

# *Which Way Do We Grow?*



## A City Of San Diego Public Survey Analysis

July 2004



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

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**Environmental Services Department**

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Director

Chris Gonaver  
Assistant Director

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THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO  
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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The following City of San Diego staff participated in the development of this report:

- Linda Giannelli Pratt, Program Manager,  
Environmental Services Department
- Lora Brill, Planning Department Liaison,  
Planning Department
- David Gordon, Associate Analyst,  
Environmental Services Department
- Thomas Arnold, Associate Analyst,  
Environmental Services Department
- L.M. Brown, Technical Assistant,  
Environmental Services Department

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*Which Way Do We Grow?  
A City Of San Diego  
Public Survey Analysis*

Table of Contents

Which Way Will We Grow? ..... Page 1  
What Do We Ask of You? ..... Page 2  
What Are the Sustainable Community Indicators? ..... Page 3  
What Did We Ask? ..... Page 4  
Who Participated? ..... Page 5  
How Are We Doing? ..... Page 6  
Summary of Perceptions ..... Page 7  
On The Fence: Energy Conservation ..... Page 8  
On the Fence: Water Conservation ..... Page 10  
On the Fence: Reducing Crime ..... Page 11  
Feeling Good: Air Quality ..... Page 12  
Feeling Good: Nearness to Transit and Retail ..... Page 14  
Feeling Good: Use of Public Transit ..... Page 16  
Needs Improvement: Traffic ..... Page 17  
Needs Improvement: Affordable Housing ..... Page 19  
Needs Improvement: Beach and Bay Pollution ..... Page 21  
Needs Improvement: Education ..... Page 22  
Needs Improvement: Poverty ..... Page 23  
So, Are We Staying or Leaving? ..... Page 24  
Promise to Future Generations ..... Page 25  
Appendix 1 ..... Page 26  
Appendix 2 ..... Page 28

# Which Way Will We Grow?

This is an important question for those of us who call San Diego “home”. The answer can be full of hope and of cautious optimism if we have faith in each other that decisions made today will be mindful of the collective impact those decisions have on tomorrow. The answer may be more pessimistic if we do not feel we have the information or ability to get involved, be heard, and make a difference.

The purpose of this report is to highlight many aspects of this great City, and to compare the **perception** of more than 2,300 San Diego residents with the **facts and figures**. Comparing the similarities and differences can help us understand what we can do as individuals, as businesses, and as public agencies to create the future we want for San Diego.

**How do we measure a city's progress?** We decided to find out using a set of “indicators” that measures certain aspects of the community. The purpose of developing indicators is to identify important challenges in the community, find data that are suited to measure the conditions, and track change over time. Ultimately, the idea is to set specific goals for each indicator so we have a clearer idea of where we want to be.

Another way to determine whether San Diego is worthy of affection is to directly ask the residents. So in February and March of 2004 a public survey was distributed entitled “Quality of Life in San Diego.” This survey was mailed to 3,000 randomly selected residents throughout the city of San Diego. Of those, more than 600 replied. The second method was to place the same survey online, and more than 1,700 people replied.

Side by side, the perception and the facts tell a fuller, richer story about San Diego and how it is being experienced in the hearts and minds of its residents.

**What are the limitations of this report?** First, the indicators do not measure all of the important dimensions of a community. Very often, the things that people want to measure, “happiness” for example, are not included because quantitative indicators are not available. We can only present snapshots of various aspects of the City over a period of time. Second, while the survey was mailed to a random group of residents, and the online survey was available, the demographic proportions of those who chose to respond do not reflect the richly diverse population of the city. Lastly, this report does not intend to explain why people have the opinions they do, or why trends have changed. Hopefully, you will be motivated to pursue those questions and discuss them with your friends and family.

**What is the future of San Diego?** How can we make the best use of our built environment and natural environment, our highways and roadways, our natural resources and the water and energy that we import? How can we improve our schools, homes, and working conditions? San Diego is projected to grow by 35% within the next 25 years, raising our population from approximately 1.2 million to nearly 1.7 million. How will we accommodate the more than 400,000 people who are not currently residing here? How can we successfully engage as many residents as possible to discuss these issues? The collective impact of our actions can dramatically change the answer to the question, “which way do we grow?” The outcome is a shared responsibility of all sectors of our society-government institutions, businesses and community organizations, and most importantly, individuals. We can create a more “sustainable” city, one that meets the economic, environmental and social needs of its community today, and is mindful of the needs of future generations.

# What Do We Ask of You?

By familiarizing ourselves with the outcome of the public survey and the indicators, we become better informed. If we are informed and are willing to participate in the public dialogue, then we can work together in a meaningful way to improve conditions. By so doing, our collective impact is appreciated by future generations.

## LEARN MORE

The indicators challenge us to discover why trends are moving as they are. Learning more means understanding what causes conditions to get better or worse, and figuring out what can be done to make things better.

Improving the community starts with voting. You can also make a difference by becoming active in community planning groups and town councils, writing letters to the editor, and communicating with your elected representatives at local, state, and national levels.

Being part of a larger group that shares your values and concerns is an effective way to be heard. Volunteering your support to these organizations may be key to their survival!

## share the information

*Sharing your knowledge with friends, relatives, and colleagues can spread understanding about what's good about our community and what needs our attention to make things better.*

# What are the City of San Diego Sustainable Community Indicators?

Beginning in 1998 with a series of public forums coordinated through the San Diego Natural History Museum, a group of indicator “experts,” public officials, and community members gathered together to begin the dialogue about how to measure the “sustainability” of the San Diego region. What are the core components of economic stability, environmental quality and social wellness?

Based on the public's input, a draft list of indicators emerged. When leadership of this project transferred to the City of San Diego at the end of 1999, additional indicators were added to measure progress on City priorities.

In January 2002, Mayor Dick Murphy and the San Diego City Council approved the final set of Sustainable Community Indicators.

For those indicators aligned with many of Mayor Murphy's Ten Goals for the City, the outcomes rely mostly on government action. For those broader indicators that measure the patterns of consumption per capita, progress relies on the collective impact of our individual actions.

Nearly 300 people initially participated in the three-year process to identify the indicators, and their guidance and opinions were very helpful. However, more public opinion was desired. For that reason, the public survey was developed as a means to make it convenient for more San Diegans to respond.

The complete list of the Sustainable Community Indicators is in Attachment One on page 28. The entire survey can be found in Attachment Two on page 30.

## Idealistic Enough to Inspire

*How Did We Select the “San Diego Sustainable Community” Indicators?*

Indicators are a reflection of a community's priorities. By tracking indicators over time, we can see the course we are on and are better able to determine adjustments that may be needed.

All indicators needed to meet the following criteria: provide valuable information; provide guidance toward community improvement; be idealistic enough to inspire; and be pragmatic enough to be measured effectively.

# What Did We Ask?

The Public Survey focused on issues that related to eleven of the San Diego Sustainable Community Indicators. The five answer selections for each question ranged from strongly positive to strongly negative.

- 1. How important is this issue to you?**  
Very Important; Somewhat Important; Neutral; Somewhat Unimportant; Very Unimportant
- 2. How satisfied are you today with this issue?**  
Very Satisfied; Somewhat Satisfied; Neutral; Somewhat Dissatisfied; Very Dissatisfied
- 3. How do you think this issue has changed in the past five years?**  
Much Better; Somewhat Better; No Change; Somewhat Worse; Much Worse

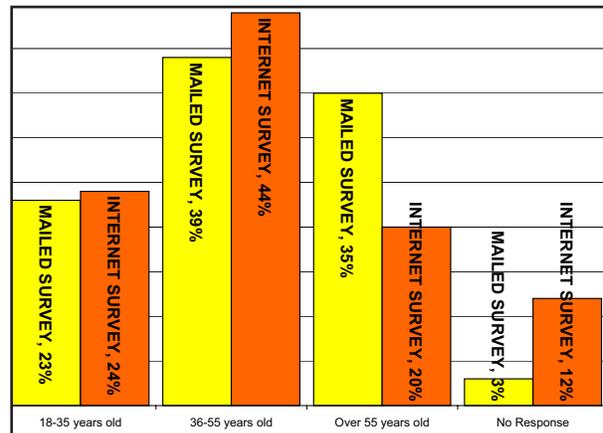
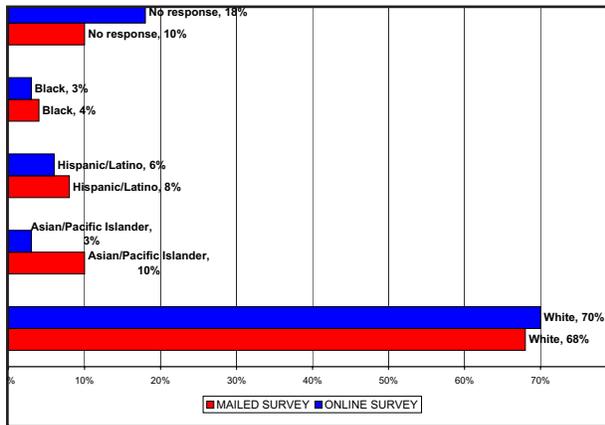
## Lessons Learned

The survey revealed some interesting generalities about San Diegans. For example, here is what the people who responded said:

- **Very few of us choose to live where we do solely because of a desire to be closer to family or to a particular school;**
- Women tend to be more concerned than men across the board, evaluating each issue as more important, reporting less current satisfaction, and expressing more concern about change over time;
- **Homeowners are generally more satisfied with current conditions than renters, perhaps because of an increased sense of investment in the well being of a neighborhood;**
- Sometimes we say we feel strongly about the importance of an issue, perhaps many issues, but we don't seem to pay enough attention to that issue to know whether we are satisfied with the current condition or how conditions have changed over time.

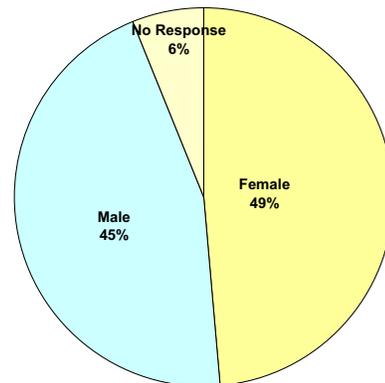
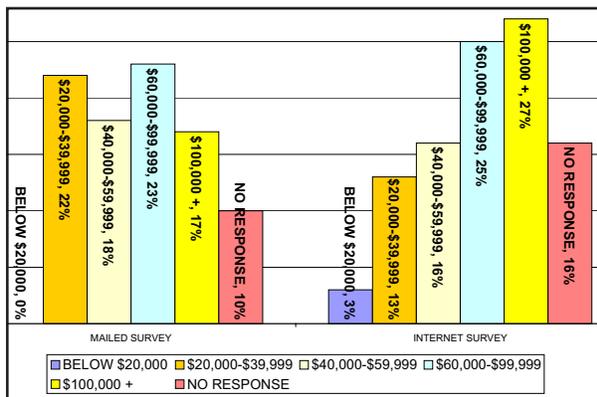
# Who Participated?

More than 2,300 San Diego residents took part in the survey. Demographic information was compiled for ethnicity, age, income level, and gender. The information was divided into two groups, the mailed survey and the online survey respondents. As illustrated below, most respondents were white, aged 36-55 years old. There was a broad range of income, from below \$20,000 and extending to more than \$100,000. Compare this with the “San Diego Statistical Snapshot”, found on the inside of the back cover.



**Ethnicity:** Averaging the two survey groups, 69% were white, 7% were Asian/ Pacific Islander, 7% were Hispanic/Latino, and 4% were Black.

**Age:** Averaging the two survey groups, 41% were between 36-55 years old, 28% were more than 55 years old, and 24% were 18-35 years old.



**Income:** More than 27% of the online respondents indicated that they earn more than \$100,000 per year, and 3% made less than \$20,000 per year. For the mailed survey, 23% of the respondents earn between \$60,000-99,999 per year, and 17% made more than \$100,000 per year.

**Gender:** This was closely split between females (49%) and males (45%), with 6% not responding to the question.

# How Are We Doing?

In general, many of the answers to the survey questions are largely based on our expectation of “what should be.” How clean should our air and water be? How much affordable housing should there be? In order to sort the answers into categories, we came up with a method that used the “importance” of an issue as the foundation, and compared that with the current satisfaction level and the perceived change over time.

- 1) How important is this issue to you?
- 2) What is your current level of satisfaction with this issue?
- 3) Has this issue improved over the past five years?

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	1	2	2	2	2	2	2
a) improving air quality			1						
b) creating affordable housing			1						
c) reducing pollution of beaches and bays			1						
d) conserving energy			1						
e) access to transit stops and retail shops from residential areas			1						
f) increasing use of public transit (bus, train, trolley)			1						
g) decreasing local poverty			1						
h) reducing crime rate			1						

## The Categories

**1. On the Fence: Energy Conservation, Reducing the Crime Rate, and Water Conservation.** While these issues were rated as very important, there did not seem to be enough understanding and/or interest to know if we are satisfied with the current conditions or with the change over time.

**2. Feeling Good: Air Quality, Access to Transit Stops, and Public Transit Use.** There is a consistently good feeling that our City and/or region are doing very well with these aspects.

**3. Needs Improvement: Traffic Congestion, Affordable Housing, Decreasing Poverty, Local K-12 Education, and Beach and Bay Pollution.** Those who took the survey believe that these conditions fall below expectation, and that matters to us because most of these issues seem to be very important to us.

# A Summary of Perceptions and Facts

This report seeks to highlight the similarities and differences between how the public perceives conditions in San Diego, and what the data tells us about those conditions.

The table below lists each of the issues highlighted in the public survey. Next to each issue is the overall perception of how San Diego is doing, based on the survey respondents, and is represented by either On the Fence, Feeling Good, or Needs Improvement. Following that is at least one key fact associated with the issue. It is interesting to compare whether these facts support the perceptions. What you will find is that many do not match up. What might be done to raise the level of awareness in the community?

INDICATOR	On the Fence	Feeling Good	Needs Improvement	Data Analysis
Energy Conservation	X			Per capita use has increased since 2001, and there are more people in the region; possibilities of energy shortfalls statewide
Water Conservation	X			Per capita use has increased; drought conditions have significantly impacted the Colorado River
Reducing Crime Rate	X			Violent crime and juvenile contacts have decreased in the past 8 years
Air Quality		X		Number of days exceeding the State ozone limit have decreased since the year 2000
Nearness to Bus and Rail		X		Increasingly, more homes are nearer to public transit
Use of Public Transit		X		The total ridership for the trolley, bus and train combined has decreased since 1998
Traffic			X	Since 1997, there are more cars per person and more miles traveled per person, and there are more people
Affordable Housing			X	Between 1995-2003, the median price for a home increased nearly 140%
Pollution of Beaches and Bays			X	The number of beach closures has decreased more than 61% between 2000 and 2003
Education			X	Between 1997 and 2002, there is a 33% increase in the number of high school graduates eligible to attend CSU and UC
Poverty			X	Between 1995 and 2002, there is an increase of 670% in the number of children living in poverty in San Diego

Nearly half of those surveyed believe that energy conservation is very important. That's the good news! A puzzling question is why most people indicated that energy conservation has been unchanged



that is a growing population—we added nearly 100,000 more people between 2002 and 2004.

The average number of kilowatt hours (KWh) per year used in San Diego's homes

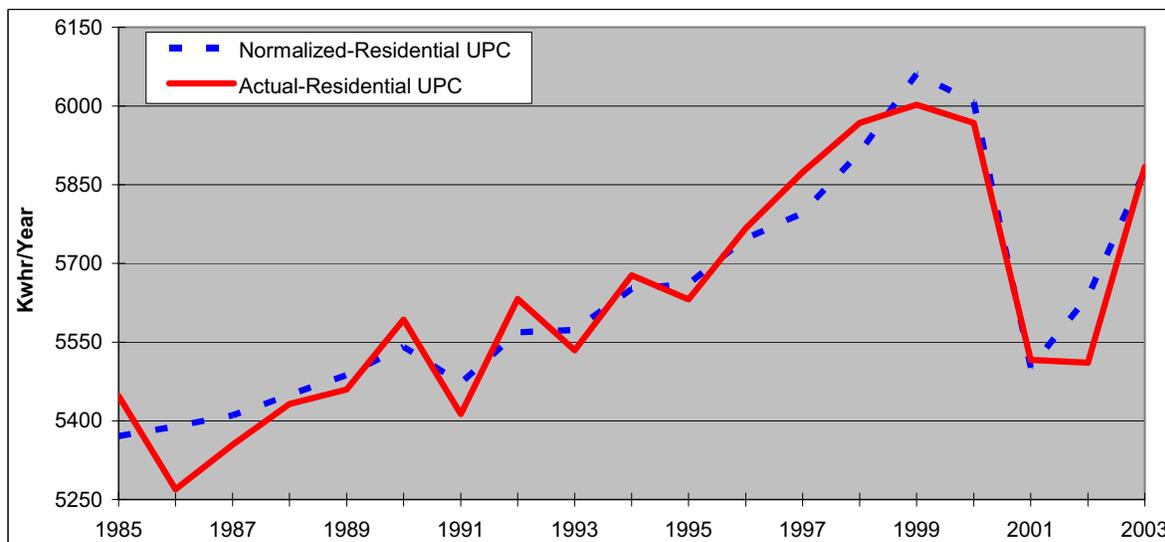
over the past 5 years, even though San Diego was in the “heat” of an energy crisis in 2000-2001. More than 40% stated that they have no strong feelings one way or the other (neutral) about how satisfied they are with the current level of conservation.

decreased by 8% between 2000 and 2001, from 6,007 KWh to 5501 KWh. This was during the “energy crisis” when utility rates skyrocketed, and threats of rolling blackouts loomed. Energy conservation thrived! Unfortunately, after the perceived end of the energy crisis, energy use per home continues to creep back up, and in 2003 it was 7% more than in 2001.

Predictions for the Summer of 2004 indicate another possible wave of energy shortfalls. Why? Ensuring an adequate energy supply for this region is a very complex issue. Power generation, the capacity of transmission lines, and possible problems in other areas of the State all affect San Diego's energy security. Coupled with

What is the solution? A BIG part is serious conservation. That requires a conscientious effort to think about how we work and how we live. Suggestions about conserving energy can be found at the City's

**Electric Residential Use-Per-Customer**



# Energy Conservation

continued

website, <http://www.sandiego.gov/energy>, and from San Diego Gas and Electric at <http://www.sdge.com/residential>.

What else can we do to strengthen our energy security? The San Diego region imports more than 90% of the energy we use. Most of that is from power plants that burn natural gas (31%) and coal (20%). Power generation from coal is the largest source of air pollution in the nation. We can address energy security and environmental quality by investing in locally-generated renewable energy. As an economic bonus, the renewable energy industry is one of the fastest growing job markets in the nation. Rather than millions of dollars each year going out of the community to our energy suppliers, we could retain that money HERE to boost our local economy.

On August 7, 2003, Mayor Dick Murphy announced the City's commitment to producing 50 megawatts (MW) of renewable energy in San Diego within the next decade. The City of San Diego currently generates nearly 17.5 MW of renewable power, enough for about 20,400 homes. Here are some examples:

1. More than 4.75 MW of electricity is produced at the City's Point Loma Waste

Water Treatment Plant (PLWWTP) by a cogeneration facility that is powered by methane gas, a by-product of sewage treatment,

2. When treated sewage exits the PLWWTP, it falls 100 feet to the ocean, replicating what happens at hydroelectric power plants; the result is 1.35 MW of power.

3. Digested sewage sludge at the City's Metro Biosolids Center (MBC) and landfill gas from the adjacent Miramar Landfill is captured and converted to produce 6.4 MW of electricity.

4. Photovoltaic panels (solar power) have been installed at four City buildings.

Achieving at least 50 MW of renewable energy cannot succeed unless there is broader community participation—private developers, businesses, and individuals. Are solar, wind, or other cogeneration options practical alternatives for you?

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) is taking a leadership role in developing the California Energy Plan, which includes renewable energy requirements. Information about this Plan is found at the CPUC's website, <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/static/industry/electric/energy+action+plan>.

## A Link Between Air Pollution and Turning on the Light?

**FACT:** The production of energy is not without consequences; coal and oil are very dirty and are responsible for an average of 40% of the air pollution nationwide. Natural gas power plants also create air pollution. While we may not see the polluted skies here, because 90% of our energy is imported, we still need to be mindful of the environmental impacts of energy use.

**How important?** Conserving energy ranked 5th, with 47% stating that it was “very important”

**How satisfied are you?** This ranked 5th, with the majority “neutral”

**Has it improved over the past 5 years?** This ranked 4th, with the largest percentage stating “no change” over the past 5 years

There is a population increase throughout the areas relying on water from the Colorado River "upstream" of San Diego. In fact, the 1,400-mile-long river delivers water to



already impacted because of climate change. As the climate becomes warmer, the snow packs in the Sierras melt sooner than usual. This increases flows in the winter when existing reser-

voirs are not large enough to store it. Additionally, the decrease in spring and summer flows reduces water supply when Southern California is the driest.

some of the nation's driest and hottest cities, including Phoenix and Las Vegas. It supplies water to 25 million people in seven states and more in Mexico. According to a May 1, 2004 interview with an official from the United States Department of the Interior, the ongoing drought may result in the first formal declaration of a water shortage on the Colorado River. This action could cut the amount of water that can be drawn from the river.

Conservation is essential! That message was brought to the public in the late 1980's, and gradually more and more people are heeding the call. Water use per capita reflects many varying conditions, not the least of which is rainfall and severe drought conditions. It can also reflect the level of commitment we have to conservation. Find out more about the City's award-winning Water Conservation Program at [www.sandiego.gov/water/conservation](http://www.sandiego.gov/water/conservation).

San Diego's second major water source, the Sierra Nevada Mountains, has another set of problems. According to Scripps Institution of Oceanography, the availability of water from the Sierras is

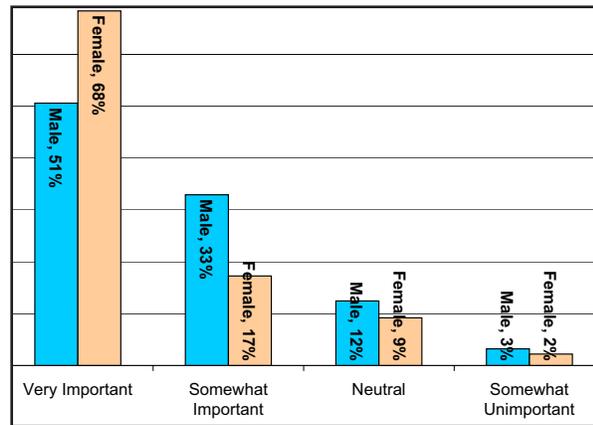
## WATER CONSERVATION

Water conservation is critical, and new options for water sources must be explored. The City produces recycled water at two water reclamation facilities: North City and South Bay. The recycled water is then distributed through a separate system using purple pipes, and new building developments are required to use it when available. The cost of recycled water is less than 50% of the potable water rate. Additional information can be obtained at [www.sandiego.gov/water/recycled](http://www.sandiego.gov/water/recycled).

YEAR	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
<b>Residential Gallons/Capita</b>	30,538	34,940	35,859	31,839	33,395	34,713	32,990	34,027
<b>Percentage of Recycled Water Used</b>				10.8	16.1	13.5	14.1	17.9



## HOW IMPORTANT IS REDUCING CRIME?

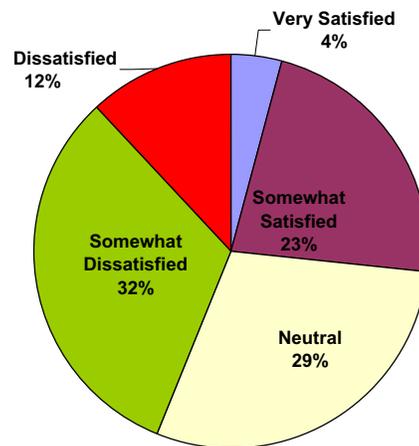


**How important?** Reducing crime ranked 3rd from the top, with it being “very important” to 60% of those who were mailed the survey and 49% of those who took the survey online; this was the largest difference between the two groups

**How satisfied are you?** This ranked 4th

**Has it improved over the past five years?** This ranked 5th, with the largest percentage stating “no change”

## LEVEL OF SATISFACTION



## Is San Diego One of America's Safest Large Cities?

Violent crime incidents have decreased steadily from 1995 through 1999. The violent crime level has stayed relatively constant for the past five years. Juvenile contacts have increased between 1995 and 1999, but have fallen each year since then.

YEAR	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Violent Crime	11,077	10,148	9,789	8,744	7,410	7,161	7,406	7,193
Juvenile Contacts	8,907	9,618	10,126	11,480	12,016	11,431	10,976	9,011



# FEELING GOOD

**A**ir pollution is clearly linked to health problems, especially for children and elderly residents, and those with respiratory conditions. The challenge of breathing the heavily polluted air after the October 2003 wildfires is a clear example of what we do not want for the San Diego region.

“Ground-level ozone” is caused by internal combustion vehicles. It forms when sunlight and heat interact with vehicle emissions. Even at very low levels, ozone can aggravate respiratory conditions, interfere with the ability of plants to produce and store food, and damage materials such as rubber. More hot days, which we have been experiencing in

**How important?** Improving air quality ranked 6th out of the 11 indicators

**How satisfied are you?** This ranked 1st, with more than 50% "somewhat satisfied"

**Has it improved over the past 5 years?** This ranked 3rd

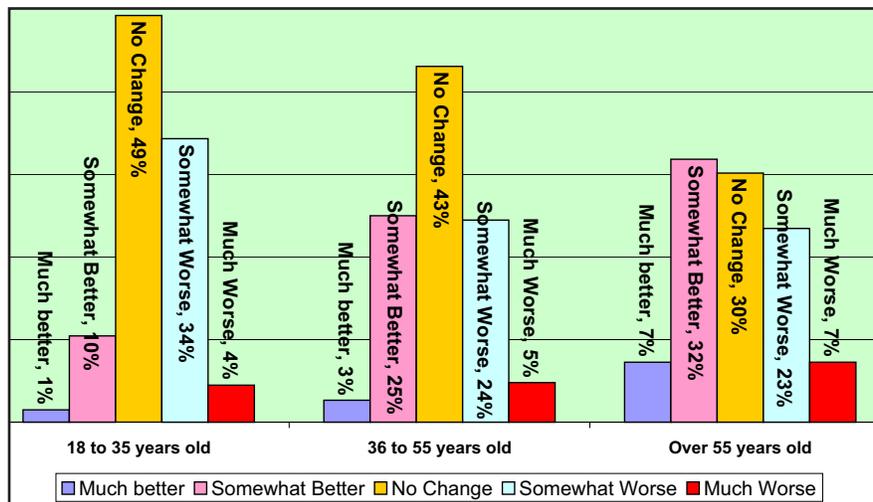
### Sensitive Populations in San Diego Total: 1.3 million people

- Cardiovascular disease: 175,000
- Chronic respiratory disease: 225,000
- Elderly (over 65): 240,000
- Children (under 14): 500,000
- Athletes: 175,000

Southern California, make this problem even worse. More fuel-efficient, well-maintained vehicles will reduce the amount of car exhaust; in turn, that reduces the production of ozone. Using public transportation is a big help, too!

## Demographic Observations

Respondents from the lowest income group felt that air quality was more important to quality of life than those in the highest income group; they also felt that air quality had improved less over the last five years. As age increased, the change in air quality was rated more favorably. Home owners were more satisfied than renters with current conditions and changes in air quality.



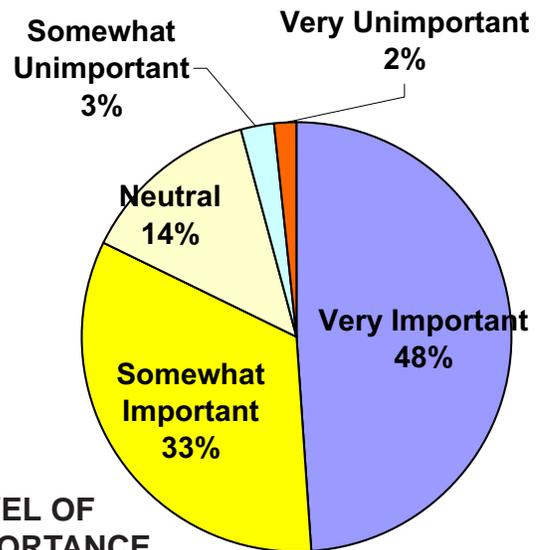
What is the major source of air pollution?

**FACT:** Motor vehicles are responsible for about 60 percent of smog-forming emissions (oxides of nitrogen and reactive hydrocarbons). In 1998 the San Diego Air Basin exceeded the California standard for ground-level ozone air pollution on 54 days. The number of days declined every year until 2001, when the standard was exceeded on 13 days. In 2002 the number of days increased to 15. Data for 2003 is not yet available. More information can be found at the County of San Diego Air Pollution Control District website at <http://www.sdapcd.org>.

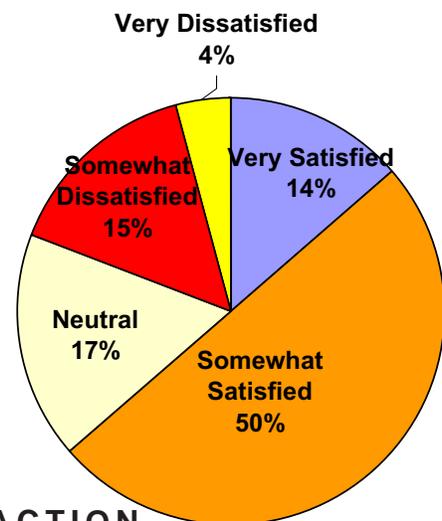
In April 2004, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) moved to enforce tougher clean-air standards for ozone that have been on the books since 1997 but were delayed by lawsuits. As a first step, San Diego was listed among 474 U.S. counties that do not meet the EPA's new ozone standard when measured over an eight-hour period. Smog problems here, however, are modest compared to those of the Los Angeles basin and western Riverside County, where, the EPA said, levels of ozone, a component of smog, can be severe.

## Feeling Good: Air Quality

continued



LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE



SATISFACTION LEVEL

### Health Effects of Ozone

- Especially harmful to children, senior citizens and those suffering from asthma or existing heart and lung disease
- Chronic exposure reduces lung capacity, lowers stamina, and leaves people vulnerable to long-term respiratory problems



# FEELING GOOD

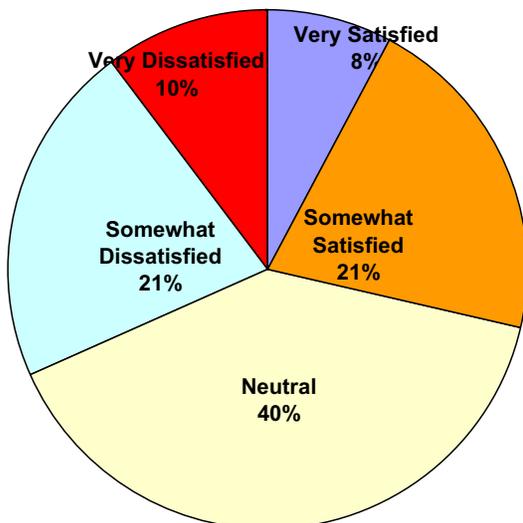
San Diegans living in the southern half of the city were more satisfied with access to transit and retail than those in the north, and access does tend to be better in those areas. Middle-aged respondents, between 36 and 55, were more dissatisfied than older or younger respondents, possibly because this group is most likely to be driving children who are unable to access destinations on their own. Respondents, aged 18 to 36, felt that proximity to transit had improved more than older individuals did. This may be because this age group is more likely to have walked to retail or used transit in the last five years. Finally, individuals whose annual household income was below \$60,000 felt that access to transit and retail had improved more than higher-income groups did.

**How important?** Access to transit stops and retail ranked last in terms of importance to quality of life

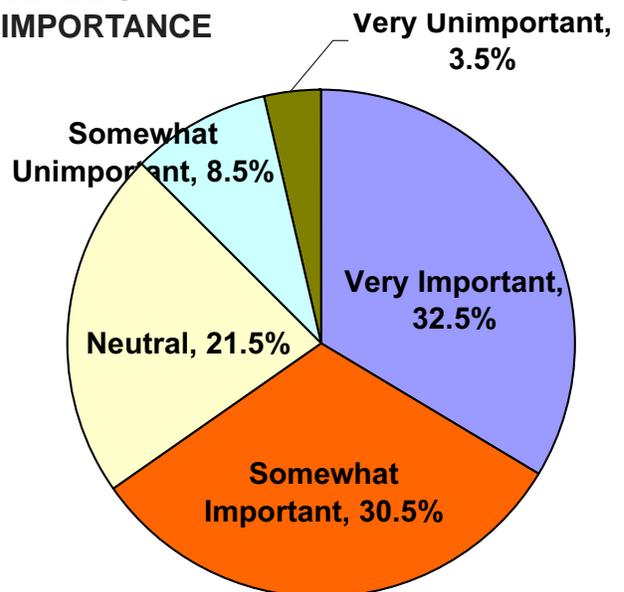
**How satisfied are you?** This ranked 2nd, with the majority “neutral”

**Has it improved over the past 5 years?** This ranked 2nd in terms of “better or much better”

**SATISFACTION LEVEL**



**LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE**



## Feeling Good: Nearness to Transit

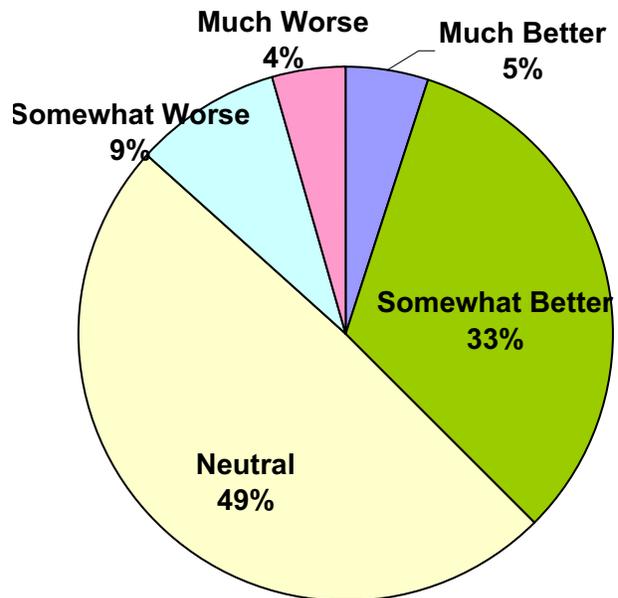
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The benefit is that residents in those areas can either walk to the stores near them or easily take public transit, thereby reducing dependence on cars. The percentage of housing unit building permits that are within a quarter mile of commercial parcels has varied since 1998, but consistently hovers around the 50% mark. The percentage of housing unit building permits within a quarter mile of a transit stop has increased significantly over the 1998 level.

However, proximity does not necessarily mean it is easy to access retail or transit from residences. The design of housing, new retail centers, and the streets and sidewalks that connect them are very important. The City of San Diego recently adopted a new Street Design Manual, which creates new guidelines for designing accessible streets.

In October of 2002 the City Council also adopted the first element of a new General Plan for the city—the Strategic Framework Element. The Strategic Framework Element envisions a City of Villages, vibrant centers throughout the city that integrate housing, employment, and retail, that are connected by a world-class transit system. More information about the City of Villages and the General Plan Update can be found at the City Planning Department's website: <http://www.sandiego.gov/cityofvillages/index.shtml>.

### FIVE YEAR CHANGE



*In general, residents living in the southern half of San Diego are more satisfied with transit and retail proximity than their northern counterparts.*

### UNIT GROWTH

		YEAR		
			New Units	New Units
			Near Commercial	Near Transit
44%		1998		30%
56%		1999		42%
64%		2000		54%
63%		2001		46%
52%		2002		47%



# FEELING GOOD

**G**roups that are more likely to use public transit gave a more positive evaluation of current conditions and change in the last five years. Overall, coastal and northeastern residents are most dissatisfied with public transit use; there is less transit service in these areas. Higher income individuals said they were neutral or dissatisfied at a greater rate than lower income individuals. There are several possible explanations for income-based differences: there may be less transit service to higher income neighborhoods, higher income individuals may have less experience with transit and more negative preconceptions, or this group may have higher expectations for service, frequency, and speed than lower income groups. Middle-aged respondents, between 36 and 55, were more dissatisfied than older or younger respondents, possibly because this group is most likely to be driving children who are unable to access destinations on their own. Respondents, ages 18 to 36, felt that transit use had improved more than older individuals did. This may be because this age group is more likely to have used transit in the last five years. The trend of homeownership being correlated with a more positive evaluation of current conditions is also demonstrated in this category.

**How important?** Increasing public transit ranked 9th

**How satisfied are you?** This ranked 3rd

**Has it improved over the past five years?** This ranked 1st, with a combined 36% saying it is “much better” or “somewhat better”

## What Would it Take to Convince You to Take Public Transit?

**FACT:** Daily ridership on the trolley and Coaster systems has increased steadily over the years. However, the number of daily passengers on the San Diego Transit system (bus) has decreased.

## By the Numbers Over the Years

YEAR	Daily Ridership	San Diego Trolley	San Diego Transit	Coaster Route
1996	182,720	61,693	118,234	2,793
1997	190,006	68,588	118,102	3,316
1998	205,365	78,681	123,260	3,424
1999	216,604	88,599	123,635	4,370
2000	222,817	93,365	125,230	4,222
2001	227,359	100,228	122,587	4,544
2002	215,925	90,532	120,333	5,060
2003	208,781	95,362	107,617	5,802



## NEEDS IMPROVEMENT TRAFFIC

A key aspect about traffic congestion that needs to be clearly understood is that we all complain about it fiercely. However, the facts show that between 1998 and 2001, we have increased the number of cars per person and we have increased the number of miles we drive per person. Compounding that is an ever-increasing number of people in the region going from Point A to Point B at nearly the same time. Instead of being part of the problem, what can individuals do to be part of the solution? Carpooling and using public transit even one or two days per week could make a big difference if everyone participated!

### Traffic Demographics

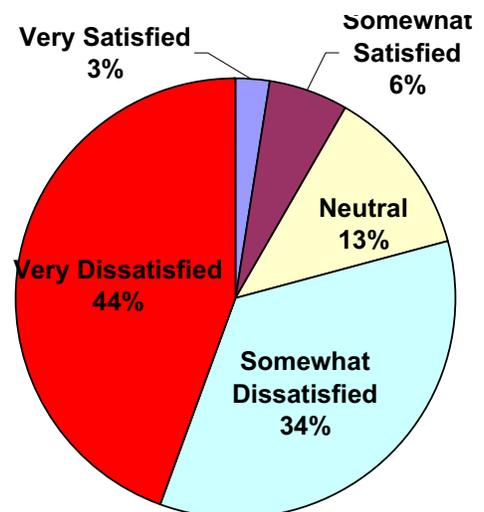
Respondents living in the northern portions of the city, on average, said that reducing traffic congestion was “very important” to quality of life. However, individuals living in the coastal, downtown, and mid-city areas tended to say that it was only “somewhat important.” Dissatisfaction with traffic congestion was also correlated with income. Higher income individuals tended to be more dissatisfied with the level of traffic congestion.

**How important?** An average of 63% stated that reducing traffic congestion was “very important”

**How satisfied are you?** This ranked last, with more than 40% stating that they were “very dissatisfied”

**Has it improved over the past 5 years?** This ranked last with 59% stating that it is “much worse”

### SATISFACTION LEVEL



# Needs Improvement: Traffic

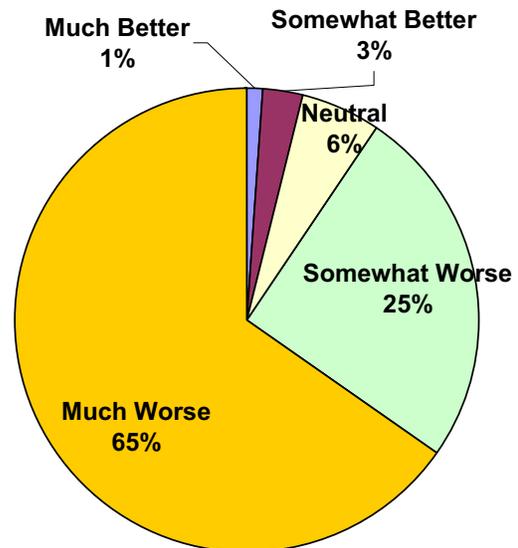
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## Do You Like to Sit in Traffic?

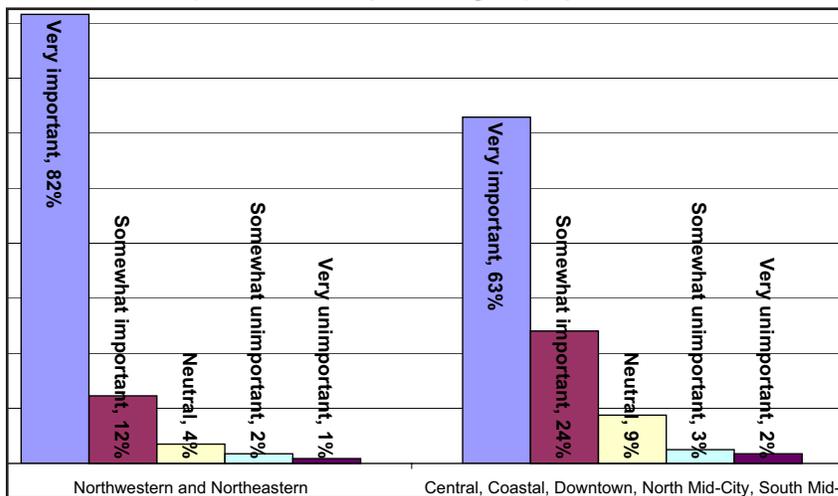
**FACT:** Both the number of registered vehicles per person and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per person, per year has increased steadily since 1997. For example, in 2001, the average miles traveled per capita (man, woman, and child) was 9,000. This is an increase of over 300 miles from the 1997 level.

What contributes to this? One big reason is that where we choose to live is farther away from where we work. The other big factor is that we have MORE and MORE cars, steadily increasing from 1998 to 2001.

Per Capita Increases		
YEAR	VMT/capita/ year	Vehicles/ capita
1997	8,678	
1998	8,814	0.78
1999	8,896	0.79
2000	8,937	0.81
2001	9,000	0.82



## Level of Importance by Geography



**FIVE YEAR CHANGE**



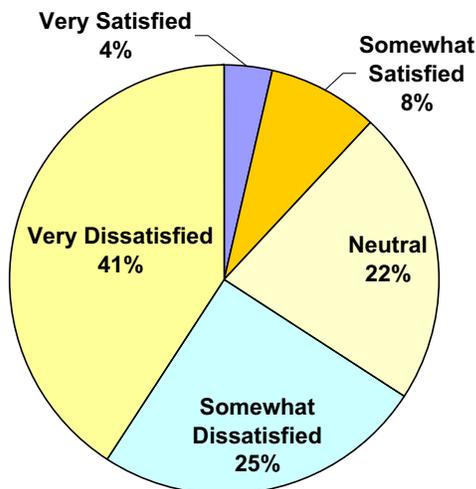
## AFFORDABLE HOUSING: WHO CARES THE MOST?

Geographically, creating affordable housing was most important to respondents living in the southern portions of San Diego. Home owners thought affordable housing was less important to quality of life than renters, presumably because they are not subject to concerns about rent increases. Concern also decreased as income increased, the higher a person's income the less important they felt affordable housing production was to quality of life. Renters evaluated change in conditions much more negatively than homeowners did.

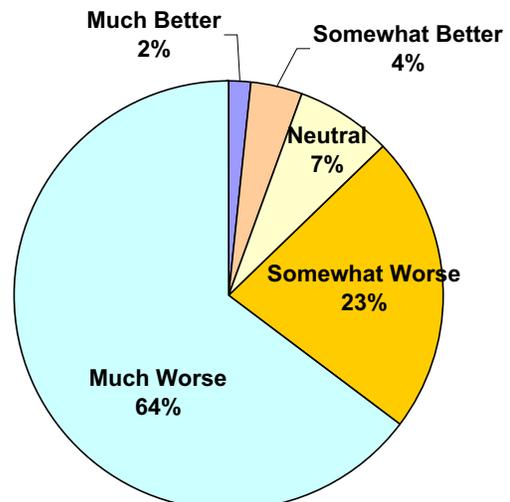
## NEEDS IMPROVEMENT AFFORDABLE HOUSING

**How important?** Creating affordable housing ranked 7th out of the 11 categories respondents rated

**How satisfied are you?** This ranked 8th  
**Has it improved over the past 5 years?** This ranked 10th, with the majority (more than 50%) stating that it is much worse



**SATISFACTION  
LEVEL**



**FIVE YEAR  
CHANGE**

# Needs Improvement: Affordable Housing

continued



The National Association of Realtors has ranked San Diego County the third-most expensive real estate market in the nation. The current housing market is too expensive for 85 percent of the population to buy a median-priced home.

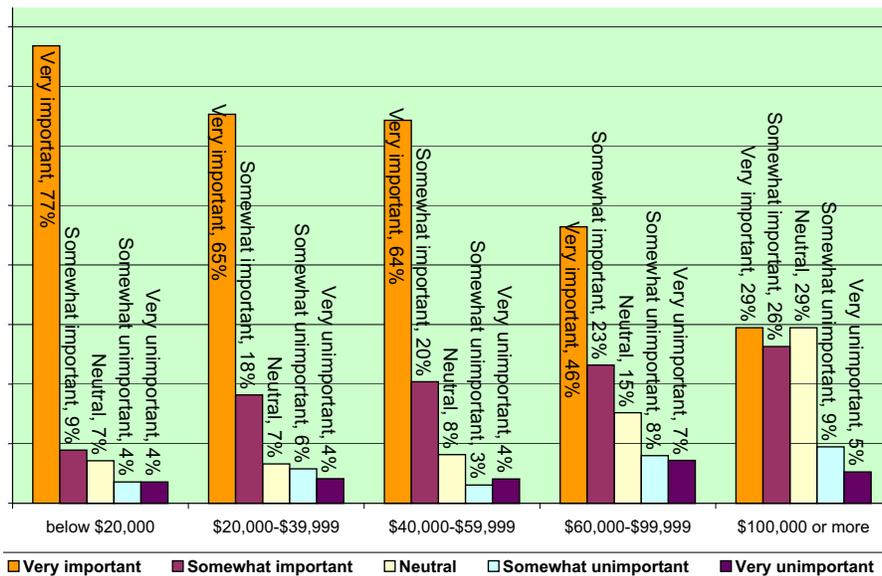
## How much can you pay for a home?

**FACTS:** The ratio of median home price (including condos and townhomes) to median income has increased every year, from 6.8 in 1998 to 9.8 in 2002. That means that the median cost for a home is almost 10 times the median annual income (median income was extrapolated from tax return data and is approximately equal to the Median Earnings Measure in the US Census). Although income data for 2003 is not yet available, the median home price in 2003 was \$380,000.

### San Diego Housing Commission Assisted Housing Units

YEAR	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
#	1,796	943	589	1,427	1,634

### Level of Importance by Annual Household Income





# NEEDS IMPROVEMENT POLLUTION

In 2001, “Clean Up Our Beaches and Bays” was established as one of Mayor Murphy's top ten goals. It called for a 50% reduction of beach postings and closures at San Diego city beaches by 2004. In 2003 there were 61.5% less beach posting and closure days than in 2000. The city's beach posting days are the sum of the beach closure days resulting from sewage spills to public waters added to the beach advisory days due to high bacteria levels found in samples taken during routine monitoring. For more information about efforts underway to curb stormwater pollution and for a list of what you can do to be part of the solution, check out the City's Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program at [www.ThinkBluesd.org](http://www.ThinkBluesd.org).

Indicator	2000	2001	2002	2003
Beach Posting and Closure Events (San Diego city beaches)	1957	1247	1065	752
Beach Closure Events	22	26	13	7
Beach Posting and Closure Events	206	149	85	114
Beach Closure Days	78	296	59	46
General Advisory Events (Rainfall ")	6 (6.92")	13 (8.53")	9 (4.23")	8 (9.18")
General Advisory Days	38	49	35	32

## What Pollutes Our Beaches?

**FACT:** Primarily, the culprit is US! The storm drains take in runoff from roads, as well as what runs into channels and streams from all over San Diego County. We are in a large, complex watershed, and everything flows downstream untreated into our beaches and bays.



**How important?** Reducing pollution ranked 2nd out of the 11 categories

**How satisfied are you?** This ranked 6th, with most people “somewhat dissatisfied”

**Has it improved over the past 5 years?** This ranked 6th



**NEEDS**  
IMPROVEMENT  
**EDUCATION**

**How Well Are We Preparing  
the Next Generation?**

The average college graduate earns about \$45,000 a year more than a high school graduate. The University of California and California State University systems require that high school students complete adequate preparatory classes with a C or better to be eligible to apply. The percentage of high school seniors in the city of San Diego that complete these classes has increased slowly since 1998.

**Education Demographic**

The only area where respondents reported quality of schools as the major factor in their choice of a neighborhood were the portions of the City north of the Marine Corp Air Station, Miramar.

**How important?** Improving local K-12 ranked 8th

**How satisfied are you?** This ranked 3rd

**Has it improved over the past 5 years?** This ranked 8th out of 11, with the largest percentage stating “no change”

**Percentage of High School Graduates Completing UC/CSU Eligible Classes**

1996-1997	41%
1997-1998	41%
1998-1999	43%
1999-2000	46%
2000-2001	47%
2001-2002	47%

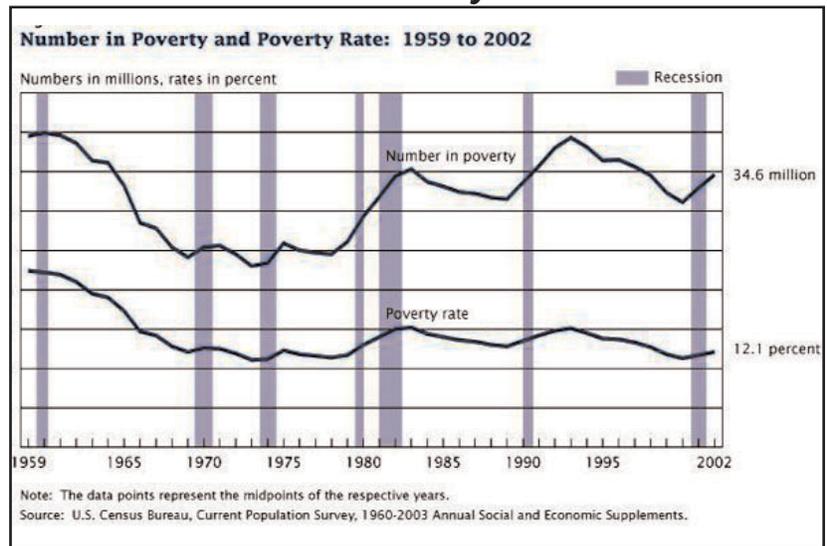


NEEDS  
IMPROVEMENT  
POVERTY

## What's the Level of Poverty in San Diego?

According to the California Chamber of Commerce, San Diego County's Gross Regional Product (GRP) grew from 96 billion in 1998 to \$110 billion in 2000, and was projected to continue increasing by five to seven percent per year. Coupled with that is a relatively low unemployment rate over the past several years. While this seems to illustrate a strong economy, the hourly wage has not reflected similar growth for many people in the region. In fact, more people now live below the federal poverty level. In 1995, 476 children between the ages of 6-19 were reported living below the poverty level in the San Diego region, and by 2002, that number grew by more than 650% to 3,591. This affects our schools, public services, and future workforce. How can we create a more sustainable city, one that meets the social needs of its community today and is mindful of the needs of future generations?

### Trends in National Poverty Level



### PERCENTAGE

of population **BELOW** poverty level in past twelve months\*

YEAR: 1990 2000 2002  
RATE: 13.4% 14.6% 14.7%

### PERCENTAGE

of Related Children Under 18 **BELOW** poverty level in past twelve months\*

YEAR: 1999 2000 2002  
RATE: 19.8% 20.0% 23.3%

### \*Poverty Status for City of San Diego

(Source: 1990 and 2000 Decennial Census, 2001-2002 ACS Survey Census Bureau)

**How important?** Decreasing local poverty ranked 2nd from last

**How satisfied are you?** This ranked 2nd from last

**Has it improved over the past 5 years?** This ranked 3rd from last, with a combined total of 47% stating that it is "somewhat worse" or "much worse"

# So, Are We Staying or Leaving?

**W**e wanted to know why people live where they do. What is important in selecting our neighborhood? The survey offered several possible reasons for choosing a neighborhood: affordable housing, high quality schools, safety, closeness to family, shorter commute time, and “other”. Aside from “other”, the highest percentage of respondents, 20%, said that the major reason they chose to live where they do is because they wanted a shorter commute. The most common responses in the “other” category were being close to the beach, a strong sense of community, and central location.

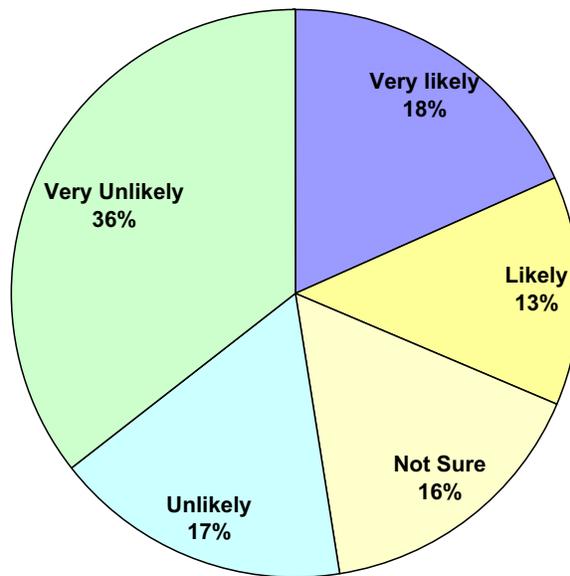
The only areas where respondents reported quality of schools as the major factor in their choice of a neighborhood were the portions of the city north of the Marine Air Station, Miramar. More than 9% of people in the South Mid-City and 20% of those in the southern-most communities in the city said that they wanted to be closer to family. Residents in the coastal area had by far the highest percentage of “other” answers, such as cultural factors, beach access, and staying where they feel connected.

How likely are we to move from our current neighborhood in the next three years? If we separate out the “Not

sure” responses, about one-third of the remaining respondents are planning to move within the next three years.

## WHY ARE PEOPLE DECIDING TO LEAVE THEIR CURRENT NEIGHBORHOODS?

About 40% of people who responded that they were likely to move in the next three years cited as their major reasons significant life changes, such as completing school, getting a new job, or getting married. A smaller percentage said that they needed a larger home or that they wanted to purchase a home. More than 35% stated that the high cost of housing in the San Diego region was their reason for wanting to move.



**Plans to Move?**

# Are We Able to Uphold the Promise to Future Generations?

Communities are complex systems. The economy, environment, and social systems that support communities are all interconnected. A sustainable community, one that is worthy of our affection for many generations to come, requires a consensus among government, business, civic organizations, and private citizens to take the “longer view” when it comes to decision-making. These are the questions we need to ask:

- What are the results of our collective decisions in 10 years, 20 years, and 50 years?
- How can we achieve a balance that meets the social, economic, and environmental needs of the community?

## TRAFFIC AND HOUSING

The two most significant issues identified in the public survey were traffic congestion and unaffordable housing. What has been our collective response? We have had an increase in the average vehicle miles traveled per day from 27 to 28, often because we are seeking affordable housing farther away from the heart of the city and other job centers. We also have increased the number of cars we have; there are now 0.82 cars for every man, woman and child, an increase of 5% from four years ago.

## ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

Mayor Dick Murphy has declared that the city needs to pursue energy independence. While the City organization has made tremendous strides in reducing energy use and using renewable energy resources, a greater effort is needed in the general community. Does conservation always require a crisis?

## WATER WORRIES

What about water? Between 1995 and 2002, our average use of water per person increased by 11%. The total water use in the city increased even more, some 24%, because we have an ever-growing population. Can we sustain this level of use, especially with an ongoing drought affecting the Colorado River and melting snow packs in the Sierra Nevada Mountains?

## IMPOVERISHED GAINS

Most of those who completed the survey stated that they thought there was no change in the level of local poverty in the past five years. However, between 1990 and 2002, the percentage of children younger than 18 living in families below the poverty line increased from 19.8% to 23.3%.

## EDUCATED TRENDS

Our promise of a sustainable community is not possible unless today's children are being adequately prepared to become tomorrow's civic leaders. The percentage of high school graduates with University of California/California State University preparatory courses completed has increased from 41% in 1997 to 47% in 2002. That's movement in the right direction, but there are still too many young people that may become disenfranchised as a result of their lack of education.

*Please contact us at:*

**[sustainability@sandiego.gov](mailto:sustainability@sandiego.gov)**

You are invited to be part of the solution. It is now time to set goals for each of the indicators so we can chart our course to a sustainable future.

## APPENDIX ONE

# San Diego Sustainable Community Indicators

### San Diego Sustainable Community Indicators

1. **Air Quality and Transportation**
  - a. Annual number of days exceeding the one hour California standard for ozone air pollution (San Diego Basin)
  - b. Vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita per year
  - c. Percent of newly permitted units that are within .25 miles of a commercial parcel
  - d. Percent of newly permitted units that are within .25 miles of a public transit stop
  - e. Registered vehicles per capita (County of San Diego)
  - f. Number of weekday transit riders (including Coaster, San Diego bus lines and Trolley)
  
2. **Housing and Neighborhoods**
  - a. Number of public housing units
  - b. Number of new affordable housing units produced with San Diego Housing Commission incentives
  - c. Rate of home ownership within the county as compared with the national average (San Diego County)
  - d. Average number of shade trees per mile of street
  - e. Per capita spending for capital improvement projects
  - f. Ratio of median home sales price to median income
  
3. **Water Quality of Beaches and Bays**
  - a. Beach Posting and Closure Days (City of San Diego beaches)
  
4. **Crime Rate**
  - a. Incidents of violent crime committed
  - b. Juvenile crime contacts
  - c. Number of children participating in City of San Diego 6-to-6 childcare programs for grades K-8
  
5. **Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy**
  - a. KWh consumed per residential account per month (average of the entire SDG&E network)
  - b. KWh consumed per non-residential account per month (average of the entire SDG&E network)
  - c. KWh of renewable energy generation within city limits
  - d. Number of City sites using alternative energy generated on-site
  - e. Number of City facilities at which the "Green Building Policy" is fully implemented
  - f. The number of submittals to Development Services Department that include renewable energy
  - g. Gallons of fuel saved through City fleet management fuel-reduction strategies
  - h. Number of vehicles converted from standard diesel fuel, a significant air pollutant, in the City fleet and other large fleets
  
6. **Open Space and Species Protection**
  - a. Number of species in the priority plants monitoring effort
  - b. Percent completion of the City of San Diego target open space acquisitions for 2007

## APPENDIX ONE

# San Diego Sustainable Community Indicators

continued

7. **Water Use and Reuse**
  - a. Potable water consumed per capita per year
  - b. Percentage of reclaimed water that is beneficially reused per year
  
8. **Environmental Management and Climate Protection**
  - a. Number of municipal facilities in the region certified as ISO 14001 (an international environmental certification), such as landfill operations (Environmental Services Department) and Sewage Conveyance (Metropolitan Wastewater Department)
  - b. Combined greenhouse gas emission reductions resulting from the City Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Action Plan
  
9. **Civic Engagement**
  - a. Percent registered voter participation in Presidential elections (County of San Diego)
  - b. Number of volunteers helping in City of San Diego programs – data is for fiscal year
  - c. Average number of hours volunteered per volunteer in City of San Diego programs
  
10. **Education System and Income**
  - a. Percentage of high school graduates with University of California/California State University preparatory courses completed (San Diego Unified high schools and other selected high schools with a large percentage of San Diego students)
  - b. Percent of people over 25 with at least two years of specialized education after high school
  - c. Median household income
  - d. Number of children between 1 and 6 years of age living in households at or below 133% of the federal poverty level
  
11. **Public Outreach**
  - a. Annual number of City-sponsored environmental education venues for youth, grades K-12
  - b. Annual number of City-sponsored Community Forums
  
12. **Cross-Border Programs**
  - a. The number of City-sponsored meetings per year of cross-border information exchanges between San Diego and Tijuana
  - b. Number of City-sponsored border-related forums related to energy, environment, public works and public health

# APPENDIX TWO



## PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY "Quality of Life in the City of San Diego"

THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

1. Please indicate your 5-digit home ZIP CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Please indicate how important each of the following items are to you, in terms of the quality of life in the City of San Diego (**circle ONE response per item**):

	<u>Very important</u>	<u>Somewhat important</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Somewhat unimportant</u>	<u>Very unimportant</u>
a) improving air quality .....	1	2	3	4	5
b) creating affordable housing .....	1	2	3	4	5
c) reducing pollution of beaches and bays	1	2	3	4	5
d) conserving energy .....	1	2	3	4	5
e) access to transit stops and retail shops from residential areas .....	1	2	3	4	5
f) increasing use of public transit (bus, train, trolley).....	1	2	3	4	5
g) decreasing local poverty.....	1	2	3	4	5
h) reducing crime rate.....	1	2	3	4	5
i) improving local K-12 education .....	1	2	3	4	5
j) reducing traffic congestion .....	1	2	3	4	5
k) conserving water .....		2	3	4	5

3. Please indicate how satisfied you are with current (2004) conditions in the City of San Diego regarding each of these items (**circle ONE response per item**):

	<u>Very satisfied</u>	<u>Somewhat satisfied</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Somewhat dissatisfied</u>	<u>Very dissatisfied</u>
a) air quality .....	1	2	3	4	5
b) availability of affordable housing .....	1	2	3	4	5
c) level of pollution of beaches and bays .....	1	2	3	4	5
d) energy conservation .....	1	2	3	4	5
e) nearness of transit stops and retail shops to residential areas .....	1	2	3	4	5

# APPENDIX TWO

continued

f) use of public transit (bus, train, trolley).....	1	2	3	4	5
g) local poverty level.....	1	2	3	4	5
h) crime rate .....	1	2	3	4	5
i) quality of local K-12 education .....	1	2	3	4	5
j) level of traffic congestion.....	1	2	3	4	5
k) water conservation .....	1	2	3	4	5

4. How many years total have you lived in the City of San Diego (circle ONE below):

- 1 - less than 5 years ⇒ PLEASE GO DIRECTLY TO QUESTION 5 NOW
- 2 - 5 to 10 years
- 3 - more than 10 years

4a. If you have lived in the City of San Diego for 5 years or more, please indicate for each of the following how that aspect of the quality of life in San Diego has changed in the last 5 years (circle ONE response per item):

	<u>Much better</u>	<u>Somewhat better</u>	<u>No change</u>	<u>Somewhat worse</u>	<u>Much worse</u>
a) air quality .....	1	2	3	4	5
b) availability of affordable housing .....	1	2	3	4	5
c) level of pollution of beaches and bays .....	1	2	3	4	5
d) energy conservation .....	1	2	3	4	5
e) nearness of transit stops and retail shops to residential areas .....	1	2	3	4	5
f) use of public transit (bus, train, trolley).....	1	2	3	4	5
g) local poverty level.....	1	2	3	4	5
h) crime rate .....	1	2	3	4	5
i) quality of local K-12 education .....	1	2	3	4	5
j) level of traffic congestion.....	1	2	3	4	5
k) water conservation .....		2	3	4	5

5. There may be many reasons why you chose to live in your particular neighborhood. Please indicate the most important factor in your decision to live in your current neighborhood (circle ONE):

- 1 - low cost of housing
- 2 - felt safe
- 3 - shorter commute time
- 4 - high quality of schools
- 5 - to be closer to family
- 6 - other (please describe): \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX TWO

continued

6. Please indicate how likely you are to move from your neighborhood in the next three years (**circle ONE**):

1 - very likely  
2 - likely  
3 - not sure      ⇨ **PLEASE GO DIRECTLY TO QUESTION 7 NOW**  
4 - unlikely      ⇨ **PLEASE GO DIRECTLY TO QUESTION 7 NOW**  
5 - very unlikely ⇨ **PLEASE GO DIRECTLY TO QUESTION 7 NOW**

- 6a. If you answered **very likely** or **likely** in Question 6 above, please select the single most important reason why you're considering leaving your neighborhood (**circle ONE**):

1 - high cost of housing      4 - poor quality of schools  
2 - don't feel safe            5 - to be closer to family  
3 - long commute time      6 - other (**please describe**): \_\_\_\_\_

7. Please indicate how you found out about this survey (**please  check ALL that apply**):

it was mailed to me       *My 94.1* Website       other (**please describe**): \_\_\_\_\_  
 *City of San Diego* Website       *KPBS* Website

### **OPTIONAL QUESTIONS:**

The following optional questions are asked to help us better understand the various perceptions from San Diego's diverse communities. Please select ONE answer for each question.

8. Gender:      1 - male      2 - female

9. Age group:    1 - 18 to 35 years    2 - 36 to 55 years    3 - over 55 years

10. Ethnicity:    1 - Asian/Pacific Isl.    2 - Hispanic/Latino    3 - African American/Black  
4 - Caucasian/White    5 - other (**please describe**): \_\_\_\_\_

11. Annual household income before taxes:    1 - below \$20,000    2 - \$20,000 to \$39,999    3 - \$40,000 to \$59,999  
4 - \$60,000 to \$99,999    5 - \$100,000 or more

12. Housing:      *rent* ⇨ (**circle ONE**):    1 - house    2 - condo    3 - apartment    4 - other  
*own* ⇨ (**circle ONE**):    1 - house    2 - condo    3 - other  
other (**please describe**): \_\_\_\_\_

## San Diego Statistical Snapshot

<b>City of San Diego</b> (Source: SANDAG)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seventh Largest City in the U.S.</li> <li>Area: 331 square miles</li> <li>52 miles long from North to South</li> </ul>			
<b>San Diego Region</b> (Source: CNNMoney website; <i>Best Places to Live</i> )			
Category	City Statistics	National Avg.	Rank
<b>Weather</b>			
Annual days with mostly sun	267	213	—
<b>Education</b>			
Spending per pupil	\$4,811	\$5,387	206
Number of 4-year colleges	10	4.03	27
Number of 2-year colleges	9	2.77	16
<b>Health</b>			
Air quality index (higher is better)	69	65.9	177
<b>Quality of Life</b>			
Leisure Index (100 is best, 0 is worst)	65	19.42	10
Arts Index (100 is best, 0 is worst)	13	11.48	77

## San Diego Demographics

	Current (2000)	Projected (2030)	% Change
<b>Total Population</b>	1,223,400	1,656,820	35
<b>Age</b>			
0-19	335,028	371,214	11
20-59	722,375	881,997	22
60-80 and over	166,097	403,609	143
<b>Median Age</b>	32.6	38.2	17
<b>Ethnic Composition</b>			
Hispanic	310,752	560,975	81
White	603,892	601,149	-0.5
Black	92,830	97,895	5.5
American Indian	4,267	8,909	109
Asian	164,895	225,000	37
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	5,311	40,218	657
Other	3,065	48,393	1,479
Two or More Races	38,388	74,281	94
<b>San Diego Economic Base (Year 2000 Data)</b>			
Management, professional, and related occupations	233,054		
Service occupations	88,462		
Sales and office occupations	147,136		
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	1,391		
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	37,174		
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	50,165		
Military	34,696		
(Source: SANDAG)			



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO



The City of San Diego  
Environmental Services Department  
Sustainable Community Program  
9601 Ridgehaven Court  
San Diego, CA 92123-1636

