

TO: Interested Parties

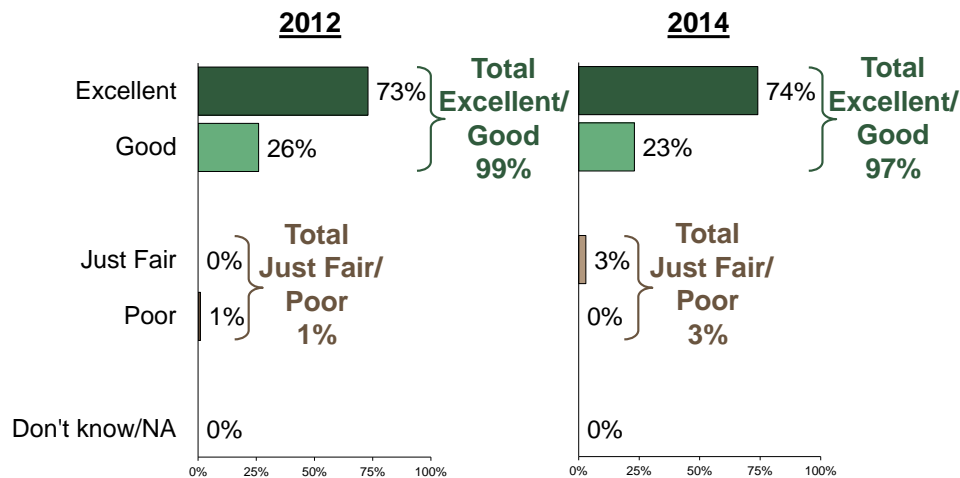
FROM: Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3)

RE: Summary of Survey Results

DATE: September 3, 2014

A recent survey¹ of 403 random City of Rancho Santa Margarita residents found that, as in 2012, the vast majority of respondents (97%) have favorable views of the City as a place to live (see Figure 1). Respondents are also optimistic about the future direction, with nine in ten (93%) believing that things will get even in better or stay the same in the next five years.

Figure 1: Rating of Rancho Santa Margarita as a Place to Live in 2012 and 2014



¹ Between June 18th – June 23rd, 2014, Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3) conducted a telephone survey of 403 random registered voters in the City of Rancho Santa Margarita. The margin of error for the full sample is plus or minus 4.9 percent, margins of error for subgroups will be higher.

- No one issue dominates the public's concern, with one-quarter saying they cannot think of a concern. Though the highest percentage of respondents who volunteered a response mentioned an economic-related issue.

City Services:

- Three in four respondents (78 percent) gave high ratings to the services the City provides, including high marks for public safety, trash and recyclable pick-up and graffiti removal.
- At least ninety two percent or more highly rated the general appearance of the community, personal safety and the accessibility and availability of open space and natural areas.
- Those who have had contact with City employees rate their interaction favorably, with respect the courtliness (83%), knowledge (79%) and timeliness (79%).

Economic and Land Use Issues:

- Residents perceive that the City is in excellent financial health (74%) and has managed its finances well (69%). Therefore, there are low percentages of voters (34%) who believe the city needs additional funding.
- There is overwhelming support for existing planning policies, in particular those to maintain the City's character and attract business that is most beneficial to the City and its residents.
- Almost seven in ten (68%) agree that the Planning Commission and City Council should continue to make land use decisions on the community's behalf. Further, among those with an opinion, two-thirds (65%) agree that the Planning Commission and City Council are most knowledgeable and experienced to make land use decisions.
- There is strong support for non-residential development in the City, but less so for the construction of additional homes.

Social Policy:

- Respondents have favorable views on continuing school safety programs to reduce Cyber-bullying and prevent drug use among youth (92%), as well as establishing neighborhood watch programs throughout the City (89%).



Rancho Santa Margarita Resident Satisfaction Survey 2014

Summary of Survey Results

Conducted June 18-23, 2014

320-612

Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates - FM3

Public Opinion Research & Strategy

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction and Methodology	3
Summary of Findings.....	5
Detailed Findings	12
Part 1: General Perceptions of the City of Rancho Santa Margarita.....	12
1.1 Ratings of Rancho Santa Margarita as a Place to Live.....	12
1.2 Overall Quality of Life in Rancho Santa Margarita	13
1.3 Most Important Issues in Rancho Santa Margarita	15
Part 2: Ratings of Rancho Santa Margarita City Government and Services.....	17
2.1 Overall Rancho Santa Margarita City Government Job Ratings	17
2.2 Rating aspects of Rancho Santa Margarita Community Life	19
2.3 Satisfaction with Specific City Services	20
Part 3: Perceptions of Rancho Santa Margarita’s Fiscal Health	22
Part 4: Economic and Land Use Planning Policies, Proposals, and Actions	26
4.1 Planning Policies and Proposals	26
4.2 Impressions of City Government in Land Use Decisions.....	28
4.3 General Opinions About Development.....	30
4.4 Current Development Policies or Actions Being Considered.....	32
Part 5: Other Policy Proposals	36
Part 6: Contact and Satisfaction with Services Provided by City Employees	37
6.1 Contact With Rancho Santa Margarita Employees	37
6.2 Satisfaction with Service from Rancho Santa Margarita Employees	37
Part 7: Information Sources.....	38

APPENDIX A: TOPLINE SURVEY RESULTS

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

The City of Rancho Santa Margarita commissioned Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3) to conduct a resident satisfaction survey in June 2014. FM3 also conducted a resident satisfaction survey for the City in June 2012. In both studies, the overall mission was to determine residents' opinions and attitudes toward issues and services related to the City.

In the current study, FM3 interviewed 403 Rancho Santa Margarita residents by telephone. The sample was randomly selected using the registered voter list for the City of Rancho Santa Margarita. Random selection of survey respondents allows the sample to speak for the universe of potential Rancho Santa Margarita respondents within a margin of error of what would have been found had the entire population of voters been surveyed. The margin of error for the survey sample of 403 respondents as a whole is plus or minus 4.9 percent at the 95 percent confidence level; for smaller subgroups of the sample, the margin of error is larger. For example, results for women, who make up 53 percent of the sample, have a margin of error of plus or minus 6.5 percent. Thus, for this and other population groupings of similar or even smaller size, interpretation of the survey's findings are more suggestive rather than definitive and should be treated with a certain caution.

The survey was conducted from June 18th to 23rd, 2014. The survey took an average of 20 minutes to complete. The sample was weighted slightly to conform to demographic data on the City's voter population.

The current survey tracked some questions from the 2012 study, and this report compares results for repeated questions.

A note on reading the text: Please note that due to rounding, the sum of two figures may not total 100 percent. For example, if 20.4 percent of respondents said "excellent" and 19.3 percent said "good," the total positive rating is 39.7 percent, which rounds up to 40 percent, not down to the 39 percent one might presume from having read the figures of 20 percent and 19 percent in the text.

Below is an outline of the various sections in this report. Following the outline, a summary of the findings is presented. The remaining portion of this report, consisting of seven sections, discusses the findings in more detail.

- **Part 1** describes survey respondents' opinions of Rancho Santa Margarita as a place to live, the quality of life in the City, and the most important issues facing City residents.
- **Part 2** discusses the respondents' ratings of the job the City government is doing in providing services and aspects of community life.
- **Part 3** explores perceptions of Rancho Santa Margarita's fiscal health, including the job the City is doing managing its finances and the need for additional funds.
- **Part 4** looks at opinions of Rancho Santa Margarita's planning policies and role in land use decisions. This section also investigates views on development in the City and current development policies and actions being considered.
- **Part 5** describes the results for two safety policies tested: school, student and parent safety programs and neighborhood watch programs.
- **Part 6** explores resident contact with City employees and satisfaction with their experience.
- **Part 7** presents the most relied upon sources of information about news and issues facing Rancho Santa Margarita.

Full topline results of the survey are included at the end of the report as **Appendix A**.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

General Perceptions of the City of Rancho Santa Margarita

- **Rancho Santa Margarita residents hold their city in high regard.** Nearly all (97%) respondents rated the City positively as a place to live, with 74 percent calling it an “excellent” place to live. This finding is statistically unchanged from the 2012 study. (*Part 1.1*)

- **Nearly all respondents believe the quality of life in Rancho Santa Margarita has gotten better (29%) or stayed the same (64%) over the last few years.** The fact that nearly two in three respondents believe the quality of life in the City has remained the same is a positive finding in and of itself given the current high rate of satisfaction with Rancho Santa Margarita as a place to live. Furthermore, positive ratings are up slightly from 23 percent two years ago. (*Part 1.2*)

- **Not only are residents positive about the City today, but they are optimistic about its future.** Four in ten (41%) respondents believe the quality of life in Rancho Santa Margarita will get better over the next five years, while 48 percent believe it will remain the same. Again, believing the quality of life will remain the same is a positive result in light of the already high reviews. Ratings are up slightly from 2012 when 35 percent anticipated the quality of life to get better over the next five years. (*Part 1.2*)

- **No one issue facing the City dominates public concern.** (*Part 1.3*)
 - When asked to volunteer the one or two most important issues facing residents of Rancho Santa Margarita, the highest proportion—one in four (24%) was either uncertain or specifically said “nothing.”
 - The most mentioned concerns were economic, with 10 percent mentioning jobs and the economy generally and eight percent the need for more businesses or tax revenue (18% in total). However, mentions of these issues are down slightly from 23 percent in 2012.

- Seven percent mentioned public safety issues, including crime, drugs, or panhandlers, while six percent volunteered police, fire, or public safety generally (for a total of 13% mentioning a public safety concern).
- Another 12 percent specifically mentioned traffic congestion, up from five percent in 2012.
- Cost of living issues (10%), education (8%), and land issues related to the Nissan dealership or strip mall (7%) round out the most mentioned concerns.

Ratings of Rancho Santa Margarita City Government and Services

- **City government gets strong ratings for providing services—a not surprising finding in light of the positive overall reviews of Rancho Santa Margarita and modest concerns about the City.** Nearly eight in ten (78%) rated the City’s job performance in providing services to residents as “excellent” (25%) or “good” (53%). While 15 percent consider the City government’s job performance “only fair,” just three percent rated it as “poor.” Ratings are little changed from 2012. (*Part 2.1*)
- **As in 2012, survey respondents also gave Rancho Santa Margarita high marks for aspects of their community life.** (*Part 2.2*)
 - *The general appearance of the community* (95% “excellent”/“good,” 64% “excellent”)
 - *Personal safety* (94% “excellent”/“good,” 60% “excellent”)
 - *Accessibility and availability of open space and natural areas* (87% “excellent”/“good,” 48% “excellent”)
 - *Opportunities for organized recreational activities* (83% “excellent”/“good,” 39% “excellent”)
 - *Availability of shopping opportunities* (83% “excellent”/“good,” 35% “excellent”)

➤ **Ratings are also very positive for specific services and programs provided by City government.** Respondents were asked to rate 11 specific services on a 7-point scale, where a “1” indicated they are not at all satisfied and a “7” indicated they are very satisfied with the service. Ratings ranged from an average of 5.7 to 6.3, well above the midpoint of 4.0 on the scale. This shows a solid level of satisfaction in each area. Furthermore, these ratings are little changed from 2012. (*Part 2.3*)

- *Fire protection and paramedic services (6.3)*
- *Trash, yard waste and recyclables pick-up (6.3)*
- *Police protection in your neighborhood (6.2)*
- *Graffiti removal (6.1)*
- *Landscaping on street medians and other public areas (6.0)*
- *Maintenance of local streets and sidewalks (5.9)*
- *Street sweeping (5.9)*
- *City emergency preparedness (5.9)*
- *Tree trimming (5.8)*
- *Recreational programs for youth (5.8)*
- *Animal control services (5.7)*

Perceptions of Rancho Santa Margarita’s Fiscal Health

➤ **Most likely growing out of the positive views of life in Rancho Santa Margarita, there is a low sense of urgency for additional funds to provide the level of city services that residents need and want.** Just 34 percent believe there is a “great” (8%) or “some” need (27%) for more funding. Nearly six in ten (58%) believe there is “little” (19%) or “no real need” (38%). Eight percent are uncertain. (*Part 3*)

- **Also influencing opinions about the need for more funding is that most residents believe Rancho Santa Margarita is in a healthy financial position.** (Part 3)
- Three out of four (74%) residents agree that *Rancho Santa Margarita is one of the top cities in excellent financial health in Orange County.*
 - Seven out of ten (69%) respondents agree that *the City manages its finances well.* Just nine percent disagree, with 22 percent uncertain.
 - Over half (55%) of respondents do NOT believe *state cutbacks have negatively affected city services and programs.*

Economic and Land Use Planning Policies, Proposals, and Actions

- **There is overwhelming support for existing Rancho Santa Margarita planning policies. Approximately nine in ten favor the following policies:** (Part 4.1)
- *Work to maintain a substantial fiscal surplus, also known as a reserve fund, to ensure sufficient financial resources during slow economic periods when City revenue generation may be low.*
 - *Attract and retain industry that complements Rancho Santa Margarita's character.*
 - *Encourage businesses to locate where they most benefit residents and surrounding businesses.*
 - *Promote the development and retention of retail businesses that serve local needs, and expand selection of conveniently located goods and services.*
 - *Stimulate high-paying jobs and economic growth that support the City's employment, entertainment, and shopping needs.*
 - *Promote the development and retention of retail businesses that help the City maintain essential public safety and other local community services.*
 - *Encourage the growth, location and retention of industries that generate revenue for City services and programs.*
 - There is only slightly less support for *ensuring that new businesses and revitalization are consistent with existing development policies established for the community* (83% favor)

and promoting the development and retention of retail businesses that help the City compete for revenue and jobs within the region (83% favor).

- **Reflecting the trust residents have in their City government, 68 percent agree that *the Planning Commission and City Council should continue to make land use decisions on the community's behalf.*** Twenty-two percent called this statement inaccurate, while 10 percent are uncertain. (Part 4.2)

- **While there is strong agreement that the Planning Commission and City government should make land use decisions, there is more uncertainty as to whether they have the most expertise to do so.** A lower 53 percent believe it is accurate that *the Planning Commission and City Council are the most knowledgeable and experienced to make land use decisions on the community's behalf.* However, the proportion of respondents who feel this statement is inaccurate is only slightly greater than the proportion that gave this response about whether City government should make such decisions, 29 percent versus 22 percent. Instead, the proportion unable to give an opinion nearly doubled (19% uncertain to 10%). (Part 4.2)

- **The results suggest a conflicted view on development in Rancho Santa Margarita.** Over half (52%) think it is NOT accurate to say *I live in Rancho Santa Margarita because it is not too developed.* Just 43 percent find this statement accurate. Furthermore, half (51%) would favor *encouraging more development.* However, 58 percent also said they would favor *restricting new development* and 51 percent oppose *encouraging the construction of additional homes in the City.* These findings suggest that residents may not be strongly concerned about the current level of development, but are concerned about additional residential development. (Part 4.3)

➤ **There is solid support for proposed non-residential development actions.** (Part 4.3):

- There is strong support for *approving retail stores and restaurant space at existing shopping centers*, with 90 percent in favor (48% “strongly”).
- Three in four (75%) favor *improving the appearance and landscaping of the City entrance ways and the Civic Center*, with 37 percent “strongly” in support.
- There is solid support for *developing a 23-acre sports park along City-owned land on the Antonio Parkway near the southern limits of the City, also known as Chiquita Ridge*. Seven in ten (71%) respondents favor this proposal. However, intensity of support is modest, with 38 percent “strongly” in support.
- Support declines when respondents were asked to consider developing a retail center (56% favor) or single family detached homes (50% favor) at this same location.

➤ **Residents stand behind the City’s current development policies.** Approximately 9 in 10 favor *ensuring that developers comply with the City’s award winning master plan to protect our unique community character and continuing to maintain transparent, fair policies that support revitalization but also preserve our distinctive small town character*. Moreover, three out of four respondents (76%) oppose *allowing developers to build anything they want on their property, regardless of our city’s established land use policies*. (Part 4.4)

Other Policy Proposals

- Just over nine in ten (92%) favor *continuing school, student, and parent safety programs to reduce cyber-bullying and prevent drug use among our youth*, with 73 percent “strongly” in favor. (Part 5)
- Nearly as many respondents favor *establishing neighborhood watch programs throughout the City*, with 89 percent in favor and 54 percent “strongly.” (Part 5)

Contact and Satisfaction with Services Provided by City Employees

- **Just over two in ten respondents (22%) have had a business-related contact with a Rancho Santa Margarita employee over the past two years** (statistically equal to the result in 2012). (*Part 6.1*)

- **Residents who have had recent contact with City employees rated the service they received favorably.** Eighty-three percent gave them “excellent” or “good” ratings for *courtesy*, 79 percent for *knowledge*, and 79 percent for *timeliness*. These are solid reviews that meet or exceed ratings in other California cities. However, these ratings are down from 2012, particularly the proportion rating City employees as “excellent” in each area. (*Part 6.2*)

Information Sources

- *Conversations with family, friends, and neighbors* was the most mentioned information source about news and issues affecting the Rancho Santa Margarita community among a list of sources provided. Eighty-three percent said they turn to family, friends, or neighbors “frequently” or “occasionally.” (*Part 7*)

- The other most mentioned sources are *print and/or online editions of local community newspapers* (57% “frequently” or “occasionally”); *print and/or online editions of the Orange County Register* (52%); *Community Living, which is a City-published magazine* (51%); and *homeowners association meetings or newsletters* (45%). (*Part 7*)

The remainder of this report presents the findings in more detail.

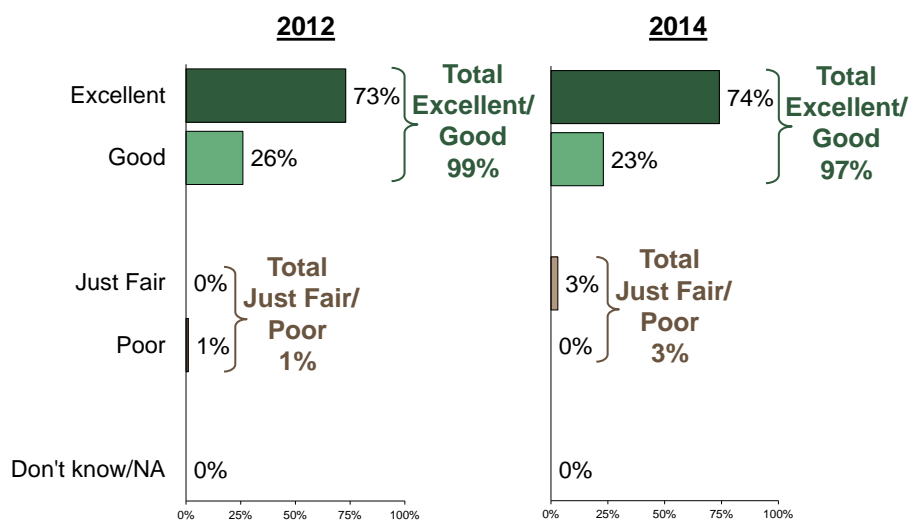
DETAILED FINDINGS

Part 1: General Perceptions of the City of Rancho Santa Margarita

1.1 Ratings of Rancho Santa Margarita as a Place to Live

Rancho Santa Margarita residents have a universally positive impression of life in their city. A nearly unanimous 97 percent gave Rancho Santa Margarita positive reviews as a place to live, with 74 percent calling it “excellent” and 23 percent “good.” This is little changed from 2012, when 99 percent had a positive impression (**Figure 1** illustrates the results).

**Figure 1:
 Ratings of Rancho Santa Margarita as a Place to Live, 2012 and 2014**



Results Among Subgroups: Table 1 shows that positive reviews of Rancho Santa Margarita are high among all demographic groups studied. However, homeowners, post-graduates, white residents, and residents 50 years of age and older are more likely than renters, those less educated, Latinos, and 18 to 49 year old residents to call Rancho Santa Margarita an “excellent” place to live.

**Table 1:
Demographics of Rancho Santa Margarita as a Place to Live**

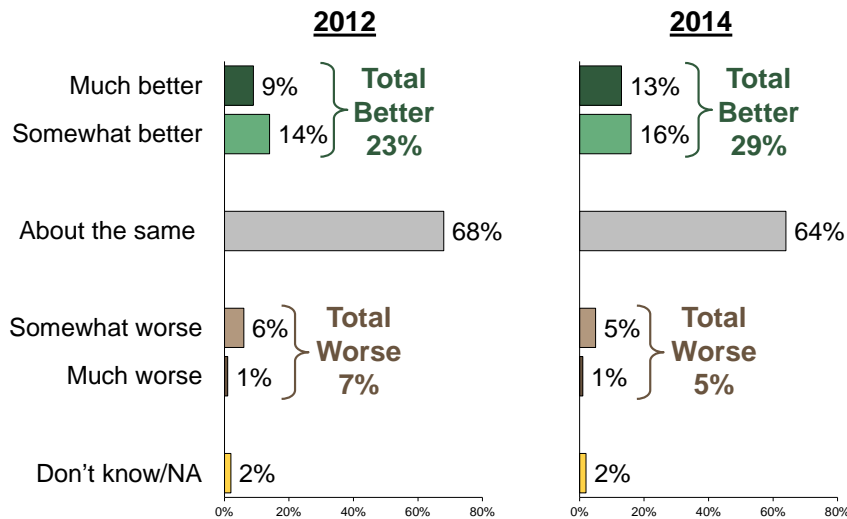
Demographic Group	Excellent	Good	Just Fair/Poor
All Respondents	74%	23%	3%
Gender			
Men	73%	24%	4%
Women	76%	23%	2%
Age			
18-49	70%	26%	3%
50+	81%	18%	2%
65+	82%	18%	0%
Race			
White	76%	22%	2%
Latino	66%	30%	4%
Education			
High school or less	69%	27%	5%
Some college	78%	21%	1%
College graduate	70%	27%	3%
Post-graduate	87%	9%	4%
Non-College	75%	23%	2%
College+	74%	23%	3%
Residence			
Own	79%	19%	2%
Rent	60%	34%	5%
Housing Type			
Single family	74%	24%	2%
Multi-family	74%	22%	4%
Length of Residence			
5 or less	73%	27%	0%
6 to 10	63%	33%	4%
11 to 20	78%	21%	1%
21+	78%	15%	7%

1.2 Overall Quality of Life in Rancho Santa Margarita

Not only do nearly all respondents view Rancho Santa Margarita as an “excellent” or “good” place to live, but nearly three in ten (29%) believe the overall quality of life in the City has gotten better in the last three or four years. Furthermore, 64 percent believe the quality of life has remained the same—a positive finding given the strongly favorable view of Rancho Santa

Margarita as a place to live. Just five percent see the quality of life as having gotten worse. The proportion who believes the quality of life has improved is up slightly from 23 percent in 2012—perhaps reflecting the improving California and national economy (**Figure 2** illustrates the results).

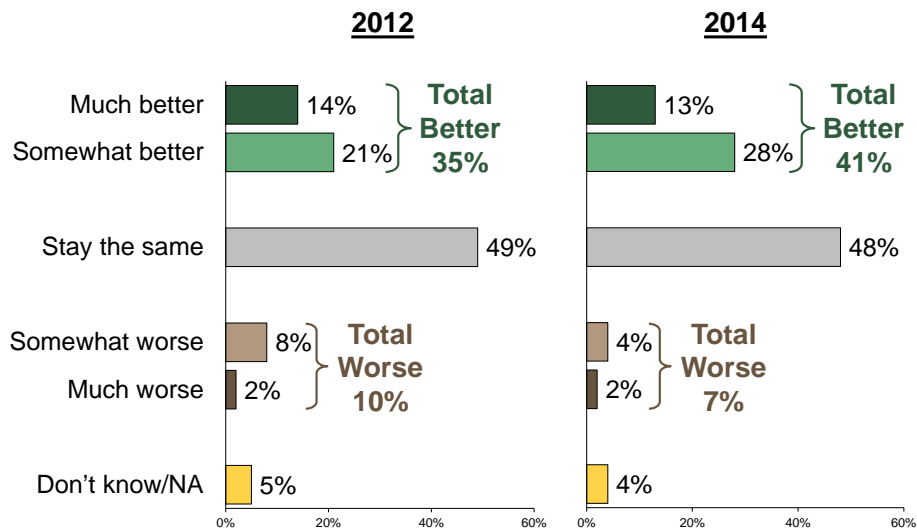
Figure 2:
Overall Quality of Life in the Last Three to Four Years, 2012 and 2014



Results Among Subgroups: Residents of 21 years or more are far more likely to feel the quality of life has gotten worse in the last three to four years than those of lesser tenure—albeit a low 12 percent gave this response (compared to 3% of more recent residents). There is no other notable variation in the proportion considering the quality of life to have gotten better or worse among other demographic groups.

Rancho Santa Margarita residents are also optimistic about their City’s future, with 41 percent believing the quality of life will get better over the next five years and just seven percent believing it will get worse (48% believe it will stay the same). Again, the high proportion that believes the quality of life will get better is particularly noteworthy given the already high level of satisfaction. As shown in **Figure 3**, more respondents are optimistic about the City’s future in the current study than in 2012. At that time, a slightly lower 35 percent felt the quality of life would get better.

**Figure 3:
 Overall Quality of Life in the Next Five Years, 2012 and 2014**



Results Among Subgroups: There is little variation in the future outlook across demographic groups. Latinos are slightly more optimistic than white respondents (51% to 40% total better), as are respondents with a high school education or less (55%) versus those more educated (approximately 39%). Residents of six to 10 years are more optimistic than the sample average (55% to 41%).

1.3 Most Important Issues in Rancho Santa Margarita

As in 2012, respondents were asked to volunteer what they consider the one or two most important issues facing residents of the City of Rancho Santa Margarita today. The highest proportion, 24 percent, said “nothing” (15%) or “don’t know” (9%) in response to this question, making it the most mentioned response. This is statistically equal to 2012 and highlights that, for many residents, there is no issue at the forefront of their attention in regard to Rancho Santa Margarita. The most mentioned concerns include the following (**Table 2** illustrates the results):

- Economic concerns top the list, with 10 percent mentioning jobs and the economy generally and eight percent the need for more businesses or tax revenues. This is down slightly from 2012 when 23 percent mentioned these issues.

- Public safety followed, with seven percent mentioning crime, drugs or panhandlers, while six percent volunteered police, fire, or public safety generally. Public safety mentions were similar in 2012.
- Just over one in ten (12%) specifically mentioned traffic congestion, putting it among the most mentioned concerns. Concern about traffic congestion is up from five percent in 2012.
- Cost of living issues were also often mentioned, including high taxes (5%) and the cost of living, food, and gasoline (5%). Related, five percent mentioned affordable housing, foreclosures, and HOAs.
- Rounding out the most mentioned issues are schools and education (8%), land issues related to the Nissan dealership or strip mall (7%), building or zoning issues (4%), infrastructure/roads/sidewalks/street lights (4%), and overpopulation (4%). There was little change in the proportion volunteering concern about schools/education or infrastructure issues.

Table 2:

Most Important Issues Facing Rancho Santa Margarita Residents, 2012 and 2014

(Ranked by 2014 responses, Open-end Grouped Responses mentioned by 2% or more;

Percentages are over 100% because respondents were allowed to give up to two responses.)

Open Ends	2012	2014
*Nothing/No concerns/Doing good	13%	15%
*Traffic/Congestion	5%	12%
*Jobs/Economy	18%	10%
More businesses/Produce tax revenues	5%	8%
Schools/Education	8%	8%
*Crime/Drugs/Panhandlers	12%	7%
Mention of Nissan dealership/Land issue	NA	6%
*Police/Fire/Public safety	1%	6%
Cost of living/Food/Gasoline	NA	5%
*Affordable housing/Foreclosures/HOA's	8%	5%
High taxes	3%	5%
Roads/Infrastructure/Sidewalks/Streetlights	5%	4%
Building/Zoning issues	NA	4%
*Parks/Recreation/Youth programs	2%	4%
*Crowded/Too much population	3%	4%
*Water/Drought	5%	3%
Less growth/Development/Too much/No more	NA	2%
Other mention	22%	8%
DK/NA/Unsure	12%	9%

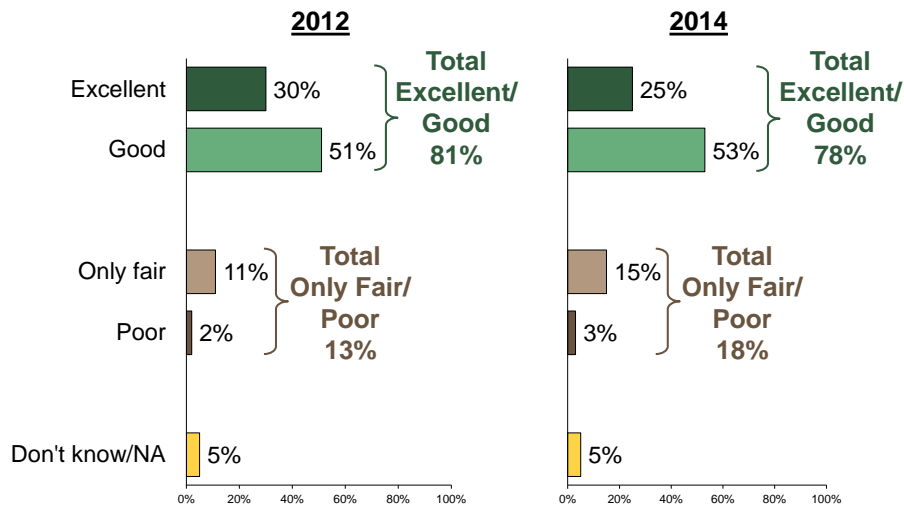
**Slight differences in wording of the open-ends from 2012: Nothing, Economy/Cost of living, Crime/Drugs/Safety, Fire safety, Homeowner's Association, Youth programs, Overdevelopment/Over population, Water issues.*

PART 2: RATINGS OF RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA CITY GOVERNMENT AND SERVICES

2.1 Overall Rancho Santa Margarita City Government Job Ratings

Rancho Santa Margarita residents rated their City government favorably for providing services to residents. Nearly eight in ten (78%) consider the job being done by City government in this regard to be “excellent” (25%) or “good” (53%). While 15 percent gave the City an “only fair” rating, just three percent view the City’s job performance poorly. Ratings are down insignificantly from 2012 when 81 percent gave positive reviews and 13 percent had a negative impression (see **Figure 4**).

**Figure 4:
 Overall Rancho Santa Margarita City Government Rating in Providing Services, 2012 and 2014**



Results Among Subgroups: Table 3 illustrates the high proportion of positive reviews across all demographic groups. As the table shows, job ratings for City government are weaker with residents of 10 years or less than longer term residents, those with a high school education or less compared with those more educated, and men more than women. The proportion who gave an “only fair” or “poor” rating rises with declining age as well.

Those who see a “great” need or “some” need for additional city funding are slightly more negative in their assessment of City government’s job performance in providing services than those who perceive “little” or “no real” need for additional funding (25% “fair”/“poor” to 15%).

**Table 3:
 Demographics of Rancho Santa Margarita City Government Rating in Providing Services,
 2014**

Demographic Group	Excellent/Good	Only Fair/Poor
All Respondents	78%	18%
Gender		
Men	75%	22%
Women	80%	14%
Age		
18-49	77%	20%
50+	79%	16%
65+	82%	10%
Race		
White	78%	18%
Latino	72%	23%
Education		
High school or less	67%	30%
Some college	83%	12%
College graduate	78%	18%
Post-graduate	81%	12%
Non-College	78%	18%
College+	79%	17%
Housing Type		
Single Family	79%	17%
Multi-family	76%	18%
Residence		
Own	78%	17%
Rent	77%	21%
Length of Residence		
5 or less	74%	21%
6 to 10	65%	29%
11 to 20	82%	12%
21+	84%	15%

2.2 Rating aspects of Rancho Santa Margarita Community Life

Rancho Santa Margarita residents were asked to rate five specific aspects of community life that residents are likely to encounter or have an opinion about. These five areas were also evaluated in 2012. As in 2012, reviews in each area were overwhelmingly positive, with “excellent” or “good” reviews from 83 percent or more respondents in each area. The strongest rated aspects of community life tested were *the general appearance of the community* (64% “excellent,” 95% “excellent”/“good”) and *personal safety* (60% “excellent,” 94% “excellent”/“good”). Nearly nine in ten gave strong ratings for *the accessibility and availability of open space and natural areas* (48% “excellent,” 87% “excellent”/“good”). Ratings were only slightly weaker for *opportunities for organized recreational activities* (39% “excellent,” 83% “excellent”/“good”) and *the availability of shopping opportunities* (35% “excellent,” 83% “excellent”/“good”). As shown in **Table 4**, ratings for open space and natural areas are down slightly from 2012 and ratings for shopping opportunities are up slightly.

Table 4:
**Proportion Giving Excellent or Good Ratings to Aspects of Rancho Santa Margarita
 Community Life, 2012 and 2014**
(Ranked by 2014)

Aspect	2012	2014	Difference
The general appearance of the community	96%	95%	-1
Personal safety	95%	94%	-1
The accessibility and availability of open space and natural areas	92%	87%	-5
Opportunities for organized recreational activities	80%	83%	+3
The availability of shopping opportunities	77%	83%	+6

Results Among Subgroups: There are few notable differences by demographic groups in their overall positive reviews. Differences in “excellent” ratings include the following:

- White residents gave more “excellent” ratings in all areas aside from *the availability of shopping opportunities* than Latino residents, most notably with regard to *personal safety* (62% “excellent” among white to 43% among Latino residents) and *opportunities for organized recreational activities* (41% among white to 27% among Latino residents).
- Residents of multi-family housing gave “excellent” ratings about *the general appearance of the community* in higher numbers than those in single family housing (74% to 61%), although it is the highest rated aspect of community life tested for both.
- Homeowners gave stronger ratings than renters for *personal safety* (61% to 50%), *accessibility and availability of open space and natural areas* (52% to 34%), and *opportunities for organized recreational activities* (42% to 29%).
- Post-graduates were the most likely to give “excellent” reviews of *the general appearance of the community* (78%). “Excellent” ratings for *opportunities for organized recreational activities* rose with level of education, from 28 percent among those with a high school education or less, to 49 percent of post-graduates.
- Residents ages 50 or older were more likely than those younger to rate each aspect as “excellent.”

2.3 Satisfaction with Specific City Services

Rancho Santa Margarita respondents were presented with a list of 11 specific services provided by City government—all of which were also tested in 2012. For each service mentioned, respondents were asked to rate it on a 7-point scale, where a “1” indicated they are “not at all satisfied” and a “7” indicated they are “very satisfied” with that service.

On average, respondents are the most satisfied with *fire protection and paramedic services* (6.3) and *trash, yard waste and recyclables pick-up* (6.3), closely followed by *police protection in your neighborhood* (6.2), *graffiti removal* (6.1), and *landscaping on street medians and other public areas* (6.0). Furthermore, between 74 and 81 percent gave these services a rating of “6” or “7” on the 7-point scale.

Mean ratings are only slightly lower for the remaining services and programs tested: *maintenance of local streets and sidewalks* (5.9), *street sweeping* (5.9), *city emergency preparedness* (5.9), *tree trimming* (5.8), *recreational programs for youth* (5.8), and *animal control services* (5.7). Mean scores are statistically little changed from 2012; all are within one-tenth of a point from their respective 2012 ratings, aside from *animal control services*, which has a differential of two-tenths.

Table 5 illustrates the average rating for each service compared with 2012 results.

Table 5:
Average Satisfaction Ratings with City Services, 2012 and 2014
(Ranked by Mean Score Difference;
Mean Score Scale: 1 to 7; where 1 = not at all satisfied and 7 = very satisfied)

Service	Mean Score		
	2012	2014	Difference
Recreational programs for youth	5.7	5.8	+0.1
Trash, yard waste and recyclables pick-up	6.3	6.3	NC
Fire protection and paramedic services	6.3	6.3	NC
Police protection in your neighborhood	6.2	6.2	NC
Maintenance of local streets and sidewalks	5.9	5.9	NC
Street sweeping	5.9	5.9	NC
Graffiti removal	6.2	6.1	-0.1
Landscaping on street medians and other public areas	6.1	6.0	-0.1
City emergency preparedness	6.0	5.9	-0.1
Tree trimming	5.9	5.8	-0.1
Animal control services	5.9	5.7	-0.2

Results Among Subgroups: High proportions of all subgroups gave ratings of “6” or “7” on the 7-point scale. The proportion giving “6” or “7” ratings are used to analyze the subgroups, rather than mean scores, because of the narrow range of mean scores among subgroups.

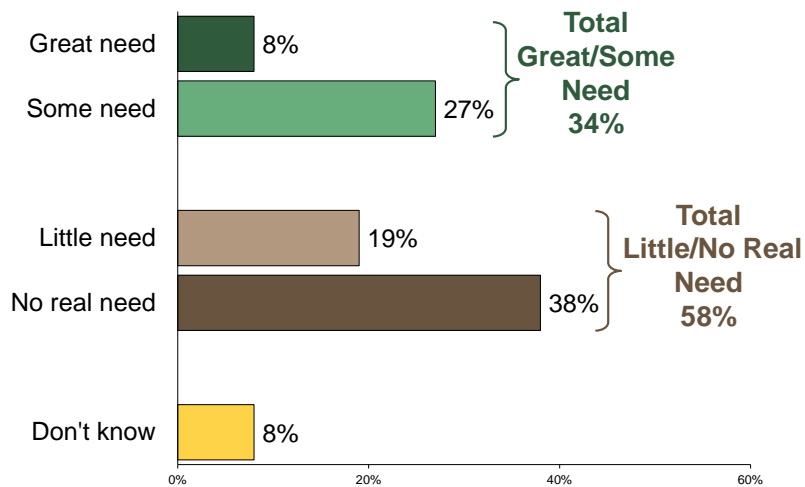
Generally speaking, the highest rated services with the sample as a whole are also at the top with each subgroup analyzed. There were few notable differences among subgroups.

- The proportion rating *maintenance of local streets and sidewalks* a “6” or “7” declines with years of residency, from 77 percent among residents of five years or less to 59 percent among residents of more than 20 years. Residents of more than 20 years show the lowest intensity of satisfaction regarding *street sweeping* as well, with 54 percent giving a “6” or “7” compared to the sample average of 65 percent.
- Multi-family home dwellers gave at least slightly stronger ratings in nearly every service area than do single family home residents, although the top five rated services are the same for both.
- Homeowners were more likely to give a “6” or “7” satisfaction rating for *graffiti removal* than renters, 76 percent to 65 percent.
- White respondents also gave higher marks to the City for *graffiti removal* than did Latino respondents (75% to 63%). Latinos show more satisfaction with *street sweeping* than do white respondents (77% to 63%).

PART 3: PERCEPTIONS OF RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA’S FISCAL HEALTH

Reflecting the high level of satisfaction with the quality of life in Rancho Santa Margarita and the job performance of City government, there is little perceived need for additional funds to provide the level of city services that Rancho Santa Margarita residents need and want. Just one in three (34%) believe there is a “great” (8%) or “some” (27%) need for more funding. Meanwhile, 19 percent see “little” need and 38 percent believe there is no need (8% are uncertain). **Figure 5** illustrates the results.

**Figure 5:
Perception of Need for Additional Funds for City Services, 2014**



Results Among Subgroups:

- Nearly half (47%) of those who rated the quality of life in Rancho Santa Margarita as “good” believe there is a “great” or “some” need for additional funding, compared to just 30 percent who think the quality of life is “excellent.”
- Perception of need is higher among renters than homeowners (41% “great”/“some” to 32%), non-college residents than college graduates (46% to 27%), Latinos than white residents (61% to 28%), residents ages 18 to 49 than those older (42% to 28%), and women 18 to 49 than women 50+ (46% to 24%).

Also contributing to the low perceived urgency for additional funding is that most residents believe the City is in a solid financial position.

Three in four (74%) agree that *Rancho Santa Margarita is one of the top cities in excellent financial health in Orange County*, with 43 percent calling this statement “very” accurate. Just seven percent called this statement inaccurate, with 18 percent uncertain (see **Figure 6**).

Results Among Subgroups:

- Agreement with this statement is broad-based, with high numbers of all subgroups calling it accurate. Residents of more than 10 years are more likely to consider this statement “very” accurate than newer residents (50% to 35%).
- Although the sample size is small on this split-sampled¹ question, the proportion who called this statement “very” accurate is higher among those who believe the quality of life in Rancho Santa Margarita is “excellent,” those who believe it has gotten much better in the last three to four years and expect it to get much better in the next five years, as well as those who rated the job City government is doing in providing services as “excellent.”

Nearly seven in ten (69%) respondents believe it is accurate to say that *the City manages its finances well* (see **Figure 6**). While only 36 percent called this “very” accurate, the overall level of agreement is very positive in comparison to other cities FM3 has studied. Furthermore, just nine percent called this statement inaccurate, with 22 percent uncertain. Therefore, the vast majority of those able to give a response had a positive impression.

Results Among Subgroups:

- There is little notable variation by demographic groups. However, homeowners were more likely to call this statement accurate than renters (74% to 54%), with renters far more uncertain (34% to 19%). Those ages 50 to 64 (30%) and women 50+ in particular (37%) were also among the most uncertain.
- Again, the proportion who called this statement “very” accurate is higher among those who believe the quality of life in Rancho Santa Margarita is “excellent,” those who believe it has gotten much better in the last three to four years and expect it to get much better in the next five years, as well as those who rated the job City government is doing in providing services as “excellent.”

Over half (55%) of respondents believe it is NOT accurate that *state cutbacks have negatively affected city services and programs*. Just 31 percent agreed with this statement, with 14 percent uncertain (see **Figure 6**).

¹ Split-sampled questions are those asked of a random half of the sample rather than the full sample.

Results Among Subgroups:

- The small group of those who rated the City's job performance in providing services as "only fair" or "poor" are more likely to consider this statement accurate than those who rated the City positively in this regard (42% to 29% accurate).
- Those who feel there is a "great" or "some" need for more city funding consider this statement accurate in higher proportions than those who feel there is "little" or "no real" need for more funding (47% to 23% accurate).
- Residents of more than 10 years are more likely to consider this statement NOT accurate (60%) than newer residents (44%). Those in single family homes are more likely to call it inaccurate than multi-family home dwellers (60% to 47%), as are homeowners than renters (60% to 39%) and college graduates than non-college respondents (63% to 44%). This suggests that more affluent residents may feel less impacted by state cutbacks.

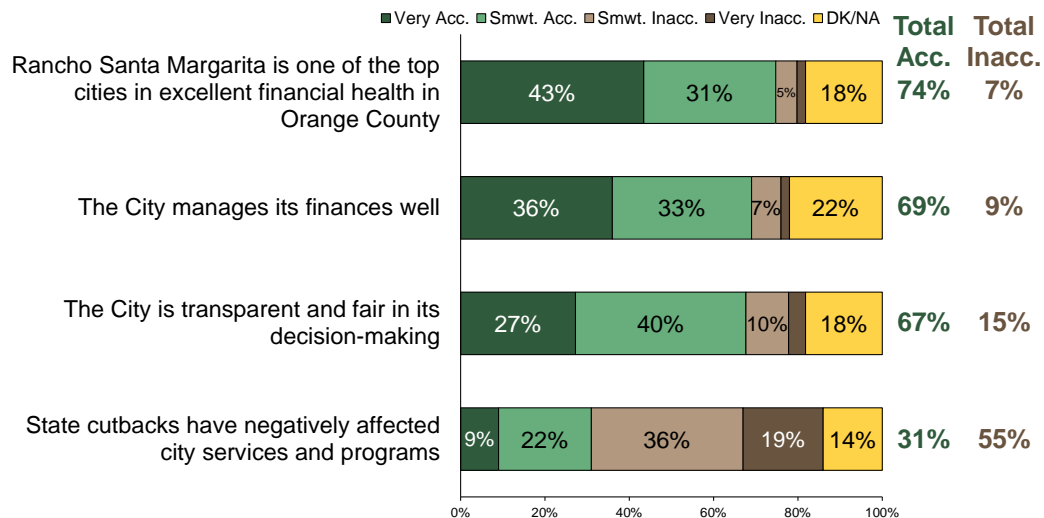
Related to fiscal management (as well as land use decisions), two-thirds (67%) of respondents believe *the City is transparent and fair in its decision-making*. Just 15 percent called this statement inaccurate, with 18 percent uncertain. It is important to note, however, that agreement is soft, with just 27 percent calling this statement "very" accurate and 40 percent calling it "somewhat" accurate (see **Figure 6**).

Results Among Subgroups:

- Those who gave the City government positive ratings for providing services are more likely to consider this statement accurate than those who rated the government as "only fair" or "poor" (72% to 53% accurate).
- Those who see a "great" or "some" need for additional funding were more likely to call this statement accurate than those who see "little" or "no real" need (79% to 65%).
- Non-college respondents were more likely to call this statement accurate than college graduates (78% to 60%), with college graduates considering it inaccurate in higher numbers (20% to 8% among non-college graduates).
- Renters were slightly more likely than homeowners to call this statement accurate (79% to 63%).

- Although the sample size is small on this split-sampled question, Latino residents were more likely to call this statement accurate than white respondents (83% to 64%).

Figure 6:
Agreement with Statements About Fiscal Health/Transparency
(Ranked by “very accurate”)



PART 4: ECONOMIC AND LAND USE PLANNING POLICIES, PROPOSALS, AND ACTIONS

4.1 Planning Policies and Proposals

The survey presented respondents with statements reflecting Rancho Santa Margarita planning policies and asked them if they favor or oppose each one. The results show strong support for the policies tested (**Table 6** illustrates the results).

- *Work to maintain a substantial fiscal surplus, also known as a reserve fund, to ensure sufficient financial resources during slow economic periods when City revenue generation may be low:* 91 percent favor, 63 percent “strongly.” Men ages 50 or older reacted with more intensity to this policy than other subgroups, with 87 percent “strongly” in favor.
- *Attract and retain industry that complements Rancho Santa Margarita’s character:* 91 percent favor, 59 percent “strongly.”

- *Encourage businesses to locate where they most benefit residents and surrounding businesses:* 91 percent favor, 56 percent “strongly.”
- *Promote the development and retention of retail businesses that serve local needs, and expand selection of conveniently located goods and services:* 90 percent favor, 56 percent “strongly.” A higher proportion of single family home dwellers “strongly” favor this policy than multi-family home residents (60% to 46%).
- *Stimulate high-paying jobs and economic growth that support the City’s employment, entertainment, and shopping needs:* 89 percent favor, 59 percent “strongly.”
- *Promote the development and retention of retail businesses that help the City maintain essential public safety and other local community services:* 89 percent favor, 58 percent “strongly.”
- *Encourage the growth, location and retention of industries that generate revenue for city services and programs:* 87 percent favor, 57 percent “strongly.”
- *Ensure that new businesses and revitalization are consistent with existing development policies established for the community:* 83 percent favor, 54 percent “strongly.” Just 10 percent oppose this policy.
- *Promote the development and retention of retail businesses that help the City compete for revenue and jobs within the region:* 83 percent favor, 54 percent “strongly.” Just 10 percent opposed this policy. Latino respondents were among the most likely to favor this policy overall (97%). Men ages 50 and older were no more likely than those younger to favor this proposal overall, but do so with greater intensity (71% “strongly” favor, compared to 48% of those younger and 52% of women).

Overall, college graduates are more strongly favorable toward most policies than non-college residents.

Table 6: Favor/Oppose Planning Policies, Proposals, and Actions
(Ranked by Total Favor)

Statement	Total Favor	Strongly Favor	Total Oppose	Don't Know/NA
Work to maintain a substantial fiscal surplus, also known as a reserve fund, to ensure sufficient financial resources during slow economic periods when City revenue generation may be low	91%	63%	5%	4%
Attract and retain industry that complements Rancho Santa Margarita's character	91%	59%	5%	4%
Encourage businesses to locate where they most benefit residents and surrounding businesses	91%	56%	6%	3%
Promote the development and retention of retail businesses that serve local needs, and expand selection of conveniently located goods and services	90%	56%	6%	4%
Stimulate high-paying jobs and economic growth that support the City's employment, entertainment and shopping needs	89%	59%	9%	2%
Promote the development and retention of retail businesses that help the City maintain essential public safety and other local community services	89%	58%	5%	5%
Encourage the growth, location and retention of industries that generate revenue for city services and programs	87%	57%	8%	5%
Ensure that new businesses and revitalization are consistent with existing development policies established for the community	83%	54%	10%	7%
Promote the development and retention of retail businesses that help the City compete for revenue and jobs within the region	83%	54%	10%	6%
Encourage the construction of additional homes in the city	44%	21%	51%	5%

4.2 Impressions of City Government in Land Use Decisions

Just over two out of three respondents agree that *the Planning Commission and City Council should continue to make land use decisions on the community's behalf*, with 68 percent calling this statement accurate (22% call this statement inaccurate).

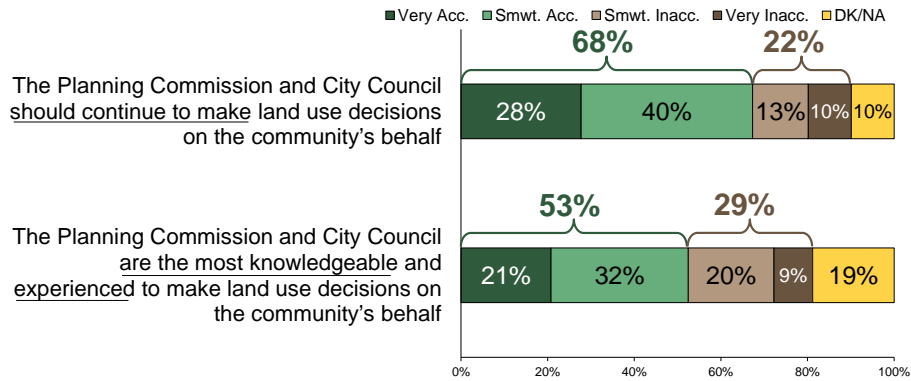
Agreement drops when the statement says *the Planning Commission and City Council are the most knowledgeable and experienced to make land use decisions on the community's behalf*. Focused on expertise, 53 percent called this statement accurate. However, the proportion calling

it inaccurate is only slightly higher than the aforementioned statement. Instead, nearly twice as many respondents were unable to give an opinion (19% to 10%). **Figure 7** illustrates the results.

Results Among Subgroups: Those who rated the job being done by City government in providing services as “only fair” or “poor” have a larger drop off in agreement between the statements that the Planning Commission and City Council *should continue* to make land use decisions and *are the most knowledgeable and experienced* than those who rate the City’s job performance positively. Seventy percent of those who gave “excellent” or “good” ratings to the City for providing services called it accurate that the Planning Commission and City Council *should continue* to make land use decisions. A lower 58 percent consider it accurate that they are *the most knowledgeable and experienced* to do so. This is a 12-point decline from the “*should continue*” statement. Meanwhile, 63 percent of those who gave the City “only fair” or “poor” reviews agree more with the former statement compared to 36 percent with the latter. This is a 27-point decline. Therefore, the decline in agreement with the “*knowledgeable and experienced*” statement from the “*should continue*” statement is more than double among those who gave the City negative reviews for providing services than those with a more positive view of the City.

- Drop off is also larger among renters than homeowners (a 27-point decline to a 12-point decline) and men than women (-22 to -10) – particularly men ages 18 to 49 (-29).

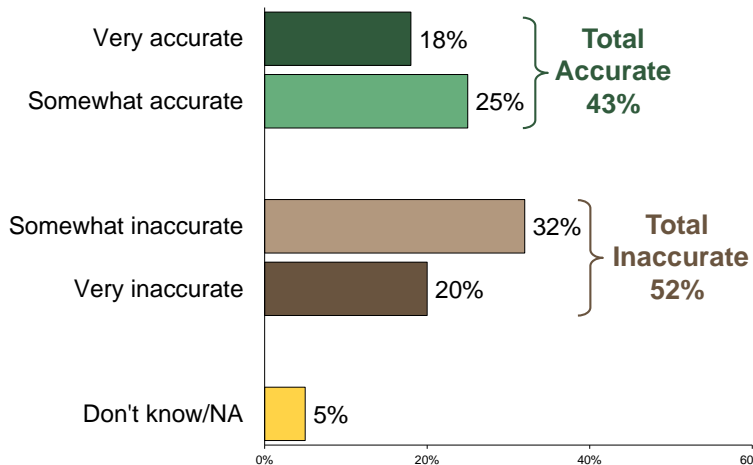
Figure 7:
Agreement with Statements About Land Use Decisions
 (Ranked by “very” accurate)



4.3 General Opinions About Development

Just over half (52%) of respondents said the statement *I live in Rancho Santa Margarita because it is not too developed* is NOT accurate (see **Figure 8**). Forty-three percent consider this an accurate description of how they feel, with a low 18 percent calling it “very” accurate. Residents of more than 20 years (66%), women ages 18 to 49 (65%), and men ages 50 or older (64%) were the most likely to call this statement inaccurate. The small group of residents of five years or less was the most likely to call this statement accurate (62%).

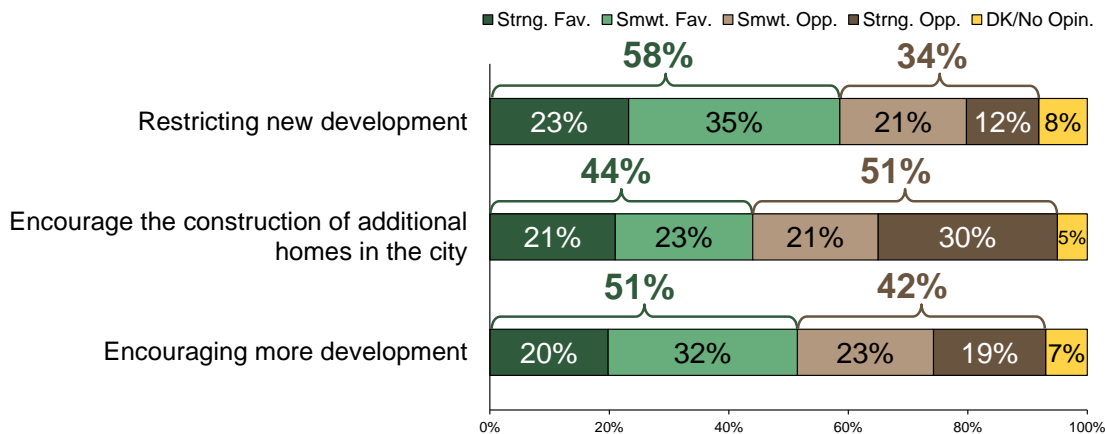
Figure 8:
Agreement with the Statement:
I live in Rancho Santa Margarita Because it is Not Too Developed



Half (51%) of residents favor *encouraging more development*, while a lesser 42 percent oppose it (see **Figure 9**).

However, 58 percent also said they favor *restricting new development*, and 51 percent oppose *encouraging the construction of additional homes in the City* (see **Figure 9**). These apparently contradictory findings highlight what reaction to other development proposals suggest: residents are open to some development, and in particular that which protects the community’s character and advances economic opportunity, but are more opposed to residential development generally.

Figure 9:
Opinions on Development
(Ranked by “strongly” favor)



Results Among Subgroups:

- Those who feel there is a “great” or “some” need for additional funding are more likely to favor *encouraging the construction of additional homes in the City* than those who perceive “little” or “no real” need for additional funding (60% to 36%).
- Residents of over 20 years are more likely to favor *restricting new development* than those of lesser tenure (67% to approximately 55%). Opposition to *encouraging the construction of additional homes in the City* rose with tenure in the City, from 39 percent of residents of 10 years or less to 65 percent of residents of more than 20 years.
- Those living in multi-family dwellings are slightly more likely to favor *encouraging more development*, with 58 percent giving this response, compared with 48 percent of those living

in single family homes. They are also more likely to favor *encouraging the construction of additional homes in the City* than single-family home dwellers (57% to 37%).

- Homeowners are more likely to favor *restricting new development* than renters, 63 percent to 41 percent. Meanwhile, 55 percent of renters oppose this restriction, and 58 percent favor *encouraging more development* (compared to 49% of homeowners). Renters are also far more likely to favor *encouraging the construction of additional homes in the City* than homeowners (76% to 36%).
- Non-college respondents favor *restricting new development* in higher proportions than college graduates (66% to 53%).
- Those 50 years of age or older are more likely to oppose *encouraging more development* (50% to 37% of those younger). They are also less likely to support *encouraging the construction of additional homes in the City* than those younger (50% in favor among those 18 to 49 compared to 36% of those older).
- Although the sample size is small on this split-sampled question, Latino respondents are far more likely to favor *encouraging the construction of additional homes in the City* than are white respondents (72% to 42%).
- Men are more likely to favor *encouraging the construction of additional homes in the City* than are women (51% to 37%), in particular men ages 18 to 49 (63 percent).

4.4 Current Development Policies or Actions Being Considered

Illustrating support for development that maintains the community's character, 91 percent favor *ensuring that developers comply with the City's award winning master plan to protect our unique community character*, with 64 percent "strongly" in favor. Moreover, 93 percent favor *continuing to maintain transparent, fair policies that support revitalization but also preserve our distinctive small town character*, with 61 percent "strongly" in favor. And 76 percent oppose (56% "strongly") *allowing developers to build anything they want on their property, regardless of our City's established land use policies*. Just 22 percent favor this.

More specifically, seven in ten (71%) respondents favor *developing a 23-acre sports park along City-owned land on the Antonio Parkway near the southern limits of the City, also known as Chiquita Ridge* (38% “strongly”). Just 22 percent oppose this development proposal. There is less support for *developing a retail center* (56% in favor and 33% opposed) and even less for *developing single family detached homes* in this same area (50% favor to 41% oppose). These results may also indicate a reluctance to develop open spaces.

There is strong support for *approving additional retail stores and restaurant space at existing shopping centers*. Ninety percent favor this development, with nearly half (48%) “strongly” in favor.

Three in four (75%) also favor *improving the appearance and landscaping of the City entrance ways and the Civic Center* with 37 percent “strongly” in support.

Table 7 illustrates the results for these statements.

Table 7: Favor/Oppose Current Development Policies or Actions Being Considered
 (Ranked by Total Favor)

Statement	Total Favor	Strongly Favor	Total Oppose	Don't Know/NA
Continuing to maintain transparent, fair policies that support revitalization but also preserve our distinctive small town character	93%	61%	4%	2%
Ensuring that developers comply with the City's award winning master plan to protect our unique community character	91%	64%	6%	3%
Approving additional retail stores and restaurant space at existing shopping centers	90%	48%	8%	2%
Improving the appearance and landscaping of the City entrance ways and the Civic Center	75%	37%	21%	5%
Developing a 23-acre sports park along City-owned land on the Antonio Parkway near the southern limits of the City, also known as Chiquita Ridge	71%	38%	22%	7%
Developing a retail center along City-owned land on the Antonio Parkway near the southern limits of the City, also known as Chiquita Ridge	56%	30%	33%	11%
Developing single family detached homes along City-owned land on the Antonio Parkway near the southern limits of the City, also known as Chiquita Ridge	50%	22%	41%	9%
Allowing developers to build anything they want on their property, regardless of our City's established land use policies	22%	11%	76%	2%

Results Among Subgroups:

Length of residency: Residents of five years or less are the most likely to favor *developing single family detached homes along City-owned land on the Antonio Parkway near the southern limits of the City, also known as Chiquita Ridge*. More than three out of four (77%) of these newest residents favor this, compared to approximately 46 percent of longer-term residents.

Housing type: Multi-family home dwellers are slightly more likely to support developing single family detached homes at Chiquita Ridge (56% to 47%). They are nearly twice as likely as single-family home dwellers to oppose *improving the appearance and landscaping of the City entrance ways and the Civic Center* (31% to 17%). Single family home dwellers support *approving additional retail stores and restaurant space at existing shopping centers* with greater intensity, with 52 percent “strongly” in favor compared to 39 percent of multi-family home dwellers. There is little difference in overall support however.

Homeownership: Renters are more supportive of *developing single family detached homes* on Chiquita Ridge (74% to 42% for homeowners, with 46% of homeowners opposed). They are also slightly more supportive of *developing a retail center* in this same area (67% to 55% of homeowners). Nine in ten renters and homeowners favor *approving additional retail stores and restaurant space at existing shopping centers*. However, homeowners are more likely to “strongly” favor this, 54 percent to 30 percent. Homeowners oppose *allowing developers to build anything they want on their property, regardless of our City’s established land use policies* in some of the highest numbers (80%).

Education: College graduates reacted with more intensity of support to *approving additional retail stores and restaurant space at existing shopping centers* than did non-college respondents (56% “strongly” favor to 36%). However, there is no difference in overall support.

Gender: There is little notable difference in response to each proposal by gender. Men show more support for developing single family detached homes at Chiquita Ridge than women (59% to 42%).

Age: Support declines with age for *improving the appearance and landscaping of the City entrance ways and the Civic Center*, with 82 percent of those 18 to 49 in favor compared to 65 percent of those older. Intensity of support for developing a 23-acre sports park at Chiquita Ridge also declines with age, from 42 percent of those 18 to 49 to 28 percent of those 65 or older. Those 50 years of age or older are more likely to oppose developing single family detached homes at Chiquita Ridge and *improving the appearance and landscaping of the City entrance ways and the Civic Center*.

PART 5: OTHER POLICY PROPOSALS

Ninety-two percent of respondents favor *continuing school, student, and parent safety programs to reduce cyber-bullying and prevent drug use among our youth*, with 73 percent “strongly” in favor (see **Table 8**). Non-college respondents support this proposal with greater intensity than college graduates (80% “strongly” favor it compared to 68% of college graduates). This proposal also generated more intensity with women than men (81% to 64% “strongly” favor) and those 18 to 49 than those older (82% to 66%).

There is also widespread support for *establishing neighborhood watch programs throughout the City*. Eighty-nine percent favor this proposal, with 54 percent “strongly” favoring it (see **Table 8**). There is far-reaching support for this proposal. However, residents of five years or less are the most likely to “strongly” favor it, with 71 percent giving this response.

Table 8: Favor/Oppose Safety Policies
(Ranked by Total Favor)

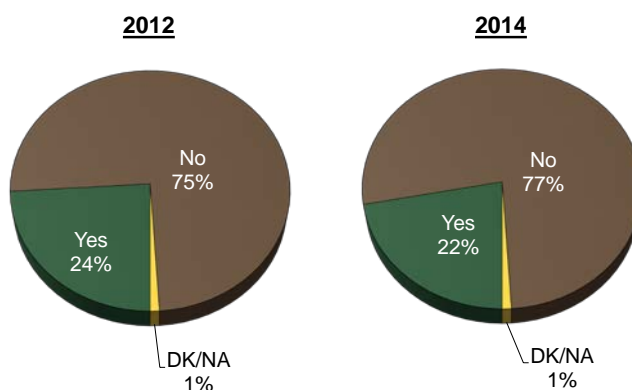
Statement	Total Favor	Strongly Favor	Total Oppose	Don't Know/NA
Continuing school, student and parent safety programs to reduce Cyber-bullying and prevent drug use among our youth	92%	73%	5%	3%
Establishing neighborhood watch programs throughout the City	89%	54%	6%	4%

PART 6: CONTACT AND SATISFACTION WITH SERVICES PROVIDED BY CITY EMPLOYEES

6.1 Contact With Rancho Santa Margarita Employees

Twenty-two percent of respondents said they have had a business-related contact with a Rancho Santa Margarita employee over the past two years—statistically equal to the 24 percent who gave this response in 2012 (see **Figure 10**).

Figure 10:
Contact with Rancho Santa Margarita City Employees, 2012 and 2014



Results Among Subgroups:

- The proportion that has had contact with the City rose with length of residence, from 16 percent of residents of five years or less to 34 percent of residents of more than 20 years.
- Single family dwellers are more likely to have contacted the City in the last two years than multi-family dwellers (26% to 15%), as are homeowners than renters (24% to 13%).
- Residents under the age of 30 are the least likely to have had contact, at eight percent. Men ages 50 and older are the most likely to have done so at 37 percent.

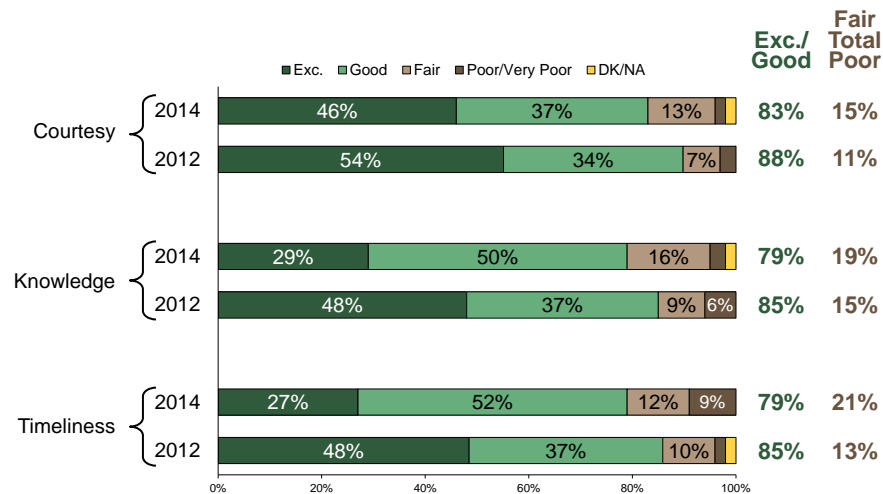
6.2 Satisfaction with Service from Rancho Santa Margarita Employees

Those who had contact with City employees in the last two years were asked to rate the service provided by those employees (**Figure 11** illustrates the results). Approximately eight in ten respondents rated the City employees positively for *courtesy* (83% “excellent” or “good”), *knowledge* (79%), and *timeliness* (79%).

These ratings are down slightly from 2012, when 88 percent rated City employees positively for *courtesy*, 85 percent for *knowledge*, and 85 percent for *timeliness*. Notably, intensity of ratings have fallen: from 54 percent “excellent” for *courtesy* to 46 percent, 48 percent “excellent” for *knowledge* to 29 percent, and 48 percent for *timeliness* to 27 percent. “Poor” ratings for *timeliness* are up from two percent to nine percent. Overall, “fair” or “poor” ratings have nearly doubled for *timeliness* (21% to 13%).

Figure 11:
Service Ratings for City Employees, 2012 and 2014

(Asked only among those who have had a business-related contact with a City Employee; n=90, ranked by “excellent” in 2014)



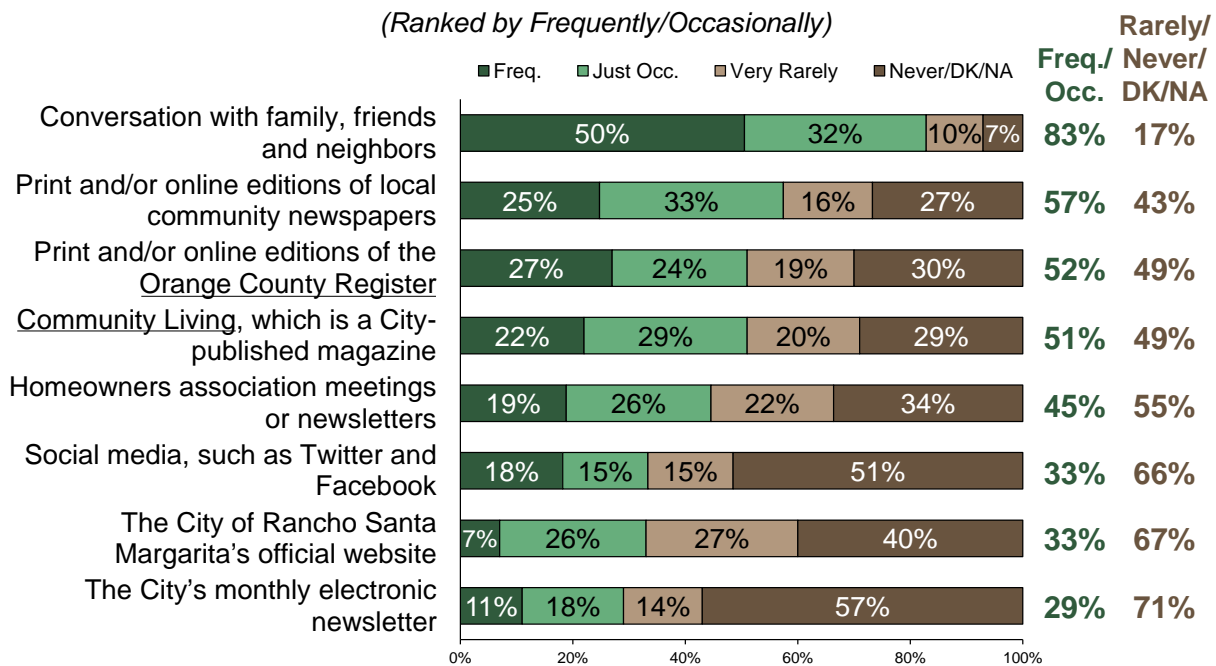
PART 7: INFORMATION SOURCES

Survey respondents were provided with a list of information sources and asked how often they turn to each for news and issues affecting the Rancho Santa Margarita community (see **Figure 12**). As in 2012, *conversations with family, friends, and neighbors* is far and away the most relied upon source of information about news and issues affecting Rancho Santa Margarita. Over eight in ten (83%) said they “frequently” (50%) or “occasionally” (32%) get news through these conversations (statistically equal to 2012).

The other most mentioned sources are *print and/or online editions of local community newspapers* (57% “frequently” or “occasionally”); *print and/or online editions of the Orange County Register* (52%, down slightly from 58% in 2012); *Community Living, which is a City-published magazine* (51%); and *homeowners association meetings or newsletters* (45%). These items were also the most mentioned in 2012.

Less utilized sources include *social media, such as Twitter and Facebook* (33%, unchanged from 2012); *the City of Rancho Santa Margarita’s official website* (33%, down slightly from 39% in 2012); and *the City’s monthly electronic newsletter* (29%, unchanged from 2012).

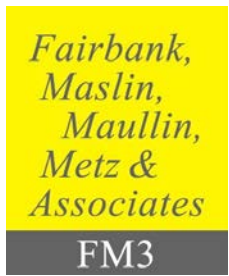
Figure 12: Information Sources Used



Results Among Subgroups: *Conversations with family, friends, and neighbors* is the most relied upon source of information among all subgroups. Community newspapers, the Orange County Register, and Community Living generally are also the top sources with most groups. Notable differences among subgroups include the following:

- Usage of social media declines with age, from 53 percent of those under 30 using social media “frequently” or “occasionally” compared to just 22 percent of those 50 years of age or older. Those 50 years of age or older are also more likely to turn to Community Living (62% to 43% for those 18 to 49) and *homeowners association meetings or newsletters* (53% to 36%) than those younger.
- Residents of more than 20 years are more likely to turn to the Orange County Register at least occasionally (65%) than residents of lesser tenure (approximately 47%). Residents of five years or less are the least likely to rely on family, friends, and neighbors (67% “frequently” or “occasionally”) and far less so than those of longer residency (86%). Related to age, reliance on social media declines with years of residency.
- Homeowners are more likely than renters to turn to Community Living (55% to 39%) and, not surprisingly, *homeowners association meetings or newsletters* (49% to 28%).
- College graduates are more likely to turn to *homeowners association meetings or newsletters* than non-college respondents (52% to 36%). This most likely reflects that college graduates are far more likely to be homeowners.

APPENDIX A
TOPLINE SURVEY RESULTS



CITY OF RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA
2014 RESIDENT SATISFACTION SURVEY
320-612-WT
N=403
MARGIN OF SAMPLING ERROR ±4.9% (95% CONFIDENCE INTERVAL)

Hello, I'm _____ from F-M-Three, a public opinion research company. We're conducting a public opinion survey about issues that interest residents of the City of Rancho Santa Margarita. We are definitely not trying to sell anything, or ask for a donation of any type. We are only interested in your opinions. May I please speak to _____? **(MUST SPEAK TO VOTER LISTED. VERIFY THAT THE VOTER LIVES AT THE ADDRESS LISTED; OTHERWISE, TERMINATE.)**

A. Before we begin, I need to know if I have reached you on a cell phone. **(IF YES, ASK:)** “Are you in a safe place where you can talk?”

- Yes, cell and in safe place----- 53%
- Yes, cell not in safe place -----**(TERMINATE CALL AFTER YOU TRY TO ARRANGE A CALL BACK AT A BETTER TIME)**
- No, not on cell ----- 47%
- (DON'T READ) DK/NA/REFUSED----- TERMINATE**

1. **(T)** Ok, let’s begin. Generally speaking, how would you rate Rancho Santa Margarita as a place to live: is it an excellent place to live, a good place, just fair, or a poor place to live?

- EXCELLENT/GOOD ----- 97%**
- Excellent----- 74%
- Good ----- 23%
- FAIR/POOR ----- 3%**
- Just fair ----- 3%
- Poor ----- 0%
- (DON'T READ) DK/NA ----- 0%**

2. (T) Next, thinking back over the last three or four years, would you say that the overall quality of life in Rancho Santa Margarita has gotten better, gotten worse, or stayed about the same? (IF **BETTER/WORSE ASK:**) “Would that be much (BETTER/WORSE) or just somewhat (BETTER/WORSE)?”

TOTAL BETTER -----29%

Much better ----- 13%

Somewhat better ----- 16%

About the same ----- 64%

TOTAL WORSE ----- 5%

Somewhat worse ----- 5%

Much worse----- 1%

(DON'T READ) DK/NA ----- 2%

3. (T) Thinking again about the quality of life, over next five years, do you think the quality of life in the City of Rancho Santa Margarita will get better, stay the same, or get worse? (IF **BETTER/WORSE, ASK:** “Is that much **BETTER/WORSE** or somewhat?”

TOTAL BETTER -----41%

Much better ----- 13%

Somewhat better ----- 28%

Stay the same ----- 48%

TOTAL WORSE ----- 7%

Somewhat worse ----- 4%

Much worse----- 2%

(DON'T READ) DK/NA ----- 4%

4. (T) What would you say are the one or two most important issues facing residents of the City of Rancho Santa Margarita today? **(RECORD UP TO TWO RESPONSES - RECORD VERBATIM RESPONSES BELOW, THEN CODE)**

Nothing/no concerns/doing good-----	15%
Traffic/congestion-----	12%
Jobs/economy-----	10%
More businesses/produce tax revenues-----	8%
Schools/education-----	8%
Crime/drugs/panhandlers-----	7%
Mention of Nissan dealership/land issue-----	6%
Police/fire/public safety-----	6%
Cost of living/food/gasoline-----	5%
Affordable housing/foreclosures/HOA's-----	5%
High taxes-----	5%
Roads/infrastructure/sidewalks/streetlights-----	4%
Building/zoning issues-----	4%
Parks/recreation/youth programs-----	4%
Crowded/too much population-----	4%
Water/drought-----	3%
Less growth/development/too much/no more-----	2%
More growth/development/planned-----	1%
Mention of strip mall issue-----	1%
Lack of trust in government-----	1%
Homelessness-----	1%
Balance budget/fiscal responsibility-----	1%
Parking-----	0%
Other mention-----	3%
DK/NA/unsure-----	9%

5. (T) Next, how would you rate the overall job being done by Rancho Santa Margarita's City government in providing services to City residents? Would you say the City is doing an...? (READ RESPONSES AND RECORD)

EXCELLENT/GOOD ----- 78%

Excellent-----25%

Good -----53%

FAIR/POOR ----- 18%

Only fair, or -----15%

Poor job ----- 3%

(DON'T READ) DK/NA ----- 5%

6. In your personal opinion, do you think there is a great need, some need, a little need, or no real need for additional funds to provide the level of city services that Rancho Santa Margarita residents need and want?

GREAT/SOME NEED ----- 34%

Great need----- 8%

Some need-----27%

LITTLE/NO REAL NEED----- 58%

Little need-----19%

No real need -----38%

(DON'T READ) Don't know ----- 8%

7. (T) Next, I would like to mention some particular aspects of community life that residents of Rancho Santa Margarita are likely to encounter or have an opinion about. After hearing each one, please tell me if you would rate that aspect of community life in Rancho Santa Margarita as excellent, good, just fair or poor? (RANDOMIZE)

	<u>EXC</u>	<u>GOOD</u>	<u>JUST FAIR</u>	<u>POOR</u>	<u>(DK/NA)</u>	<u>EXC/GOOD</u>	<u>FAIR/POOR</u>
[]a. (T) The accessibility and availability of open space and natural areas -----	48%	39%	9%	3%	1%	87%	12%
[]b. (T) Personal safety -----	60%	35%	4%	1%	0%	94%	6%
[]c. (T) Opportunities for organized recreational activities -----	39%	45%	11%	2%	3%	83%	14%
[]d. (T) The availability of shopping opportunities -----	35%	47%	16%	1%	1%	83%	17%
[]e. (T) The general appearance of the community -----	64%	31%	4%	1%	0%	95%	5%

8. Now I would like to mention some statements about City of Rancho Santa Margarita-related issues. Please tell me if you think each of the following statements is accurate or inaccurate. (IF ACCURATE/INACCURATE, ASK: "Is that very ACCURATE/INACCURATE or only somewhat?") (RANDOMIZE)

	VERY ACC	SMWT ACC	SMWT INACC	VERY INACC	(DK/NA)	TOTAL ACC	TOTAL INACC
(ASK SPLIT SAMPLE A ONLY)							
[]a. The Planning Commission and City Council <u>should continue</u> to make land use decisions on the community's behalf -----	28%	40%	13%	10%	10%	68%	22%
[]b. Rancho Santa Margarita is one of the top cities in excellent financial health in Orange County -----	43%	31%	5%	2%	18%	74%	7%
[]c. The City should attract businesses that offer good wages to City residents-----	52%	35%	4%	4%	4%	87%	9%
[]d. The City is transparent and fair in its decision-making-----	27%	40%	10%	4%	18%	67%	15%

(ASK SPLIT SAMPLE B ONLY)

[]e. The Planning Commission and City Council <u>are the most knowledgeable and experienced</u> to make land use decisions on the community's behalf -----	21%	32%	20%	9%	19%	53%	29%
[]f. State cutbacks have negatively affected city services and programs-----	9%	22%	36%	19%	14%	31%	55%
[]g. I live in Rancho Santa Margarita because it is not too developed-----	18%	25%	32%	20%	5%	43%	52%
[]h. The City manages its finances well ----	36%	33%	7%	2%	22%	69%	9%

(RESUME ASKING ALL RESPONDENTS)

9. I would now like to mention some City planning policies; after each, I would like you to tell me if that is a policy that you favor or oppose. (IF FAVOR/OPPOSE, ASK:) "Is that strongly (FAVOR/OPPOSE) or just somewhat?"

	STR FAVOR	SMWT FAVOR	SMWT OPPOSE	STR OPPOSE	(DON'T READ) DK/NA	TOTAL FAVOR	TOTAL OPPOSE
(ASK ALL RESPONDENTS)							
[]a. Encourage businesses to locate where they most benefit residents and surrounding businesses-----	56%	35%	4%	3%	3%	91%	6%
[]b. Ensure that new businesses and revitalization are consistent with existing development policies established for the community -----	54%	29%	5%	5%	7%	83%	10%

	<u>STR</u> <u>FAVOR</u>	<u>SMWT</u> <u>FAVOR</u>	<u>SMWT</u> <u>OPPOSE</u>	<u>STR</u> <u>OPPOSE</u>	(DON'T READ) <u>DK/NA</u>	<u>TOTAL</u> <u>FAVOR</u>	<u>TOTAL</u> <u>OPPOSE</u>
[]c. Encourage the growth, location and retention of industries that generate revenue for city services and programs-----	57%	30%	6%	2%	5%	87%	8%
[]d. Promote the development and retention of retail businesses that help the City maintain essential public safety and other local community services -----	58%	31%	3%	3%	5%	89%	5%
[]e. Promote the development and retention of retail businesses that help the City compete for revenue and jobs within the region -----	54%	30%	7%	3%	6%	83%	10%
[]f. Attract and retain industry that complements Rancho Santa Margarita's character -----	59%	32%	2%	3%	4%	91%	5%

(ASK SPLIT SAMPLE A ONLY)

[]g. Promote the development and retention of retail businesses that serve local needs, and expand selection of conveniently located goods and services -----	56%	35%	3%	3%	4%	90%	6%
[]h. Encourage the construction of additional homes in the city -----	21%	23%	21%	30%	5%	44%	51%

(ASK SPLIT SAMPLE B ONLY)

[]i. Work to maintain a substantial fiscal surplus, also known as a reserve fund, to ensure sufficient financial resources during slow economic periods when City revenue generation may be low -----	63%	28%	3%	3%	4%	91%	5%
[]j. Stimulate high-paying jobs and economic growth that support the City's employment, entertainment and shopping needs -----	59%	30%	8%	1%	2%	89%	9%

(RESUME ASKING ALL RESPONDENTS)

10. (T) Next, I am going to mention some specific services and programs provided to Rancho Santa Margarita residents by Rancho Santa Margarita’s City government. These services and programs are either provided directly by City staff or by contracting with some other government agency or private vendor or party. After each one you hear, I would like you to tell me how satisfied you are personally with the job being done by the City of Rancho Santa Margarita or private entities in providing that program or service to the City’s residents. We will use a scale of one to seven, where one means **NOT AT ALL SATISFIED** with the service or program and seven means you are **VERY SATISFIED**. If you have no opinion or don't know about a service or program I mention, you can tell me that too. Here is the first one... **(RANDOMIZE)**

		NOT AT ALL SATISFIED					VERY SATISFIED		
	MEAN	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	DK
[]a. (T) Police protection in your neighborhood-----	6.2	1%	1%	2%	3%	12%	27%	53%	1%
[]b. (T) Graffiti removal-----	6.1	3%	1%	2%	5%	10%	19%	55%	5%
[]c. Maintenance of local streets and sidewalks-----	5.9	3%	1%	2%	6%	19%	26%	42%	2%
[]d. (T) Landscaping on street medians and other public areas -----	6.0	2%	1%	1%	7%	14%	26%	48%	1%
[]e. (T) Tree trimming-----	5.8	3%	1%	4%	5%	22%	25%	38%	3%
[]f. (T) Fire protection and paramedic services -----	6.3	2%	1%	0%	2%	9%	24%	56%	5%
[]g. (T) Animal control services -----	5.7	2%	2%	2%	7%	17%	24%	31%	16%
[]h. (T) Street sweeping -----	5.9	2%	0%	2%	6%	21%	23%	42%	3%
[]i. (T) Recreational programs for youth-----	5.8	2%	1%	3%	6%	19%	23%	34%	11%
[]j. (T) Trash, yard waste and recyclables pick-up-----	6.3	1%	0%	1%	4%	12%	23%	57%	1%
[]k. (T) City emergency preparedness ---	5.9	1%	1%	1%	6%	16%	23%	31%	21%

11. The following are some current policies or actions being considered by the City of Rancho Santa Margarita to maintain the quality of life in the City. For each one I mention, please tell me whether it sounds like something you would favor or oppose. **(IF FAVOR/OPPOSE, ASK:)** “Do you strongly **FAVOR/OPPOSE** or just somewhat?” **(RANDOMIZE)**

	STR FAVOR	SMWT FAVOR	SMWT OPPOSE	STR OPPOSE	(DK/NO OPIN)	TOTAL FAVOR	TOTAL OPPOSE
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(ASK ALL RESPONDENTS)

[]a. Developing a 23-acre sports park along City-owned land on the Antonio Parkway near the southern limits of the City, also known as Chiquita Ridge -----	38%	33%	11%	11%	7%	71%	22%
--	-----	-----	-----	-----	----	-----	-----

	<u>STR</u> <u>FAVOR</u>	<u>SMWT</u> <u>FAVOR</u>	<u>SMWT</u> <u>OPPOSE</u>	<u>STR</u> <u>OPPOSE</u>	<u>(DK/</u> <u>NO</u> <u>OPIN)</u>	<u>TOTAL</u> <u>FAVOR</u>	<u>TOTAL</u> <u>OPPOSE</u>
[]b. Ensuring that developers comply with the City's award winning master plan to protect our unique community character-----	64%	28%	5%	1%	3%	91%	6%
[]c. Approving additional retail stores and restaurant space at existing shopping centers-----	48%	42%	5%	3%	2%	90%	8%
[]d. Allowing developers to build anything they want on their property, regardless of our city's established land use policies-----	11%	11%	20%	56%	2%	22%	76%

(ASK SPLIT SAMPLE A ONLY)

[]e. Developing a retail center along City-owned land on the Antonio Parkway near the southern limits of the City, also known as Chiquita Ridge-----	30%	26%	12%	21%	11%	56%	33%
[]f. Restricting new development-----	23%	35%	21%	12%	8%	58%	34%
[]g. Improving the appearance and landscaping of the City entrance ways and the Civic Center-----	37%	38%	13%	8%	5%	75%	21%
[]h. Continuing school, student and parent safety programs to reduce Cyber-bullying and prevent drug use among our youth-----	73%	19%	2%	3%	3%	92%	5%

(ASK SPLIT SAMPLE B ONLY)

[]i. Developing single family detached homes along City-owned land on the Antonio Parkway near the southern limits of the City, also known as Chiquita Ridge-----	22%	28%	13%	28%	9%	50%	41%
[]j. Encouraging more development-----	20%	32%	23%	19%	7%	51%	42%
[]k. Continuing to maintain transparent, fair policies that support revitalization but also preserve our distinctive small town character-----	61%	32%	3%	2%	2%	93%	4%
[]l. Establishing neighborhood watch programs throughout the City-----	54%	35%	5%	2%	4%	89%	6%

(RESUME ASKING ALL RESPONDENTS)

NOW, I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY OF RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA

12. (T) Have you had any business-related contact with Rancho Santa Margarita City employees over the past two years?

Yes ----- (ASK Q13)--22%
 No ----- (SKIP TO BOX PRE Q14)--77%
 (DON'T READ) DK/NA(SKIP TO BOX PRE Q14)--1%

(ASK Q13, IF YES IN Q12)

13. (T) Please tell me how you rate the following aspects of the service provided by the City employees you have dealt with. Would you rate their _____ as excellent, good, fair, poor, or very poor? (RANDOMIZE)

N=90

		<u>EXC</u>	<u>GOOD</u>	<u>FAIR</u>	<u>POOR</u>	<u>VERY POOR</u>	(DON'T READ) <u>DK/NA</u>	<u>EXC/GOOD</u>	<u>FAIR/TOT POOR</u>
[] a.	(T) Courtesy-----	46%	37%	13%	0%	2%	2%	83%	15%
[] b.	(T) Knowledge-----	29%	50%	16%	1%	2%	2%	79%	19%
[] c.	(T) Timeliness -----	27%	52%	12%	7%	2%	0%	79%	21%

(RESUME ASKING ALL RESPONDENTS)

NEXT LET ME ASK YOU ABOUT SOURCES OF INFORMATION ABOUT RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA

14. (T) Now, I'm going to mention some information sources from which people learn about news and issues affecting the Rancho Santa Margarita community. For each I mention, please tell me how often you use that particular information source. Is it frequently, just occasionally, very rarely, or never? (RANDOMIZE)

		<u>FREQ</u>	<u>JUST OCCAS</u>	<u>VERY RARELY</u>	<u>NEVER</u>	(DON'T READ) <u>DK/NA</u>	<u>FREQ/OCCAS</u>	<u>RARELY/NEVER</u>
[] a.	(T) Print and/or online editions of the <u>Orange County Register</u> -----	27%	24%	19%	29%	1%	52%	48%
[] b.	(T) Print and/or online editions of local community newspapers -----	25%	33%	16%	26%	1%	57%	42%
[] c.	(T) Homeowners association meetings or newsletters-----	19%	26%	22%	32%	2%	45%	53%
[] d.	(T) The City's monthly electronic newsletter -----	11%	18%	14%	55%	2%	29%	69%
[] e.	(T) <u>Community Living</u> , which is a City-published magazine -----	22%	29%	20%	28%	1%	51%	48%
[] f.	(T) The City of Rancho Santa Margarita's official website -----	7%	26%	27%	39%	1%	33%	66%
[] g.	(T) Conversation with family, friends and neighbors-----	50%	32%	10%	6%	1%	83%	16%
[] h.	(T) Social media, such as Twitter and Facebook -----	18%	15%	15%	50%	1%	33%	65%

HERE ARE MY FINAL QUESTIONS. THEY ARE JUST FOR STATISTICAL PURPOSES.

15. (T) How long have you lived in Rancho Santa Margarita? **(READ LIST)**
- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|-----|
| Less than three years | ----- | 5% |
| Three to five years | ----- | 9% |
| Six to ten years | ----- | 20% |
| 11 to 20 years | ----- | 41% |
| 21 years or more | ----- | 23% |
| (DON'T READ) DK/NA/Refused | ----- | 2% |
16. (T) Do you live in a single family home, a condominium or townhouse or an apartment?
- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|-----|
| Single family | ----- | 69% |
| Condo/townhouse | ----- | 22% |
| Apartment | ----- | 7% |
| Other | ----- | 1% |
| (DON'T READ) DK/NA/Refused | ----- | 1% |
17. (T) Do you own or rent your residence?
- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|-----|
| Own | ----- | 76% |
| Rent | ----- | 21% |
| (DON'T READ) DK/NA/Refused | ----- | 3% |
18. (T) How many individuals under the age of 18 live in your household?
- | | | |
|---------------------------|-------|-----|
| None | ----- | 58% |
| One/two | ----- | 35% |
| Three/four | ----- | 6% |
| Five or more | ----- | 0% |
| (DON'T READ) DK/NA | ----- | 1% |
19. (T) What was the last level of school you completed?
- | | | |
|--|-------|-----|
| Grades 1-8 | ----- | 0% |
| Grades 9-11 | ----- | 0% |
| High school graduate (12) | ----- | 13% |
| Community college graduate/
vocational school graduate/some college | ----- | 27% |
| College (4 years) | ----- | 43% |
| Post-graduate work | ----- | 15% |
| (DON'T READ) DK/NA/REFUSED | ----- | 1% |

20. (T) With which racial or ethnic group do you identify yourself: Hispanic or Latino, White or Caucasian, Black or African-American, Asian or Pacific Islander, or some other ethnic or racial background?

Hispanic/Latino -----	11 %
White/Caucasian -----	78 %
Black/African-American-----	2 %
Asian/Pacific Islander-----	3 %
Other (SPECIFY _____)-----	2 %
(DON'T READ) DK/NA/REFUSED --	4 %

21. (T) In what year were you born?

1996-1990 (18-24) -----	10 %
1989-1985 (25-29) -----	5 %
1984-1980 (30-34) -----	5 %
1979-1975 (35-39) -----	9 %
1974-1970 (40-44) -----	8 %
1969-1965 (45-49) -----	13 %
1964-1960 (50-54) -----	16 %
1959-1955 (55-59) -----	9 %
1954-1950 (60-64) -----	9 %
1949-1940 (65-74) -----	6 %
1939 or earlier (75 & over) -----	3 %
(DON'T READ) DK/NA/Refused -----	7 %

THANK AND TERMINATE

Sex: By observation

Male-----	47 %
Female -----	53 %

Party: From file

Democrat -----	24 %
Republican -----	49 %
No Party Preference-----	23 %
Other party-----	4 %