



GODBE RESEARCH
Gain Insight



Executive Summary

- The survey found that residents of Redwood City are highly satisfied with the overall quality of life in the City.
 - Approximately 92 percent of the residents reported that they are either “very satisfied” (59%) or “somewhat satisfied” (33%) with the quality of life.
 - In line with this high satisfaction with quality of life, 1 out of 5 residents did not identify an important issue facing the City. Otherwise the residents mentioned a wide variety of issues, including the economy (11%), gangs (9%), and affordable housing (7%).
 - Although no single issue emerged as a clear priority among residents, the results indicate that residents have diverse perspectives on the issues facing the City.
 - When compared to the results of the previous surveys, the results suggest that residents are more concerned with economic and public safety issues, and less concerned with affordable housing, traffic congestion, and issues related to education.

- A majority of residents feel a strong sense of community living in Redwood City, and are engaged in the City either through their neighborhood and neighbors or through local groups and organizations.
 - More than 4 out of 5 residents reported feeling a sense of community. Moreover, 3 out of 5 residents reported feeling a “very strong” (22%) or “somewhat strong” (37%) sense of community, and these ratings are consistent with the 2003 survey.
 - Sense of community is higher among the women and among the Hispanic residents.
 - On average, the residents surveyed derive their sense of community more from friends living locally, their neighborhood and neighbors, and community programs and activities.
 - In line with the above findings, 9 out of 10 residents reported interacting with at least several of their neighbors. Specifically, 45 percent interact with several neighbors and 43 percent interact with half of their neighbors or more.
 - Roughly 1 out of 2 residents surveyed had volunteered or participated with a group or organization in Redwood City or donated money or other resources.

- The results indicate that residents are highly satisfied with the job Redwood City is doing to provide City services, and satisfaction with several areas has increased from previous surveys.
 - More than 4 out of 5 residents are satisfied with City services as a whole, with 41 percent “very satisfied” and 45 percent “somewhat satisfied.”
 - This high level of overall satisfaction is consistent with the results of the 2003 survey, and maintains the increase in satisfaction that occurred from the 2001 survey to the 2003 survey.
 - The survey shows that residents are relatively more satisfied with the City’s efforts to attract people to the downtown area, trim City trees, provide traffic law enforcement, and keep the City clean, and relatively less satisfied with assistance with disaster preparedness and availability of affordable housing.
 - When compared to previous surveys, the results show an increase in satisfaction with the City’s efforts to attract people to the downtown area, trim trees, and availability of affordable housing, and a slight decrease in satisfaction with neighborhood police patrols.

- Residents' ratings of additional City services were consistently positive.
 - Roughly 1 out of 2 residents rated neighborhood street sweeping as “excellent” (19%) or “good” (37%). Although these results represent a decline from the 2003 survey, the results suggest that residents are tolerating the reduction in these services.
 - Consistent with the results of previous surveys, roughly 3 out of 4 residents reported that the sidewalks in their neighborhood are in “good condition all over” (23%) or are in “mostly good condition” (50%).
 - Also consistent with previous surveys, close to 9 out of 10 residents rated the City as “very clean” (26%) or “somewhat clean” (62%).
 - Code enforcement ratings have improved from the 2001 survey. In the current survey, a majority of the residents reported that code enforcement is either “not a problem” (59%) or “only a small problem” (16%) in their neighborhood. This result represents a 12 percent increase in ratings of “not a problem.”

- Public safety ratings remain positive, and the results indicate that residents feel significantly safer in the downtown area after dark.
 - Overall, 7 out of 10 residents reported that the police department does an “excellent” (25%) or “good” (45%) job of addressing neighborhood concerns. These results are consistent with the 2001 survey and the 2003 survey, although another measure found a slight decline in satisfaction with neighborhood police patrols.
 - Similar to the results of the 2003 survey, 4 out of 5 residents reported that they feel “very safe” (46%) or “somewhat safe” (34%) walking alone in their neighborhood after dark.
 - Perceptions of safety in the downtown area have improved significantly from the 2003 survey results. Currently 3 out of 4 residents feel either “very safe” (39%) or “somewhat safe” (37%) walking in the business downtown areas of Redwood City after dark. This result represents a 21 percent increase in ratings of “very safe.”
 - Among the residents who reported that they do not feel safe in their neighborhood and/or downtown after dark, they most frequently mentioned gangs or other crime and people or groups loitering as the reason.

- Although satisfaction with City parks and recreation remains high, the results suggest that use has slightly declined from previous years.
 - Approximately 58 percent of residents reported that their household had used a City park, recreation facility, or recreation program with the past 12 months, compared to 65 percent and 70 percent in the 2003 and 2001 survey, respectively.
 - In contrast to the change in use, ratings of local parks, recreation facilities, and recreation programs are consistent with the previous surveys. Overall, 82 percent of the survey respondents rated these as “excellent” (39%) or “good” (43%).
 - The residents who reported use rated local parks, recreation facilities, and recreation programs even more positively than the residents who did not report use.

- Residents' use of the public library and ratings of services have increased slightly from previous surveys.
 - Currently, 3 out of 4 residents reported that their household had used a Redwood City public library or library services, in comparison to 67 percent in the 2003 survey.
 - More than 4 out of 5 residents rated the public library services as “excellent” (52%) or “good” (33%), and this result represents a 10 percent increase in ratings of “excellent” from the 2001 survey and the 2003 survey.
 - Approximately 1 out of 3 library users reported that there is no improvement they would like to see to Redwood City public libraries. Otherwise, an expanded selection of books (12%) and additional computers (10%) topped the list.
 - Finally, residents' reasons for not visiting the library largely reflect personal preferences, rather than some defect or problem with the library: don't have time (25%) and prefer to use the Internet instead (22%).

- The results suggest that interactions with residents are a potential area of improvement for City employees.
 - Although similar to the results of previous surveys, just 1 out of 5 residents reported that they had called, written, or gone to see a City employee or Council member in the past 12 months about an issue or problem.
 - Of these residents, 58 percent reported being satisfied with the quality of information and the level of courtesy, whereas 14 percent reported being “somewhat dissatisfied” and 22 percent reported being “very dissatisfied.”
 - Dissatisfied residents most frequently reported that their problem was not resolved (46%) or mentioned issues related to the time it took to answer their question (20%).

- The survey found that the City newsletter and City website are excellent, but under-utilized, resources for residents and would benefit from increased marketing to residents.
 - As might be expected with its recent introduction, just 1 out of 3 residents reported that they were aware of “Redwood City Community Notes.”
 - However, fully 86 percent of those aware are satisfied with the overall quality of the newsletter. Additionally, satisfaction was higher among the Hispanic residents than the residents of other ethnic groups.
 - Approximately 4 out of 5 residents who access the Internet reported that they were aware of the official City website. However, 1 out of 5 of those aware had never visited the website.
 - Among the residents who had visited the website, 83 percent reported that it is easy to find information.

- Overall, 1 out of 3 residents live in a household where the primary language is one other than English, and 71 percent of these residents would be more likely to use information from the City if it were sent in their native language.