

**CITIZEN SURVEY WORKSHOP
SEPTEMBER 22, 2010**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:31 p.m. and was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. ROLL CALL

Present at the meeting were Mayor Paul, and Councilmembers Caletka, Hattan and Luis. Also present were Town Administrator Shimun, and Assistant Town Clerk Roig recording the meeting.

3. CITIZEN AND BUSINESS SURVEY

Dr. Phillip Downs, consultant with Kerr and Downs Research, presented the results of the Citizen and Business survey. He explained the purpose of the research had been to obtain business leaders' and citizens' evaluations of various services and of the Town Council. It was also to obtain their reactions to some strategic issues facing the Town. Dr. Downs said the results were from 384 citizen surveys and 361 business surveys, with a margin of error of +/- 5%.

Dr. Downs said overall, both citizens and business leaders had positive responses to the Council and Town services. Both groups were interested in every type of development and growth. They were interested in preserving tradition, but not at the expense of growth and development. There were also groups who were interested in a more diverse business environment, more progressive opportunities for dining, retail and entertainment.

Citizens

Dr. Downs said the citizen survey showed support for development in the areas of University Drive, I595, SR7, I75 and Davie Road ranging from 55% to 72%. A majority of citizens supported all types of development (except manufacturing) such as educational facilities, Green industry and high tech. Only in the Transit Oriented Corridor was there support for manufacturing.

Citizen respondents had been asked if business and development should be permitted in areas of Town where it was not currently concentrated with the idea of enhancing prosperity, and the response had been split 50/50. They were also asked if growth and development regulations should be loosened in order to spur growth and development, and citizens favored modifying growth and development rules so services could be funded.

Dr. Downs said Council had received over 60% positive marks in terms of setting policy that reinforced the Town's mission. Two out of three citizens felt the Town was committed to customer service and 73% gave the Town high marks for delivering an array of services. Dr. Downs said there were mixed reviews regarding use of tax money. Citizens rejected the idea of building a new Town Hall.

Dr. Downs said they had asked citizens if they would favor cutting back on services to keep taxes and fees from going up or maintaining the service level with the possibility that fees and taxes might increase. He said almost half the people seemingly would not be averse to higher taxes and fees.

Dr. Downs stated that all of the Town-provided services had received positive evaluations but the most favored economic development strategy was education.

Descriptors people wanted to identify the Town in 10 years included: high tech, having upscale shopping, eating and entertainment, more progressive leadership, more diverse business environment, making more of the Town's assets and being more competitive with other municipalities in Broward County. They wanted the Town to move away from some of the traditions relating to western, rural and old time Florida.

Respondents had been asked if they were willing to accept the terms of growth, such as taller buildings, greater population density, business that might not look and feel like what they were used to and a slim majority had responded positively. Seventy percent of respondents believed Council was making the right decisions to move the Town forward. Seventy percent also favored modifying the western theme restrictions to attract growth and eighty-one percent favored a business-friendly atmosphere.

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Businesses

Dr. Downs said the business survey results were not distinctly different from the citizen survey. Support for development in different parts of the community ran about 15% higher in the business survey. Business leaders were more willing than citizens to accept the terms of growth, such as taller buildings and greater population density. They were also more willing than citizens to move past tradition in order to grow. Seventy-five percent of business leaders thought Council was making the right decisions to move the Town forward. By a 3:1 margin, business leaders saw their interaction with Town government benefiting them and their business interests.

Dr. Downs said business leaders had specific concerns about business codes, and most of these concerned signage. Business leaders were more in favor of maintaining the western theme than citizens, but did not want it to hinder development. Sixty percent favored modifying growth regulations. Sixty-three percent gave the Town Council and Town government positive ratings in terms of attracting businesses to the Town and 68% gave them positive marks for their efforts to retain existing businesses. Dr. Downs stated business leaders overwhelmingly supported incentive to attract other businesses and strongly supported a business-friendly atmosphere.

Dr. Downs said business leaders gave very good marks for Town services, and they were more willing than citizens to cut back on services to avoid hikes in fess and taxes. Regarding economic development strategies, business leaders also favored education highest. They also agreed with citizens that the Town should move toward being a high tech community, having upscale shopping, eating and entertainment, more progressive leadership, more diverse business environment, and to move away from some of the traditions relating to western and rural influences. In ten years, business leaders did not want to move away from the suburban family orientation and the education focus, but they wanted to move toward better utilization of assets, a more diverse business environment, being more economically competitive and more business friendly.

Dr. Downs said business leaders favored offering incentives to attract more business and industry. They also saw higher education as a way to attract more business and industry. Business leaders had also indicated they would buy advertising on Town venues.

Mayor Paul felt this gave Council some direction on things they needed to do. She said they must be more proactive with using their money wisely. Mayor Paul thanked Mr. Downs for his efforts.

Councilmember Luis felt the citizens needed more education regarding the new Town Hall. Mr. Downs said it was a difficult environment to propose any project that would cost money. He agreed it was an educational process and he advised Council to keep the message simple and communicate it effectively. Mr. Shimun remarked that he routinely killed roaches in the building, there was a rat trap under his desk, and they had conducted a mold study and spent tens of thousands of dollars repairing the Town Hall roof.

4. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss and no objections, the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Approved _____

Mayor/Councilmember

Town Clerk