

Spring 2024

South Tacoma Neighborhood Plan

COMMUNITY PRIORITIES SURVEY AND MULTILINGUAL ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

About the Neighborhood Planning Program

The City of Tacoma’s Neighborhood Planning Program provides enhanced planning and development support to help communities create strong, vibrant, and diverse neighborhoods. The program begins with a robust engagement phase, and then moves into implementation of actionable strategies based on community priorities.

About the Community Priorities Survey *(page 2)*

Open to community members throughout the launch of the South Tacoma Neighborhood Plan, the Community Priorities Survey was an opportunity for the community to share initial feedback about assets, opportunities, and challenges perceived within the neighborhood. Between January 17 and May 13, the 19-question online survey received 114 responses via the South Tacoma Neighborhood Plan Social Pinpoint page; this document outlines and summarizes the responses and major themes that emerged.

About the Multilingual Engagement Summary *(page 16)*

Working with the City of Tacoma’s Language Ambassadors, we developed a six-question survey about neighborhood assets, challenges, and opportunities that was available in seven languages (English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Khmer, Russian, Ukrainian, and Korean) in paper and online formats. We received a total of 92 surveys (2 in English, 50 in Vietnamese, and 40 in Spanish).

The responses to these surveys, as well as other feedback from community engagement opportunities such as events and interviews, are integral to informing the recommendations in the South Tacoma Neighborhood Plan, and the South Tacoma Steering Group will use this input to inform their prioritization process for the Neighborhood Plan. The next phase of engagement will collect feedback on priority areas and specific project actions.

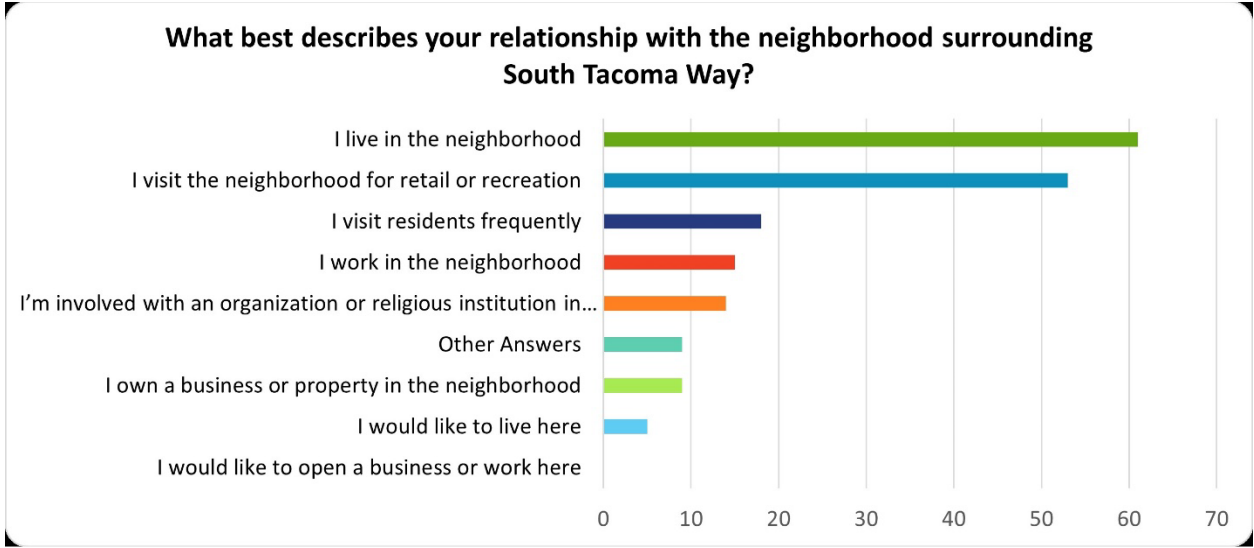
COMMUNITY PRIORITIES SURVEY

Survey Questions and Response Summaries

Neighborhood Profile

1. What best describes your relationship with the neighborhood surrounding South Tacoma Way?
(Select all that apply)¹

¹ Note: “Select all that apply” questions have totaled responses that do not add up to 100%.

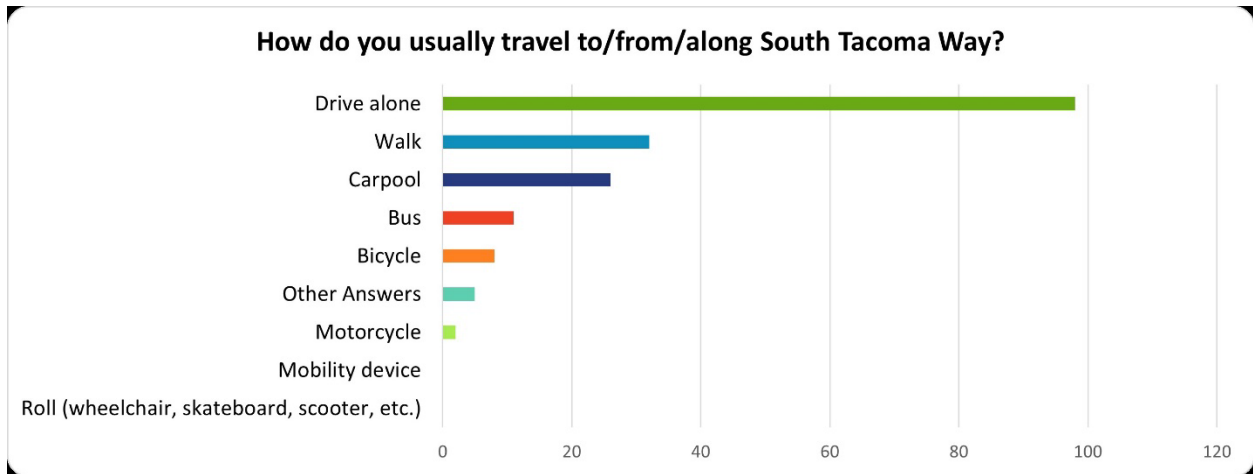


What best describes your relationship with the neighborhood surrounding South Tacoma Way?		
Choice	Responses	
I live in the neighborhood	61	55.5%
I visit the neighborhood for retail or recreation	53	48.2%
I visit residents frequently	18	16.4%
I work in the neighborhood	15	13.6%
I'm involved with an organization or religious institution in the neighborhood	14	12.7%
I own a business or property in the neighborhood	9	8.2%
Other Answers	9	8.2%
I would like to live here	5	4.6%
I would like to open a business or work here	0	0.00%
Answered	110	
Skipped	0	

Other answers included:

- Lives in nearby neighborhoods and travels through South Tacoma often
- Grew up in South Tacoma and nearby neighborhoods, but lives elsewhere
- Go to school in South Tacoma
- Manage property in South Tacoma

2. How do you usually travel to/from/along South Tacoma Way? (Select all that apply)

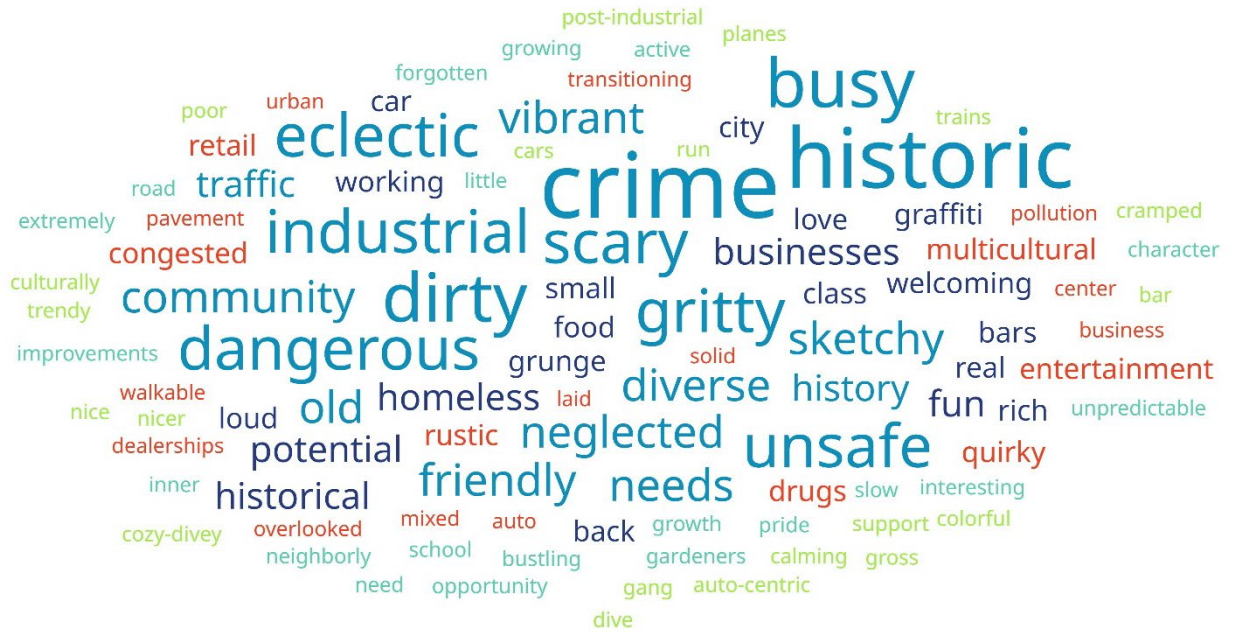


How do you usually travel to/from/along South Tacoma Way?		
Choice	Responses	
Drive alone	98	89.1%
Walk	32	29.1%
Carpool	26	23.6%
Bus	11	10.0%
Bicycle	8	7.3%
Other Answers	5	4.6%
Motorcycle	2	1.8%
Roll (wheelchair, skateboard, scooter, etc.)	0	0.00%
Mobility device	0	0.00%
Responses	110	
Skipped	0	

Other answers included:

- Travels via train
- Drives with family and friends

3. What three words capture the essence of the South Tacoma Way neighborhood?



Answered	98
Skipped	12

Common themes included:

- History and industrial character
- Crime and neglect, with some respondents feeling unsafe
- Vibrancy, sense of community, and support for local businesses
- Cars, speeding, and congestion
- Cultural diversity

4. What do you consider to be the center of the South Tacoma Way neighborhood?

Answered	98
Skipped	12

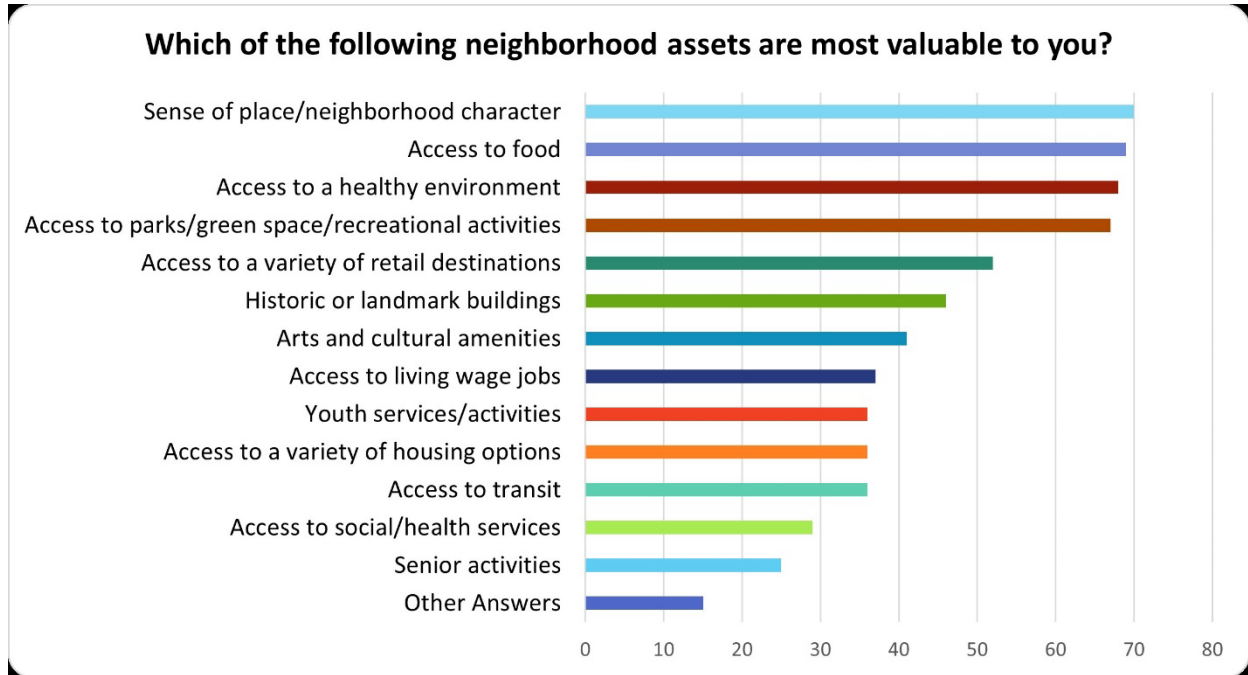
The most common responses to this question were:

- South Tacoma Way Business District/South 56th Street and South Tacoma Way
 - “56th and South Tacoma Way...but South Tacoma Neighborhood is MUCH bigger than just the business district.”
- South Tacoma Way or/and South Washington Street and South 40th Street to South 66th Street
- B&I Public Marketplace
- South Park
- Howdy Bagel
- Auto row

- South Tacoma Branch Library
- Star Center

Neighborhood Assets

5. Which of the following neighborhood assets are most valuable to you? (Select all that apply)



Which of the following neighborhood assets are most valuable to you?		
Choice	Responses	
Sense of place/neighborhood character	70	63.6%
Access to food	69	62.7%
Access to a healthy environment	68	61.8%
Access to parks/green space/recreational activities	67	60.9%
Access to a variety of retail destinations	52	47.3%
Historic or landmark buildings	46	41.8%
Arts and cultural amenities	41	37.3%
Access to living wage jobs	37	33.6%
Access to a variety of housing options	36	32.7%
Youth services/activities	36	32.7%
Access to transit	36	32.7%
Access to social/health services	29	26.4%
Senior activities	25	22.7%

Other Answers	15	13.6%
Answered	110	
Skipped	0	

Other answers included:

- Protecting the South Tacoma Aquifer
- Public safety: cleanliness, street lighting, police presence
- Sidewalks, bike lanes, and pedestrian safety
- Concerts, entertainment, and culture
- The library

6. Tell us more about what you love about your neighborhood and think is important to celebrate/preserve:

Answered	82
Skipped	28

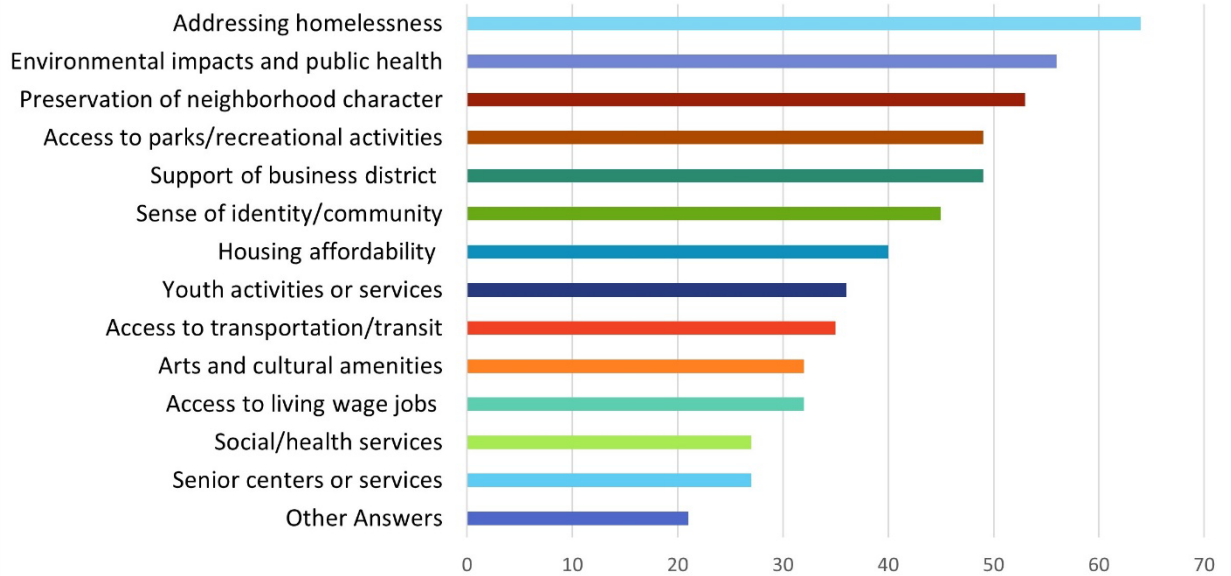
Common themes included:

- **Historic preservation:** fondness for the historic buildings and architecture, as well as the character and charm these buildings bring to the neighborhood
 - “Love the blue collar history, historic buildings, and current diversity.”
- **Community and diversity:** strong sense of community pride and appreciation for the neighborhood’s diversity; residents value the mix of cultures, businesses, and people
- **Concerns about crime and homelessness:** some residents feel that safety needs to be addressed to improve the overall quality of life in the area
- **Desire for improvement:** more green spaces, recreational areas, local businesses, and events
 - “People live here. Why wouldn’t we invest in it?”
- **Environmental concerns:** some respondents highlight the importance of protecting trees and maintaining clean air to protect the well-being of residents
- **Mixed feelings about development:** some residents welcome new businesses and investments; others are wary of gentrification and the potential loss of neighborhood character
 - “While I am pleased to see efforts to restore the glories of the past... any artificial efforts to 'improve' this area will result in financial gentrification and end up like Hilltop.”
- **Appreciation for local businesses:** many respondents appreciate the presence of local businesses and restaurants in the neighborhood; they see these establishments as vital to the community's identity

Issues and Ideas

7. What are the major issues in the neighborhood that the City of Tacoma and our partners should address? (Select all that apply)

What are the major issues in the neighborhood that the City of Tacoma and our partners should address? (Select all that apply)



What are the major issues in the neighborhood that the City of Tacoma and our partners should address? (Select all that apply)		
Choice	Responses	
Addressing homelessness	64	58.2%
Environmental impacts and public health	56	50.9%
Preservation of neighborhood character	53	48.2%
Support of business district	49	44.6%
Access to parks/recreational activities	49	44.6%
Sense of identity/community	45	40.9%
Housing affordability	40	36.4%
Youth activities or services	36	32.7%
Access to transportation/transit	35	31.8%
Access to living wage jobs	32	29.1%
Arts and cultural amenities	32	29.1%
Senior centers or services	27	24.6%
Social/health services	27	24.6%
Other Answers	21	19.1%
Answered	110	
Skipped	0	

Other answers included:

- Speeding vehicles and reckless driving; respondents feel unsafe while walking/rolling

- Crime, theft, violence, and inadequate police response
 - “Crime has risen such as vandalism of autos, homes, store windows. This decreases sense of safety...and is a threat to the businesses ability to economically remain [in] the important part of the neighborhood”
- Need for more mixed-use development and walkability
- Environmental concerns, preservation of South Tacoma Aquifer
- Desire to preserve neighborhood character
- Lack of support for veterans, the elderly, and youth
- Desire for a community center

8. What actions or improvements do you want to see happen in your neighborhood?

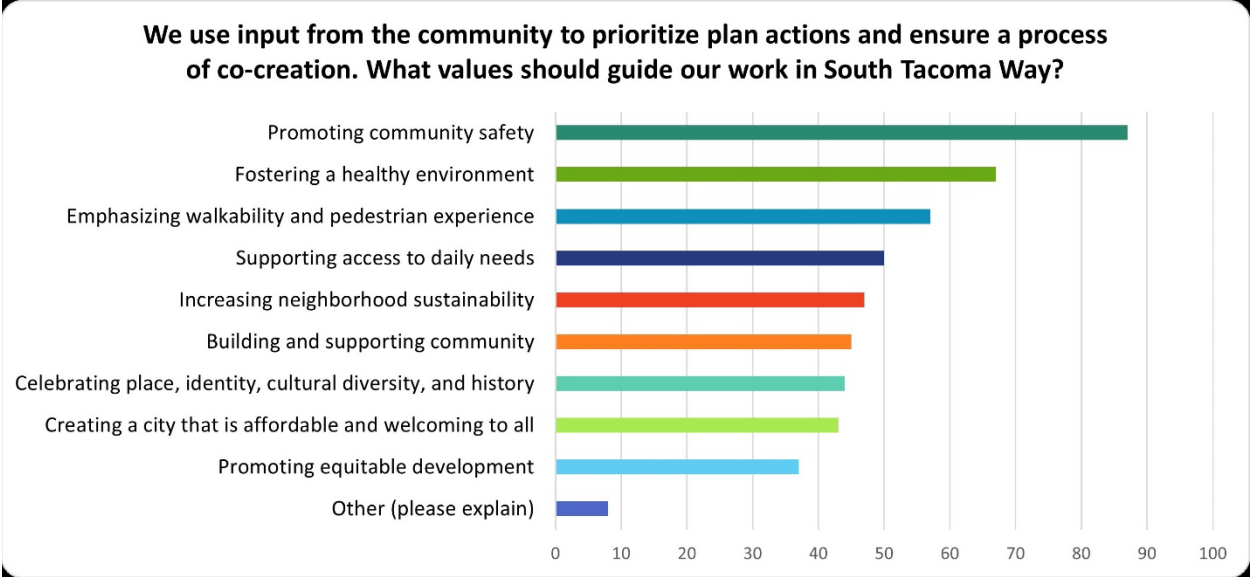
Answered	89
Skipped	21

Common themes included:

- **Safety and crime reduction:** increased police presence, addressing drug activity and vandalism
- **Public space improvements:** cleaner streets, street lighting, and more green space
- **Transportation safety:** better pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, increased visibility at crosswalks, traffic calming measures like speed bumps and roundabouts
 - “I think addressing speeding along 56th and S. Tacoma Way...It's sketchy to cross with kids to get to the library since we walk north.”
- **Community representation:** involvement in decision-making processes, addressing long-standing issues, establishing trust, and prioritizing the needs of residents
- **Social services:** support for vulnerable populations, such as the homeless and veterans, including access to housing, healthcare, and community resources
- **Economic development:** supporting local businesses, creating job opportunities, and improving the economic vitality of the neighborhood while preserving its unique character
 - “Housing costs are outrages and there are not enough jobs that provide a living wage.”
- **Environmental protection:** preserving tree canopy, addressing pollution, and mitigating industrial development
 - “South Tacoma needs to retain all current trees and plant more”

Community Involvement

9. We use input from the community to prioritize plan actions and ensure a process of co-creation. What values should guide our work in South Tacoma Way? (Select all that apply)



We use input from the community to prioritize plan actions and ensure a process of co-creation. What values should guide our work in South Tacoma Way?		
Choice	Responses	
Promoting community safety	87	80.6%
Fostering a healthy environment	67	62.0%
Emphasizing walkability and pedestrian experience	57	52.8%
Supporting access to daily needs	50	46.3%
Increasing neighborhood sustainability	47	43.5%
Building and supporting community	45	41.7%
Celebrating place, identity, cultural diversity, and history	44	40.7%
Creating a city that is affordable and welcoming to all	43	39.8%
Promoting equitable development	37	34.3%
Other (please explain)	8	7.4%
Answered	108	
Skipped	2	

10. Are there nonprofit organizations, businesses, religious institutions, or neighborhood leaders in South Tacoma who we should reach out to as part of our outreach?

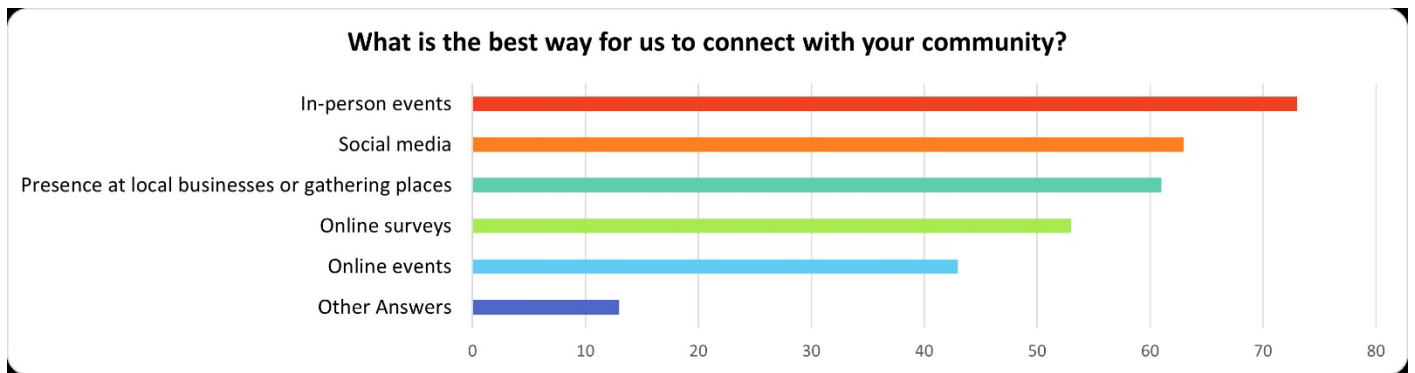
Answered	54
Skipped	56

Answers included:

- Community organizations:
 - South Tacoma Neighborhood Council
 - YMCA
 - Boys and Girls Club
 - Habitat for Humanity
 - Tacoma Rescue Mission
 - Step by Step
 - Elevate Health
 - Sea Mar Community Health Centers
 - HopeSparks Family Services
 - Nourish Pierce County
 - Emergency Food Network
 - Meals on Wheels
 - Asia Pacific Cultural Center
 - South Tacoma Business District
 - Korean Women's Association
 - Meals on Wheels
- Religious institutions:
 - Puget Sound Foursquare Church
 - Visitation STEM School and Church
- Businesses:
 - Fernseed
 - Howdy Bagel
 - Bluebeard Coffee
 - Church Cantina
 - Theory Real Estate
 - Intentions Juice
 - Mule Tavern
 - Airport Tavern
 - The Hive
 - Glum Drop
 - Emerald City Orchids
 - Real Art Tacoma
 - Super Smash Games
 - Panera Bread
 - Whole Foods
- Educational institutions:
 - Mt. Tahoma High School
 - Gray Middle School

- Edison Elementary School
- BJ's Barber College
- Individuals who are active in the local community and business district
- Public services:
 - Tacoma Public Library
 - Tacoma Rescue Mission
 - Tacoma Police Department
 - Metro Parks
- Advocacy groups
 - Climate Alliance of the South Sound
 - SUN Alliance

11. What is the best way for us to connect with your community? (Select all that apply)



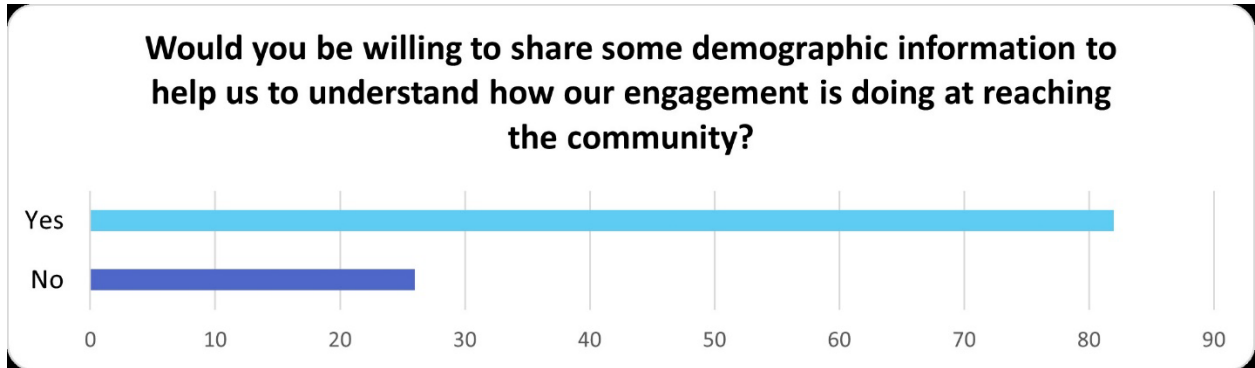
What is the best way for us to connect with your community?		
Choice	Responses	
In-person events	73	70.9%
Social media	63	61.2%
Presence at local businesses or gathering places	61	59.2%
Online surveys	53	51.5%
Online events	43	41.8%
Other Answers	13	12.6%
Answered	103	
Skipped	7	

Other answers included:

- South Tacoma Neighborhood Council meetings
- South Tacoma Business District meetings
- Mailers, flyers in the community, email newsletters, phone conversations, and website updates

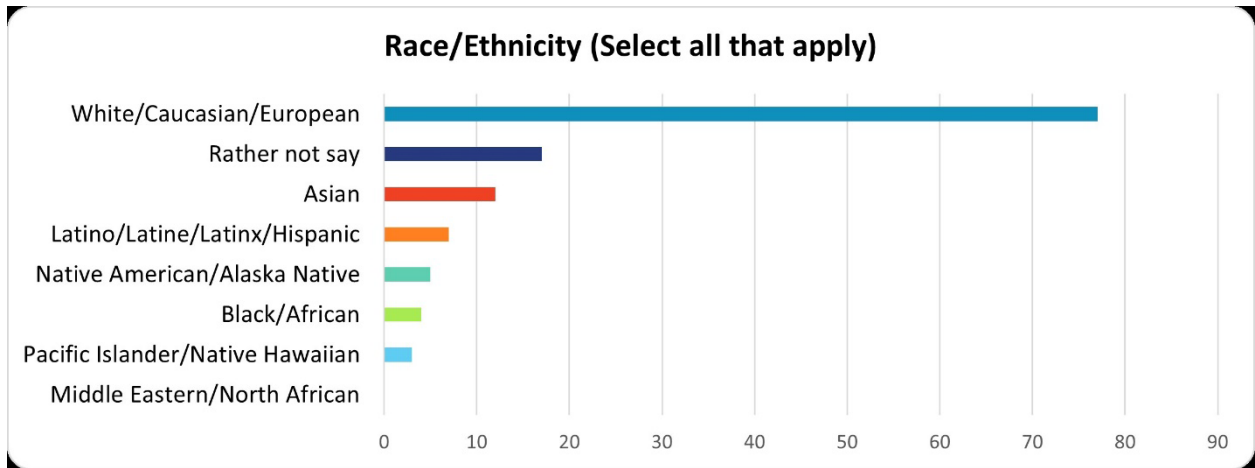
Optional Demographic Questions

12. Would you be willing to share some demographic information to help us to understand how our engagement is doing at reaching the community?



Would you be willing to share some demographic information to help us to understand how our engagement is doing at reaching the community?		
Choice	Responses	
Yes	82	75.9%
No	26	24.1%
Answered	108	
Skipped	2	

13. Race/Ethnicity (Select all that apply)



Race/Ethnicity (Select all that apply)		
Choice	Responses	
White/Caucasian/European	77	72.0%
Rather not say	17	15.9%
Asian	12	11.2%

Latino/Latine/Latinx/Hispanic	7	6.5%
Native American/Alaska Native	5	4.7%
Black/African	4	3.7%
Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian	3	2.8%
Middle Eastern/North African	0	0.00%
Answered	107	
Skipped	3	

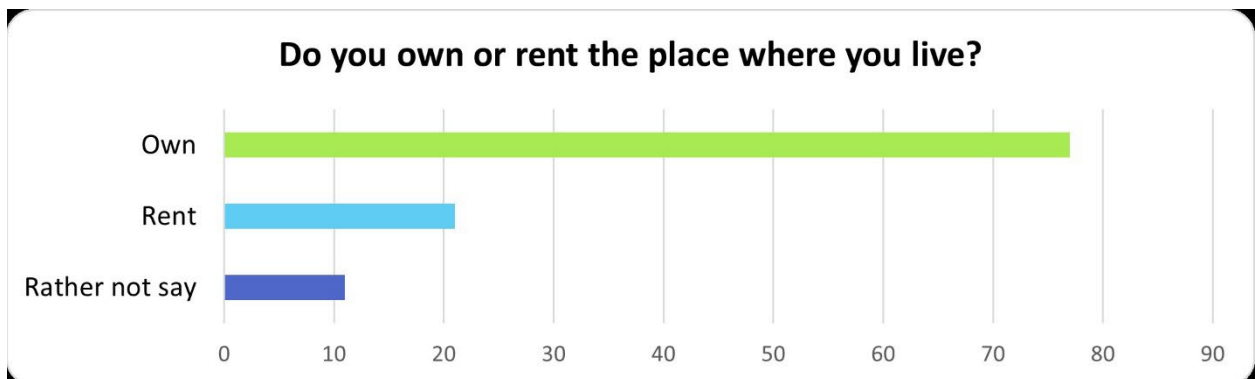
14. Please list any specific race, ethnic, and national groups, and tribal/band affiliations with which you identify:

Answered	23
Skipped	87

Answers included:

- Osage
- Iroquois
- Japanese American
- Puerto Rican
- Korean
- Guamanian
- Puyallup Tribe
- Scandinavian
- Mexican
- Italian/Siciliano
- Ashkenazi Jew
- Creole

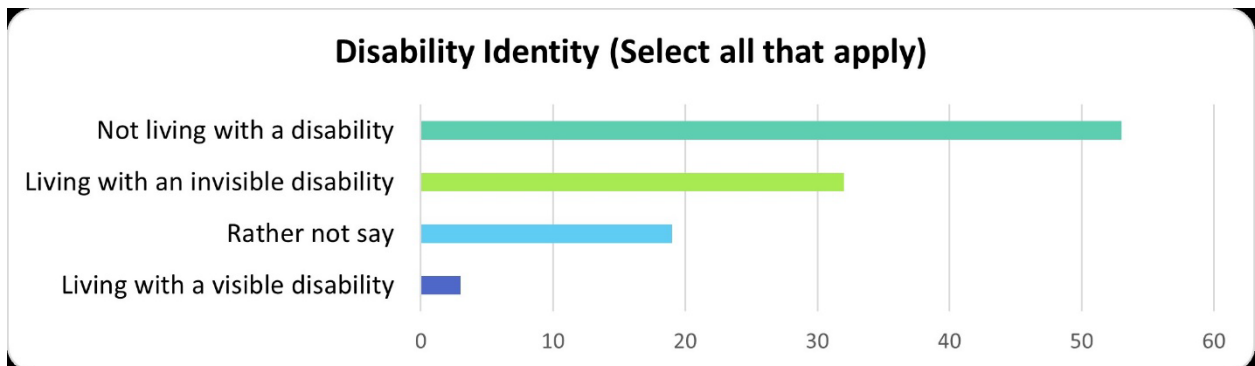
15. Do you own or rent the place where you live?



Do you own or rent the place where you live?

Choice	Responses	
Own	77	70.6%
Rent	21	19.3%
Rather not say	11	10.1%
Answered	109	
Skipped	1	

16. Disability Identity (Select all that apply)



Disability Identity (Select all that apply)		
Choice	Responses	
Not living with a disability	53	51.5%
Living with an invisible disability	32	31.1%
Rather not say	19	18.5%
Living with a visible disability	3	2.9%
Answered	103	
Skipped	7	

17. Please list ADA accommodation requests:

Answered	16
Skipped	94

Answers included:

- Transcripts of recorded events
- Event venues that are single-level or have an elevator/ramps
- Dimmer lights and comfortable acoustics
- Closed captioning reader board at events, microphone/speaker for asking questions
- ADA accessible parking, more parking overall

18. Primary language spoken at home:

Answered	82
Skipped	28

Answers included:

- English
- Korean

19. Additional language(s) spoken at home:

Answered	19
Skipped	91

Answers included:

- Russian
- Spanish
- German
- Korean
- Hawaiian
- American Sign Language
- French
- Vietnamese

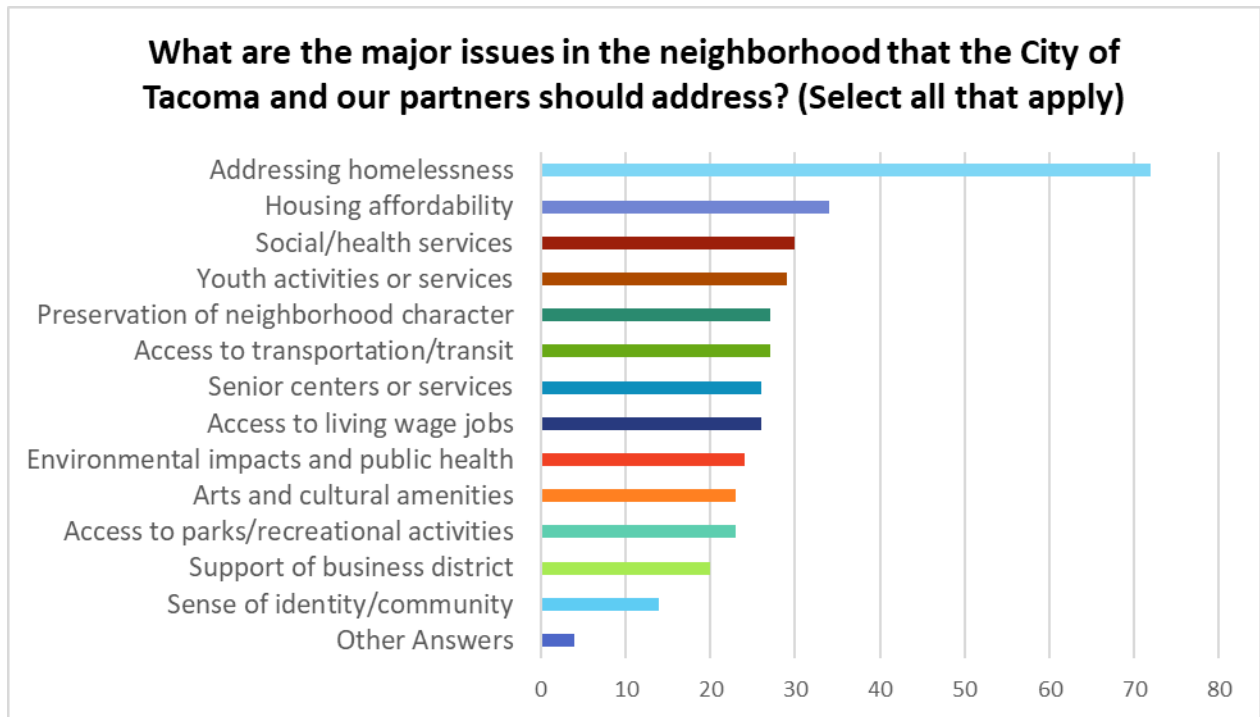
MULTILINGUAL ENGAGEMENT SURVEY
Survey Questions and Response Summaries

1. Tell us about what you love about your neighborhood and think is important to celebrate and/or preserve:

Open-ended answers, organized by theme:

- **Sense of community and identity:**
 - The trust and kindness of people
 - Places to come with family
 - “Celebrate that [South Tacoma Way] is a street with history”
- **Community amenities:**
 - Library
 - Cultural events in the area
 - Green areas
 - Movie theater on South 84th Street
 - “Preserve the Asian and Hispanic restaurant community”
- **Safety and infrastructure:**
 - Sense of security and safety
 - Police presence
 - Keep streets in good condition

2. What are the major issues in the neighborhood that the City of Tacoma and our partners should address? (Select all that apply)



What are the major issues in the neighborhood that the City of Tacoma and our partners should address? (Select all that apply)		
Choice	Responses	
Addressing homelessness	72	80.0%
Housing affordability	34	37.8%
Social/health services	30	33.3%
Youth activities or services	29	32.2%
Access to transportation/transit	27	30.0%
Preservation of neighborhood character	27	30.0%
Access to living wage jobs	26	28.9%
Senior centers or services	26	28.9%
Environmental impacts and public health	24	26.7%
Access to parks/recreational activities	23	25.6%
Arts and cultural amenities	23	25.6%
Support of business district	20	22.2%
Sense of identity/community	14	15.6%
Other Answers	4	4.4%
Answered	90	
Skipped	2	

Other answers included:

- Recreation spaces for families
- Traffic danger

3. What actions or improvements do you want to see happen in your neighborhood?

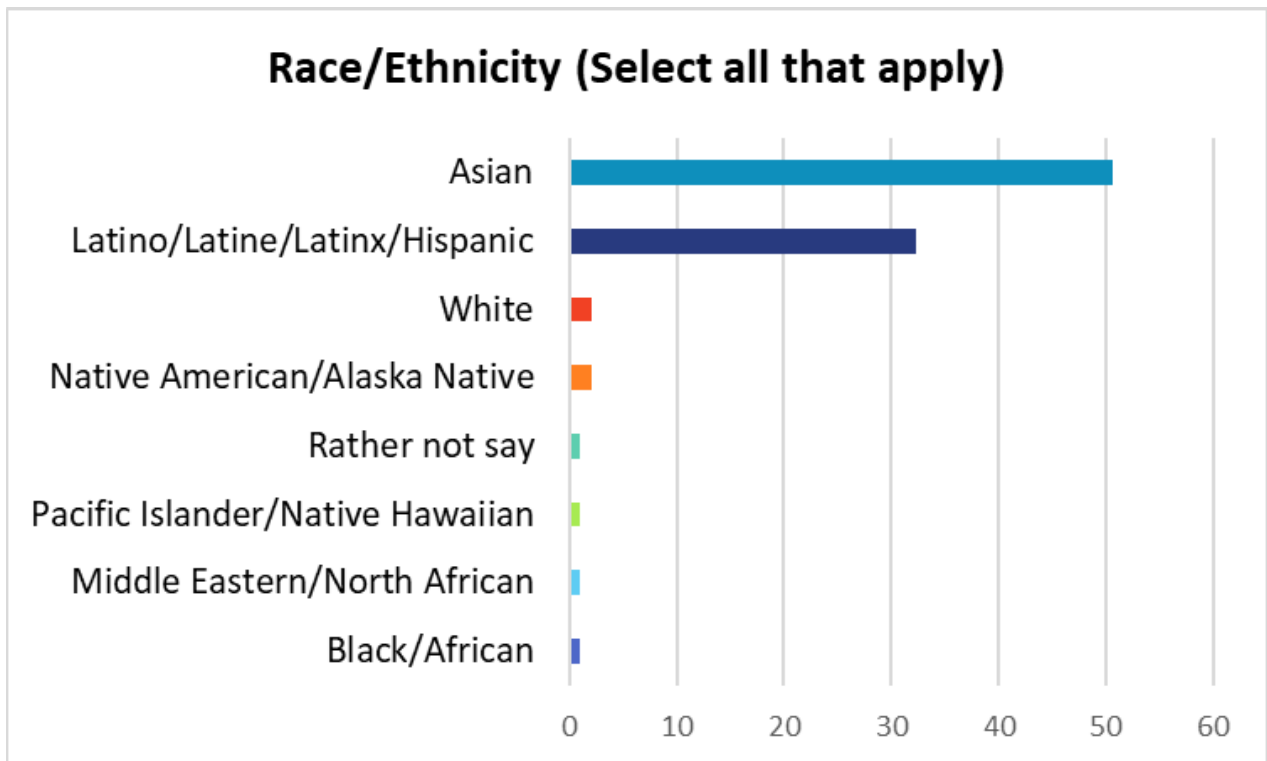
Open-ended answers:

- **Improved access to transportation/transit and improved safety**
 - More crosswalks
 - Bike lanes
 - “People go way too fast on STW between 50th-56th. Need speed bumps or one lane each way”
 - Reduced speed limits
- **Environmental impacts and public health**
 - Litter and graffiti removal
 - More trash cans
 - Better air quality
 - “More trees to lower summer temps”
- **Safety and Security**
 - More police presence
 - More cameras and security

- More lights at night
- “Less theft and less poverty”
- “Enforce nuisance property codes”
- **Access to parks/recreational activities**
 - “Maintenance of picnic areas; more green and tree areas”
 - “Parks and recreation spaces for the whole family”
- **Social/health services**
 - Emergency care clinic
- **Sense of identity/community**
 - “I think it would be good to have outdoor events to promote relationships between neighbors, businesses, government officials, entities like TPD, TPCHD, and others. More illuminated and supervised bus stations, public spaces for recreation and artistic manifestation.”

Optional: Demographics

4. Race/Ethnicity (Select all that apply)



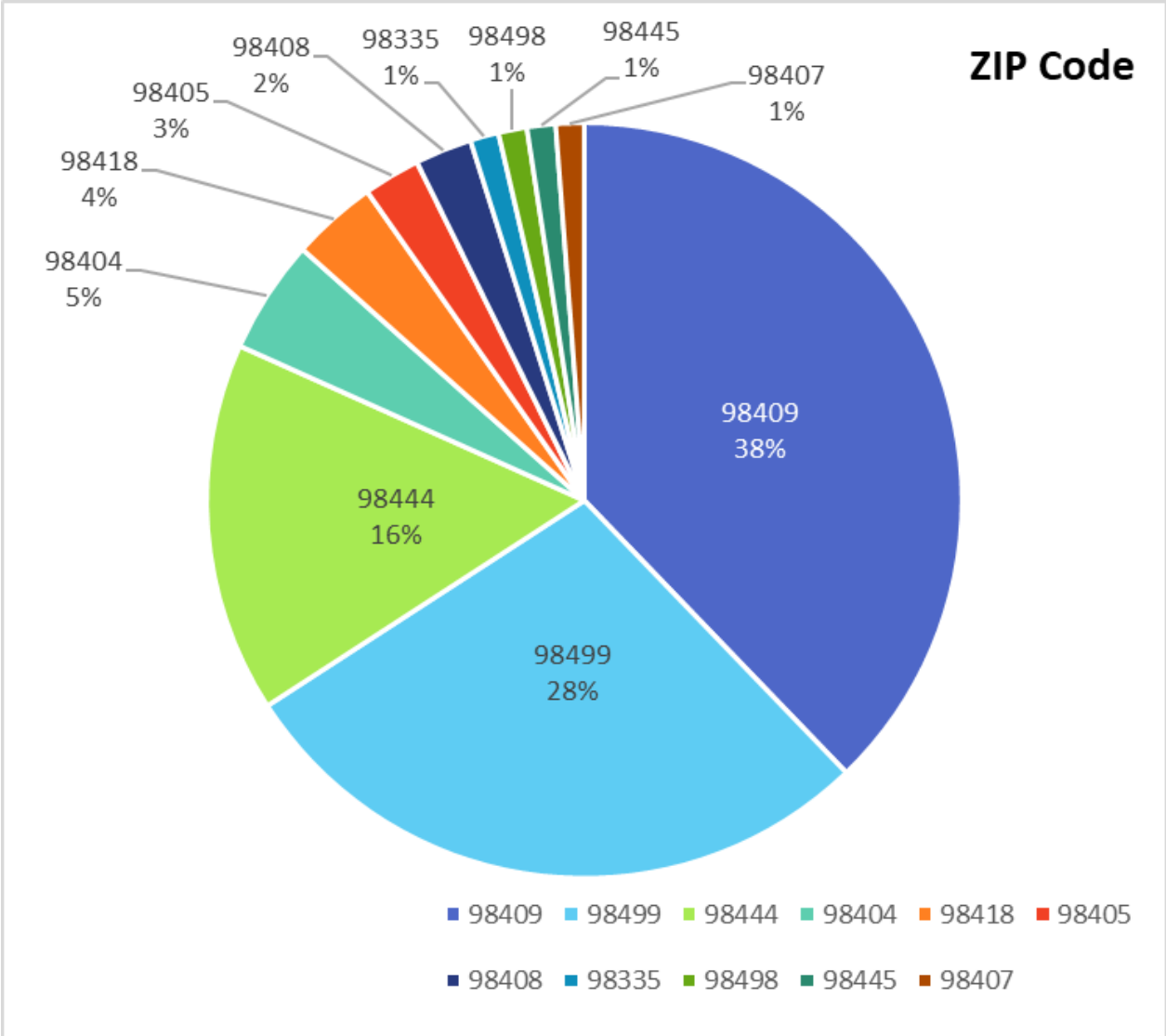
Race/Ethnicity (Select all that apply)		
Choice	Responses	
Asian	51	61.4%
Latino/Latine/Latinx/Hispanic	32	38.6%
Native American/Alaska Native	2	2.4%
White	2	2.4%

Black/African	1	1.2%
Middle Eastern/North African	1	1.2%
Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian	1	1.2%
Rather not say	1	1.2%
Answered	83	
Skipped	9	

Please list any specific race, ethnic, and national groups, and tribal/band affiliations with which you identify:

- “Mexican”
- “Latino”
- “Vietnamese”
- “Vietnamese People”
- “Alaskan”

5. What is your ZIP Code?



What is your ZIP Code?		
ZIP Code	Response Count	Percent of Responses
98409	31	38%
98499	23	28%
98444	13	16%
98404	4	5%
98418	3	4%
98405	2	2%
98408	2	2%
98335	1	1%
98498	1	1%
98445	1	1%
98407	1	1%
Answered	81	

Skipped	11	
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