

H O U R G L A S S



F O U N D A T I O N

Hourglass Foundation  
2000  
Lancaster County  
Quality of Life Survey

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## **Lancaster County Quality of Life Survey 2000**

### **Background**

As part of its mission to provide information, facilitate discussion and champion the intelligent management of county resources, the Hourglass Foundation has conducted its second Lancaster County Quality of Life Survey. It is our hope to make local citizens, organizations and governments more aware, better informed and to help them find solutions to immediate and long-term problems impacting our quality of life.

Two years ago, the Hourglass Foundation commissioned the first survey of Quality of Life in Lancaster County. The 1998 Survey consisted of two parts:

1. A telephone survey of the general population (453 county residents) who were asked a series of questions – mostly open ended – about their likes, dislikes, attitudes and perceptions.
2. A series of focus groups with both opinion leaders and residents of Lancaster County.

The 2000 Survey also consists of two parts:

1. A telephone survey of the general population where an expanded sample of 1,240 county residents were interviewed using some of the 1998 questions and some new questions.
2. A follow-up telephone survey where 500 county residents were asked their knowledge of and support for ten county issues.

The Hourglass Foundation greatly appreciates the generous financial support received from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and the Lancaster Environmental Foundation<sup>1</sup> in fielding this survey of attitudes and perceptions of the quality of life in Lancaster County.

### **Methodology**

The research was conducted, tabulated and reported by Polk-Lepson Research Group of York, Pennsylvania. The research design as well as specific questions were developed jointly by the Hourglass Foundation and Polk-Lepson Research Group.

During the Summer of 2000, a total of 1,240 Adult Lancaster County residents were interviewed over the phone as part of the general population survey. A sample of this size yields a sampling accuracy of  $\pm 2.8$  percent at the 95 percent confidence level. Some of the questions were open-ended, unaided questions.

To ensure the projectibility and usefulness of the data, a sampling design was created whereby a random sample of Lancaster County adult residents was stratified into nine urbanicity classifications – balanced to assure equiproportional distribution across zip codes.

Additionally, both cross tabulations and answer tree analyses were performed. These multivariate analyses also examined the data to identify possible attitude differences among population segments.

Interviews were conducted on weekdays, weekday evenings and on weekends. When required, callbacks were made.

During September 2000, a total of 500 follow-up interviews were conducted to gain additional insights into Countians' knowledge and support of a variety of Lancaster County issues. The sample size yields a sampling accuracy of  $\pm 4.4$  percent at the 95 percent confidence level.

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<sup>1</sup>This material was prepared with the support of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the U.S. Department of Energy (USDOE). Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed herein are those of the Hourglass Foundation and do not necessarily reflect the views of the DEP or the USDOE.

- 92% of Lancaster Countians feel something should be done to stop or slow down the loss of farmland, and 81% are supportive of paying to keep farmland undeveloped.
- 72% of people feel Lancaster County is doing a fair or poor job of managing growth.
- Half (48%) of the people surveyed favor government increasing its involvement in regulating and directing the growth and development of Lancaster County.

### **Lancaster City:**

- 44% of Lancaster Countians say they seldom or never go into Lancaster City.
- 68% of Countians feel the biggest threat to quality of life in Lancaster City is crime, drugs, violence, guns and gangs.
- Over half (53%) of the people interviewed feel the quality of life in Lancaster City is somewhat or much worse than five years ago.
- Two-thirds (66%) of Countians feel somewhat or not at all safe in Lancaster City. Only 32% of Lancaster City residents feel somewhat or not at all safe in the City.
- 36% of Countians rate the performance of the Lancaster City School District as adequate or superior in preparing its youth for employment or further education. Half (50%) of City residents rate the performance as adequate or superior.
- 80% of Countians feel "the future of Lancaster School District will have a major impact on Lancaster City."
- One-quarter (25%) of Lancaster Countians say they would be willing to pay more taxes to support City revitalization.

### **County Issues:**

- Expansion of Manheim Auto Auction

Only 31% of people feel very informed about the expansion of the Manheim Auto Auction and 21% feel uninformed. Only 10% of respondents are very supportive of the expansion and 16% are very opposed. One-third of all county residents are unsure if they support or oppose it.

Of those who say they are very informed, 25% are very supportive and 25% are very opposed. The proposed expansion of the Manheim Auto Auction appears to be the most controversial of all issues studied. Knowledge on the subject increases with level of education. Males are more likely to support expansion than females.

➤ Crackdown on Gun Crimes

The proposed crackdown on gun crimes is the least controversial of all the issues studied. While only 30% of the people feel very informed, 57% are very supportive. Only 4% of respondents expressed any opposition.

Respondents who live in the City of Lancaster and fringe areas are more likely to be supportive of the crackdown on gun crimes. Females are also more likely to be very supportive of this issue.

➤ Public School Vouchers

Most people (77%) do not feel very informed on the subject of public school vouchers; consequently, 30% are unsure as to whether they support or oppose vouchers. 20% of respondents indicated they are very supportive and 10% said they are very opposed.

Residents of the City of Lancaster are less likely (16% vs. 30% of total sample) to be unsure of their support or opposition, and more likely (35% vs. 18% of total sample) to be opposed to public school vouchers.

➤ Construction of New Route 23

Despite public discussion, one-third (34%) of Lancaster Countians feel uninformed about the construction of New Route 23. Only 19% say they feel very informed.

People are either supportive (62%) or unsure (29%) with only 9% expressing opposition. The highest level (16%) of opposition comes from people in farm regions.

➤ Rails to Trails

About half (47%) of respondents feel uninformed about rails to trails. People tend to either support it (55%) or be unsure (39%), with only 6% expressing any opposition.

The highest levels of support for rails to trails come from people living in fringe and farm areas.

➤ Farmland Preservation Bond Issues

Only 13% of the population feel informed on the topic of farmland preservation bond issues, with 46% indicating they are uninformed. Despite low levels of knowledge, 69% say they are supportive of farmland preservation bond issues. Opposition is low (4%) and 27% of respondents feel unsure.

The highest level of support for farmland preservation bond issues comes from people living in Lancaster City with 53% (versus 36% of total sample) indicating they are very supportive.

➤ Construction of a New Convention Center in Lancaster City

Only 11% of people feel very informed about the construction of a new convention center in Lancaster City. 45% say they are uninformed and 40% of respondents are unsure if they support or oppose it. In general, 46% of Lancaster Countians are supportive, 14% oppose it and the rest are unsure.

As might be expected, the highest level of support comes from people living in the City of Lancaster.

➤ County Hotel Tourist Tax

Almost half (49%) of respondents feel uninformed about the county hotel tourist tax, with only 14% indicating they feel very informed. 43% of Lancaster Countians are unsure if they support or oppose the tax. In general, 31% support it, 26% oppose it and the rest are unsure.

➤ Providing a Home for the Rocky Springs Carousel

Half (51%) of respondents feel uninformed about providing a home for the Rocky Springs Carousel. Only 15% say they are very informed. 38% of Lancaster Countians say they are supportive, 9% say they are opposed and most (53%) are unsure.

The greatest support for providing a home for the Rocky Springs Carousel comes from residents of the City of Lancaster with 59% being supportive (versus 38% of the total sample).

➤ Tax Credits for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings

Only 12% of Lancaster Countians feel very informed about tax credits for rehabilitating historic buildings. 59% of respondents feel uninformed and 41% feel unsure if they support or oppose it.

Of those who say they are very informed, 67% are very supportive. People living in the City of Lancaster are more likely (65% vs. 47% of the total sample) to support tax credits.

## Survey Findings

### General:

#### Q: Like Best About Lancaster County

1. Countryside, farmland, open space, rural life (52%)
2. Nice place to live and raise a family (17%)
3. People/friendly people (15%)

#### Q: Like Least About Lancaster County

1. Traffic, poor roads (41%)
2. Over-development (25%)

#### Q: Biggest Threats to Lancaster County's Quality of Life

1. Over-development, sprawl, loss of farmland (59%)
2. Crime, drugs, violence, guns, gangs (20%)

#### Q: Quality of Life Compared to Five Years Ago

1. About the same (45%)
2. Somewhat or much worse (34%)
3. Somewhat or much better (19%)

#### Q: Perceived Safety of Living in Lancaster County

1. Very or somewhat safe (94%)
2. Somewhat unsafe or not at all safe (5%)

#### Q: Perceived Performance of Lancaster County Schools

1. Superior or adequate (78%)
2. Inadequate (10%)
3. Uncertain (12%)

#### Q: Perceived Adequacy of Amount of Land for Parks, Trails and Outdoor Recreation

1. Very or somewhat adequate (74%)
2. Somewhat or very inadequate (22%)

#### Q: Perceived Quality of Air and Water

1. Our health is slightly at risk (57%)
2. Our health is greatly at risk (7%)
3. Our health is not at risk (32%)



**Q: Family Member Suffers from Illness Believed Caused by Environmental Factors**

1. No (85%)
2. Yes (15%)

**Q: Should Restrictions or Limits be Placed on Growth in Lancaster County**

1. Yes (91%)
2. No (5%)
3. Allow no growth (4%)

**Q: Should Growth Boundaries in the County's Comprehensive Plan be Mandatory**

1. Yes (50%)
2. No (26%)
3. Unsure (24%)

**Q: Should Townships and Boroughs Cooperate More Frequently in Managing Development**

1. Yes (91%)
2. No (5%)

**Q: Do Elected Officials do a Sufficient Job Studying Major Issues Before Making Decisions**

1. Yes (39%)
2. No (36%)
3. Unsure (25%)

**Q: Do Local Television and Newspapers Make Sufficient Information Available on Major Issues**

1. Yes (62%)
2. No (27%)
3. Unsure (11%)

**Q: Perceived Reason for Low Voter Turnout in County Elections**

1. Apathy/disinterest (25%)
2. Not enough information/education (13%)
3. Vote won't make a difference (9%)
- Unsure (18%)

**Q: Believe Your Vote Makes a Difference Influencing Quality of Life in Lancaster County**

1. Yes (72%)
2. No (19%)
3. Unsure (10%)

**Q: Agree or Disagree – “The future well-being of Lancaster City will have a major impact on the rest of Lancaster County.”**

1. Agree (68%)
2. Disagree (17%)
3. Undecided (15%)

**Q: Perceived Problem of Traffic Congestion**

1. Serious problem (69%)
2. Minor problem (27%)
3. Not a problem (3%)

**Q: Means of Traveling to Work**

1. Car (94%)
2. Bus (1%)
3. Walk (5%)

**Q: Time Traveling to Work**

1. 10 minutes or less (39%)
2. 11 – 20 minutes (33%)
3. 21 – 30 minutes (14%)
4. More than 30 minutes (14%)

**Q: Is Time Traveled to Work a Problem**

1. No (84%)
2. Yes (14%)

**Q: Would You Prefer to Live Where Basic Services Were Within Walking Distance**

1. No (55%)
2. Yes (41%)

**Q: Type of Community You Would Prefer to Live In**

1. Diversity of income, age and race (57%)
2. Similar income, age and race (43%)

**Q: With Respect to Continued Loss of Farmland...**

1. Feel it's a serious problem (77%)
2. Feel it's a minor problem (19%)
3. Feel it's not a problem (3%)

**Q: Do You Think Something Should be Done to Stop or Slow Down Loss of Farmland**

1. Yes (92%)
2. No (8%)

**Q: With Respect to Paying to Keep Farmland Undeveloped**

1. Very or somewhat supportive (81%)
2. Not Supportive (11%)

**Q: How Good of a Job is Lancaster County Doing in Managing Growth**

1. Fair or poor (72%)
2. Good or excellent (23%)

**Q: Should Government Increase or Decrease Their Involvement in Regulating and Directing Growth and Development in Lancaster County**

1. Strongly or moderately increase (48%)
2. Maintain current involvement (27%)
3. Moderately or strongly decrease (13%)

**Lancaster City:**

**Q: How Often Do You Go Into Lancaster City**

1. Seldom or never (44%)
2. Occasionally or frequently (56%)

**Q: Biggest Threats to Quality of Life in Lancaster City**

1. Crime, drugs, violence, guns, gangs (68%)
2. Over-development, sprawl (9%)

**Q: Quality of Life in Lancaster City Compared to Five Years Ago**

1. Somewhat or much worse (53%)
2. About the same (24%)
3. Somewhat or much better (11%)
4. Unsure (12%)

**Q: Perceived Safety in Lancaster City**

1. Somewhat unsafe (45%)
2. Somewhat or very safe (28%)
3. Not at all safe (21%)

**Q: Perceived Safety in Lancaster City (City Residents)**

1. Somewhat or very safe (67%)
2. Somewhat unsafe (23%)
3. Not at all safe (9%)

**Q: Perceived Performance of Lancaster City School District**

4. Adequate or superior (36%)
5. Inadequate (21%)
6. Unsure (43%)

**Q: Perceived Performance of Lancaster City School District (City Residents)**

1. Adequate or superior (50%)
2. Inadequate (28%)
3. Unsure (22%)

**Q: Agree or Disagree – “The Future of Lancaster School District Will Have a Major Impact on Lancaster City.”**

1. Agree (80%)
2. Disagree (6%)
3. Unsure (14%)

**Q: Willing to Pay More Taxes to Support City Revitalization**

1. No (58%)
2. Yes (25%)
3. Unsure (18%)

**Note:** Reported responses may not add to 100% either because we have reported only the answers most frequently given (unaided questions), or because multiple responses were recorded, or because respondents didn't know.

**County Issues:**

**Q. Expansion of Manheim Auto Auction**

Very informed (31%)  
Somewhat informed (48%)  
Uninformed (21%)

Very supportive (10%)  
Somewhat supportive (24%)  
Somewhat opposed (17%)  
Very opposed (16%)  
Unsure (33%)

**Q. Crackdown on Gun Crimes**

Very informed (30%)  
Somewhat informed (46%)  
Uninformed (25%)

Very supportive (57%)  
Somewhat supportive (22%)  
Somewhat opposed (2%)  
Very opposed (2%)  
Unsure (18%)

**Q. Public School Vouchers**

Very informed (23%)  
Somewhat informed (47%)  
Uninformed (30%)

Very supportive (29%)  
Somewhat supportive (23%)  
Somewhat opposed (8%)  
Very opposed (10%)  
Unsure (30%)

**Q. Construction of New Route 23**

Very informed (19%)  
Somewhat informed (48%)  
Uninformed (34%)

Very supportive (29%)  
Somewhat supportive (33%)  
Somewhat opposed (5%)  
Very opposed (4%)  
Unsure (29%)

**Q. Rails to Trails**

Very informed (16%)  
Somewhat informed (36%)  
Uninformed (47%)

Very supportive (34%)  
Somewhat supportive (21%)  
Somewhat opposed (3%)  
Very opposed (3%)  
Unsure (39%)

**Q. Farmland Preservation Bond Issues**

Very informed (13%)  
Somewhat informed (41%)  
Uninformed (46%)

Very supportive (36%)  
Somewhat supportive (33%)  
Somewhat opposed (2%)  
Very opposed (2%)  
Unsure (27%)

**Q. Construction of a New Convention Center in Lancaster City**

Very informed (11%)  
Somewhat informed (45%)  
Uninformed (45%)

Very supportive (11%)  
Somewhat supportive (35%)  
Somewhat opposed (10%)  
Very opposed (4%)  
Unsure (40%)

**Q. County Hotel Tourist Tax**

Very informed (14%)  
Somewhat informed (37%)  
Uninformed (49%)

Very supportive (9%)  
Somewhat supportive (22%)  
Somewhat opposed (15%)  
Very opposed (11%)  
Unsure (43%)

**Q. Providing a Home for the Rocky Springs Carousel**

Very informed (15%)  
Somewhat informed (34%)  
Uninformed (51%)

Very supportive (14%)  
Somewhat supportive (24%)  
Somewhat opposed (4%)  
Very opposed (5%)  
Unsure (53%)

**Q. Tax Credits for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings**

Very informed (12%)  
Somewhat informed (30%)  
Uninformed (59%)

Very supportive (20%)  
Somewhat supportive (27%)  
Somewhat opposed (7%)  
Very opposed (4%)  
Unsure (41%)

### Issue Degree of Knowledge

	Very Informed	Somewhat Informed	Uninformed
Expansion of Manheim Auto Auction	31%	48%	21%
Crackdown on Gun Crimes	30%	46%	25%
Public School Vouchers	23%	47%	30%
Construction of New Route 23	19%	48%	34%
Rails to Trails	16%	36%	47%
Farmland Preservation Bond Issues	13%	41%	46%
Construction of a New Convention Center in Lancaster City	11%	45%	45%
County Hotel Tourist Tax	14%	37%	49%
Providing a Home for the Rocky Springs Carousel	15%	34%	51%
Tax Credits for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings	12%	30%	59%



### Issue Degree of Support

	Very or Somewhat Supportive	Very or Somewhat Opposed	Unsure
Crackdown on Gun Crimes	78%	4%	18%
Rails to Trails	56%	6%	39%
Farmland Preservation Bond Issues	69%	4%	29%
Construction of New Route 23	62%	9%	29%
Tax Credits for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings	47%	11%	41%
Public School Vouchers	52%	18%	30%
Providing a Home for the Rocky Springs Carousel	38%	9%	53%
Construction of a New Convention Center in Lancaster City	46%	14%	40%
County Hotel Tourist Tax	31%	26%	43%
Expansion of Manheim Auto Auction	35%	32%	33%