

Future Funding Priorities Survey & Community Conversations

March 9, 2009

Joint Work Session:

City Council/Budget Committee

Community Outreach Report

- Community Outreach Summary
 - Similarities and differences: Funding Priorities Survey and Community Conversations
- Funding Priorities Survey
 - Who we heard from
 - What they said
- Community Conversations
 - Who we heard from
 - What they said
- Your Observations

Approach Overview

- Two primary components:
 - Printed and on-line survey
 - Series of community conversations
- Interest:
 - Post card distribution (City offices, Chamber and business associations, neighborhood associations, boards and commissions, City Center employers)
 - Press coverage
- Design: gauge community perceptions regarding:
 - Relative importance of four result areas
 - Priority programs and services within each result area

The Results

- Result areas ranked differently
 - Community Conversations: Livable Community most important
 - Funding Priorities Survey: Livable Community least important
- Top priority programs and services within result areas are similar

Safe Community

- Four priorities clustered at the top across both formats:
 - Quick response when safety or well-being is at risk
 - Preventing drug and gang activity
 - Preparing for emergency response
 - Lending a helping hand to those in need

Livable Community

- Top priorities:
 - Maintaining parks and open space
 - Being responsible in planning as our community grows
 - Maintaining library services
- From Community Conversations:
 - Emphasis on recreation programs for youth and families (not in survey)

Vibrant Economy

- Top priorities:
 - Recruiting and retaining employers that provide family wage jobs
 - Attracting new industry and business by providing needed infrastructure
- Survey:
 - Planning to have adequate land, water, sewer and streets for our future
- From Community Conversations:
 - Helping to renovate buildings and promote housing, retail and office uses in downtown

Healthy Environment

- Top priorities:
 - Supply abundant and clean drinking water
 - Protect our health by responsibly managing sewage disposal
 - Protect our watershed, creeks and streams

Who We Heard From

- Almost 900 responses; half provided additional comments
 - Live in south Salem (39%)
 - Between 36-69 years old (74.8%)
 - Family income more than \$70,000 (44.2%)
 - Speak English at home (98.9%)
 - Live in Salem (81.9%); Work in Salem (70.8%)

What They Said

- Priority result areas:
 - Safe Community – highest priority by more than half respondents (51.3%)
 - Healthy Environment – second most important priority, less than a third (28.6%)
 - Vibrant Economy – third most important, almost one third (31.2%)
 - Livable Community – least important priority (39.7%)

What They Said: Comments

Broad categories, order of frequency:

1. Suggestions for preserving specific services or programs
2. Ideas for generating savings
 - Promote volunteerism
 - Reduce costs associated with employees
 - Eliminate or reduce service provision
 - Contract out services or programs

What They Said: Comments

Broad categories, order of frequency
(cont.):

3. Theorizing about service priorities for government
4. New ideas for program/service investment
5. Services provided by a separate governmental entity
6. Specific to budget process or survey
7. Ideas for new revenue sources

Who We Heard From

- Approximately 160 community members participated (including 40 Spanish speakers)
- West Salem, north Salem, south Salem and McKay high school
- Format: presentation, poll and facilitated small group discussions by result area
- Most chose to discuss Livable Community; Spanish-speaking focus: Vibrant Economy

What They Said

- Top Priorities:
 - Quick response when safety or well-being is at risk
 - Lend a helping hand to people in need
 - Maintain library services, parks and open space
 - Recruit and retain employers with family wage jobs
- Healthy Community (no clear priority) three of the four conversations:
 - Clean drinking water
 - Protect watershed, creeks, streams
 - Reduce energy use and cost at City buildings

Closing

- Observations
- Questions