

Budget Priorities Outreach Survey Results

Fiscal Year 2015-16

The City of Santa Rosa's annual budget priorities outreach online survey was available for public input from January 5, 2015 through March 1, 2015. This summary includes the consolidated results from both the English and Spanish versions of the survey.

The survey respondents submitted a significant number of written comments on a variety of important priorities for the City, although there were clearly some common themes regarding key budget priorities that were mentioned by respondents. Some of the major needs as reflected in the survey responses and corresponding comments were improvement in pavement and pothole maintenance, increasing park maintenance, retrofitting and turning street lights back on, improving homeless shelter operations and providing much needed affordable housing.

In terms of the written comments and suggestions, perhaps the most prevalent overriding theme expressed was a strong need to fund and improve services that most directly affect the citizens of Santa Rosa. City services should be provided in a cost-effective manner and with greater efficiency, but also accessible during business hours that meet the needs of the public.

The level of response to the survey by the public was tremendous, with over 1,300 survey respondents and over 1,700 written comments submitted. Of the survey respondents:

- 91% were Santa Rosa residents
- 52% were age 55 or older
- 58% had household incomes \$100K or more
- 85% identified their ethnicity as Caucasian
- 44% reside in the Northeast section of Santa Rosa
- 47% identified as either a business owner or member of a community organization.

More detailed survey demographic information can be found in the demographic section below.

Budget priorities survey results summarized by City department

1. Community Development Department

Responses	1321
Program priorities (% rated as either Very or Extremely Important)	57% -Access to Public Information & Self-Help Services 44% -Public Counter Hours of Operation, One-Stop Shop Permits 38% -Economic Development-Code and Policy Adjustments
Comments summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase hours of service, improve responsiveness - Improving customer service should be a priority - Current permit process too slow, complicated, not user friendly - Technological improvements would improve efficiency and public access to information (online, website access)

2. Economic Development and Housing Department

Responses	1321
Program priorities (% rated either Very or Extremely Important)	66% - Economic Development 64% - Homeless Shelter Operations 60% - Affordable Housing Production 57% - Neighborhood Revitalization Program
Comments summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -More affordable housing needed, now at a crisis level -Growing homeless situation has become an epidemic problem -Need a long-term solution to homelessness in the City -Need to revitalize neighborhoods -Too many requirements (permits, rules, fees, etc.) make it very difficult to start a new business in Santa Rosa. -More partnership with non-profit organizations to address homeless issues. -Skyrocketing rents creating a major housing affordability problem

3. Fire Department

Responses	1316
Most important programs	51% - Emergency Preparedness Coordinator 51% - Fire Investigation 50% - Continued Fire Station Funding at the end of the SAFER Grant 46% - Vegetation Management 43% - Weed Abatement 31% - Community Outreach 26% - 2 nd Battalion
Comments summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Concerns about Measure O funding- need cost containment of resources spent on Fire resources. -Weed abatement and vegetation management critical importance but maybe could be done more cost effectively. -Is adding a 2nd Battalion position truly a critical need versus other priorities?

4. Police Department

Responses	1326
Most important programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 71% - Sexual Assault Examinations 67% - Mental Health Mobile Support Team Training 60% - Body-Mounted Video Systems for Patrol Officers 59% - Expand Downtown Enforcement Team/Police Presence in Core Areas of City 49% - Fiduciary Elder Abuse Outreach/Physical Elder Abuse 45% - Professional Standards Unit 28% - Additional K-9
Comments summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Increase police patrols and visible presence in Downtown, Railroad Square, and other high crime areas. -Strong support for body-mounted video for patrol officers -More policing of unsafe drivers, traffic violation enforcement -Police department funding already more than adequate

5. Recreation and Parks Department

Responses	1317
Most important programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 81% - Park Maintenance 76% - Programs for At-Risk Youth 69% - Building Maintenance 64% - Community Centers & Programs 58% - Aquatic Centers & Programs 41% - Creative Arts Programs
Comments summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Restore funding towards park maintenance -A thriving community needs well-maintained parks and community centers -Increase community participation in caring for the parks -Support maintaining existing facilities and infrastructure, use future budget excess to build facilities -Need to support and increase funding of youth programs -Keep Prince Greenway safe, clean, and graffiti-free

6. Transportation and Public Works Department

Responses	1337
Most important programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 86% - Pavement and Pothole Maintenance 69% - Street Lights 64% - Traffic Signal Timing 63% - Pedestrian Enhancements 61% - CityBus Transit and Paratransit Services 57% - Graffiti Removal 57% - Street Signs and Roadway Striping 52% - Flood Prevention 43% - Bicycle Enhancements 33% - Roadway Safety Education Campaign
Comments summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Overwhelming support to improve the condition of streets and fill potholes -Turning back on all street lights a high priority-public safety issue -Traffic signal timing needs improvement -Increase bus service and find a way to lower Paratransit cost

7. City Manager's Office

Responses	1302
Most important programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 58% - Violence Prevention 48% - Community Engagement 38% - Administration 34% - City Clerk's Office
Comments summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The city needs a strong community engagement program to promote communication and encourage volunteerism -Critical to engage with, inform, and listen to the public -City officials must remain available and responsive to public inquiry and input -More funds applied to services that directly affect citizens -Public engagement should be a priority -Implement Open Government Task Force recommendations -Exorbitant cost of public employee pensions needs to be addressed -Emulate best practices from other cities -Provide more automated and web-based services to make it easier for citizens to do business with the City while reducing administrative costs

8. Survey respondent demographics

Gender	Female: 55% Male: 45%
Age	44 to 54: 22% 65 to 74: 21% 35 to 44: 14% 60 to 64: 13% 55 to 59: 13% 25 to 34: 8% 75+ : 5% 18 to 24: 3% Under 18: 1%
Household income	>/\$120K: 26% \$80-100K: 17% \$100-120K: 15% \$60-80K: 14% \$40-60K: 12% \$20-40K: 11% < \$20K: 5%
Children =/<18 years live in household	None: 69% One: 15% Two: 12% Three: 4% Four or more: 1%
Adults 65+ live in household	None: 58% One: 21% Two: 19% Three: 1% Four or more: 1%
Ethnicity	Caucasian: 85% Hispanic/Latino: 6% Other ethnicity: 5% Asian: 2% African-American: < 1% American Indian: < 1% Pacific Islander: < 1%
Resident of Santa Rosa	Yes: 91% No: 9%
Santa Rosa residence area	Northeast: 44% Northwest: 23% Southeast: 22% Southwest: 11%
Business Owner or Community Organization	Yes: 47% No: 53%