

Appendix A

Executive Summary

Key Findings

Based on an analysis of the survey data, GRA offers the following key findings:

Living in Rocklin

The first substantive question of the survey asked respondents to indicate how long they had lived in the City of Rocklin. Eight percent of respondents indicated that they had lived in the City of Rocklin 'Less than 1 year', 34 percent '1-4 years', 26 percent '5-9 years', 16 percent '10-14 years', and 17 percent of respondents indicated that they had lived in the City of Rocklin '15 years or longer'.

Respondents who had lived in the City of Rocklin four years or less were next asked why they had moved to Rocklin. Approximately 21 percent of respondents stated that they moved to Rocklin because they had 'Accepted a new job', 13 percent of respondents mentioned 'Personal reasons', 12 percent mentioned 'Family/Friends', 12 percent mentioned the 'Quality of schools', and 11 percent of respondents stated they moved to Rocklin because of the 'Cost of housing/Living less expensive'. It is likely that respondents who have indicated they moved to Rocklin because of the 'Cost of housing/Living less expensive' have moved from The Bay Area where these costs are higher. However, it is not possible to confirm this relationship with the available data.

Issues of Importance

Respondents were next asked to indicate what they felt was the most important issue facing residents in the City of Rocklin. Approximately 38 percent of respondents mentioned 'Growth of the City/Urban sprawl', 16 percent indicated 'Population growth', and 11 percent mentioned 'Traffic congestion' as the most important issue facing residents of Rocklin today. In total, almost two-thirds of the respondents (65%) in Rocklin mentioned a growth-related issue in the City as the most important community issue.

Overall Satisfaction with City Services

Eighty-six percent of Rocklin residents indicated that they were either 'very satisfied' (41%) or 'somewhat satisfied' (45%) with the job the City of Rocklin was doing to provide city services. Approximately 10 percent were either 'somewhat dissatisfied' (8%) or 'very dissatisfied' (2%) with the job the City was doing. The remaining four percent were undecided or declined to state their opinions.

Over the past four years, GRA has conducted more than 50 similar studies with municipalities across California. Overall satisfaction scores in these studies ranged from approximately 50 percent to more than 90 percent. The percentage of residents who were 'very satisfied' or 'somewhat satisfied' in the City of Rocklin was average compared with GRA's other municipal clients in California. However, the percentage of Rocklin residents who were 'very dissat-

isfied' was below average compared with GRA's other municipal clients in the State of California.

Evaluation of City Services

Rocklin residents considered 'Providing fire protection services', 'Maintaining a low crime rate', 'Providing emergency medical services', 'Repairing and maintaining local streets and roads', and 'Ensuring that streets, schools, and parks are constructed along with new developments' the most important city services. In contrast, 'Allowing a variety of housing types including multi-family housing in the City', 'Increasing the availability of affordable housing for low income households', and 'Meeting the residents' needs for local shopping opportunities' were considered the least important city services of those tested.

Residents were most satisfied with the City's efforts to 'Provide fire protection services', 'Maintain a low crime rate', 'Provide emergency medical services', and 'Enforce traffic laws'. In contrast, residents were least satisfied with the City's efforts to 'Provide recycling services', 'Preserve open space in the City of Rocklin', 'Reduce traffic congestion within the City of Rocklin', and 'Improve older areas of Rocklin'.

Traffic and Transportation

Residents were next asked how they would rate overall traffic circulation on local streets in the City of Rocklin, excluding Interstate Highway 80 and State Highway 65. Fifty-five percent of residents felt the overall traffic circulation in Rocklin was either 'excellent' (10%) or 'good' (45%). In contrast, 34 percent of residents in Rocklin rated traffic circulation in Rocklin as 'fair', and 10 percent rated it as 'poor' (8%) or 'very poor' (3%).

Respondents were also asked if they commuted to a city outside the Rocklin area on a regular basis for their job or school. Fifty-six percent of Rocklin residents commuted to a city outside the Rocklin area on a regular basis for their job or school.

Residents who indicated they commuted to a city outside the Rocklin area on a regular basis for their job or school were next asked which city or area they commuted to. Thirty-seven percent of respondents commuted to Sacramento, 32 percent to Roseville, 11 percent to a city or area not among the available choices, five percent to Citrus Heights, four percent to Lincoln, and three percent of respondents commuted to Rancho Cordova.

Residents who indicated they commuted to a city outside the Rocklin area on a regular basis for their job or school were also asked to indicate the primary form of transportation they typically used to get to work or school. Ninety-one percent of respondents 'Drive', six percent rode in a 'Carpool/Vanpool', one percent took the 'Bus', one percent took a 'Taxi', one percent 'Walk or bicycle', and one percent used 'Other' forms of transportation.

City-Resident Interaction and Communication

The last substantive section of the survey was designed to assess the level of interaction and communication of Rocklin residents with the City, as well as to evaluate their experience

during their interactions. Approximately 42 percent of respondents indicated that they had interacted with city staff in the last 12 months.

Residents who had interacted with city staff were asked to rate their overall experience as positive or negative. Eighty-five percent of respondents indicated that their interaction with City of Rocklin Staff was a positive experience.

Respondents were also asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with the City's efforts to communicate with the residents of Rocklin. Approximately three-quarters of Rocklin residents were at least 'somewhat satisfied' with the effort the City had made in communicating with its residents (75%). Compared with GRA's other municipal clients in California, the City of Rocklin had an average percentage of respondents who were 'very' or 'somewhat' satisfied with the City's effort to communicate with its residents.

Conclusions & Recommendations

Based on the research objectives for this study and the findings of the analyses, GRA is pleased to offer the following conclusions and recommendations:

City Satisfaction

In general, residents were satisfied with the City of Rocklin's overall efforts to provide city services. A combined 86 percent stated they were either 'very satisfied' (41%) or 'somewhat satisfied' (45%) with the City's performance in general. When asked specifically about individual services provided by the City, residents expressed slightly lower levels of satisfaction. Residents indicated they were satisfied with the City's efforts to provide each of the specific municipal services examined in the survey. This finding provides an excellent opportunity for the City of Rocklin. That is, residents were satisfied with the City at an overall level, but when probed about specific services, they identify several areas where the City can boost its performance even higher.

By providing their perceived importance of, as well as their level of satisfaction with, city services, Rocklin residents identified several important areas where the City has an opportunity to improve specific service provision. Rocklin residents expressed the greatest interest in seeing improvements in 'Protecting creeks and waterways', 'Repairing and maintaining local streets and roads', 'Preserving open space in the City of Rocklin', and 'Reducing traffic congestion within the City of Rocklin'.

Growth in Rocklin

Growth management, both in terms of development and population, should be given the utmost consideration when planning the future of Rocklin. An overwhelming percentage of residents identified growth-related issues (e.g., growth of the City/urban sprawl, population growth, traffic congestion) when asked about the most important issue that residents of Rocklin faced. This result is striking given respondents were not primed to think about these issues earlier in the survey. Moreover, items related to growth (e.g., preserve open space,

reduce traffic congestion) were at the forefront in the city services satisfaction-importance section of the survey. While these services were among the most important to residents, they were also among the services residents were least satisfied with. Additionally, slightly more than half of respondents indicated overall traffic circulation on local streets in the City of Rocklin was at least 'good'. Clearly growth and development issues are very important and very 'top of mind' for Rocklin residents. It is important that the City keep this in mind when moving forward with the City of Rocklin General Plan update.

*The Importance of City-Resident
Communication*

Rocklin residents expressed a high level of satisfaction with the City's efforts to communicate with its residents with approximately 75 percent indicating that they were satisfied. GRA recommends the City continue to improve its level of communication with residents. A strong communication link not only serves to strengthen community involvement in local government, but it can also improve perceptions of the City and its efforts to provide services by making individuals aware of such efforts. It seems that often times residents' opinions are shaped largely by how they perceive that the City is approaching a particular problem. Sometimes just knowing that their city is putting forth efforts increases their overall satisfaction with a particular service or issue.

For instance, GRA recently worked with a city that received a considerably low score for the perceived safety of its parks and recreation facilities. Several months later, the City began to dig trenches and lay down wire to provide many of their parks and facilities with exterior lighting. Several weeks into the project, the City conducted another survey of its residents and asked a similar set of questions. The City Manager was concerned that because of the work in progress in the parks, accessibility was hindered and that would reflect negatively in the survey. However, to everyone's surprise, accessibility was rated highly, and even more surprisingly, so was safety. Even though the parks had no additional lighting and were not actually any 'safer' than before, simply knowing that the City was acting to improve safety seemed to influence the public's perception of it.

Lower levels of satisfaction with a service or an issue are often a factor of the availability of information as much as they are a factor of the actual provision of a service or condition of an issue. Such may also be the case for some of the areas that surfaced in this survey (e.g., improve older areas of Rocklin, provide recycling services). Thus, proactively informing residents of the City's efforts in such areas may be one of the first steps in addressing these services and also improving the residents' perceptions of their city.