

*Fairbank,  
Maslin,  
Maullin,  
Metz &  
Associates*

**FM3**

*Public Opinion Research  
& Strategy*

**TO:** Interested Parties

**FROM:** Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3)

**DATE:** May 27, 2014

**RE:** City of Sausalito—Summary of Key Survey Findings

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Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3) recently completed a survey to assess community attitudes toward local issues facing the City of Sausalito, including awareness of City budget issues, satisfaction with City services, community budget priorities and interest in community enacted funding to address local needs.<sup>1</sup> **The survey results indicate that the community is highly supportive of the overall direction of the City and have confidence in the City’s fiscal management, with solid majorities expressing approval of the job being done by the City in delivering local services and managing the City’s budget and finances.**

The balance of this memorandum details key findings from the survey.

**Constituents express confidence in the overall direction in which the City is heading, and provide highly positive assessments of the City’s job performance in key areas.** Consistent with prior assessments of the City’s overall direction, 64 percent of Sausalito constituents believe the City is headed in the “right direction.” In contrast, only 17 percent say the City has “gotten off on the wrong track,” while 19 percent indicate that they do not have enough information to offer an opinion. Assessments of the City’s overall job performance are also strong. More than three-quarters (77%) of respondents say they approve of the job being done by the City in providing basic services and taking care of the needs of Sausalito residents, this includes 25% who strongly approve. Only 17 percent say they disapprove. Likewise, substantial majorities (55% or more) say they have a “very favorable” opinion of key City departments,

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<sup>1</sup>**Methodology:** From April 6–May 4, 2013, FM3 completed 200 telephone interviews with City of Sausalito voters. The margin of sampling error for the full sample is +/- 6.9%; margins of error for subgroups within the sample will be higher. Where applicable, results are compared to a prior survey of Sausalito voters conducted on behalf of the City in 2011.

2425 Colorado Avenue Suite 180  
Santa Monica, CA 90404  
Phone: (310) 828-1183  
Fax: (310) 453-6562

1999 Harrison Street Suite 1290  
Oakland, CA 94612  
Phone: (510) 451-9521  
Fax: (510) 451-0384

including the library (72% “very favorable”), the Police Department (55% “very favorable”) and the Parks and Recreation Department (52% “very favorable”).

In addition, by a margin of nearly two to one, a majority of constituents (56%) say they “approve” of the job being done by the City in managing local tax dollars. In contrast, less than one-quarter (23%) say they “disapprove.” Notably, a comparable number (22%) say they do not have enough information to offer an opinion.

**Sausalito constituents place a high value on maintaining the City’s fiscal stability and place a high priority on a number of key services.** Survey respondents were read a list of a range of basic services provided by the City, and were then asked to indicate whether or not it represented an important funding priority and to what extent (extremely, very or somewhat important). There is broad agreement that the City should focus on maintaining the City’s long-term financial viability, with 69 percent of respondents identifying this as an “extremely” or “very important” priority. Constituents also identified a range of other specific services as highly important, including the following:

- ✓ Maintaining storm drains to prevent pollutants, garbage and sediment from entering the Bay (72% “extremely”/“very important”)
- ✓ Repairing 80-year old deteriorating storm drains (69% “extremely”/“very important”)
- ✓ Fixing potholes (60% “extremely”/“very important”)
- ✓ Maintaining and repairing neighborhood streets (60% “extremely”/“very important”)
- ✓ Fixing broken and potentially unsafe sidewalks (53% “extremely”/“very important”)

Given the value placed on key service priorities, by a two-to-one margin a solid majority (61%) of constituents say they would be supportive of a potential temporary local sales tax measure to address community needs. Respondents also expressed a value for the inclusion of strong accountability and transparency provisions if the City were to move forward with such a measure. These provisions include citizens’ oversight of expenditures, independent audits and the publication of expenditure reports for citizen review to promote transparency and ensure that funds are used efficiently, effectively and as promised.

Overall, the results of the community survey are highly positive, demonstrating that constituents have confidence in the leadership being provided by the City both in delivering basic services and managing the City’s budget and finances.