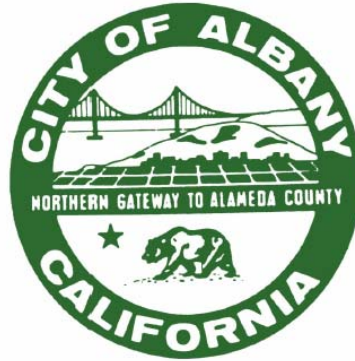


# Proposal to Conduct Research for the



## City of Albany

Submitted By  
**Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates**

**December 6, 2011**

**Contact:**  
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**Partner**

921-2664

*Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates - FM3*  
*Public Opinion Research & Strategy*

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

	<u>PAGE</u>
A. INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY-----	2
B. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED SERVICES-----	4
C. PROPOSED TIMELINE-----	8
D. FIRM QUALIFICATIONS AND RELEVANT EXPERIENCE -----	9
1. General Information About the Firm-----	9
2. Relevant Experience and Qualifications-----	10
E. PROJECT STAFF -----	13
F. FEE SCHEDULE -----	15

## **A. INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3) is pleased to submit this proposal to the City of Albany to conduct a public opinion survey assessing voters' reactions to several different potential ballot measures. We believe that our firm is well-qualified to conduct this opinion research, based upon both our prior in the area – including conducting a survey for the Albany Unified School District – and our extensive experience conducting opinion research on behalf of cities across the state seeking to generate additional revenue to support local services.

The following are some of the other key specific benefits that FM3 would bring to this research project:

- **FM3 has experience conducting research in Albany and Alameda County.** In addition to the 2004 survey we conducted for the Albany Unified School District, FM3 has also conducted extensive opinion research in numerous other Alameda County communities. This archive of research will help to inform and strengthen the research we conduct for the City of Albany.
- **FM3 is a national leader in designing campaign strategies to pass ballot measures.** FM3 has provided research in support of hundreds of state and local ballot measure campaigns. The firm regularly takes on some of the largest, toughest, and most hard-fought ballot measure campaigns in the country. In California, FM3 research has helped craft winning strategies for innovative and contentious statewide measures like Proposition 11 (implementing a Citizen's Redistricting Commission), Proposition 71 (a bond measure to fund stem cell research) and Proposition 39 (reducing the vote threshold required for local school bonds). In addition, FM3 opinion research supported a range of successful local ballot measures in the past election cycle, despite the challenges of the economic downturn and rising voter distrust of government.
- **FM3 can complete the research quickly.** Given our familiarity with Albany and community (Partner Dave Metz is a Berkeley resident and lives just outside the City border), FM3 can quickly complete the survey and analyze and report the results to the full City Council in approximately four weeks. Once the final questionnaire is approved for fielding, it will take up to a week to complete the interviews, depending upon the sample size and length of survey.
- **FM3 has a fully staffed office in Oakland and is readily available for in-person meetings in Albany.** FM3 Partner Dave Metz and Vice President Curtis Below will be assigned to this project. Our office is located in Oakland, and our staff is available as needed for in-person meetings in Albany.

We recommend that the survey be conducted over the telephone, with a sample size of 300 to 400 registered Albany voters, and an average length of 10 to 20 minutes.

*City of Albany – Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates  
Proposal to Conduct Opinion Research - 3*

Depending on the ultimate length and sample size of the survey, the cost of the survey would be between \$14,750 (N=300, 10 minutes) and \$21,750 (N=400, 20 minutes).

FM3 Partner David Metz and Vice President Curtis Below may be reached in our Oakland office:

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The balance of this proposal outlines our qualifications and recommended approach to the research in more detail. Please let us know if there is any further information we can provide.

## **B. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED SERVICES**

The following section outlines FM3's recommended methodology for conducting a telephone survey of voters in the City of Albany.

**Questionnaire Design:** In designing the survey questionnaire, FM3 will draw on its knowledge of public opinion survey methodology as well as its past experience in conducting similar surveys in other California communities. FM3 will also draw heavily on the input it receives from the City in designing the questionnaire. The process will begin with an initial, in-person kickoff meeting between FM3 and City staff that will be involved in the project. The meeting will provide a comprehensive discussion about major issues facing the City and how potential ballot measures would help address those challenges.

It is our understanding that the City has in mind approximately 10-15 different questions. In constructing the initial survey questionnaire, we would start with those questions initially, but will suggest adding other questions, based upon our experience in other communities. We imagine that the survey could include questions in some or all of the following areas (among others):

- Satisfaction with current City government services, including those related to the potential ballot measures;
- Perceptions of the City's management of tax dollars and provision of services;
- Support for a ballot measure or measures given draft ballot language we would construct with the City;
- Assuming some of the ballot measure seek to raise revenue for the City, support for various funding mechanisms;
- A ranking of the importance of various projects that the City could potentially undertake with additional funding, including both specific projects and broader categories of spending;
- Reactions to major arguments for and against a measure followed by questions to detect shifts in vote preferences;
- Sources of information voters use most often to inform themselves about major issues in the community; and
- Comprehensive demographic characteristics.

After the kickoff meeting, FM3 staff will begin drafting the questionnaire, while maintaining close phone and e-mail contact with the City to follow up on issues discussed during the kickoff meeting. FM3 will then present a first draft of the survey questionnaire to the City for review. After collecting feedback, FM3 will revise and refine the survey questionnaire.

We foresee proceeding through several drafts of the survey, incorporating feedback from the City before each revision, to develop a questionnaire that is capable of obtaining all of the necessary information. Before commencing interviewing, FM3 will obtain the approval of the appropriate City representative on the final version of the questionnaire.

*City of Albany – Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates  
Proposal to Conduct Opinion Research - 5*

The City's estimates of a survey consisting of 10-15 questions suggest a somewhat shorter survey than we typically conduct for cities assessing several different ballot measures. For example, we typically recommend including 5-7 demographic questions at the end of each survey in order to better assess the opinions of key demographic or geographic subgroups of the population, in addition to helping ensure that the interviewed population is representative of the voting population. Therefore, we generally conduct surveys of this nature that take approximately 15 to 20 minutes for the average respondent to complete over the telephone and include roughly 45 to 60 items. However, we are committed to working with the City to draft a survey instrument that meets the City's specific policy and budgetary needs and will include a variety of options on the pricing section of this proposal.

**Sample Selection:** We recommend that the sample be drawn from lists of registered voters in Albany who, based on their past voting behavior, are considered likely to cast ballots in the November 2012 election. We can also use voting histories to look at a portion of this electorate likely to participate in a June 2012 election. This affords us the ability to compare the impact of placing a measure on both ballots within the same survey.

After our initial review of the Albany voting population, we estimate that approximately 8,400 voters are likely to participate in the November 2012 election. Our prior experience suggests that this is sufficient to reach a sample size of 400, but we should caution that in smaller communities we sometimes can only conduct closer to 350 interviews. This can be sometimes difficult to predict, and this cost section of this proposal presents the different sample size options.

That being said, we recommend completing at least 300 interviews; a sample size of 400 would facilitate more detailed analysis of subgroups of the survey respondents and is more common for surveys of this nature. At the 95 percent confidence level, a sample size of 300 would provide a margin of error of plus or minus 5.7 percent. A sample of 400 would yield a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 4.9 percent. Margins of sampling error for demographic, geographic and socioeconomic subgroups within the community – such as partisan, income, and neighborhood groups – will be somewhat higher.

**Interviewing:** FM3 will subcontract for telephone interviewing services with a telephone interviewing facility with which we have collaborated on hundreds of research projects. The facilities we work with have well-established procedures to supervise the interviewing process and to verify that interviews are conducted according to specifications. Among these procedures are the monitoring of actual interviews by on-site supervisors, identification of each interview by interviewer, and the use of a regularly employed staff of professional, full time interviewers. There is an established protocol for callbacks of busy or "not-at-home" numbers designed specifically to maintain the randomness of interviewee selection. FM3 retains all interviews as part of its data processing procedures described below.

*City of Albany – Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates  
Proposal to Conduct Opinion Research - 6*

FM3 proposes to review its procedures with the City to ensure satisfaction with all technical aspects of the sample selection and interviewing process.

**Data Analysis:** Response data will be analyzed by FM3’s Data Processing and Analysis Department staff using Survey System software, a well-documented and widely-used data analysis software package, to report the tabulation and cross-tabulation of data. As needed, FM3 may augment Survey System with SAS, another widely used social science data analysis program often used for more advanced statistical analysis. FM3 has a SAS-certified statistician on its staff. FM3’s Data Processing and Analysis Department employs a data checking and editing system to eliminate errors and document the handling of data received from the interviewers.

The day after interviewing has been completed FM3 will e-mail the City “topline” results of the survey. These results will present the overall percentage of respondents that chose each answer to each of the survey’s questions.

Within a few days, FM3 will provide the client with a comprehensive set of cross-tabulated results. The cross-tabulated results will include a table for each question or demographic variable in the survey, with a series of up to 180 columns indicating how various subgroups of the Albany population responded to that question. The cross-tabulated results will make it possible to detect differences in responses to each survey question among different subsets of the population: for example, it will be possible to compare men and women; respondents under age 50 and 50 and over; homeowners and renters; long-time residents and more recent arrivals; residents of each individual ZIP code within the community; and many more subgroups of the local population.

Finally, FM3’s custom-designed data processing software package can convert the raw electronic data to ASCII format or virtually any other format commonly used, so that the actual results of the survey can be transmitted electronically to the client at the conclusion of the study.

**Reports and Presentations:** Results of the survey will be presented both in-person and in writing. The written report will also present key data in tabular and graphic form. After a draft report has been reviewed and commented upon by the client, FM3 will make any necessary changes and submit the final report. Finally, FM3 will make detailed presentations of the survey results using overhead slides at a time and place of the City’s choosing.

We believe that the depth and quality of our written and graphic reports of survey results sets our firm apart from many of our competitors. Among the key features of FM3’s written and graphic reports are the following:

- ✓ An executive summary and recommendations of which of the contemplated ballot measures are feasible and when;
- ✓ Detailed analysis and interpretation of the survey results;
- ✓ Evaluation of significant differences between demographic, geographic, and attitudinal subgroups of survey respondents.

*City of Albany – Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates  
Proposal to Conduct Opinion Research - 7*

After the report and graphic presentation have been completed, FM3 staff will remain available to answer follow-up questions from the client on an ongoing basis. As the need arises, FM3 will re-analyze the data to provide answers to follow-up questions that may be posed by the City.

**Deliverables:** In summary, upon conclusion of the survey project, the City will have received from FM3 all of the documents listed below. All documents can be provided in hard-copy or electronic form (or both), depending on the City's preference.

- ✓ **Final survey questionnaire**
- ✓ **Topline survey results** (the survey questionnaire filled in with the percentages choosing each response code)
- ✓ **Full cross-tabulated results** (responses to every question in the survey, broken down by dozens of demographic, geographic, and attitudinal subgroups of the City population)
- ✓ **Comprehensive written report of results** (a written summary and analysis of the survey, including tables and graphs, with conclusions and recommendations)
- ✓ **A Graphic presentation of key findings** (color slides highlighting important results)
- ✓ **Raw data in electronic form** (delivered in a file format chosen by the City)



## **C. PROPOSED TIMELINE**

FM3 is ready to begin work on the survey at the City's request and can complete the research in approximately four weeks time from the initial kick-off meeting. A potential summary of the project milestones follows and FM3 would be happy to either shorten or lengthen the timetable at the City's request.

### **Week One**

- Authorization to proceed
- Finalize contract
- Kick-off meeting
- Circulate first survey draft for comment

### **Week Two**

- Conference call or meeting to discuss survey draft
- Revise survey, circulate revised version for comment
- Finalize sample specifications
- Finalize survey questionnaire
- Obtain final approval of survey
- Acquire survey sample

### **Week Three**

- Conduct survey interviews
- Produce topline results
- Produce cross-tabulated results

### **Week Four**

- Analyze results
- Develop graphic presentation of results
- Obtain City feedback on memorandum, graphic presentation and any additional reporting materials requested by the City and finalize these materials
- Present survey findings and recommendations in person to City

## **D. FIRM QUALIFICATIONS AND RELEVANT EXPERIENCE**

### **1. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE FIRM**

Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz and Associates (FM3), a California corporation, has specialized in public policy-oriented opinion research since the company was first organized in 1981. FM3 offers a full range of opinion research and communications strategy consulting services, including research services for public agencies to assess the feasibility of local ballot measures. FM3 opinion research and marketing services include:

- Random-digit-dial (RDD) and listed sample public opinion telephone surveys in English and Spanish or other languages
- Public opinion mail surveys in English, Spanish and Asian languages
- In-depth executive interviews
- Focus groups in English, Spanish, and Asian languages
- Product testing and consumer market research
- Advertising testing using Audience Response System “Perception Analyzer” technology
- Communications strategy consulting

FM3 plans and executes all phases of focus group and survey research projects from beginning to end. On an annual basis, the company conducts as many as one hundred focus groups and three hundred surveys. It designs the research instrument, specifies the sampling or recruitment plan, manages the data gathering process and analyzes and interprets the data. FM3 is also adept in the use of perception analyzer technology, which bridges the gap between qualitative and quantitative opinion research.

FM3 has on-staff Spanish language capability that it applies to all research projects involving populations with significant Spanish speaking segments.

FM3's primary business is to provide timely public opinion analysis to assist policymakers in making decisions. The firm's principals have decades of experience in opinion research, and our 22-person staff is multi-talented and works as a team to assure the completion of quality opinion analysis in a timely manner. In addition, FM3's data collection and sampling sub-contractors are closely supervised and pre-qualified by FM3 to render immediate, high-quality service. FM3 prides itself in delivering personal service to its clients, who are assured ongoing contact with the firm's principals and senior personnel.

More detailed information about FM3 and its clients may be found on the firm's website, [www.fm3research.com](http://www.fm3research.com).

## **2. RELEVANT EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS**

FM3's background and experience leave the firm well-prepared to conduct a survey in the City of Albany. Among the most relevant aspects of the firm's experience are the following:

- ✓ **FM3 has extensive experience conducting research in Alameda County, including the City of Albany.** Though the firm has clients across the country, FM3 maintains a full-time office in Oakland and focuses much of its research in northern California and the Bay Area. The firm's staff is quite familiar with the electorate in Alameda County. A short summary of our Alameda County experience includes the following.
  - In 2004, FM3 conducted a survey for the **Albany Unified School District** to assess support for a variety of potential ballot measures, including a bond measure and a parcel tax.
  - Since 2007 FM3 has conducted research on environmental and waste management issues in Alameda County on behalf of **StopWaste.org**, a government agency that represents the collaborative efforts of the Alameda County Waste Management Authority and the Alameda County Source Reduction and Recycling Board.
  - In 2010, FM3 conducted survey research on behalf of the **Oakland Unified School District** to assess the feasibility of a finance measure to support teacher and staff retention in local public schools. In addition to testing voter support for revenue enhancements to support education, the research is currently being used to assist the District and a coalition of community stakeholders in crafting an expenditure plan.
  - In 2011 and 2009, FM3 conducted research on behalf of the **City of Dublin** to assess the feasibility of a general purpose finance measure to support local city services and voter priorities for city expenditures should a finance measure move forward.
  - In 2011 and 2008, FM3 conducted a survey research of voters in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties to evaluate public perceptions of the **Oakland Zoo** and assess voter attitudes toward the expansion Zoo programs and voter willingness to support parcel tax and bond financing to improve and expand zoo facilities and programs.
  - From 2006-2008, FM3 has completed several survey and focus group projects for the **Zone 7 Water Agency** to gauge public support for implementation of the Agency's StreamWISE flood prevention program benefiting residents in the Livermore-Amador Valley.
  - FM3 has completed three community surveys on behalf of the **City of Oakland**, in 2000, 2002 and 2005. These community-wide surveys were conducted in five

*City of Albany – Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates*  
*Proposal to Conduct Opinion Research - 11*

languages and provided vital data for the City's budgeting and planning efforts. Earlier this year, FM3 provided analysis of a survey of public attitudes toward police services for the City of Oakland.

- FM3 conducted a voter survey in 2005 of residential property owners in unincorporated Alameda County on behalf of the **Alameda County Clean Water Program** to assess voter attitudes towards a measure to increase clean water fees.
  - In 2004, FM3 recently completed a voter survey for the **East Bay Regional Park District**, giving us extremely current data on the attitudes of many Alameda County voters toward providing funding for parks and conservation.
  - From 2007-2008, FM3 completed numerous voter surveys for cities in Alameda County to assess voters attitudes towards a variety of ultimately successful public finance measures, including the cities of **Alameda, Fremont, Oakland, and Pleasanton.**
  - FM3 has a long history of conducting surveys for the **Port of Oakland**, including completing a community assessment survey to establish attitudes toward and perceptions of the Port in 2007. Prior research includes a series of focus group discussions and a tenant satisfaction survey to assess their attitudes toward the Port and help identify strengths and weaknesses in the Port's customer relations.
  - FM3 completed surveys and provided strategic advice for the sponsors of two ballot measures approved by Oakland voters in March of 2004, **Measure P** (which retained the City's "strong-mayor" form of government) and **Measure Q** (which enacted a parcel tax to fund Oakland libraries).
  - FM3 has provided research for many years to a number of elected officials in Alameda County, including former **Oakland Mayor Jerry Brown, State Senator Loni Hancock, Assemblywoman Joan Buchanan,** and former **Assemblywoman Dion Aroner.**
  - FM3 has completed numerous surveys for school districts in Alameda County, including the **Oakland Unified School District, the Hayward Unified School District, the Albany Unified School District, the Fremont-Newark Community College District, the Chabot-Las Positas Community College District** and the **Berkeley Unified School District.**
- ✓ **FM3 is a leader in conducting research designed to pass ballot measures in difficult environments.** FM3 has conducted much of its ballot measure research in challenging electoral contexts, including many of the most highly-contested and difficult campaigns in the country. In many of these campaigns, FM3 has had to help develop strategies to overcome tens of millions of dollars of campaign spending from the opposition; win support from more than two-thirds of local voters to ensure passage; overcome campaigns from sponsors of competing measures on the same

*City of Albany – Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates  
Proposal to Conduct Opinion Research - 12*

ballot; or obtain majority support for tax and spending measures in the midst of an economic downturn.

The latter has obviously been very challenging since the “Great Recession” began in late 2007. However, during this time period (since the beginning of 2008) FM3’s opinion research has helped contribute to the passage of over 60 local bond and tax measures (primarily in California), demonstrating that despite high rates of unemployment and cynicism of government, it is still possible to pass well-crafted local finance measures.

## **E. PROJECT STAFF**

The FM3 project manager for this project will be Partner Dave Metz. Mr. Metz will ensure that the project is completed within the scheduled time frame and that the quality of the required products will meet the City of Albany's expectations and requirements. Mr. Metz will be assisted in client coordination, survey drafting, data analysis and report writing by FM3 Vice President Curtis Below and Research Assistant Greg Lewis.

All senior FM3 staff members assigned to this project possess advanced degrees in public policy, statistics and/or extensive experience working in state or local government. As a result, FM3 has a ready understanding of the challenges and tradeoffs that confront local government planners in a time of reduced revenues and increasing demand for services. The City is assured primary, direct contact with senior level project staff throughout the research project – the same level of contact it has received on prior projects led by Mr. Metz.

Biographies for key members of the project team are provided below:

### **David Metz, Partner**

David Metz, Partner in Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates, has provided qualitative and quantitative research and strategic advice to dozens of non-profit organizations, government agencies, businesses, and candidate and ballot measure campaigns at both the state and local levels since joining the firm in 1998.

Metz has conducted research for dozens of local governments in California, helping them craft ballot measures to provide additional revenue to fund vital public services. Metz has also provided research and consulting to help win voter approval for five statewide parks, land use and water quality and supply bonds in California. Metz has also specialized in providing community satisfaction, policy development and financial increment surveys for cities, including San Francisco, Oakland and San Jose, as well as numerous other local and regional government agencies. Metz has also specialized in providing research to numerous conservation organizations, among them the Nature Conservancy, Trust for Public Lands, the League of Conservation Voters, the Sierra Club, and the National Audubon Society.

Prior to joining FM3, Metz served as an analyst for the City of Milwaukee's Budget and Management Division, a Staff Assistant to Milwaukee Mayor John O. Norquist, and the chief finance aide to San Francisco Supervisor Susan Leal.

David Metz received his Bachelor's degree in Government from Harvard University in 1993. He received his Master's in Public Policy from the Goldman School of Public Policy at the University of California-Berkeley in 1998. Metz is a member of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR), and may be reached at FM3's Oakland office at (510) 451-9521, or at [dave@fm3research.com](mailto:dave@fm3research.com).

*City of Albany – Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates  
Proposal to Conduct Opinion Research - 14*

**Curtis Below**

Curtis Below, Senior Researcher at Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates, brought his broad professional experience in the public, nonprofit and private sectors to FM3 in 2007. Since joining the firm he has provided qualitative and quantitative research and strategic advice to government agencies, non-profit organizations, businesses, and candidate and ballot measure campaigns at both the state and local levels.

While at FM3, Curtis has specialized in providing public financing, community satisfaction, and policy development surveys for cities, counties, school districts, and other local and regional government agencies, including the cities of San Jose and Sacramento. Curtis has also provided research to numerous conservation organizations, among them the Environmental Defense Fund, the Nature Conservancy, the League of Conservation Voters, and the Trust for Public Land. Further, Curtis has provided research for candidates seeking public office at the city, county, and state levels.

In the public sector, Curtis previously worked in the California State Legislature for then Assembly member Herb J. Wesson, Jr., specifically focusing on health, utilities and conservation issues. He also served as the Vice-Chair of the City of Oakland's Public Ethics Commission, overseeing city laws regarding open records, public meetings, campaign financing and lobbyist registration. In the nonprofit sector, Curtis worked for the Environmental Defense Fund, focusing primarily on environmental health issues. In the private sector, Curtis was a co-founder and Vice President of Get Active Software, an Internet software and services company that provided online constituent mobilization and engagement tools for nonprofit organizations, including the AFL-CIO, American Lung Association, US Chamber of Commerce, the Humane Society of the United States and PBS.

Curtis received his Bachelor's degree in Geography/Environmental Studies from UCLA in 1994 and both his Master's of Public Policy and Master's of Public Health from UC Berkeley in 1998.

**Greg Lewis**

Greg Lewis joined FM3 as a Research Assistant in 2010. Mr. Lewis is responsible for assisting researchers with qualitative and quantitative research and analysis. Since joining the firm, he has assisted with research conducted on behalf of a diverse range of public and non-profit sector clients, including the Nature Conservancy, the Sierra Club, Alameda County StopWaste.org, and many others. Prior to joining FM3, Mr. Lewis worked as a researcher and writer for Media Matters for America, a DC-based non-profit "watchdog" group concerned with accuracy in the media. He is a 2008 graduate of the University of Maryland, College Park, where he majored in Government & Politics and History.

**F. PROPOSED FEE SCHEDULE**

The following table presents cost estimates for the voter survey at lengths of 10, 15 and 20 minutes, assuming in each case a randomly-selected sample of 300 or 400 voters in the City of Albany. As a point of reference, we typically conduct 15-20 minute surveys for projects of this nature, although our initial communications suggest that you may have fewer questions in mind and something closer to 10 minutes. In any case, FM3 is prepared to complete the survey via telephone for a total price of between **\$14,750** and **\$21,750** depending on the length of the questionnaire (**Figure 1**). This price is all-inclusive, and includes all costs for questionnaire design, sample acquisition, interviewing, data entry, cross-tabulation, analysis and reporting of survey results.

**FIGURE 1  
Estimated Survey Costs**

<b>Length</b>	<b>N=300</b>	<b>N=400</b>
10 minutes	\$14,750	\$16,500
15 minutes	\$16,250	\$18,500
20 minutes	\$19,000	\$21,750

FM3 will bill all research tasks for the fixed prices shown above, rather than by the hour. We propose a payment schedule of 50% upon delivery of a draft questionnaire instrument and 50% at the completion of the project. FM3 is committed to creating, implementing and analyzing the survey in the most cost-effective manner. FM3 will work directly with the City to design a final research plan that both serves the City’s research needs and also meets its budget.

FM3 will decrease its final costs if the survey length runs shorter than expected, to reflect the actual labor and direct costs associated with the final set of services provided.