

# The Survey Says...

City of Kent Budget Services Survey Results  
December 2006

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.

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

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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

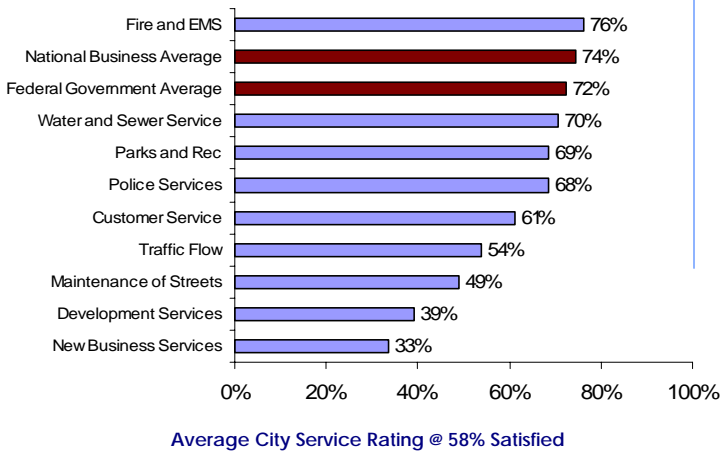
## Kent City Services Budget Survey

1. Please rate your overall satisfaction with services provided by the City of Kent on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is "very dissatisfied" and 5 is "very satisfied."

	Satisfaction Rating					Don't Know	Funding for this area should?			Circle your top 2 priorities.	
	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied		Increase	Stay Same	Decrease	Top Priority	2nd Priority
Police Services	1	2	3	4	5	na	↑	-	↓	1	2
Fire and EMS	1	2	3	4	5	na	↑	-	↓	1	2
Parks and Rec	1	2	3	4	5	na	↑	-	↓	1	2
Maintenance of Streets	1	2	3	4	5	na	↑	-	↓	1	2
Water and Sewer Service	1	2	3	4	5	na	↑	-	↓	1	2
Customer Service	1	2	3	4	5	na	↑	-	↓	1	2
Traffic Flow	1	2	3	4	5	na	↑	-	↓	1	2
Development Services	1	2	3	4	5	na	↑	-	↓	1	2
New Business Services	1	2	3	4	5	na	↑	-	↓	1	2

1% Participation Rate

### Satisfaction Results by Category (out of 100%)



## Citizen's Funding Preferences

When asked whether to increase funding, keep funding the same, or decrease funding, the majority of citizens voted as follows:

### Increase Funds

- Street Maintenance
- Parks and Rec
- Traffic Flow
- Development Services
- New Business Services
- Image of the City
- Neighborhoods
- Town/Gown Relations
- Trash and Litter
- Code Enforcement
- Sidewalks
- Streets
- Graffiti
- New Construction
- Redevelopment
- New Businesses
- Downtown Kent
- Retail Shopping
- Dining Options
- Entertainment Options
- Arts and Culture

### Keep Funds Same

- Police Service
- Fire and EMS
- Water and Sewer Service
- Customer Service
- Quality of City Services
- Feeling Safe in Kent
- Value for Tax Dollars
- Environmental Protection
- City Communications
- Police Protection
- Police Response Time
- Neighborhood Patrol
- Officer Attitudes
- Traffic Enforcement
- Parking Enforcement
- Underage Drinking
- Fire Protection
- Fire Response Time
- Fire Prevention
- Quality of Medical Services
- Firefighter Attitudes
- Maintenance of Homes

### Keep Funds Same

- Maintenance of Businesses
- Private Signs
- Condition of City Buildings
- Spring Clean Up
- Leaf Collection
- Snow Removal
- Brush Collection
- Stormwater Drainage
- Quality of New Homes

### Decrease Funds

- Enforcement of Noise Ordinance

## 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 on-line at [www.kent360.com](http://www.kent360.com). (50 residents completed the survey on line.)

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 - 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.

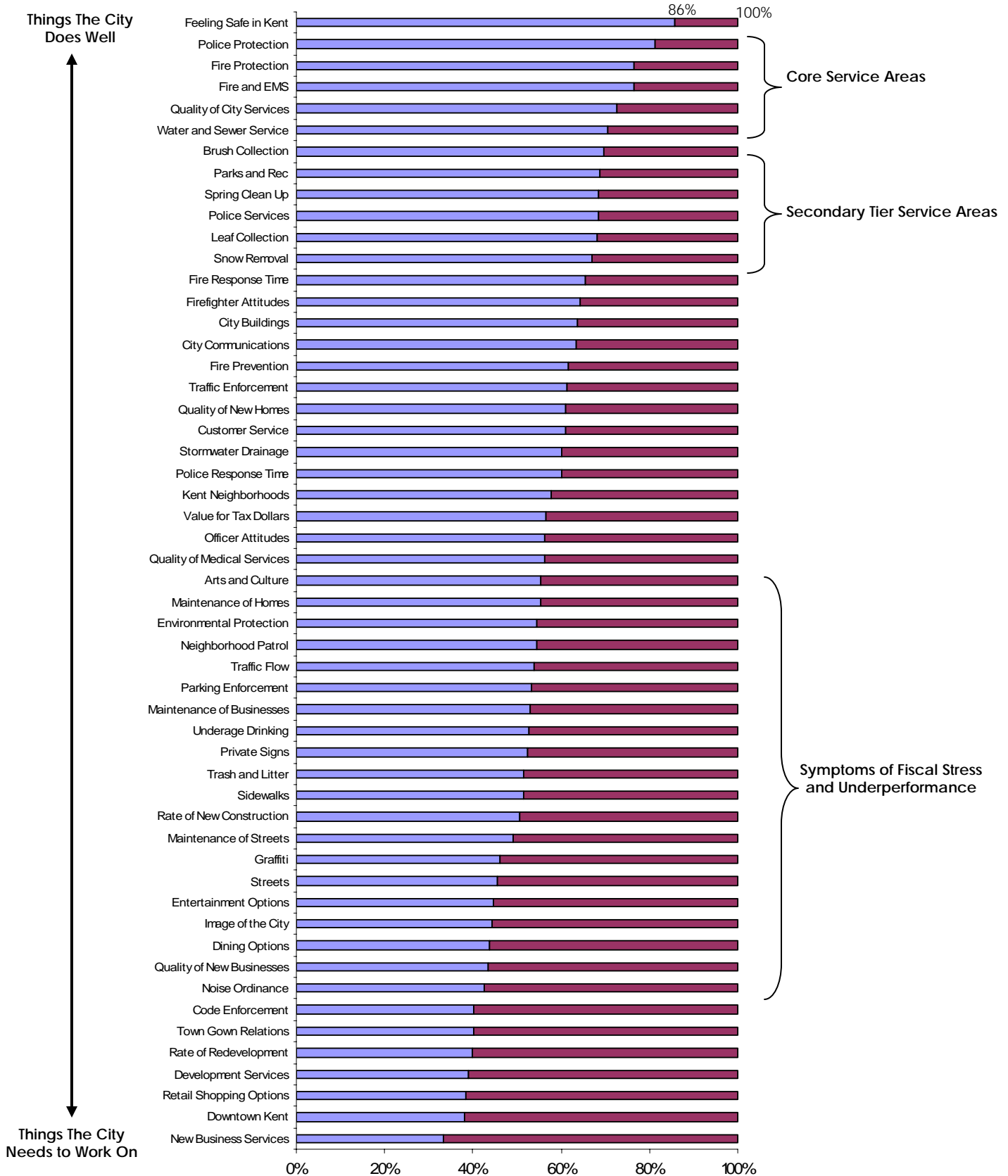
The residents also continue to place a high value on public safety functions, with the majority consistently supporting sustaining funding for police and fire.

**The Highest Vote Was: 70% of the respondents voted in favor of increasing funding for Street Maintenance.**

# Satisfaction Scorecard

## EVALUATING THE RESULTS

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.



# Overall Priority Rankings

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.

First Priority	Cumulative Ranking	Second Priority	Cumulative Ranking	1st and 2nd Combined	Cumulative Ranking
<b>Downtown Kent</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Maintenance of Streets</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Downtown Kent</b>	<b>1</b>
Police Protection	2	<b>Maintenance of Private Homes</b>	<b>1</b>	New Business Services	2
New Business Services	3	Officer Attitudes	2	Police Protection	3
Police Services	4	Quality of Medical Services	2	Police Services	4
Fire Protection	5	Image of the City	3	Image of the City	4
Image of the City	6	Fire Response Time	3	Fire Protection	5
Code Enforcement	6	Streets	3		
Value for Tax Dollars	7	Development Services	4	Value for Tax Dollars	6
Development Services	8	Value for Tax Dollars	4	Streets	6
Street Maintenance	8	Town Gown Relations	4	Development Services	7
Retail Shopping Options	8	Traffic Enforcement	4	Rate of Redevelopment	8
Neighborhood Patrol	9	Maintenance of Businesses	4	Maintenance of Streets	9
Rate of Redevelopment	9	Rate of Redevelopment	4	Neighborhood Patrol	9
Town Gown Relations	10	Quality of New Businesses	4	Officer Attitudes	9
Officer Attitudes	10	Downtown Kent	4	Code Enforcement	9
Sidewalks	10	New Business Services	5	Retail Shopping Options	9
		Police Response Time	5	Town Gown Relations	10
Police Response Time	11	Neighborhood Patrol	5	Maintenance of Homes	10
Maintenance of Businesses	11	Fire Protection	5		
Snow Removal	11	Dining Options	5	Maintenance of Businesses	11
Maintenance of City Streets	12			Police Response Time	12
Quality of City Services	12	Fire and EMS	6	Sidewalks	13
Trash and Litter	12	Traffic Flow	6	Snow Removal	13
Environmental Protection	13	Quality of City Services	6	Quality of City Services	14
Underage Drinking	13	Kent Neighborhoods	6	Quality of Medical Services	14
Maintenance of Private Homes	13	Underage Drinking	6	Traffic Enforcement	15
Fire and EMS	14	Graffiti	6	Fire Response Time	15
Parks and Recreation	14	Snow Removal	6	Underage Drinking	16
Traffic Flow	14	Retail Shopping Options	6	Quality of New Businesses	16
City Communications	14	Police Services	7	Fire and EMS	17
Traffic Enforcement	14	Parks and Recreation	7	Traffic Flow	17
Stormwater Drainage	14	Environmental Protection	7	Environmental Protection	17
Feeling Safe in Kent	15	Noise Ordinance	7	Trash and Litter	17
Kent Neighborhoods	15	Fire Prevention	7	Parks and Recreation	18
Noise Ordinance	15	Sidewalks	7	Kent Neighborhoods	18
Fire Response Times	15	Entertainment Options	7	City Communications	19
Quality of Medical Services	15	Feeling Safe in Kent	8	Noise Ordinance	19
Quality of New Businesses	15	City Communications	8		
Arts and Culture	15	Police Protection	8	Feeling Safe in Kent	20
		Parking Enforcement	8	Dining Options	20
Rate of New Construction	16	Code Enforcement	8	Arts and Culture	20
Quality of New Homes	16	Condition of City Buildings	8	Graffiti	21
Entertainment Options	16	Spring Clean Up	8	Stormwater Drainage	21
Fire Prevention	17	Leaf Collection	8	Entertainment Options	21
Firefighter Attitudes	17	Arts and Culture	8	Fire Prevention	22
Graffiti	17	Private Signs	8	Spring Clean Up	23
Spring Clean Up	17	Trash and Litter	9	Leaf Collection	23
Leaf Collection	17	Brush Collection	9	Parking Enforcement	24
Brush Collection	17	Water and Sewer Service	9	City Buildings	24
Dining Options	17			Brush Collection	24
		Customer Service	No Votes	Rate of New Construction	24
Water and Sewer Service	No Votes	Firefighter Attitudes	No Votes	Quality of New Homes	24
Customer Service	No Votes	Stormwater Drainage	No Votes	Firefighter Attitudes	25
Parking Enforcement	No Votes	Rate of New Construction	No Votes	Private Signs	25
Private Signs	No Votes	Quality of New Homes	No Votes		
Condition of City Buildings	No Votes				

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.

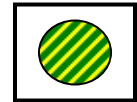
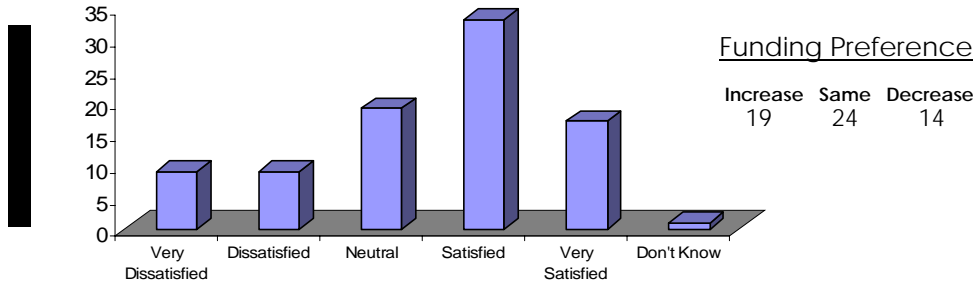
Quick Color Guide

Green = good shape

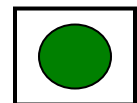
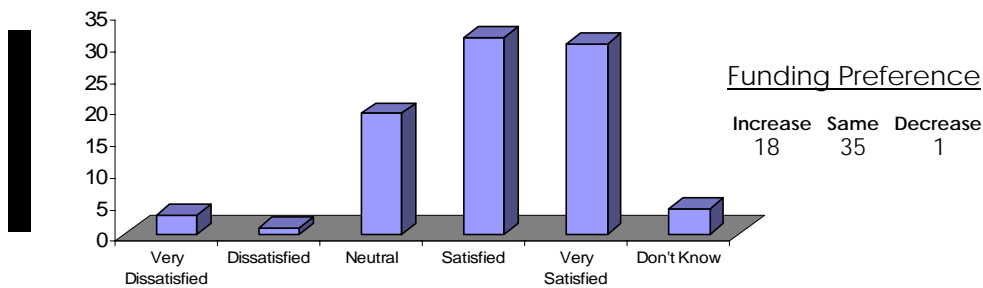
Yellow = early warning

Red = problem

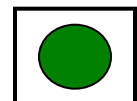
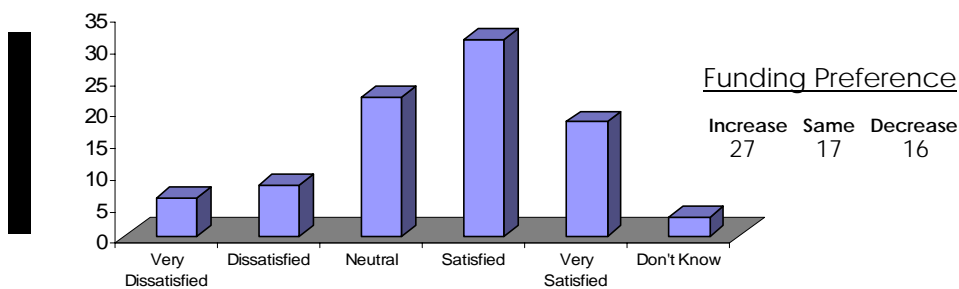
**a. Police Services**



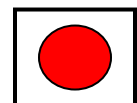
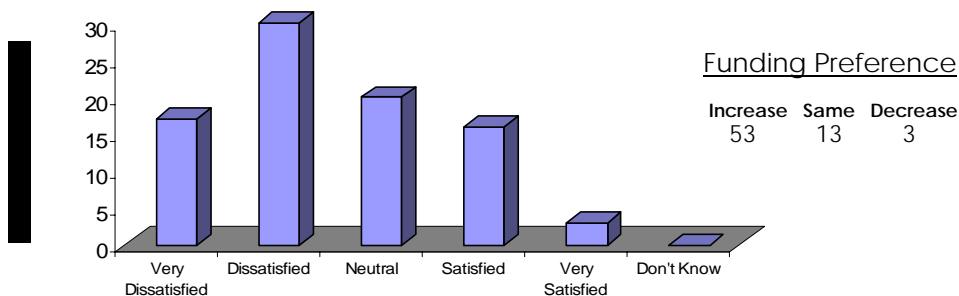
**b. Fire and EMS**



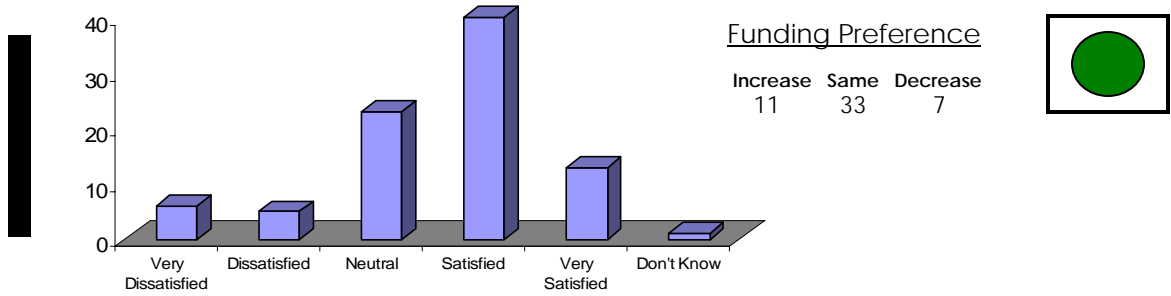
**c. Parks and Recreation**



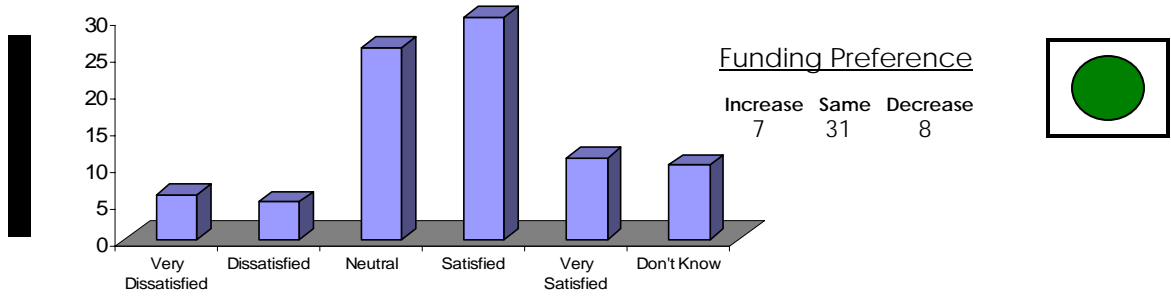
**d. Maintenance of City streets.**



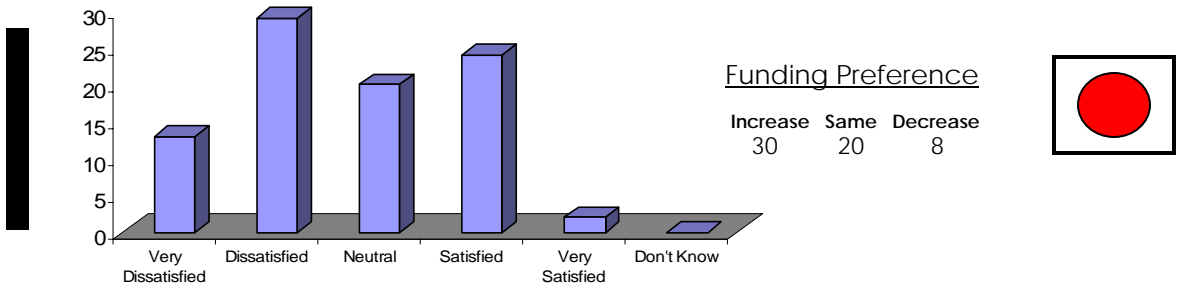
e. City Water and Sewer Service



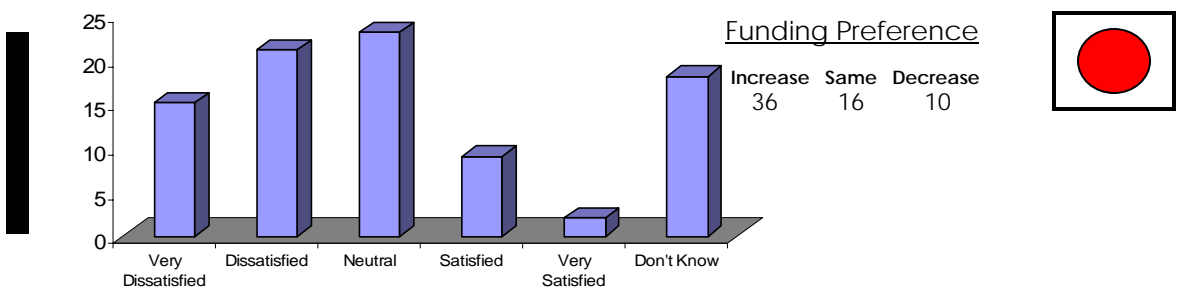
f. Customer Service



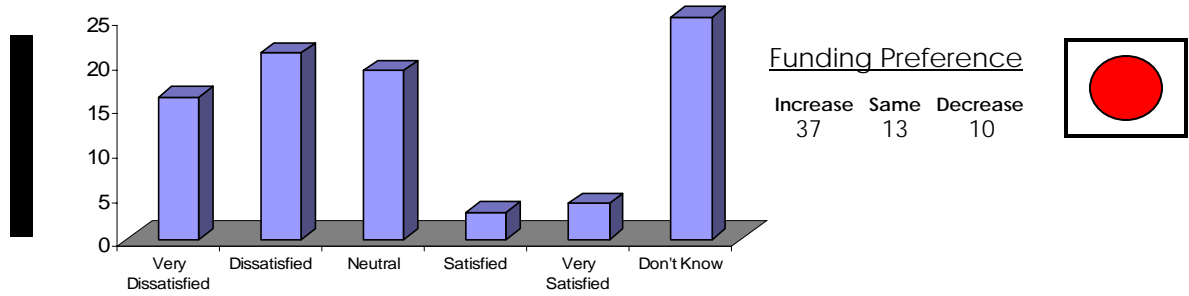
g. Traffic Flow



h. Development Services

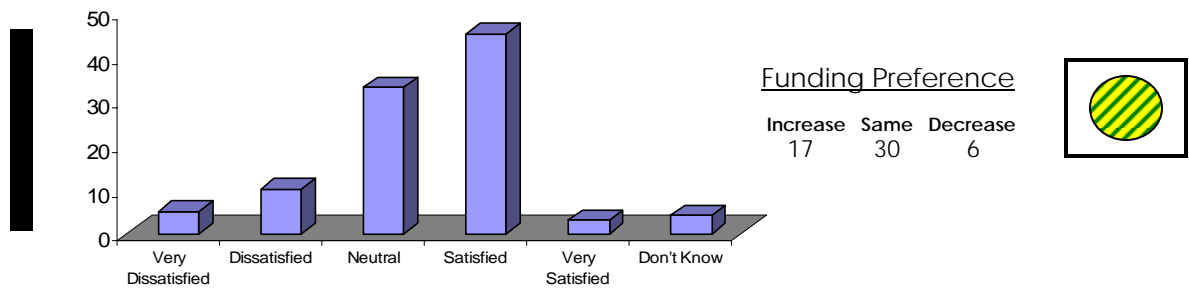


i. New Business Services

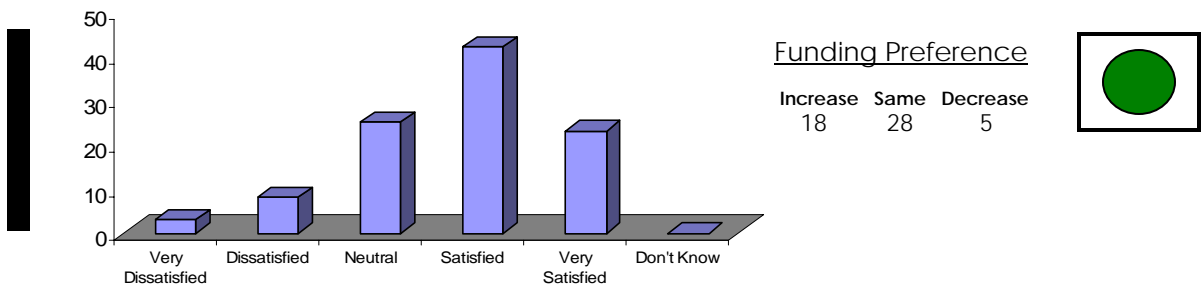


2. Satisfaction Part 2 Please rate your overall satisfaction with the following things about Kent.

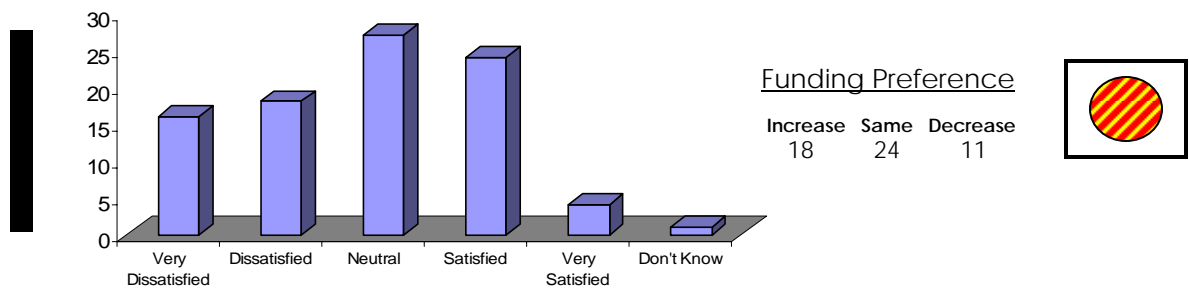
a. Quality of City Services



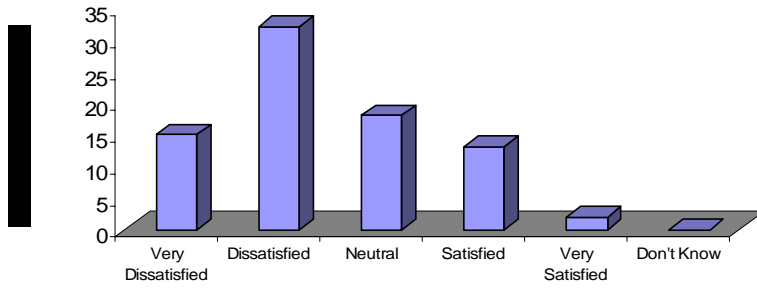
b. Feeling Safe in Kent



c. Value Received for Tax Dollars

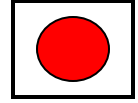


d. Image of the City

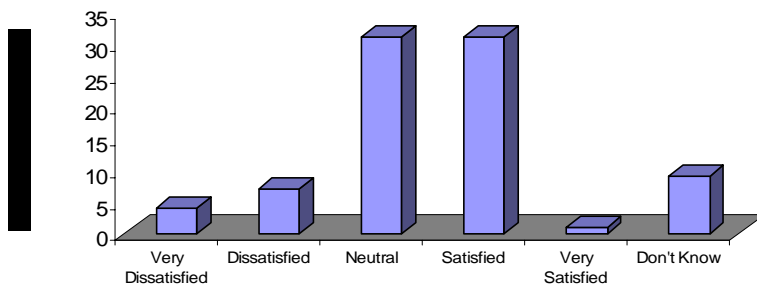


Funding Preference

Increase	Same	Decrease
38	15	6

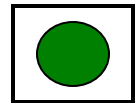


e. Environmental Protection

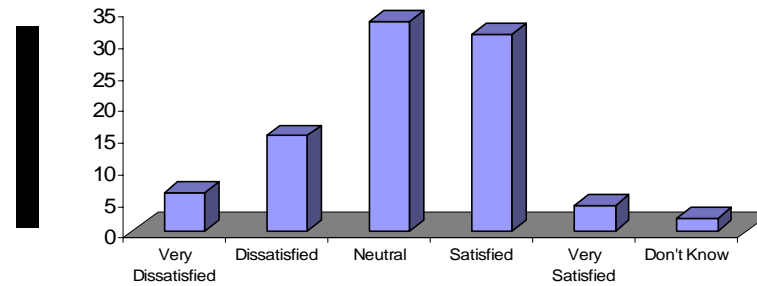


Funding Preference

Increase	Same	Decrease
19	23	11



f. City Communications

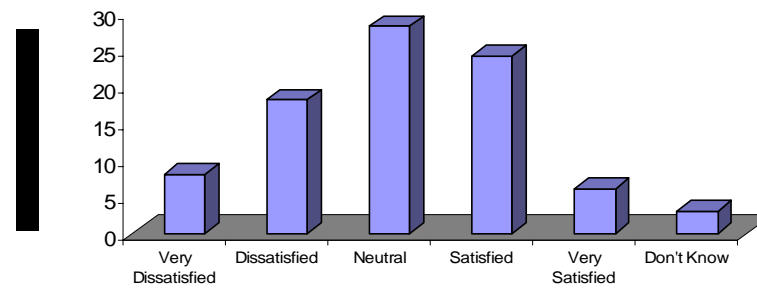


Funding Preference

Increase	Same	Decrease
14	24	10

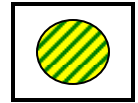


g. Kent Neighborhoods

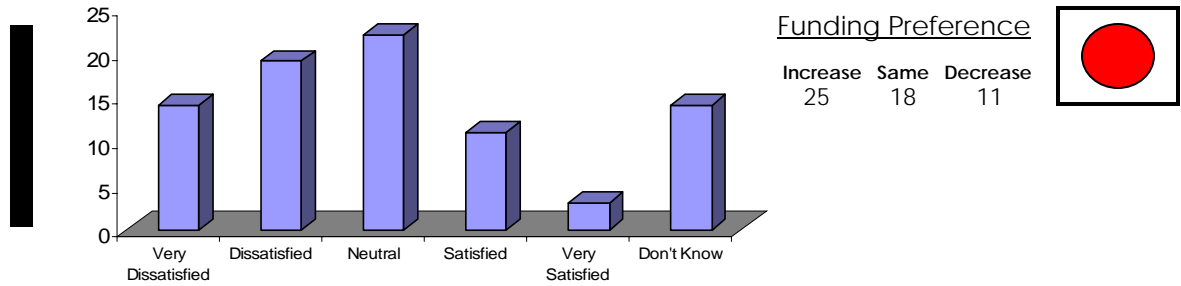


Funding Preference

Increase	Same	Decrease
20	19	10

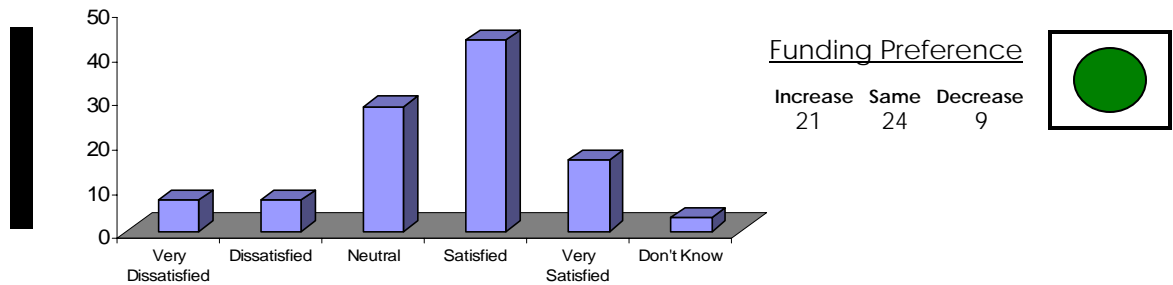


h. Town Gown Relations

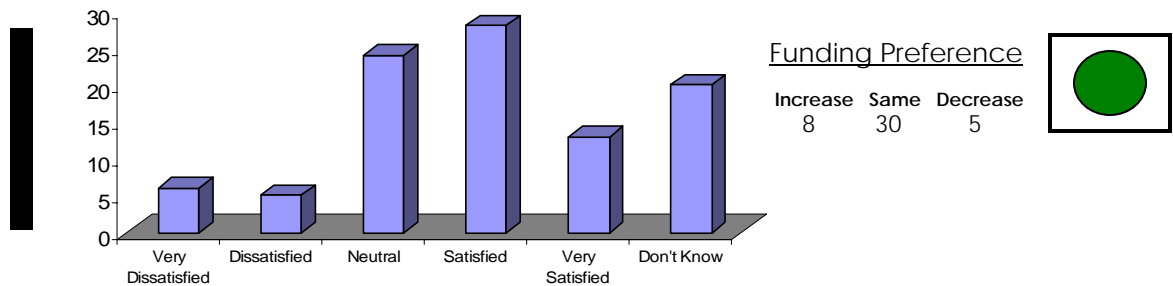


3. Public Safety Satisfaction Please rate your overall satisfaction with the following aspects about Public Safety.

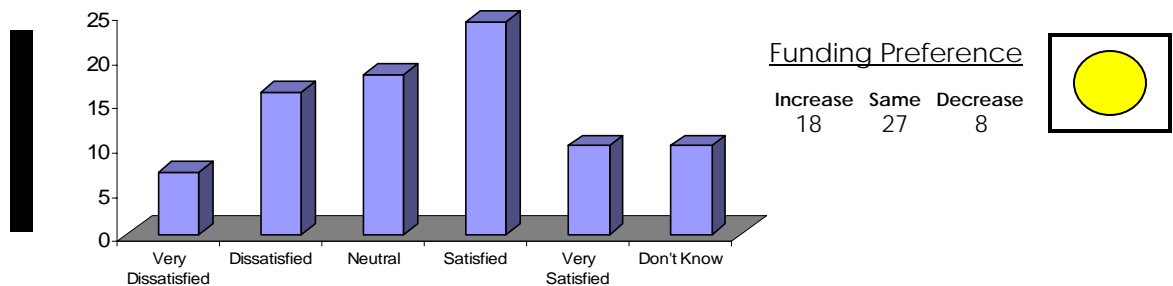
a. Police Protection



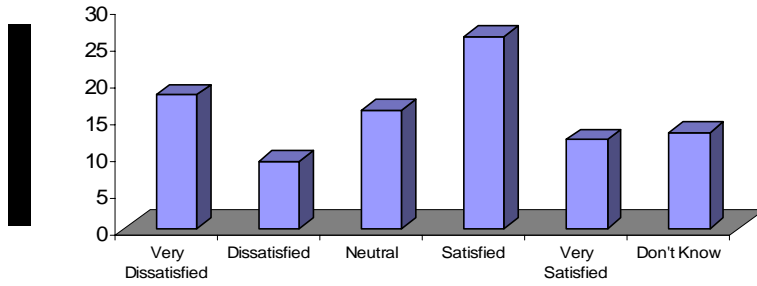
b. Police Response Time



c. Neighborhood Patrol

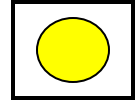


d. Officer Attitudes

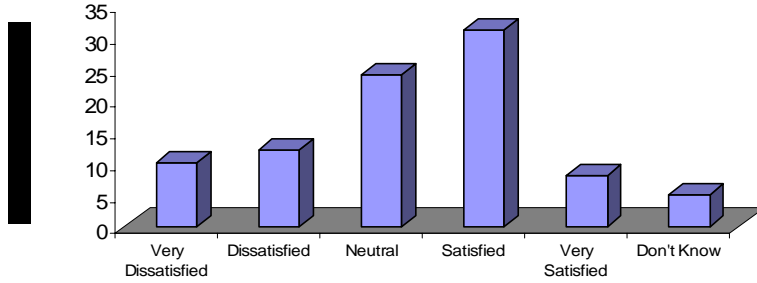


Funding Preference

Increase	Same	Decrease
13	26	8

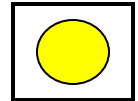


e. Traffic Enforcement

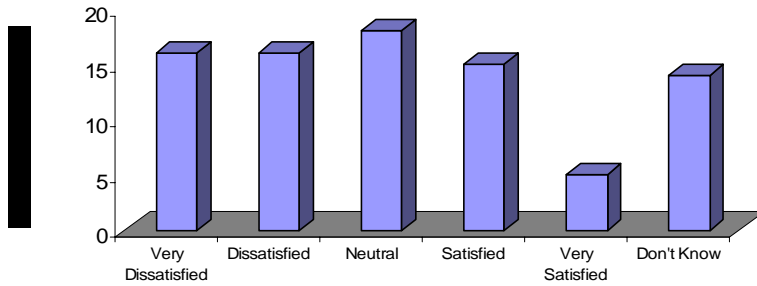


Funding Preference

Increase	Same	Decrease
15	29	8

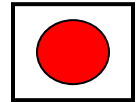


f. Noise Ordinance

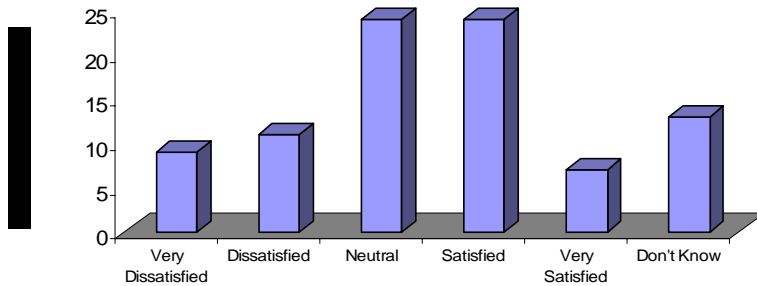


Funding Preference

Increase	Same	Decrease
12	17	18

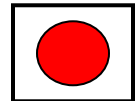


g. Parking Enforcement

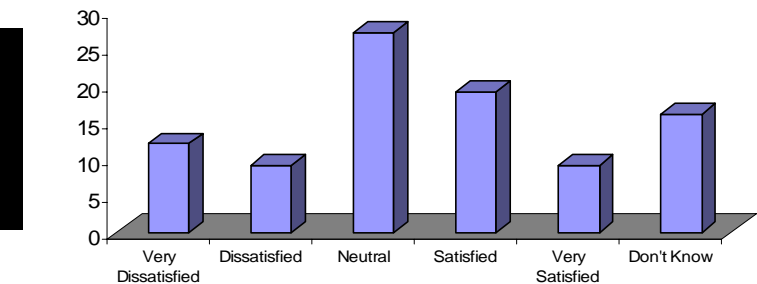


Funding Preference

Increase	Same	Decrease
10	22	18

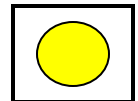


h. Underage Drinking

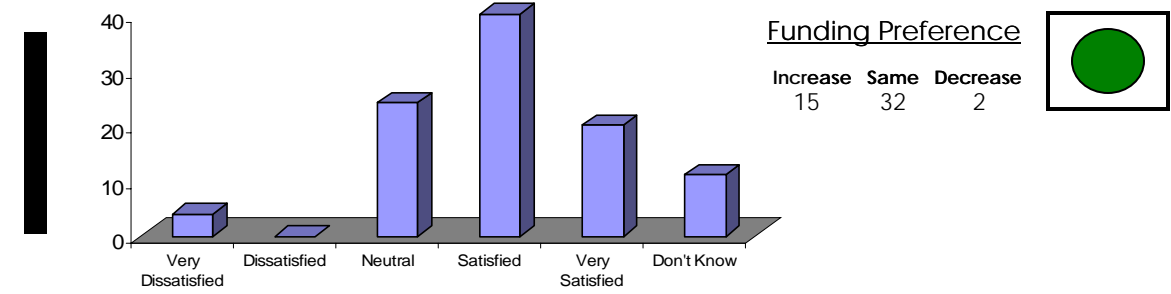


Funding Preference

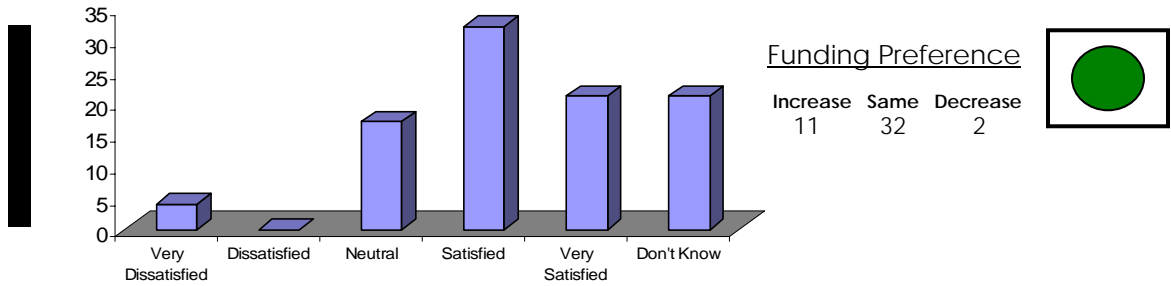
Increase	Same	Decrease
11	19	17



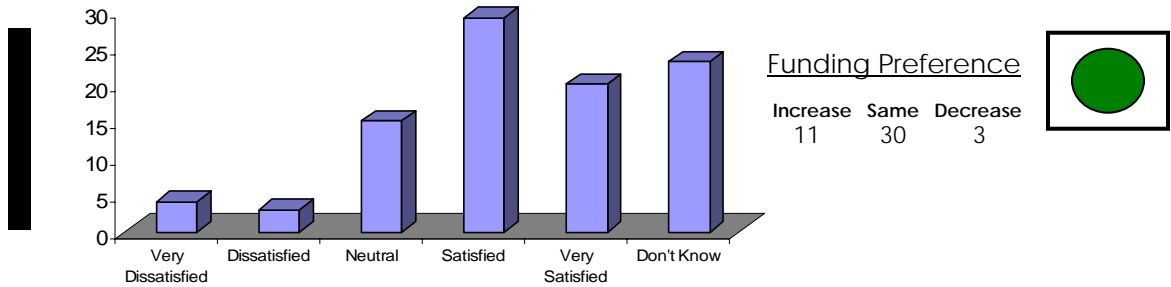
i. Fire Protection



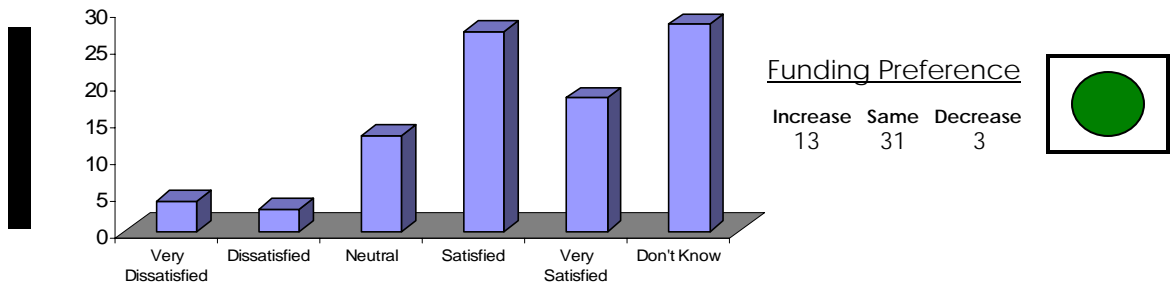
j. Fire Response Time



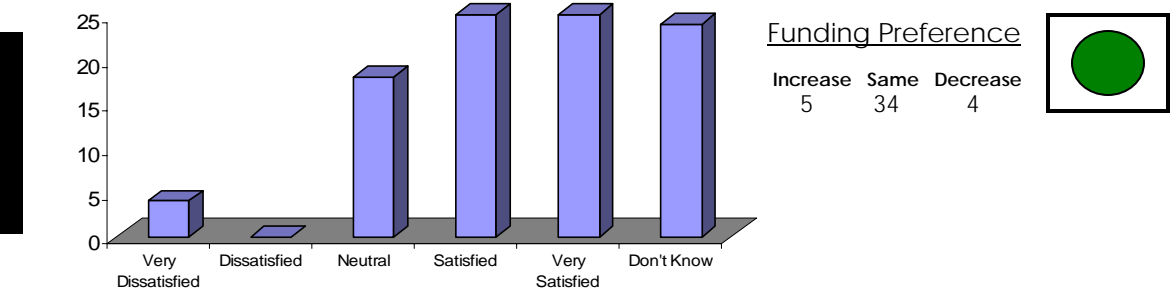
k. Fire Prevention



l. Quality of Medical Services



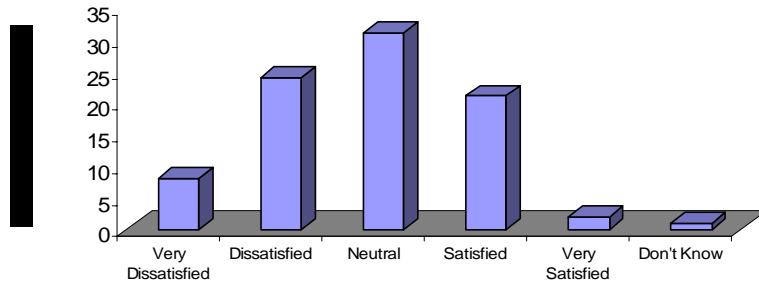
m. Firefighter Attitudes



4. City Maintenance How satisfied are you with:

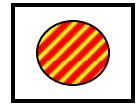
*PRIVATE PROPERTY*

a. Maintenance of Homes

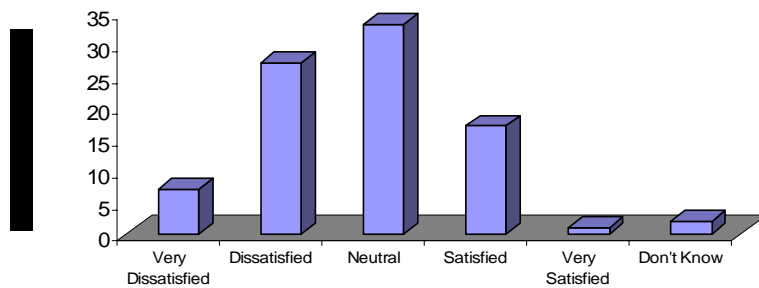


Funding Preference

Increase	Same	Decrease
16	24	8

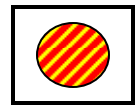


b. Maintenances of Businesses

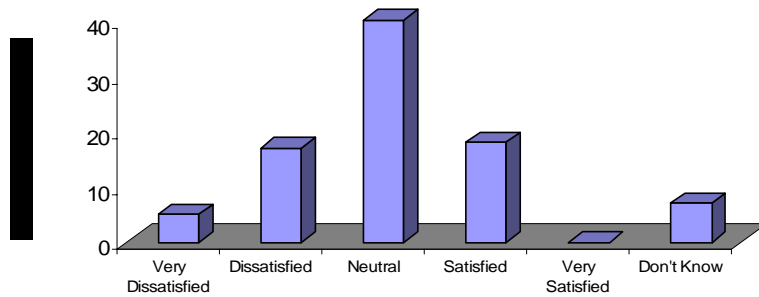


Funding Preference

Increase	Same	Decrease
19	25	8

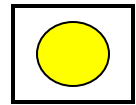


c. Private Signs

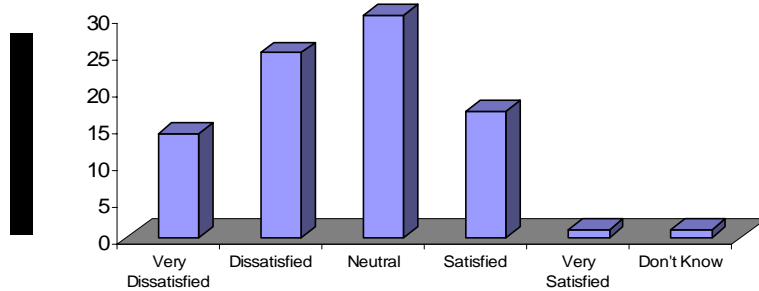


Funding Preference

Increase	Same	Decrease
9	25	8

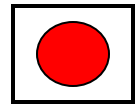


d. Trash and Litter

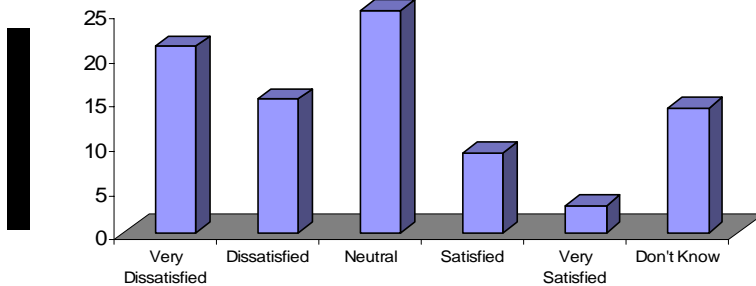


Funding Preference

Increase	Same	Decrease
24	23	7

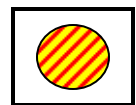


e. Code Enforcement



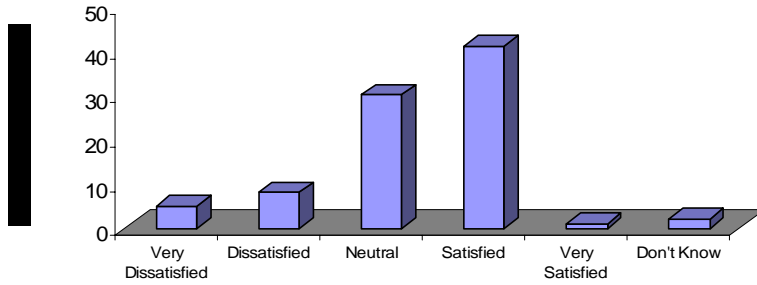
Funding Preference

Increase	Same	Decrease
27	20	10



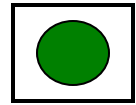
**PUBLIC PROPERTY**

f. City Buildings

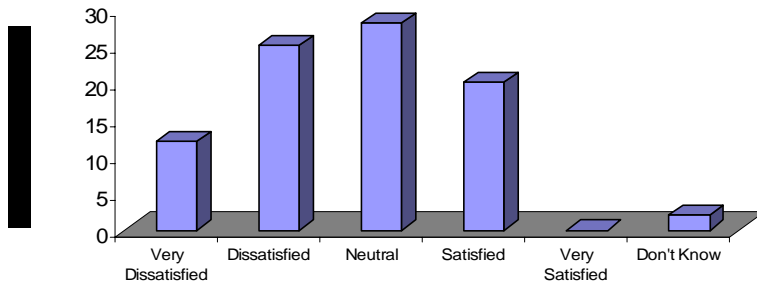


Funding Preference

Increase	Same	Decrease
13	26	12

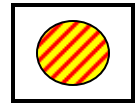


g. Sidewalks

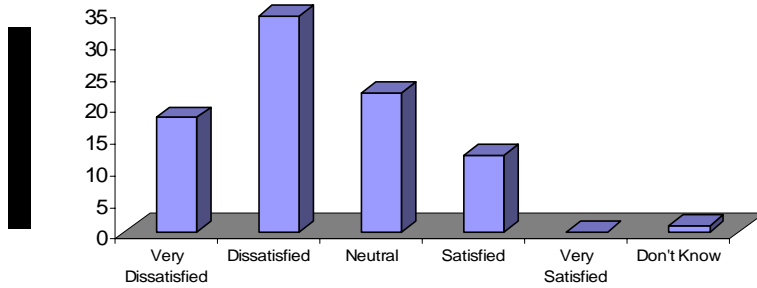


Funding Preference

Increase	Same	Decrease
31	22	5

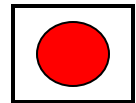


h. Streets

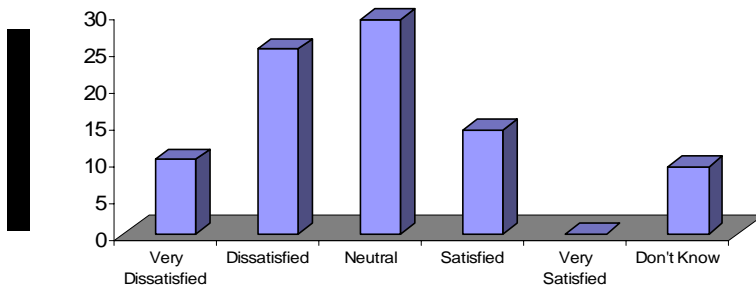


Funding Preference

Increase	Same	Decrease
45	16	3

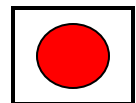


i. Graffiti

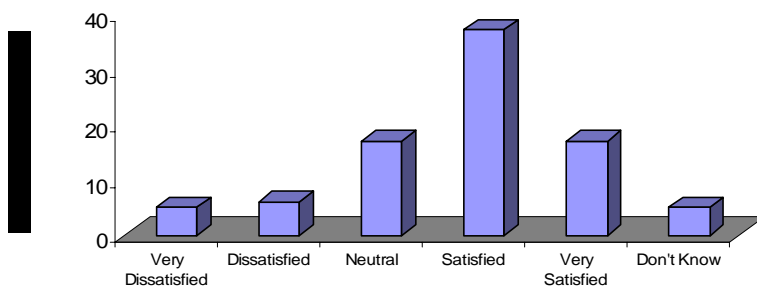


Funding Preference

Increase	Same	Decrease
23	20	8

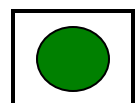


j. Spring Clean Up

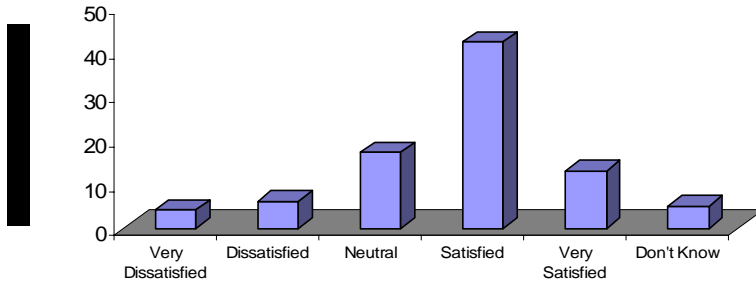


Funding Preference

Increase	Same	Decrease
6	33	7

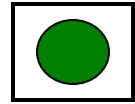


k. Leaf Collection

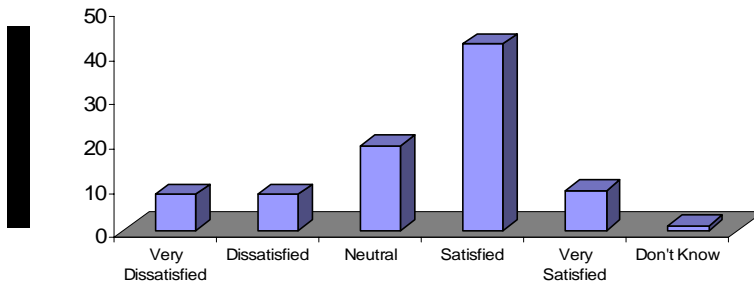


Funding Preference

Increase 9    Same 33    Decrease 7

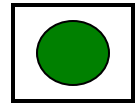


l. Snow Removal

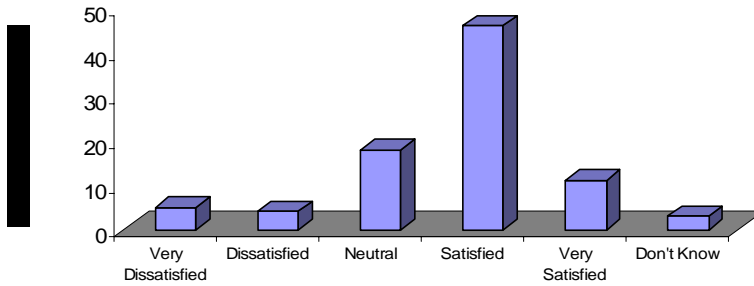


Funding Preference

Increase 19    Same 29    Decrease 4

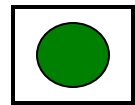


m. Brush Collection

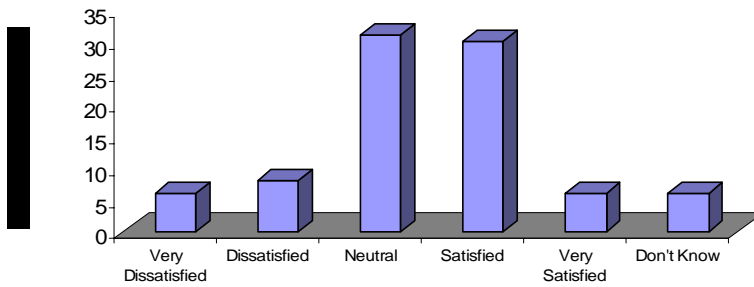


Funding Preference

Increase 8    Same 35    Decrease 6

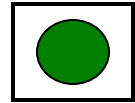


n. Stormwater Drainage



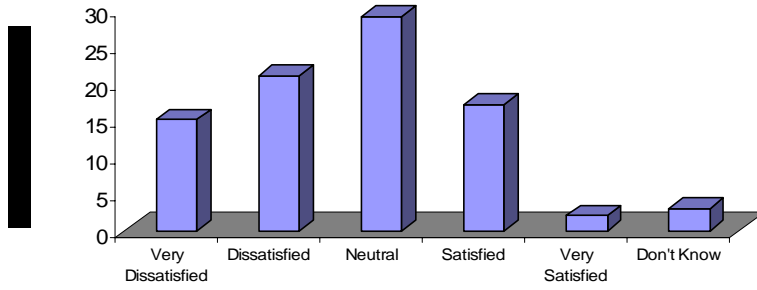
Funding Preference

Increase 10    Same 31    Decrease 9



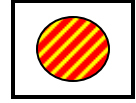
5. City Growth and Development How satisfied are you with:

a. Rate of New Construction

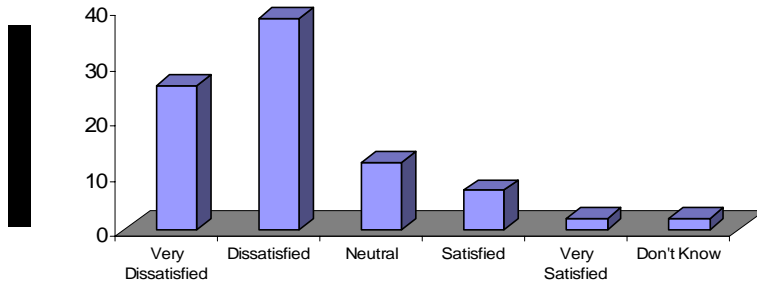


Funding Preference

Increase	Same	Decrease
17	16	16

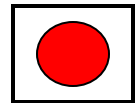


b. Rate of Redevelopment

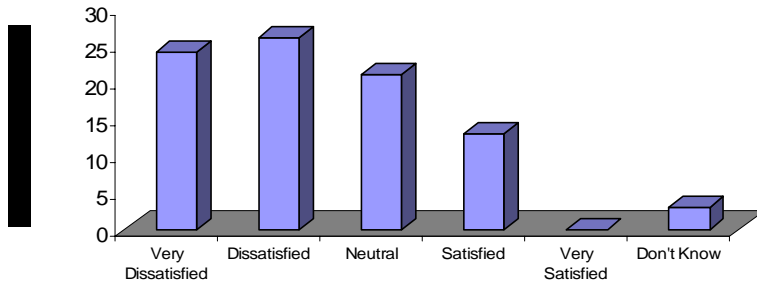


Funding Preference

Increase	Same	Decrease
44	9	8

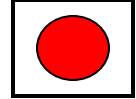


c. Quality of New Businesses

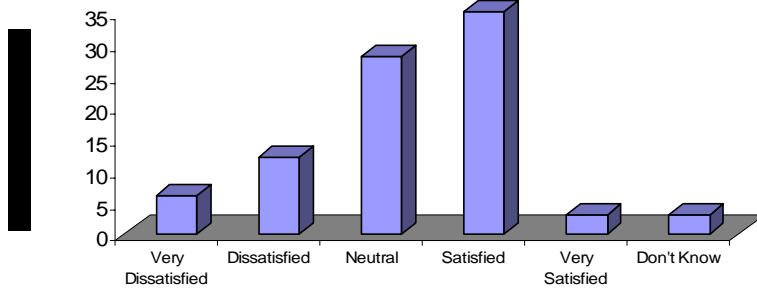


Funding Preference

Increase	Same	Decrease
34	12	8

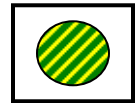


d. Quality of New Homes

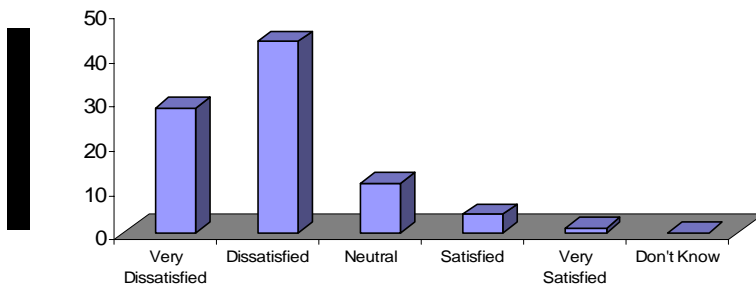


Funding Preference

Increase	Same	Decrease
12	21	16

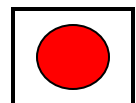


e. Downtown Kent

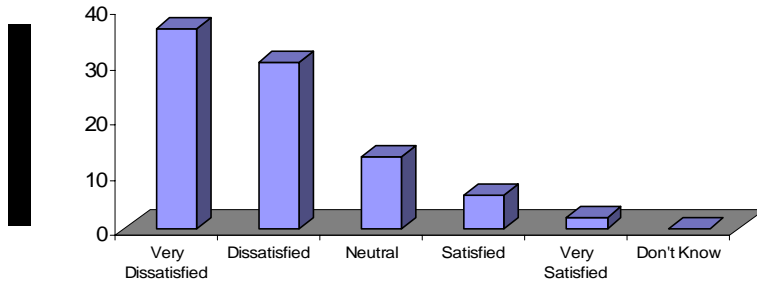


Funding Preference

Increase	Same	Decrease
51	9	7

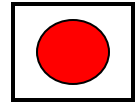


f. Retail Shopping Options

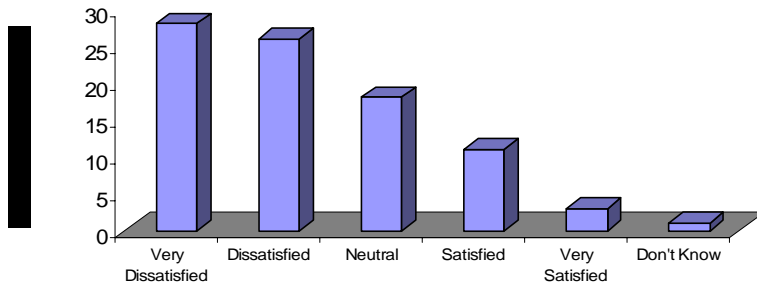


Funding Preference

Increase	Same	Decrease
45	6	8

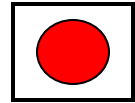


g. Dining Options

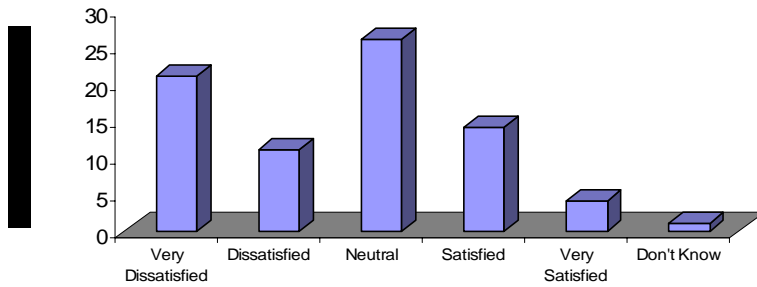


Funding Preference

Increase	Same	Decrease
37	13	9

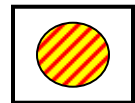


h. Entertainment Options

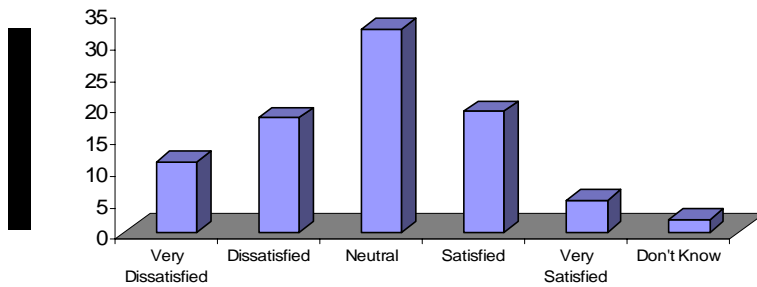


Funding Preference

Increase	Same	Decrease
30	13	10

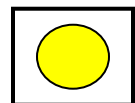


i. Arts and Culture



Funding Preference

Increase	Same	Decrease
24	20	11



# Citizen Written Comments

"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."