



CITY OF SALEM

585 Liberty St SE
Salem, OR 97301

Staff Report

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Date: 10/14/2019

Item #: 5.b.

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Steve Powers, City Manager

SUBJECT:

2019 Community Satisfaction Survey

Ward(s): All Wards

Councilor(s): All Councilors

Neighborhood(s): All Neighborhoods

ISSUE:

Results of the 2019 Community Satisfaction Survey.

RECOMMENDATION:

Information only.

SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND:

As an input to Salem's strategic planning and the City Council's Policy Agenda setting, the City conducted a statistically valid sampling of Salem residents.

FACTS AND FINDINGS:

The September 2019 Community Satisfaction Survey, conducted by DHM and attached (Attachment 1), is one of several data sources that will be considered at the City Council's November 18, 2019 Work Session as the Council begins to consider priorities for the 2020 City Council Policy Agenda. This statistically valid poll was conducted from September 4 to September 9, 2019. The survey was administered in both Spanish and English, and captured responses from 459 residents via phone—both cell and land lines, with an option to do the survey on-line. The purpose of the survey was to

assess residents' satisfaction with City services and their values related to growth and funding.

In December 2016, survey results were used to help develop initial priorities for the Strategic Plan and serve as a baseline measurement for resident perceptions on how the City is performing. To track changes in opinion, the 2019 survey benchmarked several questions from the 2018, 2017, and 2016 surveys.

According to the 2019 survey results, Salem residents expressed satisfaction with core City services such as emergency response, parks, and street lighting. Consistent with responses since 2016, almost 9 of 10 residents are generally satisfied with the services the City provides like police and fire protection, parks and recreation, library, and water and sewer services. Residents also expressed satisfaction with the City's protection of our natural environment and support of arts and culture. Compared with survey responses from 2016, there is a growing concern about whether residents feel their neighborhoods are getting a fair share of City resources. Overall, about four in ten residents think the City is headed in the right direction.

Residents voiced concerns about homelessness and City infrastructure. Homelessness and affordable housing remain a top concern with more residents (41%) listing these issues as the most important issue for Salem. Historically, Salem has provided services to those experiencing homelessness in our community through existing local social service providers with grants totaling \$400,000 each year. More recently, since 2017, Salem has increased investment in affordable housing, allowed for more housing types, and initiated the Homeless Rental Assistance Program. Since its inception, more than 240 people in our community have been housed through the Housing Rental Assistance Program.

Residents also see room for improvement in walking and biking safety, creating more job opportunities, and street maintenance. A majority of residents with experience driving across town during peak traffic hours say it is difficult (82%). Residents also asked to hear more from the City more often. Bicycle and pedestrian safety is an important priority for our roadways. Adding lighting, pedestrian crossing improvements and new bike lanes have helped. Salem has also made investments in off-street bicycle and pedestrian trails.

Courtney Knox Busch
Strategic Initiatives Manager

Attachments:

1. City of Salem 2019 Survey, DHM Research - September 2019