of concern is expressed as the degree to which they agreed with each statement. The higher the level of agreement, the greater their level of concern.

Overall, respondents felt safe in their neighborhoods and were generally not concerned with being a victim of the crimes tested in Question 11. It is worth noting, however, that several crimes did concern a sizeable minority of respondents—particularly car theft and damage. As shown in Table 5 on the next page, concern about personal safety did not change significantly from the 2007 study.

Question 11 *As I read each of the following statements, please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the statement. In my neighborhood, I am concerned that: _____.*

FIGURE 21 AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS ABOUT NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY

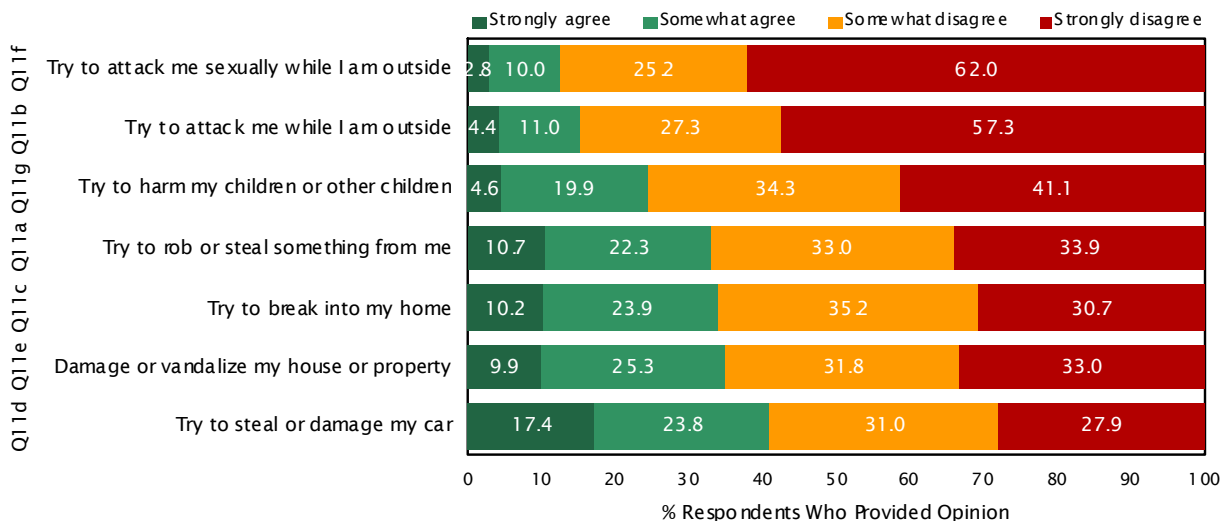
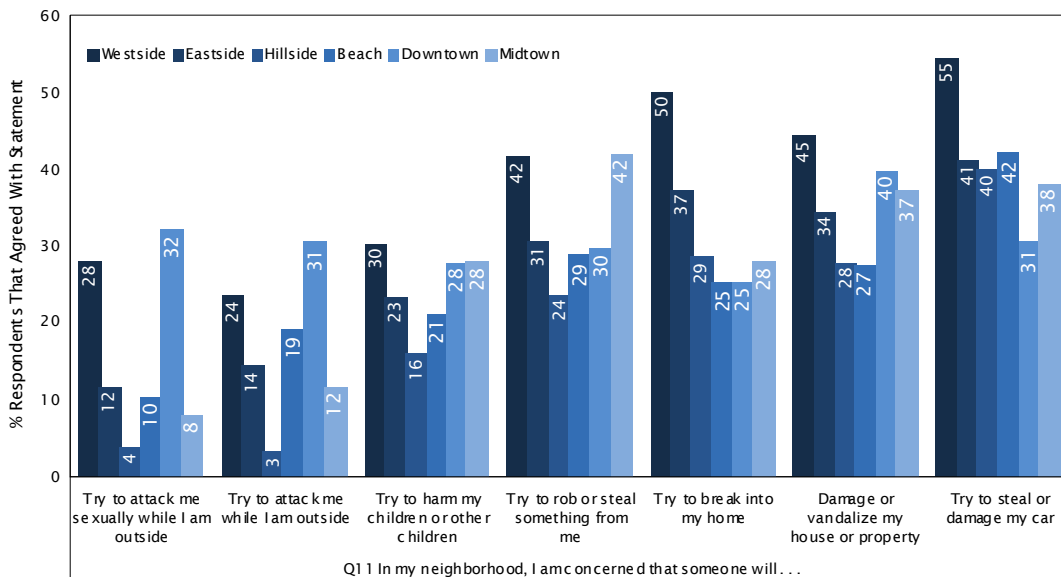


TABLE 5 AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS ABOUT NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY (2005 TO 2009)

	Study Year				Difference in Agreement 07 to 09
	2009	2007	2006	2005	
Try to harm my children or other children	24.6	26.9	32.0	29.4	-2.4
Try to rob or steal something from me	33.1	34.5	33.5	28.2	-1.5
Try to attack me while I am outside	15.3	16.1	20.2	15.9	-0.7
Try to steal or damage my car	41.1	41.3	43.1	32.7	-0.1
Try to attack me sexually while I am outside	12.9	11.2	12.7	12.9	+1.6
Damage or vandalize my house or property	35.2	32.8	35.9	30.3	+2.4
Try to break into my home	34.1	31.2	35.5	29.4	+2.9

Figure 22 displays how concern about being a victim of a crime varied by the type of crime and the neighborhood in which a respondent lived. Concern about victimization was generally highest in the Westside area.

FIGURE 22 AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS ABOUT NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY BY NEIGHBORHOOD



POLICE DEPARTMENT PRIORITIES The next question in this series was designed to measure respondents' opinions about the priority that the Ventura Police Department should place on addressing specific crimes and services. Respondents were first instructed that the Police Department has a limited budget and staff, so the Department must prioritize the services that it offers. For each of the services shown on the left of Figure 23, respondents were then asked to indicate whether the service should be a high, medium, or low priority for the Department—or if the Department should not spend any resources on the service.

Figure 23 presents the services in order of priority based on the percentage of respondents who indicated that the service should be a *high* priority for the Department. At the top of the list was gang enforcement (79%), then follow-up investigation of crimes (67%), and preventing juvenile crimes (61%). At the other end of the spectrum, respondents felt that police storefronts (20%), foot patrols (25%), and enforcing traffic laws (25%) were lower priorities. Table 6 shows how the percentage of respondents who indicated that each service is a high priority changed between

2007 and 2009. Between the two studies, there was a statistically significant decrease in the percentage of respondents who considered crime prevention programs a *high* priority.

Question 12 *The City of Ventura's Police Department has a limited budget and staff, so the Department must prioritize the services that it offers. As I read each of the following services provided by the Department, please indicate whether you think the Department should make the service a high, medium or low priority. If you feel the Department should not spend any resources on a service, just say so. Please keep in mind that not all of the services can be high priorities.*

FIGURE 23 PUBLIC SAFETY SPENDING PRIORITIES

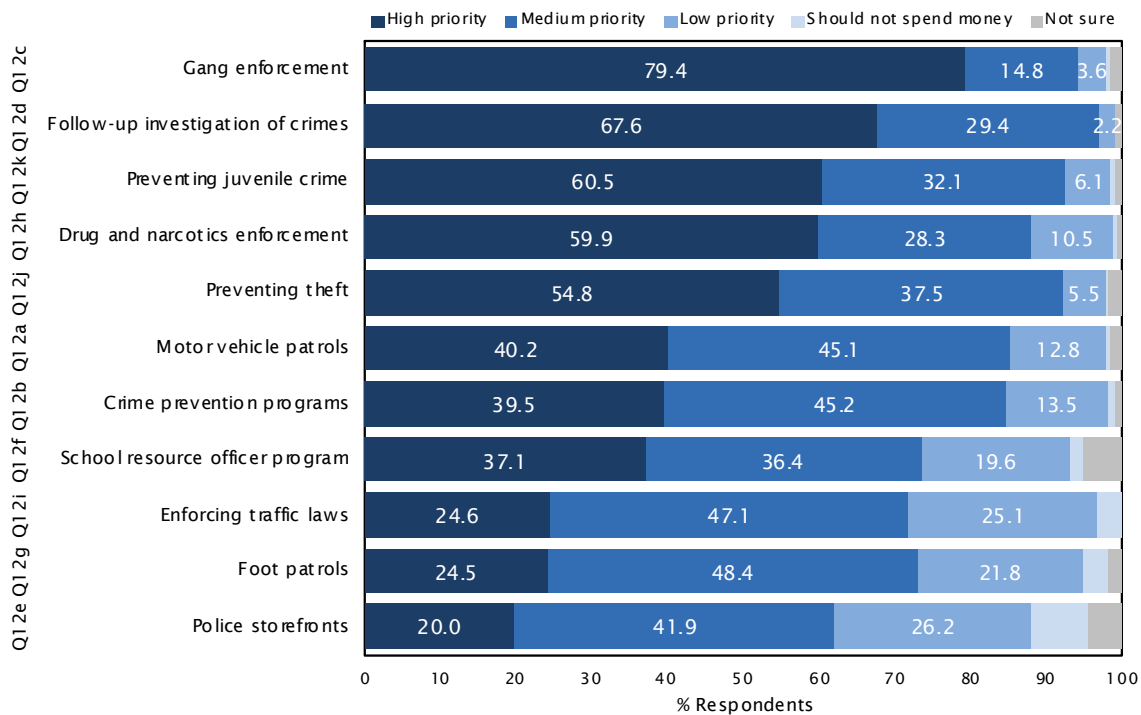


TABLE 6 PUBLIC SAFETY SPENDING PRIORITIES (2007 TO 2009)

	Study Year		Difference in High Priority
	2009	2007	
Enforcing traffic laws	24.6	24.2	+0.4
Preventing theft	54.8	55.0	-0.2
Foot patrols	24.5	25.6	-1.1
Motor vehicle patrols	40.2	41.4	-1.2
Preventing juvenile crime	60.5	61.9	-1.4
School resource officer program	37.1	39.0	-1.8
Follow-up investigation of crimes	67.6	69.9	-2.2
Gang enforcement	79.4	81.7	-2.3
Police storefronts	20.0	22.4	-2.4
Drug and narcotics enforcement	59.9	65.0	-5.1
Crime prevention programs	39.5	47.5	-8.0†

† Statistically significant change (p < 0.05) between the 2007 and 2009 studies.

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, illegal signs, 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.

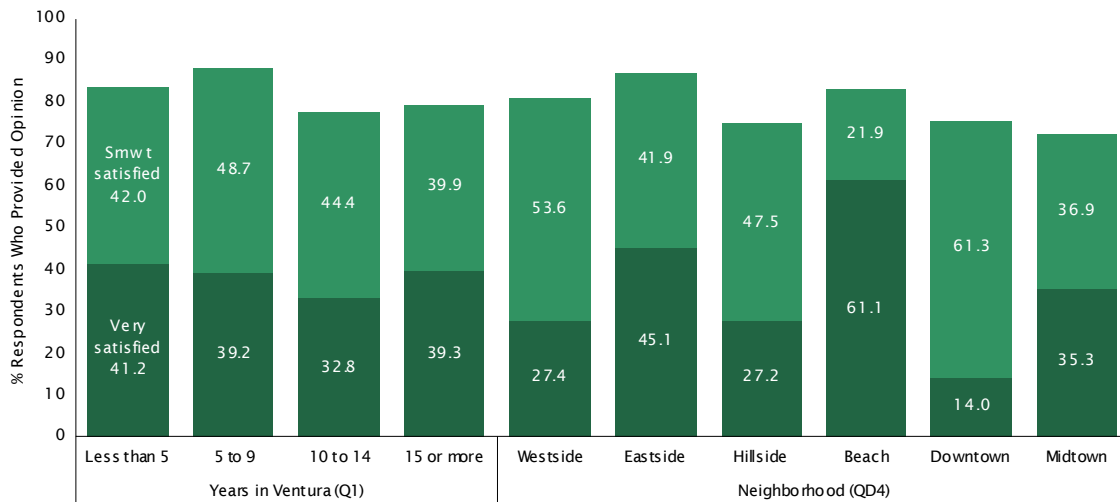
Figure 24 presents the results of this question for 2009, 2007, and 2006, showing only respondents who provided an opinion. Satisfaction with code enforcement among those who provided an opinion was quite high, with 81% of residents indicating they were satisfied with the City's performance in this area. The results suggest a trend of improvement since 2007, although the increase in satisfaction was not statistically significant. For the interested reader, Figure 25 on the next page shows the levels of satisfaction among respondents who held an opinion about the City's code enforcement efforts, by years of residence and neighborhood.

Question 13 *The City of Ventura has created codes to address a variety of issues that can affect a neighborhood, such as illegal parking, abandoned vehicles, non-permitted construction, illegal signs, 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 24 SATISFACTION WITH CODE ENFORCEMENT (2006 TO 2009)



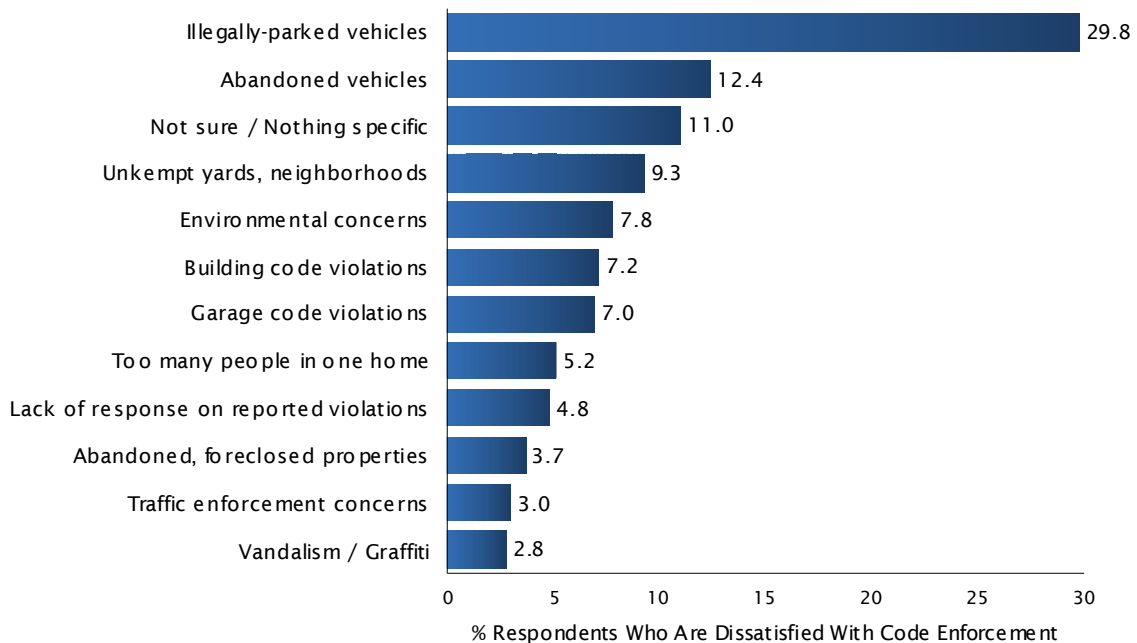
FIGURE 25 SATISFACTION WITH CODE ENFORCEMENT BY YEARS IN VENTURA & NEIGHBORHOOD



For the small percentage of respondents who expressed dissatisfaction with code enforcement efforts, the survey provided an open-ended opportunity (Question 14) to describe the particular issue or code violation the City isn't addressing that is the cause of their dissatisfaction (see Figure 26). The most common responses to this question were related to illegally-parked vehicles (30%) and abandoned vehicles (12%).

Question 14 *Is there a particular issue or code violation that the City isn't addressing that leads you to be dissatisfied?*

FIGURE 26 REASON FOR DISSATISFACTION WITH CODE ENFORCEMENT



PARKS & RECREATION

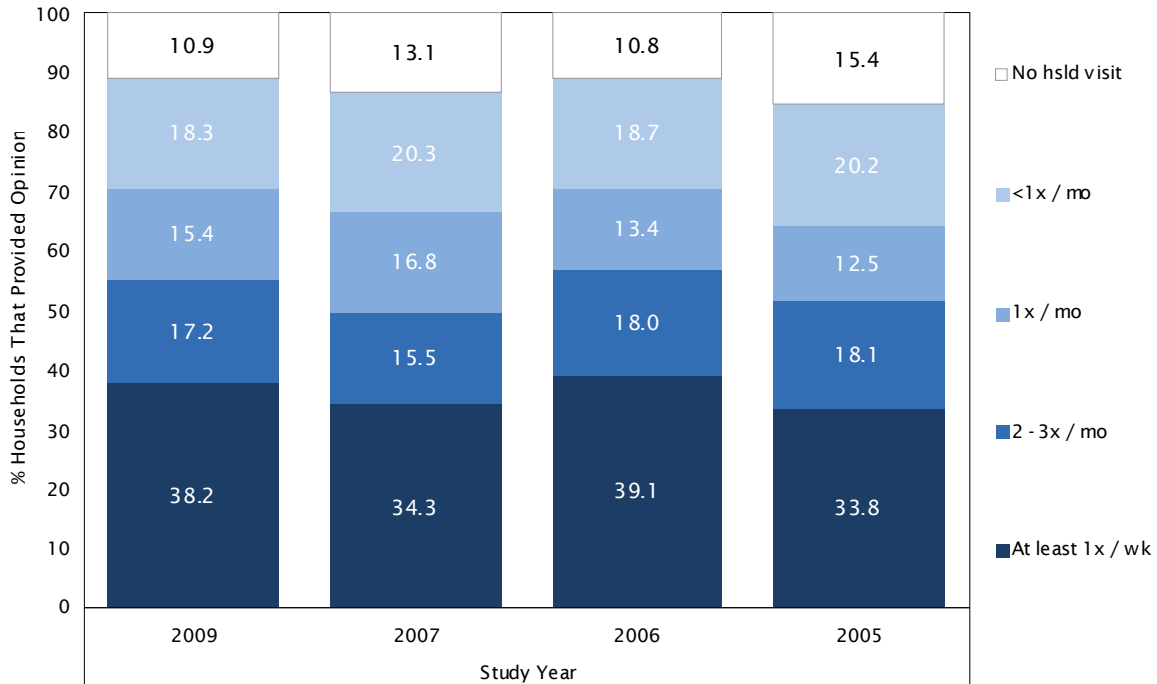
By providing areas and opportunities to recreate, relax, and play, the City of Ventura’s parks, recreation facilities, and recreation and cultural programs promote a sense of community in the City, improve property values, enhance the business climate and local economy, and generally contribute to a higher quality of life for residents and visitors. The next five questions of the survey sought to profile residents’ use and perceptions of community parks and recreational facilities, as well as their participation in, and opinions about, recreation and cultural programs.

PARKS The first two questions in this series were designed to measure household use of Ventura parks. Respondents were asked whether one or more members of their household had visited a City of Ventura park in the 12 months prior to the interview and, if yes, how frequently their household typically visits a Ventura park. The answers to both of these questions are combined in Figure 27. Overall, 89% of respondents in 2009 reported that at least one member of their household had visited a city park in the 12 months prior to the interview. Moreover, the frequency of visits was high. Thirty-eight percent (38%) of residents reported that a member of their household visits a park at least once per week. When compared with the patterns found in 2007, there were no statistically significant changes.

Question 15 *Have you or anyone else in your household visited a City of Ventura park in the past 12 months?*

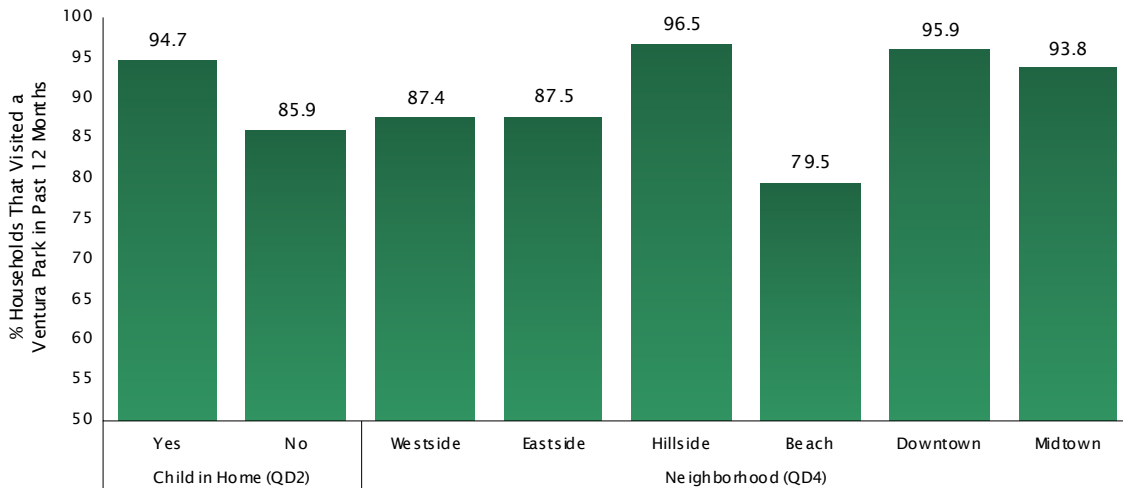
Question 16 *How frequently do you or other members of your household typically visit the parks in Ventura? At least once per week, two to three times per month, once per month, or less often than once per month?*

FIGURE 27 HOUSEHOLD PARK VISIT IN PAST 12 MONTHS (2005 TO 2009)



As expected, households with children were considerably more likely than their counterparts to have visited a city park in the prior year. Across the various neighborhoods in the City, residents of the Hillside, Downtown, and Midtown neighborhoods reported the highest rate of park usage (see Figure 28).

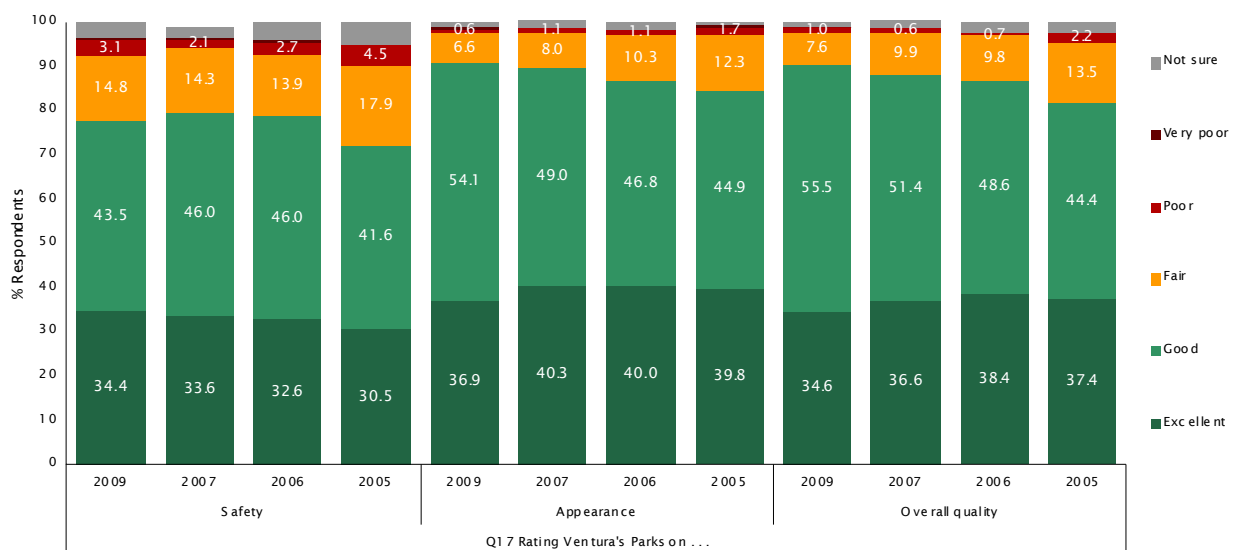
FIGURE 28 HOUSEHOLD PARK VISIT IN PAST 12 MONTHS BY CHILD IN HOME & NEIGHBORHOOD



Respondents were next asked to rate the overall quality, safety, and appearance of Ventura’s parks using a five-point scale of excellent, good, fair, poor, or very poor. Figure 29 presents the results for 2009 alongside those for the prior three studies for each aspect tested. Overall, Ventura’s parks were rated favorably. More than three-quarters (77%) of respondents chose *excellent* or *good* to describe the parks’ overall quality, appearance, and safety. There were no statistically significant changes between the 2007 and 2009 studies.

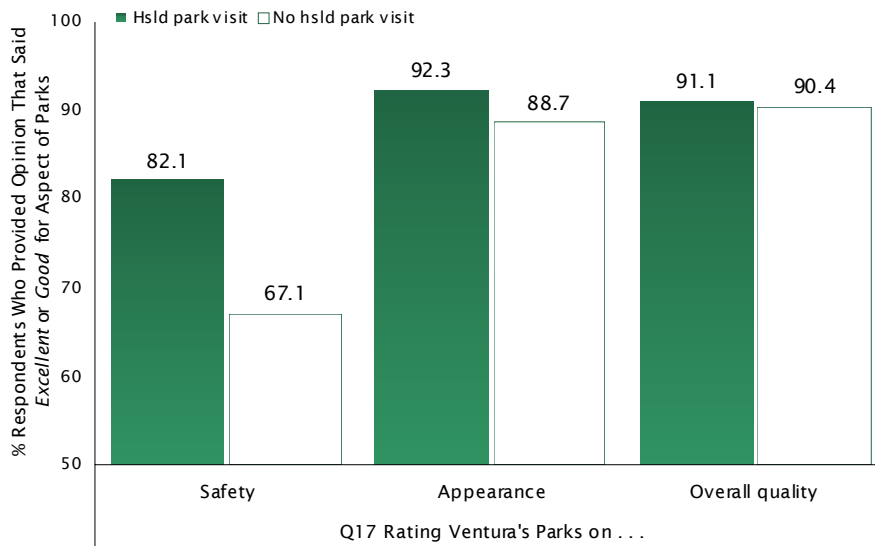
Question 17 How do you rate the: _____ of Ventura parks? Would you say it is excellent, good, fair, poor or very poor?

FIGURE 29 PERCEPTION OF PARKS (2005 TO 2009)



Opinions of Ventura’s parks varied depending on whether one had visited a park in the 12 months prior to the interview (see Figure 30 below). Those who visited a park during this period were more likely to provide a rating of excellent or good for each aspect, particularly safety.

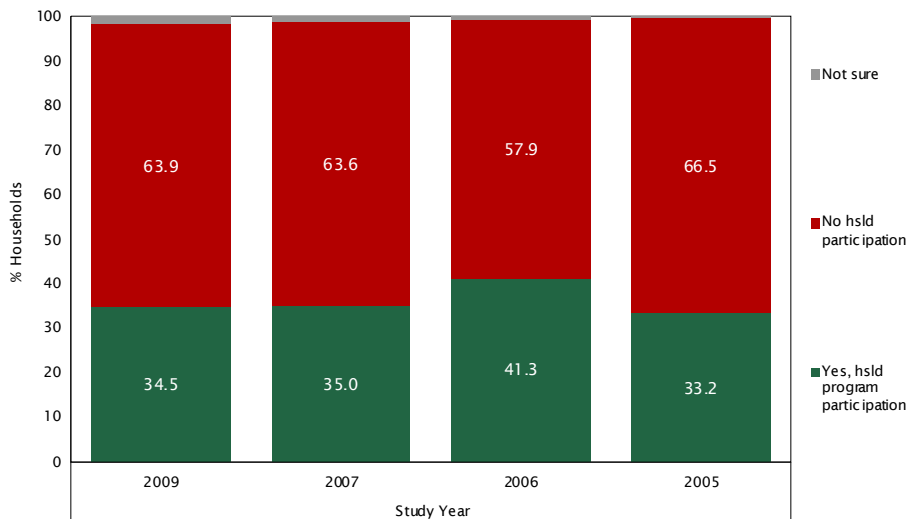
FIGURE 30 PERCEPTION OF VENTURA PARKS BY HOUSEHOLD PARK VISIT



PROGRAMS At this point, the survey switched from facilities to programming. Respondents were first asked if one or more members of their household had participated in a recreational or cultural program offered by the City in the 12 months prior to the interview. Figure 31 presents the results to this question for 2009 alongside the results from 2007, 2006, and 2005.

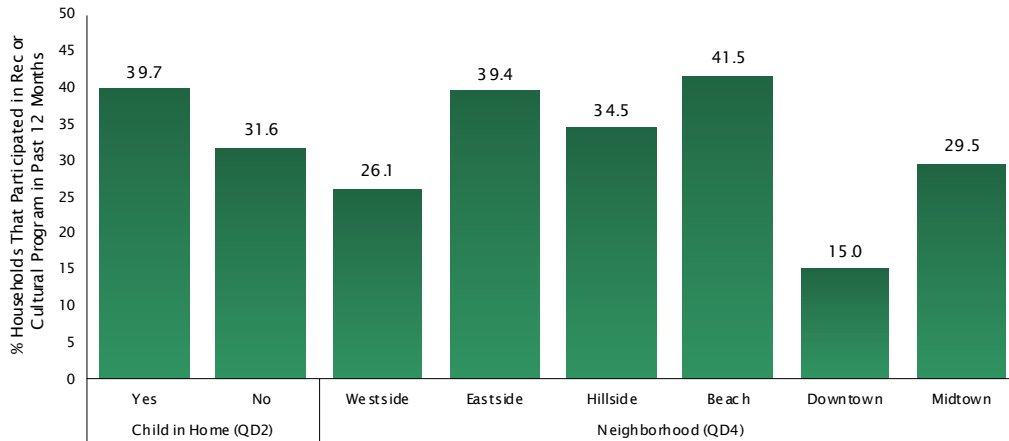
Question 18 *In the past 12 months, have you or any member of your household participated in a recreational or cultural program offered by the City of Ventura?*

FIGURE 31 HOUSEHOLD PARTICIPATION IN RECREATION OR CULTURAL PROGRAM IN PAST 12 MONTHS (2005 TO 2009)



Overall, 35% of respondents reported that at least one member of their household had participated in a program during the past year, which was virtually identical to the 2007 finding. Participation in a recreation program was most commonly reported by households with children and by residents of the Beach and Eastside neighborhoods (see Figure 32).

FIGURE 32 HOUSEHOLD PARTICIPATION IN RECREATION OR CULTURAL PROGRAM IN PAST 12 MONTHS BY CHILD IN HOME & NEIGHBORHOOD



Households that had participated in a recreational program or programs offered by the City were asked two follow-up questions to identify the type of programs they participated in, as well as how they would rate the overall quality of the programs. Programs for adults (17% of all households) and children (12%) were the most commonly-cited types in 2009 (Figure 33). Table 7 examines household participation since the 2005 study. Between 2007 and 2009 there was a statistically significant increase in household participation in programs for adults.

Question 19 *Was the program or programs that your household participated in designed for children, teens, adults, seniors or families?*

FIGURE 33 HOUSEHOLD PARTICIPATION IN SPECIFIC PROGRAMS IN PAST 12 MONTHS

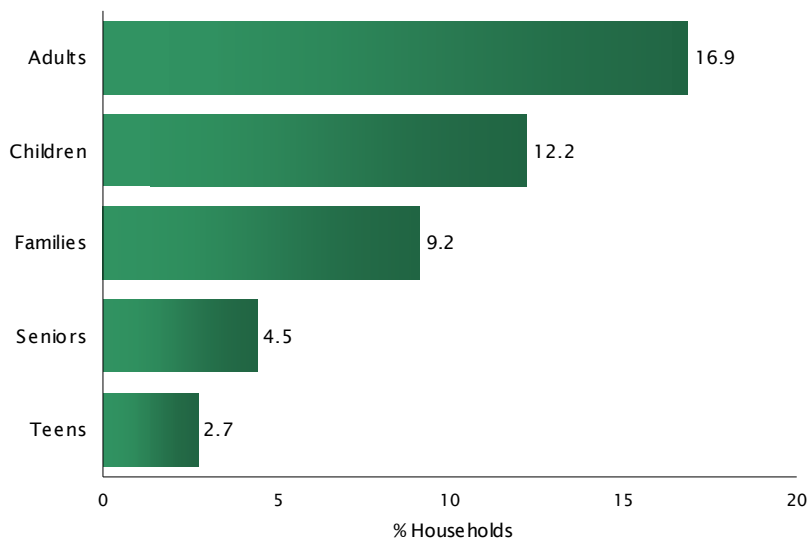


TABLE 7 HOUSEHOLD PARTICIPATION IN SPECIFIC PROGRAMS IN PAST 12 MONTHS

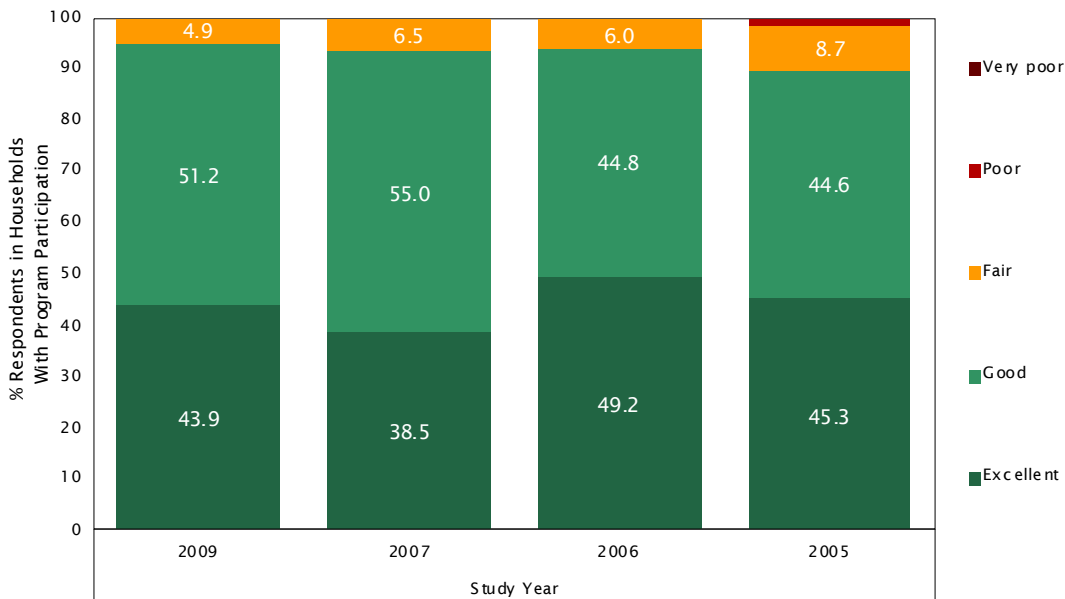
	Study Year				Difference in Hsld Participation 07 to 09
	2009	2007	2006	2005	
Adults	16.9	10.7	13.7	13.3	+6.2†
Seniors	4.5	4.9	6.7	2.8	-0.4
Families	9.2	10.4	17.2	8.4	-1.3
Teens	2.7	4.9	5.9	3.2	-2.2
Children	12.2	15.2	16.3	12.3	-3.0

† Statistically significant change (p < 0.05) between the 2007 and 2009 studies.

Figure 34 on the next page shows that program participants generally held very favorable opinions of the quality of the programs, with 95% stating that they were either excellent (44%) or good (51%). An additional 5% rated the overall quality of the programs as fair, and no respondents rated the programs as either poor or very poor. The 2009 results were statistically similar to those found in 2007.

Question 20 Overall, how would you rate the quality of Ventura's recreational and cultural programs that your household participated in? Would you say it was excellent, good, fair, poor or very poor?

FIGURE 34 OVERALL QUALITY OF RECREATION AND CULTURAL PROGRAMS (2005 TO 2009)



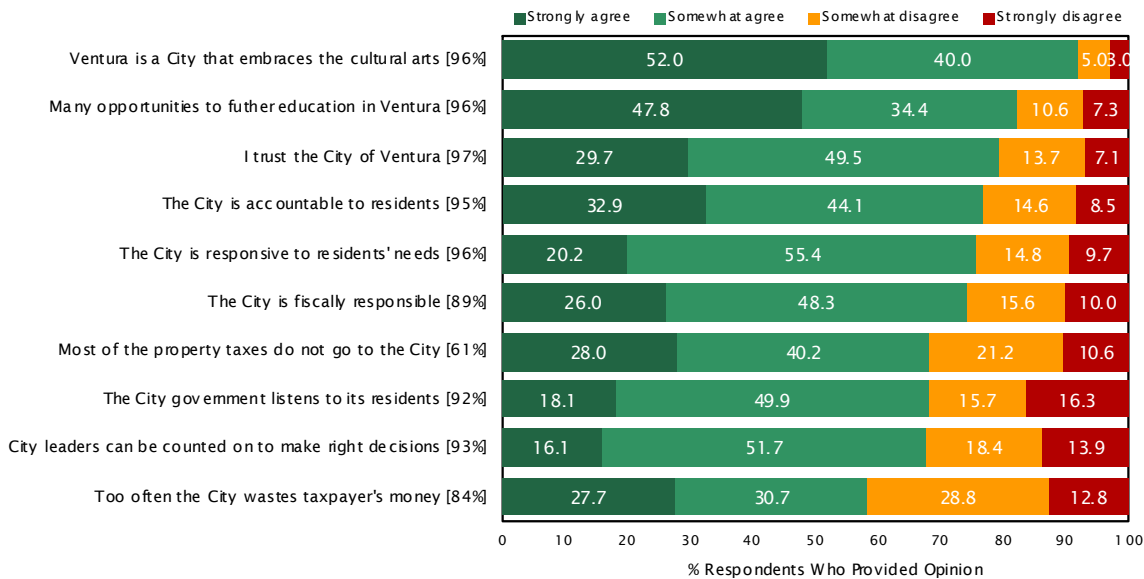
PERCEPTIONS OF VENTURA

Although much of the survey focused on residents' satisfaction with the City's efforts to provide specific services, as mentioned in the *Introduction* the City of Ventura recognizes that there is more to good local governance than simply providing satisfactory services. Do residents perceive that the City is accessible and responsive to residents' needs when making decisions? Do residents feel that the City does what it says it is going to do and is accountable to residents? Answers to questions like these are just as important as service or policy-related questions in measuring the City's performance in meeting the needs and expectations of residents. Accordingly, they were a focus of the latter part of the interview.

PERCEPTIONS OF CITY GOVERNMENT The first question in this series was designed to profile respondents' perceptions of the City of Ventura on a variety of dimensions, including accountability, accessibility, and management of city funds. For each of the statements shown in truncated form on the left of Figure 35, respondents were simply asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement—or if they had no opinion. The percentages shown in the figure are among those who held an opinion.⁵

Question 21 *Next, I'm going to read you a series of statements about Ventura. For each, I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement.*

FIGURE 35 AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS ABOUT VENTURA



Overall, more than eight-in-ten residents agreed that Ventura is a city that embraces the cultural arts (92%) and has many opportunities in the City to further one's education (82%). In terms of the City government and Council, better than three-quarters of residents agreed that the City is trustworthy (79%), accountable to residents (77%), and responsive to residents' needs (76%). A

5. The percentage who held an opinion for each statement is shown to the right of the statement in parentheses. The percentages shown in the bars are among those with an opinion, which allows for a more direct and meaningful comparison of responses across the 10 statements tested.

dichotomy arises on fiscal topics. Although 74% agreed that the City is fiscally responsible, 58% also agreed that too often the City wastes taxpayers' money or spends it on its own pet projects. It is also worth noting that although approximately one-third of residents were 'not sure', among those with an opinion more than two-thirds (68%) correctly believed that most of the property taxes that residents pay go to the State and schools rather than the City.

Table 8 presents the percentage of respondents who agreed with each statement tested in 2009, along with the corresponding percentages in 2007, 2006, and 2005 where applicable. The difference in the results between 2009 and 2007 is presented in the far right column for each statement tested in both studies. Although the results varied somewhat between studies, the differences were not statistically significant.

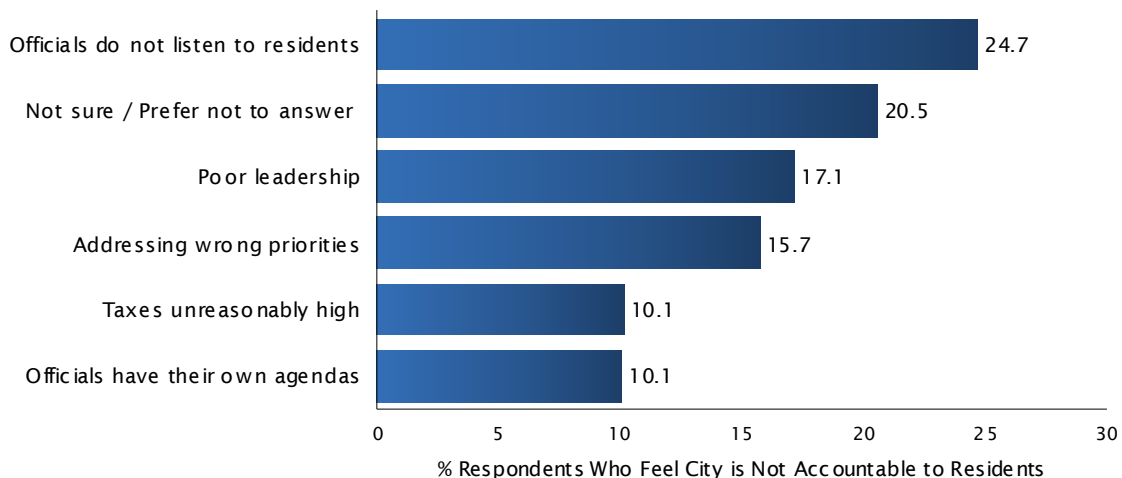
TABLE 8 AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS ABOUT VENTURA (2005 TO 2009)

	Study Year				Difference in Agreement 07 to 09
	2009	2007	2006	2005	
The City is accountable to residents	76.9	75.3	82.1	76.5	+1.6
Ventura is a City that embraces the cultural arts	92.0	90.8	89.6	N/A	+1.1
Many opportunities to further education in Ventura	82.2	82.6	80.1	N/A	-0.5
I trust the City of Ventura	79.2	80.1	86.6	82.0	-0.9
The City government listens to its residents	68.0	69.0	71.3	69.7	-1.0
The City is fiscally responsible	74.3	76.2	77.4	81.5	-1.9
The City is responsive to residents' needs	75.5	77.5	78.5	77.0	-2.0
Most of the property taxes do not go to the City	68.2	72.5	68.4	N/A	-4.2
City leaders can be counted on to make right decisions	67.7	73.1	72.8	67.6	-5.4
Too often the City wastes taxpayer's money	58.4	64.3	61.0	58.8	-5.8

The minority of respondents who perceived that the City is not accountable to residents or who indicated they do not trust the City were asked in an open-ended manner if there was a particular reason for their feelings. True North reviewed and recoded the verbatim responses into the categories shown in the next two figures. The most common response for both questions was related to feelings that City officials do not listen to residents' concerns or are not addressing the needs of residents.

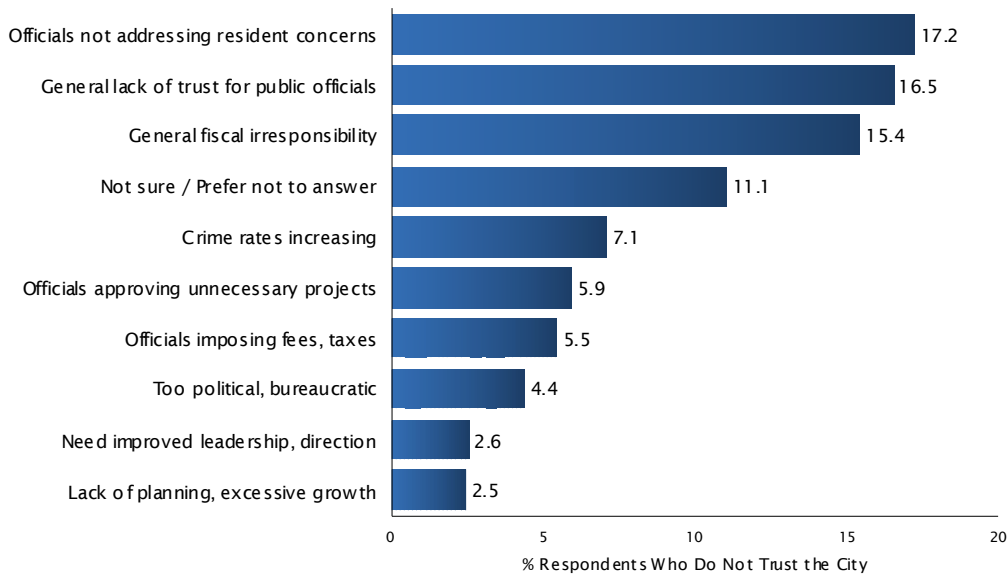
Question 22 *Is there a particular reason why you think the City is not accountable to residents?*

FIGURE 36 REASON FOR PERCEPTION THAT CITY IS NOT ACCOUNTABLE TO RESIDENTS



Question 23 *Is there a particular reason why you do not trust the City?*

FIGURE 37 REASON FOR NOT TRUSTING THE CITY



COMMUNITY & CIVIC INVOLVEMENT All respondents were next asked two questions about their involvement in the community and local government affairs. The first of these questions asked if, in the past three years, the respondent had volunteered time or resources to assist a community cause. Figure 38 presents the results of this question in 2009 alongside those for 2007, 2006, and 2005. Overall, half (50%) of respondents in 2009 reported that they had volunteered time or resources to a community cause during this period, which is similar to the 53% identified in 2007.

Question 24 *During the past three years, have you volunteered your time or resources to assist with a community cause?*

FIGURE 38 VOLUNTEERED TO ASSIST WITH COMMUNITY CAUSE IN PAST THREE YEARS (2005 TO 2009)

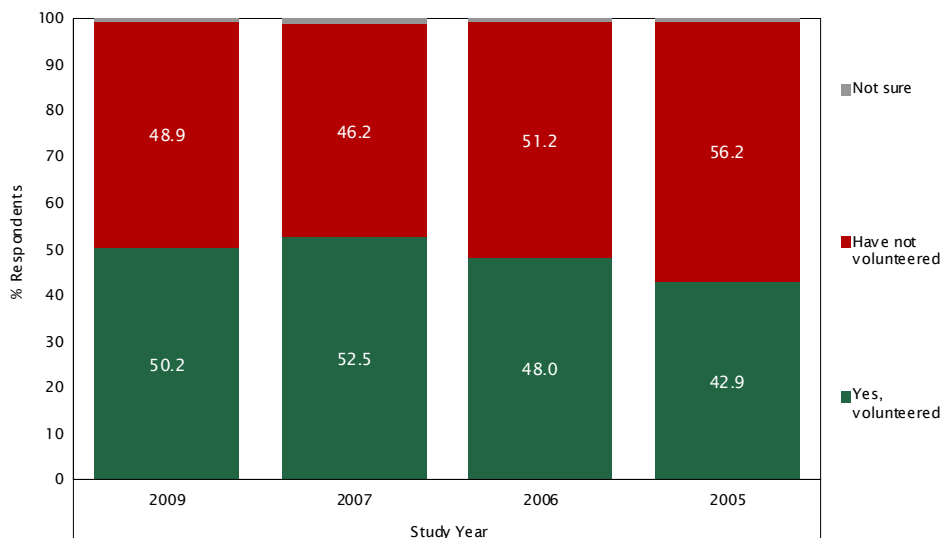


FIGURE 39 VOLUNTEERED TO ASSIST WITH COMMUNITY CAUSE IN PAST THREE YEARS BY YEARS IN VENTURA, AGE & GENDER

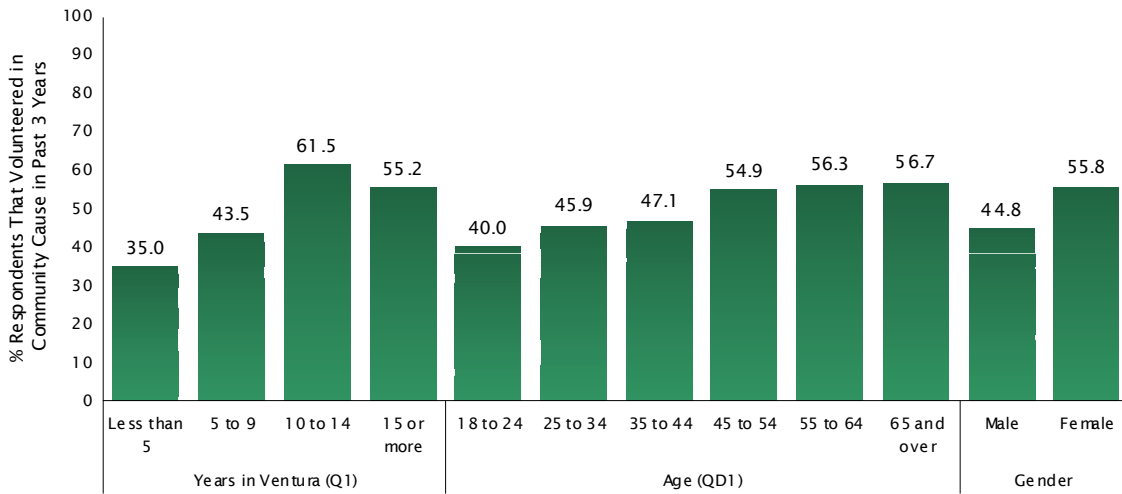
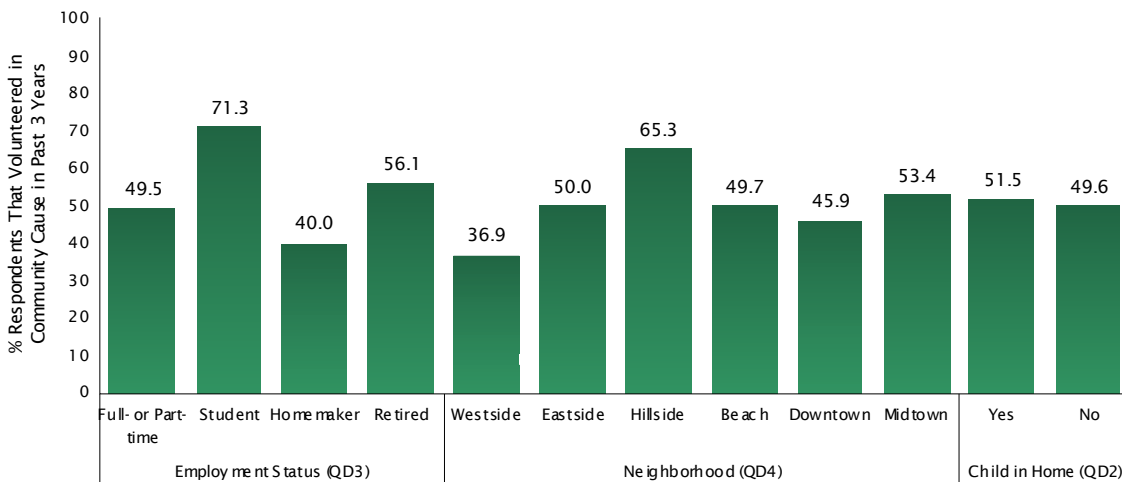


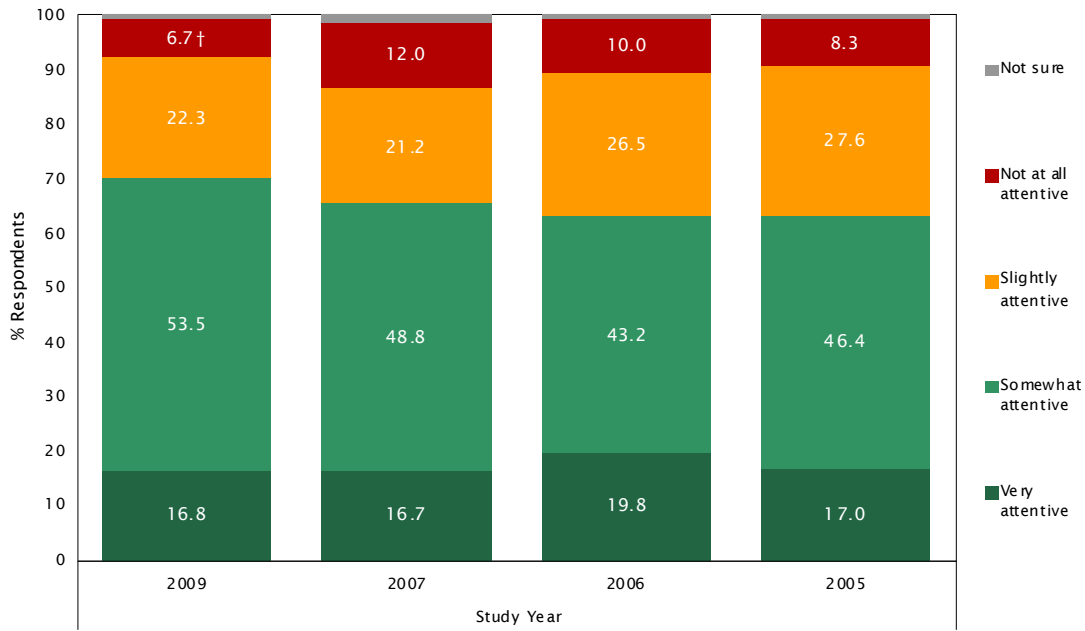
FIGURE 40 VOLUNTEERED TO ASSIST WITH COMMUNITY CAUSE IN PAST THREE YEARS BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS, NEIGHBORHOOD & CHILD IN HOME



Shifting to matters of local government, the survey next asked respondents to rate how attentive they are to the issues, decisions, and activities of the City of Ventura using a scale of very attentive, somewhat attentive, slightly attentive, or not at all attentive. Overall, 17% of respondents claimed they are very attentive to matters of local government, 54% somewhat attentive, and 22% slightly attentive. An additional 7% of respondents said they do not pay any attention to the activities of the City of Ventura, which is significantly less than the percentage found in 2007.

Question 25 How much attention do you pay to the issues, decisions, and activities of your City government? Would you say that you are very attentive, somewhat attentive, slightly attentive, or not at all attentive?

FIGURE 41 ATTENTIVENESS TO LOCAL ISSUES



† Statistically significant change ($p < 0.05$) between the 2007 and 2009 studies.

For the interested reader, the next two figures look at responses to Question 25 by a variety of demographics. Most notably, long-time residents, older respondents, home-makers and retired individuals were considerably more likely than their counterparts to report that they pay attention to local issues.

FIGURE 42 ATTENTIVENESS TO LOCAL ISSUES BY YEARS IN VENTURA & AGE

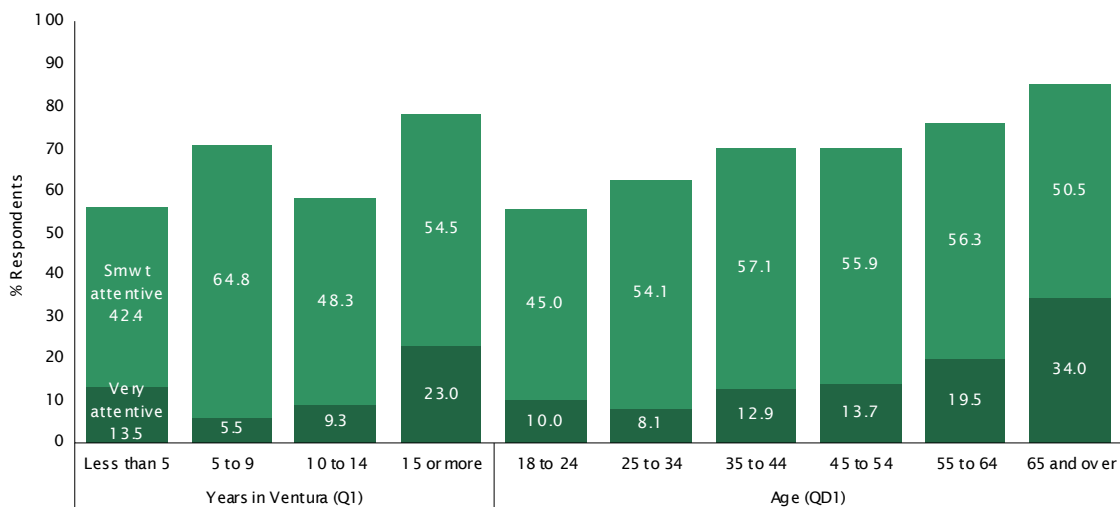
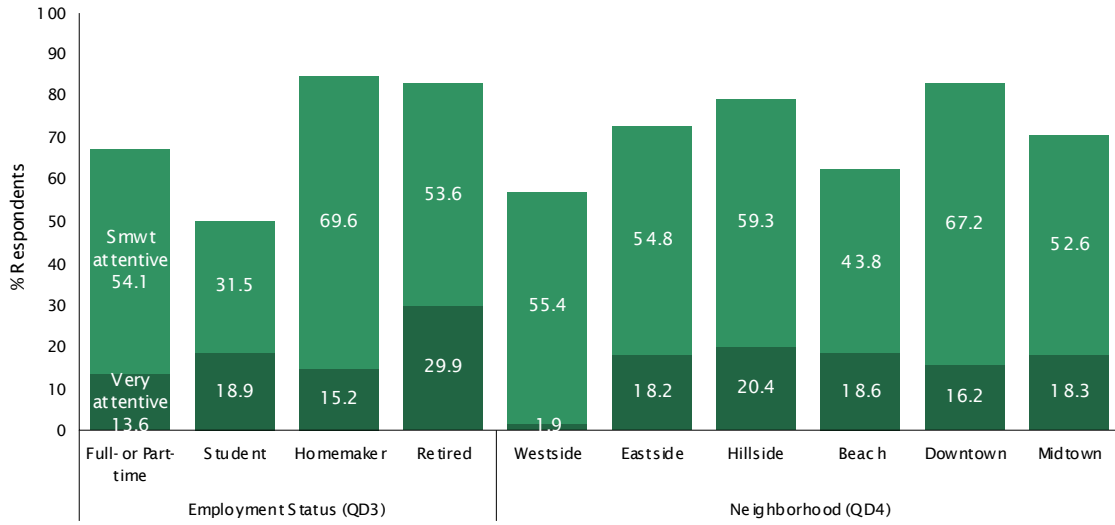


FIGURE 43 ATTENTIVENESS TO LOCAL ISSUES BY YEARS IN EMPLOYMENT STATUS & NEIGHBORHOOD



SPENDING PRIORITIES

It is often the case that residents' desires 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 and needs of residents.

Question 26 was designed to provide Ventura with a reliable measure of how residents prioritize a variety of projects, programs, and improvements to which the City could allocate resources. The format of the question was straightforward: after informing respondents that the City is facing economic challenges and does not have the resources to fund *all* of the projects and programs that may be desired by residents, respondents were asked whether each project or program shown in Figure 44 should be a high, medium, or low priority for future City spending—or if the City should not spend money on the project at all.

The projects and programs are sorted in Figure 44 from high to low based on the proportion of respondents who indicated that an item was a *high* priority for spending. Among the items tested, providing fire protection, emergency medical response, and preparing for natural disasters was assigned the highest priority (84% high priority), followed by improving providing police patrols and preventing crime (72%), and promoting economic development (56%).

Question 26 *Like many cities in California, Ventura is facing some difficult choices due to a poor economy and increasing costs. Because the City can not fund every project and program desired by residents, the City must set priorities. As I read each of the following items, 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 for future City spending. 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 44 PROJECT AND PROGRAM SPENDING PRIORITIES

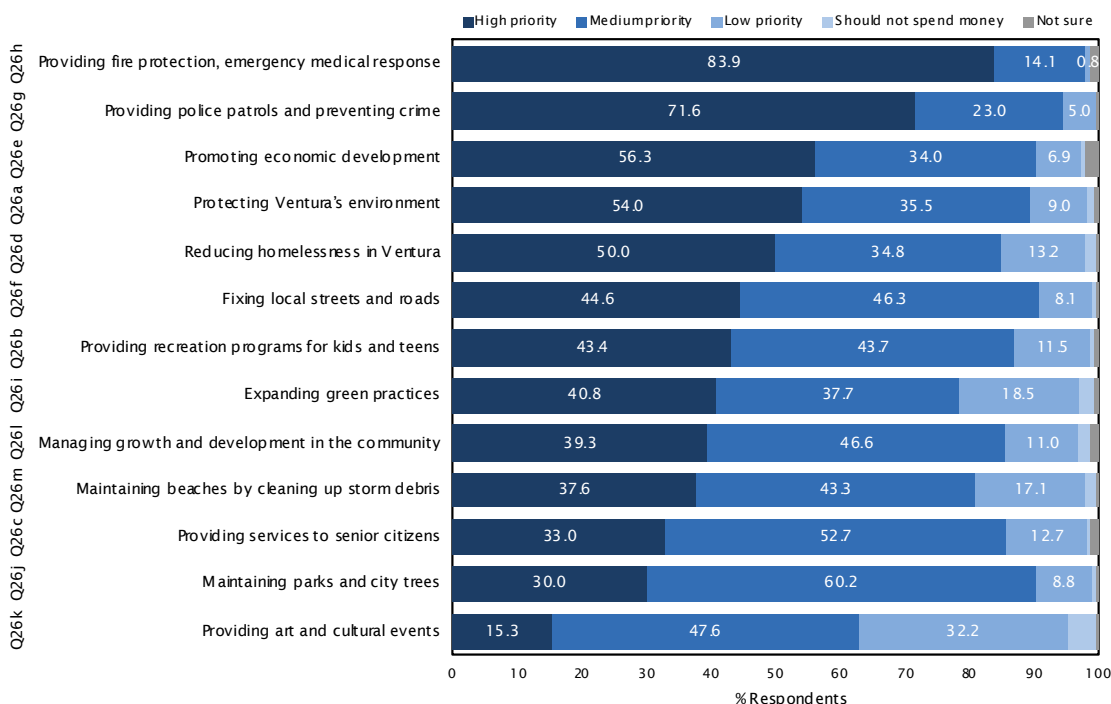


Table 9 examines the responses to Question 26 by the age of the respondent, showing the percentage of *high* priority responses for each project or program tested. The most striking pattern in the table is that although some movement is seen in the rankings of items between age groups, the highest overall priorities (e.g., public safety services and economic development) remain near the top.

TABLE 9 PROJECT AND PROGRAM SPENDING PRIORITIES BY AGE (SHOWING % HIGH PRIORITY)

	Age (QD1)					
	18 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 and over
Providing fire protection, emergency medical response	80.0	78.4	85.7	84.3	87.4	86.6
Providing police patrols and preventing crime	55.0	70.3	74.3	73.5	75.9	77.3
Promoting economic development	65.0	56.8	61.4	48.0	48.3	61.9
Protecting Ventura's environment	45.0	56.8	57.1	58.8	60.9	43.3
Reducing homelessness in Ventura	55.0	56.8	51.4	42.2	52.9	47.4
Fixing local streets and roads	40.0	37.8	41.4	52.0	46.0	48.5
Providing recreation programs for kids and teens	45.0	40.5	51.4	46.1	36.8	36.1
Expanding green practices	40.0	43.2	40.0	40.2	46.0	36.1
Managing growth and development in the community	20.0	37.8	41.4	43.1	47.1	42.3
Maintaining beaches by cleaning up storm debris	40.0	35.1	41.4	35.3	31.0	40.2
Providing services to senior citizens	35.0	16.2	45.7	31.4	34.5	36.1
Maintaining parks and city trees	25.0	29.7	31.4	34.3	25.3	30.9
Providing art and cultural events	25.0	8.1	12.9	20.6	8.0	16.5



BACKGROUND & DEMOGRAPHICS

TABLE 10 DEMOGRAPHICS OF SAMPLE (2005 TO 2009)

Study Year	2009	2007	2006	2005
<i>Respondents</i>	420	400	400	400
QD1 Age				
18 to 24	12.0	10.1	9.9	10.3
25 to 34	16.4	18.3	17.9	18.7
35 to 44	19.4	22.7	22.2	23.1
45 to 54	20.6	18.9	18.6	19.3
55 to 64	13.6	10.8	10.5	11.0
65 and over	16.4	16.7	16.3	17.0
Refused	1.7	2.5	4.5	0.5
QD2 Child in home				
Yes	35.9	35.1	34.8	39.1
No	63.9	63.6	63.0	60.9
Refused	0.2	1.2	2.3	0.0
QD3 Employment status				
Employed full-time	46.3	49.4	43.3	52.7
Employed part-time	9.1	12.1	11.9	10.1
Student	5.7	4.6	6.8	5.9
Homemaker	7.6	5.7	10.4	6.3
Retired	20.0	20.5	19.0	19.9
In-between jobs	9.5	3.5	4.3	4.6
Refused	1.7	4.2	4.2	0.6
QD4 Neighborhood				
Westside	8.8	11.1	11.6	12.0
Eastside	43.5	36.6	38.7	34.8
Hillside	9.4	8.1	8.8	8.1
Beach	8.5	12.5	9.9	12.1
Downtown	5.0	5.3	8.3	7.5
Midtown	20.7	19.3	18.0	21.0
Not sure	4.1	7.2	4.8	4.5
QD5 Ethnicity				
Caucasian / White	70.6	71.2	68.1	70.9
Latino / Hispanic	13.7	12.9	13.7	17.7
Af American / Black	1.6	0.5	0.7	0.7
American Indian	1.0	1.7	1.9	2.0
Asian	1.5	2.1	0.9	2.0
Pacific Islander	0.3	0.0	1.0	0.2
Mixed	3.6	4.8	4.8	1.7
Other	4.8	2.8	2.8	3.4
Refused	2.8	4.0	6.1	1.3
QD6 Interest in small group discussion participation				
Yes	67.1	58.4	64.1	66.6
No	24.7	34.1	27.8	26.7
Not sure	8.2	7.6	8.1	6.8
QD7 Gender				
Male	51.3	51.2	44.4	50.2
Female	48.7	48.8	55.6	49.8

Table 10 presents the key demographic and background information that was collected during the surveys in 2009, 2007, 2006, and 2005. Because of the probability-based methodology used in creating the sample, the results shown are representative of the universe of adults within the City of Ventura. The primary motivations for collecting the background and demographic information were to manage the sampling process and provide insight into how the results of the substantive questions of the survey vary by demographic characteristics (see crosstabulations in Appendix A for a full breakdown of each question).



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 & TRANSLATION Dr. McLarney of True North Research worked closely with the City of Ventura 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 the 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.

Many of the questions asked in the 2009 survey were tracked directly from the 2005, 2006, and 2007 surveys to allow the City to track reliably its performance over time. Once the survey was finalized, it was professionally translated into Spanish to allow individuals who preferred to take the interview in Spanish the opportunity to do so.

PROGRAMMING & PRE-TEST Prior to fielding the survey, the questionnaire was CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) programmed to assist the live interviewers when conducting the telephone interviews, as well as programmed to allow participation via the Internet among selected respondents who preferred to participate online. 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 integrity of the questionnaire was pre-tested internally by True North and by dialing into random homes in the City of Ventura prior to formally beginning the survey.

SAMPLE Households within the City of Ventura were chosen for this study using a random digit dial (RDD) sampling method. An RDD sample is drawn by first selecting all of the active phone exchanges (first three digits in a seven digit phone number) and working blocks that service the City. After estimating the number of listed households within each phone exchange that are located within the City, a sample of randomly selected phone numbers is generated with the number of phone numbers per exchange being proportional to the estimated number of households within each exchange in the City. This method ensures that both listed and unlisted households are included in the sample. It also ensures that new residents and new developments have an opportunity to participate in the study, which is not true if the sample were based on a telephone directory.

Although the RDD method is widely used for community surveys, the method also has several known limitations that must be adjusted for to ensure representative data. Research has shown, for example, that individuals with certain demographic profiles (e.g., older women) are more likely to be at home and are more likely to answer the phone even when other members of the household are available. If this tendency is not adjusted for, the RDD sampling method will produce a survey that is biased in favor of women—particularly older women. To adjust for this behavioral tendency, the survey included a screening question which initially asked to speak to the youngest male available in the home. If a male was not available, then the interviewer was instructed to speak to the youngest female currently available. This protocol was followed to the

extent needed to ensure a representative sample. In addition to following this protocol, the sample demographics were monitored as the interviewing proceeded to make sure they were within certain tolerances.

Additionally, because the City of Ventura shares phone exchanges with neighboring communities, potential respondents were initially asked the ZIP code of their residence (Question SC1). All adults in ZIP codes 93001, 93002, 93003, 93004, 93005, 93006, 93007, 93009 who lived in the City of Ventura were eligible to participate.

MARGIN OF ERROR DUE TO SAMPLING By using an RDD probability-based sample and monitoring the sample characteristics as data collection proceeded, True North ensured that the resulting sample was representative of adults in the City of Ventura. The results of the sample can thus be used to estimate the opinions of *all* adults 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 420 adults for a particular question and what would have been found if all of the estimated 78,803 adults in the City had been interviewed.

For example, in estimating the percentage of adult residents who would be willing to participate in a small group discussion about the City and civic participation (Question D6), 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:

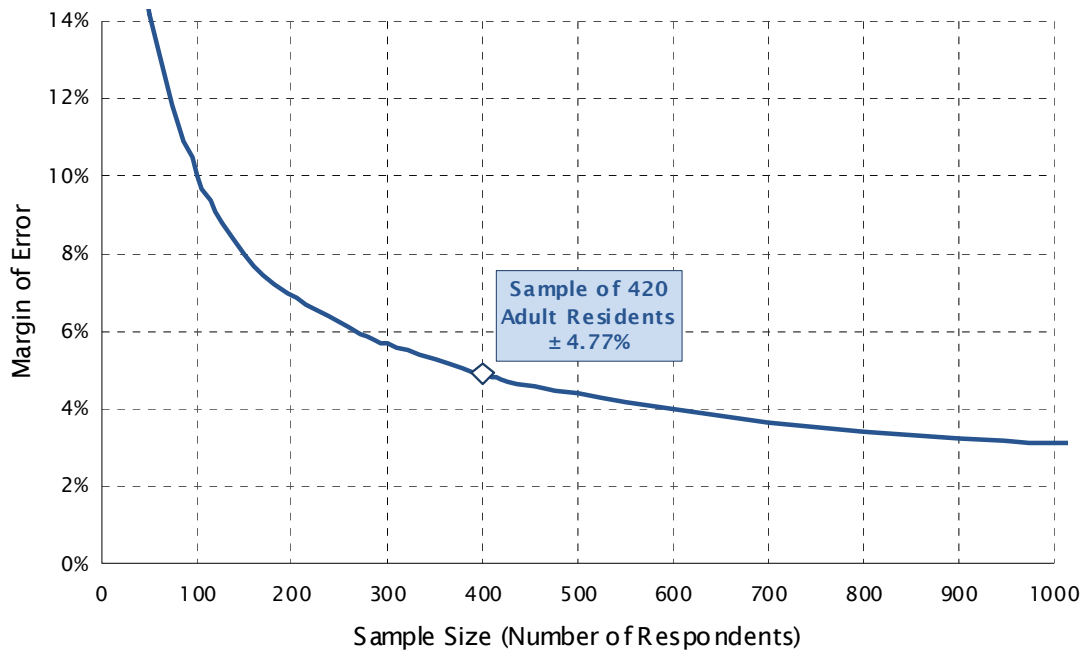
$$\hat{p} \pm t \sqrt{\left(\frac{N-n}{N}\right) \frac{\hat{p}(1-\hat{p})}{n-1}}$$

where \hat{p} is the proportion of adult residents who said they would be willing to participate in a small group discussion (0.67 for 67% in this example), N is the population size of all adult residents (78,803), n is the sample size that received the question (420), 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 $\pm 4.49\%$. This means that with 67% of adult residents indicating they would be willing to participate in a small group discussion about the City and civic participation, we can be 95% confident that the actual percentage of all adult residents who would be willing to participate is between 63% and 72%.

Figure 45 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 $\pm 4.77\%$ for questions answered by all 420 respondents.

Within this report, figures and tables show how responses to certain questions varied by subgroups such as years living in Ventura, age of the respondent, and neighborhood of residence. Figure 45 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.

FIGURE 45 MAXIMUM MARGIN OF ERROR



DATA COLLECTION The primary method of data collection for this study was telephone interviewing. Interviews were conducted during weekday evenings (5:30PM to 9PM) and on weekends (10AM to 5PM) between January 24 and February 4, 2009. 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. Telephone interviews averaged 21 minutes in length. Additionally, respondents who preferred to take the survey online were allowed to do so via a secure, password protected website.

DATA PROCESSING 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 whether a change in responses between the 2007 and 2009 studies was due to an actual change in opinions or was likely an artifact of independently drawn cross-sectional samples.

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 pie charts for a given question.

QUESTIONNAIRE & TOPLINES



City of Ventura
Resident Satisfaction Survey
Final Toplines
March 2009

Section 1: Introduction to Study

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 your community and we would like to get your opinions.

If needed: This is a survey about important issues in Ventura (Ven-Ter-Uh). I'm NOT trying to sell anything.

If needed: The survey should take around 15 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: Screener for Inclusion in the Study

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

SC1	What is the zip code at your residence? <i>(Read zip code back to them to confirm correct)</i>			
	1	93001, 93002, 93003, 93004, 93005, 93006, 93007, 93009	100%	Continue
	2	Other	0%	Terminate
<i>If SC1 = 93001 or 93004, ask SC2. Otherwise, skip to Section 3.</i>				
SC2	Do you live within the City of Ventura (Ven-Ter-Uh), or do you live just outside of the City in an area that is governed by the County?			
	1	Within City of Ventura	100%	Continue
	2	Outside / Governed by County	0%	Terminate
	99	Not sure / Refused	0%	Terminate

Section 3: General Perceptions of City

I'd like to begin by asking you a few questions about what it is like to live in the City of Ventura (Ven-Ter-Uh).

Q1	How long have you lived in the City of Ventura (Ven-Ter-Uh)?		
	1	Less than 1 year	4%
	2	1 to 2 years	6%
	3	3 to 4 years	7%
	4	5 to 9 years	18%
	5	10 to 14 years	11%
	6	15 years or longer	54%
	99	Refused	0%
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	40%
	2	Good	52%
	3	Fair	7%
	4	Poor	1%
	5	Very Poor	0%
	98	Not sure	0%
	99	Refused	0%
Q3	If the City government could change one thing to make Ventura (Ven-Ter-Uh) a better place to live now and in the future, what change would you like to see?		
	Not sure / Cannot think of anything		17%
	Improve, maintain roads		12%
	Limit growth / Preserve open space		8%
	Improve public safety		7%
	Develop, improve downtown area		7%
	Address homeless issue		6%
	Provide more affordable housing		5%
	Beautify City, beaches		5%
	Improve, add parks, rec facilities		5%
	Reduce traffic congestion		4%
	Change, improve Council, gov process		4%
	Improve public transit		4%

Improve education	3%
Nothing / Everything is fine	3%
Reduce taxes, fees	2%
Reduce budget / Control spending	2%
Improve employment opportunities	2%
Provide positive alternatives for youth	1%
Improve planning, zoning	1%
Reduce building permit restrictions	1%
Address illegal immigrant issue	1%
Improve traffic signs	1%

Section 4: City Services

Next, I'm going to ask a series of questions about services provided by the City of Ventura (Ven-Ter-Uh).

Q4 Generally speaking, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the job the City of Ventura (Ven-Ter-Uh) is doing to provide city services? (*get answer, then ask*): Would that be very (satisfied/dissatisfied) or somewhat (satisfied/dissatisfied)?

1	Very satisfied	42%
2	Somewhat satisfied	44%
3	Somewhat dissatisfied	7%
4	Very dissatisfied	3%
98	Not sure	2%
99	Refused	1%

Split Sample. Half of the sample gets Q5 & Q6 together. Other half gets Q7 & Q8 together

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.

Make sure respondent understands the 4 point scale.

	<i>Randomize</i>	Extremely Important	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not at all Important	Not sure	Refused
A	Enforcing traffic laws	15%	47%	34%	4%	0%	0%
B	Maintaining a low crime rate	33%	58%	8%	0%	0%	0%
C	Providing police patrols	22%	58%	16%	2%	1%	0%
D	Maintaining local streets and roads	18%	62%	19%	1%	1%	0%
E	Providing art in public places	8%	23%	53%	16%	0%	0%
F	Landscaping, including street medians and street trees	3%	42%	49%	5%	0%	0%
G	Maintaining parks	20%	52%	28%	1%	0%	0%

H	Reducing traffic congestion on City streets	15%	40%	39%	6%	0%	0%
I	Providing cultural programs	9%	39%	40%	10%	1%	0%
J	Preserving open space	21%	47%	25%	5%	1%	0%
K	Promoting economic development	23%	52%	20%	3%	2%	0%
L	Preserving historic buildings	15%	40%	40%	4%	1%	0%
M	Maintaining sidewalks and bike paths	14%	54%	30%	1%	1%	0%
N	Providing recreation programs for elementary school children	22%	53%	21%	4%	1%	0%
O	Providing recreation programs for adults	5%	33%	53%	8%	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 Ventura (Ven-Ter-Uh) 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	Refused
A	Enforce traffic laws	43%	44%	6%	1%	5%	0%
B	Maintain a low crime rate	41%	47%	6%	5%	2%	0%
C	Provide police patrols	47%	38%	6%	4%	4%	1%
D	Maintain local streets and roads	22%	47%	16%	12%	3%	0%
E	Provide art in public places	33%	46%	4%	3%	14%	0%
F	Landscape, including street medians and street trees	37%	50%	8%	1%	4%	0%
G	Maintain parks	43%	44%	6%	3%	4%	0%
H	Reduce traffic congestion on City streets	27%	42%	18%	7%	6%	1%
I	Provide cultural programs	29%	45%	6%	3%	16%	1%
J	Preserve open space	29%	45%	11%	6%	7%	1%
K	Promote economic development	14%	52%	11%	12%	8%	2%
L	Preserve historic buildings	38%	42%	5%	3%	11%	1%
M	Maintain sidewalks and bike paths	32%	47%	9%	9%	3%	0%
N	Provide recreation programs for elementary school children	29%	37%	7%	4%	22%	0%
O	Provide recreation programs for adults	31%	41%	8%	2%	18%	0%

Q7							
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.							
<i>Make sure respondent understands the 4 point scale.</i>							
	<i>Randomize</i>	Extremely Important	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not at all Important	Not sure	Refused
A	Providing emergency medical services	35%	55%	8%	1%	0%	0%
B	Enforcing parking laws	5%	13%	56%	25%	1%	0%
C	Protecting the environment	25%	45%	25%	4%	0%	0%
D	Preparing the City for emergencies	24%	53%	19%	3%	1%	0%
E	Maintaining adequate street lighting	16%	50%	29%	4%	0%	0%
F	Keeping public building and facilities clean and attractive	13%	47%	35%	6%	0%	0%
G	Providing public transportation services	19%	36%	38%	6%	1%	0%
H	Providing outreach services for seniors and their families	11%	36%	42%	9%	2%	1%
I	Managing growth and development in the City	23%	46%	21%	9%	0%	0%
J	Preventing flooding	17%	48%	27%	6%	2%	0%
K	Protecting coastal water quality	26%	53%	16%	4%	0%	0%
L	Preventing stormwater pollution	22%	52%	19%	5%	1%	1%
M	Providing recreation programs for teens	17%	43%	35%	3%	2%	0%
N	Providing recreation programs for seniors	7%	33%	48%	11%	0%	1%
O	Providing fire protection services	34%	58%	7%	1%	0%	0%
P	Providing fire prevention services	22%	52%	22%	4%	0%	0%
Q8							
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 Ventura (Ven-Ter-Uh) 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	Refused
A	Provide emergency paramedic services	61%	22%	2%	2%	12%	1%
B	Enforce parking laws	31%	36%	7%	7%	17%	2%
C	Protect the environment	24%	46%	10%	4%	15%	1%
D	Prepare the City for emergencies	22%	40%	8%	2%	25%	1%

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E	Maintain adequate street lighting	42%	42%	7%	6%	3%	1%
F	Keep public building and facilities clean and attractive	43%	39%	6%	5%	5%	1%
G	Provide public transportation services	29%	36%	10%	8%	15%	1%
H	Provide outreach services for seniors and their families	17%	35%	8%	4%	35%	2%
I	Manage growth and development in the City	23%	40%	13%	18%	6%	1%
J	Prevent flooding	36%	30%	6%	3%	24%	1%
K	Protect coastal water quality	26%	42%	11%	6%	14%	1%
L	Prevent stormwater pollution	19%	43%	10%	7%	19%	1%
M	Provide recreation programs for teens	18%	38%	11%	9%	22%	2%
N	Provide recreation programs for seniors	26%	35%	4%	2%	29%	2%
O	Provide fire protection services	68%	20%	1%	2%	7%	1%
P	Provide fire prevention services	51%	30%	3%	2%	11%	3%

Section 5: Public Safety & Neighborhood Issues

Q9 Next, I'd like to ask a few questions about personal safety and security in the City of Ventura (Ven-Ter-Uh). When you are _____, would you say that you feel very safe, reasonably safe, somewhat unsafe, or very unsafe?

Randomize		Very Safe	Reasonably Safe	Somewhat Unsafe	Very Unsafe	Not sure	Refused
A	Walking alone in your neighborhood after dark	39%	41%	14%	4%	1%	0%
B	Walking alone in commercial and retail areas during the day	66%	30%	3%	1%	0%	0%
C	Walking alone in commercial and retail areas after dark	20%	48%	19%	8%	3%	1%

Only ask Q10 if Q1 = (3,4,5,6). Otherwise, skip to Q11.

Q10 When compared to three years ago, would you say that the City of Ventura (Ven-Ter-Uh) is safer now, is less safe, or is about the same as it was before? If safer or less safe, ask: Would that be much (safer/less safe) or somewhat (safer/less safe)?

1	Much safer	4%
2	Somewhat safer	10%
3	About the same	66%
4	Somewhat less safe	14%
5	Much less safe	4%
98	Not sure	1%
99	Refused	0%

Q11 As I read each of the following statements, please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the statement. In my neighborhood, I am concerned that: _____. Do you agree or disagree? Would that be strongly (agree/disagree) or somewhat (agree/disagree)?							
	<i>Randomize</i>	Strongly Agree	Smwht Agree	Smwht Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure	Refused
A	Someone will try to rob or steal something from me	11%	22%	33%	34%	0%	0%
B	Someone will try to attack me while I am outside	4%	11%	27%	57%	0%	1%
C	Someone will try to break into my home	10%	24%	35%	30%	1%	1%
D	Someone will try to steal or damage my car	17%	23%	30%	27%	1%	1%
E	Someone will damage or vandalize my house or property	10%	25%	32%	33%	0%	0%
F	Someone will try to attack me sexually while I am outside	3%	10%	25%	61%	0%	1%
G	Someone will try to harm my children or other children	4%	19%	33%	39%	3%	2%
Q12 The City of Ventura's (Ven-Terr-Uhz) Police Department has a limited budget and staff, so the Department must prioritize the services that it offers. As I read each of the following services provided by the Department, please indicate whether you think the Department should make the service a high, medium or low priority. If you feel the Department should not spend any resources on a service, just say so. Please keep in mind that not all of the services can be high priorities. Here is the (first/next) one: _____. Should this service be a high, medium or low priority for the Department, or should the Department not spend any resources on this service?							
	<i>Randomize</i>	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Should not spend resources	Not sure	Refused
A	Motor vehicle patrols	40%	45%	13%	0%	1%	0%
B	Crime prevention programs like neighborhood watch	40%	45%	14%	1%	0%	1%
C	Gang enforcement	79%	15%	4%	1%	0%	1%
D	Follow-up investigation of crimes	68%	29%	2%	0%	0%	0%
E	Police storefronts	20%	42%	26%	7%	4%	1%
F	School resource officer program	37%	36%	20%	2%	4%	1%
G	Foot patrols	24%	48%	22%	4%	1%	1%
H	Drug and narcotics enforcement	60%	28%	11%	1%	0%	0%
I	Enforcing traffic laws	25%	47%	25%	3%	0%	0%

J	Preventing theft	55%	37%	6%	0%	1%	1%
K	Preventing juvenile crime	60%	32%	6%	0%	0%	0%
Q13	The City of Ventura (Ven-Terr-Uh) has created codes to address a variety of issues that can affect a neighborhood, such as illegal parking, abandoned vehicles, non-permitted construction, illegal signs, 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? <i>Get answer. If 'satisfied' or 'dissatisfied', then ask: Would that be very (satisfied/dissatisfied) or somewhat (satisfied/dissatisfied)?</i>						
	1	Very satisfied	28%		Skip to Q15		
	2	Somewhat satisfied	30%		Skip to Q15		
	3	Somewhat dissatisfied	7%		Ask Q14		
	4	Very dissatisfied	7%		Ask Q14		
	98	Not sure	29%		Skip to Q15		
	99	Refused	0%		Skip to Q15		
Q14	Is there a particular issue or code violation that the City isn't addressing that leads you to be dissatisfied? <i>If yes, ask: Please briefly describe it to me.</i>						
	Illegally-parked vehicles		30%				
	Abandoned vehicles		12%				
	Not sure / Nothing specific		11%				
	Unkempt yards, neighborhoods		9%				
	Environmental concerns		8%				
	Building code violations		7%				
	Garage code violations		7%				
	Too many people in one home		5%				
	Lack of response on reported violations		5%				
	Abandoned, foreclosed properties		4%				
	Vandalism / Graffiti		3%				
	Traffic enforcement concerns		3%				

Section 7: Parks & Recreation

Q15	Have you or anyone else in your household visited a City of Ventura (Ven-Ter-Uh) park in the past 12 months?						
	1	Yes	88%		Ask Q16		
	2	No	11%		Skip to Q17		
	98	Not sure	1%		Skip to Q17		
	99	Refused	0%		Skip to Q17		

Q16	How frequently do you or other members of your household typically visit the parks in Ventura (Ven-Ter-Uh)? At least once per week, two to three times per month, once per month, or less often than once per month?								
	1	At least once per week						43%	
	2	2 to 3 times per month						19%	
	3	Once per month						17%	
	4	Less often than once per month						21%	
	98	Not sure						0%	
	99	Refused						0%	
Q17	How do you rate the: _____ of Ventura (Ven-Ter-Uh) parks? Would you say it is excellent, good, fair, poor or very poor?								
	<i>Randomize</i>		Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor	Not Sure	Refused
A	Safety		34%	43%	15%	3%	1%	3%	0%
B	Appearance		37%	54%	7%	1%	1%	1%	0%
C	Overall quality		35%	56%	8%	1%	0%	1%	0%
Q18	In the past 12 months, have you or any member of your household participated in a recreational or cultural program offered by the City of Ventura (Ven-Ter-Uh)?								
	1	Yes	34%			Ask Q19			
	2	No	64%			Skip to Q20			
	98	Not sure	2%			Skip to Q20			
	99	Refused	0%			Skip to Q20			
Q19	Was the program or programs that your household participated in designed for children, teens, adults, seniors or families? (<i>Multiple response permitted</i>)								
	1	Children						35%	
	2	Teens						8%	
	3	Adults						49%	
	4	Seniors						13%	
	5	Families						27%	
	98	Not sure						2%	
	99	Refused						0%	

Q20	Overall, how would you rate the quality of Ventura's (Ven-Ter-Uhs) recreational and cultural programs that your household participated in? Would you say it was excellent, good, fair, poor or very poor?		
	1	Excellent	44%
	2	Good	51%
	3	Fair	5%
	4	Poor	0%
	5	Very Poor	0%
	98	Not sure	0%
	99	Refused	0%

Section 8: Perceptions of Ventura

Q21	Next, I'm going to read you a series of statements about Ventura (Ven-Ter-Uh). For each, I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement. Here is the (first/next) one: _____. Do you agree or disagree? Would that be strongly (agree/disagree) or somewhat (agree/disagree)?						
	<i>Randomize</i>	Strongly Agree	Smwht Agree	Smwht Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure	Refused
A	City leaders can be counted on to make the right decisions on matters of local government	15%	48%	17%	13%	6%	1%
B	The City is responsive to residents' needs	19%	53%	14%	9%	4%	1%
C	The City is accountable to residents	31%	42%	14%	8%	4%	0%
D	I trust the City of Ventura	29%	48%	13%	7%	3%	1%
E	The City is fiscally responsible	23%	43%	14%	9%	10%	1%
F	Too often the City wastes taxpayer's money or spends it on their own pet projects	23%	26%	24%	11%	15%	2%
G	The City government listens to its residents when making important decisions	17%	46%	14%	15%	7%	1%
H	Most of the property taxes that residents pay do not go to the City, the money goes to the State and to schools	17%	25%	13%	6%	36%	3%
I	Ventura is a City that embraces the cultural arts, including music, theatre and museums.	50%	39%	5%	3%	3%	0%
J	If a person wants to continue their education, there are a lot of opportunities in Ventura	46%	33%	10%	7%	3%	0%

<i>Only ask Q22 if Q21C = (3,4).</i>		
Q22	Is there a particular reason why you think the City is not accountable to residents?	
	Officials do not listen to residents	27%
	Not sure / Prefer not to answer	22%
	Poor leadership	18%
	Addressing wrong priorities	17%
	Officials have their own agendas	11%
	Taxes unreasonably high	11%
<i>Only ask Q23 if Q21D = (3,4).</i>		
Q23	Is there a particular reason why you do not trust the City?	
	Officials not addressing resident concerns	20%
	General lack of trust for public officials	19%
	General fiscal irresponsibility	18%
	Not sure / Prefer not to answer	13%
	Crime rates increasing	8%
	Officials approving unnecessary projects	7%
	Officials imposing fees, taxes	6%
	Too political, bureaucratic	5%
	Need improved leadership, direction	3%
	Lack of planning, excessive growth	3%
Q24	During the past three years, have you volunteered your time or resources to assist with a community cause?	
	1 Yes	50%
	2 No	49%
	98 Not sure	1%
	99 Refused	0%

Q25	How much attention do you pay to the issues, decisions and activities of your City government? Would you say that you are very attentive, somewhat attentive, slightly attentive, or not at all attentive?		
	1	Very attentive	17%
	2	Somewhat attentive	53%
	3	Slightly attentive	22%
	4	Not at all attentive	7%
	98	Not sure	1%
	99	Refused	0%

Section 8: Spending Priorities

Like many cities in California, Ventura (Ven-Ter-Uh) is facing some difficult choices due to a poor economy and increasing costs. Because the City can not fund every project and program desired by residents, the City must set priorities.

Q26 As I read each of the following items, 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 for future City spending. 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 item be a high, medium, or low priority for the City, or should the City not spend any money on this item?

		High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Should not spend money	Not sure	Refused
	<i>Randomize</i>						
A	Protecting Ventura's (Ven-Ter-Uhs) environment	54%	36%	9%	1%	0%	0%
B	Providing recreation programs for kids and teens	43%	44%	12%	1%	0%	0%
C	Providing services to senior citizens	33%	53%	13%	0%	1%	0%
D	Reducing homelessness in Ventura (Ven-Ter-Uh)	50%	35%	13%	2%	0%	0%
E	Promoting economic development to strengthen the local economy	56%	34%	7%	1%	2%	0%
F	Fixing local streets and roads	45%	46%	8%	1%	0%	0%
G	Providing police patrols and preventing crime	72%	23%	5%	0%	0%	0%
H	Providing fire protection, emergency medical response, and preparing for natural disasters	84%	14%	1%	0%	1%	0%
I	Expanding green practices that promote conservation and sustainability	41%	38%	19%	2%	1%	0%
J	Maintaining parks and city trees	30%	60%	9%	1%	0%	0%
K	Providing art and cultural events	15%	48%	32%	4%	0%	0%
L	Managing growth and development in the community	39%	47%	11%	2%	1%	0%
M	Maintaining beaches by cleaning up storm debris and protecting nearby homes against sand build-up	38%	43%	17%	2%	0%	0%

Section 11: Background & Demographics

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

D1	In what year were you born? Year recorded and grouped into age categories shown below.	
	18 to 24	12%
	25 to 34	16%
	35 to 44	19%
	45 to 54	21%
	55 to 64	14%
	65 and over	16%
	Refused	2%
D2	Do you currently have any children under the age of 18 living in your home?	
	1 Yes	36%
	2 No	64%
	99 Refused	0%
D3	Which of the following best describes your employment status? Would you say you are employed full-time, part-time, a student, a homemaker, retired, or are you in-between jobs right now?	
	1 Employed full-time	46%
	2 Employed part-time	9%
	3 Student	6%
	4 Homemaker	8%
	5 Retired	20%
	6 In-between jobs	10%
	99 Refused	2%
D4	Which of the following neighborhoods is closest to where you live? <i>Read list.</i>	
	1 Westside	9%
	2 Eastside	44%
	3 Hillside	9%
	4 Beach	8%
	5 Downtown	5%
	6 Midtown	21%
	98 Not sure / Refused	4%

D5	What ethnic group do you consider yourself a part of or feel closest to? <i>(Read list if respondent hesitates)</i>		
	1	Caucasian/White	71%
	2	Latino/Hispanic	14%
	3	African-American/Black	2%
	4	American Indian or Alaskan Native	1%
	5	Asian: Korean, Japanese, Chinese, Vietnamese, Filipino or other Asian	2%
	6	Pacific Islander	0%
	7	Mixed Heritage	4%
	98	Other	5%
	99	Refused	3%
D6	Last question. The City of Ventura (Ven-Ter-Uh) may be conducting small group discussions with residents in the future about the City and civic participation. Would you be willing to participate in one of these discussions?		
	1	Yes	67%
	2	No	25%
	98	Not sure	7%
	99	Refused	1%
D7	Record First Name		
	First name recorded	Data on file	
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 Ventura (Ven-Ter-Uh).			

Post-Interview Items

D8	Gender		
	1	Male	51%
	2	Female	49%
D9	Interview language		
	1	English	97%
	2	Spanish	3%