“RACE in the Woo: A community roundtable”
Survey:
African American Citizen Satisfaction with Municipal Services and Quality of Life in Worcester
Introduction & Purpose

- The survey provided black residents the opportunity...
  - To rate their quality of life in the City
  - To evaluate the performance of the City’s public services
  - To express their feelings about the representation of black interests by City officials
- Findings from this survey...
  - Describe how residents feel about services provided by municipal government and why they feel that way
  - Enables City leaders to focus their efforts and to identify initiatives to better serve black residents
Methodology

• Findings are based on a survey available to hundreds of festival attendees of the 13th annual African American and Juneteenth Festival in Worcester, MA on June 19, 2010.

• Sample Selection
  ▫ Invited to complete the survey at vendor booth
  ▫ Research assistants recruited respondents by invitation
  ▫ Purposive sampling method: every willing participant between 12:00 pm and 8:00 pm

• 143 completed surveys were received/ 107 were valid
Satisfaction with Quality of Life & City Services

- 49% dissatisfied with the overall quality of life in Worcester
- 66% dissatisfied with the overall appearance of the city
- 77% dissatisfied with city efforts to attract new businesses and jobs to the city
- 81% dissatisfied with the value of services received for city tax dollars
Satisfaction with Quality of Life & City Services

The overall quality of life in Worcester: 51% Satisfied, 49% Dissatisfied

Image and appearance of the city: 34% Satisfied, 66% Dissatisfied

Value of services received for your city tax dollars: 19% Satisfied, 81% Dissatisfied

The city’s efforts to attract new businesses and jobs to the city: 23% Satisfied, 77% Dissatisfied

The availability and convenience of public transportation: 46% Satisfied, 54% Dissatisfied

Housing availability or affordability: 36% Satisfied, 64% Dissatisfied
Satisfaction with Public Services

- **Upkeep and appearance of City property**: 66% Satisfied, 44% Dissatisfied
- **Sewer and drainage services to your residence**: 83% Satisfied, 18% Dissatisfied
- **Residential trash and curbside recycling collection services**: 83% Satisfied, 17% Dissatisfied
- **Snow removal on streets in your neighborhood**: 47% Satisfied, 53% Dissatisfied
- **Snow removal on major city streets**: 58% Satisfied, 42% Dissatisfied
- **Adequacy of street lighting in your neighborhood**: 56% Satisfied, 44% Dissatisfied
- **Pedestrian safety in your neighborhood**: 66% Satisfied, 34% Dissatisfied
- **Condition/cleanliness of sidewalks in your neighborhood**: 61% Satisfied, 39% Dissatisfied
- **Condition/cleanliness of street/road surfaces in your neighborhood**: 49% Satisfied, 51% Dissatisfied
Selected Results

92% of respondents identified as White/Caucasian, and only 4% identified as Black/African American, a higher degree of satisfaction is consistently noted on most variables.

Figure 2: Respondents Satisfied or Very Satisfied with Quality of Life Issues in Worcester, 2005-2006
Figure 3: Respondents' Ratings of Various Municipal Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Excellent/Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor/Very Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential trash collection and recycling services</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sewer and drainage services to your home</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snow removal on major City streets</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street lighting in your neighborhood</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upkeep and appearance of City recreation areas</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snow removal on streets in your neighborhood</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public transportation (bus and commuter rail)</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall leaf collection services</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian safety in your neighborhood</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleanliness of streets and sidewalks</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition of streets</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition of sidewalks</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage of Respondents
Perception of Safety

- In downtown Worcester at nighttime:
  - Very Safe: 25%
  - Somewhat Safe: 46%
  - Unsafe: 29%

- In downtown Worcester during the daytime:
  - Very Safe: 61%
  - Somewhat Safe: 35%
  - Unsafe: 4%

- Walking alone in your neighborhood at nighttime:
  - Very Safe: 35%
  - Somewhat Safe: 46%
  - Unsafe: 19%

- Walking alone in your neighborhood during the daytime:
  - Very Safe: 62%
  - Somewhat Safe: 37%
  - Unsafe: 3%
Representation

3 Most Pressing Problems Facing the African American Community

- **31% Jobs/Economy/Housing**
  - 70% dissatisfied with how city officials address the issues

- **22% Representation**
  - 88% dissatisfied with how city officials address the issues

- **18% Community/Culture**
  - 77% dissatisfied with how city officials address the issues
## Representation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-Identified Major Issues Facing the African American Community</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Level of Satisfaction as Indicted by Respondents Measured as a Percentage of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Very Well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community/Culture</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Representation</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>74</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Does City Council Represent the Interests of African Americans in Worcester?

- Yes: 46%
- No: 40%
- Unsure: 14%
Are African Americans needed in Political Office?

85% Yes
10% Unsure
5% No
City Public Officials’ Relationship with the African American Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active in the African American community</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable of African American community issues</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informed of African American community issues</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Are City Officials Doing Enough?

- 49% Not Nearly Enough
- 27% Doing a lot
- 20% Doing some
- 4% Not Enough
Are City Officials Committed to African American Issues?

- Poor: 47%
- Barely Enough: 26%
- Moderate: 25%
- Strong: 2%
Will City Officials Pursue Policies & Programs to Improve Their Quality of Life?

- Very Likely: 6%
- Somewhat Likely: 26%
- Not Very Likely: 46%
- Not Likely At All: 22%
Community /Cultural Recognition

- Naming important and active organization within the African American community

'Important' African American Community Organizations

- Unable to Identify: 19%
- Able to Identify: 81%
Community /Cultural Recognition

- African American community organizations have a more defined presence than do individuals.

Identification of Important/Active Leaders and Orgs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names of Important Organizations</th>
<th>Names of Important Leaders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19%</td>
<td>50% (Unable to Identify)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% of Respondents
Economy (jobs, housing, commerce)

- Residents indicated they were dissatisfied with their economic quality of life.

### Satisfaction with Public Services in Worcester

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please indicate your level of satisfaction with each of the following by checking the column corresponding to your opinion</th>
<th>Percent of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing Availability and Affordability</td>
<td>n=105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City's efforts to attract new businesses and jobs to city</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of services received for your city tax dollars</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Observations

• Black Worcester residents are generally dissatisfied with municipal services.
• 81% of respondents are dissatisfied with the value of services received for their tax dollars.
• Half of respondents are satisfied with their overall quality of life in Worcester.
• While black citizens believe the quality of services to be low, only 21% had contacted the city with a request or complaint.
Observations

• Respondents indicated the three major problems in the black community...
  ▫ Jobs, economy, housing (31%)
  ▫ Representation (22%)
  ▫ Community and culture (18%)

• Respondents also expressed dissatisfaction with how such issues are addressed by city public officials
  ▫ 71% indicated “not very well” or “poorly”
Observations

- Half of all respondents were not able to identify a leader in the black community.
- 81% were able to identify an important and active organization within the black community.
- More research is required to understand...
  - Residents’ views about the black community
  - The representation of black interests by city public officials
  - City spending priorities and the distribution of resources
## City Personnel Affirmative Action Data

Table 1: Minority Full-Time Personnel Employment: Worcester City Government, 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2009 Summary Function Categories</th>
<th>Whites</th>
<th>Blacks</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>% Black</th>
<th>% Hispanic</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>% Other</th>
<th>% Total Minority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Officials/Administrators</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technicians</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protective Service Workers</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraprofessionals</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Support</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled Craft Workers</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Maintenance</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Personnel</td>
<td>1141</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


*Excludes school systems, educational institutions, fire protection, and elected/appointed officials
Next Steps...

- Questions
- Dialogue