



**THE NCS**<sup>TM</sup>  
The National Community Survey<sup>TM</sup>

# Lynchburg, VA

Open-ended Responses

2019



**NRC**

National Research Center Inc.

2955 Valmont Road Suite 300  
Boulder, Colorado 80301  
n-r-c.com • 303-444-7863

**ICMA**

*Leaders at the Core of Better Communities*

777 North Capitol Street NE Suite 500  
Washington, DC 20002  
icma.org • 800-745-8780

# Contents

Summary .....	1
Verbatim Responses to Open-ended Question .....	2



The National Community Survey™  
© 2001-2019 National Research Center, Inc.

The NCS™ is presented by NRC in collaboration with ICMA.

NRC is a charter member of the AAPOR Transparency Initiative, providing clear disclosure of our sound and ethical survey research practices.

# Summary

The National Community Survey™ (The NCS™) is a collaborative effort between National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA). The survey and its administration are standardized to assure high quality research methods and directly comparable results across The NCS communities. This report includes the verbatim responses to an open-ended question included on The NCS 2019 survey for Lynchburg. Additional reports and the technical appendices are available under separate cover.

Respondents were asked to record their opinions about additional issues not addressed by the survey in the following question:

- Is there a community issue or concern to you that is not addressed in this survey? Please explain.

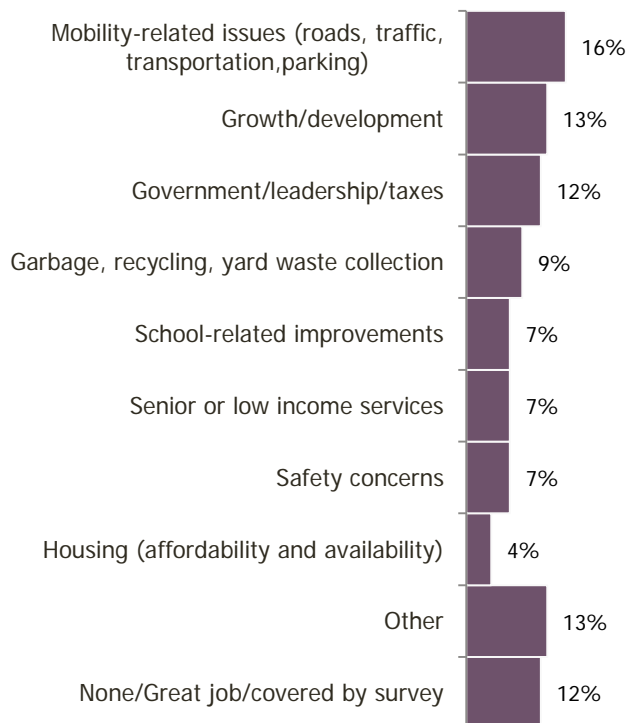
The verbatim responses were categorized by topic area and those topics are reported in the following chart with the percent of responses given in each category. Because some comments from residents covered more than a single topic, those verbatim responses are grouped by the first topic listed in each comment whenever a respondent mentioned more than a single topic.

Results from the open-ended question are best understood by reviewing the frequencies that summarize responses as well as the actual verbatim responses themselves. A total of 377 surveys were completed by Lynchburg residents; of these 147 respondents wrote in responses for the open-ended question.

About 1 in 10 respondents cited a concern or issue related to mobility (including roads, traffic, transportation, and parking), garbage/recycling/yard waste collection, or growth and development. A similar proportion of residents wrote a comment regarding government, leadership decisions, or taxes and 7% of residents mentioned an issue related to school improvements, senior or low income services, and safety.

Figure 1: Additional Resident Concerns

*Is there a community issue or concern to you that is not addressed in this survey? Please explain.*



# Verbatim Responses to Open-ended Question

The following pages contain the respondents' verbatim responses as written on the survey or entered in the web survey and have not been edited for spelling or grammar. Responses have been organized by coded topic areas.

## Is there a community issue or concern to you that is not addressed in this survey? Please explain.

Mobility-related issues (roads, traffic, transportation, parking)

- \* Parking within city limits in housing areas the parking is not monitored. To many times someone parks in front of fire, hydrant. \* To many people putting loose trash out by the road (near home) and trash stays (never picked up) people never held accountable.
- Bring back the neighborhood watch. More street lights.
- Disregard of traffic laws by motorists is alarming. We need red-light cameras and increased traffic law enforcement.
- GLTC cutting routes on Old Graves Mill Rd. I have to jump in ditches to walk to Timberlake SS. Few sidewalks speeding drivers on Old Graves Mill are beyond my ability to understand. Come walk with me!
- I would like to see more red light enforcement- red light cameras welcome!
- Is the money being spent on Odd Fellows Road really necessary? Seems like a huge expense, for little benefit.
- It seems like the GLTC uses the least repaired buses to service Lynchburg sheltered industries- They break down after.
- LACK OF SIDEWALKS.
- More cars in the city and surrounding area, then the current road layout can handle.
- Not enough parking downtown. Too many streets blocked off for constructions. Would go downtown more for shows and activities, but traffic concerns & no parking keeps me from doing so.
- Poor public transportation system. Lack of sidewalks on Timberlake Rd. Need better system for animal control. I could not get help for a dog in need that was crossing Wards Road, was told they do not respond for cat emergencies.
- Public transportation options not great outside of downtown.
- Reflectors need to be placed on yellow lines on roadways to improve visualization on road. More patrol for speeding/ careless driving. Improve efficiency of our rural trash collection (dump). Other cities have far more efficient dumps. Increase police presence in Boonsboro area. Offer [?] recycling program!!
- Sidewalks for Leesville Rd for bikes & walking of playgrounds or park in our area.
- Sidewalks on Timberlake Road are desperately needed from Leesville Road to the Campbell Co. Ltd!
- Sidewalks. If they don't exist people won't or can't walk places. This limits mobility for families, the elderly and those with disabilities.
- Specific concern- increasing walkability as Rivermont Ave.
- The bike infrastructure needs a lot of improvement Rivermont Avenue is unsafe for cyclists.
- Traffic control and quality road paving.
- Traffic enforcement - not adequate police presence- many go through red lights, monitoring could probably par a police salary!
- Traffic safety, far too many drives are blatantly running red lights!!
- Would like to see more sidewalks for safety of pedestrians. Would like to see the standard for cleanliness raised for the exterior and interior of buildings (especially businesses) in Lynchburg.
- Yes- multiple vehicles that park on the wrong side of the street against flow of traffic daily & do not get tickets. (>10/ day)

Growth/development

- ABANDONED PROPERTIES ARE A BLIGHT AND DANGER TO NEIGHBORHOOD.
- City has grown. Infrastructure planning is horrible in all approve higher density areas but do not think, plan about traffic.
- Encroachment of developments/apartment complexes/commercial space on longtime existing neighborhoods without adequate space/buffers in between, specifically the Richland Hills neighborhood where we live.

- HISTORIC DISTRICT NEGLECT (DANIELS HILL) 600-700 IS LUCKY.
- In general, some of these questions are difficult to answer. My wife and I used to live at the Walden Pond apartments but moved to The Forest townhomes about 15 months ago. The quality difference and the 'neighborhood-iness' of the two is striking. Walden Pond was incredible, put on events, had wonderful landscaping, and was overall a great place to live. My wife and I moved to The Forest townhomes thinking that a townhome would be a step up but, unfortunately, this place is pretty awful. The HOA doesn't seem to care about its residents in the slightest, there are no amenities (the pool didn't open in 2019, the tennis court is in shambles and locked, the swingset was recently taken down, etc.), and there is a lot more crime (car break-ins specifically). These two communities are separated by less than two miles but you wouldn't know that by just living in the two.
- Increased population projections are used to justify additional housing, when in fact studies have shown that these are tax liabilities, while commercial development are tax assets. City Council can limit the amount of residential development and should probably consider doing so. The infrastructure is sufficient already (we don't need more fast food or internet services) and meanwhile the schools are suffering. Talk to your Planners about slowing residential development and the Economic Development team to bring in more industry.
- Lack of shopping options ex: grocery, clothing, shopping (not everyone likes to shop on-line) area could also be more movie theaters/ music venues/ both indoors and outdoors.
- Liberty's prominent presence in city has negatively impacted our growth: reputation nationality. More mixed used urban development is needed and more investment in trail network warranted.
- Many empty buildings where should have their facades/ cleared up!
- New construction- city needs to take better care in development to protect future residents.
- Not enough trees & green space, too many billboard stop over, building. Too much congestion in Timberlake & Wards Rd.
- Refresh white Rock Hill, houses need refreshed, yards, more playground for children to play at, more help for low income families. Center for elderly, young people closer grocery store.
- Retail and commercial development away from Wards Rd.
- Suburban sprawl is still continuing.
- Way too many apartment complexes, duplexes etc. built. Why develop more. Stop building useless Traffic circles. Also lower taxes. 3 and 4 churches on a street way to many. Boost employment opportunities.
- Yes I live with the Daniel's Hill Historic District and in my opinion Daniel's Hill always gets what people would say "the short end of the stick" doesn't look as nice as the other historic district. Animals has loose in the neighborhood increased traffic will be with the 48 lofts at end of Cabell renovation of the Vainguinim at end of Rivermont Ridge and now the more of condo in the 18 helps gauge in Rivermont had to get out of Rivermont from Cabell. Sometimes 30 minutes or more at times plus the speeders coming across the bridge. Also some abandoned & absent landowners and junk cars & old lumber in neighbor's yards. Also air quality is bad from the smoke pollution from of Griffin Pipe Company.
- Yes! I think there is too much multi-family units being built without regard to the capacity of roads. Build or improve roads first, then give out permits to builders!!! During rush hours, it is impossible to get where you need to be at reasonable time.

#### Government/leadership/taxes

- Areas of city where tax dollars are spent. (Too much "downtown.")
- City taxes were not addressed. Trash can decals increased 37.5%. Low income people who must buy trash tags now must pay 10.00 for 5. This increased from 6.25 for 10. This is all tax. Ridiculous. Curbside trash is not picked up as we are told; numerous calls must be made. [?] controlled by Centra- hardly any choices. Also why do we continue to take street space to make more bike lanes that no one uses?
- City workforce does not reflect the community especially at the middle to higher levels of management.
- Generally poor business practices, oppressive christianity
- HOPE THAT CITY COUNCIL WILL DEAL WITH ISSUES HONESTLY AND NOT BASED ON POLITICAL AFFILIATION.

- I am very concerned at how much say Liberty University has in things that get done in the city. I appreciate that they bring in money, but I do not want them giving direction to what LYH should and should not be doing. It is disingenuous to say this doesn't happen. Enough stories tell me it does. In my neighborhood alone, there are several high-ranking LU personnel and unfortunately stories get out. I am very happy with the newest City Council and have actively followed what they do. I think they honestly want the best for LYH and am very happy with that. I worry about the schools. I put my youngest in private schools because it is so bad at ECG with drugs and alcohol. My oldest had a drug deal directly over her desk one day. I called the school with the names of the kids and there wasn't anything they could do. This was a DAILY problem. I do not encourage anyone with kids to put their kids in ECG. Finally, I would like to see the degree of your City Engineer. She or he must have been the worst in their class as our stoplight system simply could not be worse. I'm not just talking about the constant - CONSTANT - issues at 501 and 221, but if I go down Rivermont, I hit every single light. Surely - surely! - it cannot be that difficult to fix that. There are days when I'd rather be in DC traffic than to deal with stopping at every light. Also, I wish there were more traffic circles. I love them and they save the planet because people aren't stuck at lights that have no one at them!
- People/ residents in Boonesboro area get far better service from city than people in other areas!! City wasted tax dollars in my neighborhood that made it difficult to know our ditch. What they did did not address the real problem ya'll don't care!
- Property taxes encourage people to move to countries whose residents use and benefit from city parks streets, activities, etc. Zoning should allow for gradual accommodation for homes of lesser value to be built near expensive neighborhoods.
- Spending too much on street scaping, round-about.
- Taxes too high and wasted.
- The customer service from the City of Lynchburg government employees is awful. There appears to be absolutely no consideration for the people who live in the city. The government should also consider paperless options for bills and property tax notifications because the USPS in the city is worse than the city government.
- The influence of business and institutions have over the community. The city allows them to do whatever they want without contributing to the community as a whole.
- TOO MANY FEES FOR SERVICES.
- Too much money being spent in downtown Lynchburg.

#### Garbage/recycling/yard waste collection

- Current recycling system is very difficult for seniors living in small apartments. Curbside pickup is needed! I've never lived in a city of this size w/o it.
- For leaf pickup- there is no schedule- when you call to set an idea of when they will be picking up leaves in your neighborhood the person who answers has no due. For all we know the leaf machine people clock in and go back home. Not good business.
- Lots of trash on the curbs all over Lynchburg. Also survey should consider time length someone has lived here.
- Recycling is awful. Collection bins are not emptied often enough and are never cleaned, so all summer they are full of bees.
- The change in recycling due to external reasons does not justify County Waste just going along with the changes. I wish more had been done to allow the recycling system to continue as it had been.
- The Recycle program is terrible. Weirdo, closed Centers unmanned locations contribute to contamination. I do not feel state at most locations! The streets are full of stuffs. Lived the side near HABITAT Headquarters be developed as a "super" exchange recycle center. Lynchburg is proud to be a tree city. The recycle program helped to contribute to the trees. It seems to be more of a "trash" city. What can be done?
- There is no recycling where I live. This is very important for our household.
- Too much of burning trash & leaves in my neighborhood (Hollywood).
- Trash ply- what we have to pick up after they leave?
- WAY TOO MUCH TRASH AND HOUSEHOLD ZONING BEING LEFT ON THE STREET. EITHER STOP IT OR PUT MORE EFFORT TO PICK UP.

### School-related improvements

- Condition of the city school building, many buildings are very old and hard to keep up, many are water damaged and cause sickness to those inside. This infrastructure needs attention.
- Lynchburg needs to be teaching cursive in the public school system. There are too many poorly designed traffic circles. Construction takes far too long. We should be preserving our Historical buildings not turning them all into housing.
- Making sure teachers are well paid & supported.
- More after school programs for children of all ages and not just the young ones. More Black history classes need to be taught in high school.
- School education is an issue for minority (blacks). They are not teaching value, teachers are more focused on SOL's verses teaching the children. Jerry Falwell has too much say so here in this city and something needs to be done about that. No places to visit, or shop. The mall has no shopping stores anymore
- The school systems determination to get passing SOL's is put before actually educating and preparing our children for college.

### Senior or low income services

- Business partnerships are needed for low income families near their homes or on transportation routes.
- City should do more to attract retirees.
- Community stores for affordable food. Our store in the plaza was the place to get affordable food (and) meet our friends, fellowship.
- DSS, abused children, CPS, abuse of elderly. Need more resources.
- Food desert- Lack of access to affordable, nutritious food in some areas, especially the poor ones.
- Grocery that is affordable for low-income residents in downtown 2nd Rivermont area. Fliers with schedules of town hall meetings & topics mailed to residents.
- Help for seniors in care of yards a homes. Sometimes cost become to high for people on fixed incomes.
- Homelessness- meaningful housing partners for those in poverty or transition between life stages. Sense of community and ownership and safety in public/ low income housing. Allowing tiny homes as a solution.
- Homelessness- not decent shelters for these people. Need better quality, affordable mental health care. Severe racial & economic & religious discrimination!!!
- I wish survey people living in retirement community especially handicapped people.
- More help & opportunity for lower socio-economic areas/people, as well as healthcare & education.
- There are not enough electric chairs in stores for the handicapped, and those that are there (Walmart groceries on Old Forest Road for example) are never charged up when you need to use them.

### Safety concerns

- Better lighting at bus stops at nights.
- Gun violence prevention. Would like to see besmart.org rolled out across the city.
- Increase police presence on roads. There are many aggressive and erratic drivers!
- policies are not compensated enough for their work-therefore not attracting enough people to apply (firemen too). Putting a sidewalk on Florida Avenue was not a sensible way to spend taxpayer's money it sends a message that police& fire are not appreciated.
- Take good care of your first responders. They have done a wonderful job this years. Give them a pay raise!
- Too many guns (open carry policy). Monopoly of health care center (poor, expensive care). Everything liberty wants, liberty get policy by City Govt.
- Too much gang activity- too much drug dealing!! Too many young male niggers with too much free time!!
- Unsafe driving in downtown areas, failure to obey stop signs, speeding.
- We have a horrible neighbor, who is violent doesn't obey zoning codes, etc., and the police of the city government won't do anything about it, although neighbors have complained.
- You refuse to fund police & fire fighters, EMS who need a lot of financial help including good increases in salaries- but OK to waste money on changing the street to two way traffic when it was not.
- I live in a neighborhood that does not have sidewalks until you reach a major street. This is a safety issue and limits the amount of walking I am able to do and feel safe.



### Housing (affordability and availability)

- (1) Downtown residential development is vast majority rental- would like to see multiple ownership opportunities in the < \$ 300 K price range. Have million dollar properties solve no housing issues. (2) Get a major grocery store in/near downtown.
- Housing for low- income/ disabled individuals that is safe and affordable. Little opportunity, few openings, extensive waiting lists.
- Housing for special needs people.
- More affordable housing for middle class.
- Quality housing for young people, working that don't qualify for liberty student discount or earn too much \$ for low income apartments. Grandchildren working; living in dumps (in 20's).
- SAFE AFFORDABLE HOUSING.
- Single home being turned into college housing for more than allowed, those houses being renew without inspection.

### Other

- 1) What is available at inner city neighborhood centers. How are activities published. Not at all like city wide centers & programs. 2) Racial-equality. 3) My neighborhood don't look like others.
- 1. Lynchburg city has to monitor and curtail the activities of Jerry Fallwell Jr. This individual is an evil, corrupt piece of garbage, just like Donald Trump, the 'god' he worships. 2. It would be advantageous for the Lynchburg City brush and bulk collection team to operate according to a fixed schedule. Leaving bulk items on the front lawn (curb) for extended periods of time (in some cases, up to a month) kills the lawn in that specific location. As a result of your lethargic collection policy, parts of my front lawn is less than desirable and an obvious contrast, in terms of lawn quality, to the rest of the grass.
- A City Newsletter should be mailed out to residents not put in newspaper or online, a hard copy mailed quarterly or monthly of all activities in the city- include meetings, festivals, participation, road work schedule, etc.
- Better city sponsored or partnerships for recreation on the James River- Whitewater kayaking course, high-ropes/ Zip line suspension, bridge, bike trails & running trails etc.
- bring in quality jobs. connect Lynchburg to a major highway. keep providing food to all students.
- Competition for internet services. Homes prices 120,000-160,000 ready to be lived in (not fixed upper).
- I am frustrated that Blue Bell ice cream avoids Lynchburg, while supplying Charlottesville & Richmond with a delicious taste of home (Texas), but steering clear of Lynchburg.
- Lack of athletic fields- lighted & turf. Kids need more places to play & practice organized sports.
- LEVEL OF QUALITY CARE IN OUR HOSPITAL.
- Low cost high speed internet
- Noise in the city, autos, mufflers, Liberty University Student airplane training @ night even until after 11 pm, barking dogs, speeding in residential areas, nothing being done, no center line in newly paved residential streets, taxes too high for what I get for payment, City Council spends our money for nothing.
- Parental (guardian) involvement & responsibility of their children criminal justice and legal system.
- Parents problems not city.
- Sporadic odors from wastewater treatment plant & landfill. Enforcement of red-light running by vehicle.
- Suggest survey money in future.
- There always is but I am not the person or family to ask.
- there is no community band and secondary band teachers seem unwilling to help. There is community interest in this. I have canvassed my neighborhood through the website 'next door'.
- There needs to be a program of support for the community cats. Animal control only deals with dog situations. City Council should look into getting a meeting to organize a cat program- Trap- Neuter - Release. There is a overpopulation of cats in Lynchburg and we all need to help.
- Trust area that may be a current overall concern everywhere.



None/great job/covered by survey

- Keep up the good work!
- No
- No
- No
- No
- No
- No- It has all been covered.
- NO- SURVEY IS COMPREHENSIVE.
- No.
- No.
- No.
- No.
- No.
- No.
- "No".
- No. I cannot think of anything you did not cover.
- Nothing.
- THIS IS A VERY GOOD SURVEY & I ENJOYED COMPLETING IT.
- This survey covers it well.
- We are got years so we don't have many concerns but want everything possible for everyone.

N/A

- I AM 19 YEARS OLD [?] COMMUNITY. I REALLY CAN'T ANSWER ANY OF THE SUBJECTS IN NUMBER TO.
- I have only lived here for 1 1/2 years.
- Moved here 1 year ago, no change.
- N/A
- N/A.
- N/A.
- N/A.
- We have only lived in Lynchburg for 1 yr., not knowledgeable of changes made in past 2 yrs.