



**TO:** Greg Smith  
**FROM:** Andrew Thibault, EMC Research  
**RE:** Public Safety Initiative Survey Results  
**DATE:** March 2, 2020

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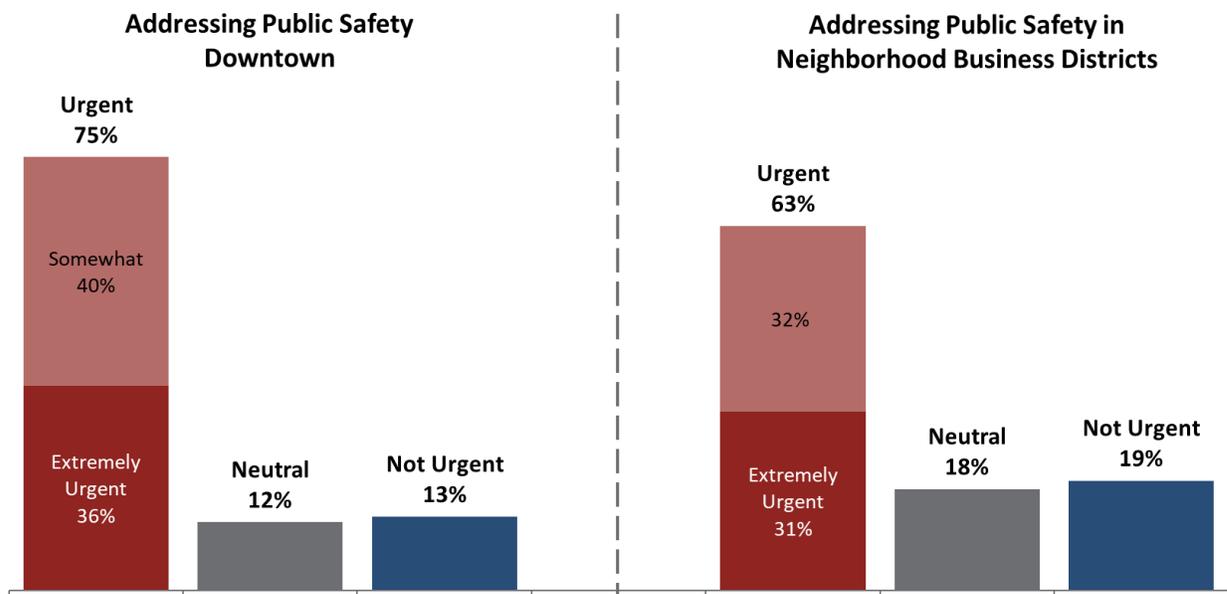
### METHODOLOGY

EMC Research completed 500 live telephone interviews – including landlines and cell phones – among likely November 2020 voters in the City of Seattle. The overall margin of error for these results is  $\pm 4.4$  points at the 95% confidence interval.

### KEY FINDINGS

*Seattle voters feel unsafe in downtown Seattle and most feel it is urgent to address public safety in downtown Seattle and in neighborhood business districts.*

- A majority of voters (52%) say they feel less safe in downtown Seattle today than they did two years ago.
- Three quarters of likely voters (75%) think “addressing public safety and drug-related crime on streets in **downtown Seattle**” is an urgent issue and nearly two-thirds (63%) say “addressing public safety and drug-related crime on streets in **neighborhood business districts**” is urgent.

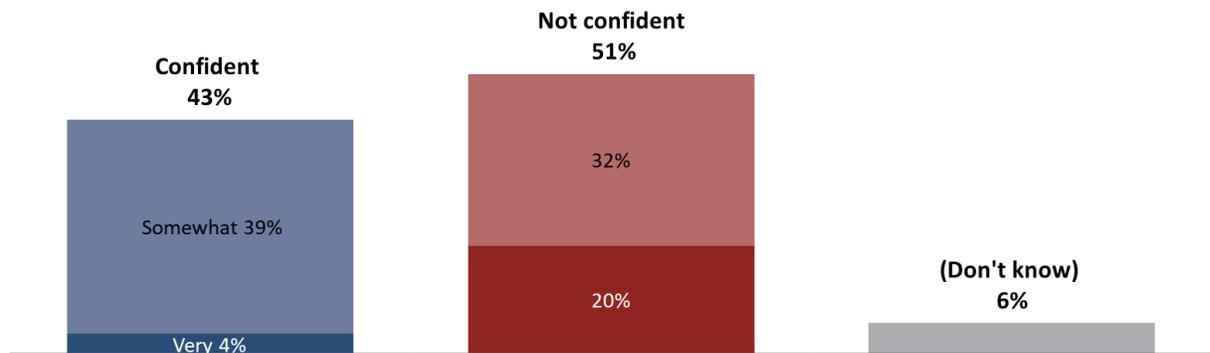


Q19. How urgent an issue is addressing public safety and drug-related crime on streets in Downtown Seattle?  
Q20. And using the same scale, how urgent an issue is addressing public safety and drug-related crime on streets in neighborhood business districts?

Voters are **not** confident that the Mayor and City Council are pursuing the right approach to improving safety in downtown Seattle.

- A majority of voters (51%) say they are not confident that the Mayor and City Council are pursuing the right approach to improving safety downtown. Another four-in-ten (39%) say they are only somewhat confident in the City’s approach. Only 4% are very confident.

**Confidence In City’s Public Safety Approach**



Q22. Thinking about the Mayor and City Council, how confident are you that they are pursuing the right approach to improving public safety in Downtown Seattle? Would you say you are very confident, somewhat confident, not that confident, or not at all confident?

Despite strong concerns about public safety and a lack of confidence in the City’s current approach, Seattle voters continue to be divided over how to best approach the issue.

**A:** Seattle has reached a tipping point. Street crime is getting worse because there are no consequences. Downtown Seattle and neighborhood business districts are becoming unwelcoming and unsafe for residents, local businesses, workers, and visitors because of aggressive, threatening, and drug-related criminal behavior. The City urgently needs to do more to make Seattle safer.

OR

**B:** Like other rapidly growing cities, we face challenges, but statistics show that crime is actually down in Seattle. Overall, the City has done a good job balancing enforcement with support programs that help address underlying issues and give people a way out instead of just locking them up. Stepped up enforcement is not the answer.

**The City urgently needs to do more**  
44%



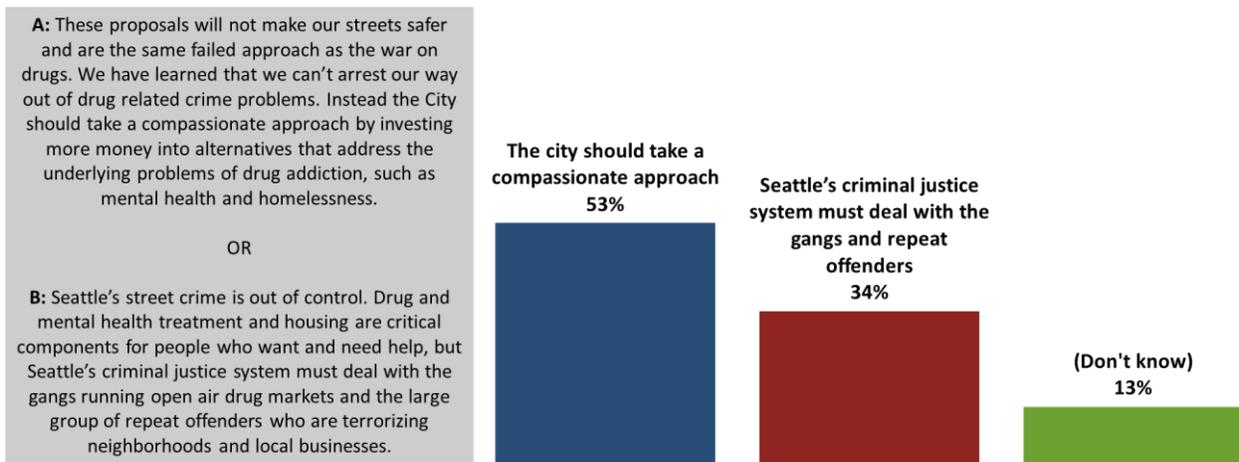
**Stepped up enforcement is not the answer**  
47%



*There is strong majority support for all nine components tested in the survey as part a potential public safety ballot measure.*

- Support is strongest for:
  - ✓ “Coordinating enforcement and support services to deal with prolific criminal offenders who repeatedly cycle through the criminal justice system. Having dedicated prosecutors, probation workers, and non-profit service providers in each police precinct to coordinate these efforts.” (84% support / 49% strongly support)
  - ✓ “Adding 150 police officers to bring Seattle up to the national average of 21 officers for every 10,000 adults.” (79% / 49%)
  - ✓ “Establishing a 100-bed mandatory treatment and support services center for violent offenders with drug and alcohol addictions who refuse to follow court orders for treatment and case management.” (78% / 41%)
  - ✓ “Creating a dedicated court within the Seattle Municipal Court to monitor repeat offenders and ensure they comply with court orders.” (77% / 43%)

*Although there is strong majority support for all the individual components tested – including those that focus more on enforcement – a majority of Seattle voters still prioritize an overall approach that is focused on compassion and investing in addressing the underlying issues, rather than a strict enforcement approach.*



*Most voters agree that “pursuing a public safety initiative is a good idea because it will help send a message to prosecutors and city hall that if they don't take action to address this issue, Seattle voters will.”*

- Two-thirds of voters (67%) favor pursuing a public safety initiative. Only one-in-four are opposed and there is almost no strong opposition.