

WHO SHOULD JUDGE  
COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION SUCCESS?

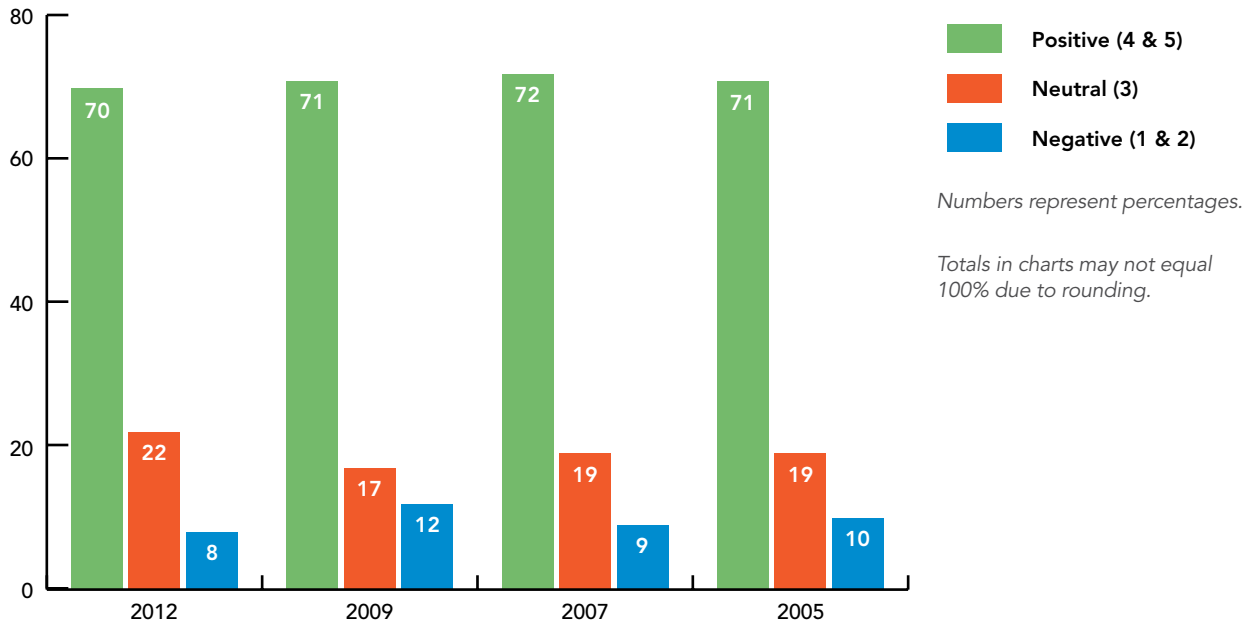


**The residents**  
**who live in**  
**community associations!**

NATIONAL RESEARCH BY IBOPE ZOGBY INTERNATIONAL

## WHAT DO COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION RESIDENTS SAY?

On a scale of one to five, with one being very bad and five being very good, how would you rate your overall experience living in a community association?



A national survey conducted in February 2012 by IBOPE Zogby International affirms what we learned from similar national surveys in 2005, 2007 and 2009.

- Residents rate their overall community association experience as positive—by almost a nine to one margin!
- Association board members strive to serve the best interests of their communities.
- Community managers provide value and support to associations.
- Residents believe overwhelmingly that association rules protect property values.
- Homeowners value the return they get for their association assessments.
- Residents do not want additional government intervention in their communities.

*The findings from national tracking surveys in 2005, 2007, 2009 and 2012 were based on telephone interviews with random, nationally representative samples of adults residing in homeowners associations, condominiums, cooperatives and other planned communities, collectively called “community associations” in this report.*

**Difficult economic times typically create more negative public views toward most institutions—whether Wall Street, the U.S. Congress or industry. But that hasn't happened in the case of the more than 315,000 U.S. community associations. Despite serious economic and housing issues, community associations continue to get high approval ratings from their residents—the people who know best.**

Critics of community associations like to focus on largely isolated, anecdotal reports in the media. Conflicts make headlines, and that's what most Americans read in newspapers and see on television about community associations. These stories are news because they are the exception to the rule. We read about the plane that crashed, not the thousands of flights that landed safely the same day.

Unfortunately, "good news" is close to being an oxymoron. We don't see stories about the tens of millions of homeowners who are satisfied in their communities. We read few media profiles about volunteer board members who lead their associations quietly and effectively. We rarely see stories about managers and other professionals who provide invaluable guidance and support to their community association clients.

But when you ask residents about their own community associations—when you ask the people who know—the news is overwhelmingly positive.

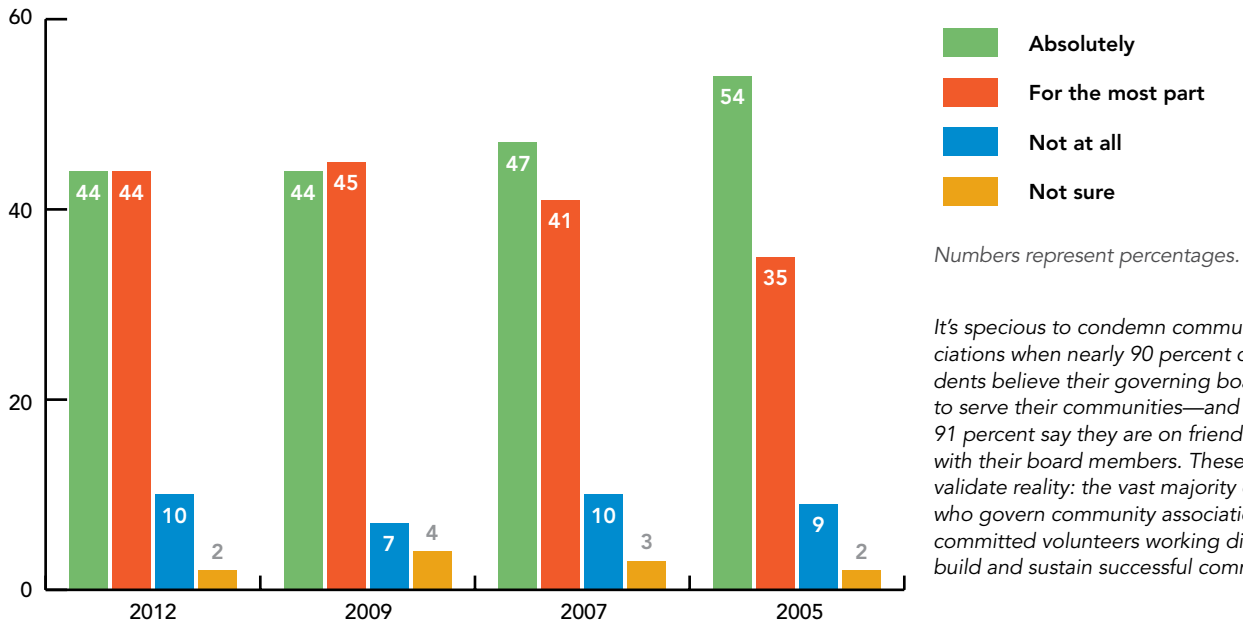
But not perfect. Utopia doesn't exist. Some community associations contend with disagreements and conflict—not unlike our workplaces, schools, social organizations and places of worship. There are opportunities for disagreements and conflict in every type of neighborhood, including community associations. While all community associations do not function as well as we might like, it's reassuring to know that reality is much more positive than some HOA critics would have us believe.

We encourage homeowners who are dissatisfied to step up and play a positive role in their associations. Homeowners get out of their communities what they put into them. There's no substitute for active and constructive homeowner involvement and no better way to build a true sense of community. This vision is reflected in associations that become better—even preferred—places to call home.

*CAI offers a variety of tools and resources for the homeowners who lead their associations, as well as three levels of professional education for community managers. Visit [www.caionline.org/edcenter](http://www.caionline.org/edcenter).*

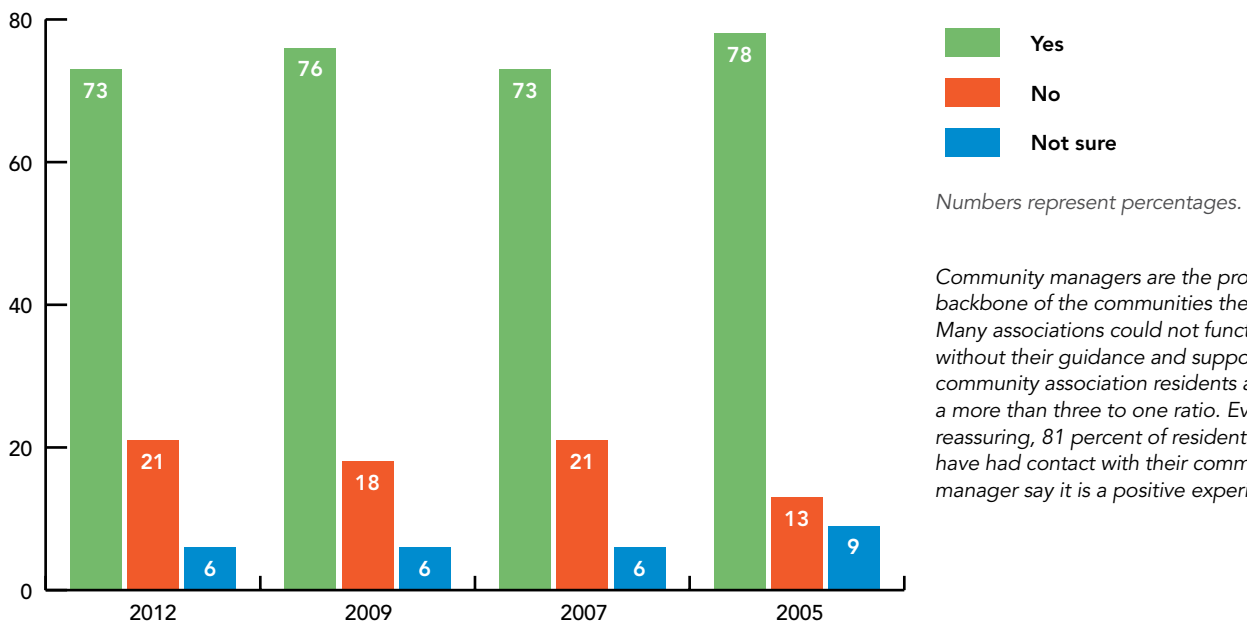
## GOVERNING BOARDS

Do you think the members of your elected governing board strive to serve the best interests of the community as a whole?



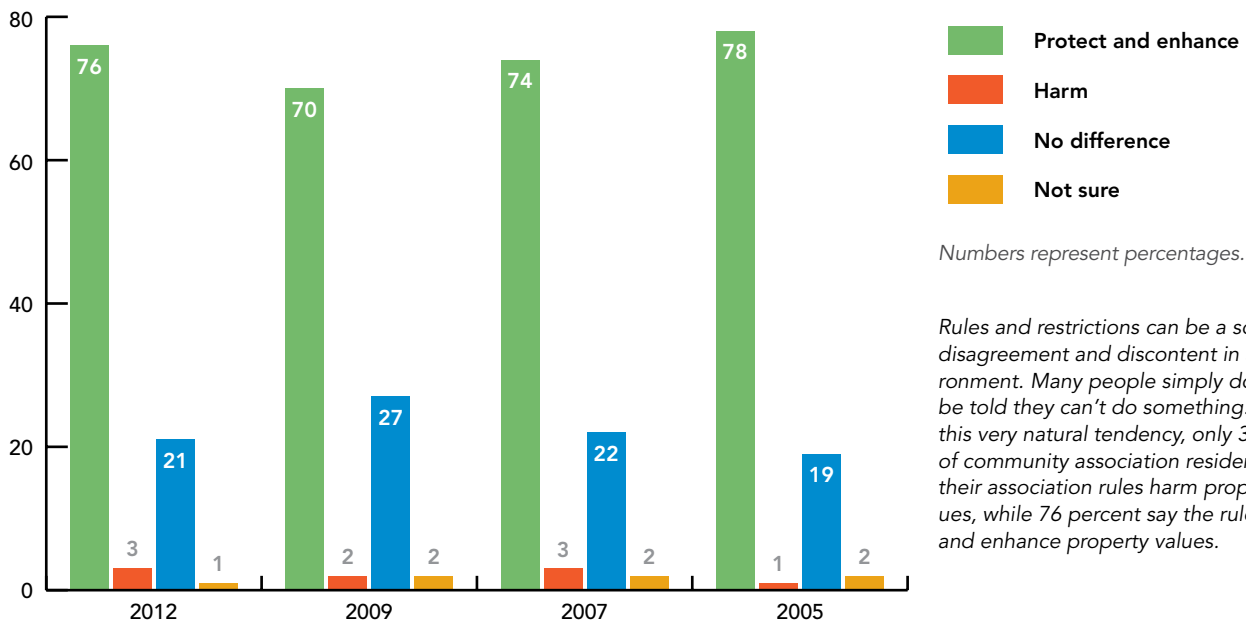
## COMMUNITY MANAGERS

Does the community manager provide value and support to residents and the community as a whole?



## ASSOCIATION RULES

Do the rules in your community protect and enhance property values, harm them or make no difference?



### Best aspects of living in a community association

- 24% Neighborhood attractiveness
- 17% Less maintenance for owners
- 13% Community safety
- 12% Property values
- 8% Responsible neighbors

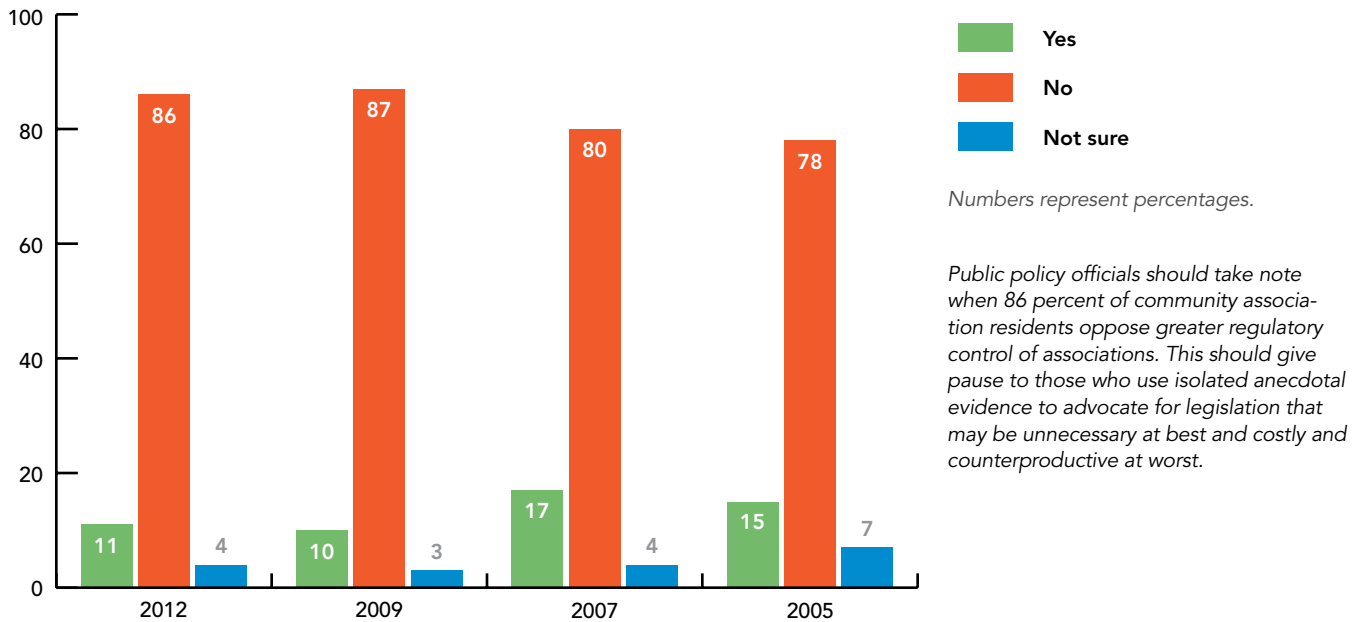
### Worst aspects of living in a community association

- 34% Nothing bad about the association
- 15% Restrictions on exterior improvements
- 10% Dealing with neighbors
- 9% Paying assessments
- 8% Dissatisfaction with association board
- 7% Restrictions on parking

Twenty-five percent of respondents reported a “significant” personal issue or disagreement with their associations in the past. Of those, 42 percent were satisfied with the result, while 35 percent were unsatisfied. For most of the others, the issue was unresolved at the time of the survey. It’s interesting that 25 percent had experienced a significant issue and that 35 percent of them were unsatisfied, yet only 8 percent of residents are unsatisfied with their associations overall. This strongly suggests that the vast majority of residents recognize and appreciate the net benefit of living in their communities—even when there are differences of opinion.

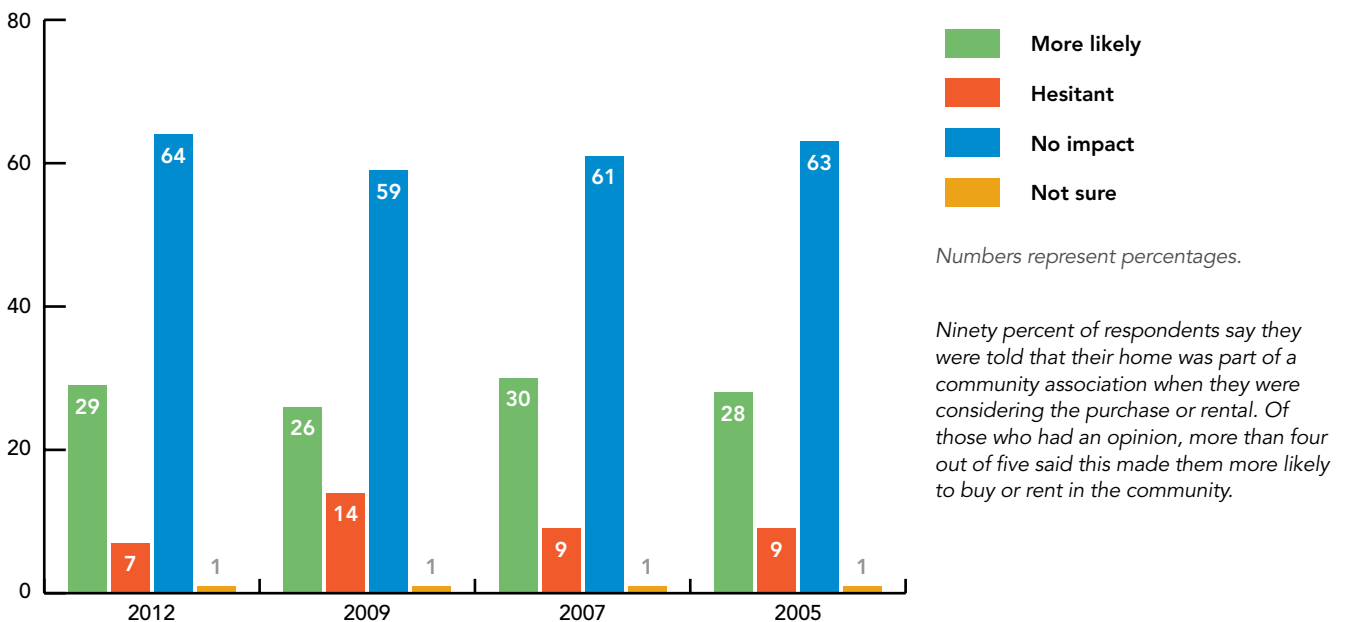
## GOVERNMENT REGULATION

The governance of community associations is subject to differing state laws and regulations. Would you like to see more government control of associations?



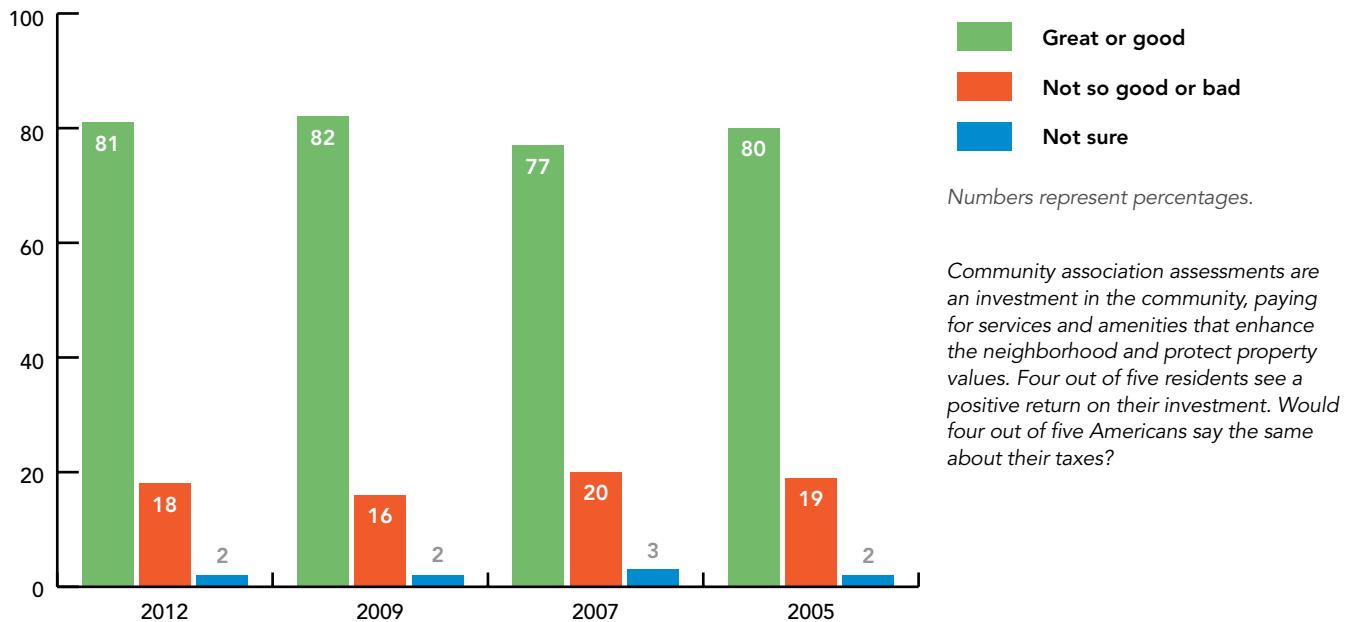
## PRE-PURCHASE AWARENESS

Did the fact that your current home is in a community association make you more likely to purchase or rent your home, make you hesitant about purchasing or renting your home or have no impact?



## ASSOCIATION ASSESSMENTS

Considering your overall assessments and the services provided by your association, how would you describe the return for what you pay in assessments?



### Average monthly association assessments

- 53% \$100 or less
- 27% \$101 to \$300
- 8% \$301 to \$500
- 4% More than \$500
- 4% No answer
- 4% Not required

Five percent of respondents reported being behind on their assessment payments to the association. Almost half of those said the association tried to work with them by offering special payment plans, deferred or partial payments or another options.



**The 2012 IBOPE Zogby research was sponsored by the Foundation for Community Association Research.** The foundation is a nonprofit organization created in 1975 to keep CAI at the forefront of scholarship, knowledge and insight pertaining to community association management and governance. Visit [www.cairf.org](http://www.cairf.org) for information about research projects, publications, scholarships and more.

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**This document was developed and published by Community Associations Institute.** CAI is an international membership association that works in partnership with 59 domestic chapters, a chapter in South Africa and housing leaders in a number of other countries. CAI provides three levels of professional education for community managers and an extensive array of resources and learning tools for community association board members and other homeowner leaders.

Visit [www.caionline.org](http://www.caionline.org).