


2017

Life in Hampton Roads Survey Press Release #1: Regional, City and Neighborhood Quality of Life

Social Science Research Center, Old Dominion University

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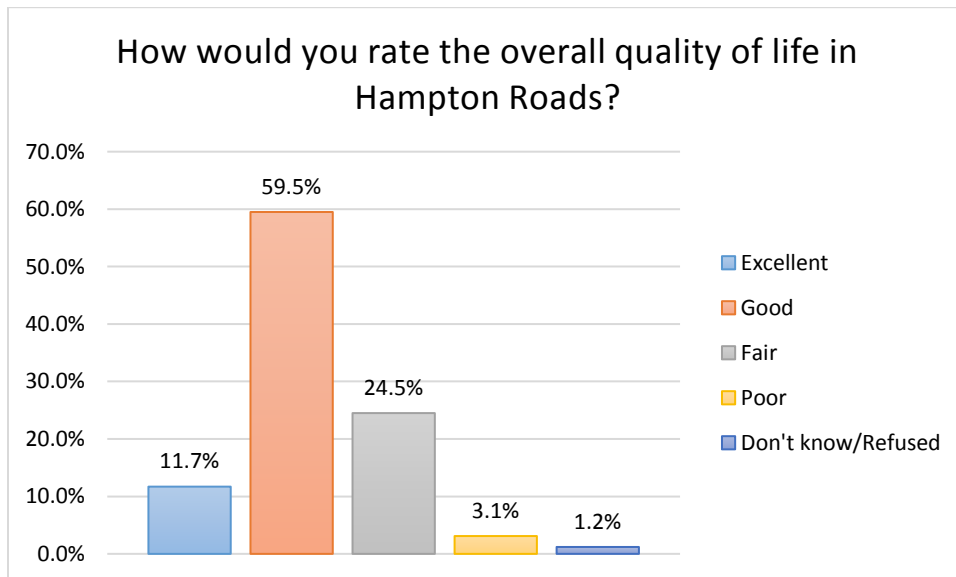
Life in Hampton Roads Survey Press Release #1

Regional, City and Neighborhood Quality of Life

The Old Dominion University Social Science Research Center is proud to release the first part of the 2017 Life in Hampton Roads (LIHR) Survey Report. LIHR has been conducted by the Social Science Research Center with support from the Old Dominion University Office of Research and the College of Arts and Letters since 2010 and is now in its eighth year. Release #1 focuses on regional quality of life. Data from prior years is also provided when available to show comparisons in responses over time. Responses were weighted by city population, race, age, gender and phone usage (cell versus land-line) to be representative of the Hampton Roads region. Subsequent releases will focus on health and education, crime, politics, transportation, flooding and sea level rise and economics. For additional information on survey methodology, and analyses of other issues, please see the SSRC website at www.odu.edu/ssrc.

Overall Quality of Life

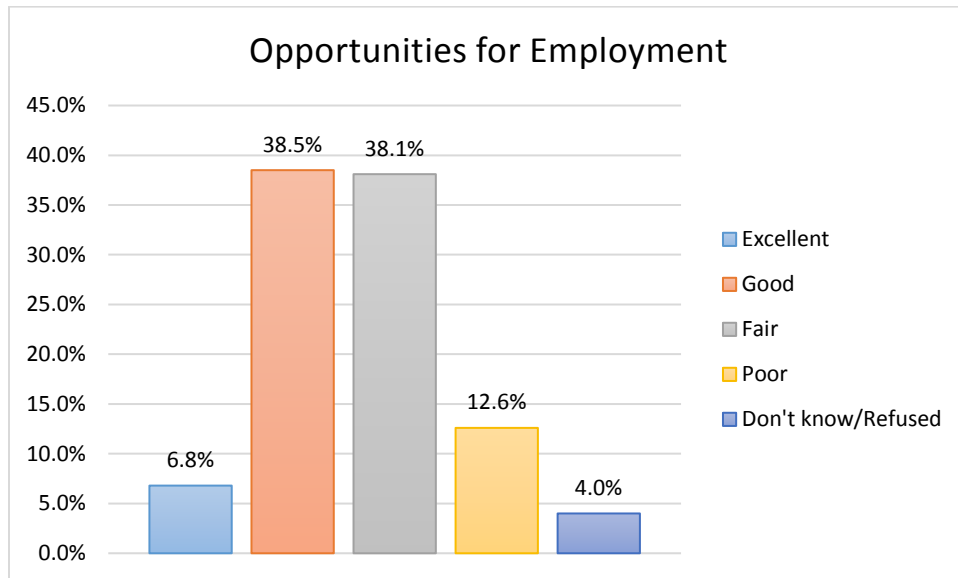
The overall quality of life in Hampton Roads has remained steady. The 2017 Life in Hampton Roads (LIHR) survey continues to show a generally good regional quality of life. The majority of those interviewed (71.2 percent) reported that the overall quality of life in Hampton Roads was excellent or good while 27.6 percent found it to be fair or poor. The portion of respondents rating regional quality of life as good or excellent is slightly higher than last year's portion (70.3 percent).



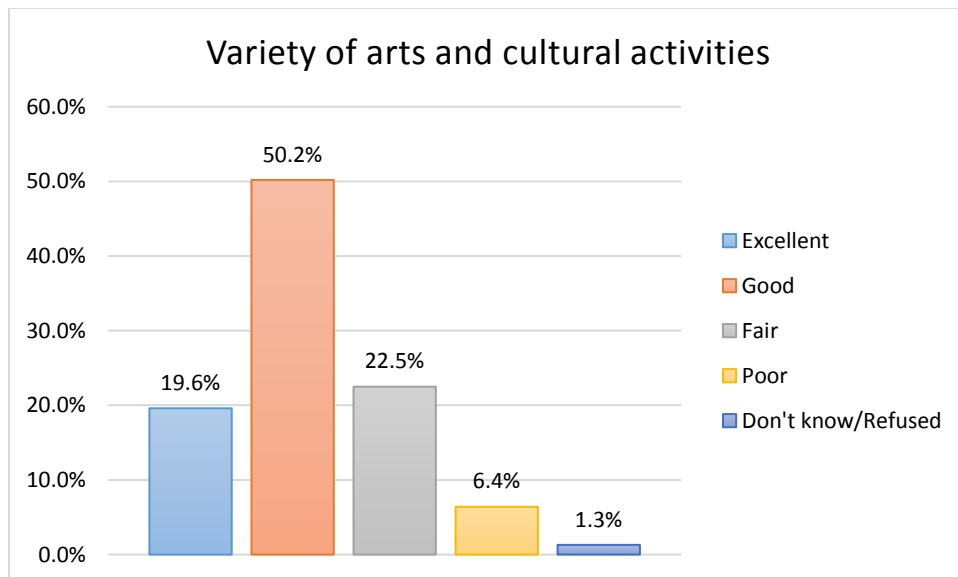
Respondents were fairly split when rating opportunities for employment in Hampton Roads.

Over half of respondents (50.7 percent) rated opportunities for employment as either fair or poor (38.1

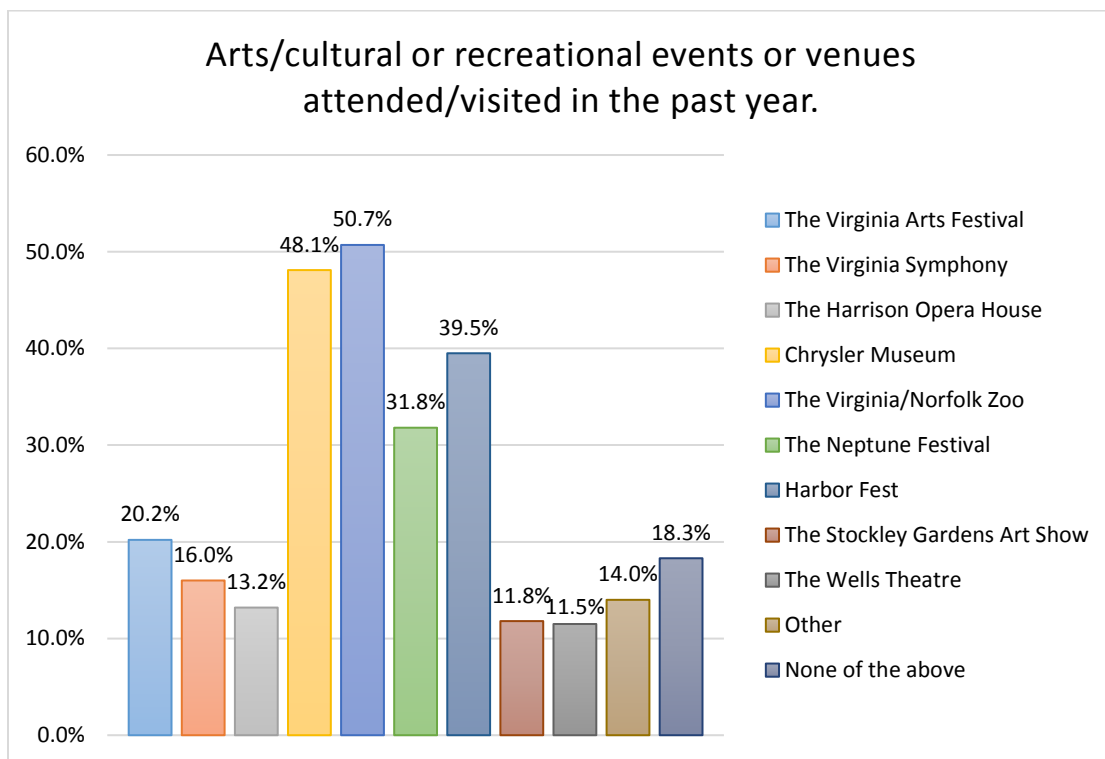
percent and 12.6 percent respectively). Conversely, just under half (45.3 percent) rated opportunities for employment as either excellent or good (6.8 percent and 38.5 percent respectively).



Respondents rated the variety of arts and cultural activities available in Hampton Roads favorably. The majority (69.8percent) rated the variety of arts and cultural activities as either excellent or good and 22.5 percent rated the variety of arts and cultural activities as fair. Only 6.4 percent rated the variety of arts and cultural activities in Hampton Roads as poor.



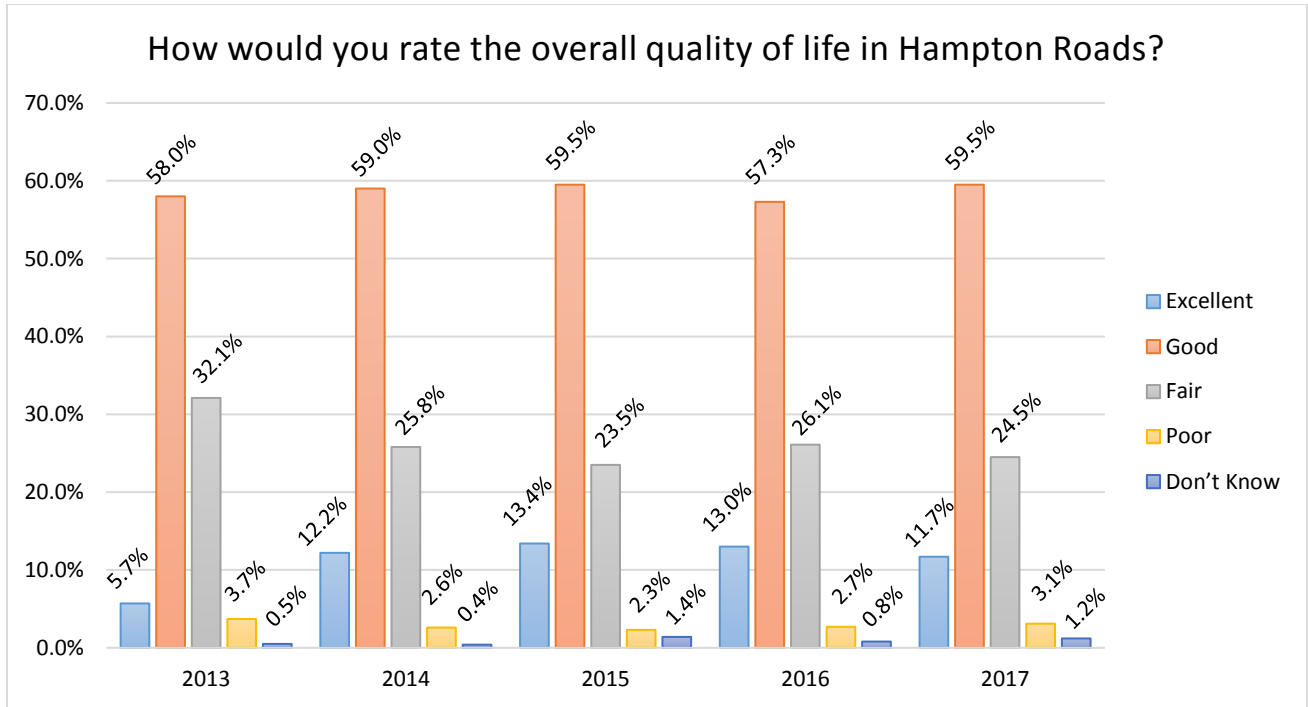
Respondents were asked what arts, cultural or recreational events and venues they had attended in the past year. Over fifty percent (50.7 percent) said they had been to the Virginia/Norfolk Zoo in the past year and 48.1 percent said they had been to the Chrysler Museum. Additionally, 39.5 percent attended Harbor Fest and 31.8 percent attended The Neptune Festival in the past year. Other venues and events mentioned were the Virginia Arts Festival (20.2 percent), the Virginia Symphony (16 percent), the Harrison Opera House (13.2 percent), the Stockley Gardens Art Show (11.8 percent), and the Wells Theatre (11.5 percent).



Quality of Life in Hampton Roads

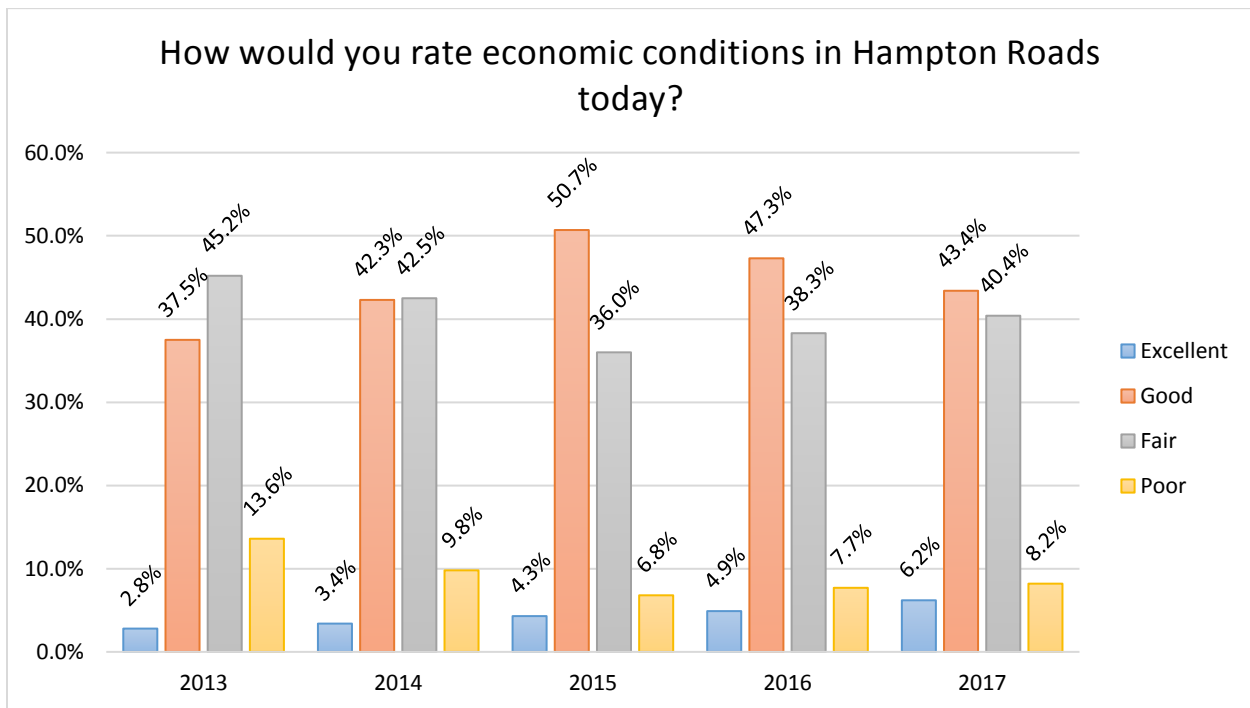
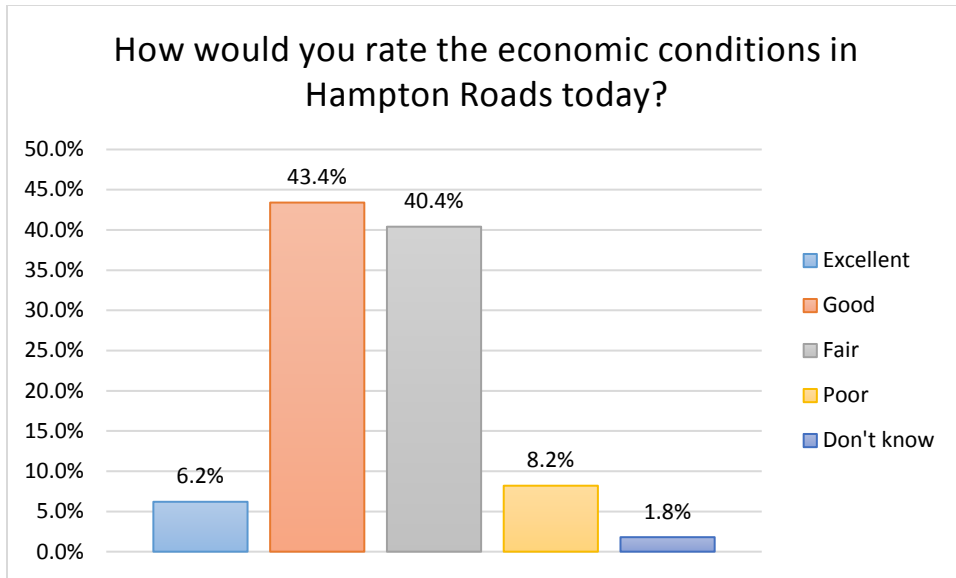
Over the last several years, quality of life has remained relatively consistent in Hampton Roads. In 2013, 63.7 percent of respondents rated the quality of life in Hampton Roads as excellent or good. In 2014, 71.2 percent of respondents rated quality of life in Hampton Roads as excellent or good; in 2015, 72.9 percent; and in 2016, 70.3 percent. In 2017, there was a slight increase in the percentage of respondents who rated quality of life in Hampton Roads as excellent or good (71.2 percent). Focusing on

the other end of the spectrum, ratings of the quality of life as poor have been consistently low (always less than 5 percent) and decreased from 3.7 percent in 2013 to 3.1 percent in 2017, although this is slightly higher than the three previous years (2.6 percent, 2.3 percent, and 2.7 percent, respectively).



Economic Conditions in Hampton Roads

Consistent with the mixed role played by the economy in respondents' evaluation of regional quality of life, ratings of the regional economy remained relatively stable from years past. Survey respondents were asked to rate the economic conditions in Hampton Roads today. A vast majority of our respondents answered good (43.4 percent) or fair (40.4 percent). The percentage of respondents who feel the economy is doing 'good' has declined nearly seven percent since 2015. Conversely, 8.2 percent said that they believed that the economic conditions were poor. Only 6.2 percent of residents believed economic conditions to be excellent.



Home Ownership in Hampton Roads

Respondents were asked whether or not they own or are in the process of buying their home, rent or have some other arrangement. Similar to past years, the majority of residents reported that they own or are in the process of buying their home (65.1 percent). Another 30.6 percent indicated that they rent, while only 3.8 percent reported having another arrangement.

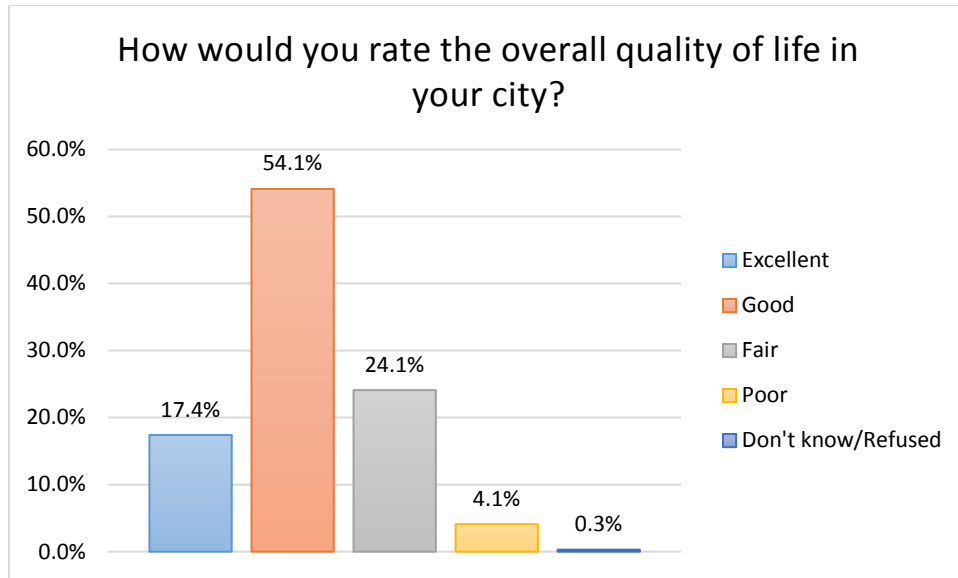
Home Ownership	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Own or in the process of buying	71.4%	65.6%	65.5%	64.3%	65.1%
Rent	25.5%	31.9%	30.6%	32.7%	30.6%
Other arrangement	3%	2%	3.1%	2.2%	3.8%
Don't know/Refused	0.1%	0.6%	0.9%	0.7%	0.5%

Neighborhood and City Quality of Life Ratings

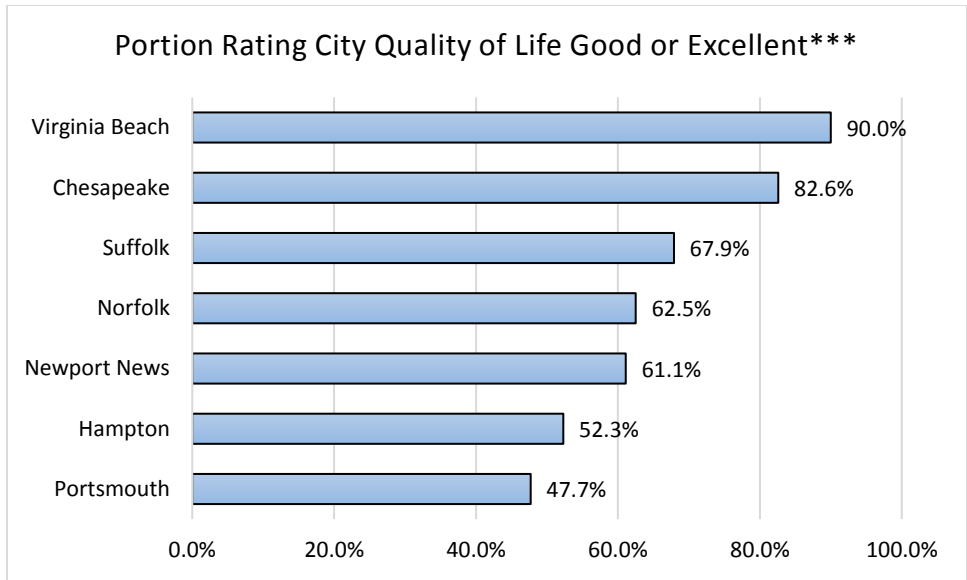
The 2017 Life in Hampton Roads survey examined sub-regional measures of neighborhood and city quality of life and also examined relevant measures at the city level. Although such analyses have significant value, they should also be understood in the context of the much greater uncertainty associated with inferences from sub-population analyses. The maximum margin of error, including design effects from weighting, for the entire sample of LIHR is 3.27 percent (95 percent confidence level). Thus, only quite large differences between subsample groups are statistically significant and the margin of error for individual cities will be much larger.

City Quality of Life

Respondents were asked to rate the quality of life for their city of residence. Over 70 percent of respondents reported the quality of life in their city as excellent or good (17.4 percent and 54.1 percent, respectively). Another 28.2 percent rated the quality of life in their city as either fair (24.1 percent) or poor (4.1 percent).



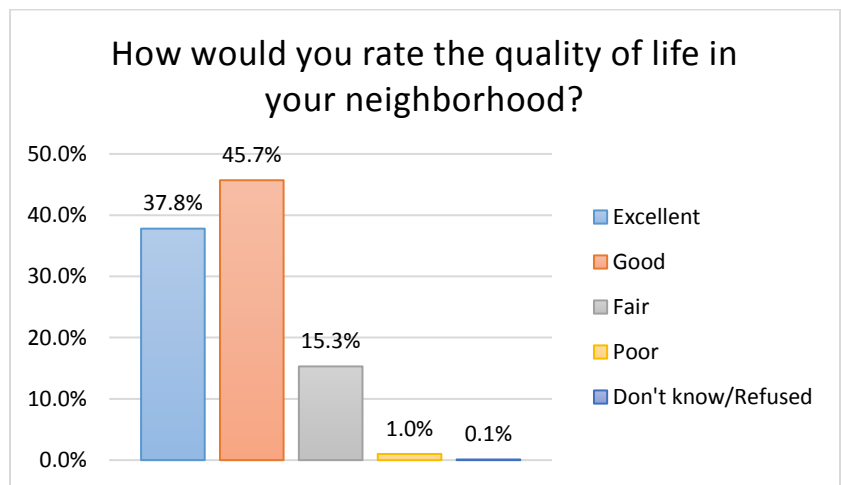
Perceptions of city quality of life varied significantly across the Hampton Roads region ($p < .05$). At the top end, 90 percent of respondents from Virginia Beach rated the quality of life in their city as good or excellent, as did 82.6 percent of respondents from Chesapeake. Suffolk was considerably lower, with 67.9 percent rating city quality of life good or excellent. Norfolk and Newport News ranked somewhat lower, at 62.5 percent and 61.1 percent respectively. Finally, Hampton and Portsmouth ranked substantially lower at 52.3 percent and 47.7 percent, respectively. Residents in some cities appear to have substantially higher perceptions of quality of life than others. Although the rankings within the top group (Virginia Beach, Chesapeake and Suffolk) and the bottom group (Norfolk, Newport News, Hampton and Portsmouth) cannot be known with statistical confidence, we can be confident, at more than the 95 percent confidence level, that the top group and bottom group are different, and the observed rankings are broadly consistent with patterns we have seen in previous survey years.



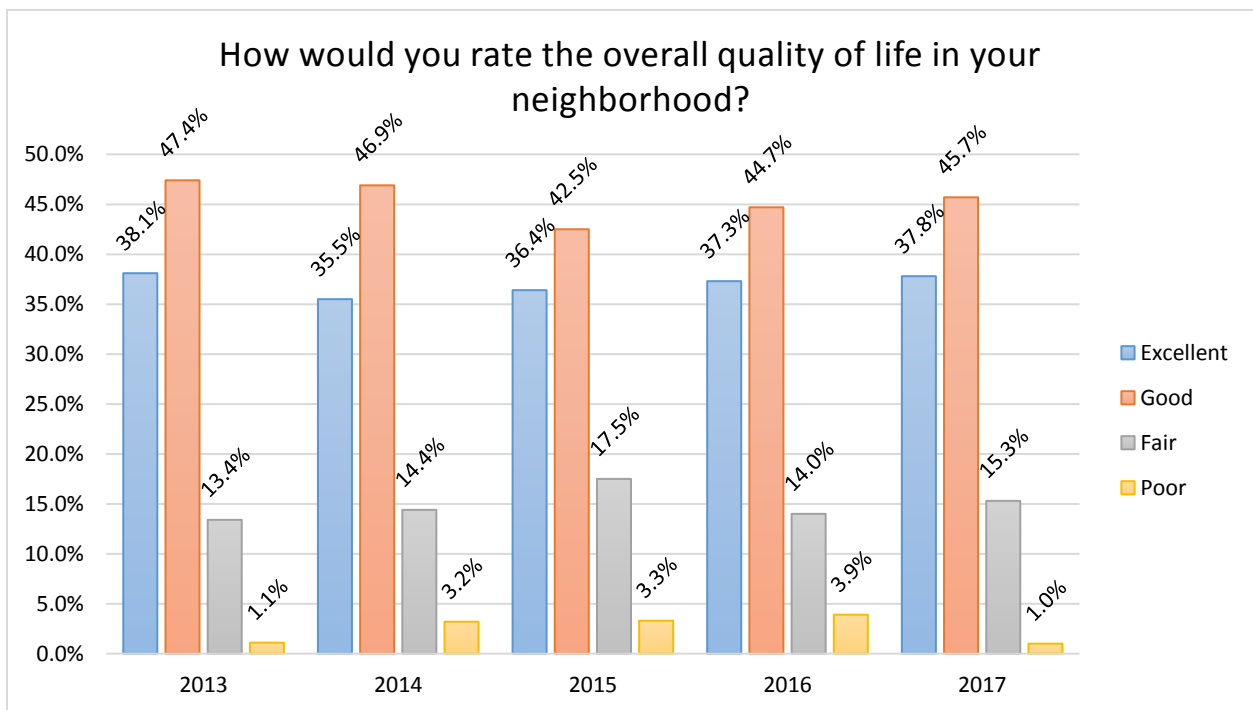
***p<.000 statistically significant, 2-tailed test

Neighborhood Quality of Life

Overall, respondents reported very high ratings for quality of life in their neighborhood. The majority of respondents (83.5 percent) rated the quality of life in their neighborhood as either excellent or good. In contrast, only 16.3 percent of respondents rated the quality of life in their neighborhood as fair or poor. Overall, quality of life was rated the highest (excellent and good) for respondent’s neighborhood (83.5 percent), followed by city of residence (71.5 percent) and finally Hampton Roads as a whole (71.2 percent).



Across years, a strong majority of respondents rated the quality of life in their neighborhoods as good or excellent. While there was a general decline from 2013 (85.5 percent) to 2015 (78.9 percent), 2016 and 2017 saw the percentage of respondents rating the quality of life in their neighborhood as excellent or good increase to 82 percent and 83.5 percent, respectively. Additionally, 2017 saw the lowest percentage of respondents rating the quality of life in their neighborhood as poor (1 percent) in the past five years. The previous low was in 2013 (1.1 percent) and in 2014 through 2016, this percentage was over 3 percent each year.



In summary, overall quality of life in Hampton Roads remains relatively consistent with past years. Although there were some differences between cities in the reported quality of life, respondents reported a slightly higher quality of life in their neighborhoods in 2017 than last year. There was a slight increase in quality of life in Hampton Roads as a whole since 2016. Respondents rated the variety of arts and cultural activities higher than opportunities for employment (69.8 percent excellent/good compared to 45.3 percent excellent/good). Those rating economic conditions as fair or poor are the highest since 2014.

All Life in Hampton Roads data summaries 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 2017 Life in Hampton Roads survey should be addressed to:

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