

Quality of Life in Cary

The perception of the quality of life in Cary over the past two years was assessed with a 5-point scale. The response categories for this question were much worse (1), somewhat worse (2), the same (3), somewhat better (4), and much better (5). Overall, 51.0% of respondents perceived the quality of life in Cary as the same over the past two years (Table 35). However, the mean dropped from 3.24 in 2006 to 3.01 this year. This indicates a decline in the perception that the quality of life is better from the last survey. Keep in mind, lower means indicate perceptions of a decline in the quality of life. It is important to note the percentage on the “worse” side (below the midpoint of 3) of the scale exceeded the percentage on the “better” side (above 3) of the scale 26.1% to 22.9%. This is the first time this has occurred. To gain more insight into the lower ratings, the respondents who answered with a rating below 3 were asked the reason for the low rating (Appendix G). There were 142 comments and the two primary reasons for the lower quality of life ratings were growth issues (47 comments) and traffic (33 comments). Other key concerns were increased crime (12 comments), construction issues (8 comments), schools issues (8 comments), and road conditions (7 comments).

Table 35. Quality of Life in Cary.

Year	Mean	Much Worse 1	Somewhat Worse 2	The Same 3	Somewhat Better 4	Much Better 5	% Below 3	% Above 3
08	3.01	0.8	25.3	51.0	18.1	4.8	26.1	22.9
06	3.24	1.9	10.2	57.3	22.9	7.7	12.1	30.6
04	3.44	0.5	7.9	50.0	30.6	11.0	8.4	41.6
02	3.18	1.0	18.6	49.0	23.9	7.5	19.6	31.4
00	3.05	1.6	22.8	49.2	22.0	4.4	24.4	26.4

Quality of Life Crosstabulations

The crosstabulations for age, education, gender, housing type, income, language, race, and years in Cary are shown in Tables B249-B256. The subgroups with the highest means (perceive quality of life improving) were African-Americans (3.24), 56-65 age group (3.21), Asians (3.20), 18-25 age group (3.20), and 0-1 year Cary residents (3.15). The lowest means (perceive quality of life declining) were for the \$20,001-\$30,000 income level (2.85), \$50,001-\$70,000 income level (2.86), apartment dwellers (2.89), and over 65 age group (2.91). In the 34 crosstabulations conducted this year, the “worse” percentages exceeded the “better” percentages by 18 to 14 (with 2 the same). This highlights the shift in the perception that the quality of life has declined slightly.