

COMMUNITY OPINION SURVEY
SUMMARY REPORT

PREPARED FOR THE
CITY OF SAN MATEO



MAY 11, 2020



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INTRODUCTION

Encompassing 15.9 square miles in the San Francisco Bay Area, the City of San Mateo was incorporated in 1894 and is currently home to an estimated 104,570 residents.¹ The City's dedicated team of full-time and part-time employees provides a full suite of services to residents and local businesses.

To monitor its progress in meeting residents' needs, the City engages residents on a daily basis and receives periodic *subjective* feedback regarding its performance and policies. Although these informal feedback mechanisms are a valuable source of information for the City in that they provide timely and accurate information about the opinions of specific residents, it is important to recognize that they do not necessarily provide an accurate picture of the community as a whole. For the most part, informal feedback mechanisms rely on the resident to initiate 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 with a particular service or policy, 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 city services, facilities, and policies. Ultimately, the survey results and analyses presented in this report will provide Council and staff with information that can be used to make sound, strategic decisions in a variety of areas including service improvements and enhancements, measuring and tracking internal performance, budgeting, and community outreach.

In addition to gathering performance-related feedback, the survey was also designed to help inform the City's General Plan update. Like most California cities, the City of San Mateo relies on its General Plan to guide decisions with respect to land use, development, mobility, sustainability, and related policy matters. Although the City Council, staff, and consultants have played an important role in gathering data and organizing the update process, it was the desire of the City that the citizens of San Mateo be the true inspiration and authors of the Plan. Accordingly, a portion of the survey was dedicated to understanding San Mateo residents' needs and opinions as they relate to issues that will be addressed in the General Plan, with a focus on how best to plan future housing as required by State law.

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 importance for residents, as well as their perceptions of the quality of life in San Mateo;
- 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 General Plan topics with a focus on land use and housing;

1. State of California, Department of Finance, January 2019.

- Profile household use of parks and recreation facilities, household interest in various recreation programs, and park and recreation funding priorities;
- Determine satisfaction with (and perceived effectiveness of) the City’s communication with residents; *and*
- Collect additional background and demographic data that are 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 39). In brief, the survey was administered to a random sample of 1,276 adults who reside in the City of San Mateo. The survey followed a mixed-method design that employed multiple recruiting methods (mailed letters, email, and telephone) and multiple data collection methods (telephone and online). Administered in English and Spanish between January 27 and February 6, 2020, the average interview lasted 18 minutes.

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 42), and a complete set of crosstabulations for the survey results is contained in Appendix A.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS True North thanks the City of San Mateo for the opportunity to conduct the study and for contributing valuable input during the design stage of this study. The collective experience, insight, and local knowledge provided by city representatives and staff 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, Inc. and not necessarily those of the City of San Mateo. 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, establishing fiscal priorities, passing revenue measures, and developing effective public information campaigns.

During their careers, Dr. McLarney (President) and Mr. Sarles (Principal Researcher) have designed and conducted over 1,000 survey research studies for public agencies—including more than 400 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, to learn more about a particular finding, simply turn to the appropriate report section.

QUALITY OF LIFE

- San Mateo residents provided positive ratings for the overall quality of life in the City (81% excellent or good), San Mateo as a place to shop and dine (72%), and as a place to raise a family (65%).
- Although still rated favorably by over half of respondents, residents provided somewhat softer ratings for San Mateo as a place to work (58%) and as a place to recreate (56%).
- Less than one-third of residents provided a favorable rating for San Mateo as a place to retire (30%), although approximately 16% held no opinion or did not provide a rating.
- When asked what they like most about living in the City of San Mateo that city government should make sure to *preserve* in the future, residents were most apt to cite parks and recreation facilities and opportunities (26%), shopping and dining opportunities (14%), small town atmosphere (11%), and proximity to surrounding cities/areas (10%).
- When residents were asked to indicate the one thing city government could *change* to make San Mateo a better place to live, now and in the future, providing more affordable housing was the most common response (24%), followed by reducing traffic congestion (19%), limiting growth and preserving open space (16%), improving and maintaining infrastructure and roads (10%), and improving parking (9%).

CITY SERVICES

- Close to three-quarters (73%) of San Mateo residents indicated they were either very (19%) or somewhat (54%) satisfied with the City's efforts to provide municipal services. Approximately 18% were very or somewhat dissatisfied, whereas 9% were unsure or unwilling to share their opinion.
- Residents were asked to rate their satisfaction with 13 specific services provided by the City of San Mateo. Although the majority of residents surveyed were satisfied with 12 of the 13 services tested, they were most satisfied with the City's efforts to provide fire protection, prevention, and emergency medical services (96% very or somewhat satisfied), followed by maintain public buildings and facilities like City Hall, libraries, and parking garages (92%) and provide parks, sports fields, and recreation facilities (89%).
- At the other end of the spectrum, respondents were comparatively less satisfied with the City's efforts to manage traffic congestion (30%), address homelessness (51%), and maintain local streets and roads (54%).

HOUSING & BUILDING

- Approximately seven-in-ten residents indicated that there is currently too little housing that is affordable for middle-income (72%) and low-income families (69%). Approximately one quarter of residents felt the amount of affordable housing was about right or were unsure (middle income: 24%, low income: 25%), while just 4% felt there was too much housing that is affordable for middle-income families and 7% shared the same sentiment for housing that is affordable for low-income families.

- After informing respondents that the State of California is expected to require the City of San Mateo to plan for thousands of new housing units, just over half (51%) initially preferred that new homes be **concentrated** in a few larger developments and located in areas of the City that are close to transit, stores, and restaurants. Forty-one percent (41%) of respondents preferred that the new housing be **spread** throughout the City by having smaller infill projects and allowing for more housing units per parcel within existing residential neighborhoods. The remaining 8% were unwilling to share their opinion.
- Respondents who preferred that new housing be **concentrated** in a few larger developments and located in areas of the City that are close to transit, stores, and restaurants were most apt to cite easier access to public transportation (33%) and less traffic congestion/having fewer cars on the road (26%) as the main reasons for their preference. Other reasons cited by at least 10% of this subgroup of respondents included preserving open space/limiting sprawl (15%), improved access to shopping and dining (11%), and preserving existing neighborhoods (11%).
- Respondents who preferred that new housing be **spread** throughout the City by having smaller infill projects and allowing for more housing units per parcel within existing residential neighborhoods cited reducing congestion and spreading people out as the main reason for their preference (28%), followed by a general preference for housing to be spread out and that there is currently too much density (20%) and that the plan allows for more balanced, distributed communities (13%).
- A majority of respondents supported three of the four strategies tested for **concentrating** future housing, with support being greatest for allowing buildings up to eight stories in a few areas of the City near transit (66% strongly or somewhat support), followed by keeping existing five story building limits, but allowing more housing units within each building (57%), and allowing buildings up to 12 stories in these areas (51%). Less than half of respondents supported allowing buildings over 12 stories in these areas (47%).
- Among the three strategies tested for **spreading** future housing throughout the city, support was strongest for allowing single family homes to be redeveloped into duplexes (66%). Just under a majority (49%) of respondents expressed support for allowing single family homes to be redeveloped with up to four units per parcel, whereas approximately four-in-ten (41%) supported allowing condominiums or apartments to be built in areas currently zoned for single family houses.
- After learning more about the strategies that may be required for concentrating or spreading housing throughout the city, approximately 15% of respondents changed their preference, although the changes were largely off-setting. The majority (52%) of residents continued to prefer that future housing to be concentrated in a few larger developments and located in areas of the City that are close to transit, stores, and restaurants, while 40% of respondents preferred to spread future housing throughout the City by having smaller infill projects and allowing for more housing units per parcel within existing residential neighborhoods (initially 41%). Eight percent remained unwilling to share their opinion.

RECREATION & FACILITIES

- On a yearly basis, nearly all San Mateo households utilize city parks (98%), three-quarters utilize community centers (76%), and four-in-ten households (41%) make use of city pools.
- The *frequency* of visits is highest for parks, with 70% of residents reporting that their household visits a San Mateo park at least once per month. Twenty percent (20%) of respondents reported monthly visits to a community center by their household, whereas 5% visit a city pool at least once per month.

- When presented with a list of eight activities that could be offered by the City, art and cultural enrichment programs received the highest level of household interest (82% very or somewhat interested), followed by drop-in gym use, weight rooms or cardio equipment (75%) and adult group fitness classes (73%).
- At the other end of the spectrum, less than the majority of households expressed interest in participating in learning to swim classes (45%), licensed preschool and after school childcare (48%), and activities for teens (49%).
- Among 11 specific recreation projects being considered by the City, expanding and improving the network of outdoor trails in the City was assigned the highest priority (73% high or medium priority), followed by making improvements to Central Park (69%), providing licensed pre-school and after-school childcare facilities (68%), and upgrading children's play areas in existing parks (66%).

COMMUNICATIONS

- Overall, 70% of respondents indicated they were satisfied with the City's efforts to communicate with residents through newsletters, the Internet, social media, and other means. The remaining respondents were either dissatisfied with the City's efforts in this respect (19%) or unsure of their opinion (11%).
- The most frequently cited source for city information was the San Mateo Daily Journal, mentioned by 37% of respondents. The Daily Journal was followed by letters, postcards, flyers, or brochures mailed to the home (31%), email notifications from the City (31%), and the social media website and app Nextdoor (26%).
- Respondents indicated that email was the most effective method for the City to communicate with them (88% very or somewhat effective), followed by postcards, letters, and newsletters mailed to the home (i.e., direct mail, 79%), social media like Facebook, Twitter, and Nextdoor (77%), and the City's website (69%).
- Television programs (40%), advertisements in local papers (43%), and town hall meetings (49%) were generally viewed by residents as less effective ways for the City to communicate with them.



CONCLUSIONS

As noted in the *Introduction*, this study was designed to provide the City of San Mateo with a statistically reliable understanding of its residents' opinions, satisfaction, and needs as they relate to city services, facilities and policies, as well as topics pertinent to the General Plan update. 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.

How well is the City performing in meeting the needs of San Mateo residents?

San Mateo residents are generally satisfied with the City's efforts to provide services, as well as the quality of life in their city. Close to three-quarters of residents (73%) indicated they were satisfied with the City's overall efforts to provide municipal services, whereas 18% were dissatisfied and the remaining 9% were unsure or did not provide a response (see *Overall Satisfaction* on page 15). The level of satisfaction expressed with the City's performance *in general* was also mirrored in residents' assessments of the City's performance in providing most specific services, with the highest satisfaction scores assigned to the City's efforts to provide fire protection, prevention, and emergency medical services, maintain public buildings and facilities like City Hall, libraries, and parking garages, and provide parks, sports fields, and recreation facilities (see *Specific Services* on page 17).

The City's performance in providing municipal services has contributed to a high quality of life for residents. Indeed, the vast majority of residents surveyed (81%) rated the quality of life in the City of San Mateo as excellent or good. This sentiment was also widespread, with the percentage who rated the quality of life as excellent or good exceeding 70% across *every* identified resident subgroup (see *Overall Quality of Life* on page 11).

When asked in an open-ended manner to describe the things they value most about living in San Mateo that they would like to preserve in the future, parks and recreation facilities and opportunities was at the top of the list, followed by shopping and dining opportunities, San Mateo's small town atmosphere, and proximity to surrounding cities/areas (see *What Do You Like Most About Living in San Mateo?* on page 12).

Where should the City focus its efforts in the future?

In addition to measuring the City's current performance, a key goal of this study is to look *forward* and identify opportunities to adjust services, improve facilities, and/or refine communications strategies to best meet the community's evolving needs and expectations. Although resident satisfaction in San Mateo is generally high (see above), there is always room for improvement. Below we note some of the areas that present the best opportunities in this regard.

Considering respondents' verbatim answers regarding what they feel city government could do to make San Mateo a better place to live (see *What Should Be Changed?* on page 13) and the levels of satisfaction found in specific service areas (see *Specific Services* on page 17), the top priorities are: providing affordable housing, reducing traffic congestion, limiting growth/preserving open space, addressing homelessness, and maintaining local streets and roads.

With the recommendation that the City focus on these areas, it is equally important to stress that when it comes to improving satisfaction in service areas, the appropriate strategy is often a combination of better communication and actual service improvements. It may be, for example, that many residents are simply not aware of the City's ongoing infrastructure improvement efforts, or the limits of what a city can do to address homelessness. Choosing the appropriate balance of actual service improvements and efforts to raise awareness on these matters will be a key to maintaining and improving the community's overall satisfaction in the short- and long-term.

What do the survey results reveal about San Mateo residents' opinions on housing?

As noted in the prior section, affordable housing is top-of-mind for many San Mateo residents. Approximately one-quarter of respondents (24%) mentioned a desire for additional affordable housing when asked what *one* change the City could make to improve the quality of life in San Mateo, and more than two-thirds of residents perceived that there currently is not enough affordable housing in the City for middle-income (72%) and low-income (69%) families. Although younger residents and those currently renting their home were the most likely to perceive a shortage of affordable housing in the City, that view was also shared by a large majority of residents who currently own their home in the City (see *Affordable Housing* on page 19).

The aforementioned patterns notwithstanding, it should also be recognized that some residents are concerned about growth and development (see *What Should Be Changed?* on page 13), and opinions are mixed regarding how best to accommodate future housing in the City. Upon learning that the State of California is expected to require the City of San Mateo to plan for thousands of new housing units, just over half (51%) preferred that these new homes be **concentrated** in a few larger developments and located in areas of the City that are close to transit, stores, and restaurants, explaining their preference by citing easier access to public transportation, having less traffic congestion/fewer cars on the road, preserving open space/limiting sprawl, improved access to shopping and dining, and preserving existing neighborhoods.

Conversely, 41% of respondents preferred that the new housing be **spread** throughout the City by having smaller infill projects and allowing for more housing units per parcel within existing residential neighborhoods. When asked to explain their preference, they anticipated that spreading new housing throughout the City would reduce traffic congestion, maintain lower densities, and allow for more balanced/distributed communities.

On the topic of housing, there were some interesting patterns among San Mateo resident subgroups. Although most subgroups favored future housing to be concentrated in a few larger developments and located in areas of the City that are close to transit, stores, and restaurants, this was especially true for newer residents, those living in single family homes, home owners, Caucasians, and residents under the age of 35. Those who rent their home and those currently living in condominiums or apartments were the only subgroups to express a clear preference for spreading new housing throughout the City with smaller infill projects and allowing for more housing units per parcel within existing residential neighborhoods (see *Initial Preference for Future Housing* on page 20).

To be able to **concentrate** additional housing in a few areas of the City near transit, stores and restaurants may require allowing taller buildings and/or allowing more units per acre (see *Strategies to Concentrate Housing* on page 23). With this in mind, two-thirds (66%) of respondents indicated they would support allowing buildings up to eight stories in a few areas of the City near transit, whereas 51% supported allowing buildings up to 12 stories in these areas. A majority were also in support of an alternative concentration strategy of keeping existing five story building limits, but allowing more housing units within each building (57%).

When it comes to the alternative approach of **spreading** housing throughout the City, close to two-thirds of respondents supported allowing single family homes to be redeveloped into duplexes (66%). Options that allowed for even higher density in existing residential neighborhoods, however, met with more resistance. Just under a majority (49%) of respondents expressed support for allowing single family homes to be redeveloped with up to four units per parcel, whereas approximately four-in-ten (41%) supported allowing condominiums or apartments to be built in areas currently zoned for single family houses (see *Strategies to Spread Housing* on page 25).

To what extent are San Mateo residents making use of the City's parks and recreation facilities, and what do they view as future priorities?

The City of San Mateo is currently home to over 20 neighborhood and community parks, hundreds of acres of preserved open space, and numerous recreation and community facilities. By providing much-needed spaces to recreate, relax and play, San Mateo's parks and recreation facilities help to promote a strong sense of community in the City,

improve property values, enhance the business climate and local economy, and generally contribute to a higher quality of life for residents and visitors alike. Indeed, when asked what they like most about the City of San Mateo that should be preserved in the future, residents were most apt to reference the City's parks, recreation facilities, and recreation opportunities (see *What Do You Like Most About Living in San Mateo?* on page 12).

Consistent with the above, the results of the survey indicate that most residents take advantage of the City's parks and recreation facilities, with nearly all respondents indicating that at least one member of their household periodically visits a San Mateo park and just over three-quarters stating they make periodic use of the City's community centers. As is often the case, household use of the City's pools was lower, with four-in-ten households utilizing them on an annual basis (see *Frequency of Use* on page 27).

To help the City update its recreation programs, parks, and facilities, the survey asked respondents to identify the programs and activities of greatest interest to their households, as well as prioritize among a list of 11 improvements being considered for future funding. Art and cultural enrichment programs received the highest level of household interest, followed by drop-in gym use, weight rooms or cardio equipment and adult group fitness classes. That said, program interest varied widely across demographic subgroups, with activities targeted to a specific demographic group generally being rated highest among that particular group. For example, although less than 30% of *all* households were *very* interested in licensed preschool and after school childcare, the level reached two-thirds among respondents with children under six years of age in their household (see *Programming Interests* on page 28).

Among the facility improvements being considered by the City, expanding and improving the network of outdoor trails in the City was viewed as the highest priority, followed by making improvements to Central Park, providing licensed pre-school and after-school childcare facilities, and upgrading children's play areas in existing parks (see *Priority Improvements* on page 29).

How well is the City communicating with San Mateo residents?

The public's preferences for communication are growing increasingly diverse. Whereas older residents continue to rely on newsletters and printed forms of communication, younger residents generally show great interest in digital forms of communication including social media, text, and smart phone apps. This pattern makes the challenge of city-resident communication more difficult than in the past, when the sources residents relied on for information were fewer and more consistent across subgroups. In turn, satisfaction with public agency communications has generally declined over the past five years.

Against this backdrop of declining satisfaction with public agency communications *in general*, the survey results suggest the City of San Mateo is doing a solid job communicating with its residents. Approximately seven-in-ten respondents said they were satisfied with the City's efforts to communicate through newsletters, the Internet, social media, and other means.

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 (see *Communication Preferences* on page 36). Some of these methods the City appears to already be using effectively, including the City's website and social media. Others—including direct mail—may require additional investment on the part of the City, but were widely noted by residents as being effective means for the City to communicate with them.

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. It also has a tendency to skew an agency's communication performance away from demographic subgroups that prefer traditional printed media. 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.

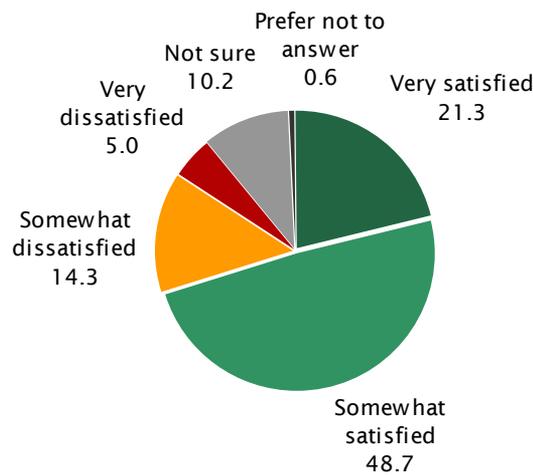
COMMUNICATIONS

The importance of city communication with residents cannot be over-stated. Much of a city’s success is shaped by the quality of information that is exchanged in both directions, from the City to the community and from the community to the City. This study is just one example of San Mateo’ efforts to enhance the information flow to the City to better understand the community’s concerns, perceptions, and needs. Some of San Mateo’ many efforts to communicate with its residents include its newsletters, timely press releases, social media, and its website. In this section, we present the results of several communication-related questions.

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH COMMUNICATION Question 17 asked San Mateo residents to report their satisfaction with city-resident communication. Overall, 70% of respondents indicated they were satisfied with the City’s efforts to communicate with residents through newsletters, the Internet, social media, and other means. The remaining respondents were either dissatisfied with the City’s efforts in this respect (19%) or unsure of their opinion (11%).

Question 17 Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the City's efforts to communicate with residents through newsletters, the Internet, social media, and other means?

FIGURE 21 SATISFACTION WITH COMMUNICATION



The next three figures display how satisfaction with the City’s efforts to communicate with residents varied by length of residence, presence and age(s) of children in the home, presence of an adult 65 years and older in the household, age of the respondent, gender, ethnicity, satisfaction with the City’s overall performance in providing services, and home ownership status.

As is often the case, residents dissatisfied with the City’s overall performance or unsure of their rating were also the least satisfied with the City’s communication efforts, whereas those generally satisfied with the City were the most satisfied with city-resident communication. It is also noteworthy that newer residents (less than 1 year) and younger residents (under 25) were generally less satisfied than their counterparts with respect to city-resident communication.

FIGURE 22 SATISFACTION WITH COMMUNICATION BY YEARS IN SAN MATEO, CHILD IN HSLD & ADULT OVER 65 IN HSLD

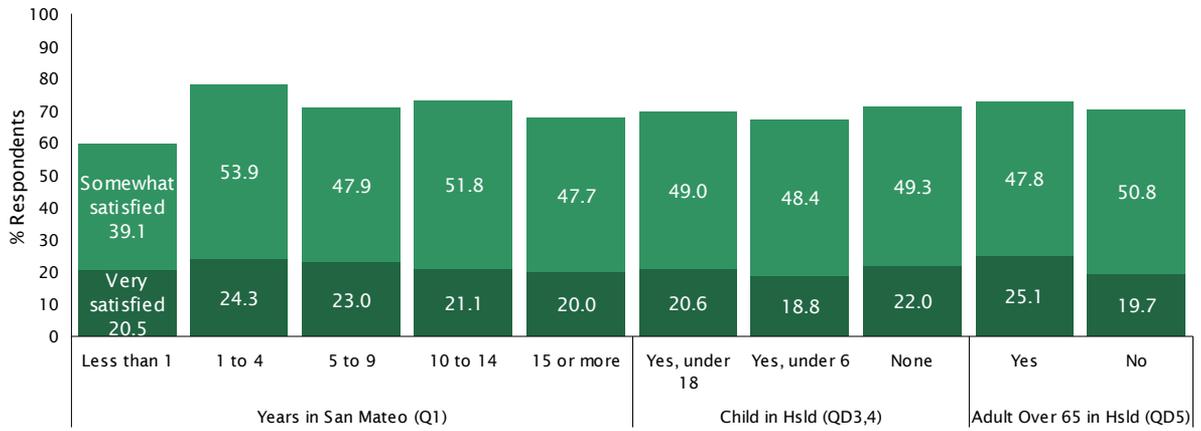


FIGURE 23 SATISFACTION WITH COMMUNICATION BY AGE & GENDER

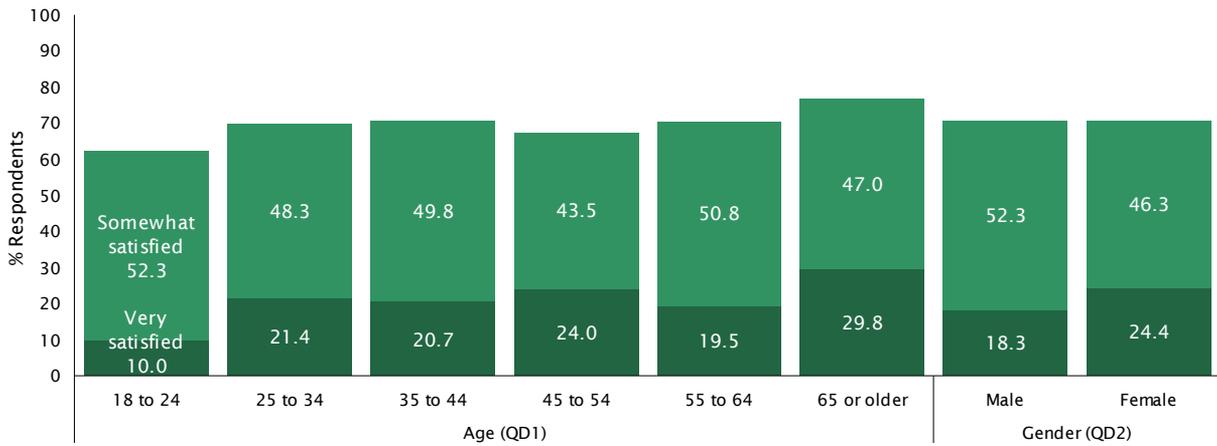
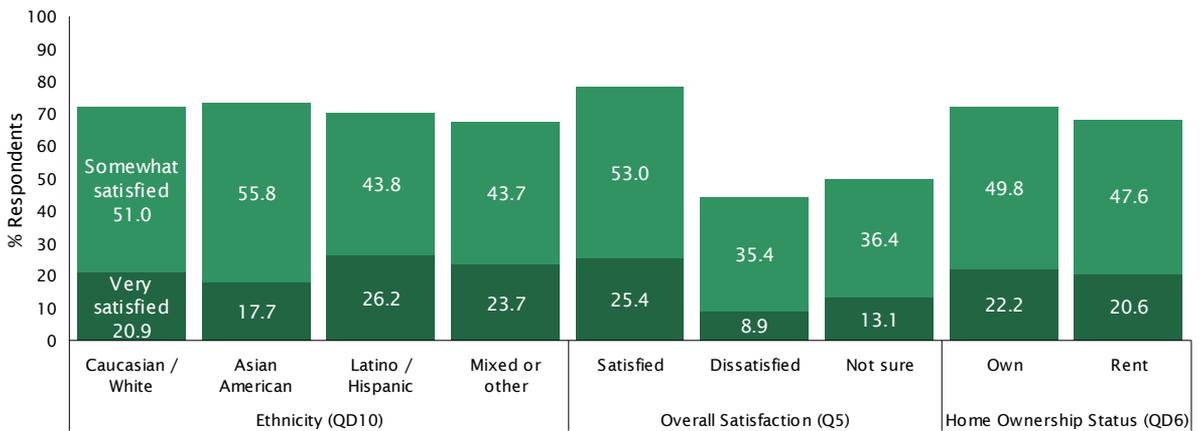


FIGURE 24 SATISFACTION WITH COMMUNICATION BY ETHNICITY, OVERALL SATISFACTION & HOME OWNERSHIP STATUS

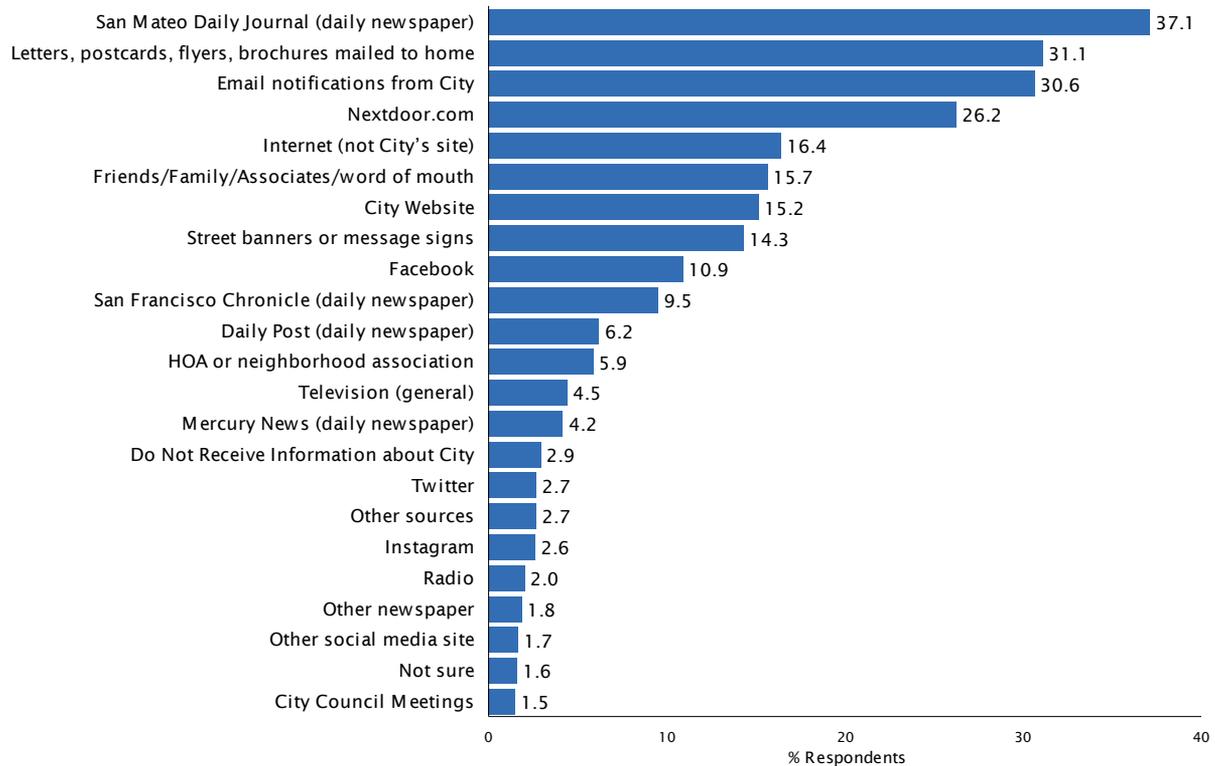


SOURCES OF INFORMATION To help the City identify the most effective means of communicating with residents, it is helpful to understand what information sources they currently rely on for this type of information. Question 18 asked respondents to identify the top three information sources they typically use to find out about City of San Mateo news, events, and programs. Because respondents were allowed to provide up to three sources, the percentages shown in Figure 25 represent the percentage of residents who mentioned a particular source and thus sum to more than 100.

The most frequently cited source for city information was the San Mateo Daily Journal, mentioned by 37% of respondents. The Daily Journal was followed by letters, postcards, flyers, or brochures mailed to the home (31%), email notifications from the City (31%), and the social media website and app Nextdoor (26%).

Question 18 *What information sources do you use to find out about City of San Mateo news, events, and programs?*

FIGURE 25 INFORMATION SOURCES



Figures 26 to 28 on the next page present the information source categories by a number of key demographic traits. For ease of interpretation, the bars representing city-sponsored sources are displayed in shades of green, and non-city sources in shades of orange.

FIGURE 26 INFORMATION SOURCES BY OVERALL, AGE & SATISFACTION WITH COMMUNICATION

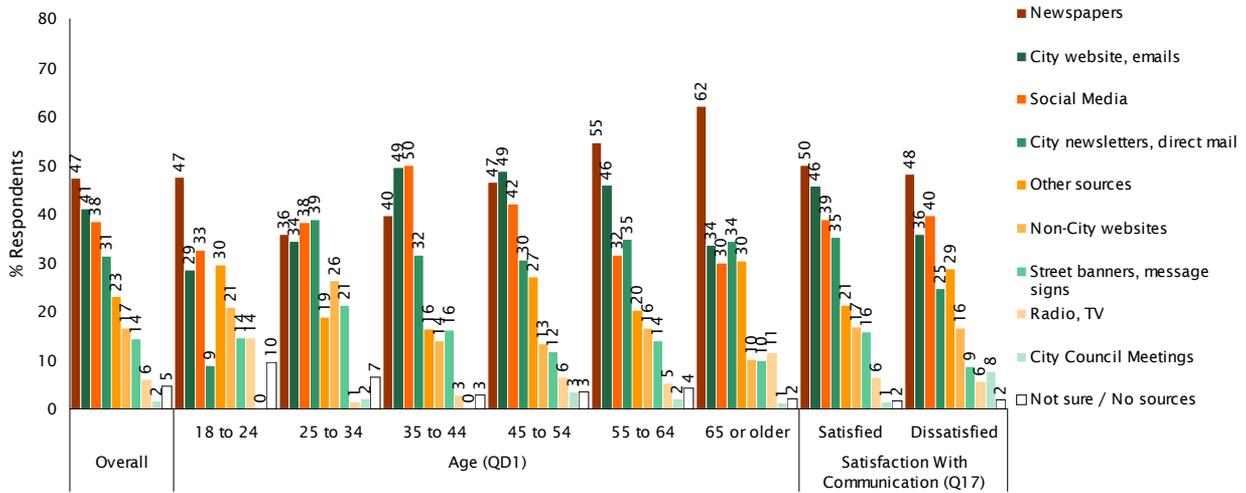


FIGURE 27 INFORMATION SOURCES BY ETHNICITY, CHILD IN HSLD & ADULT OVER 65 IN HSLD

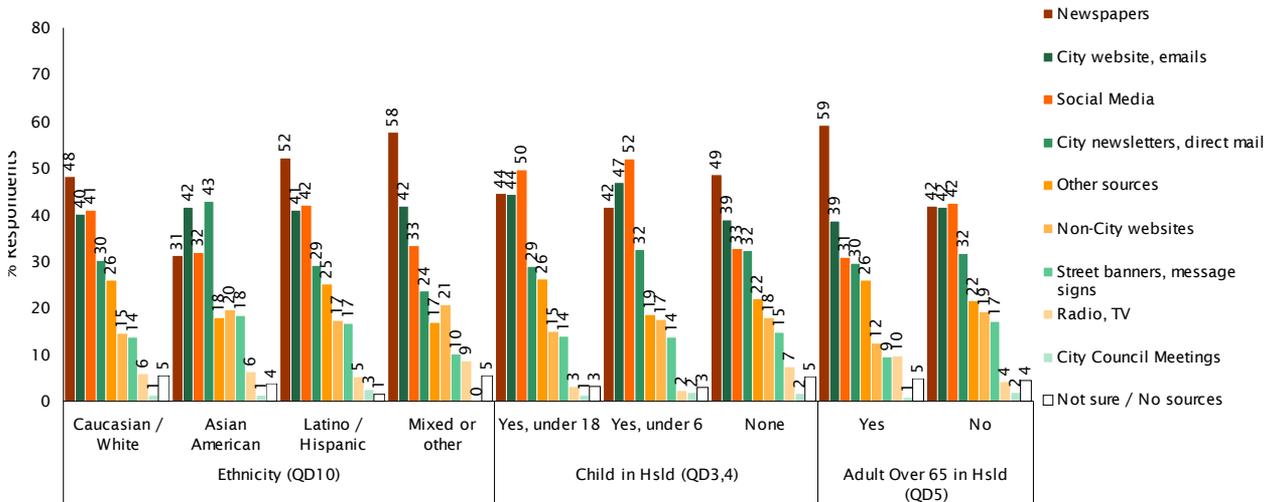
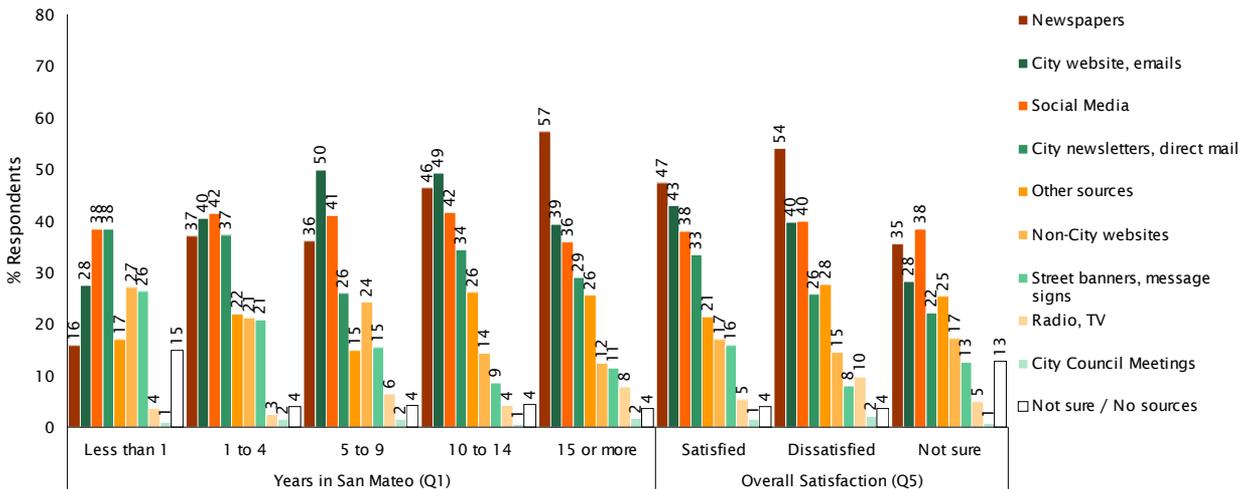


FIGURE 28 INFORMATION SOURCES BY YEARS IN SAN MATEO & OVERALL SATISFACTION



COMMUNICATION PREFERENCES The next communication-related question presented residents with the methods shown to the left of Figure 29, and asked whether each would be an effective way for the City to communicate with them. Overall, respondents indicated that email was the most effective method (88% very or somewhat effective), followed by postcards, letters, and newsletters mailed to the home (i.e., direct mail, 79%), social media like Facebook, Twitter, and Nextdoor (77%), and the City’s website (69%). Television programs (40%), advertisements in local papers (43%), and town hall meetings (49%) were generally viewed by residents as less effective ways for the City to communicate with them.

Question 19 *As I read the following ways that the City of San Mateo can communicate with residents, I'd like to know if you think they would be very effective, somewhat effective, or not an effective way for the City to communicate with you.*

FIGURE 29 EFFECTIVENESS OF COMMUNICATION METHODS

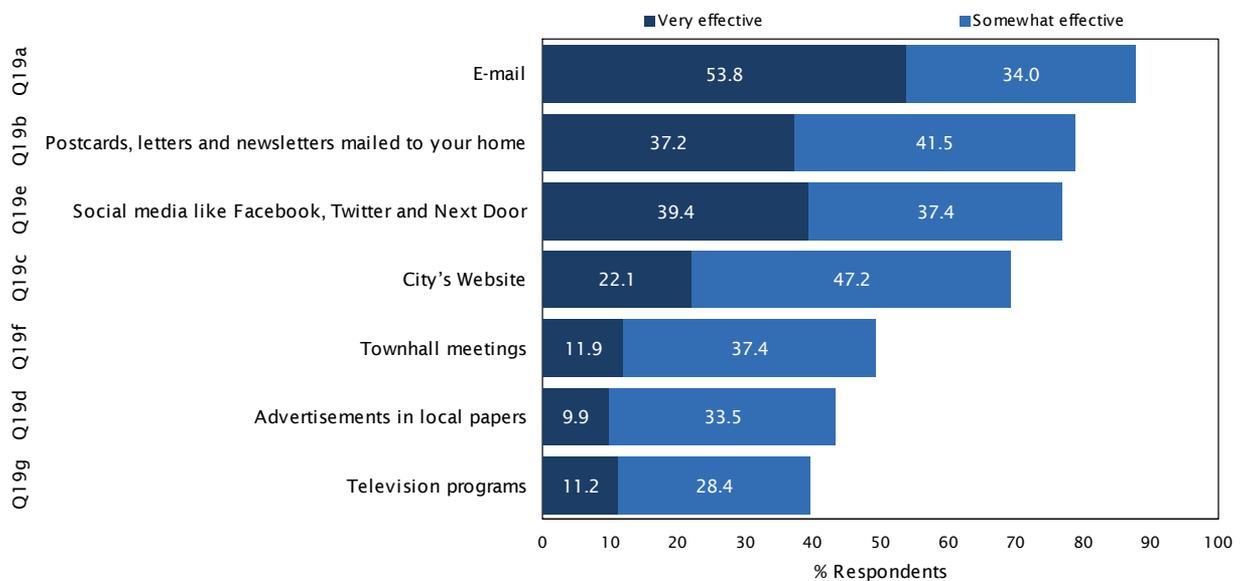


Table 23 below and the two tables on the next page show how the percentage of residents that rated each communication method as *very effective* varied depending on their age, satisfaction with the City’s overall efforts to provide municipal services, ethnicity, presence and age(s) of children in the home, and satisfaction with city-resident communication.

TABLE 23 EFFECTIVENESS OF COMMUNICATION METHODS BY AGE (SHOWING % VERY EFFECTIVE)

	Age (QD1)					
	18 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 or older
E-mail	57.6	57.6	54.6	56.9	55.6	47.3
Social media like Facebook, Twitter and Next Door	47.8	47.8	45.9	41.5	27.2	25.0
Postcards, letters and newsletters mailed to your home	26.1	26.1	36.5	37.4	41.7	39.7
City's Website	14.5	14.5	22.0	24.7	25.3	21.5
Townhall meetings	10.9	10.9	9.0	12.9	13.9	14.5
Television programs	24.5	24.5	9.6	8.0	10.4	9.1
Advertisements in local papers	15.6	15.6	3.6	8.2	9.4	18.9

TABLE 24 EFFECTIVENESS OF COMMUNICATION METHODS BY OVERALL SATISFACTION & ETHNICITY (SHOWING % VERY EFFECTIVE)

	Overall Satisfaction (Q5)			Ethnicity (QD10)			
	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Not sure	Caucasian/ White	Asian American	Latino/ Hispanic	Mixed or other
E-mail	55.9	44.6	55.1	54.1	54.5	55.3	51.5
Social media like Facebook, Twitter and Next Door	41.0	33.6	37.1	36.5	41.1	46.1	42.5
Postcards, letters and newsletters mailed to your home	39.7	31.9	25.4	38.0	34.6	38.7	33.8
City's Website	23.1	22.3	14.8	19.0	17.7	26.2	28.9
Townhall meetings	11.9	12.0	13.2	12.0	8.1	14.1	13.5
Television programs	10.6	12.1	15.4	5.5	6.8	21.7	21.6
Advertisements in local papers	10.3	10.1	6.3	9.7	4.7	14.9	10.7

TABLE 25 EFFECTIVENESS OF COMMUNICATION METHODS BY CHILD IN HSLD & SATISFACTION WITH COMMUNICATION (SHOWING % VERY EFFECTIVE)

	Child in HslD (QD3,4)			Satisfaction With Communication (Q17)	
	Yes, under 18	Yes, under 6	None	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
E-mail	59.6	62.1	51.4	56.8	52.2
Social media like Facebook, Twitter and Next Door	48.1	56.0	35.4	42.7	32.9
Postcards, letters and newsletters mailed to your home	37.0	37.5	36.6	40.1	35.7
City's Website	22.5	25.9	20.9	24.2	18.2
Townhall meetings	11.7	11.1	12.0	13.4	10.2
Television programs	12.2	15.1	10.3	11.4	12.2
Advertisements in local papers	8.9	8.0	10.6	10.1	13.0



BACKGROUND & DEMOGRAPHICS

TABLE 26 DEMOGRAPHICS OF SAMPLE

Total Respondents	1,276
Years in San Mateo (Q1)	
Less than 1	5.8
1 to 4	18.5
5 to 9	12.8
10 to 14	10.1
15 or more	52.4
Prefer not to answer	0.4
Age (QD1)	
18 to 24	9.0
25 to 34	20.5
35 to 44	21.0
45 to 54	16.8
55 to 64	12.8
65 or older	15.7
Prefer not to answer	4.2
Child in Hsld (QD3,4)	
Yes, under 18	34.3
Yes, under 6	16.5
None	60.5
Prefer not to answer	5.2
Adult Over 65 in Hsld (QD5)	
Yes	32.1
No	63.0
Prefer not to answer	4.9
Home Ownership Status (QD6)	
Own	56.7
Rent	40.1
Prefer not to answer	3.2
Home Type (QD7)	
Single family	60.1
Townhome	8.4
Condo	9.6
Apartment	18.5
Prefer not to answer	3.3
Anticipated Years in San Mateo (QD8)	
Less than 5	20.0
5 to 10	25.2
11 to 15	10.5
16 or more	33.7
Prefer not to answer	10.5
Employment Status (QD9)	
Full-time	63.4
Part-time	5.3
Student	5.4
Homemaker	2.5
Retired	15.6
Between jobs	2.2
Prefer not to answer	5.5
Ethnicity (QD10)	
Caucasian / White	39.8
Asian American	18.3
Latino / Hispanic	23.5
Mixed or other	10.4
Prefer not to answer	8.0
Gender	
Male	45.2
Female	50.5
Not listed	0.6
Prefer not to answer	3.7

Table 26 presents the key demographic information collected during the survey. 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, and to ensure that the resulting sample matched the profile of San Mateo's adult population on key characteristics.