



**PPIC
STATEWIDE
SURVEY**

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**Special Survey on Californians
and Their Housing**

in collaboration with

The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

The James Irvine Foundation

The David and Lucile Packard Foundation

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Policy
Institute of
California**

The Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) is a private operating foundation established in 1994 with an endowment from William R. Hewlett. The Institute is dedicated to improving public policy in California through independent, objective, nonpartisan research.

PPIC's research agenda focuses on three program areas: population, economy, and governance and public finance. Studies within these programs are examining the underlying forces shaping California's future, cutting across a wide range of public policy concerns, including education, health care, immigration, income distribution, welfare, urban growth, and state and local finance.

PPIC was created because three concerned citizens – William R. Hewlett, Roger W. Heyns, and Arjay Miller – recognized the need for linking objective research to the realities of California public policy. Their goal was to help the state's leaders better understand the intricacies and implications of contemporary issues and make informed public policy decisions when confronted with challenges in the future. PPIC does not take or support positions on any ballot measure or on any local, state, or federal legislation, nor does it endorse, support, or oppose any political parties or candidates for public office.

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Preface

The PPIC Statewide Survey series provides policymakers, the media, and the general public with objective, advocacy-free information on the perceptions, opinions, and public policy preferences of California residents. Inaugurated in April 1998, the survey series has generated a database that includes the responses of more than 106,000 Californians.

This survey on Californians and their housing—a collaborative effort of the Public Policy Institute of California and The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, The James Irvine Foundation, and The David and Lucile Packard Foundation—is a special edition of the PPIC Statewide Survey. This is the eighth in a series of eight surveys—two per year for four years—launched in May 2001. The intent of the series is to inform state, local, and federal policymakers, encourage discussion, and raise public awareness about a variety of population growth, land use, and environmental issues facing the state. The current survey focuses in particular on public perceptions of residential conditions, attitudes toward current and possible housing choices, and preferences for the role of state and local government in housing policies.

This special edition presents the responses of 2,502 adult residents throughout the state. With a large sample size and multilingual interviewing, we examine in detail the public’s perceptions of their housing and neighborhood conditions, their attitudes toward current and future housing options, and the preferred role of state and local government policies today and in the future in the California housing market. Some of the questions are repeated from PPIC Statewide Surveys on land use issues conducted as part of this survey series in November 2001 and November 2002. More specifically, we examine the following issues:

- The public’s perceptions of residential conditions, including satisfaction with their housing and neighborhoods and their specific features such as the amount of space in the home, privacy from neighbors, safety of the neighborhood, and sense of community; satisfaction with commute and the availability of public transit; perceptions of regional problems such as traffic congestion and the lack of availability of affordable housing; and the consequences of housing prices on family finances and housing options for future generations, as well as the perceived impacts on the region.
- Housing options for Californians, including the current demographic profile of homeowners and renters; the perceptions of homeowners and renters of their current housing costs and their ability to move to another home that they could afford in their region; responses to tradeoffs regarding housing size and length of commute, housing type and proximity to public transit, residential land use and access to local services, and closeness of neighbors’ homes and proximity to parks and recreation; and perceptions of housing opportunities in low-income and minority neighborhoods.
- Preferences for housing policies, including ratings of state and local government performance in the housing policy arena and support for a variety of local and state government policies and regional efforts that have been proposed to encourage new housing development, increase the supply of affordable housing, and provide incentives for “smart growth” or integrated planning.
- Variations in residential perceptions, attitudes toward housing options, and preferences for housing policies across the five major regions of the state (Central Valley, San Francisco Bay Area, Los Angeles County, Inland Empire, and Orange/San Diego); between Asians, blacks, Latinos, and non-Hispanic whites; and across housing, socioeconomic, and political groups.

Copies of this report may be ordered by e-mail (order@ppic.org) or phone (415-291-4400). Copies of this and earlier reports are posted on the publications page of the PPIC web site (www.ppic.org). For questions about the survey, please contact survey@ppic.org.

Regional Groupings Used in This Report



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Press Release

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<http://www.ppic.org/main/pressreleaseindex.asp>

SPECIAL SURVEY ON CALIFORNIANS AND THEIR HOUSING

HOUSING COSTS LEAD MANY CALIFORNIANS TO CONSIDER MOVING Homeownership a Major Dividing Line Between Haves, Have Nots

SAN FRANCISCO, California, November 18, 2004 — Although Californians deeply value their quality of life in the Golden State, a surprising number say that the cost of housing could drive them away, according to a new survey released today by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) in collaboration with the Hewlett, Irvine, and Packard Foundations.

The survey's large sample size (2,502) and multilingual interviews (conducted in English, Spanish, Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese) make this the most comprehensive survey on housing and housing policy to date. Overall, Californians express grave concerns about the cost of housing and see little upside to the run-up in housing prices. In fact, one quarter (24%) of Californians today say the cost of housing in their part of California is forcing them to seriously consider moving – to another part of the state or away from California altogether. This sentiment is highest among coastal residents, and many are acting on it: A recent PPIC study found that coastal Californians are driving much of the Central Valley's population boom.

Nearly all Californians (94%) perceive that home values have been increasing in their region, with 84 percent saying they have increased a lot in recent years. Some see broad benefits to skyrocketing housing prices – most residents (82%) view it as at least somewhat important to the economic vitality of their part of the state. But they express greater ambivalence about this phenomenon as it relates to them personally. Specifically, 49 percent of Californians say that increasing average home values in their part of the state are a bad thing for them and their families, while 41 percent call it a good thing. One reason for this perspective? Californians worry about the fallout of increasing prices for younger family members. Three in four adults (77%) say they are at least somewhat concerned that the cost of housing will prevent the younger generation in their family from buying a home in their region of the state. Moreover, one in three (31%) cite a more immediate effect of housing costs – that is, it places a financial strain on their households today.

“Californians understand the economic value of our hyper real estate market, but they also feel the pinch of high prices,” says PPIC Statewide Survey Director Mark Baldassare. A majority of Californians (55%) view the availability of affordable housing as a big problem in their region today, placing it just below traffic congestion (59%) and far above the lack of well-paying jobs (35%), population growth (35%), and air pollution (30%) as a regional concern. Orange and San Diego County residents are the most likely (63%) and Central Valley residents the least likely (39%) to see affordable housing as a big problem in their area.

Homeownership: The Great Divide

Beyond regional differences, homeownership represents a profound dividing line between the “haves” and “have nots” in California today. About six in 10 California adults say they own their own home. Majorities of whites (71%) and Asians (59%) own their homes; majorities of Latinos (55%) and blacks (51%) are renters. A large majority of U.S.-born residents (68%) are homeowners, while immigrants (55%) are more likely to rent. And the likelihood of owning a home increases sharply with age, income, and education.

Homeownership rates also have serious implications for elections and politics in the state. Seventy-five percent of likely voters in the state's elections are homeowners, while a majority of those who are not registered to vote are renters. As a result, voters' preferences largely reflect the opinions of homeowners. “Despite all the recent

focus on coastal versus inland California or blue versus red counties, we need look no further than the demographics of homeownership to see a great social divide facing our state,” says Baldassare.

Consistent with this divide, homeowners express greater satisfaction than do renters with their quality of life:

- While 89% of state residents say they are at least somewhat satisfied with their current housing and neighborhood, homeowners are far more likely than renters to say they are very satisfied with their housing (75% to 34%) and community (65% to 41%).
- Homeowners (68%) are also more likely than renters (34%) to report a high degree of satisfaction with the amount of living space in their home. Overall, 86 percent of Californians are at least somewhat satisfied with their living space and privacy, with Central Valley residents more likely than others to be very satisfied.
- Neighborhood safety is less of a concern for homeowners than for renters: 64 percent of residents who own homes say they are very satisfied with the security of their neighborhoods, compared to 40 percent of renters. Whites (64%) are more likely than Asians (47%), Latinos (41%), and blacks (38%) to hold this view.

Given the dramatic rise in home values, homeowners have another reason to feel good. Indeed, 93 percent of homeowners say that the value of their home has increased in recent years, and 76 percent say it has increased a lot. Nevertheless, these large increases in equity do not make most homeowners confident that they could buy another home, given the current market. Only a slim majority (53%) say it is very likely (23%) or somewhat likely (30%) that they could find a home they could afford and would want to buy in their part of California. Of those who say their home values have increased a lot, only 23 percent think they would be able to find another home to buy in their region.

Although 86 percent of renters in California hold onto the hope of being homeowners someday, only 18 percent believe it is very likely they will find a home they can afford, with fewer than half (49%) saying it is at least somewhat likely. Renters in the Inland Empire are more likely than others to believe they can find a home to buy in their region. Whites (11%) are much less likely than Latinos (23%) and blacks (25%) to be optimistic about finding a home to buy in their part of the state.

Homeownership in Low-Income Communities Harder to Achieve

Regardless of their housing status, many state residents express concern about the housing options that are available in low-income and minority neighborhoods. Most Californians (55%) – and majorities across racial/ethnic groups – believe that these neighborhoods are less likely than other communities to attract developers to build new single-family homes. And by more than a two-to-one margin (54% to 25%), state residents are also more likely to think that buyers in low-income communities have a harder time rather than an easier time qualifying for loans than buyers in other neighborhoods. Blacks (74%) and Democrats (57%) are far more likely than whites (48%) and Republicans (45%) to hold this view.

Little Support – But Lots of Ideas – for Government Housing Policies

Given their worries about housing availability and affordability, how do residents feel about the related policies of their state and local governments? Only one in four (23%) believes that state government is doing an excellent or good job on housing and land use policy, with a similar percentage (22%) giving state leaders poor ratings on the topic. However, there is a lack of consensus about whether or not state government should alter its policies in response to rising housing costs or shortages. Half (50%) think state government is doing enough (33%) or too much (17%) to encourage construction, while 37 percent say government could do more. And 52 percent say the state government should maintain current land use and environmental restrictions even if it increases the cost of new housing, compared to 40 percent who support easing such restrictions. However, residents do get behind a number of specific proposals aimed at promoting the development of new housing: Majorities favor shifting property tax dollars from state to local governments as an incentive for local leaders to approve new housing developments (57%); using transportation funding as an incentive to encourage local

governments to develop integrated plans for housing, jobs, and transit (59%); and providing “smart growth” guidelines to local governments (54%).

At the local government level, Californians are only slightly more supportive of the way leaders are handling land use and housing issues: 33 percent say they are doing an excellent (6%) or good (27%) job. Despite this ambivalence, most residents (67%) believe local governments should work together to develop regional plans for housing development and land use. And they also see a role for themselves at the ballot box: 61 percent say they would support a local bond measure to subsidize the cost of building affordable housing, and 53 percent would reject efforts to slow down the pace of development in their community.

More Key Findings

- **Community Spirit** (page 2)

Two in three residents (66%) say their neighborhoods have a sense of community. This perception increases with age, homeownership, and length of residence.

- **Commuting Satisfaction** (page 3)

Three in four employed residents (77%) say they are either very satisfied (44%) or somewhat satisfied (33%) with their commute to work. Fewer workers (52%) express satisfaction with the public transit options that are available to them, with one-third (32%) saying they are dissatisfied with public transit.

- **The Lure of the Single-Family Home** (page 10)

Seventy percent of Californians would prefer to live in a single-family detached home, even if it means they have to drive to work and to travel locally. However, a majority (53%) also say they would choose to live in a small home with a small backyard if it means a shorter commute to work.

- **Urban vs. Suburban** (page 11)

Californians are divided when asked if they would be willing to trade the typical features of suburban communities for more urban amenities: 48 percent prefer to live in a mixed-use neighborhood if it means proximity to stores and services, while an almost equal number (49%) choose a residential-only neighborhood.

About the Survey

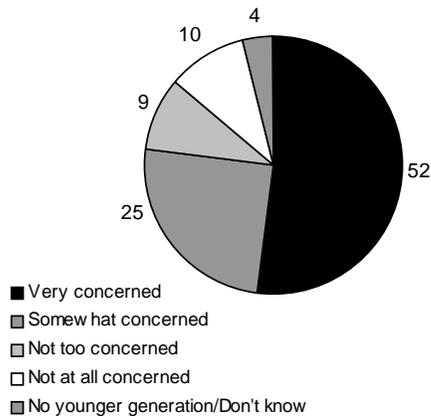
This survey – a collaborative effort of the Public Policy Institute of California, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, The James Irvine Foundation, and The David and Lucile Packard Foundation – is a special edition of the PPIC Statewide Survey. Findings of this survey are based on a telephone survey of 2,502 California adult residents interviewed between October 21 and November 1, 2004. Interviews were conducted in English, Spanish, Chinese, Korean, or Vietnamese. The sampling error for the total sample is +/- 2%. The sampling error for subgroups is larger. For more information on methodology, see page 19.

Mark Baldassare is research director at PPIC, where he holds the Arjay and Frances Fearing Miller Chair in Public Policy. He is founder of the PPIC Statewide Survey, which he has directed since 1998. His book, *A California State of Mind: The Conflicted Voter in a Changing World*, is available at www.ppic.org.

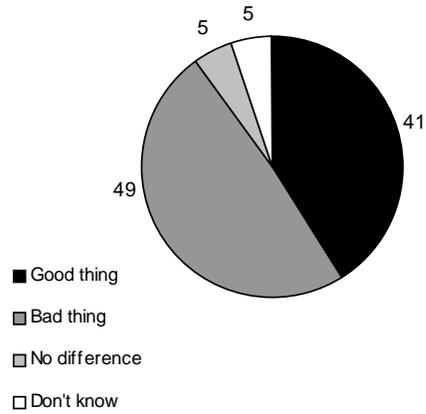
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This report will appear on PPIC’s website (www.ppic.org) on November 18. ###

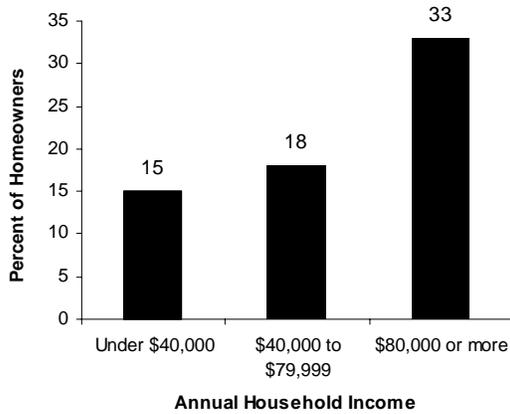
Concern About Younger Generation Being Able to Afford a Home in the Area



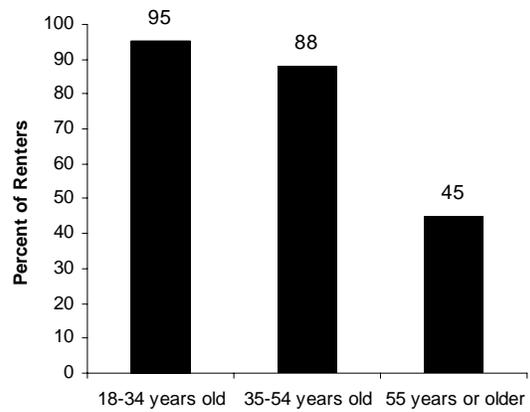
Views toward Increasing Home Values



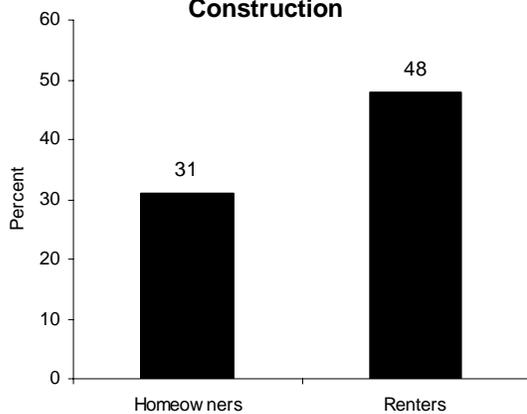
Percent Very Likely to Find an Affordable Home in California



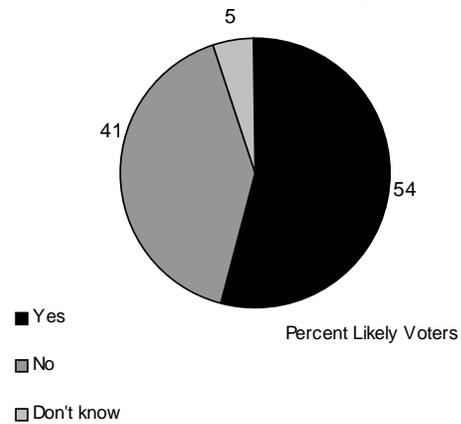
Percent Who Hope to Own a Home Someday



State Government Not Doing Enough to Encourage Housing Construction



Vote on Local Bond for Affordable Housing



Residents' Perceptions

Housing Satisfaction

What kind of housing do Californians have and how do they feel about it? Whether owning or renting, six in 10 California adults live in single-family detached houses, the rest in attached houses, apartments, mobile homes, and other types of dwellings. Most Californians seem to find their housing adequate. Nine in 10 say that they are somewhat (30%) or very (59%) satisfied with their current housing, and these levels of satisfaction are similar to those reported in our November 2001 survey.

Despite this general satisfaction, there are important differences across geographic regions, racial/ethnic categories, and demographic groups. Central Valley adults (65%) are more likely than others to be very satisfied with their housing. Whites (67%) are more likely than Asians (43%), blacks (54%), and Latinos (51%) to be very satisfied, and satisfaction increases with age, education, and income. Differences are especially large depending on ownership and housing type: Homeowners (75%) are much more likely than renters (34%), and people living in single-family dwellings (73%) are much more likely than apartment dwellers (29%), to say they are very satisfied with their current housing.

Majorities of Californians also say that they are very satisfied with the space in their home (55%) and the privacy their home has from neighbors (55%). Again, satisfaction differs across regions and groups: Central Valley residents are more likely than others to be highly satisfied with their space and privacy. Whites are more likely than Asians, blacks, and Latinos to be very satisfied with the amount of their space. High levels of satisfaction with space and privacy increase with age, education, and income and are strongly related to homeownership and type of dwelling. As with general housing satisfaction, homeowners are much more likely than renters to report that they are very satisfied with the amount of their space (68% to 34%), and people in single-family detached homes are much more likely than apartment dwellers to be very satisfied with the privacy of their homes (65% to 33%).

“Overall, how satisfied are you with the house or apartment you live in?”

	All Adults	Region				
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	Inland Empire
Very satisfied	59%	65%	58%	59%	53%	65%
Somewhat satisfied	30	23	33	27	35	27
Somewhat dissatisfied	7	6	7	9	9	5
Very dissatisfied	4	6	2	5	3	3

“How satisfied are you with the amount of living space in the house or apartment you live in?”

	All Adults	Race/Ethnicity			
		Asians	Blacks	Latinos	Whites
Very satisfied	55%	40%	47%	47%	61%
Somewhat satisfied	31	48	29	34	28
Somewhat dissatisfied	9	9	12	11	8
Very dissatisfied	5	3	12	8	3

Neighborhood Satisfaction

The majority of Californians today say they live in large cities and suburban communities, while a little over one-third say they live in small cities and towns or rural areas. Overall, nine in 10 residents say they are satisfied with the neighborhoods they live in, while 56 percent report that they are *very satisfied*.

As with general housing satisfaction, neighborhood ratings vary by region and across groups. Orange/San Diego (60%) and Central Valley residents (59%) are somewhat more likely than others to say that they are very satisfied. The highest level of neighborhood satisfaction is greater among whites (65%) than among Asians (47%), blacks (45%), and Latinos (43%). Homeowners (65%) are much more likely than renters (41%) to be very satisfied with their neighborhoods, and neighborhood satisfaction tends to increase with age, education, and income. As for type of community, residents of large cities are somewhat less likely than others to report that they are very satisfied with their neighborhoods.

The vast majority of Californians also say they are satisfied with the safety of their neighborhoods, with more than half describing themselves as *very satisfied*. However, perceptions of neighborhood safety differ across racial/ethnic groups, with whites (64%) feeling more safe than Asians (47%), and blacks (38%) and Latinos (41%) expressing the lowest satisfaction with safety. Perceptions of neighborhood safety tend to increase with age, education, and income; and homeowners (64%) are much more likely than renters (40%) to be very satisfied with this aspect of their neighborhood. Residents of large cities (47%) are less likely than others to report high levels of satisfaction with safety. Considering another aspect of neighborhood life, two in three residents say that their neighborhoods have a “sense of community.” This perception increases with age, homeownership, and length of residence and does not vary much across the state’s regions. Sixty-one percent of large city residents report that their neighborhood has a sense of community.

“Overall, how satisfied are you with the neighborhood you live in?”

	All Adults	Region				
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	Inland Empire
Very satisfied	56%	59%	55%	52%	60%	54%
Somewhat satisfied	33	27	33	35	31	36
Somewhat dissatisfied	7	9	9	8	5	6
Very dissatisfied	4	5	3	5	4	4

“How satisfied are you with the safety of your neighborhood?”

	All Adults	Race/Ethnicity			
		Asians	Blacks	Latinos	Whites
Very satisfied	55%	47%	38%	41%	64%
Somewhat satisfied	30	38	43	34	26
Somewhat dissatisfied	10	10	10	14	8
Very dissatisfied	5	5	9	11	2

Commuting Satisfaction

How do Californians feel about the commute from home to work? Three in four employed residents say they are either very satisfied (44%) or somewhat satisfied (33%), but two in 10 are at least somewhat dissatisfied. The percentage who report being very satisfied has actually declined since our November 2002 survey (54% to 44%) while overall satisfaction is about the same.

Across the state's major regions, Central Valley residents (49%) are the most likely to say they are very satisfied with their commute to work. Unlike measures of housing and neighborhood satisfaction, there are no significant differences in commuting satisfaction across age, education, and income categories, or between homeowners and renters. Residents across different types of communities—large cities, suburbs, and small cities and towns—also report similar levels of satisfaction.

California's working residents have a much more negative response to the public transit that is available for commuting to work. About half say they are very satisfied (20%) or somewhat satisfied (32%) with the availability of public transit, while one in three are at least somewhat dissatisfied. Latinos (29%) are much more likely than other racial/ethnic groups to say they are very satisfied with the public transit that is available for commuting to work. Satisfaction with public transit declines with age, education, income, and homeownership. Residents of large cities, and in the San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles—where public transit would seem to be more plentiful than in smaller communities and other regions—do not express higher levels of satisfaction with public transit.

“Overall, how satisfied are you with your commute to work?”

	All Employed Adults	Region				
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	Inland Empire
Very satisfied	44%	49%	42%	43%	39%	41%
Somewhat satisfied	33	32	34	31	37	28
Somewhat dissatisfied	12	8	13	15	12	15
Very dissatisfied	8	7	6	9	9	13
Work at home	2	1	3	1	2	1
Don't know	1	3	2	1	1	2

“How satisfied are you with the public transit that is available for commuting to work?”

	All Employed Adults	Race/Ethnicity			
		Asians	Blacks	Latinos	Whites
Very satisfied	20%	13%	20%	29%	16%
Somewhat satisfied	32	42	36	37	25
Somewhat dissatisfied	14	11	9	13	16
Very dissatisfied	18	17	23	11	21
Don't know	16	17	12	10	22

Regional Problems

When asked about a list of five regional problems, a majority of Californians identified traffic congestion on freeways (59%) and the availability of affordable housing (55%) as big problems in their part of California, far ahead of the lack of well-paying jobs (35%), population growth and development (35%), and air pollution (30%). The 55 percent of residents naming affordable housing as a big problem today is considerably higher than the 43 percent in November 2001 and the 44 percent in November 2002.

There are strong regional differences in perceptions of affordable housing: San Francisco Bay Area, Los Angeles, and Orange/San Diego county residents are much more likely than residents of the Central Valley and the Inland Empire to see this as a big problem. Whites, blacks, and Latinos are about equally likely, and more likely than Asians, to say housing affordability is a big problem in their region. The perception of housing affordability as a big problem tends to decline with age, income, and length of residence in the dwelling—and most dramatically with home ownership: Owners (48%) are much less likely than renters (67%) to see housing affordability as a big problem. Across community types and dwelling types, those who live in large cities (61%) and in apartments (65%) and mobile homes (65%) are more likely than others to perceive affordable housing as a big problem in their part of California.

How big a problem is _____ in your part of California? (percent saying "a big problem")	All Adults	Region				
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	Inland Empire
traffic congestion on freeways and major roads	59%	40%	65%	72%	64%	67%
the lack of opportunities for well-paying jobs	35	35	34	39	28	31
air pollution	30	40	20	41	24	33
the availability of housing that you can afford	55	39	58	59	63	41
population growth and development	35	30	30	39	41	36

How big a problem is _____ in your part of California? (percent saying "a big problem")	All Adults	Race/Ethnicity			
		Asians	Blacks	Latinos	Whites
traffic congestion on freeways and major roads	59%	52%	71%	56%	62%
the lack of opportunities for well-paying jobs	35	24	57	51	27
air pollution	30	25	37	41	26
the availability of housing that you can afford	55	48	58	56	55
population growth and development	35	26	31	29	39

Housing Costs

How do Californians feel about the long-term effects of the recent run-up in housing prices? They worry about the fallout for younger people in their families. Nearly eight in 10 residents say they are at least somewhat concerned that the younger generation in their family will not be able to buy a home in their part of California, and 52 percent are *very concerned* about this possibility. Coastal residents are more likely than residents of inland regions of the state to express this concern. The percentage who describe a high degree of concern tends to increase with income and education. It is also higher among the 35 to 54 age group (58%) than among younger residents (ages 18 to 34, 46%) or older residents (age 55 and older, 52%), and among people with children (56%) than among those with no children (50%). There are no differences between homeowners and renters in this concern.

Moreover, one in three Californians cite a more immediate effect of housing costs—that is, it places a financial strain on their households today. Almost half of renters (46%) and those with household incomes under \$40,000 (43%) report that housing costs place either a lot or a little strain on their household finances. Latinos (40%) and Asians (38%) are more likely than whites (27%) and blacks (28%) to say that housing costs place a financial strain on their household. Reports that housing costs place a little strain on household finances are also more common among younger adults and parents of children.

About one-quarter of residents say that the cost of housing in their region is making them seriously consider moving to another part of California or out of the state. This reaction to regional housing costs is highest among renters (37%), those age 18 to 34 (31%), and those with incomes under \$40,000 (29%). Nonwhites are more likely than whites, and coastal residents are more likely than inland residents, to say that housing costs are making them seriously consider moving to another part of California.

“How concerned are you that the cost of housing will prevent the younger generation in your family from buying a home in your part of California?”

	All Adults	Region				
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	Inland Empire
Very concerned	52%	44%	59%	51%	55%	48%
Somewhat concerned	25	32	21	27	24	25
Not too concerned	9	8	7	9	11	13
Not at all concerned	10	14	10	10	9	11
No younger generation in family / Don't know	4	2	3	3	1	3

“Does the cost of your housing make you and your family seriously consider moving away from the part of California you live in now?”

	All Adults	Home		Age		
		Own	Rent	18-34	35-54	55 or older
Yes	24%	16%	37%	31%	25%	14%
No	76	84	63	69	75	86

Housing Appreciation

Nearly all Californians (94%) perceive that home values have been increasing in their region, with 84 percent saying that they have increased *a lot* in recent years; but how do they weigh the costs and benefits of this increase? Eight in 10 say that this trend is at least somewhat important to the quality of life and economic vitality of their part of California, and 39 percent say it is a *very important* factor. This generally positive perception of the overall consequences of increasing home values is found across all major regions, racial/ethnic groups, and socioeconomic categories.

However, when it comes to the effect on their families, residents' responses are mixed: Forty-one percent say increasing home values in their region are a good thing, 49 percent say they are a bad thing, for them and their families. Few (5%) believe this has made no difference. Whites are evenly divided (46% good thing, 44% bad thing) while Asians, blacks, and Latinos are more likely to say that this trend has had negative consequences for them. About half of residents in the coastal regions say it has been a bad thing, while residents in the inland regions are evenly divided. Upper-income, older, and college-educated residents are all more likely to say the increase is a good thing, while lower-income residents, young adults, and the noncollege educated are all more likely to say it has been bad. Predictably, the largest differences in perceptions of increasing average home values are among homeowners (56% good thing, 33% bad thing) and renters (15% good thing, 78% bad thing).

“In general, how important are increasing average home values to the quality of life and economic vitality of your part of California?”

	All Adults	Region				
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	Inland Empire
Very important	39%	38%	36%	44%	37%	41%
Somewhat important	43	44	44	41	47	45
Not too important	9	10	10	8	11	6
Not at all important	3	4	4	3	2	3
Don't know	6	4	6	4	3	5

“Overall, do you think increasing average home values in your part of California is a good thing or a bad thing for you and your family?”

	All Adults	Race/Ethnicity			
		Asians	Blacks	Latinos	Whites
Good thing	41%	35%	36%	31%	46%
Bad thing	49	44	59	62	44
No difference	5	13	2	4	5
Don't know	5	8	3	3	5

Housing Options

The Homeownership Gap

Given the cost of owning a home in California today, homeownership represents a major divide between the “haves and have nots” in the state. In our current survey, about six in 10 California adults say they own their home. Who are the Californians most likely to own their home?

Majorities of whites (71%) and Asians (59%) own their homes; majorities of Latinos (55%) and blacks (51%) are renters. Along another dimension, a large majority of U.S.-born residents (68%) are homeowners, while immigrants (55%) are more likely to be renters. The likelihood of owning a home increases sharply with age and household income, as well as with education and years at current residence.

Homeownership rates also have implications for elections and politics in California today. Seventy-five percent of likely voters in the state’s elections are homeowners, while infrequent voters are evenly divided between homeowners and renters, and a majority of those who are not registered to vote are renters. As a result, voters’ preferences largely reflect the opinions of homeowners rather than renters in the state’s elections.

“Do you own or rent your current residence?”

		Own	Rent
Race/Ethnicity	Whites	71	29
	Asians	59	41
	Blacks	49	51
	Latinos	45	55
Age	18 to 24	38	62
	25 to 34	44	56
	35 to 44	59	41
	45 to 54	74	26
	55 to 64	78	22
	65 or older	83	17
Income	Under \$20,000	32	68
	\$20,000 to under \$40,000	48	52
	\$40,000 to under \$60,000	63	37
	\$60,000 to under \$80,000	69	31
	\$80,000 to under \$100,000	78	22
	\$100,000 or more	88	12
Nativity	Native	68	32
	Immigrant	45	55
Voters	Likely voters	75	25
	Infrequent voters	51	49
	Not registered	38	62

Homeowners' Attitudes

California homeowners have good reason to be highly satisfied with their homes and neighborhoods today. They have become the beneficiaries of an infusion of new household wealth as the average price of homes on the market has risen. Ninety-three percent of homeowners say that the value of their home has increased in recent years, and 76 percent say it has increased *a lot*.

Most homeowners in all regional categories believe that their home values have risen considerably in recent years. As for racial/ethnic differences, white homeowners (82%) are most likely and Latino homeowners (60%) are least likely to say that they have experienced a substantial increase in home equity. The perception of a significant growth in home values increases with homeowners' age, income, and education.

Nevertheless, these large increases in the equity do not make most homeowners confident that they could buy another home, given the current housing market. Only a slim majority of homeowners say that it is at least somewhat likely that they could find a home that they could afford and would like to buy in their part of California, with 23 percent saying that such an outcome is *very likely*. Across the state's regions, fewer than one in four homeowners believe that they would be very likely to find a home they could afford and would like to buy. While responses across racial/ethnic groups are generally similar, this perception tends to decline with age and increase with education and income. Of those who say their home values have increased a lot, only 23 percent think they would be able to find a home they could afford and would like to buy in their region.

“In the past few years, do you think the value of the home you live in has increased a lot, increased some, stayed about the same, or declined?”

Homeowners Only	All Homeowners	Age			Household Income		
		18-34	35-54	55 or older	Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to \$79,999	\$80,000 or more
Increased a lot	76%	66%	79%	79%	57%	77%	88%
Increased some	17	21	16	15	28	16	10
Stayed about the same	3	5	2	3	6	3	1
Declined	2	4	2	1	5	2	0
Don't know	2	4	1	2	4	2	1

“If you decided to buy a new home in the near future, how likely is it that you would be able to find a home that you can afford and would like to buy in your part of California?”

Homeowners Only	All Homeowners	Age			Household Income		
		18-34	35-54	55 or older	Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to \$79,999	\$80,000 or more
Very likely	23%	23%	24%	22%	15%	18%	33%
Somewhat likely	30	35	33	22	25	31	34
Not very likely	26	27	25	26	27	34	18
Not at all likely	19	13	17	25	29	16	13
Don't know	2	2	1	5	4	1	2

Renters' Attitudes

The rental market in California has also experienced price increases, but it has been relatively stable for the state's renters, compared to the housing market for homeowners. A slim majority of renters say their rents have increased some (31%) or a lot (21%). About four in 10 (38%) say their rents have stayed about the same; only 3 percent say their rents have actually declined in recent years. The perception that rents have risen substantially increases with age, and lower-income renters are more likely than upper-income renters to perceive steep increases in rents. Latinos (28%) are more likely than whites (15%), and renters with children (27%) are more likely than those without (16%), to say that rents have increased a lot.

Eighty-six percent of renters in California hold onto the hope of being homeowners someday. The desire to own a home is strongly felt across all regions and racial/ethnic groups. Nine in 10 renters ages 35 to 54 are hoping to own a home, compared to under half of those in the 55 and older age group.

How do renters gauge their prospects for actually finding a home that they could afford and would like to buy in their region? Only 18 percent of renters believe it is very likely that they will find a home that they can afford, with less than half (49%) saying it is at least somewhat likely. The expectations for future homeownership are higher among younger than older renters and among upper-income than lower-income residents. Renters in the Inland Empire are more likely than others to believe they can find a home to buy in their region. Whites (11%) are much less likely than Latinos (23%) and blacks (25%) to say that it is very likely that they can find a home that they can afford and would like to buy in their part of California.

"In the past few years, has the rent on the home or apartment you live in increased a lot, increased some, stayed about the same, or declined?"

<i>Renters Only</i>	All Renters	Age			Household Income		
		18-34	35-54	55 or older	Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to \$79,999	\$80,000 or more
Increased a lot	21%	19%	22%	27%	25%	19%	11%
Increased some	31	30	33	32	31	38	19
Stayed about the same	38	40	36	35	34	36	56
Declined	3	2	5	3	3	2	6
Don't know	7	9	4	3	7	5	8

"Do you hope to someday own a home?"

<i>Renters Only</i>	All Renters	Age			Household Income		
		18-34	35-54	55 or older	Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to \$79,999	\$80,000 or more
Yes	86%	95%	88%	45%	84%	91%	91%
No	12	4	9	51	14	9	7
Don't know	2	1	3	4	2	0	2

Housing Choices

What would Californians choose if they were confronted with the tradeoff between living in a large home and having a long commute to work—other things being equal? Today, they say they would choose a small home and a short commute over a large home and a long commute by an 11-point margin (53% to 42%). In November 2002, a similar question elicited a similar proportion choosing a small home and short commute (49%) over a large home and a long commute (47%).

Compared to two years ago, the percentages of residents mentioning traffic congestion and housing affordability as *big problems* in their regions have increased sharply, especially in the state’s coastal areas. Coastal residents are also the most likely to opt for the small home and short commute choice, while inland area residents are the most inclined to have a large home, even if it means a long commute. The preference for a small home and a short commute increases with age, and it is a choice that is less prevalent among those with children than those without. The proportion of residents who would choose a small home and short commute increases with income and is also higher among renters than among homeowners. Sixty-one percent of Asians would choose the small home and short commute, as would 55 percent of whites, 51 percent of Latinos, and 48 percent of blacks.

Most Californians are unwilling to give up their strong preference for single-family detached homes and their current reliance on the automobile for commuting and local travel. Seven in 10 would choose to live in a single-family home, even if it meant that they had to use a car to commute to work and to travel locally; 26 percent would choose to live in an attached dwelling if there was convenient public transit to commute and travel locally. The highest percentages of residents choosing the condo or townhome side of the tradeoff are among renters (37%), 18 to 34 year olds (30%), those with incomes under \$40,000 (32%), San Francisco Bay area residents (34%), and residents of large cities in California (31%).

“How do you feel about the following tradeoffs? Other things being equal, would you choose to live in a ...”

	All Adults	Region				
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	Inland Empire
Small home with a small backyard if it means you have a short commute to work	53%	43%	61%	54%	59%	50%
Large home with a large backyard, even if it means you would have a long commute to work	42	53	33	41	38	45
Don't know	5	4	6	5	3	5

	All Adults	Home		Age		
		Own	Rent	18-34	35-54	55 or older
Single-family detached home, even if it means that you need to drive a car to commute and travel locally	70%	76%	60%	68%	75%	64%
Condo or townhome if it was convenient to use public transit to commute and travel locally	26	20	37	30	23	28
Don't know	4	4	3	2	2	8

Neighborhood Choices

Californians are evenly divided when asked if they would be willing to trade the typical features of suburban communities for more urban services and recreational amenities in their locales. About half (49%) would prefer to live in single-family homes that are further apart, even if it means that they have to drive to parks and recreation. An almost equal proportion (47%) would choose single-family homes close together if they could walk to parks and recreation. Coastal residents are more likely than inland residents to prefer single-family homes that are closer together if they can walk to parks and recreation. Central Valley (58%) and Inland Empire (58%) residents express the highest preference for more spread-out homes. The preference for homes that are further apart is particularly strong among residents in the 35 to 54 age group and in the higher income brackets. A majority of whites opt for homes that are further apart, while majorities of Asians, blacks, and Latinos favor homes that are closer together.

Forty-eight percent of Californians would prefer to live in a mixed land-use neighborhood where they can walk to local amenities. An equal proportion (49%) would rather live in a residential-only neighborhood, even if they have to drive to stores, schools, and services. A similar question elicited a nearly identical response in our November 2002 survey. The public's preference for living in mixed-use neighborhoods is higher among renters than homeowners and among younger than older residents. The public's preference for residential-only neighborhoods tends to increase with income and is higher among whites (53%) than among Asians (39%), blacks (44%), and Latinos (44%). Los Angeles and San Francisco Bay Area residents are more likely than others to favor the mixed land-use neighborhoods where residents can walk to stores, schools, and services.

“How do you feel about the following tradeoffs? Other things being equal, would you choose to live in a ...”

	All Adults	Region				
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	Inland Empire
Neighborhood where single-family homes are far apart, even if it means you have to drive to parks and outdoor recreation	49%	58%	40%	43%	51%	58%
Neighborhood where single-family homes are close together if it means you could walk to parks and outdoor recreation	47	39	56	52	46	38
Don't know	4	3	4	5	3	4

	All Adults	Home		Age		
		Own	Rent	18-34	35-54	55 or older
Mixed-use neighborhood if it means you can walk to stores, schools, and services	48%	43%	57%	54%	47%	43%
Residential-only neighborhood, even if it means you have to drive to stores, schools, and services	49	53	41	44	51	51
Don't know	3	4	2	2	2	6

Equity Issues

In previous surveys, we have found that Californians believe low-income and minority neighborhoods are disadvantaged compared to other neighborhoods in the region—for instance, in terms of roads, schools, redevelopment activities, and environmental conditions. How do residents perceive the housing options that are available in low-income and minority neighborhoods?

A majority of Californians (55%) believe that low-income and minority neighborhoods are less likely than other neighborhoods to attract developers to build new single-family homes, while 29 percent see them as more likely to attract this type of construction. Pluralities across racial/ethnic groups hold the belief that low-income and minority neighborhoods attract less new housing. The perception that low-income and minority neighborhoods are at a relative disadvantage for attracting new single-family homes increases with income and is similar for homeowners and renters.

By more than a two-to-one margin, Californians are also more likely to think that buyers in low-income and minority neighborhoods have a more difficult time qualifying for loans than in other neighborhoods. There are significant racial/ethnic differences in this perception, with blacks (74%), Latinos (62%), and Asians (60%) much more likely than whites (48%) to say that it is relatively harder for buyers in low-income and minority neighborhoods. The belief that qualifying is more difficult in those neighborhoods is strongest among lower-income residents. It is also stronger among renters than among homeowners (60% to 50%). There is a political dimension as well: Republicans (45%) and conservatives (52%) are less likely than Democrats (57%) and liberals (61%) to think that it is harder to qualify for a home loan in low-income and minority areas.

“Do you think that low-income and minority neighborhoods are more likely or less likely than other neighborhoods in your part of California to attract developers to build new single-family homes?”

	All Adults	Race/Ethnicity			
		Asians	Blacks	Latinos	Whites
More likely	29%	27%	34%	38%	26%
Less likely	55	49	59	52	56
Equally likely	3	7	2	2	2
Don't know	13	17	5	8	16

“Do you think that it is easier or harder for buyers to qualify for loans to purchase homes in low-income and minority neighborhoods than in other neighborhoods in your part of California?”

	All Adults	Race/Ethnicity			
		Asians	Blacks	Latinos	Whites
Easier	25%	19%	15%	28%	25%
Harder	54	60	74	62	48
No difference	5	6	4	1	7
Don't know	16	15	7	9	20

Housing Policies

State Government's Role

When asked to rank the state government on housing and land use policies, most of the public indicate that they are not that impressed. Only one in four believes the performance today is excellent (2%) or good (21%), and just as many (22%) believe that the state government is doing a poor job in this policy area. About half give the state government a fair rating on housing and land use policy.

The response of California likely voters—who are largely homeowners—is similar. In fact, homeowners (25%) are only slightly more likely than renters (20%) to say that the state government is doing an excellent or good job on housing and land use policy. Across regions, three in 10 Inland Empire (30%) and Central Valley (28%) residents rate the state's policies as excellent or good, compared to two in 10 San Francisco Bay Area (21%), Los Angeles (21%), and Orange/San Diego (22%) residents. Residents' ratings of the state government on housing and land use issues do not vary significantly by age, education, or household income.

“Overall, how would you rate the state government when it comes to housing and land use policies for the state of California?”

	All Adults	Region					Likely Voters
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	Inland Empire	
Excellent	2%	4%	2%	2%	2%	3%	1%
Good	21	24	19	19	20	27	21
Fair	48	46	48	49	50	44	47
Poor	22	20	23	22	20	21	24
Don't know	7	6	8	8	8	5	7

California residents are conflicted about how much state government is doing to encourage housing construction. Although four in 10 adults think the state government should be doing more, about half of Californians think that the state government is doing enough or too much to encourage new construction. There are sharp differences of opinions between homeowners and renters and across income groups about how much more the state should do. Three-quarters of blacks and about half of Latinos (48%) think the state government should do more in this area, compared to only 38 percent of Asians and 28 percent of whites. There are also partisan differences: Democrats (42%) are more likely than Republicans (26%) to think the state government is not doing enough to encourage new housing. Across regions, residents in Los Angeles (48%) and the San Francisco Bay Area (42%) are more likely than others to say that the state government is not doing enough.

“Overall, do you think that the state government is doing too much, the right amount, or not enough to encourage housing construction in the state of California?”

	All Adults	Homeownership		Household Income			Likely Voters
		Own	Rent	Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to \$79,999	\$80,000 or more	
Too much	17%	19%	13%	14%	20%	18%	20%
Right amount	33	36	28	29	34	38	34
Not enough	37	31	48	47	35	30	32
Don't know	13	14	11	10	11	14	14

State Housing Policies

Should state government manage land use and environmental regulations differently in response to rising housing costs? A slim majority of all adults (52%), and a larger majority of likely voters (59%), prefer to have the state government maintain its current land use and environmental restrictions even if it increases the cost of new housing. Support for maintaining current environmental regulations is at or near a majority among Democrats (58%), Republicans (49%), and independent voters (55%) and across the state’s regions. However, whites (60%) are more likely than blacks (40%), Latinos (40%), and Asians (48%) to support maintaining the current restrictions even if it means higher costs for new housing. Support for easing current environmental and land use restrictions is considerably higher among renters than homeowners and among lower-income than upper-income residents.

Which statement comes closer to your views—even if neither is exactly right ...	All Adults	Homeownership		Household Income			Likely Voters
		Own	Rent	Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to \$79,999	\$80,000 or more	
The state government should maintain current land use and environmental restrictions even if it increases the cost of new housing	52%	55%	47%	45%	55%	60%	59%
The state government should ease current land use and environmental restrictions to increase the supply of housing	40	37	47	45	40	36	34
Don't know	8	8	6	10	5	4	7

In recent years, housing policy experts have claimed that the state’s system of allocating local tax dollars since the passage of Proposition 13 encourages a “fiscalization of land use.” The argument is that local governments have incentives to approve commercial and retail developments, which generate local sales tax dollars. At the same time, they have no incentive to approve new housing construction, because the state legislature decides how to allocate property tax dollars among local governments and schools. A majority of adults (57%) and likely voters (57%) are in favor of shifting property tax dollars from the state to local governments to give local governments an incentive to approve new housing developments. A majority of Democrats, Republicans, and independents favor using property tax dollars in this way.

Renters are more likely than homeowners (65% to 53%) to be in favor of shifting property tax dollars to local governments to encourage approval of new housing developments. About six in 10 residents across the state’s regions would support this shift in property tax money. Seven in 10 blacks (69%) would favor this policy, as would about six in 10 Latinos (63%) and whites (55%), and half of Asians (51%). Support for this property tax shift decreases with age but is not related to income.

“Would you favor or oppose a shift of property tax dollars from the state government to local governments as an incentive for local governments to approve new local housing developments?”

	All Adults	Party Registration			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favor	57%	60%	52%	65%	57%
Oppose	32	30	40	25	33
Don't know	11	10	8	10	10

Recently, some policymakers have proposed using the state’s allocation of transportation funding as an incentive to encourage “smart growth” in localities—that is, integrated planning of housing and land use that would encourage more efficient commuting patterns. Majorities of all Californians (59%) and likely voters (57%) support the idea of using transportation funding to develop integrated plans, as do majorities across the state’s major regions. Democrats (63%) and independents (64%) are more likely than Republicans (48%) to favor using state transportation funding for this reason. Support for it is also higher among Latinos (68%) than among blacks (59%), Asians (59%), and whites (55%) and among renters (64%) than among homeowners (56%). Support decreases with age and increases with education but is unrelated to residents’ household income.

“Do you favor or oppose the state government's using transportation funding as an incentive to encourage local governments to develop integrated plans for housing, jobs, and transit?”

	All Adults	Region					Likely Voters
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	Inland Empire	
Favor	59%	58%	58%	62%	58%	57%	57%
Oppose	30	31	31	27	30	34	33
Don't know	11	11	11	11	12	9	10

When asked if the state government should provide “smart growth” guidelines for local housing and land use planning, a majority of Californians (54%) say the state government should be involved in this manner. Likely voters in the state are evenly divided on this role for the state government. However, support for this state policy approach is at or near a majority in all regions. As for racial/ethnic differences, 65 percent of Latinos think the state should provide these types of guidelines, compared to 53 percent of Asians, 54 percent of blacks, and 48 percent of whites. Support for the state governments’ role in promoting smart growth declines with age, income, homeownership, and length of residence.

There are sharp partisan and ideological differences in this policy area. Majorities of Democrats (59%) and independents (56%) favor the state government’s involvement in local development issues, while a majority of Republicans (56%) prefer that the state government not intervene. Support for state involvement is higher among liberals (60%) and moderates (54%) than among conservatives (50%).

<i>Which statement comes closer to your views—even if neither is exactly right ...</i>	All Adults	Party Registration			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
The state government should provide “smart growth” guidelines to local governments for local housing and land use planning	54%	59%	41%	56%	49%
The state government should not be involved in local housing and land use planning	40	35	56	40	47
Don't know	6	6	3	4	4

Local Government's Role

Californians give more-favorable ratings to their local government than to their state government, but they are not particularly positive about how their local officials are handling housing and land use issues. One-third of California residents give their local government excellent (6%) or good (27%) performance ratings when it comes to housing and land use policies in their city or community. Four in 10 say their local government is doing only a fair job on housing and land use policy, and one in five thinks that local officials are doing a poor job in this policy area. Republicans (42%) are somewhat more likely than Democrats (34%) and independents (31%) to rate their local government's performance as excellent or good.

Homeowners are much more likely than renters to give excellent and good ratings to their local government's handling of housing and land use policy (39% to 24%). Across regions, Los Angeles County residents (29%) are less likely than others to give their local government positive ratings for handling land use policies. Only 24 percent of residents who live in the central areas of large cities give excellent or good ratings to their local government's handling of these issues, compared to higher ratings given in older suburbs (35%); small cities, towns, and rural areas (36%); and newer suburban areas (45%). Whites (39%) are more likely than others to think their local government is doing an excellent or good job on housing and land use policy, and ratings increase sharply with income and age.

“Overall, how would you rate your local government when it comes to housing and land use policies in your city or community?”

	All Adults	Homeownership		Age			Likely Voters
		Own	Rent	18-34	35-54	55 or older	
Excellent	6%	7%	4%	4%	5%	9%	7%
Good	27	32	20	25	26	33	31
Fair	40	37	45	44	41	34	39
Poor	20	19	23	20	22	18	20
Don't know	7	5	8	7	6	6	3

Once again, Californians are divided in their assessment of their local government's role in encouraging new housing. Thirty-seven percent of Californians think local officials are not doing enough to encourage construction in their city or community, while half think their local governments are already doing the right amount (36%) or too much (18%). Half of the state's renters say local governments are not doing enough, compared to only 30 percent of homeowners. The belief that local governments could do more to encourage housing construction at the local level decreases with age and income and is more pronounced among Democrats than Republicans. Across racial/ethnic groups, whites are less likely than others to think local governments should do more to encourage new housing.

“Overall, do you think that your local government is doing too much, the right amount, or not enough to encourage housing construction in your city or community?”

	All Adults	Race/Ethnicity				Likely Voters
		Asians	Blacks	Latinos	Whites	
Too much	18%	9%	5%	13%	23%	21%
Right amount	36	39	17	28	42	41
Not enough	37	36	75	51	26	31
Don't know	9	16	3	8	9	7

Local Housing Policies

Would Californians support a local government bond to fund affordable housing? If an election were held today, 61 percent of the state’s residents would vote yes on a local bond measure to subsidize the cost of building affordable housing for the workforce in their part of California. The margin of support narrows considerably among the state’s likely voters—who are mostly homeowners. Still, majorities across the state’s regions would support a bond measure to subsidize the cost of building affordable housing for their regional workforce. Support varies sharply, however, along partisan lines: While 72 percent of Democrats and 63 percent of independents would support such a bond measure, only 41 percent of Republicans would vote yes. Across racial/ethnic groups, 80 percent of blacks and 77 percent of Latinos would vote yes on this measure, compared to 55 and 53 percent of Asians and whites, respectively.

Support for a local bond measure to subsidize the cost of affordable housing declines with income and is significantly higher among younger adults than older adults and among renters than homeowners.

“If an election were held today, would you vote yes or no on a local bond measure to subsidize the cost of building affordable housing for the workforce in your part of California?”

	All Adults	Homeownership		Age			Likely Voters
		Own	Rent	18-34	35-54	55 or older	
Yes	61%	53%	75%	73%	60%	49%	54%
No	32	40	19	22	33	44	41
Don't know	7	7	6	5	7	7	5

Local ballot initiatives to slow down the pace of growth and development have been a part of the state’s political landscape for several decades. Today, less than a majority of the state’s residents would support a local measure to slow down the pace of development—if this would lead to higher housing prices. Only 40 percent of all adults would support such a measure. However, likely voters are more narrowly divided (44% would support this measure if it appeared on the ballot, 50% would not). Republicans (44%), Democrats (42%), and independents (43%) are about equally likely to favor slower development, even if it means higher housing costs. There is relatively little difference in the levels of support for this measure between Californians who feel financially strained by the cost of their housing and those who do not (42% to 37%). There is no region of the state in which a majority of residents would support such a measure at the risk of higher housing costs.

Homeowners are much more likely than renters (46% to 31%) to support local growth limits, even if it means higher housing prices; support also increases with age, education, and income. Whites (46%) are considerably more likely than Asians, blacks, and Latinos to support slowing down the pace of development, even if it increases the cost of local housing.

“If an election were held today, would you vote yes or no on a local measure to slow down the pace of development in your city or community, even if this meant having higher housing prices?”

	All Adults	Race/Ethnicity				Likely Voters
		Asians	Blacks	Latinos	Whites	
Yes	40%	34%	27%	34%	46%	44%
No	53	52	70	59	47	50
Don't know	7	14	3	7	7	6

Regional Housing Policies

Many Californians believe in a regional approach to the housing and land use issues in their area of California. Two in three residents say their local governments should work together to generate a common regional plan for housing development and land use, while only one in three Californians thinks that local governments should work independently, with each local government developing its own housing and land use plans. Across the state’s regions, political parties, racial/ethnic groups, and other demographic groups, six in 10 or more Californians think that regional housing development and land use planning is preferable to each local government making its own plans and policies.

Which statement comes closer to your views—even if neither is exactly right ...	All Adults	Region					Likely Voters
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	Inland Empire	
Local governments should work together and have a common plan for housing development and land use in their region	67%	67%	66%	66%	67%	69%	67%
Local governments should work independently and each have their own plans for housing development and land use	30	29	31	29	30	28	31
Don't know	3	4	3	5	3	3	2

Even as Californians overwhelmingly approve of a regional approach to housing and land use decisions, many express opposition to the idea of the state government requiring local governments to build their fair share of new housing that is affordable to the workforce in their region. In fact, a majority of all adults (51%) and a solid majority of likely voters (59%) think that local governments should be the ones to decide how much and what kinds of new housing to build in their communities. Across regions, opposition to this type of state intervention in local housing issues is weakest among residents in Los Angeles (45%) and the Inland Empire (49%).

Clearly, there are strong partisan and ideological differences in this policy area. A larger majority of Republicans (65%) than Democrats (51%), and conservatives (55%) than liberals (46%), think that local governments should decide what to do, rather than having the state government require a “fair share” of new affordable housing. Whites (59%) and Asians (53%) are more likely to prefer local government decisions than are blacks (41%) and Latinos (38%). Support for state government dictating local building requirements is much higher among renters than homeowners and among younger than older residents.

Which statement comes closer to your views—even if neither is exactly right ...	All Adults	Age			Likely Voters
		18-34	35-54	55 or older	
Local governments should decide how much and what kinds of new housing to build in their communities	51%	46%	52%	57%	59%
The state government should require local governments to build their “fair share” of new housing that is affordable for the workforce in the region	44	51	43	35	37
Don't know	5	3	5	8	4

Survey Methodology

The PPIC Statewide Survey is directed by Mark Baldassare, research director at the Public Policy Institute of California, with assistance in research and writing from Jon Cohen, associate survey director, Renatta DeFever and Kristy Michaud, survey research associates, and Kimberly Curry, survey intern. The survey was conducted in collaboration with The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, The James Irvine Foundation, and The David and Lucile Packard Foundation and benefited from discussions with staff at the foundations and their grantees and colleagues at other institutions; however, the survey methods, questions, and content of the report were solely determined by Mark Baldassare.

The findings of this survey are based on a telephone survey of 2,502 California adult residents interviewed between October 21 and November 1, 2004. Interviewing took place on weekday nights and weekend days, using a computer-generated random sample of telephone numbers that ensured that both listed and unlisted telephone numbers were called. All telephone exchanges in California were eligible for calling. Telephone numbers in the survey sample were called up to six times to increase the likelihood of reaching eligible households. Once a household was reached, an adult respondent (age 18 or older) was randomly chosen for interviewing by using the “last birthday method” to avoid biases in age and gender. Each interview took an average of 19 minutes to complete. Interviewing was conducted in English, Spanish, Chinese, Korean, or Vietnamese. We chose these languages because Spanish is the dominant non-English language in the state and these three Asian languages account for most of the non-English speaking Asian adults in California. Casa Hispana translated the survey into Spanish. Schulman, Ronca & Bucuvalas, Inc. translated the survey into Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese and conducted the telephone interviewing.

We used recent U.S. Census and state figures to compare the demographic characteristics of the survey sample with characteristics of California’s adult population. The survey sample was closely comparable to the census and state figures. The survey data in this report were statistically weighted to account for any demographic differences.

The sampling error for the total sample of 2,502 adults is +/- 2 percent at the 95 percent confidence level. This means that 95 times out of 100, the results will be within 2 percentage points of what they would be if all adults in California were interviewed. The sampling error for subgroups is larger. The sampling error for the 1,986 registered voters is +/- 2.3 percent. The sampling error for the 1,393 likely voters is +/- 2.7 percent. Sampling error is only one type of error to which surveys are subject. The reported numbers for Asian and black likely voters are from a small sample base. Results may also be affected by factors such as question wording, question order, and survey timing.

Throughout the report, we refer to five geographic regions. “Central Valley” includes Butte, Colusa, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Shasta, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Yolo, and Yuba Counties. “SF Bay Area” includes Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma Counties. “Los Angeles” refers to Los Angeles County, “Inland Empire” includes Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, and “Orange/San Diego” refers to Orange and San Diego Counties. These five regions represent the major population centers of the state, accounting for approximately 90 percent of the state population.

We present specific results for respondents in the four self-identified racial/ethnic groups of Asian, black, Latino, and non-Hispanic white. We also compare the opinions of registered Democrats, Republicans, and independents. The “independents” category includes only those who are registered to vote as “decline to state.” We also analyze the responses of “likely” voters— those who are the most likely to participate in the state’s elections. We use earlier PPIC Statewide Surveys to analyze trends over time in California.

PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY: SPECIAL SURVEY ON HOUSING
OCTOBER 21—NOVEMBER 1, 2004
2,502 CALIFORNIA ADULT RESIDENTS
ENGLISH, SPANISH, CHINESE, KOREAN, AND VIETNAMESE
MARGIN OF ERROR +/-2% AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL FOR TOTAL SAMPLE

We are interested in the region or broader geographic area of California that you live in. I am going to read to you a list of problems that other people have told us about. For each one, please tell me if it is a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not a problem in your region.

[rotate questions 1 to 5]

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1. How about traffic congestion on freeways and major roads?</p> <p>59% big problem
 26 somewhat of a problem
 13 not a problem
 2 don't know</p> <p>2. How about the lack of opportunities for well-paying jobs?</p> <p>35% big problem
 35 somewhat of a problem
 24 not a problem
 6 don't know</p> <p>3. How about air pollution?</p> <p>30% big problem
 37 somewhat of a problem
 31 not a problem
 2 don't know</p> <p>4. How about the availability of housing that you can afford?</p> <p>55% big problem
 23 somewhat of a problem
 20 not a problem
 2 don't know</p> <p>5. How about population growth and development?</p> <p>35% big problem
 33 somewhat of a problem
 29 not a problem
 3 don't know</p> | <p>6. Next, I would like to ask you some questions about where you live. Is the place you currently live a single-family detached home; an attached home such as a condo, duplex, or townhome; an apartment; or another type of dwelling?</p> <p>63% single-family detached home
 14 attached home
 20 apartment
 2 mobile home
 1 don't know</p> <p>7. Overall, how satisfied are you with the house or apartment you live in—are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?</p> <p>59% very satisfied
 30 somewhat satisfied
 7 somewhat dissatisfied
 4 very dissatisfied</p> <p>8. How satisfied are you with the amount of living space in the house or apartment you live in—are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?</p> <p>55% very satisfied
 31 somewhat satisfied
 9 somewhat dissatisfied
 5 very dissatisfied</p> <p>9. How satisfied are you with the amount of privacy that your house or apartment has from neighbors—are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?</p> <p>55% very satisfied
 31 somewhat satisfied
 9 somewhat dissatisfied
 5 very dissatisfied</p> |
|---|---|

10. Which of the following best describes the city or community where you live—is it a large city, a suburb of a large city, a small city or town, or a rural area? (*as appropriate*: Would that be in the central part of the city? Would that be an older suburb or a newer suburb?)
- 16% large city, central part
 - 15 large city, other part
 - 18 suburb, older
 - 6 suburb, newer
 - 27 small city
 - 8 town
 - 8 rural area
 - 2 other answer
11. Overall, how satisfied are you with the neighborhood you live in—are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?
- 56% very satisfied
 - 33 somewhat satisfied
 - 7 somewhat dissatisfied
 - 4 very dissatisfied
12. How satisfied are you with the safety of your neighborhood—are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?
- 55% very satisfied
 - 30 somewhat satisfied
 - 10 somewhat dissatisfied
 - 5 very dissatisfied
13. Would you say the neighborhood you live in has a sense of community or not?
- 66% yes, has a sense of community
 - 31 no, does not have a sense of community
 - 3 don't know
14. Do you own or rent your current residence?
- 62% own [*ask q. 15*]
 - 38 rent [*ask q. 16*]
15. In the past few years, do you think the value of the home you live in has increased a lot, increased some, stayed about the same, or declined?
- 76% increased a lot
 - 17 increased some
 - 3 stayed about the same
 - 2 declined
 - 2 don't know
- [*go to q. 18*]
16. In the past few years, has the rent on the home or apartment you live in increased a lot, increased some, stayed about the same, or declined?
- 21% increased a lot
 - 31 increased some
 - 38 stayed about the same
 - 3 declined
 - 7 don't know
17. Do you hope to someday own a home?
- 86% yes
 - 12 no
 - 2 don't know
18. If you decided to buy a new home in the near future, how likely is it that you would be able to find a home that you can afford and would like to buy in your part of California—very likely, somewhat likely, not very likely, or not at all likely?
- 21% very likely
 - 30 somewhat likely
 - 25 not very likely
 - 22 not at all likely
 - 2 don't know
19. Could you please tell me if you have lived at your current address for fewer than five years, five years to under 10 years, 10 years to under 20 years, or 20 years or more?
- 47% fewer than five years
 - 18 five years to under 10 years
 - 19 10 years to under 20 years
 - 16 20 years or more
20. Does the cost of your housing place a financial strain on you and your family today? (*if yes*: Is that a lot of financial strain or only a little?)
- 14% yes, a lot
 - 17 yes, a little
 - 69 no
21. Does the cost of your housing make you and your family seriously consider moving away from the part of California you live in now? (*if yes*: Does it make you consider moving elsewhere in California, or outside of the state?)
- 8% yes, elsewhere in California
 - 15 yes, outside of the state
 - 1 yes, other
 - 76 no

22. How concerned are you that the cost of housing will prevent the younger generation in your family from buying a home in your part of California—very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?

- 52% very concerned
- 25 somewhat concerned
- 9 not too concerned
- 10 not at all concerned
- 1 no younger generation in family
- 3 don't know

23. To the best of your knowledge, have average home values in your part of California been increasing in the past few years, or not? (if yes: Have they been increasing a lot or only a little?)

- 84% yes, have increased a lot
- 10 yes, have increased a little
- 3 no, have not increased
- 3 don't know

24. Overall, do you think increasing average home values in your part of California is a good thing or a bad thing for you and your family?

- 41% good thing
- 49 bad thing
- 5 no difference
- 5 don't know

25. In general, how important are increasing average home values to the quality of life and economic vitality of your part of California—very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

- 39% very important
- 43 somewhat important
- 9 not too important
- 3 not at all important
- 6 don't know

On another topic, many people face tradeoffs when choosing where to live—meaning that they have to give up some things in order to get other things. How do you feel about the following tradeoffs? Other things being equal...

[rotate questions and pairs 26 to 29]

26. (1) Would you choose to live in a small home with a small backyard if it means you have a short commute to work *[or]* (2) Would you choose to live in a large home with a large backyard, even if it means you would have a long commute to work?

- 53% small home, short commute
- 42 large home, long commute
- 5 don't know

27. (1) Would you choose to live in a condo or townhome if it was convenient to use public transit to commute and travel locally *[or]* (2) Would you choose to live in a single-family detached home, even if it means that you need to drive a car to commute and drive locally?

- 26% condo or townhome, convenient to use public transit
- 70 single-family detached home, drive a car
- 4 don't know

28. (1) Would you choose to live in a mixed-use neighborhood if it means you can walk to stores, schools, and services *[or]* (2) Would you choose to live in a residential-only neighborhood, even if it means you have to drive to stores, schools, and services?

- 48% mixed-use neighborhood, walk to stores
- 49 residential-only neighborhood, drive to stores
- 3 don't know

29. (1) Would you choose to live in a neighborhood where single-family homes are close together if it means you could walk to parks and outdoor recreation *[or]* (2) Would you choose to live in a neighborhood where single-family homes are far apart, even if it means you have to drive to parks and outdoor recreation?

- 47% single-family homes close together, walk to parks and outdoor recreation
- 49 single family homes far apart, drive to parks and outdoor recreation
- 4 don't know

30. Changing topics, do you think that low-income and minority neighborhoods are more likely or less likely than other neighborhoods in your part of California to attract developers to build new single-family homes?

- 29% more likely
- 55 less likely
- 3 equally likely
- 13 don't know

31. Do you think that it is easier or harder for buyers to qualify for loans to purchase homes in low-income and minority neighborhoods than in other neighborhoods in your part of California?

- 25% easier
- 54 harder
- 5 no difference
- 16 don't know

32. Overall, how would you rate your local government when it comes to housing and land use policies in your city or community—excellent, good, fair, or poor?

6% excellent
27 good
40 fair
20 poor
7 don't know

33. Overall, do you think that your local government is doing too much, the right amount, or not enough to encourage housing construction in your city or community?

18% too much
36 right amount
37 not enough
9 don't know

[rotate questions 34 and 35]

34. If an election were held today, would you vote yes or no on a local bond measure to subsidize the cost of building affordable housing for the workforce in your part of California?

61% yes
32 no
7 don't know

35. If an election were held today, would you vote yes or no on a local measure to slow down the pace of development in your city or community, even if this meant having higher housing prices?

40% yes
53 no
7 don't know

36. Overall, how would you rate the state government when it comes to housing and land use policies for the state of California—excellent, good, fair, or poor?

2% excellent
21 good
48 fair
22 poor
7 don't know

37. Overall, do you think that the state government is doing too much, the right amount, or not enough to encourage housing construction in the state of California?

17% too much
33 right amount
37 not enough
13 don't know

[rotate questions 38 and 39]

38. Would you favor or oppose a shift of property tax dollars from the state government to local governments as an incentive for local governments to approve new local housing developments?

57% favor
32 oppose
11 don't know

39. Do you favor or oppose the state government's using transportation funding as an incentive to encourage local governments to develop integrated plans for housing, jobs, and transit?

59% favor
30 oppose
11 don't know

People have different ideas about state land use and local growth issues. Please tell me if the first statement or the second statement is closer to your views—even if neither is exactly right.

[rotate questions and pairs 40 to 43]

40. (1) The state government should ease current land use and environmental restrictions to increase the supply of housing *[or]* (2) The state government should maintain current land use and environmental restrictions, even if it increases the cost of new housing?

40% ease current restrictions
52 maintain current restrictions
8 don't know

41. (1) The state government should provide "smart growth" guidelines to local governments for local housing and land use planning *[or]* (2) The state government should not be involved in local housing and land use planning.

54% state government should provide guidelines
40 state government should not be involved
6 don't know

42. (1) The state government should require local governments to build their "fair share" of new housing that is affordable for the workforce in the region *[or]* (2) Local governments should decide how much and what kinds of new housing to build in their communities.

44% state should require local governments to build fair share of affordable housing
51 local governments should decide what to build
5 don't know

43. (1) Local governments should work together and have a common plan for housing development and land use in their region *[or]* (2) Local governments should work independently and each have their own plans for housing development and land use.

- 67% local governments should work together
- 30 local governments should work independently
- 3 don't know

44. Turning back to your own life, how satisfied are you with your family life—are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?

- 70% very satisfied
- 23 somewhat satisfied,
- 4 somewhat dissatisfied
- 2 very dissatisfied
- 1 don't know

45. How satisfied are you with your work and career—are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?

- 42% very satisfied
- 30 somewhat satisfied,
- 8 somewhat dissatisfied
- 7 very dissatisfied
- 13 do not work

46. In general, would you say your own health is excellent, good, fair, or poor?

- 38% excellent
- 41 good
- 17 fair
- 4 poor

47. Taken altogether, how would you say things are these days—are you very happy, somewhat happy, or not too happy?

- 45% very happy
- 43 somewhat happy
- 11 not too happy
- 1 don't know

[rotate questions 48 and 49]

48. Is the state government doing more than enough, just enough, or not enough to help people balance work and family life with policies for family leave, flex time, after school, and child care?

- 11% more than enough
- 32 just enough
- 47 not enough
- 10 don't know

49. Are employers in California doing more than enough, just enough, or not enough to help people balance work and family life with policies for family leave, flex time, after school, and child care?

- 9% more than enough
- 34 just enough
- 48 not enough
- 9 don't know

50. Generally speaking, how much interest would you say you have in politics—a great deal, a fair amount, only a little, or none?

- 33% great deal
- 38 fair amount
- 22 only a little
- 7 none

51. On another topic, some people are registered to vote and others are not. Are you absolutely certain that you are registered to vote?

- 79% yes *[ask q. 51a]*
- 21 no *[skip to q. 52]*

51a. Are you registered as a Democrat, a Republican, an independent, or as another party?

- 43% Democrat
- 34 Republican
- 18 independent
- 5 another party *(specify)*

52. Regardless of your current voter registration status, generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Democrat, a Republican, an independent, or what?

- 37% Democrat *[go to q. 53b]*
- 25 Republican *[go to q. 53c]*
- 27 independent *[ask q. 53a]*
- 5 other *(specify) [ask q. 53a]*
- 6 don't know *[ask q. 53a]*

53a. Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or Democratic Party?

- 26% Republican party
- 38 Democratic party
- 25 neither
- 11 don't know

[go to 54a]

53b. Would you call yourself a strong Democrat or not a very strong Democrat?

- 62% strong
- 37 not very strong
- 1 don't know

[go to 54a]

53c. Would you call yourself a strong Republican or not a very strong Republican?

64% strong
35 not very strong
1 don't know

[Responses recorded for questions 54a through 55 are from likely voters only]

54a. Do you plan to vote in the general election on November 2nd?

90% yes *[ask q. 54b]*
10 already voted by absentee or early-voting ballot *[go to q. 55]*

54b. Will you vote at your local polling place or by absentee ballot?

75% local polling place
24 absentee ballot
1 don't know

55. How often would you say you vote—always, nearly always, part of the time, seldom, or never?

78% always
22 nearly always

[question 56 on November 2nd election is deleted]

57. On another topic, would you consider yourself to be politically...

11% very liberal
20 somewhat liberal
29 middle-of-the-road
25 somewhat conservative
11 very conservative
4 don't know

58. Overall, thinking ahead 20 years from now, do you think California will be a better place to live than it is now or a worse place to live than it is now, or will there be no change?

32% better place
41 worse place
19 no change
8 don't know

59. If you had to pick one top policy priority for the state over the next 20 years, what would it be?

[code, don't read]

15% jobs; economy; unemployment
14 education; schools
9 immigration; illegal immigration
8 environment; pollution
7 health care; health costs; Medicare
7 housing costs; housing availability
5 state budget; deficit; taxes
4 crime; drugs
4 population growth; sprawl
4 traffic; transportation
2 government regulations
1 electricity costs; energy crisis; gasoline prices
1 poverty; the poor
1 race relations; racial and ethnic issues
1 water; water quality; water availability
6 other (*specify*)
11 don't know

[60-73: demographic questions]

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