

**CITY OF GRASS VALLEY**  
**Memorandum for**  
**COUNCIL MEETING OF March 25, 2008**  
**Prepared on March 18, 2008**

**TO:** Grass Valley City Council  
via Joe Heckel, Interim City Administrator

**FROM:** John Foster, Chief of Police

**SUBJECT:** Police Department 2008 Citizen Attitude Survey Results

**RECOMMENDATION:** Receive and file.

**STAFF REPORT:** The tenth annual Police Department Citizen Attitude Survey was completed earlier this month. The objective of the survey is to provide the opportunity for local citizens and business owners to rate the level of quality for thirty-five separate programs, issues or services provided by the Police Department. The survey also gives the community an opportunity to indicate which services they feel the Police Department should emphasize in the future. This valuable information is an important aid to our department in determining how best to prioritize programs and services, while utilizing available resources to strengthen our community policing partnerships with the citizens of Grass Valley.

Again this year, methodology and guidelines suggested by the United States Bureau of Justice Statistics and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services were followed. Citizen Attitude Surveys were mailed to 600 residents and businesses located within the City of Grass Valley. To maintain a random citywide sampling, surveys were mailed to residents and/or business owners selected from all areas of the city. A 19% response rate was realized this year, greater than the typical average return rate of 10% to 15%. There were 115 surveys completed and returned this year. The results of this year's survey provide the basis for the following information.

83.7% of the respondents indicated their approval of overall public services in the "excellent" or "good" rating. Animal Control showed a significant increase in the "excellent" level of satisfaction by raising 33.5% (38.5% in 2008 vs. 5% in 2007) and Contact/Follow Through by 22.4% (48.3% in 2008 vs. 25.9% in 2007).

Results of the survey would indicate our community considers drug abuse to be our most serious problem (68.4%), followed by domestic violence (38.2%), alcohol abuse (37.5%), and youth crimes (22.6%). This year's survey would indicate greater concern with sexual assault (an increase of 2.2% from 2007), truancy (an increase of 2.6% from 2007), graffiti (an increase of 3% from 2007), youth crimes (an increase of 3.5% from 2007), and domestic violence (an increase of 3.7% from 2007). Several categories showed a decline in the "serious problem" category when compared to 2007 with burglary showing a decline of 9.1%, vehicle violations 9%, drug abuse dropping 4.6%, bicycle violations 4.2%, hate/bias crimes 3%, vandalism 2.6%, and alcohol abuse 1.7%. Only 4.5% of our respondents feel there is a serious problem with noise, a small decrease from last year's 6.9%. Tobacco use by minors, animals at large, and gangs also reflected slight decreases in ratings of "serious problems" when compared to the 2007 survey.

The following comparison of respondent's ratings of "serious problems" during the past three years reflects the concerns and trends of our growing community.

	<u>Serious Problems</u>		
	<u>2008 Survey</u>	<u>2007 Survey</u>	<u>2006 Survey</u>
Drug Abuse	68.4%	73.0%	71.8%
Domestic Violence	38.2%	34.5%	47.3%
Alcohol Abuse	37.5%	39.2%	36.5%
Youth Crimes	22.6%	19.1%	14.7%
Vandalism	22.2%	24.8%	21.0%
Tobacco Use by Minors	22.0%	23.5%	23.1%
Burglary	18.8%	27.9%	29.3%
Sexual Assault	15.6%	13.4%	17.1%
Truancy	11.3%	8.7%	7.0%
Vehicle Violations	9.5%	18.5%	16.6%
Animals At Large	7.3%	8.5%	4.3%
Graffiti	7.3%	4.3%	4.2%
Gangs	5.6%	5.9%	5.6%
Hate/Bias Crimes	5.5%	8.5%	8.0%
Noise	4.5%	6.9%	8.5%
Bicycle Violations	0.9%	5.1%	2.8%

The following survey comparison of "service levels and future emphasis" re-enforces the community's need for drug enforcement, the need for more emphasis on crime prevention programs for both juveniles and adults, police patrols, and criminal investigation. The desire for more traffic enforcement remains a priority.

	<u>Much More/More</u>		
	<u>2008 Survey</u>	<u>2007 Survey</u>	<u>2006 Survey</u>
Drug Enforcement	70.6%	78.4%	71.8%
Crime Prevention	58.5%	56.3%	50.4%
Juvenile Crime Prevention	58.0%	53.8%	52.1%
Police Patrols	54.5%	56.3%	55.2%
Criminal Investigation	53.6%	48.3%	48.9%
Traffic Enforcement	33.9%	46.5%	46.5%
Animal Control	20.9%	22.6%	21.5%

Police Department staff will continue to conduct this informative and valuable survey on an annual basis. The results of this survey will be shared with the public by using our City web page, City newsletter, and local media.

Several respondents to the citizen attitude survey provided additional remarks and/or observations in addition to the survey questions. The information will be provided to the appropriate COPP block officers for any applicable follow-up. Additionally, any comments that apply to a specific division like Animal Control or Traffic will be forwarded accordingly.