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Residents Give High Marks to Town Services Town to use survey to Plan for Future

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How do residents feel about Town services? They're feeling good in #ChapelHill.

Eighty-five percent of the residents surveyed, who had an opinion, were “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with the overall quality of services provided by the Town of Chapel Hill -- significantly higher than the national average of 56 percent. The satisfaction rating has remained consistent with a slight increase of 3 percent since Chapel Hill first surveyed residents in 2009.

“Chapel Hill residents have consistently rated Town services highly – a source of pride for all of us,” Town Manager Roger Stancil said. “Residents are consistent in praising the work of Town employees and the high level of service they receive every day. The survey also identifies community priorities and areas of concern. This feedback informs Council decisions to apply public resources to address the things that matter the most.”



“The survey helps us learn from the perspectives of our residents, including those who might not engage in traditional public processes, and helps us see changes over time in those perspectives.”

The Town has conducted four surveys over the past seven years. The results are used in Town planning processes, budgeting, and evaluation of services. The survey has helped the Council to identify improvement projects targeted in a \$40.3 million general obligation (G.O.) bond that was approved by voters in November 2015. In the coming years, these bonds will fund priority needs that the community values the most -- streets and sidewalks, trails and greenways, recreation facilities, solid waste facilities and stormwater improvements.

Benchmarking data compares Chapel Hill to similar cities in the Southeast and the United States. Evaluating the survey responses over seven years, the Town is also able to compare perceptions of its services over time. The areas of high satisfaction have remained consistent over the years, with some areas moving up or down only by a few notches.

The Town hired ETC Institute to conduct the statistically valid survey. ETC mailed 2,000 surveys to randomly selected Chapel Hill households in October and November 2015. A telephone survey was conducted as a follow-up to the mailed survey. There were 411 residents who completed the survey (a 21 percent response rate).

To review the complete results of the Community Survey, find the extensive report online at www.townofchapelhill.org/survey

2015 Chapel Hill Community Survey Highlights

Areas of High Satisfaction

The major categories of Town services that had the highest levels of satisfaction were the overall quality of public library services (94 percent), the overall quality of public safety services (88 percent), and the overall quality of Town parks and recreation programs and facilities (80 percent).

1. Public Library services
2. Public safety services
3. Overall quality of services provided by the Town
4. Parks and Recreation programs and facilities

Importance – Satisfaction Ratings (indicating community priorities)

Over the past four surveys, these priority areas have consistently ranked as the top four priority areas, with some shifts in order.

1. Flow of traffic and congestion
2. How well the Town is preparing for the future
3. How well the Town is managing change
4. Overall value for your tax dollars and fees

Needs Being Met in Chapel Hill

About 96 percent of respondents said that the town's character as a University community played an important role when deciding to live in Chapel Hill. This number has grown by about 10 percent since the Town began conducting the biennial survey in 2009.

1. University community
2. Safety and security
3. Access to RTP
4. Availability of cultural activities/arts
5. Access to restaurants/entertainment

Capital improvements rated as most important

The Bond Referendum approved by voters in November targets the capital needs the community values the most -- streets and sidewalks, trails and greenways, recreation facilities, solid waste facilities and stormwater improvements. Learn more at www.townofchapelhill.org/bondinfo

1. Bicycle lanes/off-road paths
2. Re-development of Downtown
3. Stormwater system improvements
4. Trails and greenways
5. Sidewalk construction

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