



# **Community Voices Final Report May 2003**



**Prepared for:**  
**City of Santa Monica**  
**Human Services Division**  
**1685 Main Street, #212**  
**Santa Monica, CA 90401**  
**Phone: 310/458-8701**  
**Fax: 310/458-3380**  
**TTY: 310/458-8696**

PROJECT CONSULTANTS  
Gary Bess Associates  
Lynn Warshafsky Associates

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*To those who took time to participate - the nearly 2,000 people who completed one of our surveys, the more than 250 people who attended the Community Voices Gathering, and the 750 people who attended one of more than 40 discussion groups - we wish to offer our sincerest appreciation and thanks for your participation and concern for your community.*



## **A GUIDE TO USING THIS REPORT**

We have designed this report to make it accessible and easy to use. It is our hope that it will prove a valuable tool to those who, in the course of their work, must describe the diverse human service needs of the Santa Monica community and make a well-supported case for funding and other forms of support. This report serves to supplement and, in some cases, update or replace data from the *Community Voices Final Report (March 2000)*. We have summarized the content of each report section below.

### **Executive Summary**

For those interested in a snapshot of Community Voices 2002, we suggest you review the Executive Summary. It outlines the purpose, methodology, and key findings of Community Voices.

### **Introduction**

This section provides an overview of Community Voices and briefly reviews the economic climate in which human service funding decisions have been made.

### **Sources of Data**

Here we describe the primary and secondary sources of data that we utilized in this planning and funding process.

## **Themes and Priorities**

This section is the heart of the report for readers interested in the human service needs of the Santa Monica community. By “themes” we mean broad issues and ideas that emerged with great frequency from a cross-section of community members. We recognize there may be any number of strategies for addressing these themes. By human service “priorities,” we mean both those areas that have been identified as priorities across all or most data sources, as well as those that are specific to a population or service area (e.g., seniors, youth, and persons with disabilities). For those familiar with the previous Community Voices Report (2000), you will find that, not surprisingly, many of the themes and priorities identified in 2002 are the same as those articulated in the prior report.

## **Santa Monica Community Profile**

The 2002 Community Profile updates the profile developed in 2000. It presents a summary of demographic and social welfare indicators collected from the 2000 Census and analyzed by the RAND Corporation. It also includes pertinent data from other sources.

## **Appendix**

The appendix provides a listing of additional documents available to interested readers, including selected statistics on Santa Monica and original survey instruments.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Community Voices 2002: Community Profile and Human Services Planning Project

### **Introduction**

In 1999, at the direction of City Council, the Human Services Division (Division) initiated its first community-wide planning process, *Community Voices*, which resulted in a report that described the City of Santa Monica's demographic profile, human service needs, and human service priorities. The FY 2000-2003 Community Development Plan, which described the grant funding process and outlined funding recommendations for the City's Community Development program, built on the Community Voices report.

In 2002, the Division undertook a second planning process, also called *Community Voices*, for the purpose of updating data and determining its three-year (FY 2003-2006) funding strategies and recommendations, as described in this report. This effort involved more than 2,000 residents, community leaders, and service providers in identifying and discussing the salient issues and needs of the Santa Monica community. The information and thoughtful input obtained during Community Voices helped shape the Division's funding rationale, Request for Proposals (RFP), and funding recommendations for the FY 2003–2006 Community Development Program.

This Executive Summary offers a snapshot of the processes and key outcomes of Community Voices.

### **Methodology**

Data was gathered through a variety of methods including: surveys distributed to consumers utilizing Santa Monica services and to youth and young adults; discussion groups involving community leaders, social and civic group members, agency representatives, and the general public; presentations and discussions at five public hearings of City Commissions; a Community Voices Gathering attended by more than 250 people; a review of secondary data sources including reports prepared by schools and community groups; and an analysis of demographic and social welfare indicators collected primarily from Census 2000.

## Key Findings

### *Themes*

A number of themes addressing a range of topics emerged through Community Voices:

- The need for enhanced communication about, and coordination of, human services.
- Increased public awareness of programs and services and access to services.
- Expanded prevention approaches.
- Improved service quality and consistency.
- Expanded after-school programs.
- Increased cultural sensitivity of service providers.

### *Shared Needs and Priorities*

Table 1 represents priorities shared across most data sources. While the rank–order was different among different sources; the top priorities were essentially the same. It is not surprising to see that they mirror the shared needs and priorities identified in 1999. It is also interesting to note that one of the priorities identified, health care access, is not directly under the purview of the City. However, the Division does partner with nonprofit organizations whose missions and services address this priority.

**Table 1. Top Identified Needs and Priorities**

| <i>Needs and Priorities 2002</i>   | <i>Needs and Priorities 1999</i>         |
|--|--|
| Increasing the number of affordable housing units                            | Affordable housing                       |
| Improving access to health care for children and their families              | Health care access                       |
| Reducing the number of juveniles engaged in criminal activity                | Youth services with emphasis on teens    |
| Ensuring that every child is born healthy and enters school ready to succeed | Early child development / family support |

In addition, in 2002, three other new priorities emerged with frequency:

- Increasing support for education in general, and for Santa Monica public schools, specifically.
- Increasing access to affordable childcare.
- Increasing the availability of mental health services.

## **Needs and Priorities by Respondent Groups**

The following section highlights needs and priorities identified by specific respondent groups.

### ***Clients/Consumers of Human Services***

- Most respondents go to friends (36.8%) or other family members (33.2%) when they need help, while 28.2% use human services agencies, and 27.7% use church or religious advisors.
- Less than one-quarter (23.8%) seek help from a therapist or social worker
- The two most frequently identified barriers to service access were: (1) long wait lists when attempting to get services; and, (2) lack of childcare while receiving services.
- The top three services ranked as needing expansion were: (1) affordable housing; (2) transitional/long-term shelter/housing; and, (3) access to health care.

### ***Youth and Young Adults***

- Nearly one-quarter (24.6%) of youth respondents had been in trouble with the police an average of 2.42 times.
- Eleven percent (10.8%) indicated that they have been involved with a gang, and an additional 6.6% reported that they had been approached to join a gang.
- Concern about school and grades ranked as the highest worry of youth and young adults, followed by worries about family.
- Family and friends were identified as the most common sources for social and personal support and safety (74%).
- More than one-quarter of respondents reported having seen someone being beaten up, and one-fifth had lost a close friend.
- More than 50% of respondents belonged to a school or community club.
- Slightly more than two-thirds (68.6%) of respondents had volunteered at some time in their lives, and 82.7% indicated that they would volunteer.
- Working with young children and tutoring young people were ranked highest as areas of volunteer interest, while working with homeless people and participating on a City advisory board or commission ranked the lowest.
- The most utilized services were after-school programs (39.5%), social and recreational activities (36.5%), and educational services (30.4%).
- Services that youth and young adults think should be expanded include educational, help getting into college, and health care.

### ***Community-wide Discussion Groups and Public Hearings***

Respondents identified the following priorities and needs:

- Mental health
- Affordable housing
- Healthcare

- Affordable childcare

Respondents believed that primary service barriers include:

- A lack of cultural sensitivity on the part of providers
- Transportation
- Accurate information on service availability

They also identified older adults and homeless persons as the subpopulations requiring special attention from City services.

### **Highlights from the Updated Community Profile**

The following information was derived from an updated Community Profile based primarily on the 2000 Census, which was prepared by the RAND Corporation.

- Santa Monica's population declined by 3.25% or 2,821 people between 1990 and 2000, to 84,084.
- Ethnic and racial groups which experienced a decline in population include whites (decreased by 7.2%), Latinos (decreased by 7.4%), and African-Americans (decreased by 4.0%), while Asian and Pacific Islander populations increased by 7%.
- Older adults (65+) comprise 14% of the city's population, a decline of 3% between 1990 and 2000, and nearly half (42%) of them reported having at least one disability in 2000.
- 55% of all African American Santa Monica residents, and 39% of all Latinos, reside in the Pico Neighborhood (90404).
- According to the 2000 Census, the median income in Santa Monica was \$50,714. In constant dollar terms (CPI-U adjusted), this is an increase of about 5% over the median income of \$35,997 reported in 1990.
- Household rents increased by 49% between 1990 and 2000, from a median of \$532 to \$792.
- While the number of households living in poverty increased by 8% during the 1990s, the percentage of female headed households in poverty declined between 1990 and 2000, from 24.6% to 19.2%, and the number of households with children declined by approximately 30% between 1990 and 2000, representing 12% of all households in Santa Monica in 2000.
- Households receiving public assistance also declined from 5% to 2% between 1990 and 2000, while Medi-Cal eligibility between 1992 and 2002 increased by 17.5%.
- According to the 1999 City Of Santa Monica Homeless Population Survey, an estimated 1,037 individuals are homeless, with 72% of them being males, and 2% of the homeless being under the age of 17.



## INTRODUCTION

In 1999, at the direction of the City Council, the Human Services Division of the City of Santa Monica's Community and Cultural Services Department launched *Community Voices: A Community Profile and Planning Project* (Community Voices). This comprehensive planning process guided the development of its funding priorities, resulting in the FY 2000–2003 Community Development Plan.

In 2002, the Council asked the Division to: (a) conduct a second Community Voices for the purpose of updating the community profile based on year 2000 Census data; (b) consider new human service priorities and needs, if any, that might guide the planning and funding framework for the City over the next three years (FY 2003-2006); and, (c) take a special look at the interests, needs, and priorities of Santa Monica's youth and young adults - particularly those between the ages of 11 and 23.

In addition to thoughtful consideration of the many voices that make-up the data in this report, staff was also charged with considering the economic constraints currently facing the City. Between 1990 and 2000, the City was looking at a budget surplus, which resulted in a recommendation for one-time capital improvement projects in addition to regular human service program requests. However, in FY 2003-2004, the City is faced with a deficit of over \$16 million due to the loss of revenue post September 11, the local impact of State budget deficits, and other economic factors. At the time of the writing of this report, the economic climate is highly unstable, making it very difficult to project the timeframe for improved revenue. The overall projected cut to the Human Services budget in 2003-2004 is 5%, and staff has had to make some hard choices. For example, only currently-funded human service agencies were invited to apply for the 2003-2006 funding cycle.

In this report, we review and discuss data from the Community Voices planning process. In many cases, data affirms what we learned in 1999. In others, it provides new information that will be important to those involved in the planning and delivery of human services to Santa Monica residents.

Community Voices was successful because of the active participation and interest of many members of our community. Known individual participants, as well as community groups, commissions, parent and teacher groups, associations, and others who allowed us time on their agendas, are acknowledged in the appendix.



## **AN OVERVIEW OF SOURCES OF DATA**

We relied on four primary methods of information gathering: discussion groups; original surveys; previously prepared reports and surveys; and the Community Voices Gathering. These represent both *primary data*, that is information from activities developed specifically for Community Voices, as well as *secondary data*, the analysis of other existing information that we considered relevant. Together, all data sources form the basis of the funding process and recommendations described later in this report.

For the most part, data gathering employed a *convenience sample method*; that is, it was gathered from people participating in groups, clubs, networks, associations, and related activities. Convenience sampling is not a statistically valid measure and, consequently, we cannot say that the input received is representative of all segments of the community; however, we consider it a valuable indicator of perception and feeling.

### **Primary Sources of Data**

#### ***Community-wide Discussion Groups and Public Hearings***

We were interested in finding new ways to hear from as many people as possible. We decided that asking for time on the agendas of existing civic, school, parent, nonprofit, and other community groups would be the most effective way to reach the greatest diversity of people. We facilitated more than 40 discussion groups, held five public hearings in partnership with City boards and commissions, and held a special meeting with school district administrators; through this method, we heard from more than 750 people. We also facilitated a special meeting of nonprofit human service agency Executive Directors (the Executive Directors' Roundtable), with more than 40 executives or senior managers participating in this Roundtable.

A standard set of open-ended questions was developed and used with each group in order to generate consistent data sets. Participant responses were recorded by one of two facilitators and responses from all groups were transcribed and analyzed for common themes. Participants were also asked to complete the \$10 Survey (described below) and were invited to talk about other general matters of concern to them.

Discussion group participants completed a total of 442 \$10 Surveys. A complete list of discussion groups is included in the appendix.

### ***Community Voices' Surveys***

#### **The \$10 Survey**

The \$10 Survey asked respondents to hypothetically allocate \$10 among a number of community issues such as affordable housing, healthcare for uninsured children, and crime reduction programs for juveniles. A version was introduced with the first Community Voices. In the fall of 2002, the survey was revised and distributed at discussion groups, which were included in the Client/Consumer Surveys and the Youth and Young Adult Surveys, and made available on the City's Web page, at City-funded agencies and in other public places. More than 1,400 surveys were completed and returned.

#### **Client/Consumer Survey**

Distributed through City programs, at public meetings, libraries and local human service agencies, the Client/Consumer Survey asked respondents about their needs and experiences with social service programs; 585 were completed and returned. The Client/Consumer Surveys asked questions similar to those developed for the discussion groups; this provided us with an understanding of how clients or consumers view similar issues. Additional questions addressed specific experiences clients/consumers had when receiving services, and requested descriptive information on respondents. A sample survey is included in the appendix.

#### **The Youth and Young Adult Survey**

Because of the City Council's interest in developing a better understanding of the interests, needs, and priorities of youth and young adults ages 11 to 23 years, a survey instrument targeting this population was created. An Institutional Review Board (IRB) composed of three researchers and City staff was convened to review the survey before it was released. The IRB sought to minimize risks from the survey to youth and young adults, and to ensure maximum confidentiality of participants.

Surveys were distributed at a range of locations such as park programs, after-school programs, and youth clubs. A core group of youth was also trained to do direct outreach at parks, malls, the Santa Monica Pier, and other places where youth and young adults congregate. Three hundred thirty-seven (337) youth and young adults returned completed surveys. Questions were extensive and asked about youth and young adults' experiences, feelings, behaviors, and interests, and gathered descriptive information and service use history. A sample survey is included in the appendix.

### ***The Community Voices Gathering***

The culminating event of Community Voices was the *Community Voices Gathering* (Gathering), which was held on January 11, 2003 at John Adams Middle School. Attended by more than 250 people, including a significant number of youth, the Gathering offered an opportunity to present preliminary data to participants; to celebrate achievements since the first Community Voices; to showcase City agencies and programs through resource tables; and to ask residents, once more, to discuss their priorities, their visions for the City, and their concerns. The latter was facilitated by artists using experiential activities in breakout groups to develop a better understanding of community needs, identify community resources, dispel prejudices, and develop formal and informal responses. The collective input of participants has been helpful in interpreting data and shaping recommendations.

### **Secondary Data Sources**

#### ***Review of Reports, Data, and Related Information***

Division staff launched Community Voices with a review and analysis of relevant internal reports, which provided information on goals achieved and challenges encountered in responding to the priorities and needs identified in 1999.

Several other data sources, mostly pertaining to school age youth, were also reviewed. These included: National Center on Public Education – Hi Places Survey (SMMUSD 2001-2002); institutional racism in the Santa Monica School District (SMMUSD): “Its Impact on Students of Color,” a report by Mothers for Justice presented to the SMUUSD Board of Education on June 27, 2002; Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District, “California Healthy Kids Survey;” Goodwin Simon Strategic Research report “Santa Monica 2002 Resident Study;” and the current information from the National Center of Public Education and Prevention.

#### ***Census 2000***

RAND was commissioned to update the Community Profile, highlighting key demographic data on the City of Santa Monica from the 2000 Census, among other sources.

#### ***The Residential Satisfaction Survey (September 2002)***

Conducted annually, the Residential Satisfaction Survey (RSS) is a random, statistically valid telephone survey of Santa Monica residents. We looked at the data related to human service delivery, and compared RSS data to survey and, when relevant, other data generated through Community Voices.



## **A SUMMARY OF THEMES AND PRIORITIES**

The following *themes and priorities* were developed from an analysis of all data sources. “Themes” refer to those broad issues and ideas that emerged frequently across respondent groups. “Priorities” are those issues most frequently identified as priority areas for City resident, agency, and government action.

Because this Community Voices project was completed just three years after the first Community Voices (1999–2000), there are few significant changes in data from 1999 to 2002. Please refer to the earlier report for a more complete picture of current human service themes and priorities in the City of Santa Monica.

### **Themes**

When looking across all data sources (surveys, discussion groups, Gathering), we found that the themes identified in 1999 were heard again in 2002. These include:

- Increase public awareness of programs and services
- Increase access to services
- Expand prevention approaches
- Improve service quality and consistency
- Improve coordinate and communication

These themes are discussed in detail in the report Community Voices (2000).

When analyzing the data generated from the more than 40 discussion groups and public hearings, three other themes emerged repeatedly this year: expanding after-school programs; increasing the cultural sensitivity of service providers; and, supporting public education.

## Shared Needs and Priorities

More than 2,000 residents, community leaders, service providers, educators, business leaders, and others participated in one or more element of Community Voices. This section summarizes the needs and priorities identified by a broad cross-section of the community.

In Table 2, below, you will see that the needs and priorities identified in 1999 and 2002 almost exactly match, although the data sources differ between the two periods (e.g., focus groups in 2002, but not in 1999). This is not surprising, as they tend to represent complex issues requiring a multi-faceted, long-term response.

Two of the identified priorities, affordable housing and health care access, are not directly within the purview of the Human Services Division nor, in the case of health care, of the City. However, in both cases, the Division partners with and supports many organizations whose missions and services address both priorities. Also note that while the language in the fourth priority for 2002 (reducing the number of juveniles engaged in criminal activity) is different from that in 1999 (youth services with an emphasis on teens), in the 1999 Community Voices report most respondents emphasized the importance of prevention and intervention activities for youth.

**Table 2. Top Identified Needs and Priorities**

| <b>Needs and Priorities 2002</b>   | <b>Needs and Priorities 1999</b>         |
|--|--|
| Increasing the number of affordable housing units                            | Affordable housing                       |
| Improving access to health care for children and their families              | Health care access                       |
| Reducing the number of juveniles engaged in criminal activity                | Youth services with emphasis on teens    |
| Ensuring that every child is born healthy and enters school ready to succeed | Early child development / family support |

In addition to these recurrent priorities in the 1999 and 2002 Community Voices process, some new priorities have also emerged. They include:

- Increasing support for education, in general, and for Santa Monica schools, specifically.
- Increasing access to affordable daycare.
- Increasing the availability of mental health services.

## **\$10 Survey Summary**

Respondents participating in discussion groups, completing the youth and young adult survey, and completing the client/consumer survey were each asked to advise the City on how they would spend a limited amount of public funds. The scenario they were given was: *If you had only \$10 to spend on helping people in Santa Monica, how would you distribute your money?* A total of 1,404 surveys were returned and analyzed. Overall, respondents of the \$10 Survey indicate that *affordable housing, ensuring that children are born healthy and enter school ready to succeed, and securing housing for people who are homeless*, should be among the top human and social service spending priorities for the City.

Separate analyses of focus group participants, youth and young adults, and clients and consumers indicated that *affordable housing* should be the highest priority for City funding. Focus group participants and client/consumer respondents each ranked *affordable housing* as their top priority, and youth and young adult survey participants ranked *affordable housing* as their third highest spending priority for the City.

The top five priorities for City spending for all respondents, focus group participants, youth and young adult survey respondents, and client/consumer respondents are presented in Table 3, below. They are rank ordered (1–5), with 1 indicating the highest priority by respondent group.

**Table 3. Priorities for City Spending by Data Source**

| <b>Rank</b> | <b>All Participants<br/>n=1,404</b>   | <b>Rank</b> | <b>Focus Groups<br/>n=442</b>  | <b>Rank</b> | <b>Youth and Young Adult Survey<br/>n=377</b>                                 | <b>Rank</b> | <b>Client/Consumer Survey Participants<br/>n=585</b>                            |
|-------------|---|-------------|--|-------------|---|-------------|---|
| 1           | To increase the number of affordable housing units                            | 1           | To increase the number of affordable housing units                                   | 1           | To ensure that every child is born healthy and enters school ready to succeed | 1           | To increase the number of affordable housing units                              |
| 2           | To ensure that every child is born healthy and enters school ready to succeed | 2           | To ensure that every child is born healthy and enters school ready to succeed        | 2           | To improve access to health care for children and their families              | 2           | To help homeless people secure housing and employment                           |
| 3           | To help homeless people secure housing and employment                         | 3           | To improve access to health care for children and their families                     | 3           | To reduce the number of juveniles engaged in criminal activity                | 3           | To ensure that every child is born health and enters school ready to succeed    |
| 4           | To improve access to health care for children and their families              | 4           | To reduce the number of juveniles engaged in criminal activity                       | 3           | To increase the number of affordable housing units                            | 4           | To improve access to health care for children and their families                |
| 5           | To reduce the number of juveniles engaged in criminal activity                | 5           | To engage youth in civic affairs or extra-curricular activities (e.g., volunteerism) | 5           | To help homeless people secure housing and employment                         | 5           | To increase the self-sufficiency and community participation of senior citizens |

**Priorities by Respondent Group**

In this section we summarize the data from each key data source, presenting information on the specific interests and needs of clients or consumers, youth and young adults, and community-affiliated residents (discussion group participants). We then provide a review of other general data that may be of interest to the reader.

## **Client/Consumer Survey**

The following offers a summary of key findings from the Client/Consumer Survey, which was completed by 585 respondents. These surveys were distributed primarily through human service agencies. A full report on consumer and client responses to the City's Client/Consumer Survey is attached in the appendix.

### **Descriptive Data**

More than 60 percent (61.9%) of clients/consumers completing the survey were female. The racial/ethnic group with the greatest representation, 42.2%, was white, while African-Americans represented 23.1% of respondents and Latino/Hispanics accounted for 21.4%. Asian/Pacific Islanders, Native Americans, and multi-ethnic/racial respondents were each 3.5% or less. Virtually all were 18 years of age or older, with 68.9% between the ages of 18 and 54, and 29.6% 55 years of age or older.

Thirty-six percent (36%) of respondents indicated that they have a disability. Of those with disabilities, more than one-half, 57.6%, report that it is a physical disability, while 50.0% indicate that they have a psychiatric disability. Slightly less than 10 percent (9.0%) report having a learning disability, with 6.7% indicating a sensory auditory/visual disability, and 4.3% a developmental disability. The percentages total more than 100% because some respondents reported having more than one kind of disability.

### **Where People go for Help**

Within a 12-month period, consumers used a Santa Monica-based agency an average of 2.72 times; non-Santa Monica-based agencies were used 2.42 times. Most clients and consumers reported that when they or their family need help, they go to friends (36.8%) or other family members (33.2%), slightly more than one-fourth utilize human services agencies (28.2%) or church or religious advisors (27.7%). Slightly less than one-quarter of respondents indicate that they seek help from a therapist or social worker (23.8%).

### **Services Used**

Respondents were asked to identify from a list those services they had used in the previous 12 months. Nearly two-thirds (61.3%) of consumers and clients had used public transportation services in the past 12 months, and 60.3% benefited from health care services. Services used by at least one-third of clients and consumers in the past 12 months are presented below in Table 4.

**Table 4. Services Used in Past 12 Months**

| <b>Services Used in Past 12 Months</b>  | <b>Percent</b> |
|---|----------------|
| Transportation  | 61.3%          |
| Health Care Access  | 60.3%          |
| Emergency Food/Clothing/Shelter   | 48.8%          |
| Affordable Housing  | 45.3%          |
| Drug or Alcohol   | 45.0%          |
| Individual or Family Counseling   | 45.0%          |
| Transitional/Long-Term Shelter/Housing  | 43.0%          |
| Employment & Job Training   | 40.0%          |
| Adult Education   | 39.7%          |
| Legal Counseling or Advice  | 39.3%          |
| Self-Help Support (e.g., Alcoholics Anonymous, Overeaters Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous) | 34.7%          |
| Independent Living Services   | 33.7%          |

### ***Service Quality***

Clients and consumers were asked to report on the frequency that they experienced certain problems that could affect the quality of care that they received or their ability to access services. The most frequently identified issues in order of ranking are:

1. Long wait lists when attempting to get services.
2. Childcare is not available for parents/caregivers while they are receiving services.
3. Hard to get through on the telephone/leave messages and don't get called back.
4. If you don't speak English, it is hard to get help.
5. It is difficult to get information about what services are available.

### ***The Need for Expanded Services***

Consumers were also asked to assess the level of need for expanded services that ranged from *no need* (1) to *an overwhelming need* (5). Affordable housing ranked as the highest need at 4.36, followed by transitional/long-term shelter/housing at 4.07, access to health care at 4.06, emergency food and shelter services at 4.00, and independent living services at 3.96.

## **Youth and Young Adults**

Because of the City Council's interest in developing a better understanding of the interests, needs and priorities of youth, the 2002 Community Voices project included a special survey targeting youth, ages 11-23. Three hundred seventy-seven (377) youth and young adults completed the Youth and Young Adult Survey. The following highlights key findings; a full report on the youth and young adult survey is attached in the appendix.

### **Descriptive Data**

Slightly more than one-third (38.4%) of youth and young adult respondents were Hispanic (Latino), followed by 28.4% white, and 12.2% African-Americans. Multi-ethnic/racial respondents were 6.9%, and Asian/Pacific Islanders were 3.1%. Those reporting "other" ethnicities or races comprised 10% of respondents. Most youth and young adults (96%) were currently in school. The average age of respondents was 15.65 years; the most frequent age reported by respondents was 17.

### **Law Enforcement and Gang Involvement**

Nearly one-quarter (24.6%) of youth and young adults reported that they had been in trouble with the police. The average number of times was 2.42 times. The reasons given for being in trouble ranged from driving too fast, to shoplifting, graffiti, and drugs.

Eleven percent (10.8%) of youth and young adults indicated that they have been involved with a gang, and an additional 6.6% reported that they had been approached to join a gang.

### **Volunteer Involvement**

More than one-half (53.4%) of youth and young adults reported that they belonged to a school or community club or organization. Among the most common involvements were the Police Activities League (PAL), the Boys and Girls Club, and the Red Cross. Note that this is not necessarily representative, as several of these organizations were also used as sites for distributing Youth and Young Adult Surveys. Slightly more than two-thirds (68.6%) of youth and young adults said that they had volunteered at some time in their lives, and 82.7% indicated that they would volunteer if there were opportunities in their community. Working with young children and tutoring young people were ranked highest as areas of volunteer interest, while working with homeless people and participating on the City advisory board or commission ranked the lowest.

### **Emotional Health**

Youth and young adults were asked how often in the past 12-months they had *worried* about certain issues in their lives based on a scale of *never* (1) to *all of the time* (5). Concern about school and grades ranked the highest, followed by worries about family, “lots of different things,” and money.

Youth and young adults were also asked about their personal well-being. Using the same five-point scale, family and friends were identified as the most common sources for social and personal support and safety. Table 5 presents responses in order of importance.

**Table 5. Youths’ Well Being**

| <b>In the past year I’ve thought --</b> | <b>Average</b> |
|---|----------------|
| My family cares about me                | 4.27           |
| I have really close friends             | 3.92           |
| I have a close family                   | 3.90           |
| I feel safe at school                   | 3.87           |
| I feel safe in my neighborhood          | 3.79           |
| I’m happy with my life                  | 3.77           |
| My friends care about me                | 3.75           |
| I learn a lot in school                 | 3.66           |

Respondents were asked about *life events* that may have occurred in the past 12 months. More than one-third reported having difficulty getting along with one or more members of their family, and approximately one-third reported failing a class or having a close family member die. More than one-quarter reported having seen someone being beaten up, and one-fifth had lost a close friend. Table 6 represents a partial table of responses.

**Table 6. Life Events in the Past 12 Months**

| <b>Life Event</b>  | <b>Percent</b> |
|--|----------------|
| I had problems getting along with one or more members of my family | 39%            |
| I failed a class   | 32%            |
| A close family member died   | 32%            |
| I saw someone get beaten-up  | 27%            |
| I saw someone get beaten-up  | 27%            |
| I lost a close friend  | 21%            |

In response to the question “*where do you go when you need help,*” the majority of youth and young adults identified friends (74%) and family members (60%). Other responses are presented in Table 7.

**Table 7. Where Youth Go When They Need Help**

| <b>Where do you go when you need help?</b> | <b>Percent</b> |
|--|----------------|
| Friends                                    | 74%            |
| Family member                              | 60%            |
| Counselor                                  | 25%            |
| An adult at school                         | 22%            |
| No one                                     | 14%            |
| Church/Religious advisor                   | 11%            |
| Other                                      | 10%            |
| Human service agency                       | 3%             |

Youth and young adults were asked what they usually do after school or during free time. More than one-half reported going to the movies, hanging out with friends, listening to music, playing sports, studying or doing homework, and watching TV or playing video games. In rank order, the top activities are presented in Table 8.

**Table 8. After-School or Free Time**

| <b>What do you usually do after school or during free time?</b> | <b>Percent</b> |
|---|----------------|
| Hangout with friends after school or during your free time      | 77%            |
| Listen to music after school or during your free time           | 72%            |
| Watch TV/play video games after school or during your free time | 63%            |
| Study/do homework after school or during your free time         | 58%            |
| Go to the movies after school or during your free time          | 52%            |
| Play sports after school or during your free time               | 50%            |

***Services and Programs***

Youth and young adults were asked whether they currently use certain services. The most utilized services are among after-school programs (39.5%), social and recreational activities (36.5%), and educational services (30.4%).

If youth and young adults had a need for services, they reported that need would center on the following services: independent living services (91.2%), HIV/AIDS services (90.6%), domestic violence services (89.2%), self-help programs (89.2%), and alcohol/drug counseling (88.2%). Note, again, that these results reflect a convenience sample of youth.

Youth and young adults were asked to indicate whether certain services should be expanded based on a three-point scale of *no need* (1), *some need* (2), and *great need* (3). The top five services recommend for expansion are presented in the table below.

**Table 9. Highest Need for Expansion**

| Highest Ranked for Expansion    | Average |
|---------------------------------|---------|
| Educational                     | 2.12    |
| Help getting into college       | 2.12    |
| Health services                 | 2.07    |
| Social/recreational             | 2.07    |
| Youth Center                    | 2.07    |
| After-school programs (general) | 2.06    |
| HIV/AIDS services               | 2.01    |

***Discussion Groups***

City staff facilitated more than 40 discussion groups, five public hearings in collaboration with City Commissions, and an Executive Directors Roundtable, reaching more than 800 participants. Most discussion groups were held as part of an organization’s regularly scheduled meeting. These provided an opportunity for participants to individually and collectively respond to a series of open-ended questions; a rich array of ideas flowed from these meetings. The following is a recap of recurrent themes and observations; they are not rank ordered.

***Most Important Social Problems Facing the City***

- Homeless (specific issue not stated)
- Affordable and accessible housing
- Access to health care
- After-school (alternative) activities for high school students
- Affordable daycare

***Subpopulations, Groups, or Neighborhoods Requiring Special Attention***

- Senior citizens
- The homeless

- Low-income individuals and families
- Pico neighborhood

### ***Types of Services Needed that are Appropriate for City Funding***

- Mental health services on school campuses
- Affordable housing
- Healthcare and mental health care
- Affordable childcare
- Transportation services
- Community Resource Center

### ***Common Barriers to Service***

- Lack of cultural sensitivity
- Affordable transportation
- Systematic issues such as lack of, or inappropriate, service information
- *Red tape* and not knowing where to start

### **Community Voices Gathering**

The January 11, 2003 *Community Voices Gathering* underscored Santa Monica's rich human resources. A diverse group of participants — all ages, from many ethnic/racial groups, and representing different neighborhoods of the City — gave voice to their concerns.

In workshops of 15 to 25 people, more than 250 participants worked with artist-facilitators to creatively express their concerns, ideas, and priorities and to envision the Santa Monica of the future. The artists-facilitators used exercises incorporating many different mediums including dance, music, poetry and improvisation to help participants express themselves. These elements were combined into a final presentation by each group to the larger assembly. The idea of partnership and collaboration — what each of us can do as citizens of the City — was emphasized. The themes that emerged from these presentations included strong support for affordable housing, youth recreation, delinquency prevention and intervention, education, senior services, healthcare for children and their families, services for persons with disabilities, and early childhood education. Most expressed appreciation for the many resources currently available and a desire to build on these for the betterment of the whole community.



## AN UPDATED COMMUNITY PROFILE

Using data primarily from the 2000 Census, the RAND Corporation updated the Community Profile initially developed for the City in 1999. In this report, we offer highlights of key demographic and social welfare indicators from the 2000 Census, as well as other sources, that we believe are most relevant to the themes and priorities identified in *Community Voices*. For interested readers, the complete 2003 City of Santa Monica Community Profile, conducted by RAND is also available online at [www.rand.org/community\\_area/rand\\_area/index.html](http://www.rand.org/community_area/rand_area/index.html).

### Population

The 2000 Census data indicate that the overall population of Santa Monica is now at 84,084 residents, a slight decline of 3% since 1990. The City of Santa Monica is 8.3 square miles and has a population density of 1,013 persons per square mile. This makes it one of California's most densely populated urban communities.

### Population by Zip Code

There are five zip codes in Santa Monica, 90401 – 90405. Census 2000 data indicate that most population growth from 1990 to 2000 was in zip code 90401, which is bordered by Wilshire Blvd. on the north, Pico Blvd. on the south, 12<sup>th</sup> Street on the east, and the ocean on the west. The highest concentrations of people in Santa Monica are in the 90405, 90403, and 90404 zip codes, as shown in Table 10, below.

**Table 10. Population by Zip Code**

| Zip Code | RAND 1990 Census | RAND 2000 Census |
|----------|------------------|------------------|
| 90401    | 2,607            | 5,027            |
| 90402    | 10,429           | 11,195           |
| 90403    | 21,726           | 23,513           |
| 90404    | 25,202           | 19,208           |
| 90405    | 26,941           | 26,017           |

## Race/Ethnicity

Racial and ethnic groups are concentrated in different neighborhoods throughout the City, with 55% of African Americans and 38% of Latinos residing primarily in the 90404 zip code (Pico Neighborhood). The 90405 zip code (the Sunset Park/Ocean Park neighborhood) is the most racially and ethnically diverse area in the City, capturing at least 25% of each racial and ethnic group's population. The least diverse area is the 90402 zip code, with 87.4% of the population being white and representing only 16% of the total white population. However, other racial/ethnic groups, (with the exception of Asian/Pacific Islanders), have a much lower proportion of its population residing there. It is also important to note that overall whites are the majority of the population in all zip code areas of the city. Table 11, below, presents the total persons for each of the five zip codes by race/ethnicity.

**Table 11. Race/Ethnicity by Zip Code**

| Race/Ethnicity                    | Total Persons in 90401 | Total Persons in 90402 | Total Persons in 90403 | Total Persons in 90404 | Total Persons in 90405 |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| African-American                  | 213                    | 54                     | 331                    | 1,681                  | 804                    |
| Asian/Pacific Islander            | 355                    | 685                    | 1,615                  | 1,593                  | 1,991                  |
| Hispanic                          | 638                    | 421                    | 1,338                  | 3,564                  | 3,439                  |
| Multiple Race/Ethnicity           | 137                    | 255                    | 620                    | 722                    | 909                    |
| Native American or Alaskan Eskimo | 23                     | 13                     | 29                     | 55                     | 82                     |
| Other                             | 37                     | 22                     | 59                     | 72                     | 128                    |
| White                             | 3,798                  | 10,042                 | 19,564                 | 10,269                 | 18,736                 |
| Total                             | 5,201                  | 11,492                 | 23,556                 | 19,956                 | 26,089                 |

Source: 2000 Census (STF1 - 100% counts)

Note: These data are based on the Census 2000 5-digit Zip Code Tabulation Area (ZCTA) boundaries that do not correspond exactly to the City of Santa Monica boundary. Therefore, population totals may differ from counts based on the city boundary.

Census data also indicates that Santa Monica residents' racial/ethnic composition has changed between 1990 and 2000, as the following shows:

- There was a 7.2% decline in the white population from 1990 to 2000.
- The Latino/Hispanic population declined by 7.4% since 1990.
- Asian and Pacific Islanders increased by 7.0% since 1990.
- The African American population declined by 4.0% since 1990.

## **Housing**

According to the 2000 Census, the majority of households (65%) are renter households. Owners represent 28% of households and, in 2000, 7% of housing units were vacant. The rents paid in the City increased by 49% from a median of \$532 in 1990 to \$792 in 2000. This level of increase in gross median rents was significantly higher than increases reported for Los Angeles County (12.5%), and the state of California as a whole (20.5%).

## **Households**

The 2000 Census data indicate that the average household size of renter-occupied housing is 1.63 persons; it is 2.31 persons for owner-occupied units. Sixty-two percent (62%) of households are composed of people who are not related through marriage. This figure does not account for “nontraditional” family households (e.g., unmarried heterosexual, gay, or lesbian families). Fifty-one percent (51%) are individuals living alone.

Twelve percent (12%) of households are comprised of families with children. This is approximately a 30% decrease from the 1990 Census. The highest geographic concentration of households composed of families with children is in the 90402 zip code (North of Montana), where 28% of all the households are families with children.

## **Income and Poverty Rates**

In 1999, the federal poverty threshold for a family of four was an annual household income of \$16,895. The number of households in poverty in Santa Monica increased by 8% during the nineties. Ten percent (10%) or 8,740 households have incomes below the federally determined poverty thresholds. Poverty in Santa Monica is geographically concentrated primarily along the I-10 corridor in the 90401 and 90404 zip code areas. In 1990, 24.6% of female-headed households with related children less than 18 years of age lived in poverty. In 2000, this percentage decreased to 19.2%.

Households receiving *any type* of public assistance declined from 5% in 1990 to 2% in 2000. However, the total number of residents eligible for Medi-Cal increased over the last 10 years between 1992 and 2002 by 17.5%, from 6,407 to 7,531. This discrepancy, in addition to covering slightly different 10-year periods, seems to also suggest that those in need of public assistance either did not report such assistance on the 2000 Census, or are not receiving assistance that they might be eligible for. Twenty percent (20%), or 2,713 students are eligible for, and receive, free or reduced cost school lunches.

### Age of Residents

As shown in Table 12, although the overall population decreased between 1990 and 2000, the number of children 19 years and younger increased slightly by 0.5% — from 13,330 to 13,396.

**Table 12. Age Range Changes 1990–2000**

| <b>Age</b>     | <b>Total<br/>Persons<br/>1990</b> | <b>Total<br/>Persons<br/>2000</b> |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 0 to 4 years   | 4,048                             | 3,448                             |
| 5 to 9 years   | 3,101                             | 3,538                             |
| 10 to 14 years | 2,898                             | 3,507                             |
| 15 to 19 years | 3,283                             | 2,903                             |
| 20 to 24 years | 4,885                             | 4,032                             |
| 25 to 34 years | 19,674                            | 17,034                            |
| 35 to 44 years | 17,501                            | 16,670                            |
| 45 to 54 years | 9,742                             | 13,237                            |
| 55 to 64 years | 7,422                             | 7,637                             |
| 65+ years      | 14,351                            | 12,078                            |
| Total          | 86,905                            | 84,084                            |

Source: 1990 Census (STF 1 – 100% counts) and 2000 RAND

### Older Residents

Older residents (65 years and over) comprise 14% of the city’s population (11,771 residents), representing a 3% decline from 1990 Census data figures. More than 40% of older residents reported having at least one disability.

### Youth

The 2000 Census data reveals that the majority of the City’s young people, those below age 25, reside in the 90404 and 90405 zip codes. The 90404 zip code has the highest concentration of young people; 32% of all 15 to 19 year olds and 36% of all 20 to 24 year olds reside there.

### Criminal Activity

**Overall Crime Data 1996–2002** (Santa Monica Police Department, Crime Analysis Unit)

Overall criminal offenses reported in the City have continued to decline, registering a 20% drop between 1996 and 2002. Crimes characterized as “serious offenses,”

such as murder, rape, aggravated assault, burglary, etc., are down 36% since 1996. Criminal offenses characterized as “less serious” have decreased by 3% between 1996 and 2002. However, the “less serious” offenses have also been trending upward over the last four years (1999 to 2002).

**Juvenile Crime Data 1996–2002** (Santa Monica Police Department, Crime Analysis Unit)

In contrast to the overall crime data, juvenile arrest data for the City indicate that arrests of juveniles have doubled since 1996. There were 153 juvenile arrests in 1996, and 347 juvenile arrests in 2002. Juveniles arrested for “serious offenses” declined by 2% between 1996 and 2002, but, “less serious” offense arrests rose from 39 in 1996 to 236 in 2002 - an increase of 505%. A large part of this increase may be due to improved data collection and reporting practices of offenses committed by juveniles implemented by the Santa Monica Police Department in 1999.

**Residents with Disabilities**

In 2000, individuals with disabilities constituted 28.8% of the total population in Santa Monica - a total of 24,224 individuals. For youth aged five to 15 years with a disability, 53% had a disability in the category of a mental limitation. Thirty-one percent (31%) of individuals 65 and over had a physical disability in 2000.

**Educational Attainment**

In 2000, the educational attainment levels of Santa Monica residents were, on average, significantly higher than for Los Angeles County and California. A full 91% of residents have completed high school while 61% of residents over the age of 25 reported having a college degree (e.g. either an associates degree or higher). This figure is high when compared to Los Angeles County (30%), and California (34%).

**Residents who are Homeless**

According to the 1999 City of Santa Monica Special Census (Homeless Census), available through the Human Services Division, an estimated 1,037 individuals are homeless, with 72% of them being males, and 2% being under the age of 17. Furthermore, 52% of the individuals that are homeless are white, 24% are African-American, and 18% are Latino.



## APPENDIX

The following additional documents and data are available upon request to the Human Services Division by calling (310) 458-8701, TTY (310) 458-8696 or emailing [HumanServices@Santa-Monica.org](mailto:HumanServices@Santa-Monica.org).

- Community Voices Youth and Young Adult Survey Instrument (2002)
- Community Voices Consumer/Client Survey Instrument (2002)
- Community Voices Survey Data: Data and summaries of selected information collected through the Community Voices Surveys and Discussion Groups
- City of Santa Monica Community Development Program Grantee List
- City of Santa Monica Community Profile (RAND, 2003): Summary of demographic and several social welfare indicators collected from the 2000 Census and analyzed by RAND

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July 24, 2003