



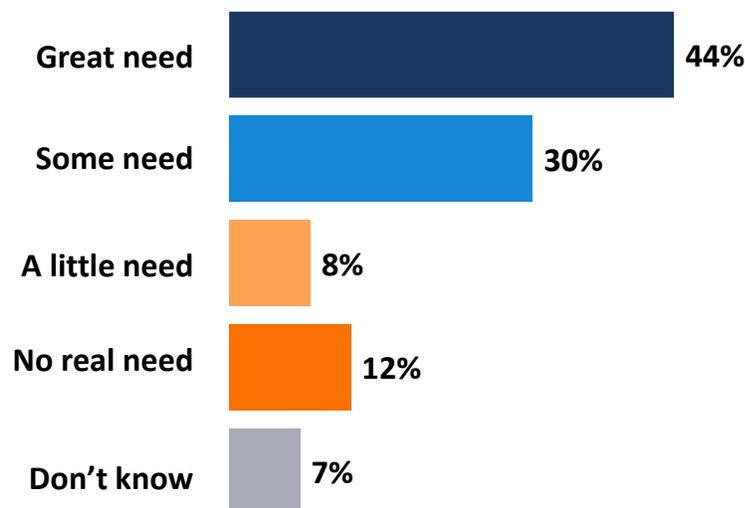
TO All Interested Parties
FROM FM3 Research
RE: Kern County Budget Priorities Community Survey
DATE September 22, 2021

Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3) recently conducted a survey of 811ⁱ respondents living in Kern County to examine the local population's budget and service priorities. **The study found that most believe the County has a great need for additional funding and would prioritize spending for public safety, addressing mental health and addiction issues, and maintaining emergency response.**

Key findings include:

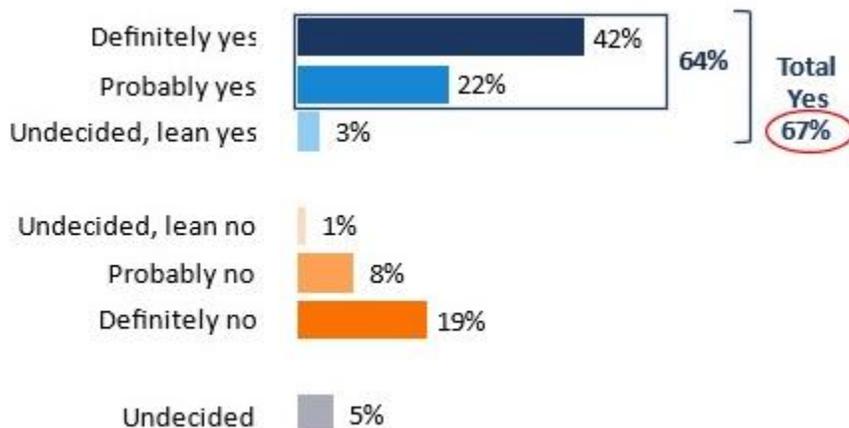
- **Nearly three-quarters (74%) believe the County has a need for additional funding.** Forty-four percent of all respondents believe the County has a great need for additional funding, while an additional 30% believe the County has some need. Eight percent also believe the County has a little need, but only 12% believe there is no real need.

Figure 1: Perception of County's Need for Additional Funding



- **Up to 67% of respondents are interested in a potential County-wide local funding measure, with a simple majority threshold.** Overall, 67% support the measure, with 42% indicating they would definitely vote “yes,” while 22% would probably vote “yes” and an additional three percent lean towards supporting the measure. In contrast, less than a third (28%) indicate they would vote against it” (see **Figure 2**).

Figure 2: Support for a Potential Local Funding Measure with a Simple Majority Threshold



- **Respondents prioritizing funding for maintaining public safety services, including law enforcement, as well as addressing mental health and addiction challenges, maintaining emergency response and repairing roads and potholes.** Eighty-five percent said it is “extremely” or “very” important to maintain “law enforcement, fire, and 911 response,” with half of all respondents saying it is “extremely important” (51%). Over eight-in-ten also said it was “extremely” or “very” important to “recruit and retain qualified firefighters and paramedics.” Other non-public safety services that also ranked high in importance included “helping address mental health and addiction challenges” (77% “extremely” or “very” important) and “repairing roads and potholes” (77%). **Figure 3** on the following page shows other services or projects that were prioritized as “extremely” or “very important” to fund by over three-fourths of respondents.

Figure 3: Most Important Services or Projects to Fund
(Ranked by “Extremely” or “Very Important”)

Service or Project	Ranked as “Extremely” or “Very Important” to Fund
<i>Maintaining law enforcement, fire, and 911 response</i>	85%
<i>Recruiting and retaining qualified firefighters and paramedics</i>	84%
<i>Preventing thefts and property crimes</i>	79%
<i>Providing supervision of high-risk offenders who are on probation</i>	77%
<i>Helping address mental health and addiction challenges</i>	77%
<i>Repairing roads and potholes</i>	77%
<i>Supporting veteran services</i>	76%
<i>Preventing property crimes</i>	75%
<i>Maintaining anti-gang programs</i>	75%
<i>Preparing for and responding to natural disasters such as earthquakes</i>	75%
<i>Attracting new industries and jobs</i>	74%
<i>Retaining and attracting local businesses and jobs</i>	74%
<i>Recruiting and retaining qualified Sheriff’s deputies</i>	73%
<i>Maintaining crime prevention programs</i>	71%
<i>Helping address homelessness</i>	70%

Overall, a vast majority of respondents understand the County has a need for additional funds. Up to two-thirds would support a potential local funding measure with a simple majority threshold, and prioritize funding for services including maintaining public safety and 911 response, as well as helping address mental health and addiction challenges, and repairing roads and potholes.

ⁱ Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3) conducted a dual-mode (online and phone-landline and cell) survey between July 14th-26th, 2021, among 811 voters registered in Kern County likely to participate in a November 2022 election. Telephone interviews were conducted in English and Spanish; online interviews were conducted in English only. The margin of error for the full sample is +/- 3.9% with a 95% confidence interval. Margins of error for population subgroups will be higher. Some percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.