Participation, Politics and Planning: The Impact of Citizen Participation in Palo Alto, California

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This has been an amazing experience and I can’t thank everyone enough for being there for me every step of the way. Enjoy!
Introduction

The built environment influences every aspect of our daily lives. From the buildings and parks we walk by everyday to the roads we drive on to get home from work, we live in an ever-changing urban environment. For the first time, half of humanity lives in cities, and it is estimated that by 2030 60% of the world’s population will live in cities.\(^1\) However, many people in the United States frequently overlook the process of planning cities.

In the city of Palo Alto located in the San Francisco Bay Area, the built environment is a highly discussed topic. The ever-changing environment is discussed in daily newspaper articles, blogs run by citizens in the community and at neighborhood events. But how active is Palo Alto? Is Palo Alto’s active voice a result of everyone in the community voicing their opinions or rather a small group of citizens voicing loud opinions? Are the majority of Palo Alto residents getting a say?

This research explores citizen participation and questions whether current participation methods are representative of entire communities. Many people are affected by urban change and should therefore be able to voice their opinions through citizen participation. However, inefficiencies in current methods of participation exclude and deter citizens from participating, leaving only the self-selected “usual suspects” to voice their opinions for the entire community. Consequently, this enables the creation of a silent majority with their own opinions not being heard. New forms of participation need to be adopted and increased throughout cities in the United States to not only give citizens more opportunities to voice their opinions in local government, but also to give

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citizens the chance to build civic identity by connecting with their local government and citizens in solving a problem or issue. A heightened sense of civic identity through citizen participation builds trust between citizens and the local government, investment in communities and neighbors, and active, sustainable cities. However, this can only be achieved by involving the whole community and ensuring that many citizens are participating in local government processes.

In order to understand the effects of citizen participation on citizens, the built environment and local government, this research analyzes citizen participation methods used in Palo Alto, California. As of May 2010, the city of Palo Alto was in the final stages of updating its Comprehensive Plan with a focus on the California Avenue Concept Area in the heart of the city. This update will serve as a guideline for all future development around California Avenue; therefore citizen participation is vital to the process. In order to receive citizens’ opinions for the future changes to their neighborhood, local government officials hosted neighborhood workshops to allow citizens to voice their opinions about their neighborhood and future change. However, like many forms of participation being used in cities all over the United States, this method of participation failed to acquire opinions representative of the entire community being affected by the change. This failure leads one to wonder about the potential effects of inadequate and unrepresentative participation not only on the urban landscape of Palo Alto, but also on the level of civic identity and community in the California Avenue neighborhood. The future of a city is determined by citizens’ opinions and therefore it is vital for cities to implement participation methods that gather diverse, wide-ranging opinions from the
entire community. But what happens when participation is unrepresentative of the entire community?

**Research Methodology**

I began my research in Palo Alto by first observing and analyzing the neighborhood workshops used during the Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan Update. These workshops revealed who was participating, how they were participating and what they were saying. I then took these opinions voiced in the neighborhood workshops and compared them to opinions from residents in the neighborhood surrounding California Avenue, going to be directly affected by Comprehensive Plan Update. The opinions from the residents in the California Avenue neighborhood at large were accumulated through a survey I created and distributed during the summer of 2009. After receiving opinions from 230 residents in the California Avenue neighborhood and interviewing residents who live in and around the area, it became evident that the opinions from the surveys and those from the workshops were conflicting. From the analysis of these two contradicting opinions, this research concludes that planners are not receiving opinions in the neighborhood workshops representative of the neighborhood going to be directly effected by the change. Unfortunately, city planners are making their decisions for the future of the California Avenue neighborhood based off of a small group of self-selected citizens who are able and motivated to attend the workshops, instead of a representative portion of the neighborhood, who are hesitant or excluded from participating.

After discussing the difference of opinions found in Palo Alto citizens, I explore literature over the past fifty years, which concludes that ineffective participation leads to citizen unrest and distrust towards the local government therefore impacting the future
of citizen participation, investment and liveability in the city. This research explores the impacts of methods of participation and the reasons for the development of a large silent majority in Palo Alto during the Comprehensive Plan Update. Why did citizens not participate in the neighborhood workshops? Is the large silent majority a result of the local governments participation methods in the present and the past, or is it a broader result of citizens’ lifestyles and everyday choices today? Is the government not able to gain citizens’ opinions for reasons out of their control? This research concludes with recommendations and suggestions for improvement in Palo Alto’s citizen participation methods and other cities in the same situation by exploring multi method approaches to participation and the importance of surveys in citizen participation.
CHAPTER I:
PALO ALTO
Overview of Palo Alto, CA

Palo Alto is located in the southern Peninsula of the San Francisco Bay Area. With a population of 65,000 people, Palo Alto residents are unique in comparison to other cities in the United States. Roughly 68% of residents are white, while the second largest population is Asian, 24%, and the third largest is Hispanic or Latino, 5%.² The majority of residents in Palo Alto are highly educated. An astounding 78% of adults hold Bachelors Degrees or higher, compared to the U.S. average of 27%. The highly educated population is also considerably wealthy, averaging a $126,000 household median income compared to the U.S. average of $52,000.³ The highly educated, wealthy population of Palo Alto contributes to its astounding business market that continues to grow and thrive today. Palo Alto’s business market is characterized as a mixture of “high-tech and locally owned companies” due to the fact that Palo Alto is the birthplace of Silicon Valley and has witnessed many start-ups flourish to become established businesses over the past few decades.⁴ The city website, which was the first ever U.S. city webpage when launched in 1994,⁵ gives credit for its top marks in business to the daytime population in Palo Alto, which almost doubles its resident population at 120,000 people.⁶ The inflow of people during the day sustains the large business in Palo Alto such as the Stanford Shopping Center, Stanford Medical facilities and local business located on University Avenue, California Avenue and dispersed locations around the city. The booming

³ U. S. Census Bureau “Palo Alto City, California Fact Sheet.”
⁵ Biltzer, “Palo Alto Neighborhoods.”
businesses have had a great impact on the desirable, safe and job abundant housing market in Palo Alto. The median home price has skyrocketed to $1.5 million in 2009. The housing market, even in the economic conditions today, is still thriving after only suffering a slight drop from the previous year. Palo Alto’s uniqueness is a result of not only the rare population of highly educated and wealthy individuals but also due to its business and housing market.

**Comprehensive Plan Update**

The city of Palo Alto has also grown and transformed its landscape over the past decade. Right now Palo Alto is in the process of updating its Comprehensive Plan from the year 2010 to 2020. The Comprehensive Plan, a long-range document that includes goals, policies and programs for how a community will manage its land use, housing, circulation, natural resources, economics and public services, will be updated with an Amendment that aims to “revise base conditions and growth projections, modify policies and programs, update the land use map and revise the Housing Element.” In addition to these overall goals, the plan focuses on two concept areas in Palo Alto. A concept area consists of a neighborhood in the city that has experienced some change over the past several years and will be developed further by improving land uses, transportation services, sustainability, economic vitality and community services as declared by the updated Comprehensive Plan. One of the concept areas is located in the East Meadow/Fabian Way neighborhood near Interstate 101 on the southern end of Palo Alto. The other concept area consists of the California Avenue neighborhood located in

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the heart of Palo Alto between El Camino Real Rd and Alma Street. This research focuses specifically on the California Avenue concept area due to the unique characteristics that make up this particular neighborhood.

There are approximately 200 households located within the California Avenue concept area and 500 households within half a mile of the concept area boundaries in the four neighborhoods that border the concept plan area, Evergreen Park, Venture, College Terrace and Old Palo Alto. The concept area itself lies within the Evergreen Park and Ventura neighborhood. The homes in the California Avenue neighborhood range from single-family two story homes, bungalows and cottages to large duplexes, dense apartments and upscale condos. The typical family size is 2.5 and tends to be more liberal in politics and lifestyle. To many residents who live within the California Avenue neighborhood California Avenue is an eclectic area, less upscale than University Avenue, but with plenty of charm and comfort that contributes to the liveability of the area.

12 “Palo Alto Neighborhood Map,”
http://www.paloaltoonline.com/neighborhoods/maps/pamap.jpg
Neighborhood Workshops

Palo Alto chose the private design firm Design, Consulting & Environment, DC&E, to assist in the process of updating the Comprehensive Plan. According to Roland Rivera, Senior Planner in the City of Palo Alto and director of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment Update, DC&E was hired for many reasons, but one that stood out to them was their methodology for collecting residents’ opinions for the Update.\textsuperscript{13}

The Comprehensive Plan Update obtained citizens’ opinions about the future of the neighborhood through two methods--neighborhood workshops and stakeholders meetings. At stakeholders meetings business owners, who may or may not also be residents in Palo Alto, voiced their opinions about the Comprehensive Plan. Although these meetings were important for stakeholders, business owners and the city, my research focuses on the Neighborhood Workshops in Palo Alto, the primary method planners in Palo Alto used to solicit opinions from the broad community of citizens.

Over the course of a year the City of Palo Alto and DC&E hosted three community workshops to solicit opinions from the community about future development in the California Avenue neighborhood. Although the workshops obtained opinions from the community, the opinions were from a small self-selected group of individuals that had the time and initiative to attend the workshop. The workshops as a form of participation in itself contributed to an unrepresentative population of opinions. The following section is an account of the first neighborhood workshop that I observed.

\textsuperscript{13} Roland Rivera, Personal Interview, November 5, 2009.
as an onlooker. It reveals tension, inefficiencies and problems that are discussed in the analysis section of this research.

**Pre-Workshop Concerns**

The first neighborhood workshop was held February 12, 2009, a Thursday night, from 7:00 to 9:30pm. The workshop, hosted in the Lucie Stern Community Center, drew approximately 50 residents from the community. As people filled the room it became evident that citizens were visibly upset and angry about the plan. Many people looked stern as they whispered sharply to their neighbors. I overheard one woman tell the person sitting in front of her, an acquaintance of some sort, “I’m a little shaken about this plan.” The acquaintance responded, “Should be a smaller scale,” followed by a disapproving look to the planners side of the room. The women shrugged their shoulders in unison. It appeared that citizens were anxious before the workshops had even begun.

**Presenting Information**

The first workshop opened with a PowerPoint presentation by DC&E planner and founder, David Early. Early first explained the history and meaning of DC&E as well as the definition of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment Update and the Concept Areas. Early then went on to ask broad questions on PowerPoint slide such as, “What should happen in the area?” “How can we improve the area for employees, shoppers and residents?” and “What things should stay the same or change?” Many residents seemed to grow restless during the PowerPoint presentation and anxiously waited to have their

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14 Observation from Neighborhood Workshop, 2/12/09.
15 Observation, 2/12/09.
pressing questions answered and worries eased. A couple of residents began talking amongst themselves, asking the person next to them questions since they could not address the whole group until the PowerPoint was over. However, more worries seemed to have been developed by the information presented in the PowerPoint as more and more people expressed concern on their faces.

The last half of the PowerPoint provided land use maps for the citizens’ understanding of the area and addressed the main concerns about development such as transportation, parking, urban aesthetic, businesses, and housing. Each topic was given a slide to discuss not only the present condition of each development characteristic, but also concerns and comments that already addressed the problems and suggested solutions. For example on the “businesses slide” the slide stated, “Many office vacancies.” This is a statement that provided information about the area and contributed to the education of citizens about the California Avenue Concept Area. The next statement on the same slide, however, “Concern that zoning requirements are too restrictive regarding medical offices,” appeared to make assumptions of citizens’ opinions or draw upon an opinion from an unknown source. The assumptions continued on to the topic of housing, a sensitive subject in Palo Alto given the high cost of living in the city and the potential impact of more housing on residents’ lifestyles. The PowerPoint suggested the addition of more housing, including multi-family housing to the wealthy, mostly single-family residing residents at the workshop. This opinion led to visible reactions from the residents. Almost everyone in the meeting began talking to the

person sitting next to them, checking facts and asking opinions. The presenter David Early had to take a moment to collect everyone in order to wrap up the presentation without any distractions from the audience.


**Initial Public Comment**

After the PowerPoint presentation David Early opened the floor for initial comments from the residents at the meeting. Several citizens were eager to voice their opinions via microphone, but many remained quiet. The people who addressed their fellow neighbors and planners had strong opinions towards future development of California Avenue, but most notably, each had strong opinions against the addition of more housing in the California Avenue area. Each person who stood up to speak stated that they did not support the addition of housing in the California Avenue Concept.
Area, made clear by their definitive tone and stern faces. It appeared that they could not be swayed and other residents nodded in agreement at the strong remarks. Others stated in a sincere tone that they would like to see California Avenue remain the way it is. One woman said, “Nothing is wrong with it, why should it change?” However, other residents stated some change is necessary but definitely not on the subject of housing. These residents appeared timid and audience members showed opposition to their slight suggestions at change. A few shook their heads “no” at the comment. The man sitting next to me did not even appear to continue listening once he heard the direction the opinion was going in. He began writing on his notepad, preparing for his time to speak.

Small Group Discussion

After the initial comments by approximately 10 to 12 citizens, the group of about 50 residents divided into small groups of 8 to 10 people to discuss their opinions under the moderation of a DC&E or Palo Alto Planning Department staff member. Each group was asked to answer the same five questions: “What do you like about the area?” “What are the area’s strong points?” “What do you not like about the area?” and “What do you think could be changed in the area?” Before answering the question, each resident introduced him or herself and explained their connection to the California Avenue concept area. The group I observed consisted of four Palo Alto residents, the owner of Mollie Stones an upscale supermarket on California Avenue who was a former resident of Palo Alto, the head of the California Avenue Area Development Association who also resides in the California Avenue area, and the President of a local neighborhood board. A few of the people in the small group had participated in the

20 “Observation,” 2/12/09.
initial public comment, and once the group started answering the questions and conversing, these residents made it very clear once again that they were opposed to the addition of more housing. A couple of the residents remained shy and hesitant to voice their opinions in contrast to the outspoken individuals in the group. It was only through the moderator directly asking the silent residents what they thought, that every citizen participated in stating their responses to the five questions. This method of moderating was effective in my group, but it is unknown if moderators in each group took the initiative to encourage every group member to speak in order to receive opinions from every citizens. Many people could have easily sat through the small group discussion without voicing their opinions. After the allotted time of group discussion, each group was asked to appoint a spokesperson to address the entire workshop and voice the main points of concern and opportunity their small group found in the California Avenue Concept Area. Many groups had overlapping opinions, while others stood out in their concerns, but some clear themes emerged.

**Wrapping Up**

After each group presented David Early summarized the themes and trends he witnessed during the small group discussion and entire workshop. Early stated parking was a reoccurring issue during discussions and more parking structures would benefit the businesses, the aesthetic of California Avenue could be modified with consistent art, and housing could be potentially added two to four stories atop the present one-floor businesses on California Avenue. The last part of this statement led to a full-blown argument that brought the meeting to a standstill for approximately fifteen minutes. A woman tried to correct David Early by saying that the not everyone agreed to the
potential addition of more than two stories of residential on top of retail buildings. One or two stories were okay with her, but she stated that the numbers three and four seemed to “come out of nowhere.” David Early responded to her by saying he heard those numbers while visiting each group during the small group discussions. She then became angered at the fact that David Early was not changing his statement generalizing the housing opinions he heard in the small groups, even though she stated she did not agree with the opinion. The women abruptly yelled at Early from across the room and with her finger pointed straight at him screamed, “I live in this city, I pay taxes, you work for this city, you work for ME!” David Early became speechless from the startling accusation and while trying to collect his thoughts and mediate the situation was interrupted by a supporter of the addition of higher density housing, who was the first to voice his opinion supporting housing to the workshop as a whole. The man stood up and said, “I wanted more than two stories of housing, I was the one who said that...He [David Early] is not making that up.” The women responded by yelling back some harsh words and flipping the man off. At the sight of the gesture, David Early stepped in full force to stop the heated argument, but at the same time three elderly women, a woman with a toddler and a middle aged woman all quickly filed out of the room. David Early began talking to calm everyone down, but another resident who seemed to have grown angry during the argument stood up, leaned over the man (supporter of housing) sitting his chair and screamed at the top of his voice, “Shut UP!!” Luckily, David Early was a few feet away and quickly pulled the angered man back and ordered him to sit down in his chair. The man obliged, but remained tense and angry. David Early then stated he had never experienced an argument like that in any community workshop he had led. He then tried
once again to conclude the meeting by stating some residents would like one to two
stories, focusing his attention at the woman, while others would like more. At this time a
few people raised their hands to state they too, like the man who spoke against the
angered women, stated they wanted more than two stories of housing on top of the retail
stores on California Avenue during the small group discussion. David Early seemed
relieved that a few stepped forward and supported his first generalization about housing,
but the women who started the argument became angrier in the back row. At the end of
the meeting people quickly left, but a few lingered, resulting in more conflict. According
to reports from the Palo Alto Daily, physical threats were voiced in the parking lot after
the meeting and the police were called to resolve the situation. However, the controversy
continued and a restraining order was filed against the resident who supported housing
and allegedly made physical threats to the woman and her husband, who did not support
housing. The restraining order charges were eventually dropped, but the individuals
involved in the altercation did not attend the next neighborhood workshop held four
months later on June 23, 2009.

Second & Third Workshops

The second and third workshops employed the same format—PowerPoint
presentation, initial comments, small groups, small group presentations, and wrap up—
with some minor tweaks to improve the quality and prevent large conflicts from
occurring again. For example, the second meeting started with the Interim Planning
Director, Curtis Williams, explaining the purpose of the meetings as well as DC&E’s
presence and the intended outcomes from the meetings, which were to work with the
community to update the plan. He heavily emphasized that the city wanted to work with
citizens. The second and third workshops were also more interactive and involved the citizens in creating booklets with ideas for development in the Concept Plan area.
Unfortunately, the second and third workshops had less people in attendance than the first workshop, which may have made a large impression on the California Avenue neighborhood and the City of Palo Alto.

**Formation of a Hypothesis:**

After observing the large opposition to housing in the neighborhood workshops, I came away with the conclusion that most residents in the California Avenue area were opposed housing and advocated for little change if any to the California Avenue Concept Area. With this theory I began to hypothesize reasons for why people were opposed to an increase in housing and change within their neighborhood. I wondered if people were opposed to housing because they were afraid of their property values lowering? Maybe citizens were fearful of overcrowding in their schools and on their streets. Could the reasoning for their opposition contain deeper sentiments? Were residents really opposing government assisted or below market rate housing when they decided to say no to new development? Were they therefore saying no to diversity? I also wondered if a resident’s lifestyle characteristics determined their opposition to housing. Were more homeowners opposed to housing? Were more people with children or a higher income opposed to housing? I thought of numerous theories to explain Palo Alto citizens’ opposition to housing and decided to create and distribute a survey to understand the demographics of the population that opposed housing and the type of housing they opposed. I assumed that I would be able to understand the citizens that opposed housing and develop ways that the local government could work with these residents who appeared to be displaying
hesitant “Not in My Backyard” attitudes towards housing. However, my survey unexpectedly found startling data that changed my research completely.
CHAPTER II: SURVEY METHODOLOGY
Target Population & Sample Size

I conducted fieldwork in Palo Alto from June 2009 to August 2009. In order to narrow the target population of Palo Alto for the survey, my sample frame consisted of 443 households located in either the Comprehensive Plan Update Concept Area or within three blocks of the Concept Area borders along El Camino Avenue, Alma Street, Cambridge Avenue and Lambert Avenue in the four neighborhoods surrounding California Avenue. The households were chosen based on their close proximity to the Concept Area due to the fact that the residents in these households were going to be directly affected by the Comprehensive Plan Amendment Update, which would determine future characteristics of the neighborhood, such as the addition of more housing.

The addresses for the 443 households were collected from a public database accessed through a contact at the City of Palo Alto. I received a list of all the addresses within the Concept Area and the neighborhood surrounding it. I chose addresses from the list based on my sampling frame and formed two lists of households located within the Concept area and households within three blocks of the Concept Area totaling 443 households.

The 443 households received the survey in a mailed envelope that contained a cover letter explaining the research and its purpose, a consent form for the resident to keep, the one-page survey, a stamped return envelope to return the survey in and two dollars in compensation. The cover letter, addressed to each individual address, explained the research study in depth stating who I was, why I was doing the research, the intended use of the survey results and why the resident’s participation was important for the
future of their community. The consent form explained in depth the potential risks and intended impact of the survey and the participant’s role in the survey as a research subject. Consent was determined based on a resident’s willingness to complete the survey and return it. If the resident returned a completed survey they gave consent for their opinions to be used, but if they did not return a completed survey they did not give consent. After reading the consent form the resident encountered a one-page survey. The survey consisted of 11 questions with 10 Likert scale items and one open-ended response. The first five questions asked residents how they would rate their neighborhood, what is the most important aspect of their neighborhood and how supportive they would be to the addition of three types of housing in their neighborhood; general housing, housing near the California Avenue Caltrain station and housing that included retail in the same building. The last seven questions asked how long they had lived in the residence, if they own or rent the residence, if they have children, their gender, current age, highest level of education acquired and household yearly income. When the resident completed the survey, they returned it in the provided stamped return envelope. Also included in the survey packet materials was a compensation gift of two dollars for the resident’s time and effort in completing the survey. Many scholars find that cash is the best way to encourage responses due to the fact that it gives people a direct incentive to participate in the research study.

The survey results were collected over a time period of two months. The results were first entered into Microsoft Office Excel and then counted and cross-tabulated using PASW Statistics 18, formerly known as SPSS Statistics.

I received 230 surveys from the 443 surveyed households, resulting in a 52% response rate. Although there was a high survey response rate representative of the community surveyed, one potential flaw in using a survey is that residents who responded are residents who care enough about the topic to take the time to voice their opinion. Therefore, there are still many people in the community that received my survey, but did not voice their opinion; my survey was unable to reach these populations. When analyzing the results of my survey it is important to note that a majority of the California Avenue residents that responded to my survey expressed these opinions. There are still many people in the community who have not expressed their opinions and my have completely different opinions.

**Survey Results**

The survey began by asking residents their opinions about their present neighborhood and potential changes for the future. When asked, “How would you rate the neighborhood you live in?” 46% of the respondents felt that their neighborhood was “excellent”. When combined with respondents who felt their neighborhood was “good” 90% of the respondents had positive opinions towards their neighborhood. Roughly 10% felt that their neighborhood was “fair” or “poor”. These results showed that many of the residents in the California Avenue neighborhood enjoyed and liked the neighborhood at its current state.
The survey then asked respondents a set of three questions to measure their feelings towards the addition of more housing in their neighborhood. The first question aimed to measure how residents felt about the addition of more housing in general to their neighborhood. This question revealed an astonishing response, contradicting the opinions I observed in the neighborhood workshops, where the majority of residents were opposed if not extremely opposed to the addition of more housing. The survey revealed that roughly 60% of the California Avenue neighborhood residents who responded to the survey were “supportive” or “very supportive” to the addition of more housing in their neighborhood. The majority of respondents favored the addition of more housing, while only 40% were either “unsupportive” or “very unsupportive”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Response</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1 (Poor):</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group 2 (Fair):</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3 (Good):</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 4 (Excellent):</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>45%</td>
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<td>TOTAL:</td>
<td>214</td>
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<tr>
<th>Q2. How supportive would you be of new housing in your neighborhood?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Survey Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 1 (Very Unsupportive):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2 (Unsupportive):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3 (Supportive):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 4 (Very Supportive):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The second question, which also aimed to measure how respondents felt towards more housing, asked how supportive a resident would be to new housing near the California Avenue Caltrain Station. A surprising 75% percent of the survey respondents were “supportive” or “very supportive” to the addition of new housing near the Caltrain station.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Response</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1 (Very Unsupportive):</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2 (Unsupportive):</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3 (Supportive):</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 4 (Very Supportive):</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL:</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The third question measured how supportive residents were of new housing that included both housing and retail stores within the same building, or in other words mixed-use development. Again this question revealed startling results regarding citizens’ opinions towards housing. Sixty-five percent of residents were “supportive” or “very supportive” to the addition of mixed-use housing in their neighborhood. Only 23% were “opposed” and 12% “very opposed”
Q4. How supportive would you be of new housing that includes housing and retail stores within the same building in your neighborhood?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Response</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1 (Very Unsupportive):</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2 (Unsupportive):</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3 (Supportive):</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 4 (Very Supportive):</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL:</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hypothesis Reconsidered:

All three questions measuring citizens’ opinions towards housing revealed unexpected results that contradicted my original hypothesis. I came to the conclusion from observing the neighborhood workshops that many citizens in the California Avenue area of Palo Alto were opposed to housing. Yet, when directly asking the California Avenue residents going to be affected by the Update about their opinions towards housing through the form a survey, I found that they were in fact supportive of the addition of more housing in three different forms within their California Avenue neighborhood. As a result my research evolved and I began questioning the methods of participation Palo Alto used to collect opinions. Why were the opinions I collected from the California Avenue residents different than the opinions planners and city hall officials heard in the neighborhood workshops? Why was there a large silent population, evident from my survey results, within the community not participating when it appears that Palo Alto is an actively engaged community? Are Palo Alto participation methods failing to
receive opinions representative of the community or an unmotivated citizens responsible for this large gap in participation?
CHAPTER III:
CITIZEN PARTICIPATION THEORIES
Putting the observations and survey results in perspective

The survey results found that there was a large silent population within Palo Alto not participating in local government processes. But why is it that residents were not participating? Why was it always the same group of people voicing their opinions in the neighborhood workshops, creating a hidden large silent majority in the community? By analyzing literature on citizen participation this research can better understand the foundation of participation and apply theory to the forms of citizen participation used in Palo Alto.

Social Capital

Citizen participation is considered the cornerstone of democracy in the United States compared to any other nation worldwide. However, relative to past political participation levels in the United States, people are participating in politics, community activities and civic identity building activities at alarmingly low rates. According to scholars such as Robert Putnam, the 1960’s surge in community affairs and a sense of shared identity, predicted a future of active civic life in the United States, but participation levels never increased to meet their projected future levels.23 Putnam blames a decrease in what he considers “social capital” or connections, reciprocity and trustworthiness amongst individuals in social networks on television, two-career families, suburban sprawl, generational changes in values and modernity. These causes are rooted in cultural, economic and technological changes over the past half-century. Scholars such as Kelly Campbell also state that participation decreases as the result of a lack of civic

identity. Putnam and Campbell believe civic identity motivates citizens to participate for the good of the community as a whole must continued to be cultivated by local government policies, grassroots efforts and individual innovation.

Putnam and Campbell remain optimistic that the factors responsible for social capital’s deterioration in the United States will act as the catalyst for an increase in social capital in the future and as a result a dramatic increase in civic identity. New and innovate forms of participation that capitalize on technology, the state of the economy and present social affairs domestically and abroad are needed to encourage citizens to voice ones opinions in government, whether through voting, attending government sponsored meetings, signing a petition or becoming a part of community events and happenings. Citizen participation creates fully developed and livable cities in the United States and must increase for cities to flourish. Although citizen participation has the potential to reverse societal forces that have deterred social capital to benefit the lives of many, there are many other obstacles to representative and engaged citizen participation in cities today.

Cost & Benefit Analysis

As stated before, citizen participation methods in Palo Alto resulted in a small group of citizens voicing their opinions and a large majority of citizens remaining silent and not participating. Putnam believes societal changes have affected participation levels, but what other factors have affected the levels of participation in Palo Alto? A lack of participation could have been the result of some citizens believing that the cost of

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participating in the neighborhood workshops outweighed the benefit. Jan Leighley states that some citizens do not participate because they are not invested in the community physically through home ownership.\textsuperscript{25} If citizens were invested and owned a home Leighley believes citizens would participate for their own self-interest of helping maintain and improve the quality of the neighborhood they are physically invested in financially and physically.

Bruno Frey analyzes the cost and benefit of citizen participation in terms of higher income individuals and time. Although many scholars believe that higher income levels, often accompanied by higher educational levels, result in higher levels of participation,\textsuperscript{26} Frey argues that citizens with higher income levels participate at lower levels due to the fact their time is extremely valuable.\textsuperscript{27} He states that citizens are busy working, thinking about work, or occupied in some other way with work, which results in their high levels of income to spend time participating. The cost of participating for these citizens is greater than the benefit. However, he finds that when people with higher incomes do participate, their productivity in the activity is high due to the fact that this population is familiar with tasks such as writing a letter to a congressperson or contemplating and giving their opinions on a political question. Therefore, if participation is not seen as a large cost of time, higher income individuals will participate and therefore build civic identity and contribute towards a vibrant city in a highly

effective way. Citizen participation must be available on the citizens’ time and in a manner that allows them to quickly complete the task.

**Tiebout & Williams Models**

Citizen participation can also be analyzed through models that help understand why and how individuals participate in local government processes. David Lowery and William Lyons analyze participation through two models, the Tiebout model and the Williams model. Both models use the same structure, which states when a citizen is confronted with a problem in their neighborhood they act in one of four ways; voice, loyalty, neglect and exit. However, the two models deviate in the type of analysis used to determine the action a citizen takes. In the Tiebout model the citizen determines their action based on weighing the financial and more specifically tax costs and benefits to each action. The Williams model states that a citizen determines his or her action based on how a citizen’s everyday life is going to be benefited or negatively affected based on their decision to act in a certain way. Each decision, voice, loyalty, neglect and exit reveals the level of participation a citizen is willing to express in his or her neighborhood. If a citizen is confronted with a problem and decides to either actively voice their opinion by participating in local government or remaining loyal by keeping quiet knowing the local government will solve the problem, the citizen demonstrates trust in the city. This trust can be attributed to a citizen’s satisfaction with the local government in the past and therefore a belief that any problem the city is faced with will be resolved and their community will be a better place in the end.

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On the other hand, if a citizen is confronted with a problem and decides to take the extreme approach and exit the city because the cost is greater than the benefit for the citizen’s financial or lifestyle status, the citizen is showing complete distrust in the city’s ability to solve the problem effectively for their own benefit and the benefit of the community as a whole. Most of the time a citizen’s exit is the result of negative past experiences with the local government. For example, this could be the result of a citizen who used to voice their opinion and participate in local government, but in the end felt as though they had little impact due to a local government’s civic participation framework, leading the individual to become completely discouraged by the experience. Experiences like this first lead to the action of neglect, which is seen as a person who does not participate in trying to help solve the problem with local government and chooses to stay silent because they know their opinion is not valued by the local government. In many cases people who demonstrate neglect, would choose to exit the neighborhood but do not have the mobility to do so.

My survey unveils a large silent majority of residents in Palo Alto that do not participate in local government processes. Therefore, according to the Tiebout Model and Williams Model the majority of residents in Palo Alto are silent and consequently are either choosing to act loyal and trust the local government to figure out the problem on their own or exhibiting neglect and not participating because they know their opinion will not be effective due to local government participation framework and past experiences with a local government that does not value or stress participation.

Other scholars such as Albert Hirschman study exit, voice, neglect and loyalty in terms of economic analysis, which can be applied to citizens’ actions in local government
processes and the community. Hirschman states that the deterioration in the quality of a product leads to two actions: customers stop buying the goods, defined as exit, and customers express their dissatisfaction to management, defined as voice option. We can analyze citizen participation in these terms by substituting what Hirschman refers to as “management” for the Palo Alto local government, visualizing “customers” as citizens and imagining “goods” as what the local government offers the citizens either through policies, urban development, or opportunities for a vibrant, livable lifestyle within the city. Hirschman analyzes when one option takes precedence over the other and finds that people who value quality will exit first when the quality of a product, or in this case the qualities of the city deteriorates. Many will voice their opinions to try and improve quality before they exit, but exit is the only way to deal with the local government if quality isn’t improved since Hirschman defines a city as a “monopoly,” one form of government under which Palo Alto residents reside. The local government has a monopoly over the citizens since they only have one government deciding the quality and future of the city. If a citizen feels strongly about the deterioration in the quality of their city, in order to exit from the single monopoly government they are under, they must move to another city. Most cities work under one local government and therefore monopolies exist in all cities and citizens exit to find better quality “goods” or lifestyle and tax benefits. That is why it is important to have citizen participation as a large part of local government so that citizens can voice their opinions and contribute to change in the singular and only government they have. If citizens do not voice they will exit, leading to the deterioration of a city as a whole.

Structure of Citizen Participation

The structure of participation has a large impact on the action of a citizen when a city is faced with a problem or change such as the Comprehensive Plan Amendment Update. The structure does not only determine actions of a citizen, but also the actions of a citizen based on their race. Kent Jennings believes the framework governments put in place for citizens to participate defines and determines the type of citizen that participates. In many instances citizens of a certain race have more political capital and knowledge of how to voice their opinions in an effective way due to a high education attainment and social experience. Others, such as minorities and low-income individuals do not have the experience necessary to participate in local government processes in Palo Alto. The present format of participation skews the level of diversity in the citizens that participates and in extreme cases excludes citizens of a certain race or ethnicity from participating in local government all together.

Many believe that the traditional form of local government needs to be “shaken up” completely and re-evaluated to determine its true effectiveness in receiving active participation. However, many cities such as Palo Alto continue to use traditional forms of citizen participation, which many scholars define as community workshops, stand and deliver meetings, and information sessions. These traditional forms have been proven to have negative impacts on the type of participation they receive, such as the problems described above: less diversity, restricted access, apathy, distrust and negative actions.

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32 Campbell, "Theorizing the Authentic: Identity, Engagement, and Public Space."
This research analyzes the traditional form of citizen participation Palo Alto uses to determine the diversity and rate of responses Palo Alto used to make decisions for the Comprehensive Plan Update.
CHAPTER IV: WORKSHOP & SURVEY ANALYSIS
Palo Alto Participation Methods

The literature on citizen participation provides insight into potential reasons citizen participation was ineffective at receiving opinions from a large, representative portion of citizens in Palo Alto. It could be the result of citizens’ lifestyle choices, the structure of citizen participation instilled by the government or a lack of motivation on the part of the citizen. This section analyzes the neighborhood workshops and survey results through this framework to pinpoint exact instances in the Palo Alto methods of participation that may have contributed to the inefficiencies in participation.

Miscommunication

The first neighborhood workshop failed to not only to allow individual citizens to openly express their opinions, but also to allow citizens to openly communicate with each other, a vital step in reaching common ground in workshop settings such as this. The second and third workshops did not have the open conflicts present in the first, but the relatively unchanged structure did not facilitate true active participation. Some citizens were still silent, and others still overly active. The workshop failed to bring the two together and create a cohesive and constructive workshop. Additionally, there was a lower turnout at both the second and third workshop. Less participation could be the result of the newspaper articles and blogs discussing the conflict and inefficiencies in the first meeting. For apathetic citizens who may be expressing neglect towards the local government, these reports may have reinforced their sentiments that citizen participation is pointless since they believe the city does not want to hear or truly use their opinions, given the lack of outreach and avenues for participation. However, others who may have
been considering participating or did participate in the first workshop might have not attended the second and third due to safety and personal concerns.

**Distrust**

In addition, a lack of trust in local government could have deterred residents from participating in local government affairs. A lack of trust towards the Palo Alto officials was evident from the very beginning of the first neighborhood workshop. According to scholars, citizens distrust with a city arises out of what planners might think are the “normal” or “inevitable” situations that occur in workshops. According to Rosener, “Citizens are frustrated because they feel their participation is too often ‘after the fact’ or ignored.” This could be directly applied to the Palo Alto residents who attended the meeting pent up with opinions that have been waiting to be heard. The visibly upset and stern faces coupled with the harsh whispers of rumors in the room could be attributed to the fact that the residents have felt ignored in the past and in the time period before the workshop. It is only natural that people would start wondering what is going to happen to their neighborhood and what is happening at that moment in the planning process since they are not yet involved in the process. Rosener sees a solution to this problem in “informal meetings” held at very early points in the planning process. An informal meetings’ purpose is to facilitate two-way communication with all participants at a table or in a circle instead of in a speaker and audience setting. These meetings should alleviate the worries that citizens feel when they are not yet involved in

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34 Rosener, “Citizen Participation: Tying Strategy to Function,” 64.
the process and allow dispersal of information and gathering of preliminary thoughts and concerns before a formal meeting is held.

Distrust may have also arisen during the PowerPoint presentation, which presented information and listed opinions and concerns about the development that seemed to have already been formed by someone other than citizens. The PowerPoint displayed concerns and comments that appeared to be pre-meditated and voiced only one side of the argument. At the sight of these a few people raised their hands to make comments of their own, but they were told to wait until after the presentation to state their comment. The presentation of information in this way only led to a bigger gap in trust with the citizens since these concerns and solutions seemed to have already been formed without citizens’ input. The lack of communication between DC&E and Palo Alto with the community members present at the workshop led the community members to assume that the city was already planning without them. According to Roland Rivera, the concerns and solutions presented on the slides were the result of stakeholders meetings that DC&E and Palo Alto had already conducted. The concerns and solutions were suggestions from business owners and landowners. However, David Early never mentioned this and only further stressed throughout the workshop “we are here to make this plan with you, the community.”35 It could have been made more clear that the planners and city were there to work with the community and the stakeholders in the area, therefore when the citizens’ opinions would be modified or fused with other suggestions form the stakeholders. However, it seemed that the planners gave priority to the stakeholders over the citizens given the fact they based their preliminary concerns

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35 Neighborhood Workshop, 2/12/09.
and options for solutions based on the stakeholders opinions. This priority may be due to the fact that the stakeholders decide the type of business for their property, which in turn supplies the city’s tax base. Therefore, in theory it would be important to put the opinions of the stakeholders first for the benefit of the city. Citizens’ opinions are sacrificed for the stakeholders’ opinions, but this can be seen as beneficial to the development of the city as a whole. Business are vital for vibrant cities, and planners must plan for the city as a whole, even though this may create distrust between the citizens and Palo Alto like it has in the past, the situation can be alleviated with honest and open communication.

Exclusion

Another aspect of the workshop, the initial public comment, also had drastic effects on the workshop. First, it only allowed the most opinionated to voice their opinions and be heard by the planners and discouraged shy residents from participating. According to Michael Perfater in “The Changing Character of the Public Hearing,” citizens are often microphone shy and refuse to comment because the resident has to stand in front of an audience and have the public speaking abilities to clearly express their opinions in a short amount of time. It is a high stress way of participating that does not cater to the different types of people present at the meeting. In the neighborhood workshop many residents are highly educated and well spoken, but other residents such as minorities and younger individuals lack the education, language skills, public speaking confidence and feeling of authority in their own opinions over others.

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Therefore, they do not voice their opinions and are excluded from participating and expressing their opinions. This population is left out of the participation process early in the workshops and not heard until the larger group disperses into smaller groups of 8 to 10 individuals, but even then some opinions go unvoiced and planners gather opinions from only the vocally opinionated. Luckily, in some scenarios, residents who fall into this category approach a city planner on their own, since they do not feel comfortable in the group setting. According to Roland Rivera, in these situations all he can do as the director is give them his email address and hope that they contact him via email or phone so that their opinions can be considered in the update process. But what if this citizen does not have access to a computer or do not take the initiate to follow up with their opinions? They already expended energy and effort in trying to voice their opinion in the workshop, but the environment prevented them from doing so. What gives a citizen the incentive to overcome more hurdles such as locating a computer, finding the right words to express their opinions and send an email? This obstacle can be overcome if the planner approached the resident and did not rely on the resident to approach them. Citizen participation should be active on the part of the planner so that citizens are engaged in participation and openly welcome to participate.

**Neglect & Investment**

In addition to support for more housing the survey also found interesting correlations with the level of participation and citizens’ investment in the community defined as both the length of time a citizen had lived in Palo Alto and homeownership. When asked how many years a resident had lived in their residence the majority of residents responded between five and twenty. The average number of years a resident
has resided in his or her household was 10 years. This long period of time leads one to believe that residents are invested in their neighborhood. They have chosen to remain in the California Avenue neighborhood; therefore the residents have a deep connection with the neighborhood. These deep connections should mean a predominant amount of civic participation as concluded earlier by Leighley\textsuperscript{37}, but in some cases the opposite is true. The majority of residents in the California Avenue neighborhood do not participate in the urban planning processes. This leads one to wonder why people physically invested in the community for a long amount of time are not particularly invested in other aspects, such as civic participation, which shapes and forms the neighborhood they have lived in for a considerable amount of time. Some conclusions one may be able to deduce from the lack of participation is the presence of apathy and distrust towards local government, which has led many residents to express “neglect” as analyzed earlier. This can be seen in an interview of one resident, Bob, who has lived in Palo Alto for 50 years, his entire life. After trying for years to participate in the Palo Alto urban planning process and encountering dead ends and the inability to voice his opinion for change, Bob grew apathetic and today does not participate in any form of local government. “I’ve given up on the city,” was a phrase he expressed multiple times in the conversation. Bob told of one failed encounter with the city that occurred approximately five years ago. He and his fellow neighbors approached the local government with concerns about noise pollution in their neighborhood. After trying to express their concerns in multiple ways and talking to multiple city hall officials in order to receive some type of help from the city, their concerns were acknowledged and they were told some type of change

\textsuperscript{37} Leighley, "Attitudes, Opportunities, and Incentives: A Field Essay on Political Participation."
would occur to alleviate the noise pollution, but nothing was ever done. Bob felt as though the city simply told him they would do something to ease his concerns and stop his complaining. These failed encounters with the local government only reinforced Bob’s apathetic and distrustful feelings towards the city. When the city calls for citizen input for an issue, such as the Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan Update, Bob feels that his opinions won’t be taken into account or used in their decision making process. He stated, “They [local government] say they want to hear from people, but what are they really doing?” Bob questioned what city hall officials are doing in the planning process and what they are doing with the opinions they receive from citizens. He was very hesitant to believe that the city really wants to hear people and very hesitant about the extent of which the city actually using the citizens’ opinions in their decisions. This has led to what he called “disenchantment” with the city. Bob and many of his friends and neighbors in Palo Alto have become so detached from local government that they do not even vote for city council members anymore. If Bob could leave Palo Alto he would, but his inability to move due to old age and physical investment has led to him living in disenchantment with a city that people are longing to move into, while he wishes he could move out.

In addition, my survey found that exactly 50% of the 230 residents I surveyed were homeowners and the other 50% renters. This did not seem to affect the type of opinions they had since the support for housing was seen in renters and homeowners at equal rates, but it did affect their levels of participation. When comparing the households who responded to my survey to the residents’ households who attended a neighborhood workshop, I found that the majority of people who attended the first neighborhood
workshop were homeowners. Therefore, Leighley’s theory of investment is present in the California Avenue neighborhood of Palo Alto. Physical investment in a community through home ownership leads to a higher percentage of participation in local government issues, such as the Comprehensive Plan Amendment, and the higher the level of home ownership within a neighborhood the higher the level of participation. However, in many cities in the Bay Area, such as Daly City and Menlo Park, the percentage of people who own a home and rent are extremely similar to Palo Alto. However, most of these cities have higher rates of participation than Palo Alto; therefore, the percentage of people who own is not a factor in determining levels of participation, since cities with the same homeownership levels have different levels of participation. There is another factor influencing why people do and do not participate. When analyzing the cities that have the same owner and renter statistics of Palo Alto, but higher participation rates, it is noticeable that each city has a strong framework for participation outlined in their city goals and mission. Therefore, the presence of a strong framework for participation has a greater effect on levels of participation than homeownership rates and physical investment. A strong structure for participation needs to be implemented in Palo Alto so that participation rates increase.

From this analysis of the neighborhood workshops and surveys it is clear that a lack of citizen participation could be due to the single method of participation, neighborhood workshops, that potentially excludes citizens, breeds distrust and does not encourage citizens to participate within the actual workshops or in local government at all. A lack of participation could also be the result of citizens’ lifestyles and personal choices. Many citizens are not invested in the community and therefore do not feel the
need to participation in local government processes. Other citizens do not find the benefit of participation greater than other aspects of their life such as work and forms of leisure. Both the local government and the citizens are accountable for this large silent majority in Palo Alto not voicing their opinions. Therefore, how can citizen participation be revitalized? How can the city change its structure of participation? What is going to make residents realize that their opinion is vital in local government process and how can they be motivated to participate? It all comes down to the local government making sure they are receiving a representative sample of opinions from its citizens. How does the local government make sure they are reaching out to all members of the community? In the next chapter I discuss how to answer these questions as well as other data that reinforces why citizen participation is an important issue to be addressed in Palo Alto.
CHAPTER V:
THE FUTURE OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN PALO ALTO
Effects of Current Participation Methods in the City

The neighborhood workshops the City of Palo Alto used in the Comprehensive Plan Update to solicit opinions from citizens were not effective in obtaining opinions from the community as a whole. This research has analyzed potential reasons for this large silent majority in citizen participation. A survey distributed by the City of Palo Alto this past fiscal year also revealed low participation rates, as well as concrete reasons for the low rates, such as distrust and apathy towards the local government. These negative opinions only reinforce the fact that citizen participation in Palo Alto needs to be changed.

The National Citizens Survey conducted by the Palo Alto Auditor’s Office in December of 2009 was sent to 424 residents of Palo. Although many city council members and city hall officials believe the survey solely measured citizens’ perceptions rather than facts, the survey revealed opinions that reinforced the conclusions I drew from observations in the workshops, survey data, and literature analysis.

The National Citizens Survey grouped the survey results by the four zip codes that make up Palo Alto, dividing the city into North, South, East and West. In the 94306-area zip code on the southern side of Palo Alto where California Avenue is located, the survey results displayed higher feelings of distrust and apathy compared to the other zip codes in Palo Alto. Only 76% of residents in the California Avenue zip code area, 94306, rated Palo Alto as a “good” or “excellent” place to live. When residents in the 94306 zip code were asked their opinions towards “The overall direction Palo Alto

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is taking” only 43% stated they felt “good” or “excellent” about the future of Palo Alto. Therefore, the majority of residents in the California Avenue neighborhood do not feel as if Palo Alto is improving or moving forward in a progressive manner. This is reinforced by the fact that only 41% of residents thought the “Overall quality of new development in Palo Alto” was “good” or “excellent.” An even lower percentage of residents, 34%, stated they felt “good” or “excellent” about the land use, planning, zoning and infrastructure development such as buildings and streets in Palo Alto. All of these statistics show that citizens are not happy with their neighborhood. But if people are not happy, why are they not participating? Palo Alto residents in the California Avenue neighborhood held the lowest opinions towards development and the future of Palo Alto, but also the lowest rates for citizen participation.

When asked about participating in local government, only 48% of residents stated Palo Alto does a “good” or “excellent” job at welcoming citizen involvement and only 27% of residents had attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting at least once. Most citizens felt unwelcome participating and even when they did, which is in very rare cases, only Forty-four percent stated Palo Alto does a “good” or “excellent” job at listening to citizens. These startling statistics reinforce my research on participation in Palo Alto. Participation is a rare occurrence even though many people feel negatively towards development in their neighborhood. Citizens want change, but citizen participation is not making itself available for these citizens who feel negatively towards their neighborhood to express themselves and contribute in an open and welcoming environment towards the development of their neighborhood and city.
This may come as a surprising dilemma for many considering that citizen participation has been a one of the top three goals set forth by the Palo Alto City Council for the past three years. This survey reveals that little progress has been made in the area and improvement is much needed in the future that welcomes the community back to local government, ensuring them that their voices and opinions are valuable and needed to construct a city for a whole community instead of the self-selected few that already voice their opinions.

**Why new Citizen Participation now? Sustainability, Economy, & Liveability**

Before I discuss potential ways to revitalize citizen participation in Palo Alto I first need to discuss why revitalizing citizen participation is such a vital issue beyond connecting citizens back to the city and creating trust within the community. Why is it so important to make sure every citizen is being heard for a decision about new development in the California Avenue neighborhood? Can’t the city and citizens just take into account the opinions of people who care enough and have the ability to take the time and effort to attend a workshop or send an email voicing their opinions? Why is representative citizen participation so crucial specifically to the California Avenue concept area?

Citizen participation is vital to this neighborhood because the neighborhood has the potential to undergo change that will contribute to the sustainability, economic growth and livability of the neighborhood. According to the 2000 census only 30% of Palo Alto residents work in Palo Alto. This means when taking into account the number of Palo Alto residents who do not work in Palo Alto or work from home, over 20,000 Palo Alto residents are commuting to work every day. In addition Palo Alto’s large retail,
business and medical industry creates 76,000 jobs and as mentioned before a daytime population of worker that exceeds the total population of Palo Alto. Palo Alto’s job base continues to expand and by 2020 it is predicted to reach 82,000 employment positions, therefore the number of people commuting in and out of Palo Alto will reach over 70,000 people.

The high rate of vehicle commuting dramatically increases pollution and greenhouse gas emissions in the state of California, damaging the environment and depleting resources. Fortunately, California is in the process of working towards lowering greenhouse gas emissions to 1990s levels by 2020 under Assembly Bill 32 and Senate Bill 375, which encourage sustainable regional development. Greenhouse gas emissions could be reduced significantly if Palo Alto began developing the city with a sustainable regional framework in mind. This could begin with the Comprehensive Plan Update. The Update to the Comprehensive Plan has the ability to lower pollution rates and increase sustainability not only for Palo Alto, but for California by changing land uses and increasing zoning for more housing near public transportation and commercial areas.

California Avenue is already ripe for new development and housing due to its unique characteristics such as transportation that allows easy travel throughout the Bay Area, low density on California Avenue and the surrounding neighborhood, current zoning districts and diverse residents that make up the neighborhood. California Avenue contains the right mix resources that could transform the already changing and growing California Avenue into a thriving sustainable community.
Transportation

The California Avenue neighborhood’s proximity to public transportation makes it a highly viable candidate for the addition of more housing and businesses. The Caltrain station, located at the north end of California Avenue provides transportation up and down the Peninsula to San Francisco, San Jose, and beyond.

As of February 2009, the California Avenue Caltrain station ranked number 13 out of 33 stations for the average highest weekday boardings. The high ridership at the California Avenue Caltrain station is in large part due to renovations the station underwent in November of 2008. The renovations included the construction of a new northbound platform equipped with shelters, ticket validators, stations boards, electronic message signs, and a public address system. The new construction also improved track capacity, rail safety, and brought the station up to date for the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Caltrain station at California Avenue is well used and the addition of more housing and business could only benefit from the renovations and high ridership present on the Caltrain station today.

California Avenue is also well connected to the VTA Bus transit system. At the Corner of California Avenue and El Camino Real the VTA transit station connects Palo Alto to East San Jose and between by the Rapid 522 bus. The 522-bus line combines state of the art technology and fast service to encourage ridership between house and job as well as locations around the peninsula. This new technology present on only a few

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VTA buses at the moment is growing and will only continue to expand to other buses that travel the Bay Area.

Public transportation is becoming a more popular means to move around the Peninsula to and from work and leisure destinations. California Avenue public transportation is already far ahead of most cities and the development of more housing and businesses would be easily supported by the public transit already in place. In addition to the California Avenue and El Camino Real bus stop, a Transit Center located at Page Mill Rd and El Camino, about .3 miles away from California Avenue and El Camino Real provides transportation to other areas in the Peninsula. This station serves 9 bus lines and has space for parking vehicles and numerous bike racks and bike lockers for riders.
“California Avenue Concept Plan Area Transportation Nodes,” Cal Ave. Workshop Presentation #1, Slide 21.
"Caltrain Stations", http://www.caltrain.com/caltrain_map.html
Density

California Avenue is also a prime place for more development because of its low density. The businesses directly located on California Avenue are one-story buildings with tall facades that give the illusion of a two story buildings. There is vertical room for California Avenue to grow. With the addition of condos and apartments on top of the one story buildings, California Avenue could combat the skyrocketing housing prices and allow for Below Market Rate housing and affordable housing for new residents, increasing the population of Palo Alto residents and therefore sustainability of the city.

Zoning

The city is already encouraging sustainable development by zoning California Avenue as Pedestrian Transit Oriented Development. This new zoning district was put in place to encourage more development around the Caltrain station. According to the Palo Alto Municipal Code under Chapter 18.34, PTOD zoning is defined as a place that “allows higher density residential dwellings on commercial, industrial and multi-family parcels within a walkable distance of the California Avenue Caltrain station…” This type of district was determined for California Avenue because it will support use of public transportation, encourage a variety of housing, businesses and office uses, increase connectivity to surrounding existing pedestrian and bicycle routes, as well as the streetscape and allow for the implementation of the Housing Element for the Comprehensive Plan. California Avenue is zoned and ready for more development, but are the residents that live within this area ready for new development?

My survey results found that many, if not a majority of Palo Alto residents in the California Avenue neighborhood are ready for more change involving an increase in housing and in turn density within the neighborhood creating a sustainable enclave. However, these opinions were not being heard due to the form of participation used in the Comprehensive Plan Update. New forms of participation need to be developed to encourage these opinions to be heard so that Palo Alto can develop how the entire community wants it to and in this specific case a representative population of the community wants California Avenue to transform into a vibrant, sustainable city. It is the current participation methods that are hindering these opinions from being heard and a result the city of Palo Alto as a whole is suffering.

Proposal for New Forms of Participation in Palo Alto:

This section consists of policy and program suggestions for the City of Palo Alto. New methods of participation are needed to revitalize citizen participation in the city as a whole and in the neighborhoods that make up the city, such as California Avenue. An increase in civic identity, connection between community members and trust between the Palo Alto local government and its citizens is vital for the future development and livability of the city. All of these aspects will revitalize participation and help transform Palo Alto into a city that the citizens want it to be.

Although I have established that there are many reasons citizens do not participate, both due to their own choices and the present framework for participation. I believe that the local government must take the first step towards amending relationships with citizens and develop participation methods that reach out to citizens and motivate them to participate, no matter what their reasoning for their lack of participation in the past. The local government needs to start with a fresh, new approach that works on a city wide scale to ensure opinions are being heard from all of the diverse citizens in the city of Palo Alto.

There are many options to revitalizing participation today. Over the past ten years cities have overcome the traditional forms of participation and created many new innovative approaches to participation. The most important aspects to these new forms of participation is making sure everyone in the community is being approached to participate and the city is receiving a representative opinion from the community. The best way of doing this is through a combination of extended outreach to citizens and supplementing traditional participation methods, such as neighborhood workshops with
new progressive methods such as online participation forums and surveys to obtain a complete view of citizens’ opinions.

For the City of Palo Alto I suggest an extension of the current forms of participation used during the Comprehensive Plan Update. The Update did collect valuable and insightful opinions from residents, but it lacked diversity and large-scale participation. If the neighborhood workshops were supplemented with other forms of participation the city would be able to receive opinions from a diverse large majority of residents that are an accurate representation of what citizens want. I therefore propose to the planning department a framework of participation that consists of enhanced neighborhood workshops, an online venue for participation and surveys to ensure that the opinions gathered through the other two avenues of participation are representative of the community as a whole.

New Neighborhood Workshops

The traditional neighborhood workshops were successful at collecting opinions during the Comprehensive Plan Update, but could be enhanced as a medium of participation in itself to obtain a higher rate of diverse opinions. One of the problems with the workshops was not involving citizens from the very beginning of the workshop. At the beginning of the workshop I would suggest each citizen write down their concerns or opinions that have been formed from learning about the problem of issues through newspaper articles, information provided by the local government or conversations with other citizens. I would then ask the residents to rank their opinions so that the citizens can prioritize their opinions from the very beginning and the planners can have a base and scale of opinions to utilize in that meeting and in the future. During
the meeting, I would suggest that a planner records the most reoccurring opinions, roughly between ten and twenty on a printed document from the residents’ original lists. It is assumed that many of the opinions will be discussed in the workshop by both the local government and the citizens, but the list of opinions will bring to light issues that for one reason or another are not talked about or stressed enough given the amount of people who originally wrote it as an opinion. Then at the end of the meeting, after discussing the opinions and issues the planner could hand this sheet of paper out to each citizen and each citizen could either rank the order that they think these opinions are important or circle the level of importance for each opinion in a likert scale form based on what they heard and learned in the meeting. This is a simple way to make sure that each citizen’s opinion is being heard and ensures citizens that the city has their opinion in writing and it will be considered. This process also eliminates exclusion in the neighborhood workshop for shy individuals and puts the citizen in a situation to really consider what is most important to them on their own terms. I think that when you have this base knowledge the city is able to move forward towards conversation and reaching common ground with the citizens and between citizens. This brings me to the second step of the enhanced neighborhood workshop.

The PowerPoint presentation during the Comprehensive Plan Update provided citizens with valuable information about their neighborhood that many may not have been aware of. However, some of the points on the presentation seemed to be opinions formulated by someone other than the citizens and aroused a feeling of distrust in citizens. In order to alleviate these feelings of distrust I suggest the PowerPoint to present solely facts and incorporate a form of deliberative democracy in the presentation
to better inform citizens of the impact of their choices in building the Update or solving an issue within the community. Deliberative Democracy, developed by James Fishkin at Stanford University, is defined as an attempt to use public opinion research to present results of a poll with a human face. Deliberative Democracy is a complex method that involves randomly selecting a representative sample of citizens, having the citizens take a poll voting one way on an issue, educating the citizens on that issue as well as the impacts of their vote and then having them take the poll again with the new knowledge of the potential impacts of his or her vote.46 This method of citizen participation has dramatically impacted the way people view citizen participation, their opinions and the future of their community. Although deliberative democracy would be a great way to receive opinions representative of a community in Palo Alto in a fast way to help make decisions about an issue, the program has its drawbacks in terms of long-term sustainability and inclusion. Only a certain number of residents are chosen to participate for one weekend in the deliberative democracy program limiting the size and length of time for participation. My solution to revitalizing participation in Palo Alto focuses on bringing the whole community back together for the long term and therefore a type of citizen participation that uses the theories behind deliberative democracy, but encourages and includes many citizen in the process over an extended period of time would be the ideal use of deliberative democracy.

This would manifest itself in the PowerPoint presentation as suggested earlier. A main component of the presentation would be to present how citizens’ current opinions might affect the neighborhood and city as a whole. I observed many people in Palo Alto

who were extremely focused on their own well being in the community. For example, citizens were concerned about solely their own property values and taxes, their own street and increase of traffic and noise on it, their own children’s school and the impact of one or two more children being added into a classroom. Although each of these problems does have a significant impact on the individual and can have an impact on the community as a whole, I think the residents in Palo Alto were lacking the broader community awareness when voicing their opinions and making decisions in the workshops. Many people either failed to realize or did not care about the broader implications of less housing in the California Avenue or less sustainable development. As discussed earlier the impact of not building housing or increasing the density of an area has severe impacts not only in Palo Alto but also in the Bay Area as a whole. Sustainability, affordable living and diversity are sacrificed to keep Palo Alto just as it is. However, if the city educated citizens on the impact of less housing and development, citizens would become more aware of the impact of their opinions and many people would be able to see the broader community and city wide implications of their opinions, hopefully leading to the right choice to be made.

The third aspect of the neighborhood workshops continues on the theme of community and proposes that citizens bond with each other in this decision making process. Many citizens came into the Palo Alto workshops set in their way and trying to “win” the argument against other citizens. However, if citizens took the time to briefly get to know one another and the background to their opinions, many may find that collaborating and joining ideas is a feasible feat. During the workshop I would suggest citizens gather into small informal groups before, during and after the meetings to get to
know one another and forms partnerships in an attempt to put citizens in the mindset that not only does the local government and the citizens need to work together, but citizens must also work with each other to develop a thriving environment. Some citizens may never get along and agree but at least they will have a full understanding as to why another citizen has such strong feelings towards an issue and can respect their opinion about the issue.

There are many other citizen participation methods that could be added to the traditional neighborhood workshop. However after observing the workshops I believe one component should not be included in the neighborhood workshops in order to ensure that the environment is a welcoming, sociable and constructive to gathering citizens’ opinions. This component is the initial public comment segment, which allowed selected citizens to voice their opinions towards the whole group, creating a mob mentality when it became clear that the majority of residents held the same opinions. However, as this research found the large majority opinion heard in the neighborhood workshops is not representative of a whole community and the initial public comment only groups people into opposing sides and excludes citizens who do not feel that they have the skills to stand up and present their ideas to a large group.

**Online Participation**

In order to ensure more citizens are participating in public participation the second method of citizen participation is an online aspect available to citizens on their own time and in their own privacy. Palo Alto already has an “Online City Hall” that allows people to voice opinions about certain issues affecting the community and city council meetings in an online forum setting. Although some forums have up to 500
citizens viewing the information about the issue or council meeting, only a small fraction are participating and writing their opinions on the forum wall for other citizens to read. This online forum has the potential to be an effective way of gathering opinions from community members that may have been reluctant in the past to participate in local government due to frustrations with not getting their voice heard or the inability to attend the meeting because of time conflicts. This online format allows people to participate on their own time and know that their opinions are expressed and out in the open for anyone to read. However, I think the Online City Hall could improve in a way to connect citizens with one another and reassure citizens that the opinions they post on the forums are being read and taken into account when city hall officials are making decisions. This is one of the areas that I believe the local government should devote resources and time to reconnect with citizens and foster an open, trusting relationship.

The local government needs to be involved in the online forum and build a partnership with community members. This could be done in a multitude of ways. In San Francisco, mayor Gavin Newsom reaches out to the citizens by hosting online city hall meetings where he takes people questions via email and responds online directly to the viewer. He spends a significant amount of time interacting with residents in this online format, which allows people to ask him questions on their own time as well as watch and listen to his responses on their own time. This format also shows the Gavin Newsome cares about what everyone is thinking. He has taken the time to reach out to the community and form a relationship in a new avenue that brings more diversity and more citizens involved in local government and its processes.
I propose this type of engagement with citizens in Palo Alto, but in a way that allows citizens to receive an “inside” look into how local government works and how their opinions are being used in local government processes. This structure of online participation will consist of the local government outlining the steps they would take in an urban planning process such as updating the Comprehensive Plan or an issue such as budget cuts. There would be a section of the website dedicated solely for the local government to explain the current stage they are in during a certain decision making process. This blog would be updated daily if not multiple times daily and not only educate citizens about the process, but also make them feel included in the process. Each blog post will be accompanied with a forum that allows citizens to comment voice their opinion about the stage the local government is in. This form of online participation takes involving citizens in the process a step further by actually communicating back on citizen opinions and facilitating a online conversation with citizens, showing and describing how his or her opinions are used in the decision making process. This is a large undertaking but I believe the local government must develop and implement big ideas in order to receive big results, in this case high rates of diverse opinions from a large silent population of citizens who have not participated in local government for many years.

**Surveys**

However, many citizens are still going to remain silent. It is difficult to achieve perfect rates of participation. The main goal of this proposal though is to ensure that the opinions the local government receives are representative of the city and specifically the community being directly affected by the changes, such as the California Avenue.
Comprehensive Plan Update. Unfortunately, it is hard to determine what is a representative portion of the community, but we can compare the results received from the different forms of participation to the demographic data of the community being affected by the change. This ensures that a diverse population is being heard, which could range from single parents to people of different race and ethnicity and renters or homeowners. Surveys could also serve as a main method of ensuring representative opinions and collecting opinions from residents who did not participate in the neighborhood workshops or online website. The surveys will consist of thorough questions that obtain opinions from the citizens about the certain topic being addressed by the local government as well as demographic and lifestyle information. Many residents who participated in the original neighborhood workshops during the Comprehensive Plan Update has skewed ideas about the number of citizens who have children, use public transportation and work outside of the city. These facts are vital to make the crucial point that new development and housing are needed, yet in many cases the local government does not have up to date information to help citizens understand the community at large and as a result lead to unsure rumors describing the present condition of the city to circulate. Therefore, surveys that gather information about citizens are vital to citizens’ participation so that rumors and hearsay do not skew people’s opinions towards a specific subject. They surveys will also allow a planner or city hall official to feel confident in his or her decisions, knowing that the majority of citizens agree with their decision and that the city hall official is contributing towards a better community that the citizens want.
Conclusion

In conclusion, I found over the course of my research that citizen participation is a complex characteristic of local government that makes up the core of a city. It can either contribute to a vibrant, thriving city or lead to the creation of a plethora of problems within a city. The old traditional methods of citizen participation have relied on the status quo and have therefore failed to transition into the technological savvy and expressive generation we live in today. New modes of communication are developed every day to connect people around the world and allow people to voice their opinions, yet communication between the city and its citizens has remained the same, hindering people’s ability to express their opinions in a way that is effective, efficient, convenient, and vital for the development of a vibrant city. Cities, such as Palo Alto must take action to revitalize participation in a way that caters to their citizens before all communication is lost and the feelings of apathy, distrust and disconnect lead to citizens moving out of Palo Alto and to other vibrant cities that easily allow citizens to participate and value their opinions.

However, Palo Alto still has the chance to revitalize participation and I hope that the data and policy suggestion put forth by this research will at least help to inspire some change within citizen participation in Palo Alto. Now is the time for planners to look and move forward and to allow the citizens to become part of the city and participate in multiple ways that allow them freedom of expression and communication between other citizens as well as the local government.
WORKS CITED


"Concept Plan Areas." http://www.paloalto2020.org/content/concept-plan-areas.


Appendix A: Survey*

START HERE

1. How would you rate the neighborhood you live in? (Please circle one)
   - Excellent
   - Good
   - Fair
   - Poor

2. How supportive would you be to new housing in your neighborhood? (Please circle one)
   - Very supportive
   - Supportive
   - Unsupportive
   - Very Unsupportive

3. How supportive would you be to new housing near the California Avenue Caltrain station? (Please circle one)
   - Very supportive
   - Supportive
   - Unsupportive
   - Very Unsupportive

4. How supportive would you be to new housing that includes housing and retail stores within the same building in your neighborhood? (Please circle one)
   - Very supportive
   - Supportive
   - Unsupportive
   - Very Unsupportive

5. How many years have you lived at this residence? _______ Years

6. Do you own or rent this residence?    
   - Own
   - Rent

7. Do one or more children live within this residence?  
   - Yes
   - No

8. What is your Gender?    
   - Female
   - Male

9. What is your current age? (Please circle one)
   - Under 30 years
   - 31-40 years
   - 41-50 years
   - 51-60 years
   - 61-70 years
   - Over 71 years

10. What is the highest level of education you have completed? (Please circle one)
    - Some High School or less
    - High School
    - College Degree
    - Postgraduate Degree

11. Which of the following categories best describes your household yearly income? (Please circle one)
    - $30,000 or less
    - $30,000 to $90,000
    - $90,000 to $150,000
    - $150,000 or more

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* The original survey contained an additional question that asked residents to rank in order 1 through 5 what they value most in their neighborhood with number 1 being the aspect they most value in the neighborhood and number one the aspect they least value. The options were location to work, sense of community, location to everyday retail services (groceries, showing...etc.), location to public transportation and schools in the neighborhood. However, when receiving the survey results back many residents misinterpreted the question and did not rank each number in order 1 through 5 or failed to rank each aspect that they value. Therefore, the question was not analyzed in the survey results and not used in this research due to the survey error.
Appendix B: Survey Results

Q1. “How would you rate the neighborhood you live in?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Response</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1 (Poor):</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2 (Fair):</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3 (Good):</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 4 (Excellent):</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL:</strong></td>
<td><strong>214</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q2. How supportive would you be to new housing in your neighborhood?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Response</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1 (Very Unsupportive):</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2 (Unsupportive):</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3 (Supportive):</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 4 (Very Supportive):</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL:</strong></td>
<td><strong>219</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q3. How supportive would you be to new housing near the California Avenue Caltrain station?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Response</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1 (Very Unsupportive):</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2 (Unsupportive):</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3 (Supportive):</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 4 (Very Supportive):</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL:</strong></td>
<td><strong>218</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q4. How supportive would you be of new housing that includes housing and retail stores within the same building in your neighborhood?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Response</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1 (Very Unsupportive):</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2 (Unsupportive):</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3 (Supportive):</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 4 (Very Supportive):</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL:</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q5. How long have you lived in this residence? Average 10 Years

Q6. Do you own or rent this residence?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Response</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Renters</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>50 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Owners</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>50 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL:</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q7. Do one or more children live within this residence?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Response</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number that do not have children</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number that do have children</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL:</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q8. What is your gender?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Response</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Females</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>65 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Males</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>35 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL:</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Q9. What is your current age?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Response</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1 (Under 30 yrs):</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2 (31-40 yrs):</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3 (41-50 yrs):</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 4 (51-60 yrs):</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 5 (61-70 yrs):</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 6 (Over 71 yrs):</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL:</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Q10. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Response</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1 (Some HS or less)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2 (High School)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3 (College Degree)</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 4 (Postgrad Degree)</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL:</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Q11. Which of the following categories best describes your household yearly income?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Response</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1 ($30,000 or less)</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2 ($30,000 to $90,000)</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3 ($90,000 to $150,000)</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 4 ($150,000 or more)</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL:</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>