



2025 ASIAN PACIFIC MINNESOTANS COMMUNITY PRIORITIES REPORT

Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans

Abstract

The Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans conducted a biennial community priorities survey to gain a better understanding of priority issues for Minnesotans of Asian and Pacific Islander ancestry. Respondents were asked to identify their top three issues and provide a written explanation of why a specific issue was important to themselves or their community. A total of 674 responses were collected during the survey period, between July 14, 2024, and October 31, 2024. Respondents most frequently identified access to healthcare; arts, culture, and heritage; income and wages; home ownership; and employment as the issues of greatest importance. For the five most frequently identified issue areas, detailed open-ended responses were further evaluated for themes that demonstrated why these issues were of greater importance to Asians and Pacific Islanders.

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Governance

Minn. Stat. § 15.0145 Ethnic Councils.

Subd. 6. Duties of council.

(a) A council must work for the implementation of economic, social, legal, and political equality for its constituency. The council shall work with the legislature and governor to carry out this work by performing the duties in this section.

(b) A council shall advise the governor and the legislature on issues confronting the constituency of the council. This may include, but is not limited to, presenting the results of surveys, studies, and community forums to the appropriate executive departments and legislative committees.

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Introduction

The Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans (the Council) is a state agency charged with representing Asian Pacific Minnesotans and advocating on their behalf in the executive and legislative branches of state government. At the beginning of each legislative biennium, the Council conducts a community priorities survey to gain a deeper understanding of the issues of greatest concern to the Asian Pacific Minnesotan (APM) population. The results of the survey are used to inform the Council’s legislative priorities for the subsequent biennium. The survey was designed and administered by Council research staff and content structure was devised from previous biennial survey responses. The Council deploys the survey as an instrument to understand the highest priority issues for Minnesota’s approximately 364,000 Asian and Pacific Islander residents.¹ The survey is used in addition to reviewing the Council’s prior legislative work, evaluating the needs of Asian Pacific communities through legislative listening sessions, participating in community engagement activities, and discussions between the Council’s Board and staff.

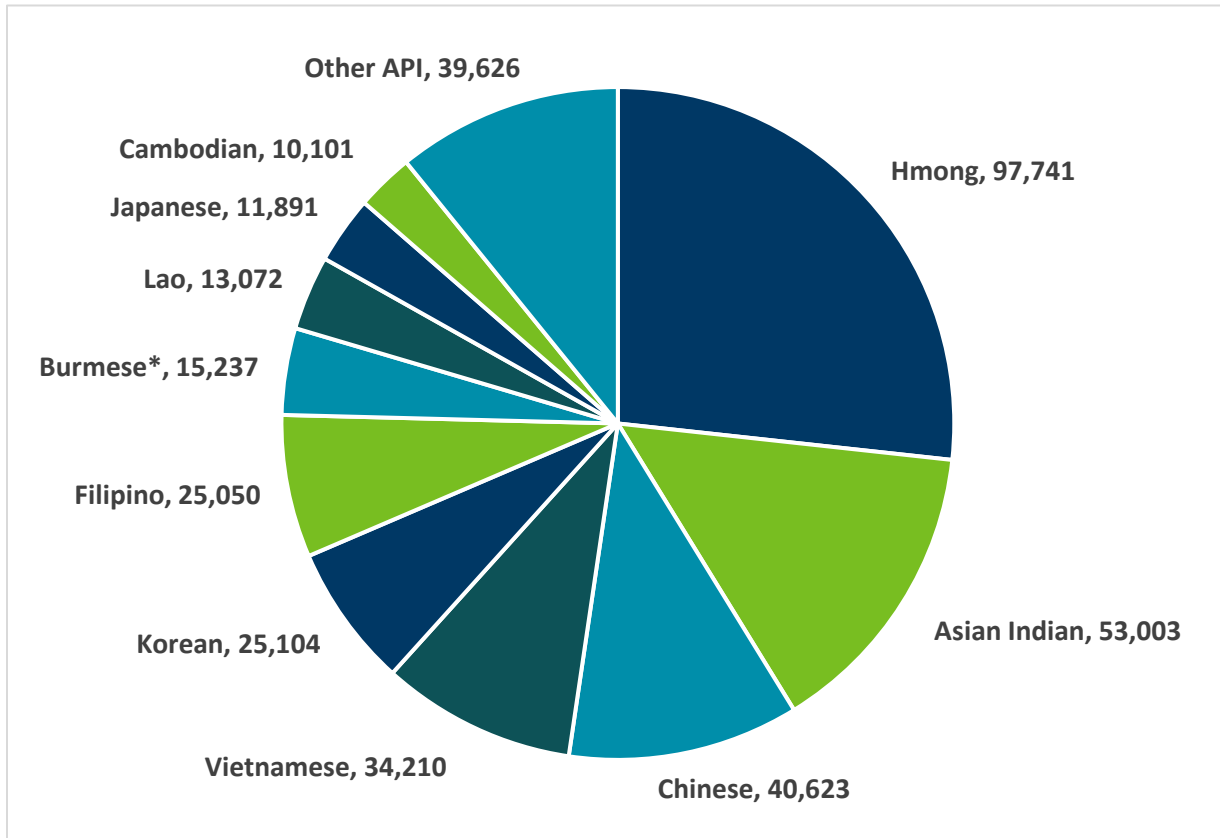
Methods

Design

The community priorities survey sought to capture a representative sample of APM population. Based on 2020 Census population (Graph 1), a minimum representational sample was calculated for each of the seven largest Asian Pacific ethnic groups in Minnesota. Six questions were chosen for the 2025 survey based on prior legislative priority surveys.

¹ U.S. Census Bureau (2024). P1: Race. 2020: DEC Redistricting Data (PL 94-171). Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov/table/DECENNIALPL2020.P1?q=p1&g=040XX00US27>.

Graph 1. Asian Pacific Minnesotan Population Size, by Ancestry or Ethnic Origin.^{2,3}



Instrument - Demographics

Respondents were asked to self-identify their demographic information, including their city of residence, zip code, ethnic origin, and general role within the API community. Ethnic categories and community role choices were selected based on the 2023 Community Priorities Report to remain consistent.

Instrument - Issue Areas

Using historical responses from 2017, 2019, 2021, and 2023, survey priority areas were tagged using themes and subthemes identified in open-ended questions. In addition, priority areas were organized and identified using the structure of the Minnesota House and Senate legislative committees. The committee structure mandates how the responses would be acted upon at the Minnesota legislature, and therefore was deemed to be necessary for the categorization of responses.

² U.S. Census Bureau (2024). Asian Alone or in Any Other Combination by Selected Groups, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-year estimates. Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2022.B02018?q=B02018&g=040XX00US27>.

³ U.S. Census Bureau (2024). Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander Alone or in Any Other Combination by Selected Groups, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-year estimates. Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2022.B02019?q=B02019&g=040XX00US27>.

* "Burmese" includes Burmese, Karen, and Karenni ethnic groups.

Participant Recruitment

The survey collection period occurred between July 15 and October 31 of 2024. The survey was disseminated through an online, self-administered form and at community- and Council-led events. Respondents were given text instructions to complete the survey based on their own experiences or the experiences of their self-identified community.

Online Survey

The online survey was sent through the Council’s email listserv, which included API-led nonprofits and community organizations, APM student groups, Minnesota state employees, and through members of the Council Board. A survey link was also posted on the Council’s Facebook page, LinkedIn page, and website. Social media and email reminders to complete the survey online were published periodically during the collection period.

In addition, API community-based organizations and college student organizations were contacted directly and encouraged to share survey information through their email and social media channels.

Analysis

Demographics

Demographic information was calculated using self-identified responses. A total of 674 responses were received (Table 1). Those who did not identify as having any API heritage or who did not reside in Minnesota were eliminated from further analyses (94 respondents). Of the remaining 580 APM respondents, 67 identified as having more than one ethnic origin, including non-API ethnicities. Responses that included more than one API group were counted several times. For example, a respondent reporting “Chinese and Vietnamese” would be included in the Chinese as well as the Vietnamese numbers. Thus, the number of counted API responses (650) does not equal the number of API respondents (580) (Graph 2). This aligns with the Census data methodology shown in Graph 1.

This analytical process differs from the methodology used in the Council’s previous reports. In prior reports, respondents who identified with more than one ethnic origin were categorized using deterministic fractional assignment, based on the total number of ethnicities self-identified.⁴ For example, a respondent who identified as Korean and Black was counted as 0.5 Korean and 0.5 Black in demographic counts. These fractional values were totaled with their identified ethnicities for the final ethnic origins counts.

This methodology applies only to demographic information and is used solely in comparison to statewide APM population estimates. For community roles and issue area counts, individual responses were only counted once.

⁴ Solomos, J. and Collins, P.H. (2010). *The SAGE Handbook of Race and Ethnic Studies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Table 1. Total Number of Survey Respondents.

Number of Responses	N
Total completed surveys	674
Asian and Pacific Islander Minnesotans	580
Non-Asian and Pacific Islander and/or non-Minnesota resident	94

Issue Areas

Policy issues were coded based on three categories selected by the respondent. Themes were identified using two open-ended follow-up questions to the multiple-choice issue area question. The issue area question stem structure limited respondents to select up to three responses. Issue area responses ranged from one to three choice selections of 30 possible choices. Only the five most frequently identified issue areas were categorized into themes and analyzed using open coding.⁵

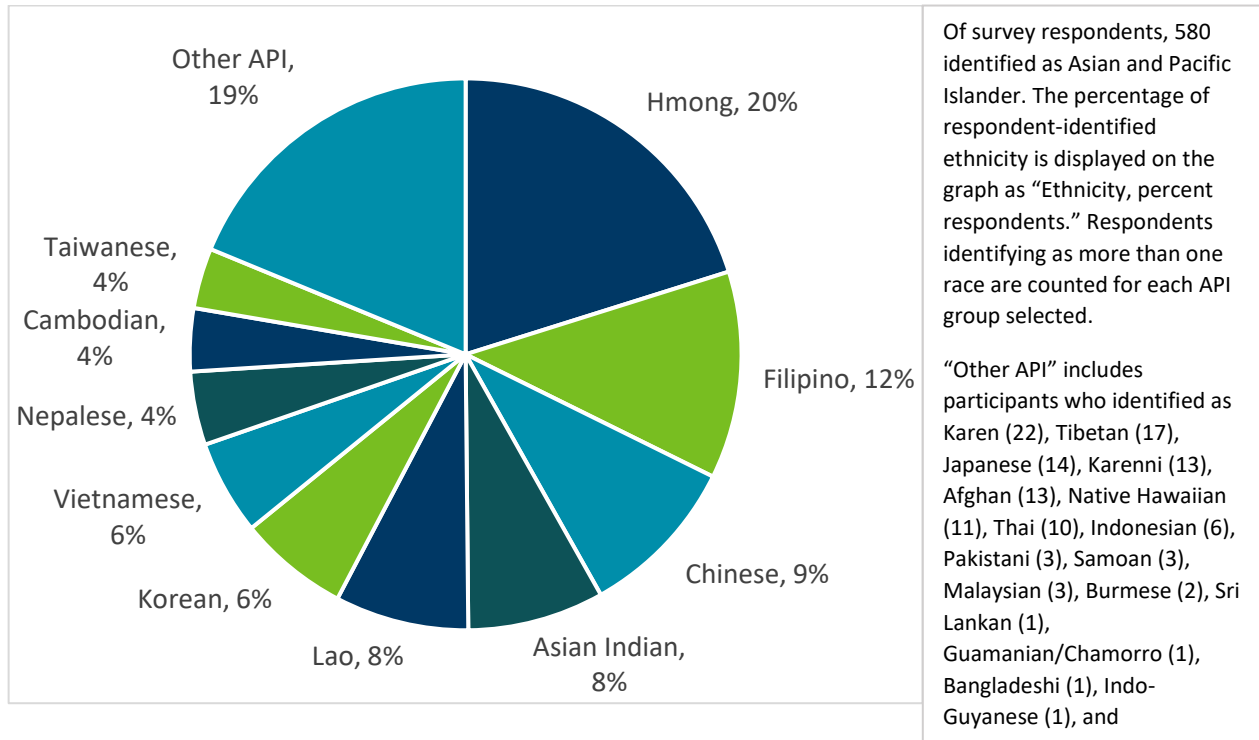
Results

Quantitative Analysis

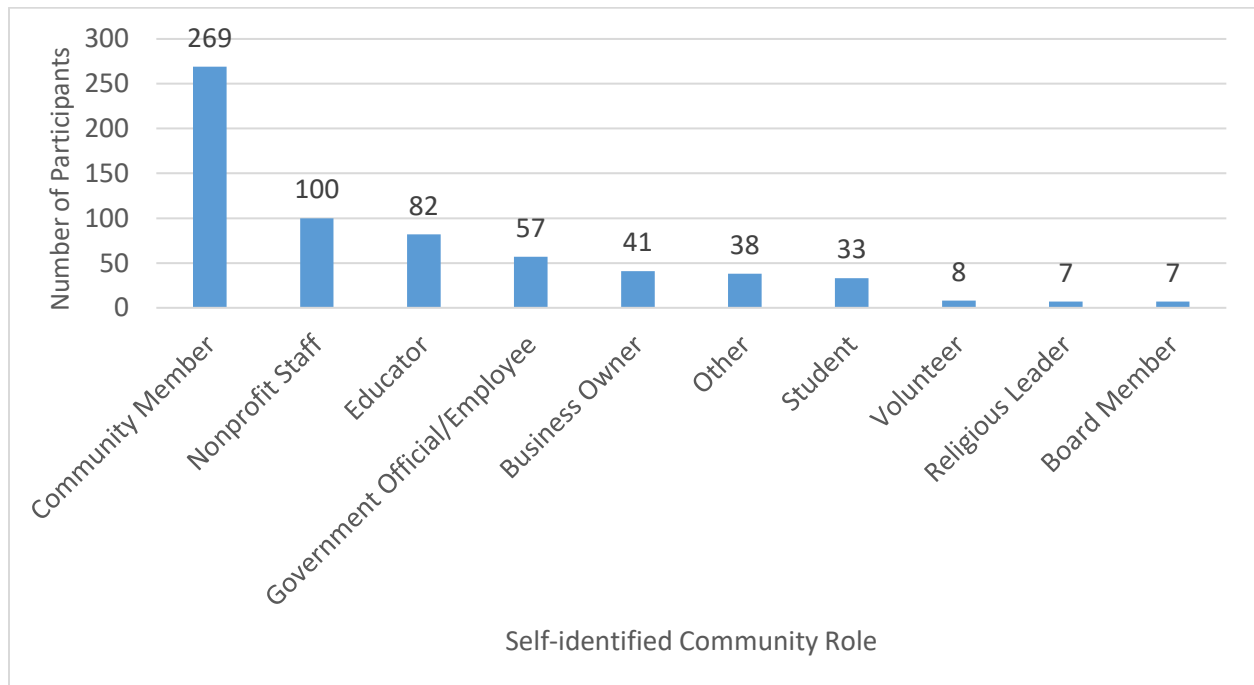
Survey respondents provided self-identified demographic information for ethnicity (Graph 2) and community role (Graph 3). Additional geographic information was collected for the purpose of participant recruitment. The eight most frequently identified participant ethnicities were representative of the eight most populous API ethnic groups in Minnesota. The largest proportion of respondents were of Hmong, Filipino, Chinese, and Asian Indian ancestry. Of API respondents, 42% identified as being community members, 16% as nonprofit staff, 13% as educators, and 9% as government officials and/or employees.

⁵ Strauss, A. and Corbin, L (1990). Basics of Grounded Theory Methods. Beverly Hills, CA: SAGE Publications.

Graph 2. Response Sample Size, by Ancestry or Ethnic Origin.

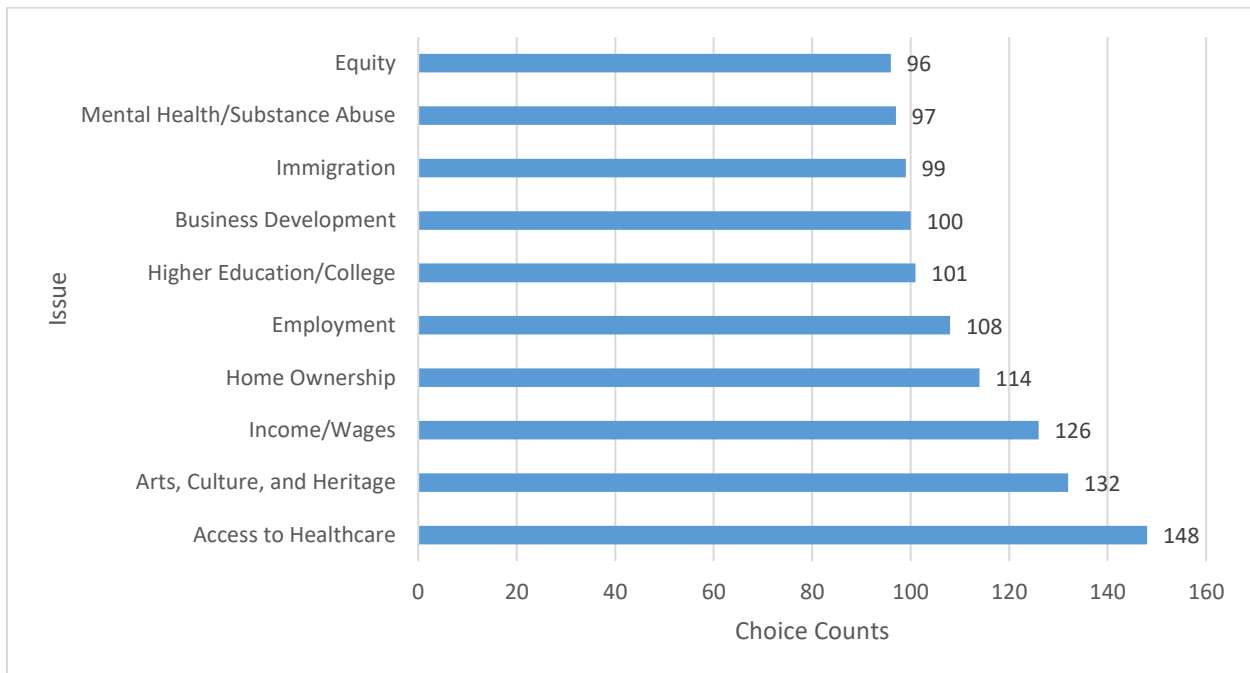


Graph 3. Participant Sample Size, by Community Role.



Respondents were asked to identify their three highest priority issues for themselves or their community from a list of 30 predetermined issue areas (Graph 4). Respondents were also given the option to write their own response if it was not represented by any of the issue areas listed. The five most frequently selected priority issues were: access to healthcare (148); arts, culture, and heritage (132); income/wages (126); home ownership (114); and employment (108). Additional high-priority issues identified by respondents were: business development, equity, immigration, mental health/substance abuse, and higher education/college.

Graph 4. Ten Most Frequently Selected Priority Issues.



Qualitative Analysis

Respondents were asked to identify and select priority issues impacting themselves or their community. They were then asked to provide a written response describing which issue is the most important to them and how this identified priority issue has impacted their community. For the five most frequently identified issue areas, respondents' detailed, open-ended responses were further evaluated for themes that demonstrated why these issues were of greater importance to API individuals. Responses were coded under a single major theme per each participant's written response.

Access to Healthcare

Access to Healthcare was identified 148 times by respondents as being one of their top three priority issues. Thirty-six respondents identified it as a high-priority issue and gave a written explanation of their selection. Four major themes emerged from the written responses, including cost, equity, ease of navigation, and the need for education.

Table 2. Access to Healthcare Written Response Themes.

Themes	Quotes
Cost (17)	“Quality healthcare that is affordable and timely should be a basic right for a human being.”
	“High healthcare costs create barriers to access including mental healthcare.”
Equity (11)	“Access to healthcare is critical to human survival and can be a barrier for underrepresented groups. These include not only BIPOC communities, but seniors and people of low income.”
	“No one should be restricted from addressing health problems.”
Navigation (6)	“The healthcare system is complex with every [...] clinic operating independently therefore having different systems that don’t always talk to each other or work with people’s health insurance.”
	“I am a health care provider and see the stress people have navigating through our current health care system.”
Education (3)	“[The government should provide] more education and clarity on services and what is offered for those in low-income families, as well as young folks in their 20s after they are kicked out of their family health insurance plan.”
	“I think it will be a great help if targeted information can be given to the new communities.”

() – indicates the number of times theme was identified.

Arts, Culture, and Heritage

Arts, culture, and heritage was identified 132 times by respondents as being one of their top three priority issues. Thirty-nine respondents identified it as a high-priority issue and provided written explanations of their selection. Four major themes emerged from the written responses, including preserving culture, representation, connection, and identity.

Table 3. Arts, Culture, and Heritage Written Response Themes.

Themes	Quotes
Preserving Culture (16)	“The current generation isn’t aware of their heritage and how they’ve come to this country.”
	“The longer my people are here in the USA, the more we are losing our language and appreciation for our culture. [...] We must preserve and pass it on to the next generations.”
	“If there is no support for [preserving culture and heritage] then many cultural traditions and teachings are lost.”
Representation (10)	“It’s important to represent our different cultures for others to gain understanding of who we are as individuals and communities.”
Connection (5)	“I believe [art] brings different cultures together.”
Identity (3)	“[Arts, culture, and heritage] help solidify one’s own identity through the creative and cultural learning process.”

() - indicates the number of times theme was identified.

Income/Wages

Income/wages was identified 126 times by respondents as being one of their top three priority issues. Twenty-five respondents identified it as a high-priority issue and gave a written explanation of their selection. Three major themes emerged from the written responses, including increased cost of living, equity, and safety.

Table 4. Income/Wages Written Response Themes.

Themes	Quotes
Cost of Living (12)	“Current income is not keeping up with inflation and rising cost of living.”
	“The cost of living has gone up exponentially and the average household income is not enough to cover all expenses.”
Equity (4)	“There should be [equity] when it comes to income and wages.”
Safety (2)	“Poverty has ramifications for all the other areas such as domestic violence, education, mental health, etc.”

() - indicates the number of times theme was identified.

Home Ownership

Home ownership was identified 114 times by respondents as being one of their top three priority issues. Fifteen respondents identified it as a high-priority issue and gave a written explanation of their selection. Three major themes emerged from the written responses, including cost, access to assistance, and safety.

Table 5. Home Ownership Written Response Themes.

Themes	Quotes
Cost (5)	“Most of us [in the] middle class can’t afford to own a home at these prices.”
	“There has to be a cap on rising prices and [...] a way to make owning a home more affordable and accessible. It’s getting more and more expensive to buy and rent.”
Access to Assistance (3)	“[The government should provide] access to homeownership like down payment assistance and alternative financing, especially for those historically excluded.”
Safety (3)	“Home ownership [is my top priority] because stability and safety is the base of success for our families and community.”

() - indicates the number of times theme was identified.

Employment

Employment was identified 108 times by respondents as being one of their top three priority issues. Fourteen respondents identified it as a high-priority issue and gave a written explanation of their selection. Three major themes emerged from the written responses, including ability to thrive/cost of living, job opportunities, and equity.

Table 6. Employment Written Response Themes.

Themes	Quotes
Ability to Thrive/Cost of Living (4)	“Employment opportunities provide financial resources for individuals, families, and communities to be successful and thriving.”
	“Employment [is my top priority] because in that way we determine how to live and survive in the USA.”
Job Opportunities (3)	“Only few are given a chance to be employed due to limited job vacancies and high standards.”
Equity (3)	“There should be more jobs offered, especially for ages 50 and above.”
	“[There should be] equality in employment and income with peers.”

() - indicates the number of times theme was identified.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this report, the five most frequently identified issues for the APM population in 2024 were: access to healthcare; arts, culture, and heritage; income/wages; home ownership; and employment. A qualitative analysis of written responses highlighted that structural changes and policy reform were deemed important steps to addressing the top priority issues for the APM community. Participants rarely differentiated between local, state, and federal governments in their written responses.

The limitations of this study were: a small sample size relative to the total population of APMs, language barriers for survey respondents, and the use of convenience sampling. Given the limited educational attainment, language barriers, and access to technology in subpopulations of the APM community, future studies should further prioritize in-person data collection and explore translation services.