City of Virginia Beach

Citizens' Survey Report

February 2005

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Continental Research conducted this survey of 500 randomly-selected Virginia Beach residents over a 24-day period beginning February 8, 2005. The Margin of Error for a study of this size is plus or minus 4.4%. The purpose of the study was to provide decisionmakers with a snapshot of residents' opinions about 30 City services and characteristics (see Table 4) and their evaluation of several key community features. On a 4-point scale where 4 = Very Satisfied and 1 = Very Dissatisfied, the **top** fifteen ratings were:

- The public libraries (3.47 out of a possible 4.0)
- Fire Department services (3.39)
- Recreation centers (3.37)
- Museums, the aquarium, and cultural arts activities (3.35)
- Paramedic and rescue squad services (3.31)
- The appearance of the City's municipal buildings and facilities (3.30)
- Police services (3.29)
- The parks (3.27)
- The 911 Emergency Telephone Center (3.23)
- The overall appearance of your neighborhood (3.23)
- City trash collection and recycling services (3.20)
- The number of opportunities for volunteerism (3.19)
- Horticulture and agriculture services (3.15)
- The overall appearance of the City (3.15)
- The courtesy of City employees (3.08)

Interviewers also obtained a more global measure of satisfaction with City services:

- The overall satisfaction with City services (3.11 out of a possible 4.0)

Respondents were also asked if they agreed or disagreed with a series of seven statements (see Table 10). Using a 4-point scale where 4 = Strongly Agree and 1 = Strongly Disagree, the **top** agreement ratings were:

- Virginia Beach is a good place to live (3.29 out of a possible 4.0)
- My neighborhood is a safe place to live (3.19)
- Virginia Beach, in general, is a safe place to live (3.13)
- For the most part, I can conveniently access City services (3.14)

Participants were also asked to name something that could be changed to enhance their satisfaction with living in Virginia Beach (see Table 11). The most popular responses related to reducing traffic flow problems (14.6%) and lowering taxes/fees (8.2%), and improving the road system (7.6%). Some also mentioned planning better for growth and development (3.6%), solving rain water drainage problems (3.4%), and focusing more on locals instead of tourists and businesses (3.2%).

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (continued)

On the next several pages, charts highlight the major findings of this study. Clearly, Virginia Beach residents enjoy a high level of satisfaction with City services, and this has been relatively consistent over the years. (Of course, small variations are normal.)

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH CITY SERVICES

Year	Satisfaction	n
1995	94.8%	(n=498)
1998	94.8%	(n=499)
2000	91.6%	(n=500)
2003	93.2%	(n=499)
2005	92.6%	(n=500)
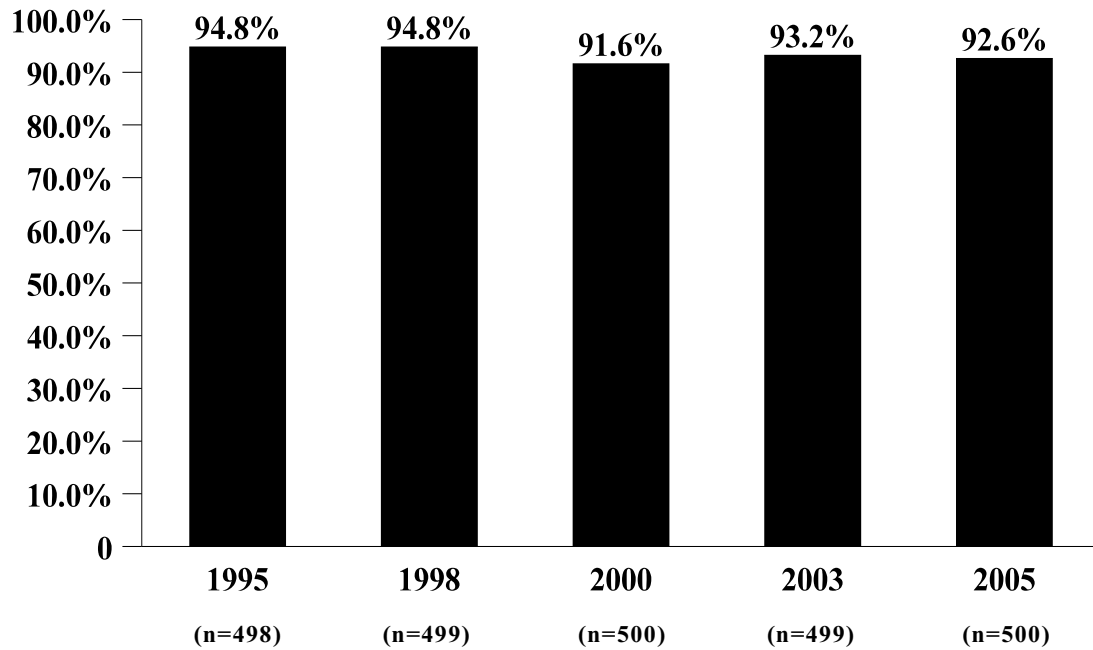
Note: The (n=__) beneath each column indicates the number of people who responded to the question.

PERCENT WHO AGREE VA BEACH IS A GOOD PLACE TO LIVE

	1995	1998	2000	2003	2005
	94.0%	95.2%	96.2%	96.6%	95.6%
	(n=500)	(n=500)	(n=500)	(n=500)	(n=500)
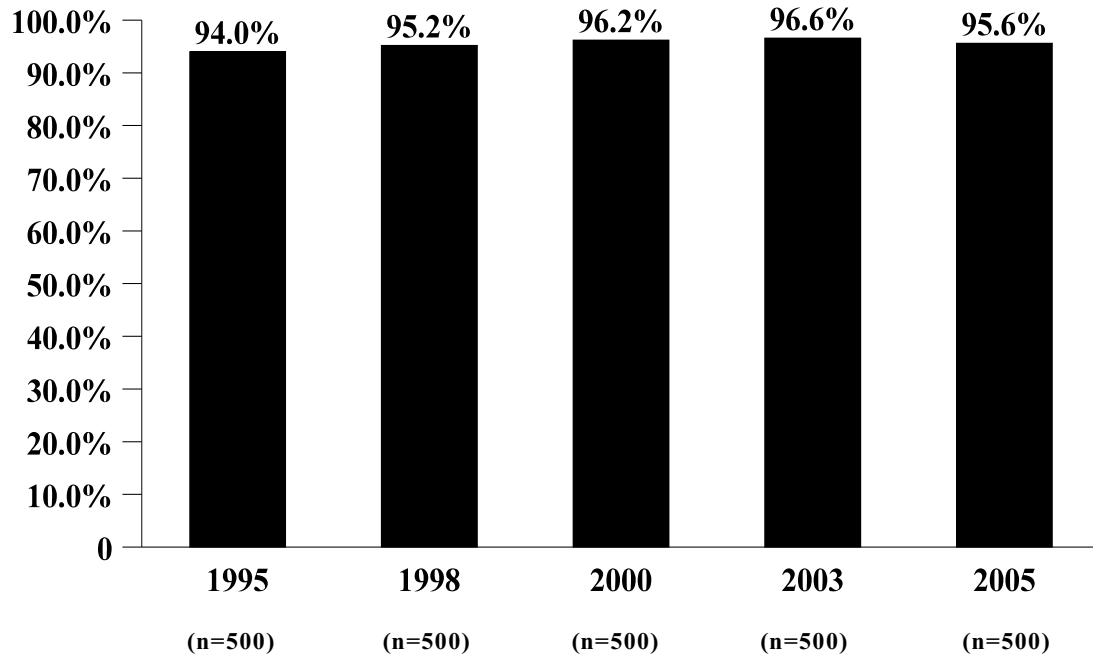
PERCENT WHO AGREE VA BEACH IS A SAFE PLACE TO LIVE

	1995	1998	2000	2003	2005
	86.8%	94.0%	94.4%	95.6%	94.8%
	(n=500)	(n=500)	(n=500)	(n=500)	(n=500)

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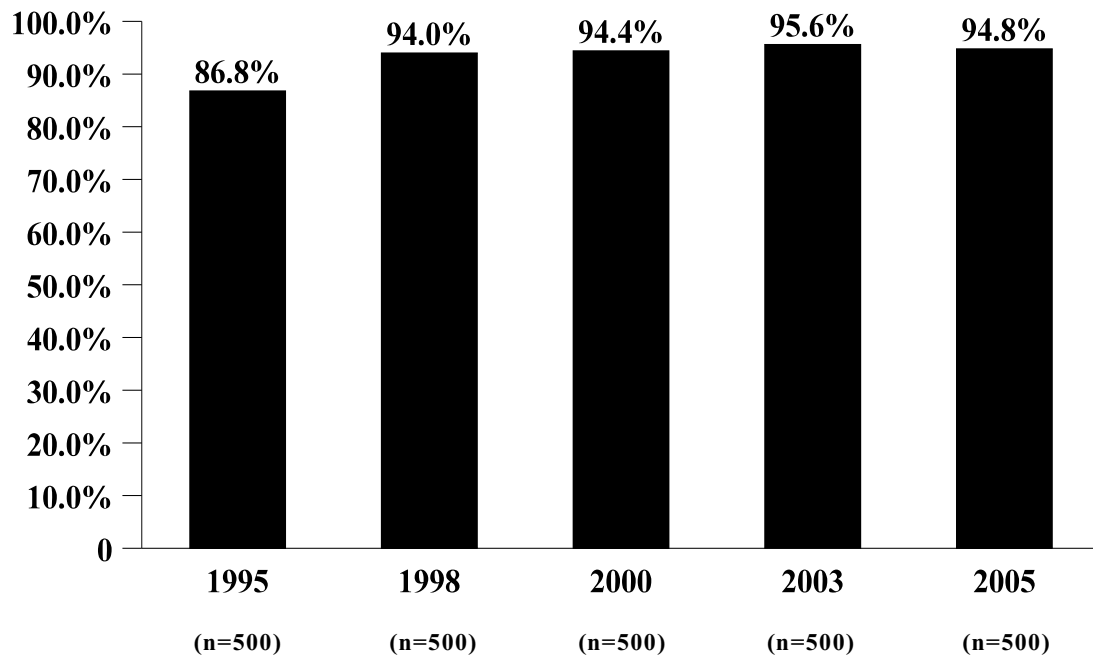
PERCENT WHO AGREE "MY NEIGHBORHOOD" IS A SAFE PLACE TO LIVE

	1995	1998	2000	2003	2005
	89.2%	91.6%	94.2%	96.4%	93.6%
	(n=500)	(n=500)	(n=500)	(n=500)	(n=500)
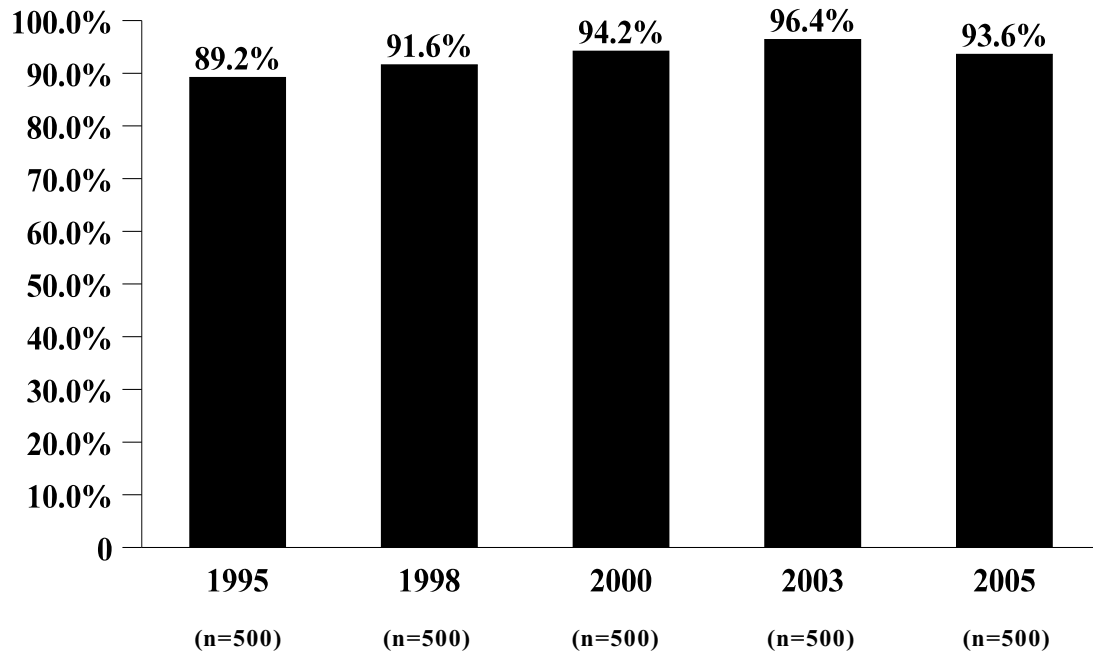
PERCENT WHO AGREE THEY CAN CONVENIENTLY ACCESS CITY SERVICES

	1995	1998	2000	2003	2005
	93.2%	96.0%	93.2%	94.6%	94.8%
	(n=498)	(n=500)	(n=500)	(n=500)	(n=500)
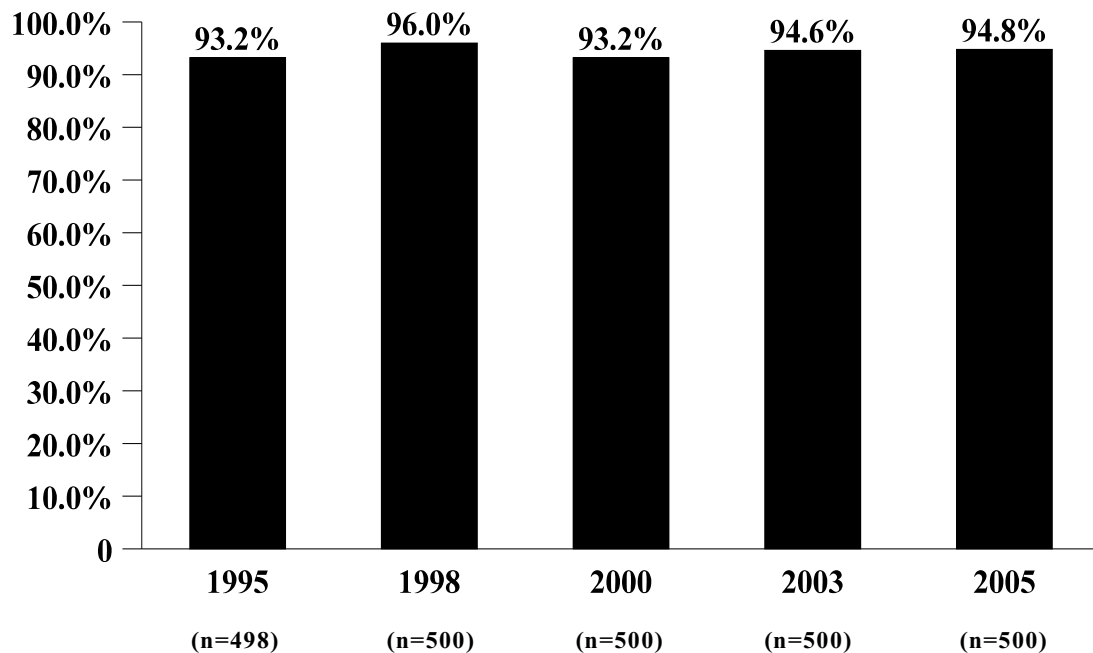
PROJECT BACKGROUND

Items on this survey of Virginia Beach citizens reflect the City's mission to enhance the quality of the community and provide municipal services that are valued by City residents. This opinion survey was commissioned in February of 2005 to measure whether residents' expectations are being met. It was conducted by a local full-service marketing research company, Continental Research. A series of similar studies have been conducted since 1993, so there is a basis for comparison over time. Research such as this is one way of measuring progress toward the City's goal of exceeding residents' expectations.

As was true in prior studies, this survey involved a random sample of 500 Virginia Beach heads of household. The project was coordinated by Dia Hayes, a representative from the City's Management Services Department. The survey was designed such that residents rated their level of satisfaction with various City services and characteristics.

It is important to remember that opinion surveys measure the residents' perceptions, and those views are not always based on first hand experience or fact. Survey responses are often the result of generalized impressions, and opinions can be impacted by many things, large and small. The economy influences how people feel about taxation, as does Presidential election year rhetoric. And, there are local issues that may have been covered in the media and influenced taxpayers' views (e.g., construction of the 31st Street oceanfront redevelopment project, ambulance staffing concerns).

METHODOLOGY

This telephone survey of Virginia Beach residents was conducted by Continental Research Associates, Inc., a local marketing research firm. The study was designed to provide decisionmakers in Virginia Beach with a snapshot of the community's attitudes toward 30 City services and characteristics and other important topics. As a comparative study, the results can be tracked over time. The 2003 survey questionnaire served as the basis for this survey, although changes were made to reflect current issues. Wording changes will be apparent when this report is compared to prior results.

The list of residents to be contacted was computer-generated by a copyrighted telephone number creation program. The households were randomly chosen based on the proportion of homes in each Zip Code (per the Post Office). Once proportionate by Zip Code, two randomized digits were added to each phone num ber to achieve a more fully representative sample and ensure the inclusion of new and unlisted phone numbers. This process does result in a large number of "Disconnects," but it produces a higher quality sample than working with listed phone numbers.

Once the survey draft was approved, the 2005 questionnaire was pre-tested by senior staff members. Pre-testing helps to identify technical problems in the question wording, format, sequencing, or the overall flow of the questionnaire. This pre-test included 33 interviews and resulted in only minor survey modifications.

METHODOLOGY (continued)

The data collection phase is extremely important to the research process. Professional, staff interviewers conducted the interviews. Each of the eight staff members chosen for this project had extensive training (that included standardized training materials from the Marketing Research Association) and years of market research experience. The data collection phase began with a lengthy briefing session. Instructions for using the questionnaire were presented along with information about Virginia Beach and City services. Each interviewer participated in several role-playing exercises with the survey. This provided an opportunity to discuss techniques for probing and practice the pace at which the survey should progress.

After the briefing session, the calls were made (from the Continental Research offices) over a 24-day period beginning on February 8, 2005. Initial contacts were made between 5:15 and 9:15 p.m. on weeknights and from 4 to 9 p.m. on Sundays. The interviewers were instructed to speak with an adult head of household, alternating the request for a male and female. Because there is overlap in both Zip Codes and phone prefixes with other localities, a screening question was used to ensure that only residents of Virginia Beach were interviewed. Also, when an interviewer became aware of the respondent's employer, completed surveys from City employees were not included in the final data file.

For a survey of this nature, proper sampling is critical. The interviewers attempted to reach each household initially selected for this study at least 6 times on different evenings, trying to secure an interview. After six or more unsuccessful attempts, a substitute household was chosen. An appointment system was used to secure interviews with busy people, and a few surveys were completed over two contact calls.

The questionnaire was rather long and detailed. Respondents were asked about their use of 9 City services. They were asked for an opinion of 30 City services and characteristics and an overall measure of satisfaction. In addition, their level of agreement with a series of 7 statements was measured, along with a lengthy open-ended question and various demographic profile items. A copy of the survey form can be found in the Appendix.

Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) technology was used, and each survey answer was recorded verbatim. The surveys were generally well-received, requiring an average of 15.2 minutes to complete. Because residents were encouraged to share their feelings about the issues on the survey, many interviews did require over 20 minutes to complete. Within each grid of questions, a rotation scheme was used to control for any sequence bias. The open-ended responses were recorded verbatim and later categorized into groupings for presentation in the report.

A Field Supervisor was always present to mentor and electronically monitor the interviewers' work. He "dual recorded" a portion of each person's work daily to check for consistency in the recording of all answers. Thirty-eight percent of all calls were fully monitored, and an additional 25% were partially monitored, which is far in excess of the industry standard of 5% validation. At the end of each shift, a de-briefing session was held to discuss the survey's progress. The de-briefings provided anecdotal information that was used to interpret the tabulated findings.

METHODOLOGY (continued)

Once the 500 interviews were completed, the sample frame list of phone numbers was tallied:

    1800 Initial sample of random phone numbers
    <u>-803</u> Determined to be non-working random numbers
    997 Available for contact (746 of them were used; the remainder held aside)

    650 Attempted to contact initially (6 attempts)
      96 Substitute numbers used to attempt contact after others were deleted

    500 Completed interviews
       9 Partial interviews/terminations
    162 Initial refusals/refusal after starting/too busy
       9 Hard of hearing/could not be understood
       3 City employees (not included in final data file)
     63 Never reached (no answer/busy/only caller ID or answering machine/call back)

A detailed SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) computer program was written to tabulate and analyze these findings. A file containing the 1995, 1998, 2000, and 2003 survey data was compiled in order to complete various statistical comparisons (e.g., T-Tests). It matched up each 2005 question with the respective similar (but not always identical) item on earlier surveys.

MARGIN OF ERROR

The term "Margin of Error" refers to the difference between what a survey finds and what one would get if a complete census of Virginia Beach households had been conducted. The figure is expressed as the maximum amount a percentage in this report might vary from what a full census would have produced.

With a sample size of 500 residents, we are 95% certain that any percentage in this report will be within plus or minus 4.4 percentage points. (The Margin of Error for earlier years was the same.)   This 4.4 percentage points applies to figures in this report that are near 50%. When a figure is closer to 90% or to 10%, the Margin of Error is considerably better.

While there are many ways to introduce error in survey research, sampling is a critical factor. To reduce any bias caused by selecting the random sample, Continental Research employed a "six attempt" method for contacting participants. From the initial sub-sample of 650 randomly-selected Virginia Beach households with working phones, the interviewers attempted to reach each participant at least six times over a period of several weeks to secure an interview (before a substitute household was contacted). This persistence is critical to achieving a representative sample of households and to the accuracy of the findings.

HOW TO MAKE COMPARISONS

Virginia Beach has conducted a Citizens' Survey seven times, typically referring to 1994 or 1995 as the benchmark. (Due to space limitations, this report includes only the 1995 results.) While the findings are typically very favorable, minor changes from year to year are to be expected. Because the ratings are so high (i.e., many are above 90%), downward fluctuations are normal.

Naturally, questionnaire wording changes have occurred over the years. Any text changes between the last survey in 2003 and the current survey have been noted in the Appendix within the survey form. The new wordings are marked by the term "chng." If the change was substantial enough to have likely impacted the results, a notation will also be seen in the report's chart.

The most significant change occurred after 1995 when the wording of the "use" questions was improved. Rather than ask if a person had "used" a museum, the residents were asked if they had "visited" a Virginia Beach museum in the past year. Other, less significant differences can be seen when comparing across all survey instruments. The proportion of "Don't Know" responses has also varied from year to year. Because this can distort the findings (e.g., the percent who were Satisfied), this report displays data for only those who responded to a question, excluding "Don't Know" responses.

This survey was not intended to rank City departments against one another. Each department provides unique services, with some being more likely than others to be rated favorably (because of the nature of their work). To be fair, please consider each rating in context without comparing one department to another.

This report also includes tabulated "average" Satisfaction scores. Although the rating questions use a word scale rather than a number scale, we calculate averages to compare the data over time and between groups. By using mathematical averages, we can isolate any statistically significant changes.

To calculate mathematical averages, the following numeric equivalence scales were employed:

Tables 4 & 7 -

4 = Very Satisfied (the highest rating)

3 = Satisfied

2 = Dissatisfied

1 = Very Dissatisfied (the lowest rating)

Table 10 -

4 = Strongly Agree (the highest rating)

3 = Agree

2 = Disagree

1 = Strongly Disagree (the lowest rating)

NOTE: In both cases, the scale midpoint would be 2.5.

T-Test results are shown in Tables 4, 7, and 10. A T-Test is a statistical technique that tests for differences in the distribution of the responses and the averages over time. The T-Test is a mathematical formula that helps determine whether changes in the averages between two groups are "random" or "statistically significant."

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SUMMARY: 2005 SURVEY RESULTS

This telephone survey of 500 randomly-selected Virginia Beach residents was conducted by Continental Research in February and March of 2005. The City of Virginia Beach conducts a periodic Citizens' Survey to secure feedback from taxpayers on City services and residents' concerns. A representative from the City's Management Services Department, Dia Hayes, coordinated the project and assisted with questionnaire development. Each resident was asked to evaluate numerous City services and characteristics. There were also more general questions about his or her overall satisfaction with living in Virginia Beach.

As has been true in the past, these survey results are quite favorable. One of the most important indicators of resident satisfaction is the global measure. When respondents were asked to evaluate their **overall satisfaction with City services**, 92.6% were satisfied (see Table 3). This is extremely favorable and has been very high since the earlier benchmark studies.

A series of questions on the survey allowed residents to rate 30 City programs and services (plus the one global rating). Nine of those services were followed by "use" measures (see Table 1). The purpose of identifying users was to analyze whether people with first hand experience were more (or less) satisfied than those with no recent experience (see Table 7).

Use and Satisfaction With 30 City Services/Characteristics

Table 1 displays the "use" data since 1995. While the majority of the respondents have used some City services, we would expect fewer to have used others. The reported "use" rates ranged from 39.2% for having contact with the Police Department to 77.4% for visiting a public beach in the City.

The percentage of those surveyed who offered an opinion about each of the 30 City services and characteristics is found in Table 2. The interviewers encouraged residents to voice a general opinion about services even if they had no direct experience because people may have seen, heard, or read about them or simply hold a generalized opinion. In 2005, on average, about 99.6% of the residents were able to rate each of the 30 City services. When a global rating was measured (to represent the "Overall Satisfaction with City Services"), 100% offered a response.

As is customary, rating scores in this report exclude those who said "I don't know." And, when calculating the overall "Percent Satisfied" with a City service or program, the Very Satisfied and Satisfied responses were combined (see Table 3). This is felt to be a general satisfaction measure. When looking at the "Percent Satisfied" measure, it is important to realize that a combined percentage is not very sensitive to change. More variation will occur in the individual ratings over time. As you might expect, some people who were simply "Satisfied" in one year may become "Very Satisfied" the next. While this represents an improvement, no net change in the combined "satisfaction measure" would occur.

NOTE: After 1995, the "use" questions were re-worded to reflect whether citizens used, visited, or observed (as appropriate) the services or programs. This explains the lower levels of use found in 1995 (see Table 1).

SUMMARY: 2005 SURVEY RESULTS (continued)

Many municipalities target a goal of 80% (or more) for residents' satisfaction ratings. Such a scheme helps decisionmakers identify services that achieve below 80% and may warrant additional focus or emphasis. In Virginia Beach, most programs and services enjoyed very high levels of satisfaction (see Table 5). Nineteen of the 30 services and characteristics that were rated exceeded the threshold level of 80% satisfaction, and 16 of those 19 scored at 90% or above. More importantly, 92.6% were satisfied with City services <u>overall</u>.

Items that received **a 90% or more satisfaction rating** include:

- Fire Department services (99.4%)
- The public libraries (97.4%, and improved significantly* since 2003)
- Paramedic and rescue squad services (96.8%)
- The 911 Emergency Telephone Center (96.4%)
- The appearance of the City's municipal buildings and facilities (96.4%, and improved significantly* since 2003)
- Police services (95.8%)
- The number of opportunities for volunteerism (95.2%)
- Recreation centers (94.0%, and improved significantly* since 2003)
- Museums, the aquarium, and cultural arts activities (93.8%, and improved significantly* since 2003)
- Horticulture and agriculture services (93.8%)
- The parks (92.8%)
- City trash collection and recycling services (91.8%)
- The overall appearance of the City (91.4%)
- The courtesy of City employees (91.2%)
- The overall work performance of City employees (91.2%)
- The overall appearance of your neighborhood (90.0%)

Survey items that received between **80% and 89% in their satisfaction rating** include:

- Efforts to make Virginia Beach more appealing to tourists (84.4%)
- Water and sanitary sewer services (83.4%)
- The public beaches in the City (83.4%)

*Based on T-Test of means.

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SUMMARY: 2005 SURVEY RESULTS (continued)

Those items that rated below the 80% target include:

- The City's mental health and substance abuse services (78.1%)
- The job opportunities in Virginia Beach (77.3%)
- Efforts to attract more businesses and help businesses expand (76.0%)
- The City's work with other area communities to address issues impacting our region (72.7%)
- Maintenance of existing City roads and bridges (64.4%)
- Efforts to protect natural resources, the environment, and open green space (63.9%)
- Services for needy or homeless families (62.0%)
- Rain water drainage (58.6%)
- Planning for residential development (55.8%)
- Planning and construction of new City roads (45.6%)
- The flow of traffic in the City (32.8%)

An "average" rating is the most appropriate statistic for tracking change over time. Satisfaction with each service was measured by using a four-point word scale. By assigning numbers to each word rating (Very Satisfied = 4, Satisfied = 3, Dissatisfied = 2, and Very Dissatisfied = 1), we have calculated a mathematical average (known as a mean). Using average ratings and a statistical T-Test procedure, researchers can monitor any "significant improvement" over time. The results in Table 4 highlight any significant increases in the average rating scores. A superscript letter "d" indicates a finding of "significant improvement" since 2003.

Sideline Comments

Because of space constraints on the survey instrument, we use anecdotal information from interviewer de-briefings and sideline comments to explain some of the lower scores. For example, there were people who indicated dissatisfaction with "Planning and Construction of New City Roads" because they felt the road system in Virginia Beach had not kept pace with growth and increased traffic. As has been true on the prior surveys, many of the residents' concerns related to growth. Below is a summary of the sideline comments as they relate to "Dissatisfied" ratings:

Efforts to make Virginia Beach more appealing to tourists
> Spend a little less money on tourism, like financing hotels.
> Think about the people who live here first before the tourists. Consider the taxpayers before taking citizens' money and throwing it into tourism.

Services for needy and homeless families
> The City is shutting out the homeless. They have no type of outreach program.
> The City has only one shelter that I know of. They need another one because there are too many homeless people on the beach.

The City's efforts to protect natural resources, the environment, and open green space
> Take better care of or promote better care of the environment, especially the wetlands.
> The City needs to protect our natural resources more. Too many trees are disappearing.
> Make City planning (i.e., green space) more uniform.

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Planning and construction of new City roads
> They build houses faster than they build roads. That makes the traffic situation worse.
> Traffic at the intersection of Virginia Beach Blvd. and Independence Blvd. is bad.
> Finish up roads projects before starting new road projects every week.
> Spend less money on roads and more on mass transit.
> The City is growing too fast, and the roads are not keeping up with the development.
> They should consider taking care of the infrastructure before building big structures. Putting up six or seven fast-food restaurants without proper roads is an example of this. They just have poor planning.

The flow of traffic in the City
> Do something about the traffic. I don't think they have the lights timed correctly to allow traffic to flow as smoothly as it could. Some roads need to be widened.
> I'm always stopped in traffic. The light cycles are too short. I'm sitting more than I am moving, and traffic congestion is terrible.
> The biggest problems involve the roads. Cars clog the intersections, and some of the traffic patterns are ridiculous.

Rain water drainage
> My neighborhood always floods when it rains.
> Drainage ditches need to be cleaned out.

Planning for residential development
> Work a little harder planning new neighborhoods, and when you get a plan, stick to it.
> There should be less development and more planning. Plan out communities better instead of trying to get more taxpayers. Taxpayers always suffer in the end.
> Residential development is getting out of control. There is not enough housing for low income families.
> Quit building homes and condos on every single bit of land.

Paramedic & Rescue Squad services
> Improve the rescue services. The City is too large for volunteer services.
> Take care of the ambulance situation. We don't have enough personnel to take care of our needs.
> Provide for a paid rescue service instead of volunteers. The City is too large to rely on only volunteers 24-7.

Efforts to attract more businesses and help businesses expand
> Quit building big hotels and garages and stop putting so much money into the Town Center.
> Spend our City tax dollars on education and not on building tall buildings and restaurants.

Users vs. Non-Users

Table 7 looks at the average satisfaction levels of users and non-users, and Table 6 compares those rating scores over time. Generally speaking, we might expect a person with first hand experience to rate a given service higher than someone with no recent experience. For example, people who go to the beach rated the beaches significantly higher than those who do not. There can be instances, however, where it is logical that "users" of a service (e.g., police services) might not be as happy.

Agreement With Seven Statements

In the next section of the survey, the interviewer read a series of statements about Virginia Beach. The respondent was asked if s/he Strongly Agreed, Agreed, Disagreed, or Strongly Disagreed with each. As can be seen in Table 8, over 97% of the participants had an opinion about each of these statements. In fact, 100% responded to three of the seven items.

Table 9 shows the percent who agreed with each of the seven statements. Very high levels of agreement were found, with 95.6% of those surveyed saying that Virginia Beach is a good place to live. When asked about conveniently accessing City services, 94.8% agreed with the statement that was read. These figures have remained relatively high over the years, reinforcing that Virginia Beach works hard to please its residents.

In terms of the communication between residents and the City. Three-fourths (75.3%) of those surveyed said they know how to tell the City about how they feel on important issues (see Table 9). And, 67.1% agreed that "The City welcomes citizen involvement and input on important issues." The City continues to seek out ways to effectively communicate with residents and make each citizen feel valued.

Community safety remains a high priority for City Council. Residents were asked if they felt their own neighborhood was safe and 93.6% agreed. When asked if they perceive the City as a safe place to live, 94.8% agreed. The percentage feeling safe in the City and their own neighborhood has increased since 1995 (see Table 9).

Residents were asked to react to the statement, "Overall, I receive a good value for my City tax dollar," and over three-fourths (75.7%) of those surveyed agreed. It is typical for people to react negatively towards taxation questions, yet this item produced many positive responses. The average rating score of 2.84 places it above the midpoint of the rating scale (see Table 10). Just as the last 12 surveys were being completed for this study, most residents received real estate property tax notices showing a change in the assessed value of their property. (These notices appeared to have no impact on the final interviews.)

Making Residents More Satisfied

Each participant was asked to suggest one thing that would make him/her a more satisfied resident of the City (see Table 11). As is common with open-ended questions, the responses included a variety of subject areas. The three most popular responses had to do with reducing traffic flow problems (14.6%), lowering taxes or fees (8.2%), and improving the road system (7.6%). In descending order, the next items were: planning better for growth and development (3.6%), solving rain water drainage problems (3.4%), and focusing more on locals instead of tourists and businesses (3.2%).

Summary

Overall, Virginia Beach residents enjoy a very favorable quality of life. The satisfaction scores were quite high, on average, and many residents offered sideline comments about what a lovely place Virginia Beach is. As would be expected, there are things that can and should be improved, and growth issues that will be part of life for years to come. Even so, the survey results were quite favorable, not just for the population as a whole, but for individual segments (e.g., young and older, new residents and longstanding, in all parts of the City). It is obvious that the City of Virginia Beach is truly a "Community for a Lifetime."

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                              TABLE 1                                  │
│     Percent Who Used/Experienced Each City Service In The Past 12 Months │
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In the past 12 months, have you:	1995	1998	2000	2003	2005
Been to a Va. Beach recreation center (wording change since 2003)	45.2%	62.0%	52.4%	58.8%	56.2%
Visited a City park	64.8%	76.6%	74.6%	77.6%	71.2%
Visited a public beach in Va. Beach	66.2%	77.8%	78.0%	78.4%	77.4%
Visited the Virginia Beach Public Library and/ or used the library by computer from home or office (wording change since 2003)	80.0%	86.0%	79.8%	79.8%	73.6%
Visited a museum, the aquarium, or attended a cultural arts activity in Va. Beach (wording change since 2003)	n/a	60.4%	58.2%	62.8%	65.4%
Observed an emergency response of a Va. Beach Rescue Squad	n/a	59.8%	68.0%	63.0%	63.4%
Had any contact with the Police Department	n/a	48.6%	51.8%	46.6%	39.2%
Observed Fire Department services or programs being performed	n/a	57.2%	60.4%	60.0%	57.6%
Had any direct contact with a City employee either in-person, by telephone, or by e-mail (wording change since 2003)	n/a	n/a	n/a	79.4%	76.2%
	(n=500)	(n=500)	(n=500)	(n=500)	(n=500)

The results in Table 1 follow predictable patterns, with over three-fourths (77.4%) having visited a public beach in the past year. Slightly fewer (73.6%) said they had used a Virginia Beach public library (or used the library by computer from home/work) or visited a City park (71.2%). Considerably fewer residents (39.2%) reported having contact with the Virginia Beach Police Department.

It is interesting to see if people with first hand knowledge of a service rate it differently than non-users. Generally speaking, one might expect a person with first hand experience to rate a given service higher than others would. Tables 6 and 7 show how these satisfaction ratings differ.

NOTE: Where possible, items in the tables are organized in the same sequence as the questionnaire. The notation (n=500) indicates that 500 people responded to the question. These numbers will vary from table to table as "No Answers" are omitted. The 2005 question wordings are used along the left margin of each table in this report. In 1995, residents were simply asked if they "used" each service, and the use questions were later re-phrased to better measure if citizens have first hand experience.

TABLE 2
Percent Who Had An Opinion About Each City Service/Characteristic

	1995	1998	2000	2003	2005
Paramedic & Rescue Squad Services	n/a	99.4%	99.6%	99.4%	100.0%
Fire Department Services	91.4%	99.2%	99.6%	99.0%	100.0%
Police Services	94.6%	100.0%	100.0%	99.6%	100.0%
Horticultural & Agricultural Services (including The Farmer's Market)	89.0%	96.2%	98.2%	98.8%	96.8%
Public Libraries	98.8%	100.0%	99.8%	100.0%	100.0%
Recreation Centers (wording change since 2003)	95.6%	98.4%	99.6%	99.2%	99.8%
Parks	98.6%	99.2%	99.6%	99.6%	99.8%
The Appearance of the City's Municipal Buildings & Facilities (wording change since 2003)	96.4%	99.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
The Number of City Activities & Programs Where Residents Can be Volunteers	96.4%	99.2%	97.8%	96.6%	99.0%
The 911 Emergency Telephone Center	n/a	n/a	n/a	97.6%	99.8%
Museums, the Aquarium, & Cultural Arts Activities (wording change since 2003)	93.2%	99.0%	99.8%	99.8%	100.0%
The Public Beaches in the City	97.6%	99.4%	99.8%	100.0%	100.0%
The Job Opportunities in Va. Beach	n/a	n/a	n/a	97.8%	99.6%
Efforts to Attract More Businesses & Help Businesses Expand	n/a	n/a	99.0%	98.4%	100.0%
Water & Sanitary Sewer Services	99.0%	100.0%	100.0%	99.8%	100.0%
Services for Needy or Homeless Families	87.6%	95.8%	96.8%	96.2%	99.4%
The City's Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services (wording change since 2003)	84.0%	n/a	94.2%	94.6%	97.6%
The Overall Appearance of the City	n/a	n/a	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
The Overall Appearance of Your Neighborhood	n/a	n/a	100.0%	99.8%	100.0%

TABLE 2 (cont'd)
Percent Who Had An Opinion About Each City Service/Characteristic

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	1995	1998	2000	2003	2005
The City's Work With Other Area Communities to Address Issues Impacting Our Region	n/a	n/a	n/a	98.8%	98.8%
The City's Efforts to Protect Natural Resources, the Environment, & Open Green Space (wording change since 2003)	n/a	n/a	99.6%	99.0%	99.8%
City Trash Collection & Recycling Services	99.0%	99.8%	100.0%	99.6%	99.4%
Efforts to Make Va. Beach More Appealing to Tourists	n/a	n/a	99.6%	99.6%	100.0%
Planning for Residential Development	96.2%	99.4%	99.8%	99.6%	100.0%
Maintenance of Existing City Roads & Bridges	99.6%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
The Flow of Traffic in the City	n/a	n/a	n/a	100.0%	100.0%
Planning & Construction of New City Roads	97.2%	96.6%	99.6%	99.2%	99.6%
Rain Water Drainage	98.6%	99.8%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
The Courtesy of City Employees	n/a	n/a	n/a	100.0%	100.0%
The Overall Work Performance of City Employees	n/a	n/a	n/a	100.0%	100.0%
Overall Satisfaction With City Services	99.6%	99.8%	100.0%	99.8%	100.0%
	(n=500)	(n=500)	(n=500)	(n=500)	(n=500)

Again, question participation rates were extremely high in 2005. Because we consider all taxpayer opinions to be important, interviewers were told to be patient with residents, encouraging them to respond to the survey questions based on anything they may have seen, heard, or read, or know from personal experience.

Beginning on the next page, Table 3 shows the percentage of respondents who were satisfied with each City service or characteristic. Please recognize that the nature of a department's work may cause some scores to be higher than others.

TABLE 3
Percent Who Were Satisfied With Each City Service/Characteristic

	1995	1998	2000	2003	2005
Paramedic & Rescue Squad Services	n/a	97.8%	95.2%	98.0%	96.8%
Fire Department Services	99.3%	98.6%	97.8%	99.0%	99.4%
Police Services	91.1%	91.6%	90.2%	95.0%	95.8%
Horticultural & Agricultural Services (including The Farmer's Market)	97.5%	95.0%	91.0%	93.9%	93.8%
Public Libraries	98.8%	96.0%	95.0%	95.6%	97.4%
Recreation Centers (wording change since 2003)	96.7%	96.7%	96.4%	95.6%	94.0%
Parks	97.6%	94.6%	93.6%	95.8%	92.8%
The Appearance of the City's Municipal Buildings & Facilities (wording change since 2003)	97.5%	92.5%	93.6%	94.8%	96.4%
The Number of City Activities & Programs Where Residents Can be Volunteers	99.2%	96.6%	92.6%	95.2%	95.2%
The 911 Emergency Telephone Center	n/a	n/a	n/a	95.7%	96.4%
Museums, the Aquarium, & Cultural Arts Activities (wording change since 2003)	97.6%	95.4%	92.8%	94.2%	93.8%
The Public Beaches in the City	87.7%	88.7%	77.0%	82.2%	83.4%
The Job Opportunities in Va. Beach	n/a	n/a	n/a	77.9%	77.3%
Efforts to Attract More Businesses & Help Businesses Expand	n/a	n/a	78.4%	75.0%	76.0%
Water & Sanitary Sewer Services	74.9%	88.4%	85.6%	88.2%	83.4%
Services for Needy or Homeless Families	77.2%	84.6%	75.8%	69.0%	62.0%
The City's Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services (wording change since 2003)	86.4%	n/a	86.4%	78.4%	78.1%
The Overall Appearance of the City	n/a	n/a	92.8%	89.2%	91.4%
The Overall Appearance of Your Neighborhood	n/a	n/a	91.6%	90.0%	90.0%

(continued)

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TABLE 3 (cont'd)
Percent Who Were Satisfied With Each City Service/Characteristic

	1995	1998	2000	2003	2005
The City's Work With Other Area Communities to Address Issues Impacting Our Region	n/a	n/a	n/a	72.3%	72.7%
The City's Efforts to Protect Natural Resources, the Environment, & Open Green Space (wording change since 2003)	n/a	n/a	71.5%	74.1%	63.9%
City Trash Collection & Recycling Services	85.7%	91.6%	91.0%	92.8%	91.8%
Efforts to Make Va. Beach More Appealing to Tourists	n/a	n/a	82.3%	84.9%	84.4%
Planning for Residential Development	58.6%	71.4%	65.3%	61.2%	55.8%
Maintenance of Existing City Roads & Bridges	67.5%	72.6%	66.6%	61.4%	64.4%
The Flow of Traffic in the City	n/a	n/a	n/a	39.2%	32.8%
Planning & Construction of New City Roads	76.1%	64.8%	68.7%	49.4%	45.6%
Rain Water Drainage	67.3%	70.1%	57.8%	63.6%	58.6%
The Courtesy of City Employees	n/a	n/a	n/a	91.4%	91.2%
The Overall Work Performance of City Employees	n/a	n/a	n/a	91.2%	91.2%
Overall Satisfaction With City Services	94.8%	94.8%	91.6%	93.2%	92.6%
	(s=347)	(s=415)	(s=145)	(s=473)	(s=484)
	(l=498)	(l=500)	(l=500)	(l=500)	(l=500)

The City of Virginia Beach continues to do an excellent job of meeting citizens' expectations. Many communities consider an 80% satisfaction level to be a measure of success. In Virginia Beach, 19 of the 30 services/characteristics rated above the 80% threshold. They include: Fire Dept. services, paramedic and rescue squad services, parks, the 911 Emergency Telephone Center, public libraries, recreation centers, the number of ways to volunteer, police services, the appearance of municipal buildings and facilities, the City's museums, the aquarium, and cultural arts activities, horticulture and agriculture services, City trash collection and recycling services, the overall appearance of neighborhoods, the overall appearance of the City, water and sanitary sewer services, efforts to make Virginia Beach more appealing to tourists, the public beaches, the courtesy of City employees and the overall work performance of City employees.

Even more impressive is that 16 of the 30 individual items rated at or above 90% satisfaction. The survey also included a global satisfaction rating to see how residents feel about City services, in general. The overall satisfaction score was 92.6%.

NOTE: Only those who shared their opinions were included. The (s=___) figures indicate the smallest number of people in that column and (l=___) represents the largest. As in prior years, the term "Satisfied" combines the Very Satisfied and Satisfied responses.

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TABLE 4
Average Satisfaction Scores For Each City Service/Characteristic
These averages could range between 1.0 (Very Dissatisfied) and 4.0 (Very Satisfied)
(The midpoint of this rating scale is a 2.5.)

	1995 Avg.	1998 Avg.	2000 Avg.	2003 Avg.	2005 Avg.
Paramedic & Rescue Squad Services	n/a	3.47	3.38	3.43	3.31
Fire Department Services	3.32	3.43	3.39	3.47	3.39
Police Services	3.20	3.21	3.23	3.33	3.29 [a b]
Horticultural & Agricultural Services (including The Farmer's Market)	3.09	3.14	3.11	3.21	3.15 [a]
Public Libraries	3.52	3.45	3.34	3.39	3.47 [c d]
Recreation Centers (wording change since 2003)	3.29	3.24	3.22	3.23	3.37 [a b c d]
Parks	3.31	3.19	3.14	3.23	3.27 [b c]
The Appearance of the City's Municipal Buildings & Facilities (wording change since 2003)	3.14	3.10	3.08	3.17	3.30 [a b c d]
The Number of City Activities & Programs Where Residents Can be Volunteers	3.19	3.21	3.09	3.17	3.19 [c]
The 911 Emergency Telephone Center	n/a	n/a	n/a	3.26	3.23
Museums, the Aquarium, & Cultural Arts Activities (wording change since 2003)	3.32	3.31	3.25	3.27	3.35 [c d]
The Public Beaches in the City	3.08	3.07	2.85	3.09	3.07 [c]
The Job Opportunities in Va. Beach	n/a	n/a	n/a	2.90	2.88
Efforts to Attract More Businesses & Help Businesses Expand	n/a	n/a	2.85	2.84	2.85
Water & Sanitary Sewer Services	2.83	2.97	2.96	3.05	3.00 [a]
Services for Needy or Homeless Families	2.81	2.91	2.80	2.69	2.64
The City's Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services (wording change since 2003)	2.94	n/a	2.89	2.81	2.83
The Overall Appearance of the City	n/a	n/a	3.17	3.12	3.15

NOTE: T-Test key is on the next page.   (continued)

TABLE 4 (cont'd)
Average Satisfaction Scores For Each City Service/Characteristic
These averages could range between 1.0 (Very Dissatisfied) and 4.0 (Very Satisfied)
(The midpoint of this rating scale is a 2.5.)

	1995 Avg.	1998 Avg.	2000 Avg.	2003 Avg.	2005 Avg.
The Overall Appearance of Your Neighborhood	n/a	n/a	3.25	3.20	3.23
The City's Work With Other Area Communities to Address Issues Impacting Our Region	n/a	n/a	n/a	2.76	2.76
The City's Efforts to Protect Natural Resources, the Environment, & Open Green Space (wording change since 2003)	n/a	n/a	2.78	2.82	2.66
City Trash Collection & Recycling Services	2.98	3.28	3.20	3.30	3.20 [a]
Efforts to Make Va. Beach More Appealing to Tourists	n/a	n/a	2.97	3.04	3.02
Planning for Residential Development	2.53	2.75	2.64	2.60	2.51
Maintenance of Existing City Roads & Bridges	2.70	2.74	2.70	2.63	2.66
The Flow of Traffic in the City	n/a	n/a	n/a	2.25	2.15
Planning & Construction of New City Roads	2.80	2.65	2.70	2.43	2.39
Rain Water Drainage	2.64	2.70	2.53	2.61	2.54
The Courtesy of City Employees	n/a	n/a	n/a	3.08	3.08
The Overall Work Performance of City Employees	n/a	n/a	n/a	3.03	3.04
Overall Satisfaction With City Services	3.09	3.15	3.05	3.08	3.11
	(s=347)	(s=415)	(s=145)	(s=473)	(s=484)
	(l=498)	(l=500)	(l=500)	(l=500)	(l=500)

Although the questions were measured using a word scale rather than a numeric rating, by calculating averages (means), we can compare results over a period of years. A number of average satisfaction ratings have improved over the years, and a few have declined. Of greatest interest are those T-Tests where a "d" indicates a significant improvement since the last study was conducted in 2003.

T-TEST KEY: a = significant improvement over 1995
b = significant improvement over 1998   (Based on a Two-Tailed T-Test analysis.)
c = significant improvement over 2000
d = significant improvement over 2003

NOTE: Only those with opinions were included. The (s=___) figures at the bottom of the table indicate the smallest number of people in that column, and (l=___) is the largest. A T-Test analysis has been performed to find significant improvements in satisfaction over the years. An "n/a" indicates that a comparable question was not asked in that year.

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TABLE 5: SUMMARY TABLE
Percent Who Were Satisfied In Descending Order (based on 2005)

	1995	1998	2000	2003	2005
Fire Department Services	99.3%	98.6%	97.8%	99.0%	99.4%
Public Libraries	98.8%	96.0%	95.0%	95.6%	97.4%
Paramedic & Rescue Squad Services	n/a	97.8%	95.2%	98.0%	96.8%
The 911 Emergency Telephone Center	n/a	n/a	n/a	95.7%	96.4%
The Appearance of the City's Municipal Buildings & Facilities (wording chng.)	97.5%	92.5%	93.6%	94.8%	96.4%
Police Services	91.1%	91.6%	90.2%	95.0%	95.8%
The Number of City Activities & Programs Where Residents Can be Volunteers	99.2%	96.6%	92.6%	95.2%	95.2%
Recreation Centers (wording chng.)	96.7%	96.7%	96.4%	95.6%	94.0%
Museums, the Aquarium, & Cultural Arts Activities (wording chng.)	97.6%	95.4%	92.8%	94.2%	93.8%
Horticultural & Agricultural Services (including The Farmer's Market)	97.5%	95.0%	91.0%	93.9%	93.8%
Parks	97.6%	94.6%	93.6%	95.8%	92.8%
Overall Satisfaction With City Services	94.8%	94.8%	91.6%	93.2%	92.6%
City Trash Collection & Recycling Services	85.7%	91.6%	91.0%	92.8%	91.8%
The Overall Appearance of the City	n/a	n/a	92.8%	89.2%	91.4%
The Courtesy of City Employees	n/a	n/a	n/a	91.4%	91.2%
The Overall Work Performance of City Employees	n/a	n/a	n/a	91.2%	91.2%
The Overall Appearance of Your Neighborhood	n/a	n/a	91.6%	90.0%	90.0%
Efforts to Make Va. Beach More Appealing to Tourists	n/a	n/a	82.3%	84.9%	84.4%
Water & Sanitary Sewer Services	74.9%	88.4%	85.6%	88.2%	83.4%
Public Beaches in the City	87.7%	88.7%	77.0%	82.2%	83.4%
The City's Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services (wording chng.)	86.4%	n/a	86.4%	78.4%	78.1%
The Job Opportunities in Va. Beach	n/a	n/a	n/a	77.9%	77.3%
Efforts to Attract More Businesses & Help Businesses Expand	n/a	n/a	78.4%	75.0%	76.0%
The City's Work With Other Area Communities to Address Issues Impacting Our Region	n/a	n/a	n/a	72.3%	72.7%
Maintenance of Existing City Roads & Bridges	67.5%	72.6%	66.6%	61.4%	64.4%
The City's Efforts to Protect Natural Resources, the Environment, & Open Green Space (wording chng.)	n/a	n/a	71.5%	74.1%	63.9%
Services for Needy or Homeless Families	77.2%	84.6%	75.8%	69.0%	62.0%
Rain Water Drainage	67.3%	70.1%	57.8%	63.6%	58.6%
Planning for Residential Development	58.6%	71.4%	65.3%	61.2%	55.8%
Planning & Construction of New City Roads	76.1%	64.8%	68.7%	49.4%	45.6%
The Flow of Traffic in the City	n/a	n/a	n/a	39.2%	32.8%
	(s=347)	(s=415)	(s=145)	(s=473)	(s=484)
	(l=498)	(l=500)	(l=500)	(l=500)	(l=500)

NOTE: The (s=___) indicates the smallest number of people in that column and (l=___) represents the largest. The term "Satisfied" combines Very Satisfied and Satisfied responses. An "n/a" means that a comparable question was not asked that year.

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<div style="border:1px solid black">

TABLE 6
Percent Who Were Satisfied With Each City Service (Users vs. Non-Users)*

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	1998		2000		2003		2005	
	Use**	Don't	Use**	Don't	Use**	Don't	Use**	Don't
Recreation Centers (wording chng.)	97.1%	96.2%	97.7%	94.9%	96.9%	93.6%	94.3%	93.6%
Parks	95.0%	92.9%	94.1%	92.0%	95.6%	96.4%	92.4%	93.7%
Public Beaches in the City	90.0%	84.3%	80.8%	63.3%	83.7%	76.9%	86.6%	72.6%
Public Libraries	95.6%	98.6%	95.2%	94.0%	95.7%	95.0%	97.6%	97.0%
Museums, the Aquarium, & Cultural Arts Activities (wording chng.)	96.7%	93.3%	95.2%	89.4%	95.2%	92.4%	94.2%	93.1%
Paramedic/Rescue Squad Svcs.	98.3%	97.0%	95.3%	94.9%	97.8%	98.4%	95.3%	99.5%
Police Services	89.7%	93.4%	85.7%	95.0%	93.1%	96.6%	93.4%	97.4%
Fire Department Services	98.6%	98.6%	97.0%	99.0%	99.3%	98.5%	100.0%	98.6%
The Courtesy of City Employees	n/a		n/a		90.4%	95.1%	90.6%	93.3%
The Overall Work Performance of City Employees	n/a		n/a		89.7%	97.1%	90.8%	92.4%
	(s=117)	(s=70)	(s=109)	(s=100)	(s=233)	(s=101)	(s=196)	(s=113)
	(l=430)	(l=334)	(l=399)	(l=374)	(l=399)	(l=265)	(l=387)	(l=304)

Table 6 shows the percentage of Users and Non-Users who were "Satisfied" with each City service. In some cases, those with first hand experience did rate a service higher, but that was not always true. This is partly because the table shows percentages rather than means (see next page).

NOTE: Only those with opinions were included. The (s=___) figures indicate the smallest number of people in that column and (l=___) represents the largest. As in prior years, the term "Satisfied" combines Very Satisfied and Satisfied responses. An "n/a" indicates that a comparable question was not asked in that year.

*Because of space constraints, the 1995 columns were removed.

**Had contact with or used that service.

TABLE 7
Average Satisfaction Scores For Some City Services: Separated by Users & Non-Users
These scores could range between 1.0 (Very Dissatisfied) and 4.0 (Very Satisfied)
(The midpoint of this rating scale is a 2.5.)

	2005 Had Contact With	2005 Non-Users	2005 Avg.
Recreation Centers (wording change since 2003)	3.52	3.17	3.37 [a]
Parks	3.31	3.17	3.27 [a]
Public Beaches in the City	3.14	2.82	3.07 [a]
Public Libraries	3.55	3.24	3.47 [a]
Museums, the Aquarium, & Cultural Arts Activities (wording change since 2003)	3.44	3.18	3.35 [a]
Paramedic & Rescue Squad Services	3.35	3.24	3.31 [a]
Police Services	3.35	3.25	3.29
Fire Department Services	3.49	3.25	3.39 [a]
The Courtesy of City Employees	3.09	3.04	3.08
The Overall Work Performance of City Employees	3.06	3.01	3.04
	(s=196) (l=387)	(s=113) (l=304)	(s=499) (l=500)

T-Tests were performed to see if citizens who reported first hand experience with a City service rate it higher (on average) than those who did not. Most findings mirror what logic would suggest. In general, people are more favorable toward those City services they have experience with.   In some cases, the contact makes no real difference, as evidenced by a T-Test being "not significant." The superscript letter "a" indicates when users rated the service significantly higher than non-users.

T-TEST KEY: a - users rated significantly higher
b - non-users rated significantly higher

(Based on a Two-Tailed T-Test analysis.)

NOTE: Only those with opinions were included in the calculations. The (s=___) figures at the bottom of the table indicate the smallest number of people in that column, and (l=___) represents the largest. A statistical analysis has been performed to isolate any significant differences in satisfaction. Only significant differences have been indicated.

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TABLE 8
Percent Who Had An Opinion About Each Statement

	1995	1998	2000	2003	2005
I know how to inform the City about the way I feel on important issues	99.0%	99.4%	100.0%	99.6%	99.6%
The City welcomes citizen involvement and input on important issues	96.6%	98.8%	99.4%	99.2%	98.0%
Virginia Beach is a good place to live	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
For the most part, I can conveniently access City services	99.6%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
My neighborhood is a safe place to live	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Virginia Beach, in general, is a safe place to live	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	99.6%
Overall, I receive a good value for my City tax dollar	n/a	n/a	n/a	99.8%	98.8%
	(n=500)	(n=500)	(n=500)	(n=500)	(n=500)

Participation rates for these "Agreement" questions in 2005 were extremely high. Interviewers were patient with residents, encouraging them to take their time. Table 9 on the next page shows the percentage of respondents who "Agreed" with each statement.

TABLE 9
Percent Who "Agreed With" Each Statement

	1995	1998	2000	2003	2005
I know how to inform the City about the way I feel on important issues	71.7%	75.1%	71.2%	76.5%	75.3%
The City welcomes citizen involvement and input on important issues	77.8%	77.1%	62.6%	71.4%	67.1%
Virginia Beach is a good place to live	94.0%	95.2%	96.2%	96.6%	95.6%
For the most part, I can conveniently access City services	93.2%	96.0%	93.2%	94.6%	94.8%
My neighborhood is a safe place to live	89.2%	91.6%	94.2%	96.4%	93.6%
Virginia Beach, in general, is a safe place to live	86.8%	94.0%	94.4%	95.6%	94.8%
Overall, I receive a good value for my City tax dollar	n/a	n/a	n/a	77.2%	75.7%
	(s=496)	(s=489)	(s=497)	(s=496)	(s=490)
	(l=500)	(l=500)	(l=500)	(l=500)	(l=500)

Clearly, these residents think Virginia Beach is a nice place to live. They find that they can conveniently access City services, and they feel safe at home and in the community. We expected that the first two items about citizen involvement would score somewhat lower. First of all, many citizens do not feel a need to communicate their feelings to the City (and therefore, they do not know how to go about it). And, secondly, some residents mentioned that high level decisionmakers simply do not have the time for full citizen involvement on all issues. They note that it would be impractical to have a process where everyone voices their personal opinions on important issues. This is not to suggest that Virginia Beach has no room for improvement. The observation is simply that some people do not expect it or want to know how to weigh in on every important issue.

NOTE: Only those with opinions were included in the calculations. The (s=___) figures at the bottom of the table indicate the smallest number of people in that column, and (l=___) represents the largest. As in prior years, the term "Agree" combines Strongly Agree and Agree responses.

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TABLE 10
Average Agreement Level For Each Listed Statement
These averages could range between 1.0 (Strongly Disagree) and 4.0 (Strongly Agree)
(The midpoint of this rating scale is a 2.5.)

	1995	1998	2000	2003	2005
I know how to inform the City about the way I feel on important issues	2.75	2.86	2.80	2.88	2.89 [a]
The City welcomes citizen involvement and input on important issues	2.82	2.85	2.62	2.74	2.71
Virginia Beach is a good place to live	3.24	3.30	3.24	3.32	3.29
For the most part, I can conveniently access City services	3.09	3.16	3.08	3.10	3.14
My neighborhood is a safe place to live	3.15	3.17	3.16	3.23	3.19
Virginia Beach, in general, is a safe place to live	2.97	3.14	3.11	3.16	3.13 [a]
Overall, I receive a good value for my City tax dollar	n/a	n/a	n/a	2.85	2.84
	(s=496)	(s=489)	(s=497)	(s=496)	(s=490)
	(l=500)	(l=500)	(l=500)	(l=500)	(l=500)

While Table 9 showed the percent who agreed with each of the seven statements, Table 10 presents the average "Agreement" scores. The four-point agreement scale ranges from 1 to 4, with a mid-point of 2.5. All averages were well above the 2.5 mid-point, and four of the seven were above 3.0. While there were some small changes in the means since 2003, none were statistically significant increases.

T-TEST KEY: a = significant improvement over 1995
   b = significant improvement over 1998
   c = significant improvement over 2000   (Based on a Two-Tailed T-Test statistical analysis.)
   d = significant improvement over 2003

NOTE: Averages include only those with opinions. The (s=___) figures at the bottom of the table indicate the smallest number of people in that column, and (l=___) represents the largest.

TABLE 11
Most Important Thing The City Could Do To Make Residents More Satisfied

	2005
I think everything is fine	12.8%
They should reduce the traffic flow problems	14.6%
The City should lower my taxes/fees	8.2%
They should improve the roads, build more roads, or finish road projects sooner	7.6%
The City needs to plan better for growth/development	3.6%
They should solve the rain water drainage problems	3.4%
They should focus more on locals, not tourists or businesses	3.2%
Stop or minimize the growth	2.6%
The cost of living is too high (utilities/housing)	2.6%
There is too much residential development	2.4%
They need to stop cutting deals with developers	2.4%
We need more public transportation	2.4%
They should improve the schools (more funding/smaller classes)	2.2%
The City needs more/better jobs	2.2%
The City should create/preserve more green spaces	2.0%
We need more code enforcement	1.8%
They should listen more to citizens/Do more surveys	1.8%
They should provide more help for the homeless	1.6%
They should solve the jet noise problems	1.4%
We need more recreation/activities for kids and teens	1.4%
We need more for tourists to do	1.2%
The City should hire a paid rescue squad	1.2%
The City should stop wasting money	1.2%
I disagree with current elected officials	1.0%
The City should prevent pollution/protect wildlife better	1.0%
They need to stop using eminent domain to steal property	0.8%
We need more street sweeping/litter control	0.8%
We need to raise City employees' wages/Treat them better	0.8%
We need more help for the elderly	0.8%
The police should stop being overzealous	0.6%
I'd like to see free oceanfront parking for locals	0.6%

<table>
<tr><td>TABLE 11 (cont'd)
Most Important Thing The City Could Do To Make Residents More Satisfied</td></tr>
</table>

	<u>2005</u>
The trash pick-ups shouldn't litter	0.6%
They should stop development near Oceana	0.6%
They should improve the water quality	0.6%
They should provide more help for the disabled	0.6%
The should focus more on regionalism	0.6%
Reducing crime is important	0.4%
The rules in the oceanfront area should be stricter	0.4%
They should continue the development of Downtown	0.4%
Answer 911 calls sooner	0.4%
The City should maintain green spaces better	0.4%
We need more cultural events and activities	0.4%
They should bring in a professional sports team	0.4%
The city needs other sources of revenue	0.2%
They need more courthouse parking	0.2%
Don't let buses be parked in driveways	0.2%
They need to keep the EMS system all-volunteer	0.2%
They should expand mosquito control efforts	0.2%
I have racial concerns (racism/prejudice)	0.2%
They need to hire more diverse City employees	0.2%
The City needs to remove the red light cameras	0.2%
We need more boat ramps	0.2%
We need more street lighting	0.2%
They need to keep the red light camera program running	0.2%
The City needs to improve their libraries	0.2%
The City needs more ambulances	0.2%
They should clean the Lynnhaven River	0.2%
They should add more horse trails	0.2%
They should add more bike lanes	0.2%
The City should respond to requests more quickly	0.2%
More information should be shared with citizens	0.2%
Enforce an early curfew for teens	0.2%
I want to hook up to City sewers	0.2%
	100.0%
	(n=500)

TABLE 12
Demographic Profile Items

	1995	1998	2000	2003	2005
Gender					
Male	50.0%	48.2%	50.0%	49.8%	50.0%
Female	50.0%	51.8%	50.0%	50.2%	50.0%
Race					
White	80.4%	80.6%	76.8%	77.6%	74.4%
African American	13.2%	12.4%	16.0%	13.4%	19.0%
Asian/Pacific Isles/Filipino	3.4%	3.8%	3.0%	4.4%	3.8%
Hispanic*	2.6%	2.2%	2.2%	3.2%	2.2%
Native American	n/a	n/a	1.4%	1.2%	n/a
Other	0.4%	1.0%	0.6%	0.2%	0.6%
Age					
18 - 25**	10.8%	10.4%	13.2%	9.0%	7.0%
26 - 34	26.8%	21.4%	16.0%	14.0%	16.6%
35 - 44	23.8%	27.4%	25.8%	26.2%	24.0%
45 - 54	17.6%	16.4%	21.4%	20.6%	24.2%
55 - 64	11.2%	12.0%	12.0%	15.2%	14.2%
65 or older	9.8%	12.4%	11.6%	15.0%	14.0%
Median Age	40.2 yrs.	41.6 yrs.	43.1 yrs.	45.4 yrs.	46.0 yrs.
Registered to Vote in Va. Beach					
Yes	n/a	77.2%	75.0%	79.4%	81.8%
No	n/a	22.8%	25.0%	20.6%	18.2%
Years Lived in Va. Beach					
One year or less	9.2%	6.2%	8.8%	5.8%	3.2%
2 - 5	18.6%	17.4%	14.4%	12.0%	11.8%
6 - 10	17.8%	17.8%	16.8%	17.6%	14.8%
11 - 20	23.4%	23.2%	24.2%	25.2%	25.4%
21 or more years	31.0%	35.4%	35.8%	39.4%	44.8%
City of Employment (for working adults)					
Virginia Beach (incl. works from home)	58.8%	60.0%	63.8%	64.2%	67.9%
Norfolk	30.5%	25.5%	23.5%	23.8%	19.7%
Chesapeake	4.5%	6.0%	7.2%	6.3%	7.9%
Portsmouth	3.6%	6.0%	1.8%	2.7%	1.7%
Suffolk	0.2%	0.7%	n/a	0.7%	1.2%
Peninsula Cities	2.0%	1.6%	3.3%	1.9%	1.7%
Other	0.2%	0.2%	0.4%	0.2%	0.0%

*Not a race category, but included here for comparison.

**This survey only included those who were a head of household.

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	TABLE 12 (cont'd)
	Demographic Profile Items

	1995	1998	2000	2003	2005
Kids Under 18 in Household					
Yes	n/a	n/a	n/a	43.2%	39.8%
No	n/a	n/a	n/a	56.8%	60.2%
Type of Housing					
Townhouse	n/a	14.2%	13.4%	13.4%	11.2%
Single family home	n/a	68.0%	67.8%	71.4%	69.2%
Apartment or condo	n/a	16.6%	16.6%	13.4%	16.8%
Trailer or mobile home	n/a	0.8%	1.2%	1.0%	1.4%
Duplex	n/a	0.4%	1.0%	0.8%	1.4%
Own vs. Rent Home					
Own	n/a	75.2%	74.8%	76.8%	73.2%
Rent	n/a	24.8%	25.2%	23.2%	26.8%
Educational Background					
High school or less	n/a	n/a	n/a	26.6%	25.2%
1-3 years of college	n/a	n/a	n/a	34.6%	33.0%
4-year college degree	n/a	n/a	n/a	22.4%	29.2%
Completed a graduate degree	n/a	n/a	n/a	16.4%	12.6%
Annual Household Income					
Under $20,000	13.3%	8.5%	7.3%	6.9%	5.3%
$20,000 to $39,999	34.0%	30.4%	28.5%	22.7%	18.4%
$40,000 to $59,999	29.1%	31.2%	27.5%	26.9%	28.7%
$60,000 to $79,999	12.5%	15.4%	17.9%	17.6%	20.2%
$80,000 or more	11.1%	14.6%	18.7%	25.9%	27.3%
Median Income	$41,830	$47,142	$50,296	$55,151	$58,309
Zip Code*					
23451	9.6%	9.6%	13.6%	13.4%	13.4%
23452	15.2%	15.2%	14.6%	14.0%	14.0%
23453	n/a	n/a	n/a	7.6%	7.6%
23454	15.6%	15.6%	14.6%	14.2%	14.2%
23455	10.6%	10.6%	11.6%	11.4%	11.4%
23456	15.6%	15.6%	14.8%	9.2%	9.2%
23457	0.8%	0.8%	1.0%	0.8%	0.8%
23459	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
23460	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
23461	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
23462	14.8%	14.8%	14.6%	14.2%	14.0%
23464	17.8%	17.8%	15.2%	15.2%	15.2%

*Note: The distribution of surveys by Zip Code was based on U.S. Postal Service household counts. Some Zip Code boundaries change over time.

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APPENDIX

2005 City of Virginia Beach Survey of Citizens
CATI Telephone Survey Form
Wording changes since 2003 are noted by "chng."

Hello, I'm _____ with Continental Research. We're conducting a survey for the City of Virginia Beach to see how residents feel about City services. The results will be used for future planning. (If needed... your phone number was randomly selected from among all residents.)

1) Are you a resident of Virginia Beach?   If no, politely terminate interview.

2) Are you at least 18 years of age?   If no, ask to speak to an adult.

3) Is this a home or a business?   If exclusively a business, politely terminate interview.

4) To begin with may I ask your Zip Code?   2 3 4 ___ ___

[If person says he is an employee, do the survey, but indicate the status and tell your supervisor.]

Think for a moment about living in the City of Virginia Beach. Overall, are you Very Satisfied, Satisfied, Dissatisfied, or Very Dissatisfied with the City's (fill in with Q5-34) ?

(Rotate Q5 - Q34)

		VS	**S**	**D**	**VD**	**D/K**
5)	Paramedic & Rescue Squad services	4	3	2	1	7
6)	Fire Department services	4	3	2	1	7
7)	Police services	4	3	2	1	7
8)	Horticultural & Agricultural Services, including The Farmer's Market	4	3	2	1	7
9)	Public libraries	4	3	2	1	7
10)	Recreation centers (chng.)	4	3	2	1	7
11)	Parks	4	3	2	1	7
12)	The appearance of the City's municipal buildings & facilities (chng.)	4	3	2	1	7
13)	The number of City activities & programs where residents can be volunteers	4	3	2	1	7
14)	The 911 Emergency Telephone Center	4	3	2	1	7

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		VS	S		D	VD	D/K
15)	Museums, the aquarium, & cultural arts activities (chng.)	4	3		2	1	7
16)	The public beaches in the City	4	3		2	1	7
17)	The job opportunities in Virginia Beach	4	3		2	1	7
18)	Efforts to attract more businesses & help businesses expand	4	3		2	1	7
19)	Water & sanitary sewer services	4	3		2	1	7
20)	Services for needy or homeless families	4	3		2	1	7
21)	The City's mental health & substance abuse services (chng.)	4	3		2	1	7
22)	The overall appearance of the City	4	3		2	1	7
23)	The overall appearance of your neighborhood	4	3		2	1	7
24)	The City's work with other area communities to address issues impacting our region	4	3		2	1	7
25)	The City's efforts to protect natural resources, the environment, & open green space (chng.)	4	3		2	1	7
26)	City trash collection & recycling services	4	3		2	1	7
27)	The efforts to make Virginia Beach more appealing to tourists	4	3		2	1	7
28)	Planning for residential development	4	3		2	1	7
29)	Maintenance of existing City roads & bridges	4	3		2	1	7
30)	The flow of traffic in the City	4	3		2	1	7
31)	Planning & construction of new City roads	4	3		2	1	7
32)	Rain water drainage (also called storm water management)	4	3		2	1	7
33)	The courtesy of City employees	4	3		2	1	7
34)	The overall work performance of City employees	4	3		2	1	7
35)	I'd like to get your overall satisfaction with City services. Are you Very Satisfied, Satisfied, Dissatisfied, or Very Dissatisfied overall?	4	3		2	1	7

36) What is the ONE most important thing the City could do that would make you a more satisfied resident?

_____

_____

_____

We'd like to know which programs and services provided by the City of Virginia Beach you or your family have used in the past 12 months. Have you   (fill in with Q37 - 45) ?

Yes No

37) 1   2   Been to a Virginia Beach recreation center (chng.)

38) 1   2   Visited a City park

39) 1   2   Visited a public beach in Virginia Beach

40) 1   2   Visited the Virginia Beach Public Library and/or used the library by computer from home or office (chng.)

41) 1   2   Visited a museum, the aquarium, or attended a cultural arts activity in Virginia Beach (chng.)

42) 1   2   Observed an emergency response of a Virginia Beach Rescue Squad

43) 1   2   Had any contact with the Police Department

44) 1   2   Observed Fire Department services or programs being performed

45) 1   2   Had any direct contact with a City employee either in-person, by telephone, or by e-mail (chng.)

Next, I'd like to know if you Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree with this statement.

(Rotate Q46 - Q52)	**SA**	**A**	**D**	**SD**	**D/K**
46) I know how to inform the City about the way I feel on important issues	4	3	2	1	7
47) The City welcomes citizen involvement and input on important issues	4	3	2	1	7
48) Virginia Beach is a good place to live	4	3	2	1	7
49) For the most part, I can conveniently access City services	4	3	2	1	7
50) My neighborhood is a safe place to live	4	3	2	1	7
51) Virginia Beach, in general, is a safe place to live	4	3	2	1	7
52) Overall, I receive a good value for my City tax dollar	4	3	2	1	7

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53) Do you live in: **(Read Choices)**

    1- A townhouse
    2- A single family home
    3- An apartment or condo
    4- A trailer or mobile home, or
    x- Something else? _____

54) Do you own your home or do you rent?

    1- Owns/Has mortgage   2- Rents

55) And, how many years have you lived in Virginia Beach?   ___ ___ yrs.

56) Do you have any children under the age of 18 living in your household?

    1- Yes   2- No

57) In what city do you work?   **(If non-working, inquire about spouse)**

01- Norfolk	05- Hampton	44- No one in h'hld works
02- Portsmouth	06- Newport News	
03- Chesapeake	07- Suffolk	
04- Virginia Beach	Other _____	

58) Are you registered to vote in the City of Virginia Beach?

    1- Yes   2- No

59) And, which age group fits you? **(Read Choices)**

    1- 18 to 25   4- 45 to 54
    2- 26 to 34   5- 55 to 64
    3- 35 to 44   6- 65 or older

60) To be sure we interview all groups of people, which racial or ethnic group best represents you?
(Read Choices)

    1- White (Caucasian)   4- Asian or Pacific Islander
    2- African American   5- Hispanic, or
    3- Filipino American   x- Other... and that is? _____

61) What is the highest level of education you have completed? **(Read If Needed)**

   1- High school or less
   2- 1-3 years of college/trade school
   3- A 4-year college degree
   4- Completed a graduate degree

62) Last of all, which LETTER includes your total yearly household income? Just stop me when I say the right letter.

   1- **A** Under $20,000   4- **D** $60,000 to $79,999
   2- **B** $20,000 to $39,999   5- **E** $80,000 to $99,999, or
   3- **C** $40,000 to $59,999   6- **F** $100,000 or more?

63) **Record Gender**:   1- Male   2- Female

Thanks for sharing your time with me today.
We'll be reporting the results of this survey to City Council in about 2 months.
Also, the results will be posted on the City's website VBGov.com.