



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 22-117, **Version:** 1

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### **TITLE:**

Carrboro Resident Survey Results

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this agenda item is to provide the results of the Carrboro Resident Survey.

**DEPARTMENT:** Communication and Engagement

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**INFORMATION:** The Carrboro Resident Survey serves as a consumer report card for the Town of Carrboro. Residents rate their quality of life, their satisfaction with services, and perceptions of local government. Town of Carrboro leaders have conducted the biennial survey since 2016 to inform strategic planning and budgeting decisions.

Results from the recent survey conducted in November and December 2021 show that Carrboro ranks as a “high performing city” with nearly all (98%) of the residents surveyed rating the Town of Carrboro as “excellent” or “good” as *a place to live*, as *a place to raise children* (98%), and as *a place they feel welcome* (96%). This performance description is cited by the survey consultant when analyzing how Carrboro data compares with other communities across the country.

### **Highlights from Overall Survey Results**

- **Notable high areas of satisfaction** are overall appearance of the town (82%), access to parks and green space (80%), and availability of festivals and community events (78%). Notable high areas of satisfaction with town services were public works (91%), fire services (87%), parks and recreation facilities (87%) recreation and cultural programs (83%), and police services (81%).
- **Most important categories of Town services** were parks and recreation facilities, public works, and police services. These categories are based on the sum of respondents’ top three choices of the most important services.
- **The top three investment priorities** for the Town were identified as affordable housing, economic development, and police services.
- **Residents were asked to prioritize the allocation of funds received through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)** to address the economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic. These funds are being called a “generational opportunity” to make impactful investments in the community. The actions that had the highest levels of support were providing services to disproportionately impacted communities and investing in infrastructure.

### **Qualified Census Tract (Oversampling)**

In an effort to hear voices from residents who are historically hard to reach, Town staff requested a second survey to be conducted in February 2022 as part of the Carrboro Resident Survey, circling residents who live in the **Qualified Census Tract**. These tracts must have 50 percent of households with incomes below 60 percent of the Area Median Gross Income (AMGI) or have a poverty rate of 25 percent or more. QCTs are a common, readily accessible, and geographically granular method of identifying communities with a large proportion of low-income residents. Responses are analyzed separately as a comparison to the overall survey results.

Respondents from these areas of town were more likely to be renters (78% in the QCT as compared to 45% in the overall survey), younger (43% in the QCT are ages 18-34 as compared to 19% in the overall survey) people of color (13.3% are Black, 9.6% Asian and 9.6 % Hispanic in the QCT as compared to 11% Black, 9% Asian and 7% Hispanic in the overall survey), and have less access to the internet (8.7% reported no access to the Internet in the QCT as compared to 3% in the overall survey.)

### Highlights from QCT Survey Results

- **Most important categories of Town services** were parks and recreation, housing and community, and transportation.
- **Satisfaction was lower than the overall survey results** for ease of walking, ease of biking and availability of sidewalks.
- **Residents were asked to prioritize the allocation of funds received through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)**, to address the economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic. The actions that had the highest levels of support were providing services (fund education assistance, child care, affordable housing, services for unhoused persons, lead remediation) to disproportionately impacted communities and investing in infrastructure (water, stormwater, energy conservation, sewer, and broadband).

### Benchmarking

When Carrboro is compared to communities across the region and the United States, it scores the highest in every comparable category. For example, overall ratings for Carrboro “as a place to live” were 98% for Carrboro, 60% in the Atlantic Region and 50% in the United States. This data was collected from ETC Institute national and regional surveys. The Atlantic Region comprises North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Delaware, Maryland, District of Columbia and New Jersey. ETC Institute has indicated that due to these high rankings, Carrboro is eligible for national recognition and is scheduled to receive a company award.

### Methodology

The Town’s survey consultant was ETC Institute, a professional market research firm that has administered surveys in more than 300 cities and counties across the United States. ETC Institute has administered community surveys in our area for the Town of Chapel Hill, the Town of Hillsborough, and the City of Durham.

The six-page survey was mailed to a random sample of 2,000 households in Carrboro in December 2021. The goal to obtain completed surveys from at least 400 residents was surpassed when a total of 512 residents completed the survey. The survey mailing was followed up by emails and phone calls inviting responses. To encourage participation, ETC Institute communicated that a VISA gift card would be presented to one of the survey respondents.

Language translation in Spanish and Chinese was offered to residents through interpreters of ETC Institute while making follow-up phone calls to residents who received the mailed survey. The Town also contracted with CHICLE to provide language translation in additional languages (Burmese, Karen and others) to anyone who requested this.

### **Attachments**

- Town of Carrboro Community Survey Findings Report (Attachment A)
- Town of Carrboro Community Survey Open-Ended Comments (Attachment B)
- Town of Carrboro Results for Qualified Census Tract (Attachment C)

### **Publication of Survey Results**

Carrboro Resident Survey reports will be posted on the Town of Carrboro website at <https://carrboronc.gov/1096/Citizen-Survey-Reports> A news flash will be published to inform the community of the results and to thank residents for their participation.

**FISCAL & STAFF IMPACT:** The Carrboro Resident Survey is budgeted on a biennial basis in the amount of \$22,000.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Town Council is requested to receive the results of Carrboro Resident Survey.