



YOUR VOICE OUR FUTURE

Planning Oro Valley Together

COMPARATIVE SURVEY FINDINGS

September 2013 – February 2014

Executive Summary

Prepared for:



Prepared by:



TOWN OF ORO VALLEY *YOUR VOICE, OUR FUTURE*
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Executive Summary

I.	<u>Overview of Survey Process</u>	1
	Four Survey Methods	
	Survey Differences	
	Survey Similarities	
II.	<u>Overview of Findings</u>	2
	Sample Composition and Comparisons	
	Survey Evaluation Guidelines	
	Statistical Significance, Patterns and Overall Trends	
	Community Vision, Values and Priorities (1.0)	
	Public Safety (2.0)	
	Transportation (3.0)	
	Parks & Recreation (4.0)	
	Land Development (5.0)	
	Economic Development (6.0)	
	Communication (7.0)	
III.	<u>Conclusions</u>	5

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Executive Summary

Since September 2013, the Town of Oro Valley has been engaged in outreach to its residents to measure community attitudes related to the Town's future. The goal of the community outreach is to assist in the development of the General Plan update.

I. Overview of Survey Process

Four Survey Methods – Based on a survey instrument developed in conjunction with FMR Associates, the Town has sought community opinions in four different ways:

- **Telephone:** a statistically-valid and statistically-projectable survey of adult (18+) Oro Valley residents was conducted in September 2013 by FMR Associates. Sample size is 306.
- **Community Events:** three individual questions selected from the telephone survey instrument were posed to attendees by Town volunteers and staff at more than 60 community events. Those in attendance responded using Post-It Notes to questions written on a large paper flipchart tablet. No demographic data was collected; however, events were targeted to sample youth, families, retirees and other mixed demographic groups. More than 2,600 Post-It Notes were completed by community event attendees.
- **Online:** a self-administered, web-based version of the entire telephone survey was created and linked at the **YourVoiceOV.com** website. Sample size is 212.
- **Paper:** a self-administered paper survey (very similar to the telephone survey) was developed and distributed by the Town at various community events and in the *Explorer* newspaper. Sample size is 104.

Survey Differences – The primary difference in these four methodologies relates to the selection process for survey participation. The **telephone survey** respondents were *randomly-selected* utilizing a process that allows for equal probability of selection. Respondents in the paper, YourVoiceOV and event surveys *selected themselves* to participate and offer their opinions. Potentially, these respondents are more likely to express highly positive or negative opinions. Self-selected respondents certainly represent the opinions and attitudes of Oro Valley citizens, but are not *projectable* to all residents. There are also differences with respect to the demographic composition of telephone, paper and YourVoiceOV survey respondents.

Survey Similarities – The four survey methods were used to elicit opinions from as many different residents and community members as possible. Despite the different data collection methods, there is a strong degree of correlation and similarities in the comparative survey findings. As a result, survey findings are representative of the attitudes and priorities of the community.

1.0 Community Vision, Values and Priorities

What do residents value most about living in Oro Valley? Oro Valley is valued for being a **safe community with a low crime rate**, along with its **natural beauty**. This is the case regardless of survey method. Other Oro Valley residents appreciate the **community spirit**, including **friendly neighbors** and/or a **small town rural feeling**. Some add that Oro Valley is a **clean** community.

What do residents value least about living in Oro Valley? The “top” reasons are clear, as residents express concerns related to: distance from and/or a perceived **lack of services**; **apprehensions over rapid Town growth**; complaints about **traffic issues** (including stop lights); perceptions related to the **police**; and **climate-related** concerns (too hot, weather is same year-around).

Speed of Oro Valley’s Growth – The majority of residents think that the Town is growing “about right.” However, among the rest (and regardless of survey method), significantly more think the Town is growing “too much” than “too little.”

As Oro Valley becomes a more self-sufficient community, which areas require additional focus for it to become a more complete or livable community? Regardless of survey method, the “top 5” areas of focus are the same: beginning with **employment opportunities**, and followed by **shopping opportunities**, **festivals/cultural events**, **parks** and **education choices**.

What are the biggest challenges facing Oro Valley in the next ten years? Across survey methods, the same three challenges are mentioned, including: **reducing traffic congestion on Oracle Road**, **managing land development**, **maintaining a low crime rate** and **managing Town growth**. Others challenges specified by 6% or more include providing economic opportunities, maintaining public streets, maintaining water availability, protecting the environment, maintaining financial stability and providing convenient access to goods and services.

What should Oro Valley be known for in the future? Across surveys, the top five characteristics are the same. Residents think it is important that Oro Valley be known **as a low-crime community**, **for its physical beauty (such as desert/mountain views)**, **as a family-friendly community with quality schools** and **as an outdoor and recreational community**. Others indicate that Oro Valley should be known as a center for health and medical research and as a good place to open a business.

There is also across-the-board agreement in terms of **how a “family-friendly community” is defined**. Oro Valley residents describe it as a **low crime or safe community**, with **parks/recreation/swimming pools** and **good schools with good funding** (including general references to education) – along with **family entertainment**, **youth** and/or **multi-age related activities**.

2.0 Public Safety

Key Public Safety Elements – A strong majority of Oro Valley residents (regardless of survey method) think the most important elements of public safety include **school safety, a high visibility police force** (with quick response times and one-on-one interactions with residents) and **crime prevention programs** (such as Neighborhood Watch and Dispose-a-Med). There is also support for **disaster planning/homeland security preparedness**.

3.0 Transportation

Four transportation-related issues elicit significant priority to address, including: improving street maintenance; building more sidewalks and bike lanes; increasing public transportation; and developing alternative routes to Oracle Road. When asked to identify the *highest* priority, **developing alternative routes to Oracle Road** and **improving street maintenance** are named most often.

What is the preferred means for funding the highest priority transportation issues? Increased commercial development, user fees based on consumption and/or issuing municipal bonds are most preferred. There is little support for increasing the sales tax or instituting a Town of Oro Valley personal property tax.

4.0 Parks & Recreation

Oro Valley residents think that **soccer/multi-use fields, baseball/softball fields, a dog park** and/or a **skate park** are top priorities as far as additional recreation amenities and services for the Town. There is also support for providing children’s play equipment, ramadas/picnic tables, a BMX track, tennis courts and basketball courts.

What is the preferred means for funding the most desired recreation amenities? Issuing municipal bonds and user fees (like a park permit) are most preferred – with very low support for increased sales tax or an Oro Valley personal property tax.

5.0 Land Development

The degree of agreement with statements related to land development in Oro Valley is generally consistent among telephone, paper and YourVoiceOV participants. While the following summarize the degree of agreement with these statements – in order of overall percentage of agreement – the balance of respondents did not necessarily disagree. Many indicated a neutral opinion or no response.

- ✓ **Oro Valley should promote energy efficient building construction, green building and renewable energy** (the vast majority agree [66%-88%], and ranks first – regardless of survey method).
- ✓ **As Oro Valley grows, it should consider increasing water rates to promote general water conservation** (33%-46% agree).

- ✓ **Oro Valley should grow by adding new areas to the Town limits** (41%-52% agree).
- ✓ **Oro Valley should emphasize *commercial* growth rather than *residential* growth** (41%-54% agree).
- ✓ **Oro Valley should provide more housing options for residents, including single family homes, apartments, condominiums and townhomes** (More disagree than agree [regardless of method].)

6.0 Economic Development

The highest priority employment opportunities for Oro Valley to develop are the same across survey method: **medical/health care, research/technical parks, educational institutions** and **visitor/tourist attractions**. And one-half or more consider all four a high priority. In lesser numbers, others mention employment opportunities related to light industry/manufacturing and small professional office complexes.

7.0 Communication

The most preferred media to learn important news about the Town of Oro Valley is primarily the ***Explorer***, followed by the northwest edition of the ***Arizona Daily (Sunday) Star***, the **Town of Oro Valley website** and **television news**.

III. Conclusions

While four different survey collection methods were utilized in this Community Survey, when comparing the results, there was a strong degree of correlation. The different survey methods allowed for input from all residents and community members, while the data analysis meant that all opinions were taken into consideration (with the statistically-projectable telephone surveys given the highest priority, followed by the event survey, self-administered online survey and self-administered paper survey based primarily on sample size). The results of this exhaustive survey process clearly represent the opinions and priorities of the community in a consistent, significant manner and can be confidently incorporated in the development of the Town's General Plan Update.