

PULSE₂₀₁₃

LEXINGTON QUALITY OF LIFE SURVEY



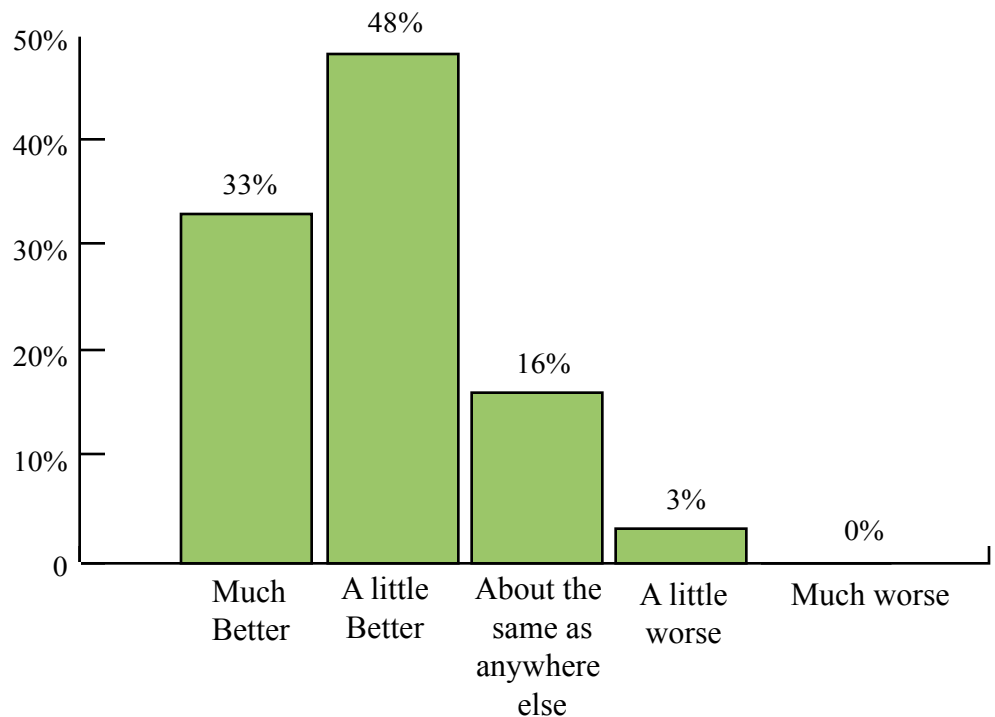
In the past several years, we at The Matrix Group have seen major changes being made in Lexington’s infrastructure, development policies, nightlife, education, environmental quality, and more. This made us think: what do Lexingtonians think about the area’s quality of life? What are the good things and the bad things about life here in our little corner of the world? What improvements would make Lexington even better in the future? So we went directly to the source. We asked Lexington residents to respond to an online survey that was designed to evaluate respondents’ perceptions of the area’s quality of life.

The Matrix Group has periodically surveyed Lexington citizens on this topic over the years, because, as researchers, we know that what people think is just as important, if not more important, than other measures when assessing quality of life.

It turns out that people think Lexington is a pretty great place to live overall.

The graph below shows that, overall, more than 80% of respondents say the quality of life in Lexington is better compared to the rest of the nation.

Quality of Life Compared to Other Parts of the Nation



“It’s a small college town and a good place to raise a family.”

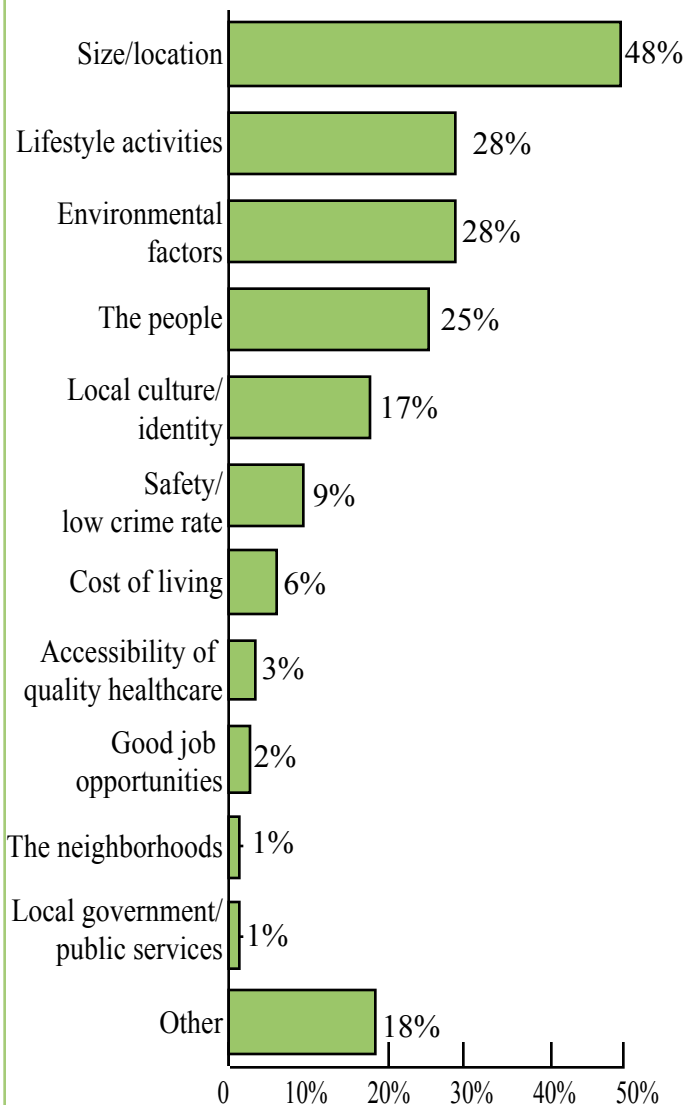
When we break the responses to this question out by demographic, we notice several trends:

- Generally, the older a respondent is, the more likely he or she is to rate Lexington’s quality of life highly.
- The longer a respondent has lived in Lexington, the higher his quality of life rating generally is.
- Respondents in West Lexington gave the highest average quality of life rating.
- Respondents in Downtown and North Lexington gave the lowest.

Like any city, there are significant areas for improvement – traffic and transportation issues most notably came to the forefront in this study. But when taken as a whole, the research results show that people like living here.

The most-liked aspects of living in Lexington are the size and location, lifestyle activities in the area, and environmental factors like the beauty of the landscape and plentiful greenspace.

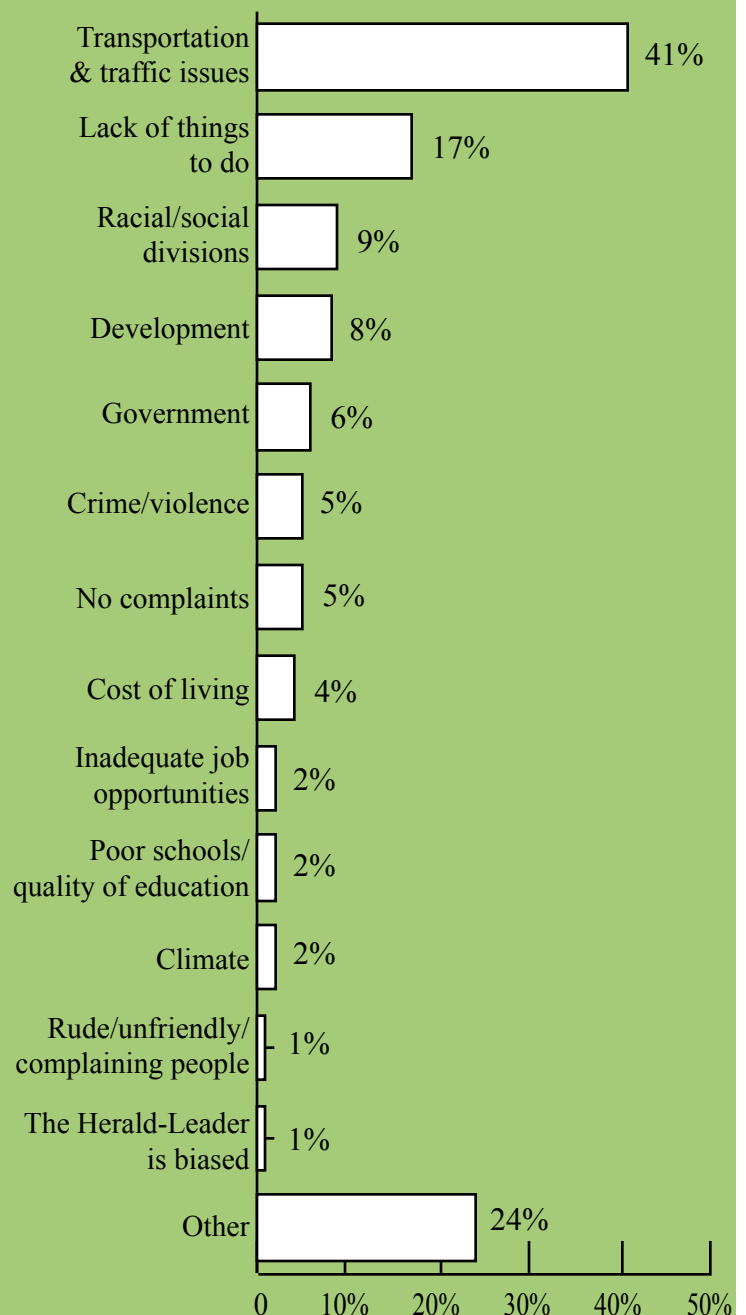
Most-Liked about Lexington



“There are not enough good quality restaurants or nightclubs, and traffic is too heavy and not handled correctly.”

The least-liked characteristics of living in Lexington are related to transportation and traffic issues, as well as a perceived lack of things to do.

Least-Liked about Lexington



“Lexington still has a small town flavor even though it is growing by leaps and bounds.”

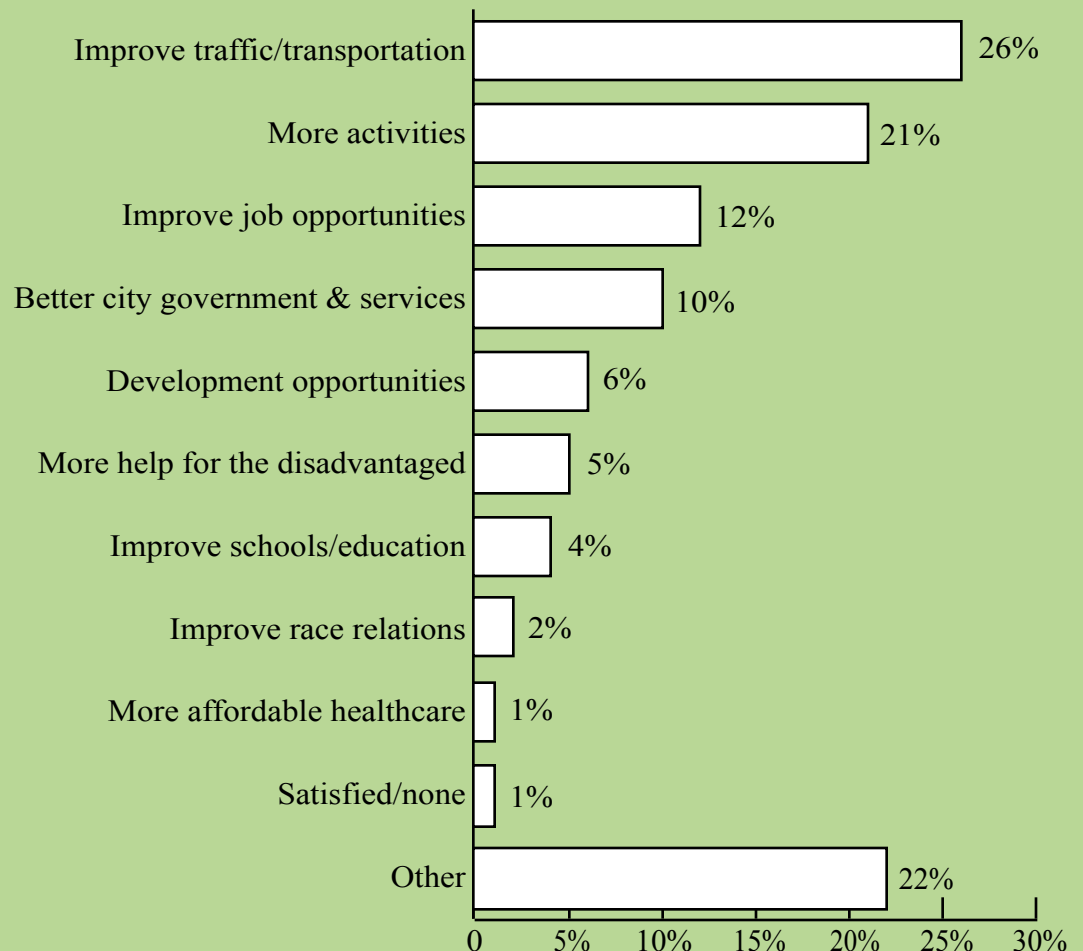
We asked respondents to rate Lexington in several areas using a school grading system. Access to quality healthcare earned the highest grade – a ‘B+’. Lexington received the lowest grades for the two transportation-related areas. Both traffic flow and ease of utilizing alternative modes of transportation received grades of ‘C-’.

	Overall grade	Percent who gave an ‘A’
Access to quality healthcare	B+ (3.14)	40.0%
Parks & recreational facilities	B- (2.91)	24.5%
Arts & cultural resources	B- (2.74)	16.0%
Environmental quality	B- (2.74)	15.3%
Public safety	B- (2.60)	12.4%
The vibrancy of the downtown area	B- (2.51)	11.1%
Affordability of housing	C+ (2.31)	9.5%
Job or career opportunities	C+ (2.28)	7.3%
How easy it is to utilize alternative modes of transportation	C- (1.98)	5.8%
Traffic flow	C- (1.60)	2.7%

Scale: A=4; B=3; C=2; D=1; F=0

A recurring finding throughout the study was that citizens are not satisfied with the current state of traffic and transportation in Lexington. When asked what change or improvement they would most like to see made, more than 25% of respondents said they want to see improvements in traffic and transportation.

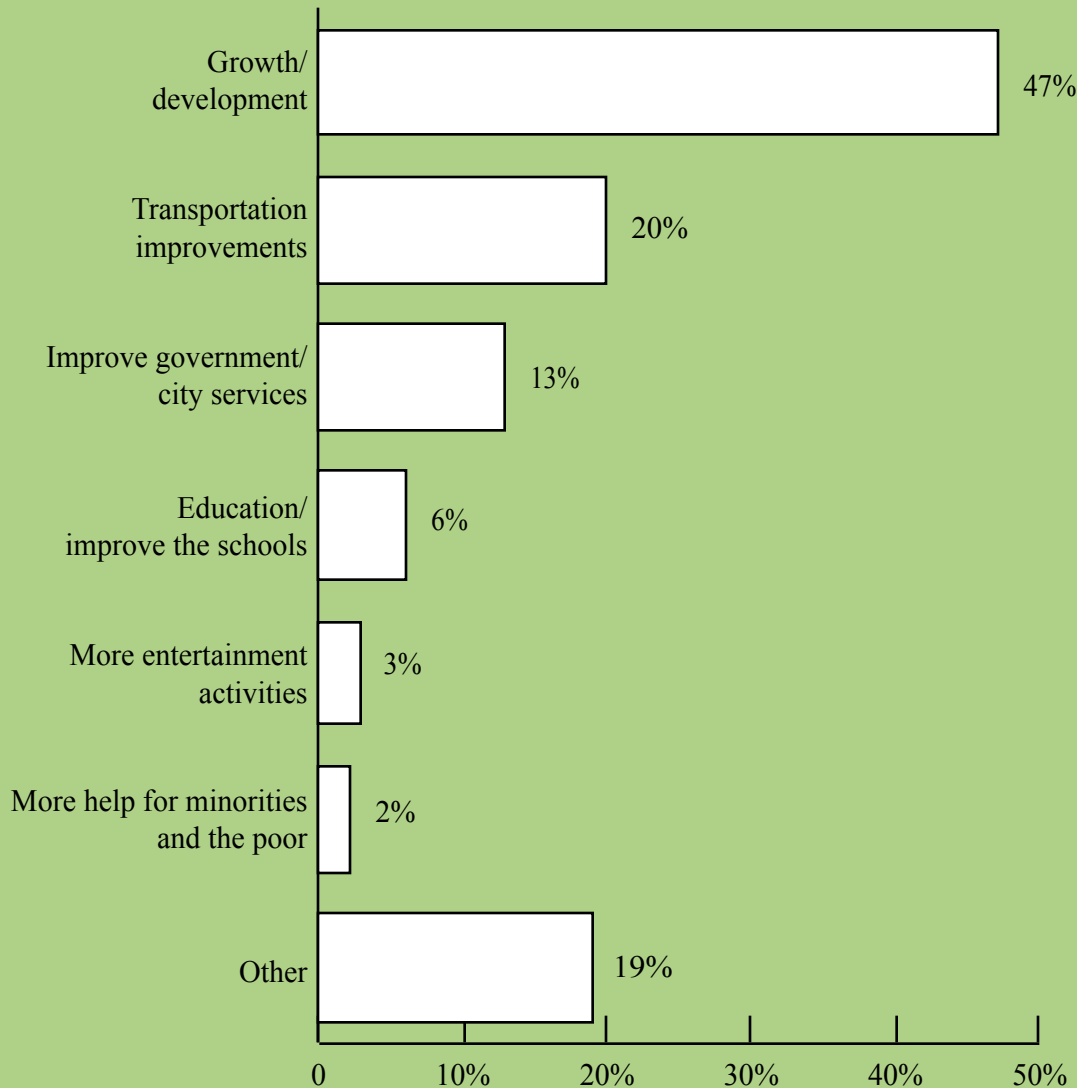
Desired Improvements



“Traffic is a much bigger headache than I would expect for a city this size.”

We asked respondents to think about Lexington in the coming decade. What do they think should be the main priority for Lexington planners? Nearly half of respondents said that the main priorities over the next 10 years should be related to growth and development. Twenty percent said transportation improvements should be the main priority.

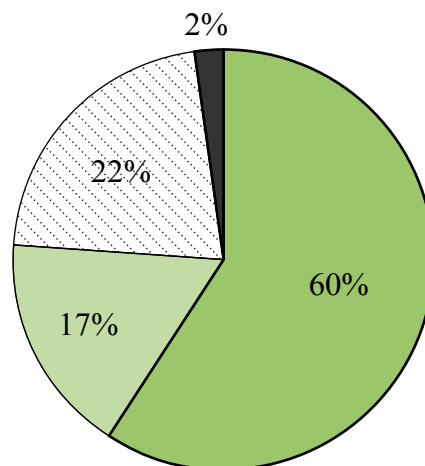
Priorities in the Future



“Try to increase jobs being brought in while rennovating areas that are neglected.”

Direction in which Lexington is Moving

There is good news for Lexington’s elected officials; 60% of respondents say they think our local officials are moving Lexington in the right direction.

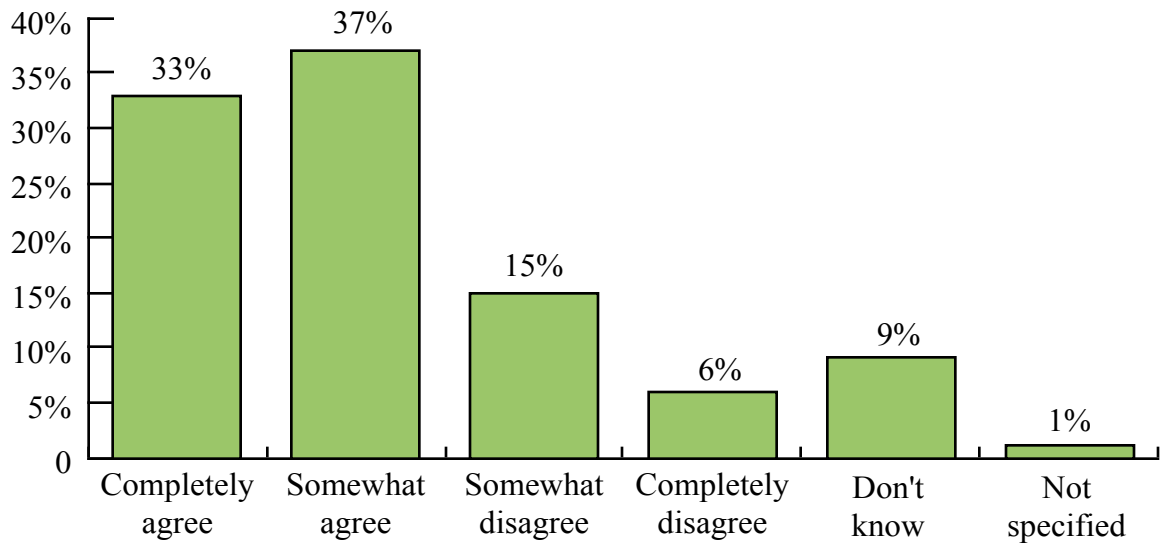


- Right direction
- Wrong direction
- Don't know
- Not specified

Lexington is known for its urban and rural balance, and one recurring issue in Lexington is whether or not to expand the urban service area to include more rural land. In recent years, Lexington has pursued a general policy in which development is encouraged within the existing urban service area instead of expanding the service area outward. We asked respondents how much they agree with this policy.

Seventy percent of respondents agree that development should be encouraged within the existing urban service area instead of expanding the boundary outward.

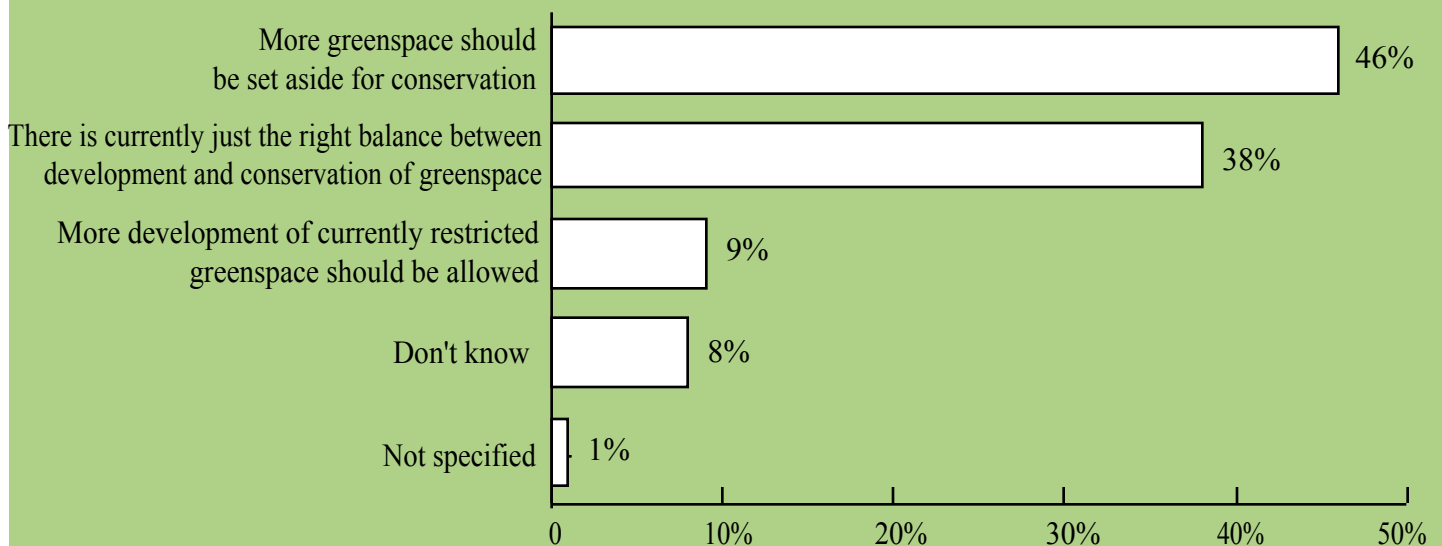
Agreement with Development Policies



"I like being able to go from metropolitan surroundings to being out in the country within minutes."

The importance of greenspace in Lexington is clear. Over five times as many respondents think more greenspace should be set aside for conservation than think more development of currently restricted greenspace should be allowed.

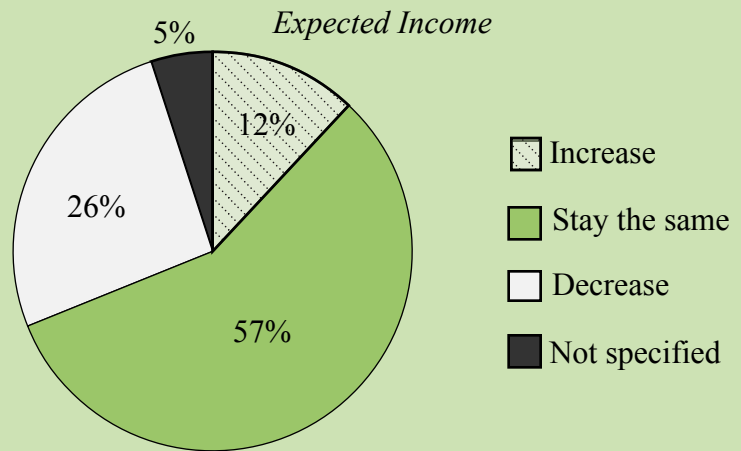
Greenspace vs. Development



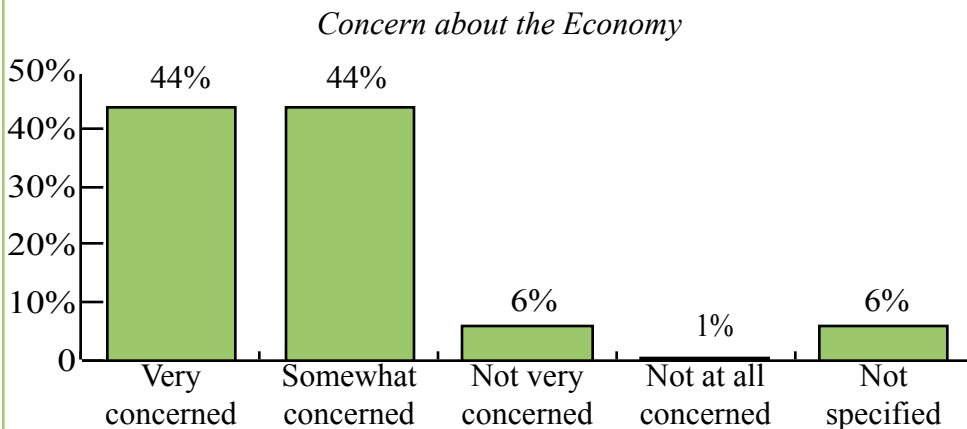
One factor that affects a person's perception of their quality of life is their economic outlook and household finances. So we asked respondents several questions designed to help us understand how Lexington citizens are feeling about their finances and the economy.

"I don't think that there's enough of an effort to bring high-value jobs to the city. We have a very educated populace that could be put to good use if the opportunities were available."

More respondents anticipate their household income will decrease in the next year than anticipate an increase. Most respondents, however, think their incomes will stay the same.

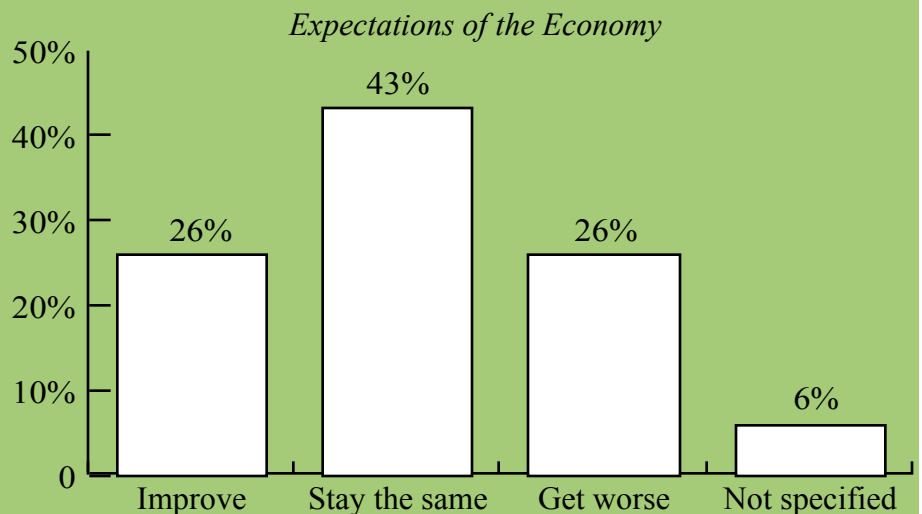


Eighty-eight percent of respondents are concerned about the economy.



"The job market in Lexington is better than the surrounding counties."

Approximately 26% of respondents feel the economy will improve this year, while the same percentage feel the economy will get worse. Forty-three percent expect the economy to stay the same.

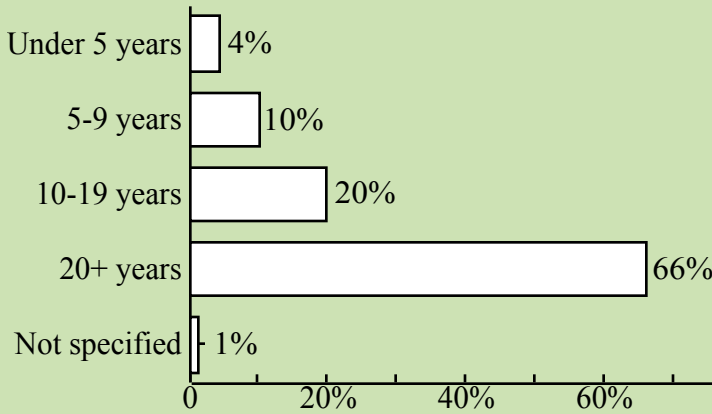


Methodology

This research was initiated by The Matrix Group to understand how Lexington residents perceive the area’s quality of life. Respondents who are members of The Matrix Group’s Consumer Panel were invited via email to take the online survey in August, 2013. A total of 550 respondents completed the survey by the closing date of August 27, 2013. Based on the larger population of Fayette County residents, the sample of 550 provides research results at the standard 95% confidence level with a margin of error of plus or minus 4.17%.

Profile of the Respondents

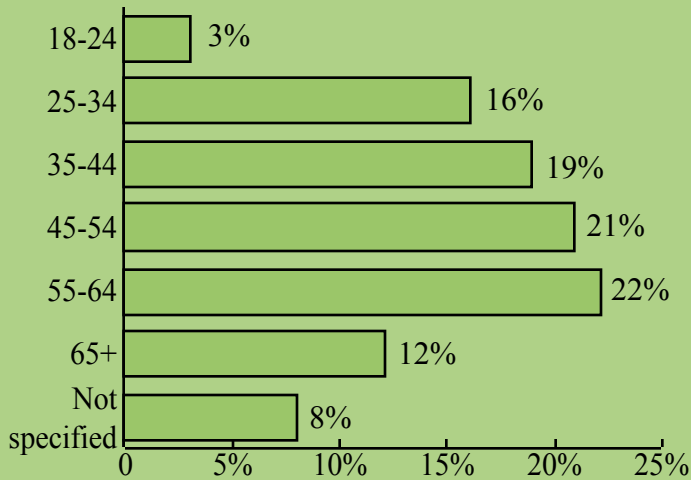
Number of years living in Lexington



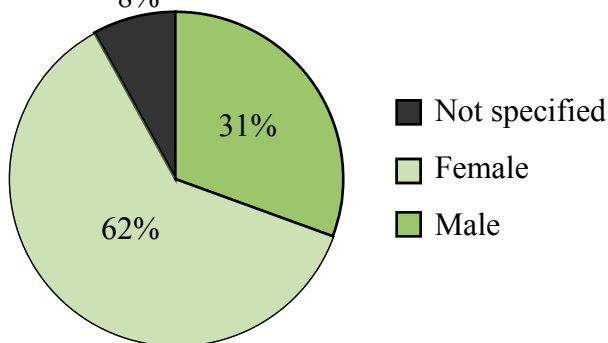
Zip Code

Area	Percent
South Lexington	25.8%
40515	11.5%
40517	8.7%
40514	5.6%
East Lexington	22.5%
40509	12.0%
40502	10.5%
West Lexington	21.3%
40503	11.8%
40504	6.2%
40513	3.3%
North Lexington	18.5%
40511	10.7%
40505	6.9%
40516	0.5%
40510	0.4%
Downtown Lexington	3.5%
40508	2.9%
40507	0.4%
40506	0.2%
Not specified	8.4%

Age



Gender



Race

