



**Palo Alto
Asian American, Native Hawaiian,
Pacific Islander (AANHPI)
Lived Experiences
Survey**

- 1.** Introduction/Context
- 2.** Top concerns for AANHPI Residents (Findings from Palo Alto Community Survey and HRC Survey)
- 3.** HRC Survey Respondent Characteristics
- 4.** Cross Race Comparisons (Palo Alto Community Survey)

Introduction

Survey Goals

This survey was conducted by the Human Relations Commission to more fully understand the lived experiences of Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander residents. Part of the motivation of this project was to understand whether the spike in anti-Asian hate crimes seen nationally was having an impact on the lived experiences of Palo Alto Residents.

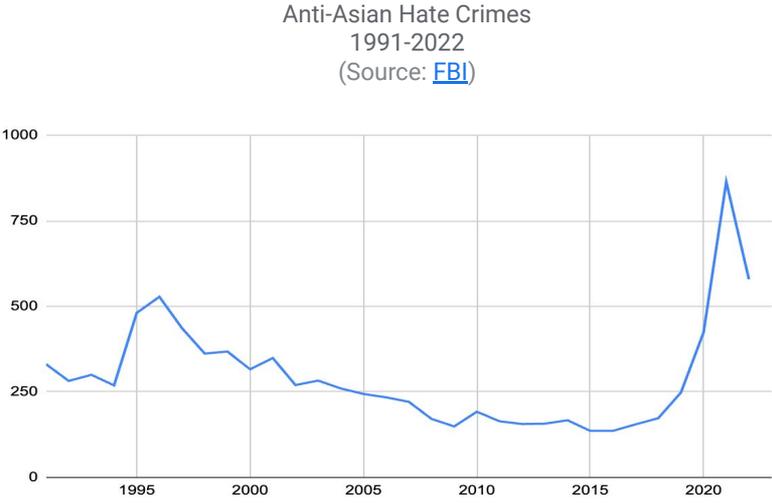
Timing

This survey was conducted between May and July 2023.

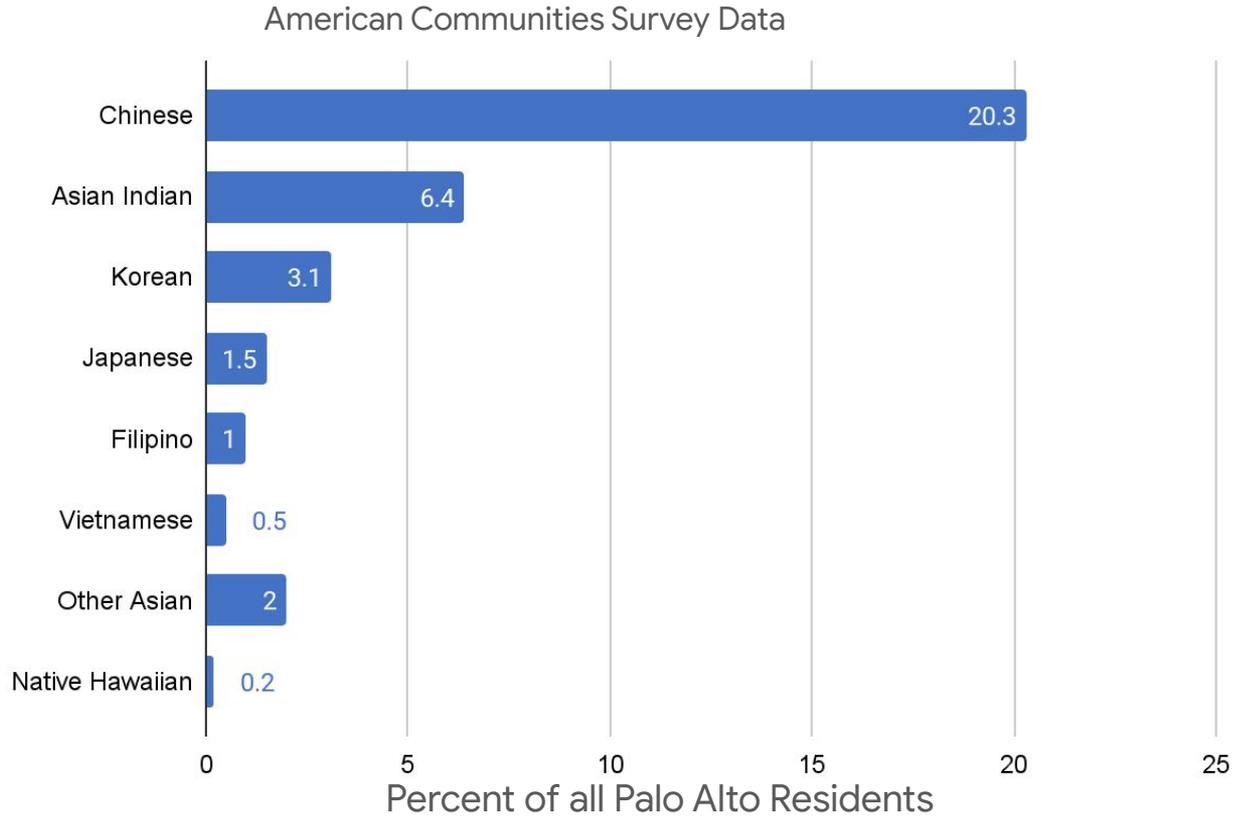
Method

The survey was shared using word-of-mouth, social media posts, flyers, City enews and community cultural groups/events. There were 100 responses to the survey.

- To address the small number of responses, we supplemented where possible with two additional data sources: the American Communities Survey from the US Census Bureau (using race/ethnicity category “Asian”) and the 2023 Palo Alto Community Survey (using 190 responses in the “Asian, Asian Indian, and Pacific Islander” race/ethnicity category).

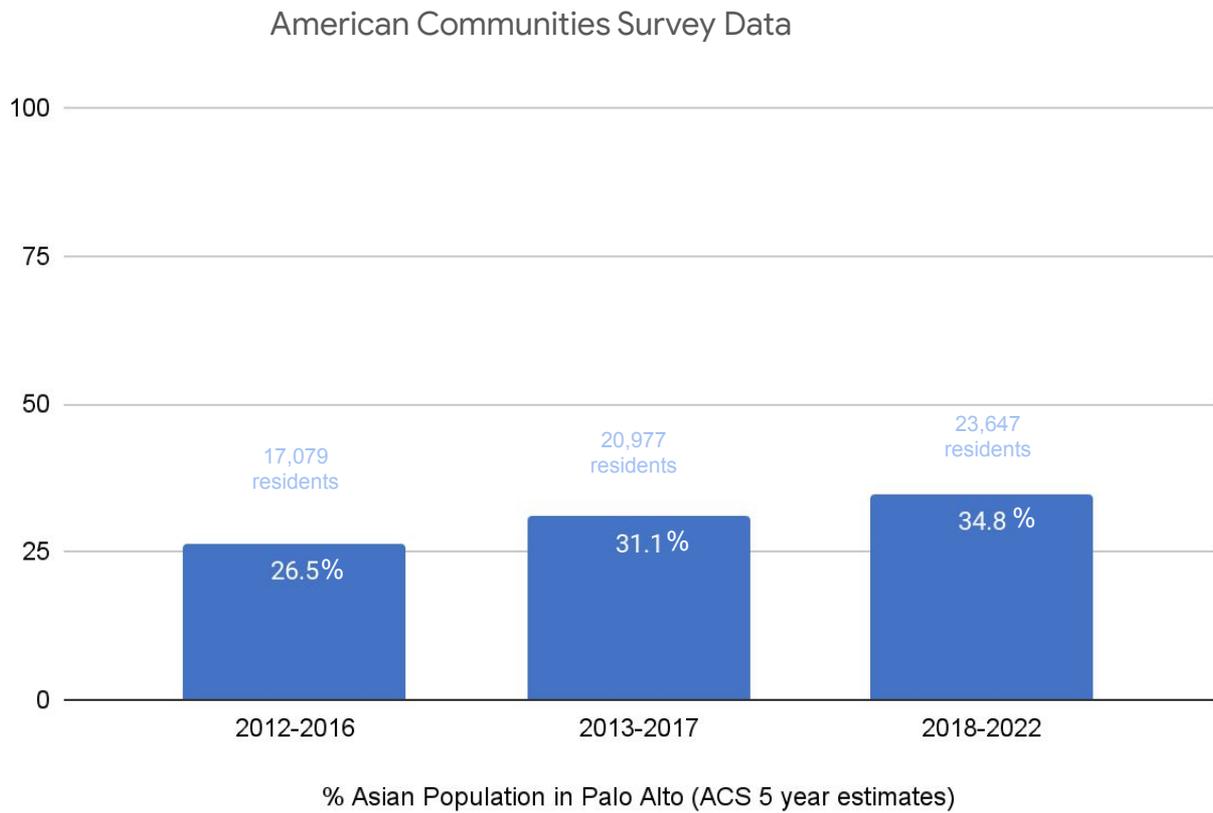


In 2022, 34.8% of Palo Alto was Asian*; the majority of Asian residents are Chinese (20.7% of all residents).



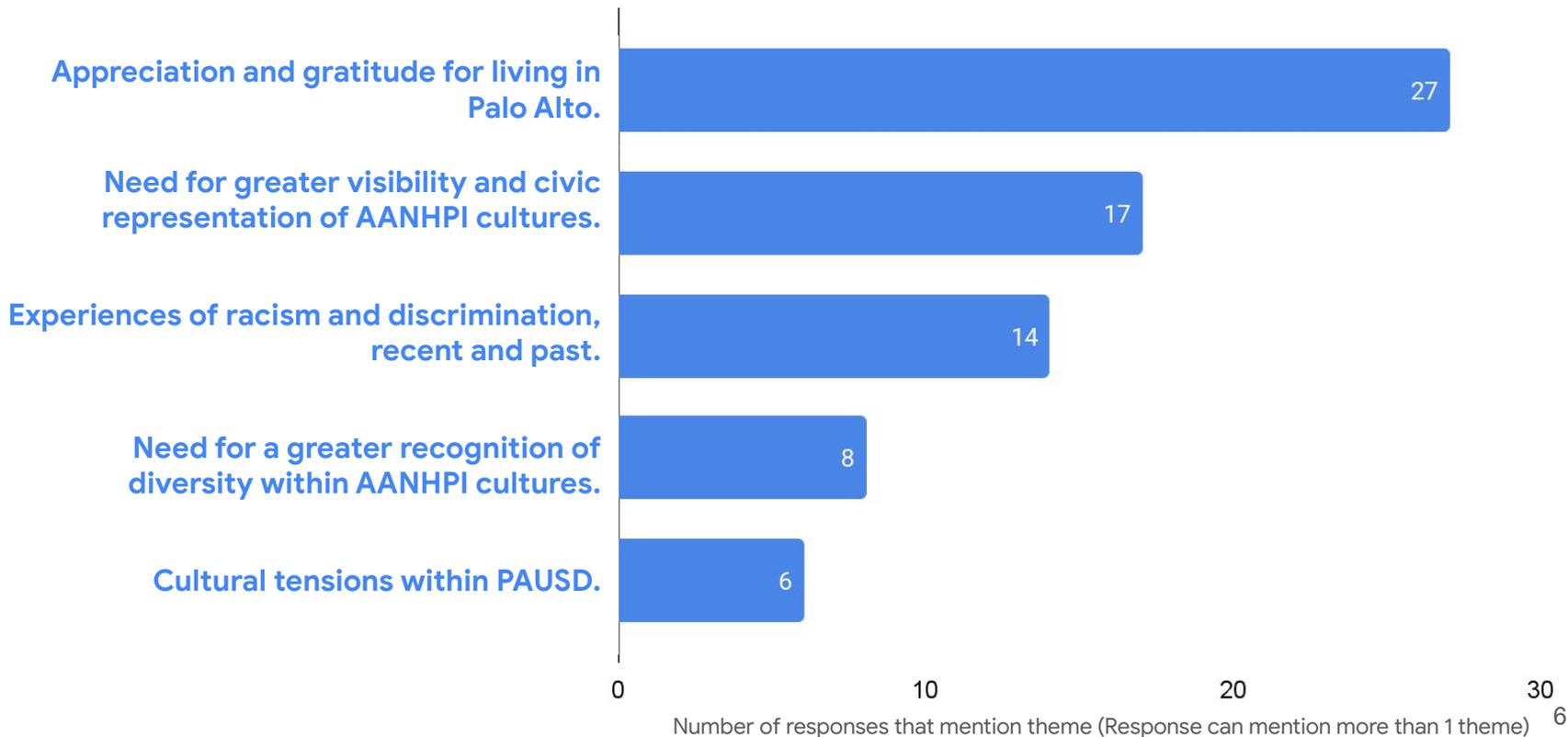
Only includes people who identified as one race. 2.2% of residents are Asian and white. ACS 5 year estimate is +/- 2.2%.

The Asian population has been steadily growing in Palo Alto.



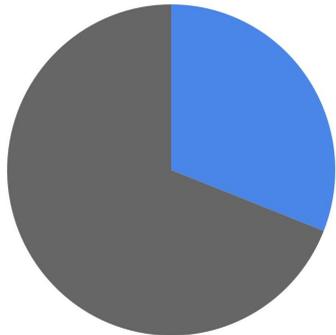
What should we know about your experience as an AANHPI individual in Palo Alto?

There were five recurring themes within responses:



1. HRC Survey shows many AANHPI residents have appreciation and gratitude for living in Palo Alto.

The most common theme expressed by AANHPI residents was a general sense of gratitude for living in Palo Alto.



27 out of 81
comments



I feel comfortable in the community.

I feel safe and comfortable living and walking in Palo Alto, I didn't realize the proportion of Asians was so high. Its gone up since we moved here in 1986.

It's great

Love the diversity

Overall it is great

Enjoy being part of the community

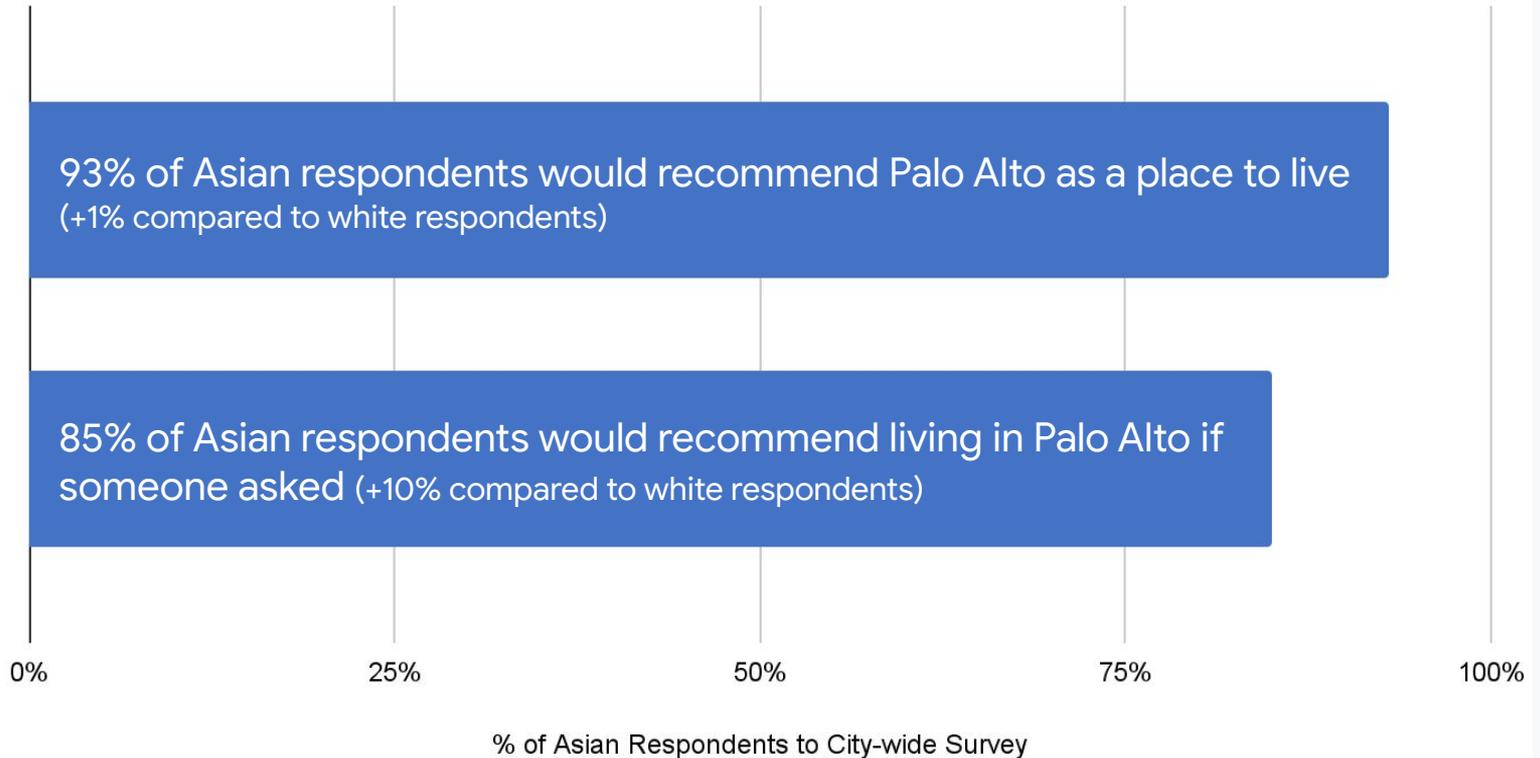
Great place to live and see family thrive!!

I have enjoyed living in Palo Alto and have been treated well.
I feel satisfied so far.

Palo Alto is a great place to live and raise children. We plan to continue to live here after our retirement.



1. Community Survey results similarly show that AANHPI residents have high levels of appreciation for the city.

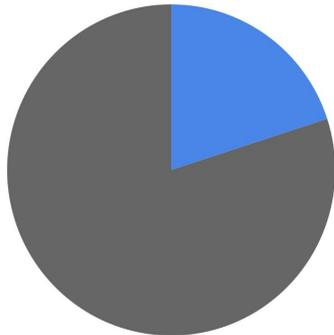


Due to low n-counts for other races/ethnicities, only white and Asian respondents responses were available from comparison.

2. HRC Survey shows a greater visibility and civic representation of AANHPI cultures.

The second most common theme was a need for greater visibility and appreciation for AANHPI residents and their culture, including:

- Greater representation in government (4 comments)
- More community resources, especially in the libraries (e.g. books in Chinese) (4 comments)
- More cultural representation in community events (2 comments)
- Greater representation within school staff/teachers/libraries. (2 comments)



17 out of 81
comments



We need more local leaders to represent our community! Equality!

It would be nice to see representation in different places of city government and school admissions.

We do not have enough representation in the government.

Sometimes feel like we don't see enough cultural events or representation in media at Paly. Would like to hear more about supportive resources for Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders.

35% of our city events are not Asian themed/focused. We would love to help our kids experience our parents culture but that is hard when most events are Turkey Trots and Chili Cookoffs.

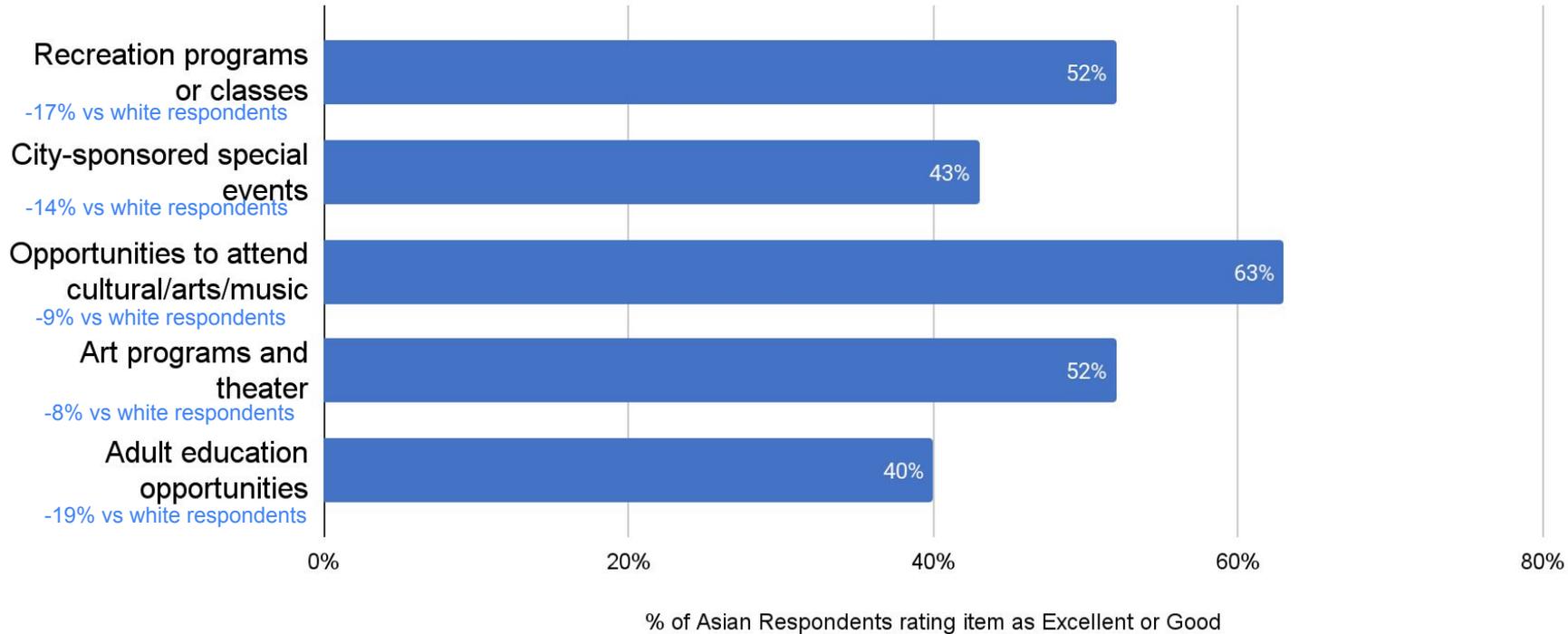
Provide more Chinese newspaper/magazines/videos at Rinconada library or online.

Palo Alto is not very diverse. Suggest adding more cultural programs, more communication to decrease AAPHI hate problem.

I think the community can provide more Chinese signs for Senior Chinese person, such as bus station, public parks, etc.



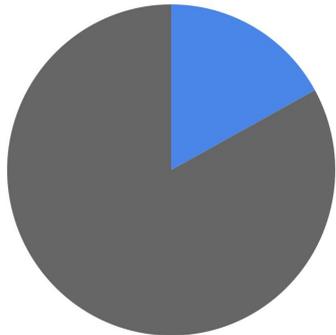
2. The Community Survey also shows a need for greater visibility and civic representation of AANHPI cultures.



Due to low n-counts for other races/ethnicities, only white and Asian respondents responses were available from comparison.

3. The HRC Survey shows experiences of racism and discrimination, recent and past.

Respondents mentioned the general existence of racist attitudes (10 comments), specific recent incidents (5 comments) and some past incidents (3).



14 out of 81
comments



There is still some racial discrimination against (immigrant) Chinese people.

Racism against Asians is still a reality in Palo Alto.

Enjoy the cultural diversity and open-mindedness of most people but there are always some who don't appreciate it and those who aren't open to sharing.

There is a columnist for the Palo Alto Online News that has written things that are very hurtful to African Americans, Asians, and other people of color.

It feels like the Southeast Asian community and Islander community are largely viewed as "the help". I don't think there is any inherent racial bias, but the economic entry point to the city pretty much guarantee that Palo Altans are only learning about their wealthy neighbors instead of other Asian cultures.

My experience has not resulted in any ethnic prejudices, but I was upset when I heard about the Asian mailman that was verbally accosted a few years ago on Ross Road.

I have seen a lot of changes in my 68 years. When I was going to Walter Hays, my brother and I were the only Asians at the school. I remember while climbing on a jungle gym at Eleanore Park a boy pulled the corners of his eyes and made noises mimicking the Chinese language. I was probably 10 or so. But that's the only negative experience that I remember while growing up in PA.



3. Feedback in the Community Survey also shows some evidence of discrimination among Asian, Asian Indian and Pacific Islander residents.

Ratings of Community

Openness and acceptance of the community toward people of diverse backgrounds
-9% vs White respondents

52%

Valuing/respecting residents from diverse backgrounds
+1% vs White respondents

64%

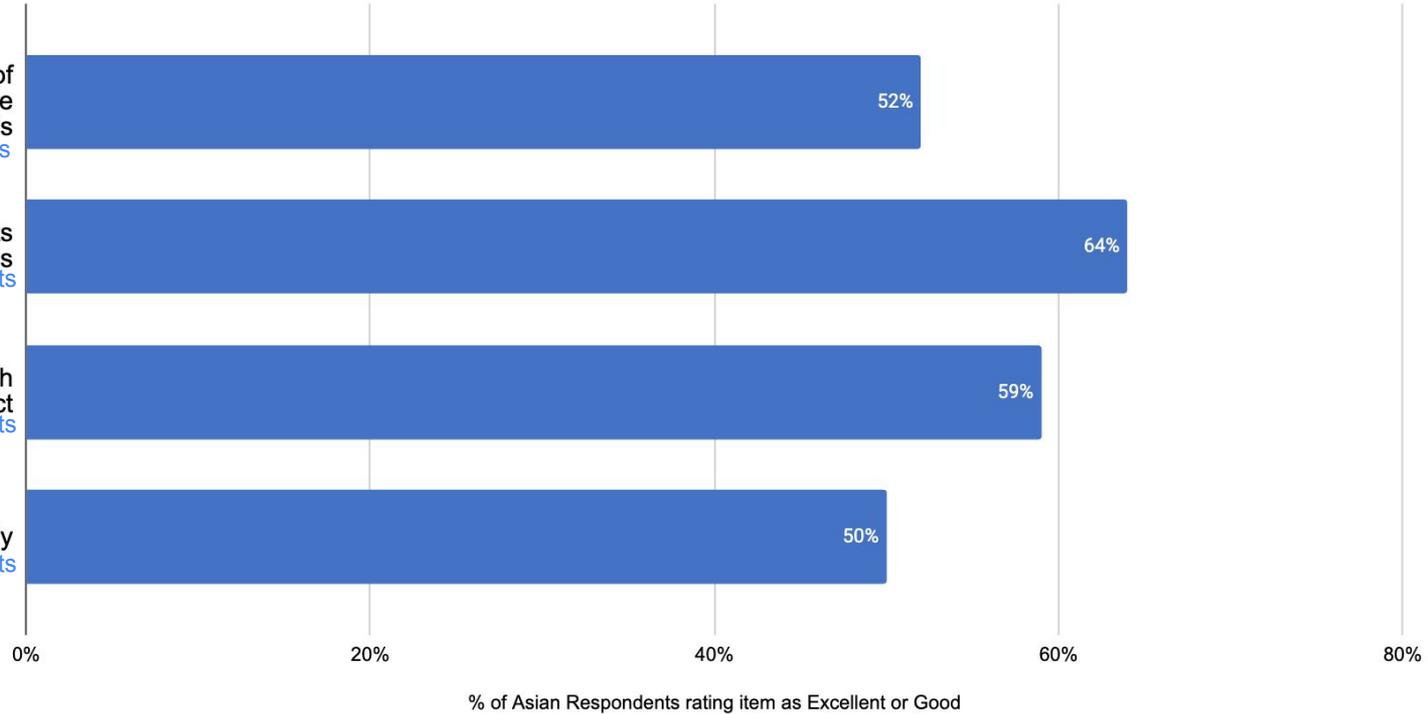
Ratings of City Govt

Treating residents with respect
+5% vs White respondents

59%

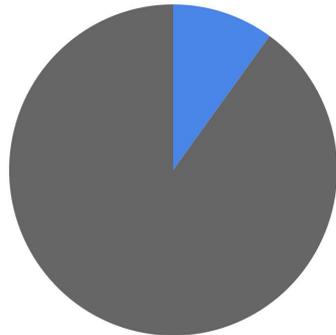
Treating all residents fairly
+8% vs White respondents

50%



4. HRC Survey Shows the need for a greater recognition of diversity within AANHPI cultures.

Some residents mentioned the need for a greater appreciation of the diversity within AANHPI cultures.



8 out of 81 comments



Firstly, the term AANHPI is offensive. It attempts to reduce the rich diversity of all the communities defined by the term as if they were a homogenous group.

Any attempt to understand this as a group will fail as they comprise very different cultures, world-views, and political leanings.

Asian is not a monolithic homogeneous group. There are wild differences in culture, values, beliefs and norms. It's frustrating to be lumped into one category. AANHPI community is very diverse, however it is stereotyped to be a homogenous group.

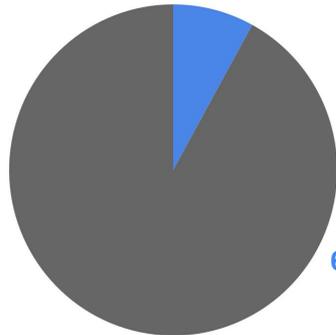
Within AANHPI not only there are cultural differences, but there are inequities experienced between the populations based on the group they represent, class, education, immigration status, generation (how many years lived in US), and darkness of skin

There should be more voices in the world for mixed people.



5. Finally, the HRC Survey included feedback on cultural tensions within PAUSD.

Respondents noted that there are cultural tensions within PAUSD and different cultural standards for public education, particularly around parenting styles (2 comments) and STEM education (2 comments).



6 out of 81 comments



As a white passing person, I often hear people speaking negatively about Asian parents and kids as if they don't 'belong' or somehow ruin their children's educational experience. The concept of 'forever foreigner' is alive and well in Palo Alto.

Schools in PA feel less welcoming to Asians with the current district leadership. They want to take away opportunities for students to excel in STEM subjects and it feels like Asian students are targeted by their new policies.

I feel that the PAUSD school district demonizes Asian Americans as two-dimensional and as creating academic pressure not only on their own children, but the children of the entire community. There is an assumption by the school district leadership that if an Asian student is feeling any stress or depression (not necessarily associated with academics), it must be caused by academic pressure from their Asian Tiger parents.

We have experienced a very hostile school board that did not take us as parents' feedback when making decisions.

There is an anti-STEM vibe flowing through the PAUSD administration that disproportionately affects Asian kids. The current kerfuffle over multivariable calculus and linear algebra is an example. These are courses primarily taken by Asian kids and the administration decided to initially drop them, and after a big fight has allowed them back in a less than ideal manner.



Four key ways to build a more inclusive community for Asian residents

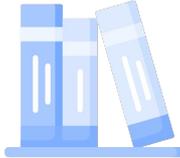
To be considered for future inclusion in the HRC workplace in Q2 2024



Greater representation
in city government boards,
commissions, and staff



Additional Asian-centered
cultural events



More non-multilingual or
multi-cultural **library and
other resources**; or
greater awareness of
existing resources



Multilingual **wayfinding
signage**

Monolingual English was the most common language of respondents, but several other languages were also spoken.

Language(s)	
English only	34
English + other language(s)	58
Chinese*	33
Chinese only	7
Indian Language other than Hindi*	10
Japanese*	8
Spanish*	8
Hindi*	6
Vietnamese*	4
French*	3

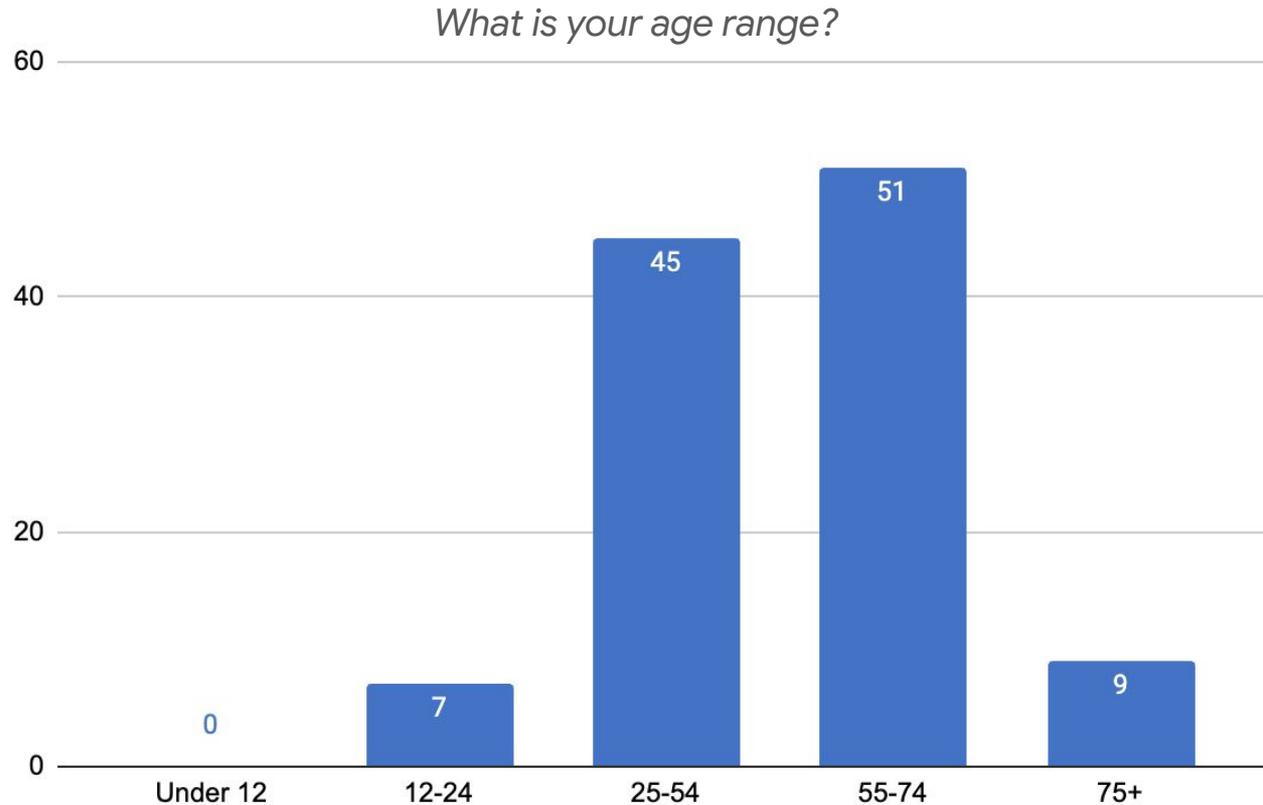
According to American Communities Survey (US Census), 33% of Palo Alto residents speak a language other than English at home.

% of all residents who speak a language other than English at home who speak	
Spanish	4%
Indo-European language	11%
Asian or Pacific Islander language	18%

*Most speakers also spoke English.

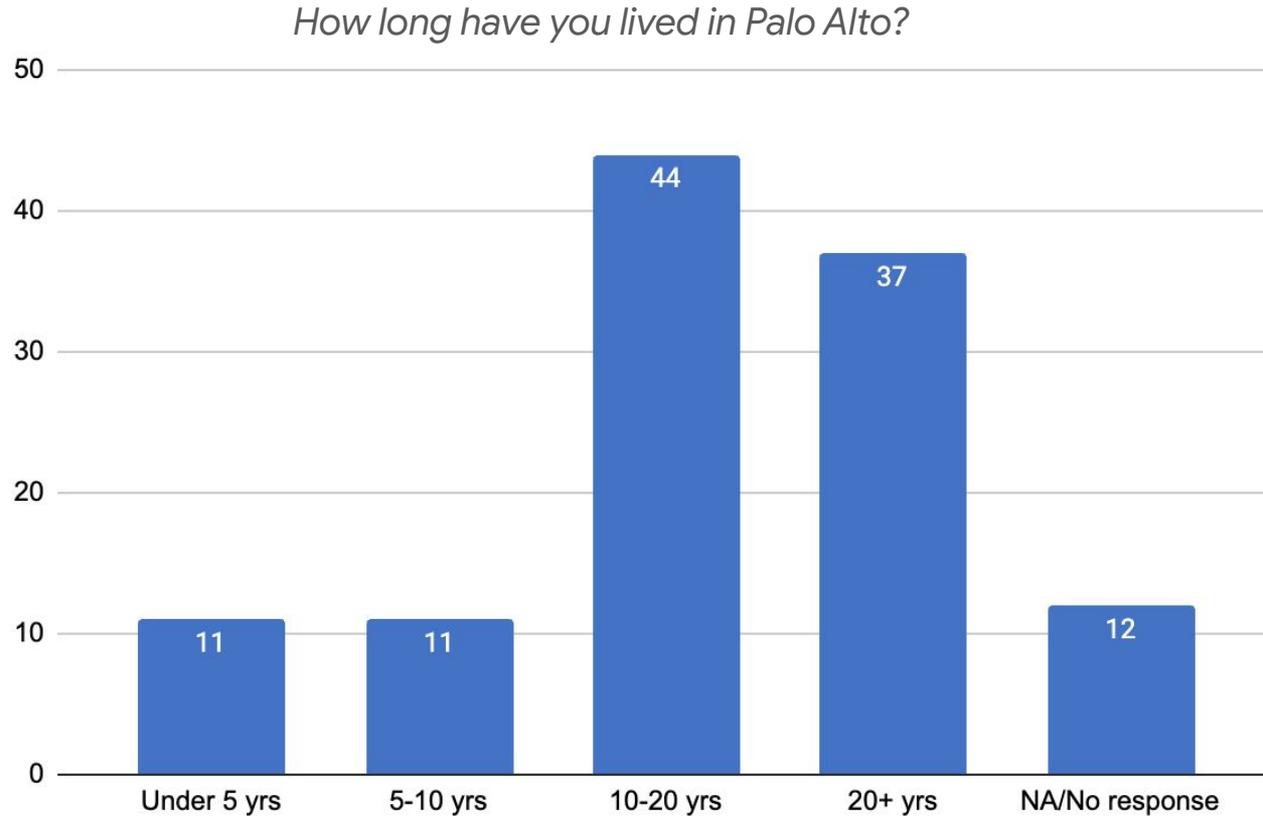
Languages only spoken by one respondent included: Korean, French, Tongan, Samoan, Taiwanese, Filipino, Burmese, Italian, German.

A large majority of respondents were either young-middle aged adults(25-54) (39%) or seniors (55+) (44%).



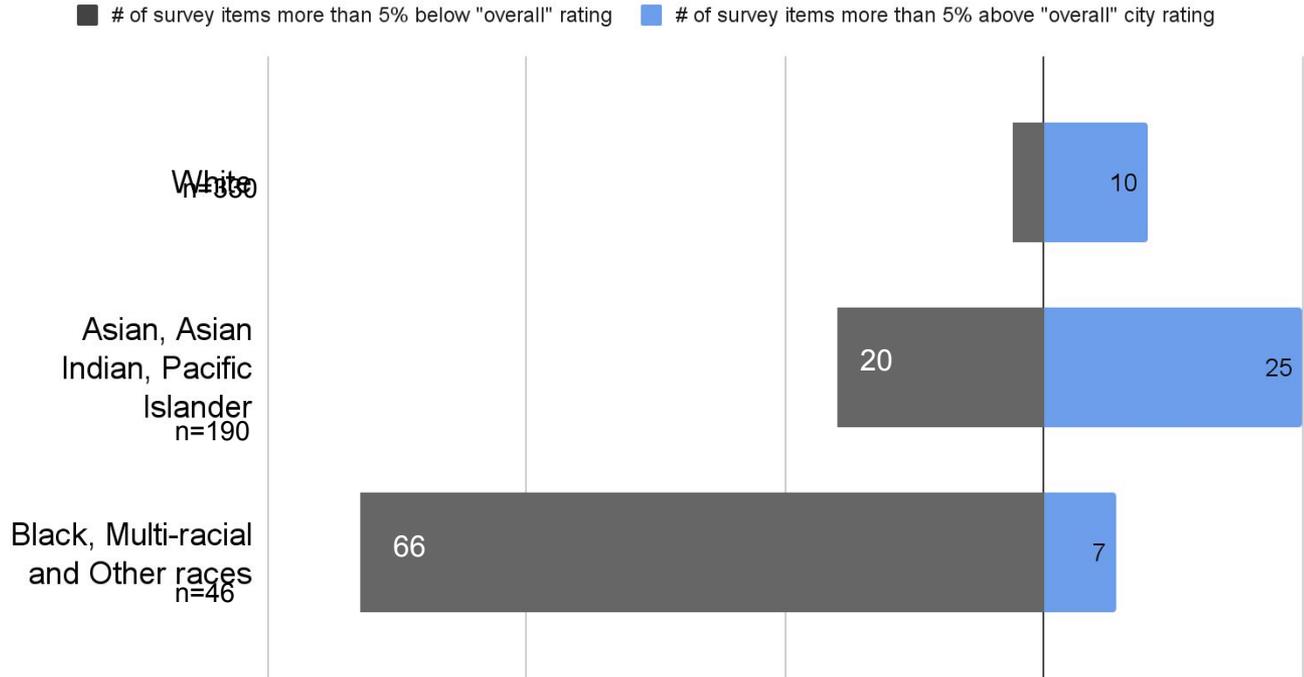
According to 2022 American Communities Survey (US Census), 38.5% of Palo Alto was 25-54 and 29% were over 55%, suggesting that the demographics of respondents roughly matched those of the city.

A large majority of respondents have lived in Palo Alto 10+ years (63%).



In the Palo Alto Community Survey, “Black, Multi-Racial, and Other” residents have a generally less positive experience compared to White and Asian residents.

Overall distribution of Palo Alto City Survey items by race



In the Community Survey, there is general consensus across racial groups about the areas of our city that need the most attention. *Gray boxes indicate that item was not in lowest 12 for group.*

Lowest ranked items on Community Survey across all respondents	All Residents	White	Asian, Asian Indian, Pacific Islander	Black, Multi-Racial, "Other"
Cost of living in Palo Alto	8%	7%	8%	14%
Availability of affordable quality housing	10%	7%	14%	9%
Availability of affordable quality mental health care	17%	17%	15%	21%
Building and planning application processing services	20%	14%	29%	32%
Availability of affordable quality childcare/preschool	20%	16%	26%	28%
Ease of travel by public transportation in Palo Alto	23%	25%	19%	19%
Variety of housing options	24%	20%	31%	22%
Land use, planning, and zoning	32%	28%	41%	26%
Affordable high-speed internet access	35%	36%	35%	30%
Taking care of vulnerable residents	39%	38%	45%	25%
Code enforcement	40%	36%	45%	44%
Working hard to keep utilities prices competitive	41%	46%	33%	41%

Unique areas of concern for each racial group: *Items were ranked in the racial group's bottom 12 but not in the bottom 12 for all residents combined.*

	White	Asian, Asian Indian, Pacific Islander	Black, Multi-Racial, and Other
Items that were in the racial group's bottom 12, but not in bottom 12 for the city overall.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities to learn about City services through social media such as Twitter, Facebook, and Nextdoor • Adult educational opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treating all residents fairly • Value of services for taxes paid to Palo Alto • Overall direction Palo Alto is taking • Being open and transparent to the public