

# CHISM STRATEGIES

— ADVOCACY & ELECTIONS —

To: Interested Parties  
From: Brad Chism  
Date: 5/11/2021  
RE: Poll for Birmingham, AL Mayoral Election

Our firm recently conducted a survey of 662 likely Birmingham, AL voters. The survey instrument combined IVR technology for mobile phones and SMS-to-web responses for cell phones. The margin of error is +/- 3.93%. This was an independent survey for a local organization and not for any mayoral campaign.

Below is a summary of our findings.

- More than two thirds of Birmingham voters say they are likely to vote to reelect Mayor Woodfin with 52% of voters saying they will definitely vote to re-elect Woodfin.
- When Randall Woodfin is matched against former Mayor William Bell, County Commissioner LaSahunda Scales, and Chris Woods, among those voters expressing an opinion, the choices are:
  - Former Mayor Bell 17.3%
  - Commissioner Scales 16.5%
  - Mayor Woodfin 61.5%
  - Chris Woods 4.8%
- When asked about Mayor Woodfin's job performance in handling the COVID pandemic in the city of Birmingham, among those voters expressing an opinion:
  - Favorable 77%
  - Unfavorable 23%

## Our Analysis

Compared to elections in other major cities across the South, Mayor Woodfin is in a very strong position headed into the fall. Given his significant financial advantage over those considering running, Woodfin is the favorite and it is conceivable that he could expand his current support north of 60%.

The public gives Mayor Woodfin very strong marks for steady leadership during the COVID crisis. (Previous surveys show more than 90% of residents supported the mask ordinance.) Woodfin was the first Mayor in Alabama and one of the first in the nation to follow recommendations from health professionals and require a mask and social distancing.

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In addition, support for Woodfin has also been likely buoyed by Birmingham having the largest job growth and private investment over any three-year period in recent Birmingham history.

While Woodfin is the clear favorite to lead the ticket, the race for second place should be much more interesting. While our survey shows the race between Bell and Scales for second is in a dead heat, Scales has the best chance to gain ground. Because Bell has been in Birmingham politics for more than two decades, he is well known with voters. Given that his support is less than 20% despite his high name ID, his campaign will have a difficult time gaining ground on a popular incumbent. Scales, on the other hand, is less known and therefore could improve her standing in the coming months if she is able to raise money to fund a media campaign. One can anticipate the race for second place to be highly contentious and negative as Scales and Bell have a long history of being enemies who have regularly attacked each other.

While any prediction this far out is subject to revision, should trends hold we expect that Woodfin will win re-election, Scales will finish a distant second, and Bell will finish in third place. Chris Woods will finish in single digits and a distant fourth.

## Birmingham, AL Survey

April 1-5, 2021

N = 662

**Q1** How likely are you to vote in the 2021 Mayoral Election in Birmingham?

- 89.6% Very likely
- 10.4% Somewhat likely
- 0.0% Somewhat unlikely
- 0.0% Not voting

**Q2** If the election for Mayor were held today, would you likely vote to re-elect Randall Woodfin or would you prefer some other candidate?

- 52.1% Very likely Woodfin
- 15.2% Somewhat likely Woodfin
- 15.9% Prefer some other candidate
- 16.8% Not sure

**Q3** If the candidates for Mayor of Birmingham were William Bell, LaShaunda Scales, Randall Woodfin and Chris Woods who would you likely favor if the election were held today?

- 13.6% Bell
- 12.2% Scales
- 49.4% Woodfin
- 3.7% Woods
- 21.0% Unsure

**Q4** How would you rate the job that Mayor Randall Woodfin has done in responding to protect the public during the coronavirus pandemic? Would you say he has done an excellent job, a good job, only a fair job, or a poor job in responding to protect the public during the COVID pandemic?

- 75.5% Favorable
- 17.9% Unfavorable
- 6.6% Unsure

**Q5** Age Range

- 13.0% 18 to 34
- 13.0% 35 to 44
- 17.0% 45 to 54
- 26.0% 55 to 64
- 31.0% 65 or older

**Q6** Gender

- 38.0% Male
- 62.0% Female