Budgets are more than dollars and cents. They are financial expressions of the values of the community - the means by which a community defines what’s important, what it aspires to be, and how it plans to get there.

Through the budget, goals are translated into services, and those services are put to work for the community. There is always more work to be done than resources permit, so it is critical to focus resources on what the community needs most. The citizen survey was one way to check with our customers to be sure the City was focused on what the community wanted.

It’s not just how much we have, it’s What we do with it.

There are no shortcuts when it comes to building a great community. It takes candid conversations every day about what is working and what needs to be worked on. Successful cities face challenges head-on and create opportunities to find new solutions to old problems.

The 2006 City Services Survey started this conversation in Kent. The results in this report provide a snapshot of what Kent’s residents think their City does well and what it needs to do better. This information sets the bar for 2006, and gives Kent something to shoot for in 2007.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

9,000 Surveys Mailed & On-Line
88 Surveys Completed

Kent City Services Budget Survey

1. Please rate your overall satisfaction with services provided by the City of Kent on a scale of 1 to 3 where 1 is “very dissatisfied” and 3 is “very satisfied.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Type</th>
<th>Rate:</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Police Services</td>
<td>Rate:</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire and EMS</td>
<td>Rate:</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks and Rec</td>
<td>Rate:</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance of Streets</td>
<td>Rate:</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Business Services</td>
<td>Rate:</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Funding for this area should be:
- Increase funds
- Keep funds the same
- Decrease funds

THE SURVEY

In the Fall 2006 edition of the Tree City Bulletin, a City Services Budget Survey was mailed to approximately 9,000 households. Residents were invited to provide input into helping the City set budget priorities. The survey form was also available online at www.kent360.com. (50 residents completed the survey online.)

The survey had 5 categories of questions related to citizen satisfaction with: 1) Overall City Services; 2) Community; 3) Public Safety; 4) City Maintenance; and 5) Growth and Redevelopment.

Residents were given a chance to rate their satisfaction from very dissatisfied to very satisfied for each area. Residents were also given a chance to pick what they considered the top two priorities in the City and indicate whether funding should be increased, kept the same, or decreased for each area.

SATISFACTION RESULTS

As tight budgets grew tighter over the last 5 years, the City sought to focus resources on core services as much as possible, and those efforts were rewarded in the survey with high citizen satisfaction ratings for fire, police and utilities.

Likewise, those service areas that are underfunded, e.g., street maintenance and economic development, appeared to fall victim to the impacts of fiscal stress with low citizen satisfaction ratings.

To that extent, the survey results demonstrate that customer satisfaction is equal parts employee performance and resource capabilities. Exceptional employees can do more with less, but they can't necessarily do everything with less – and that means some less critical service levels will slip and customer satisfaction in those areas will likely follow.

The good news is that as the standards for customer service have climbed, the performance of the City's core service areas have climbed right along with them. Core service satisfaction rates are competitive with national benchmarks for customer satisfaction in both government and private industry.

This suggests that when resources are available, Kent City employees can deliver service as well as anyone in the nation.

FUNDING PREFERENCES

Balancing tight budgets is a process of choosing what to cut, where to hold the line, and when to increase funds. When posed with these questions, the majority of survey respondents favored keeping funding the same for 59% of the items listed, and increasing funds to the remaining 40% of the high priority items (see list to the left). The only item where a majority of residents favored reducing funding was in the enforcement of the noise ordinance.

For the top rated areas like street maintenance, revitalizing downtown Kent, stimulating new businesses, and improving the image of the City, the majority of residents support spending more money on these items in order to do them better.

The residents also continue to place a high value on public safety functions, with the majority consistently supporting sustaining funding for police and fire.

The Highest Vote Was: 70% of the respondents voted in favor of increasing funding for Street Maintenance.
Another way of looking at customer satisfaction is to plot the ratings received against a calculated perfect score. Using 100% as a perfect score – which would require every person to report that they are “very satisfied” – the actual survey scores were tabulated, and each service area was charted. The list below illustrates the gap between the actual score (blue bars) and a perfect score (purple bars). The list is also shown in descending order, with the highest scores at the top and the lowest scores at the bottom.
Citizens were asked to rank what they considered to be the top two areas that they believed the city needed to focus on. The outcome of the rankings are displayed below in descending order - meaning that the items at the top of the list received the most votes and the items at the bottom the least votes. Where different items received the same number of votes, they are reflected as ties in the ranking. The far right column combines all the scores for first and second place votes to give an overall summary ranking.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Priority</th>
<th>Cumulative Ranking</th>
<th>Second Priority</th>
<th>Cumulative Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Kent</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Maintenance of Streets</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Protection</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Officer Attitudes</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Business Services</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Quality of Medical Services</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Police Services</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Image of the City</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Protection</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Fire Response Time</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image of the City</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Streets</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code Enforcement</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Development Services</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value for Tax Dollars</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Value for Tax Dollars</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development Services</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Town Gown Relations</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Maintenance</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Traffic Enforcement</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Shopping Options</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Maintenance of Businesses</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Patrol</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Rate of Redevelopment</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate of Redevelopment</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town Gown Relations</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Officer Attitudes</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sidewalks</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Police Protection</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maintenance of Businesses</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Snow Removal</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of City Streets</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of City Services</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trash and Litter</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental Protection</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Underage Drinking</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maintenance of Private Homes</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire and EMS</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parks and Recreation</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic Flow</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>City Communications</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Traffic Enforcement</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stormwater Drainage</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feeling Safe in Kent</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Noise Ordinance</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fire Response Times</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Medical Services</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of New Businesses</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arts and Culture</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate of New Construction</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of New Homes</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment Options</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Prevention</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firefighter Attitudes</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graffiti</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring Clean Up</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leaf Collection</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brush Collection</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dining Options</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Water and Sewer Service</td>
<td>No Votes</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Service</td>
<td>No Votes</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firefighter Attitudes</td>
<td>No Votes</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stormwater Drainage</td>
<td>No Votes</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate of New Construction</td>
<td>No Votes</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of New Homes</td>
<td>No Votes</td>
<td>Kent Neighborhoods</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In total votes, “Downtown Kent” led the way, with in 1 out of 2 respondents putting it at the top of their list. 1 in 4 respondents put new businesses, public safety and the image of the City as the next most important priorities.
Citizen Survey Results

Completed December 2006

1. Overall Satisfaction
   Please rate your overall satisfaction with services provided by the City of Kent.

   a. Police Services

   Funding Preference
   Increase 24  Decrease 14
   Don't Know 19

   b. Fire and EMS

   Funding Preference
   Increase 18  Decrease 1
   Don't Know 35

   c. Parks and Recreation

   Funding Preference
   Increase 27  Decrease 16
   Don't Know 17

   d. Maintenance of City streets.

   Funding Preference
   Increase 53  Decrease 3
   Don't Know 13

Quick Color Guide
Green = good shape
Yellow = early warning
Red = problem
e. City Water and Sewer Service

Funding Preference
Increase 11  Same 33  Decrease 7

f. Customer Service

Funding Preference
Increase 7  Same 31  Decrease 8

g. Traffic Flow

Funding Preference
Increase 30  Same 20  Decrease 8

h. Development Services

Funding Preference
Increase 36  Same 16  Decrease 10
2. Satisfaction Part 2

Please rate your overall satisfaction with the following things about Kent.

a. Quality of City Services

b. Feeling Safe in Kent

c. Value Received for Tax Dollars
d. Image of the City

![Bar Chart]

Funding Preference
Increase: 38
Same: 15
Decrease: 6

e. Environmental Protection

![Bar Chart]

Funding Preference
Increase: 19
Same: 23
Decrease: 11

f. City Communications

![Bar Chart]

Funding Preference
Increase: 14
Same: 24
Decrease: 10

g. Kent Neighborhoods

![Bar Chart]

Funding Preference
Increase: 20
Same: 19
Decrease: 10
h. Town Gown Relations

3. Public Safety Satisfaction Please rate your overall satisfaction with the following aspects about Public Safety.

a. Police Protection

b. Police Response Time

c. Neighborhood Patrol
d. Officer Attitudes

![Bar Chart for Officer Attitudes]

**Funding Preference**
Increase: 13  
Same: 26  
Decrease: 8

---

e. Traffic Enforcement

![Bar Chart for Traffic Enforcement]

**Funding Preference**
Increase: 15  
Same: 29  
Decrease: 8

---

f. Noise Ordinance

![Bar Chart for Noise Ordinance]

**Funding Preference**
Increase: 12  
Same: 17  
Decrease: 18

---

g. Parking Enforcement

![Bar Chart for Parking Enforcement]

**Funding Preference**
Increase: 10  
Same: 22  
Decrease: 18

---

h. Underage Drinking

![Bar Chart for Underage Drinking]

**Funding Preference**
Increase: 11  
Same: 19  
Decrease: 17
i. Fire Protection

Funding Preference

Increase: 15
Same: 32
Decrease: 2

j. Fire Response Time

Funding Preference

Increase: 11
Same: 32
Decrease: 2

k. Fire Prevention

Funding Preference

Increase: 11
Same: 30
Decrease: 3

l. Quality of Medical Services

Funding Preference

Increase: 13
Same: 31
Decrease: 3

m. Firefighter Attitudes

Funding Preference

Increase: 5
Same: 34
Decrease: 4
4. City Maintenance  How satisfied are you with:

PRIVATE PROPERTY

a. Maintenance of Homes

b. Maintenances of Businesses

c. Private Signs

d. Trash and Litter

e. Code Enforcement

Funding Preference
Increase  Same  Decrease
16  24  8

Funding Preference
Increase  Same  Decrease
19  25  8

Funding Preference
Increase  Same  Decrease
9  25  8

Funding Preference
Increase  Same  Decrease
24  23  7

Funding Preference
Increase  Same  Decrease
27  20  10
PUBLIC PROPERTY

f. City Buildings

Funding Preference
Increase Same Decrease
13 26 12

Funding Preference
Very Dissatisfied Dissatisfied Neutral Satisfied Very Satisfied Don't Know


g. Sidewalks

Funding Preference
Increase Same Decrease
31 22 5

Funding Preference
Very Dissatisfied Dissatisfied Neutral Satisfied Very Satisfied Don't Know


h. Streets

Funding Preference
Increase Same Decrease
45 16 3

Funding Preference
Very Dissatisfied Dissatisfied Neutral Satisfied Very Satisfied Don't Know


i. Graffiti

Funding Preference
Increase Same Decrease
23 20 8

Funding Preference
Very Dissatisfied Dissatisfied Neutral Satisfied Very Satisfied Don't Know


j. Spring Clean Up

Funding Preference
Increase Same Decrease
6 33 7

Funding Preference
Very Dissatisfied Dissatisfied Neutral Satisfied Very Satisfied Don't Know
k. Leaf Collection

Funding Preference
Increase Same Decrease
9 33 7

l. Snow Removal

Funding Preference
Increase Same Decrease
19 29 4

m. Brush Collection

Funding Preference
Increase Same Decrease
8 35 6

n. Stormwater Drainage

Funding Preference
Increase Same Decrease
10 31 9
5. City Growth and Development

How satisfied are you with:

a. Rate of New Construction

- Funding Preference: Increase 17, Same 16, Decrease 16

b. Rate of Redevelopment

- Funding Preference: Increase 44, Same 9, Decrease 8

c. Quality of New Businesses

- Funding Preference: Increase 34, Same 12, Decrease 8

d. Quality of New Homes

- Funding Preference: Increase 12, Same 21, Decrease 16

e. Downtown Kent

- Funding Preference: Increase 51, Same 9, Decrease 7
f. Retail Shopping Options

![Retail Shopping Options Chart]

Funding Preference
Increase: 45
Same: 6
Decrease: 8

---

g. Dining Options

![Dining Options Chart]

Funding Preference
Increase: 37
Same: 13
Decrease: 9

---

h. Entertainment Options

![Entertainment Options Chart]

Funding Preference
Increase: 30
Same: 13
Decrease: 10

---

i. Arts and Culture

![Arts and Culture Chart]

Funding Preference
Increase: 24
Same: 20
Decrease: 11
“Need street repairs.”

“My street is never completely cleaned due to the students’ cars – also leaf pick up.”

“Put up “No Engine Brake” signs on N. Mantua Street.”

“Businesses lack of snow removal.”

“Many uneven sidewalks.”

“New businesses: shoe repair, taxi, Red Lobster, Pottery Barn – no more pizza!”

“Spring clean up – charge the landlords.”

“Need code enforcement, especially rentals.”

“Older neighborhoods sidewalks are dangerous – repairs needed and trash, glass, gravel, mud removed.”

“Need to offer leaf mulch again!”

“Need more bike racks and bike lanes along roads.”

“Downtown Kent is improving – river park is nice and library.”

“Value for Tax Dollars needs a real good fiscal review!”

“Streets quality of workmanship is very “shoddy”, very poor!”

“Keep costs down - us retired persons can not cope with increases.”

“Kent needs to build its culture. The pieces are there but the effort is lacking.”

“More taxes bad! Use money wisely instead.”

“Feel that money has been mismanaged in regard to development. Don’t need out of state companies dictating our growth. We should have talent here. Quit letting KSU dictate. Put hotel on campus, not downtown. Safety departments seem to use funds wisely. Am ashamed with square with tattoo business – How about some standards! Stop spending thousands on studies. Use common sense!”
"In general city services seem to be quite good. Sometimes leaf and brush pickup get way behind. You maintain your buildings and equipment well. East and west routes through Kent – especially from west to east are good for traffic flow. From that point on it goes down hill rapidly. Many of the streets are in poor condition, and need much repair. Your new library looks great and should prove a community asset. Some restoration efforts are better than others. The downtown Hotel needs to be demolished and a lot of the remaining area should be severely upgraded or replaced. You have only one restaurant that I’d take an out of town guest to – Pufferbelly. Schwebels has become a professor’s lunch room. You have never been accused of being a cultural destination because you certainly don’t have much...not withstanding that some of the KSU events have been worthwhile. I realize that you are heroically playing catch-up and I admire this – but much needs to be done. Good luck.”

“Downtown Kent – very dissatisfied with hotel and campus link.”

“Parks and Rec – more adult opportunities needed.”

“Water and Sewer Service – too expensive.”

“Development Services – developers are allowed too much latitude.”

“Kent Neighborhoods – Landlords need to be held more accountable.”

“Town Gown Relations – University does not listen well, they need to have a partnering attitude.”

“Need more enforcement of traffic, noise ordinance, underage drinking. Officers are pleasant. Appreciate their efforts greatly.”

“Maintenance of Streets – satisfied except College Court.”

“Kent police, fire & EMS are exceptional. We are fortunate to have such high quality services in our city.”