

KUHF 88.7 FM AND KHOU CHANNEL 11 NEWS
2009 HOUSTON MAYORAL SURVEY

STEPHANIE POST
ROBERT M. STEIN
THE CENTER FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT, RICE UNIVERSITY

AND

THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY SURVEY RESEARCH INSTITUTE

*INTERVIEWS WERE CONDUCTED WITH 501 REGISTERED VOTERS IN THE CITY OF HOUSTON
AUGUST 21-26, 2009. THE ERROR RATE FOR THIS SAMPLE IS +/-4.4%.*

How likely are you to vote in November? Are you...

TOTAL RESPONSES.....	501	100%
Very likely to vote	437	87%
Somewhat likely to vote	64	13%

Overall, do you think things in Houston are headed in the right direction, or do you feel that they are pretty seriously off on the wrong track?

TOTAL RESPONSES.....	501	100%
Right Track.....	378	75%
Wrong Track.....	73	15%
Don't Know	49	10%
Refused	1	0%

What do you think is the most important problem facing the City of Houston that you would like to see the next mayor do something about?

TOTAL RESPONSES.....	501	100%
Traffic congestion	46	9%
Public transportation/buses/rail.....	31	6%
Streets and roads.....	28	6%
Taxes	18	4%
Crime	150	30%
Drugs.....	20	4%
Government waste/inefficiency	8	2%
Economy	27	5%
Jobs/keeping businesses	28	6%
Education/public schools	14	3%
Cost of living.....	7	1%
Environment/air/water pollution.....	8	2%
Speeding/unsafe traffic conditions.....	1	0%
Flooding	15	3%
Gangs/violence	13	3%
Growth and development	6	1%
Homelessness.....	4	1%
Housing - repair or condition	2	0%
Overcrowding/overpopulation	2	0%
Revitalizing neighborhoods	1	0%
Health care.....	12	2%
Budget	1	0%
Racial and sexual harassment in the HFD	0	0%
Other	43	9%
Nothing/None	7	1%
Don't Know/Refused.....	9	2%

In the next two to three years, do you think the economy will get better, get worse or stay the same?

TOTAL RESPONSES	501	100%
Better.....	365	73%
Worse	51	10%
Stay the Same	65	13%
Don't Know.....	19	4%
Refused.....	1	0%

Mayor Bill White cannot run again for Mayor because of term limits. There are five major candidates for mayor. I'd like to read you their names and ask for whom you'll be likely to vote if the election were held today...

TOTAL RESPONSES	501	100%
Gene Locke	48	10%
Annise Parker	66	13%
Peter Brown.....	26	5%
Roy Morales.....	14	3%
Don't Know.....	339	68%
Refused.....	8	2%

Who would be your second choice for Mayor of Houston among these candidates:

TOTAL RESPONSES	154	100%
Gene Locke	26	17%
Annise Parker	33	21%
Peter Brown.....	29	19%
Roy Morales.....	17	11%
Don't Know.....	48	31%
Refused.....	1	1%

Now please tell me if you approve or disapprove of the job that each of the following is doing.

TOTAL RESPONSES..... 501 100%

	Approve	Disapprove	Not Sure	Refused
<i>Harris County Appraisal District</i>	179 (36%)	231 (46%)	90 (18%)	1 (0%)
<i>Houston Independent School District</i>	211 (42%)	178 (36%)	110 (22%)	2 (0%)
<i>Houston Fire Department</i>	418 (83%)	60 (12%)	23 (5%)	0 (0%)
<i>Houston Police Department</i>	391 (78%)	92 (18%)	18 (4%)	0 (0%)
<i>City Controller Annise Parker</i>	259 (52%)	44 (9%)	196 (39%)	2 (0%)
<i>City Council member Peter Brown</i>	149 (30%)	27 (5%)	322 (64%)	3 (1%)
<i>The Houston City Council, as a whole</i>	282 (56%)	89 (18%)	130 (26%)	0 (0%)
<i>METRO, the metropolitan transit authority</i>	294 (59%)	130 (26%)	75 (15%)	2 (0%)

Now I would like to read you a series of statements about Houston. After you hear each one, please tell if you think it is an accurate or inaccurate statement

TOTAL RESPONSES.....

501 100%

	Accurate	Inaccurate	Don't Know	Refused
<i>Crime in Houston is increasing.</i>	363 (72%)	109 (22%)	29 (6%)	0 (0%)
<i>The City of Houston has done enough to prepare and protect the city and its residents for another major hurricane.</i>	254 (51%)	179 (36%)	67 (13%)	1 (0%)
<i>The services I receive from the city of Houston are good value for my tax dollars.</i>	299 (60%)	158 (32%)	42 (8%)	2 (0%)
<i>My neighborhood gets it fair share of attention and funding the city government.</i>	252 (50%)	205 (41%)	43 (9%)	1 (0%)
<i>The city's budget situation will get significantly worse in the next year causing the need for cuts in services and/or increases in taxes and fees.</i>	247 (49%)	149 (30%)	104 (21%)	1 (0%)
<i>Complaints about harassment of racial minorities and women employees in the City of Houston Fire Department are an isolated problem and not widespread.</i>	267 (53%)	141 (28%)	91 (18%)	2 (0%)
<i>Houston's best mayors have been business or professional leaders rather than elected officials.</i>	315 (63%)	90 (18%)	92 (18%)	4 (1%)

I am going to read you a list of proposals that the next mayor of Houston might introduce. After I read each one please tell me if you would favor or oppose that proposal?

TOTAL RESPONSES..... 501 100%

	<i>Favor</i>	<i>Oppose</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>	<i>Refused</i>
<i>Adoption of tougher land use restrictions to protect our neighborhoods.</i>	405 (81%)	70 (14%)	25 (5%)	1 (0%)
<i>Reducing traffic congestion by creating more efficient bus and rail systems.</i>	412 (82%)	68 (14%)	21 (4%)	0 (0%)
<i>Using Houston Police officers to enforce federal immigration laws.</i>	279 (56%)	177 (35%)	45 (9%)	0 (0%)
<i>Adoption of drainage fee to control flooding during hurricanes and severe weather.</i>	331 (66%)	143 (29%)	27 (5%)	0 (0%)
<i>Adoption of an animal control fee to protect and provide for stray and homeless animals.</i>	336 (67%)	137 (27%)	28 (6%)	0 (0%)

Which of these proposals would be the best long-term solution to the traffic problems in Houston.

TOTAL RESPONSES.....	501	100%
Building bigger and better roads and highways.....	141	28%
Making improvements in public transportation, such as trains, buses, and light rail.	249	50%
Developing communities where people can live closer to where they work and shop.	88	18%
Don't Know.....	22	4%
Refused.....	1	0%

W of the following two statements comes closest to your opinion:

TOTAL RESPONSES.....	501	100%
Some people say Houston's lack of zoning laws have helped keep home prices affordable and should not be changed.	136	27%
Some people say Houston should enact tougher land use restrictions to protect our neighborhoods.	213	43%
(BOTH)	79	16%
(NEITHER)	23	5%
(MAKES NO DIFFERENCE)	23	5%
Don't Know/No Answer.....	27	5%

I am now going to read you descriptions of some of the candidates for mayor. After you hear each description please tell me if you have a generally favorable neutral, or generally unfavorable opinion of that person.

Peter Brown is a 72 year-old Democrat who is a member of the City Council and an architect. He supports tougher land use restrictions and has worked to increase recycling and energy conservation in Houston.

TOTAL RESPONSES.....	501	100%
Favorable	190	38%
Unfavorable.....	84	17%
Neutral.....	190	38%
Don't Know	33	7%
Refused	4	1%

Annisie Parker is a 52 year-old Democrat who served on the City Council for 6 years and is now the City Controller, where she monitors city revenues and expenditures. Before entering public service, she worked in the oil and gas industry for 20 years.

TOTAL RESPONSES.....	501	100%
Favorable	240	48%
Unfavorable.....	59	12%
Neutral.....	159	32%
Don't Know	40	8%
Refused	3	1%

Roy Morales is 53 year-old Republican currently serving as a Harris County Department of Education Trustee. He is a highly decorated military veteran and businessman, who served as the Chief Technology Officer for the City of Houston Emergency Center.

TOTAL RESPONSES.....	501	100%
Favorable	169	34%
Unfavorable.....	84	17%
Neutral.....	199	40%
Don't Know	45	9%
Refused	4	1%

Gene Locke is a 61 year-old African-American Democrat who was City Attorney under former Mayor Bob Lanier and serves as a legal advisor to METRO and the Port of Houston. He played key roles in some of the most significant economic development projects in Houston.

TOTAL RESPONSES.....	501	100%
Favorable	215	43%
Unfavorable.....	59	12%
Neutral.....	186	37%
Don't Know	36	7%
Refused	5	1%

Now that you have heard more about the candidates, let me ask you again. If the 2009 election for Mayor of Houston were held today, for whom would you vote if the candidates were:

TOTAL RESPONSES	501	100%
Gene Locke	68	14%
Annise Parker	79	16%
Peter Brown.....	51	10%
Roy Morales.....	64	13%
Don't Know	230	46%
Refused	9	2%

If no candidate for mayor gets a majority in the November 4 general election there will be a run-off between the top two candidates about 30 days later. If there were a run off for mayor for whom would you vote between:

TOTAL RESPONSES	501	100%
Gene Locke	109	22%
Annise Parker	147	29%
Neither	25	5%
Don't Know	212	42%
Refused	8	2%

If there were a run off for mayor for whom would you vote between:

TOTAL RESPONSES	501	100%
Gene Locke	143	29%
Peter Brown.....	102	20%
Neither	31	6%
Don't Know	215	43%
Refused	10	2%

We are interested in how people feel generally about term limits for elected officials. On a scale of one to seven, where one represents very strong support for term limits, 4 is neutral, and seven is very strong opposition to term limits, where would you place yourself?

TOTAL RESPONSES.....	501	100%
1 - Very strong support of term limits.....	204	41%
2.....	39	8%
3.....	29	6%
4 - Neutral.....	117	23%
5.....	24	5%
6.....	16	3%
7 - Strong opposition of term limits.....	60	12%
Not Sure.....	12	2%
No Answer/Refused.....	0	0%

The City of Houston now limits its elected officials, the mayor, controller, and city council members, to a lifetime total of three two-year terms in office. What is your opinion about these term limits in the City of Houston? Would you like to see the City:

TOTAL RESPONSES.....	501	100%
Get rid of term limits.....	55	11%
Keep the present term limits.....	268	53%
Keep limits, but change limit from three to four two-year terms...	123	25%
Or would you prefer some other option.....	35	7%
Not Sure/No Opinion.....	20	4%

Mayor White has proposed that the city create a commission to study and recommend changes to the city's current term limits. A referendum would be held on the commission's recommendations in November 2010. Do you support or oppose the Mayor's plan?

TOTAL RESPONSES.....	501	100%
Support.....	305	61%
Oppose.....	153	31%
Don't Know.....	43	9%
Refused.....	0	0%

What is the highest level of formal education you have completed?		
TOTAL RESPONSES.....	501	100%
Less than High School Graduate.....	18	4%
High School Graduate.....	101	20%
Business/trade school.....	14	3%
Attended college.....	107	21%
College graduate.....	184	37%
Postgraduate.....	71	14%
Not Sure/No Answer.....	1	0%
Refused.....	5	1%

Are you presently married, single, widowed, or separated/divorced or in a domestic partnership?		
TOTAL RESPONSES.....	501	100%
Married.....	290	58%
Single.....	66	13%
Widowed.....	78	16%
Separated/divorced.....	59	12%
Domestic partnership.....	3	1%
Other.....	0	0%
Not Sure/No Answer.....	0	0%
Refused.....	5	1%

Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent or something else?		
TOTAL RESPONSES.....	501	100%
Republican.....	117	23%
Democrat.....	225	45%
Independent.....	123	25%
Something Else.....	18	4%
Don't Know.....	4	1%
Refused.....	14	3%

Age		
TOTAL RESPONSES.....	501	100%
18 to 24 years.....	13	2.6%
25 to 34 years.....	16	3.2%
35 to 44 years.....	46	9.2%
45 to 54 years.....	93	18.6%
55 to 64 years.....	135	26.9%
Over 65 years.....	198	39.5%

In which of the following racial or ethnic groups would you place yourself?

TOTAL RESPONSES.....	501	100%
White or Anglo.....	262	52%
Hispanic or Latino	62	12%
Black or African American	151	30%
Asian American or Pacific Islander.....	10	2%
Native American.....	1	0%
Or Other.....	8	2%
Not Sure/No Answer.....	1	0%
Refused.....	6	1%

Gender

TOTAL RESPONSES.....	501	100%
MALE	238	48%
FEMALE.....	263	52%
