



City of Renton

2023 Resident Survey Results

August 7, 2023

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VP of Insights and Solutions



Brief Overview of Nathan and ComEngage, a Division of ReconMR

ComEngage

We focus on providing public agencies with best in class community engagement with residents through a variety of methodologies. ComEngage also conducted the Resident Survey in 2017.

ReconMR, a survey research company specializing in high quality data collection with 20+ years in business, acquired ComEngage in 2023.

Nathan Wiggin

17 years of market research experience, most of it for NWRG and ComEngage. Also worked with Microsoft and the University of Washington. Has managed dozens of community surveys, primarily in WA, CO, and ID



Why perform a community survey?

- Set and compare benchmarks
- Help gauge service satisfaction
- Better understand residents' perceptions and vision for the future
- Provide data to assist in decision-making, budgeting, and setting priorities
- Best practice is to conduct surveys every two years



Categorization of questions

- Quality of Life
- Sense of Community
- Use of Tax Dollars
- Environment
- Travel
- City Priorities
- Challenges
- Special Events
- Inclusion Efforts
- Police
- Safety
- Emergency Preparedness
- Code Enforcement
- Communication Channels
- Interactions with City Employees



Questionnaire Design

- The questionnaire design process began with input from the Executive Leadership Team (ELT).
 - Evaluated past Renton questionnaires and surveys conducted by neighboring cities. Followed industry best practices and modified questions to fit the needs of the Renton community and priorities.
 - City leadership reviewed the questions and provided feedback.
 - Finally, the questionnaire was reviewed by the Mayor and given final approval.
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- There were 64 performance-related questions customized for the 2023 Renton Resident Survey.
 - Most questions are measured on a 7-point scale, considered best practice for survey research.



Methodology

- 652 completed surveys
- Postcard invites mailed to a randomized sample of 12,500 Renton addresses with QR Code linked to the online survey and an individual Survey ID for each household.
- Invites reinforced and reminders sent by multiple modes of contact: text, email, and phone calls.
- The City conducted outreach to include hard-to-reach respondents.
- Survey available online and over the phone; 15 surveys completed by phone.
- The survey was available in 8 languages. 2 surveys were completed in Chinese. 3 were completed in Spanish. The rest were completed in English.
- Margin of error +/-3.8% at 95% confidence level. This means that if the study were duplicated in the same time frame, with a different set of respondents, 95 times out of 100, the results would be the same (+/- 3.8%).



Outreach for the 2023 Resident Survey

June 1 through July 23, 2023

In addition to the 12,500 postcards sent, the City brought attention to the Resident Survey through a variety of communication channels and activities.

- This Week in Renton e-newsletter
- Farmers Markets
- Neighborhood Picnics
- Summer Concerts
- Outdoor Movies
- Neighborhood Program Distribution List (emailed 30 different neighborhoods/groups)
- Banners in Facilities (City Hall, Community Center, Senior Center)
- Mayor's Inclusion Task Force (meetings, emails, flyers/posters, interviews)
- City Council
- City Departments (interactions with residents)





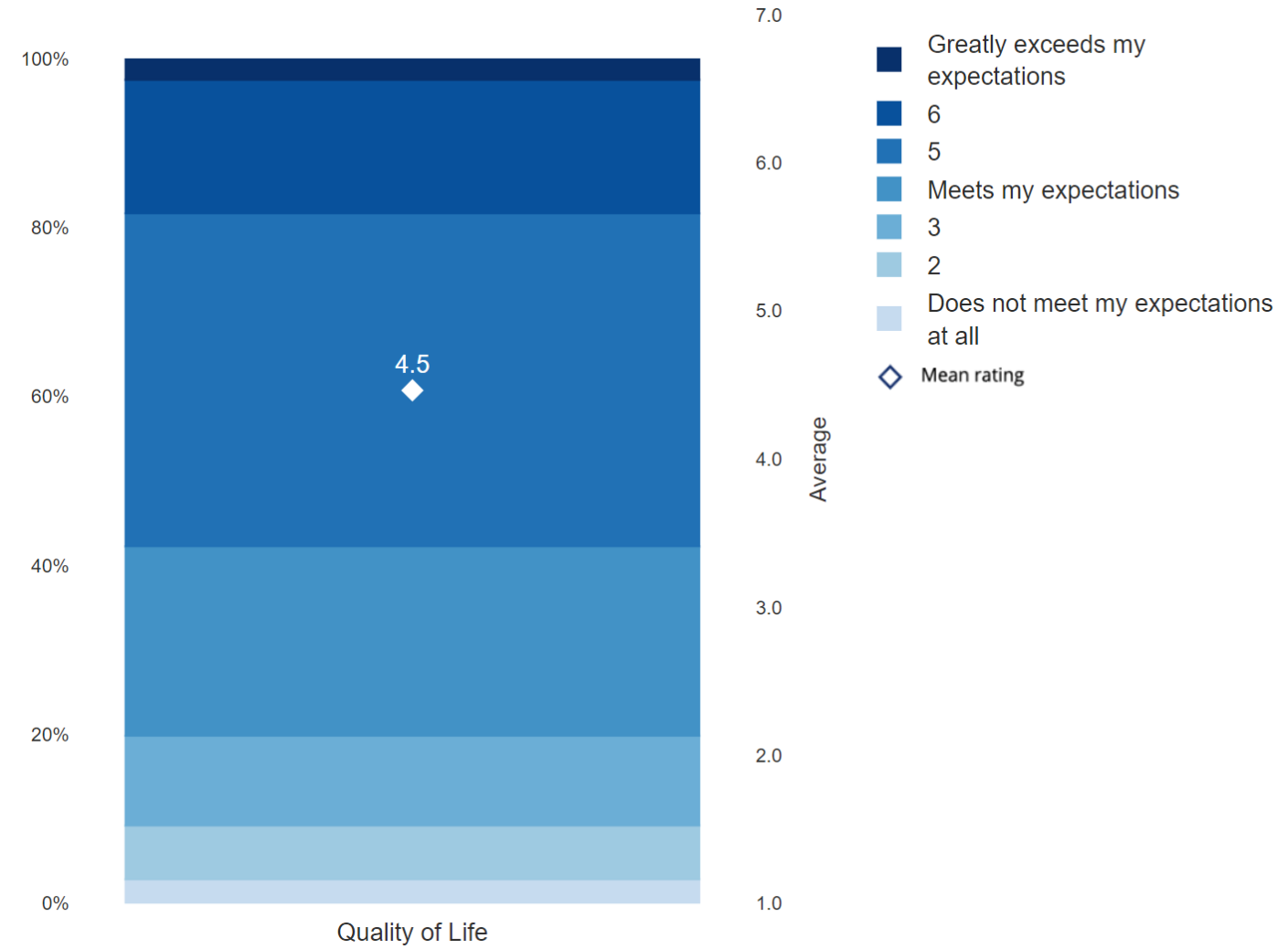
In Depth Interviews

- Purpose and methodology
- 7 conducted so far – list participants. Total of 10-12 will be conducted.
- In the following slides you will see some quotes selected from these interviews
- Key themes:
 - Genuine, early commitment to inclusion by the city.
 - Crime is problematic.
 - Downtown improving, small businesses.



Quality of Life

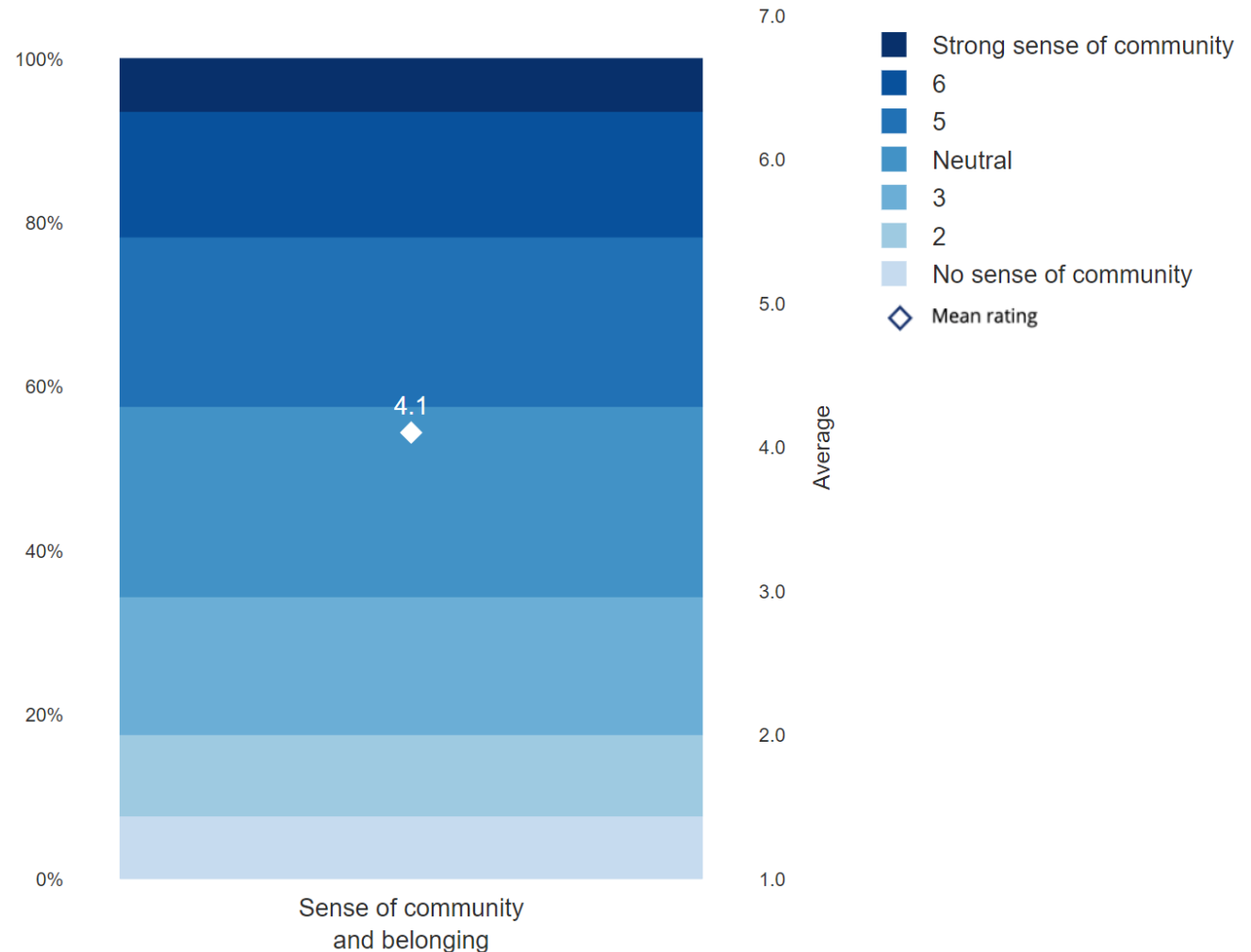
- 8 out of 10 residents say that the quality of life in Renton meets or exceeds their expectations
- Older residents tend to rate this higher





Sense of Community

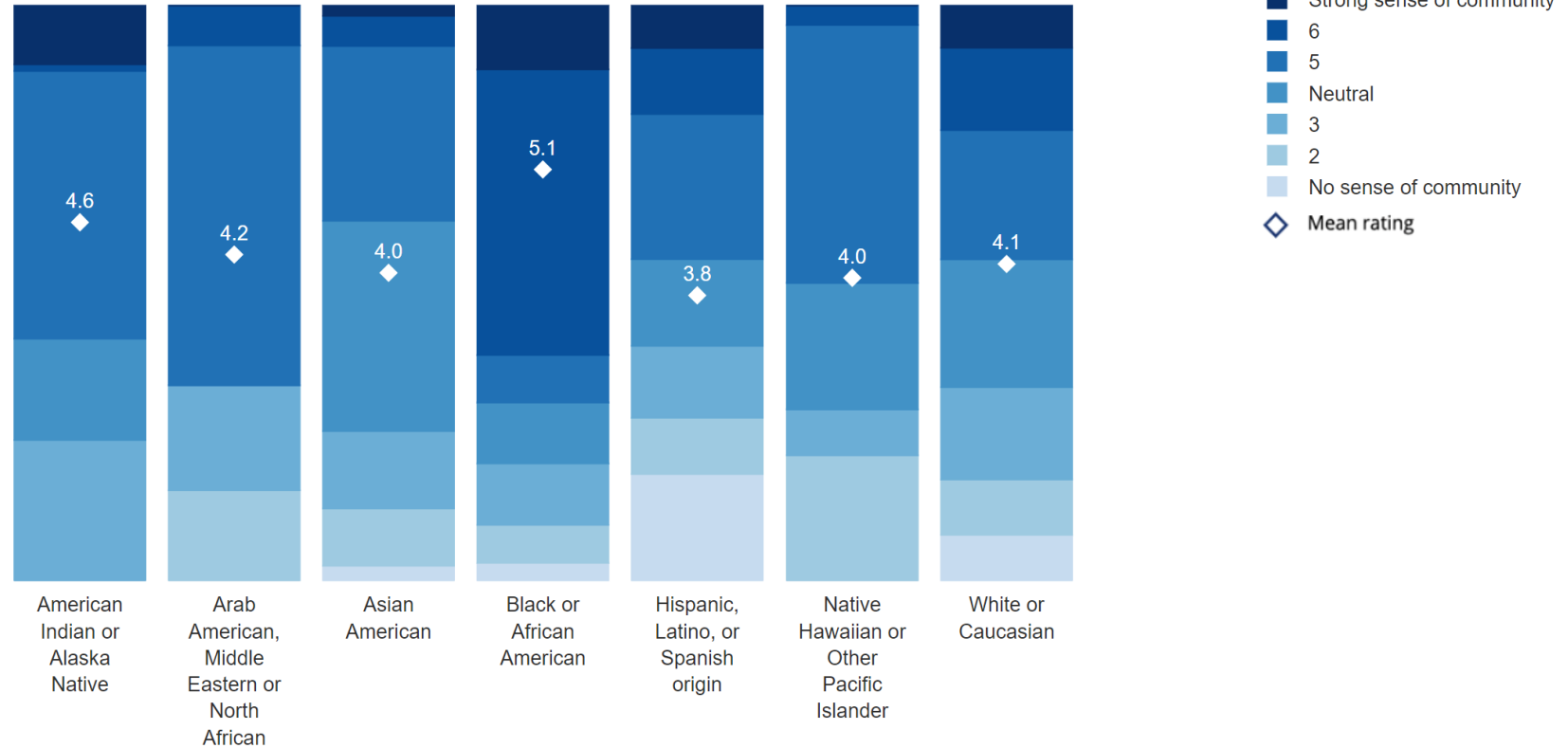
- Nearly half of residents say that they feel a sense of community in their neighborhood.
- Nearly a quarter of resident selected “neutral” for this question.
- Older residents tend to rate this higher





Sense of Community (continued)

- When we look at race, the sense of community rating is consistent with the overall average.
- Black/African American residents rated this higher.





"I think it's like any city, some people feel a real sense of community and some people don't. I know people that live in Renton who have pretty much zero interest in in being part of the broader community..."

..."But, engaging people like that with fun activities definitely can help build a sense of community. She actually came down to the Pride/Wine Walk event, which was cool. I don't know that she'd ever been downtown..."

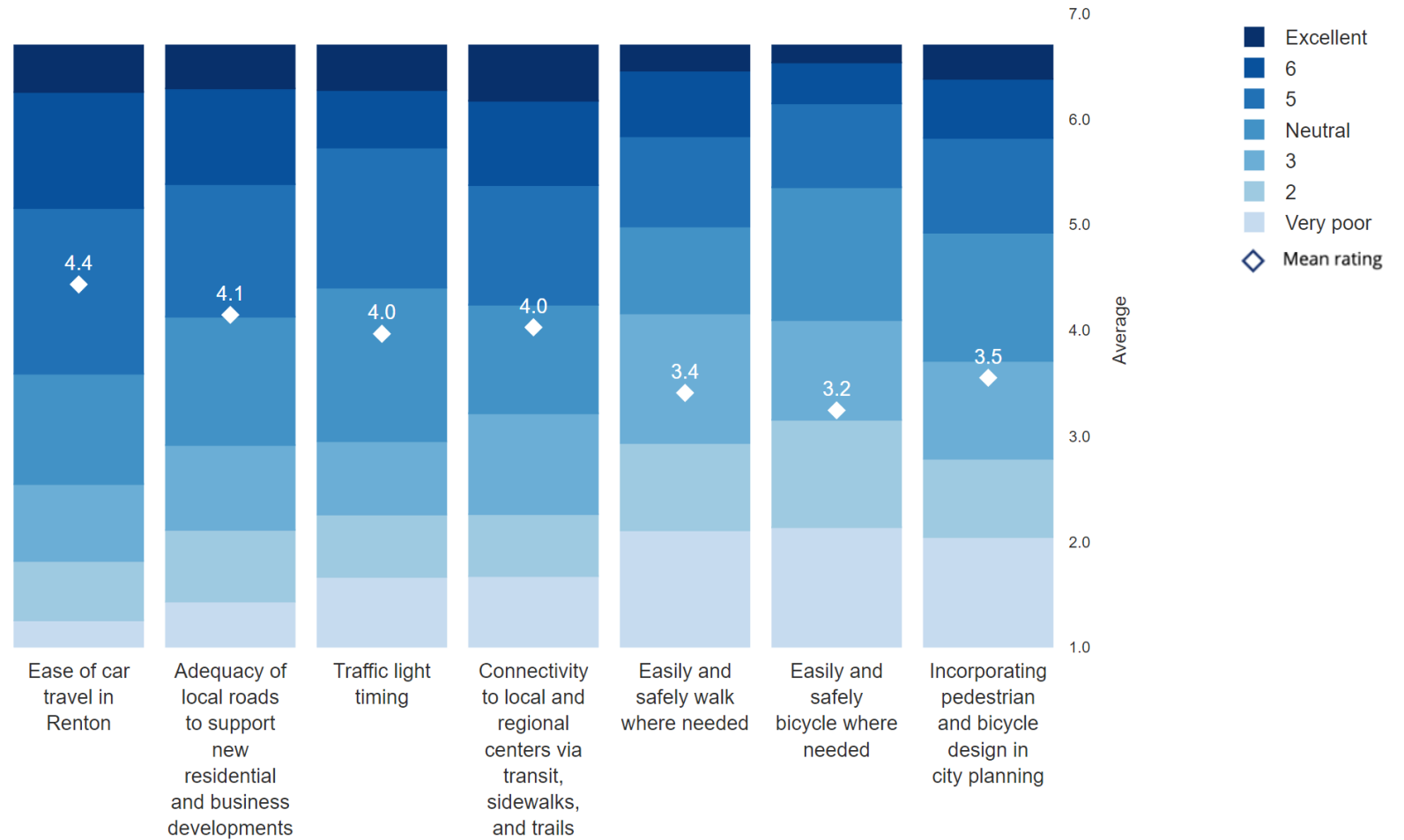
"So, those types of things can really help build community, especially if they're hosted in a central location. I think Renton has what it takes."

-- Mayor's Inclusion Task Force Member



Travel in Renton

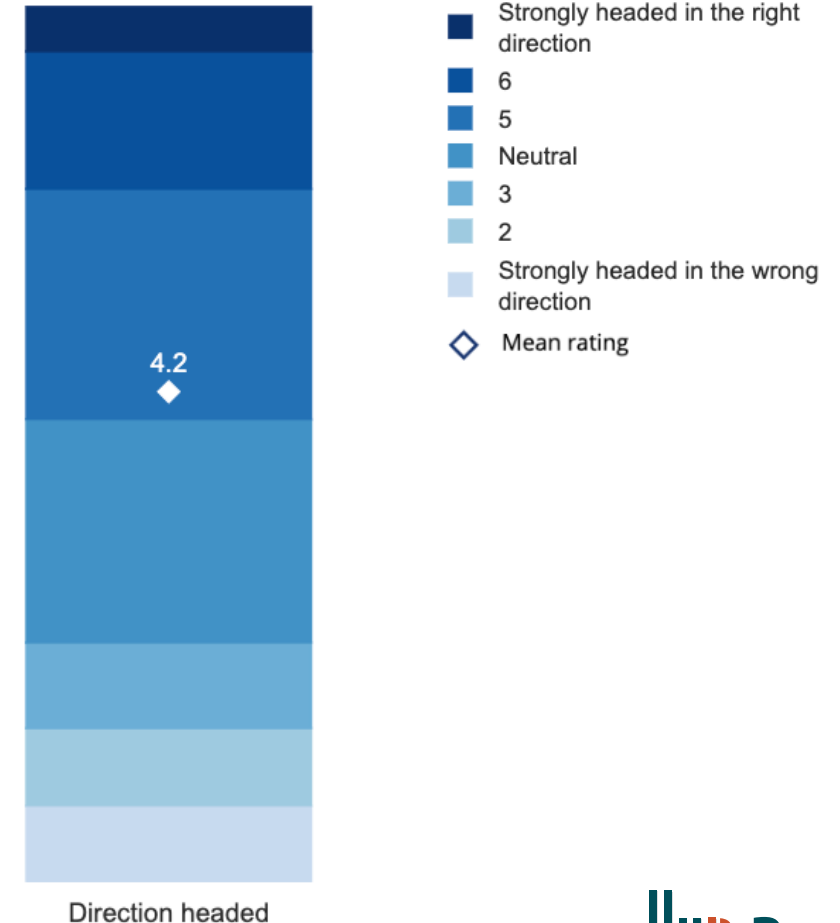
- About half of Renton residents gave above average ratings for the following:
 - Ease of car travel
 - Local roads
 - Traffic light timing
 - Transit connectivity
- Room for improvement...
 - Pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure





Direction the City is Headed

- Over half of residents said they feel the City is headed in the right direction.
- Older residents tend to rate this higher





There has been good work done to make Renton a great place to live and work. Businesses are also doing well. They've started doing well and are headed in the right direction, I'd say. It's still a work in progress."

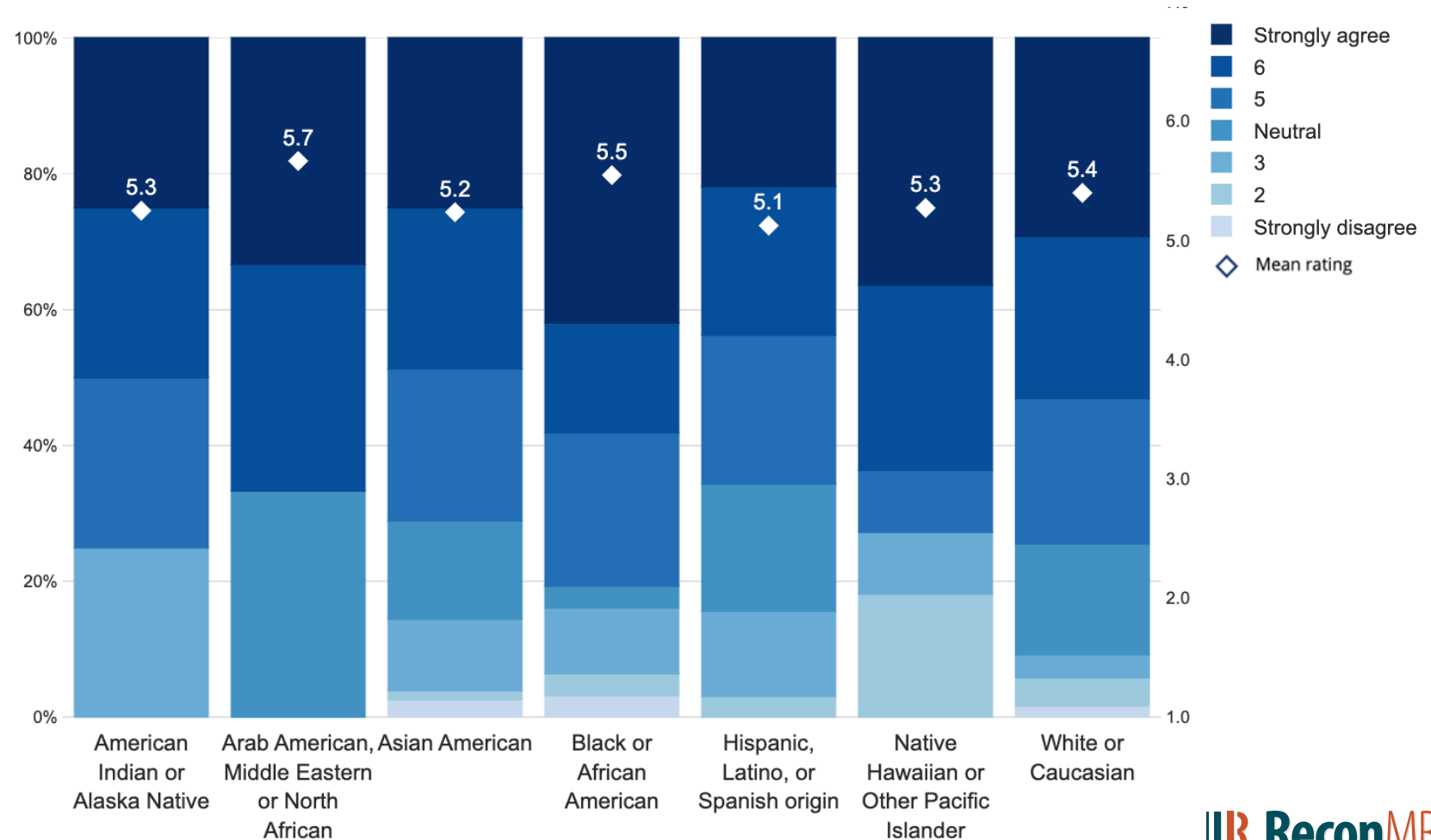
--Mayor's Inclusion Task Force Member

"I like what they're doing now on Sunset Boulevard. I think that's about 500 units of apartments. That's a very good sign of growth, economically. That will also help promote the businesses in the area and providing affordable housing to families. They have the library there and the park and improvements in the roads too." -- Mayor's Inclusion Task Force Member



City Sponsored Events Build a Sense of Community

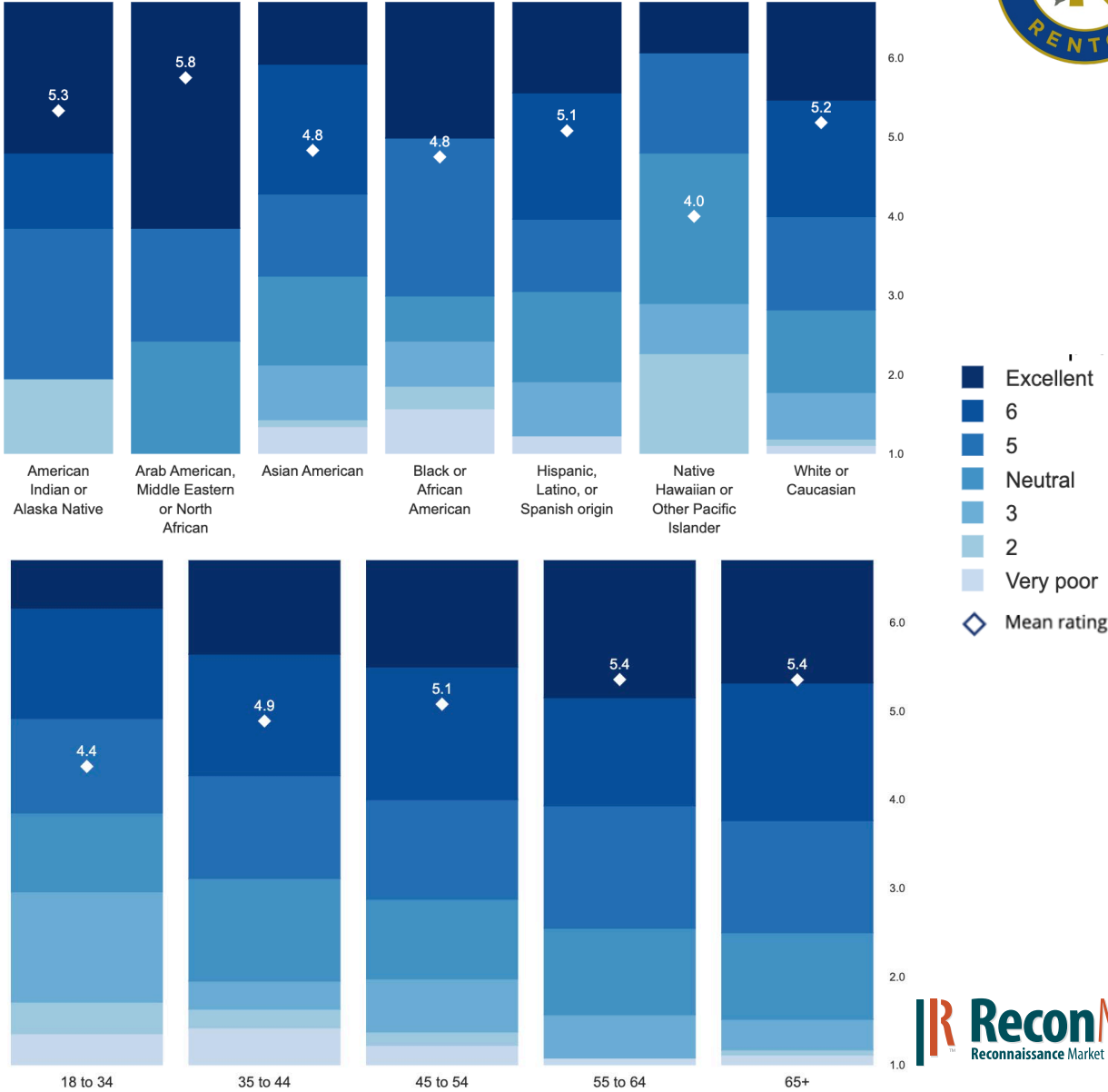
- Regardless of race, a majority of Renton residents agree that City sponsored events build a sense of community.
- 6 out of 10 said these events are a good use of public resources.



Efforts to Inform Diverse Language and Cultural Populations on City Services



- "Please rate the City of Renton's efforts to inform its diverse language populations on the various services provided by the City"
- 7 out of 10 residents rated this above average
- No statistically significant differences by race
- Residents age 18-34 rate this lower





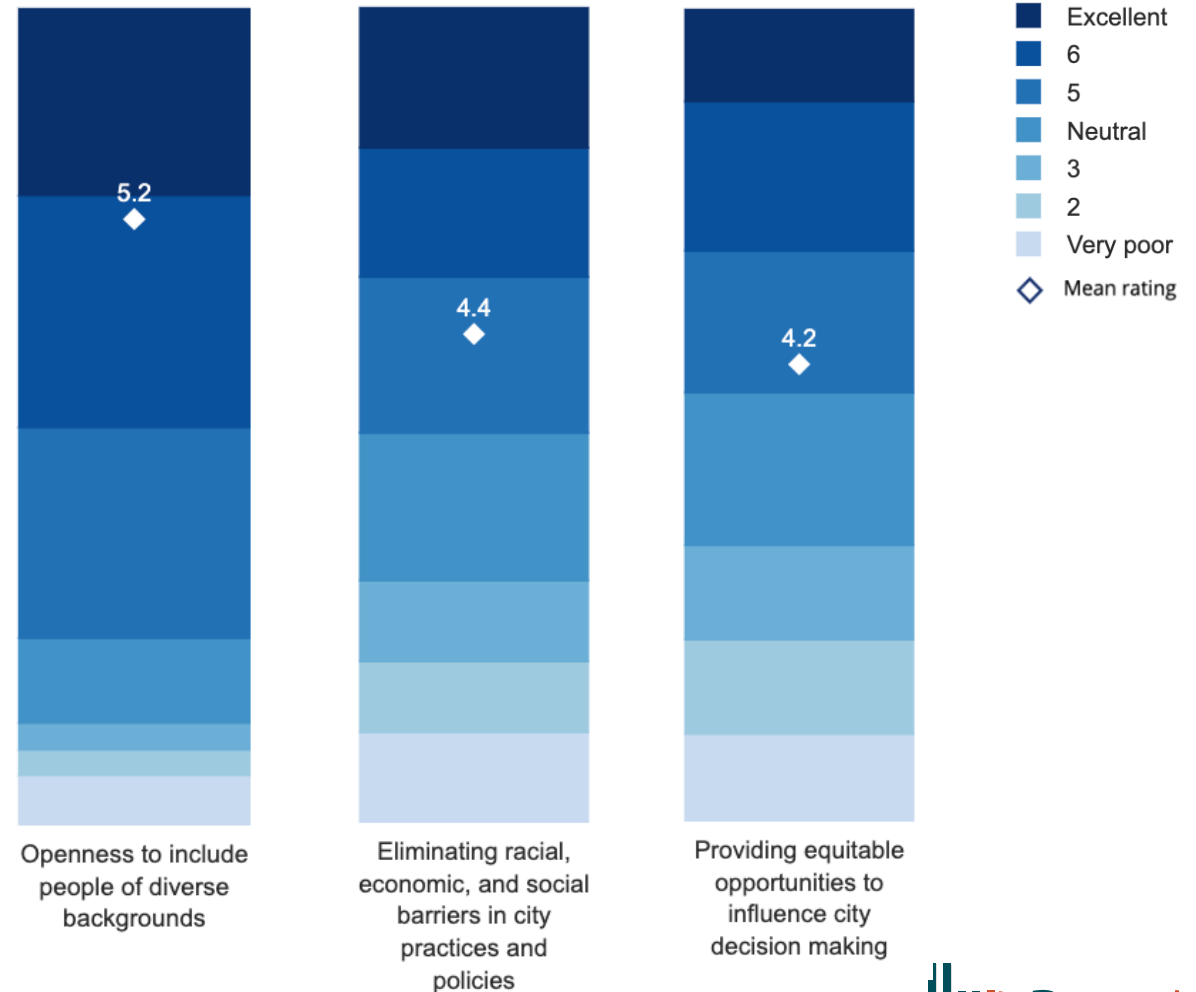
“Since I joined the Inclusion Task Force, I became very active with the city and I tried to encourage other Filipinos to be active as well by participating in their projects and programs, and especially in the multicultural festival where we learn to know other cultures, traditions, customs, and even religion. So my number one feeling is the feeling of belonging.”

--Mayor's Inclusion Task Force Member



Inclusion Ratings

- 8 out of 10 residents said that the City does a good job including people of diverse backgrounds
 - Arab-American/Middle Eastern/ North African and White/Caucasian residents rated this higher
- 6 out of 10 said the City is doing a good job of eliminating racial, economic, and social barriers in City practices and policies
 - White/Caucasian residents rated this higher
- 6 out of 10 said the City does a good job of providing equitable opportunities to influence City decision-making
 - Asian American and White/Caucasian residents rated this higher



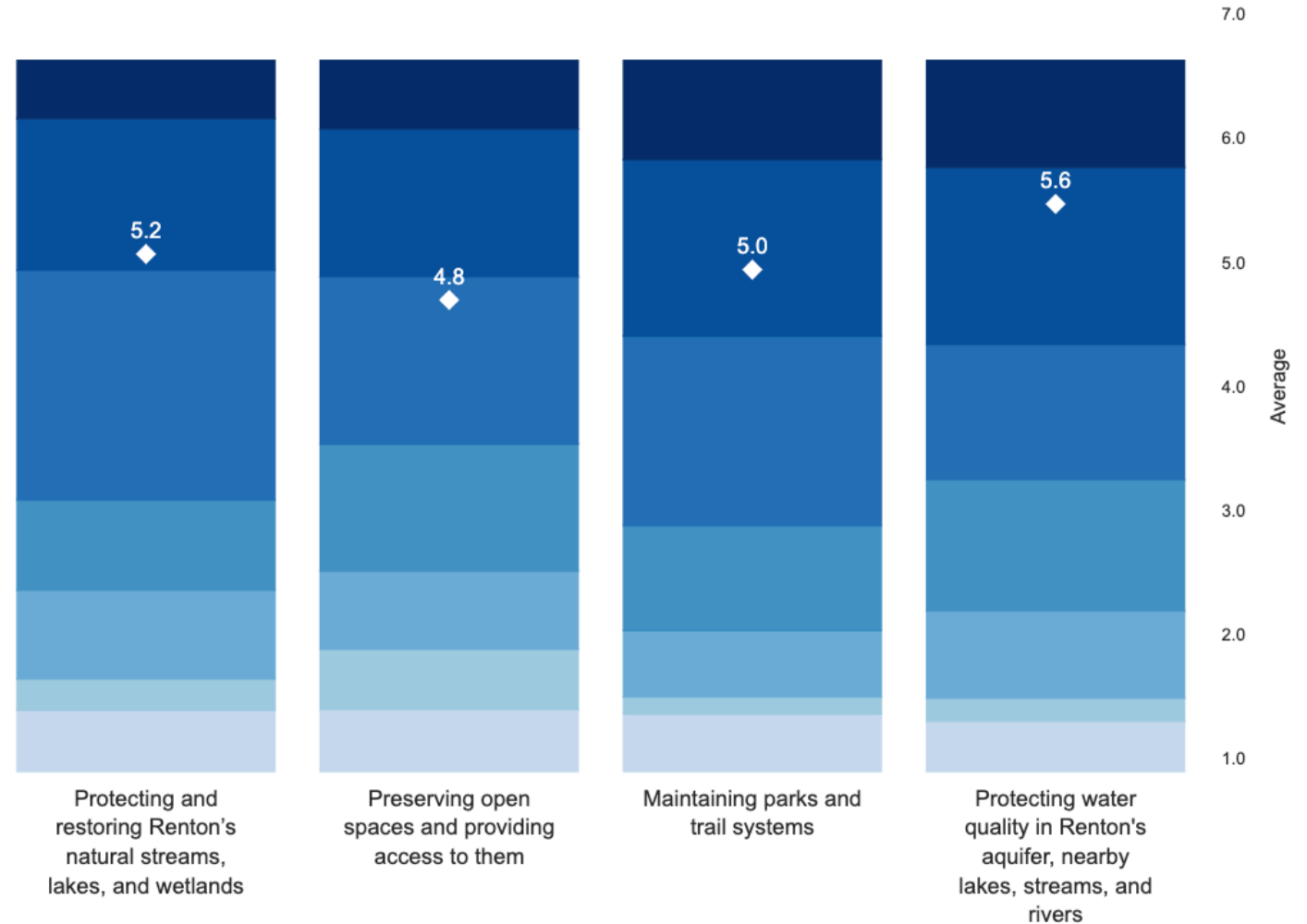


"I think the city has engaged with social justice as well as equity in terms of hiring. I don't have numbers on quantity, but I've seen with my own eyes that the change has started."
--Mayor's Inclusion Task Force Member



Environmental Stewardship

- The survey asked four questions pertaining to environmental preservation and open space.
- City of Renton scored above average on three out of four.





"Given the size of the city, I think we have a really good Parks and Recreation Department and a lot of options for residents and visitors to enjoy all the different outdoor areas and facilities..."

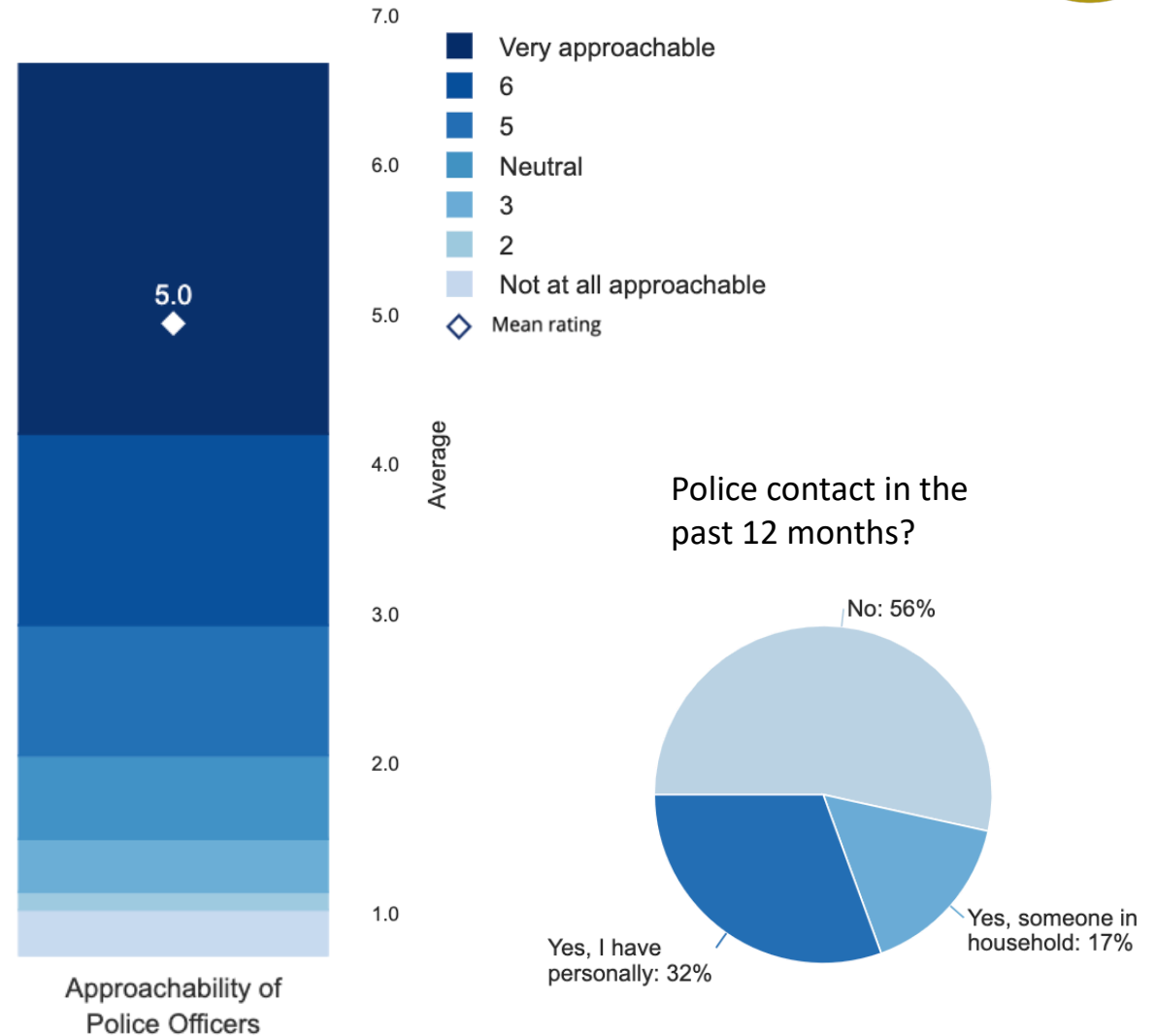
"...We have everything from Henry Moses Pool to Coulon Park to all of the parks that are remodeled right now."

-- Mayor's Inclusion Task Force Member



Renton Police

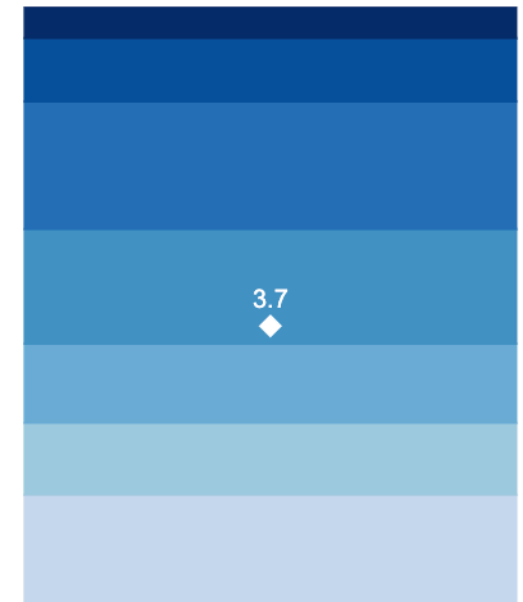
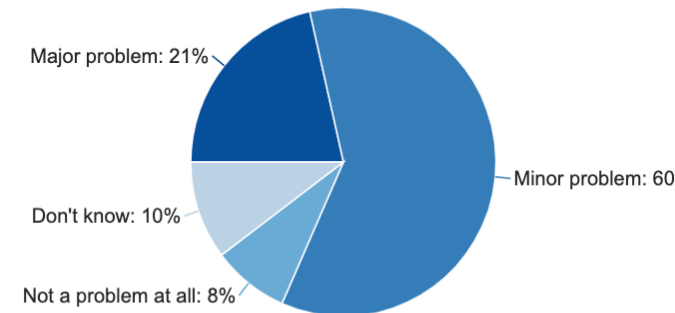
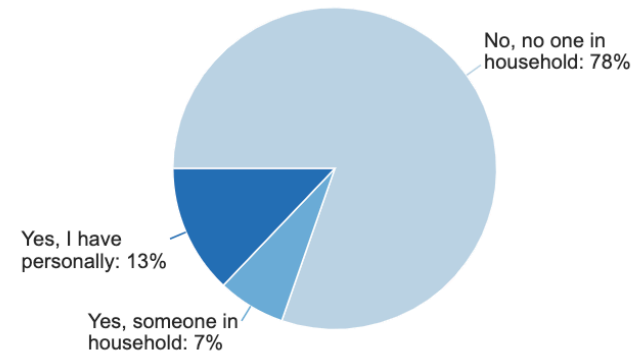
- 77% of residents rated Renton Police Officers as approachable
 - Arab-American/Middle Eastern/ North African and White/Caucasian residents rated this higher
 - Residents 65+ rated this higher than younger residents
- About half of Renton households have had contact with the Renton Police in the past 12 months.





Code Enforcement

- Household contact with Code Enforcement?
 - 20% of Renton households have had contact with Code Enforcement in the past 12 months.
- To what extent are dilapidated properties a problem in Renton?
 - 60% say this is a minor problem
 - 21% say this is a major problem
- 4 in 10 residents feel the City is doing a good job of enforcing codes related to property maintenance issues.

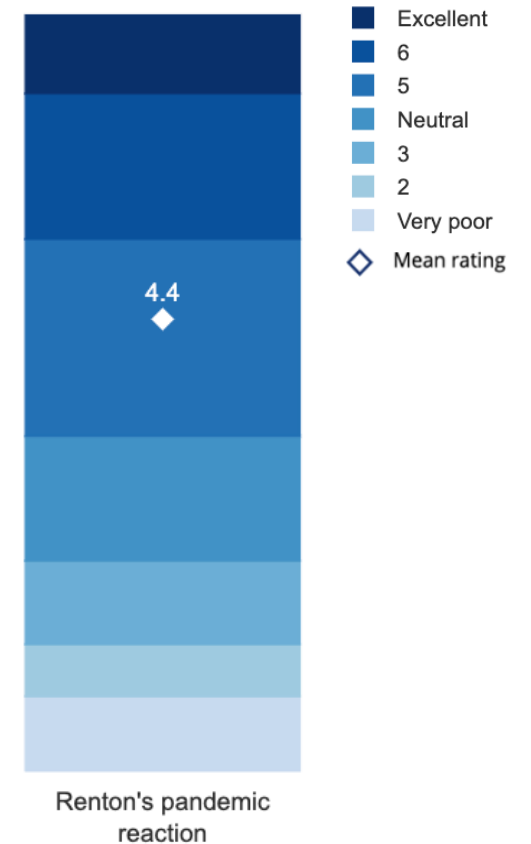
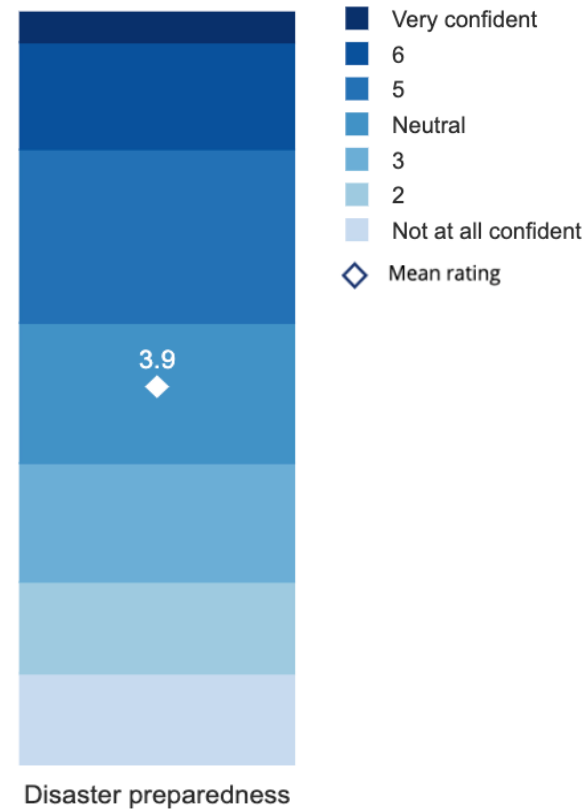


Rate Renton's efforts to enforce codes related to property maintenance issues



Confidence in Emergency Preparedness

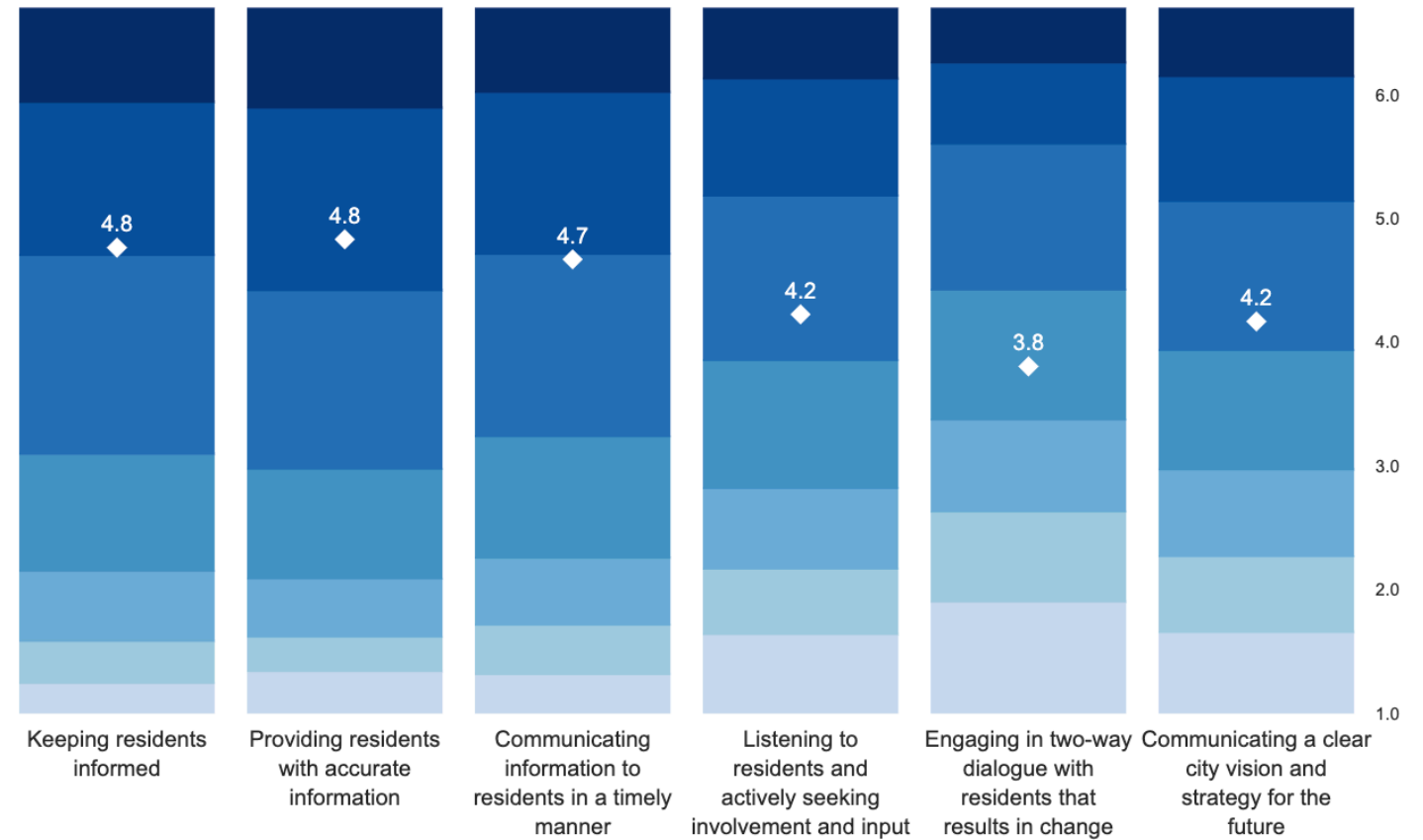
- 4 out of 10 residents are confident in Renton's ability to respond to disasters such as earthquakes and floods.
- 6 out of 10 residents feel the City did a good job of adjusting business operations during the Pandemic while maintaining a high level of service.





Communication Efforts

- *"How would you rate City of Renton on the following communication efforts?"*
- 6 out of 10 residents feel the City is doing a good job of keeping residents informed, and providing timely and accurate information
- Room for improvement:
 - Engaging in two-way dialogue





"Younger people are not particularly interested in getting involved in community issues, for the most part, but there's definitely an age gap with especially the kids who don't consume media in the same way...

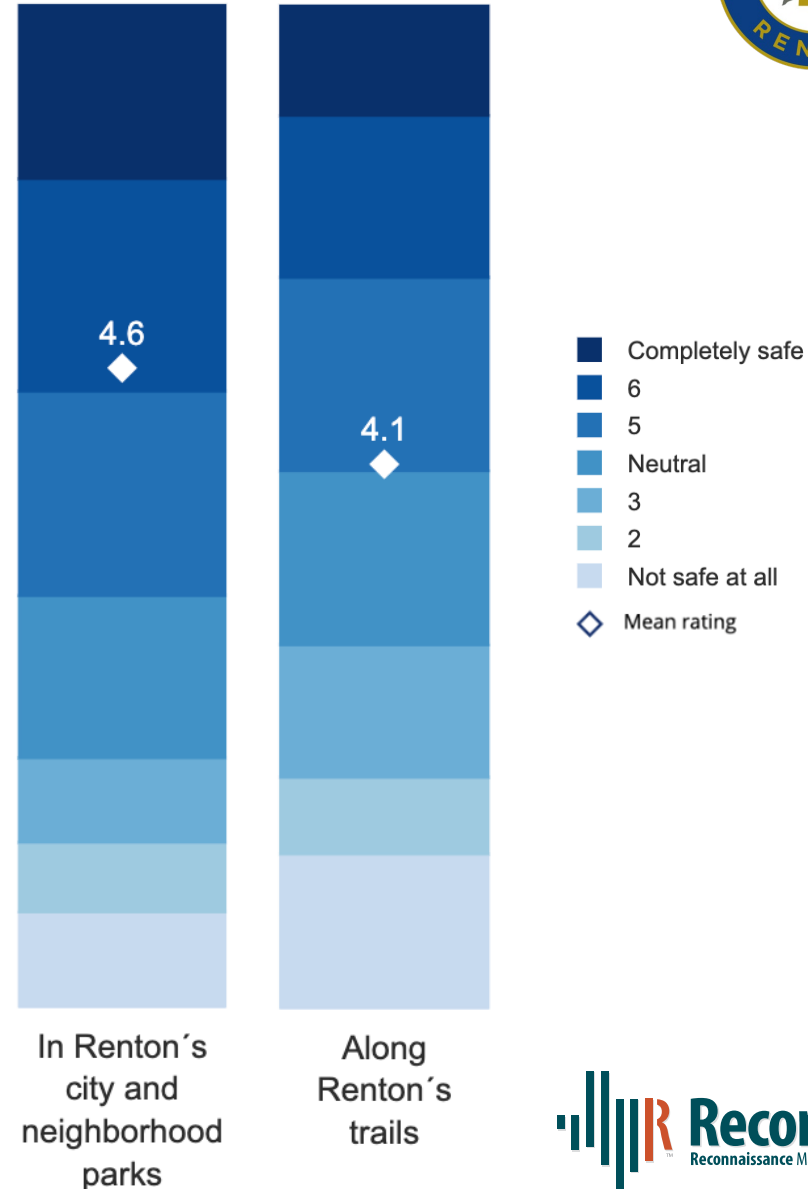
"...We have such a diverse population, a lot of those kids are in very diverse families and can bring back information to their parents or relatives that may not necessarily be exposed to city information."

--Mayor's Inclusion Task Force Member



Safety at parks and along trails

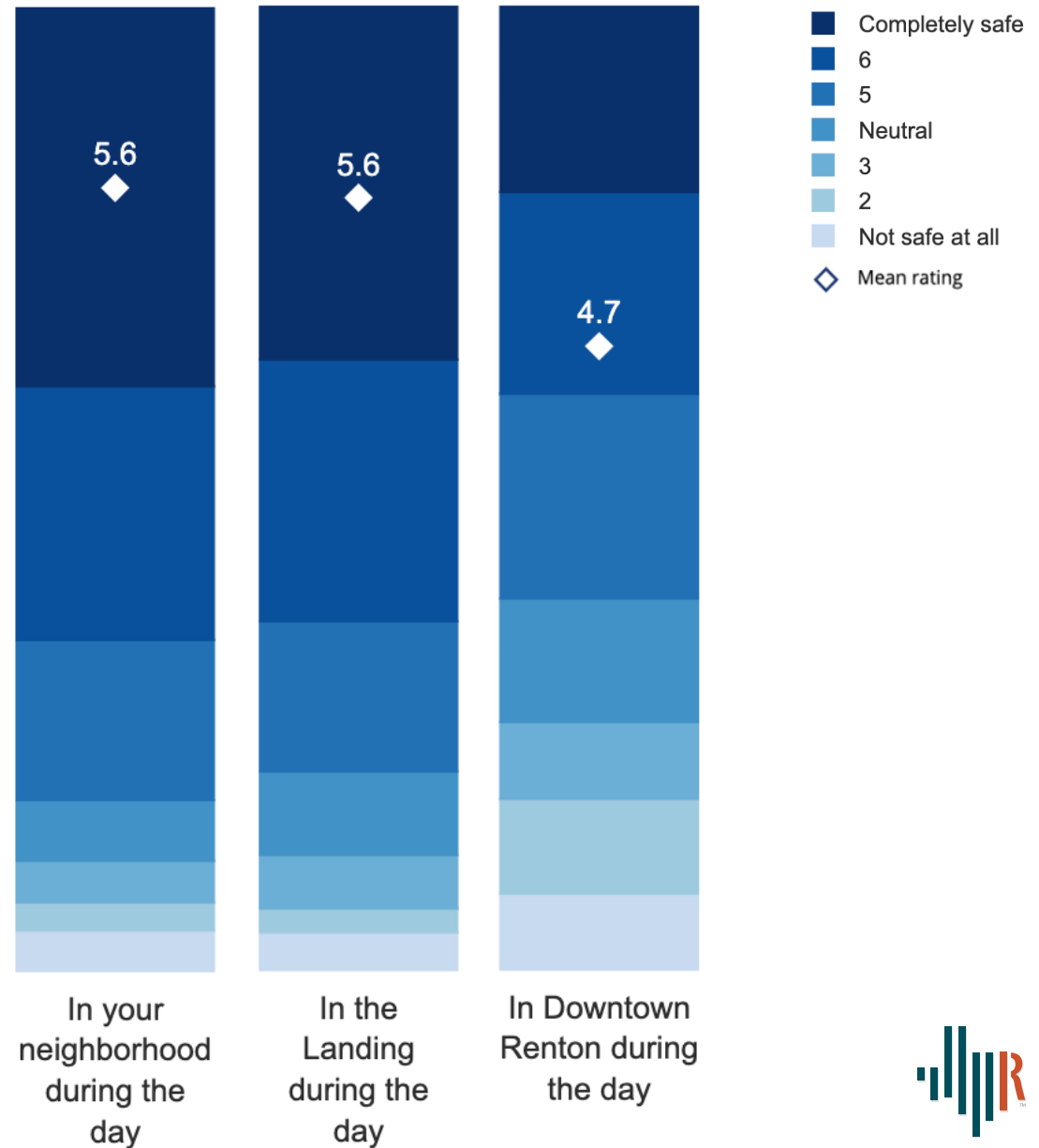
- 6 out of 10 residents said they feel safe in Renton's parks
- 5 out of 10 residents said they feel safe along Renton's trails





Safety during the day

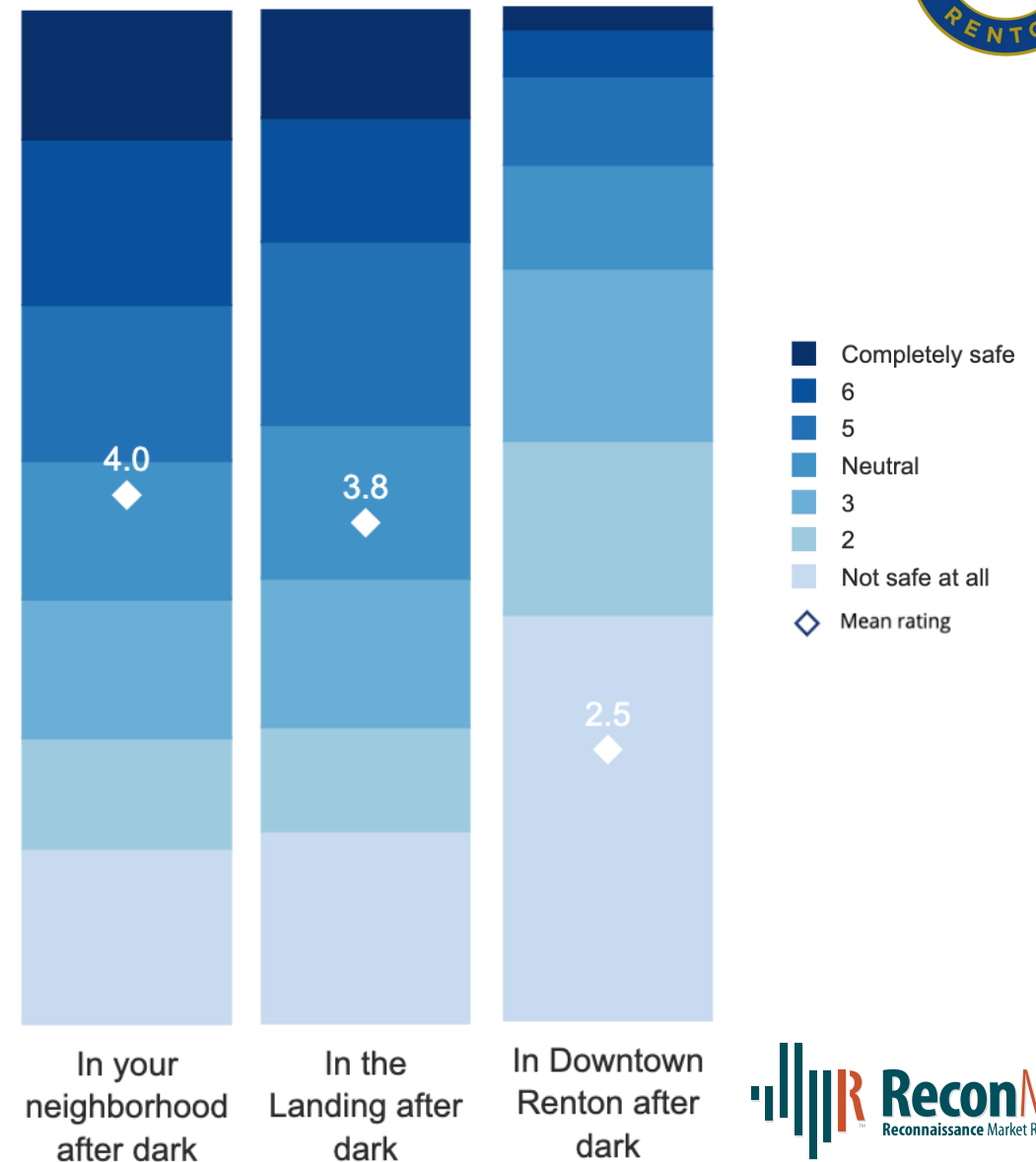
- 8 out of 10 residents said they feel safe in their neighborhood and in The Landing during the day
- 6 out of 10 residents said they feel safe in Downtown Renton during the day





Safety at night

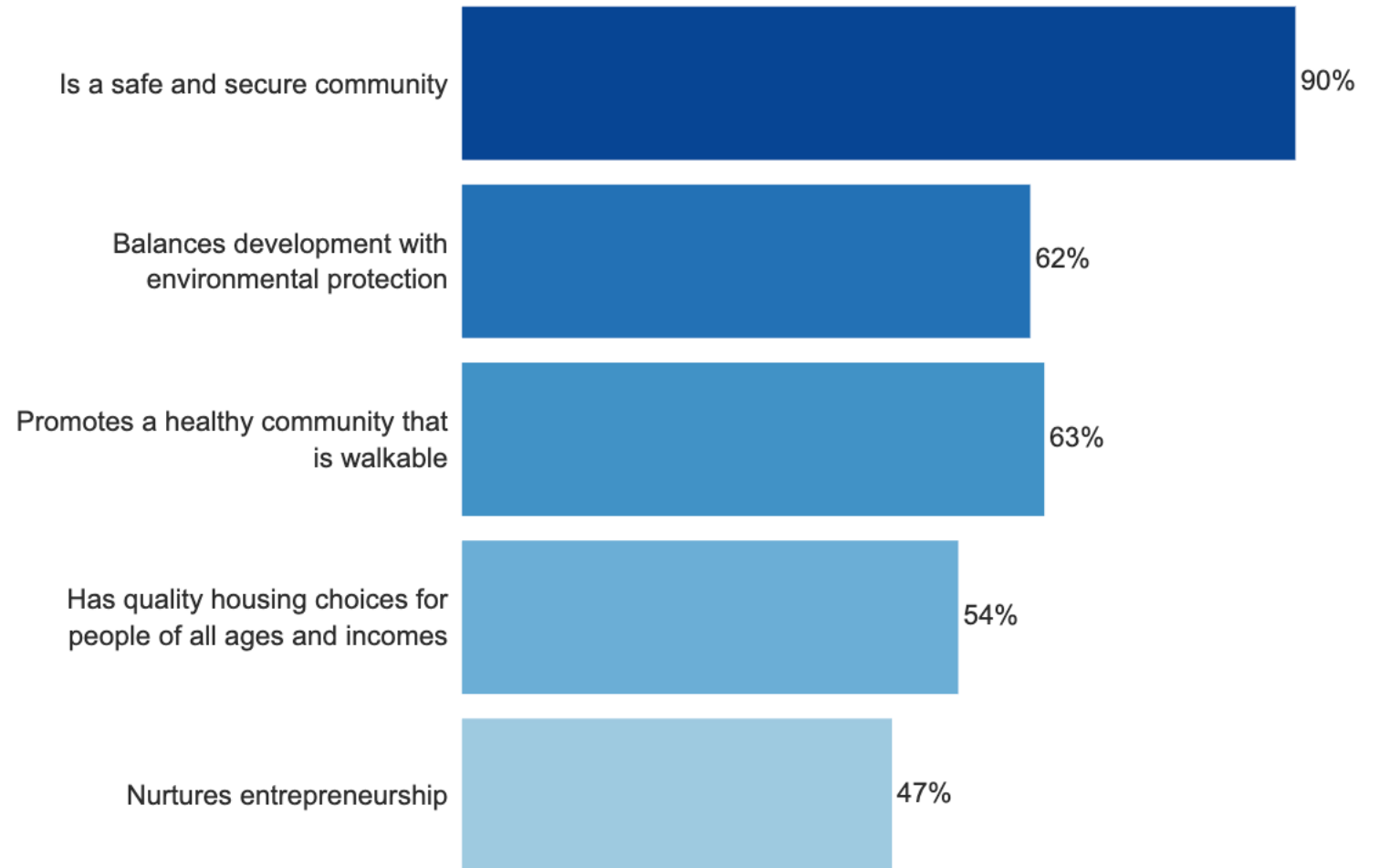
- 4 out of 10 residents said they feel safe in their neighborhood and in The Landing at night
- 1 out of 10 residents said they feel safe in Downtown Renton at night
- *Of those who don't feel safe... Why?*
 - Fear of crime
 - Insufficient street lighting and sidewalks





Strategic Priorities

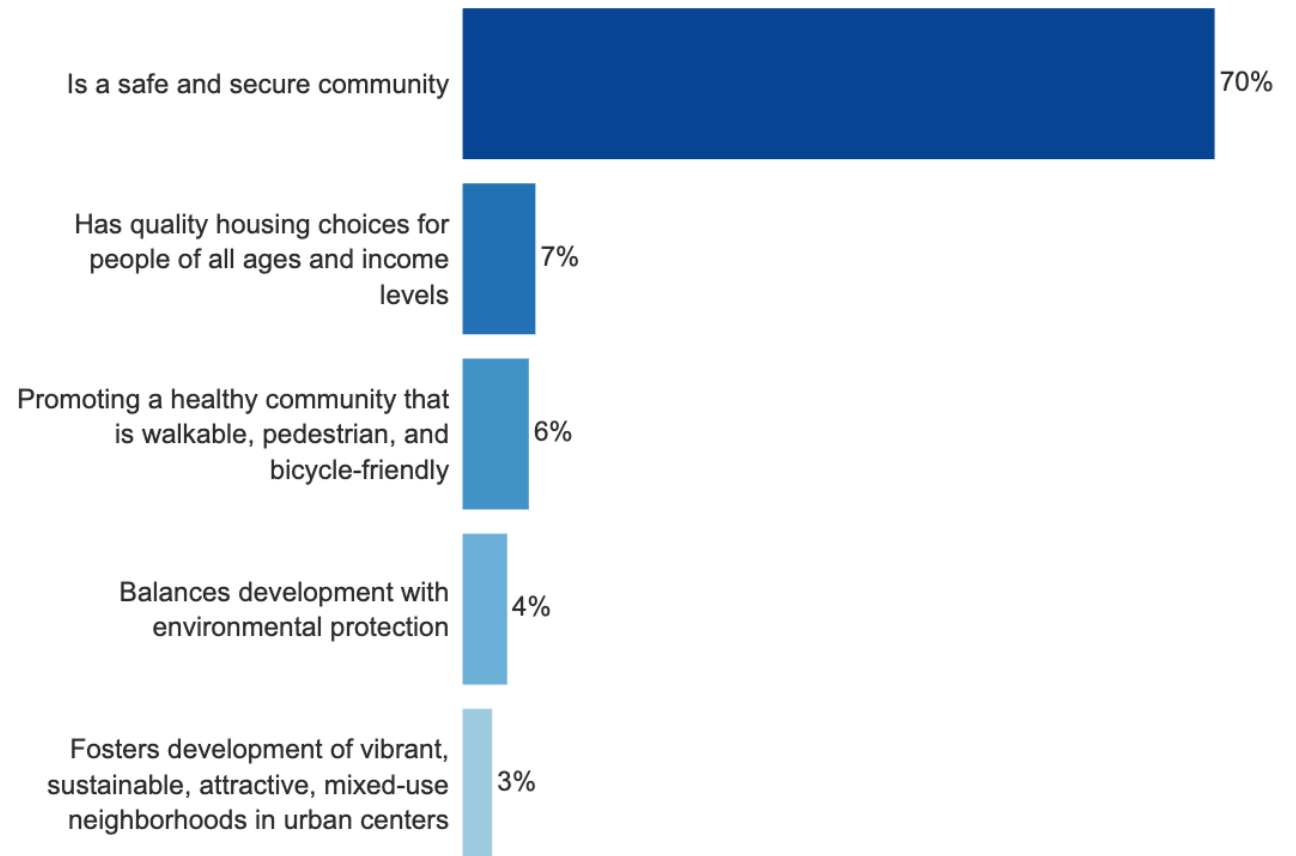
- Residents were presented with a list of 15 City priorities. *“Please select all that are important to you.”*
- These top five priorities are consistent across race and age demographics





Strategic Priorities (continued)

- “Of those you selected, which is the most important?”
- When asked to indicate their top priority, 70% of residents selected “safe and secure community.”
 - Regardless of race, safety is the top priority for Renton residents.
 - Housing availability is a consistently in the top 2 or 3, regardless of race.
- Interesting: 20% of residents age 18-34 said that “promoting a walkable and bicycle friendly community” was their top priority.





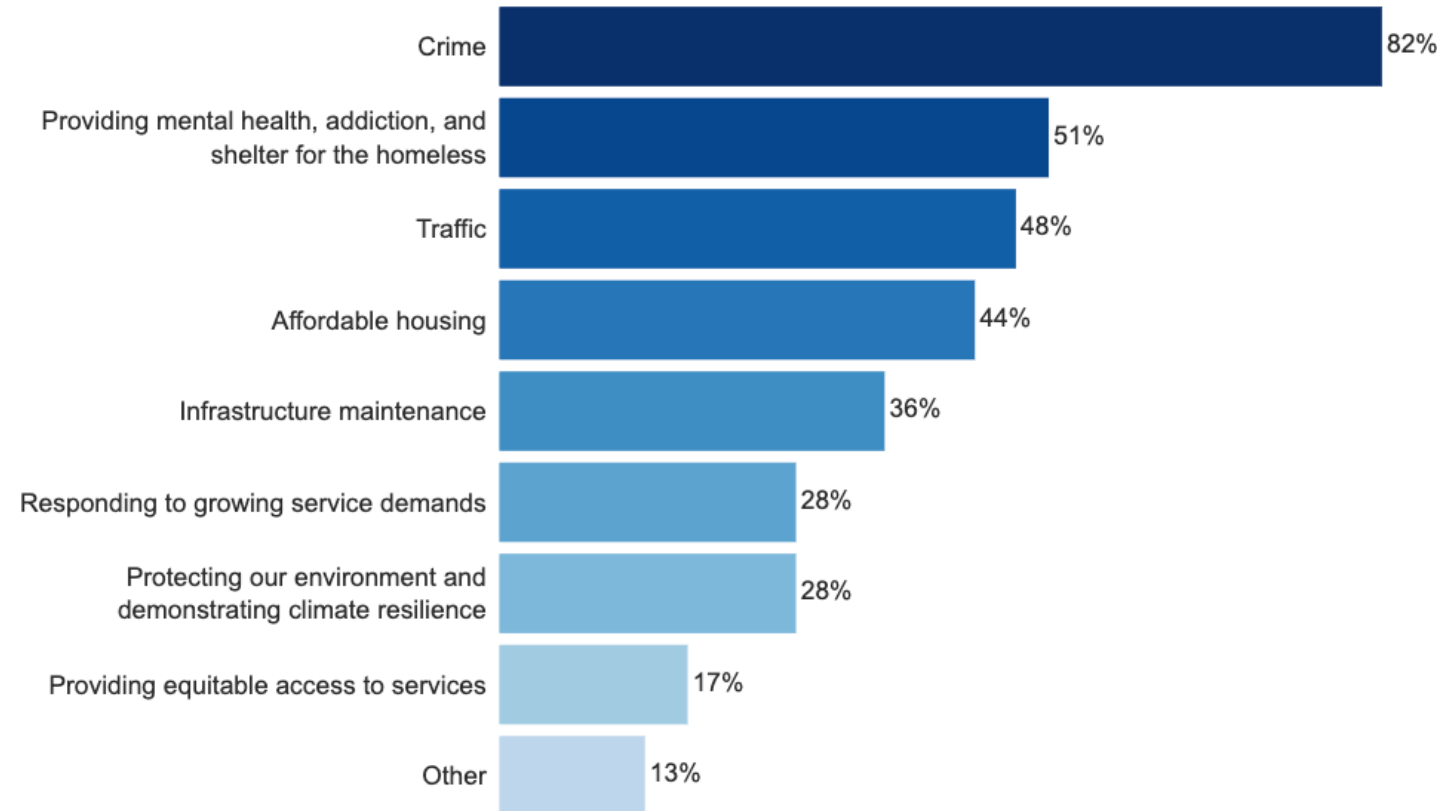
Strategic Priorities (continued)

- *“Of those you did not select, which is the least important?”*
- Of the items residents reported as the least important, the highest percentage (16%) was “includes and seeks to understand and celebrate the diversity of our community.”
- The 2nd highest percentage (9%) was “Invites me to engage in two-way dialogues with residents that results in change.”
- Both of these items fall into the bottom five across all races and age groups.



Challenges facing Renton

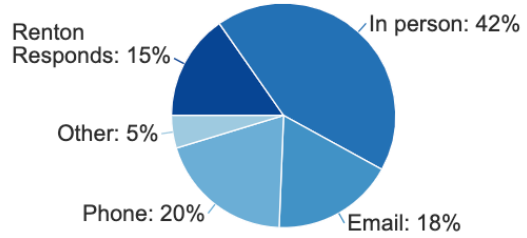
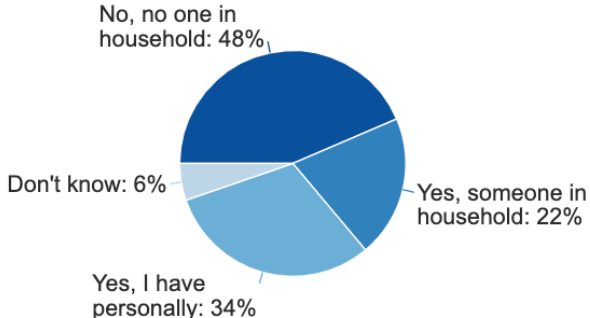
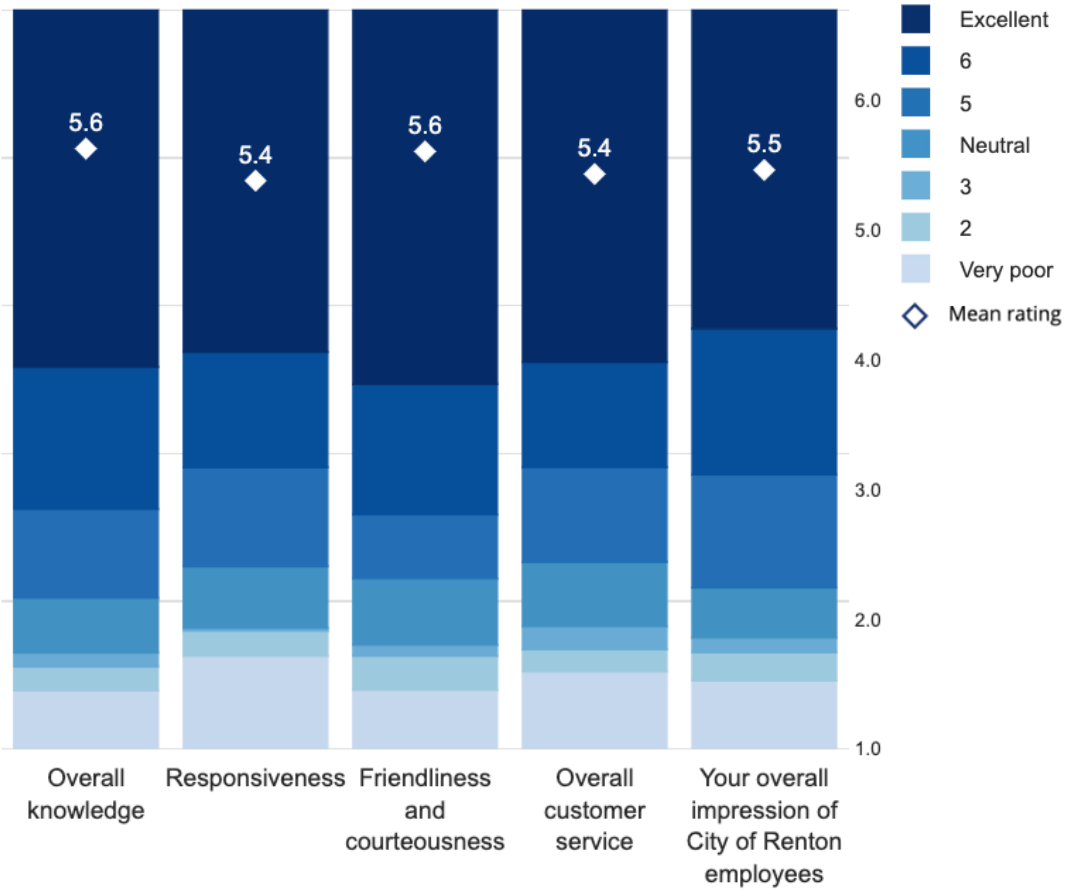
- *“What do you see as the most significant challenges facing Renton in the next 5 years?”*
- 82% of residents indicated that crime was one of the most significant challenges.
- This is consistent across race and age demographics.
- Other significant challenges:
 - Providing services to those experiencing homelessness
 - Traffic
 - Affordable housing





Contact with City Employees

- *Contact within the past 12 months?*
 - *Just over half of Renton households have had contact with the City in the past 12 months*
- *Mode of communication?*
 - *Nearly half of these interactions have taken place in-person, followed by phone, email, and Renton Responds*
- *In you or your family member's most recent contact, how would you rate the City of Renton employee on each of the following?*
 - *Across the board, excellent service ratings for City of Renton employees.*





Summary of Performance-Related Questions

- There were 64 performance-related questions customized for the 2023 City of Renton Resident Survey.
- Where is the City performing above average?
 - City employee performance
 - Reaching out to Renton's diverse language and cultural populations
 - Environmental stewardship
 - Daytime safety
 - Police performance
- Average performance?
 - Transit Infrastructure (roads, traffic light timing)
 - Taxpayer satisfaction with public utilities
 - General communication efforts
 - Employment opportunities
- Below average performance?
 - Pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure
 - Code enforcement related to property maintenance issues
 - Nighttime safety in the Landing and Downtown

Overview of all Performance-Related Questions



Above average performance	Rating
Protecting water quality	5.7
Daytime neighborhood safety	5.6
Daytime Landing safety	5.6
City employees are courteous	5.6
City employees are knowledgeable	5.6
Overall impression of City employees	5.5
City employees provide good customer service	5.4
City employees are responsive	5.4
Openness to include	5.2
Protecting Renton's streams, lakes, watershed	5.2
Approachability of Police	5
Maintaining parks and trails	5
Reaching out to diverse populations	5

Average performance	Rating
Including diverse populations	4.9
Preserving open space	4.8
Your neighborhood	4.8
Effort to inform diverse language and cultural populations	4.8
Police respond in a timely manner	4.7
Water utilities	4.9
Eliminating barriers in city practices	4.9
Wastewater utilities	4.9
Parks and Rec	4.8
Keeping residents informed	4.8
Providing accurate information	4.8
Availability of recreation	4.7
Daytime Downtown safety	4.7
Timely communication	4.7
Quality of life	4.7
As a place to work	4.6
Equitable opportunities to influence City decision making	4.6
Park safety	4.6
Cultural coordination efforts	4.5
Waste management	4.5
Pandemic response	4.4
Compared to the places	4.4
Ease of car travel	4.4
As a place to raise children	4.3

Average performance	Rating
Direction headed	4.3
Police consistently enforce the law	4.2
Road maintenance	4.2
Court Services	4.2
Vibrant Downtown	4.2
Employment opportunities	4.2
Listening to residents	4.2
Communicating a clear vision	4.2
Sense of community	4.1
Public Safety	4.1
Adequacy of local roads	4.1
Connectivity to transit	4.1
Well planned neighborhoods	4.1
Well planned business districts	4.1
Providing support for people in need	4.1
Trail safety	4.1
Development services	4
Traffic light timing	4
Nighttime neighborhood safety	4

Below Average performance	Rating
Confidence	
disaster preparedness	3.9
Nighttime Landing safety	3.8
Two-way dialogue	3.8
Code enforcement	3.7
Incorporating walk/bike friendly design	3.5
Easily and safely walk	3.4
Easily and safely bike	3.2
Nighttime Downtown safety	2.5

Questions?

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