Overview of the Life in Hampton Roads Survey

The Social Science Research Center (SSRC) at Old Dominion University recently completed data collection for the second annual Life in Hampton Roads telephone survey. The purpose of the survey was to gain insight into residents' perceptions of the quality of life in Hampton Roads. The survey also attempted to determine the attitudes and perceptions of citizens regarding topics of local interest such as transportation and traffic, local and state government, crime, and other issues. Funding for the 2011 survey was provided by the ODU Office of Research and the Office of University Advancement. Questions were generated through email invitations to faculty throughout the University community. Questions of interest were submitted, and the overall pool of questions was narrowed down by SSRC staff and the Associate Dean of Research for the College of Arts and Letters. New questions were included along with several questions from the first Life in Hampton Roads survey conducted in 2010. The 2010 survey consisted of 106 questions and the 2011 survey consisted of 76 questions which asked respondents about media and news consumption, arts, culture, and travel, quality of life, transportation, local and state government and political issues, environmental issues, health and education, housing, spirituality and well-being, neighborhood issues and crime, military life, and basic demographic information. In addition to basic demographic questions, a total of 35 questions are comparable across the two years' data. This report examines the data for both years and compares the percentage of responses for various questions across the 2010 and 2011 samples[1].

In 2011, a total of 730 completed interviews were obtained; 681 completed surveys were obtained in the 2010 effort. It is important to note, however; that both overrepresented women, whites, and older individuals. A weight variable was computed separately for each year, and the data files were weighted to correct for discrepancies in age, race, and gender between the survey sample and the general Hampton Roads population. The 2011 sample was also weighted based on estimates of the population based on telephone usage (landline versus cellphone). Frequencies were generated for both the weighted and unweighted samples for 2010 and 2011

[1] The changes reported here reflect only absolute change in percentage of respondents reporting a given response. Statistical significance of these changes was not assessed for this report.

using PASW statistical software. All results used in this report come from the weighted samples, in order to present results which are more representative of the Hampton Roads population. It is important to note that since cell phone numbers were not included in the 2010 sample, the data reported here for 2011 reflects respondents who indicated that they had a working phone in their home that was not a cell phone. All "cell-only" respondents were removed from the 2011 data used in this report before weights were applied. The removal of cell phone-only respondents from the 2011 sample was done only in order to compare data between 2010 and 2011. Removing respondents who are reachable only via cell phone has the effect of underrepresenting minority respondents, males, and younger respondents. While the weighting of the data corrects for these issues when the entire 2011 sample is considered, the full sample (including the cell-only respondents) is not comparable to the 2010 sample given that cell phones were not called in 2010 and thus, no "cell-only" respondents participated in 2010.

Demographics

The 2011 sample had a lower percentage of Virginia Beach residents (29.3%) than in 2010 (33.0%), and a greater percentage of Norfolk residents responded in 2011 (14.9%) than in 2010 (10.4%). There were more white respondents represented in the 2011 sample (63.2%) than in 2010 (53.0%), and more respondents reported their race as Black or African-American in 2010 (35.2%) than 2011 (30.3%). The percentage of those who reported their race as "Other" was lower; from 2.3% in 2010 to 1.2% in 2011. The 2011 sample was 44.4% male and 55.6% female, compared with 48.0% male and 52.0% female in 2010. The average age of respondents was younger in 2010 (43.4 years in 2010 and 49.9 years in 2011). Almost 2% more respondents reported that they had less than a high school diploma in 2011 (4.6%) than in 2010 (2.9%). Five percent fewer reported "some college" or an Associate's degree (34.4% in 2011, compared to 39.5% in 2010). There was an increase in the percentage of respondents who reported having Bachelor's degrees (18.7% in 2010, compared to 20.6% in 2011), and who reported having a Graduate degree (12.7% compared to 14.8%). It is important to reiterate that the underrepresentation of young respondents, minority respondents, and males is partially due to the removal of cell phone-only respondents from the 2011 data for purposes of comparison. These demographics, however, are very similar to the 2010 data and reflect the comparable methodology across the two surveys.

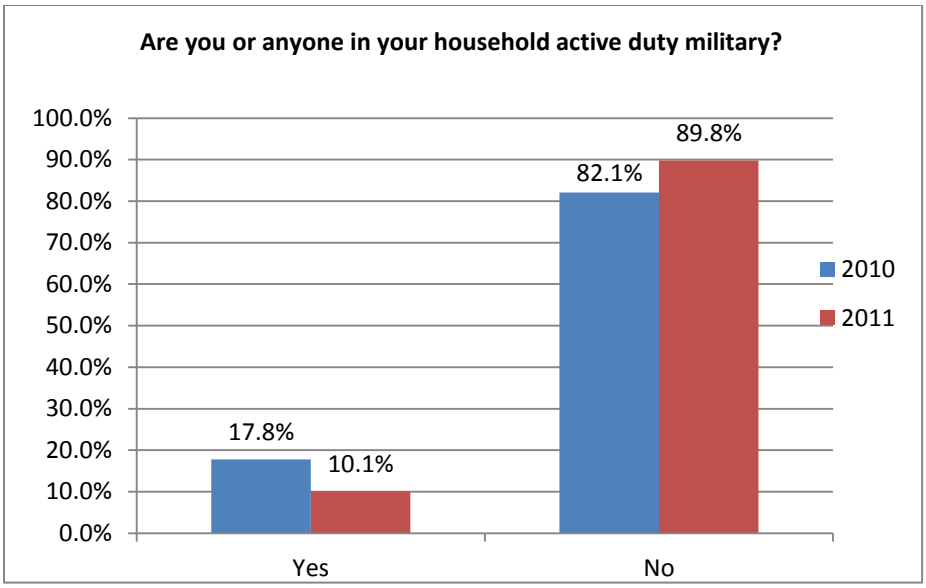
Hampton Roads City	2010	2011
Chesapeake	17.7%	17.7%
Hampton	9.3%	9.5%
Newport News	14.7%	11.3%
Norfolk	10.4%	14.9%
Portsmouth	10.2%	8.9%
Suffolk	6.2%	8.3%
Virginia Beach	33.0%	29.3%
Race of Respondent	**2010**	**2011**
White	53.0%	63.2%
Black or African-American	35.2%	30.3%
Hispanic or Latino	3.9%	1.0%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.5%	0.6%
Asian	0.9%	0.9%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.2%	0.2%
Multiracial	3.3%	1.9%
Other	2.3%	1.2%
Refused	0.7%	0.7%
Gender	**2010**	**2011**
Male	48.0%	44.4%
Female	52.0%	55.6%
Average Age	**2010**	**2011**
Average age (years)	43.4	49.9
Education Level	**2010**	**2011**
Some grade school	0.7%	0.4%
Some high school	2.2%	4.2%
High school diploma/GED	18.5%	17.8%
Completed trade/professional school	5.4%	5.3%
Some college	28.2%	22.3%
Associate's degree	11.3%	12.1%
Bachelor's degree	18.7%	20.6%
Graduate degree	12.7%	14.8%
Other	2.0%	2.3%
Refused	0.3%	0.3%

Slightly fewer respondents reported their marital status as "married" (56.2% compared to 54.9%) or "single, not living with a partner" (23.8% in 2010 compared to 20.7% in 2011). There was a small increase in the percentage of respondents whose status was "divorced" (9.0% compared to 10.8%), cohabiting (5.4% compared to 6.0%), or "widowed" (5.3% in 2010 compared to 7.3% in 2011). In 2010, 17.8% of respondents indicated that someone in their household was active duty military, but only 10.1% did so in 2011.

Six percent fewer respondents indicated that they were employed in 2011 (59.3%) than in 2010 (65.6%), and 4.2% fewer indicated that they were not employed (21.6% compared to 17.4%), although there was a ten percent increase in of respondents who indicated that they were retired (12.8% compared to 23.2%)[2]. Income levels, however, were not strikingly different in 2011. Those indicating that their total family household income was less than $30,000 made up 21.2% of the sample in 2011 and 17.5% in 2010. Those who indicated that their incomes were in the $60,000-$90,000 range dropped from 19.2% in 2010 to 17.0% in 2011, but those who indicated that their incomes were above $90,000 increased 2.7% from 21.7% in 2010 to 24.4% in 2011.

Marital Status	2010	2011
Single, not living with partner	23.8%	20.7%
Single, living with partner	5.4%	6.0%
Married	56.2%	54.9%
Divorced/separated	9.0%	10.8%
Widowed	5.3%	7.3%
Refused	0.4%	0.3%
Employment Status	**2010**	**2011**
Employed	65.6%	59.3%
Full-time		
Part-time		
Not employed	21.6%	17.4%
Looking for work		
Not looking for work		
Retired	12.8%	23.2%
Refused	0.1%	0.2%
What was your family household income last year?	**2010**	**2011**
Less than $10,000	4.8%	6.5%
More than $10,000 to $20,000	7.1%	7.6%
More than $20,000 to $30,000	5.6%	7.1%
More than $30,000 to $40,000	9.9%	7.3%
More than $40,000 to $50,000	8.2%	7.2%
More than $50,000 to $60,000	7.6%	11.6%
More than $60,000 to $70,000	7.2%	5.1%
More than $70,000 to $80,000	8.4%	6.5%
More than $80,000 to $90,000	3.6%	5.4%
More than $90,000 to $100,000	6.1%	3.6%
More than $100,000	15.6%	20.8%
Don't know	7.4%	4.6%
Refused	8.5%	6.9%

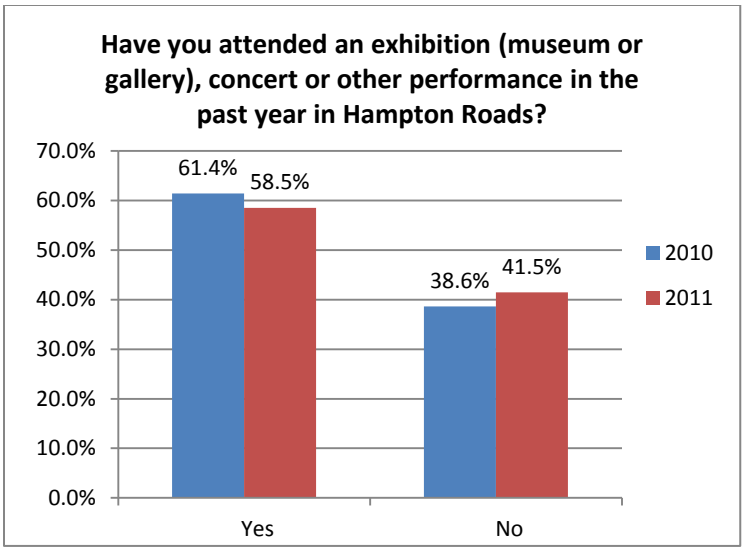
[2] The employment question was worded differently in 2011. Percentages reflected here represent the total percentage of people who indicated that they were employed, unemployed, and retired in 2011.

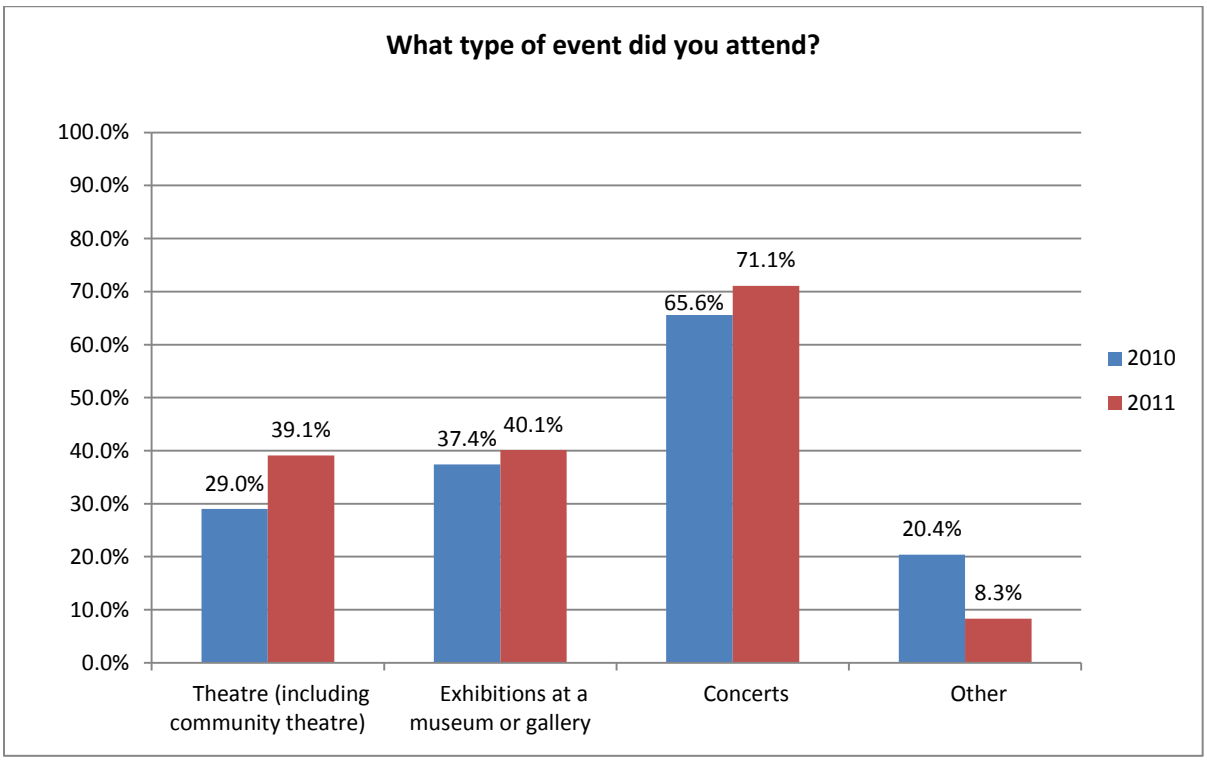


Cultural Activities and Travel

A smaller percentage of individuals reported attending any exhibition at a museum or gallery, concert, or other kind of performance in Hampton Roads in 2011 (58.5%) than in 2010 (61.4%). Of those who did attend an event[3], there were increases in all of the reported categories except 'Other.' Museum or gallery exhibitions were attended by 40.1% of respondents in 2011 compared with 37.4% in 2010. The percentage of respondents reporting concert attendance increased 5.5% from 65.6% in 2010 to 71.1% in 2011, and theatre attendance was reported by 10% more people in 2011 (39.1% compared to 29.0% in 2010). Some of the increases in reported attendance may be attributable to the 12.1% decline in the percentage of respondents who responded with 'other' and then specified an event in their own words, which was 20.4% in 2010 and only 8.3% in 2011. In 2011, a smaller percentage of respondents reported having traveled in the past 12 months (87.3% compared to 92.0% in 2010). Most respondents traveled within the Virginia/North Carolina/Washington DC region in both 2010 (61.8%) and 2011 (72.9%), and elsewhere in the United States (57.3% in 2010 and 66.9% in 2011). The percentage of respondents reporting international travel decreased in 2011, from 13.8% to 12.1%.

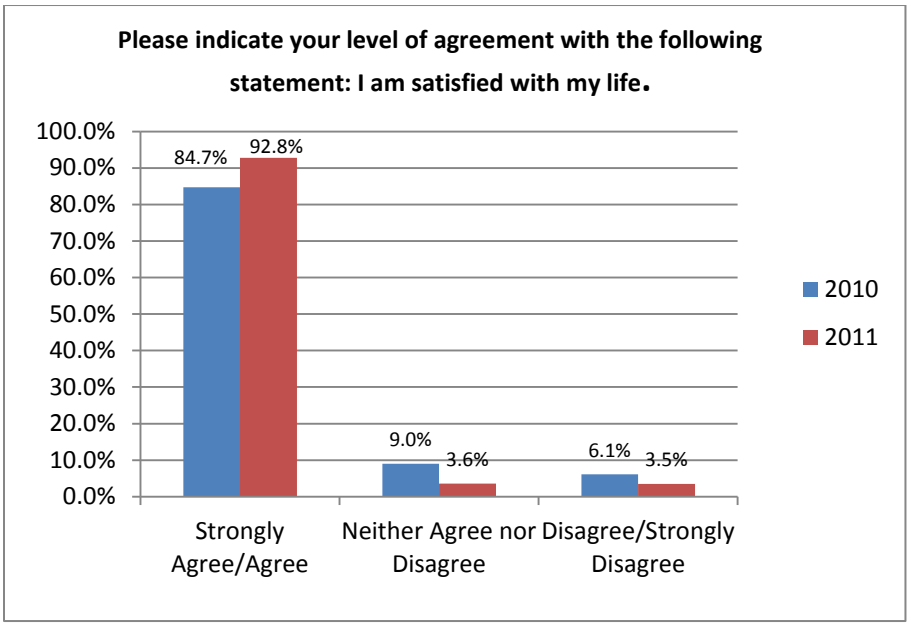
[3] Respondents were able to choose more than one response, thus percentages do not add to 100.

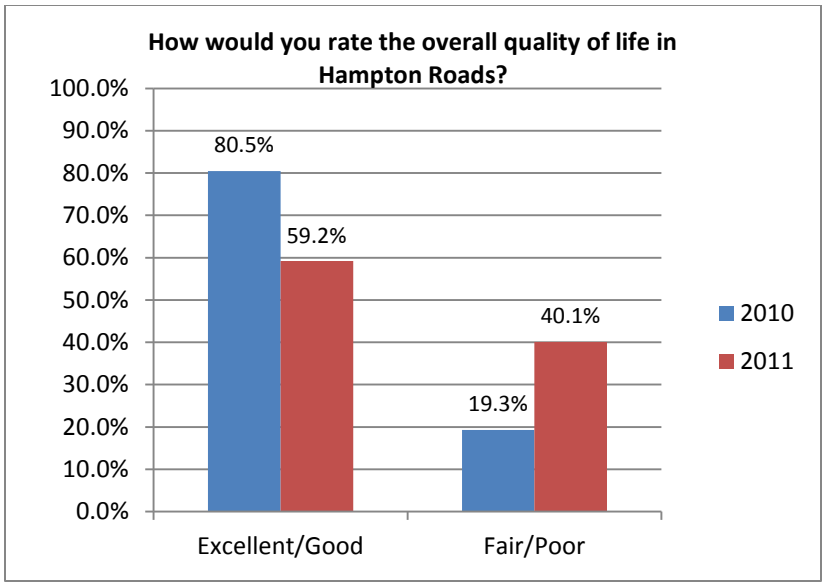

Have you attended an exhibition (museum or gallery), concert or other performance in the past year in Hampton Roads?
70.0%
60.0%
50.0%
40.0%
30.0%
20.0%
10.0%
0.0%
61.4%
58.5%
38.6%
41.5%
Yes
No
2010
2011

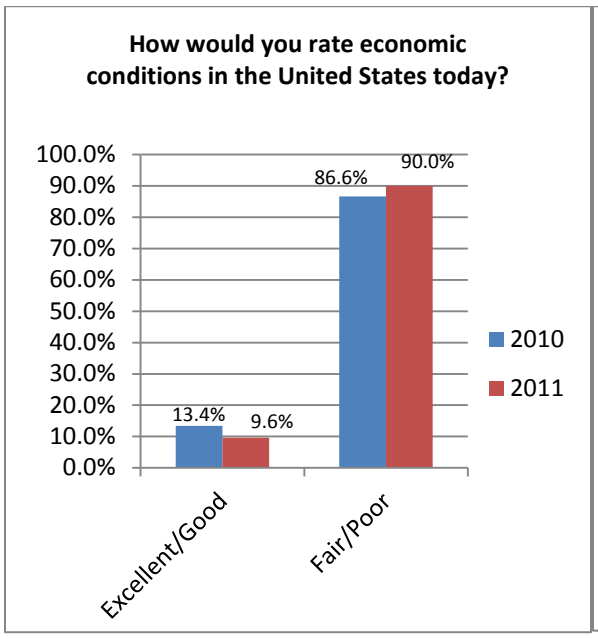

What type of event did you attend?
100.0%
90.0%
80.0%
70.0%
60.0%
50.0%
40.0%
30.0%
20.0%
10.0%
0.0%
29.0%
39.1%
37.4%
40.1%
65.6%
71.1%
20.4%
8.3%
Theatre (including community theatre)
Exhibitions at a museum or gallery
Concerts
Other
2010
2011

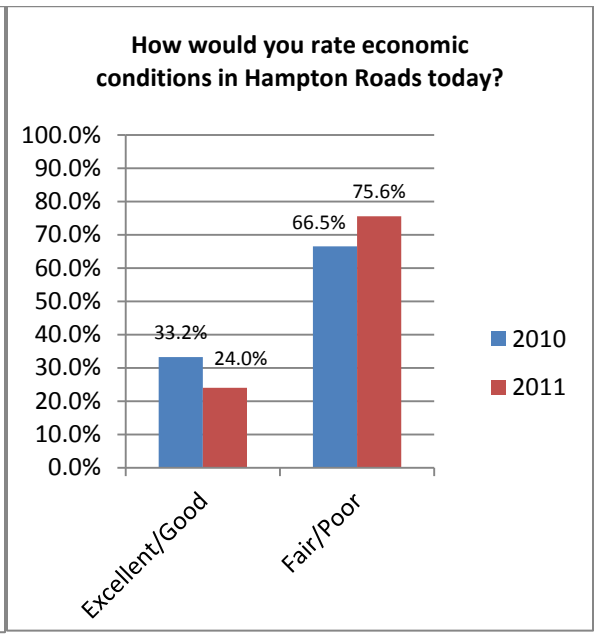
Quality of Life and Economic Conditions in Hampton Roads

Personal satisfaction remained high in 2011, with 92.8% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement "I am satisfied with my life," compared with 84.7% in 2010. Comparatively, respondents' perceptions of the overall quality of life in Hampton Roads changed a great deal. In 2010, 80.5% of respondents rated the overall quality of life in Hampton Roads as 'Excellent' or 'Good,' while in 2011, only 59.2% did so. When asked to rate economic conditions in Hampton Roads, 75.6% said 'Fair' or 'Poor' compared with 66.5% in 2010. However, Hampton Roads' economic situation was not rated as poorly as that of the United States as a whole: 90.0% responded 'fair' or 'poor' in 2011, and 86.6% did so in 2010 when asked to rate economic conditions in the United States today.





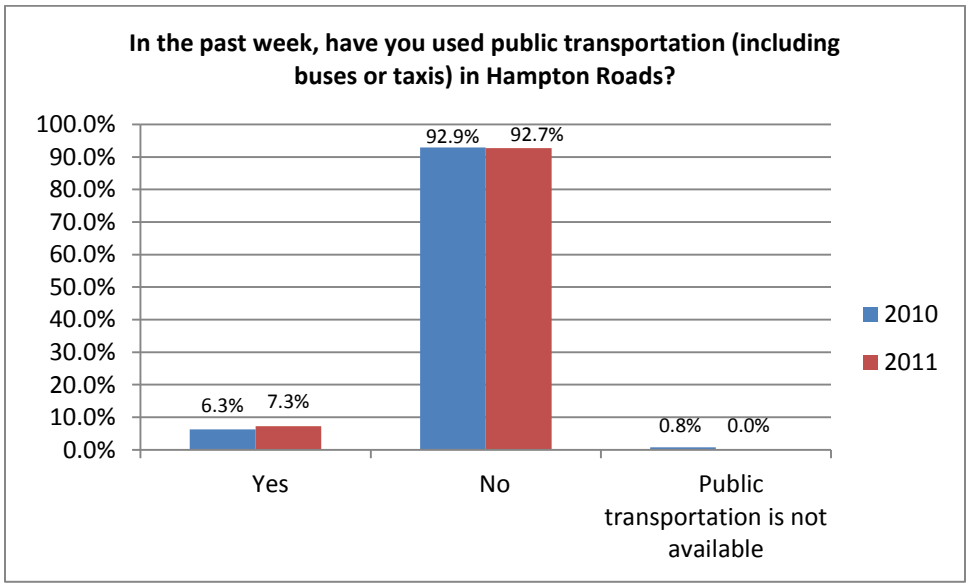




Public Transportation in Hampton Roads

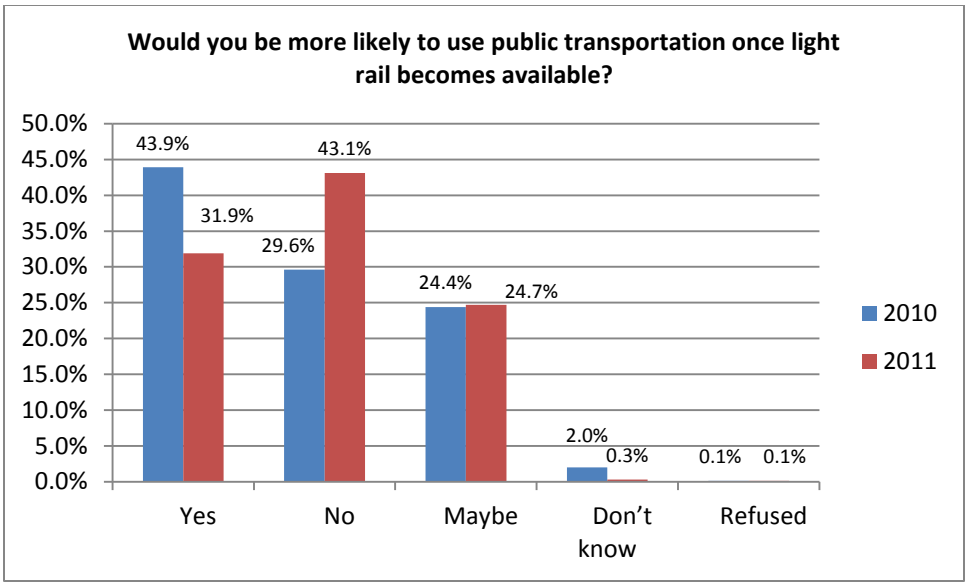
There was a slight increase in the percentage of respondents who said that they had used public transportation (including buses or taxis) in Hampton Roads in the past week from 6.3% in 2010 to 7.3% in 2011.

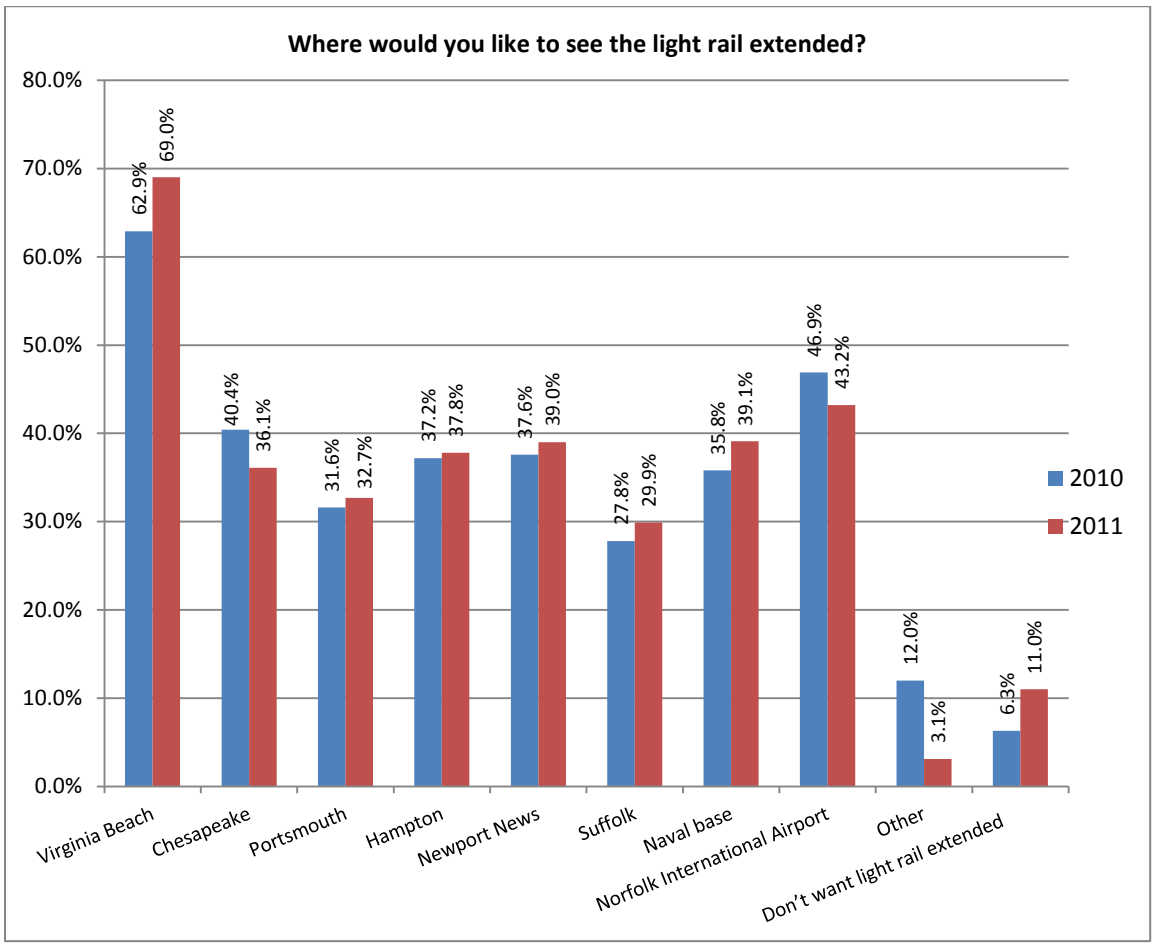
However, there was also an increase in the percentage of individuals who responded that they would not be more likely to use public transportation once the light rail becomes available[4], from 29.6% in 2010 to 43.1% in 2011. Those who said 'don't know' also decreased; from 2.0% to 0.3%. When asked where they would like to see the light rail extended, more respondents in 2011 said Virginia Beach (69.0% compared to 62.9% in 2010), and Portsmouth (32.7% compared to 31.6% in 2010). The percentage of respondents who would like to see the light rail extended to Hampton (37.8% compared to 37.2% in 2010), Newport News (39.0% in 2011 and 37.6% 2010), Suffolk (29.9% compared to 27.8% in 2010), and the Naval base (39.1% compared to 35.8% in 2010) increased slightly. A smaller percentage of 2011 respondents said that they would want the light rail extended to either Chesapeake (36.1% in 2011, 40.4% in 2010) or Norfolk International Airport (43.2% in 2011, compared to 46.9% in 2010). There was a marked increase in the percentage of respondents who stated that they 'don't want the light rail extended; from 6.3% in 2010 to 11.0% in 2011.

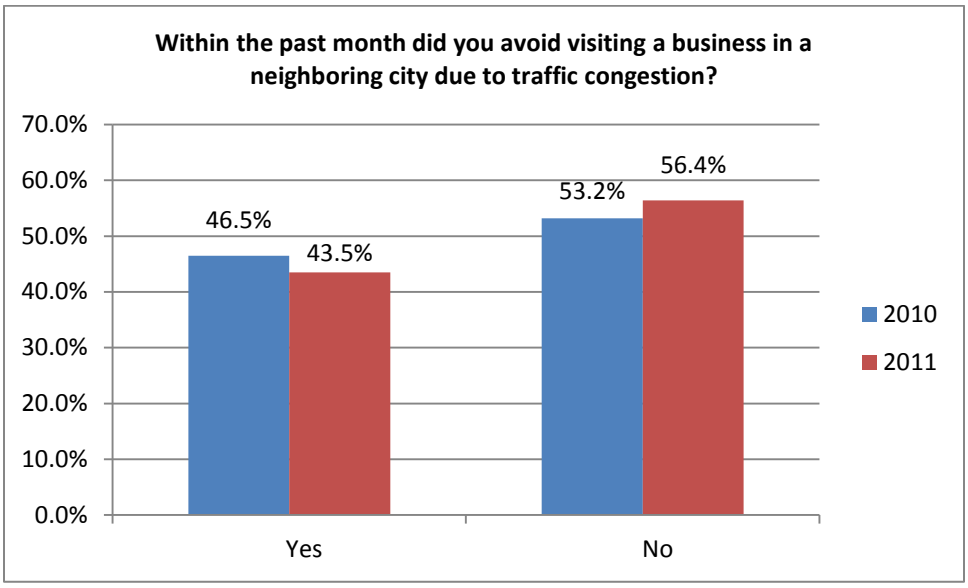


The average commute for Hampton Roads residents in 2011 was 27 minutes, which is a slight increase over the 2010 average of 25.1 minutes. A slightly lower percentage of respondents said that they avoided visiting a business in a neighboring city due to concerns about traffic in 2011; 43.5% compared with 46.5% in 2010.

[4] The Tide Light Rail system was opened to the public approximately 4 weeks after the Life in Hampton Roads interviews were completed.


Would you be more likely to use public transportation once light rail becomes available?
50.0%
45.0%
40.0%
35.0%
30.0%
25.0%
20.0%
15.0%
10.0%
5.0%
0.0%
43.9%
31.9%
29.6%
43.1%
24.4%
24.7%
2.0%
0.3%
0.1%
0.1%
Yes
No
Maybe
Don't know
Refused
2010
2011

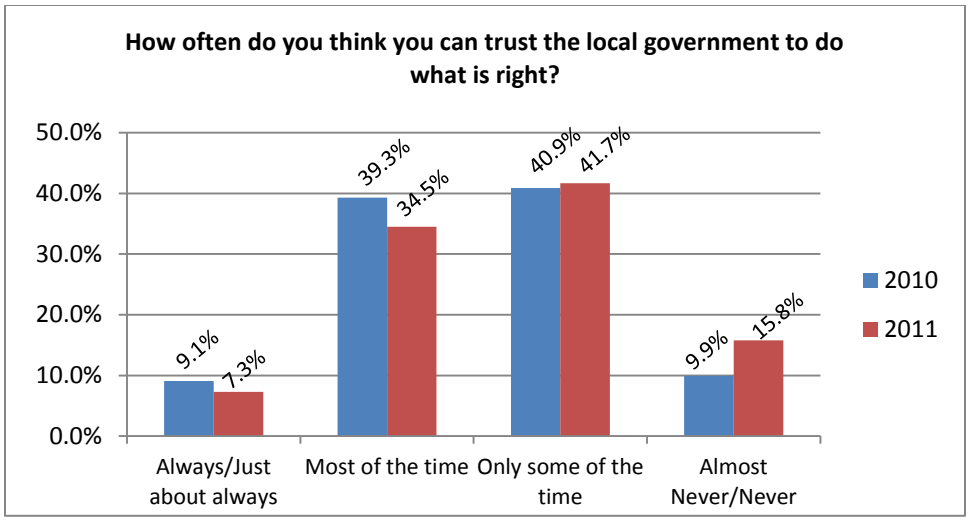

Where would you like to see the light rail extended?
80.0%
70.0%
60.0%
50.0%
40.0%
30.0%
20.0%
10.0%
0.0%
62.9%
69.0%
40.4%
36.1%
31.6%
32.7%
37.2%
37.8%
37.6%
39.0%
27.8%
29.9%
35.8%
39.1%
46.9%
43.2%
12.0%
3.1%
6.3%
11.0%
Virginia Beach
Chesapeake
Portsmouth
Hampton
Newport News
Suffolk
Naval base
Norfolk International Airport
Other
Don't want light rail extended
2010
2011

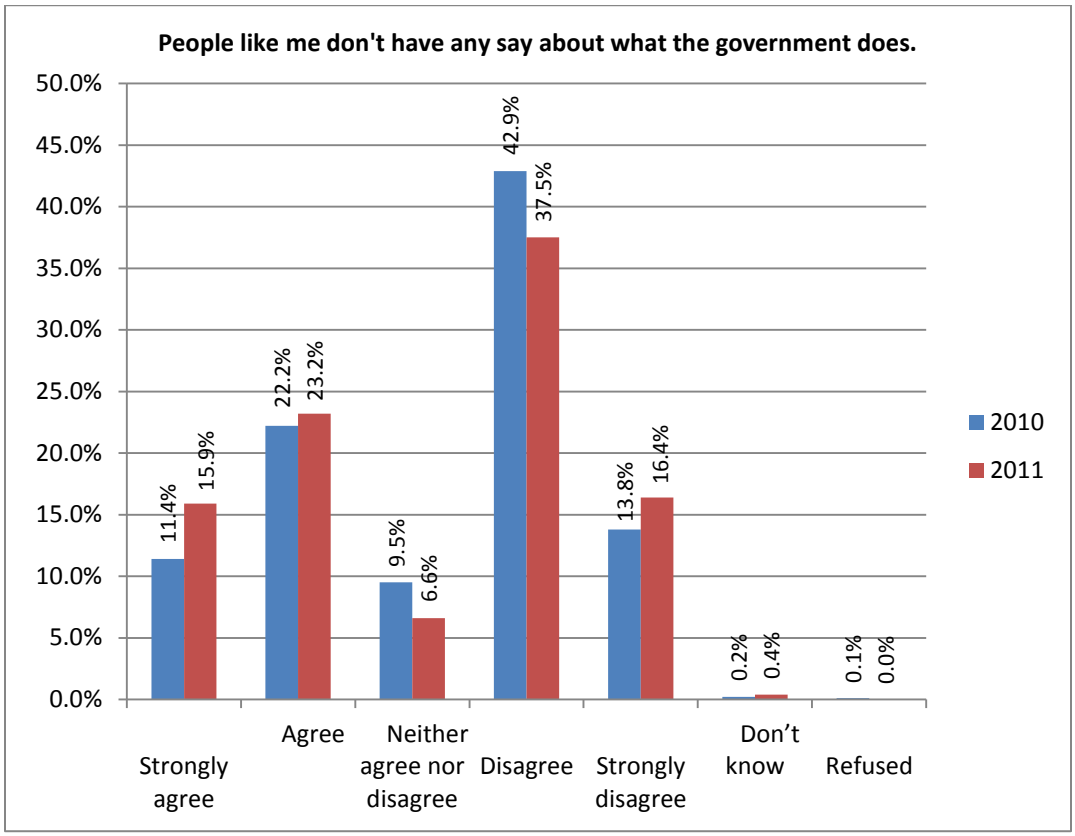


Political, Governmental, and Social Issues[5]

Hampton Roads residents reported somewhat less trust in their local government in 2011. When asked "How much of the time do you think you can trust the local government to do what is right," 7.3% said 'always' or 'just about always' compared with 9.1% in 2010. Those who said 'most of the time' comprised 34.5% of the sample in 2011, but 39.3% in 2010. The percentage of respondents who said 'only some of the time' was 41.7% in 2011 and 40.9% in 2010; and the percentage who said 'almost never' or 'never' was 15.8% in 2011 compared with 9.9% in 2010. Further, 39.1% agreed or strongly agreed that 'people like me don't have any say about what the government does,' compared to 33.6% in 2010.

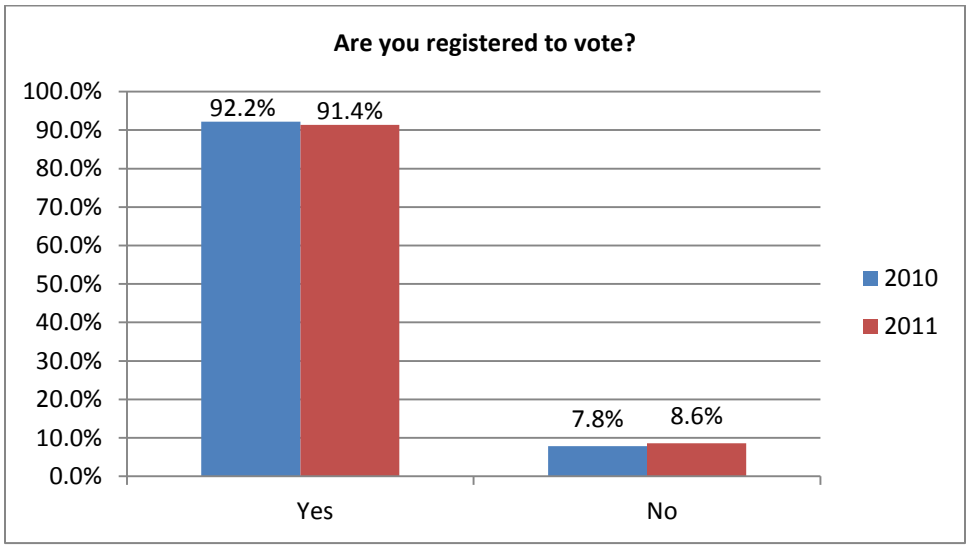
[5] It is important to note that during the data collection period the debt ceiling debate, early declarations for the 2012 presidential election, and various other polarizing political issues were reported in the media.

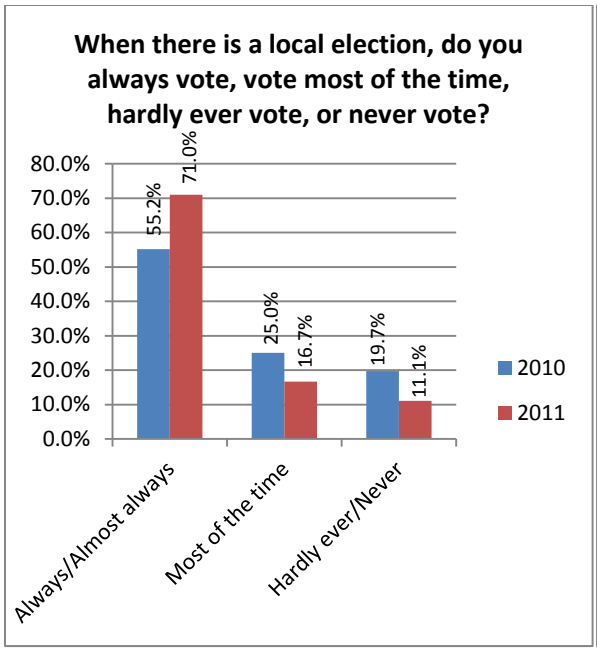


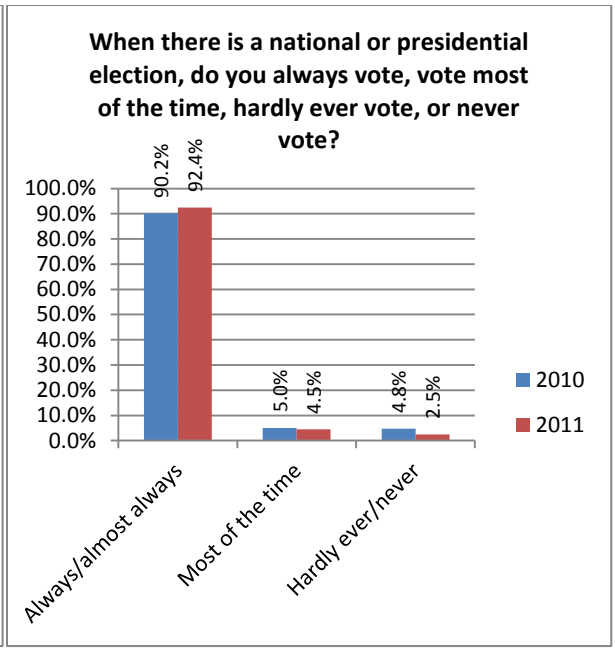


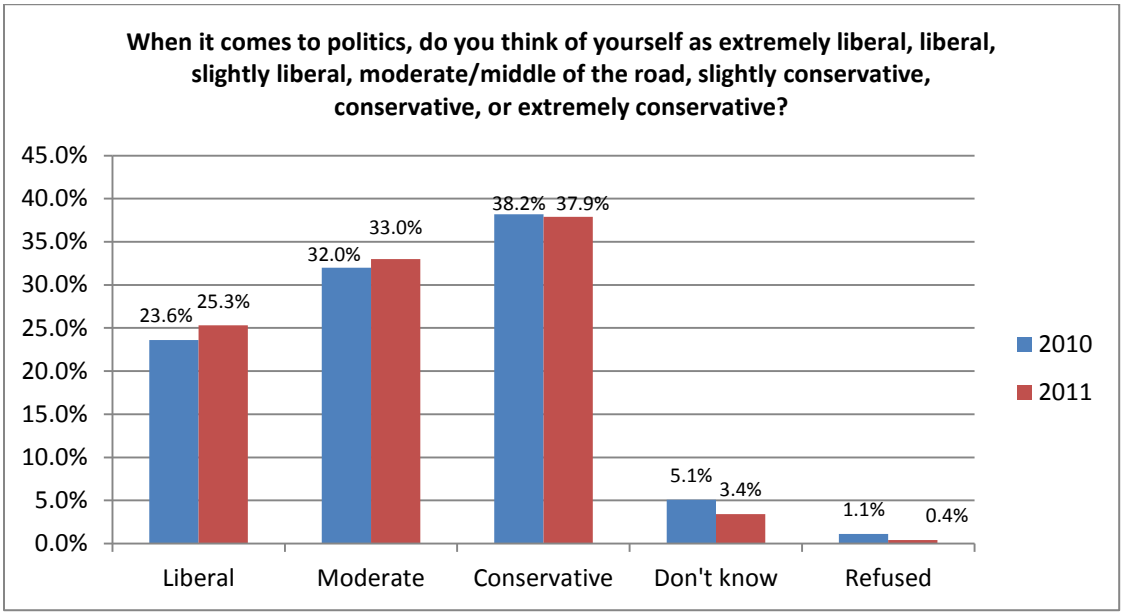
The percentage of respondents said that they were registered to vote was relatively unchanged; 91.4% in 2011 compared with 92.2% in 2010. A larger percentage of respondents said that they 'always' or 'almost always' vote in local elections in 2011 (71.0%) than in 2010 (55.2%). When asked about their voting behavior with respect

to national or presidential elections, 92.4% of 2011 respondents said they 'always' or 'almost always' vote, relatively unchanged compared to 90.2% of respondents in 2010. Respondents were asked how they usually think of themselves when it comes to politics, and were given response options ranging from 'extremely liberal' to 'extremely conservative.' The percentages of respondents in each category were almost unchanged from 2010. A quarter of respondents indicated that they were 'extremely liberal,' 'liberal,' or 'slightly liberal' in 2011: 25.3% compared to 23.6% in 2010. Slightly fewer individuals responded that they were 'extremely conservative,' 'conservative,' or 'slightly conservative' in 2011: 37.9% compared to 38.2% in 2010. A third of respondents in 2010 and 2011 indicated that they were 'moderate or middle of the road' (32.0% in 2010, and 33.0% in 2011).



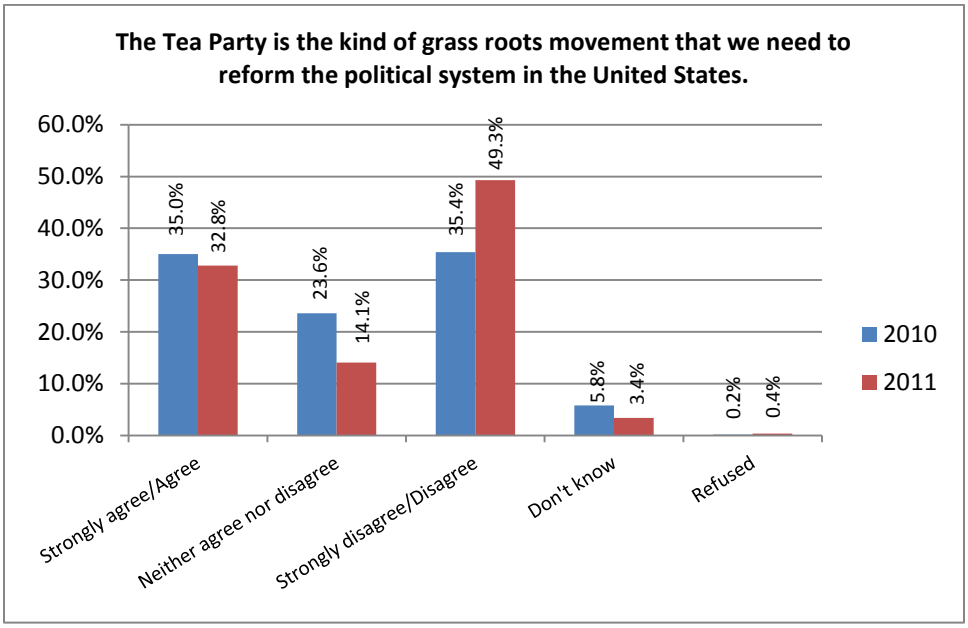


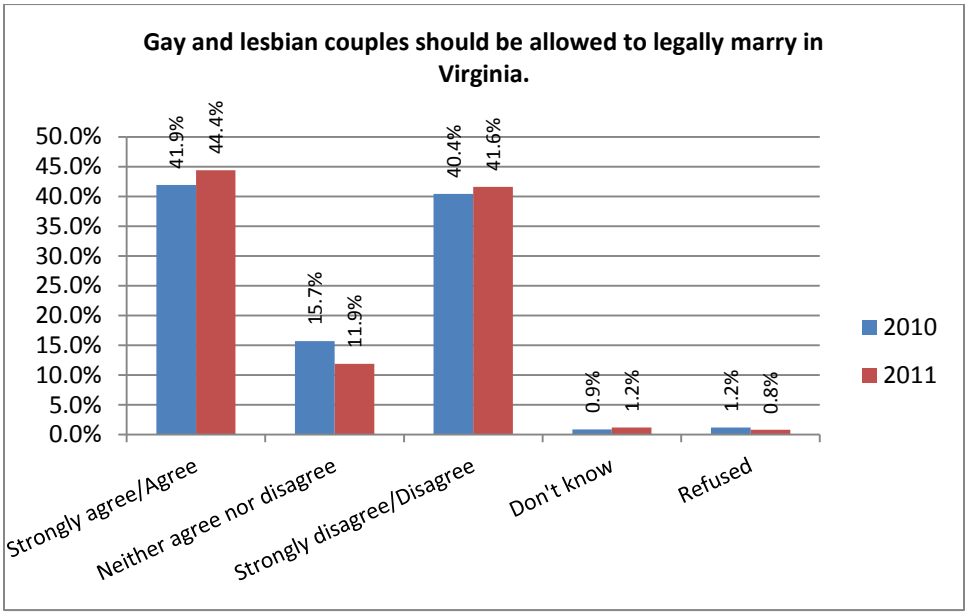




Almost 50% of 2011 respondents said that they strongly disagree or disagree with the statement that 'the Tea Party is the kind of grassroots movement that we need to reform the political system in the United States' (49.3%), but in 2010, 35.4% disagreed or strongly disagreed. Further, the percentage who said that they neither agreed nor disagreed fell 9.5% from 23.6% in 2010 to 14.1% in 2011. Support for gay and lesbian couples being

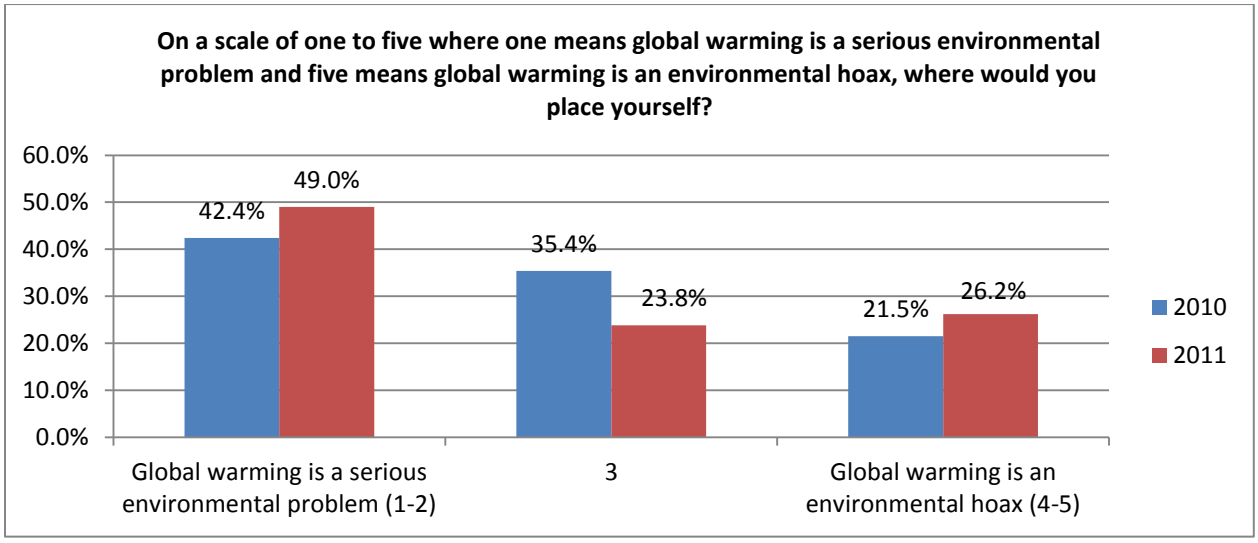
allowed to legally marry in Virginia increased slightly from 41.9% (agree/strongly agree) to 44.4%. Neutral responses decreased from 15.7% in 2010 to 11.9% in 2011.





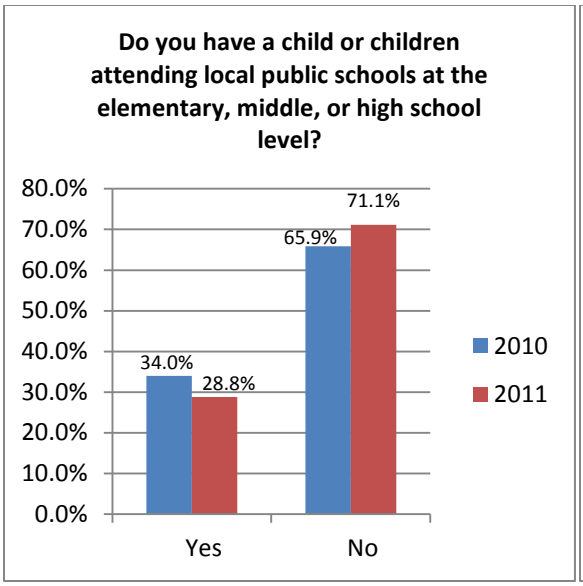
Global warming was another political issue that was addressed in the Life in Hampton Roads survey in both 2010 and 2011. Respondents were asked to place themselves 'on a scale of one to five where one means global warming is a serious environmental problem, and five means global warming is an environmental hoax."

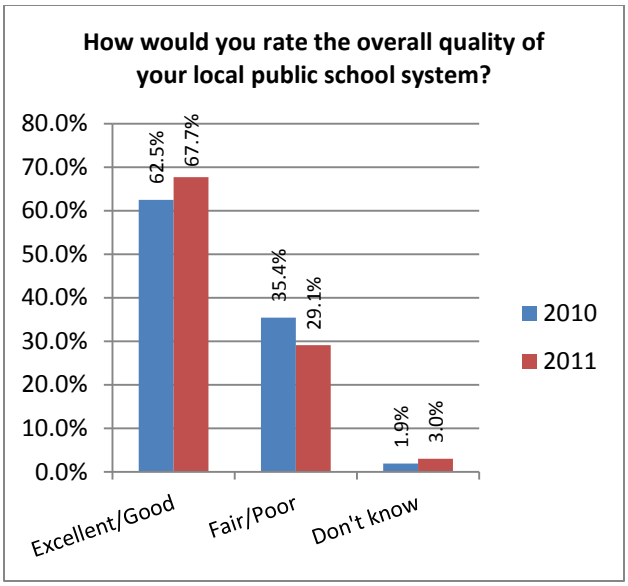
The percentage of respondents who said either 1 or 2, indicating that they felt global warming is a serious environmental problem was 49.0% in 2011 and 42.4% in 2010. Those who felt global warming 'is an environmental hoax,' (responding with 4 or 5) made up 26.2% of the sample in 2011 and 21.5% in 2010. Those who were neutral on the issue (responding with a 3) accounted for 23.8% in 2011, down from 35.4% in 2010.



Public Schools in Hampton Roads

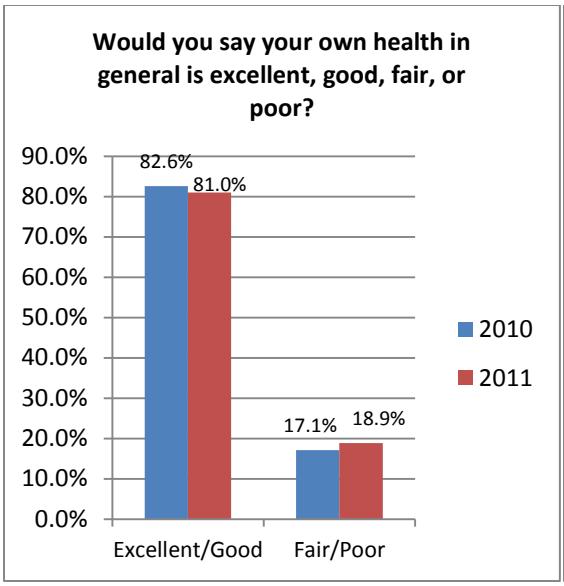
Twenty-nine percent of respondents had a child or children attending public school in Hampton Roads in 2011 (28.8%), compared to 34% in 2010. Respondents were asked to rate the overall quality of the local public school systems whether or not they had children attending, and overall ratings were favorable for both 2010 and 2011. Those rating the public school system as excellent or good accounted for 67.7% of the sample in 2011 and 62.5% in 2010.

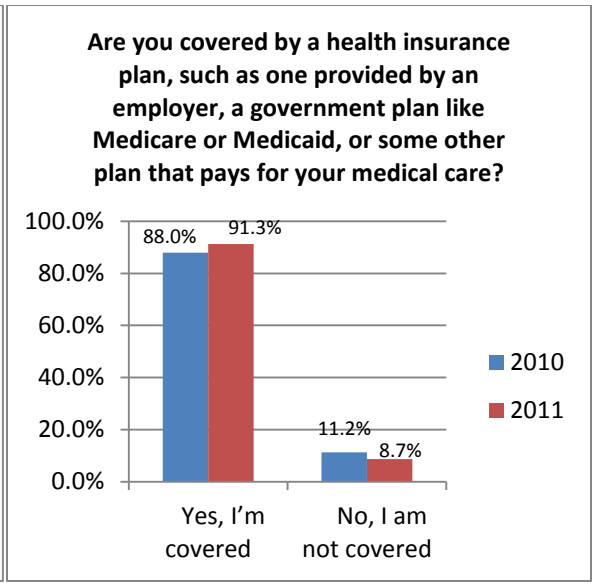


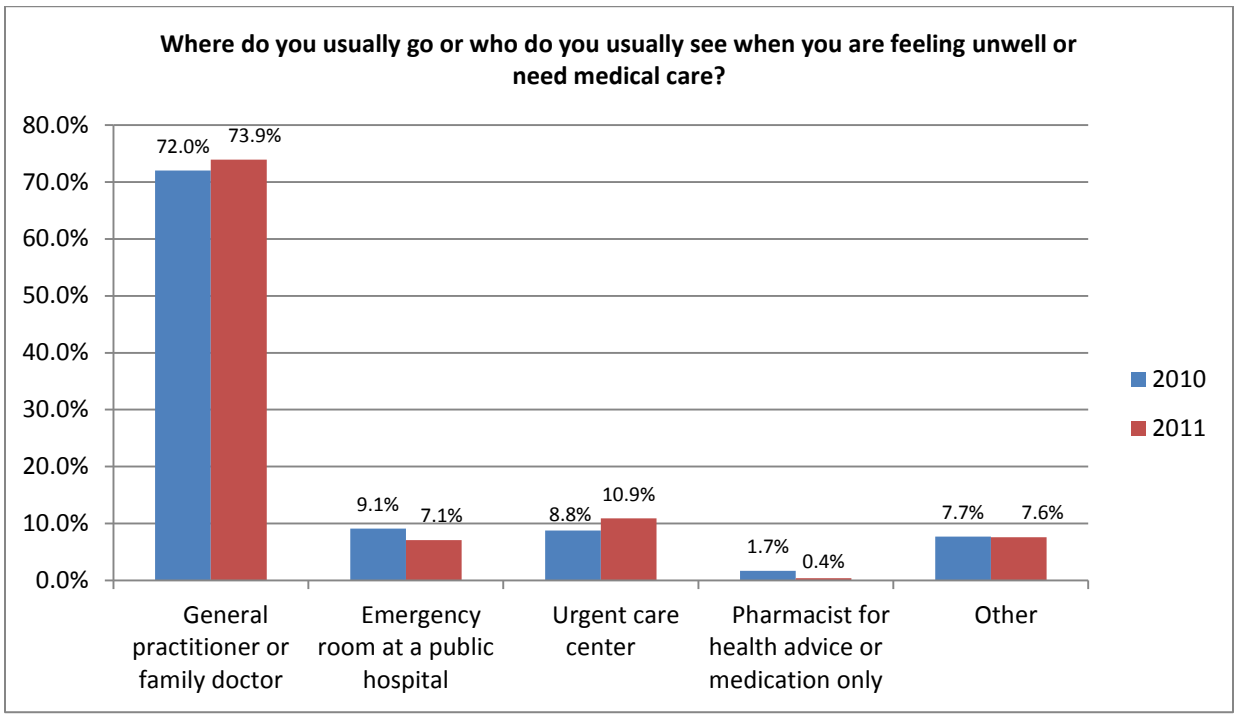


Health and Health Care Choices among Hampton Roads Residents

The majority of respondents in both 2010 (82.6%) and 2011 (81.0%) reported their general health as excellent or good, although there was a slight decrease in that percentage. A larger percentage of respondents in 2011 reported that they are covered by some form of health insurance than in 2010 (91.3% in 2011 compared to 88.0% in 2010). Seventy four percent of respondents in 2011 (73.9%) reported that they go to a general practitioner or family doctor when they are unwell, compared to 72.0% in 2010. A slightly lower percentage reported going to an emergency room at a public hospital (7.1%) in 2011 compared to 9.1% in 2010. Eleven percent (10.9%) of 2011 respondents reported going to an urgent care center, compared to 8.8% in 2010. Only 0.4% of respondents in 2011 reported that they go to a pharmacist for health advice or medication only, compared to 1.7% in 2010. Those who specified some other medical caregiver stayed relatively unchanged across the two years (7.7% in 2010 compared to 7.6% in 2011).

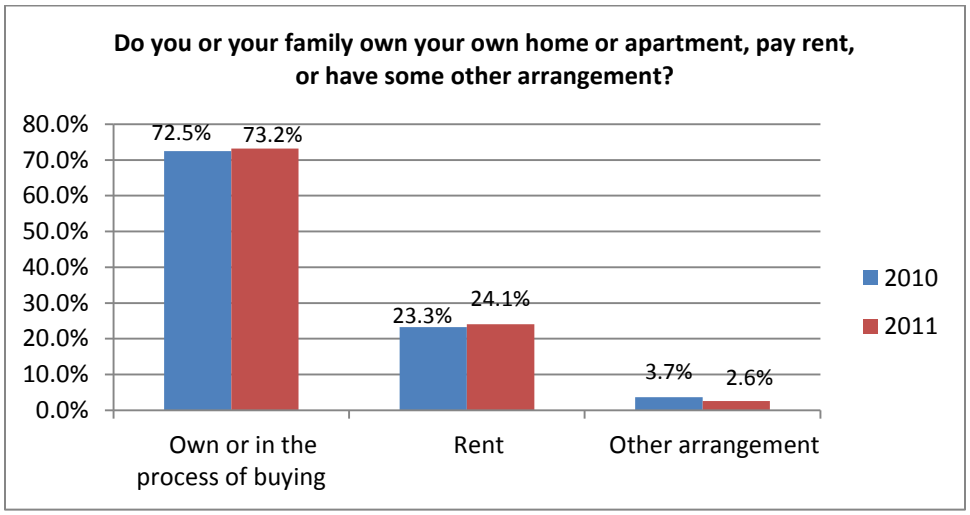


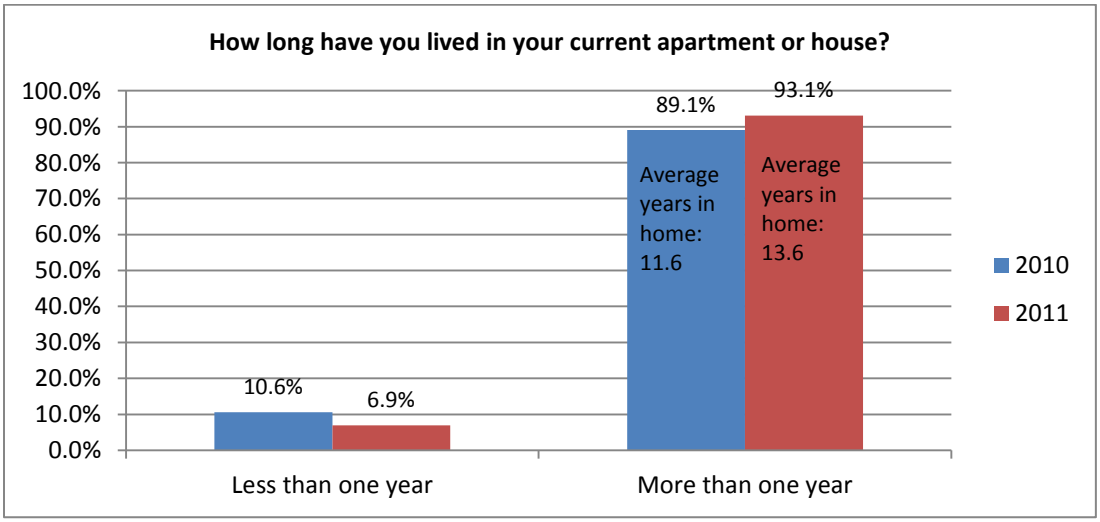


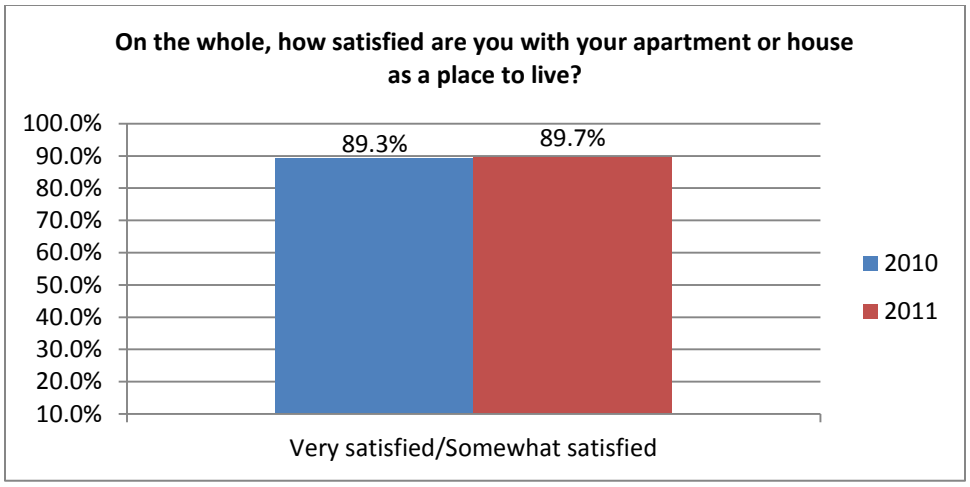


Housing Situation and Satisfaction

Similar percentages of respondents reported owning or being in the process of buying their homes in 2010 (72.5%) and 2011 (73.2%). Renters made up 24.1% of the sample in 2011, and 23.3% in 2010. Those who reported 'some other arrangement' accounted for 2.6% of respondents in 2011 and 3.7% in 2010. Respondents reported living in their current residence for longer periods in 2011 than in 2010: 6.9% reported less than one year of residence compared to 10.6% in 2010. The average number of years in their residence for those who reported living in their current residence for more than one year was 11.6 years in 2010 and 13.6 years in 2011. Almost ninety percent of respondents reported being very or somewhat satisfied with their apartment or house as a place to live in both 2010 (89.3%) and 2011 (89.7%).

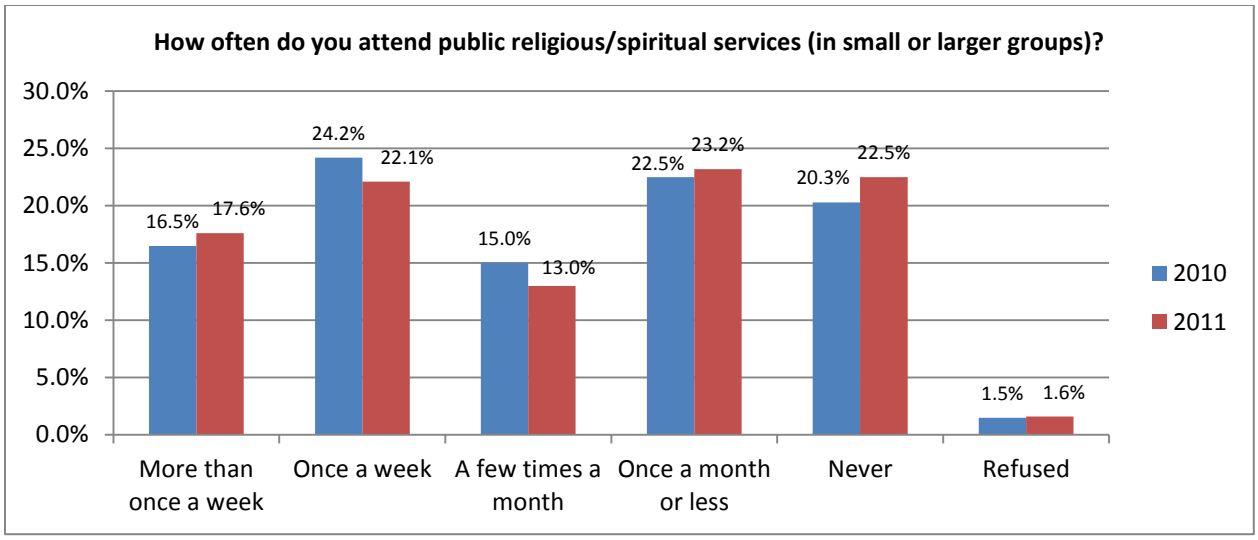


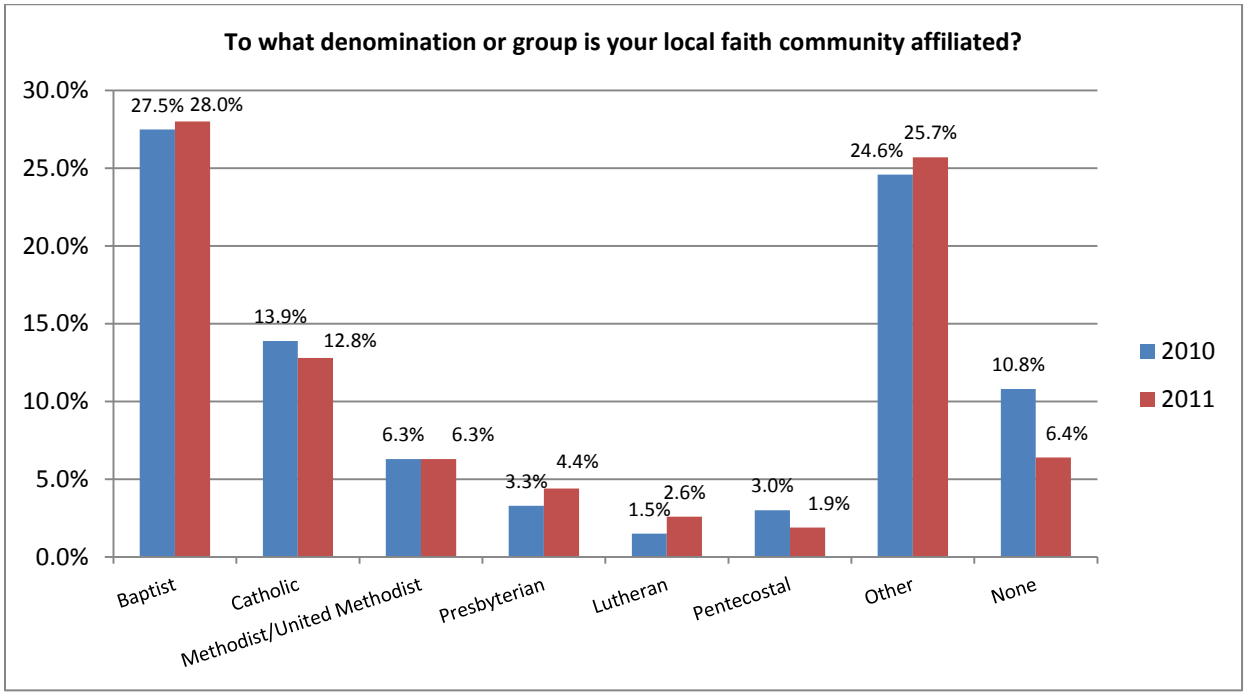




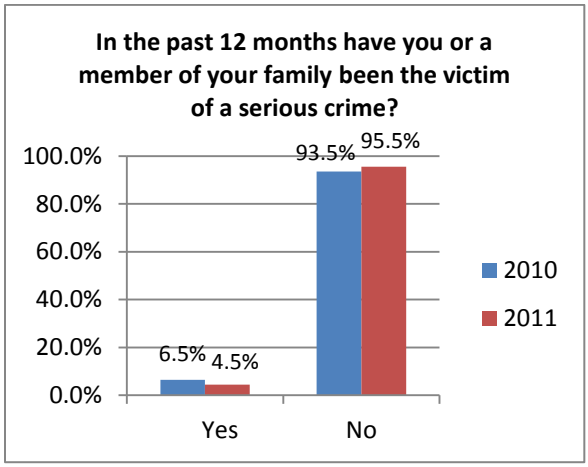
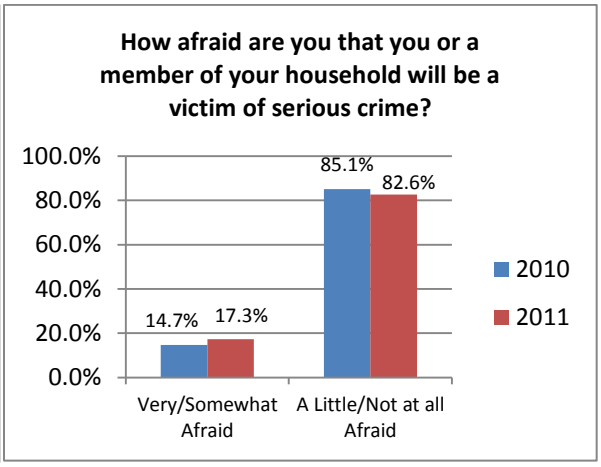
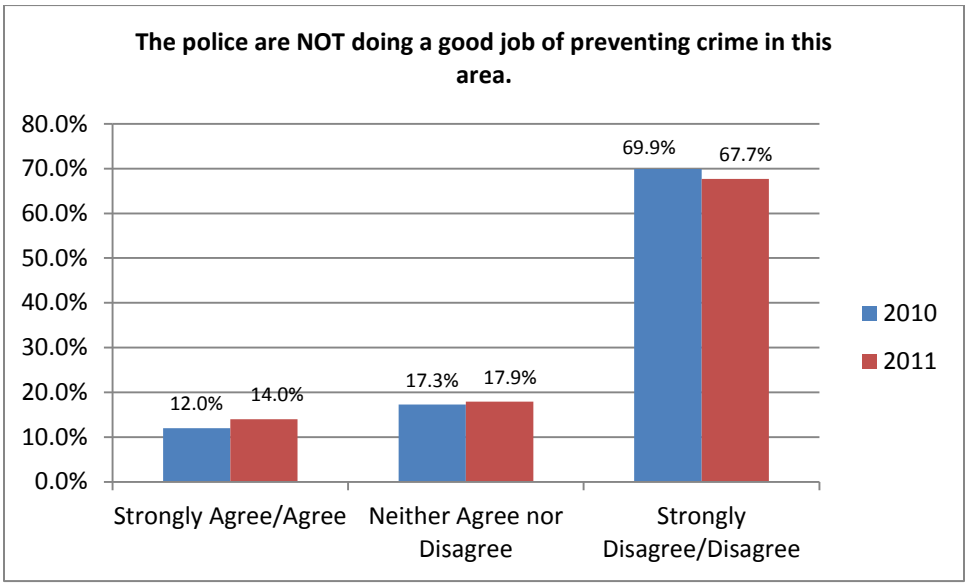
Spirituality and Religion

There was a slight increase in the percentage of respondents who reported attending public religious or spiritual services more than once a week (16.5% in 2010 compared with 17.6% in 2011), a decrease in those reporting attendance once a week (24.2% compared to 22.1%), and a few times a month (15.0% compared to 13.0%). There was an increase in those reporting once a month or less (22.5% compared to 23.2% in 2011), and those reporting that they never attend public religious or spiritual services (20.3% in 2010 compared to 22.5% in 2011). Changes in the percentage of respondents reporting various denominations were minimal: Baptists made up 27.5% of the sample in 2010, and 28.0% in 2011, Catholics 12.8% in 2010 and 13.9% in 2011, and Methodists accounted for 6.3% in both 2010 and 2011. Those respondents who reported their denomination as "none" made up 10.8% in 2010 and 6.4% in 2011.





Crime

Hampton Roads residents overwhelmingly reported that they and those in their households have not been the victims of a serious crime in the past 12 months in both 2010 (93.5%) and 2011 (95.5%). A majority of respondents in both years also report a low level of fear of serious victimization; with 82.6% reporting that they are 'a little afraid' or 'not afraid at all' in 2011, and 85.1% in 2010. Those who reported being 'very' or 'somewhat'

afraid increased slightly from 14.7% in 2010 to 17.3% in 2011. A slightly lower percentage of respondents reported in 2011 that they feel police are doing a good job of preventing crime; 67.7%, as compared with 69.9% in 2010.