



DirectionFinder[®] Survey

Executive Summary Report

Overview and Methodology

During the fall of 2010, ETC Institute administered a DirectionFinder[®] Survey for the City of Blue Springs 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. Although the City has been conducting regular citizen surveys since 1989, this was the seventh time Blue Springs had conducted a DirectionFinder[®] Survey. The first DirectionFinder[®] was administered in 2000.

The 2010 survey was seven (7) pages long and took the average person approximately 20 minutes to complete. Many questions were the same as those asked in previous Blue Springs DirectionFinder[®] surveys to allow the City to objectively evaluate changes in service delivery over the past ten years.

The survey was administered by mail and phone to a random sample of **619** residents during the fall of 2010. The overall results of the survey have a precision of at least +/- 4.0% at the 95% level of confidence.

This report contains:

- an executive summary of the methodology and major findings
- charts depicting the overall results of the survey along with comparisons to the results from previous surveys (years 2006 and 2009)
- GIS maps for selected questions
- importance-satisfaction analysis to help the City use survey data to set priorities
- benchmarking data that shows how the survey results for Blue Springs compare to other cities in the metropolitan Kansas City area
- a copy of the survey instrument

Interpretation of “Don’t Know” Responses. The percentage of persons who gave “don’t know” responses is important because it often reflects the level of utilization of City services. For graphical purposes, the percentage of “don’t know” responses has been excluded to facilitate valid comparisons with data from previous years. The percentage of “don’t know” responses for each question is provided in the Tabular Data Section of this report. When the “don’t know” responses have been excluded, the text of this report will indicate that the responses have been excluded with the phrase “who had an opinion.”

Major Findings

- **Residents were generally satisfied with the overall quality of services provided by the City of Blue Springs.** Most of the residents surveyed who had an opinion were satisfied with the quality of fire and ambulance services (88%), the quality of City parks facilities (81%), the quality of the police services/protection (79%), the quality of water/sewer utilities (73%), and the quality of customer service received from City employees (73%). Residents were least satisfied with the overall maintenance of City streets & sidewalks (40%).
- **Services that residents thought should receive the most emphasis over the next two years.** The two major areas that residents thought should receive the most emphasis from the City over the next two years are: (1) maintenance of City streets and sidewalks and (2) the flow of traffic and congestion in Blue Springs.
- **Public Safety.** The highest levels of satisfaction with Public Safety services, based upon the combined percentage of “very satisfied” and “satisfied” responses of residents who had an opinion, was how quickly ambulance personnel respond to emergencies (78%), the quality of dispatch (911) services (75%), and the professionalism of City Police (74%). Residents were generally less satisfied with the quality of animal control (53%) and the visibility of police in retail areas (52%).
- **City Maintenance.** The highest levels of satisfaction with City Maintenance services, based upon the combined percentage of “very satisfied” and “satisfied” responses of residents who had an opinion, was the snow removal on major City streets (81%), the overall cleanliness of City streets and public areas (72%), the maintenance of City traffic signals/street signs (70%), the maintenance of the City’s water/wastewater system (70%) and the maintenance of City buildings (67%). Residents were generally less satisfied with the maintenance of City sidewalks (42%). **9 of the 11 areas city maintenance services that were assessed on this year’s survey produced significant* increases in satisfaction levels compared to the 2009 survey.**
***Changes of 4% or more are significant.**

- **Parks and Recreation.** The highest levels of satisfaction with Parks and Recreation services, based upon the combined percentage of “very satisfied” and “satisfied” responses of residents who had an opinion, were the number of City parks (81%), the maintenance of City parks & park equipment (79%) and Hidden Valley Sports Complex (76%). Residents were generally less satisfied with the public art throughout the City (49%).
- **Enforcement of City Codes and Ordinances.** The highest levels of satisfaction with City codes and ordinances, based upon the combined percentage of “very satisfied” and “satisfied” responses of residents who had an opinion, was the overall appearance of the City (63%). Residents were generally less satisfied with enforcing the mowing/trimming of grass/weeds (42%).
- **City Communications.** The highest levels of satisfaction with City Communication services, based upon the combined percentage of “very satisfied” and “satisfied” responses of residents who had an opinion, was the Parks and Recreation Activity Guide (82%) and the quality of the Blue Springs Magazine (81%). Residents were generally less satisfied with the quality of programming on City’s cable channel (54%).
- **Transportation.** The highest levels of satisfaction with various aspects of transportation, based upon the combined percentage of “very satisfied” and “satisfied” responses of residents who had an opinion, were the traffic flow on Highway 40 during non-peak times (64%), pedestrian walkways in neighborhood areas (62%), and traffic flow on Highway 7 during non-peak times (58%). Residents were less satisfied with peak (rush hour) traffic on Highway 7 (26%) and Woods Chapel Road (27%).

Other Findings:

- 82% of the residents surveyed who had utilized City services in the last year rated City employees as courteous and polite.
- 76% of the residents surveyed who had utilized City services in the last year said that City employees were easy to contact.
- 89% of the residents surveyed indicated they thought recycling was either “very important” or “somewhat important”, only 3% did not think it was important, and 8% were not sure.

- 81% of the residents surveyed indicated it would be either “very likely” or “somewhat likely” to recycle using special bins at their curbside, 9% indicated not likely, and 10% were not sure.
- 56% of the residents surveyed indicated they would be either “very supportive” or “somewhat supportive” of having their city coordinate their residential trash and recycling services, 22% were not supportive, and 22% were not sure.
- 43% of the residents surveyed indicated they would be either “very likely” or “somewhat likely” of receiving their City of Blue Springs monthly water and sewer utility bill electronically rather than a standard paper bill. 39% were indicated “not likely”, and 18% were “not sure”.

Significant Increases and Decreases. The latest DirectionFinder® survey for the City of Blue Springs showed that the results for the City of Blue Springs improved or stayed the same in 73 of the 87 areas that were assessed in both 2009 and 2010. Changes of 4% or more were statistically significant. Areas that changed by 10% or more are listed below.

Areas than Improved by at least 10% from 2009 to 2010:

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

There were NO areas than Declined by at least 10% from 2009 to 2010.