Southeast Area Plan – Phase 1 Community Feedback Summary

June 2025

This summary includes public input from the first phase of the Planning process for the Southeast Area Plan. It includes feedback provided at in-person or virtual meetings, interactive online mapping, focus groups, pop-up engagements, and the Madison Madness Feedback bracket activity. The feedback is organized by the seven elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Comments are grouped by common themes, assets, issues, and opportunities for each of the elements. Similar comments are grouped together under one row with a tally of how many people commented on that topic in the right column and source of the feedback. Comments highlighted in the color of the element indicate feedback from underrepresented groups. Text in color shows feedback from underrepresent community members. This input was gathered by a third-party organization. For focus groups (FG), comments were counted as one under the tally column for each comment.

Comment	#	Source
Land Use		
Land Use – Redevelopment to Mixed Use: • Ensure commercial/mixed-use spaces under new housing buildings are used and not empty • Don't add housing on top of businesses **Opportunities** • Redevelop commercial spaces and underutilized properties into mixed use space to increase housing density and eliminate excess parking/pavement in various areas (see detailed feedback summary for specific areas)	31	(OC) (PM1) (FG) (MM) (BW)

• More multi-unit residential in areas: along Atwood Avenue, American Family site • More utilization/density in the areas: Karmenta Center, undeveloped land west of the church at 4917 Milwaukee Street (3 stories max), Milwaukee Street and Milo Lane, more TR-C3 in Eastmorland, 4513 Milwaukee Street • Integrate housing with stores, clinics, and community spaces		
Land Use – Commercial: **Assets** • Love businesses in little strip mall on Monona Drive and E Buckeye Road • Amazing small, locally owned businesses in Rolling Meadows Shopping Center • Like spaces for local business owners to have affordable space to operate and provide important amenities for neighbors (ex. Ace Hardware/Jade Monkey commercial strip) • Like great restaurants and businesses that are vibrant, unique, and POC-owned **Opportunities** • Need corridors of services like more small local restaurants/commercial amenities and more grocery options around the areas: North and South of 12/18, along Atwood Avenue, near Meadowlark Drive and Oynx Lane, Monona Drive and E Buckeye Road, Meadow Park Townhomes off N Wallbridge Avenue, and along Milwaukee Street • Lower parking minimums for businesses	13	(OC) (BW)
Land Use – General: **Issues**	10	(OC) (FG)

• Too many nuisance apartments and homeless facilities **Opportunities** • Increase density and housing by resources like transit, walking/biking paths to meet needs of current and future residents • Use underutilized spaces for community gardens, art installations, and picnic areas • Add hotel near Milwaukee Street and Corporate Drive or Atlas Avenue and Cottage Grove Road • Redevelop East Towne Mall into housing options (ownership options) • Increase access to amenities in areas: west of Highway 51, North of Sigglekow Road • Increase affordable housings like in City-owned lots in Owl Creek to have permanently affordable housing • Allow homeowners to develop multifamily housing (instead of developers) • Add public swimming pool • Large scale communal housing		(MM) (BW)
Transportation		
Traffic Safety/Speeding: **Assets** • Good improvements along Dempsey Road (especially at Davis Street) **Issues** • Highway 51 has high speeds with limited visibility • Near crashes on E Buckeye Road and Vondron Road	22	(OC) (PM1) (FG) (BW) (NW)

• Speeding vehicles and speeding on streets like: Monona Drive, W Dean Avenue to avoid Pflaum Road, Swanton Road, N Thompson Drive, Wilshire Lane, Dempsey Road, Highway 51, Milwaukee Street, Maher Avenue • Lowering speed limits makes travel difficult **Opportunities** • More speed enforcement and speed reduction measures • Sync and improve light timing along streets like Cottage Grove Road and Stoughton Road to support through traffic • Create physical barriers, repaint lines, plant trees to calm traffic • Add rumble strips to off ramp to alert divers to slow down through the curve for Highway 51 • Righthand lanes should be right turn only on Sprecher Road and Milwaukee Street • Need turn lane toward YMCA on Westbound Cottage Grove Road and Claire Street • Left turns are difficult on Swanton Road and Milwaukee Street		
Bicycle/Pedestrian Safety: **Assets** • Monona Court is great for walking/biking and could be nice in other places • Like bike paths and lanes on E Buckeye Road and Atwood Avenue • Like Pedestrian crossing at Highway 51 and Portland Parkway • Love Cottage Grove Road	52	(OC) (PM1) (FG) (MM) (BW)

• Multi-use path connecting Commercial Ave and Blettner Blvd is great safe connection under Highway 30 **Issues** • Lack of lack of pedestrian access on Highway 51 • Crossing view is blocked by Hill on Lakeview and Buckeye on Lake Loop • Close to cars on Monona Drive from Cottage Grove Road • Dangerous biking and walking conditions and inadequate pedestrian crossings • Improvements in ADA-compliant infrastructure are needed, such as wheelchair-accessible sidewalks and curb ramps **Opportunities** • Make traffic stop/yield to cyclist/pedestrians crossing instead of bikes/pedestrians having to stop for cars • Add green paint to improve visibility of bike lanes and make bike lanes protected • Add bike route street icons streets like: Stonehaven Dr., Ellen Ave. from E Buckeye to Vondron Rd., Wagon Trail • Extend medians to create refuge islands for pedestrians and cyclists to more safely cross the street • Use parked cars, pinch points, and protected bike lanes to chicane Cottage Grove Rd. from about Atwood Blvd. to I-90 and beyond • Add dedicated bike lane on Vondron Road, Sandlewood Cir., Pebblebrook Dr., S. Thompson Dr. from Capitol City Path all the way to Cottage Grove Rd., Ellen Ave. from E Buckeye to Cottage Grove Rd., and Starker Ave • Use curb extensions to designate the beginning/end of those parking zones and make drivers more aware of pedestrians/cyclists crossing or waiting to cross		

• Close streets to through traffic in front of schools to allow safe plaza for students • Better bike/pedestrian safety infrastructure: Milwaukee Street, crossings at Highway 51, Milo Lane and Easley Lane, Marsh Road and Siggelkow Road, Wittwer Road, Starker Ave & and Deerwood/Acewood, Cottage Grove Road, Fair Oaks Drive, Sprecher to Sun Prairie Park/Ride, and Royster Oaks Drive and Maher Avenue		
Connectivity (Road/Bike/Ped): **Issues** • Unimproved section of Monona Drive is a critical gap in the bike network • Monona's "No bike on sidewalk" signs are incorrect • People do not ride in shoulder due to safety concerns on Monona Drive **Opportunities** • Improve Connection in various areas like Glacial Drumlin trail (see detailed feedback summary for specific areas) • Bike paths and mountain bike trails (including nature-immersed trails) • Improve access to lakes and jobs across the city	51	(OC) (PM1) (FG) (BW) (NW)
Street Design: • Convert Highway 51 to urban boulevard with more housing and businesses, connect Tompkins through Highway 51, add more pedestrian access to frontage roads, reduce footprint, noise, traffic, number of lanes, and increase pedestrian/bike safety and access	10	(OC) (PM1 (FG) (MM) (BW)

• Convert intersection to roundabout on: Diamond Dr and Portland Pkwy, Cottage Grove Rd and Meadowlark Drive, Agriculture Drive and Femrite Drive, • Extend Cottage Grove Rd median on across Vernon Ave and Inwood Way to only allow right in/right out • Add road diet and expand sidewalk into multi-use path on Agriculture Drive and Marsh Road • Less parking and shoulder bike lanes on E Buckeye Road • Keep street parking to both sides of Wittwer Road north of playfields • Closed intersections at every new project		
Transit: **Assets** • Love C2 bus line as an alternate to biking **Issues** • No Stop Zone from Buckeye makes transit less accessible/usable • Limited bus routes and infrequent service, especially on Milwaukee Street and weekends—hinder mobility, particularly for individuals with disabilities and families without cars. **Opportunities** • Extend routes and make efficient (ex. Add stop in front of Monona Grove High School) • Connect Metro D and C • Reduction of BRT stops limits use of Madison Metro • Additional rapid transit lines connect Madison and Monona both East and West of Highway 51	11	(OC) (PM1) (FG) (MM) (BW)

• Re-add service to the Meadows Apartments on N Thompson Drive and Swanton Road • Third BRT route which loops around Lake Monona connecting Atwood Ave, Monona Dr, W Broadway, Moorland Ave, Rimrock, John Noland, and share 151 with lines A and B up to First Street • Enhanced bus stops with shelter, benches, and lighting • Improve Inter city transit infrastructure (routes and stations) • Light rail • Integrate Metro tap-to-ride with Bcycle membership		
Street/Services: • Improve transit to intercity bus services (ex. transit between busses and new Amtrak station) • Shelter is minimal and need updating at Dutch Mill Park and Ride • Add B-cycle rack at Atwood Ave at Cottage Grove Road and Claire Street at Cottage Grove next to Lussier Family East YMCA	4	(OC) (PM1)
Neighborhoods and Housing		
Neighborhood Design: • Alleyways are great for safe cycling, slower speeds and trash collection, like seeing diversity in housing design • More developments that foster neighborhood connection and provide family-oriented resources • Implement developments with character and Universal Design into housing and public buildings • Improve accessibility and design of Glendale Neighborhood	19	(OC) (FG) (MM) (BW)

• Benches in neighborhoods		
Affordability: • Build new, diverse, and quality affordable housing (ex. More than large apartment complexes, not income restricted, with greenspaces) • Rising rent costs and long waitlists for affordable and accessible units are key frustrations • Property taxes keep rising (would like exemption for homeowners above a certain age)		
Diverse Housing: • Building multifamily units, one-level or first-floor homes, and housing for seniors and people with disabilities. • Increase moderate income housing options • Less luxury housing and more missing middle housing • Love increases in housing density to make room for people and nature		
Housing Programs: Add housing programs for first time home buyers or rent to own cheaper than renting apartments	1	(MM)
School Comments [staff note: the City does not control school attendance areas or school expansions]: • Before and after school is not appropriately managed and kids are running through the streets at Monona Grove High School and Kennedy School • Poor performance and unsafe school environments are causing families to move out of Madison	3	(OC) (MM)
Economy and Opportunity		
Businesses/Economic Development/Jobs: **Issues**	7	(OC) (FG)

• Scarcity of local businesses and numerous empty storefronts on Milwaukee Street • Small businesses face barriers to occupying commercial space • Many struggle to find stable, local jobs—particularly undocumented residents who face additional hurdles • Undocumented immigrants face significant employment barriers **Opportunities** • Assess the area south of Atlas Ave. and north of Cottage Grove Road to see if denser commercial/office space is viable with an Economic Feasibility Study • Improve Small business development and retail presence in the neighborhood • Want employment diversity beyond cleaning, food service, and warehouse jobs • Expand employment opportunities beyond large organizations to provide employment opportunities and tax base		
Culture and Character		
Neighborhood Gathering Spaces (Third Spaces)/Destinations and Activation: • More places beyond home and work that promote connection, such as community centers, cultural gathering spaces, and youth areas • Neighborhood lacks a gathering indoor/outdoor space throughout the year without barriers to entry (like needing to purchase something) in Heistand Neighborhood and Rolling Meadows Neighborhood • Need neighborhood serving destinations and activation in: Milwaukee Street beyond Hiestand Park, Atwood Ave at Cottage Grove Road, E Buckeye neighborhood/corridor, Unity Church lot (along Tompkins Drive), Strip mall needs a facelift like Ace Hardware building, more activation, and use parking lot space next door • More inclusive school events, cultural gatherings, and outdoor neighborhood activities • Neighborhood posting/bulletin board in Honeysuckle Park and for Meadows's residents	14	(OC) (PM1) (FG) (BW) (NW)
Library: Love Pinney Library	2	(OC)

		(PM1)
Gateway streets: Have proper gateway streets/ intersections for the City like on Broadway and Dutch Mill	1	(OC)
Arts: • Support the arts • More affordable artist spaces	1	(MM)

Green and Resilient		
Parks: **Assets** • Appreciate existing parks (e.g., Kennedy playground, sledding hill) • Monona Golf Course is a valuable green space for outdoor activities year-round for both humans and animals • Acewood Park is a great open space with an enjoyable bike path, and it is a joy when the goats graze the park • Great park and open space in Kenndy Park, Edna Taylor Park, Heritage Sanctuary, Heistand Park, and Eastmoreland Park • Ontario Park is a heavily utilized, popular park for neighbors to bring children. These pocket parks feel safe and pleasant for neighbors to frequent. **Opportunities** • Increase and prioritize urban green spaces, park access, greenspaces/nature, trails for hiking, and community gardens spaces	36	(OC) (PM1) (FG) (MM) (BW)

• Want more revitalized and accessible green spaces • More secure, small dog areas • Add mountain bike trails of more than 3 miles in one location • Improve playgrounds and parks (ex. Outdoor recreations, splash pad) • Would be nice for a food forest in Lake Edge Park • Need like for path that diverges through Ontario Park • Would like renovated park shelter, dedicated walking path throughout the wooded area and connect to the lower part of park, and clearer signage about walking in woods during Frisbee Golf season • Add a labyrinth garden or some other attractive outdoor amenity (that doesn't disturb nearby neighbors) to McGinnis Park • Convert basketball court into a full court or more versatile court at Portland Park • Add pocket park in area next to water tower on Spaanem Avenue and Allis Avenue • Convert portion of Eastmoreland Park into dog park		
Stormwater: • Stormwater from Milwaukee Street does not have a drain at the Corner of Milwaukee Street and Milo Lane, • There are no drains on Boyton Place causing Hamlet Place and Milo Lane to flood	2	(OC) (PM1)
Wildlife/Invasive Species: Love wildlife along Lake Edge, O.B. Sherry Park is great place to see wildlife, Birds frequent these waters, appreciate the native plants here on Capitol City Path just west of Dempsey Road, monitor green spaces for invasive species	3	(OC) (PM1)
Trees/Greenery: Add trees along length of Highway 51 to provide shade and curb speeding and along Acewood Boulevard, would like thoughtful approach to future tree canopy (street lined streets and bike/ped paths)	3	(OC) (MM)

Environment Sustainability: Grow thoughtfully and sustainably, go more green, more infrastructure to combat hot temperatures (splash pads, outdoor cooling stations, pergola), clean lakes and river	4	(MM) (BW)
Effective Government		
Intergovernmental coordination: Work with Monona to connect bike paths and bus routes	3	(OC) (BW)
Health and Safety		
Sidewalks: **Opportunities** • Widen sidewalks across the railroad and add turning radius on Dempsey Road near Capitol City Trail • Add sidewalks to Lake Edge Boulevard, Maher Avenue, south side of E Buckeye Road, Monona Court, north side of Milwaukee Street between W Corporate Drive and Regas Road, S Stoughton Rd • Extend sidewalk which runs through parking lot north of the Pinney Library across Pinney St • Better sidewalks	7	(OC) (FG) (MM)
Litter/Debris: Glass and metal debris on Bridge across and surrounding blocks of Agriculture Drive and Tradesmen Drive and bridge connecting Milo Ln and Stein Ave	3	(OC) (NW)
Neighborhood Safety: **Issues** • Incidents of shootings and general feelings of being unsafe ○ Gun shots prevalent in area along east of N Thompson Drive and North of Swanton Road and the Hiestand neighborhood • Drug use in Hiestand Park	9	(OC) (PM1) (FG) (MM)

• Car theft and burglars in the Heistand neighborhood • Need for urgent care, clinics, and culturally responsive care for aging and disabled populations **Opportunities** • Neighborhood watch programs, foot or bike patrols, and infrastructure to slow traffic • Community-centered, preventive safety measures and wellness initiatives **Environmental Safety:** • Road noise, and poor lighting near schools and parks create unsafe conditions • Manage airport noise (F35s?) **Lighting:** Poorly lit areas compromise safety		
Other		
Other – Planning Process: Commenting map is a great idea	1	(OC)

Key for Feedback Source

(OC) Online Commenting Map

(PM1) Kickoff Public Meetings | Virtual & In-Person

(BW) Madison Bike Week

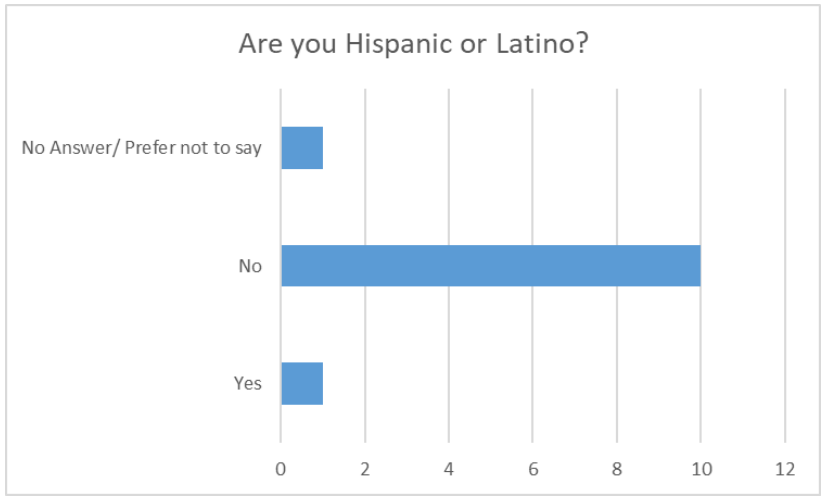
(MM) Madison Madness

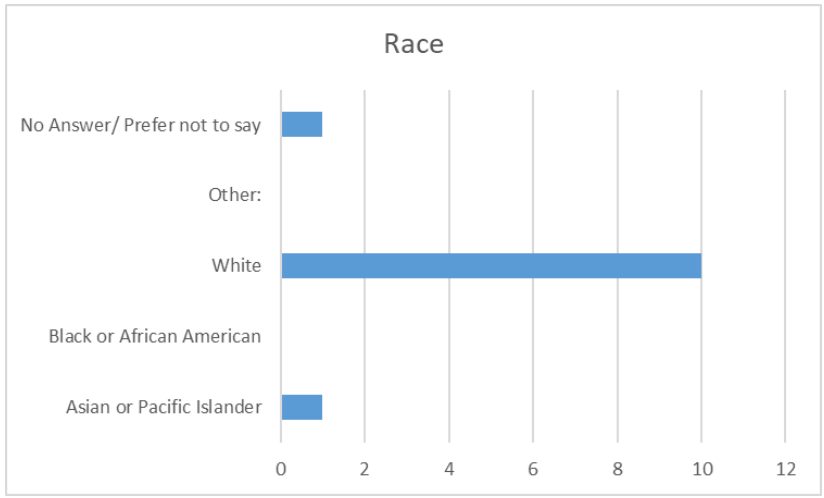
(NW) Hiestand Neighborhood Walk & Talk

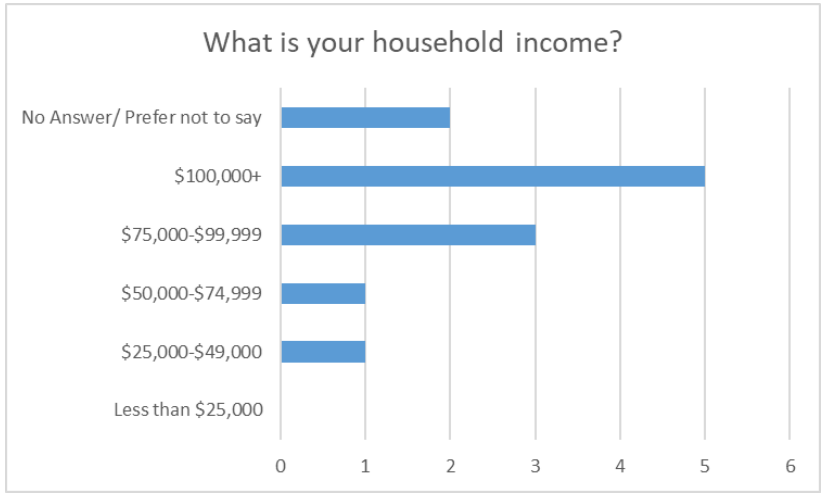
(FG) Focus Groups

December 4, 2024 In-Person Meeting Attendee Demographics:

Public meeting attendee responses to demographics questions is optional. About a third of the approximately 35 attendees from the Southeast Area Plan meetings opted to provide demographic information. That information is summarized below.






What is your household income?
No Answer/ Prefer not to say
$100,000+
$75,000-$99,999
$50,000-$74,999
$25,000-$49,000
Less than $25,000
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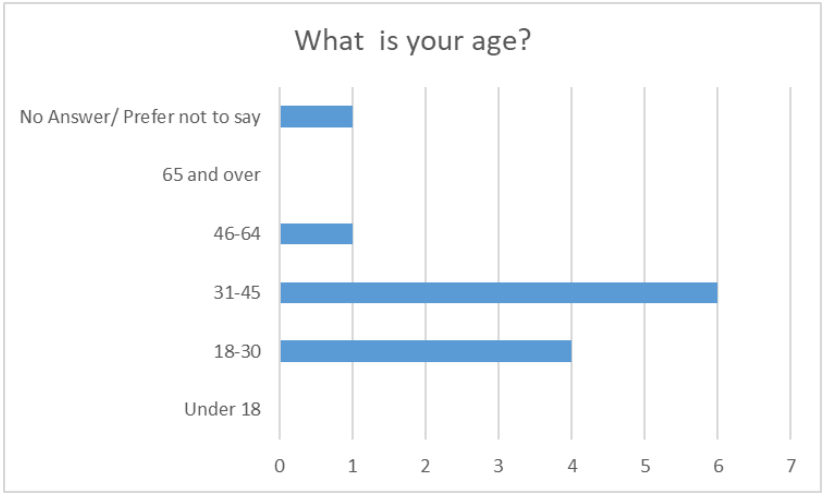
2
3
4
5
6


What is your age?
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31-45
18-30
Under 18
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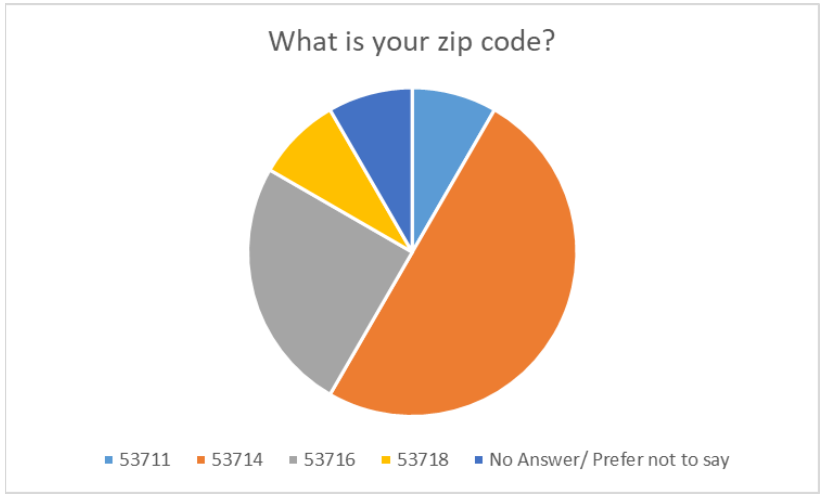
2
3
4
5
6
7


What is your zip code?
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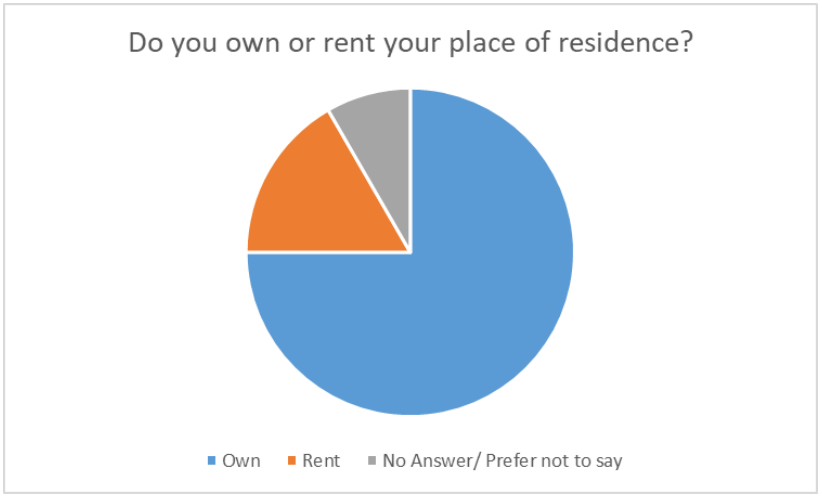
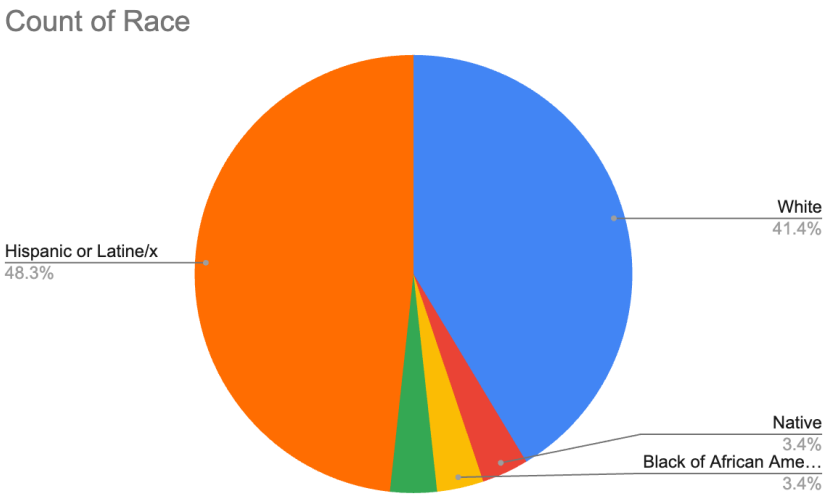
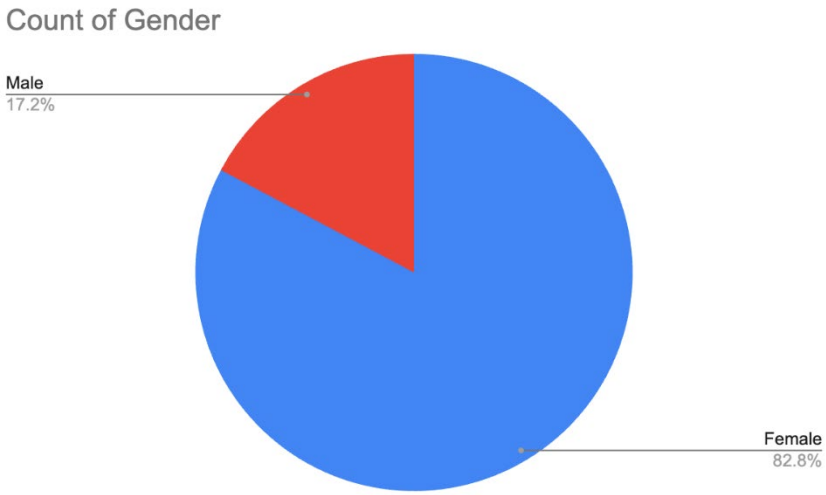
53718
No Answer/ Prefer not to say


Do you own or rent your place of residence?
Own
Rent
No Answer/ Prefer not to say

From Focus Group Report