

## Town Council Focus Areas

The survey included several questions examining specific focus areas of the Town Council as determined in the 2008 Council Staff Retreat. The respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with the Town's efforts in several areas including environmental protection, school issues, downtown revitalization, transportation, planning & development, and parks, recreation, & cultural issues. A 9-point scale from very dissatisfied (1) to very satisfied (9) was used for all the areas examined with the exception of a 9-point effectiveness scale used for one of the questions (effectiveness of Town Council working to keep Cary the best place to live, work, and raise a family). The aspects are listed in order of mean scores indicating higher levels of satisfaction and/or effectiveness from the respondents.

The job the Town is doing with parks, recreation, and cultural issues earned the highest rating of any of the focus areas examined this year. The respondents were asked to consider several factors in their rating including quality/quantity of existing parks, greenways, and community centers; how close these facilities are located to their home; planning for the aquatics center and performing arts center; and building new parks, community centers, greenways, and trails. Table 74 shows the very positive results from the respondents. The mean was 7.46 with 87.6% on the "satisfied" side of the scale above 5. There were only 0.9% of the responses on the "dissatisfied" side below 5.

In addition, the ratings differed between those respondents who have participated in a Parks & Recreation program compared to those who have not participated. The mean for those who have participated in a program was 7.68 versus 7.35 for those who have not participated in a program. This highlights how actual experience with a program can alter the overall perceptions.

The respondents who gave the Town a rating below 5 ("dissatisfied" side) were subsequently asked what actions the Town could take to make them more satisfied with parks, recreation, and cultural resource issues. The comments are shown in Appendix I. In total, there were only 8 comments with no theme or central issue evident due to the limited number of comments.

**Table 74. Satisfaction with Overall Job the Town is Doing on Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Issues.**

Year	Mean	Very Dissatisfied 1	2	3	4	Neutral 5	6	7	8	Very Satisfied 9	% Above 5
08	7.46	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.7	11.4	7.7	25.9	27.9	26.1	87.6

The respondents were also generally satisfied with the job the Town is doing on issues

related to environmental protection. They were asked to consider the Town's environmental efforts such as recycling, open space preservation, water conservation, and erosion control. The respondents gave the Town high marks with a mean of 7.04 (Table 75). This year there were 80.0% of the responses on the "satisfied" side of the scale and only 3.5% on the "dissatisfied" side indicating a strong level of support. The respondents who gave the Town a rating below 5 were asked what actions the Town could take to make them more satisfied with environmental protection (Appendix J). There were 24 total comments and the primary suggestions were to stop excessive water usage/abuse, recycling more items, and stop cutting down the trees.

**Table 75. Satisfaction with Overall Job the Town is Doing on Environmental Protection.**

Year	Mean	Very Dissatisfied 1	2	3	4	Neutral 5	6	7	8	Very Satisfied 9	% Above 5
08	7.04	1.0	0.0	1.0	1.5	16.6	11.8	25.4	22.4	20.4	80.0

The next highest rated of the focus areas was how effective the Town Council was in working to keep Cary the best place to live, work, and raise a family. This question did not use the satisfaction rating scale but a 9-point effectiveness scale ranging from very ineffective (1) to very effective (9). The results were positive and supportive of the Town Council with a mean of 6.85 (Table 76). There were 77.0% of the responses on the "effective" side of the scale and only 4.1% on the "ineffective" side. The respondents who gave the Town a rating below 5 were asked what actions the Town could take to make them more satisfied with keeping Cary the best place to live, work, and raise a family (Appendix K). There were 19 total comments which focused mostly on concerns about growth and development. Other suggestions centered on listening more to citizens, school issues, and safety.

**Table 76. Effectiveness of Town Council in Working to Keep Cary the Best Place to Live, Work, and Raise a Family.**

Year	Mean	Very Ineffective 1	2	3	4	Neutral 5	6	7	8	Very Effective 9	% Above 5
08	6.85	1.3	0.3	0.5	2.0	19.0	12.3	28.8	20.1	15.8	77.0

The respondents were also positive concerning their level of satisfaction with the Town's efforts with transportation. The respondents were asked to consider issues like widening roads, offering C-Tran bus service, synchronizing signal lights, adding bike lanes/greenways /sidewalks. Table 77 shows the mean was 6.66. There were 72.9% on the "satisfied" side of the scale and 11.1% on the "dissatisfied" side. This represents a relatively good rating for an

issue that has been contentious in the past. The respondents who gave the Town a rating below 5 were asked what actions the Town could take to make them more satisfied with transportation (Appendix L). The 65 total comments focused on several issues including synchronizing lights, adding sidewalks, improving C-Tran (timing, routes, information availability), widening roads, and improving public transportation.

**Table 77. Satisfaction with Overall Job the Town is Doing on Transportation.**

Year	Mean	Very Dissatisfied 1	2	3	4	Neutral 5	6	7	8	Very Satisfied 9	% Above 5
08	6.66	0.7	0.5	1.7	8.2	15.9	12.2	24.1	24.9	11.7	72.9

There were also positive results on the job the Town is doing with downtown revitalization. The respondents were asked to consider issues such as adding a new park, renovating old Cary Elementary into an arts space, improving parking, and creating fresh streetscape (new streets, sidewalks, lighting, furniture). The results indicated the respondents were generally satisfied with the Town's downtown revitalization efforts (Table 78). The mean was 6.55 with 69.7% responding on the "satisfied" side and only 6.9% on the "dissatisfied" side. The respondents who gave the Town a rating below 5 were asked what actions the Town could take to make them more satisfied with downtown revitalization (Appendix M). There were 29 total comments which focused on not seeing any results downtown and/or to speed things up. Other comments included that it was a waste of money and others wanted downtown to stay the same.

**Table 78. Satisfaction with Overall Job the Town is Doing on Downtown Revitalization.**

Year	Mean	Very Dissatisfied 1	2	3	4	Neutral 5	6	7	8	Very Satisfied 9	% Above 5
08	6.55	0.8	0.8	2.0	3.3	23.5	13.0	26.3	18.9	11.5	69.7

The respondents were asked to rate the job the Town is doing with planning & development. They were asked to consider issues such as development land use plans for specific areas, ensuring new development is high quality and compatible with existing development, and making sure the infrastructure can support growth. The results show a relatively good level of satisfaction with a mean of 5.93 (Table 79). However, this aspect earned a somewhat lower rating than the other focus areas. There were 61.1% on the "satisfied" side of the scale and 18.4% on the "dissatisfied" side. The respondents who gave the Town a rating below 5 were subsequently asked what actions the Town could take to make them more satisfied with planning & development (Appendix N). There were 78 total suggestions and most focused on controlling growth/development (45 comments), improving the

infrastructure (9 comments) and not giving developers so much influence (6 comments).

**Table 79. Satisfaction with Overall Job the Town is Doing on Planning & Development.**

Year	Mean	Very Dissatisfied 1	2	3	4	Neutral 5	6	7	8	Very Satisfied 9	% Above 5
08	5.93	3.1	2.6	3.8	8.9	20.4	18.1	24.2	12.2	6.6	61.1

The final area examined the job the Town is doing in regards to school issues. Although the Wake County School Board operates Cary's public schools, the respondents were asked to consider the Town's efforts such as banking land for schools, placing police in schools, locating park facilities adjacent to schools, and being an advocate for Cary citizens with the School Board. The results show a degree of satisfaction with a mean of 5.73 (Table 80). There were 49.0% on the "satisfied" side of the scale and 15.3% on the "dissatisfied" side. Note the high percentage (35.6%) of neutral responses. Overall, the level of satisfaction was not as strong for this area. The respondents who gave the Town a rating below 5 were asked what actions the Town could take to make them more satisfied with school issues (Appendix O). There were 66 total suggestions that focused on ending reassignments (21 comments), Cary being more of an advocate for citizens (10 comments), ending year-round school (9 comments), and Cary starting its own school system (9 comments).

**Table 80. Satisfaction with Overall Job the Town is Doing on School Issues Overall.**

Year	Mean	Very Dissatisfied 1	2	3	4	Neutral 5	6	7	8	Very Satisfied 9	% Above 5
08	5.73	5.2	2.2	3.0	4.9	35.6	12.1	18.6	11.5	6.8	49.0

#### Town Council Focus Areas Crosstabulations

The crosstabulations for the focus areas were conducted on groupings of age, children in household under 18, education, housing type, income, race, and years in Cary. The crosstabulations for satisfaction with the job the Town is doing with parks, recreation, and cultural programs are shown in Tables B437-B443. The subgroups showing the lowest levels of satisfaction were from \$20,001-\$30,000 income level (6.77), 18-25 age group (6.80), townhouse/condo dwellers (6.97), apartment dwellers (7.03), Asians (7.10), \$30,001-\$50,000 income level (7.12), over 65 age group (7.17), and those without a college degree (7.20).

The crosstabulations for satisfaction with the job the Town is doing with environmental protection are shown in Tables B444-B450. The means were generally consistent and

positive; however, a few areas did indicate lower levels of satisfaction including the 18-25 age group (6.15), townhouse/condo dwellers (6.67), \$30,001-\$50,000 income level (6.69), and 6-10 year Cary residents (6.75).

The crosstabulations for the effectiveness of Town Council in working to keep Cary the best place to live, work, and raise a family are shown in Tables B451-B457. This question had some of the most consistent means with very few lower ratings among the breakdowns. The only subgroups indicating slightly lower effectiveness means were 56-65 age group (6.57) and \$20,001-\$30,000 income level (6.62).

The crosstabulations for satisfaction with the job the Town is doing with transportation are shown in Tables B458-B464. Although most of the means were supportive, there were several subgroups with lower levels of satisfaction including the \$20,001-\$30,000 income level (6.15), \$50,001-\$70,000 income level (6.24), townhouse/condo dwellers (6.31), African-Americans (6.35), apartment dwellers (6.39), \$30,001-\$50,000 income level (6.40), and 2-5 year Cary residents (6.40).

The crosstabulations for satisfaction with the job the Town is doing with downtown revitalization are shown in Tables B465-B471. The levels of satisfaction were generally positive and consistent for the breakdowns. The only subgroups showing lower levels of satisfaction were apartment dwellers (6.03), townhouse/condo dwellers (6.03), Asians (6.11), and 18-25 age group (6.31).

The crosstabulations for satisfaction with the job the Town is doing with planning & development are shown in Tables B472-B478. The subgroups were generally consistent in their levels of satisfaction. The only areas demonstrating lower levels of satisfaction were townhouse/condo dwellers (5.62), 56-65 age group (5.70), and Asians (5.70).

The final crosstabulations for satisfaction with the job the Town is doing with school issues are shown in Tables B479-B485. The means were generally consistent in the breakdowns. There were several subgroups showing somewhat lower satisfaction means including townhouse/condo dwellers (5.13), \$20,001-\$30,000 income level (5.46), Asians (5.50), apartment dwellers (5.50), 56-65 age group (5.51), and over 65 age group (5.51).