



Office of Public Information and Engagement

American Rescue Plan

First Round of Community Engagement

**What did we ask,
what did we learn,
and what happens
next?**

Today's Agenda

- 1** Purpose of engagement
- 2** How the city engaged
- 3** Detailed findings
- 4** Effect of engagement

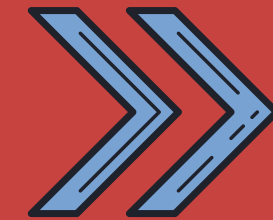
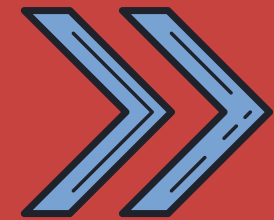
Why did we ask?

Purpose



Purpose

Why did the city ask for public input?



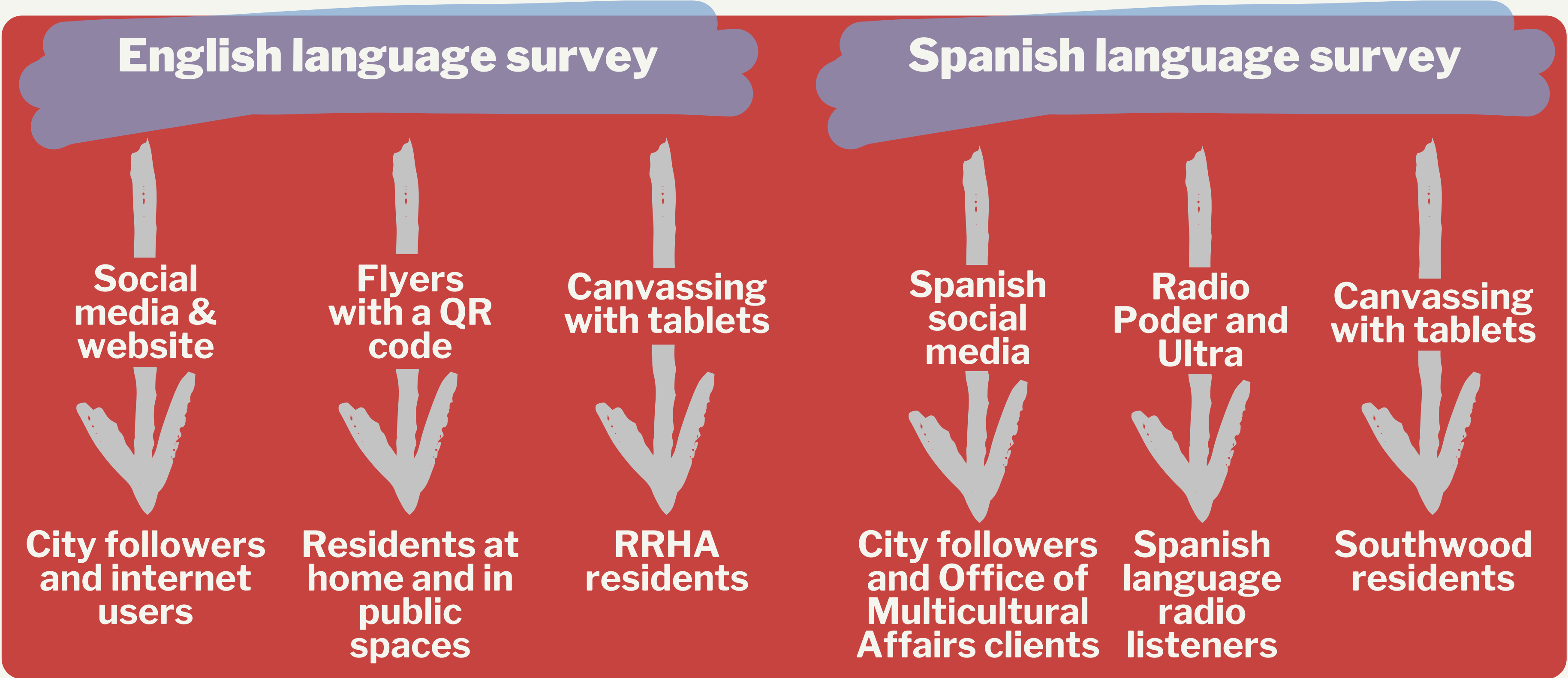
How did we ask?

Methods



Methods

How did the city engage, and why?



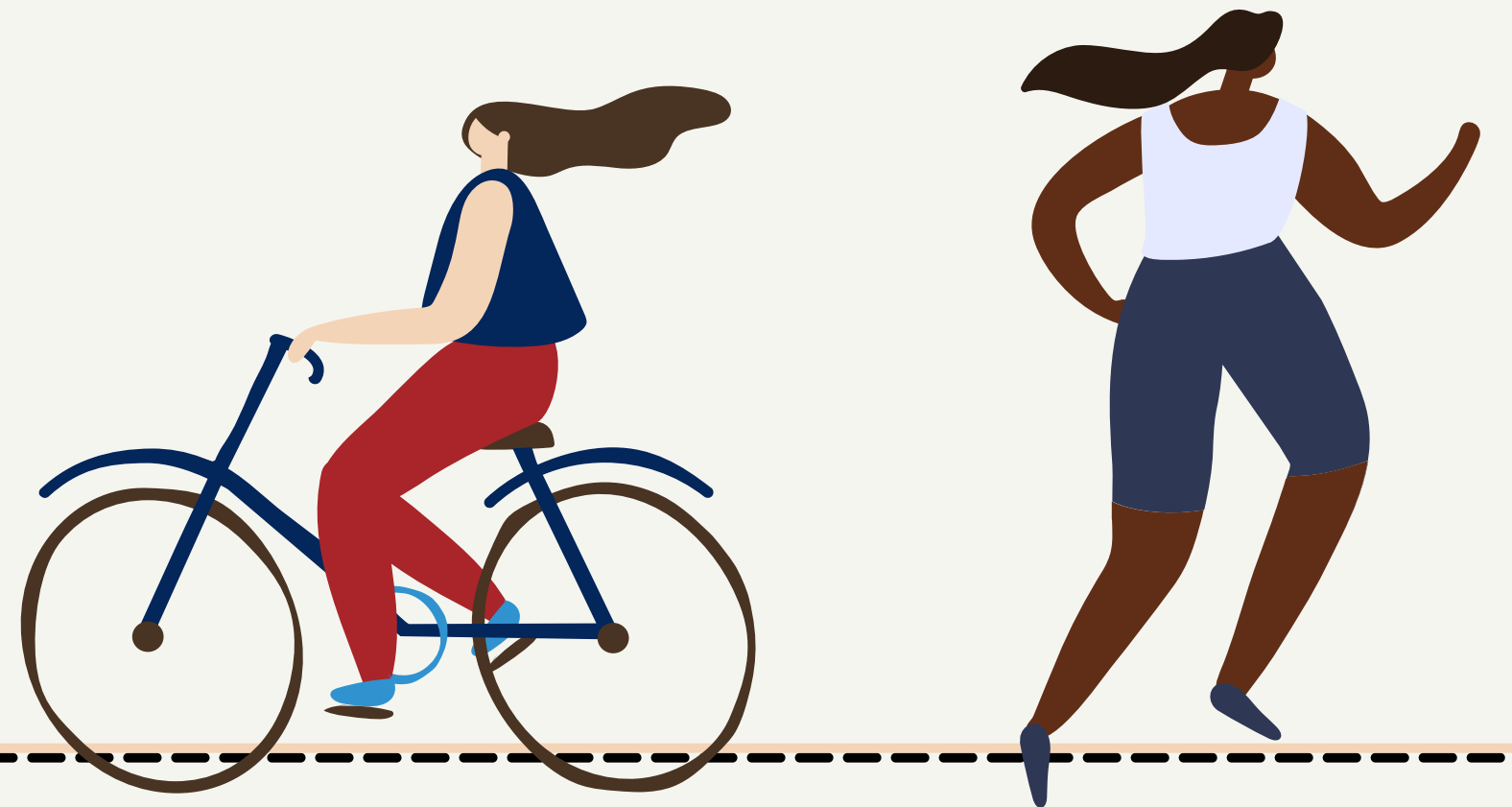
Methods

How did the city engage, and why?

July 27 - August 9

What did we learn?

Findings



Findings

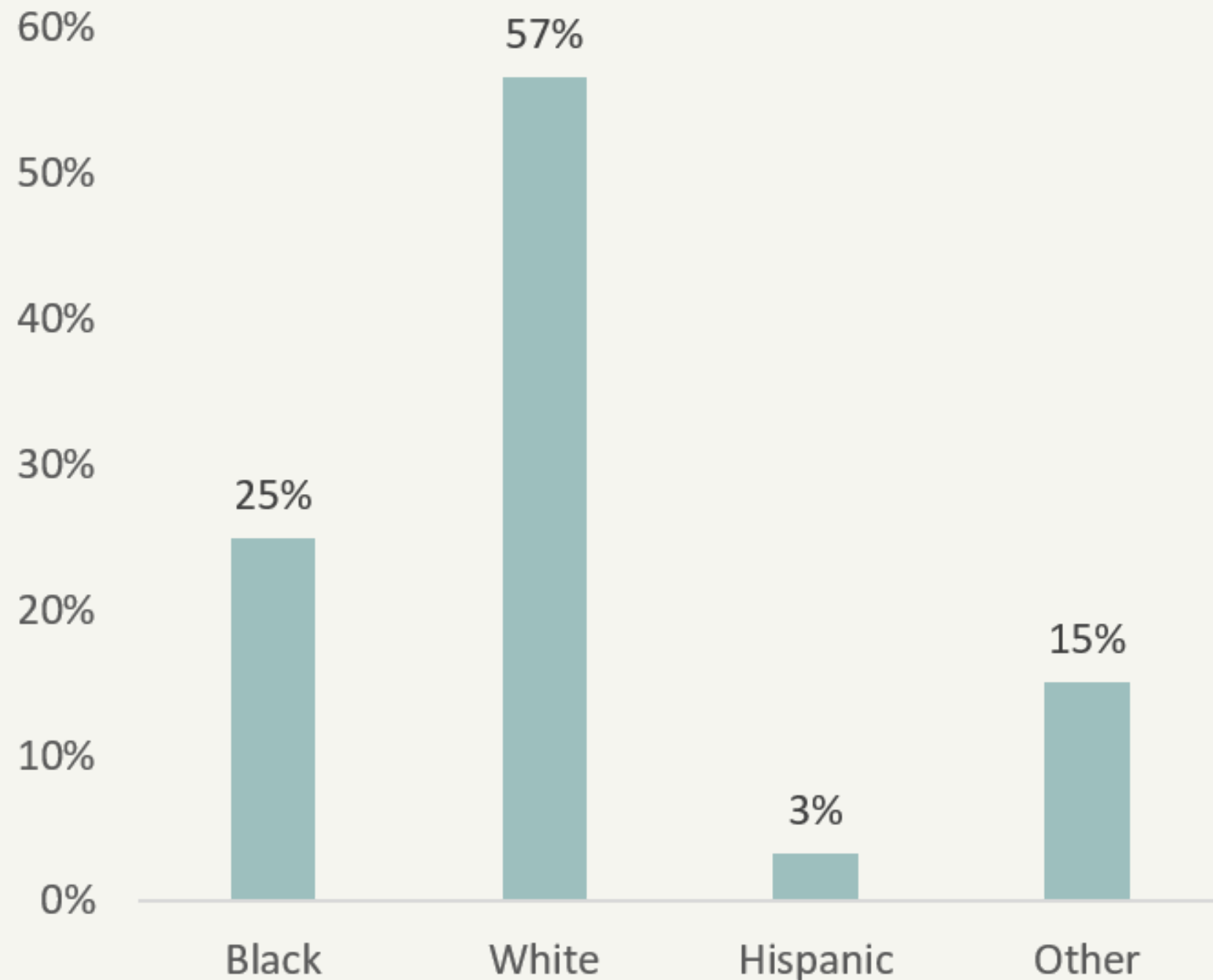
Who participated?

Respondents represented a broad swathe of Richmond, and some groups or areas were more represented than others.

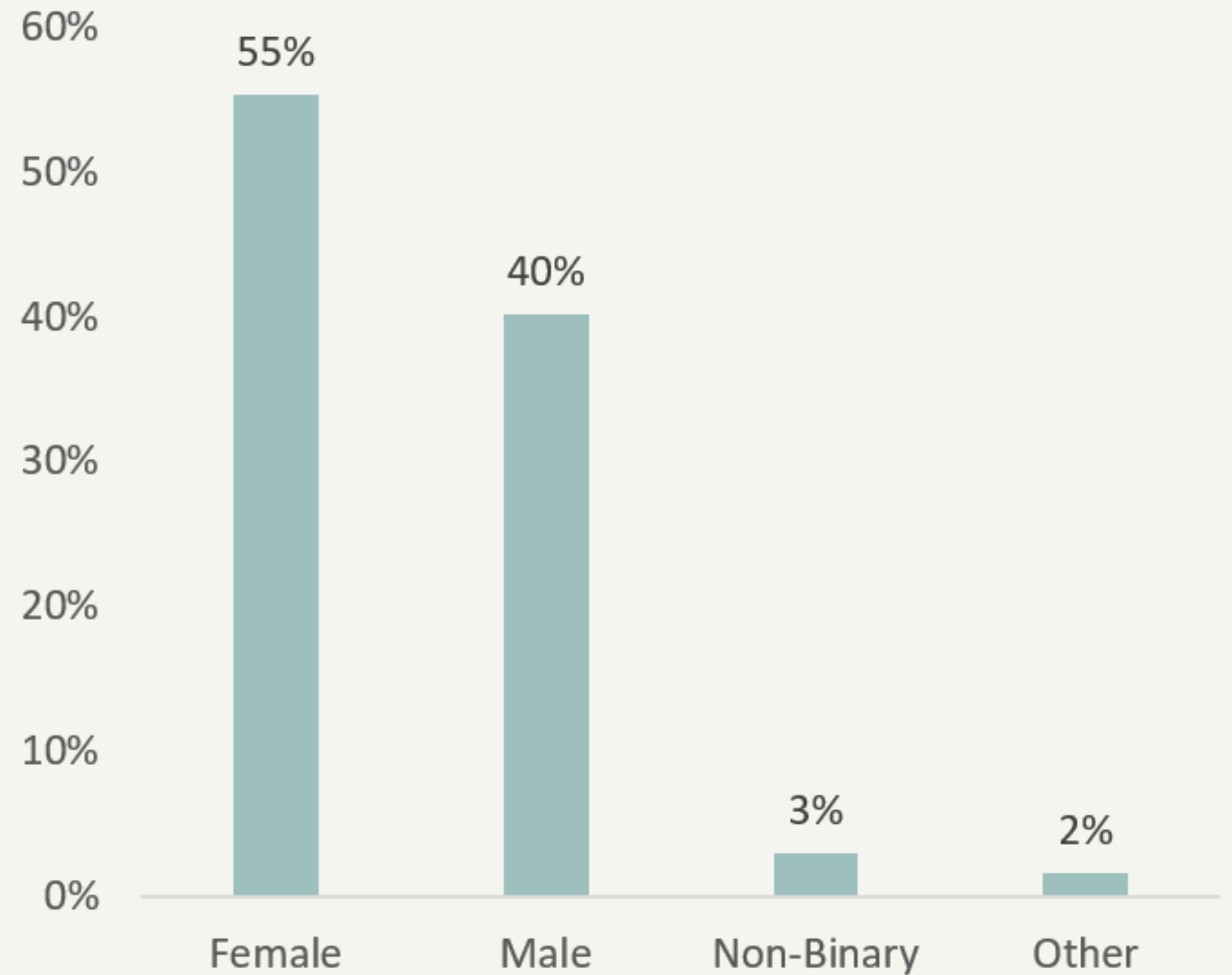
1,990 surveys were completed.

The completion rate was 100%.

Self-identified Race

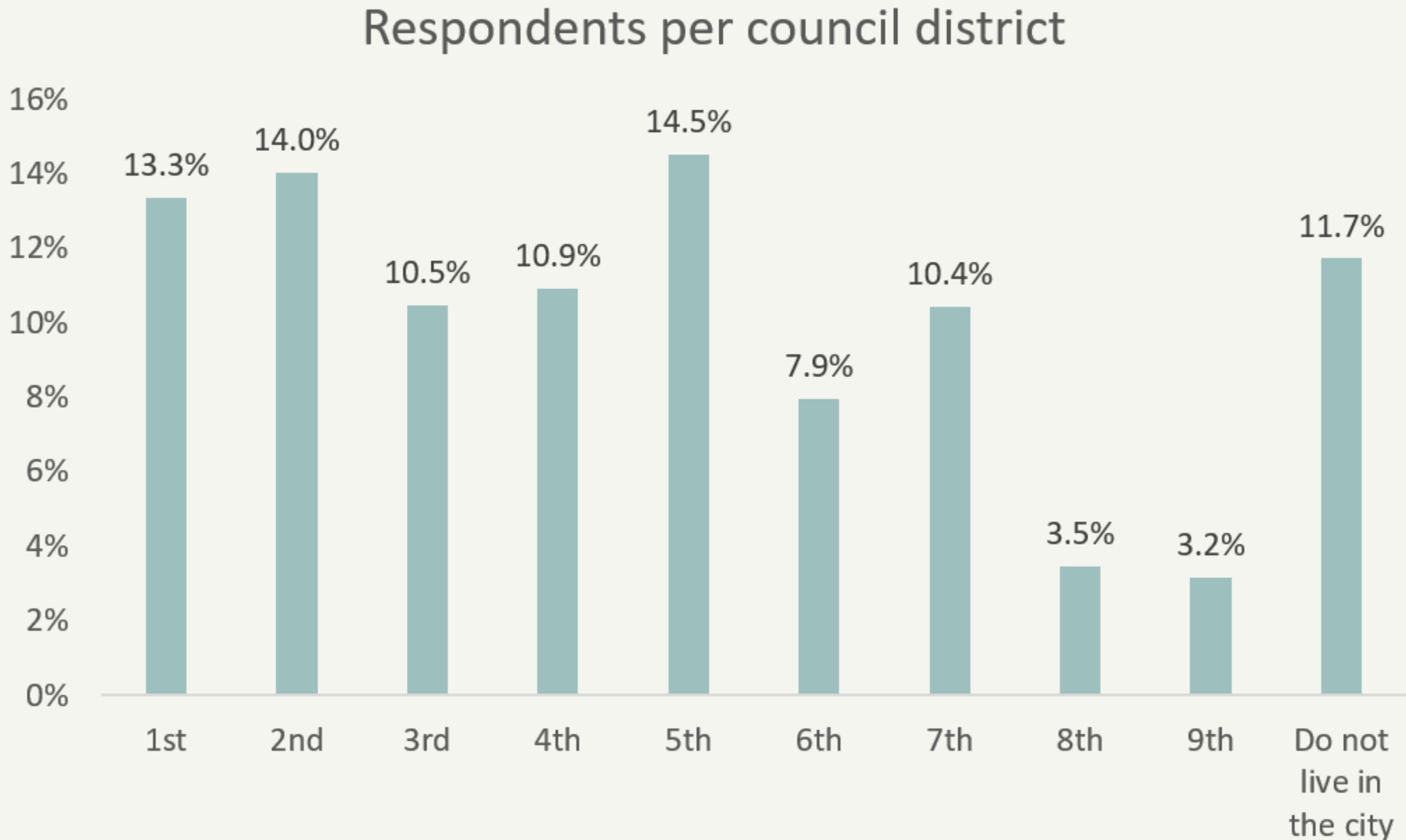


Gender



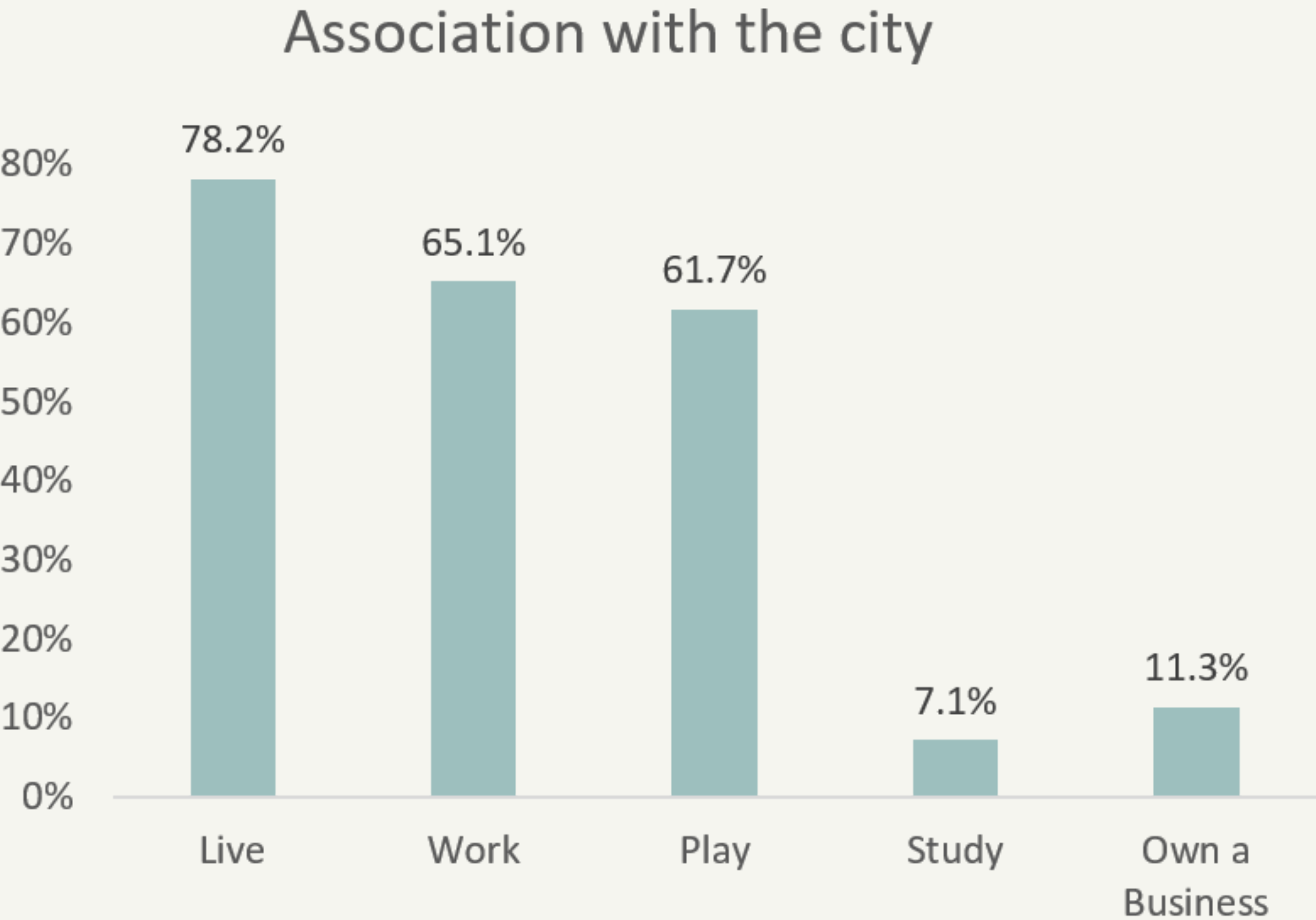
Residents from across the city participated.

Representation was strongest in the 5th, 2nd and 1st Districts.



Residents from across the city participated.

At least 78% of respondents live in the city.



Findings

How did the pandemic affect Richmonders?

Respondents were asked how the pandemic affected them. Richmond is feeling the effects economically, emotionally and socially.

23% said they suffered job loss, loss of income, reduced hours or some other employment challenge

“I lost a long period of work due to furlough, and after that felt as though my working conditions were still unsafe despite the precautionary measure that had been put in place. I am still trying to recover financially and from the stress.”

“Government response was welcomed but also demoralizing because we could fix/resolve poverty if we actually want to. (extra unemployment payments, family cash payments)”

“It has definitely been a stressful time. Members of my family have lost their jobs.”

“Lost my job, facing mental health consequences of financial stress and isolation.”

“We experienced loss of work and loss of income. We were sustained by unemployment payments.”

15% said their mental health took a toll, citing stress, anxiety, uncertainty and depression

“I have lost family members and friends. I have had to deal with depression in our home. We are staying afloat but not without stress lately.”

“My work life balance was decreased, which added more stress – especially as a healthcare worker and unpartnered parent.”

“I have had limited human interaction for the entire pandemic. I lived and worked from a 1 bedroom apartment. Nature was my only mental reprieve during this time.”

“More than anything, just a mental health strain, especially dealing with misinformation, but also missing out on being with other people. Robust outdoor public space would help, particularly in reducing the urban heat issues in the East End and providing free public restrooms.”

12% cited a greater workload, challenges of working remotely or the burden of being essential

“Lack of services. Stress from covering hospital nursing shifts when others elected to stay home, with no compensation.”

“The pandemic has let me know that essential personnel aren’t really appreciated as much as some people say they are.”

“Longer hours at work and more work related stress.”

“The pandemic resulted in short staffing (unsafe), mandatory overtime and poor compensation.”

“I work for the Health Department so my whole job is to pay attention to COVID in excruciating detail. I am mentally exhausted and unable to see my niece, nephew or grandparents.”

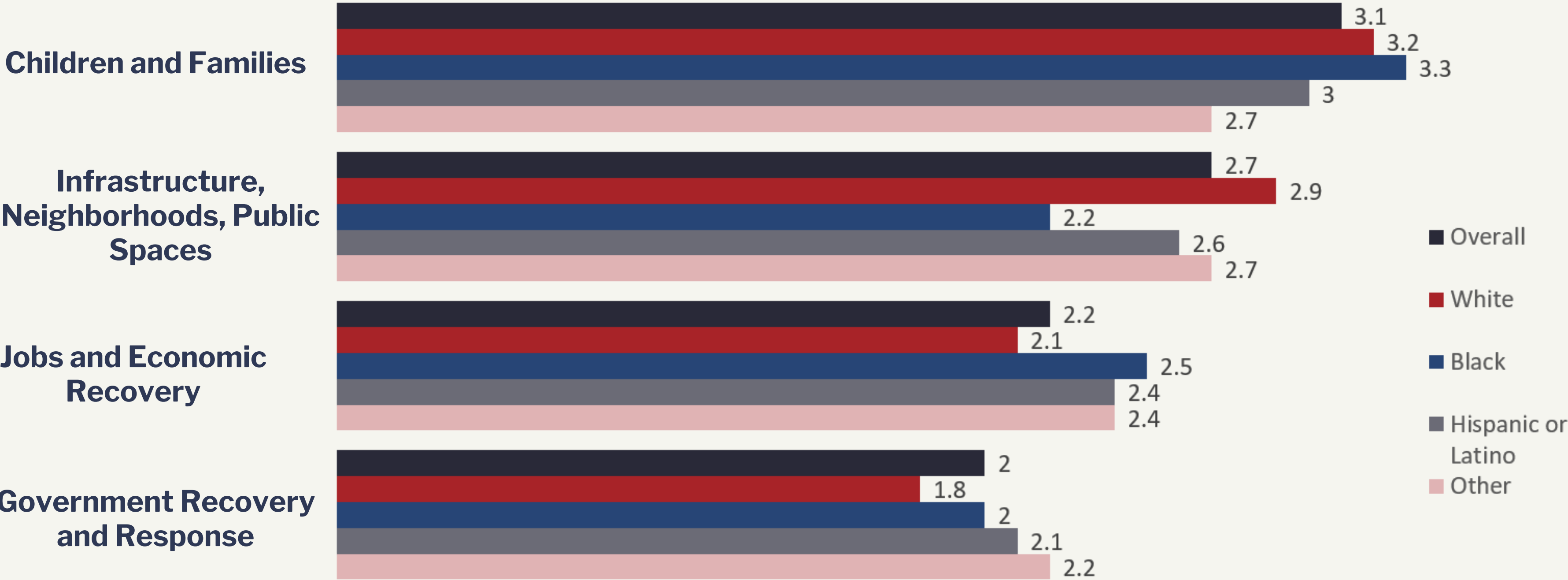
Findings

What do Richmonders care about in recovery?

Respondents ranked "Children and Families" as the top spending priority.

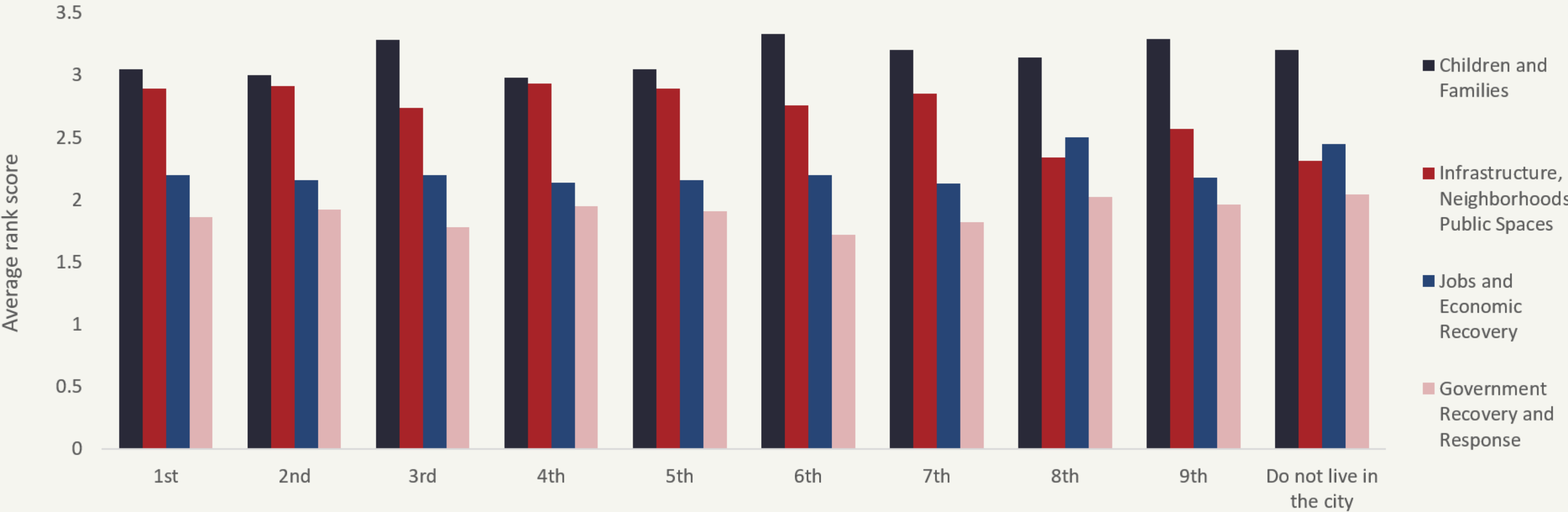
This top-ranked priority is reflected across districts and demographics.

Respondents ranked “Supporting Children and Families” as most important.

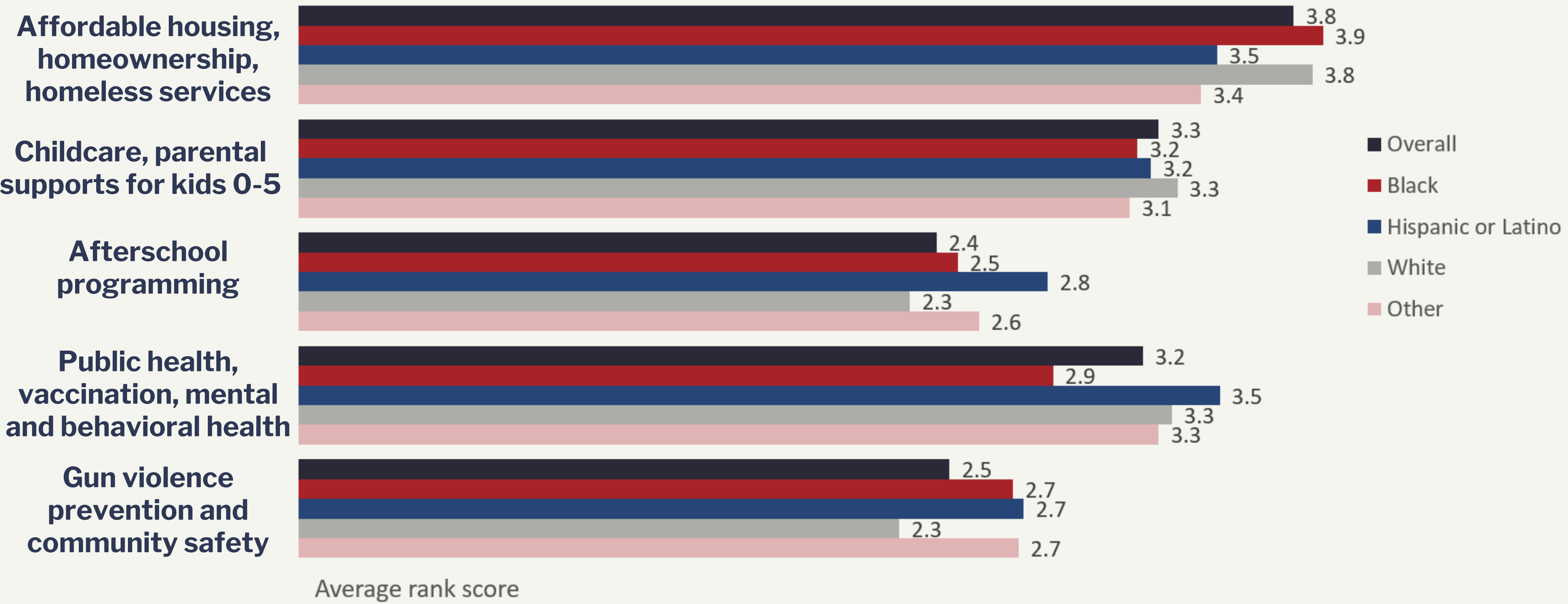


Average rank score

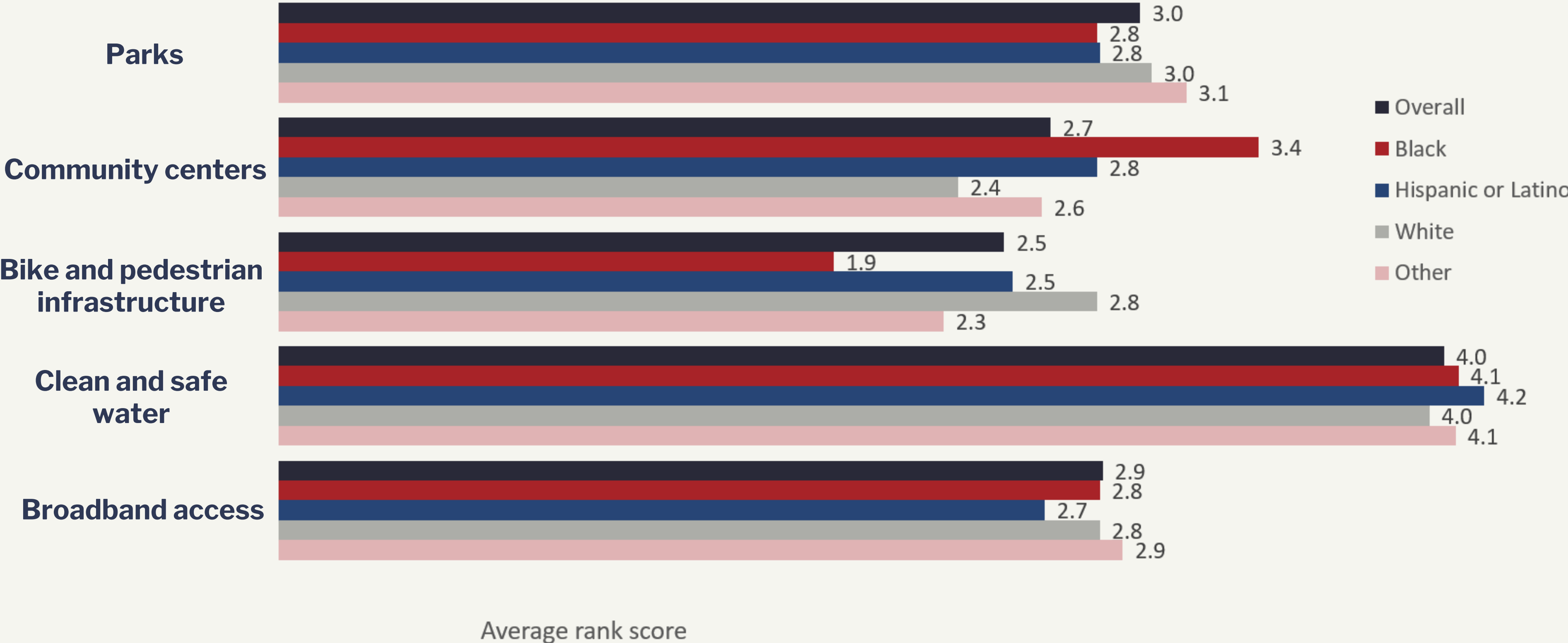
Overwhelmingly, citywide priorities are reflected on a district level.



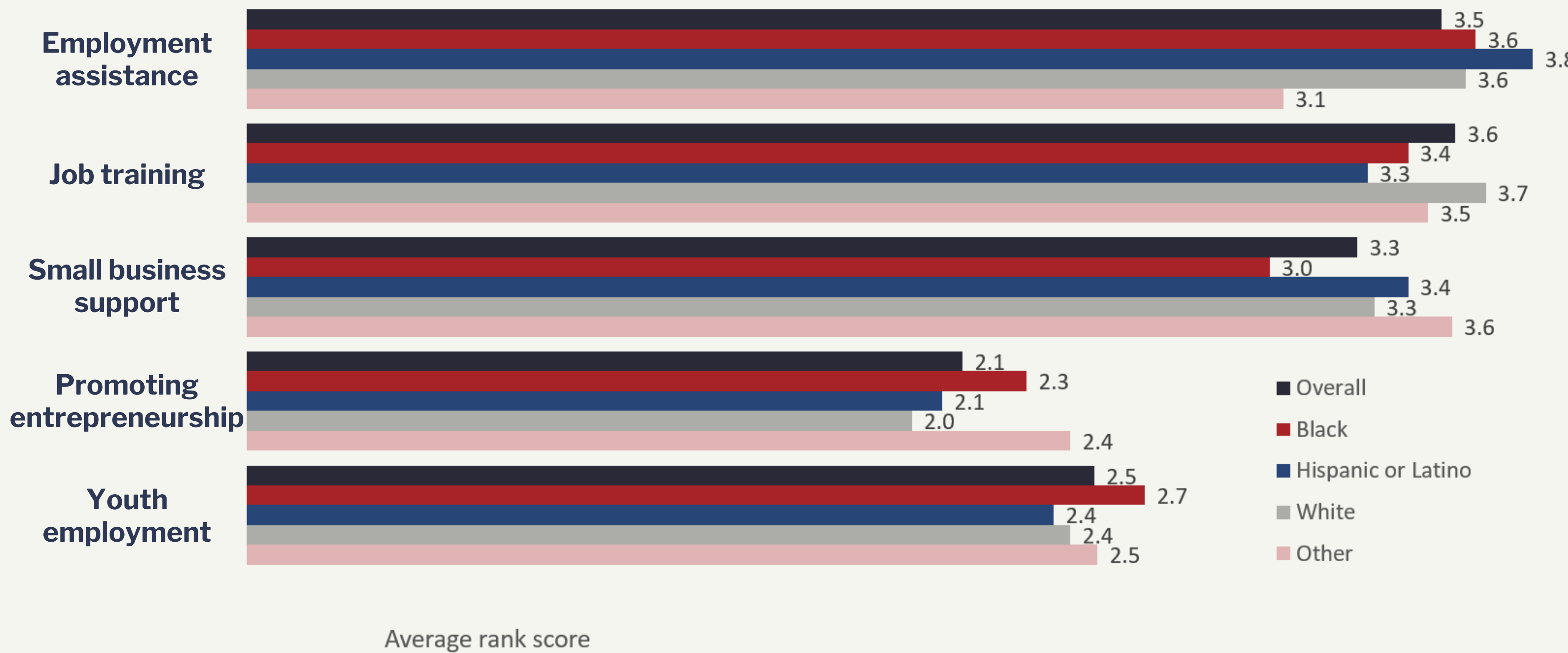
Attainable, secure housing ranks high on Children and Family priorities.



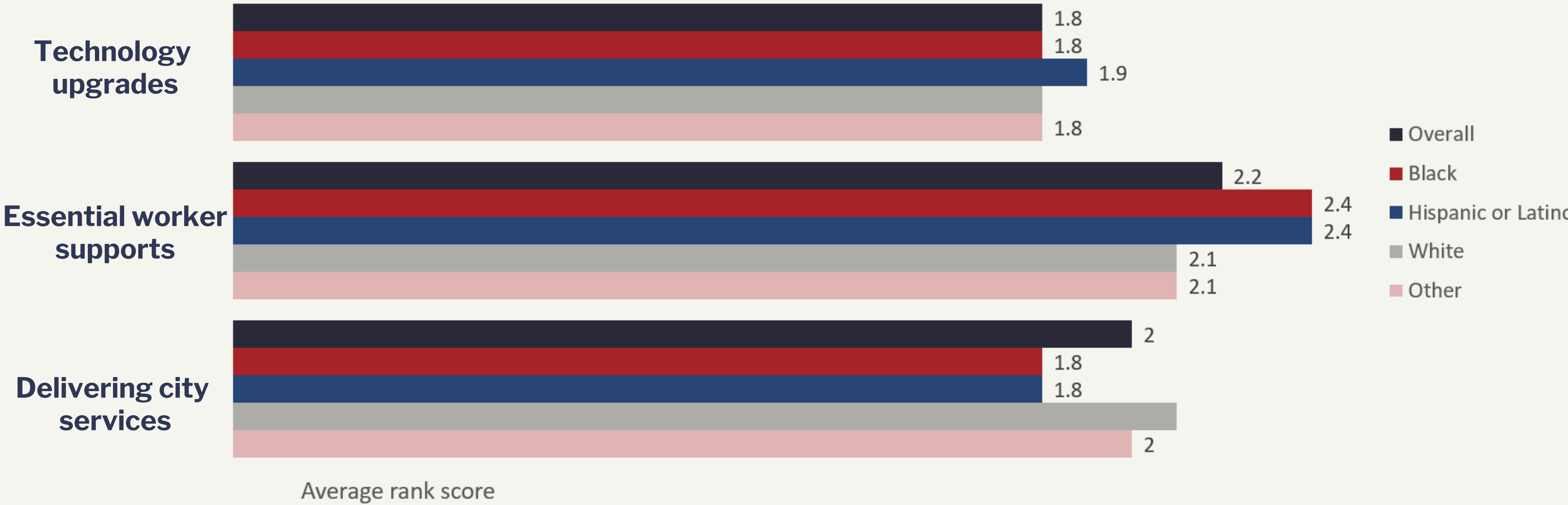
Clean and safe water is a clear infrastructural priority.



Overall, job training and employment assistance take priority in economic support.



Respondents rank support for essential workers top issue for government recovery.



Findings

Above all else, what do Richmonders prioritize?

People, especially the youngest among us, and the places they rely on to **learn, grow, play and be safe.**

13% of respondents chose "kids" as their word.



Words organized by topic

What issues did respondents prioritize in their one-word answers?

- **25% - specific infrastructure and transportation topics**
- **19% - supporting children and families**
- **12% - housing support**
- **11% - city services and city employee compensation**
- **5% - public safety and first responders**

What's next?

Effects



Effects

How is the data being used?

The draft spending plan for \$154 million aims to help our city *build back better*.

Your input helped define what *better* looks like.

Effects

What are the next steps?

The draft spending plan will be a public document.

The second round of engagement will ask residents for feedback on the draft plan.



Office of Public Information and Engagement

Thank you!

www.rva.gov/arp