

San Diego Speaks Survey, 2009



2009 Budget Issues

- Across California, cities are facing the challenge of balancing residents' expectations for services with limited or reduced resources
- In an effort to garner citizen input on these challenges, the City of San Diego administered the 'San Diego Speaks' survey
- The survey was designed by the office of the Independent Budget Analyst and the Budget and Finance Consultant

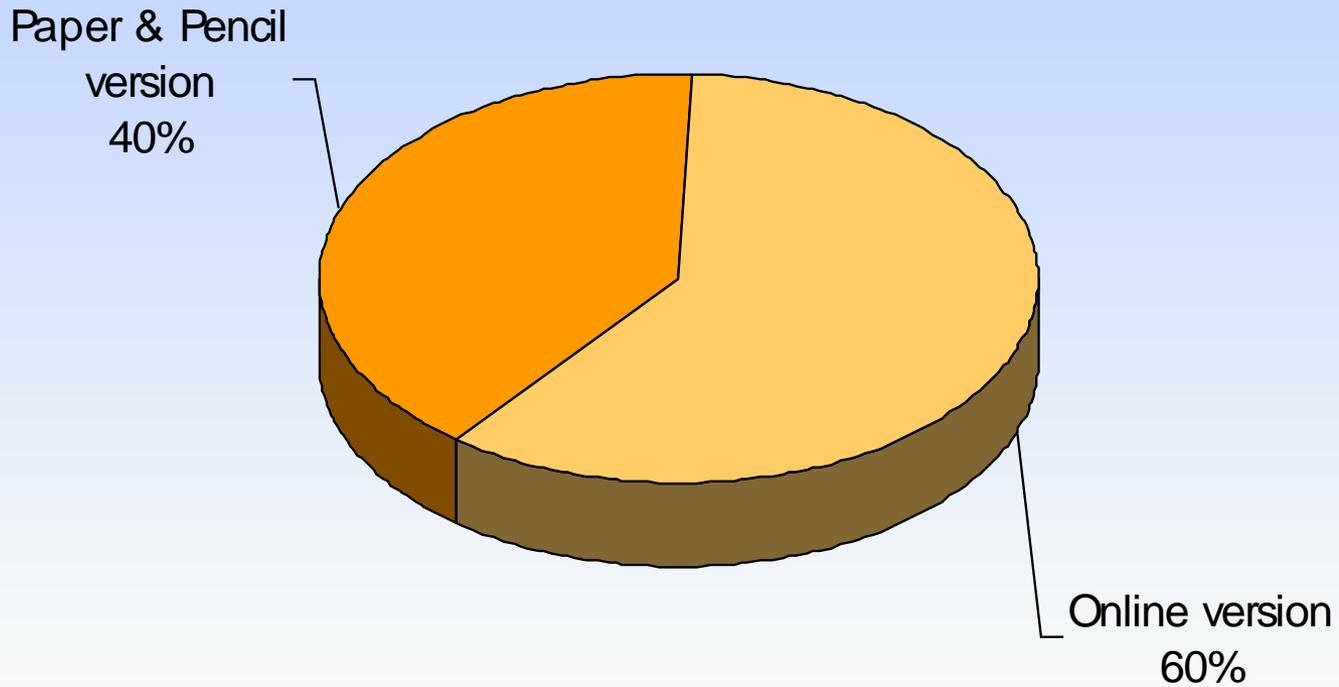
Survey Overview

- Survey was administered in two formats: as a self-administered paper-and-pencil survey and online via the City website
- Both versions of the survey were offered in English and Spanish
- Self-administered surveys were handed out at six community meetings between February 4 and February 27, 2009
- The online survey was available from February 5 through March 1, 2009
- The online survey was advertised on television via Cox Communication in the second half of February, at community meetings, and on the City website
- Online and self-administered versions varied slightly
- Survey contained 40 questions asking about prioritization of services and suggestions for service elimination and revenue options
- Final N=687; 275 of these were paper & pencil, 412 were online respondents

Data: Context and Limitations

- Data was collected via a non-random (non-probability) sample of voluntary participants; therefore data do not necessarily represent the opinions of all San Diego residents.
- Respondents to the paper & pencil survey appeared to misunderstand the question format, resulting in many blank datapoints, particularly on the “Reduce/Eliminate” and “Pay More For” questions.
- The online survey included the option “Neither” for the “Reduce/Eliminate” series of questions. Due to this difference, we were unable to merge the online and paper & pencil data for these particular questions.
- The open-ended questions allowed for multiple responses to each question. Percents for these questions are based on the number of ideas, NOT the number of people responding to the question.

Breakdown of Surveys Collected



All Services, Ranked: Essential/Non-Essential, part 1

	Essential	Non-Essential	No response
911 emergency response	92%	2%	5%
Fire emergency services	91%	3%	6%
Overall police services	84%	7%	9%
Street maintenance	83%	8%	9%
Street lighting	82%	10%	8%
Police efforts: gang problems	80%	12%	8%
Trash collection	76%	12%	12%
Police efforts: reduce property crime	75%	14%	11%
Playgrounds, ball fields, multi-purpose fields	70%	18%	12%
Neighborhood branch libraries	69%	22%	9%
Police efforts: drug problems	67%	24%	9%
Recreation centers	66%	23%	11%
Recycling	65%	22%	13%
After school programs	64%	27%	9%
Sidewalk maintenance	64%	23%	13%
Storm water compliance	63%	23%	14%
Beach maintenance and quality of facilities	62%	21%	17%
Youth rec center programs	62%	28%	10%
Fire brush management	61%	24%	15%
Lifeguard services	60%	24%	16%

All Services, Ranked: Essential/Non-Essential, part 2

	Essential	Non-Essential	No response
Graffiti control/removal	58%	30%	12%
Senior and therapeutic programs	56%	33%	11%
Fire prevention	54%	30%	15%
Park ranger services	53%	29%	18%
Code enforcement	53%	32%	15%
Library youth programs	51%	36%	13%
Swimming pools	51%	34%	15%
Community planning	51%	33%	16%
Brush thinning	47%	36%	17%
Passive park areas	46%	37%	17%
Open space	46%	37%	17%
Lead/asbestos inspections	44%	41%	15%
Main library downtown	42%	42%	16%
Community cleanups	42%	42%	16%
Residential street sweeping	39%	43%	18%
Adult rec center programs	37%	48%	15%
Art and cultural programs	36%	47%	17%
Street landscaping	31%	51%	18%

All Services, Ranked: Reduce/Eliminate/Neither, part 1

(Online respondents only; N=412)

	Reduce	Eliminate	Neither
Residential street sweeping	46%	23%	31%
Street landscaping	45%	28%	27%
Passive park areas	41%	21%	38%
Art and cultural programs	40%	36%	24%
Recreation centers	40%	12%	48%
Brush thinning	40%	21%	39%
Adult rec center programs	40%	40%	20%
Code enforcement	40%	16%	44%
Community cleanups	39%	27%	34%
Community planning	39%	23%	38%
Playgrounds, ball fields, multi-purpose fields	38%	10%	52%
Park ranger services	38%	13%	49%
Swimming pools	38%	22%	40%
Fire prevention programs	37%	17%	46%
Lifeguard services	36%	9%	55%
Senior and therapeutic programs	36%	27%	37%
Sidewalk maintenance	36%	8%	56%
Graffiti control/removal	35%	15%	50%
Lead/asbestos inspections	35%	30%	35%

All Services, Ranked: Reduce/Eliminate/Neither, part 2

(Online respondents only; N=412)

	Reduce	Eliminate	Neither
Library youth programs	34%	28%	38%
Main Library downtown	33%	33%	34%
Beach maintenance	33%	9%	58%
Open space	33%	23%	44%
Fire brush management	32%	14%	54%
Branch libraries	32%	13%	55%
Storm water compliance	28%	16%	56%
Police efforts: reduce property crime	27%	5%	68%
Police efforts: drug problems	27%	13%	59%
Youth rec center programs	26%	24%	50%
After school programs	23%	23%	54%
Recycling	22%	16%	62%
Street lighting	19%	6%	75%
Police efforts: gang problems	18%	6%	76%
Street maintenance	18%	4%	78%
Trash collection	16%	14%	70%
Overall police services	14%	2%	84%
Fire emergency services	8%	2%	90%
911 emergency response	4%	2%	94%

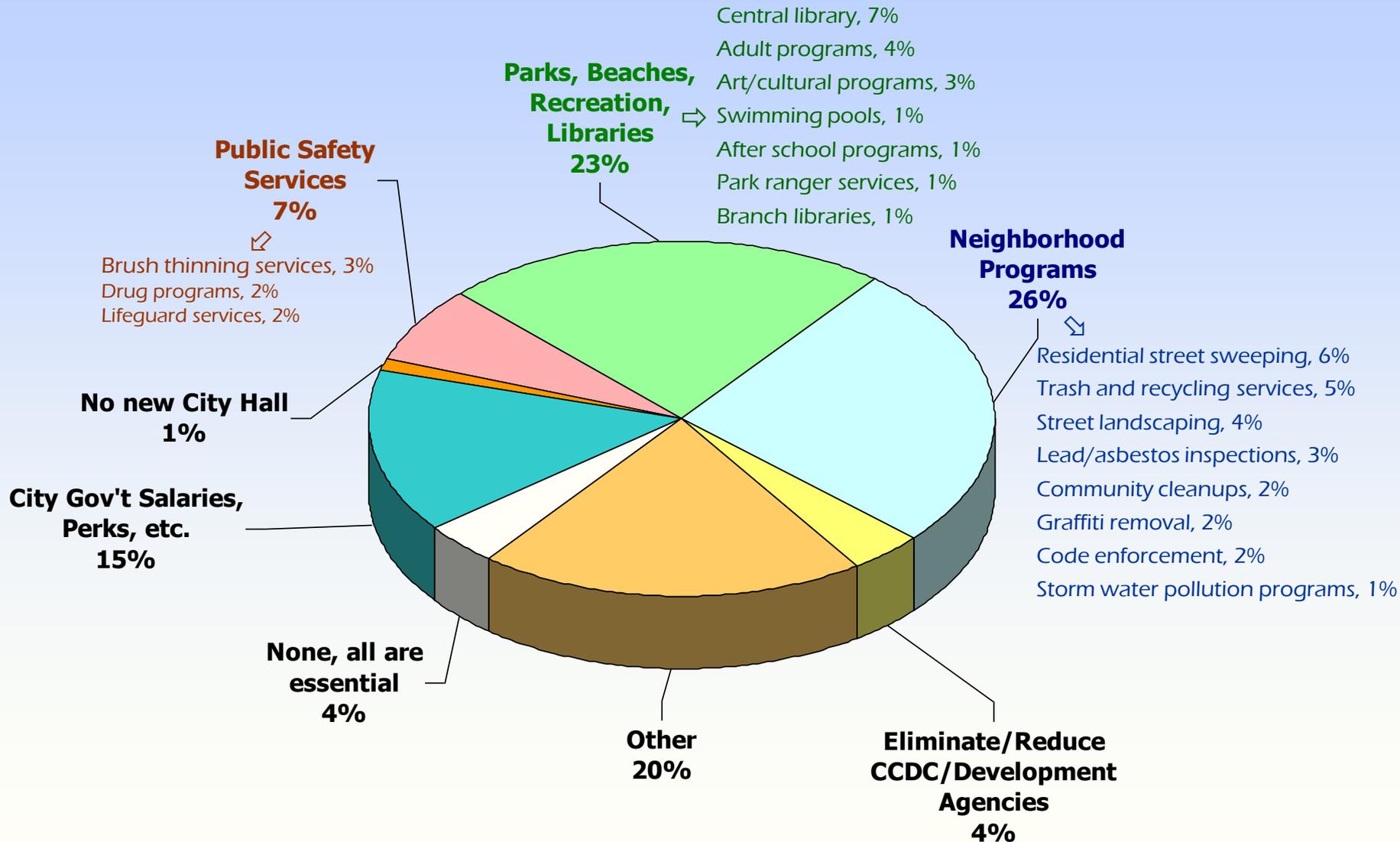
All Services, Ranked: Would Pay More For, part 1

	Would Pay More	No response
Trash collection	37%	63%
911 emergency response	36%	64%
Fire emergency services	34%	66%
Overall police services	32%	68%
Street maintenance	32%	68%
Recycling	31%	69%
Police efforts: gang problems	28%	72%
Branch libraries	28%	72%
Street lighting	28%	72%
Playgrounds, ball fields, multi-purpose fields	26%	74%
After school programs	25%	75%
Recreation centers	24%	76%
Youth rec center programs	23%	77%
Sidewalk maintenance	23%	77%
Police efforts: drug problems	22%	78%
Police efforts: reduce property crime	22%	78%
Beach maintenance	22%	78%
Storm water compliance	22%	78%
Graffiti control/removal	21%	79%

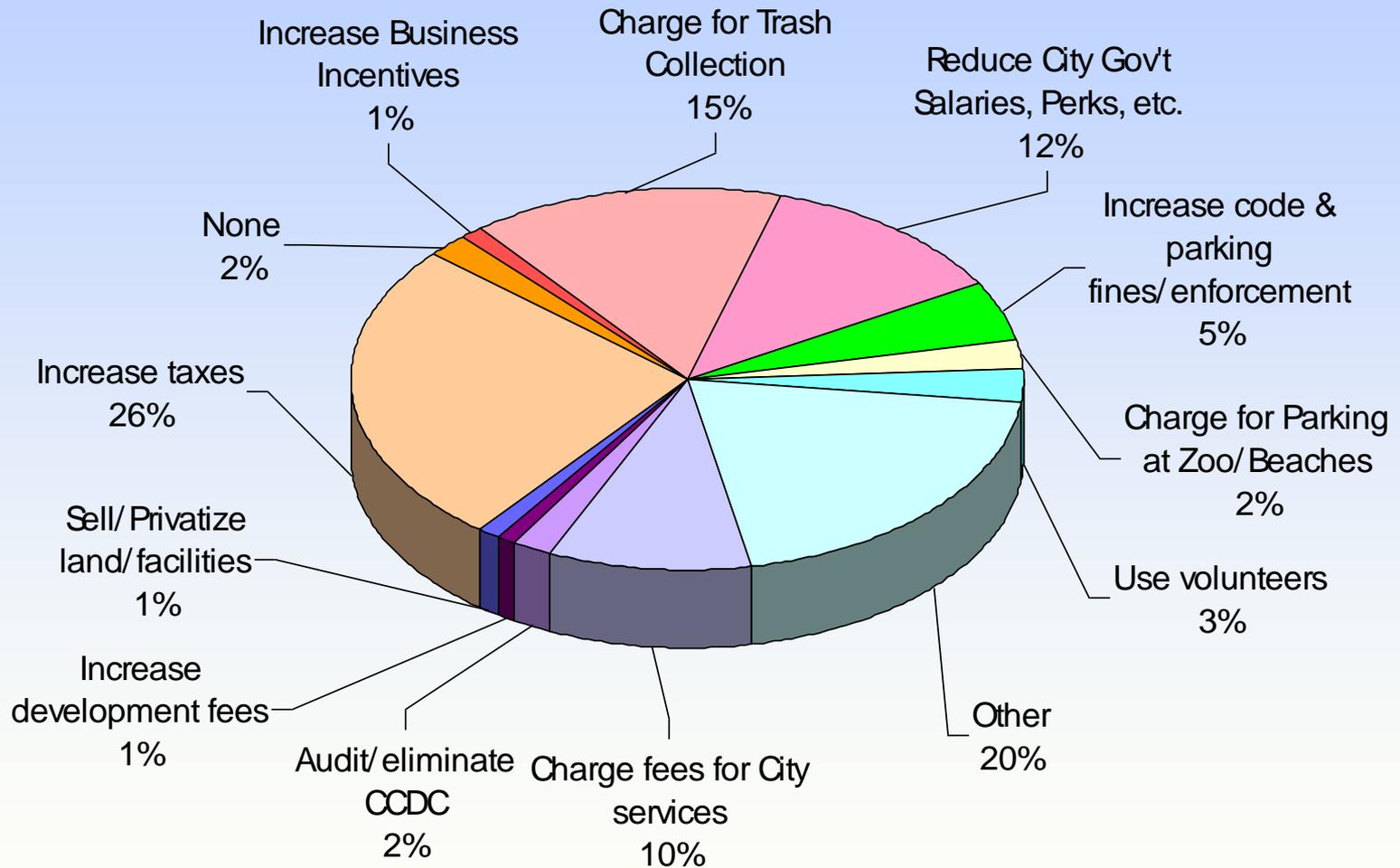
All Services, Ranked: Would Pay More For, part 2

	Would Pay More	No response
Fire brush management	20%	80%
Senior and therapeutic programs	20%	80%
Library youth programs	19%	81%
Park ranger services	19%	81%
Swimming pools	19%	81%
Open space	18%	82%
Code enforcement	18%	82%
Fire prevention programs	17%	83%
Passive park areas	17%	83%
Lifeguard services	16%	84%
Main library downtown	16%	84%
Art and cultural programs	16%	84%
Brush thinning	16%	84%
Residential street sweeping	15%	85%
Adult rec center programs	14%	86%
Lead/asbestos inspections	14%	86%
Community planning	13%	87%
Community cleanups	13%	87%
Street landscaping	12%	88%

What programs or services should be eliminated?



Suggested Tax/Revenue Opportunities



Takeaway

- Over one-fourth of respondents suggested raising taxes to offset costs.
- Public safety services are considered essential. Respondents are not willing to reduce or eliminate them, and some are even willing to pay more for key safety services such as 911 and fire emergency services.
- Many respondents are willing to pay for residential trash collection, and many suggested charging for this service as a way to increase revenue.
- There is a slight lack of confidence in the City's financial practices. Some respondents seem to resent what they consider to be high salaries and benefits awarded to City employees.
- Neighborhood programs and Park/Beaches/Recreation/Library services were the most frequently suggested services for reduction/elimination.
- Increasing taxes, charging for trash collection, and reducing City salaries/perks, were the top three suggestions for increasing City revenue.