Achieving Community Alignment in California Local Government

Report Deck

Prepared for Public Use

08-28-2024

CivicPulse

Outline

1. Background
2. Alignment of Community Priorities
    - Overall, Officials vs Residents
    - Breakdowns of Priorities by Community Characteristics
    - Breakdowns of Priorities by Official Demographics
    - Breakdowns of Priorities by Resident Demographics
3. Constituent Communication
    - Preferred Methods, Officials vs Residents
    - Perceived Difficulty of Scheduling, Officials vs Residents

Background

Overview of Local Elected Official Survey

- **Completed responses:** 254 responses
- **Government type**: 30 (county) vs. 224 (municipality)
- **Survey timeline:** October to November 2023
- **Survey administrator**: CivicPulse

Overview of Resident Survey

- **Completed responses:** 4,517 responses
- **Survey timeline:** August 2023
- **Survey administrator**: Berkeley IGS

Demographics of Resident Survey

Gender Group	Number of Respondents
Women	2,268
Men	2,302

Age Group	Number of Respondents
Under 50	2,287
Over 50	2,270

Racial/Ethnic Group	Number of Respondents
Hispanic/Latino	973
Black/African American	272
White	2,544
Asian American/Pacific Islander	435

Community Priorities – Question Text

Local Elected Officials

Below we present a list of issues that local communities in California might face. How would you prioritize each of them for your community?

Response Options: *Very high priority, somewhat high priority, Somewhat low priority, very low priority, not at all a priority*

- Clean air and water
- Improved roads and highways
- Improved public transportation
- Walkability of your community
- Well-maintained parks
- Preparing for natural disasters
- Services for residents in need
- Jobs and economic development
- Affordable housing
- Public safety
- High quality K-12 public education
- Accessible healthcare

Residents

The following is a list of issues that local communities in California might face. How high or low of a priority do you think each one should be in your community?

Response Options: *Very high priority, somewhat high priority, Somewhat low priority, very low priority, not at all a priority*

- Clean air and water
- Improved roads and highways
- Improved public transportation
- Walkability of your community
- Well-maintained parks
- Preparing for natural disasters
- Services for residents in need
- Jobs and economic development
- Affordable housing
- Public safety
- High quality K-12 public education
- Accessible healthcare

Constituent Communications – Question Text

Local Elected Officials

The following is a list of different ways constituents might communicate their concerns to local elected officials. How effective is each one in communicating with you?

Response Options: *Very effective, Somewhat effective, Not too effective, Not at all effective*

- Public meetings
- One-on-one meetings
- Social media
- Emails
- Letters
- Phone calls

How difficult or easy is it for constituents to schedule a meeting with you?

Response Options: *Very difficult, Somewhat difficult, Not very difficult, Not at difficult*

Residents

The following is a list of different ways of communicating concerns to local elected officials. How effective do you think each one would be in communicating with your local elected officials?

Response Options: *Very effective, Somewhat effective, Not too effective, Not at all effective*

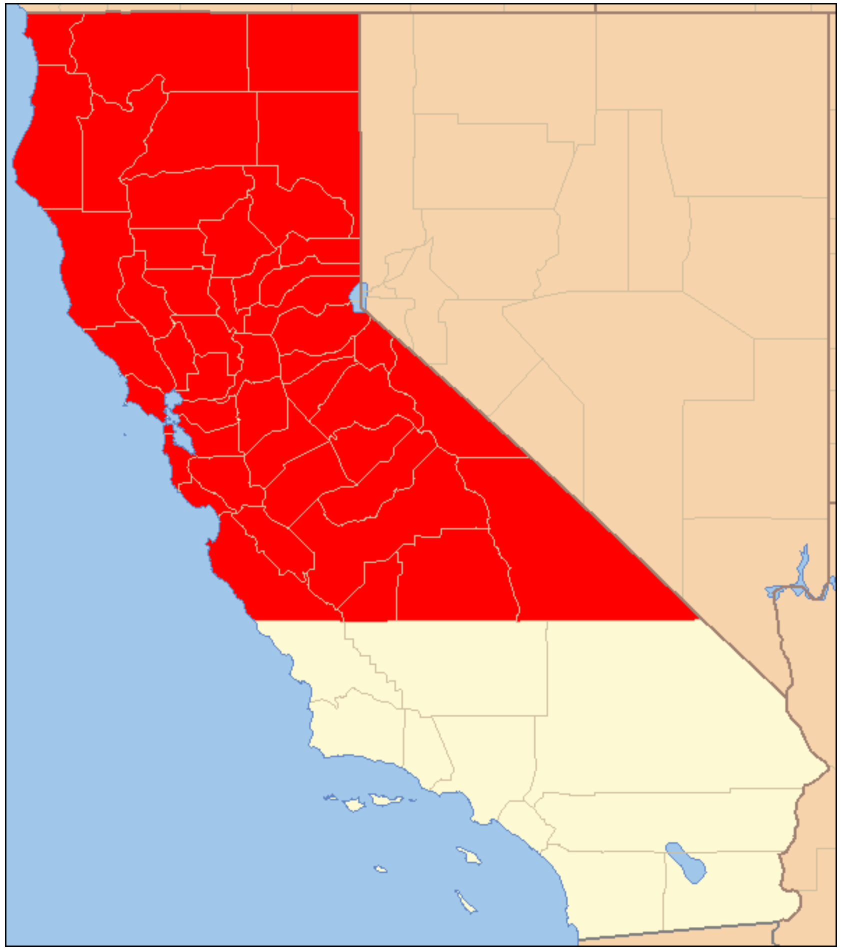
- Public meetings
- One-on-one meetings
- Social media
- Emails
- Letters
- Phone calls

How easy or difficult do you think it would be to schedule a meeting with one of your local elected officials?

Response Options: *Very difficult, Somewhat difficult, Not very difficult, Not at difficult*

CivicPulse

Regional Segmentation of California



Border Counties
North: Monterey, Kings, Tulare, Inyo
South: San Luis Obispo, Kern, San Bernadino

151 officials completed responses in North
103 officials completed responses in South

1,718 residents completed responses in North
2,299 residents completed responses in South

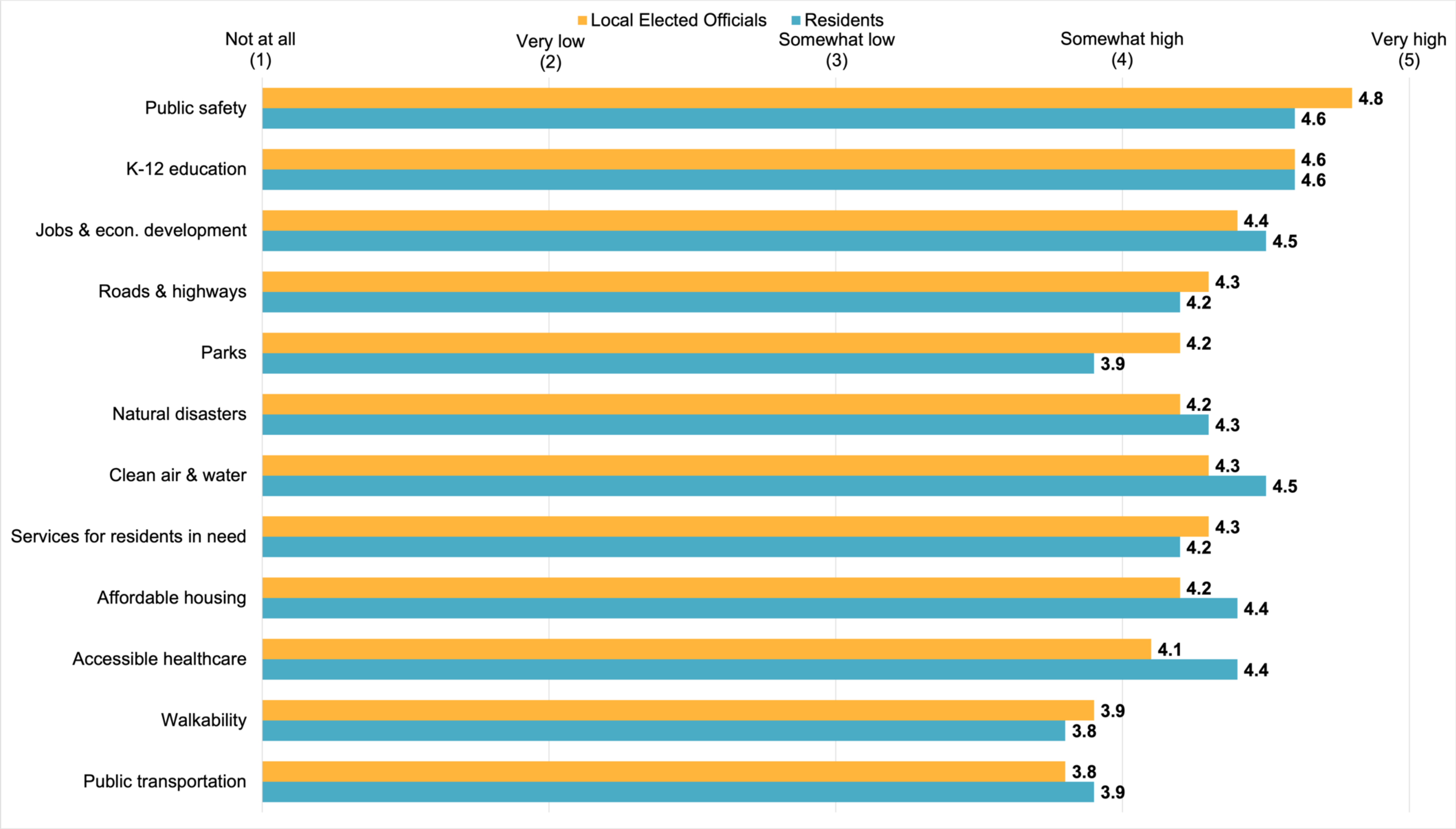
CivicPulse

Overall Alignment of Community Priorities

Priority Ranking of Residents vs Local Elected Officials (Overall)

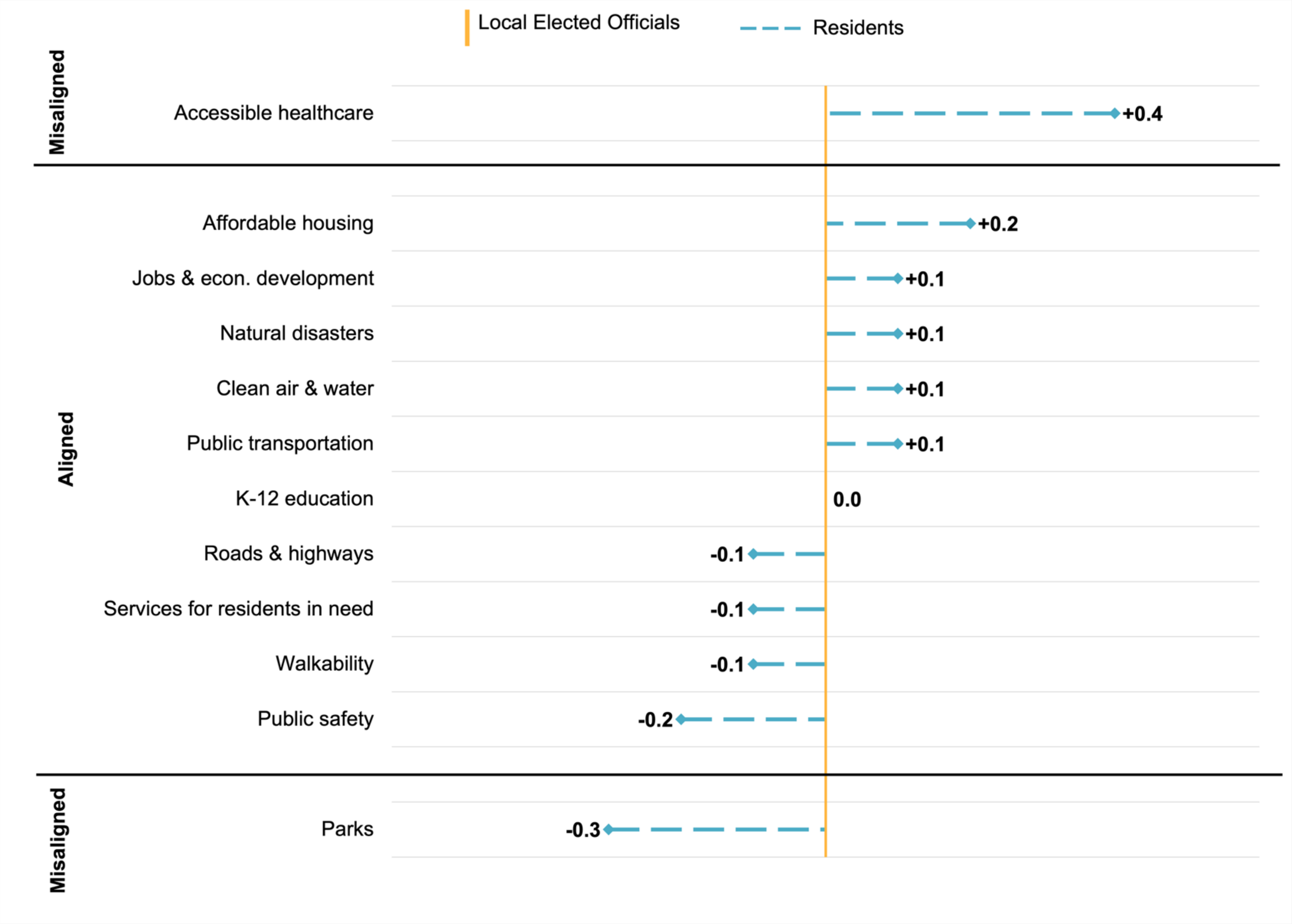
Policy area	Residents	Local elected officials
Public safety	1	1
K-12 education	2	2
Jobs and economic development	3	3
Clean air and water	4	4
Accessible healthcare	5	10
Affordable housing	6	9
Natural disasters	7	7
Roads and highways	8	5
Services for residents in need	9	6
Public transportation	10	12
Parks	11	8
Walkability	12	11

Priorities of Local Elected Officials vs Residents (Overall)



CivicPulse

Priorities of Local Elected Officials vs Residents (Overall Difference)



CivicPulse

Statistical Significance of Community Priority Alignment, Officials vs. Residents

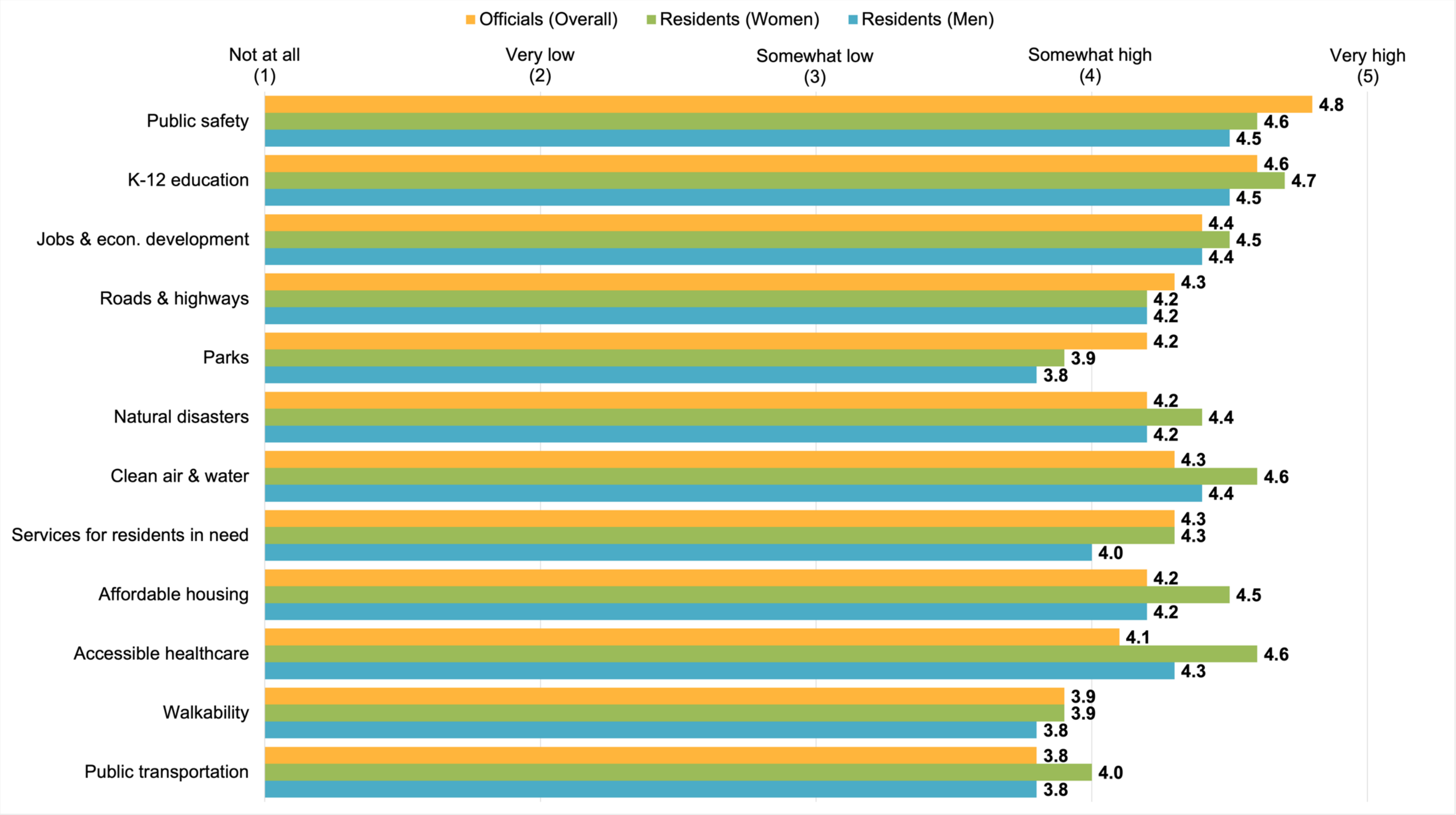
Policy area	Mean officials - weighted	Mean residents - weighted	Difference - weighted	Mean officials - unweighted	Mean residents - unweighted	Difference - unweighted	P value
Public safety	4.776	4.605	0.171	4.739	4.553	0.186	0.000
K-12 education	4.576	4.578	-0.002	4.562	4.599	-0.037	0.401
Jobs & econ. development	4.38	4.504	-0.124	4.42	4.436	-0.016	0.763
Roads & highways	4.289	4.192	0.097	4.316	4.166	0.15	0.005
Parks	4.181	3.85	0.331	4.117	3.871	0.246	0.000
Natural disasters	4.193	4.265	-0.072	4.202	4.287	-0.085	0.099
Clean air & water	4.344	4.47	-0.126	4.265	4.479	-0.214	0.000
Services for residents in need	4.264	4.155	0.109	4.183	4.156	0.027	0.622
Affordable housing	4.179	4.391	-0.211	4.296	4.364	-0.068	0.254
Accessible healthcare	4.075	4.449	-0.374	4.108	4.433	-0.326	0.000
Walkability	3.892	3.821	0.071	3.893	3.805	0.087	0.171
Public transportation	3.81	3.879	-0.069	3.79	3.918	-0.128	0.051

Breakdowns of Priorities by Resident Demographics

Comparison of Policy Priority Ranking between Gender Groups

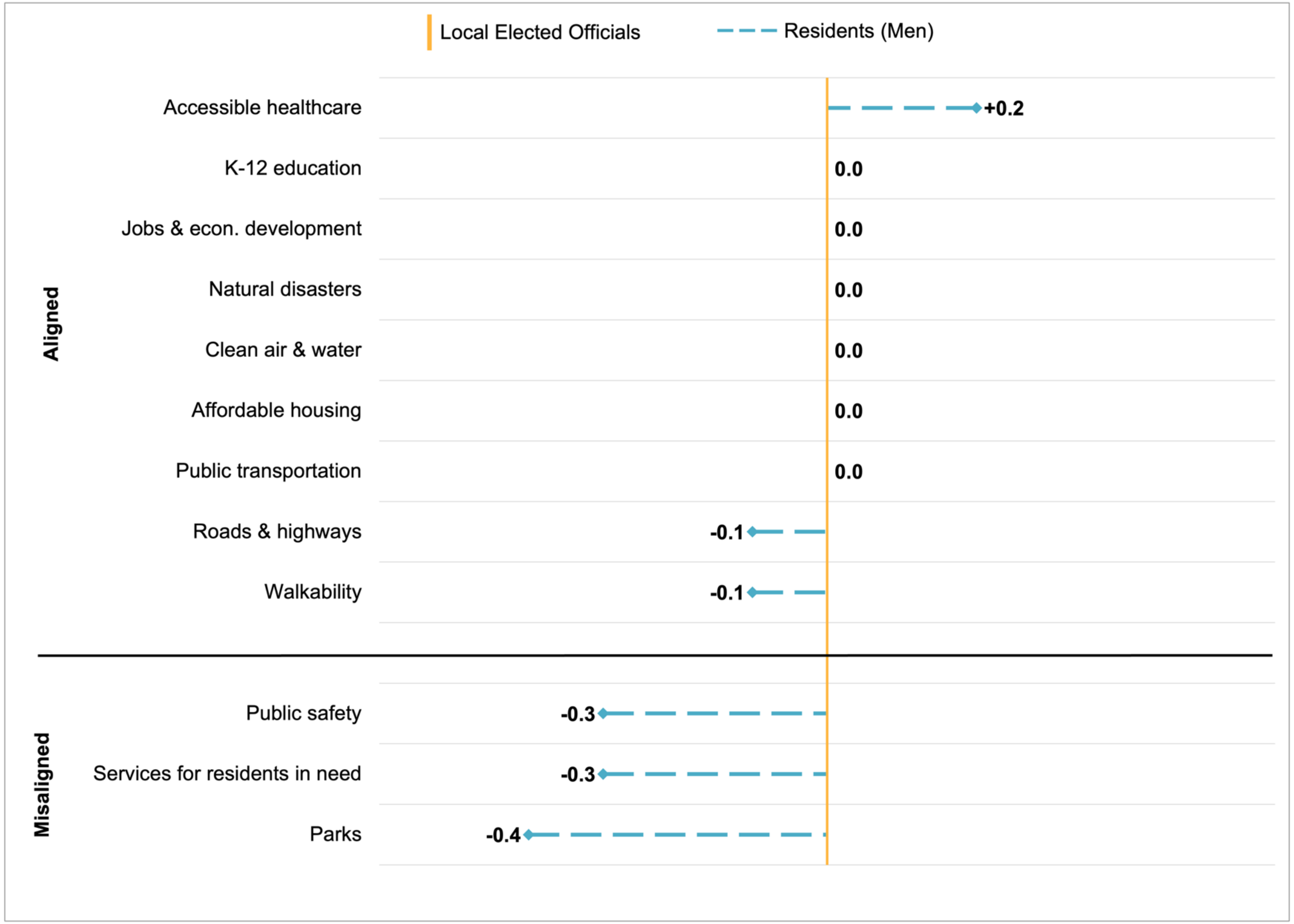
Policy area	Local elected officials	Residents (women)	Residents (men)
Public Safety	1	2	2
K-12 education	2	1	1
Jobs and economic development	3	6	3
Clean air and water	4	3	4
Roads and highways	5	9	8
Services for residents in need	6	8	9
Natural disasters	7	7	7
Parks	8	11	11
Affordable housing	9	5	6
Accessible healthcare	10	4	5
Walkability	11	12	12
Public transportation	12	10	10

Priorities of Local Elected Officials vs. Women and Men residents



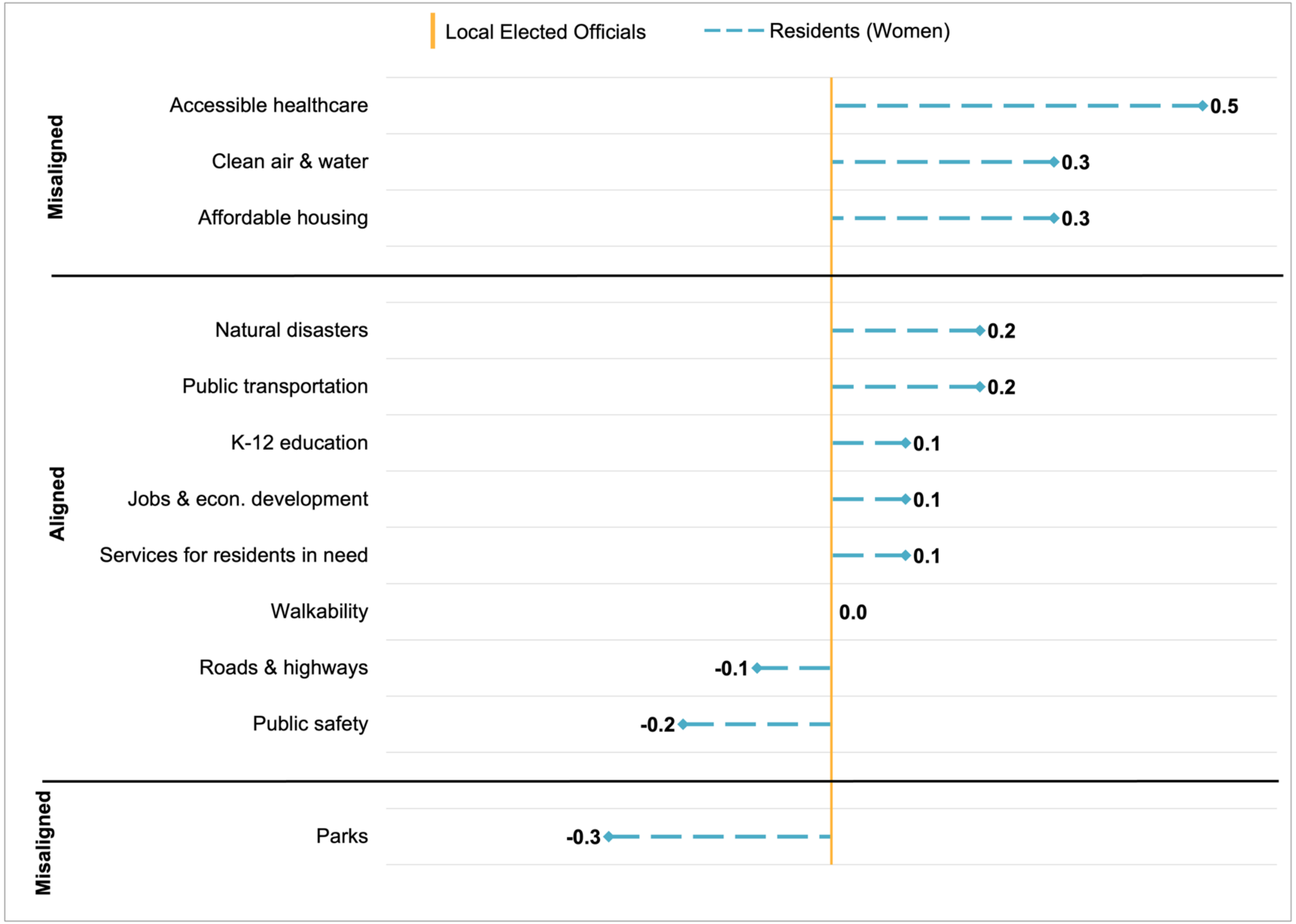
CivicPulse

Difference in Priorities of Local Elected Officials vs. Men Residents



CivicPulse

Difference in Priorities of Local Elected Officials vs. Women Residents



CivicPulse

Statistical Significance of Community Priority Alignment, Officials vs. Women Residents

Policy area	Mean officials - weighted	Mean residents - weighted	Difference - weighted	Mean officials - unweighted	Mean residents - unweighted	Difference - unweighted	P value
Public safety	4.776	4.607	0.169	4.739	4.607	0.132	0.000
K-12 education	4.576	4.662	-0.086	4.562	4.662	-0.1	0.401
Jobs & econ. development	4.38	4.494	-0.114	4.42	4.494	-0.074	0.763
Roads & highways	4.289	4.174	0.115	4.316	4.174	0.142	0.005
Parks	4.181	3.94	0.241	4.117	3.94	0.177	0.000
Natural disasters	4.193	4.4	-0.207	4.202	4.4	-0.198	0.099
Clean air & water	4.344	4.593	-0.249	4.265	4.593	-0.328	0.000
Services for residents in need	4.264	4.32	-0.056	4.183	4.32	-0.138	0.622
Affordable housing	4.179	4.514	-0.335	4.296	4.514	-0.218	0.254
Accessible healthcare	4.075	4.583	-0.508	4.108	4.583	-0.476	0.000
Walkability	3.892	3.851	0.041	3.893	3.851	0.042	0.171
Public transportation	3.81	3.997	-0.187	3.79	3.997	-0.207	0.051

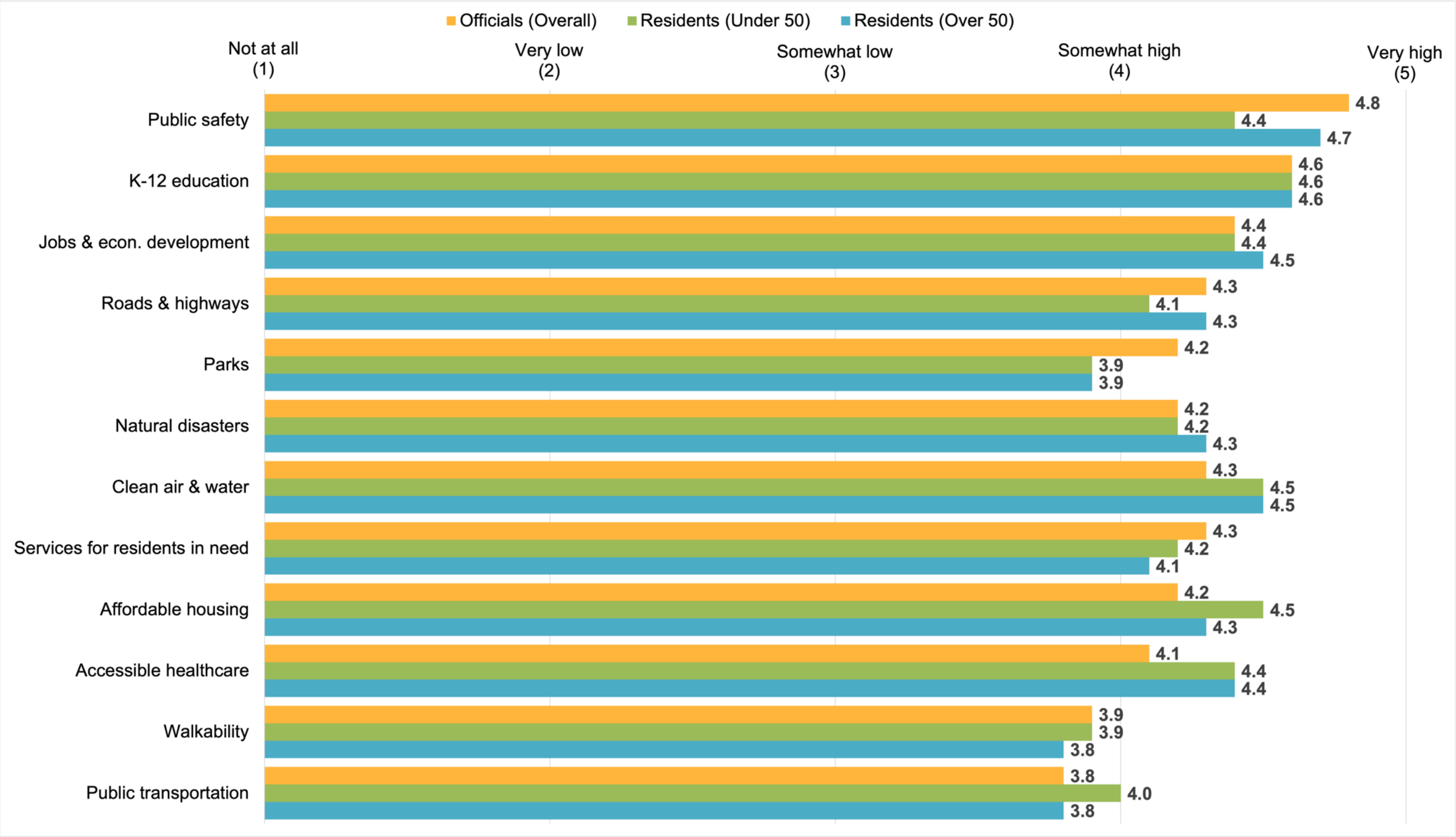
Statistical Significance: Officials vs Residents - Men

Policy area	Mean officials - weighted	Mean residents - weighted	Difference - weighted	Mean officials - unweighted	Mean residents - unweighted	Difference - unweighted	P value
Public safety	4.776	4.5	0.276	4.739	4.5	0.239	0.000
K-12 education	4.576	4.535	0.041	4.562	4.535	0.027	0.401
Jobs & econ. development	4.38	4.376	0.004	4.42	4.376	0.044	0.763
Roads & highways	4.289	4.364	-0.02	4.265	4.364	-0.099	0.000
Parks	4.181	4.16	0.129	4.316	4.16	0.156	0.005
Natural disasters	4.193	3.995	0.27	4.183	3.995	0.188	0.622
Clean air & water	4.344	4.178	0.015	4.202	4.178	0.025	0.099
Services for residents in need	4.264	3.807	0.375	4.117	3.807	0.31	0.000
Affordable housing	4.179	4.215	-0.036	4.296	4.215	0.081	0.254
Accessible healthcare	4.075	4.286	-0.212	4.108	4.286	-0.179	0.000
Walkability	3.892	3.762	0.13	3.893	3.762	0.131	0.171
Public transportation	3.81	3.838	-0.028	3.79	3.838	-0.048	0.051

Comparison of Policy Priority Rankings between Age Groups

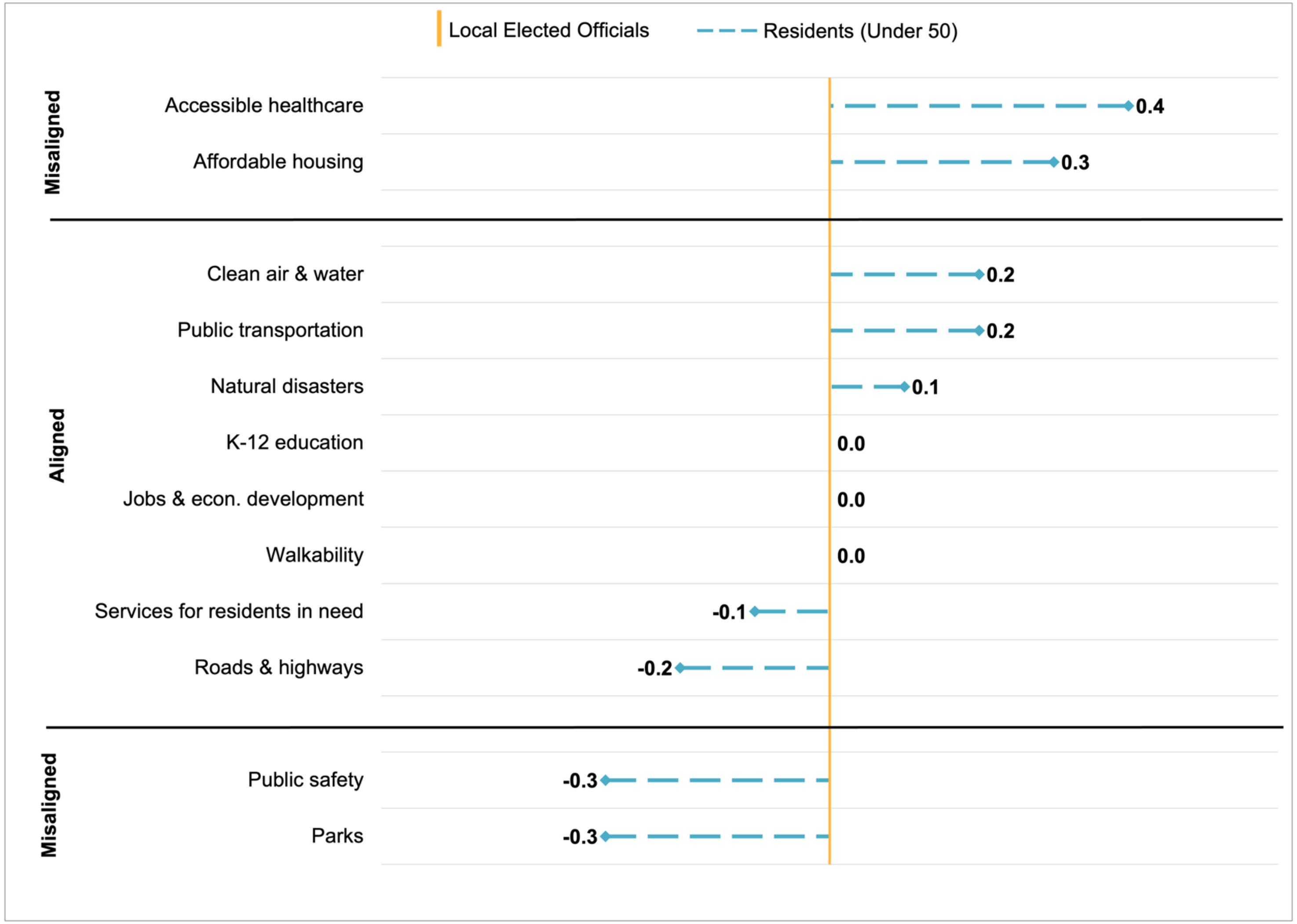
Policy area	Local elected officials	Residents (under 50)	Residents (over 50)
Public Safety	1	5	1
K-12 education	2	1	2
Jobs and economic development	3	6	3
Clean air and water	4	2	4
Roads and highways	5	9	7
Services for residents in need	6	8	9
Natural disasters	7	7	6
Parks	8	11	10
Affordable housing	9	3	8
Accessible healthcare	10	4	5
Walkability	11	12	12
Public transportation	12	10	11

Priorities of Local Elected Officials vs. Residents Under and Over 50



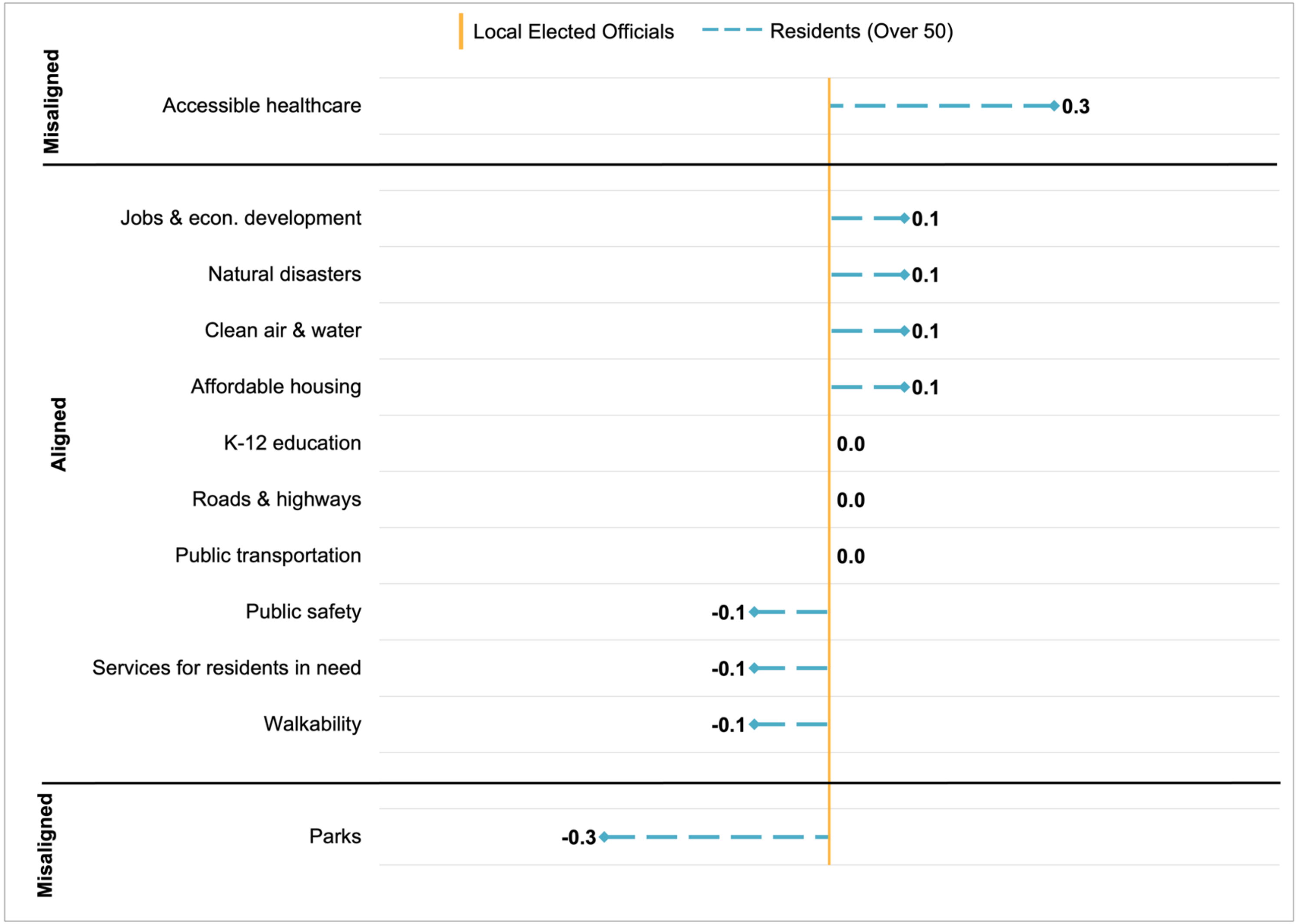
CivicPulse

Difference in Priorities of Local Elected Officials vs. Residents Under 50



CivicPulse

Difference in Priorities of Local Elected Officials vs. Residents Over 50



CivicPulse

Statistical Significance: Officials vs Residents Under 50

Policy area	Mean officials - weighted	Mean residents - weighted	Difference - weighted	Mean officials - unweighted	Mean residents - unweighted	Difference - unweighted	P value
Public safety	4.776	4.442	0.334	4.739	4.442	0.297	0.000
K-12 education	4.576	4.577	-0.001	4.562	4.577	-0.015	0.401
Jobs & econ. development	4.38	4.397	-0.017	4.42	4.397	0.023	0.763
Roads & highways	4.344	4.498	-0.154	4.265	4.498	-0.233	0.000
Parks	4.289	4.059	0.229	4.316	4.059	0.257	0.005
Natural disasters	4.264	4.187	0.077	4.183	4.187	-0.004	0.622
Clean air & water	4.193	4.24	-0.047	4.202	4.24	-0.037	0.099
Services for residents in need	4.181	3.86	0.321	4.117	3.86	0.257	0.000
Affordable housing	4.179	4.475	-0.296	4.296	4.475	-0.179	0.254
Accessible healthcare	4.075	4.445	-0.371	4.108	4.445	-0.338	0.000
Walkability	3.892	3.857	0.035	3.893	3.857	0.036	0.171
Public transportation	3.81	4.009	-0.198	3.79	4.009	-0.218	0.051

Statistical Significance: Officials vs Residents Over 50

Policy area	Mean officials - weighted	Mean residents - weighted	Difference - weighted	Mean officials - unweighted	Mean residents - unweighted	Difference - unweighted	P value
Public safety	4.776	4.658	0.118	4.739	4.658	0.081	0.000
K-12 education	4.576	4.62	-0.044	4.562	4.62	-0.058	0.401
Jobs & econ. development	4.38	4.472	-0.092	4.42	4.472	-0.052	0.763
Roads & highways	4.344	4.461	-0.117	4.265	4.461	-0.195	0.000
Parks	4.289	4.27	0.019	4.316	4.27	0.046	0.005
Natural disasters	4.264	4.125	0.139	4.183	4.125	0.057	0.622
Clean air & water	4.193	4.333	-0.14	4.202	4.333	-0.131	0.099
Services for residents in need	4.181	3.882	0.3	4.117	3.882	0.235	0.000
Affordable housing	4.179	4.261	-0.082	4.296	4.261	0.035	0.254
Accessible healthcare	4.075	4.422	-0.347	4.108	4.422	-0.314	0.000
Walkability	3.892	3.756	0.136	3.893	3.756	0.137	0.171
Public transportation	3.81	3.832	-0.022	3.79	3.832	-0.041	0.051

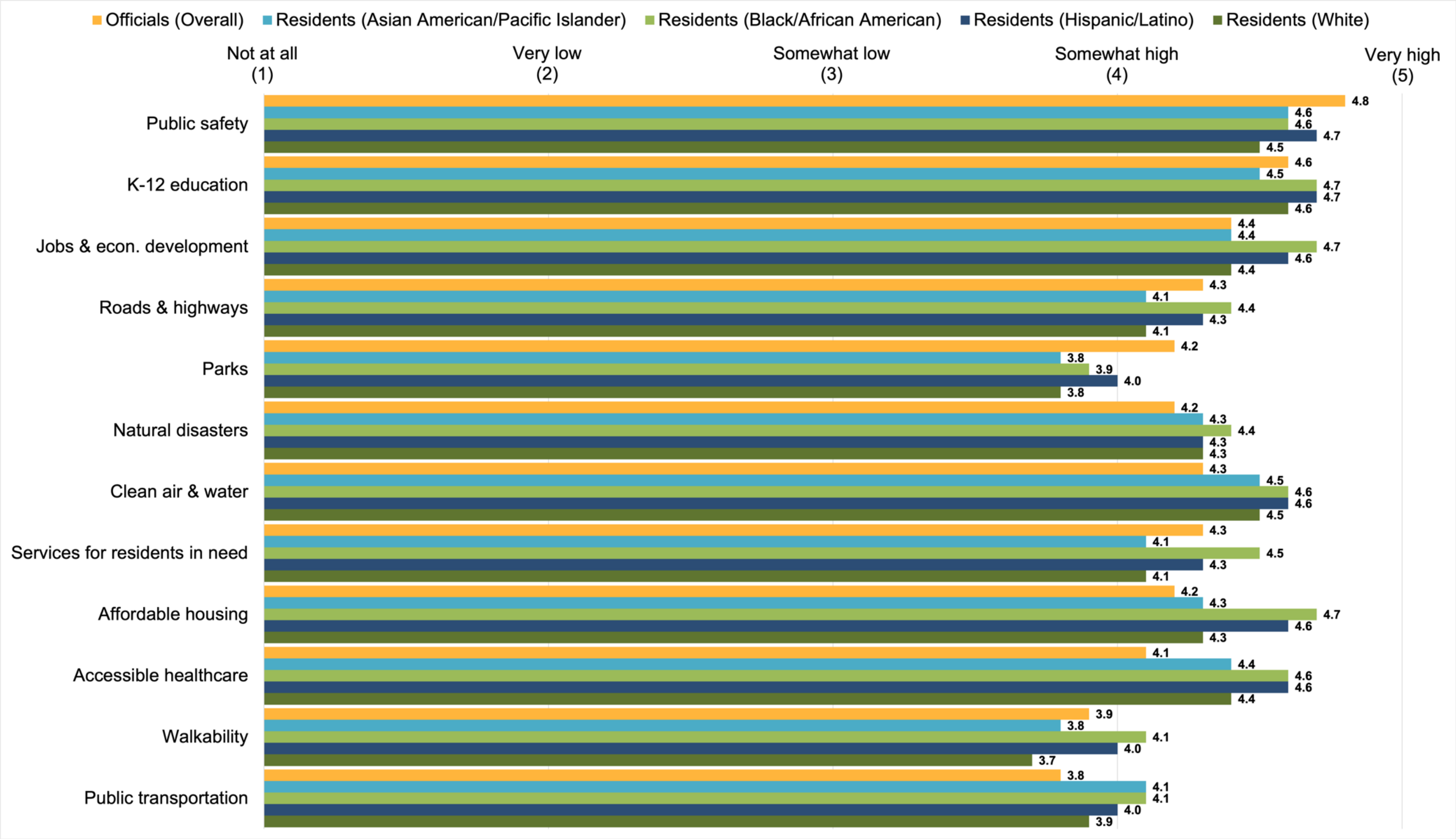
CivicPulse

Comparison of Policy Priority Ranking between Racial/Ethnic Groups

Policy area	Local elected officials (overall)	Residents (Asian American/Pacific Islander)	Residents (Black/African American)	Residents (Hispanic/Latino)	Residents (White)
Public Safety	1	1	4	1	2
K-12 education	2	2	3	2	1
Jobs and economic development	3	5	1	3	5
Clean air and water	4	3	6	6	3
Roads and highways	5	10	9	9	8
Services for residents in need	6	8	7	8	9
Natural disasters	7	7	8	7	7
Parks	8	12	12	12	11
Affordable housing	9	6	2	5	6
Accessible healthcare	10	4	5	4	4
Walkability	11	11	11	10	12
Public transportation	12	9	10	11	10

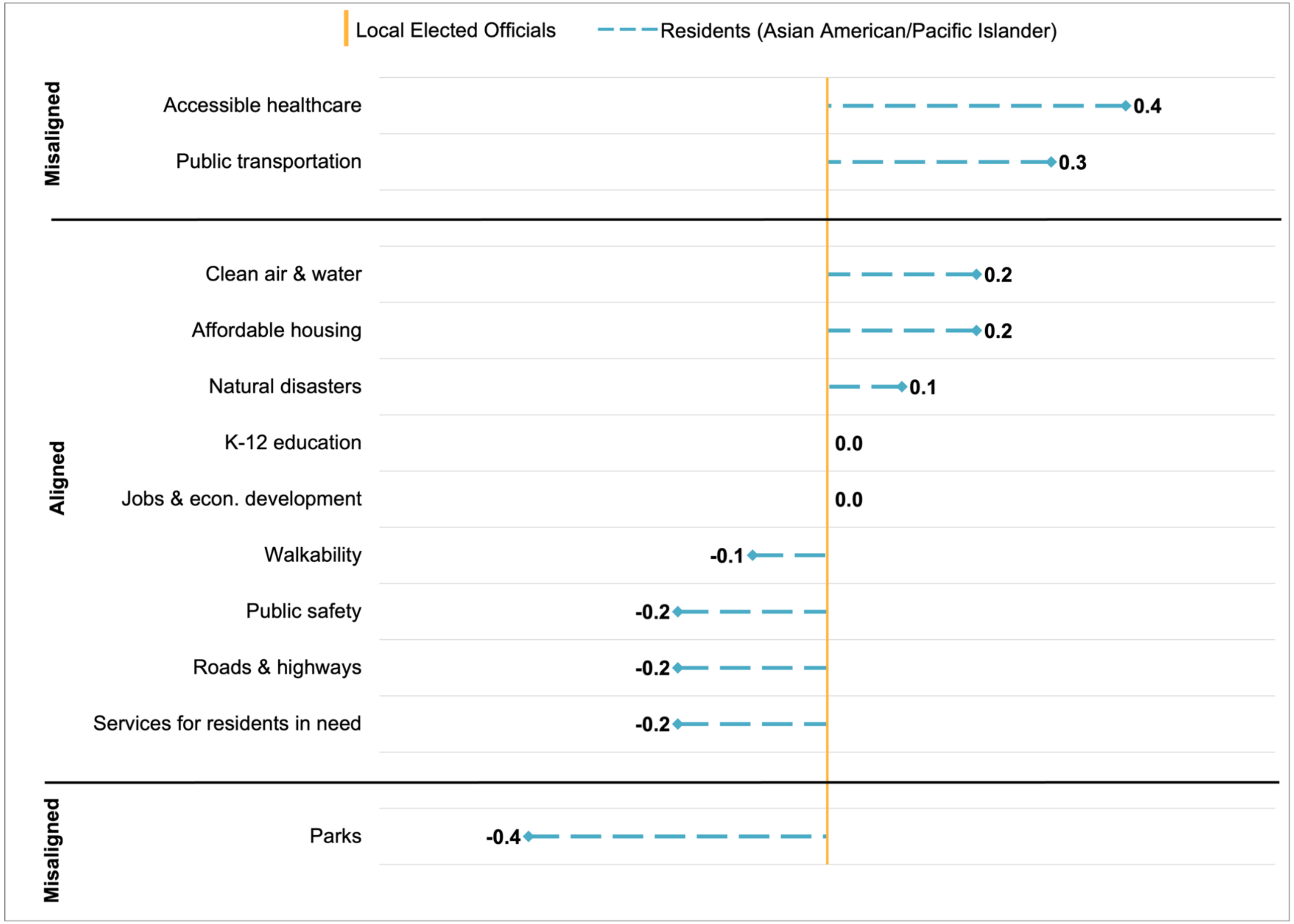
CivicPulse

Priorities of Local Elected Officials vs. Residents by Racial/Ethnic Group



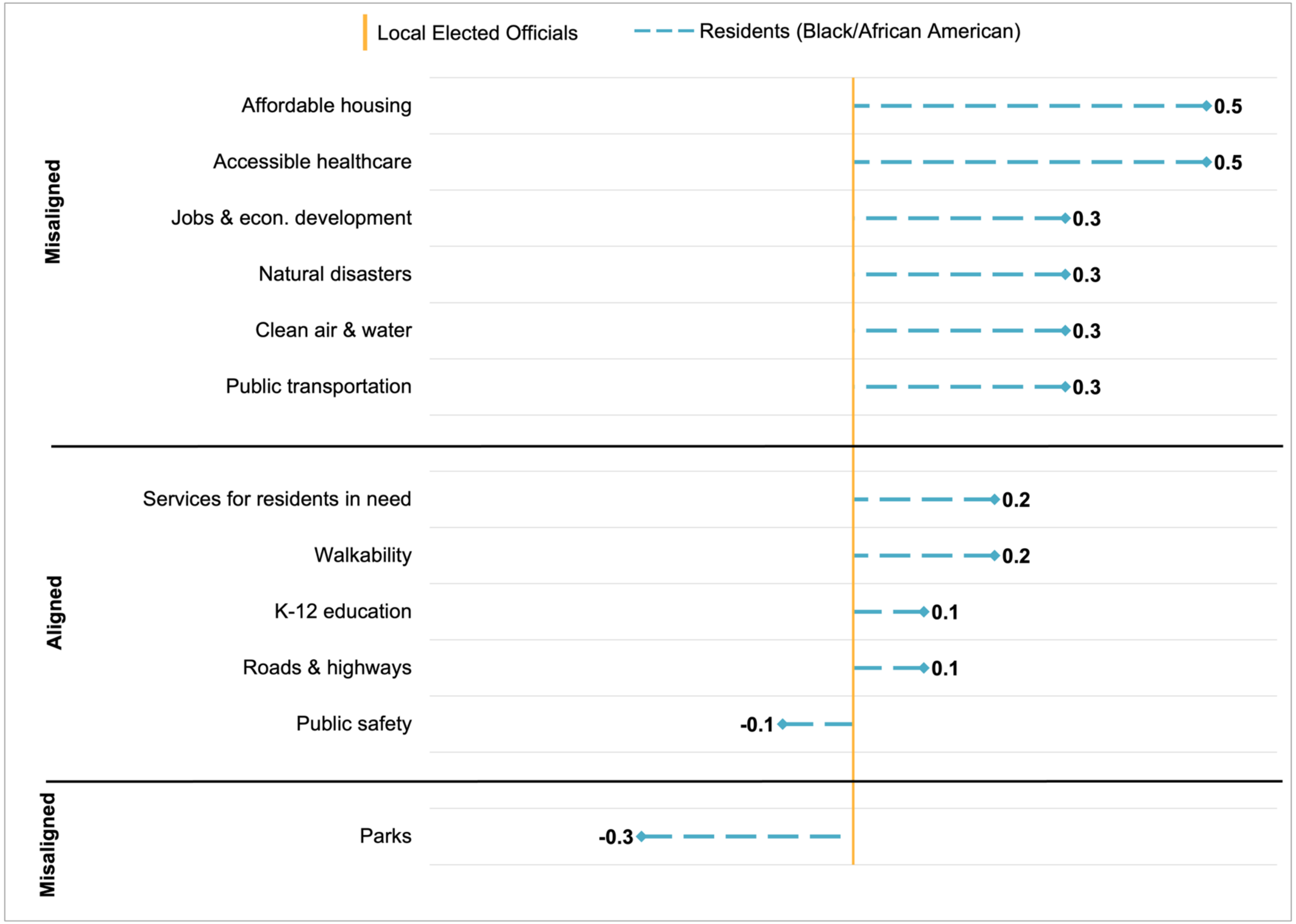
CivicPulse

Difference in Priorities of Local Elected Officials vs. Asian American/Pacific Islander Residents



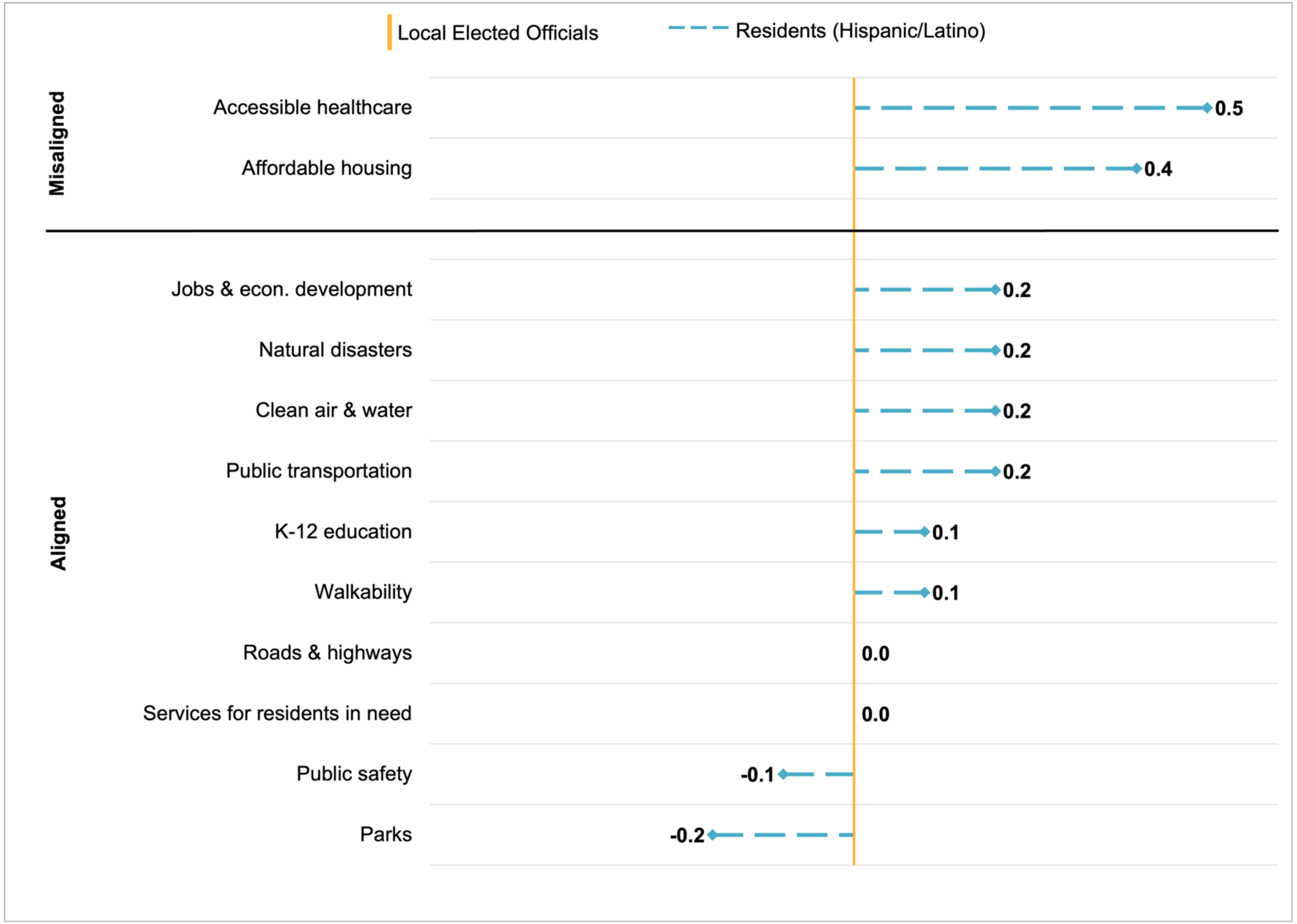
CivicPulse

Difference in Priorities of Local Elected Officials vs. Black/African American Residents



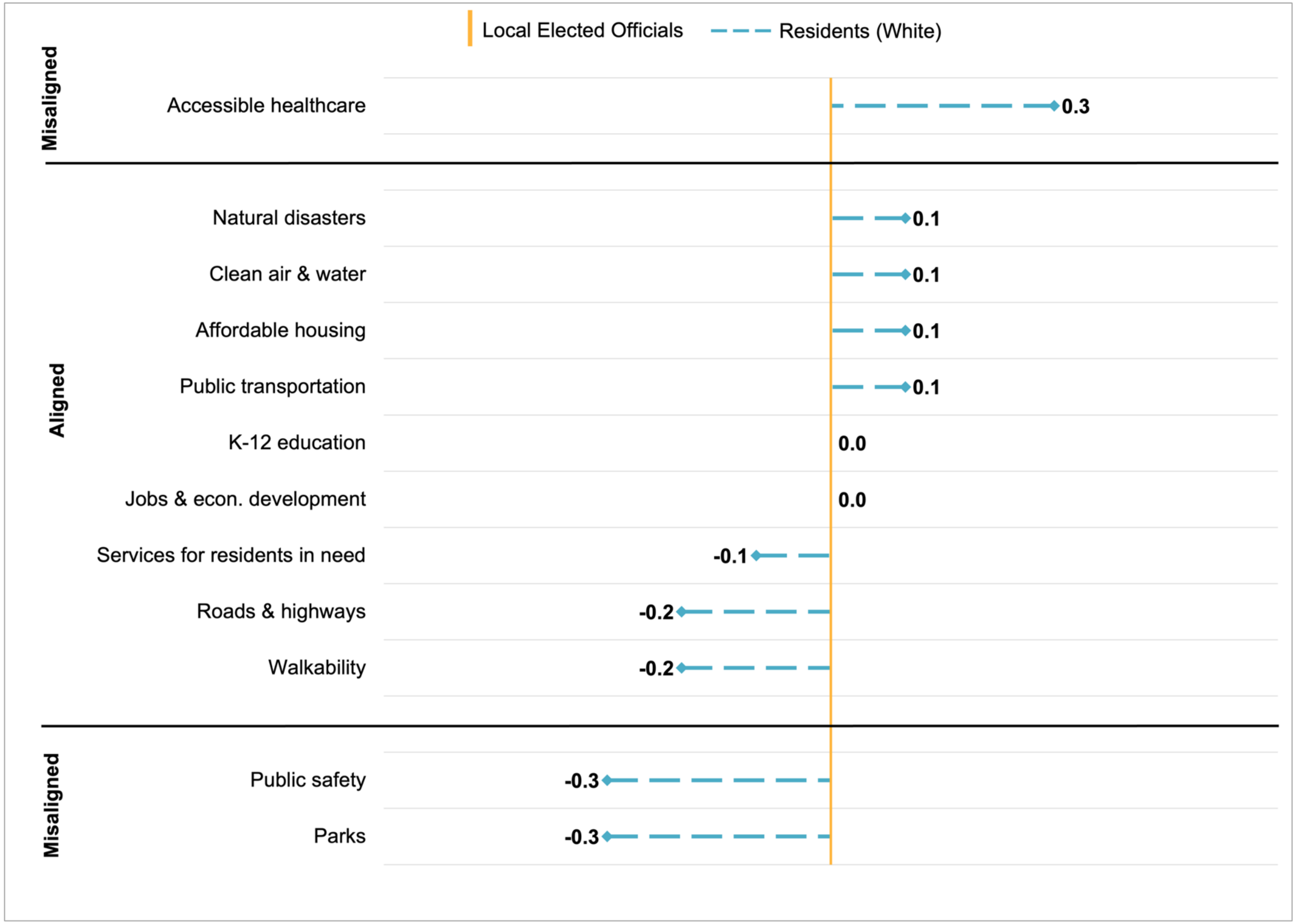
CivicPulse

Difference in Priorities of Local Elected Officials vs. Hispanic/Latino Residents



CivicPulse

Difference in Priorities of Local Elected Officials vs. White Residents



CivicPulse

Statistical Significance: Officials vs Asian American/Pacific Islander Residents

Policy area	Mean officials - weighted	Mean residents - weighted	Difference - weighted	Mean officials - unweighted	Mean residents - unweighted	Difference - unweighted	P value
Public safety	4.776	4.55	0.226	4.739	4.55	0.189	0.000
K-12 education	4.576	4.546	0.03	4.562	4.546	0.016	0.401
Jobs & econ. development	4.38	4.4	-0.02	4.42	4.4	0.02	0.763
Roads & highways	4.344	4.498	-0.154	4.265	4.498	-0.232	0.000
Parks	4.289	4.056	0.233	4.316	4.056	0.26	0.005
Natural disasters	4.264	4.098	0.166	4.183	4.098	0.084	0.622
Clean air & water	4.193	4.253	-0.06	4.202	4.253	-0.05	0.099
Services for residents in need	4.181	3.784	0.397	4.117	3.784	0.333	0.000
Affordable housing	4.179	4.34	-0.161	4.296	4.34	-0.044	0.254
Accessible healthcare	4.075	4.442	-0.367	4.108	4.442	-0.334	0.000
Walkability	3.892	3.838	0.054	3.893	3.838	0.055	0.171
Public transportation	3.81	4.097	-0.287	3.79	4.097	-0.307	0.051

Statistical Significance: Officials vs Black/African American Residents

Policy area	Mean officials - weighted	Mean residents - weighted	Difference - weighted	Mean officials - unweighted	Mean residents - unweighted	Difference - unweighted	P value
Public safety	4.776	4.645	0.131	4.739	4.645	0.094	0.000
K-12 education	4.576	4.65	-0.074	4.562	4.65	-0.087	0.401
Jobs & econ. development	4.38	4.702	-0.322	4.42	4.702	-0.282	0.763
Roads & highways	4.344	4.585	-0.241	4.265	4.585	-0.32	0.000
Parks	4.289	4.356	-0.067	4.316	4.356	-0.04	0.005
Natural disasters	4.264	4.479	-0.215	4.183	4.479	-0.296	0.622
Clean air & water	4.193	4.436	-0.243	4.202	4.436	-0.234	0.099
Services for residents in need	4.181	3.929	0.252	4.117	3.929	0.188	0.000
Affordable housing	4.179	4.679	-0.5	4.296	4.679	-0.383	0.254
Accessible healthcare	4.075	4.609	-0.534	4.108	4.609	-0.501	0.000
Walkability	3.892	4.056	-0.164	3.893	4.056	-0.163	0.171
Public transportation	3.81	4.093	-0.282	3.79	4.093	-0.302	0.051

Statistical Significance: Officials vs Hispanic/Latino Residents

Policy area	Mean officials - weighted	Mean residents - weighted	Difference - weighted	Mean officials - unweighted	Mean residents - unweighted	Difference - unweighted	P value
Public safety	4.776	4.671	0.105	4.739	4.671	0.068	0.000
K-12 education	4.576	4.65	-0.074	4.562	4.65	-0.088	0.401
Jobs & econ. development	4.38	4.586	-0.206	4.42	4.586	-0.166	0.763
Roads & highways	4.344	4.55	-0.206	4.265	4.55	-0.285	0.000
Parks	4.289	4.262	0.027	4.316	4.262	0.054	0.005
Natural disasters	4.264	4.265	-0.001	4.183	4.265	-0.082	0.622
Clean air & water	4.193	4.341	-0.148	4.202	4.341	-0.139	0.099
Services for residents in need	4.181	3.997	0.184	4.117	3.997	0.12	0.000
Affordable housing	4.179	4.557	-0.378	4.296	4.557	-0.261	0.254
Accessible healthcare	4.075	4.575	-0.5	4.108	4.575	-0.468	0.000
Walkability	3.892	4.01	-0.119	3.893	4.01	-0.117	0.171
Public transportation	3.81	4.002	-0.192	3.79	4.002	-0.212	0.051

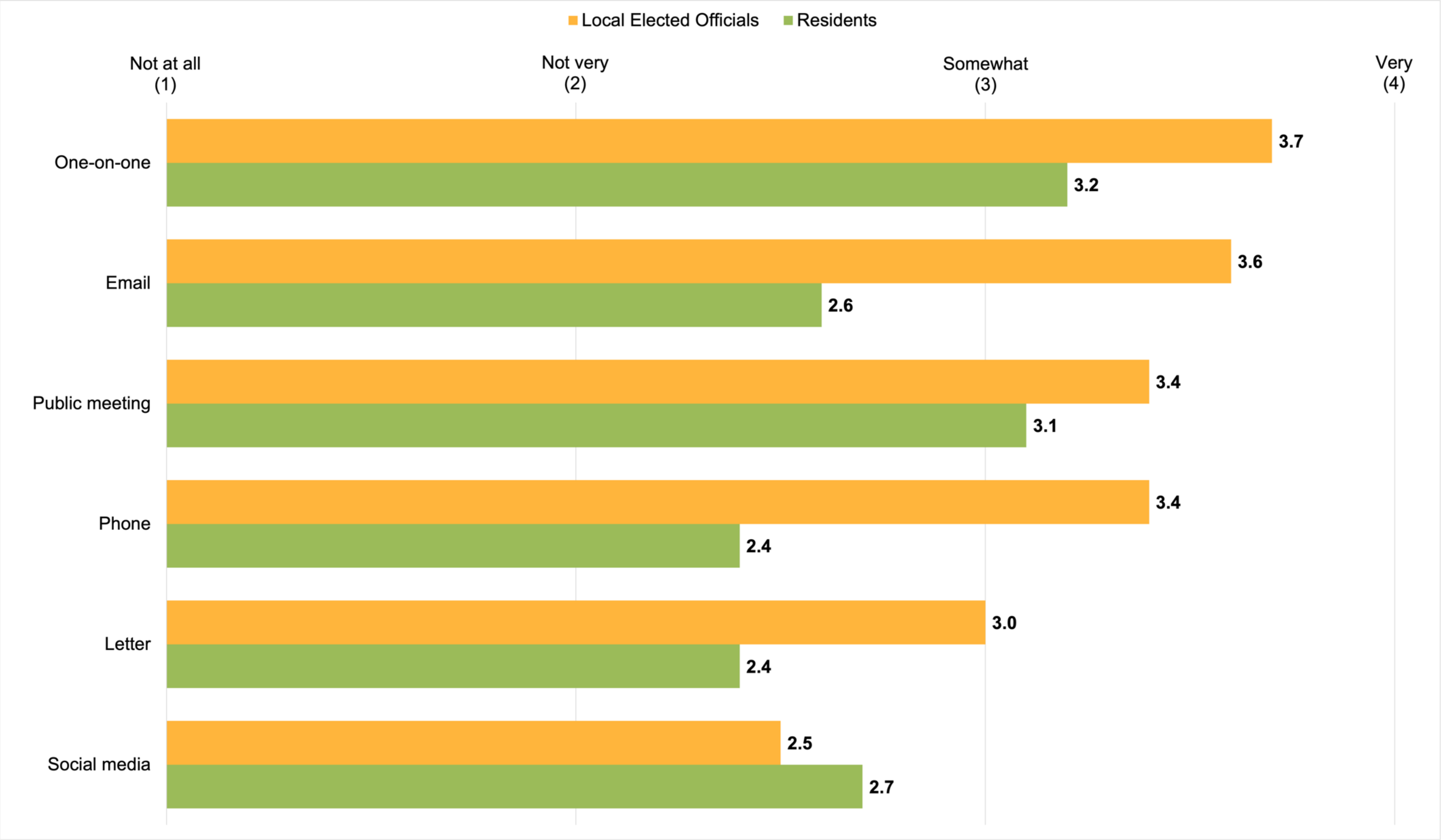
CivicPulse

Statistical Significance: Officials vs White Residents

Policy area	Mean officials - weighted	Mean residents - weighted	Difference - weighted	Mean officials - unweighted	Mean residents - unweighted	Difference - unweighted	P value
Public safety	4.776	4.503	0.273	4.739	4.503	0.235	0.000
K-12 education	4.576	4.594	-0.017	4.562	4.594	-0.031	0.401
Jobs & econ. development	4.38	4.359	0.021	4.42	4.359	0.061	0.763
Roads & highways	4.344	4.474	-0.13	4.265	4.474	-0.209	0.000
Parks	4.289	4.131	0.158	4.316	4.131	0.185	0.005
Natural disasters	4.264	4.129	0.136	4.183	4.129	0.054	0.622
Clean air & water	4.193	4.278	-0.085	4.202	4.278	-0.076	0.099
Services for residents in need	4.181	3.844	0.337	4.117	3.844	0.273	0.000
Affordable housing	4.179	4.31	-0.131	4.296	4.31	-0.014	0.254
Accessible healthcare	4.075	4.402	-0.327	4.108	4.402	-0.294	0.000
Walkability	3.892	3.72	0.172	3.893	3.72	0.173	0.171
Public transportation	3.81	3.872	-0.062	3.79	3.872	-0.082	0.051

Perceived Effectiveness of Communication Methods

Effective Communication Methods, Local Elected Officials vs Residents



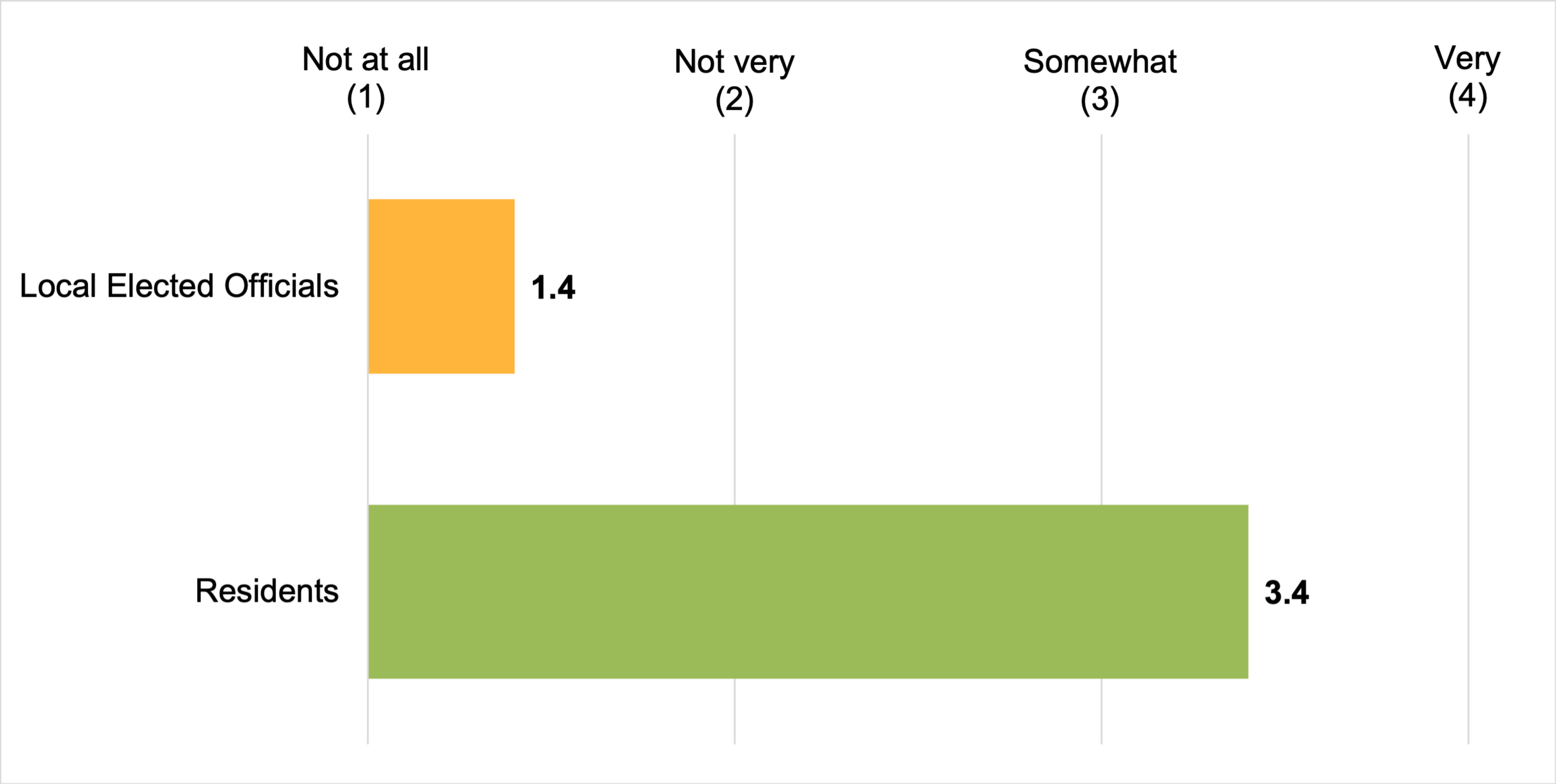
CivicPulse

Statistical Significance: Communication Methods (Overall)

Communication Method	Mean officials - weighted	Mean residents - weighted	Difference - weighted	Mean officials - unweighted	Mean residents - unweighted	Difference - unweighted	P value
One-on-one	3.73	3.199	0.53	3.75	3.253	0.497	0.000
Email	3.585	2.599	0.986	3.556	2.612	0.944	0.000
Public meeting	3.447	3.062	0.386	3.378	3.05	0.328	0.000
Phone	3.422	2.421	1.001	3.419	2.444	0.975	0.000
Letter	3.041	2.442	0.599	3.087	2.443	0.644	0.000
Social media	2.473	2.733	-0.259	2.427	2.662	-0.234	0.000

Perceived Difficulty of Scheduling Meetings

Perceived Difficulty of Scheduling Meeting, Local Elected Officials vs Residents



CivicPulse

Statistical Significance: Difficult to Schedule Meeting (Overall)

Communication Method	Mean officials - weighted	Mean residents - weighted	Difference - weighted	Mean officials - unweighted	Mean residents - unweighted	Difference - unweighted	P value
Scheduling difficulty	1.379	3.381	-2.002	1.419	3.365	-1.946	0

Contact details

For replication data or questions about our methodology, please email info@civicpulse.org.