

Research Summary Sheet

- Seven hundred and ninety-seven (797) Atlanta residents participated in this study.** Four hundred six (406) residents completed the paper surveys at the regularly scheduled Neighborhood Planning Unit (NPU) meetings and three hundred ninety-one (391) residents responded online via Survey Monkey.
- NPU members are more educated and more likely to be homeowners than the general Atlanta population.** See table below for comparison with Atlanta population.

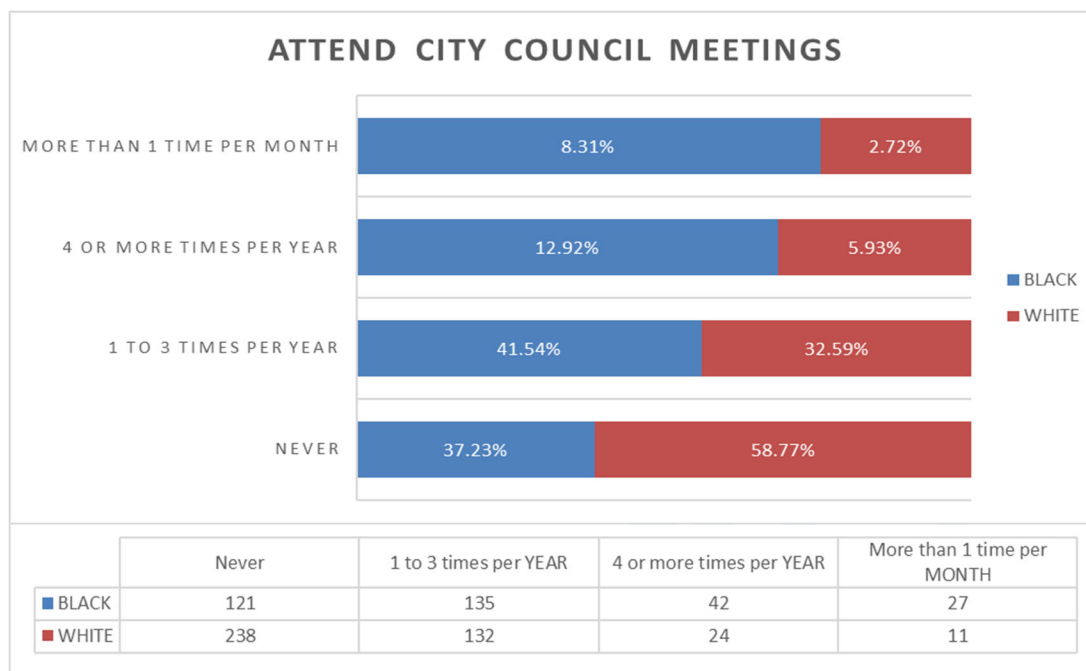
Survey Respondents' Characteristics (%)

	Paper	Online	Total Sample	City of Atlanta
Total Sample	51	49	100	100
Male	53	40	47	48
Female	47	60	53	52
Afro-Amer/Black	59	27	43	57
Euro-Amer/White	36	68	52	35
All others (Asian, Latino, etc.)	5	5	5	8
\$0-\$34,999	37	14	25	40
\$35,000-\$54,999	15	12	14	15
\$55,000-\$84,999	16	19	18	10
\$85,000 or more	32	55	44	35
High school diploma or less	27	8	17	45
Bachelors or more	74	92	83	55
18-24 year olds	2	1	2	5
25-34 year olds	16	21	18	15
35-44 year olds	19	26	22	18
45-54 year olds	18	21	19	18
55-64 year olds	19	20	19	18
65-74 year olds	20	10	15	26
75yrs + year olds	7	1	4	
Household w/ child under 18	22	29	25	---
Home renter	17	10	14	45
Homeowner	74	88	82	55
Business owner	15	10	12	---

3. **Formal arrangements like the NPU system reduce participation disparities.** In research studies, minorities, low-income, and less-educated people are often found to be less engaged in local government and community development initiatives. However, in Atlanta, study findings indicate that minority, low-income, and less educated residents are as much as three (3) times more likely to be engaged in community affairs than their White/non-minority, higher income, and more educated counterparts.
 - a. *Future research might look at why Blacks are more engaged than Whites in Atlanta.* Is this finding due to the formal arrangement of the NPU system? Or is there another reason? Would this finding hold true in another city that has an NPU-like system? How does Atlanta's NPU system fare in comparison?
4. It is not completely clear whether NPU members are more involved in individual co-production activities with their local public service providers versus collective co-production activities, but one thing is clear from the findings: **Respondents are extensively involved in various forms of civic engagement.** For example, 76% participated in cleaning/maintaining their community. *See table below.*

Co-production activities	% who participated at least once/year	
Attend City Council meetings	52	Collective / Group Activities
Attend NPU meetings	75	
Attend other community-related meetings	79	
Attend community-related court hearings	26	
Cleaned public areas or facilities	76	Can Be EITHER individual or group
Patrolled neighborhood	29	
Reported code violations	55	Individual Activities
Reported suspicious activities	71	
Reported service problems	63	
Filed complaint against service agent (ACRB)	6	
Shared opinions about community project	72	
Donated money to a community event/project	76	
Thanked service agent	51	

5. For the thirteen (13) activities listed above, those who are more involved (and more frequently involved) seem to be **Black, less educated, lower income, property owners, and older residents.** The graph below offers one example, highlighting the higher levels of City Council meeting attendance of Black residents compared to their White counterparts.



6. **Participation begets participation.** The more residents engage with their local government, the more likely they are to engage in other opportunities in the future — possibly because participants become more familiar with the process or more aware of the other needs in the community.
7. **Nonmaterial motivations have a greater impact.** Contrary to what was expected, residents are more likely to be motivated by nonmaterial incentives than by material needs. The majority of respondents indicated that they engaged in co-production with their local government/public service providers because they felt like they could make a difference (63%); they felt like it was their duty (59%); or their engagement helps them connect with their neighbors (58%). With only 10 and 27 percent, material rewards (improving the quantity or quality of their public service) were not popular determinants of residents' co-productive engagement with their local government.

Why Atlanta Residents Engaged in Coproduction	Popularity (selected in top 3)	Importance (ranked as #1)
I felt like I could make a difference.	63	29
I felt it was my civic duty.	59	35
It makes me feel connected to my community.	58	29
It gives me a sense of purpose/accomplishment.	39	12
I was not satisfied with the quality of my public service.	27	10
My neighbors encouraged me to.	18	7
I was not receiving a government service.	10	5
My local government encouraged me to.	4	2
Other	6	4

8. **Residents' desire to connect with their neighbors (a social need) seems to primarily influence collective activities (those involving groups of residents rather than individual activities).**
Social need does not seem to motivate individual activities.
9. **Encouragement from their local government or from their neighbors has substantial influence on collective activities.** Specifically, when the local government encouraged residents to attend City Council meetings and court hearings of someone accused of a crime in their community (Court Watch Program), residents responded by attending. The same is true for filing a report against public service representatives via the Atlanta Citizen Review Board (ACRB). When neighbors encouraged each other to attend community-related meetings, this was also quite effective.
10. **Material motivations primarily have positive influences on individual activities that are specific to a service output.** Activities that are impacted by material motivations (desire to improve the quality or quantity of a local public service) are those with a direct link to a specific public service outcome. Therefore, activities that are broad, like any of the general body meetings, did not address a specific service need but rather MANY. Activities like reporting service problems or code violations or cleaning the community all led to direct service results and therefore had material motivations.
11. **Future studies that will be beneficial to the City of Atlanta or its residents:**
 - a. ***NPU-specific findings*** – This will allow for a comparative analysis from NPU to NPU.
 - b. ***Impact of Participation*** – The types of impacts residents' joint efforts with government have on service outputs and outcomes.
 - c. ***Satisfaction Levels*** – Are NPU participants (and other residents who are involved in their communities) more satisfied with their public services than nonparticipants?