



Racial Equity Survey Results

Town of Middlebury
July 2022

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Survey Overview

Primary Lens: Racial Equity

Essential Question: *What do people experience while living, working, learning, and visiting the Town of Middlebury?*

Survey open May-July- electronic and paper versions available.

Offered in English and Spanish

3-4 possible detractors/distractors

Demographics at a glance

216 total responses

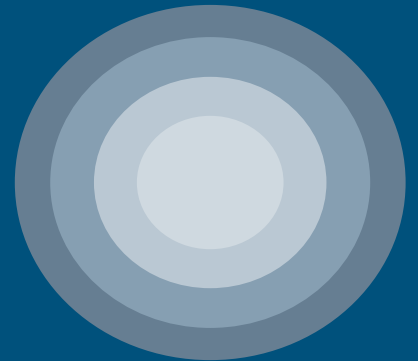
77% (167 respondents) live in Middlebury

0.5% (1 respondent) identified as a college student

73% (157 respondents) were 45 years old or older

2.8% (6 respondents) were under the age of 24

41 respondents are interested participating in the forums



Demographics at a glance

18.5% (38* respondents) identify as members of the **LGBQIA+** community.

6% (13 respondents) identified beyond the gender binary.

14.4% (31 respondents) identify as **people with disabilities**.*

12.5% (27 respondents) identify as **Black, Indigenous, Asian, biracial, and/or people of other races**.

86.5% (186 respondents) identify as **white** only

Demographic summary: while the overall response rate is low based on the number of people who live in Middlebury, representation of structurally oppressed and systemically disadvantaged groups is robust, with the exception of people with disabilities.



Diversity is a fact

Equity is a choice.

Inclusion is an action.

Belonging is an outcome.

Experiences of Belonging



Work



Live

Do people feel **welcome** in the Town of Middlebury?

Do people feel **safe** in the Town of Middlebury?



Learn

Are there **opportunities** and **accessible services** for people in the town of Middlebury?



Play

Is Middlebury a welcoming place?

- ★ Inclusion
 - ★ Satisfaction
 - ★ Access/Experience of
Municipal Services
-

57%

Overall, the majority of people experience the Town of Middlebury as a satisfying or very satisfying place to live.

68%

The majority of respondents are satisfied with the town of Middlebury.

However...

Responses Across Race: Inclusion, Belonging & Satisfaction by Percentage



“Most of the “lack of welcome” I feel here is the hyperawareness of being a person of color in a largely white context. I watch what I say/do, and I have to explain myself or my context more often.”

-Southeast Asian woman

Inclusion, Belonging and Satisfaction by Race Across Indicators

White Respondents:

Highest rated area for Inclusion & Belonging:

Socializing (128)

Highest rated area for Satisfaction

Recreation (160 respondents)

BIPOC Respondents:

Highest rated area for Inclusion & Belonging:

Recreation & Leisure (13)

Highest rated area for Satisfaction

Work & Socializing (tied at 19)

“I tried to become involved in things. Cliques seem to be the social norm in M’bury. I was disregarded often, made clear I did not “belong.”

- Bi/Multiracial Female

Consensus Across Race: Inclusion, Belonging and Satisfaction by Race Across Indicators

LEARNING was the area in which more respondents of all races felt the *least* sense of **inclusion, belonging and safety.**

RETIREMENT and **SOCIALIZATION** are the two areas in which respondents of all races felt the *least* sense of **satisfaction.**

“My children have observed or been subject to overt racism, sexism, and homophobia in public schools on a daily basis.”

- White Male

Summary

While most people indicated that they feel welcome and included overall, further exploration in the following areas is recommended:

Learning

Socialization

Retirement

Safety

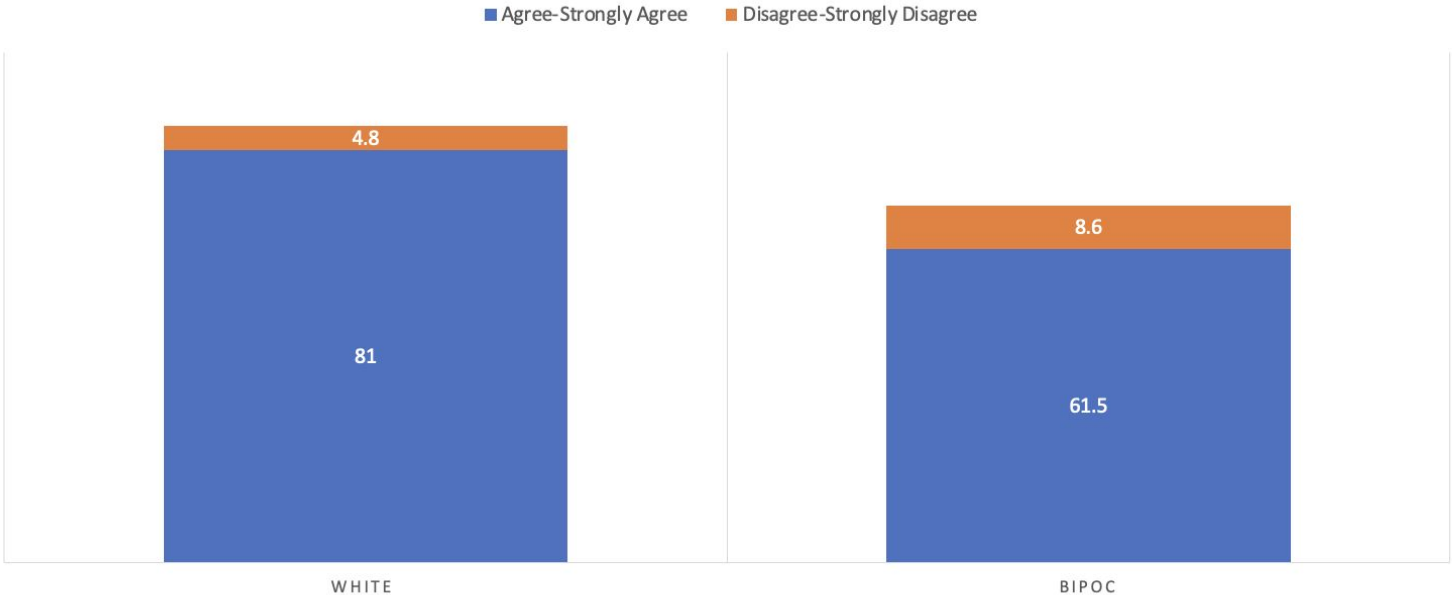
- ★ Live, work, socialize, learn
- ★ Experiences with racism and other forms of identity-based harm



77%

Percentage of respondents who feel safe or very safe overall in the Town of Middlebury.

OVERALL EXPERIENCE OF SAFETY IN THE TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY BY RACE



Feelings of Safety as Percentages by Race

Experiences of Safety by Race

White respondents:

Safest area:

Socializing (172) & Live (160)

Least safe area:

Work (12) & Learn (13)

BIPOC respondents:

Safest area:

Work (18) & Socialize (18)

Least safe area:

Learn (3)

81% / 47%

The **percentage of BIPOC (21)** who report experiencing, witnessing, or having a loved one experience racism in the Town of Middlebury as compared to the **percentage of white respondents (88)**.

“While riding the public bus my wife was harassed on one occasion by another passenger. My [Asian]wife wears the hijab and like myself is a practicing Muslim.”
- *White male*

Summary

- There is a significant difference between BIPOC and white respondents' experience and sense of safety in the Town of Middlebury.
- Learning continues to be an area in which respondents indicate concern.
- 25% (46) of white respondents had never seen or heard of racism in the Town of Middlebury. This could account for why some respondents did not understand or feel that racism is an issue that the Town of Middlebury should address.

Opportunities

- ★ Family
- ★ Cultural Relevance
- ★ Economic
- ★ Entertainment
- ★ Health/Environment



65%

Of respondents believe that the Town of Middlebury has ample opportunities

Middlebury is rated as a healthy environment (83%) and a great place to raise children (77%).

***“My spouse and I are both POC and we genuinely like it here in terms of a smaller community, access to programming/culture through the events at the College, outdoor activities etc.”
Southeast Asian, Woman (NOT female)***

“However, in order to access more culturally specific things (such as grocery items, haircare, restaurants, majority-BIPOC community, cultural festivals), then we either have to create those spaces or go somewhere like Burlington or Montreal.”-Southeast Asian, Woman (NOT female)

White respondents (19%) were significantly less likely to report concerns about opportunities than BIPOC respondents (35%)

The most widely agreed upon concern for people in Middlebury is economic opportunity (35%).

“As a lower income resident, I feel there is financial bias in town. Especially at the Middlebury Natural Foods Coop, but also at many other places. People look down at those of us who don’t dress as nicely and don’t buy like the average. I also believe that drives racism...people believe those of color are lower on the income scale.” - White Female

“It’s important to discuss classism in Middlebury and how it intersects with racism.” - White Female

Municipal Services

★ Experiences

★ Access

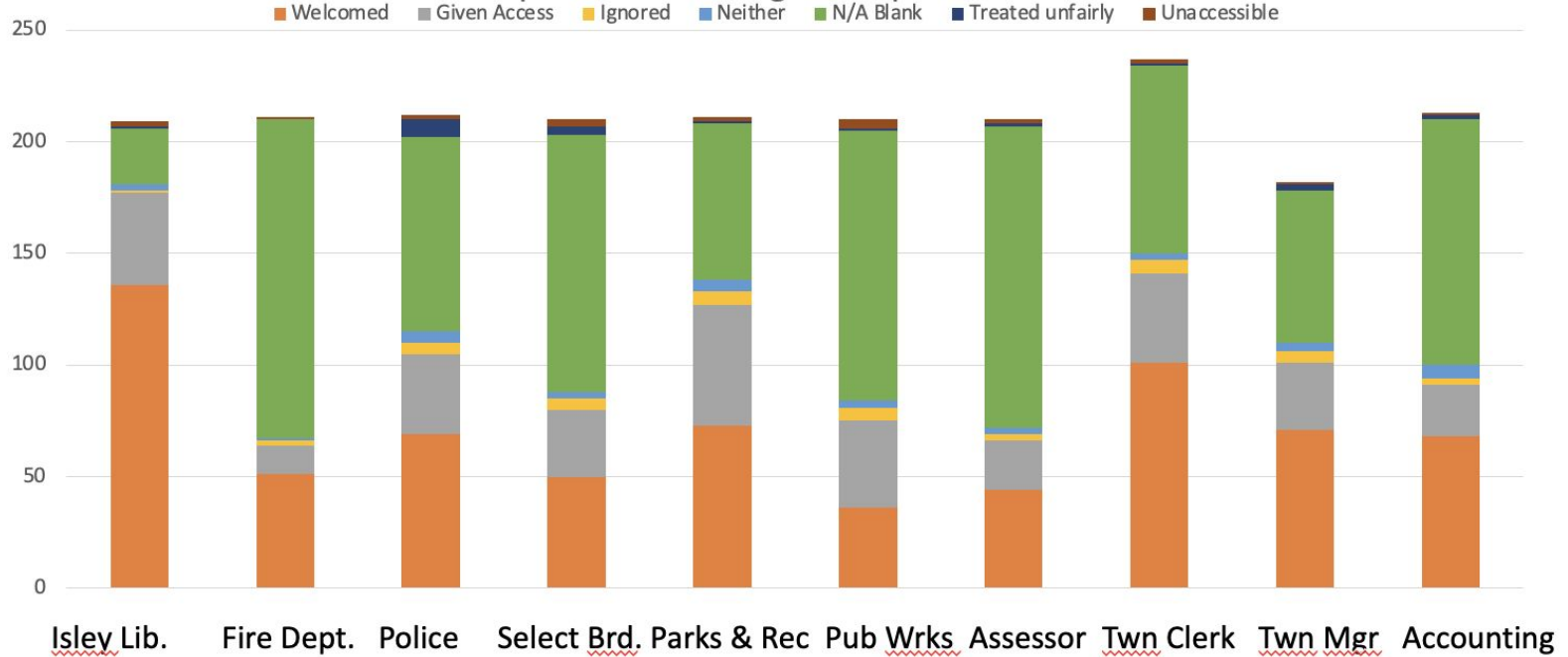
★ Frequency



47.5%

Of respondents had positive experiences while accessing municipal services

Experience Accessing Municipal Services



Accessing Municipal Services- Raw Data

Employee Representation

“We need to be more proactive in recruiting and retaining Black and Hispanic staff beyond the college in town government (especially our libraries) and with large employers (ACSD, Medical, law and financial services). I am aware that there are Mexican workers interested in being hired for police services.”- White female

Experiences with Municipal Services by Race

White respondents:

Positive Experiences 51%

Negative Experiences 3.5%

Most Accessed: Isley Library, Town Clerk

Least Accessed: Fire Department, Assessor,
Public works

BIPOC respondents:

Positive Experiences 30%

Negative Experiences 7%

Most Accessed: Isley Library, Police Department

Least Accessed: Fire Department, Assessor,
Select Board

BIPOC reported 2x more negative experience (7% vs 3.5%) when accessing municipal services as their white counterparts.

15% of BIPOC and 6% of white respondents reported a negative experience with police, while 52% of white respondents and 27% of BIPOC reported positive experiences.

Summary

The Isley Library is an important part of the Middlebury community.

Satisfaction with municipal services is an area to explore.

ADDITIONAL THEMES

SUGGESTIONS

“I think teaching and provide the community with more information and trainings on unconscious bias would be a great thing to do. Because even people that don't think they are experiencing racism within our community and state, they probably are. It's hard in a community that is 99% white to see it in the same ways communities in the south might be seeing it but it is here and present.”-White Female

“The town should be publicly doing a lot more to be and show that we are a community that is anti-racist and supports people and businesses owned by BIPOC folks.”- White female

“One thing I feel is worth noting is potentially fat-phobia in our community or discrimination based on size in addition to race/ gender expression/ sexual orientation/ disability/ etc.”- Latinx/Latin American/Hispanic/White, Gender Non-Conforming

“Middlebury is, on balance, a very good place to live. In my fantasy, it would pay extra attention to providing fundamental business service (food, clothing, shelter) in the downtown over fingernails, tattoos, and cannabis; it would prioritize infrastructure spending vice [sic-versus] driving down property tax, and it would put special emphasis on pedestrian and bicyclist safety in road design, implementation, and traffic safety enforcement. Further, it would figure out a way to fashion a Habitat for Humanity-like organization that would transform existing housing into lifetime affordable housing for first-time home buyers as opposed to expensive second homes for out-of-towners. Finally, it would work with ACSD to unfetter primary, middle, and high school educators from administration and minutiae to reinforce readin' 'ritin', and 'rithmetic.”

-White Male

GRATITUDE

“Thank you for conducting this survey. It’s important to be more aware of how members of our community of all different identities experience life in Middlebury. While my identity may allow me to feel safe engaged most of the time, many community members do not. Looking forward to learning results & dialogues.”- White Female

“Glad you’re getting input from citizens. I feel there’s much I need to learn from others (POC, those with disabilities, different gender identities from my own) and welcome opportunities to enlarge my understanding of what others, who are not privileged as I am, in my community. Thank you for doing this.”-White Female

Intersectional Concerns

Affordable housing

“A severe lack of affordable housing prohibits greater racial equity.”

Accessibility to/comfort in public spaces

Homelessness

Specific municipal departments

Diversity in food options

Vermont State Police interactions

Next Steps



Work



Live



Learn



Play

Digest the data- write down questions, concerns, conflicts, and celebration points.

Determine what elements of the report you want to be public facing and who should have access to what data (raw etc...)

Set dates and overarching questions for the forums.

Questions



Thank You!