

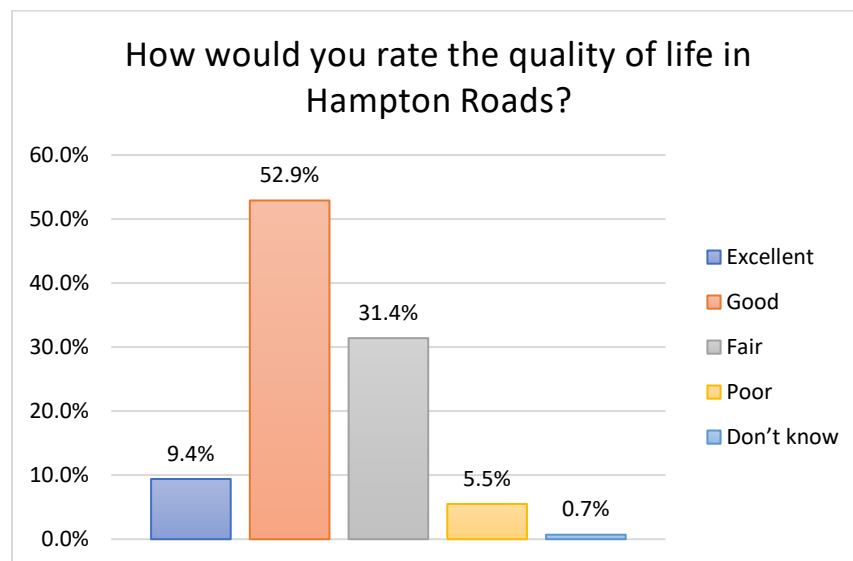
Life in Hampton Roads 2023 – Quality of Life

Introduction

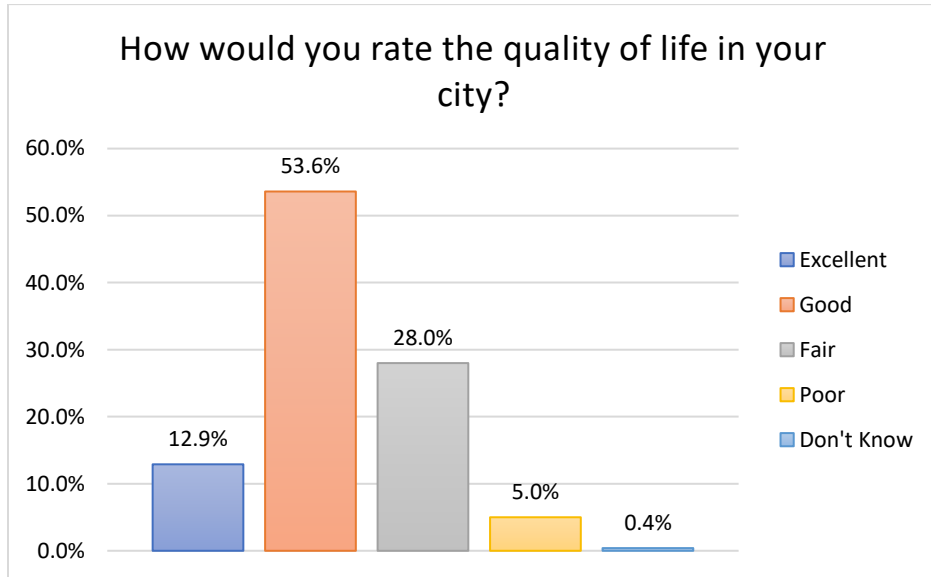
The Social Science Research Center (SSRC) at Old Dominion University (ODU) recently completed data collection for the 14th annual Life in Hampton Roads (LIHR) survey. The purpose of this survey is to gain insight into residents’ perceptions of the quality of life in Hampton Roads as well as other topics of local interest such as perceptions of police, politics, the economy, education, and health. A total of 610 telephone surveys were completed between June 6 and Aug. 25, 2023. Surveys this year were completed over the telephone as they were last year and prior to 2020. In 2020, due to COVID-19, surveys were completed via on-line web panels. In 2021, a mixture of online web panels and telephone surveys were utilized. This year, a mixture of listed and random-digit dial (RDD) cell phone and landline telephone numbers were used. From 2012 to 2019, RDD landline and cell phone samples were used. This change limits, to some degree, the ability to compare this year’s results with those from previous years or to confidently generalize the results to the Hampton Roads population as a whole. However, as with previous years, this year’s survey data was weighted to match a city’s population distribution on several variables including race, Hispanic ethnicity, age and gender, along with telephone type (cell only versus landline).

Perceptions of the Region, City, Neighborhood

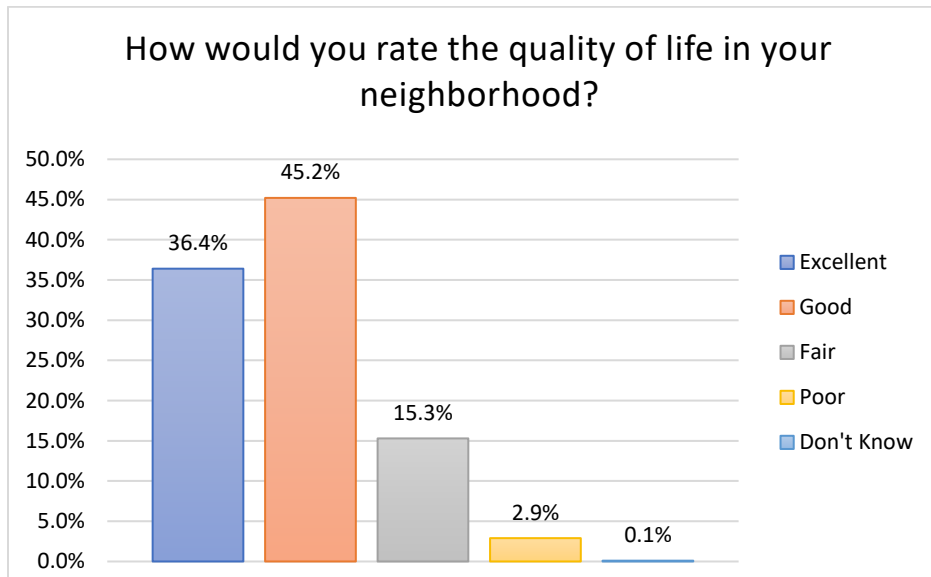
A majority but less than two-thirds of respondents rated the quality of life in the region as excellent or good (62.3%). This is lower than last year (69.3%) and is lower than most previous non-COVID years (ranging from 68% to 71% between 2017-2019). Less than a third rated Hampton Roads’ quality of life as fair (31.4%) and 5.5% rated it as poor.



Consistent with previous years, respondents rated the quality of life in their city and their neighborhood higher than they did for the region. About two-thirds rated the quality of life in their city as good or excellent (66.5%) and 28% rated their city as fair. Only 5% rated their city's quality of life as poor.

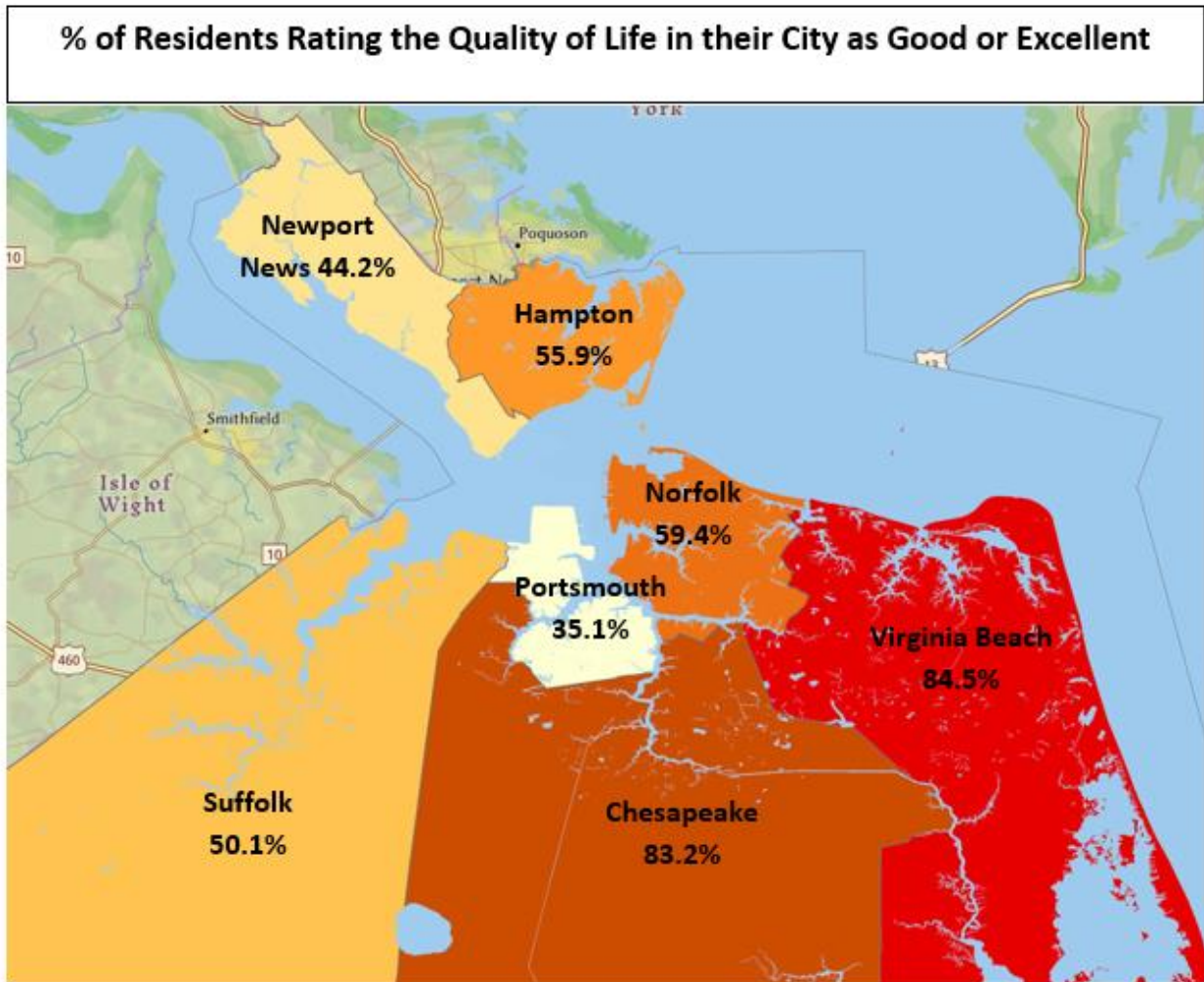


Neighborhood ratings of quality of life were the highest, with 81.6% rating their neighborhood as excellent or good. Only 15.3% rated their neighborhood quality of life as fair and 2.9% rated it as poor.



Respondents varied in their ratings of quality of life in their city, with those living in Virginia Beach and Chesapeake having the largest percentage of excellent and good ratings (84.5% and 83.2%, respectively). About 56% of residents in Hampton and about 60% in Norfolk also rated their city as excellent or good.

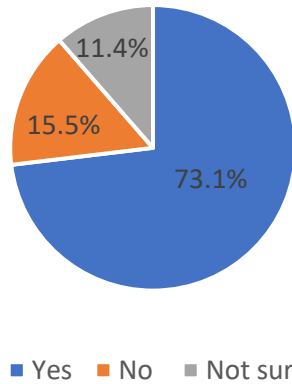
About half of Suffolk resident rated the quality of their city as good or excellent while well under half of residents in Newport News (44.2%) and Portsmouth (35.1%) rated the quality of life that highly.



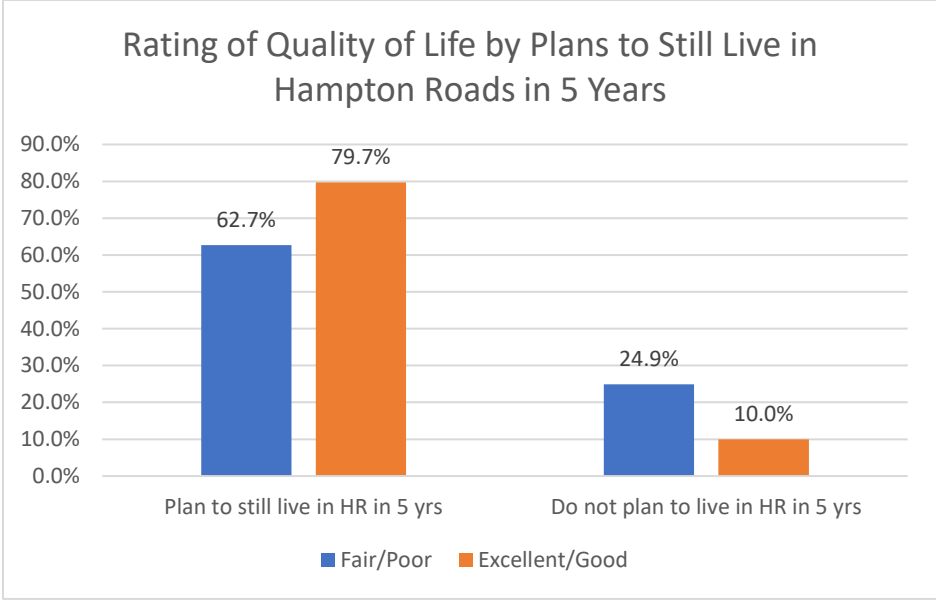
Plans to Leave Hampton Roads

Respondents were asked how long they have lived in Hampton Roads. The responses ranged from less than a year to 91 years with an average of 27.6 years. Respondents were also asked if they plan to still live in Hampton Roads five years from now. Most respondents (73.1%) indicated that they still plan to live in the region while 15.5% do not plan to still be living in Hampton Roads in five years and 11.4% were unsure. Those who indicated that they were unsure or do not plan to still live in the region five years from now were asked what city/state they were most likely to move to. Responses were varied but some of the most frequently mentioned locations included: Florida, North Carolina, Georgia, Maryland/Washington D.C., another part of Virginia, and even international locations.

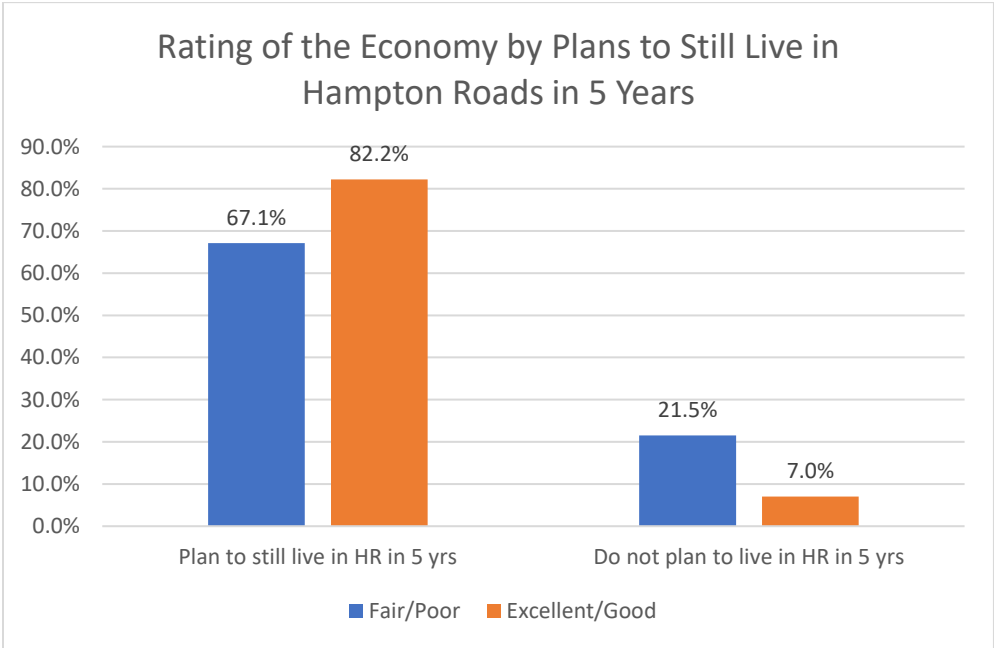
Do you plan to still live in Hampton Roads five years from now?



Perceptions of the quality of life and the economy in Hampton Roads are clearly related to whether respondents plan to leave or stay in the region over the next five years with those who rate the region as less desirable more likely to leave and those who rate the area more favorably more likely to stay. As described above, the majority of residents surveyed plan to stay in the area. Even among those who rate the region as fair or poor, a majority (62.7%) plan to stay, but a much larger majority, nearly 80%, of those who rate the area as good or excellent plan to stay. In contrast, only 10% of those who rate the area favorably (good or excellent) plan to leave the region in the next five years, while more than twice that percentage (24.9%) who rate the area as poor or fair plan to leave. Interestingly, rating of the quality of life in the region does not appear to affect those who are uncertain of their residence in future, with about 12.4% of those rating the quality of life unfavorably and 10.3% of those rating the area favorably unsure of their future residence.



Results were similar when looking at the economy, with 67.1% of those who rated the economy as fair or poor planning to stay but 82.2% of those who rated it as excellent or good planning to stay. Only 7% of those who rate the economy favorably (good or excellent) plan to leave the region in the next five years, while more than one in five (21.5%) of those who rate the area as poor or fair plan to leave. Those who plan to leave are also younger (39 average age) than those who plan to stay (47.5 average age) and those who are unsure (43.5 average age).



The Life in Hampton Roads Data report and press releases will be placed on the Social Science Research Center website as they are released (<http://www.odu.edu/al/centers/ssrc>). Follow-up questions about the 2023 Life in Hampton Roads survey should be addressed to:

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