



News Release

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City's Annual Satisfaction Survey Shows Residents Enjoy Living in Durham *85 Percent Rated the Bull City as an Excellent or Good Place; Highest All-Time Rating*

DURHAM, N.C. – The results from the [2018 Durham Resident Satisfaction Survey](#) show that 85 percent of residents feel that Durham is a good-to-excellent place to live, which is up 4 percent from last year, making it the highest all-time rating achieved since this survey began 13 years ago.

The 2018 results, shared today with the Durham City Council during their annual budget retreat, is the ninth City of Durham resident satisfaction survey distributed over the past 13 years, and the fourth combined survey with Durham County Government and Durham Public Schools, that holistically reveals how residents feel about Durham as a community.

“The survey provides an ongoing opportunity to touch base with our residents – in a statistically sound way – to find out what they think of our community and the services provided by their two local governments and public education system,” said City Manager Tom Bonfield. “The overall results provide a picture of, not only resident satisfaction, but also how we should view community-wide priorities. The City administration specifically uses this information to help direct our priorities, from making day-to-day decisions to overall long-term planning and funding allocation.”

A major theme that emerged from the survey indicated that, compared to other large cities with populations of 250,000 or higher, Durham is setting the standard for the overall quality of City-provided services and customer service from City employees, both rating 63 percent, which is 28 percent and 19 percent above the national benchmark average, respectively. Additionally, 74 percent of respondents were satisfied with the overall quality of life in their neighborhood, which is also up 2 percent from last year.

Based on the survey, residents felt the overall community-wide priorities for improvement over the next two years should be public schools, maintenance of city streets, police protection, GoDurham public transit system, ease of travel within Durham, and pedestrian facilities.

The top five City-provided services with the highest levels of satisfaction, which combines very satisfied and satisfied responses, included: response time for fire services at 72 percent; water and sewer utilities at 66 percent; police protection at 64 percent; and parks and recreation programs at 62 percent.

Other 2018 results showed the following City-provided services that respondents would be willing to pay higher taxes to support:

- Affordable Housing: 39 percent; decrease of 2 percent from 2017.
- Youth Programming: 35 percent; increase of 3 percent from 2017.
- Job Creation and Training: 33 percent; decrease of 4 percent from 2017.
- Public Safety Staffing: 28 percent; increase of 2 percent from 2017.

The 2018 results specifically related to housing are as follows:

- 77 percent of respondents were able to find housing they could afford in Durham; decrease of 1 percent from 2017.
- 34 percent have monthly housing costs that exceed 30 percent of their monthly income; increase of 2 percent from 2017.
- 31 percent have major home repairs that impact their quality of life or that they have put off because of lack of resources; increase of 1 percent from 2017.

The [ETC Institute](#), which conducted the survey in December 2018, used a randomly selected sample of 608 households whose demographics accurately reflect the population inside the city limits. The survey has a 95 percent level of confidence with a margin of error of +/- 3.97 percent. Full results of the City's portion of the survey are now available on the City's Budget and Management Services Department [webpage](#).

About the Budget and Management Services Department

The City of Durham [Budget and Management Services Department](#) is responsible for the development and oversight of the City's annual budget and Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The department is also responsible for performance management, continuous improvement, and strategic planning. A division of the department, the [Office of Performance and Innovation](#), serves as internal consultants, helping City departments accomplish Durham's "One Vision and Five Goals" through advancing the City's [Strategic Plan](#); providing framework for data-driven decisions; fostering a culture of innovation; and facilitating process improvements.

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