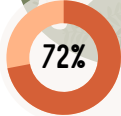


Youth Perspectives on: Environmental Protection & Climate Change



Overview



72% of youth surveyed (n=1,125) rated this issue as somewhat or extremely important

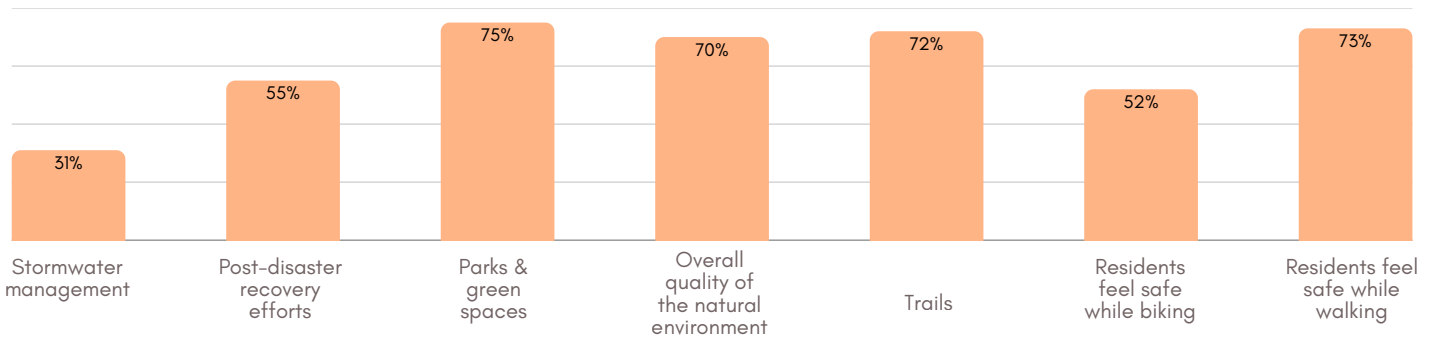
This theme, emerging 195 times, captures youth aspirations for a more sustainable, climate-resilient Alexandria. Student feedback emphasizes the importance of ecological health, green infrastructure, and shared responsibility for sustainability. They expressed concern about pollution, limited access to nature, and inadequate waste management. They called for bold action to protect the environment for current and future generations.

WHY IT MATTERS

The environment plays a critical role in shaping youth health, safety, and quality of life. Clean air, water, and public spaces are essential for well-being, while environmental degradation and climate change disproportionately impact vulnerable communities. Youth who grow up with access to green spaces and sustainable infrastructure are more likely to engage in physical activity, experience lower stress levels, and develop a lifelong ethic of stewardship.

WHAT THE DATA SAY

Resident Satisfaction with Public Spaces in Alexandria
Source: 2024 Resident Survey



WHAT YOUTH WANT

75+ mentions

Ecological Health of the City

"Better biking-accessible roads to promote biking."
"More walkable access to everything."
"More open spaces like parks and gardens."

- Clean water, air, and green public spaces
- More trees, gardens, and nature-friendly areas
- Infrastructure that promotes walking and biking

55+ mentions

Waste Management

"Clean, stop littering."
People clean up after themselves."
"Recycling."

- Clean streets, parks, and schools
- Accessible and well-publicized recycling services
- A culture of shared responsibility for keeping public spaces clean

WHAT YOUTH EXPERIENCE

15+ mentions

Ecological Health of the City

"Lack of bike lanes."
"Water quality is bad."
"Not enough open space."
"The climate is very, very important to me."

- Concerns about poor water quality, dirty rivers, and limited green space
- Perceptions of insufficient attention to climate risks like flooding

45+ mentions

Waste Management

"Trash everywhere."
"No recycling services (you have to do it yourself)."

- Frequent exposure to litter, especially in recreational areas
- Frustration with limited or confusing recycling options