

COMMUNITY SURVEY  
RESEARCH REPORT

PREPARED FOR THE  
CITY OF ALISO VIEJO



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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	<b>i</b>
<b>List of Tables</b> .....	<b>iii</b>
<b>List of Figures</b> .....	<b>iv</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
Purpose of Study .....	1
Overview of Methodology.....	1
Organization of Report.....	2
Acknowledgements .....	2
Disclaimer .....	2
About True North.....	2
<b>Just the Facts</b> .....	<b>3</b>
Quality of Life.....	3
City Services.....	3
Future Spending Priorities .....	3
Community Events .....	4
Economic Development .....	4
City-Resident Communication.....	4
Parks .....	4
<b>Conclusions</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Quality of Life</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Overall Quality of Life.....	8
Question 2 .....	8
Ways to Improve Quality of Life .....	9
Question 3 .....	10
<b>City Services</b> .....	<b>11</b>
Overall Satisfaction.....	11
Question 4 .....	11
Specific Services.....	12
Question 5 .....	13
Question 6 .....	14
<b>Performance Needs &amp; Priorities</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>Future Spending Priorities</b> .....	<b>18</b>
Question 7 .....	18
Question 8 .....	19
<b>Community Events</b> .....	<b>20</b>
Event Attendance & Awareness.....	20
Question 9 .....	20
Question 10 .....	22
<b>Economic Development</b> .....	<b>23</b>
Question 11 .....	23
Question 12 .....	24
Town Center Update.....	25
Question 13 .....	25
<b>City-Resident Communication</b> .....	<b>27</b>
Satisfaction With Communication .....	27
Question 14 .....	27
Sources of Information.....	28
Question 15 .....	29
Communication preferences.....	30
Question 16 .....	30
Attention Paid to Local Government .....	31
Question 17 .....	31

**Parks** ..... 33  
     Question 18 ..... 33  
     Question 19 ..... 34  
**Background & Demographics** ..... 36  
**Methodology** ..... 37  
     Questionnaire Development ..... 37  
     Programming & Pre-Test ..... 37  
     Sample ..... 37  
     Margin of Error due to Sampling ..... 37  
     Data Collection ..... 39  
     Data Processing ..... 39  
     Rounding ..... 39  
**Questionnaire & Toplines** ..... 40



# LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	Needs & Priority Matrix . . . . .	16
Table 2	Priorities For Future Spending (Showing % High Priority) by Age & Child in Home . . . . .	19
Table 3	Priorities For Future Spending (Showing % High Priority) by Home Type & Years in Aliso Viejo. . . . .	19
Table 4	Town Center Update Priorities (Showing % High Priority) by Age & Child in Home . . . . .	26
Table 5	Town Center Update Priorities (Showing % High Priority) by Home Type & Years in Aliso Viejo. . . . .	26
Table 6	Effectiveness of Communication Methods (Showing % Very Effective) by Age, Satisfaction With Communication & Child in Home <sup>31</sup>	
Table 7	Demographics of Sample . . . . .	36



# LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1	Quality of Life	8
Figure 2	Quality of Life by Years in Aliso Viejo & Child in Home	8
Figure 3	Quality of Life by Home Ownership Status & Age	9
Figure 4	Quality of Life by Home Type, Gender & Attentiveness to City Gov	9
Figure 5	Changes to Improve Aliso Viejo	10
Figure 6	Overall Satisfaction	11
Figure 7	Overall Satisfaction by Years in Aliso Viejo & Child in Home	11
Figure 8	Overall Satisfaction by Home Ownership Status & Age	12
Figure 9	Overall Satisfaction by Home Type, Gender & Attentiveness to City Gov	12
Figure 10	Importance of Services	13
Figure 11	Satisfaction With Services	14
Figure 12	Resident Service Needs	17
Figure 13	Priorities For Future Spending	18
Figure 14	Additional High Priorities	19
Figure 15	Attendance and Awareness of Community Events	20
Figure 16	Awareness of Community Events by Year in Aliso Viejo, Child in Home & Age	21
Figure 17	Attendance of Community Events by Year in Aliso Viejo, Child in Home & Age	21
Figure 18	Rating Community Events	22
Figure 19	Desire Additional Restaurants, Retail Stores in Aliso Viejo	23
Figure 20	Desire Additional Restaurants, Retail Stores in Aliso Viejo by Years in Aliso Viejo, Child in Home & Home Type	23
Figure 21	Desire Additional Restaurants, Retail Stores in Aliso Viejo by Age & Gender	24
Figure 22	Additional Restaurants, Retail Stores Desired in Aliso Viejo	24
Figure 23	Town Center Update Priorities	25
Figure 24	Satisfaction With Communication	27
Figure 25	Satisfaction With Communication by Years in Aliso Viejo & Child in Home	27
Figure 26	Satisfaction With Communication by Home Ownership Status & Age	28
Figure 27	Satisfaction With Communication by Home Type, Gender & Attentiveness to City Gov	28
Figure 28	Aliso Viejo Information Sources	29
Figure 29	Aliso Viejo Information Sources by Satisfaction With Communication	30
Figure 30	Effectiveness of Communication Methods	30
Figure 31	Attentiveness to City Government	31
Figure 32	Attentiveness to City Government by Years in Aliso Viejo & Home Type	32
Figure 33	Attentiveness to City Government by Gender & Age	32
Figure 34	Awareness of AVCA Park Ownership & Maintenance	33
Figure 35	Awareness of AVCA Park Ownership & Management by Years in Aliso Viejo, Attentiveness to City Gov & Gender	33
Figure 36	Awareness of AVCA Park Ownership & Management by Age & Home Type	34
Figure 37	Preference For Park Ownership & Maintenance	34
Figure 38	Preference For Park Ownership & Maintenance by Years in Aliso Viejo & Awareness of AVCA	35
Figure 39	Preference For Park Ownership & Maintenance by Attentiveness to City Gov, Child in Home & Gender	35
Figure 40	Preference For Park Ownership & Maintenance by Home Type & Age	35
Figure 41	Maximum Margin of Error	38



## INTRODUCTION

Incorporated in 2001 and currently home to an estimated 49,477 residents,<sup>1</sup> the City of Aliso Viejo is a master planned community that is known for its natural beauty, safety, attractive neighborhoods, award-winning schools, and extensive parks and recreational areas. The City provides a wide range of services and facilities to residents and local businesses either directly or through contract with other public and private organizations.

As part of its commitment to provide high quality services and responsive local governance, the City engages its residents on a daily basis and receives regular feedback on issue, policy, and performance matters. Although these informal feedback mechanisms are valuable sources of information for the City, in that they provide timely and accurate information about the opinions of specific residents, they do not necessarily provide an accurate picture of the community as a whole. Informal feedback mechanisms typically rely on the resident to initiate the feedback, which creates a self-selection bias. The City receives feedback only from those residents who are motivated enough to initiate the feedback process. Because these residents tend to be those who are either *very* pleased or *very* displeased regarding a particular topic, their collective opinions are not necessarily representative of the City's resident population as a whole.

**PURPOSE OF STUDY** The motivation for the current study was to design and employ a methodology that would avoid the self-selection bias noted above and thereby provide the City with a statistically reliable understanding of its residents' satisfaction, priorities and concerns as they relate to services, facilities and policies provided by the City. Ultimately, the survey results and analyses presented in this report provides City Council and staff with information that can be used to make sound, strategic decisions in a variety of areas, including service provision, capital improvements, planning, policymaking, budgeting, and community outreach.

To assist in this effort, the City selected True North Research to design the research plan and conduct the study. Broadly defined, the study was designed to:

- Identify key issues of concern for residents, as well as their perceptions of the City.
- Measure residents' overall satisfaction with the City's efforts to provide municipal services, and their satisfaction with a variety of specific services.
- Gather opinions on local matters including community events, economic development, park management, and prioritizing potential capital improvements and service enhancements.
- Determine the effectiveness of the City's communication with residents.
- Collect additional background and demographic data that is relevant to understanding residents' perceptions, needs, and interests.

**OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY** A full description of the methodology used for this study is included later in this report (see *Methodology* on page 37). In brief, a total of 400 randomly selected adult residents participated in the survey between August 23 and September 6, 2013. The sample of telephone numbers used for the study consisted of both land lines and cell phones. Once selected at random, respondents were provided with the opportunity to participate

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1. Source: California Department of Finance estimate for January 2013.

in the survey by telephone or through a secure, password-protected website hosted by True North. Interviews conducted by telephone averaged 20 minutes in length.

**ORGANIZATION OF REPORT** This report is designed to meet the needs of readers who prefer a summary of the findings as well as those who are interested in the details of the results. For those who seek an overview of the findings, the sections titled *Just the Facts* and *Conclusions* are for you. They provide a summary of the most important factual findings of the survey in bullet-point format and a discussion of their implications. For the interested reader, this section is followed by a more detailed question-by-question discussion of the results from the survey by topic area (see *Table of Contents*), as well as a description of the methodology employed for collecting and analyzing the data. And, for the truly ambitious reader, the questionnaire used for the interviews is contained at the back of this report (see *Questionnaire & Toplines* on page 40), and a complete set of crosstabulations for the survey results is contained in Appendix A, which is bound separately.

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

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

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

During their careers, Dr. McLarney (President) and Mr. Sarles (Principal Researcher) have designed and conducted over 800 survey research studies for public agencies, including more than 300 studies for California municipalities and special districts.



## JUST THE FACTS

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

### QUALITY OF LIFE

- Nearly all respondents (96%) shared favorable opinions of the quality of life in Aliso Viejo, with 63% reporting it is excellent and 33% stating it is good. Only 3% of residents indicated that the quality of life in the City is fair, and less than 1% of residents used poor or very poor to describe the quality of life in Aliso Viejo.
- When provided with an open-ended opportunity to suggest a change that city government could take to make Aliso Viejo a better place to live, more than one-third (37%) of respondents indicated they desired no changes from the City (22%) or were unsure of a change that would make Aliso Viejo a better place to live (15%). Of specific suggestions, the most common were providing or improving parks and recreation facilities (9%), reducing taxes and fees (6%), limiting growth and development (5%), reducing traffic congestion (5%), improving the local economy (4%), and providing more community events (4%).

### CITY SERVICES

- More than nine-in-ten Aliso Viejo residents (93%) indicated they were either very satisfied (67%) or somewhat satisfied (25%) with the City's efforts to provide municipal services. Only 3% of respondents indicated that they were dissatisfied with the City's overall performance, and an additional 5% were unsure or unwilling to share their opinion.
- Residents were asked to rate the importance of 13 specific services provided by the City of Aliso Viejo. Overall, residents rated public safety services as the most important, including providing fire protection and prevention services (93%), emergency medical services (92%), and police and crime prevention services (90%). Other services ranked toward the top of the list included providing trash and recycling services (84%), maintaining and repairing streets (83%), and preparing the community for emergencies (76%).
- The survey also asked about satisfaction with the City's efforts to provide the same 13 services. Residents were most satisfied with the City's efforts to provide fire protection and prevention services (97% very or somewhat satisfied), followed closely by emergency medical services (97%), police and crime prevention services (97%), street sweeping services (96%), and trash and recycling services (95%).

### FUTURE SPENDING PRIORITIES

- When asked to prioritize among a series of projects and programs that could be funded by the City in the future, improving local walking and biking trails was assigned the highest priority (66% high or medium priority), followed by creating a Park-N-Ride facility (51%) and providing a local shuttle bus system that would operate around the Town Center (49%).
- Given the opportunity to name any additional high priorities for future city spending, approximately two-thirds (66%) of respondents indicated that none came to mind. Among those mentioned, the most common were providing additional parks and recreation facilities (8%), improving schools and education (5%), and improving public safety (4%).

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

- Less than half of residents surveyed had heard of Founder's Day (49%) and Snowfest (49%), and just over one-quarter (28%) had heard of the Community Cup Golf Tournament.
- Attendance rates in the past two years were highest for Founder's Day (17%) and Snowfest (17%), followed by the Community Cup Golf Tournament at 5%.
- Respondents who had attended an event in the past two years rated their experience on a scale of 0 to 10, with a 0 meaning their experience was very poor and a 10 meaning it was excellent. Ratings were largely positive, with Founder's Day receiving the highest rating (7.40), followed by Snowfest (7.26), and the Community Cup Golf Tournament (6.96).

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Forty-four percent (44%) of respondents said they desire additional restaurants and retail stores in Aliso Viejo.
- Those interested in additional businesses were asked to name one or two restaurants or retail stores they were interested in having located in Aliso Viejo. The most commonly mentioned were family restaurant chains, such as Applebee's and Red Lobster (23%), followed by upper-scale restaurants chains, such as Yard House and Cheesecake Factory (22%) and fast food restaurant chains such as McDonald's and In-N-Out (18%).
- Residents were asked to prioritize a variety of proposed projects concerning the Town Center Update. Among the projects tested, providing adequate parking was assigned the highest priority (83% high or medium priority), followed by attracting new retail stores and restaurants (79%), making the Town Center more pedestrian friendly (78%), and making traffic improvements to reduce congestion (75%).

## CITY-RESIDENT COMMUNICATION

- Overall, 76% of respondents said they were satisfied with City's efforts to communicate with residents through newsletters, the Internet, social media, and other means. About one-fifth (21%) were dissatisfied, and another 4% were unsure or chose not to provide an opinion.
- The most frequently cited source for city-related information was the City's newsletter, mentioned by 30% of respondents, followed by the Internet in general (26%) and the City's website (21%). No other sources were mentioned by at least 10% of respondents.
- Overall, residents indicated that newsletters mailed to their home was the most effective method for the City to communicate with them (84% very or somewhat effective), followed by the City's website (79%), email (74%), flyers, postcards, and brochures available at public locations (68%), and social media like Facebook and Twitter (68%).
- Nine percent (9%) of respondents said they are very attentive to the issues, decisions, and activities of City government, 44% are somewhat attentive, and 30% are slightly attentive. Another 16% said they do not pay any attention to the activities of the City of Aliso Viejo.

## PARKS

- Approximately two-thirds (65%) of residents are aware that most parks in the City are owned and maintained by AVCA.
- Residents are evenly divided on the topic of local park ownership and operation, with 33% preferring the City of Aliso Viejo, 31% opting for AVCA, and another 35% unsure of their opinion or having no preference either way.



## CONCLUSIONS

As noted in the *Introduction*, this study was designed to provide the City of Aliso Viejo with a statistically reliable understanding of its residents' awareness, opinions, priorities and needs as they relate to services, facilities and policies provided by the City. As such, it can provide the City with information needed to make sound, strategic decisions in a variety of areas—including service provision, capital improvements, planning, policymaking, budgeting, and community outreach. Whereas subsequent sections of this report are devoted to conveying the detailed results of the survey, in this section we attempt to 'see the forest through the trees' and note how the collective results of the survey answer some of the key questions that motivated the research.

The following conclusions are based on True North's interpretations of the survey results, as well as our experience conducting hundreds of similar studies for municipalities throughout the State.

*How well is the City performing in meeting the needs of Aliso Viejo residents?*

Aliso Viejo residents are among the most satisfied resident groups that True North has encountered. Ninety-three percent (93%) reported that they were satisfied with the City of Aliso Viejo's overall performance in providing municipal services, with 67% indicating that they were *very* satisfied in this respect. The high level of satisfaction expressed with the City's general performance was echoed in residents' assessments of 13 specific service areas. For all service areas tested, the City is meeting the needs and expectations of at least 88% of its residents, and for the majority of services the City meets or exceeds the needs of at least 95% of its residents.

The City's performance in providing municipal services has also contributed to a high quality of life in the City. Nearly every resident surveyed rated the quality of the life in the City as either excellent (63%) or good (33%). Moreover, when asked about desired changes to improve Aliso Viejo, more than one-third (37%) of residents could think of nothing to improve or indicated that no changes were needed.

To the extent that the survey results can be viewed as a report card on the City's performance, the City receives straight A's for all but a couple of service areas. When compared with more than 200 similar studies that True North's research team has conducted for California municipalities, as well as a nationwide survey sponsored by True North regarding residents' perceptions of local government performance, the scores found in this study place the City of Aliso Viejo comfortably within the top 10% of municipalities in terms of service performance.

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

Perhaps the most important recommendation, and one that is often overlooked in customer satisfaction research, is for the City to recognize the many things that it does well and to focus on continuing to perform at a high level in these areas. Noted throughout this report, residents were generally quite pleased with the City's efforts to provide services and

facilities and have a favorable opinion of the City's performance in most areas. The top priority for Aliso Viejo should thus be to do what it takes to maintain the high quality of services it currently provides to remain in the top tier of performance among California municipalities.

However, as the City continues to strive for improvement, the results of this study do suggest opportunities to further bolster resident satisfaction. Considering the list of services and their respective priority status for future City attention provided in the body of this report (see *Resident Service Needs* on page 17), respondents' open-ended responses about ways the City can be improved (see *Changes to Improve Aliso Viejo* on page 10), as well as residents' stated priorities for future city funding (see *Priorities For Future Spending* on page 18), the top candidates for improvement are: preparing the community for emergencies, providing after school programs, improving parks, recreation, and community facilities, which may include walking and biking trails, managing traffic congestion in the City in general as well as the Town Center, and managing growth and development.

Having recommended that the City focus on these service areas, it is equally important to stress that the appropriate strategy for improving resident satisfaction in these areas is likely a combination of focused communication and actual service improvements. It may be, for example, that many residents are simply not aware of the City's various emergency preparedness programs and services, such as the Community Emergency Preparedness Academy or AlertOC, the City's emergency notification system. Choosing the appropriate balance of actual service improvements and efforts to raise public awareness on these topics will be a key to maintaining and improving residents' overall satisfaction in the short- and long-term.

*How well is the City communicating with Aliso Viejo residents?*

The aforementioned recommendations regarding public information are underscored by residents' current levels of satisfaction with the City's efforts to communicate with them through newsletters, the Internet, social media, and other means. Although the City of Aliso Viejo generally does a good job communicating with residents with 76% of indicating satisfaction, the intensity of satisfaction was not strong (40% very satisfied). Moreover, less than half of all respondents mentioned the City Newsletter or City website as a source for city information, and less than 10% mentioned any other single city-sponsored source.

Looking to the future, there are a variety of communication methods that residents generally viewed as being effective ways for the City to communicate with them, including newsletters mailed to their home, the City's website, email, flyers, postcards, and brochures available at public locations, and social media. At least two-thirds of residents offered that each of these methods would be at least *somewhat* effective in reaching

them. Additionally, when looking specifically at those currently dissatisfied with communication, social media and email were seen as the most effective means of communication, with more than 40% of those individuals citing them as *very effective*.

Of course, it should be recognized that although there is cost-savings to be had from relying *exclusively* on electronic communication channels, it is not a recommended practice, as research has shown that it will reduce readership and substantially lower residents' overall satisfaction with an agency's communication efforts. To the extent that the City can balance digital channels with traditional paper-based information sources like postcards and newsletters, it will optimize city-resident communication.

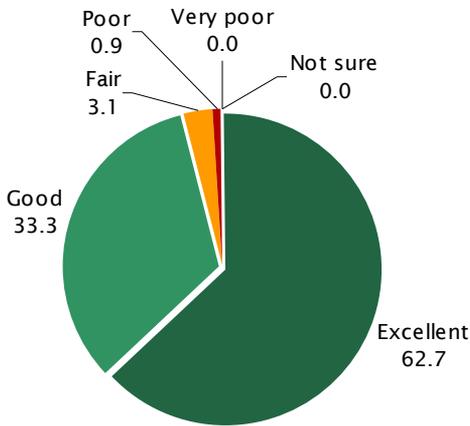
Finally, it is worth noting that communication preferences are certain to vary according to the topic at hand and thus the particular demographic of interest. For example, when communicating information that pertains to the community as a whole, such as emergency preparedness and the Town Center Update, a medium that reaches and appeals to a broad range of residents is likely to be the most effective method. However, as the topic becomes more specifically targeted, so too should the method of dissemination. For example, informing residents about a community event that is likely to appeal to younger adults and parents, such as Snowfest, might be better accomplished with one or more forms of electronic distribution, such as the City's website and social media such as the City's Facebook page (see Table 6 on page 31 for a look at how information sources differ between demographic groups).

# QUALITY OF LIFE

The opening series of questions in the survey was designed to assess residents' perceptions of the quality of life in Aliso Viejo, as well as their ideas for what the city government could do to improve the quality of life in the city, now and in the future.

**OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE** At the outset of the interview, respondents were asked to rate the quality of life in the city using a five-point scale of excellent, good, fair, poor, or very poor. As shown in Figure 1 below, nearly all respondents (96%) shared favorable opinions of the quality of life in Aliso Viejo, with 63% reporting it is excellent and 33% stating it is good. Only 3% of residents indicated that the quality of life in the city is fair, and less than 1% of residents used poor or very poor to describe the quality of life in Aliso Viejo.

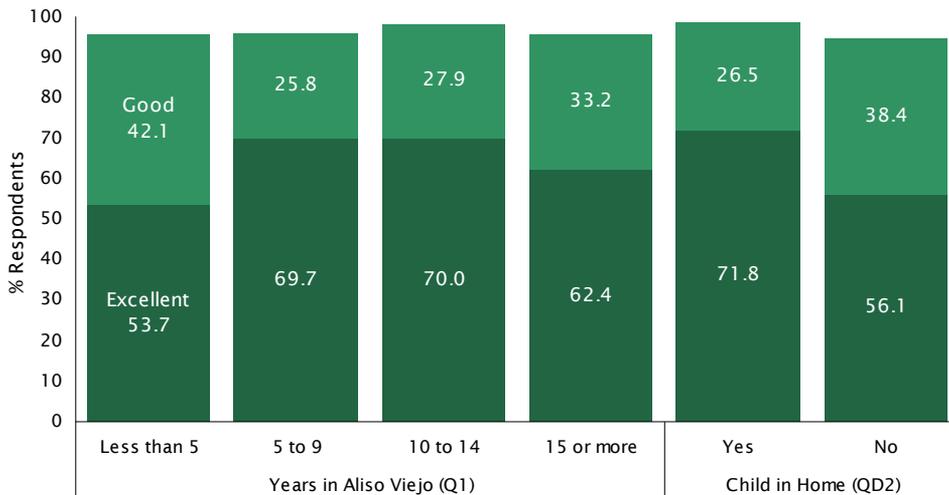
**FIGURE 1 QUALITY OF LIFE**



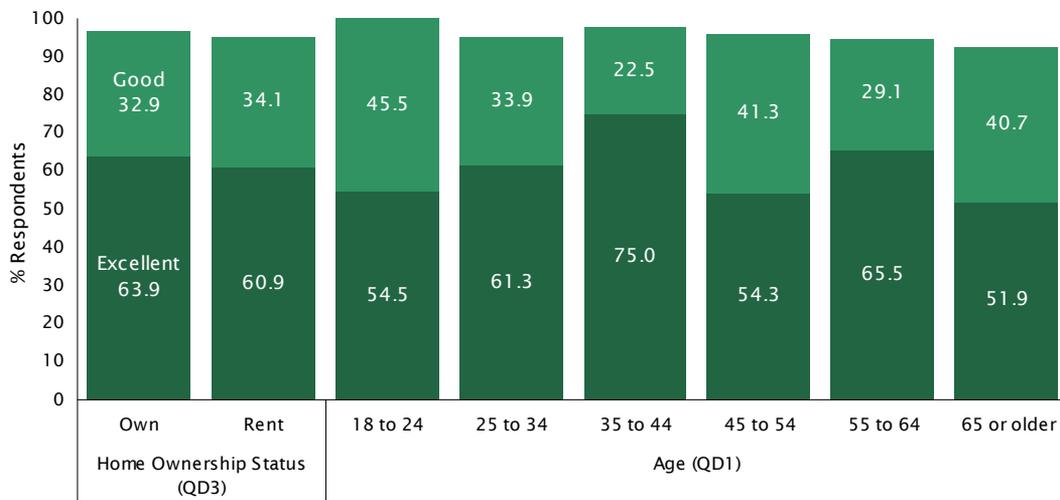
**Question 2** *How would you rate the overall quality of life in the City? Would you say it is excellent, good, fair, poor or very poor?*

For the interested reader, figures 2 through 4 show how ratings of the quality of life in the city varied by years of residence in Aliso Viejo, presence of a child in the home, home ownership status, age, home type, gender, and attentiveness to city government. Although there were modest variations between subgroups (e.g., those between 35 and 44 years of age were more likely than their counterparts to rate the quality of life as excellent), at least 90% of every subgroup rated the quality of life in the City as excellent or good.

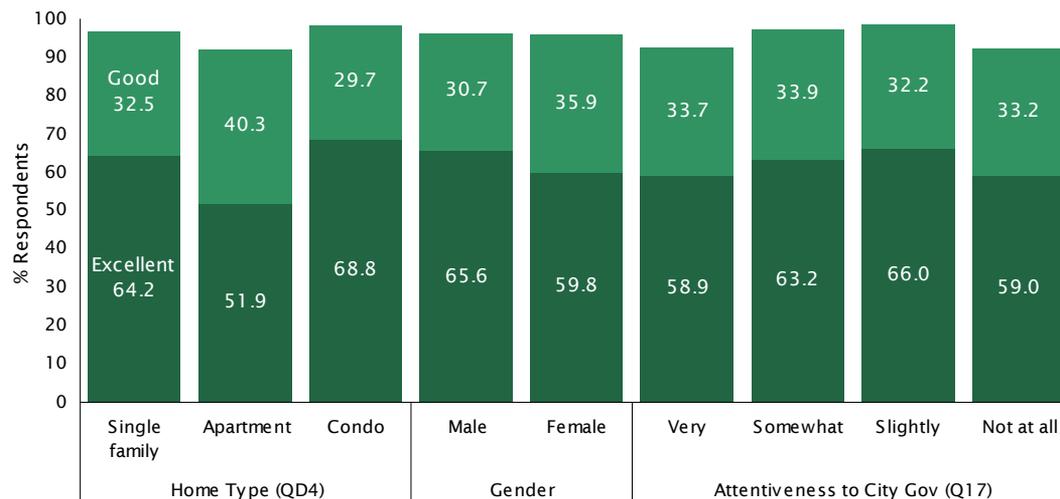
**FIGURE 2 QUALITY OF LIFE BY YEARS IN ALISO VIEJO & CHILD IN HOME**



**FIGURE 3 QUALITY OF LIFE BY HOME OWNERSHIP STATUS & AGE**



**FIGURE 4 QUALITY OF LIFE BY HOME TYPE, GENDER & ATTENTIVENESS TO CITY GOV**

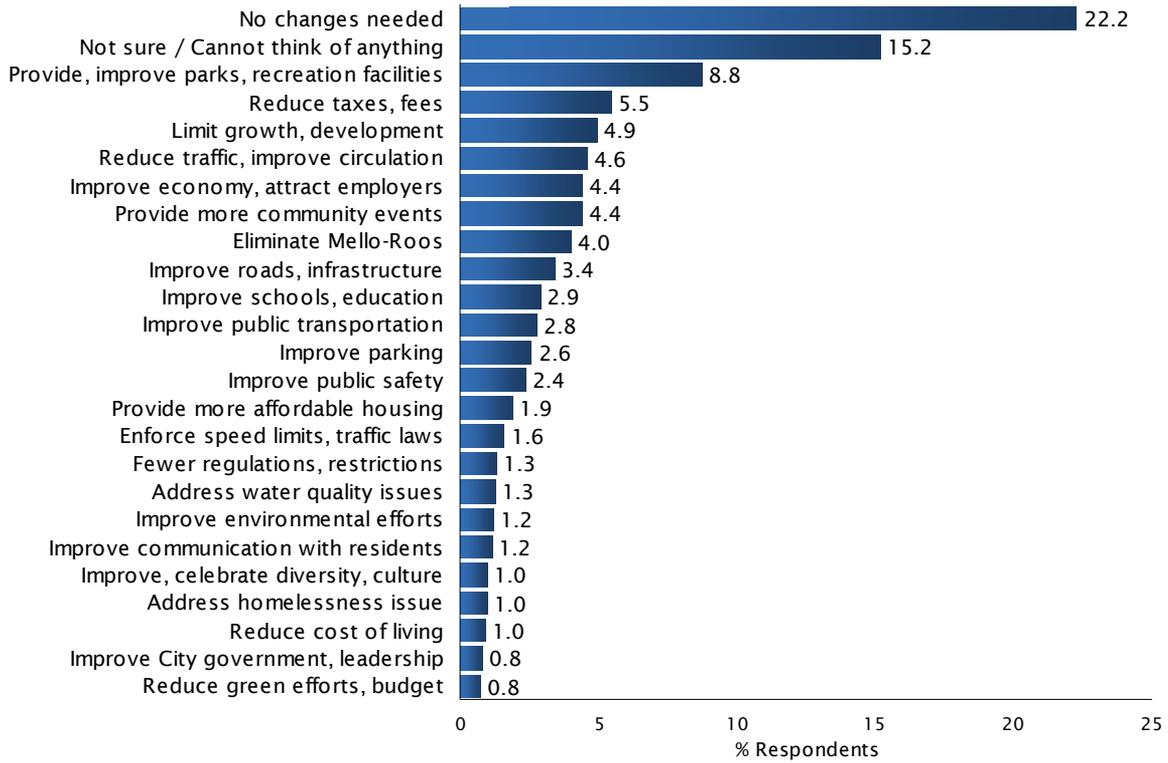


**WAYS TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE** Respondents were next asked to indicate one thing city government could change to make Aliso Viejo a better place to live, now and in the future. This question was asked in an open-ended manner, allowing respondents to mention any change that came to mind without being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

More than one-third (37%) of respondents indicated they desired no changes from the City (22%) or were unsure of a change that would make Aliso Viejo a better place to live (15%). Of specific suggestions, the most common were providing or improving parks and recreation facilities (9%), reducing taxes and fees (6%), limiting growth and development (5%), reducing traffic congestion (5%), improving the local economy (4%), and providing more community events (4%). No other single improvement was mentioned by more than 4% of respondents.

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

**FIGURE 5 CHANGES TO IMPROVE ALISO VIEJO**

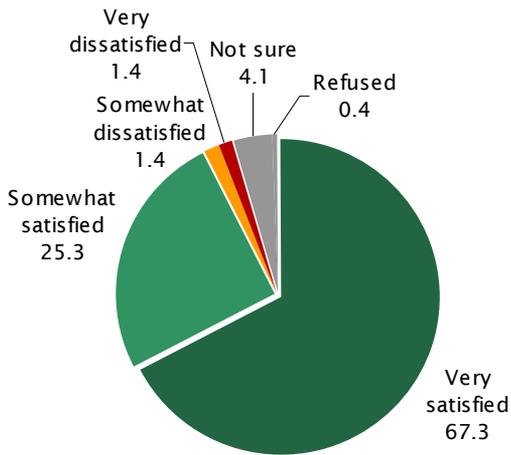


# CITY SERVICES

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

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

**FIGURE 6 OVERALL SATISFACTION**

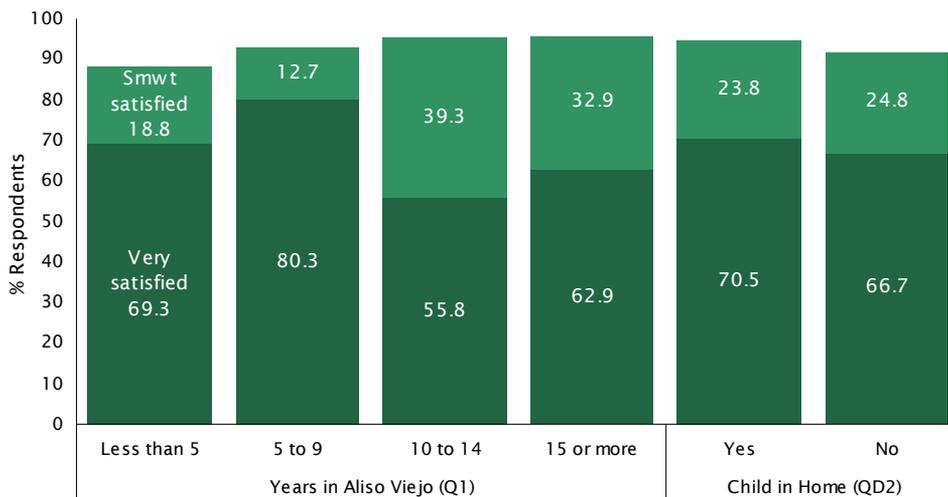


**Question 4** *Generally speaking, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the job the City of Aliso Viejo is doing to provide city services?*

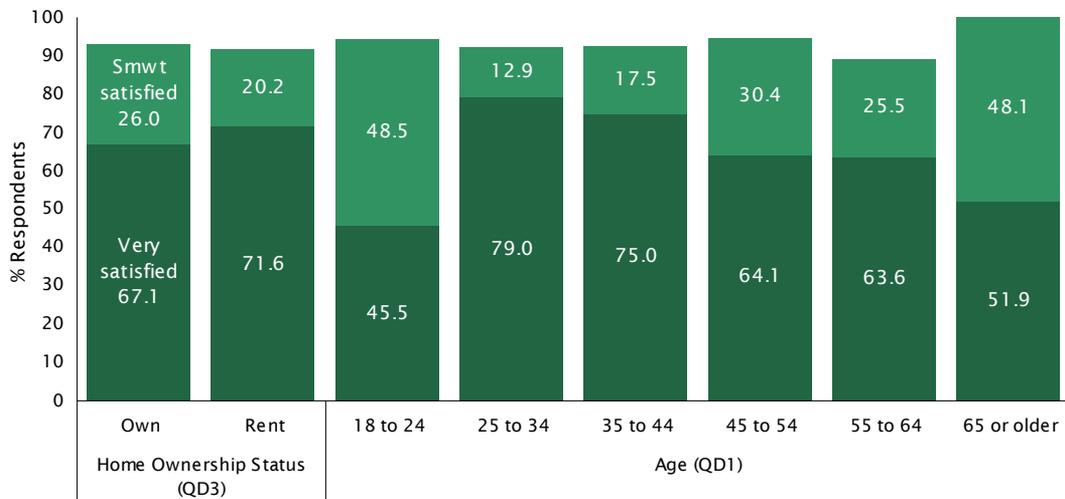
As shown in Figure 6, more than nine-in-ten Aliso Viejo residents (93%) indicated they were either very satisfied (67%) or somewhat satisfied (25%) with the City's efforts to provide municipal services. Only 3% of respondents indicated that they were dissatisfied with the City's overall performance, and an additional 5% indicated that they were unsure or unwilling to share their opinion.

Figures 7 through 9 display how the percentage of respondents who were satisfied with the City's overall performance varied across a variety of demographic subgroups. The most striking pattern in the figures is that the high level of satisfaction expressed by residents as a whole was generally shared by all subgroups.

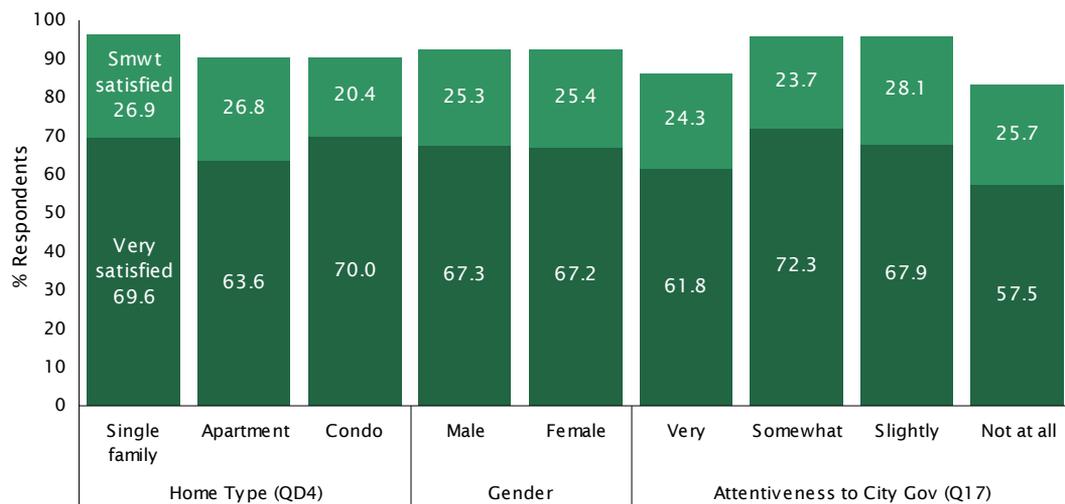
**FIGURE 7 OVERALL SATISFACTION BY YEARS IN ALISO VIEJO & CHILD IN HOME**



**FIGURE 8 OVERALL SATISFACTION BY HOME OWNERSHIP STATUS & AGE**



**FIGURE 9 OVERALL SATISFACTION BY HOME TYPE, GENDER & ATTENTIVENESS TO CITY GOV**



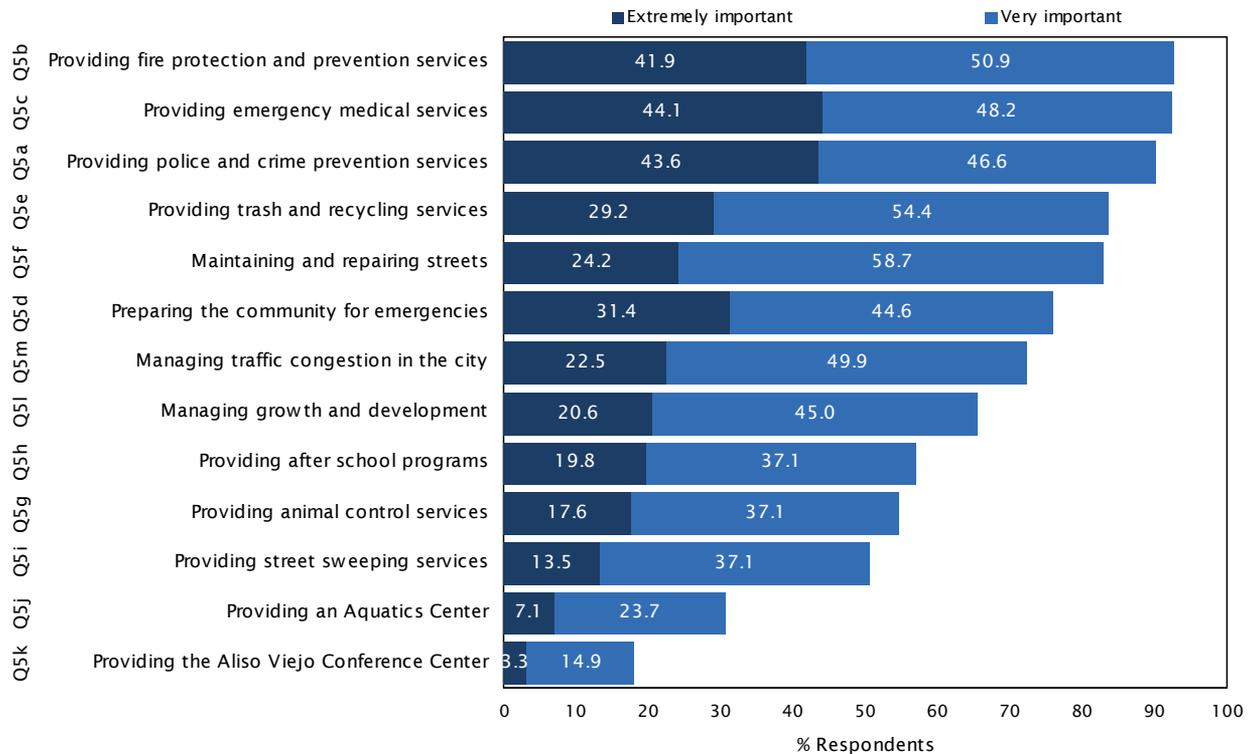
**SPECIFIC SERVICES** Whereas Question 4 addressed the City’s *overall* performance, the next two questions asked respondents to rate the importance of *specific* services offered by the City, as well as their level of satisfaction with efforts to provide these services. For each service, respondents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

Figure 10 on the next page presents the services sorted by order of importance according to the percentage of respondents who rated a service as *at least* very important. Overall, Aliso Viejo residents rated public safety services as the most important, including providing fire protection and prevention services (93%), emergency medical services (92%), and police and crime prevention services (90%). Other services ranked toward the top of the list included providing trash and recycling services (84%), maintaining and repairing streets (83%), and preparing the community for emergencies (76%).

At the other end of the spectrum, providing the Aliso Viejo Conference Center (18%), providing an Aquatics Center (31%), and providing street sweeping services (51%) were viewed as less important.

**Question 5** Next, I'd like to ask you about a number of services offered by the City of Aliso Viejo directly or through contract with other organizations. For each of the services I read, please tell me whether the service is extremely important to you, very important, somewhat important, or not at all important.

**FIGURE 10 IMPORTANCE OF SERVICES**

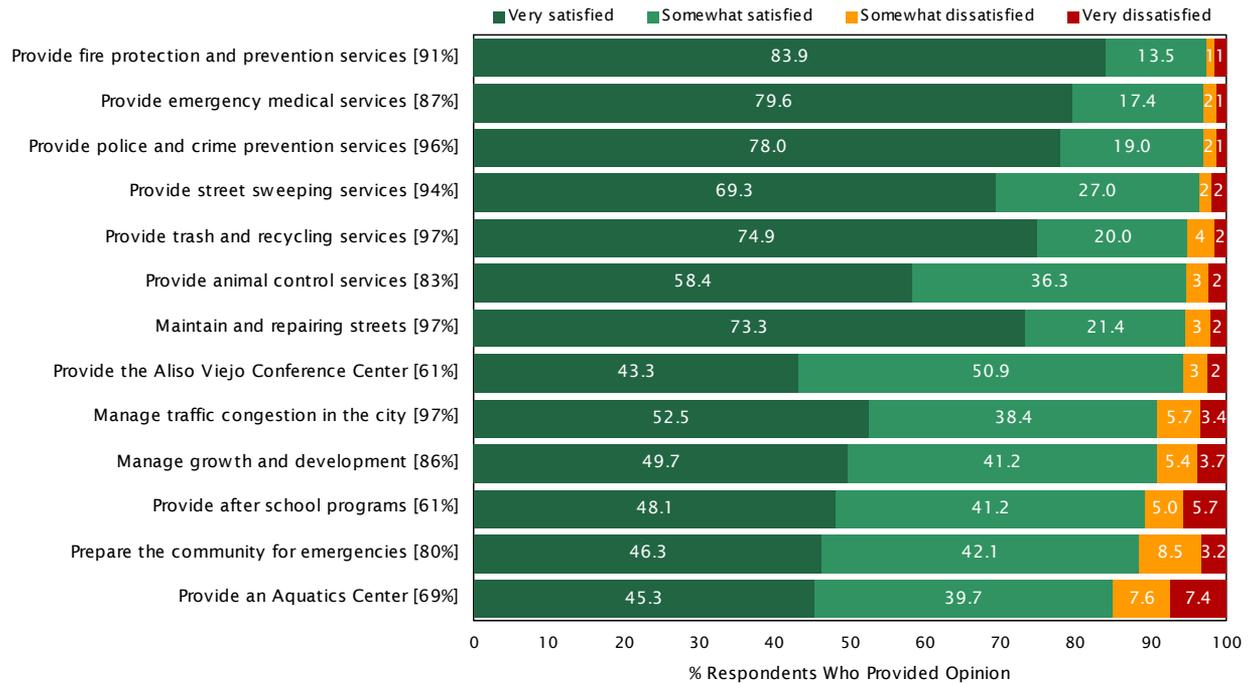


Turning to the satisfaction component, Figure 11 on the next page sorts the same list of services by the percentage of respondents who indicated they were either very or somewhat satisfied with the City’s efforts to provide the service. For comparison purposes between the services, only respondents who held an opinion (either satisfied or dissatisfied) are included in the figure. Those who did not have an opinion were removed from this analysis. The percentage of respondents who provided an opinion (either satisfied or dissatisfied) is presented in brackets beside the service label in the figure, while the bars represent the answers of those with an opinion.

At the top of the list, respondents were most satisfied with the City’s efforts to provide fire protection and prevention services (97% very or somewhat satisfied), followed closely by emergency medical services (97%), police and crime prevention services (97%), street sweeping services (96%), and trash and recycling services (95%). Respondents were slightly less satisfied with the City’s efforts to provide an aquatic center (85%), prepare the community for emergencies (88%), and provide after school programs (89%). It is important to note that even for these latter services at least 85% of respondents indicated they were satisfied with the City’s performance.

**Question 6** For the same list of services I just read, I'd like you to tell me how satisfied you are with the job the City of Aliso Viejo or its contract organizations are doing to provide the service. Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with efforts to: \_\_\_\_\_, or do you not have an opinion?

**FIGURE 11 SATISFACTION WITH SERVICES**





## PERFORMANCE NEEDS & PRIORITIES

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

Rather than rely on sample *averages* to conduct this analysis, True North has developed and refined an *individualized* approach to identifying priorities. This approach is built on the recognition that opinions will vary from resident to resident and that understanding this *variation* is required for assessing how well the City is meeting the needs of its residents.<sup>2</sup> Table 1 on the next page presents a two-dimensional grid based on the importance and satisfaction scales. The horizontal axis corresponds to the four *importance* response options, whereas the vertical scale corresponds to the four *satisfaction* response options.

The 16 cells within the grid are grouped into one of six categories based on how well the City is meeting, or not meeting, a resident's needs for a particular service. The six groups are as follows:

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

---

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

*Not Meeting Needs, Severely*

The City is severely *not* meeting a respondent’s needs if a) a respondent is dissatisfied and the service is viewed as extremely important, or b) a respondent is very dissatisfied and the service is viewed as very important.

**TABLE 1 NEEDS & PRIORITY MATRIX**

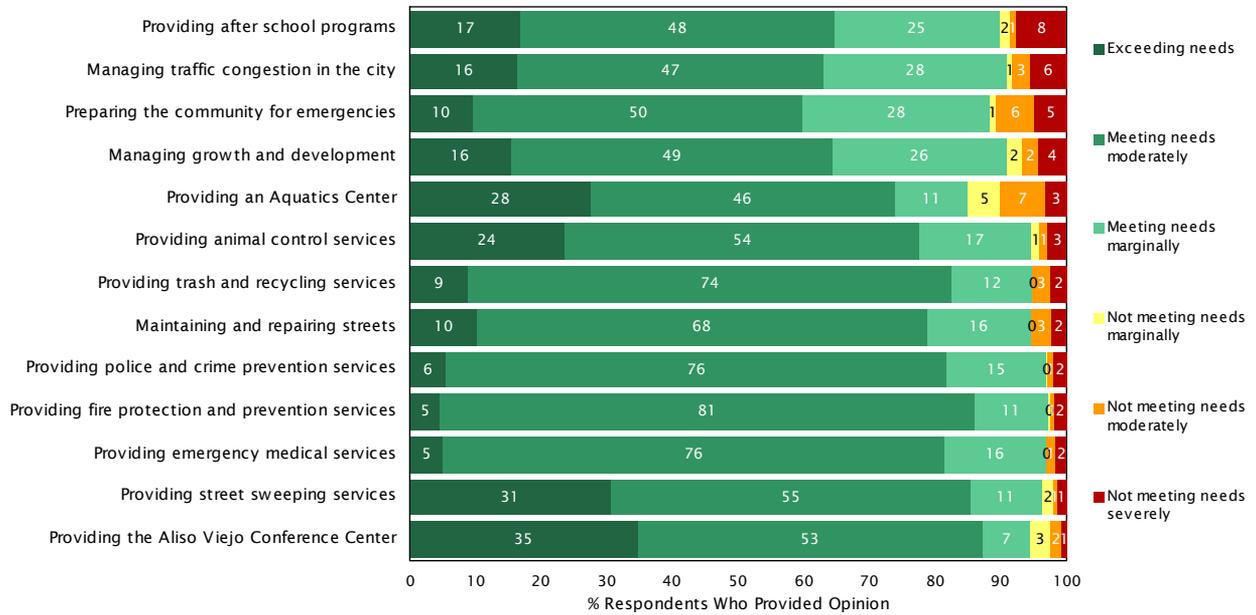
		Importance			
		Not at all important	Somewhat important	Very important	Extremely important
Satisfaction	Very satisfied	Exceeding needs	Exceeding needs	Meeting needs, moderately	Meeting needs, moderately
	Somewhat satisfied	Exceeding needs	Meeting needs, moderately	Meeting needs, marginally	Meeting needs,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

Using this framework, True North categorized respondents individually for each of the 13 services tested in the survey. For example, a respondent who indicated that preparing the community for emergencies was somewhat important and they were very satisfied with the City’s efforts in this service area would be categorized in the *exceeding needs* group for this service. The same respondent may be grouped in the *marginally not meeting needs* group for another service if he or she was somewhat dissatisfied with the City’s efforts to provide the service, but the service was viewed as only somewhat important.

Figure 12 on the next page presents each of the 13 services tested in the survey, along with the percentage of respondents grouped into each of the six possible categories. For ease of interpretation, the color-coding in Figure 12 is consistent with that presented in Table 1. For example, in the service area of preparing the community for emergencies, the City is exceeding the needs of 10% of respondents, moderately meeting the needs of 50% of respondents, marginally meeting the needs of 28% of respondents, marginally not meeting the needs of 1% of respondents, moderately not meeting the needs of 6% of respondents, and severely not meeting the needs of 5% of respondents.

Operating from the management philosophy that, all other things being equal, the City should focus on improving services that have the highest percentage of residents for which the City is *severely* not meeting their needs, the services have been sorted by order of priority. Thus, providing after school programs is the top priority, followed by managing traffic congestion in the City, preparing the community for emergencies, and managing growth and development.

**FIGURE 12 RESIDENT SERVICE NEEDS**



## FUTURE SPENDING PRIORITIES

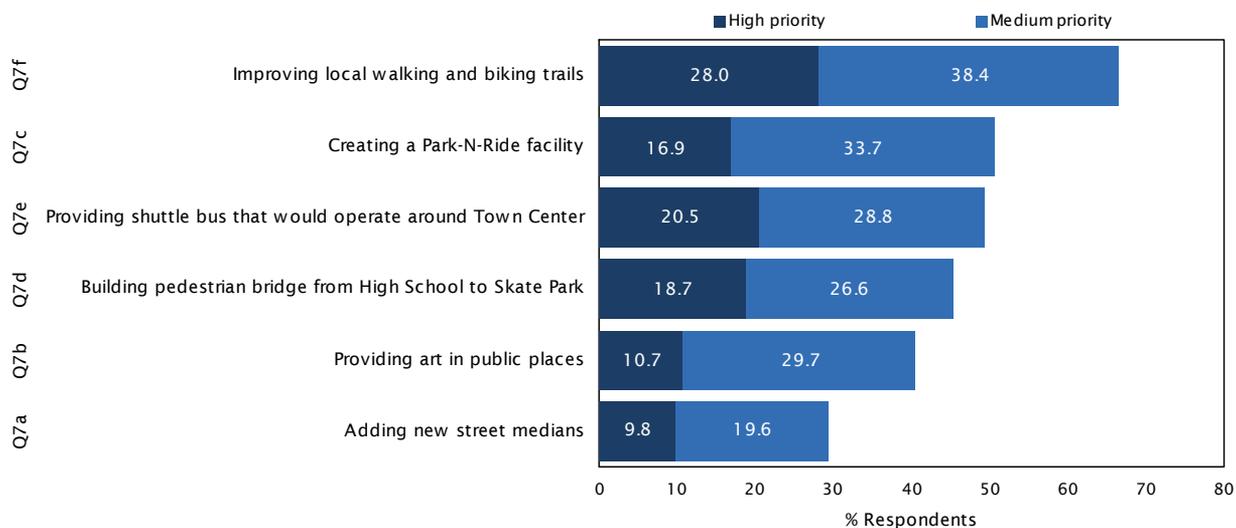
It is often the case that residents’ desires for public facilities and programs exceed a city’s financial resources. In such cases, a city must prioritize projects and programs based upon a variety of factors, including the preferences and needs of residents.

Question 7 was designed to provide Aliso Viejo with a reliable measure of how residents, as a whole, prioritize a variety of projects, programs, and improvements to which the City could allocate resources in the future. The format of the question was straightforward: after informing respondents that the City does not have the financial resources to fund *all* of the projects and programs that may be desired by residents, respondents were asked whether each project or program shown in Figure 13 should be a high, medium, or low priority for future City spending—or if the City should not spend money on the project at all.

The projects and programs are sorted in Figure 13 from high to low based on the percentage of respondents who indicated that an item was *at least* a medium priority for future city spending. Among the projects and programs tested, improving local walking and biking trails was assigned the highest priority (66% high or medium priority), followed by creating a Park-N-Ride facility (51%), and providing a local shuttle bus system that would operate around the Town Center (49%).

**Question 7** *The City of Aliso Viejo has the financial resources to provide some of the services, programs and projects desired by residents. Because it can't fund every project, however, the City must set priorities. As I read each of the following items, please indicate whether you think the City should make the item a high priority, a medium priority, or a low priority for future city spending. If you feel the City should not spend any money on this item, just say so. Please keep in mind that not all of the items can be high priorities.*

**FIGURE 13 PRIORITIES FOR FUTURE SPENDING**



For the interested reader, Table 2 and Table 3 on the next page provide the percentage of respondents who considered a project or program a *high priority* by their age, presence of a child in the home, home type, and years of residence.

**TABLE 2 PRIORITIES FOR FUTURE SPENDING (SHOWING % HIGH PRIORITY) BY AGE & CHILD IN HOME**

	Age (QD1)						Child in Home (QD2)	
	18 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 or older	Yes	No
Improving local walking and biking trails	24.2	32.3	21.7	30.4	34.5	29.6	32.0	25.7
Creating a Park-N-Ride facility	33.3	16.1	13.3	21.7	21.8	29.6	14.7	25.1
Providing shuttle bus that would operate around Town Center	33.3	16.1	18.3	16.3	16.4	14.8	22.3	16.7
Building pedestrian bridge from High School to Skate Park	21.2	14.5	15.0	19.6	20.0	11.1	17.6	16.9
Providing art in public places	12.1	6.5	10.8	10.9	14.5	11.1	8.7	12.1
Adding new street medians	9.1	9.7	7.5	12.0	10.9	11.1	12.1	8.0

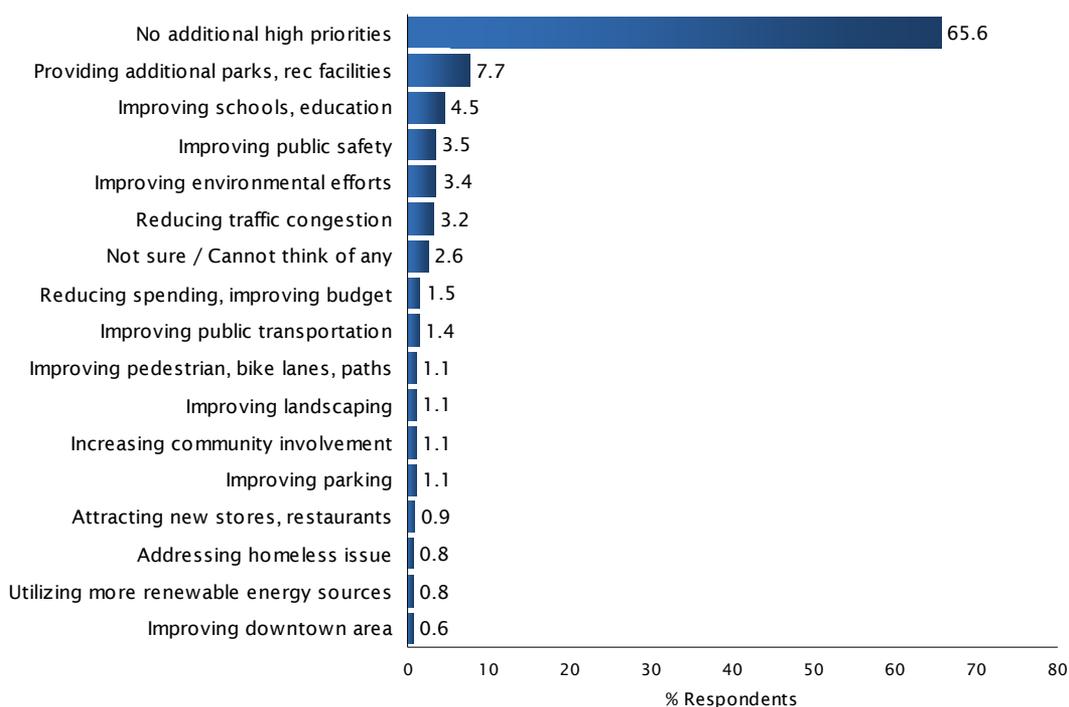
**TABLE 3 PRIORITIES FOR FUTURE SPENDING (SHOWING % HIGH PRIORITY) BY HOME TYPE & YEARS IN ALISO VIEJO**

	Home Type (QD4)			Years in Aliso Viejo (Q1)			
	Single family	Apartment	Condo	Less than 5	5 to 9	10 to 14	15 or more
Improving local walking and biking trails	28.6	32.6	25.9	32.2	32.7	18.5	26.7
Creating a Park-N-Ride facility	18.6	31.6	16.2	17.7	21.3	20.7	21.5
Providing shuttle bus that would operate around Town Center	18.7	27.5	14.6	19.4	19.9	19.1	16.2
Building pedestrian bridge from High School to Skate Park	16.7	24.1	13.8	12.3	21.0	14.2	21.7
Providing art in public places	10.6	13.2	9.2	12.9	10.0	5.6	13.9
Adding new street medians	8.8	20.1	4.8	10.5	12.7	8.3	7.4

Recognizing that the items tested in Question 7 was not an exhaustive list of the range of projects that residents may feel should be a priority for the City, Question 8 followed up by asking respondents if they think there are additional high priority goals that weren't already mentioned. Approximately two-thirds (66%) of respondents indicated that no additional high priorities came to mind (see Figure 14). Among those mentioned, the most common were providing additional parks and recreation facilities (8%), improving schools and education (5%), and improving public safety (4%).

**Question 8** *Is there a project that I didn't mention that you think should be a high priority for future city spending?*

**FIGURE 14 ADDITIONAL HIGH PRIORITIES**



## COMMUNITY EVENTS

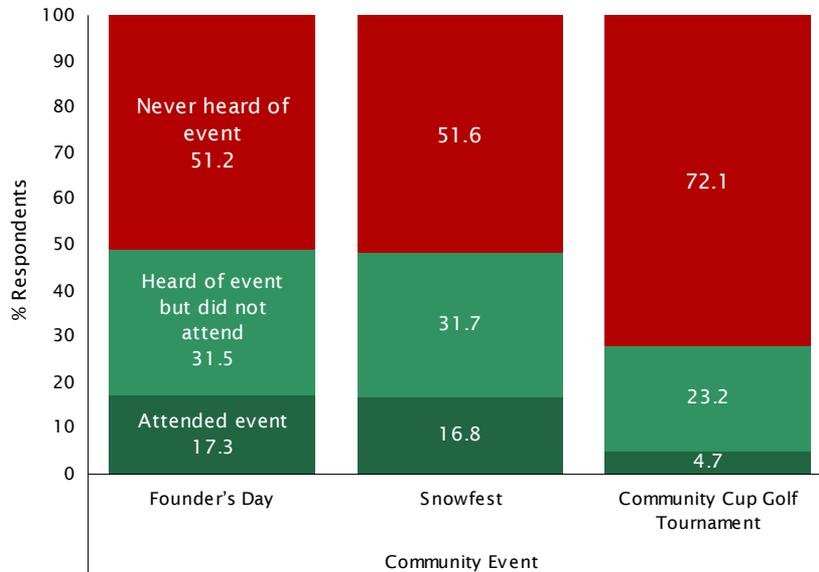
Throughout the year, the City of Aliso Viejo hosts a number of special events designed to bring the community together. One of the objectives of the survey was to profile residents' awareness, participation, and experiences as they relate to special community events provided by the City.

**EVENT ATTENDANCE & AWARENESS** The first question in this series asked residents if they had attended any of the three specific events listed in Figure 15—Founder's Day, Snowfest, and the Community Cup Golf Tournament—in the past two years and, if not, whether they were aware of the event prior to taking the survey. The attendance and awareness percentages are combined and presented below in the next figure.

Less than half of residents surveyed had heard of Founder's Day (49%) and Snowfest (49%), and just over one-quarter (28%) had heard of the Community Cup Golf Tournament. Attendance rates in the past two years were highest for Founder's Day (17%) and Snowfest (17%), followed by the Community Cup Golf Tournament at 5%.

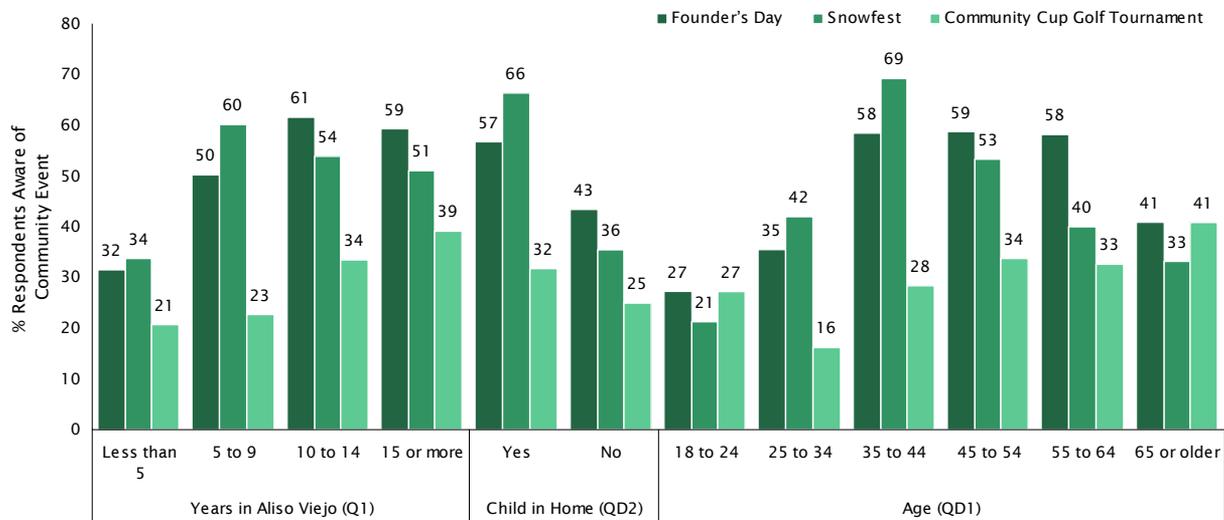
**Question 9** *Next, I'm going to read a short list of community events. For each that I read, please indicate whether you have attended the event in the past two years. If no, ask: Had you heard of this event prior to taking this survey?*

**FIGURE 15 ATTENDANCE AND AWARENESS OF COMMUNITY EVENTS**

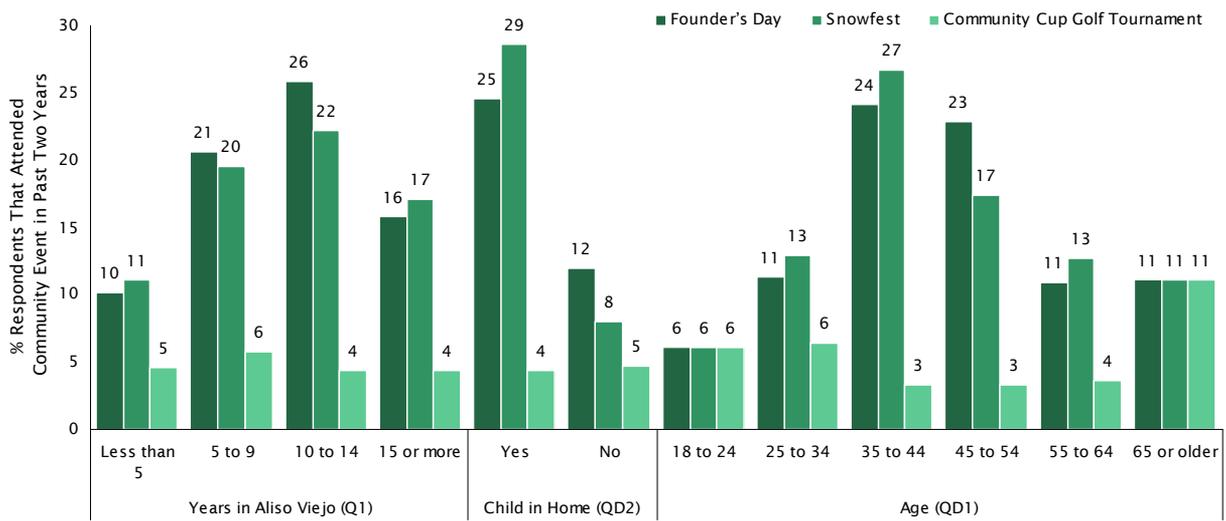


As one might expect, awareness and attendance of the three events varied considerably by demographics of the resident. On the next page, Figure 16 and Figure 17 provide awareness and attendance of the three events by years of residence, presence of a child in the home, and the age of the respondent. Awareness and attendance rates were generally lowest among newer residents, those without a child in the home, and younger residents.

**FIGURE 16 AWARENESS OF COMMUNITY EVENTS BY YEAR IN ALISO VIEJO, CHILD IN HOME & AGE**



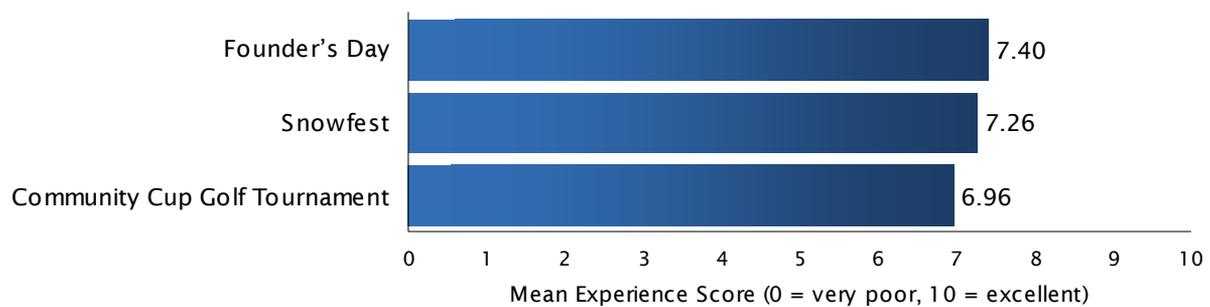
**FIGURE 17 ATTENDANCE OF COMMUNITY EVENTS BY YEAR IN ALISO VIEJO, CHILD IN HOME & AGE**



Respondents who had attended an event in the past two years were next asked to rate their experience, using a scale of 0 to 10, with a 0 meaning their experience was very poor and a 10 meaning their experience was excellent. Figure 18 provides the average experience scores for each of the three events. Ratings were largely positive for all three events, with Founder's Day receiving the highest rating (7.40), followed by Snowfest (7.26), and the Community Cup Golf Tournament (6.96).

**Question 10** *For each of the events that you attended, I'd like to know how you would rate your experience on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means that you had a very poor experience and 10 means you had an excellent experience. A 5 means you had a neutral experience. You can use any number between 0 and 10.*

**FIGURE 18 RATING COMMUNITY EVENTS**

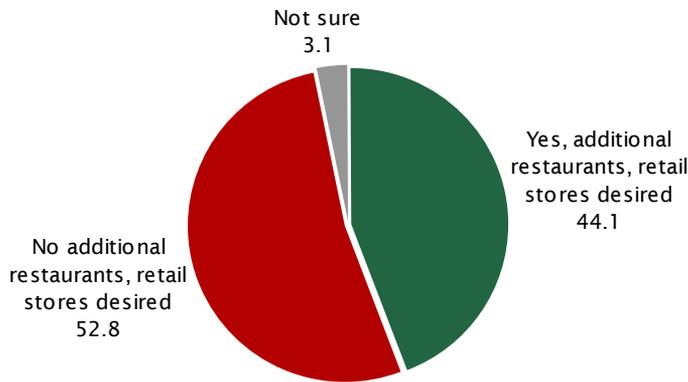


## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

One of the challenges for any city is to create sustainable economic development and redevelopment initiatives that will support the tax base required for current and future needs. Naturally, the success and sustainability of future retail economic initiatives will depend in part on the shopping behaviors and preferences of Aliso Viejo residents. Businesses that meet these preferences will thrive, whereas those that do not will not succeed. Accordingly, the survey included two questions designed to identify residents' desire for new dining and shopping opportunities, as well as an additional question regarding their priorities for the Town Center update.

**Question 11** *Next, I'd like to ask you a few questions about your shopping preferences. Thinking of the restaurants and retail stores that your household visits outside of the city, are there any that you would like to have available in Aliso Viejo?*

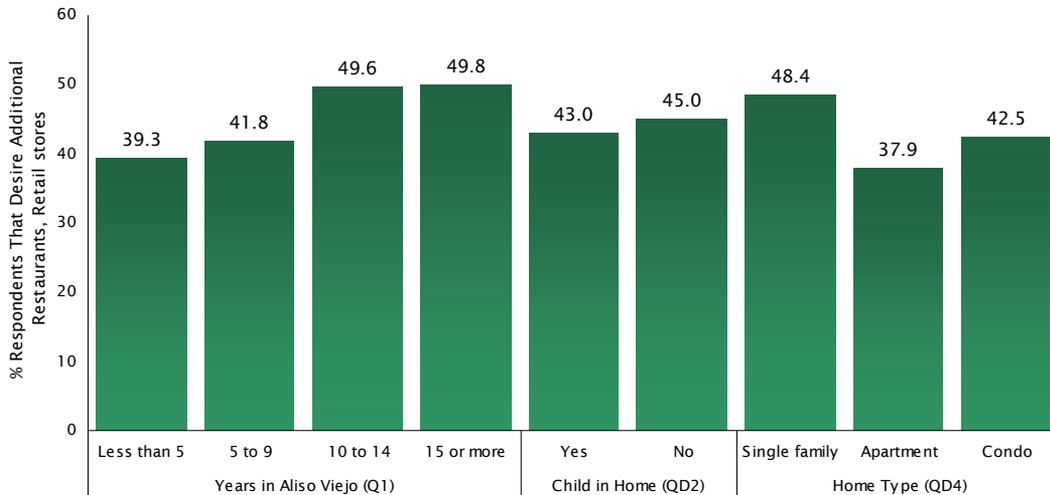
**FIGURE 19 DESIRE ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS, RETAIL STORES IN ALISO VIEJO**



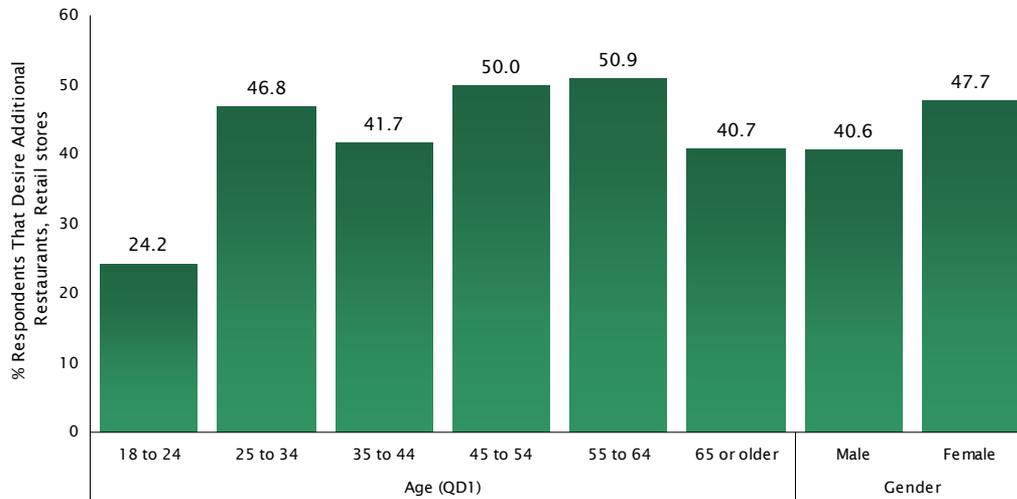
All residents were asked to indicate if, among the restaurants and retail stores their household shops at outside the City, there are any they would like to have available in Aliso Viejo. Forty-four percent (44%) answered this question in the affirmative (see Figure 19).

Interest in additional businesses varied across demographic subgroups and was somewhat higher among those who have lived in the City the longest, those in single-family homes, those between 45 and 64, and women.

**FIGURE 20 DESIRE ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS, RETAIL STORES IN ALISO VIEJO BY YEARS IN ALISO VIEJO, CHILD IN HOME & HOME TYPE**



**FIGURE 21 DESIRE ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS, RETAIL STORES IN ALISO VIEJO BY AGE & GENDER**

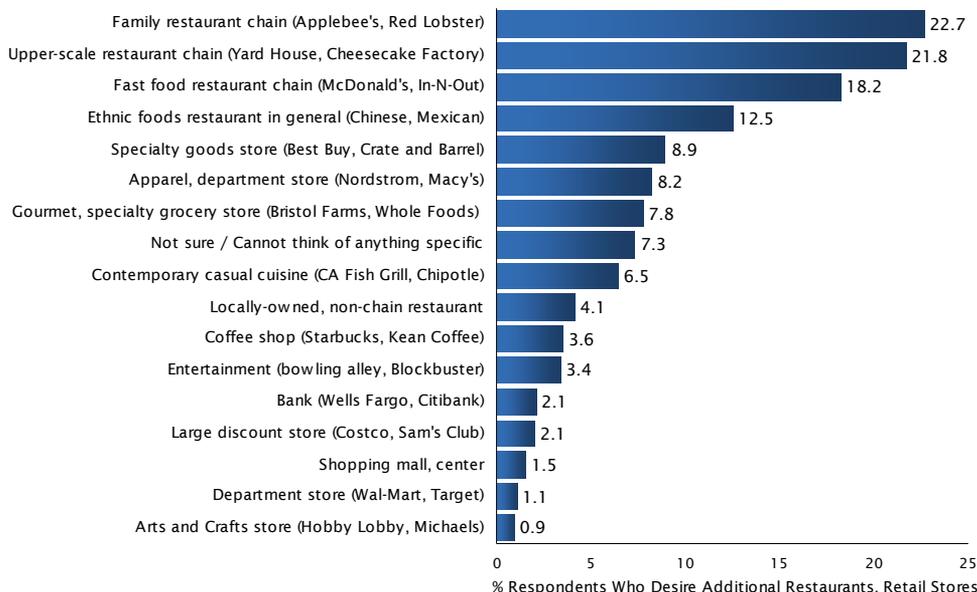


Those interested in additional businesses were asked to name one or two restaurants or retail stores they were most interested in having located in Aliso Viejo. This question was asked in an open-ended manner, allowing respondents to name any business without being limited to a list of options. True North later reviewed the responses and grouped them into the broader categories shown in Figure 22, which provides examples of the applicable categories in parentheses.

The most commonly mentioned types of businesses that residents would like to have located in the City were family restaurant chains, such as Applebee’s and Red Lobster (23%), followed by upper-scale restaurants chains, such as Yard House and Cheesecake Factory (22%), and fast food restaurant chains such as McDonald’s and In-N-Out (18%).

**Question 12** *What are the names of one or two restaurants or retail stores you would most like to have located in Aliso Viejo?*

**FIGURE 22 ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS, RETAIL STORES DESIRED IN ALISO VIEJO**



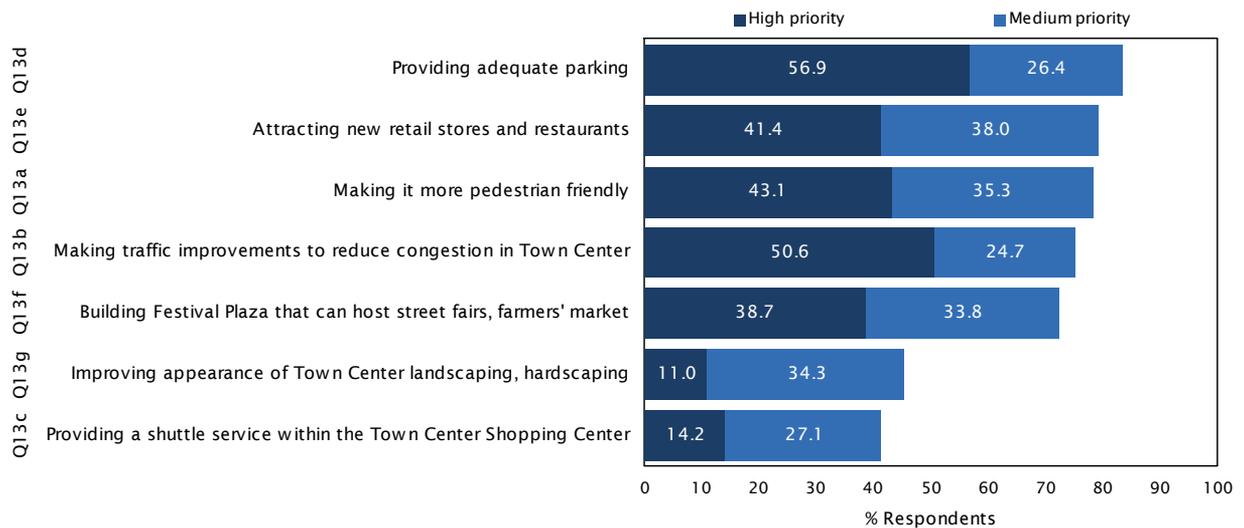
**TOWN CENTER UPDATE** The City of Aliso Viejo is currently pursuing a variety of economic development efforts to attract and retain businesses, create jobs, and spur its local economy. One such effort is the Town Center Vision and Opportunities Plan, which, among other things, will provide new and upgraded amenities to improve the shopping environment and experience in the Aliso Viejo Town Center.

Question 13 was designed to provide the City with a reliable measure of how residents prioritize a variety of proposed projects concerning the Town Center Update. The format of the question was similar to that of Question 7 earlier in the survey: respondents were asked if each item shown to the left of Figure 23 should be a high, medium, or low priority when updating the Town Center—or if the project should not be part of the update at all.

The proposed Town Center projects are sorted in Figure 23 from high to low based on the percentage of respondents who indicated that an item was *at least* a medium priority. Among the projects tested, providing adequate parking was assigned the highest priority (83% high or medium priority), followed by attracting new retail stores and restaurants (79%), making the Town Center more pedestrian friendly (78%), making traffic improvements to reduce congestion (75%), and building a Festival Plaza that can host events like street fairs and a farmers market (73%).

**Question 13** *The City is planning to make improvements to the Town Center shopping center. As I read each of the following items, I'd like you to indicate whether you think the item should be a high, medium, or low priority when updating the Town Center. If you think the item should not be part of the update, just say so. Please keep in mind that not all of the items can be high priorities.*

**FIGURE 23 TOWN CENTER UPDATE PRIORITIES**



For the interested reader, tables 4 and 5 on the next page provide the percentage of respondents who considered a proposed project a *high priority* by their age, presence of a child in the home, home type, and years of residence.

**TABLE 4 TOWN CENTER UPDATE PRIORITIES (SHOWING % HIGH PRIORITY) BY AGE & CHILD IN HOME**

	Age (QD1)						Child in Home (QD2)	
	18 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 or older	Yes	No
Providing adequate parking	45.5	56.5	56.7	55.4	70.9	55.6	55.1	57.8
Attracting new retail stores and restaurants	27.3	50.0	45.8	32.6	49.1	33.3	45.6	38.6
Making it more pedestrian friendly	36.4	40.3	39.2	50.0	41.8	48.1	47.4	40.4
Making traffic improvements to reduce congestion in Town Center	48.5	43.5	50.8	51.1	58.2	55.6	50.6	50.1
Building Festival Plaza that can host street fairs, farmers' market	51.5	43.5	41.7	28.3	32.7	37.0	41.6	37.1
Improving appearance of Town Center landscaping, hardscaping	12.1	9.7	11.7	9.8	9.1	14.8	8.3	12.6
Providing a shuttle service within the Town Center Shopping Center	12.1	11.3	11.7	15.2	21.8	18.5	11.0	16.6

**TABLE 5 TOWN CENTER UPDATE PRIORITIES (SHOWING % HIGH PRIORITY) BY HOME TYPE & YEARS IN ALISO VIEJO**

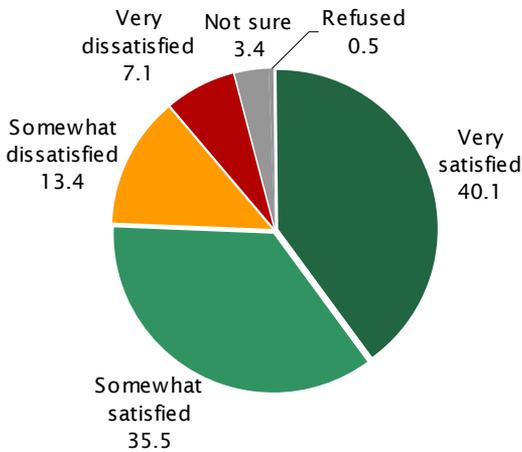
	Home Type (QD4)			Years in Aliso Viejo (Q1)			
	Single family	Apartment	Condo	Less than 5	5 to 9	10 to 14	15 or more
Providing adequate parking	56.2	52.9	60.1	55.7	58.8	57.6	56.1
Attracting new retail stores and restaurants	45.1	33.9	41.7	44.4	41.0	41.4	39.2
Making it more pedestrian friendly	41.1	59.0	37.5	38.5	47.7	40.3	47.4
Making traffic improvements to reduce congestion in Town Center	50.7	44.1	53.2	44.3	50.7	53.6	57.7
Building Festival Plaza that can host street fairs, farmers' market	37.4	43.4	38.1	43.5	44.8	33.5	28.7
Improving appearance of Town Center landscaping, hardscaping	9.1	17.7	9.0	14.1	13.3	6.5	9.2
Providing a shuttle service within the Town Center Shopping Center	13.2	23.2	10.3	11.6	16.1	9.9	18.8

# CITY-RESIDENT COMMUNICATION

The importance of City-resident communication cannot be overstated. Much of a city’s success is shaped by the quality of information that is exchanged in both directions, from the city to its residents and vice-versa. This study is just one example of Aliso Viejo’s efforts to enhance the information flow to the City to better understand citizens’ concerns, perceptions, and needs. In this section of the report, we present the results of a variety of communication-related questions.

**SATISFACTION WITH COMMUNICATION** Question 14 of the survey asked residents to report their satisfaction with city-resident communication in the City of Aliso Viejo. Overall, 76% of respondents indicated they were satisfied with City’s efforts to communicate with residents through newsletters, the Internet, social media and other means. Approximately one-fifth (21%) were dissatisfied with the City’s efforts in this respect, and another 4% were unsure or chose not to provide an opinion.

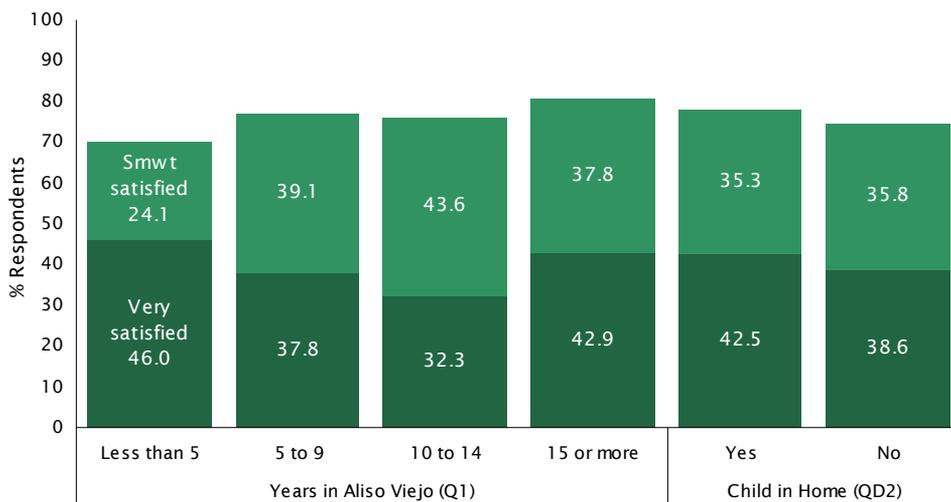
**FIGURE 24 SATISFACTION WITH COMMUNICATION**



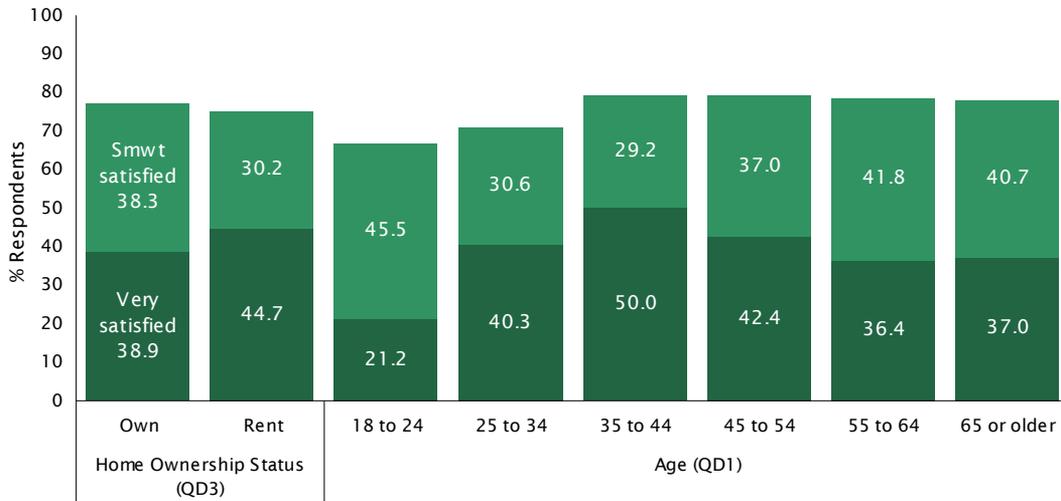
**Question 14** Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the City's efforts to communicate with residents through newsletters, the Internet, social media and other means?

Figures 25 through 27 display how the percentage of respondents who were satisfied with the City’s communication varied across a host of demographic subgroups. Younger residents, and particularly those under the age of 25 were among the least likely subgroups to indicate satisfaction with city-resident communication.

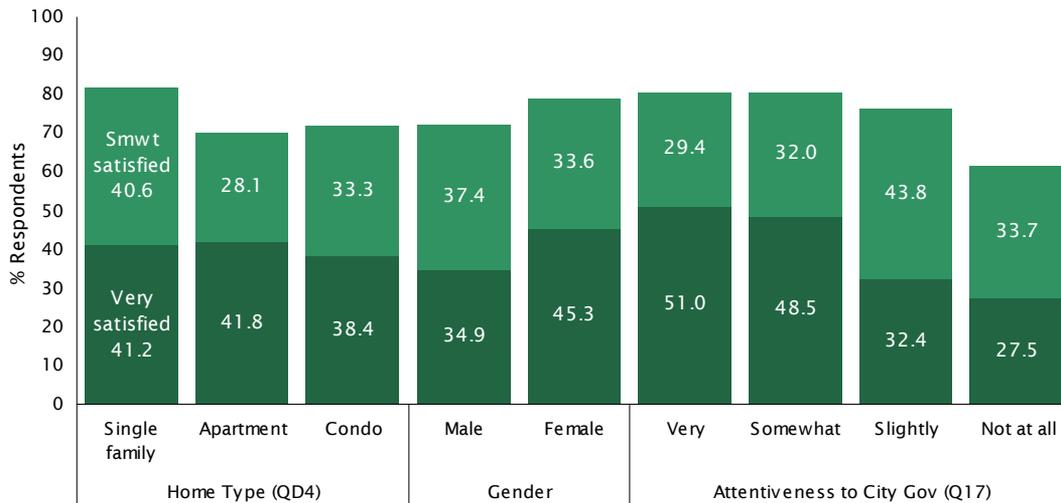
**FIGURE 25 SATISFACTION WITH COMMUNICATION BY YEARS IN ALISO VIEJO & CHILD IN HOME**



**FIGURE 26 SATISFACTION WITH COMMUNICATION BY HOME OWNERSHIP STATUS & AGE**



**FIGURE 27 SATISFACTION WITH COMMUNICATION BY HOME TYPE, GENDER & ATTENTIVENESS TO CITY GOV**



**SOURCES OF INFORMATION** To help the City identify the most effective means of communicating with residents, it is first helpful to understand what sources they currently rely on for this type of information. In an open-ended manner, residents were asked to list the information sources they typically use to find out about Aliso Viejo news, programs, and events. Because respondents were allowed to provide up to three sources, the percentages shown in Figure 28 on the next page represent the percentage of residents who mentioned a particular source, and thus sum to more than 100.

The most frequently cited source for city-related information was the City’s newsletter, mentioned by 30% of respondents, followed by the Internet in general (26%) and the City’s website (21%). No other sources were mentioned by at least 10% of respondents.

**Question 15** *What information sources do you use to find out about Aliso Viejo news, programs, and events?*

**FIGURE 28 ALISO VIEJO INFORMATION SOURCES**

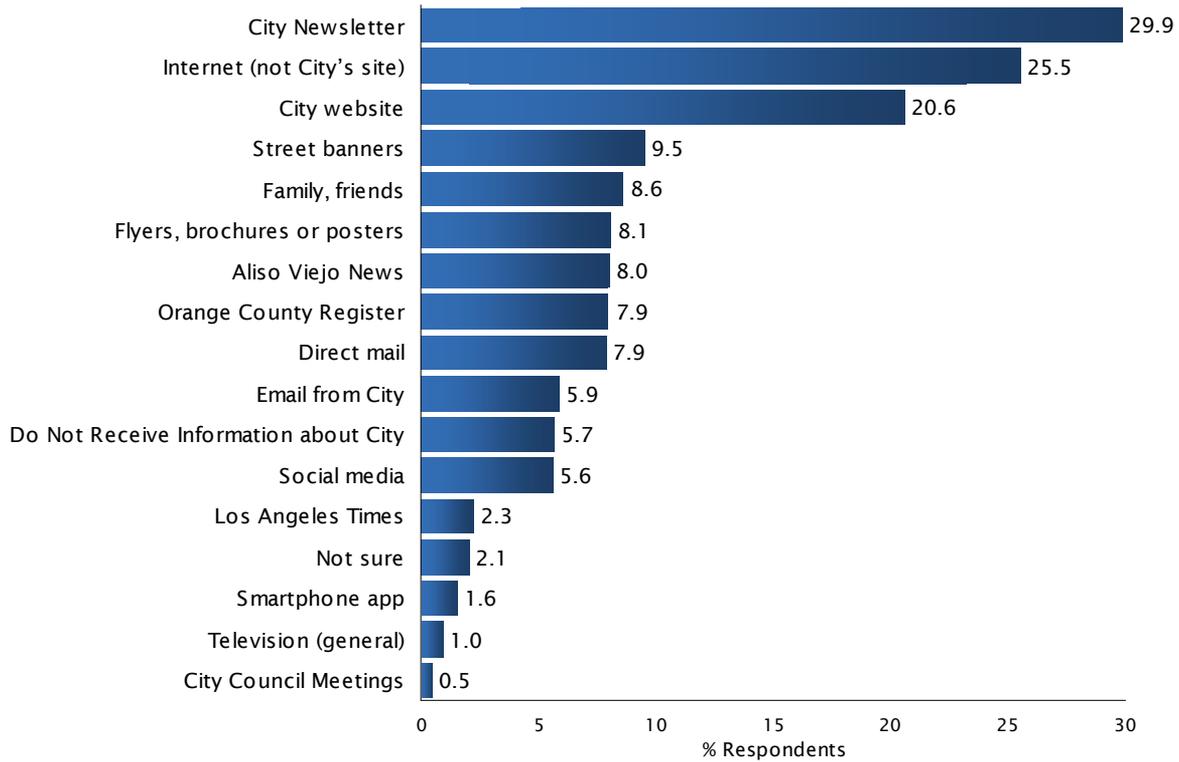
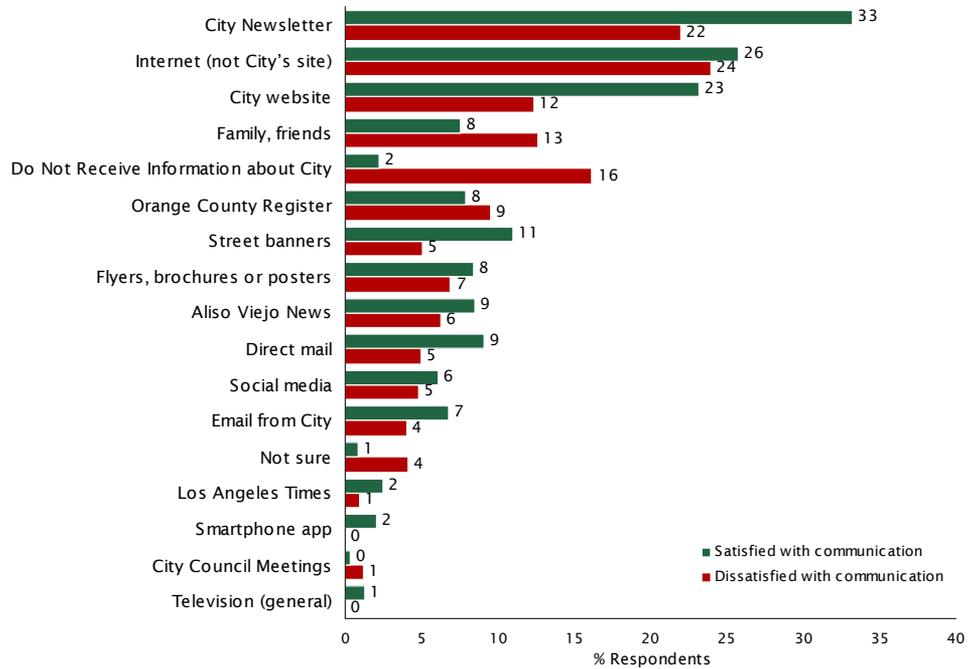


Figure 29 on the next page provides the responses to Question 15 by whether the respondent reported being satisfied with city-resident communication or dissatisfied (see *Satisfaction With Communication* on page 27). As shown in the figure, among those dissatisfied with city-resident communication (red bars), approximately 16% reported that they do not receive information regarding city news, programs, and events, compared with just 2% of those who were satisfied (green bars). Two other notable differences between those dissatisfied and those satisfied include the percentage who cited two primary city-sponsored sources: the City Newsletter (22% vs. 33%) and the City's website (12% vs. 23%).

**FIGURE 29 ALISO VIEJO INFORMATION SOURCES BY SATISFACTION WITH COMMUNICATION**



**COMMUNICATION PREFERENCES** Question 16 next presented respondents with each of the communication methods shown to the left of Figure 30 and asked, for each, if it would be a very effective, somewhat effective, or not an effective way for the City to communicate with them. Overall, respondents indicated that newsletters mailed to their home was the most effective method (84% very or somewhat effective), followed by the City's website (79%), email (74%), flyers, postcards, and brochures available at public locations (68%), and social media like Facebook and Twitter (68%).

**Question 16** *As I read the following ways that the City of Aliso Viejo can communicate with residents, I'd like to know if you think they would be a very effective, somewhat effective, or not an effective way for the City to communicate with you.*

**FIGURE 30 EFFECTIVENESS OF COMMUNICATION METHODS**

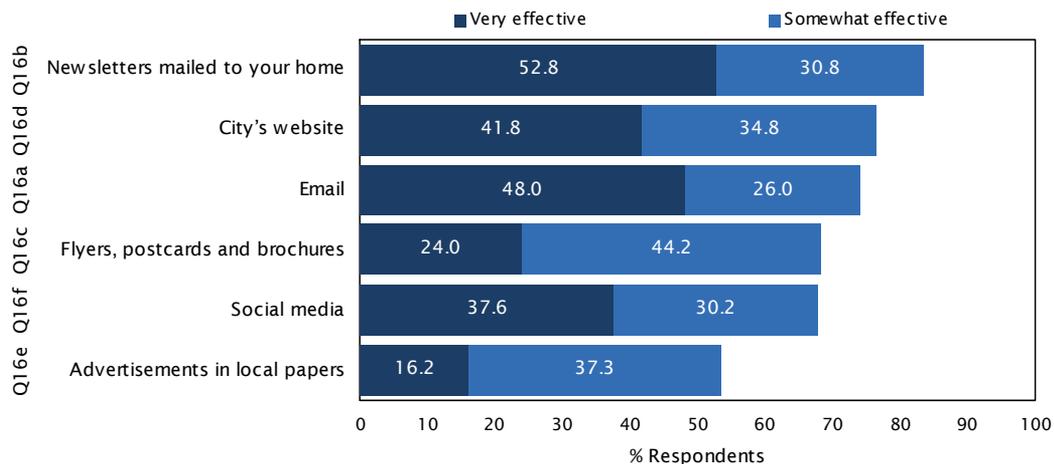


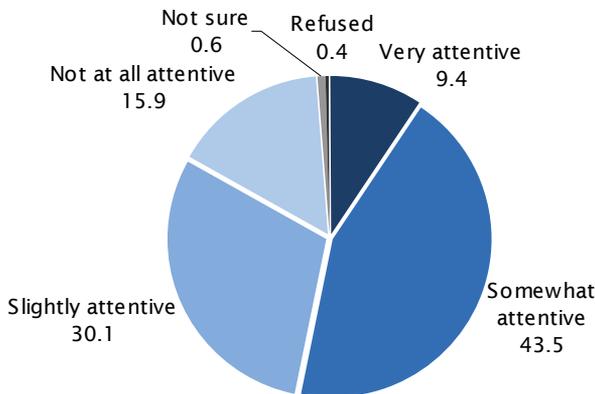
Table 6 below shows that the perceived effectiveness of communication methods varied substantially by respondent age and whether or not the respondent was satisfied with city-resident communication.

**TABLE 6 EFFECTIVENESS OF COMMUNICATION METHODS (SHOWING % VERY EFFECTIVE) BY AGE, SATISFACTION WITH COMMUNICATION & CHILD IN HOME**

	Age (QD1)						Satisfaction With Communication (Q14)		Child in Home (QD2)	
	18 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 or older	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Yes	No
Newsletters mailed to your home	42.4	54.8	60.8	45.7	56.4	44.4	58.4	35.2	56.6	50.2
Email	36.4	46.8	53.3	57.6	41.8	29.6	51.1	42.4	58.6	40.7
City's website	39.4	43.5	44.2	50.0	41.8	11.1	46.9	25.9	45.8	39.2
Social media	75.8	51.6	31.7	29.3	27.3	7.4	36.9	42.5	43.8	33.6
Flyers, postcards and brochures	15.2	32.3	21.7	21.7	20.0	22.2	26.3	18.1	24.1	23.4
Advertisements in local papers	21.2	11.3	8.3	15.2	25.5	37.0	18.2	10.5	12.6	19.3

**ATTENTION PAID TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT** The final question in this series asked respondents to rate how attentive they are to the issues, decisions, and activities of the City of Aliso Viejo using a scale of very attentive, somewhat attentive, slightly attentive, or not at all attentive. Overall, 9% of respondents claimed they are very attentive to matters of local government, 44% somewhat attentive, and 30% slightly attentive. Another 16% of respondents said they do not pay any attention to the activities of the City of Aliso Viejo (see Figure 31).

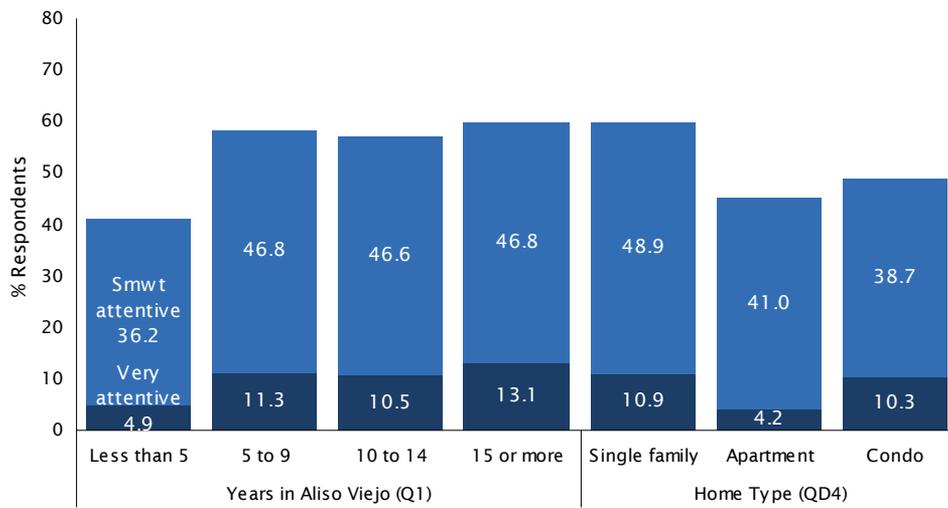
**FIGURE 31 ATTENTIVENESS TO CITY GOVERNMENT**



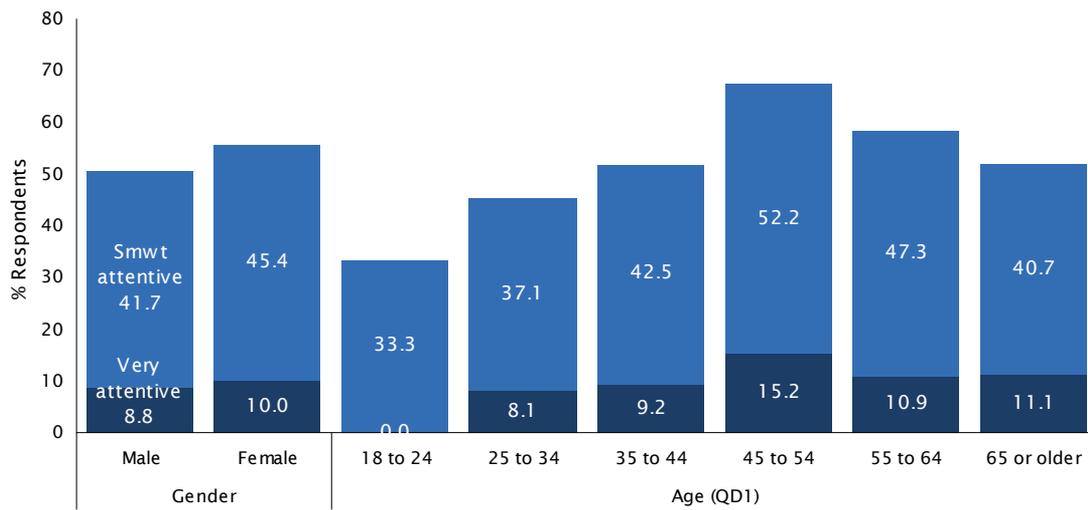
**Question 17** *How much attention do you pay to the issues, decisions, and activities of your City government? Would you say that you are very attentive, somewhat attentive, slightly attentive, or not at all attentive?*

On the next page, figures 32 and 33 display how attentiveness to local government differed across a variety of demographic subgroups. Long time residents, single-family home owners, and older residents (particularly those between 45 and 54) were generally more likely than their counterparts to pay attention to issues, decisions, and activities in the City.

**FIGURE 32 ATTENTIVENESS TO CITY GOVERNMENT BY YEARS IN ALISO VIEJO & HOME TYPE**



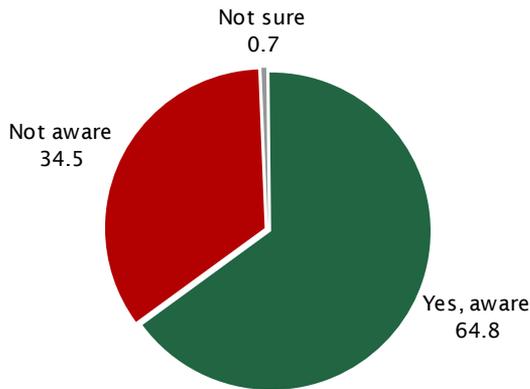
**FIGURE 33 ATTENTIVENESS TO CITY GOVERNMENT BY GENDER & AGE**



PARKS

Aliso Viejo is both a City and a master planned community. As such, some services are provided by the City, and other services are provided by the Aliso Viejo Community Association (AVCA). For example, the City is responsible for providing services such as police protection, fire safety, planning, building and safety, and public works, whereas AVCA responsibilities include common area maintenance, including parks, greenbelts, parkways, and slopes. Two questions were included in the survey to assess residents' awareness of AVCA's role in park ownership and maintenance, and also to identify their preference for park ownership and operation.

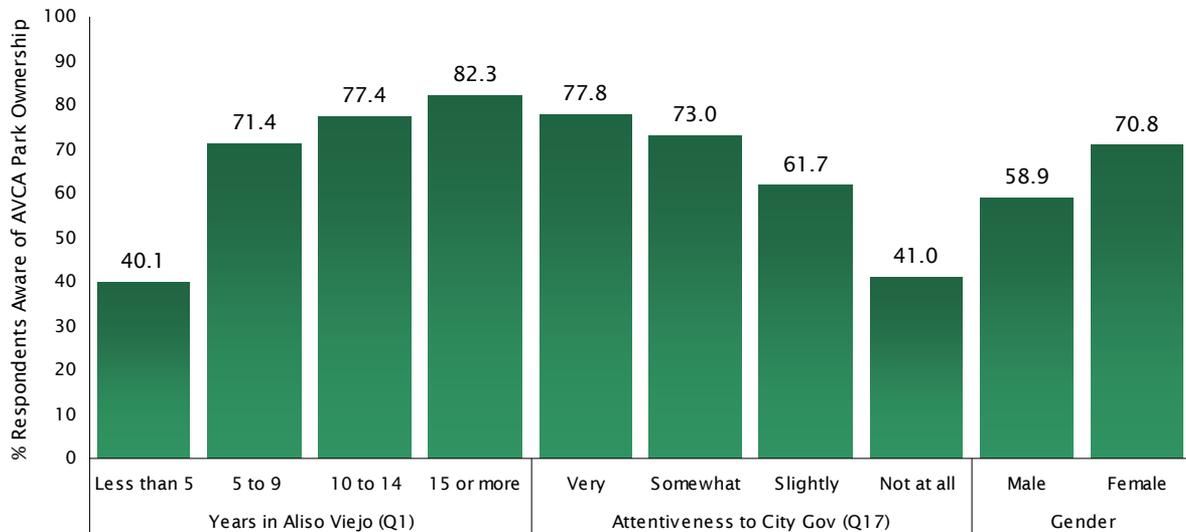
FIGURE 34 AWARENESS OF AVCA PARK OWNERSHIP & MAINTENANCE



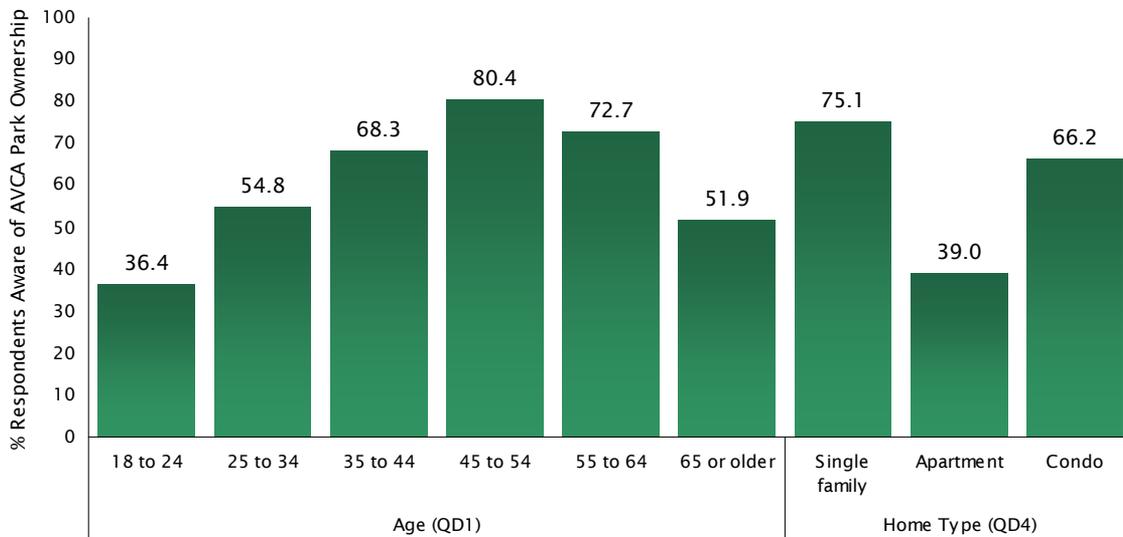
**Question 18** *Prior to taking this survey, were you aware that most parks in the city are owned and maintained by the Aliso Viejo Community Association, also known as AVCA?*

As shown in Figure 34, approximately two-thirds (65%) of residents are aware that most parks in the City are owned and maintained by AVCA. Figures 35 and 36 display awareness of AVCA's role by a variety of demographic subgroups. Long time residents, those most attentive to city government, women, residents between the ages of 45 and 54, and owners of single-family homes were the most likely subgroups to be aware of AVCA's role in park ownership and maintenance.

FIGURE 35 AWARENESS OF AVCA PARK OWNERSHIP & MANAGEMENT BY YEARS IN ALISO VIEJO, ATTENTIVENESS TO CITY GOV & GENDER

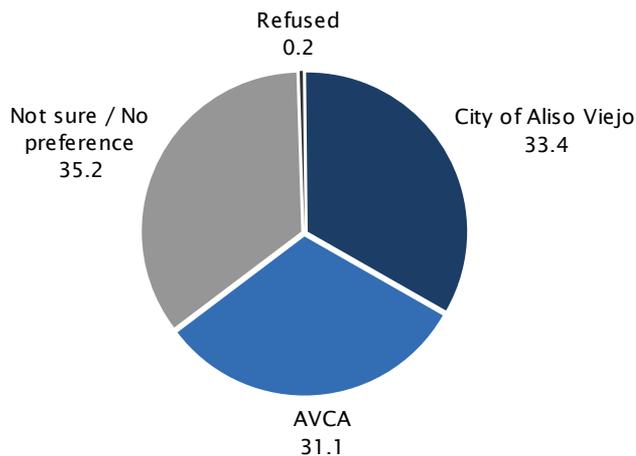


**FIGURE 36 AWARENESS OF AVCA PARK OWNERSHIP & MANAGEMENT BY AGE & HOME TYPE**



The final substantive question of the survey asked respondents if they would prefer that the City of Aliso Viejo or AVCA own and operate local parks. Figure 37 displays the findings of this question and reveals that residents are evenly divided on the topic of park ownership and operation, with 33% preferring the City of Aliso Viejo, 31% opting for AVCA, and another 35% unsure of their opinion or having no preference either way.

**FIGURE 37 PREFERENCE FOR PARK OWNERSHIP & MAINTENANCE**

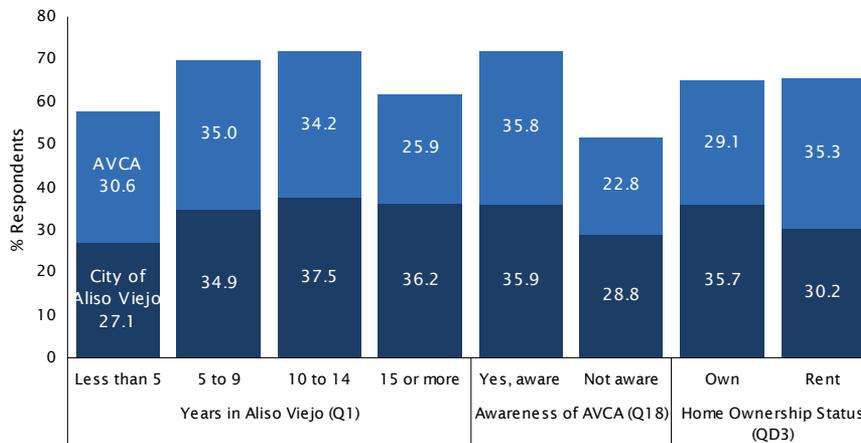


**Question 19** *Would you prefer to have \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ own and operate local parks?*

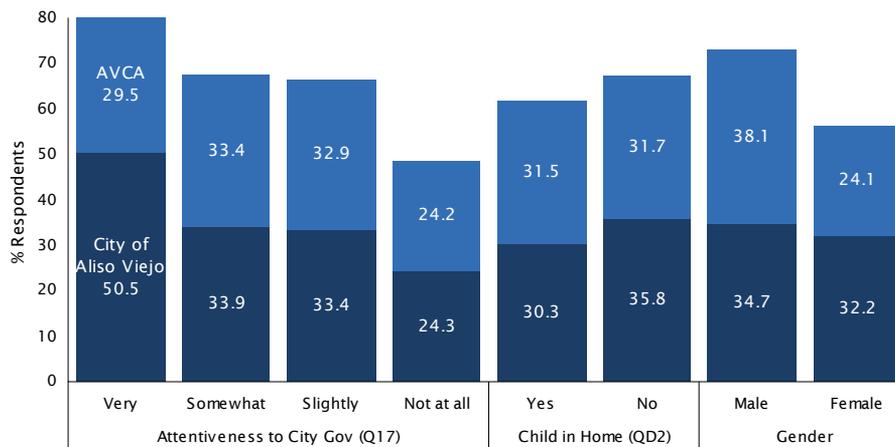
Figures 38 through 40 on the next page display the findings of this question by a variety of demographic subgroups, showing the percentage who preferred either the City of Aliso Viejo or AVCA (the percentages of those without a preference are not included in the figures). Opinions varied substantially between subgroups. Notable findings include: a preference for the City among long time residents; an even split between the City and AVCA among those aware of AVCA, with a slight edge to the City among

those previously unaware of AVCA; a distinct preference for the City among those who consider themselves very attentive to City government and local issues; a preference for AVCA among younger residents and renters, and a preference for the City among older residents and single-family home owners.

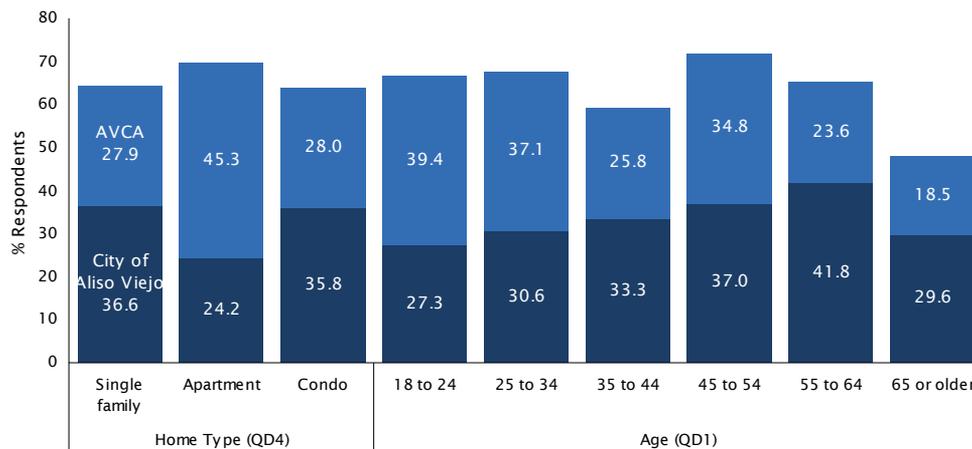
**FIGURE 38 PREFERENCE FOR PARK OWNERSHIP & MAINTENANCE BY YEARS IN ALISO VIEJO & AWARENESS OF AVCA**



**FIGURE 39 PREFERENCE FOR PARK OWNERSHIP & MAINTENANCE BY ATTENTIVENESS TO CITY GOV, CHILD IN HOME & GENDER**



**FIGURE 40 PREFERENCE FOR PARK OWNERSHIP & MAINTENANCE BY HOME TYPE & AGE**





## BACKGROUND & DEMOGRAPHICS

**TABLE 7 DEMOGRAPHICS OF SAMPLE**

<i>Total Respondents</i>	<i>400</i>
<b>Years in Aliso Viejo (Q1)</b>	
Less than 5	31.3
5 to 9	23.7
10 to 14	22.3
15 or more	21.8
Refused	1.0
<b>Age (QD1)</b>	
18 to 24	10.3
25 to 34	21.1
35 to 44	26.0
45 to 54	22.1
55 to 64	10.8
65 or older	7.0
Refused	2.7
<b>Child in Home (QD2)</b>	
Yes	41.9
No	56.5
Refused	1.5
<b>Home Ownership Status (QD3)</b>	
Own	61.6
Rent	35.0
Refused	3.3
<b>Home Type (QD4)</b>	
Single family	45.8
Apartment	19.7
Condo	32.6
Refused	1.9
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	50.2
Female	49.8

Table 7 presents the key demographic and background information collected during the survey. Because of the probability-based sampling methodology used in this study (see *Sample* on page 37), the results shown in the table are representative of adult residents in the City of Aliso Viejo. The primary motivation for collecting the background and demographic information was to provide a better insight into how the results of the substantive questions of the survey vary by demographic characteristics (see Appendix A for more details).



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

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

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

Some of the questions asked in this study were presented only to a subset of respondents. For example, only respondents who had attended a particular community event (Question 9) were asked to rate their experiences at the event (Question 10). The questionnaire included with this report (see *Questionnaire & Toplines* on page 40) identifies the skip patterns that were used during the interview to ensure that each respondent received the appropriate questions.

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

**SAMPLE** The survey was conducted using a stratified sample of 400 households drawn from the universe of registered voter households in the City. Consistent with the profile of this universe, the sample was stratified on household characteristics and a total of 400 clusters were defined, each representing a particular combination of household party-type and geographic location within the City. Once a household was randomly contacted, potential respondents were then screened for inclusion in the study based on their age and gender. This method helped to ensure a balanced sample profile that matches that of the City's adult population within certain tolerances. Note that a respondent who was contacted at a registered household did not need to be a registered voter to participate in the study.

**MARGIN OF ERROR DUE TO SAMPLING** By using the probability-based sample as discussed above and monitoring the sample characteristics as data collection proceeded, True North ensured that the sample was representative of adult residents in the City of Aliso Viejo. The results of the sample can thus be used to estimate the opinions of *all* adult residents in the City. Because not every adult in the City participated in the survey, however, the results have what is known as a statistical margin of error due to sampling. The margin of error refers to the difference between what was found in the survey of 400 adults for a particular question and what would have been found if all of the estimated 36,613 adults in the City<sup>3</sup> had been interviewed.

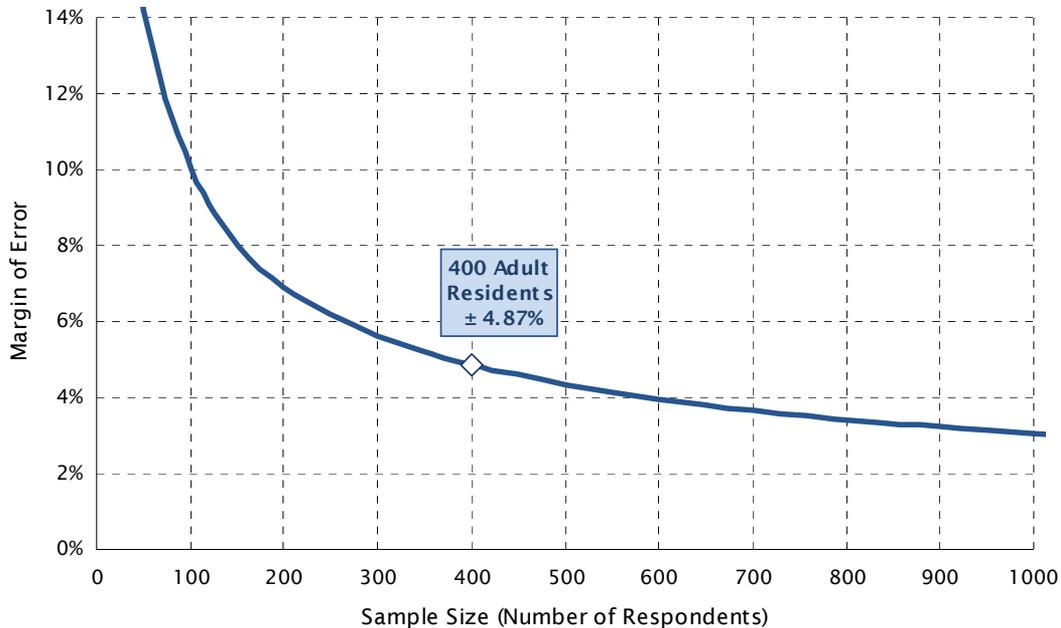
For example, in estimating the percentage of adults who rate the quality of life in Aliso Viejo as excellent (Q12), the margin of error can be calculated if one knows the size of the population, the size of the sample, a desired confidence level, and the distribution of responses to the question. The appropriate equation for estimating the margin of error, in this case, is shown below.

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

where  $\hat{p}$  is the proportion of adults who rated the quality of life as excellent (0.63 for 63% in this example),  $N$  is the population size of all adults (36,613),  $n$  is the sample size that received the question (400), and  $t$  is the upper  $\alpha/2$  point for the t-distribution with  $n - 1$  degrees of freedom (1.96 for a 95% confidence interval). Solving the equation using these values reveals a margin of error of  $\pm 4.71\%$ . This means that with 63% of survey respondents rating the quality of life in Aliso Viejo as excellent, we can be 95 percent confident that the actual percentage of *all* adult residents in Aliso Viejo who would rate the quality of life as excellent is between 58% and 68%.

Figure 41 provides a plot of the *maximum* margin of error in this study. The maximum margin of error for a dichotomous percentage result occurs when the answers are evenly split such that 50% provide one response and 50% provide the alternative response (i.e.,  $\hat{p} = 0.5$ ). For this survey, the maximum margin of error is  $\pm 4.87\%$  for questions answered by all 400 respondents.

**FIGURE 41 MAXIMUM MARGIN OF ERROR**



Within this report, figures and tables show how responses to certain questions varied by demographic characteristics such as ZIP code within the City, age of the respondent, and years of residence in the City. Figure 41 is thus useful for understanding how the maximum margin of error for a percentage estimate will grow as the number of individuals asked a question (or in a partic-

3. Sources: California Department of Finance population estimate (January 2013) and age distribution from U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census Data.

ular subgroup) shrinks. Because the margin of error grows exponentially as the sample size decreases, the reader should use caution when generalizing and interpreting the results for small subgroups.

**DATA COLLECTION** The primary method of data collection was telephone interviewing. Interviews were conducted during weekday evenings (5:30PM to 9PM) and on weekends (10AM to 5PM) between August 23 and September 6, 2013. It is standard practice not to call during the day on weekdays because most working adults are unavailable and thus calling during those hours would bias the sample. The interviews averaged 20 minutes in length. Respondents who preferred to participate online were allowed to do so at their convenience via a secure website hosted by True North. Each respondent who preferred to participate online was given a unique password that could be used only once.

**DATA PROCESSING** Data processing consisted of checking the data for errors or inconsistencies, coding and recoding responses, categorizing open-ended responses, and preparing frequency analyses and crosstabulations.

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

## QUESTIONNAIRE &amp; TOPLINES



City of Aliso Viejo  
Resident Satisfaction Survey  
Final Toplines  
September 2013

#### Section 1: Introduction to Study

Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm calling on behalf of TNR, an independent public opinion research company. We're conducting a survey about important issues in Aliso Viejo (Uh-LEE-so Vee-A-ho) and we would like to get your opinions.

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

*If needed:* The survey should take about 14 minutes to complete.

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

*If needed:* If you prefer, you can also take the survey online at your convenience at: <<insert URL>>. Provide unique password.

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

#### Section 2: Screener for Inclusion in the Study

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

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

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

*If respondent asks why we want to speak to a particular demographic group, explain:* It's important that the sample of people for the survey is representative of the adult population in the city for it to be statistically reliable. At this point, we need to balance our sample by asking for people who fit a particular demographic profile.

#### Section 3: Quality of Life

I'd like to begin by asking you a few questions about what it's like to live in the City of Aliso Viejo (Uh-LEE-so Vee-A-ho).

Q1	How long have you lived in Aliso Viejo (Uh-LEE-so Vee-A-ho)?		
	1	Less than 1 year	4%
	2	1 to 4 years	27%
	3	5 to 9 years	24%
	4	10 to 14 years	22%
	5	15 years or longer	22%
	99	Refused	1%

Q2	How would you rate the overall quality of life in the City? Would you say it is excellent, good, fair, poor or very poor?		
	1	Excellent	63%
	2	Good	33%
	3	Fair	3%
	4	Poor	1%
	5	Very poor	0%
	98	Not sure	0%
	99	Refused	0%
Q3	If the city government could change one thing to make Aliso Viejo (Uh-LEE-so Vee-A-ho) a better place to live now and in the future, what change would you like to see? Verbatim responses recorded and later grouped into categories shown below.		
	No changes needed		22%
	Not sure / Cannot think of anything		15%
	Provide, improve parks, recreation facilities		9%
	Reduce traffic, improve circulation		5%
	Limit growth, development		5%
	Reduce taxes, fees		5%
	Provide more community events		4%
	Improve economy, attract employers		4%
	Eliminate Mello-Roos		4%
	Improve roads, infrastructure		3%
	Improve parking		3%
	Improve schools, education		3%
	Improve public transportation		3%
	Provide more affordable housing		2%
	Enforce speed limits, traffic laws		2%
	Improve public safety		2%
	Improve, celebrate diversity, culture		1%
	Improve environmental efforts		1%
	Improve City government, leadership		1%
	Address homelessness issue		1%
	Fewer regulations, restrictions		1%
	Reduce cost of living		1%
	Address water quality issues		1%
	Improve communication with residents		1%

Section 4: City Services								
Q4	Generally speaking, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the job the City of Aliso Viejo (Uh-LEE-so Vee-A-ho) is doing to provide city services? <i>Get answer, then ask:</i> Would that be very (satisfied/dissatisfied) or somewhat (satisfied/dissatisfied)?							
	1	Very satisfied						67%
	2	Somewhat satisfied						25%
	3	Somewhat dissatisfied						1%
	4	Very dissatisfied						1%
	98	Not sure						4%
	99	Refused						0%
Q5	Next, I'd like to ask you about a number of services offered by the City of Aliso Viejo (Uh-LEE-so Vee-A-ho) directly or through contract with other organizations. For each of the services I read, please tell me whether the service is extremely important to you, very important, somewhat important, or not at all important. <i>Make sure respondent understands the 4 point scale.</i>							
	<i>Randomize</i>		Extremely Important	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not at all Important	No Opinion	Refused
A	Providing police and crime prevention services		44%	47%	9%	0%	0%	0%
B	Providing fire protection and prevention services		42%	51%	6%	1%	0%	0%
C	Providing emergency medical services		44%	48%	7%	1%	0%	0%
D	Preparing the community for emergencies		31%	45%	21%	2%	0%	0%
E	Providing trash and recycling services		29%	54%	13%	2%	1%	0%
F	Maintaining and repairing streets		24%	59%	15%	1%	1%	0%
G	Providing animal control services		18%	37%	37%	7%	1%	0%
H	Providing after school programs		20%	37%	25%	14%	3%	1%
I	Providing street sweeping services		13%	37%	43%	6%	1%	0%
J	Providing an Aquatics Center		7%	24%	41%	25%	2%	0%
K	Providing the Aliso Viejo Conference Center		3%	15%	48%	29%	4%	1%
L	Managing growth and development		21%	45%	29%	4%	1%	0%
M	Managing traffic congestion in the city		22%	50%	24%	4%	0%	0%

<p><b>Q6</b></p> <p>For the same list of services I just read, I'd like you to tell me how satisfied you are with the job the City of Aliso Viejo (Uh-LEE-so Vee-A-ho) or its contract organizations are doing to provide the service.</p> <p>Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with efforts to: _____, or do you not have an opinion?  <i>Get answer. If 'satisfied' or 'dissatisfied', then ask: Would that be very (satisfied/dissatisfied) or somewhat (satisfied/dissatisfied)?</i></p>							
	<i>Randomize</i>	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	No Opinion	Refused
A	Provide police and crime prevention services	75%	18%	2%	1%	3%	0%
B	Provide fire protection and prevention services	76%	12%	1%	1%	9%	0%
C	Provide emergency medical services	69%	15%	1%	1%	13%	0%
D	Prepare the community for emergencies	37%	34%	7%	3%	20%	1%
E	Provide trash and recycling services	72%	19%	3%	1%	3%	0%
F	Maintain and repairing streets	71%	21%	3%	2%	2%	0%
G	Provide animal control services	48%	30%	2%	2%	17%	1%
H	Provide after school programs	29%	25%	3%	3%	37%	2%
I	Provide street sweeping services	65%	25%	2%	2%	6%	0%
J	Provide an Aquatics Center	31%	27%	5%	5%	29%	2%
K	Provide the Aliso Viejo Conference Center	26%	31%	2%	1%	38%	1%
L	Manage growth and development	43%	35%	5%	3%	14%	0%
M	Manage traffic congestion in the city	51%	37%	5%	3%	3%	0%

**Section 5: Future Spending Priorities**

The City of Aliso Viejo (Uh-LEE-so Vee-A-ho) has the financial resources to provide some of the services, programs and projects desired by residents. Because it can't fund every project, however, the City must set priorities.

<p><b>Q7</b></p> <p>As I read each of the following items, please indicate whether you think the City should make the item a high priority, a medium priority, or a low priority for future city spending. If you feel the City should not spend any money on this item, just say so. Please keep in mind that not all of the items can be high priorities.</p> <p>Here is the (first/next) one:_____. Should this item be a high, medium or low priority for the City – or should the City not spend any money on this item?</p>							
	<i>Randomize</i>	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Should not spend money	No Opinion	Refused
A	Adding new street medians	10%	20%	51%	18%	2%	0%

B	Providing art in public places	11%	30%	44%	15%	0%	0%
C	Creating a Park-N-Ride facility	17%	34%	32%	14%	2%	1%
D	Building a pedestrian bridge across Aliso Creek Road from the High School to the Laguna Niguel (Ni-gell) Skate Park	19%	27%	30%	21%	3%	0%
E	Providing a local shuttle bus system that would operate around the Town Center	21%	29%	32%	18%	1%	0%
F	Improving local walking and biking trails	28%	38%	25%	8%	1%	0%
Q8	Is there a project that I <i>didn't</i> mention that you think should be a high priority for future city spending? <i>If yes, ask: Please briefly describe it to me. Verbatim responses recorded and later grouped into categories shown below.</i>						
	No additional high priorities	66%					
	Providing additional parks, rec facilities	8%					
	Improving schools, education	5%					
	Reducing traffic congestion	3%					
	Improving environmental efforts	3%					
	Improving public safety	3%					
	Not sure / Cannot think of any	3%					
	Improving landscaping	1%					
	Utilizing more renewable energy sources	1%					
	Addressing homeless issue	1%					
	Improving public transportation	1%					
	Improving parking	1%					
	Reducing spending, improving budget	1%					
	Improving pedestrian, bike lanes, paths	1%					
	Improving downtown area	1%					
	Increasing community involvement	1%					
	Attracting new stores, restaurants	1%					

**Section 6: Community Events**

Q9	Next, I'm going to read a short list of community events. For each that I read, please indicate whether you have attended the event in the past two years. <i>If says no, ask: Had you heard of this event prior to taking this survey?</i>						
		Q9a: Attended?			Q9b: Heard of?		
	<i>Randomize</i>	Yes	No	DK/NA	Yes	No	Refused
A	Founder's Day	17%	82%	1%	49%	51%	0%
B	Community Cup Golf Tournament	5%	95%	0%	28%	72%	0%
C	Snowfest	17%	83%	1%	49%	52%	0%

Q10	For each of the events that you attended, I'd like to know how you would rate your experience on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means that you had a very poor experience and 10 means you had an excellent experience. A 5 means you had a neutral experience. You can use any number between 0 and 10. <i>Make sure respondent understands the scale.</i> How would you rate your experience at the: ____?												
<i>Ask Q10 for each item where Q9a = 1.</i>													
<i>Randomize</i>		Very poor					Neutral					Excellent	Refused
A	Founder's Day	1%	0%	0%	1%	5%	11%	7%	18%	27%	6%	19%	4%
B	Community Cup Golf Tournament	0%	0%	0%	0%	10%	14%	4%	24%	31%	0%	10%	7%
C	Snowfest	2%	0%	3%	3%	0%	11%	7%	17%	29%	11%	14%	2%

#### Section 7: Economic Development

Next, I'd like to ask you a few questions about your shopping preferences.

Q11	Thinking of the restaurants and retail stores that your household visits outside of the city, are there any that you would like to have available in Aliso Viejo (Uh-LEE-so Vee-A-ho)?			
	1	Yes	44%	Ask Q12
	2	No	53%	Skip to Q13
	98	Not sure	3%	Skip to Q13
	99	Refused	0%	Skip to Q13
Q12	What are the names of one or two restaurants or retail stores you would most like to have located in Aliso Viejo (Uh-LEE-so Vee-A-ho)?			
	Family restaurant chain (Applebee's, Red Lobster)		23%	
	Upper-scale restaurant chain (Yard House, Cheesecake Factory)		22%	
	Fast food restaurant chain (McDonald's, In-N-Out)		18%	
	Ethnic foods restaurant in general (Chinese, Mexican)		13%	
	Specialty goods store (Best Buy, Crate and Barrel)		9%	
	Apparel, department store (Nordstrom, Macy's)		8%	
	Gourmet, specialty grocery store (Bristol Farms, Whole Foods)		8%	
	Not sure / Cannot think of any		7%	
	Contemporary casual cuisine (CA Fish Grill, Chipotle)		6%	
	Locally-owned, non-chain restaurant		4%	

	Coffee shop (Starbucks, Kean Coffee)	4%					
	Entertainment (bowling alley, Blockbuster)	3%					
	Large discount store (Costco, Sam's Club)	2%					
	Bank (Wells Fargo, Citibank)	2%					
	Shopping mall, center	2%					
	Department store (Wal-Mart, Target)	1%					
	Arts and Crafts store (Hobby Lobby, Michaels)	1%					
Q13	The City is planning to make improvements to the Town Center shopping center. As I read each of the following items, I'd like you to indicate whether you think the item should be a high, medium or low priority when updating the Town Center. If you think the item should not be part of the update, just say so. Please keep in mind that not all of the items can be high priorities.						
	Here is the (first/next) one: _____. Should this amenity be a high, medium or low priority for the Town Center update, or should it not be included?						
	<i>Randomize</i>	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Should not be included	No Opinion	Refused
A	Making it more pedestrian friendly	43%	35%	15%	6%	0%	0%
B	Making traffic improvements to reduce congestion in the Town Center	51%	25%	20%	4%	1%	0%
C	Providing a shuttle service within the Town Center Shopping Center	14%	27%	35%	24%	0%	0%
D	Providing adequate parking	57%	26%	11%	5%	1%	0%
E	Attracting new retail stores and restaurants	41%	38%	14%	5%	1%	0%
F	Building a Festival Plaza that can host events like street fairs and a farmers market	39%	34%	18%	9%	0%	0%
G	Improving the appearance of the Town Center through better landscaping and hardscaping	11%	34%	40%	13%	1%	0%

Section 8: City-Resident Communication			
Q14	Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the City's efforts to communicate with residents through newsletters, the Internet, Social Media and other means? <i>Get answer, then ask: Would that be very (satisfied/dissatisfied) or somewhat (satisfied/dissatisfied)?</i>		
	1	Very satisfied	40%
	2	Somewhat satisfied	36%
	3	Somewhat dissatisfied	13%
	4	Very dissatisfied	7%
	98	Not sure	3%
	99	Refused	1%

Q15		What information sources do you use to find out about Aliso Viejo (Uh-LEE-so Vee-A-ho) news, programs and events? <i>Don't read list. Record up to first 3 responses.</i>				
1	City Newsletter/Aliso Viejo Community Newsletter	30%				
2	City website	21%				
3	City's smart phone app/iApp	2%				
4	eNews/emails from the City	6%				
5	Aliso Viejo News/newspaper	8%				
6	Orange County Register/newspaper	8%				
7	Los Angeles Times/newspaper	2%				
8	Television (general)	1%				
9	City Council Meetings	0%				
10	Radio	0%				
11	Social media/Facebook/Twitter	6%				
12	Internet (not City's site)	26%				
13	Flyers, brochures or posters (displayed at public facilities)	8%				
14	Postcards, letters, flyers or brochures (mailed to home)	8%				
15	Street banners	10%				
16	Friends/Family/Associates	9%				
18	Other	4%				
19	Do Not Receive Information about City	6%				
98	Not sure	2%				
99	Refused	0%				
Q16		As I read the following ways that the City of Aliso Viejo (Uh-LEE-so Vee-A-ho) can communicate with residents, I'd like to know if you think they would be a very effective, somewhat effective, or not an effective way for the City to communicate with you.				
	<i>Randomize</i>	Very Effective	Somewhat Effective	Not Effective	Not Sure	Refused
A	Email	48%	26%	25%	1%	0%
B	Newsletters mailed to your home	53%	31%	16%	1%	0%
C	Flyers, postcards and brochures available at public locations	24%	44%	31%	1%	0%
D	City's website	42%	35%	22%	2%	0%
E	Advertisements in local papers	16%	37%	45%	2%	0%
F	Social media like Facebook and Twitter	38%	30%	30%	2%	0%

Q17	How much attention do you pay to the issues, decisions, and activities of your City government? Would you say that you are very attentive, somewhat attentive, slightly attentive, or not at all attentive?		
	1	Very attentive	9%
	2	Somewhat attentive	44%
	3	Slightly attentive	30%
	4	Not at all attentive	16%
	98	Not sure	1%
	99	Refused	0%

#### Section 9: Parks

Q18	Prior to taking this survey, were you aware that most parks in the city are owned and maintained by the Aliso Viejo (Uh-LEE-so Vee-A-ho) Community Association, also known as AVCA (AV-Kuh)?		
	1	Yes, was aware	65%
	2	No, was not aware	34%
	98	Not sure	1%
	99	Refused	0%
Q19	Would you prefer to have _____ or _____ own and operate local parks? <i>Randomize order of options 1 &amp; 2.</i>		
	1	The City of Aliso Viejo (Uh-LEE-so Vee-A-ho)	33%
	2	AVCA (AV-Kuh)	31%
	98	Not sure / No preference	35%
	99	Refused	0%

#### Section 10: Background & Demographics

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

D1	In what year were you born? Year recoded into age groups shown below.	
	18 to 24	10%
	25 to 34	21%
	35 to 44	26%
	45 to 54	22%
	55 to 64	11%
	65 or older	7%
	Refused	3%

D2	Do you have one or more children under the age of 18 living in your household?	
1	Yes	42%
2	No	57%
99	Refused	2%
D3	Do you own or rent your residence in the City of Aliso Viejo (uh-LEE-so Vee-A-ho)?	
1	Own	62%
2	Rent	35%
99	Refused	3%
D4	Which of the following best describes your current home?	
1	Single family detached home	46%
2	Apartment	20%
3	Condominium	33%
99	Refused	2%
Those are all of the questions that I have for you! Thanks so much for participating in this important survey! This survey was conducted for the City of Aliso Viejo.		

#### Post-Interview Items

D5	Gender	
1	Male	50%
2	Female	50%