



Staff Report

File #: 20-380
Version: 2

Date: 10/12/2020
Item #: 1.4a.

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Steve Powers, City Manager

SUBJECT:

Revised Staff Report -2020 Community Satisfaction Survey

Ward(s): All Wards

Councilor(s): All Councilors

Neighborhood(s): All Neighborhoods

ISSUE:

Results of the 2020 Community Satisfaction Survey.

RECOMMENDATION:

Information only.

SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND:

As an input to Salem’s Strategic Plan Update and the City Council’s annual Policy Agenda setting, the City conducted a statistically valid sampling of Salem residents.

FACTS AND FINDINGS:

The September 2020 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 16, 2020 Work Session as the Council discusses the Strategic Plan Update and begins to consider priorities for the 2021 City Council Policy Agenda. This statistically valid poll was conducted from September 1 to September 19, 2020. The survey was administered in both Spanish and English, and captured responses from 400 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 2020 survey benchmarked several questions from the 2019, 2018, 2017, and 2016 surveys.

According to the 2020 survey results, Salem residents expressed satisfaction with core City services such as emergency response, parks, and street lighting. Consistent with responses since 2016, at least 8 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. Approximately 70% of 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. Two-thirds say this is both on account of actions the City has taken and circumstances outside the City's control.

Homelessness and affordable housing remain the top concern with half of the residents surveyed (49%). Residents also report dissatisfaction and see room for improvement in coordinating social services to serve needs of homeless in our community (67%) and ensuring that residents of all income levels have access to affordable housing (55%). 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 260 people in our community have been housed through the Housing Rental Assistance Program.

Residents also report dissatisfaction and see room for improvement in creating more job opportunities (31%), planning and development review (31%), and street maintenance (30%). A majority of residents with experience driving across town during peak traffic hours say it is difficult (79%). Residents also asked to hear more from the City more often. In the past six months, some residents report engaging with the City by submitting a comment on a City project (14%), engaging with a City social media post (37%), attending a City Council meeting (7%), and attending an open house or community meeting (12%).

In 2019, the City launched a campaign to help everyone prepare to survive for at least two weeks after a major disaster. We surveyed residents on preparedness again in 2020 to gauge whether we improved. In 2020, more report being very or somewhat prepared (63%) than in 2019 (58%) and more report having already made an emergency kit in 2020 (54%) than in 2019 (41%).

Courtney Knox Busch
Strategic Initiatives Manager

Attachments:

1. City of Salem 2020 Survey, DHM Research - September 2020