



November 27, 1995

Dear Citizen,

YOUR OPINION COUNTS

The City Council is conducting a survey of opinions on services provided by the City. We invite you to express your views on local issues under consideration for future action by the Council.

For your convenience an electronic telephone interview system will be used. You simply call our toll-free number

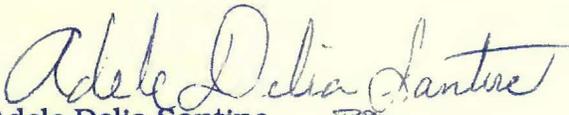
1-800-398-1696

anytime, 24 hours a day, between now and December 8, 1995. It takes about 15 minutes to complete the survey. You will be invited to comment on the services provided by the City and their relative importance to you. In addition, you will be given the opportunity to express your personal concerns and offer your suggestions regarding important issues.

The survey ends December 8, 1995. I urge you to call the toll-free number. Your opinions will guide the Council in making Belmont

“the best place to live, work and do business.”

Sincerely,


Adele Delia Santine
Mayor, City of Belmont

**Dialing Instructions
For Rotary or Touch-Tone™ Telephones**

1. Dial the toll-free number located on the letter.
2. When you call the toll-free number, the phone will be answered by a phone-mail system. This means you may make your call at any time that is convenient for you, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
3. If you are using a rotary dial phone, please reduce background interference, such as television or radio, children or barking dogs.
4. At the end of the interview you will have an opportunity to make comments or suggestions. You may want to prepare some thoughts.
5. You will be using the scale below when you answer the questions, so please keep this letter handy when you call.

Scale A

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | = Extremely Important |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | = Very Important |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | = Somewhat Important |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | = Not at All Important |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0 | = Don't Know/Can't Rate |

We know your time is valuable. By asking you to call our toll-free number when you have the time, we hope that we have made the process easy and convenient for you.

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM CITY HALL

City of Belmont
1365 Fifth Ave

BULK RATE US POSTAGE PAID PERMIT #92 BELMONT CA
--

*Carrier Route Presort
Postal Customer
Belmont CA 94002*

SERVING SAN CARLOS, BELMONT AND REDWOOD SHORES

Enquirer-Bulletin

INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPERS

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 13, 1995

PHONE: (415) 367-9834

Belmont tries to get in touch

BY ALAN SISENWEIN
Staff Reporter

At a cost of \$40,000 to \$50,000, Belmont residents are questioning whether the city is getting its money's worth for its recent phone-in survey.

While some residents contend the survey is not worth the cost, others are concerned that it may not accurately reflect the city's views. Still more believe that it could have been better organized to ensure greater response from the citi-

zenry.

"It seems like a high price to pay," said former City Clerk Jim McLaughlin, a frequent critic of government spending.

McLaughlin said the same information could have been gleaned by attending neighbor-

hood association meetings or by paying more attention during the public forum segments of city council meetings.

At the same time, McLaughlin noted that it is hard for council members to regularly attend neighborhood associa-

tion meetings because they are required to attend meetings so many inter-city agencies.

Newly-elected councilmember Coralin Feierbach, who was not in office when the survey

See **SURVEY**, page 12A

KEY: Was it worth Belmont's money?

1A

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"Its too expensive for a city
that must keep within a tight
budget," she said.

Feierbach also said the survey
may give the council a skewed
result. With most polls, people
are called on a random basis,
she noted.

The Belmont survey, by con-
trast, required people to call in.
Consequently, Feierbach said
people with a one-issue gripe
could distort the poll.

Tom Seivert, president of the
Belmont Historical Association,
took the survey and said it took
too long.

The survey, which asks over
40 questions, lasts about 15
minutes and can go on longer,
depending on the length of the

caller's response to some open-
ended questions.

Some of the questions he
thought were irrelevant. He
cited the question asking
whether the police depart-
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should be posted at the ele-
mentary, middle or high school
level, even though Carlmont
High School has been widely
recognized as a trouble spot.

Seivert also noted he received
his mailed notification of the
survey from the city days after
he completed the survey.

Former Planning Commis-
sioner Denny Lawhern, who
also took the survey, said the
city's publicity campaign was
not well executed, citing the
erratic delivery of the mail no-
tifications.

"In hindsight, it looks like
there was an effort to reach the

community, but the effort fell
down," Lawhern said.

With a better publicity cam-
paign, Lawhern said the survey
could have attracted more re-
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Lawhern said he also thought
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Lawhern suggested that the
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Council gadfly Rose Ozwirk,
who attended the public meet-
ings at which the survey was
discussed, said she had not

taken the survey as of this writ-
ing but planned to do so.

Ozwirk, who is familiar with
the survey's format, said she
did not like the idea that the
city does not mention the price
tags attached to various types.

"It doesn't constitute a fair
analysis," Ozwirk said.

Elaine Farmer, another fre-
quent face at council meetings,
was also planning to take the
survey.

With the pressure of the hol-
idays on everyone, Farmer said
finding the time is hard, and
the survey would have got a
better response if it had been
done early next year.

"We're all busy shopping, get-
ting ready for the holidays and
going to social events," she said.
"I think its timing is way off."

The survey began Nov. 27 and
ended Dec. 8.

S M Times
Nov 25 - 26, '95

Belmont is conducting an automated survey

*Residents have 12
days to sound off
on variety of topics*

DIANA MARSZALEK

Times Staff Writer

BELMONT — Residents are going to have the chance to tell city officials what they think on subjects ranging from communicating with City Hall to emergency services.

The city is going to conduct an automated survey to find out what the bulk of local residents think about such topics.

For 12 days beginning Monday, residents will be able to call a special number to register their opinions.

Mayor Adele Della Santina said the results of the survey will be important in city officials' decision-making pro-

cesses.

"This would give us some guidance as to what the majority of people would like," Della Santina said. "This gives the opportunity to hear from the whole spectrum of the population."

The survey will ask residents 12 questions about their opinions on a range of city issues, including street maintenance, recycling, community development and parks.

Residents can call the survey using touch-tone or rotary telephones 24 hours a day during the survey period. The survey's number is 1-800-398-1696.

Some questions require participants to answer by pushing buttons on their telephones. Others require residents to speak.

The survey will take about 10 minutes to complete. All answers will be confidential.

City officials won't be required to abide by the residents' advice. But Della Santina said at least they'll know better what people want.

*Results of Phone Survey
Dec 1995*

possible without knowing the total population of each community.

Figure 1 shows the distribution of respondents by community.

DRAFT

Figure 1

Distribution of Respondents

Belmont Community	Percentage of Respondents	Number of Respondents
Plateau/Skymont	5%	73
Hallmark	8%	108
Cipriani	19%	258
Carlmont	14%	193
Western Hills	1%	18
Country Club	13%	178
Central	5%	69
Chula Vista	2%	24
Sunnyslope	5%	64
East Belmont	3%	45
Sterling Downs	6%	78
Homeview	2%	23
Don't Know	17%	235
Total	100%	1361

IV DISPLAY OF THE DATA

The responses to all 42 questions, compiled in tabular form, are displayed in Appendix 3. For those questions that required a verbal response, comments are listed by the frequency of their occurrence. To facilitate an easy overview of the results and to provide a quick qualitative view of the most significant trends, the data is presented in the next section in the form of bar graphs, pie charts, and short tables.

The respondents felt strongly about preserving historic structures, with 61% rating this "Extremely Important" or "Very Important" Ten percent felt that preserving historic structures was "Not Important at All" (Figure 18)

Figure 18

How Important Is It to Preserve Historic Structures?

Rating	Percent of Respondents
Extremely Important	39%
Very Important	22%
Somewhat Important	27%
Not at all Important	10%
Don't Know/ Can't Rate	1%

$$39\% = 530$$

$$22\% = 299$$

$$27\% = 367$$

$$10\% = 136$$

TOTAL 1361

See MAYOR, page 10A

Enquirer Bulletin 11-29 1995

Survey in the works

BY ALAN SISENWEIN
Staff Reporter

Belmont residents will soon have the chance to tell the city what they think about local issues without leaving the comfort of their homes.

Within weeks, residents will be able to dial a number and express their views to the city council on the possible future of police, fire, parks, waste disposal and other services.

The survey is not meant to be scientific but to look for opinion trends within the community.

See SURVEY, page 10A

Enquirer Bulletin
Nov 29, 1995

10A

Enquirer-1

IRVEY: What does Belmont want?

Continued from 1A

"It's as scientific as we want it to be," said Mayor Adele Della Santina. "We're not scientists."

The survey, which Santina said will cost the city between \$4,000 and \$5,000, is designed to see if the council's policies are in step with resident's desires.

Councilmember Nancy Levitt noted that the council already has formed opinions on how to proceed with the issues presented in the survey. The survey is meant to confirm whether those opinions reflect community consensus.

For example, the 42-question survey asks whether the Police Department's school resources officer should allocate his time dealing with youths at the high school, middle school or elementary school level.

Levitt said the council has its

own notion of where the officer's efforts should be concentrated, but wants public confirmation.

"If 200 or 300 people have complaints with a program, we've got a problem," Levitt said, adding that the council would then have to rethink its course.

Although Menlo Park has previously used this method of culling public opinion, Levitt said it is not a common practice.

"We're in the minority," she said.

The survey is one component of the council's two-year old Strategic Plan, an outline which seeks to make the city "the single most desirable community in the San Francisco Bay Area in which to live, work and do business" by the end of the century.

Belmont residents who take part in the survey will hear this

mission statement when they call the survey number.

In some areas of the survey, residents will be asked "yes" or "no" questions, such as "Should the city impose more restrictive review of home height and size to protect the view of neighbors?"

Other questions require graded answers, such as: "How important is it to preserve historic structures?"

On this query, residents would respond on a scale of 1 to 4, with answers ranging from "extremely important" to "not important at all." If they do not have an opinion, they would press the "5" button on their phone.

There are also five open questions. One such query asks "As a resident of Belmont, what do you believe is the most important issue facing the city today?"

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