



# **A City Like Me:** **Santa Cruz** **2024**

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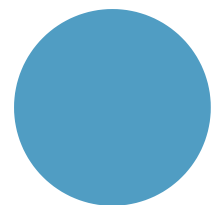
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# Purpose

The “2024 A City Like Me: Santa Cruz” (Like Me) survey is a key component of the City of Santa Cruz’s (City) broader Health in All Policies (HiAP) initiative. The survey evaluates the current state of representation on City advisory bodies and identifies potential disparities in relation to the diverse demographics of the community. By evaluating the composition of City advisory bodies, the City aims to develop evidence-based strategies that bolster representation and foster inclusivity to ensure that all voices are heard in the decision-making processes that shape Santa Cruz. This commitment to equitable representation is foundational to the City's pursuit of a just, equitable, and thriving community where everyone feels a sense of belonging and has the opportunity to contribute to the collective well-being. This report presents the key findings from the 2024 Like Me survey, and provides recommendations for improving representation on City advisory bodies.



The 2024 Like Me survey aims to assess and improve the representation and diversity of City advisory bodies, ensuring all community voices are heard in decision-making processes.


# Background

In November 2021, the Santa Cruz City Council (CN) adopted the racial discrimination resolution (Resolution NO. NS-29,893), acknowledging the history and ongoing presence of racism and white supremacy in the community. This resolution revived the HiAP City Council Committee and tasked it with developing concrete, actionable steps to foster a more inclusive, and safe community. Additionally, the ordinance committed the City to increasing representation and diversity in civic leadership by identifying and removing barriers to access, improving outreach to diverse organizations during recruitment for City advisory bodies, and implementing measurable metrics to ensure the community's diversity is reflected at all levels.

In 2022, City staff partnered with community-based organization Ventures to produce the first Like Me report. The report's key findings highlighted several significant disparities including:

- overrepresentation of residents from zip code 95060
- underrepresentation of People of Color (PoC)
- underrepresentation of Hispanic/Latino residents
- underrepresentation of renters

To address these disparities, the report recommended several actions: establishing a committee to monitor and address these disparities, collecting demographic data during the application process, educating advisory body members about the importance of diversity and representation, and collaborating with the County of Santa Cruz (County) to develop comprehensive solutions for equitable representation across all community segments.



Over the past two years, City elected officials and staff from multiple departments have worked collaboratively to implement the recommendations contained in the 2022 City Like Me report.

**A summary of the actions taken is provided below:**

- The HiAP Committee has overseen implementation of the 2022 Like Me report recommendations, including receiving progress updates from City and County staff, and including goals for increasing Hispanic/Latino and Renters representation on advisory bodies as part of the 2024 HiAP Workplan which was adopted by CN in December 2023.
- The City Clerk's Office updated the advisory body application to include voluntary demographics questions, and the Advisory Body Handbook to include information about the City's Like Me and HiAP initiatives.
- City staff have collaborated with County staff to raise public awareness about the role of advisory bodies in local government, upcoming openings, and the application and appointment process. In September 2023, City and County staff jointly facilitated a virtual community meeting to discuss the City and County's representation goals, and solicit public feedback about barriers to serving on advisory bodies.
- Staff developed the City's Youth Liaison Program to formally integrate youth under 18yo in local government decision-making.
- In 2024, City staff started development of a City compensation policy for advisory body members which, upon approval by CN, is tentatively scheduled to go into practice in January 2025. The CN adopted budget includes funds for advisory body compensation.



# Methodology

To assess trends in advisory body representation, the City has committed to conducting the Like Me survey biannually. This report summarizes the results and key findings of the City's second survey and study of advisory bodies. Staff designed the survey specifically for individuals serving on City advisory bodies which includes committees, commissions, task forces, boards, and CN.

Survey response data was compared to City population data from the 2022 American Community Survey (ACS) and 2020 U.S. Census to assess how representative advisory bodies are of the City's population based on zip code, age, race/ethnicity, education level, gender, veteran status, disability identity, housing status, and income level. Additionally, the 2024 City survey data was compared to the 2022 City survey data to capture changes in the demographic makeup of advisory bodies from 2022 to 2024.

To maintain consistency with the methodology employed in the 2022 Like Me survey analysis, variances of 10% or more are referred to as "critical under or over representation."



## Participation

All advisory body members were eligible to participate in the 2024 Like Me survey. In the Spring of 2024, a link to the online survey was provided to all advisory body members via email. Participation in the survey was entirely voluntary, and all responses were collected anonymously. In total, 65 out of 94 individuals serving on advisory bodies completed the survey for a response rate of 69%.

# 2024 HiAP Workplan

As part of the City's efforts to foster a more inclusive representative City government and to address discrepancies identified in the 2022 Like Me report, the HiAP Committee included two goals to increase participation of underrepresented groups on advisory bodies as part of the 2024 HiAP Workplan.

## Goal 1

Increase Hispanic/Latino representation on advisory bodies by 60% from its 2022 baseline level by 2025.

## Goal 2

Increase renters representation on advisory bodies by 30% from its 2022 baseline level by 2025.



# Key Findings

## ● Significant Increase in Hispanic/Latino Representation

The City achieved its goal of a 60% increase in Hispanic/Latino representation, with the proportion of Hispanic/Latino survey respondents doubling from 5% in 2022 to 10% in 2024. The 100% increase indicates progress towards greater representation. However, despite the progress made, it is important to note that Hispanic/Latino residents remain critically underrepresented on advisory bodies compared to their proportion of the City's population. Hispanic/Latino residents make up 21% of the City's population, and only 10% of advisory body members, resulting in a 11% underrepresentation.

## ● Decrease in Renters Representation

Survey data shows that renter representation decreased from 28% in 2022 to 22% in 2024. This 21% decrease presents a challenge to meeting the City's goal of increasing renter representation by 30% from its 2022 base value by 2025. Currently, renters make up 53% of the City's population, and only 22% of advisory body members, an underrepresentation of -31%. The 31% variance is the largest variance for any group in the 2024 survey.





# Key Findings

## ● Critical Overrepresentation of Zip Code 95060

Residents in zip code 95060 are overrepresented in City advisory bodies by 26 percentage points. 72% of survey respondents live in the 95060 zip code, while only 46% of city residents live there.

## ● Critical Overrepresentation According to Age

Youth under 18yo make up 12% of the City's population and 0% of advisory body members. Young adults aged 18-24yo are critically underrepresented, making up only 2% of advisory body members compared to 31% of the City's population, a variance of -29%. In contrast, individuals aged 65 and over are overrepresented, comprising 43% of advisory body members while they represent only 13% of the City's population, a variance of +30%.



# Recommendations

## ● Targeted Outreach to Renters

The survey reveals critical underrepresentation of renters on advisory bodies compared to the city's general population. To address this discrepancy, consider implementing targeted outreach strategies to engage renters, such as facilitating community workshops in rental complexes, creating a renters mailing list, and direct invitations to renters to apply for openings. Additionally, explore opportunities to partner with local housing and renter serving organizations to conduct outreach to renters.

## ● Targeted Outreach to Youth and Young Adults

Over the past year, staff developed the City's Youth Liaison Program to more formally integrate youth under 18yo in local government decision-making. Although the Youth Liaison is not appointed to an advisory body, future evaluations should consider including the City's Youth Liaison in their surveys as this will provide a more accurate analysis of youth representation in City government. Currently, the City's Park and Recreation (P&R) Department is also exploring opportunities to formally integrate youth under 18yo into the City's advisory structure, including potentially standing a youth subcommittee of the P&R Commission. Consider including an update from P&R on youth integration as part of the HiAP 2025 Workplan.

To address the age discrepancy for young adults 18-24yo on City advisory bodies, consider conducting outreach to local schools, Cabrillo College and University of California Santa Cruz. Additionally, consider collaborating with the County on young adult/youth recruitment.

# Recommendations

## ● Goal Development

As part of the 2025 HiAP Workplan consider developing additional goals that address the underrepresentation/overrepresentation of specific groups identified in this report. When developing goals, consider developing goals that directly address the variance between the City's population and City advisory bodies rather than a percentage increase/decrease for a specific group. For example, instead of targeting a 60% increase in Hispanic/Latino representation from the 2022 baseline, the City could set a goal to decrease underrepresentation of Hispanic/Latino residents from -11% to -8%. This approach would directly address the existing underrepresentation/overrepresentation of specific groups and allow for more consistent progress evaluations over time.

## ● More research is Needed

The recommendations from the 2022 Like Me report were implemented and put into action over the past 2 years. 2 years is a relatively short period to assess their full impact. Additionally, various factors influence the representativeness of City advisory bodies year to year. These factors include the number of openings, which committees or commissions have openings, committee and commission rules, applicants' schedules, and childcare availability. Each of these variables can significantly impact who is able and willing to serve on City advisory bodies.

More research is necessary to fully assess how these recommendations are affecting recruitment and the overall representativeness of City advisory bodies. Therefore, it is recommended that the City continue conducting its biannual Like Me survey, continue its public engagement and education activities, and focus on evaluating trends over time rather than any specific point in time to gain a clearer and more accurate understanding of community representation on City advisory bodies.

# About HiAP

The City's HiAP initiative is informed by a strategic framework that recognizes local governments can enhance community well-being by integrating public health, sustainability, and equity considerations into all municipal decision-making processes. Recognizing that community health outcomes are influenced by a multitude of factors beyond traditional healthcare such as housing, global warming, transportation, and economic opportunity, the HiAP framework seeks to address the social determinants of public health and community well-being through cross-sector collaboration, community engagement and comprehensive policy integration. Through its HiAP initiative, the City strives to:

- **Substantively engage community stakeholders:** Encourage active participation from residents, community organizations, and other relevant stakeholders in the development and implementation of City policies that impact their daily lives.
- **Mitigate health disparities:** Ensure equitable access to resources and opportunities that promote public health and well-being for all residents, regardless of socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, or other factors.
- **Foster interdepartmental collaboration:** Facilitate collaboration and communication across City departments to create a more coordinated and effective approach for addressing the needs of the City's residents.

For more details about the City's HiAP initiative please visit the City's HiAP webpage: [www.cityofsantacruz.com/government/city-departments/city-manager/health-in-all-policies](http://www.cityofsantacruz.com/government/city-departments/city-manager/health-in-all-policies).

# Survey Data Tables

The following tables contain a comparison between the 2022 and 2024 Like Me surveys as well as the variance for each demographic characteristic evaluated from overall City demographics.

## Age

Age Range	2022 Survey	2024 Survey	Change	City Data	City Variance
Under 18	0%	0%	0%	12%	-12%
18-24	0%	2%	2%	31%	-29%
25-64	65%	55%	-10%	44%	11%
65 and over	35%	43%	23%	13%	30%

## Disability

Disability Identity	2022 Survey	2024 Survey	Change	City Data	City Variance
Yes	9%	11%	2%	8%	3%
No	91%	89%	-2%	92%	-3%



## Education

Level of Education	2022 Survey	2024 Survey	Change	City Data	City Variance
High School or Equivalent	2%	0%	-2%	13%	-13%
Some college	5%	10%	5%	21%	-11%
Associates	2%	6%	4%	8%	-2%
Bachelors	49%	37%	-11%	28%	9%
Masters	33%	35%	2%	15%	20%
Doctorate	9%	6%	-3%	4%	2%
Professional	0	6%	6%	4%	2%

## Gender

Gender	2022 Survey	2024 Survey	Change	City Data	City Variance
Male	52%	47%	-5%	49%	2%
Female	45%	53%	8%	51%	-2%
Nonbinary	2%	0%	-2%	n/a	n/a
Transgender	2%	0%	-2%	n/a	n/a
Other*	n/a	0%	n/a	n/a	n/a

\*This response category was not previously included in the 2022 Like Me survey.

## Housing

Housing Status	2022 Survey	2024 Survey	Change	City Data	City Variance
Homeowner	71%	78%	7%	47%	31%
Renter	28%	22%	-6%	53%	-31%
Other	2%	0%	-2%	n/a	n/a

## Income

Income	2022 Survey	2024 Survey	Change	City Data	City Variance
less than \$15,000	0%	3%	3%	10%	-7%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	2%	0%	-2%	6%	-6%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	0%	3%	3%	7%	-4%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	2%	6%	4%	8%	-2%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	12%	14%	2%	8%	6%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	16%	20%	4%	8%	12%
\$100,000 - \$124,999	21%	12%	-9%	9%	3%
\$125,000 - \$149,000	7%	11%	4%	7%	4%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	23%	17%	-6%	12%	5%
\$200,000 and over	16%	14%	-2%	24%	-10%

## Race/ Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	2022 Survey	2024 Survey	Change	City Data	City Variance
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0%	0%	0%	1%	-11%
Asian	2%	0%	-2%	10%	-10%
Black or African American	3%	5%	2%	2%	3%
Hispanic or Latino	5%	10%	5%	21%	-11%
Multiracial*	n/a	6%	n/a	11%	-5%
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
White	85%	77%	-8%	61%	16%
Other (Not Hispanic or Latino)*	n/a	2%	n/a	8%	-6%

\*This response category was not previously included in the 2022 Like Me Survey.

## Veteran

Veteran Status	2022 Survey	2024 Survey	Change	City Data	City Variance
Yes	7%	14%	7%	3%	11%
No	93%	86%	-7%	97%	-11%

Zip Code

Zip Code	2022 Survey	2024 Survey	Change	City Data	City Variance
95060	69%	72%	3%	46%	26%
95062	26%	27%	1%	36%	-9%
95063	n/a	0%	n/a	n/a	0
95064	3%	0%	-3%	10%	-10%
95065	2%	2%	0%	8%	6%

