

2009 DirectionFinder® Community Survey FINAL Results



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Prepared for
Town of Chapel Hill

February, 2010

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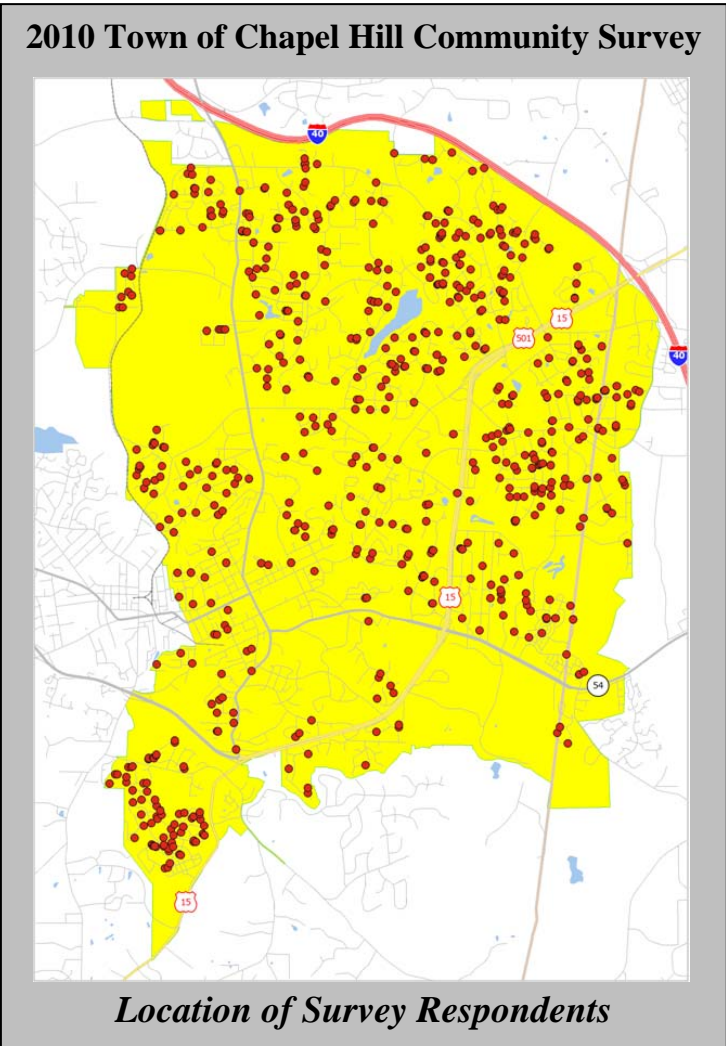
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Purpose and Methodology

ETC Institute administered the DirectionFinder® survey for the Town of Chapel Hill during December of 2009 and January of 2010. The survey was administered as part of the Town’s effort to assess citizen satisfaction with the quality of services. The information gathered from the survey will help the Town establish budget priorities and refine policy decisions.

Resident Survey. A seven-page survey was mailed to a random sample of 2,000 households in the Town of Chapel Hill. Approximately seven days after the surveys were mailed, residents who received the survey were contacted by phone. Those who indicated that they had not returned the survey were given the option of completing it by phone. Of the households that received a survey, 432 completed the survey by phone and 264 returned it by mail for a total of 696 completed surveys (35% response rate). The results for the random sample of 696 households have a 95% level of confidence with a precision of at least +/- 3.7%. There were no statistically significant differences in the results of the survey based on the method of administration (phone vs. mail). In order to better understand how well services are being delivered by the Town, ETC Institute geocoded the home address of respondents to the survey. The map to the right shows the physical distribution of survey respondents based on the location of their home.



The percentage of “don’t know” responses has been excluded from many of the graphs shown in this report to facilitate valid comparisons of the results from the Town of Chapel Hill with the results from other communities in the DirectionFinder® database. Since the number of “don’t know” responses often reflects the utilization and awareness of city services, the percentage of “don’t know” responses has been 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.*”

This report contains:

- a summary of the methodology for administering the survey and major findings
- GIS maps that show the results of selected questions as maps of the Town
- benchmarking data that shows how the results for the Town of Chapel Hill compare to other cities
- importance-satisfaction analysis
- tables that show the results for each question on the survey
- a copy of the survey instrument

Major Findings

- **Most of the residents surveyed were satisfied with Town services.** Eighty-seven percent (87%) of the residents surveyed *who had an opinion* were satisfied (rating of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale) with the quality of the Town's public safety services, 83% were satisfied with the quality of the Town's library services, 82% were satisfied with the overall quality of services provided, and 77% were satisfied with the maintenance of Town parks and recreation programs. *Satisfaction with the overall quality of services provided by the Town rated 24% above the national average. Satisfaction with the overall quality of customer service from the Town rated 15% higher than the national average and overall maintenance of town streets rated 14% higher.*
- **Services that residents thought should receive the most increase in emphasis over the next two years.** The areas that residents thought should receive the most increase in emphasis from the Town of Chapel Hill over the next two years were: (1) planning for growth and (2) managing growth.
- **Perceptions of the Town.** Most (90%) of the residents surveyed *who had an opinion* indicated that they were satisfied with the quality of life in the Town of Chapel Hill, 86% were satisfied with the image of the Town, and 76% were satisfied with the overall feeling of safety in the Town. *Satisfaction with feelings of safety in neighborhoods after dark rated 28% above the national average and set a new high benchmark among other communities.*
- **Public Safety.** Eighty-eight percent (88%) of the residents surveyed *who had an opinion* were satisfied (rating of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale) with the location of fire stations, and 87% were satisfied with the overall quality of fire protection. Residents thought the public safety service that should receive the most additional emphasis over the next two years was the Town's efforts to prevent crime. *Satisfaction with how quickly police respond to emergencies in the Town of Chapel Hill rated 9% higher than the national average.*

- **Town Regulations.** Sixty percent (60%) of the residents surveyed *who had an opinion* were satisfied (rating of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale) with enforcing codes designed to protect public safety, 59% were satisfied with enforcing sign regulations, and 58% were satisfied with the maintenance of business property.
- **Parks and Recreation.** Eighty percent (80%) of the residents *who had an opinion* were satisfied (rating of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale) with the maintenance of town parks, 74% were satisfied with the number of town parks, 69% were satisfied with the youth athletic programs, and 68% were satisfied with the landscaping and appearance of public areas along streets. Residents thought the area of parks and recreation that should receive the most additional emphasis over the next two years was improvements to the Town’s walking and biking trails.
- **Town Communications.** More than half (58%) of the residents surveyed *who had an opinion* were satisfied (rating of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale) with the availability of information about programs and services, 55% were satisfied with the quality of the Town’s website, and 53% were satisfied with the Town’s efforts to keep residents informed about local issues. *Satisfaction with the availability of information about programs and services rated 11% above the national average, the Towns efforts to keep you informed rated 9% above the national average, and satisfaction with the level of public involvement rated 14% above the national average.*
- **Town Maintenance/Public Works.** The areas of maintenance that were rated best by residents included: overall satisfaction with the maintenance of street thoroughfares (75%), maintenance of neighborhood streets (74%), and maintenance of street signs and pavement markings (73%). Residents were generally least satisfied with the maintenance and preservation of downtown. *Satisfaction with the maintenance of major streets, maintenance of neighborhood streets, and the cleanliness of streets and public areas all rated significantly higher than the national average.*
- **Transportation.** Eighty-one percent (81%) of the residents surveyed *who had an opinion* were satisfied (rating of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale) with the quality of Chapel Hill Transit, 53% of those surveyed were satisfied with the availability of greenways, and 52% were satisfied with how well the traffic signal system provides efficient traffic flow.
 - The most congested East/West Road is US 15-501 South
 - The most congested North/South Road is Forham Boulevard
 - Seventy percent (70%) of respondents have at least one member of their household who has used public transit in Chapel Hill
 - Fifty-one percent (51%) of those surveyed ride a bicycle
- **Library Services.** Ninety-five percent (95%) of the residents surveyed *who had an opinion* were satisfied (rating of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale) with the quality of assistance provided by the library staff, 87% were satisfied with the quality of reference services, and 87% were satisfied with the overall quality of library services.

- **Trash Service.** Ninety-three percent (93%) of the residents surveyed *who had an opinion* were satisfied (rating of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale) with residential garbage collection service, 87% of those surveyed were satisfied with residential recycling service, and 77% were satisfied with brush and bulky removal service.

Other Findings.

- 69% of the residents surveyed were very likely or likely to vote in favor of issuing obligation bonds to improve bicycle lanes and off-road paths.
- 73% of residents surveyed indicated that they thought the Town of Chapel Hill should continue to manage the Halloween event to keep it small and local.
- 68% of residents surveyed indicated that they use recycling services located in Chapel Hill or Eubanks Road.
- 92% of residents surveyed live within walking distance to a bus stop.
- 54% of those surveyed were dissatisfied with the availability of parking in downtown Chapel Hill.
- 73% of those surveyed felt that a redeveloped downtown was an essential or important part of the Town's economic development strategy.
- 76% of residents surveyed get information about the Town of Chapel Hill via newspaper; 43% internet, 36% television, and 24% email.
- 90% of the residents surveyed indicated that the quality of public schools played an important role when deciding to live in the Town of Chapel Hill.
- 83% of residents surveyed were satisfied with the overall performance of the Town's Police Department.