

One of the richest African-American-majority counties in the country, Prince George's County has grown dramatically in recent decades—its current population of more than 900,000 is nearly five times its size when measured in the 1950 Census. The VoicesDMV survey results for Prince George's reflect a community that is "proud but honest" about its challenges and a community that is deeply rooted in civic pride and faith.

## HIGHLIGHTS, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES

The survey responses show optimism and engagement of County residents across a number of metrics. Prince George's County residents are among our most politically empowered, with a quarter noting they felt they have "great" or "moderate" influence on local government—more than most other jurisdictions and on par with the District. Prince George's County residents also see a much stronger role for local government in addressing societal issues, with much higher proportions reporting that issues such as helping people with basic needs and employment should be high or extremely high priorities for local government.

On the downside, safety was of greater concern for residents in Prince George's County than in other jurisdictions, with more than 26 percent noting that the County is either "not very safe" or "not safe at all." Fewer people in Prince George's County were extremely likely to recommend their jurisdiction as a place to live (22 percent), compared with the DMV overall (33 percent). A quarter of Prince George's respondents report fear of themselves or a loved one being arrested or questioned by police, and more than 50 percent reported a perception that people of color are treated less favorably by law enforcement.

Prince George's County respondents reflect a higher share of individuals facing economic challenges as compared to most other areas in the region. When asked how well they were managing financially these days, the results were good for many across the region, however the data also reveal people living in Prince George's County were notably less likely to say they were living comfortably (18 percent) than those in other parts of the DMV (about 30 percent).

Our region's growth and prosperity have meant the cost of living can be high, making life challenging for people who do not have jobs that pay a living wage, people who cannot work, or people on fixed incomes. When asked what would happen if they lost their current sources of income, one in three people regionally said they would not have enough money to continue to live as they do today for more than two months, however in Prince George's this figure was much higher at 45 percent. More than a quarter (26-27 percent) of County residents noted they have had difficulty affording essential food or housing in the past twelve months, the highest such rating in the region.

In Prince George's County, one focus group member described the county's challenge providing enough services for the increasing population of former DC residents moving to Maryland. "Although Prince George's is [one of] the richest black [counties in America], we also have a lot of poor people moving here. Especially now because they are pushed out of DC. I don't think we have the social services infrastructure to support



[Prince George's County] is better than where many people in the world live, but there are some challenges.

services that poorer residents need and that they used to get in DC and are no longer getting. We can't support them the way they should [be supported]."

Finally, Prince George's respondents were more likely to rate their local public schools as either "fair" or "poor" (46 percent) compared to the DMV region more broadly (28 percent).

## ISSUE FOCUS: DISCRIMINATION

A larger share of Prince George's County respondents reported having felt discriminated against than any other jurisdiction—33.6 percent of respondents reported experiencing some form of discrimination in the past year (compared to 22 percent in Fairfax, for example). Ninety-one percent of these respondents reported that race and ethnicity was one reason for this discrimination—again, the highest such share in the region. Prince George's respondents were markedly less likely to report discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation, or language (34.8 percent, 7.1 percent, and 12.2 percent, respectively) than the region at large (47.5 percent, 13.2 percent, and 18.7 percent, respectively).

### Q42. IN THE PAST YEAR, HAVE YOU EVER FELT DISCRIMINATED AGAINST WHILE IN THE WASHINGTON AREA?

DC	PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY	MONTGOMERY COUNTY	FAIRFAX COUNTY	OTHER NORTHERN VIRGINIA
26%	34%	25%	22%	25%

## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

Prince George's County residents are our region's most religiously engaged community, with 85.6 percent of respondents noting they are a believer in some form of organized religion. Further, County residents report churchgoing at a much higher rate than other jurisdictions, with more than 60 percent noting they'd attended a local church, synagogue, mosque or place of worship in the last year, and 53 percent reporting having given money to their local place of worship.

Along with DC, Prince George's respondents were much more likely to rank preventing discrimination as an "extremely high" priority (41 percent) for local government. Other highly ranked priorities for the County included protecting people from crime (60 percent) and improving education (52 percent).

 I had the opportunity to leave and decided to stay because of great parks [and other features]. I don't want to be where everything is cookie cutter; Prince George's is complex.

While Prince George's residents report utilizing services from local nonprofits at a similar rate to other suburban jurisdictions (40 percent use services at least once a year), they are also more likely than residents from other DMV jurisdictions to say they did not know of any nonprofits that met their needs—one third of respondents who reported never using nonprofits report this was the reason. A respondent from Prince George's County had this to say: "In Prince George's, there is a lot of duplication of services and not enough collaboration between organizations that do the exact same thing. [I think nonprofits] need to pull their resources together so the funding doesn't get spread so thin between groups." Attendees of the Prince George's County community conversation noted that not everyone was well informed about what services were available in the county, with one attendee stating that "this is a great place to live because of an abundance of resources, but people need to be better informed of those resources."