



Information Item

Date: April 20, 2011

To: Mayor and City Council

From: Kathryn Vernez, Assistant to the City Manager for Community & Government Relations

Subject: Results from 2011 Santa Monica Resident Survey

Introduction

The attached report from Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3) provides in-depth information on resident opinions of key issues facing Santa Monica and opinions about City service delivery. From February 8 – 13, 2011, a total of 407 phone interviews with randomly selected adults 18 years of age or older living in Santa Monica were completed in Spanish and English, including 85 interviews with adult residents who responded to the survey on their cell phone and a total of 61 interviews conducted with Latino residents. While general satisfaction with City service delivery is very high, the findings provide the basis for additional service improvement, as well as areas for ongoing focus.

Background

The City of Santa Monica conducts a bi-annual telephone survey of Santa Monica residents to assess attitudes about City services and to identify changes in attitudes compared to similar studies conducted in previous years. A competitive Request for Quote/Proposals was issued, proposals were rated by staff from the City Manager's Office, Finance, and Community and Cultural Services, and interviews were conducted with five finalists. FM3 was selected based on strength of presentation, qualifications, experience, methodology, strategy and plan to accomplish survey goals.

Discussion

The 2011 Santa Monica Resident Survey consisted of a number of questions asked in previous resident surveys. Under these circumstances, comparison were provided from previous years, where available, including 2002, 2005, 2007 and 2009 studies. Additional

questions were also asked this year to address new issues, meet the current and anticipated operational needs of the departments for more in-depth information, and to establish new benchmarks on key services. The results presented in the attached report will guide staff in identifying service priorities and developing workplans for the upcoming two fiscal years.

This is a summary of key topline results, while the full report provides detailed analysis.

The key areas of inquiry include:

- General Perceptions and Top Concerns
- Importance and Satisfaction Ratings for Santa Monica City Services
- The Disaster Assistance & Response Training (DART) and I've Got 7 Programs
- The Land Use and Circulation Element, (LUCE)
- Contact with the City of Santa Monica

General Perceptions and Top Concerns:

Positive ratings are garnered for the City's overall quality of life and service delivery. Most frequently cited top-of-mind important issues facing the City are the budget crisis, traffic/congestion, homelessness, airport noise, and education-related issues. The City receives less positive ratings for dealing with homeless people in Santa Monica, ensuring affordable housing, and managing traffic flow. A short summary of findings presented in the report reveal:

- 94% Santa Monica as an excellent or pretty good place to live.
- 96% rate Santa Monica as very or somewhat environmentally friendly.
- 74% are very or somewhat satisfied with the job the City of Santa Monica is doing to provide City services.

Most frequently cited top of mind important issues facing the City of Santa Monica today include¹ (2009 comparisons in parenthesis):

- Budget Crisis 35% (2009, 4%)
- Traffic/congestion 24% (2009, 32%)
- Homeless 22% (2009, 31%)
- Airport noise 10% (2009, 1%)
- Education/Educational funding/cost of education 10% (2009, 1%)

¹ Grouped responses from residents own words.

From a list of 6 issues provided (mean ratings, scale of 1 to 5; where “1”= “not a serious problem at all” and “5”=“very serious problem”):

Most serious problems:

- The affordability of housing (3.8)
- The number of homeless people in the city (3.8)
- Traffic congestion (3.7)
- Lack of parking (3.5)

Least serious problems:

- Gangs and youth violence (2.4)
- Crime (2.5)

Importance and Satisfaction Ratings for Santa Monica City Services:

Top rated City services on an Importance Scale (mean ratings, scale 1 to 5 where 1”= “Not at all Important” and “5”= “Very Important”)

- Providing emergency 911 services (4.7)
- Putting out and preventing fires (4.5)
- Protecting crime and protecting public safety (4.4)
- Maintaining city beaches (4.4)

Lowest rated City Services on an Importance Scale (mean ratings)

- Enforcing the City's noise laws (3.4)
- Keeping street trees trimmed (3.5)
- Providing cultural and arts opportunities (3.6)
- Enforcing laws against overnight camping in parks and doorways (3.6)

Highest rated City Services on a Satisfaction Scale (Mean ratings; scale 1 to 5; where “1”= “Very Dissatisfied” and “5”= “Very Satisfied”)

- Putting out and preventing fires (4.5)
- Providing emergency 911 services (4.4)
- Providing public library services (4.4)
- Collecting trash and recycling from home (4.2)
- Maintaining City parks (4.2)

Lowest rated City Services on a Satisfaction Scale (Mean ratings)

- Dealing with homeless people in Santa Monica (3.0)
- Ensuring there is affordable housing (3.0)
- Keeping traffic on city streets flowing smoothly (3.0)

The Disaster Assistance & Response Training (DART) and I've Got 7 Programs:

DART

- 19% have seen or heard anything about DART, with only 3% saying seen or heard a lot
- Only 2% of those who had seen/heard anything about DART said they had participated in the City's one-day DART training course
- 43% of those who had not taken the free one-day DART training course were interested in doing so

I've Got 7

- 11% have seen or heard anything about I've Got 7, with only 3% saying seen or heard a lot
- 48% of respondents said their household has at least seven days of supplies on hand in case of an emergency, such as an earthquake

The Land Use and Circulation Element, LUCE:

- Alternative transportation options, such as walking paths, bike lanes and public transportation (4.2) and open space (4.2) scored as the most important community benefits identified in development agreements under LUCE (mean rating scores); using a scale of 1 to 5, where "1"= "Not at all Important" and "5"= "Very Important"
- Arts and culture venues (3.5) scored among the lowest benefits identified in development agreements under LUCE (mean rating scores)
- 62% of residents 18 years of age or older own a bike, with about one-third of the bike owners riding it daily or a few times a week
- Of those who own bikes, 43% say they either feel very or somewhat safe riding their bicycle in Santa Monica. A further 29% felt neither safe or unsafe, 27% felt not too safe or not at all safe and 2% could not provide an answer
- 58% reported took the Big Blue Bus in 2010, 50% said they did in the 2009 survey

Contact with the City of Santa Monica:

- 45 % contacted Santa Monica City or any reason other than an emergency in 2010
 - 86% contacted via telephone
 - 50% contacted via Online
 - 63% contacted via In-person
- Satisfaction mean ratings with City staff on various dimensions were the same as in 2009 survey (mean rating scores; ; **scale 1 to 5; where “1”= “Very Dissatisfied” and “5”= “Very Satisfied”**)
 - Courteous 4.2 (76% very or somewhat satisfied)
 - Responsive to needs 3.9 (71% very or somewhat satisfied)
 - Knowledgeable 4.0 (74% very or somewhat satisfied)
- 70% feel they have an opportunity to voice their concerns to the City on major community decisions that affect their lives. (Similar to 2009 survey response 71%)
- 57% rated City's efforts to communicate with Santa Monica residents through newsletters, the Internet and other means as either somewhat or very satisfied (mean score of 3.7, the same as the mean score on the 2009 survey)
- Top sources of information about issues affecting "your" community (frequently/occasionally)
 - Other people, including family, friends, or neighbors 73%
 - Los Angeles Times 57%
 - Seascape 53%
 - Santa Monica Daily Press 46%

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Attachment: [2011 Santa Monica Resident Survey](#)