

## CHAPTER 2: Quality of Life in Spotsylvania County

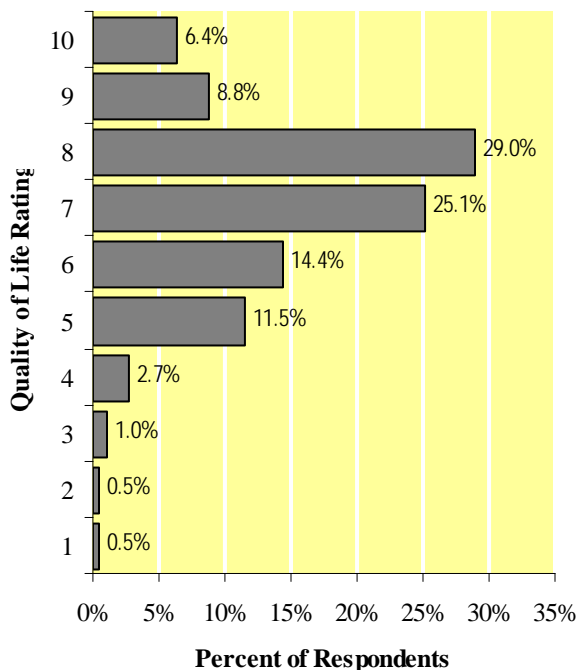
In general, citizens have a favorable impression of their quality of life in Spotsylvania County.

In order to assess this quality of life, each respondent was asked,

*“Please imagine a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 represents the worst possible community in which to live, and 10 represents the best possible community. Where on that scale would you rate Spotsylvania as a place to live?”*

The mean quality of life rating was 7.10, demonstrating that citizens of Spotsylvania County are, in general, pleased with their quality of life. Approximately 44.2 percent of the respondents rated the County’s quality of life an “8” or better and 6.4 percent rated it as a “10,” the best possible rating. Only 30.6 percent of respondents rated the quality of life as a “6” or worse, with a mere 4.7 percent rating it less than a “5.” Figure 2.1 illustrates these findings.

**Figure 2.1: Overall Quality of Life Rating**



To better understand the issues affecting citizens’ opinions about their quality of life, residents who

rated the County a “9” or higher were asked to report the main aspects that they like about Spotsylvania County. Most often stated was the quietness of the area and that it is still relatively rural, but that shops and other conveniences are nearby. Others indicated they liked the friendliness of the people and the quality of the schools.

Similarly, those who rated the County a “6” or lower were asked what they dislike about living in Spotsylvania County. The most frequently mentioned items included traffic congestion and rapid growth and development in the area. Others also feel that taxes are too high and that County-provided services are not keeping up with population growth.

When looking at the various demographic subgroups on the quality of life rating, two interesting differences appeared. First, there was a significant difference based on race. Asians rated the quality of life in the County the highest, with a mean rating of 7.88. African-Americans were also very positive in their rating, giving the County an average rating of 7.63, whereas the average rating among Caucasians was 7.04 and among those of “other” races was 6.56.<sup>2</sup>

Second, there was a significant difference in quality of life ratings based on whether or not there was a child aged 5 to 12 living in the home. Of those respondents who have children under 18 living with them, those who have a child between the ages of 5 and 12 gave higher quality of life ratings (mean 7.28) than did those without children in that age category (mean 6.92). Interestingly, there was no difference in quality of life ratings based on whether or not there was a child of any age living in the home. The difference was only for those between the ages of 5 and 12.

### Summary

In summary, residents of Spotsylvania County are very satisfied with their quality of life. There are, however, some significant differences based on race and the presence of children aged 5 to 12 in the household.

<sup>2</sup> When interpreting this demographic difference, however, it is important to note that the number of Asian and “other” respondents were quite low. Only 8 respondents identified themselves as Asian and 16 respondents reported their race as “other.”