



Staff Report

File #: 22-0820

REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

DATE: 10/19/2022

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: City Manager's Office

SUBJECT:
Results of the City of Corona's Participation in the National Community Survey.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This staff report asks the City Council to receive the results of the City of Corona's participation in the National Community Survey. The National Community Survey Report provides the opinions of a representative sample of 714 Corona residents on the central facets of community livability and compares these against perspectives gathered in surveys from over 600 other communities.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the City Council receive and file the results of the City of Corona's participation in the National Community Survey.

BACKGROUND & HISTORY:

The National Community Survey (NCS) is developed and administered by the National Research Center at Polco, in partnership with the International City/County Management Association and provides a comprehensive picture of livability and resident perspectives about local government services, policies, and management. The NCS captures residents' opinions on the following 10 central facets of a community: Economy; Mobility; Community Design; Utilities; Safety; Natural Environment; Parks and Recreation; Health and Wellness; Education, Arts and Culture; and Inclusivity and Engagement. Over 600 communities throughout the United States participate in the NCS, and the results of each survey are benchmarked against the participating communities.

The City of Corona Strategic Plan includes multiple performance indicators that measure resident satisfaction levels with city services. The questions in the National Community Survey capture data for these performance indicators and will allow the City to measure our progress in achieving the goals and objectives in our Strategic Plan.

ANALYSIS:

The City contracted with Polco to conduct the NCS during the Spring and Summer of 2022. The survey was available in two formats - a random sample survey and an open participation survey. Both surveys were available in both English and Spanish and were promoted by the City through email, social media, and on the City website.

The random sample survey was mailed to 7,000 randomly selected households beginning on May 16, 2022 and remained open for 14 weeks. The initial mailing consisted of a postcard inviting households to participate, and a second mailing containing a cover letter with survey instructions, a questionnaire, and a postage-paid return envelope. All mailings included a web link to give residents the opportunity to respond to the survey online. Of the 7,000 households that were invited to participate, 714 completed the survey, providing an overall response rate of 10%. The response rate generated a traditional “level of confidence” of 95%, which indicates the probability that the survey findings are true for the entire population, within a margin of error of plus or minus 4 percentage points around any given percent reported for all respondents. Survey results were weighted so that the demographic profile of respondents was representative of the demographic characteristics of the 2010 Census and 2020 American Community Survey estimates for adults in the City of Corona.

After the random sample survey was underway, the open participation survey link was promoted by the City beginning June 20, 2022. This survey was open to all Corona residents and remained open for 8 weeks, generating 310 responses. Since the open participation survey data was not collected through a random sample, a level of confidence in the representativeness of the sample cannot be estimated. As a result, this presentation reports out on the scientifically valid survey results; however, the responses to questions by the open participation respondents can be found beginning on page 75 in the attached NCS Report of Results (Exhibit 1).

The chart below shows a summary of the results from the random sample survey and the proportion of Corona residents who rated the community facets positively for quality and the priority placed on each facet. Also displayed is whether local ratings were lower, similar, or higher than the national benchmark. Response details for all questions related to each facet of the community are provided in the attached NCS Report of Results (Exhibit 1).

	Rating on quality of characteristics		Importance of characteristics	
	% excellent or good	vs. benchmark	% essential or important	vs. benchmark
Overall economic health	57%	Similar	93%	Similar
Overall quality of transportation system	41%	Similar	70%	Similar
Overall design or layout of residential and commercial areas	57%	Similar	84%	Similar
Overall quality of utility infrastructure	66%	Similar	90%	Similar
Overall feeling of safety	54%	Lower	97%	Similar

Overall quality of natural environment	60%	Lower	80%	Similar
Overall quality of parks and recreation opportunities	67%	Similar	81%	Similar
Overall health and wellness opportunities	55%	Similar	77%	Similar
Overall opportunities for education, culture, and the arts	49%	Similar	76%	Similar
Residents' connection and engagement with their community	38%	Similar	68%	Similar

The City is already addressing several areas where Corona ranked lower than the national benchmark through our City of Corona Strategic Plan for 2021-2026. The Strategic Plan was adopted by the City Council on February 17, 2021 and sets a course of action by establishing priority goals, outlining actions to achieve those goals, and setting up a framework to report our progress to the public. Below is an overview of the areas where the City ranked lower than the national benchmark in the NCS, along with a listing of the Strategic Plan strategies the City has underway, or programmed during the Plan's five-year implementation schedule.

Ranked low	What are we doing?
Economy	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corona as a place to visit • Vibrancy of downtown /commercial area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed and implementing a Downtown Revitalization Plan • Redeveloping the Corona Mall • Exploring opportunities to bring in additional hotels to support larger conferences, gatherings, and events
Mobility	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ease of travel by car • Traffic enforcement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AI Traffic Signal Optimization Project to optimize traffic flows • Advocate with RCTC and the State for transportation improvements that impact congestion • Develop long-term multi-modal transportation plan
Community Design	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall appearance • Public places where people want to spend time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the feasibility of a business façade improvement program; volunteer clean up events; enhanced graffiti removal program; establish consistent quality and maintenance standards for City Park and recreation facilities; Urban Forest Management Plan and planting 15,000 trees in the City, LMD renewal initiative, and more. • Park land acquisitions; parks revitalizations, redeveloping City Park.

Ranked low	What are we doing?
Safety	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall feeling of safety • Feeling safe from violent crime • Feeling safe from property crime • Quality of crime prevention • Feeling safe in downtown /commercial area during the day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade and maintain 911 system to ensure reliable emergency response • Determine appropriate staff levels for effective emergency response capability and address understaffing • Improve emergency response times to meet or beat national benchmarks • Expand resident engagement and involvement in police and fire support efforts • Create Police Officer Business Liaison program to engage local businesses, provide advice on crime prevention, and respond to concerns • Increase crime prevention in the downtown business district, including exploring the deployment of additional police officers dedicated to this area
Natural Environment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall quality of natural environment • Cleanliness of Corona • Corona open space • Air quality • Water resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a plan for newly acquired wilderness spaces that fosters outdoor recreation activities • Continue and enhance the City's Graffiti Removal program and hold community clean ups. • Improve the use of SeeClickFix to encourage reporting of graffiti and cleanliness issues • Enhance trash removal and community cleanup projects
Parks & Recreation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreational opportunities • Quality of City parks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop "on demand" registration capabilities to provide onsite reservations at parks/facilities • Establish consistent quality and maintenance standards for City park and recreation facilities • Develop a master plan for the redevelopment of City Park
Education, Arts & Culture	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities to attend special events and festivals • Community support for the arts • Opportunities to attend cultural/arts/music activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formed a special event unit to better support event coordination • Establishing annual process to expand community events through partnerships • Develop additional performing arts venue in the City and/or renovate Historic Civic Center • Promote the use of public spaces for certain festivals or shows to showcase arts & culture

Ranked low	What are we doing?
Inclusivity & Engagement	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Corona as a place to retire• Opportunities to volunteer• Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Utilize volunteer-led hikes to help residents become familiar with trail and park opportunities• Ensure event planning meet the needs and interests of a diverse mix of ages and interests• Ensure robust engagement with a broad section of the community when development plans for parks and facilities
Quality of Life	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overall image or reputation of Corona	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reimagine the City of Corona's brand, identity, and story,• Develop communications plan to tell our story and build trust between City and residents

The City will continue its participation in the National Community Survey on a biennial basis, and conduct our own Quality of Life Survey in the interim years to track the community's sentiment over time. It is our goal is that as we continue to implement the strategies and objectives in the Strategic Plan and tell our story to the community about all the great things the City of Corona is doing, resident perceptions about the quality of City services will improve over time.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no financial impact associated with receiving the results of the City's participation in the National Community Survey.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

This action is exempt pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Statue and Guidelines, which states that a project is exempt from CEQA if the activity is covered by the commonsense exemption that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with the certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. This action is to receive a report on the results of the City's participation in the National Community Survey, and there is no possibility that this action will have a significant effect on the environment. Any future projects that may be developed as a result of this survey will go through the CEQA process, if required. Therefore, no environmental analysis is needed.

PREPARED BY: DONNA FINCH, ASSISTANT TO THE CITY MANAGER

REVIEWED BY: JACOB ELLIS, CITY MANAGER

Attachment:

1. Exhibit 1 - National Community Survey - Report of Results
2. Exhibit 2 - The City of Corona 2022 Community Survey
3. Exhibit 3 - Presentation