

## Executive Summary

This report is the culmination of several months of collaboration between Portland's City Budget Office and HR&A Advisors ("the survey team"), representatives from throughout Portland's government, community leaders, and most importantly, people who live, work, and play in the City of Portland.

8,814 complete responses were received from people across Portland.\* While the respondent pool was more White and more affluent than the general population of Portland residents, the 2019 survey increased representation from communities of color compared to the 2016 Auditor's Survey. The increased number of responses enabled the survey team to better understand the specific challenges experienced by some of these traditionally underrepresented communities.

The survey yielded the following overarching findings\*\*:

- **A majority of respondents are satisfied with Portland today as a place to live, raise children, work or go to school, or be part of a community.** However, longer-tenured residents and Black respondents are more likely to be dissatisfied (Q7-Q10).
- **Optimism about the future of Portland is mixed** – approximately 45% of citywide respondents feel positively about Portland's future, and another 45% do not. Respondents with disabilities are less optimistic about Portland's future compared to others (Q3).
- **Responses were evenly split between those who agreed they can find jobs in Portland sufficient to support themselves and/or their families, and those who disagreed.** Those with disabilities reported having more difficulty finding jobs that pay enough to support them or their families (Q15).
- **According to respondents, homelessness is perceived as the top challenge facing Portland.** This perspective was shared across every race and age group. Homelessness was cited in multiple sections of the survey; for example, it was mentioned as the reason why people moved and why people did not participate in Parks programs. In all, 88% of citywide respondents are dissatisfied with the City's response to homelessness – the highest level of dissatisfaction to any of the questions included in the survey (Q4, Q28).

- **Respondents mentioned the issue of drugs and mental health frequently in multiple sections of the survey.** For example, under the question of challenges facing Portland, at least 10% of respondents who provided open-ended responses mentioned drug use (Q4).
- **More than 40% of respondents in every race and residency length group identified the high cost of living as a top challenge facing Portland (Q4).**
- **Respondents, regardless of race and age, chose increasing housing affordability and addressing homelessness as a top budget priority.** This was identified as a priority for owners and renters alike, but residents in East Portland were most likely to be worried about losing their homes due to cost (Q6, Q17).
- **Investing in transportation and infrastructure such as city sidewalks was the second-most cited budget priority citywide (Q6).**
- **The third most cited budget priority varied according to race.** White respondents chose police services. However, Asian, Black, and Hispanic respondents selected economic development (including job creation and enhancing residents' capacity to start new businesses) above police services, and those who identified as multiracial selected Parks programs as their third highest priority. (Q6).
- **Sentiment is divided on the topic of racial equity.** Overall, 40% of respondents agree and 40% disagree with the statement, "In Portland, we are making progress on becoming a city where a person's outcomes are not based on their race." Black respondents were most likely to disagree, followed by those who identified as two or more races. Hispanic and White respondents gave similar responses, and Asians were more likely than others to agree (Q11).

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\* Prior to filtering out duplicate, incomplete, and test responses, over 10,000 responses were collected before and during the survey period. Details on data cleaning are included in the methodology section.

\*\* Survey questions are included in the appendix beginning on page 69.

- **On the topic of police services, 39% are dissatisfied with police protection from violent crime. When asked how the Police Bureau could improve police services, responses differed between Black and White respondents.** Black respondents placed discussing local concerns with police as their highest priority, while White respondents chose increased police personnel in their neighborhoods. Satisfaction with police protection from both violent and property crime is among the lowest for residents from East Portland (Q23-Q25).
- **Two thirds of respondents feel that traffic or crowding is worse compared to last year, and approximately 40% feel their commutes are getting less reliable or safe.** Portlanders who commute by driving (the most common transportation mode) are the least satisfied with the safety, reliability, and traffic/crowding of their daily commutes (Q32-Q34).
- **Communities of color, as well as young and senior residents, value Portland's public transit.** Public transit users were also more likely to be satisfied with the reliability of their commutes (Q5, Q32).
- **Across the board, respondents' favorite part of where they live in Portland is access to outdoor and natural areas. Almost all respondents (97%) visit the City's parks and natural areas.** Furthermore, 70% of Portlanders are satisfied with the safety and cleanliness of Portland's parks. However, satisfaction levels for the safety and cleanliness of parks is lowest in East Portland (Q5, Q38, Q40, Q41).
- **Half of respondents participated in a parks program in the past year.** Respondents want the City to improve recreation programs by making them more welcoming to people of different cultures and more affordable. These choices were supported especially by non-White respondents and the 16-29 cohort. Furthermore, respondents raised the issues of homelessness and drug use as deterrents from participation in Parks programs (Q39, Q42).
- **Portlanders do not feel they have the power to influence City government decisions that affect them.** Responses were consistent across educational attainment, household income, and geography. On the topic of engagement, younger respondents (20-29) are least likely to engage in civic life, including attending meetings held by community-based organizations, supporting a candidate or ballot measure, or voting (Q12, Q14).
- **The youngest cohort is most concerned about climate change – 38% listed it as a budget priority compared to 21% citywide (Q6), and 18% identified this as one of the top three challenges facing Portland compared to 11% citywide (Q4).**
- **Respondents prefer to receive City information over email, regardless of race or age. 70% of those who accessed the survey online preferred email, twice as many as any other option.** However, those who accessed the survey through Data Fellows\* rated email, websites, mail, and social media similarly (Q56).

*In order to increase participation of underrepresented communities, the survey team conducted canvassing and other outreach efforts to target communities of color. While this yielded a higher number of responses from non-White Portlanders than the 2016 Auditor's Survey, people of color were still underrepresented in the respondent pool. Therefore, the survey team adjusted responses for race when reporting citywide results. More detail on this methodology is included on page 9.*

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\* Canvassers hired to bring the survey directly into underrepresented communities