

## 2008 Resident Satisfaction Survey Results

### Residents Give Arlington Government Top Marks Overall satisfaction rated 29% above national average

Residents are highly satisfied with County government services, according to results from Arlington's second Resident Satisfaction Survey, conducted by ETC Institute. The County saw **overall satisfaction improve in 57 of the 84 service areas** that were rated in 2004 and 2008 surveys. When compared to other communities of the same size, overall satisfaction with County services rated **29 percent above the national average**.

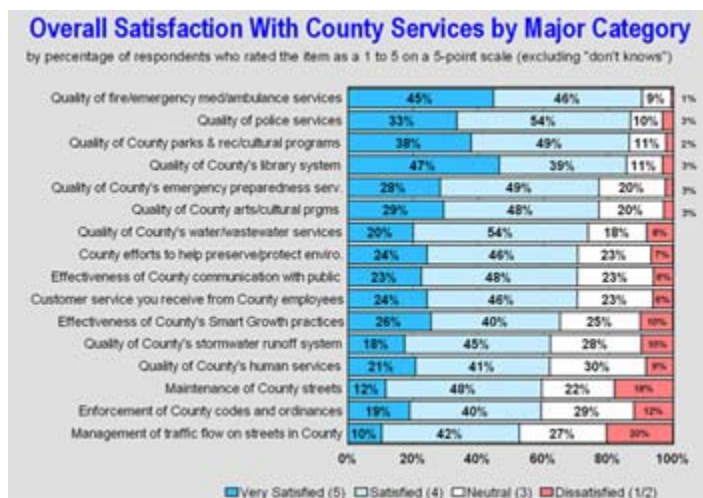
When compared to the national average, Arlington again sets new benchmarks in overall satisfaction with quality of life issues.

- 87% satisfaction with **quality of County services** (up 1% and compared with the national average of 58%)
- 87% satisfaction with the **overall quality of life** in Arlington (up 1% and compared with national average of 79%)
- 62% satisfaction with the **"value received for your tax dollar"** (up 3% and compared with national average of 53%)
- 79% satisfaction with the **quality of the schools** (up 8% and compared with national average of 66%)

"I have conducted more than 400 community surveys during the past decade, and **Arlington's performance is among the very best in the nation**," says Chris Tatham, vice president at ETC Institute. "The survey results are very impressive and clearly show Arlington County has done an excellent job of prioritizing limited resources in the areas most important to residents."

#### More Information

- \* [Presentation](#) (with graphs & charts)
- \* [ETC Institute Detailed results](#)
- \* [2004 survey results](#)
- \* [Video on survey results](#)



“The survey is a critical tool for measuring customer satisfaction with major County services,” said County Manager Ron Carlee. “The feedback on how we’re doing – and where we can do better – helps us continually improve.”

[View a larger version of the chart at right.](#) (Also view a presentation with [additional charts and graphs.](#))

### Other Major Findings

- Residents are very satisfied with major County services. **Public safety, parks/recreation and library services** continue to have very high satisfaction ratings.
- The survey showed significant increases in satisfaction ratings (from the 2004 survey) in several major categories:

	2004	2008	U.S. Benchmark
Parks & Recreation	81%	86%	74%
Maintenance of streets	54%	60%	50%
Management of traffic flow	47%	53%	48%
Effectiveness of smart growth practices	48%	65%	<i>No comparison data</i>
Effectiveness of communication	65%	71%	50%

- Although residents also saw improvements in **traffic flow** and **street maintenance** since 2004, they continue to be the top two areas residents feel the County should improve over the next two years.
- Efforts to **preserve and protect the environment** – a new response category in the 2008 survey – is the third highest priority area.
- The area of **stormwater management** also had a significant decrease in ratings from 2004. This reflects the County's need for [stormwater management](#) and infrastructure improvements – and reaffirms the County Board's policy and funding actions earlier this year.
- 69% of residents are satisfied with the community's **inclusiveness** and 67% support efforts to embrace **diversity** -- both areas were new questions this year.
- The survey also indicated opportunities for improvement in several areas including the following: emergency preparedness information; code enforcement on overcrowding and noise; substance abuse prevention and treatment; and services for low/fixed income residents.

### Public Presentation & Next Steps

At the County Board meeting on July 22, 2008 at 3 p.m., Arlington and ETC Institute will present an overview of the survey results to the Board and community.

County departments also are developing action plans by the end of August to address improvement opportunity areas.

### **Survey Methodology**

- Most survey questions were the same as those asked in 2004.
- Administered by mail/phone/Internet during May-June 2008.
- Survey offered in English and Spanish.
- Random sample of more than 1,200 households.
- Demographics of the sample matched the 2006 Census demographics for Arlington County with regard to gender, ethnicity and age.
- Results have a 95% level of confidence with a precision of at least +/- 2.6%.
- Home addresses of the survey respondents were geocoded to ensure representation across the County.
- The results assessed against ETC Institute's national benchmarks.



### **Survey Background**

This 2008 survey is the second comprehensive survey to assess resident satisfaction with County services. Arlington County conducted its first comprehensive satisfaction survey in 2004. The County will use the survey results as an additional tool to measure its performance and enable more effective management of community services. Hundreds of cities and counties around the nation use surveys such as this to assess their performance.

### **About ETC Institute**

ETC Institute, a nationally-known firm, has conducted opinion research services for more than 250 cities and counties in 46 states. Through its proprietary DirectionFinder®, a national benchmarking survey initiative, ETC compared Arlington's survey results to those of other similar communities with populations over 100,000 across the United States.

### **Detailed Survey Results**

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