



This summary highlights and supplements the results of the **Santa Clarita Valley Community Survey** completed during the Winter/Spring of 2001. As a component of the public outreach and education effort for the Valleywide General Plan process, a survey was developed to ask Valley citizens their thoughts on major issues affecting the future of the Valley. 14,000 total surveys were distributed throughout the Valley. Just under 2,000 surveys were completed, mostly by Santa Clarita Valley residents. 330 of the surveys received were completed on-line and 1,645 were completed and mailed in, resulting in a survey return rate of over 10 percent. The normal return rate for surveys is about 3-4 percent indicating a higher-than-average rate of response from Santa Clarita Valley residents.

Vision

Survey respondents want a balanced community that offers a mix of housing, jobs, commerce, recreation, culture and open space. They also want a community that is family-oriented and friendly.

Respondents see the 1) increase in traffic, 2) loss of open space, and 3) declining quality of education (threatened by overcrowding, lack of facilities, teacher/student ratio, etc.) as the top threats to their quality of life.

Characteristics of better planned communities include 1) siting of development to preserve hillsides, ridgelines, habitats and open space, 2) landscaped streets, parkways, and medians, and 3) pedestrian paseos and trails.

Of the 1,912 responses to “How many neighbors do you know?” 711 people responded knowing more than 10; 521 responded knowing 6 to 10; 461 responded knowing 3 to 5 neighbors, and; only 48 responded knowing none of their neighbors. *64 percent of respondents knew 6 or more of their neighbors!*

The neighborhood features which facilitate people interacting with their neighbors include 1) families with children, 2) proximity of houses, and 3) parks, playing fields or community pools.

Natural Resources

- 63 percent of respondents do not agree that environmental resources are being protected in the Valley.
- 93 percent agree that development should not be permitted on primary ridgelines and that significant topographical and geologic formation should be preserved.
- 88 percent agree that development should be sited to protect significant biological resources.
- 86 percent of respondents believe more should be done to preserve and protect the Santa Clara River.



Parks and Recreation

Approximately 1,025 responses were given when asked where new parklands should be located. Canyon Country was indicated 321 times, Saugus 104 times and all over the Valley 82 times.

82 percent of respondents agreed with the concept of developing new or integrating existing public school facilities with multi-purpose parks and athletic fields.

Park facilities most needed in the Valley are 1) passive green areas, 2) picnic facilities, 3) nature observation, and 4) playground equipment.

Housing

- Almost 75 percent of respondents agreed a variety of housing types should be provided within the Valley.
- The top 3 concerns regarding new multi-family housing were 1) increased traffic, 2) impacts on schools, and 3) increased crime.
- When asked, just under 75 percent of respondents agreed to wanting to be able to live in SCV after retirement.
- The top two reasons for possibly not being able to do so include 1) personal decision to live elsewhere, and 2) cost of housing.
- When asked why their children might not be able to live in SCV in the future the top responses were 1) overcrowded schools, and 2) cost of housing.

Economy

- 81 percent of respondents replied their nearest retail center met their daily needs.
- 87 percent replied they can shop for most major retail purchases in SCV.
- Almost 90 percent agreed older commercial districts should be revitalized.
- **Responses were split for employment needs being met within the Valley (45 percent agreed, 45 percent disagreed, and 10 percent had no opinion).**

Transportation

- The two most significant transportation issues in SCV are 1) local traffic and congestion and 2) travel from SCV to outside the Valley.
- When asked how many times within the last year people used public transit in the Valley, 71 percent responded never using it.
- When asked what would increase use of public transit, no clear solution was identified and 28 percent of respondents indicated “Nothing-don’t want to use.”
- Only 5 percent (99 people) of respondents use Metrolink regularly.



Schools

Overcrowding was seen as the major threat to schools by 68 percent of respondents.

Growth/Future Development

- There is a definite split between those who oppose and those who accept growth as a natural phenomenon. **51 percent of respondents agreed growth should be accommodated, while 47 percent did not agree.**
- When asked where growth should go, people responded that it should go near urban areas (42 percent of responses).
- If growth is to be planned for, it should be a combination of residential, commercial and/or industrial (57 percent of responses).
- Of their top two choices for responding to growth, respondents chose limiting growth to locations where adequate infrastructure could be guaranteed (1,324 responses) and setting annual growth rates (806 responses).

Infrastructure

- 19 percent of respondents believe there are major deficiencies in the Valley's ability to provide for *water needs*.
- Only 7 percent believe there are deficiencies with *sewer service*, and 11 percent feel the same for *storm drainage capability*.
- 22 percent of respondents see a major deficiency in *electricity supply* while only 9 percent saw deficiencies with *natural gas service*.

The top sustainable infrastructure concepts selected were 1) solid and green waste recycling programs, 2) use of drought tolerant species in landscaping, 3) use of alternative forms of energy, and 4) sustainable building practices.

Public Services

When asked where more *library facilities* were needed in the Valley, respondents provide almost 700 suggestions. Of those 700, 173 respondents indicated Saugus and 78 indicated Newhall could use a new library.

Responses were split for the adequacy of *health care facilities and programs*, less than half of respondents (43 percent) indicated those were adequate in the Valley while slightly more respondents (48 percent) disagreed.

Only 23 percent of respondents believe *senior services* are adequate. The programs and facilities most needed for seniors are:

- assisted resident care (447 responses)
- activities and recreation (359 responses)
- health care (376 responses)



Only 15 percent of respondents believe *youth services* are adequate. The programs and facilities most needed for youth are:

- recreation (602 responses)
- education services (567 responses)
- entertainment (533 responses)

66 percent of respondents agreed the Valley is adequately served by police, sheriff and fire departments. 19 percent disagreed and 16 percent responded “don’t know.”

Safety

Respondents believe the rate of population growth and development (41 percent) and lack of City and County cooperation to manage growth (22 percent) are the major threats to safety in SCV.

City/County Standards

Consistent standards and policies should be in place for:

- *Floodway and drainage systems* - 81 percent of respondents agree.
- *Street and median design/landscape and streetscape* - 89 percent agree.
- *Housing and neighborhood design* – 83 percent agree.
- *Commercial district design* – 84 percent.
- *Industrial/business park design* – 84 percent.
- *Bikeway network* – 88 percent.
- *Hiking and equestrian trails* – 87 percent.
- *Historic preservation* – 88 percent.

Respondent Information

- 77 percent of respondents identified themselves as living in the *City of Santa Clarita*; 19 percent indicated they live in unincorporated *Los Angeles County*.
- Of 1,644 responses, the most common cited responses to “Name the community you live in” were:
 - 353 Saugus
 - 317 Canyon Country
 - 293 Valencia
 - 178 Aqua Dulce
 - 153 Newhall
- 70 percent of respondents live in a *single-family detached neighborhood*.
- 83 percent *live in the Valley and own their home*.
- 57 percent have lived in the Valley for *more than 10 years*.
- 40 percent *work* in the City of Santa Clarita; 19 percent *work* in the Los Angeles region.
- 59 percent are *female*.
- 34 percent are *40-49 years old*; 27 percent are *30-39 years old*.