

Central Carolina *On the Table* Participants: Optimistic and Empowered to Make Change

2019 Central Carolina Community Foundation *On the Table* participants who completed the post-conversation survey rate Lexington and Richland Counties positively along a number of dimensions and are optimistic about what the future holds. They identify economic issues as top priorities for their community to address, and they feel empowered to get involved and make change.

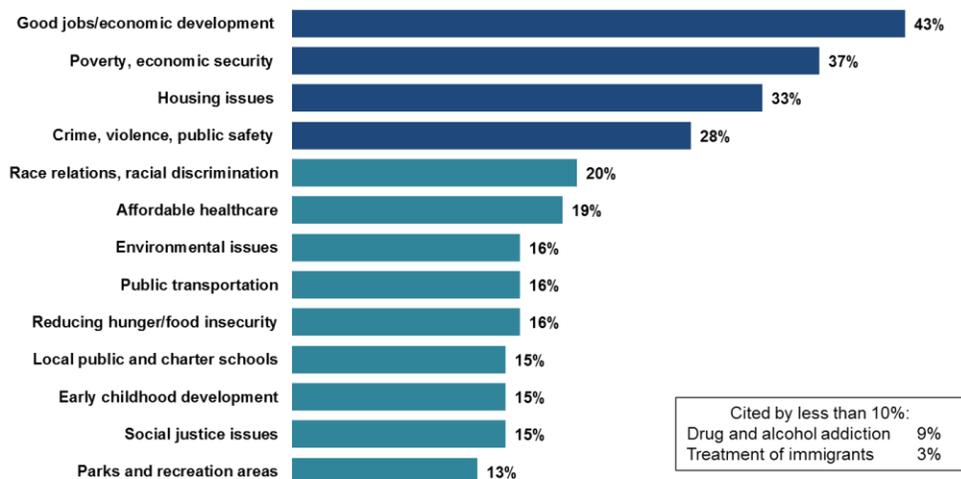
The People and Their Perspectives: *On the Table* participants give Richland and Lexington Counties high marks and feel hopeful about what the future holds for their community.

- ✓ Significant majorities of participants agree that their community is the perfect place for them (82%), that residents have shared goals and priorities (76%), and that their community provides opportunities for everyone (67%). Two in three (65%) see their community as more united than divided when it comes to addressing important goals and challenges.
- ✓ Nearly nine in 10 (88%) say Richland and Lexington Counties are welcoming of people who move there from somewhere else, and 93% say they would recommend the counties as a place to live—with equally high proportions in both Lexington (93%) and Richland County saying so (92%).
- ✓ Participants are optimistic about the future: eight in 10 (79%) are more hopeful than worried about what the future holds for their community and more than seven in 10 (72%) believe their community will be a better place to live in five years. Just 5% say they think it will be worse.

Community Priorities: economic issues are the top priority.

- ✓ *On the Table* participants identify good-paying jobs and economic development (43%) and poverty and economic security (37%) as the top priorities they want their community to address, and economic issues and poverty was the most-discussed issue at *On the Table* conversations. Housing issues (33%) and crime, violence, and public safety (28%) emerge as important second-tier priorities. These priorities were consistent across both Richland and Lexington Counties.

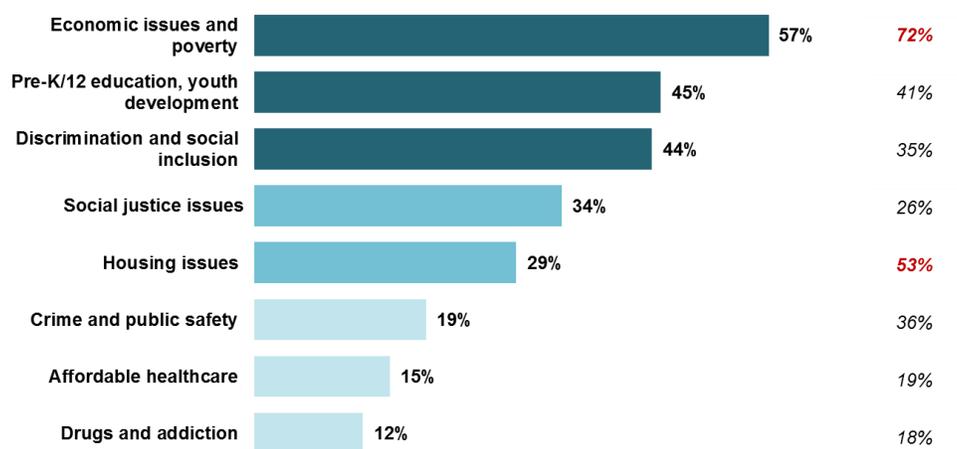
THREE most important issues for my community to address:



Community Engagement: participants feel empowered to make an impact in their community, but they identify a need for more opportunities to get involved on specific issues.

- ✓ More than nine in 10 (91%) participants believe that coming together from across the area is essential or very important for developing solutions to community challenges.
- ✓ Significant majorities (88%) believe that people like them can have an impact on making their community a better place to live; those ages 18-to-34 (93%) and African-American participants (95%) believe so at even higher rates.
- ✓ There is room to engage participants on addressing key issues: economic issues and poverty (72%) and housing issues (53%) were the most commonly discussed topics at *On the Table*. However, only 57% feel there are opportunities to get involved in addressing economic issues and poverty, and significant proportions don't feel there are opportunities to get involved in a number of community challenges.

For which of these issues do you feel there are opportunities for you personally to get involved? ***Discussed at On the Table:***



- ✓ Although participants feel some uncertainty over how to get involved, nearly all (94%) say they are likely to take a specific action regarding an issue or solution they discussed at *On the Table*.

On October 22, 2019, Central Carolina Community Foundation hosted its 2019 On the Table conversations with generous support from the Knight Foundation. Central Carolina Community Foundation estimates that approximately 2,160 adults participated in the conversations. This memo presents key findings among 565 adults who participated in On the Table conversations and completed the post-conversation survey. The survey was conducted online by Hart Research Associates and Public Opinion Strategies.