

New Utrecht Library and Affordable Housing

New
Utrecht
Library

Content in this presentation is a draft. Final statistics and graphics can be found in the Community Visioning Report which will be published on the project website.

March 3, 2026

Community Engagement Report-Back

Bklyn
Public Library

NYC
Housing Preservation
& Development
Office of Neighborhood
Strategies

Agenda

1. Introduction
2. Community Engagement Process
3. What We Heard
4. Next Steps and Discussion



1.

Introduction

Introduction

New Utrecht Library and Affordable Housing

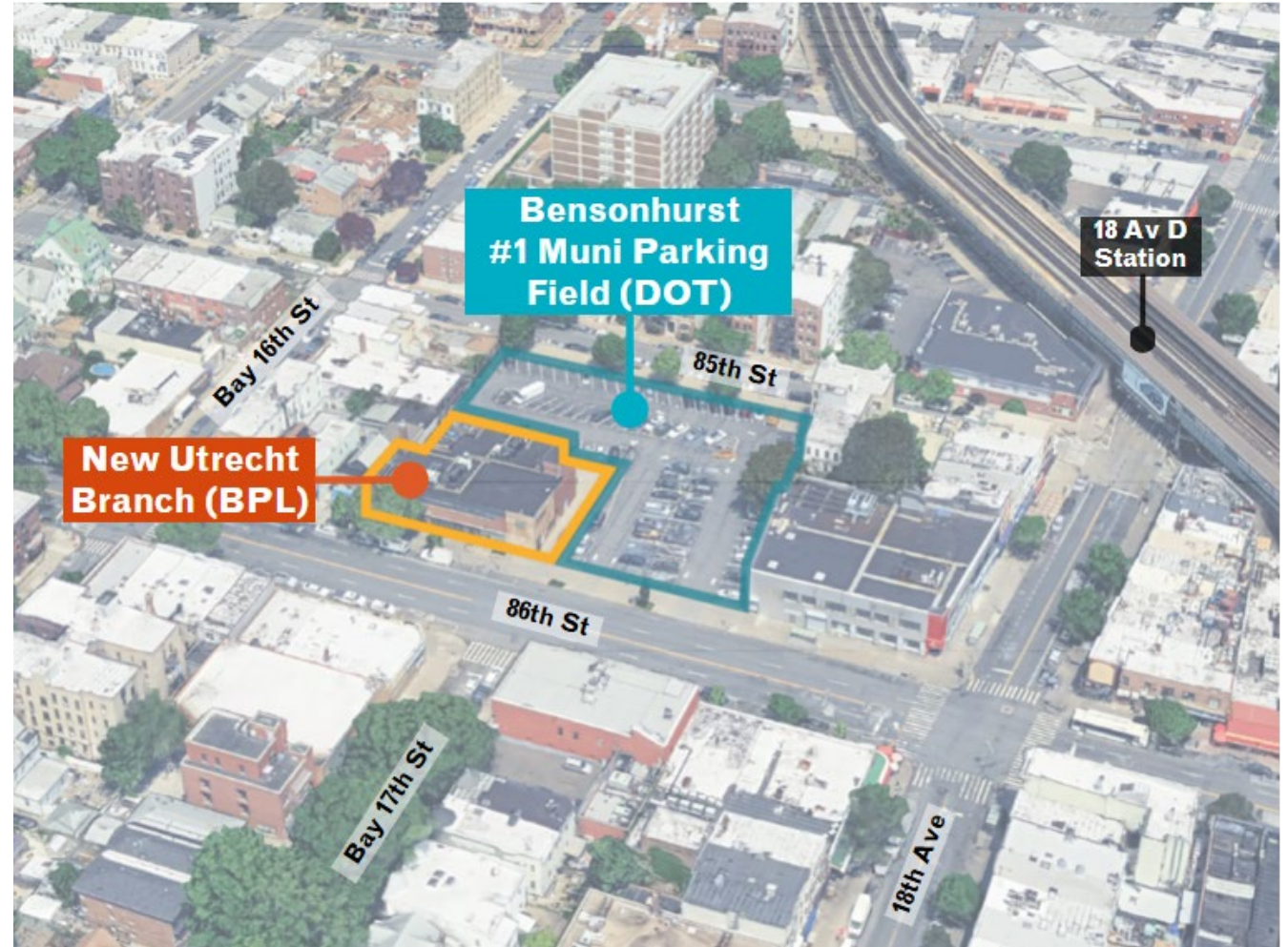
The Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and Brooklyn Public Library (BPL) are collaborating on the redevelopment of New Utrecht Library and the neighboring Muni Lot with a **new state-of-the-art library** alongside **100% affordable housing** and **community amenities**.



Introduction

Site Description and Context

- 1743 86th Street, Brooklyn, Community District 11
- City Council District 38: CM Avilés
- State Assembly District 47: AM Colton
- State Senate District 17: Senator Chan
- Lot Size: approx. 46,000 square feet
- Zoning Districts: R5 and R5/C1-2
- Mass Transit: One block from 18 Avenue D Station



Project Background

New Utrecht Library

- **Year Built:** 1957
- **Ownership:** City
- **Size:** ~23,000 Square Feet
- **Friends of New Utrecht Library,** Sonia Valentin President
- **Branch Needs:**
 - \$23M allocated for DDC renovation of the library.
 - Community engagement began in 2018.
 - Project was stalled in the pandemic and again in 2025.
 - Most recent scope was unable to include community's original vision for improved and redesigned interior.
 - HPD partnership presents opportunity to achieve the full vision.



Photos by
Gregg Richards, BPL

Project Background

Affordable Housing Need in Community District 11

High Rent Burden in CD11

- **56%** of renters are rent burdened.
- **33%** of renters are severely rent burdened.

NYC Housing Connect in CD 11

- Over **13,000 households** in CD11 have an active account on NYC Housing Connect to apply for affordable housing lotteries.

Sources:

2019-2023 American Community Survey (ACS)

NYC HPD, December 2025

2.

Community Engagement Process

Community Engagement

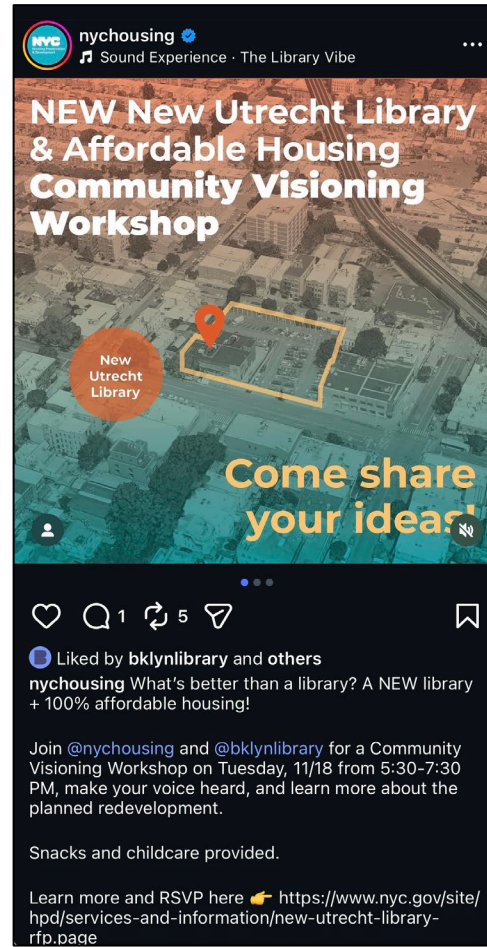
Key Stakeholders

- Community Board 11
- Friends of New Utrecht Library
- Library patrons
- Community members
- Neighboring schools, institutions, local orgs
- Local elected officials



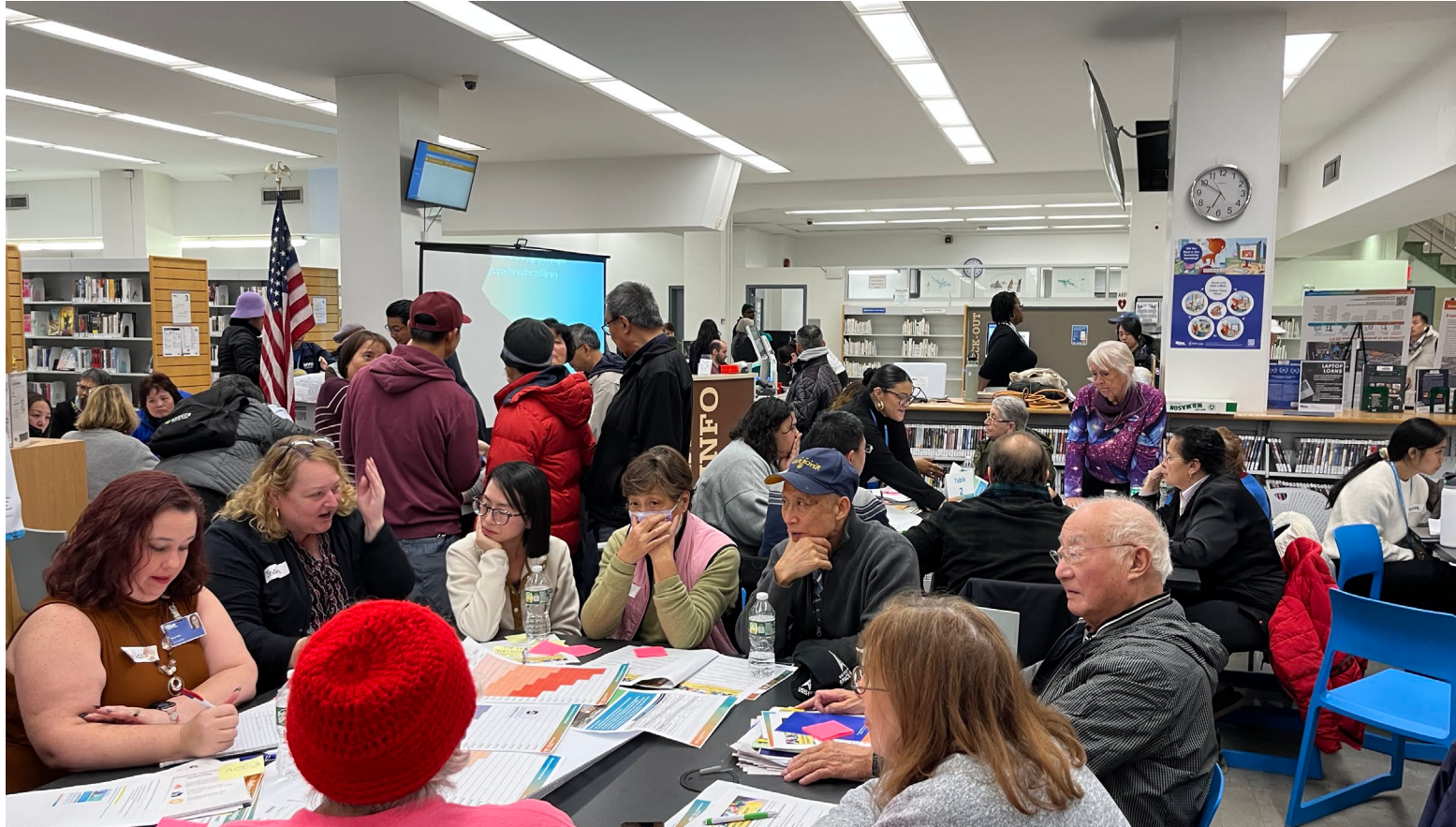
Community Engagement Engagement Strategy

- Project website
- Email blasts
- Social media
- Targeted outreach
- Tabling and flyering
- Questionnaire
- Public workshop



Community Engagement

11/18/25 Community Visioning Workshop



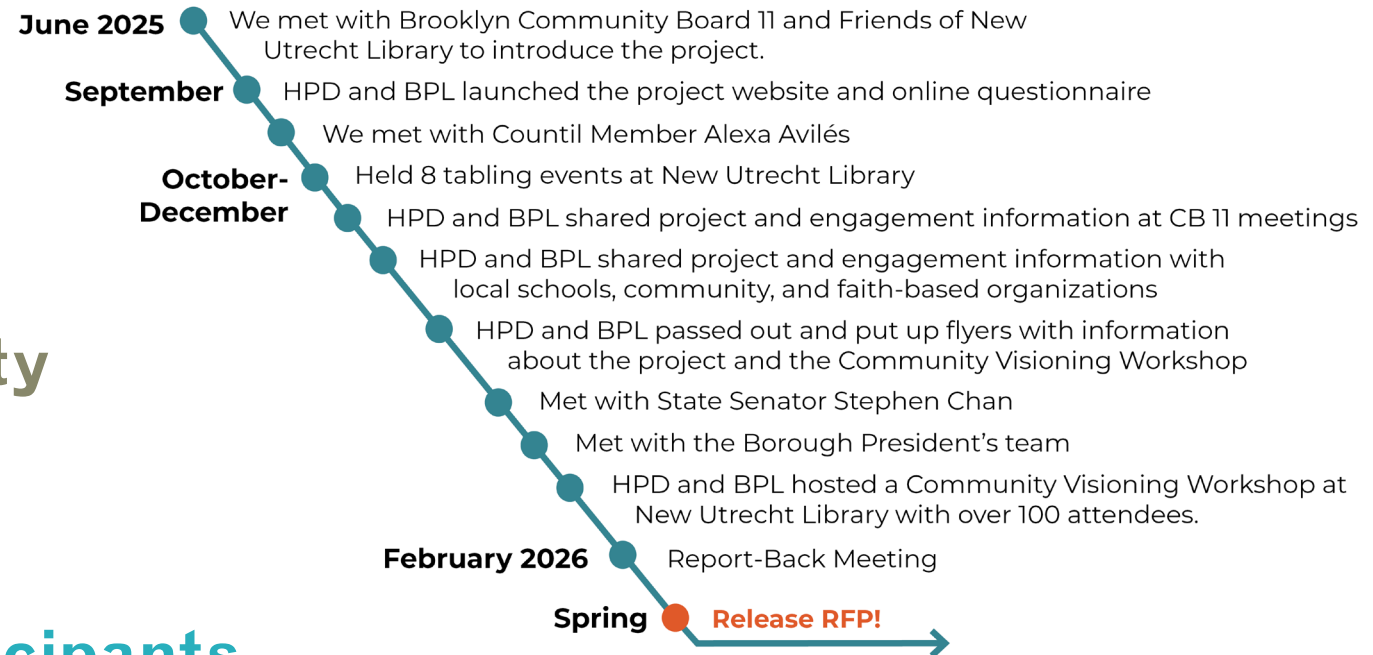
Community Engagement Timeline and Highlights

8 Tabling Events

10+ Meetings with Community
Board 11 and Elected Officials

100+ Public Workshop Participants

327 Questionnaire Responses

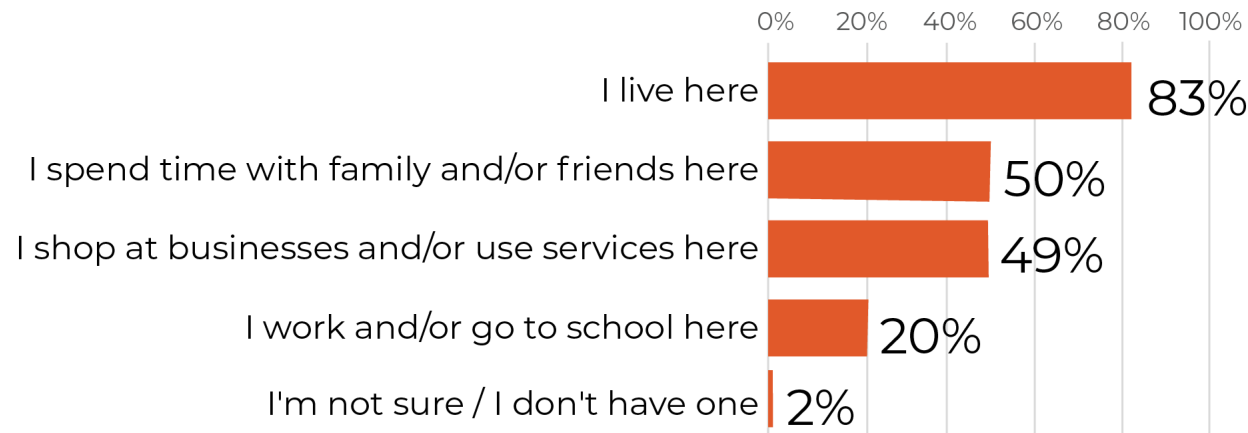


3.

What We Heard

What We Heard Who We Heard From

Connection to the Neighborhood



Respondents chose as **many options as applied**.
97% responded to this question.

ZIP Code

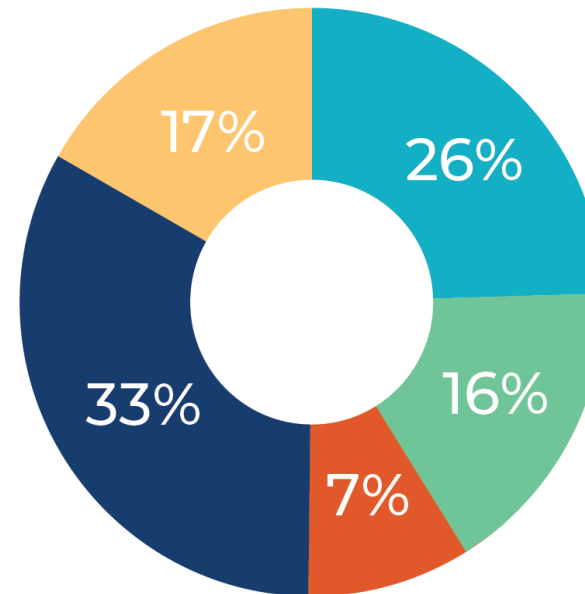
- 98% of respondents live in Brooklyn.
- 87% live in a ZIP code adjacent to the library.

99% responded to this question.

What We Heard

New Utrecht Library Patronage

75% of respondents visit the library **at least once a month**, and **33%** visit **multiple times a week**.

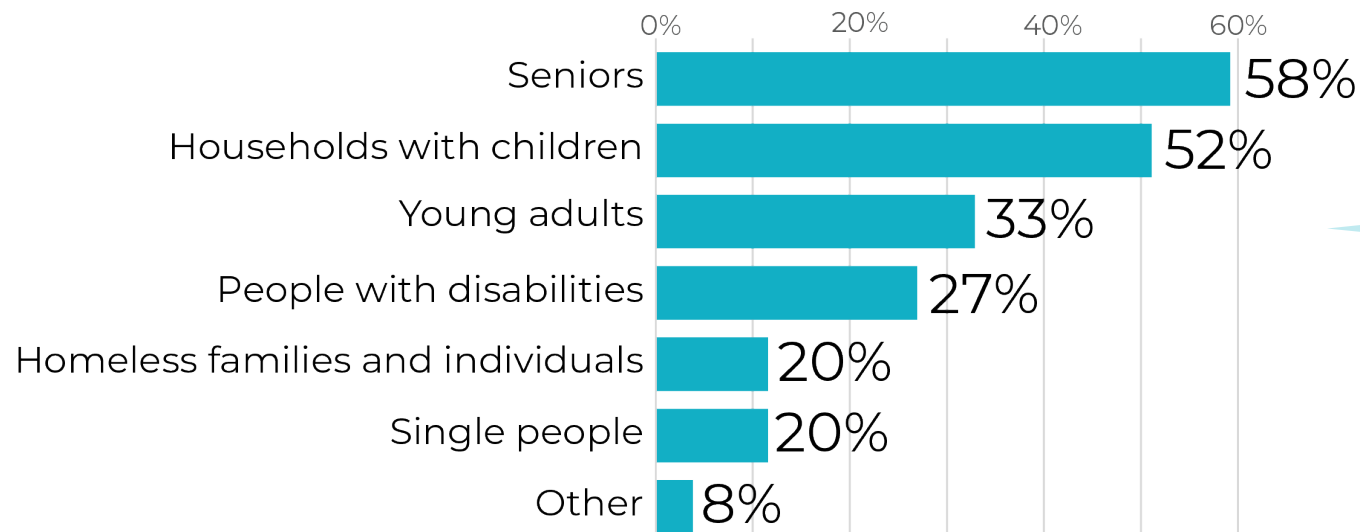


99% responded to this question.

What We Heard

Housing: Who Needs Housing

A majority of respondents felt **seniors** and **households with children** have the greatest need for housing at this site.



"Literally everyone needs affordable housing."

"Local residents, with a reasonable AMI [Area Median Income] qualifier."

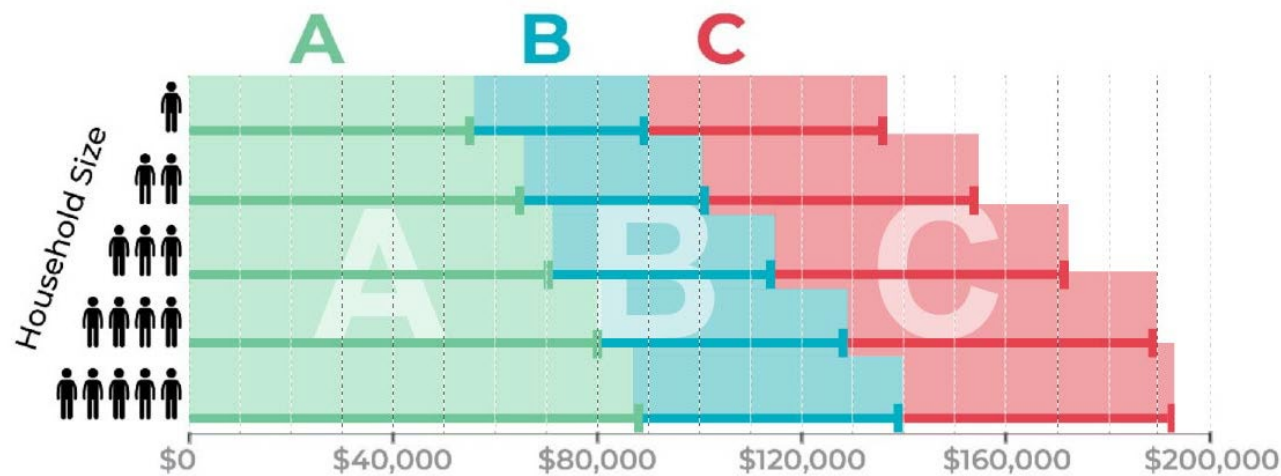
"Military veterans"

Respondents chose **as many options as applied**.
95% responded to this question.

What We Heard

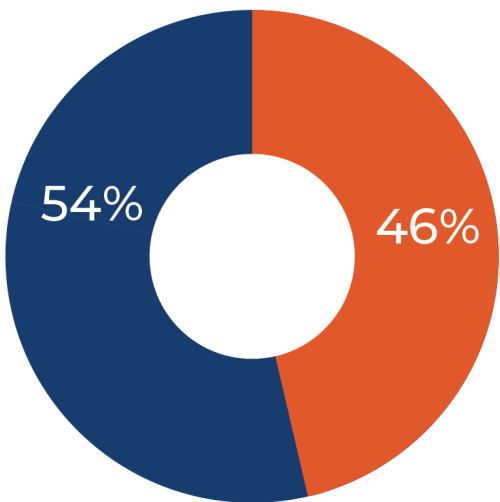
Housing: Rental or Homeownership

A majority of respondents felt **rental housing** is most needed in the neighborhood around the library.



Rental 54%

Homeownership 46%



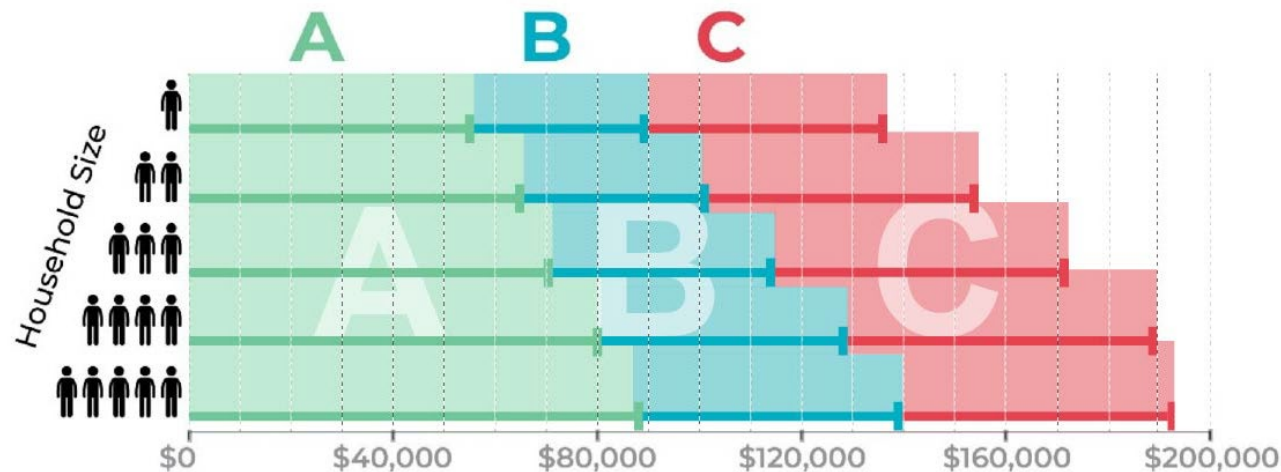
Homeownership available only to households with “C” incomes above.

94% responded to this question.

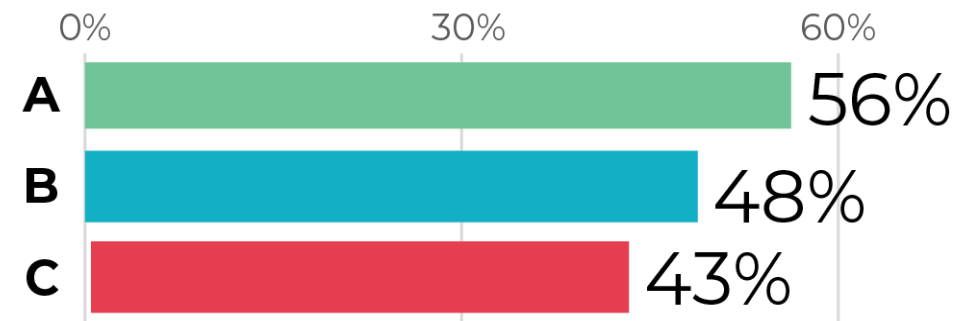
What We Heard

Housing: Incomes Served

A majority of respondents indicated preference for affordable units for **lower income** households.



Homeownership available only to households with “C” incomes above.



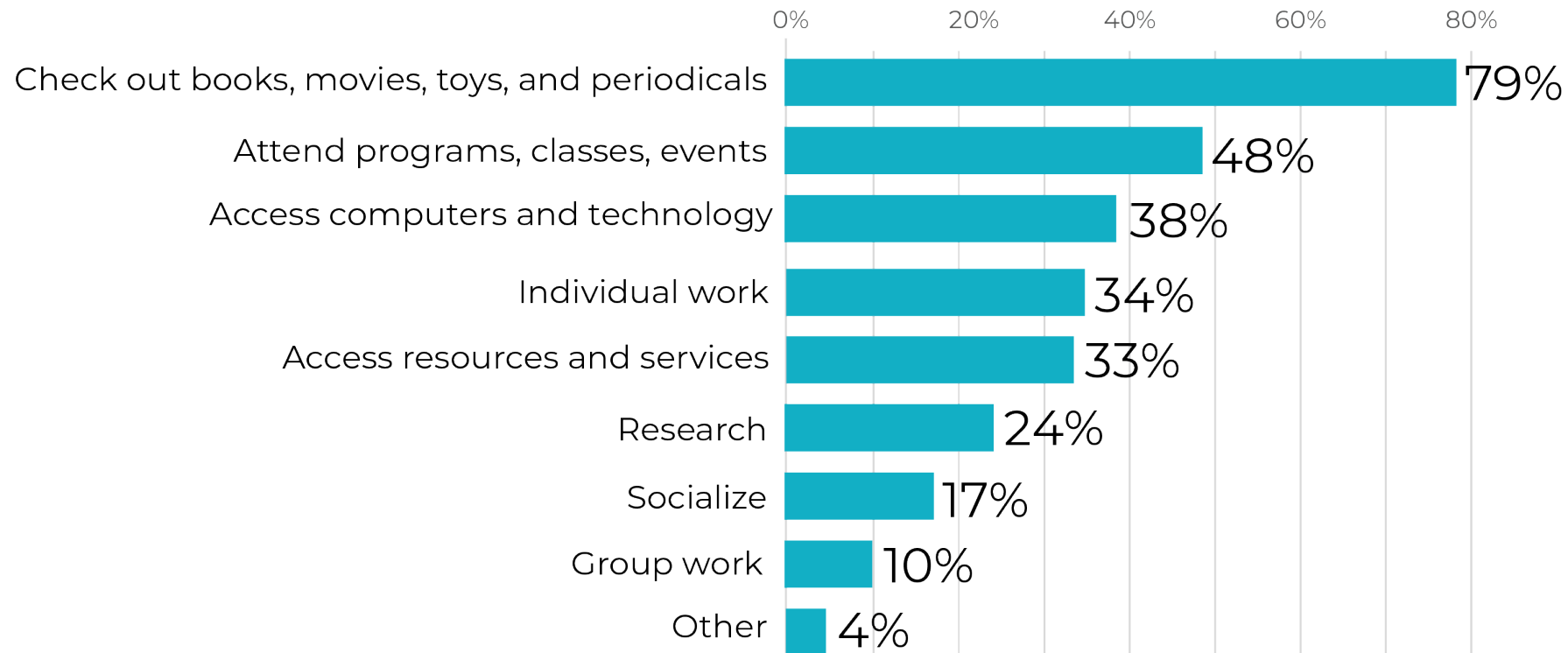
“Make it actually affordable to working class New Yorkers.”

“There is a significant demand for affordable housing in the Bensonhurst community. This is an acute need for low-income families in the neighborhood.”

Respondents chose **as many options as applied**.
93% responded to this question.

What We Heard

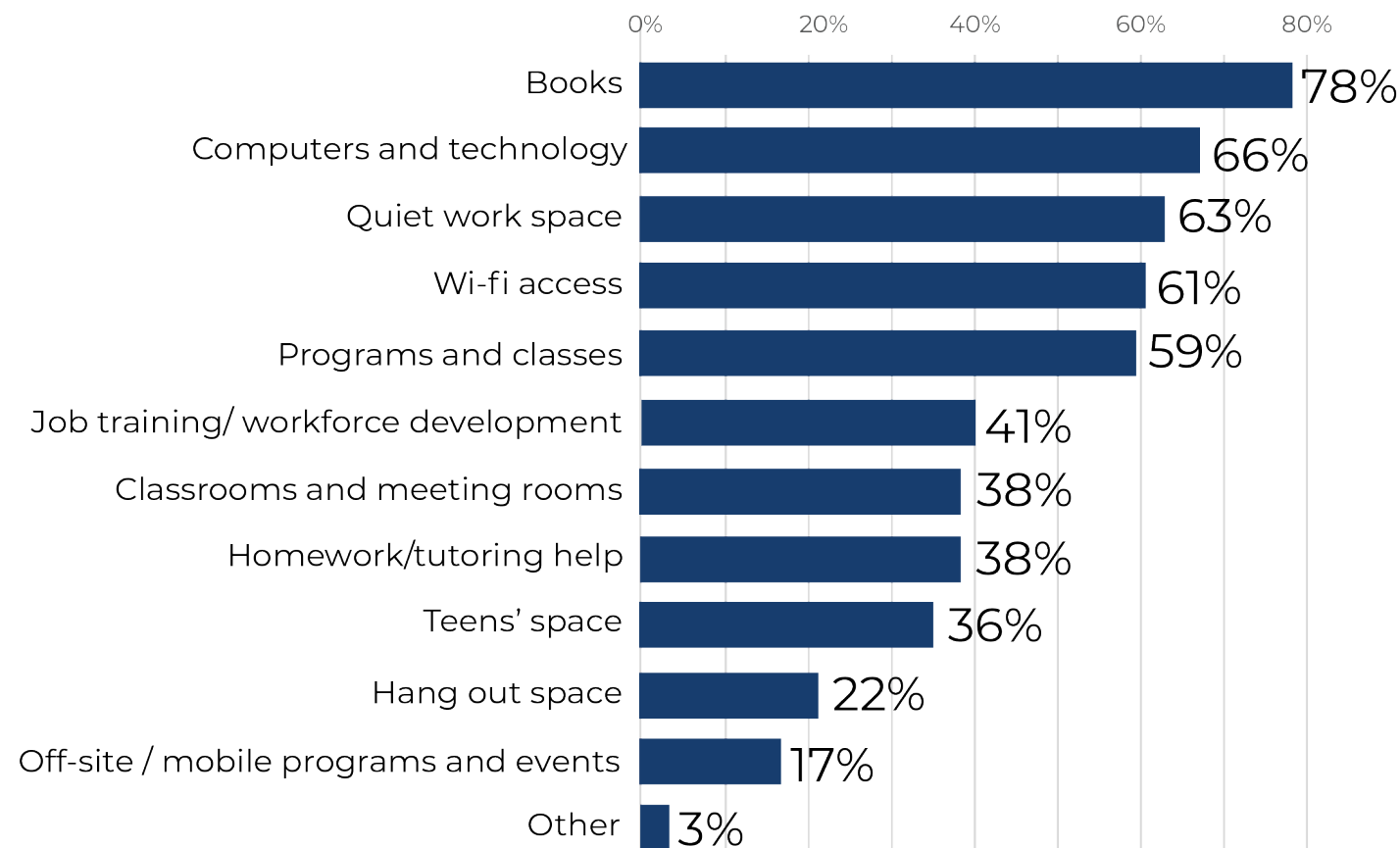
Library: Favorite Activities



Respondents chose **as many options as applied**.
97% responded to this question.

What We Heard

Library: New Spaces and Programs



"I wish that there were more books in this library"

Respondents chose **as many options as applied**.
98% responded to this question.

What We Heard

Library: Serving the Community's Needs

What is something you wish you could change about your library?

- **The library is deeply valued, but it is at capacity.**
There is overcrowding, limited seating, long bathroom waits, and competition for quiet space.
- **More programming**—especially for adults, teens, and families outside school hours—**and longer hours.**
- **Expand and modernize library spaces** to include **flexible, patron areas** and improve safety and maintenance.
- **Bathrooms, water fountains and basic infrastructure** need **significant improvement** to support heavy daily use.

"A better community room with AV technology" ... "that is available for neighborhood gatherings."

"Seats get taken up fast as there are many students who live in this neighborhood"

"The bathrooms are super old, need more than two."

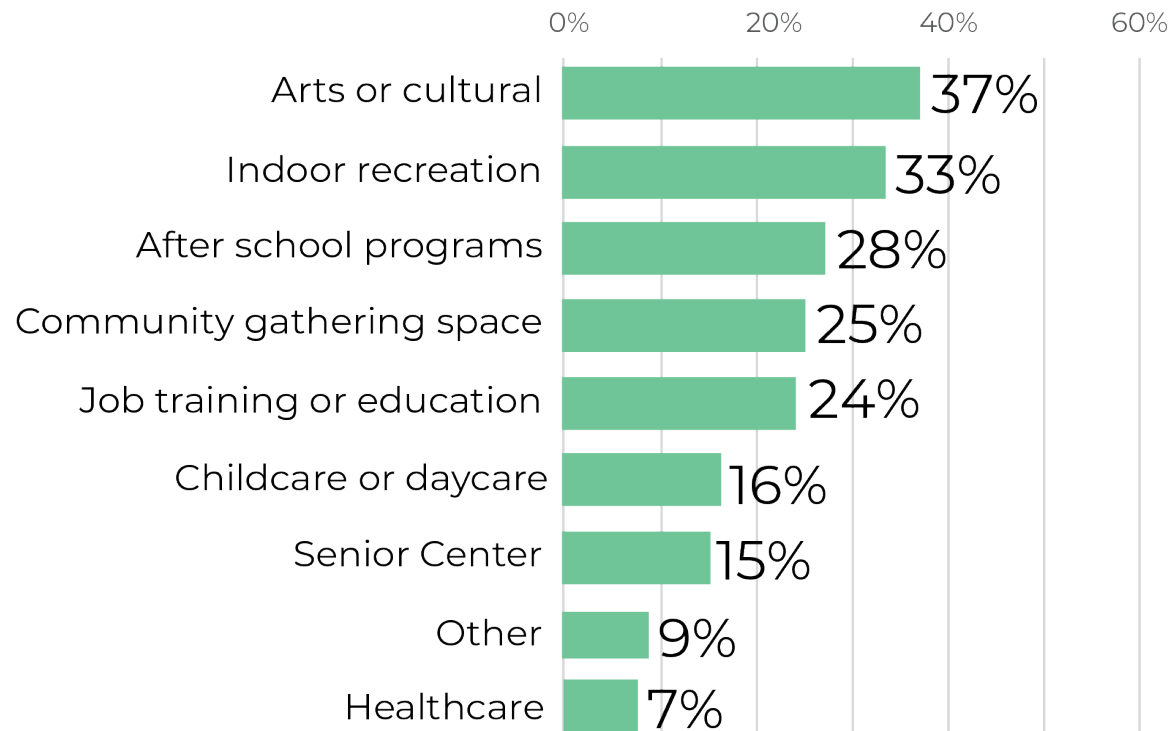
"Better spaces to work quietly as an individual."

64% responded to this question.

What We Heard

Other Ground Floor Uses – Community Spaces

There was not a majority consensus on preferred community spaces in addition to the library.



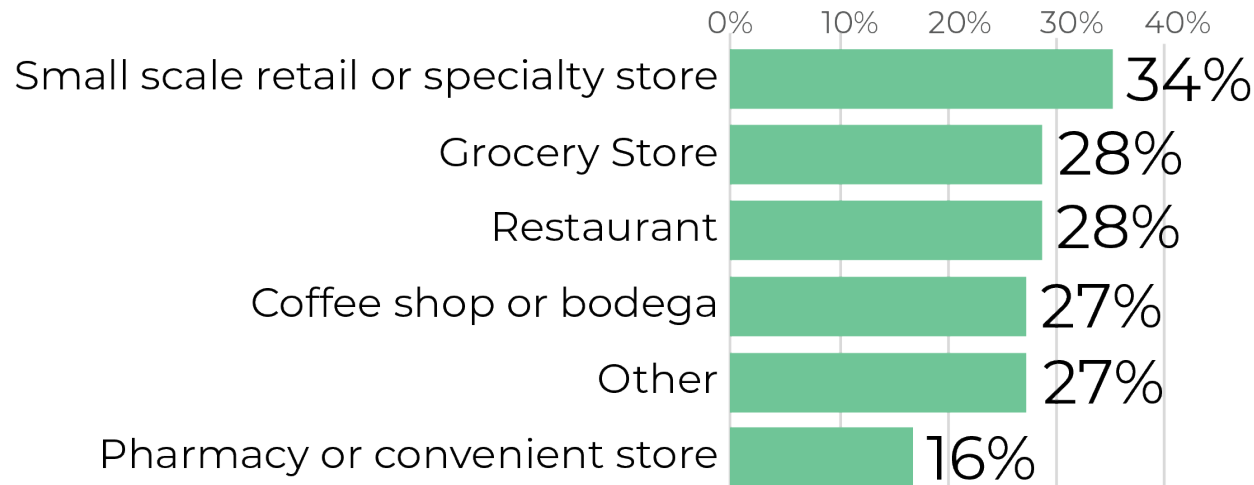
“Affordable recreational space for seniors and children to go to for all seasons.”

Respondents chose **as many options as applied**.
90% responded to this question.

Who We Heard From

Other Ground Floor Uses – Commercial and Retail Needs

There was not a majority consensus on preferred commercial uses in addition to the library.



“Affordable family friendly low-cost gym”

“None of the above, we have enough of all of those options!”

Respondents chose **as many options as applied**.
84% responded to this question.

What We Heard

Potential Rezoning and Building Form

- There were a range of opinions shared about the sizes and heights of the new buildings.
- Concerns about impacts of the development on surrounding properties and existing services and infrastructure.
- Height and density should be concentrated along 86th Street, with a smaller building along 85th.

"As long as it's accessible inside and out, the shape doesn't matter."

"It needs to consider sunlight, the shortcut walking path currently through the parking lot, sidewalk space, managing foot traffic in an already congested area."

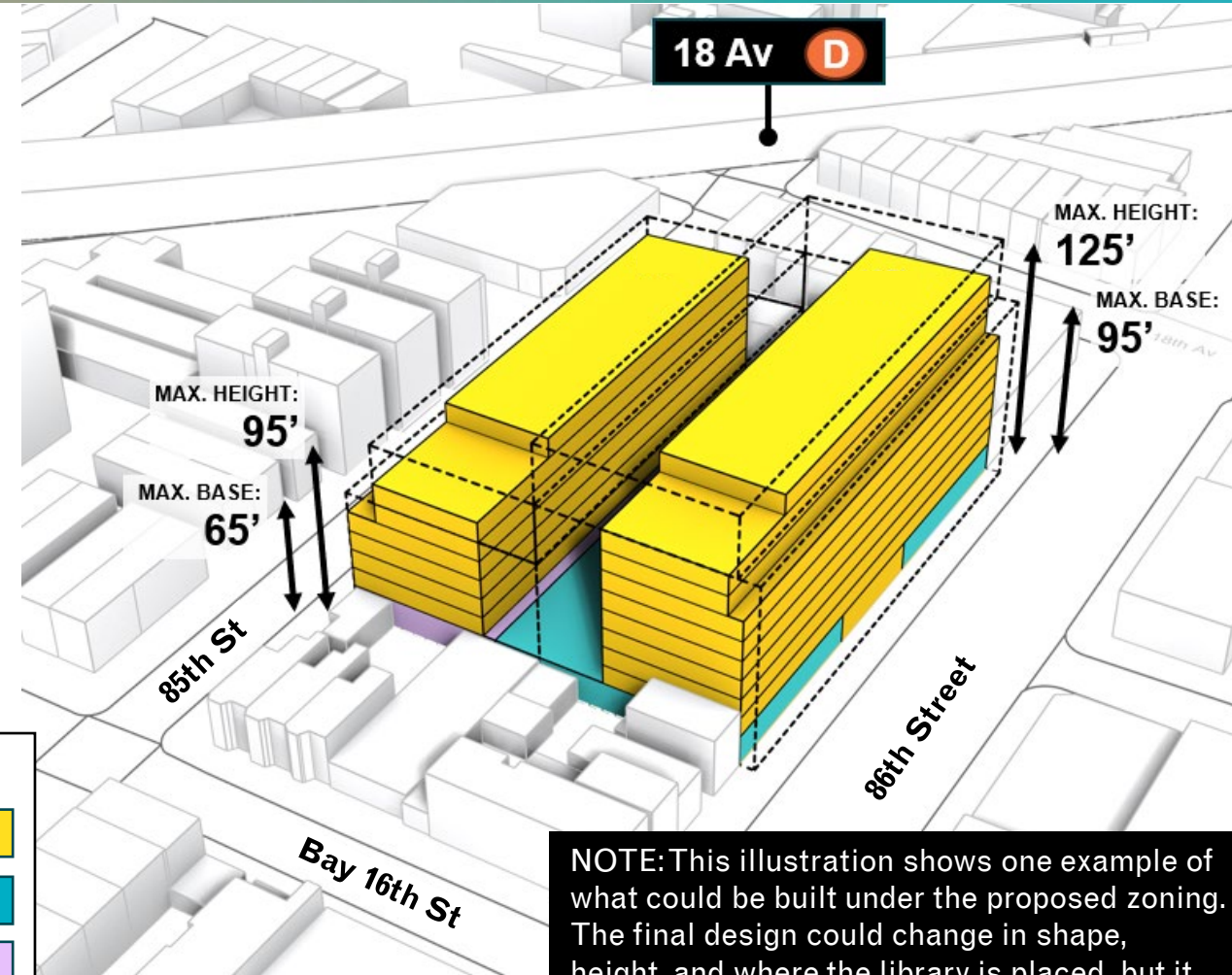
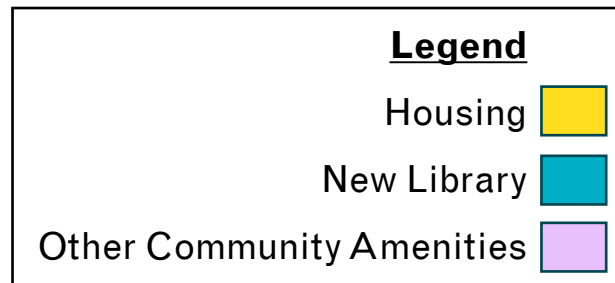
"I understand the desire for this building to fit into the surrounding neighborhood, but I think this city is one that is always changing... So if we have a new, tall building on the library lot, as long as the housing is affordable I don't care how big it is."

"I have concerns about the impact on our already densely populated neighborhood."

"Where are the people going to park?"

Updated Rezoning Proposal

- New library with primary entrance on 86th St.
- Library phasing is left flexible.
- Approx. 220-290 affordable homes.
- **86th Street:**
 - C4-5D (R7D) District
 - Approx. 9-12 stories
 - Commercial uses permitted
- **85th Street:**
 - R6A District
 - Approx. 6-9 stories
 - Lower density context



NOTE: This illustration shows one example of what could be built under the proposed zoning. The final design could change in shape, height, and where the library is placed, but it would remain within the dotted lines.

What We Heard

Takeaways

Library

- New Utrecht Library is not meeting the current demand: inefficient spaces and outdated infrastructure.
- Strong support for increasing library hours, programs, and book collections.
- Flexible spaces.
- Concerns about the impact of construction on library programs and services.

Affordable Housing

- Housing for all groups, but especially seniors and households with children.
- Housing for a range of incomes. Preference for lower incomes that reflect the surrounding community.

Rezoning and Building Form

- Advocacy for a lower-density rezoning option that is more responsive to existing neighborhood scale.
- Concerns about neighborhood impacts.
- Larger building on 86th, shorter on 85th.

Other Non-Residential Uses

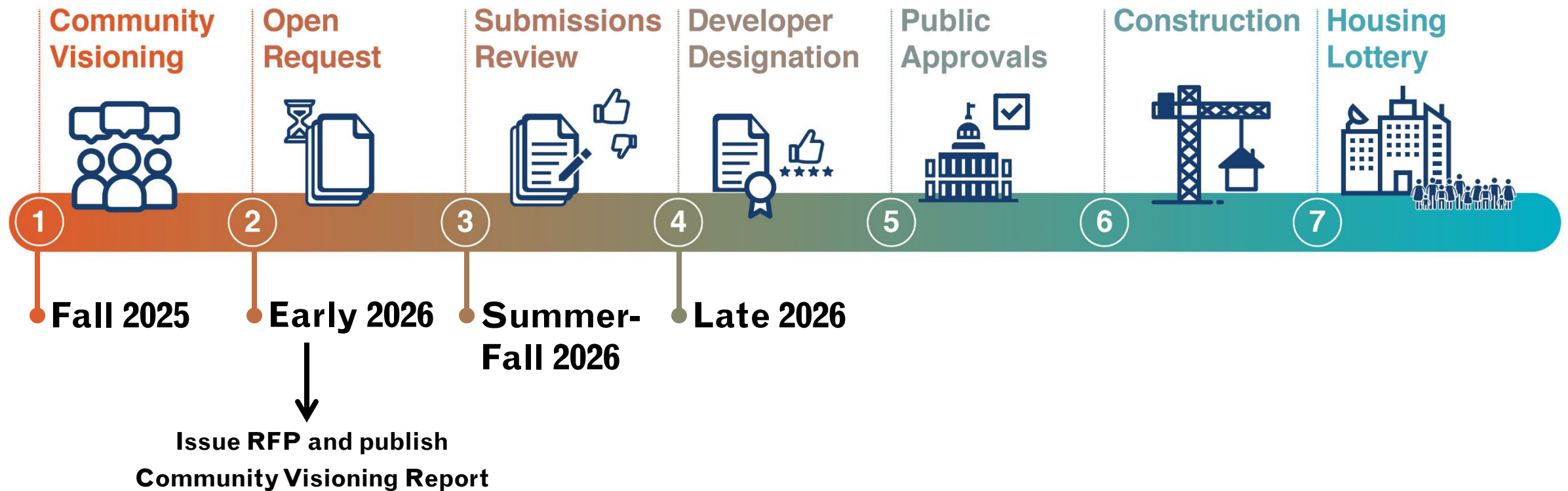
- Concerns about losing public parking.
- No majority consensus on other potential uses; commercial uses are lower priority.
- Interest in accessible outdoor green space, indoor recreation, arts and culture.
- Ensure other uses are not duplicative of the library.

4.

Next Steps

RFP and Community Visioning Process

Development Process

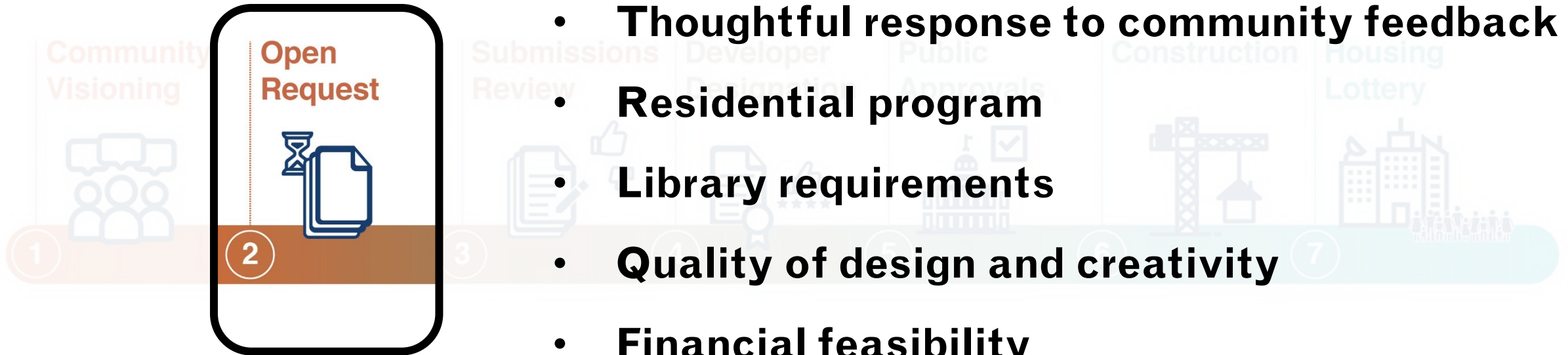


RFP and Community Visioning Process

Development Process

RFP criteria to include:

- **Thoughtful response to community feedback**
- **Residential program**
- **Library requirements**
- **Quality of design and creativity**
- **Financial feasibility**
- **Development team experience**



EMAIL: NewUtrechtLibrary@hpd.nyc.gov

WEBSITE: nyc.gov/newutrechtlibrary



New
Utrecht
Library

NYCTM

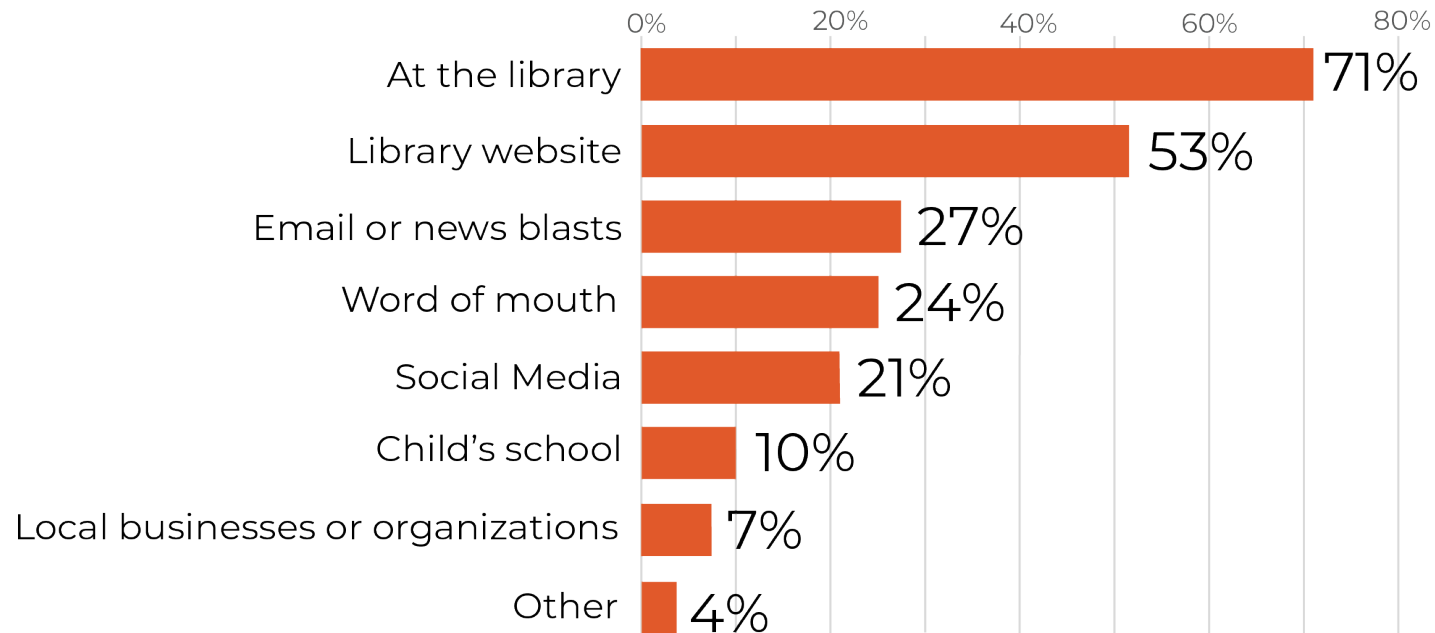
Housing Preservation
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Public Library

Appendix

Additional Questionnaire Responses

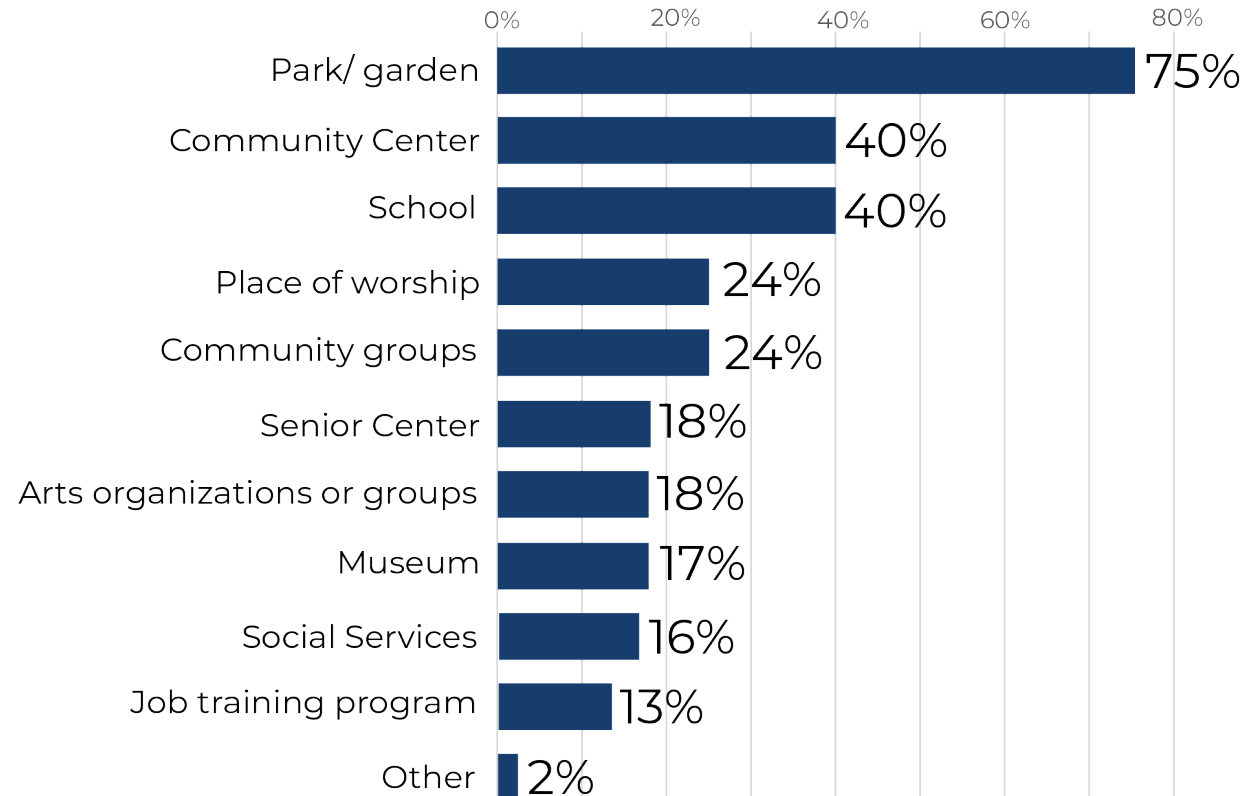
Library: How Do You Hear About Events and Programs



Respondents chose **as many options as applied**.
97% responded to this question.

Library: Neighborhood Uses

Other than the library, what groups and services do you use in your neighborhood?



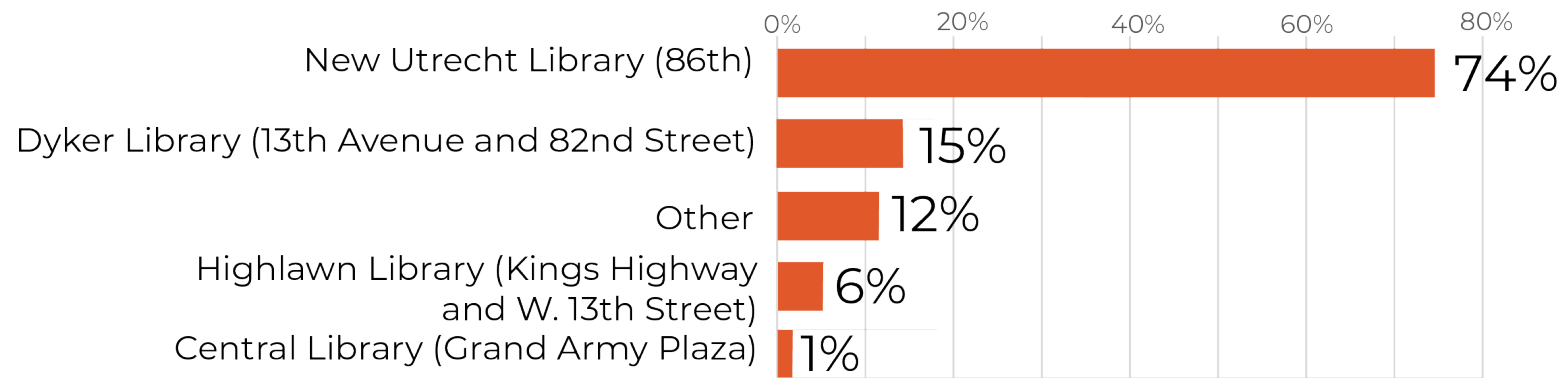
Respondents chose **as many options as applied**.
94% responded to this question.

Appendix

Who We Heard From

Who We Heard From

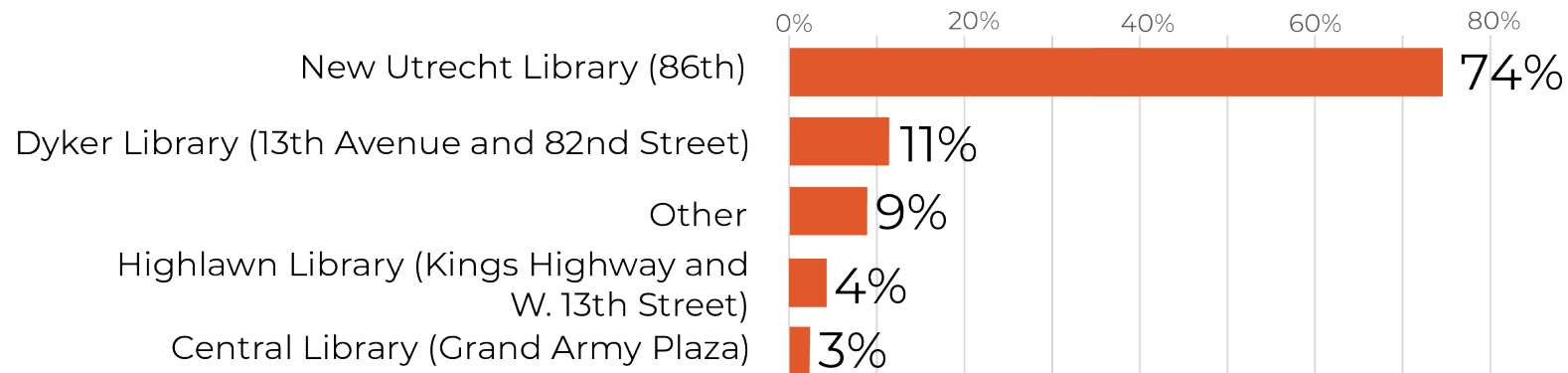
Visiting the Library: Closest Branch to Residence



Respondents chose **as many options as applied**.
98% responded to this question.

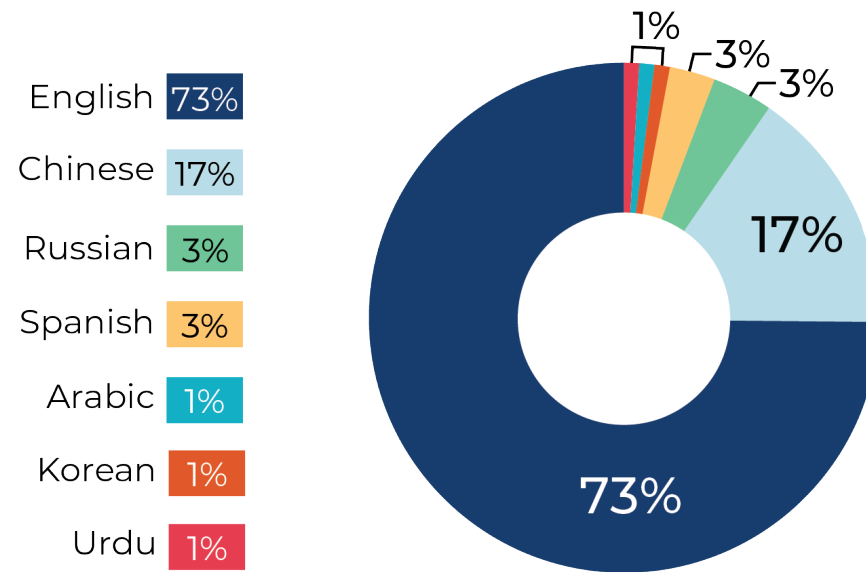
Who We Heard From

Visiting the Library: Most Visited Branch



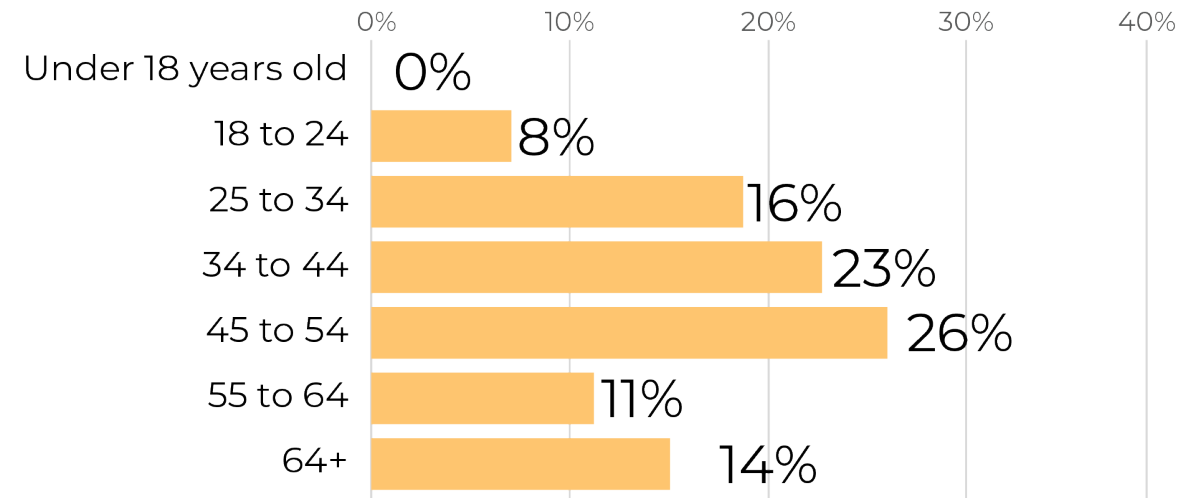
Respondents chose **as many options as applied**.
98% responded to this question.

Who We Heard From Language Preference



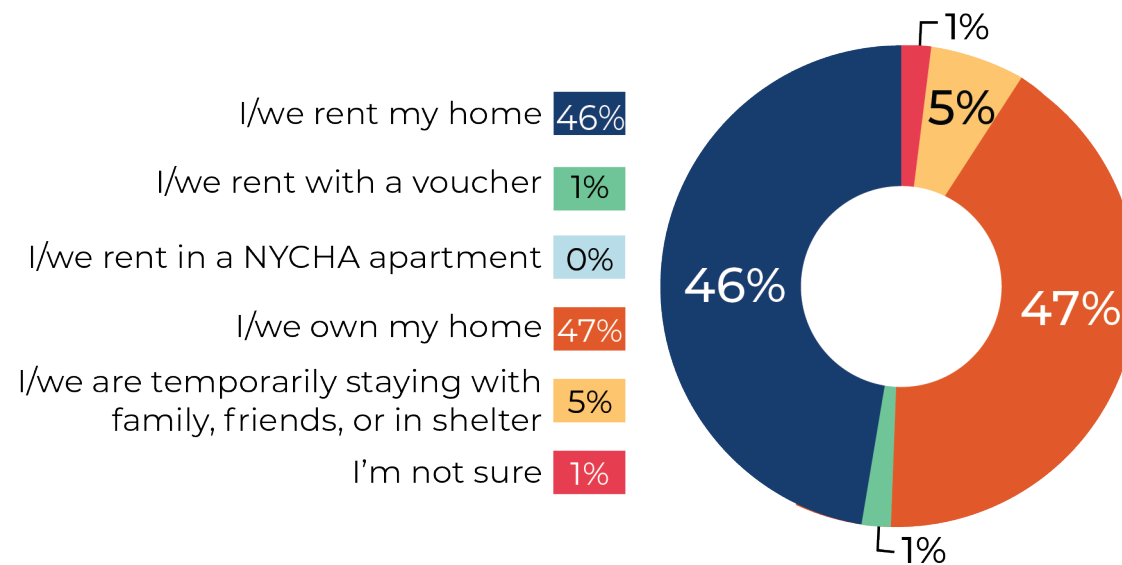
85% responded to this question.

Who We Heard From Age



86% responded to this question.

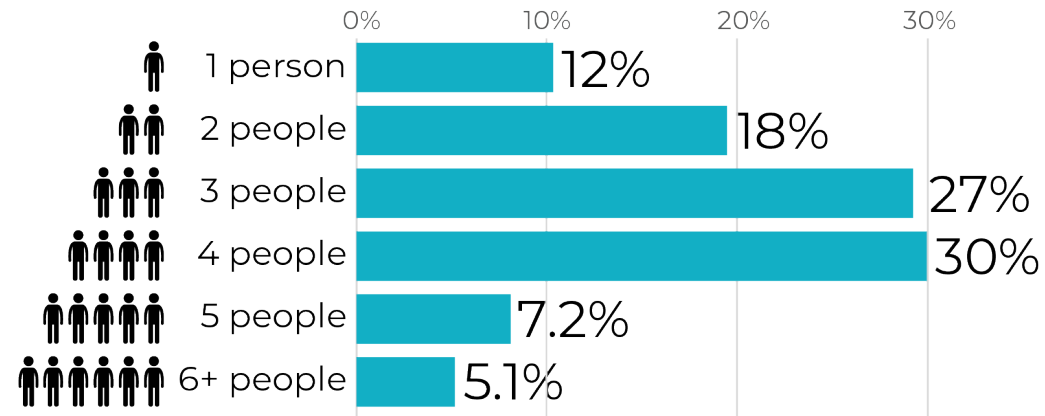
Who We Heard From Housing Description



94% responded to this question.

Who We Heard From

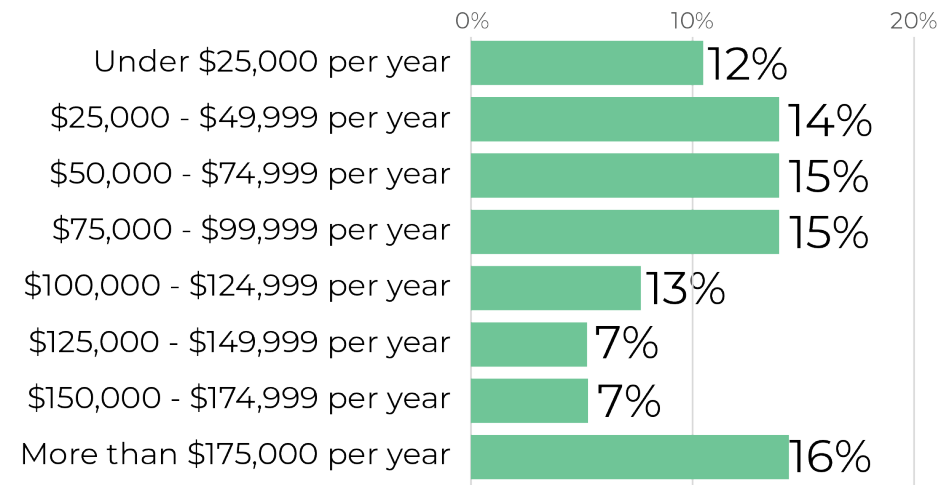
Household Size



85% responded to this question.

Who We Heard From

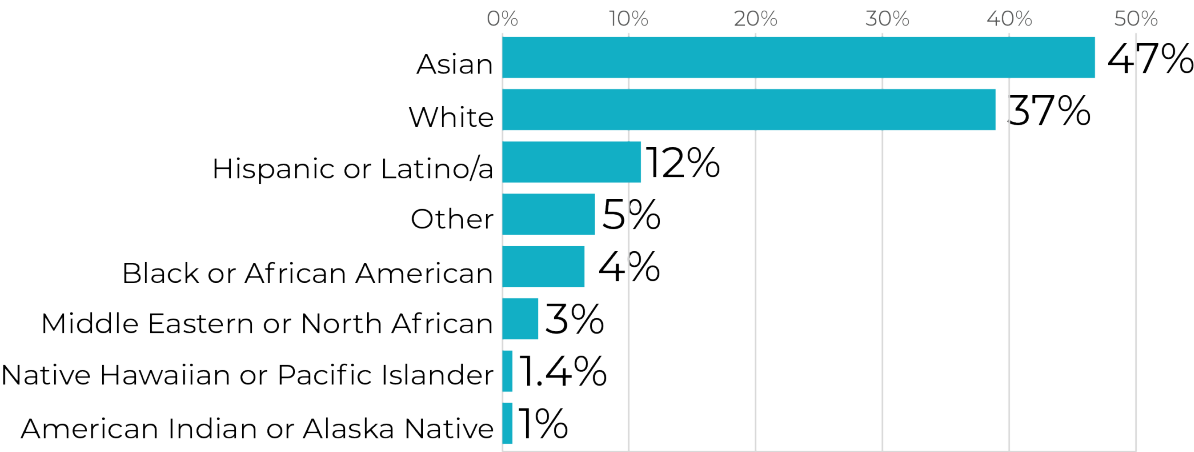
Household Income



86% responded to this question.

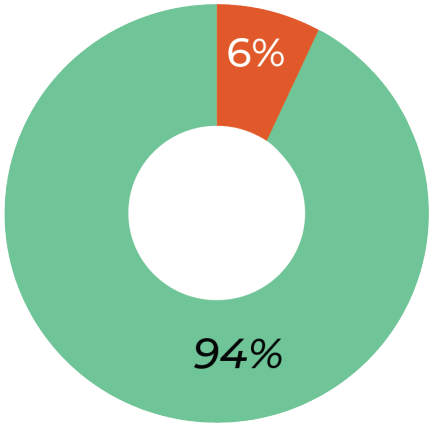
Who We Heard From Race and Ethnicity

Race and Ethnicity



Respondents chose **as many options as applied**.
86% responded to this question.

Multiples Racial/Ethnic Groups and/or “Other”



Selected two or more racial/ethnic groups and/or selected “other” **6%**
Selected one racial/ethnic group **94%**

Appendix

Precedents

Precedents

Sunset Park Library (BPL)

Construction Completion: Fall 2023

- New Sunset Park Library
- 49 affordable housing homes
- Community space and recording studio



Precedents

Inwood Library (NYPL)

Construction Completion: Spring 2024

- New Inwood Library
- 174 affordable housing homes
- Community center and Universal Pre-K



Precedents

Grand Concourse Library (NYPL)

Developer announced in 2025

- New Grand Concourse Library
- 113 affordable housing homes
- Community spaces for children, teens, and families



Appendix

Additional Project Background

Project Background

NYC Housing Crisis

Low Vacancy Rates:

- Historic low of **1.4%** of apartments are vacant citywide.
- **Less than 1%** of apartments that rent for less than \$1,650 per month are vacant.

Sources:

2023 New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey (NYCHVS)

Project Background

Affordable Housing Development on City-Owned Land

- High quality affordable housing development for many different types of New Yorkers, including:
 - Multifamily housing
 - Senior housing
 - Supportive housing with social services
 - Set-asides for families coming from shelter
 - Homeownership opportunities
- Citywide design standards and project-specific design guidelines.
- Climate resiliency and sustainability requirements.
- Opportunities for minority- and women-owned businesses (M/WBEs) and non-profit developers.