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MAJORITY OF VOTERS UNDECIDED IN 2025 SAN ANTONIO MAYOR'S RACE, BUT GROUP OF SEVEN CANDIDATES EMERGE FROM THE PACK LED BY JONES, COURAGE, AND PELAEZ

LITTLE OPPOSITION TO VIA GREEN LINE; TEPID SUPPORT FOR PROJECT MARVEL AND USE OF COUNTY VENUE TAX FOR NEW SPURS ARENA; CRIME AND SAFETY VIEWS

RESULTS FROM SAN ANTONIO LIKELY VOTER POLL—FEBRUARY 17-20, 2025

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SAN ANTONIO, TX – A poll of San Antonio likely voters (n=683, MOE= +/- 3.8%) conducted by the UTSA Center for Public Opinion Research shows that more than half of voters are either unfamiliar with the 27 candidates running to succeed Ron Nirenberg as Mayor of San Antonio in the May 2025 election or are unsure how they would vote in the mayor's race. However, a top tier of candidates has emerged. Gina Ortiz Jones (9.3%) and John Courage (7.9%) led the pack, followed by Manny Pelaez (5.5%) Four other candidates (Melissa Cabello Havrda, Beto Altamirano, Adriana Rocha Garcia, and Clayton Perry) drew at least 3%, with 19 of the 27 candidates receiving less than 1%. **(Part 1)**

San Antonio voters also weighed in on several major local initiatives, including the plan to redevelop Hemisfair (code-named Project Marvel), using Bexar County's venue tax to pay for part of a new San Antonio Spurs arena, construction of a new stadium for the San Antonio Missions minor league baseball team, and VIA's planned Advanced Rapid Transit line (the Green Line). The proposal to construct the Green Line drew little opposition from voters, but support for the other initiatives was tepid. **(Part 2)**

Asked about their attitudes towards safety and crime, most voters reported that no one in their household has recently been a victim of a crime and that they feel somewhat or very safe in their neighborhood during the day. Fewer reported feeling safe in their neighborhoods at night. **(Part 3)**

Voters continue to give relatively high marks to local government and local officials compared to state and federal government/officials. San Antonio voters are also more optimistic about the direction the city is going in than they are about the state and country **(Part 4)**. The study's methodology is included in **Part 5**, and cross tabulations and question wording are included in the appendix.

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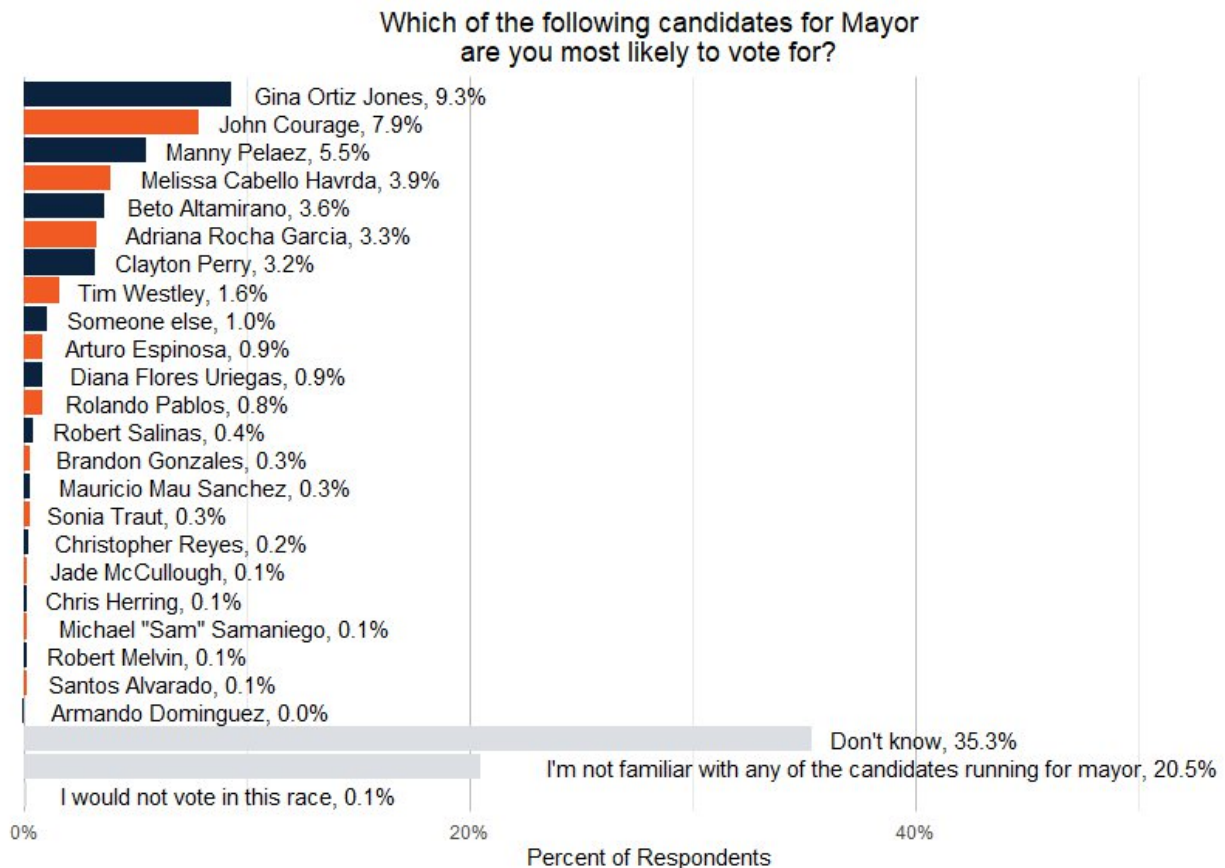
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Part 1. 2025 San Antonio Mayor's Race

Most San Antonio likely voters are not sure who they will vote for in the May 2025 mayoral election to succeed Mayor Ron Nirenberg, with 35.3% stating they do not know who they will vote for, and another 20.5% stating they were not familiar with any of the candidates. However, there is evidence of a top tier of candidates among the 27 who filed to run in the mayor's race.

Leading the pack are Gina Ortiz Jones with 9.3%, John Courage with 7.9%, and Manny Pelaez with 5.5%. Four other candidates attracted at least 3%: Melissa Cabello Havrda (3.9%), Beto Altamirano (3.6%), Adriana Rocha Garcia (3.3%), and Clayton Perry (3.2%). Apart from Tim Westley (1.6%), no other candidate polled above 1%. However, 1% of voters did indicate they would vote for someone other than the 27 on the ballot.



Note: values may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding. Candidates who received no support in the poll were not included in the figure; for full list of candidates, see appendix.

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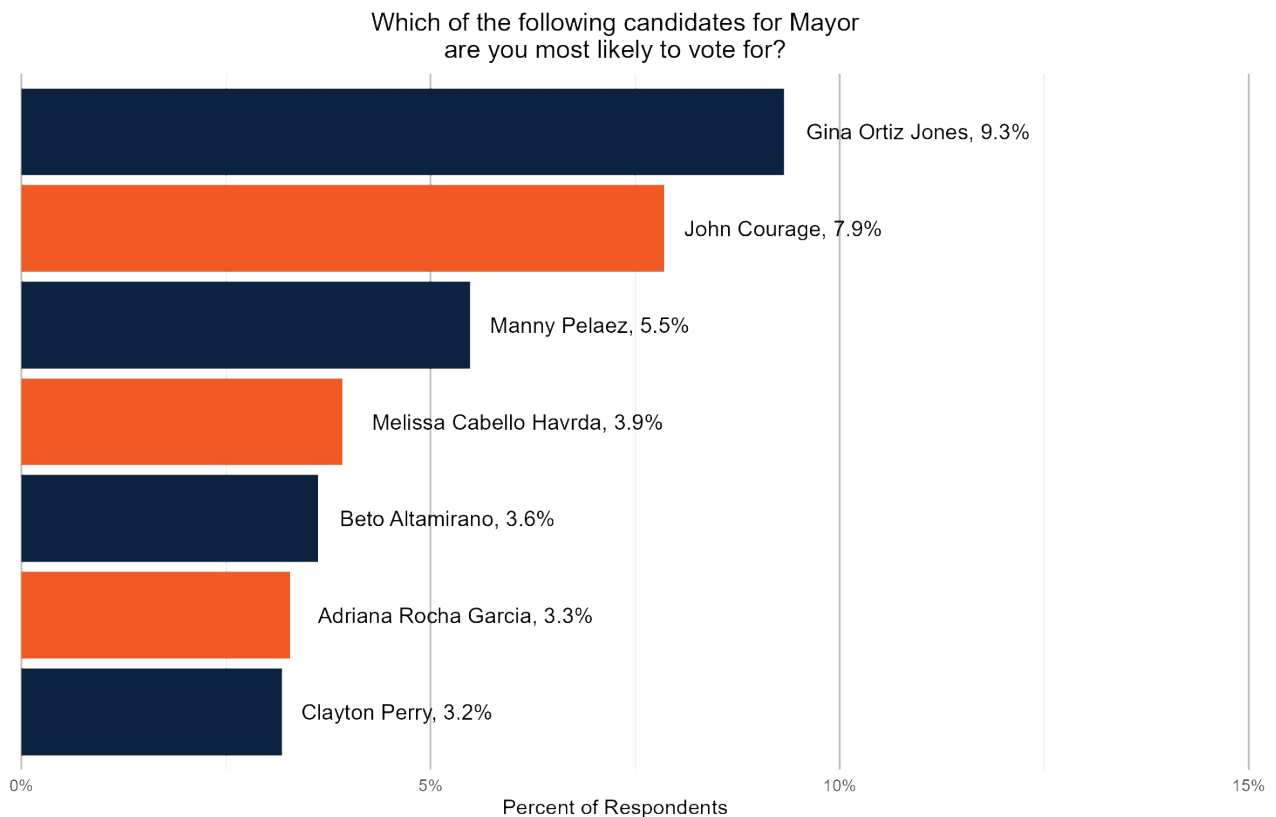
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Candidate Leads, Margins of Error, and Statistical Significance

The common practice of calculating candidate leads by doubling the margin of error (MOE) for the poll is not appropriate for assessing candidate leads when there is more than one response option and no candidate is close to 50 percent support; in this case, an alternative margin of error must be calculated for each comparison.¹

All seven candidates polling at least 3% held statistically significant leads over the other 20 candidates. Looking at support within this group of seven, Gina Ortiz Jones' lead over John Courage (1.4 points, MOE is +/- 3.1%) is not statistically significant. However, her lead over Manny Pelaez (3.8 points, MOE= +/- 2.9%) is statistically significant, as are her leads over the rest of the group.



Note: values may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding.

¹ The formula used for calculating the margins of error for differences in candidate proportions is:

$$1.96 \cdot \sqrt{\frac{(p1+p2)-(p1-p2)^2}{n-1}}$$
 where p1 equals candidate 1's proportion, p2 equals candidate 2's proportion, and n=sample size. More information can be found [here](#).

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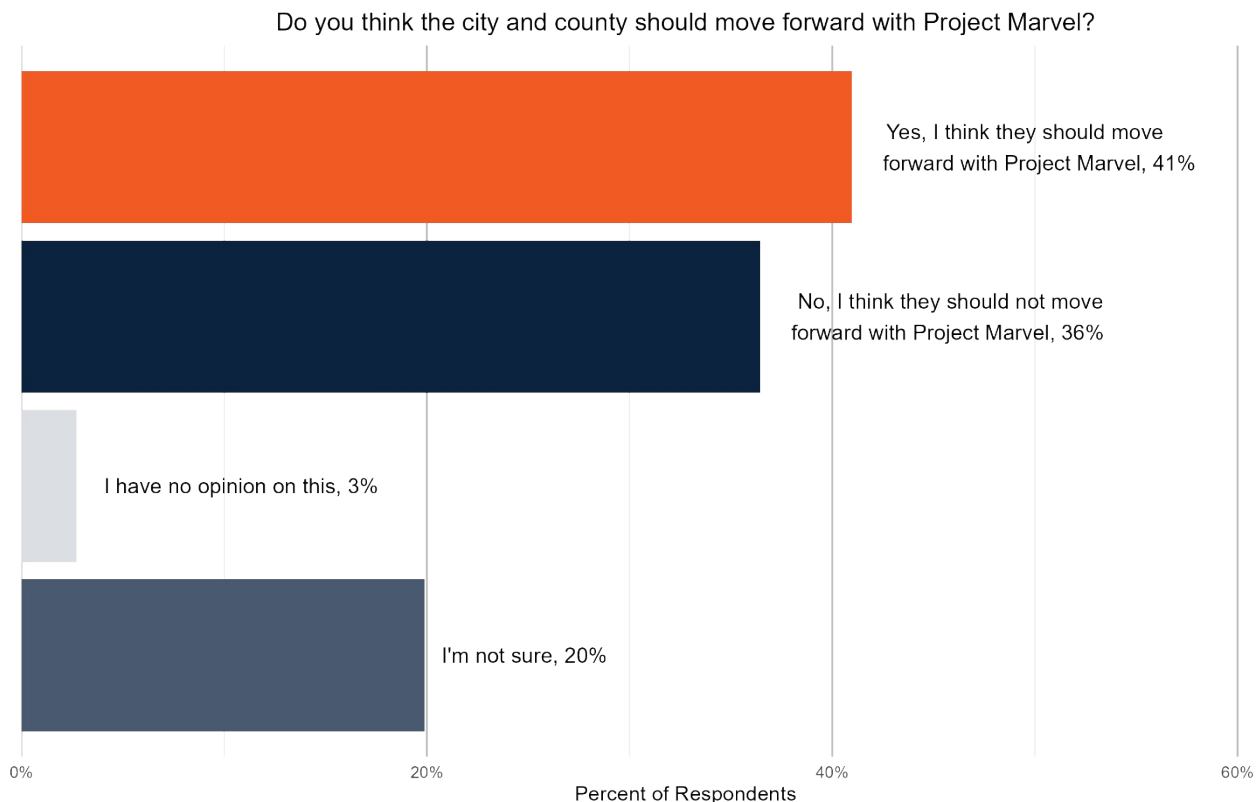
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Courage's lead over Pelaez (2.4 points, MOE= +/- 2.8%) is not significant, but Courage's leads over the remainder of the field are statistically significant. Pelaez's leads over Melissa Cabello Havrda (1.6 points, MOE= +/- 2.3%) and Beto Altamirano (1.9 points, MOE= +/- 2.3%) are not statistically significant, but his leads over the remainder of the group of seven are significant.

Part 2. Local Initiatives: Project Marvel, Missions Stadium, and VIA Green Line

San Antonio likely voters reported tepid support for the City of San Antonio and Bexar County plan to redevelop a portion of Hemisfair in downtown San Antonio into a sports and entertainment district. The plan, code-named "Project Marvel," includes construction of a new arena for the San Antonio Spurs, a land bridge over Interstate 37, and expansions of the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center and the Alamodome. About 41% said they think the city and county should move forward with Project Marvel, 36% said they think they should not move forward with Project Marvel, 20% were not sure and 3% had no opinion.



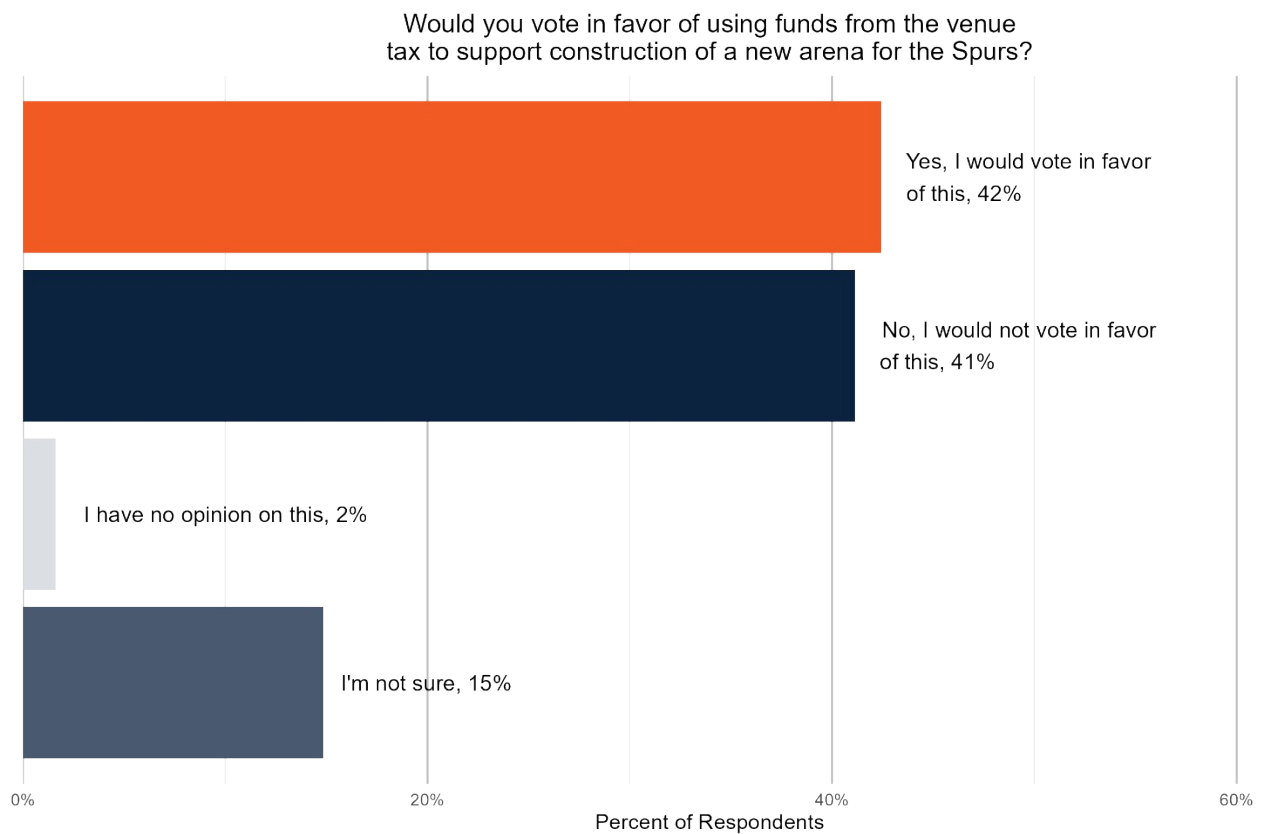
Note: values may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding

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As part of the Project Marvel plan, some of the funding for the new San Antonio Spurs arena could come from Bexar County's venue tax, which is a tax on rental cars and hotel rooms. However, Bexar County voters would have to vote to approve this, potentially in November 2025. Regardless of their overall position on Project Marvel, voters were also asked if they would vote in favor of using funds from the venue tax to support construction of a new arena for the Spurs. A slim plurality (42%) indicated they would vote in favor of this, with 41% saying they would not, and 15% unsure.



Note: values may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding

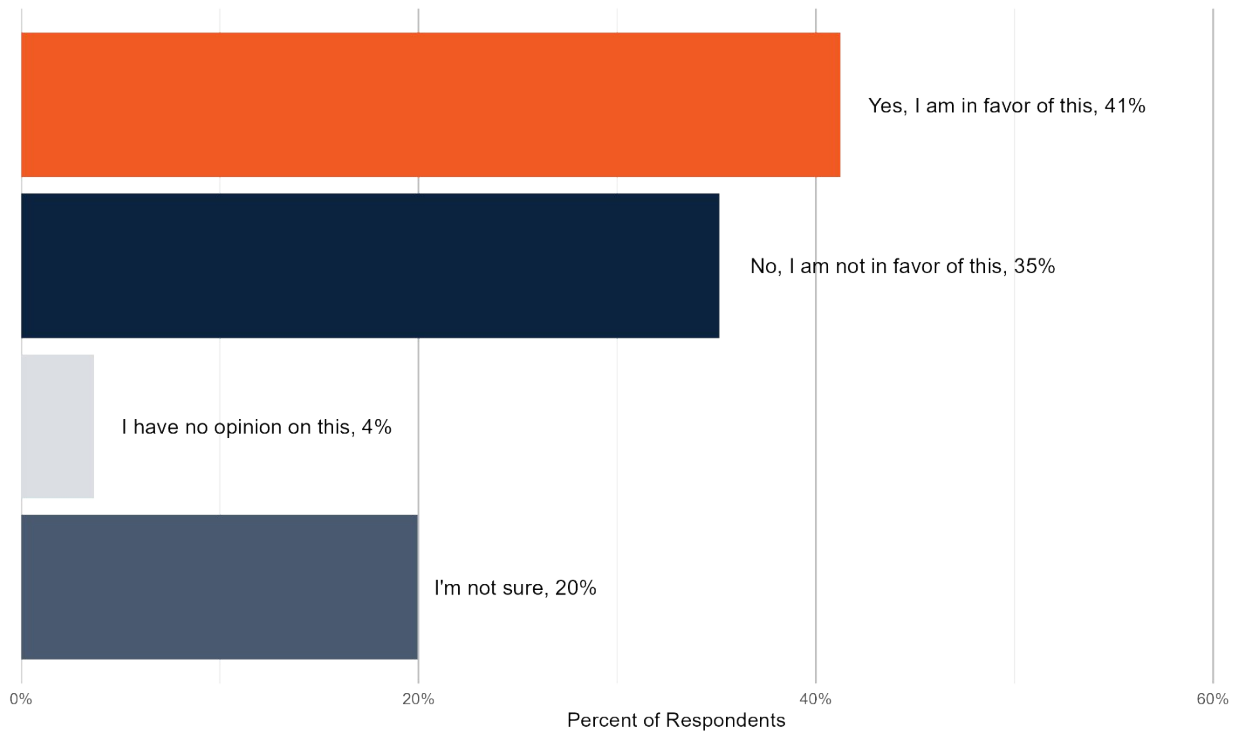
Voters also weighed in on a separate plan proposed by the owners of the San Antonio Missions minor league baseball team to build a new 7,500-8,000 seat stadium just north of downtown San Antonio, with costs offset by nearby land development. Like the support for Project Marvel, about 41% were in favor of the Missions ballpark plan, with 35% opposed and about 20% unsure. These numbers are also similar to the support the plan received when CPOR last asked about the Missions ballpark plan (September 2024): 40% of (presidential election) likely voters supported it, with 35% not in favor of the plan, and more than quarter unsure or lacking an opinion.

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Are you in favor of the plan to build the new downtown stadium for the San Antonio Missions?



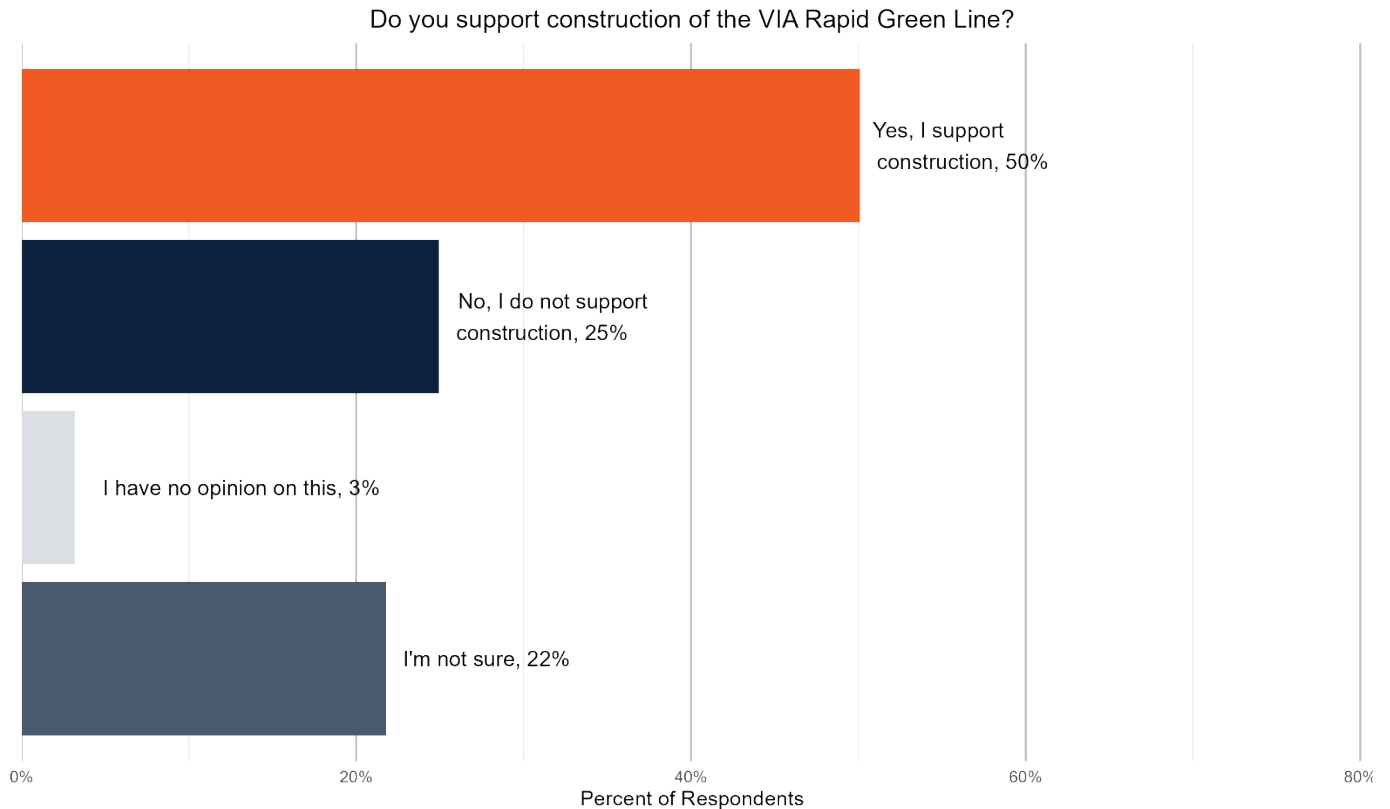
Note: values may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding

Plans to construct the VIA Rapid Green Line, a rapid bus transit line that will run from the San Antonio Airport to the Mission reach mostly along San Pedro Avenue, drew little opposition from likely voters. Half (50%) were supportive of the Green Line plan, with 25% opposed, 22% not sure, and 3% reporting they had no opinion.

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Part 3. Crime and Safety

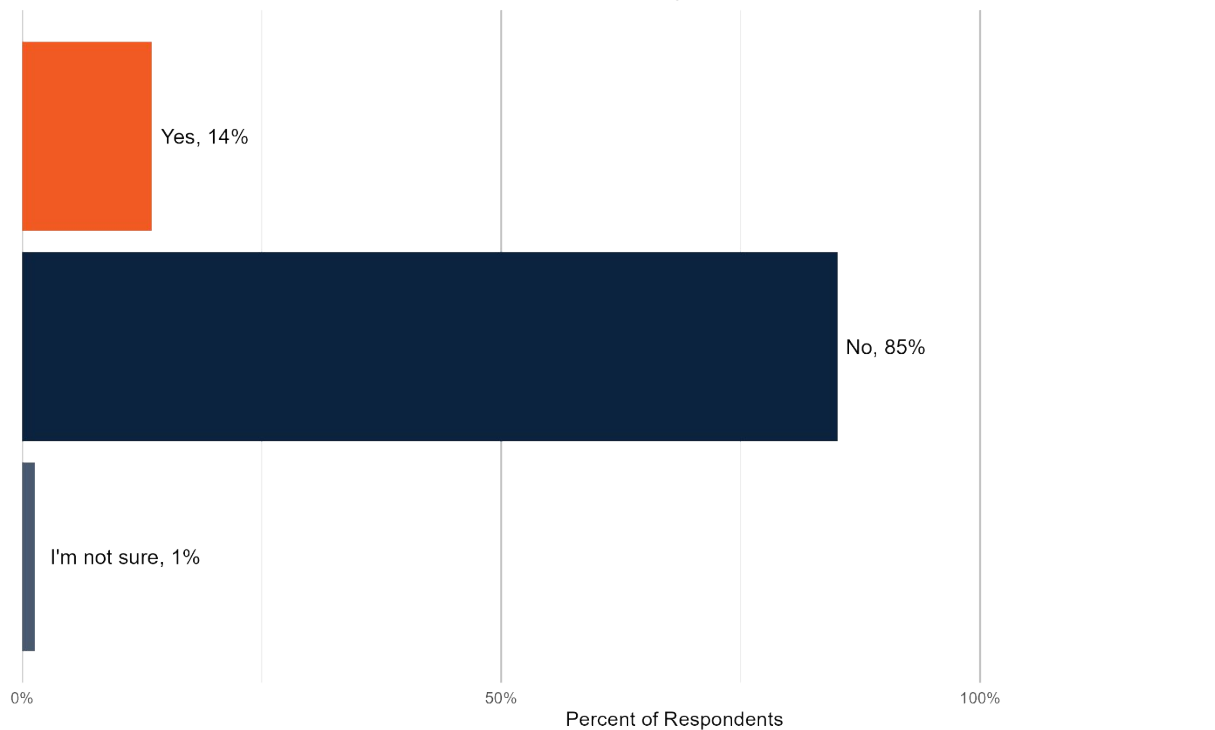
Results from CPOR's November 2024 Bexar County Voter Panel Study revealed that voters cited crime (15%), homelessness (9%), and affordable housing (9%) as the most important issues facing Bexar County. Because crime was cited as the top issue, San Antonio likely voters were asked to provide some perspectives on crime and safety in the February 2025 poll. Most voters (85%) reported that neither they nor anyone in their household has recently been a victim of a crime--including robbery, assault, fraud, or other types of crime--in the past 12 months. 14% reported that someone in their household had been victimized and 1% stated they were unsure.

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Have you or anyone in your household been the victim of a crime in the past 12 months?



Note: values may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding

Most San Antonio voters also said they felt either very safe (61%) or somewhat safe (32%) in their neighborhoods during the day, with 4% reporting they felt neither safe nor unsafe. Less than 1 in 100 (0.5%) reported feeling very unsafe in their neighborhood during the day, with 3% stating they felt somewhat unsafe.

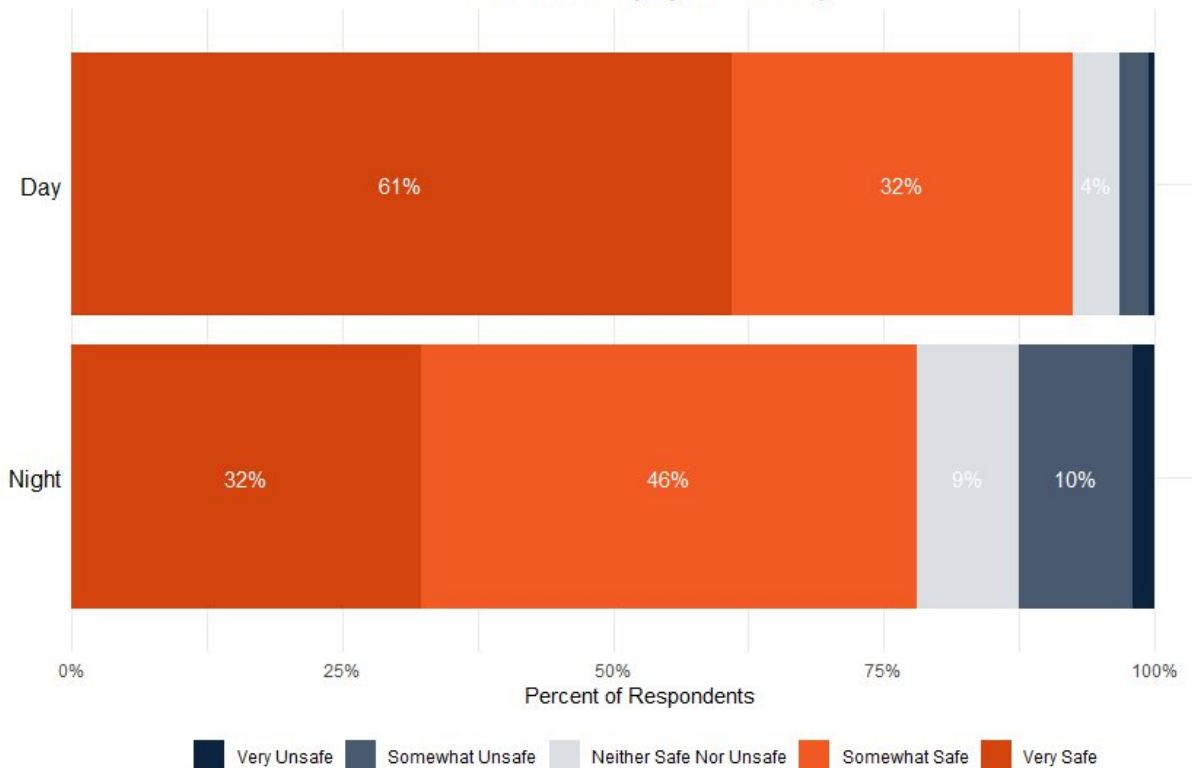
Voters reported feeling less safe in their neighborhoods at night. Only 32% reported feeling very safe at night, with 46% reporting feeling somewhat safe. 9% said they felt neither safe nor unsafe, with 10% reporting they felt somewhat unsafe. A small proportion (2%) reported feeling very unsafe in their neighborhoods at night.

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Perceived Safety by Time of Day



Note: values may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding

Part 4. Evaluations of City, State, and National Government

Direction City, State, and Country are Heading In

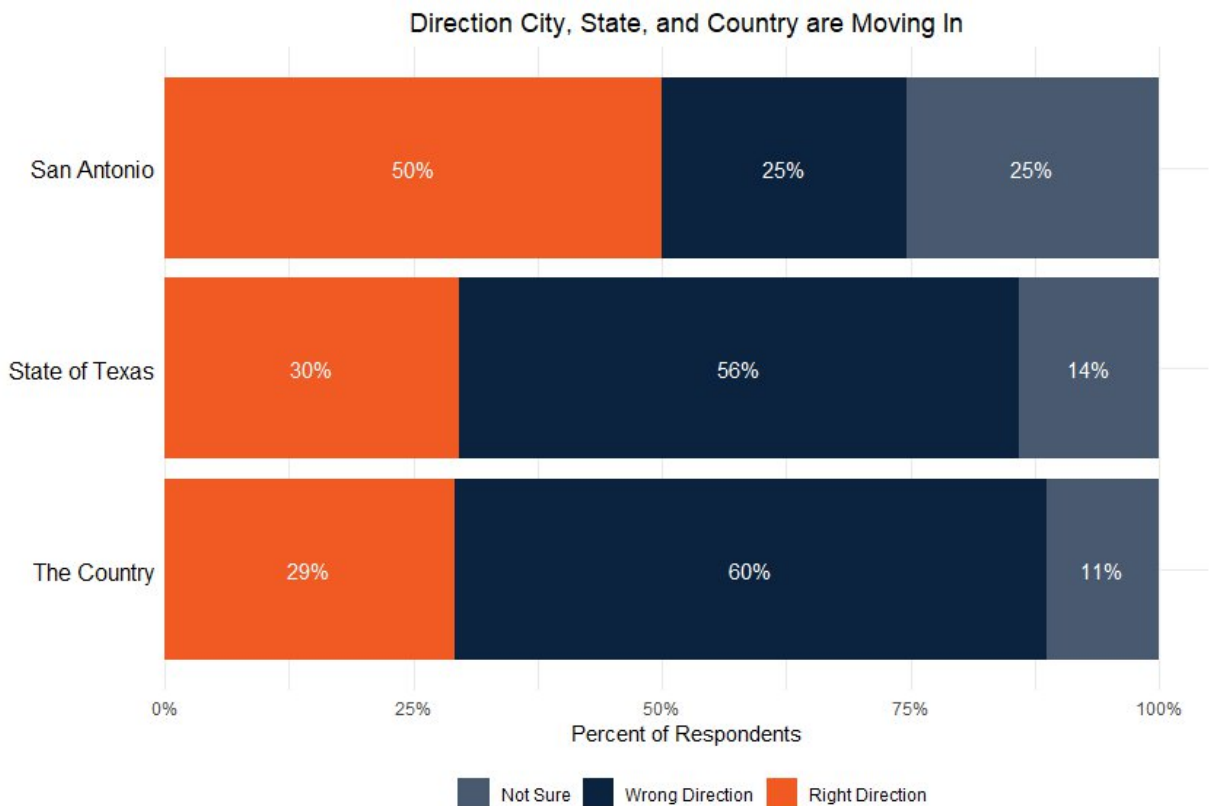
Voters assessed the direction they thought the City of San Antonio, the State of Texas, and the country were headed in. Similar to the results of previous CPOR surveys, local voters were the most sanguine about the direction of the City the San Antonio: 50% selected “right direction” and 25% selected “wrong direction,” with a quarter of respondents unsure.

San Antonio voters were more pessimistic about the direction the state and country were moving in. Majorities believed the state (56%) and country (60%) were moving in the wrong direction. The percentage of voters who thought the state (30%) and country (29%) were moving in the right direction were similar.

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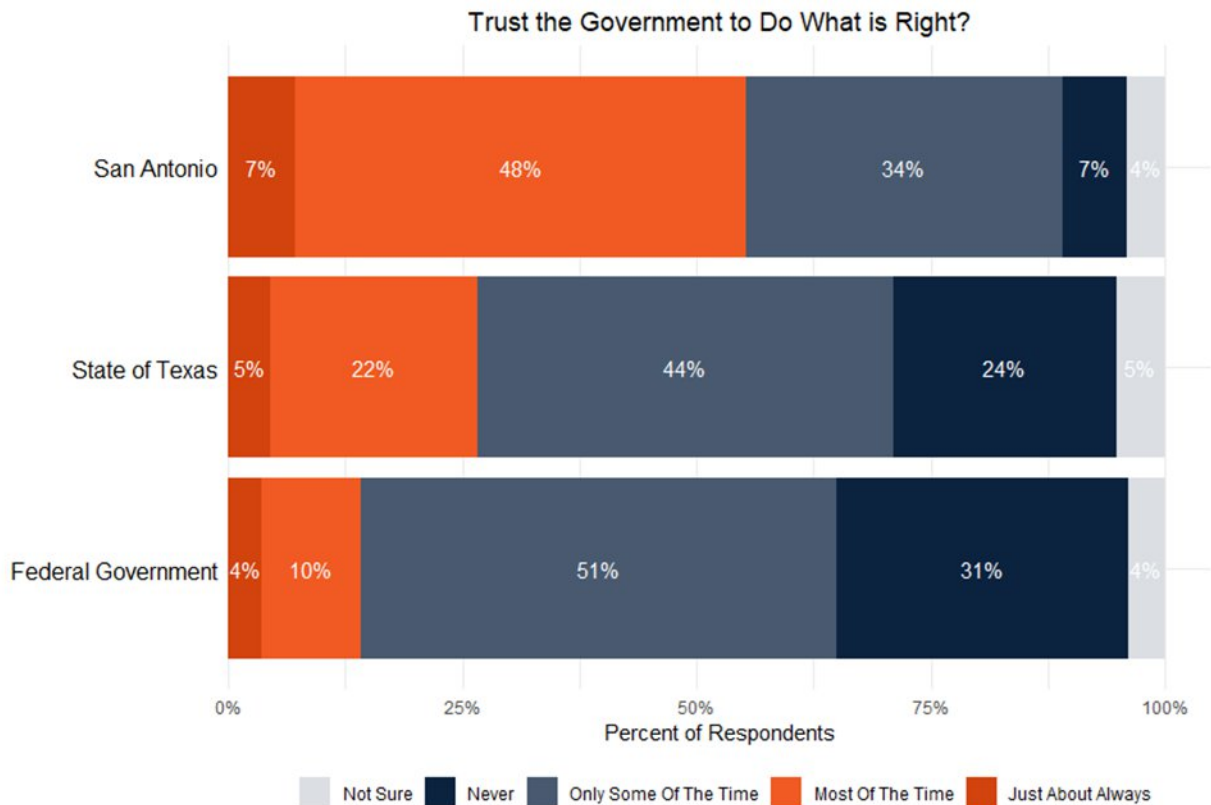
Trust in Government: National, State, and Local

A majority of San Antonio voters trust the government of the City of San Antonio to do the right thing just about always (7%) or most of the time (48%). This number fell to 27% for the State of Texas and 14% for the federal government. Whereas only 7% said they thought they could never trust local government to do what is right, 24% said that the state government could never be trusted, and 31% said the same about the federal government.

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Approval of Local, State, and National Leaders

Higher marks for government at the local level also extend to approval of public officials. A majority (58%) strongly approved or somewhat approved of the job Rob Nirenberg was doing as mayor of San Antonio, with 22% strongly or somewhat disapproving of his job performance. This is consistent with CPOR's previous polls gauging approval of Nirenberg's performance.

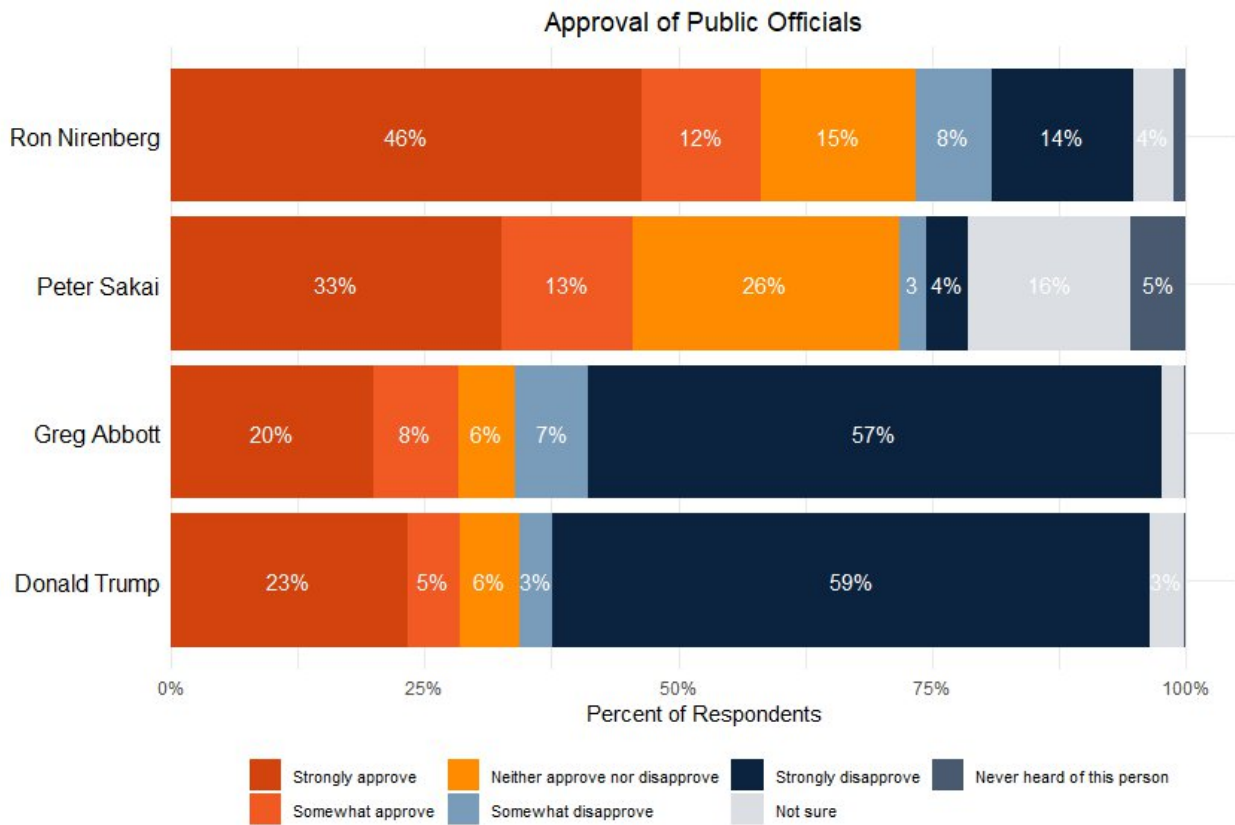
One notable difference from previous CPOR findings is familiarity levels with Peter Sakai, the Bexar County Judge: while 21% of San Antonio voters said they had never heard of Sakai or were not sure about his performance, this is notably smaller than the 37% of Bexar County voters who said the same in CPOR's September 2024 Local Voter Poll. Sakai's approval number (46%) was also higher (previously 28%) while the percentage who disapproved (7%) remained low. Differences with previous findings do not necessarily mean familiarity with Sakai has grown, however; whereas the samples from CPOR's fall poll were meant to resemble presidential electorate, the sample for this poll was meant to resemble the much smaller group of voters who vote in municipal elections and, thus, are more likely to be familiar with local officials in general.

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Disapproval of both Governor Greg Abbott and President Donald Trump was high. More than half (64%) of voters voiced disapproval of Abbott’s performance as governor of Texas, with 28% approving. A similar percentage (28%) approved of Donald Trump’s performance as president, with 3% somewhat disapproving and 59% strongly disapproving of his job performance.



Part 5. Methodology

Sample and Sampling Frame

The sample consisted of likely voters residing in the City of San Antonio, TX. The sampling frame consisted of all registered voters with San Antonio residential addresses and verified email addresses. Information on registered voters, voter history, and their verified contact information came from a list purchased from the data broker, L2. Respondents who did not consent to participate, indicated that they did not live in the City of San Antonio, or indicated they were not likely to vote at all in the May 2025 City of San Antonio municipal elections were ineligible to participate in the poll. The survey was fielded from February 17th to February 20th, 2025.

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Sampling Methodology, Recruitment, and Weighting

Stratified registration-based sampling (RBS) was used to select the sample. Registered voters with verified email addresses and residential addresses in the City of San Antonio were stratified into three categories, based on personal vote history in prior San Antonio mayoral elections: voters, abstainers, and new registrants with no vote history. Estimates of the rates at which each of the three strata were expected to vote in the May 2025 election were then produced based on an analysis of previous San Antonio mayoral elections: the rates at which 2017 voters, abstainers, and new registrants voted in the 2019 election were calculated, as were the rates for these groups in the 2021 and 2023 elections. Weighted average turnout rates for each of the groups were then used as the benchmark voting rates for the May 2025 election. The number of registered voters in each stratum was then multiplied by the estimated voting rates to produce the fraction of the sample each stratum should make up. After the survey was fielded, data were weighted by these strata fractions and self-reported likelihood of voting.

Mode and Language

Respondents were recruited via email, which provided a link to the survey, hosted on the computer-assisted self-interviewing platform, Qualtrics. Reminder emails were sent out to subjects who had not completed the survey several days after the initial recruitment email was sent out. The survey was bilingual. Respondents were given the option to complete the survey in either English or Spanish.

Sample Size, Sampling Error, and Response Rates

The samples consisted of 683 likely voters. Approximately 70,000 voters were randomly selected in total for participation in the poll. 1,059 individuals began the survey and 17 respondents were deemed ineligible for one of several reasons (see Sample and Sampling Frame). The response rate was approximately 1.2%, and the completion rate was 76%. The (unadjusted) margin of error for the poll was +/- 3.8%.

Data Processing and Quality

Bots, fraudulent responses, and multiple submissions were prevented via tools included on the survey platform Qualtrics. Surveys completed in less than two minutes were flagged for straightlining, but no surveys in this poll violated the two-minute rule.

Acknowledgement of Limitations

As with all research, this poll has limitations, and we acknowledge the unmeasured error associated with all forms of public opinion research.

For more information about the poll's methodology, contact Dr. Bryan Gervais via email at bryan.gervais@utsa.edu or phone at (210)458-5644.

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Appendix

	Would you say you follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, some of the time, only now and then, or hardly at all?			
	Hardly at all	Only now and then	Some of the time	Most of the time
Sex				
Female	0%	4%	21%	33%
Male	0%	2%	9%	29%
Other	0%	0%	0%	0%
Prefer not to say	0%	0%	1%	1%
Education				
Less than HS	0%	0%	0%	0%
HS/GED	0%	1%	3%	4%
Some college, assoc., cert.	0%	2%	10%	15%
Bachelor's or more	0%	2%	19%	43%
Prefer not to say	0%	0%	0%	0%
Party ID				
Democrat	0%	2%	13%	29%
Republican	0%	1%	8%	18%
Independent	0%	2%	10%	15%
Prefer not to say	0%	0%	0%	0%
Ideology				
Liberal	0%	0%	10%	24%
Moderate	0%	1%	9%	15%
Conservative	0%	2%	10%	20%
Haven't thought much about this	0%	1%	3%	3%
Prefer not to say	0%	0%	0%	1%

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	In May, San Antonio residents will be heading to the polls to cast votes for Mayor and the City Council. How much thought have you given to the May local election?			
	None	Only a little	A lot	Quite a lot
Sex				
Female	2%	24%	21%	11%
Male	3%	15%	13%	9%
Other	0%	0%	0%	0%
Prefer not to say	0%	1%	1%	1%
Education				
Less than HS	0%	0%	0%	0%
HS/GED	1%	4%	2%	2%
Some college, assoc., cert.	1%	10%	10%	6%
Bachelor's or more	4%	25%	23%	13%
Prefer not to say	0%	0%	0%	0%
Party ID				
Democrat	3%	19%	14%	8%
Republican	2%	9%	10%	7%
Independent	1%	12%	11%	5%
Prefer not to say	0%	0%	0%	0%
Ideology				
Liberal	1%	15%	12%	6%
Moderate	2%	9%	10%	5%
Conservative	2%	12%	11%	7%
Haven't thought much about this	0%	4%	1%	2%
Prefer not to say	0%	0%	0%	0%

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	Thinking about the May election in which San Antonio residents will vote for Mayor and City Council, how likely is it that you will vote in the local election?				
	Slightly likely	Moderately likely	Very likely	Extremely likely	Don't know
Sex					
Female	2%	3%	9%	44%	0%
Male	0%	2%	5%	32%	0%
Other	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Prefer not to say	0%	0%	1%	2%	0%
Education					
Less than HS	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
HS/GED	0%	0%	2%	6%	0%
Some college, assoc., cert.	1%	2%	7%	18%	0%
Bachelor's or more	1%	3%	6%	54%	0%
Prefer not to say	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Party ID					
Democrat	1%	2%	6%	35%	0%
Republican	0%	2%	3%	23%	0%
Independent	1%	2%	6%	19%	0%
Prefer not to say	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Ideology					
Liberal	0%	2%	5%	28%	0%
Moderate	0%	2%	4%	20%	0%
Conservative	1%	1%	5%	26%	0%
Haven't thought much about this	1%	1%	2%	3%	0%
Prefer not to say	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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Survey Question Wording and Response Options

Survey Question Wording	Response Options
Do you live in the City of San Antonio or somewhere else in Bexar County?	I live in the City of San Antonio / I live in Bexar County but not in the City of San Antonio / I do not live in the City of San Antonio or somewhere else in Bexar County
Would you say you follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, some of the time, only now and then, or hardly at all?	Most of the time / Some of the time / Only now and then / Hardly at all
In May, San Antonio residents will be heading to the polls to cast votes for Mayor and the City Council. How much thought have you given to the May local election?	Quite a lot / A lot / Only a little / None
Thinking about the May election in which San Antonio residents will vote for Mayor and City Council, how likely is it that you will vote in the local election?	Extremely likely / Very likely / Moderately likely / Slightly likely / Not likely at all / Don't know
A number of individuals are running for Mayor of San Antonio in the May 2025 election. Which of the following candidates for Mayor are you most likely to vote for?	[Randomized list of candidates: Beto Altamirano / Santos Alvarado / John Courage / Armando Dominguez / Arturo Espinosa / Adriana Rocha Garcia / Brandon Gonzales / April Guadarrama / Melissa Cabello Havrda / Chris Herring / Gina Ortiz Jones / Jade McCullough / James "Jae" Melvin / Robert Melvin / Rolando Pablos / Manny Pelaez / Clayton Perry / Christopher Reyes / Bill Ruppel / Robert Salinas / Michael "Sam" Samaniego / Mauricio Mau Sanchez / Sonia Traut / Diana Flores Uriegas / Andrew Fernandez Vicencio / Tim Westley / G Zambrano] / Someone else / I'm not familiar with any of the candidates / Don't know / I would not vote in this race
Next, we'd like to learn about how you think things are going. Generally speaking, would you say things in San Antonio are headed in the right direction, the wrong direction, or are you not sure?	Right direction / Wrong direction / Not sure

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Survey Question Wording	Response Options
Generally speaking, would you say things in the state of Texas are headed in the right direction, the wrong direction, or are you not sure?	Right direction / Wrong direction / Not sure
And finally, generally speaking, would you say things in the country are headed in the right direction, the wrong direction, or are you not sure?	Right direction / Wrong direction / Not sure
How much of the time do you think you can trust the San Antonio city government to do what is right?	Just about always / Most of the time / Only some of the time / Never / Not sure
How much of the time do you think you can trust the government of the State of Texas in Austin to do what is right?	Just about always / Most of the time / Only some of the time / Never / Not sure
How much of the time do you think you can trust the federal government in Washington to do what is right?	Just about always / Most of the time / Only some of the time / Never / Not sure
Do you approve or disapprove of the way Ron Nirenberg is handling his job as mayor of the City of San Antonio?	Approve / Disapprove / Neither approve nor disapprove / Not sure / Never heard of this person
Do you approve or disapprove of the way Peter Sakai is handling his job as Bexar County Judge?	Approve / Disapprove / Neither approve nor disapprove / Not sure / Never heard of this person
Do you approve or disapprove of the way Greg Abbott is handling his job as governor of Texas?	Approve / Disapprove / Neither approve nor disapprove / Not sure / Never heard of this person
Do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as president of the United States?	Approve / Disapprove / Neither approve nor disapprove / Not sure / Never heard of this person
[Official approve follow-up]: Do you strongly [approve/disapprove] or only somewhat [approve/disapprove] of the job [official] is doing?	Strongly [approve/disapprove]/Somewhat [approve/disapprove]
The City of San Antonio and Bexar County are considering a plan to redevelop a portion of Hemisfair in downtown San	Yes, I think they should move forward with Project Marvel / No, I think they should not move forward with Project Marvel/ I'm not sure / I have no

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Survey Question Wording	Response Options
<p>Antonio into a sports and entertainment district. The plan, code-named "Project Marvel," includes construction of a new arena for the San Antonio Spurs, a land bridge over Interstate 37, and expansions of the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center and the Alamodome. Do you think the city and county should move forward with Project Marvel?</p>	<p>opinion on this</p>
<p>As part of the Project Marvel plan, some of the funding for the new San Antonio Spurs arena could come from Bexar County's venue tax, which is a tax on rental cars and hotel rooms. However, Bexar County voters would have to vote to approve this. Would you vote in favor of using funds from the venue tax to support construction of a new arena for the Spurs?</p>	<p>Yes, I would vote in favor of this/ No, I would not vote in favor of this/ I'm not sure / I have no opinion on this</p>
<p>The owners of the San Antonio Missions minor league baseball team have proposed a new 7,500-8,000 seat stadium just north of downtown San Antonio, with costs offset by nearby land development. Are you in favor of the plan to build the new stadium?</p>	<p>Yes, I am in favor of this/ No, I am not in favor of this/ I'm not sure / I have no opinion on this</p>
<p>San Antonio is planning to start work on the VIA Rapid Green Line, a rapid bus transit line that will run from the San Antonio Airport to the Mission reach, mostly along San Pedro Avenue. The Green Line, which is referred to as "advance rapid transit," is meant to provide more frequent, reliable, and convenient bus service and develop a transit-oriented corridor around San Pedro Avenue. Some residents of neighborhoods around San Pedro Avenue worry that the Green Line will result in more car traffic on their</p>	<p>Yes, I support construction / No, I do not support construction / I'm not sure / I have no opinion on this</p>

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Survey Question Wording	Response Options
streets, due to a reduction in lanes available to cars. A federal grant would pay for more than half of the project. Do you support construction of the Green Line?	
Have you or anyone in your household been the victim of a crime in the past 12 months? This could include robbery, assault, fraud, or other types of crime.	Yes / No / I'm not sure
How safe do you feel in your neighborhood [during the day/ at night]?	Very Safe / Somewhat Safe / Neither Safe Nor Unsafe / Somewhat Unsafe / Very Unsafe
What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?	Less than high school / High school diploma or equivalent / Some college, no degree / Associate degree / Bachelor's degree / Master's degree / Doctoral degree / Professional degree (JD, MD)
Choose one or more races that you consider yourself to be.	White / Black or African American / American Indian or Alaska Native / Asian / Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander / Other (specify)
Are you Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino?	Spanish / Hispanic / Latino / None of these
What is your sex?	Male / Female / Other / Prefer not to say
Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, or an Independent?	Republican / Democrat / Independent
[If Republican or Democrat]: Would you call yourself a strong [Republican/Democrat] or a not very strong [Republican/Democrat]?	Strong / Not very strong
[If Independent]: Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican or Democratic party?	Republican / Democratic / Neither
Where would you place yourself on the political ideology scale?	Extremely liberal / Liberal / Slightly liberal / Moderate / Slightly conservative / Conservative / Extremely conservative / Haven't thought much about this

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