

## **Life in Hampton Roads Survey Press Release #1**

### **Regional, Neighborhood, and City Quality of Life**

*The Old Dominion University Social Science Research Center is proud to release the first part of the 2014 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 -2(r)9(si)4(t)-4(y C*

The demographic and weighting appendix ([www.odu.edu/ssrc](http://www.odu.edu/ssrc)) provides details about survey respondents and coverage. The total sample size for 2014 was 853 respondents drawn from the seven cities at the core of Hampton Roads—Chesapeake, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Suffolk, and Virginia Beach. Responses were weighted to match city-level population, race, gender, cell-phone-usage, and age estimates. The margin of error for the 2014 LIHR survey is 3.7 percent (95 percent confidence interval).

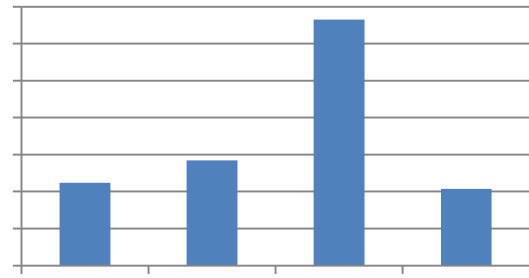
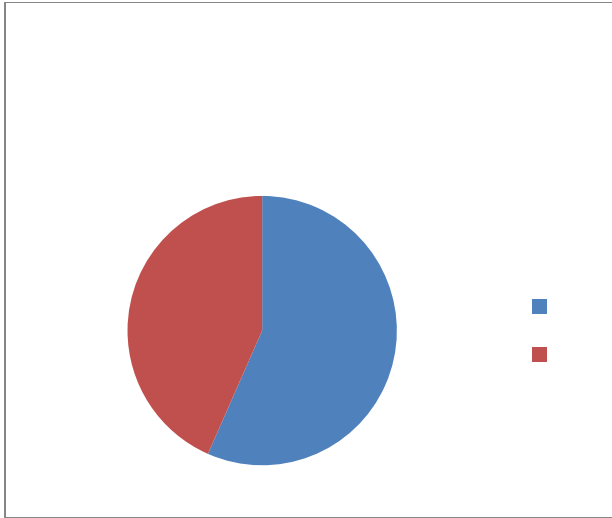
Over the last four years, reported quality of life in Hampton Roads has shown a modest upward trend. In 2012, 12% of respondents rated the quality of life in Hampton Roads as excellent. Last year (2013) showed a decrease down to 5.7%, but this year's data has bounced back with 12.2% of respondents rating the quality of life in Hampton Roads as excellent. Those that reported the quality of life in Hampton Roads as good increased over the past four years; 2011 (51%), 2012 (56.4%), 2013 (58%), and 2014 (59%). Additionally, only 25.8% of respondents rated the quality of life in Hampton Roads as fair, compared to 36% in 2011, 28% in 2012 and 32.1% in 2013.

In addition to rating the overall quality of life in Hampton Roads, participants were asked to provide a few words as to why they choose their rating. The respondents (71.2%) who rated the quality of life as good or excellent mentioned several common themes. The most common was

considering it a positive for the region (48 out of 50). Others reported that the military presence in the area provided cultural and economic benefits, though some voiced concern about over-dependence on the military as an economic driver. Even on traffic, perspective matters and a few respondents found a glass







A final gauge of regional quality of life is whether individuals plan to stay in the area over the long term. Nearly seventy percent of respondents said that they planned on living in Hampton Roads five years from now (68.2%). The portion planning to stay has remained relatively consistent over the past three years. The majority of respondents (72.4% in 2012, 68% in 2013, and 68.2% in 2014) reported they plan to live in Hampton Roads five years from now.

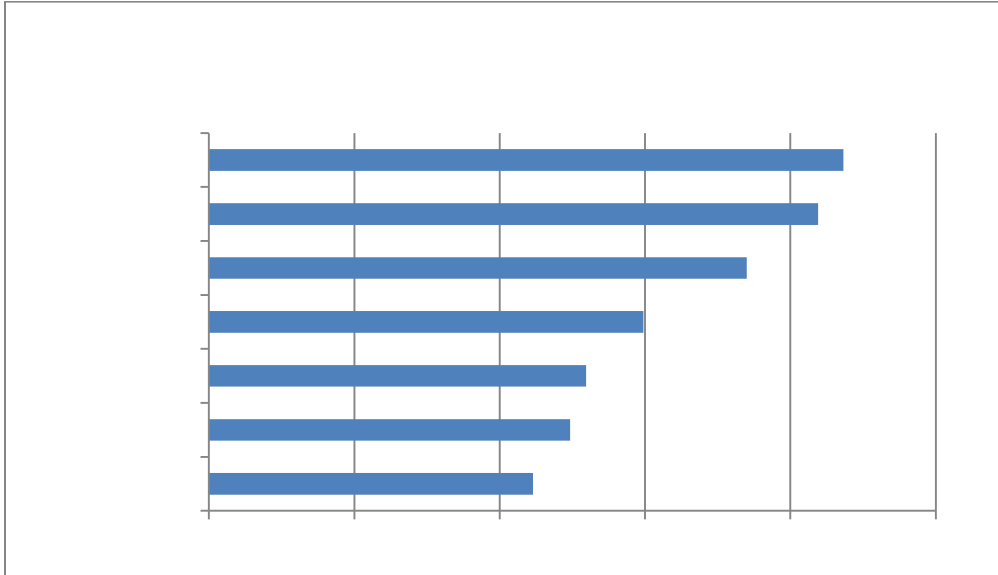
This analysis examines sub-regional measures from the 2014 Life In Hampton Roads survey (LIHR 2014) conducted by the Old Dominion University Social Science Research Center. The survey includes a number of questions that are most relevant if analyzed at the sub-regional level. This analysis focusses on these measures, and particularly at measures relevant at the city and neighborhood level. We begin by examining aggregate measures of neighborhood and city quality of life, and then examine the relevant measures at the city and zip code level.

*Although such analyses have significant value, they should also be understood in the context of*



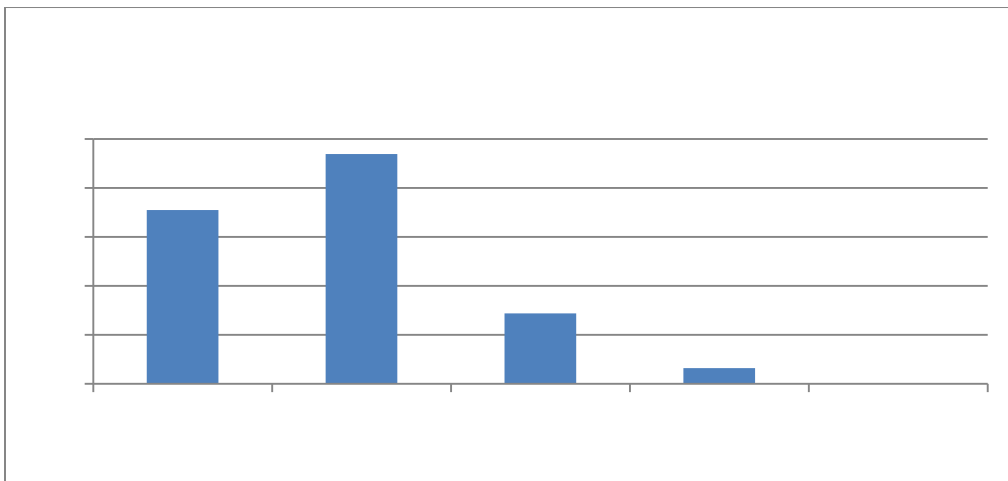
*land-line) to be representative of the Hampton Roads region. Details of survey methodology are included in the 2014 LIHR demographics and methodology section ([www.odu.edu](http://www.odu.edu))*

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.

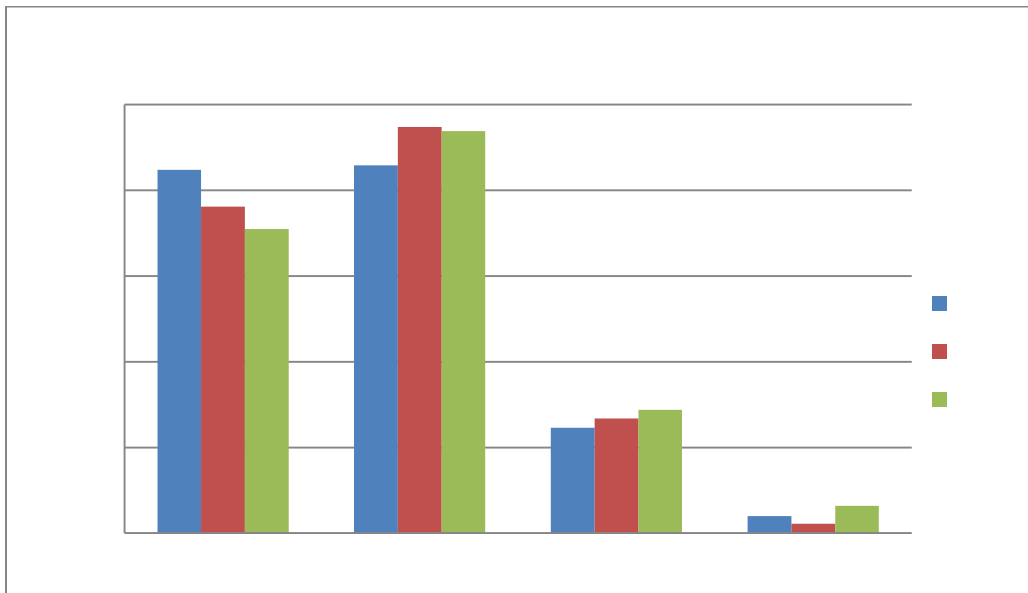


### *Neighborhood Quality of Life*

Overall, respondents reported a very high rating for quality of life in their neighborhood. The majority of respondents (82.4%) rated the quality of life in their neighborhood as either excellent or good. In contrast, only 17.6% of respondents rated the quality of life in their neighborhood as fair or poor.



Ratings neighborhood quality of life have been on the decline for the past several years. In 2012, 42.4percent rated the quality of life in their neighborhood as excellent, but that number decreased to 38.1percent in 2013, and 35.5 percent in 2014. Additionally, this year marked the highest percentage of respondents' ratings of fair (14.4%) and poor (3.2%) in the past three years.



Neighborhood quality of life varies very widely across the region. Among zip codes for which at least five weighted responses were obtained, the lowest average neighborhood quality of life was in the following five zip codes, all of which had less than 1/3 of respondents indicating that their neighborhood quality of life was good or excellent: 23607, 23702, 23661, 23324, 23504. The lowest of these low neighborhoods was 23607 only one of the nine respondents from this Newport News zip code indicated that the quality of life in the neighborhood was good, and the rest indicated either a fair or poor neighborhood quality of life. These zip codes appear likely to be parts of the region that are distinctly worse off, and they arguably need significant ongoing attention from regional leadership. The five highest ranking zip codes for neighborhood quality of life were 23455, 23707, 23321, 23510, and 23435, with 100 percent of respondents indicating that their neighborhood quality of life was good or excellent. These high quality of life zip codes include a range of different living situations, including the relatively rural 23435 in Suffolk, and the densely urban downtown 23510 in Norfolk.

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improve the regional quality of life, placing an emphasis on crime and transportation as leading challenges that diminish regional quality of life. City and neighborhood quality of life ratings reveal substantial variation across the Hampton Roads region. Some areas within almost every city (and some cities within Hampton Roads) receive much higher marks from residents than others. These and other issues will be examined in more detail in analyses of additional questions from the LIHR survey.

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