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CITY OF MEDICINE CITY OF DURHAM | NORTH CAROLINA

Date: August 20, 2015

To: Thomas J. Bonfield, City Manager
Through: Wanda S. Page, Deputy City Manager
From: Bertha T. Johnson, Budget and Management Services Director
Joshua S. Edwards, Strategic Initiatives Manager
Subject: 2015 Resident Survey Draft

Executive Summary

Over the last two months the Resident Survey team has met with department directors, the Executive Team, and County staff to develop the attached draft 2015 Resident Survey. The input and guidance of the City Council is being sought prior to administration administering the survey.

Recommendation

Budget and Management Services recommends that the City Council:

1. Receive a copy of the 2015 draft Community Survey, and
2. Provide feedback on content of survey.

Background

The City of Durham began surveying residents in 1999 and has continued the effort every two years through 2013. The survey provides the opportunity to assess how well the City is achieving its vision and mission with both quality of life and service quality questions. The survey also provides feedback on how services need to be improved or what priorities need to be addressed from the residents' perspective. The importance of the survey is also highlighted in the City's strategic plan:

Goal 4: Innovative and High Performing Organization

Objective: Provide professional management that encourages a culture of innovation, collaboration, and transparency to deliver quality services through an exceptional workforce.

An important component of achieving success and becoming an innovative and high performing organization is hearing from our residents. To improve, we must know where we are succeeding and where we are not. This opens up opportunities for innovation and collaboration as we learn from the feedback.

Survey Development Process

In May, Durham County approached the City about the possibility of conducting a joint survey. The City and County have joint departments and have partnered on several joint initiatives. Staff has established a multidisciplinary City/County Innovation Lab to support the formation of transformational ideas into solutions. One of the topics we have explored is how we can better engage the community together. When the County approached city staff about being part of the survey we considered this approach for multiple reasons including:

- Communitywide engagement
- Identification of community values
- Fostering joint partnerships
- Cost savings
- Potential for annual survey

In June, the Resident Survey Team discussed key criteria to use to prioritize questions. The following criterion was agreed upon to use to select survey questions:

- Confirms alignment between residents and organizational priorities
- Provides feedback on quality of core services
- Encourages more informed decision making
- Provides data for benchmarking and performance management
- Ensure data is not available through another source

In July, the Resident Satisfaction team presented this information and received feedback from the Deputy City Manager portfolio teams as well as to individual department directors who had questions on previous surveys specific to the department's operations. Department Directors had the opportunity to share feedback during the entire month of July. In August, a final draft was shared with the Executive Team and Department Directors to allow for final review and feedback. The final step prior to sending the draft to the vendor is sharing it with City Council.

The current timeline is for the vendor to administer the survey during early fall with completion before Thanksgiving. The results will be presented at the City Council Budget Retreat in February, 2016.

Issues/Analysis

The Resident Survey is limited to seven pages of questions. In order to meet the seven page limit, point in time questions were removed as well as questions that received low response rates. The majority of questions fulfilled the criteria from the above section and remained from the previous survey. On the attached draft survey new questions are color coded according to whether they are City or County related.

The vendor will provide two reports; one that includes City resident responses the other focused on all County residents.

Alternatives

N/A

Financial Impact

If the City chooses to partner with the County to conduct a Community Survey, total costs are projected to be \$19,125, with each organization contributing \$9,563 to the survey. However, if the City of Durham pursues a survey of its own the projected cost is \$13,125. The funds for the survey are available in the FY16 budget.

SDBE Summary

N/A

Attachments

Draft 2015 Community Survey