



News Release

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City Annual Satisfaction Survey Shows Residents Enjoy Living in Durham

81 Percent Rated the Bull City as an Excellent or Good Place to Live

DURHAM, N.C. – The results from the [2017 Durham Resident Satisfaction Survey](#) show that 81 percent of residents feel that Durham is a good-to-excellent place to live, and 72 percent are satisfied with the overall quality of life in their neighborhood.

The 2017 results, shared earlier today with the Durham City Council during their annual budget retreat, is the eighth City of Durham resident satisfaction survey, and the third combined survey with Durham County Government and Durham Public Schools, that holistically reveals how residents feel about Durham as a community.

“The survey provides a great opportunity to touch base with our residents – in a statistically sound way – to find out what they really think of our community and the services provided by their two local governments and public school system,” said City Manager Tom Bonfield. “The overall results provide a great picture of, not only resident satisfaction, but also how we should view community-wide priorities. The City administration specifically uses this information to help direct our priorities, from making day-to-day decisions to overall long-term planning and funding allocation.”

A major theme that emerged from the survey indicated that, compared to other large cities with populations of 200,000 or higher, Durham is setting the standard for the overall quality of City-provided services and customer service from City employees, rating 59 percent and 57 percent, which is 14 percent and 21 percent above the national benchmark average, respectively.

Based on the survey, residents felt the overall community-wide priorities for improvement over the next two years should be public schools, maintenance of streets, quality of police protection, and ease of travel in Durham.

The top five City-provided services with the highest levels of satisfaction, which combines very satisfied and satisfied responses, included: fire protection and rescue services at 79 percent; response time for fire services at 73 percent; water and sewer utilities at 61 percent; parks and recreation programs at 60 percent; and police protection at 58 percent.

The largest increases since 2016 in overall satisfaction for City-provided services included:

- Timeliness of employees’ response increased by 9 percent
- Appropriateness of employees’ response increased by 8 percent
- Overall feeling of safety in Durham increased by 8 percent
- Location of downtown parking facilities increased by 8 percent
- Value received for local property taxes increased by 7 percent

The largest decreases since 2016 in overall satisfaction for City-provided services included:

- Athletic programs decreased by 8 percent

- Ease of travel in Durham decreased by 8 percent

Other 2017 results showed the following City capital projects respondents would be willing to pay higher taxes to support:

- Street improvements: 43 percent
- Parks and open spaces: 33 percent
- Trails and greenways: 32 percent
- Sidewalks: 31 percent
- Public safety facilities: 25 percent
- Bike lanes: 24 percent
- Public art: 18 percent
- Parking: 16 percent
- Aquatic facilities: 12 percent
- Athletic fields: 12 percent

The 2017 results also showed the following City-provided services respondents would be willing to pay higher taxes to support:

- Affordable housing: 41 percent
- Job creation/training: 37 percent
- Youth programming: 32 percent
- Senior programming: 28 percent
- Public safety staffing: 26 percent

The [ETC Institute](#), which conducted the survey in December 2017, used a randomly selected sample of 406 households whose demographics accurately reflect the population inside the city limits. The survey has a 95 percent level of confidence with a margin of error of +/- 4.9 percent. Full results of the City's portion of the survey are now available on the City's Budget and Management Services Department [webpage](#).

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