



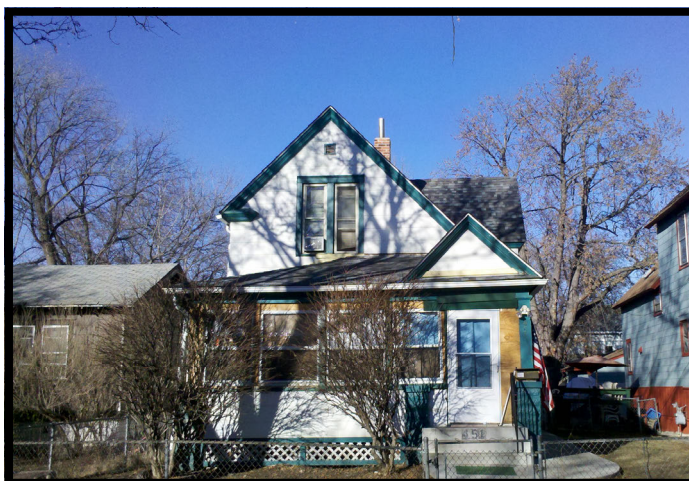
Neighborhood Revitalization

Frogtown Neighborhood 3-Year Follow-up Study



Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
Background	4
Purpose.....	4
Baseline Data Source & History of Frogtown Focus.....	5
Focus Area Activities 2011-2014.....	7
Property Conditions Survey	9
Methods.....	9
Vacancy Results.....	11
Building Conditions Results.....	13
Resident Perceptions Survey	18
Methods.....	18
Demographics.....	19
Neighborhood Satisfaction Results.....	20
Safety Results.....	28
Social Capital Results.....	29
Civic Engagement Results.....	30
Which Factors Correlated with Overall Satisfaction?	32
Key Findings & Future Implications	34
Appendix	35
A. NR8—Residential Property Assessment.....	35
B. NR5—Community Resident Focus Group Protocol.....	36
C. NR4—Community Resident Survey.....	39



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We would like to acknowledge those who provided the baseline data for this study: Specifically FNA for collecting the 2011 property condition data, and the Frogtown Focus partners (led by FNA, Springboard for the Arts, and TC Habitat) for collecting the 2012 resident perception data.

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Executive Summary

History and Purpose

Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity (TC Habitat) launched its Neighborhood Revitalization (NR) work in 2011 in coordination with a nationwide initiative of Habitat for Humanity International. Through this initiative, Habitat expands from a focus on impacting individual families to a broader goal of improving quality of life in an entire neighborhood.

This report summarizes findings from an evaluation of housing conditions and quality of life measures in TC Habitat's NR focus area in St. Paul. The evaluation examines data collected in 2014, and when possible, compares it to data collected in a 2011/2012 baseline study. TC Habitat and its community partners will use this evaluation to assess the impact of their work and to inform future action.

TC Habitat selected its St. Paul NR focus area in 2011, after being invited by Frogtown Neighborhood Association (FNA) to join Frogtown Focus, a community effort to improve a 16-block section of Frogtown (from University to Thomas, and Dale to Western). This collaborative planning process grew out of residents' concerns that, in the wake of the housing crisis and in anticipation of the light rail Green Line, there was a lack of responsiveness and coordination from housing developers. This lack of a coordinated housing plan was putting the neighborhood at risk for decline.

Frogtown Focus held approximately 20 community listening sessions and focus groups to create a resident-inspired development plan. In response to that plan, TC Habitat committed to doing focused housing work in the area each year, plus deepening its level of engagement with residents, partner organizations and Habitat homeowners. Habitat would be just one spoke on the wheel, partnering with many other local groups (housing developers, community organizations, public entities) doing housing work in the area.

Making such substantial programmatic changes also meant creating new ways to evaluate impact—to shift from looking at outcomes on the single home/single family level to looking at outcomes on the neighborhood level. Habitat committed to completing a follow-up evaluation 3 years later to track neighborhood level conditions and changes over time.

During the timeframe of this study (June 2011-June 2014), many organizations made housing investments in the 16-block focus area:

- TC Habitat built 4 homes on empty lots and completed 2 rehabs, and sold the homes to qualified first-time homebuyers with affordable mortgages. (TC Habitat also built 1 home and completed 1 rehab just outside the focus area.) TC Habitat's *A Brush with Kindness program* completed repairs on 5 homes in partnership with low-income homeowners. The organization also deepened its relationships with residents and partners, adapted its work in response to community desires, conducted outreach at community events, and provided support to neighborhood initiatives.
- The Frogtown Rondo Home Fund (FRHF) was formed in early 2013 in response to the housing concerns expressed in Frogtown Focus and other community input processes. It is a collaborative initiative of community organizations, philanthropy and local governments to coordinate and significantly improve housing conditions in the Frogtown and Rondo neighborhoods. One of FRHF's geographic focus areas includes the original Frogtown Focus/TC Habitat NR area, creating priority for housing activities consistent with the goals that came out of Frogtown Focus.
- The following additional housing activities were documented by FRHF as completed in the focus area: the rehab of 4 vacant homes by Preserve Frogtown, Model Cities, Ramsey County's 4R Program, and Greater Frogtown CDC; construction of 1 new home by Urban Homeworks; home improvement lending by Greater Frogtown CDC; site

acquisition and land banking of 7 properties by the City of St. Paul Housing and Redevelopment Authority and the Twin Cities Community Land Bank; resident outreach and organizing around housing programs, public safety, community gardening, voter registration, and tenant issues by FNA, the Frogtown/Rondo Action Network (FRAN), and the Community Stabilization Project (CSP).

Methods

Property Conditions: In summer of 2011, Frogtown Neighborhood Association conducted visual assessments of the exteriors of most parcels in the focus area. In May and June of 2014, TC Habitat for Humanity completed follow-up assessments of every parcel in the focus area using the Success Measures Data Systems (SMDS) tool *NR8—Residential Property Assessment* (see Appendix A). The results of both surveys were then converted to a common scale to be able to compare conditions across years. Due to this conversion of scale, conclusions were drawn loosely in this report.

Resident Perceptions: In January-August 2012, Frogtown Focus used the SMDS tool *NR5-Community Resident Focus Group Protocol* (see Appendix B) to collect resident perceptions of quality of life in a focus group format. In May and June of 2014, TC Habitat gathered follow-up information by collecting individual surveys from 116 of the 458 households (25%) in the area using the SMDS tool *NR4—Community Resident Survey* (see Appendix C). This population and response rate means the survey was statistically significant with a 95% confidence level and 8% margin of error. When comparing resident perceptions between 2012 and 2014, the differences in methodologies between the years must be taken into account. Evaluation best practice allows data from focus groups to be compared side by side with data from surveys, but conclusions must be drawn very loosely. Therefore, comparisons of perceptions across years in this report can point to possible trends but are not statistically significant.

Interpretation: The findings from this evaluation were shared with 28 people representing 18 community partners at the December 4, 2014 FRHF meeting, and in one-on-one conversations with partners. The data spurred great discussions; partner comments and interpretations are included in the results and conclusions sections of this report.

Results and Conclusions

What do the data tell us about the impact of focused revitalization efforts in this 16-block area? And how can this information from the community guide our work moving forward?

Although a cause and effect relationship cannot be stated between revitalization efforts and community changes, the data do suggest that the area has avoided the significant decline in property conditions and quality of life that were feared in the wake of the housing crisis and at the start of this effort. The data also show a lot of opportunities to do more.

Below is a summary of key findings and recommendations for future action that were made by community partners upon reviewing the findings. The recommendations are meant to inform conversations among stakeholders who are planning future housing work in the area:

Vacant Buildings

- The number of vacant buildings was cut in half, mostly through rehabilitation rather than demolition.
- Community partners recommend continuing to rehabilitate and fill vacant homes.

Vacant Lots

- The number of vacant lots in the neighborhood increased slightly due to the fact that building demolitions outnumbered new construction projects between 2011 and 2014.
- Community partners recommend creating/updating a coordinated plan for vacant lots.

Property Conditions

- Conditions improved on some homes and declined on others. The 2014 survey showed 326 homes with repair needs. Paint was the most common aspect needing repair.
- Community partners recommend increasing the impact of home improvement programs, including ideas such as streamlining application processes, increasing services to rental properties, and focusing on specific blocks.

Resident Satisfaction

- Overall resident satisfaction is high and most residents would prefer to continue living in this neighborhood.
- Community members recommend supporting the preference of most residents to stay in the neighborhood by identify additional ways to make housing affordable and prevent displacement. They recommended conducting further research to determine whether displacement is happening or likely to happen.

What Residents Liked BEST

- Residents' favorite aspects of the neighborhood are: 1) their homes or apartments, 2) access to amenities, 3) proximity to public transportation, and 4) neighbors.
- Community partners recommend building upon neighborhood assets and marketing these positive aspects of the neighborhood.

What Residents Liked LEAST

- Safety and litter/trash/dumping are the top concerns of residents and are most likely to impact overall satisfaction. Other top concerns are: neighbors, types of housing available, and affordability of housing.
- Community members recommend increasing efforts to impact safety and litter/trash/dumping issues, and investigating and addressing resident concerns about types of housing available and affordability.

Social Capital

- Owners and renters did not differ in their overall satisfaction and feelings of connectedness to the neighborhood, which is in contrast to some studies in other communities.
- Community members recommend investigating why renters show higher feelings of connectedness in this area than in most neighborhoods to see if the answers shed light on how to increase renters' feelings of connectedness in other neighborhoods.

Background

Purpose

Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity (TC Habitat) launched its Neighborhood Revitalization (NR) work in 2011 in coordination with a nationwide initiative of Habitat for Humanity International. Through this initiative, Habitat expands from a focus on impacting individual families to a broader goal of improving quality of life in an entire neighborhood.

This report summarizes findings from an evaluation of housing conditions and quality of life measures in TC Habitat's NR focus area in St. Paul. The evaluation examines data collected in 2014, and when possible, compares it to data collected in a 2011/2012 baseline study. TC Habitat and its community partners will use this evaluation to assess the impact of their past work and to inform future action. While a cause and effect relationship cannot be stated between revitalization efforts and community changes, important correlations and trends can be identified.

TC Habitat selected its St. Paul Focus area in 2011, after being invited by Frogtown Neighborhood Association (FNA), to join Frogtown Focus, a community effort to improve a 16-block section of Frogtown. TC Habitat chose this area, from University to Thomas, and Dale to Western, because community partners were working together on a collaborative planning process, and because of the opportunity to make a meaningful difference in a core city neighborhood on a high priority transit corridor.

TC Habitat committed to completing a significant amount of housing work (new building, rehabilitation and repairs) in that neighborhood each year. It also planned to do its work *differently* in the focus area, because housing work alone would not lead to neighborhood level change. This meant adopting a model that included more in-depth community engagement with residents, partner organizations and Habitat homeowners. Habitat would be just one spoke on the wheel, partnering with many other local groups (housing developers, community organizations, public entities) to work on a coordinated plan.

Making such substantial programmatic changes also meant TC Habitat needed to create new ways to evaluate its impact and that of its partners—to shift from looking at outcomes on the single home/family level to looking at outcomes on the neighborhood level. This evaluation does just that. It uses Success Measures Data Systems (SMDS) tools developed by Neighborworks America to look at changes in *neighborhood level* conditions over time.

The findings from the evaluation were shared with 28 people representing 18 community partners* at the December 4, 2014 Frogtown Rondo Home Fund meeting, and in one-on-one conversations with partners. The data spurred great discussions; partner comments are included in the results and conclusions sections of this report.

TC Habitat is making this data available to organizations who would like to use it for further research.

*Aurora St. Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation, City of St. Paul Planning and Economic Development, Community Stabilization Project (CSP), The Cultural Wellness Center, Frogtown Neighborhood Association, Frogtown Rondo Action Network (FRAN), Goodwill-Easter Seals/LFIT, Hmong American Partnership, Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers, MN Housing Finance Agency, MNSTEP, NeighborWorks Home Partners, Preserve Frogtown, Southern MN Regional Legal Services, St. Paul Dept. of Safety and Inspections, Twin Cities Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), Summit-University District 8 Planning Council, Wilder/St. Paul Promise Neighborhood

Baseline Data Source and History of Frogtown Focus

Frogtown Focus

The baseline data for this evaluation came from an extensive community input process called Frogtown Focus. The process was conducted by the Frogtown Neighborhood Association (FNA), TC Habitat, and Springboard for the Arts in 2011 and 2012, in the same 16-block area as Habitat’s NR focus neighborhood.

Frogtown Focus grew out of residents’ desire for a coordinated housing development plan for this area, as it dealt with two huge economic shifts:

- **Housing Crisis:** Predatory lending during the housing boom had led to many foreclosures and vacancies in Frogtown and created a drag on neighborhood property values and livability. Many of the 16 blocks were highly impacted by the crisis—on one block alone, 10 of the 23 properties were either vacant lots or had vacant houses.
- **Light Rail:** This area bordered the planned light rail Green Line. The new line had the potential to be a tremendous asset to the neighborhood, but it also could raise housing costs in the area.

These two factors meant the neighborhood was attracting a lot of attention from housing developers—both subsidized housing developers and real estate speculators. The neighborhood was about to change, but how? Would the changes improve the quality of life for existing residents or come at their expense?

Residents worried that a lack of responsiveness and coordination from housing developers was putting the neighborhood at risk for

- declines in property conditions from long-term vacancies.
- declines in property conditions from poor quality construction by investors and builders.
- loss of the neighborhood’s cultural and historical character from haphazard demolition or poorly designed rehabilitation.
- loss of affordability and displacement of residents due to investor-driven increases in property values and rents.
- a decline in overall quality of life in the neighborhood if the above risks were realized.

2012 Focus Groups and Listening Sessions

To create a resident-inspired development plan, Frogtown Focus held approximately 20 community listening sessions and focus groups. These sessions generated

- **data on resident perceptions of quality of life:** Indicators included resident perceptions on likes and dislikes in the neighborhood, levels of civic engagement, methods of communication, and social capital. This data became part of the baseline for this study.
- **priorities to guide future developments in the area:**
 - ◆ Increase responsiveness from developers and ongoing mechanisms for community input
 - ◆ Address vacancies quickly. Prioritize high vacancy blocks first
 - ◆ Prioritize rehabilitation and preservation over demolition
 - ◆ Create a mix of ownership and rental
 - ◆ Define “affordability” in line with neighborhood incomes that are lower than area median income (residents defined housing as affordable if <\$700/mo.)

- ◆ Use good quality durable material
- ◆ Use architecturally compatible design
- ◆ Balance housing with greenspace and other non-residential amenities

2011 Property Condition Surveys

Additional baseline data was gathered in 2011 when FNA conducted a survey of exterior property conditions of most properties in the focus area.

Frogtown Focus Follow-up Evaluation Plans

The Frogtown Focus partners agreed that Habitat would lead a follow-up evaluation of resident perceptions and property conditions in 2014 to monitor progress and inform future planning.

Focus Area Activities: June 2011-June 2014

To provide context for the follow-up evaluation data, this section gives a brief overview of activities undertaken by TC Habitat and other partners in the neighborhood from the time of the baseline study (2011/2012) through the follow-up evaluation (May and June 2014).

TC Habitat’s NR Activities

- Built 4 homes on empty lots and completed 2 rehabs. All of the homes were sold to qualified first-time homebuyers with affordable mortgages. (TC Habitat also built 1 home and completed 1 rehab just outside the focus area.)
- Completed *A Brush with Kindness* repairs on 5 homes in partnership with low-income homeowners.
- Adapted house designs to better match existing housing stock.
- Built deeper relationships with residents and organizations in the community, and was at the table when community members were gathering and planning.
- Participated in community events like Open Streets and Unify University Parade.
- Provided technical assistance and staff/volunteer capacity to support smaller community partners (e.g. data collection and analysis, door-to-door canvassing to share neighborhood information and register voters.)

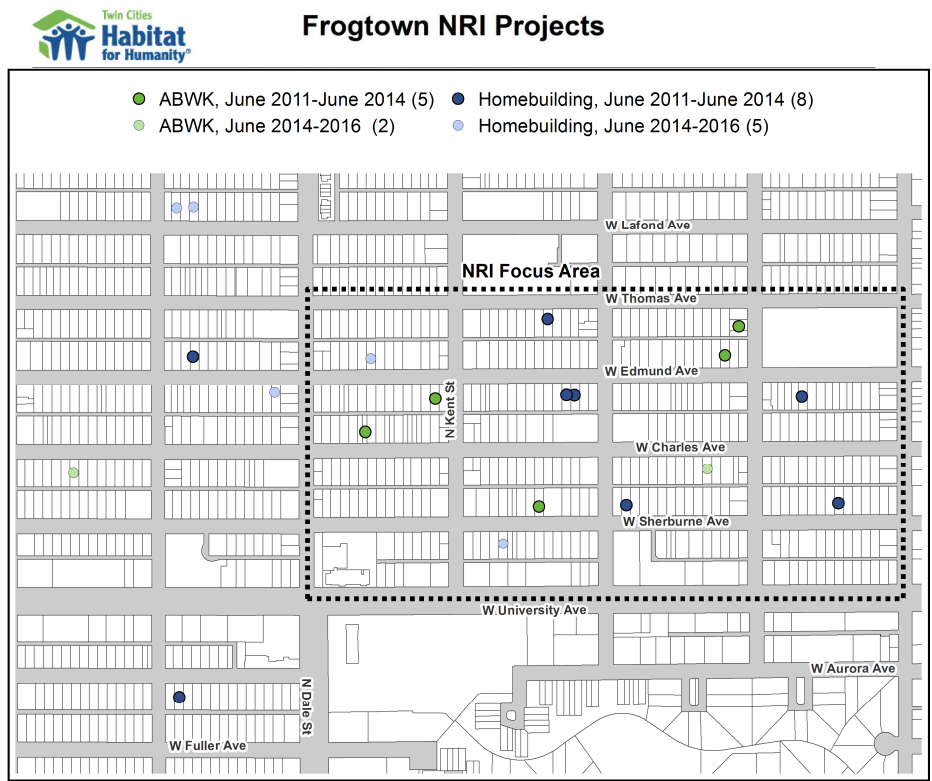


Figure 1 Homes constructed, rehabbed, and repaired by TC Habitat from June 2011-June 2014, plus future work that is scheduled to be completed after the timeframe of the study.

- Helped create a housing guide for people seeking housing resources specifically in Frogtown.
- Supported resident organizations in advocating for public policy changes.

Creation of the Frogtown Rondo Home Fund (FRHF)

The FRHF was formed in early 2013 in response to the housing concerns expressed in Frogtown Focus and other community input processes. It is a collaborative initiative of community organizations, philanthropy and local governments to coordinate and significantly improve housing conditions in the Frogtown and Rondo neighborhoods. One of FRHF’s geographic focus areas includes the original Frogtown Focus/TC Habitat NR area, creating priority for housing activities consistent with the goals that came out of Frogtown Focus.

Community Partner Activities

Investments by many community partners contributed to the outcomes in the 16-block focus area during the timeframe of this study. The FRHF documented the following housing activities from June 2011-June 2014:

- The rehab of 4 vacant homes by Preserve Frogtown, Model Cities, Ramsey County's 4R Program, and Greater Frogtown CDC
- Construction of 1 new home by Urban Homeworks
- Home improvement lending by Greater Frogtown CDC
- Site acquisition and land banking of 7 properties by the City of St. Paul Housing and Redevelopment Authority and the Twin Cities Community Land Bank
- Resident outreach and organizing around housing programs, public safety, community gardening, voter registration, and tenant issues by FNA, the Frogtown/Rondo Action Network (FRAN), and Community Stabilization Project

Property Condition Survey

The property condition surveys were visual assessments of properties exteriors to document the physical condition of the neighborhood at the parcel level, and to begin to track changes over time. The properties were assessed from the front and/or side sidewalks.

Methods

2011

FNA collected the baseline property condition data in June 2011 by visually surveying 350 (of the 387) parcels in the 16-block focus area.

The survey assessed 5 aspects of each property: roof, windows, siding, fence, and yard, using a 2-point scale (0=needs no repairs or needs only minor repairs; 1=needs major repairs). The surveys also noted vacant lots and buildings.

The initial purpose of the survey was to identify properties in need of repairs so that home repair support programs could do targeted outreach to those residents. Several months later, as Frogtown Focus and Habitat's NR program developed more fully, the groups decided to use this data as the baseline for a 3-year follow-up assessment.

2014

TC Habitat's staff completed follow-up assessments of all 387 properties in May and June 2014.

As a part of the launch of NR, TC Habitat subscribed to Success Measures Data Systems (SMDS) to gain access to more detailed and standardized assessment tools than were available during the baseline phase. To assess property conditions, surveyors used the SMDS tool *NR8—Residential Property Assessment* (see Appendix A). This tool assesses the conditions of several singular aspects of the house and yard, as well as the overall condition of the house and the area around the house. Evaluators used SMDS training materials that included photos and descriptions of each scale to standardize their criteria for rating each property.

Evaluators used the SMDS 3-point scale to assess each aspect of the property (0=good and needs no repairs; 1=needs minor repairs; 2=needs major repairs), and used the SMDS 5-point scale to assess the property's overall condition (0=good and needs no repairs; 1=needs minor repairs; 2=needs major repairs; 3=comprehensive renovation; 4=dilapidated). They also identified vacant lots and buildings.

The criteria for rating a building as vacant was that the building "appears vacant." Additional efforts were made to verify vacancies through secondary sources (Google Maps, Ramsey County GIS, City of St. Paul Vacant Building List). However it is possible that a building was occupied even though it appeared vacant and was listed as vacant in city records.

Methodology Considerations When Comparing Data Across Years

Since the survey methods varied between 2011 and 2014, evaluators made the following adaptations to the data to compare across years: 1) Used only the 5 aspects of the home that were included in both years' surveys (roofs, windows, siding, fence, and yard), 2) numerically converted the data from 2014 to the 2011 scale (3-point scale to 2-point scale).

When drawing conclusions about property conditions in 2011 vs. 2014, these different survey methods must be kept in mind. Minor changes in property conditions could actually be the result of the different methods of data collection and might not reflect actual changes in conditions. Major changes in conditions are more likely to be a reflections of actual change.

It is also important to remember that despite careful training and standardization of survey tools, this type of survey naturally has some subjectivity based on the individual tendencies of each evaluator.

For the above reasons, conclusions about change will be drawn very loosely in this report.

Vacancy Results

Overall Vacancies: 2011 & 2014

Table 1 shows the number of vacant buildings and lots that were counted in the 16-block focus area in 2011 and 2014. The number of vacant buildings decreased by over 50% during this time while the number of vacant lots increased slightly. See below for details about these changes.

Comparison of Vacancies between 2011 and 2014		
	2011	2014
Vacant buildings	33	15
Vacant lots	19	21

Table 1 Number of vacant houses and lots in 2011 and 2014

Vacant Buildings

Figure 2 below displays what has happened to the buildings that were vacant in 2011, and the origins of the 2014 vacant buildings. Of the 33 vacant buildings in 2011, 5 were still vacant in 2014, 21 had been rehabbed and became occupied, and 7 were demolished. Of the 7 demolished properties, 4 were still vacant lots in 2014, 1 became a community garden, and 2 were replaced by new construction (1 by Urban Homeworks, 1 by TC Habitat). Between 2011 and 2014, 10 additional homes became vacant.

Upon seeing this data, community partners were pleased that so many of the vacant properties had become occupied, since filling vacancies was a top priority of Frogtown Focus.

To learn more about the types of rehabilitation work that occurred, evaluators reviewed data from the City of St. Paul and Frogtown Rondo Home Fund. They found that of the 21 rehabbed buildings, 10 were rehabbed by a landlord, 5 were rehabbed by a private investor, 2 were rehabbed by an owner-occupant, 3 were rehabbed by a nonprofit, and 1 was rehabbed by Ramsey County’s 4R program.

With “rehabilitation over demolition” being another top priority of Frogtown Focus, many community partners were pleased to see a rate of 75% (21) rehabs and 25% (7) demolitions. They believed this reflected a change in practices since 2011. At the same time, some community partners felt that this level of demolition was still too high.

Evaluators turned to the same sources to learn more about the 10 additional buildings that became vacant since 2011: 3 of them became vacant due to condemnation, 3 went through foreclosure, and 4 were the result of various other situations faced by homeowners.

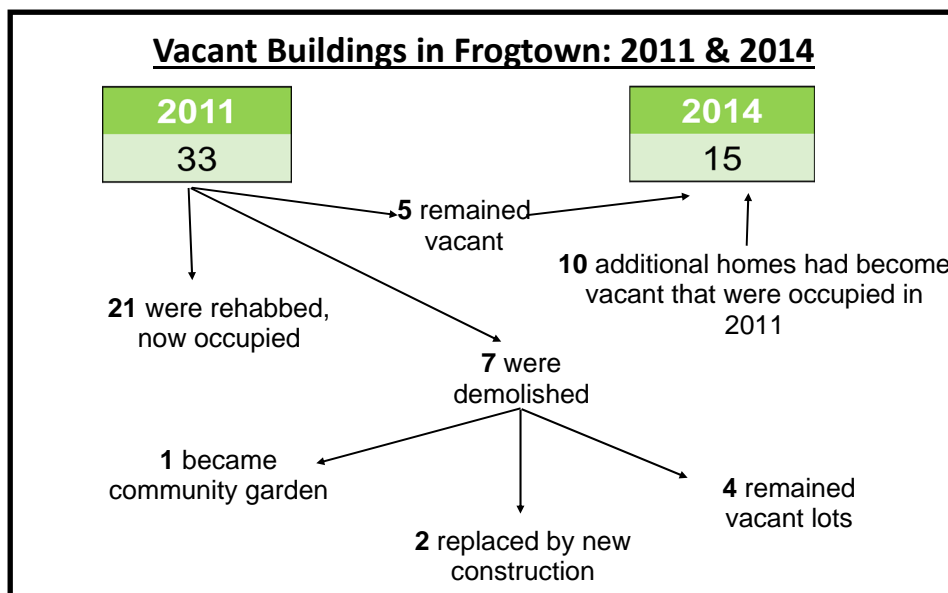


Figure 2 What happened to the buildings that were vacant in 2011, and the origins of the 2014 vacant buildings.

Vacant Lots

Figure 3 below shows what happened to the lots that were vacant in 2011 and the origin of the 2014 vacant lots.

Of the 19 vacant lots in 2011, 15 remained vacant in 2014, 1 had been combined with an adjacent property, and 3 were occupied with new homes constructed by TC Habitat for Humanity.

The total number of vacant lots grew because 4 houses that were vacant in 2011 were demolished and remained vacant lots (carryover from Figure 2), plus 2 houses that were occupied in 2011 were later demolished and remained vacant lots. (One of these houses was destroyed in a fire in 2012 and the other was vacated due to tax forfeiture.)

Community partners were not surprised to see that the number of vacant lots had increased. They said it demonstrated that there has not been a solid plan for what to do with properties after demolition and there is a need for renewed efforts to 1) ensure demolition happens only when completely necessary, and 2) make a plan for filling vacant lots more quickly.

Community partners noted that TC Habitat was the only organization building a significant number of homes on vacant lots during this time.

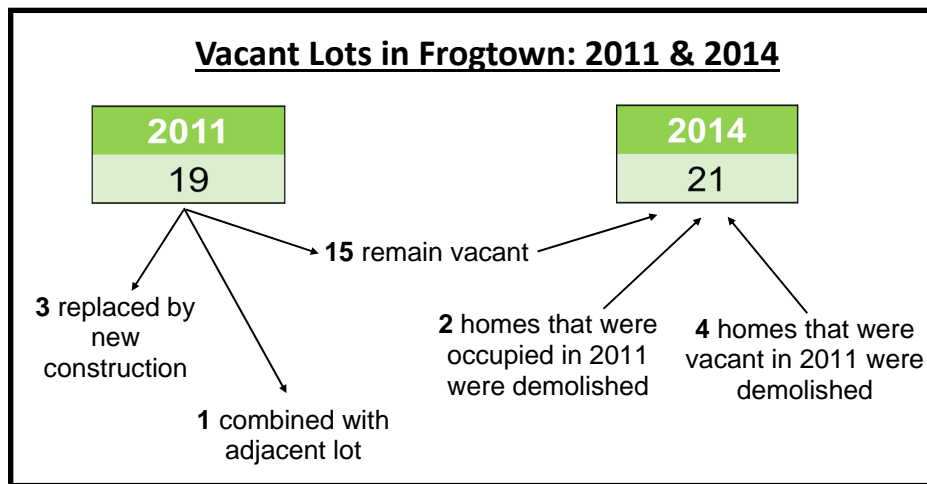


Figure 3 What happened to the lots that were vacant in 2011, and the origins of the lots that were vacant in 2014.

Displacement Questions for Further Study

When presented with this data, community partners asked important questions that were not a part of this evaluation: Are there trends that indicate displacement of people of color in this area? What were the races of the people who left these vacant buildings and what were the races of the people who moved in? Did the people who moved into the rehabbed and new housing live in this neighborhood previously? What was the level of affordability of the rehabbed and new housing?

Displacement is an important topic for future research and this vacancy data will be a useful starting point.

Building Conditions Results

Building Conditions: 2014

Of the 387 houses assessed in 2014, 61 were in good condition, 228 needed minor repairs, 88 needed major repairs, 9 needed comprehensive renovation, and 1 was dilapidated (see Figure 4).

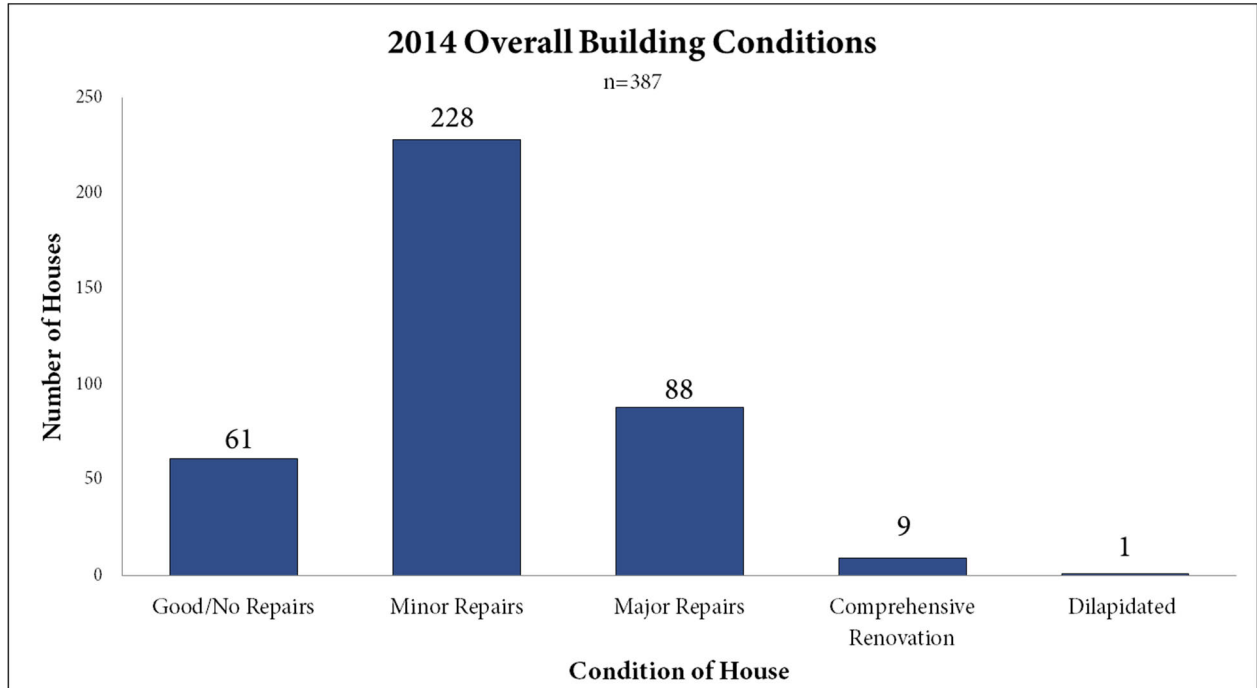


Figure 4 2014 Housing Conditions Assessment: Overall conditions results.

Figure 5 shows the frequency of repair needs for specific aspects of the assessed properties in 2014. There were no obvious outliers; roofs were the best rated aspect in the neighborhood, while exterior paint was the worst.

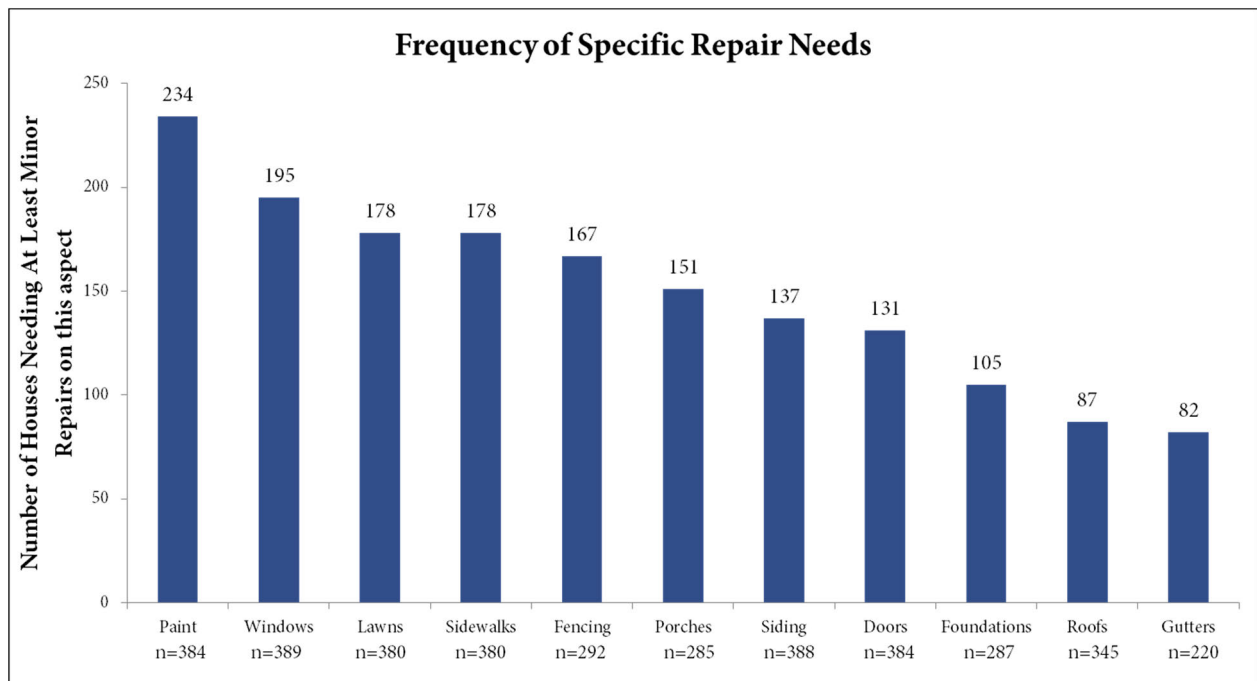


Figure 5 2014 This graph depicts the housing aspects that were in need of minor repair or major repair in the focus area.

Figure 6 below shows the overall conditions of rental vs. owner-occupied homes. A chi-square test showed that the overall conditions of rental and owner-occupied homes vary significantly ($p=0.016$). There are more owner-occupied homes that do not need repairs and more rental properties that do need some level of repairs.

Community partners reflected on the impact of City of St. Paul rental property codes that set a basic standard for quality. These codes might be successfully limiting the number of rental properties in need of major repairs. At the same time, a high number of properties need minor repairs and there aren't any incentives for landlords to complete them.

Partners said that few resources are available to support repairs for rental properties in the area and more are needed.

Partners were surprised with the high number of homesteaded properties that needed repairs. They would like to see increased impact from existing homeowner repair programs, including improved outreach strategies and coordination between the programs' application processes.

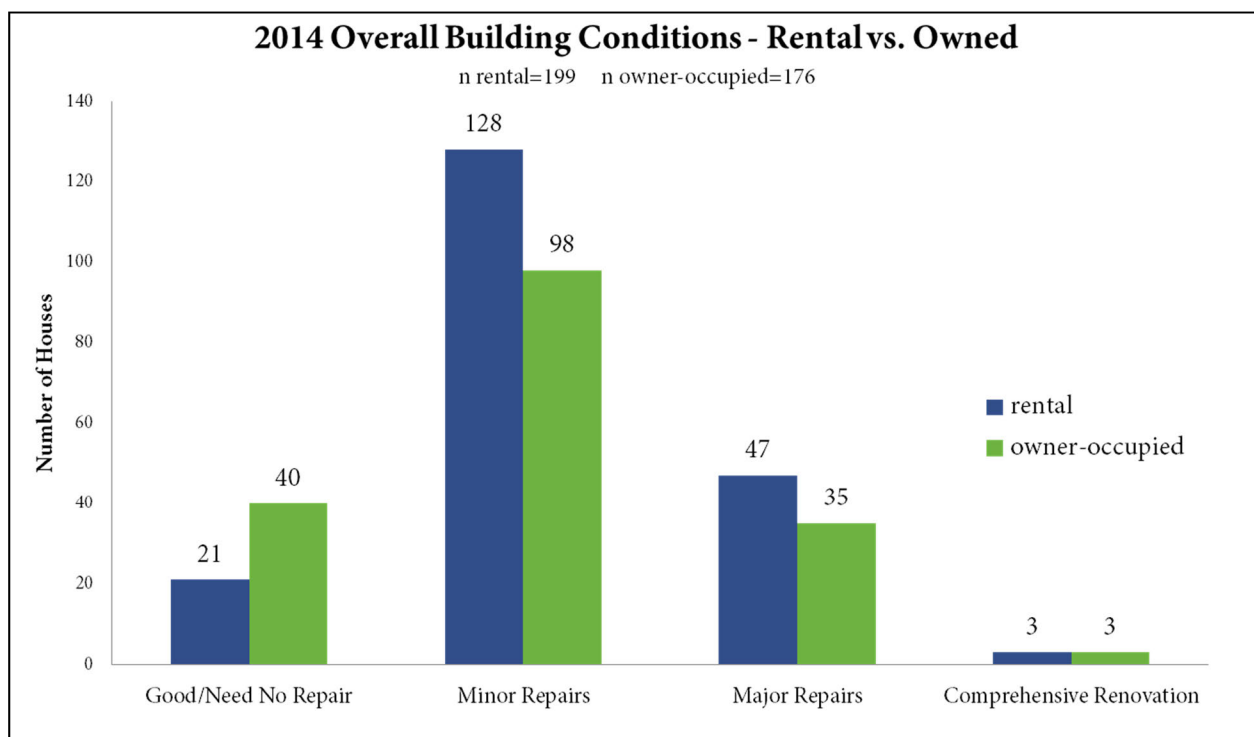


Figure 6 2014 Housing Conditions: comparison of rental and owner-occupied properties.

Mapping property condition data is helpful for planning future housing development and repair services in the area.

Figure 7 below maps the property condition data, as well as vacant lots and nonresidential buildings. This map identifies specific properties that are in good condition or have various levels of repair needs.

Community partners were surprised to see that properties with repair needs are spread out rather than grouped in any one area.

2014 Building Conditions in Frogtown Focus Area



Figure 7 The overall condition of each building in the focus area,

To better identify zones with greater repair needs, evaluators calculated the average conditions of the properties on each block and displayed those averages in Figure 8. This map will be helpful to community partners considering block focused repair initiatives.

2014 Average Building Conditions by Block

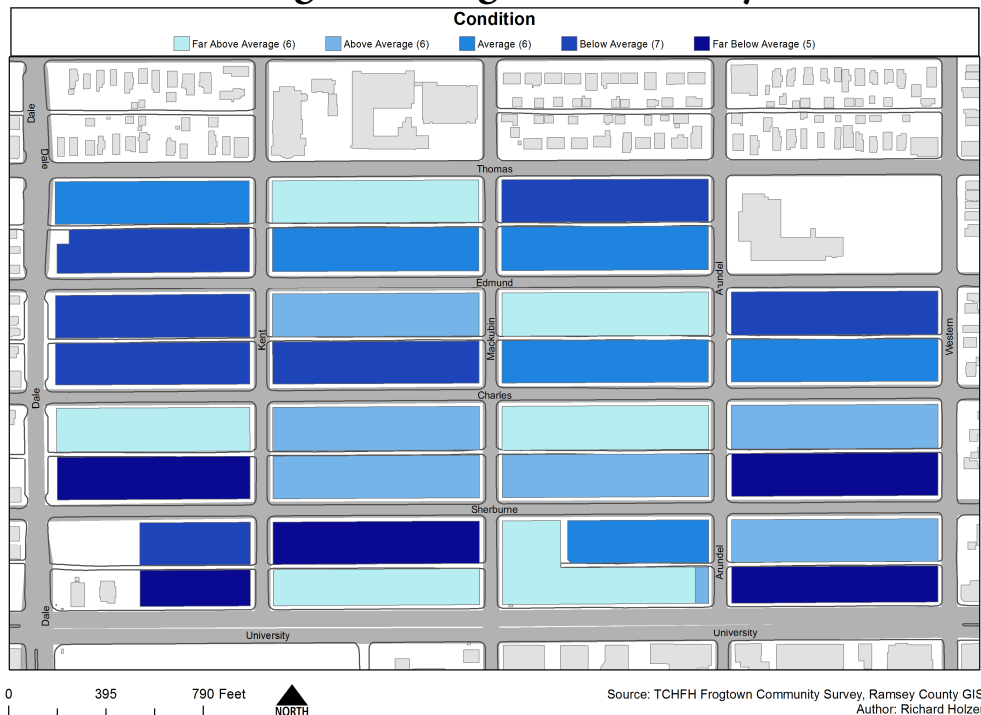


Figure 8 The average property conditions for each block in the focus area in relation to the other blocks in the focus area.

Figure 9 shows the property conditions of only the homesteaded properties, meaning they are likely owner-occupied. This map will be useful to TC Habitat's *A Brush with Kindness* program and other home repair programs as they conduct outreach in the neighborhood.

2014 Property Conditions of Homesteaded Properties

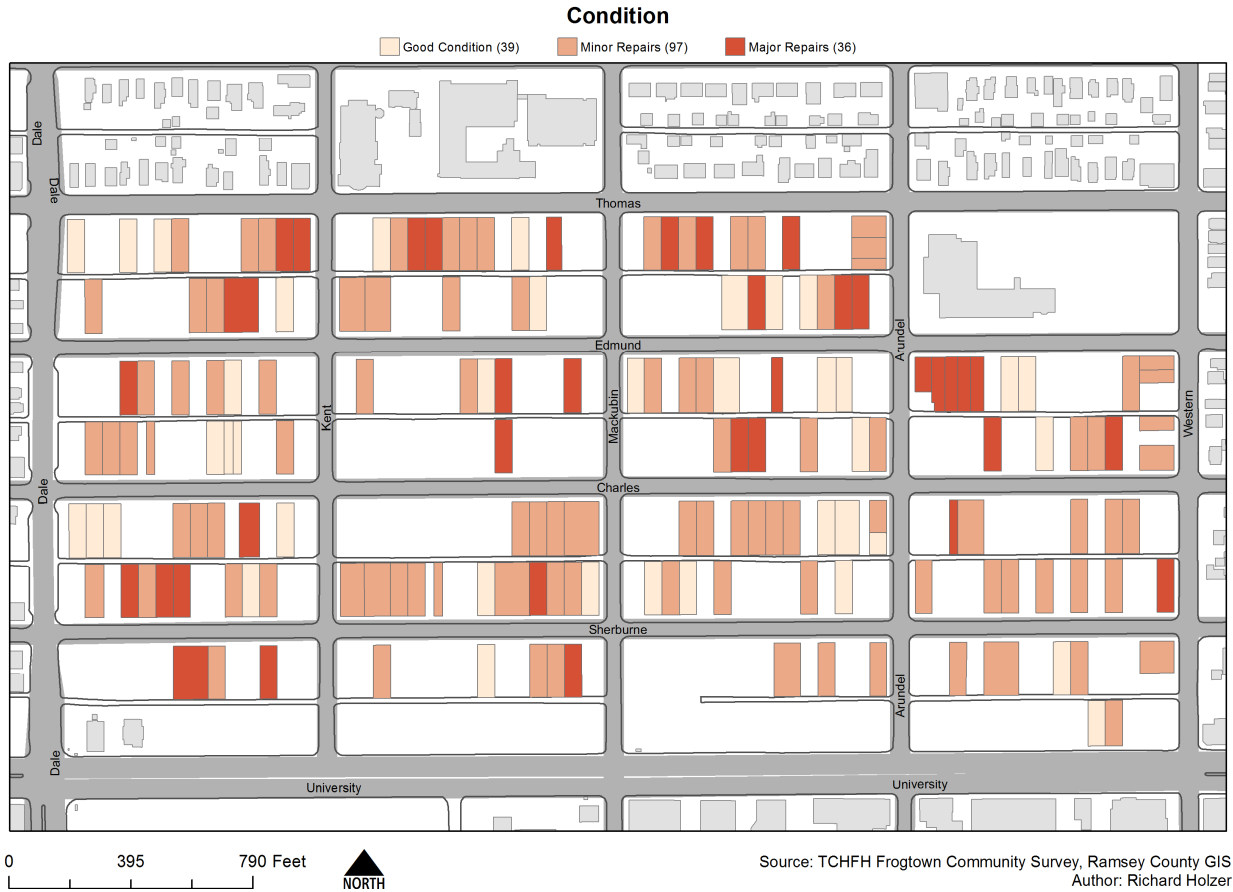


Figure 9 The building conditions for all homesteaded properties in the focus area.

Building Condition Changes: 2011-2014

Summary

Due to the different methods used in 2011 and 2014 (outlined on pp. 9-10), conclusions about overall changes in building conditions should be drawn loosely.

The evaluation estimated that 77 properties improved in condition, 188 stayed the same, and 85 deteriorated (see Table 2): over half of the properties saw little change, and an approximately equal number of properties improved and declined. No one aspect of the homes changed more than any other aspect. Roofs were in the best condition overall in both 2011 and 2014, and exterior paint was in the worst condition both years.

Community partners affirmed that these findings match their impressions of what has been happening in the neighborhood. They said that the data is an important reminder that, even with all of the work going on to improve properties in the focus area, deterioration naturally happens on other properties at the same time. This data is also a reminder that change takes a long time and 3 years is just the beginning of recovery from years of disinvestment.

Community members said the neighborhood avoiding a massive decline in the wake of the housing crisis may be a great success. At the same time, the data shows that there is a lot more work to be done.

Estimated Changes in Property Conditions: 2011-2014	
Improved	77
Stayed the same	188
Deteriorated	85

Table 2 Change in building conditions between 2011 and 2014.

Most Dramatic Changes

One way to draw stronger conclusions from this data is to only compare those properties that showed the most dramatic changes. If the 2011 and 2014 ratings were substantially different for a property, it is more likely that the survey results captured actual changes that were not the result of different methodologies.

Table 3 shows that there were 41 properties that showed change on 2 or more of the assessed aspects (roof, windows, siding, fence, yard). Of those properties, 24 improved in condition and 17 declined. The improvements were made by a combination of homeowners, nonprofits, and especially landlords. Properties that declined were a combination of owner-occupied, landlord owned, and vacant.

Community partners were pleased to see that so many improvements had come at the hands of landlords and owner-occupants who chose to invest in their properties.

Partners reiterated their desire for more impact from nonprofit repair programs in the area, including improved outreach and coordination of application processes, and focusing on specific blocks.

Questions for Further Study

Community partners hypothesized that this neighborhood saw higher rates of property improvement than a similar 16-block area immediately to the east, posing an interesting idea for further research with control groups: Did delineating a specific focus area increase the amount of improvement in this area compared to similar areas?

41 Properties with Most Dramatic Change in Condition: Reason for Change	
Total Improved 24	
Improved by landlord	16
Improved by owner-occupant	4
Improved by nonprofit	4
Total Deteriorated 17	
Deteriorated, owned by landlord	7
Deteriorated, owner-occupied	6
Deteriorated, vacant building	4

Table 3 Breakdown of the 41 properties that showed the most dramatic change in condition between 2011 and 2014.

Resident Perceptions Survey

The primary goal of TC Habitat's NR program is to improve quality of life in the focus area. The fields of psychology and community development measure quality of life using multiple key indicators, including neighborhood satisfaction, perceptions of safety, social capital (social cohesion), and civic engagement. Evaluators collected and analyzed data on these measures to inform their work and track changes over time.

Methods

2012

Resident perceptions were first collected by FNA, Springboard for the Arts, and TC Habitat as part of Frogtown Focus initiative 2012. A series of almost 20 listening sessions and focus groups were conducted from January through August of 2012, with attendance varying from 0 to 45 people. Attendees were a mixture of community residents and (largely non-profit) housing developers. Some meetings were held in neighborhood meeting rooms, some were walking tours, and others were held at interesting buildings within the neighborhood.

Typically meetings included a short presentation on a topic like historic preservation or affordable housing development finance, plus collecting resident perceptions of the neighborhood using adapted versions of the SMDS tool NR5-*Community Resident Focus Group Protocol* (see Appendix B). Residents were given written surveys, used dot maps to respond to questions, and were asked questions verbally.

The result of this initiative was a wealth of qualitative information and some quantitative data.

2014

TC Habitat's community outreach staff led the collection of follow-up data in May and June 2014. They used a 27-question SMDS tool called *NR4-Community Resident Survey* (see appendix C).

All 459 households in the focus area were invited to complete the survey. First staff sent a postcard to every household inviting them to complete the survey online. Then several members of the Frogtown/Rondo Action Network (FRAN) were hired and trained to bring the evaluation to residents door to door. All respondents were given a gift card (\$10 for online and \$5 for in person) as an incentive to complete the survey.

116 of 459 households completed the survey, which is a 25.27% response rate. This population and response rate means the survey was statistically significant with a 95% confidence level and 8% margin of error.

Methodology Considerations When Comparing Data Across Years

When comparing resident perceptions between 2012 and 2014, the differences in methodologies between the years must be taken into account. Evaluation best practice allows data from focus groups to be compared side by side with data from surveys, but conclusions must be drawn very loosely. Therefore, comparisons of perceptions across years in this report can point to possible trends but are not statistically significant.

Demographics 2014

Of those who completed the survey, 50% owned their home while 50% rented their home (Figure 10). This breakdown matches the actual rate of homeownership in the focus area, which is 51.8% (according to Ramsey County’s GIS database of homesteaded properties). The fact that the sample group matched the actual demographics in the area adds further validity to this study.

The focus area has a higher percentage of homeowners than the broader 55103 zip code where the homeownership rate is estimated at 40% (U.S. Census, 2013 American Community Survey).

Type of Household

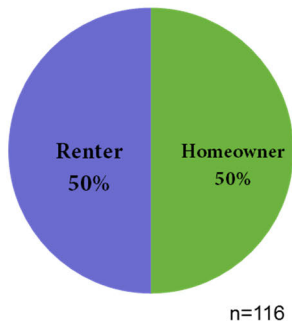


Figure 10 The percentages of renters and homeowners that completed the survey.

Years in Neighborhood

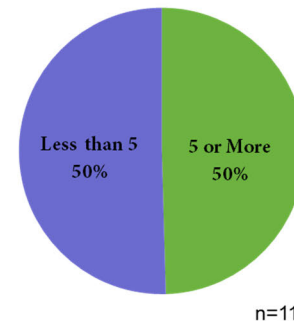


Figure 11 The percentages of respondents who had lived in Frogtown for 5 or more years or less than 5 years.

Figure 11 shows that half of respondents had lived in the neighborhood 5 or more years and half had lived there less. Figure 12 shows the same data segmented by owners and renters. A large number of renters had lived in the neighborhood for less than 5 years. Homeowners were fairly evenly spread between 0 and 30+ years.

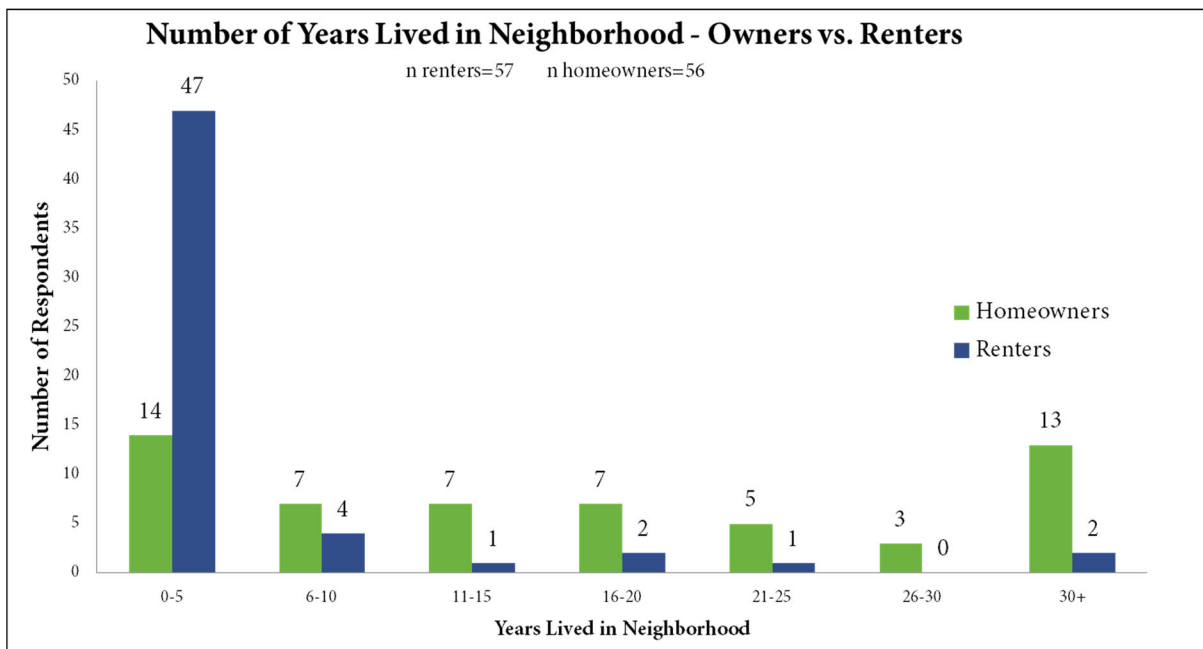


Figure 12 Number of years lived in the neighborhood for renters and owners.

Neighborhood Satisfaction Results

Overall Satisfaction: 2014

The 2014 survey included 3 questions about residents' overall satisfaction with the neighborhood. Satisfaction was fairly high for all three questions: 84% of respondents were satisfied with the neighborhood to at least some degree (Figure 13), 77% would recommend the neighborhood to someone as a good place to live (Figure 14), and 70% would continue to live in Frogtown if they had a choice (Figure 15).

Renters and owners did not differ significantly in any of these measures of overall neighborhood satisfaction.

See pp. 32-33 for details on factors from other parts of the survey (perceptions of safety, litter, neighbors, street lighting) that correlated with overall satisfaction.

This data sparked very interesting conversations with community partners. Many had mixed feelings, simultaneously feeling pleased that a majority of residents rated the neighborhood so positively, while also feeling surprised to see such positive responses because they know that residents have many concerns about the neighborhood. After discussion, there was a general consensus that as community partners they are often in the role of hearing residents' concerns, but they don't always get to hear what people like about the neighborhood. One person summed it up this way: "Residents might have concerns about the neighborhood, but most don't want to live anywhere else."

Partners noted that this high level of satisfaction explains why residents have expressed so much fear about the potential for displacement. Most residents do not want to have to move away from a neighborhood that they like.

Partners were excited to use this data to market the neighborhood, but they cautioned against using it to discount the real concerns that residents have.

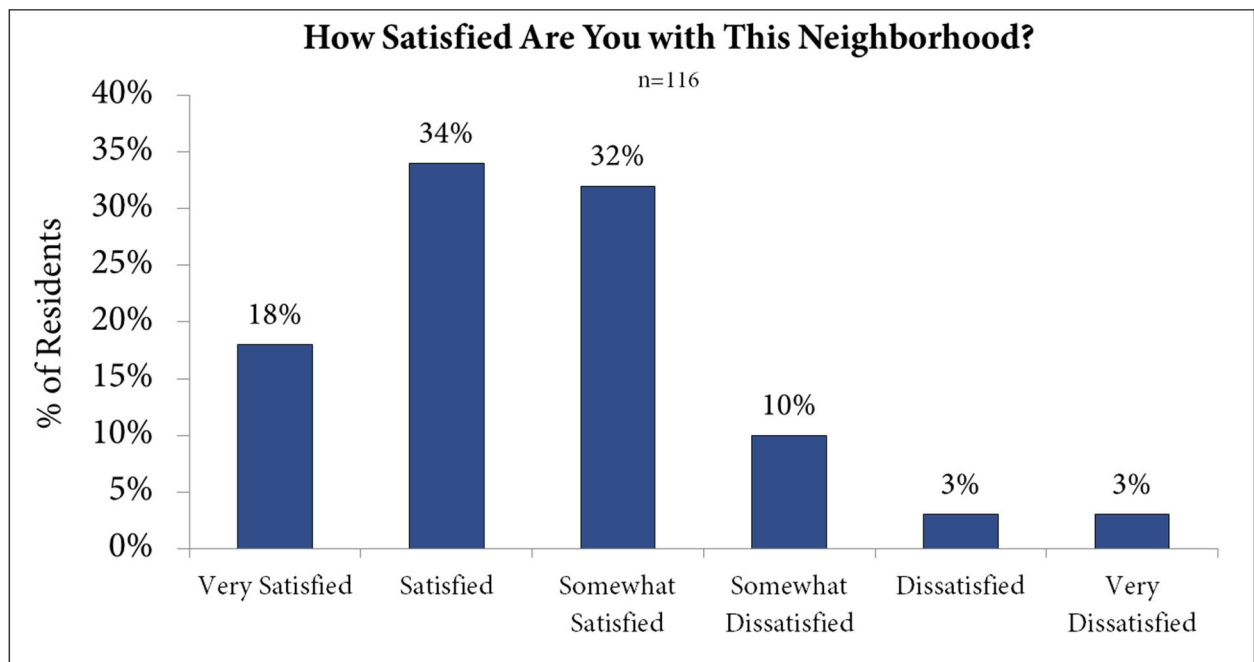


Figure 13 Responses to the question, "Overall, considering everything, how satisfied would you say you are living in this neighborhood?"

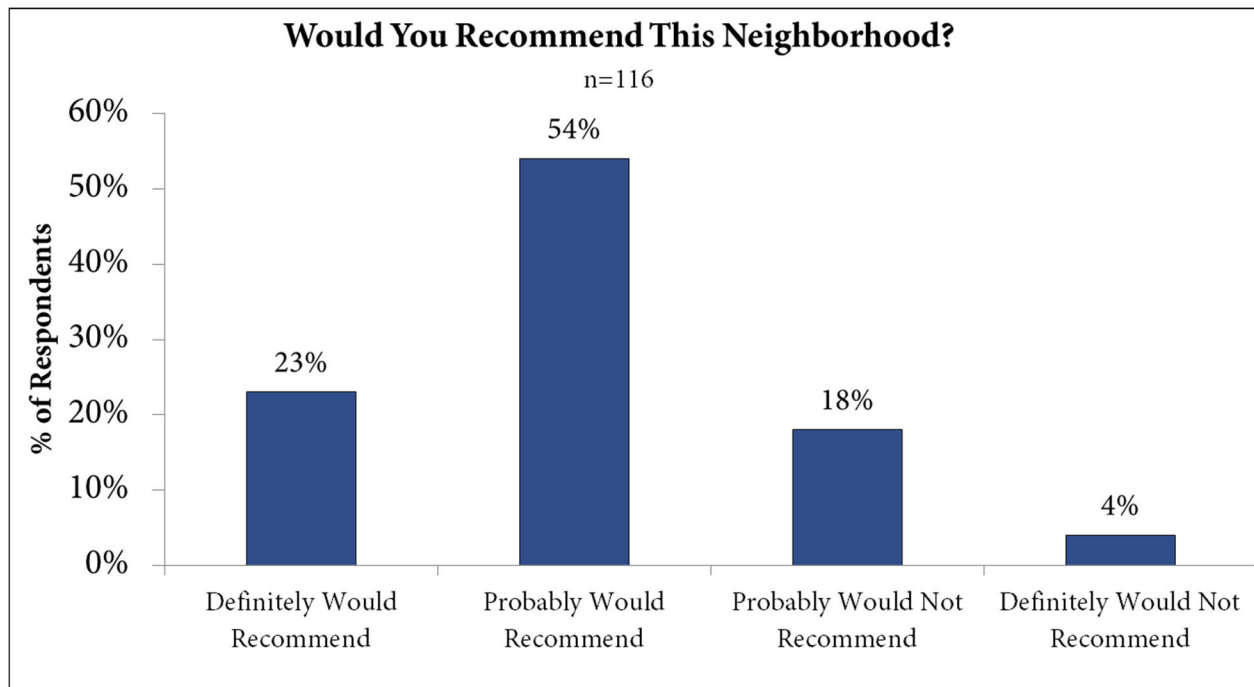


Figure 14 Responses to the question, “Would you recommend this neighborhood to someone as a good place to live?”

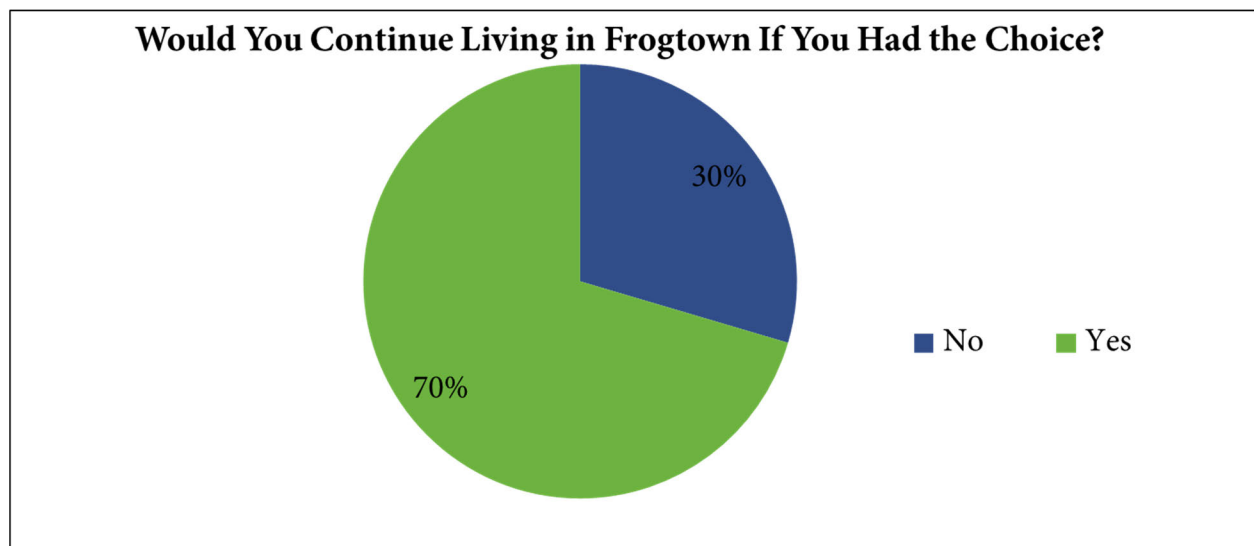


Figure 15 Responses to the question, “Would you continue to live in this neighborhood if you had the choice?”

What Residents Liked BEST: 2014

This page presents insights from the 2014 survey related to what residents like best about their neighborhood. Community partners can celebrate and build upon these existing assets.

Table 4 shows the results of a question in which residents were asked to choose the 3 aspects they liked BEST about their neighborhood from a preset list. The top results were “my house or apartment,” “access to amenities,” “proximity to public transportation,” and “my neighbors.”

Figure 16 is a visual representation of the frequencies of various words used by residents in open-answer comments explaining why they would want to stay in the neighborhood.

Liked BEST 2014		
Aspect of Neighborhood	# of Respondents	% of Respondents
My house or apartment	63	54.31%
Access to amenities, such as neighborhood centers and stores	55	47.41%
Proximity to public transportation	52	44.83%
My neighbors	43	37.07%
Distance to work	31	26.72%
Affordability of housing	28	24.14%
Schools for my children	25	21.55%
Access to job opportunities	11	9.48%
Types of housing available	8	6.90%
Safety	6	5.17%
Free Response Answers (n=13)		
Location	4	3.45%
Other	4	3.45%
Green	3	2.59%
Diversity	2	1.72%

Table 4 Number and percentage of residents who chose each aspect as one of their top 3.



Figure 16 The size of each word represents how often it was used in positive responses to the open-answer question, “Please describe why you would/would not continue living in the neighborhood.”

Comparison of BEST Aspects of Neighborhood: 2012 & 2014

How did residents' favorite aspects of the neighborhood compare between 2012 and 2014? Table 5 shows the top 4 answers from the 2012 focus groups' listing of community assets alongside of the 2014 survey results for best liked neighborhood features. Though direct comparison between the 2012 and 2014 data is difficult due to the different methods and questions used, some limited comparison can be informative.

This comparison shows that "access to amenities" and "neighbors" have remained key positive aspects of the neighborhood. (Note that the "community orgs" and "identity" aspects that were ranked highly in 2012 were not available as a choice in the 2014 assessment.)

Comparison of Positive Neighborhood Traits		
Rank	2012 "Community Assets"	2014 "Best Liked Aspects"
1	Neighbors	My House
2	Community Organizations	Access to Amenities
3	Identity	Public Transportation
4	Access to Amenities	Neighbors

Table 5 The top-rated aspects of the neighborhood in 2012 and 2014.

What Residents Liked LEAST: 2014

Table 6 shows the results of a question in which residents were asked to choose the 3 aspects they liked LEAST about their neighborhood from a preset list. "Safety" was selected most commonly by a large margin, followed by "my neighbors," "types of housing available," and "affordability of housing."

Figure 17 is a visual representation of the frequencies of various words used by residents in open-answer comments explaining why they would not want to stay in the neighborhood.

Community partners found it interesting that "my neighbors" appeared near the top of both the "liked best" and "liked least" lists. They hypothesized that this was related to the specific neighbors that each respondent was living near.

Liked LEAST 2014		
Aspect of Neighborhood	# of Respondents	% of Respondents
Safety in the neighborhood	75	64.66%
My neighbors	30	25.86%
Types of housing available	28	24.14%
Affordability of housing	18	15.52%
Access to job opportunities	16	13.79%
Schools for my children	11	9.48%
My house or apartment	10	8.62%
Distance to work	6	5.17%
Proximity to public transportation	6	5.17%
Access to amenities, such as neighborhood centers and stores	5	4.31%
Free Response Answers (n=20)		
Other	9	7.76%
Trash/Dirty/Attractiveness	5	4.31%
Noise	4	3.45%
Environment	2	1.72%

Table 6 Number and percentage of residents who chose each aspect as one of their 3 least liked aspects.



Figure 17 The size of each word represents how often it was used in negative responses to the open-answer question, "Please describe why you would/would not continue living in the neighborhood."

As another way to identify dislikes in the neighborhood, respondents were asked whether or not they believed items on a list of problems were issues in their neighborhood (“yes” or “no”). Table 7 shows the ranked list. Issues related to “litter, trash or debris,” “vacant houses/apartments,” and “dumping” were at the top of the list.

Community partners discussed the ways that litter/trash, vacancies and dumping issues are all interrelated, saying that the lack of city-wide trash pick up in St. Paul creates a situation where some residents cannot or do not contract for trash removal. Additionally the high number of vacancies creates more places where items can be dumped. Partners would like to see advocacy in support of city-wide trash pick up to help alleviate this issue that is clearly a major concern for residents.

FNA further validated the data in this section of the evaluation by stating that safety and litter/trash, and dumping are the most common problems that residents call them about.

Is this an Issue in Your Neighborhood?		
Potential Neighborhood Issues	# Who Believe It Is a Problem	% Who Believe It Is a Problem
Litter, trash, or debris	94	81.0%
Vacant houses/apartments	82	70.7%
Dumping	78	67.2%
Traffic/speeding vehicles	75	64.7%
Poorly maintained streets/sidewalks	74	63.8%
Drug activity	71	61.2%
Vacant non-residential buildings	61	52.6%
Vandalism and/or break-ins	56	48.3%
Stray cats/dogs	48	41.4%
Poorly maintained parks/playgrounds	43	37.1%
Inadequate street lighting	38	32.8%
Graffiti	36	31.0%
Squatting	34	29.3%

Comparison of LEAST Liked Aspects of the Neighborhood: 2012 & 2014

How did residents' least liked aspects of the neighborhood compare between 2012 and 2014? Table 8 shows the top 4 answers from the 2012 focus groups' listing of community deficits alongside of the 2014 survey results for least liked neighborhood features. Though direct comparison between the 2012 and 2014 data is difficult due to the differing methods and questions, some limited comparison can be informative.

This comparison shows that "safety" has remained the primary concern of this neighborhood, and "types of housing available" has also remained a top issue.

Schools were the second highest deficit listed in 2012 but they were listed much less frequently in 2014. Community partners reflected on what this difference might mean and presented a few theories: 1) The difference might just be due to the differing methodologies. 2) School satisfaction might have actually increased from 2012 to 2014 since during that time local schools became neighborhood based and bussing from other areas of the city was eliminated. 3) School issues might have been on the top of focus group participants' minds in 2012 because the whole community was in the midst of conversations about the upcoming school changes. Investigating whether or not school satisfaction actually changed over this time would be valuable follow-up research.

"Affordability of housing" was not listed by anyone as a deficit in 2012, but it was #4 on the list in 2014. Again conclusions cannot be drawn about whether or not resident perceptions of affordability actually changed, but this data does flag housing affordability as an important issue for further research. Rents have been rising in the neighborhood just as they have been rising all over the Twin Cities, but it is not yet known whether this section of Frogtown has experienced higher than average increases. FNA is working with a class at Macalester College to compare the cost increases in Frogtown to those in similar neighborhoods to determine if light rail and other factors are causing higher cost increases.

Comparison of Negative Neighborhood Traits		
Rank	2012 "Community Deficits"	2014 "Least Liked Aspects"
1	Safety	Safety
2	Schools	My Neighbors
3	Types of Housing Available	Types of Housing Available
4	Access to Amenities	Affordability of Housing

Table 8: Least liked aspects of the neighborhood in 2012 and

Comments Related to Likes/Dislikes: 2014

Evaluators sorted responses to the following 3 open-ended questions into common themes (see Figure 18):

- “Please specify what else you like BEST about the neighborhood.”
- “Please specify what else you like LEAST about the neighborhood.”
- “Please describe why you would/would not continue living in the neighborhood.”

These themes provide further insights into what topics were on the minds of residents. Once again “safety” was by far the most common concern expressed by residents, while the most positive comments were related to “general satisfaction,” “proximity to amenities and transit” and “sense of community.”

Upon seeing safety again listed as the top concern amongst residents, community members expressed a need to continue the work they are doing around this issue individually and to work together more to increase the impact of that work.

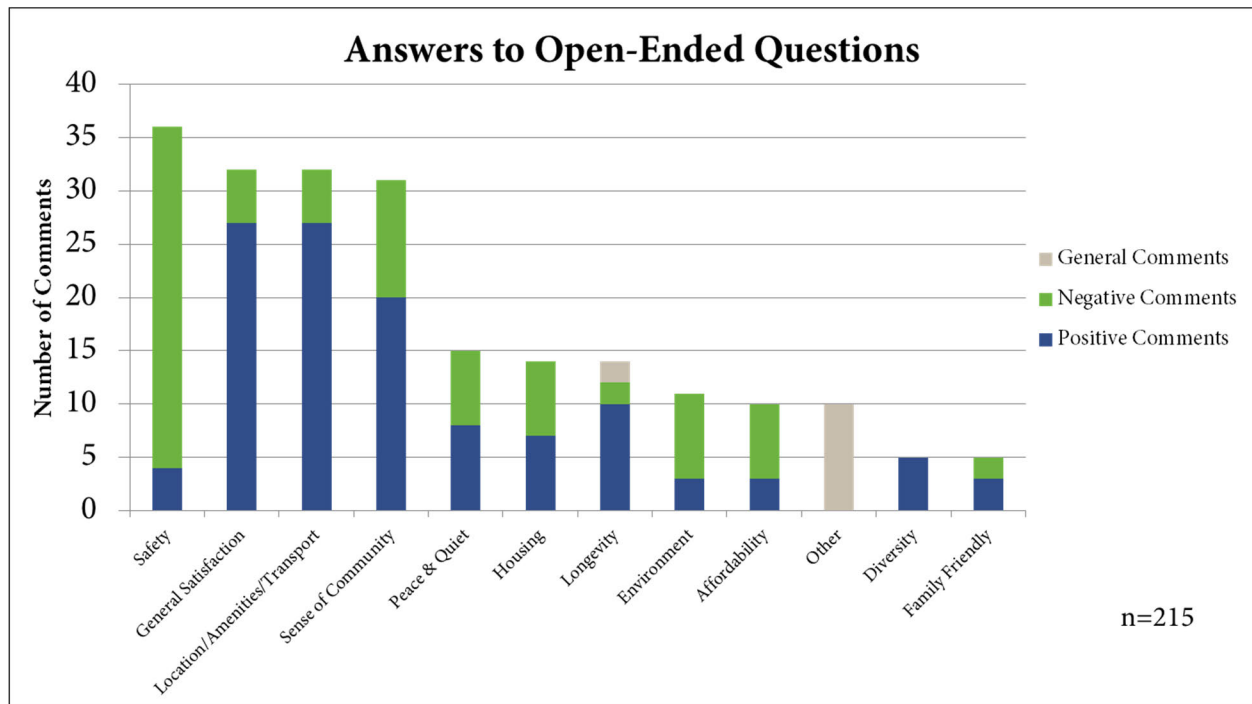


Figure 18 Frequency of themes present in all open-ended questions/comment sections on the survey: “Please specify what else you like BEST about the neighborhood.” “Please specify what else you like LEAST about the neighborhood.” “Please describe why you would/would not continue living in the neighborhood.”

Safety Results

Figure 19 below shows details about how safe residents reported feeling at various locations and times of day in 2014. Residents said they feel most safe in their homes and feel least safe walking outside at night.

Community partners plan to use this information as they consider strategies for increasing feelings of safety in the neighborhood, especially since residents listed safety as their biggest concern. Community partners mentioned, for example, that organizations who are creating parks and other green spaces need to take safety concerns into account during their planning.

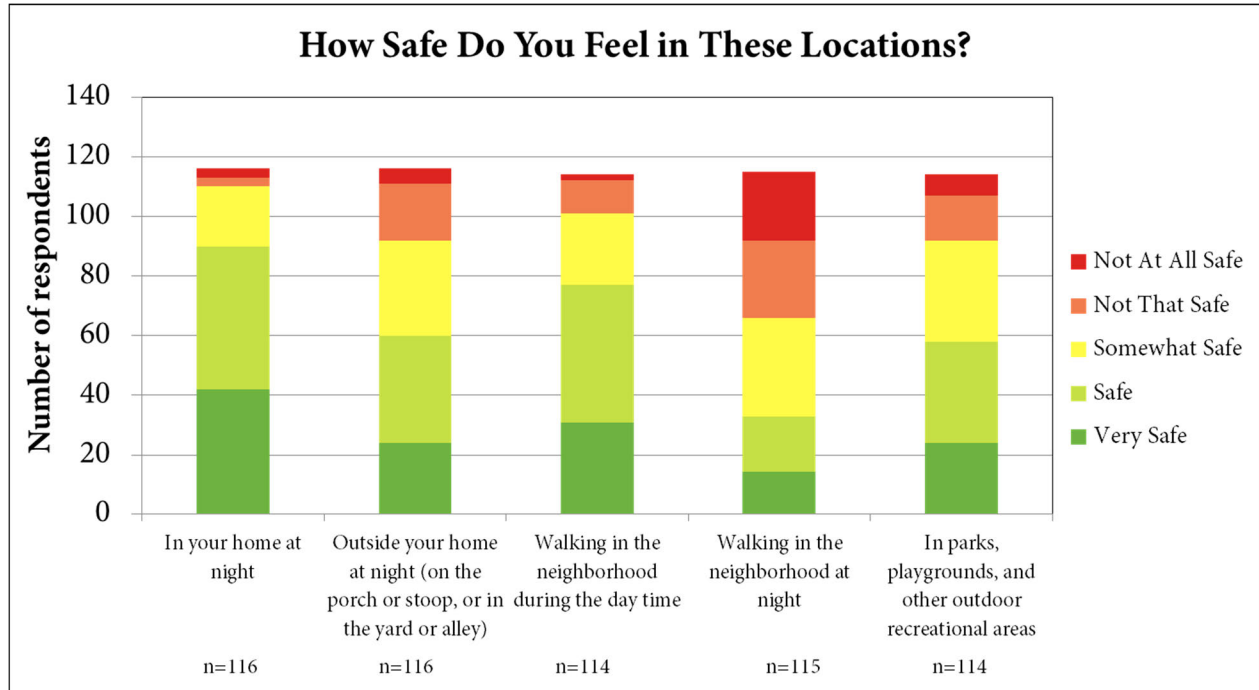


Figure 19 Responses to the question, “Please indicate how safe you feel in each of the following locations.”

Social Capital Results

Social capital, the network of relationships in a community and people’s willingness to help each other, has been shown to be a key determinant of quality of life in communities.

Figure 20 shows that approximately 78% of respondents in 2014 said they felt like a part of the neighborhood at least “to some extent”. (Feeling like part of the neighborhood was not found to be significantly different between homeowners and renters.) Figure 21 shows that a high percentage of respondents in 2014 believed that neighbors are at least somewhat likely to help with various favors.

Community partners were surprised to see that renters felt as much a part of the neighborhood as homeowners because this finding is contrary to public opinion and contrary to studies in some other communities (Habitat for Humanity: Neighborhood Revitalization Baseline Evaluation Report; Cooper, Olson, & Viola, 2013). This Frogtown finding presents a great opportunity to investigate *why* renters in this area feel more connected than in other communities and could give ideas for how to increase renters’ feelings of connectedness in other areas.

Community partners also said these findings are a good reminder that people with low incomes often rely heavily on their support networks. If this neighborhood is providing that network for people, it could make displacement especially challenging for residents.

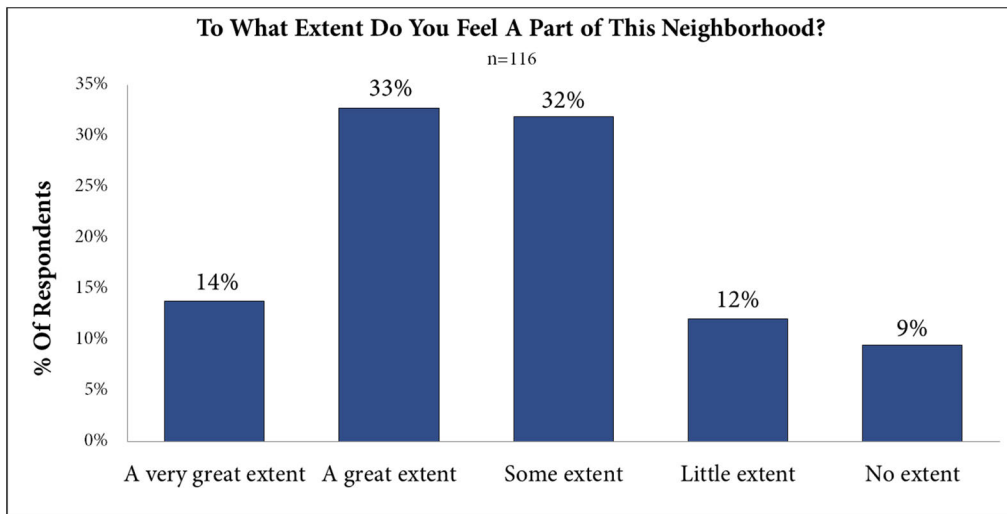


Figure 20 Responses to the question “to what extent do you feel a part of this neighborhood?”

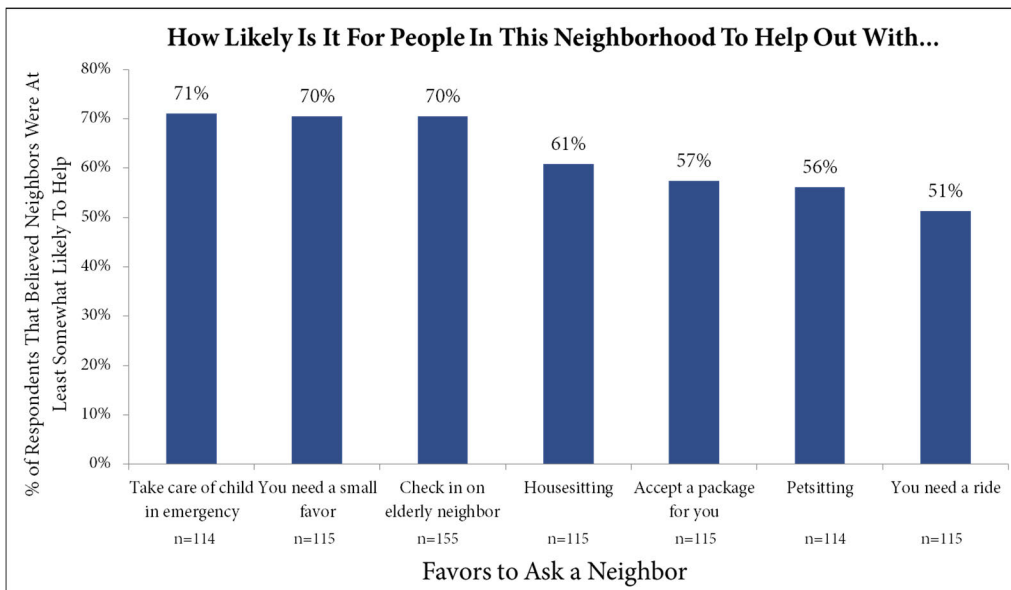


Figure 21 Percentage of residents who responded with “somewhat likely,” “likely,” or “very likely” to the question: “How likely is it for people in this neighborhood to help out if...”

Civic Engagement Results

Pages 30-31 present findings related to civic engagement from the 2014 survey and compare them to 2012 focus group findings when possible.

Table 9 shows results from 2012 and 2014 when residents were asked to rank whether they had participated in a list of activities in the neighborhood in the past 12 months. Because of the different sample sizes and methods across years, it is difficult to draw conclusions. However, it appears that volunteering and voting are most common, and participating in events or social activities by local organizations might have increased from 2012 to 2014.

Participation in Neighborhood Activities		
	2012	2014
Vote in a local or national election	75%	59%
Volunteer with a nonprofit or community organization	63%	41%
Work to improve public spaces	50%	33%
Attend a resident or tenant meeting, block club, or neighborhood association meeting	44%	37%
Attend a public meeting, write a public official, talk with a public official	38%	39%
Participate in a community event or social activity sponsored by a local organization	17%	48%
Become involved in community affairs, civic activities, or political issues.	—	26%

Table 9 Percentages of participants in the 2012 focus groups and 2014 surveys saying they participated in these neighborhood activities in the last 12 months.

Table 10 shows the frequency with which residents reported using different types of businesses in Frogtown in 2014.

Use of Neighborhood Businesses in Frogtown in 2014						
	% Sometimes or Often	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Total
Main food shopping	85.34%	6	11	37	62	116
Purchase gasoline	79.31%	8	16	32	60	116
Other shopping	79.13%	6	18	47	44	115
Eat out	67.24%	7	31	41	37	116
Banking	66.96%	17	21	21	56	115
Medical and health care	56.90%	33	17	23	43	116
Dental care	53.45%	35	19	27	35	116

Table 10 Responses to the question, “Please indicate how often you do these activities right in this neighborhood.”

Figure 22 shows how respondents received information about the neighborhood in 2012 and 2014. The most common methods in 2014 were “neighbors, relatives and friends,” and “flyers/newsletters.”

The overall increases from 2012 to 2014 may simply be due to the differences in methodology and might not be related to actual changes in how respondents receive information.

However it is more likely that that the categories showing more dramatic change (“flyers/newsletters” and “block clubs/neighborhood associations”) reflect actual changes in how information is received. For instance, a new “Greening Frog-town” newsletter began circulating, and FNA, TC Habitat and other community organizations have conducted increased door-knocking and flyering in the last couple of years.

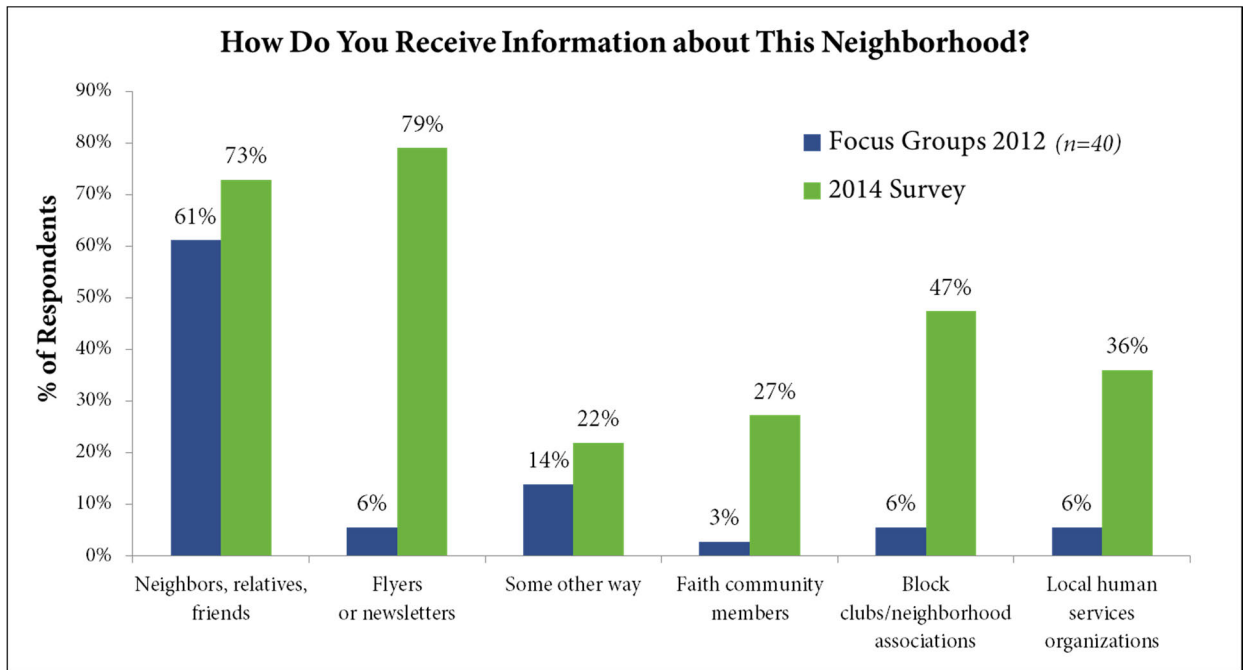


Figure 22 Percentage of respondents in the 2012 focus group and the 2014 survey who reported receiving information from the listed methods.

Which Factors Correlated with Overall Satisfaction?

In order to better understand which factors are related to residents' satisfaction with their neighborhood, a series of statistical tests were used to look for relationships between questions on the survey .

Overall satisfaction ratings and overall feeling of **safety** were significantly correlated ($p < 0.01$, $r = 0.528$). As feelings of safety increased, so did overall satisfaction ratings (see Figure 23). Safety was also related to whether a resident wished to stay in the neighborhood ($p < 0.01$). Those wishing to stay in the neighborhood had significantly higher ratings of safety.

Overall satisfaction was also related to whether respondents saw **litter/trash** as a problem ($p = 0.119$; Figure 24), whether they rated **neighbors** as their best or least liked aspect of their neighborhood ($p < 0.001$; Figures 25 and 26), and whether they saw **street lighting** as a problem ($p = 0.095$; Figure 27).

Although correlation does not mean causation, since safety and litter/trash were both top concerns among residents, this data suggests that addressing safety and litter issues has the highest potential to change residents' satisfaction with their neighborhood. If the goal is to improve the overall quality of life in the neighborhood, partner organizations should examine how their programs directly or indirectly affect perceptions of safety and litter in the neighborhood.

No other significant correlations were found. Surprisingly, overall satisfaction was not correlated with the number of homesteaded homes on the respondent's block, the number of vacant lots on their block, the number of vacant homes on their block, or whether a resident owned or rented their home.

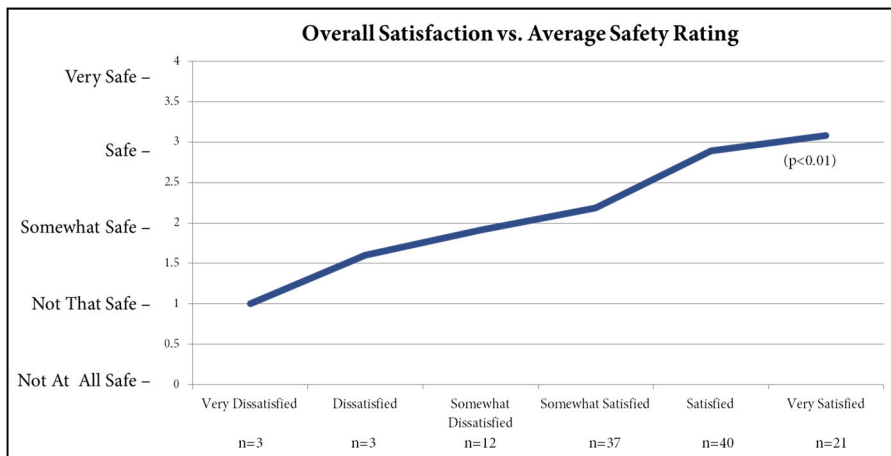
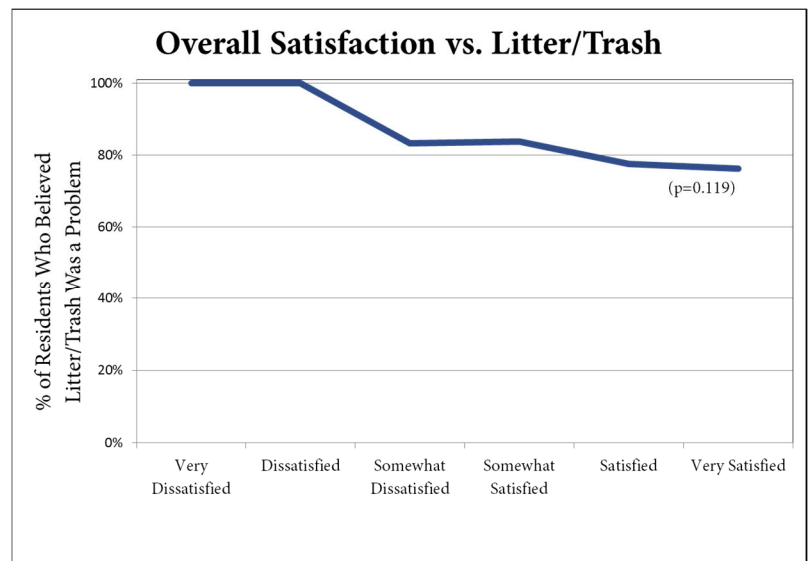


Figure 23 Overall satisfaction and perceptions of safety were significantly correlated; as feelings about safety improved, so did overall satisfaction.

Figure 24 Overall satisfaction and concerns about litter/trash were significantly correlated; as concerns about litter/trash decreased, overall satisfaction increased.



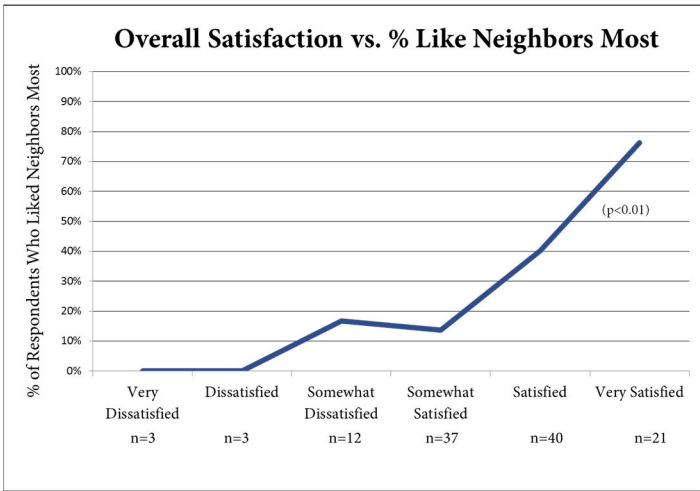


Figure 25 Overall satisfaction was significantly correlated with whether respondents rated neighbors as one of their BEST liked aspects of the neighborhood; as liking one’s neighbors increased, so did overall satisfaction.

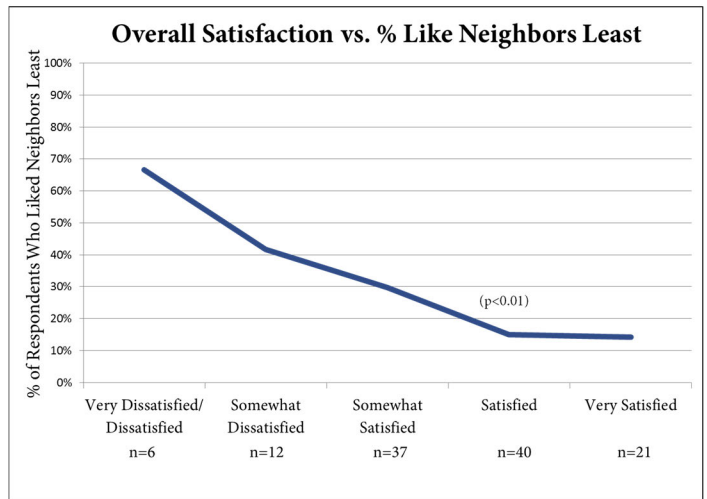


Figure 26 Overall satisfaction was significantly correlated with whether respondents rated neighbors as one of their LEAST liked aspects of the neighborhood; as disliking one’s neighbors increased, overall satisfaction decreased.

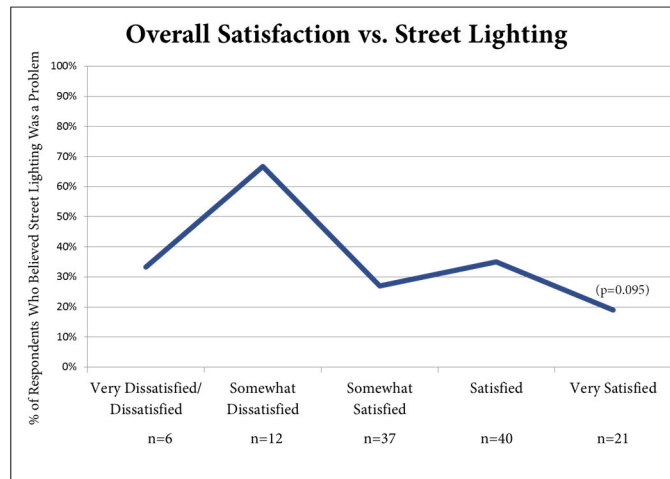


Figure 27 Overall satisfaction and concerns about street lighting were significantly correlated; as concerns about street lighting decreased, overall satisfaction increased.

Key Findings & Future Implications

What do the data reported above tell us about the impact of focused revitalization efforts in this 16-block area? And how can this information from the community guide our work moving forward?

As mentioned earlier, a cause and effect relationship cannot be stated between revitalization efforts and community changes, but the data do suggest that the area has avoided the significant decline in property conditions and quality of life that were feared in the wake of the housing crisis and at the start of this effort.

The data also show a lot of opportunities to do more. Upon reviewing the findings, community partners made the following recommendations for future action. These recommendations are meant to inform conversations among stakeholders who are planning future housing work in the area:

	Finding	Community Partner Recommendations for Action
Vacant Buildings	The number of vacant homes was cut in half from 2011 to 2014, mostly through rehabilitation rather than demolition.	Continue work to rehabilitate and fill vacant homes.
Vacant Lots	The number of vacant lots increased slightly due to the fact that building demolitions outnumbered new construction projects between 2011 and 2014.	Create/update a coordinated plan for vacant lots.
Property Conditions	Property conditions improved on some homes and declined on others. The 2014 survey showed 326 homes with repair needs. Paint was the most common aspect needing repair.	Increase the impact of home improvement programs, including ideas such as streamlining application processes, increasing services to rental properties, and focusing on specific blocks.
Resident Satisfaction	Overall resident satisfaction is high and most residents would prefer to continue living in this neighborhood.	Support the preference of most residents to stay in the neighborhood. Identify additional ways to make housing affordable and prevent displacement. Conduct further research to determine whether displacement is happening or likely.
What Residents Liked BEST	Residents' favorite aspects of the neighborhood are: 1) their homes or apartments, 2) access to amenities, 3) proximity to public transportation, 4) neighbors.	Build upon neighborhood assets and market these positive aspects of the neighborhood.
What Residents Liked LEAST	Safety and litter/trash/dumping are the top concerns of residents and are most likely to impact overall satisfaction. Other top concerns are: neighbors, types of housing available, and affordability of housing.	Increase efforts to impact safety and litter/trash/dumping issues. Investigate and address resident concerns about types of housing available and affordability.
Social Capital	Owners and renters did not differ in their overall satisfaction and feelings of connectedness to the neighborhood, which is in contrast to some studies in other communities.	Investigate why renters show higher feelings of connectedness in this area than in most neighborhoods. See if the answers shed light on how to increase their feelings of connectedness in other neighborhoods.

RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY

To be used at the parcel level only.

Survey Number: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

	Sound condition and in good repair	Minor maintenance, repair, or replacement needed	Major repair or replacement needed	Not observable	Not applicable
Exterior of the Dwelling					
Roof	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gutters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Windows	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Exterior doors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Siding/Exterior walls	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Paint on walls and trim	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foundation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Porches/Balconies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attached garage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Features around the Dwelling					
Detached garage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other detached structure(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fencing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sidewalk(s) and walkway(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Driveway	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Visible on the Property	A lot	Some	None
Trash, debris, or litter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Abandoned vehicles, appliances, or other equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deteriorating or abandoned toys, tools, or other paraphernalia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Lawn and/or Landscaping

- Well maintained
- Adequately maintained
- Poorly maintained

Signage on Site

- Realtor's "For Sale" sign
- "For Sale by Owner" sign
- Foreclosure/Bank ownership sign

Dwelling Appears Vacant

- Yes
- No

Overall Exterior Condition of the Dwelling

- Good and needs no maintenance or repair
- Needs minor repairs only
- Requires a limited number of major repairs
- Requires comprehensive renovation
- Dilapidated and not able to be repaired or renovated
- Construction of dwelling is not complete

Overall Condition of the Features around the Dwelling

- Good and needs no maintenance or repair
- Needs minor repairs only
- Requires a limited number of major repairs
- Requires comprehensive renovation
- Dilapidated and not able to be repaired or renovated

COMMENTS:

COMMUNITY RESIDENT FOCUS GROUP

This protocol is a general guide to qualitative data collection using the focus group method. Focus groups should be conducted by a trained moderator with participants who are reasonably homogeneous and are not familiar with one another.

The residents recruited for each focus group should be similar based on characteristics salient to the line of inquiry. In this case, commonality might be determined by living situation, neighborhood location, and/or tenure. Therefore, group types could be determined by the range of housing available in the neighborhood, any relevant geographic sub-areas, and/or how long residents have lived in the neighborhood. If there is little or no variation in a particular characteristic (e.g., small neighborhood with no sub-areas), that factor would not enter into the determination of the group types.

For example, in this situation, a given focus group should include only those individuals who own their homes or only those who rent their homes. These two types of residents should not be recruited for the same focus group. In a similar fashion, there might be two types of groups for renters: one conducted with those who rent single-family houses or apartments in small rental buildings (e.g., 2 to 4 units) and one conducted with those who rent apartments in larger rental buildings or complexes (e.g., 5 or more units).

At least two different focus groups should be conducted for each group type. For example, if each of the three types of housing groups noted above is located in two different geographic sub-areas of the community, there would be six group types. At least two focus groups of each of the group types would be conducted, for a total of at least 12 focus groups.

Similarly, other characteristics might be considered in determining group type. For example, length of time living in the community might be used to differentiate between newer residents (e.g., less than five years) and longer-term residents (e.g., five years or more). Using this distinction in a neighborhood where there is one sub-area and only homeowners and renters of single-family houses or apartments in small rental buildings, there would be four group types. As a result, at least eight focus groups would be conducted.

In recruiting participants for the focus groups, questions such as the following can be used during the initial screening process to qualify residents for inclusion in a group of a certain type.

1. *Which of the following best describes where you currently live?*

- Single-family home*
- Apartment in a building with 2 to 4 units*
- Apartment in a building with 5 or more units*
- Someplace else Specify: _____*

2. *Do you currently own the home where you live?*

- Yes*
- No*

3. *In what year did you move into [define neighborhood]? _____*

The same questions should be asked in the re-screening process prior to beginning each focus group. This will confirm that the participants have the characteristics that qualified them for inclusion in the group.

COMMUNITY RESIDENT FOCUS GROUP

Thank you for taking the time to join me today for this discussion. My name is *[moderator name]*. I am conducting this focus group because *[name of organization]* is interested in hearing from residents who live in your neighborhood. When I use the word "neighborhood," I am referring to *[define neighborhood]*.

I'll be asking you a series of questions to find out what you think about the neighborhood. My associate will be taking notes so that we are sure to record your thoughts accurately. What you say will be kept completely confidential. We will be summarizing the comments of everyone in the group together, so no one will be able to link a specific comment to a particular person.

Also, please keep in mind that there are no right or wrong answers to the questions I have. People see things differently, so I would like to hear everyone's thoughts.

Let's start off by talking about what it's like to live in your neighborhood.

1. What comes to mind for you?
2. Right now, how likely are you to recommend your neighborhood to someone as a good place to live? Why do you say this?
3. If you had a choice, would you continue to live in your neighborhood? Why or why not?
4. What are the things you like best about living in your neighborhood?
5. What are the things you like least about living in your neighborhood?
6. How do you learn about what is happening in your neighborhood?
7. Are you involved in any neighborhood activities? If so, what are they?
8. Do people in your neighborhood help each other out? If so, what do they do to help out?

Now, I'd like to know what you think about the physical condition of your neighborhood.

9. How would you describe the appearance of your neighborhood?
10. Do you have any concerns about physical maintenance in your neighborhood? If so, what are they?

Next, let's move on to public services in your neighborhood. By this I mean things like police, fire department, ambulances, trash pickup, recycling, and public transportation.

11. How would you describe the public services in your neighborhood?
12. Do you have any concerns about the public services in your neighborhood? If so, what are they?

Now, let's talk about the goods and services that are available in your neighborhood. By this I mean things like stores, banks, gas stations, restaurants, health care, and entertainment.

13. Which of these things are available right now in your neighborhood?

COMMUNITY RESIDENT FOCUS GROUP

14. How would you describe the quality of these goods and services?
15. What goods and services would you like to have in your neighborhood that are not available now?
16. Do you get these goods or services somewhere else? If so, where?

Next, I'd like to know about safety in your neighborhood.

17. How safe do you feel in your neighborhood?
18. Does location make a difference in how safe you feel? Does time of day matter?
19. How about seniors and children? How safe are they in your neighborhood?

Now, let's wrap up with a general question.

20. What other comments do you have about living in your neighborhood?

Thank you for talking with me today.

NR4 - Community Resident Survey

* **Address:** _____

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey. We are interested in your thoughts about the neighborhood in which you live.

1. **Which of the following best describes where you currently live?**

- Single-family home
- Apartment
- Someplace else (please specify in next question)

2. *If you selected "someplace else," please specify where you currently live:*

3. **Do you currently own the home where you live?**

- Yes No

- If you answered this question with "Yes" , then **Skip to Q5**
- If you answered this question with "No" , then **Skip to Q4**

4. **Which of the following best describes how you currently pay for your home?**

- I pay rent directly to a landlord.
- I pay rent to someone else living in the same home.
- I live in the home, but do not pay rent.

5. **What year did you move into your current home?**

6. **What year did you move into this neighborhood?**

7. **Overall, considering everything, how satisfied would you say you are living in this neighborhood? Are you...?**

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

8. **Right now, how likely are you to recommend this neighborhood to someone else as a good place to live?**

- Definitely would recommend the neighborhood
- Probably would recommend the neighborhood
- Probably would not recommend the neighborhood
- Definitely would not recommend the neighborhood

9. **If you had the choice, would you continue to live in this neighborhood?**

- Yes No

10. **Please describe why you feel this way:**

11. **What are the things that you like best about living in this neighborhood? You can choose up to three factors listed.**

- My house or apartment
- My neighbors
- Distance to work
- Access to amenities, such as neighborhood centers and stores
- Proximity to public transportation
- Schools for my children
- Access to job opportunities
- Safety in the neighborhood
- Affordability of housing
- Types of housing available
- Something else (please specify in next question)

12. ***Please specify what else you like best about the neighborhood:***

13. **What are the things that you like least about living in this neighborhood? You can choose up to three factors listed.**

- My house or apartment
- My neighbors
- Distance to work
- Access to amenities, such as neighborhood centers and stores
- Proximity to public transportation
- Schools for my children
- Access to job opportunities
- Safety in the neighborhood
- Affordability of housing
- Types of housing available
- Something else (please specify in next question)

14. **Please specify what else you like least about your neighborhood:**

15. **To what extent do you feel a part of this neighborhood? Would you say to...?**

- A very great extent
- A great extent
- Some extent
- Little extent
- No extent

16 **Please indicate how likely you think it is that people in this neighborhood would help out in these situations.**

Would you say it is very likely, likely, somewhat likely, not that likely, or not at all likely that people in this neighborhood would help out if...?

	Very likely	Likely	Some-what likely	Not that likely	Not at all likely
You needed a ride somewhere.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A package was delivered when you were not at home and it needed to be accepted.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You needed a favor, such as picking up mail or borrowing a tool.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You needed someone to watch your house when you were away.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
An elderly neighbor needed someone to periodically check on him or her.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A neighbor needed someone to watch a pet when he or she is not home.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A neighbor needed someone to take care of a child in an emergency.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

17. **To what degree do people in this neighborhood share information about what's happening locally?**

- A great deal
- A fair amount
- Some
- A little
- Not at all

18. The following are ways in which people sometimes find out about what is happening in their neighborhood. Please indicate whether or not you use these methods to get information. Do you get information about this neighborhood from...?

	Yes	No
Neighbors, relatives, and friends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Flyers or newsletters	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Block clubs or neighborhood associations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Faith community members	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local human service organizations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Some other way (please specify in next question)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

19. Please specify another method:

20. The following is a list of different ways in which people sometimes become involved in their communities. Please indicate whether or not you have participated in these activities in this neighborhood during *the past 12 months*. During *the past 12 months*, did you...?

	Yes	No
Attend a resident or tenant meeting, a block club meeting, or a neighborhood association meeting.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attend a public meeting, write to a public official, or talk with a public official.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volunteer your time to support a nonprofit or community organization.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Become involved in community affairs, civic activities, or political issues.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Work to improve the public spaces in your neighborhood	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vote in a local or national election	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participate in a community event or social activity sponsored by a local organization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

21. Thinking about basic retail necessities, such as food, clothing, and banking, what portion of those basic goods and services are available right in this neighborhood? Would you say...?

- Almost all
- Many
- Some
- Few
- None

22. The following are different activities that people sometimes can do in their communities. Please indicate how important it is to you that you can do each of these things right in this neighborhood.

	Very important	Important	Somewhat important	Not that important	Not at all important
Do your main food shopping	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do other kinds of shopping	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Purchase gasoline	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Eat out	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do your banking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Receive medical/health care	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Receive dental care	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

23. Please *indicate how often* you do each of these activities right in this neighborhood. Would you say it's often, sometimes, rarely, or never?

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Do your main food shopping	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do other kinds of shopping	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Purchase gasoline	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Eat out	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do your banking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Receive medical or health care	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Receive dental care	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

24. The following are things that people sometimes consider issues in communities. Please indicate whether or not you think each is a problem in this neighborhood.

	Yes	No
Poorly maintained streets and sidewalks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Litter, trash, or debris	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Abandoned or vacant houses and/or apartments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Abandoned or vacant non-residential buildings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Graffiti	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Poorly maintained public spaces, such as parks and playgrounds	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Traffic or speeding vehicles	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inadequate street lighting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Drug activity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dumping	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vandalism and/or break-ins	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Squatting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Stray cats and/or dogs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other issue: (please specify in next question)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

25. Please specify another issue:

26. **The following is a list of services that are offered in communities. Please indicate whether or not you are satisfied with each of them.**

	Satisfied	Not satisfied
Police response	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Emergency services, such as fire department and ambulances	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public utilities, such as water, electric, and gas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public transportation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sanitation services, such as trash pickup and recycling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Street repair, cleaning, and plowing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Parks, playgrounds, and recreation centers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public library facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Traffic control	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

27. **Please indicate how safe you feel in each of the following places. Would you say you feel very safe, safe, somewhat safe, not that safe, or not at all safe?**

	Very safe	Safe	Some-what safe	Not that safe	Not at all safe
In your home at night	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Outside your home at night (on the porch or stoop, or in the yard or alley)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Walking in the neighborhood during the day time	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Walking in the neighborhood at night	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In parks, playgrounds, and other outdoor recreational areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

28. **Please indicate how safe you believe the following residents are in this neighborhood. Would you say they are very safe, safe, somewhat safe, not that safe, or not at all safe?**

	Very safe	Safe	Somewhat safe	Not that safe	Not at all safe
Senior citizens who live in the area	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Children who are playing outside	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Children and youth in schools	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Neighborhood residents going about their daily lives	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

29. **What other comments do you have about living in this neighborhood?**

Thank you for completing the survey!

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