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Survey Shows Increased Citizen Satisfaction with City Services, Quality of Life in Newport Beach

NEWPORT BEACH, Ca. -- The preliminary report on the August 2010 Newport Beach Citizen Satisfaction Survey results shows that the City improved in 47 of 76 areas that were originally assessed in 2007 and that resident satisfaction with the quality of life in the city has increased.

"These recent survey results have far exceeded our expectations," said Mayor Keith Curry. "The City held the line on all services, showed improvement in more than half of its core services and made extraordinary progress in a number of key areas. Even during these challenging economic times, we continue to set and increase the gold standard among cities."

The City conducts the surveys to assess citizen satisfaction with the delivery of major city services. Both the 2007 and the 2010 surveys were conducted by ETC Institute of Olathe, Kansas. The survey was mailed to a random sample of 3,500 City households and calls were made to those households that did not return the written survey. They were given the option of completing the survey by phone. A total of 727 households completed the survey, which results in a 95 percent level of confidence with a precision of at least +/- 3.6 percent. Therefore, changes of four percent or more from 2007 to 2010 were statistically significant.

ETC has conducted hundreds of customer satisfaction surveys for cities throughout the United States and maintains a large volume of survey data to use in comparing the Newport Beach data with that of other cities.

According to ETC's Christopher Tatham, most cities the firm works with try to show statistically significant improvement in areas identified as high priorities. For Newport Beach, this means the City would want to show improvement of at least 3.6% in areas in which the City placed

emphasis since the last survey. Tatham noted that while this is a common measure, the economic downturn has impacted this target and since 2008, most cities have experienced decreases in satisfaction due to more negative attitudes among U.S. citizens.

The City's composite satisfaction index also increased significantly from 100 in 2007 to 105 in 2010. While Newport Beach saw marked improvement, The U.S. average declined by five points. ETC derived the composite satisfaction index from the mean rating given for all categories city services assessed.

The survey's major findings indicate that most residents are satisfied with the quality of life in the city and that residents are still generally satisfied with the quality of services provided by Newport Beach. According to the survey, there were no significant decreases in any of the 76 City services evaluated. Some the more significant service improvements include:

- Satisfaction with the City website increased 17 percent
- Satisfaction with how well the City is planning for growth increased 12 percent
- Satisfaction with the City's enforcement of the exterior maintenance of commercial property increased 12 percent
- Satisfaction with City's outdoor athletic facilities increased 10 percent
- Satisfaction with a feeling of safety in commercial business areas after dark increased 10 percent.
- Satisfaction with the effectiveness of City communication with the public increased 10 percent.

The preliminary survey trend analysis, attached, summarizes how the results of the 2010 survey compare to the 2007 survey. The final report, including all charts, graphs, maps and tabular data will be presented to the City Council at its October 26 meeting.

City of Newport Beach Community Survey Analysis of Trends from 2007 to 2010

Overview

In 2007 and then again in 2010 the City of Newport Beach conducted a resident survey to assess satisfaction with the delivery of major city services. The charts on the following pages show how the results of the City's 2010 survey compare to the results of the City's 2007 survey. Given the sample size of both surveys, changes of 4.0% or more from 2007 to 2010 were statistically significant.

Satisfaction with the Overall Quality of Life in Newport Beach.

There was a significant increase (+4%) in the percentage of residents who were satisfied with the overall quality of life in Newport Beach (88% in 2007 versus 92% in 2010).

Satisfaction with Major Categories of City Services.

Among the ten major categories of city services that were assessed in 2007 and 2010, there were significant improvements in six areas:

- Satisfaction with the effectiveness of City communication with the public increased 10% from 69% in 2007 to 79% in 2010.
- Satisfaction with the quality of customer service from City employees increased 6% from 75% in 2007 to 81% in 2010.
- Satisfaction with the maintenance of City streets and infrastructure increased 6% from 75% in 2007 to 81% in 2010.
- Satisfaction with the maintenance of traffic flow on City streets increased 6% from 61% in 2007 to 67% in 2010.
- Satisfaction with the enforcement of City codes and ordinances increased 5% from 63% in 2007 to 68% in 2010.
- Satisfaction with the quality of the City's public library increased 4% from 92% in 2007 to 96% in 2010.

Satisfaction with Safety and Security. Among the five safety and security items assessed in 2007 and 2010, there were significant increases in three areas:

- Satisfaction with the feeling of safety in commercial and business areas after dark increased 10% from 59% in 2007 to 69% in 2010.
- Satisfaction with the feeling of safety on City beaches increased 7% from 76% in 2007 to 83% in 2010.
- Satisfaction with the feeling of safety in City parks increased 6% from 73% in 2007 to 79% in 2010.

Satisfaction with Public Safety Services.

Among the ten public safety services that were assessed in 2007 and 2010, there were significant improvements in four areas:

- Satisfaction with the quality of lifeguard services increased 8% from 85% in 2007 to 93% in 2010.
- Satisfaction with emergency medical and paramedic services increased 5% from 90% in 2007 to 95% in 2010.
- Satisfaction with the enforcement of parking regulations increased 5% from 69% in 2007 to 74% in 2010.
- Satisfaction with the enforcement of local traffic laws increased 4% from 74% in 2007 to 78% in 2010.

Satisfaction with Facility and Recreation Services.

Among the nine facility and recreation services that were assessed in 2007 and 2010, there were significant improvements in seven areas:

- Satisfaction with outdoor athletic fields increased 11% from 68% in 2007 to 79% in 2010.
- Satisfaction with the quality of programs for seniors increased 8% from 75% in 2007 to 83% in 2010.
- Satisfaction with the availability of City recreation facilities increased 8% from 73% in 2007 to 81% in 2010.
- Satisfaction with the quality of programs for youth increased 7% from 76% in 2007 to 83% in 2010.
- Satisfaction with the number of parks increased 6% from 75% in 2007 to 81% in 2010.
- Satisfaction with the availability of information about recreation programs increased 6% from 75% in 2007 to 81% in 2010.
- Satisfaction with the quality of programs for adults increased 6% from 74% in 2007 to 80% in 2010.

Satisfaction with Code Enforcement Services. There were significant improvements in four of the five code enforcement services that were assessed in 2007 and 2010:

- Satisfaction with the enforcement of the exterior maintenance of commercial property increased 12% from 58% in 2007 to 70% in 2010.
- Satisfaction with the enforcement of animal control regulations increased 8% from 62% in 2007 to 70% in 2010.

- Satisfaction with the enforcement of the exterior maintenance of residential property increased 8% from 57% in 2007 to 65% in 2010.
- Satisfaction with the enforcement of the cleanup of debris on private property increased 7% from 58% in 2007 to 65% in 2010.

Satisfaction with City Communication. There were significant increases in four of the five communication services that were assessed in both 2007 and 2010:

- Satisfaction with the quality of the City's website increased 17% from 52% in 2007 to 69% in 2010.
- Satisfaction with the information in the City Manager's Community newsletter increased 10% from 62% in 2007 to 72% in 2010.
- Satisfaction with the quality of the City's cable channel (NBTV) programming increased 5% from 46% in 2007 to 51% in 2010.

Satisfaction with Maintenance Services. There were significant increases in eight of the nine maintenance services that were assessed in both 2007 and 2010:

- Satisfaction with the adequacy of City street lighting increased 8% from 70% in 2007 to 78% in 2010.
- Satisfaction with the condition of major City streets increased 7% from 77% in 2007 to 84% in 2010.
- Satisfaction with the cleanliness of neighborhood stormwater drains increased 7% from 76% in 2007 to 83% in 2010.
- Satisfaction with the condition of street signs and traffic signals increased 6% from 83% in 2007 to 89% in 2010.
- Satisfaction with the attractiveness of streetscapes and medians increased 6% from 80% in 2007 to 86% in 2010.
- Satisfaction with the condition of neighborhood sidewalks increased 6% from 73% in 2007 to 79% in 2010.
- Satisfaction with the condition of neighborhood streets increased 5% from 80% in 2007 to 85% in 2010.
- Satisfaction with the cleanliness of beaches increased 5% from 73% in 2007 to 78% in 2010.

Satisfaction with Customer Service.

There were significant increases in two of the five customer service items that were assessed in both 2007 and 2010:

- Satisfaction with how well residents' issues were handled increased 7% from 70% in 2007 to 77% in 2010.

- Satisfaction with the accuracy of the information and assistance given increased 5% from 76% in 2007 to 81% in 2010.

Other Significant Increases:

- Satisfaction with how well the City is planning growth increased 12% from 49% in 2007 to 61% in 2010.
- Satisfaction with the character and quality of neighborhoods increased 5% from 84% in 2007 to 89% in 2010.
- Positive ratings (“excellent” and “good”) of Newport Beach as a City that is moving in the right direction increased 9% from 73% in 2007 to 82% in 2010.
- Ratings of Newport Beach as an “excellent” or “good” place to raise children increased 6% from 85% in 2007 to 91% in 2010.
- Positive ratings (“excellent” and “good”) of Newport Beach as a place that provides an efficient delivery of services increased 4% from 84% in 2007 to 88% in 2010.