

DELIVERING SAFETY, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND JUSTICE FOR NEW YORK CITY:

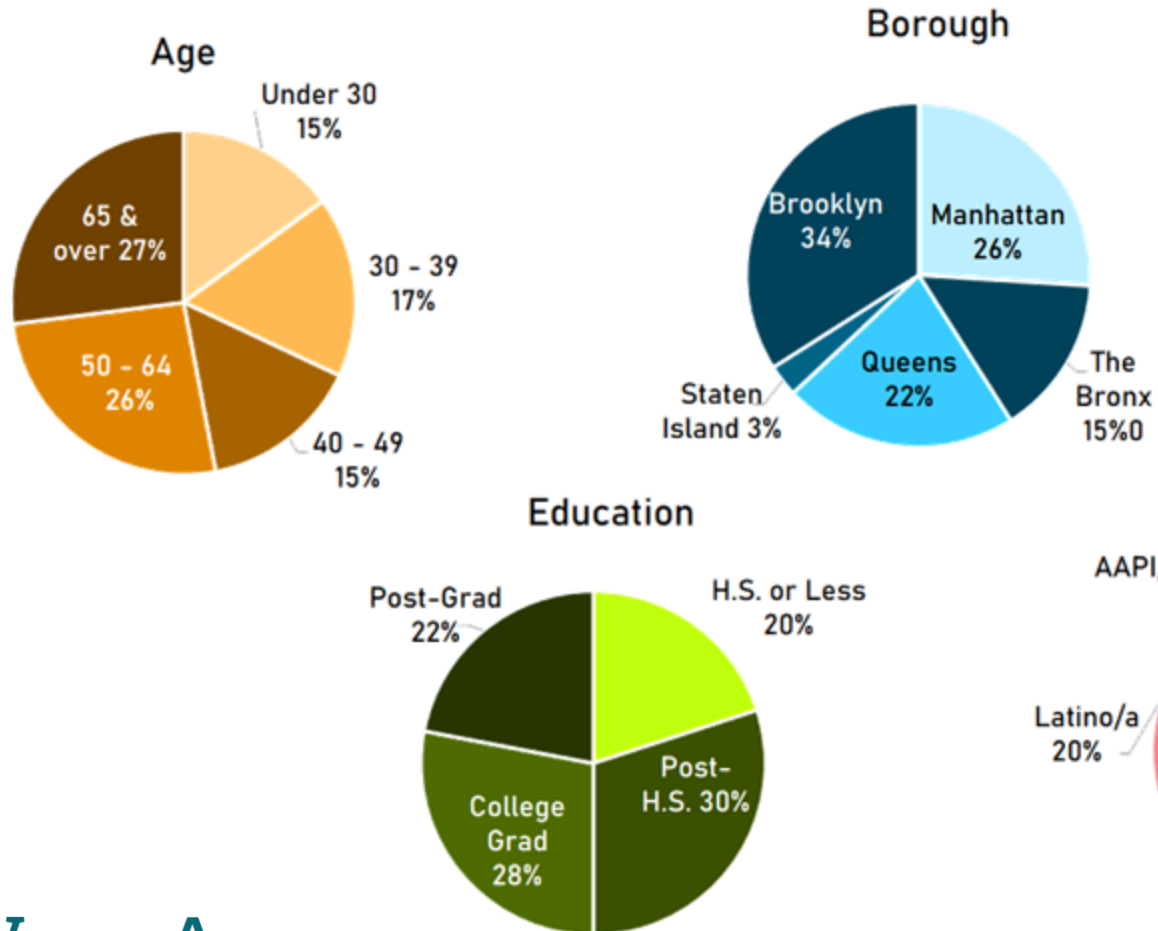
New York City policies and polling for the 2025 mayoral race

March 2025

VeraACTION

December 2024 poll by Lake Research Partners of likely Democratic primary voters in 2025

Profile of all 2025 Democratic Primary Voters NYC



Our polling sample

640 likely NYC Democratic primary voters:

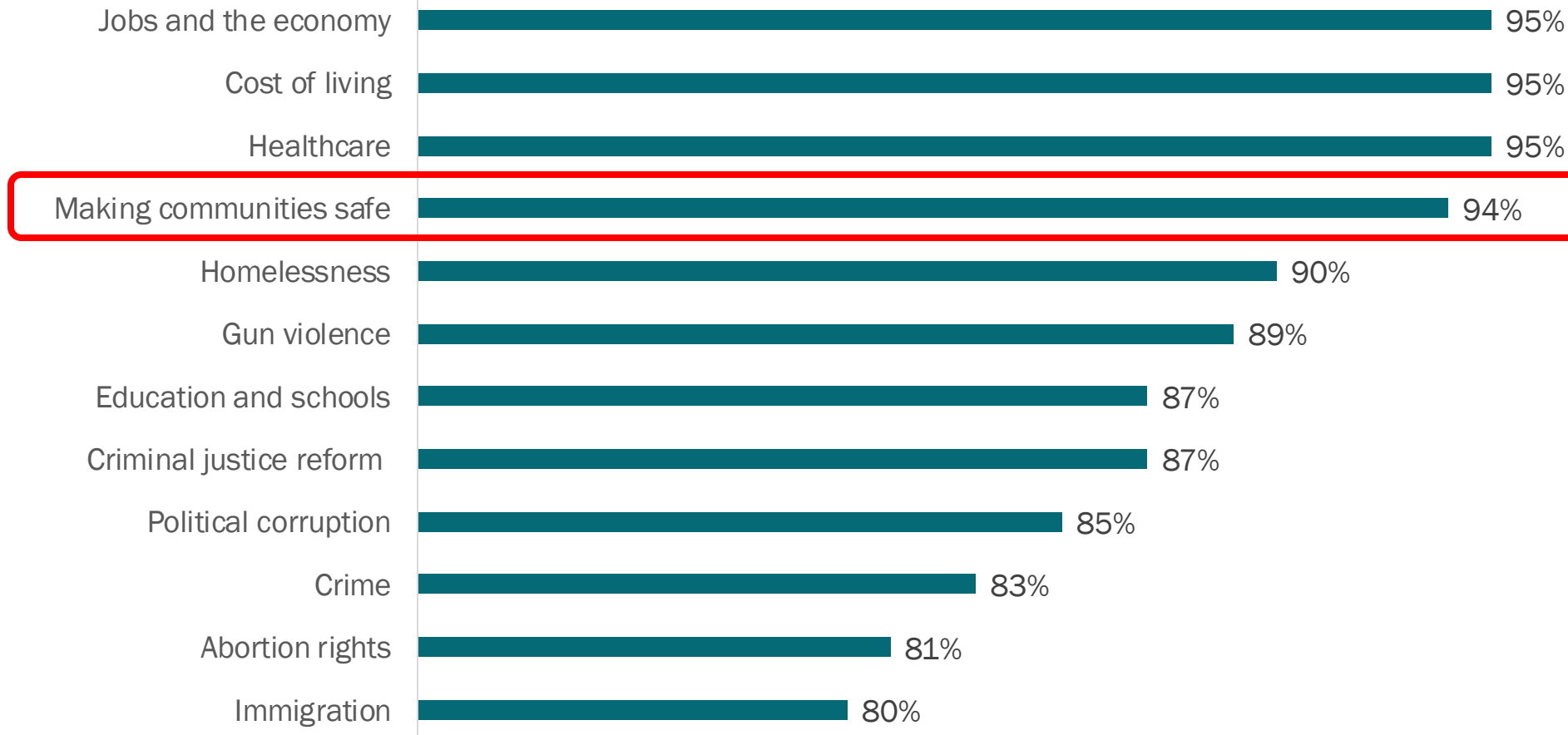
- 106 white voters
- 133 Black voters
- 223 Latino voters
- 178 Asian voters

Results were weighted to match the racial composition of the primary electorate.

What New Yorkers want:
**Safety is *the* top priority for
New Yorkers this election.**

"Making communities safe" was as high a priority as healthcare and the cost of living to surveyed voters

Which issues are important or very important to your vote?



Addressing New Yorkers' concerns means championing the following key areas

Job and the economy

Cost of living

Healthcare

Making communities safe

Homelessness

Gun violence

Education and schools

Criminal justice reform

Political corruption

Crime

Abortion rights

Immigration

Community safety and security on the street and in the subway

Affordability, opportunity, and economic stability

Government accountability

We recommend 5 big ideas to advance safety, accountability, and justice

1

Invest in the full range of tools in the public safety toolbox to prevent crime, respond to crisis, and stop violence

2

Deliver better, more effective, and more accountable policing that lives up to the responsibility of the role

3

Make the subways safer by comprehensively addressing the daily signs of crisis and neglect

4

Improve the shopping experience for both workers and consumers

5

Close Rikers Island once and for all and implement a new approach to accountability and safely reducing the jail population

A mayoral platform that meets the moment:
**New Yorkers want comprehensive,
neighborhood-driven, and community-based
solutions.**

A comprehensive, community-based approach to safety wins over surveyed voters across all demographics

Which statement comes closer to your own view about how to address crime and public safety?

TOUGH ON CRIME:

Do more to get tough on crime – like having tougher sentences for people convicted of violent crimes, maintaining strong bail laws to keep dangerous people in jail, and providing police more support and resources.

42%

COMPREHENSIVE SAFETY:

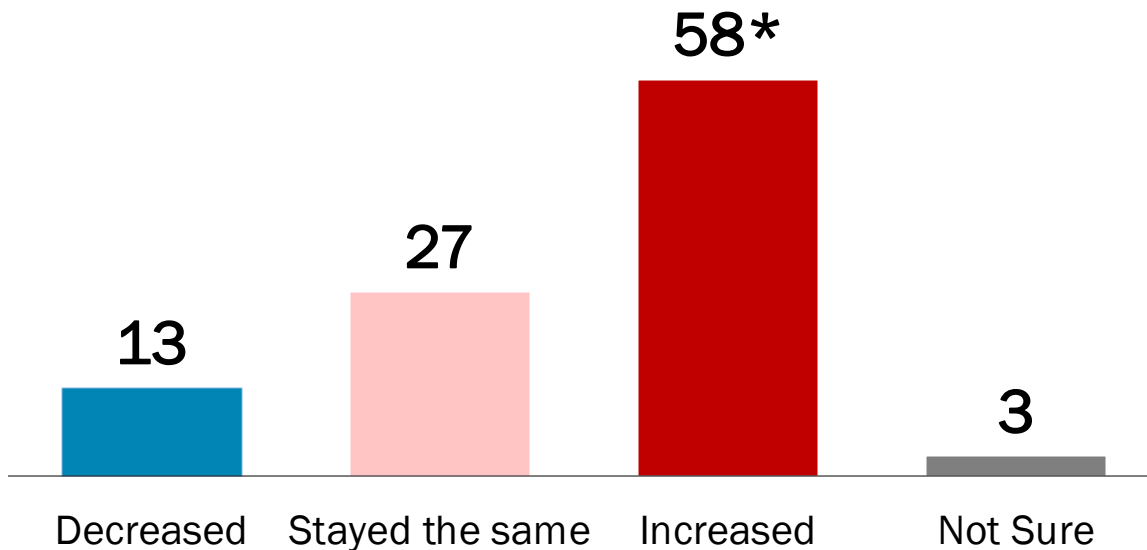
Fully fund things that are proven to create safe communities – like good schools, jobs, and affordable housing – and help prevent crime by increasing treatment for mental health and drug addiction and getting illegal guns off the street.

58%

Support for “comprehensive safety” includes 52% of white voters, 64% of Black voters, 56% of Latino voters, and 64% of AAPI voters

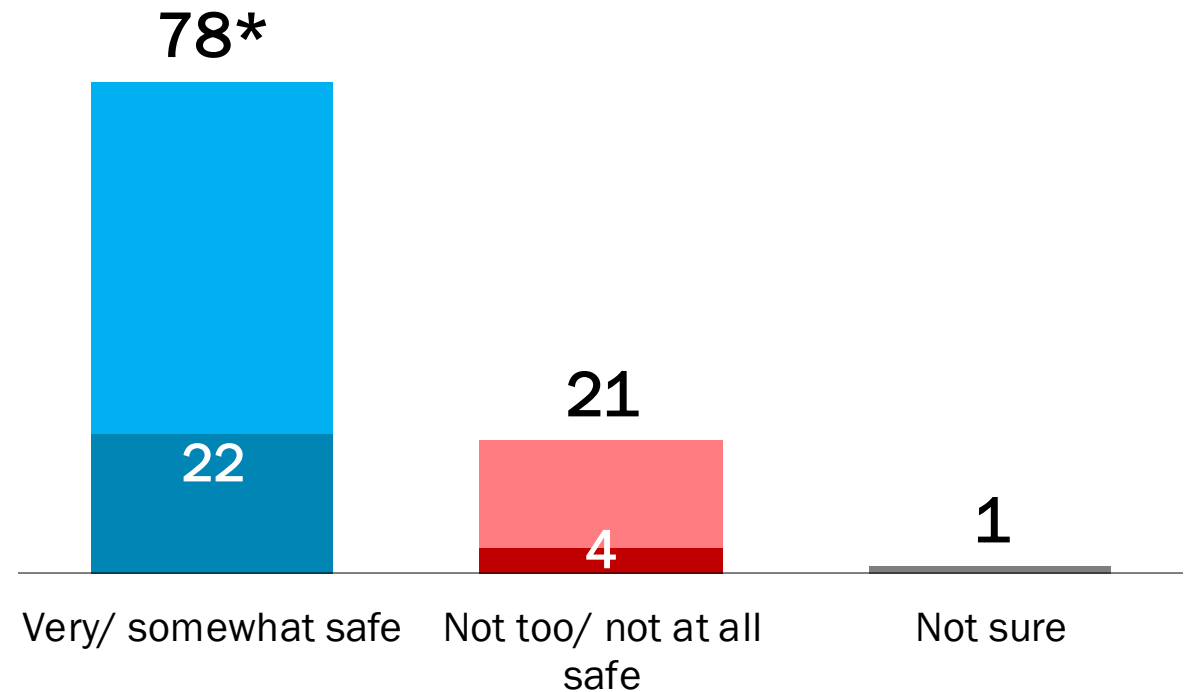
A neighborhood lens builds on a strong sense of local safety in contrast to concerns about citywide crime

In the past few years, do you think crime citywide has...?



* Includes 57% of white voters, 55% of Black voters, 64% of Latino voters, and 62% of AAPI voters

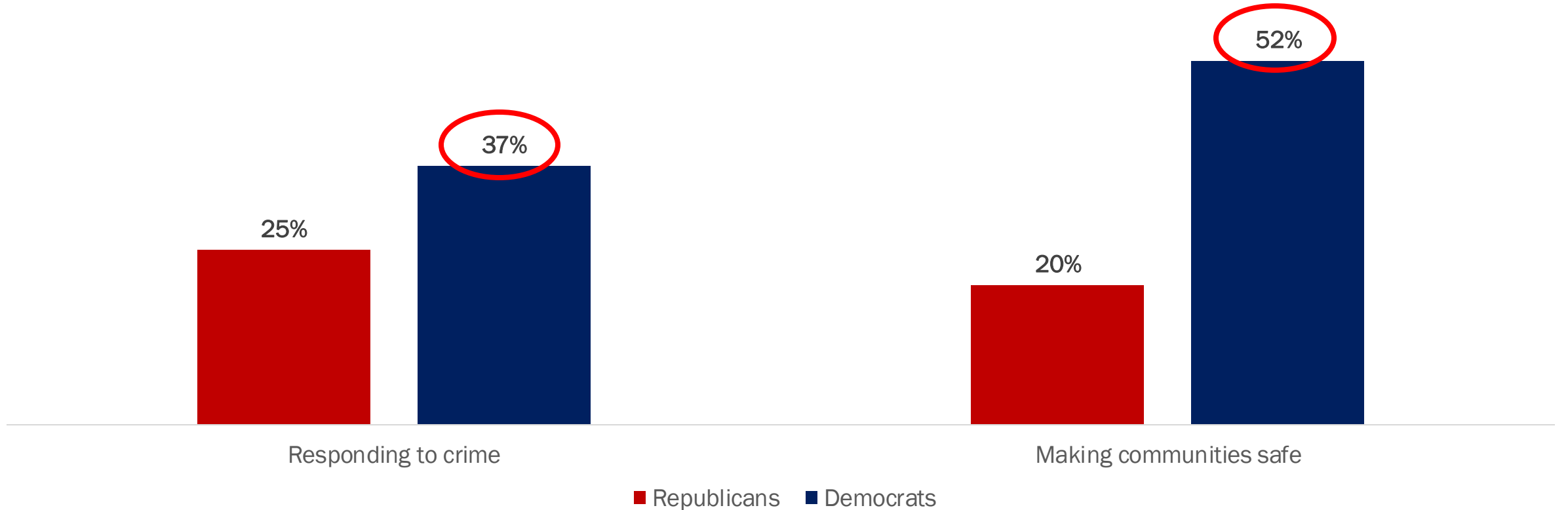
How safe do you feel in your own neighborhood?



* Includes 80% of white voters, 72% of Black voters, 78% of Latino voters, and 88% of AAPI voters

A commitment to “making communities safe” over “responding to crime” sets Democrats up for success

Which political party do you trust more when it comes to...?



IDEA #1:

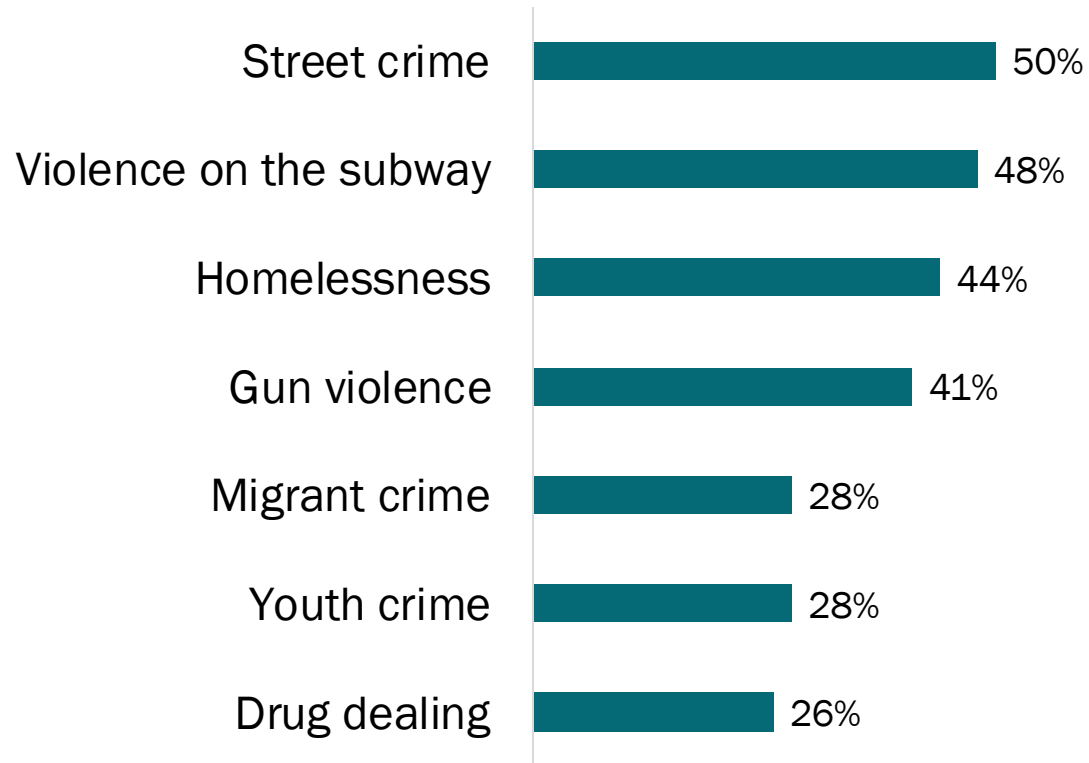
Invest in the full range of tools in the public safety toolbox to prevent crime, respond to crisis, and stop violence.

Housing, mental health treatment, and anti-gun violence programs will address New Yorkers' safety concerns

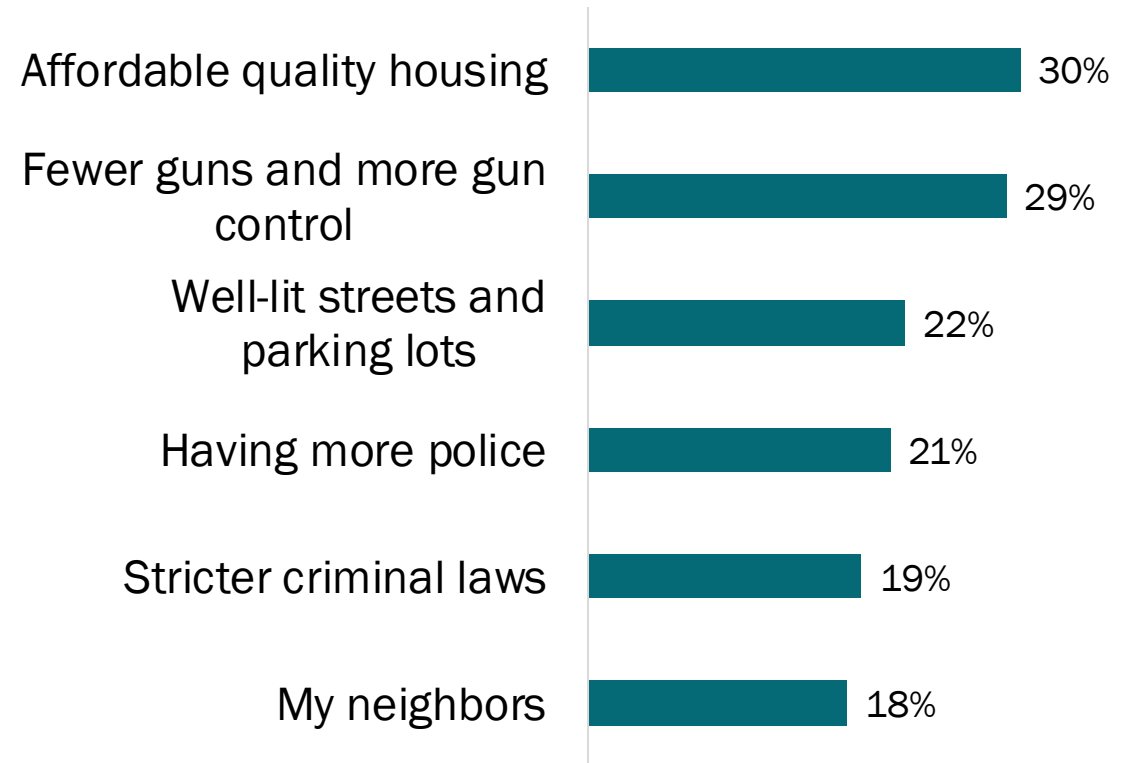
- ❖ **Invest in more affordable housing and other physical infrastructure:** Expanding access to housing vouchers and expanding programs like Justice Involved Supportive Housing can break cycles of instability and crime—and at a fraction of the cost of incarceration. In addition, investing in better sanitation, street lighting, and green spaces can improve quality of life and reduce crime.
- ❖ **Expand community-based mental health treatment:** Investing in more Intensive Mobile Treatment (IMT) teams, clubhouses, crisis respite centers, and stabilization centers, and expanding B-HEARD, will strengthen the city's continuum of community-based mental healthcare, improving safety and stability for all New Yorkers.
- ❖ **Reduce gun violence with a neighborhood-specific approach:** The Crisis Management System (CMS) contributed to a 21 percent reduction in shootings citywide between 2012 and 2024. Investing more in the community-based programs that prevent gun violence will enable service expansion, keeping more New Yorkers safe.

These solutions align with what makes surveyed voters feel safe

What safety issues concern you?

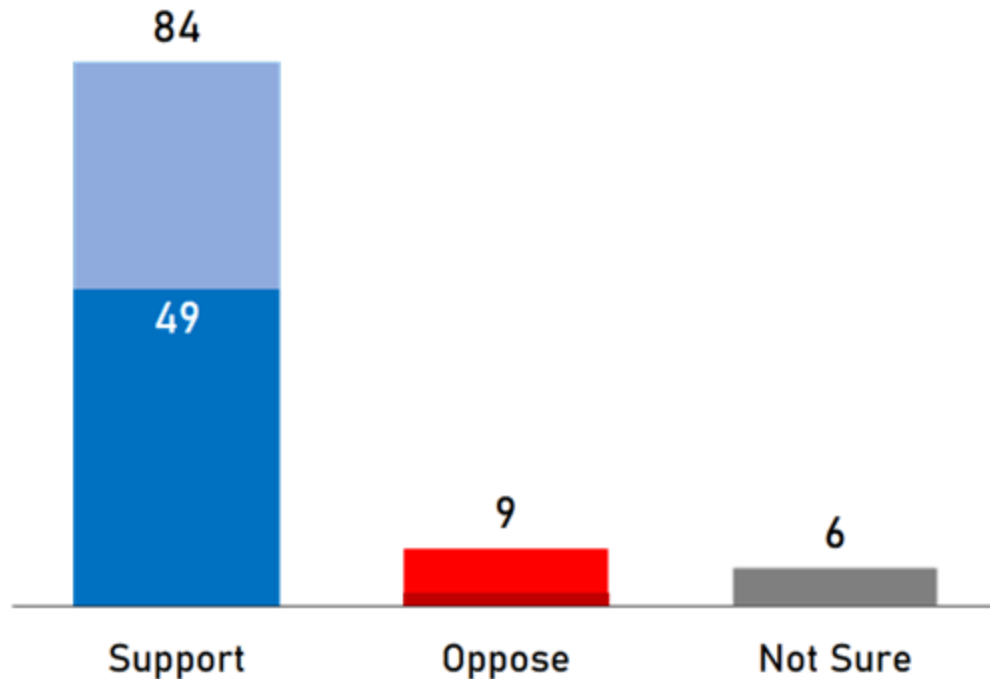


What makes you feel safe?

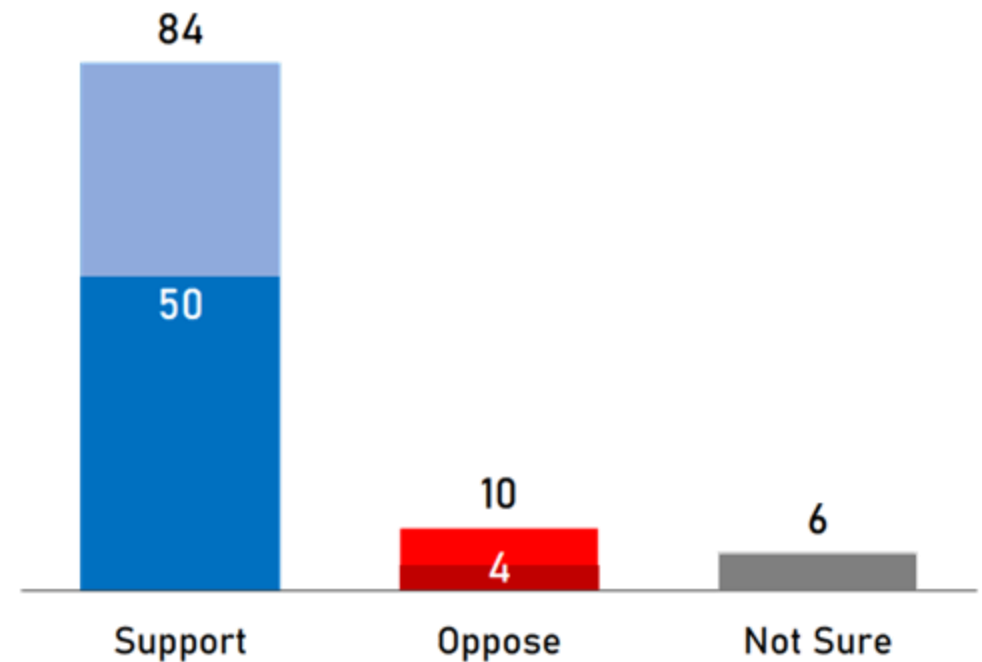


Fully funding supportive housing enjoys widespread support, including in the context of immigration

Do you support or oppose expanding programs like supportive housing, mental health treatment, and drug treatment so New Yorkers can remain safely in the community under supervision instead of awaiting trial in jail?



Do you support or oppose fully funding programs and services, like jobs, education, access to treatment and medical care, that improve the lives of all New Yorkers, including immigrants in New York?



Investing in a continuum of mental healthcare is also popular among surveyed voters

INVOLUNTARY HOSPITALIZATION:

No New Yorker should have to walk down the street in fear of being attacked by a mentally unstable person. If dangerous people refuse the care that they need, police should take them to the nearest hospital for treatment or to jail. It's the only way to make our streets and subways safe for everyone and it isn't hard to do. It's time to put the safety of our families and law-abiding New Yorkers first.

38%

COMMUNITY-BASED MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT:

It is scary to see someone having a mental health crisis on the street or in the subway. We need to set up more healthcare clinics and mobile crisis response teams so that people with mental illness don't wait months, or even years, to get help. Making it easy to get treatment is the key to keeping people stable, not throwing them in the hospital or jail for short stays.

56%

IDEA #2:

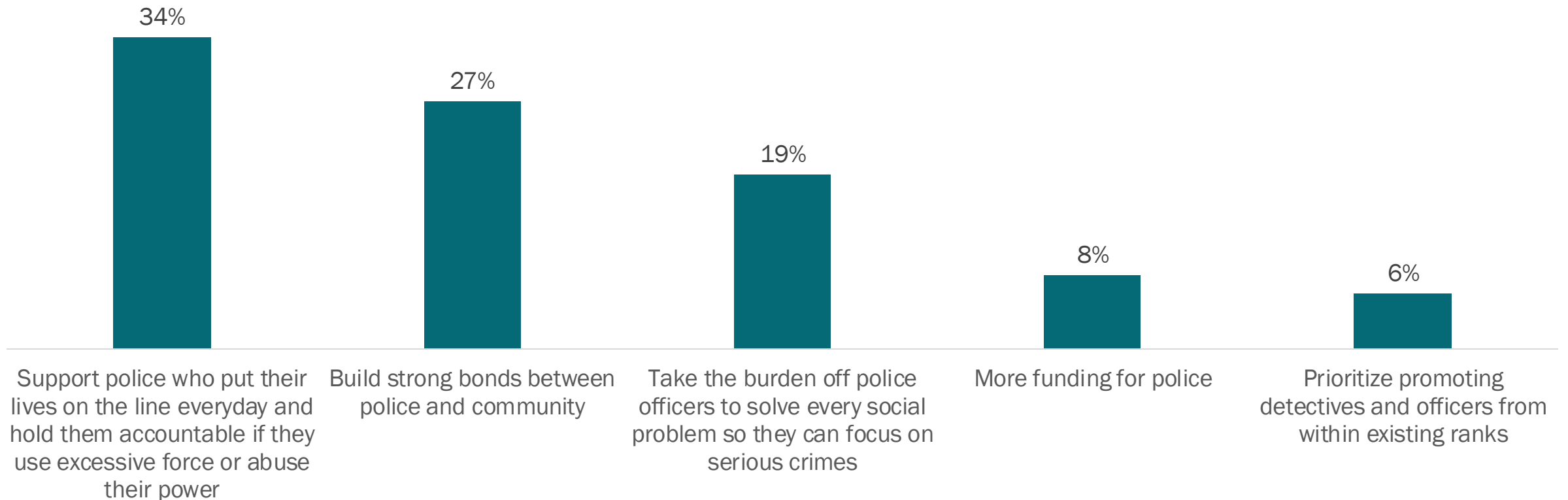
Deliver better, more effective, and more accountable policing that lives up to the responsibility of the role.

Focus on concrete ways to improve NYPD with a balanced message of support and accountability

- ❖ **Redeploy police resources to focus on the right priorities:** Police should limit low-level enforcement and instead focus on the violent crime that matters most to New Yorkers. Civilianizing administrative and management roles will allow NYPD to redeploy officers and detectives, thereby improving response times, raising clearance rates, and enabling the department to better meet New Yorkers' needs.
- ❖ **Improve training:** Strong training, particularly on topics like procedural justice, can help officers build trust with the public and do their jobs more effectively. Regular training accompanied by ongoing evaluation will help make any operational changes last, to the benefit of all New Yorkers.
- ❖ **Insist on accountability:** By fully staffing the Civilian Complaint Review Board, seeking community input and feedback by surveying residents on an ongoing basis (at a minimum), and increasing data transparency, the next mayor can make clear that we can support police while holding them accountable when they abuse their power and break the law.

Polling shows that New Yorkers want better policing, not more policing

Which statement about the police do you support most?



Support and accountability polls significantly ahead of messages championing failed police policies of the past

SUPPORT STOP-AND-FRISK:

Crime in New York is out of control because woke policies have blocked the police from doing their jobs. Law enforcement maintains public safety by letting people know that if they commit a crime, they will face consequences. It's simple: more police equals less crime. While bringing back widespread stop-and-frisk to the city is a bad idea, police should use this tool aggressively in the most dangerous neighborhoods. We need to support the police to do their jobs—anything less puts us all at risk.

28%

SUPPORT AND ACCOUNTABILITY:

It isn't fair to expect the police to solve every social problem. No one profession can do that. Stop-and-frisk raises tensions between police and communities without making us any safer. The police should focus on investigating and solving serious crimes and send trained experts to help New Yorkers who are homeless or in crisis. By sending the right first responder, we can make our communities safer. This is not anti-police. We can support police doing their jobs while holding them accountable if they abuse their power or break the law.

63%

IDEA #3:

Make the subways safer by comprehensively addressing the daily signs of crisis and neglect.

Subway safety requires investments in outreach, response, and infrastructure

- ❖ **Expand successful street-based programs to the subway:** To complement existing, but insufficient, outreach done by BRC, expand above-ground outreach and care (from NYC H+H SHOW vans, Janian, Project Renewal, Breaking Ground, and others) into the subways.
- ❖ **Expand drop-in centers in stations:** Expand 24/7 “welcome centers” at end-of-line stations and ensure each offers counseling, case management services, access to care, and referrals to housing.
- ❖ **Provide the right responder:** Armed police are not well-situated to deescalate situations involving people experiencing homelessness, mental illness, or crisis. Trained specialists should be stationed at each major transportation hub and able to respond within 15 minutes, offering needed care.
- ❖ **Improve MTA infrastructure:** Invest in platform barriers so that no one ends up on the tracks, full-height turnstile barriers to prevent fare evasion, and improved lighting at entrances and on platforms.

Deploying trained experts polls significantly ahead of a police-focused response

LET POLICE GET TOUGH ON CRIME:

People are scared to come to New York City because there are daily reports of murders, muggings, shoplifting sprees, and knife attacks—especially on the subways. Soft-on-crime politicians have made New York more dangerous than ever—with bail reform and lax prosecutions that let violent criminals, like sex offenders and murderers, roam free. Law enforcement and community leaders understand we need to get tough on crime, let police do their job, and pass stricter sentences for criminals. It's time to put law-abiding citizens first.

38%

DEPLOY TRAINED EXPERTS:

A safe subway system keeps New York going, but recent high-profile acts of violence have shaken the city's confidence in our transportation lifeline. We must deploy trained experts to get New Yorkers who are homeless or in crisis connected to help and install barriers to keep riders from falling or being pushed onto the tracks. Transit police should focus on serious crime instead of intrusive searches or idly standing around. It's time to act on real solutions that make our subways safer for all.

55%

IDEA #4:

Improve the shopping experience for both workers and consumers.

Combating retail theft requires different approaches for organized crime vs. crimes of desperation

- ❖ **Curb organized retail crime:** Much retail theft is driven by large-scale fencing operations that resell stolen goods online. Federal law requires large online marketplaces to verify the identity of high-volume third-party sellers on their platforms and to make it easier for consumers to report suspicious sellers. The next mayor should build on this by supporting a law requiring online retailers to investigate and report the resale of stolen goods to prevent it from happening.
- ❖ **Work with businesses to reduce theft:** Retailers with low levels of theft have attributed their success to measures like employee training and store layouts. The next mayor should launch a fund and work with BIDs to increase employee safety and change store layouts to reduce theft.
- ❖ **Support neighbors stealing necessities:** 1 in 4 New Yorkers cannot afford essentials. Community navigator programs that connect people who have been caught stealing to housing, treatment, and other stabilizing services, as well as scaling up alternatives to incarceration for theft offenses, can help address root causes and break cycles of shoplifting.

IDEA #5:

Close Rikers Island once and for all and implement a new approach to accountability and safely reducing the jail population.

Closing Rikers requires safely reducing the jail population and sticking to a realistic timeline

- ❖ **Adopt a plan to close Rikers that includes leadership and a timeline:** Appoint a Rikers czar to spearhead all aspects of closure including expedited jail construction, community engagement, population reduction, and DOC culture and operations change.
- ❖ **Safely reduce the jail population:** Use existing initiatives like the jail population review teams, Local Conditional Release Commission, and 6-A work release program to drive down the jail population.
- ❖ **Focus on accountability, not punishment:** Investing in restorative justice, prioritizing diversion where appropriate, and creating targeted programs for people repeatedly arrested will advance accountability while reducing the flow of people to Rikers.
- ❖ **Improve conditions in the meantime.** At a minimum, expand care for people with mental illness, increase investments in counseling and case management, and end the use of solitary confinement.

A majority of surveyed voters favor the transition to four borough-based jails

KEEP RIKERS OPEN:

The criminals at Rikers Island are there because they committed serious crimes, like murder and rape. They are already sheltered, fed and given healthcare on the taxpayer's dime. We must be tough on crime and deter people from committing crimes and keep our officers and citizens, not criminals, safe. We should fix what needs fixing but otherwise leave well enough alone. Closing Rikers Island to build four new jails near people's homes just to make life more comfortable for criminals is dangerous and a waste of time and taxpayer money.

36%

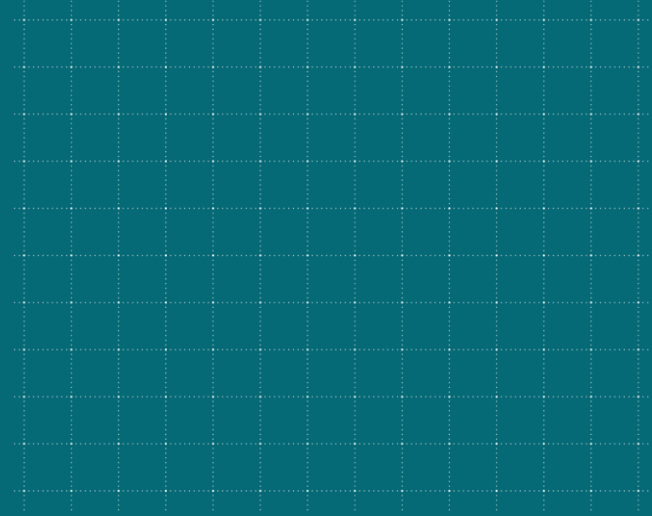
RIKERS IS COSTLY AND INEFFECTIVE:

Rikers Island has failed to keep New Yorkers safe. The horrible conditions at the jail complex cause everyone to suffer—including incarcerated people, their families, and the corrections officers working there. The lack of basic services, like educational programs or medical and mental health care, means people come out worse than when they went in. And it costs too much: \$507,000 a year just to lock one person up. We need to close Rikers once and for all and build four modern, cost-effective jails in the boroughs

54%

Addressing previous reforms:

Protect progress and invest in what truly works



Recent reforms have been scapegoated, but New Yorkers need more progress, not a return to the past

- ❖ **Bail reform** lowered the city's jail population by 31 percent, reduced recidivism, and saved families across New York \$104 million in bail payments by eliminating money bail for many misdemeanor and nonviolent felony charges. Judges can still set bail on violent or repeat charges, but the reforms mean that wealth no longer determines freedom for people accused of nonviolent crimes.
- ❖ **Raise the Age** saw arrests drop by double digits for 16-year-olds within the first year of the law's passage without increasing crime. Implementation has been a challenge—the state has yet to distribute most of the funds it set aside to connect young people with programming—but the law itself advances safety and justice for young New Yorkers.
- ❖ **Discovery reform**, which is under attack right now in Albany, brought transparency and fairness to the pretrial process. New York needs better implementation so that evidence is shared efficiently and in a timely manner between law enforcement, prosecutors, and the defense bar, but the reforms are a critical step to ensuring fair trials.

Our suggestion:

Be “serious about safety,” not tough on crime.

Being “serious about safety” means talking about real solutions that will make a difference

- Lead with safety
- Talk about preventing and breaking cycles of crime
- Include immediate and long-term solutions
- And own accountability and justice too

“I stand for safety, accountability, and justice. I will make communities safer with real solutions that prevent crime before it happens by investing in good schools, affordable housing, treatment for mental health and drug addiction, and well-paying jobs. I will break the cycle of crime by holding people accountable when they violate the laws and build a just system that treats everyone fairly. I will support police who put their lives on the line everyday, while also holding them accountable if they abuse their power or break the law. I will get illegal guns off the street and focus police resources on solving the most serious cases.”

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