MEMORANDUM

TO: Donna Barron, City Manager

FROM: James Kunke, Community Relations & Tourism Director

DATE: November 17, 2016

SUBJECT: **2016 Resident Satisfaction Survey – Executive Summary**

The 2016 Resident Satisfaction Survey was conducted from July 15 through August 5 of this year as a way to measure public perception of city services and quality of life in Lewisville. A full analysis is attached. This executive summary focuses on overall public perceptions and key recommendations drawn from survey results.

The survey was conducted exclusively online, which does have some bearing on the results as described in the full analysis. Generally, online surveys tend to produce lower overall satisfaction ratings than are generated by random-sample telephone surveys, and online survey results tend to have a higher percentage of "high intensity" responses at both ends of the scale.

More than 1,200 responses were received for the 2016 Resident Satisfaction Survey, a decrease of about 20 percent from the 2015 online survey but still more than three times as many responses as were collected for most previous surveys. The lack of random sampling makes the results somewhat anecdotal in nature, but the large response rate does add to the reliability of the results.

A surprisingly high 61 percent of respondents said they had lived in Lewisville 10 years or longer, and 89 percent described themselves as homeowners. This lends added value to "change over time" assessments, but also means newer residents (particularly apartment dwellers) are under-represented in the survey results.

Overall Public Perception

Survey results show a population that is generally satisfied with life in Lewisville and supportive of recent and ongoing public efforts to improve the city. Overall, 91.05 percent of respondents said they are "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the quality of life in Lewisville, and positive responses outpaced negative responses by an 10.2-to-1 ratio. This result has increased slightly each of the past two years, but within the expected statistical margin. Only nine respondents described themselves as "very dissatisfied."

When asked how Lewisville has changed, nearly half (46.81 percent) said it has improved and another 33.57 percent said it has stayed the same while they have lived here. Only 18.10 percent said it has gotten worse, a positive comparison ratio of 2.6-to-1.

More than 82 percent of respondents said they would recommend Lewisville to a relative or friend who was looking for a place to live in North Texas (with 41.04 percent very likely), and 79.36 percent of respondents said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the city services they receive for property taxes paid.

Most individual city services received a "passing" satisfaction rating better than 70 percent, including three (Fire Services, Ambulance Services and Library Services) scoring in the 90s. Four services received rating between 45 and 56 percent; action steps already have been proposed for each of those areas.

Public awareness of the Lewisville 2025 vision plan jumped significantly from 2015 to 2016, likely due in part to the annual report that was mailed to all Lewisville and Castle Hills addresses in February. Overall, 61.95 percent of respondents this year indicated some awareness of the vision plan (25.81 percent at a high level), compared to 50.24 percent awareness last year.

In the area of public communication, 85.46 percent of respondents said it is "very easy" or "somewhat easy" to give feedback or input to the city, and 74.40 percent of respondents said the city is "very responsive" or "somewhat responsive" to public feedback or input. Both of those results are slightly higher than in the 2015 survey.

Key Recommendations

Note: *Some recommendations (marked with an *) are repeated from the 2016 Police Operations and Code Enforcement Survey.*

Connecting Taxes with Services. Nearly 80 percent of respondents were satisfied with the level of City services receive in return for property taxes paid, but positive intensity rated at just 16.88 percent. City services received high ratings in nearly every portion of the 2016 survey, so a stronger emphasis is needed on communicating the value of those services. This should start with the 2017 Annual Report, and should continue with periodic information distributed throughout the year.

Telephone Training for Employees. Survey results make clear that telephone interaction is not going away any time soon. Continued emphasis needs to be given on telephone procedures, and front-line call-takers need to continue being included in the public information cycle. More widespread employee training should be considered that focuses specifically on telephone etiquette and tactics for handling angry telephone callers. In addition, steps should be taken to ensure that all employees (and especially front-line call takers) have easy access to a staff telephone directory and a basic understanding of department responsibilities, so that re-directed telephone calls are sent to the correct office as often as possible.

*** Research Options for Improved Follow-Up.** Follow-up is a challenge for most cities. Research should be conducted to see if comparable cities elsewhere have found effective ways to provide timely follow-up to residents who report an issue, and suitable methods for Lewisville should be developed and adopted. This might be an appropriate task for the new Community Liaison position added as part of the 2016-17 budget.

Recreation Programs. While ratings for Recreation Programs remain in an acceptable range, there has been some decline in those rankings during the past two years and positive intensity is lower than for other rated services. A review of recreation class offerings would be useful in determining what classes would be most successful. This should include a follow-up survey focused only on recreation. This could be timed in conjunction with the hiring of a new PALS director next spring.

Adult and Tech Classes at the Library. Survey results show a steady decline since 2014 for satisfaction ratings related to technology classes and adult classes at the library, with ratings in low 80s for the 2016 survey. By comparison, ratings for children's programming have stayed in the mid-90s each survey year.

With new computers and other technology being purchased for the library as part of the FY 2016-17 budget, this seems to be a good time to review current offerings and partner with other city departments or other local agencies (such as Lewisville ISD) on expanded tech and adult classes.

Wildlife Education. Animal Services had an expanded presence in the 2016 survey and received positive ratings overall, but "response to reports of wildlife" received the lowest satisfaction rating at 82.26 percent. It is the opinion of staff that part of that lower rating is caused by the public's misunderstanding about what Animal Services is able to do when encountering indigenous wildlife, and about the threat (or lack of threat) posted by those animals. Some public education efforts have been made, but increased information should be made available through online outlets (website and social media), printed materials, and classes.

Promotion of Lewisville 2025. Survey results show increased public awareness of the Lewisville 2025 vision plan, but also increased public interest in seeing regular updates about plan goals and accomplishments. The annual report should be continued, but the website presence for Lewisville 2025 should be redesigned to ensure more frequent updates and easier public navigation. In addition, efforts should be made to directly link appropriate public projects to Lewisville 2025 through signage, newsletter articles, website content, and news media materials.

*** Review Sidewalk Maintenance Program.** The city's sidewalk maintenance program should be reviewed to ensure resident needs are being met in a timely and efficient manner. The 2016-17 city budget does include increased funding for sidewalk maintenance, which is an important step. A more detailed review might reveal ways to prioritize projects and reduce the current time lag between a project being scheduled and a project being completed. In addition, to the extent possible, a real-time online map showing current and scheduled sidewalk projects could be a valuable way to increase public awareness about program demands.

*** Encourage Online Issue Reporting.** Residents who use the online reporting system (website or mobile app) are able to track the status of their reported issues through completion. Increasing the number of people who use this option also would increase the level of follow-up they receive. A citywide public education effort is needed to encourage use of the online reporting system, focusing on the tracking benefits. The current reporting system also should be reviewed to assess ease of use.

Hike & Bike Trails Map. Every survey taken in Lewisville since at least 2002 has shown strong public interest in trails, especially since the Lewisville 2025 Public Input Survey. The satisfaction rating for trails has increased each of the past two years as new trails are added to the City's system. When the new Garden Ridge trail opens, a dedicated marketing effort should be made to promote awareness and use of the trail system. This should include a printed trails map, an online trails map, and consideration of an interactive trails map on the City's mobile app.

*** Review Street Light Requirements.** Current requirements for street lights in residential developments should be reviewed to ensure that public safety is the top priority. In addition, street light installations in existing residential neighborhood should be reviewed to ensure developers complied with the requirements. Where there is a deficiency identified, a suitable response should be prepared.

*** Public Reporting of Burned Out Street Lights.** Lewisville PD launched a low-key effort in spring 2016 asking residents to report broken or burned-out street lights. A more comprehensive effort should be made later in 2016, using the mobile app and a telephone hotline to make it easy for residents to report street light issues. The campaign needs to emphasize maintenance, not requests for new installations.