

PPIC
STATEWIDE
SURVEY
JULY 2000

**Special Survey
of San Diego County**
in collaboration with the
San Diego Dialogue

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Preface

The San Diego survey—a collaborative effort of the Public Policy Institute of California and San Diego Dialogue—is a special edition of the PPIC Statewide Survey. This report summarizes the results of the baseline “awareness” survey for a one-year citizen engagement and dialogue project in San Diego County, organized by San Diego Dialogue in partnership with the Leadership Learning Network, Inc. (chaired by Dan Yankelovich) and funded by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

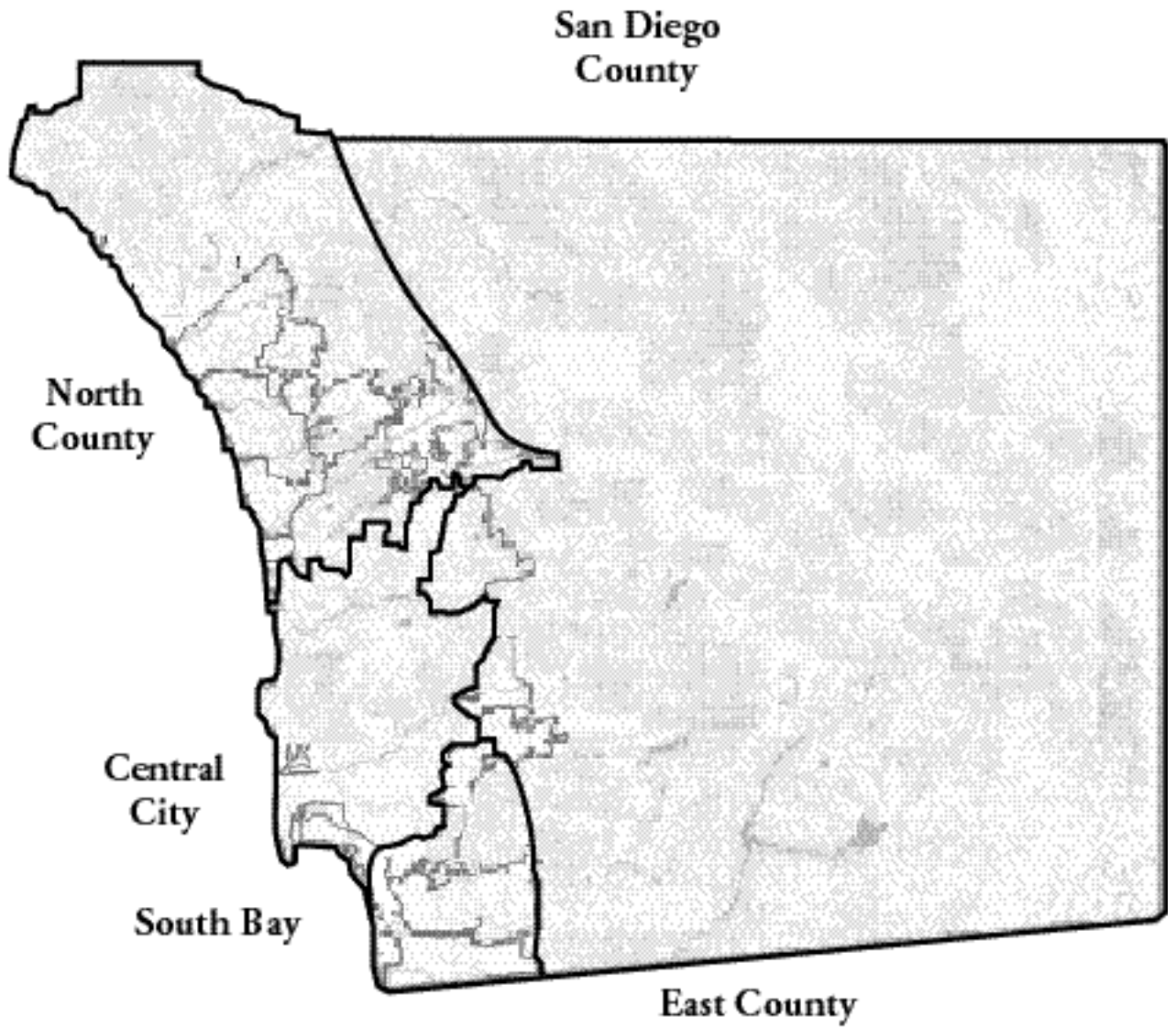
The intent of the current survey is to provide the first comprehensive, advocacy-free study of the perceptions, attitudes, and public policy preferences of San Diego County residents. The county is the second most populous in California and is one of the fastest growing and most dynamic metropolitan regions in the state. The social, economic, political, and public policy trends in this large county are of considerable interest to researchers and local and state leaders throughout California.

San Diego County—a Southern California coastal region with a 4,260 square mile land area stretching from the Orange County and Riverside County borders in the north to the Tijuana, Mexico, border in the south—is home to about 2.8 million residents. The population has increased by 1 million residents since 1980 and is expected to grow by another 1 million by 2020. The county includes 18 cities, with most located near the coast. The largest is San Diego, with 1.2 million residents. The unincorporated communities contain about a half million residents. The county’s population is 24 percent Latino, 9 percent Asian, 6 percent black, and 61 percent non-Hispanic white. The county is becoming more racially and ethnically diverse over time.

This survey of 2,000 adult residents, conducted in June 2000, provides baseline awareness questions for measuring changes over time and includes comparisons with other major regions of California and with the state as a whole, focusing in particular on the following areas:

- Ratings of the seriousness of specific problems confronting the region today, including growth and land-use issues, fiscal and governance issues, and social and economic trends.
- Perceptions of the major causes of the problems today, including the amount of population growth and the nature of land use, fiscal stresses on the system of local governance, and social and economic trends such as inner-city decline and growing income inequality.
- Support for policies that others have suggested for solving the problems facing the San Diego area, including specific growth and land-use policies, fiscal and governance reforms, and social and economic policies that seek to improve the conditions of lower-income residents.
- Variations in perceptions and policy preferences between all adult residents, “likely voters” who most actively participate in local elections, and Latinos and young adults (18 to 34 year olds)—who are underrepresented in the political process today—and differences across the four regions of the county (the central city of San Diego, South Bay, north county, and east county).
- Overall evaluations of San Diego County as a place to live, including quality of life ratings, commuting problems, future growth expectations, and plans to continue living in the county.

Copies of this report or other PPIC Statewide Surveys may be ordered by e-mail (order@ppic.org) or phone (415-291-4400).



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Press Release

CONCERNS ABOUT GROWTH LOOM LARGE IN SAN DIEGO

Residents See Government as Major Part of Problem, But Optimism About Region's Future Reigns

SAN FRANCISCO, California, July 19, 2000 — San Diegans have seen the future and it looks like L.A. Residents say traffic, housing, and a host of other growth-related worries threaten the county and government is failing to meet the challenge, according to a new survey by the Public Policy Institute of California and San Diego Dialogue. At the same time, residents express surprising optimism about the region's ability to overcome its troubles and say they won't head for greener pastures anytime soon.

The large-scale public opinion survey of 2,000 San Diego County residents reveals a nearly unanimous (93%) expectation that the county's population will grow in the next ten years, with eight in ten residents saying it will grow rapidly. Strikingly, only 18 percent believe the county will be a better place to live in 2010, while 38 percent say it will be worse. San Diegans are more likely than Californians as a whole to believe that their region will experience rapid growth in the next ten years (82% to 59%) and are less likely to say that it will be a better place to live a decade from now (18% to 28%).

Given this concern, San Diegans are quick to find growth-related issues at the heart of the county's problems. When asked to name the single biggest problem facing their part of San Diego, residents say traffic (29%), followed by crime (15%) and population growth and development (13%). Growth-related concerns again top the list when residents are asked to rank a number of local problems. Three in four say that traffic (78%) and the lack of affordable housing (74%) are serious problems in their part of the county, and more than half (58%) say that pollution is a serious problem. Three other issues — immigration (57%), local taxes (54%), and homelessness and poverty (51%) — are also seen as big problems by a majority of residents. Residents in the north county are more likely than those in other regions to see traffic, development, lack of parks, and population increases as serious problems, while people in the South Bay are more concerned than other county residents about pollution.

"The effects of San Diego's tremendous growth are hitting home for many residents," said PPIC Statewide Survey Director Mark Baldassare. "And with the county's population projected to increase by 1 million residents in the next 20 years, it's not surprising that there is uncertainty and some doubt about what the future will hold."

Government Viewed as Ineffective, Corrupt

While growth may be the key problem, government is a central cause, according to San Diegans. When asked about a number of potential reasons for the region's problems, residents cite "the government spending money on the wrong things" more than any other reason (75%), followed by too fast growth (63%), ineffective government (61%), poor quality schools in inner-city neighborhoods (61%), and too much growth in the wrong places (60%). Majorities also view other government-related issues — including excessive regulations driving up the cost of housing (59%), government allocation of state and local taxes (58%), greed and corruption in government (56%), and

overdevelopment resulting from insufficient government regulations (51%) — as major causes of their area's problems.

San Diegans' profound distrust of government surfaces again when residents are asked to rate proposed solutions to the region's problems. The highest level of support is found for reducing corruption in government (89%), followed closely by building a superior transit system (85%), investing more money in public schools (85%), and reforming local government so that it serves the interests of the entire community (84%). Ironically, solid majorities also support strengthening the powers of local government so that it can deal with problems more effectively (70%) and making it easier for local governments to raise money by reforming the property tax system (55%). However, residents make it clear that they intend to control the purse strings: only 46 percent say they support making it easier for local governments to raise money by requiring a simple majority rather than a two-thirds vote to pass local taxes. While South Bay residents are most likely to think that reducing corruption in government is a good idea (92%), they are also the most likely to support strengthening local government (80%), reforming the property tax system (68%), and requiring only a simple majority vote to pass local taxes (56%).

"Residents are relatively scathing in their assessment of government in San Diego County," said Baldassare. "However, they also understand that local officials have a key role to play in solving the region's problems and are willing to provide at least some of the fiscal tools that governments need. There is a significant opportunity here."

Glass Half Full

Indeed, despite the perils of a growth-filled future, San Diego residents find much promise in their region. Two in three residents say that the county is headed in the right direction, and only about one in four say that things are going in the wrong direction. Similarly, most (84%) say that the quality of life in San Diego County is going either "very well" (24%) or "somewhat well" (60%), while relatively few think that the quality of life in their county is going badly (15%).

Although most San Diegans expect rapid growth and few expect conditions to improve, two in three residents still intend to live in San Diego County a decade from now. Sixty-four percent say they see themselves living in the county in 2010, while 30 percent say they will call another county home. Not coincidentally, the majority of residents also believe that solutions to the problems facing their part of San Diego are within reach: Fifty-nine percent say they are optimistic that local problems will be solved, with South Bay residents even more hopeful than most (64%).

"Many difficult choices lie ahead for San Diegans, their elected leaders, and their community organizations as we confront the challenges presented by population growth and our unique geographic situation," said Chuck Nathanson, Executive Director of San Diego Dialogue. "But the level of optimism and commitment to the county that this survey reveals is remarkably powerful and encouraging."

Interestingly, Latinos hold an even more optimistic view of the county and its future than adult residents generally. They are more likely to believe that the problems facing their area of the county will be solved (71% to 59%), to say that things are generally headed in the right direction (73% to 66%), and to think that the quality of life in the county is going very well or somewhat well (91% to 84%). Latinos are also more likely to think that the county will be a better place to live in 2010 (31%) than a worse place (25%). Despite their overall optimism, younger residents (ages 18 to 34) are the least likely to say they see themselves living in the county ten years from now (55%).

About the Survey

The Special Survey of San Diego County — a collaborative effort of the Public Policy Institute of California and San Diego Dialogue — is a special edition of the PPIC Statewide Survey. The survey offers the first comprehensive, advocacy-free study of the perceptions, attitudes, and public policy preferences of San Diego residents. It provides baseline information for a one-year citizen engagement and dialogue project in the county, organized by San Diego Dialogue in partnership with Leadership Learning Network, Inc. (chaired by Dan Yankelovich) and funded by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

Findings are based on a telephone survey of 2,000 San Diego County adult residents interviewed from June 12 to June 18, 2000. Interviews were conducted in English or Spanish. The sampling error for the total sample is +/- 2%. For additional information on survey methodology, see page 21.

[Dr. Mark Baldassare](#) is a senior fellow at PPIC. He is founder and director of the PPIC Statewide Survey, which he has conducted since 1998. For over two decades, he has conducted surveys for the University of California, Irvine, and major news organizations, including the Orange County Edition of the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Orange County Register*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, KCAL-TV, and KRON-TV. Dr. Baldassare is the author of numerous books, including *California in the New Millennium: The Changing Social and Political Landscape* (University of California Press, 2000).

PPIC is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to objective, nonpartisan research on economic, social, and political issues that affect the lives of Californians. The Institute was established in 1994 with an endowment from William R. Hewlett.

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San Diego Context

The County's Future

Almost all San Diego County residents expect the population to increase in their county, and 82 percent predict rapid growth in the next 10 years. This nearly unanimous perception of growth is found among likely voters, younger adults, Latinos, and across the four regions of the county.

Looking ahead, only 18 percent expect their county to be a better place to live in 2010, while 38 percent expect it to be a worse place to live and 42 percent think that it will be about the same. Likely voters are the most pessimistic, and younger adults remain somewhat more optimistic than all adults. Latinos are much more likely than all adults to say that San Diego will be a better place to live in the future (31% to 18%). In every region, more residents think the county will be a worse rather than a better place to live ten years from now.

Comparing these results to those of an earlier PPIC Statewide Survey (June 2000), we find that residents in San Diego County (82%) are more likely than residents of the state as a whole (59%) to believe that their region will experience rapid growth in the next 10 years. San Diego County residents are also less likely than Californians as a whole to say that their region will be a better place to live in 2010 than it is today (18% to 28%).

"In the next 10 years, do you think the population of San Diego County will grow rapidly, grow slowly, stay about the same, or decline?"

	All Adults	Likely Voters	Ages 18 to 34	Latino
Grow rapidly	82%	83%	82%	82%
Grow slowly	11	10	11	9
Stay about the same	5	5	4	6
Decline	1	1	2	2
Don't know	1	1	1	1

"Ten years from now, do you think San Diego County will be a better place to live than it is now, a worse place to live than it is now, or about the same?"

	All Adults	Likely Voters	Ages 18 to 34	Latino
Better place	18%	16%	21%	31%
Worse place	38	41	34	25
Same	42	41	44	41
Don't know	2	2	1	3

Overall Mood Today

Although they are concerned about the county's future, most residents are upbeat about overall conditions today. Two in three adult residents say that things in San Diego County are generally going in the right direction, and only about one in four say that things are going in the wrong direction. Similarly, most (84%) say that the quality of life in San Diego County is going either "very well" (24%) or "somewhat well" (60%), while relatively few think that the quality of life in their county is going badly (15%). There are no differences in the overall mood today between all adults and likely voters, younger adults, Latinos, or across the four regions of the county.

In comparing the survey's results to those of the June 2000 Statewide Survey, we find that San Diego residents are less likely than Californians as a whole to say things are going very well in their region (24% to 29%). San Diego residents are also less likely than Orange County residents to say things in their county are going very well (24% to 38%), based upon a comparison of this survey's responses with those of the Orange County Annual Survey conducted in May 2000.

"Do you think things in San Diego County are generally going in the right direction or the wrong direction?"

	All Adults	Likely Voters	Ages 18 to 34	Latino
Right direction	66%	65%	71%	73%
Wrong direction	27	30	23	19
Don't know	7	5	6	8

"Thinking about the quality of life in San Diego County, how do you think things are going?"

	All Adults	Likely Voters	Ages 18 to 34	Latino
Very well	24%	23%	23%	24%
Somewhat well	60	60	65	67
Somewhat badly	12	12	9	6
Very badly	3	4	2	2
Don't know	1	1	1	1

The Daily Commute

While overall conditions are positive, traffic is a daily annoyance for most of the county's work force. About two in three employed residents say that traffic congestion is a problem during their commute, while one in four describe traffic as a "great problem." There are no differences across demographic and voter groups in citing problems with the commute. North county residents (67%) are more likely than those in other regions to say that they experience at least some traffic problems.

Length of commute has a dramatic effect on perceptions of traffic problems. Among those whose commute from home to work is 30 minutes or more, 51 percent say that traffic congestion is a great problem, 37 percent say it is somewhat of a problems, and 12 percent say it is not a problem. Among those with shorter commutes, only 16 percent have a great problem with traffic, while 38 percent have some problems and 46 percent have no problem.

San Diego residents (26%) are more likely than Orange County residents (18%) or Central Valley residents (15%) to rank traffic congestion during their commute as a serious problem. We have no comparable results for Los Angeles, the San Francisco Bay area, or the state as a whole.

**"On a typical day, how much of a problem is traffic congestion when you travel to and from work?"
(asked only of employed residents)**

	All Adults	Likely Voters	Ages 18 to 34	Latino
Great problem	26%	25%	28%	25%
Somewhat of a problem	37	38	38	39
No problem	37	37	34	36

	<u>Region</u>			
	Central City	North County	South Bay	East County
Great problem	23%	29%	27%	27%
Somewhat of a problem	39	38	35	33
No problem	38	33	38	40

Migration Plans

Even though most San Diegans expect rapid growth and few expect conditions to improve, two in three residents still expect to live in San Diego County in 2010. Only three in 10 expect to move outside the county in the next 10 years. There are no differences between all adults and Latinos and no variation across the four regions of the county. Younger adults, however, are less likely than all adults to see themselves living in the county a decade from now.

"Ten years from now, do you see yourself living in San Diego County or somewhere else?"

	All Adults	Likely Voters	Ages 18 to 34	Latino
Living in San Diego County	64%	68%	55%	66%
Living somewhere else	30	26	39	28
Don't know	6	6	6	6

	<u>Region</u>			
	Central City	North County	South Bay	East County
Living in San Diego County	63%	64%	65%	66%
Living somewhere else	30	29	31	29
Don't know	7	7	4	5

Local Civic Life

Active involvement in local public affairs is fairly uncommon in the San Diego area, but no less so than in the state as a whole. Fewer than one in 10 residents say they are very involved in working on local and neighborhood issues. One in three say they are somewhat involved, while most (58%) say they are not involved in local issues.

Among those most likely to vote, 11 percent are very involved, four in 10 are somewhat involved, and half are not involved in working on local issues. The level of involvement in local civic life does not differ much between all adults, young adults, and Latinos.

San Diego city residents are less likely to be involved in working on local and neighborhood issues than those living in the three regions outside the central city.

The level of civic involvement in San Diego County is comparable to the level we found for Californians as a whole in the October 1998 Statewide Survey. However, San Diego residents (58%) are a little more likely to report being “not involved” in local and neighborhood affairs than either Orange County residents (54%) or Central Valley residents (51%), when we compare the results of the current survey to the Orange County Annual Survey and a PPIC survey conducted in 1999.

"Are you very involved, somewhat involved, or not involved in working on local and neighborhood issues?"

	All Adults	Likely Voters	Ages 18 to 34	Latino
Very involved	9%	11%	7%	9%
Somewhat involved	33	39	34	39
Not involved	58	50	59	52

	<u>Region</u>			
	Central City	North County	South Bay	East County
Very involved	8%	9%	11%	9%
Somewhat involved	31	36	34	35
Not involved	61	55	55	56

Problems

Overall Ranking of Problems

County residents were asked to rank 15 problems in terms of the seriousness of each with respect to their local area. Three in four residents named traffic (78%) and the lack of affordable housing (74%) as serious problems. More than half said that pollution (58%), immigration (57%), local taxes (54%), and homelessness and poverty (51%) were serious problems. The lack of parks and open spaces, the lack of government funding for local public services, too much development, the quality of education in public schools, too many people moving into the county, and crime and gangs all registered complaints by fewer than half but more than four in 10 residents. The lack of well-paying jobs, inadequate public transit, and water availability were mentioned less often.

In a separate, open-ended question, San Diego residents also named traffic (29%) as the single biggest problem facing their area of San Diego. In California as a whole, the quality of public schools has consistently been named in recent PPIC Statewide Surveys as the number one issue in California. In PPIC's Central Valley Survey (November 1999), water was perceived to be the most important problem, and the Orange County Annual Survey in May 2000 found that crime topped the list in that county.

"Is _____ a big, serious problem for your part of San Diego?"
 (% who consider it a big, serious problem reported below)

	All Adults	Likely Voters
Traffic congestion on freeways and major roads	78%	82%
Availability of affordable housing	74	73
Air and water pollution and other environmental threats	58	57
The issue of immigration_both legal and illegal	57	59
The amount of property taxes, sales taxes, and other local taxes and fees that residents have to pay	54	50
Homelessness and poverty	51	49
Lack of public parks and open spaces	48	44
Inadequate government funding for local services	48	49
Too much big, sprawling development	47	51
	45	48

Problems

Too many people moving into the area	42	42
Crime and gangs	41	37
Lack of adequate public transportation	38	42
Lack of well-paying jobs	38	32
Availability of water	29	32

Growth-Related Issues

Looking separately at the seven growth-related issues, we note once again that residents are most likely to name traffic as a big problem, followed closely by the availability of affordable housing. More than half also rate pollution (58%) as a big problem, and just under half rank the lack of parks (48%) and too much development (47%) as major concerns, while 42 percent say that too many people moving into their area is a big problem and 29 percent express serious concerns about the availability of water.

Compared to all adults, likely voters are more concerned about traffic and development, younger adults are more concerned about affordable housing and a lack of parks, and Latinos are more troubled about pollution and, again, a lack of parks and open space in their local area.

Residents in the north county are more likely than those in other regions to perceive traffic, development, lack of parks, and too many people moving in as serious problems. People in the South Bay are more concerned than other county residents about pollution. Central city residents are the most likely to say that the lack of affordable housing is a big problem.

"Is _____ a big, serious problem for your part of San Diego?"
 (% who consider it a big, serious problem reported below)

	All Adults	Likely Voters	Ages 18 to 34	Latino
Traffic congestion on freeways, major roads	78%	82%	75%	72%
Availability of affordable housing	74	73	78	75
Air, water, environmental pollution	58	57	61	62
Lack of parks, open spaces	48	44	54	56
Too much big, sprawling development	47	51	42	41
Too many people moving into the area	42	42	42	36
Availability of water	29	32	22	29

	Region			
	Central City	North County	South Bay	East County
Traffic congestion on freeways, major roads	79%	85%	78%	69%
Availability of affordable housing	77	71	72	72
Air, water, environmental pollution	61	55	67	51
Lack of parks, open spaces	47	50	43	47
Too much big, sprawling development	44	56	44	45
Too many people moving into the area	37	51	42	38
Availability of water	28	31	25	30

Fiscal and Governance Issues

As for the rankings of the four fiscal and governance issues, San Diego residents (54%) are most likely to say that the amount of local taxes and fees they pay is a big problem. Other issues are considered big problems by fewer than half of the county's residents, including the lack of government funding for public services (48%), the quality of education in public schools (45%), and the lack of adequate public transportation (38%).

Compared to all adults, likely voters are more concerned—and younger adults less concerned—about the adequacy of public transportation in their local area. Latinos are more likely than all adults to say that taxes and the lack of adequate government funding for services are big problems.

Problems

South Bay residents are more concerned than others in the county about the amount of taxes they pay, the adequacy of government funding for public services, and the quality of public schools. North county and central city residents are the most likely to say that inadequate public transportation is a big problem.

"Is _____ a big, serious problem for your part of San Diego?"
 (% who consider it a big, serious problem reported below)

	All Adults	Likely Voters	Ages 18 to 34	Latino
Amount of property taxes, sales taxes, and other local taxes and fees that residents have to pay	54%	50%	54%	63%
Lack of adequate government funding for public services, such as schools, police, libraries	48	49	49	54
Quality of education in public schools	45	48	44	47
Lack of adequate public transportation	38	42	32	36

	<u>Region</u>			
	Central City	North County	South Bay	East County
Amount of property taxes, sales taxes, and other local taxes and fees that residents have to pay	51%	55%	62%	55%
Lack of adequate government funding for public services, such as schools, police, libraries	49	44	58	47
Quality of education in public schools	47	47	52	35
Lack of adequate public transportation	40	40	27	33

Social and Economic Trends

Looking at the ratings given to the four social and economic trends, we see that county residents are more likely to rank immigration as a big problem than any of the other issues. Fewer see homelessness and poverty (51%), crime and gangs (41%), and the lack of well-paying jobs (38%) as big problems in their part of the county.

Likely voters give similar ratings as all adults to immigration and homelessness and poverty, but they are less concerned about crime and gangs and the lack of well-paying jobs. Younger residents are more likely than all adults to cite the lack of well-paying jobs as a serious issue and are less likely to see immigration as a serious problem.

Latinos are much more likely than all adults to say that homelessness and poverty, crime and gangs, and the lack of well-paying jobs are major problems.

South Bay residents are more likely than people living in other regions of the county to say that immigration, homelessness and poverty, crime and gangs, and the lack of well-paying jobs are big problems.

"Is _____ a big, serious problem for your part of San Diego?"
 (% who consider it a big, serious problem reported below)

	All Adults	Likely Voters	Ages 18 to 34	Latino
Immigration issue—both legal and illegal	57%	59%	52%	55%
Homelessness and poverty	51	49	53	60
Crime and gangs	41	37	41	58
Lack of well-paying jobs	38	32	42	59

	Region			
	Central City	North County	South Bay	East County
Issue of immigration—both legal and illegal	53%	61%	66%	55%
Homelessness and poverty	52	50	60	44
Crime and gangs	39	45	53	35
Lack of well-paying jobs	36	32	53	42

Likelihood of Solving Problems

Even though many residents see a range of serious problems in their part of the county, most believe that solutions are within reach. Most residents (59%) believe that the problems facing their area will be solved. There are no differences between all adults and likely voters in terms of this optimism. Younger adults and Latinos are more optimistic than all adults, and South Bay residents are more optimistic than people living in other regions of the county about the prospects for resolving local problems.

"Are you optimistic or pessimistic that the problems facing your part of San Diego will be solved?"

	All Adults	Likely Voters	Ages 18 to 34	Latino
Optimistic	59%	57%	64%	71%
Pessimistic	36	39	31	23
Don't know	5	4	5	6

	<u>Region</u>			
	Central City	North County	South Bay	East County
Optimistic	59%	59%	64%	59%
Pessimistic	36	36	29	38
Don't know	5	5	7	3

Causes

Overall Ranking of Causes

County residents were asked if they thought that 16 reasons that others have given for the county's problems were major or minor causes of those problems. Government spending money on the wrong things was named more than any other reason as a major cause of the serious problems facing San Diego County today—75 percent of the county's residents are convinced that this is true. Six in 10 residents believe that 11 additional factors are major causes of San Diego's problems: rapid growth, ineffective government, poor quality schools in inner-city neighborhoods, too much growth in the wrong places, excessive regulations driving up the cost of housing, the growing gap between rich and poor, the way government goes about allocating state and local taxes, people being unwilling to live in parts of San Diego that are rundown and unsafe, greed and corruption in real estate development, greed and corruption in government, and ineffective regional planning. About half of those interviewed lay the blame on three more factors—too much immigration, over-development, and unfair taxes.

"I'm going to read some of the reasons people give for the problems in San Diego. For each one, please tell me if you think it is a major or minor cause of the big, serious problems facing your part of San Diego (% who consider it a major cause reported below)

	All Adults	Likely Voters
Government spending money on the wrong things	75%	77%
Too fast growth	63	63
Ineffective government	61	64
Poor quality schools in inner-city neighborhoods	61	59
Too much growth in the wrong places	60	60
Cost of housing being driven up by excessive government regulations	59	54
Growing gap between the rich and poor	59	56
The way government goes about allocating state and local taxes	58	60
People unwilling to live in rundown, unsafe areas	58	55
Greed and corruption in real estate development	57	56
Greed and corruption in government	56	54
Lack of effective regional planning	56	61
Too much immigration	52	52
Over-development because of insufficient government regulations	51	48

Unfair taxes	49	45
Lack of convenient public transportation	40	40

Growth-Related Causes

Looking separately at the three growth-related factors, we see that six in 10 residents believe that rapid growth (63%), too much growth in the wrong places (60%), and greed and corruption in real estate development (57%) are major sources of the county's problems. There are no major differences between all adults, likely voters, and younger adults. Latinos are more likely than all adults to say that greed and corruption in real estate development is a major cause of the county's problems. They are less likely than all adults to cite too fast growth as a cause.

As for regional differences, those living in the north county and South Bay are the most likely to consider all three growth-related factors as major rather than minor causes of San Diego's problems.

"Is _____ a major or minor cause of the problems in San Diego?"
 (% who consider it a major cause reported below)

	All Adults	Likely Voters	Ages 18 to 34	Latino
Too fast growth	63%	63%	61%	58%
Too much growth in the wrong places	60	60	61	59
Greed and corruption in real estate development	57	56	60	62

	Region			
	Central City	North County	South Bay	East County
Too fast growth	61%	67%	68%	59%
Too much growth in the wrong places	59	64	63	55
Greed and corruption in real estate development	55	61	62	57

Fiscal and Governance Causes

Among the nine fiscal and governance issues, government spending money on the wrong things (75%) was mentioned the most as a major reason for the county's problems. Importantly, the strength of this conviction is similar across all political, demographic, and geographic groups.

Six in 10 residents cite ineffective government, excessive regulations driving up the cost of housing, and the way state and local taxes are allocated as major sources of problems. Over half of the county's residents believe that ineffective regional planning, greed and corruption in government, over-development due to insufficient regulations, and unfair taxes are significant reasons for the county's problems. Four in 10 residents say the lack of adequate public transportation is a major cause of problems.

Likely voters are more concerned than all adults about a lack of effective regional planning. Younger adults are less likely than all adults to believe that the lack of effective regional planning is a major cause of problems. Latinos are more likely than all adults to consider a number of factors as major rather than minor forces underlying the county's problems—the cost of housing due to excessive regulations, the way government allocates state and local funds, greed and corruption in government, over-development because of insufficient regulations, and unfair taxes. Similarly, South Bay residents more often than others cite a number of factors as major causes of the problems in San Diego— excessive regulations driving up the cost of housing, greed and corruption in government, over-development because of insufficient regulations, and unfair taxes.

"Is _____ a major or minor cause of the problems in San Diego?"
 (% who consider it a major cause reported below)

	All Adults	Likely Voters	Ages 18 to 34	Latino
Government spending money on the wrong things	75%	77%	77%	76%
Ineffective government	61	64	60	60
Cost of housing, excessive regulations	59	54	62	75
The way state and local taxes are allocated	58	60	60	67
Lack of effective regional planning	56	61	49	55
Greed and corruption in government	56	54	58	65
Over-development, insufficient regulations	51	48	51	55
Unfair taxes	49	45	51	63
Lack of convenient public transportation	40	40	37	45

	<u>Region</u>			
	Central City	North County	South Bay	East County
Government spending money on the wrong things	75%	74%	75%	79%
Ineffective government	62	63	60	57
Cost of housing, excessive regulations	56	60	70	61
The way state and local taxes are allocated	58	57	59	60
Lack of effective regional planning	56	57	58	54
Greed and corruption in government	53	56	62	57
Over-development, insufficient regulations	50	52	62	44
Unfair taxes	44	50	64	52
Lack of convenient public transportation	42	43	37	31

Social and Economic Causes

Looking at responses to the four social and economic causes of today's problems, we find that six in 10 residents believe that poor quality inner-city schools, the growing gap between rich and poor, and people unwilling to live in rundown parts of San Diego are major forces underlying the county's problems. About half think that too much immigration is a major cause of today's problems.

Likely voters are no different from all adults in the way they evaluate the importance of these four social and economic issues in explaining today's problems. Younger adults are more likely than all adults to think that poor-quality schools in inner-city neighborhoods and people being unwilling to live in rundown parts of San Diego are major issues. Latinos are more likely than all adults to say that poor-quality inner-city schools, the growing gap between rich and poor, and people being unwilling to live in rundown parts of San Diego are among the major reasons for today's problems. South Bay residents are more likely than those living in other regions to rate all four social and economic issues as major causes of the serious problems facing San Diego County today.

"Is _____ a major or minor cause of the problems in San Diego?"
 (% who consider it a major cause reported below)

	All Adults	Likely Voters	Ages 18 to 34	Latino
Poor quality schools in inner-city neighborhoods	61%	59%	66%	74%
Growing gap between the rich and poor	59	56	62	69
People being unwilling to live in parts of San Diego that are neglected, rundown, unsafe	58	55	65	72
Too much immigration	52	52	48	53

	Region			
	Central City	North County	South Bay	East County
Poor quality schools in inner-city neighborhoods	64%	59%	70%	54%
Growing gap between the rich and poor	58	60	64	58
People being unwilling to live in parts of San Diego that are neglected, rundown, unsafe	60	53	70	56
Too much immigration	46	55	64	52

Solutions

Overall Ranking of Solutions

Residents were asked whether 13 proposals suggested for solving the big problems in San Diego were good ideas or not. The highest level of support was for reducing corruption in government (89%), followed closely by building a superior public transit system (85%), investing more money in public schools (85%), and reforming local government so that the interests of the entire community are taken into account (84%). At least seven in 10 residents said it was a good idea to build more low-cost housing, permit regional and local governments to divide the property taxes, build more housing near jobs, build more housing near public transit, and strengthen the power of local governments so they can be more effective in solving problems. About two in three residents liked the proposals to establish growth boundaries and to reduce the flow of immigrants. While about half said it was a good idea to make it easier for local governments to raise more money by reforming the property tax system (55%), fewer than half wanted to make it easier for local governments to raise more money by changing the vote required for passing local taxes from a two-thirds to a simple majority (46%).

**"I'm going to read you some of the proposals people have made for solving the big, serious problems in San Diego. For each one, please tell me whether you think it is a good idea or not."
(% who consider it a good idea reported below)**

	All Adults	Likely Voters
Making a big effort to reduce corruption in government	89%	87%
Building a superior public transit system, so that more people have an incentive to use mass transit instead of their cars	85	82
Investing more money in public schools, so that poor children have the same quality education as wealthy children	85	78
Reforming local government, so that the interests of the entire community are taken into account instead of people looking out for their own neighborhood	84	81
Making an all-out effort to build more low-cost housing	77	72
Permitting regional and local governments to decide how to divide property taxes, rather than have the State Legislature make the decisions	72	72
Building more housing near job centers	72	71
Building more housing near public transit	71	70
Strengthening the powers of local governments, so that they can deal more effectively with big, serious problems	70	65
Establishing growth boundaries that discourage further development	69	67
Reducing the flow of immigrants—both legal and illegal—across the U.S. borders	64	64
Making it easier for local governments to raise more money by reforming the property tax system	55	47
Making it easier for local governments to raise more money by requiring a simple majority rather than a two-thirds vote to pass local taxes	46	38

Growth-Related Policies

Among the four growth-related solutions, building a superior public transit system (85%) was the most popular idea for solving San Diego's problems. This is not surprising, since 78 percent of the county's residents rated traffic congestion as a serious problem, ranking it at the top of the list of 15 problems discussed earlier in this report.

Seven in 10 residents said they liked the proposals for building more housing near job centers, building more housing near public transit, and establishing growth boundaries. There are no differences between all adults and likely voters in their support of these four policy options. Younger adults are more likely than all adults to think that growth boundaries are a good idea. Latinos give more support than all adults to all four proposals. The idea of establishing growth boundaries has more support in the north county and South Bay than in the central city and east county. South Bay residents are more in favor than other county residents of building more housing near job centers. While the idea of building a superior public transit system is very popular in all regions, this proposal has lower support in the east county than in the other regions.

"Is _____ a good idea or not?"
(% who consider it a good idea reported below)

	All Adults	Likely Voters	Ages 18 to 34	Latino
Building a superior public transit system	85%	82%	85%	89%
Building more housing near job centers	72	71	74	82
Building more housing near public transit	71	70	74	78
Establishing growth boundaries	69	67	73	75

	Region			
	Central City	North County	South Bay	East County
Building a superior public transit system	85%	87%	86%	81%
Building more housing near job centers	73	71	76	72
Building more housing near public transit	70	72	72	70
Establishing growth boundaries	67	73	73	67

Fiscal and Governance Reforms

Looking at the six fiscal and governance reform proposals, we find that the most popular solution for solving the big problems in San Diego is to reduce government corruption, followed closely by reforming local government so that the interests of the entire community are taken into account. Seven in 10 residents think it is a good idea to permit regional and local governments to divide the property taxes, rather than let the State Legislature make the decisions, and the same margin of support favors strengthening the power of local governments so they can be more effective in solving problems. About half like the idea of reforming the property tax system (55%), while fewer

want to make it easier for local governments to raise more money by requiring a simple majority instead of a two-thirds vote to pass local taxes (46%).

Likely voters differ from all adults in that they are less favorably disposed to strengthening the powers of local government, reforming the property tax system, and allowing local taxes to pass with a simple majority vote. Younger adults and Latinos are more likely than all adults to favor four of the proposals—reforming local government to make it more responsive, strengthening local government to make it more effective, reforming the property tax system, or allowing local taxes to pass with a simple majority vote. As for regional differences, South Bay residents show more support than other county residents for four of the proposals —reforming local government to make it more responsive, strengthening local government to make it more effective, reforming the property tax system, and making it easier to pass local taxes. Central city residents are less likely than other county residents to say that permitting regional and local governments to divide the property taxes and strengthening the power of local governments are good ideas for solving the problems facing San Diego. East county residents are less favorable than other county residents toward the proposals requiring only a simple majority vote for local tax increases and making it easier for local governments to raise money by reforming the property tax system.

"Is _____ a good idea or not?"
(% who consider it a good idea reported below)

	All Adults	Likely Voters	Ages 18 to 34	Latino
Reducing corruption in government	89%	87%	91%	93%
Reforming local government to better serve the interests of the community	84	81	88	89
Letting regional and local governments decide how to divide property taxes	72	72	75	70
Strengthening the powers of local governments	70	65	77	85
Reforming the property tax system	55	47	68	70
Requiring only a simple majority vote to pass local taxes	46	38	55	63

	Region			
	Central City	North County	South Bay	East County
Reducing corruption in government	88%	90%	92%	89%
Reforming local government to better serve the interests of the community	83	84	88	83
Letting regional and local governments decide how to divide property taxes	69	74	75	74
Strengthening the powers of local governments	69	72	80	67
Reforming the property tax system	54	57	68	51
Requiring only a simple majority vote to pass local taxes	44	49	56	41

Social and Economic Policies

As for the three social and economic policy suggestions, most residents (85%) support the idea of investing more money in public schools. Three in four residents want to make an all-out effort to build more low-income housing. Two in three residents think it is a good idea to reduce the flow of immigrants.

Compared to all adults, likely voters are less in favor of investing in public schools and in making an all-out effort to build low-cost housing; still, about three in four support these ideas. Latinos and younger adults are more likely than all adults to say that giving poor children the same education as wealthy children and building low-cost housing are good ideas for solving today's problems. Younger adults are less likely than all adults to say that reducing immigration is a good idea. In looking at differences across regions, South Bay residents are more supportive of all three social and economic proposals than other county residents.

"Is _____ a good idea or not?"
 (% who consider it a good idea reported below)

	All Adults	Likely Voters	Ages 18 to 34	Latino
Giving poor children same education as wealthy	85%	78%	93%	95%
Making a big effort to build more low-cost housing	77	72	81	88
Reducing the flow of immigrants	64	64	59	62

	Region			
	Central City	North County	South Bay	East County
Giving poor children same education as wealthy	85%	84%	90%	82%
Making a big effort to build more low-cost housing	77	77	86	73
Reducing the flow of immigrants	59	67	70	67

Survey Methodology

The San Diego Survey is a special edition of the PPIC Statewide Survey, which is directed by Mark Baldassare, a senior fellow at the Public Policy Institute of California, with research assistance from Eric McGhee, Mina Yaroslavsky, and Christopher Hoene. The questions were designed to provide a baseline awareness survey for a one-year citizen engagement and dialogue project. The methodology, questions, and content of this report were solely determined by Mark Baldassare. The survey benefited from consultation with Dan Yankelovich, Chuck Nathanson, Scott Grimes, Barbara Lee, and Monica Schweidler on behalf of the San Diego Dialogue project.

The findings presented in this report are based on a telephone survey of 2,000 San Diego County adult residents interviewed from June 12 to June 18, 2000. Interviewing took place on weekend days and weekday nights, using a computer-generated random sample of telephone numbers, ensuring that both listed and unlisted telephone numbers were called. All telephone exchanges in San Diego County were eligible for calling. Telephone numbers in the survey sample were called up to five times to increase the likelihood of reaching eligible households. Once a household was reached, an adult respondent (18 or older) was randomly chosen for interviewing by using the “last birthday method” to avoid biases in age and gender. Each interview took an average of 20 minutes to complete. Interviewing was conducted in English or Spanish. Maria Tello translated the survey into Spanish.

We used recent U.S. Census, state, and county figures to compare the demographic characteristics of the survey sample with characteristics of San Diego County’s adult population. The survey sample was closely comparable to U.S. Census, state, and county figures. The survey data in this report were statistically weighted to account for any demographic differences.

The sampling error for the total sample of 2,000 adults is +/- 2 percent at the 95 percent confidence level. This means that 95 times out of 100, the results will be within 2 percentage points of what they would be if all adults in San Diego County were interviewed. The sampling error for subgroups is larger. Sampling error is just one type of error to which surveys are subject. Results may also be affected by factors such as question wording, question order, and survey timing.

As part of the baseline awareness survey, we compare the responses of all adults with those from “likely voters” in local elections and with the responses of Latinos and young adults (ages 18 to 34), who are currently underrepresented in the political process. The sampling error for the 925 likely voters is +/- 3%; for the 792 young adults, it is +/- 4%; and for the 416 Latinos, it is +/- 5%. The sample sizes for the African American and Asian subgroups are not large enough for separate statistical analysis.

Throughout the report, we refer to four geographic regions in San Diego County. The “Central City” of San Diego includes much of the city of San Diego as well as the city of Coronado, composing 42 percent of the county’s population. “North County” includes the cities of Carlsbad, Del Mar, Encinitas, Escondido, Oceanside, San Marcos, Solana Beach, Vista, and neighboring unincorporated areas (25 percent of the county's population). “East County” includes El Cajon, La Mesa, Lemon Grove, Poway, Santee, and adjoining unincorporated areas (21 percent of the population). “South Bay” includes Chula Vista, Imperial Beach, National City, and adjacent unincorporated areas (12 percent of the population).

In some cases, the San Diego Survey uses questions and the results of responses recorded in the PPIC Statewide Surveys conducted since 1998, the Orange County Annual Surveys conducted by Mark Baldassare and Cheryl Katz since 1982, national surveys conducted by the Pew Research Center since 1998, and a survey by the University of Virginia for the American Association of Retired Persons in 1996.

**PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY: SPECIAL SURVEY ON SAN DIEGO COUNTY
IN COLLABORATION WITH SAN DIEGO DIALOGUE
JUNE 12 – JUNE 18, 2000
2,000 SAN DIEGO COUNTY ADULT RESIDENTS; ENGLISH AND SPANISH
MARGIN OF ERROR +/- 2% AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL FOR TOTAL SAMPLE**

1. First, I'd like to begin by asking you some questions about the part of San Diego you live in. Which of the following best describes the area where you now live?

- 20% the central city of San Diego
- 40 northern San Diego
- 25 eastern San Diego
- 15 South Bay

2. What do you think is the biggest and most serious problem facing your part of San Diego? (*code don't read*)

- 29% traffic, transportation
- 15 crime, gangs
- 13 population growth, development
- 5 housing, housing costs, housing availability
- 5 drugs
- 4 schools, education
- 2 environment, pollution
- 2 water
- 1 immigration
- 1 race relations, ethnic tensions
- 1 local government taxes
- 1 government regulations
- 1 welfare
- 1 jobs and the economy
- 1 health care, HMO reform
- 1 lack of values, morals, religion
- 2 other answers
- 15 don't know

I am going to read you a list of problems other people have told us about. For each one, please tell me if you think it is a big, serious problem for your part of San Diego or not a big, serious problem. (*rotate questions 3-17*)

3. How about traffic congestion on freeways and major roads?

- 78% big, serious problem
- 21 not a big, serious problem
- 1 don't know

4. How about too much big, sprawling development?

- 47% big, serious problem
- 49 not a big, serious problem
- 4 don't know

5. How about too many people moving into your area?

- 42% big, serious problem
- 56 not a big, serious problem
- 2 don't know

6. How about the availability of affordable housing?

- 74% big, serious problem
- 22 not a big, serious problem
- 4 don't know

7. How about the lack of opportunities for well-paying jobs?

- 38% big, serious problem
- 53 not a big, serious problem
- 9 don't know

8. How about crime and gangs?

- 41% big, serious problem
- 57 not a big, serious problem
- 2 don't know

9. How about the quality of education in the public schools?

- 45% big, serious problem
- 41 not a big, serious problem
- 14 don't know

10. How about a lack of adequate government funding for local public services, such as schools, police, and libraries?

- 48% big, serious problem
- 42 not a big, serious problem
- 10 don't know

11. How about a lack of public parks, and fewer and fewer open spaces?

- 48% big, serious problem
- 50 not a big, serious problem
- 2 don't know

12. How about the amount of property taxes, sales taxes, and other local taxes and fees that residents have to pay?

- 54% big, serious problem
- 40 not a big, serious problem
- 6 don't know

13. How about the availability of water?

- 29% big, serious problem
- 68 not a big, serious problem
- 3 don't know

14. How about the issue of immigration—both legal and illegal?

- 57% big, serious problem
- 39 not a big, serious problem
- 4 don't know

15. How about air and water pollution and other environmental threats?

58% big, serious problem
40 not a big, serious problem
2 don't know

16. How about homelessness and poverty?

51% big, serious problem
47 not a big, serious problem
2 don't know

17. How about a lack of adequate public transportation?

38% big, serious problem
58 not a big, serious problem
4 don't know

18. Are you optimistic or pessimistic that the problems facing your part of San Diego will be solved?

59% optimistic
36 pessimistic
5 don't know

I'm going to read some of the reasons people give for the problems in San Diego. For each one, please tell me if you think it is a major or minor cause of the big, serious problems facing your part of San Diego. (rotate questions 19-34)

19. What about too fast growth?

63% major cause
35 minor cause
2 don't know

20. What about the government spending money on the wrong things?

75% major cause
19 minor cause
6 don't know

21. What about the growing gap between the rich and the poor?

59% major cause
36 minor cause
5 don't know

22. What about too much immigration?

52% major cause
44 minor cause
4 don't know

23. What about a lack of effective regional planning?

56% major cause
36 minor cause
8 don't know

24. What about greed and corruption in government?

56% major cause
37 minor cause
7 don't know

25. What about greed and corruption in real estate development?

57% major cause
32 minor cause
11 don't know

26. What about unfair taxes?

49% major cause
45 minor cause
7 don't know

27. What about ineffective government?

61% major cause
34 minor cause
5 don't know

28. What about too much growth in the wrong places?

60% major cause
35 minor cause
5 don't know

29. What about the cost of housing being driven up by excessive government regulations?

59% major cause
34 minor cause
7 don't know

30. What about over-development because of insufficient government regulations?

51% major cause
42 minor cause
7 don't know

31. What about poor quality schools in inner-city neighborhoods?

61% major cause
28 minor cause
11 don't know

32. What about people being unwilling to live in parts of San Diego that have been neglected and that are rundown and unsafe?

58% major cause
35 minor cause
7 don't know

33. What about a lack of convenient public transportation?

40% major cause
56 minor cause
4 don't know

34. What about the way government goes about allocating state and local taxes?

58% major cause
28 minor cause
14 don't know

I'm going to read you some of the proposals people have made for solving the big, serious problems in your part of San Diego. For each one, please tell me whether you think it is a good idea or not. (*rotate questions 35-47*)

35. How about making it easier for local governments to raise more money by reforming the property tax system?
- 55% good idea
37 not a good idea
8 don't know
36. How about making it easier for local governments to raise more money by requiring a simple majority rather than a two-thirds vote to pass local taxes?
- 46% good idea
49 not a good idea
5 don't know
37. How about permitting regional and local governments to decide how to divide property taxes, rather than have the state legislature make the decisions?
- 72% good idea
21 not a good idea
7 don't know
38. How about establishing growth boundaries that discourage further development?
- 69% good idea
26 not a good idea
5 don't know
39. How about building more housing near job centers?
- 72% good idea
24 not a good idea
4 don't know
40. How about building more housing near public transit?
- 71% good idea
27 not a good idea
2 don't know
41. How about making an all-out effort to build more low-cost housing?
- 77% good idea
21 not a good idea
2 don't know
42. How about building a superior public transit system, so that more people have an incentive to use mass transit instead of their cars?
- 85% good idea
14 not a good idea
1 don't know

43. How about investing more money in our public schools, so that poor children have the same quality education as wealthy children?
- 85% good idea
13 not a good idea
2 don't know
44. How about reforming local government so that the interests of the entire community are taken into account, instead of everyone looking out for their own neighborhood?
- 84% good idea
13 not a good idea
3 don't know
45. How about strengthening the powers of local governments so that they can deal more effectively with big, serious problems?
- 70% good idea
25 not a good idea
5 don't know
46. How about reducing the flow of immigrants—both legal and illegal—across the U.S. borders?
- 64% good idea
30 not a good idea
6 don't know
47. How about making a big effort to reduce corruption in government?
- 89% good idea
9 not a good idea
2 don't know
48. On another topic, do you think things in San Diego County are generally going in the right direction or the wrong direction?
- 66% right direction
27 wrong direction
7 don't know
49. Thinking about the quality of life in San Diego County, how do you think things are going—very well, somewhat well, somewhat badly, or very badly?
- 24% very well
60 somewhat well
12 somewhat badly
3 very badly
1 don't know
50. In the next 10 years, do you think that the population of San Diego County will grow rapidly, grow slowly, stay about the same, or decline?
- 82% grow rapidly
11 grow slowly
5 stay about the same
1 decline
1 don't know

51. Ten years from now, do you think that San Diego County will be a better place to live than it is now, a worse place to live than it is now, or about the same?
- 18% better place
 - 38 worse place
 - 42 the same
 - 2 don't know
52. Ten years from now, do you see yourself living in San Diego County or somewhere else? (*if elsewhere: Is that inside or outside of California?*)
- 64% San Diego County
 - 9 elsewhere, in California
 - 21 elsewhere, outside California
 - 6 don't know
53. On another topic, are you currently employed full time or part time or are you not employed?
- 59% full-time employed
 - 11 part-time employed
 - 30 not employed (*skip to q. 57*)
54. What is the location of the place where you report to work?
- 32% the central city of San Diego
 - 39 northern San Diego County
 - 13 eastern San Diego County
 - 9 South Bay
 - 3 outside of San Diego County
 - 4 other, not sure (specify)
55. On a typical day, how long does it take you to get from your home to the place where you report to work?
- 32% under 15 minutes
 - 37 15 minutes to under 30 minutes
 - 16 30 minutes to under 45 minutes
 - 7 45 minutes to under 60 minutes
 - 5 60 minutes or more
 - 3 it depends, other answers
56. On a typical day, how much of a problem is traffic congestion when you travel to and from work? Would you say it is no problem at all, somewhat of a problem, or a great problem?
- 37% no problem at all
 - 37 somewhat of a problem
 - 26 great problem
57. On another topic, some people are registered to vote and others are not. Are you absolutely certain you are registered to vote?
- 75% yes
 - 25 no (*skip to q. 59*)
58. Are you registered as a Democrat, a Republican, another party, or as an independent or as "decline to state"?
- 31% Democrat
 - 35 Republican
 - 3 other party
 - 27 independent, decline to state
 - 4 don't know, refuse
59. Would you consider yourself to be politically very liberal, somewhat liberal, middle-of-the-road, somewhat conservative, or very conservative?
- 8% very liberal
 - 20 somewhat liberal
 - 32 middle-of-the-road
 - 25 somewhat conservative
 - 11 very conservative
 - 4 don't know, refuse
60. Generally speaking, how much interest would you say you have in politics—a great deal, a fair amount, only a little, or none?
- 20% great deal
 - 44 fair amount
 - 27 only a little
 - 9 none
61. How often would you say you vote—always, nearly always, part of the time, seldom or never?
- 47% always
 - 19 nearly always
 - 10 part of the time
 - 7 seldom
 - 17 never
62. How about working on local and neighborhood issues—are you very involved, somewhat involved, or not involved?
- 9% very involved
 - 33 somewhat involved
 - 58 not involved
- [Questions 63 – 72: demographic questions]

PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY

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