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RESEARCH GROUP

TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Garin-Hart-Yang Research Group
DATE: March 15, 2023
RE: Recent Survey of Dallas Voters

From March 8 to 11, 2023, Garin-Hart-Yang interviewed a random and representative sample of 501 Dallas voters from the voter file who said they are likely to vote in the May election. The results of this phone survey, which was conducted among both landline and cell phone respondents, have a margin of error of ± 4.5 percentage points.

The following are the key findings:

#1. Survey respondents are solidly optimistic about the city's direction, which stands in stark contrast to the current negative attitudes toward the nation and even the state. For example, a statewide February 2023 University of Texas/Texas Politics Project Poll shows a majority of Texans saying that the state is off on the WRONG track by 51% to 35%.

But among Dallas respondents, a 54% majority say the city is headed in the right direction, compared with 33% who say that things in Dallas are off on the wrong track. Importantly, during this time of division different groups of Dallasites generally share the same positive outlook—with 54% of white respondents, 53% of Black respondents, and 57% of Latino respondents all saying that the city is headed in the right direction.

#2. Given the sense of optimism about Dallas's direction, it is no surprise that the city's leadership, particularly Mayor Johnson, is well regarded by survey respondents. When asked to rate the job that Mayor Johnson is doing, better than three in four (77%) respondents approve of his job performance, with just 17% disapproving. As is the case with perceptions of Dallas's direction, Mayor Johnson's approval ratings are uniformly favorable across the city, garnering outstanding ratings by race, gender, and age. For instance, three in four (75%) respondents ages 18 to 34 approve of Mayor Johnson, while the approval rating is even higher (81%) among Dallasites ages 65+.

The Dallas City Council as a whole receives solid marks, with a 55% majority of respondents saying they approve of it and 30% saying they disapprove.

One important note to put the city's 54% "right direction" and Mayor Johnson's 77% approval rating into proper perspective is that BOTH questions were asked very early in the survey and well before any information was provided to survey respondents about the Mayor's accomplishments or policies.

#3. Crime and public safety are top of mind when we ask survey respondents for the most important issues facing Dallas; yet a strong majority believe that the city and their neighborhoods are safe, and Mayor Johnson elicits solidly favorable ratings for his handling of crime.

Respondents volunteer in their own words the following as the most important issues facing the city:

- **Crime/public safety** **38%**
- Education 24%
- Homelessness 22%
- Street repairs/potholes 20%
- Affordable housing 14%
- Property taxes 13%
- **More police/funding** **12%**
- **Gun violence/shootings** **12%**

Even though a significant percentage of Dallasites has crime and public safety on their mind, 72% believe that Dallas is very or somewhat safe, compared with just 25% who say the city is unsafe. And when asked specifically about their own neighborhood, fully 85% of survey respondents say they feel safe, with the “safe” rating fairly uniform across the city.

And Mayor Johnson’s rating on his handling of Dallasites’ top issue is positive by two to one.

#4. Finally, a majority of survey respondents rate three priorities as important for the city to achieve, with two in particular showing very widespread appeal.

- Increasing salaries, benefits, and training to help retain and recruit highly qualified police officers (83% very/fairly important);
- Lowering property taxes for homes and businesses (71% very/fairly important); and
- Building enough new parks so that EVERY Dallas resident lives within 10 minutes of a quality park. (53% very/fairly important).