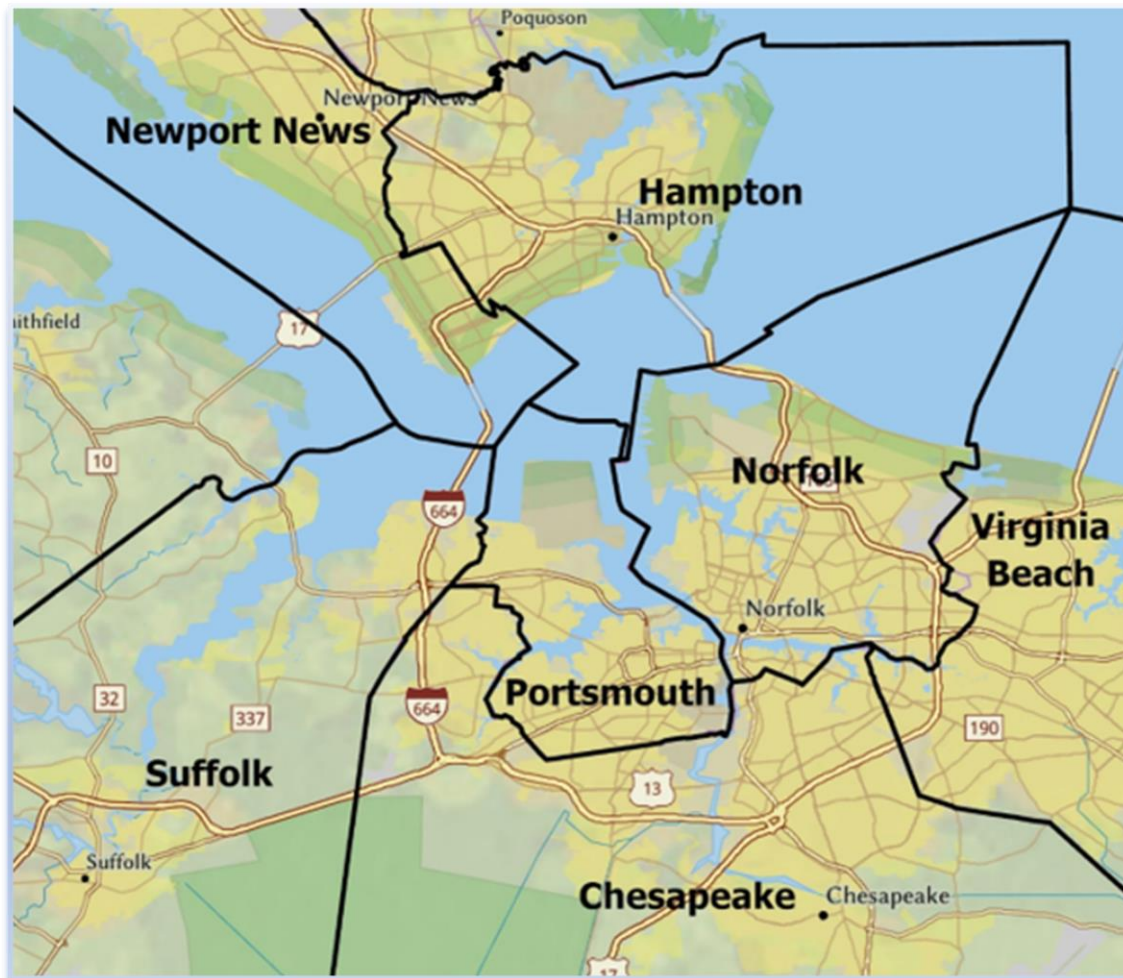

LIFE IN HAMPTON ROADS - 2022

The 13th Annual Life in Hampton Roads Survey Report



THE SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH CENTER
OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

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Executive Summary

The Social Science Research Center (SSRC) at Old Dominion University is pleased to present the results from the 13th annual Life in Hampton Roads (LIHR) survey. The purpose of the survey was to gain insight into residents' perceptions of the quality of life in Hampton Roads. This year, all survey data was collected via telephone interviews as was the case prior to the pandemic. More than two-thirds of respondents rated the quality of life in the region as excellent or good (69.3%). About 25% rated Hampton Roads' quality of life as fair (24.7%) and 4.5% 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 as a whole. Just over 70% rated the quality of life in their city as good or excellent (70.1%) and 24.2% rated their city as fair. Only 5.6% rated their city's quality of life as poor. Neighborhood ratings of quality of life remain the highest, with 82.3% rating their neighborhood as excellent or good. Only 15.9% rated their neighborhood quality of life as fair and 1.8% rated it as poor.

- Hampton Roads residents had mixed perceptions of the economy but showed some optimism about their own financial situation. Less than half (42.4%) of those surveyed rated the economic conditions in Hampton Roads as excellent (3.1%) or good (39.3%). A similar percentage (42.0%) rated economic conditions as fair and 14.6% rated them as poor. Interestingly, despite the impacts of COVID-19, these ratings are not much different than in past years of the survey, during or prior to the pandemic.
- The outlook for home purchasing and inflation, however, may be less optimistic, with 65.2% of respondents saying that now is a bad time to buy a house and only 14.7% responding that it is a good time to buy. Only 12.4% think that it is neither a good nor bad time. This is a major decline from 2021.
- More than 81% of respondents rated the quality of their own health as excellent (26.2%) or good (55.5%). This is higher than last year with most of the increase being in the excellent category - increasing from 17.9% to 26.2%. Thus, we are seeing an increase in self-reported good/excellent health close to levels reported pre-pandemic (e.g., from 82% in 2017). However, over a third of the population (35.2%) reporting that the pandemic has somewhat negatively affected their mental health and nearly twenty percent (19.5%), saying that the pandemic has negatively affected their mental health a great deal.
- More than three-quarters of Hampton Roads residents report that they are fully vaccinated against the COVID-19 virus. This year, the number of fully vaccinated residents rose to 78.6% and only

14.1% had received no vaccinations. This past year, half of the sample (50.6%) reported getting at least one booster, that is, three or more shots.

- This year, 72% of respondents reported that they are somewhat or very satisfied with the police and this is relatively consistent over the past few years. However, respondents reported negative experiences with police varied significantly between races. Well over half of African American respondents (59%) knew someone in the community who had a serious negative interaction with the police - which is 20% higher than whites (39%) and about 10% more likely than those identifying as some other racial group (48%).
- Overall, respondents' attitudes towards President Joe Biden's job performance were down from last year which corresponds with changing national trends in the president's approval rate. The percentage who strongly approved of Biden's job performance dropped by about ten percent (from 14.7% to 4.3%), and the percentage who approved also dropped by more than five percent (from 41% to 35.2%).

This year's report also includes breakdowns for many questions by race and/or city of residence. In some cases, there are significant differences among these groups.

Introduction

The Social Science Research Center (SSRC) at Old Dominion University recently completed data collection for the 13th 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, health and COVID-19, transportation, and other issues. A total of 639 telephone surveys were completed between May 31 and August 19, 2022. Surveys this year were all completed over the telephone as was the case prior to 2020. In 2020, due to COVID-19, surveys were completed via on-line web panels. In 2021, a mixture of on-line web panels and telephone surveys were utilized. This year, a mixture of listed and random-digit dial (RDD) cellphone and landline telephone numbers were used. From 2012 to 2019, random digit dial (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 access to broadband internet service. Funding for the 2022 survey was provided by the Social Science Research Center. The SSRC would like to thank the College of Arts and Letters and the ODU Office of Research for their continued support of the survey.

Survey Demographics

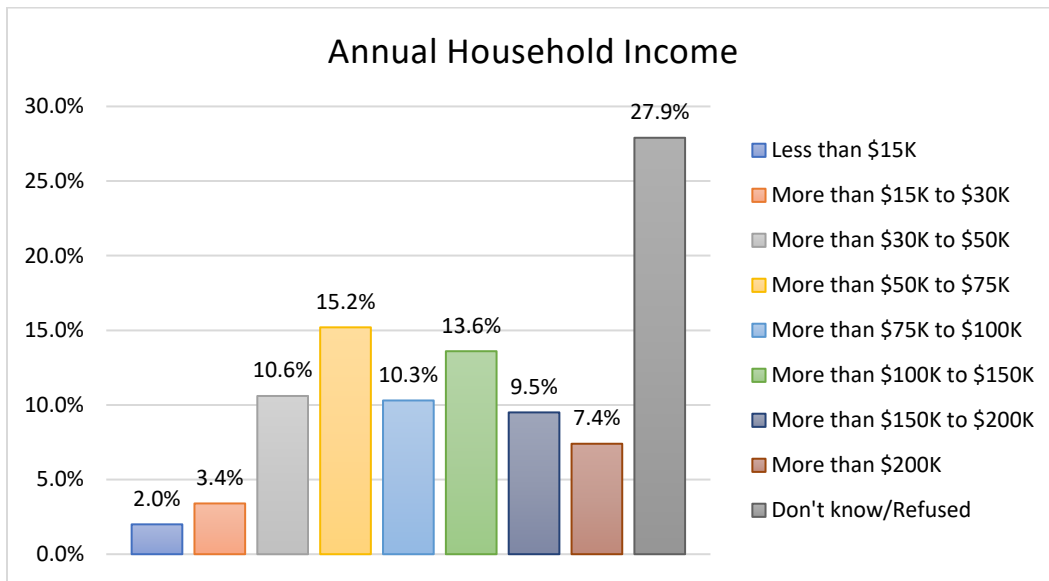
Unlike most data presented in the 2022 Life in Hampton Roads survey report, demographic data described here is unweighted to give curious readers a sense of the demographic coverage achieved by the survey. Of the 639 citizens interviewed, 58.2% were white, 28.0% were Black or African American, and 8.1% considered themselves to be another race/ethnicity. This includes 0.9% identifying as American Indian or Alaskan Native, 0.6% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, 0.3% Asian, and 4.1% multiracial. In a separate question, 7.0% of respondents indicated that they were of Hispanic/Latino origin.

More than 40 percent of respondents were male (42.7%) and 56% were female. More than one in three (37.3%) of the respondents received a high school diploma or GED, completed trade or professional school, or attended some college. An additional 47.7% of respondents completed an undergraduate or graduate degree. More than half of respondents were married (53.1%) and 18.8% were divorced, separated, or widowed. Less than one-quarter of those surveyed were single and not living with a partner (21%) while a small portion of single people reported living with a partner (5.3%).

Race	Percentage
White	58.2%
Black/African-American	28.0%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.9%
Asian	0.3%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.6%
Multiracial	4.1%
Other	2.2%
Don't Know/Refused	5.7%
Hispanic/Latino Origin?	Percentage
Yes	7.0%
No	91.5%
Don't know/Refused	1.4%
Gender	Percentage
Male	42.7%
Female	56.0%
Prefer to self-identify	0.6%
Highest level of school completed	Percentage
Some grade school	0.6%
Some high school	1.1%
High school diploma/GED	14.1%
Completed trade/professional school	1.9%
Some college	21.3%
Associate's degree	11.7%
Bachelor's degree	26.1%
Graduate degree	21.6%
Other	0.8%
Don't Know/Refused	0.8%
Age	Age in years
Average age (years)	53.4
Marital Status	Percentage
Single, not living with partner	21.0%
Single, living with partner	5.3%
Married	53.1%
Divorced/separated	11.1%
Widowed	7.7%
Don't Know/Refused	1.9%

Only about 5% of participants reported their annual household income as \$30,000 or less, 25.8% reported earning more than \$30,000 to \$75,000, while 40.8% earned more than \$75,000. This is the most refused

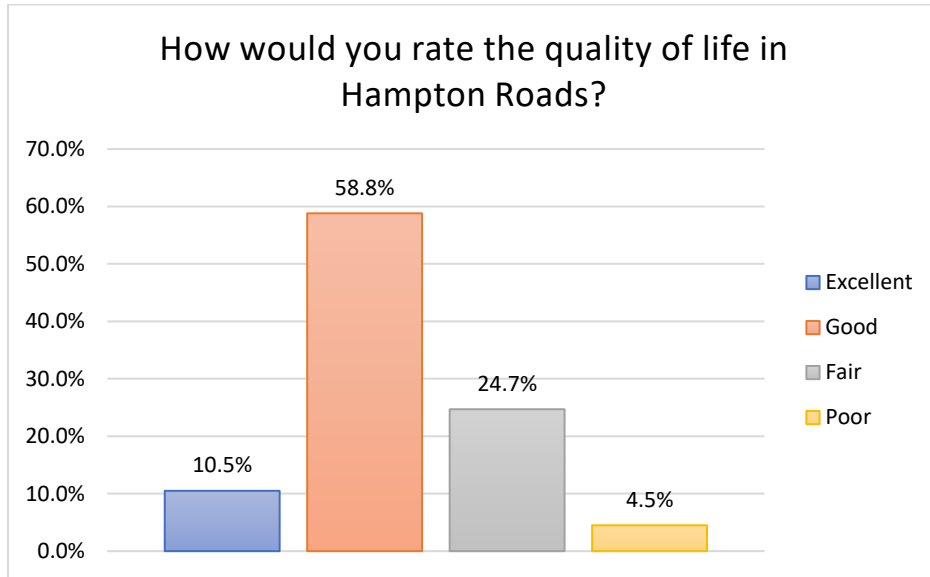
question in the survey, with almost 19.4% declining to answer and another 8.5% responding with “don’t know.”



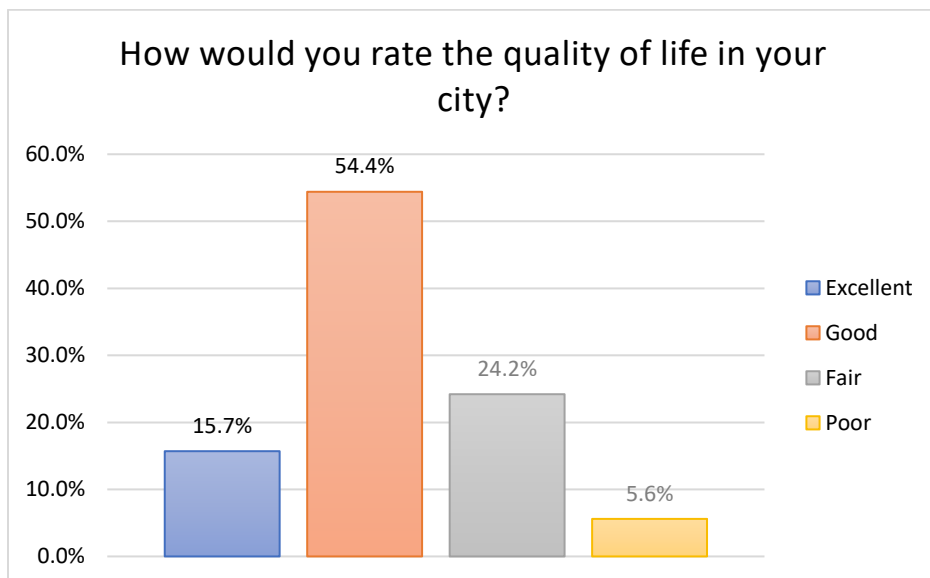
Quality of Life

Perceptions of the Region, City, Neighborhood

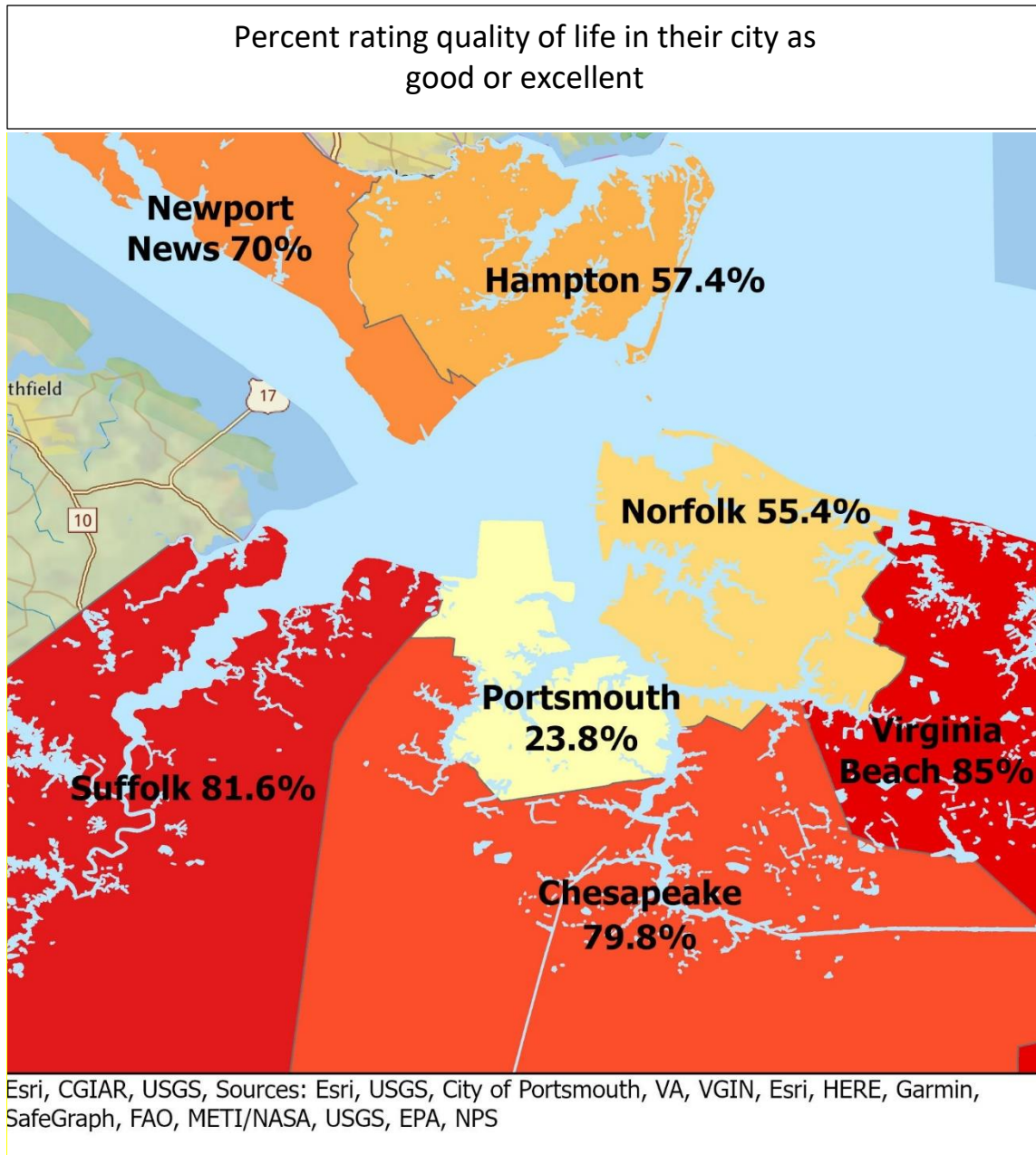
More than two-thirds of respondents rated the quality of life in the region as excellent or good (69.3%). This is slightly higher than last year (65.4%) during the pandemic and more closely reflects previous, non-COVID years (ranging from 68% to 71% between 2017-2019). About 25% rated Hampton Roads' quality of life as fair (24.7%) and 4.5% rated it as poor.



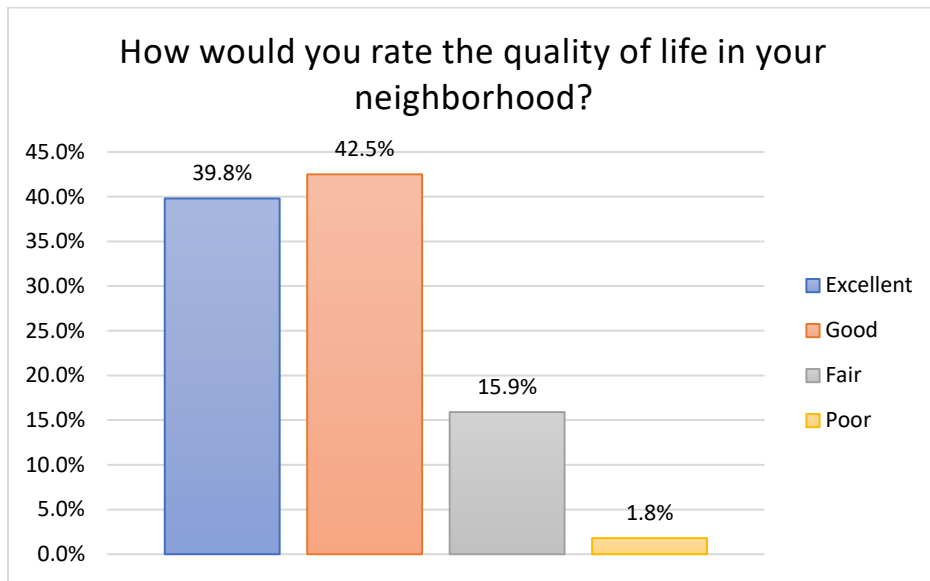
Consistent with previous years, respondents rated the quality of life in their city and their neighborhood higher than they did for the region. About 70% rated the quality of life in their city as good or excellent (70.1%) and 24.2% rated their city as fair. Only 5.6% rated their city's quality of life as poor.



However, there was significant variation in the perceived quality of life across the respective cities. Less than a quarter of the respondents in Portsmouth rated the quality of life in their city good or excellent (24%), while over half similarly rated the quality of life in Norfolk (55%) and Hampton (57%). Seventy percent of Newport News residents rated their quality of life as good or excellent and 80% or more of respondents in Chesapeake (80%), Suffolk (82%) and Virginia Beach (85%) rated their city as such.

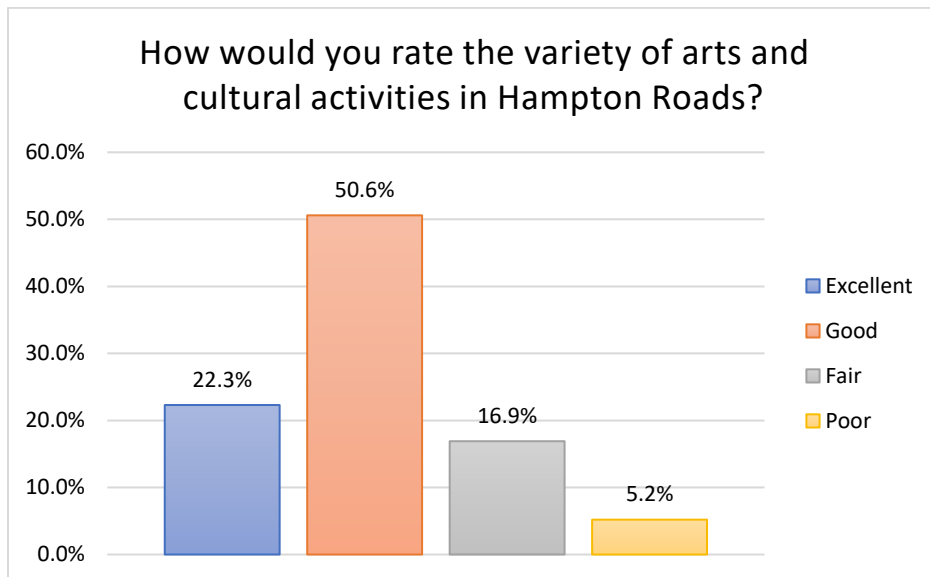


Neighborhood ratings of quality of life were the highest, with 82.3% rating their neighborhood as excellent or good. Only 15.9% rated their neighborhood quality of life as fair and 1.8% rated it as poor.



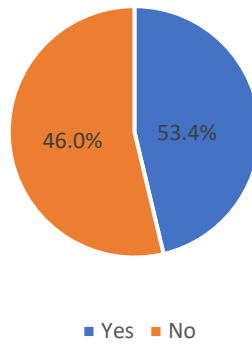
Cultural Activities

Almost three-quarters of respondents rated the variety of arts and cultural activities in Hampton roads as excellent (22.3%) or good (50.6%). Another 16.9% rated the variety of arts and cultural activities in Hampton Roads as fair and 5.2% rated the variety as poor.



Additionally, more than half of respondents said they had visited a historical site, museum, or monument in Hampton Roads in the last 12 months (53.4%).

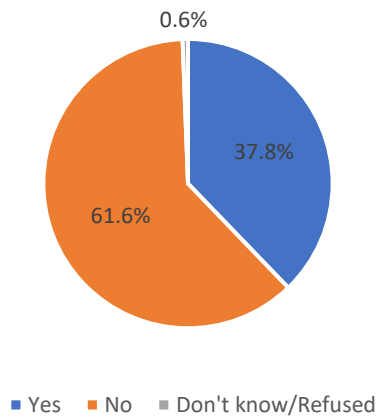
Have you visited a historical site, museum, or monument in Hampton Roads in the last 12 months?



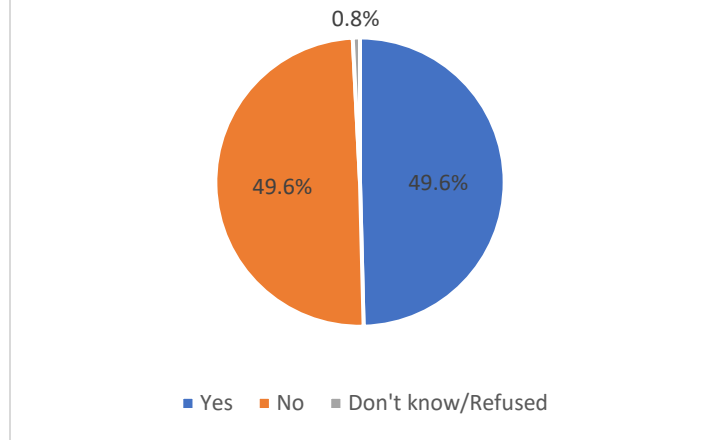
Transportation/Traffic

Less than one in four respondents (37.8%) reported avoiding visiting a business in a neighboring city due to tolls on the bridges or tunnels. However, almost half of respondents (49.6%) reported avoiding visiting a business in a neighboring city due to traffic congestion

Within the past month, did you avoid visiting a business in a neighboring city due to tolls on the bridges or tunnels?

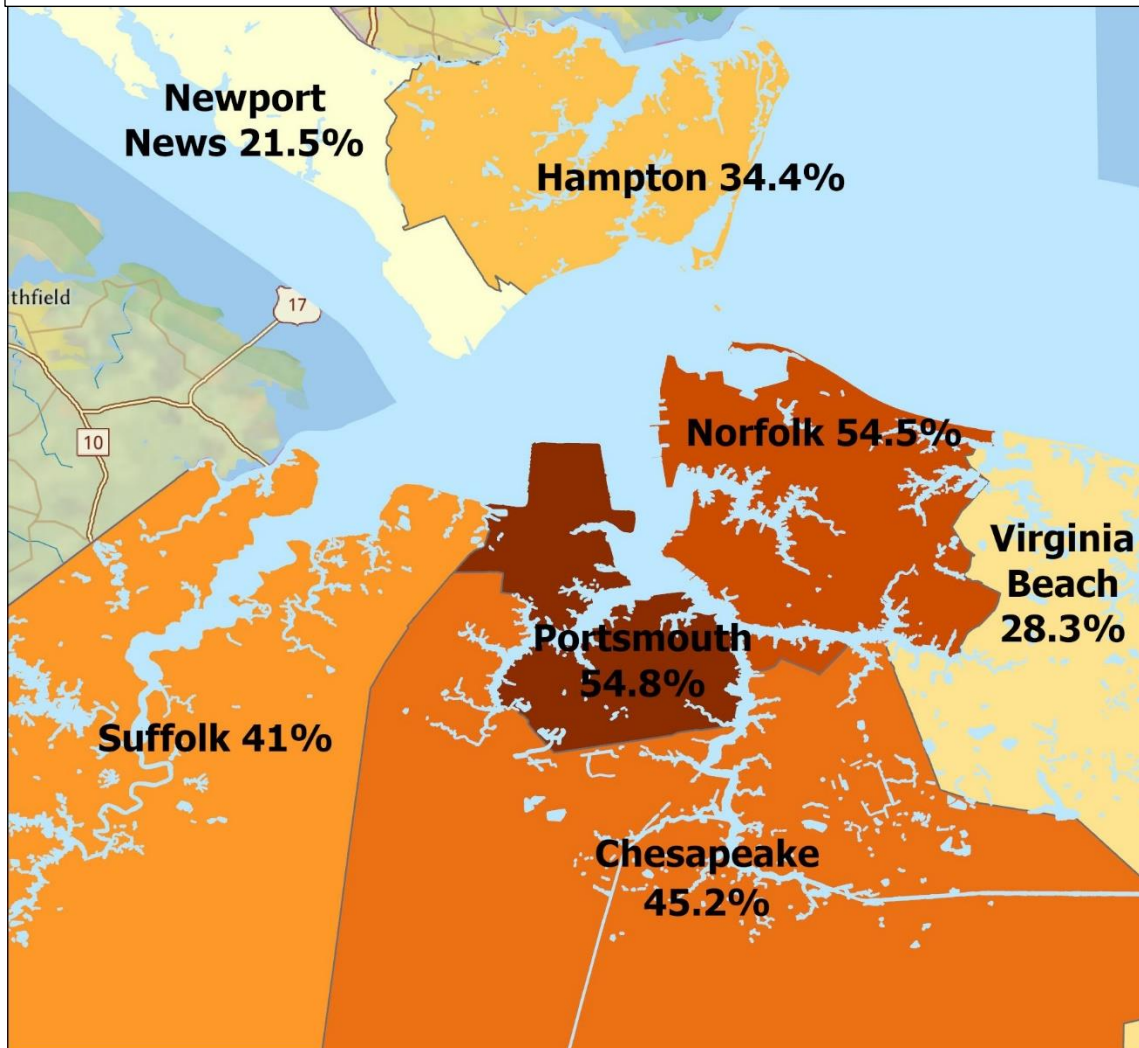


Within the past month, did you avoid visiting a business in a neighboring city due to concerns about traffic congestion?



Significant variation did exist across cities in the percentage of respondents who reported avoiding visiting a business in neighboring cities because of concern over traffic congestion. Less than a third of respondents in Newport News (22%) and Virginia Beach (28%) reported avoiding visiting a business in a neighboring city compared to about one-third of respondents in Hampton (34%). Less than half of respondents in Suffolk (41%) and Chesapeake (45%) avoided as did more than half in Norfolk and Portsmouth (both 55%).

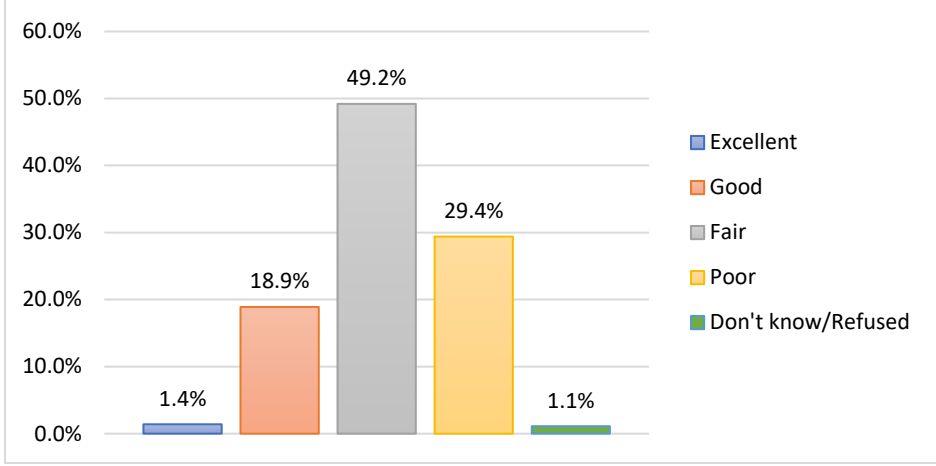
Percent reporting avoiding a business in a neighboring city because of concern of traffic congestion



Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, Sources: Esri, USGS, City of Portsmouth, VA, VGIN, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS

Furthermore, 78.6% of respondents rated the flow of traffic on the region's roads as either fair (49.2%) or poor (29.4%). A staggeringly low 1.4% rated the flow of traffic on the region's roads as excellent and 18.9% rated the flow as good.

How would you rate the flow of traffic on the region's roads?



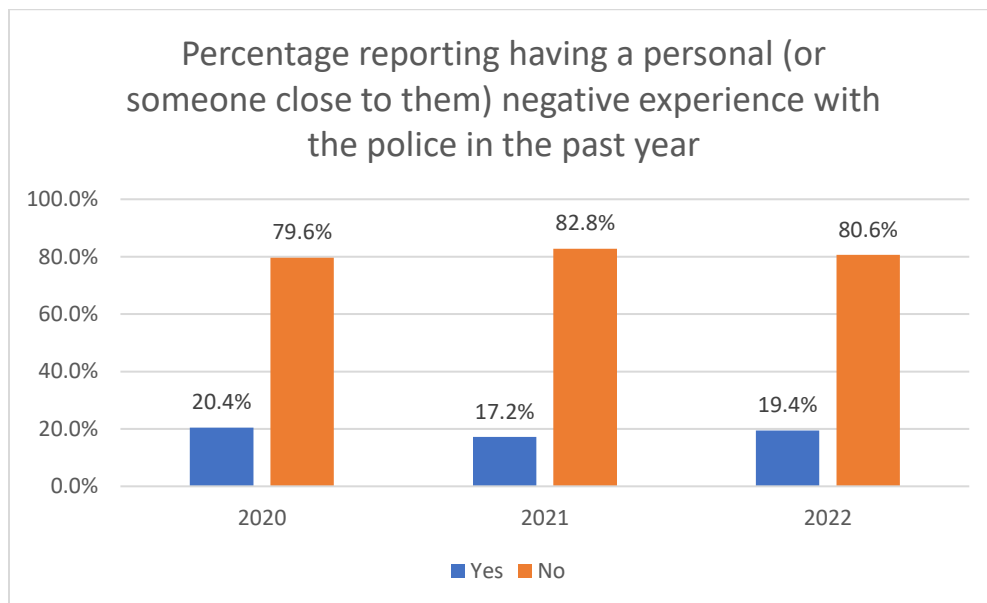
Experiences and Attitudes Towards the Police and Reactions to Crime

Negative Experiences with the Police

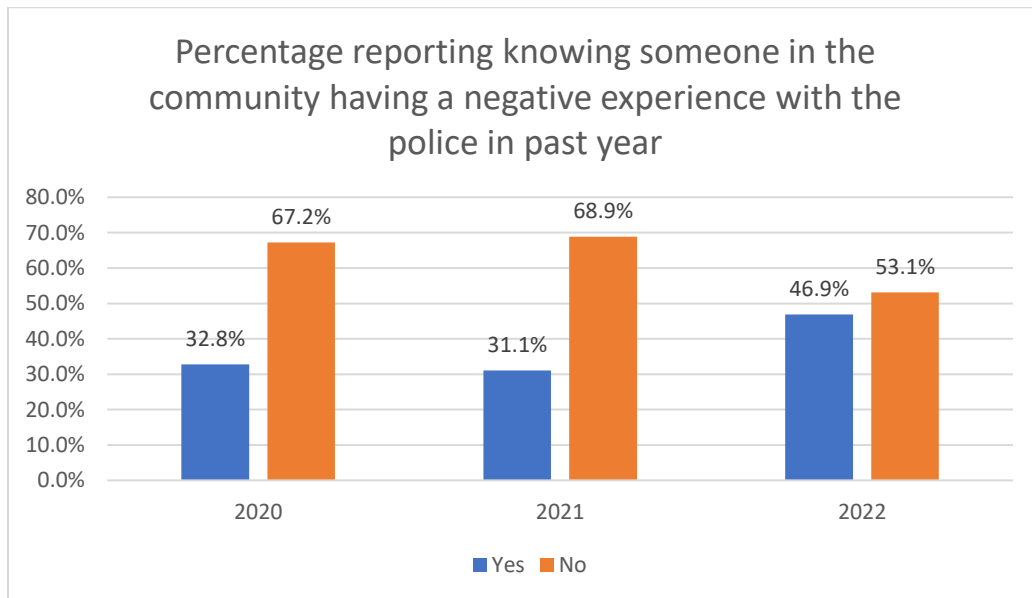
For the past few years, the Life in Hampton Roads survey has included two items measuring negative experiences with the police:

1. In the past year, have you or someone close to you had a negative experience with police (e.g., the officer shouted at you, cursed at you, pushed or grabbed you)?
2. In the past year, have you heard of someone in your local community who had a negative experience with police (e.g., the officer shouted at them, cursed at them, pushed or grabbed them)?

We note that both items refer to relatively serious negative experiences and are not issues related to standard daily encounters with the police (e.g., a brief conversation about directions or a traffic stop). Response categories were simply “yes” and “no”. This year 19.4% of respondents reported that they (or someone close to them) had had a negative experience with the police, up slightly (2.2%) from 17.2% reported last year and down 1% from the year before. All in all, these minor differences are not statistically different and are likely due to sampling variation.



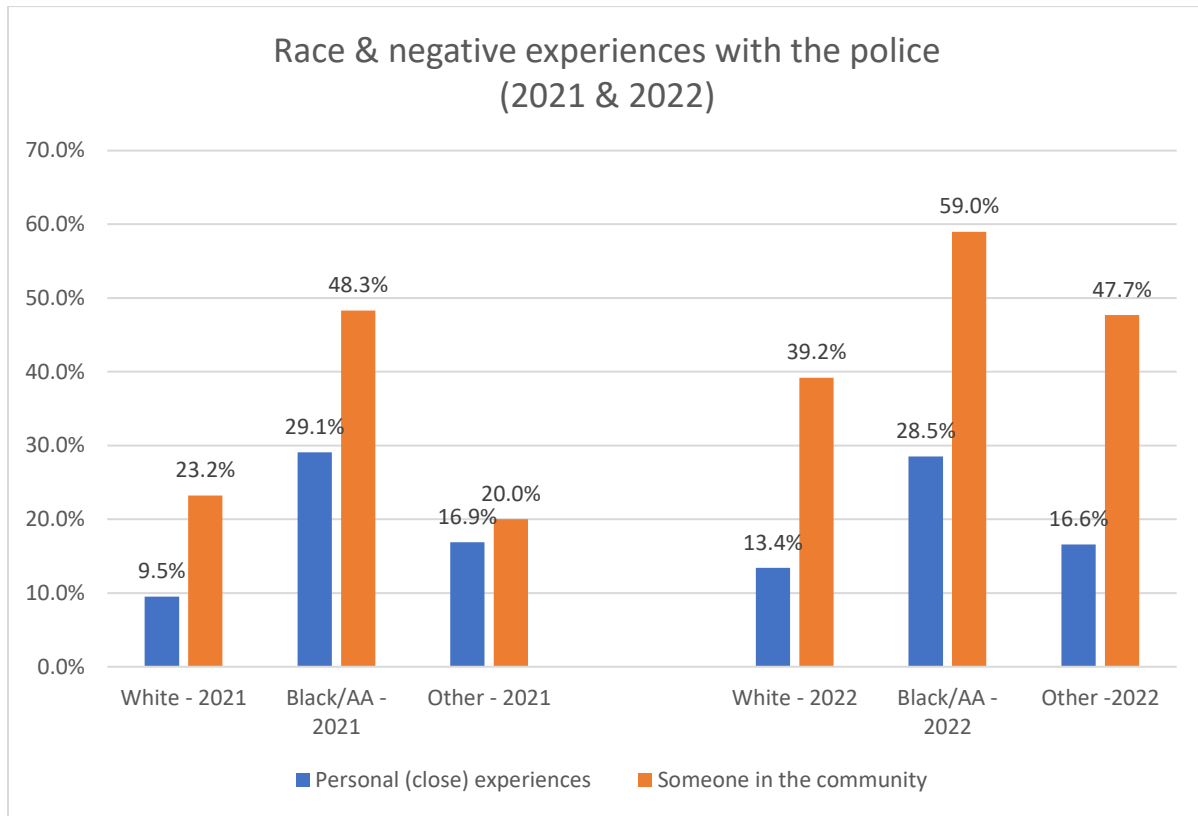
The percentage of residents having heard of someone in their local community who had had a negative encounter with the police was much larger than close personal experiences. Indeed, this past year nearly half of respondents (47%) reported knowing someone in the community who had had a significant negative experience with the police in the past year. This is significantly more than the prior two years where 33% and 31% reported such knowledge. Knowledge of serious negative encounters with the police is higher than close personal encounters, at least in part, because there are so many ways of hearing about unpleasant incidences—e.g., from family, friends, or various media sources.



Consistent with past surveys and a considerable body of empirical literature, we again found statistically significant and relatively strong differences in negative encounters with the police by race and ethnicity. In 2021, African American respondents were more than twice as likely (29%) than white respondents (13%) to report that they themselves or someone close to them had a negative experience with the police. At nearly 17%, persons responding that they were some other race or ethnicity were only slightly more likely than whites to report this type of experience and much less (10% less) likely than African Americans.

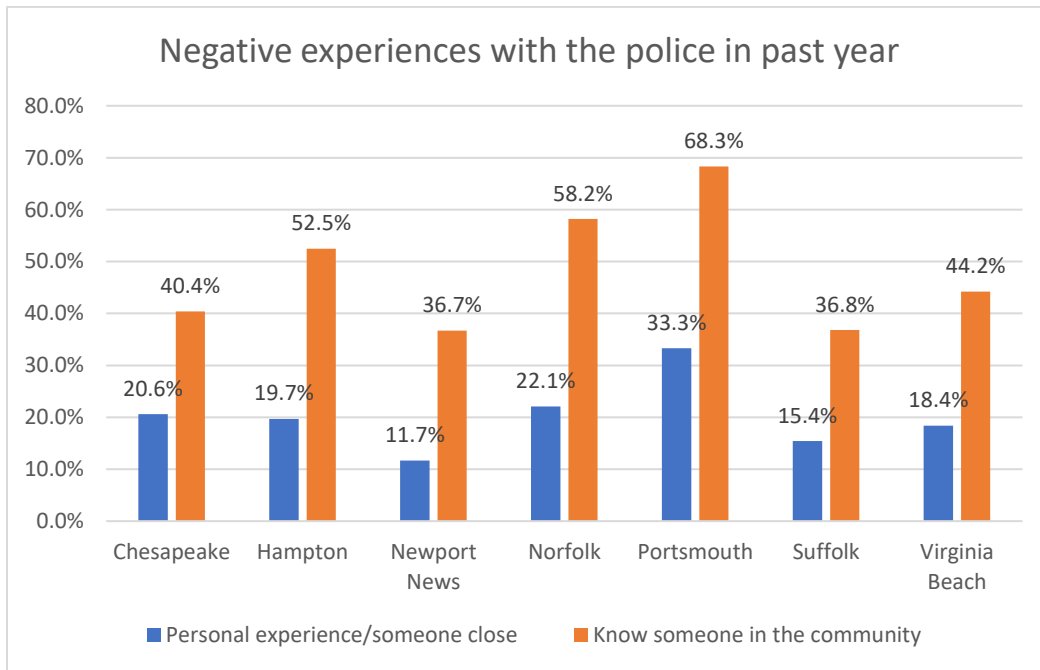
Well over half of African American respondents (59%) knew someone in the community who had a serious negative interaction with the police - this is 20% higher than whites (39%) and about 10% more likely than those identifying as some other racial group (48%). African Americans were clearly at heightened risk of experiencing a negative encounter with the police than either white respondents or those of other racial/ethnic status.

In general, there appears to be an increase in negative experiences with the police and this is particularly clear when we focus on hearing of negative encounters by others in the community. From last year, white respondents’ hearing of someone else in the community having a negative experience rose 10% from 29% to 39%, African American’s reporting of hearing of someone in the community also rose by a similar degree (11%) from 48% to 59%, and those responding as other (i.e., nonwhite, non-African American) increased by almost 28% from 20% to 48%. Given that the composition of the “other” category is so diverse but small in number, it is difficult to tease out the specific groups that are experiencing increased knowledge about serious encounters with the police.



While the variation in personal negative experiences with the police (and/or experiences of someone close) appears to vary across cities ranging from 12% (Newport News) to 33% (Portsmouth)—the relationship is not statistically significant and may well have resulted from sampling variation. It is also important to note that the total sample size is lower than most previous years reducing statistical power to detect small but potentially important differences. Further, although these analyses focus on Hampton Roads as a whole, sample sizes for the individual cities vary considerably and even with the appropriate weighting, we encourage caution with making comparisons between cities with relatively small sample sizes.

Knowledge of someone else’s negative experiences with the police in the community, in turn, does significantly vary by city. Knowledge of negative encounters with the police in Suffolk and Newport News were relatively low (both about 37%) while Chesapeake and Virginia Beach were slightly higher but still under half of respondents (40% and 44%, respectively). Hampton (53%), Norfolk (58%) and Portsmouth (68%) all have a majority reporting that they knew someone in the community who had serious negative experiences with the police.

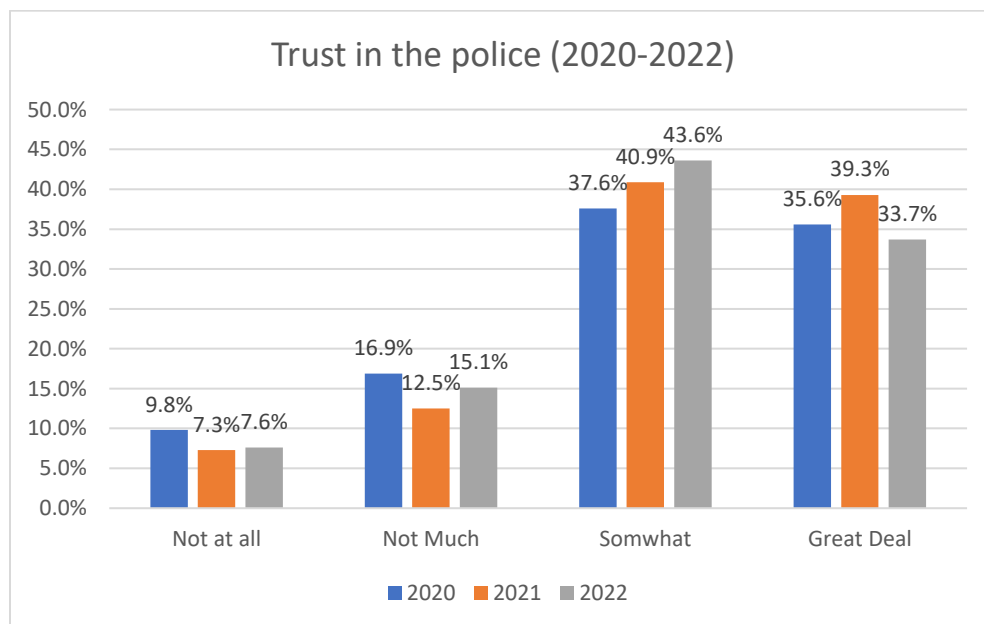
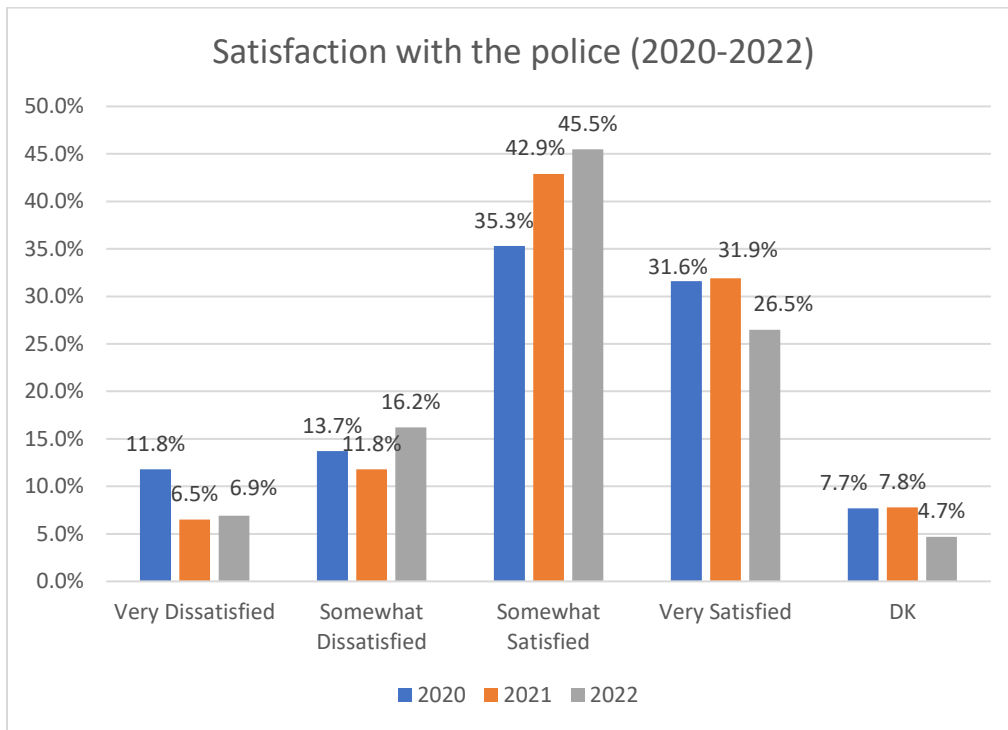


Satisfaction with and Trust in the Police

Hampton Roads residents were asked two questions focused on satisfaction with and trust in the police. These questions were also asked in 2020 and 2021. Over time just under one-third of the sample responded that they were very satisfied with the police and there appears to be recent decline in being very satisfied, from 32% in 2020 and 2021 to 27% in the most recent survey. While these number may appear relatively low, when we look at the percent somewhat satisfied, we add another 35-45% (over time) to the generally satisfied group. Thus in 2022, fully 72% of respondents reported that they are somewhat or very satisfied with the police and this is relatively consistent over the past few years.

There is also general trust with the police in the Hampton Roads area. Over the past three years consistently a third or more of respondents (33-39%) reported that they had a great deal of trust in the police. Another significant proportion ranging from 38% to 44% reported that they were somewhat trusting of the police. Combining these figures, we see that fully 77% were at least somewhat trusting of the police. Similar to satisfaction, it does appear that there are fewer people reporting a great deal of trust

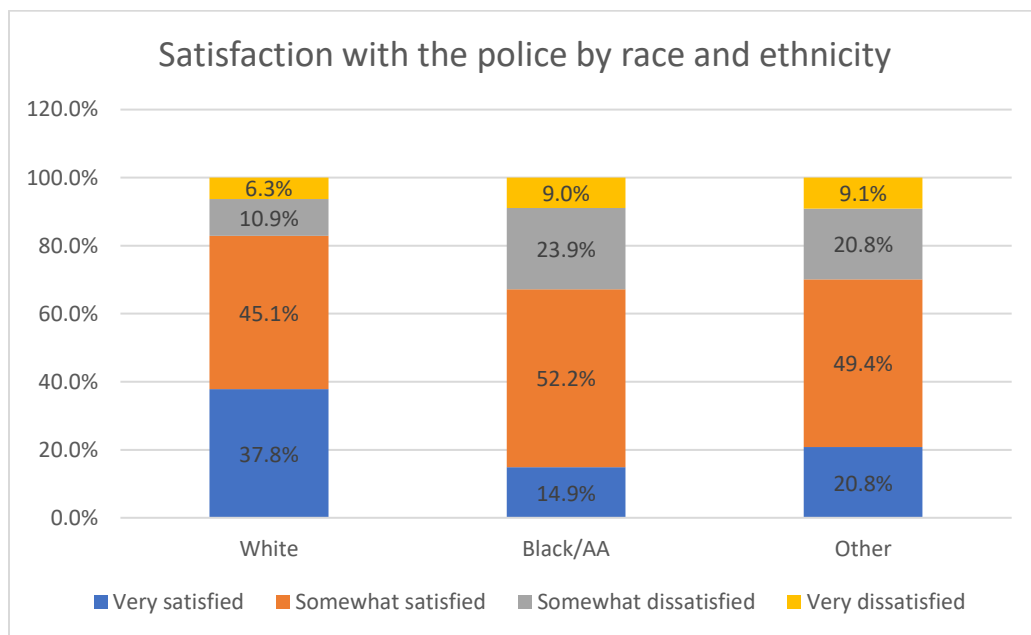
(39% in 2021 compared to 34% in 2022) with a slight increase in those reporting being somewhat trusting of the police (from 41% to 44%).



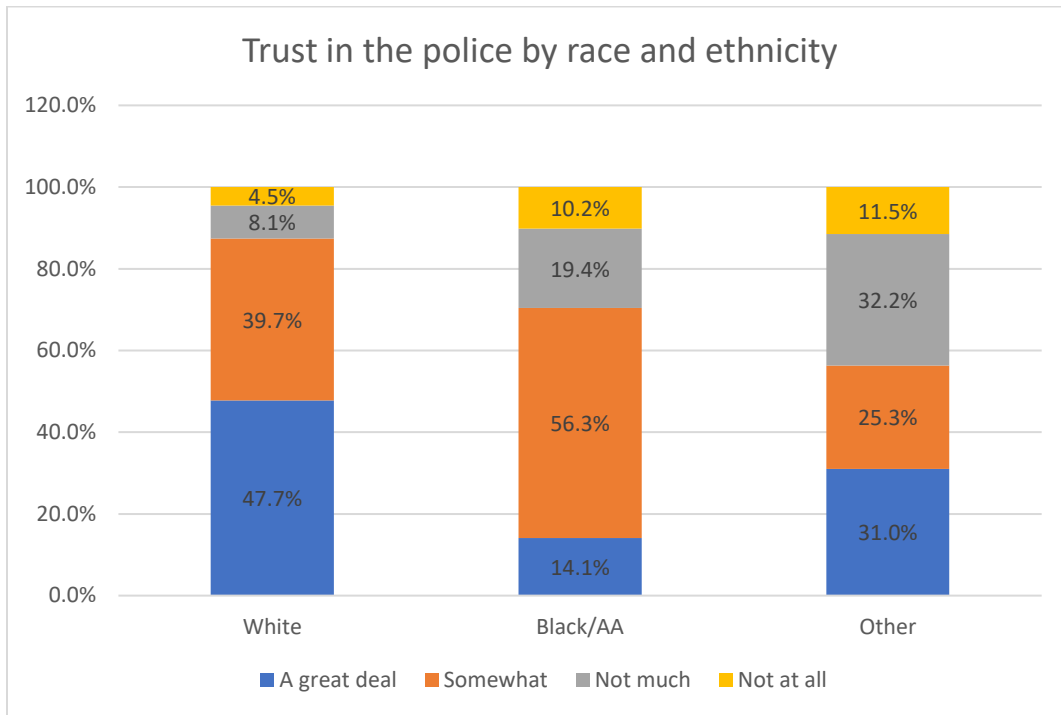
Satisfaction and Trust in the Policy by Race and Ethnicity

The Life in Hampton Roads survey data show that persons of color are more likely to experience serious negative encounters with the police than are whites. Past findings from the survey and empirical research nationwide support the hypotheses that persons of color are also less satisfied with and trusting of the police than are whites.

Results from the 2022 survey continue to show significant racial and ethnic disparities in satisfaction with the police. White respondents are more than twice as likely as African Americans to respond that they are very satisfied with the police and about 17% more likely than those identifying as other races. While a considerable number of African Americans and those characterized as other report being somewhat satisfied with the police, summing those two categories still shows white respondents (87%) being more satisfied with the police than African Americans (67.1%) or others (70.2%).

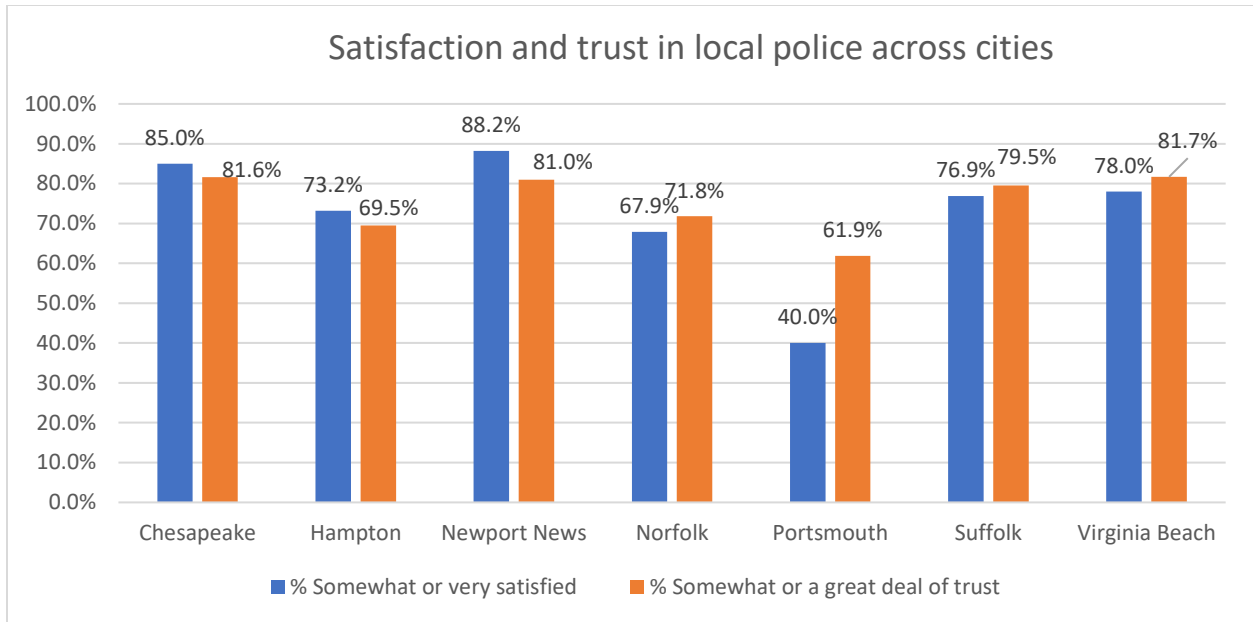


The story is largely replicated when we focus on trust in the police. Nearly half (48%) of whites say they have a great deal of trust in the police versus only 14% of African Americans and 31% of those responding as other races. Most white respondents (87%) trust the police somewhat or a great deal, while far fewer African Americans (70%) or those characterized as other (56%) hold such trust. Alternatively, twice as many African American (10%) and other races (12%) report that they have no trust at all in the police compared to whites (5%).



Perceptions of the Police by City

Both satisfaction and trust in the police varied significantly by city. More than three-quarters of respondents in Suffolk (77%), Virginia Beach (78%), Chesapeake (85%) reported being very or somewhat satisfied with the highest percentage in Newport News (88%). Less than three-quarters of respondents in Hampton (73%), Norfolk (68%) reported satisfaction with police with lowest in Portsmouth (40%). The trends were similar for trust with Chesapeake, Newport News, Virginia Beach and Suffolk all reporting between 80-82%, while Hampton (70%) Norfolk (72%) and Portsmouth (62%) all have ratings 10% to 20% lower.

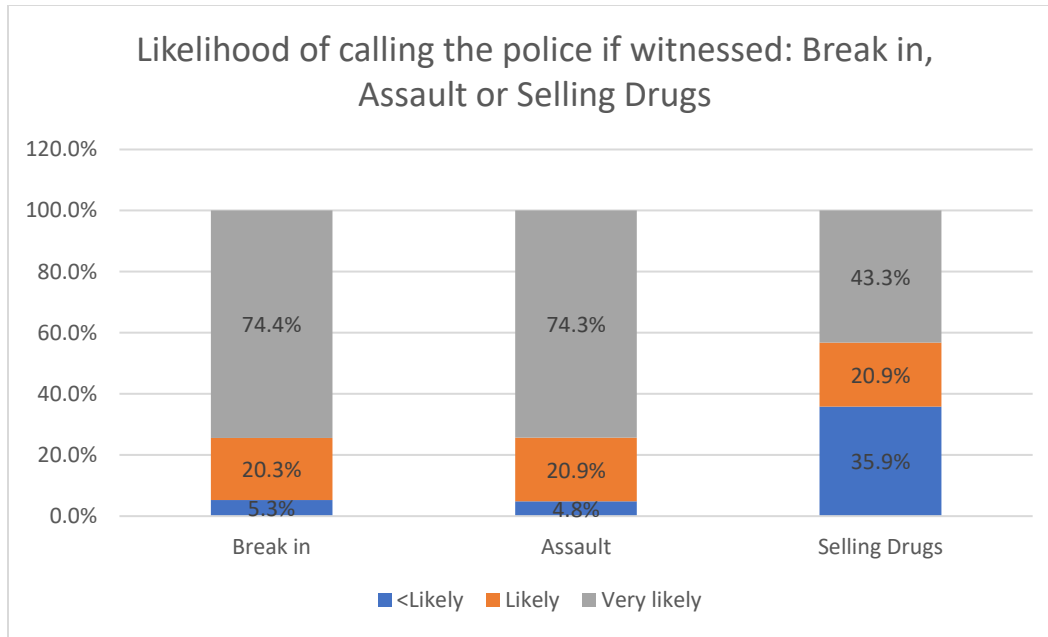


Willingness to Call the Police

Another way to estimate public attitudes towards the police is to assess their willingness to utilize their services. We asked survey respondents how likely they would be to call the police if they saw someone...

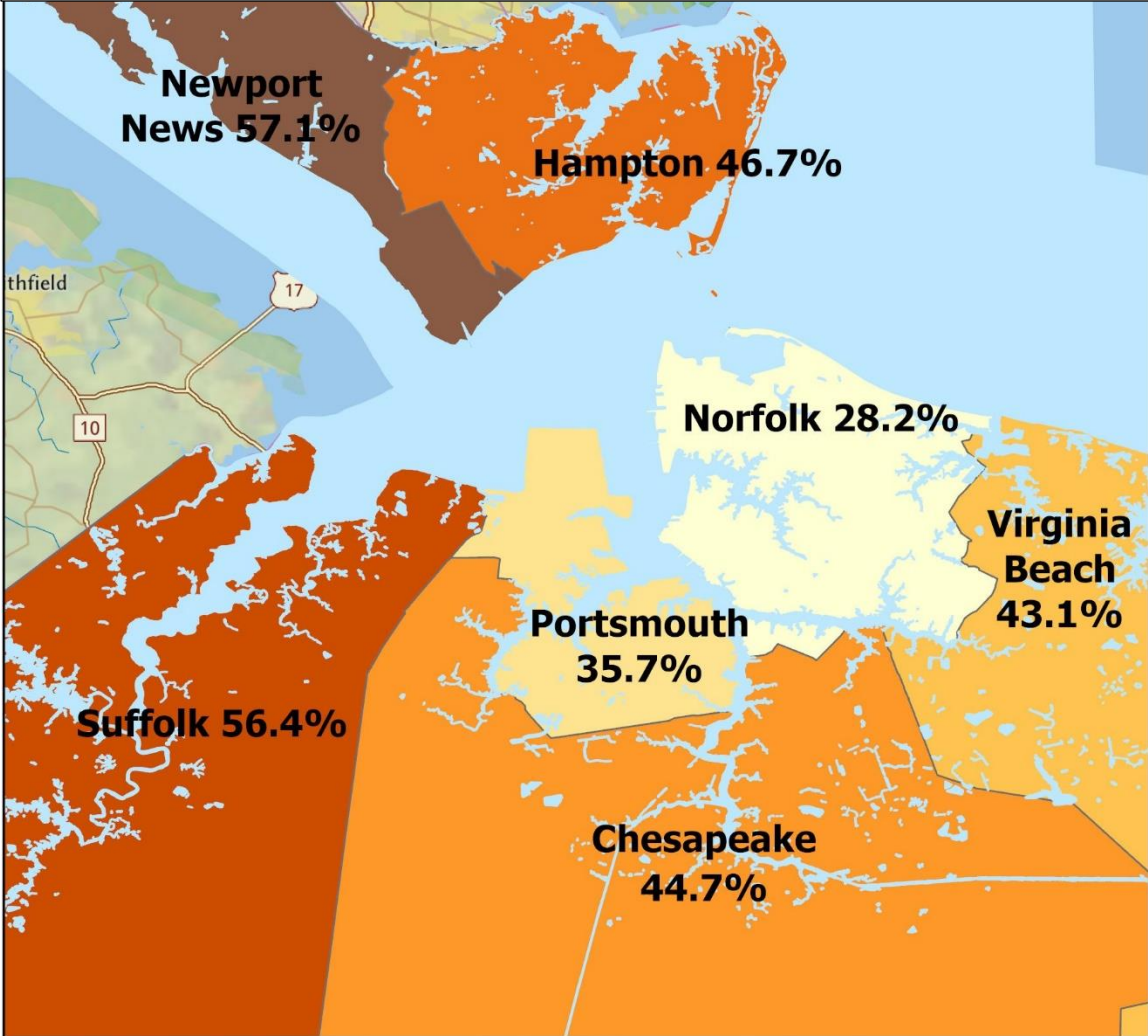
- Breaking into a home or building
- Assaulting someone
- Selling drugs

The response categories included: very unlikely, unlikely, neither likely nor unlikely, likely, or very likely. In general, we found that respondents were willing to call the police, especially in cases where someone was breaking into a home or building or if they witnessed someone assaulting another. Nearly three-quarters of the sample responded that they would be very likely to call the police in these two situations. Another 20-21%, totaling 94-95%, reported that they would be likely to call the police. The likelihood changes when we focus on witnessing someone selling drugs. A far smaller proportion of the sample reported they would be very likely (42%) or likely to call the police (20%) and fully 19% reported that they would be unlikely to call the police.



To explore these data further, we dichotomized the three variables to distinguish those who were very likely to report an offense to the police versus those less willing (e.g., very unlikely, unlikely, neither likely nor unlikely, and likely). The first two variables (breaking in and assault) did not significantly vary by cities across Hampton Roads. However, willingness to report witnessing someone selling drugs did vary significantly across cities. More than half of the respondents in Newport News (57%) and Suffolk (56%) would be very likely to call police if they saw someone selling drugs. Chesapeake, Hampton, and Virginia Beach all had between 43% and 47% of respondents indicating that they would call the police if they saw someone selling drugs. Finally, 36% of respondents from Portsmouth and 28% of respondents from Norfolk reported that they would call the police in a situation involving drug dealing.

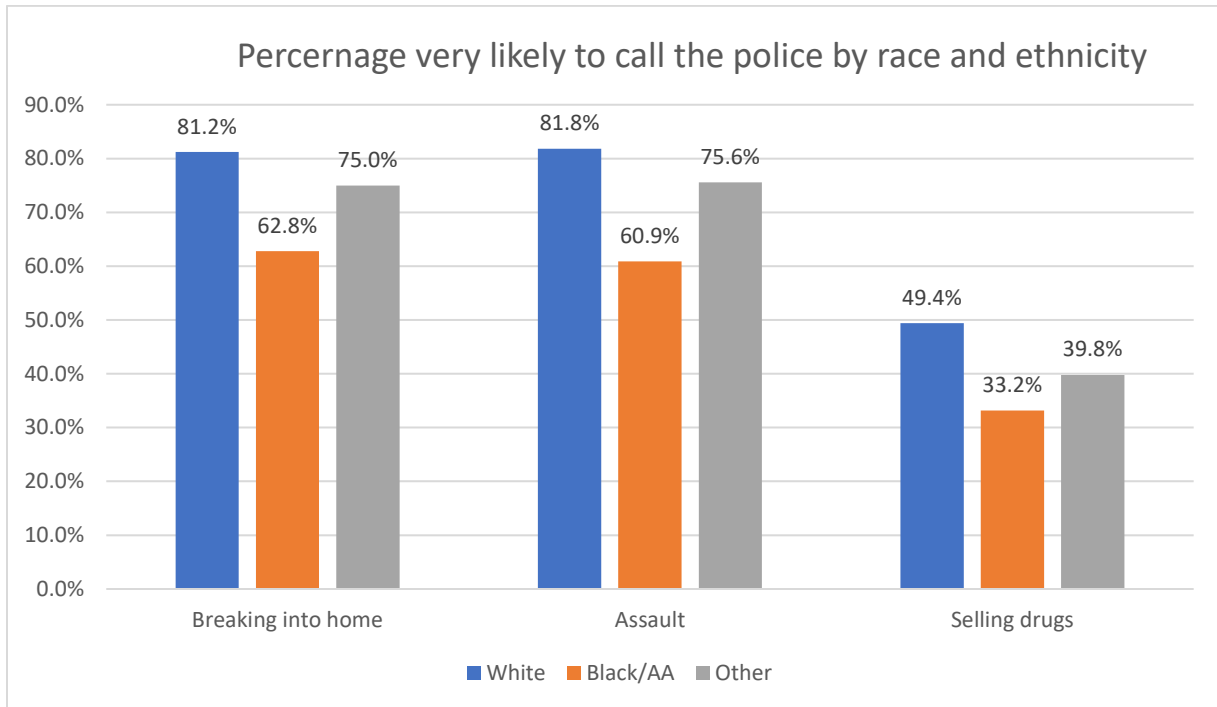
Percent reporting that they would call the police if they saw someone selling drugs



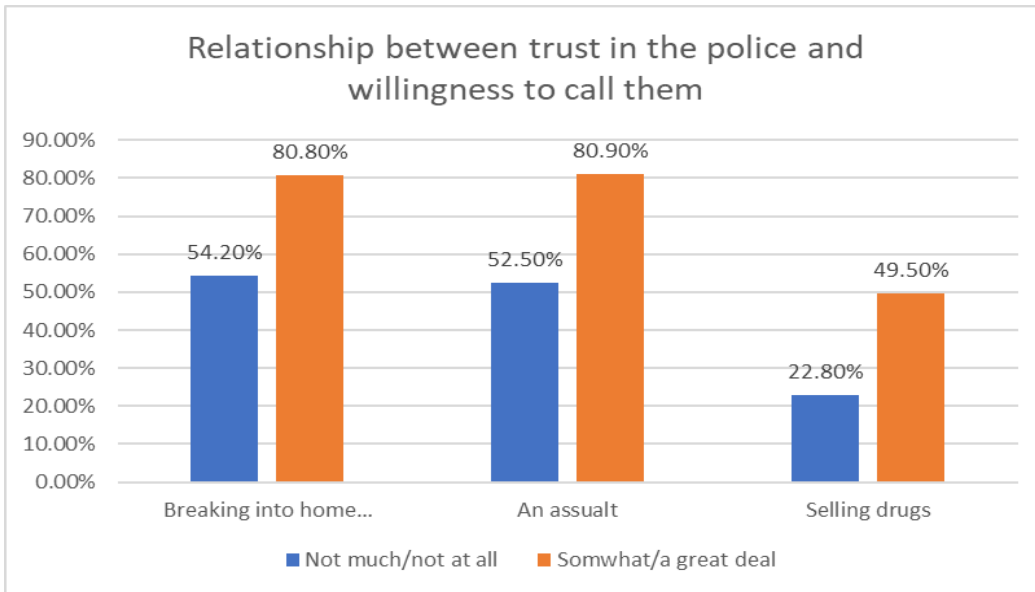
Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, Sources: Esri, USGS, City of Portsmouth, VA, VGIN, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS

Using the same dichotomization (very likely versus all other categories) we examined respondents’ willingness to call the police in the three situations described earlier by race. Here we find relatively strong and statistically significant differences by race. Most white respondents (81-82%) responded that they would call the police in cases of someone breaking into a home or building or seeing a person being assaulted while a much lower percentage of African American respondents indicated the same (63% and 61%, respectively). Respondents of other race/ethnicities are also less likely than white respondents to call the police in cases of breaking/entering and assault (75% and 76%, respectively). In the third

situation, witnessing the selling of drugs, white respondents are much less likely to be willing to call the police (49%) than in the other situations, but so are African Americans (33%) and those of other races (40%). These results suggest relatively strong differences between racial groups.



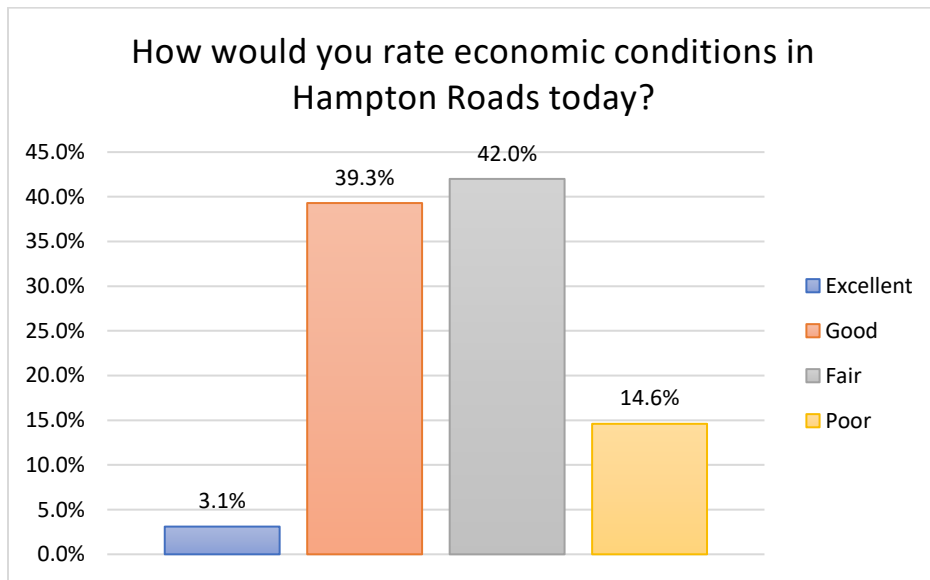
While a full multivariate analysis of these findings is beyond the scope of this general summary report, the data show shown that African American respondents have more negative experiences with the police and are less satisfied and trusting of the police. Bivariate statistical analyses suggest willingness to call the police in each of these situations is correlated with both negative experiences with the police as well as trust and satisfaction with the police. Importantly, we find that while negative experiences and satisfaction with the police are significantly correlated with willingness to call the police, trust in the police is the strongest factor affecting willingness to call. Those who trust the police (somewhat or a great deal) are about 25% more likely to report being willing to call the police if witnessing a break-in or an assault than those having less trust in the police. Further, while respondents were less likely to report being willing to call the police when witnessing someone selling drugs, those who report great trust in the police were about 27% more likely than those less trusting to call the police.



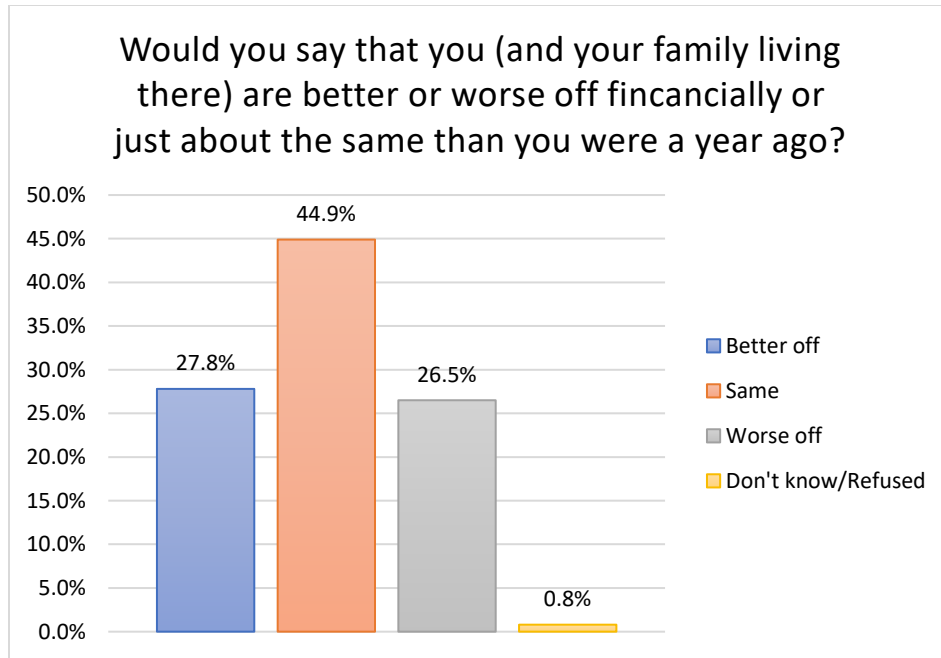
The Economy & Employment

Economy

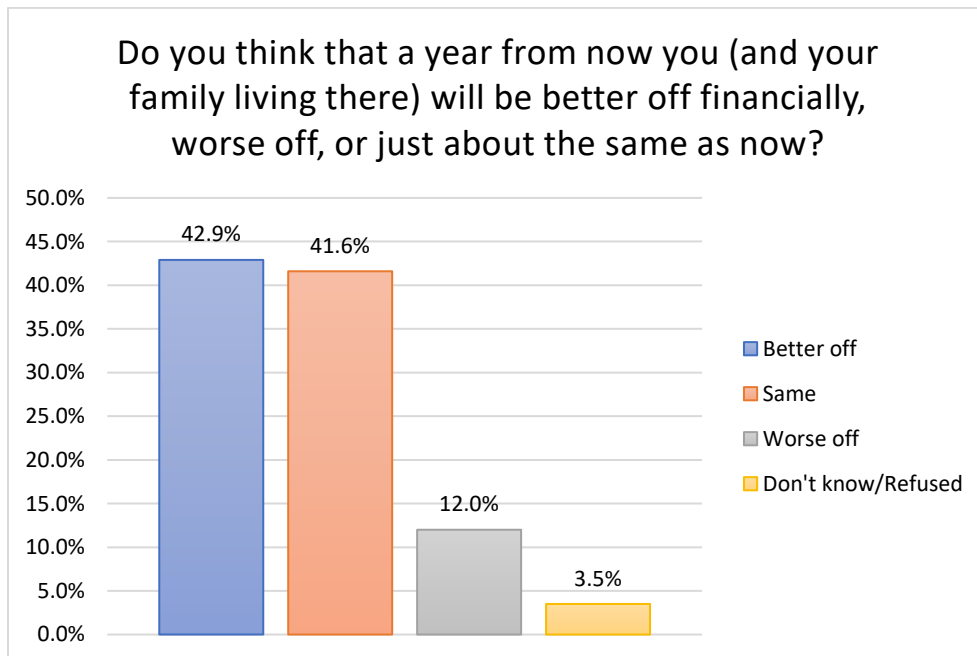
Hampton Roads residents had mixed perceptions of the economy but showed some optimism about their own financial situation. Less than half (42.4%) of those surveyed rated the economic conditions in Hampton Roads as excellent (3.1%) or good (39.3%). A similar percentage (42.0%) rated economic conditions as fair and 14.6% rated them as poor. Interestingly, despite the impacts of COVID-19, these ratings are not much different than in past years of the survey, during or prior to the pandemic. For example, in 2021, 47.5% rated economic conditions as excellent or good and 41.4% rated them as fair.



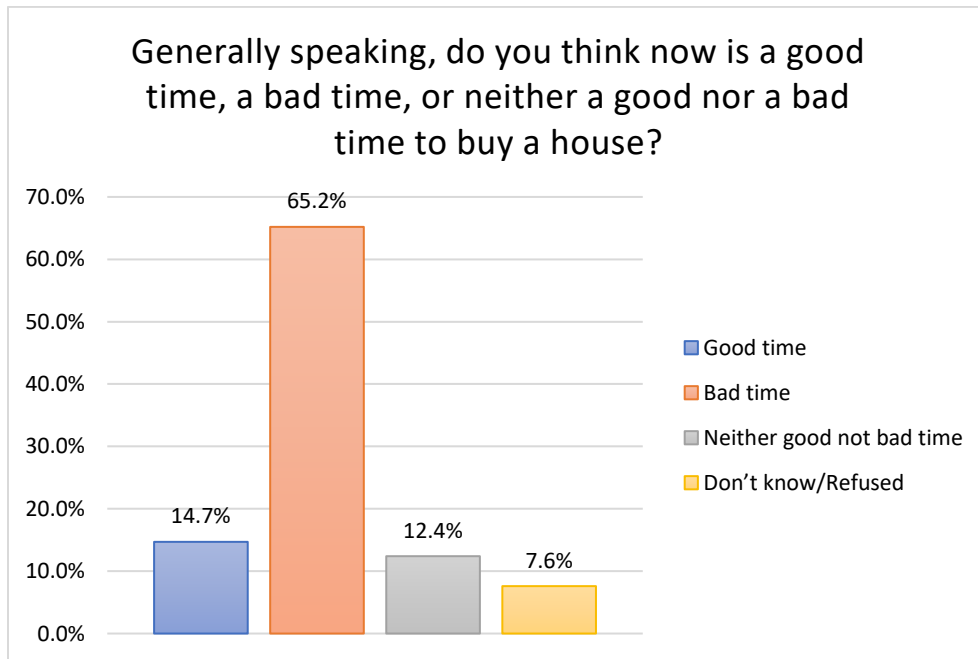
When asked if they and their family were better or worse off financially compared to a year ago, 27.8% reported that they were better off and 44.9% reported that they were about the same. About 26.5% indicated that they and their family were worse off. These numbers show a slightly less positive view of residents' financial standing compared to 2021 (24.1% thought they were better off and 56.0% thought they were about the same).



Respondents showed some optimism for the future, with 42.9% indicating that they think they and their family will be better off financially a year from now. More than 40 percent (48.3%) think they will be the same and 12.0% think they will be worse off. Residents are perhaps hopeful that the worst of the financial impacts of COVID-19 will not be long-lasting.

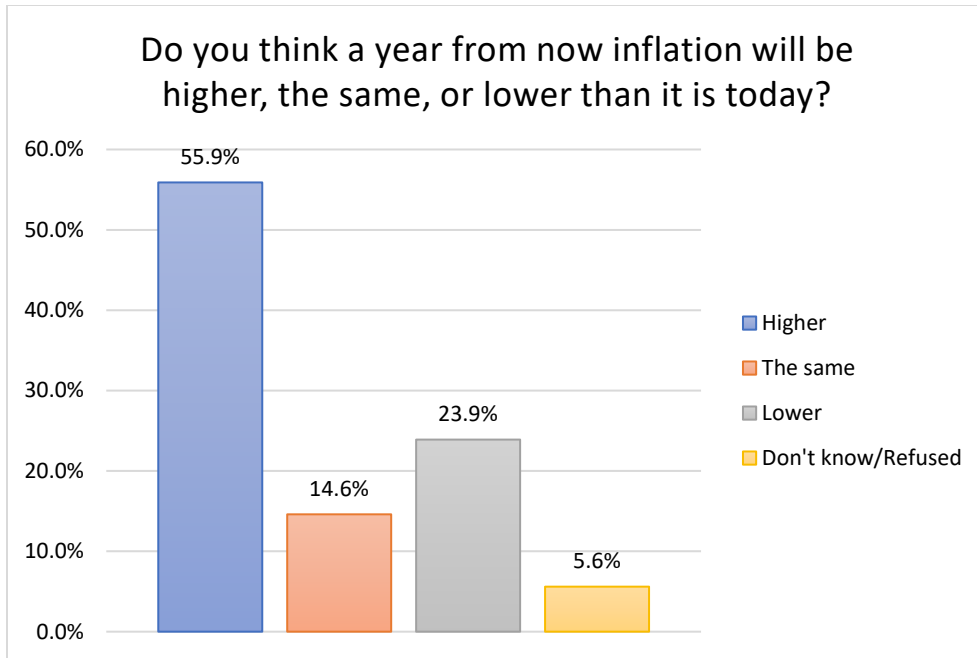


The outlook for home purchasing and inflation, however, may be less optimistic, with 65.2% of respondents saying that now is a bad time to buy a house and only 14.7% responding that it is a good time to buy. Only 12.4% think that it is neither a good nor bad time. This is a major decline from 2021 when 27.8% thought it was a good time to buy a house and only 41.3% thought it was a bad time to buy a house. These shifting sentiments perhaps reflect the impacts of rising interest rates and higher home prices.¹



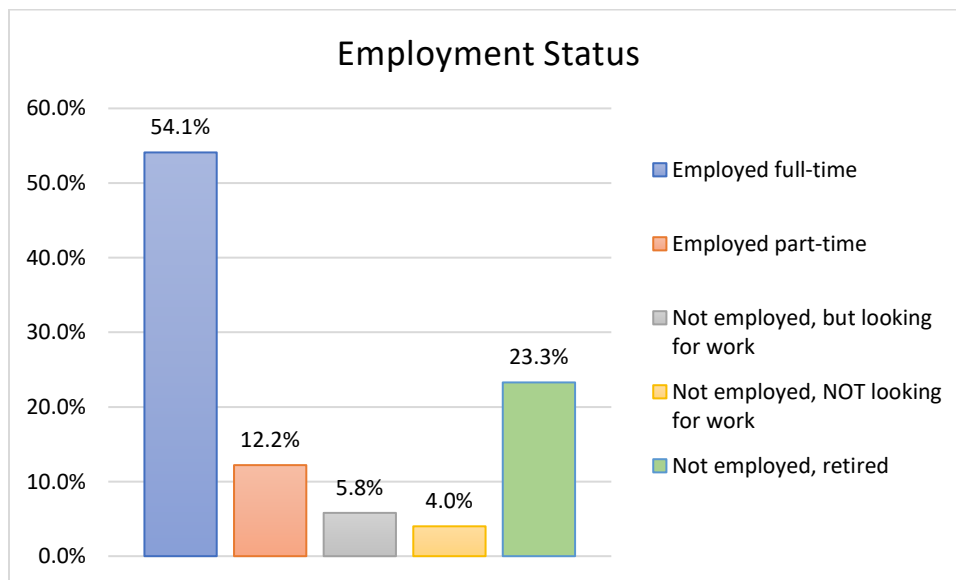
This year, respondents were asked if they thought inflation would be higher, the same, or lower than it is today a year from now. More than half of respondents stated that they thought inflation would be higher than it is today a year from now (55.9%) and 14.6% thought inflation would be about the same. Less than one-quarter of respondents thought inflation would be lower than it is today in a year (23.9%).

¹For example, see: <https://virginiarealtors.org/2022/02/24/where-are-home-prices-really-headed-in-2022/>



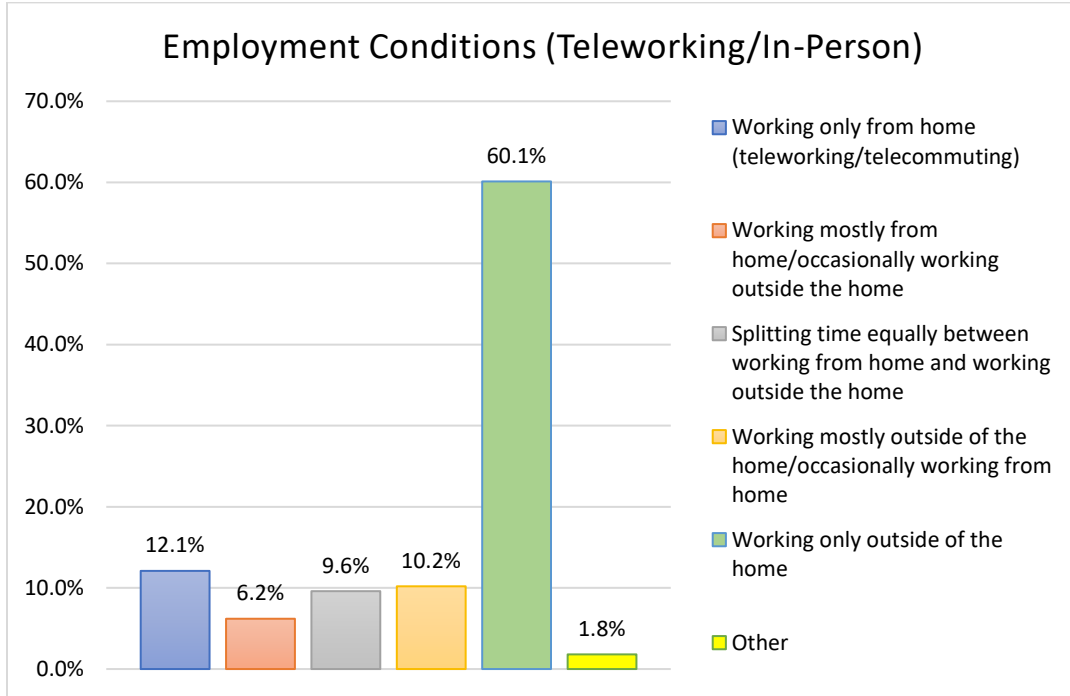
Employment

As can be seen from the graph below, more than half of those responding to this year's survey were employed full-time (54.1%) while another 12.2% were employed part-time. The percentage of respondents reporting being employed full-time increased since last year when the percentage was below 50% (47.8%). Almost one in four respondents were retired (23.3%). About 5% were not employed but looking for work while 4.0% were not employed and not looking for work.



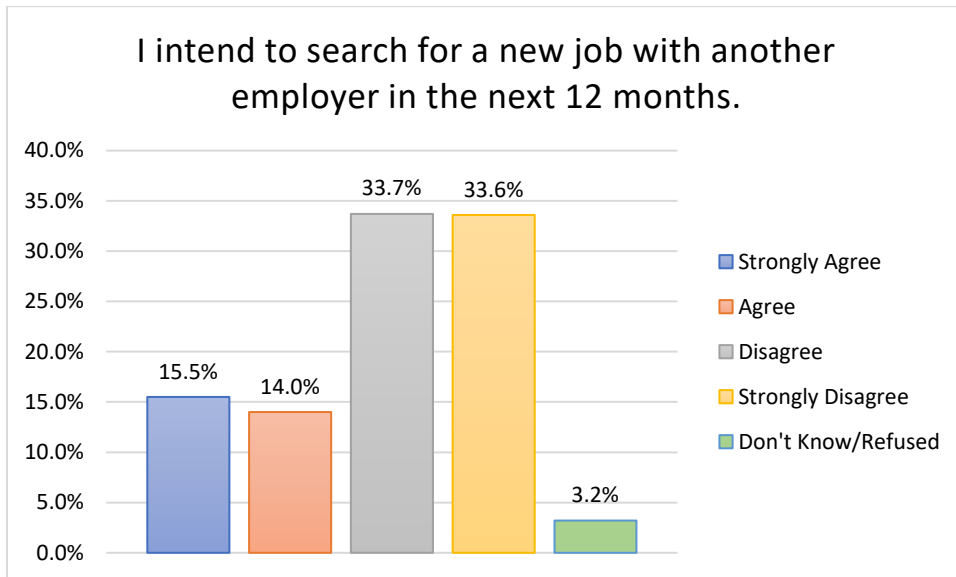
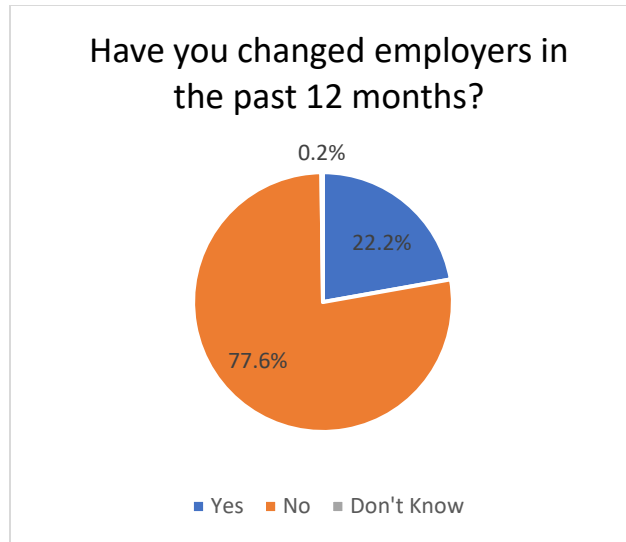
Three out of every five respondents who are working either full or part-time reported they are working only outside of the home and not doing any teleworking or telecommuting (60.1%). Another 12.1% said

they are working only from home and either teleworking or telecommuting. The remaining respondents reported either working mostly outside of the home (10.2%), splitting time equally between working from home and outside the home (9.6%), or working mostly from home (6.2%). Only 1.8% had some other arrangement.



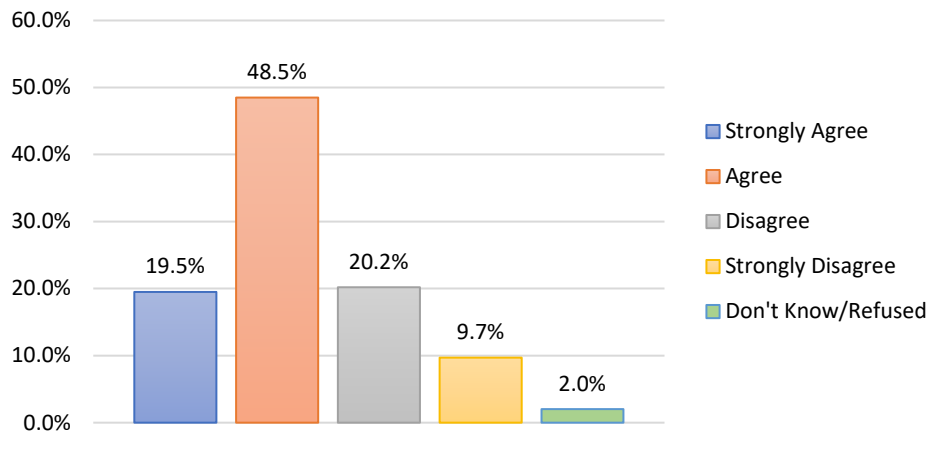
Respondents were asked to rate their level of work burnout on a scale of 0 to 10, with “0” meaning “not feeling burned out at all and “10” meaning “feeling completely burned out.” The average rate given for work burnout was 4.8. The most common ratings of work burnout reported were 0 (17.5%), 8 (13.0%), and 5 (12.1%).

Regarding recent or future job changes, more than three-quarters of respondents (77.6%) said they had not changed employers in the past 12 months, while 22.2% said they had changed employers in the past 12 months. A majority of respondents (67.3%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed that they intend to search for a new job with another employer in the next 12 months. Only 15.5% strongly agreed that they intended to search for a new job with another employer in the next 12 months and 14.0% agreed.



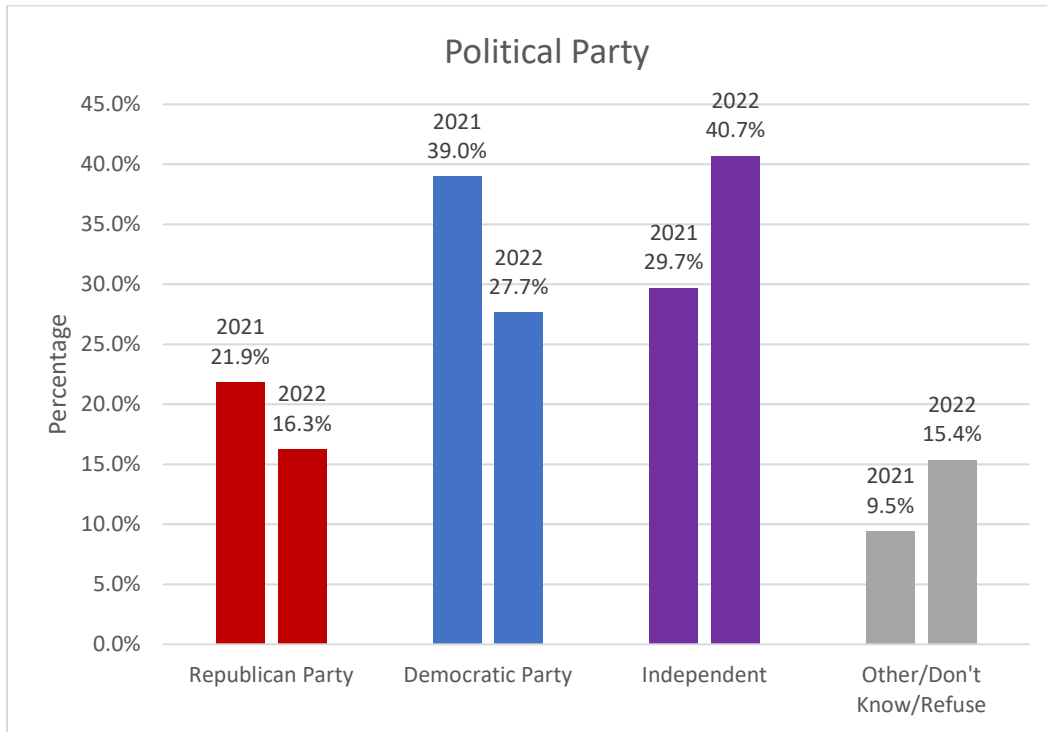
Generally, respondents seem fairly satisfied with the overall compensation at their current job. In fact, 48.5% agreed that they are satisfied with the overall compensation at their current job and another 19.5% strongly agreed. One in five did disagree that they are satisfied with their current overall compensation and 9.7% strongly disagreed.

I am satisfied with the overall compensation (or pay) at my current job.



Politics and Political Opinions

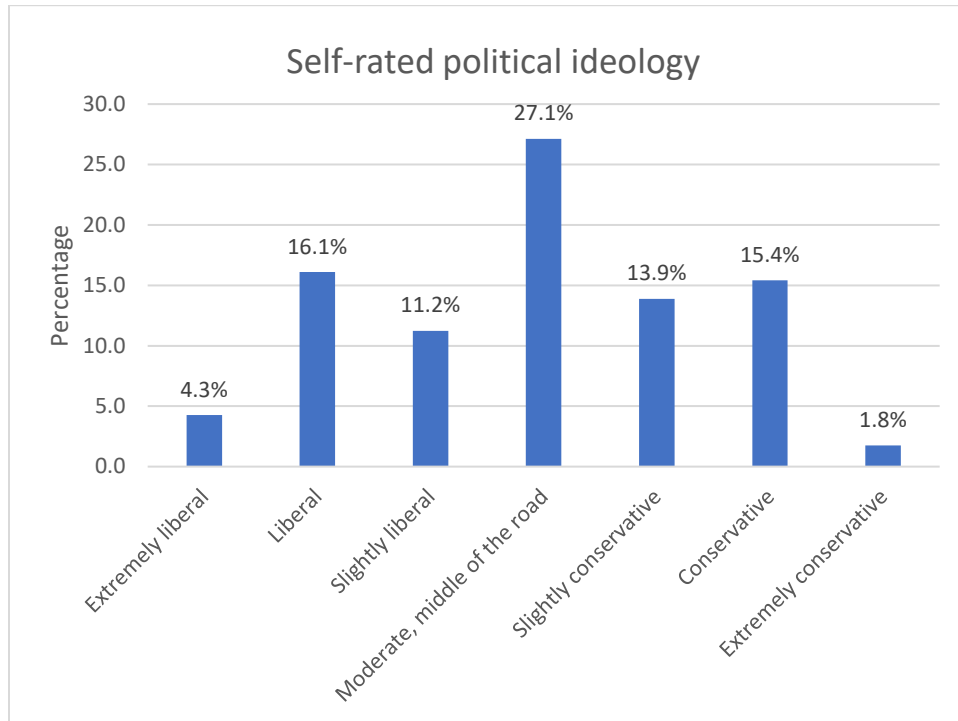
The Life in Hampton Roads survey always includes a few questions about political attitudes. In 2022 the questions asked included party affiliation, political ideology, job approval of President Biden, Governor Youngkin, and local mayors.



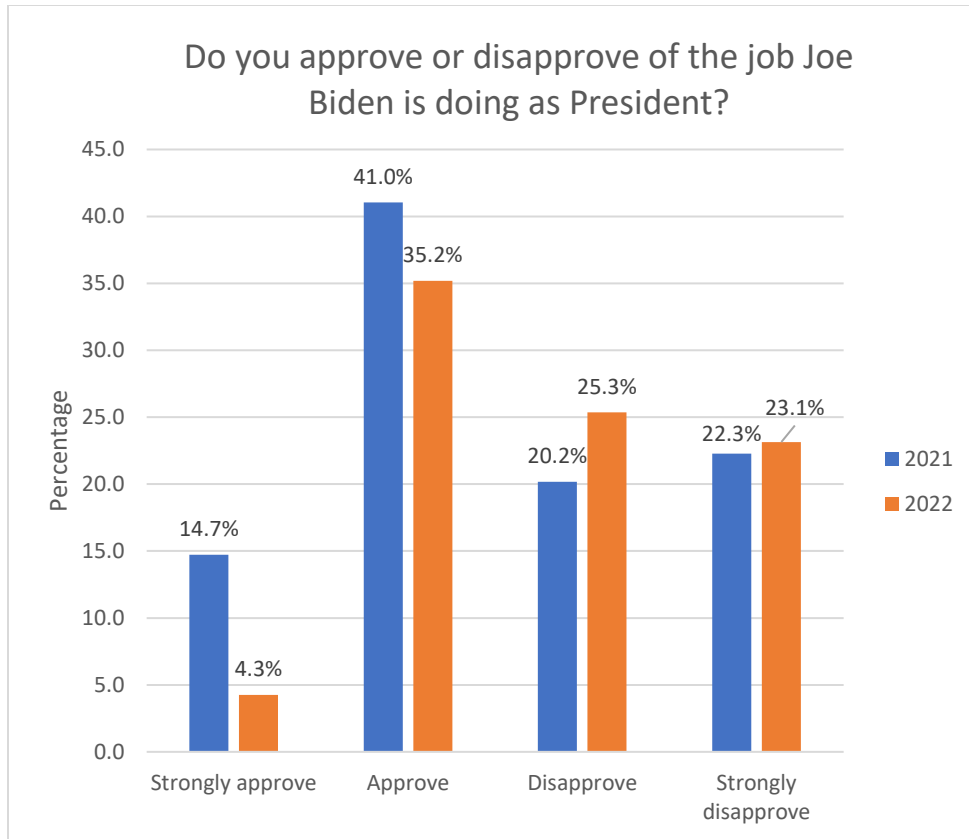
Political party affiliation among respondents to the survey continued to lean substantially towards the Democratic Party, in line with past surveys in Hampton Roads. Nearly twenty eight percent (27.7%) of respondents said they felt closest to the Democratic party when asked the question “Do you generally feel closer to the Democratic Party, the Republican Party, or do you consider yourself to be an independent or something else?” Approximately sixteen percent (16.3%) responded Republican Party. But this represents a substantial decline for both parties from last year, with the portion of respondents who indicated that they were political independents or affiliated with some other party surging to the highest levels we have seen in some time. Last year we found “a trend towards more individuals indicating a major party they felt closest to, especially on the Democratic side” but this trend seems to have sharply reversed in 2022 with a majority of individuals indicating that they are political independents or affiliated with some other party.

This year we also brought back a political ideology question that had not been asked for several years. Individuals were asked to describe their political views on a 7-point scale ranging from extremely liberal

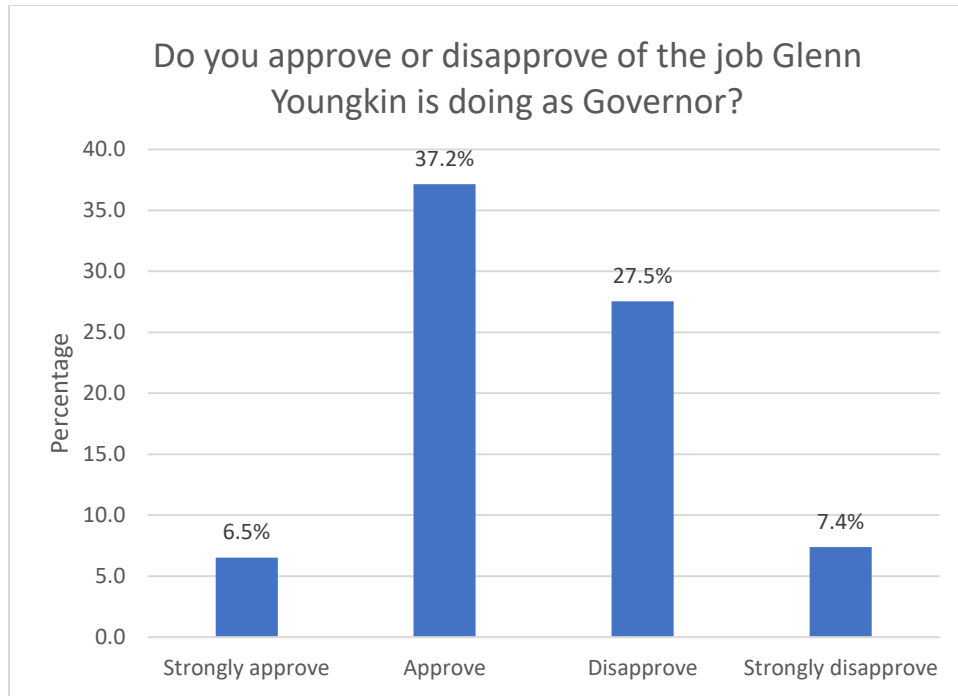
to extremely conservative. This item suggests that the region is quite balanced ideologically, with nearly equal numbers of liberals, moderates, and conservatives.



As can be seen in the figure, the largest group of respondents were those who said they were moderate (27.1%). The next largest groups were those who described themselves as Liberal (16.1%) and Conservative (15.4%). Overall, nearly thirty two percent (31.6%) of respondents described themselves as Liberal (summing across the three liberal categories), and slightly more than thirty one percent (31.1%) of respondents described themselves as conservative. Roughly one in ten respondents either refused to state their ideology (6.6%) or indicated that they did not know (3.6%).



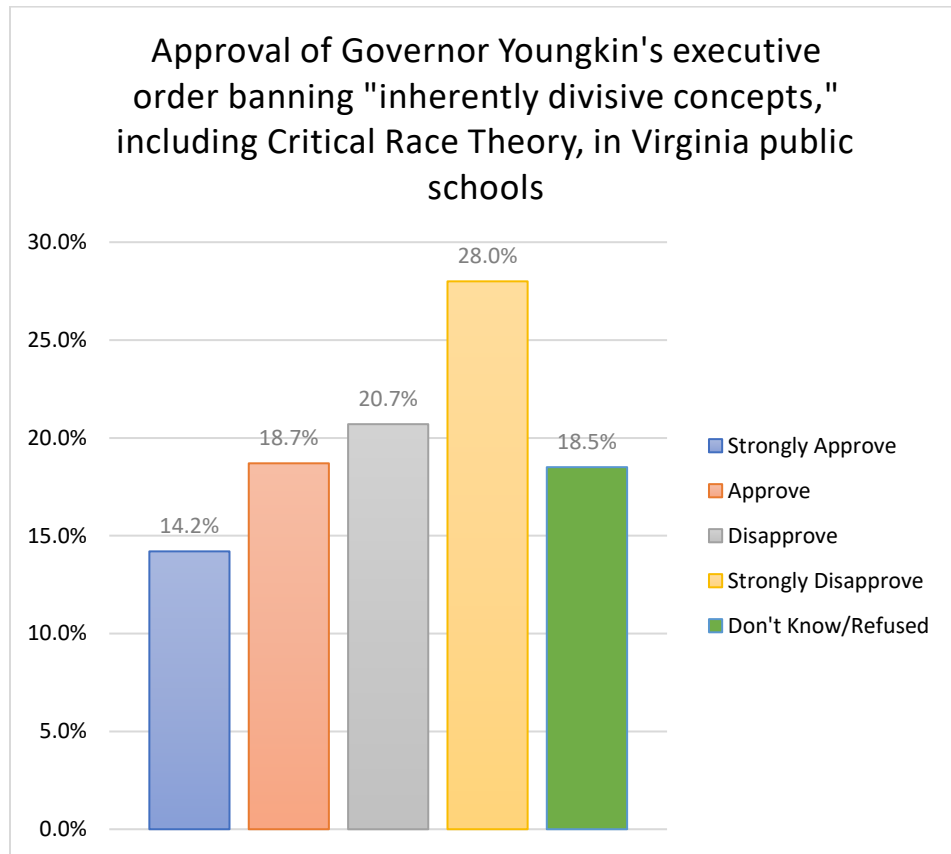
Overall, respondents' attitudes towards President Joe Biden's job performance were down from the 2021 survey, in line with changing national trends in the president's approval rate. The percentage who strongly approved of Biden's job performance dropped by about ten percent (from 14.7% to 4.3%), and the percentage who approved also dropped by more than five percent (from 41% to 35.2%).



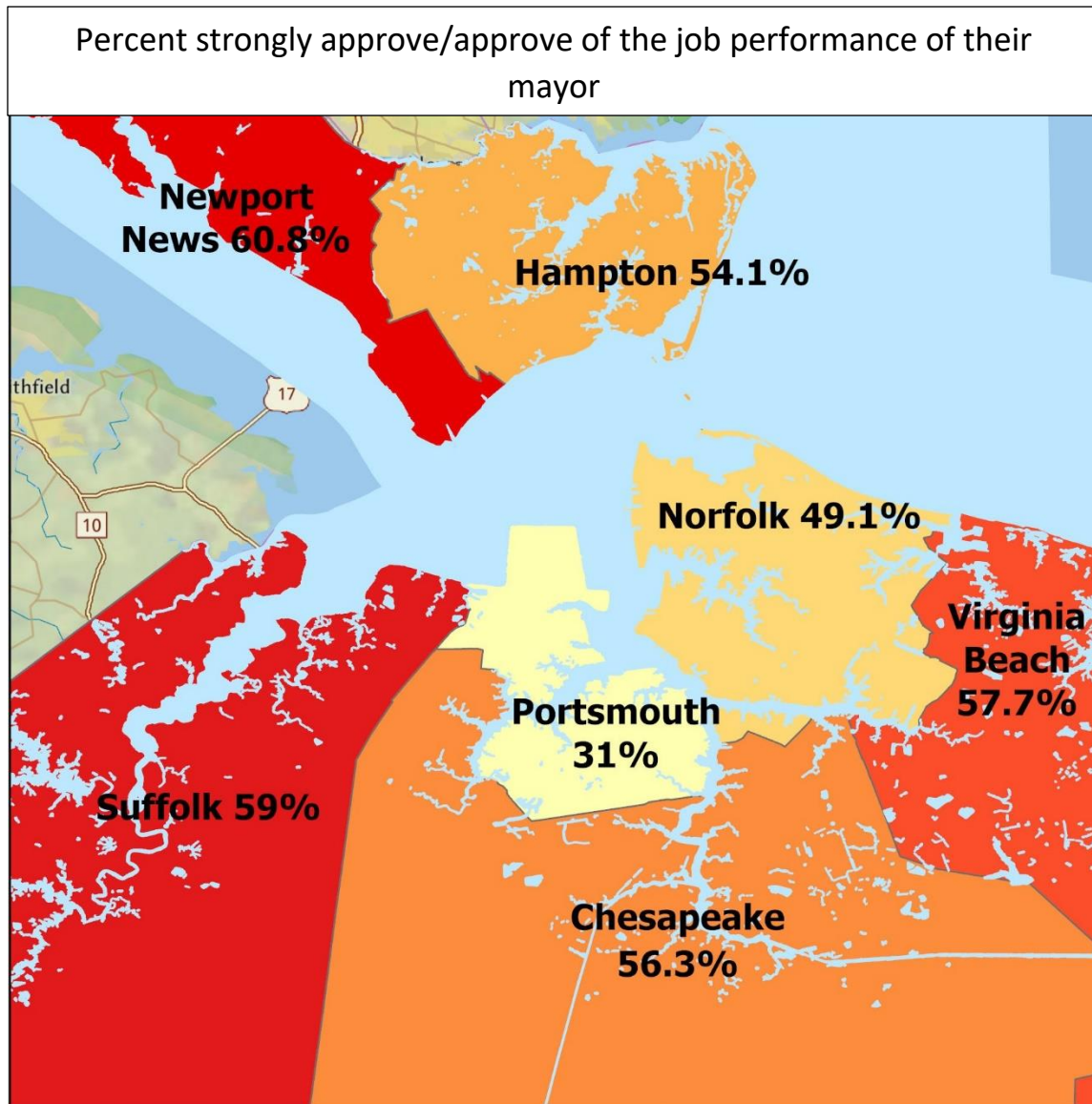
At the time that the survey was conducted, Glenn Youngkin had been on the job as governor for several months. Opinion of Youngkin’s job performance was mixed, with almost forty-four percent (43.7%) approving or strongly approving, and nearly 35 percent (34.9%) disapproving or strongly disapproving. More than twenty percent of respondents indicated that they either did not know (15.7%) or refused to answer (5.6%). Since Youngkin received roughly forty five percent of the vote in the November 2021 gubernatorial election within the 7 cities surveyed (217,129 out of 479,886 votes), this level of approval seems consistent with neither major gains nor losses in popularity for the governor at this point in his administration.

One of the issues that Governor Youngkin campaigned on was education, and an early action by the governor in this area involved an executive order banning “inherently divisive concepts” including Critical Race Theory in Virginia public schools. Evaluations of this action were much more negative than overall evaluations of the governor, and also divided the governor’s support base to a somewhat greater degree than his opponents. Approximately one third (32.9%) of respondents indicated that they approved or strongly approved of the order, but nearly half (48.7%) disapproved. As with the gubernatorial job approval question, a substantial portion of respondents indicated that they did not know or refused to answer the question (18.5%). The executive order divided the governor’s supporters. Almost a quarter of the respondents who *approved or strongly approved* of the governor’s job performance *disapproved or strongly disapproved* of the executive order (23.6%), whereas only one out of every fifteen respondents (6.7%) who disapproved or strongly disapproved the overall job performance of the governor approved of

the executive order. Responses to the question broke down predictably along partisan and ideological lines, with only a few Republicans (13.4%) disapproving or strongly disapproving the action, and even fewer Democrats (7.4%) approving. Similarly, only a handful of respondents who identified as liberal or extremely liberal approved or strongly approved the action (4.6%) while a substantially larger portion of conservative or extremely conservative respondents disapproved or strongly disapproved (21.1%).



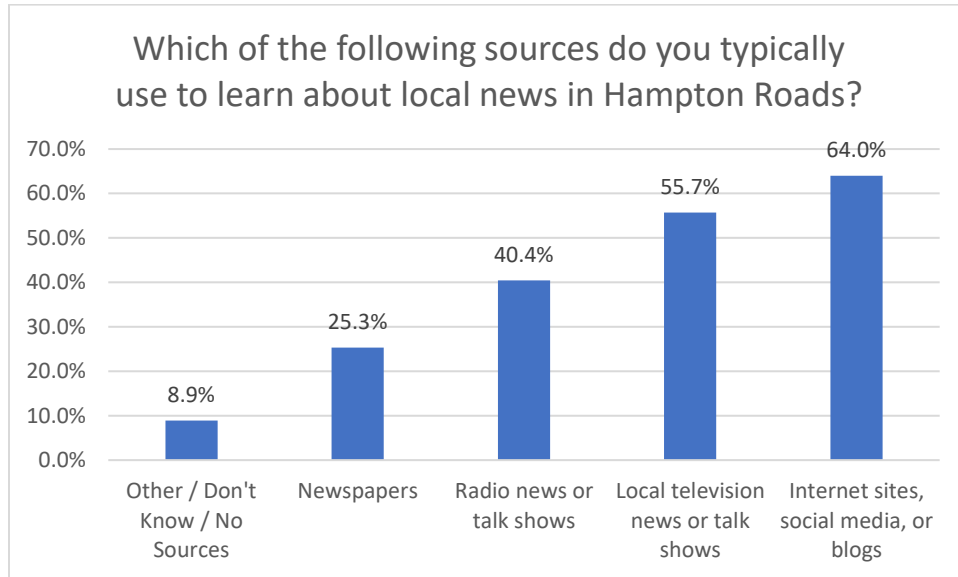
We also asked about mayoral job approval. Responses to this question were relatively strong for most mayors. Overall, 54.2% percent indicated that they approved/strongly approved with only seventeen percent (16.9%) voicing disapproval. We observed similar patterns for most regional cities, except for Portsmouth. Only 31.0% of Portsmouth residents surveyed indicated that they approved of “the job your local mayor is doing” while fifty seven percent (57.1%) indicated that they disapproved. It is important to remember that the overall sample sizes here are quite small at the city level – only 38 individual Portsmouth residents responded to the survey. Nonetheless, the data seems to suggest that while the residents of most cities are relatively happy with the job performance of their mayor, Portsmouth residents appear to be an exception.



Esri, CGIAR, USGS, Sources: Esri, USGS, City of Portsmouth, VA, VGIN, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS

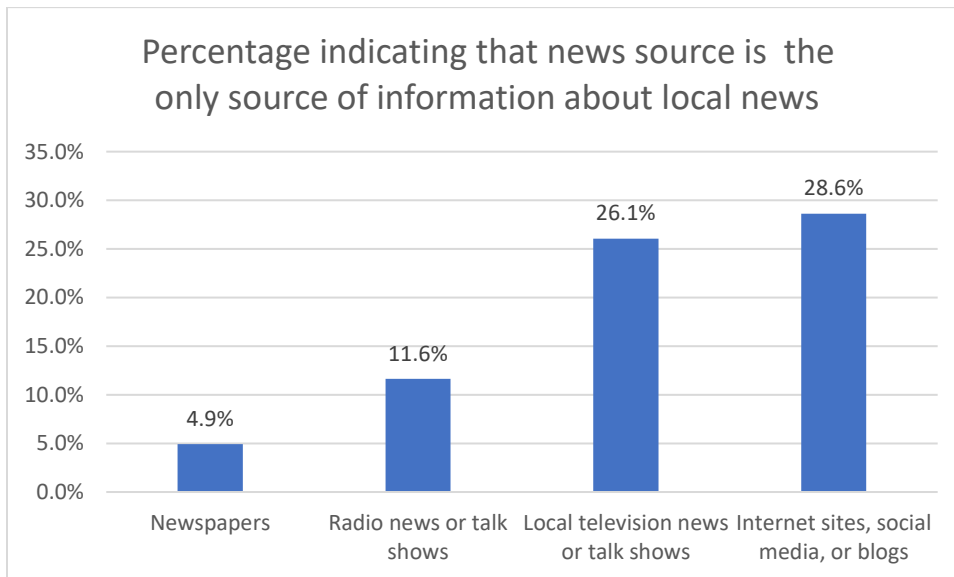
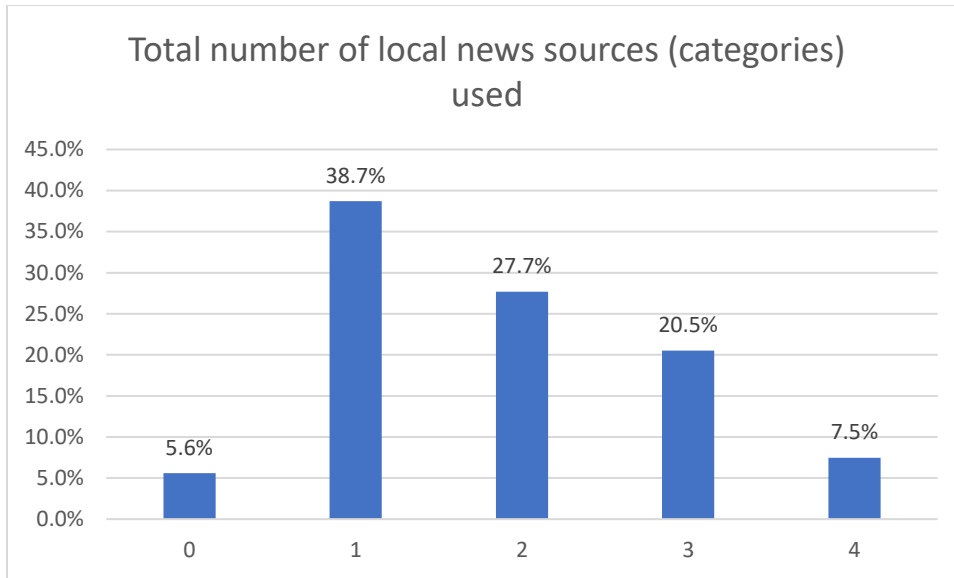
News Sources

This year for the first time, respondents were asked to identify their sources of information about local news with the question “Which of the following sources do you typically use to learn about local news in Hampton Roads?” Respondents could select all that applied from among the following options: local television news; newspapers; internet sites, social media, or blogs; radio news or talk shows; and other. Respondents could also indicate that they do not obtain local Hampton Roads news as well as “don’t know” or “refused”.



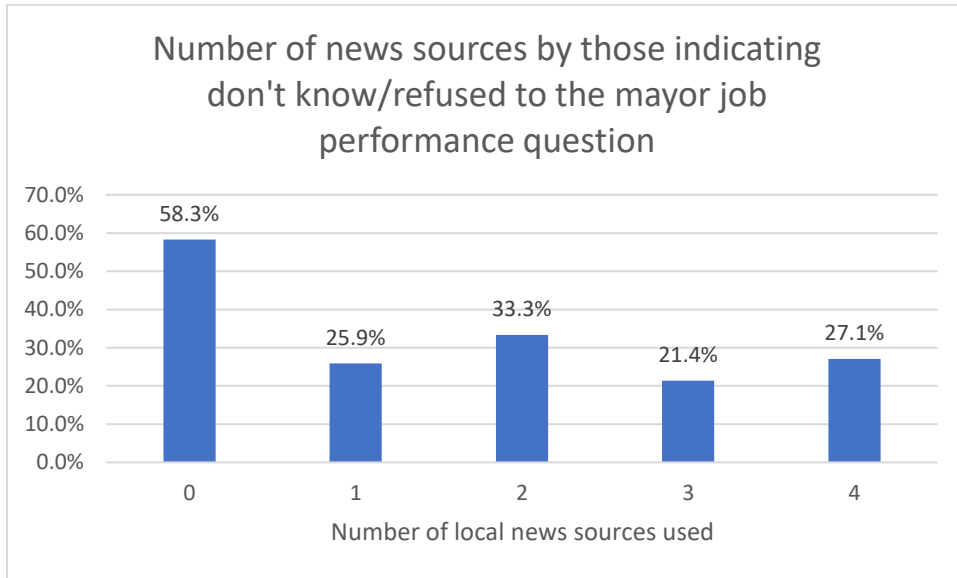
Most respondents selected at least one news source. Among the four sources, newspapers had the smallest share, with one in four respondents (25.3%) indicating that they use newspapers to learn about local news. Radio news (40.4%) and local television news or talk shows (55.7%) had substantially larger proportions, and internet sites, social media, or blogs were the most common source, used by almost two thirds of respondents (64%).

Slightly more than half of respondents named at least two news sources (55.7%) and slightly more than a third of respondents (38.7%) named only one news source. There were striking differences across the news sources in the frequency with which the news source was the only source of information. Only five percent of newspaper readers had the newspaper as their only source. By contrast, more than a quarter of respondents who relied on local television (26.1%) and the internet (28.6%) had no other source of information.



Does it matter how many sources of information one has about local news? More than a quarter of respondents to the local mayor job approval question indicated that they either did not know (22.5%) or that they refused to answer (6.4%). Perhaps unwillingness or inability to answer the local mayor job performance question reflects a lack of information about that performance, in part due to consuming minimal amounts of local news. More than half of the respondents who consult none of the four categories of news sources did not express an opinion about the job performance of their local mayor (58.3%) while a third or less of the respondents in all other categories did not evaluate the job

performance of their local mayor. Failure to attend to local news may render citizens less able to effectively participate in local politics.²

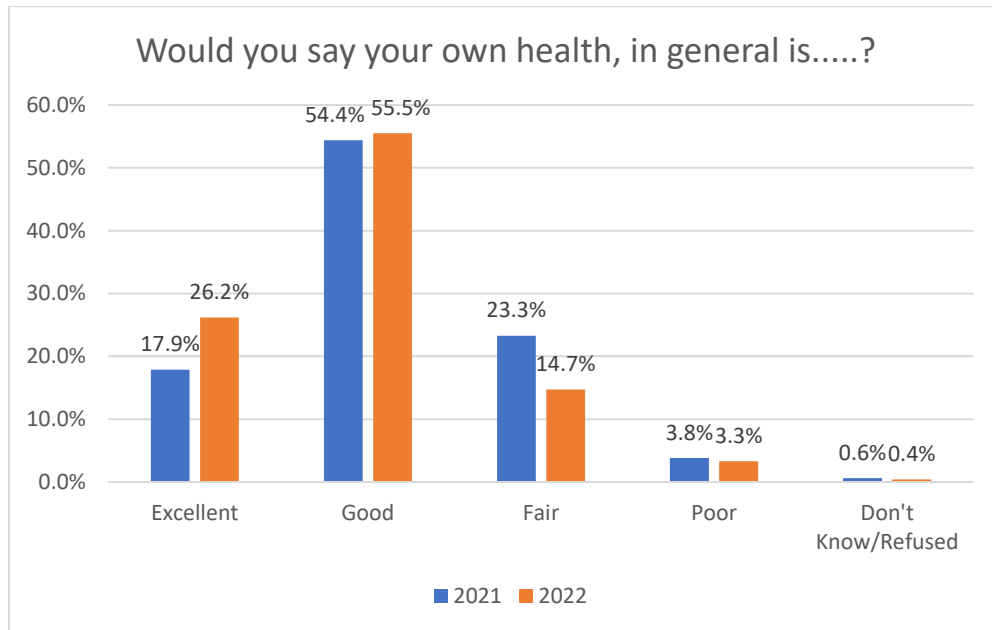


² Across the different news sources, those who consulted any news source were more likely to answer the mayor job approval question. But the difference was only statistically significant ($p < 0.1$) for newspapers and local television news, and the effect was largest (and most statistically significant) for local television news. One-third (33.9%) of respondents who did not watch local TV news failed to rate their local mayor's job performance, while only 25 percent of those who did watch failed to rate mayoral job performance.

Health, Education & Welfare of Hampton Roads

Health, COVID-19, and Climate Change

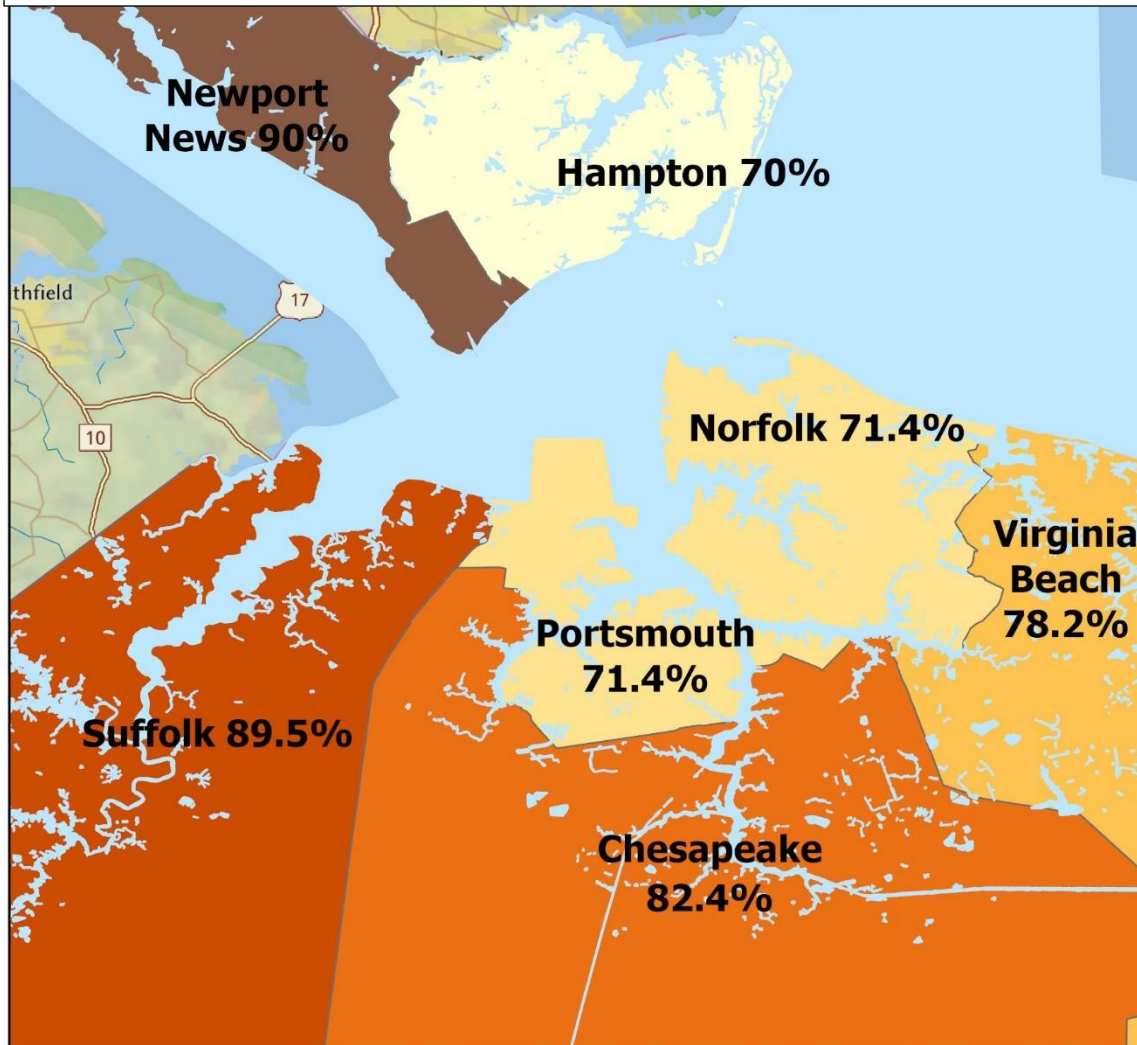
More than 81% of respondents rated the quality of their own health as excellent (26.2%) or good (55.5%). This is about 9% higher than last year (72%) with most of the increase being in the excellent category going from 17.9% to 26.2%. Thus, we are seeing an increase in self-reported good/excellent health close to levels reported pre-pandemic (e.g., from 82% in 2017).



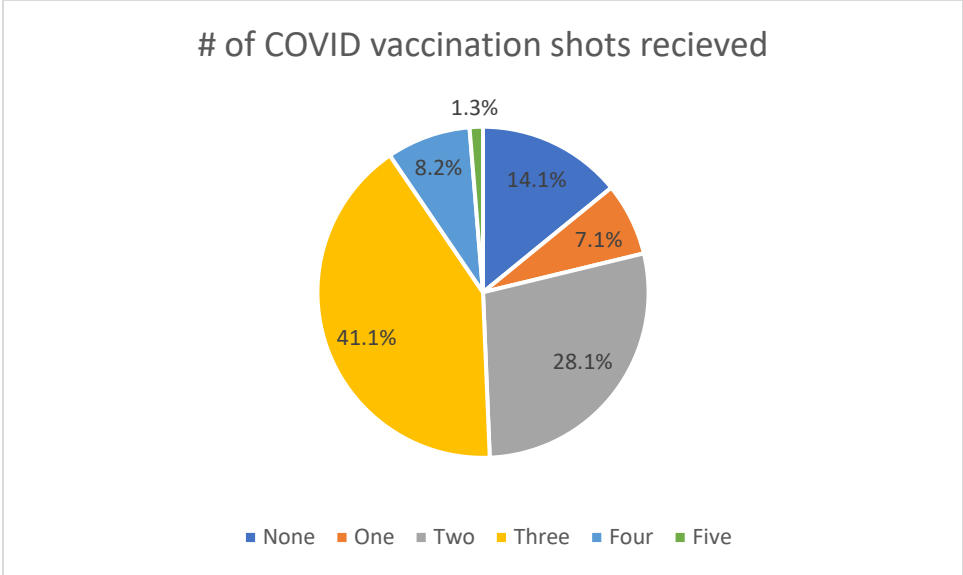
Last year, in the 2021 survey, Hampton Roads residents were asked if they had been vaccinated with at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine and 74.1% indicated yes and this year 85.2% reported they had received at least one dose – an increase of more than 10%. Last year, 69.9% of respondents indicated that they were fully vaccinated (defined as two shots) and 25% indicated that they were not vaccinated (even partially). This year, the number of fully vaccinated residents rose to 78.6% and only 14.1% had received no vaccinations. This past year, half of the sample (50.6%) reported getting at least one booster, that is, three or more shots.

There was significant variation across cities in the proportion of people who were fully vaccinated this past year (2 doses or more). A solid majority of Hampton (70%), Norfolk and Portsmouth (both 71%) respondents reported being fully vaccinated. The rates were even higher in Virginia Beach (78%) and Chesapeake (82%). About 90% of residents in Suffolk and Newport News had received full vaccinations by the summer of 2022.

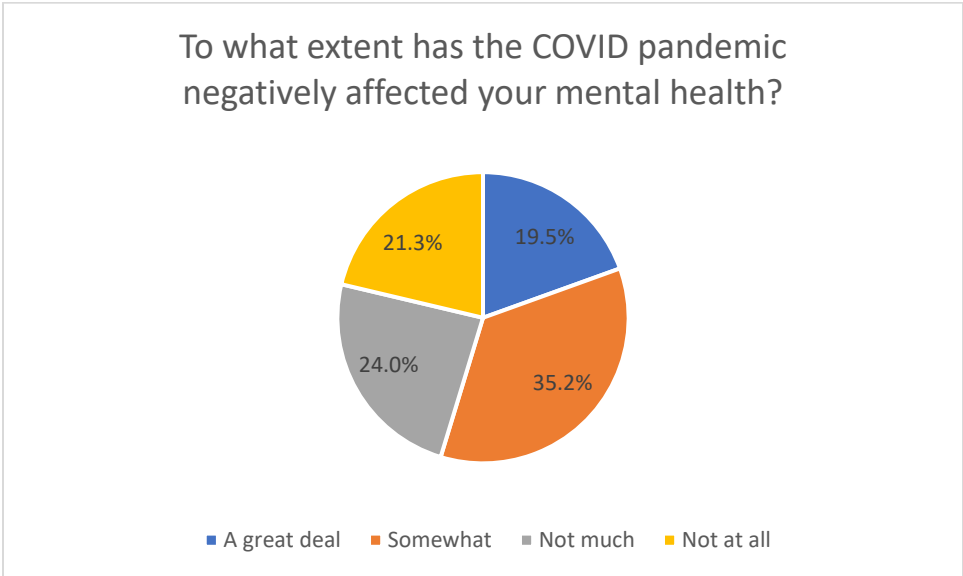
Percent reporting that they have received two or more doses of a COVID-19 vaccine



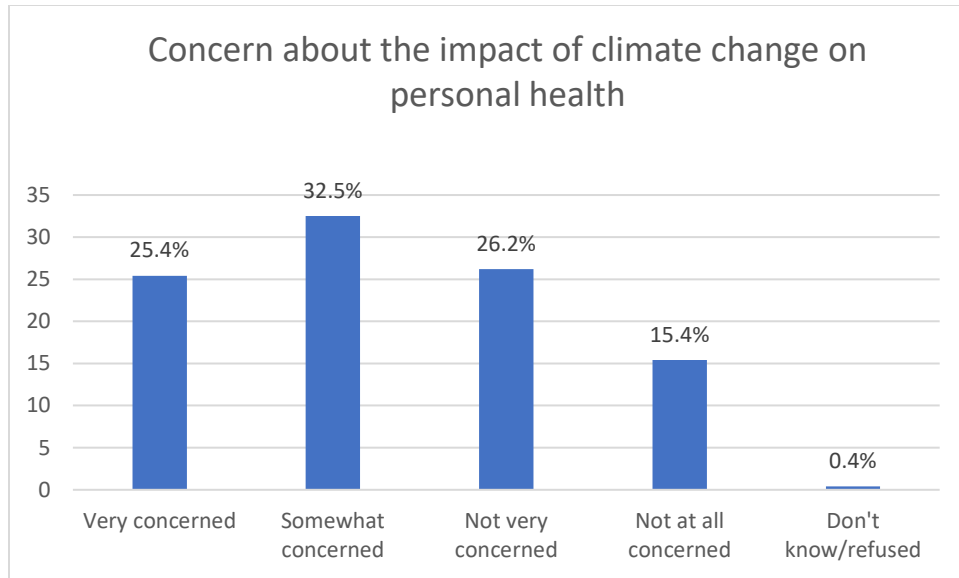
Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, Sources: Esri, USGS, City of Portsmouth, VA, VGIN, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS



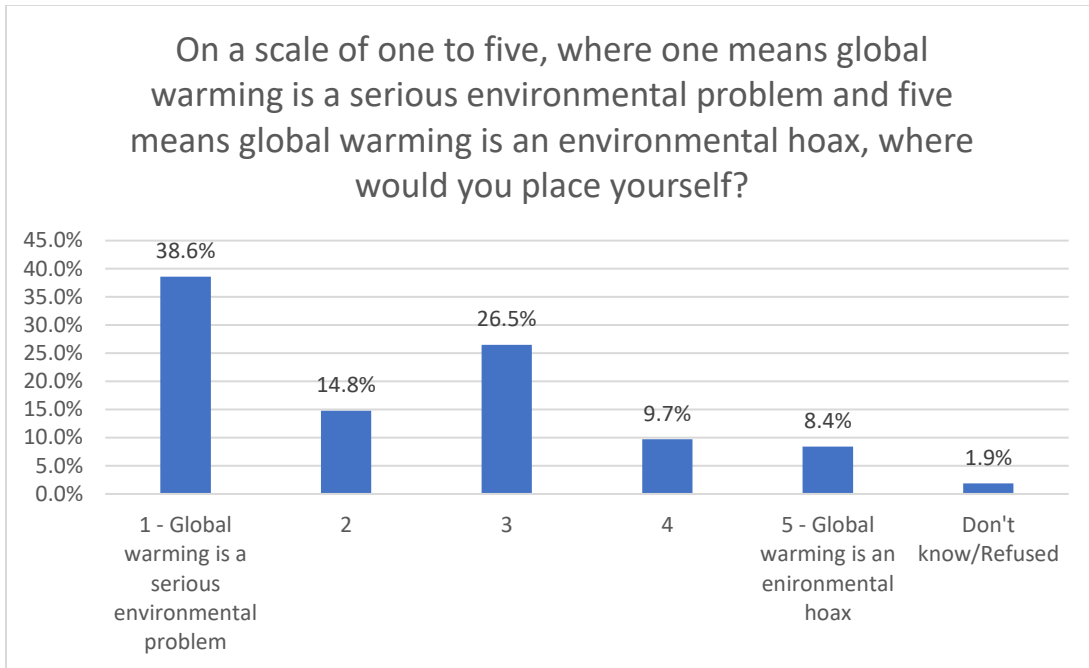
The COVID pandemic has had far ranging consequences and this year we asked Hampton Roads respondents to what extent the COVID pandemic has negatively affected their mental health. Hampton Roads residents appear to some extent a resilient population with almost half reporting, “not much” (24%) or “not at all” (21.3%). Still, that leaves over a third of the population (35.2%) reporting that the pandemic has somewhat negatively affected their mental health and nearly twenty percent (19.5%), saying that the pandemic has negatively affected their mental health a great deal.



Another societal concern involves the impact of climate change on the earth and on individual. We asked residents of Hampton Roads how concerned they were about the impact of climate change on their own personal health. Well over half (57.9%) reported that they were either somewhat (32.5%) or very concerned (25.4%). Over 40% indicated they are not very concerned or not at all concerned.

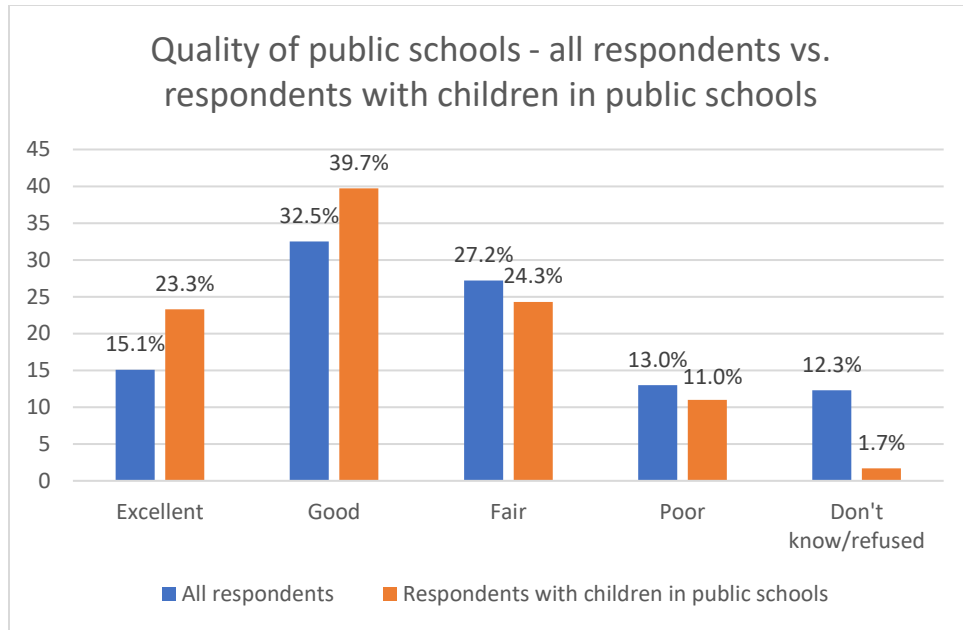


This year, we repeated a question from the first years of the Life in Hampton Roads survey (2011) which asked respondents, using a scale of one to five where one means global warming is a serious environmental problem and five means global warming is an environmental hoax, where they would place themselves. More than one-third (38.6%) of respondents responded with 5 (serious problem) while only 8.4% responded with 1 (environmental hoax). The percentage of who responded in the middle (3) increased from slightly from 21.5% in 2011 to 26.5% this year. The percentage responding 4 or 5 (hoax) decreased from 23.5% in 2011 to 18.1% this year.



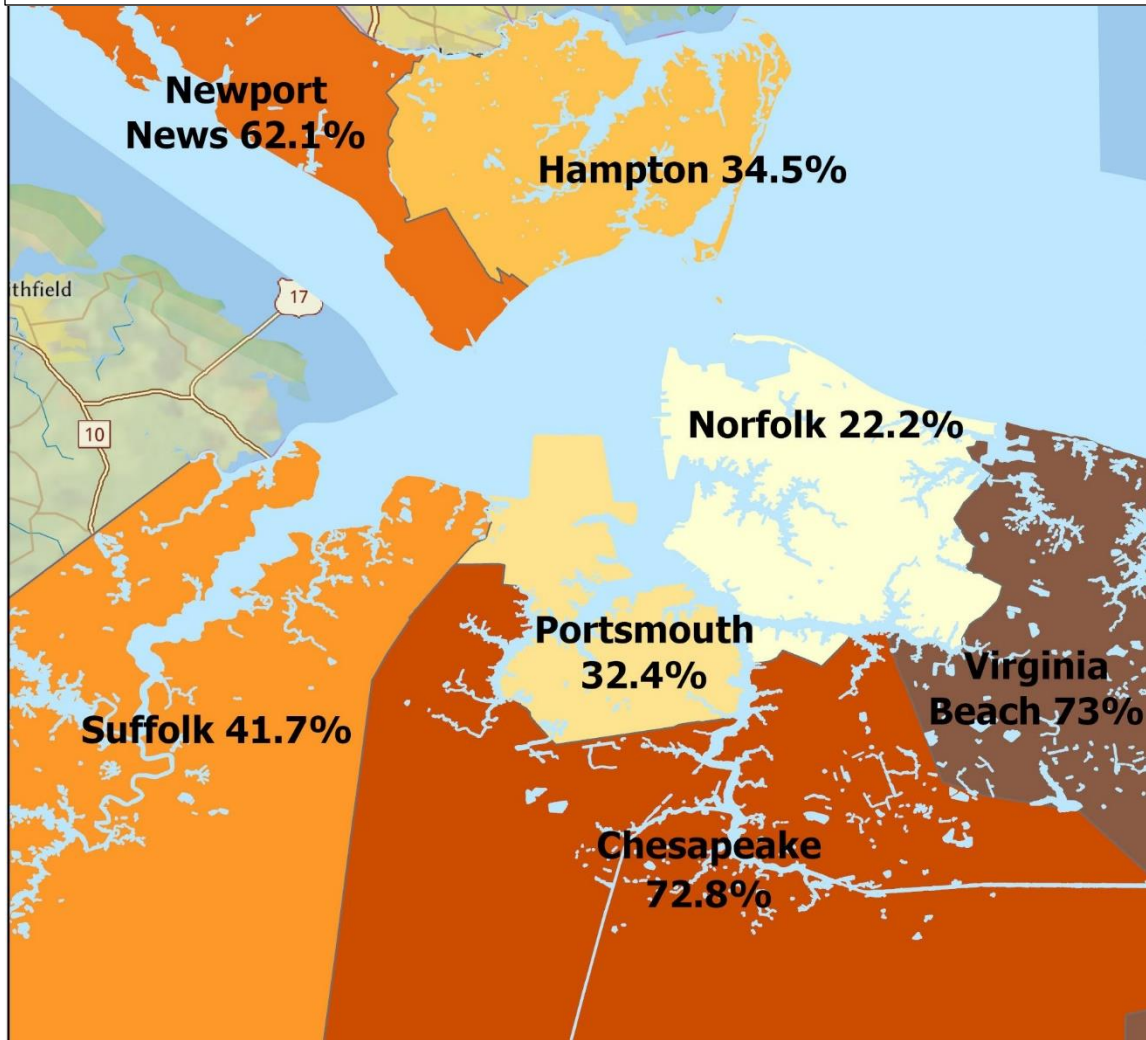
Education and the Welfare of Hampton Road Residents

Respondents were asked to rate the quality of their local public school system and there was considerable variation in the responses. About 15% reported that their public school system was excellent and another third (32.5%) reported their school system was good. Still, 27.2% rated their local public school as fair and another 13% rated it as poor. These numbers are compared below with a subsample of respondents (n=136), parents with children in local public schools. There are a couple of items of note. First, parents with children in public schools were less likely to report that they did not know about the quality of the public schools. Second, they tended to view them more favorably than those with children in the public schools. Parents with children in the public schools were 8.2% more likely to describe them as excellent and 7.2% more likely to rate them as good.



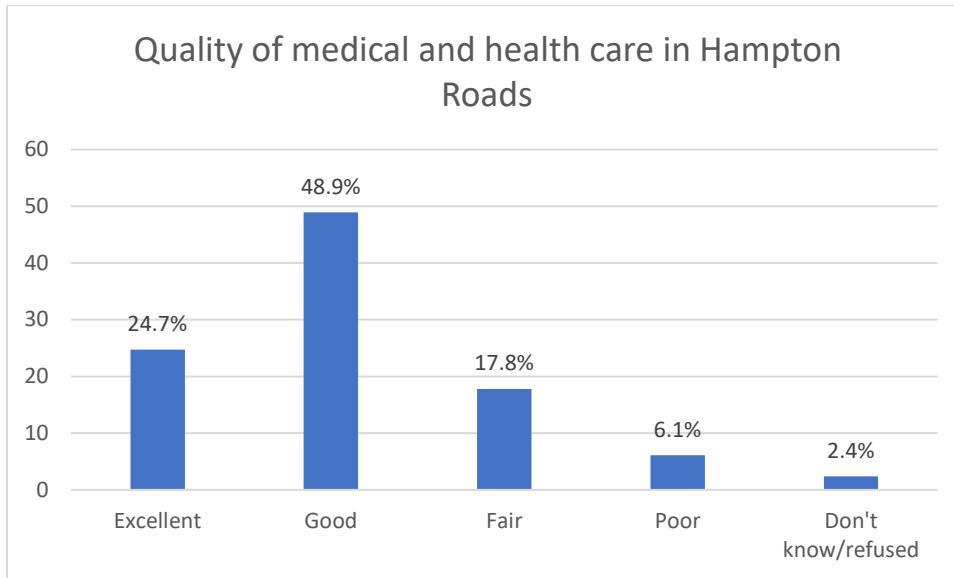
Perceptions of the quality of local public schools varied significantly across cities. Perception of the public schools were lowest in Norfolk with only 22% rating them as good or excellent. About a third of Portsmouth (32%) and Hampton (35%) rated their public schools as good or excellent and less than half of Suffolk rated their schools positively (42%). Over half of the respondents in Newport News (62%) rate their local public schools as good or excellent and nearly three quarters of those in Chesapeake and Virginia Beach rated their public schools positively.

Percent rating the quality of local public schools as good or excellent

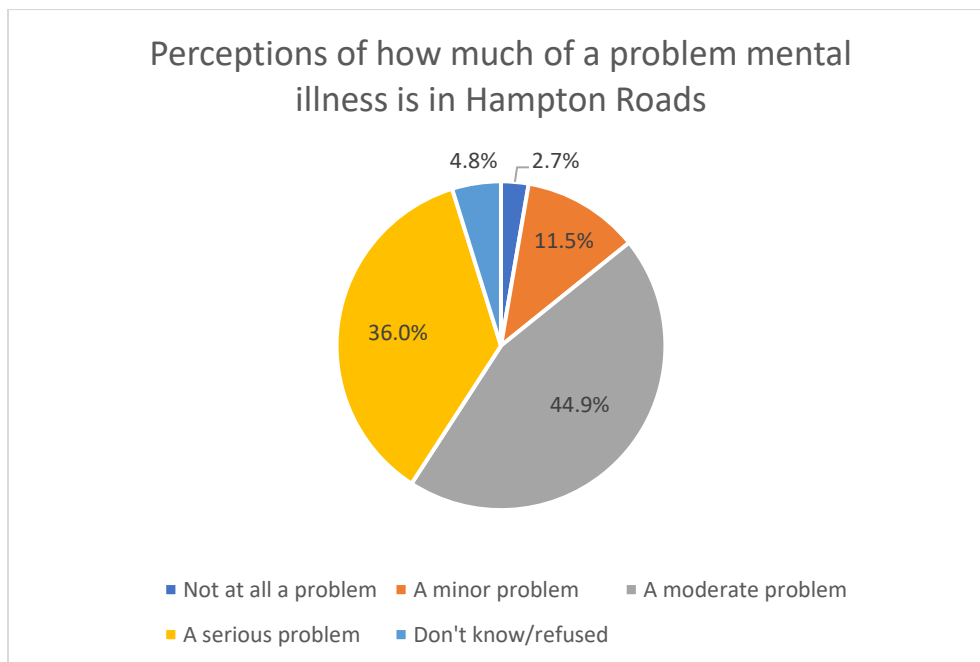


Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, Sources: Esri, USGS, City of Portsmouth, VA, VGIN, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS

Several questions were asked this year regarding the welfare of Hampton Road residents with a specific focus on mental health. We began with a general question regarding residents' perceptions of the quality of medical and health care in the Hampton Roads region. About a quarter of respondents rated medical and health care in the area as excellent and another 48.9% rated it a good, thus, nearly three quarters of the sample perceived the quality of care as good or excellent and 6.1% rated it as poor.

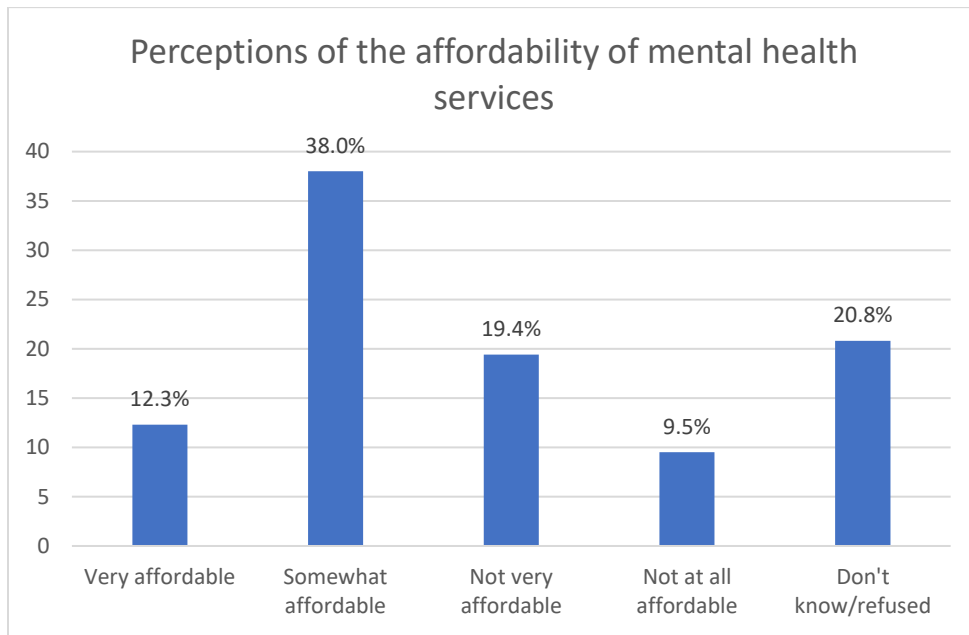


Respondents were asked how much of a problem mental illness is in Hampton Roads. Very few suggested that it was not a problem at all (2.7%) and another relatively small percentage stated that it was a minor problem (11.5%). Significantly more residents believed that mental illness was a moderate problem (44.9%) and more than a third (36%) responded that it was a serious problem.



We also asked respondents how affordable they thought mental health services were for people like them in Hampton Roads. Only 12.3% thought that health care services were very affordable though another 38% rated mental health services as somewhat affordable—about half felt that mental health care services

were somewhat or very affordable. We note however, that about 20.8% of the sample did not know (19.2%) or refused to answer the question (1.6%). It does seem reasonable that many respondents would not know the costs of mental health services. Removing these individuals from the sample produces a similar but slightly more positive story. Among those who have some knowledge of the cost of mental health services, 12.3% report that it is very affordable and another 38% say it is somewhat affordable. Still nearly a quarter (19.4%) state that mental health services are not very affordable and another 9.5% state that it is not at all affordable.



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