

## **Race and Equity Pocket Questions**

**Title and purpose of this initiative:** Community Survey 2024

**Department:** Communication & Engagement

### **What are the racial and equity impacts?**

When the Town conducts its usual surveys and invites participation through posts to the email newsletter, through social media, and even at outdoor kiosks and in places where people meet like hair salons, grocery stores and laundromats, staff are aware of the difficulties in ensuring full representation.

The Town of Carrboro is committed to using a research consultant (ETC Institute) for biennial community surveys for their expertise with rigorous, representative methodologies to achieve high-quality, accurate results. This includes a concerted effort for improving representation from subgroups that have historically been underrepresented.

### **Who is or will experience community burden?**

According to Gallup polling, all survey methodologies have limitations. Similar to the demographic profile of individuals reached via other modes and surveys (by Gallup and other organizations), individuals responding to surveys who are younger, have lower education levels, have lower income levels, or identify with a racial or ethnic minority tend to participate at lower rates.

Gallup discusses the challenges of ensuring survey participation by Black respondents in a recent article (see link below). While a recent survey on racial equality achieved an overall participation rate of 42% -- the participation rate of Black respondents, as well as individuals aged 18 to 44 and those with a high school education or less, was about 15 percentage points lower, on average. For this reason, Gallup focuses efforts on oversampling and engaging the groups that tend to participate at the lowest rates. Note article available at:

<https://news.gallup.com/opinion/methodology/318140/reaching-black-americans-gallup-panel.aspx>

In a similar approach, the Town of Carrboro is oversampling for the Community Survey. Carrboro staff worked with ETC Institute to create a second survey sample for the Community Survey that targets residents who live in the Qualified Census Tract. These tracts must have 50 percent of households with incomes below 60 percent of the Area Median Gross Income (AMGI) or have a poverty rate of 25 percent or more. QCTs are a common, readily accessible, and geographically granular method of identifying communities with a large proportion of low-income residents. Responses are analyzed separately as a comparison to the overall survey results.

In this way, staff are able to view the results of the overall community sample with the special sample of those residents who live in the QCT to note any differences in perception about Town services.

### **Who is or will experience community benefit?**

Surveys that are not scientifically valid will often have a disproportionate number of advantaged residents participating to complete the surveys. When these are the only voices that are heard by elected officials, it becomes more difficult to make equitable decisions.

Scientifically valid feedback is time consuming and can be costly. The Town relies upon a survey consultant to ensure that residents who complete the survey closely match the demographics of the town including that the respondents are diverse economically and geographically.

### **What are the root causes of inequity?**

American political, social, and financial systems have worked to actively marginalize people of color, specifically Black Americans.

### **What might be the unintended consequences of this action or strategy?**

Customer satisfaction surveys help us discover how residents *feel* about local government as well as gauge their satisfaction in specific service areas. But results can be skewed, not consistent, and not detailed enough to target specific areas of concern, resulting in data that's difficult to translate into an actionable plan. Some residents willingly share only negative reports, leaving behind all the standards that are being successfully met. But used together with data that reflects actual performance and progress by departments, the results of perception and opinion in these surveys about how well the government is running can help tell a useful story.

### **Survey Differences between QCT Responses and General Community Responses**

When comparing the survey results from the communitywide sample to the Qualified Census Tract (QCT) sample, the general results are similar across all service and topic categories, including:

- **As a place to live**, both sample groups rate the community highly with 97% of the general survey reporting excellent or good satisfaction and 94% of the QCT survey reporting excellent or good satisfaction.
- **Overall quality of life**, both sample groups rate the community highly with 93% of the general survey reporting excellent or good satisfaction and 91.4% of the QCT reporting excellent or good satisfaction.
- **Top services most important** in the communitywide survey are parks and recreation facilities; housing and community services; and transportation infrastructure.
- **Top services most important** in the QCT survey are housing and community services; transportation infrastructure; and police services.

**QCT respondents more satisfied by 5% or more (as compared to communitywide survey respondents) with:**

- opportunities to participate in Town decision making
- perception of Carrboro as a community headed in right direction
- responsiveness of the Town to the needs of its residents
- overall value received for Town tax dollars and fees

**QCT survey respondents less satisfied by 5% or more (as compared to communitywide survey respondents) with:**

- number of walking and biking trails
- fees charged for recreation programs
- feeling of safety in their neighborhood, in parks and facilities, and overall feeling of safety
- various measures of effectiveness of police services
- availability of sidewalks
- availability greenways/multi-use paths
- accessibility of public areas/facilities for persons with disabilities
- access to parks and green space
- adequacy of street lighting
- availability of on-street bike amenities
- availability of bike parking

**QCT survey respondents are more likely to ...**

- identify as renters (65% of respondents in the QCT survey as compared to 45% in the communitywide survey)
- identify as younger (42% of respondents in the QCT survey are ages 18-34 as compared to 20% from this age group in the communitywide survey)
- ride a bicycle to commute to work or school (67% compared to 39%)
- ride Chapel Hill Transit (63% compared to 46%)
- report that their monthly housing costs (rent or mortgage) exceed 30% of monthly income (50% compared to 33%)
- use outdoor information kiosks (and by contrast, less likely to use Nextdoor, community groups and blogs, and neighborhood associations for news sources.

Carrboro Community Survey 2024 Demographic Information Comparison			
	Carrboro – overall	Community Survey	QCT Survey
Race/Ethnicity	Asian – 8.5% Black – 15% Am Indian/Alaska Native – 0.65% White – 64% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander – 0.2%	Asian – 9% Black – 13.5% Am Indian/Alaska Native – 0.7% White – 68% Other – 3.7%	Asian – 5.4% Black – 13.3% Am Indian/Alaska Native – 1.2% White – 71.1% Other – 4.2%
Spanish or Latino ancestry	8.5%	8% - yes 90% - no	11% - yes 85% - no
Age	33 – median age	18-34 – 20% 35-44 – 19% 45-54 – 19% 55-64 – 18% 65+ - 18%	18-34 – 42% 35-44 – 17% 45-54 – 9% 55-64 – 13% 65+ - 19%
Gender	Male - 46% Female - 54%	Male – 47% Female – 48% Nonbinary – 2%	Male – 38% Female – 55% Nonbinary – 6%
Rent or Own Home		Rent – 45% Own – 54%	Rent – 65% Own – 35%
Income	\$76,599 – median income	Under 30K – 16% \$40-59K – 22% \$60-99K – 20% \$100-129K – 15.5% \$130K+ - 15.7%	Under 30K – 25% \$40-59K – 33% \$60-99K – 17% \$100-129K – 11% \$130K+ - 7%
Internet at home		Yes – 95.3% No – 1.5%	Yes – 95.2% No – 2.4%