

## 2025 NEW ORLEANS MAYORAL ELECTION



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<https://www.uno.edu/academics/colaehd/la/political-science/survey-research-center/studies>

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The University of New Orleans Survey Research Center (SRC) conducted a live interviewer telephone poll of likely voters in Orleans Parish. A total of 409 randomly selected respondents were interviewed between September 20<sup>th</sup> and September 24<sup>th</sup>.

A likely voter was defined as an individual who voted in at least four of the last ten elections where turnout was above 10 percent.<sup>1</sup> In addition, individuals who voted in three of the last ten elections and participated in the 2021 mayoral election were included in the sampling frame. The combined landline and cell phone sample was weighted to reflect the gender, age, race, and council district parameters of the voter file obtained from the Louisiana Secretary of State. The margin of error is +/- 4.8 percent at a 95% level of confidence.

- A majority of likely voters (52%) believe the city is headed in the wrong direction.
- Most likely voters (51%) strongly disapprove of Mayor LaToya Cantrell’s job performance
- Councilmember Helena Moreno holds a commanding lead in the mayoral race.
- Moreno is viewed as the “change” candidate, drawing strength from voters dissatisfied with the mayor and the city’s current trajectory.
- Moreno performs especially well among the most politically engaged and habitual voters.
- State Representative Matthew Willard leads the race for Council-At-Large, Division 1 seat, though the contest is marked by a high share of undecided voters.
- Incumbent J.P. Morrell enjoys a substantial lead in the competition for the Councilmember At-Large, Division 2 seat.
- Michelle Woodfork holds a sizeable lead over her five opponents in the contest for Orleans Parish sheriff.

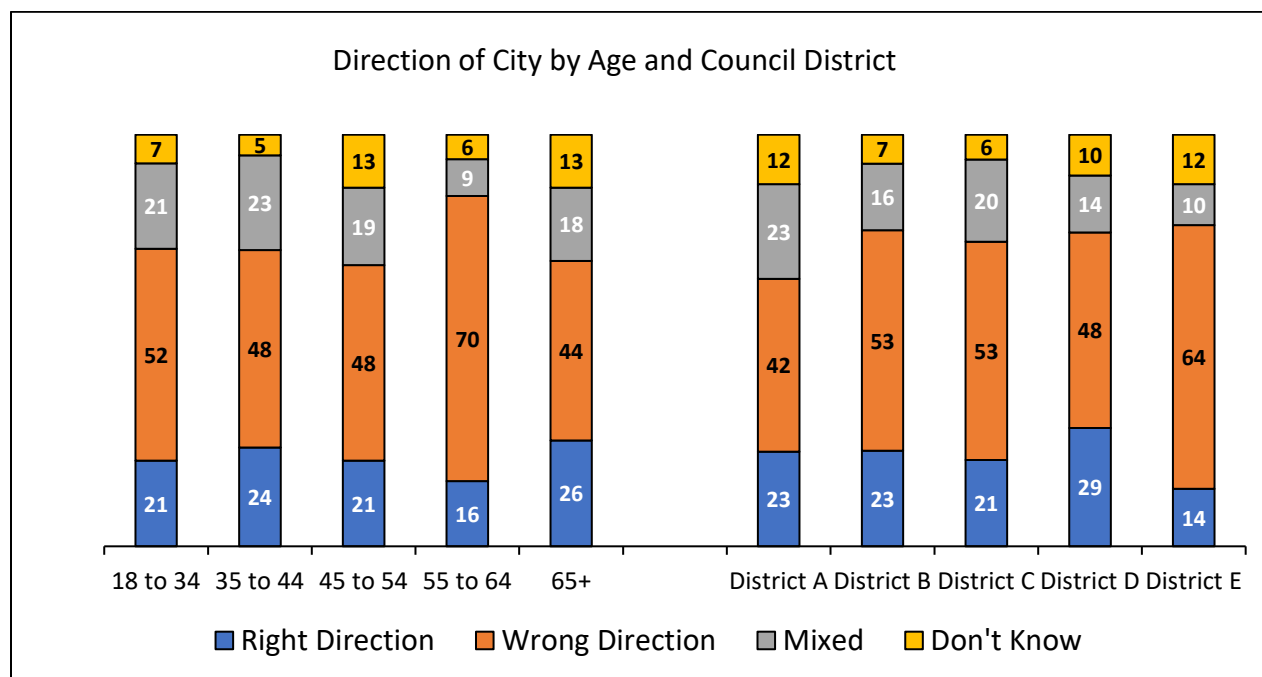
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<sup>1</sup> The ten elections: November 13, 2021 (29 percent) ; December 11, 2021(23 percent); November 8, 2022 (42 percent); December 10, 2022 (14 percent); March 25, 2023 (10 percent); April 29, 2023 (14 percent); October 14, 2023(27 percent); November 18, 2023 (16 percent); November 5, 2024 (59 percent); and March 29, 2025 (31 percent).

### Direction of City and Mayoral Job Approval Rating

	Overall	Whites	Blacks	Other	Females	Males
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Right Direction	22	20	24	13	20	25
Wrong Direction	52	51	53	46	56	45
Mixed – Some things right, some wrong	17	23	14	13	16	18
DK	10	6	10	29	8	12
(N)	409	162	221	24	242	167

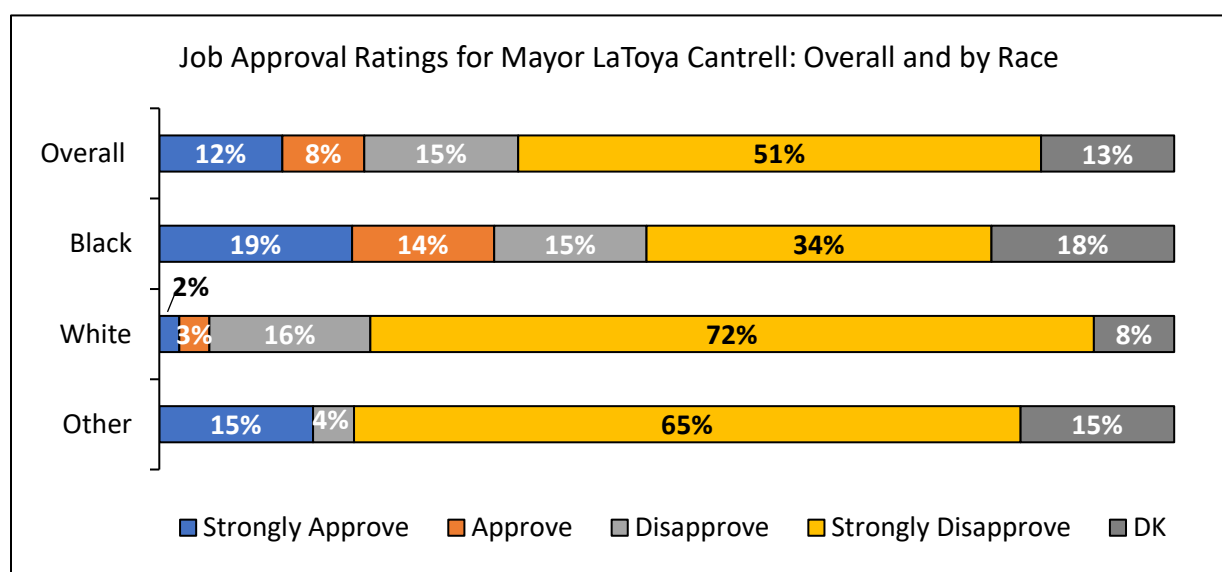
Respondents were asked whether they believe the city of New Orleans is moving in the right direction or headed in the wrong direction. The overall mood is pessimistic, with a majority of likely voters saying the city is on the wrong track. Black and white voters were generally aligned in their assessments of the city's direction. However, whites were more likely than blacks to say the situation was mixed. A gender gap also emerged, with female respondents expressing greater pessimism than their male counterparts.



Respondents were more than twice as likely to say the city was moving in the wrong direction than the right direction across nearly every age group, with the exception of the oldest respondents. Those in the 55 to 64 age cohort were especially negative in their assessment of the direction of the city.

By geography, respondents in District B and District C were more than twice as likely to say the city was on the wrong track than to believe it was moving in the right direction. Residents of District A were the least likely to hold a negative view. District E respondents, however, were the most pessimistic – nearly 5 times more likely to say the city is moving in the wrong direction than the right direction. The highest degree of optimism was expressed in District D, though even there nearly half of respondents felt the city was on the wrong track.

The negative sentiment respondents communicated about the direction of the city mirrors their evaluations of Mayor LaToya Cantrell. An overwhelmingly majority disapprove of her performance in office. The current survey shows the mayor’s job approval rating at just 20%, while 66% say they are dissatisfied with her performance. Notably, 51% of respondents strongly disapprove of the job she is doing.

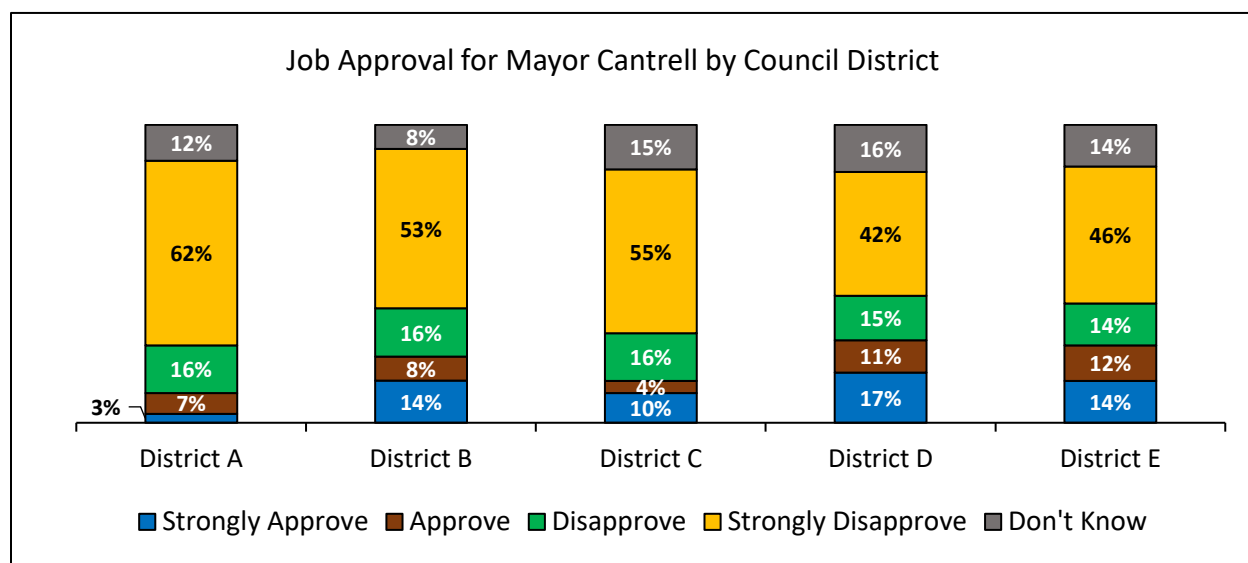


A clear racial divide emerges in the evaluations of the mayor’s job performance. About one-third of black respondents give the mayor positive marks, compared with only 5% of whites. While nearly half of black respondents are dissatisfied with the mayor, an overwhelming majority of whites disapprove of her performance. In addition, two-thirds of non-black minorities rate the mayor negatively.

	Females	Males	18 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65+
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly Approve	13	11	10	8	16	13	13
Approve	6	10	10	7	11	7	7
Disapprove	18	11	24	23	11	17	12
Strongly Disapprove	47	57	48	53	51	54	52
DK	15	11	7	10	11	8	17
(N)	242	167	29	62	63	83	167

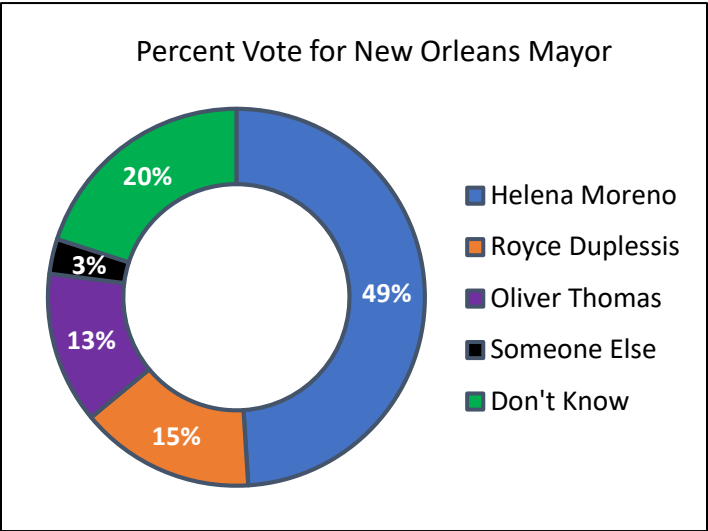
Men and women are relatively similar in their overall approval ratings of Mayor Cantrell. The same holds for their overall disapproval levels. Men, however, express a greater degree of intense displeasure with the mayor's job performance than females do.

Strong disapproval of the mayor's job performance is also evident across age groups. Nearly every age cohort, with the exception of the youngest respondents, shows a majority who strongly disapprove of job the mayor is doing.



There is some variation in how the mayor is evaluated across the City Council districts. A majority of respondents in three districts express a strong dissatisfaction with the mayor's performance. The mayor receives slightly more positive evaluations in District D and District E. Nonetheless, a majority of residents in these areas of city are still displeased with job she is doing.

Mayoral Election



According to our results, Councilmember At-Large Helena Moreno holds a commanding lead in the mayor’s race, which is consistent with other polls

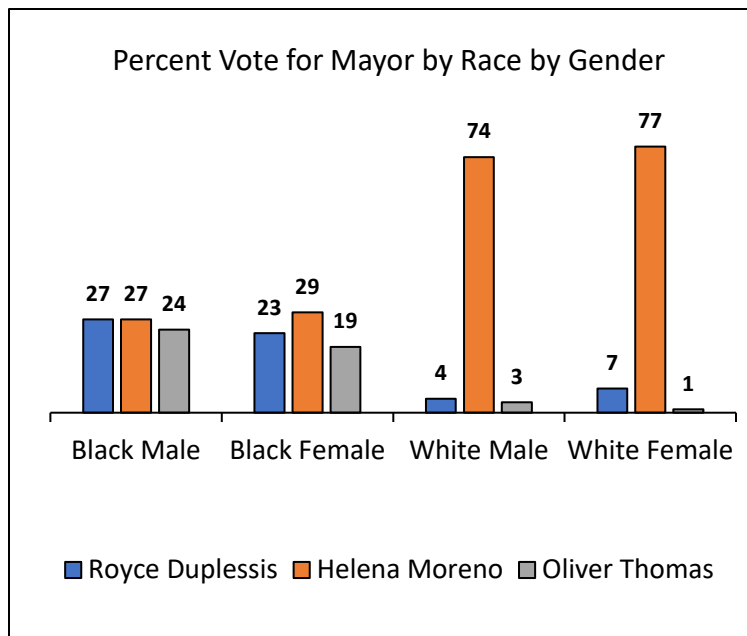
Nearly half of respondents say they support her for mayor, more than three times the level of support for any other candidate. State Senator Royce Duplessis follows at 15% and Councilmember Oliver Thomas

trails close behind at 13%. Another 3% back someone else, while about one-in-five respondents are either undecided or unsure, leaving a block of voters still up for grabs.

	Whites	Blacks	Other	Females	Males
	%	%	%	%	%
Royce Duplessis	5	24	-	16	14
Helena Moreno	76	28	63	49	50
Oliver Thomas	2	21	11	11	15
Someone Else	3	2	15	2	4
DK	14	25	11	22	17
(N)	162	221	27	242	167

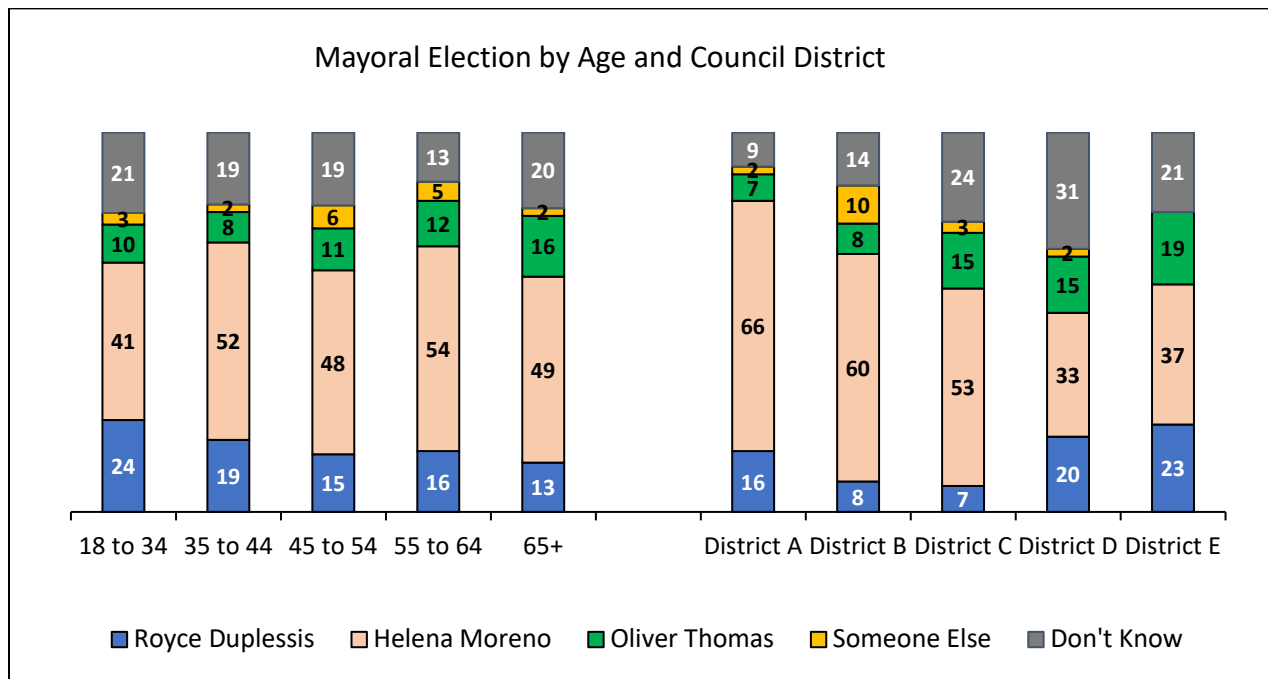
A sizeable racial divide is evident in mayoral vote preferences. An overwhelming majority of whites indicate they will vote for Moreno, while black voters are more fragmented in their choices. Moreno receives 28% support, followed closely by Duplessis at 24% and Thomas at 21%. One-quarter of black respondents remain undecided. Although numerically smaller, non-black minority groups lean heavily toward Moreno.

Gender preferences are far less pronounced, as men and women express similar overall preferences for mayor. Men show slightly stronger support for Thomas, while women are somewhat more likely to be undecided.



Both white men and white women show strong support for Moreno, while black men and black women are more divided in their preferences. Among black men, 27% support Duplessis and 24% back Thomas, compared with 23% and 21% of black women, respectively. Support for Moreno is nearly identical across gender, with 27% of black men and 29% of black women saying they plan to voter for her.

There is some variation in candidate support across age groups. Moreno secures majority backing among respondents age 35-44 and 55-64, and about half of those ages 45-54 and 65 and older also support her. She performs less strongly among the youngest voters, but still leads with a plurality. Duplessis draws his strongest support from the youngest age group, while Thomas performs best among the oldest voters.



There are notable geographical differences in support across the council districts. Moreno receives strong support in Districts A, B, and C, but sees her backing drop sharply in Districts D and E, where she receives 33% and 37%, respectively. Even so, she still leads in both with a plurality. Notably, Moreno outpolls Thomas in the council district he represents by a 2 to 1 margin, while Duplessis also draws his strongest support from District E.

	Democrat	Republican	Third Party	No Party
	%	%	%	%
Royce Duplessis	17	3	7	16
Helena Moreno	49	69	33	46
Oliver Thomas	15	3	-	11
Someone Else	2	6	20	2
DK	18	20	40	25
(N)	315	35	15	44

Moreno's appeal crosses party lines. She is backed by half of registered Democrats, 69% of registered Republicans, and nearly half of voters registered with no party. Third party registrants show the least support.

### Status Quo vs. Change: How Perceptions Influence Support

		Cantrell Job Approval Rating		Direction of City	
	Overall	Disapprove	Approve	Wrong Direction	Right Direction
	%	%	%	%	%
Royce Duplessis	15	12	24	13	20
Helena Moreno	49	60	23	53	43
Oliver Thomas	13	7	33	10	22
DK	20	18	16	21	15
(N)	409	271	82	210	91

We analyzed whether evaluations of the Mayor Cantrell's job performance and perceptions of the city's direction influenced support for the mayoral candidates. In other words, did respondents' views of the mayor and the city shape whom they backed for mayor?

The first column shows the overall support for each candidate in this poll. The following columns compare that support with respondents' evaluation of the mayor



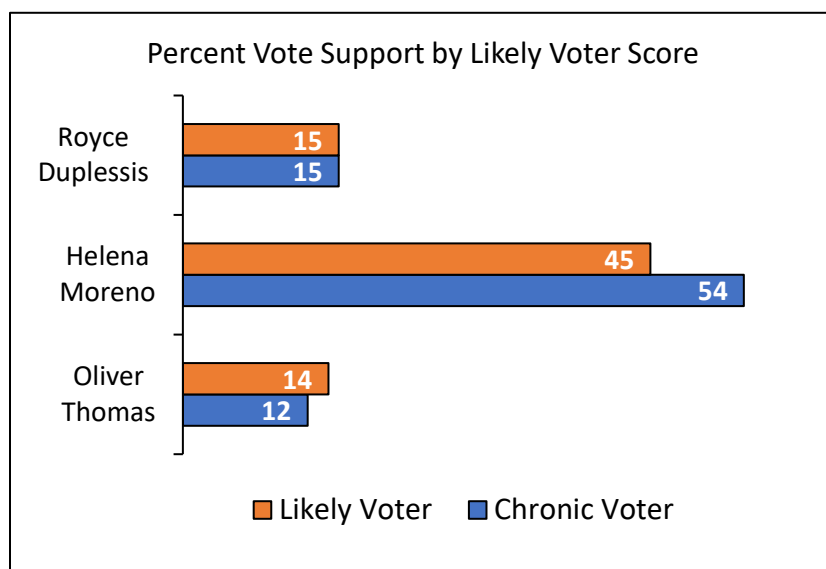
and the city's direction. Duplessis, favored by 15% overall, is backed by only 12% of those who disapprove of the mayor but by 24% of those who approve of her performance. A similar pattern appears for Thomas. While he is supported by 13% overall, he draws only 7% among those who disapprove of the mayor, but rises to 33% among those who approve.

Moreno's relationship to these evaluations runs in the opposite direction. She is supported by 49% overall, but climbs to 60% among those who disapprove of the mayor, and falls to 23% among those who approve of Cantrell's performance.

The parallel trend emerges with perceptions of the city's direction. Support for both Duplessis and Thomas increases among respondents who believe the city is headed in the right direction, while Moreno's support grows among those who say the city is on the wrong track.

This pattern positions Moreno as the "change" candidate, drawing strength from voters dissatisfied with the mayor and the city's current trajectory, while Duplessis and Thomas appeal more to those who are generally satisfied with the status quo.

### Likely vs. Chronic Voters: Patterns of Support



We also examined whether respondents' voting frequency influences support for the mayoral candidates. The overall sample comprises registered voters who participated in at least four of the past ten elections with turnout above 10 percent, along with those who voted in three of the past ten elections if they cast a

ballot in the 2021 mayoral primary election. For this analysis, we classified individuals who voted in three to six elections as "likely voters" and those who voted seven or more times as "chronic voters."<sup>2</sup>

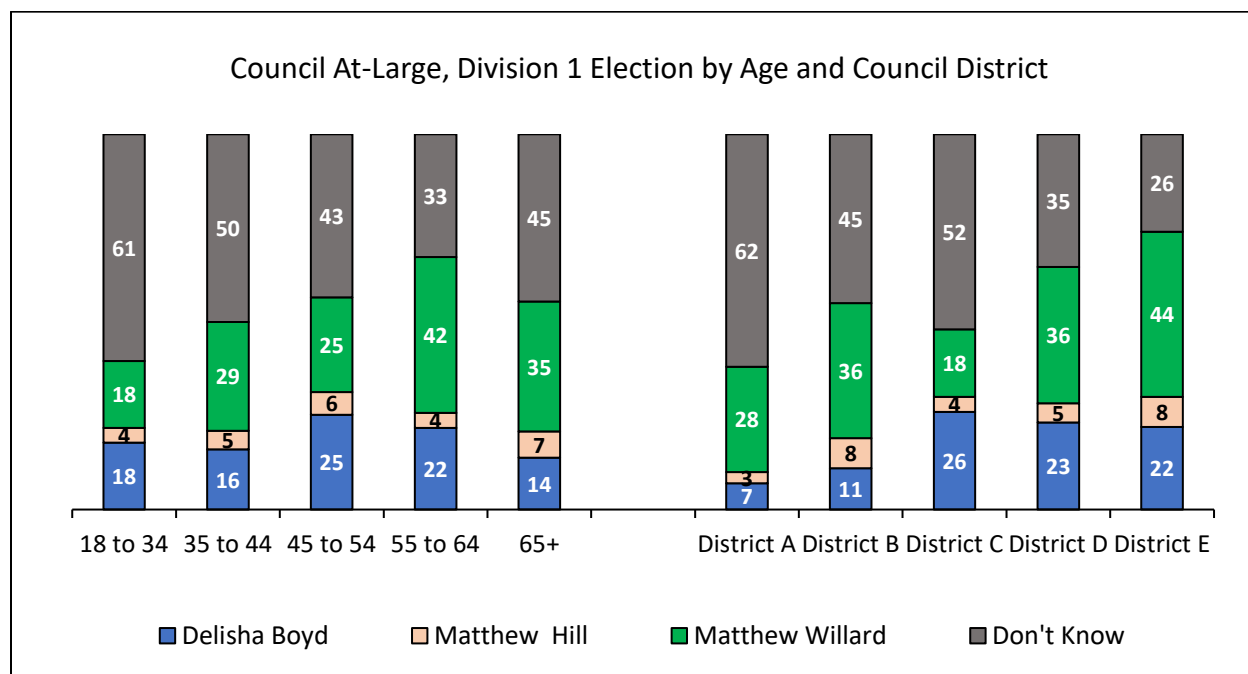
<sup>2</sup> There were 208 voters in the likely voter category and 201 in the chronic voter category.

The bar graph illustrates that 54% of chronic voters plan to support Moreno. This indicates that she performs especially well among the most politically engaged and habitual voters. These are highly reliable participants in local elections.

### Council-At-Large, Division 1

	Overall	Whites	Blacks	Other	Females	Males
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Delisha Boyd	18	7	27	7	22	13
Matthew Hill	5	3	7	7	3	10
Matthew Willard	32	28	36	26	35	28
DK	44	61	30	59	41	50
(N)	409	162	221	26	242	167

State Representative Matthew Willard leads the race for the Council At-Large, Division 1 seat, with 32% support, followed by State Representative Delisha Boyd at 18%. Willard holds a double-digit advantage over Boyd across key demographic groups, including whites, blacks, non-black minorities, women and men. However, the defining feature of this contest is the unusually high level of uncertainty. Between 30% to 61% of respondents remain undecided or unsure of their preference.



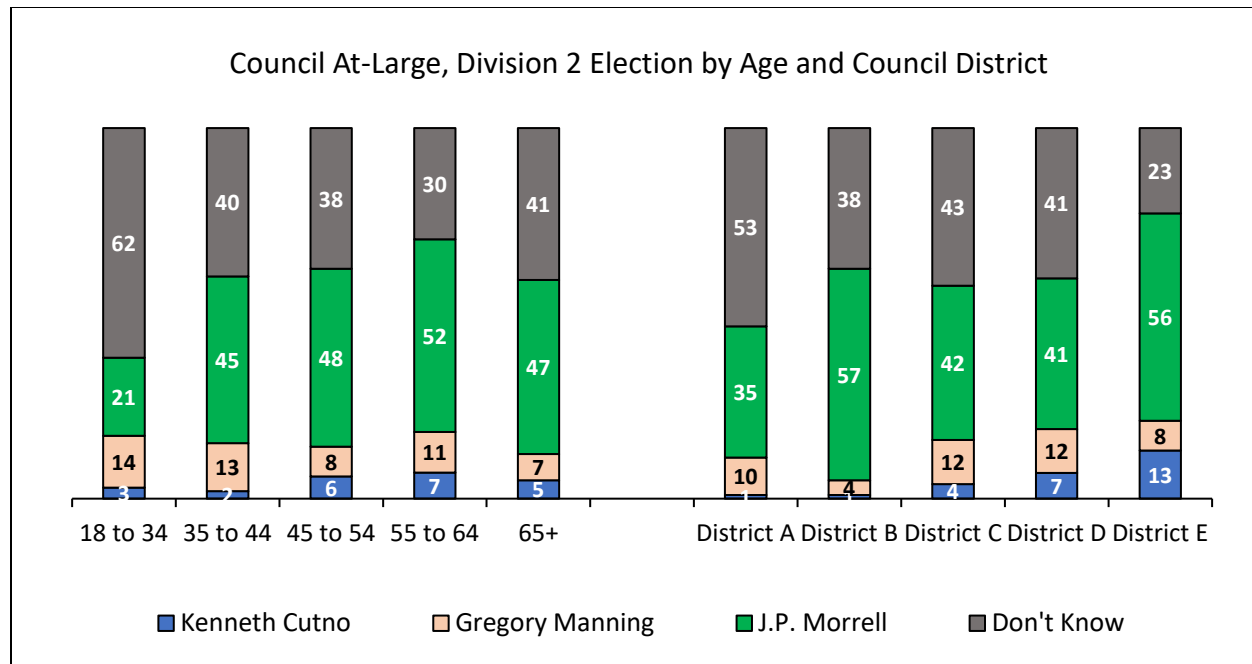
Support for Boyd and Willard varies across age groups. The two are tied among younger voters, though a striking 61% of this group remain undecided. Willard's backing grows among voters ages 35-64, but drops off among the oldest voters. Boyd performs best with the 45-54 age group. In the end, uncertainty is widespread across all the age groups, underscoring how unsettled the contest remains.

A high degree of uncertainty characterizes both District A and District C. District C is the only part of the city where Boyd outpolls Willard. Willard's greatest strength is in District E, where he garners 44% support. He also has secured the backing from more than a third of voters in District B and District D.

### Council-At-Large, Division 2

	Overall	Whites	Blacks	Other	Females	Males
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Kenneth Cutno	5	-	10	-	5	5
Gregory Manning	10	9	11	-	10	10
J.P. Morrell	45	44	47	38	45	46
DK	39	47	32	62	40	39
(N)	409	162	221	26	242	167

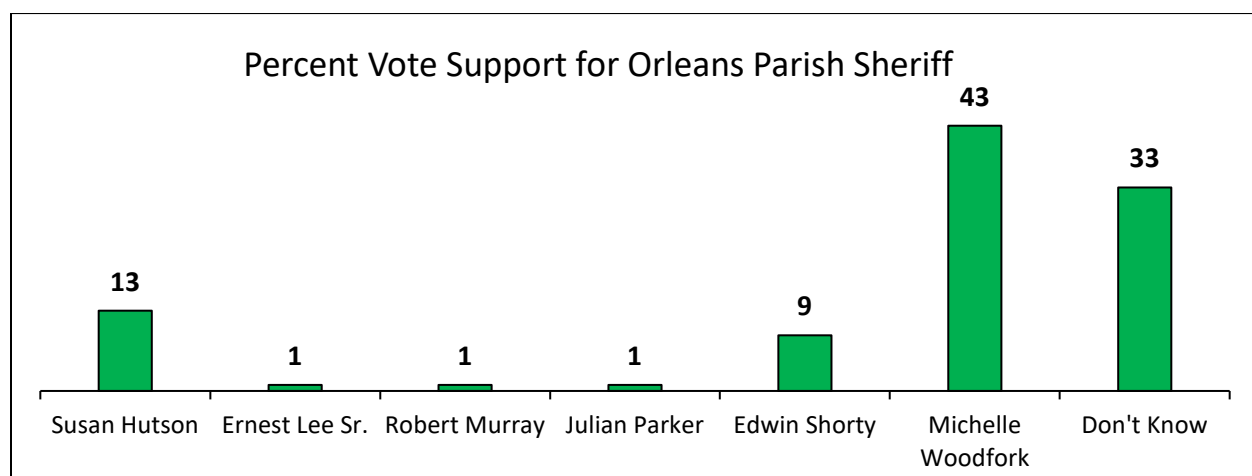
The incumbent candidate J.P. Morrell has a substantial lead in the contest for the Councilmember At-Large, Division 2 seat. On average, he leads his closest competitor, Gregory Manning, by 36 points across the demographic groups of whites, blacks, non-black minorities, men and women. As in the Division 1 at-large contest, a sizable share of respondents remain unsure of who they will support in this election.



Morrell enjoys majority or near majority support among voters age 35 and older, though an average of 37% in these age groups did not express a preference. Among younger voters, only 21% back Morrell, while 62% remain uncertain about who they support.

The highest degree of uncertainty in the Council At-Large, Division 2 contest was located in District A. Voters in that district were twice as likely as voters in District E to remain undecided. Vote support for Morrell varies across council districts. He secures majority backing District B and E, and exceeds 40% in District C and D.

### Orleans Parish Sheriff



Michelle Woodfork holds a sizeable lead over her five opponents in the race for Orleans Parish sheriff. The incumbent, Susan Hutson, trails well behind in second place at 13%, followed by Edwin Shorty is at 9%. The remaining candidates each register just 1%. Notably, one-third of respondents remain undecided.

	Overall	Whites	Blacks	Other	Females	Males
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Susan Hutson	13	14	13	11	13	12
Ernest Lee Sr.	1	1	1	-	1	1
Robert Murray	1	1	1	-	1	2
Julian Parker	1	1	1	-	1	2
Edwin Shorty	9	6	13	-	6	13
Michelle Woodfork	43	37	47	41	44	40
DK	33	41	24	48	35	29
(N)	409	162	221	26	242	167

Woodfork is stronger among black voters than white voters. Black support for Shorty is about twice that of whites. There is no apparent gender gap in backing Woodfork, but men are roughly twice as likely as women to support Shorty. Hutson's support appears consistent across both race and gender groups.

	Overall	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Susan Hutson	13	10	14	13	12	13
Ernest Lee Sr.	1	-	2	2	-	2
Robert Murray	1	-	-	-	-	2
Julian Parker	1	3	3	2	-	1
Edwin Shorty	9	17	8	6	11	8
Michelle Woodfork	43	14	25	43	49	51
DK	33	55	48	35	28	24
(N)	409	29	63	63	83	168

Woodfork's support varies by age group, increasing steadily across older groups. Shorty is strongest among youngest voters, where he outpolls Woodfork, but his backing largely remains in the single digits beyond that group. In contrast, Woodfork's support grows consistently with age. Hutson's support appears stable, holding in the 10% to 14% range across all age groups.

	Overall	District A	District B	District C	District D	District E
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Susan Hutson	13	10	18	11	17	8
Ernest Lee Sr.	1	-	-	1	2	1
Robert Murray	1	2	-	-	1	3
Julian Parker	1	-	3	3	-	-
Edwin Shorty	9	7	3	13	7	17
Michelle Woodfork	43	36	40	40	47	50
DK	33	46	37	33	26	22
(N)	409	90	73	76	93	78

Woodfork is strongest in Districts E and D, with 50% and 47% of the vote, respectively. Shorty performs best in Districts E and C with 17% and 13% support, respectively. Hutson's strongest showing is in District B, where she garners 18%, and she also receives 17% in District D.

## Sample Demographics

### Respondent Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	FEMALE	242	59.0	59.0	59.0
	MALE	168	41.0	41.0	100.0
	Total	409	100.0	100.0	

### Respondent Race

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	WHITE	162	39.5	39.5	39.5
	BLACK	221	54.0	54.0	93.5
	ASIAN	5	1.3	1.3	94.8
	HISPANIC	6	1.5	1.5	96.3
	OTHER	15	3.7	3.7	100.0
	Total	409	100.0	100.0	

### Age Category

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18 TO 34	29	7.0	7.0	7.0
	35 TO 44	62	15.1	15.1	22.1
	45 TO 54	63	15.4	15.4	37.5
	55 TO 64	83	20.2	20.2	57.7
	65 AND OVER	168	41.1	41.1	98.7
	REFUSED	5	1.3	1.3	100.0
	Total	409	100.0	100.0	

### Council District

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	District A	89	21.7	21.7	21.7
	District B	73	17.9	17.9	39.6
	District C	76	18.7	18.7	58.3
	District D	94	22.9	22.9	81.2
	District E	77	18.8	18.8	100.0
	Total	409	100.0	100.0	

## Questionnaire

1) Overall, would you say things in the City of New Orleans are moving in the right direction, or do you feel it is headed in the wrong direction?

- 3 RIGHT DIRECTION
- 2 WRONG DIRECTION
- 1 MIXED — SOME THINGS RIGHT, SOME WRONG
- 9 NOT SURE/NO OPINION

2) New Orleans will elect a mayor in October. Of the following three candidates, which ONE would you most likely vote for... (ROTATE NAMES) Royce Duplessis, Helena Moreno, or Oliver Thomas. (PAUSE) If there is a candidate for mayor I did not name that you would likely vote for, who would that be?

- 1 ROYCE DUPLESSIS
- 2 HELENA MORENO
- 3 OLIVER THOMAS
- 4 SOMEONE ELSE
- 9 DON'T KNOW/UNDECIDED

3) As things stand today, which of the following candidates would you be most likely to vote for in the election for Division 1 council-at-large? (ROTATE NAMES)

- 1 DELISHA BOYD
- 2 MATTHEW HILL
- 3 MATTHEW WILLARD
- 9 DON'T KNOW/UNDECIDED

4) Which of the following candidates would you be most likely to vote for in the election for Division 2 council-at-large? (ROTATE NAMES)

- 1 KENNETH CUTNO
- 2 GREGORY MANNING
- 3 J.P. MORRELL
- 9 DON'T KNOW/UNDECIDED



5) As things stand today, which of the following candidates would you be most likely to vote for in the election for Orleans Parish Sheriff? (ROTATE NAMES)

- 1 SUSAN HUTSON
- 2 ERNEST LEE SR.
- 3 ROBERT MURRAY
- 4 JULIAN PARKER
- 5 EDWIN SHORTY
- 6 MICHELLE WOODFORK
- 9 DON'T KNOW/UNDECIDED

6) In general, do you approve or disapprove of the job Mayor LaToya Cantrell is doing? (PAUSE)  
Is that strongly or not very strongly

- 4 STRONGLY APPROVE
- 3 APPROVE
- 2 DISAPPROVE
- 1 STRONGLY DISAPPROVE
- 9 DON'T KNOW/NOT FAMILIAR

7) What is your age? (READ CHOICES)

- 1 18 TO 34
- 2 35 TO 44
- 3 45 TO 54
- 4 55 TO 64
- 5 65 AND OVER
- 9 REFUSE

8) What is your race? (DO NOT READ CATEGORIES UNLESS ASKED)

- 1 WHITE
- 2 BLACK
- 3 ASIAN
- 4 HISPANIC
- 5 OTHER
- 9 DON'T KNOW/REFUSED

9) Record Gender

- 1 FEMALE
- 5 MALE

Thank you, this is the end of the interview. Have a nice day/night