

**City of San Rafael: 2011 City Satisfaction Survey  
Topline Report  
March 2011**

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The City of San Rafael commissioned Godbe Research to conduct a telephone survey of voters to assess overall perceptions of living in the City and to gauge satisfaction with the City's performance in providing services and programs. The survey also evaluated perceptions of the condition of City facilities, assessed awareness of the City's financial situation, and gathered feedback on preferred information sources and City communications.

**SURVEY METHODOLOGY**

Overall, 500 voters in the City of San Rafael completed the survey, representing a total universe of approximately 28,636 registered voters. The study parameters resulted in a margin of error of plus or minus 4.3 percent. Interviews were conducted from February 15 through February 21, 2011, and the average interview time was approximately 20 minutes.

Once collected, the sample of voters was compared with the registered voter population in the City of San Rafael to examine possible differences between the demographics of the sample of respondents and the actual universe. The data were weighted to correct any differences, and the results presented are representative of the voter characteristics of the City in terms of gender, age, and political party type.

**QUESTIONNAIRE METHODOLOGY**

To avoid the problem of systematic position bias, where the order in which a series of questions is asked systematically influences the answers, several questions in the survey were randomized such that the respondents were not consistently asked the questions in the same order. The series of items in questions 5, 8, and 9 were randomized to avoid such position bias.

Question 19 allowed the voters surveyed to mention multiple responses. For this reason, the response percentages sum to more than 100, and these represent the percent of the voters who mentioned a particular response, rather than the percent of total responses.

**MEAN SCORES AND ROUNDING**

In addition to the percentage breakdown of responses to each question, results for the questions relating to satisfaction with City services (Q5) and condition of City facilities (Q9) include a mean score. For example, to derive the overall satisfaction with a City service (Q5), a number value was assigned to each response category as follows: "very satisfied" = +2, "somewhat satisfied" = +1, "somewhat dissatisfied" = -1 and "very dissatisfied" = -2. The individual answer of each respondent was then assigned the corresponding number, from +2 to -2 in this example. Finally, all respondents' answers were averaged to produce a final score that reflects the overall satisfaction with a service. The resulting mean score makes interpretation of the data considerably easier. Responses of "Don't Know" (DK/NA) were not included in the calculations of the means for any questions.

Conventional rounding rules apply to the percentages shown in this report, .5 or above is rounded up to the next number, and .4 or below is rounded down to the previous number. As a result, the percentages may not add up to 100 percent.

1. Generally speaking, do you think things in San Rafael are going in the right direction or do you feel things are seriously off on the wrong track?

<b>Right direction</b>	67%
<b>Wrong track</b>	20%
<b>DK/NA</b>	13%

2. In general, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the overall quality of life in San Rafael? Is that very (satisfied/dissatisfied) or somewhat (satisfied/dissatisfied)?

<b>Very satisfied</b>	63%
<b>Somewhat satisfied</b>	29%
<b>Somewhat dissatisfied</b>	5%
<b>Very dissatisfied</b>	3%
<b>DK/NA</b>	<1%

3. In general, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the job the City of San Rafael is doing to provide City services? Would that be very (satisfied/dissatisfied) or somewhat (satisfied/dissatisfied)?

<b>Very satisfied</b>	42%
<b>Somewhat satisfied</b>	39%
<b>Somewhat dissatisfied</b>	7%
<b>Very dissatisfied</b>	5%
<b>DK/NA</b>	6%

4. Generally speaking, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with how the San Rafael City Council are performing their job? Would that be very (satisfied/dissatisfied) or somewhat (satisfied/dissatisfied)?

<b>Very satisfied</b>	24%
<b>Somewhat satisfied</b>	33%
<b>Somewhat dissatisfied</b>	9%
<b>Very dissatisfied</b>	10%
<b>DK/NA</b>	26%

5. Moving on, I'd like to read you a list of services provided by the City of San Rafael. For each, please tell me whether you are satisfied or dissatisfied with the job the City of San Rafael is doing to provide the service.

Here's the (first/next): \_\_\_\_\_. Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the City's performance in this area? [GET ANSWER, THEN ASK:] Would that be very (satisfied/dissatisfied) or somewhat (satisfied/dissatisfied)?

	Mean Score	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	DK/NA
<b>5A. Providing programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions</b>	.7	20%	20%	8%	7%	44%
<b>5B. Providing police protection</b>	1.4	60%	30%	3%	4%	3%
<b>5C. Keeping taxes at affordable levels</b>	.4	23%	37%	16%	15%	9%
<b>5D. Managing growth and development</b>	.6	28%	32%	15%	13%	13%
<b>5E. Preserving open space</b>	1.3	50%	30%	6%	5%	9%
<b>5F. Managing traffic on city streets</b>	.9	41%	33%	12%	10%	4%
<b>5G. Maintaining city streets and roads</b>	.5	32%	34%	16%	17%	1%
<b>5H. Providing public library services</b>	1.3	54%	27%	6%	3%	9%
<b>5I. Providing fire and paramedic services</b>	1.7	68%	23%	2%	1%	6%
<b>5J. Providing affordable housing</b>	.4	20%	24%	14%	11%	30%
<b>5K. Maintaining storm drains</b>	1.0	43%	33%	9%	7%	8%
<b>5L. Maintaining sidewalks</b>	.8	37%	35%	13%	12%	3%
<b>5M. Providing bike and pedestrian friendly routes</b>	1.0	41%	33%	8%	7%	11%
<b>5N. Trimming trees along city streets</b>	1.0	42%	35%	11%	7%	5%
<b>5O. Maintaining and weeding median strips along city streets</b>	.8	39%	31%	10%	12%	9%
<b>5P. Cleaning and sweeping city streets</b>	1.0	47%	33%	10%	8%	2%
<b>5Q. Providing sufficient parking downtown</b>	.8	39%	34%	10%	11%	5%
<b>5R. Providing senior citizen services</b>	1.1	27%	23%	5%	3%	42%
<b>5S. Providing youth and teen services</b>	.9	22%	22%	7%	6%	43%
<b>5T. Providing community events</b>	1.2	45%	33%	8%	4%	11%
<b>5U. Providing adequate parks and recreation facilities</b>	1.3	53%	33%	7%	3%	4%

Computation of Mean Scores:

"Very Satisfied" = +2, "Somewhat Satisfied" = +1, "Somewhat Dissatisfied" = -1, and "Very Dissatisfied" = -2.

	Mean Score	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	DK/NA
<b>5V. Maintaining parks</b>	1.3	49%	36%	5%	5%	6%
<b>5W. Providing recreational and cultural arts programs</b>	1.3	45%	33%	5%	4%	14%
<b>5X. Providing child care services</b>	.9	16%	13%	5%	4%	62%
<b>5Y. Meeting the needs of ethnic minorities</b>	1.0	25%	27%	6%	4%	37%
<b>5Z. Providing garbage collection and recycling services</b>	1.4	64%	24%	4%	5%	4%
<b>5AA. Enforcing traffic and parking laws</b>	1.1	49%	28%	8%	9%	6%
<b>5BB. Maintaining City facilities</b>	1.2	42%	37%	5%	4%	12%

Computation of Mean Scores:

“Very Satisfied” = +2, “Somewhat Satisfied” = +1, “Somewhat Dissatisfied” = -1, and “Very Dissatisfied” = -2.

6. Moving on to other topics. In your opinion, \_\_\_\_\_.

	Yes	No	DK/NA
<b>6A. Do you generally feel safe from crime in San Rafael?</b>	87%	11%	1%
<b>6B. Do you feel as safe today as you did five years ago when you walk city streets?</b>	67%	27%	6%
<b>6C. Has the revitalization effort in the downtown area been a good thing for San Rafael?</b>	79%	11%	10%
<b>6D. Do you have confidence in City leaders to solve the difficult problems as they arise?</b>	57%	25%	18%
<b>6E. Is San Rafael successfully maintaining its unique character and hometown atmosphere?</b>	74%	21%	5%

7. Next, has traffic in your local neighborhood improved, worsened, or stayed about the same in the last two years?

<b>Improved</b>	10%
<b>Worsened</b>	29%
<b>Stayed about the same</b>	61%
<b>DK/NA</b>	1%

8. Next, I'm going to read you a list of City buildings and facilities. For each one, please tell me whether you have visited or used the facility within the past two years.

Here's the (first/next): \_\_\_\_\_, have you visited or used this facility within the past two years?

	Yes	No	DK/NA
8A. San Rafael Public Library	74%	25%	1%
8B. City parks	81%	19%	<1%
8C. The Falkirk Cultural Center	38%	61%	1%
8D. Pickleweed Community Center	28%	71%	1%
8E. San Rafael Community Center	51%	48%	1%
8F. Terra Linda Community Center	33%	66%	1%
8G. Police station	25%	75%	1%
8H. Fire stations	27%	72%	1%

9. Next, I'm going to read you the same list of City buildings and facilities. This time, please tell me if you would say the condition of that facility is excellent, good, fair, or poor.

Here's the (first/next): \_\_\_\_\_, would you say the condition of this facility is excellent, good, fair, or poor?

	Mean Score	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	DK/NA
9A. San Rafael Public Library	2.0	19%	46%	16%	3%	16%
9B. City parks	2.0	19%	55%	13%	3%	10%
9C. The Falkirk Cultural Center	2.1	13%	36%	7%	1%	44%
9D. Pickleweed Community Center	2.1	16%	23%	7%	1%	53%
9E. San Rafael Community Center	1.9	11%	39%	14%	2%	35%
9F. Terra Linda Community Center	1.9	8%	31%	9%	1%	51%
9G. Police station	1.9	10%	35%	10%	2%	43%
9H. Fire stations	1.9	11%	39%	8%	4%	39%

Computation of Mean Scores: "Excellent" = +3, "Good" = +2, "Fair" = +1, and "Poor" = 0.

10. In your opinion, would you say the City's financial situation is excellent, good, fair, or poor?

<b>Excellent</b>	3%
<b>Good</b>	17%
<b>Fair</b>	38%
<b>Poor</b>	20%
<b>DK/NA</b>	22%

11. What is the single, largest problem facing the City of San Rafael today?

<b>Poor financial situation/condition</b>	17%
<b>Illegal immigrants or day laborers</b>	9%
<b>Cost of living or housing</b>	9%
<b>Availability of jobs</b>	9%
<b>Homelessness</b>	8%
<b>Quality of education</b>	7%
<b>Traffic congestion</b>	7%
<b>Growth and/or overcrowding</b>	5%
<b>Public safety (includes 'crime')</b>	4%
<b>Condition or safety of streets</b>	1%
<b>Condition or safety of sidewalks/pathways</b>	1%
<b>Condition or safety of buildings</b>	<1%
<b>Other</b>	14%
<b>DK/NA</b>	8%

12. Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the job the City of San Rafael is doing in spending taxpayers' money?

<b>Satisfied</b>	53%
<b>Dissatisfied</b>	24%
<b>Mixed</b>	12%
<b>No opinion</b>	9%
<b>Not applicable</b>	1%

13. Do you feel local taxes in San Rafael are too high, too low, or just about right?

<b>Too high</b>	39%
<b>Too low</b>	5%
<b>Just about right</b>	50%
<b>DK/NA</b>	6%

14. To cope with the economic downturn and the California budget crisis, the City of San Rafael recently had to cut more than 4 million dollars in funding to city services and facilities.

Before taking this survey, were you aware of these cuts in funding to city services and facilities?

<b>Yes</b>	54%
<b>No</b>	45%
<b>DK/NA</b>	1%

15. Due to budget cuts, city staffing has been reduced by 12 percent over the last three years. These cuts include more than 55 city staff, including police officers, parks and recreation workers, maintenance personnel, and other positions that provide resident services.

Before taking this survey, were you aware of these cuts in city staffing?

<b>Yes</b>	54%
<b>No</b>	45%
<b>DK/NA</b>	1%



Next, a few questions about City Communications.

16. The City of San Rafael provides information on local services and events through several online sources. Please tell me if you were aware that the City offers information through each of the following:

	Yes	No	DK/NA
<b>16A. The City's website</b>	65%	33%	2%
<b>16B. Email newsletters</b>	34%	64%	1%
<b>16C. Facebook</b>	15%	82%	3%
<b>16D. Twitter</b>	10%	87%	3%

17. [SKIP IF Q16A = NO; n = 334] How often do you visit the City's website? [IF NEEDED: [www.cityofsanrafael.org](http://www.cityofsanrafael.org)]

<b>Often</b>	9%
<b>Sometimes</b>	64%
<b>Never</b>	25%
<b>DK/NA</b>	1%

18. [IF Q17 = OFTEN OR SOMETIMES; n = 244] How informative is the City's website to you? Would you say it is . . .

<b>Very helpful</b>	33%
<b>Somewhat helpful</b>	56%
<b>Not too helpful</b>	9%
<b>DK/NA</b>	2%

19. Are you, or anyone in your household, a member of social networking websites, such as Facebook or Twitter? [Multiple Responses]

<b>No</b>	46%
<b>Facebook</b>	51%
<b>Twitter</b>	9%
<b>Other</b>	1%
<b>DK/NA</b>	2%

20. In general, how would you prefer to receive information from the City of San Rafael on local services and events? Would you prefer . . .

<b>A printed newsletter mailed to residents</b>	43%
<b>An email or electronic newsletter</b>	32%
<b>Visit the City website</b>	13%
<b>Updates through Facebook</b>	3%
<b>Updates through Twitter</b>	<1%
<b>Not interested</b>	7%
<b>DK/NA</b>	2%

21. Do you pay a great deal, some, or very little attention to San Rafael city government business?

<b>Great deal</b>	19%
<b>Some</b>	44%
<b>Very little</b>	36%
<b>DK/NA</b>	1%

### **Additional Respondent Information**

A. What ethnic group do you consider yourself a part of or feel closest to?

<b>Caucasian or White</b>	86%
<b>Hispanic or Latino</b>	3%
<b>Asian</b>	3%
<b>African-American or Black</b>	2%
<b>Two or more races</b>	2%
<b>American Indian or Alaska Native</b>	1%
<b>Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander</b>	<1%
<b>Some other race</b>	1%
<b>DK/NA</b>	2%

B. Do you have any children 18 years or younger living in your household?

<b>Yes</b>	23%
<b>No</b>	76%
<b>DK/NA</b>	1%

C. Including yourself, if applicable, how many adults ages 65 and over live in your household?

<b>None</b>	60%
<b>One</b>	21%
<b>Two</b>	16%
<b>Three or more</b>	1%
<b>DK/NA</b>	2%

D. Which of the following best describes your working status?

<b>Full-time</b>	39%
<b>Part-time</b>	8%
<b>Self-employed</b>	13%
<b>Unemployed</b>	4%
<b>Homemaker or Stay-at-home parent</b>	4%
<b>Retired</b>	31%
<b>Student</b>	1%
<b>DK/NA</b>	1%

## E. How long have you lived in San Rafael?

<b>Less than 5 years</b>	12%
<b>5 to 10 years</b>	18%
<b>11 to 20 years</b>	23%
<b>More than 20 years</b>	37%
<b>Lifetime</b>	9%
<b>DK/NA</b>	1%

## F. Again, for statistical purposes only, what was the approximate total income of your household last year? Was it.....

<b>Less than \$20,000</b>	4%
<b>\$20,000 to less than \$40,000</b>	9%
<b>\$40,000 to less than \$75,000</b>	19%
<b>\$75,000 to less than \$100,000</b>	19%
<b>\$100,000 to less than \$125,000</b>	8%
<b>\$125,000 to less than \$150,000</b>	5%
<b>\$150,000 or more</b>	11%
<b>DK/NA</b>	24%

## G. Respondent's Gender [Recorded from Voice]:

<b>Male</b>	46%
<b>Female</b>	54%

INFORMATION FROM VOTER FILE: *All information is included in voter registration records, and these items were not asked during interviews.*

H. Party:

<b>Democrat</b>	57%
<b>Republican</b>	20%
<b>Other</b>	3%
<b>DTS</b>	19%

I. Age:

<b>18-29</b>	8%
<b>30-39</b>	10%
<b>40-49</b>	18%
<b>50-64</b>	34%
<b>65+</b>	29%

J. Household Party Type:

<b>Democrat (1)</b>	32%
<b>Democrat (2+)</b>	18%
<b>Republican (1)</b>	8%
<b>Republican (2+)</b>	6%
<b>Other (1)</b>	13%
<b>Other (2+)</b>	4%
<b>Democrat &amp; Republican</b>	5%
<b>Democrat &amp; Other</b>	9%
<b>Republican &amp; Other</b>	4%
<b>Democrat, Republican &amp; Other</b>	<1%

K. Homeownership Status:

<b>Own</b>	67%
<b>Rent</b>	33%