



# Mesa Residents' Perceptions of the Mesa Police Department and Community Safety

**ASU**® Arizona State  
University

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# Survey Methodology

To help the Mesa Police Department understand Mesa residents' current perceptions of policing in the community and attitudes toward potential reforms, a telephone and web survey was conducted of Mesa residents.

**Survey Conducted:** Jan. 29, through Feb. 14, 2024

**Survey Type:** 562 telephone and 288 text-to-web

**Margin of Error:** +/- 3.4 percentage points at 95% confidence level

**Survey Size:** N = 850

**Weighting Applied:** Lightly weighted on age, gender, Hispanic or Latino origin and education level to match ACS data.

# Quality of Life and Crime in Mesa



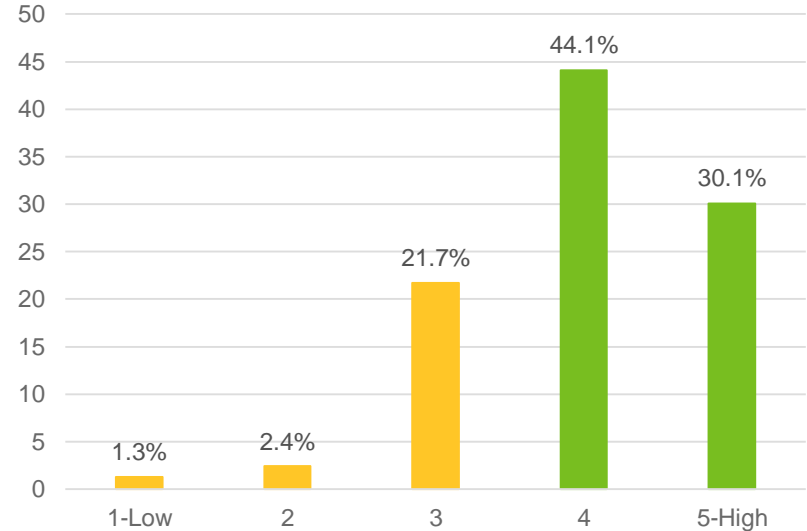
## How would you rate the quality of life in Mesa?

Most respondents said they are satisfied with the quality of life in Mesa.

On a scale of 1-5, with 5 being high, **74.2%** of respondents said 4 or 5.

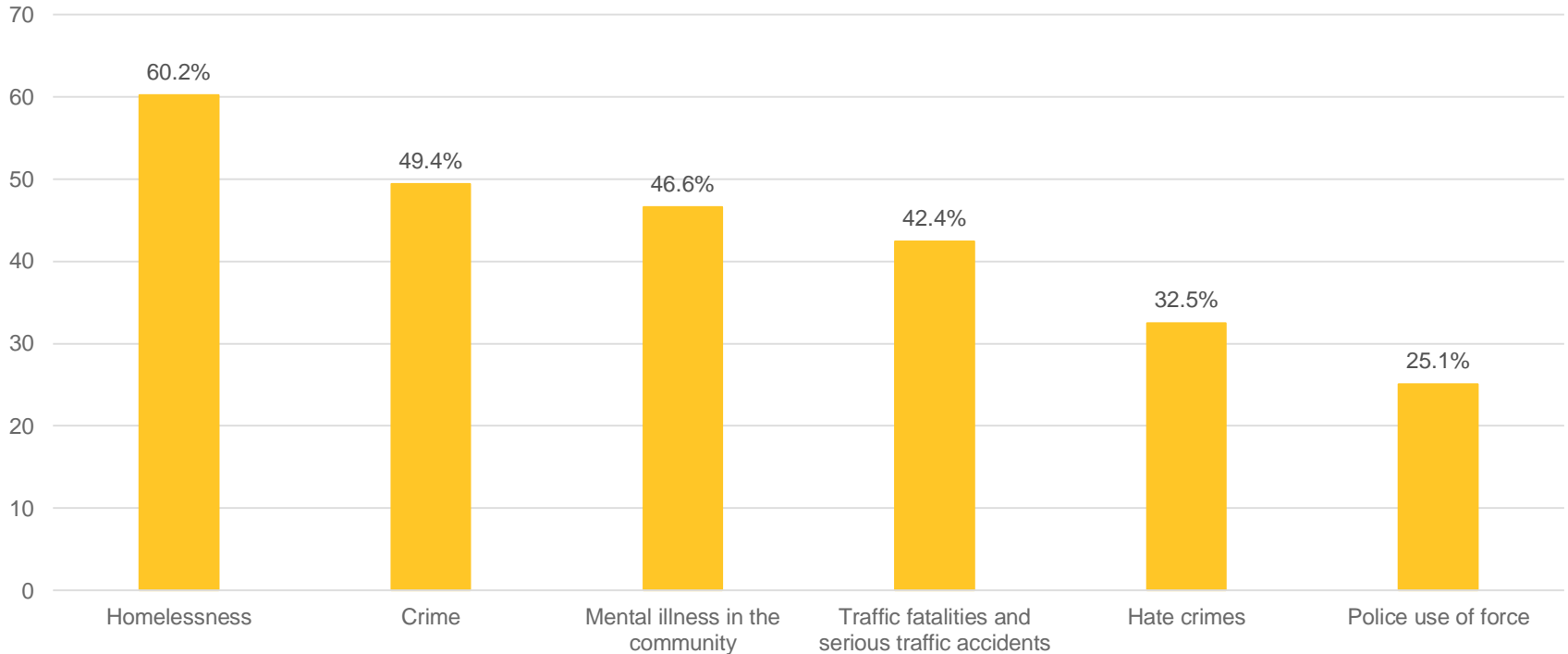
These results are in line with the last policing community survey. In 2021, **79.5%** of respondents said quality of life in Mesa was high (rated 4 or 5).

## How would you rate the quality of life in Mesa?



## How concerned are you about the following subjects in Mesa?

Of the six topics presented, the largest share of respondents stated concern about homelessness (60.2%) followed by crime (49.5%) and mental illness in the community (42.4%).

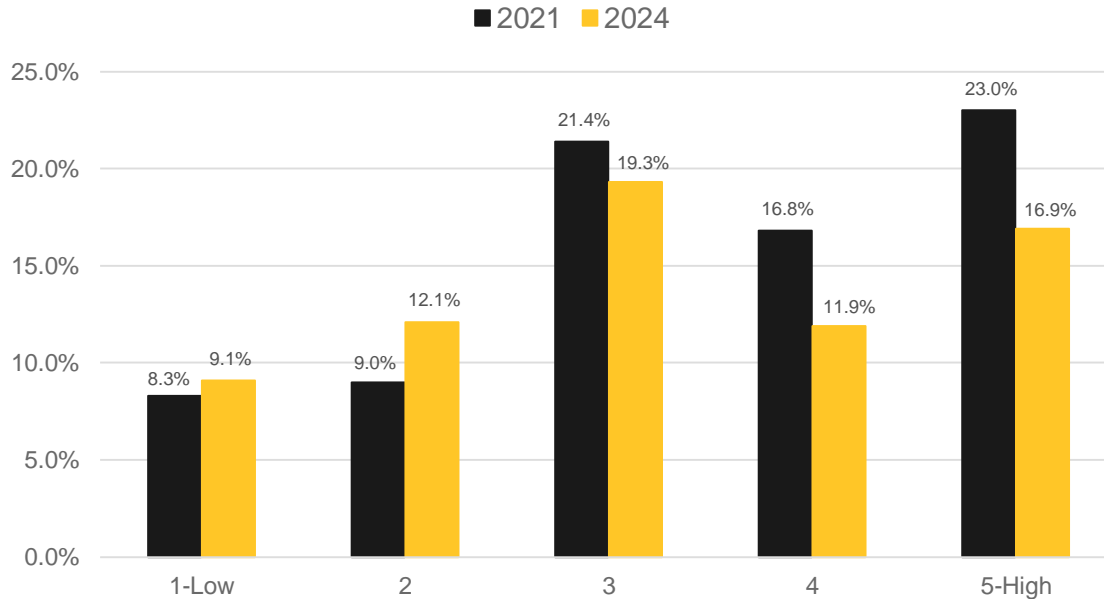


# Community Policing



## To what extent does the Mesa Police Department make it easy for community members to provide input (e.g., comments, suggestions, and concerns)?

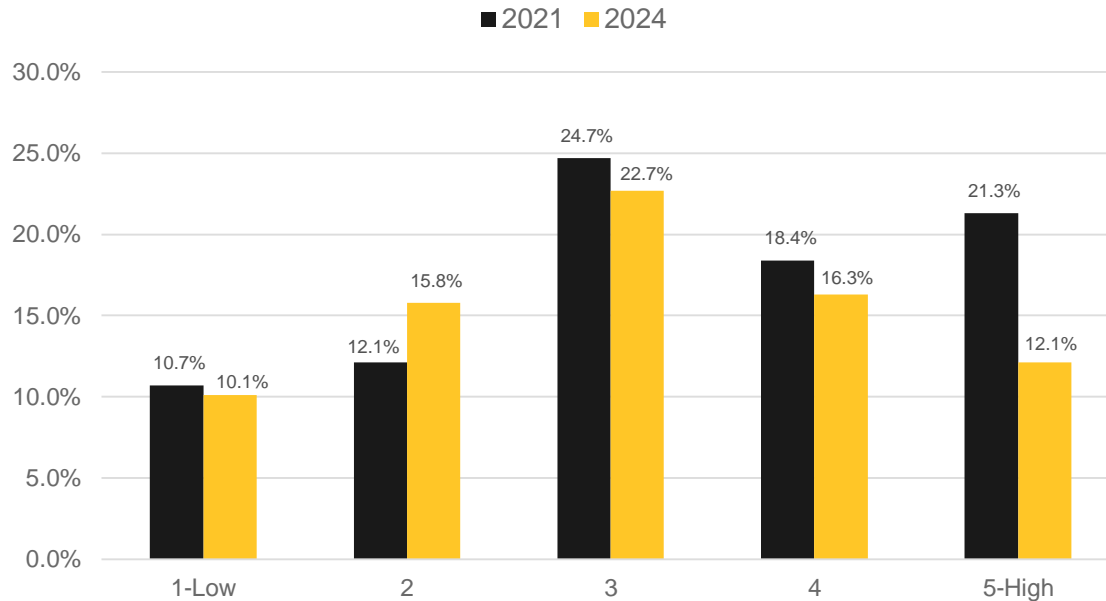
About **29%** of respondents said that the Mesa Police Department makes it easy for community members to provide input. However, nearly 1 in 3 respondents were not sure or did not know, indicating a high level of unfamiliarity with the department's community input processes.





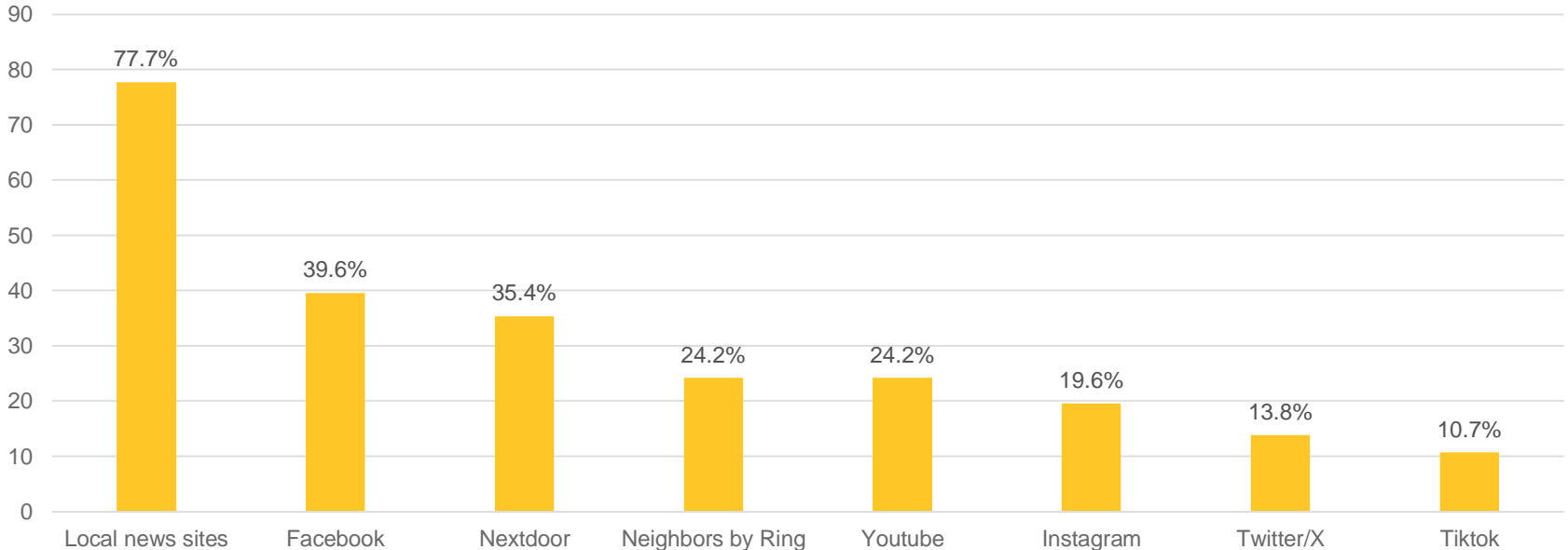
## How effectively does the Mesa Police Department communicate with community members (e.g., through its website, emails, or public meetings)?

About **30%** of respondents said that the Mesa Police Department communicates effectively with community members.



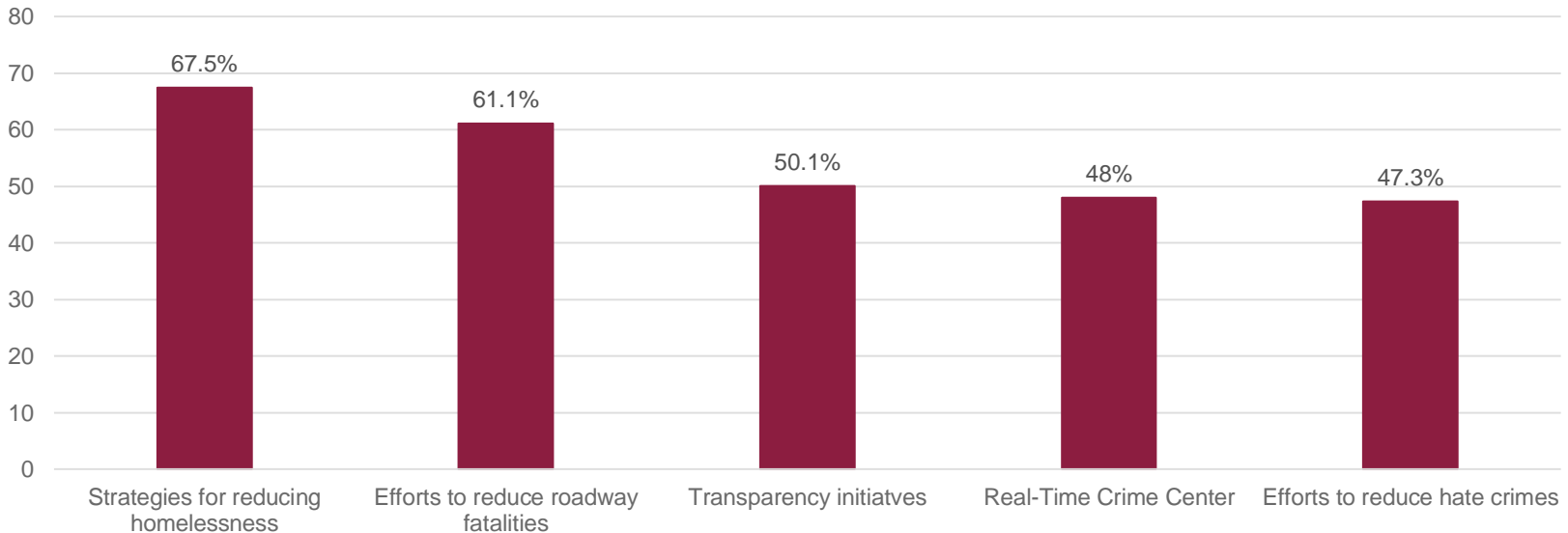
## Of the following options, which do you use to get information about what's going on in your area?

Local news sites (**77.7%**) were respondents' most-used sources for information. Social media based-sources such as Facebook (**39.6%**), Nextdoor (**35.4%**), and Neighbors by Ring (**24.2%**) were the next most popular options.



## What is your level of interest in each of the following community policing programs?

Of the community policing programs, respondents were most interested in the City of Mesa's strategies for reducing homelessness (**67.5%**). Over half of respondents were also interested in the City of Mesa's efforts to reduce roadway fatalities (**61.1%**) and the Mesa Police Department's Transparency Initiatives (**50.1%**).

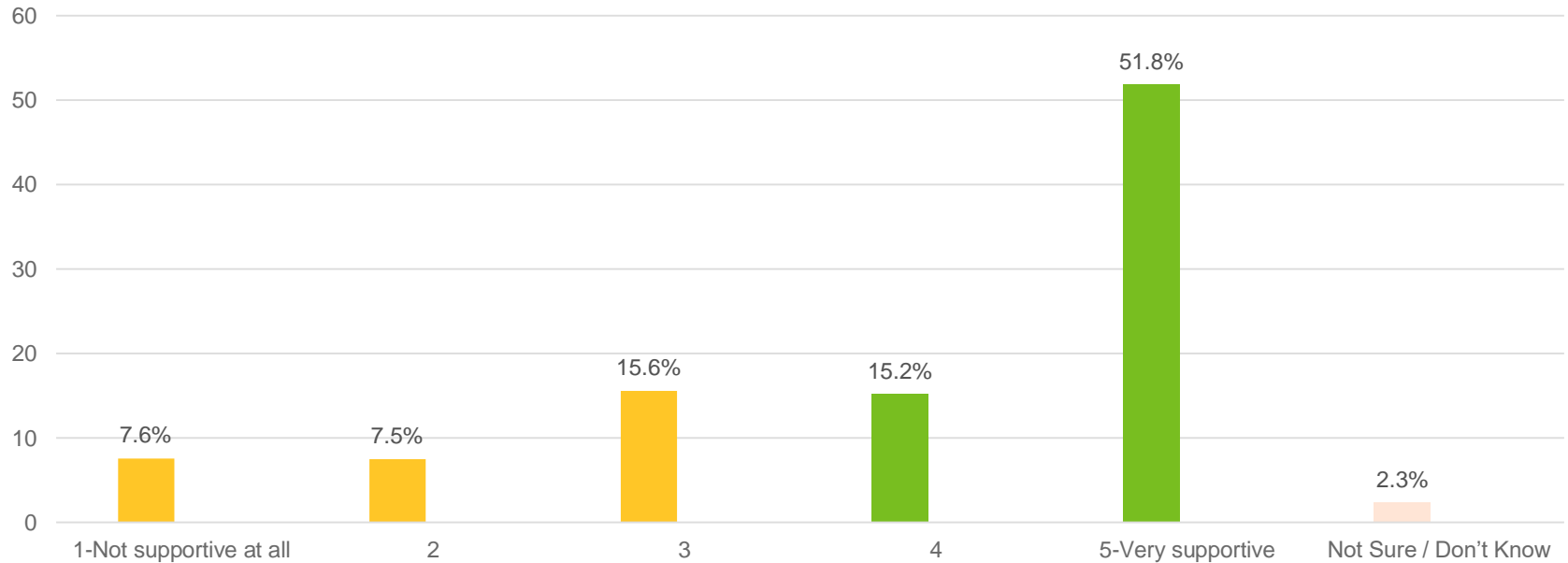


# Mental Health Response and Homelessness



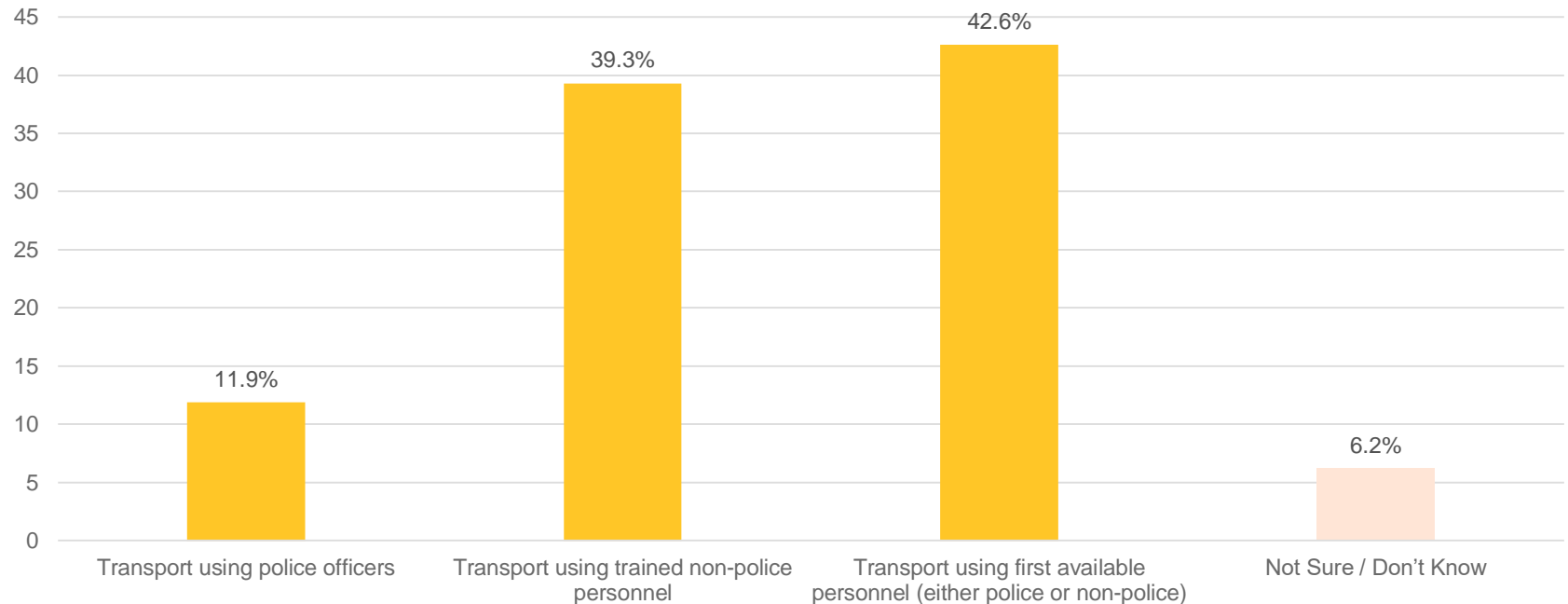
## How supportive are you of using public funds to increase the number of non-police mental health crisis response teams?

The majority of respondents (**67%**) supported the use of public funds to increase the use of non-police mental health crisis teams when responding to non-violent mental health calls.



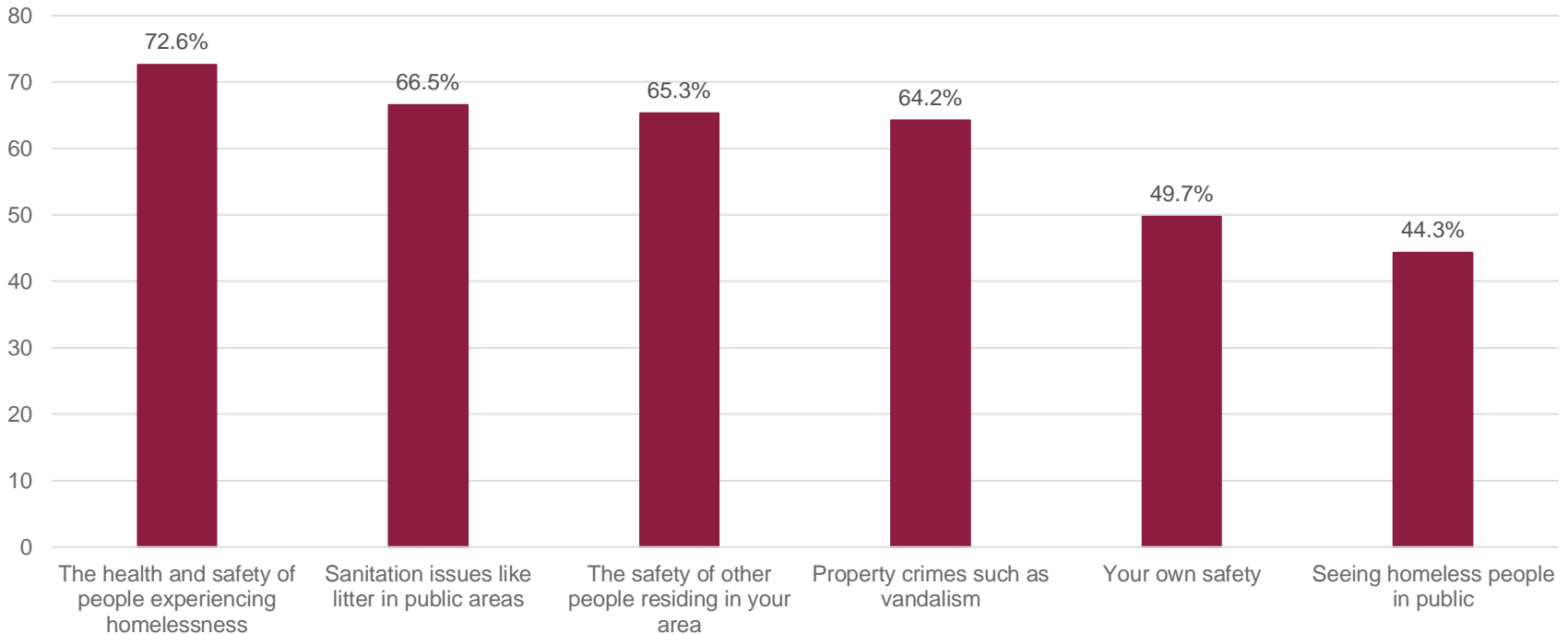
## How would you like the City of Mesa to address mental health crises that require transporting someone to a mental health care facility?

The largest share of respondents (**42.6%**) preferred to use first available personnel (police or non police.) A slightly smaller share (**39.3%**) preferred non-police personnel.



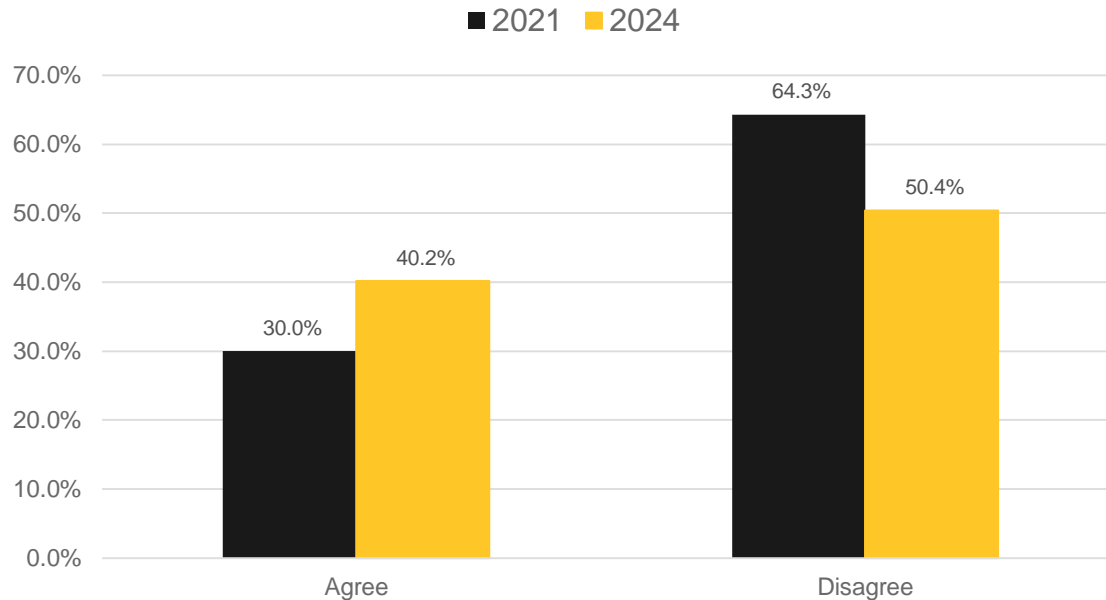
## Which of these most concerns you when thinking about homelessness in Mesa?

When thinking about homelessness in Mesa, respondents were most concerned about the health and safety of people experiencing homelessness (72.6%).



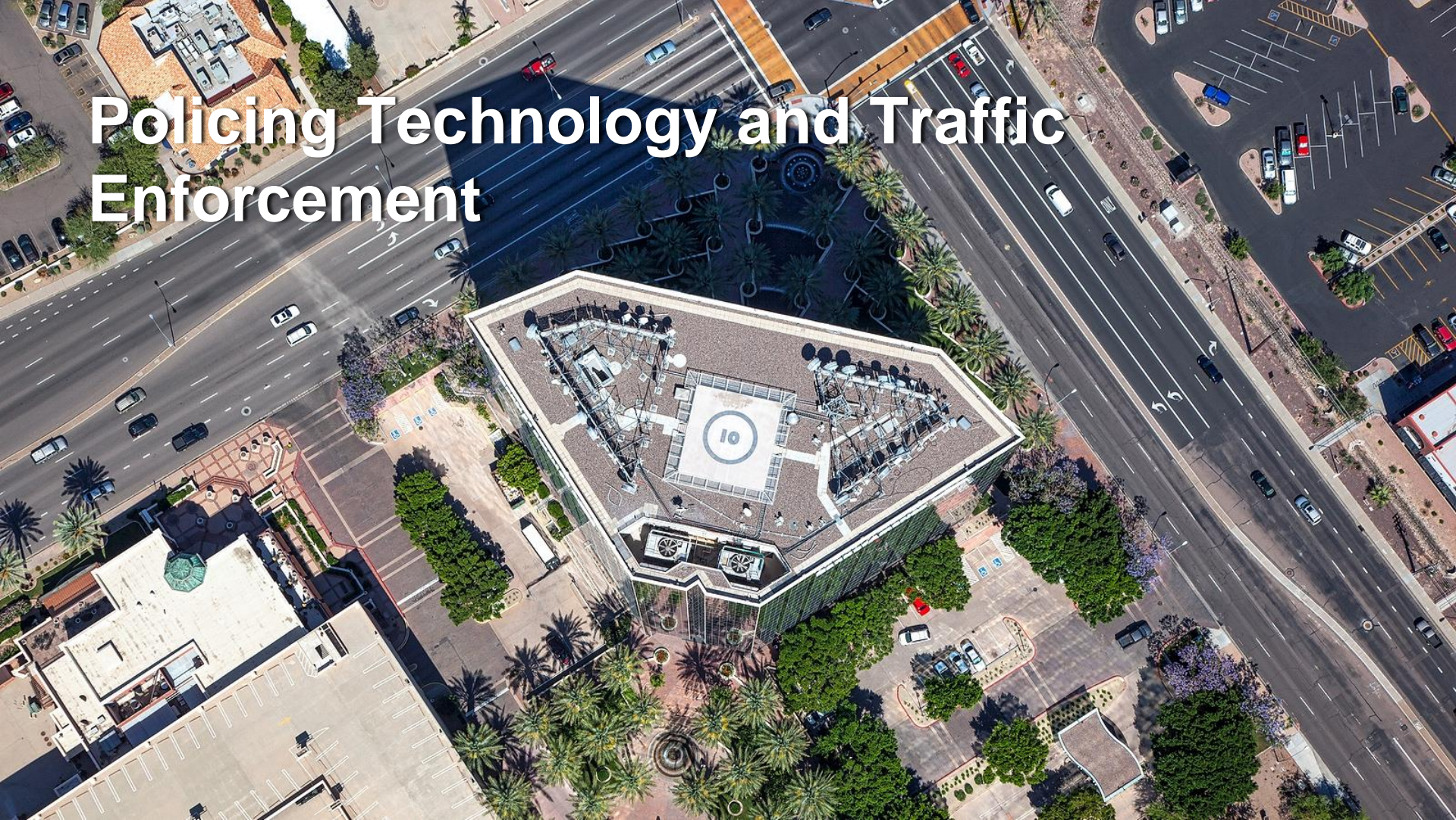
**Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Arresting people experiencing homelessness for minor criminal offenses is an effective public safety strategy.**

Slightly more than half of respondents (**50.4%**) do not think that arresting people experiencing homelessness for minor criminal offenses is an effective public safety strategy.





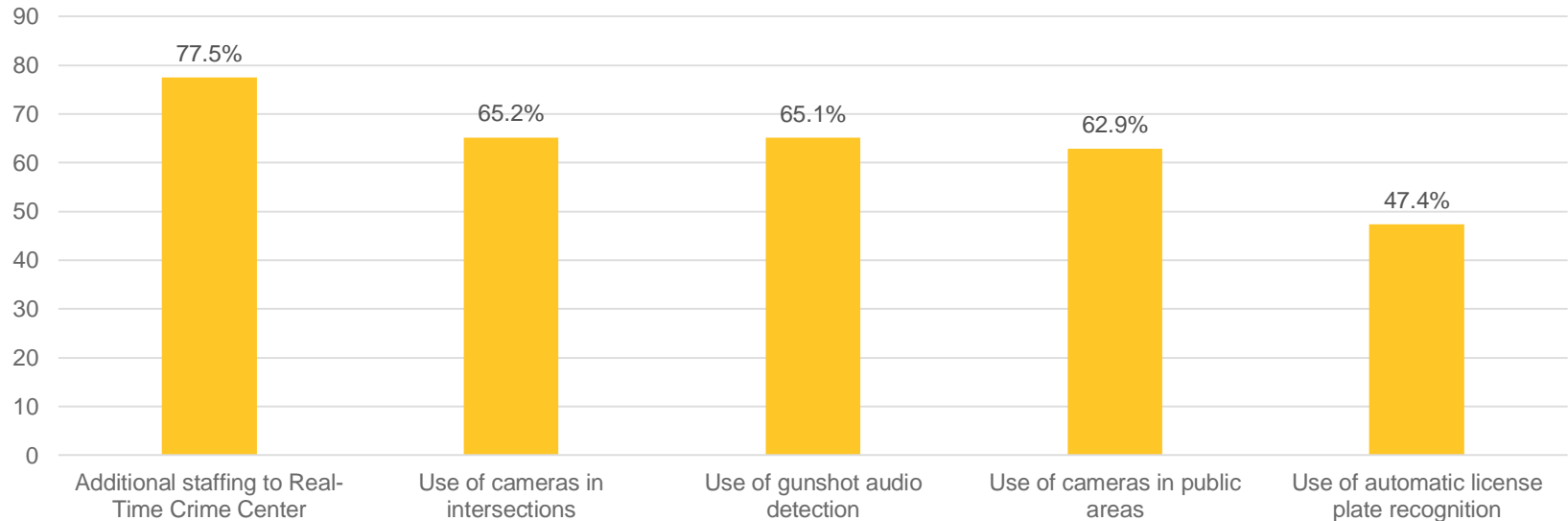
# Policing Technology and Traffic Enforcement



**The Mesa Police Department operates a Real-Time Crime Center to track and respond to crimes in Mesa quickly and appropriately. Please consider the following proposed improvements.**

Respondents were most supportive of additional staffing for the Real-Time Crime Center (approx. **78%**).

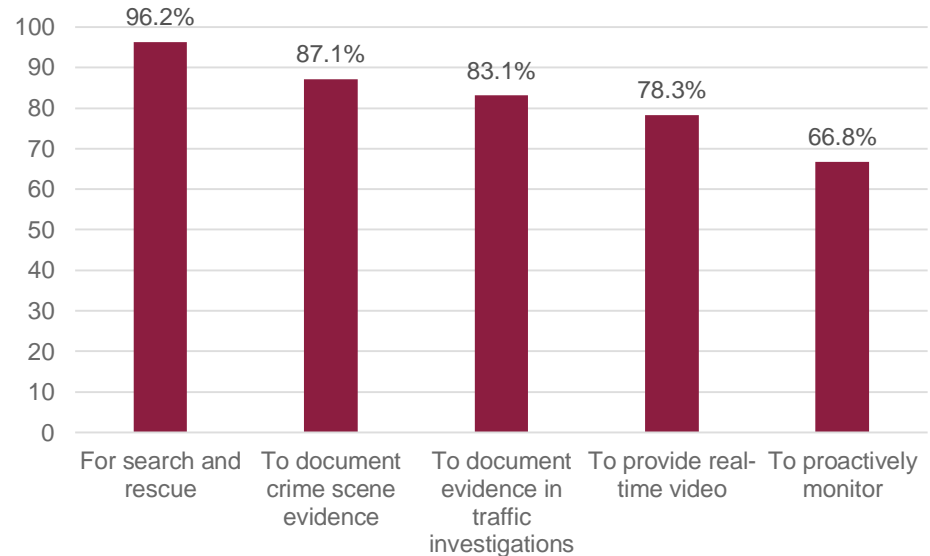
Support for Real-Time Crime Center Improvements



## Yes or no, do you support the use of drones by law enforcement...

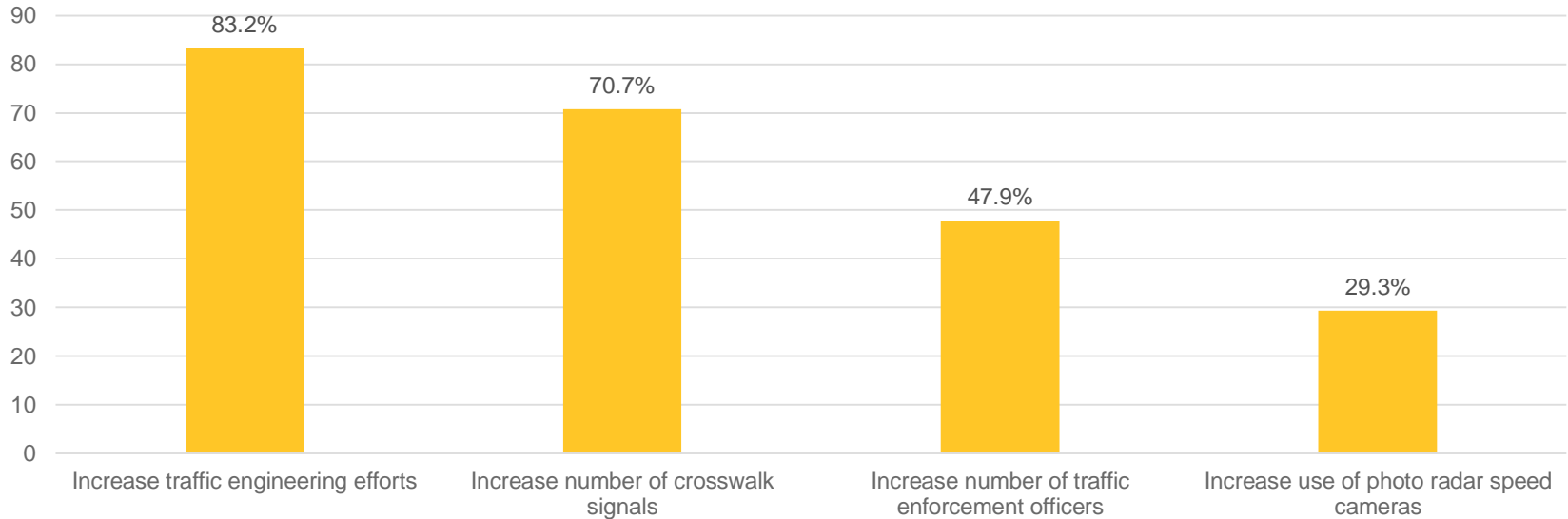
- to provide **real-time video** information to officers prior to arriving on scene?
- for **search and rescue** operations?
- to **document evidence in traffic investigations**?
- to **document evidence at crime scenes**?
- to **proactively monitor high crime areas**?

The use of drones for search and rescue operations received the most support from participants (**96.2%**), but support for drone use across all types of police work was greater than 65%.



## Please consider the following initiatives to reduce serious traffic accidents and fatalities.

Participants were most supportive of increasing traffic engineering efforts to improve roadway safety and traffic conditions (**83.2%**). The least supported was the use of photo radar speed cameras, which less than a third of participants supported (**29.3%**).

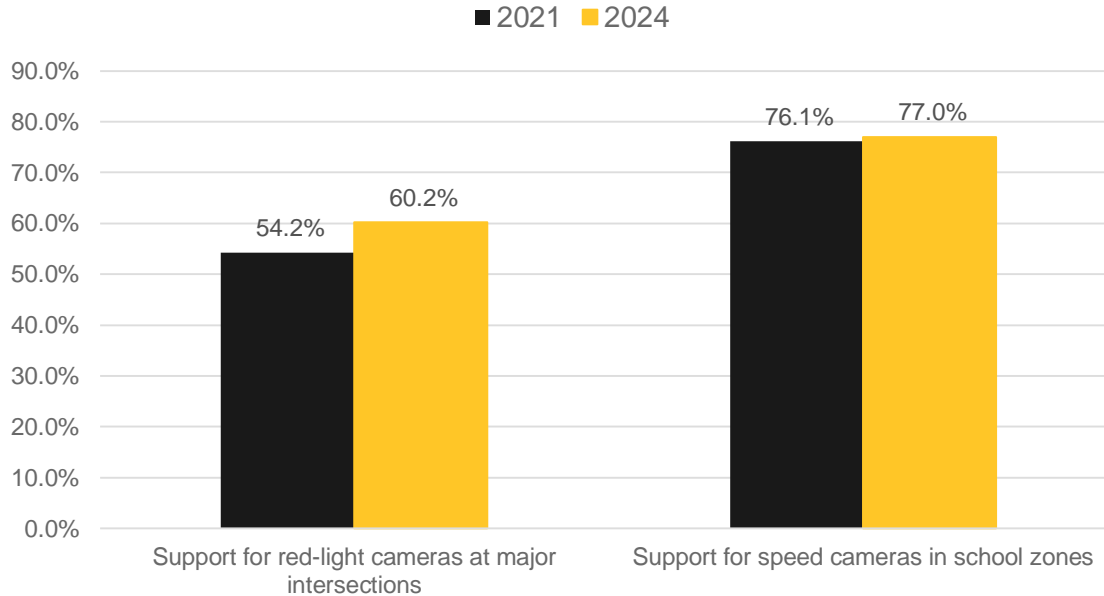


## Do you support the use of red-light cameras to reduce accidents?

More than half of respondents (**60.2%**) said yes.

## Do you support the use of speed cameras in school zones?

Over three quarters of respondents (**77%**) said yes.



# Police Contact and Professionalism

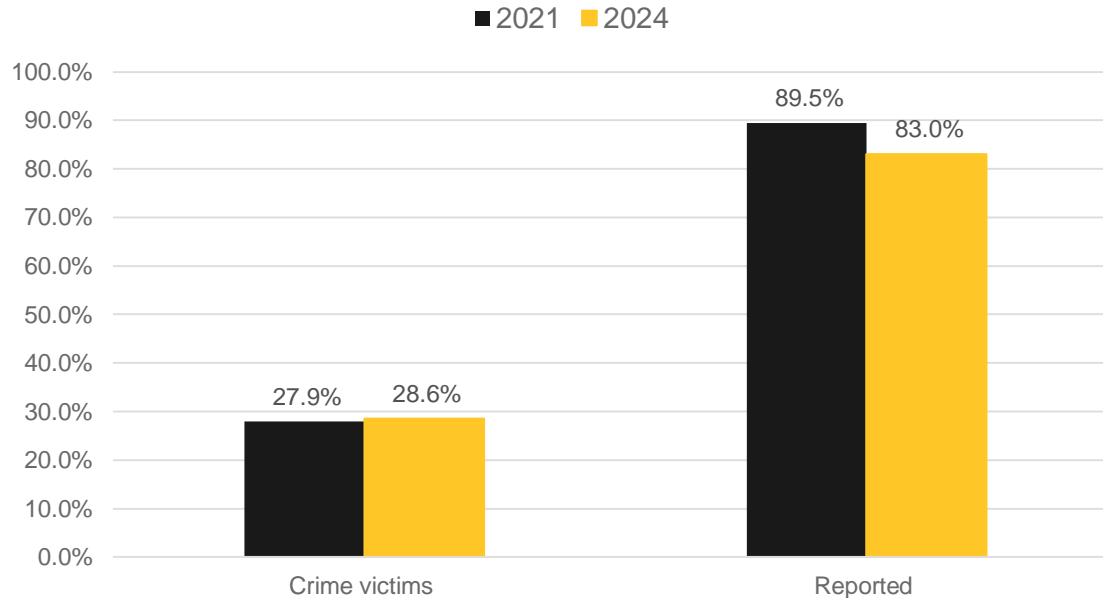


## Have you been a victim of crime in Mesa?

Just over one quarter of respondents (**28.6%**) reported being a victim of crime in Mesa.

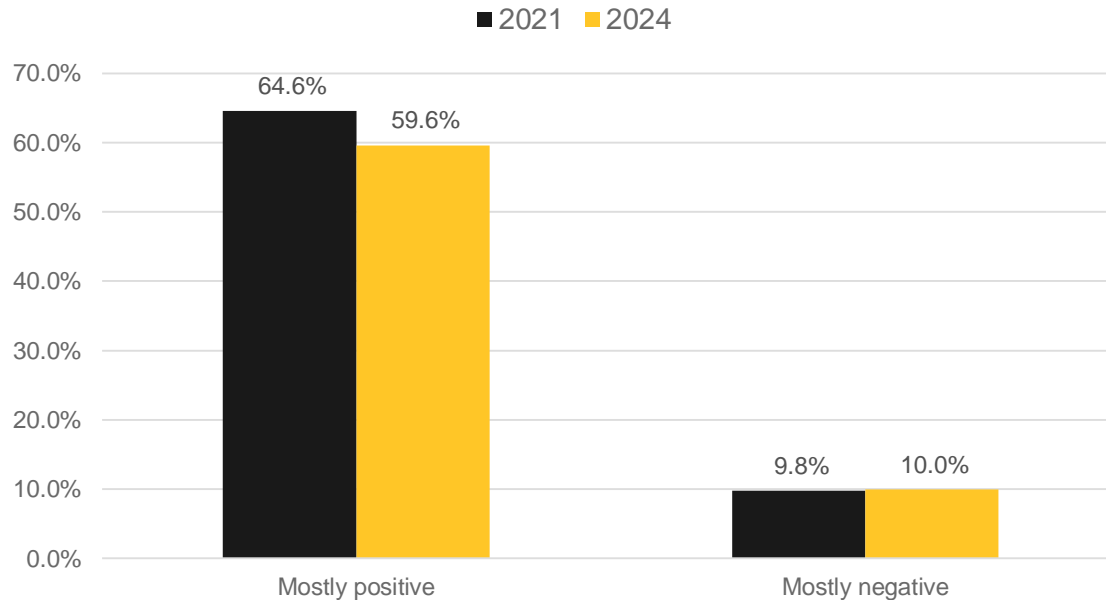
## Did you report the crime to the police?

Of the respondents who reported being a victim of crime in Mesa (N = 243), most (**83%**) reported the crime to the police.



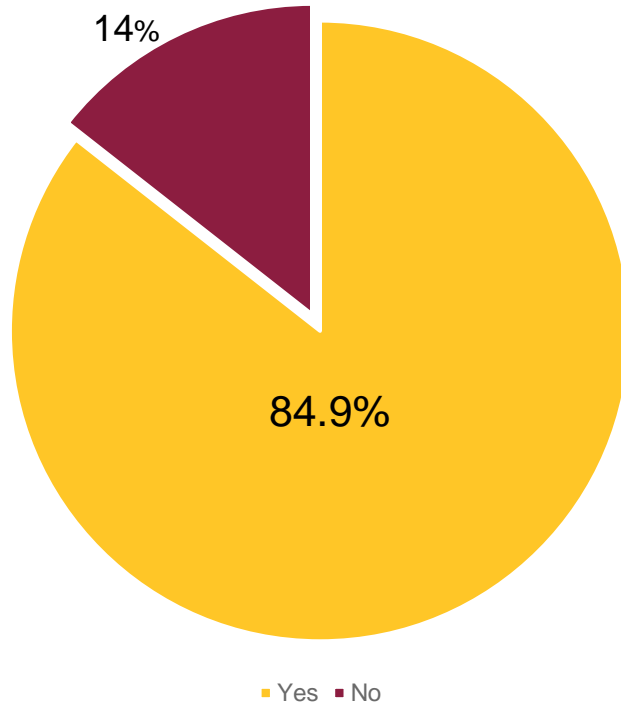
## How would you describe your experiences with Mesa Police Department officers?

More than half of respondents (**59.6%**) said that their experiences with Mesa Police Department officers were “mostly positive.” One in ten respondents said their experiences were “mostly negative.” About one quarter of respondents (**26.2%**) said they have not had any experiences with Mesa Police Department officers.





## During your contact with the Mesa PD during the past year, did the officer sufficiently explain his or her actions?



Of the respondents who indicated that the Mesa Police Department initiated contact with them in the past year (N = 105), about **85%** said that the officer sufficiently explained their actions.

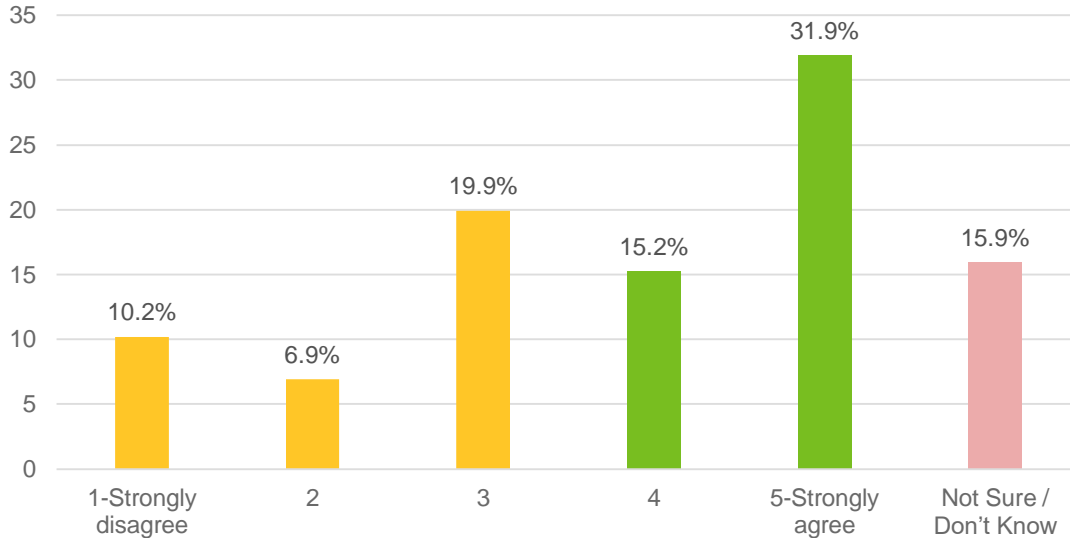
In 2021, about **95%** of survey respondents said that during their contact with a member of the Mesa Police Department, the officer sufficiently explained their actions.

# Use of Force



**To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Mesa police officers only use the amount of force necessary to accomplish their tasks.**

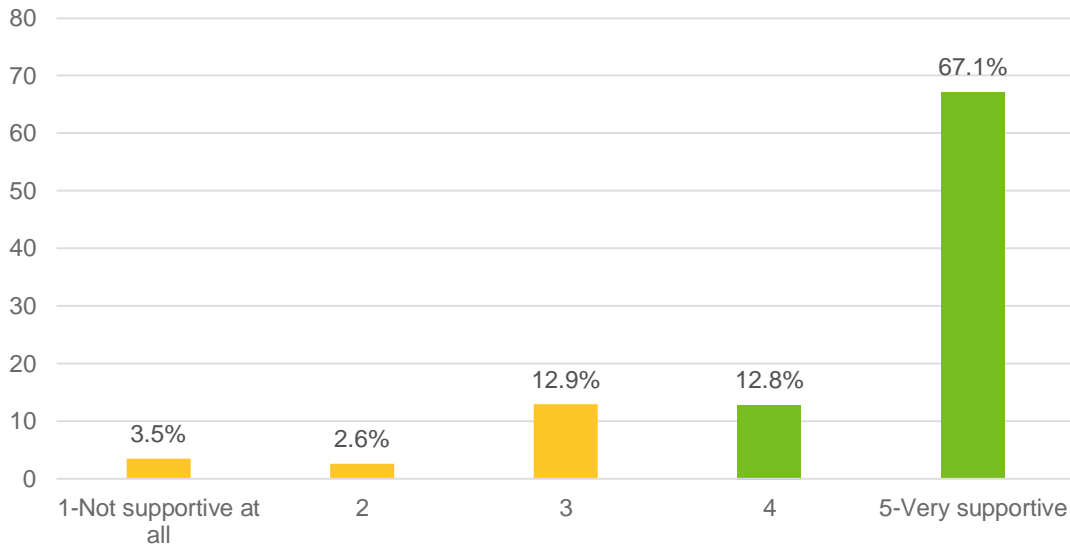
Slightly less than half of participants (**47.1%**) said Mesa police officers only use the amount of force necessary to accomplish their tasks. About **17%** disagree, and almost the same percentage of participants are either not sure or don't know.



These results are in line with the last policing community survey. In 2021, **51%** of respondents said Mesa police only use the necessary amount of force.

## How supportive are you of using public funds for de-escalation training where officers would learn strategies to reduce the likelihood of injury or death?

Over three quarters (approximately **80%**) said they are supportive of using public funds for de-escalation training. The intensity of support for de-escalation training was high, with **67.1%** saying they were very supportive of the idea.



These results are in line with the last policing community survey. In 2021, **70.9%** of respondents were very supportive.

# Overall Satisfaction and Priorities

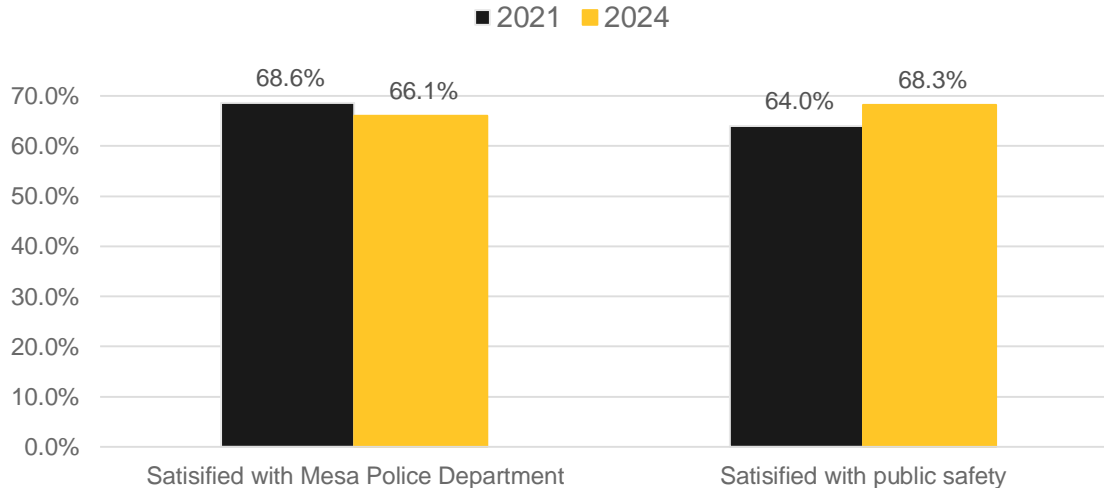


## How satisfied are you with the performance of the Mesa Police Department?

More than half of participants were satisfied with the Mesa Police Department is (**66.1%** said 4 or 5). The share of respondents who said they were not satisfied was under **10%**.

## How satisfied are you with public safety in Mesa?

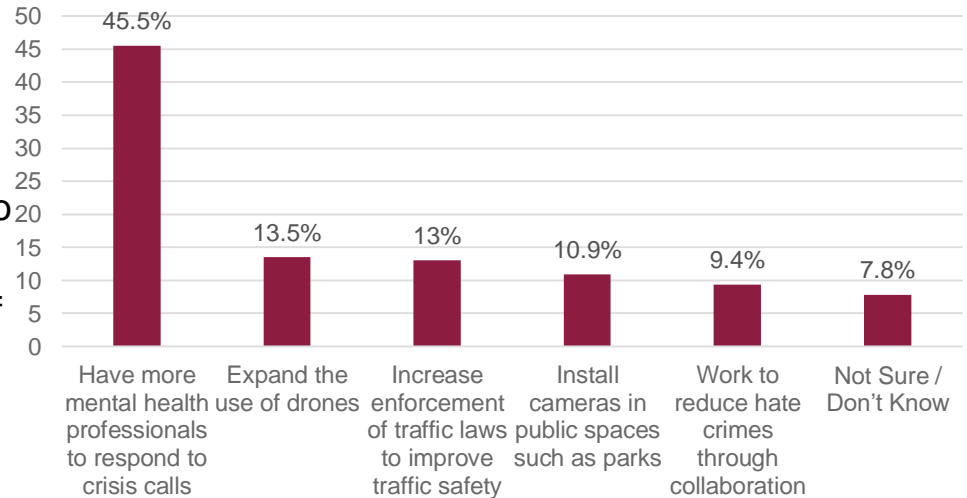
More than half of participants indicated they were satisfied with public safety in Mesa (**64%** said 4 or 5). A small share (**7.3%**) said they were not satisfied.



## Of the following list, which item would you like the City of Mesa to prioritize in the coming year?

- Have more **mental health professionals** respond to crisis calls
- **Install cameras** in public places such as parks
- **Expand the use of drones** for crime scene surveillance and investigation
- **Work to reduce hate crimes**
- **Increase enforcement of traffic laws** to improve traffic safety

The largest share of respondents (**45.5%**) chose having more mental health professionals responding to crisis calls as a priority. Other items were much less likely to be prioritized, with the next largest share of respondents choosing expanding the use of drones at crime scenes (**13.5%**).



# Thank you