

**CITY OF SAN DIEGO
2004 RESIDENT SATISFACTION SURVEY**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

January 2005

Prepared for

City of San Diego
San Diego, California

Prepared by

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INTRODUCTION

This study was commissioned by the City of San Diego, California. The primary purpose of this effort was to measure residents' satisfaction with City services. More specifically, this study addressed the following issues:

- Attitudes about the quality of life in San Diego;
- Overall satisfaction with the City's performance in providing services;
- Satisfaction with 34 specific City-provided services;
- Utilization of selected City-provided services and facilities;
- Attitudes about safety in the City of San Diego.

This study represents the tenth annual city-wide resident satisfaction study conducted for the City of San Diego. Where appropriate, comparisons are made to the prior studies.

The information contained in this report is based on 600 in-depth interviews conducted with a representative cross-section of San Diego residents. All of the interviewing on this project was conducted via telephone by professional interviewers of the Behavior Research Center during October 2004.

This Executive Summary provides a brief overview of the primary findings of this research. For a more detailed analysis of the findings generated in this research, please refer to the Summary Analysis report.

When comparing the overall results from this study with the overall results from the prior Resident Satisfaction Surveys, the reader is advised that variations between the studies must exceed six percent to be deemed statistically significant.

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OVERVIEW

- KEY FINDINGS**

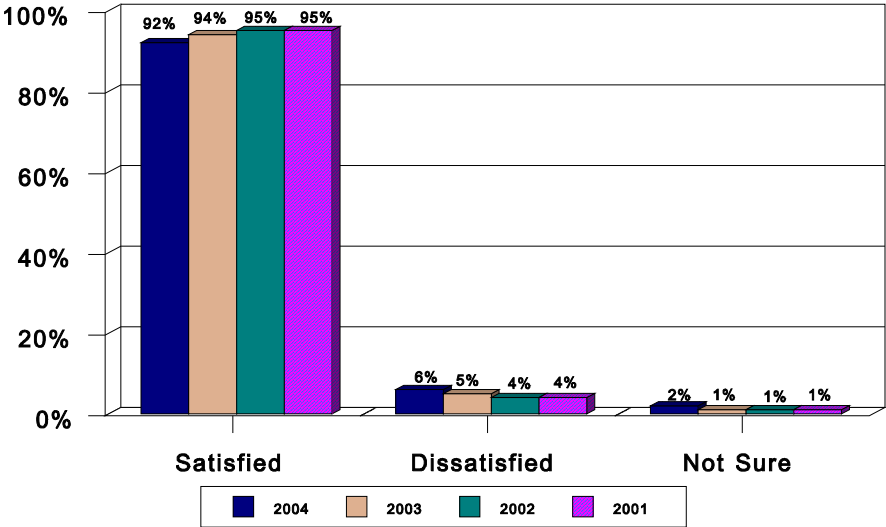
Three key findings are evident from this research effort:

- First, the City of San Diego continues to receive very high marks from residents for the services it provides, with better than nine out of ten residents (92%) indicating they are satisfied with the job the City does. Importantly, this attitude is universal among all population subgroups.
- Second, the City receives highly positive ratings in the vast majority of instances for its efforts in delivering the 34 specific municipal services surveyed.
- Third, the quality of life that San Diego offers continues to be viewed very highly with a positive rating of 78 percent among residents. Again, this attitude is generally held by all the various socio-demographic subgroups making up the City.

- OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH CITY SERVICES**

Better than nine out of ten San Diego residents (92%) continue to indicate they are either very satisfied (34%) or somewhat satisfied (58%) with the services the City provides. Demographically, overall satisfaction with the services the City provides is high among all population subgroups. This response pattern again indicates broad-based satisfaction with City services among residents.

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH CITY SERVICES



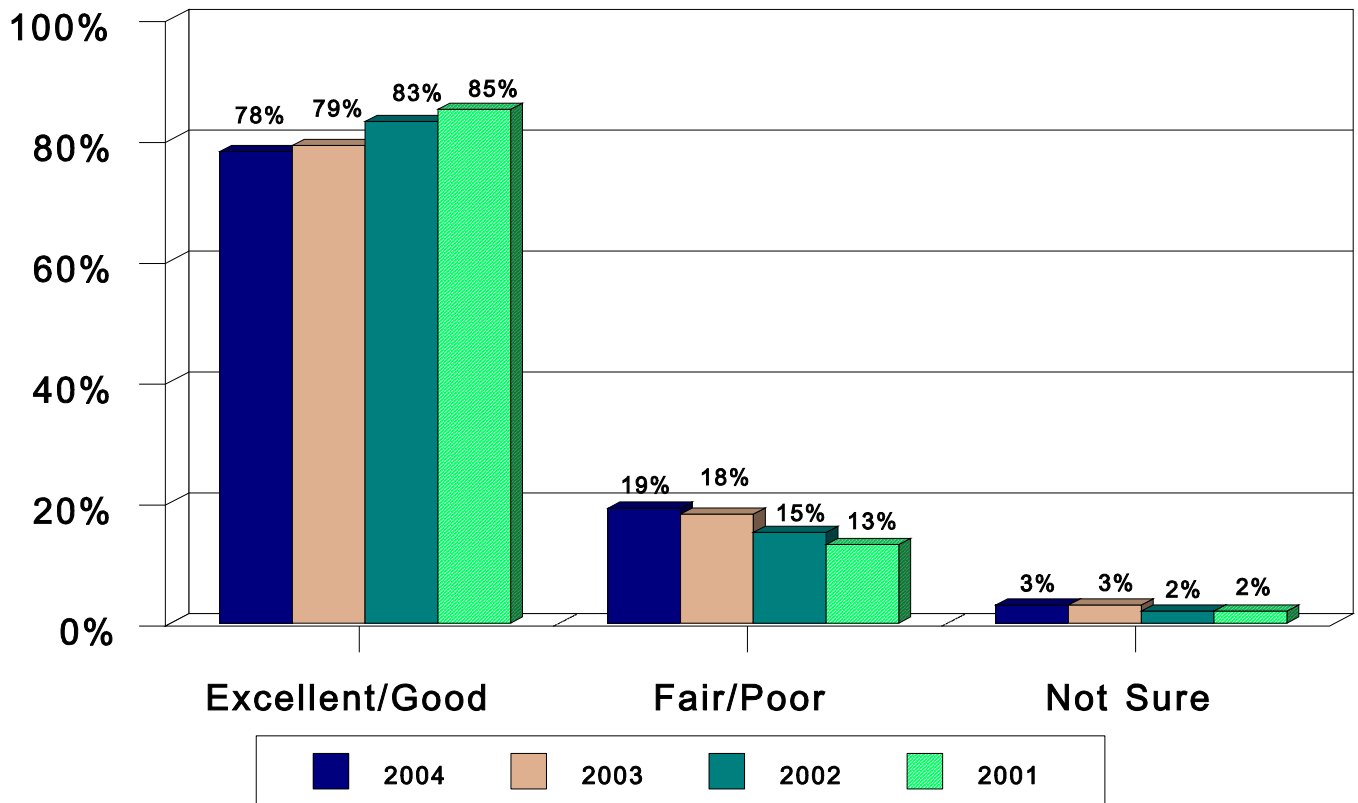
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- QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO**

San Diego residents also continue to rate the quality of life in the City very highly with, nearly eight out of ten residents (78%) indicating it is either excellent (36%) or good (42%) compared to other large cities in California. In comparison, 19 percent of residents rate the quality of life as either fair or poor.

When residents' attitudes about the quality of life in San Diego are analyzed by demographic subgroups, we find that only among non-whites (68%) does the positive response drop below 70 percent.

QUALITY OF LIFE IN SAN DIEGO



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- **SATISFACTION WITH SELECTED CITY SERVICES**

San Diego residents were asked to indicate how satisfied they are with each of 34 services provided by the City of San Diego – very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. Each of the positive responses (very satisfied, somewhat satisfied) to this series of questions was then combined to generate a "satisfaction rating" for each of the 34 services. For example, 39 percent of residents indicate they are very satisfied with the overall quality of police service and 46 percent indicate they are somewhat satisfied – an 85 percent satisfaction rating.

Presented on the following two charts are the satisfaction ratings for each of the 34 services studied. As may be seen, six of the services received a satisfaction rating from nine out of ten residents or more:

- Library services (94%);
- Fire emergency service (93%);
- City's web site (93%);
- City-provided residential trash collection service (92%);
- City-provided home recycling service (91%);
- Quality of parks and recreation facilities (91%).

Also receiving very positive ratings from residents were seven additional services which received a satisfaction rating of between 80 and 89 percent from residents:

- 911 emergency response service (87%);
- Police concern for citizen safety (86%);
- Overall quality of police service (85%);
- Maintenance of street landscaping (83%);
- Quality of housing in your neighborhood (82%);
- Emergency medical service (82%);
- Street sweeping (81%).

A third tier of 12 City services received a satisfaction rating of between 70 and 79 percent from residents:

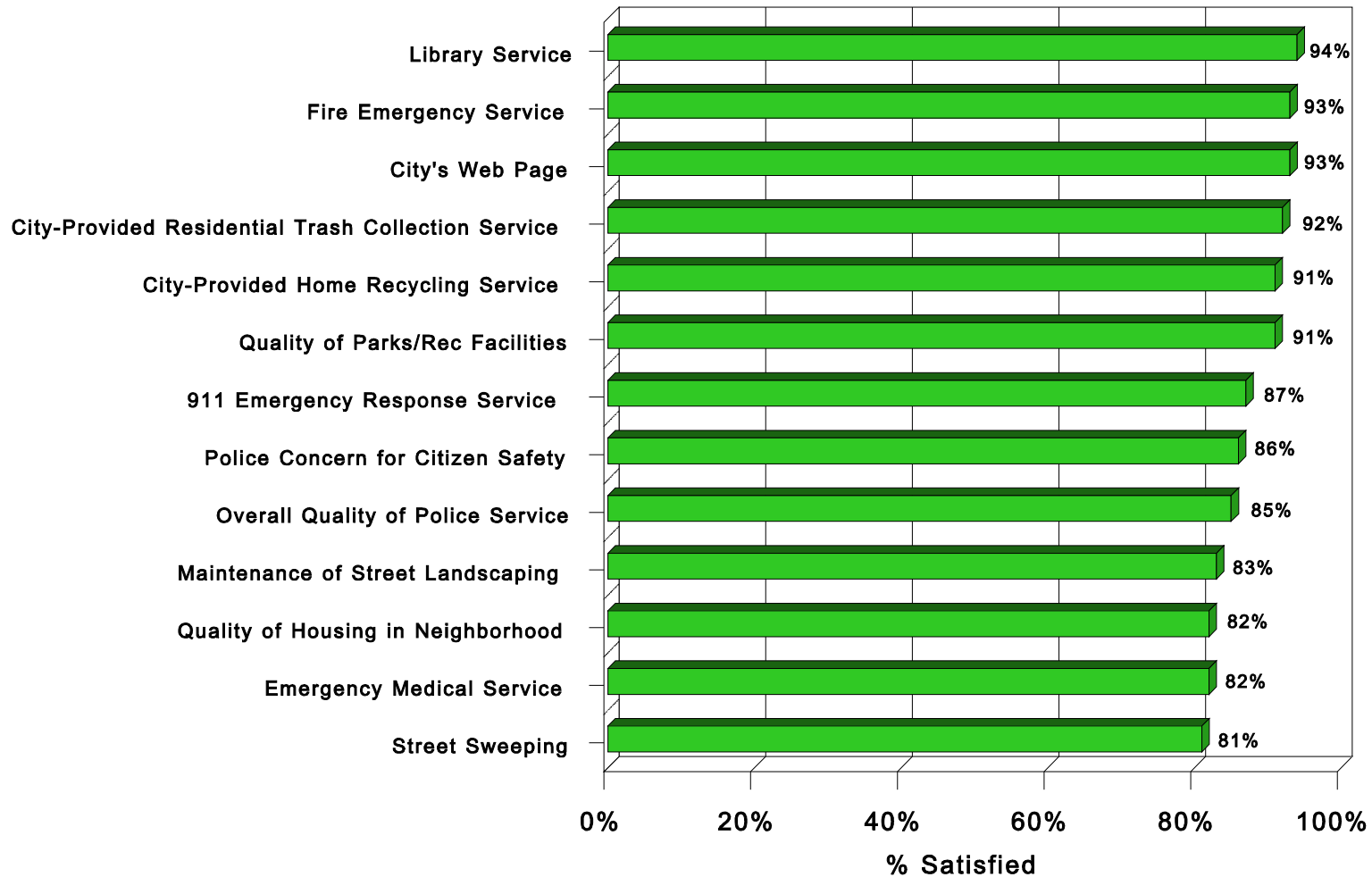
- Art and cultural programs available (79%);
- Lifeguard services (78%);
- City Attorney's efforts to reduce domestic violence (78%);
- Condition of City-owned buildings (76%);
- Police response to calls for assistance (76%);
- Efforts to control/remove graffiti (75%);
- Quality of parks and recreation services (74%);
- Police efforts in addressing neighborhood crime (74%);
- Fire prevention programs (73%);
- Police RSVP Program (73%);
- Trash/litter programs (72%);
- Beach and water safety education (72%).

Nine of the 34 City services evaluated in this study generated satisfaction ratings below 70 percent:

- Maintenance of sidewalks (69%);
- Police efforts to address drug problems (68%);
- Police efforts to address gang problems (66%);
- Accuracy of City water and sewer bills (61%);
- Street maintenance (61%);
- Traffic flow on major streets (55%);
- Taste, color and odor of City drinking water (52%);
- Attracting and retaining businesses (45%);
- Affordability of housing (26%).

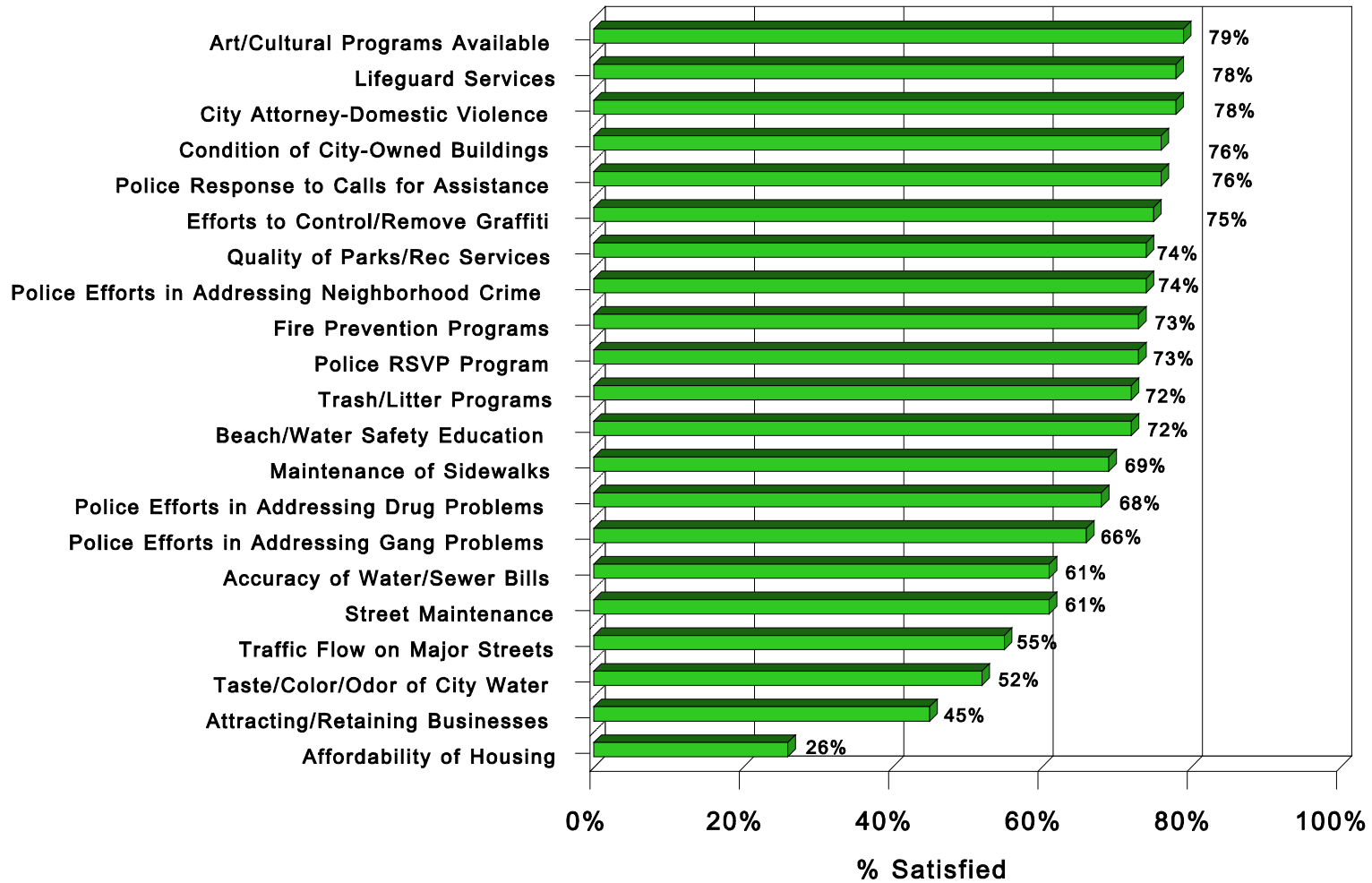
When the 2004 service ratings are compared to the 2003 ratings, we find that in 32 cases the ratings are statistically unchanged (a six point or less positive or negative shift), while in only two cases are they statistically less positive (more than a six point negative shift). The services that receive a lower rating in 2004 than in 2003 are the taste, color and odor of City drinking water (-9) and the police RSVP Program (-7).

SATISFACTION WITH CITY SERVICES - TOP RATED



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SATISFACTION WITH CITY SERVICES - OTHER SERVICES

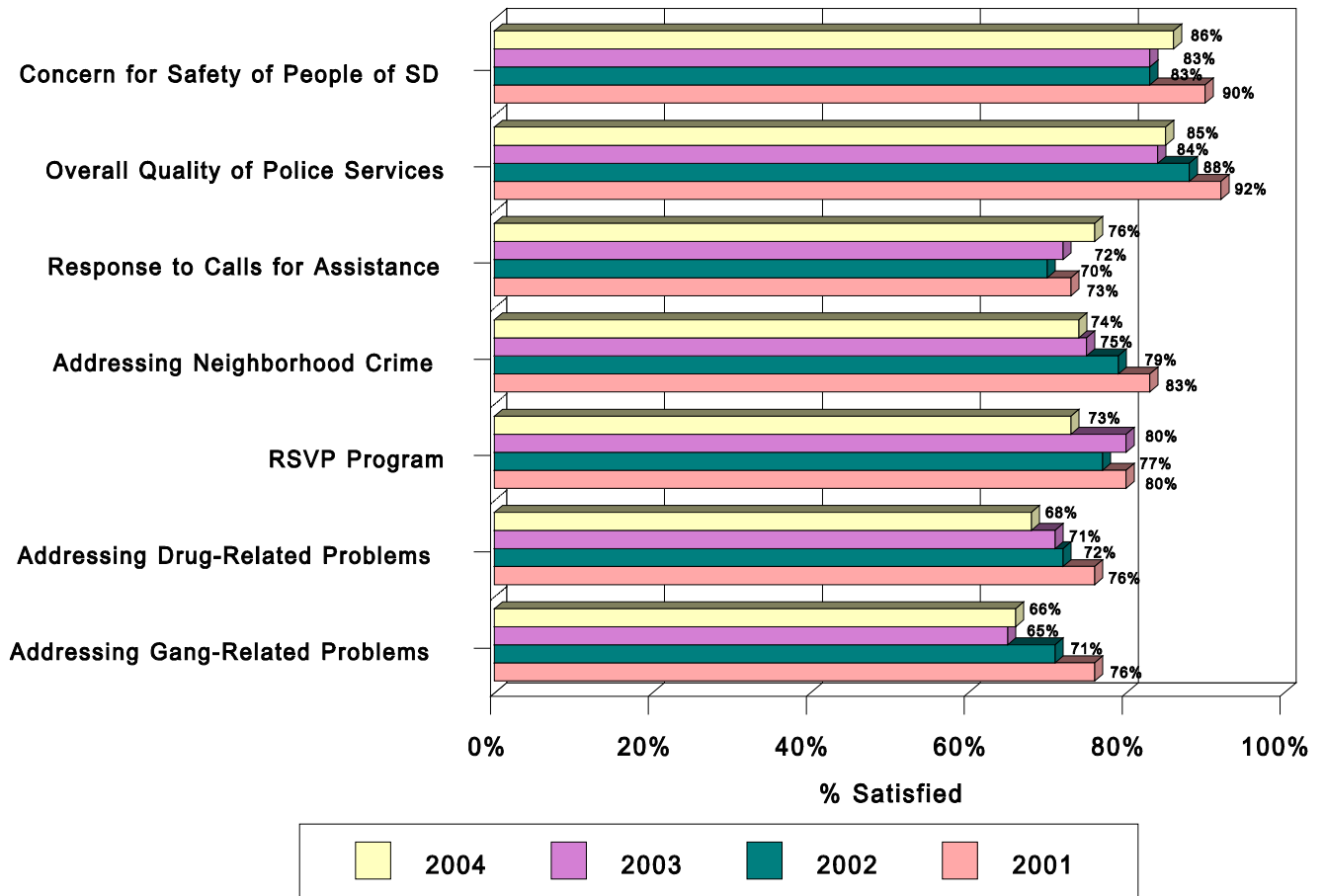


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- SATISFACTION WITH POLICE SERVICES**

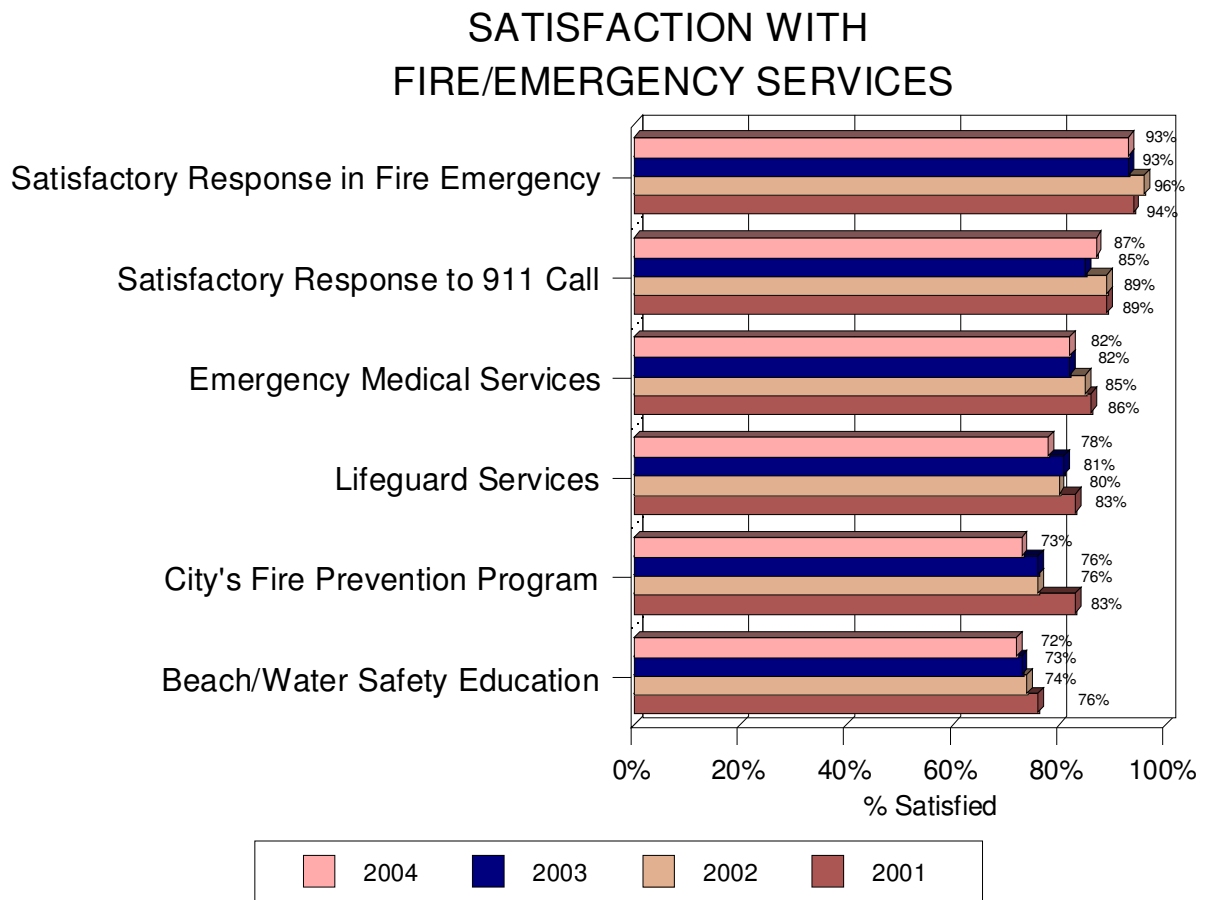
Residents reveal high levels of satisfaction with the Police Department in a variety of areas. Those areas where the Police Department receives its highest satisfaction ratings are: 1) the Department's concern for the safety of the people of San Diego (86%), 2) the overall quality of service provided by the Department (85%); 3) the Department's response after calls for assistance (76%); 4) efforts in addressing neighborhood crime (74%); and 5) the Department's Retired Senior Volunteer Patrol (RSVP) Program (73%). The only areas which record a rating below 70 percent are the Department's effort in addressing drug-related problems (68%) and gang-related problems (66%). The ratings in this series of questions reflect levels of satisfaction that are similar to those observed in 2003 except in the case of the Department's RSVP Program which declined seven points. It appears that more of the respondents were not sure about the program, resulting in an increase in the "not sure" reading of six percent.

SATISFACTION WITH POLICE SERVICES



- **SATISFACTION WITH FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES**

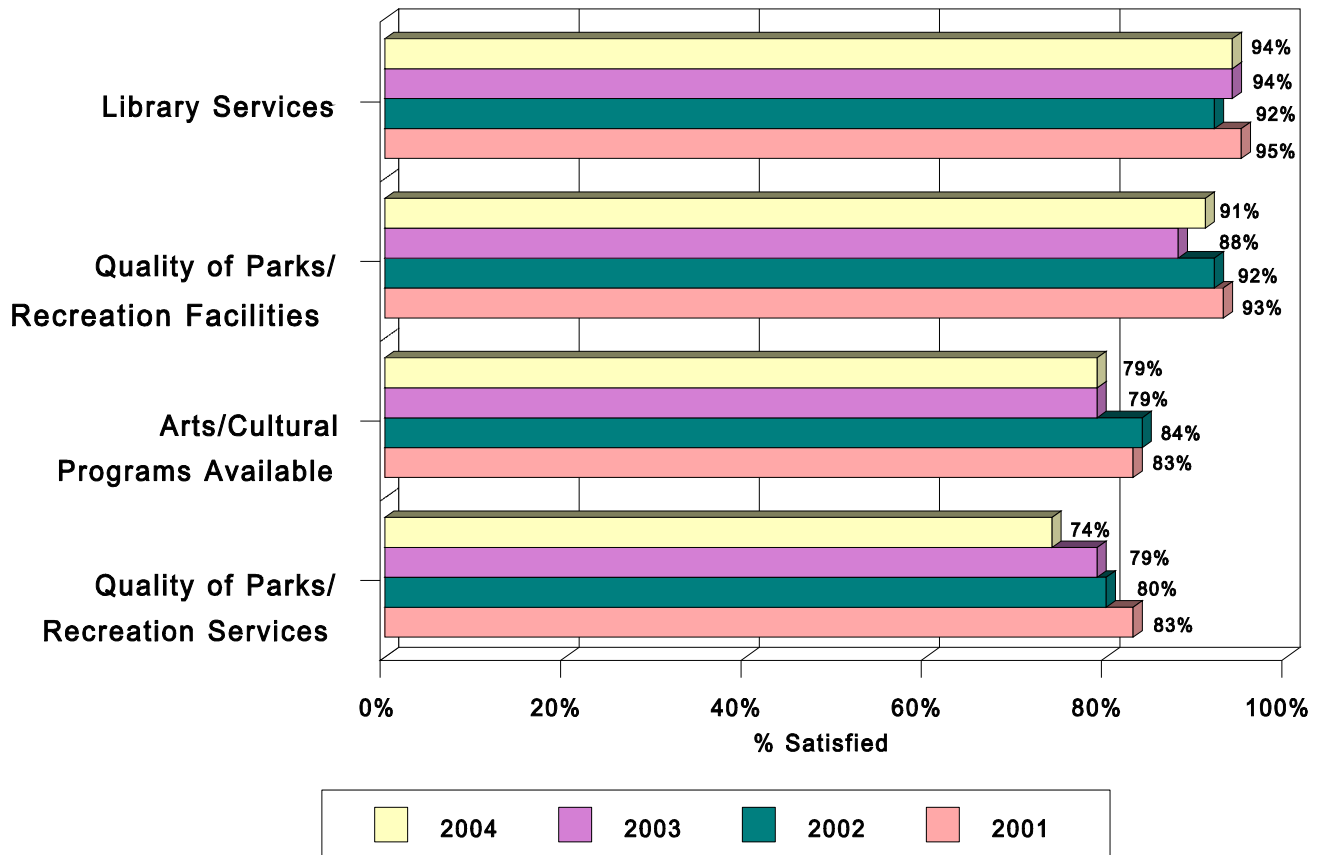
San Diego residents continue to rate the City's fire and emergency services very highly, with roughly seven out of ten residents or more indicating they are satisfied with each of six primary services: 1) fire emergency services (93%); 2) 911 services (87%); 3) emergency medical services (82%); 4) lifeguard services (78%); 5) fire prevention programs (73%), and; 6) beach and water safety education (72%). These ratings are consistent with the 2003 ratings.



- **SATISFACTION WITH PARKS/RECREATION, LIBRARIES AND ARTS/CULTURAL PROGRAMS**

The City's parks/recreation, libraries and arts/cultural programs continue to draw very positive ratings from residents. Thus we find over nine out of ten residents indicate satisfaction with the quality of the City's library services (94%) and the City's parks/recreation facilities (91%). Receiving slightly lower ratings, albeit still very positive ones, are the availability of arts/cultural programs (79%) and the quality of parks/recreation services (74%).

SATISFACTION WITH PARKS/RECREATION, LIBRARIES AND ARTS/CULTURAL PROGRAMS

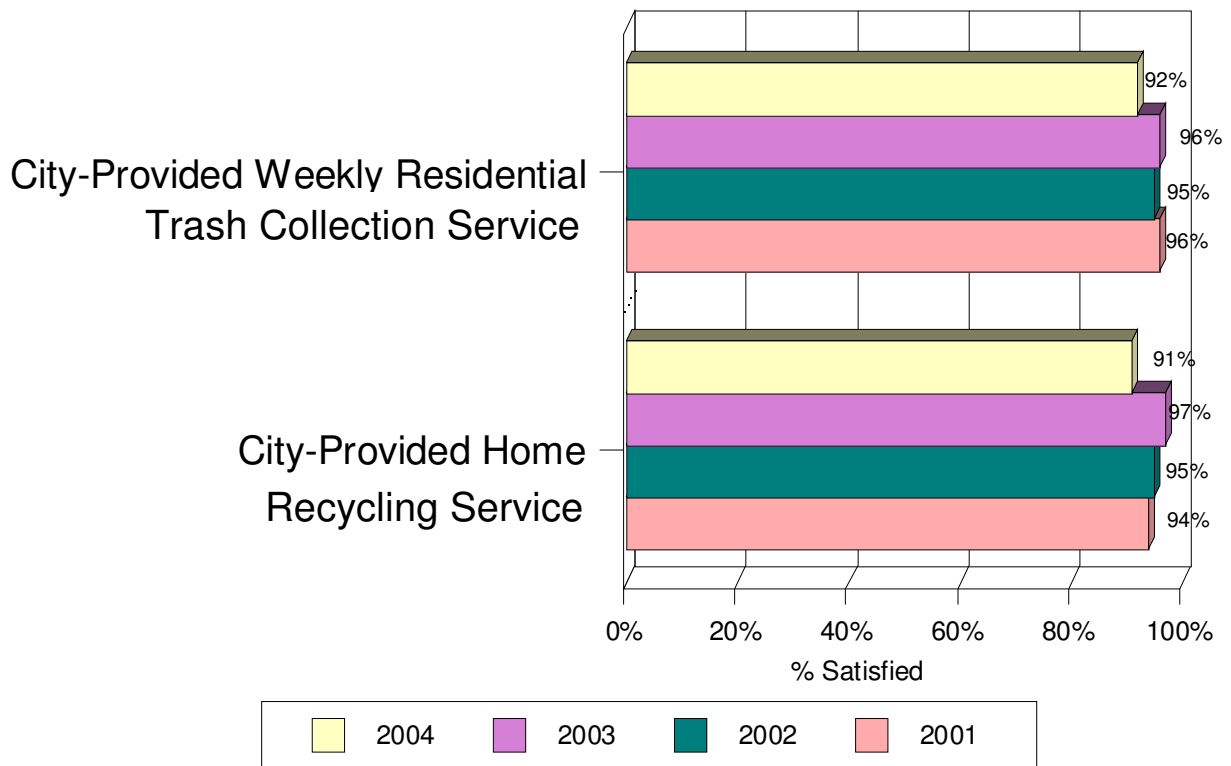


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- SATISFACTION WITH CITY-PROVIDED TRASH COLLECTION AND RECYCLING SERVICES**

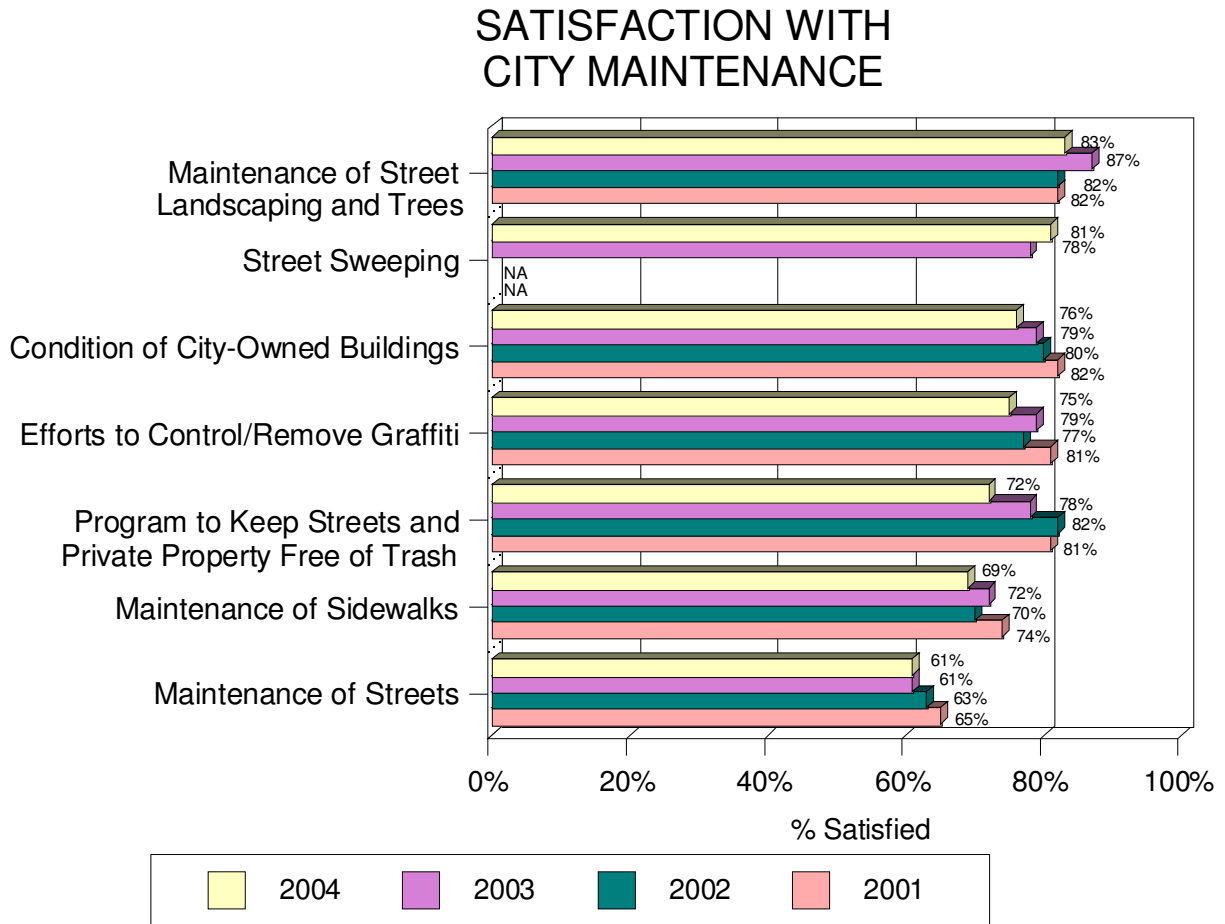
Seventy-one percent of San Diego residents indicate they receive City-provided residential trash collection service and 69 percent recycling service. These residents continue to be satisfied with the service they receive with over nine out of ten such residents indicating they are satisfied – 92 percent for trash collection service and 91 percent for recycling service.

SATISFACTION WITH CITY TRASH COLLECTION AND RECYCLING SERVICE



- **SATISFACTION WITH CITY MAINTENANCE**

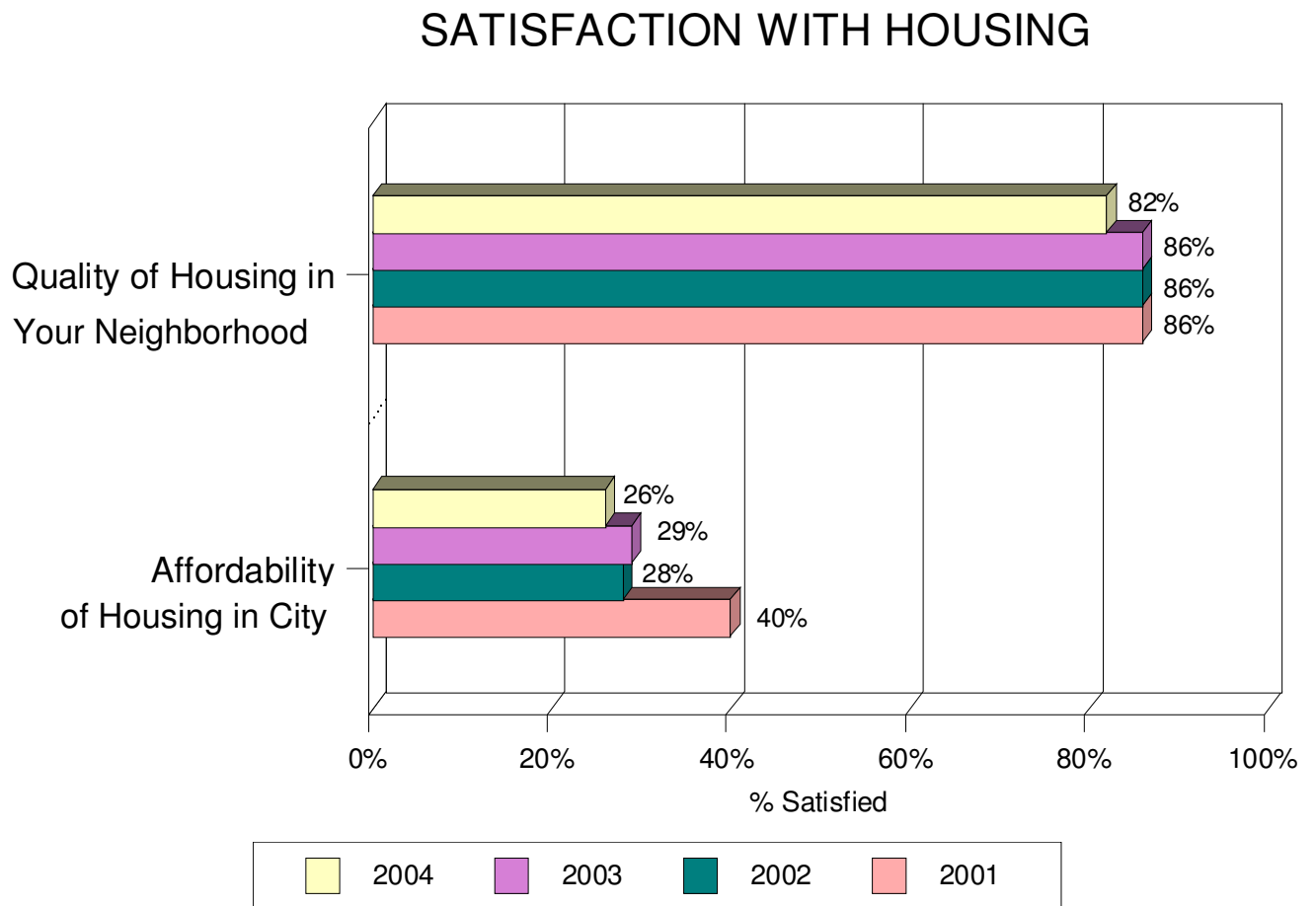
When residents are asked to evaluate the City in terms of its maintenance efforts in seven selected areas, roughly seven out of ten residents or more offer high satisfaction ratings in six of the areas studied: 1) street landscaping (83%); 2) street sweeping (81%); 3) the condition of City-owned buildings (76%); 4) graffiti control and removal (75%); 5) programs to keep streets and private property free of trash (72%), and; 6) sidewalk maintenance (69%). The one area where the City continues to receive a slightly lower satisfaction rating is street maintenance where 61 percent of residents offer a satisfied rating.



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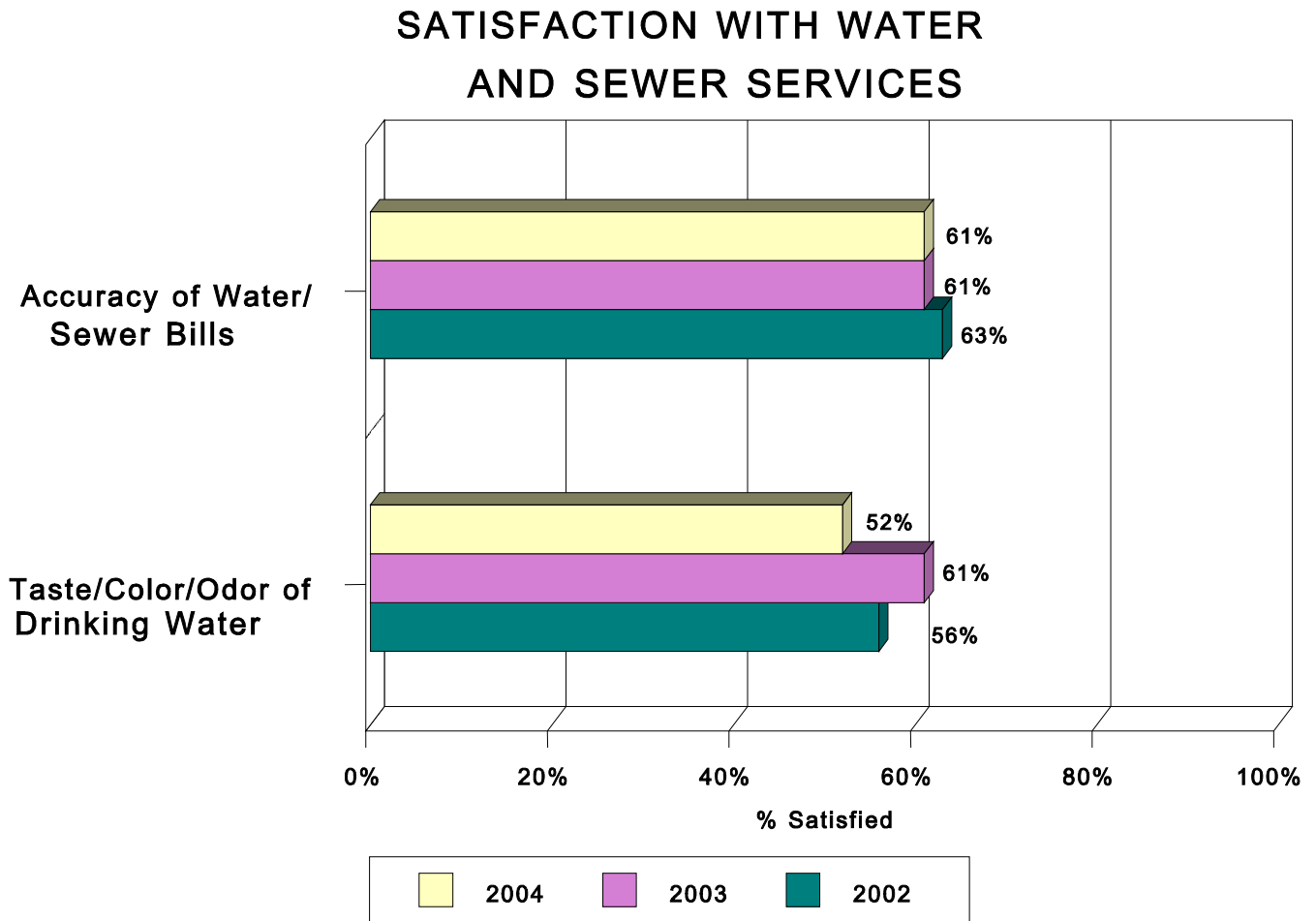
- **SATISFACTION WITH HOUSING**

San Diego residents continue to be very positive in terms of their satisfaction with the quality of housing in their neighborhood (82%). The same cannot be said about their satisfaction with the affordability of housing in the City, with a rating of only 26 percent.



- **SATISFACTION WITH WATER AND SEWER SERVICES**

Sixty-one percent of residents are satisfied with the accuracy of City water bills, with 20 percent unable to offer a rating. If only those residents with an opinion are analyzed, the satisfactory rating increases to 76 percent. The taste, color and odor of City drinking water receives a satisfaction rating of 52 percent, which is a statistically significant drop of nine points from last year.



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- **SATISFACTION WITH TRAFFIC FLOW**

Fifty-five percent of San Diego residents are satisfied with traffic on major streets in the City, while 43 percent are dissatisfied.

- **SATISFACTION WITH THE CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE**

Seventy-eight percent of those residents who are familiar with the City Attorney's effort to reduce domestic violence are satisfied with the effort the Office is making in this area – down from 84 percent in 2003.

- **EVALUATION OF NEIGHBORHOOD AND CITY SAFETY**

Eighty-six percent of residents reveal they feel safe in their neighborhood, while 77 percent feel safe in the City as a whole. These readings are unchanged from 2003.

- **EVALUATION OF CITY'S EFFORTS IN ATTRACTING BUSINESSES AND JOBS**

Forty-five percent of San Diego residents give the City positive ratings in its efforts in attracting and retaining businesses – in line with the 46 percent recorded last year but down from 61 percent in 2001.

- **AWARENESS AND USAGE OF CITY'S WEB SITE**

Sixty-one percent of residents are aware of the City's web site, which is up from 33 percent in 1996 and 60 percent last year. Ninety-three percent of users of the site are satisfied with it – statistically unchanged from 2003.

- **ATTENDANCE AT COMMUNITY PLANNING GROUP MEETINGS**

Twenty-four percent of residents indicate they have been to a community planning meeting in their neighborhood during the past five years – similar to the ratings received in prior years.

- **USAGE OF CITY'S CABLE CHANNEL**

Sixteen percent of residents watch the City's cable channel at least once a week while 30 percent watch at least monthly. Overall, 53 percent of residents indicate they never watch the channel – a decrease from the 57 percent recorded in 2003.