

Appendix B

2010 Biennial Citizen Survey Focus Group Questions

Our goal today is to get your opinions about how the Town might move forward in improving upon its scores on specific items in the survey and to discuss in more detail issues and concerns respondents like you raised in the survey.

How many of you ever participated in a focus group before? *Facilitator explains how it works. Asks folks to capture extra or extended thoughts on the paper and turn in before leaving.*

Just to get an idea of whom you all are, let me ask a few demographic questions.

Do all of you live within the Town limits?

How long has each of you lived in Cary?

How many of you live in apartments?

1a. Growth in Cary showed up again in this year's survey as a concern, even though the population and tax to the recent past, probably due to the recession. How much do you think concerns over growth might be citizens on what the actual growth rate is as it changes over time?

1b. What about growth do you think concerns folks? For example, is it byproducts of growth, such as traffic

1c. How much of the concern is growth in Cary, growth in Wake County, or growth in the Triangle?

1d. When you think about what the Town government has done regarding growth over the last two years, what negatively?

1e. What do you think the Town should be doing to better manage growth?

1f. What would be the ideal growth situation in Cary?

2a. Now let's talk about traffic. Are most of the problem spots more in Cary or outside Cary? Can you name weekdays, weekends, or specific times of day?

2b. What ideas do you have for how the Town should improve traffic? (*probe as necessary with building mass transit, bike lanes, HOV lanes, better traffic signal system timing...*)

3a. Another of the concerns raised in the survey was street maintenance, things like fixing potholes and repaving. Who do you think is responsible for paving streets and fixing potholes in Cary?

3b. The correct answer is that it depends on the street. Some streets are owned by the State (NCDOT), some are private streets. With this in mind, let me throw out a few street names, and you tell me whether it's a State maintained road, or a private road that's maintained by the people who live along it. First one. Raise your hand if you think Maynard Road is a State road. How many of you think it's a Town road? Any of you think it's private?

3c. Kildaire Farm is a State road, which means the State is supposed to use some of the money you pay in state taxes for it. Raise your hands if you think that Maynard Road is a State road. How many of you think it's a Town road?

3d. Maynard Road is also a State road, and the State is supposed to use some of the money you pay in state taxes for it. Raise your hands if you think that Cary Parkway is a State road. How many of you think it's a Town road? Any of you think it's private?

3e. It is both. Parts of Cary Parkway are the responsibility of the State and the northern leg is the Town's. How many of you think Academy Street is a State road. How many of you think it's a Town road? Any of you think it's private?

3f. Academy Street is a Town road, and the Town is responsible for keeping it up. So, while no one likes potholes, how would you like your thoughts on: Should Cary citizens pay twice to have a State road maintained – once through state taxes – or should the Town continue to do what it's doing, which is letting the state know when they need repairs? What would you like to see done on this issue?

4a. Okay, on to money. We heard some conflicting ideas in the survey this year and want to get your thoughts on it. We want to keep taxes and fees low and slow growth but at the same time spend more on roads and move forward with improvements. Imagine, the revenues the Town gets from consumer spending, like sales tax and wine & beer tax, are very dependent on citizen spending habits, and the Town hasn't raised property taxes in over 20 years and growth is what drives sales taxes and growth make up a big part of the money Cary gets to provide you with new and better roads. So, if that means without raising your taxes, the Town has already had to cut its operations way back and cancel some projects for improving downtown. So, we'd like your ideas on how to deal with the conflict of citizens wanting the Town to improve roads without raising taxes, yet still pay for improvements. What are your thoughts?

4b. Are there certain types of projects or activities that you think should have a higher priority over others? Should we focus more on maintenance and upkeep of existing facilities and focus less on new things, or do you think we should focus on new things more? What's your preference between the two or what?

4c. Staying with this for a few more minutes, do you generally agree or disagree with the things the Town is doing? Do you think the Town is spending money wisely and appropriately?

4d. Is there anything that sticks out in your mind as something you wish the Town hadn't or wouldn't pursue?

- 5a. The Town is very interested in having citizens participate in the governing process. They want to create programs, projects, policies, and laws. They want these decisions to reflect the wants, needs, and values of the community. They are happy with how things are going. So let's start by defining involvement. When you think of being involved, what things come to mind?
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- 5b. Generally speaking, how interested are you in being involved in Town government? Talk a little about how interested or somewhat interested? Depends on the issue?
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- 5c. What kinds of things would motivate you to get more involved?
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- 5d. Outside of participating in the survey and this focus group, how many of you've had some level of involvement? (raise hands)?
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- 5e. What were you involved in, what did you do?
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- 5f. Do you think you benefited from the experience? How?
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- 5g. How did you find out about the issue and how to get involved? (*probe as necessary: newspaper article*)
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- 5h. Finally and real quick. How many people who read print media are reading it online?
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6. In closing, is there anything else about the Town of Cary government that you'd like to share with us before we wrap up? *thanking participants and other "housekeeping" issues.*