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PRESS RELEASE

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First Selectman Announces Results of First Resident Survey

November 21, 2003...First Selectman Richard Bergstresser today announced the results from the first Greenwich Resident Survey. The survey is the initial step in developing a long-range, strategic plan for the Town and should be used to develop outcome-based budgets based on the priorities set by Town residents.

Two hundred eighty-nine completed surveys were submitted, which had been distributed randomly to about 1,000 residents through the mail. Surveys also were available on the Town Web site and were distributed at the September RTM.

"I am very pleased that we received nearly 300 responses to our first resident survey," said Mr. Bergstresser. "This high return rate ensures that we have statistically significant information on which to base our Town's strategic plan. The complete results are available on the Town Web site at www.greenwichct.org"

A summary of results follows:

All 12 districts were represented.

Residents were asked to select the park they used the most from the Town's 33 facilities. The top three parks selected by respondents were:

- Greenwich Point (45%)
- Bruce Park (12%)
- Byram Park (5%)

Sixty percent of respondents have lived in Greenwich for more than 20 years. 89% have lived here for five or more years.

Ninety-six percent (96%) rated Greenwich as an "excellent" or "good" place to live and 85% rated overall quality of services provided by our Town as "very good" or "good."

When residents were asked how they would rate specific Greenwich services, they awarded
First place to our library system
Second place to Emergency Medical Services, Fire Department and the Bruce Museum
Third place to Griffith Harris Golf Course, Greenwich Point and our Parks

Residents rated maintenance of streets, roads and sidewalks at the bottom.

There were two questions about taxes.

To the first question, over half or 52% of respondents said that taxes are right for the amount and quality of services received. 10% see the services as a “bargain,” checking the answer that “taxes are low for the amount and quality of services I receive.” While 15% said that taxes are high but the Town provides more services at a higher quality than expected.

In the question that asked people how confident they were that their tax dollars are being spent wisely by the Town, on a scale of 1 to 10 with “10” meaning “very confident,” over half the respondents or 52% ranked the Town 7 or better and 64% ranked the Town above the mid-point.

A whopping 97% said that they felt “very safe” or “fairly safe” in Town; while less than one-half of one percent said that they felt “not safe at all.”

With the new Town Web site being available for just one year, 70% of respondents said that they have visited the site. The top two reasons for using the site are to find Town news and information (36%) and for Town meeting calendars and agendas (22%).

Over 80% said that it is “very easy” or “fairly easy” to obtain information about the Town.

Ninety percent of respondents said that they have had contact with a Town employee either over the telephone or in person during the past year. Nearly three-quarters or 74% said that they were “very” or “somewhat satisfied” with how their question or problem was handled.

Residents were asked to rate the seriousness of seven specific in Greenwich. They were asked their opinion about traffic congestion, parking, street repair or maintenance, code violations, environmental issues, dogs off leash and sidewalk repair.

Residents were given four choices as to the seriousness of each of the seven issues. Not one resident circled the choice “not a serious issue” to any of the seven issues. “Dogs off leash” was considered “not too serious.” Sidewalk repair, environmental and code violations hovered around the midpoint between “not too serious” and “somewhat serious.” “Traffic congestion and “parking” were considered more than “somewhat serious.”

Fifty-seven percent said that they used educational, health, social, recreation or public safety services during the past year. 57% of respondents said that they had no children under 18.

When asked “How happy are you that you live in Greenwich,” on a scale of 1 to 10 with 10 being “very happy” and 1 being “not happy at all,” 94% of respondents gave a rating of 6 or better.

Males represented 56% percent of respondents and females, 44%. Sixty-three percent were between 35 and 65 years of age and nearly 17% were 70 or older. Just 4% were under 25.

Residents also were asked to write their comments to four questions:

“What are the most important issues facing citizens of Greenwich today?”

“What type of services should the Town provide that are currently not being provided?”

“What other comments would you like to make regarding the services provided by the Town of Greenwich?”

“Let us know if you have any additional thoughts you would like to share (e.g., What kind of town would you like Greenwich to be?).”

In their written responses, residents said that the top four issues facing the Town are traffic; long-range planning including charter change, zoning and parking. Fourteen percent of respondents said that they would like the Town to add recreational services.

You can read the written comments on the Town Web site at www.greenwichct.org