

Laguna Beach Resident Satisfaction Survey Results, 2021

As many have mentioned in texts and emails, Polco's survey of Laguna residents had problematic aspects, such as:

**The wording of questions, e.g., three different items, such as education, culture, and arts. Were respondents providing answers about education, or culture/arts?*

**The mail sampling frame, was labeled as a probability sample, but was based on responses, that seemed to have been mailed to residents who were Laguna business owners at a higher rate than Laguna's nonbusiness-owning residents*

**The online survey was not made available for residents' responses until right after Christmas on December 29.*

Let's start with a review of the direct mail survey responses, which was mailed out to a select group of 2,700 on November 19, 2021, and kept open until January 12, 2022.

It received 553 responses, with 82% indicating they owned a home, and 18% who reported they rented (page 4). Since the City's housing report data shows about 37% of Laguna's residents are renters, the mail survey sample appears flawed. Polco attempted to correct this bias by **"weighting"** the mail-in responses to bring them more in line with the City's figures (see page 66), or go to the URL at the bottom of this document.

The highest percentage of respondents were from the Central Village/Downtown area with 30%, followed by 20% from North Laguna – for 50% from these two areas. Since the greatest number of residents live outside these two areas, it again makes the sampling strategy appear questionable. 81% of the direct mail survey respondents reported voting in the last election.

In comparison, an open access online survey was made available to all residents right after Christmas and before New Year's on December 29, 2021, and kept open for 14 days. Despite being made available during the hectic holiday season - a time recommended against by survey research studies - the online survey received 1,290 responses. Similar to the direct mail survey, 84% of respondents indicated they owned a home and 16% reported renting (page 76).

Also, similar to the mail survey, the highest percentage of online respondents were from the Central Village/Downtown area, with 25% there, followed by 21% from North Laguna—a total of 46% from those two areas. The similar response rates from these particular areas raises the question of what characteristics do these two sections of town share with other neighborhoods?

Since 73% of the respondents in a **separate** Polco Laguna business survey (see URL below) indicated that they were residents, perhaps there were more respondents from the resident business owners than residents who don't own a business in Laguna? Again, another peculiarity since the vast majority of residents work elsewhere.

92% of online respondents reported voting in the last election.

Features Which Received The Most Favorable Votes

	Mail Survey	Online Survey
Fire Department	94%	94%
Preservation of Natural Resources	89%	87%
Parks and Recreation	83-87%	83-88%
Library	84%	72%
Police	83%	81%
Appearance of the City	82%	77%
Lower Forest as Pedestrian plaza	64%	66%
Canyon undergrounding utilities	60%	62%

Features Which Received the Most Unfavorable Votes (% Negative Responses)

	Mail Survey	Online Survey
Traffic congestion and flow	75%	79%
Affordable housing	67%	74%
City discourages resident involvement	55%	58%
Ranking poor-fair confidence in City government	55%	60%
Ease of public parking	22%	39%

What are the take-aways from the resident survey?

Despite the oddities in sampling, the things residents liked and disliked were remarkably similar between the mail and online surveys. Laguna residents love their outdoor spaces, recreation opportunities, the library, the fire and police departments, and the appearance of the City.

Laguna residents think **traffic congestion** is our biggest problem, followed by a lack of affordable housing, the ease of public parking, and a lack of trust/confidence in City government. The latter are things we must work to improve, and the favorable are things for us to protect and cherish.

See this URL for more information on each survey:

<https://www.lagunabeachcity.net/our-initiatives/community-survey-results>