

Vision Zero Town Hall Meeting Executive Summary

The Vision Zero Education Team held town hall meetings in each ward of the city in early 2018 over the course of two weeks. Dinner and childcare were provided at each meeting to make it more accessible for all citizens and attendance at each meeting averaged around 28 citizens. Maps were provided at each meeting depicting fatal and severe injury crashes from 2006-2016 in each ward, along with additional ward specific statistics. Two questions per Vision Zero focus area (Engineering, Education and Enforcement) were posed to the participants during the tabletop exercises and residents were invited to provide their feedback. The meetings were hosted in a world café style, where citizens sat at small tables with a discussion facilitator and scribe that captured the conversation. This format encourages conversation from all participants.

Engineering Q1: “What does a safe street look like?”

The answers received indicated that participants wanted a safe street for all modes of transportation. This includes good lighting; wide, accessible sidewalks; signaled or painted crosswalks; and included biking lanes as well as space for parking on the street, but did not allow for parking a car within a bike lane. Participants wanted the street to be well-maintained which includes the clearing of low hanging limbs; storm drains facing the correct direction; proper signs; easily visible markings; and adequate shoulders. There was disagreement as to whether a narrow or wide street is safer. Narrower streets would help slow traffic but may make it difficult for emergency vehicles. Roads that are wider tend to encourage more speeding. Traffic control devices were also mentioned in creating a safe street including; pedestrian islands; speed bumps; bulb outs; and landscaping. Participants also mentioned wanting a city standard for traffic calming. Most participants agreed that education and culture changes would need to occur to make the streets safer for travel including jaywalking and the use of cell phones while traveling.

Engineering Q2: “How would reduced speeds benefit your neighborhood?”

Participants agreed that it would encourage outdoor use and make the neighborhood safer. This would allow cars more time to stop and people would feel safer about doing outdoor activities if cars weren't speeding by. Less maintenance would also be needed if speeds were reduced due to less wear and tear on streets and less street signs and poles being damaged. Participants disagreed on the benefit of reducing speeds if they were not enforced. They acknowledged that enforcement is expensive and time consuming and that the police department is already understaffed. They also felt that sometimes people who were speeding were not aware what the speed limit was. They also noted that speeding was occurring in their neighborhoods because of the backup of traffic on the major roads. This encourages drivers to utilize neighborhoods as cut through streets. To encourage people to slow down participants liked the ideas of utilizing traffic calming measures such as noticeable speed bumps, “children playing” signs, street trees/plants and narrower roads.

Education Q1: “What should the campaign for Vision Zero should look like?”

Participants were shown a [Vision Zero video from Austin, TX](#) that our Education Team felt was very impactful as an example to consider when discussing this question. Participants felt that the campaign should be timed strategically such as when students travel to and from class and that the campaign should be in multiple languages. They felt that the campaign should utilize local areas and events to reach the most people including medical office waiting rooms; International Centers; the Farmer's Market; T/F Film Festival; Roots and Blues; football games; neighborhood associations, and the university populations like fraternities and sororities.

Participants listed various mediums to host the campaign including social media (Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter); radio and online radio ads; movie previews; City Source; road signs and billboards; local news specials and items like magnets or stickers. Participants thought the messaging of the campaign should include information on appropriate biking rules; awareness of all road users; and distracted driving. The messaging should utilize local stories and be personalized to the Columbia area with positive messaging.

Education Q2: “What street designs or infrastructure was confusing to them?”

New infrastructure like roundabouts and HAWK signals are found to be safer ways of managing Columbia’s roadways but these new devices can be confusing for those who haven’t come into contact with one before. These new devices would most likely be a focus of the campaign to instruct people on how to utilize the devices safely. When posed this question, roundabouts were the most common answer. Participants wanted more painting and signs to help others know how to navigate a roundabout. They were also concerned with double lane roundabouts and pedestrians and bicyclists navigating them. Crosswalks and HAWK signals were the second most mentioned confusing infrastructure. Participants stated that drivers didn’t know what the flashing lights on the HAWK signals meant. They were also concerned with people not utilizing crosswalks or walking without them having the right of way. Sharrows were also mentioned as confusing due to the lack of maintenance or not enough being placed. It was mentioned that drivers need to understand what the sharrows meant. Other infrastructure mentioned included diverging diamonds, pedestrian scrambles and J-turns. Participants mentioned that education on the confusing infrastructure should focus on how these structures work and should possibly be required for all who request parking passes.

Enforcement Q1: “Do you support the reinstatement of a Traffic Unit in the City of Columbia?”

The traffic unit within the Columbia Police Department was disbanded when the Columbia Outreach Unit was formed. A critical action of the Enforcement Team is to reinstate a Traffic Unit. This unit’s primary responsibility would be to enforce traffic laws. Overall the participants were in favor of reinstating the traffic unit but also wanted to keep the Community Outreach Unit. Some concerns that were discussed included ensuring that the traffic laws are enforced equitably and were enforced from a safety perspective not as a money making initiative. A second concern was funding. Suggestions were to tax online sales and dedicate this solely to the traffic unit, also look at grants. If no outside funding could be secured, the budget would need to be adjusted to make this a priority. If a traffic unit was reinstated, participants wanted not only driver’s laws to be enforced but also bicyclist’s and pedestrian’s laws. Participants suggested that the reinstatement of the traffic unit be advertised heavily since people are not obeying traffic laws now since they know they are not being enforced. They also would like to utilize this enforcement during specific times such as game days. Lastly, participants suggested looking at other cities and modeling after their actions.

Enforcement Q2: “What are some innovative and equitable strategies of enforcing traffic laws?”

The most popular response from participants was the use of traffic classes in lieu of fines. These classes would allow drivers to be educated on the traffic laws and allow for low income households to take care of their ticket without having to pay a fine they couldn’t afford. Participants wanted these classes to focus on driving safety but also on biking and pedestrian safety and be offered at various times with possible childcare arrangements available. Another strategy to educate drivers was to utilize the Community Outreach Unit to educate those citizens or come and speak to different groups on traffic safety. If a fine for a traffic ticket was going to be imposed, participants liked the idea of basing it on a sliding scale. This would allow those who were low income and high income to be punished equally. A concern of the sliding scale for fines was the time it would take to verify income. Participants didn’t want to have defendants have to come to court multiple times to clear up a traffic ticket. A final recommendation of enforcing traffic laws was to utilize community service instead of a fine. Participants discussed that paying fines does not always affect people equally but, when someone is asked to give up their time, it affects everyone the same. Community service ideas included requiring volunteering at the Parks and Recreation Bike Co-Op or helping make sure the bike lanes were clear of debris. Regardless of which strategy is chosen, it was agreed that some type of accountability needed to be implemented to help deter bad driving habits.

Following the end of each meeting, participants were asked to take a short survey. Approximately 65 responses were received. The answers have been included as pie charts at the end of this summary.

What does a safe street look like?

- **Lighting:** well lit, LED, have engineers check occasionally
- **Sidewalks:** wide, ADA accessible, well maintained: enforce people removing snow from sidewalks: have strategy to go back into old developments
- **Crosswalks:** signaled, lit, tactile and sound, raised, painted, adequate signage, clear visibility zone around crosswalks
- **Biking/Parking Lanes:** protected bike lanes, no parking in them, remove limbs and allow for clear visibility, painted and maintained
- **Maintenance/Visibility:** clear of debris, overhanging limbs, adequate shoulders, functional and tapered down curbs, storm drains correct direction, designed to allow turns correctly
- **Width of Street:** narrower streets are easier to cross but may be difficult for emergency vehicles. Wider streets could allow for bike lanes, parking and driving lanes. I'd prefer the width to fit the neighborhood.
- **Painting and Signage:** Clear signs with no obstructions blocking them. Well marked roads that easily visible.
- **Traffic Control Devices:** Pedestrian Island with button to cross, speed bumps, roundabouts, bulb outs and landscaping, city standard for traffic calming
- **Education/Culture Changes:** No right turn on red in pedestrian/biking areas, no texting and walking, no delivery trucks downtown, 35% window tint, fix the jaywalking culture, clear communication of who has the right of way
- **Multi-Modal:** Comfortable and safe for all who use streets, complete streets policy

How would reduced speeds benefit your neighborhood?

- **Safety and Outdoor Use:** Safer for children, pedestrians, allow for cars more time to stop, feels safer so people come outside more and create more of a neighborhood feeling, easier to enter and exit driveways, encourage biking
- **Enforcement:** Need enforcement, enforcement is expensive, enforcement and flashing signs showing speed- dis-incentivized to go fast
- **Property Value:** possibly raise property values
- **Pollution:** reduced air emissions, reduced noise and air pollution
- **Knowledge and Awareness:** People need to know all residential streets are 25 mph, people won't follow even if you lower, sometimes you have to just drive with the traffic, put rumble strips on road to notify where speed limit changes
- **Cut Through Streets:** Need better connectors to make traffic flow, when traffic gets backed up traffic cuts through neighborhoods,
- **Traffic Calming/Street Design:** Speed bumps painted a different color, Speed limits painted on the streets, narrow roads with cars parked, yellow "children playing signs", street trees and plants, roundabouts, crosswalks, pedestrian bridges
- **Feelings:** Happier overall, shocked when speed limits were lowered last time and council went back and forth, no one will notice
- **Maintenance:** Near trailheads a lot of speeding and traffic and there's no signs, Ruined signs and poles by crashes, markings, surface, sight lines and less wear and tear on streets

What should the campaign look like?

- **Timing:** Timing should be frequent and strategic on the message, when kids are commuting to and from class
- **Audience:** Summer Welcome Education, Greek Informative Meeting, Neighborhood Associations, Public Schools, University's International Centers, Large employers, Farmers Market, Large Local events (T/F, RNBBBQ, Football), Doctor's Offices
- **Driver's Education:** Make it required, Vision Zero included in Driver's Ed, Cycling and Pedestrian Info in driver's education, discount driver's education program (offer incentives for completing)
- **Diversity:** Print and share in multiple languages, make it accessible for multiple ages, Include all modes of traffic
- **Type of Advertisement:** Social Media (Facebook, Snap chat, Instagram), Impactful and attractive videos, Short videos (Vine like), Radio and Online Radio, QR Code, Bus Poster, City Source, Billboards, Road signs, Stickers, Magnets, News special, Competition between high school students for PSA, Signs with number of deaths, Movie previews, Utilize free media before paid
- **Messaging:** Bike by the driving rules, Speeding, awareness of all road users, changing lanes to pass, biking and walking are acceptable modes of transportation, use local houses or streets in messages, local stories of injuries or deaths, personalize it, pedestrian safety, infrastructure instructions (roundabout, hawk signals, etc.), not negative, texting and driving, distracted driving and distracted pedestrians

What street designs or infrastructure is confusing to you?

- **Communication/Education:** Educate hosts for visitors, Better communication about road structures/how to navigate, Bike friendly listed on city entrance signs, businesses don't advertise what bike trail they're on, garages downtown send mixed messages of driving downtown, education requirement to receive parking pass,
- **Sharrows:** seems like they're disappearing, incorrectly placed, not painted frequently enough, need more education on sharrows for both bikers and drivers
- **Roundabouts:** double roundabouts, pedestrians and biking through roundabouts, signage, lights and painting for roundabouts, campaign to educate on how to use roundabouts
- **Diverging Diamonds:** Difficult for bicyclists, good as long as there is adequate signing and striping
- **Crosswalks/ Hawk Signals:** Some people don't know when to stop, flashing lights can be confusing, pedestrian overpasses are not being used, ensure that people are actually using crosswalks to cross, no time for drivers to turn when pedestrians are in crosswalk
- **J Turns:** on 63 are confusing
- **Pedestrian Scrambles:** pedestrian scrambles are confusing
- **Other:** Traffic rules, can't see striping when raining, turning when pedestrians walking, 4 way stops, flashing yellow lights

Should a traffic unit be reconstituted?

- **Possible negatives:** issue of equity in stops, look like money maker rather than safety initiative
- **Ward Specific:** necessary in first ward
- **Community Outreach Unit:** want both community policing and traffic unit, community policing approach to traffic unit, use COU to get the word out, build relationships and people alter their behavior based on relationships, cop involvement in community
- **Technology:** flashing signs and signs that show speed, red light cameras, app to do online reporting of people breaking traffic laws
- **Enforcement:** problem is that drivers are not aware of speed and go with traffic, not enough officers to enforce now, would change my behavior, miss bicycle and foot patrols, need patrolling during games, enforcement of rules that impact pedestrians and bicyclists, publicize that the unit is back, assign enforcement based on crime analyst, enforce all users of the roads
- **Research:** model after other cities, look at data since unit disbanded- has it made a difference
- **Funding:** look at shifting to property tax- more stable, if no support for tax increase adjust budget and make it a priority, tax for online shopping to pay for it, grants, educate public to pass funding, increase fines
- **Other:** need no texting and driving law, encourage walking leads to less crime and more use of parks

Strategies to Enforce Traffic Laws

- **Design:** Diagonal crosswalks (scrambles), continuity in signage- do not repeat too much
- **Sliding Scale/Fines:** beneficial to low income community, would it require more court appearances to lower fine, requiring more time off of work?, higher fines more impactful but can have negative perception, repeat offenders should get higher fines, increase fines for streets with accidents or high fatalities
- **Training and Education:** Police should have bias training, training instead of ticket to waive fine, start with warnings, chirping at crosswalks reminding people to put their phones down, signs that show speed to encourage them to slow down, training instead of ticket is good but what is the cost to host these, make sure classes are acceptable to everyone (daycare, dinner, etc.), shock videos in class, have police officers interact with teens and teach First Impact, Parents involved with teen drivers, Police at PTA meetings to educate, emphasis on pedestrian and bike safety, after so many tickets- require class- time matters to everyone
- **Community Policing:** Community policing type of enforcement, active neighborhood associations should take initiative and try to slow drivers, make sure enforcement is done equitably, look at traffic data in strategic plan neighborhoods- does community policing help?, use community police officers for education and enforcement
- **Community Service:** Community service in exchange for fines, something that benefits pedestrians and cyclists, volunteer to clean roadways, community service hits everyone the same, work in P&R new bike co-op
- **Technology:** traffic cameras, speed enforcement radar, speed warning indicator, something that looks like a camera or radar at intersection
- **Accountability:** speed report published in paper, public shaming for people on phones, need accountability, individual hold a sign "I'm a bad driver"

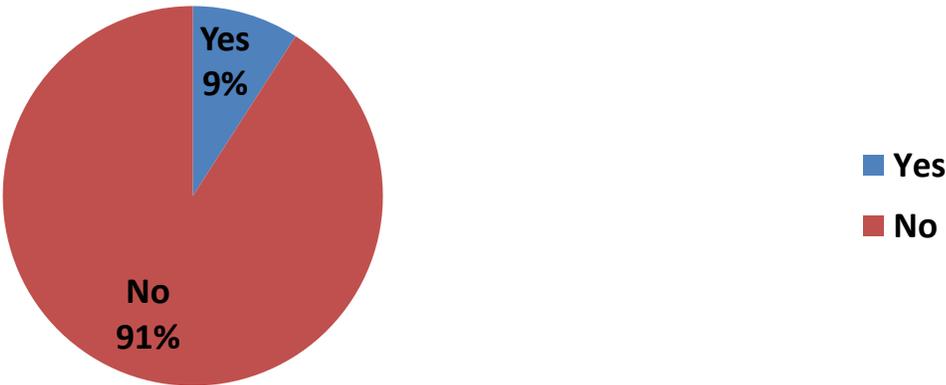
Had you heard of Vision Zero prior to this meeting?



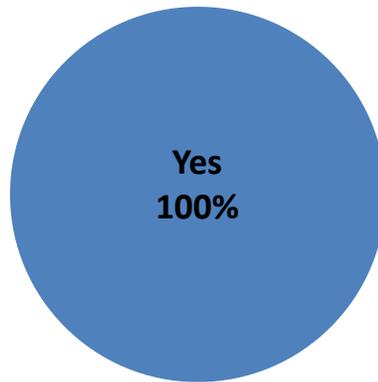
Are fatal and serious injury traffic crashes an issue that needs to be addressed?



Do you think Columbia's streets are safe for everyone?

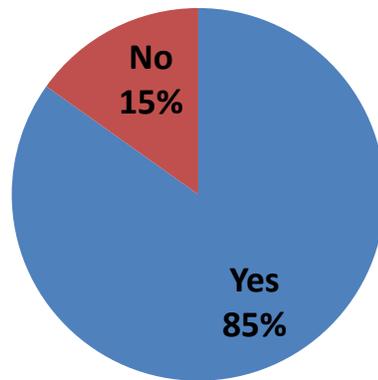


Do you believe that crashes are preventable?



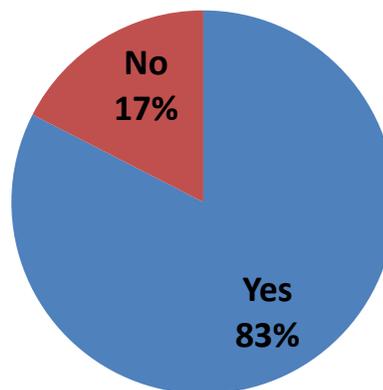
■ Yes
■ No

Is excessive speeding an issue in your area?



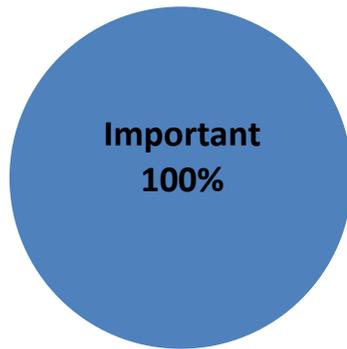
■ Yes
■ No

Would you support lowering speed limits in your area?



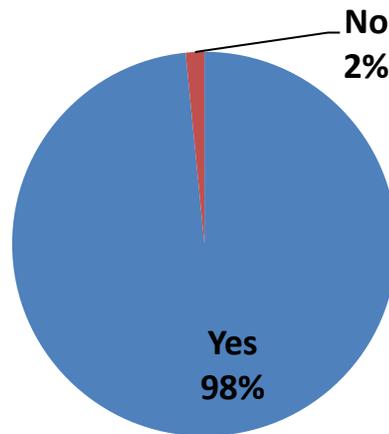
■ Yes
■ No

Is it important for schools to teach students how to travel safely?



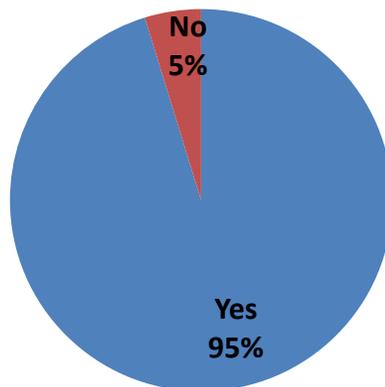
- Important
- Not important

Would you support a statewide texting ban?



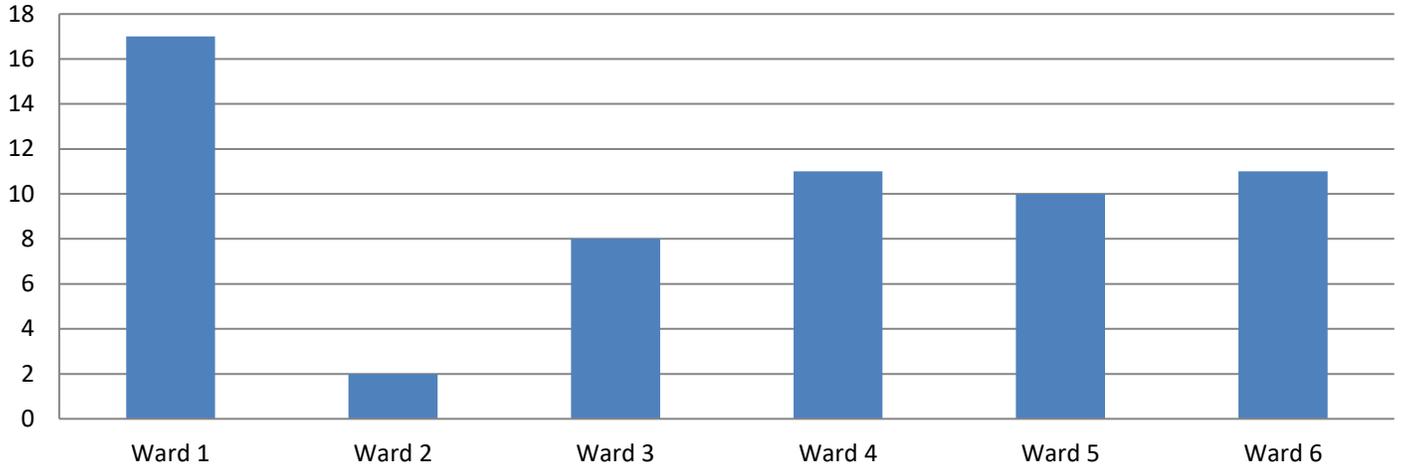
- Yes
- No

Would you support reestablishing a traffic unit?

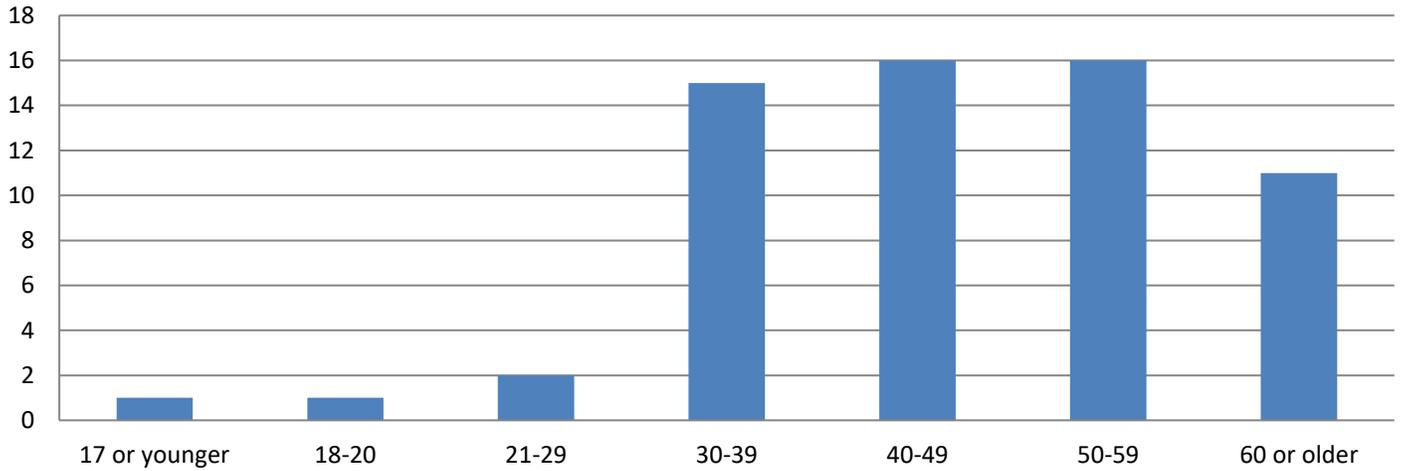


- Yes
- No

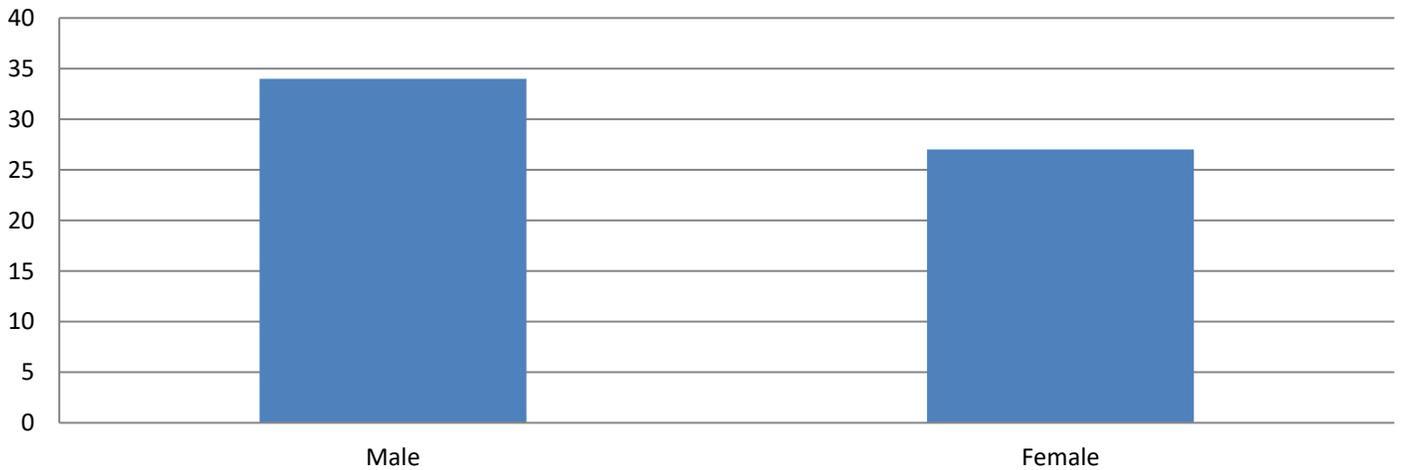
Which City Ward do you live in?



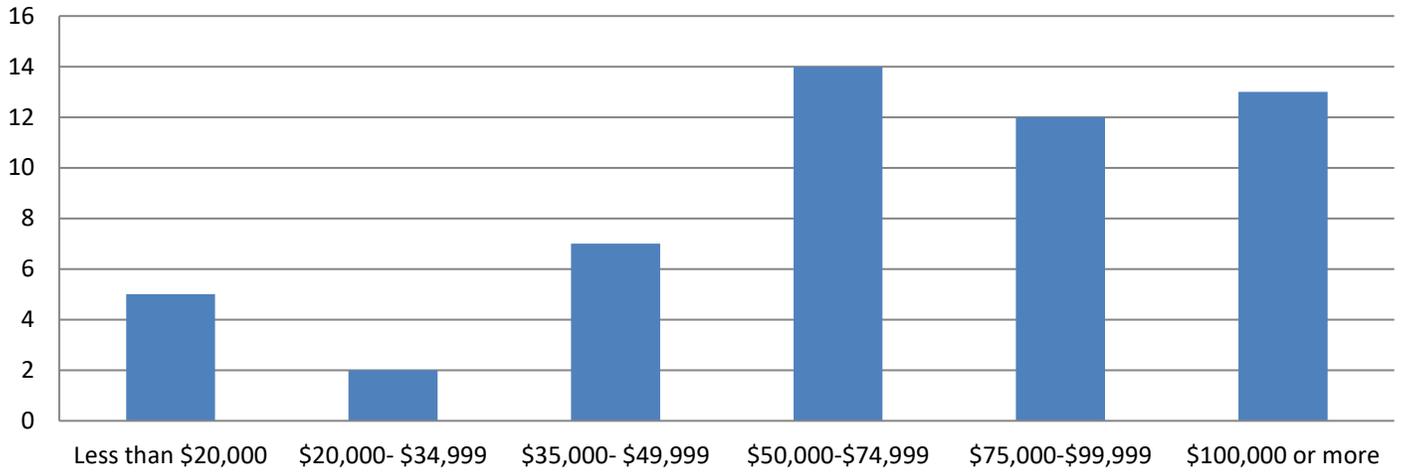
What is your age?



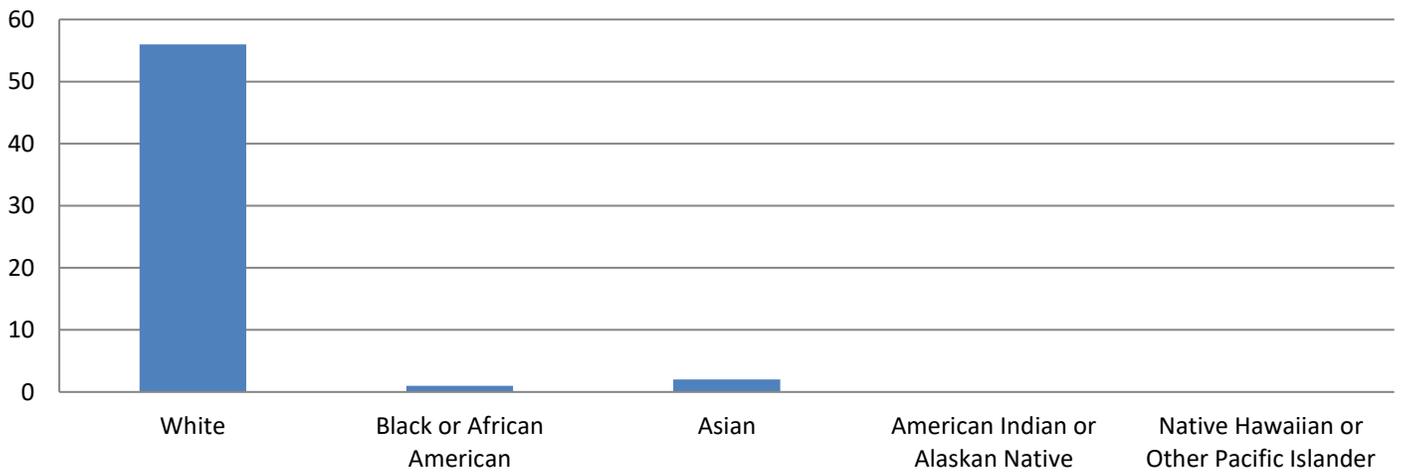
What is your gender?



Household Income



Race



Ethnicity

