

## **Summary of Weinland Park Evaluation Project**

The Weinland Park Evaluation survey was created in response to a need for comprehensive baseline data that would set the foundation for tracking changes in the neighborhood overtime, and a needs assessment of residents to be used to guide programmatic development.

A random geographically stratified sampling technique was used to recruit participants, and a \$20 Kroger gift card was used as an incentive to participate. The boundaries of the neighborhood included High Street on the West, the CSX Railroad Tracks/Grant on the East, Chittenden Avenue on the North, and Fifth Avenue on the South. Sampling was accomplished by visiting every third house or housing unit and continuing to recycle through parts of the neighborhood until a 25% threshold was reached.

The survey was conducted in an interview format. Two surveyors (from a diverse team of 9) met each respondent at a location of their choice, typically the respondent's home. The interview included ~150 questions and took 45 minutes to 1½ hours to complete, and covered the following topics: 1) Demographics, 2) Housing and Mobility, 3) Access to Basic Needs, 4) Neighbor Interaction, 5) Personal Interests and Community Involvement, 6) Public Safety, 7) Workforce Development, 8) Education and Child Development, 9) Use of Computers and Media, 10) Economic Well-Being, 11) Health, 12) Feedback about the Neighborhood, and 13) Needs Assessment. Upon completion of the needs assessment, residents were asked if they would like information about specific resources in the area. A Weinland Park resource list was created for this purpose. A member of the evaluation team, currently a graduate student of social work, followed up with residents of great need, and helped them overcome obstacles to receiving services.

A total of 441 Weinland Park residents were interviewed, a sample representing 26% of Weinland Park households. A total of 217 residents declined to be interviewed. The number of vacant housing units was found to total 313. Because numbers reported in results represent about ¼ of the total households, percentages are the main focus to aid in interpreting findings.

The following are a list of key conclusions by topic that have resulted from the analysis of this survey data:

### **Demographics/Education**

- 35% of respondents were students (with 18% from OSU) – there was a significant number from Columbus State, Franklin University, and other Technical Schools.
- The average age of the children living in respondents homes (332 children from 151 homes) was 7 years. 50% of children were 5 years or younger.
- African American respondents were much less likely to have obtained High School or higher degrees when compared to their white counterparts.

### Economic Well-being

- Only 18% of respondents had full-time employment, 26% worked part-time, and **36% were unemployed**.
- 67% of those who did work reported inconsistent work schedules.
- 49% of respondents received food stamps. 30% lived in Section 8 housing.
- The number one barrier to employment reported was health (22%) -- this included having a disability, mental illness, an injury, a pregnancy, or a child with an illness. Other commonly mentioned barriers were transportation barriers (not having a car/license) (19%), the "bad economy" (no jobs available) (18%), and a criminal history (15%). Education (no high school diploma) (10%) and lack of childcare (7%) also were reported as significant barriers.
- A majority of respondents reported they *did not* utilize payday lending services (82%), access rapid tax refund services (83%), or sell items at pawn shops (84%).

### Workforce Development

- 30% of respondents had attended a workforce development program, most (63%) over the last 3 years. A majority (56%) believed the program they attended helped them find a job.

### Religion/Church Attendance

- Over 150 different churches/temples/mosques were attended by respondents. One (or even a few) did not dominate with regard to attendance, though 27% attended in the 43201 zip code area.

### Housing and Mobility

- 13% of respondents reported that an individual(s) was staying with them in their household for 4 nights per week or more as a guest.
- 9% of respondents reported they had been homeless over the last year.
- 52% of children lived in single family homes, 19% lived in a home with two cohabitating adults.
- Respondents, overall, were moderately satisfied with their housing situation. 39% of renters reported they would consider buying home in Weinland Park, while 49% of home owners reported they would consider buying again.
- 67% of the respondents reported living in Weinland Park for 5 years or less; 28% of respondents reported living in Weinland Park for 8 years or more; 11% of respondents reported living in Weinland Park for 20 years or more.
- 81% (356) of respondents had moved in the last 5 years (on average, they had moved 3 times over the last 5 years), with 33% reporting they had lived in Weinland Park prior to moving to their current home.
- 26% of respondents reported wanting to live in Weinland Park in the next 5 years.

### Neighborhood Identification

- Only 13% of respondents reported that the neighborhood they lived in was called “Weinland Park.” 49% reported living in the “Short North” or “The Short”, while 21% reported living in the “Campus Area,” “South Campus,” or “The Gateway.”

### Personal Interests

- Respondents reported top areas of interest as: sports, reading, and music.
- 29% of respondents reported volunteering their time toward a variety of causes. 51% of those worked on projects in the Weinland Park/43201 area code.
- The most popular volunteer activities included cooking/serving food at food pantries (23%), caring for/activities with children (18%), involvement in planning/running events (9%), or volunteering at a church/mosque (8%).

### Public Safety

- 43% of respondents reported that they or someone close to them had been affected by gun violence.
- Among other things, they reported that they or someone close to them had been affected by home burglaries (42%), automobile break-ins (37%), or domestic violence (33%).
- “Unsupervised youth” was reported by as being a major problem for residents living in this neighborhood (mean score = 6, median score = 7, **mode score = 10**).
- Respondents reported moderate trust of the police, although those under the age of 20 reported that police were much less trustworthy.

### Access to Basic Needs

- Kroger (43201) was, by far, the most common destination for grocery shopping (95%), with Giant Eagle (43202, 43215) (24%), Aldi (43211) (21%), and Wal-Mart (43219) (19%) being other frequented locations.
- Outside of Family Dollar, Dollar Tree, and KC Sports (all 43201), respondents reported leaving the neighborhood to shop for items outside of food (e.g., Walmart, Target, AJ Wright).

### Use of Computers and Media

- 85% of respondents reported knowing how to use a computer, and 67% reported having a home computer (78% of these respondents also reported having internet access at home).
- 99% of respondents reported knowing how to read, and 81% reported reading every day.
- 92% of respondents with children living in their home reported reading to their children under the age of 11, with a majority (62%) reading to their child every day.

- 80% of respondents reported going to the library, with 45% of these respondents visiting every day to once a week. *The Northside library was, by far, the most utilized library (65%).*

### Health

- **50%** of households contained an individual(s) that had been diagnosed with one or more of these conditions: Asthma, Diabetes, High Blood Pressure, Heart Disease, Obesity.
- **38%** of households contained an individual(s) that had been diagnosed with one or more of these conditions: Depression, Anxiety Disorder, Bipolar Disorder, Schizophrenia.
- 60% of households contained an individual(s) who had sought treatment in the emergency room over the last year. The average number of visits was 5 (the median was 2, the mode was 1).
- Overall, Weinland Park respondents who have access to healthcare (58%) are satisfied with their treatment (mean score = 8, median score =9, mode score = 10).
- Alcohol consumption was reported by 66% of respondents. On average, the maximum number of drinks respondents have had *on any given occasion during the past month* averaged 7 (the mode was 13 or more).
- Respondents reported that recreational drug use was a moderate to major problem for residents in Weinland Park (mean score = 7, median score =8, mode score = 10).
- 53% of respondents reported smoking cigarettes, smoking cigars, or chewing tobacco.

### Children and Child Development

- 194 children of respondents attended 60 different pre-, elementary, middle, and high schools.
- When deciding where to send their children to school, parent respondents noted that the most important factors they consider are the quality of teachers/teaching, safety, the types of curriculum/variety of classes, location, and services offered (e.g., special needs programming, daycare, arts programming, college preparatory programming).
- Parents were overwhelmingly satisfied with the schools their children were attending.
- The top reasons respondents reported their children were not involved in extracurricular activities included their children being too young, lack of time, financial barriers, or transportation barriers.

### Neighborhood Feedback

- Overall, respondents were slightly satisfied with Weinland Park as a place to live, and a majority of respondents who had lived in Weinland Park for two years or more felt that conditions in Weinland Park have improved.
- Although a great majority of respondents reported *not* being involved in community organizing around new developments or neighborhood issues (75%), a majority (79%) noted they would be interested if the opportunity arose.
- Respondents reported wanting to see improvements around the trash pick-up/litter and safety of the neighborhood. Related to this, they reported police and city services needed improvement, and

that vacant housing needed to be addressed. Many respondents also felt programming that provided more creative activities/outlets for children were needed.

### **Needs Assessment**

- The needs of respondents were great, with top needs being in the areas of economic development (employment that pays more than a minimum wage, entrepreneur development), health (access to insurance, dental, and vision care), basic needs (transportation, affordable housing), and social services (counseling).