



# SA CLIMATE READY COMMUNITY INPUT disABILITYsa

FINAL RESULTS REPORT

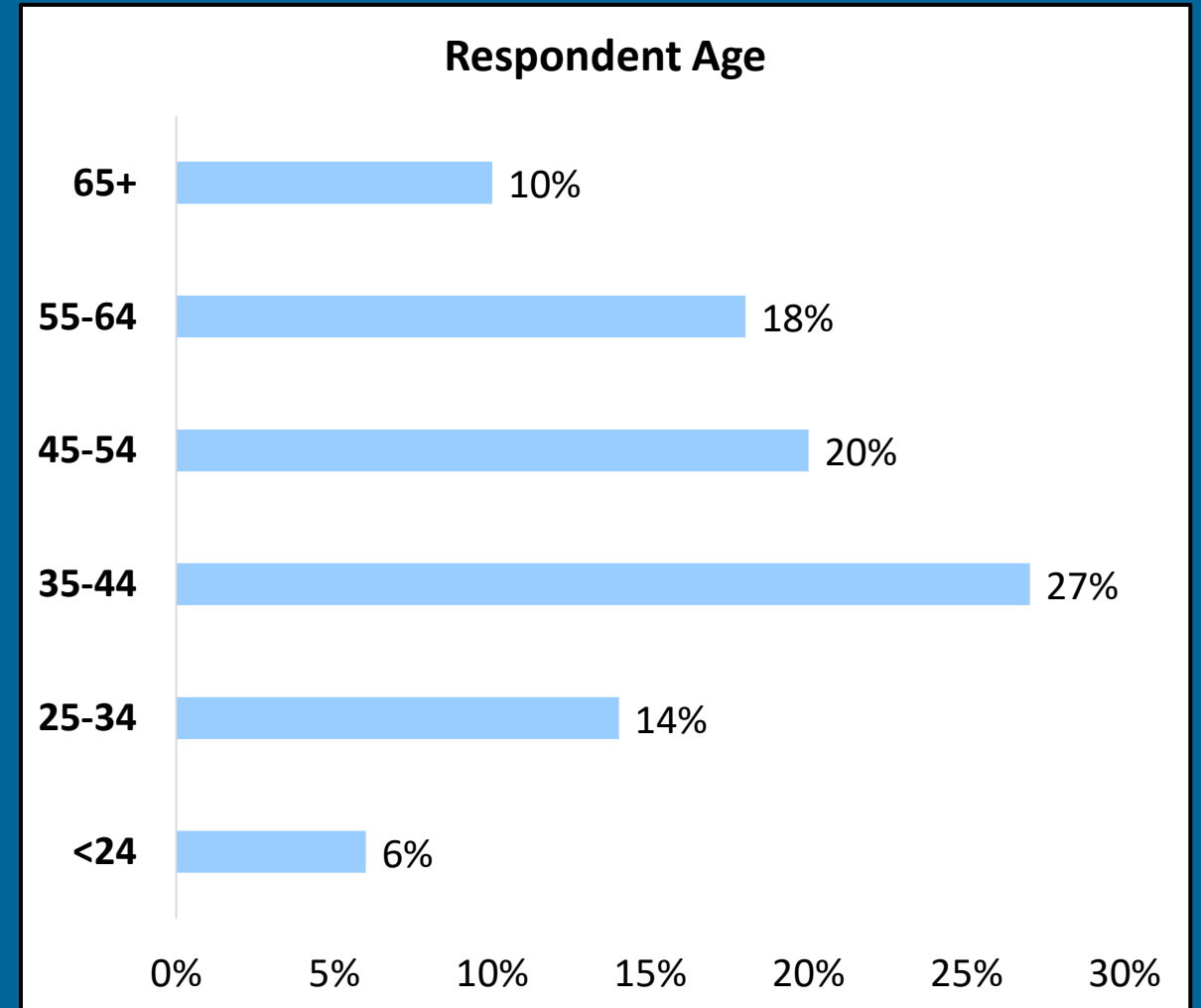
# Overview & Method

- disABILITYsa named Community Input Grantee in August 2021
- Data collected on 3 topics:
  - Awareness of climate change
  - Current & anticipated impacts of climate change, esp. regarding disabilities
  - Recommendations for City officials
- Total sample of **101 people** via survey and focus groups, conducted Sept-Dec 2021
- Survey made available in ASL, Spanish, and English; Focus Groups conducted in English



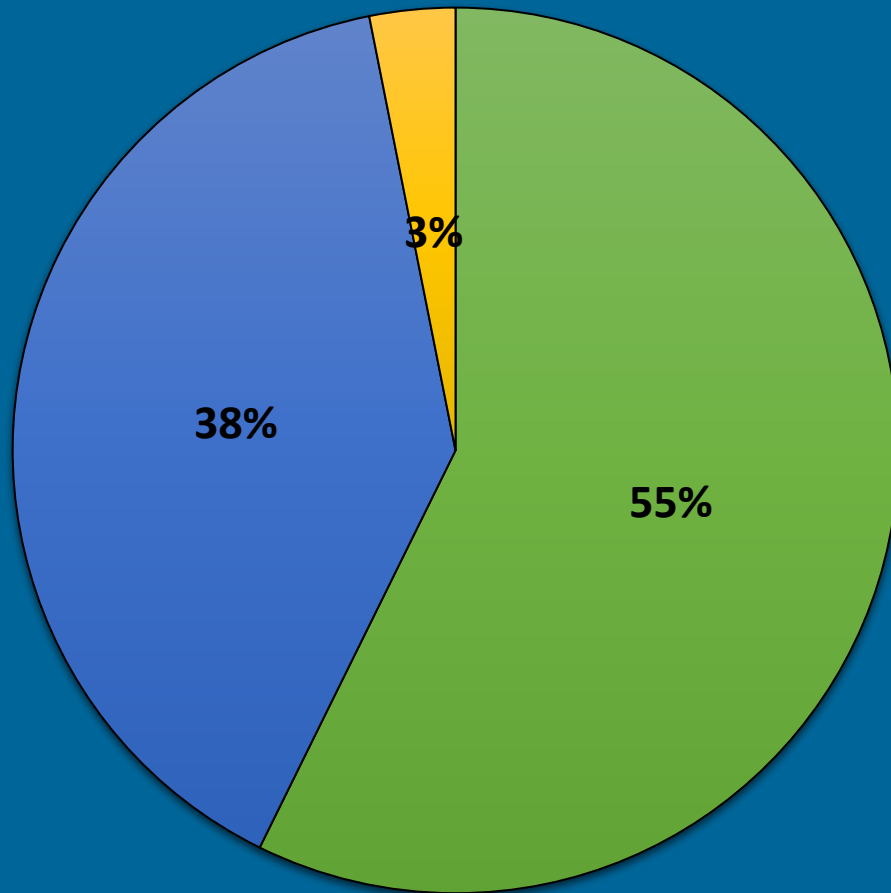
# Survey Sample

Characteristic	Percentage
Female	62%
Male	34%
Hispanic or Latinx	28%
Black or African American	10%
White	46%
Multiracial/ethnic	5%
American Indian	1%
Asian American	1%
LGBTQ2+	15%
Military-Connected	8%
<b>TOTAL: 97 Survey Respondents</b>	



# Survey Sample

**Note:** Responses will sum to greater than 100% because respondents were able to choose multiple options.

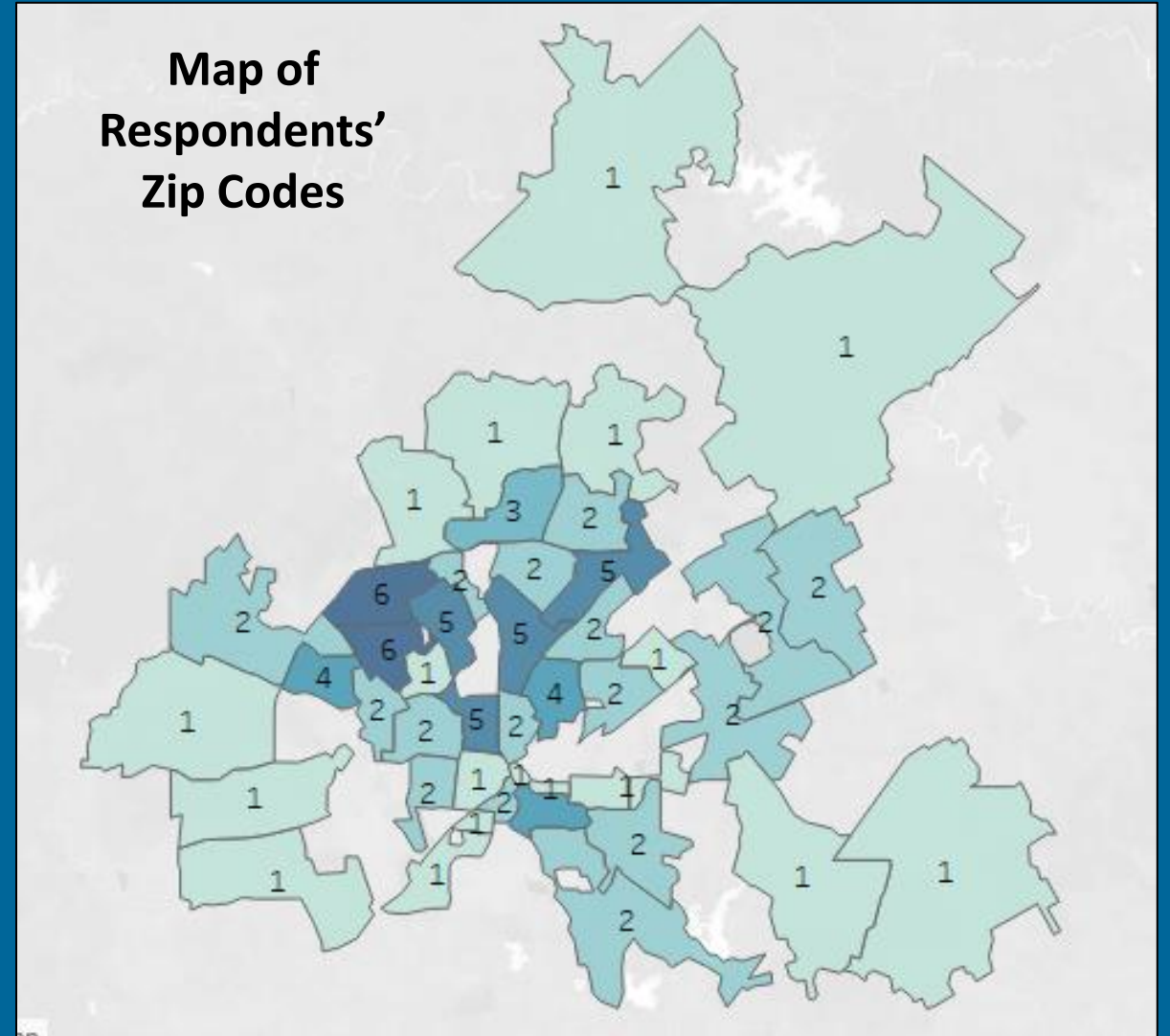


■ Live with a Disability   ■ Caregiver   ■ Have Autism

	Respondents Living with a Disability (n = 54)	Caregiver Respondents (n = 37)
Vision	19%	3%
Hearing	15%	9%
Physical	56%	41%
Cognitive	9%	41%
Learning	22%	62%
Something else	9%	21%
Prefer not to answer	2%	3%

# Survey Sample

Council District	# of Respondents
District 1	13
District 2	8
District 3	8
District 4	2
District 5	5
District 6	4
District 7	12
District 8	9
District 9	6
District 10	9
Unincorporated Bexar County	9
Incorporated City other than SA	5



# Focus Group Sample

- Two focus groups conducted in December 2021
- 4 Participants, all identified as living with a disability
- Conducted over Zoom, approx. 40 minutes each
- Co-facilitated by Melanie Cawthon and Dr. Kathleen Denny (consultant)

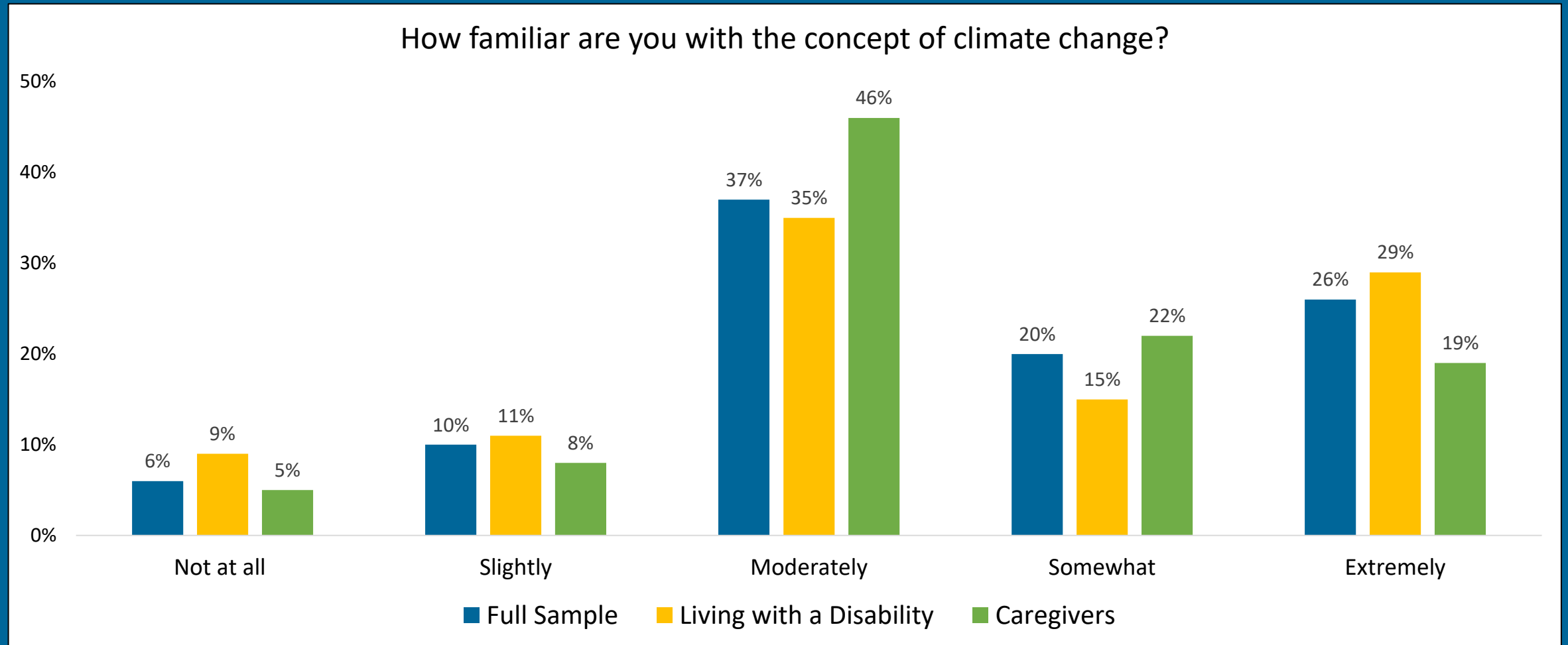
**Note on presentation of results:** Results for survey and focus group samples are presented separately in the following report unless otherwise specified.

# AWARENESS

A majority of the survey sample reported being at least *Moderately familiar* with the concept of climate change, although three-quarters of the sample do not talk or think about climate change more than *Sometimes*.

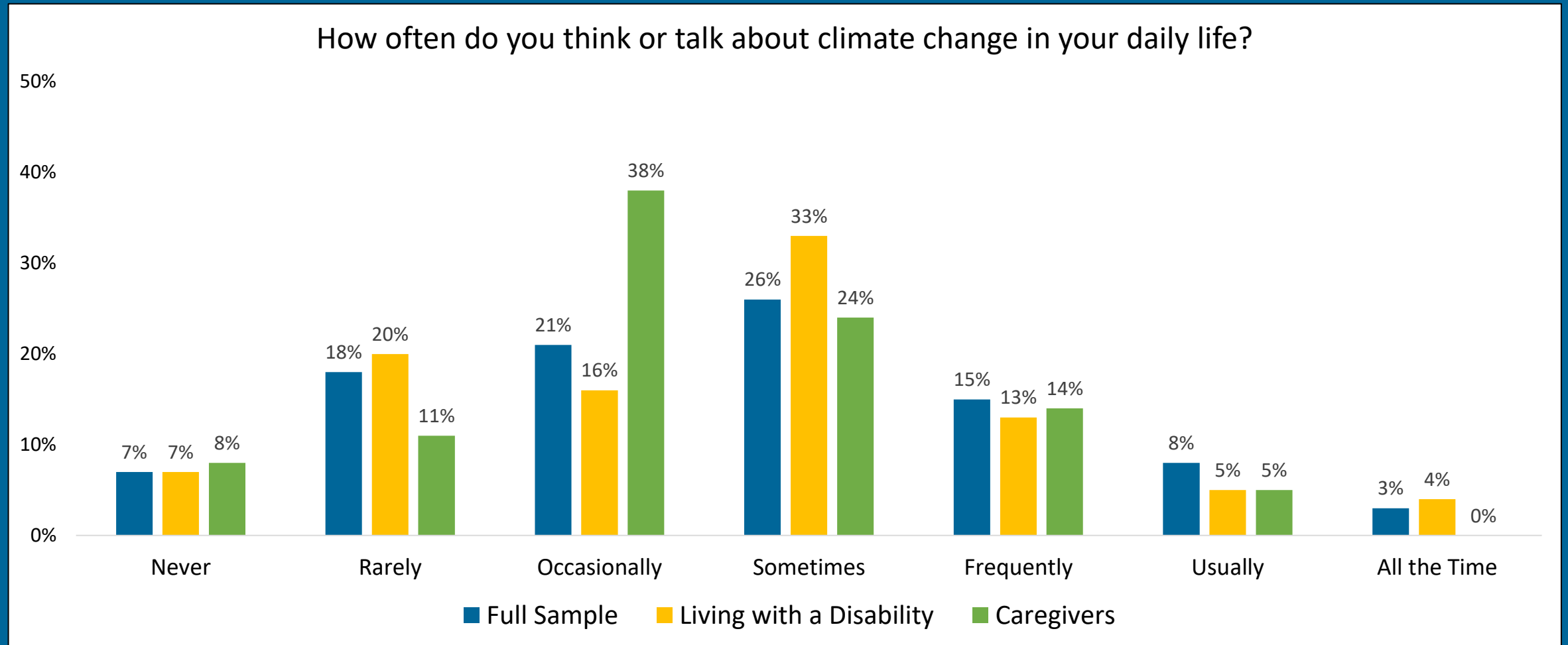


# Familiarity with Climate Change





# Frequency of Thinking or Talking about Climate Change



# Skeptical Respondents

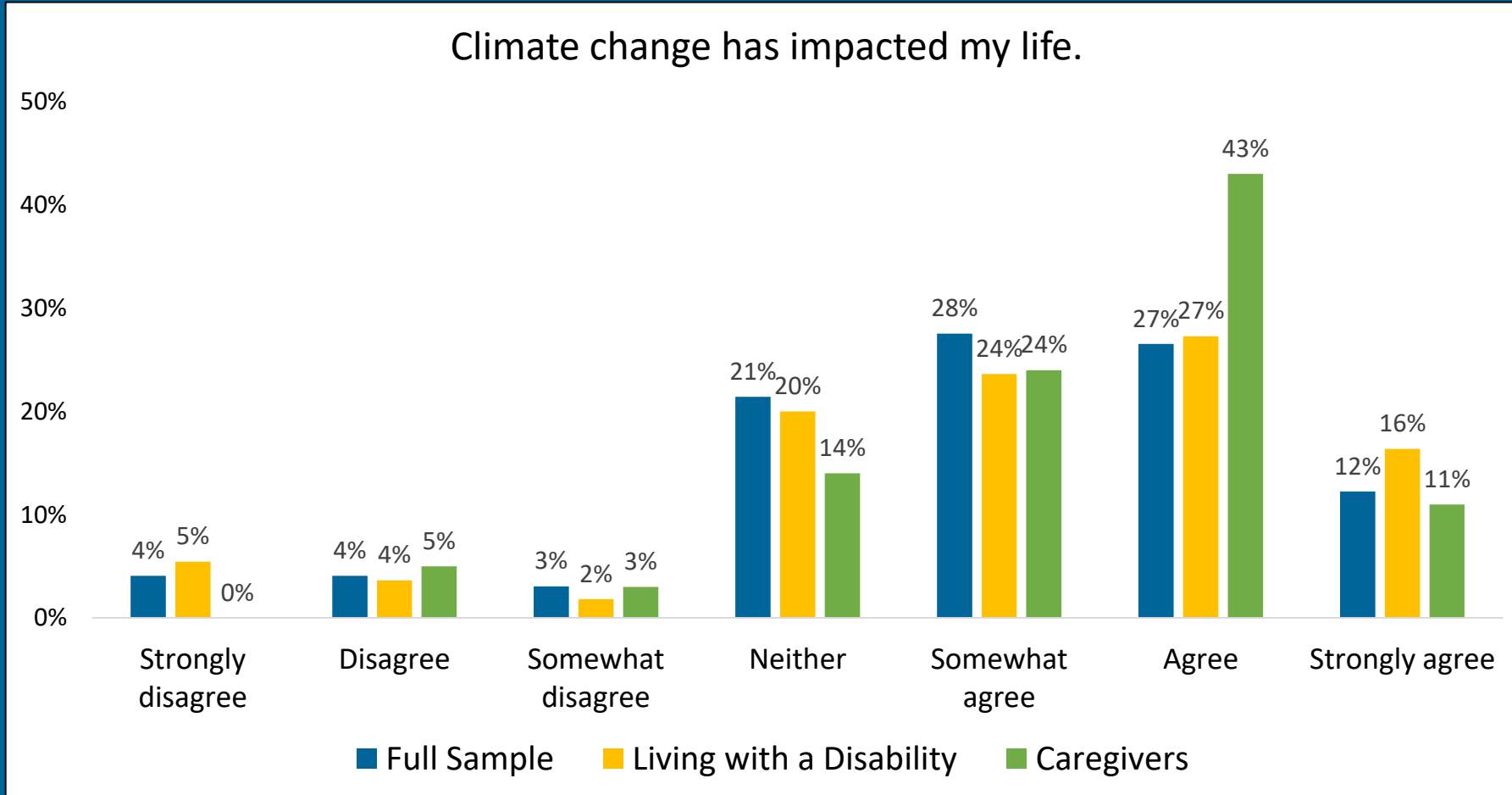
- Of the 97 survey respondents, 6 shared skepticism about the reality of climate change, believing it to be either a natural phenomenon or a politically hyped “hoax”
  - 5 of the 6 reported being 55+
  - 4 of the 6 identified as living with a disability
  - 3 of the 6 identified as female
- Of the 4 focus group participants, 3 were in agreement on the reality of climate change and aligned in how they described it; one participant, although not skeptical, seemed less aware of the concept.

# IMPACTS

Although just over 10% of survey respondents *Strongly Agree* that climate change currently impacts their life, over one-third of the full sample *Strongly Agrees* that climate change could impact their life in the future. Extreme weather, health, and increased costs are the primary ways respondents report being impacted.



# Currently Impacted by Climate Change



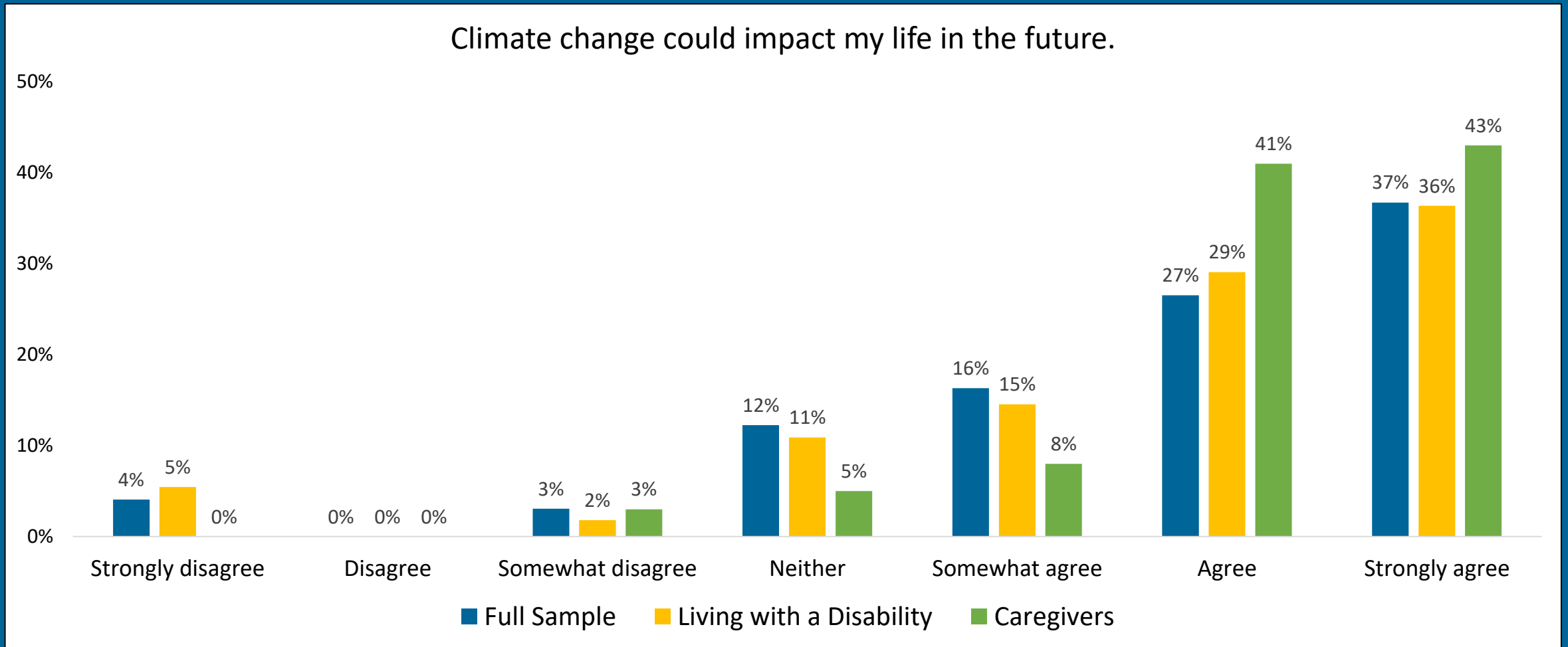
## Top 3 ways respondents reported being currently impacted:

1. Extreme weather events (e.g., Feb. '21)
2. Health, especially asthma & allergies
3. Price increases on goods & utilities

“It should be obvious to any long-time SA resident that the weather patterns have changed and have become more erratic. The deep freeze this past winter will not be the last.”

-Respondent living with a disability

# Potential for Impact



# Percent who Agree Area Has Been or Could be Impacted

## Climate change has impacted or could impact my...

Full Survey Sample	% Agree	Living with a Disability	% Agree	Caregivers	% Agree
1. Health	56%	1. Health	61%	1. Neighborhood Environment	76%
2. Neighborhood Environment	55%	2. Neighborhood Environment	56%	2. Health	70%
3. Relatives' Health	53%	3. Relatives' Health	54%	3. Relatives' Health	70%
4. Finances	44%	4. Finances	52%	4. Finances	49%
5. Ability to Travel	43%	5. Ability to Travel	48%	5. Ability to Travel	46%
6. Disability	36%	6. Disability	41%	6. Disability	41%

Percentages based on respondents who “Agreed” or “Strongly Agreed” that the area had been or could be impacted.

### Additional impact areas offered in open-ended survey feedback:

Access to healthy foods

Ability to enjoy the outdoors

Deteriorating infrastructure

Effects on mood & mental health

# Climate Change & Disability: Methodological Note

- The surprising survey result above – fewer than half of the sample agreed that climate change has or could affect their disability – led to a reexamination of the survey question itself.
- Upon reflection, it is believed the question wording may have led to a misinterpretation of its intent and should be worded differently to ask about effects on respondents' *lives*, rather than effects on the disability itself.
- Should the survey be relaunched for future data collection, the question will be revised to: “Climate change has impacted or could impact your experience living with a disability”

# How Climate Change Impacts My Life with a Disability

Qualitative results from both the survey and focus groups offer valuable insights into the current and potential effects of climate change on those living with a disability. Common themes from qualitative feedback are shown below.

- Extreme temperatures affect my body, especially ability to self-regulate body temperature
- Poor air quality affects my breathing
- Extreme weather forces me to stay inside, leading to even greater isolation
- Change and instability in weather affect my mental health
- Extreme weather events affect my ability to access specialized supplies

*“En mi manera el cambio climático ha afectado o podría afectar mi discapacidad es en la difícil de hablando mis problemas y mis ansiedad.” / “The way climate change has affected or could affect my disability is a difficulty in talking about my problems and my anxiety.”* - Person living with a disability



# Consensus Among Caregivers

Survey respondents who identify as caring for someone living with a disability are **most likely to agree** that climate change does and/or will impact their lives.

“There are solutions that can be found. I find it sad that this topic was well publicized by former Vice President Al Gore, in 2000, and congress did not take him seriously. To this day, the very topic is treated like a sham and those that have the power to address the issue and the impact on our world seem collectively not to care. As it stands, on a daily basis in San Antonio, temperatures are so extreme. My children who have disabilities have been placed on notice by their infectious disease doctor that they are not to be outside on high alert days.”

- Caregiver for someone living with a disability

# COMMUNITY INPUT

Survey respondents rated *Health* and *Emergency Preparedness* as the top two areas for City officials to prioritize. In open-ended feedback and focus groups, transportation and communication equity were also elevated as areas requiring government attention.



# Priority Rankings

Please rank the areas in terms of their priority for you, where # 1 is the area you want the government to focus on first....

Top Priority Across Full Survey Sample	# People	Top Priority for those Living with a Disability	# People	Top Priority for Caregivers	# People
Health	40%	Emergency Preparedness	39%	Health	51%
Emergency Preparedness	38%	Health	37%	Emergency Preparedness	38%
Economic Growth	8%	Economic Prosperity	9%	Economic Prosperity	5%
None	8%	None	9%	Finances	5%
Finances	5%	Finances	6%	None	0%

**A focus group participant’s explanations for prioritizing emergency preparedness:**

“I’m a person with a disability. I’ve lived here for a number of years. I don’t know what the plan is. If – well, more like, *when* – an emergency happens, who gets who out?...What if we can’t drive? I don’t know what the plan is.”

# Prioritize Equitable Transportation

As a member of the disability community, what else would you like to make sure City officials understand as they finalize priorities for the Climate Action Plan?



- Invest in usable and reliable public transportation
- Invest in a walkable city with usable, accessible sidewalks
- Maintain the Tree Giveaway initiative

**“The less independent one is, the more climate crises like the winter freeze impact you.”**

– Respondent living with a chronic medical condition

**“Along with equitable maintenance of city streets the city must focus on usable and reliable public transit instead of adding more highway lanes that take too long to build and simply allow more vehicles on the road, creating more congestions and adds to the problem of climate change.”**

– Respondent living with a mental health issue



In Respondents' Own Words

# Prioritize Equitable Communications

As a member of the disability community, what else would you like to make sure City officials understand as they finalize priorities for the Climate Action Plan?



- Accessibly communicate emergency response plans to the diverse disability community
- Ensure existing emergency resources are advertised accessibly
- Those delivering the messaging should be reflective of the disability community

**“If we’re not getting it [information about climate change] to them [people with disabilities] in a way they can understand or receive it well, I think we need to go the extra mile to make sure we’re communicating well and that they understand what’s at stake”**

- Focus Group Participant living with a physical disability



In Respondents’ Own Words



# DISABILITYSA'S SA CLIMATE READY COMMUNITY INPUT

RESULTS REPORT  
DECEMBER 14, 2021