

Using the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to Meet our Highest Needs

Richmond, CA | Community Needs Assessment

OCTOBER 2022

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01

INTRODUCTION

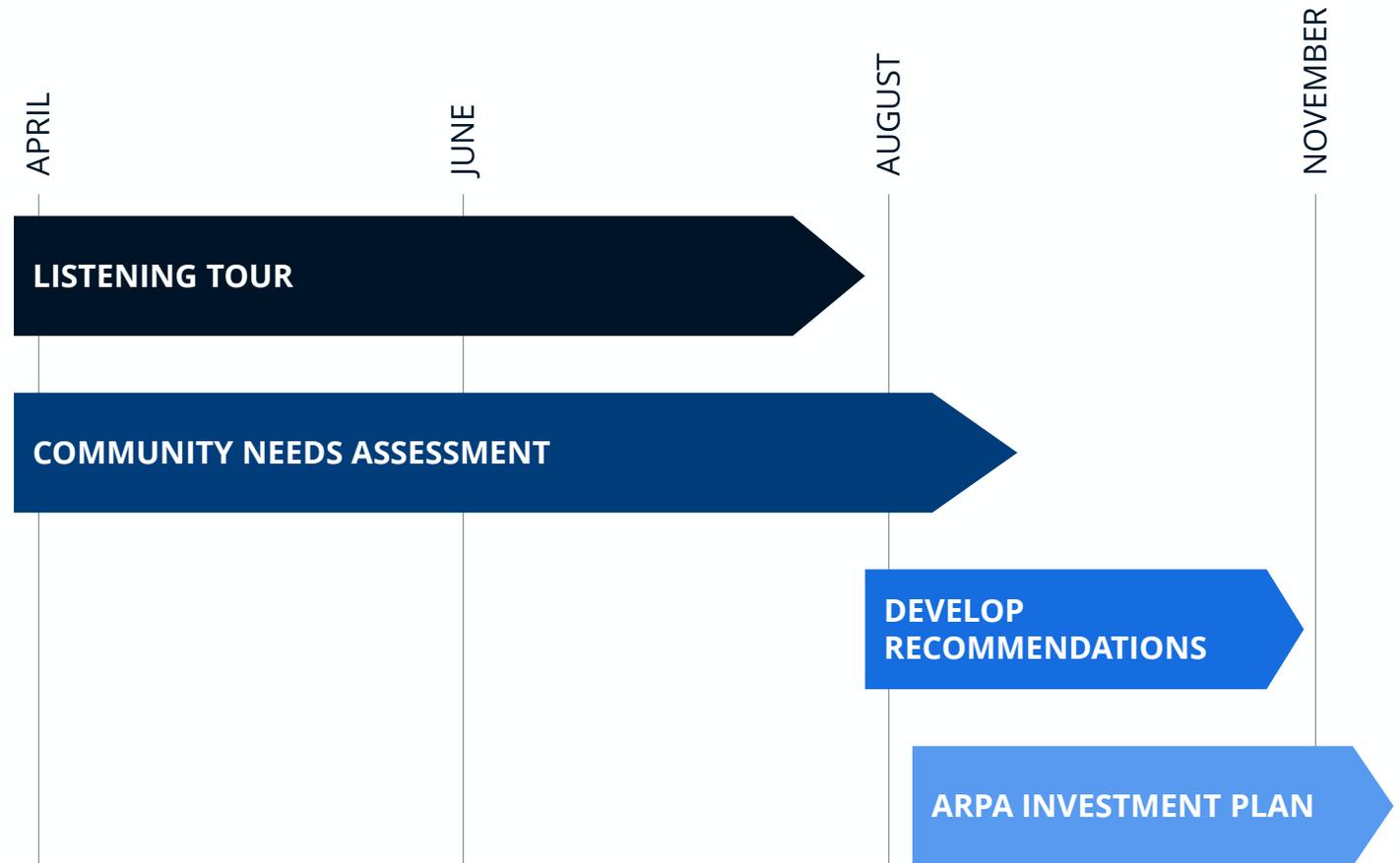
INTRODUCTION

This draft Community Needs Assessment provides a summary of work completed to date to develop Richmond's ARPA Strategic Investment Plan.

The City of Richmond hired a team including HR&A Advisors and Contigo Partners to develop a Community Needs Assessment to shape the City's COVID-19 recovery efforts. The Community Needs Assessment provides a summary of the findings of an inclusive community listening tour and additional needs analysis. It will inform the development of the ARPA Strategic Investment Plan.

This draft briefing book **provides a visual summary of work completed and the findings of the Community Needs Assessment.** It provides information including:

- An overview of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)
- A description of the Strategic Investment Planning process and of engagement activities undertaken in the community listening tour
- A description of the communities in Richmond that have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19
- An overview of cross-cutting themes that emerged from the listening tour and additional analysis and which will underpin recommended uses of ARPA funds
- A summary of the next steps for this project.



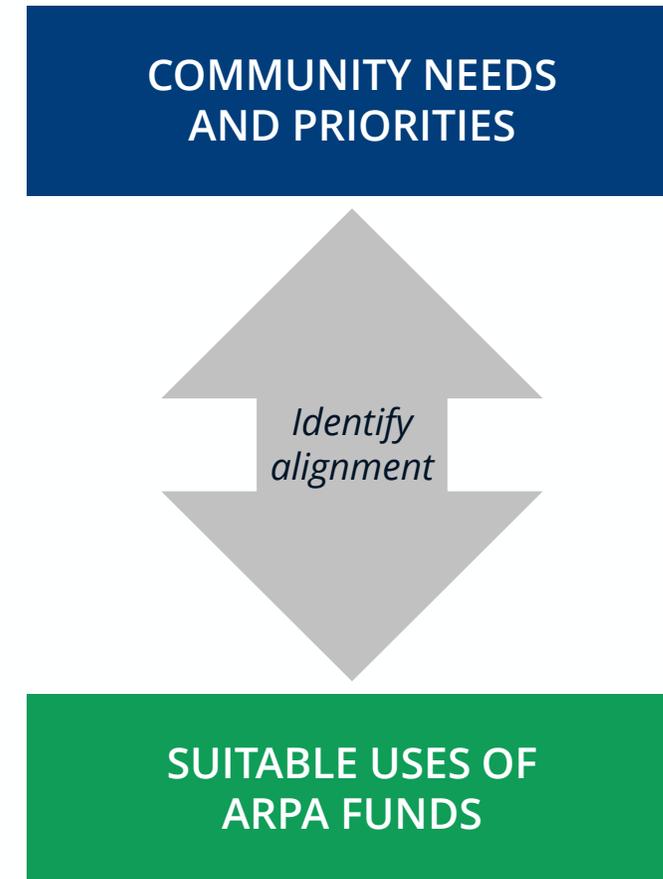
INTRODUCTION

The Community Needs Assessment will inform the City's use of its ARPA funds to support recovery from the impacts of COVID-19.

Through the passage of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), **the federal government provided state, tribal and local governments with much needed assistance to help offset the negative impacts of COVID-19.** As part of the \$1.9 trillion ARPA relief package, the City of Richmond received an allocation of \$27.7 million.

The City of Richmond would like to understand **how COVID-19 has impacted Richmond businesses and residents** and work with the community to **identify priorities for the allocation of its ARPA funds.** HR&A Advisors and Contigo Partners conducted a Community Needs Assessment, including a community listening tour, to help the City better understand the impacts of COVID-19 and remaining recovery needs. The goal for the community listening tour was to assess community needs and priorities for the use of ARPA funds by **facilitating an inclusive and equitable process, reaching a representative range of Richmond residents, businesses, and other stakeholders,** including new voices, and empowering community members by providing opportunities for them to share their experiences and perspectives about community needs.

The Community Needs Assessment will inform the development of a plan for the strategic investment of ARPA funds in Richmond, in accordance with ARPA requirements.



INTRODUCTION

The American Rescue Plan Act provides federal funding to cities and counties to support COVID-19 recovery efforts.

The American Rescue Plan Act, which was passed in March 2021, provides Federal funding for cities and states address COVID-19 recovery needs, with a focus on supporting the development of strong and equitable communities.

ARPA funds must be obligated by December 31, 2024, and must be expended by December 31, 2026.

While not an explicit requirement of the program, ARPA is a one-time source of funding, and therefore the most suitable uses of ARPA funds will be investment in projects or programs that do not require ongoing funding.

ARPA legislation outlines four broad categories of eligible uses for ARPA funds:



RESPONDING TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF COVID-19



REPLACING LOST PUBLIC SECTOR REVENUE



PROVIDING PREMIUM PAY FOR ESSENTIAL WORKERS



MAKING INVESTMENTS IN WATER, SEWER, AND BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE

INTRODUCTION

ARPA legislation outlines four broad categories of eligible uses for ARPA funds.



Responding to public health and economic impacts of COVID-19 | This can be a program or service related to identified impacts and designed to benefit impacted groups. Subcategories include:

- **Public health**, including COVID-19 mitigation and prevention, assistance with medical expenses, behavioral and mental health treatment, and preventing or responding to violence.
- **Assistance to households**, including food assistance, emergency housing, internet access or digital literacy, burials, home repair or weatherization, paid leave, workforce development services, financial services, affordable housing development, education, childcare, and direct cash assistance.
- **Assistance to small businesses**, including loans, grants, and technical assistance and other services.
- **Assistance to nonprofits**, including loans, grants, or technical assistance and other services.
- **Aid to impacted industries**, including financial support for payroll, and support for the maintenance and operations of existing facilities, technical assistance or other services, and COVID-19 mitigation or prevention.
- **Public sector capacity**, including increased capacity for public safety, public health, and human services staff; rehiring of public sector staff or providing other staff retention; and effective service delivery including program evaluation, community outreach, investments in technology, and costs related to COVID-19 response.
- **Assistance to disproportionately impacted households, businesses, and communities**, such as services to address health disparities, vouchers to help households relocate to neighborhoods with higher economic opportunity, investments in neighborhoods to promote improved health outcomes, remediation and removal of hazardous materials, improvements to vacant and abandoned properties, services or investments to address educational disparities, support for start-ups or expanding small businesses, and funding for rehabilitation or improvements to commercial properties.

INTRODUCTION

The Final Rule from the Department of the Treasury outlines four broad categories of eligible uses for ARPA funds.



Replacing lost public sector revenue | To assist cities, the federal government allowed cities to take a maximum allowance of up to \$10 million, allowing recipients to select between a standard amount of revenue loss or calculate revenue loss using the Treasury's formula, which compares actual revenue to a counterfactual trend. Funds can be used for any typical government services, including general administrative staff, services, and facilities, public safety services, road maintenance, infrastructure, and environmental remediation. The City of Richmond elected to calculate its revenue loss based on the Treasury formula and saw a 12.4% reduction in revenue, or \$34.9K, which is otherwise greater than the City's allocation.



Premium pay for eligible workers | Cities can provide premium pay up to \$13 per hour for eligible workers performing essential work, including:

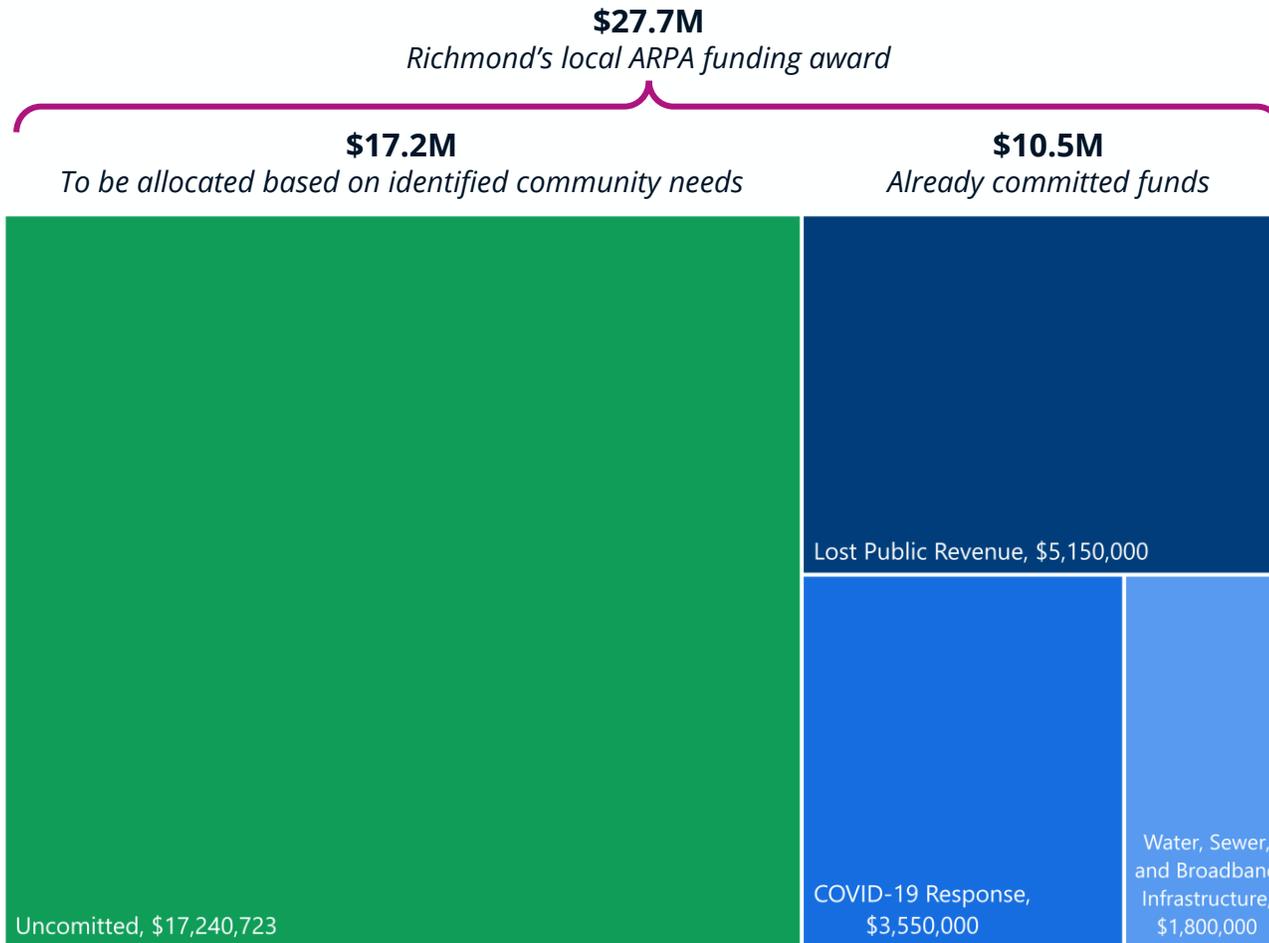
- Health care, public health, mental health, social services, family or childcare, emergency response providers, medical testing, pharmacy, and other health and social services
- Grocery stores, restaurants, food production, and delivery
- Sanitation, maintenance, laundry, elections, and other critical services
- Biomedical research
- Transportation and warehousing
- Hotel and commercial lodging facilities used for COVID-19 mitigation and containment



Investments in Water, Sewer, and Broadband Infrastructure | Cities can make investments to improve specific categories of infrastructure, including broadband, drinking water systems, and wastewater and sewer systems. This helps address the consequences of deferred maintenance in drinking water systems, treatment of sewage and stormwater, and some resiliency-focused projects such as green infrastructure, rainwater harvesting, and water conservation. Broadband infrastructure investments are intended to address areas without access to reliable, affordable broadband, add enrolment in a low-income subsidy program, and modernize cybersecurity.

INTRODUCTION

Richmond received an allocation of \$27.7M in ARPA funds and has already allocated approximately \$10.5M, leaving \$17.2M in uncommitted funds.



Use of Funds

ARPA is a one-time source of funding, and therefore the most suitable use of ARPA funds is investment in projects or programs that do not require ongoing funding. Examples of suitable projects include:

- Temporary programs that address short-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic
- One-time capital investments in property or infrastructure
- Spending to conduct studies or pilot programs
- Seed funding for loan funds
- Other projects that do not require hiring new permanent staff or ongoing commitment of funds

ARPA funds must be obligated by December 31, 2024 and expended by December 31, 2026. Therefore, Richmond should consider both:

- Short-term recovery, including providing immediate relief to disproportionately impacted individuals
- Long-term stability, including any long-term community needs Richmond can address now based on funding availability



02

IMPACTED POPULATIONS

IMPACTED POPULATIONS

Nationally, data and news stories indicate that particular populations were likely to be disproportionately impacted during the pandemic. As such, ARPA includes specific provisions to provide assistance to those households, businesses, and communities.

Community Demographics

Based on national data trends, key demographic components that were likely to impact an individual or household's experience during the pandemic include:

- **Neighborhood:** dense, urban areas saw higher transmission of the COVID-19 virus.
- **Race and ethnicity:** ongoing and historic systemic barriers for specific populations, including redlining, restrictions from job opportunities, reduced opportunities to build generational wealth, and more, meant that some populations were more likely to be physically and economically impacted by the pandemic.
- **Language and immigration status:** this community often was unable to access key resources, including stimulus checks.
- **Poverty and housing status:** without stable resources, it became more difficult for many to afford basic necessities, including rent payments.
- **Age:** both younger and older adults particularly struggled with the social isolation of the pandemic.
- **Education level:** individuals without a high school diploma, including those in service industries, were more likely to be laid off during the initial lockdown, and had less transferrable skills so continue to struggle to find new work.

US Treasury Definition of Disproportionate Impacts

Disproportionately impacted households are those that experienced a disproportionate, or **meaningfully more severe, impact from the pandemic**. Pre-existing disparities in health and economic outcomes magnified the impact of the COVID-19 public health emergency on certain households and communities. Many different geographic, income-based, or poverty-based presumptions could be used to designate disproportionately impacted populations. For example, if a household qualifies for programs like Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Section 8 Vouchers, and Free and Reduced-Price Lunch (NSLP) and/or School Breakfast (SBP) programs, the household is also recognized as disproportionately impacted.

The interim final rule for ARPA funds provided significant flexibility for recipients to determine which households, populations, communities, or small businesses have been impacted and/or disproportionately impacted by the pandemic and to identify appropriate responses.

IMPACTED POPULATIONS

Demographic analysis was conducted to identify potential populations that faced disproportionate impacts in Richmond for focused outreach and conversations.

Community Demographics

To identify the same demographic components in Richmond, demographic research questions included:

- **Neighborhood:** Which areas of Richmond may have been more dangerous for residents, due to density proximity to one another?
- **Race and ethnicity:** Which racial and ethnic communities faced additional barriers during the pandemic, and how did those barriers impact them?
- **Language and immigration status:** Which people had a harder time accessing resources during the pandemic due to communication barriers or disconnect from government? What resources were they able to use, and what should be done to help them now?
- **Poverty and housing status:** How did income and housing insecurity impact Richmond residents during the pandemic? What do they need to have more housing security?
- **Age:** How did the pandemic impact different age groups in Richmond, from students to older adults?
- **Education level:** As Richmond residents continue their work or find new work, how does their education level impact their ability to earn a living? What do business owners need support with?

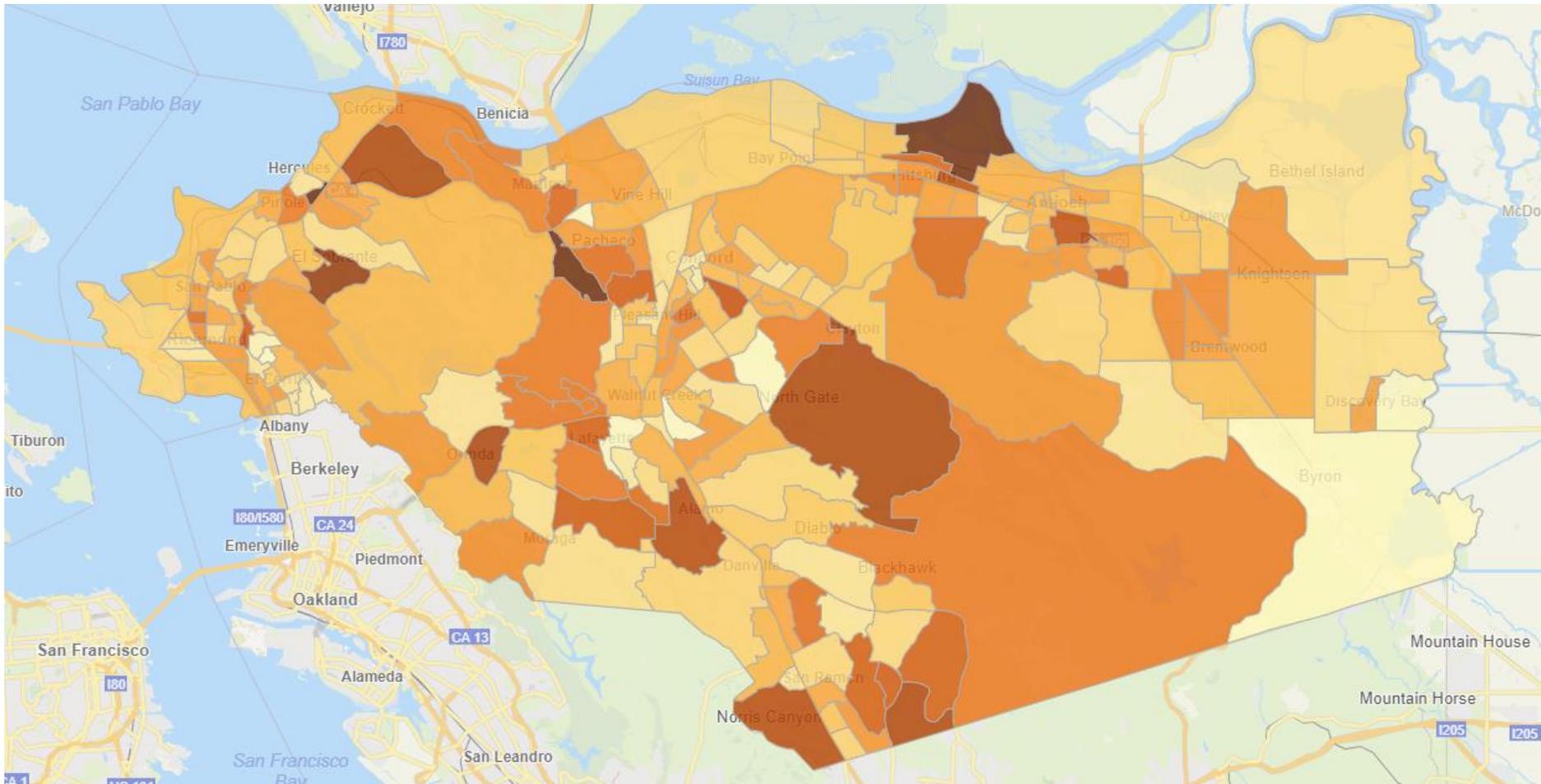
Richmond Focus Populations

Based on this data, and in collaboration with the City and other stakeholders, we identified organizations serving the following populations/stakeholder groups to meet with during focused conversations and share additional outreach with:

- Latinx/Spanish speaking residents
- Black residents
- Asian and Pacific Islander residents
- Disabled residents
- Immigrants
- Community service providers (services range in type, but include health and educational organizations)
- Homeless individuals
- Renters and housing advocacy organizations
- Youth
- Seniors
- Local businesses, particularly in retail and hospitality
- Local workforce, including reentry population

IMPACTED POPULATIONS

Denser, more urban areas of Richmond had higher rates of COVID-19 positivity, though contraction did not vary significantly from other cities throughout Contra Costa County.



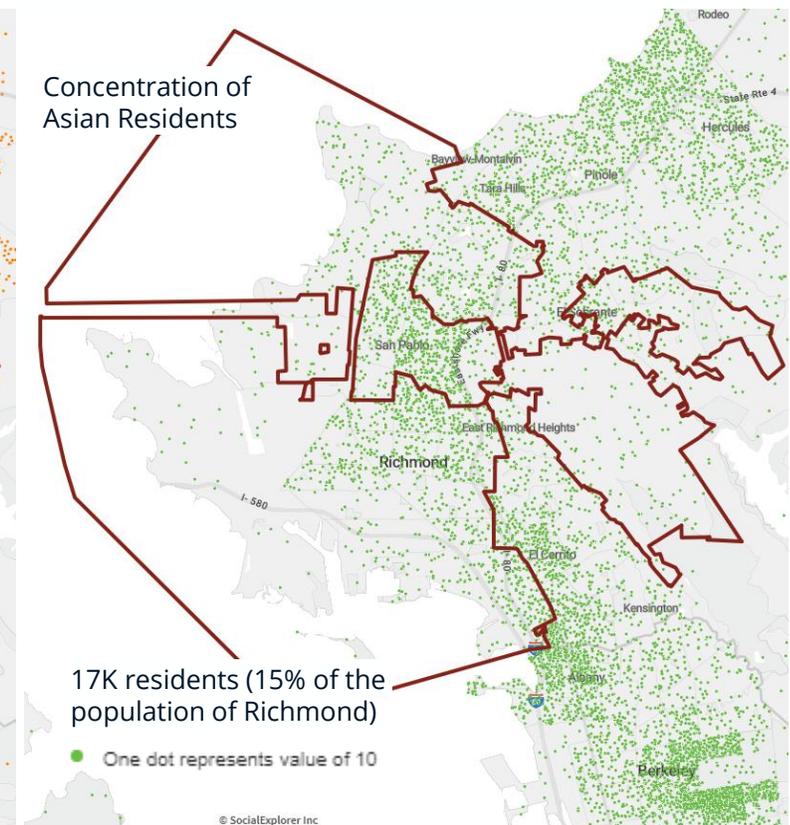
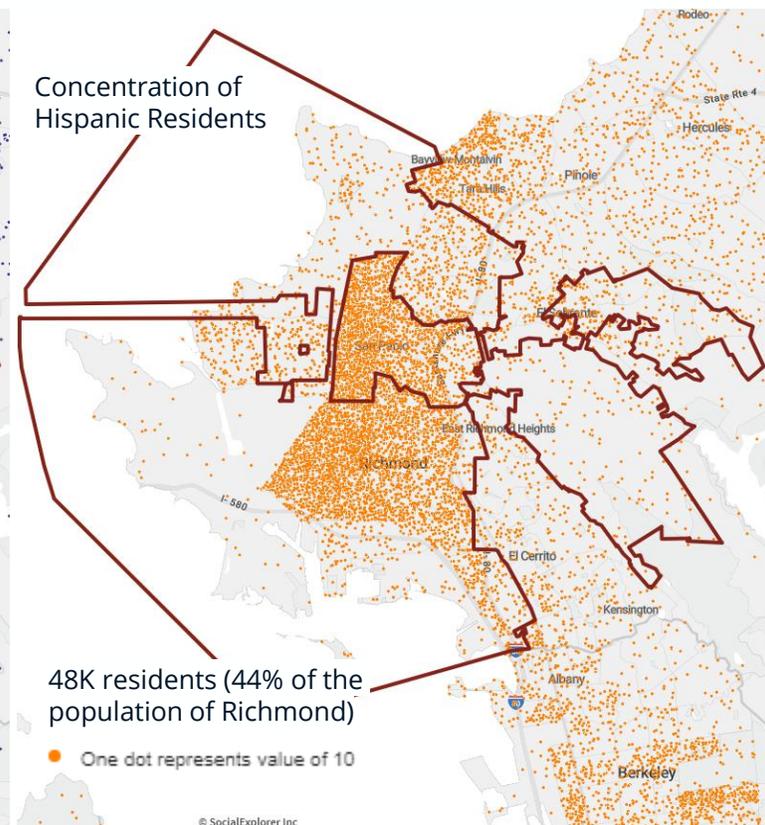
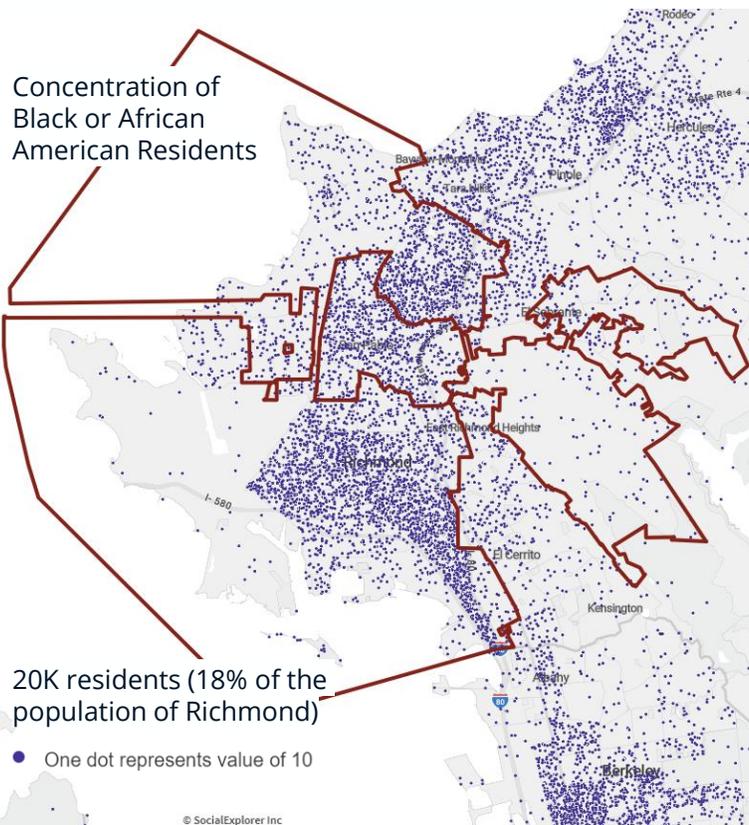
CURRENT COVID-19 CASES IN CONTRA-COSTA COUNTY

Current testing positivity rate and cases in the last 7 days (September 7-14, 2022). Census tracts in darker colors have higher testing positivity rates.

IMPACTED POPULATIONS

Populations that face structural racism are nationally overrepresented among populations that contracted COVID-19, more likely to work in essential services with increased exposure, and may have language barriers that limit access to services and information.

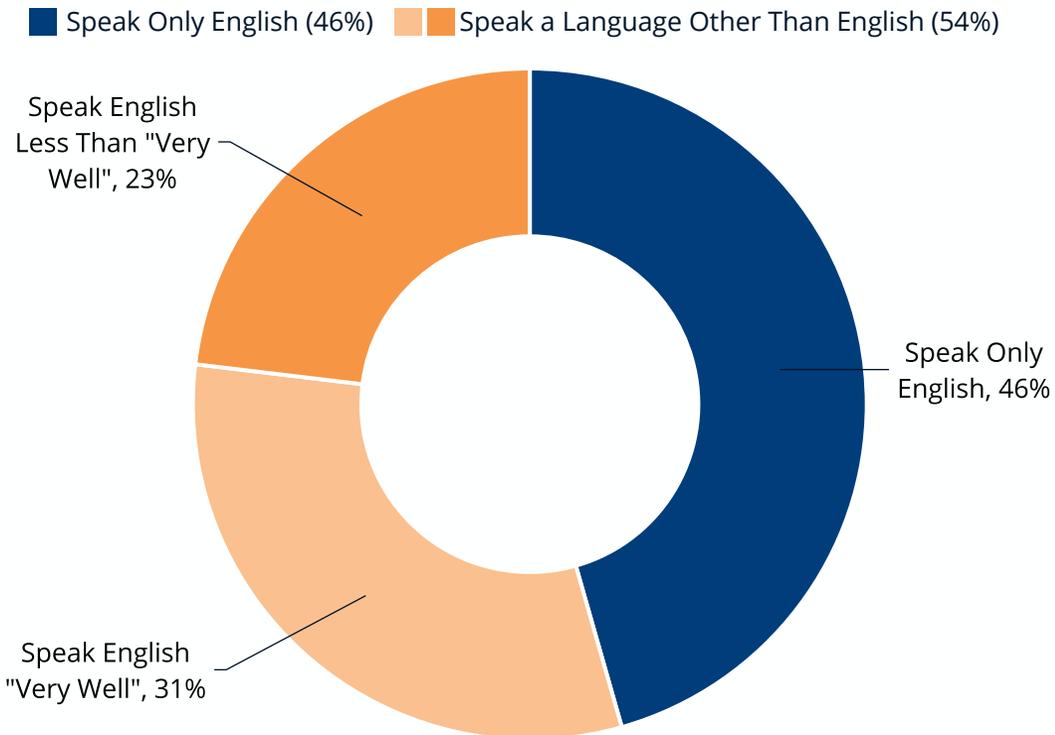
RICHMOND POPULATIONS FACING STRUCTURAL RACISM



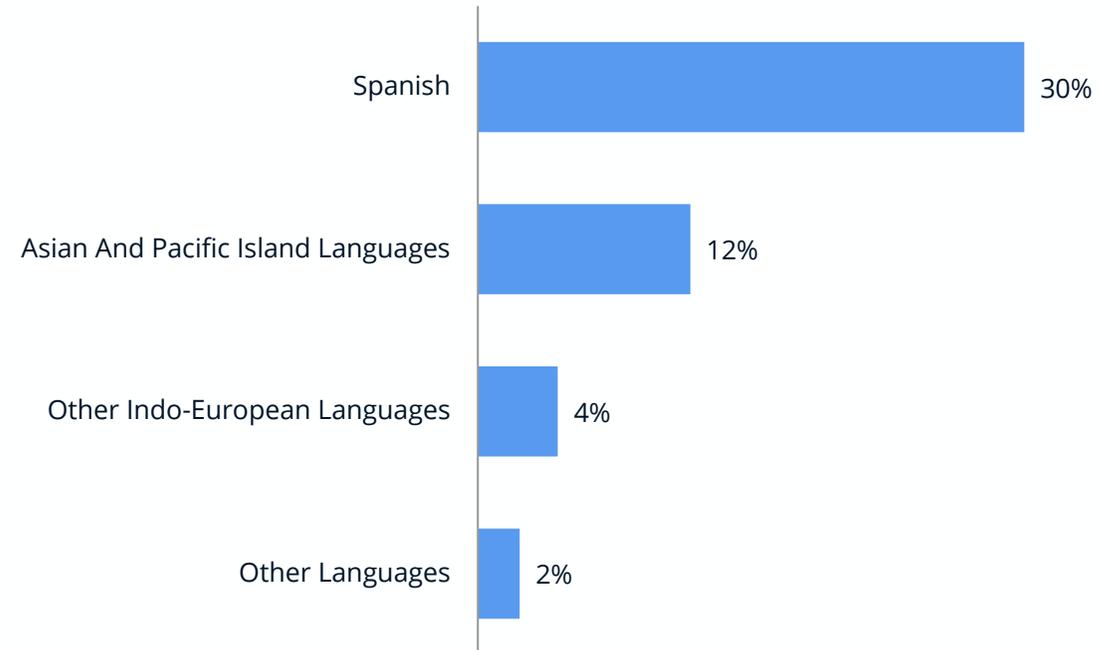
IMPACTED POPULATIONS

Over half of Richmond residents speak a language other than English at home, which can increase barriers to accessing information and services during the pandemic, impacting residents' health, safety, and economic recovery.

Language Spoken At Home in Richmond



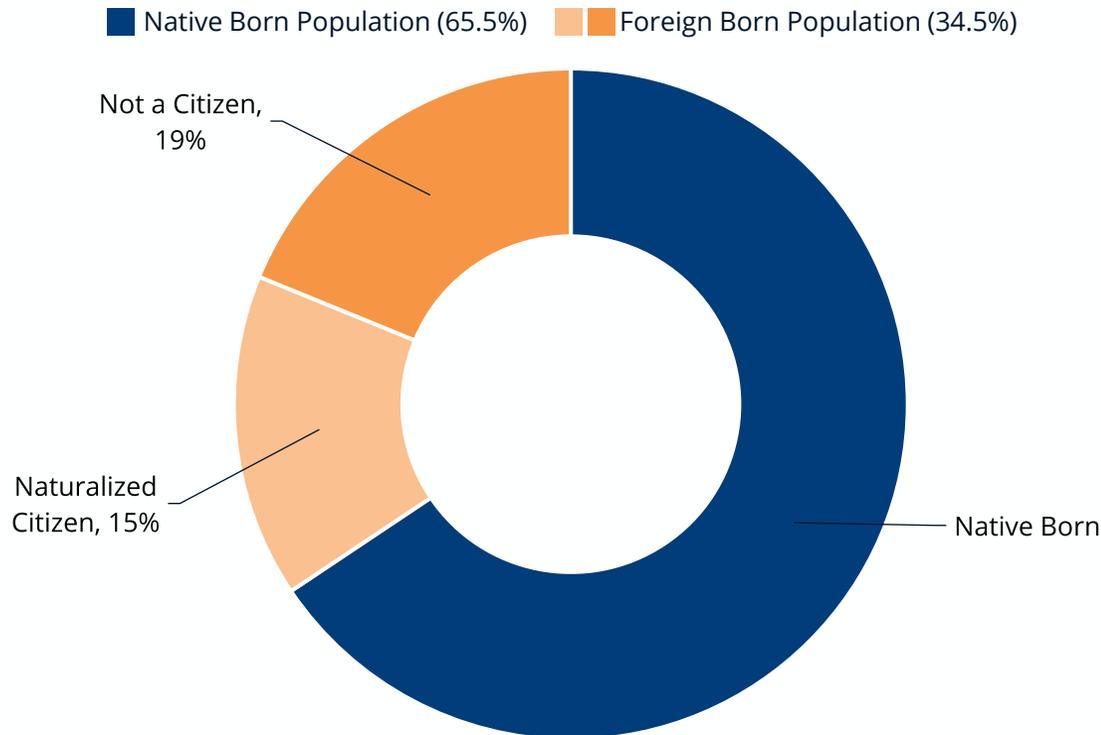
Household Language of Households with Limited English Speaking Status in Richmond



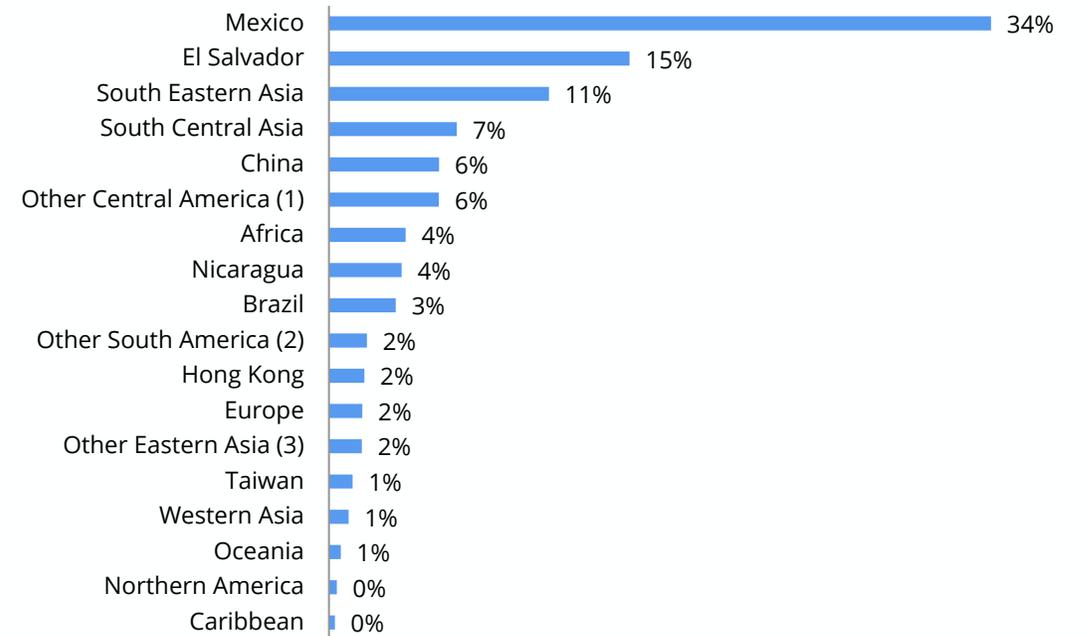
IMPACTED POPULATIONS

For the 35% of Richmond residents born in another country, many may have struggled while disconnected from their family and international support networks. The 19% of Richmond residents that do not hold citizenship status faced additional insecurities during the pandemic, including being blocked from financial support like stimulus checks.

Nativity by Citizenship Status in Richmond



Place of Birth for Foreign-Born Population in Richmond



Aggregation excludes country-specific populations with statistical significance over 2%:

(1) Aggregation excludes Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua

(2) Aggregation excludes Brazil

(3) Aggregation excludes China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan

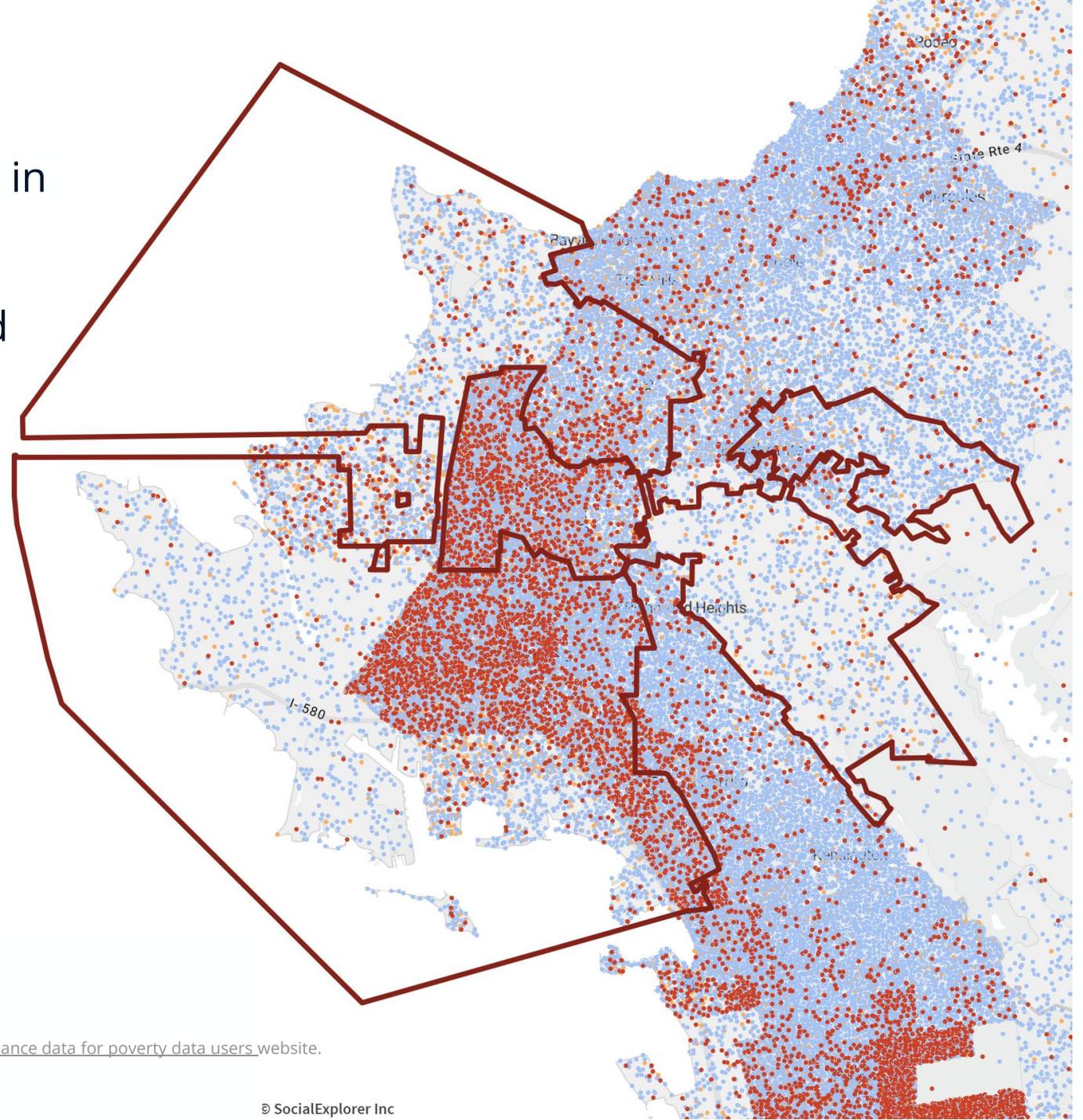
IMPACTED POPULATIONS

People living in poverty, concentrated in the middle of Richmond, were more vulnerable to food insecurity, digital inequities, and housing insecurity and potential evictions.

PEOPLE LIVING IN POVERTY

Ratio of Income to Poverty Level, where families under 1.00 are considered in poverty, 1.00 to 1.99 are considered struggling, and over 2.00 are not at risk of poverty*

-  Population for Whom Poverty Status Is Determined: Under 1.00 (Doing Poorly) 15K residents, or 14% of the population of Richmond
-  Population for Whom Poverty Status Is Determined: 1.00 to 1.99 (Struggling) 21K residents, or 19% of the population of Richmond
-  Population for Whom Poverty Status Is Determined: 2.00 and Over (Doing Ok) 72K residents, or 67% of the population of Richmond



*For more information on how the US Census Bureau measures poverty, please visit the [guidance data for poverty data users](#) website.

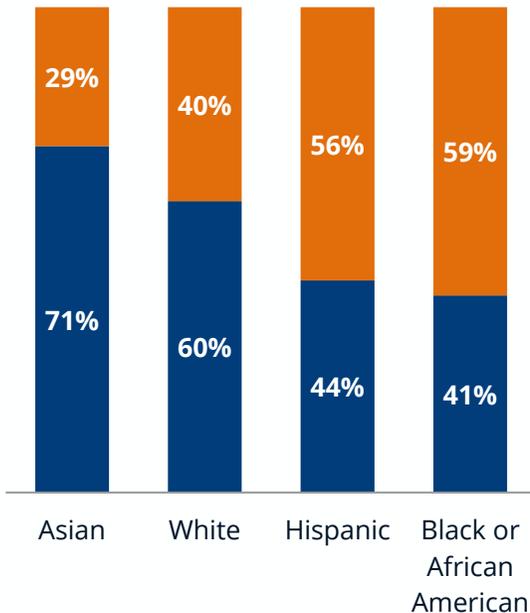
Source: US Census ACS 5-Year Estimates (2020)

IMPACTED POPULATIONS

Renters during the pandemic may have also been experiencing un- or under-employment, thus placing them at risk of missing monthly payments in an already insecure housing environment. In Richmond, renters are far more likely to be Black or Hispanic.

HOUSING TENURE BY RACE

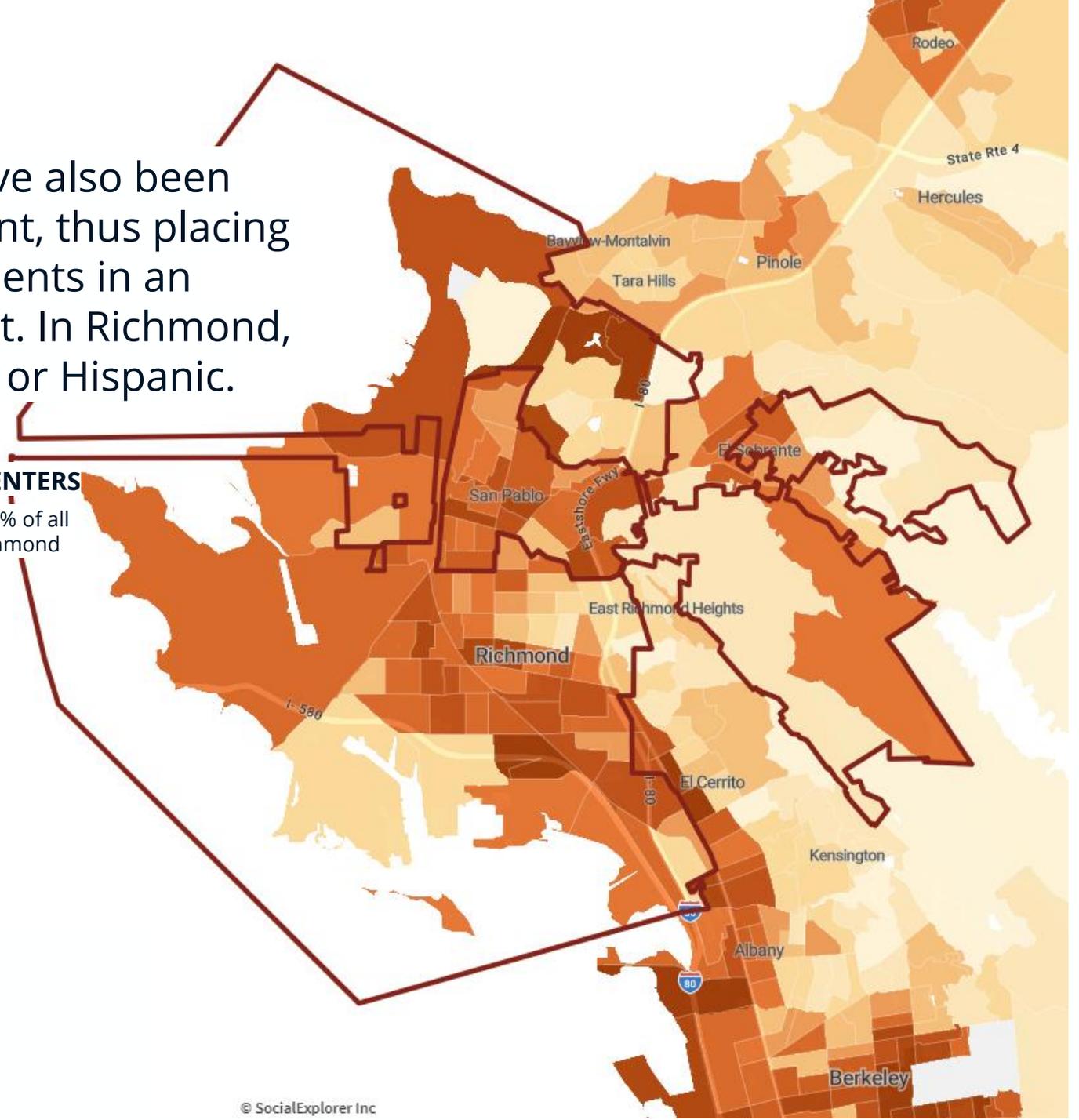
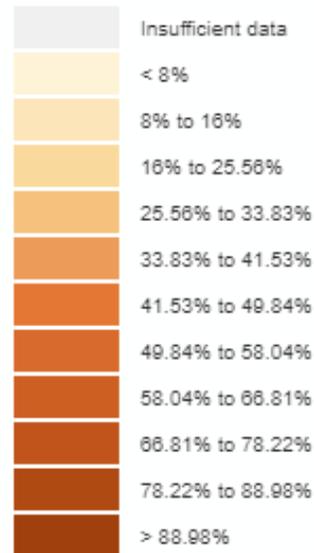
■ Owner ■ Renter



Source: US Census ACS 5-Year Estimates (2020)

CONCENTRATION OF RENTERS

Total Renters: 18K units, or 47% of all occupied housing units in Richmond



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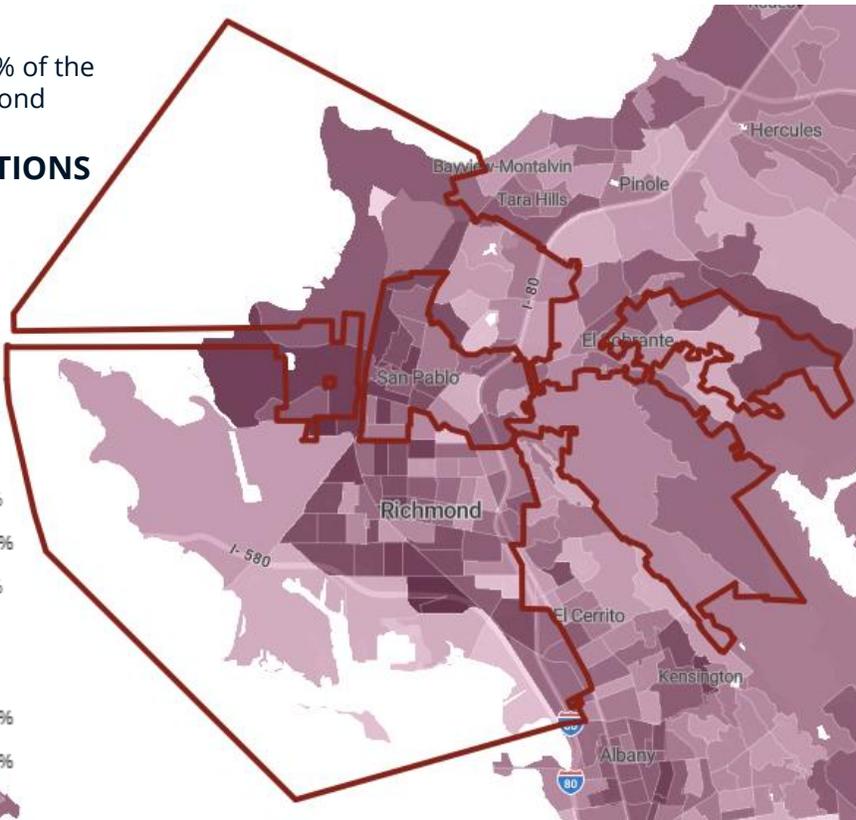
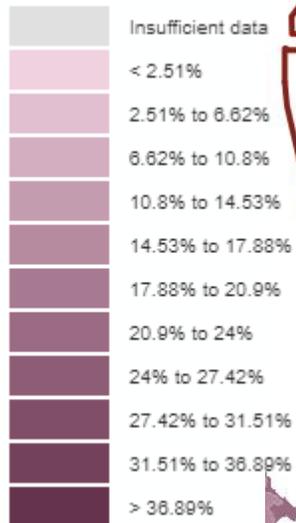
IMPACTED POPULATIONS

The impact to youth, including remote learning, social isolation, and familial deaths, created dozens of stressors that their developing brains have a harder time adapting to. Meanwhile, older adult populations were cut off from family and social networks and may have had a harder time accessing online resources due to digital illiteracy.

24K residents, or 22% of the population of Richmond

YOUTH POPULATIONS

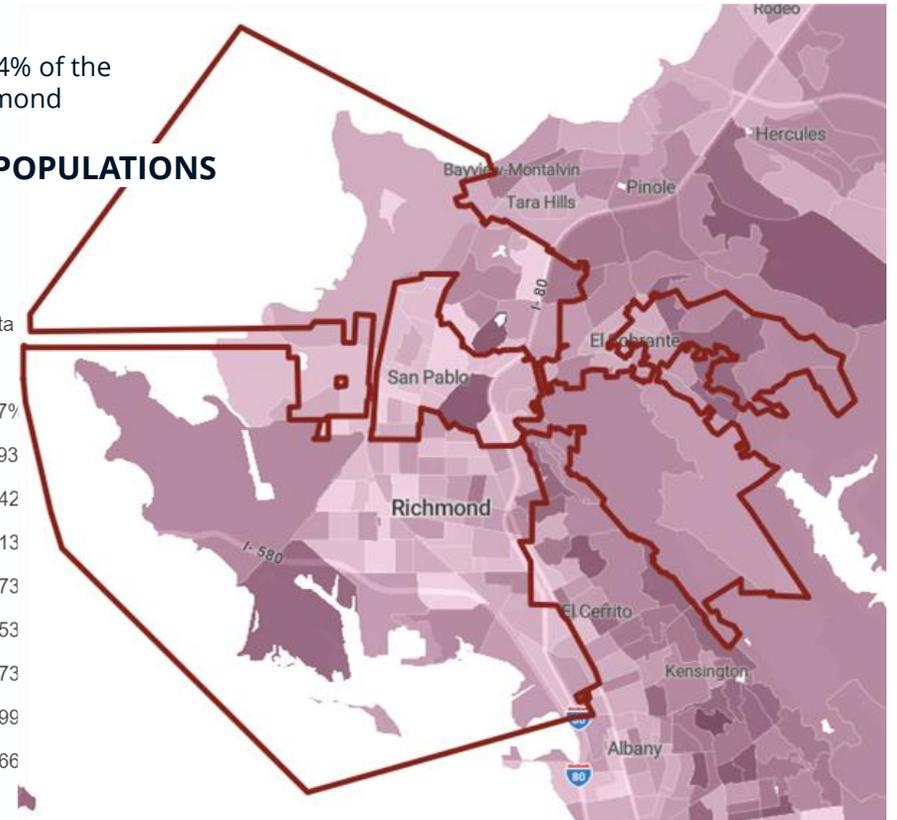
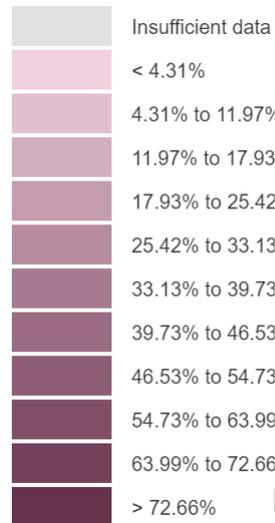
Concentration of Residents Under 18



15K residents, or 14% of the population of Richmond

OLDER ADULT POPULATIONS

Concentration of Residents Over 65

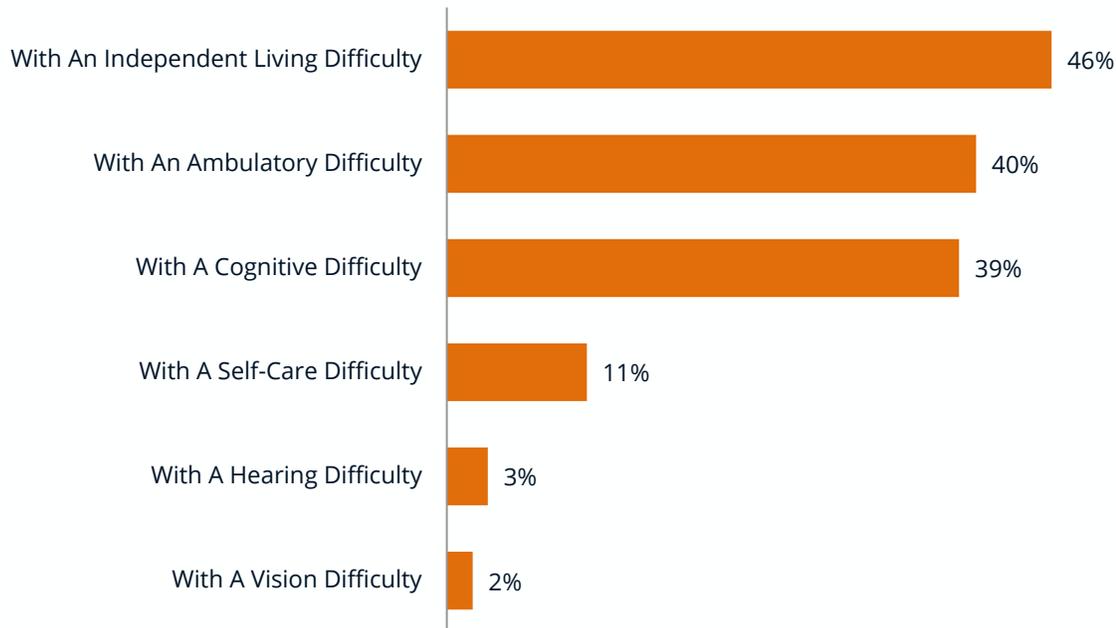


Source: US Census ACS 5-Year Estimates (2020)

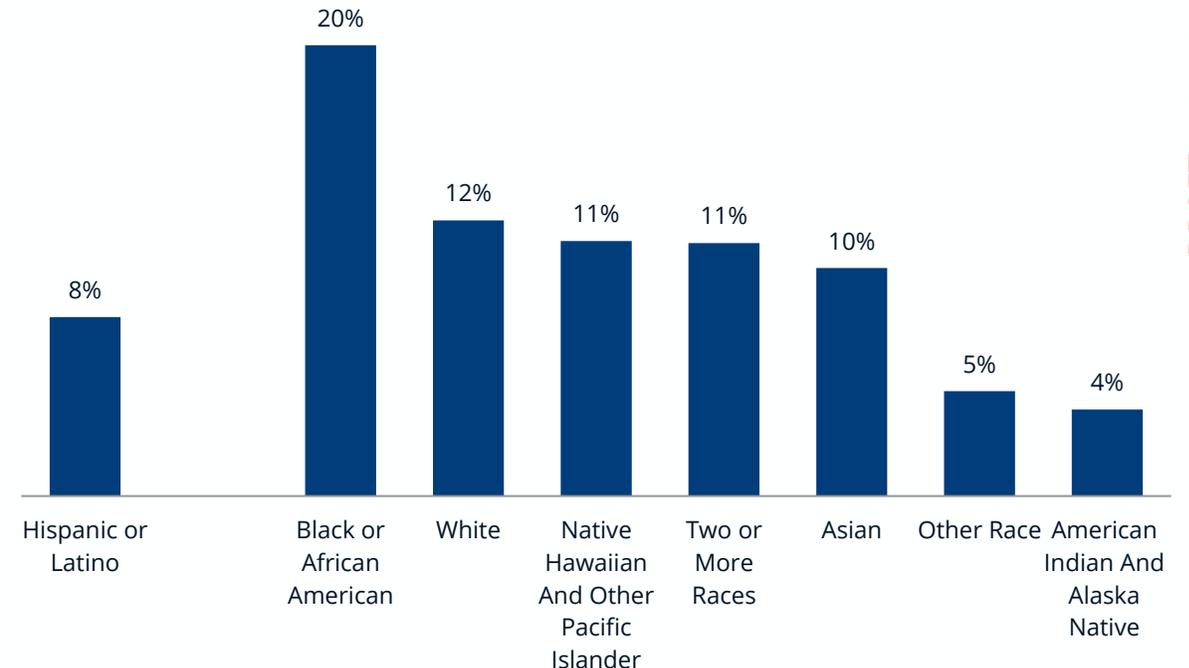
IMPACTED POPULATIONS

Individuals with disabilities may have had a more difficult time maintaining their health throughout the pandemic, as existing conditions require support that may have been reduced or eliminated due to social distancing. Nationally, systemic racism and historical inequities in health care access mean that Black residents are far more likely to have a disability today, a trend seen clearly in Richmond.

Share of Population with Disabilities in Richmond



Disability Status by Race and Ethnicity in Richmond



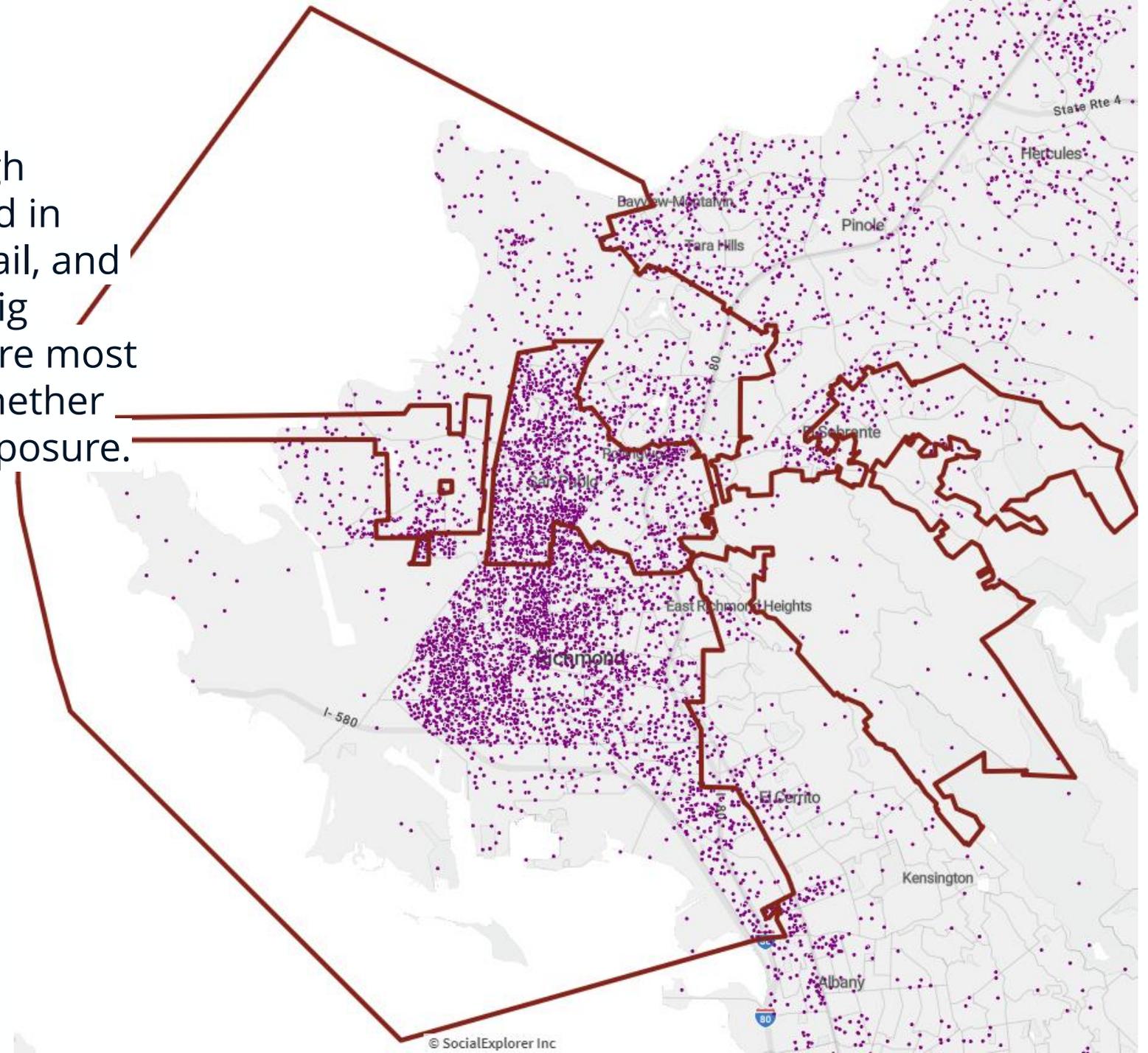
IMPACTED POPULATIONS

Many individuals without a high school diploma were employed in industries like restaurants, retail, and hospitality, or working in the gig economy. These industries were most impacted by the pandemic, whether facing job loss or increased exposure.

INDIVIDUALS WITHOUT A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

● One dot represents value of 5

17K residents, or 22% of the population 25 and over in Richmond



IMPACTED POPULATIONS

Through the demographic analysis, the consulting team was able to better define the populations to engage with during the listening tour in targeted conversations.

Latinx/Spanish speaking residents: 44% of Richmond's population is Hispanic, with over 11,000 households primarily speaking Spanish in the home. This community may have faced increased difficulty accessing resources through local, state, or federal resources, and focus groups should seek to understand what support is needed to reduce these barriers. Additionally, through the engagement process, it is essential to provide both English and Spanish options for discussion, surveys, and feedback opportunities.

Black residents: Richmond includes roughly 20,000 Black residents, or 18% of the population. Focus groups should reach out to these communities to understand how their lived experiences mirror national systemic inequities, including preexisting health conditions, job opportunities, housing insecurity, and other barriers that are blocking their paths to an equitable recovery.

Asian and Pacific Islander residents: The 15% of Richmond residents that are Asian may have had difficulty overcoming language and cultural barriers to access resources during the pandemic. The listening tour should aim to understand what resources these communities felt blocked from and what they need to stabilize and recover socially and economically.

Disabled residents: Richmond has a large share of residents that have difficulty with independent living, ambulatory difficulty, and cognitive difficulty, which relates to mental health needs. Focus groups should seek to understand what services these populations could not use during the pandemic, and what they need to recover moving forward. In particular, outreach should focus on Black residents, who are disproportionately likely to have a disability in Richmond.

Renters and housing advocacy organizations: Richmond has a relatively high concentration of renters as compared to surrounding cities. Renters had less housing security and more cost burden during the pandemic, and in Richmond, this disproportionately impacted Black and Hispanic residents. Focus groups should include residents from these communities to hear about particular stressors, including evictions or trouble accessing rent relief.

Youth and seniors: Youth and senior populations frequently felt the impact of social isolation most acutely during the pandemic. Focus groups should include individuals from both of these demographics across racial and ethnic groups to hear about their support networks, thus better understanding social resilience across Richmond and the success of outreach efforts through schools and other organizations.



03

ENGAGEMENT
PROCESS

ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

HR&A and Contigo led a community listening tour to provide insight for City leadership to the impacts of the pandemic and priorities for ARPA investments.

What have been the impacts of COVID-19 on Richmond, its residents, and its businesses?

- How has the city been impacted? Its households, businesses?
- How has it impacted participants personally (immediate and long-term impacts)?
- Which households and businesses were most impacted?
- How and where were impacts felt most strongly?
- What have the lasting impacts to the economy been?
- Who was or is most vulnerable to impacts?

What is the status of recovery?

- What is the perception or understanding of the City's recovery efforts to date?
- What should the City be continuing to do to address COVID-19 impacts?
- Where have people gone for information or assistance with COVID-19 impacts? What types of assistance have they received?
- What services or recovery assistance is needed but not available?

How should the City prioritize and allocate ARPA funds?

- What types of expenditures (revenue replacement, economic recovery, public health, water and broadband infrastructure, premium pay for essential workers) should the City prioritize, and how?
- Within those types of expenditures, what projects or investments are the greatest priority or address the greatest need?
- What can private industry and households do to help to Richmond recover?

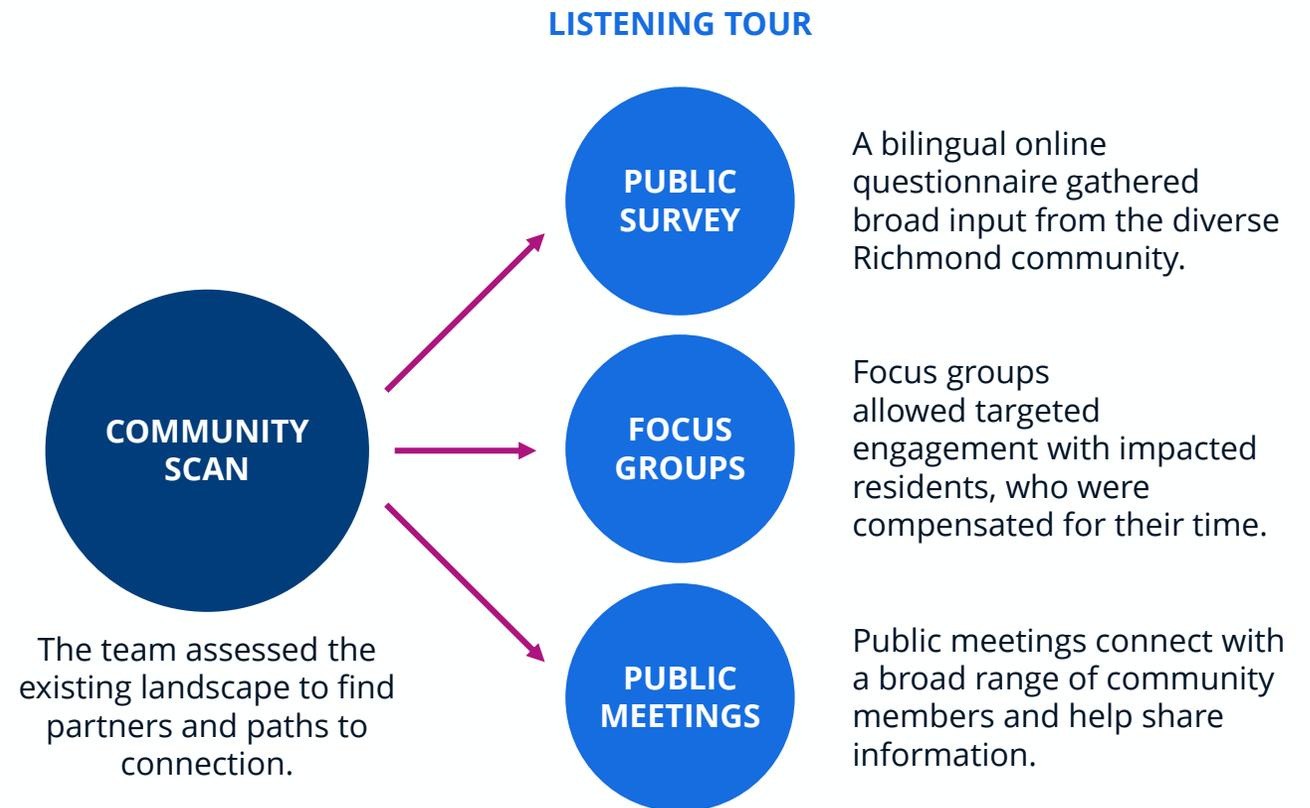
ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The consultant team connected with a broad and inclusive range of stakeholders through a robust outreach and engagement process described in the following pages.

Throughout the engagement process, outreach focused on **reaching diverse residents, businesses, community serving organizations and other key stakeholder groups** to gather broad meaningful input to inform the City's COVID-19 recovery efforts and investments. In particular, efforts focused on reaching community members that may not participate in traditional engagement, including attending large format public meetings, but have been most impacted by the economic and health impacts of the pandemic.

The key goals of the outreach program were to:

- 1. Empower community members** by providing opportunities for them to share their “voices” and perspectives about community needs
- 2. Create working partnerships** with community groups, community-serving organizations and stakeholders that engender trust and collaboration
- 3. Maintain transparent and productive two-way communications** program that exceeds minimum public participation requirements



ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The community scan enabled the consulting team to collaborate with community organizations to identify and reach target populations.

Community-based organizations have conducted many important previous outreach efforts both prior to and following the pandemic. The consulting team began by gathering data and existing documentation from earlier outreach efforts to understand local best practices for successful engagement and avoid duplication of research, which can become tiring for residents. This community scan created goals for what engagement should look like for this project.

Based on these studies, and bolstered by other experts in engagement, a successful and inclusive engagement process includes:

- **A diverse sample of residents**, including a diverse range of incomes, ages, and racial and ethnic backgrounds, with a focus on identifying and reaching those most impacted by COVID-19.
- **Vulnerable or hard-to-reach populations**, including veterans, disabled individuals, the unhoused, and undocumented, or organizations that provide services to these populations.
- Individuals or organizations that **have not previously been engaged** in efforts related to ARPA or other community needs.
- **Business owners and property owners** in Richmond, as well as residents and community service providers.
- Residents from **throughout the city**.



COMMUNITY
SCAN

ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The focus groups and public community meetings brought a diverse group of community members together to discuss their individual and collective experience during the pandemic, in addition to their vision for equitably spending ARPA dollars.

Outreach

The project used many outreach strategies to reach the widest group of people and encourage them to participate in the project in whatever ways possible (through the survey, in public meetings, and in targeted focus groups).

Public outreach included promoting meetings on KCRT Television, going door to door to local businesses on 23rd street, sending email blasts to community-based organizations and government departments, Facebook and Instagram advertising, promotion at community events, and website with updates and survey participation. In addition, a group of students at Richmond High School conducted survey and business outreach through the Youth Plan, Learn, Act Now (Y-PLAN) program.

In addition, the consultant team used targeted outreach to bring together focus groups of various organizations that serve impacted organizations, described in further detail on the following page.

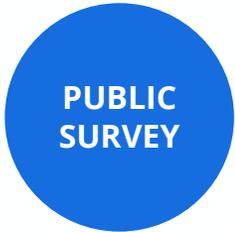
Facilitation Agenda

Discussion Focus	Discussion Questions
INDIVIDUAL <i>Understanding Personal Priorities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prior to March 2020, what were three meaningful personal concerns/challenges you felt needed to be addressed in your life? Over the past two years a lot has shifted for people personally and for our community, if you think about your personal concerns and challenges during the pandemic, did they change from those prior to the pandemic? Looking ahead to 2022 and 2023, what personal concerns and challenges do you anticipate?
COLLECTIVE <i>Understanding Community Connections</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe how you and/or people you know in your community accessed information to address personal or business concerns and challenges during the pandemic? Describe how you and/or people you know in your community accessed resources to address personal or business concerns and challenges during the pandemic. Was there a specific pain point that you consistently wished could be addressed by the City of Richmond?
RESOURCES <i>Understanding Access</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was there a specific success or helpful resources that you believe should be celebrated and/or continued by the City of Richmond. As you think about all of your interactions connected to the City of Richmond (people and systems) during the pandemic, what descriptive words come to mind? Share an example that helps us understand why you chose those words.
VISION <i>Understanding Unique and Shared Priorities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When we are successful equitably investing ARPA funds in the Richmond community what does that look like and feel like? COVID recovery funds can be used to assist people and the community in a variety of ways, What are your top three needs as you and your community continue to recover from impacts of the pandemic?

ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

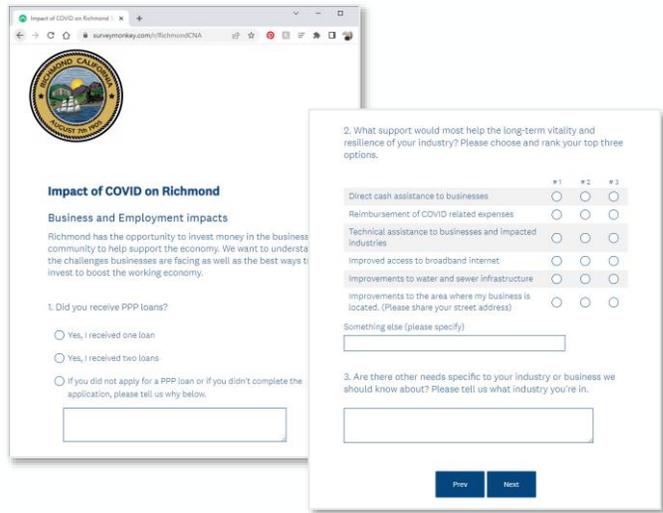
The public survey was designed to understand how Richmond residents and businesses were impacted by COVID, as well as how they would like to allocate ARPA funding.

LISTENING TOUR



Target: Receive at least 500 total survey responses, aiming for a near representative sample of Richmond residents in terms of age, race/ethnicity, income, and geography.

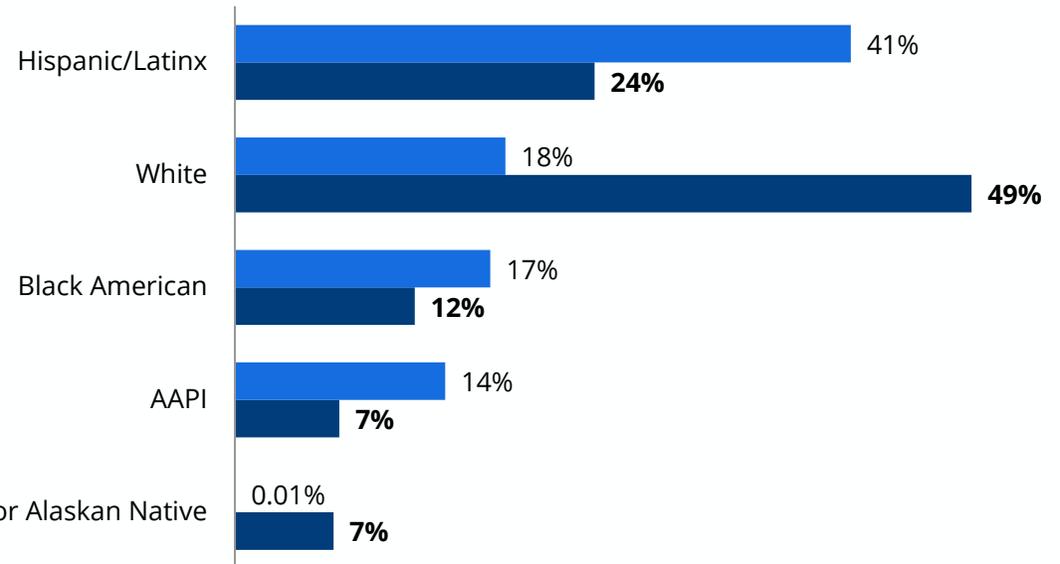
Result: 210 survey responses



The survey results were analyzed with the understanding that respondents do not mirror the diversity of the Richmond community in terms of race/ethnicity, income, and age. Thus, the data collected through the public survey is used to characterize and pull additional insight into the Community Needs Assessment, but not determine most findings. Additional survey results can be found in the appendix.

PUBLIC SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

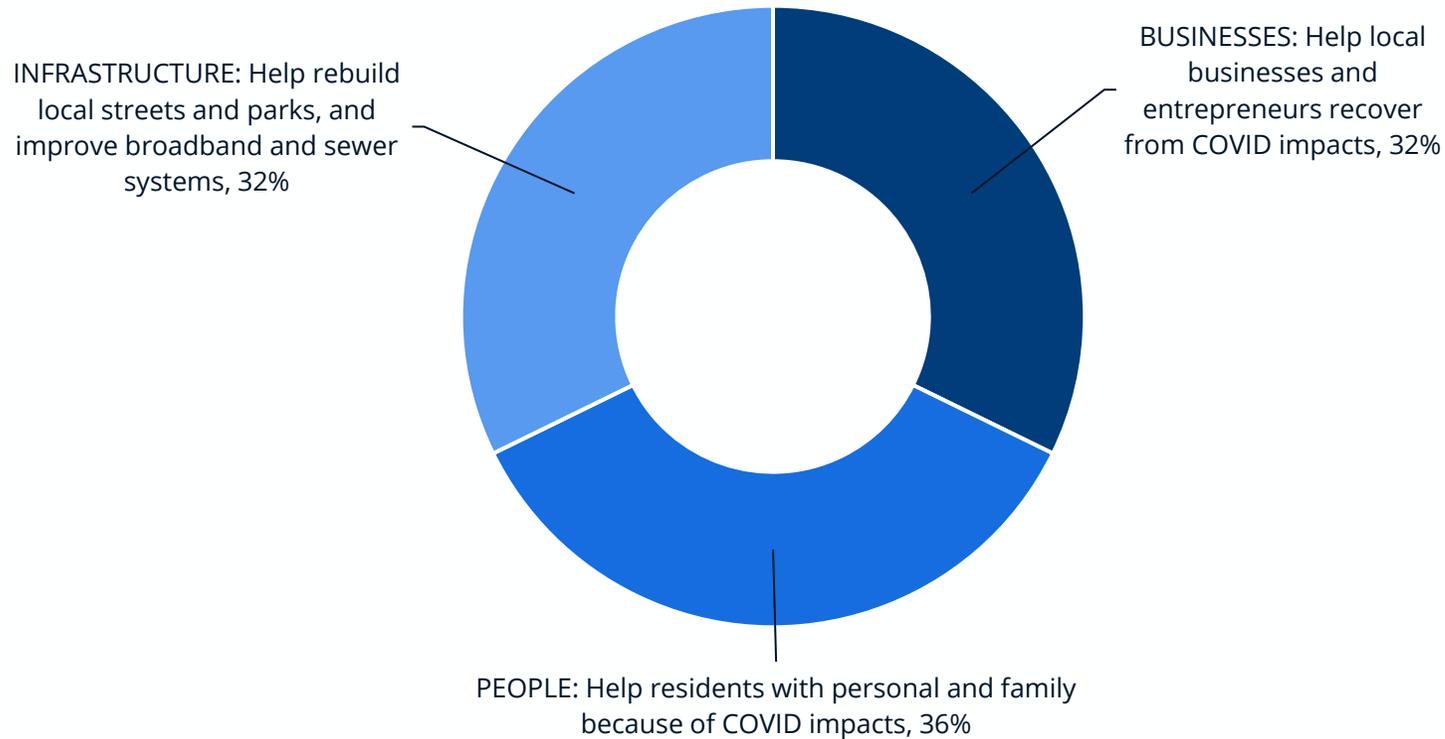
■ Share of Population (2020 Census) ■ Share of Survey Respondents



ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Survey participants prioritized nearly equal support for investment in neighborhoods and infrastructure, local businesses, and families.

If you had \$1,000 to invest in the City of Richmond, how would you divide up the spending among the areas below?

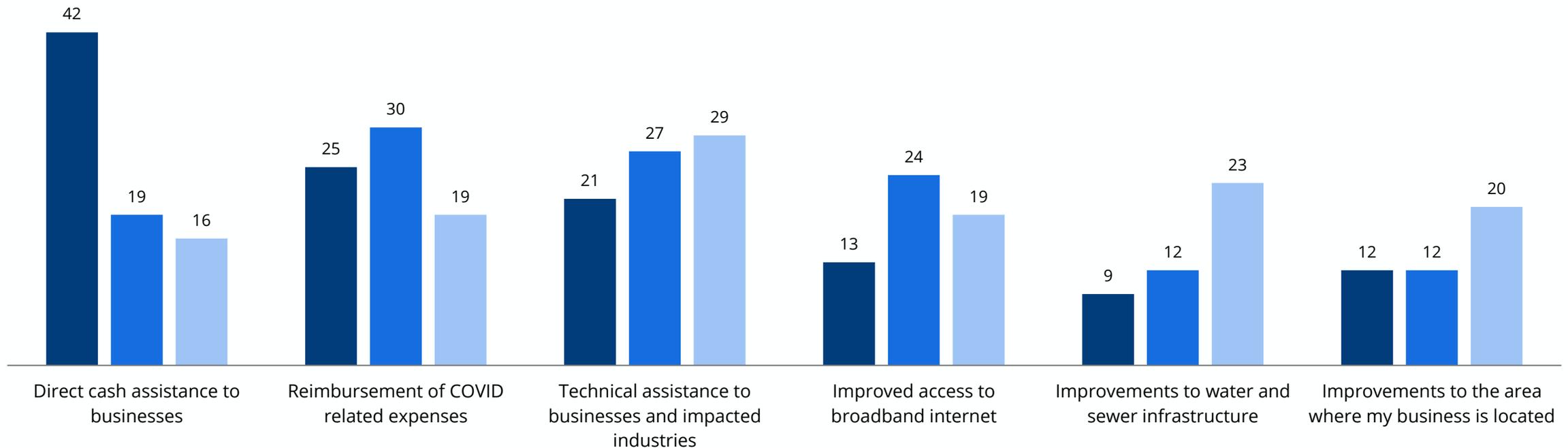


ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

When asked about the economic impacts of the pandemic, most survey respondents indicated that direct cash assistance to businesses would best provide the support their industry needs for long-term sustainability.

What support would most help the long-term vitality and resilience of your industry? Please choose and rank your top three options.

■ # 1 ■ # 2 ■ # 3



ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

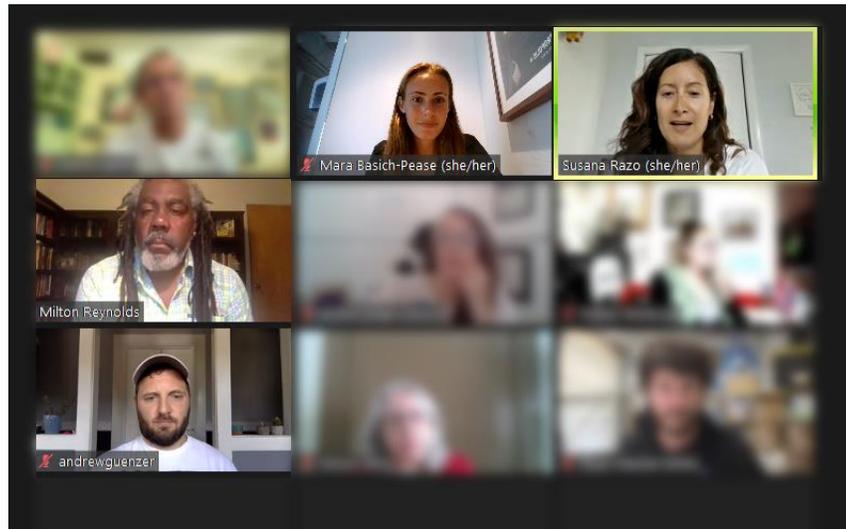
The consulting team directly engaged underrepresented voices through small facilitated focus groups hosted in partnership with community organizations.

LISTENING TOUR



Target: Speak with at least 100 community members from target populations.

Result: 126 community members from a range of target populations engaged through focus groups



The consulting team reached out to community-based organizations that served the individuals noted in the “Impacted Populations” section of this report in order to directly reach those who had been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. After an organization was contacted, organizational leaders helped coordinate scheduling, invitations, and any special accommodations (e.g., technology, translation) to ensure a large and representative group of participants could join and participate fully. Nationally, members of these community groups may also be unlikely to attend traditional, public community meetings due to barriers or perceived barriers with participating or having their voices heard; thus, focus groups helped individuals to share their thoughts and center the conversation on that community’s unique and shared lived experiences.

Target Population	Attendees
Black residents and Youth	16
Community service providers	16
Latinx/Spanish speaking residents, and Immigrant Community	11
Local workforce, including reentry population	12
Black residents and Youth	8
Community service providers, Youth	5
Disabled Residents	18
Youth, Seniors, Asian Residents, Immigrants	17
Local Business/Retail and Hospitality	7
Seniors; Asian American and Pacific Islander Community	12
Total Number of Participants	126

ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Two open community meetings were hosted for community members to share ideas and priorities for ARPA spending.

LISTENING TOUR

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Target: Host 3 virtual community meetings in both English and Spanish

Result: 2 community meetings hosted to-date with over 150 attendees to-date. A third will be held to discuss the findings of the Community Needs Assessment and initial Strategic Investment Plan

Public meetings created opportunities to hear from individuals throughout the community, highlighting experiences both specific to population groups and shared throughout Richmond. Participants were able to ask questions about the community engagement process and overall community needs assessment methodology. Then, transitioning to discussion, all participants were invited to answer the questions previously listed and engage in a dialogue by speaking up during the meetings and/or adding thoughts live in the virtual chat box. The dialogue during both meetings was robust, with representative participants from community-based organizations, residents, workers and business owners, racial and ethnic communities, and other communities. Spanish translation services were available during the meeting, with an additional survey shared following the meeting for participants to add any thoughts that did not fit within the 60 to 90 minute meetings.

**HELP US INVEST MILLIONS IN COVID RELIEF FUNDS
VIRTUAL COMMUNITY FORUMS**

Help us decide how to invest \$17.2 MILLION in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to help us address immediate and long-term needs and businesses.

**AYÚDANOS A INVERTIR MILLONES EN FONDOS DE AYUDA DE COVID
FOROS DE COMUNIDADES VIRTUALES**

¡Queremos tu opinión!

Únete a nosotros!

- Lunes, Junio 27, 2022 - 5:30pm - 7:30pm
- Lunes, Julio 11, 2022 - 5:30pm - 7:30pm

ENLACE DE LA REUNIÓN:
[HTTPS://CL-RICHMOND-CA-US.ZOOM.US/J/94503049794](https://cl-richmond-ca-us.zoom.us/j/94503049794)

REGÍSTRESE PARA LA REUNIÓN EN WWW.CL-RICHMOND.CA.US/ARPA
CONTÁCTENOS: 510.307.8016 | ARPA@CLRICHMOND.CA.US

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04

COMMUNITY NEEDS

COMMUNITY NEEDS

The community listening tour and additional analysis identified five cross-cutting themes of community need with implications for Richmond’s recovery priorities.



OUR JOBS AND BUSINESSES

Economic insecurity is at the root of Richmond resident’s struggles, as without sufficient and sustainable income, people struggle to pay rent, afford medical care, and more. To make it through the pandemic, local small businesses needed a range of technical, economic, and social support that many felt unable to access, including difficulties accessing Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans.



OUR HEALTH

More people than ever sought mental health services as a result of the pandemic, including disconnected youth, overburdened parents, and isolated older adults. For some, this was their first time seeking mental health services, and they found a lack of culturally-competent and accessible mental health service providers.



OUR HOMES AND NEIGHBORHOODS

Rent burden has been high in Richmond since even before the pandemic and was made worse as the pandemic disrupted workers’ ability to earn income. Housing insecurity is more pressing than ever, and many community members prioritized tenant assistance and rental assistance programs as their highest need.



OUR FAMILIES

Communities that struggle with accessing information often cannot overcome the barriers necessary to understand public announcements and connect with services. Access to broadband internet, technology and computer literacy further compounded issues of service access, particularly for youth and older adults.



OUR CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

Richmond residents rely on their churches, neighborhoods, and community organizations to stay socially and economically connected, and need events to return safely and quickly. To do so, the City can increase support for nonprofit organizations already leading this work locally.



OUR JOBS AND BUSINESSES

Small business owners shared difficulties accessing Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans, particularly businesses without relationships with banks.

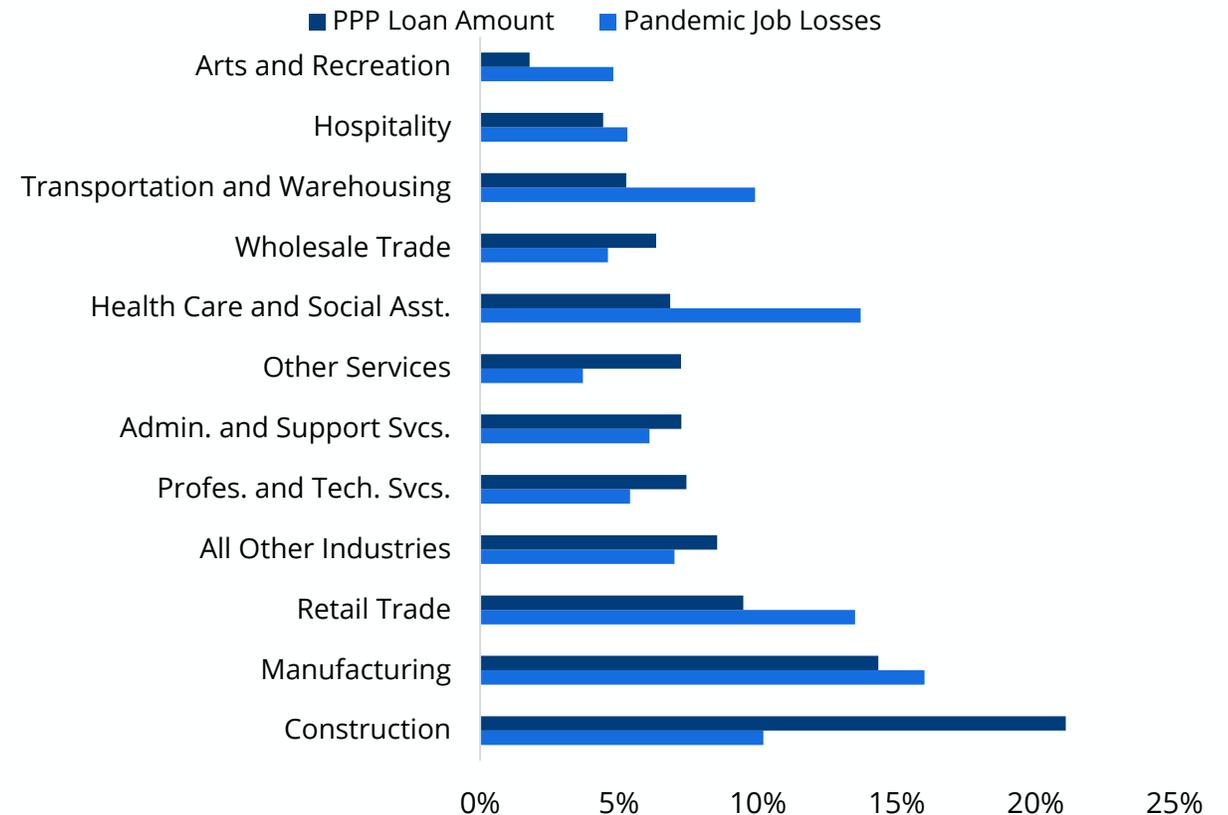
Businesses in Richmond received nearly \$240M in Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans between April 2020 and May 2021. Of the roughly 3,000 loans distributed in Richmond, 75% were for amounts smaller than \$30K. **However, Retail, Health Care, Arts and Recreation, and other hard-hit industries received relatively low volume of PPP loans** as compared to their pandemic employment losses. Of the Richmond businesses that did receive PPP loans, the loan amount per job was relatively consistent regardless of the business size.

A San Francisco Chronicle analysis of census tracts throughout the Bay Area found that **businesses located in lower income and communities of color were less likely to receive PPP loans than more affluent areas.** During the listening tour, Black- and Brown-led businesses shared that having relationships with banks was a top factor in securing PPP loans.

LISTENING TOUR FINDING

Members of the API community shared that first-generation children are used as interpreters and advocates for accessing government information and services, but small businesses who rely on their children were not able to access government loans because **their child interpreters do not have the skills and financial competency needed to submit loan applications.**

Pandemic Job Losses in Richmond and PPP Loan Volume by Industry in Richmond





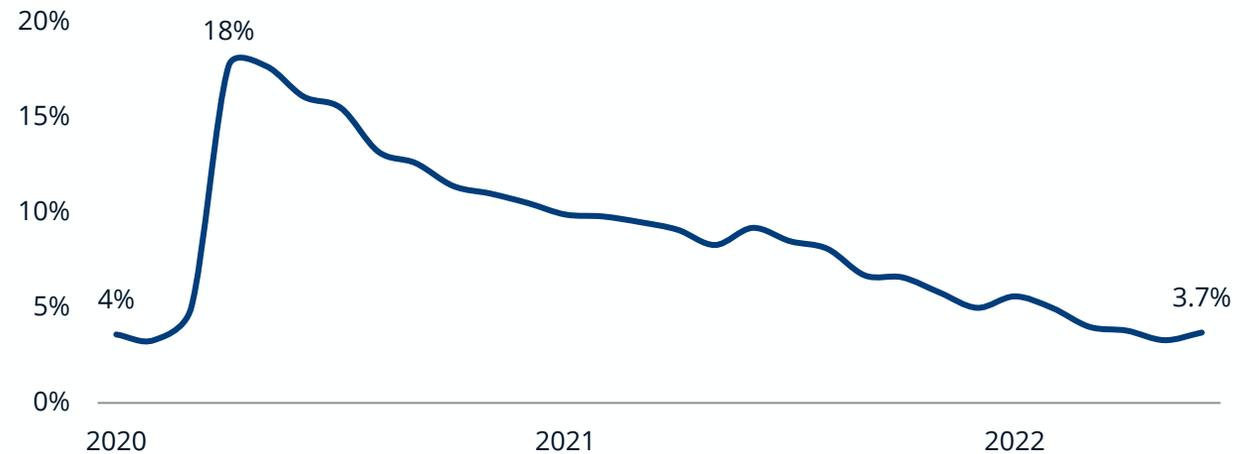
OUR JOBS AND BUSINESSES

Richmond residents that lost work during the pandemic have faced challenges in finding new job opportunities; those with barriers to employment have particularly struggled.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, **a large share of Richmond residents worked in sectors such as restaurants and hospitality, which faced extreme disruption** due to mandatory stay-at-home regulations and social distancing. As a result, many workers either saw their hours reduced, were let go, or saw their businesses close entirely.

Though the Citywide unemployment rate has returned to pre-pandemic levels, populations with barriers to employment struggle to find new work – for example, communities with limited English proficiency have struggled to find employment, while individuals with a criminal record have a harder time finding work opportunities that welcome them. For other communities, social distancing regulations cut them off from their networks and they couldn't find new work. For example, Hispanic residents shared that they find many jobs through informal conversations with their family and community; once this communication channel was closed, they struggled connecting to work opportunities.

City of Richmond Unemployment Rate Since March 2020



LISTENING TOUR FINDING

During a focus group with Black and Latinx youth connected to the Office of Neighborhood Safety, attendees discussed their lack of job security both currently and into the future. They shared that **workforce training and other opportunities are important to lead to more stable employment, which is critical for overall long-term stability.** One participant said this could look like a transition from hourly to salaried employment.



OUR JOBS AND BUSINESSES

To make it through the pandemic, local small businesses needed a range of technical, economic, and social support that many felt unable to access.

Small business owners shared that they loved having their businesses in the City of Richmond, but encountered many challenges doing business here. There was a shared sentiment across participants that the City was not sufficiently supportive of small businesses. However, **Richmond has a strong ecosystem of nonprofit organizations that provide important services to the small business community** particularly during the pandemic. Nonprofits were able to provide services like business owner outreach, sharing materials and information, and shop local campaigns, including CoBiz, Richmond Main Street Initiative and the Renaissance Center. Many perceived these organizations, not the City, as the most effective and supportive institutions during the pandemic.

Business owners shared a strong call for **more accountability and access to information from the City**. Businesses during the pandemic noted their need for a range of technical assistance to access PPP loans, formalize their structure and bookkeeping, and also to transition businesses to online business platforms.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

The City's **Short-Term Local Business Recovery Action Plan (STLBRAP)** included a deeper analysis of the near-term impacts of COVID-19 on Richmond's economy and made recommendations to support business recovery. **Access to capital and regulatory challenges** were among the major challenges identified in the STLBRAP, particularly because many businesses were hesitant or unable to take on new debt in an uncertain business environment. In response to these findings the STLBRAP recommended that small business assistance should focus on grants and technical assistance to access needed resources, as well as other changes to increase the accessibility of business services.

The City has already committed \$1 million of its ARPA allocation to the Richmond Rapid Response Fund (R2F) to provide direct financial assistance to residents, businesses, and community-based organizations to meet a range of recovery needs.

LISTENING TOUR FINDING

Small business owners shared that during the pandemic, they **needed a range of technical assistance** to formalize their structure and bookkeeping and to transition businesses into online business platforms. Heading into the pandemic, many small businesses and entrepreneurs **did not have their business formalized** and did not have their financial statements organized in Quickbooks, which made it difficult to navigate PPP loans.



OUR HEALTH

More people than ever sought mental health services as a result of the pandemic, including disconnected youth, overburdened parents, and isolated older adults.

According to community providers, the demand for mental health services has risen exponentially during the pandemic. Isolation, stress, and other issues have contributed to a growing need for mental health services. Many parents spoke about their children’s mental health challenges, and noted that they needed to advocate for their children to receive adequate care. Populations with cultural or other barriers, including the disabled, seniors, limited English speaking residents, and the immigrant and Asian Pacific Islander refugee community, reported an increased sense of isolation due to an inability to connect to community or access services.

In response to these challenges, some residents accessed mental health services for the first time during the pandemic. However, some reported **a lack of culturally-competent and accessible mental health service providers.** For instance, those seeking care for the first time might find it challenging to connect with providers that do not understand their unique beliefs and behaviors in their treatment.

LISTENING TOUR FINDING

During a focus group, one parent shared that during the pandemic, his high-school aged son “is doing okay, but he is missing his friends. He is pretty lonely. And no sports, and he liked to play sports. So basically he just does school, and it’s been pretty stressful for him all year... during the pandemic it’s been really hard to handle for us as parents because we don’t know how to help him. **We are not psychologists, and he can only handle it in the school with his friends.**”



Listening tour participants noted RYSE Youth Center’s Community Health program, which creates support networks for youth to find safe, welcoming, and loving spaces, in addition to case management and individual counseling services.

LISTENING TOUR FINDING

One focus group participant recounted that “I was a parent at home, and it was really hard to work from home when everyone is interrupting you and freaked out. **I had my kids and an elder living with me.** We couldn’t have anyone over because [my mom] was so nervous about someone bringing COVID inside. It really affected my kids mentally, and **they’re still really shook up about it.**”



OUR HEALTH

Residents are still struggling to find affordable, accessible food due to the rising price of household goods; some are still facing medical bills lingering from the pandemic.

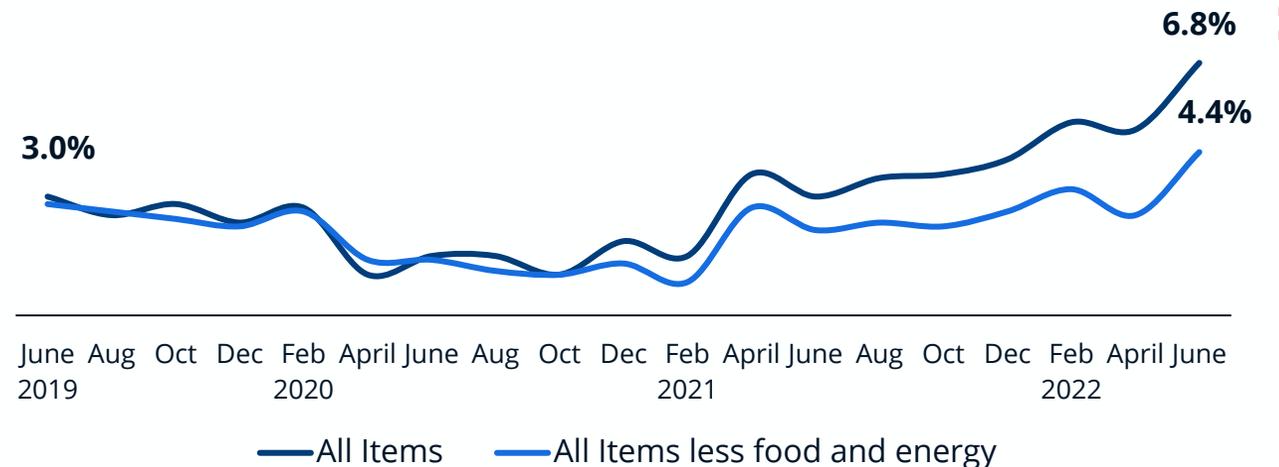
Basic health needs, including food access and the ability to see a doctor, became even more important during the pandemic. While food banks have seen a slight dip since the peak of the pandemic, local pantry workers indicated they are still seeing demand far above pre-pandemic levels. **At the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano Counties, demand for services has picked up again since April 2022.** Schools also served as an important distribution hub for food: since the start of the pandemic, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has reimbursed districts for providing free meals to all students, and California will expand access to free school meals during the 2022-23 school year.

Even though the impacts of the pandemic have lessened, residents are still **struggling to afford basic health care, including nutritious food and lingering medical bills**, while the nation struggles with inflation. As of July 2022, inflation on consumer prices in the Bay Area, at 6.8 percent, representing a 4.4 percent increase compared with last June. This trend is repeated throughout the country, with the national average on consumer prices up to 9.1 percent inflation.

LISTENING TOUR FINDING

Many groups recognized food distribution programs and the role of **schools and libraries as trusted entities to provide much needed food and nutritional support** to community members. Members of the API community noted that the **foods offered are not always culturally inclusive**, as food distribution did not include necessities like rice. Community-based organizations like APEN helped fill this gap in services.

**Consumer Price Index in Bay Area
June 2019 - June 2022**





OUR HOMES AND NEIGHBORHOODS

Rent burden had been high in Richmond in advance of the pandemic and was made worse as the pandemic disrupted workers' ability to earn income.

Even before the pandemic, residents in Richmond needed to spend more of their income on housing than surrounding communities. 54% of Richmond renters are housing cost burdened, which means they spend over one-third of their income on rent, compared to 50% in Contra Costa County and 44% in the Metro Area*. This trend is mirrored among homeowners; 58% of Richmond homeowners pay over one-third of their monthly income on mortgage costs, compared to 50% in both Contra Costa County and the Metro Area.

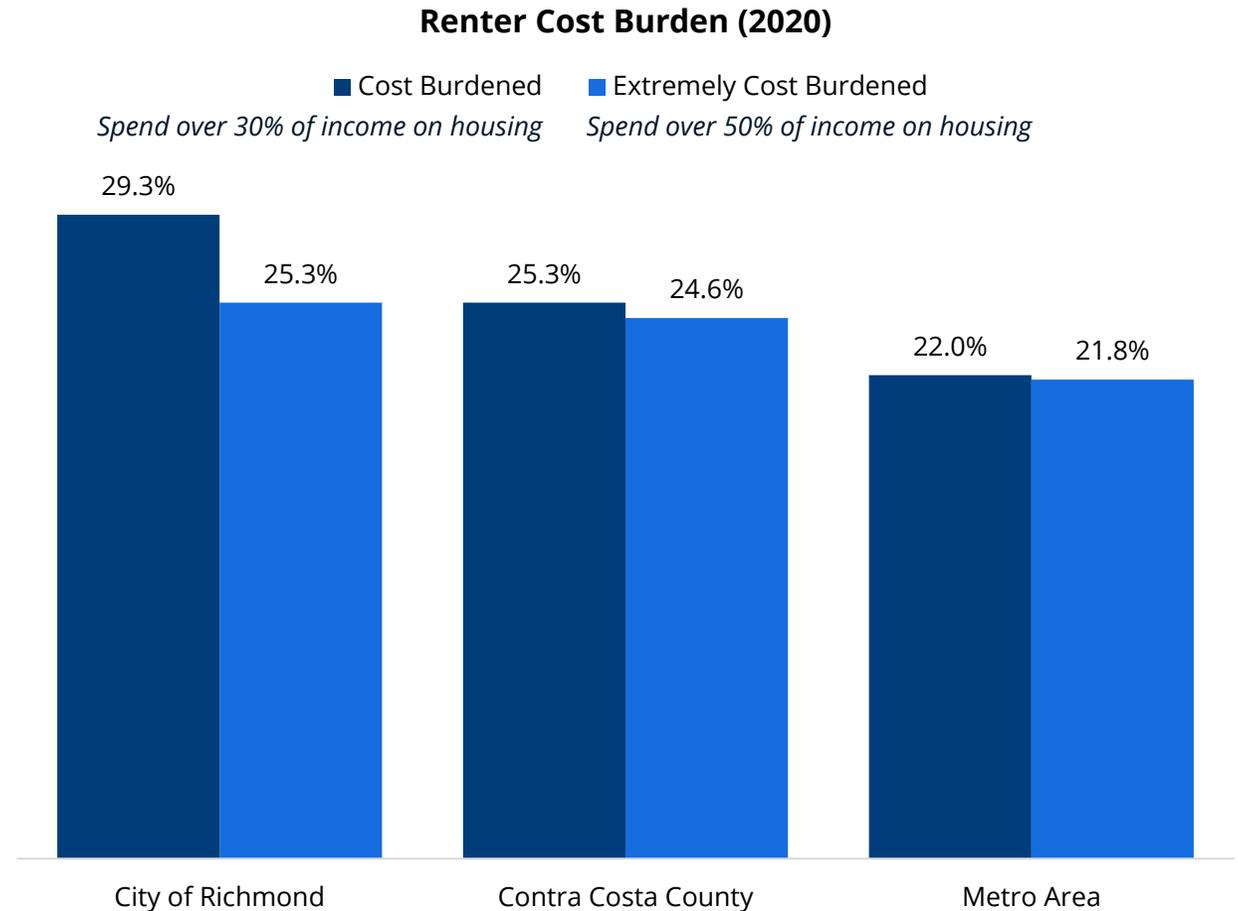
Over the course of the pandemic, as residents couldn't work and lost income, many faced new struggles with rent. Some fell behind on rent while out-of-work sick with COVID-19, or due to un-/under-employment, and have not been able to recover from past-due rent and bills.

LISTENING TOUR FINDING

One focus group participant explained that "my husband, our only family worker, did not work for one month when he was sick and **the rent doesn't wait, the food doesn't wait.** We don't have family here, but neighbors helped." Another shared that "My husband got sick and he also had high fever. **No one helped us with high rent.**"

*"Metro Area" refers to the San Francisco–Oakland–Berkeley Metropolitan Statistical Area, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Source: US Census ACS 5-Year Estimates (2020)





OUR HOMES AND NEIGHBORHOODS

Rental assistance programs supported some families, but many found these programs inaccessible and ineffective.

To keep renters in their homes, California operated an Emergency Rental Assistance Program which provided funding for households who fell behind on rental payments due to the economic impacts of COVID. The program ended in June 2022. Over 2,800 households in Richmond received assistance (7.5% of all households), the majority of which identified as Black or Hispanic. However, **Hispanic renters were relatively unrepresented among recipients, and may have faced barriers to accessing assistance.**

During the pandemic, the Richmond Rapid Response Fund (R3F) partnered with related organizations to provide one-time funds to households unable to pay rent due to a COVID-19 related job loss or loss of income. Additionally, the City shared rental resources on its webpage, including links to the California rent relief program application and contact information for local organizations providing rent assistance.

LISTENING TOUR FINDING

Many focus groups expressed the need to **make rental assistance programs more accessible**. One participant shared that after applying for rental relief, “we had to take out a loan because it took 8 months [to receive funding from the State]. We couldn’t access services even if they existed.”

Source: [State of California COVID-19 Rent Relief Dashboard](#)

California Emergency Rental Assistance Program in Richmond *Data as of August 2022*

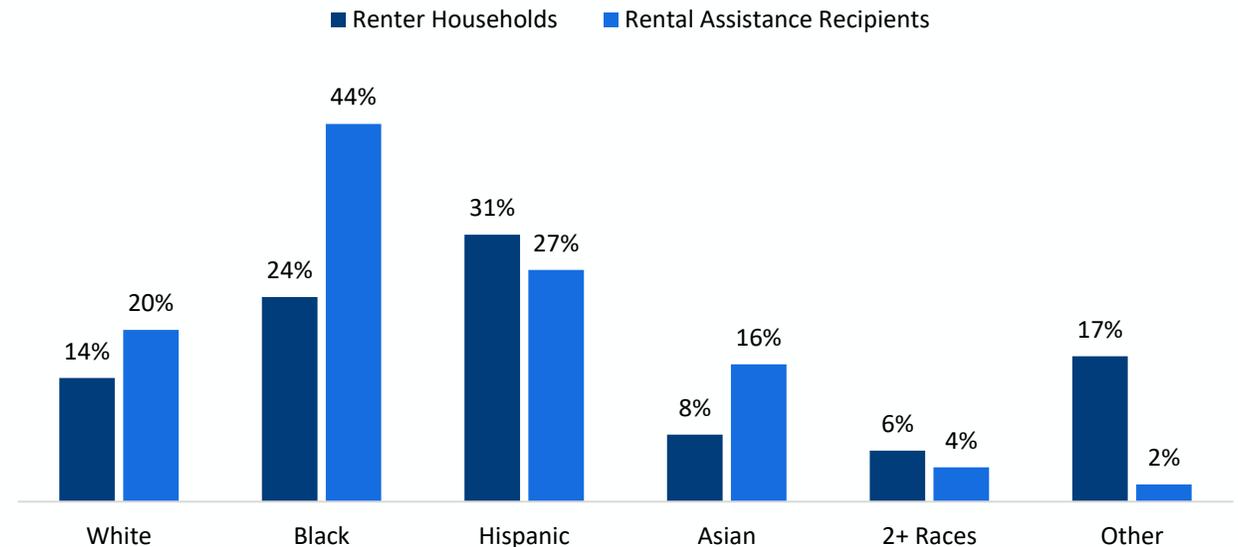
2,850

Total Households Served

\$12,590

Average Assistance Received

Access to Rental Assistance by Race in Richmond





OUR HOMES AND NEIGHBORHOODS

Housing insecurity is more pressing than ever, as some communities faced evictions and others experiencing homelessness became disconnected from services.

Richmond residents may be particularly vulnerable to eviction due to a perceived lack of legal protections, despite the City temporary ordinance and State tenant relief act. Contra Costa County has one of the highest rates of pandemic evictions in the Bay Area, second only to Solano County. Eviction rates are 2 to 3 times higher for Black households in the County.

During the pandemic, the homeless population in Contra Costa County grew by 35%. According to the 2021 Continuum of Care Annual Report, of those who reported losing their housing, 30% of households reported losing it in West County, where Richmond has the largest population. That share is slightly higher than the population that reported sleeping in West County before enrolling in crisis response, suggesting that **people who experience homelessness in West County cannot locally access supportive services**. At the household level, 1,320 households reported losing their housing in Richmond, roughly 1.5 times more than the next closest city.

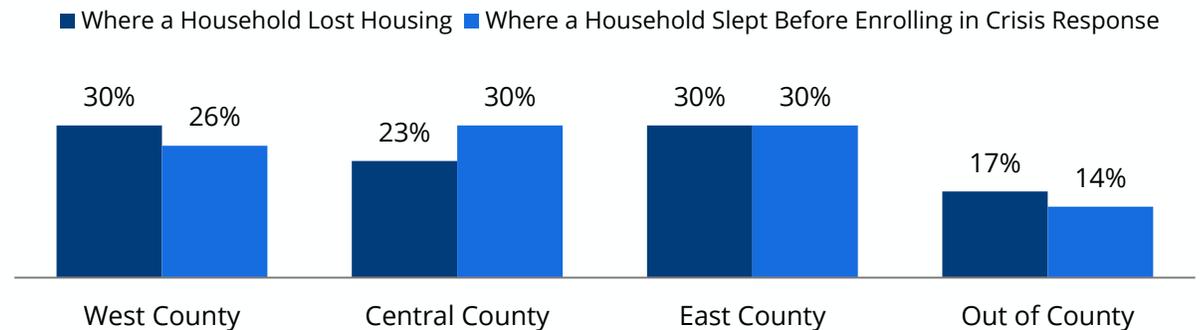
LISTENING TOUR FINDING

“Our landlord is asking for a large deposit of \$6,000 to get into a new place. I had to get it somewhere only to **end up on the street** with 3 adolescent daughters. **I was up to date with rent payments** and would always pay on time.

LISTENING TOUR FINDING

Members of the housing justice community recognized that this has been a major challenge for Richmond since far before the pandemic: “Our community is **historically disinvested**. The people that bore the brunt of it have already been pushed out. Some folks never rebounded from the foreclosure crisis, and **never came back into ownership/stability** with housing. Some became serial renters, others got pushed out, others became homeless.” This was compounded by a “pre-pandemic [Not in My Backyard or “NIMBY”] perspective on homelessness. Everyone knows homelessness is a problem, but if people are given the chance to be part of the solution, they send it somewhere else.”

Location of Where Households Lost their Housing and Where Households Slept Before Enrollment in Crisis Response, 2021





OUR HOMES AND NEIGHBORHOODS

The State has dedicated significant recovery resources to increasing housing affordability throughout California.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

California has dedicated ARPA funds and other funding to create and expand programs to increase the supply of housing and address housing security and affordability statewide. These include:

- **Multifamily Housing Program:** Provides low-interest deferred-payment loans for new construction, rehabilitation, and preservation of permanent and transitional housing that serves lower-income households
- **California Housing Accelerator Fund:** Provides funding for shovel-ready development projects that have received awards of funding from the department of Housing and Community Development but have funding gaps
- **HOME-ARP Program:** Funding for the Department of Housing and Community Development to assist individuals or households experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness by providing rental assistance, supportive services, shelters, and other support
- **State Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program:** Provides tax credits to support the development of rental housing for low-income households
- **Adaptive Reuse Program and Homekey Program:** Provides funding to convert commercial buildings, hotels, and motels into affordable housing
- **Infill Infrastructure Grant Program:** Provides funding to accelerate the development of infill projects in brownfields and downtowns
- **Preservation Fund:** Funding to preserve existing affordable housing
- **Legal Aid:** Provides funding for legal services to prevent evictions



OUR FAMILIES

With children and youth suddenly confined to stay at home, families needed affordable accessible childcare and programs for youth struggling to stay connected and motivated.

California offers subsidies childcare, but they are capped by income: a family of three can earn no more than \$78K to qualify. There is a high demand for childcare, but due to the rising costs of living, families who might make slightly more than the household maximum are left with few affordable options, often waiting months, or even years to find a slot that works for them.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) defines childcare as “affordable” if the copay costs 7 percent or less of a family’s income. Based on the statewide average cost of childcare, a family in California would need to make at least \$341K to pay for both an infant and preschooler. **Childcare – and not housing – is now the largest expense for households in California.**

Many youth, parents and formerly incarcerated residents in particular spoke to the **need for youth programming and positive outlets for youth.** West Contra Costa Unified School District noted that programming for middle schoolers in particular is lacking, and that **better family engagement is needed at all levels.** Residents shared that they see Richmond as lacking spaces for youth socialization, especially with parks closed during the pandemic. Particularly during the beginning of the pandemic, when social engagements were most restricted and youth had to stay home from school, community members wanted more services that support the youth’s mental health.

LISTENING TOUR FINDING

In a conversation with Building Blocks for Kids, Latina Center, and Family Justice, families voiced the need for **education and program support for older children 6-19 years of age.** While speaking with the Reentry Success Center, participants stressed interest in **support for people coming out of high school,** who “need more direction or help, instead of being dumped on the street. Young people could use help, education, and housing assistance.”



Dorcas Sims leads her fifth-grade class at Nystrom Elementary as schools return to in-person learning.

LISTENING TOUR FINDING

Attendance data showed that **about 3,400 students left West Contra Costa Unified** during the pandemic. One resident shared that “The youth got forgotten. Doing school from home was really hard. The school district lost a lot of students because **teachers couldn’t connect with them.** A lot of kids got lost, a lot of education got lost.” Another noted that some students “**had to stop school in order to work,** because if they didn’t work, they couldn’t make ends meet. We saw 16-year-olds entering the workforce full-time.”



OUR FAMILIES

Access to broadband internet, technology, and computer literacy further compounded issues of service access, particularly for youth and older adults.

While 90 percent of households in the city of Richmond have internet access, statewide data shows that this access is likely not equitably distributed across income levels.

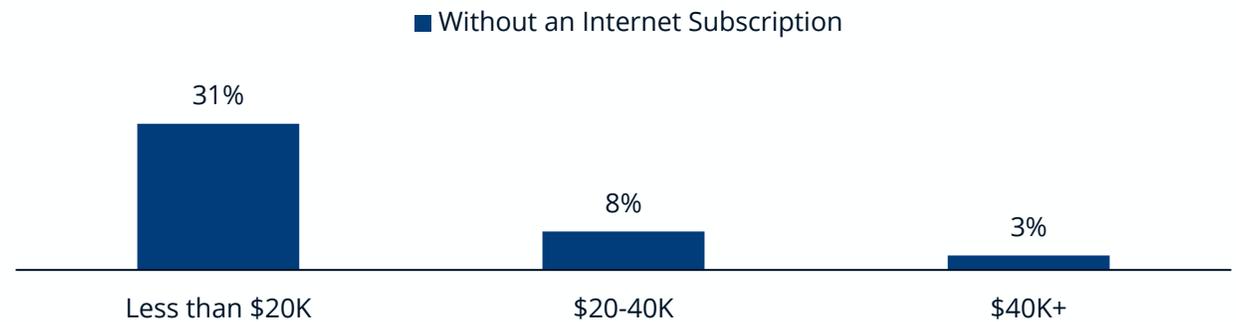
During the listening tour, residents shared that the need for internet service and technology added a new expense and source of stress at a time when household incomes were declining for non-salaried and laid-off workers. Many shared that the transition to online learning and workshop offerings was challenging and did not provide the same benefits of being in person.

Many services, such as vaccination and testing appointments, required online scheduling further compounding access to care. For others, not being literate in digital programs like Zoom limited their ability to connect with others or participate in remote work.

LISTENING TOUR FINDING

One focus group participant shared their experience saying, "I had online school since the start of the pandemic from sophomore to senior year of high school. At the very start, **all my parents and sisters had to work from home, and we had a lot of internet issues.** One day, my teacher's internet was so bad that we just had to cancel school that day."

California Households without Internet Access, by Income



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

California's **Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB)** was established during the pandemic to help families and households struggling to afford internet service. The program provided a discount of up to \$50 per month towards broadband service for eligible households and a one-time discount to purchase computers or tablets. Since then, congress has created the **Affordable Connectivity Program**, a new long-term, \$14 billion program, to replace the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program

In total, roughly 4,500 Richmond residents accessed EBB services in 2021, or 4.1% of the City's population, despite 13% of residents that report that their cell phone service is the only way they access the internet. Many Richmond residents reported being **unaware of the services and programs that are available to them** at the local, state, and federal level, including help accessing the internet.



OUR FAMILIES

Communities that struggle with accessing information often cannot overcome the barriers necessary to understand public announcements and connect with services.

Small businesses, residents and service providers alike emphasized the need for access to information. **Language is a major barrier** for the 54% of Richmond residents that speak a language other than English at home. People reported not knowing where to go to get accurate COVID-19 guidance or information about available programs. Some were able to get information through schools or connections to doctors and nurses, but **most did not know where to go for credible and accurate information**, and many relied on social media.

Focus group participants suggested many ways to **improve access to information**, including a City of Richmond app, a centralized phone number that provides access to live assistance in multiple languages, more flyers, door-to-door canvassing in multiple languages, and more. Others suggested **providing resources to existing service providers in the community who are already delivering information to the community** so that these organizations could increase their capacity. For example, LEAP supported students by providing access to the internet and sharing information about available resources in the City of Richmond. County Supervisor John Gioia was also highlighted for his office's efforts to share information about how to accessing COVID-19 tests and masks, and getting these resources to community service providers who could distribute them to residents.

Source: US Census ACS 5-Year Estimates (2020)

LISTENING TOUR FINDING

Latinx families spoke to the need to have access to information for the Latinx community and non- and limited-English speaking Richmond residents. Multiple participants discussed **the challenge with access to information, the lack of cultural competency in service delivery**, and the lack of accountability amongst services providers, nonprofits and City departments alike for not serving community members equitably and with respect.

LISTENING TOUR FINDING

The lack of available interpreters in languages like Laotian dialects, Hmong and Vietnamese, as well as other Asian Pacific Islander (API) languages, means that **these communities do not have equitable access to resources**. However, this results in a lot of community cohesion in the API community and a strong shared commitment to sharing information through their networks of family, friends and religious/spiritual organizations.



OUR CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

Nonprofit organizations played critical, central roles for many types of communities during the pandemic, but still face tight resourcing and some competition for funding.

Out of the roughly 2,300 PPP loans dispersed in Richmond, only 81 went to organizations that identified as a nonprofit.

Amongst nonprofit organizations, focus group participants shared that there seems to be a fair bit of **competition for resources and some duplication of services**. Many suggested greater efficiency and improved outcomes could be gained by establishing a nonprofit convening or forum to encourage collaboration and learning from each other. Community members added that holding a community service fair could be another way to **get information out about available resources to community members**, particularly those who are not active online.

LISTENING TOUR FINDING

Nonprofits, already connected closely within their networks, were able to distribute funds to meet their cultural and constituent needs with more discretion during the pandemic. One focus group's participants noted that **"when you give money to nonprofits it is really going out into their community**. For example, [an organization the participant is part of], they have meetings with the community and go out and ask how they want to spend it."

LISTENING TOUR FINDING

Many nonprofit organizations had to shift internal resources during the pandemic while still providing services to their constituents. One participant in the public survey shared that **"nonprofits that have shifted to hybrid workforces still need spaces to meet** in person from time to time. It would be great if the city's community centers could offer this space a low or no cost." Another noted that the City should prioritize "support for the nonprofits who have been particularly hit, which makes it hard [for nonprofit organizations to provide services]. Help for the nonprofits is **an investment that will pay back dividends.**"

During a focus group with NIAD (Nurturing Independence Through Artistic Development), which serves people with disabilities, organizers shared that they struggled to transition their in-person studio space to online opportunities that adequately serve their artists, including supply distribution.





OUR CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

Richmond residents rely on their faith-based organizations, neighborhoods, and community organizations to stay socially and economically connected.

During the pandemic, there were significantly fewer places to connect. City facilities closed for a few months, reopened for virtual programming, and moved to hybrid models. The closure of day programs for the disabled, churches and community centers, the cancellation of large cultural celebrations and community festivals, and the closure of ethnic restaurants or the shift to take-out only service all impacted the social and economic health of Richmond residents.

LISTENING TOUR FINDING

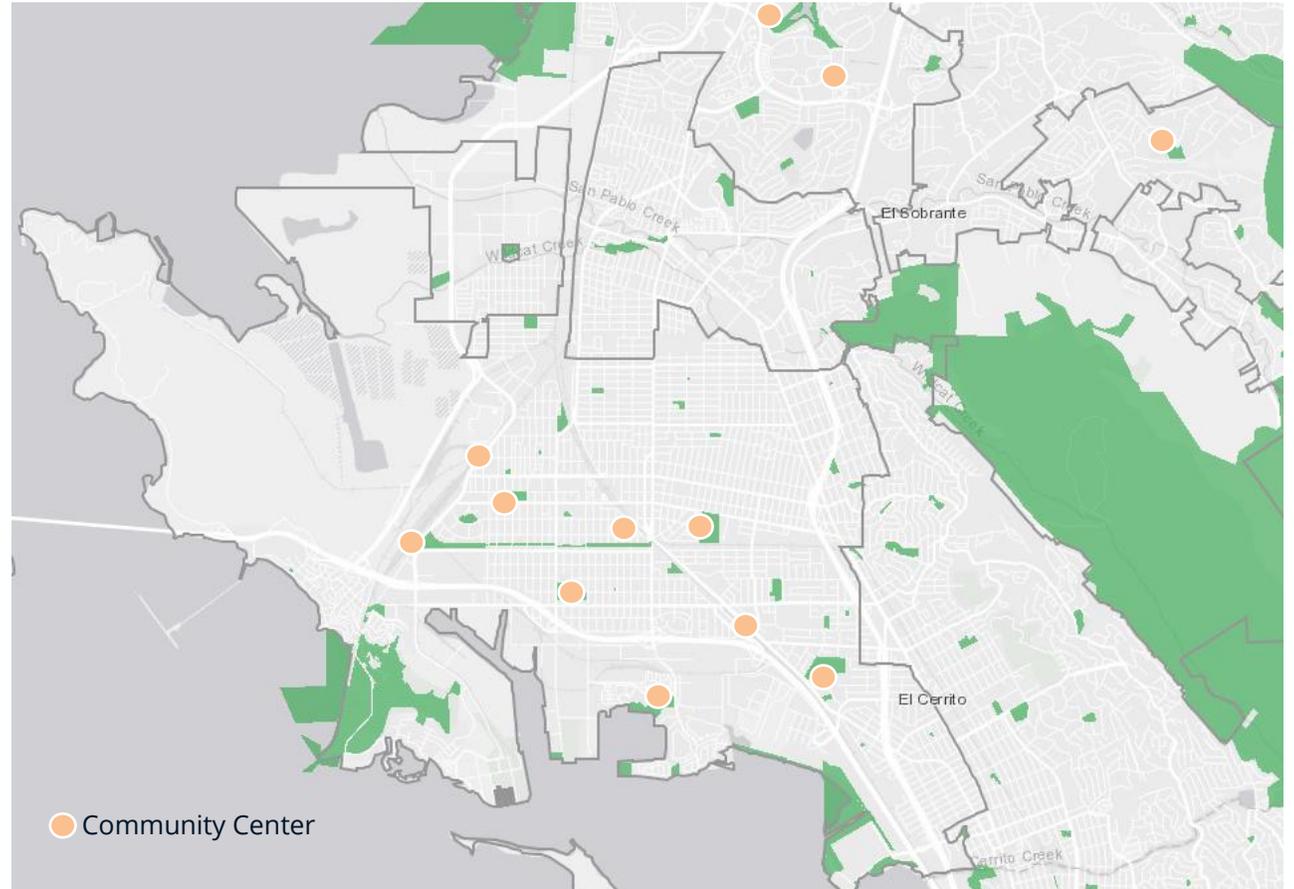
“In the past, Laotian New Year was celebrated in the Richmond auditorium. We have a big gathering and people come from around the Bay Area. We haven’t been able to celebrate since 2020. **Not being able to have this celebration is another loss of the pandemic and it affects our sense of community.**”

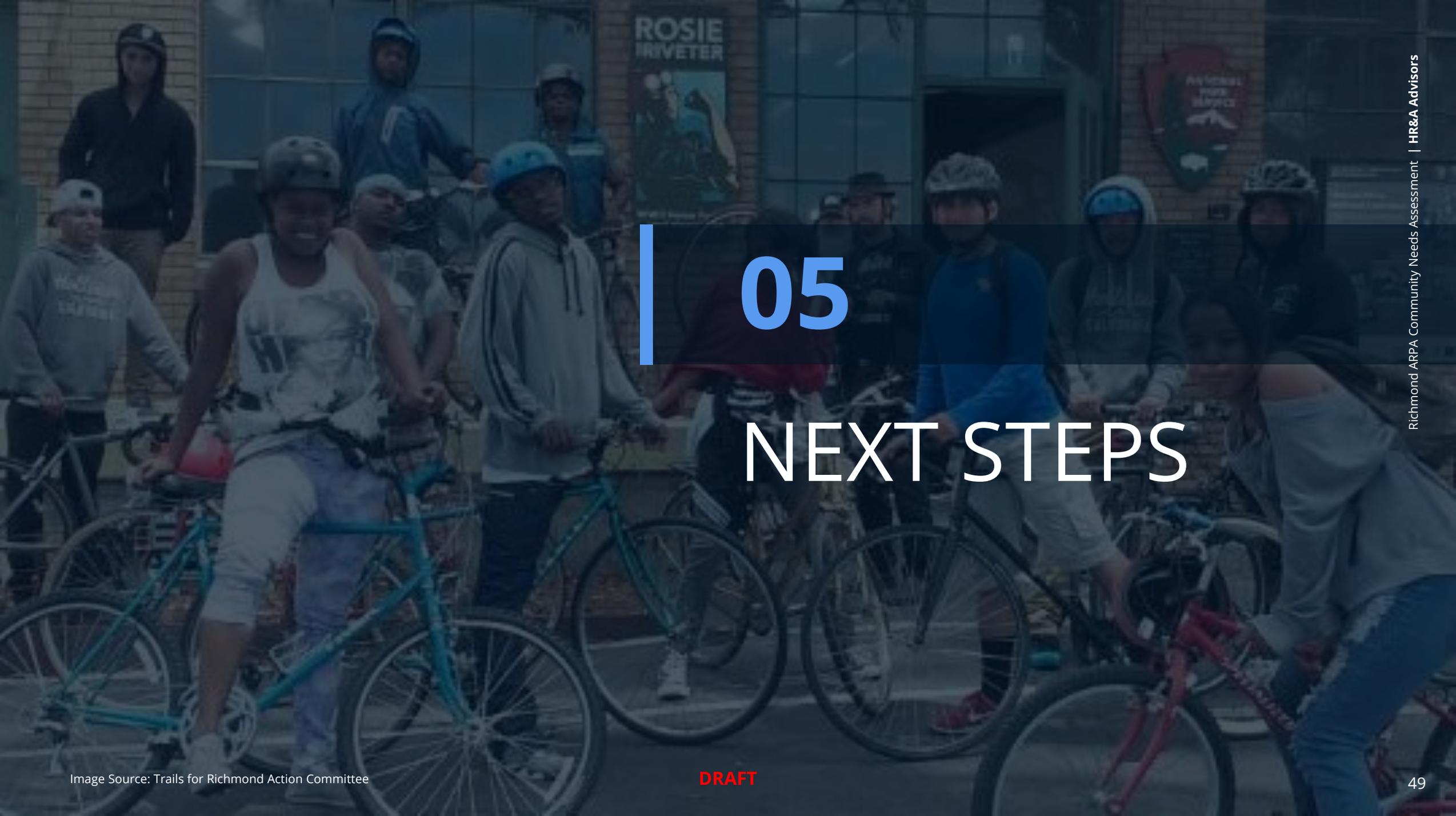


Wat Lao New Year 2019

Source: Trust for Public Land ParkServe (2022)

Parks and Community Centers Throughout Richmond





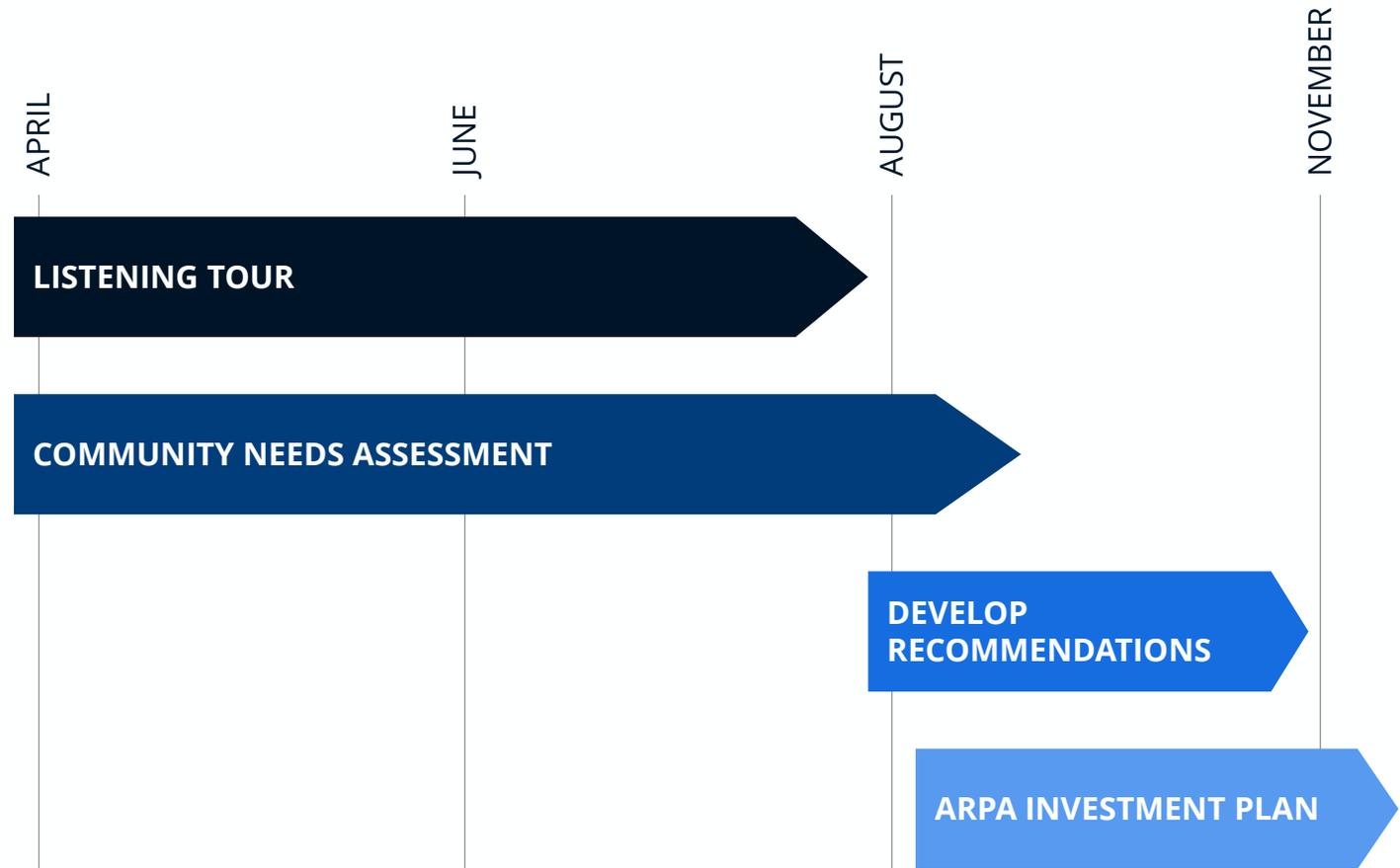
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NEXT STEPS

NEXT STEPS

Richmond's ARPA Strategic Investment Plan will make recommendations for how the City should allocate its ARPA funds to address community needs.

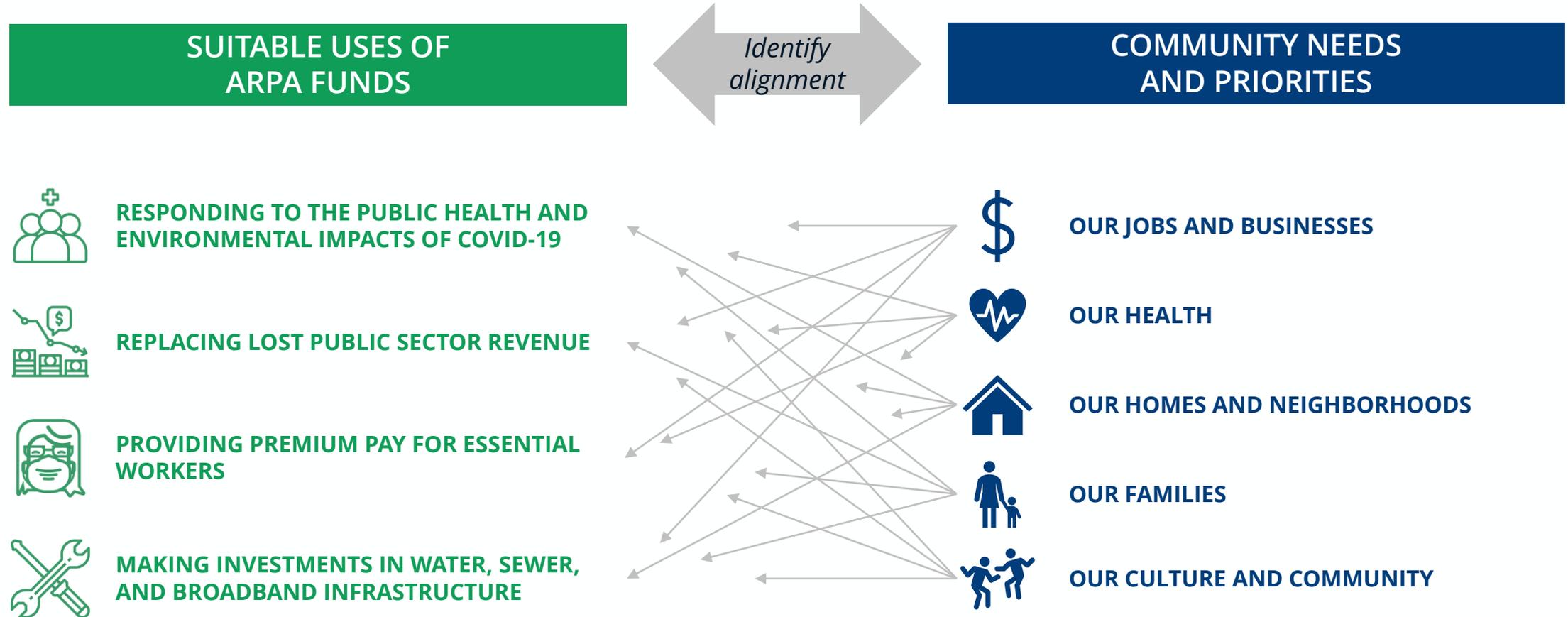
This draft community needs assessment will be finalized following input from City Council as well as a third community meeting in October 2022.

The Community Needs Assessment will serve as the basis for the ARPA Strategic Investment Plan. Drawing on the findings of the Community Needs Assessment, HR&A will work with the City to identify potential uses for the City's ARPA funds, including how they align with both community needs and ARPA requirements. HR&A will also make recommendations for the distribution of the City's ARPA funds across the five areas of need identified.



NEXT STEPS

The strategic investment plan will identify potential uses of ARPA funds, with a focus on identifying projects that meet ARPA requirements and address community needs.



NEXT STEPS

The community has already provided a range of ideas for the City to fund using ARPA, with other ideas for investment still to come. Suggestions from the community include:

OUR JOBS AND BUSINESSES

- Provide technical assistance in a variety of languages
- Increase broadband access citywide
- Establish a community bank
- Add English as a second language classes
- Expand programs to help small local businesses, such as marketing support and streetscape improvements

OUR HEALTH

- Expand mental health services in schools
- Expand culturally-specific mental health services to reduce health disparities
- Add transportation to grocery stores to eliminate food deserts
- Support for equitable access to healthcare, including help covering medical costs and more transportation

OUR HOMES AND NEIGHBORHOODS

- Reduce barriers to homeownership
- Provide emergency rental assistance to prevent eviction and homelessness
- Develop an affordable housing plan
- Invest in stormwater infrastructure and green streets
- Fund streetscape improvements, including trash cleanup

OUR FAMILIES

- Support for preschool and childcare entrepreneurship
- Provide youth programming, including programs that employs Richmond residents and support the community
- Improve literacy through family-level interventions

OUR CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

- Increase amenities at city parks, including bathrooms and drinking water
- Add free programs in the city's parks
- Increase public art throughout Richmond
- Reopen and enhance community centers citywide
- Support capital investment in the public library system

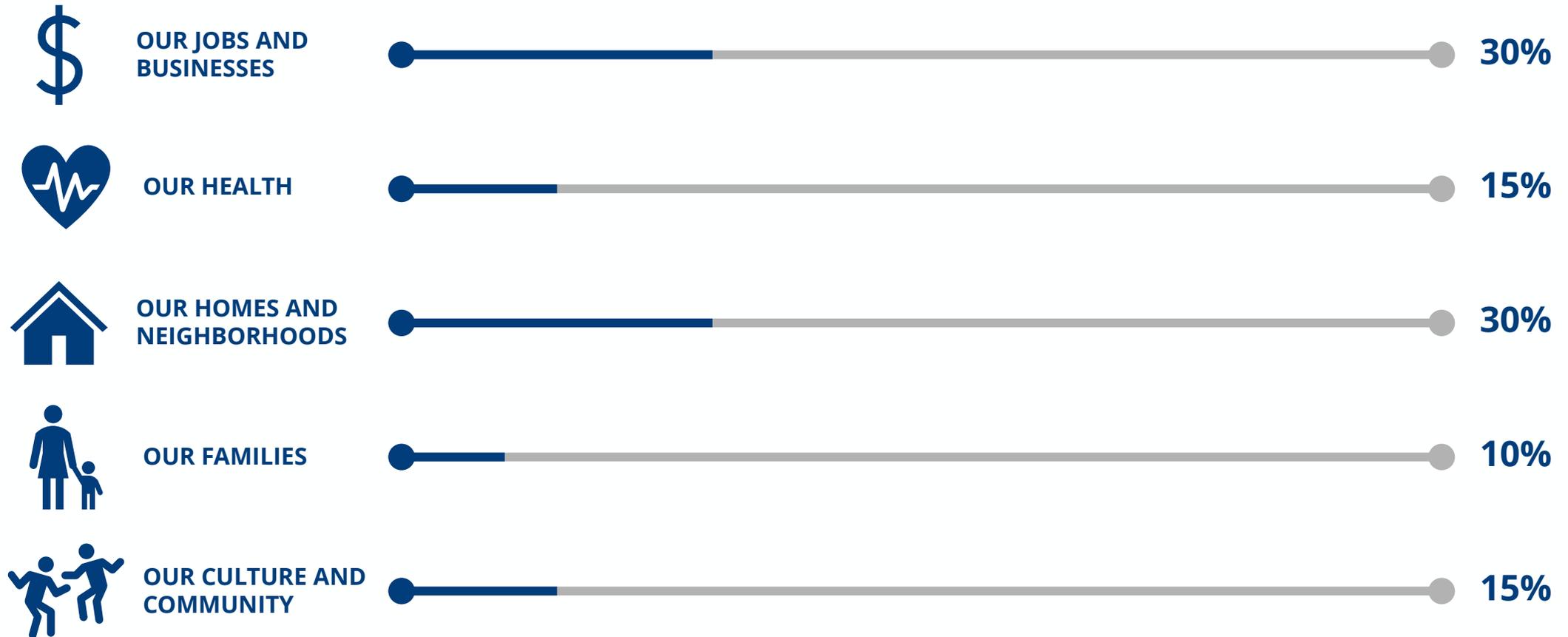
OTHER AREAS

- Hire grant writers to help access funding
- Pursue federal and state funding for equitable broadband access
- Pilot Restorative Justice programs
- Create jobs for residents to serve as interpreters to other residents in their community in a service language assistance program

NEXT STEPS

The City should allocate available ARPA funds across the five areas of need based on the level of need, likely cost of potential projects, and other factors.

Potential allocation of ARPA funds by category of need



Using the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to Meet our Highest Needs

Richmond, CA | Community Needs Assessment

OCTOBER 2022