

FINAL REPORT

Los Osos Wastewater Project
COMMUNITY ADVISORY
SURVEY

Prepared for:

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY
DEPARTMENT of PUBLIC WORKS

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OPINION
STUDIES
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

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INTRODUCTION

Background and Survey Purpose

This report describes a mail-in survey conducted on behalf of the San Luis Obispo County Department of Public Works. This mail-in survey, titled Community Advisory Survey, was commissioned by the Department of Public Works as part of the county's efforts to develop a Wastewater Project for the community of Los Osos. As background, the authority to complete the Los Osos Wastewater Project was transferred from the Los Osos Community Services District to the County of San Luis Obispo under the authority of Assembly Bill 2701 (Blakeslee, 2006) following considerable controversy. Since then, the Department of Public Works has conducted numerous studies to determine viable technology and location options for the project. In addition, it has undertaken an extensive public outreach effort to ensure that property owners and residents of the community have ample opportunity to provide input to decision makers about their desires and expectations for the project. This Community Advisory Survey is a part of that public outreach effort.

The purpose of this Community Advisory Survey is twofold: 1) to allow all members associated with the community (property owners, renters, absentee landlords, commercial interests, those in the Prohibition Zone and those outside the Prohibition Zone) to have an equal opportunity to voice their opinions in a systematic way about key factors, and 2) to provide County Supervisors and other decision makers with specific measures of community members' values, preferences, interests and concerns with regard to the final project description. Such data should help decision makers be able to base their decisions on factual information about the community's sentiment rather than on speculation.

Methodology

On Wednesday, February 18th, 2009, a total of 8,167 questionnaire packets were mailed to Los Osos property owners and renters. The majority of these questionnaire packets—7,557, to be exact—were mailed to owners/renters with properties in the Prohibition Zone; an additional

610 were mailed to owners/renters whose properties are not in the Prohibition Zone. The packets contained a cover letter signed by Paavo Ogren, Director of Public Works, a Project Status Report and a 4-page questionnaire. A postage paid return envelope addressed to Opinion Studies at a San Luis Obispo post office box was also included for ease in returning the completed form. By Saturday, March 14th, a total of 2,699 completed questionnaires were received. This quantity forms the bases for data shown in this report. An additional 72 forms were received between March 14th and March 27th, the publication date of this report. These late-arriving forms were not counted in the survey base but all hand-written comments have been reviewed. These 2,761 forms represent a return rate of 34% which is about three times the rate typically obtained in mail-in surveys. This is testimony to the community's on-going interest in the Los Osos Wastewater Project and significantly increases the validity of the survey.

The final mailing list was created by merging the Property Assessment List (created from tax information provided by the County Assessor's office) with the U.S. Post Office's Active Mailing Addresses for the 93402 zip code. The Assessor's List identified property owners (those living in Los Osos as well as those living outside the community) and the U.S. Post Office's list identified rental addresses. To the extent possible, duplicate entries for the same address (John Smith; Mary Smith) were excluded so that only one form was mailed to each address. In the end, packets were sent to 1,396 Prohibition Zone property owners with mailing addresses outside the 93402 zip code (this included people with Los Osos post office boxes), 4,360 Prohibition Zone property owners with mailing addresses in the 93402 zip, 1,801 renters in the Prohibition Zone and 610 owners and renters outside the Prohibition Zone. Packets were mailed to private residences as well as to commercial properties.

Using this method, questionnaire packets were distributed to property owners and renters alike and to absentee owners as well. The only segment not represented in the distribution was absentee owners (people living outside the 93402 zip) with properties outside the Prohibition Zone which by all estimations is a relatively small number.

Blue questionnaires bearing serial numbers from 01000 to 017557 were mailed to properties in the Prohibition Zone. Green questionnaires bearing serial numbers 02000 to

020610 were mailed to properties outside the Prohibition Zone. These unique serial numbers were randomly assigned to each form at the time forms were printed. No number was associated with any property address or with any addressee's name. This serial number method combined with the use of color paper prevented the duplication and submission of multiple questionnaire forms.

Extra questionnaires bearing serial numbers beginning with 11 and 12 were printed and distributed upon request to people in the Prohibition Zone and people outside the Prohibition Zone, respectively. A total of 18 extra questionnaires were mailed to properties in the Prohibition Zone property and eight to properties outside the Prohibition Zone. Fifteen Prohibition Zone extra forms and five non Prohibition Zone extra forms were returned and included in the final sample.

As mentioned above, completed questionnaires were mailed directly to Opinion Studies. All data processing tasks have been completed by Opinion Studies and its affiliates without assistance from the Department of Public Works. While the Department of Public Works will review hand-written comments following the publication of this report, it has not been involved in the tabulation or analysis of data.

SUMMARY OF SURVEY FINDINGS

A total of 2,699 questionnaire forms were completed by just over 3,000 people in the course of this mail-in survey. More than 80% of respondents are people who will bear the cost of building the Los Osos Wastewater Project—property owners with properties in the Prohibition Zone. Throughout this report, these respondents are called the Assessment Group; renters in the Prohibition Zone and property owners outside the Prohibition Zone (people who will not be assessed) are grouped in a category called Not Assessment Group (see Detailed Findings, Section 1, page x for further explanation).

Survey participants are more concerned about the Project's collection system and treatment facility location than they are about any other component. Those in the Assessment Group are more concerned about the collection system while those in the Not Assessment Group are more concerned about the location of the project (see Detailed Findings, Section 2). Respondents clearly endorse the adoption of a gravity system (see Detailed Findings, Section 3). Sixty-nine percent of all respondents (and 70% of the Assessment Group) said they prefer a gravity system over a STEP/STEG system. Only 15% chose a STEP/STEG system over a gravity system. In a separate question, 46% of all respondents (and 48% of Assessment Group respondents) said they prefer a gravity system even if a STEP/STEG system provided savings. Twenty four percent of all respondents (and 26% of the Assessment Group respondents) would be interested in a STEP/STEG system IF it provided a savings over a gravity system. However, for 19%, the savings would have to be at least \$50 a month to make a STEP/STEG system worthwhile. For 7%, a savings of \$10 and \$30 would make a STEP/STEG system worthwhile. Ten percent of respondents are committed to a STEP/STEG system even it provides no savings.

In terms of a treatment facility location (see Detailed Findings, Section 4), respondents indicate a strong preference for an out of town location (Turri Road area, Tonini property) but also a willingness to support a project located on the edge of town (Giacomazzi, Branin, cemetery properties). By contrast, few respondents support the idea of locating the treatment facility at a mid-town site, a.k.a. Tri-W site.

In terms of treatment technologies (see Section 5), above all else, respondents are interested in a project description that provides for lower costs overall (72%). They express some interest in energy efficiency (64%) but far less interest in minimizing visual impact (21%) or ensuring a smaller footprint (15%). Respondents favor hauling solids to a location outside the community over composting (47% versus 31%).

When asked to consider the Project as a whole and to indicate what they are most concerned about, 22% said the most important issue is getting the project done as soon as possible (see Detailed Findings, Section 6). This sentiment was echoed in written comments at various points in the survey. Costs—with on-going costs being slightly more important than initial costs—are also deemed extremely important. These two cost issues were identified as most important, second most important and third most important by 51% and 44%, respectively, of the Assessment Group. Selecting a description that requires little on-going maintenance was identified as a top-three issue by 31% of Assessment Group respondents. Less important are issues like reusing treated water (mentioned in top three by 24% of Assessment Group), situating away from homes (23%), being energy efficient (18%) and having little impact on the environment (16%). Of very little concern are disruptions that will occur during construction.

When asked specifically about their willingness to pay extra for four specific project enhancements, sixty four percent of respondents express willingness to pay slightly higher costs for a description that returns treated water to the groundwater (see Detailed Findings, Section 7). As expressed in another question, they indicated the least interest in paying extra for composting.

It is also worth noting here that a sizeable portion of the sample (42%) expects to apply for financial assistance if such an aid program can be developed. Consistent with their concerns about costs, respondents offered many open ended comments (see Detailed Findings, Section 8, for some examples) encouraging decision makers and others to keep costs affordable and to obtain federal funding to assist the community in its efforts to move forward with this Project.

DETAILED FINDINGS

Detailed survey findings are presented in eight sections as follows:

- *Section 1* provides an overview of who responded to the survey. It defines respondents in terms of demographics and other criteria such as intent to apply for financial aid and knowledge about project.
- *Section 2* looks at respondents' relative concern for various project components. Are they more concerned about the treatment location or its collection system?
- *Section 3* focuses on respondent's specific collection system preferences and reasons for these preferences. In addition, the section considers how people's preferences might change if a STEP/STEG system can provide some savings.
- *Section 4* summarizes results related to treatment location preferences.
- *Sections 5* looks at attitudes toward other technology issues like composting versus hauling and issues such as cost versus minimizing visual impact.
- *Section 6* looks at the project as a whole and provides information about respondents' priorities.
- *Section 7* summarizes respondents' willingness to pay additional costs for various project enhancements.
- Lastly, *Section 8* focuses on common themes emerging from more than 2,000 comments provided by respondents. Included in this section are some respondents' actual verbatim comments.

Section 1: Sample / Survey Participants

This section describes those who responded to the survey. Specifically, it describes respondent's demographics and focuses on other topics such as how informed and opinionated respondents are with regard to the Los Osos Wastewater Project. This section also highlights sources of information used by respondents to learn about project issues and on respondents' expected intent to apply for financial aid if an aid program is developed.

Table 1 below summarizes the types of Los Osos properties represented by respondents and whether those properties are located in or out of the Prohibition Zone. This information is very important and provides bases for analysis of other data in this survey.

Ninety-two percent of the respondents are people associated with properties in the Prohibition Zone; only 8% of the sample has properties outside the Prohibition Zone. The largest single group of respondents are people who own one Los Osos property in the Prohibition Zone and use that property as their primary residence. This all-important group makes up 59% of the sample. The second largest group is comprised of people who own a single property in the Prohibition Zone but live elsewhere, presumably renting their Los Osos property to someone else. This group represents 12% of the sample. Other 'owners' are people who own vacant lots and nothing else (2%) and people who own multiple properties (7%). This latter group includes people who live in Los Osos and who also own a rental property or vacant lot. It also includes people who are absentee landlords with a number of rental properties.

In summary then, private residence property owners with properties in the Prohibition Zone make up 80% of the sample--the group which will be most impacted by assessments levied for the construction of the Wastewater Project. Fortunately, this group makes up a significant portion of the survey's sample. Commercial property owners are also an important component since they too will directly bear the cost of the Wastewater Project. Together, these two groups make up 83% of the sample.

Private residence renters make up 8% of the sample (and nearly all are in the Prohibition Zone). Commercial property renters comprise another 2% of the sample (and nearly all are in the Prohibition Zone).

Table 1: Types of Los Osos Properties Represented in Survey Sample

TYPES OF LOS OSOS PROPERTIES	Prohibition Zone	Not Prohibition Zone	Total
<i>Owner Private Residence:</i>	80%	7%	87%
Own single prop: primary home	59%	7%	66%
Own single prop: not primary home	12%	<1%	12%
Own single prop: lot	2%	<1%	2%
Own multiple properties (primary home plus lot or rental property, rental property plus lot, etc.)	7%	<1%	7%
<i>Owner Commercial Property:</i>	3%	<1%	3%
<i>Renter Private Residence:</i>	7%	1%	8%
<i>Renter Commercial Property:</i>	2%	<1%	2%
TOTAL	92%	8%	100%

Throughout this report, special attention is paid to responses provided by property owners whose properties are in the Prohibition Zone because these people will bear the biggest burden of costs associated with the construction of the Los Osos Wastewater Facility. As noted above, this group makes up a significant portion of the survey’s sample (83%); because of this, their responses often vary only by a few percentage points from the total sample. However, to underscore how this group differs in sentiment from community members who will not be responsible for a major portion of the costs (renters living in the Prohibition Zone and owners and renters with properties not in the Prohibition Zone), we think it is instructive to show results from these groups separately when the differences are significant. Therefore, at varying points, data is shown for ‘Total Sample’ (all respondents), for ‘Assessment Group’ (property owners with properties in the Prohibition Zone) and for ‘Not Assessment Group’ (renters in the Prohibition Zone and owners and renters not in the Prohibition Zone). In all cases, table bases are clearly shown and defined.

In order to better understand who responded to the survey, respondents were asked to indicate how long they have owned or rented property in Los Osos, how old they are and what

their annual household income is (if they are private residence owners or renters). More than 40% respondents have been affiliated with Los Osos for 20 years or more (Table 2). Another 26% have been in the area for 10 to 20 years. Those who are in the Assessment Group have been in the community a little longer than those who are in the Not Assessment Group (Table 3).

Table 2: Length of Time in Los Osos
Q2: How long have you owned or rented property in Los Osos?

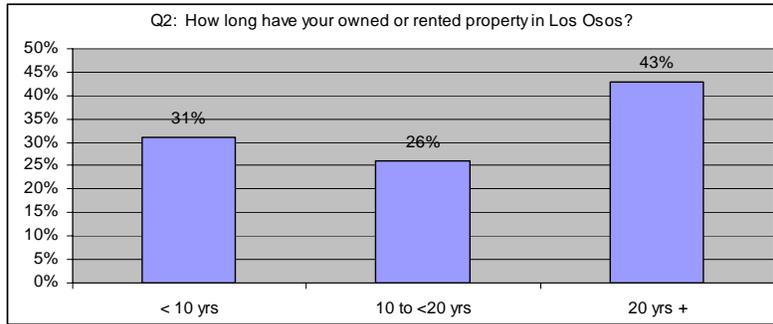
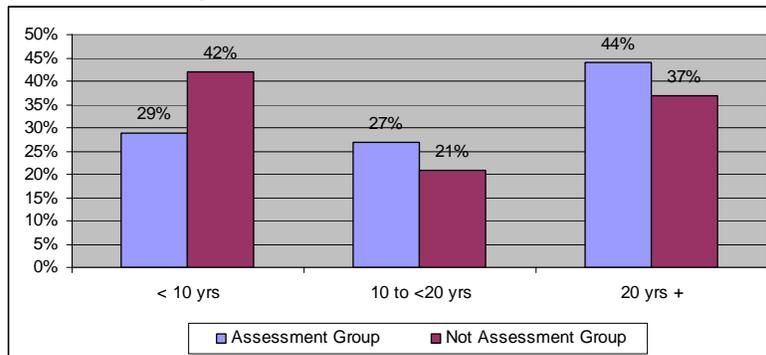


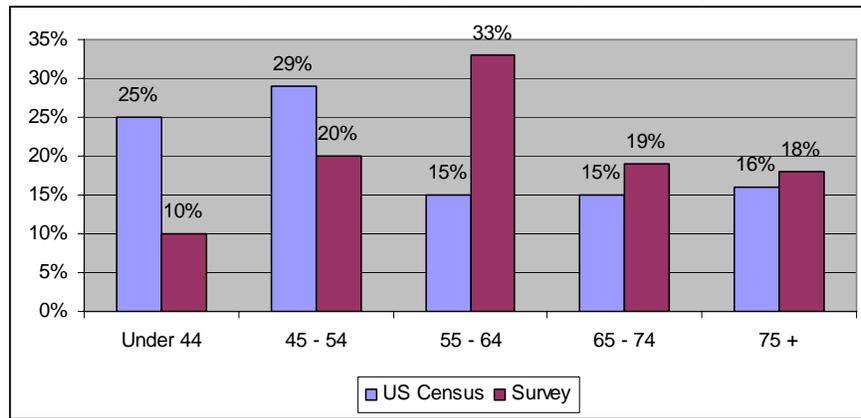
Table 3: Length of Time in Los Osos by Assessment Status
Q2: How long have you owned or rented property in Los Osos?



In terms of age, respondents are generally older than the community's adult population (ages 20 years +) based on a comparison of U.S. Census data (2000) to survey data. Table 4 below shows the community's age distribution according to the U.S. Census data and the survey's age distribution. The table illustrates that survey respondents as a group are older than residents of the community. People under the age of 54 make up 54% of the community's residents but only 30% of the survey's sample. By contrast, survey respondents in the age group 55 to 64 comprise 33% of the sample but only 15% of the community's adult population. However, this discrepancy makes sense. We expect that younger renters did not respond as frequently to the survey as did people with more tenure in the community. Also, some properties are represented twice in the survey—once by the property owner and once by the renter. The

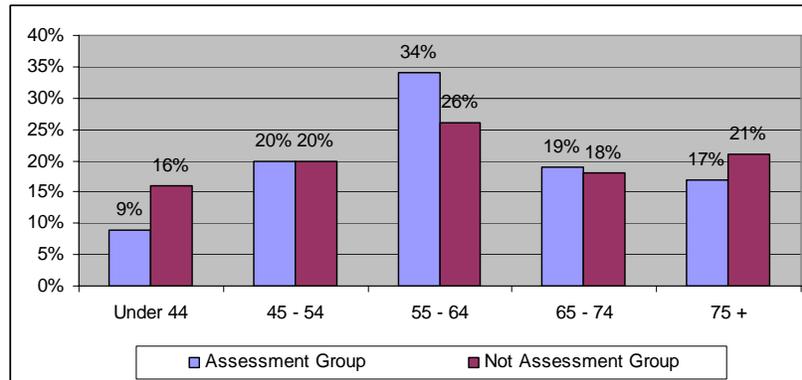
overall age of the sample would then shift to being 'older' if the property owner and renter are both older than the general population. While a closer match on a key demographic such as age would be preferable, this divergence in this situation is acceptable. Those who responded to the survey are those who are most engaged in debate and care most about the construction of a Wastewater Facility.

Table 4: Ages of Community Members as Reported by the U.S. Census Data 2000 versus Survey Respondents
Q4: How old is the person/are the people who completed this questionnaire?



Respondents in the Assessment Group are slightly older than those in the Not Assessment Group (Table 5). Assessment respondents make up a larger share of this mid age group (55 to 64) while Not Assessment Group respondents tend to be both older and younger than the assessed group.

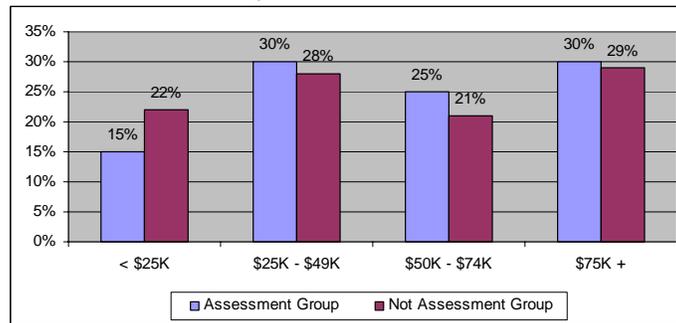
Table 5: Ages of Respondents by Assessment Status
Q4: How old is the person/are the people who completed this questionnaire?



Respondents affiliated with private residences were asked to indicate their annual household incomes (Table 6). Not surprisingly, many respondents (21% of the Assessment

Group and 19% of the Not Assessment Group) chose not to reveal their incomes. Among those who did, incomes vary significantly showing that the sample base includes households of varying income levels. While 30% of the sample comes from households with incomes over \$75,000, 45% live in households with incomes under \$50,000. Members of the Not Assessment Group are more likely than the Assessment Group to be in the lowest income category. This is not surprising considering the fact that the Not Assessment Group includes renters in the community (in and out of the Prohibition Zone) as well as those property owners out of the Prohibition Zone.

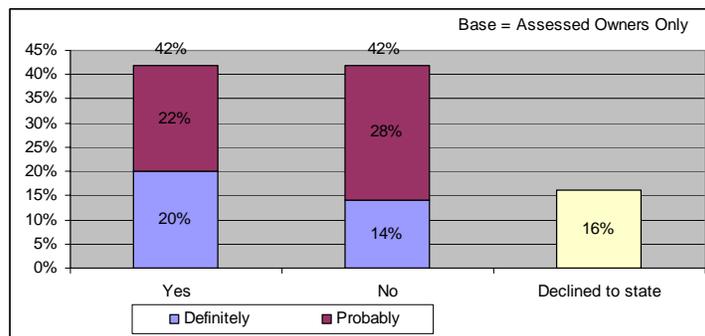
Table 6: Annual Household Income among Private Residence Respondents by Assessment Status
Q5: Please indicate your household's total annual income?



Private residence respondents were also asked to indicate if they plan to apply for financial assistance if a financial aid program can be developed. Table 7 below is based only on the Assessment Group. Forty-two percent of owners facing assessment definitely or probably will apply while an equal share (42%) will definitely or probably not apply. Sixteen percent declined to state or do not know whether they will or will not apply. Note: Twenty-five percent of the non-assessed group (about 6% of the sample) indicated interest in applying for aid also. These may be renters anticipating a need for assistance to help with increased rent rates.

Table 7: Intentions to Apply for Financial Assistance

Q6: Do you plan to apply for financial assistance if a financial aid program can be developed to assist low or fixed income households with costs associated with the construction of the Wastewater Project?



To gauge respondents' knowledge about the project, respondents were asked to indicate how informed they feel about issues related to the Los Osos Wastewater Project (Table 8) and how strong their opinions are with regard to the Project (Table 9). Twenty percent of both the Assessment Group and the Not Assessment Group say they are 'very informed' about issues. Assessment Group members are more likely than Not Assessment Group member to describe themselves as having 'very strong opinions.' A very large contingent—75% and 81%, respectively—consider themselves 'very' or 'somewhat informed' and / or having 'very' or 'somewhat strong opinions.' Obviously, the Wastewater Project is a topic that has received wide-spread attention in the community. Very few respondents are disengaged from the issue.

Tables 8: How Informed

Q8: How informed do you feel about the issues related to the construction of a Wastewater Project for Los Osos?

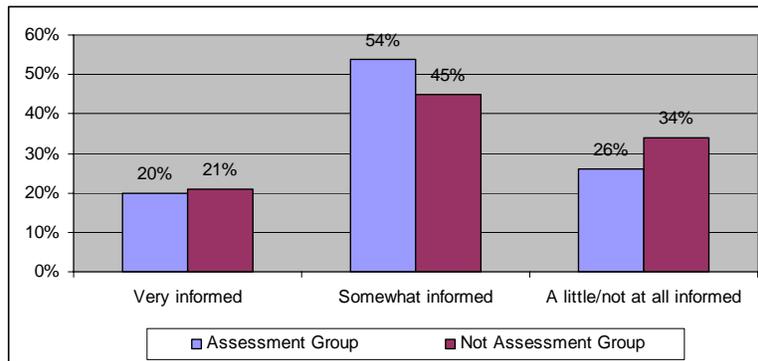
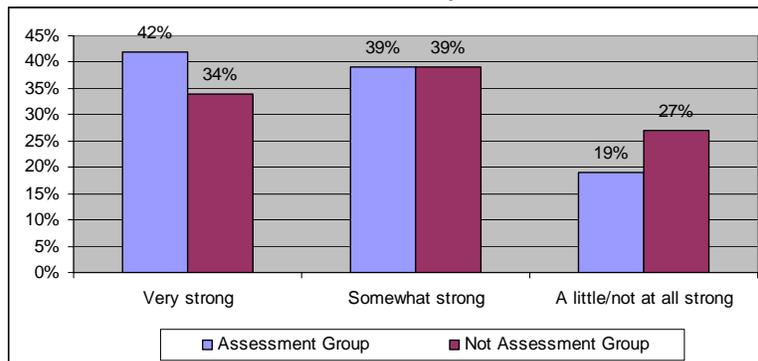


Table 9: Strength of Opinions

Q9: How would you describe your opinions about the Los Osos Wastewater Project?



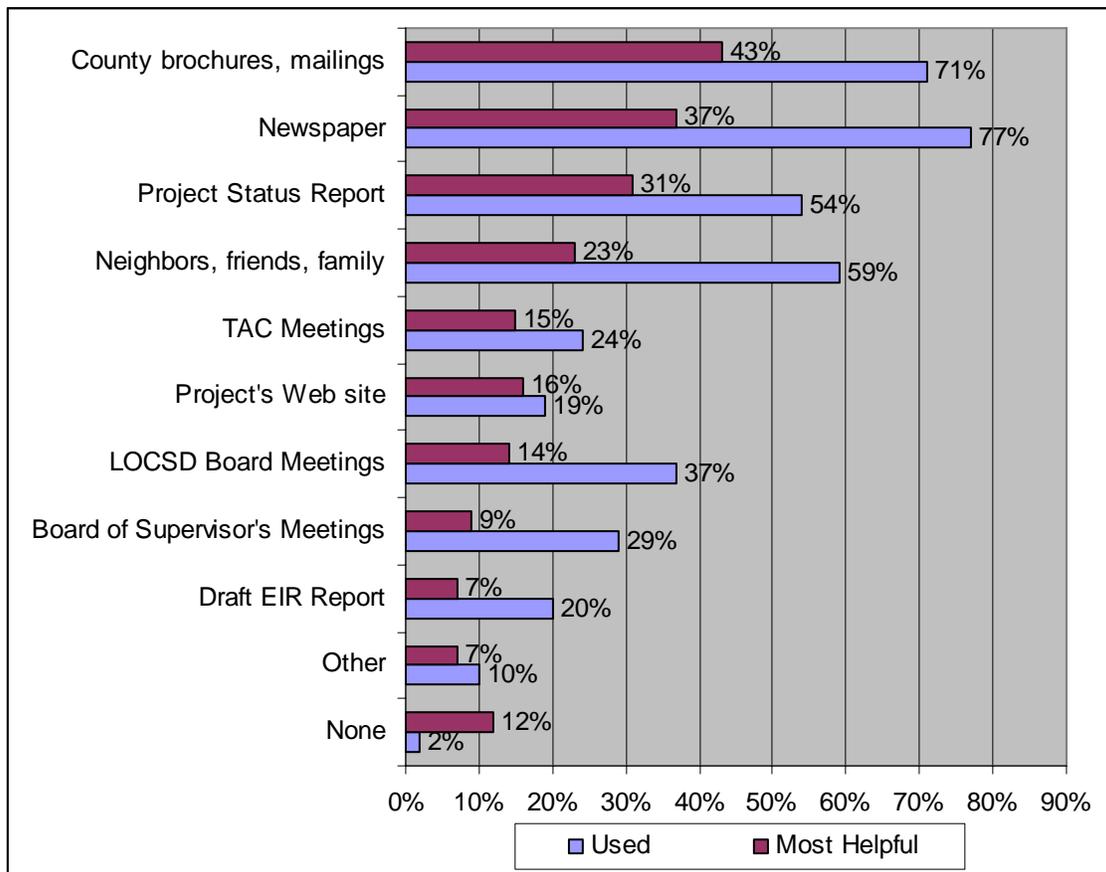
As evident in the tables above, Los Osos owners/residents are concerned with issues related to the Wastewater Project. To make completing the questionnaire a less arduous task, respondents were given the opportunity to 'opt out,' i.e., to have their opinions on Questions 11

through 22 (the most technical questions) recorded as 'no opinion.' Interesting, only 2% of the Assessment Group chose to exercise this option while 5% of the Not Assessment Group opted out.

Respondents were asked to indicate what sources of information they used over the last years to inform themselves about the Project (Table 10). They were also asked to indicate which sources they found most helpful. The source used most often was the newspaper but the one found most helpful was the County's brochures and mailings. The Project Status Report enclosed with the survey questionnaire and neighbors, friends and family were also used and found helpful by a significant number of respondents.

Table 10: Information Sources Used and Found Most Helpful

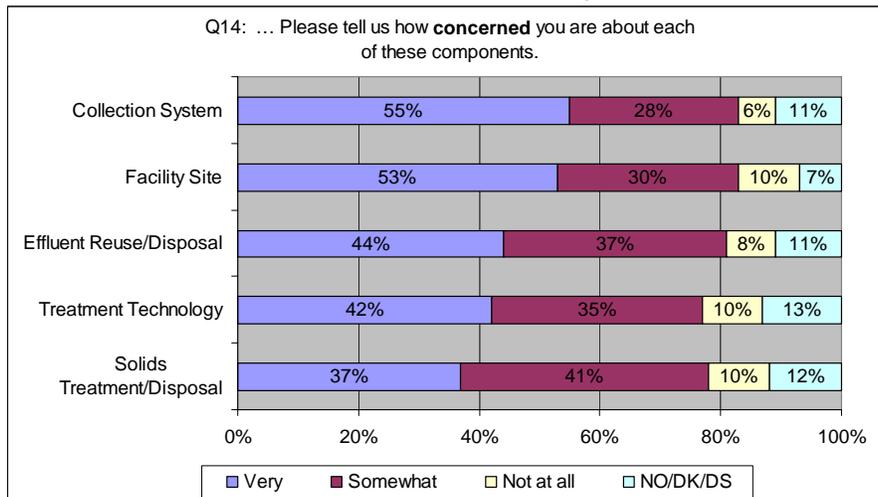
Q7: What are your sources of information about the Project? Please check all the sources you used over the last few years to help you understand the County's plans for the Project. Then check the one or two sources you found most helpful.



Section 2: Relative Concern for Project Components

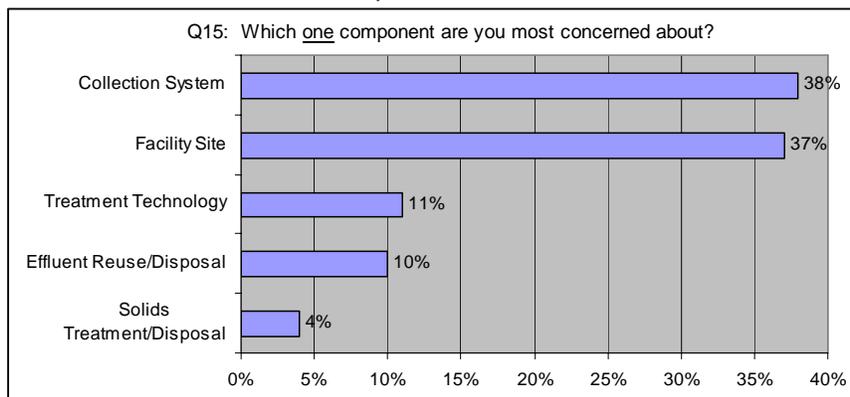
Respondents were asked to indicate how concerned they are about five different aspects of the Project. Nearly 80% indicated they are ‘very’ or ‘somewhat concerned’ about all five components (Table 11). However, the two components respondents are more concerned about are the Project’s collection system and its treatment location. Just over half of all respondents say they are ‘very concerned’ about these two aspects.

Table 11: Concern about Components



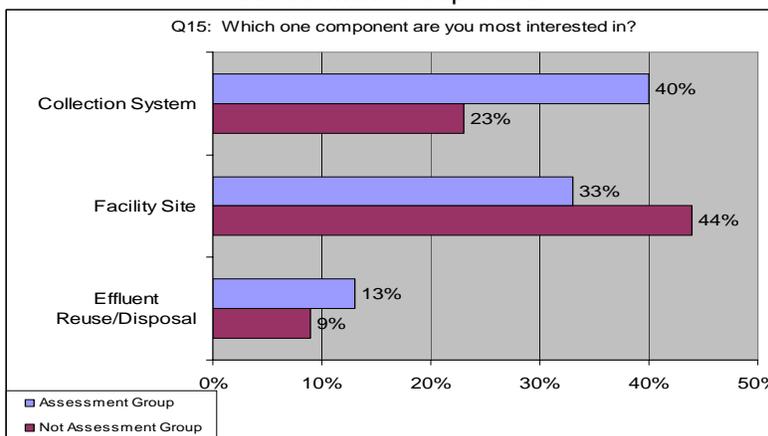
Respondents were then asked to indicate which ONE component they are most concerned about (Table 12). The results to this question reinforce the finding that respondents are much more concerned about the Project’s collection system and treatment location than they are about other components. Nearly 40% of respondents chose either the Project’s collection system or its location as the single component they are most concerned about. The remaining respondents—about a quarter of the sample—were divided. Eleven percent and 10%, respectively, said they are most concerned about the Project’s treatment technology or effluent reuse and disposal. Only 4% are most concerned about issues related to the Project’s treatment and disposal of solids.

Table 12: One Component Most Concerned About



When results for each the two assessment groups are considered separately, some distinct differences emerge. Those in the Assessment Group are much more concerned about the Project’s collection system while those in the Not Assessment Group are more concerned about the Project’s treatment location (Table 13). The Not Assessment Group shows more interest in effluent reuse and disposal than does the Assessment Group.

Table 13: One Component Most Concerned About by Assessment Group Status



Note: There were virtually no differences in attitudes toward treatment technologies and solids treatment between the two groups so those percentages are not included in the table above.

Clearly, respondents in both groups want decision makers to focus their discussions and debates more on the Project’s collection system and treatment location and less on other components. While decisions regarding these other components are not unimportant to respondents, they are just less important than decisions regarding the Project’s collection system and its treatment location.

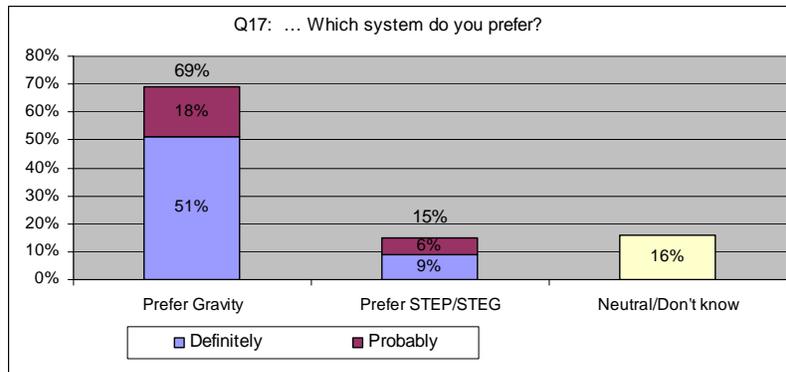
Section 3: Specific Attitudes about Collection System

Without a doubt, the Project's collection system is a hot topic especially among respondents in the Assessment Group. A key focus of the survey was to ascertain respondents' preference between a gravity system and a STEP/STEG system, the two systems determined by prior studies to be viable for the Los Osos community. In the questionnaire, respondents were provided with the following information and asked to indicate which system they preferred:

"Two different collection systems are being considered: 'hybrid' gravity system and a STEP/STEG system. The Project team has found both options to be technically viable for Los Osos. A Project peer review by the National Water Research Institute also found the two systems are 'functionally equivalent.' However, the Draft EIR has determined that a gravity system has slightly less environmental impacts than STEP/STEG. A gravity system will also be less disruptive to individual properties and have less initial out of pocket costs for property owners, because it does not require the installation of new septic tanks in front yards, nor upgrading of your electrical panels. A STEP/STEG system might result in a lower overall project cost for property owners and residents but that is uncertain, especially considering the time required to design a new collection system and that further delays could jeopardize grant funding. Which system do you prefer?"

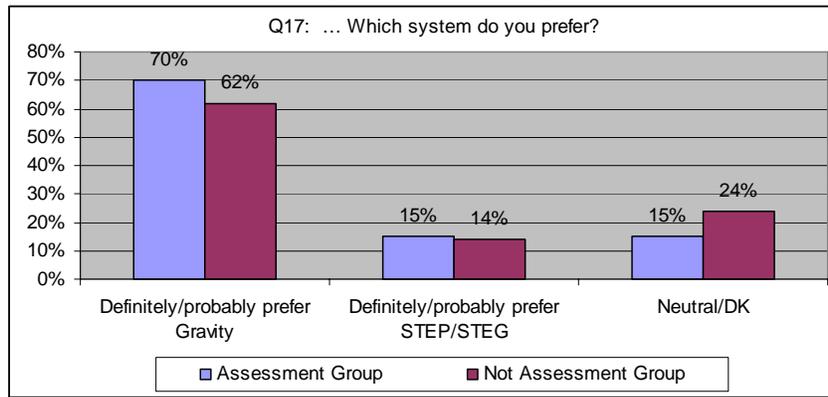
Table 14 below indicates that significantly more Los Osos property owners/residents support plans to construct a facility which utilizes a gravity collection system than support plans for a STEP/STEG system. More than half of all respondents said they 'definitely prefer' a gravity system while another 18% say they 'probably prefer' a gravity system. Therefore, more than two-thirds of all owners/residents want a gravity system. By contrast, only 15% 'definitely' or 'probably prefer' a STEP/STEG system. Another way to look at this is to say that five times as many people are definitely committed to a gravity system as are committed to a STEP/STEG system (i.e., 51% versus 9%). This is a clear mandate for decision makers to move forward with plans for a gravity-based system.

Table 14: Collection System Preferred



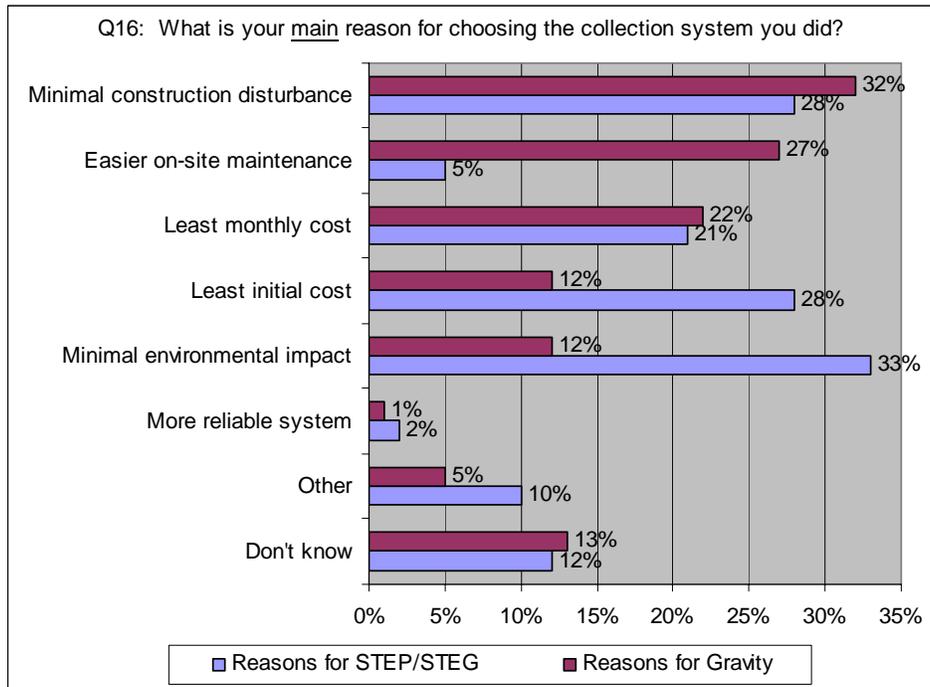
When results from the Not Assessment Group are separated from the Assessment Group, we see that members of the Not Assessment Group are less inclined to support a gravity system than are members of the Assessment Group but at the same time are equally inclined to support a STEP/STEG system (Table 15).

Table 15: Collection System Preferred by Assessment Group



As a follow up question, respondents were asked to specify their main reason for choosing the system they did. Those who chose gravity did so because they believe such a system will provide 'minimal construction disturbance,' provide 'easier on-site maintenance' and be the least costly each month (Table 16). By contrast, those who chose a STEP/STEG system did so because they believe such a system will provide 'minimal environmental impact,' despite information that a gravity system is slightly superior to a STEP/STEG system on this issue. Other reasons for choosing a STEP/STEG system include 'minimal construction disturbance' and 'least initial cost.'

Table 16: Reason for Preferring Gravity or STEP/STEG System



Note: Despite instructions to indicate one reason, many respondents gave more than one reason for choosing the system they did. Thus, total percentages add to more than 100%.

So what types of people prefer each type of system? And what types of people remain neutral on this issue? Supporters of the two systems come from all situations and circumstances and both groups are dominated by people whose Los Osos properties are their primary homes. However, there are a few slight differences. Compared to the STEP/STEG support group, the gravity support group includes more landlords (own a home in Los Osos that is not their primary residence) and vacant lot owners, and more people with higher household incomes. Renters and people who expect to apply for financial aid make up a greater share of the STEP/STEG group than they do of the gravity group. STEP/STEG supporters also are more likely to describe themselves as ‘very informed’ and as having ‘very strong opinions.’ The two groups are similar in their tenure in the community and their ages. People who are neutral on the topic are much more likely to be renters, to live outside the Prohibition Zone and to have lived in the community for a shorter period of time.

To test the strength of people’s commitments to a gravity or STEP/STEG system if a STEP/STEG system is proven to provide some cost savings, respondents were asked one additional question. This question attempted to address the situation that a STEP/STEG system

might provide some costs savings and posed various cost savings scenarios—from \$50 a month down to \$10 a month. Nearly half of all respondents (46% of all respondents and 48% of the Assessment Group) say they are not interested in a STEP/STEG system at any cost savings (Tables 17 and 18 below). By contrast, only 10% of all respondents as well as Assessment Group respondents and 11% of the Not Assessment Group say they are fully committed to a STEP/STEG system under any circumstance, cost savings or not.

Twenty five percent of all respondents and 26% of Assessment Group respondents would be interested in a STEP/STEG system if such a system could save them money each month. However, the savings would have to be at least \$50 a month to interest 18% of respondents (19% of the Assessment Group). Five percent would be interested at a \$30 a month savings. Only two percent would be interested at a \$10 a month savings. Therefore, at best, a STEP/STEG system would be the system of choice for 35% of all respondents (36% of the Assessment Group) IF such a system could save property owners at least \$50 a month. Even under this unlikely situation, support for a STEP/STEG system is less than support for a gravity system.

Table 17: System Preference Given Various STEP/STEG Cost Savings

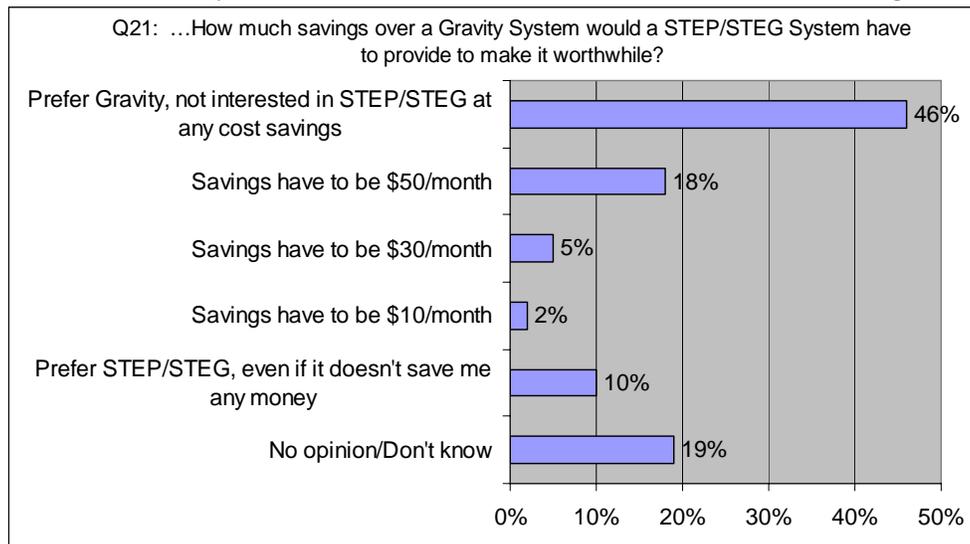
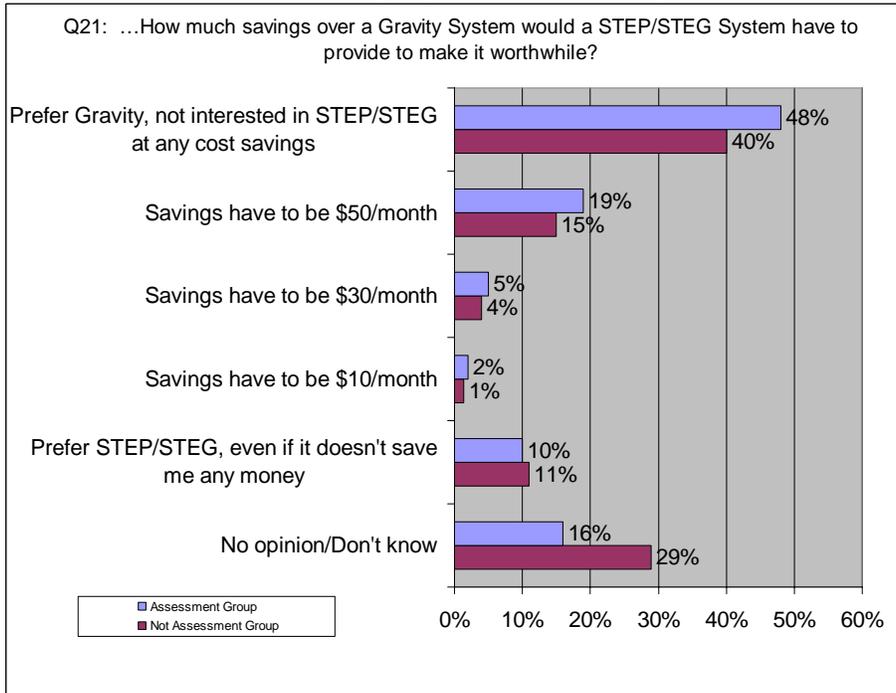


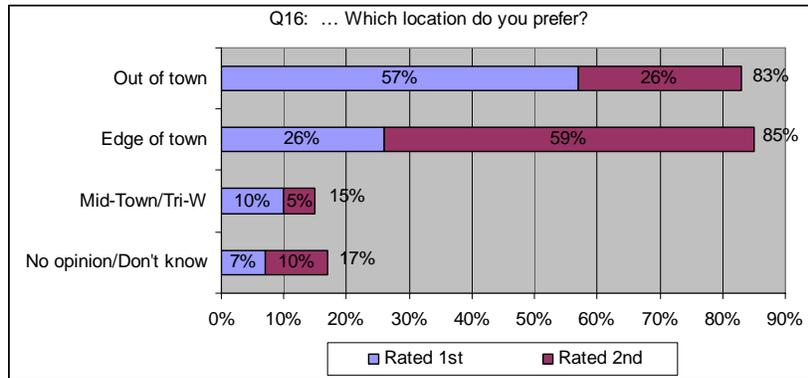
Table 18: System Preference Given Various STEP/STEG Cost Savings by Assessment Group



Sections 4: Specific Attitudes about Treatment Facility Site

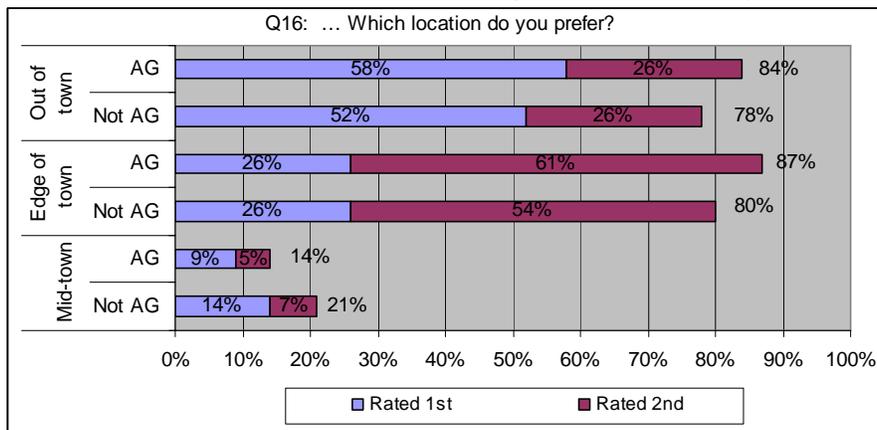
Respondents were asked their opinions about three different proposed sites for the facility. Specifically, they were asked to indicate their first and second choices from among three proposed treatment locations. Table 19 below shows the results. The out of town location—Turri Road area, Tonini property—is clearly the preferred choice of the majority. More than twice as many people chose that location as their first choice than chose the edge of town location, which received the second highest number of ‘first choice’ votes. Only 15% of respondents chose the mid-town location as either their first or second choice. Only 15% of respondents chose the mid-town location as either their first or second choice.

Table 19: Location Preferences



Assessment Group members are slightly more likely to choose the out of town or edge of town treatment location (Table 20). By contrast, Not Assessment Group respondents show more interest in the mid-town location than do the Assessment Group respondents.

Table 20: Location Preference by Assessment Group



Note: AG = Assessment Group and Not AG = Not Assessment Group.

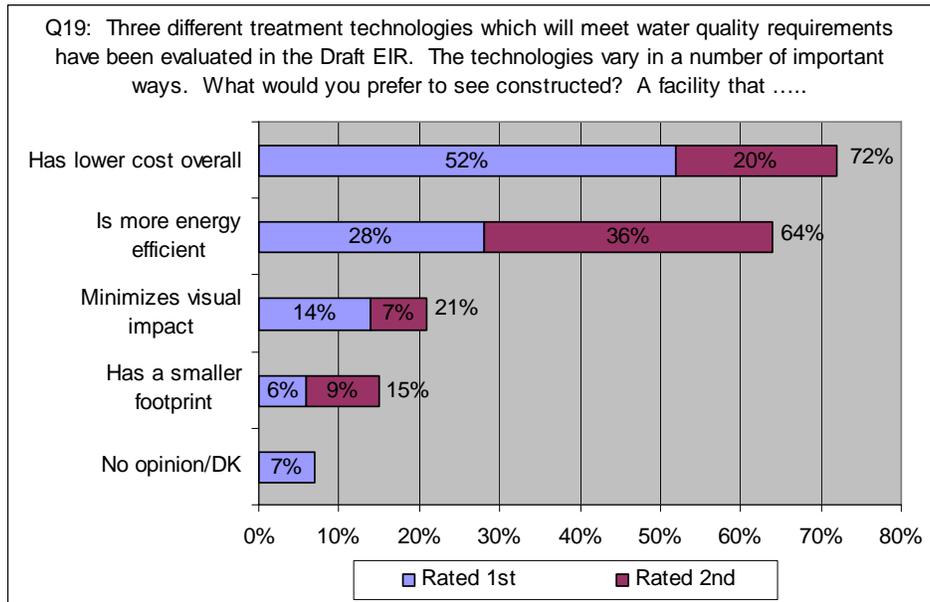
Generally speaking, all demographic and interest groups chose the out of town treatment location over the other two locations except STEP/STEG supporters. Fifty-four percent of STEP/STEG supporters chose the edge of town location. This compares to only 21% of gravity supporters. This is a significant difference. Attitudes also vary among people with properties in the Prohibition Zone and outside the Prohibition Zone. People outside the Prohibition Zone were much more likely than people in the Prohibition Zone to choose the mid-town location as their location of choice (23% versus 9% among Prohibition Zone respondents).

Section 5: Attitudes about Other Components

Respondents were asked two other questions about Project components. The first of these questions had to do with treatment technologies in general and asked respondents to indicate their first and second choices among four options. Results are shown in Table 21 below.

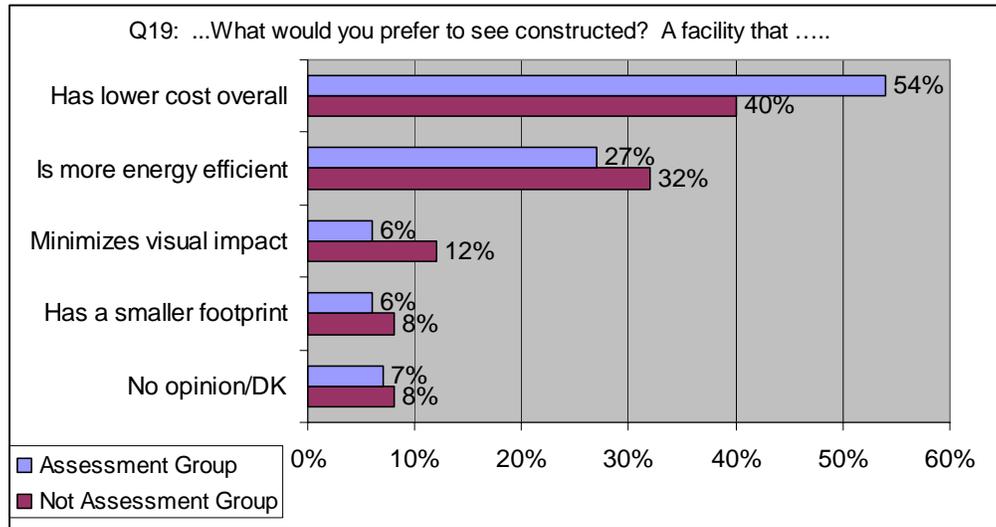
Regarding treatment technologies in general, respondents again demonstrated interest in keeping costs low. Over half of respondents chose 'has lower cost overall' as their first choice. The attribute receiving the next highest number of first choice votes is 'is more energy efficient' (28%). Respondents showed less interest in a facility that minimizes visual impact and has a smaller footprint.

Table 21: Ratings of Treatment Technologies



When the Assessment Group is separated from the Not Assessment Group, we see some clear differences (Table 22). The Assessment Group is much more interested in keeping costs low while the Not Assessment Group is more interested than its counterpart in energy efficiency, visual impact and size of the facility's footprint.

Table 22: Ratings of Treatment Technologies by Assessment Group



The second treatment question respondents were asked had to do with the treatment and disposal of solids. Included in the questionnaire was this information:

“Another important component of the system is the treatment and disposal of solids, also called sludge. One option is to haul sludge to a location outside of the community where it will be treated and sold by a third party as compost or otherwise disposed of. A second option is to produce compost at the Los Osos facility for use in the community as compost. Composting at the facility will be more expensive than hauling it away. Which do you prefer?”

Nearly half of respondents (Total Sample and Assessment Group alike) chose hauling, the least expensive treatment method, over composting (Table 23). A third (31%) is interested in composting despite its higher price tag. A significant number of respondents indicated they don't know or have an opinion on this issue at this point. Composting is a much more popular idea among STEP/STEG supporters. Fifty-five percent of this group chose composting over hauling compared to only 29% of gravity supporters. Composting is also more attractive to people in the Not Assessment Group than to people in the Assessment Group (Table 24).

Table 23: Preferences for Treatment and Disposing of Solids

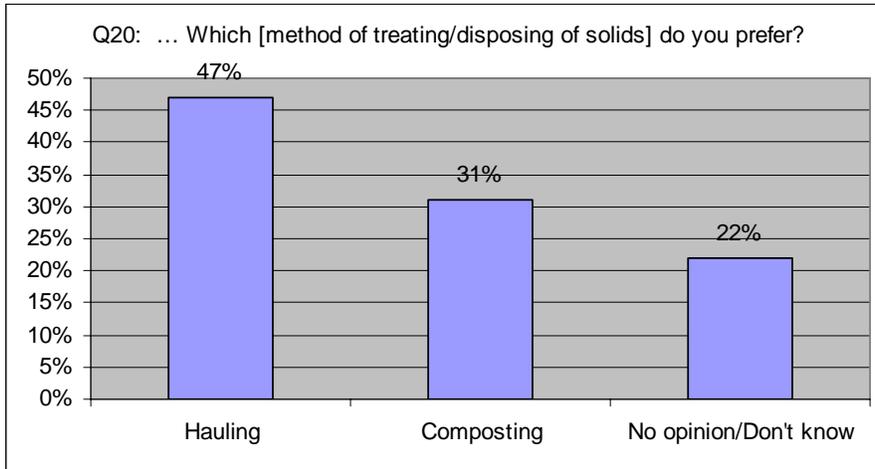
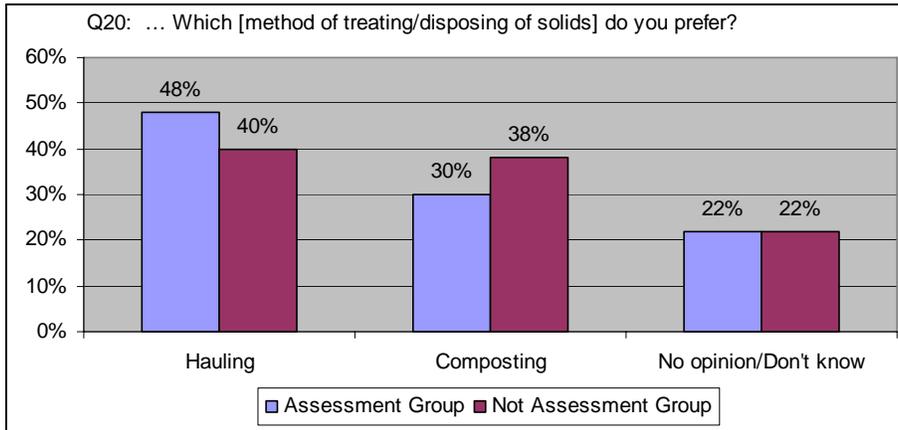


Table 24: Preferences for Treatment and Disposing of Solids

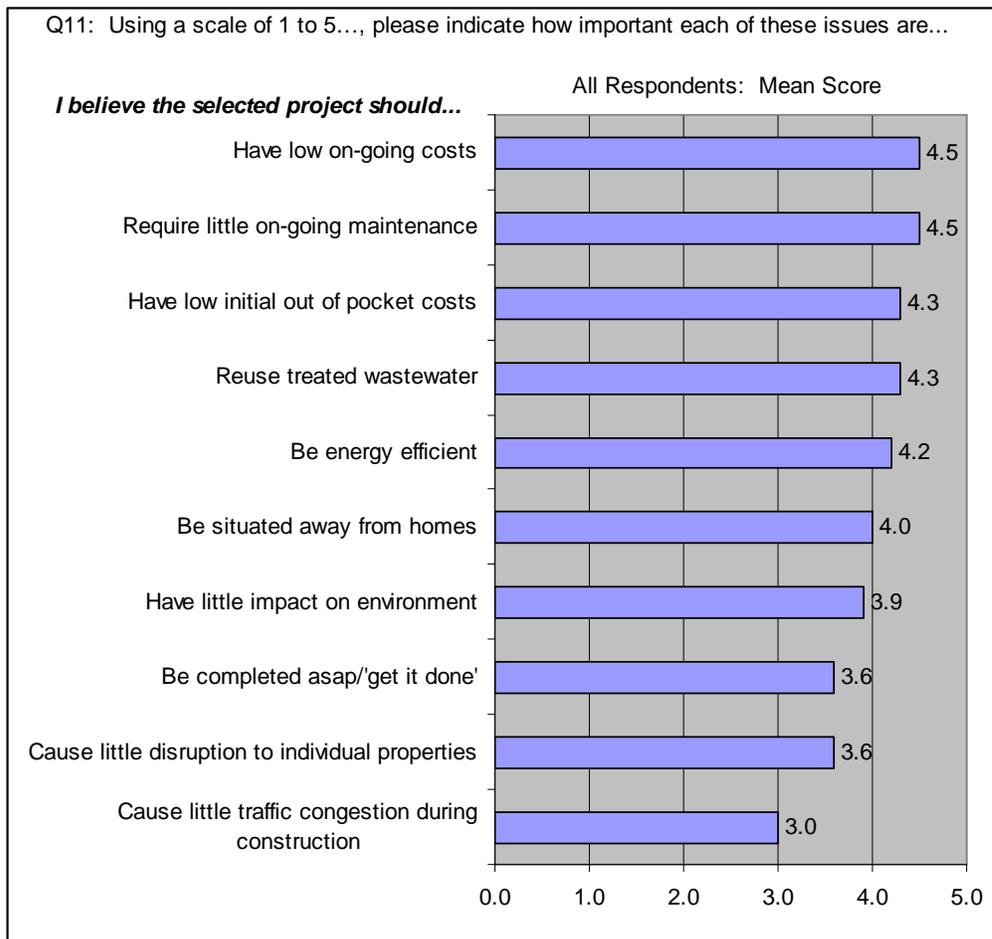


Section 6: General Concerns about Project

What issues do respondents think are most important with respect to the Project's final design? To answer this question, respondents were asked to indicate the importance of various issues on a five-point scale with '5' being 'extremely important.' All issues received a mean score rating of at least 3.0 indicating that all issues listed on the questionnaire are important in respondents' minds. Some issues, however, are more important than others.

'Have low on-going costs' and 'require little on-going maintenance' were consistently rated higher than other issues (Table 25). On the five-point scale, these two issues received a mean score of 4.5. 'Have low initial out of pocket costs' and 'reuse treated wastewater' also ranked high. 'Cause little traffic congestion during construction' is considered less important than other issues.

Table 25: Issues



Respondents were then asked to indicate the issue they think is MOST important followed by the issues they think are second and third most important. Interestingly, the issue ranked most important by the largest share of respondents is ‘be completed as soon as possible/’get it done.’” See Table 26 below. People in both groups—the Assessment Group and the Not Assessment Group—chose this issue more often than all other issues as their ‘top/first’ choice. Another issue which received a lot of attention among the Assessment Group is ‘have low initial out of pocket costs.’ Among the Not Assessment Group, the issue ‘be situated away from homes’ was very important.

Table 27 below shows the total number of times each issue was mentioned as first, second and third most important by members of each of the two assessment groups. Results in this table underscore the fact that members of the Assessment Group give greater priority to issues related to cost and long term maintenance than do members of the Not Assessment Group. Issues like ‘reusing treated wastewater,’ ‘being energy efficient’ and having little impact on the environment’ enjoy a higher priority among the Not Assessment Group than they do among the Assessment Group. The criteria ‘be situated away from homes’ is also more important to Not Assessment Group respondents than to the Assessment Group. Neither group is very concerned about choosing a project that causes little disruption during construction either to the town as a whole or to individual properties.

Table 26: % of Assessment Groups Ranking Each Issue as Most Important

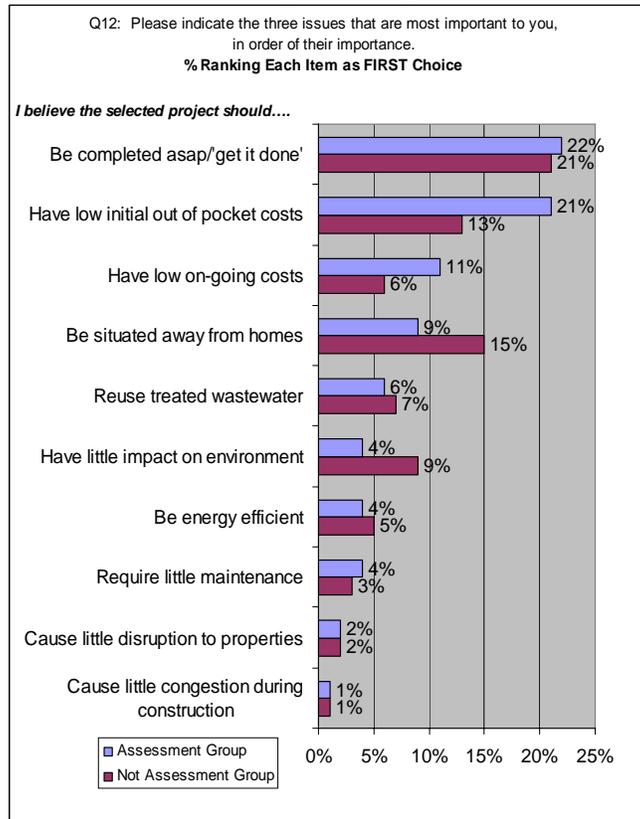
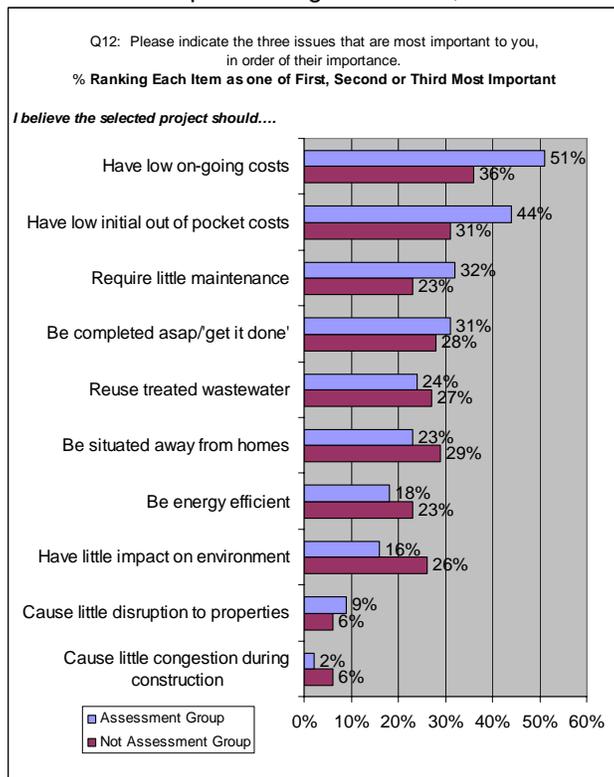


Table 27: % of Assessment Groups Ranking Issue First, Second or Third Most Important



To summarize then, the issues respondents deem most important in the final project description are:

- Low costs (on-going costs being slightly more important than initial costs),
- Getting the project done as soon as possible, and
- Minimum on-going maintenance.

Less important features are:

- Reuse treated wastewater,
- Be situated away from homes,
- Be energy efficient, and
- Have little impact on the environment.

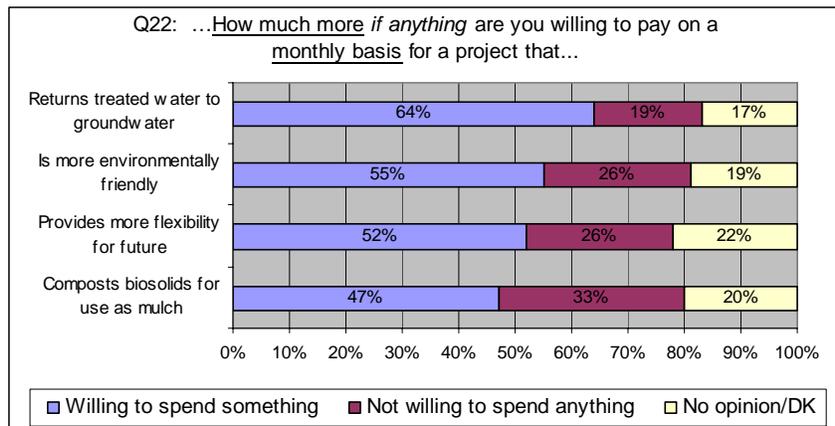
Section 7: Interest in Additional Features at Various Costs

To determine owners' and residents' willingness to pay additional fees for project enhancements, respondents were presented with four add-on ideas and asked to indicate how willing they are, if at all, to pay various dollar amounts (less than \$5 to more than \$10) for each of the four ideas.

Three of the four ideas were endorsed by more than half of the respondents (see Table 28 below). However, only one idea—return treated water to groundwater for irrigation—received support from a significant majority. Sixty four percent or almost two thirds of respondents indicated willingness to spend extra money for a treatment facility that allows reuse of treated water. This finding is consistent with other research completed by Opinion Studies which indicates a heightened interest in water conservation among San Luis Obispo County residents.

Building a project which is environmentally friendly ranked behind one that reclaims water and just ahead of one that is designed to incorporate future upgrades. As seen in a previously reported question, composting is attractive to some respondents but not to a majority. Less than half are willing to pay extra for composting.

Table 28: Inclination to Spend More on Enhancements



Respondents also indicated a willingness to spend more for the capability of utilizing treated water than they are for other enhancements (see Table 29 below). The Assessment Group members indicated a willingness to spend an average of \$5.75 a month more for a facility

that has the capability of reclaiming water but only \$4.90 for one that is environmentally friendly, \$4.30 for one that provides for future upgrades and \$3.75 for one that composts.

Table 29: Mean Value of Additional Monthly Costs Willing to Pay

PROJECT ENHANCEMENT IDEAS	Monthly Additional Cost Willing to Pay* Mean	
	Assessment Group	Not Assessment Group
Returns reclaimed treated water to groundwater for use for irrigation	\$5.75	\$6.33
Is more environmentally friendly / incorporates "green" or "sustainable" technologies	\$4.90	\$5.57
Provides more flexibility for future upgrades	\$4.30	\$4.93
Composts and recycles biosolids for use as mulch and fertilizer	\$3.75	\$4.50

* Mean calculations are based on people who said 'nothing' as well as those who indicated a cost.

The two assessment groups were similar in their responses to this question except that the Not Assessment Group was consistently more willing to spend extra and to spend more for each enhancement. While the Assessment Group indicated willingness to spend between \$3.75 and \$5.75 on the tested enhancements, the Not Assessment Group indicated a willingness to spend \$4.50 to \$6.33.

Section 8: Thematic Issues Revealed in Verbal Comments

At two points in the questionnaire form, respondents were given opportunity to provide comments about other issues they want decision makers to consider when making final decisions about the facility. More than 2,000 of the 2,699 completed forms contained written comments. Some 140 people wrote letters or sent in other documents to explain their positions.

Several important themes emerge from these comments. These themes along with sample comments are described below.

Theme: Keep costs low; make project affordable.

“Decision makers must keep in mind that there are many retired seniors on fixed incomes in this community who cannot afford life changing increases in monthly expense!”

“The costs of this project will be too much for us to afford. We can barely afford our usual utilities, property taxes, mortgage payments, etc. The project will destroy many lives and force out many people!”

“Make it cheap. Make it fast. Make it work correctly the first time.”

“Low income seniors don't want to lose their homes or apartments.”

“If the project is not affordable, I think you will see an increase of homes fall into foreclosure. If the monthly cost is too great many home owners will face the choice of not being able to pay for medical insurance, medicine or food for their families.”

“All of Los Osos should pay for this! It will be much more equitable and FAIR with a community wide sewer system. All of Los Osos and Baywood Park will benefit from this system.”

“Other areas pay much less for a sewer. Our little area must be the most expensive in the nation. Where is this kind of additional money going to come from?”

“We would like to see as much as possible of the original Montgomery, Watson & Harza design used. This designed project was excellent and ready to go, and will save costs.”

“The cost of flushing one's toilet should not force one to re-locate. Homes outside the PZ should participate in the cost....they will benefit also.”

“Keeping it local will help to keep the cost down. Compared to transporting it outside our city.”

Theme: Get federal funding, secure stimulus dollars.

“PLEASE explore and pursue federal aid.”

"This project is a perfect candidate for funds from the Fed Stimulus package. Please work diligently toward obtaining these for us. There is no way we can afford \$200+ a month. We will lose everything!"

Theme: Get it done as soon as possible; make a decision and move forward.

"Please have our system running before the state condemns our properties."

"This project should have been done 20 years ago."

"Avoid all options that involve additional studies and analyses. GET IT DONE! Thank you county for your thoughtful work on this project!"

"Start this project as soon as possible. I bought my property in 2001. I was asked to pay about \$3,000 and paid it, and hoped we get a sewer soon. Nothing has happened yet."

"Just build it! I trust the county realizes that most of Los Osos will struggle to make ends meet but it only gets more expensive. I just want it done without my yard getting shredded."

"Thank you for asking these questions. We are so fed up with the bickering and delays. Build it – build it right – build it now!"

"Please just get it done. This town has deteriorated because no money goes to daily infrastructure. I do not let my kids go to the park any more because drugs and crime are in use."

Theme: Don't be influenced by negative minority.

"Ignore the nit-pickers, the lawsuits and the extreme activists who will never compromise and are very vocal but a very, very small minority."

"We would like to get this gravity system up and running ASAP. DO NOT let the obstructionists cost us even more money. DO NOT let the trouble makers hurt us more than they already have."

"This is 20 - 30 years overdue due to idiots with too much time on their hands. They should volunteer for Red Cross or something constructive."

"Don't let the anti-sewer idiots sue to stop it !!!!!"

Theme: Prefer a gravity system.

"Selected project should be the choice that qualifies for the most potential of federal and state funding. My understanding is that the gravity system has the greatest likelihood of such funding."

"I see no reason to make the treatment plant progressive/different/or more eco friendly. It should just be similar to whatever 90% of Americans use. It should be expandable."

"We strongly support the gravity collection system. We do not, under any circumstances, want a STEP/STEG system on our properties."

"Please, please, please build a tried and tested gravity system. A step system will cost me thousands of dollars more. Please don't do this to us!"

“Gravity system, no STEP/STEG system. Let’s have a proper sewer if we’re going to do it. The impact of a STEP/STEG over time is too high a price to pay to save a few bucks up front.”

“I want a gravity system and conventional treatment as low a cost as possible and as sustainable as possible.”

“We want a real sewer system!”

Theme: Prefer a STEP/STEG system.

“Please have a STEP proposal looked at in the consideration process. Thank you.”

“This survey is totally biased in favor of a hybrid gravity collection system. Include STEP/STEG in design/build proposals. Include guaranteed maximum price, full lifecycle costs for both collection systems.”

“Think new technologies; not old, failed ones. Give us something to be proud of. Don’t make us the community that gets laughed at.”

“Los Osos has a unique opportunity to design and build a wastewater treatment facility that makes sense economically and environmentally. Please consider a STEP/STEG option as I believe this will benefit our town and community best in the future.”

“Gravity has major problems with leaks. STEP bacteria eliminate a large % of solids. Tonini is outside of the aquifer, spray fields waste water.”

Theme: Concerned about a STEP/STEG system.

“The STEP/STEG is really designed for rural areas (see photo on page 4 of enclosed-tells all). Putting those septic tanks on the small lots in Los Osos is just not feasible. What a mess that will be! It will destroy the yards!”

“All of the STEP septic tank effluent pumps trying to all start after a power outage. The in rush current would be tremendous and a design problem. We have a lot of power outages.”

“Requiring every home owner to maintain the tank on his/her front yard would be a nightmare! If the tank were to be put out in the street and maintained by the CSD, well then fine!”

“STEP cost more to property owners for their on-site costs. No effective cost savings.”

“Based on the county footprint for the STEP option, we would have no way to position the unit on our property without major reconstruction and costs. STEP does not work for us.”

“No STEP/STEG system! 75% of my property and landscape would be trashed—economically it would be non-recoverable at today’s cost to return to original state of landscape on top of maintenance fees!”

Theme: Appreciate county’s efforts.

“We appreciate the county’s effort on this difficult project, for a difficult community. We are concerned that too many unqualified people for the Los Osos public are having too much to say on technical issues.”

"Thank you for navigating us through this nightmare."

"The county has the best judgment and NOT all these special interest groups."

"I am sorry you guys had this dumped on you. I am ashamed of Los Osos' inability to do this years ago."

"Thank you. Please keep doing what is best for the community, not what is politically correct."

"Keep moving forward with the facts despite a few loud objections. Keep moving forward and thanks for asking!"

Theme: Critical of county's efforts/survey.

"Question re finances are biased and are designed to make County's unaffordable "preferred" gravity system appear to meet Federal affordability standards."

"This survey is very jaded against STEP/STEG. There are no dollar amounts to compare the two, nothing in here about Indian Burial grounds. Nothing about up to date technologies. Not enough time to research questions. Plus you spent too much \$\$ on brochures."

Theme: Don't need sewer; delay until economy is better; like system in place now.

"In this economy, why are we starting a sewer project? We do not believe the water situation is that bad. It should be put on hold until the economy is better even if it takes seven to ten years."

"When attending the first meeting at Los Osos Middle School we were told there would be 100's of blue babies if we didn't get a sewer. How many have there been? Morro Bay has a sewer system and they still have nitrates in water. What happens if this "out of the world" project fails to eliminate nitrates? Can we sue to get our money back?"

Theme: Oppose mid-town location, prefer one location over others.

"No mid-town project please. Our children use the library, park and church and needn't be exposed to the toxins that are bound to be emitted. Also, hauling is potentially dangerous and very short sighted way of disposing solids. Please compost."

"Do not under any conceivable circumstances consider the mid-town Tri-W site to be an acceptable facility site for the people of Los Osos or Baywood Park. It is not!"

"We do not want the treatment facility in town. If you select Tri-W we are in for more litigation and social turmoil. Please respect our wishes."

Theme: Consider other technologies.

"Please consider modern system. Build similar to Santa Cruz project."

"We must return all reclaimed water to the groundwater to maximize our supply of potable water and prevent saltwater intrusion."

CONCLUSIONS

More than 3,000 people participated in this mail-in survey (312 of the 2,699 questionnaires were completed by more than one person). This represents a very large portion of the residents and property owners associated with Los Osos. While a mail-in survey is not a random or scientifically drawn sample, this level of participation in relationship to the population of the area certainly suggests that the data reported here is an accurate representation and measure of community sentiment.

Based on input from this survey, we conclude the following:

- Community members are much more interested in a project description that incorporates a gravity collection system than in a STEP/STEG system, even if a STEP/STEG system provides some savings.
- Community members want the treatment location site to be out of town but are also willing to support plans for a site at the edge of town.
- Community members are not nearly as concerned about other components such as effluent reuse and disposal or solids treatment and disposal. When pressed, they indicate a preference to haul rather than compost solids and to choose energy efficiency over a smaller footprint or minimizing visual impact. They also indicate some willingness to pay a little extra to reclaim treated water for use for irrigation.
- Above all else, community members are interested in a Project that is affordable, one that has low on-going costs as well as one that has low initial costs. They are also interested in a Project that requires minimal on-going maintenance. Generally speaking, the majority of community members want a ‘no-frills’ project, one that is reliable and operates efficiently and effectively but does not provide for a lot of extras. To help offset costs, community members are very interested in pursuing federal stimulus dollars.
- Along with keeping costs low, community members rank getting the project done as soon as possible as a top priority. Among other issues, they are concerned that further delays will only serve to increase final costs.

APPENDIX

Note: The following two items will be posted separately on Monday, 3/30.

SURVEY COVER LETTER

QUESTIONNAIRE



SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Paavo Ogren, Director

County Government Center, Room 207 • San Luis Obispo CA 93408 • (805) 781-5252

Fax (805) 781-1229

mail address: pwd@co.slo.ca.us

February 17, 2009

SUBJECT: Community Advisory Survey

Dear Los Osos Property Owner or Resident/Business Owner:

This Community Advisory Survey is part of the County's on-going efforts to develop a Wastewater Project for the community of Los Osos. The survey's purpose is to gather information about preferences you may have regarding the Project's building site, collection system and other important components. The survey also asks you to indicate the relative importance of various issues such as costs and future upgrades. County supervisors and other decision makers will use this information along with other information such as the Draft Environmental Report to guide them as they make final decisions regarding the Project.

Your input is essential! Even if you don't have strong opinions about the project or don't feel very informed, we want to hear from you. Please take 10 to 30 minutes or so to complete the enclosed survey questionnaire. If you don't have strong opinions about the entire project and/or do not wish to complete the entire survey, you can indicate that in Question #10. Your answers to the survey's remaining questions will be recorded as 'no opinion.'

The survey includes four sections.

- **Section 1** asks for information about you and the sources of information you may or may not have used to learn about Project options.
- **Section 2** asks you to indicate the relative importance of various issues related to the Project in general.
- **Section 3** asks you to indicate your specific preferences about the Project's location and technology.
- **Section 4** asks some important questions about costs.
- **Section 5** provides space for you to tell us in your own words anything else you think decision makers should know.

The enclosed Project Status Report includes current information that you may want to reference as you complete this questionnaire. For more information, please visit the Project website www.slocounty.ca.gov/PW/LOWWP or call County staff at (805) 781-5279.

Using the postage paid return envelope enclosed, **please mail your completed survey by February 27, 2009** to Opinion Studies, a local research company contracted by the County to tabulate and analyze survey responses. Please be assured that your answers are anonymous and cannot be associated in anyway with your name or property address.

Sincerely,

PAAVO OGREN
Director of Public Works

Enclosure

INSTRUCTIONS:

Use dark BLUE or BLACK pen
Mark checkboxes clearly, like this:



SECTION 1
This section concerns you, your Los Osos property and your information sources about the Wastewater Project

1. Please tell us about your Los Osos property(ies). Is it a private residence or commercial property? Do you own or rent the property? If you are associated with more than one property, please indicate that and check all that apply.

- Private residence:**
- Renter
 - Owner: property is my primary residence
 - Owner: property is not my primary residence
 - Owner: vacant lot
- Commercial property:**
- Renter
 - Owner: existing building
 - Owner: vacant lot

of properties: One Two or more

2. How long have you owned or rented this property?

- Less than 2 years
- 2 to less than 5 years
- 5 years to less than 10 years
- 10 years to less than 15 years
- 15 years to less than 20 years
- 20 years or more
- Decline to state

3. Was this questionnaire completed by one person or more than one person?

- One person
- More than one person
- Decline to state

4. How old is the person/are the people who completed this questionnaire? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

- Under 24 55 to 64
- 25 to 34 65 to 74
- 35 to 44 75 and over
- 45 to 54 Decline to state

!!! IF YOUR PROPERTY IS COMMERCIAL, PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 7 DIRECTLY !!!

5. PRIVATE RESIDENCE OWNERS ONLY

Please indicate the household's total annual income.

- Less than \$25,000 \$75,000 and over
- \$25,000 - \$49,999 Decline to state
- \$50,000 - \$74,999

6. PRIVATE RESIDENCES OWNERS ONLY

Do you plan to apply for financial assistance if a financial aid program can be developed to assist low or fixed income households with costs associated with the construction of the Wastewater Project?

- Yes, definitely No, probably not
- Yes, probably No, definitely
- Decline to state

7. What are your sources of information about the Project? Please check all the sources you used over the last few years to help you understand the County's plans for the Project. Then check the one or two sources you found most helpful.

Sources Used	Most Helpful (check 1 or 2)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Board of Supervisor's Meetings
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	LOCS D Board Meetings
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	LOCS D Board Meetings Technical Advisory Committee Meetings: in person or viewed on Channel 20
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	County Brochures and Direct Mailings
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Newspaper
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neighbors, friends, family members
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Project's WEBSITE: www.slocounty.ca.gov/PW/LOWWPDraft
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	EIR Report, dated November 2008
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Enclosed Project Status Report
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	None, have not referred to any sources of information
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Decline to state
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify): _____

8. How informed do you feel about the issues related to the construction of a Wastewater Project for Los Osos?

- Very informed Somewhat informed A little informed Not at all informed Decline to state

9. How would you describe your opinions about the Los Osos Wastewater Project?

- Very strong Somewhat strong A little strong Not at all strong Decline to state

10. IF YOU DO NOT HAVE OPINIONS ABOUT THE PROJECT OR DON'T FEEL INFORMED AND WOULD PREFER NOT TO ANSWER ALL OR ANY OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS, PLEASE FEEL FREE TO INDICATE THAT BELOW. Your responses will be recorded as 'no opinion' on any question you do not answer.

- I/we do not have opinions about the Wastewater Project or do not feel informed enough to answer these questions. Please record my/our responses as 'no opinion' for the remaining questions.
- I/we do have opinions about the Wastewater Project. Please record my/our specific responses as indicated below.

SECTION 2
This section concerns your opinions about the Wastewater Project in general.

11. Using a scale of "1" to "5", using checkboxes, please indicate how important each of these issues are when you think about options for the Project.

I believe that the selected project should ...	Not at all important		Somewhat important		Extremely important		No Opinion	Don't know
	1	2	3	4	5			
<input type="checkbox"/> ...Be completed as soon as possible—"just get it done"	<input type="checkbox"/>							
<input type="checkbox"/> ...Be energy efficient	<input type="checkbox"/>							
<input type="checkbox"/> ...Cause little traffic congestion and disruption throughout town during construction	<input type="checkbox"/>							
<input type="checkbox"/> ...Cause minimal disruption to your property during construction	<input type="checkbox"/>							
<input type="checkbox"/> ...Have minimal impact on the environment	<input type="checkbox"/>							
<input type="checkbox"/> ...Have relatively low initial out of pocket costs for owners	<input type="checkbox"/>							
<input type="checkbox"/> ...Have relatively low on-going costs for owners	<input type="checkbox"/>							
<input type="checkbox"/> ...Require minimal on-going maintenance by owner/renter	<input type="checkbox"/>							
<input type="checkbox"/> ...Reuse treated wastewater to benefit community's water supply	<input type="checkbox"/>							
<input type="checkbox"/> ...Situate facility and other components away from residential areas	<input type="checkbox"/>							

12. Thinking again about issues in Question 11 above, please indicate the three (3) issues that are the MOST important to you, in order of their importance. Please, write 1, 2, and 3 in a box adjacent to the issue you would like to rate. For example, if "Be energy efficient" is most important to you, then mark it as following: 1 Similarly, mark your second choice as 2 and 3rd choice as 3

13. What other issues, if any, do you want decision makers to think about when making final decisions regarding the project?

- None, no other issues

SECTION 3

This section concerns your opinions about specific components in the Wastewater Project. For more information, see the TAC Pro/Con Summary on pages 14 and 15 in the Project Status Report.

14. A lot of decisions have to be made about the Project's components before the Project can be constructed. Some people have strong feelings about where the facility should be located while others are more concerned about what collection system should be used. And still others have no opinion or don't care about which options decision makers select in the end. Please tell us how concerned you are about each of these components.

COMPONENTS	Not at all concerned	Somewhat concerned	Very Concerned	No Opinion	Don't know	Most Concerned
Collection System	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Effluent Reuse/Disposal	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Facility Site	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Solids Treatment/Disposal	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Treatment Technology	<input type="checkbox"/>					

15. Which one component are you most concerned about? (SELECT ONLY ONE)

The next few questions concern options for different locations and types of technology which have been determined to be viable for the Wastewater Project.

16. Three different locations for the treatment facility have been considered. Which of the following sites do you prefer? Please indicate your first and second choices. Please refer to map on page 11 of Project Status Report.

PROPOSED SITES	FIRST CHOICE (check one only)	SECOND CHOICE (check one only)
Mid-Town: a.k.a. Tri-W site	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Edge of town: Giacomazzi, Branin, cemetery properties	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Out of town: Turri Road area, Tonini property	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No opinion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

17. Two different collection systems are being considered: a "hybrid" gravity system and a STEP/STEG system. The Project team has evaluated gravity and STEP/STEG collection systems and found each option to be technically viable for Los Osos. A Project peer review by the National Water Research Institute also found that the two systems are "functionally equivalent." However, the Draft EIR has determined that a gravity system has some environmental benefits over STEP/STEG. In addition, a gravity system will be less disruptive to individual properties and have less initial out of pocket costs for property owners, because it does not require the installation of new septic tanks in front yards, nor upgrading of your electrical panels. A STEP/STEG system might result in a lower overall project cost for property owners and residents but that is uncertain, especially considering the time required to design a new collection system and that further delays could jeopardize grant funding. Which system do you prefer?

- Definitely Gravity Definitely STEP/STEG Neutral, no opinion: SKIP TO Question 19
 Probably Gravity Probably STEP/STEG Don't know: SKIP TO Question 19

18. What is your main reason for choosing the collection system you did?

- Easier on-site maintenance Least initial cost Least monthly cost Minimal construction disturbance
 Minimal environmental impact More reliable system Don't know Other: _____

19. Three different treatment technologies which will meet water quality requirements have been evaluated in the Draft EIR. The technologies vary in a number of important ways. What would you prefer to see constructed? Just like before, write **1** and **2** to indicate you first and second choices.

- A facility that has a smaller footprint A facility that has a lower cost overall
 A facility that is more energy efficient No opinion
 A facility that minimizes visual impact Don't know

20. Another important component of the system is the treatment and disposal of solids, also called sludge. One option is to haul sludge to a location outside of the community where it will be treated and sold by a third party as compost. A second option is to produce compost at the Los Osos facility for use in the community as compost. Composting at the facility will be more expensive than hauling it away. Which do you prefer?

- Composting Hauling No opinion Don't know

SECTION 4

This section concerns various cost issues not explored elsewhere in survey

21. Thinking about the two collection systems described above in Question 17, how much savings over a Gravity System would a STEP/STEG System have to provide to make it worthwhile?

- I prefer a Gravity System, I am not interested in a STEP/STEG system at any cost savings. A STEP/STEG System would have to save me at least **\$5** a month to make it worthwhile
 A STEP/STEG System would have to save me at least **\$50** a month to make it worthwhile I prefer a STEP/STEG System even if it doesn't save me any money
 A STEP/STEG System would have to save me at least **\$30** a month to make it worthwhile No opinion Don't know

22. Generally speaking, how much more *if anything* are you willing to pay on a monthly basis for a project that ...

	Nothing	Less than \$5	\$5 - \$10	More than \$10	No Opinion	Don't know
...Composts and recycles biosolids for use as mulch and fertilizer?	<input type="checkbox"/>					
...Is more environmentally friendly / incorporates "green" or "sustainable" technologies?	<input type="checkbox"/>					
...Provides more flexibility for future upgrades?	<input type="checkbox"/>					
...Returns reclaimed treated water to groundwater for use for irrigation?	<input type="checkbox"/>					

SECTION 5

What other issues are you concerned about?

23. Please use the space below to tell us anything else you would like decision makers to know regarding the Wastewater Project.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR COMPLETING THIS IMPORTANT SURVEY.
 Please mail your completed form in the postage paid envelope provided by **February 27**.
 Mail to: Opinion Studies, P.O. Box 5210, San Luis Obispo, CA 93403-5210

