

ORANGE COUNTY ANNUAL SURVEY
1985 Final Report

Mark Baldassare, Study Director

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Program in Social Ecology and
Public Policy Research Organization
University of California, Irvine

September, 1985

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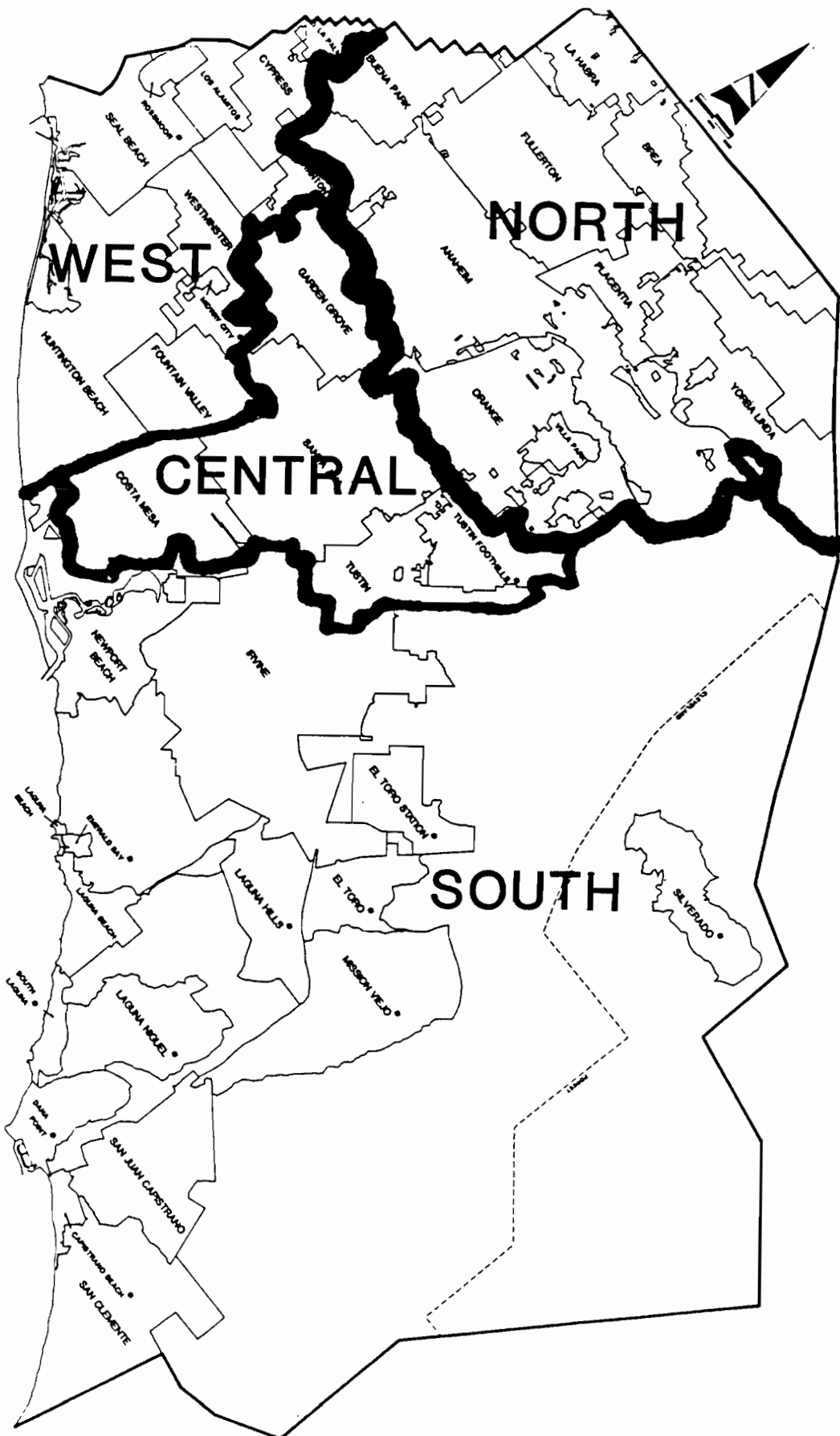
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Orange County

Geographic Regions



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 1985 Orange County Survey is the fourth annual survey of Orange County residents. The survey began as a collaborative funding effort of the University of California at Irvine and businesses, agencies and foundations in Orange County. This year for the first time the survey is wholly supported by Orange County community sponsorship and subscription. The 1985 survey also represents a turning point in another way. As a survey at mid-decade, it allows us to assess how far we have come and where we are likely to go in the 1980s in demographic trends, transportation, housing, community attitudes, public policies and politics. Comparing the results with the 1980 census and the three years of the Orange County Annual Survey from 1982 to 1984, this year's survey gives us a unique opportunity to evaluate Orange County over time.

In terms of demographic trends, there has been a 70% increase in the average income in Orange County from 1980 to 1985. While the 1980 census shows the average income to be \$23,000, the 1985 Orange County survey reveals an increase to \$39,000. The rising costs of renting and home-ownership have also resulted in denser living conditions and more crowding than in the beginning of the decade. Fewer people live alone. Households have fewer rooms, and according to the standard of crowding of 1.01 persons per room, more households are overcrowded.

Orange County is about five years ahead of the nation as a whole in terms of economic status and living conditions. That is, the United States is where the county was in average income and density in 1980. These differences are accentuated in certain geographic regions of the county.

Dividing the county into central, north, west and south geographic areas, the south forms the affluent extreme of the county with twice as many households earning over \$50,000 than the central county and a median income double that of the nation's. The north and west county stand between these two extremes. Trends from the earlier Orange County surveys indicate that the disparity between the south county and other regions is widening.

Transportation problems and preferred solutions have been tracked by the Orange County Survey for four years. This year we see a dramatic decline in freeway satisfaction. In 1982 32% of the population were satisfied with freeways. By 1985 only 18% are satisfied. The largest proportionate decline in satisfaction was between 1984 and 1985. Corresponding to this is an increase in the desire for building new freeways from 23% last year to 37% now. This is the first year since the beginning of the survey that in the south county building new freeways is more strongly supported than adding new lanes to existing freeways.

Of four transportation solutions currently being discussed in Orange County, residents most prefer employer incentives for carpooling. A large majority also supports new freeway lanes for buses and carpools. Developer fees are favored by 56% of residents. Toll roads were least desired with only 17% in favor. Preferred solutions vary by geographic area, with those who live or work in the south county most supportive of developer fees.

Investigating the changing cost of housing in Orange County, we find costs to be increasing but less than in the early 1980s. The proportional cost of renting has increased more than the cost of owning a home. In particular, mortgages have increased by \$200 since 1980 to an average of \$541 in 1985. Rental costs increased \$242 since 1980 to \$578 in 1985.

Housing costs are more expensive in the south county than in other regions. However, the change in costs has been small from 1984 to 1985, signaling a positive situation for new homebuyers.

In contrast to the leveling off of housing prices in the 1980s, most homeowners perceive that their homes have increased in market value over the last few years. This is consistent with the strong belief uncovered in last year's survey among Orange County residents that owning a home is a good investment. Also, in contrast to higher rental costs, only half of renters say their costs have increased in the last few years.

Residents were asked whether a number of changes in the county from 1980 to the present were for the better, worse, or made no difference. The most positively rated change in the county is the movement toward a high technology employment center, with over 80% in support. Next most favorably rated is the trend toward more commercial development. Also seen as changes for the better by the majority are fewer people moving into the county and home prices becoming fairly stable. Less population growth is seen particularly positively by south county residents. Favored by less than half of residents are the increasing numbers of racial and ethnic minorities in Orange County. Support for this is particularly low among central county residents. Also seen less favorably is the increase in the number of elected Republicans. Responses to this question, predictably, split along party lines. In sum, of the major trends in Orange County in the first half of the 1980s, residents seem to be more favorable toward the demographic and economic changes than the political and social trends.

Orange County residents are clear about what policies they want for the future. Asked what policies they would like to see in the next five years, there is great support for toxic waste disposal programs. A large majority also favor a continued moratorium on offshore oil drilling. Similarly, a majority favors government financial assistance for first-time homebuyers. Shown less support are policies to encourage apartment construction. Less favored also is a halt to all growth county-wide. Similarly, there is little support for building a large downtown in Orange County like big cities have. These findings are consistent with earlier survey findings that point to preferences for controlled growth rather than no growth and to the preference for homeownership among current renters. In general, residents want a continuation of the status quo in the county. They want their environment protected, homeowners rather than renters, planned growth, and a suburban rather than a big city atmosphere.

In continuing to monitor residents' political beliefs and stands on national issues, the 1985 survey focuses on attitudes toward social welfare spending. In terms of welfare recipients, there is widespread belief that there are Americans in need of public assistance. However, simultaneously, people believe that many abuse the current welfare system. Nearly three-fourths said that the federal government should not make further cuts in social programs for the truly needy. A majority would support increased federal funding for the truly needy. Residents prefer governmental as opposed to private contributions as the main source of assistance for poor people. However, most favor the "block" grant approach of localities deciding how monies are to be spent rather than the "categorical" approaches of the federal government deciding who is eligible for assistance. Thus, in

terms of residents' approach to social welfare, most favor more support for those in need but better screening strategies for recipients and more local determination of the use of funds.

Finally, attitudes on local government continue to be assessed in the 1985 survey. Generally, Orange County residents are satisfied with the current government structure. Most believe the current system of county and city governments sharing responsibilities is effective. Most oppose a merger of county and city governments. Most favor continuing the greater responsibility of city governments for their communities. In addition, a majority of residents are greatly concerned about Orange County problems, more so than problems on a local or on the state level. This indicates a county-wide identification and commitment among residents. And, in terms of their perceptions of the future of the county, more people, and an increasing number from past surveys, say Orange County will be a better place to live in the future.

The 1985 survey clarifies Orange County residents' perceptions of the past and their desires for the future of their communities. This mid-decade assessment of attitudes about and preferences for housing, transportation, government and public policy provides a guide for community leaders and decision-makers as to the shape of Orange County for the rest of the 1980s. The Orange County Annual Survey continues to be a useful tool for evaluating the present and planning for the future of Orange County.

ORANGE COUNTY ANNUAL SURVEY

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INTRODUCTION

The Orange County Annual Survey is in its fourth year. The 1985 survey reported here represents the first as a university-based research program with all its funding from external sources. I would like to again underscore the intended purpose of the Orange County Annual Survey that has guided its development since 1982: (1) to provide decision makers in the private and public sectors with valid and current information on Orange County residents; (2) to track shifts in important attitudes and population characteristics over time; (3) to study the social, economic, and political issues of Orange County from a nonadvocacy position; and (4) to help establish public discussion and enlightened debate in future public policy.

The theme of this year's survey is "Orange County at Mid-Decade." Many changes have been occurring in the 1980s as this metropolis evolves into a major place for residence and work. It seemed sensible in our committee discussions to use the 1985 survey as a mechanism to look backward five years at where we have come from and simultaneously to look forward five years at where we are going. We accomplish this by considering the changing social and economic facts, trends in residents' attitudes over time, and perceptions of the past, present, and future. The 1980 Census serves as a baseline to contrast income, housing, and household characteristics at the beginning of the decade with those today. The 1982 through 1984 Orange County Annual Surveys offer a basis with which to compare today's views on transportation, housing, and government with those registered earlier. Perceptions of changes which have occurred in this first part of the decade and preferences for public policies to address issues which will be with us in the second part of the decade offer evaluations about what the county is

becoming and how some positive changes might be facilitated. We think that the mixture of information presented in this survey is unique and groundbreaking for the Orange County Annual Survey.

The 1985 survey also examines some facets of Orange County life which were uncovered but not fully examined in last year's survey. We continue our analysis of attitudes on national issues by considering views towards social welfare spending. This topic obviously represents a major and unresolved domestic policy issue. For Orange County residents, it represents a potential clash of their social liberalism and fiscal conservatism which is of interest to our further understanding of political beliefs. We also focus again on attitudes towards local government by examining preferences for government restructuring. It is often said that suburban local government allows for too much diffusion of responsibility and too little central authority. Residents are thus asked about their evaluations of the current structure and their support for combining governmental authorities or redistributing the responsibilities of city and county governments. The attitudes towards local government and social welfare represent critical issues which, along with other information this year, ought to assist in the mid-decade review.

A finding kept emerging in the course of analyzing the 1985 survey. It seemed so critical to understanding Orange County today and in the future that it became a subtheme of this year's report. This year we analyze geographical divisions of Orange County which represent distinguishable communities in terms of social, housing, and public policy concerns. Orange County is separated into north, west, central, and south (see previous map). In examining the 1982 through 1985 surveys it is obvious that there are not only significant but also growing differences among these areas over time.

One benefit of this geographical analysis is the realization that Orange County can no longer be viewed as a simple homogeneous area. At its current stage of mature development it must be considered a large and complex region with varying landscape, residents, beliefs, and life styles.

The report is divided into the following sections. First, the methods of the survey are described including the sample, the data collection procedures and the content of the survey instrument. Then the findings are presented in seven separate sections. These include demographic trends, transportation, housing, perceptions of recent trends, support for future policies, social welfare spending, and local government and the future. A conclusions section summarizes the findings from this year's survey and relates the results back to the theme of Orange County at mid-decade and the special topic of regional differences within Orange County.

METHODS

Sample

The sample for the 1985 Orange County Annual Survey consists of 1,008 randomly selected residents who were interviewed by telephone. The sample is stratified geographically, with half of the sample selected from north of the Santa Ana River and half from the south. For data analyses, the sample is statistically weighted to represent the actual distribution of the Orange County population.¹

The sample in each area was chosen using a computer program which randomly generates telephone numbers from among working blocks of telephone exchanges. A working block is one that contains numbers in use. The total of telephone numbers generated within an exchange was in proportion to the number of residential phones represented by that exchange in the northern part of the county or the southern part of the county. Using this procedure, approximately 2,500 telephone numbers from the south and approximately 2,500 telephone numbers from the north were drawn. This procedure of random digit dialing ensures that unlisted as well as listed numbers are included in the sample. Also, since over 97% of the households in Orange County have telephones, random dialing yields a sample representative of the population of Orange County.

The Trolldahl-Carter Method was used in randomly selecting which adult member of the household was to be interviewed.² This method consists of enumerating the total number of adults in the household and the total number of men in the household. Then, using a prearranged grid, the interviewer selects the individual in the household for interviewing.

As further evidence of the representativeness of the sample chosen by the above methods, characteristics of the sample were compared to characteristics of the total Orange County population using the 1980 Census. On the basis of age, household composition, marital status, household size, and homeownership, the sample is representative of the population of Orange County. Characteristics of the 1982, 1983, and 1984 Orange County Annual Survey samples were also contrasted with the characteristics of the 1985 Orange County Annual Survey sample. Marital status, ethnicity, age, sex, and education were closely comparable in the four surveys.

The sampling error for this survey is plus or minus three percentage points. This means that if this survey were to be repeated 100 times, in 95 out of the 100 times the answers obtained for a particular question would match those we obtained in this survey within three points. The sampling error for any particular subgroup would be greater. These calculations assume that the data were collected under ideal circumstances. Since there are a large number of practical problems in conducting social surveys, the actual sampling error for any particular result might be slightly higher.

Data Collection and Survey Instrument

As noted above, the interviewing for the Orange County Annual Survey was done by telephone. Cost considerations and methodological improvements have led to telephone surveys' increased adoption in the social sciences. In addition, several studies show similar quality in telephone and face-to-face interviews.

Interviewers were closely supervised during the data collection. Interviewers participated in a two-hour training session on the Orange County Annual Survey instrument. Supervisors were available during the

telephone interviewing to answer questions of interviewers or respondents. The telephone system used also allowed supervisors to monitor interviews to correct for errors in administering the questionnaire.

The interviewing was done between June 10 and June 26, 1985. On weekdays, interviewing occurred between the hours of 5:30 and 10:00 p.m., and on Saturday between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. For each number in the sample, at least four call back attempts were made. The resulting sample of 1,008 represents 24% of the numbers dialed (4,287 in all). For 14%, a refusal to cooperate was received. Four percent could not be completed because the respondent did not speak English. The majority of calls not completed (56%) was due either to nonworking residential phone numbers, continual busy signals, or to no answers, which may indicate nonresidential phone numbers. The refusal rate for the survey was 37%, that is, 24% completions plus 14% refusals divided into 14%. This is consistent with the general refusal rate in surveys, which varies between 25% and 40%.³

The interview itself contained 100 questions and each survey on average took 20 minutes to complete (see Appendix D). The survey questions were designed and pretested over a six-month period. In the first stage, questions were developed as a result of focus groups conducted by U.C. Irvine students. A second stage involved meetings with relevant groups to review the topics and questions, including the Research Advisory Committee. A final stage involved extensive consultation between Mark Baldassare and Social Data Analysts, Inc. This was followed by three pretests of the interview including 20 persons prior to the actual fieldwork.

The interview began with several questions on housing and perceived changes in Orange County since 1980. These were followed by survey items pertaining to transportation attitudes and policy preferences. The next

series of questions was concerned with future public policy issues, local government attitudes, and social welfare programs. Then there were 35 closed-ended questions and an open-ended question pertaining to needs in Orange County. The needs questions were asked for the Orange County Needs Assessment Project and will be discussed publicly by that group at a later date. The interview ended with asking for factual information such as income, age, marital status, and household size.

FINDINGS

Demographic Characteristics

This year we focus on changes in key household and economic indicators between 1980 and 1985. In addition, demographic differences across geographic regions in Orange County are also considered. The subareas referred to throughout this study follow the divisions listed on the map at the beginning of the report.

Table 1 shows differences over time with figures from the 1980 U.S. Census and 1985 statistics from the Orange County Annual Survey. It is obvious that income has risen sharply since 1980. There has been a \$16,000 gain in household median income or a 70% rate of increase as the average income changed from \$23,000 in 1980 to \$39,000 at mid-decade. This income gain is far in advance of the inflation rate of approximately 30% during the same period.⁴ In addition, there are three times as many households today with over \$50,000 in income than there were in 1980. One in eleven had over \$50,000 at the beginning of the decade and more than one in four households is at this level in 1985.

The rate of increase in household income was about 8% for approximately a \$3,000 gain between 1984 and 1985. This gain represents an increase well

in advance of the inflation rate.⁵ However, the gain was considerably less than the 16% increase between 1983 and 1984, indicating that wages and incomes have been growing more slowly than at the earlier stages of the economic recovery.

There has been a slight decline in the average size of the Orange County home. The median number of rooms was 5.2 in 1980 and was 4.8 in 1985. Undoubtedly this is due to housing costs for homeowners and renters. At the same time, there has been a large drop in the number of one-person homes. The proportion of people living alone was 21% at the beginning of the decade and is 15.5% today. This is probably accounted for by the rising cost of rentals which is discussed later. The decline in persons living alone is offset by a higher proportion of married couples as well as unrelated individuals living together in the typical Orange County household. Smaller rooms and fewer people living alone combine to cause a slight increase in the proportion of overcrowded homes. While 5.6% of all households had 1.01 or more persons per room in 1980, there were 7.4% overcrowded households in 1985.

Comparisons between Orange County and the most recent national figures indicate some interesting differences in economic and household characteristics. The 1984 General Social Survey showed the national median household income as \$21,000 compared with \$39,000 for Orange County.⁶ Nine percent of the households nationwide had incomes over \$50,000 compared with 27% in Orange County. Comparing Orange County with the nation is thus similar to contrasting Orange County in 1980 with its income level today. The average persons per household was 2.42 in the nation and 2.84 in Orange County, with 22% of national households composed of persons living alone and 15.5% of Orange County households as one-person dwellings. In sum, Orange County is

well ahead of the national average in income. But housing units tend to have more people in them reflecting both population characteristics and housing costs.

As important as the demographic differences over time are the variations evident across regions of Orange County. The south county is especially distinct from the central county along several economic and household dimensions. The north and west county stand between these two extremes. Household income in the south county is well above the county-wide average and especially the central county level. Almost twice as many households in the south county have incomes over \$50,000 than in the central county, with 37% in the south county and only 20% in the central county. Housing units are also largest in the south county, while more overcrowded homes exist in the central county than elsewhere. The most one-person homes are found in the central and north county while the least are in the south and west county. There are thus sharp differences in income levels and housing conditions between two adjacent regions, that is the central and south areas, with the north and west regions being more similar to the county average along the five key demographic dimensions.

There are also signs that the socio-economic differences between central county and south county are increasing over time. The 1982 Survey found 13% of central residents and 23% of south residents with household incomes over \$50,000. In 1985 the proportion at this high income level had increased to 20% in the central county but also to 37% in the south county. The central county median income differed from south county's by \$6,000 in 1982 (\$32,000 versus \$26,000) and in 1985 that difference has increased to \$11,000 (\$43,000 versus \$32,000).

TABLE 1

DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES: OVER TIME AND ACROSS AREAS

Over Time	1980	1985
Median Income	\$23,000	\$39,000
Over \$50,000	9%	27%
Number of Rooms	5.2	4.8
Overcrowded Homes	5.6%	7.4%
One Person Homes	21%	15.5%

Across Areas	South	Central	North	West
Median Income	\$43,000	\$32,000	\$38,000	\$40,000
Over \$50,000	37%	20%	24%	27%
Number of Rooms	5.1	4.3	4.7	5.0
Overcrowded Homes	5.8%	11.9%	7.1%	5.9%
One Person Homes	15.0%	17.0%	18.0%	12.3%

TABLE 2

1985 HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN DIFFERENT GROUPS

Median for All Households	\$39,000
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By Household Type

Married with children	\$43,000
Married without children	\$41,000
Single living alone	\$30,000

By Household Work Status

One full-time worker	\$38,000
Two full-time workers	\$43,000

By Tenure

Homeowner	\$42,000
Renter	\$32,000

By Mortgage Payment

\$500 or less	\$38,000
\$501 to \$1,000	\$43,000
More than \$1,000	\$57,000

By Rental Payment

\$500 or less	\$26,000
\$501 to \$750	\$33,000
More than \$750	\$46,000

In Table 2 we review some social factors which distinguish income levels in Orange County. Nuclear family households have an average income of about \$43,000, which is well above the county average and that obtained by other household types. Two full-time worker households have, on average, about \$5,000 more in income than one full-time worker households. Home-owners have about \$10,000 more in income. There are wide variations in income levels within homeowner groups and renter groups. For instance, those making monthly mortgage payments of more than \$1,000 per year, which is the average cost for those owning a dwelling for two years or less, have incomes of \$57,000. Those who are paying over \$750 for monthly rent, which is one in five rentals in Orange County, have incomes around \$46,000.

Transportation

In this section we analyze a tracking question on freeway attitudes which we have asked since 1982 and examine preferences for four new solutions to Orange County's transportation problems. Then we consider transportation attitude differences across different regions and social groups.

Figure 1 indicates that there has been much movement in transportation attitudes during the 1980s and, especially significant, since the defeat of Proposition A last June. In 1982 there was 32% of the population saying they were satisfied with the freeways while today that proportion is 18%. Between 1984 and 1985 the proportion satisfied fell from 25% to 18%, the largest single year decline on record. The proportion of residents who favor building new freeways has increased from 25% to 37% during the 1982 to 1985 period. Between 1984 and 1985 alone the proportion of residents wanting to build new freeways increased from 23% to 37%, comprising the largest single year increase in support of this option. The 14% change was

accounted for by a 7% decline in freeway satisfaction and a 7% decline in those giving the option "add lanes to existing freeways." There is obviously new and increasing support for building additional freeways and a continuing decline in transportation satisfaction.

The reasons for the large shift in attitudes between 1984 and 1985 are difficult to establish. There are two possibilities. One is that Proposition A temporarily halted the slide in freeway dissatisfaction and increased support for adding lanes as residents weighed their inconveniences against new taxes. Another is that as the south county continues to be developed, and as the road situation there deteriorates, support for new freeways is increasing.

This year we asked about transportation solutions which are currently being discussed to solve Orange County's traffic problems. Four options were mentioned, that is, employer incentives for carpooling, setting aside a new freeway lane for buses and carpools, developer fees to help pay for new freeways, and making new Orange Country freeways into toll roads. Residents were asked whether each option was a good idea or a bad idea and the results are reported in Table 3. Nearly everyone answered that incentives for carpooling was a good idea. In reality, it should be noted that a very small proportion of residents actually carpool. Sixty-nine percent supported the high occupancy vehicle lane concept and 29% were opposed. Developer fees were favored by 56% of the residents with, again, about one third against. Toll roads for new freeways received the least support. Only one in six stated that toll roads were a good idea while 8 in 10 thought they were a bad idea.

The findings report a pattern seen again and again in the Orange County population. There is widespread recognition of a freeway traffic problem.

People generally favor approaches to solving the problem which will not cause them any inconvenience or personally cost them any money. Hence, the notion of encouraging other Orange County residents to carpool seems a good idea to most. This thus explains the support for employer incentives and high occupancy vehicle lanes. Developer fees are favored because, again, the approach suggests no direct cost to the resident. This solution may be given somewhat less support than carpooling options because some may perceive that developer fees will be passed along to them as future consumers. Toll roads receive virtually no support since personal payments for transportation innovations are most obvious in this option.

Developer fees and new freeway lanes for high occupancy vehicles are perhaps the most talked about proposals today. Forty-one percent of the residents favor these joint efforts. Two-thirds support both carpooling incentives and high occupancy lanes. Four in ten believe that carpooling incentives, high occupancy vehicle lanes, and developer fees are all good ideas. Only one in ten state that all four transportation solutions are good ideas.

Transportation preferences and freeway attitudes do vary in different groups. Table 4 indicates that south county residents are much more likely than others to favor building new freeways as well as developer fees to pay for new freeways. In fact, more south county residents favor building new freeways than support adding lanes for the first time since we began asking the freeway attitudes question.⁷ Older residents and higher income residents also are more likely than others to favor building new freeways. Younger persons favor developer fees and high occupancy vehicle lanes more

Figure 1
TRENDS IN FREEWAY ATTITUDES

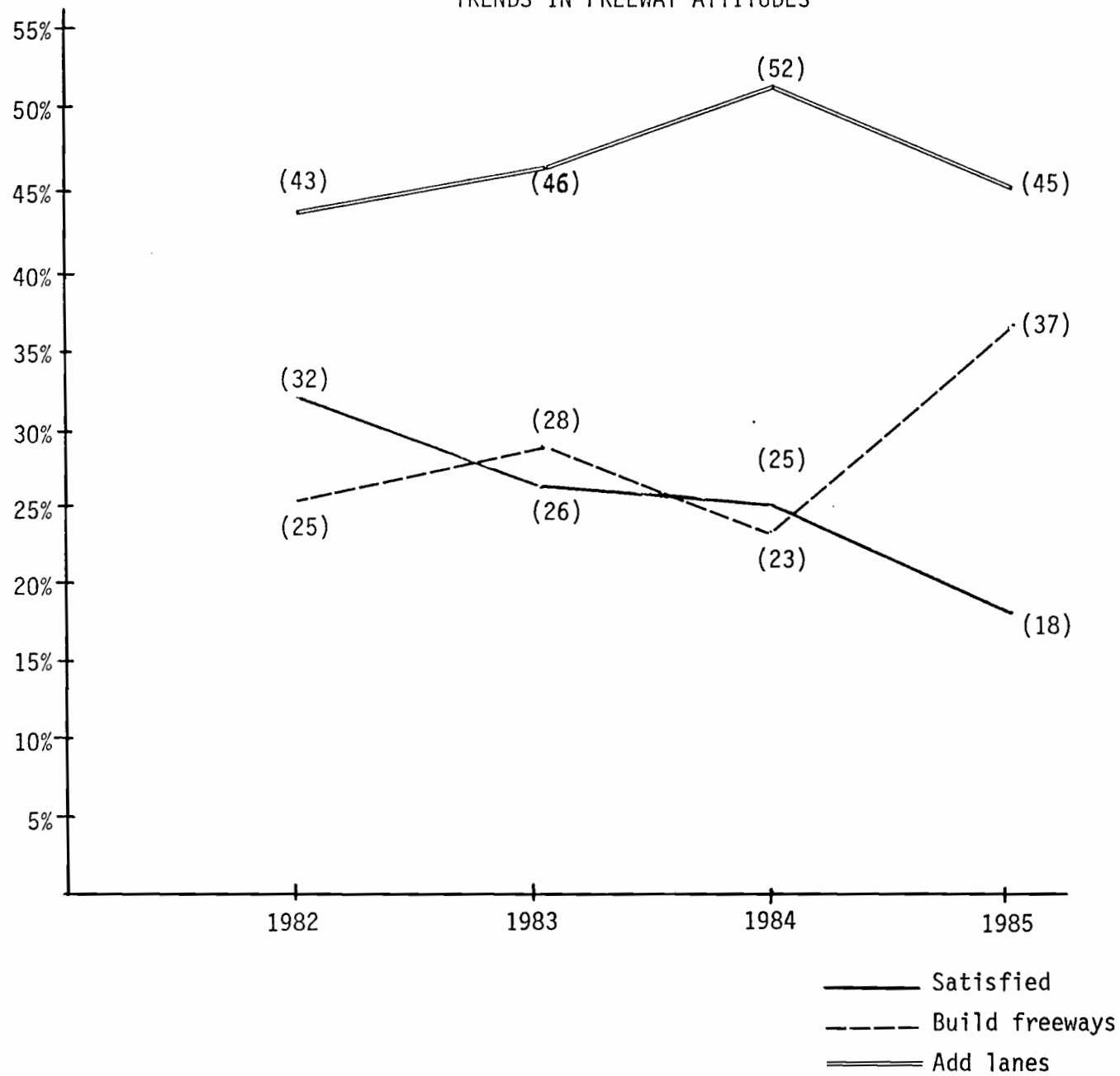


TABLE 3
PREFERRED TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS

	Good Idea	Bad Idea
Incentives for carpooling	86%	12%
New lanes for buses and carpools	69%	29%
Developer fees for new freeways	56%	37%
Toll roads for new freeways	17%	79%

TABLE 4
TRANSPORTATION PREFERENCES IN DIFFERENT GROUPS

	Build Freeways	Developer Fees	Carpool/Bus Lanes
<u>Total</u>	37%	56%	69%
<u>Area</u>			
North	38%	55%	70%
West	31%	57%	70%
Central	33%	48%	66%
South	43%	61%	66%
<u>Age</u>			
Under 25	29%	66%	79%
25 to 64	37%	53%	67%
65 or over	46%	59%	66%
<u>Income</u>			
Under \$26,000	26%	53%	76%
\$26 to \$50,000	35%	53%	67%
Over \$50,000	45%	55%	68%
<u>Party</u>			
Republican	39%	54%	67%
Democrat	37%	58%	66%

than others. Less affluent residents are also more in favor of carpool and bus lanes than are higher income residents. As we have seen in the 1982 survey, Democrats and Republicans are not distinguishable on freeway attitudes and transportation preferences.

The location of the workplace was also considered as a possible determinant of freeway attitudes and policy preferences. The same north, south, west and central divisions were used for residents' places of employment. Forty-four percent of those who worked in the south county were in favor of building new freeways and only 16% were satisfied with the current system. Sixty-one percent of the employed residents working in the south county favored developer fees, which is a considerably higher proportion than those who work at other county locations. These statistics closely parallel the findings for location of residence, largely because three-fourths of the south county residents who are employed work in the south county. As more people live in the south county, and as it emerges as a magnet for employment in the county as a whole, then one can expect for dual reasons that freeway attitudes will decline and pressure to build new freeways will increase.

Housing

In this section we review changes in housing costs since 1980 and also differences in mortgage and rental payments across regions of Orange County. Then, residents' perceptions of increasing rental costs and home values are also reviewed.

Mortgage costs on average increased \$200 since 1980, from \$341 at the beginning of the decade to \$541 in 1985 (see Table 5). During the same time, rental costs increased even more, from a 1980 median of \$336 to \$578

in 1985, for an overall change of \$242. The porportional increase between 1980 and 1985 was 59% for mortgage costs and 72% for rental costs. When considering that the income increase was 70% during this same period, mortgage costs increased at a substantially lower rate than income increased while rental costs kept pace with household earnings.

Mortgage costs actually declined by 2% between 1984 and 1985 for the first time since we have measured these changes. Meanwhile, rents increased but only at a rate of 4%. This is in comparison with rental and mortgage cost increases of over 20% between 1983 and 1984. The decline in mortgage costs is obviously good news to would-be homebuyers. It is due to many factors including lower interest rates, greater supply and more competitiveness in the housing market, and the building of smaller and less expensive dwellings in Orange County.

There is an important trend in the high rent and high mortgage categories when contrasting the 1983, 1984, and 1985 Orange County Annual Surveys. Mortgage payments over \$1,000 were made by 12% of all homeowners in 1983, 21% in 1984, and 22% in 1985. Rental payments over \$750 were made by 6% of all renters in 1983, 15% in 1984, and 20% in 1985. High cost rentals are growing at a more rapid rate than are high cost mortgages, reflecting why rental costs are on average more expensive than mortgage costs and, further, why rental costs are continuing to increase.

There are wide variations in housing costs, as in income and household characteristics, across regions of Orange County. South county residents spend the most in mortgage costs and in rental payments. Mortgage costs are the lowest in the central county, less by \$160 than in the south county. Rental payments are the lowest in the north county, where apartment renters are in the greatest numbers, and are \$200 less than in the south county.

Table 6 presents the mortgage costs and rental payments for different resident groups. Housing costs vary by income with, interestingly, residents earning \$36,000 or more paying the same amount of monthly costs whether they rent or own. It is more expensive on average to own an attached home than a detached home, undoubtedly reflecting time of purchase. Apartment renters pay about \$100 less than those who rent attached or detached dwellings. Housing costs vary by size of the dwelling although less for renters than for homeowners. Also, there are large differences in costs accounted for by time in the dwelling. Those recently purchasing a home are paying about \$1,000 in monthly mortgages, while those who moved in before 1980 are paying less than \$600 per month.

Homeowners perceive that their homes have increased in market value over the last few years. One-third said their homes increased a lot and two-thirds said they increased either a lot or some. This finding is in agreement with the 1984 survey which indicated that the overwhelming proportion of Orange County residents believe that owning a home is a good investment. It stands in stark contrast to the reality of a flattening off of Orange County housing prices during the 1980s. In contrast, only about half the renters viewed their costs as increasing a lot or some in the last few years. Many renters in Orange County have a relatively short length of stay in their dwellings and may not stay at one address long enough to experience meaningful differences in their rental costs.

There is evidence of differing views of the housing market within distinct Orange County groups. Of the homeowners, those who have lived in their dwellings for more than 10 years, who pay less than \$500 per month, and who each made \$26,000 per year are much more likely to say that their houses have increased a lot in market value. These people may be viewing

TABLE 5
THE HOUSING MARKET: OVER TIME AND ACROSS AREAS

Over Time	1980	1985		
Mortgage	\$341	\$542		
Rental	\$336	\$578		
Across Areas	South	Central	North	West
Mortgage	\$601	\$438	\$571	\$555
Rental	\$690	\$587	\$487	\$587
Perceived Increases	A Lot	Some	Little	None
Rent	29%	22%	17%	32%
Home Value	35%	33%	20%	12%

TABLE 6
1985 HOUSING PAYMENTS IN DIFFERENT GROUPS

	Mortgage	Rent
Median for All Households	\$542	\$578
<u>By Household Income</u>		
Under \$26,000	\$213	\$444
\$26,000 to \$35,000	\$485	\$592
\$36,000 to \$50,000	\$651	\$642
Over \$50,000	\$770	\$798
<u>By Housing Type</u>		
Detached	\$557	\$631
Attached	\$672	\$667
Apartment	--	\$541
Mobile Home	\$225	--
<u>By Housing Size</u>		
1 to 3 rooms	\$463	\$536
4 or 5 rooms	\$492	\$636
6 or more rooms	\$626	\$657
<u>By Years at Dwelling</u>		
2 or less	\$991	\$590
3 to 5	\$850	\$583
6 to 10	\$576	\$535
More than 10	\$217	\$411

the long-term increases rather than those occurring in the last few years. The renters who earn between \$26,000 and \$35,000, who pay rents between \$501 and \$750, who have lived in the residences for 3 to 5 years, and who live in apartments are the most likely to perceive that their rents have increased a lot. Perhaps most significant is the finding that 56% of renters in the \$501 to \$750 range say that rent has increased a lot. This price range, increasingly, is becoming the modal rental experience in Orange County.

Perceptions of Recent Trends

As Orange County enters a more mature stage of community development there are some changes which are occurring in its physical landscape and social structure. Also, some natural trends in politics and economics have found their way to Orange County. This year, in another attempt to focus on Orange County at mid-decade, we asked residents to judge the impact of changes that have been underway in the first half of the 1980s.

We asked all residents who have lived in the county since before 1980, "Here are some ways in which Orange County has changed since 1980. For each one, please tell me whether the change has been for the better or the worse or if you think it has made no difference." Responses to the six questions which followed are presented in Table 7. The changing economic base of Orange County towards a high technology employment center received the most favorable reviews. Over 80% thought this was an improvement and few believed this was a change for the worse or made no difference. Residents clearly view this trend as an advantage which Orange County has over regions in which "sunset" industries predominate. The trend towards more commercial development was also viewed favorably by a sizable majority. The transition from residential to commercial development which has been occurring as land

becomes more expensive, and as employers seek locations near new residential developments, is probably seen as strengthening the economy and people's job and wage prospects. The slowdown in the migration to Orange County and the fact that home prices have not been rising as rapidly as in the previous decade received favorable responses by slightly more than a majority. These related demographic trends obviously are seen as easing the pressure on two sensitive problems in Orange County, that is, housing costs and traffic congestion. Two other trends received less favorable reviews. Fewer than half said that the increasing numbers of racial and ethnic minorities was a change for the better. A similarly mixed review was given to the increasing number of Republicans elected in Orange County. In all, residents seem more favorable towards the demographic and economic changes underway than the political and social trends.

It is equally interesting to note the responses regarding changes for the worse and no difference. The question evoking the most "worse" responses was concerned with home prices becoming stable. This is probably because many homeowners would not be receiving the kinds of property equity they had expected upon purchase or received in the past. The question may have had even more negative judgments had it not been for the benefits of a less steep escalation of home prices for Orange County's renters. The questions receiving the most "no difference" responses were racial and ethnic mix and more Republicans elected. Many people in Orange County may not have yet experienced the greater ethnic diversity in the county since minorities are relatively segregated in central and north county neighborhoods. People also have apparently seen no noticeable changes in their localities due to the presence of more Republicans elected to government offices.

Some important variations in attitudes towards recent trends are evident across geographic regions. Table 8 shows that the south county residents are the most likely to say that fewer people moving in is a change for the better. Also, the central county residents are the least likely to say that an increasing racial and ethnic mix is a change for the better. The facts that south county residents are less favorable towards growth and central county residents are less favorable towards social diversity must be considered, in both cases, as partial rejections of ongoing trends which are occurring more dramatically in these two areas than elsewhere in the county.

Other variations in social and political groups are also reported in Table 8. Homeowners look less favorably towards commercial development and more favorably towards fewer people moving to Orange County. Long-term residents and Republicans also are more likely to say that fewer people moving in is a change for the better. Lower income residents look less positively at the increasing racial and ethnic heterogeneity of Orange County than other residents.

A final comment is in order regarding the responses to the "more elected Republicans" question. This evoked a very partisan response, with almost all Republicans saying this was a change for the better and a large majority of Democrats viewing this trend as a change for the worse. This is a major reason why it is difficult to have Orange County residents objectively assess the effects of political change. This also may reflect the fact that local politics in Orange County is affected by political party labels despite the periodic attempts to remove partisanship from local races.

TABLE 7
PERCEPTIONS OF RECENT TRENDS

	Better	No Difference	Worse
High tech employment	82%	7%	6%
Commercial development	60%	12%	23%
Fewer people moving in	57%	12%	25%
Home prices fairly stable	51%	12%	32%
Racial and ethnic mix	47%	23%	24%
More elected Republicans	46%	27%	16%

TABLE 8
VIEWS OF RECENT TRENDS IN DIFFERENT GROUPS

	Commercial Development	Fewer People Moving In	Racial Mix
Total Change for Better	60%	51%	47%
<u>Geographic Area</u>			
North	59%	56%	46%
West	63%	52%	53%
Central	59%	58%	41%
South	57%	65%	51%
<u>Years in County</u>			
6 to 10	60%	46%	49%
11 or more	60%	60%	47%
<u>Tenure</u>			
Own	59%	60%	48%
Rent	63%	51%	47%
<u>Income</u>			
Under \$15,000	58%	52%	45%
\$15,000 to \$25,000	54%	64%	40%
\$26,000 to \$35,000	65%	55%	50%
\$36,000 to \$50,000	55%	54%	46%
\$51,000 to \$75,000	61%	59%	50%
Over \$75,000	69%	66%	57%
<u>Party</u>			
Republican	61%	62%	47%
Democrat	59%	56%	49%

Support for Future Policies

In this year's survey we wanted not only to ask people what they thought of the changes which had taken place since 1980 but, equally as important, what they would like to see occurring in the last five years of this decade. We looked at six long-term and somewhat futuristic policies for Orange County. The options were introduced with a statement which read, "Would you like to see each of the following occur in Orange County in the next five years?" Answers given were "yes," "no," or "don't know."

The results in Table 9 suggest that there are widely varying opinions on each of the policy options. As usual in Orange County public opinion polls, environmental pollution concerns rise to the top of the list. Local programs for toxic waste disposal and a continued moratorium on offshore oil drilling are the policies people want most for the remainder of the 1980s. The next concern, close behind, is housing. Over half the residents favor government financial assistance for first time homebuyers. This is also a fairly typical response in Orange County given concerns about housing costs and homeownership attainment. The three remaining future policies received a much lower level of public support. These were, in order, policies to encourage apartment construction, a halt to all growth county-wide, and building a large downtown area like big cities have. A lack of enthusiasm for apartments and a downtown area is consistent with the suburban and homeowner oriented preferences for community development which are evident in Orange County. Weak support for a no growth policy is consistent with the 1984 survey findings that pointed to people's preferences for planned growth rather than no growth. In essence, the policy preferences in total mean that people want a continuation of the status quo to be assured. They want the environment protected, homeowners rather than apartment renters, planned

TABLE 9
SUPPORT FOR FUTURE POLICIES

Toxic waste disposal	79%
No offshore oil drilling	60%
New homebuyers assistance	59%
Apartment construction	44%
No growth	31%
Build a large downtown	20%

TABLE 10
SUPPORT FOR FUTURE POLICIES IN DIFFERENT GROUPS

	Toxic Disposal	Homebuyers Assistance	Apartment Construction	No Growth
Total	79%	59%	44%	31%
<u>Age</u>				
Under 25	81%	82%	59%	40%
25 to 34	81%	71%	44%	30%
35 to 44	75%	51%	39%	28%
45 to 54	83%	47%	34%	27%
55 to 64	74%	57%	45%	30%
65 or older	79%	35%	46%	33%
<u>Tenure</u>				
Own	77%	51%	38%	30%
Rent	84%	76%	54%	33%
<u>Sex</u>				
Men	76%	55%	47%	26%
Women	82%	63%	41%	35%
<u>Income</u>				
Under \$15,000	77%	72%	57%	43%
\$15 to \$25,000	82%	67%	49%	38%
\$26 to \$35,000	83%	68%	46%	38%
\$36 to \$50,000	76%	58%	45%	25%
\$51 to \$75,000	82%	52%	41%	27%
Over \$75,000	76%	45%	40%	20%
<u>Party</u>				
Republican	79%	46%	41%	29%
Democrat	78%	66%	41%	29%

growth and economic development, and an Orange County that maintains its current physical and social character rather than becoming a big city area.

There are some interesting differences in support of future policies across social groups. These are summarized in Table 10. Results concerning the offshore oil drilling question have already been reviewed elsewhere.⁸ Women and renters are more interested in future toxic disposal policies than others. Republicans and Democrats are equally concerned about waste disposal. Homebuyers assistance and apartment construction are most favored by the young, renters, and lower income residents. These types of residents are most likely to need expanded housing opportunities. Low income groups, women, and those under 25 years of age are somewhat more supportive of no growth policies. However, no growth does not receive majority support in any age, tenure, sex, income, or party group.

An additional comment should be made about the responses of renters to the homebuyers' assistance versus the apartment construction proposals. Three-fourths of the renters wanted homebuyers assistance while only slightly more than half wanted apartment construction. Fewer renters thus identify their future needs with the rental housing stock. In this county, then, future solutions to housing needs are still viewed as attaining homeownership.

Social Welfare Spending

Last year we began an exploration into Orange County residents' attitudes towards political issues of national scope. Attitudes towards social, fiscal, law and order, and defense topics were addressed. There was an unexpected mix of strong social liberalism and fiscal conservatism in the responses we received. This led us to consider how Orange County residents

perceive perhaps the most controversial of all domestic issues, that is, social welfare spending. By definition this topic involves social and fiscal concerns and, thus, attitudes towards welfare should help us have a clearer picture of Orange County's unique political beliefs.

Six questions were asked about social welfare, including attitudes towards the recipients, programs, and funding methods. The results in Table 11 indicate some mixed feelings about social welfare issues. There is widespread belief that there are Americans in need of public assistance but, at the same time, an equally strong perception that many people abuse the current welfare system. Only one in three said that there are very few truly needy Americans while three in four viewed many current recipients as actually ineligible for welfare.

Most Orange County residents favor the "safety net" for the truly needy and a majority would even like to see welfare funding increased. Nearly three in four said that the federal government should not make further cuts in social programs for the truly needy and about 60% would support increased federal funding for the truly needy.

Orange County residents prefer public assistance to private assistance approaches to helping poor people. Only one in three states that private industry and individual contributions should be the main sources of assistance for poor people. While residents believe that the federal government should be the source of funds, they also think that the localities should decide how welfare monies should be spent. Fifty-five percent favor the "block" grant approach of localities being given a lump sum to be spent as needed while only 39% support a "categorical" grant approach of the federal government setting eligibility standards and deciding how the money should be spent.

There are really no national survey questions which are directly comparable to those asked of Orange County residents. However, the general trend of support for social welfare spending was evidenced in a recent Harris survey. In that national poll of 1,292 also conducted in June, there were consistent results that cuts in defense spending should occur before there are any more cuts in domestic social programs. Support for maintaining current levels of social spending was found for a wide variety of specific programs.⁹ Comparable national questions have not been asked before on the recipients, alternatives to public assistance, and funding allocation methods.

Attitudes towards welfare spending and funding methods do vary by social characteristics and perceptions of recipients (see Table 12). Lower income residents and renters are the least in favor of spending cuts and the most in favor of increased spending. Democrats are less in favor of spending cuts and more in favor of spending increases, although a majority of Republicans want increased spending. There are no differences in support of lump sum funding by income, tenure, or party affiliation. Residents who believe that there are few poor people and much welfare fraud are less likely than others to support no further cuts or to favor increased welfare spending. Federal eligibility standards, as opposed to lump sum funding, is slightly more popular among those who perceive few needy Americans and many ineligible welfare recipients.

In brief, Orange County residents perceive that there are needy Americans who are deserving of funding. They are not, however, convinced that the welfare system screens out the needy from others and are less inclined to have the federal government decide on who should receive funding

TABLE 11
SOCIAL WELFARE SPENDING

The Recipients

Very few Americans are needy 36%

Many recipients are ineligible 74%

Programs for the Needy

No Federal cuts 72%

Increase funding 62%

Use private contributions 32%

Funding Methods

Lump sum to localities 55%

Federal standards 39%

TABLE 12
WELFARE ATTITUDES IN DIFFERENT GROUPS

	No Cuts	Increase Funding	Lump Sum Funding
Total	72%	62%	55%
<u>Income</u>			
Under \$15,000	83%	79%	52%
\$15,000 to \$25,000	74%	66%	57%
\$26,000 to \$35,000	77%	69%	56%
\$36,000 to \$50,000	71%	56%	56%
\$51,000 to \$75,000	72%	56%	58%
Over \$75,000	62%	57%	59%
<u>Tenure</u>			
Own	70%	60%	55%
Rent	77%	66%	55%
<u>Party</u>			
Republican	63%	52%	58%
Democrat	83%	74%	54%
<u>Few Poor</u>			
Yes	67%	56%	52%
No	76%	65%	56%
<u>Welfare Fraud</u>			
Yes	68%	59%	54%
No	81%	72%	60%

than the local government. They are also not willing to see social welfare responsibilities transferred to the private sector and citizens.

Local Government and the Future

An essential ingredient to a mid-decade assessment is an evaluation of how local government is currently perceived and what changes in local government are favored for the future. Orange County has a unique form of local government, with over 20 municipalities and a county government sharing authority. Sometimes this system is described as diffuse and cumbersome and some recommend a restructuring to deal with local and regional problems. We asked several questions along these lines of investigation (see Table 13). Also, several questions which elicit general attitudes towards Orange County and the locality are examined as potential contributors towards local government attitudes.

One question asked whether "the current system of the county government and city government sharing responsibilities for solving problems in Orange County is effective." Fifty-six percent said it was effective, 29% said it was not effective, and 15% had no opinion on the subject. When questioned about the preference for a merger of county government and city governments into one large countywide government only 29% favored this proposal, while 63% opposed it and 8% had no opinion. Another question asked whether the county government or the city government should have more responsibility in the respondent's community. Fifty-eight percent said the city should have more and 28% said the county should have more. The response is probably a perception by the residents as to the existing division of responsibilities, that is, that cities do more than county government. These three questions

indicate that Orange County residents are satisfied with the current government structure and do not favor a regional government with sole authority over local and county-wide affairs.

A question which has been repeated since 1983 asked if Orange County in the future would be a better place to live or a worse place to live than it is now. More people thought it would be a better place than a worse place. Since 1983 there has been a 5% increase in the proportion of people stating that Orange County will be a better place to live in the future. This is a trend which, in addition to attitudes towards local government, suggests that people are in general satisfied with current local affairs and are optimistic about the future.

In Table 14 we review social and geographic factors which distinguish people's attitudes towards local government. Perceptions of local government do not vary between geographic regions. Nor do effectiveness ratings differ considerably by years in the county or by political party affiliation. Support for local government merger decreases with time in the county and Republican affiliation but not by geographic region. Those who favor more city government responsibilities are more likely to be long-term residents and Republicans and less likely to be south county residents. Since a larger proportion of south county residents live in unincorporated areas, administered by the county government, it is understandable that these residents would more often favor increased county government responsibilities.

Attitudes towards Orange County also predictably affect attitudes towards local government. People who expressed a great deal of concern about Orange County's problems (item discussed below) were more likely to rate local government as less effective, to oppose merger plans, and to favor

TABLE 13
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND THE FUTURE

Local government system is effective

Yes	56%
No	29%

Merger of city and county governments

Favor	29%
Oppose	63%

Who should have more responsibility

City	58%
County	28%

Orange County in the future

Better place	42%
Worse place	34%
No change	22%

TABLE 14
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ATTITUDES IN DIFFERENT GROUPS

	Local Gov't. Effective	Merger of Local Gov'ts.	City should Do More
Total	56%	29%	58%
<u>Geographic Area</u>			
North	56%	27%	61%
West	58%	32%	59%
Central	54%	29%	63%
South	55%	27%	51%
<u>Years in County</u>			
5 or less	58%	31%	51%
6 to 10	56%	34%	55%
11 or more	54%	26%	62%
<u>Party</u>			
Republican	58%	23%	62%
Democrat	54%	31%	56%
<u>Concerned About County</u>			
A great deal	53%	29%	60%
Somewhat	57%	28%	56%
Not at all	73%	25%	54%
<u>County Future</u>			
Better	61%	32%	62%
Worse	44%	25%	55%
No change	66%	32%	56%

more city responsibilities than those who expressed some concerns or no concerns with Orange County's problems. Those who stated that the county would be a worse place to live in the future thought government was less effective, opposed merger plans, and were against more city responsibilities more often than those who perceived that the county would become a better place to live in the future. More involvement with community concerns and more optimism towards the future obviously increase positive sentiments towards the current government system and limit the preferences for changing the local governmental structure.

Another important finding is the distinction in responses to a series of three questions about concerns with local area or city, Orange County, and state problems. All were answered on a scale ranging from a great deal, to somewhat, to not at all concerned about its problems. Fifty-five percent were a great deal concerned about Orange County problems, 46% with local or city problems, and 41% with state problems. More people do indicate interest in "cosmopolitan" than in "local" issues and a majority show a great deal of concern about Orange County. Also, about one in three residents express a great deal of concern about local, county, and state-wide problems. This sizable group would seem to represent the proportion of highly civic-minded Orange County adults.

CONCLUSIONS

Orange County has changed in significant ways since the decade began. Incomes have risen sharply for the average household, placing more than one in four in the over \$50,000 per year bracket. Homes have become smaller and

mortgage payments and rents have increased. One-person households have declined as housing costs have led single persons to double up with unrelated others or live with their relatives. Freeway traffic has gotten worse. Only one in six is satisfied with freeways today in contrast with one in three in 1982. Support for building new freeways in Orange County is beginning to take hold. In all, the mid-decade review points to an Orange County which has experienced phenomenal growth in its standard of living alongside of its two nagging problems, that is, freeway congestion and high housing costs.

The residents we interviewed gave us several indications of how they perceive the changes in the 1980s and what they would like to see occur in the remainder of the decade. They told us clearly what they do not want Orange County to become. They are opposed to downtowns, toll roads, a sole county-wide authority, and policies to encourage apartment construction. In other words, they want to see Orange County maintain its local and suburban flavor. They are willing to see growth and commercial development, in fact they look forward to the economic advantage they bring, as long as the environment is not spoiled by pollution. They favor new freeways and innovative approaches to encouraging high occupancy vehicles, but they do not want to pay for transportation and they probably would not carpool themselves. They would rather see programs to financially assist new homebuyers than development policies to encourage more apartments. They are lukewarm towards the increasing racial and ethnic diversity in the county. The profile suggests a population which has benefited from the growing economic importance of Orange County in terms of jobs and income. As a group, the residents of this area would like to see their standard of living continue to climb without the region being transformed into a large urban area.

The county continues to develop and change its form despite people's desires to maintain the status quo. Orange County is evolving into a mature region with increasingly distinct subcommunities. Over time as the population grows there is a natural tendency for people and activities to redistribute themselves along the lines of common economic and social characteristics. High income groups and low income groups are becoming more segregated in Orange County. High paying white collar employment is also becoming more spatially separated from low paying employment. South county is increasingly the home of high status residents and jobs while central county has the concentration of low status residents and jobs. The evidence is less certain as to the status of the north and west regions. There is a momentum in the formation of subcommunities which is evident in changes between the 1982 survey and the 1985 survey. The preferences for a south county move of affluent homeowners, upper middle class residents, and families noted in the 1984 survey will certainly hasten the income inequalities between different Orange County regions.

What are the implications of the regional distinctions occurring within Orange County? It will be increasingly invalid for market researchers, planners, academics, and policy makers to discuss Orange County per se without considering its separate subcommunities. Over time, we expect that the public agenda will become different in each region. For instance, while building freeways may top the list in the south county, it may be that community redevelopment is most significant in the central county. It will be more difficult, then, to mobilize residents over county-wide issues. Residents will perceive themselves as living in distinct social worlds which are larger than their locality but smaller than the county.

The county's mixture of social liberalism and fiscal conservatism is evident in opinions towards national social welfare policies. Residents believe that there are needy people who should not have their current benefits reduced. They also think that the current system pays many ineligible recipients and that the local government and not the federal government ought to distribute the welfare monies. They do not want welfare responsibilities transferred from the public sector to corporations and individuals. This is a pattern of responses which helps further to build the people of Orange County's political beliefs. Residents believe there are serious social problems deserving of funding but do not trust government and especially higher levels of government in spending the money effectively to deal with the problems. They fall short in taking greater personal responsibility for addressing civic issues.

In this year's survey we also asked specifically about residents' commitment to the county and views towards the local government system. The majority of residents are very concerned about county-wide affairs, in fact, more so than local or state issues. But their vision about how to tackle local and county-wide issues favors local area involvement and the current system of city and county government sharing responsibilities. There is little interest in a super-government controlling the county region or the county government usurping more of the city governments' responsibilities. County residents do care about the county as a whole and not just the local area in which they live. We should not forget, however, that they have strong political beliefs about taxes, local governmental power, and the limitations of governmental bureaucracies. These beliefs will influence their views about current county-wide problems and set the parameters for future actions.

FOOTNOTES

1. The actual interviewing and data reduction were administered by Social Data Analysts, Inc., of New York. Their methods and data weighting procedures are further described in a technical report prepared for UC, Irvine, dated July 1, 1985. The weighting was based upon the 1980 Census figures and the 1984 population estimates which both indicated that 57% of the population was in the north county and 43% was in the south county.
2. From "Random selection of respondents withing household surveys" by V. Trol Dahl and R. Carter, 1964, Journal of Marketing Research, 1, 71-76.
3. Reported in James Frey, 1983, Survey Research by Telephone, Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.
4. Source is the Consumer Price Index for Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim published by the Division of Labor Statistics, State of California. Information from 1980 through June 1985 was reviewed.
5. Same source reported in Footnote 4.
6. Survey conducted by the National Opinion Research Center, University of Chicago. Codebook and frequencies distributed by the Roper Center.
7. Build freeways versus add lanes responses in the south county are as follows: 1982 = 29% to 38%; 1983 = 35% to 41%; 1984 = 30% to 48%; and 1985 = 43% to 41%.
8. Reported in UC Irvine press release dated August 15, 1985.
9. Reported in the Orange County Register, July 18, 1985.

APPENDIX A

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APPENDIX D

ORANGE COUNTY SURVEY - IV

June 1985

HELLO, my name is _____ and I am calling for the University of California at Irvine. We are conducting a survey to find out how Orange County residents feel about their community. Your household has been randomly selected to be included in this study.

PROCEDURE FOR DETERMINING DESIGNATED RESPONDENT IN HOUSEHOLD:

1. In order to find out who in this household I should interview, I first need to know how many persons 18 years or older live here...including yourself? (CIRCLE A CODE NUMBER ON THE HORIZONTAL SCALE TO INDICATE TOTAL NUMBER OF ADULTS IN HOUSEHOLD)
2. And how many of these are men? (RECORD BELOW ON VERTICAL SCALE)

Total Number of Men in the Household	Total Number of Adults in the Household:			
	1	2	3	4
0	Woman	Oldest Woman	Youngest Woman	Youngest Woman
1	Man	Man	Man	Oldest Woman
2		Oldest Man	Youngest Man	Youngest Man
3			Youngest Man	Oldest Man
4 or more				Oldest Man

Use the chart above to determine who in the household you should interview. Simply intersect the two variables from questions 1 and 2 (total number in household and total number of men in household) -- for example, if there are three adults in the household and two of them are men, you would interview the youngest man in the household. Observe the following:

1. If the designated respondent is not at home, make an appointment to call back and record callback date and time on call record sheet.
2. If necessary, re-introduce yourself and re-read the introductory paragraphs to the designated respondent.
3. If the designated respondent will not be available in the next 2 weeks, then conduct the interview with the adult who told you the designated respondent is not available. Record below the reason why the designated respondent will not be available and if a surrogate is interviewed, the relationship of the surrogate to the designated respondent.

Reason designated respondent not available:

IF respondent asks who is doing this survey, say:
This survey is being done under a research grant to a group of professors at the University of California at Irvine. Professor Mark Baldassare can be contacted if you want more information. His phone number is 714-856-5449.

1

2

First, I'd like to ask you some questions about where you currently live.

3

4

5. Is the place where you currently live a:

- 1 = single family attached home (e.g., condo or townhouse)
- 2 = single family detached home
- 3 = apartment
- 4 = mobile home
- 5 = other

DON'T READ [9= Refuse

5

6. How many rooms do you have in your home not counting hallways, kitchen and bathrooms?

(Code directly from 1 to 8 or more)
9= Don't Know or Refuse

6

7. How long have you lived in Orange County?

- 1 = 5 years or less [SKIP to Q. 14]
- 2 = 6 to 10 years
- 3 = more than 10 years

DON'T READ [9= Don't Know or Refuse [SKIP to Q. 14]

7

Here are some ways in which Orange County has changed since 1980. For each one please tell me if you think that the change has been for the better or the worse or if you think it has made no difference.

(Categories for Q. 8 to Q. 13)

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 = better | DON'T [4= Has not changed |
| 2 = worse | READ [5= Don't Know |
| 3 = no difference | [9= Refuse |

8. There are more jobs in high technology industries.

8

9. Fewer people are moving into Orange County.

9

10. More Republicans have been elected in Orange County.

10

11. The population is ethnically and racially more mixed.

11

12. The cost of buying a home has remained relatively stable.

12

13. There are more business parks and commercial areas.

13

14. How long have you lived at your current residence?

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 1= less than a year | DON'T [7= Don't Know |
| 2= 1 to 2 years | READ [9= Refuse |
| 3= 3 to 5 years | |
| 4= 6 to 10 years | |
| 5= 11 to 20 years | |
| 6= more than 20 years | |

14

15. Do you own or rent your present residence?

1 = own [SKIP to Q. 18] DON'T [9= Refuse [SKIP to
2 = rent READ Q. 20]

15

16. What is your current monthly rental payment?

1 = under \$250 DON'T [6= Don't Know
2 = \$251 to \$500 READ [9= Refuse
3 = \$501 to \$750
4 = \$751 to \$1,000
5 = more than \$1,000

16

17. In the last few years has your rent increased:

1 = a lot DON'T [5= Don't Know
2 = somewhat READ [9= Refuse
3 = very little
4 = not at all

17

[SKIP to Q. 19]

18. What is your current monthly mortgage payment
(not including taxes and insurance)?

1 = under \$250 DON'T [7= Don't Know
2 = \$251 to \$500 READ [8= No Mortgage
3 = \$501 to \$750 [9= Refuse
4 = \$751 to \$1,000
5 = \$1,001 to \$1,500
6 = over \$1,500

18

19. In the last few years do you think that the market value of
the home you live in has increased:

1 = a lot DON'T [5= Don't Know
2 = somewhat READ [9= Refuse
3 = very little
4 = not at all

19

20. Which of the following best describes how you feel
about the freeways in Orange County?

1 = the current freeway system is satisfactory, or
2 = more lanes should be added to the existing
freeways but no new freeways should be built, or
3 = we need to build new freeways to prevent an
increase in traffic congestion

DON'T READ [4= Don't Know [9= Refuse

20

There are many different solutions that have been suggested
to help solve some of Orange County's transportation problems.
For each of the following tell me whether you think this is
a good idea or a bad idea.

(Categories for Q. 21 to Q. 24)

1 = a good idea DON'T [3= Don't Know
2 = a bad idea READ [9= Refuse

21. having employers provide incentives for carpooling.

21

22. charging all land developers in the county fees to
help pay for new freeways.

21

23. making new Orange County freeways into toll roads.

23

24. setting aside a new freeway lane for carpools and buses.

24

Would you like to see each of the following occur in Orange County within the next five years?

(Categories for Q. 25 to Q. 30)

1 = yes
2 = no

DON'T [3= Don't Know
READ [9= Refuse

25. government financial assistance for first time homebuyers

25

26. local programs for toxic waste disposal

26

27. drilling for oil off the coastline

27

28. building a large downtown area like big cities have

28

29. policies to encourage apartment construction

29

30. a halt to all growth in Orange County

30

31. Do you think that the current system of the county government and city governments sharing responsibilities for solving problems in Orange County is effective?

```
1 = yes
2 = no
```

DON'T [3= Don't Know
READ [9= Refuse

31

32. Compared to the way it is now would you prefer to see the county government have more responsibility or a city government have more responsibility in your community?

1 = county
2 = city

DON'T READ [3= no change
[4= Don't know
[9= Refuse

32

33. Would you favor or oppose the merger of county government and city governments into one large countywide government?

1 = favor
2 = oppose

DON'T [3= Don't Know
READ [9= Refuse

33

How much are you concerned about the problems of the following places?

(Categories for Q. 34 to Q. 36)

1= a great deal
2= somewhat
3= not at all

DON'T [4= Don't Know
READ [9= Refuse

34. the local area or city in which your home is located. Are you concerned a great deal, somewhat, or not at all about its problems?

34

35. the State of California. Are you concerned a great deal, somewhat, or not at all about its problems.

35

36. Orange County. Are you concerned a great deal, somewhat, or not at all about its problems.

36

37. In the future do you think Orange County will be:

- 1 = a better place to live than it is now
- 2 = a worse place to live than it is now
- 3 = no change

DON'T READ [4= Don't Know [9= Refuse

37

Do you agree or disagree with each of these statements about public assistance or welfare programs.

(Categories for Q. 38 to Q. 41)

- 1 = agree DON'T [3= Don't Know
- 2 = disagree READ [9= Refuse

38. Private industry and individual contributions should be the main sources of assistance for poor people.

38

39. No matter what else has to be cut, the federal government should not make further cuts in social programs aimed at helping the truly needy.

39

40. Many people who are currently receiving welfare are not really eligible.

40

41. The federal government should increase the amount of money available to help the truly needy.

41

42. There are very few people in this country who are really poor and unable to help themselves.

42

43. In managing public assistance or welfare programs would you prefer that:

- 1= the federal government give a lump sum of money to a locality and then let the local officials determine how the money should be spent, or
- 2= the federal government should specify the eligibility requirements and exactly how much money people should get

DON'T [3= Don't Know
READ [9= Refuse

43

We would like to know what you think of different groups living in Orange County. Would you say that overall each of the following groups has very serious problems, somewhat serious problems, or no serious problems?

(Categories for Q. 44 to Q. 53)

1 = very serious problems DON'T [4= Don't Know
2 = somewhat serious problems READ [9= Refuse
3 = no serious problems

- | | |
|--|----|
| 44. First, senior citizens. Would you say that overall they have very serious problems, somewhat serious problems, or no serious problems? | 44 |
| 45. What about women. Would you say that overall they have very serious problems, somewhat serious problems, or no serious problems? | 45 |
| 46. teenagers. Would you say that overall they have.... | 46 |
| 47. young adults. Would you say that overall they have.... | 47 |
| 48. children. Would you say that overall they have.... | 48 |
| 49. minorities. Would you say that overall they have.... | 49 |
| 50. the mentally disabled. Would you say that overall they have.. | 50 |
| 51. the physically disabled. Would you say that overall they have... | 51 |
| 52. foreign immigrants. Would you say that overall they have.... | 52 |
| 53. low income residents. Would you say that overall they have.... | 53 |

Now I would like to ask you some questions about local services. For each service I would like you to consider the needs for additional funding, that is, in addition to what it already gets, and tell me whether you consider this service to have a high priority for additional funding, a medium priority, or a low priority.

(Categories for Q. 54 to Q. 69)

1= high priority for additional funding
2= medium priority for additional funding
3= low priority for additional funding

DON'T READ [4= Don't Know [9= Refuse

- | | |
|---|----|
| 54. public health care. Would you say that this should have a high priority, medium priority, or low priority for additional funding? | 54 |
| 55. public schools | 55 |
| 56. parks and recreation programs | 56 |
| 57. local roads and freeways | 57 |
| 58. public transportation | 58 |

1= high priority for additional funding
2= medium priority for additional funding
3= low priority for additional funding

DON'T READ [4= Don't Know [9= Refuse

59. police protection. Would you say that this should have a high priority, medium priority, or low priority for additional funding?

59

60. financial assistance for poor families....

60

61. protecting the environment from pollution....

61

62. planning for growth....

62

63. child care....

63

64. counseling services....

64

65. immigrant services....

65

66. drug and alcohol abuse programs....

66

67. shelters for people without housing....

67

68. legal aid services....

68

69. assistance for abused family members....

69

Overall, how would you rate each of these features of Orange County life? Would you say you are...

(Categories for Q. 70 to Q. 78)

1 = very satisfied DON'T [4= Don't Know
2 = somewhat satisfied READ [9= Refuse
3 = not at all satisfied

70. culture and the arts. Would you say that you are very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, or not at all satisfied with this?

70

71. recreation....

71

72. health facilities....

72

73. job opportunities....

73

74. housing opportunities....

74

75. government effectiveness....

75

76. local news coverage....

76

77. volunteer organizations....

77

78. community leaders....

78

105. Considering these and other issues in Orange County, what do you think are the most serious needs? (PROBE FOR UP TO 5)

105 106 107 108 109 110 111 112 113 114

115. What is your current work status?

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|-------|-------------------------|
| 1 = full time employed | DON'T | [8= Don't Know [SKIP to |
| 2 = part time employed | READ | [9= Refuse Q.122] |
| 3 = unemployed [SKIP to Q. 122] | | |
| 4 = student [SKIP to Q. 122] | | |
| 5 = retired [SKIP to Q. 122] | | |
| 6 = keeping house [SKIP to Q. 122] | | |
| 7 = other [SKIP to Q. 122] | | |

115

116-120 What is the zip code of your current workplace?
(City, if known)

116 117 118 119 120

121. On a typical day, how much of a problem is traffic congestion when you travel to and from work? Would you say it is:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-------|----------------|
| 1 = no problem at all | DON'T | [4= Don't Know |
| 2 = a slight problem | READ | [9= Refuse |
| 3 = a great problem | | |

121

122. What is your age?

- | | | |
|-----------------|-------|------------|
| 1 = 18 to 24 | DON'T | [9= Refuse |
| 2 = 25 to 34 | READ | |
| 3 = 35 to 44 | | |
| 4 = 45 to 54 | | |
| 5 = 55 to 64 | | |
| 6 = 65 or older | | |

122

123. What was the last grade of school that you completed?

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-------|----------------|
| 1 = some high school or less | DON'T | [6= Don't Know |
| 2 = high school graduate | READ | [9= Refuse |
| 3 = some college | | |
| 4 = college graduate | | |
| 5 = post-graduate degree | | |

123

124. What is your current marital status?

- | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------|--|
| 1 = married | | |
| 2 = divorced or separated | [SKIP to Q. 126] | |
| 3 = widowed | [SKIP to Q. 126] | |
| 4 = single/never married | [SKIP to Q. 126] | |

DON'T READ [9= Refuse

124

125. What is your spouse's current work status?

- | | | |
|------------------------|-------|------------|
| 1 = full time employed | DON'T | [9= Refuse |
| 2 = part time employed | READ | |
| 3 = unemployed | | |
| 4 = student | | |
| 5 = retired | | |
| 6 = keeping house | | |
| 7 = other | | |

125

126. Do you live with your parents?

1 = yes DON'T [3= Don't Know
2 = no READ [9= Refuse

126

127. How many persons, including yourself, live in your household?

(Code directly 1 to 8 or more) 9= Refuse

127

128. How many adult full-time workers are in your household?

(Code directly from 0 to 8 or more) 9= Refuse

128

129. How many children 17 and under are in your household?

(Code directly from 0 to 8 or more) 9= Refuse

129

130-134 What is the zip code of your current residence?

130 131 132 133 134

135. What is the category of your total household or family income?

1 = under \$15,000 DON'T [7= Don't Know
2 = \$15,000 to \$25,000 READ [9= Refuse
3 = \$26,000 to \$35,000
4 = \$36,000 to \$50,000
5 = \$51,000 to \$75,000
6 = over \$75,000

135

136. Are you currently registered to vote in Orange County?

1 = yes DON'T [3= Don't Know [SKIP to
2 = no [SKIP to Q. 138] READ [9= Refuse Q. 138]

136

137. In which party are you currently enrolled?

1 = Republican DON'T [5= Don't Know
2 = Democrat READ [9= Refuse
3 = Independent
4 = Other

137

138. Would you consider yourself to be politically:

1 = liberal DON'T [4= Don't Know
2 = middle of the road READ [9= Refuse
3 = conservative

138

139. Are you of Hispanic origin or descent?

1 = yes DON'T READ [9= Refuse
2 = no

139

140. How would you describe your race?

1 = Asian DON'T READ [9= Refuse
2 = Black
3 = White
4 = Other

140

141. What is your sex?

1 = male
2 = female

141

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

Phone Number: _____

PERCEPTIONS OF NEEDS AMONG THE GENERAL PUBLIC:

THE 1985 ORANGE COUNTY ANNUAL SURVEY*

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JULY 1985

*PREPARED FOR THE ORANGE COUNTY NEEDS ASSESSMENT STUDY WHICH SPONSORED THE SURVEY QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE PUBLIC'S ATTITUDES TOWARDS NEEDS PRESENTED IN THIS REPORT.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The general public's perceptions of needs were gathered during the 1985 Orange County Annual Survey involving 1,008 telephone interviews in June. Adult residents were asked to state the most serious needs in Orange County and questioned on the need for additional service funding, the problems of different groups, and satisfaction with specific quality of life attributes. The results were as follows:

* The most serious needs in Orange County according to the public are transportation, mentioned by 54%, and housing, mentioned by 29%. The other frequently noted needs were education, population growth, crime and safety, the environment, and drug and alcohol abuse.

*Several services are perceived by about 60% of the public as needing more funding. These are environmental protection, services for abused family members, public schools, drug and alcohol programs, and police protection.

*No resident group is viewed as having very serious problems by a majority of the public. The groups perceived most in need are low income residents, the mentally disabled, the physically disabled, adolescents, and seniors.

* Residents are very satisfied with specific quality of life attributes in Orange County. Housing opportunities, government effectiveness, community leaders, and local news coverage had the least positive ratings but even these had more residents satisfied than not satisfied.

*There are significant differences in perceived needs among north, central, west, and south county residents. South county residents are the most likely to perceive transportation and growth as serious problems. North and central county residents are the most concerned about crime, childrens' needs, and social services funding.

*Perceived needs also vary among age, sex, and income groups. Wealthier residents are most concerned about transportation and growth issues. Less affluent residents more often want increased funding for poor families, child care, counseling, housing shelters, and legal aid. Women place a higher priority on additional funding for social services while men are more likely to want transportation funding increased. Younger adults place more emphasis on funding services for the needy, mid-life adults on transportation needs, and older adults on public transportation and the problems of senior citizens.

The findings suggest that there is considerable consensus on the most serious needs in Orange County. Transportation and housing are perceived as the most serious problems and several services receive high ratings for additional funding. However, there are major differences in perceived needs across regions and social groups which may increase over time. Future studies should provide a more intensive analysis of the public views on the most serious needs. The public's perceptions of needs should also be examined for changes periodically.

PERCEPTIONS OF NEEDS AMONG THE GENERAL PUBLIC:

THE 1985 ORANGE COUNTY ANNUAL SURVEY

INTRODUCTION

Orange County has experienced decades of rapid growth and industrialization. Communities in such circumstances can have a major shift in their social character without sufficient changes in the institutions and services which meet people's needs. This is why it is timely and important to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment of Orange County and its distinct geographic subareas. There is also a lack of valid and detailed information concerning the county's most pressing and current needs. It is possible under these conditions that funders, service providers, and policymakers may make decisions about the future based upon an inaccurate image of Orange County and its residents.

This report focuses on the public's views of needs in the local community. Information is gathered through a survey which is representative of the general population. There are several reasons why a systematic opinion poll is an essential component of a needs assessment. The opinion poll is a means of gathering detailed information about what a representative group of individuals sees as the needs of an area. Further, many residents bring their biases and

personal experiences into their perceptions of the needs of a community. In some instances they may look away from, and in others cases they may exaggerate, the known needs of a locality. The opinion poll also offers information about the popularity of policy options. It can thus be used to shape public debates and develop a political consensus.

The survey questions asked of the Orange County residents follow a logic which deserves clarification. There are two ways of asking needs questions. One is to ask an individual about his or her own needs. Another way asks residents about the needs they have seen in their own communities. We chose the latter approach for several reasons. Personal needs may be of a low incidence in public opinion polls. Also, individuals can be reluctant to present themselves in need due to social desirability effects. Finally, asking about community problems would seem to present an inclusive list of needs, that is, both the individuals' needs and their observations of others' needs.

This report is divided into several sections. The methods used to measure the general public's perceptions are next presented. Then, the responses to each of the needs questions in the opinion poll are summarized. Following this is a discussion of the factors which influence the need perceptions, such as age, sex, income, and years and place of residence in the county. Finally, some general conclusions are made about perceived needs in Orange County.

METHODS

The information on public opinion towards needs in Orange County was gathered as part of the 1985 Orange County Annual Survey. The survey sample of 1,008 residents was a random stratified sample of all telephone subscribers in Orange County, California. Since 97 percent of all Orange County households have telephones we may assume that the sample is representative of the adult population. Also, statistical comparisons between the 1980 census and survey sample characteristics indicate that the survey achieved a high level of correspondence with the known characteristics of the general population.

The survey methods and questions were designed by Professor Mark Baldassare of U.C. Irvine and the field work was conducted under his direction by Social Data Analysts, Inc. of New York. The sample was selected using a procedure in which the computer randomly selects the last four digits of a telephone number from within working blocks of existing telephone exchanges. In order to do this, we developed a list of existing exchanges, gathered a list of working blocks within those exchanges, and calculated the number of residential telephones within each working block. Then, a computer program randomly generated telephone numbers within a particular exchange in proportion to the total number of residential telephones in that same exchange.

Using the above procedure, we generated 5,000 random telephone numbers. The numbers were divided in two separate lists with half the numbers from north of the Santa Ana River and half from south of the Santa Ana River. The lists were used to complete approximately 500 interviews from north Orange County and about 500 interviews from south Orange County. However, in this report and in all documentation the data are weighted so as to represent the actual geographic distribution of the population in Orange County which is 57 percent in the north and 43 percent in the south.

The interviewing took place between June 10 and June 26. Telephone calls were made between 5:30 P.M. and 10:00 P.M. on weekdays and 10:00 A.M. and 4:00 P.M. on weekends. All the interviewers had previous survey research experience and extensive training on the survey questions prior to this study. Also, supervisors were present at all times to monitor and validate the interviews and to correct any errors that may have occurred. A total of 4,287 numbers were dialed in order to complete the 1,008 interviews. For every number in the sample at least four call back attempts were made. In most instances when a number was dialed but did not result in a completed interview it was because the number was not working, or there was a continual busy signal, or there was no answer, or because the randomly selected household member was never home. For 4 percent of the telephone numbers the interview could not be completed

because the respondent did not speak English and for 14 percent there was a refusal to cooperate. Compared with most community surveys, which have recently been experiencing increases in refusals, this interview evoked a high level of interest and willingness to cooperate.

When a household was reached an adult over 18 years of age was randomly selected using the Trøldahl-Carter method. In this method, the interviewer begins the interview by asking how many adults there are in the household and how many adult men there are in the household. Then, using a prearranged grid involving these two features, the interviewer selects an adult in the household to be interviewed. This procedure insures that age and sex characteristics are adequately represented.

The interview itself contained 100 questions and each survey on average took 20 minutes to complete. The survey questions were designed and pretested over a six month period. In the first stage, questions were developed as a result of focus groups conducted by U.C. Irvine students. A second stage involved meetings with relevant groups, in the case of the needs questions this was with the Needs Assessment Steering Committee. A final stage involved extensive consultation with Social Data Analysts, Inc. and three pretests of the interview prior to the actual fieldwork.

The interview began with several questions on housing, transportation, growth, and public policy. Then, there were

35 closed-ended questions pertaining to needs in Orange County. Ten questions asked people to rate the seriousness of problems experienced by different groups. Sixteen questions asked for priority rankings for additional funding for specific services. Nine questions asked about the degree of satisfaction with different quality of life attributes. These were followed by an open-ended question with up to 5 answers concerning the perception of the most serious needs in Orange County. The needs questions from the survey are all presented in Appendix A. The needs questions were specifically designed to complement issues being addressed in community leader, focus group, and service provider studies. The interview ended with asking factual information about the respondent and the household.

The margin of error for a survey of 1,008 individuals is plus or minus 3 percentage points. This means that if the survey were to be repeated 100 times, in 95 out of 100 times the answers obtained for a particular question would match those we obtained within 3 percentage points either way. Of course, the sampling error for any subgroup would be larger. For instance, for women it is 4.5% due to the sample size of approximately 500. Also, these calculations do not take into account forms of error other than those due to sampling which may occur during interviewing.

FINDINGS

Perceived Needs for Additional Funding

The first responses examined are regarding the perceived need for additional service funding. This part of the survey was introduced with this statement, "Now I would like to ask you some questions about local services. For each service I would like you to consider the needs for additional funding, that is, in addition to what it already gets, and tell me whether you consider this service to have a high priority for additional funding, a medium priority, or a low priority." A list of 16 services was read and the responses given for each service category are presented in Table 1.

There are 5 services for which about 60 percent of the population states that there is a high priority for additional funding. These are environmental protection, services for abused family members, public schools, drug and alcohol abuse programs, and police protection. In each case, less than 10 percent of the residents consider the service as a low priority for funding. The differences in the ratings for each service are within the margin of error so that it is impossible to rank order these needs.

A second group eliciting a lower priority for additional funding involves six services. These receive high priority ratings of between 39 percent and 44 percent. Again, the differences between these service ratings are not

Table 1

PERCEIVED NEEDS FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING*

Service Category	% High Priority	% Medium Priority	% Low Priority
Environmental Protection	60	30	8
Abused Family Members	59	32	7
Public Schools	58	32	9
Drug and Alcohol Abuse	57	31	11
Police Protection	57	34	9
Roads and Freeways	44	41	14
Shelters for the Homeless	42	40	15
Planning for Growth	41	37	20
Public Health Care	41	41	15
Child Care	40	41	17
Public Transportation	39	41	19
Poor Families	30	49	18
Counseling Services	23	46	29
Parks and Recreation	22	51	26
Legal Aid Services	21	48	29
Immigrant Services	16	41	39

* Source is the 1985 Orange County Annual Survey by Mark Baldassare, U.C. Irvine. The responses for a question do not total to 100 percent due to don't knows and refusals.

large enough to be meaningful. These include roads and freeways, shelters for the homeless, planning for growth, public health care, child care, and public transportation. No more than 20 percent gives any service in this grouping a low priority.

A third grouping represents the services which receive the lowest priority for additional funding. Between 16 percent and 30 percent give five services high priorities for additional funding. In rank order from most to least perceived need they are financial assistance for poor families, counseling services, parks and recreation, legal aid services, and immigrant services. In this grouping, with the exception of financial assistance for poor families, there are more people giving a low priority for additional funding than there are those giving a high priority ranking.

Perceived Problems of Specific Groups

The next series of questions involve evaluations of different groups in Orange County. An introductory statement read, "We would like to know what you think of different groups in Orange County. Would you say that overall each of the following groups has very serious problems, somewhat serious problems, or no serious

Table 2
PERCEIVED PROBLEMS OF SPECIFIC GROUPS*

Orange County Group	% Very Serious Problems	% Somewhat Serious Problems	% No Serious Problems
Low Income Residents	43	41	13
Mentally Disabled	36	34	17
Adolescents	34	39	25
Physically Disabled	32	39	21
Seniors	29	43	23
Minorities	25	46	25
Foreign Immigrants	24	39	33
Young Adults	19	44	35
Children	18	32	47
Women	13	37	46

* Source is the 1985 Orange County Annual Survey by Mark Baldassare, U.C. Irvine. The responses for a question do not total to 100 percent due to don't knows and refusals.

problems?" A list of 10 groups followed and the findings are summarized in Table 2.

There are five groups for whom more of the public believe they have very serious problems than no serious problems. Low income residents are ranked as having the most serious problems of all, with 43 percent stating this group has very serious problems. The four other groups have about one in three residents noting very serious problems and these include the mentally disabled, adolescents, the physically disabled, and senior citizens.

Two groups have one in four residents perceiving that they have very serious problems. These ratings are for minorities and foreign immigrants. At least as many perceive that these same groups have no problems at all.

The least concern is evidenced for young adults, children, and women. Less than 20 percent views each of these groups as having very serious problems. In the case of children and women nearly half of all residents perceive these groups as having no serious problems at all.

Ratings of Quality of Life Features

There is a third category of needs that is not concerned with the well being of specific groups or the adequacy of different services but, rather, with the more general quality of life in Orange County. The section of the survey began, "Overall, how would you rate each of these

features of Orange County life? Would you say you are very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, or not at all satisfied?" The results involving 9 quality of life attributes are presented in Table 3.

In general, ratings of the quality of life in Orange County are very positive. At most, only about one in five express dissatisfaction. The four features which received not satisfied ratings from 13 percent to 22 percent of residents are housing opportunities, government effectiveness, community leaders, and local news coverage. Even in these instances there are more people who are very satisfied than there are people who are not at all satisfied with each attribute. Of course, it is evident that the vast majority of people are at least to some extent satisfied with these quality of life features.

Five other attributes receive even more positive ratings. Less than 10 percent note dissatisfaction and, in every case, about half the population is very satisfied. These include job opportunities, culture and the arts, volunteer organizations, health facilities, and recreation. These are viewed as among the most favorable features of Orange County life.

Table 3

RATINGS OF QUALITY OF LIFE FEATURES*

Quality of Life Attribute	% Not Satisfied	% Somewhat Satisfied	% Very Satisfied
Housing Opportunities	22	41	34
Govt Effectiveness	20	55	21
Community Leaders	14	52	26
Local News Coverage	13	34	52
Job Opportunities	9	33	54
Culture and the Arts	7	50	41
Volunteer Organizations	6	39	45
Health Facilities	5	36	55
Recreation	5	32	62

*Source is the 1985 Orange County Annual Survey by Mark Baldassare, U.C. Irvine. The responses for a question do not total to 100 percent due to don't knows and refusals.

Perceived Needs from Open-Ended Question

Immediately after the series of questions on different groups, specific services, and the quality of life there was a general question on needs which asked, "Considering these and other issues in Orange County, what do you think are the most serious needs?" This was an open-ended question which probed for as many as 5 answers from the respondent.

The purpose of the open-ended question is to elicit consideration of all the possible needs, both mentioned and not mentioned, during the interview. In all, 945 residents gave at least one answer to this question. Two perceived needs were given by 730 people, three perceived needs by 370, four perceived needs answers by 145 people, and 5 perceived needs by 47 people. There were 2,237 open-ended responses given in all or, on average, between two and three perceived needs by those who provided answers. Sixty three people said they had no answer or refused to provide the interviewer with any perceived needs.

The verbatim answers were coded and identified in 39 separate needs categories (see Appendix B). The answers are analyzed in two formats. First, we consider whether a specific need was mentioned at all in the course of the five answers given by the respondent. Next, we consider whether a specific need was mentioned first by the respondent. The rankings are similar using either method as seen in Table 4.

The 11 most commonly mentioned perceived needs are now reviewed.

By far the most mentioned needs by residents are transportation and housing. Over half noted transportation as one of their answers and about one third mentioned housing as one of their answers. It is striking that one third gave transportation as their first answer. The importance of transportation and housing was expected before the study. The salience of these issues is confirmed by the distance between the proportions mentioning transportation and housing and those giving any other responses.

Yet, it is important to note the next most commonly perceived needs. Five categories elicited responses by between 11 percent and 18 percent of the sample. These are, in order of frequency mentioned, education, population growth, crime and safety, the environment, and drug and alcohol abuse. The first four of the perceived needs have percentages which are so similar that it is impossible to rank order them in terms of perceived needs.

There are four other needs which were mentioned by between 7 and 10 percent of the residents. These include foreign immigrants, child care and abuse, senior citizens, and jobs and employment. After these perceived needs there is a very low frequency of responses for the remaining categories of answers.

Table 4

PERCEIVED NEEDS FROM OPEN-ENDED QUESTION*

"Considering these and other issues in Orange County, what do you think are the most serious needs?"

	% Mentioned At All	% Mentioned First
(1) Transportation	54	33
(2) Housing	29	13
(3) Education	18	6
(4) Population Growth	17	8
(5) Crime and Safety	16	6
(6) The Environment	14	4
(7) Drug and Alcohol Abuse	11	6
(8) Foreign Immigrants	10	4
(9) Child Care and Abuse	9	3
(10) Senior Citizens	7	3
(11) Jobs and Employment	7	2

* Source is the 1985 Orange County Annual Survey by Mark Baldassare, U.C. Irvine. The percentages are based upon the 945 individuals who gave answers to this question.

Perceived Needs by Geographic Region

Until now the analysis has focussed on the responses reported throughout Orange County by its residents. Of course, regions within Orange County differ in age, condition, and social character. For this reason it is important to examine differences in perceived needs among the major subcommunities.

Orange County was divided into four subareas as illustrated in Appendix C: north, central, south, and west. Of the total 1,008 responses there were at least 200 residents and not more than 300 residents representing each geographical area. Chi square tests confirmed that all the differences noted here are statistically significant.

There were important differences among regions in the frequency with which certain needs were mentioned. In the south region a higher proportion of people noted transportation and growth as serious needs than in the other regions. Two out of three south county residents mentioned transportation and one out of four mentioned growth. Crime was noted more often in the central region than elsewhere, with one out of four noting this perceived problem. Finally, about 12 percent mentioned child care and abuse in the north county while substantially fewer noted this in other areas.

Significant differences emerge with regard to the perceived needs for additional funding. The north and

central county are much more likely than elsewhere to note needs for social services. These include assistance for poor families, shelters for the homeless, legal aid services, and drug and alcohol abuse programs. These heightened perceptions of need undoubtedly reflect problems found more frequently in these areas.

Also, there are some differences in ratings of quality of life attributes due to area of residence. These consistently suggest that south county residents are more satisfied with their localities than other county residents. Evaluations of culture and the arts, recreation, and volunteer organizations are more favorable in the south than in the north, central, or west county.

Perceived Needs by Resident Characteristics

The needs people perceive in their communities can also vary by personal characteristics. In another analysis age, sex, income, and length of residence in the county were examined. Again, all the differences reported here were statistically significant based upon chi square tests.

First, there are some large differences in what concerns residents based upon their annual household income. Wealthier residents in Orange County are more concerned about transportation and growth issues than less affluent residents. The lower income residents tend to more often

recognize serious needs in specific groups, such as the mentally disabled, the physically disabled, foreign immigrants, and senior citizens. Also, residents with below average incomes are more likely to cite the need for additional funding for social services including assistance for poor families, child care, counseling, shelters for the homeless, and legal aid. Lower income residents are also more dissatisfied than middle and upper income residents with job opportunities, housing opportunities, and recreation in Orange County.

Men and women also tend to view needs in Orange County differently. Women have heightened concerns about the problems of seniors, teens, and children. For almost all services women place a higher priority on increasing funding than men do. The one exception is that men place a higher priority on funding roads and freeways. Men also mentioned transportation more often than women did in their open-ended responses. Women are more dissatisfied with job opportunities than men are in Orange County.

There are some important age differences in perceived needs. The patterns suggest unique concerns of young, mid-life, and older adults. Younger adults perceive the needs of foreign immigrants and minorities as greater problems than do the mid-life and older adults. Younger adults also place a higher priority on funding social services such as public health, schools, police, assistance for poor families, child care, drug and alcohol abuse programs, immigration services,

and shelters for the homeless. Mid-life adults are more concerned than others with improving roads and freeways and planning for growth. Older adults seem most concerned about additional funding for public transportation and perceive greater problems among children, teens, young adults, and seniors. Satisfaction with life quality attributes in Orange County, particularly housing and job opportunities, increases with age.

Length of residence in Orange County is the least impressive factor in explaining differences in perceived needs. Very few significant effects emerged. More recent residents were somewhat more concerned with environmental issues than others. Greater length of residence led to more willingness to spend additional funds on roads and freeways, greater satisfaction with quality of life attributes such as health facilities and community leaders, and somewhat greater perceptions of problems among adolescents, young adults, and seniors.

CONCLUSIONS

There are several conclusions which can be drawn from the current study. There seems to be agreement among residents about what are the most pressing problems in Orange County. In examining the overall pattern of results there is also considerable replication of the findings across different modes of asking the questions. These factors are discussed below as well as some observations and suggestions for further analysis.

It is most evident that the greatest perceived needs in Orange County are in the areas of service provision. The service needs dwarf concerns with the problems of different groups or dissatisfaction with community features. This reflects two facts about Orange County. It is predominantly an affluent area with most community members happy with the current state of affairs and viewing other residents in similarly positive conditions. Also, it is an area which has experienced rapid growth and industrialization leaving residents feeling that certain services are inadequately provided. It is important that residents' perceptions of community needs as service-oriented be understood in this context since this does distinguish Orange County from many other metropolitan communities.

The overriding concerns of Orange County residents are with transportation and housing. The perceived needs for improvements in these two areas has evolved as Orange County

has made the transition to a major place of work and residence. Transportation is the factor which affects the most people since few are immune from experiencing freeway congestion. Housing costs and availability has had felt impacts on most renters and is perceived as a community problem even by some homeowners. These findings have been evident in many countywide surveys in the last few years.

There seems to be some consensus about a second grouping of needs in Orange County. The issues of education, crime and safety, population growth and the environment, drug and alcohol abuse, and child care and abuse were all raised by substantial proportions of residents in the open-ended question. The need for additional funding in parallel service areas was evident elsewhere in the survey, that is, for environmental protection, services for abused family members, public schools, drug and alcohol programs, and police protection. Not all of these perceived needs are unique to Orange County. There is increasing regional, statewide, and national concerns about child abuse, environmental pollution, and drug and alcohol abuse. The issues of police and crime safety, education and the public schools, and population growth are probably more specifically Orange County issues. In the same way as transportation and housing, these issues can be tied to the real and perceived problems occurring in a growing and changing community.

In making generalizations about perceived needs one should not lose sight of the fact that Orange County is a collection of many communities and an increasingly diverse population. This is an important fact for the funder, policymaker, and service provider. The resident's location and income level was seen to have an important bearing on the perception of needs. The south county and affluent resident is more concerned about growth, the environment and transportation while the north county and less affluent resident sees greater needs for providing services to deal with social problems. These views reflect recent trends in population redistribution which may make the public's priorities even more divided by place of residence and affluence over time. The south county is developing into a wealthy area with transportation needs and the north and central county are where poverty and social problems are more concentrated. An increasing lack of consensus could impede county wide solutions to solving problems.

There are some subjects for which residents' concerns do not match with some evident trends in population change and service provision. One such example is that foreign immigrants and minorities are seen by the vast majority of residents as low priorities for additional funding and as not having serious problems. Yet, there has been tremendous growth in these populations and by all accounts the real problems of these subcommunities are substantial. The public may need to be made more aware of the existence of

these groups since, to a large extent, their presence to many seems counter to the image of Orange County.

There are other areas in which the perception of problems does not seem to match the public's willingness to commit funds for improvements. The most obvious example in this survey is transportation. It received the highest ranking as a problem and yet roads and freeways and public transportation received relatively modest ratings for additional funding. This, of course, is an issue made obvious by the earlier defeat of the transportation sales tax initiative. But it serves as a more general reminder of the lack of connection the public has made between recognizing that there is a serious transportation problem and realizing that it is related to a lack of funding to pay for solutions.

The following two recommendations are made for future research on the perceptions of needs among the Orange County general public. First, a more intensive analysis should be conducted on what the public has noted in this survey as the major needs. Second, the issue of what residents think are the most serious needs should be monitored on a periodic basis. The current study is a benchmark which has identified general concerns which can be used to select several issues for further study and measure changes in the public's perceptions over time.

APPENDIX

COMMUNITY NEEDS CATEGORIES

1. child care and abuse
2. community attitudes of citizens
3. community organizations
4. crime and safety
5. culture
6. drug and alcohol abuse
7. education
8. emergency services
9. environment
10. foreign immigrants
11. health care
11. homeless
12. housing
13. jobs and employment
14. leadership
15. legal services
16. local government
17. media
18. mentally disabled
19. offshore oil drilling
21. parks and open spaces
22. physically disabled
23. poor people's needs
24. population growth
25. programs for first time homeowners
26. race relations and minorities
27. recreation
28. religion
29. senior citizens' needs
30. shopping
31. social services
32. taxes
33. the economy and cost of living
34. transportation
35. the welfare system
36. women's issues
37. youth activities and problems
38. other needs
39. don't know or refuse