

Contact:
John Grubb
Vice President, Communications
Bay Area Council
415-981-6600
Cell: 415-847-6320
jgrubb@bayareacouncil.org



TRANSPORTATION TOPS LIST OF BAY AREA'S CONCERNS, BY WIDE MARGIN, BAY AREA COUNCIL POLL SHOWS

Traffic Concerns Particularly Acute in the North Bay

SAN FRANCISCO, Feb. 23, 2006 — According to Bay Area residents, transportation is the most important problem facing the region, with 35 percent of residents identifying it as the region's top concern in the 2006 *Bay Area Council Poll* of 600 residents released today. In particular, a whopping 54 percent of those in the North Bay counties of Marin, Sonoma, Napa and Solano said traffic was their biggest problem.

In the first of a series of results, the *Council Poll* found that housing was second in the list of concerns with 19 percent. The economy placed third among respondents at 17 percent, falling considerably from two years ago when it was the top issue in the Bay Area. The results are intended to help guide the region's policymakers in their decision-making and help the Bay Area Council develop its annual work plan.

"This a cry for help from those stuck in traffic each day, whose only option is grip the steering wheel tighter," said Jim Wunderman the president and CEO of the Bay Area Council. "They are mad and they want solutions. Luckily, some may finally be on the way. Seven of nine Bay Area counties now have transportation sales tax measures. Proposition 42 gasoline sales taxes are flowing to transportation again, thanks in part to Bay Area Council efforts. All of the North Bay counties have transportation measures on the ballot in 2006, as might Santa Clara. And, finally, if the Governor, Senator Perata and other legislative leaders can negotiate a deal on the infrastructure bond measures, voters in California will soon have a chance to usher in new era of rebuilding our states roads, public transit, schools and other infrastructure."

With one fifth of the region pointing to housing as the biggest problem, housing issues spiked to second highest intensity since 1991. Other top concerns included: Schools/education (14 percent) and fears about crime (12 percent).

Economy, Quality of Life Significantly Improved in Past Year

Despite these issues, an increasing 76 percent of respondents agree that overall quality of life in the region is going very well or somewhat well, a three percent rise from last year. The improved outlook may be driven by the large opinion shift on the Bay Area economy. Whereas last year 61 percent of respondents said the region was in bad economic times, today only 40 percent feel that way, and a plurality of 46 percent say these are good economic times. Asked about the next 12 months, 77 percent predict the economy will stay the same or get better.

Fears About Energy Costs Spike in 2006

With natural gas supplies tight in California, prices have risen and Bay Area residents have noticed. Fully 83 percent of respondents say that the cost of energy has worsened over the past year and

only three percent think costs have improved. As a likely cause, respondents point to the supply of energy having worsened by a three-to-one margin (36 percent to 12 percent).

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About the Bay Area Poll

A total of 600 residents of the nine-county Bay Area were surveyed in English and Spanish by Field Research Corporation during the period of January 16-23, 2006. Survey respondents were selected using a random probability sampling technique that gives all residents with telephones (listed or not) an equal chance of being selected for the survey. The sample was stratified to obtain representative samples in each of six Bay Area regions: Alameda County, Contra Costa County, San Francisco County, San Mateo County, Santa Clara County and the North Bay counties of Marin, Napa, Solano and Sonoma. After the completion of interviewing, the sample was weighted to conform to actual population estimates of the nine-county Bay Area. Findings are subject to a sampling error of plus or minus 4 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level.

About the Bay Area Council

Founded in 1945, the Bay Area Council (www.bayareacouncil.org) develops and drives regional public policy initiatives and researches critical infrastructure issues. Led by CEOs, the Bay Area Council presents a strong, united voice for hundreds of major employers throughout the Bay Area region whom employ more than 490,000 workers, or 1 of every six private sector employees in the Bay Area. Jim Wunderman has served as president and CEO of the Bay Area Council since April of 2004.