



CITY OF BLUE SPRINGS, MISSOURI PRESS RELEASE

903 W. Main Street Blue Springs, MO 64015 • P: 816.228.0110 • F: 816.228.7592 • W: www.bluespringsgov.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: November 16, 2010
CONTACT: Kim Nakahodo, Communications Manager
Phone: 816.655.0497, Cell: 816.651.6449
Email: knakahodo@bluespringsgov.com

Blue Springs Residents Give High Marks for City Services *Annual Citizen Survey Reflects Improvements in Citizen Satisfaction*

Blue Springs, Mo. – Results of Blue Springs’ annual DirectionFinder Citizen Satisfaction Survey are in, and findings reflect significant improvements in citizen satisfaction with City programs and services. According to the most recent survey, which was conducted during the Fall of 2010, Blue Springs residents are pleased with the City overall, particularly in the areas of public safety, parks facilities and the leadership and quality of customer service of the city staff and elected officials.

The DirectionFinder Survey, which is administered by ETC Institute, is designed to assess citizen satisfaction with the delivery of major city services and to help determine priorities for the community as part of the City’s ongoing planning process.

Findings from the survey indicate that a majority of residents (79%) are pleased with the quality of the police services and protection of the Blue Springs Police Department, 73% are satisfied with the quality of the City’s water and sewer utilities, 81% are pleased with the quality of City parks facilities and 81% are satisfied with the City’s primary communication source with residents, the Blue Springs Magazine.

Citizens are also satisfied with the overall customer service the City provides its residents through various programs and services. According to the survey, 82% of residents who had utilized City Services in 2009 and 2010, rated City employees as courteous and polite and indicated employees were easy to contact.

During his presentation of the survey results to the City Council on November 15, Chris Tatham of ETC Institute said, “the City should be very proud of this year’s results, many communities across the nation have experienced significant declines in citizen satisfaction due to the current economic environment, Blue Springs has continued to improve on last year’s results, with several areas improving by at least 10%.”

Tatham also noted that of the 87 areas that were assessed in 2009, the City of Blue Springs improved or stayed the same in 73 of those areas. Some of the more significant increases included:

- Flow of traffic and congestion management (+12%)
- Availability of info about City programs/services (+15%)
- City managing its growth (+10%)
- Availability of bicycle lanes (+17%)
- Availability of walking and biking trails (+17%)
- Maintenance of neighborhood streets (+12%)
- City efforts to keep you informed on local issues (+12%)

“This type of significant improvement in major service areas where communities around the country are generally seeing decline, is commendable” said Tatham. “The City of Blue Springs can be proud of its accomplishments in 2010, and should continue exercising the planning and implementation necessary to maintain quality services for its residents.”

Other major findings show significant increases in citizen satisfaction with the quality of Blue Springs’ leadership, which increased by 20% since 2007. Mayor Carson Ross said he attributes such high marks to a vision that he believes is shared by City Council, staff and many community stakeholders.

“In April 2008, I was elected by the citizens of Blue Springs to create a cohesive vision and direction for our community. Together with staff and the City Council, we established a number of new programs, citizen engagement efforts and new spending priorities to meet citizens’ needs for a quality community. We continue to implement and plan for many of the ideas and priorities set forth in our citizen visioning process and Council strategic planning. We can attribute the success of the 2010 survey to the efforts of our city leaders to listen, plan and act accordingly.”

City Administrator Eric Johnson, while pleased with the results from this year’s survey, said he is focused on the importance of using the annual assessment document for future planning efforts.

“We are pleased to know that residents have become increasingly satisfied with city services,” said Johnson. “Perhaps more important, however, is how we will use the survey as a planning tool to help guide important program and service decisions in the future. Our purpose for conducting the survey is to gauge not only how well we’re doing, but to determine what areas need additional attention in the upcoming year. Our goal is to always understand the expectations and priorities of our residents and customers and use feedback to continuously help us improve everything we do.”

While results reflected significant improvements in several areas, the survey also provided indication where additional focus is warranted. According to the survey, the three major areas that residents thought should receive the most emphasis from the City over the next two years include (1) maintenance of City streets and sidewalks, (2) the flow of traffic and congestion in Blue Springs, and (3) the effectiveness of community planning.

“Each year the City attempts to address these areas of citizen concerns through its annual Operating Budget, Capital Improvements Program (CIP), and best practice implementation,” said Johnson.

“As an example, the City Council has continued to use the DirectionFinder Survey results to develop an aggressive Street Maintenance Program that allocates \$2.5 million a year to rehabilitate streets throughout the City. In the future we will

continue to utilize the DirectionFinder survey as a mechanism to help align citizens' service priorities with the policy goals of our City Council," Johnson added.

Although the City has been conducting regular citizen surveys since 1989, this was the seventh time Blue Springs conducted a DirectionFinder Survey. The first DirectionFinder was administered in 2000. The full report of the 2010 citizen survey results is located on the City's website at www.bluespringsgov.com/citizensurvey.

###