

Art in Public Places: Lotus by Sunyong Chung and Philippe Klinefelter, 2013

FY 2026-27 City Council Budget Priorities

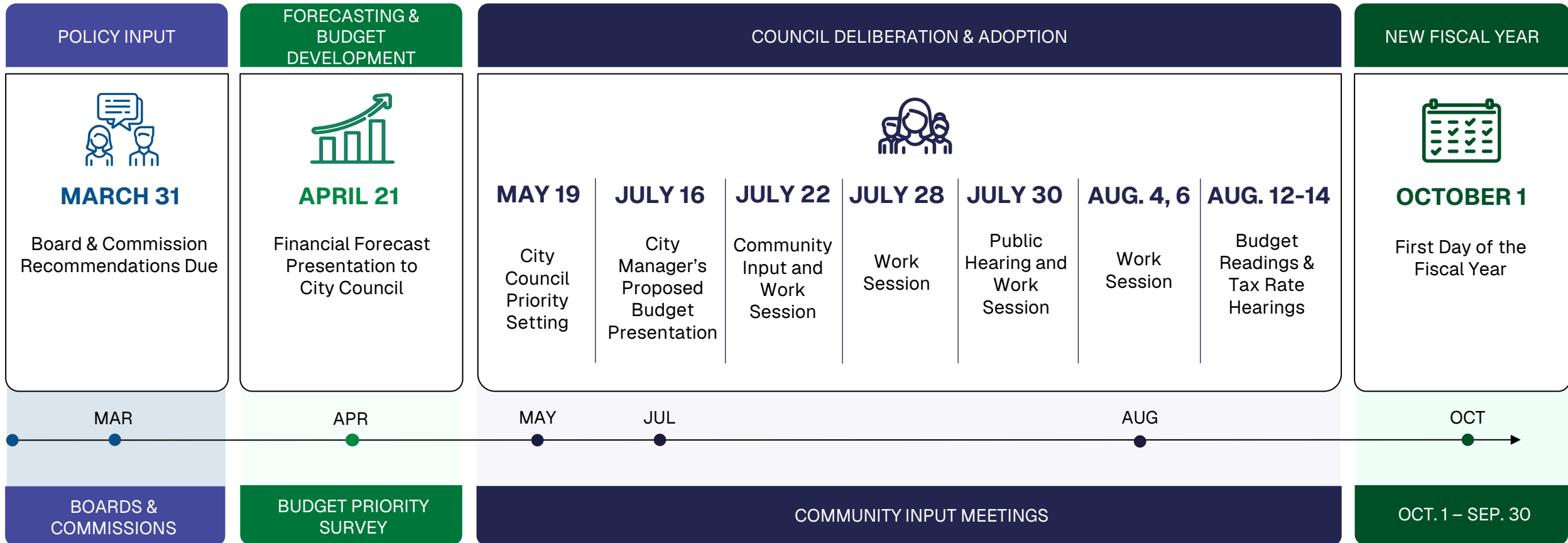
May 19, 2026

Today's Agenda

- Budget Engagement
- Survey Results
- Forecast Recap
- Prioritization Exercise



FY 2026-27 Budget Timeline



Budget Engagement

- Boards & Commission Recommendations
- City Manager Community Budget Conversations
 - 5 in-person and 1 virtual events
 - 2 events to gather feedback on City social services contracts
 - 3 employee engagement events
- Community Survey
- Budget Priority Survey
- City Council District Townhalls – *usually occur in July and August*

Community Survey

2025 Survey Overview

Responses assess Austinite satisfaction and perceptions in 115 items across 10 categories



MAJOR CITY SERVICES

Assess satisfaction with the delivery of key City services.



OVERALL PERCEPTIONS OF AUSTIN

Gauge overall perceptions and direction of the City.



PARKS, RECREATION, CULTURE, AND LEARNING

Evaluate experiences with parks, recreation, cultural facilities, and learning opportunities.



PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES & PERCEPTIONS

Measure satisfaction with public safety services and perceptions of safety in Austin.



QUALITY OF LIFE

Understand the factors that contribute to overall quality of life in Austin.



STREETS, SIDEWALKS, AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Assess the condition and performance of streets, sidewalks, and other infrastructure.



TRANSPORTATION

Evaluate transportation options, accessibility, and mobility in Austin.



UTILITY

Measure satisfaction with water, wastewater, and recycling services.

- 2,080 completed surveys
- ~200 responses per district
- Overall $\pm 2.15\%$ margin of error, at the 95% confidence level

Respondent Demographics

HOW TO READ:

Well aligned

Within -5 percentage points of Austin population

Somewhat different

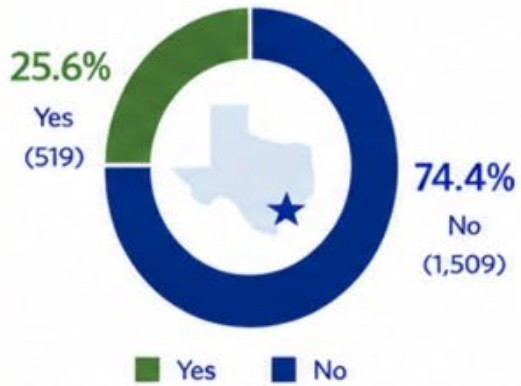
5-10 percentage points difference

Different

More than 10 percentage points difference

Are you a native of Austin, Texas?

(n=2,028)



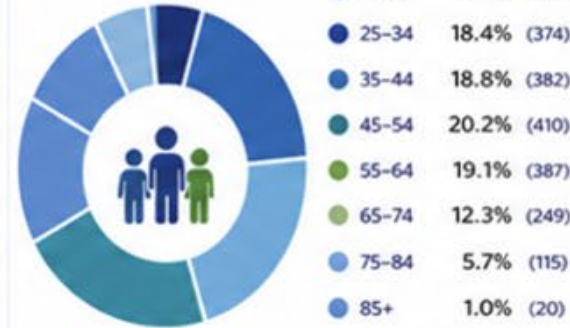
Approximately how many years have you lived in the City of Austin?

(n=2,020)



Which of the following best describes your age?

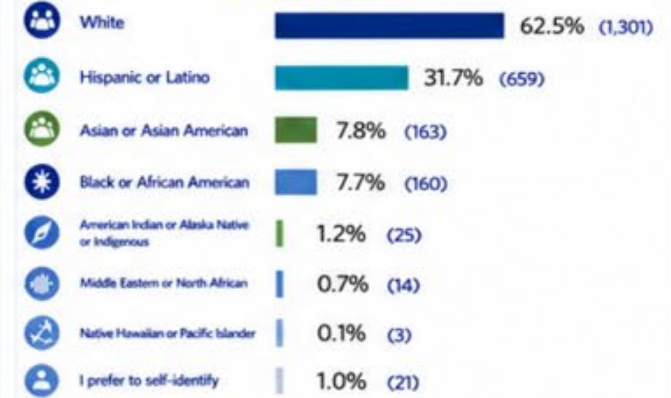
(n=2,029)



Which of the following best describes your race/ethnicity?

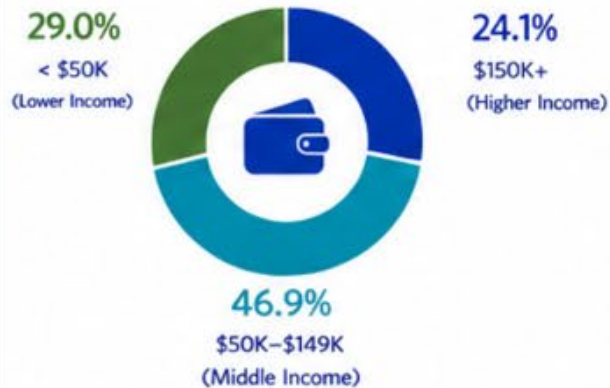
(n=2,346 responses)

MULTI-SELECT



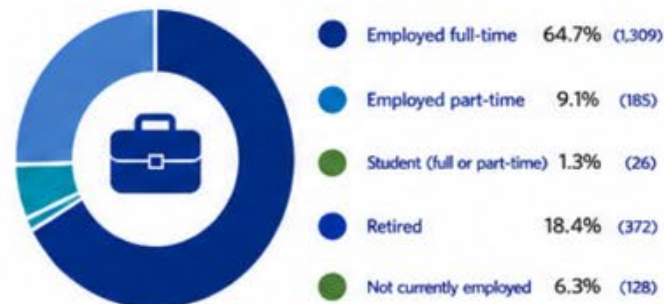
Which of the following best describes your ANNUAL household income?

(n=1,877)



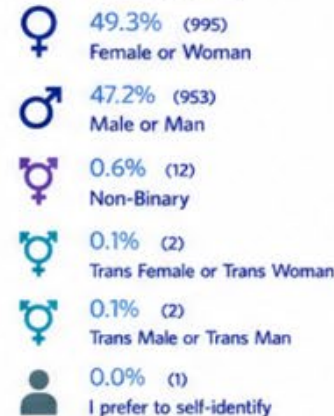
Which of the following BEST describes your employment status?

(n=2,024)



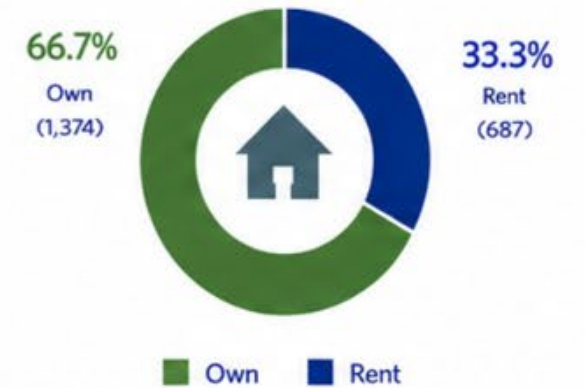
What is your current gender identity?

(n=1,965)



Do you own or rent your home?

(n=2,061)



Notable Increases

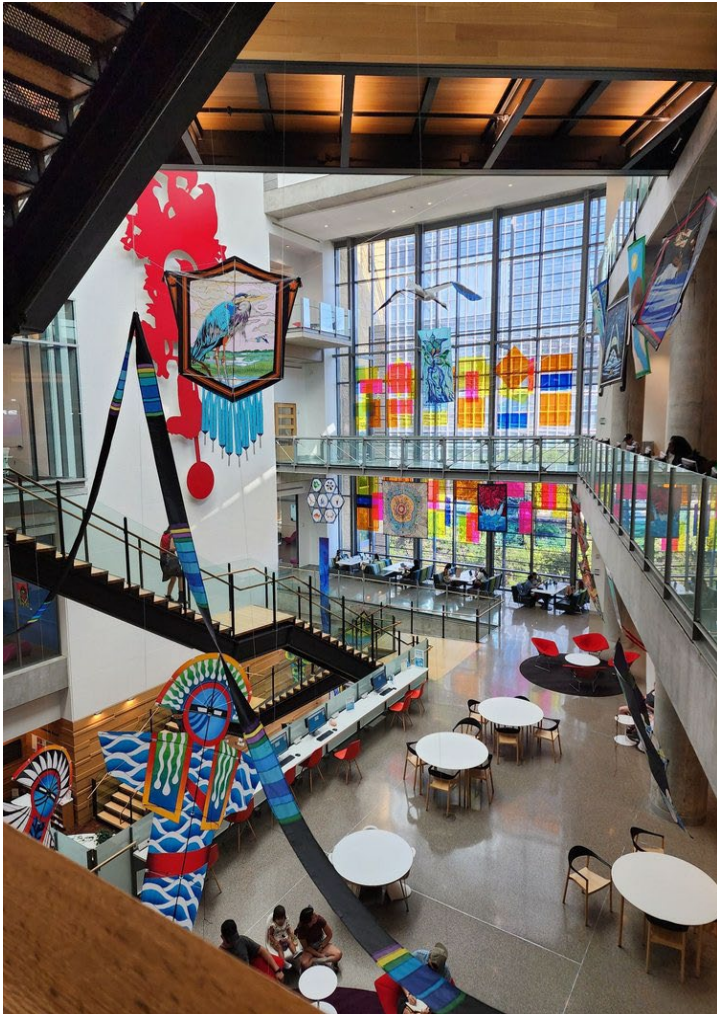
- **Strong overall improvement**
105 of 115 comparable items improved from 2023 to 2025
- **Top gains**
Electric reliability and overall quality of life
- **Public safety improving**
Response time and confidence both up
- **Takeaway**
Broad, citywide progress with strongest gains in core services

Service Item	2023 % Satisfaction /Agreement	2025 % Satisfaction /Agreement	Δ
Reliability of your electric service	49.0	65.2	▲ 16.2
Overall quality of life in the City	51.9	66.5	▲ 14.6
Timeliness of Austin Police Department response to emergency location	27.0	41.4	▲ 14.4
I am confident that in case of an emergency, my response will be delivered effectively	37.1	50.8	▲ 13.7
The City of Austin as a place to live	53.5	67.1	▲ 13.6

% Satisfaction / Agreement = Very Satisfied + Satisfied Responses or Strongly Agree + Agree

Δ = difference
▲ = increase

Overall Satisfaction



% **Satisfaction / Agreement** = Very Satisfied + Satisfied Responses or Strongly Agree + Agree

★ = Importance-Satisfaction Very High Priority

Δ = difference
▲ = increase
▲ / ▼ = neutral change

Quality of Life

	% Satisfaction / Agreement	Δ (2023 vs 2025)
Austin as place where people feel welcome	70.9	▲ 8.4
Austin as a place to live	67.1	▲ 13.3
Overall quality of life	66.5	▲ 14.6
Austin as a place to work	65.7	▲ 4.9
Austin as place to raise children	51.4	▲ 9.6
Austin as a place to retire	36.7	▲ 9.2

Major City Services

	% Satisfaction / Agreement	Δ (2023 vs 2025)
Residential garbage collection	83.6	▲ 2.6
Curbside residential recycling	78.8	▲ 2.6
Overall quality of fire services	78.1	▲ 1.5
Overall quality of City libraries	77.7	▼ 0.7
Overall enforcement of codes and ordinances	28.8	▲ 6.2
Overall quality of planning and zoning services	25.8	▲ 7.6
★ 2 Traffic flow on major streets	22.4	▲ 0.1
★ 1 Overall efforts of the City to reduce homelessness	21.9	▲ 9.1

Overall Perceptions

Perceptions of Austin

	% Satisfaction / Agreement	Δ (2023 vs 2025)
Overall quality of services	49.1	▲ 8.0
The City's effort to support diversity by serving people equally regardless of their race	46.4	▲ 5.9
Overall quality of customer service provided by the City	45.5	▲ 8.2
City of Austin planning for growth	19.3	▲ 9.4
Availability of affordable housing for low/moderate income families	16.2	▲ 8.0






% Satisfaction / Agreement = Very Satisfied + Satisfied Responses or Strongly Agree + Agree Δ = difference
 ▲ = increase
 ▼ = neutral decrease

Public safety perceptions

	% Satisfaction / Agreement	Δ (2023 vs 2025)
I trust Austin Fire Department	88.5	▼ 0.6
I trust Emergency Medical Services	86.5	0.0
Feeling safe in my neighborhood during the day	82.8	▲ 6.1
Feeling safe in my home	80.8	▲ 8.5
Feeling safe while travelling on the road with other drivers	31.2	▲ 3.3
Feeling safe while walking alone downtown at night	24.2	▲ 7.0

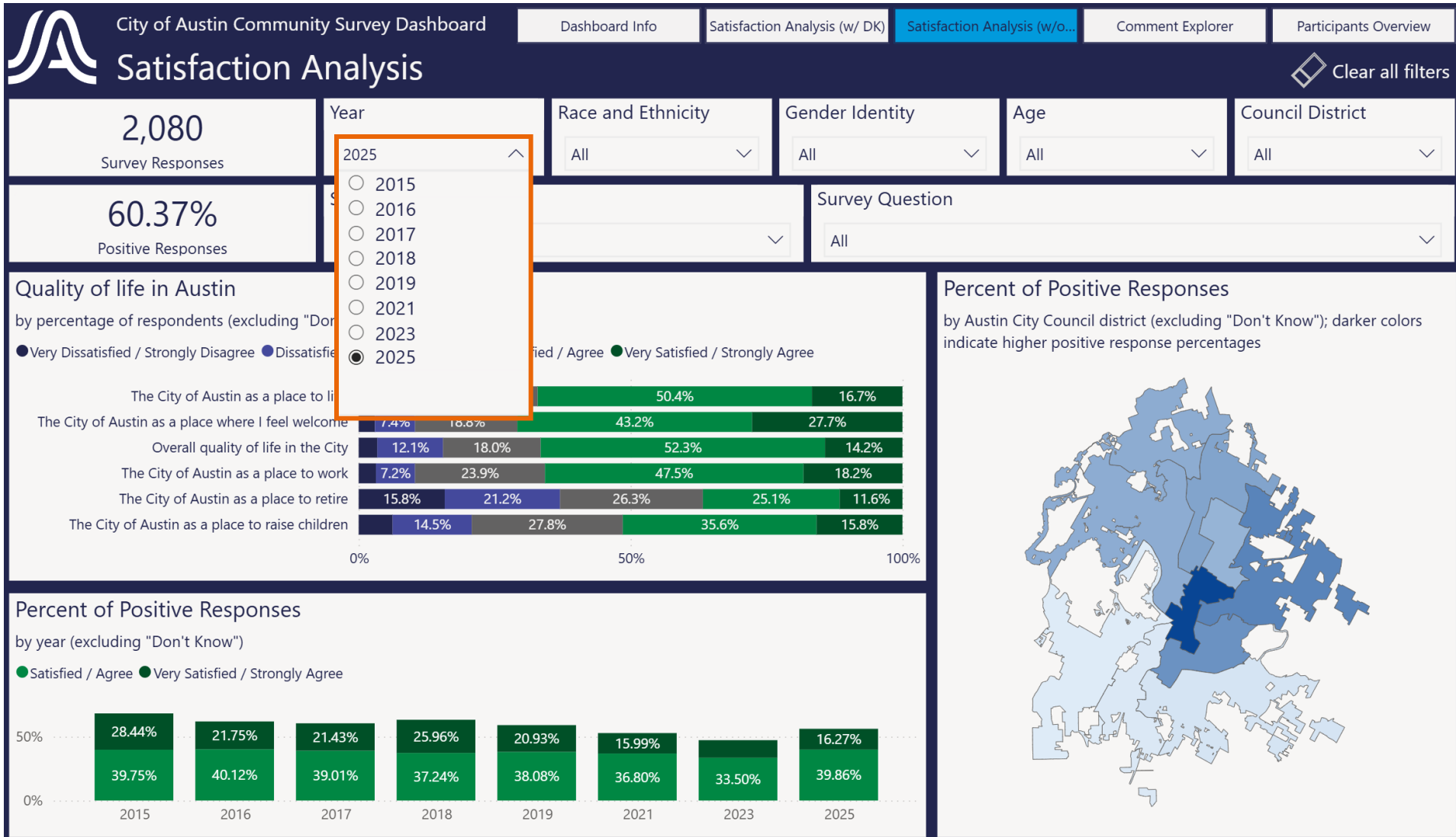
Austin's Above Benchmark Highlights

	Service Item	 Austin (% Satisfaction/Agreement)	 Texas Cities (Δ)	 US (Δ)
Residential resource recovery	Residential garbage collection	83.6	▲▲	▲▲
	Recycling	78.8	▲▲	▲▲▲
	Yard waste	77.1	▲▲▲	▲▲▲
	Bulky item pickup	67.0	▲▲	▲▲
	Quality of City libraries	77.7	▲▲▲	▲▲
	Timeliness of AFD response	76.7	▲	▲
	EMS medical assistance	72.4	▲▲	▲
	Wastewater services	72.3	▲▲▲	▲▲
Quality of life	Place to live	67.1	▲▲	▲▲
	Place to Work	65.7	▲▲	▲▲

- ▲▲▲ ~ 26-35 points above benchmark
- ▲▲ ~ 16-25 points above
- ▲ ~ 5-15 points above benchmark

Δ = difference

Dashboard: Year-Over-Year Results



Budget Priority Survey

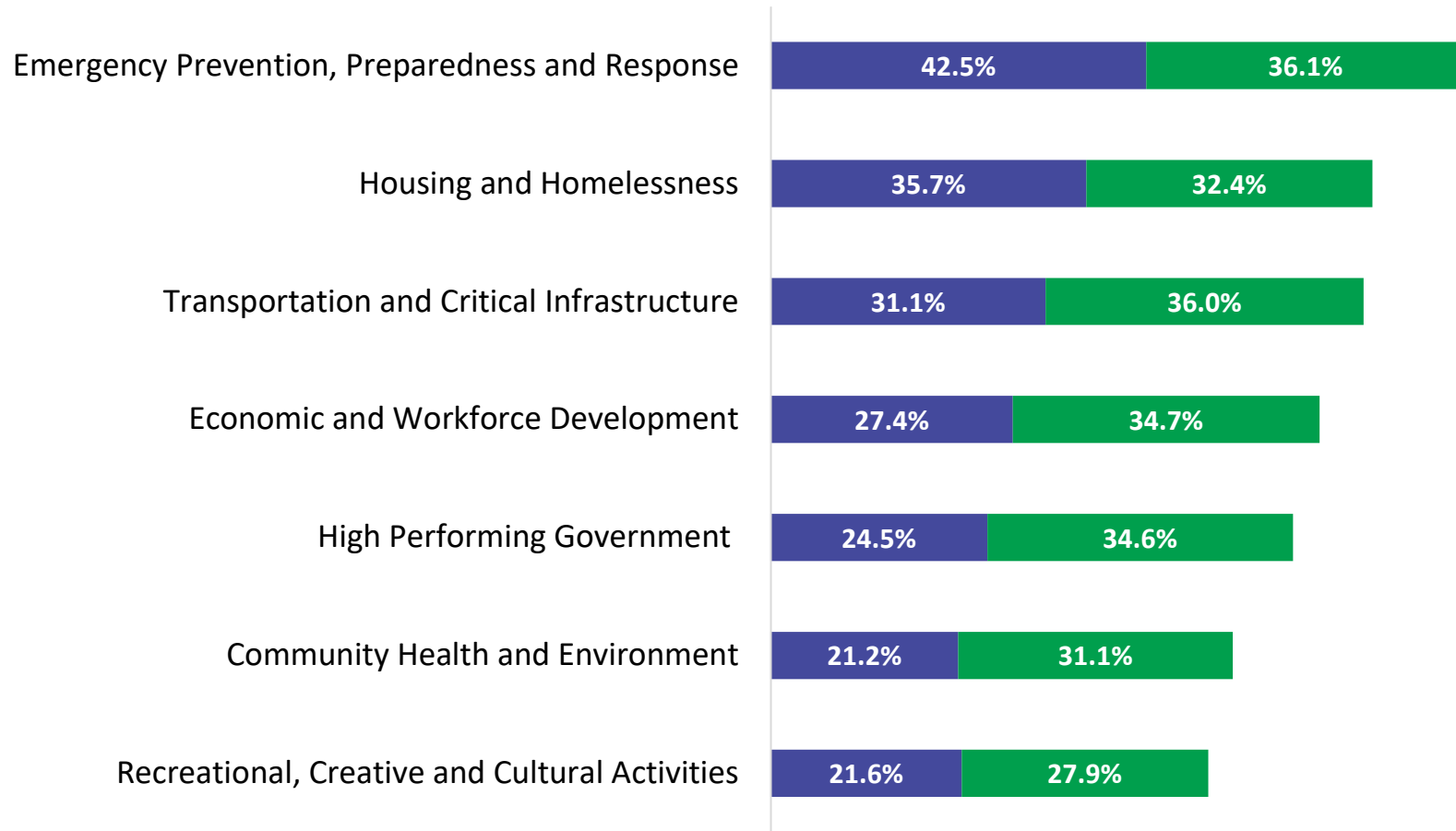
Budget Priority Survey Overview

- Annual budget priority survey seeks resident funding priorities for the upcoming budget year
- Over 850 respondents as of May 15th
- Survey will remain open until mid-June
- Final report will be published in July alongside the FY 27 Proposed Budget

Budget Priority Survey *Preliminary* Results

How important is it to you that the City funds the following services?

Aggregated scores across questions that related to each service category

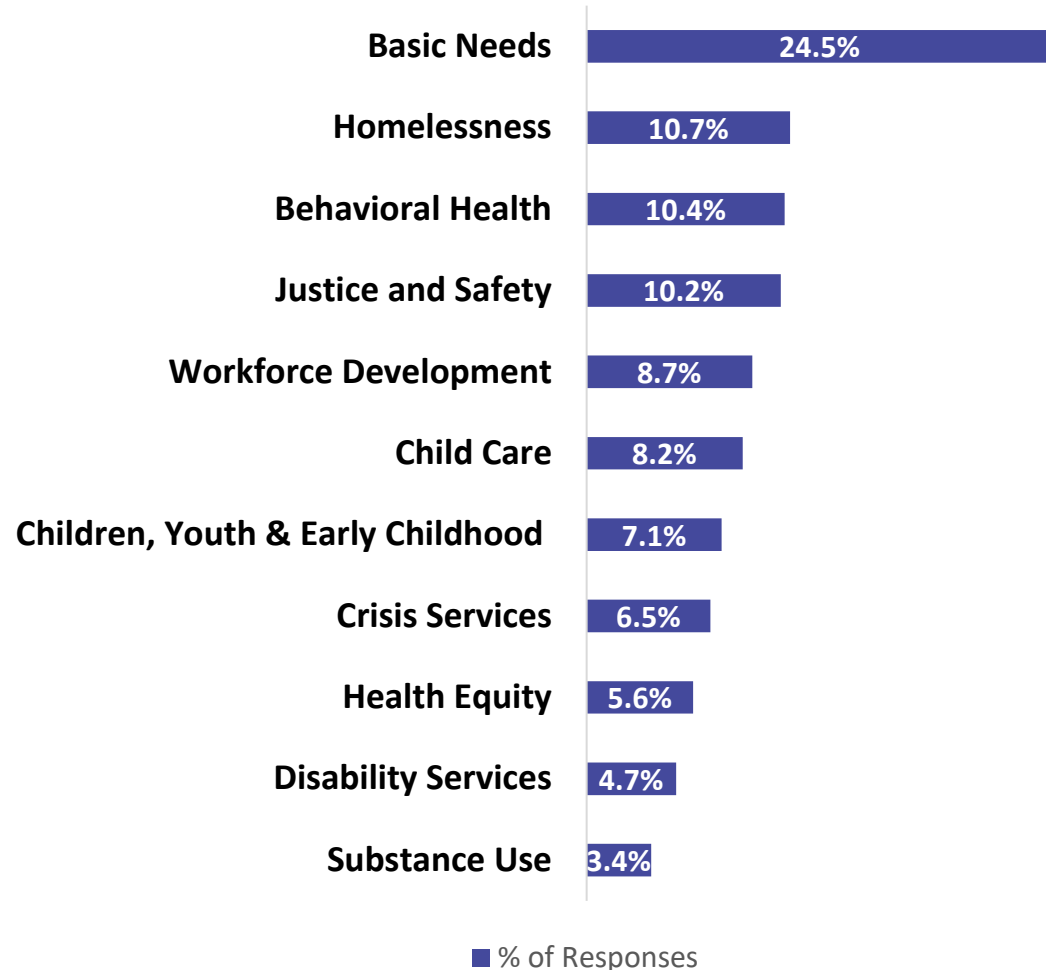


Three areas stand out as the most essential priorities for funding in the upcoming year.

- Emergency Prevention, Preparedness, and Response**
- Housing and Homelessness**
- Transportation and Critical Infrastructure**

Budget Priority Survey *Preliminary* Results

Which of the following social service funding categories would you consider a top funding priority?

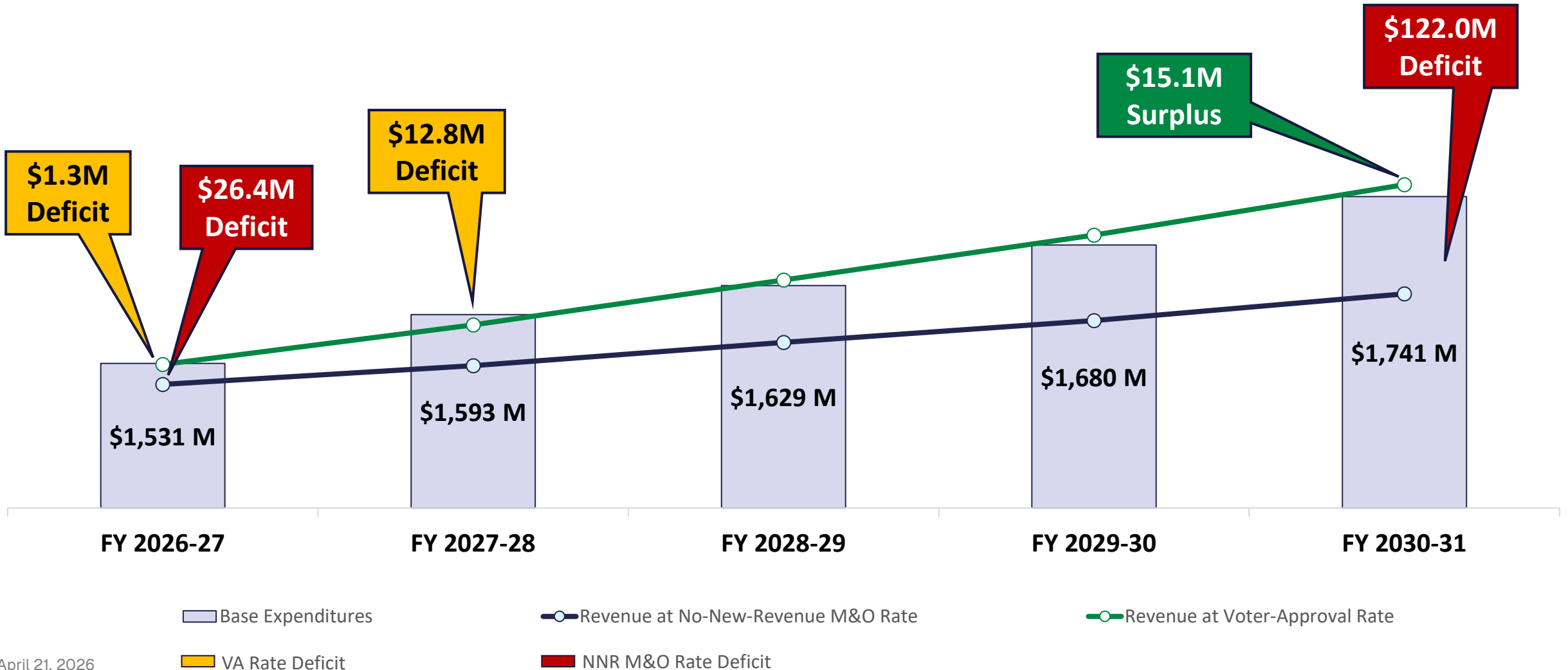


Preliminary results indicate overwhelming support for **basic needs** social service contracts to provide emergency support for food, utilities, and safety.

Forecast Recap

General Fund Five-Year Base Forecast

FIVE-YEAR AVERAGE ANNUAL REVENUE GROWTH: 1.7% @ NNR M&O; 3.4% @ VA
FIVE-YEAR AVERAGE ANNUAL EXPENDITURE GROWTH: 3.2%

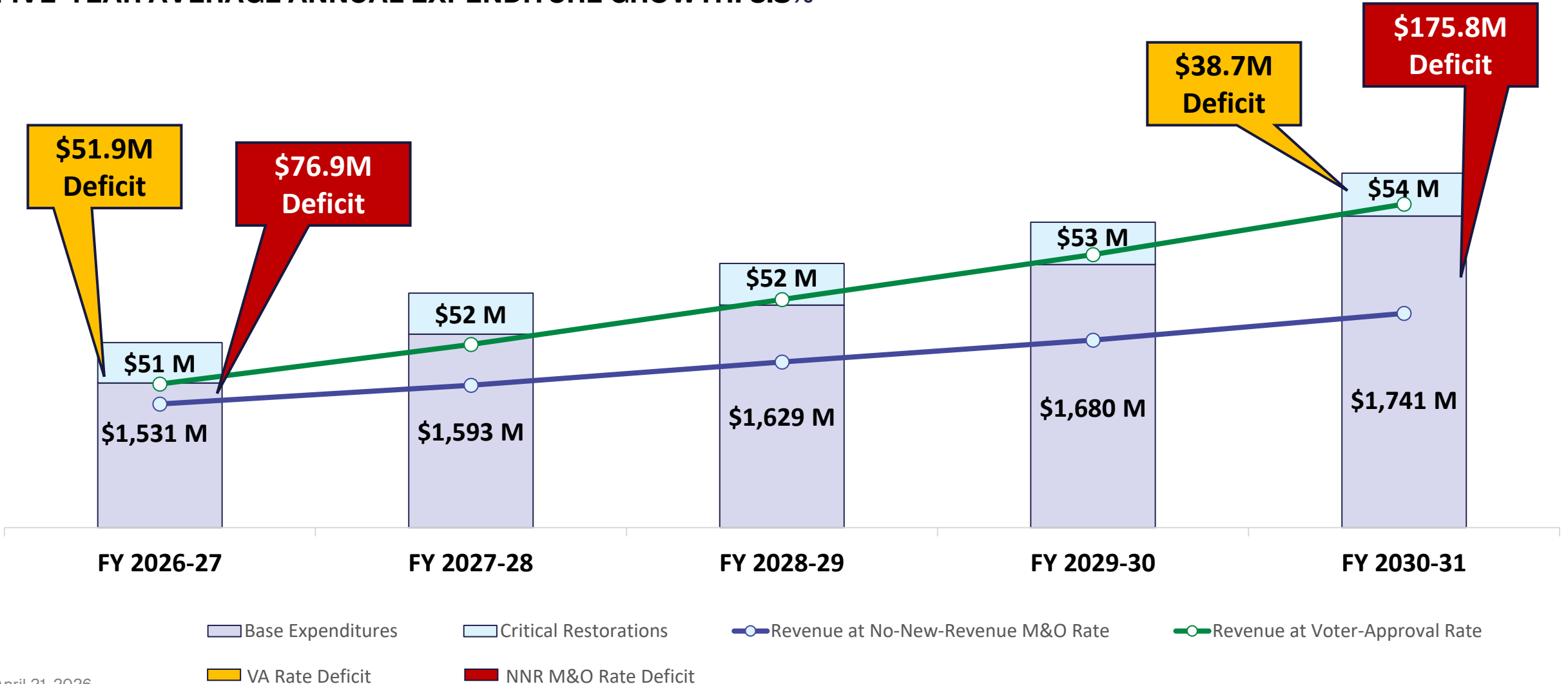


FY27 deficit grows by \$50.6 million if cost savings measures are reversed:

- Restore planned Social Services contract cuts: \$16.8 million
- Restore transfer to Capital Rehabilitation Fund for deferred maintenance needs to financial policy level: \$12.6 million
- Ensure continued funding for Local Housing Voucher Program: \$7.8 million
- 3% wage increase placeholder for civilian employees in FY27: \$7.3 million
- Restore Fire budget to level necessary to continue 4-person staffing: \$6.0 million

General Fund Five-Year Forecast: Cuts Reversed

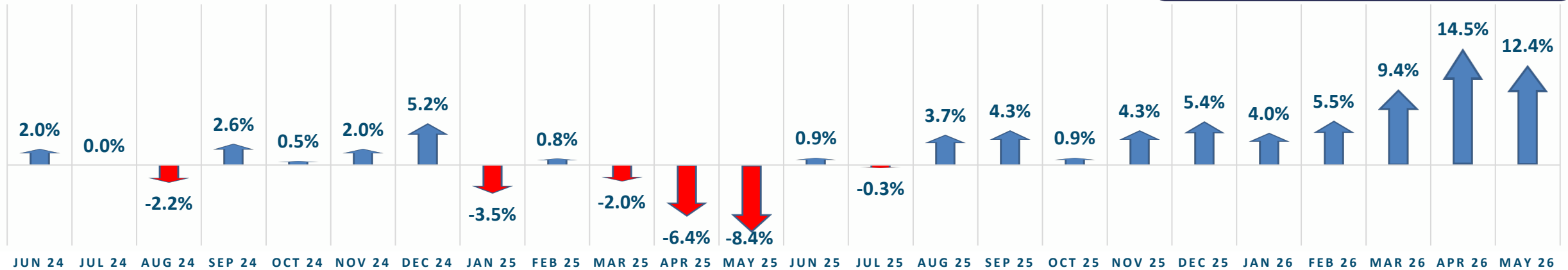
FIVE-YEAR AVERAGE ANNUAL REVENUE GROWTH: 1.7% @ NNR M&O; 3.4% @ VA
FIVE-YEAR AVERAGE ANNUAL EXPENDITURE GROWTH: 3.8%



Sales Tax Update

- **THROUGH SIX PAYMENTS, FY26 YEAR-TO-DATE GROWTH IS 7.3%**
- **CURRENT COLLECTIONS, WHICH EXCLUDE ADJUSTMENTS, SHOWING YEAR-TO-DATE GROWTH OF 8.4%**
- **FY26 YEAR-END COLLECTIONS LIKELY TO EXCEED FORECAST ESTIMATE**
 - Positive revenue implications for FY27 and subsequent years

**CURRENT MONTHLY
SALES TAX GROWTH
(EXCLUDES ADJUSTMENTS)**




City Council Prioritization Exercise

Three-Part Priorities Communication Tool

- Part A: indicate relative priority of Citywide Strategic Plan Service Areas
 - Allocate 100 points across the six areas
- Part B: specific funding priorities and potential tradeoffs
 - Indicate support for significant items not included in FY27 Budget Plan
 - Identify potential offsetting areas/items for reduction
 - Prioritize social services focus areas
- Part C: Open Input
 - Daylight additional areas of need or concern

Part A: Indicate relative priority of Citywide Strategic Plan Service Areas

- 
- Assign 100 points across the City's six strategic priority service areas based on desire for greatest investment/preservation of existing services investment
 - Community Health & Sustainability
 - Economic & Workforce Development
 - High-Performing Government
 - Homelessness & Housing
 - Mobility & Critical Infrastructure
 - Public Safety

Part B: Identify specific funding priorities and potential reduction opportunities

- Indicate position on maintaining, restoring, or partially restoring significant reductions assumed in the FY27 Budget Plan
 - Social Services contract reductions
 - Elimination of transfer to Capital Rehabilitation Fund for deferred maintenance needs
 - Elimination of funding for Local Housing Voucher Program
 - No wage increase for civilian employees
 - Fire overtime budget below level necessary to sustainably continue 4-person staffing
- Identify potential offsetting areas/items for reduction
- Prioritize social services focus areas

Part C: Opportunity for open input



- Additional needs the City should consider
- Considerations regarding specific programs, services, or initiatives
- Additional comments for the City Manager or BOE

Priority Setting Process: Timeline

- Prioritization survey will be distributed today
- Surveys are due no later than Thursday, May 28, 2026
- Results will be aggregated and finalized in a full report



QUESTIONS?

For more information on the Budget: austintexas.gov/budget

Kerri Lang

Director

Budget and Organizational Excellence

kerri.lang@austintexas.gov

Erik Nelson

Deputy Director

Budget and Organizational Excellence

erik.nelson@austintexas.gov

Art Featured:

Lotus is a permanent outdoor artwork by Austin artists Sunyong Chung and Philippe Klinefelter, located at the Asian American Resource Center (AARC). The piece features a vibrant 12-foot mosaic lotus floating in water, surrounded by seven carved granite petals rising toward the sky. Made from thousands of hand-crafted ceramic tiles depicting plants and animals native to Central Texas, the sculpture is centered by a granite seed pod that doubles as a fountain.

The lotus flower is representative of the AARC and the long history of community activism that established the center as a cultural and collective hub for all Asian Americans. The mosaic depicts the lotus as a space wherein all things, be it damselflies, ladybugs, butterflies, fish and amphibians, can congregate for a shared purpose.