

Divided Minnesota: The Gulf of Race and Income in Minneapolis and Saint Paul

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Minnesotans like to think of themselves as part of one broad community. A new poll of likely voters in Minneapolis and St. Paul reveals a gulf between how whites and non-whites view their communities, their choice of the next mayor, and the city’s priorities regarding race and income. These findings are from a survey by the Humphrey Institute’s Center for the Study of Politics and Governance of 768 likely voters who live within the city limits of Minneapolis and St. Paul between October 17 and 30, 2005

Divided Expectations

White and non-white likely voters harbor starkly different expectations toward city government. About twice the proportion of non-whites compared to whites believe city government should do a lot more to address income and race in the communities. In particular, non-whites want city government to promote policies that will create a mix of races and income groups; whites are more accepting of neighborhood that have one race or income group.

Non-Whites Expect More From City Government (likely voters)

	Promoting Income diversity		Promoting Racial diversity	
	City should do a lot more	City should do less	City should do a lot more	City should do less
White residents	24	14	28	16
Non-white	47	15	46	13
Saint Paul – white	23	13	25	17
Saint Paul – nonwhite	37	17	45	18
Minneapolis – white	28	16	32	15
Mpls - nonwhite	59	14	47	7

Numbers in cells are row percentages.

The divide is particularly strong in Minneapolis. In particular, more than twice as many non-whites want Minneapolis government to address income diversity compared to white voters.

Support for Encouraging Diverse Neighborhoods Gives a Boost to Rybak and, especially, Coleman

Support for city government taking steps to promote a mix of races and income groups in neighborhoods is influencing the Twin City mayoral elections. Government policy toward race makes the biggest difference. Backers of the city doing a lot more to create racially diverse neighborhoods are more supportive of Mayor R.T. Rybak over his challenger (Hennepin County Commission, Peter McLaughlin) and, especially, St. Paul City Council Member Chris Coleman compared to Mayor Randy Kelly.

Attitudes toward city policy on neighborhood income mix are also a factor, though not as strong. Supporters of the city doing a lot more to encourage a mix of income groups slightly favor Mayor R.T. Rybak over his challenger (Hennepin County Commission, Peter McLaughlin) and significantly prefer St. Paul City Council Member Chris Coleman over Mayor Randy Kelly.

Support for Encouraging Diverse Neighborhoods Gives a Boost to Rybak and Coleman (likely voters)

	Will vote for...			
	Kelly	Coleman	Rybak	McLaughlin
City should do “a lot more” to promote income diversity	10	34	37	34
City should do “a lot more” to promote racial diversity	14	35	41	31

Numbers in the cells are column percentages.

About the Survey

The survey was designed by the Center for the Study of Politics and Governance and its 2005 Elections Project in the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute at the University of Minnesota. The Center, the 2005 Elections Project, and the Humphrey Institute are non-partisan academic institutions that are committed to rigorous research, quality teaching, and engaged service. The Center's Elections Project have conducted a number of studies in 2004 and 2005 focusing on state and national elections in the Upper Midwest including policy briefs, analyses of election returns and public opinion, and voter registration efforts. More information can be found at its website:
<http://www.hhh.umn.edu/centers/cspg/index.html>

The research team was Lawrence R. Jacobs (Director) and Joanne M. Miller. We would like to acknowledge the support of Dean J. Brian Atwood and the superb research assistance of Melanie Burns.

The survey was fielded by the Center for Survey Research and Analysis at the University of Connecticut, which has extensive national and state experience conducting non-partisan surveys on politics and government policy.

The sample of telephone exchanges called was randomly selected by a computer from a list of active residential exchanges within the cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul. Within each exchange, random digits were added to form a complete telephone number, thus permitting access to both listed and unlisted numbers. Within each household, one adult was selected to be the respondent for the survey.

The survey was conducted by telephone with a total of 1784 adults within the city limits of St. Paul (900 adults) and Minneapolis (884) between October 17 and 30, 2005. The results, though, have been weighted to reflect different probabilities of selection based on the number of adults in a household and the number of telephone lines reaching the household. Results were also weighted to reflect the demographic characteristics of each city based on sex, age, education, and race. Likely voters are estimated based on responses to questions which assign probabilities of voting based on self-reported likelihood of voting, voter registration, past voting behavior, and interest in the election. These weightings produced a sample of 768 likely voters; our results are based on this sample.

In theory, in 19 cases out of 20 the results based on the samples in Minneapolis and St. Paul will differ by no more than 4.9 percentage points in either direction from what would have been obtained by seeking out all adults in these states. For smaller subgroups the margin of sampling error is larger.

In addition to sampling error, the practical difficulties of conducting any survey of public opinion may introduce other sources of error into the poll. Variations in the wording and order of questions, for example, may lead to somewhat different results.

From the questionnaire:

Q11I. Now, I'd like to ask you some questions about the diversity of income levels in your neighborhood – that is, the mix of lower, middle, and upper income families.

Q11. How diverse is your neighborhood in terms of the incomes that people earn – is it extremely diverse, very diverse, somewhat diverse, not too diverse, or not at all diverse?

Extremely diverse	01
Very diverse	02
Somewhat diverse	03
Not too diverse	04
Not at all diverse	05
Don't Know (vol)	98
Refused (vol).....	99

Q12. Some people think that having a diversity of incomes is important to the health of a neighborhood. Others think having a neighborhood with a diversity of incomes is not important. What about you? How important is it to the health of the neighborhood you live in to have people with diverse incomes living there – extremely important, very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

Extremely important	01
Very important	02
Somewhat important	03
Not too important	04
Not at all important	05
Don't Know (vol)	98
Refused (vol).....	99

Q13. Should the city of (St. Paul/Minneapolis) do more or less to promote income diversity within its neighborhoods? (Probe: A lot or A little More/Less)

A lot more	01
A little more	02
A little less	02
A lot less	01
Neither more nor less (vol)	97
Don't Know (vol)	98
Refused (vol).....	99

Q14I. Next, I'd like to ask you now about the racial diversity of your neighborhood -- that is, the mix of blacks, whites, Asians, Hispanics, and others.

Q14. How racially diverse is your neighborhood – is it extremely diverse, very diverse, somewhat diverse, not too diverse, or not at all diverse?

Extremely diverse	01
Very diverse	02
Somewhat diverse	03
Not too diverse	04
Not at all diverse	05
Don't Know (vol)	98
Refused (vol).....	99

Q15. Some people think that having a diversity of races is important to the health of a neighborhood. Others think having a diversity of races is not important. What about you? How important is it to the health of the neighborhood you live in to have racial diversity – extremely important, very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

Extremely important	01
Very important	02
Somewhat important	03
Not too important	04
Not at all important	05
Don't Know (vol)	98
Refused (vol).....	99

Q16. Should the city of (St. Paul/Minneapolis) do more or less to promote racial diversity within its neighborhoods? (Probe: A lot or A little More/Less)

A lot more	01
A little more	02
A little less	02
A lot less	01
Neither more nor less (vol)	97
Don't Know (vol)	98
Refused (vol).....	99

Q17. Which is more important to the health of the city of (St. Paul/Minneapolis): Promoting neighborhoods that have people with a diversity of incomes living in them or promoting neighborhoods that have people with a diversity of races living in them?

Promoting a diversity of incomes	01
Promoting a diversity of races	02
Both equally important (vol).....	96
Neither important (vol)	97
Don't Know (vol)	98
Refused (vol).....	99