

On The Table Macon Participants: Optimistic, Engaged, and Focused on Solutions

2019 *On The Table Macon* participants who completed the post-conversation survey rate their community highly. They have a clear sense of issues and challenges that need to be addressed, are highly engaged, and feel empowered to make change.

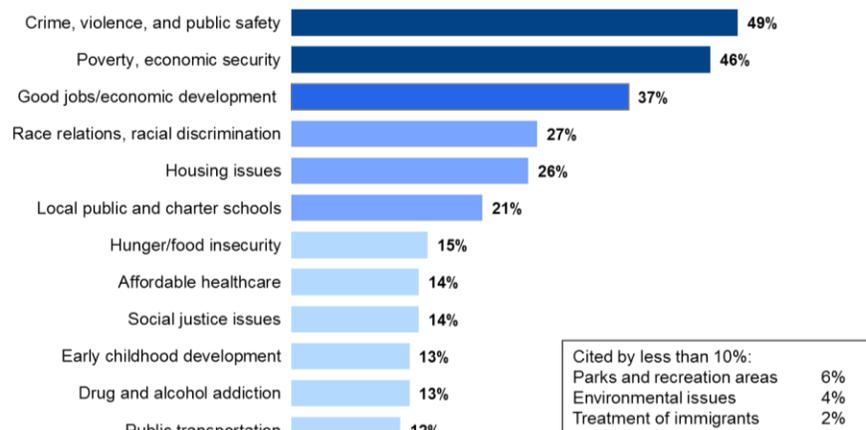
A positive community outlook, with some challenges: *On The Table Macon* participants give their community high marks on key dimensions, although perceptions of unity are mixed.

- ✓ Participants are optimistic about their community: majorities feel their community is the perfect place for people like them (77%) and that residents have shared goals and priorities for their community (72%). Throughout the region and across racial groups, majorities (61%) agree that their community provides opportunities for everyone.
- ✓ The majority (57%) think people in their community are more united than divided when it comes to addressing important goals and challenges; notably, however, white participants (64%) are more likely than participants of color (51%) to say so.
- ✓ Participants are most satisfied with public parks and green spaces in their community. By a wide margin, more participants think this aspect of their community has gotten better (66%) than think it has gotten worse (7%). Majorities also note that their community’s arts and culture (52%) and K-12 education (51%) have gotten better in the past year or so.

Priority issue areas: Public safety and economic issues are top concerns for participants.

- ✓ Crime, violence, and public safety (49%) rises to the top as the issue participants most want their community to address. It is an area in which notably more participants feel things have gotten worse (45%) rather than gotten better (14%) over the past year or so.
- ✓ Economic security (46%) and good jobs/economic development (37%) are second-tier priorities participants would like their community to address. More participants feel that poverty has gotten worse (35%) than gotten better (9%) over the past year.

THREE most important issues for my community to address



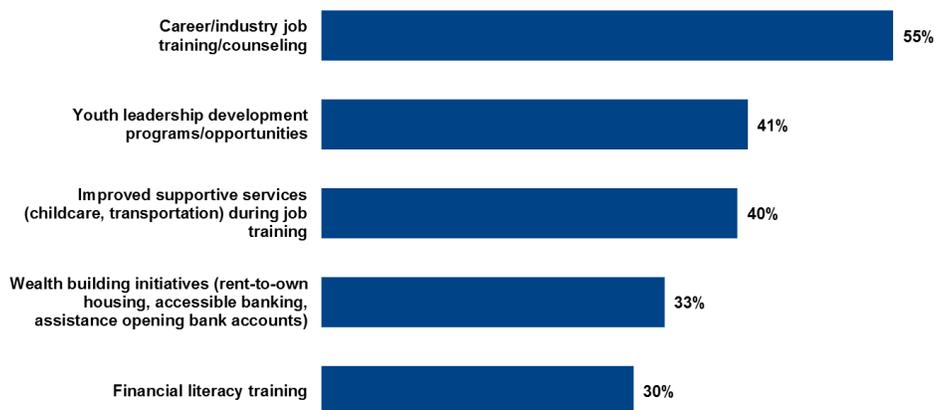
- ✓ On the issues that participants are most likely to think have gotten worse rather than better (crime and public safety and poverty), participants of color are less positive than white participants. Additionally, participants of color are more likely to think that race relations have gotten worse than better (-15), while white participants are more likely to think that race relations have gotten better by a small margin (+6). Participants who live in

the West express more pessimism about crime and public safety (worse by a margin of 48 points) than do residents in other parts of the region.

Path to change: Participants are focused on solutions and feel empowered to make change.

- ✓ Among potential solutions tested, more workforce training and financial education for unemployed and low-income citizens (53%) is expected to do the most to improve the community, followed by addressing vacant, neglected properties (40%) and improving race relations (36%). These top three solutions are consistent across racial groups and throughout the region.
- ✓ When it comes specifically to increasing economic security, participants are notably more likely to identify career/industry job training (55%) than financial literacy training (30%) as an effective solution.

TWO strategies that are the best to increase economic security in my community



- ✓ Participants identify nonprofits and community organizations (63%), faith communities (47%), and community residents themselves (44%) as having the greatest impact on making the community a better place to live.
- ✓ Nine in 10 (91%) participants believe that people coming together from across the area is critical to developing solutions to community challenges, and 87% believe people like them can make their community a better place to live.

About the participants: Highly engaged and empowered by *On The Table Macon* conversations.

- ✓ 2019 participants are highly engaged in their communities: within the last year, large majorities have donated to a charity/cause or faith organization (83%), voted in all or most elections (82%), attended a public meeting (79%), or volunteered locally (76%). Almost half (46%) have spoken with a local elected leader in the past year; participants of color (40%) and participants age 18 to 34 (36%) are less likely than white participants (52%) and seniors (58%) to say they have done so.
- ✓ Participants say *On The Table Macon* conversations helped them better understand how to take action to address issues and challenges in their community (62%), allowed them to speak with someone they did not already know (60%), and helped them learn about important issues in their community (55%).

On October 30, 2019, the Community Foundation of Central Georgia hosted its 2019 On The Table Macon conversations with generous support from the Knight Foundation. The Community Foundation of Central Georgia estimates that 4,600 adults participated in the conversations. This memo presents key findings among 873 adults who participated in On The Table Macon conversations and completed a post-conversation survey. The survey was conducted online by Hart Research Associates and Public Opinion Strategies. For more information, visit onthetablemacon.com.