



**VCU**

L. Douglas Wilder School of  
Government and Public Affairs

Survey and Evaluation Research Laboratory

**Henrico County Comprehensive Plan Update:  
Residents' Survey Results**

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Henrico County, Virginia**

SERL Project #0136



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## **Organization of the Report**

This report is a summary of results from the 2021 Residents' Survey, a component of the HenricoNext process designed to update the county's current comprehensive plan through the year 2045. It focuses on critical findings that offer statistically significant insights on residents' opinions.

This report includes the following sections:

- **Organization of the Report** – briefly describes sections and contents
- **Executive Summary** – narrative summarizing the objectives of conducting this survey, the approaches used, and a summary of the responses received
- **Technical Summary of Results** – detailed presentation and analysis of responses, including:
  - **Summary of methods** – briefly describes the methods used in the survey
  - **Overview of results** – summarizes key results overall
  - **Selected results in detail** – discusses key results in more detail, including some differences by subgroups

Four Appendices have been prepared that provide details about this Henrico Residents' Survey, and report on the data and responses that were received. They include the 16-page survey and detailed description of methodology, and approximately 400 pages of data detailing individual responses.

- **Appendix A: Questionnaire** – the paper survey booklet completed by respondents who participated on paper, showing complete question wording and context
- **Appendix B: Methods** – describes the survey methods used to create the random sample and evaluate the results of the responses
- **Appendix C: Data Tables** – includes the results of the responses for each survey question broken out by magisterial district, race/ethnicity, length of residence in the county, respondent age and presence of children under 18 years of age in the household
- **Appendix D: Open-ended Responses** – a complete listing of verbatim comments in response to open-ended survey questions

The electronic data file of survey responses, documentation allowing independent use of it, and reference data tables with statistical significance testing are available upon request and can be accessed for further exploration about the opinions of county residents.

## **Executive Summary**

### **Why the survey was conducted**

The survey was undertaken as part of the update of the Henrico County 2026 Comprehensive Plan. As conditions in the County are assessed and goals are developed for the future (along with implementation strategies designed to achieve those goals), it is critical to gain understanding of the opinions and values of Henrico County residents. The questionnaire was designed to give residents an opportunity to express their views and offer ideas about the future of Henrico County.

### **How the survey was conducted**

A sample of 5,000 county households was randomly selected by the county's Geographic Information Systems team, with the sampling approach designed to represent the views of residents in the five magisterial districts of Henrico County. Multiple mailings were sent to the identified households, including the mailing of a questionnaire and invitation to respond either via return mail or via web-based survey completion. Using a technique known as weighting, the survey data were adjusted prior to analysis to reflect the statistics known about adults residing in the county. This ensured proportional representation of residents (aged 18+) across three variables:

1. Magisterial district (Brookland, Fairfield, Three Chopt, Tuckahoe, Varina)
2. Racial/ethnic classifications (Asian, Black/African-American, Hispanic/Latino, White, Missing/Refused, All others)
3. Age groups (18-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 65+)

See Appendix B for more details on the methodology for weighting the data.

### **What the survey findings reveal**

The survey results show high levels of satisfaction with Henrico County. Regarding core county services: Majorities of residents gave positive ratings for questions related to overall quality of life today, change in quality of life over the last 10 years, overall satisfaction with core county services, and the value of county services relative to taxes paid. Three areas of strength for the county are fire and rescue services, police service, and parks/recreational programs. Four services that may benefit from attention are public schools, pedestrian safety, road maintenance/construction, and social services for people needing assistance.

Regarding planning-related services: Notable areas of strength are protecting environmental quality and supporting the development of businesses. Four planning-related county services that may benefit from attention are preserving permanent open space and sensitive environmental areas, managing where different types of new development occur, supporting the development of affordable housing, and providing bicycle and pedestrian amenities.

Residents in the Varina and Three Chopt magisterial districts expressed noticeably different opinions on some issues when compared with the other three. For example, Varina residents were more likely to say there are not enough apartments, office development, or retail development; feel less safe during the day and at night; give higher ratings to the importance of dealing with neglected properties and older homes; and give lower ratings to the importance of providing sidewalks and bike paths, and lower satisfaction ratings. Residents in Three Chopt were generally more satisfied; the most likely to say they use transit; generally more likely to say there is too much retail and apartment land use; and most supportive of the county dedicating additional resources to support the development of business. The other three districts generally aligned with one another and with the findings of the county overall.

### Next steps

This report includes a series of priority matrices which link the importance of, and satisfaction with, various conditions and services in Henrico County. Issues ranked high in importance and high in satisfaction are areas of strength for the county. Issues ranked high in importance but low in satisfaction are highlighted as issues of first priority for consideration or action. Also displayed are data linking satisfaction regarding services with magisterial district and with number of years having lived in Henrico County.

These data sets and accompanying analysis linking satisfaction with importance, magisterial district, and length of residence can help provide guidance in determining county priorities for future initiatives.

## **Technical Summary of Results**

### **Summary of Methods**

Clarion Associates of Chapel Hill, North Carolina (CA) contracted with the Survey and Evaluation Research Laboratory at Virginia Commonwealth University (SERL) to execute and summarize a sample survey conducted by mail and internet of the residents of Henrico County, Virginia, regarding their opinions about land use, planning issues, county services and quality of life. The questionnaire was constructed as a collaboration among staff at CA, SERL and Henrico County government. The survey was funded by Henrico County through an agreement with CA.

The survey's sampling approach was designed to represent the views of residents in the five magisterial districts of Henrico County as defined by the geographic boundaries that were in place in mid-2021 before redistricting was completed in late 2021: Brookland, Fairfield, Three Chopt, Tuckahoe and Varina. The populations of these districts were roughly equal at the time of the survey (see Appendix B for details).

The county's geographic information systems (GIS) team created a list of all residential mailing addresses in the county. Each address included a code for its magisterial district. With guidance from SERL, the county GIS team randomly selected the addresses for the survey. Within each of the five districts, 1,000 residential addresses were selected at random to receive a survey invitation.

Up to four mailings were sent between September 13, 2021, and November 24, 2021, to the 5,000 total addresses in the sample encouraging them to complete the survey by internet or return mail/hardcopy. Those who had previously responded were excluded from subsequent mailings.

Overall, 1,148 responses were received by January 11, 2022, after which no additional paper replies were processed and the web-based survey was closed. Accounting for 547 undeliverable addresses, the response rate for the survey was 25.8% (1,148/4,453). This was not unusually low or high, and exceeded the anticipated response rate of 20%.

To ensure proportional representation of adult residents of the county, the survey data file was weighted by magisterial district, racial/ethnic classifications, and age groups. See Appendix B for more information.

The sampling error for questions answered by all 1,148 respondents is approximately +/- 3.8 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence. This includes the effect of weighting the data. This sampling error offers good precision for characterizing residents' opinions.

It is important to note that sampling error is only one source of errors in surveys. Many are difficult or impossible to detect. Readers should keep in mind the limitations inherent in survey research.

SERL is grateful for the respondents who took the time to provide their opinions about land use, planning issues, county services and quality of life in the county. For more details about the methods used for the survey, see Appendix B.

## Overview of Results

### *Characteristics of the respondents*

The survey respondents reflected the diversity of the county, but residents who were 55 years of age or older and white were more likely to respond. The samples in the Tuckahoe and Three Chopt magisterial districts yielded more completed surveys because fewer letters were undeliverable and participation was higher among the deliverable addresses in those districts compared to the others. Using a technique known as weighting, the survey data were adjusted prior to analysis to more closely reflect the statistics known about the age, race/ethnicity and magisterial district of adults residing in the county. See Appendix B for details about characteristics of the respondents, weighting, and tables with the percentages cited below.

**Table 1: Magisterial districts of survey respondents (percent of total and weighted)**

Magisterial District	% of Total Respondents	% After Weighting Data
Brookland	21.8%	22.1%
Fairfield	14.4%	18.5%
Three Chopt	23.3%	20.4%
Tuckahoe	25.3%	20.5%
Varina	15.2%	18.5%

\* - Percentages in the table may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table 2: Race/ethnicity of survey respondents (percent of total and weighted)**

Race/ethnicity	% of Total Respondents	% After Weighting Data
Asian	5.4%	9.2%
Black/African-American	14.8%	27.8%
Hispanic/Latino	2.9%	5.0%
Multiple races/ethnicities	4.0%	4.1%
White	72.9%	54.0%

\* - Percentages in the table may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table 3: Age of survey respondents (percent of total and weighted)**

Age Cohorts	% of Total Respondents	% After Weighting Data
18-34	7.0%	22.9%
65+	39.4%	21.0%
The changes in percentages among other age groups were negligible.		

\* - Percentages in the table may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table 4: Gender of survey respondents (percent of total and weighted)**

Gender	% of Total Respondents	% After Weighting Data
Female	53.9%	58.7%
Male	45.7%	40.5%
Other description	0.4%	0.8%

\* - Percentages in the table may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

## ***Satisfaction***

The survey results show high levels of satisfaction with Henrico County. Majorities of residents gave positive ratings for overall quality of life today (77.8%), change in quality of life over the last 10 years (51.9% said it had gotten better), overall satisfaction with 12 core county services<sup>1</sup> (88.6%), and the value of county services relative to taxes paid (55.2%). Details are covered later in this report.

Based on responses to three key questions about 12 core county services, three areas of strength for the county are fire and rescue services; police service; and parks, recreational programs, and passive and active recreation facilities. Four core county services that may benefit from attention are public schools; pedestrian safety (sidewalks, bike paths, lighting); road maintenance and construction; and social services for people needing assistance.

Based on responses to three key questions about 10 planning-related county services,<sup>2</sup> the notable area of strength is protecting environmental quality in the county. Supporting the development of businesses is also a strength identified by residents. Four planning-related county services that may benefit from attention are preserving permanent open space and sensitive environmental areas, managing where different types of new development occur, supporting the development of housing affordable to local workers, and providing bicycle and pedestrian amenities.

Residents gave high marks to the county for its respect for, and protection of, the environment but also indicated that this area needs improvement and should be emphasized more in the future.

Table 5 summarizes this information for core and planning-related services.

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<sup>1</sup> The questionnaire asked about 12 core services: Parks, recreational programs, and passive and active recreation facilities; fire and rescue services; police service; public schools; social services for people needing assistance; libraries; road maintenance and construction; community landscaping and beautification in public areas; public transit (GRTC bus service); utilities (water and sewer); stormwater and drainage management; and pedestrian safety (sidewalks, bike paths, lighting). A 13<sup>th</sup> core county service, mental health services, was inadvertently omitted from the question about satisfaction with individual core county services and so was not included in most of these analyses.

<sup>2</sup> The questionnaire asked about 10 planning-related services: Providing bicycle and pedestrian amenities (sidewalks and bike paths); managing where different types of new development occur; preserving open space and sensitive environmental areas; protecting environmental quality in the County (air, water, etc.); guiding design (attractiveness/style/layout) of new development; supporting improvements to aging developments; preserving historic buildings and sites; supporting development of businesses; supporting development of a variety of housing types; and supporting development of housing affordable to local workers.

**Table 5: Summary of areas of strength and areas for attention among core and planning-related county services**

Areas of strengths	Areas for attention
Fire and rescue services	Public schools Pedestrian safety (sidewalks, bike paths, lighting)
Police service	Road maintenance and construction
Parks, recreational programs, and passive and active recreation facilities	Social services for people needing assistance
Protecting environmental quality in the county	Preserving permanent open space and sensitive environmental areas
Supporting development of businesses	Managing where different types of new development occur
	Supporting the development of housing affordable to local workers Providing bicycle and pedestrian amenities

***Focal issues in existing developed areas of the county***

In existing developed areas of the county, the five areas rated most important for the county to focus on were:

- Improving drainage to better manage stormwater in older neighborhoods (59.4% said “very important”)
- Adding sidewalks in older neighborhoods and commercial corridors (51.3% said “very important”)
- Dealing more aggressively with neglected properties (51.3% said “very important”)
- Repurposing vacant nonresidential buildings (49.6% said “very important”)
- Providing sidewalks and bike paths to connect nonresidential developments to surrounding areas (49.1% said “very important”)

***Land uses***

When asked about five different kinds of land uses, residents generally thought there was about the right amount in the county for each. Responses used a three-point scale with 1 being “Not enough,” 2 being “About the right amount” and 3 being “Too much.” The mean responses clustered around 2 (“About the right amount”). Single-family homes were on the lower end of the scale and office development was on the higher end. See Table 6.

**Table 6: Amount of five types of land uses in the county**

Land uses	Mean
Single-family homes	1.82
Industrial development	1.97
Retail development	2.08
Apartments	2.13
Office development	2.17

***Safety***

Residents were asked how safe they feel in the county during the daytime and at night. Respondents used a four-point scale with 1 being “Very unsafe,” 2 being “Somewhat unsafe,” 3 being “Somewhat safe” and 4 being “Very safe.” The average overall rating for safety during the daytime was 3.55. The average rating for safety at night was 3.06.

***Broadband***

Residents were asked “How important is it to provide broadband internet service to areas of the county that currently lack this service?” and responded on a four-point scale with 1 being “Not at all important,” 2 being “Somewhat unimportant,” 3 being “Somewhat important” and 4 being “Very important.” The average overall response was 3.74.

***Magisterial districts***

Residents from the Varina and Three Chopt magisterial districts occasionally have noticeably different opinions on some topics when compared with the other three districts. The Varina district stands out due to its frequently lower levels of satisfaction and its somewhat different rankings of priorities for development, and for where the county should devote resources in the future. For example, its residents were more likely to say there are not enough apartments, office development or retail development in the county; to say they feel less safe during the day and at night; give higher ratings to the importance of dealing with neglected properties and older homes; and give lower ratings to the importance of providing sidewalks and bike paths to connect nonresidential developments to surrounding areas. Three Chopt residents were generally more satisfied, the most likely to say they use transit, generally more likely to say there is too much retail and apartment land uses, and were most supportive of the county dedicating additional resources to support business development. The other three districts generally aligned with one another and with the findings of the county overall. See the detailed discussion later in this report for more about different responses by magisterial district.

***Open-ended responses***

The open-ended (written, verbatim) responses contributed by respondents covered a range of concerns as well as suggestions for improvements and innovations in the county. Readers can review the full listing of responses in Appendix D.

### Selected results in detail

Presented in more detail below are items from the questionnaire which SERL judged to be most noteworthy after reviewing statistically significant differences as well as broader patterns in the data. The data tables in Appendix C can be consulted for additional details on these items as well as other data not discussed in this report.

#### *Current land uses*

Residents were asked (Question 19) “The table below includes different kinds of land uses. For each one, please tell us whether you think there is not enough in the County, about the right amount, or too much,” then presented with a list of the five uses. Residents answered on a scale with 1 being “Not enough,” 2 being “About the right amount” and 3 being “Too much.” When the responses were averaged, all of the items were close to “About the right amount,” but single-family homes were on the lower end of the scale and office development was on the higher end. See Table 7.

**Table 7: Ratings for the amount of land uses, by magisterial district**

Land uses	Total <sup>3</sup>	Brookland	Fairfield	Three Chopt	Tuckahoe	Varina
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Single-family homes	1.82	1.86	1.76	1.84	1.86	1.79
Industrial development	1.97	1.95	2.01	1.89	2.06	1.96
Retail development	2.08	2.08	2.01	2.30	2.21	1.79
Apartments	2.13	2.16	2.01	2.25	2.20	1.97
Office development	2.17	2.21	2.17	2.19	2.19	2.05

#### *Priorities in existing developed areas of the county*

Residents were asked (Question 17) “Existing developed residential areas and nonresidential areas may need reinvestments and upgrades to maintain building quality and provide modern amenities. In existing developed areas in Henrico County, how important is it for the County to focus on the following issues?” Respondents were presented with a list of 10 items. Residents answered on a scale with 1 being “Not at all important,” 5 being “Very important” and a mid-point of 3 (ratings of 2, 3 and 4 were not labeled). When the responses were averaged, improving drainage to better manage stormwater in older neighborhoods was the issue of greatest importance to residents overall. These results are shown in Table 8.

<sup>3</sup> Note that the overall mean cannot be calculated directly from the district means shown in the table because the district means have different numbers of cases behind them.

**Table 8: Important issues to focus on in developed areas of the county, by magisterial district**

Issue	Total	Brookland	Fairfield	Three Chopt	Tuckahoe	Varina
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Improving drainage to better manage stormwater in older neighborhoods	4.42	4.44	4.45	4.39	4.36	4.44
Repurposing vacant nonresidential buildings	4.30	4.37	4.22	4.39	4.23	4.29
Dealing more aggressively with neglected properties	4.27	4.01	4.35	4.32	4.28	4.40
Adding sidewalks in older neighborhoods and commercial corridors	4.20	4.32	4.35	4.05	4.20	4.04
Providing sidewalks and bike paths to connect nonresidential developments to surrounding areas	4.15	4.36	4.21	4.11	4.10	3.95
Improving aging nonresidential buildings with structural problems	4.13	4.14	4.08	4.28	4.04	4.13
Improving aging homes with structural problems	4.08	4.08	4.14	4.11	3.97	4.08
Requiring improvements to older existing homes	3.69	3.37	3.74	3.75	3.73	3.92
Improving landscaping and visual quality of nonresidential developments	3.67	3.29	3.74	3.82	3.75	3.85
Modernizing and improving visual quality of nonresidential buildings	3.56	3.15	3.60	3.72	3.65	3.76

***Satisfaction with Henrico County and its services***

The survey results showed high levels of satisfaction with Henrico County, including overall quality of life today (Question 5), whether quality of life has gotten better or worse over the last 10 years (Question 7, asked of those who said they had lived in the county for 10 or more years), overall satisfaction with 12 core county services (Question 13), and the value of county services relative to taxes paid (Question 14).

On a five-point scale with 1 being “Poor,” 5 being “Excellent” and a mid-point of 3, 77.8% of all residents rated the overall quality of life today in Henrico County as either a 4 (51.9%) or a 5 (25.9%). Residents in the Varina magisterial district were less satisfied. (Differences in response by magisterial district are discussed in more detail later in this report.) See Table 9.

**Table 9: Ratings of overall quality of life in Henrico County, by magisterial district**

	How would you rate the overall quality of life today in Henrico County?					
	1 Poor	2	3	4	5 Excellent	Total*
Brookland	0.6%	1.0%	16.4%	60.7%	21.3%	100.0%
Fairfield	0.5%	4.3%	24.3%	37.9%	33.0%	100.0%
Three Chopt	0.0%	1.4%	8.2%	57.3%	33.1%	100.0%
Tuckahoe	0.3%	1.3%	10.9%	58.5%	29.0%	100.0%
Varina	1.6%	4.6%	39.0%	42.1%	12.7%	100.0%
Total	0.6%	2.4%	19.2%	51.9%	25.9%	100.0%

\* - Percentages in the table may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

A majority of respondents (51.9%) said that over the past 10 years, the quality of life in Henrico County has gotten better, as indicated by 22.1% giving a rating of 5 and 29.8% giving a rating of 4. See Table 10.

**Table 10: Ratings of change in quality of life in Henrico County over the past 10 years, by magisterial district**

	Over the past ten years, has the quality of life in Henrico County gotten worse or gotten better?					
	1 Gotten worse	2	3	4	5 Gotten better	Total*
Brookland	3.5%	5.4%	37.0%	34.7%	19.4%	100.0%
Fairfield	4.2%	5.4%	37.6%	28.5%	24.4%	100.0%
Three Chopt	3.4%	9.1%	30.5%	29.5%	27.6%	100.0%
Tuckahoe	3.2%	8.0%	37.6%	32.5%	18.7%	100.0%
Varina	5.8%	11.2%	40.1%	22.7%	20.3%	100.0%
Total	3.9%	7.8%	36.3%	29.8%	22.1%	100.0%

\* - Percentages in the table may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

Also, 88.6% of residents in total said that, overall, they were “Somewhat satisfied” (57.4%) or “Very satisfied” (31.2%) with 12 core services provided by Henrico County. See Table 11.

**Table 11: Ratings of overall satisfaction with 12 core county services, by magisterial district**

	OVERALL, how satisfied are you with the services provided by Henrico County?				
	1 Very unsatisfied	2 Somewhat unsatisfied	3 Somewhat satisfied	4 Very satisfied	Total*
Brookland	4.3%	4.6%	66.9%	24.2%	100.0%
Fairfield	2.1%	12.5%	51.2%	34.1%	100.0%
Three Chopt	3.7%	3.7%	50.4%	42.2%	100.0%
Tuckahoe	3.3%	4.1%	57.9%	34.6%	100.0%
Varina	2.7%	17.2%	59.6%	20.6%	100.0%
Total	3.3%	8.1%	57.4%	31.2%	100.0%

\* - Percentages in the table may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

In addition, a majority in total (55.2%) gave a positive response when asked to rate the value of county services in relation to taxes paid, with 39.3% saying they are a “good value” and 15.9% saying they are an “excellent value.” See Table 12.

**Table 12: Ratings of value of county services in relation to taxes paid in Henrico County, by magisterial district**

	How would you rate the value of County services provided in relation to the taxes paid?				
	1 Poor value	2 Fair value	3 Good value	4 Excellent value	Total*
Brookland	12.2%	39.1%	36.2%	12.5%	100.0%
Fairfield	7.6%	38.0%	41.8%	12.6%	100.0%
Three Chopt	5.9%	23.9%	45.9%	24.3%	100.0%
Tuckahoe	4.1%	31.0%	43.5%	21.4%	100.0%
Varina	21.2%	43.3%	27.8%	7.7%	100.0%
Total	9.9%	34.8%	39.3%	15.9%	100.0%

\* - Percentages in the table may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

When each of the county’s 12 core (Question 12) and 10 planning-related (Question 16) services were rated for satisfaction individually, they generally received high marks. On a five-point scale with 1 being “Not at all satisfied,” 5 being “Very satisfied” and a mid-point of 3, satisfaction with all 22 services ranged from 3.02 to 4.54. Details on these results are provided in Tables 14 and 16 located on pages 15 and 20, respectively.

**Core county services: Strengths and areas for attention**

The questionnaire asked residents to consider the list of 12 core county services in three ways:

1. How important it is for the County to devote resources to each service? (Question 11)
2. Satisfaction with each service (Question 12)
3. What are the top three services for which the county should be dedicating additional resources to improve? (Question 29)

Importance was measured on a five-point scale with 1 being “Not at all important,” 5 being “Very important,” and a mid-point of 3 (ratings of 2, 3 and 4 were not labeled). The ratings were averaged and the services were ranked by these means for importance of devoting resources. The list was divided into three categories – high, medium, and low – by looking for natural breaks in the mean ratings. See Table 13.

**Table 13: Importance of devoting resources to core county services (mean ratings)**

<i>High</i>	
Public schools	4.84
Fire and rescue services	4.79
<i>Medium</i>	
Road maintenance and construction	4.59
Utilities (water and sewer)	4.56
Parks, recreational programs, and passive and active recreation facilities	4.53
* Mental health services	4.52
Police service	4.52
Stormwater and drainage management	4.48
Social services for people needing assistance	4.45
Pedestrian safety (sidewalks, bike paths, lighting)	4.41
<i>Low</i>	
Libraries	4.26
Community landscaping and beautification in public areas	4.06
Public transit (GRTC bus service)	3.89

\* Note: Mental health services was inadvertently omitted from a later question about satisfaction with core county services; therefore, it is not included in the following table or the priority matrix below.

Similarly, satisfaction with each core service was measured on a five-point scale, with 1 being “Not at all satisfied,” 5 being “Very satisfied,” and a mid-point of 3 (ratings of 2, 3 and 4 were not labeled). The ratings were averaged and the three highest-rated core services were fire and rescue services (4.54), libraries (4.31), and police service (4.17). The two lowest-rated core services were public transit (GRTC bus service) (3.28) and pedestrian safety (sidewalks, bike paths, lighting) (3.02).

All of the services were ranked by these means for satisfaction. The list was divided into three categories – high, medium, and low – by looking for natural breaks in the mean ratings. See Table 14.

**Table 14: Satisfaction with core county services (mean ratings)**

<i>High</i>	
Fire and rescue services	4.54
Libraries	4.31
Police service	4.17
Parks, recreational programs, and passive and active recreation facilities	4.02
<i>Medium</i>	
Utilities (water and sewer)	3.95
Public schools	3.71
Community landscaping and beautification in public areas	3.69
Stormwater and drainage management	3.63
Road maintenance and construction	3.57
Social services for people needing assistance	3.47
<i>Low</i>	
Public transit (GRTC bus service)	3.28
Pedestrian safety (sidewalks, bike paths, lighting)	3.02

Note: Mental health services was inadvertently omitted from this question about satisfaction with core county services; therefore, it was not be included in this table or the priority matrix below.

**The priority matrix**

A priority matrix was constructed by combining the three categories into which each item was placed for satisfaction and importance (measured by ratings for how important it is for the county to devote resources to the service). The matrix helps to identify services that are perceived strengths, and those that may be the most critical to focus on to raise satisfaction ratings for them.

Items that rank high in satisfaction and either high or medium in importance can be interpreted as areas of strength. Items that rank high in importance but low in satisfaction are the first area that should benefit from attention so that satisfaction ratings can be raised. Items that rank medium in satisfaction and high in importance are the second area for attention. Items that rank low in satisfaction and medium in importance are the third area for attention. Items in the white areas of the matrix are neither areas of strength nor areas for attention. See Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Schematic of a priority matrix**

		Importance (devoting resources)		
		High	Medium	Low
Satisfaction	High	Areas of Strength		Neither
	Medium	Second Priority	Areas of Strength nor	
	Low	First Priority	Third Priority	Areas for Attention

**Priority matrix for core county services**

The priority matrix for 12 core county services is found below (Figure 2). Fire and rescue; police; and parks, recreational programs, and passive and active recreation facilities are the three core services of strength in the matrix.

There are no core services in the area of first priority for attention. Public schools is the second, and pedestrian safety (sidewalks, bike paths, lighting) is the third.

**Figure 2: Priority matrix for county services**

		Importance (devoting resources)		
		High	Medium	Low
Satisfaction	High	Fire and rescue services	Police service Parks, recreational programs, and passive and active recreation facilities	Libraries
	Medium	Public schools	Stormwater and drainage management Social services for people needing assistance Road maintenance and construction Utilities (water and sewer)	Community landscaping and beautification in public areas
	Low		Pedestrian safety (sidewalks, bike paths, lighting)	Public transit (GRTC bus service)

Note: Mental health services was inadvertently omitted from the question about satisfaction with core county services; therefore, it was not be included in the priority matrix.

The priority matrix combines information about the first two ways in which survey respondents were asked to think about the county’s core services – importance and satisfaction. The third way – declaring explicitly which core services need attention – is covered next.

***Devoting resources to improve the county's core services***

Respondents were also asked in the survey (Question 29): “Below is a list of services that Henrico County provides today. Consider the importance of these services and your satisfaction with these services. Then identify the top three services for which the county should be dedicating additional resources to improve. Please mark up to three choices.” A list of 12 core county services was provided.

In the results, the six most frequently mentioned core services for which the county should be dedicating additional resources to improve were:

- Public schools (55.5%)
- Pedestrian safety (35.3%)
- Road maintenance and construction (32.8%)
- Police service (32.5%)
- Parks, recreational programs, and access to passive open space (30.9%)
- Social services for people needing assistance (29.4%)

In the priority matrix for core county services (Figure 2 above), police service and parks were areas of strength, while public schools and pedestrian safety were areas for attention. In the case of police service and parks, the results of Question 29 suggest that many residents would like to protect and improve those strengths.

The results of Question 29 also suggest that a majority of residents would like for the county to devote resources to public schools and many residents would like for the county to devote resources to pedestrian safety. In both cases, this would probably be motivated by a desire to address problems in those services as they are in the areas needing attention in the priority matrix.

Road maintenance and construction was not an area of strength nor an area needing attention in the priority matrix for core county services; however, the results from Question 29 suggest that road maintenance, construction and people needing social services assistance should also receive attention from the county.

***Planning-related county services: Strengths and areas for attention***

The questionnaire asked residents to consider the list of 10 planning-related county services in three ways:

4. How important it is for the County to devote resources to each service? (Question 15)
5. Satisfaction with each service (Question 16)
6. What are the top three services for which the county should be dedicating additional resources to improve? (Question 30)

Importance was measured on a five-point scale with 1 being “Not at all important,” 5 being “Very important,” and a mid-point of 3 (ratings of 2, 3 and 4 were not labeled). The ratings were averaged and the three highest-rated planning-related services were supporting development of businesses (3.60), protecting environmental quality in the County (air, water, etc.) (3.59), and preserving historic buildings and sites (3.53). The two lowest-rated planning-related services were supporting improvements to aging developments (3.13) and providing bicycle and pedestrian amenities (sidewalks and bike paths) (3.09).

The services were ranked by these means for importance of devoting resources. The list was divided into three categories – high, medium, and low – by looking for natural breaks in the mean ratings. See Table 15.

**Table 15: Importance of devoting resources to planning-related county services (mean ratings)**

<i>High</i>	
Protecting environmental quality in the County (air, water, etc.)	4.66
Preserving open space and sensitive environmental areas	4.45
Managing where different types of new development occur	4.36
<i>Medium</i>	
Supporting improvements to aging developments	4.23
Supporting development of businesses	4.20
Supporting development of housing affordable to local workers	4.17
<i>Low</i>	
Preserving historic buildings and sites	4.06
Guiding design (attractiveness/style/layout) of new development	4.00
Supporting development of a variety of housing types	4.00
Providing bicycle and pedestrian amenities (sidewalks and bike paths)	3.95

Similarly, satisfaction was measured on a five-point scale with 1 being “Not at all satisfied,” 5 being “Very satisfied,” and a mid-point of 3 (ratings of 2, 3 and 4 were not labeled). The ratings were averaged and the services were ranked by these means for satisfaction. The list was divided into three categories – high, medium, and low – by looking for natural breaks in the mean ratings. See Table 16.

**Table 16: Satisfaction with planning-related county services (mean ratings)**

<i>High</i>	
Supporting development of businesses	3.60
Protecting environmental quality in the County (air, water, etc.)	3.59
<i>Medium</i>	
Preserving historic buildings and sites	3.53
Guiding design (attractiveness/style/layout) of new development	3.46
Preserving open space and sensitive environmental areas	3.42
Managing where different types of new development occur	3.32
Supporting improvements to aging developments	3.29
Supporting development of a variety of housing types	3.24
<i>Low</i>	
Supporting development of housing affordable to local workers	3.13
Providing bicycle and pedestrian amenities (sidewalks and bike paths)	3.09

**Priority matrix for planning-related county services**

The priority matrix for 10 planning-related county services is found in Figure 3. Protecting environmental quality in the county (air, water, etc.) and supporting development of businesses are the two planning-related services of strength in the matrix.

There are no planning-related services in the area of first priority for attention. Managing where different types of new development occur and preserving open space and sensitive environmental areas are the two planning-related services in the second priority area for attention. Supporting development of housing affordable to local workers is the planning-related service in the third priority area for attention.

**Figure 3: Priority matrix for county planning-related services**

		Importance (devoting resources)		
		Higher	Medium	Lower
Satisfaction	Higher	Protecting environmental quality in the County (air, water, etc.)	Supporting development of businesses	
	Medium	Managing where different types of new development occur Preserving open space and sensitive environmental areas	Supporting improvements to aging developments	Preserving historic buildings and sites Guiding design (attractiveness/style/layout) of new development Supporting development of a variety of housing types
	Lower		Supporting development of housing affordable to local workers	Providing bicycle and pedestrian amenities (sidewalks and bike paths)

### ***Devoting resources to improve county planning-related services***

Respondents were also asked the following (Question 30): “Below is a list of services that Henrico County provides today. Consider the importance of these services and your satisfaction with these services. Then identify the top three services for which the county should be dedicating additional resources to improve. Please mark up to three choices.” A list of 10 planning-related county services was provided.

In the results overall, the five most frequently mentioned planning-related services for which the county should be dedicating additional resources to improve were:

- Protecting environmental quality in the county (54.5%)
- Providing bicycle and pedestrian amenities (43.0%)
- Preserving permanent open space and sensitive environmental areas (39.8%)
- Managing where different types of new development occur (36.6%)
- Supporting the development of housing affordable to local workers (35.2%)

In the priority matrix for planning-related county services (Figure 3 above), protecting environmental quality in the county was an area of strength. Preserving permanent open space and sensitive environmental areas, managing where different types of new development occur, and supporting the development of housing affordable to local workers were areas for attention.

In the case of protecting environmental quality in the county, the results of Question 30 suggest a majority of residents would like to protect and improve this area of strength.

The results of Question 30 also suggest that many residents would like for the county to devote resources to preserving permanent open space and sensitive environmental areas, managing where different types of new development occur, and supporting the development of housing affordable to local workers, most likely to address perceived problems in these three areas.

Providing bicycle and pedestrian amenities was not an area of strength nor an area needing attention in the priority matrix for planning-related county services; however, the results from Question 30 suggest that bicycle and pedestrian amenities should also receive attention from the county.

### ***Transportation***

Several questions about transportation were included in the survey. Question 22 asked “When you travel around Henrico County, what are your top three transportation concerns?” A list of 10 possible concerns was presented, along with a choice for “Other (Write in).” Respondents were asked to mark three choices. The three most frequently mentioned concerns overall were traffic congestion (66.9%), pedestrian safety (50.3%) and vehicular safety (35.0%). Residents in the Tuckahoe district were generally more concerned about vehicular safety, and residents in the Fairfield district were generally more concerned about proximity to transit stops. See Table 17.

**Table 17: Top three transportation concerns, by magisterial district**

Concern	Total	Brookland	Fairfield	Three Chopt	Tuckahoe	Varina
Traffic congestion	66.9%	66.7%	58.9%	70.7%	67.6%	70.2%
Pedestrian safety	50.3%	53.1%	49.2%	50.8%	49.2%	48.8%
Vehicular safety	35.0%	31.5%	34.8%	32.6%	44.3%	31.7%
Bicyclist safety	34.6%	37.4%	33.6%	36.0%	33.3%	32.0%
Automobile dependency	29.8%	30.8%	32.8%	33.0%	30.9%	21.1%
Commute timing	29.6%	30.0%	31.2%	30.5%	19.7%	37.2%
Parking difficulties	18.2%	20.5%	12.6%	16.1%	19.5%	21.6%
Proximity to bike lanes or trails	13.0%	12.9%	14.9%	13.8%	14.3%	8.9%
Other	8.0%	6.7%	7.6%	5.3%	10.7%	10.2%
Proximity to transit stops	7.0%	4.2%	13.6%	7.0%	4.6%	6.3%

Respondents were also asked about their current use and desired use of three alternative modes of transportation – bicycling, walking and transit. See Appendix A for complete question wording and answer categories.

More residents said they would like to use each of these modes more frequently than reported using them currently. See Table 18.

**Table 18: Current and desired use of bicycling, walking and transit, by magisterial district**

Transportation mode	Total	Brookland	Fairfield	Three Chopt	Tuckahoe	Varina
<b>Bicycle</b>						
Current use (sometimes+often)	9.6%	7.4%	11.9%	10.8%	7.2%	11.5%
Would like to use more (yes)	38.0%	45.3%	35.9%	43.0%	37.9%	25.7%
<b>Walk</b>						
Current use (sometimes+often)	21.0%	25.5%	18.0%	23.0%	18.5%	19.0%
Would like to use more (yes)	54.8%	64.8%	53.4%	57.9%	53.8%	41.5%
<b>Transit</b>						
Current use (sometimes+often)	10.7%	12.4%	14.0%	15.4%	4.5%	7.0%
Would like to use more (yes)	25.8%	37.0%	26.1%	20.6%	20.7%	23.2%

### *Differences by magisterial district*

The responses to survey questions varied across magisterial districts, sometimes markedly. It should be noted first, though, that the weighted demographics of the respondents varied by magisterial district as well.

Household incomes reported in the survey in the Three Chopt and Tuckahoe magisterial districts were notably higher than in the other three districts, and the lowest household incomes were found in Varina. In Three Chopt, 64.9% of respondents reported household incomes of \$100,000 or more, compared to 46.3% in Tuckahoe, 35.4% in Brookland, 33.6% in Fairfield and 29.3% in Varina.

Employed respondents from Varina were significantly more likely to say they work in the city of Richmond (41.6% did so) compared to employed respondents from Three Chopt (20.0%) and Tuckahoe (18.7%). About one-third of respondents from Brookland (32.1%) and Fairfield (33.6%) said they work in the city of Richmond.

Black/African-American respondents were the majorities in Fairfield (61.8%) and Varina (53.1%), and these figures, along with Brookland's 20.0% Black/African-American population, were all statistically greater than Tuckahoe's 10.5% and Three Chopt's 7.9%.

Asian respondents were concentrated in Three Chopt – 24.7% of all respondents in Three Chopt were Asian, while the other four districts ranged from 1.7% to 9.6%. All four of those differences were statistically significant.

Female respondents were majorities in all five magisterial districts, but were more likely to be located in Fairfield (65.0%) and Varina (72.8%).

Households with children were least likely to be found in Varina (23.4%), and this was a significantly lower percentage than in Brookland (35.6%) or Three Chopt (42.7%).

Varina residents were more likely to want more apartments, office development and retail development, compared to residents of the other districts. They were least likely to say they would like to bike or walk more frequently.

Three Chopt and Brookland residents were more likely to say they use transit, while Brookland residents were more likely to say they would like to be able to use transit more frequently than they do today.

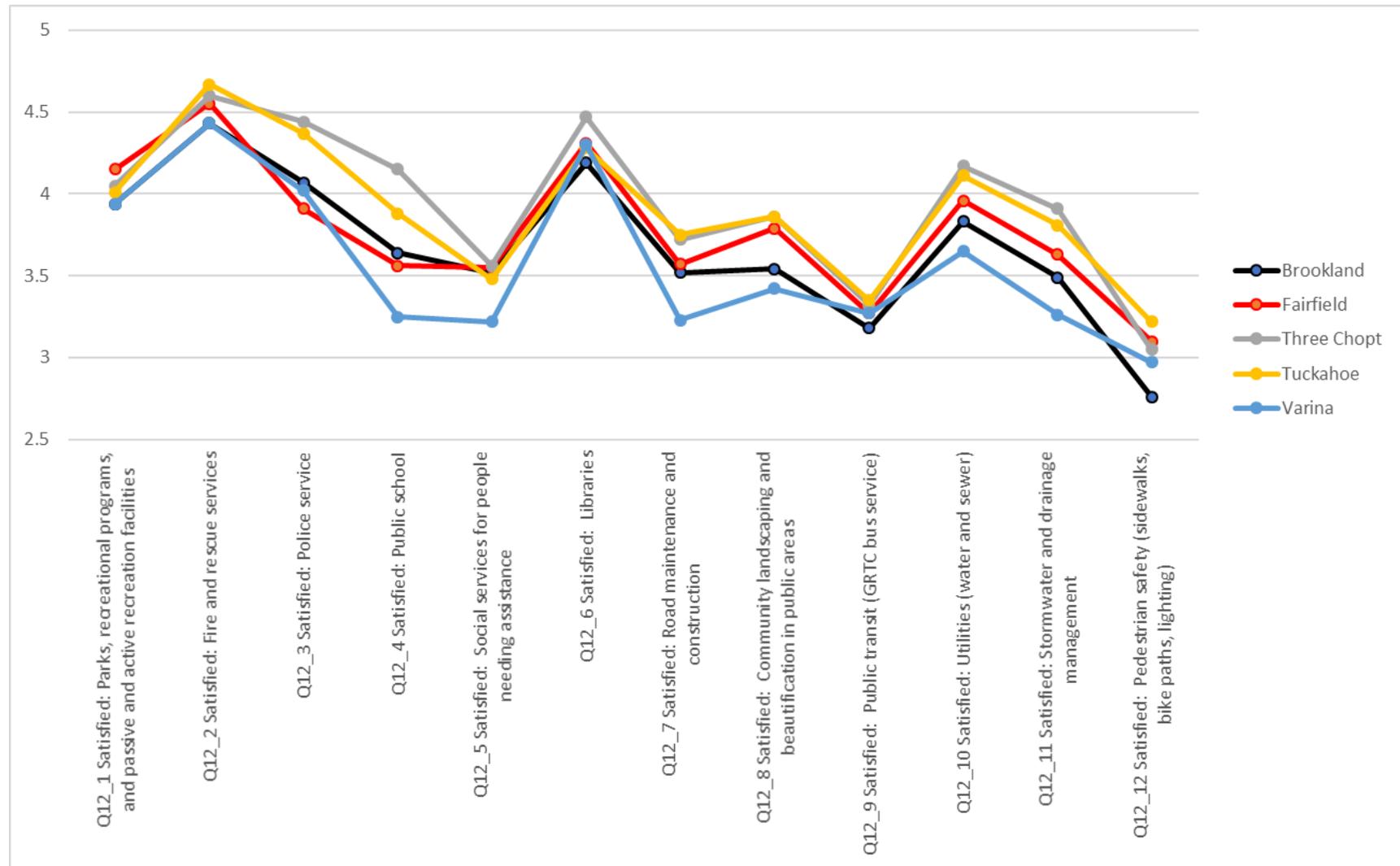
Varina residents were much less satisfied than residents of the other districts. They gave the lowest average ratings among the five magisterial districts for 20 out of 26 satisfaction-related items in the questionnaire. Varina's satisfaction ratings were lower in 52 of the 80 possible paired difference comparisons between the district and the other four districts on these 20 items. These differences were statistically significant.

The following list shows the 20 satisfaction-related items for which Varina residents gave the lowest ratings. The number in parentheses shows the number of statistically significant comparisons to other magisterial districts that were lower in Varina (out of four comparisons for each item).

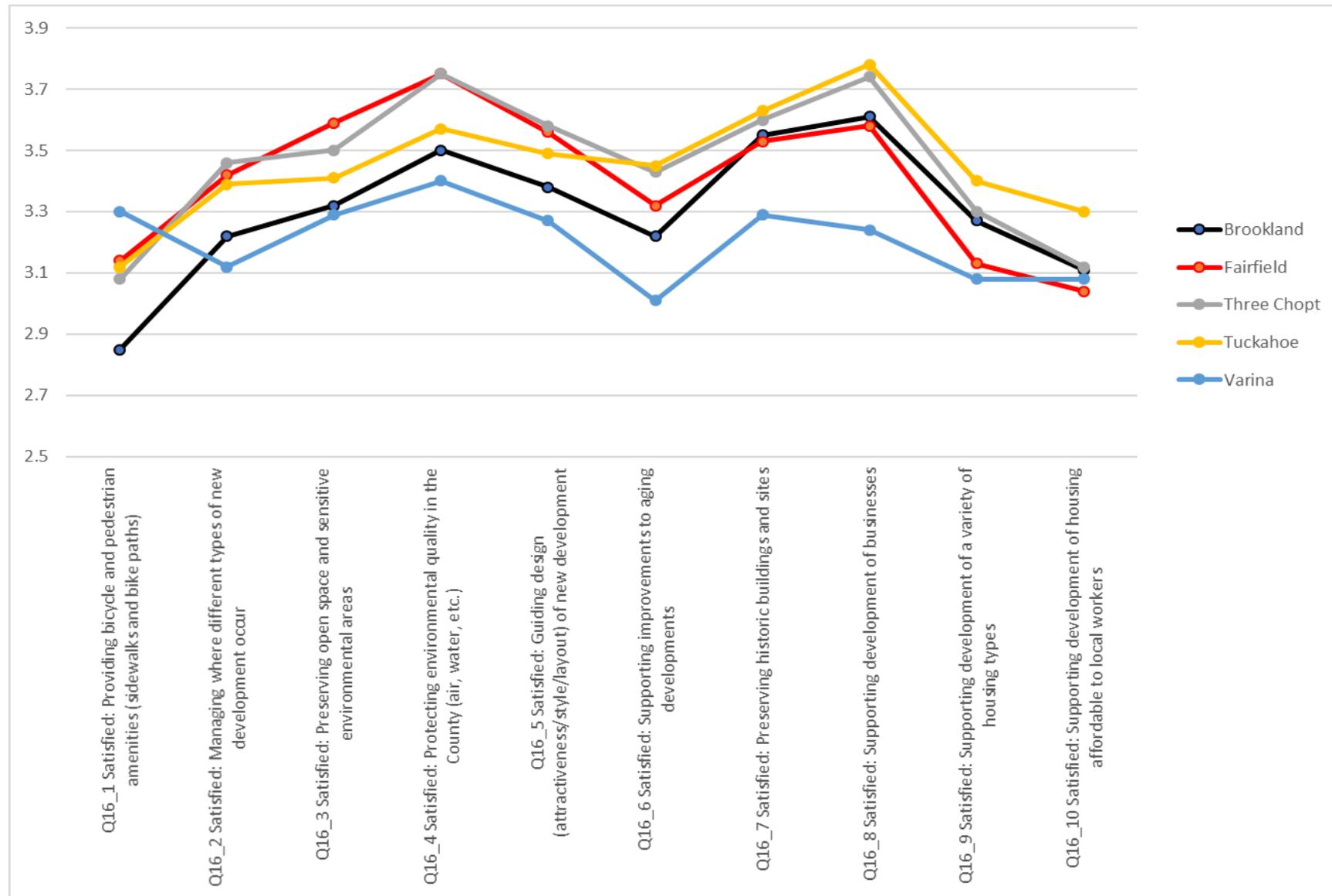
- Overall quality of life in Henrico County (4)
- Public schools (4)
- Road maintenance and construction (4)
- The value of county services provided in relation to the taxes paid (4)
- Supporting development of businesses (4)
- Social services for people needing assistance (3)
- Community landscaping and beautification in public areas (3)
- Utilities (water and sewer) (3)
- Stormwater and drainage management (3)
- Overall satisfaction with the services provided by Henrico County (3)
- Managing where different types of new development occur (3)
- Supporting improvements to aging developments (3)
- Preserving historic buildings and sites (3)
- Fire and rescue services (2)
- Protecting environmental quality in the County (air, water, etc.) (2)
- Change in quality of life over the last 10 years (1)
- Preserving open space and sensitive environmental areas (1)
- Guiding design (attractiveness/style/layout) of new development (1)
- Supporting development of a variety of housing types (1)
- Parks, recreational programs, and passive and active recreation facilities (0)

Figure 4 below shows the mean satisfaction ratings for the 12 core county services by magisterial district. Following that, Figure 5 shows the mean satisfaction ratings for the 10 planning-related county services by magisterial district.

**Figure 4: Satisfaction with core county services, by magisterial district**



**Figure 5: Satisfaction with planning-related county services, by magisterial district**



Opinions about the services for which the county should be dedicating additional resources to improve also varied by magisterial district.<sup>4</sup> This is seen in the different rankings of the frequencies of mentions of those services within magisterial districts. For example, Varina residents placed relatively higher priority on improving police service compared to the frequency of mentions of police service in other districts. In Varina, police service was mentioned second-most frequently, but only fourth- to seventh-most frequently in the other districts. Fairfield residents placed relatively lower priority on police services, mentioning them seventh-most frequently. Residents in Fairfield and Varina mentioned social services third-most frequently, while residents in the other districts mentioned them sixth- or seventh-most frequently. See Table 19.

**Table 19: County services for which additional resources should be dedicated to improve, by magisterial district**

Service	Total		Brookland	Fairfield	Three Chopt	Tuckahoe	Varina
	%	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank
Public schools	55.5	1	1	1	1	1	1
Pedestrian safety (sidewalks, bike paths, lighting)	35.3	2	2	2	2	3	7
Road maintenance and construction	32.8	3	3	5	3	5	4
Police service	32.5	4	5	7	4	4	2
Parks, recreation programs, access to passive open space	30.9	5	4	4	5	2	6
Social services for people needing assistance	29.4	6	6	3	6	7	3
Fire and rescue services	22.9	7	7	8	7	6	5
Public transit (GRTC bus service)	15.1	8	9	6	11	8	10
Stormwater and drainage management	15.0	9	8	10	8	9	8
Utilities (water and sewer)	11.2	10	11	9	10	11	9
Community landscaping/public area beautification	8.4	11	10	11	9	12	11
Libraries	5.5	12	12	12	12	10	12

Regarding which of the county's planning-related services should have more resources devoted to them to improve,<sup>5</sup> the consistently highest priority in all magisterial district was to improve protecting environmental quality in the county. Varina and Brookland residents placed relatively

<sup>4</sup> Question 29 on the survey, also described earlier in this report.

<sup>5</sup> Question 30 on the survey, also described earlier in this report.

higher priority on devoting resources to support the development of housing affordable to local workers, mentioning this priority second- and third-most frequently, respectively. Residents in the other districts mentioned this fourth- to sixth-most frequently. To a small degree, Three Chopt and Tuckahoe residents placed relatively higher priority on devoting resources to improve preserving permanent open space and sensitive environmental areas, mentioning this priority second-most frequently, while residents in the other districts mentioned this fourth- to fifth-most frequently. Devoting resources to provide bicycle and pedestrian amenities was less important to Varina residents, who mentioned it fifth-most frequently while residents in other districts mentioned it second- or third-most frequently.

Overall, respondents prioritized improving the management of *where* different types of new development occur (36.7% overall, ranked fourth) over *what* new development looks like (11.6% overall, ranked tenth and last). See Table 20.

**Table 20: Planning-related services for which additional resources should be dedicated to improve, by magisterial district**

Planning-related service	Total		Brookland	Fairfield	Three Chopt	Tuckahoe	Varina
	%	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank
Protecting environmental quality in the County	54.5	1	1	1	1	1	1
Providing bicycle and pedestrian amenities	43.0	2	2	2	3	3	5
Preserving permanent open space and sensitive environmental areas	39.8	3	4	5	2	2	4
Managing where different types of new development occur	36.6	4	5	3	4	4	3
Supporting the development of housing affordable to local workers	35.2	5	3	4	6	5	2
Supporting development of businesses	21.6	6	8	8	5	6	6
Supporting improvements to aging developments	21.4	7	7	6	7	7	7
Supporting development of a variety of housing types	17.6	8	6	7	9	8	8
Preserving historic buildings and sites	11.7	9	9	9	10	10	9
Guiding design (attractiveness/style/layout) of new development	11.5	10	10	10	8	9	10

***Differences by length of time living in the county***

Differences by length of time living in the county were probably not surprising, given that this variable is also related to the age of the respondent. For example, those who were living in the county for 10 to 20 years or more were significantly more likely to support devoting resources to police service as well as road maintenance and construction.

Those who were living in the county for 21 years or more and those living in the county for 10 to 20 years were significantly more satisfied with core county services overall. They gave mean satisfaction ratings on a four-point scale of 3.22 and 3.25, respectively, compared to 3.02 for those living in the county for five years or less, and 3.05 for those living in the county for six to nine years.

Those who were living in the county for 21 years or more were significantly less interested in having places in the county where people can live, work, and play within a 5-minute drive or 10-to-15-minute walk or bike ride. Of these long-term residents, 50.8% said this was “very important,” significantly less than those living in the county for five years or less (68.0%), those living in the county for six to nine years (67.5%), and those living in the county for 10 to 20 years (69.6%).

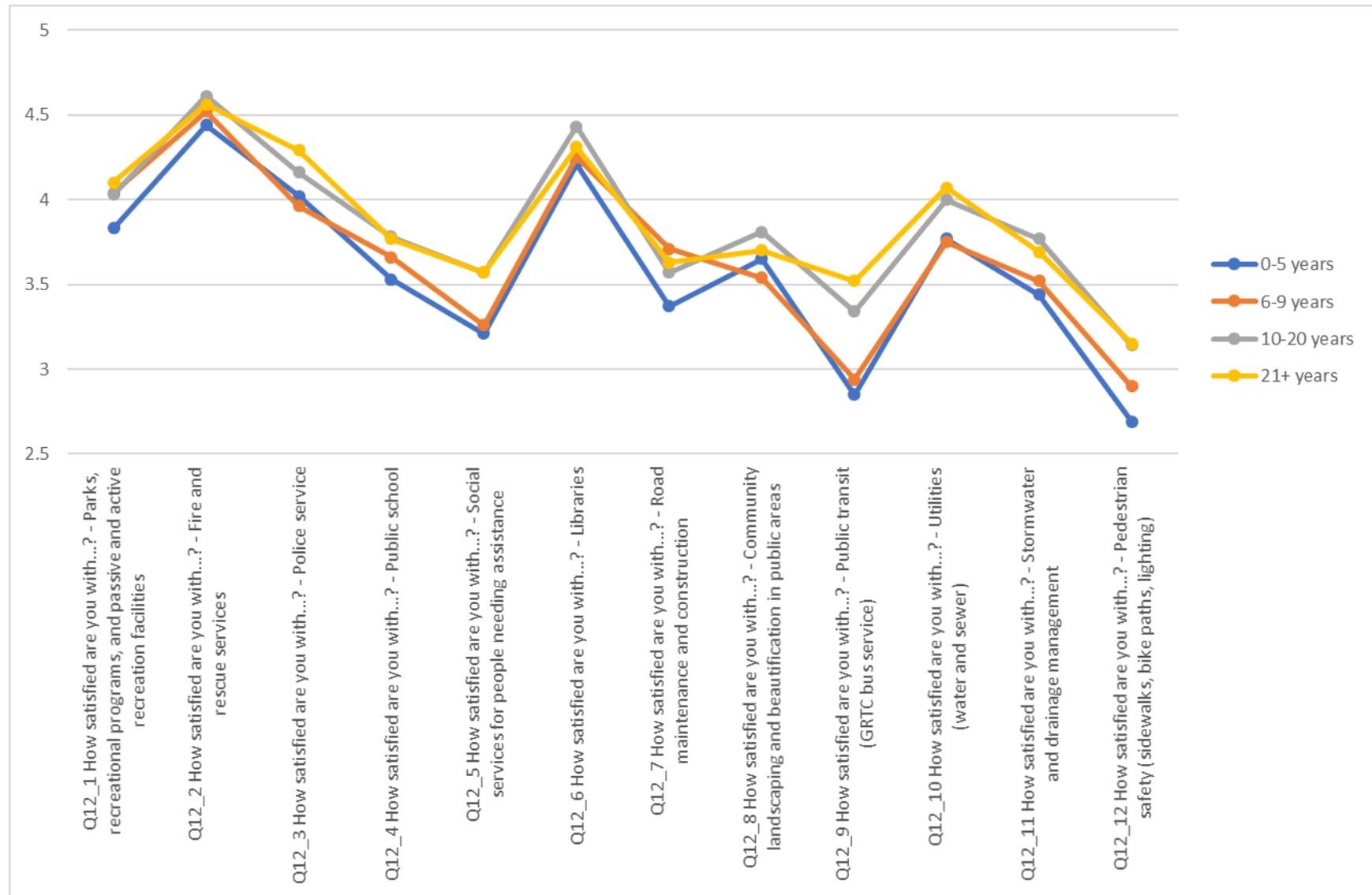
Residents living in the county for 21 or more years were generally more likely than other residents to say there were too many single-family homes, apartments, office developments, retail developments and industrial developments (not all of those differences were statistically significant, but the general pattern held true).

See Appendix C for the data tables that document these findings.

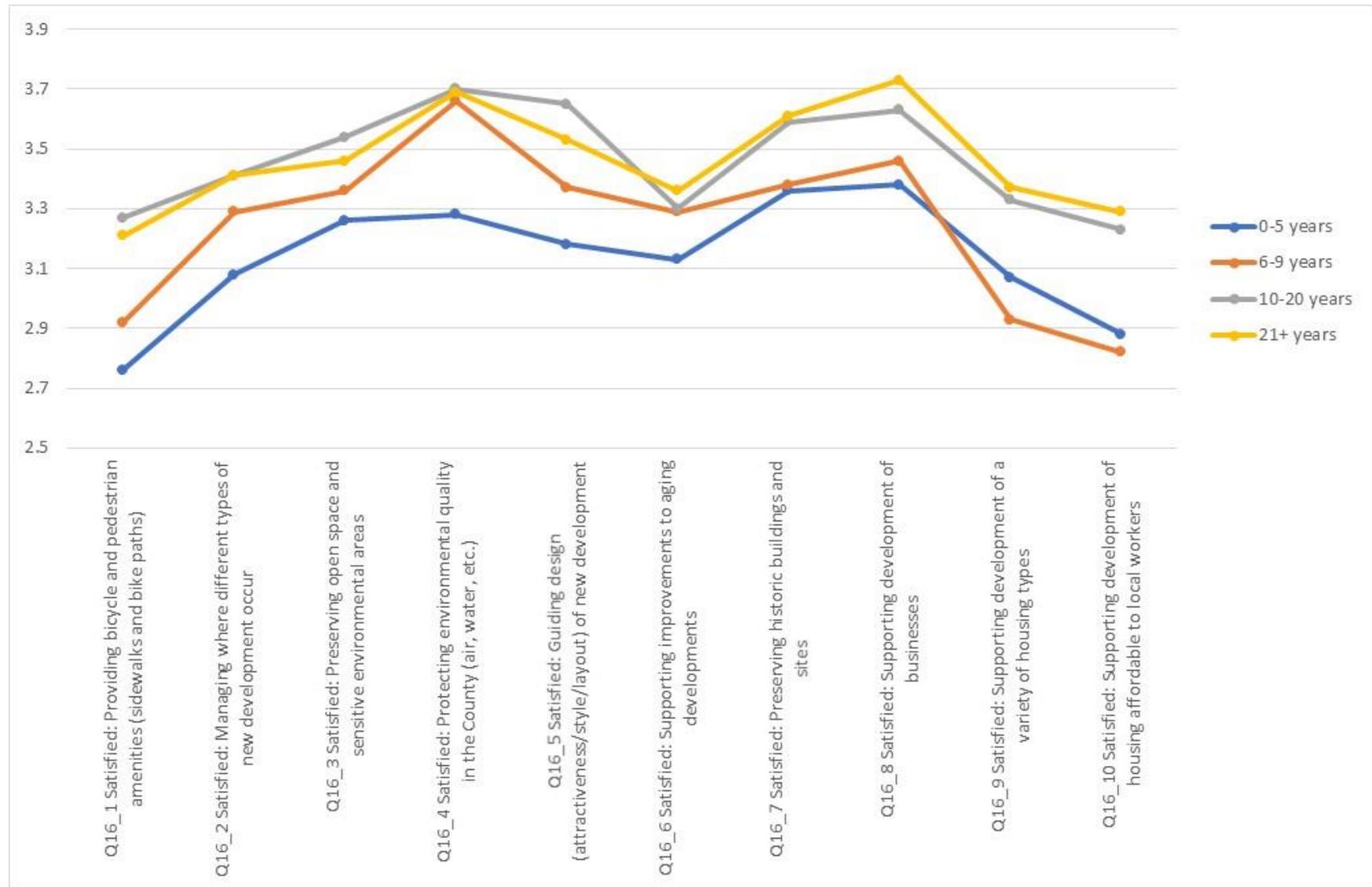
Figure 6 on the next page shows the mean satisfaction ratings for the 12 core county services by years living in Henrico County. Following that, Figure 7 shows the mean satisfaction ratings for the 10 planning-related county services by years living in Henrico County.

In general, longer-time residents (21 or more years and 10 to 20 years) gave slightly but consistently higher ratings for satisfaction with core county services (Figure 6) and planning-related services (Figure 7).

**Figure 6: Satisfaction with core county services, by years living in Henrico County**



**Figure 7: Satisfaction with planning-related county services, by years living in Henrico County**



***About the responses to open-ended survey questions (Appendix D)***

All open-ended (write-in or verbatim) responses are presented in Appendix D. Profanity and mentions of specific individuals were redacted for this report. Reviewing the open-ended responses is a very good way to get the full flavor of the opinions offered by the respondents. Appendix D contains the verbatim responses for seven survey questions:

1. Question 4: What do you value most about Henrico County? Please describe in your own words.
2. Question 6: Why did you give that rating in Question 5? (Question 5 asked: How would you rate the overall quality of life today in Henrico County? Quality of life includes the economic, social, and environmental health, well-being, and vitality of the community. Please use a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 means "Poor" and 5 means "Excellent.")
3. Question 8: Why did you give that rating in Question 7? (Question 7 asked: Over the past ten years has the quality of life in Henrico County gotten worse or gotten better? Use a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 meaning "Gotten worse" and 5 meaning "Gotten better.")
4. Question 9: What do you think is Henrico County's biggest challenge today? Please describe in your own words.
5. Question 10: When you think about your ideal vision of Henrico County in 25 years, what words come to mind? Please provide up to five words that express your vision for the County's future.
6. Question 22: "Other (Write in)" responses: When you travel around Henrico County, what are your top three transportation concerns?
7. Question 33: "Other (Write in)" responses: How do you find out about County information?

A separate document that summarizes the response themes from the Residents' Survey's open-ended questions was prepared by Clarion Associates and can be found on the project website:

<https://www.henriconext.us/resources-1>.