

## Findings

- \* Most residents throughout San Diego County don't believe that ethical problems of elected officials have become a serious crisis. Despite the unfolding scandal surrounding three members of the San Diego City Council, City residents are no more likely than County residents to see things as a serious crisis. Younger residents are downright nonchalant about an ethical crisis as a majority of those under the age of 35 feel there is no crisis or are unsure what to make of the current local political climate. However, concern is much more serious among those who are likely to vote. Fifty-two percent believe we're currently facing a serious ethical crisis and 28% label it "extreme."
- \* Despite the story's titillating aspects few people are very familiar with it and most (52%) admit to being only somewhat familiar with it. The 20% who are paying close attention tend to be older, more conservative and more likely to vote than the general population. Level of familiarity with the case is only slightly higher in the City than in the County.
- \* County residents are doing a good job of waiting for all the facts to come in before passing judgement. While not outright presuming innocence, 62% say they're unsure how many, if any, of the three targeted Council Members are guilty of a crime. However, fewer voters are unsure.
- \* Of those with an opinion, most believe at least one Council Member is guilty though 36% feel none are guilty. Voters and those paying close attention to the case are more certain they know who's guilty and who's not. But they evidently see more ambiguities in the case since fewer think any of the Council Members are actually guilty. The ratio of any guilt/no guilt ratio is 1.2:1 (28% vs. 22%) for likely voters, 1.8:1 (27% vs. 15%) for other voters and 2.4:1 (19% vs. 8%) for non-voters. Voters are clearly more skeptical of the charges than non-voters. I believe this represents a ray of hope for the three targeted Council Members.
- \* The survey shows that most south city residents who voice an opinion believe their representatives are guilty. In contrast, opinion is split almost evenly north of Interstate 8. Do south city residents know something north city don't? Again, I think this is good news for Inzunza in particular. If he can avoid indictment and clear his name – perhaps a big if – he will not have lost too many votes on the north side and have vindicated himself among his constituents on the south side.
- \* But the City Council and perhaps other local elected bodies are approaching a tipping point. Despite the finding that over two-thirds of County residents do not feel local ethics rises to anything more than a minor crisis, over half believe that, if any of charges are true, this scandal is just "the tip of the iceberg for corruption in San Diego." Voters fall into line with these sentiments. So things would get ugly if convictions eventually result.

- \* When it comes to how they would manage their own hypothetical campaign for local office, most voters claim they'd take the high road by only accepting contributions from people they agree with. Only 32% would take legal contributions from "almost anyone." Females, renters and very conservative voters are more likely than their counterparts to say they'd limit contributors to only people they agree with. But voters – especially likely ones -- buck this trend again showing that they perceive campaign financing in a more nuanced light.

### **How the KPBS/Competitive Edge Research Poll Was Conducted**

The survey was conducted by professional telephone interviewers on June 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> and contains 401 responses. Qualified respondents were limited to adults residing in San Diego County. The random sample was provided by Scientific Telephone Samples, Inc.

Verification procedures were followed and no surveys were rejected in the process. Editing, coding, computer processing and tabulation of the data were done at Competitive Edge's office in San Diego. The computer tabulations were produced using SPSSPC+ version 11.0, a statistical package copyrighted by SPSS, Inc.

The confidence level associated with samples of this type is such that, with a question where the respondents answer 50% "yes" and 50% "no," 95% of the time the results are within plus or minus 4.9% (in each sample) of the *true value*, where true value refers to the results obtained if it were possible to interview every possible qualified respondent. The degree of error is reduced when responses have larger (e.g. 60%-40%, 70%-30%, etc.) percentage differences. Conversely, the margin of error is increased somewhat when a subset of the entire 402 responses is analyzed.