



LEE COUNTY, FL 2010

DRAFT Report of Open-ended Question

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SURVEY BACKGROUND

ABOUT THE NATIONAL CITIZEN SURVEY™

The National Citizen Survey™ (The NCS™) is a collaborative effort between National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA).

The survey and its administration are standardized to assure high quality survey methods and comparable results across The National Citizen Survey™ jurisdictions. Participating households are selected at random and the household member who responds is selected without bias. Multiple mailings give each household more than one chance to participate with self-addressed and postage paid envelopes. Results are statistically weighted to reflect the proper demographic composition of the entire community.

The National Citizen Survey™ customized for this jurisdiction was developed in close cooperation with local jurisdiction staff. Lee County staff selected items from a menu of questions about services and community problems; they defined the jurisdiction boundaries NRC used for sampling; and they provided the appropriate letterhead and signatures for mailings. Lee County staff also determined local interest in a variety of add-on options to The National Citizen Survey™ Basic Service.

UNDERSTANDING THE RESULTS

ABOUT CLOSED-ENDED AND OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Questions can either be asked in a closed-ended or open-ended manner. A closed-ended question is one where a set of response options is listed on the survey. Those taking the survey respond to each option listed. Open-ended questions have no answer choices from which respondents select their response. Instead, respondents must “create” their own answers and state them in their own words. The verbatim responses are categorized by topic area using codes. An “other” category is used for responses falling outside the coded categories. In general, a code is assigned when at least 5-10% of responses will fit the code.

Advantages of an open-ended question include:

- Responses are not prompted, allowing respondents to provide answers that are not anticipated or well known.
- This type of question tends to capture response options that come to mind most quickly.
- The final result can be richer, since verbatim responses are included in an appendix, giving you and others a chance to “hear” the voice of respondents in their own words.
- There is a smaller risk of missing important dimensions.

VERBATIMS

Respondents were asked to record their opinions about Lee County in the following question:

- With cutbacks necessary, what LEE COUNTY programs or services should be considered? (Please provide up to THREE areas of further reduction in priority order.)

The verbatim responses were categorized by topic area and those topics are reported in the following table with the percent of responses given in each category. Each topic mentioned by a resident was categorized and counted for in the following table.

Results from the open-ended question is best understood by reviewing the table of frequencies that summarize responses as well as the actual verbatim responses themselves.

With cutbacks necessary, what LEE COUNTY programs or services should be considered? (Please provide up to THREE areas of further reduction in priority order.)	
	Percent of Respondents
Reduce government and spending (salaries, city staff, travel expenses)/Universal cuts/Reduce taxes	31%
Roads/Infrastructure/Landscaping/Garbage collection	22%
Housing and Human services (services to youth, seniors, low-income)/ Services to illegal immigrants	13%
None/Do not make cuts/Preserve essential services/Increase fees/Alternative funding	13%
Preservation of natural areas/green policies/Agricultural services	11%
Fire and Emergency Services	10%
Growth Management/New Building (use empty buildings)/Permits	10%
Sherriff/Police/Public safety	10%
Code enforcement/Animal control	10%
Schools/Education/School transportation	10%
Traffic Enforcement	9%
Parks and recreation/Historic sites/Library services	6%
Funds for baseball training facility	6%
Public transportation	5%
Don't know/No Response/NA/Need more information	13%
Other	12%
Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one category.	

VERBATIM RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

The following pages contain the respondents' verbatim responses as written on the survey and have not been edited for spelling or grammar. Responses have been organized by coded topic areas.

WITH CUTBACKS NECESSARY, WHAT LEE COUNTY PROGRAMS OR SERVICES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED? (PLEASE PROVIDE UP TO THREE AREAS OF FURTHER REDUCTION IN PRIORITY ORDER.)

Reduce government and spending (salaries, city staff, travel expenses)/Universal cuts/Reduce taxes

- Across the Boards reductions
- Administration - too many chiefs not doing jobs.
- Based on my experience in private business, all departments/areas can afford to reduce costs by at least 10% without severely affecting services, I would direct all department heads to cut at least 15%-20% of spending stack rank all possible reductions, make the tough choices.
- Board of managers costs
- City employees
- Consolidate departments to lower management costs
- County employment
- County facility maintenance dept.
- County workers pay is excessive in some areas
- Cut down on higher ups salary & pensions
- Decrease all county funding by 3-5%
- Decrease real estate taxes
- Economic development
- Eliminate the visitor & convention bureau
- Employee salaries
- Fewer Lee County commissioners
- Get rid of current property appraiser Who's idea was it to half the value of property to reduce taxes?
- Government administrative personnel
- High priced officials & their empire.
- I believe everything should be reduced in this economy!
- Lee County government
- Lower overpaid administration salaries
- Lower Taxes
- Make city employees pay to use dept cars & for their health insurance like the rest of us have to pay for ours.
- Motor vehicle personnel
- No new hiring - Let attrition loss take place until economy is up.
- Officials paying own fair fares period! Cut out all mileage allowances/ City truck 3 people in truck - 1 shovel in back
- Over - use of county and/or city vehicles for personal use.
- Paying for study groups that result in no changes, downtown projects that go no where
- Paying people for a job after let go.
- Payment of government officials in management

- Public information services
- Public relation/info jobs
- Publication of booklets that are not really used
- Reassess upper management and middle management to see if cut can be made.
- Reduce excess employment number
- Reduce expenses in all county offices
- Reduce Lee County staffing - transfer to cities where applicable
- Reduce travel expense to Tallahassee
- Reduction of government salaries
- Reevaluate job descriptions with productivity from an outside source start with the highest salary employees in management
- Remove duplication of processes where possible
- Review high salaries of high officials.
- Review wasted spending in all agencies.
- Salaries for govtmnt managers
- Salaries for Lee City Superintendent
- Salaries for professional positions but keep positions
- Salaries over \$70,000 per year to \$70,000 a yr
- Single candidate representative in County Commissioners Districts
- The eliminate the economic development office
- This type of survey is a big waste of money!
- Time of city watering by city
- Toll booth tenders put a 1.00 vending machine
- Too many workers standing around watching others do the work.
- Top heavy government?
- Travel by county employees
- Turn off electricity in govt. buildings when possible
- Unnesesary spending by officials
- Use "Process mgt" techniques to stream line procedures thereby reducing payroll & maintaining svcs.

Roads/Infrastructure/Landscaping/Garbage collection

- Beautification program - necessity - good idea but cleanliness practiced.
- Bicycle paths
- Consider lite rail instead of road widening
- Finish road projects in a timely manner or if preferred don't start them. Too many road with warning barriers unfinished for years. No one work working on these projects, especially Cape Cora! (More if there was space)
- Flora in roadways-? Why
- Fully screen & make cuts in yard pick up
- Garbage collection
- Highways - Maintain but less new all depts.
- Highways-roads
- Horticulture pickup to bi weekly or monthly
- Landscape medians
- Landscape or environmental resources
- Landscaping (use non-violent prisoners)
- Landscaping between lanes on roads.
- Median road improvements (Trees)

- (Money) for landscaping
- Planting of flowers
- Privatize all garbage collection
- Recycling
- Reduce “Spruce up” road and 'Cosmetic' throughway expenditures prior to and during “High season” (striping repairing). Maintain current plantings on hwy medians, reduce city spending on same.
- Reduce beautification of streets
- Road beautification & sprinkler insulation
- Road construction
- Road construction (new)
- Road construction.
- Road development
- Road expansion
- Road repair/construction
- Road work
- Roads
- Sidewalks where not necessary - only in school zones
- Stop planting so many trees on the road to Sanibal
- Stop roadway landscaping
- Storm water drainage
- The water project in Cape Coral
- Utilities maintained not extended
- Water - (Use salt water)
- With the economy discontinue median improvements until. (things pick up again). 4.
- Reevaluate staff jobs to see if some duties can be combined and possible eliminated.
- Yard waste collection
- Yard waste pick up.

Housing and Human services (services to youth, seniors, low-income)/ Services to illegal immigrants

- Aid to illegal immigrants
- Any services provided to illegal aliens.
- Anything that enables anyone here illegally getting services of any kind
- Child care facilities (parks etc, incl.) Senior citizen facilities and programs
- Community services
- Community services
- Community services
- Hand outs - more jobs
- Housing
- Human services
- Human services (Support the elderly but reduce the assistance to the able bodies. Welfare fraud is rampant in Lee County!
- Illegal aliens
- Less public assistance - more work
- No more welfare to illegal aliens
- Reduce programs for illegal aliens
- Reduce the # of persons receiving comp. for programs they are not entitled.
- Reduce unemployment comp. for those who are able to work

- Reduction of immigration initiatives
- Senior citizens programs
- Services to youths
- Stop supporting illegal alien housing
- Stop supporting illegals send them home! Stop hiring illegals, I am tired of seeing interiors take the jobs when residents get no work.
- Too many services provided for illegal aliens.
- Welfare - seemed more closely
- Welfare reform
- Withhold any support for illegals
- Youth programs - Continue & increase i.e. summer programs

None/Do not make cuts/Preserve essential services/Increase fees/Alternative funding

- Accept federal grants for law enforcement.
- Anything but police & fire
- Do not reduce police & fire protection
- Enforce traffic laws, it would be a money maker
- I can't think of any programs that could or should be cut back.
- I don't buy that cutbacks are necessarily required, rather better mgmt of available programs. Accept federal grants/programs for school improvement
- I don't think Lee Co. can afford to reduce services
- I think it is time to start educating people about the importance of why we need taxes in order to have things, like police, fire roads, bridges, parks, bike paths and not cutting taxes.
- Increase revenue by charging for violations i.e. factory manufacture environmental
- It seems to me that there have already been a list of cutbacks
- Leave as is
- No cut backs in police & fire
- No cuts in police, recreation or cultural activities - these Are what bring visitors and new home owners to Lee County
- No more cut backs, reduce amount of management -
- None
- None
- None
- None
- None
- None
- None!
- None. Citizens need to be educated on the need for taxes and the benefits we all receive from them. Taxes need to be raised to meet demand for services.
- Rather than cut services or programs, I feel the Citizens of Lee County should step up & give more, If their income warrants and increase items such as tax on alcohol, cigarettes and parking and increase fees entering parks & other public facilities, motor vehicles
- Reductions are not the answer! Increase tax Rates, to offset lower property values are a painful, but necessary option!
- We need all services - lets not go backwards

Preservation of natural areas/Green policies/Agricultural services

- 2020 land purchases
- Ag/farm
- Agricultural services
- Conservation 20/20
- County lands
- Decrease funds for beach erosion
- Enviromental protection
- Environmental - the land has been here for century it will still be here in the future if we just leave it alone.
- Environmental resource
- Environmental resource protections
- Farm advisors
- Green & environmental nonsense - bike paths
- Lee County open space
- Nature programs
- Nature programs - although a favorite of mine
- Preservation of natural spaces
- Saving Oak trees while people are hungry!

Fire and Emergency Services

- Ambulance
- Ambulance services
- Amount of fire commissioners
- Consolidate fire districts
- Do not send the FD on non-life threatening calls.
- Does an ambulance really need a fire enhance for each call?
- Eliminate need for fire truck to accompany every ambulance
- Emergency Svc: Stop sending a fire truck on every Ambulance run
- Fire
- Fire
- Fire
- Fire
- Fire (consolidate)
- Fire chiefs, assistant chiefs pay
- Fire departments (1 bass)
- Fire protection - combine districts/reduce some salaries
- Fire services
- Introduction of "Common sense" in fire districts
- Lee County Fire Departments should be consolidated into one
- Police patrols water areas
- Reduce the high cost of fire prof. excessive.
- Reduce use of life flight helicopter use-seem over-used
- Redundancy over head costs for fire districts
- Sending both fire EMS and ambulance
- Too much money is spent on fire & police building & personnel

Growth Management/New Building (use empty buildings)/Permits

- Building any more public bldg should stop
- Curtail commercial building until empty spaces are filled
- Expansion - too many empty ship malls (built & sit empty)
- Growth management
- Growth management
- Growth management
- Growth management
- Growth management
- Growth management
- New buildings i.e. schools libraries
- New construction @ Intersections
- New construction: County buildings & schools are outrageous
- Pat abandoned buildings to use
- Perhaps cut staff in the permitting dept since new building/home production has decreased drastically
- Permitting
- Smart growth
- Smart growth office elimination as unnecessary and duplications in planning
- Stop building houses no one buying them.
- Stop growth
- Urban sprawl
- We have no housing or comm const - reduce staff planning

Sherriff/Police/Public safety

- Crime prevention
- Fully screen & make cuts in police dept
- Increase transparency in sheriff's department
- Marine police
- Police
- Police
- Police advisory board
- Public safety
- Public safety
- Reduce law enforcement expense (has escalated to fast)
- Reduce misuse of police personal
- Reduce number of sheriffs
- Sheriff
- Sheriff
- Sheriff resources in courts - too many officers in courts
- Sheriff services
- Sheriffs dept
- Sheriff's dept
- Water patrolling

Code enforcement/Animal control

- Animal control
- Animal control
- Animal services
- Code enforcement
- Code enforcement
- Code enforcement
- Code enforcement
- Code enforcement
- Code enforcement
- Code enforcement - need improve efficiency
- Code enforcement officials
- Wildlife

Schools/Education/School transportation

- Cut all superintendents salaries, they're too high not one of them should make over \$70K
- If the current school choice program costs 1 penny it should be dropped - it is stupid.
- No school choice: And reduction of bus/transportation.
- Public school re-evaluation: Discontinue tenure administration.
- Remove superintendent Brouden from the school system!
- Salaries for Lee City School Board
- School administrators starting with head man
- School board employees and salaries
- School busing
- School busing
- School choice - bus system
- School transportation should be deeply cut - use local schools.
- Schools
- Schools (too many)
- Stop school choice
- Way too many school buses

Traffic Enforcement

- No more "fly-overs" at major intersections
- No 'toll roads' - 'fly-overs' or 'express' lanes
- Put non-essential traffic devices on flash between 11 pm - 6 am.
- Stop building intersection flyovers. This isn't L.A.
- Stop giving seat belt tickets!
- Ticketing doesn't reduce accidents - police on patrol reduces crime
- Too many traffic officers harassing citizens
- Traffic enforcement
- Traffic lite on adjusting - pedestrian crosswalks - to make it more pedestrian & cycling friendly. Think.

Parks and recreation/Historic sites/Library services

- Availability of historic sites - hopefully temporary
- Historic sites
- Historic sites
- Libraries. Clerical support to administrators - a secretary for all department leads is a waste of tax dollars.
- Park hours. Not the libraries! We need them more in this Economy
- Parks & recreation
- Public library - another favorite but other resources are more critical in this economy
- Public library services
- Rec
- Recreation centers
- Recreation classes/programs
- Recreation facilities
- Recreation programmer class
- Recreation, nature programs
- Recreational centers
- Recreational programs

Funds for baseball training facility

- Cancel the red sox contract save \$300,000000
- Cease dependency of base ball sports teams for income!
- Don't build new stadium for ML training
- No money should be invested by Lee Co. for Red Sox Stadium!!
- No tax payer support for sports (professional) or Bed tax use
- Red box baseball
- Red sox station
- Spending tax payment money on ball parks for billionaires
- Stop building ballparks unless its for kids
- Stop chasing after baseball teams - let them pay!
- Stop new red sox stadium
- Stop w/all the baseball crap focus on what we have - natural resources we have!

Public transportation

- Annual downtown trolley - cape canal
- Cut county subsidized bus routes
- Public trans.
- Public transit
- Public transit
- Public transport
- Public transportation
- Transit
- Transit

Don't know/No Response/NA/Need more information

- Can not comment at this time
- Do not know
- Don't have enough info
- Don't know
- Don't know
- Don't know
- Don't know
- Don't know
- Don't know
- Don't know
- Don't know
- Don't know
- Don't know
- Don't know but would support cuts.
- Don't use enough services to adequately answer this
- Have no idea what to cut just do the best you can for the least amount possible
- Have no idea what to say to this question.
- I don't have enough information for an opinion
- I have no idea
- Lee County Mgt. should decide this.
- Lets all "pull" together
- N/A
- N/A
- N/A
- N/A
- Not fully educated in all areas to reply
- Not sure
- Since I just retired - moved here seasonally last year I don't feel knowledgeable enough to give an opinion. I love it here - There's no regret on my part for leaving N. Ill. & winter.
- Sorry, these answers are the reason we pay the Lee County manager and staff.
- Support are new mayor and his suggestions
- That is a hard decision.
- Too difficult to consider

Other

- Affirmative action expenditures
- Apartment complexes
- Art of the Olympian
- Banks
- Cable vision
- Cut any funding to Edison & Ford home.
- Discontinue invasion of privacy
- Don't send surveys twice
- Eliminate paid parking at all county parks
- Gas stations
- Get out of bed w/ developers at expense of populace.
- Information technology
- Invest in thoroughly investigate the background of big individuals applying for government positions.

- Jay Judah-fired! All of them! Fire!
- Pace Somerset Lane which was a county road per ag. supervisor when I moved to Bonita springs in early 90's - Also stop charging residential tax rates on property zoned agriculture.
- Planned Parenthood
- Provide jobs for lower income employees
- Recruit green firms
- Seek community volunteering for participation @ city and county offices, and roadway, neighborhood, waterway clean-up. 4. Provide incentives for local businesses (individuals) to participate in community projects such as tree trimming.
- Stop destroying woods & forests
- Stop giving agricultural tax breaks to vacant lots inside the County
- Stop outsourcing citizen surveys
- Strip Malls
- Strip malls
- Surveys
- Tax cutbacks
- Traffic during season Nov-May!