

RESIDENT SURVEY

Resident perceptions about the Quality of Life and City Services in San José

RESIDENT SURVEY

2017 marked San José's seventh year of participation in The National Citizen Survey™ (referred to throughout this report as the resident survey). The National Citizen Survey™ is a collaborative effort between National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA). The survey was developed by NRC to provide a statistically valid sampling of resident opinions about their community and services provided by local government. Survey results in this chapter and in the following chapters provide the opinions of 1,888 residents of the City who responded to either a mail or online survey.

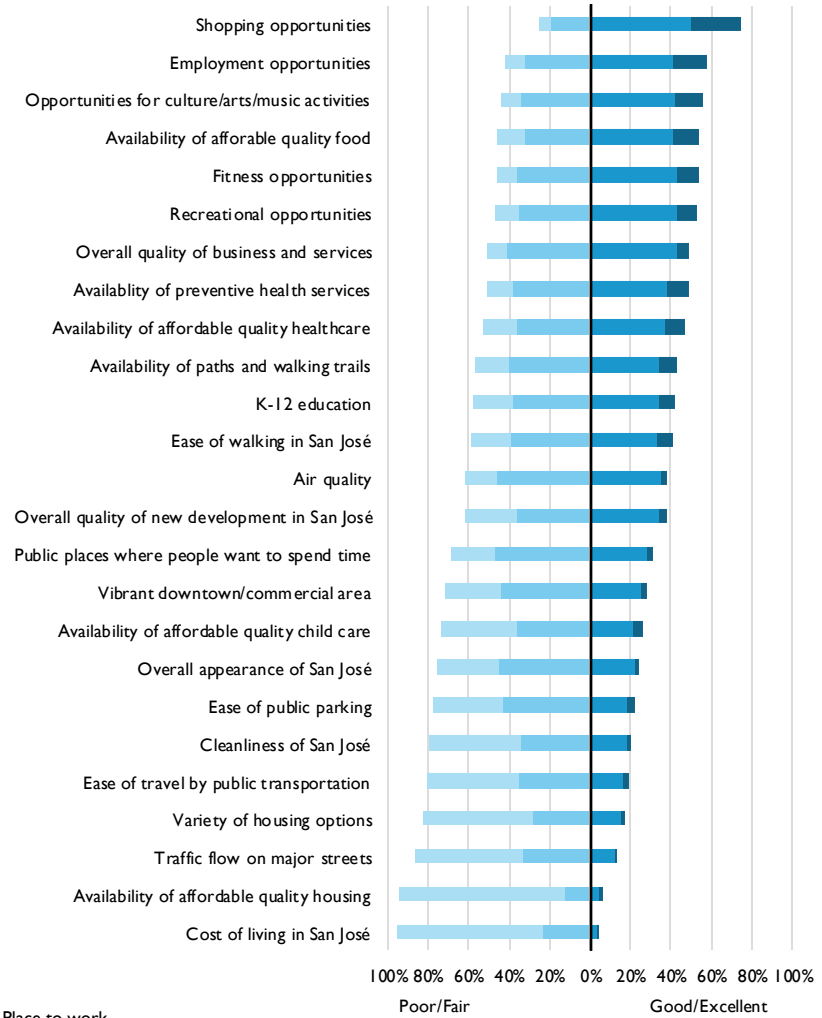
Complete survey results are posted online at www.sanjoseca.gov/servicesreport. The end of this chapter provides more specific information about the survey methodology.

QUALITY OF LIFE IN SAN JOSÉ

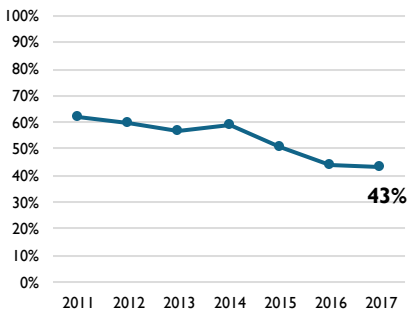
How residents rate their overall quality of life is an indicator of the overall health of a community. This can include opinions about a community's natural and built environments; the availability of services and amenities; overall feelings about safety or the economic health of the community; and other aspects of life.

Several aspects of community quality were rated highly by survey respondents, including shopping opportunities and employment opportunities. The availability of affordable housing and the cost of living remain the lowest rated community characteristics.

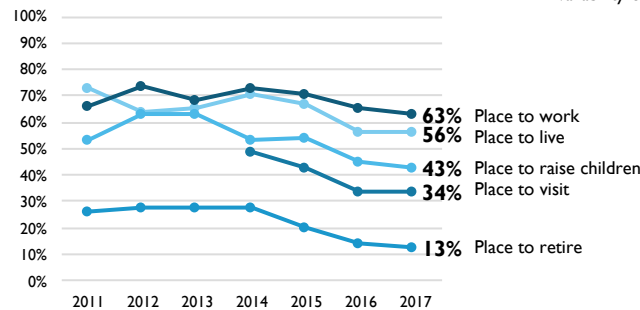
Ratings of Community Characteristics



Overall Quality of Life

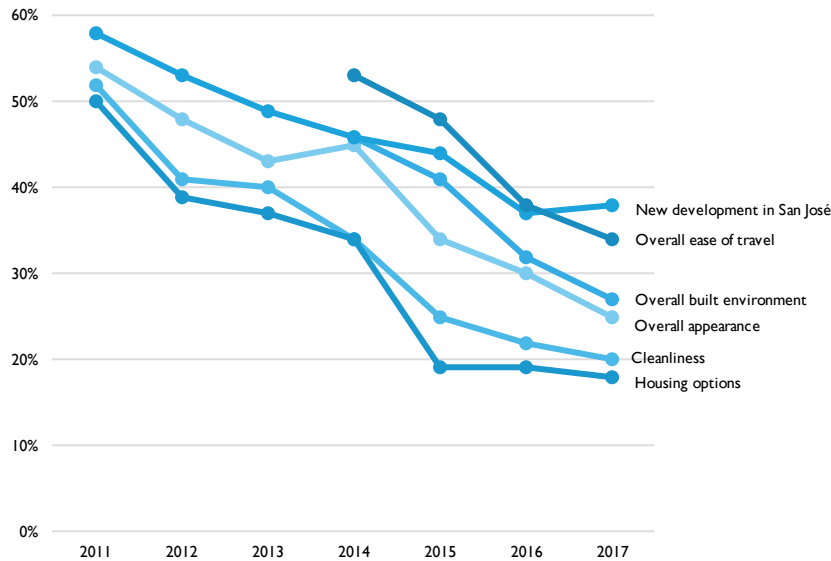


% of Respondents Rating San José as "Excellent" or "Good"



Although survey results for some community characteristics are similar to past years (e.g., shopping, employment, and recreational opportunities), responses about others have decreased significantly over the past seven years. The graph below shows some of the characteristics that have decreased the most since the start of data collection.

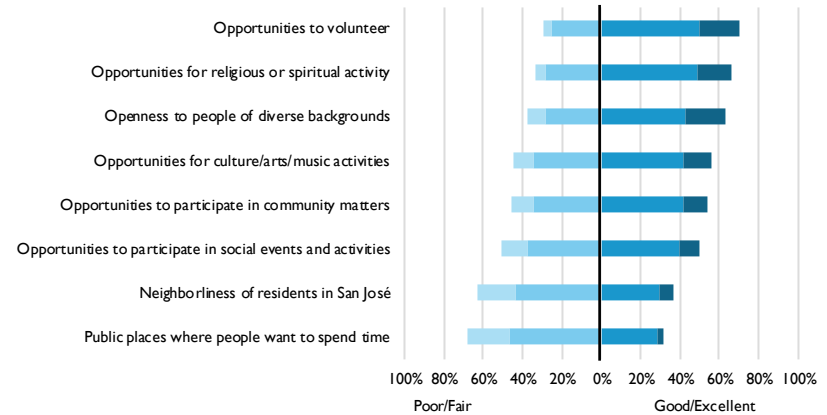
% of Respondents Rating San José as "Excellent" or "Good" for Select Characteristics with Significant Drops



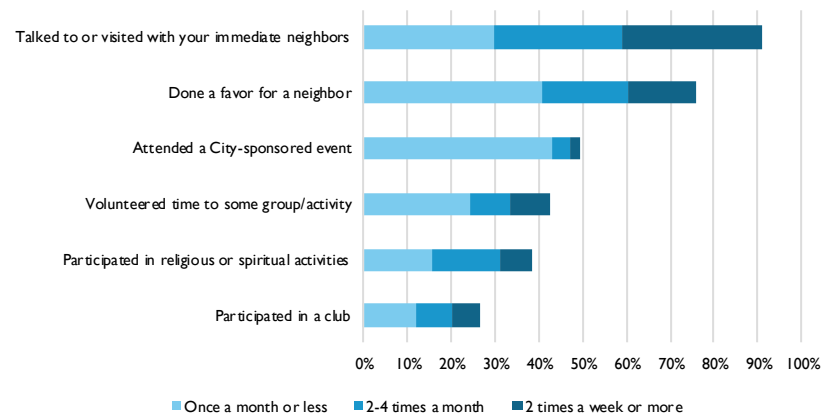
SENSE OF COMMUNITY

The charts below indicate how satisfied residents are with opportunities to engage with the community. According to the resident survey, nearly three in four residents report that they think it is essential or very important for the San José community to focus on sense of community in the next two years.

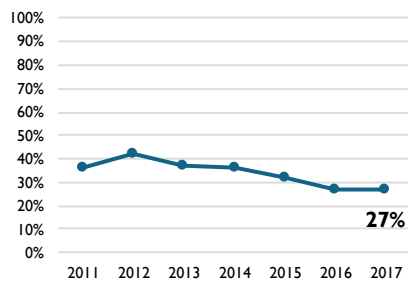
Perception of Community in San José



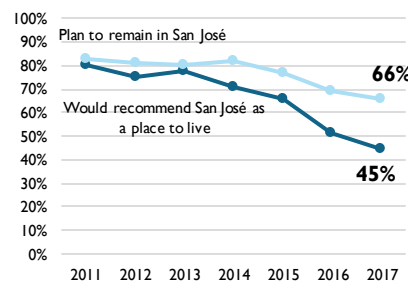
Participation in the San José Community



Sense of Community



Thoughts on Living in San José



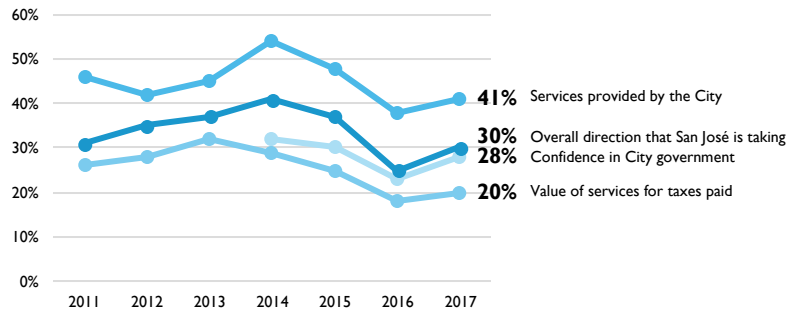
RESIDENT SURVEY

CITYWIDE QUALITY OF SERVICES

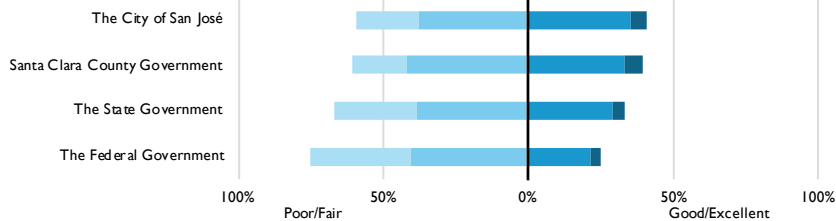
In the resident survey, the percentage of surveyed residents that rated the overall quality of City services “good” or “excellent” went up slightly. However, it is still down from prior years.

Satisfaction with specific government services ranges from a high of 78 percent of residents rating fire services as good or excellent to a low of 14 percent for street repairs. Other highly rated government services include the ease of using the San José Mineta International Airport (SJC); public libraries; and recycling, garbage, and yard waste pick-up. More information on survey results related to specific services can be found in individual department pages later in this report.

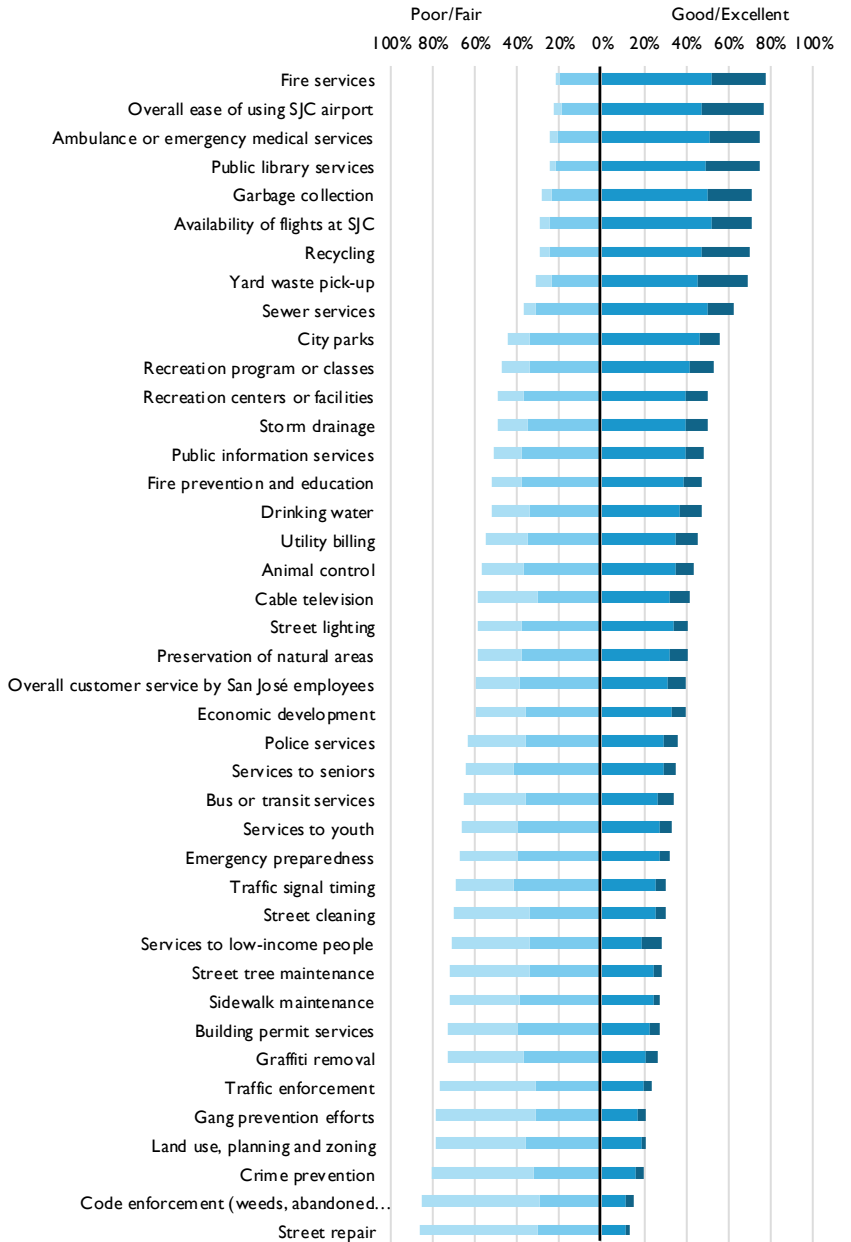
% of Respondents Rating as "Excellent" or "Good"



Perception of Governance



Quality of Government Services



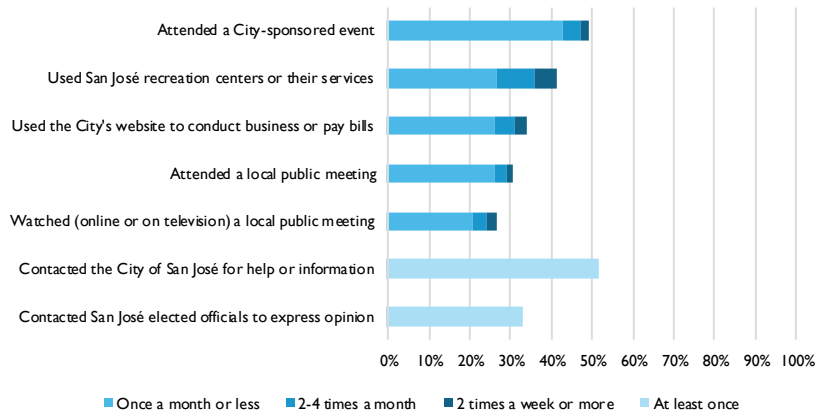
CITYWIDE PUBLIC TRUST

The resident survey also asked residents a variety of questions about their contact with City government and their confidence in San José’s governance.

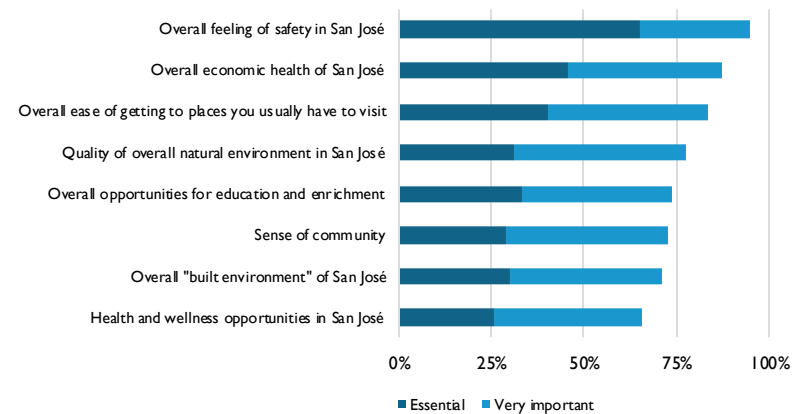
PRIORITY ISSUES FOR RESIDENTS

Residents were asked to assess priorities for the San José community to focus on in the coming two years. Nearly all respondents felt that it was essential or very important to focus on the overall feeling of safety in San José and nearly nine out of ten residents also felt it was essential or very important to focus on economic health.

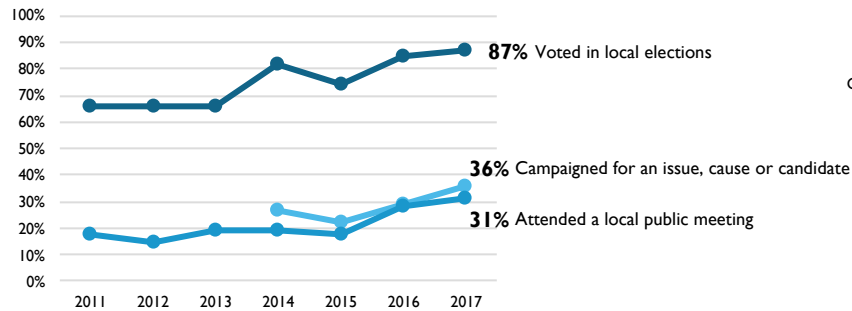
Contact with City Government



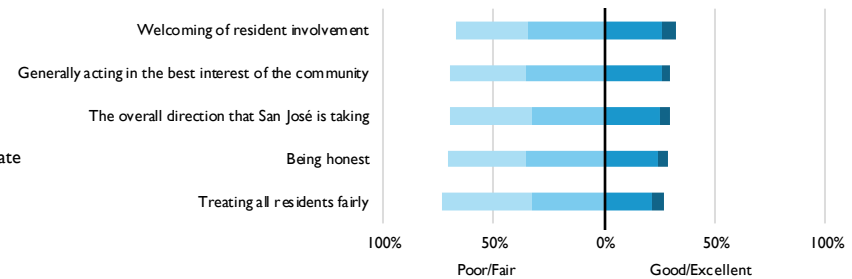
Resident Priorities in San San José



Public Participation in San José



Public Trust and Confidence in City Government



RESIDENT SURVEY

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Surveys were mailed to a total of 3,000 San José households in September, 2017 (41 of which were returned). Completed surveys were received from 521 residents, for a response rate of 18 percent. Typical response rates obtained on citizen surveys range from 25 to 40 percent. Survey respondents were selected at random and survey responses were tracked by each quadrant of the City. Participation was encouraged with multiple mailings; self-addressed, postage-paid envelopes; and three language choices—English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. Results were statistically re-weighted, as necessary, to reflect the actual demographic composition of the entire community.

An additional 1,367 residents completed an online “opt-in” survey. Upon completion of data collection of both the mail and “opt-in” surveys, data from the two samples were compared in order to determine whether it was appropriate to combine, or blend, both samples together. NRC determined that the mail and “opt-in” sample characteristics were similar, indicating that the two samples could be blended.

In addition to the demographic variables, the “opt-in” survey data were weighted using a calibration technique that takes into consideration behavioral characteristics of the sample. This calibration technique reduces the differences that may occur between the mail and “opt-in” samples by using the mail results to inform the weighting scheme of the “opt-in” sample. An index score was calculated based on respondent’s levels of engagement in the community (e.g., contact with City employees, recreation center use, frequency of volunteering). The index scores were categorized into four equal groups; the “norms” for the categorized index scores were derived from the mail sample and then included in the weighting scheme for the “opt-in” sample.

It is customary to describe the precision of estimates made from surveys by a “level of confidence” and accompanying “confidence interval” (or margin of error). A traditional level of confidence, and the one used here, is 95 percent. The margin of error around results for the City of San José Survey is plus or minus two percentage points. With this margin of error, one may conclude that when 60 percent of survey respondents report that a particular service is “excellent” or “good,” somewhere between 58 to 62 percent of all residents are likely to feel that way. Differences between 2016 and 2017 results can be considered statistically significant if they are plus or minus than three percentage points.