
Commissioners: Robert “Bob” Scott (Chair, PRESENT), Blake Spears (Vice-Chair, ABSENT), Asha Beene-Clarke (EXCUSED LATE), Lenore Gunst (PRESENT), Jennifer Seibert (PRESENT), Suzi Kalmus (PRESENT), Jacqueline Johnson (EXCUSED ABSENT), Lisa Malul (ABSENT)

Human Services Department (HSD) Commission Staff: Ana Bagtas, Aging and Adult Services Manager; Marshay Boyd, Commission Clerk

MAYOR'S COMMISSION ON AGING

Wednesday, March 5, 2025

Meeting Minutes

1. Call To Order

Chair Scott called meeting to order at 10:07 AM.

2. Roll Call/Determination of Quorum

Four commissioners present, quorum wasn't established. One commissioner arrived late, quorum was established.

3. Adoption of Agenda

ACTION ITEM: Suzi Kalmus/Lenore Gunst/Carried

4. Approval of February 5, 2025, Meeting Minutes

ACTION ITEM: Lenore Gunst/Jennifer Seibert/Carried

5. Public Comment (Specific Agenda Items, limit of two minutes)

No speakers at this time.

6. Discussion: Older Americans Month Celebration

7. Chair Scott introduced the item by presenting the topic and opening the floor for commissioners to share their thoughts on what the Older Americans Month (OAM) Celebration should look like and where it should be held. A motion was made for MCOA to attend the May OAM events at the senior centers, pending scheduling. The motion also included efforts to publicize the events to encourage participation and to foster the connections the commission is aiming to build through this celebration.

Motion: Jennifer Seibert/Suzi Kalmus/Carried

8. Presentation: MCPD Annual Survey Results – Benjamin Bartu, Disabled Ecologies Lab Manager

Chair Scott introduced this item by welcoming Benjamin Bartu to present his findings. Benjamin delivered an informational presentation on survey results gathered from Oakland residents regarding the accessibility of living in Oakland. After completing the presentation, Benjamin opened the floor for commissioners' questions and comments. Commissioner Seibert raised concerns about the validity of the survey, noting that it only included responses from 100 participants. Benjamin responded that this

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was the first iteration of the survey, which they plan to conduct annually with the goal of increasing participation over time. Commissioner Gunst asked whether this survey served as foundational work for developing a strategic plan. Benjamin clarified that while a strategic plan already exists, the survey results are being used to further strengthen and inform it. Chair Scott noted that both the Mayor's Commission on Aging and the Mayor's Commission on Persons with Disabilities could collaborate by sharing relevant data gathered through their respective surveys. Commissioner Beene-Clarke agreed and added further insight to Chair Scott's comment.

9. Updates on the 5-year Strategic Plan – Ana Bagtas, Aging and Adult Services Manager, HSD

Chair Scott opened this item by welcoming Ana, who provided an update on the listening sessions. So far, five sessions have been completed, with eleven more scheduled and two pending confirmations. Ana noted that no one attended the session held at the African American Library, highlighting the importance of hosting sessions at locations where seniors are already active. Key feedback gathered from the sessions includes the need for better access to services, more engaging activities for persons with disabilities (as there are currently none offered), support in navigating the enrollment process for services, including understanding timelines and requirements, and addressing challenges faced by individuals with language barriers. Participants also emphasized the importance of culturally appropriate staff who speak their language, inclusivity for the LGBTQ+ community in activities, greater awareness of the taxi program for transportation, and concerns about affordability, especially for those ineligible for government assistance, such as middle-income individuals needing home care as they age. Safety was also a concern, with suggestions like installing gates at senior centers, along with requests for tech literacy training and access to affordable handypersons for both small and large tasks. Ana shared that the Unity Council session will be canceled and rescheduled due to the representative's illness. Regarding the survey, it is currently under review and being tested, with Jessi Cutter-Kim doing excellent work on its development. Commissioners will receive the survey to test the list. Due to budget constraints, a consulting firm will not be hired to distribute the survey; instead, it will be a convenience sample, meaning seniors can choose whether to complete it. Ana hopes to have updated survey information by the April MCOA meeting. Commissioner Seibert asked whether the survey and listening session questions were different, and Ana confirmed they are. He also asked how the steering committee was selected, to which Ana responded that it was formed through the senior centers. Commissioner Gunst noted that paper surveys worked better for monolingual seniors last year and recommended keeping that in mind for this round. Gunst also reminded the group that the goal is to reach 6,000 respondents this year, compared to 900 last year. Ana mentioned that AARP is actively supporting the effort and has committed funds to promote the listening sessions, including covering flyer distribution. Chair Scott asked whether a mailing list could be used for the survey, and Ana confirmed that it could. Chair Scott also suggested reaching out to CEI and other organizations to identify more locations where seniors gather. Commissioner Seibert inquired whether churches are included in the survey distribution. Ana said that if commissioners have contacts at specific churches, they would be happy to provide stacks of surveys for distribution. However, due to limited staff capacity, widespread delivery is not possible unless volunteers are available, in which case they can be trained. The survey will be available online and will include a cover page with instructions, contact information, and a QR code. It will be distributed to all senior center members and partner organizations, who will be encouraged to share it using their preferred communication methods. Ana concluded by asking commissioners to share any additional organizations they would like included in the distribution list.

10. Advocacy Updates

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Chair Scott opened the item by turning it over to Commissioner Gunst for an update. Commissioner Gunst shared that the council meetings will only be active through the end of the current fiscal year, and she has chosen not to attend further meetings during that time. Instead, she's focusing on the work of MCOA and is encouraging council members to join in and support those efforts. She also noted that funding for senior programs will be cut, and unfortunately, there's little that can be done at this point. They are waiting for the upcoming elections, which may impact future decisions. She urged commissioners to pay close attention to the election, sharing her view that Loren Taylor and Barbara Lee have strong community backing. Chair Scott thanked Commissioner Gunst for her dedication and encouraged her to stay strong, emphasizing that this is exactly the time when seniors need the most support.

11. Budget Advisory Commission Report

Commissioner Gunst led into this item with saying she has not been successful at engaging the budget advisory commission, but believes they are having meetings with Spur (San Francisco) and will have an update later.

12. Human Services Department/Aging & Adult Services Report – Ana Bagtas, Aging and Adult Services Manager, HSD

Chair Scott opened the item by inviting Ana to speak. Ana shared the schedule for Older Americans Month events: East Oakland Senior Center (EOSC) on Friday, May 23 at 10:30 AM; Downtown Oakland Senior Center (DOSC) on Friday, May 16 at 10:30 AM; and a combined North Oakland Senior Center (NOSC) and West Oakland Senior Center (WOSC) event on Friday, May 30 at 10:30 AM. A shred event will also take place at EOSC on May 17 from 10 AM to 2 PM. Chair Scott asked Marshay to create and send out a full event schedule to the commission. Commissioner Beene-Clarke volunteered for the NOSC/WOSC event, Commissioner Seibert for the EOSC event, and Commissioners Gunst and Kalmus for the DOSC event. Ana noted that it's application season: the continuation application for AmeriCorps Senior Companion and Foster Grandparent Programs is due May 10, though changes had to be made to the work plan to remove references to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion due to a recent executive order. An extension was requested for the Oakland Paratransit for the Elderly and Disabled (OPED) program, and the Information and Assistance Program's funding estimate came in \$40,000 lower than last year. Ana is working closely with the Fiscal team on the bi-annual budget, looking to blend funding sources and reduce reliance on General Purpose Funds. Aging and Adult Services is also working to bring the CalAIM program to Oakland, aimed at supporting dual Medi-Cal/Medicaid-eligible and unhoused seniors. The city was approved for technical assistance and is applying for funding by May 2 in partnership with the Senior Coalition. Ana also announced a new collaboration with the USF School of Nursing to help transform senior centers into health hubs. The OPED front desk will be moved to DOSC once equipment arrives, and members will be notified by mail. Due to staffing reductions, senior centers are now closed on Fridays and will reduce hours to 9 AM–1 PM starting in April. Commissioner Gunst raised a concern that all Older Americans Month events fall on Fridays and asked how that would work given the closures; Ana said she would follow up with Kayla Brown for clarification.

13. Open Forum (Limit of two minutes)

No Speakers at this time.

14. Closing Remarks & Adjournment

Chair Scott made a correction to something he mentioned earlier. Stating Commissioner Johnson at the end

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of the February 2025 meeting did mention she would not be present for this meeting. Commissioner Gunst received a text from Commissioner Mulal that she would be absent.

Meeting Adjourned at 12:03 PM.

ACTION ITEM: Suzi Kalmus/Lenore Gunst/Motion Carried

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Oakland Mayor's Commission for Persons with Disabilities 2025 Strategic Plan Survey

Why did the Commission conduct a survey?

- To gather input directly from Oakland residents with disabilities about the challenges and priorities related to accessibility, housing, transportation, public safety, emergency preparedness, and other topics of concern
- To help shape priorities and approach in the Commission's strategic plan for 2025

How was the survey conducted?

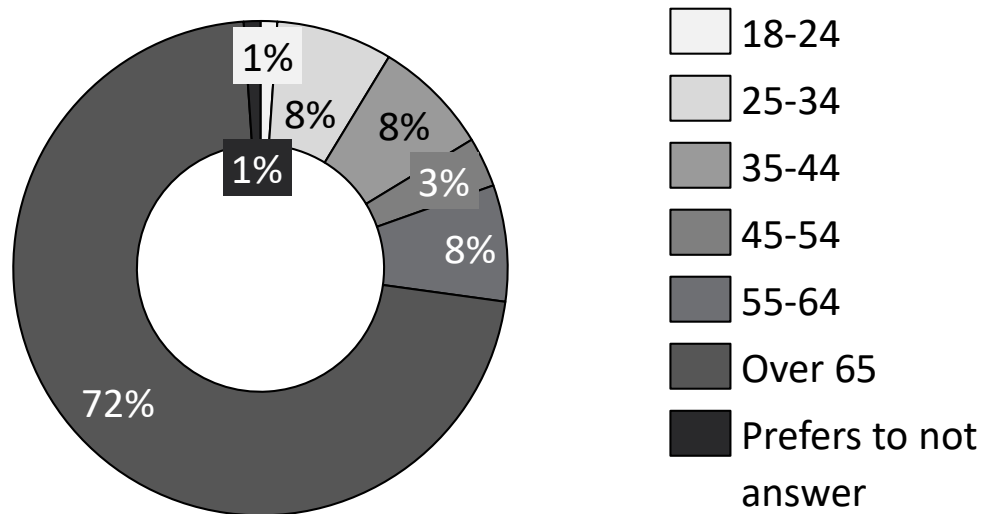
- Open from Nov. 22, 2024 – Jan. 13, 2025
- Available online, and in paper format by request
- Opportunity to request accommodations to complete survey through ADA Programs office
- Advertised through several channels, including through ADA Programs email distribution list and via community partners

Age & gender: Who responded to the survey?

The majority of respondents (72%) were 65 or older, skewing survey results

In the U.S., older adults disproportionately account for disabilities, representing around 16% of the population but 44% of those with disabilities. Our survey results are likely biased by an over-representation of this older population relative to this census data.

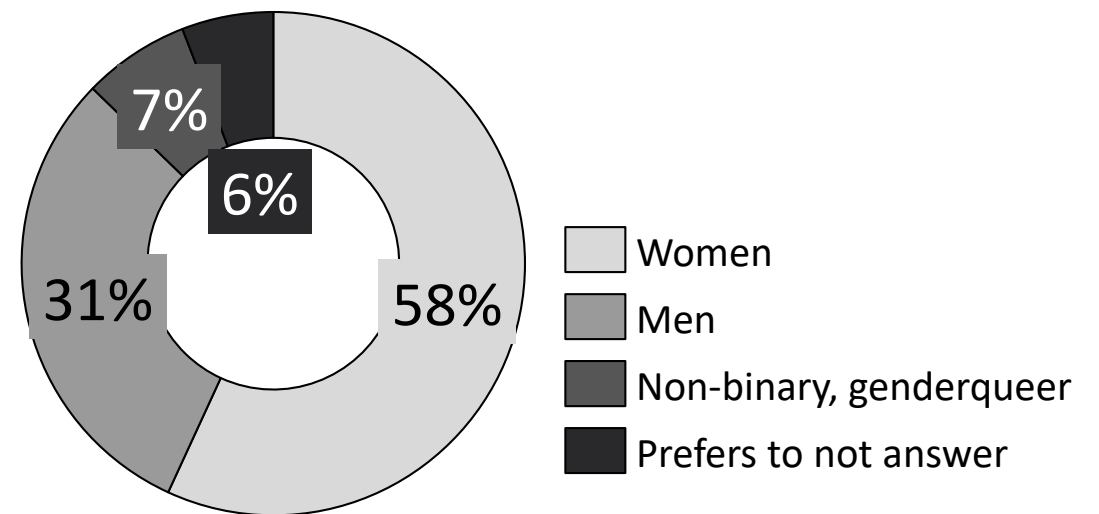
Distribution of age for survey respondents



58% of respondents were women, nearly double response rate of men

This overrepresentation of women in the survey data may impact results

Distribution of gender for survey respondents

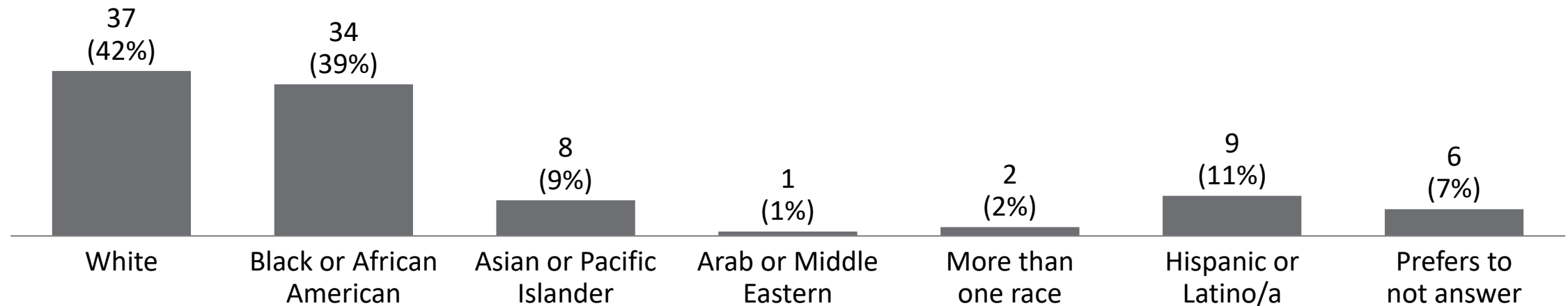


Race & ethnicity: Who responded to the survey?

The survey captured perspectives from the City of Oakland's different racial and ethnic groups, and the respondent pool reflects an overrepresentation of the white and Black populations and underrepresentation of the Asian and Hispanic or Latino/a populations

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2020 data, the racial and ethnic composition of Oakland, California, is made up of 27% white, 20% Black or African American, 16% Asian, 6% two or more races, and 29% Hispanic or Latino.

Distribution of race and ethnicity for survey respondents

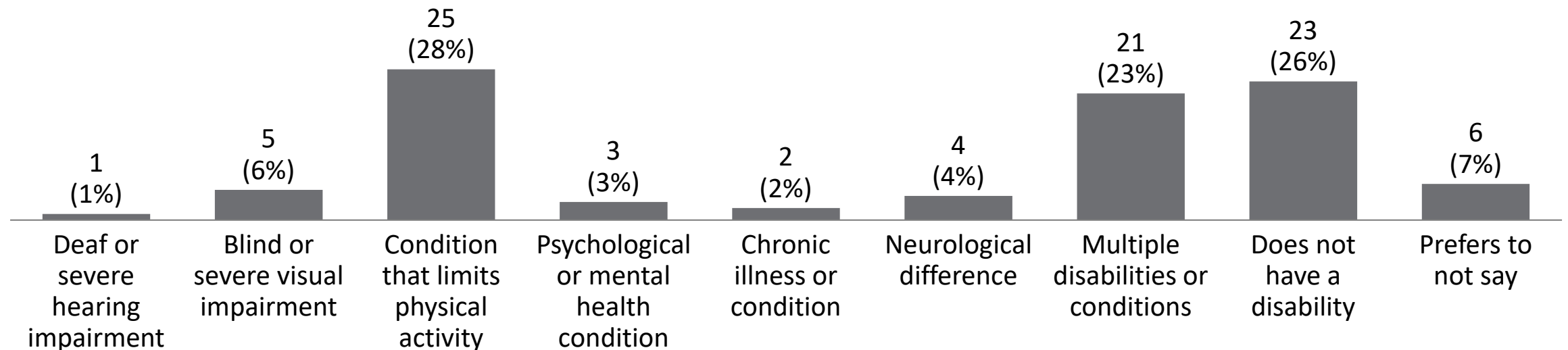


Disability: Who responded to the survey?

Survey respondents have a variety of disabilities or conditions with approximately 23% indicating that they have more than one type of disability, and some respondents did not self-identify as having a disability

Approximately 26% of respondents indicated that they did not have a disability. We chose to include responses from this group as respondents may not feel comfortable indicating they have a disability due to a culture of shame, or those individuals may have children or family members with disabilities, but our survey did not include a question to indicate this situation.

Distribution of type of disability for survey respondents

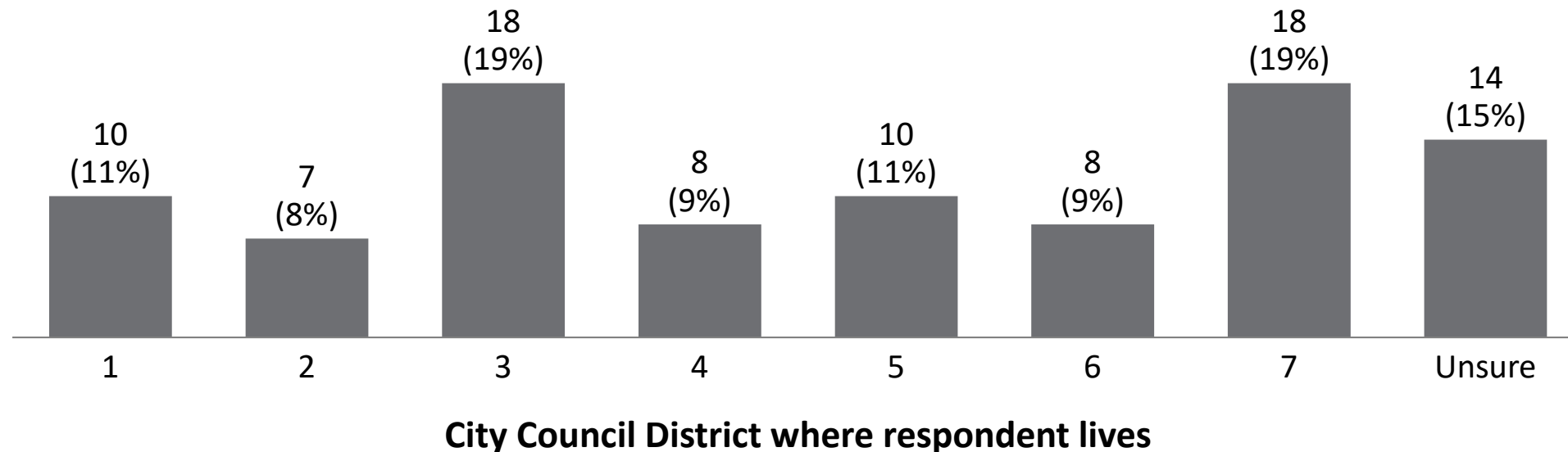


Residential area: Who responded to the survey?

We received input from respondents in all seven of Oakland's City Council districts with higher representation from Districts 3 and 7.

Approximately 15% of respondents did not know or indicate which district they reside in. We included their responses in our analysis so as not to preclude those who are unfamiliar with the district map.

Distribution of residential City Council districts for survey respondents



What Oaklanders with disabilities said they are concerned about and need

Most important issues for persons with disabilities in Oakland

- 68% selected housing
- 54% selected public safety
- 48% selected transportation

Note: While we asked respondents to indicate the most important issue, we allowed them to select more than one issue. As such, percentages add to more than 100.

Awareness of City resources and services

- Across issue areas, many respondents indicated that they are not aware of City resources and services that could support them
- 79% of respondents are not aware of housing resources or services
- 63% of respondents are not aware of transportation resources or services

Housing

Most important housing concerns for persons with disabilities in Oakland

When asked what their top three housing concerns were, respondents said:

1. Neighborhood safety (58%)
2. Housing affordability (55%)
3. Living close to public transportation (33%)
4. Getting help to make their home more accessible (23%)
5. Finding an accessible home (20%)
6. Living close to healthcare services (20%)
7. Protection from discrimination (15%)

Current housing meets majority of respondents' accessibility needs, but concerns about future affordability and ability to address accessibility

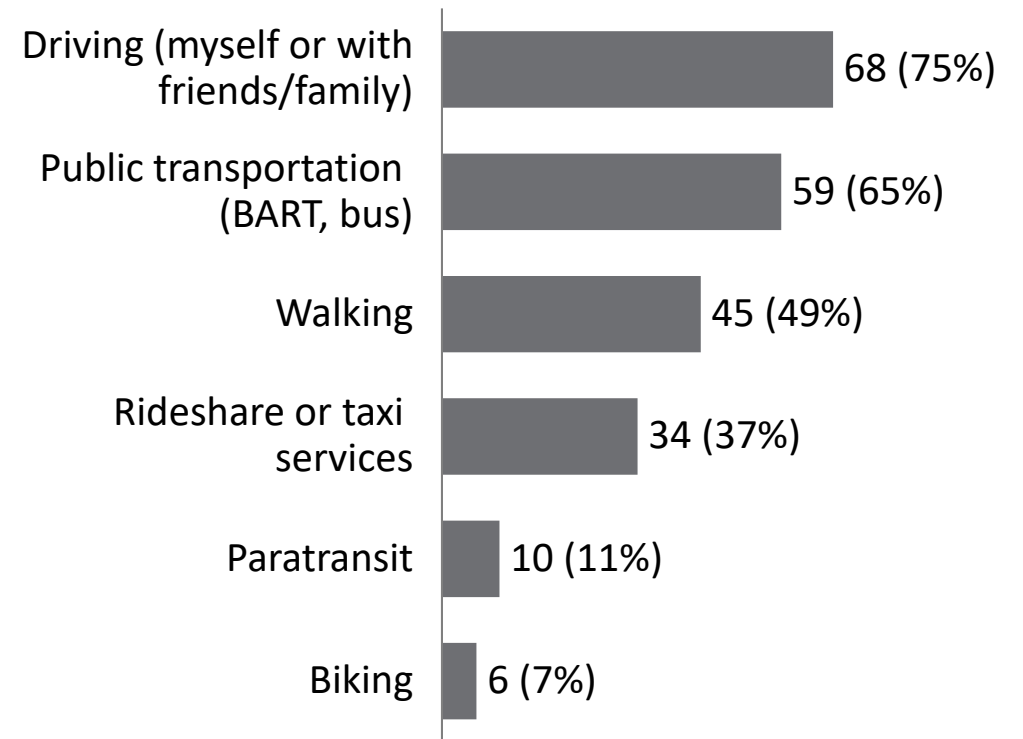
- 64% agree or strongly agree that their current housing meets their accessibility needs
- Of that group, 38% stated that they would not have the resources to make their home more accessible if they needed to
- Nearly half of all respondents are worried about losing their housing due to costs

Transportation: How are Oaklanders with disabilities getting around?

They use a variety of transit with many driving or riding in personal vehicles or taking public transit.

While 75% of respondents drive or ride in personal vehicles with others as a form of transit, most of those respondents (50 of 68) also utilize other forms of transit. Only 18 respondents indicated that they commute exclusively by driving or riding in personal vehicles.

Distribution of types of transit by survey respondents



Transportation

Most important transit concerns for persons with disabilities in Oakland

When asked what their top three transit concerns were, respondents said:

1. Reliability of transportation services (60%)
2. Safety in accessing or using public transportation (46%)
3. Accessibility of public transportation (33%)
4. Wait times for accessible taxis, rideshares, or paratransit (34%)
5. Cost of transportation (31%)
6. Curbside safety when getting from vehicle or bus to sidewalk or door (21%)
7. Staff training on disability needs (13%)

Public transit and paratransit have room to improve in meeting Oaklanders with disabilities' needs

- 17% disagreed that Oakland's public transportation options met their accessibility needs
- 65% indicated that they encounter barriers that make public transportation hard or impossible to use sometimes or more often
- For respondents who use paratransit, 44% indicated that they can only sometimes schedule rides at the times they need

Public Safety

Interactions with Oakland Police

- 55% have not interacted with the Oakland Police in the last two years
- Of those who have interacted with the Oakland Police, 49% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with how the police accommodated theirs or others' disability needs

Perceptions on & awareness of supports for mental health crises

- 87% feel that there are not enough alternatives to calling the police during a mental health crisis
- At the same time, 64% of respondents are not aware of the MACRO Program, and 79% of respondents are not aware of Alameda County's MCT, indicating a need to raise awareness

MACRO Program

- For respondents who have used the Mobile Assistance Community Responders Oakland (MACRO) Program, 50% indicated they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the services provided

Emergency Preparedness

Responses to questions around emergency preparedness were marked by uncertainty and a lack of awareness, indicating a need for better preparation.

- Of the respondents who rent, 43% indicated that they were unsure if their landlord or property manager has a plan that accommodates their disability while 39% said their landlord or property manager did not
- 50% have not tried to access emergency preparedness trainings, materials, or resources through the City of Oakland
- Of those who have tried to access emergency preparedness trainings, materials, or resources through the City of Oakland, 62% indicated that they were not able to
- 76% of all respondents were unsure if the City of Oakland's emergency plans could accommodate their accessibility needs while 13% of respondents indicated the City of Oakland's emergency plans did not accommodate their accessibility needs

Accessibility of City Services

Responses regarding accessibility of City services indicate an opportunity to improve these services, as well as communication about and awareness of the services.

- 32% of respondents face barriers when using the City of Oakland's website
- When a respondent needs a service from the City, 57% indicated it is unclear where to go online or in person
- For City events or commission meetings held virtually or in person, 27% indicated they face barriers to attending