



PO Box 3707 • Sunnyvale, CA 94088 • T: (408) 730-7500 • TDD: (408) 730-7501 • www.sunnyvale.ca.gov

The City of Sunnyvale, California

Report of Normative
Comparisons
2007



National Research Center, Inc.
3005 30th St. • Boulder, CO 80301 • T: (303) 444-7863 • F: (303) 444-1145 • www.n-r-c.com

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SURVEY BACKGROUND

About The National Citizen Survey™

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

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

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

UNDERSTANDING THE NORMATIVE COMPARISONS

Comparison Data

National Research Center, Inc. has collected citizen surveys conducted in over 500 jurisdictions in the United States. Responses to thousands of survey questions dealing with resident perceptions about the quality of community life and services provided by local government were recorded, analyzed and stored in an electronic database.

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

Jurisdiction Characteristic	Percent of Jurisdictions
Region	
West Coast ¹	16%
West ²	21%
North Central West ³	12%
North Central East ⁴	12%
South Central ⁵	9%
South ⁶	25%
Northeast West ⁷	3%
Northeast East ⁸	2%
Population	
Less than 40,000	38%
40,000 to 74,999	21%
75,000 to 149,000	17%
150,000 or more	24%

¹ Alaska, Washington, Oregon, California, Hawaii

² Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico

³ North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Iowa, Missouri, Minnesota

⁴ Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin

⁵ Oklahoma, Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas

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

⁷ New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey

⁸ Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, Maine

Use of the “Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor” Response Scale

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

Putting Evaluations onto a 100-Point Scale

Although responses to many of the evaluative questions were made on a 4 point scale with 1 representing the best rating and 4 the worst, many of the results in this summary are reported on a common scale where 0 is the worst possible rating and 100 is the best possible rating. If everyone reported “excellent,” then the result would be 100 on the 100-point scale. Likewise, if all respondents gave a “poor” rating, the result would be 0 on the 100-point scale. If the average rating for quality of life was “good,” then the result would be 67 on a 100-point scale; “fair” would be 33 on the 100-point scale. The 95 percent confidence interval around an average score on the 100-point scale is no greater than plus or minus 3 points based on all respondents.

Interpreting the Results

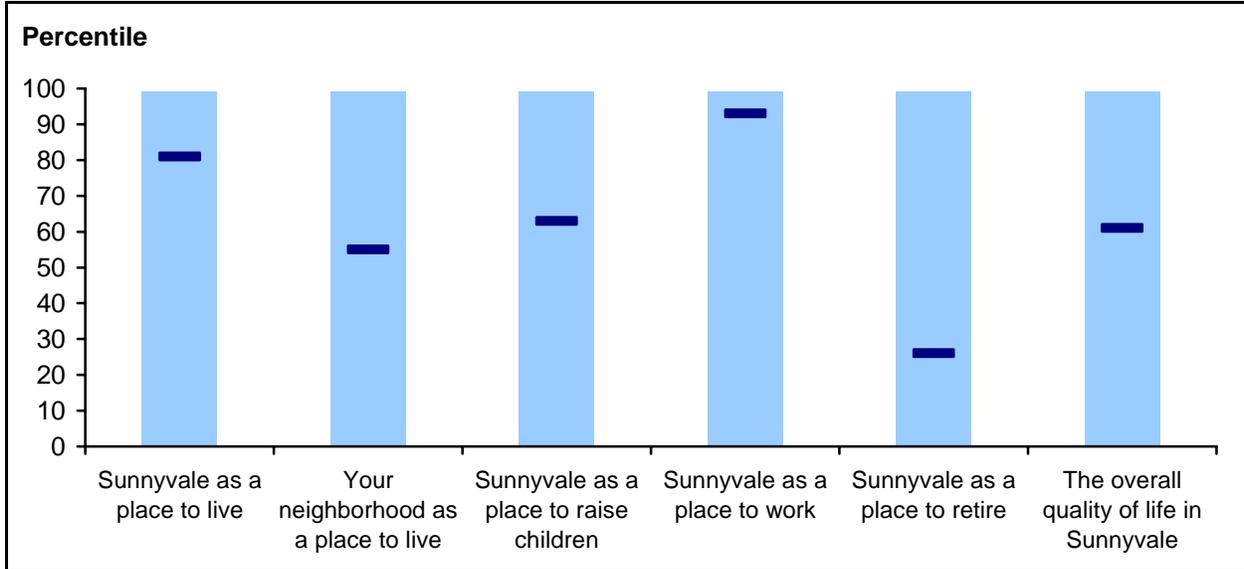
Comparisons are provided when similar questions are included in our database, and there are at least five other jurisdictions in which the question was asked. Where comparisons are available, three numbers are provided in the table. The first column is your jurisdiction's rating on the 100-point scale. The second column is the rank assigned to your jurisdiction's rating among jurisdictions where a similar question was asked. The third column is the number of jurisdictions that asked a similar question. Fourth, the rank is expressed as a percentile to indicate its distance from the top score. This rank (5th highest out of 25 jurisdictions' results, for example) translates to a percentile (the 80th percentile in this example). A percentile indicates the percent of jurisdictions with identical or lower ratings. Therefore, a rating at the 80th percentile would mean that your jurisdiction's rating is equal to or better than 80 percent of the ratings from other jurisdictions. Conversely, 20 percent of the jurisdictions where a similar question was asked had higher ratings.

Alongside the rank and percentile appears a comparison: "above the norm," "below the norm" or "similar to the norm." This evaluation of "above," "below" or "similar to" comes from a statistical comparison of your jurisdiction's rating to the norm (the average rating from all the comparison jurisdictions where a similar question was asked). Differences of no more than 3 points on the 100-point scale between your jurisdiction's ratings and the average based on the appropriate comparisons from the database are considered "statistically significant," and thus are marked as "above" or "below" the norm. When differences between your jurisdiction's ratings and the national norms are less than 3 points, they are marked as "similar to" the norm.

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

COMPARISONS

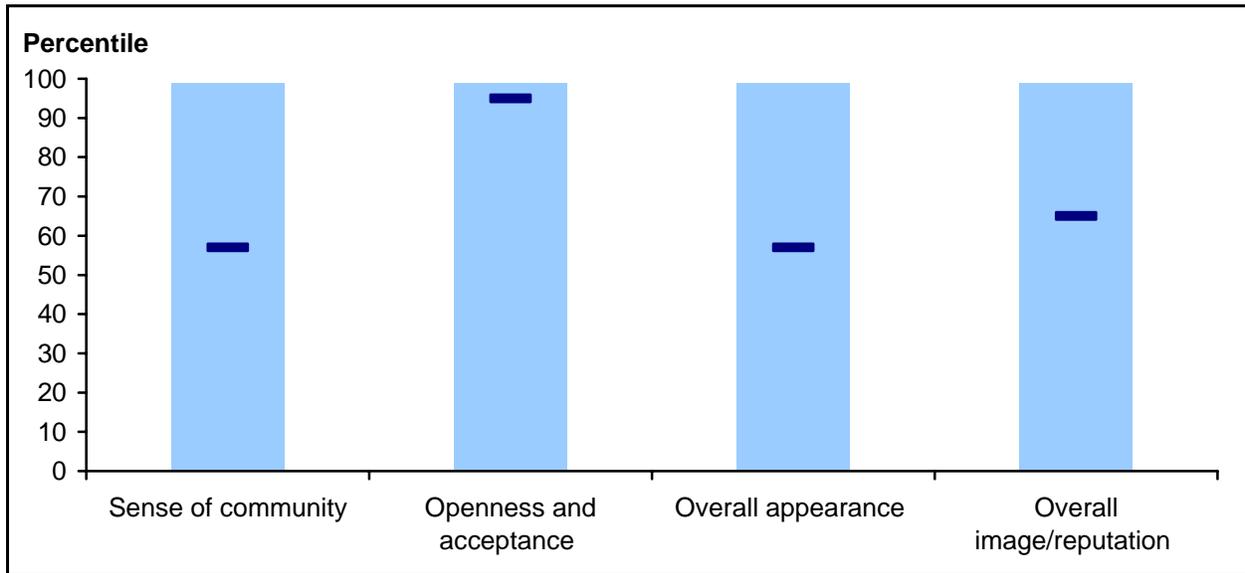
Figure 1: Quality of Life Ratings



Quality of Life Ratings

	City of Sunnyvale Rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Sunnyvale Percentile	Comparison of Sunnyvale Rating to Norm
How do you rate Sunnyvale as a place to live?	78	42	218	81%ile	Above the norm
How do you rate your neighborhood as a place to live?	69	66	147	55%ile	Similar to the norm
How do you rate Sunnyvale as a place to raise children?	70	70	187	63%ile	Above the norm
How do you rate Sunnyvale as a place to work?	70	9	111	93%ile	Above the norm
How do you rate Sunnyvale as a place to retire?	51	126	171	26%ile	Below the norm
How do you rate the overall quality of life in Sunnyvale?	69	87	224	61%ile	Above the norm

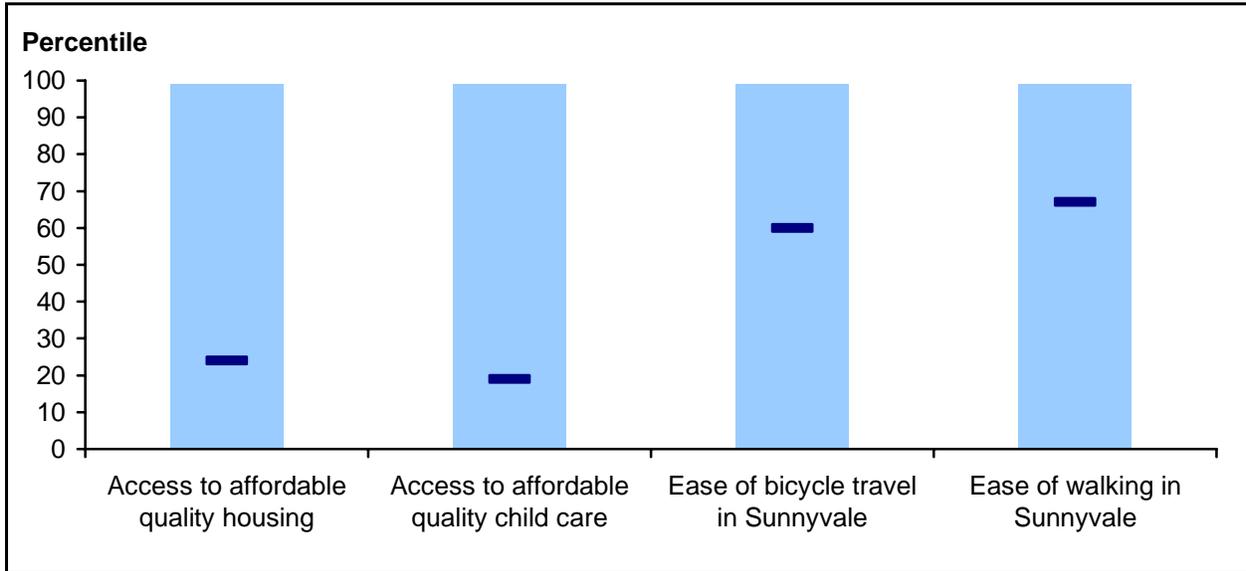
Figure 2: Characteristics of the Community: General and Opportunities



Characteristics of the Community: General and Opportunities

	City of Sunnyvale Rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Sunnyvale Percentile	Comparison of Sunnyvale Rating to Norm
Sense of community	57	64	149	57%ile	Similar to the norm
Openness and acceptance of the community towards people of diverse backgrounds	71	7	122	95%ile	Above the norm
Overall appearance of Sunnyvale	61	73	169	57%ile	Above the norm
Overall image/reputation of Sunnyvale	65	38	108	65%ile	Above the norm

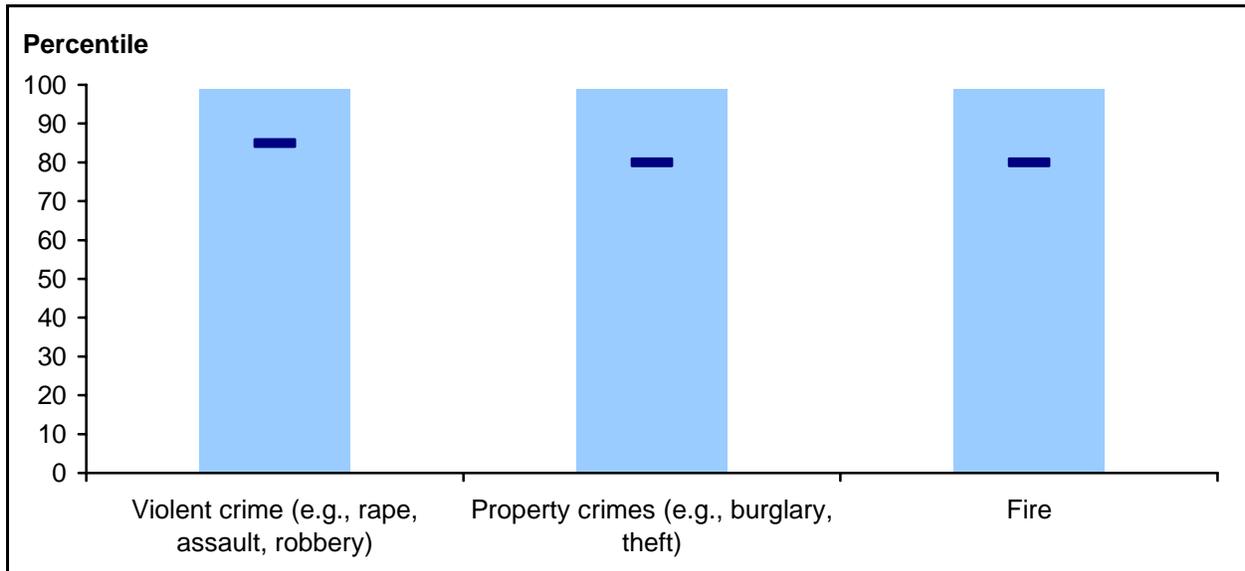
Figure 3: Characteristics of the Community: Access and Mobility



Characteristics of the Community: Access and Mobility

	City of Sunnyvale Rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Sunnyvale Percentile	Comparison of Sunnyvale Rating to Norm
Access to affordable quality housing	30	140	184	24%ile	Below the norm
Access to affordable quality child care	36	84	103	19%ile	Below the norm
Ease of bicycle travel in Sunnyvale	49	53	131	60%ile	Above the norm
Ease of walking in Sunnyvale	59	44	130	67%ile	Above the norm

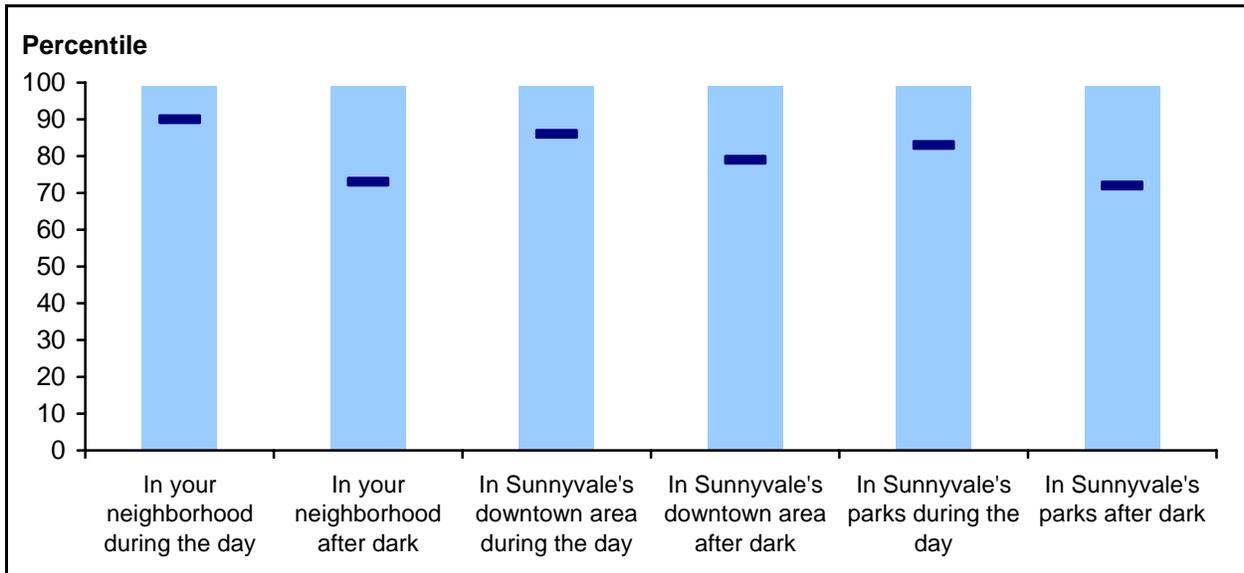
Figure 4: Ratings of Safety from Various Problems



Ratings of Safety From Various Problems

	City of Sunnyvale Rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Sunnyvale Percentile	Comparison of Sunnyvale Rating to Norm
Violent crime (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	82	22	140	85%ile	Above the norm
Property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	69	28	138	80%ile	Above the norm
Fire	79	29	139	80%ile	Above the norm

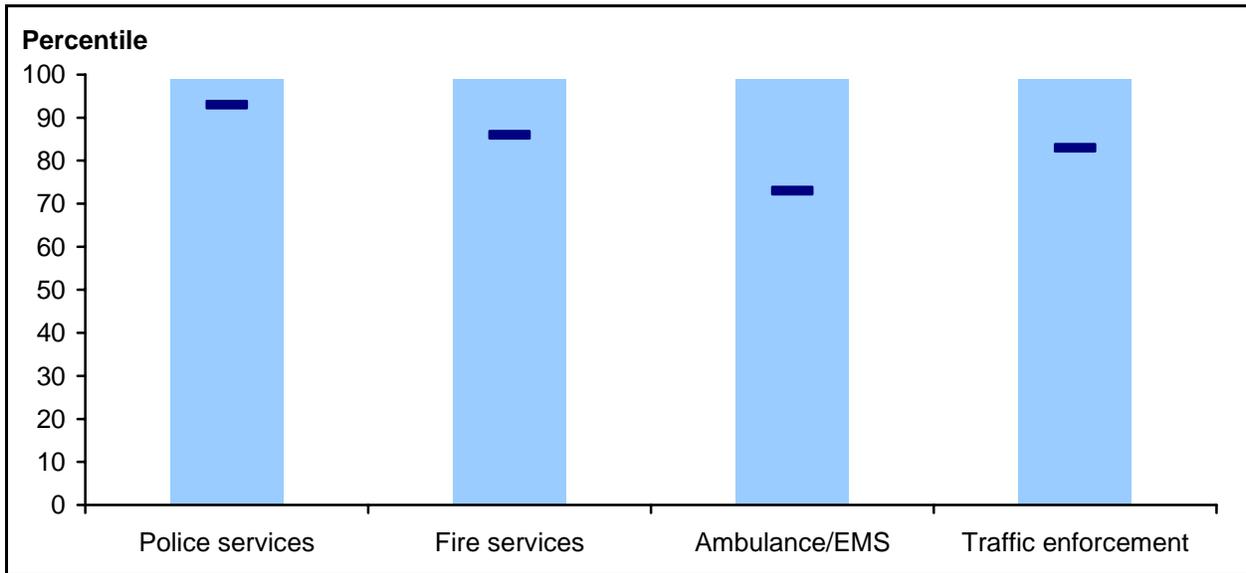
Figure 5: Ratings of Safety in Various Areas



Ratings of Safety in Various Areas

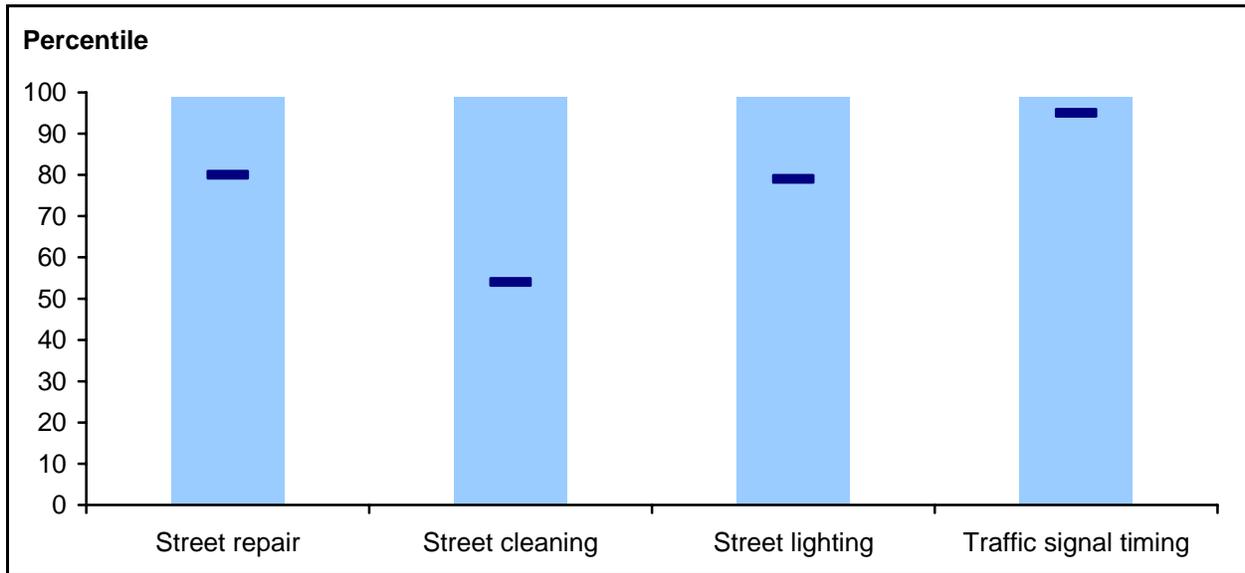
	City of Sunnyvale Rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Sunnyvale Percentile	Comparison of Sunnyvale Rating to Norm
In your neighborhood during the day	92	17	167	90%ile	Above the norm
In your neighborhood after dark	77	48	178	73%ile	Above the norm
In Sunnyvale's downtown area during the day	91	20	139	86%ile	Above the norm
In Sunnyvale's downtown area after dark	70	33	155	79%ile	Above the norm
In Sunnyvale's parks during the day	91	25	139	83%ile	Above the norm
In Sunnyvale's parks after dark	59	40	139	72%ile	Above the norm

Figure 6: Quality of Public Safety Services



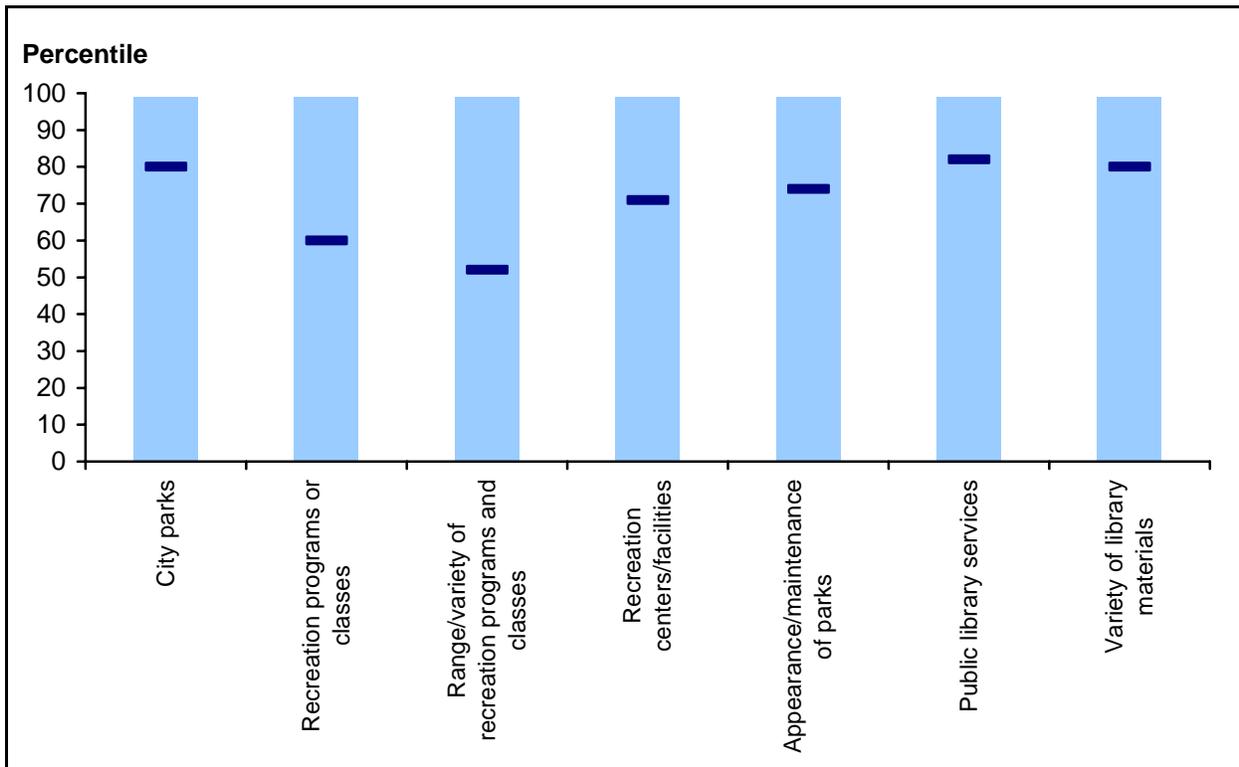
Quality of Public Safety Services					
	City of Sunnyvale Rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Sunnyvale Percentile	Comparison of Sunnyvale Rating to Norm
Police services	76	19	252	93%ile	Above the norm
Fire services	81	31	211	86%ile	Above the norm
Ambulance/emergency medical services	77	47	172	73%ile	Above the norm
Traffic enforcement	63	32	188	83%ile	Above the norm

Figure 7: Quality of Transportation Services



Quality of Transportation Services					
	City of Sunnyvale Rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Sunnyvale Percentile	Comparison of Sunnyvale Rating to Norm
Street repair	55	46	229	80%ile	Above the norm
Street cleaning	56	76	164	54%ile	Similar to the norm
Street lighting	60	37	176	79%ile	Above the norm
Traffic signal timing	58	6	108	95%ile	Above the norm

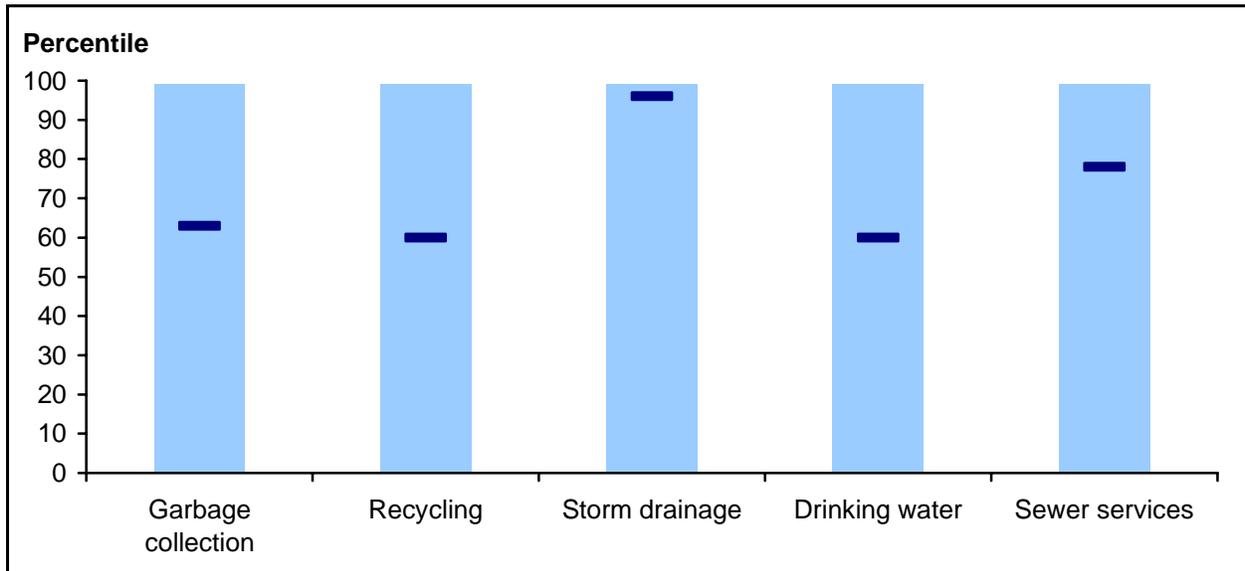
Figure 8: Quality of Leisure Services



Quality of Leisure Services

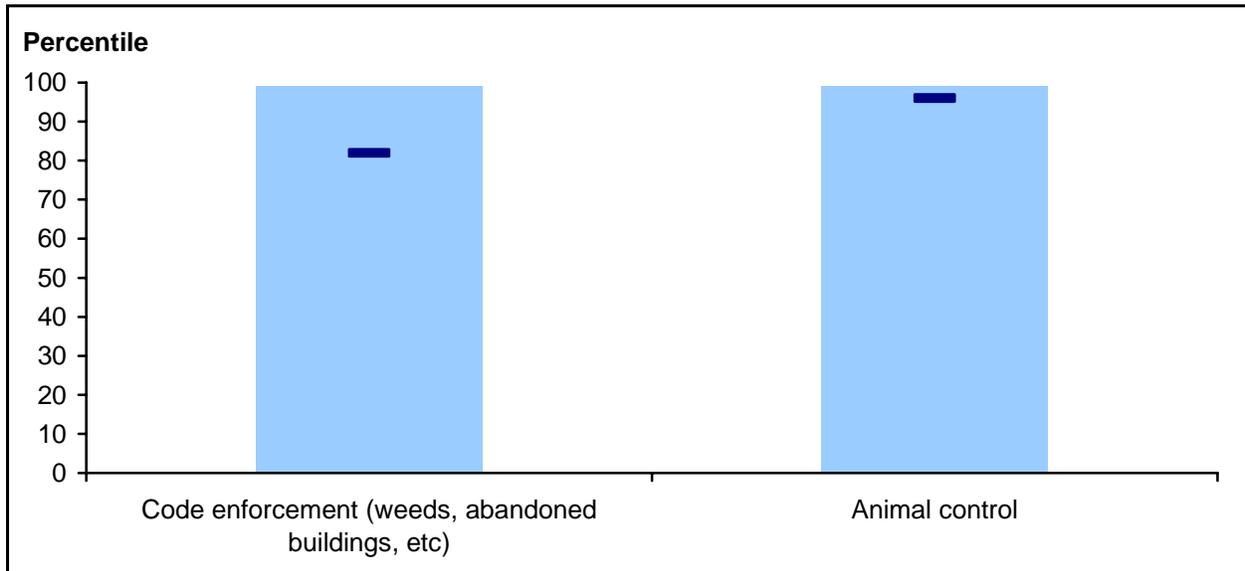
	City of Sunnyvale Rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Sunnyvale Percentile	Comparison of Sunnyvale Rating to Norm
City parks	73	33	160	80%ile	Above the norm
Recreation programs or classes	64	70	175	60%ile	Above the norm
Range/variety of recreation programs and classes	60	54	112	52%ile	Similar to the norm
Recreation centers/facilities	65	40	135	71%ile	Above the norm
Appearance/maintenance of parks	70	45	169	74%ile	Above the norm
Public library services	76	35	185	82%ile	Above the norm
Variety of library materials	70	19	90	80%ile	Above the norm

Figure 9: Quality of Utility Services



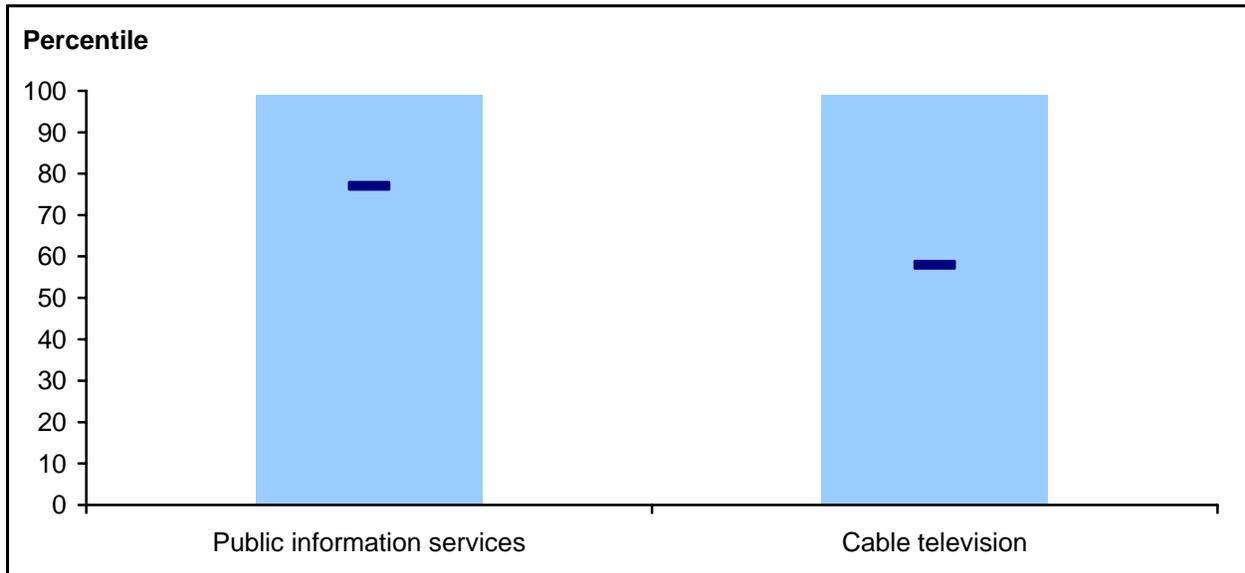
Quality of Utility Services					
	City of Sunnyvale Rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Sunnyvale Percentile	Comparison of Sunnyvale Rating to Norm
Garbage collection	70	72	195	63%ile	Similar to the norm
Recycling	67	67	165	60%ile	Above the norm
Storm drainage	64	8	179	96%ile	Above the norm
Drinking water	59	56	140	60%ile	Above the norm
Sewer services	65	32	143	78%ile	Above the norm

Figure 10: Quality of Planning and Code Enforcement Services



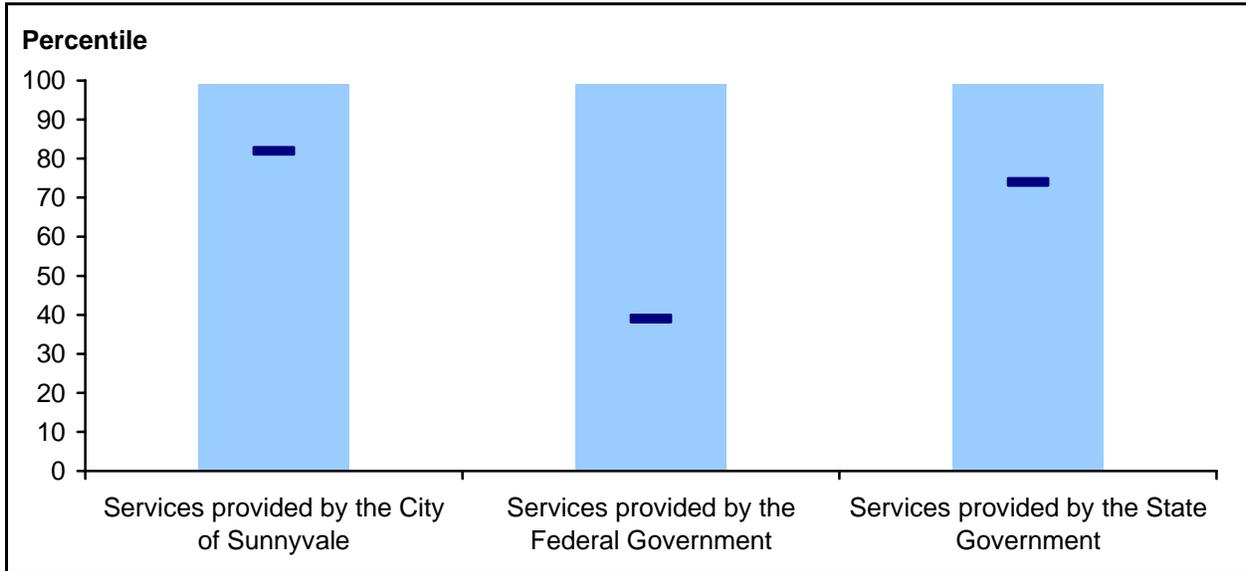
Quality of Planning and Code Enforcement Services					
	City of Sunnyvale Rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Sunnyvale Percentile	Comparison of Sunnyvale Rating to Norm
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc)	54	34	186	82%ile	Above the norm
Animal control	65	8	160	96%ile	Above the norm

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



Quality of Services to Special Populations and Other Services					
	City of Sunnyvale Rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Sunnyvale Percentile	Comparison of Sunnyvale Rating to Norm
Public information services	62	36	156	77%ile	Above the norm
Cable television	51	42	98	58%ile	Similar to the norm

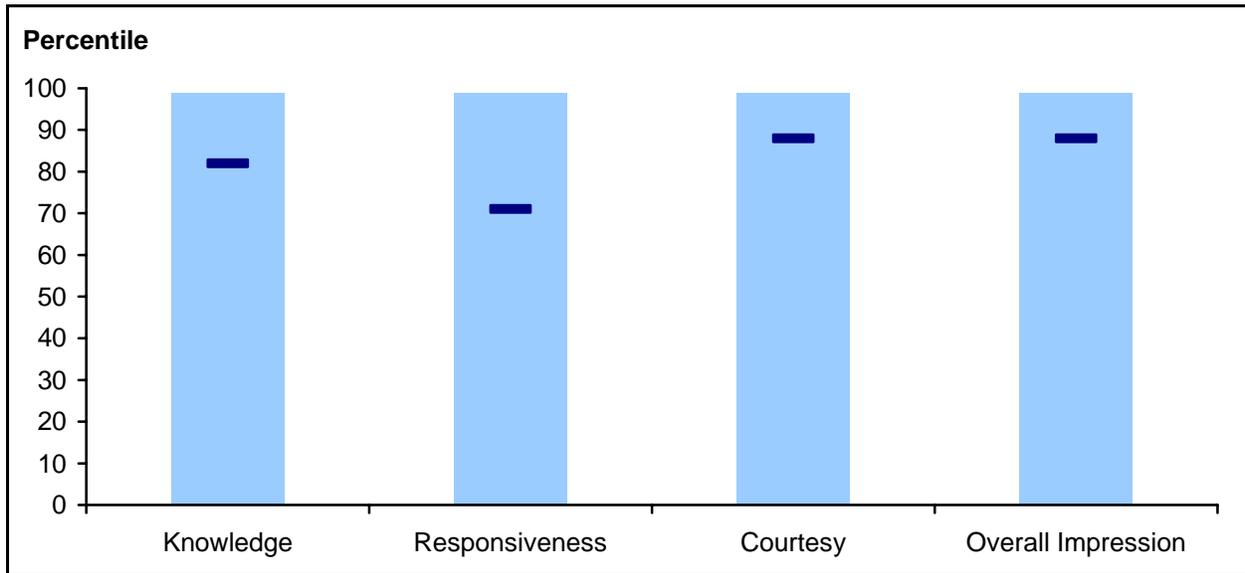
Figure 12: Overall Quality of Services



Overall Quality of Services

	City of Sunnyvale Rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Sunnyvale Percentile	Comparison of Sunnyvale Rating to Norm
Services provided by the City of Sunnyvale	68	38	206	82%ile	Above the norm
Services provided by the Federal Government	41	79	128	39%ile	Similar to the norm
Services provided by the State Government	48	34	130	74%ile	Above the norm

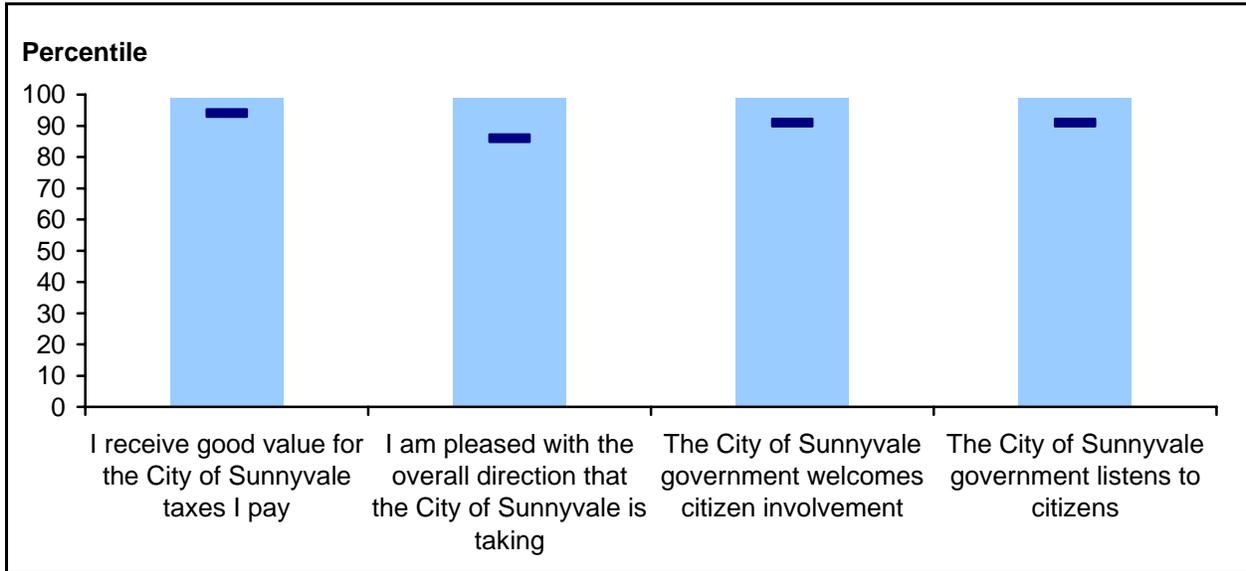
Figure 13: Ratings of Contact with City Employees



Ratings of Contact with the City Employees

	City of Sunnyvale Rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Sunnyvale Percentile	Comparison of Sunnyvale Rating to Norm
Knowledge	73	33	175	82%ile	Above the norm
Responsiveness	69	52	174	71%ile	Above the norm
Courtesy	75	17	139	88%ile	Above the norm
Overall Impression	73	25	196	88%ile	Above the norm

Figure 14: Ratings of Public Trust



Ratings of Public Trust

	City of Sunnyvale Rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	City of Sunnyvale Percentile	Comparison of Sunnyvale Rating to Norm
I receive good value for the City of Sunnyvale taxes I pay	70	13	186	94%ile	Above the norm
I am pleased with the overall direction that the City of Sunnyvale is taking	67	23	154	86%ile	Above the norm
The City of Sunnyvale government welcomes citizen involvement	70	16	166	91%ile	Above the norm
The City of Sunnyvale government listens to citizens	64	14	145	91%ile	Above the norm

APPENDIX A: LIST OF JURISDICTIONS INCLUDED IN NORMATIVE COMPARISONS

Jurisdiction Name	State	2000 Population
Homer	AK	3,946
Auburn	AL	42,987
Dothan	AL	57,737
Huntsville	AL	158,216
Siloam Springs	AR	10,000
Hot Springs	AR	35,613
Fayetteville	AR	58,047
Little Rock	AR	183,133
Safford	AZ	9,232
Sedona	AZ	10,192
Yuma	AZ	77,515
Gilbert	AZ	109,697
Tempe	AZ	158,625
Chandler	AZ	176,581
Scottsdale	AZ	202,705
Mesa	AZ	396,375
Tucson	AZ	486,699
Phoenix	AZ	1,321,045
Morro Bay	CA	10,350
Los Alamitos	CA	11,536
Solana Beach	CA	12,979
Hercules	CA	19,488
El Cerrito	CA	23,171
Coronado	CA	24,100
Ridgecrest	CA	24,927
Los Gatos	CA	28,592
Monterey	CA	29,674
Menlo Park	CA	30,785
Manhattan Beach	CA	33,852

The City of Sunnyvale Citizen Survey

Jurisdictions in Comparisons

Jurisdiction Name	State	2000 Population
Claremont	CA	33,998
Yuba City	CA	36,758
Lompoc	CA	41,103
Gilroy	CA	41,464
Palm Springs	CA	42,807
Highland	CA	44,605
San Ramon	CA	44,722
Cypress	CA	46,229
Novato	CA	47,630
Poway	CA	48,044
San Clemente	CA	49,936
Arcadia	CA	53,054
Rosemead	CA	53,505
Encinitas	CA	54,014
San Rafael	CA	56,063
Lodi	CA	56,999
Temecula	CA	57,716
Palo Alto	CA	58,598
Laguna Niguel	CA	61,891
Pico Rivera	CA	63,428
Pleasanton	CA	63,654
Walnut Creek	CA	64,296
Chino	CA	67,168
Mountain View	CA	70,708
Livermore	CA	73,345
Redwood City	CA	75,402
Lakewood	CA	79,345
Redding	CA	80,865
Santa Monica	CA	84,084
Alhambra	CA	85,804
Antioch	CA	90,532
Visalia	CA	91,565
San Mateo	CA	92,482
El Cajon	CA	94,869
South Gate	CA	96,375

The City of Sunnyvale Citizen Survey

Jurisdictions in Comparisons

Jurisdiction Name	State	2000 Population
Santa Clara	CA	102,361
Berkeley	CA	102,743
Daly City	CA	103,621
Simi Valley	CA	111,351
Thousand Oaks	CA	117,005
Concord	CA	121,780
Pasadena	CA	133,936
Torrance	CA	137,946
Irvine	CA	143,072
Santa Rosa	CA	147,595
Pomona	CA	149,473
Santa Clarita	CA	151,088
Oceanside	CA	161,029
Garden Grove	CA	165,196
Oxnard	CA	170,358
Modesto	CA	188,856
Fremont	CA	203,413
Bakersfield	CA	247,057
San Luis Obispo County	CA	247,900
Riverside	CA	255,166
Sacramento	CA	407,018
Long Beach	CA	461,522
San Francisco	CA	776,733
San Jose	CA	894,943
San Diego	CA	1,223,400
Sacramento County	CA	1,223,499
Louisville	CO	18,937
Castle Rock	CO	20,224
Parker	CO	23,558
Northglenn	CO	31,575
Englewood	CO	31,727
Broomfield	CO	38,272
Littleton	CO	40,340
Loveland	CO	50,608
Longmont	CO	71,093

The City of Sunnyvale Citizen Survey

Jurisdictions in Comparisons

Jurisdiction Name	State	2000 Population
Lafayette	CO	76,930
Thornton	CO	82,384
Boulder	CO	94,673
Westminster	CO	100,940
Arvada	CO	102,153
Fort Collins	CO	118,652
Lakewood	CO	144,126
Douglas County	CO	175,766
Boulder County	CO	291,288
Greeley	CO	360,890
Jefferson County	CO	527,056
Denver (City and County)	CO	554,636
New London	CT	25,671
Wethersfield(u)	CT	26,271
Vernon	CT	28,063
Windsor	CT	28,237
Manchester	CT	54,740
West Hartford (u)	CT	63,589
Hartford	CT	121,578
Newark	DE	28,547
Gulfport	FL	12,527
Ocoee	FL	24,391
Cooper City	FL	27,939
Palm Coast	FL	32,732
Walton County	FL	40,601
Alamonte	FL	41,200
Pinellas Park	FL	45,658
Port Orange	FL	45,823
Kissimmee	FL	47,814
Bradenton	FL	49,504
Tamarac	FL	55,588
Delray Beach	FL	60,020
Deerfield Beach	FL	64,583
Miramar	FL	72,739
Boca Raton	FL	74,764

The City of Sunnyvale Citizen Survey

Jurisdictions in Comparisons

Jurisdiction Name	State	2000 Population
Palm Bay	FL	79,413
Port St. Lucie	FL	88,769
Gainesville	FL	95,447
Cape Coral	FL	102,286
Coral Springs	FL	117,549
Hollywood	FL	139,357
Tallahassee	FL	150,624
Fort Lauderdale	FL	152,397
Orlando	FL	185,951
St. Petersburg	FL	248,232
Collier County	FL	251,377
Lee County	FL	454,918
Jacksonville	FL	735,617
Orange County	FL	896,344
Palm Beach County	FL	1,131,184
Broward County	FL	1,623,018
Miami-Dade County	FL	2,253,362
Cartersville	GA	15,925
Milledgeville	GA	18,757
Douglas County	GA	92,174
Macon	GA	97,255
Savannah	GA	131,510
Columbus	GA	185,781
Atlanta	GA	416,474
Fort Madison	IA	10,715
Fort Dodge	IA	25,136
Marshalltown	IA	26,009
Ankeny	IA	27,117
Ames	IA	50,731
Cedar Rapids	IA	120,758
Lewiston	ID	30,904
Twin Falls	ID	34,469
Idaho Falls	ID	50,730
Riverside	IL	8,895
Homewood	IL	19,543

The City of Sunnyvale Citizen Survey

Jurisdictions in Comparisons

Jurisdiction Name	State	2000 Population
Wilmette	IL	27,651
St. Charles	IL	27,896
Highland Park	IL	31,365
Northbrook	IL	33,435
Addison Village	IL	35,914
Urbana	IL	36,395
Streamwood	IL	36,407
Park Ridge	IL	37,775
Elmhurst	IL	42,762
Normal	IL	45,386
Downers Grove	IL	48,724
Village of Oak Park	IL	52,524
Mount Prospect Village	IL	56,265
Skokie	IL	63,348
Bloomington	IL	64,808
Palatine	IL	65,479
Evanston	IL	74,239
Decatur	IL	81,860
Peoria	IL	112,936
Marion County	IN	31,320
Gary	IN	102,746
Fort Wayne	IN	205,727
Gardner	KS	9,396
Shawnee	KS	47,996
Lawrence	KS	80,098
Kansas City	KS	146,866
Overland Park	KS	149,080
Wichita	KS	344,284
Ashland	KY	21,981
Bowling Green	KY	49,296
Lexington	KY	260,512
Brookline(u)	MA	57,107
Worcester	MA	172,648
Boston	MA	589,141
Greenbelt	MD	21,456

The City of Sunnyvale Citizen Survey

Jurisdictions in Comparisons

Jurisdiction Name	State	2000 Population
Baltimore	MD	651,154
Delhi Township	MI	22,569
Port Huron	MI	32,338
Meridian Charter Township	MI	38,987
Muskegon	MI	40,105
Kentwood	MI	45,255
East Lansing	MI	46,525
Novi	MI	47,386
Battle Creek	MI	53,364
Saint Clair Shores	MI	63,096
Rochester Hills	MI	68,825
Wyoming	MI	69,368
Canton(u)	MI	76,366
Farmington Hills	MI	82,111
Ann Arbor	MI	114,024
Lansing	MI	119,128
Grand Rapids	MI	197,800
Detroit	MI	951,270
Fridley	MN	27,449
Mankato	MN	32,427
Roseville	MN	33,690
Richfield	MN	34,439
Blaine	MN	44,942
Minnetonka	MN	51,301
Eagan	MN	63,557
Plymouth	MN	65,894
Bloomington	MN	85,172
Duluth	MN	86,918
Scott County	MN	89,498
St. Paul	MN	287,151
Dakota County	MN	355,904
Kirkwood	MO	27,324
Baldwin	MO	31,283
Saint Peters	MO	51,381
Saint Joseph	MO	73,990

The City of Sunnyvale Citizen Survey

Jurisdictions in Comparisons

Jurisdiction Name	State	2000 Population
Springfield	MO	151,580
Kansas City	MO	441,545
Pascagoula	MS	26,200
Biloxi	MS	50,644
Great Falls	MT	56,690
Yellowstone County	MT	129,352
Hickory	NC	37,222
Wilson	NC	44,405
Rocky Mount	NC	55,893
Wilmington	NC	90,400
Cary	NC	94,536
Greensboro	NC	223,891
Charlotte	NC	540,828
Grand Forks	ND	49,321
Fargo	ND	90,599
Merrimack	NH	25,119
Dover	NH	26,884
Salem	NH	28,112
Concord	NH	40,687
Medford	NJ	22,253
Teaneck Township	NJ	39,260
Hackensack	NJ	42,677
Taos	NM	4,700
Los Alamos County	NM	18,343
Rio Rancho	NM	51,765
North Las Vegas	NV	115,488
Henderson	NV	175,381
Reno	NV	180,480
Washoe County	NV	339,486
Rye	NY	14,955
Watertown	NY	26,705
Auburn	NY	28,574
Genesee County	NY	60,370
Ontario County	NY	100,224
Rochester	NY	219,773

The City of Sunnyvale Citizen Survey

Jurisdictions in Comparisons

Jurisdiction Name	State	2000 Population
Ravenna	OH	11,771
Centerville	OH	23,024
Sandusky	OH	27,844
Shaker Heights	OH	29,405
Fairborn	OH	32,052
Westerville	OH	35,318
Huber Heights	OH	38,212
Kettering	OH	57,502
Springfield	OH	65,358
Dayton	OH	166,179
Akron	OH	217,074
Cincinnati	OH	331,285
Columbus	OH	711,470
Oklahoma City	OK	506,132
Yachats	OR	617
Waldport	OR	2,050
Milton-Freewater	OR	6,470
Redmond	OR	13,481
Tualatin	OR	22,791
Lake Oswego	OR	35,278
Albany	OR	40,852
Tigard	OR	41,223
Corvallis	OR	49,322
Springfield	OR	52,864
Gresham	OR	90,205
Eugene	OR	137,893
Jackson County	OR	181,269
Portland	OR	529,121
Multnomah County	OR	660,486
Manheim	PA	4,784
Upper Merion Township	PA	28,863
Mt. Lebanon	PA	33,017
Cheltenham Township	PA	36,875
State College	PA	38,420
Lower Merion Township	PA	59,850

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Jurisdictions in Comparisons

Jurisdiction Name	State	2000 Population
Bethlehem	PA	71,329
Philadelphia	PA	1,517,550
Newport	RI	26,475
Mauldin	SC	15,224
Myrtle Beach	SC	22,759
Rock Hill	SC	49,765
Columbia	SC	116,278
York County	SC	164,614
Aberdeen	SD	24,658
Oak Ridge	TN	27,387
Franklin	TN	41,842
Knoxville	TN	173,890
Memphis	TN	650,100
Mount Pleasant	TX	13,935
Nacogdoches	TX	29,914
Lufkin	TX	32,709
De Soto	TX	37,646
Grapevine	TX	42,059
Bedford	TX	47,152
Missouri City	TX	52,913
McKinney	TX	54,369
Temple	TX	54,514
Victoria	TX	60,603
Round Rock	TX	61,136
Sugar Land	TX	63,328
College Station	TX	67,890
Lewisville	TX	77,737
Denton	TX	80,537
Odessa	TX	90,943
Carrollton	TX	109,576
Grand Prairie	TX	127,427
Pasadena	TX	141,674
Irving	TX	191,615
Lubbock	TX	199,564
Garland	TX	215,768

The City of Sunnyvale Citizen Survey

Jurisdictions in Comparisons

Jurisdiction Name	State	2000 Population
Plano	TX	222,030
Fort Worth	TX	534,694
Austin	TX	656,562
San Antonio	TX	1,144,646
Dallas	TX	1,188,580
Bountiful	UT	41,301
Ogden	UT	77,226
West Valley City	UT	108,896
Culpeper	VA	9,664
Goochland	VA	16,863
Blacksburg	VA	39,357
James City County	VA	48,102
Roanoke County	VA	85,778
Stafford County	VA	92,446
Portsmouth	VA	100,565
Hampton	VA	146,437
Richmond	VA	197,790
Chesapeake	VA	199,184
Norfolk	VA	234,403
Prince William County	VA	280,813
Virginia Beach	VA	425,257
Ridgefield	WA	2,147
Marysville	WA	12,268
Walla Walla	WA	29,686
University Place (u)	WA	29,933
Lynnwood	WA	33,847
Richland	WA	38,708
Olympia	WA	42,514
Redmond	WA	45,256
Renton	WA	50,052
Shoreline	WA	53,025
Yakima	WA	71,845
Bellevue	WA	109,569
Vancouver	WA	143,560
Tacoma	WA	193,556

Jurisdiction Name	State	2000 Population
Spokane	WA	195,629
Seattle	WA	563,374
Milton	WI	5,200
Ripon	WI	6,828
Platteville	WI	9,989
Grafton	WI	10,312
Marshfield	WI	18,800
Wausau	WI	38,426
Janesville	WI	59,498
Eau Claire	WI	61,704
Appleton	WI	70,087
Kenosha	WI	90,352
Winnebago County	WI	156,763
Madison	WI	208,054
Morgantown	WV	26,809
Laramie	WY	27,204
Casper	WY	49,644

APPENDIX B: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CITIZEN SURVEY DATABASE

What is in the citizen survey database?

NRC's database includes the results from citizen surveys conducted in over 500 jurisdictions in the United States. These are public opinion polls answered by hundreds of thousands of residents around the country. We have recorded, analyzed and stored responses to thousands of survey questions dealing with resident perceptions about the quality of community life and public trust and residents' report of their use of public facilities. Respondents to these surveys are intended to represent over 50 million Americans.

What kinds of questions are included?

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

What is so unique about National Research Center's Citizen Survey database?

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

What is the database used for?

Benchmarking. Our clients use the comparative information in the database to help interpret their own citizen survey results, to create or revise community plans, to evaluate the success of policy or budget decisions, to measure local government performance. We don't know what is small or tall without comparing. Taking the pulse of the community has little meaning without knowing what pulse rate is too high and what is too low. So many surveys of service satisfaction turn up at least "good" citizen evaluations that we need to know how others rate their services to understand if "good" is good enough. Furthermore, in the absence of national or peer community comparisons, a jurisdiction is left with comparing its fire protection rating to its street maintenance rating. That comparison is unfair. Streets always lose to fire. We need to ask more important and harder questions. We need to know how our residents' ratings of fire service compare to opinions about fire service in other communities.

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

A police department that provides the fastest and most efficient service—one that closes most of its cases, solves most of its crimes and keeps the crime rate low—still has a problem to fix if its clients believe services are not very good compared to ratings received by objectively “worse” departments.

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

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

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

How can managers trust the comparability of results?

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