

QUALITY OF LIFE

| ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES | EDUCATION SYSTEM | TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM | LOCAL GOVERNMENT | UTILITIES |
PRESENCE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN OUR LIVES | ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES | GOVERNMENT
SERVICES | GROWTH MANAGEMENT | RACIAL, RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC TOLERANCE | SECURITY | HEALTHCARE |
NON-GOVERNMENTAL SOCIAL SERVICES | ENTERTAINMENT | NEIGHBORHOOD AND FAMILY SUPPORT | PUBLIC
PARKS AND RECREATION | AFFORDABLE HOUSING | HISTORIC PRESERVATION | THE ARTS |

NUMBER 8 (2010)

**THE
PLANNING
COMMISSION**

THE PLANNING COMMISSION

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“I liked this area the way it was before it was over - developed.

Now all we have is crowding, traffic jams, and financial shortfalls.”

“The government has allowed speculation to distort normal home acquisition.”

“Sheriff is not controlling loud music in this county. He tells you if you don't like it move. Daupam trailer parks goes up for grabs on weekends and holidays.”

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Quality of Life Survey (Survey) began in 2002 as a way to measure public perception of Hillsborough County's quality of life. It was designed and analyzed by a statistical consultant. This is the eighth year of the Survey. For consistency the Survey has **not** been modified over time.

The Survey uses eighteen factors that were chosen by a focus group of County residents. It was the group's consensus that these eighteen factors represent the quality of life in Hillsborough County. **It is important to note these factors refer to an entire system not necessarily one program or one government's responsibility.**

For example, the Healthcare factor reflects all levels and types of healthcare. It neither references any one entity with responsibility for the many components of the healthcare system nor does it refer to the current, national discussion on healthcare. The same consideration holds true for all the remaining quality of life factors. A complete list of the factors can be found in **Table 1**. An Overall Quality of Life factor also was included to capture any other factors important to the respondent.

Respondents scored each factor on a scale from one to five. One meaning its quality was much worse than last year and five meaning its quality was much better than last year. Then each respondent indicated whether or not that factor should receive more, the same, or less attention in the next year (i.e. 2010).

Each factor was analyzed by calculating the average score of all respondents. Those average scores then were compared to the average scores from last year's survey to analyze the change, if any, in public perception over time. Results are displayed in Tables 3 through 7.

The lowest scoring factors were *Economic Opportunities* and *Healthcare*. Given the current economic downturn and the national debate on health care this result was not surprising. *Economic Opportunities* includes opportunities to operate a business or find acceptable employment. *Healthcare* includes the availability of quality, affordable healthcare for all residents.

Two factors *Entertainment* and *Racial, Religious, and Ethnic Tolerance* received average scores statistically greater than three. Thus the public perceived these as "better" when compared to one year ago. Unfortunately the Survey cannot identify why the opinion of respondents changed. The *Entertainment* factor has scored the highest every year of the Survey. This factor includes sports, concerts, and other forms of popular entertainment.

The public perceived the remaining eleven factors and the *Overall Quality of Life* as "worse." It was expected the majority of factors would receive lower scores given current economic conditions resulting in negative public opinion.

Given the expenditure required to conduct the Survey, the opportunity was used to ask questions on the back of the Survey that are of interest. The questions were clearly distinguished from the remainder of the Survey and the results displayed separately. This year's area of special interest was sustainability and growth. Table 8 shows the results of these special questions.

Fifty-four percent of respondents agreed the best, long-term solution to reduce traffic congestion is expanding public transportation, including commuter rail. When asked to rank sustainable transportation solutions, "building new roads" was ranked lowest. From a list of proposals that address how to achieve a sustainable community, the most favorable was "Encourage mixed use development to reduce the need to drive to work, to shop, and for recreation."

INTRODUCTION

This Eighth Annual Quality of Life Survey (Survey) continues to provide information allowing the Planning Commission to track changes in public perception about their quality of life in the county.

Public perception is a valuable tool for local governments to judge the effectiveness of broad program areas.

Improving the quality of life for residents is an underlying principle of all appointed or elected bodies and the county's four comprehensive plans. The Survey will be one of many pieces of information considered by the Planning Commission during the state-mandated update to the four jurisdictional comprehensive plans – unincorporated Hillsborough County and the cities of Tampa, Plant City, and Temple Terrace.

In the final analysis, the Survey presents one of many views, but the results are based on an academically sound, independent process. The Planning Commission conducts this annual Survey to monitor the public's changing perceptions. The basic principles of objective and independent research were strictly adhered to throughout the Survey process.

For the second time this year, we have provided a sampling of comments supplied to us by respondents. While there is no section within the Survey for comments, many respondents write in the margins or throughout their response sheet with comments, criticisms and other observations.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the Survey is to measure changes in the public's perception of the quality of life in Hillsborough County. It is assumed changes in quality of life are best measured by gauging changes in the factors or components that comprise those items which affect the public's perception of quality of life.

The factors used in the Survey were developed by a focus group in 2002. The focus group was a representative sampling of Hillsborough County residents. The Planning Commission hired an independent facilitator to guide the group. The focus group created a list of components that represent the quality of life in Hillsborough County. For the sake of making meaningful comparisons, it was decided to use the same factors in each year's survey. Table 1 displays the quality of life factors.

TABLE 1: QUALITY OF LIFE FACTORS

Economic Opportunities

To include opportunities to operate a business or find acceptable employment.

Education System

To include a public education system at all levels that is funded and staffed.

Transportation System

To include a system that moves people and goods with options ranging from roads to pedestrian to air travel to mass transit.

Local Government Utilities

To include drinking water, wastewater, drainage and other government-operated utilities.

Presence of Local Government in Our Lives

To include collaboration among local governments, with simplicity and privacy for the average citizen as primary concerns.

Environmental and Natural Resources

To include sensitive lands, water availability and quality, and air quality.

Government Services

To include basic services such as police and fire protection, code enforcement, social services and consumer protection.

Growth Management

To include the availability of urban, suburban and rural lifestyles; resource management; and public participation in the regulatory process.

Racial, Religious and Ethnic Tolerance

To include an open and ready acceptance of all races, ethnicities and religions.

Security

To include safety in one's home or business and a feeling of security in public settings.

Healthcare – to include the availability of quality, affordable healthcare for all residents.

Non-government Social Services – to include the presence of charities and non-profit social service organizations.

Entertainment – to include sports, concerts, and other forms of popular entertainment.

Neighborhood and Family Support – to include public and private groups that act to assist and protect neighborhoods, families and households of all types.

Public Parks and Recreation – to include all forms of outdoor public recreation opportunities and facilities.

Affordable Housing – to include rental and home ownership.

Historic Preservation – to include the preservation of historic buildings and sites.

The Arts – to include a variety of choices among the arts.

When looking at the Survey, it is important to realize these factors refer to entire systems as opposed to one program or one government's responsibility. For example Education System was selected as the second-most important quality of life factor by the focus group. After reading the brief description following Education System it is clear that this factor refers to all levels and types of education and does not refer to any one government or non-government entity. The same consideration holds for all of the quality of life factors.

A random sample of 10,000 registered voters was mailed surveys during the first week of January 2010. Given the size of the universe, 661,251 registered voters, 900 completed surveys were needed to reach the desired confidence level of 95 percent.

Over 1,100 usable surveys were returned which was more than enough to meet statistical requirements. Precautions were taken to preserve the anonymity of the respondents and ensure there was no way to trace results back to any individual in the sample.

Similar to previous surveys, respondents scored each factor on a scale of one to five, "much worse" to "much better," concerning the quality of that factor in 2009 compared to the previous year. Each respondent then chose, from "A" to "C", how much attention these factors should receive in 2010. Selecting "A" meant that factor should receive more attention in 2010; selecting "C" meant that factor should receive less attention in 2010. The letters were converted to numeric values where "A" was three points; "B" was two points; and "C" was one point. The results for each factor were analyzed separately.

The level of accuracy chosen for the Survey was 95 percent confidence. This was measured for each of the eighteen quality of life factors and the overall quality of life factor. Confidence intervals (a.k.a. "levels of accuracy") relate to the statistical concept of reliability. The reliability of a survey gives the researcher confidence that similar results will be produced from repeated samples, of the same size, drawn from the same population. In other words if 100 different samples of 10,000 were selected from the list of registered voters, it can be said with confidence that 95 out of the 100 samples would yield results within the values reported. For example with a margin of error of ± 0.1 , a factor score of 2.3 would mean that there is 95 percent confidence that the "real" value in the population is between 2.2 and 2.4.

SURVEY RESULTS

The Survey data was analyzed for three main topics.

1. Quality Results – changes in the perception of quality for each factor;
2. Attention Results – the degree to which each factor should receive attention in 2010;
3. Comparison Results – the change in perception of each factor compared to last year.

The following sections report the results of each analysis in detail. Tables 2 through 7 display the results.

“Attract businesses that will motivate jobs for local people other than construction. We are over populated.”

“Very important. Need more jobs.”

“Hillsborough County and the State of Florida is only interested (in) taxation and fees.”

“You can’t really control things affected by dismal national and government economics.”

QUALITY RESULTS

Recall that respondents were asked to score the quality of each factor on a range from one to five. Table 2 below illustrates the definition of quality scores. Table 3 displays the average quality score for each factor.

TABLE 2: DEFINITION OF QUALITY SCORES

| SCORE | DEFINITIONS |
|-------|---|
| 1 | The quality of that factor this year (2009) <i>is much worse than</i> the quality of that same factor last year (2008). |
| 2 | The quality of that factor this year (2009) <i>is worse than</i> the quality of that same factor last year (2008). |
| 3 | The quality of that factor this year (2009) <i>is about the same</i> as the quality of that same factor last year (2008). |
| 4 | The quality of that factor this year (2009) <i>is better than</i> the quality of that same factor last year (2008). |
| 5 | The quality of that factor this year (2009) <i>is much better</i> than the quality of that same factor last year (2008). |

No factors received average scores of one or five, i.e. *much worse*, or *much better*. The first two factors in Table 3 received average scores statistically greater than three. Thus the public perceived these as *better* when compared to one year ago. These factors are Entertainment and Racial, Religious, and Ethnic Tolerance.

The Entertainment factor received the highest average score of 3.18. This factor has scored the highest every year of the Survey. The Entertainment factor includes sports, concerts, and other forms of popular entertainment.

The next five factors in Table 3 were viewed by the public “about the same as” one year ago. In other words, there was no statistical difference from a score of three. The public perceived the remaining eleven factors and the Overall Quality of Life as *worse*. Average scores for these factors ranged from 2.17 to 2.92.

The lowest scoring factors were Economic Opportunities and Healthcare with scores of 2.17 and 2.54 respectively. Given the current economic downturn, this result was not surprising. Economic Opportunities includes opportunities to operate a business or find acceptable employment. Healthcare includes the availability of quality, affordable healthcare for all residents.

The Overall Quality of Life received its lowest score of 2.72 since the Survey began. Interestingly, the scores appear to slightly precede a change in the economic cycle. For example, Overall Quality of Life scores increased between 2002 and 2004, just slightly ahead of the last economic recovery. In 2005 the scores began dropping consistently each year, again just prior to the current recession which began in 2007.

TABLE 3: RANKED QUALITY SCORES

| Factor | Average | Margin of Error* |
|---|-------------|------------------|
| Entertainment | 3.18 | ±0.045 |
| Racial, Religious, and Ethnic Tolerance | 3.06 | ±0.051 |
| The Arts | 3.03 | ±0.045 |
| Public Parks and Recreation | 3.01 | ±0.043 |
| Non-Government Social Services | 2.99 | ±0.043 |
| Neighborhood and Family Support | 2.98 | ±0.049 |
| Government Services | 2.97 | ±0.050 |
| Local Government Utilities | 2.92 | ±0.047 |
| Affordable Housing | 2.89 | ±0.047 |
| Environment and Natural Resources | 2.84 | ±0.052 |
| Transportation System | 2.82 | ±0.053 |
| Education System | 2.78 | ±0.036 |
| Presence of Local Government in Our Lives | 2.76 | ±0.048 |
| Security | 2.76 | ±0.054 |
| Overall Quality of Life | 2.72 | ±0.052 |
| Growth Management | 2.69 | ±0.052 |
| Historic Preservation | 2.68 | ±0.062 |
| Healthcare | 2.54 | ±0.060 |
| Economic Opportunities | 2.17 | ±0.055 |

* Margin of Error – i.e. Confidence interval - 95 percent confident the true value lies within this range

ATTENTION RESULTS

Next each respondent was asked to score the attention each factor should receive in a range from A (three points) to C (one point). Table 4 below illustrates the definition of attention scores. Table 5 displays the average attention score for each factor.

TABLE 4: DEFINITION OF ATTENTION SCORES

| SCORE | DEFINITIONS |
|----------|---|
| A (3pts) | The factor should receive more attention next year (2010). |
| B (2pts) | The factor should receive the same amount of attention next year (2010). |
| C (1pt) | The factor should receive less attention next year (2010). |

“Haven’t had a child in school since 1979.”

“Just retired from Hillsborough County Schools. (It’s) going downhill fast -- not enough people to do the job.”

**“More teaching.
Less administering.”**

Only one factor, *Entertainment*, scored, less than two meaning that factor should receive “less attention” next year (2010). Interestingly, the *Entertainment* factor received the highest average quality score of 3.18 meaning the quality of Entertainment was perceived as “better” this year (2009) than compared to last year (2008).

One factor, *The Arts*, received an average attention score statistically equal to two. Respondents believed this factor should receive about the “same amount of” attention next year as compared to this year. The remaining factors received scores statistically greater than two meaning respondents believed more attention should be given these factors next year.

Economic Opportunities and *Education* were the two factors receiving the highest average attention scores. This result is not surprising since an analysis comparing the average quality scores and the average attention scores shows a strong negative relationship between them (i.e. as the average quality score decreases, the average attention score increases). In the case of *Economic Opportunities* and Education, this relationship holds true where the quality score was “worse” and the attention score was “more.” However, the *Education* factor received a stronger attention score (2.57) than *Healthcare* (2.45) which was rated second lowest (sixteen out of eighteen) in quality scores. The *Education* factor was rated twelfth out of eighteen based on quality scores.

TABLE 5: RANKED ATTENTION SCORES

| Factor | Average | Margin of Error* |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|
| Economic Opportunities | 2.78 | ±0.029 |
| Education System | 2.57 | ±0.036 |
| Overall Quality of Life | 2.54 | ±0.036 |
| Security | 2.52 | ±0.034 |
| Transportation System | 2.47 | ±0.041 |
| Healthcare | 2.45 | ±0.043 |
| Environment and Natural Resources | 2.43 | ±0.039 |
| Government Services | 2.39 | ±0.036 |
| Historic Preservation | 2.38 | ±0.042 |
| Growth Management | 2.37 | ±0.039 |
| Affordable Housing | 2.34 | ±0.039 |
| Local Government Utilities | 2.34 | ±0.035 |
| Neighborhood and Family Support | 2.33 | ±0.038 |
| Presence of Local Government in Our Lives | 2.21 | ±0.042 |
| Non-Government Social Services | 2.2 | ±0.039 |
| Public Parks and Recreation | 2.11 | ±0.040 |
| Racial, Religious, and Ethnic Tolerance | 2.07 | ±0.043 |
| The Arts | 2.01 | ±0.042 |
| Entertainment | 1.91 | ±0.040 |

* Margin of Error – i.e. Confidence interval - 95 percent confident the true value lies within this range

COMPARISON RESULTS

Table 6 shows the average quality score in 2009 and in 2008 for each of the eighteen factors and the *Overall Quality of Life* factor.

Eleven factors and the *Overall Quality of Life* factor received lower quality scores this year when compared to last year. Six of those factors were statistically lower, meaning respondents have a lower perception of quality now than in 2008 for those factors. It is not surprising that both the *Economic Opportunities* and the *Overall Quality of Life* factors received lower scores. In fact, it was expected that the majority of factors would have received lower scores given continued economic conditions resulting in negative public opinion. The factor with the greatest decrease in quality score was *Historic Preservation* which dropped from a score of 3.05 last year to 2.68 this year.

Six factors received statistically higher quality scores than in 2008. Respondents now have a more favorable opinion of these factors. They include: the *Affordable Housing*; the *Transportation System*; the *Healthcare*; and the *Education System* factors. Unfortunately the Survey can not identify why the opinion of respondents changed. The remaining factor, *Government Services*, was scored identical to 2008. The factor with the greatest increase in quality score was *Affordable Housing* which rose from a score of 2.51 last year to 2.89 this year.

TABLE 6: COMPARISON OF QUALITY SCORES

| Factor | Average Quality Score | |
|--|-----------------------|-------------|
| | 2009 | 2008 |
| Affordable Housing* | 2.89 | 2.51 |
| Economic Opportunities* | 2.17 | 2.25 |
| Education System* | 2.78 | 2.69 |
| Entertainment* | 3.18 | 3.28 |
| Environment and Natural Resources | 2.84 | 2.88 |
| Government Services | 2.97 | 2.97 |
| Growth Management* | 2.69 | 2.78 |
| Healthcare* | 2.54 | 2.45 |
| Historic Preservation* | 2.68 | 3.05 |
| Local Government Utilities | 2.92 | 2.95 |
| Neighborhood and Family Support* | 2.98 | 2.87 |
| Non-Government Social Services* | 2.99 | 2.93 |
| Presence of Local Government in Our Lives* | 2.76 | 2.85 |
| Public Parks and Recreation* | 3.01 | 3.08 |
| Racial, Religious, and Ethnic Tolerance | 3.06 | 3.12 |
| Security | 2.76 | 2.81 |
| The Arts | 3.03 | 3.04 |
| Transportation System* | 2.82 | 2.75 |
| Overall Quality of Life | 2.72 | 2.75 |

* denotes statistically different score in 2009 than in 2008.

Table 7 shows the average attention score for each of the factors in 2009 and in 2008. Only three factors decreased statistically compared to last year, thus respondents indicated over time that less attention should be given these factors. The three factors were: *Healthcare*; *Public Parks and Recreation*; and *Transportation System*. The scores were greater than two meaning respondents felt more attention should be given these factors. However since the scores decreased over time, respondents felt less strongly about the amount of additional attention that factor should receive. This is contrary to anticipated results since the continued economic downturn was thought to have negatively influenced the mood of the general public. It was expected all the factors would have received higher attention scores in 2009 than in 2008 indicating more attention was needed next year to improve quality of life.

Two factors, *Historic Preservation* and *Local Government Utilities*, scored significantly higher on average. Respondents feel stronger in 2009, than in 2008, more attention should be given these factors. The remaining factors and the *Overall Quality of Life* factor were not statistically different when compared to the 2008 Survey results. Thus, respondent's attitudes about the amount of attention each factor should receive next year have not changed over time.

TABLE 7: COMPARISON OF ATTENTION SCORES

| Factor | Average Attention Score | |
|---|-------------------------|-------------|
| | 2009 | 2008 |
| Affordable Housing | 2.34 | 2.37 |
| Economic Opportunities | 2.78 | 2.76 |
| Education System | 2.57 | 2.59 |
| Entertainment | 1.91 | 1.88 |
| Environment and Natural Resources | 2.43 | 2.45 |
| Government Services | 2.39 | 2.38 |
| Growth Management | 2.37 | 2.33 |
| Healthcare* | 2.45 | 2.61 |
| Historic Preservation* | 2.38 | 2.05 |
| Local Government Utilities* | 2.34 | 2.28 |
| Neighborhood and Family Support | 2.33 | 2.32 |
| Non-Government Social Services | 2.2 | 2.17 |
| Overall Quality of Life | 2.54 | 2.57 |
| Presence of Local Government in Our Lives | 2.21 | 2.18 |
| Public Parks and Recreation* | 2.11 | 2.25 |
| Racial, Religious, and Ethnic Tolerance | 2.07 | 2.09 |
| Security | 2.52 | 2.48 |
| The Arts | 2.01 | 2 |
| Transportation System* | 2.47 | 2.57 |

* denotes statistically different score in 2009 than in 2008.

QUESTIONS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Given the expenditure of time and effort required to conduct the Survey, there was an opportunity to ask additional questions on the back of the survey form. These questions are of special interest related to sustainability and growth. The questions were distinguished from the remainder of the survey and the results displayed separately in this report. Table 8 shows the introduction given on the survey form, each question, and the results.

TABLE 8: QUESTIONS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

A sustainable community meets its needs by preserving resources for future generations. Sustainability can focus on creating a diverse economy that can better withstand economic downturns and limits environmental impacts by utilizing renewable resources (e.g. solar energy and wind power). Your answers to the following questions will help the Planning Commission better understand how residents feel about sustainability and how sustainability could be addressed in your local comprehensive plans.

1. Rank the following proposals from one to four where “one” is the best sustainable transportation solution. **RANK/(AVG SCORE)**
 - Widen existing roads **1/(1.97)**
 - Improve bus service **3/(2.54)**
 - Provide commuter rail **2/(2.43)**
 - Build new roads **4/(2.95)**
2. Expanding transportation options, including commuter rail, is the best, long-term solution.
AGREE 54.3% NOT SURE 20.4% DISAGREE 25.3%
3. The following proposals address how to achieve a sustainable community. Please rank them from one to four, marking the most favorable solution “one.” **RANK/(AVG SCORE)**
 - Encourage mixed use development (i.e. areas containing workplaces, homes, shopping and recreation within walking distance). **1/(1.97)**
 - Encourage greater density of jobs and housing within urban areas. **3/(2.61)**
 - Encourage redevelopment and renewal within existing communities. **2/(2.11)**
 - Focus growth around future rail stations. **4/(3.26)**
4. Would you support a rail/transit station near your neighborhood?
AGREE 49.5% NOT SURE 21.0% DISAGREE 29.5%
5. Rank your preference to live in these areas
 - In an area within walking distance of a transit station, such as major bus or rail stops **2/(2.36)**
 - In a large community consisting of single-family homes only. **1/(2.09)**
 - In a rural or farming community. **4/(2.82)**
 - In a dense city within walking distance of most necessities. **3/(2.66)**
6. It is important for a community to have a choice of living styles like those above.
AGREE 86.4% NOT SURE 7.7% DISAGREE 5.9%

“Mass transit will not work in Tampa. It’s the humidity. No one in a business suit will stand here, sweltering, waiting for a bus or train.”

“If European cities and countries can have coordinated rail, bus and transportation system, why can’t we?”

“How about better biking around Temple Terrace? Fletcher Avenue is bad as is 56th Street.”

This survey has two steps. **Step One** asks you to mark **one** space (1-5, *Much Worse to Much Better*) that indicates how you feel the quality of life of that factor in **2009 compared to its quality in 2008**. **Step Two** asks you to mark one letter (*A-C, More Attention to Less Attention*) if you feel that the quality of life factor needs less, the same, or more attention **next year**.

Please complete the questionnaire and return it in the enclosed postage-paid envelope by **January 31, 2010**. The survey should be filled out by the person receiving the letter. If your household receives more than one survey addressed to different registered voters, each registered voter should complete and return the survey. If you have any questions, please call Suzi Dieringer at 273-3774, Ext. 348. **Thank you very much for your participation and cooperation.**

Sincerely,

Robert B. Hunter, FAICP
Executive Director

Enclosure

APPENDIX A
COVER LETTER AND SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Bruce P. Cury
Chair

January 4, 2010

Terri G. Cobb
Vice Chair

RE: Annual Hillsborough County Quality of Life Survey

Frank M. Chillura
Member-at-Large

Dear Registered Voter:

Jill Buford
Derek L. Doughty
Miller Q. Dowdy
Edward F. Giunta II
Vivian M. Kitchen
Hung T. Mai
Gary D. Sears

Congratulations! You are one of 10,000 voters who have been randomly selected from the list of registered voters in Hillsborough County to complete an important survey. The enclosed survey will help the Planning Commission determine whether or not, in the opinion of the average registered voter, the quality of life in Hillsborough County improved from 2008 to 2009.

Christina Hummel (*Ex-Officio*)
MacDill AFB

Cathy Valdes (*Ex-Officio*)
School District

Improving our residents' quality of life is a primary concern of the Planning Commission and all local elected officials. The Planning Commission is an independent agency responsible for updating the Comprehensive Plans for the four local governments in Hillsborough County (the cities of Tampa, Temple Terrace and Plant City and unincorporated Hillsborough County). While you may be unfamiliar with the Comprehensive Plan, you are familiar with its impacts.

Robert B. Hunter, FAICP
Executive Director

The Comprehensive Plan is a state-mandated document that outlines land use planning for the next twenty years. Everything from zoning, where homes and subdivisions are located, to where schools are placed in your community is affected by the Comprehensive Plan. It is the basis for decision-making at all levels of government and guides the private sector to projects that improve the quality of life of local residents.

The enclosed survey contains a list of nineteen factors or components that measure if the quality of life in Hillsborough County is improving or not. The Planning Commission did not determine this list. These factors were determined by a focus group of residents that represented Hillsborough County.

2009 Hillsborough County Quality of Life Survey

INSTRUCTIONS:

This survey has two steps. **Step One** asks you to mark **ONE** space (1-5, Much Worse to Much Better) that indicates how you feel the quality of life of that factor in **2009 compared to its quality in 2008**. **Step Two**, asks you to mark one letter (A-C, More Attention to Less Attention) if you feel that the quality of life factor needs less, the same, or more attention next year.

Step One:

Economic Opportunities – to include opportunities to operate a business or find acceptable employment.

1
←

2
Worse

3
About the Same

4
Better

5
→
Much Better

Step Two:

B
↑

B
Same Attention

C
↓

More Attention
Same Attention
Less Attention

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES:
To include opportunities to operate a business or find acceptable employment.

1
←

2
Worse

3
About the Same

4
Better

5
→
Much Better

A
↑

B
Same Attention

C
↓

GOVERNMENT SERVICES:
To include basic services such as police and fire protection, code enforcement, social services and consumer protection.

1
←

2
Worse

3
About the Same

4
Better

5
→
Much Better

A
↑

B
Same Attention

C
↓

EDUCATION SYSTEM:
To include a public education system at all levels that is funded and staffed.

1
←

2
Worse

3
About the Same

4
Better

5
→
Much Better

A
↑

B
Same Attention

C
↓

GROWTH MANAGEMENT:
To include the availability of urban, suburban and rural lifestyle options; resource management and public participation in the regulatory process.

1
←

2
Worse

3
About the Same

4
Better

5
→
Much Better

A
↑

B
Same Attention

C
↓

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM:
To include a system that moves people and goods with options ranging from roads to pedestrian to air travel to mass transit.

1
←

2
Worse

3
About the Same

4
Better

5
→
Much Better

A
↑

B
Same Attention

C
↓

RACIAL, RELIGIOUS & ETHNIC TOLERANCE:
To include an open and ready acceptance of all races, ethnicities and religions.

1
←

2
Worse

3
About the Same

4
Better

5
→
Much Better

A
↑

B
Same Attention

C
↓

LOCAL GOVERNMENT UTILITIES:
To include drinking water, wastewater, drainage and other government-operated utilities.

1
←

2
Worse

3
About the Same

4
Better

5
→
Much Better

A
↑

B
Same Attention

C
↓

SECURITY:
To include safety in one's home or business and a feeling of security in public settings.

1
←

2
Worse

3
About the Same

4
Better

5
→
Much Better

A
↑

B
Same Attention

C
↓

PRESENCE OF LOCAL GOVT IN OUR LIVES:
To include collaboration among local governments, with simplicity and privacy for the average citizen as primary concerns.

1
←

2
Worse

3
About the Same

4
Better

5
→
Much Better

A
↑

B
Same Attention

C
↓

HEALTHCARE:
To include the availability of quality, affordable healthcare for all residents.

1
←

2
Worse

3
About the Same

4
Better

5
→
Much Better

A
↑

B
Same Attention

C
↓

ENVIRONMENTAL/NATURAL RESOURCES:
To include sensitive lands, water availability and quality, and air quality.

1
←

2
Worse

3
About the Same

4
Better

5
→
Much Better

A
↑

B
Same Attention

C
↓

NON-GOVERNMENTAL SOCIAL SERVICES:
To include the presence of charities and non-profit social service organizations.

1
←

2
Worse

3
About the Same

4
Better

5
→
Much Better

A
↑

B
Same Attention

C
↓

ENTERTAINMENT:

To include sports, concerts and other forms of popular entertainment

1 2 3 4 5
←—————→
A ↑
B ↓
C ↓

PUBLIC PARKS AND RECREATION:

To include all forms of outdoor public recreation opportunities and facilities

1 2 3 4 5
←—————→
A ↑
B ↓
C ↓

HISTORIC PRESERVATION:

To include the preservation of historic buildings and sites

1 2 3 4 5
←—————→
A ↑
B ↓
C ↓

NEIGHBORHOOD AND FAMILY SUPPORT:

To include public and private groups that act to assist and protect neighborhoods, families and households of all ages

1 2 3 4 5
←—————→
A ↑
B ↓
C ↓

AFFORDABLE HOUSING:

To include rental and home ownership

1 2 3 4 5
←—————→
A ↑
B ↓
C ↓

THE ARTS:

To include a variety of choices among the arts.

1 2 3 4 5
←—————→
A ↑
B ↓
C ↓

OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE:

To include all the factors listed above and any other felt to be important by the respondent.

1 2 3 4 5
←—————→
A ↑
B ↓
C ↓

QUESTIONS ABOUT SUSTAINABILITY AND GROWTH

A sustainable community meets its needs by preserving resources for future generations. Sustainability focuses on creating a diverse economy, better able to withstand economic downturns and limits environmental impacts by utilizing renewable resources (e.g. solar energy, wind power).

Your answers to the following questions will help the Planning Commission understand how residents feel about sustainability and how sustainability could be addressed in your local comprehensive plans.

1. Rank the following proposals from one to four where "one" is the best sustainable transportation solution.

- ___ Widen existing roads ___ Improve bus service
- ___ Provide commuter rail ___ Build new roads

2. Expanding transportation options, including commuter rail, is the best, long-term solution.

Agree _____ Not Sure _____ Disagree _____

3. The following proposals address how to achieve a sustainable community. Please rank them from one to four, marking the most favorable solution "one."

- ___ Encourage mixed use development (i.e. areas containing workplaces, homes, shopping and recreation within walking distance).
- ___ Encourage greater density of jobs and housing within urban areas.
- ___ Encourage redevelopment and renewal within existing communities.
- ___ Focus growth around future rail stations

4. Would you support a rail/transit station near your neighborhood?

Agree _____ Not Sure _____ Disagree _____

5. Rank your preference to live in these areas

- ___ In an area within walking distance of a transit station, such as major bus or rail stops
- ___ In a large community consisting of single-family homes only
- ___ In a rural or farming community
- ___ In a dense city within walking distance of most necessities

6. It is important for a community to have a choice of living styles like those above.

Agree _____ Not Sure _____ Disagree _____

**“Sorry.
I don’t like this survey.
I don’t want to compare
2009 with 2008.”**