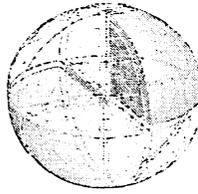


RESIDENT SURVEY FOLLOW-UP

FOLLOW-UP ITEMS

Individual Concerns (Open: 863/1486; Closed)	Unmet Community Needs (Open: 638/861)	Infrastructure Improvements	Service Improvements
Traffic (26.5%/73.8%) Taxes (20.6%/67.1%) Crime (13.9%/65%) Schools (14.5%/53.9%)	Affordable Housing (13%) Parking Avail./Enf. (8.6%) Traffic (6.6%) Quality of Public Transportation (6.4%)	Sewers Quality of Street Parking Supply Sidewalks Snow Removal	Citizen Assistance Health Code Enforcement Human Services

THE CENTER
FOR RESEARCH



&
PUBLIC POLICY

2004 ***COMMUNITY SURVEY***

Prepared for:

City of Alexandria, VA



October 2004

CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS

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Statement of Confidentiality and Ownership

All of the analyses, findings and recommendations contained within this report are the exclusive property of the City of Alexandria with offices located in the Alexandria, Virginia.

As required by the Code of Ethics of the National Council on Public Polls and the United States Privacy Act of 1974, The Center for Research and Public Policy maintains the anonymity of respondents to surveys the firm conducts. No information will be released that might, in any way, reveal the identity of the respondent.

Moreover, no information regarding these findings will be released without the written consent of an authorized representative of the City of Alexandria.

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INTRODUCTION

The Center for Research & Public Policy (CRPP) is pleased to present the results of a *2004 Community Survey* conducted among residents of the City of Alexandria, Virginia.

The survey was designed to provide resident input on quality of life, local issues, needs and satisfaction with community services.

The research study included a comprehensive telephone survey. Interviews were conducted among residents of the City of Alexandria by phone. CRPP, working together with City of Alexandria officials, designed the survey instrument to be used when calling City of Alexandria residents.

This report summarizes information collected from telephone surveys conducted September 13 – September 21, 2004.

The survey instrument employed in the *2004 Community Survey* included the following areas for investigation:

- Views on quality of life in Alexandria;
- Reasons for living in Alexandria;
- Views on issues affecting Alexandria residents;
- Satisfaction with services provided by the City of Alexandria;
- Measuring the degree expectations are met;
- Awareness, use, and rating of services, programs, and facilities by Alexandria residents;
- Sources of information used to get information about City services, events and activities;
- Opinions on specific communication channels, such as the City's website and the newsletter "FYI Alexandria";
- Community involvement in City boards, commissions and council meetings;
- Current emergency preparedness practices;
- Perception of any unmet or under-met needs in the City of Alexandria; and
- Demographics.

Section II of this report discusses the Methodology used in the study, while Section III includes Highlights derived from an analysis of the quantitative research. Section IV is a Summary of Findings for the residential telephone surveys - a narrative account of the data.

METHODOLOGY

Using a quantitative research design, CRPP completed 1001 interviews among residents of the City of Alexandria.

All telephone interviews were conducted between September 13 and September 21, 2004. Residents were contacted between 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. weekdays and 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. on the weekend.

Survey input was provided by City of Alexandria officials.

Survey design at CRPP is a careful, deliberative process to ensure fair, objective and balanced surveys. Staff members, with years of survey design experience, edit out any bias. Further, all scales used by CRPP (either numeric, such as one through ten, or wording such as strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree) are balanced evenly. And, placement of questions is carefully accomplished so that order has minimal impact.

All population-based surveys conducted by CRPP are proportional to population contributions within States, towns, and known census tract, group blocks and blocks. This distribution ensures truly representative results without significant under or over representation of various geographic or demographic groups within a sampling frame.

CRPP utilized a "super random digit" sampling procedure, which derives a working telephone sample of both listed and unlisted telephone numbers. This method of sample selection eliminates any bias toward only listed telephone numbers. Additionally, this process allows randomization of numbers, which equalizes the probability of qualified respondents being included in the sampling frame.

One survey instrument was used to elicit information from all City of Alexandria residents. Respondents qualified for the survey if they confirmed they were heads of households, at least eighteen years of age, and were current residents of the City of Alexandria, or lived within the City limits.

Training of telephone researchers and pre-test of the survey instrument occurred September 13, 2004.

All facets of the study were completed by CRPP's senior staff and researchers. These aspects include: survey design, pre-test, computer programming, fielding, coding, editing, data entry, verification, validation and logic checks, computer analysis, analysis, and report writing.

Completion rates are a critical aspect of any telephone survey research. Because one group of people might be easier to reach than another group, it is important that concentrated efforts are made to reach all groups to an equal degree. A high completion rate means that a high percentage of the respondents within the original sample were actually contacted, and the resulting sample is not biased toward one potential audience. CRPP maintained an 81% completion rate on all calls made during this 2004 *Community Survey*. And, a high completion rate, many times indicates an interest in the topic.

Statistically, a sample of 1001 surveys represents a margin for error of +/-3.0% at a 95% confidence level.

In theory, a sample of City of Alexandria residents will differ no more than +/-3.0% than if all City of Alexandria residents were contacted and included in the survey. That is, if random probability sampling procedures were reiterated over and over again, sample results may be expected to approximate the large population values within plus or minus 3.0% -- 95 out of 100 times.

Readers of this report should note that any survey is analogous to a snapshot in time and results are only reflective of the time period in which the survey was undertaken. Should concerted public relations or information campaigns be undertaken during or shortly after the fielding of the survey, the results contained herein may be expected to change and should be, therefore, carefully interpreted and extrapolated.

Furthermore, it is important to note that all surveys contain some component of "sampling error". Error that is attributable to systematic bias has been significantly reduced by utilizing strict random probability procedures. This sample was strictly random in that selection of each potential respondent was an independent event, based on known probabilities.

Each qualified household within the City of Alexandria had an equal chance for participating in the study. Statistical random error, however, can never be eliminated but may be significantly reduced by increasing sample size.

HIGHLIGHTS

ON QUALITY OF LIFE...

- Impressively, 97.2% of all residents surveyed suggested their quality of life in Alexandria is very good (50.3%) or good (46.9%). Some, 1.4% and 1.1%, suggested their quality of life in Alexandria was poor or very poor – respectively.
- And, while still high, only Arabic heritage residents provided lower positive quality of life ratings (84.0%).
- And, compared to two years ago, 79.5% suggest their quality of life was better (20.3%) or good but no change (59.2%). Some noted their quality of life became worse (8.9%) while another 2.5% suggested there was no change and their quality of life was poor.
- Just over half of all survey respondents (55.7%) suggest they were better off financially today than they were two years ago.
- Interestingly, “location” was cited most frequently as the leading reason for originally making the decision to live in or continue to live in Alexandria. Location at 39.0% was followed by work (13.9%), housing (13.5%), community (13.5%), nice neighborhoods (12.9%), birthplace (6.3%), historic nature of City (4.6%), diversity (3.9%), quality education system (3.4%), and recreational opportunities (2.1%).
- Sixty eight different responses were recorded when resident respondents were asked, in an open end format question, what they like most about Alexandria today. The top ten, in declining order, included: convenient in general (10.2%), near D.C. (6.1%), friendly people (5.4%), cultural diversity (5.1%), town has personality (5.1%), convenient for work (4.6%), size of community (4.0%), feels like a small town (3.8%), everything is in walking distance (3.4%), and town is wonderful (3.4%).

ON LOCAL ISSUES...

- **Researchers asked respondents, in an open end format question, to name the issues they were most concerned about on a local level within Alexandria. Seventy-three responses were recorded. The top ten issues named, in declining order included: traffic (15.4%), taxes (12.1%), poor school system (8.4%), crime problems (8.1%), over-development (5.7%), parking (5.0%), limited affordable housing (4.6%), over polluted (3.2%), poor government efficiency (2.4%), open space diminishing (2.0%).**
- **Eight specific issues were named in a closed end format question. Respondents were asked to rate how concerned or unconcerned they were about each issue. Three quarters of all respondents, 73.8%, suggest they were very concerned about traffic while two-thirds of respondents reported being very concerned about local real estate taxes, crime in the city, and lack of affordable housing – 67.1%, 65.1% and 62.0% respectively.**
- **Approximately one half were very concerned about: safety and security, quality of public education, and amount of parks, fields and open space – 57.8%, 53.9% and 52.0% respectfully. Some, 39.5% were very concerned about a lack of transportation alternatives to the car.**

ON COMMUNITY SERVICES...

- **Resident respondents, using a scale of one to ten, provided high and impressive satisfaction ratings for the following community services: Fire Department, Emergency Medical Services, Police Department, the courtesy of City Government staff, parks and recreational facilities, refuse and yard waste collection, and recreational opportunities and programs.**
- **Lower, but good to fair satisfaction ratings were recorded for the following services: the recycling program, the overall value of City services, condition of city sidewalks, performance of sanitary and storm sewer services, city snow removal services.**
- **Poor satisfaction ratings were recorded for the following: parking availability in your neighborhood and parking availability in Old Town and other business districts.**
- **The overall average positive rating across fifteen services measured was 72.2% (without “don’t know” respondents).**
- **Researchers asked all respondents how often the City of Alexandria meets their service expectations. A large majority (83.3%) noted the City meets their expectations always or most of the time. Another 10.4% suggested “sometimes”. Others, 2.3% and 0.8% suggested seldom or never – respectively.**

- With “don’t know” respondents removed, a large majority, 89.7%, of all respondents suggested that both elected and professional City officials are honest individuals dedicated to improving the quality of life in Alexandria.
- Significantly, 85.4% suggest that messages, information and other communication from the City is considered credible “always” or “most of the time”. Another 10.8% suggested this communication is “sometimes” credible while 2.5% noted communication is “seldom” credible and .9% said it was “never” credible. Don’t know respondents were removed from the data.

ON SERVICE AWARENESS AND USE...

- The best known City services, among twenty-four measured, included: City 911 emergency service, Metro Bus and Rail service, motor vehicle registration services, the Alexandria Library, DASH (bus service), City sponsored events, the City’s historic and cultural facilities, and animal control/shelter.
- The least known City services included: Round the clock internet Library resource service, services of the City’s Office of Human Rights, services of the City’s office of Citizen Assistance, City Mental Health, Mental Retardation, Alcohol and Drug Abuse services, and services provided by the Alexandria Health Department.
- The services rated highest (in the nineties) in satisfaction, among users, included: Round the clock internet Library resource services, Alexandria Library materials, City sponsored arts and cultural events, DASH bus service, 911 Emergency Services, the City’s historic and cultural facilities.
- The overall average positive rating across the twenty-four services measured (among users) is 80.0%.

ON COMMUNICATIONS...

- In declining order, the following are ways respondents report they usually get information about City services (multiple responses were accepted): newspapers (39.9%), city pamphlets (32.9%), word of mouth (19.6%), City newsletter: FYI Alexandria (18.4%), internet (18.1%), cable TV (12.4%), phonebook (9.7%), city web site (6.5%), neighborhood associations (3.2%), and Churches (0.3%).
- Similarly, respondents were asked how they generally get information about upcoming City sponsored events and activities. In declining order, respondents reported: newspapers (46.2%), City pamphlets, notices, flyers (31.7%), City newsletter: FYI Alexandria (19.5%), word of mouth (18.6%), internet (12.0%), cable TV (11.5%), City web site (4.6%), Churches (4.6%), neighborhood associations (4.4%), phonebook (1.8%).

- Impressively, 45.6% suggested they have visited the City's web site. Visitors were asked to rate the website on three characteristics. The highest positive rating, 76.9%, was recorded for "usability or navigability" followed by 76.0% for "interesting content" and 73.9% for "design or graphics".
- Just over half of all survey respondents, 53.5%, recall the City newsletter entitled: "FYI Alexandria". Sixty percent (59.1%) note they read the newsletter "always" or "most of the time". Another 20.3% suggest they read the newsletter "sometimes" for a new composite total of 79.5%. Some, 11.6%, seldom read the newsletter while 9.0% never read the publication.
- The newsletter received sound positive ratings on both design/graphics and interesting content – 80.4% and 79.8% respectively.

ON COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT...

- One quarter of all respondents (25.6%) report they have attended a City Council meeting while 16.1% suggested they have attended a Planning Commission Meeting and 5.1% have served on a City Board or Commission.

ON EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS...

- Researchers asked all respondents how prepared they were for emergencies. Just over half reported having developed a communication plan to stay in touch with friends and relatives (53.9%). Just under half suggested they have assembled an emergency supply kit (43.3%), taken a course such as emergency preparedness, CPR, or First Aid (43.1%), or created a formal or informal household emergency preparedness plan (42.6%).

ON COMMUNITY NEED...

- In a final open end format question, respondents were asked about any needs they or the Alexandria community might have that are either unmet or under-met.
- Ninety-nine different needs were cited. And, while 29.7% could not name a specific need, the top ten named needs included (in declining order): more affordable housing, more parking, traffic reduction, increased quality of public transportation, better schools and teachers, more open space, more police, more parks, need lower taxes, and more after school programs.

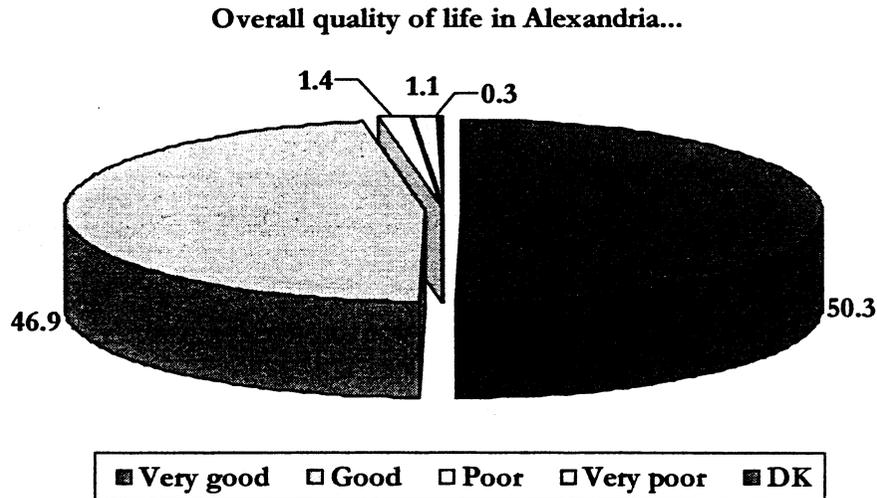
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Readers are reminded that the following section summarizes statistics collected from surveys among 1001 residents of the City of Alexandria, Virginia.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Researchers asked respondents a series of general questions regarding quality of life in Alexandria.

All resident respondents were asked how they would rate their overall quality of life in Alexandria. A large majority, 97.2%, suggested overall quality life in Alexandria was either very good (50.3%) or good (46.9%). A few, 2.5%, indicated overall quality of life in Alexandria was either poor (1.4%) or very poor (1.1%). And, 0.3% did not know or were unsure



Respondents were asked how they would describe their overall quality of life in Alexandria today, compared to two years ago. More than three quarters, 79.5%, said their overall quality of life was better (20.3%), or remained good (59.2%). Less than one eighth, 11.4%, suggested their overall quality of life remained poor (2.5%), or was worse (8.9%), than it was 2 years ago. And, 9.1% did not know or were unsure.

More than half of all respondents, 55.7%, indicated being better off financially today, than they were two years ago. Two fifths, 40.4% said they were not.

Further, all survey respondents were asked why they originally made the decision to live in, or why they continued to live in Alexandria.

The following table summarizes results. Multiple responses were accepted.

Reasons for living in Alexandria	2004
Location (close to work/highways)	39.4%
Work (work in or near Alexandria)	13.9
Housing (nice house/affordable)	13.5
Community (town character/community feeling)	13.5
Nice neighborhoods	12.9
Birthplace (lived here all life)	6.3
Historic nature of City	4.6
Diversity	3.9
Quality education system	3.4
Recreational opportunities	2.1
Other	25.8

In an open-end format question, researchers asked respondents to mention what they liked most about Alexandria today.

The following table holds results to the top ten most frequently cited responses.

Things liked about Alexandria today	2004
Convenient in general	10.2%
Proximity to D.C.	6.1
Friendly people	5.4
Cultural diversity	5.1
Town has personality	5.1
Convenient for work	4.6
Size of the community	4.0
Feels like a small town	3.8
Everything within walking distance	3.4
Town is wonderful	3.4

Other less-frequently cited responses included: pretty/attractive city, no reason/nothing, convenient shopping, convenient dining, quiet community, great job opportunities, great Mayor, good quality of life, access to transportation, access to recreational facilities, enjoy neighborhood, the biking trails, center community, historic area, safe/little crime, roads are close, many activities, very modern, convenient parks, size of city, things remaining the same, great place to raise a family, quick response by police, good city administration, museums and theatres.

Business diversity, good schools/programs, cheaper than D.C., all needs are met, community involvement, independently-ran yet metropolitan, much to do, it's on the river, development bringing in business, affordable, clean/well-maintained, style of community, library services, no problems with traffic, not crowded, good weather, T.C. Williams Volleyball team, no drugs, much tradition, good political leaders, can have a BBQ in apartment, like house, King street, not too urban, unique town, small businesses/personable, growing wisely, enjoy nature and open space, great public service, economy, architecture, financial assistance program, and great resources.

LOCAL ISSUES

Researchers asked respondents, in an open-end format question, to name the issues they were most concerned about, on a local level, within Alexandria.

The table below holds results to the top ten most frequently cited responses.

Issue of most concern	2004
Traffic	15.4%
Taxes	12.1
Poor school systems	8.4
Crime problems	8.1
Over-development	5.7
Parking	5.0
Limited affordable housing	4.6
Over-population	3.2
Poor government efficiency	2.4
Open space diminishing	2.0
No reason / nothing	9.3

Other responses mentioned with less frequency included: High cost of living, open space being diminished, gangs and drugs, flooding sewers, too many speed bumps, bridge development, cleaning up of certain areas, moral values, need of more police patrolling, flooding, public transportation, more stores/less warehouses, home owners not maintaining their properties, housing, garbage on the streets, city-provided services, programs for single mothers, limited welfare benefits, illegal immigrants, lack of jobs, need more speed bumps, educational concerns for home schooling, too many vacant buildings, security/safety, road conditions, apartments near huge campus, need more recreational facilities, need more parks.

Location of coal-burning plant, power plant polluting area, starting to accept section 8, better/more affordable health care, poor services, housing for elderly, water quality, retention for students and teachers, street noise increasing, too restricted, not at all affordable, lack of English being spoken, air pollution, need more police, maintenance of city, gas costs, electricity costs, people speed/too fast, officers don't act on speeding issues, spending money responsibly, not attractive to live due to over-population, budget needs to be fixed, terrorist threats, socio-economic issues, speeding, kids, integrity of commonwealth's Attorney General, competency of police, health care for self-employed, terrible library, lack of rights for the gay community, and need more/safer sidewalks.

Researchers read respondents a number of issues, and asked how concerned they were about each. Respondents were asked to use a scale of one to ten, where one meant very concerned, while ten meant not at all concerned.

The following table holds the cumulative totals for "Concerned" (1 – 4), as well as for "Not concerned" (7 – 10). The same results are presented, without "Don't Know" responses, in the fourth and fifth columns.

Issues	With DK's		W/O DK's	
	Concerned (1-4)	Not Concerned (7-10)	Concerned (1-4)	Not Concerned (7-10)
Traffic within Alexandria	73.6%	11.8%	73.8%	11.8%
Local real estate taxes	62.8	18.9	67.1	20.2
Crime in the City	64.0	13.0	65.1	13.2
Lack of affordable housing	60.1	21.6	62.0	22.2
Safety and security	57.6	20.8	57.8	20.8
Quality of public education	48.3	26.9	53.9	30.0
Amount of parks, fields, and open space	50.8	32.5	52.0	33.2
Lack of transportation alternatives to the automobile	38.8	45.6	39.5	46.4

COMMUNITY SERVICES

All respondents were presented with a number of city services and asked to rate each based on all they knew or had heard. Respondents were asked to use a scale of one to ten, where one meant the service was very good and ten meant the service was very poor.

The table below depicts the cumulative totals for “Good” (1 – 4), and for “Poor” (7 – 10). Results without “Don’t know” responses are presented in the fourth and fifth columns.

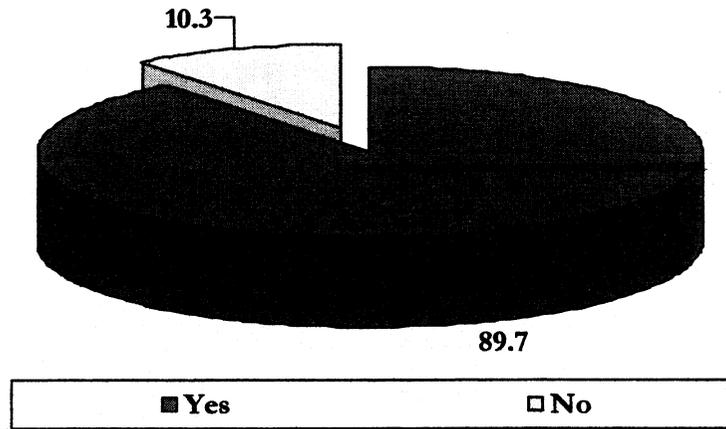
Community Service	With DK's		W/O DK's	
	Good (1-4)	Poor (7-10)	Good (1-4)	Poor (7-10)
Fire Department	78.5%	1.7%	91.5%	1.9%
Emergency medical services	68.8	2.3	89.9	3.0
Police Department	77.0	5.3	84.9	5.8
Courtesy of City government staff and employees	72.4	5.1	81.6	5.8
Parks and recreation facilities	75.2	4.4	81.2	4.7
Refuse and yard waste collection	71.9	6.9	79.9	7.6
Recreational opportunities/programs	72.2	6.9	78.8	7.5
Recycling program	63.5	10.6	73.5	12.3
Overall value of City services in light of taxes and fees paid	68.2	9.2	71.9	9.7
Condition of City sidewalks	65.7	8.7	67.0	8.9
Performance of sanitary and storm sewer services	52.2	9.3	66.0	11.7
Condition of local roads	63.4	11.6	63.9	11.6
City snow removal operations	56.9	14.4	62.9	15.9
Parking availability in your neighborhood	57.4	25.9	58.9	26.5
Parking availability in Old Town and other business districts	30.3	50.3	31.3	52.1
AVERAGE	64.9%	11.5%	72.2%	12.3%

Researchers read respondents the following statement: “Most everyone has expectations of service organizations and companies they do business with. Please think about the services provided by the City of Alexandria and tell me if the City meets your service expectations always; most of the time; sometimes; seldom; or never.”

A majority of respondents, 83.3%, suggested the City met their service expectations always (17.0%), or most of the time (66.3%). Ten percent (10.4%) suggested the City met their service expectations only sometimes. And 3.1%, noted the City met their expectations seldom (2.3%), or never (0.8%).

Further, more than three quarters of all respondents, 77.1% believe City officials, both elected and professional, are honest individuals who are dedicated to improving the quality of life in Alexandria. Another 8.9% do not. When “Don’t know” responses were taken out, 89.7% of all respondents believe City officials are honest, dedicated, individuals.

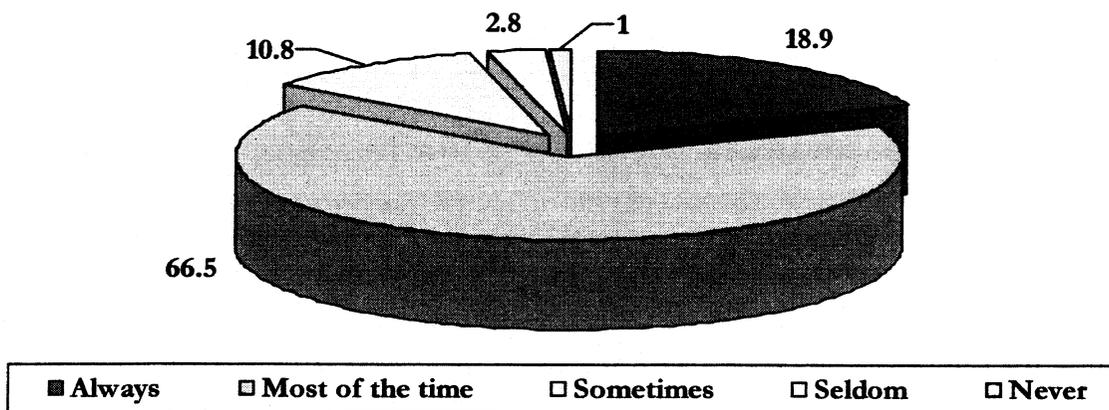
Are Alexandria City officials honest individuals? (Without DK's)



More than three quarters of respondents, 76.4%, believe messages, information and other communication from the City are credible always (16.9%), or most of the time (59.5%). Ten percent (9.7%) said these messages were only credible sometimes. And, 3.4%, suggested these communications from the City were seldom (2.5%) or never (0.9%) credible.

When “don’t know” responses were taken out, 85.4% of all respondents, noted messages, information and other communications from the City are credible always (18.9%) or most of the time (66.5%).

Communications from the City are credible... (Without DK's)



SERVICE AWARENESS AND USE

Researchers read respondents a number of specific services, programs and facilities available to Alexandria residents, and asked if they were aware of each service. Respondents indicating awareness were asked if they or their family members had used each service. If a service was used respondents were asked to rate the service, using a scale of one to ten, where one was very good and ten was very poor.

The following table summarizes results for those indicating awareness and use. The fourth and fifth column hold the cumulative total for "Good" (1-4) and "Poor" (7-10).

Services/Programs/Facilities	Aware? Yes	Use? Yes	Good (1-4)	Poor (7-10)
911 Emergency Service	98.6%	31.2%	94.4%	3.2%
Metro bus and rail service	97.8	80.2	85.6	4.7
Motor vehicle registration services	97.4	82.2	76.2	9.4
Alexandria Library books, tapes, CDs, DVDs and other materials	95.6	69.8	92.1	2.5
DASH (bus service within Alexandria)	95.5	50.2	93.8	1.8
City-sponsored events, such as the July City Birthday/Fireworks celebration or the annual Jazz Festival	93.0	60.8	87.9	1.7
The City's historic and cultural facilities, such as the Torpedo Factory, Gadsby's Tavern, Fort Ward, the Lyceum, the Friendship Firehouse, and Alexandria's Black History Museum	92.3	71.9	94.9	0.4
Animal control/Animal Shelter	90.1	34.1	88.9	3.8
City-sponsored arts and cultural events	85.9	59.8	94.7	1.4
Programs and services offered at City recreation centers	84.2	44.3	88.6	4.9
Building permit and other services of the Code Enforcement Department	83.5	30.0	68.1	14.5
Residential parking permit services	80.5	43.5	76.2	11.2
Domestic violence or sexual assault services	79.6	1.3	21.4	42.8
Tax payment services	74.5	53.7	84.6	1.9
Department of Human Services programs, such as JobLink, child welfare, and programs for seniors and those with disabilities	73.7	19.0	67.6	14.5
Services related to the assessment of real estate taxes	72.9	39.9	59.7	14.7
City-maintained athletic fields	71.9	29.6	80.5	5.5
City-sponsored youth sports programs (e.g., baseball, basketball and football)	71.0	20.8	84.2	6.6
Services provided by the Alexandria Health Department	68.9	19.3	73.0	17.0
City-sponsored adult sports programs	66.8	12.7	89.0	2.2
City Mental Health, Mental Retardation, Alcohol and Drug Abuse services	63.3	8.7	86.4	13.6
Round-the-clock internet Library resource services	62.0	28.8	98.0	---
Services of the City's Office of Human Rights	48.9	9.5	70.2	19.3
Services of the City's Office of Citizen Assistance	40.8	5.4	64.5	12.9
AVERAGE	78.7%	37.8%	80.0%	8.8%

COMMUNICATIONS

In an open-end format question, respondents were asked how they usually received information about City services.

The following table summarizes results. Multiple responses were accepted.

Source used to get information about City services	2004
Newspapers	39.9%
City pamphlets, notices, flyers	32.9
Word of mouth	19.6
City newsletter: <i>FYI Alexandria</i>	18.4
Internet	18.1
Cable TV	12.4
Phonebook	9.7
City web site	6.5
Neighborhood associations	3.2
Churches	0.3

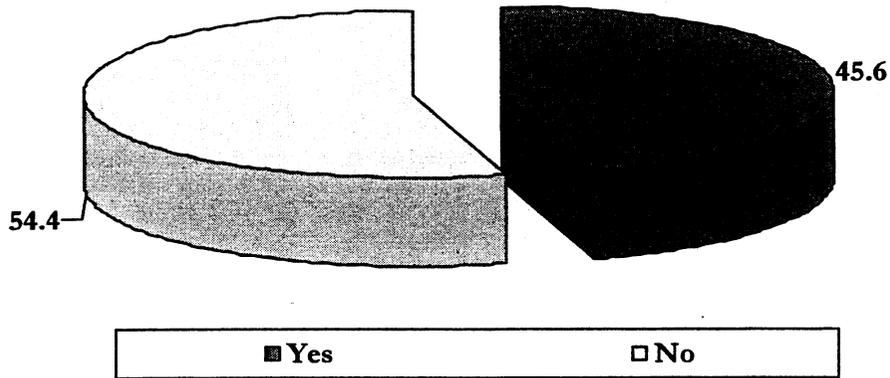
Further, respondents were asked where they usually got information on upcoming City-sponsored events and activities.

The table below holds results as collected. Multiple responses were accepted.

Source used to get information on City-sponsored events and activities	2004
Newspapers	46.2%
City pamphlets, notices, flyers	31.7
City newsletter: <i>FYI Alexandria</i>	19.5
Word of mouth	18.6
Internet	12.0
Cable TV	11.5
City web site	4.6
Neighborhood associations	4.4
Phonebook	1.8

Further, more than two fifths of all respondents, 45.6%, have visited the City's website www.alexandria.gov (or www.ci.alexandria.va.us). Just over one half, 54.4% have not.

Visited City of Alexandria web site?

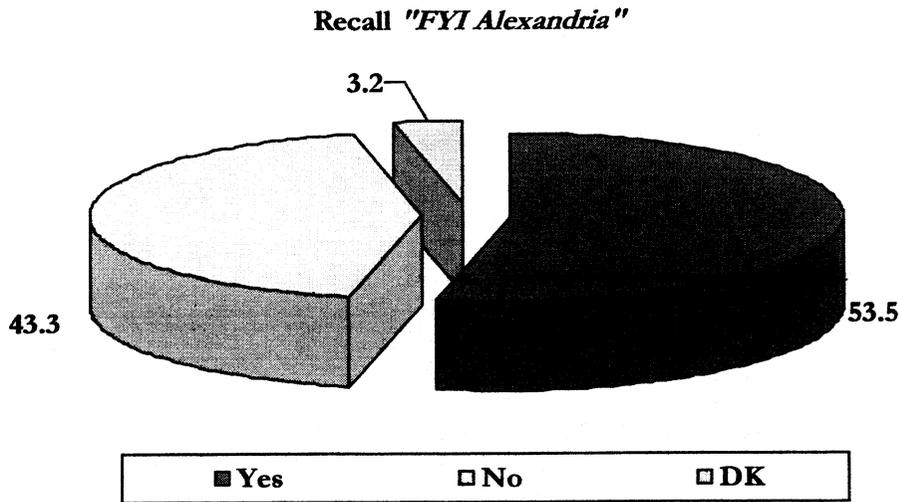


Respondents who had visited the City’s website (45.6%), were asked to rate the website on four characteristics using a scale of one to ten, where one is very good and ten is very poor.

The table below depicts the cumulative totals for “Good” (1 – 4), and for “Poor” (7 – 10). Results without “Don’t know” responses are presented in the fourth and fifth columns.

Website	With DK's		W/O DK's	
	Good (1-4)	Poor (7-10)	Good (1-4)	Poor (7-10)
Usability or navigability	72.4%	5.9%	76.9%	6.3%
Interesting content	70.8	7.0	76.0	7.5
Design or graphics	65.1	5.7	73.9	6.5
AVERAGE	69.4%	6.2%	75.6%	6.8%

More than half of all respondents, 53.5%, recall the City's newsletter titled: "FYI Alexandria". Just over two fifths, 43.3%, do not recall the newsletter. And, 3.2% did not know or were unsure.



Among respondents who recalled the City's newsletter "FYI Alexandria" (53.5%), more than half, 59.1%, suggested reading the newsletter always (33.8%), or most of the time (25.4%). One fifth, 20.3%, indicated reading the newsletter sometimes. And, 20.6% said they read the newsletter seldom (11.6%), or never (9.0%).

Respondents who indicated reading the newsletter always, most of the time, sometimes, and seldom (48.8%), were asked to rate the newsletter on several important characteristics. Respondents were asked to use a scale of one to ten, where one was very good and ten was very poor.

Newsletter	With DK's		W/O DK's	
	Good (1-4)	Poor (7-10)	Good (1-4)	Poor (7-10)
Interesting content	75.2%	4.4%	79.8%	4.8%
Design or Graphics	72.1	4.0	80.4	4.6
AVERAGE	73.7%	4.2%	80.1%	4.7%

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Researchers asked respondents if a few questions related to community involvement.

Respondents were asked if they had attended a City Council meeting, attended a planning commission meeting, or served on a City board or commission.

The following table holds results as collected

Community Involvement...	Yes	No	DK
Attended a City Council Meeting	25.6%	74.4%	---
Attended a Planning Commission Meeting	16.1	83.1	0.8
Served on a City Board or Commission	5.1	94.9	---

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Researchers read respondents a number of emergency preparedness steps, and asked if any of these had been taken.

The following table summarizes results as collected.

Emergency Preparedness...	Yes	No
Developed a communication plan to stay in touch with friends and relatives in an emergency	53.9%	46.1%
Assembled an emergency supply kit	43.3	56.7
Taken a course such as emergency preparedness, CPR or First Aid	43.1	56.9
Created a formal or informal household emergency preparedness plan	42.6	57.4

COMMUNITY NEED

Finally, researchers read respondents the following: "Throughout this survey we've reviewed many services, programs and community facilities. Please tell me of any needs of Alexandria residents, or the Alexandria community, which you feel are unmet or under-met?"

The table below holds results to the top ten most frequently cited responses.

Unmet/Undermet needs	2004
More affordable housing	6.8%
More parking	4.5
Traffic reduction	3.4
Increased quality of public transportation	3.3
Better schools / teachers	3.2
More open space	2.7
More police	2.5
More parks	2.0
Need lower taxes	1.8
More after-school programs	1.7
None/Cannot recall/nothing	29.7

Other responses cited with less frequency included: Need for better hospitals, cleaning of City, programs for senior citizens, neighborhood watch, more public health clinics, child safety checks, snow removal on streets, displacement of low-income residents, pamphlets in larger print, cleaning up of waterfront, more sidewalks/walking areas, more resources for schools, better medical facilities, more jobs, parenting classes, substance abuse programs, outreach for Latino community, dermatologist clinic for poor, dental service for poor, lower taxes, lower library fees, unfinished dog areas, human services, clean up/restoration of buildings, social service agency, flooding/drainage system, less highways, last minute notification for events, curfew for teens, better air quality, more youth activities.

Improvement of shops, proper information/resources for social services, bigger homeless shelter, more environmental responsibility by Power Plant (causing pollution), ESL services, medical care, childcare, extended weekend library hours, more senior centers, road kill clean up, road trash cleanup, a housing services for elderly, better road conditions, better access to the city, government employment, better recycling services, better government officials, monitoring of speeding cars, more bike paths, proper disposal of bulk items, trash removal.

Better building planning, les services for illegal immigrants, programs for transition from school to work, more public facilities, more benefit services, more funding for animals shelters, happy hour for dogs, better use of tax money, cleanup of loitering in parks, city-wide emergency training, better cleaning up by pet owners, services for people with special needs, rats in neighborhoods, golf course only for Alexandria residents, better plan for population growth, better treatment from Motor Vehicle Department employees, a town center, better sidewalks, more arts and crafts classes, programs for the homeless, better recreation for the disadvantaged, more pre-school programs, community-wide holiday events, better planning for Duke Street, access to child's academic records, put wires underground, more Section 8 needed, landmark Mall, enforce children registration, and gay rights.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Have a computer at home	2004
Yes	79.0%
No	20.0
DK	1.0

Access to the Internet	2004
Home	19.5%
Work	9.1
Both	54.2
No	16.2
DK	1.0

How many children under 18 living in household...	2004
1	49.1%
2	45.7
3	3.0
4	2.2

Attending public schools in Alexandria	2004 (N=230)
Yes	40.9%
No	55.7
Split – Some are, some are not	3.5

Commute to work	2004
Yes	62.1%
No	36.4
DK	1.5

How do you commute to work?	2004
Drive alone	62.8%
Metro rail	9.4
Carpool	7.2
Metro	5.1
DASH bus	4.8
Walk	4.4
Metro bus	2.3
Bike	2.1
Combination	1.6
Telecommute	0.2

Years living in Alexandria	2004
1 – 10	50.5%
11 – 20	20.3
21 – 30	11.3
31 – 40	8.0
41 – 50	3.3
51 – 60	1.6
More than 60	3.1

Rent or own?	2004
Rent	59.9%
Own	37.0
Neither	1.2
RF	1.9

Type of home	2004
Single-family	38.2%
Apartment	25.2
Townhouse/duplex	20.0
Condo	12.8
Multi-family	1.1
DK	0.5
RF	2.3

Registered to vote?	2004
Yes	85.7%
No	12.4
RF	1.9

Live east or west of Quaker Lane	2004
East	58.6%
West	36.3
DK	2.6
RF	2.5

Age	2004
18 – 25	3.3%
26 – 35	16.3
35 – 45	22.6
45 – 55	18.2
55 – 65	17.7
65 – 75	10.8
75 or older	7.4
Refused	3.8

Education	2004
8 th grade or less	0.5%
Some high school	1.9
High school grad	11.2
Tech school grad	1.0
Some college	10.8
College graduate	37.0
Post graduate or professional degree	35.6
Refused	2.1

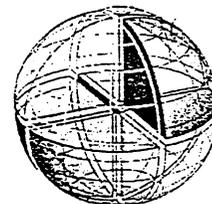
Income	2004
Less than \$25,000	7.8%
\$25,000 < \$50,000	11.2
\$50,000 < \$100,000	22.2
\$100,000 < \$150,000	14.3
\$150,000 < \$250,000	7.8
\$250,000 or more	2.4
DK	1.5
RF	32.9

Hispanic	2004
Yes	12.0%
No	85.6
RF	2.4

Arabic	2004
Yes	2.8%
No	94.4
RF	2.7

Race	2004
White	69.2%
African-American	23.4
Asian	1.5
Aleutian	0.2
Other	2.6
RF	3.2

Gender	2004
Male	42.5%
Female	57.5



CITY OF ALEXANDRIA

September 2004

Researcher:

Date:

Time start:

CB:

Time end:

Supervisor:

Hello. My name is _____. I am a research assistant at The Center for Research and Public Policy. We are talking to residents of Alexandria on behalf of the City about their quality of life, local issues, needs and satisfaction with community services. This is not a sales call. Your responses will be kept confidential.

SCREENER

A. Are you one of the heads of your household and eighteen years of age or older?

- 01 Yes (Continue)
- 02 No (Ask for qualified respondent)
- 03 DK (Thank and terminate)

B. Are you currently a resident of the City of Alexandria and live within the City limits?

- 01 Yes (Continue)
 - 02 No (Ask for qualified respondent)
 - 03 DK (Thank and terminate)
-

QUALITY OF LIFE

1. Please think about your overall quality of life in Alexandria. Please tell me if you consider your quality of life...

- 01 Very good;
- 02 Good;
- 03 Poor; or
- 04 Very poor
- 05 DK/Unsure

2. Which of the following best describes your overall quality of life in Alexandria today, compared to two years ago...

- 01 Better;
- 02 No change, but good;
- 03 No change, and poor; or
- 04 Worse
- 05 DK/Unsure

3. And, would you say you are better off financially today than you were two years ago?

- 01 Yes
- 02 No
- 03 DK/Unsure

4. Please tell me why you originally made the decision to live or why you continue to live in Alexandria?
 (RESEARCHERS: Accept multiple responses/Do not read)

- 01 Location (close to work/highways)
- 02 Housing (nice house/affordable)
- 03 Recreational opportunities
- 04 Quality education system
- 05 Nice neighborhoods
- 06 Community (town character/community feeling)
- 07 Historic nature of City
- 08 Birthplace (lived here all life) a
- 09 Work (work in or near Alexandria)
- 10 Diversity
- 11 Other: (Specify) _____

5. Please tell me what you like most about Alexandria today?

LOCAL ISSUES

6. Please tell me the issues you are most concerned with on a local level, here in Alexandria?

(RESEARCHERS PROBE: "Is there anything else?")

Now, I'll name a number of local Alexandria issues. Please tell me how concerned you are about each, using a scale of one to ten where one is very concerned and ten is not at all concerned. (RESEARCHERS: Read and rotate)

Issues	VC										NAAC	DK
7. Quality of public education	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
8. Crime in the City	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
9. Lack of affordable housing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
10. Traffic within Alexandria	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
11. Local real estate taxes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
12. Safety and security	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
13. Lack of transportation alternatives to the automobile	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	

Issues	VC										NAAC	DK
14. Amount of parks, fields, and open space	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	

COMMUNITY SERVICES

The following are a number of City services. As I read each, please rate each based on all you know or have heard using a scale of one to ten where one is very good and ten is very poor. (RESEARCHERS: Read and rotate)

Community Service	VG										VP	DK
15. Police Department	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
16. Fire Department	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
17. Emergency medical services	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
18. Refuse and yard waste collection	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
19. Recycling program	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
20. Condition of local roads	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
21. Condition of City sidewalks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
22. City snow removal operations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
23. Performance of sanitary and storm sewer services	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
24. Parking availability in your neighborhood	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
25. Parking availability in Old Town and other business districts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
26. Recreational opportunities/programs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
27. Parks and recreation facilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
28. Overall value of City services in light of taxes and fees paid	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
29. Courtesy of City government staff and employees	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	

30. Most everyone has expectations of service organizations and companies they do business with. Please think about the services provided by the City of Alexandria and tell me if the City meets your service expectations...

- 01 Always;
- 02 Most of the time;
- 03 Sometimes;
- 04 Seldom; or
- 05 Never
- 06 DK/Unsure

31. Overall, do you believe that City officials, both elected and professional, are honest individuals and are dedicated to improving the quality of life in Alexandria? Would you say...?

- 01 Yes
- 02 No
- 03 DK/Unsure

32. And, how frequently would you say messages, information, and other communications from the City are credible? Would you say...?

- 01 Always;
- 02 Most of the time;
- 03 Sometimes;
- 04 Seldom; or
- 05 Never
- 06 DK/Unsure

SERVICE AWARENESS AND USE

Now, I'll read you a number of specific services, programs and facilities offered to Alexandria residents. Please tell me if you are aware of each service and if so, if you or your family members have used each.

If you have used the service, I'll ask you to report how satisfied you were using a scale of one to ten where a one is very good and ten is very poor. (RESEARCHERS: Use 11 for DK/Unsure. Read and Rotate).

Services/Programs/Facilities	Aware?	Aware?	Aware?	Use?	Use?	Use?	RATE 1-10 DK=11
	Yes	No	DK	Yes	No	DK	
33. 911 Emergency Service	01	02	03	01	02	03	
34. Domestic violence or sexual assault services	01	02	03	01	02	03	
35. Building permit and other services of the Code Enforcement Department	01	02	03	01	02	03	
36. Animal control/Animal Shelter	01	02	03	01	02	03	
37. Metro bus and rail service	01	02	03	01	02	03	
38. DASH (bus service within Alexandria)	01	02	03	01	02	03	
39. Services related to the assessment of real estate taxes	01	02	03	01	02	03	
40. Motor vehicle registration services	01	02	03	01	02	03	
41. Residential parking permit services	01	02	03	01	02	03	
42. City-sponsored events, such as the July City Birthday/Fireworks celebration or the annual Jazz Festival	01	02	03	01	02	03	
43. Programs and services offered at City recreation centers	01	02	03	01	02	03	
44. City-sponsored youth sports programs (e.g., baseball, basketball and football)	01	02	03	01	02	03	
45. City-sponsored adult sports programs	01	02	03	01	02	03	
46. City-maintained athletic fields	01	02	03	01	02	03	
47. City-sponsored arts and cultural events	01	02	03	01	02	03	
48. Alexandria Library books, tapes, CDs, DVDs and other materials	01	02	03	01	02	03	
49. Round-the-clock internet Library resource services	01	02	03	01	02	03	
50. Department of Human Services programs, such as JobLink, child welfare, and programs for seniors and those with disabilities	01	02	03	01	02	03	

Services/Programs/Facilities	Aware	Aware	Aware	Use	Use	Use	RATE
	Yes	No	DK	Yes	No	DK	1-10 DK=11
51. Services of the City's Office of Human Rights	01	02	03	01	02	03	
52. Services of the City's Office of Citizen Assistance	01	02	03	01	02	03	
53. City Mental Health, Mental Retardation, Alcohol and Drug Abuse services	01	02	03	01	02	03	
54. Services provided by the Alexandria Health Department	01	02	03	01	02	03	
55. The City's historic and cultural facilities, such as the Torpedo Factory, Gadsby's Tavern, Fort Ward, the Lyceum, the Friendship Firehouse, and Alexandria's Black History Museum	01	02	03	01	02	03	
56. Tax payment services	01	02	03	01	02	03	

COMMUNICATIONS

57. Please tell me how you usually get information about City services? (RESEARCHERS: Accept multiple responses/Do not read list)

- 01 Newspapers
- 02 Cable TV
- 03 Neighborhood associations
- 04 Phonebook
- 05 City pamphlets, notices, flyers
- 06 City newsletter: *FYI Alexandria*
- 07 Word of mouth
- 08 Internet
- 09 City web site
- 10 Churches
- 11 Other: _____

58. And, where do you usually get information on upcoming City sponsored events and activities? (RESEARCHERS: Accept multiple responses/Do not read list)

- 01 Newspapers in a
- 02 Cable TV
- 03 Neighborhood associations
- 04 Phonebook
- 05 City pamphlets, notices, flyers
- 06 City newsletter: *FYI Alexandria*
- 07 Word of mouth
- 08 Internet
- 09 City web site
- 10 Churches
- 11 Other: _____

59. Have you visited the City's website www.alexandriava.gov (or www.ci.alexandria.va.us)?

- 01 Yes (Continue)
- 02 No (Go to Q63)
- 03 DK/Unsure (Go to Q63)

Please rate the City's website on the following four characteristics using a scale of one to ten where one is very good and ten is very poor.

Website	VG									VP	DK
60. Interesting content	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
61. Design or graphics	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
62. Usability or navigability	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11

63. Do you recall the City newsletter titled "FYI Alexandria"?

- 01 Yes (Continue)
- 02 No (Go to Q67)
- 03 DK/Unsure (Go to Q67)

64. Please tell me if you read "FYI Alexandria"...

- 01 Always;
- 02 Most of the time;
- 03 Sometimes;
- 04 Seldom; or
- 05 Never (Go to Q67)
- 06 DK/Unsure (DO NOT READ)

Please rate the newsletter on several important characteristics using a scale of one to ten where one is very good and ten is very poor.

Newsletter	VG									VP	DK
65. Design or Graphics	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
66. Interesting content	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The following questions related to community involvement. Please tell me if you have...

Community Involvement...	Yes	No	DK
67. Attended a City Council Meeting	01	02	03
68. Attended a Planning Commission Meeting	01	02	03
69. Served on a City Board or Commission	01	02	03

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

The following are a number of questions related to emergency preparedness. Please tell me if you have...

Emergency Preparedness...	Yes	No	DK
70. Created a formal or informal household emergency preparedness plan	01	02	03
71. Developed a communication plan to stay in touch with friends and relatives in an emergency	01	02	03
72. Assembled an emergency supply kit	01	02	03
73. Taken a course such as emergency preparedness, CPR or First Aid	01	02	03

COMMUNITY-NEED

74. Throughout this survey we've reviewed many services, programs and community facilities. Please tell me of any needs of Alexandria residents, or the Alexandria community, which you feel are unmet or under-met?

(RESEARCHERS PROBE: "Is there anything else?")

DEMOGRAPHICS

75. Do you currently have a computer at home?

- 01 Yes
- 02 No
- 03 DK

76. Do you currently have access to the internet at home, work or both?

- 01 Home
- 02 Work
- 03 Both
- 04 No
- 05 DK/Unsure

77. Do you have any children under the age of eighteen living at home?

- 01 Yes
- 02 No (Go to Q80)
- 03 DK/Unsure (Go to Q80)
- 04 Refused (Go to Q80)

78. How many children under the age of eighteen do you have living at home?

- 01 _____
- 77 DK/Unsure (Go to Q80)
- 99 Refused (Go to Q80)

79. Are they attending Public Schools in Alexandria?

- 01 Yes
- 02 No
- 03 Split – Some are, some are not
- 04 Don't Know/Unsure
- 05 Refused

80. Do you commute to work?

- 01 Yes (Continue)
- 02 No (Go to Q82)
- 03 DK/Unsure (Go to Q82)

81. How do you commute to work?

- 01 Walk
- 02 Bike
- 03 DASH Bus
- 04 Drive alone
- 05 Carpool
- 06 Metro
- 07 Metro rail
- 08 Metro bus
- 09 Combination/varies
- 10 Telecommute/work from home
- 11 Other
- 11 DK/Unsure

82. How many years, have you lived in Alexandria?

- 01 # _____
- 77 DK/Unsure
- 99 RF

83. Do you own or rent your current residence?

- 01 Own
- 02 Rent
- 03 Neither
- 04 DK/Unsure
- 05 RF

84. What type of home do you currently have?

- 01 Single family detached
- 02 Multi-family house
- 03 Town house/Duplex
- 04 Apartment/Apartment Building
- 05 Condominium
- 06 Mobile Home
- 07 DK/Unsure
- 08 RF

85. Are you registered to vote in Alexandria?

- 01 Yes
- 02 No
- 03 DK/Unsure
- 04 RF

86. Do you live east or west of Quaker Lane in Alexandria?

- 01 East
- 02 West
- 03 DK/Unsure (ask for Street: _____)
- 04 RF

87. Which of the following best describes your age?

- 01 18-25
- 02 26-35
- 03 36-45
- 04 46-55
- 05 56-65
- 06 66-75
- 07 76 or older
- 08 RF

88. What is your highest grade of school completed?

- 01 Eighth grade or less
- 02 Some high school
- 03 High school graduate or GED
- 04 Some technical school
- 05 Technical school graduate
- 06 Some college
- 07 College graduate
- 08 Post-graduate or professional degree
- 09 RF

89. Which of the following categories best describes your total family annual income before taxes?

- 01 Under \$25,000
- 02 \$25,000 to less than \$50,000
- 03 \$50,000 to less than \$100,000
- 04 \$100,000 to less than \$150,000
- 05 \$150,000 to less than \$250,000
- 06 \$250,000 or more
- 07 DK
- 08 RF

90. Are you of Hispanic origin, such as Latin American, Puerto Rican, Cuban or Mexican?

- 01 Yes (Go to Q93)
- 02 No
- 03 DK
- 04 RF

91. Are you of Arabic origin?

- 01 Yes (Go to Q93)
- 02 No
- 03 DK
- 04 RF

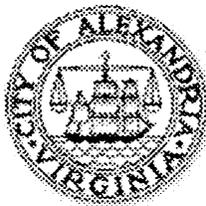
92. What is your race?

- 01 White
- 02 African-American
- 03 Asian, Pacific Islander
- 04 Aleutian, Eskimo or American Indian
- 05 Other: _____
- 06 DK
- 07 RF

Thank you very much for your time and participation.

93. Gender (by observation).

- 01 Male
- 02 Female



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Alexandria City Hall
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Alexandrians Surveyed Rate Quality of Life, City Services High Traffic and Taxes are Listed Top Concerns

October 26, 2004
PIO253-04/bg

When 1,001 Alexandria residents were surveyed by telephone in September, 97.2 percent said their quality of life in Alexandria is very good or good. Compared to two years ago, 79.5 percent said their quality of life was better (20.3 percent) or did not change (59.2 percent).

Those are just a sample of the responses to 93 questions included in a survey conducted to obtain residents opinions regarding the quality of City government services and programs.

During the week of Sept. 13, The Center for Research and Public Policy, of Trumbull, CT, asked City residents about their quality of living in Alexandria, the quality of City services, facilities, as well as the changes they feel need to be made in these areas, and the local issues of most concern to them. Trained professionals from the private firm contacted a representative sample of males and females over age 18 of various races and ethnicities. The surveyors conducted the survey in English, Spanish and Arabic, as requested by the respondents.

"This survey is part of the Council's continuing effort to improve City government. Its primary purpose is to tell us where the City may be falling short in our delivery of services, programs, and public infrastructure to residents," said City Manager Phil Sunderland.

"Resident responses that identify areas needing improvements will result in actions designed to produce those improvements. Future surveys will be used to determine whether those improvements have been achieved."

A complete report of the survey's findings will be posted on the City web site tomorrow (Oct. 27) and a summary will be published in an upcoming issue of FYI Alexandria .
Highlights include:

Quality of Life

- ▶ 97.2 % said quality of life in Alexandria is very good or good
- ▶ 2.5 % said quality of life is poor or very poor
- ▶ 79.5 % said their quality of life was better, not changed but good, compared to two years ago
- ▶ 8.9 % said their quality of life had worsened compared to two years ago
- ▶ 39% said location was the leading reason for living in Alexandria
- ▶ 13.9% said work was the leading reason for living in Alexandria
- ▶ 13.5% said housing was the leading reason for living in Alexandria
- ▶ 13.5% said community was the leading reason for living in Alexandria
- ▶ The top ten reasons respondents gave for what they liked most about Alexandria today (highest first) convenient in general, near D.C., friendly people, cultural diversity, City has personality, convenient for work, size of community, feels like a small town, everything in walking distance, and town is wonderful.

Local Issues

- ▶ Residents identified the following local issues as the ones they are most concerned about (in declining order): traffic (15.4%), taxes (12.1 %), quality of school system (8.4%), and crime (8.1% of responses).

Community Services

- ▶ High satisfaction ratings were given to the Fire Department, Emergency Medical Services, Police Department, the courtesy of City government staff, parks and recreational facilities, refuse and yard waste collection, and recreational opportunities and programs.
- ▶ Lower, but good to fair, satisfaction ratings were given to the City's recycling program, overall value of City services, condition of City sidewalks, performance of sanitary and storm sewer services, and City snow removal services.
- ▶ Poor satisfaction ratings were recorded for parking availability in respondents' neighborhoods, Old Town and other business districts.
- ▶ 83.3% of respondents said the City meets their service expectations always or most of the time.
- ▶ 10.4% said the City meets their service expectations sometimes
- ▶ After removing "don't know" responses, 89.7% of all respondents said both elected and professional City officials are honest individuals dedicated to improving the equality of life in Alexandria.
- ▶ 85.4% of those surveyed said messages, information and other communication from the City are considered credible "always" or "most of the time"
- ▶ 10.8% said City communication is "sometimes" credible.

Service Awareness and Use

- ▶ The best-known City services, among 24 measured, included City 911 emergency service, Metro Bus and Metrorail service, motor vehicle registration services, the Alexandria Library, DASH bus service, City-sponsored events, the City's historic and cultural facilities, and animal control/shelter.
- ▶ The least known City services included Round the Clock Internet Library resource service, services of the Office of Human Rights, services of the City's Office of Citizen Assistance, City Mental Health, Mental Retardation, Alcohol and Substance Abuse services, and services provided by the Alexandria Health Department.
- ▶ The services rated highest in satisfaction by users included Round the Clock Internet Library resource services, Alexandria Library materials, City-sponsored arts and cultural events, DASH service, 911 service, and the City's historic and cultural facilities.

Communications

- ▶ When asked how they usually get information about the City, respondents said newspapers first, followed in declining order by City pamphlets, word of mouth, City newsletter FYI Alexandria, Internet, cable TV, phone book, City web site, neighborhood associations, and churches.
- ▶ 45.6% of respondents said they have visited the City web site
- ▶ 59.1% of respondents who are familiar with the City newsletter, FYI Alexandria, said they read it "always" or "most of the time".

Community Involvement

- ▶ 25.6% of those surveyed said they have attended a City Council meeting
- ▶ 16.1% said they have attended a Planning Commission meeting.

Emergency Preparedness

- ▶ 53.9% of those surveyed said they have developed a communication plan to stay in touch with friends and relatives
- ▶ 43.3% said they have assembled an emergency kit

Community Needs

- ▶ When asked about unmet or under met needs, approximately one-third of the respondents could not name a specific need. The rest of those surveyed listed these top ten needs (most responses first) more affordable housing, more parking, traffic reduction, increased quality of public transportation, better schools and teachers, more open space, more police, more parks, need lower taxes, and more after school programs.

"I am very pleased to see that most residents surveyed said their quality of life is very good in Alexandria and that they gave high satisfaction ratings to most City services," said Mayor William D. Euille. "The Council will use the results of this survey, along with the adopted Strategic Plan, to develop initiatives for the City's future."

The survey was conducted by The Center for Research & Public Policy (CRPP), an independent market research and public policy consulting firm. Since its founding in 1979, CRPP has conducted 1.5 million interviews for clients including federal, state and local governments, as well as corporations, associations, academic researchers, not-for-profit organizations, healthcare organizations, universities, advertising and public relations firms.

A summary of the survey's findings are posted on the City web site www.alexandriava.gov and will be published in an upcoming issue of FYI Alexandria . Copies of the survey's findings will be available for review in City libraries by Thursday, Oct. 28 . Residents who would like a copy of the survey results may request one in the City Manager's Office, 3rd floor of City Hall, phone 703.838.3828.

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: OCTOBER 27, 2004

TO: ALL CITY EMPLOYEES

FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER *PS*

SUBJECT: RESIDENT SURVEY

Earlier this year, the City contracted with a Connecticut firm, the Center for Research and Public Policy, to conduct a survey of Alexandria residents. Considerable groundwork for the survey had been ably performed by a work group of employees representing many departments.

Between September 13 and 21, 1,001 City residents eighteen and older were surveyed by telephone and asked questions on the quality of living in Alexandria, their satisfaction with various City services, and the most significant local concerns they had with living in Alexandria. They also were asked about the ways in which they received information about City activities and events, how they perceived information given by the City, their views on the City's elected and professional employees, and what they felt were the most important unmet community needs.

It is a tribute to each of you that the overall findings of the survey demonstrated that Alexandria residents feel very positive about the quality of living in Alexandria and about the services they receive from the City government. The vast majority of residents feel that City employees are honest, courteous and dedicated to improving the quality of life in the City.

Some of the specific findings of the survey were:

- Over 97% of all responding residents said that their quality of life in Alexandria is very good or good.
- Over 86% of responding residents stated that the City government either always or most of the time meets their service expectations. Only 3.2% of the responding residents said that their service expectations are seldom or never met.
- 81.6% of responding residents rated highly the courtesy of City employees.
- 89.7% of responding residents said they believe the City's elected officials and employees were honest individuals and dedicated to improving Alexandria's quality of life.
- Residents were asked to name the local issues they were most concerned about. The top issues were traffic (15.4%), taxes (12.1%), schools (8.4%), crime (8.1%), over-development (5.7%) and parking (5%).

- Residents also were asked to name the most important need in the Alexandria community that was not being met. Ninety-nine different needs were identified. The top needs were: affordable housing (6.8%), more parking (4.5%), traffic reduction (3.4%), more public transportation (3.3%) and better schools (3.2%).

Every employee should be proud of the survey results. They confirm that the City government and City employees, overall, are perceived as delivering quality services, and being responsive and courteous. At the same time, it is important to recognize that the survey demonstrates that we can be even better, particularly in some areas. In the coming weeks, the results of the survey will be discussed with every employee, as will plans to respond to those areas where improvements are needed.

The results of the survey are now available on the City's website (www.alexandriava.gov). Every department head has a copy, and copies also are available in City libraries. I encourage you to take a look at the survey results.

cc: The Honorable Mayor and Members of City Council

I. Individual Concerns

A. Traffic

1. Analysis/Policy Making: Transportation Task Force
2. Improved Traffic Control/Efficiency
 - Traffic Calming (15 done; 9 underway)
 - Traffic Signalization
 - GRIP Program
 - Red Light Program
 - FY05 Funding for Two New Motorcycle Officers in Motor Unit
 - Increased Enforcement of TMPs
3. Improved Traffic Infrastructure
 - WWB: Route 1 Improvements, Stoval and Mill Road Ramps, and Mill/Duke/Telegraph Improvement
 - King/Beauregard
 - Eisenhower Widening
 - Monroe Ave. Bridge Straightening and Major Potomac Yard Roadways
 - Route 1 Improvements Along PY
 - Landmark Mall (Anticipated)
4. Improved Alternatives to the Car
 - Metro Matters
 - King Street Metro Platform
 - DASH Maintenance Facility
 - DASH New and Expanded Routes
5. Traffic-Related New Development Policies
 - Strict TMPs
 - Maximize Transit/Bike/Walk Travel
 - Density near Metro Stations
 - Minimize Parking Supply
 - Costly Parking
 - City Review of Developer Traffic Studies (11/23 docket)

B. Taxes

- Consider AHOP expansion
- Consider Real Estate Rate Reduction
- User Fees Review for FY06
- Council Strategic Plan: New Revenue Sources Study
- BFAC Admissions Tax Study

C. Crime

- Expanded Staff Coordination in Gang Area
- Community Task Force on Gangs
- Increase Police Presence Immediately Following Serious Crimes
- Increased Reporting on Solved Crimes
- Police Liaisons - Local Crime Reports; Community Education
- Police Department Presentation that Follows

D. Schools

- Continued City Funding of ACPS Operating and Capital
- Before/After School Study and Recommendations
- Council Strategic Plan: Pre-Kindergarten Kids -- Assessment and Strategy
- T.C. Williams Resource Commitment

II. Unmet Community Needs

A. Affordable Housing

1. Production
 - AHDC and Other Non-Profits: Annual Goal 75-100 Units/Year
 - Continued City Funding of Housing Opportunities Fund
 - New Policy on Developer AH Contributions in December/January
 - 92 New Affordable Set-Aside Units: 31 in Construction; 61 in Approved Plans
 - Hunting Towers/Hunting Terrace
 - Potomac Yard
 - Aging Rental Complexes
2. Preservation: Foxchase Section 8 Units; Glebe Park ...
3. Homeownership Assistance Programs, including to Condo-Conversion Tenants
4. Employee Loan Program (8)

B. Parking Availability/Enforcement

- King Street Retail Study Implementation
- Mt. Vernon Ave. Study Implementation
- Upcoming Waterfront Study
- Carlyle Community Parking System and Enforcement
- Additional Increased Neighborhood Enforcement: Budget Issue

C. Traffic

- See Above

D. Quality Public Transportation

1. Bus
 - DASH Maintenance Facility
 - DASH Expanded and New Routes
 - DASH About
 - City "Take Over" of Bus Shelters
2. Rail
 - Metro Matters
 - King Street Metro Platform Extension
 - Duke Street Concourse
 - Potomac Yard - Metro Station and Shuttle System
3. Bus and Rail: Major Focus in all Development Reviews, including TMPs

III. Infrastructure Improvements

A. Sewers

- I/I Projects in Commonwealth and Four Mile Run Sewer Sheds
- Holmes Run Trunk Sewer Relining
- CSO Separation Projects (Duke St., Sam Madden)

B. Quality of Streets

- Additional \$1M in FY05 Funding
- Major Arterials Done in Past 2 Years (parts of Eisenhower, Henry, Glebe, Mt. Vernon and Van Dorn)
- On-Going Budget Issue

C. Parking Supply

- See Above

D. Sidewalks

- Budget Issue: High Cost of Maintaining Brick Sidewalks
- Policy Issue: Brick Sidewalks in New Development

E. Snow Removal

- New Practice: Assignments by Area
- New GIS System
- Expanded Vendor Contracts

IV. Service Improvements

Four Departments

- Undertaken Follow-Up Surveys and Focus Groups
- Identify Specific Issues (Awareness and Quality)
- Prepare Action Plan to Address Issues
- Evaluate Actions Taken
- Determine Improvement in Next Survey