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# Hanover County, Virginia

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## Report of Geographic Subgroups Comparisons 2005



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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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Survey Background.....	1
About The National Citizen Survey™ .....	1
Understanding the Results .....	2
“Don’t Know” Responses .....	2
Putting Evaluations onto a 100-Point Scale .....	2
Understanding the Tables .....	2
Comparisons .....	4

# SURVEY BACKGROUND

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## About The National Citizen Survey™

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The National Citizen Survey™ (The NCS™) is a collaborative effort between National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA).

The National Citizen Survey™ was developed to provide local jurisdictions an accurate, affordable and easy way to assess and interpret resident opinion about important community issues. While standardization of question wording and survey methods provide the rigor to assure valid results, each jurisdiction has enough flexibility to construct a customized version of The National Citizen Survey™ that asks residents about key local services and important local issues.

Results offer insight into residents' perspectives about local government performance and as such provide important benchmarks for jurisdictions working on performance measurement. The National Citizen Survey™ is designed to help with budget, land use and strategic planning as well as to communicate with local residents. The National Citizen Survey™ permits questions to test support for local policies and answers to its questions also speak to community trust and involvement in community-building activities as well as to resident demographic characteristics.

The survey and its administration are standardized to assure high quality survey methods and comparable results across The National Citizen Survey™ jurisdictions. Participating households are selected at random and the household member who responds is selected without bias. Multiple mailings give each household more than one chance to participate with self-addressed and postage paid envelopes. Results are statistically re-weighted to reflect the proper demographic composition of the entire community. The National Citizen Survey™ customized for this jurisdiction was developed in close cooperation with local jurisdiction staff. Hanover County staff selected items from a menu of questions about services and community problems; they defined the jurisdiction boundaries we used for sampling; and they provided the appropriate letterhead and signatures for mailings. Hanover County staff also determined local interest in a variety of add-on options for The National Citizen Survey™ Basic Service.

One of the add-on options that Hanover County chose was to have crosstabulations of evaluative questions 1-15 by geographic areas. Hanover County staff identified the magisterial district for each household that received the survey mailings. All mailings for each district were printed on a unique paper color and were coded by NRC staff to identify survey by district. This method does not compromise the anonymity or confidentiality of survey respondents.

# UNDERSTANDING THE RESULTS

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## “Don’t Know” Responses

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On many of the questions in the survey respondents may answer “don’t know.” The proportion of respondents giving this reply is shown in the full set of responses included in Appendix A of the Report of Results. However, these responses have been removed from the analyses presented in this report. In other words, the tables display the responses from respondents who had an opinion about a specific item.

There were two exceptions to the removal of “don’t know” responses. For items related to crime victimization and crime reporting, “don’t know” responses were not removed. In addition, the “don’t know” responses were not removed from the policy questions.

## Putting Evaluations onto a 100-Point Scale

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Although responses to many of the evaluative questions were made on a 4 point scale with 4 representing the best rating and 1 the worst, many of the results in this summary are reported on a common scale where 0 is the worst possible rating and 100 is the best possible rating. If everyone reported “excellent,” then the result would be 100 on the 100-point scale. Likewise, if all respondents gave a “poor” rating, the result would be 0 on the 100-point scale. If the average rating for quality of life was “good,” then the result would be 67 on a 100-point scale; “fair” would be 33 on the 100-point scale.

## Understanding the Tables

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In this report, comparisons between geographic subgroups are shown. For most of the questions, we have shown only one number for each question. Usually this number is the rating on a 100-point scale. Sometimes this scale was not appropriate to use. In these cases we have summarized responses to show only the proportion of respondents giving a certain answer; for example, the percent of respondents who reported a crime, or the percent of respondents who felt the rate of growth was “about right.” For a few questions, we have shown the full set of responses: these include the question about respondents’ perceptions about the economy.

Anova and chi square tests of significance were applied to these comparisons of survey questions by geographic subgroups. A “p-value” of 0.05 or less indicates that there is less than a 5% probability that differences observed between subgroups are due to chance; or in other words, a greater than 95% probability that the differences observed are “real.” Where differences were statistically significant, they are marked in gray.

## Understanding the Results

The 95 percent confidence level for this survey is generally no greater than plus or minus 5 percentage points around any given percent reported for the entire sample (540 completed surveys). For each district, the margin of error is + or - 13% due to the individual sample sizes of each district. The table below describes the total responses per district.

<b>District</b>	<b>Number of Completed Surveys</b>	<b>Percent of sample</b>
1- Ashland	55	10%
2- Beaverdam	60	11%
3- Chickahominy	82	15%
4- Cold Harbor	89	16%
5- Henry	91	17%
6- Mechanicsville	86	16%
7- South Anna	78	15%
Total	540	100%

# COMPARISONS

## Quality of Life Ratings

Please circle the number that comes closest to your opinion for each of the following questions:	Magisterial District						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
How do you rate Hanover County as a place to live?	76	80	78	76	75	80	78
How do you rate your neighborhood as a place to live?	77	79	76	76	76	72	77
How do you rate Hanover County as a place to raise children?	72	82	82	76	78	82	74
How do you rate Hanover County as a place to work?	66	69	63	59	58	61	57
How do you rate Hanover County as a place to retire?	64	67	68	60	64	68	69
How do you rate the overall quality of life in Hanover County?	72	77	76	71	70	72	72
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor)							

**Characteristics of the Community**

Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Hanover County as a whole:	Magisterial District						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sense of community	67	65	67	62	63	66	60
Openness and acceptance of the community towards people of diverse backgrounds	53	57	47	48	47	51	52
Overall appearance of Hanover County	64	64	63	59	60	60	64
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	51	51	44	50	45	44	55
Shopping opportunities	56	50	47	56	49	55	50
Air quality	64	73	69	70	67	64	65
Recreational opportunities	48	57	49	49	54	50	51
Job opportunities	40	43	42	49	41	32	37
Access to affordable quality housing	47	37	49	39	46	45	40
Access to affordable quality child care	42	46	55	45	53	49	46
Access to affordable quality health care	58	49	60	49	61	64	46
Ease of car travel in Hanover County	55	63	58	45	47	45	51
Ease of bicycle travel in Hanover County	40	40	22	21	21	28	29
Ease of walking in Hanover County	43	39	32	31	30	36	31
Educational opportunities	54	67	70	65	63	66	59
Overall image/reputation of Hanover County	66	71	69	64	66	68	66
Overall quality of new development in Hanover County	54	52	52	48	58	54	58
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor)							

**Ratings of Growth**

Please rate the speed of growth in the following categories in Hanover County over the past 2 years:	Magisterial District						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Population growth	36%	22%	20%	26%	37%	13%	42%
Retail growth (stores, restaurants etc.)	44%	37%	40%	36%	47%	49%	45%
Jobs growth	42%	31%	40%	52%	43%	41%	44%
Proportion of respondents rating as "About right"							

**Ratings of Potential Problems in Hanover County**

To what degree, if at all, are the following in Hanover County:	Magisterial District						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Crime	51	55	56	56	57	52	60
Drugs	32	42	42	45	48	40	44
Too much growth	39	37	34	28	47	29	41
Lack of growth	81	85	89	87	81	79	92
Graffiti	76	76	76	81	83	73	85
Noise	72	74	70	74	78	64	75
Run down buildings, weed lots, or junk vehicles	60	59	59	64	65	66	51
Taxes	58	50	56	46	57	56	45
Traffic congestion	50	48	43	22	37	26	55
Unsupervised youth	48	62	62	48	63	42	64
Homelessness	75	76	88	87	81	74	82
Weeds	65	60	64	68	62	53	68
Absence of communications from Hanover County translated into languages other than English	88	85	86	85	88	79	86
Toxic waste or other environmental hazard(s)	76	82	77	87	89	76	78
Road Condition	59	47	52	50	50	43	44
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Not a problem, 0=Major problem)							

**Ratings of Safety from Various Problems**

Please rate how safe you feel from the following occurring to you in Hanover County:	Magisterial District						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Violent crime	77	83	83	78	83	78	74
Property crimes	72	76	71	67	77	65	67
Fire	77	78	77	78	81	73	69
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Very safe, 0=Very unsafe)							

**Ratings of Feelings of Safety in Various Areas**

Please rate how safe you feel:	Magisterial District						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
In your neighborhood during the day	92	93	92	91	95	90	94
In your neighborhood after dark	80	86	85	85	87	78	83
In Hanover County's shopping area(s) during the day	84	88	88	81	85	84	82
In Hanover County's shopping area(s) after dark	65	73	68	67	65	57	63
In Hanover County's parks during the day	82	85	87	79	86	81	82
In Hanover County's parks after dark	49	56	58	57	54	50	56
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Very safe, 0=Very unsafe)							

**Crime Victimization and Reporting**

	Magisterial District						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
During the past twelve months, were you or anyone in your household the victim of any crime?	17%	8%	5%	3%	5%	5%	6%
If yes, was this crime (these crimes) reported to the police?	93%	68%	69%	100%	90%	34%	44%
Percent of respondents whose households were victims of crime, and who reported the crime							

**Use of Community Amenities**

In the last 12 months, about how many times, if ever, have you or other household members participated in the following activities?	Magisterial District						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Used Hanover County public libraries or their services	84%	79%	87%	61%	77%	48%	65%
Participated in a recreation program or activity	57%	48%	70%	55%	48%	34%	38%
Visited a Hanover County park	85%	81%	85%	82%	80%	69%	66%
Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting	41%	39%	25%	28%	29%	11%	26%
Recycled used paper, cans or bottles from your home	69%	74%	68%	55%	57%	48%	51%
Volunteered your time to some group/activity in Hanover County	49%	61%	51%	43%	46%	29%	42%
Read Hanover County Newsletter	92%	90%	98%	92%	98%	90%	80%
Used the Internet for anything	81%	90%	95%	91%	95%	76%	87%
Used the Internet to conduct business with Hanover County	55%	69%	68%	61%	71%	48%	65%
Purchased an item over the Internet	62%	74%	78%	78%	80%	63%	74%
Proportion of respondents engaging in activity at least once in last 12 months							

Quality of Service Ratings

How do you rate the quality of each of the following services?	Magisterial District						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sheriff services	64	74	77	78	76	72	70
Fire services	79	70	77	83	77	78	73
Ambulance/emergency medical services	79	69	73	80	76	76	68
Crime prevention	50	67	71	67	68	62	65
Fire prevention and education	59	62	65	69	61	65	61
Street repair	40	36	42	45	45	38	36
Snow removal	46	42	45	50	44	38	44
Storm drainage	37	47	46	43	50	40	43
County parks	56	69	59	67	63	60	65
Recreation programs or classes	62	69	57	57	60	47	62
Range/variety of recreation programs and classes	53	63	58	51	58	50	56
Recreation centers/facilities	49	60	48	54	56	38	60
Nature programs or classes	46	56	43	57	45	38	51
Range/variety of nature programs and classes	42	50	43	56	43	39	52
Accessibility of trails	48	59	42	61	48	45	49
Accessibility of historic sites	58	63	58	66	63	63	56
Appearance/maintenance of Open Space	51	52	50	54	55	52	55
Land use, planning and zoning	42	38	34	32	34	32	38
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc)	42	39	44	41	36	38	35
Animal control	54	58	50	55	50	46	54
Economic development	46	48	46	50	56	48	51
Health services	54	55	56	57	64	63	51

**Quality of Service Ratings**

How do you rate the quality of each of the following services?	Magisterial District						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Services to seniors	55	45	47	57	53	55	54
Services to adolescents/teens	41	39	45	51	54	34	47
Services to children (age 0-12)	46	53	53	56	55	41	53
Services to low-income people	39	46	39	44	48	39	39
Public library services	68	70	68	62	62	67	66
Variety of library materials	54	66	59	57	53	52	64
Public information services	51	59	55	57	56	56	57
Public schools	62	75	83	71	80	73	69
Cable television	55	34	50	49	53	54	41
Mental Health Services	56	54	52	59	50	53	54
Drug and Alcohol Services	55	51	51	58	52	42	49
Adult Protective Services	58	49	46	59	51	50	60
Agricultural/Farm advisor	26	62	50	57	50	52	56
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor)							

**Ratings of Various Levels of Government**

Overall, how would you rate the quality of services provided by...	Magisterial District						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Hanover County	63	55	63	61	65	60	63
The Federal Government	49	43	47	43	45	45	46
The State Government	56	50	50	50	54	51	53
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor)							

**Proportion of Population Having Contact with Hanover County Employees**

	Magisterial District						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of Hanover County within the last 12 months?	78%	83%	69%	67%	74%	52%	68%
Percent of respondents who reported contact with a Hanover County employee in the last 12 months							

**Ratings of Contact with Hanover County Employees**

What was your impression of employees of Hanover County in your most recent contact?	Magisterial District						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Knowledge	74	69	69	70	68	70	69
Responsiveness	73	64	67	67	67	70	67
Courtesy	70	69	72	72	76	67	66
Overall Impression	73	67	67	69	71	69	66
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor)							

**Ratings of Public Trust**

Please rate the following statements:	Magisterial District						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I receive good value for the Hanover County taxes I pay	68	60	68	58	61	56	58
I am pleased with the overall direction that Hanover County is taking	64	60	59	55	57	54	58
The Hanover County government welcomes citizen involvement	58	64	60	62	65	59	58
The Hanover County government listens to citizens	52	53	52	50	53	43	50
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Strongly agree, 0=Strongly disagree)							

**Perceptions of the Economy**

What impact, if any, do you think the economy will have on your family income in the next 6 months? Do you think the impact will be:	Magisterial District						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Very positive	1%	5%	7%	0%	7%	0%	2%
Somewhat positive	12%	12%	24%	23%	12%	12%	24%
Neutral	35%	25%	33%	30%	45%	44%	35%
Somewhat negative	45%	45%	31%	37%	28%	42%	33%
Very negative	7%	13%	5%	10%	9%	2%	7%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%