

Blake Road Corridor community assessment

*Final report for the Corridor Advisory
Collaborative*

A P R I L 2 0 0 8

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Collaborative*

April 2008

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Executive summary

The Blake Road Corridor is a highly concentrated neighborhood in Hopkins, Minnesota. This one mile by one-half mile is bound by busy roadways and contains approximately 1,350 housing units (primarily rental), but relatively few services or community facilities. In 2005, due to concerns about safety and a lack of youth programming, the Hopkins Chief of Police, the Hopkins School District, the Hennepin County Strategic Initiative and Community Engagement Department, and other partners began discussing strategies to revitalize the community. Now known as the Blake Road Corridor Stakeholders Collaborative, the group includes a wide range of representatives, including residents, business leaders, faith community leaders, and school, city, and county staff.

Description of the assessment

In 2006, the Collaborative initiated a study to guide their community revitalization efforts. The goals of this assessment were to: (1) clarify community members' concerns; (2) identify long-term solutions that promote community livability, safety, growth, and development; and (3) inform a plan to address issues, engage stakeholders, and empower residents.

The assessment included multiple data collection approaches, including:

- Interviews with 383 Corridor residents, conducted in English, Spanish, and Somali.
- An online survey completed by 40 of 56 (71%) Collaborative members, including city employees, school staff, youth program leaders, social service employees, and others.
- A series of five focus groups conducted with a total of 43 participants, including Somali and Hispanic/Latino residents, renters, homeowners, and business owners/landlords.
- A review of data submitted by the Hopkins Police Department and School District.
- A review of other local and national community revitalization efforts

Variation in perceptions

This summary highlights common themes and recommendations based on the opinions of a diverse array of community stakeholders. It is important to note that there was not a single common perception of the Corridor. In general, Collaborative members expressed more concerns about the community than did residents. For example, they were more likely to rate the quality of life in the Corridor as “poor” or “very poor” (81%, compared to 16% of the residents).

Within residents, there was also disagreement. Residents who were White, owned their homes, or lived in the community for a long time, tended to rate their community more negatively than did other residents. As the community moves forward with planning, it will be important to recognize and address these inconsistencies and to engage a diverse array of partners representing different perspectives.

Community strengths

Schools

Despite the relatively poor performance of Corridor students on standardized tests (compared to students district-wide), community members and parents generally rated Hopkins schools positively. Eight in ten Collaborative members, and nine in ten parents and youth, felt that the schools provide a good educational experience, have high academic expectations for students, and adequately serve students of all cultural/racial backgrounds.

Police

Residents and Collaborative members had positive perceptions of the Hopkins police. At least nine in ten respondents felt that police responded promptly and appropriately to incidents and adequately served all residents. However, some Collaborative members and residents (i.e., those who were White and long-time residents) felt there was not enough police presence in the Corridor.

Areas of concern

Crime and safety

Perceptions of crime and safety were mixed. City data reflects a decrease in crime since 2005, and most Collaborative members and residents feel safe in the Corridor during the day. On the other hand, at least half of the stakeholders (52% of Collaborative members, 58% of residents) feel that crime has gotten worse. Seventy-three percent of the Collaborative members, and 33 percent of the residents feel unsafe in the neighborhood at night.

Limited recreational programming

At least three-quarters of the Collaborative members rated the availability of after-school programs for teens and recreational programs for young children as “poor” or “very poor.” Resident ratings were more positive, with two-thirds expressing satisfaction with after-school activities for teens and three-quarters satisfied with programs for young children. Perhaps as a result of limited activities, many individuals (94% of Collaborative members, 60% of residents) expressed concerns related to unsupervised or unoccupied youth.

Absence of an accessible, high-quality community center or park

Almost all Collaborative members (94%) rated the availability of a community center as “poor” or “very poor;” two-thirds rated the quality as poor. Residents did not necessarily share these concerns, with one-quarter identifying the quality and availability of recreational facilities as a problem and one-third identifying availability of a community center as a problem. Relatively few residents (19%-30%) use existing parks or resource centers, most often due to a lack of knowledge about them.

Limited screening and monitoring of renters

Rental management issues were of concern. Collaborative members and some residents felt that the lack of thorough tenant screening, as well as absentee landlords who failed to maintain their properties, were significant problems in the Corridor.

Poor lighting and unsafe walking areas

Nine in ten Collaborative members rated sidewalks as poor; almost half rated street lighting as poor. Almost half of the residents (44% to 46%) also expressed concerns with lighting and pedestrian safety. When asked for suggestions for improving quality of life in the Corridor, residents most often mentioned traffic management and lighting.

Limited access to social services

Approximately two-thirds of the Collaborative members rated the availability of social service agencies, health clinics, child care services, and programs for the elderly as “poor” or “very poor.” Concerns about social services ranked among residents’ most prevalent concerns, though only approximately one-quarter expressed dissatisfaction with services.

Recommendations

- Create a group of external and internal stakeholders to prioritize and guide revitalization efforts, either as a continuation of the existing Collaborative or as a new committee.
- Increase access to social services and recreation programs, especially for teenagers, by:
 - Conducting promotion and outreach activities to increase use of existing services.
 - Reducing access barriers, by providing transportation to services outside of the Corridor or co-locating services in community settings.
 - Creating a community center to serve as a hub for recreational and service programs within the Corridor.
- Improve lighting and sidewalks to make areas more pedestrian friendly.
- Increase landlord accountability for screening and monitoring their tenants.

Introduction

Community background

The Blake Road Corridor is a highly concentrated neighborhood located within the City of Hopkins, Minnesota. This one mile by one half mile area consists of about 1,350 housing units, virtually all of which are rental. The area is bound by busy roadways, bordered by commercial property along the Blake Road strip, Excelsior Boulevard on the south and Highway 7 on the north. The east side of the neighborhood is the boundary line of St. Louis Park, MN (Figure 1).

1. Map of the Blake Road Corridor



This secluded neighborhood contains few services or community facilities. The physical layout of this area restricts young children from easily leaving the area to access schools or city or private non-profit programming offered in other parts of the community. Transportation outside the corridor is an issue for these children, most of whom come from low-income families.

While safety is a top priority for the City of Hopkins, an increase in crime was seen in 2005, especially in the Blake Road Corridor area. The Blake Road Corridor makes up less than 4 percent of Hopkins, but was responsible for nearly 22 percent of all total city police calls that year. Much of the crime is reported in Cottageville Park, a small “pocket park” bordered by houses that is not visible from the street. As the only park within the Corridor, Cottageville Park has been the scene of frequent fights with teenage gangs, drug dealing, and other nuisance activity. Elementary school-age kids observe gang activity, especially when law enforcement arrives to stop fights or arrest drug dealers.

The Blake Road Corridor houses a diverse group of residents. Over the past several years, the area has seen a significant growth in the Somali and Hispanic/Latino communities as well as Russian, East Indian and other cultural groups. A total of 37 languages are spoken by students in the Hopkins schools.

Formation of the Stakeholder Group

In 2005, due to concerns about safety and a lack of supervised recreational programs for youth, the Hopkins Chief of Police turned to the community for assistance in addressing these issues. In partnership with the Hopkins School District, the Hennepin County Strategic Initiative and Community Engagement Department, and other members of the community, he convened a group of stakeholders for the purpose of organizing healthy activities for children and their families. Soon after, agencies and community members began meeting to discuss strategies to revitalize the community and formed what is now known as The Blake Road Corridor Stakeholders Collaborative. Membership of the Stakeholders Group now includes a wide range of community representatives, including residents, parents, business leaders, faith community leaders, and school, city and county staff.

The Collaborative recognized a need for better communication and interaction between residents of the Blake Road Corridor, with the goals of facilitating changes in the neighborhood and providing assistance to families while increasing their participation in their community. To combine knowledge with action and achieve social change to improve outcomes and eliminate disparities, stakeholders decided to conduct a study to guide their community revitalization efforts and build community. They believed a

process was needed to give the residents and other stakeholders a voice regarding their perceptions around quality of life issues.

Overview of the Blake Road Corridor Assessment project

In 2006, the Stakeholder Collaborative contracted with Wilder Research to conduct a community assessment, which was designed to take place in two phases. A smaller Advisory Committee, consisting of representatives of the Stakeholder Collaborative, was formed to partner with Wilder to oversee the design and implementation of this assessment. There were three goals of the assessment project:

- Gather information regarding concerns and solutions as they exist and as they are perceived by the community at large, the residents of the Corridor, and the stakeholders that interact with the residents in the target area.
- Identify long-term solutions that promote the livability, safety, growth and development of the community in all aspects, including but not limited to programming for youth and the safety and well-being of residents.
- Assist with the development of a long-term plan that will address issues, encourage stakeholder engagement, and empower residents.

Overview of the Blake Road Corridor Assessment

The assessment occurred in two phases between October 2006 and February 2008. Multiple data collection strategies were used in each phase, including: online surveys, focus groups, structured interviews, and existing community data. The following summarizes the data collection strategies implemented during each phase of the study, and a description of the respondents who participated in each component.

Phase I data collection

Two primary research approaches were used in Phase I of the assessment: an online survey with identified project stakeholders participating in the Stakeholder Collaborative and a series of five focus groups with residents and business owners. Some additional data regarding crime and education were provided by members of the Advisory Committee and are included in this report. (Results from Phase I of the assessment project were first reported to the Advisory Committee and the Stakeholder Collaborative in May 2007; see the Phase I report for additional information).

Stakeholder Collaborative survey

A survey was developed in coordination with the project's Advisory Committee. This survey was designed to explore the core areas of concern within the community, including crime and safety, schools and education, housing, businesses, and local services. The survey was administered online to members of the Corridor's Stakeholder Collaborative. To ensure that stakeholders had ample opportunity to participate, those who did not respond to the online survey and multiple reminders after several weeks were invited to complete telephone interviews with trained interviewers. Surveys and interviews were completed in March and April, 2007.

A total of 65 individuals were originally identified for the survey, although nine were subsequently considered ineligible for reasons such as leaving the area. Of the remaining 56 eligible stakeholders, 40 completed the survey (for a response rate of 71%).

While most of the stakeholders (84%) lived or worked in the City of Hopkins, relatively few (16%) lived or worked within the Blake Road Corridor (Figure 2). While most of the respondents did not live in the Blake Road Corridor, two-thirds (68%) have regular contact with Corridor residents, either informally or formally (through businesses, programs, school-related activities, etc.).

2. Collaborative survey: Percentage of stakeholders who live or work in the target area

	N	%
Do you live and/or work in the City of Hopkins?		
Yes, I live in Hopkins	1	3%
Yes, I work in Hopkins	27	71%
Yes, I both live and work in Hopkins	4	10%
No, I do not live or work in Hopkins	6	16%
Do you live and/or work in the Blake Road Corridor?		
Yes, I live in the Blake Road Corridor	1	3%
Yes, I work in the Blake Road Corridor	5	13%
Yes, I both live and work in the Blake Road Corridor	0	0%
No, I do not live or work in the Blake Road Corridor	32	84%

Collaborative members had a number of roles within the Corridor (Figure 3). One-third of the respondents (34%) were city employees. Other common roles included school staff (18%), youth program leaders (11%), and social service employees (11%).

3. Collaborative survey: Stakeholder role

Which of the following best describes your role within the Blake Road Corridor?	N	%
Other city employee	13	34%
School staff	7	18%
Youth program leader	4	11%
Social service employee	4	11%
Police officer	3	8%
County government staff	3	8%
Resident	2	5%
Clergy or faith community leader	2	5%
Elected official	1	3%
Landlord or housing manager	1	3%
Business owner	0	0%
Local business employee	0	0%
Other	7	18%

Note: Because survey respondents could select multiple roles, percentages total more than 100 percent.

Focus groups

A series of five focus groups were held in March and April 2007. Members of the Advisory Collaborative recruited participants through letters, phone calls, and in-person visits to residents and business owners in the Blake Road Corridor area. A total of 43 individuals participated in the focus groups, with between 5 and 15 individuals participating in each group. All focus groups were held at centrally located sites in the Corridor. The five focus groups were comprised of the following groups of individuals:

- Somali residents (n=15) – length of residency in the area ranged from 4 months to 6 years
- Hispanic/Latino residents (n=6) – length of residency in the area ranged from 1.5 years to 9 years
- Renters (n=6) – length of residency in the area ranged from 1.5 years to 21 years
- Home owners (n=10) – length of residency in the area ranged from 8 months to 44 years
- Business owners/landlords (n=6) – length of ownership/management in the area ranged from 2 years to 20 years

Secondary data

In addition to survey and focus group data collected for this assessment, some existing data were gathered for this report. The Hopkins Police Department provided data regarding crime committed in the Corridor to supplement the assessment data related to crime and safety. The Hopkins School District data provided information about students living in the Corridor, including their demographic background, attendance and behavior issues, and standardized test results. This information is presented later in the sections on crime and safety and schools and education, respectively.

Laying the foundation for Phase II

Consistent themes and recommendations emerged during Phase I of the community assessment. However, it was not possible to determine whether the areas of concern and recommendations reflected the priorities of the larger group of community residents, or simply mirrored the issues that had been raised as concerns within Stakeholder Collaborative meetings. Similarly, it was not possible to prioritize the recommendations based on the likelihood that they would successfully transform the community and address underlying areas of concern.

The results of Phase I were used to guide the second phase of the assessment, which included a review of other local and national community revitalization efforts (see Appendix) and in-person interviews with a larger number of Corridor residents.

Phase II data collection

Resident survey

A resident survey was developed in coordination with the project's Advisory Committee. This survey was designed to explore the core areas of concern within the community, including crime and safety, schools and education, housing, businesses, and local services.

A total of 383 surveys were completed by Corridor residents representing 357 households. The margin of error is +/-4.45 percent with a confidence level of 95 percent (calculation is based on an approximate 1,350 households in the Blake Road Corridor). Surveys were administered by trained interviewers from Wilder Research between September and December 2007. Residents were invited to complete surveys during door-to-door visits, community events at apartment complexes, and by telephone. Individuals were eligible to complete the survey if they were at least 15 years of age and a resident of the Blake Road Corridor. Surveys were completed in English (89%), Spanish (8%), and Somali (3%) (Figure 4).

Of the 716 interviews attempted, 383 were completed, for a response rate of 54 percent. The most common reasons for incomplete interviews were an inability to contact the resident (i.e., no one home after multiple attempts) (34%) and refusals (11%). Only seven residents were unable to participate due to language barriers.

4. Resident interviews: Language of interview

What language was the interview conducted in?	Interview respondents (N=383)	
	N	Percentage
English	342	89%
Spanish	30	8%
Somali	11	3%

Description of respondents

Racial/ethnic background

Residents represented a range of racial/ethnic backgrounds, including Caucasian/White (38%), Black/African American (19%), African Native (17%), and Latino/Hispanic (14%). The remaining 16 percent of the residents identified themselves as American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, Multi-racial, or Other (Figure 5).

Age and gender

Almost two-thirds of the respondents (63%) were female (Figure 6). Residents ranged in age from 15 to 92 years old; most (62%) were between the ages of 21 and 40. Caucasian/White respondents tended to be somewhat older, with almost half (48%) age 40 or older, compared to 31 percent of Black/African American, 12 percent of African Native, and 14 percent of Latino/Hispanic residents who were aged 40 or older (Figure 7).

Homeowner/renter status and length of residency

Most residents (91%) were renters, while only 8 percent were homeowners (some residents neither rented nor owned property, or both rented and owned property) (Figure 8). Homeowners were most often White/Caucasian (16%, compared to 8% of Latino/Hispanic residents, 1% of Black/African residents, and no African Native residents).

On average, residents had lived in the area for four years, although length of residence ranged from less than 1 month to 69 years. One-quarter of the residents had lived in the Corridor for less than one year, while about one half had lived there between one and five years. Homeowners (59%) and White/Caucasian respondents (32%) were more likely to have lived in the Corridor for at least six years compared to renters (16%) and respondents who were African Native (18%), Latino/Hispanic (14%), and Black/African American (7%) (Figure 9). About one in five residents (21%) also worked in the Blake Road Corridor (Figure 10).

Household composition

Most residents (87%) had four or fewer people living in their household and about half had children under 18 at home. Less than one-quarter of the Caucasian/White residents (23%) had children under 18 years old living in their household, compared to almost three-quarters of Black/African American (72%), African Native (74%), and Latino/Hispanic (73%) residents. Most residents did not have a child under 6 years of age (66%) or an adult over the age of 65 years old (95%) in their household (Figure 11).

Language

English was the most common primary language spoken at home by about two-thirds of the residents (65%). Somali was spoken by 13 percent of residents, while Spanish was spoken by 12 percent (Figure 12).

5. Resident interviews: Respondents' racial background

What is your racial background?	Interview respondents (N=379)	
	N	Percentage
Caucasian or White	142	38%
Black or African American	72	19%
African Native ^a	66	17%
Latino or Hispanic	51	14%
Asian	21	6%
Multi-racial ^b	13	3%
Other ^c	11	3%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	3	1%

^a Of the 66 African Native respondents, 63 identified their country of origin as Somalia (45%), Egypt (2%), Ethiopia (13%), Trinidad (2%), Kenya (3%), Fulani (2%), Liberia (2%), Gambia (3%), Eritrea (2%), or Cameroon (2%).

^b The 13 respondents who said they were of multiple racial backgrounds identified themselves as: Black/African American & Caucasian/White (n=4); Asian & Other- East Indian (n=1); Caucasian/White & Other-East Indian (n=1), Caucasian/White & Jewish (n=1); Caucasian/White & Latino/Hispanic (n=1); Latino/Hispanic & Other (American) (n=1); Black/African American & Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (n=1); American Indian/Alaskan Native, Black/African American, & White (n=2); and American Indian/Alaskan Native, Black/African American, & Latino/Hispanic (n=1).

^c Other racial backgrounds identified included Somalian (n=1), Egyptian (n=1), East Indian (n=3), Middle Eastern (n=1), Creole (n=1), Jamaican (n=1), and American (n=3).

6. Resident interviews: Gender of respondent

What is your gender?	Interview respondents (N=383)	
	N	Percentage
Male	141	37%
Female	242	63%

7. Resident interviews: Respondents' age

What is your age?	Interview respondents (N=381)	
	N	Percentage
15 to 20	30	8%
21 to 30	146	38%
31 to 40	92	24%
41 to 50	47	12%
51 to 60	45	12%
61 to 70	8	2%
71 to 80	10	3%
81 and older	3	1%

Age ranged from 15 to 92 years old, with an average of 35.9 years.

8. Resident interviews: Owner-renter status

Do you currently...	Interview respondents (N=381)	
	N	Percentage
Rent ^a	347	91%
Own	29	8%
Own or manage property	2	1%
Other ^b	3	1%

^a The following rental properties were included in the study: Westside Village, Creekwood Estates, Creekview Apartments, Knollwood Apartments, Plaza View Apartments, and Hiawatha Court.

^b Two respondents said they live with their parents and one respondent said they both rented and owned a property.

Note: Significant by race, chi-square = 20.8***. Caucasian/White respondents (16%) were more likely to be owners than respondents who were Black/African American (1%), African Native (0%), or Latino/Hispanic (8%).

9. Resident interviews: Length of residence in the Blake Road Corridor

How long have you lived in the Blake Road Corridor area?	Interview respondents (N=379)	
	N	Percentage
Less than 1 year	96	25%
1 year to less than 2 years	65	17%
2 years to less than three years	47	12%
3 years to less than five years	82	22%
5 years to less than 10 years	51	13%
10 years to less than 20 years	22	6%
20 years to less than 30 years	11	3%
More than 30 years	5	1%

Length of residence ranged from 0 to 69 years with an average of 4.2 years.

Note: Significant by race, chi-square = 24.9***. Caucasian/White respondents (32%) were more likely to have lived in the Corridor for 6 or more years than respondents who were Black/African American (7%), African Native (18%), or Latino/Hispanic (14%).

10. Resident interviews: Respondents who work in the Blake Road Corridor

Do you work in the Blake Road Corridor area?	Respondents responding "yes" (N=382)	
	N	Percentage
Do you work in the Blake Road Corridor area?	80	21%

11. Resident interviews: Household composition

How many people live in your household?	Total people living in household (N=383)	Children under 18 living in household (N=382)	Children under 6 living in household (N=383)	Adults aged 65 or older living in household (N=380)
0	0%	50%	66%	95%
1	21%	20%	19%	5%
2	29%	17%	11%	1%
3	19%	8%	4%	0%
4	18%	3%	1%	0%
5	7%	2%	0%	0%
6	5%	<1%	0%	0%
7	1%	0%	0%	0%
8	1%	0%	0%	0%
9	<1%	0%	0%	0%
Average	2.9	1.0	.5	.1

12. Resident interviews: Respondents' language spoken at home

What is the primary language spoken in your home?	Interview respondents (N=381)	
	N	Percentage
English	247	65%
Spanish	46	12%
Somali	50	13%
Other	38	10%
Amaric	8	2%
Hindi	4	1%
Russian	4	1%
Swahili	3	1%
Arabic	3	1%
Mandarin	2	<1%
Both English and Spanish	2	<1%
Telugu	2	<1%
Other languages	10	3%

Note. Other languages spoken by only one respondent included: Malayalam, Kannada, Singhaless, Mandigo, Fulani, Tigrina, Patra, Kiswahili, Chinese, and Cree.

Blake Road Corridor Assessment: Results

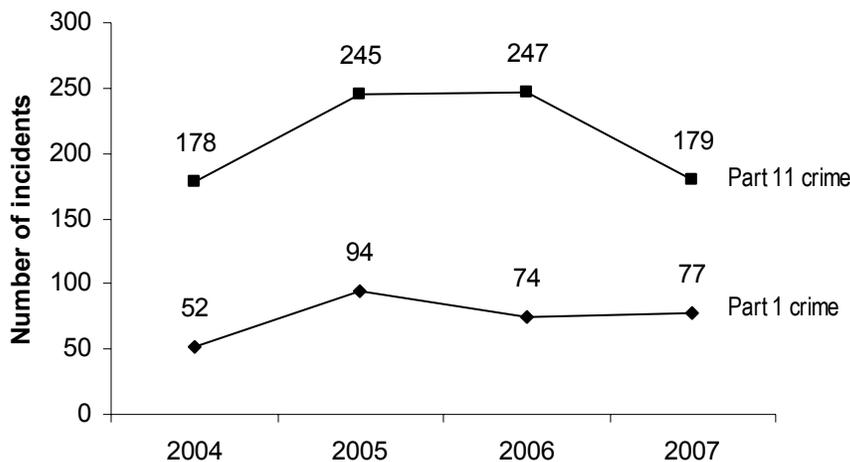
Crime and safety

Community crime statistics

Crime statistics show a decreased number of offenses in the Corridor since 2005.

An increase in crime and concerns about public safety were strong factors contributing to the interest in conducting this assessment and identifying strategies for enhancing the community. Figure 13 provides the crime statistics within the Corridor for 2004 to 2007. Large increases were seen in the number of criminal incidents between 2004 and 2005 (from 52 to 94 for Part I crimes and from 178 to 245 for Part II crimes). By 2007, there was a decrease in both Part I and Part II crimes, from 245 to 179 Part II incidents and from 94 to 77 Part I incidents. It is impossible to determine with certainty the reasons for the decreases, although the Hopkins Police Department did implement some targeted crime-prevention initiatives during the past two years.

13. Number of Part I and Part II crimes in the Corridor: 2004 - 2007



Source: Hopkins Police Department. *Note: Part I crimes include homicide, burglary, robbery, rape, vehicle theft, aggravated assault and larceny. Most other offenses are considered Part II crimes.*

Assault, larceny/theft, and vandalism were most common. Aside from traffic-related offenses, the most common forms of crime in the Corridor over the past four years were assault, larceny/theft, and vandalism. Although rates of assault had been increasing steadily between 2004 and 2006, the rate declined in 2007. Rates of vandalism and larceny/theft both doubled between 2004 and 2005. Vandalism rates have remained relatively constant since that time, while larceny/theft rates have declined (Figure 14).

14. Blake Road Corridor criminal incidents: 2004 - 2007

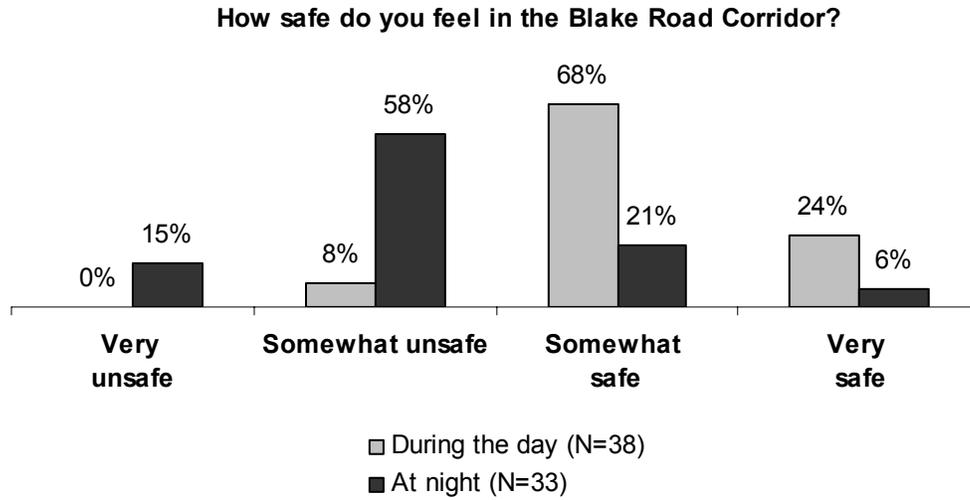
Type of crime	Year			
	2004	2005	2006	2007
Part I Crimes				
Homicide	0	0	0	0
Rape	2	0	2	4
Robbery	2	8	3	5
Aggravated assault	5	6	9	3
Burglary	8	15	7	14
Larceny/theft	26	51	47	33
Auto theft	9	14	6	18
Arson	0	0	0	0
Total Part I Crimes	52	94	74	77
Part II Crimes				
Assault	32	36	43	33
Forgery/counterfeiting	1	9	5	5
Fraud	8	10	8	8
Embezzlement	0	0	0	0
Possess stolen property	1	2	2	4
Vandalism	19	48	54	53
Weapons	5	2	2	1
Prostitution	0	0	0	1
Criminal sexual conduct	2	0	1	1
Narcotics	8	17	8	17
Gambling	0	0	0	0
Family/children	0	1	2	0
DUI	22	26	29	13
Liquor violations	7	9	4	7
Disorderly conduct	14	17	18	13
Vagrancy	6	0	0	0
All other offenses	53	68	71	23
Total Part II Crimes	178	245	247	179
TOTAL PART I & II CRIMES	230	339	321	256

Source: Hopkins Police Department.

Perceptions of safety in the Corridor

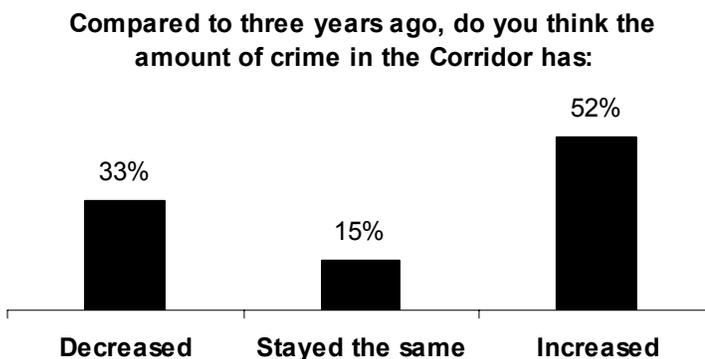
Collaborative members feel less safe in the Corridor at night than they do during the day. Almost all surveyed stakeholders (92%) feel at least “somewhat safe” in the Corridor during the day; one in four respondents (24%) feel “very safe.” Fewer stakeholders (27%) feel at least “somewhat safe” in the Corridor at night (Figure 15).

15. Collaborative survey: Level of perceived safety in the Corridor



One in two Collaborative members feels that crime in the Corridor is getting worse. Respondents were more likely to say that the amount of crime in the Blake Road Corridor has increased over the past three years (52%), rather than decreased (33%) (Figure 16).

16. Collaborative survey: Perceived changes in the amount of crime (N=33)



Residents also generally felt safe in the Blake Road Corridor, although somewhat less at night. Most residents “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that they feel safe in the Corridor and entering businesses in the Corridor during the day (95% to 98%). Fewer feel safe in the Corridor at night (68% to 80%) and being in Cottageville Park (66%) (Figure 17). Feeling less safe at night was especially true among White/Caucasian respondents (only 51% felt safe compared to 70% or more of residents from other racial or ethnic backgrounds), longer-term residents (41%, compared to more than 70% of residents who had lived in the Corridor less than 5 years), and home owners (45%, compared to 69% of homeowners) (Figures 18-20).

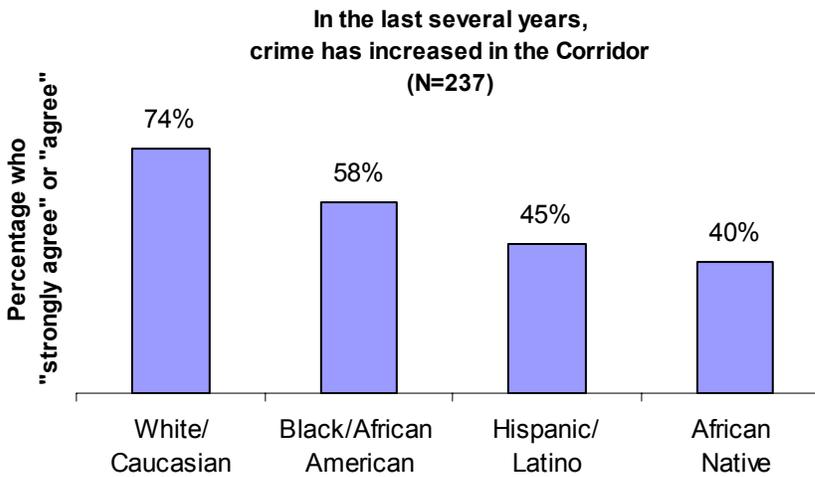
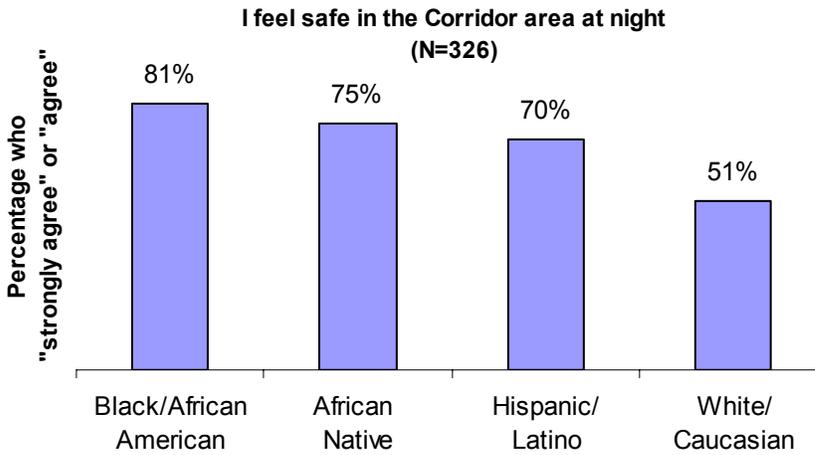
Perceptions of crime level trends varied across residents. Slightly more than half of the respondents (58%) felt crime had increased within the last few years (Figure 17). White/Caucasian residents (74%, compared to 41%-58% of residents from other racial/ethnic backgrounds), longer-term residents (81%, compared to 48%-50% of residents who had lived in the Corridor less than 5 years), and home owners (92%, compared to 55% of renters) were more likely to feel that crime was on the increase (Figures 18-20).

17. Resident interviews: Level of perceived safety in the Corridor

How much you agree or disagree with the following statements about safety and the Hopkins Police Department....	N	Would you say...					Mean	Chi-square		
		Strongly agree 4	Agree 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1	Race		Length of residence	Owner/renter status	
I feel safe in the Corridor area during the day	382	43%	52%	4%	1%	3.4	14.2	10.1	4.0	
I feel safe in the Corridor area at night	377	20%	48%	23%	10%	2.8	33.5***	32.0***	11.6**	
I feel safe entering local businesses during the day	382	51%	47%	2%	0%	3.5	13.4*	2.8	0.5	
I feel safe entering local businesses at night	369	25%	55%	15%	5%	3.0	17.7*	19.8**	8.6*	
I feel safe in Cottageville Park	154	14%	52%	20%	14%	2.7	14.7	14.8*	13.9**	
In the last several years, crime has increased in the Corridor	270	23%	35%	35%	7%	2.7	25.0**	24.2***	13.7**	

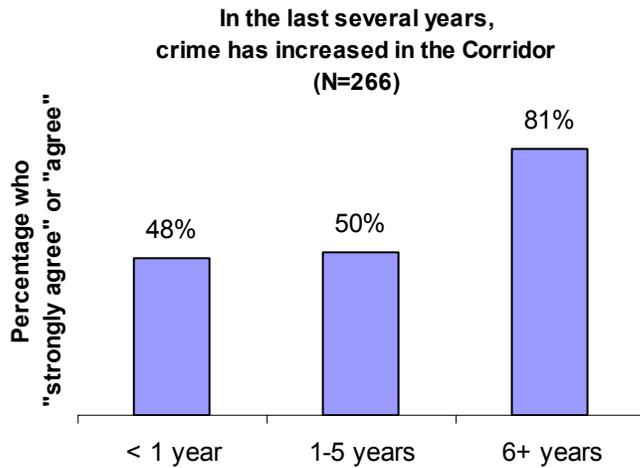
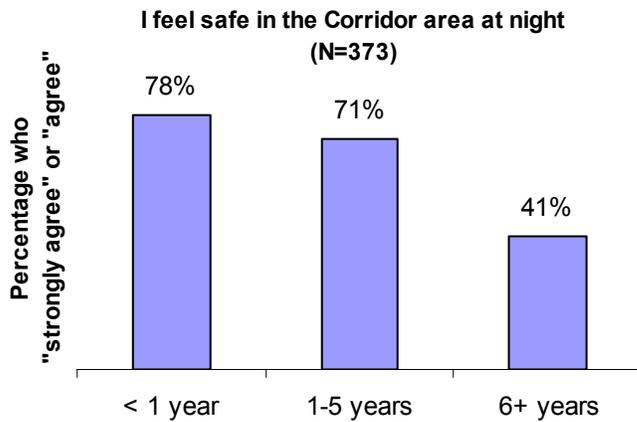
*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

18. Resident interviews: Perception of Corridor crime and safety by race



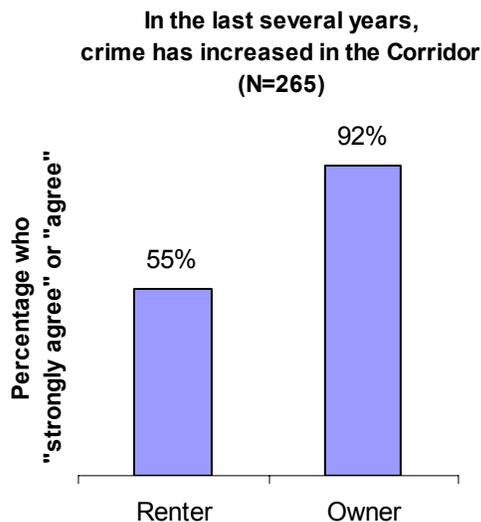
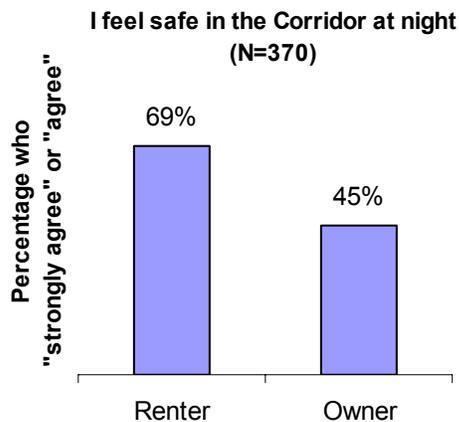
Note. *Chi-square race/ethnicity (Corridor at night) = 33.5. Chi-square by years of residency (crime has increased) = 25.0.*

19. Resident interviews: Perception of Corridor crime and safety by length of residency



Note. Chi-square by years of residency (Corridor at night) = 32.0. Chi-square by years of residency (crime has increased) = 24.2.

20. Resident interviews: Perception of Corridor crime and safety by owner/renter status



Note. Chi-square by owner/renter status (Corridor at night) = 11.6. Chi-square by owner/renter status (crime has increased) = 13.7.

Perceptions of the police

Stakeholders generally provided positive feedback regarding the police, though they felt that there is not enough police presence in the Corridor. All Collaborative members surveyed rated police/law enforcement as at least “good;” about half (53%) rated them as “very good.” Almost all Collaborative survey respondents (90% to 97%) “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that police respond quickly to incidents, have a positive relationship with residents, adequately serve all residents, and respond fairly and appropriately to incidents. Ratings of police responsiveness were especially positive, with half of the respondents (50%) “strongly agreeing” that they respond quickly to

incidents. Fewer survey respondents (62%) “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that there are enough police officers serving the Corridor (Figure 21-22).

21. Collaborative survey: Ratings of city services in the Corridor

How would you rate the following city services in the Blake Road Corridor?	N	Very poor	Poor	Good	Very good
Police/law enforcement	32	0%	0%	47%	53%

22. Collaborative survey: Perceptions of police

How much do you agree/disagree with the following statements about police serving the Blake Road Corridor?	N	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Police respond quickly to incidents	28	0%	4%	46%	50%
Police have a positive relationship with residents	31	3%	7%	71%	19%
The Hopkins Police Department adequately serves all residents	30	0%	3%	63%	33%
There are enough police officers serving the Corridor	21	5%	33%	48%	14%
Police respond fairly and appropriately to incidents	29	0%	7%	62%	31%

Residents generally provided positive ratings of the Hopkins Police Department.

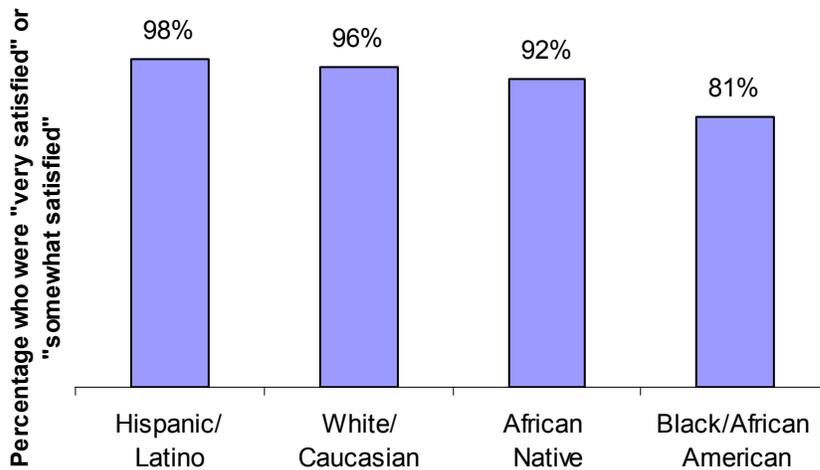
Most Corridor residents (93%) said that they were at least “somewhat satisfied” with the police/law enforcement; half (52%) were “very satisfied.” Black/African American residents were least likely to say that they were at least “somewhat satisfied” (81%, compared to 92%-98% of residents of other racial/ethnic backgrounds) (Figures 23-24).

23. Resident interviews: Satisfaction with law enforcement

How satisfied are you with the following services or programs...	Are you...					Mean	Chi-square Race
	N	Very satisfied 4	Somewhat satisfied 3	Somewhat dissatisfied 2	Very dissatisfied 1		
City services and businesses							
Police or law enforcement	363	52%	41%	5%	3%	3.4	27.0**

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

24. Resident interviews: Satisfaction with police or law enforcement by race (N=314)



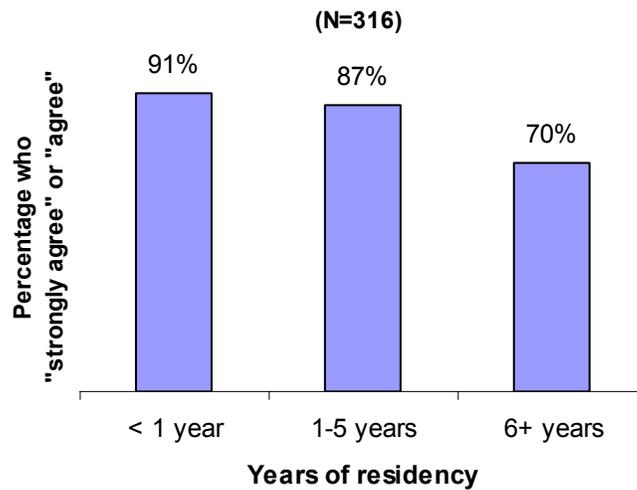
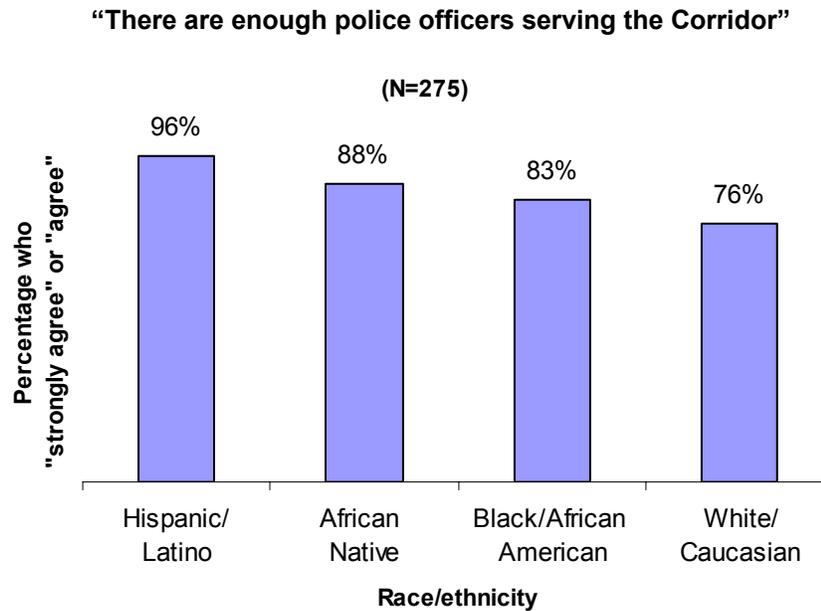
Over three-quarters of residents “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that the police: respond quickly to incidents (91%), have a positive relationship with residents (83%), adequately serve all residents (90%), respond fairly and appropriately to incidents (88%), and that there are enough police officers in the Corridor (84%). One in six residents (60%) “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that the make up the Hopkins Police Department reflected the diversity of those living in the Corridor (Figure 25).

Fewer White/Caucasian residents (76%, compared to 83%-96% of residents from other racial/ethnic backgrounds) and long-term residents (70%, compared to 87%-91% of residents who lived in the Corridor less than 5 years) felt there was a sufficient number of officers serving the Corridor (Figure 26).

25. Resident interviews: Perceptions of police

How much you agree or disagree with the following statements about safety and the Hopkins Police Department....	N	Would you say...				Mean	Chi-square	
		Strongly agree 4	Agree 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1		Race	Length of residence
Police respond quickly to incidents in the Corridor	340	49%	42%	8%	2%	3.4	9.8	3.4
Police have a positive relationship with residents in the Corridor	299	30%	53%	11%	6%	3.1	18.0*	6.3
The Hopkins Police Department adequately serves all residents in the Corridor	332	30%	60%	8%	2%	3.2	6.8	7.4
The make up of the Hopkins Police Department reflects the diversity of the people living in the Corridor	266	16%	44%	28%	11%	2.7	11.6	12.7*
There are enough police officers serving the Corridor	319	28%	56%	12%	4%	3.1	25.5**	21.0**
Police respond fairly and appropriately to incidents in the Corridor	317	28%	60%	10%	3%	3.1	28.6**	7.0

26. Resident interviews: Perception of police coverage by race and length of residency



Note. Chi-square by race = 25.5. Chi-square by length of residency = 21.0.

Other concerns about crime and safety

Collaborative members identified a range of crime and safety concerns, especially related to limited opportunities for positive youth activities. Stakeholders were asked to identify their biggest concerns about crime and safety in the Corridor. The most frequent issue mentioned by stakeholders was the lack of positive activities for youth, coupled with the potential negative impact of crime on children in the community. As described in Appendix, a range of other issues also emerged from their responses, including:

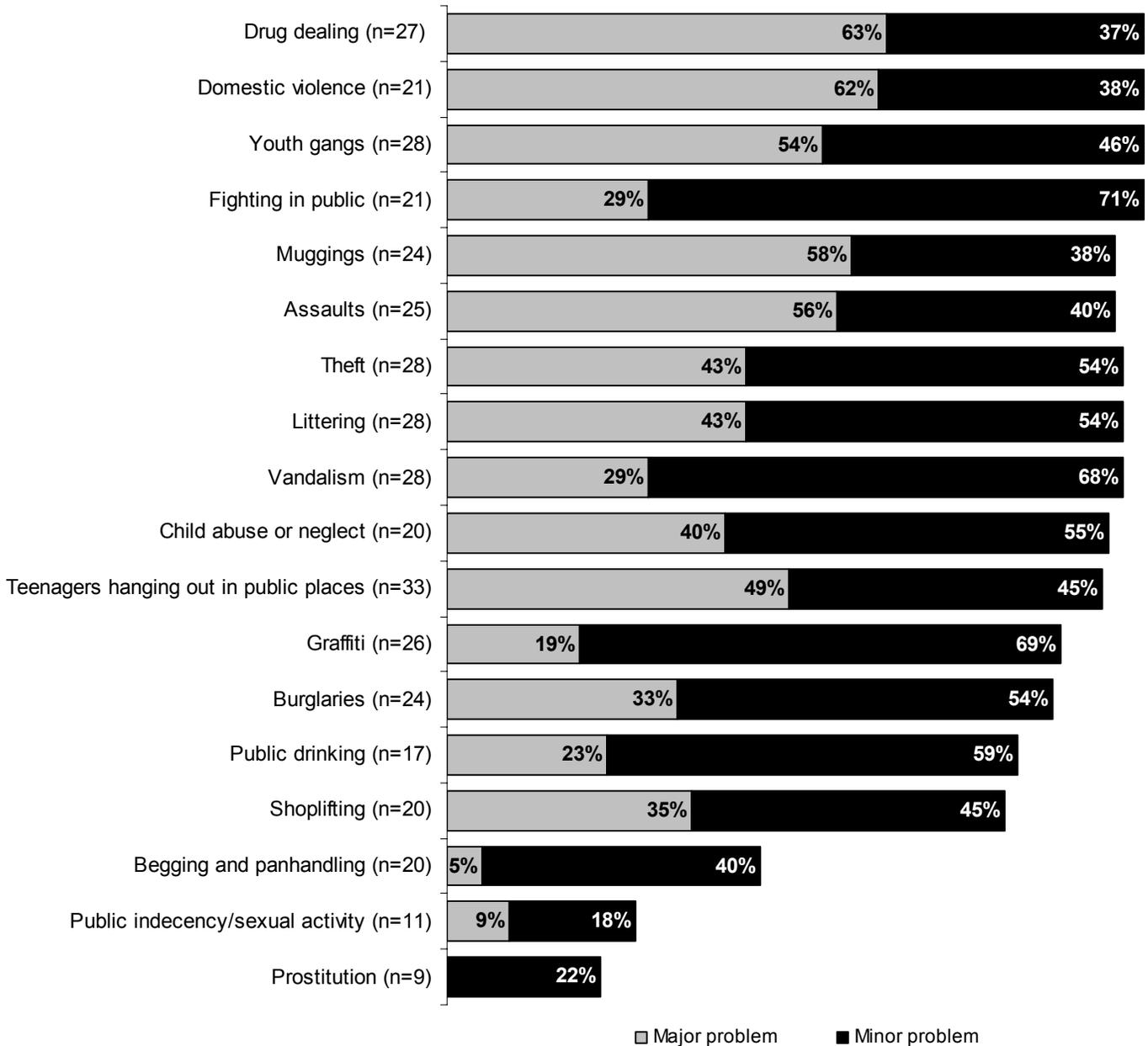
- Threats to public safety, such as assaults, muggings, or other crimes
- Concerns that the Corridor will be seen as unsafe, leading to greater turn-over of residents and challenges to redevelopment
- Limited screening and monitoring of renters
- Neighborhood layout, including poor park design, lack of lighting and unsafe walking areas for pedestrians
- Businesses that were seen as unsafe and lack of business involvement in community improvement efforts

Collaborative members identified concerns about the neighborhood, such as drug dealing, domestic violence, gangs, and assaults. Stakeholders were asked to rate the extent to which a variety of issues are problems within the Blake Road Corridor. Many issues were rated as significant concerns. More than 9 out of 10 survey respondents rated the following crime and safety issues as at least a “minor problem” in the Corridor: drug dealing (100%), fighting in public (100%), domestic violence (100%), youth gangs (100%), muggings (96%), littering (96%), vandalism (96%), theft (96%), assault (96%), child abuse or neglect (95%), and teenagers hanging out in public places (94%). More than half of the Collaborative members identified the following issues as “major concerns”: drug dealing (63%), domestic violence (62%), muggings (58%), assaults (56%), and youth gangs (54%) (Figure 27).

In many cases, respondents said that they did not know how much of a problem was presented by various issues. Relatively few stakeholders were able to rate several issues, including prostitution, public indecency/sexual activity, public drinking, shoplifting, begging and panhandling, and child abuse or neglect.

27. Collaborative survey: Stakeholders' perceptions of crime and safety issues

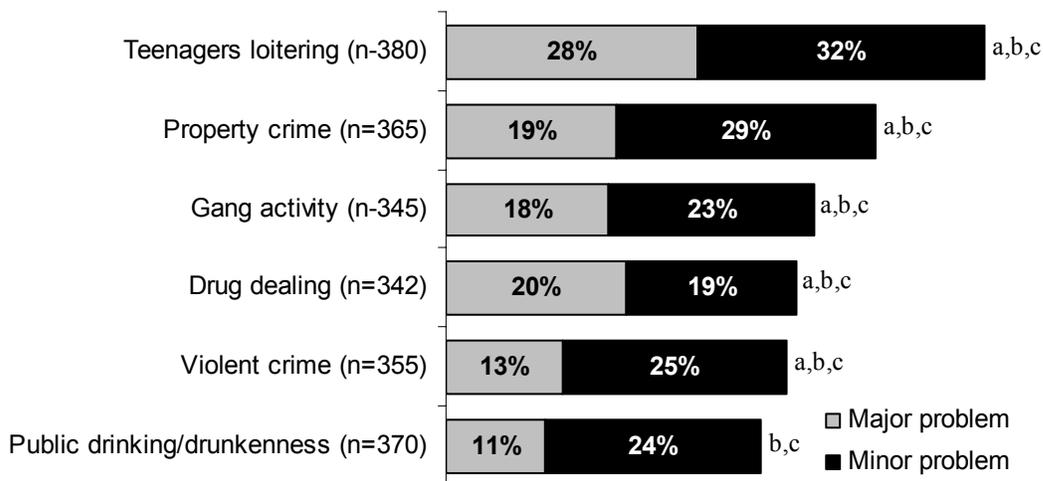
How much of a problem are the following issues in the Blake Road Corridor?



Residents’ primary concern was related to loitering or unsupervised youth. The largest problem identified by residents was loitering youth, with 60 percent perceiving this to be at least a “minor problem” in the Corridor. At least one third of residents also identified property crime (48%), gangs (41%), drug dealing (39%), violent crime (38%), and public drinking/drunkenness (35%) as a “minor” or “major” problem (Figure 28).

Several issues emerged as problems for select residents. As compared to other groups of residents, those who were White/Caucasian, had lived in the Corridor several years, and owned a home were more likely to identify the following issues as problems: teenagers loitering, property crime, gang activity, drug dealing, and violent crime (Figure 29).

28. Resident interviews: Residents’ perceptions of crime and safety



- ^a Chi-square analysis revealed significant group differences by race.
- ^b Chi-square analysis revealed significant group differences by length of residency.
- ^c Chi-square analysis revealed significant group differences by owner/renter status.

29. Resident interviews: Crime and safety concerns by race, length of residency, and owner/renter status

	Racial/ethnic comparison (N=295-330)		Length of residency comparison (N=338-378)		Owner/renter status comparison (N=338-375)	
	White	Other races	Long-term	Short-term	Owners	Renters
Teenagers loitering ^a	71%	47%-70%	69%	49%-63%	79%	57%
Property crime ^b	65%	30%-43%	73%	29%-46%	74%	45%
Gang activity ^c	53%	24%-49%	58%	21%-43%	76%	38%
Drug dealing ^d	53%	26%-35%	62%	22%-39%	79%	36%
Violent crime ^e	53%	24%-37%	66%	18%-36%	73%	35%

- ^a Significant by race (chi-square = 18.8**), by length of residency (chi-square = 14.3**), and by owner/renter status = (chi-square = 6.0*).
- ^b Significant by race (chi-square = 30.4***), by length of residency (chi-square = 32.7***), and by owner/renter status = (chi-square = 9.6**).
- ^c Significant by race (chi-square = 19.7**), by length of residency (chi-square = 23.4***), and by owner/renter status = (chi-square = 12.0**).
- ^d Significant by race (chi-square = 17.4**), by length of residency (chi-square = 27.0***), and by owner/renter status = (chi-square = 19.8***).
- ^e Significant by race (chi-square = 24.2***), by length of residency (chi-square = 39.7***), and by owner/renter status = (chi-square = 16.1***).

Summary of crime and safety

Crime statistics showed a decrease in criminal incidents since 2005. Despite this decline, more than half of Collaborative members and residents felt that crime had increased in the Corridor within the last several years. Both groups also noted feeling less safe in the Corridor at night than during the day. Collaborative members and residents both rated the Hopkins Police Department positively, although a number of stakeholders and certain groups of residents (those who were White/Caucasian and long-time residents) felt there was not sufficient police presence in the Corridor. In general, Collaborative members identified a larger number of safety concerns than residents, although issues related to drug dealing, gangs, violent crime, and loitering youth did emerge as significant concerns for both groups.

Schools and education

School data

Between September 2007 and March 2008, a total of 157 students lived in the Blake Road Corridor (i.e., east of Blake Road, between Excelsior Blvd and Highway 7). No schools are physically located within the Blake Road Corridor. Students living within the Corridor attended five schools. More than half of the students (57%) attend Eisenhower Elementary School. Other schools attended by Corridor students include Hopkins High School (17%), North Junior High (12%), West Junior High (10%), and Alice Smith Elementary (4%) (Figure 30).

30. Schools attended by students living in the Blake Road Corridor (N=157)

	N	%
Alice Smith Elementary	6	4%
Eisenhower Elementary	89	57%
North Junior High	19	12%
West Junior High	16	10%
Hopkins High School	27	17%

Source: Hopkins School District. Data apply to all students from the Blake Road Corridor enrolled at any point between September 2007 and March 2008.

Students in the Corridor represent a diverse range of backgrounds. Approximately two-thirds of the students (68%) were Black; other students were Hispanic (18%), White (8%), Asian (3%), and American Indian (2%). More than one-third of students (38%) speak English as a second language. Almost nine in ten students receive either free (76%) or reduced price (11%) lunches. Fifteen percent of the students had Individualized Education Plans. In contrast, students in the overall district were much more likely to be White (73%). Few students across the district (5%) speak English as a second language, in comparison to students in the Corridor. Students across the district are also less likely to receive either free (18%) or reduced price (6%) lunches. A slightly fewer proportion of students in the district (12%) had Individualized Education Plans (Figure 31).

31. Background of students living in the Blake Road Corridor

	Students living in Corridor (N=157)		All district students (N=7,977)	
	N	%	N	%
Gender				
Male	61	39%	4,141	52%
Female	96	61%	3,836	48%
Race				
American Indian	3	2%	37	<1%
Asian	4	3%	414	5%
Hispanic	29	18%	400	5%
Black	107	68%	1,313	16%
White	14	8%	5,813	73%
Lunch				
Free	120	76%	1,418	18%
Reduced price	19	12%	484	6%
None	18	11%	6,071	76%
Special education status				
Student has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP)	23	15%	918	12%
None	134	85%	7,059	88%
English as a Second Language (ESL)				
Yes	60	38%	392	5%
No	97	62%	7,585	95%

Source: Hopkins School District. Data apply to all students from the Blake Road Corridor enrolled at any point between September 2007 and March 2008.

On average, students living in the Corridor exhibited more than eight absences and eight tardy arrivals each between September 2007 and March 2008. One-third of students (32%) exhibited at least one behavior incident during this period that resulted in an official behavior report being entered into their student records. In comparison, students in the overall district had a somewhat higher number of tardy arrivals (more than nine) but somewhat fewer absences (over seven). Students across the district were also less likely to exhibit at least one behavior incident, with 14 percent doing so (Figures 32-33).

32. Attendance issues for students living in the Blake Road Corridor

	Students living in Corridor (N=157)	All district students (N=7,588)
Average number of absences per student	8.6	7.6
Average number of tardies per student	8.5	9.3

Source: Hopkins School District. Data apply to all students from the Blake Road Corridor enrolled at any point between September 2007 and March 2008. All absences and tardies between these dates were counted.

33. Behavior incidents for students living in the Blake Road Corridor

	Students living in Corridor (N=156)		All district students (N=7,588)	
	N	%	N	%
0	106	68%	6,550	86%
1	27	17%	640	8%
2	13	8%	221	3%
3	6	4%	72	1%
More than 3	4	3%	105	1%

Source: Hopkins School District. Data apply to all students from the Blake Road Corridor enrolled at any point between September 2007 and March 2008. All behavior events between these dates were counted. A behavior event is counted when an incident results in office involvement, with an official behavior report entered into the student's record. During this period, students exhibited an average of 1.0 behavior events each.

Many students in the Corridor did not pass the MCA test. About one in four Corridor students (42%) who took the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment in 2007 passed the math test (i.e., received a score of 3 or 4). A similar proportion (39%) had a passing score on the reading test. In contrast, students across the overall district were more likely to have passed both the reading test (88%) and the math test (68%) (Figure 34).

34. Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA II) results for students living in the Blake Road Corridor

	Students living in Corridor		All district students	
	N	%	N	%
Math level	(N=62)		(N=3,861)	
I	17	27%	618	16%
II	19	31%	633	16%
III	21	34%	1,376	36%
IV	5	8%	1,234	32%
Reading level	(N=66)		(N=3,337)	
I	23	35%	381	11%
II	17	26%	20	<1%
III	16	24%	1,132	34%
IV	10	15%	1,804	54%

Source: Hopkins School District. A level of 3 or 4 is considered passing. MCAs were completed in April 2007.

Perceptions of the schools

Collaborative members were asked several questions about the local schools. Because no schools are located within the Corridor, survey respondents were asked to consider the schools that serve the children who live in the Blake Road Corridor.

Collaborative members provided mixed ratings related to crime and safety in the schools. Most survey respondents “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that crime (75%) and student behavior problems (96%) have increased in the schools over the past three years. Despite these perceptions, almost all respondents either “agreed” (63%) or “strongly agreed” (34%) that schools are safe for students (Figure 35).

Collaborative members generally rated the educational experience provided by the schools as positive. Stakeholders also provided positive ratings to a number of other questions about the schools. Almost all respondents (97%) “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that school buildings and properties are well-maintained. At least four in five respondents “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that the schools provide students with a good educational experience, schools have high academic expectations for students, and there are opportunities for businesses and other community groups to be involved with the schools. Most survey respondents also felt that the schools do a relatively good job serving a diverse population, with approximately four in five stakeholders “agreeing” or “strongly agreeing” that the

schools adequately serve students of all cultural/racial backgrounds (79%) and adequately serve language-minority students (82%) (Figure 35).

Respondents gave less positive ratings of parent and youth involvement in the schools and opportunities for recreational programs. Several items received lower ratings from Collaborative members. Almost half of the respondents (48%) “disagreed” or “strongly disagreed” that the schools provide students with a sufficient number and variety of after-school activities. Most respondents also “disagreed” or “strongly disagreed” that students (50%) and parents (72%) are actively involved in their children’s schools (Figure 35).

35. Collaborative survey: Ratings of schools serving the children/youth who live in the Corridor

How much do you agree/disagree with the following statements about the schools that serve the children/youth who live in the Blake Road Corridor?	N	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Schools are safe for students	32	0%	3%	63%	34%
Crime has increased in the schools over the past three years	24	17%	8%	63%	12%
Student behavior problems have increased in the schools over the past three years	27	0%	4%	78%	18%
School buildings and property are well-maintained	33	0%	3%	67%	30%
The schools provide students with a good educational experience	33	0%	12%	52%	36%
The schools have high academic expectations for their students	33	3%	9%	61%	27%
The schools provide students with a sufficient number and variety of after-school activities	25	8%	40%	48%	4%
Students are actively involved in their schools	24	8%	42%	46%	4%
Parents are actively involved in their children’s schools	25	16%	56%	28%	0%
The schools adequately serve students of all cultural/racial backgrounds	29	7%	14%	65%	14%
The schools adequately serve language-minority students	28	4%	14%	64%	18%
There are opportunities for businesses and other community groups to be involved with the schools	28	7%	7%	68%	18%

Similar concerns were expressed by Collaborative members when they were asked to identify their biggest concerns with schools serving children/youth who live in the Corridor. Respondents were most likely to mention the lack of academic and recreational activities for students and the lack of family involvement. Some Collaborative members also expressed concerns with student behavior, while others felt that the community needs to be mobilized to address student concerns. A full list of respondents' comments can be found in Appendix.

One-quarter of the residents surveyed had at least one child currently attending a school in the Hopkins School District. Most students attended Eisenhower Elementary (61%) or Hopkins High School (23%). Ten youth currently attending a school in the Hopkins School District were also interviewed. Of these, nine attended Hopkins High School and one attended West Junior High (Figures 36-39).

36. Resident interviews: Parents with children attending a school within the District (parent report)

	Respondents responding "yes" (N=372)	
	N	Percentage
Do you currently have any children attending a school in the Hopkins School District?	93	25%

*Note: Statistically significant by race, chi-square=32.8***. White/Caucasian respondents (9%) were less likely to have a child attending a school in the Hopkins School District, compared to Latino/Hispanic respondents (44%), Black/African American respondents (34%), and African Native respondents (31%).*

37. Resident interviews: Schools attended by children living in the Corridor (parent report)

Which school(s) do/does your child(ren) attend?	(N=93)	
	N	Percentage
Eisenhower Elementary	57	61%
Hopkins High School	21	23%
Harley Hopkins Family Center	16	17%
North Junior High	14	15%
West Junior High	11	12%
Alice Smith Elementary	4	4%
A private school ^a	4	4%

^a One child attended each of the following four schools: St. Johns, Cedar Manor Elementary, Discoveries for Children, and Gatewood Elementary.

38. Resident interviews: Students attending a school within the District (youth report)

	Respondents responding "yes" (N=373)	
	N	Percentage
Do you currently attend a school in the Hopkins School District?	10	3%

39. Resident interviews: Schools attended by youth living in the Corridor (youth report)

Which school do you attend?	(N=10)	
	N	Percentage
Hopkins High School	9	90%
West Junior High	1	10%
Eisenhower Elementary	0	0%
Alice Smith Elementary	0	0%
North Junior High	0	0%
Harley Hopkins Family Center	0	0%
A private school	0	0%

Parents and youth rated schools very highly and felt schools provided students with a good education, sufficient after school activities, and adequately served a diverse student body. Most parents and youth (90% to 100%) “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that the schools are well-maintained, have high academic expectations for students, adequately serve students of all cultural and racial backgrounds, and adequately serve students whose primary language is not English. Almost all parents and youth (98% to 100%) also felt that the Hopkins School District provided a good education. Three in four parents (75%) felt that there were enough after school activities available for their child (Figures 40-41).

Despite the perceived availability of after school activities, less than half of youth are involved in these activities. While all youth “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that there are enough after school activities available for them to participate in, only 4 of the 10 said they were actively involved in these activities. Similarly, almost one-third of parents (30%) also reported that their child was not involved in activities at school (Figures 40-41).

Perceptions of crime and safety in the schools were somewhat mixed among parents and youth. While almost all of the parents and youth (99% to 100%) “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that they or their child felt safe at school, approximately one-third of

parents (31% to 36%) and about half of the youth (44% to 50%) felt that crime and complaints about student behavior had increased in recent years (Figures 40-41).

The majority of the parents and youth reported that parents were generally involved in their child’s education, although fewer felt parents were connected to one another. Most respondents (90% to 100%) said that parents regularly participate in their child’s school, help their child complete homework, are well-informed about school policies, and know how to get help when their child has a problem at school. Forty percent of parents and youth, however, felt that parents did not talk to or feel connected to other parents in the school district (Figures 40-41). Compared to parents of other racial backgrounds (96% to 100%), Latino/Hispanic parents (86%) were somewhat less likely to regularly participate in their children’s school (Figure 42).

40. Resident interviews: Parents’ perceptions of children’s educational experiences

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the school(s) your child(ren) attend(s)...	Would you say you...					Mean	Chi-square Race
	N	Strongly agree 4	Agree 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1		
I feel my child(ren) is/are safe at school	92	57%	42%	0%	1%	3.5	3.5
Crime has increased in the Hopkins schools in recent years	68	12%	19%	59%	10%	2.3	13.1
Complaints about student behavior in the Hopkins schools have increased in recent years	62	10%	26%	55%	10%	2.4	17.5*
Hopkins school buildings and property are well-maintained	87	44%	53%	3%	0%	3.4	4.8
My child(ren) is/are receiving a good education	92	54%	44%	2%	0%	3.5	6.8
Hopkins schools have high academic expectations for their students	90	40%	58%	2%	0%	3.4	9.2
There are enough after-school activities available for my child(ren) to participate in	84	24%	51%	20%	5%	2.9	10.9
My child(ren) is/are actively involved in school activities	86	19%	51%	28%	2%	2.9	5.5
I regularly participate in my child(ren)’s school by attending parent-teacher conferences, open houses, and my child(ren)’s activities	91	47%	47%	6%	0%	3.4	17.1**
I help my child(ren) complete homework	92	53%	38%	8%	1%	3.4	10.8
I am well-informed about Hopkins school policies, regulations, and opportunities for my children	92	47%	50%	2%	1%	3.4	10.1
I am connected with and talk to other parents in the school district	90	23%	37%	29%	11%	2.7	3.6

40. Resident interviews: Parents' perceptions of children's educational experiences (continued)

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the school(s) your child(ren) attend(s)...	Would you say you...					Mean	Chi-square Race
	N	Strongly agree 4	Agree 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1		
If my child has a problem at school, I know how to get someone at school to help us solve it	93	45%	46%	7%	2%	3.3	8.7
Hopkins schools adequately serve students of all cultural and racial backgrounds	91	47%	48%	3%	1%	3.4	9.6
Hopkins schools adequately serve students whose primary language is not English	84	41%	54%	6%	0%	3.4	6.1
There are opportunities for businesses and other community groups to be involved with Hopkins schools	70	30%	57%	11%	1%	3.2	5.3

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

41. Resident interviews: Students' perceptions of their educational experiences

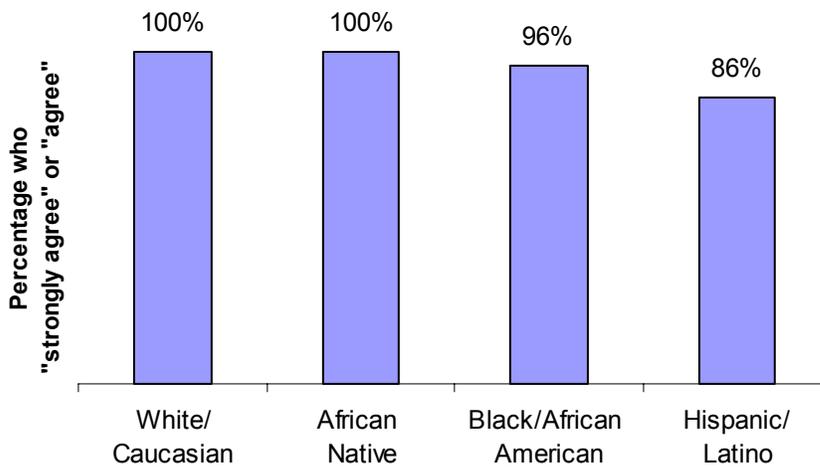
How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the school you attend...	Would you say you...					Mean
	N	Strongly agree 4	Agree 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1	
I feel safe at school	10	40%	60%	0%	0%	3.4
Crime has increased in the Hopkins schools in recent years	9	22%	22%	33%	22%	2.4
Complaints about student behavior in the Hopkins schools have increased in recent years	10	10%	40%	40%	10%	2.5
Hopkins school buildings and property are well-maintained	10	50%	40%	10%	0%	3.4
I am receiving a good education	10	60%	40%	0%	0%	3.6
Hopkins schools have high academic expectations for their students	10	70%	30%	0%	0%	3.7
There are enough after-school activities available for me to participate in	10	50%	50%	0%	0%	3.5
I am actively involved in school activities	10	20%	20%	50%	10%	2.5
My parents regularly participate in my school by attending parent-teacher conferences, open houses, and my activities	10	50%	40%	0%	10%	3.3
My parents help me complete homework	10	50%	40%	0%	10%	3.3
My parents are well-informed about Hopkins school policies, regulations, and opportunities for me	10	70%	30%	0%	0%	3.7

41. Resident interviews: Students' perceptions of their educational experiences (continued)

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the school you attend...	Would you say you...					Mean
	N	Strongly agree 4	Agree 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1	
My parents are connected with and talk to other parents in the school district	10	10%	50%	40%	0%	2.7
If I have a problem at school, my parents know how to get someone at school to help us solve it	10	60%	40%	0%	0%	3.6
Hopkins schools adequately serve students of all cultural and racial backgrounds	10	60%	40%	0%	0%	3.6
Hopkins schools adequately serve students whose primary language is not English	10	60%	40%	0%	0%	3.6
There are opportunities for businesses and other community groups to be involved with Hopkins schools	8	38%	63%	0%	0%	3.4

Note: Significance testing was not performed on youth responses about school and education due to the small sample size.

42. Resident interviews: Parents' participation in their children's school by race (N=75)



Note. Chi-square by race = 17.1

Summary of schools and education

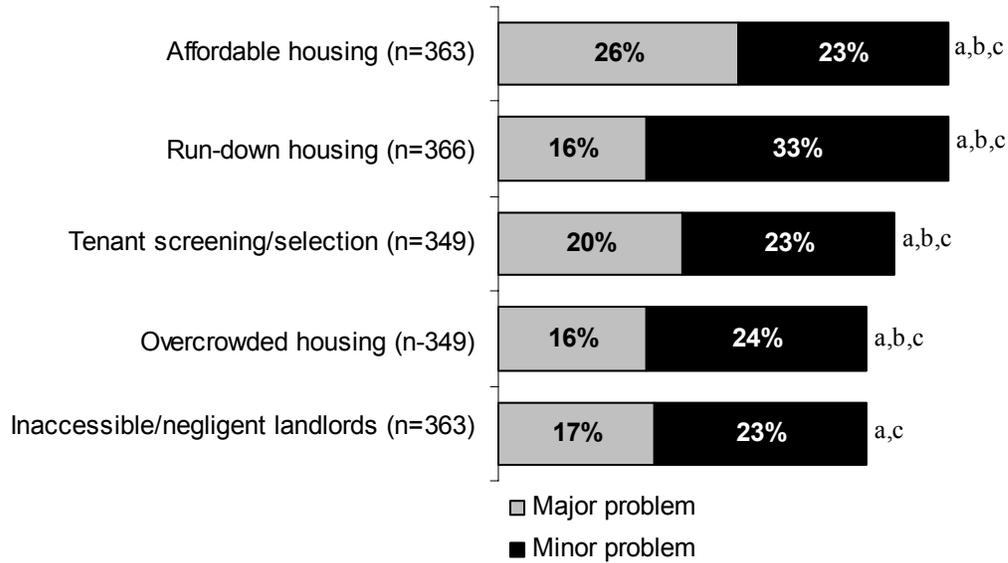
As compared to students in the district overall, students living in the Blake Road Corridor were more likely to be receiving free or reduced price lunch, to speak English as a second language, to exhibit at least one behavior incident, and less likely to pass the MCA math or reading test. Both Collaborative members and residents generally rated schools positively and felt children were receiving a positive educational experience. Although both groups of respondents felt that children were safe at school, many also thought crime in schools had increased in recent years. Collaborative members tended to feel that there was a lack of academic and recreational activities for students in school, and less involvement by families in school. In contrast, parents of children from the Corridor reported high levels of parental involvement in their child's education, although fewer felt connected to other parents. Parents and youth sufficient also reported that there were sufficient after school activities available for children and youth, but many reported low levels of youth involvement in these activities.

Housing

Related to housing, Collaborative members were most concerned about absentee landlords and property maintenance. When asked to identify their biggest concerns about housing in the Corridor, the most common concerns related to the impact of absentee landlords, especially related to poor screening and limited monitoring of tenants. Other concerns reflected poorly maintained properties, the high percentage of rental properties, and the high turnover rates of residents. See Appendix for the full list of respondents' comments.

Housing affordability, maintenance and rental issues were also concerns of residents. Residents were most concerned about affordable housing and run-down housing, with almost half (49%) saying that they were at least "minor problems" in the neighborhood. Four in ten residents (40%-43%) also rated tenant screening and selection, overcrowded housing, and inaccessible negligent landlords as problems (Figure 43). White/Caucasian residents, long-term residents, and homeowners were more likely to identify tenant screening/selection and overcrowded housing as problems (Figure 44).

43. Resident interviews: Residents' perceptions of housing



- ^a Chi-square analysis revealed significant group differences by race.
- ^b Chi-square analysis revealed significant group differences by length of residency.
- ^c Chi-square analysis revealed significant group differences by owner/renter status.

44. Resident interviews: Housing concerns by race, length of residency, and owner/renter status

	Racial/ethnic comparison (N=295-330)		Length of residency comparison (N=338-378)		Owner/renter status comparison (N=338-375)	
	White	Other races	Long-term	Short-term	Owners	Renters
Tenant screening and selection	56%	19%-53%	61%	29%-44%	84%	40%
Overcrowded housing	56%	21%-39%	52%	30%-40%	79%	38%

Note. Tenant screening significant by race (chi-square = 28.6***), by length of residency (chi-square = 24.7***), and by owner/renter status = (chi-square = 30.5***). Overcrowded housing significant by race (chi-square = 26.0***), by length of residency (chi-square = 9.8*), and by owner/renter status = (chi-square = 16.0***).

Summary of housing

Collaborative members were largely concerned about absentee landlords, as they perceived this absence led to poor tenant screening and limited monitoring of tenants. Issues related to property maintenance were also of concern. Residents expressed concerns about housing affordability and maintenance and upkeep of rental properties. Tenant screening and selection, overcrowded housing, and inaccessible negligent landlords were also seen as problems.

Recreational programs and facilities

Availability and quality of recreational services/programs

Collaborative members felt a community center, parks, and recreational programming for children and youth were generally not available or of high quality. Almost all respondents (94%) described the availability of a community center as “poor” or “very poor.” About three-quarters of the Collaborative members (74%-80%) also felt that parks and recreational programming for children and youth were lacking. More than half (56%-72%) also felt that the quality of the community center, parks, and programming were “poor” or “very poor.” Most respondents (63%-85%) did not feel that religious or spiritual opportunities were unavailable or of poor quality (Figures 45-46).

45. Collaborative survey: Availability of recreational services/programs for residents

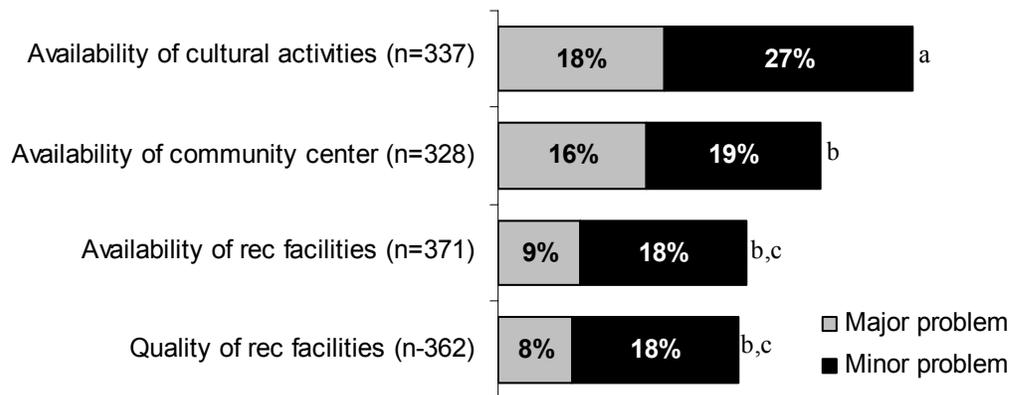
How would you rate the <u>availability</u> of the following services/programs for Blake Road Corridor residents?	N	Very poor	Poor	Good	Very good
Community events (such as festivals or celebrations)	30	27%	40%	27%	6%
Parks	35	37%	37%	20%	6%
Community center	32	63%	31%	3%	3%
Recreational programs for young children	31	29%	45%	26%	0%
After-school programs/activities for teens	29	28%	52%	20%	0%
Arts and cultural opportunities	27	33%	37%	19%	11%
Religious or spiritual opportunities	27	15%	22%	52%	11%

46. Collaborative survey: Quality of recreational services/programs for residents

How would you rate the <u>quality</u> of the following services/programs for Blake Road Corridor residents?	N	Very poor	Poor	Good	Very good
Community events (such as festivals or celebrations)	15	7%	27%	60%	7%
Parks	30	33%	33%	30%	3%
Community center	10	30%	40%	20%	10%
Recreational programs for young children	23	30%	26%	35%	9%
After-school programs/activities for teens	18	39%	33%	22%	6%
Arts and cultural opportunities	14	21%	7%	50%	21%
Religious or spiritual opportunities	21	10%	5%	76%	9%

Most residents did not identify the lack of recreational facilities and programming as problematic. About one third of residents (35%) identified the availability of a community center as a problem, while one in four (26%-27%) were concerned about the availability and quality of recreational facilities in the Corridor. Nearly half of residents (45%) did feel that the lack of cultural activities was a “minor” or “major” problem (Figure 47).

47. Resident survey: Residents’ perceptions of recreational facilities



- ^a Chi-square analysis revealed significant group differences by race.
- ^b Chi-square analysis revealed significant group differences by length of residency.
- ^c Chi-square analysis revealed significant group differences by owner/renter status.

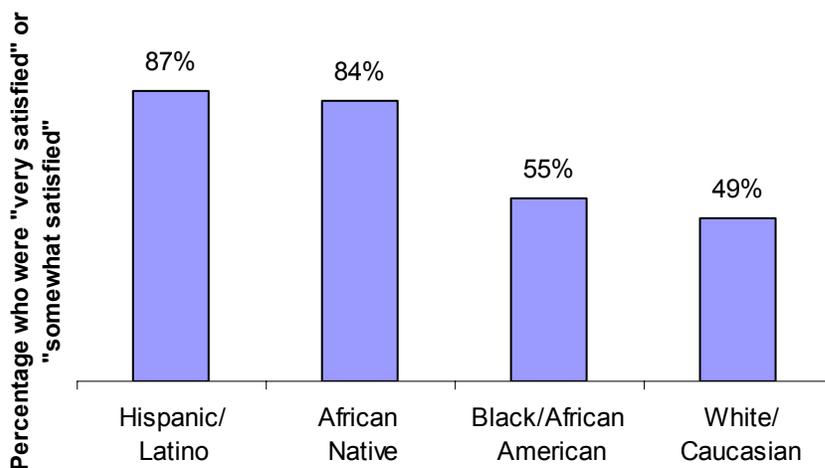
Residents were generally satisfied with the programming and enrichment activities available. At least 3 in 4 residents (78%-87%) were “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” with the programming and activities available for adults and seniors, as well as the art/cultural and religious/spiritual opportunities available to Corridor residents. Somewhat fewer (65%-72%) were satisfied with the recreational and after school programs available for young children and older youth (Figure 48). Perceptions did vary by race, however. White/Caucasian and Black/African American residents (49% to 55%) were less satisfied with after school programming for teens than Latino/Hispanic and African Native residents (84% to 87%) (Figure 49). African Native respondents (54%) expressed less satisfaction with religious and spiritual opportunities than other racial/ethnic groups (81% to 94%) (Figure 50).

48. Resident interviews: Satisfaction with programming and enrichment activities

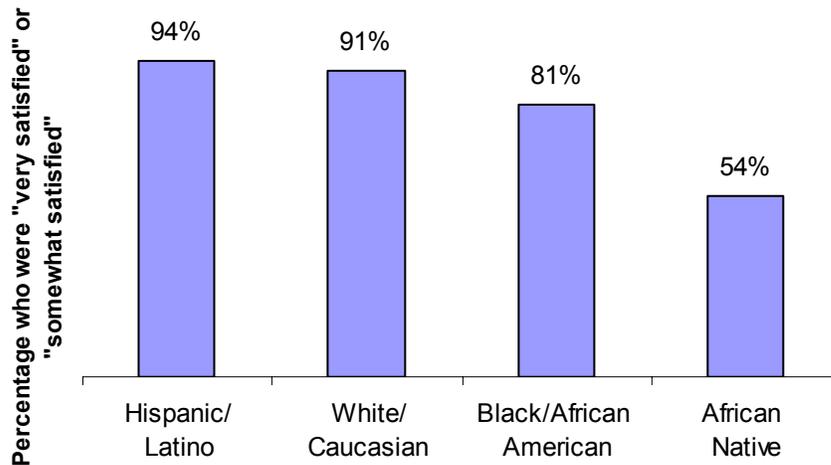
How satisfied are you with the following services or programs...	Are you...					Mean	Chi-square Race
	N	Very satisfied 4	Somewhat satisfied 3	Somewhat dissatisfied 2	Very dissatisfied 1		
Programming and enrichment activities							
Recreational programs for young children	240	26%	46%	19%	9%	2.9	13.6
After school programs and activities for teens	177	25%	40%	25%	10%	2.8	33.0***
Programs and facilities for seniors	167	28%	50%	14%	7%	3.0	8.4
Adult programs, including adult education	267	38%	49%	9%	4%	3.2	7.6
Arts and cultural opportunities	277	27%	52%	14%	7%	3.0	6.6
Religious or spiritual opportunities	312	44%	38%	15%	3%	3.2	36.6***

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

49. Resident interviews: Satisfaction with after school programs for teens by race (N=156)



50. Resident interviews: Satisfaction with religious or spiritual opportunities by race (N=269)



Use of parks and recreational facilities

Many residents did not use available parks and recreational facilities, often due to a lack of knowledge about these resources. Of the recreational facilities available within the Corridor, respondents were most likely to have used or visited the Hopkins Library (58%) and Eisenhower Community Center (30%). One-quarter or fewer of the residents said they had used or visited Oakes Park (25%), Hopkins Minnetonka Family Resource Center (22%), Cottageville Park (21%), or the Harley Hopkins Family Center (19%) (Figure 51). Residents tended not to use these facilities or attend community events primarily due to a lack of knowledge about them (36% to 76%) or a lack of interest (14% to 28%) (Figure 52).

51. Residents' use of parks and recreational facilities within the past year

In the past year, have you used or visited:	N	Yes	No	Chi-square	
				Length of residence	Owner/renter status
Cottageville Park	377	21%	79%	2.2	7.2**
Oakes Park	381	25%	75%	4.2	0.0
Eisenhower Community Center – the Adult Options Program	382	30%	70%	9.7**	0.3
Harley Hopkins Family Center	383	19%	81%	11.5**	0.6
Hopkins Library	383	58%	42%	14.4**	0.1
Hopkins Minnetonka Family Resource Center	382	22%	79%	7.2*	0.0

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

52. Residents' report of reasons for not using parks and recreational facilities within the past year

Why have you not visited:	N	Didn't know about it	No interest	It is unsafe	It is in poor condition	No transportation or it is too far	Too busy	Hours are not convenient	Too costly	Other
Cottageville Park	297	74%	15%	7%	2%	2%	6%	<1%	0%	5% ^a
Oakes Park	284	76%	14%	3%	<1%	4%	7%	<1%	0%	5% ^b
Eisenhower Community Center – the Adult Options Program	268	51%	25%	0%	0%	5%	20%	1%	0%	5% ^c
Harley Hopkins Family Center	308	74%	18%	0%	0%	2%	7%	1%	0%	4% ^d
Hopkins Library	157	36%	28%	0%	0%	6%	21%	1%	0%	20% ^e
Hopkins Minnetonka Family Resource Center	299	73%	19%	0%	0%	2%	6%	1%	0%	5% ^f

- ^a People did not visit Cottageville Park because they do not need it, do not know where it is located, other places are closer, trail is not nice, are handicapped or unable to use it, or use other places.
- ^b People did not visit Oakes Park because they do not know where it is, other places are closer, too many young people, too small, it is dominated by one cultural group, trail is not nice, are handicapped or unable to use it, do not have a family, or use other places.
- ^c People did not visit the Eisenhower Community Center because they do not need it, do not know where it is located, are handicapped or unable to use it, are too sick to attend, class was canceled, or the facility staff did not call back.
- ^d People did not visit the Harley Hopkins Family Center because they do not need it, do not know what the center has to offer, do not have a family, use other facilities, or there are language barriers.
- ^e People did not visit the Hopkins Library because they do not need it, do not know where it is located, are handicapped or unable to use it, kids are too young to use it, buy books, use other facilities, or need a membership.
- ^f People did not use the Hopkins Minnetonka Family Resource Center because they do not need it, do not know where it is located, do not know what is offered, or do not have a family.

Summary of recreational programs and facilities

The majority of Collaborative members felt recreational facilities, like community centers and parks, as well as programming for young children and teens, were not available and of poor quality. Only one-quarter to one third of residents expressed dissatisfaction with the availability or quality of recreational programming and facilities, although some differences by race did emerge. About half of White/Caucasian and Black/African residents were dissatisfied with youth programming, while about half of African Native residents were dissatisfied with religious or spiritual opportunities. Few residents used existing centers and parks, largely because they did not know they existed.

City businesses and social services

Collaborative members identified a lack of social services available for Corridor residents. About two-thirds of respondents (63%-72%) described the availability of health clinics, child care services, social service agencies, food shelves/soup kitchens, and programs for the elderly as “poor” or “very poor.” Of the services that were available, fewer (9%-36%) felt that the quality was poor. About one quarter of Collaborative members (26%-27%) felt there was limited availability of stores and restaurants (Figures 53-54).

53. Collaborative survey: Availability of businesses/social services for residents

How would you rate the <u>availability</u> of the following services/programs for Blake Road Corridor residents?	N	Very poor	Poor	Good	Very good
Stores	33	0%	27%	55%	18%
Restaurants	34	3%	23%	59%	15%
Health clinics/medical centers	25	32%	32%	28%	8%
Child care services	19	37%	32%	32%	0%
Social service agencies	22	36%	27%	32%	5%
Food shelves/soup kitchens	25	36%	36%	28%	0%
Programs/facilities for the elderly	19	42%	26%	26%	5%
Adult programs, including adult education	24	25%	29%	29%	17%

54. Collaborative survey: Quality of businesses/social services for residents

How would you rate the <u>quality</u> of the following services/programs for Blake Road Corridor residents?	N	Very poor	Poor	Good	Very good
Stores	30	0%	17%	70%	13%
Restaurants	31	0%	13%	81%	6%
Health clinics/medical centers	11	0%	18%	73%	9%
Child care services	11	0%	36%	64%	0%
Social service agencies	11	0%	9%	73%	18%
Food shelves/soup kitchens	10	10%	20%	70%	0%
Programs/facilities for the elderly	9	22%	11%	56%	11%
Adult programs, including adult education	17	18%	6%	53%	23%

Almost half of the Collaborative members disagreed that Corridor businesses meet the needs of residents. Half of the respondents (50%) “agreed” that businesses meet the needs of Corridor residents; another 5 percent “strongly agreed” (Figure 55). When asked what businesses are needed to better serve Corridor residents, Collaborative members provided a variety of suggestions, such as health care, restaurants, and grocery stores. See Appendix for the full list of suggestions.

55. Collaborative survey: Ratings of Blake Road Corridor businesses

How much do you agree/disagree with the following statements about businesses in the Blake Road Corridor?	N	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Businesses are clean and well-maintained	37	0%	24%	65%	11%
I feel safe entering local businesses during the day	38	0%	8%	76%	16%
I feel safe entering local businesses at night	32	9%	38%	50%	3%
The businesses in the Corridor meet the needs of residents	22	5%	41%	50%	5%

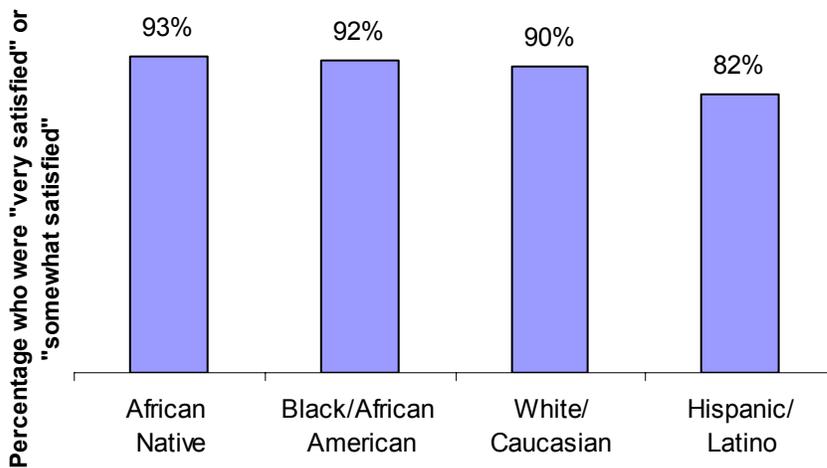
Although most residents were satisfied with businesses and social services, a substantial proportion were dissatisfied with services like child care, food shelves, and social service agencies. Almost all residents (89%-93%) were satisfied with the stores and restaurants serving the Corridor area. About one quarter of residents (23%-24%) were “very dissatisfied” or “somewhat dissatisfied” with child care services, food shelves and soup kitchens, and social service agencies (Figure 56). Hispanic/Latino residents (82%) were less satisfied with health clinics and medical centers as compared to residents from other racial/ethnic backgrounds (90%-93%) (Figure 57).

56. Resident interviews: Satisfaction with businesses and social services

How satisfied are you with the following services or programs...	Are you...					Mean	Chi-square Race
	N	Very satisfied 4	Somewhat satisfied 3	Somewhat dissatisfied 2	Very dissatisfied 1		
Stores and malls	381	53%	40%	5%	2%	3.4	8.0
Restaurants	366	41%	48%	8%	4%	3.3	7.7
Stores and restaurants that serve specific cultural or ethnic groups	345	29%	49%	16%	6%	3.0	12.0
Child care services	195	27%	49%	15%	9%	2.9	12.9
Social service agencies	217	31%	46%	18%	5%	3.0	10.0
Food shelves and soup kitchens	189	35%	42%	15%	9%	3.0	17.3*
Health clinics and medical centers	331	47%	43%	7%	3%	3.3	29.3**

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

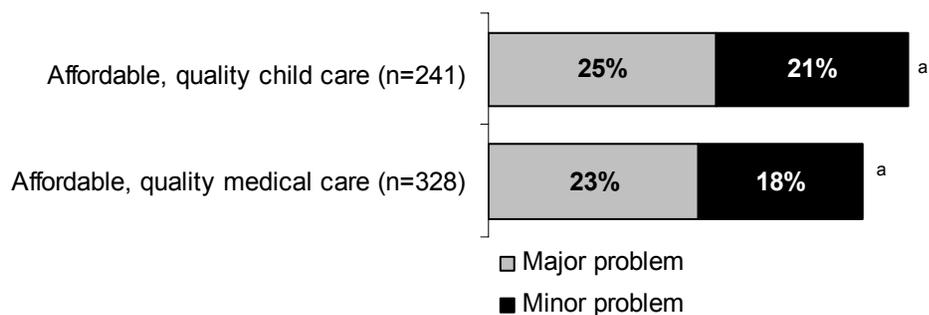
57. Resident interviews: Satisfaction with health clinics and medical centers (N=288)



Many residents felt affordable, quality child care and medical care were problematic.

Nearly half of residents (46%) felt affordable, quality child care was at least a “minor” problem, with one quarter identifying it as a “major” problem. One in four (41%) also thought affordable, quality medical care was a problem in the Corridor (Figure 58).

58. Resident interviews: Residents' perceptions of businesses/social services



Summary of city businesses and social services

Many respondents were dissatisfied with the businesses and services for residents in the Corridor. About half of the Collaborative members felt local businesses did not meet residents' needs. Most Collaborative members and a substantial proportion of residents felt that a variety of social services were not available, including social service agencies and food shelves/soup kitchens. The lack of affordable, quality child care and medical care were especially problematic to residents.

Other neighborhood concerns

City services

With the exception of sidewalks, streets, and lighting, city services generally received positive ratings. Ratings of city services were generally positive. All stakeholders rated fire protection and emergency medical services/ambulance as at least "good;" more than half rated them as "very good." Eighty-seven to 90 percent of the stakeholders rated garbage collection, snow removal, and animal control services as either "good" or "very good."

Fewer stakeholders gave ratings of at least "good" to roads/streets (62%) and street lighting (52%). The lowest ratings emerged for sidewalks, with only 10 percent of the stakeholders rating them as at least "good" (Figure 59).

59. Collaborative survey: Ratings of city services in the Corridor

How would you rate the following city services in the Blake Road Corridor?	N	Very poor	Poor	Good	Very good
Fire protection	31	0%	0%	48%	52%
Emergency medical services/ambulance	27	0%	0%	48%	52%
Animal control services	14	7%	7%	43%	43%
Garbage collection	21	0%	10%	33%	57%
Roads/streets	29	10%	28%	41%	21%
Public transportation	26	4%	23%	62%	11%
Street lighting	25	8%	40%	48%	4%
Snow removal	23	4%	9%	70%	17%
Sidewalks/pedestrian safety	30	50%	40%	3%	7%

Residents rated city services positively, especially emergency medical services and fire protection. At least 9 in 10 residents were “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” with emergency medical services and ambulance services, fire protection, garbage collection, and animal control services. Somewhat fewer (83%) were satisfied with public transportation and snow removal (Figure 60).

60. Resident interviews: Satisfaction with city services

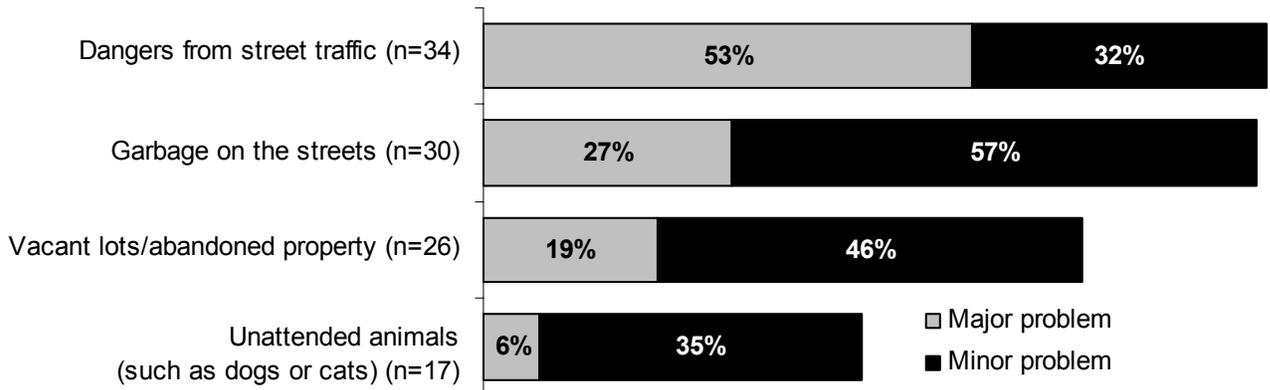
How satisfied are you with the following services or programs...	Are you...					Mean	Chi-square Race
	N	Very satisfied 4	Somewhat satisfied 3	Somewhat dissatisfied 2	Very dissatisfied 1		
Emergency medical services and ambulance services	326	61%	36%	2%	2%	3.6	12.6
Fire protection	347	59%	37%	4%	1%	3.5	9.3
Garbage collection	365	55%	37%	5%	4%	3.4	18.0*
Animal control services	234	39%	51%	7%	3%	3.3	8.4
Public transportation	339	51%	32%	10%	7%	3.3	15.7
Snow removal	336	46%	37%	12%	5%	3.3	5.8

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

Quality of life issues

Issues related to street traffic and garbage were identified as problems by most Collaborative members. More than 80 percent of respondents felt street traffic and garbage on the streets was a problem in the Corridor; half of the respondents (53%) felt street traffic was a “major” problem. Vacant lots or abandoned property was also an issue for about two-thirds of Collaborative members (Figure 61).

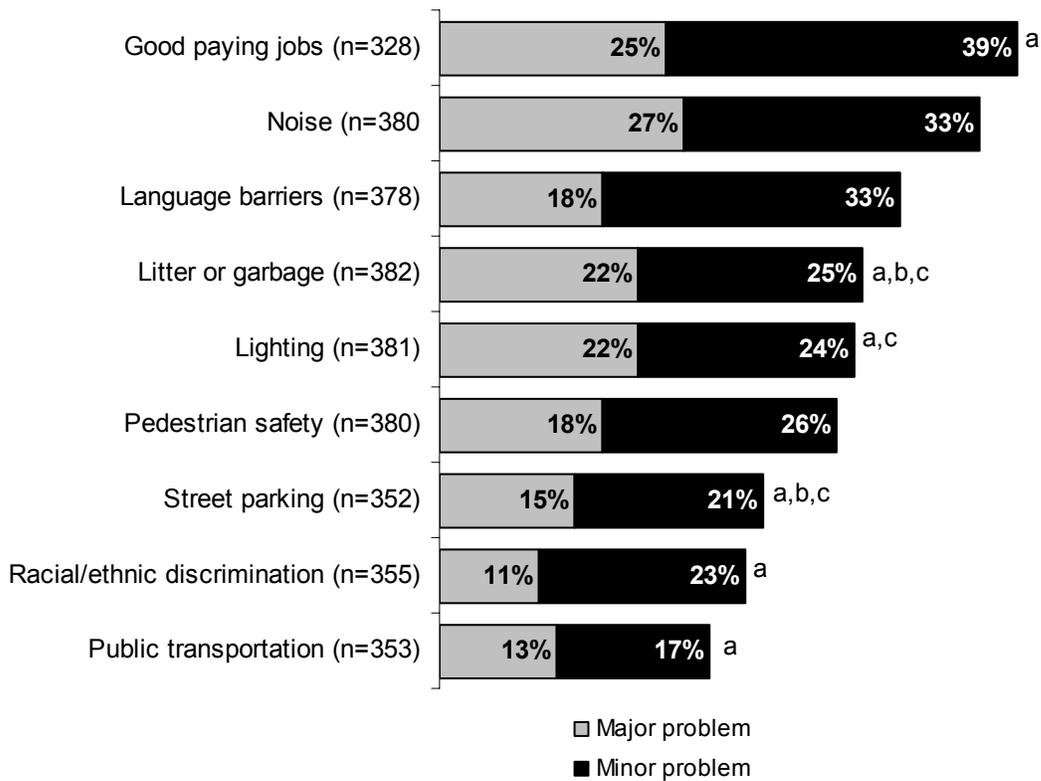
61. Collaborative survey: Stakeholders’ perceptions of other neighborhood issues



Residents identified a number of problems about living in the Corridor, but especially finding good-paying jobs and noise. At least 6 in 10 residents felt that good paying jobs and noise were problems in the Corridor; about one-quarter (25%-27%) thought they were “major” problems (Figure 62). Black/African American respondents (81%) were most likely to report that finding good-paying jobs was at least a “minor problem” as compared to other racial groups (59% to 63%) (Figure 63).

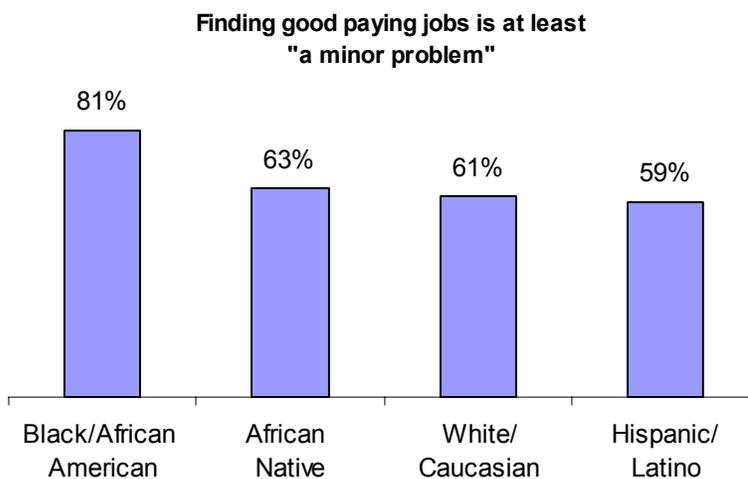
Other quality of life issues identified by more than one-third of residents include: language barriers (51%), litter or garbage (47%), lighting (46%), pedestrian safety (44%), street parking (36%), and racial/ethnic discrimination (34%) (Figure 62). White/Caucasian respondents, long-term residents, and home owners were more likely to identify litter or garbage, pedestrian safety, and street parking as at least “a minor problem” as compared to other groups of respondents (Figure 64).

62. Resident interviews: Residents' perceptions of other neighborhood issues



- ^a Chi-square analysis revealed significant group differences by race.
- ^b Chi-square analysis revealed significant group differences by length of residency.
- ^c Chi-square analysis revealed significant group differences by owner/renter status.

63. Concerns related to finding good-paying jobs by race (N=285)



Note. Chi-square = 16.8

64. Resident interviews: Quality of life concerns by race, length of residency, and owner/renter status

	Racial/ethnic comparison (N=295-330)		Length of residency comparison (N=338-378)		Owner/renter status comparison (N=338-375)	
	White	Other races	Long-term	Short-term	Owners	Renters
Litter or garbage ^a	68%	23%-50%	63%	33%-49%	83%	45%
Pedestrian safety ^b	75%	27%-42%	58%	30%-45%	86%	41%
Street parking ^c	45%	19%-39%	48%	32%-34%	62%	33%

- a Litter or garbage significant by race (chi-square = 42.2***), by length of residency (chi-square = 19.8**), and by owner/renter status (chi-square = 30.9***).
- b Pedestrian safety significant by race (chi-square = 38.9***), by length of residency (chi-square = 19.7**), and by owner/renter status (chi-square = 24.3***).
- c Street parking significant by race (chi-square = 14.1*), by length of residency (chi-square = 10.4*), and by owner/renter status (chi-square = 9.5**).

Summary of other neighborhood concerns

City services were rated positively by Collaborative members and residents, although sidewalks, streets, and lighting were perceived as somewhat less positive by Collaborative members. Collaborative members’ quality of life was most impacted by street traffic and garbage on the streets, while residents were most concerned about finding good-paying jobs and noise in the Corridor.

Community participation

Resident involvement

Opportunities for resident involvement in the community generally received negative ratings. Most of the Collaborative members gave ratings of “poor” or “very poor” to economic opportunities for residents (79%), opportunities for residents to be involved in the community (63%), and block clubs or resident groups, such as Neighborhood Watch (55%) (Figure 65).

65. Collaborative survey: Opportunities for resident involvement in the community

How would you rate the Blake Road Corridor in the following areas?	N	Very poor	Poor	Good	Very good
Block clubs or resident groups, such as Neighborhood Watch	27	7%	48%	37%	7%
Opportunities for residents to be involved in the community	27	22%	41%	33%	4%
Economic opportunities for residents	23	22%	57%	17%	4%

Generally, only half of the residents or fewer participated in community events and organizations or used community facilities. About half of the residents (51%) had participated in neighborhood events, while over one-third had participated in school events or activities (37%) and religious groups or activities (34%) (Figure 66). White/Caucasian and Black/African American residents, long-term residents, and home owners were more likely to have been involved in neighborhood groups and events (Figure 67). Approximately one-third of respondents (31%) attended National Night Out in 2007; attendance was particularly low among residents who had lived in the area for less than one year (13%, compared to 37% for longer-term residents) (Figures 68-69).

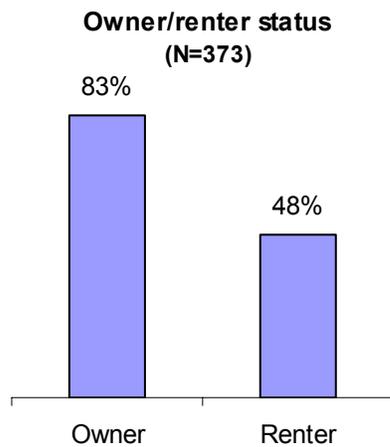
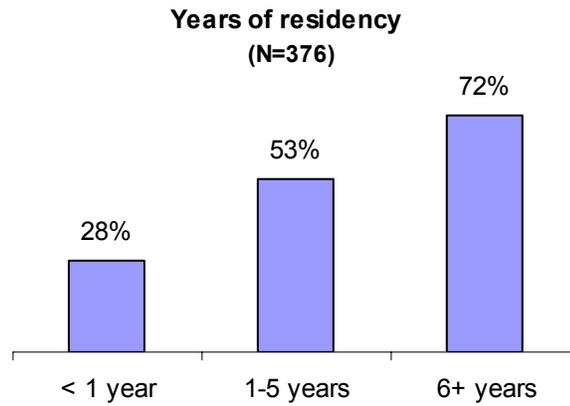
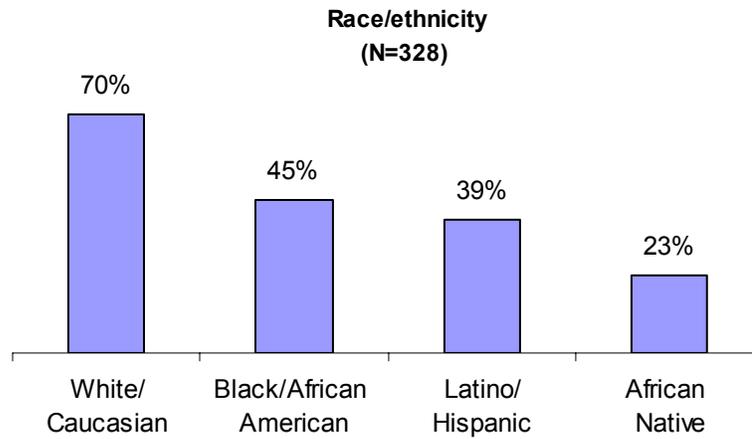
66. Resident interviews: Community participation

Which of the following have you participated in, volunteered for, or attended?	Respondents responding "yes" (N=324-380)		Chi-square		
	N	Percentage	Race	Length of residence	Owner/renter status
Neighborhood events, such as Music in the Park, Raspberry Festival, Heritage Celebration, Antique Days, Mainstreet Days, or National Night Out	192	51%	43.2***	33.7***	13.2***
School events or activities	141	37%	7.9*	8.3	2.9
Religious groups or activities	130	34%	17.1**	3.3	1.7
Sports groups or activities	112	30%	8.6*	3.0	0.1
Hospitals or health groups	96	25%	2.1	3.9	1.3
Neighborhood groups or associations, such as block clubs or Neighborhood Watch	76	20%	11.6**	14.6**	19.5***
Human service organizations	70	19%	2.7	0.2	2.8
Cultural groups, such as music or language groups	68	18%	14.1**	1.8	0.0
Children or youth recreational activities, such as Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts	43	12%	2.2	11.0**	4.9*
Political groups or campaign activities	36	10%	0.1	0.8	0.6
Environmental groups	33	9%	6.3	3.4	0.2
City Boards, Commissions, or Committees	21	6%	3.2	2.7	1.3
Civic groups or service organizations such as Kiwanis, Lions, or Rotary	17	5%	3.9	0.2	0.4
Something else? ^a	8	3%	-	-	-

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

^a One respondent said they were involved in each of the following activities: interpreting services, square dancing, YMCA/YWCA, art classes or programs, ESL classes, Alcoholics Anonymous.

67. Resident interviews: Community participation in neighborhood events by race, length of residency, and owner/renter status



Note. Chi-square by race = 43.2, chi-square by length of residency = 33.7, and chi-square by owner/renter status = 13.2.

68. Resident interviews: Attendance at National Night Out

	Respondents responding "yes" (N=382)	
	N	Percentage
Did you attend National Night Out this year (Tuesday, August 7 th , 2007)?	118	31%

Note: Significant by length of residence; chi-square=22.0***.

69. Resident interviews: Reasons for not attending National Night Out (N=265)

Why did you not attend National Night Out?	Percentage
Did not know about it or what it was	41%
Working/School	15%
No time/Too busy	11%
Did not live here then	10%
Did not want to go/had no interest	9%
Had other plans/Was not around	6%
Did not think there was one in my neighborhood	2%
There was not one in my neighborhood	4%
Was sick/ill/tired	3%
Do not like my neighbors/organizers of the event	1%
I feel too old/I do not go out that late	1%
It was canceled	<1%
Forgot about it	<1%

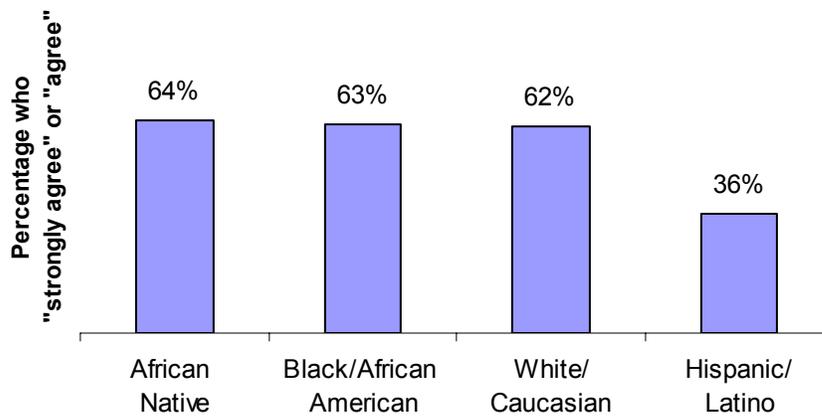
Some residents felt like they were able to influence and make changes in their communities. Sixty-one percent of respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they are able to influence things and make changes in their neighborhood (Figure 70). Fewer Latino/Hispanic residents (36%) felt they had influence over their community compared to other groups (62% to 64%) (Figure 71).

70. Residents' perceptions of influence in neighborhood

	N	Strongly agree 4	Agree 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1	Mean
I am able to influence things and make changes in my neighborhood.	345	14%	47%	31%	8%	2.7

Note: Significant by race, chi-square=23.5**.

71. Residents' perceptions of influence in neighborhood by race (N=297)



Sense of community

Collaborative members perceived little sense of community among Corridor residents. Almost all Collaborative members (96%) described the sense of community among residents as “poor” or “very poor” (Figure 72).

72. Collaborative survey: Opportunities for resident involvement in the community

How would you rate the Blake Road Corridor in the following areas?	N	Very poor	Poor	Good	Very good
A sense of community among residents	27	33%	63%	4%	0%

Although many residents felt welcome in the neighborhood, perceptions of “community” and the extent to which residents socialize varied. The majority of respondents (85%) felt welcomed and like they belong in their neighborhood (Figure 73). Most of those who did not feel welcomed said it was due to not knowing, or not wanting to know, people in the community (33%), having little in common with the community (27%), or cultural differences/language barriers (23%) (Figure 74).

At least half of the residents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they get together socially with people in their neighborhood (58%) and that they regularly stop and talk with people in their neighborhood (70%). Most residents said that they agree with most people in their neighborhood about what is important in life (68%), that people in the neighborhood help each other out when they have a problem (74%), and that people who are different from one another participate in neighborhood activities (62%). About 6 in 10 residents (61%) felt there was a sense of community among people in the neighborhood (Figure 73). Long-term residents were less likely to feel this sense of community as compared to newer residents (Figure 75).

73. Resident interviews: Sense of community among residents

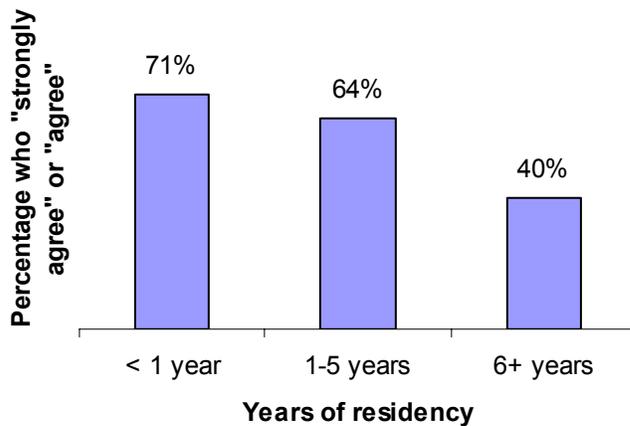
	N	Strongly agree 4	Agree 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1	Mean	Chi-square Length of residency
I get together socially with people in my neighborhood.	381	18%	40%	30%	11%	2.7	3.7
I agree with most people in my neighborhood about what is important in life.	328	17%	51%	26%	6%	2.8	3.0
People in the neighborhood help each other out when they have a problem.	339	17%	57%	20%	6%	2.9	2.4
People who are different from one another – that is, those who are young and old, or of different races, religions, or cultures – participate together in neighborhood activities.	330	16%	46%	28%	10%	2.7	18.6**
There is a sense of community among people in the neighborhood.	344	11%	49%	31%	8%	2.6	21.9**
I regularly stop and talk with people in my neighborhood.	378	19%	51%	23%	8%	2.8	7.2
Overall, I feel welcomed and like I belong in the neighborhood.	376	26%	59%	12%	4%	3.0	5.1

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

74. Resident interviews: Reasons for feeling unwelcomed in the neighborhood

Why do you disagree or strongly disagree that you feel welcomed and belong in the neighborhood?	Percentage N=52
I do not know anyone/do not want to know anyone	33%
I have nothing in common with the people who live here	27%
Cultural differences/language barriers	23%
People are rude/unfriendly/intimidating	19%
I do not feel safe/too much crime	10%
Cultural reasons or differences	6%
It is a bad neighborhood/going downhill	4%
There are too many young people/unsupervised youth	4%
Police harassment	4%
I do not like the landlord/manager	4%
I do not like it/the people	4%
It is boring/there is nothing to do	2%

75. Resident interviews: Perception of a sense of community among residents by length of residency (N=341)



Summary of community participation

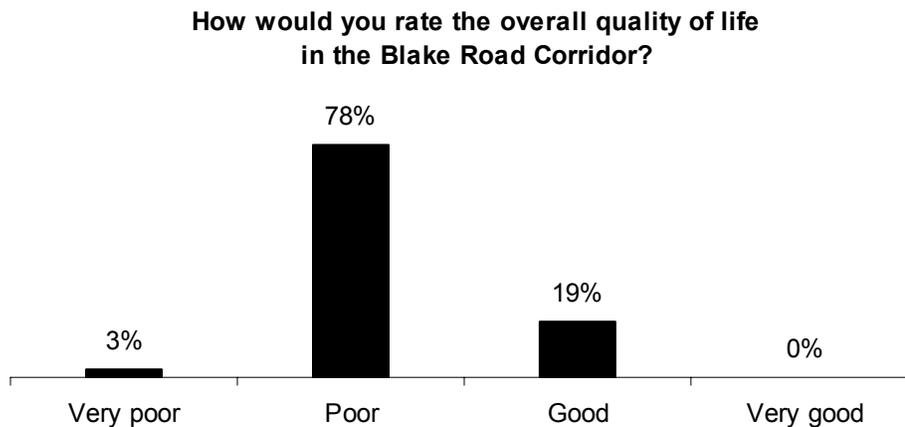
Collaborative members viewed little sense of community among residents of the Corridor. Many also felt there were few economic options for residents or opportunities to become involved in the community. Residents' perceptions of involvement in the community were mixed. About half or fewer of the residents participated in various community events or activities. A similar proportion felt like they had influence over their neighborhood, socialized with their neighbors, and felt a sense of community. Community participation was highest among residents who were White/Caucasian, long-term residents, and home owners.

Overall perceptions

Perceived quality of life

Overall quality of life in the Corridor was seen as relatively poor. More than three-quarters of the Collaborative members rated the quality of life in the Corridor as “poor” (78%). Only one in five survey respondents rated the quality of life as “good.” No Collaborative members described the quality of life as “very good” (Figure 76). Seven in 10 respondents (70%) felt that the quality of life had worsened over the past three years (Figure 77).

76. Collaborative survey: Overall quality of life in the Corridor (N=32)



77. Collaborative survey: Changes in overall quality of life in the Corridor (N=27)



Most residents were generally satisfied with life in the Blake Road Corridor, although this was less true of White residents and home owners. Most residents (62%) rated their quality of life in the Blake Road Corridor as “good,” with an additional 22 percent rating their quality of life as “very good” (Figure 78). Perceptions of quality of life were lower among White/Caucasian residents (77%, compared to 87%-95% of other racial groups) and home owners (59%, compared to 86% of renters) (Figure 79).

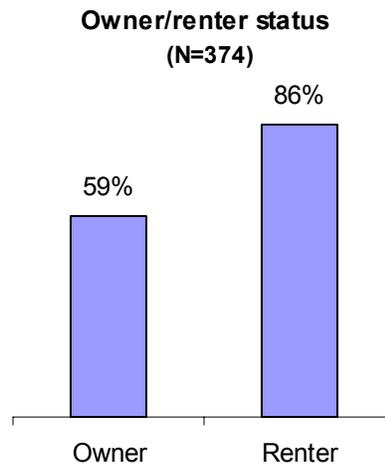
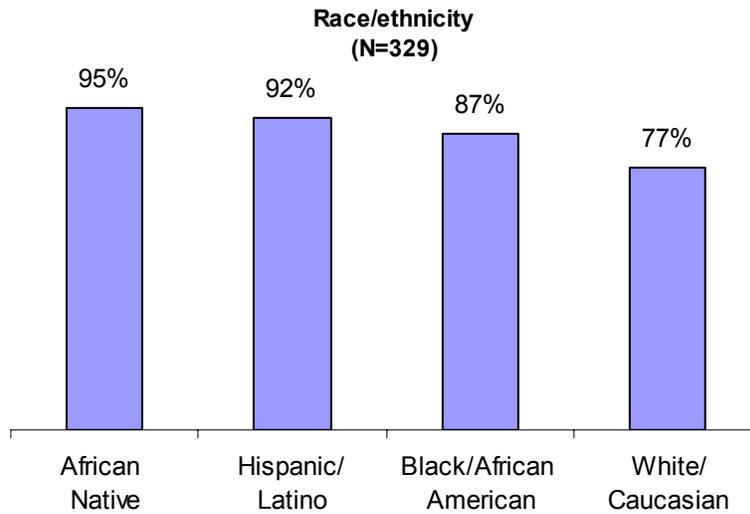
78. Resident interviews: Perceptions of quality of life in the Corridor (N=381)



Note: Significant by race, $\chi^2=23.3^{**}$, and ownership status, $\chi^2=17.4^{**}$

79. Resident interviews: Perceptions of quality of life in the Corridor by race and owner/renter status

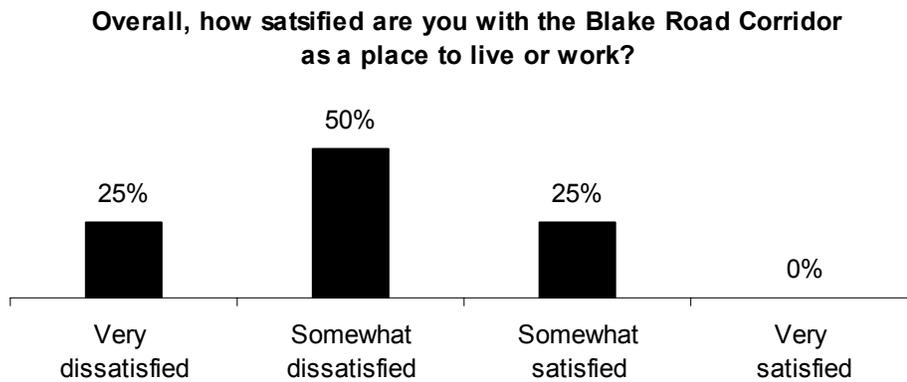
Residents who feel the quality of life in the Corridor is “good” or “very good”



Overall satisfaction with the Corridor

Collaborative members were generally dissatisfied with the Corridor as a place to live or work. Three-quarters of the survey respondents were either “somewhat dissatisfied” (50%) or “very dissatisfied” (25%) with the Corridor as a place to live or work. While one in four Collaborative members was “somewhat satisfied,” none indicated that they were “very satisfied” (Figure 80).

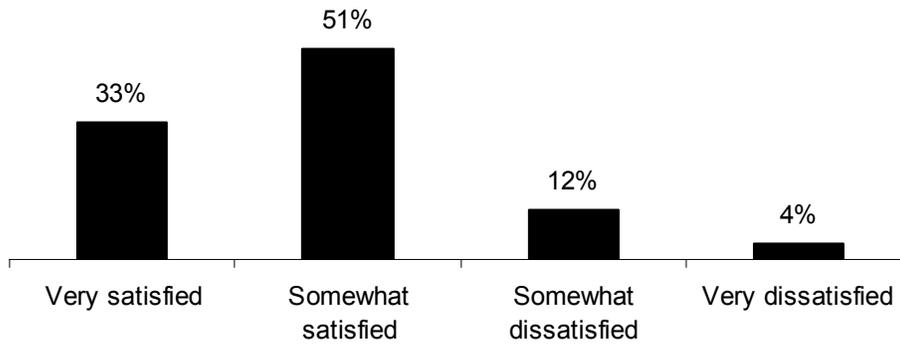
80. Collaborative survey: Satisfaction with the Blake Road Corridor as a place to live or work (N=28)



Most residents were generally satisfied with life in the Blake Road Corridor, although this was less true of White residents and home owners. About half of the residents (51%) were “satisfied” and one-third were “very satisfied” with the Corridor as a place to live and work (Figure 81). White/Caucasian residents (75%) and home owners (69%) were less satisfied with the Corridor, compared to other racial groups (89% to 94%) and renters (85%), respectively (Figure 82).

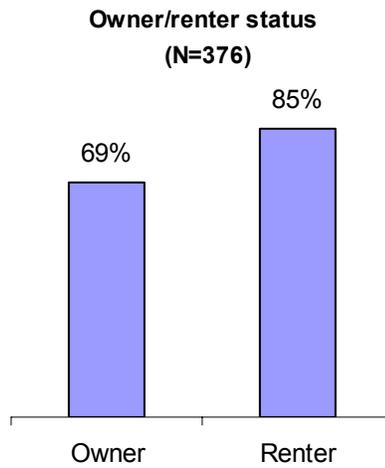
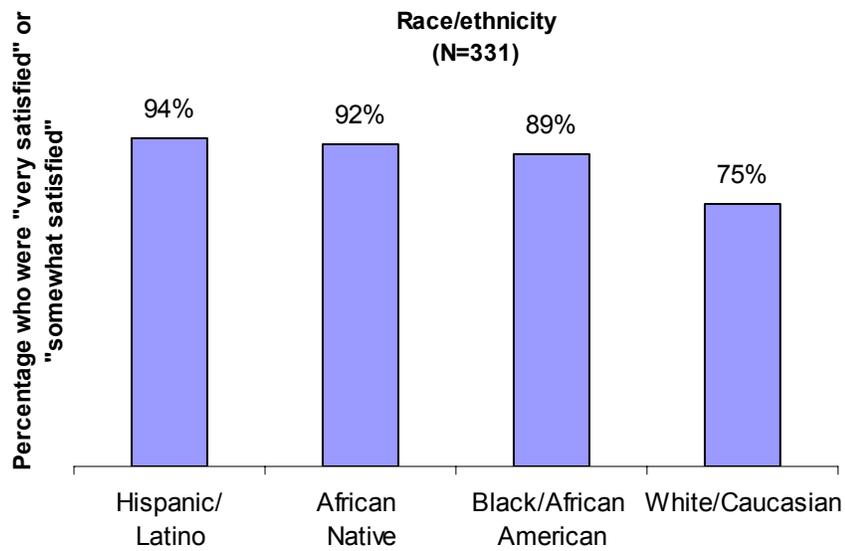
81. Resident interviews: Satisfaction with Corridor as a place to live or work (N=383)

Overall, how satisfied are you with the Blake Road Corridor as a place to live or work?



Note: Significant by race, $\chi^2=27.5^{**}$, and ownership status, $\chi^2=8.3^*$.

82. Resident interviews: Satisfaction with Corridor as a place to live or work by race and owner/renter status



One-third of residents had plans to move out of the Corridor. Despite their general satisfaction, one-third of residents were planning to move out of the Corridor within the next six months to one year (Figure 83). This was especially true of renters (36%, compared to 7% of owners) and residents who lived in the Corridor between one and five years (39%, compared to 28% of less than one year residents and 21% of long-term residents). Latino/Hispanic residents (17%) were the least likely to have plans to move compared to other racial groups (34% to 41%). Primary reasons for wanting to move included: wanting a better house or apartment or planning to own a house (34%); feeling unsafe or too much crime (18%); rent increases (15%); and, a perception that the neighborhood is bad or going downhill (10%) (Figure 84).

83. Resident interviews: Residents' plans to move out of the Corridor

	Respondents responding "yes" (N=358)	
	N	Percentage
Are you planning to move out of the Corridor in the next 6 months to a year?	119	33%

Note: Significant by race (*chi-square*=7.9*), length of residence (*chi-square*=7.9*), and ownership status (*chi-square*=10.1**).

84. Resident interviews: Residents' reasons for moving out of the Corridor

Why are you planning to move?	Percentage N=106
I want a better house or apartment/home ownership	34%
I do not feel safe/too much crime	18%
Raising the rent/rent is too expensive	15%
It is a bad neighborhood/going downhill	10%
To move closer to work/more work opportunities	9%
I do not like the landlord/manager	9%
I do not like it/the people	8%
I want to move closer to family/stay with family	7%
I like another city better	6%
There are too many young people/unsupervised youth	3%
Noise (trains/cars/people)	3%
It is not family friendly	3%
Cultural reasons or differences	3%
It is boring/there is nothing to do	3%
To get my own place	2%
To go to school somewhere else	2%
I want a smaller house/retiring	2%
There are not enough child care options	1%
Parking is bad/there are accidents in the lot	1%

Respondents could provide multiple responses. Responses were coded and do not appear verbatim.

Perceived strengths of community

Most residents felt that the proximity of businesses, major roads, and Minneapolis/St. Paul were the best things about living in the Blake Road Corridor. When asked to identify the three best things about living in the Blake Road Corridor, residents most often mentioned: the closeness and variety of stores and restaurants (55%); the Corridor's close proximity to freeways, major roads, the Twin Cities, and work (31%); the cleanliness and appearance of the neighborhood (28%); community safety (21%); and the presence of good neighbors, family and friends (21%) (Figure 85).

85. Resident interviews: Perceived best features of the Corridor

What are the three best things about living in the Blake Road Corridor?	Percentage (N=381)
The closeness and variety of stores and restaurants	55%
It has close proximity to freeways/major roads/Twin Cities/work	31%
It is a nice/clean/beautiful/quiet neighborhood	28%
I feel safe in the community/less crime	21%
Good neighbors/friendly people/have family and friends that live here	21%
Good public transportation	13%
The closeness and quality of parks/trails/nature	12%
Quality of schools and teachers	12%
It has nice affordable housing	9%
The closeness of other services (hospitals/churches/school/food shelf)	8%
Everything is close/convenient (unspecified)	7%
Good police and fire department	7%
Housing has good management/landlords	6%
There is a diversity of people (ages and cultures)	5%
Other people leave you alone/mind their own business	4%
There is a sense of community/people helping each other	3%
There are lots of jobs and employment	2%
There is off-street parking/no problems with parking	2%
Light traffic and few accidents	1%
It is far enough away from the inner city	1%
It has fewer people/less population density	1%
There are lots of kids for my children to play with/It is a good place to raise kids	1%
I know the area/I have lived here a long time	1%
Sports and youth activities	<1%
The city listens and responds to complaints	<1%
There other people of my ethnic group close by	<1%

Note: Respondents could provide multiple responses. Responses were coded and do not appear verbatim.

Recommendations for community improvement

Collaborative members identified a number of areas for improvement in the Corridor. Their most common suggestions included: improving access to or quality of the local park or creating a community center; providing opportunities to engage residents in community improvement efforts; expanding programs or services, especially opportunities for children and youth; improving the management of rental properties, including tenant screening and property maintenance; improving sidewalks or walkways for pedestrians; increasing the police presence in the neighborhood; and, making other physical improvements, including facility upgrades, improved lighting, property redevelopment, and road enhancements. See Appendix for full list of comments.

Residents identified some areas for improvement in the Corridor, most notably in the areas of transportation, roadways, and other services. Although residents suggested multiple ways to enhance life in the Corridor, few issues emerged as common areas for improvement by a significant number of residents. The most frequently reported needs included: addressing traffic and transportation issues, such as speed control, parking, public transportation and more curbs (21%); providing more lighting on streets and in parking lots (14%); making improvements to city services, such as snow removal, garbage, litter, and animal control (13%); increasing the number of recreation and community centers and activities for youth (12%); increasing or promoting parental supervision of youth to reduce loitering (12%); adding police officers on patrol or neighborhood watch groups (12%); and, increasing the variety of restaurants and stores in the Corridor (11%) (Figure 86).

86. Resident interviews: Residents' suggestions for improving life in the Corridor

When you think about issues related to crime and safety, schools, housing, businesses, city services and programs in the Corridor, what are the top three things you would like to see done or changed to improve the quality of life in the Blake Road Corridor area? **Percentage (N=356)**

Better traffic management, speed control, parking, public transportation and curbs	21%
More lighting on streets and parking lots	14%
Improve city services (snow removal, garbage, litter, animal control)	13%
More recreation and community centers for youth/More activities for youth	12%
Better and more parental supervision/less bullying/enforce curfews and reduce youth loitering	12%
More police officers/security/patrolling/neighborhood watch groups	12%
A better variety of restaurants and stores	11%
Landlords need to take better care of properties and communicate with tenants better	9%
More affordable housing/lower rents/cheaper property taxes	7%
Crime and safety (unspecified)	7%
Additional parks, trees, and green spaces/better parks and trails	7%
More jobs/better paying jobs	6%
More information or updates from the city such as newsletters and flyers	5%
More cultural diversity and less racism	5%
More sidewalks and crosswalks for pedestrians	5%
Landlords need to screen tenants better	5%
Nothing/everything is good	5%
More community and neighborhood events/better advertising of events	4%

86. Resident interviews: Residents' suggestions for improving life in the Corridor (continued)

When you think about issues related to crime and safety, schools, housing, businesses, city services and programs in the Corridor, what are the top three things you would like to see done or changed to improve the quality of life in the Blake Road Corridor area?

	Percentage (N=356)
More teachers/better schools	3%
Change the type of people living there	3%
People need to be more friendly and polite	3%
Too many drugs/drug enforcement	3%
Other crimes (prostitution/public drinking/parties/loud music)	3%
Landlords need to enforce housing rules and regulations (i.e., no smoking)	2%
Reduce the train and road noise	2%
Nicer/bigger houses and apartments	2%
Less rental properties/more home ownership	2%
More committees or forums for discussing community problems	2%
More childcare options	2%
Too many cops/harassing/profiling/more diversity in police department	2%
Too much gang activity	2%
More activities for seniors	1%
More adult education opportunities (ESL)	1%
More housing for seniors	<1%

Summary of overall perceptions

The perceptions of stakeholders and residents about life and community within the Corridor differed. Although the majority of stakeholders rated the sense of community among residents poorly, more than half of residents felt there was a sense of community in the neighborhood and felt welcomed. Stakeholders also viewed quality of life within the Corridor as relatively poor and were generally dissatisfied with the Corridor as a place to live or work. In contrast, most residents were satisfied with life in the Blake Road Corridor overall, although this was less true of White residents and home owners. One-third of residents were planning to move out of the Corridor within the next six months to one year, however.

Both stakeholders and residents were also asked to recommend improvements for the Corridor. Stakeholders identified several areas of need related to improving recreational facilities, enhancing programming for youth, increasing pedestrian safety, and making other physical improvements. Few issues emerged as common areas for improvement by a significant number of residents. The most frequently reported needs related to traffic and transportation issues, lighting, and city service improvements.

Conclusions and recommendations

Collaborative members and residents provided feedback about multiple issues affecting the Blake Road Corridor community, including crime and safety, neighborhood challenges and issues, schools and education, city services, businesses, and programming, community participation, and their overall perceptions. While some of the feedback was consistent across stakeholders, in general, there was not a single common perception of the Corridor. Collaborative members expressed more concerns about the community than did residents. Within residents, there was also disagreement. Those who were White, owned their homes, or lived in the community for a long time tended to rate their community more negatively than did other residents. As the community moves forward with planning, it will be important to recognize and address these inconsistencies and to engage a diverse array of partners representing different perspectives.

Community strengths

Schools

Despite the relatively poor performance of Corridor students on standardized tests (compared to students district-wide), community members and parents generally rated Hopkins schools positively. Eight in ten Collaborative members, and nine in ten parents and youth, felt that the schools provide a good educational experience, have high academic expectations for students, and adequately serve students of all cultural/racial backgrounds.

Police

Residents and Collaborative members had positive perceptions of the Hopkins police. At least nine in ten respondents felt that police responded promptly and appropriately to incidents and adequately served all residents. However, some Collaborative members and residents (i.e., those who were White and long-time residents) felt there was not enough police presence in the Corridor.

Areas of concern

Crime and safety

Perceptions of crime and safety were mixed. City data reflects a decrease in crime since 2005, and most Collaborative members and residents feel safe in the Corridor during the day. On the other hand, at least half of the stakeholders (52% of Collaborative members, 58% of residents) feel that crime has gotten worse. Seventy-three percent of the Collaborative members, and 33 percent of the residents feel unsafe in the neighborhood at night.

Limited recreational programming

At least three-quarters of the Collaborative members rated the availability of after-school programs for teens and recreational programs for young children as “poor” or “very poor.” Resident ratings were more positive, with two-thirds expressing satisfaction with after-school activities for teens and three-quarters satisfied with programs for young children. Perhaps as a result of limited activities, many individuals (94% of Collaborative members, 60% of residents) expressed concerns related to unsupervised or unoccupied youth.

Absence of an accessible, high-quality community center or park

Almost all Collaborative members (94%) rated the availability of a community center as “poor” or “very poor;” two-thirds rated the quality as poor. Residents did not necessarily share these concerns, with one-quarter identifying the quality and availability of recreational facilities as a problem and one-third identifying availability of a community center as a problem. Relatively few residents (19%-30%) use existing parks or resource centers, most often due to a lack of knowledge about them.

Limited screening and monitoring of renters

Rental management issues were of concern. Collaborative members and some residents felt that the lack of thorough tenant screening, as well as absentee landlords who failed to maintain their properties, were significant problems in the Corridor.

Poor lighting and unsafe walking areas

Nine in ten Collaborative members rated sidewalks as poor; almost half rated street lighting as poor. Almost half of the residents (44% to 46%) also expressed concerns with lighting and pedestrian safety. When asked for suggestions for improving quality of life in the Corridor, residents most often mentioned traffic management and lighting.

Limited access to social services

Approximately two-thirds of the Collaborative members rated the availability of social service agencies, health clinics, child care services, and programs for the elderly as “poor” or “very poor.” Concerns about social services ranked among residents’ most prevalent concerns, though only approximately one-quarter expressed dissatisfaction with services.

Recommendations

- Create a group of external and internal stakeholders to prioritize and guide revitalization efforts, either as a continuation of the existing Collaborative or as a new committee.
- Increase access to social services and recreation programs, especially for teenagers, by:
 - Conducting promotion and outreach activities to increase use of existing services.
 - Reducing access barriers, by providing transportation to services outside of the Corridor or co-locating services in community settings.
 - Creating a community center to serve as a hub for recreational and service programs within the Corridor.
- Improve lighting and sidewalks to make areas more pedestrian friendly.
- Increase landlord accountability for screening and monitoring their tenants.

Appendix

Open-ended comments (Collaborative survey)

Recommendations for Long Term Planning (supplement by Tom Schirber)

Open-ended comments (Collaborative survey)

A1. Open-ended comments: What are your biggest concerns (if any) about crime and safety in the Blake Road Corridor?

What are your biggest concerns (if any) about crime and safety in the Blake Road Corridor?

Limited opportunities for positive youth activities

Youth that are getting into trouble because they are bored or have no positive program choices to keep them busy.

We have had Chief Reid report on increased youth crime in the Blake Corridor (12/05). I know that with increased programming, crime figures are now down somewhat. I know there isn't a place for youth to gather or many activities.

No organized activities for the neighborhood kids in the Blake corridor.

I am concerned about children and teens not having any place to go.

Unsupervised younger children without any place to go.

Young adults with nothing to do usually find trouble.

Lack of positive programs for youth. (2 respondents)

Concerns about specific types of crime

Assaults and vandalism.

Drug activity.

The potential for gang activity.

I am concerned about drug trafficking. I am concerned about attacks and robberies in the business area. I am also concerned about domestic violence.

Roaming groups of youths harassing people. Drug dealing.

My biggest concern is for the safety of the residents and visitors of this area – so the muggings and assaults are a serious concern.

A1. Open-ended comments: What are your biggest concerns (if any) about crime and safety in the Blake Road Corridor? (continued)

What are your biggest concerns (if any) about crime and safety in the Blake Road Corridor?

Negative influence of crime on area children

The children growing up in this neighborhood should be able to go outside to play and not have their parents worried about them.

My biggest concern now, as it was when the focus on this area began, is the effect the criminal element may have on the youngsters who observe the activity. They are the potential law-abiding citizens AND criminal element for the very near future.

Working at the elementary school that the children attend, I know that many of the kids are not supervised. Some of the students are out late at night. Other students are not allowed to go outside because of the amount of crime. Students come to school to talk about the stabbings and shootings they see. They also talk about who is in jail. There is also a lot of gang activity that they talk about.

There are some good people that live there with their kids. The biggest thing is that they see what is going on and are not feeling safe. Parents are afraid to leave their kids alone on non-school days.

Hearing from those who live around the corridor and work with corridor residents, I am concerned about children and youth who had to witness or watch what is going on and be impacted by negative behavior.

Absentee landlords/failure to screen tenants

The high turnover of rental properties and tenants, and proper screening of tenants has led to most of the crime in the area in the past, and I'm concerned that this will continue.

Concerned about the absent landlords who don't appear to monitor renters and the activities in the rental homes on the northern end of Blake Rd.

My biggest concerns include absentee landlords.

Rental properties with fewer than 4 units usually do not have on-site property management. These absentee landlords do not always adequately screen tenant applicants. This allows tenants with criminal backgrounds to move into these units.

Community perceptions

Crime affects neighborhoods, businesses, communities. When I "Think Hopkins" I don't want to think crime.

That it will escalate. That crime and the feeling of a lack of safety will continue to increase so that the flight of good families from the neighborhood will be more dramatic than it is now.

I am concerned about the perception of the area and the impact a negative perception has on the ability to redevelop the area and prevent further decline.

There is a perception which may or may not be based in fact that it is unsafe to walk around the Blake Corridor. As resident of Hopkins who lives on the "Avenues" I see the Blake Road Corridor as a run down area fraught with minor crime escalating to major crime. I know some trail users feel it is unsafe around Blake Road.

A1. Open-ended comments: What are your biggest concerns (if any) about crime and safety in the Blake Road Corridor? (continued)

What are your biggest concerns (if any) about crime and safety in the Blake Road Corridor?

Neighborhood layout/lighting

I feel that there is a lack of sufficient lighting along the streets and on the large properties in that area.

The configuration of the park with the streets, density of individual rental property, apartments and private homes make it difficult to build a community.

My concern is that Cottageville Park will continue as a magnet for crime and personal safety issues (old playground equipment, bad lighting). Blake Road is extremely busy, but not at all pedestrian friendly.

The isolation of the neighborhoods, disconnected from public gathering spaces, shopping, viable park.

Role of businesses

Businesses don't seem to do anything about groups gathering in or on their properties which intimidate customers.

I think communication between the businesses in the community needs to be stronger.

A number of residents comment about the troubles at the Walgreens and won't go there. Other residents have told me they avoid the Knollwood Mall after dark because of police incidents.

I think the commercial properties on the corner of Blake and Lake and the high proportion of rental properties in the Blake Corridor holds back its potential for growth and development as a great "residential" neighborhood to live in.

Other comments

Don't know. (10 respondents)

The police department does not have adequate manpower to address the issues impacting the community.

The health and welfare of all the children who reside in the area. The rundown appearance of some of the duplexes in the neighborhood.

Lack of upkeep on some of the rental properties.

Continuing City Park Maintenance

How do we address the crime in the area?

Unreported crime with immigrant victims.

That it will be difficult to fix due to the high percentage of rental housing and the transient population, communication problems with ethnic groups, animosity between different ethnic groups, and a lack of resolve/interest in addressing problems on the part of the larger Hopkins citizenry.

A2. Open-ended comments: What could be done to improve safety in the Blake Road Corridor?

What could be done to improve safety in the Blake Road Corridor?

Increase screening of renters

Landlords need to be held responsible to rent to good people without records, and evict renters who commit a crime.

Background checks on all potential renters.

Continue to make landlords more accountable.

Work with landlords to enforce livability standards and crime free neighborhoods.

Hold Landlords to higher standards.

I think trying to establish some consistency with rental property landlords in the screening of tenants by landlords.

Better screening of rental tenants, especially in the duplexes. Tougher rental ordinances making evictions for criminal activity easier.

Rental background checks.

Making the landlords responsible for their property.

More proactive rental licensing mandates to deter unwanted, troublesome renters.

Require all landlords to do criminal background checks on prospective tenants. Require landlords to include crime free lease addendums in tenant leases so that they can more easily evict tenants that engage in criminal behavior.

Monitoring of renters in the rental properties.

Offer recreational activities for youth

After-school, evening and summer program options for youth.

Increase programming for youth. Try to create a gathering place for positive youth activity.

The addition of wholesome, organized activities for youth and adults, if located directly in this area, could be the difference between life and death, in some cases. A neighborhood activity center could work wonders. How it's accomplished is anyone's guess.

The kids need more to do. Other than the pool in the summer and the playground, there is nothing for them to do. There is no nearby nice park for them to play in. There are no organized sports for them. Money is also an issue. The students can't get anywhere without crossing busy streets. They sometimes ride bikes to Burnes Park in Hopkins. They are not supervised there and problems occur between different groups of kids.

Youth Center.

Have someplace for the kids to be able to play and hang out. Things to do when there is no school.

Structured community activities for children living in the area.

More activities for youth during the school year and during the summer.

I would like to see positive activities in the neighborhood for children and their families (after school activities).

A place such as boys/girls club for young adults to go where they feel safe getting to and safe being there.

Positive programs for youth.

A2. Open-ended comments: What could be done to improve safety in the Blake Road Corridor? (continued)

What could be done to improve safety in the Blake Road Corridor?

Improve public park

Improve public facilities in the area (Cottageville Park) so that more recreation programs could be offered to the children/teens in order to occupy their time.

The configuration of streets and access with an upgrade to the park are long term projects that need to continue.

Cottageville Park accessibility and renovation.

A larger neighborhood park with more amenities for kids on the east side of Blake Road would help in the long run.

Access to a park with more amenities for the community. Park & Rec staffing an improved Cottageville Park.

Clean up the neighborhood, and open up the accessibility to Cottageville Park to make it a more useful area for children to play.

Improve the park and make it more accessible.

Get rid of pocket park.

Improve parks.

Re-do park space.

Improve lighting/walkways

Improve crosswalks and sidewalks.

Better lighting and sidewalks.

Better/improved area lighting.

Make it more pedestrian-friendly.

Development of safe walkways and crossings across major roadways.

Improved lighting.

A city commitment to budgeting for improvements in street lighting, walking paths along both sides of Blake Road, new street lights at Blake and Lake.

Sidewalks, perhaps a walking bridge over Blake Rd to the businesses and park.

Updating the storefronts and street – make it more pedestrian friendly.

Increase police presence

More police officers directly assigned to the area. Special patrol such as bike patrol, etc.

Increase police presence. Is it possible to have a small police kiosk in the area? I know some large cities in Europe (and the USA?) have tried this with some success.

Police walking the streets with dogs is a better way to get in touch with the community.

Visible police officers.

More police presence always helps.

A2. Open-ended comments: What could be done to improve safety in the Blake Road Corridor? (continued)

What could be done to improve safety in the Blake Road Corridor?

Other comments

Don't know. (6 respondents)

Community building for services and programs.

Enforce laws and make sure everyone understands poor behavior will not be tolerated, period.

More adult presence along with programming located in the neighborhood.

Give the residents a sense of pride.

Redevelopment of a large portion of the area. This does not necessarily mean demolition of properties. It can be a mix of rehab and new construction.

Get the residents involved in a neighborhood watch program.

I think the improvements with community communication have begun. It's important that they continue and are supported by local businesses, county, city, faith community and schools.

Cooperation from businesses to deal with the groups whether kids or adults that gather. Don't seem to call the police to remove them or report incidents as they should. Some of the problem with the businesses is that their employees encourage or are friends of these groups.

There is some commercial property up for sale and I see that as a possible area for housing and a community center. Include residents that are renting, in neighborhood associations and planning.

A3. Open-ended comments: What are your biggest concerns (if any) about the schools serving children/youth who live in the Blake Road Corridor?

What are your biggest concerns (if any) about the schools serving children/youth who live in the Blake Road Corridor?

Lack of student activities and transportation

All out of school enrichment is run as tuition based with no transportation home after, both of these are a barrier to these families.

After school activities.

Because of lack of transportation, student who need additional academic help before or after school do not have transportation.

It was difficult answering the last group of questions. I think the Hopkins Schools do a wonderful job, but have experienced many challenges in the past few years with decreasing funds and resources. As a community member who interacts with a large number of school age children after school hours I can safely say there are NOT enough activities for students with limited financial resources. Parents who are working numerous jobs or single parents trying to raise kids have limited amounts of time and resources as do parents from other cultures who don't have strong support systems in place. All of these problems contribute to students have too much free time on their hands without any place to go and are sometime not even allowed to go home until a parent returns home.

I am concerned about after-school care, activities, and homework assistance.

The distance to their schools and activities.

Summer activities. Evening supervision.

Youth in this area don't have easy access to activities because of the major highway corridors that divide up the neighborhood.

Lack of family involvement with the schools

Lack of family involvement.

The schools are working hard to find ways to connect with all children and families. The students/families from the Blake Corridor need ways to get to school and encouragement to become involved. While the schools have put some pieces in place (Spanish and Somali Communication Specialist, Bi-lingual parenting classes) there is definitely more need than there are resources.

The difficulties they have with communication with some parents due to the fact that the parents are either too busy with work or do not take the time to be actively involved with their children's education.

Constantly moving families.

My biggest concern is trying to involve the parents, especially of the new Americans. Also parents of students who live outside the school district.

Concerns about student behavior

There is only so much the schools can do. Often when these students are involved in after school activities they are not successful. Usually it is the students' behavior that gets them in trouble.

Too much is ignored. Behavior especially-disrespect to each other. There seems to be a "dumbing down" especially in these areas. Even loudness is a problem. It is very disrupting to walk into the schools at any time (elementary) and see pushing, shoving, yelling, screaming even if it just fooling around type of thing. No manners either. Hopkins does well in what they have academically, however, due to the distractions of those listed above it's hard for the students to listen, learn and retain. Too much attention and expectations put on academics when I believe behavior and attitudes could make a world of difference. This really is for all students in all schools.

A3. Open-ended comments: What are your biggest concerns (if any) about the schools serving children/youth who live in the Blake Road Corridor? (continued)

What are your biggest concerns (if any) about the schools serving children/youth who live in the Blake Road Corridor?

Concerns about student behavior (continued)

I have witnessed when mainstream parents complain about student negative behavior. I am afraid that mainstream parents may pool out their kids and school that serve kids in the Blake Road Corridor end up like schools in the Minneapolis inner city. I am afraid that Hopkins may lose the diversity it has. I am afraid that the students of color may not challenge as much.

Too much pressure on schools to address issues/need for more community involvement

Expecting "the schools" to provide something that only "people" can provide: nurturing and caring for the young people. Schools are not people. We have to learn a new vocabulary.

The schools can't do it all. Schools are stretched as it is – this is a community issue.

Teachers and other staff are forced to be social workers instead of educators. This is a general educational problem – not specific to the Blake area schools. Too much time has to be spent on other issues (self esteem, diversity, and other "feel good" programs that should be handled by the families, faith organizations, etc.).

Other comments

State funding has not kept up with the mandates set by law, so the class sizes are increasing, as well as "extra" services such as counselors and social workers are getting cut.

Generally, I think the challenges for all schools are similar either in or outside the Blake Corridor: student, teacher and parent apathy, bullying, disrespectful behavior between teachers and students. Parental denial about their own kids. These aren't necessarily Blake Corridor concerns, but they still do trickle through the neighborhood in the form of disrespect for property, personal safety, general concern and respect in the neighborhood.

A need for more Somali, African American, and Hispanic staff in the schools.

I have no direct concerns about the schools.

The school does not get involved once the kids walk out the door. Teachers don't care about these kids emotional, or physical safety.

Safety on the bus.

Eisenhower has too high of a concentration of minority students, while schools like Glen Lake are almost all white. It is my understanding that with the redistricting, Eisenhower will gain more minority students. It feels like our schools are becoming segregated.

More inclusion.

That with the population growing, students will receive less one on one attention that they may need.

No school building in the corridor

Don't know. (12 respondents)

A4. Open-ended comments: What could be done to improve the schools serving these children/youth?

What could be done to improve the schools serving these children/youth?

Provide activities and transportation for students

Offer more after-school programs and school-release day activities.

Offer free, drop in type of enrichment during out of school time.

We need more resources to extend the learning time for these students including after-school and summer enrichment opportunities.

After school activities should be focused on providing opportunities for involvement to students, as opposed to simply "specialized" training in specific organizational groups (sports, music, etc.), that require an investment beyond just the child's presence and willingness to participate.

Finding activities for students is being addressed by the schools. This is a long term goal that needs to be continued.

Additional activities could be programmed for students after-school with grant funds and a bus.

It would be so helpful to have a Youth Community Center in Hopkins where students could play recreational sports, get homework help, have access to computers and a safe place to burn off energy. There need to be more scholarships and more transportation provided to students so they can fully participate in school and community activities.

Schools could find ways to get these kids involve in after school activity. All the focus tends to be on activities that isolate kids of lower socioeconomic standards. How are they to get to and from activity when the district cut the transportation?

Homework support programs for all children. Structured after-school sports programs which provide transportation to and from apartment buildings.

Provide transportation for the youth to gain access to the activities.

The schools should provide busing for those kids with no one to pick them up.

Longer summer programs at reduced cost.

Increase parent/family involvement

Increased presence of cultural liaisons to build relationships with residents and interpret school material. On-site conferences?

Continue to work on building connections with parents of children who live in the Blake Road Corridor. If parents feel that schools are a trusted partner, the education of their children will improve.

More parent involvement with the school.

Well integrated parent engagement activities, empower parents of students of color to be proactive in their kids school and community.

A4. Open-ended comments: What could be done to improve the schools serving these children/youth? (continued)

What could be done to improve the schools serving these children/youth?

Increase involvement with the community

Bring the school resources to the neighborhood – school could be actively involved with the Neighborhood Watch Program and any other activities which take place in the neighborhood.

Community involvement.

Get other community organizations involved and get their support.

Local community opportunities.

Provide adequate financing

Increase state funding so class sizes can be smaller, and counselors and social workers can work with all students who need their services, not just the special education students.

Adequately finance them at the community and state level.

Perhaps the elementary schools can no longer be given equal resources and that money should be allocated based on need.

Adequate staff and funding

Other comments

Offer more programs that are culturally appropriate to these children.

More emphasis on core learning. More emphasis on class discipline rather than excusing or rationalizing student misbehaviors. More emphasis on parental responsibilities. It should not be the schools' responsibility to be babysitters.

Good question-that would take some major decision and action on the administration's part and teachers.

Don't know. (13 respondents)

A5. Open-ended comments: What are your biggest concerns (if any) about housing in the Blake Road Corridor?

What are your biggest concerns (if any) about housing in the Blake Road Corridor?

Absentee landlords/poor management

Most landlords do not live in the area.

Absentee landlords. (3 respondents)

Apartment complex management in the Westside Apartments could be better. Rental property owners (homes) need to be held accountable for their tenants.

I hear from residents and police officers that there is a concern about absent landlords who rent to people who are creating an unsafe community in the northern area.

Landlords from all over.

My biggest concern is with individual rental homes and double bungalows that are owned by out of town landlords, in terms of tenant selections and upkeep of the property.

Large apartment complexes are pretty well managed. Absentee owners of duplexes are the biggest problem.

Absentee and inexperienced property managers.

With rental housing, the out of state owners are not aware of problems at their units.

Often with a homeowner (landlord) living on one side of their rental property the property is in better condition. Absentee landlords often take less pride in their property as it does not directly affect them or their quality of life.

Property upkeep/maintenance

Badly maintained double bungalows. Renters tend not to be as connected to their environment and neighborhood as homeowners, especially when those properties are not well maintained. Oxford and Cambridge streets are fast moving toward blight.

Poor maintenance of the residential area.

Maintenance of property. Some duplexes look great and others look terrible.

Cleanliness.

Poorly maintained housing perpetuates a lack of respect for the neighborhood and it's residents.

Properties are not properly maintained up to community standards.

The maintenance of the rental duplexes in the Blake Corridor has a tendency to go in waves of rehabilitation and neglect. A concern is quality, caring tenants and landlords who take pride in their home and neighborhood. This is reflected in the housing stock.

Blight. Not a great entrance into the community.

A5. Open-ended comments: What are your biggest concerns (if any) about housing in the Blake Road Corridor? (continued)

What are your biggest concerns (if any) about housing in the Blake Road Corridor?

Too much rental property in Corridor

Rental property – too much.

Way too many rental properties.

Too much rental property in Hopkins not just the Blake Road Corridor.

I believe this is one of the biggest issues. The high percentage of single-family houses that are rented has caused much of the problems in this area.

All the rental properties.

Too high a percentage of rental housing.

Residences converting to rentals.

High turnover rate of residents

Too many landlords in such a small area – no continuity when it comes to renters.

Families moving from one dwelling to another in the same area.

Turn over rate of rental.

Homeowners being pushed out by problems – and losing the investment in their homes.

Transient populations.

Screening/oversight of tenants

Screening of potential residents is poor.

Lack of tenant screening.

Not enough oversight by landlords.

Need for affordable housing

Affordability.

I am concerned that there is no adequate affordable housing.

Other

Rental duplexes.

Concentrations of populations.

Over crowding.

Don't know. (10 respondents)

The lack of a park or gathering spot for youth. Also, the area is intersected by busy Blake Road which physically isolates the area.

The configuration of the park with the streets, density of individual rental property, apartments and private homes make it difficult to build a community.

A6. Open-ended comments: What could be done to improve housing in the Blake Road Corridor?

What could be done to improve housing in the Blake Road Corridor?

Conduct more frequent/rigorous inspections

I agree with beefing up inspections.

More frequent housing inspections to be sure duplexes are being maintained properly.

Some higher standards by the city for inspections and have loans or grants available to homeowners to assist with needed renovations.

More inspection of properties.

Inspect the "less than 4-unit "rental properties on a more frequent schedule. Better maintained properties will attract better tenants. Better tenants will have more pride in keeping the neighborhood safe and well-maintained.

Increase the city's inspection activity of those properties that have code violations.

More enforcement of rental codes.

Rental licensing revisions.

More frequent rental property inspections.

Stronger rental licensing restrictions and inspections.

Partner with landlords/Hold landlords more accountable

Hold absentee landlords accountable for keeping their rentals repaired and updated.

More cooperation from rental property owners.

Make landlords accountable for their property.

Strengthen statutes that deal with absentee landlords.

Stricter rental ordinance requiring background checks on all rental properties.

Landlords need to take responsibility for their properties – do the proper screening. Community needs to enforce these standards – everywhere in the community. Poor behavior will not be tolerated in Hopkins.

Require the property owner to live within a certain distance of their property and/or monitor on a regular basis.

Require management to participate in service activities.

Make more demands on property owners to screen tenants, improve properties, or sell those properties for redevelopment.

Require tenant screening. Require adoption of the crime free addendum to all lease agreements.

A6. Open-ended comments: What could be done to improve housing in the Blake Road Corridor? (continued)

What could be done to improve housing in the Blake Road Corridor?

Redevelop community

The configuration of streets and access with an upgrade to the park along with community building activities.

Tear down all the rental units and start over.

Curb building any more rental property in Hopkins.

Redevelop the Atlas Cold storage site to help improve property values and desirability of area with the hope of attracting those interested in homestead property, city fund to provide no interest loans to landlords/homeowners for improvements.

It would be nice to be able to start with a clean slate and redesign the area to incorporate public spaces, pedestrian-friendly design, trails, and a mixture of high and mid-density housing.

Market the area to redevelopers, realizing it's not that simple.

Redevelopment.

Other

City Ordinances regarding noise, juvenile curfews, etc.

Less dark areas, improve lighting all along Blake and areas of the bike trail.

Make it more attractive, keep it clean by changing carpets and re-painting periodically.

Remove the rental duplexes.

Increase number of units.

More affordable housing.

Need local representation for these rental homes so they can be more involved.

Don't know. (13 respondents)

A7. Open-ended comments: What businesses (if any) are needed to better serve residents of the Blake Road Corridor?

What businesses (if any) are needed to better serve residents of the Blake Road Corridor?

Community Centers, Mosques.

Doctor, dentist, cafe with healthy food (not fast food), mental health provider.

Grocery stores, not convenience stores. Restaurants, not fast food places.

It would be nice if there could be a grocery store on the south side of Hwy 7 so that those who don't drive could more easily & safely shop.

Something open all night long so residents have a place to go.

I can't think of any.

I think there is a good mix of businesses.

Need diverse businesses that reflect the community in the Blake Road Corridor.

More neighborhood involvement; allow local managers decision control.

Don't know. (30 respondents)

A8. Open-ended comments: What are your biggest concerns (if any) about businesses in the Blake Road Corridor?

What are your biggest concerns (if any) about businesses in the Blake Road Corridor?

Lack of business involvement in community

Businesses should cooperate with the city/police to address issues in the area.

Potential apathy toward the neighborhood. Are those businesses interested in improving the quality of life in the neighborhood? Or are they ambivalent?

Lack of investment.

Lack of civic involvement.

Run-down/poorly maintained areas

Blake Road looks very shoddy. It doesn't look inviting. The entries and exits into businesses are confusing. The whole area needs updating. I can't imagine going over there unless I had a very specific errand.

Run-down look and feel.

Litter and picking up their carts from the neighborhood.

Minnehaha creek needs to be better maintained. I am concerned also about overdevelopment and too much trash and garbage filling up the parks and wetland areas.

Crime and safety issues

Especially at night, businesses that are open seem to allow groups to gather and this is intimidating to some customers. Part of this could be because the groups are friends of the employees.

The employment service on Blake & Excelsior (Command?) serves a level of clientele that makes me question if I know any of them to be registered sex offenders. The Market & Deli across the street from the Westside Apts. on Excelsior attracts a lot of residents from Westside apartments, but doesn't have a good pedestrian crossing path. Though residents are choosing not to safely cross, I still think it's a safety concern.

Parking lots are dark and intimidating to people during the evening hours.

I am concerned that they have criminal activity in their parking lots, and we need better lighting in the parking lots.

Fear that businesses will leave area

Crime will drive them away.

Safety of those who work there. Businesses move out because of safety concerns and loss of business.

As the community changes, business owners may move out like North Minneapolis.

Other comments

See above.

None, no concerns.

Don't know. (23 respondents)

A9. Open-ended comments: What could be done to improve businesses in the Blake Road Corridor?

What could be done to improve businesses in the Blake Road Corridor?

Improve cleanliness/appearance of businesses

Work with the city on updating the look of the businesses and the traffic flow.

Clean up the corridor. Make it safe and clean, and businesses will improve. New investment will follow. And with Cargill coming – this needs to happen, as many employees will be entering Hopkins from the east.

They need to take more pride in their property to eliminate the litter problem. I'm not sure what can influence that. Fines for litter?

Increase the frequency of property maintenance inspections of commercial properties.

Redevelop area

Create a better layout, eminent domain.

Upgrade the area around the creek.

I believe this area is going to see a great deal of redevelopment over the next 10 years including the addition of light rail transit. Many businesses will benefit from this while others will be eliminated or moved. Planning needs to assure that neighborhood service businesses remain.

Redevelopment of shopping area.

Improve security (e.g., lighting/surveillance)

Add lights and cameras in the parking lots.

Installation of good camera surveillance systems.

More lighting. More security by businesses including the need for high quality security cameras.

Improve pedestrian walkways

Safer crosswalks, sidewalks to get from east side of Blake to the businesses on the west side of Blake.

Make the area more pedestrian friendly so residents can walk down Blake Road to Knollwood Mall or Target.

Adequate street crossing to avoid fatalities.

Other comments

Don't know (23 respondents)

Better management at night and cooperation with the police. They should not allow groups to gather.

Businesses need to appoint/send liaisons to work with the police dept. and the neighborhood groups.

Businesses seem to be functioning properly.

Open businesses that reflect the community's diversity, hire people from the community.

A10. Open-ended comments: What programs or services are needed to better serve children or youth who live in the Blake Road Corridor?

What programs or services are needed to better serve children or youth who live in the Blake Road Corridor?

Accessible recreational and/or academic programming, community center or park

YMCA, Boys and Girls Clubs, Campfire. There needs to be a strong presence of youth-serving agencies bringing programming on-site and keeping kids busy!

After-school programs, summer programs.

Our kids need a good park on the east side of Blake with a recreation center and lots of drop in enrichment programming. Many of the kids love basketball, so a full court is really needed.

More programs to extend learning time for children and youth (after school and summer) along with some type of gathering place (improved park or community center).

Local community center in the neighborhood (walkable) with a gym, coffee shop, play area.

After school and summer activities.

A park/community center within walking distance that has playground equipment, play spaces, hoops and a soccer field. Bike riding path and sidewalks along Blake Rd.

Programs that offer academic as well as social entertainment in a safe environment.

Organized activities like crafts or sports. Homework help. A good park.

If the children and youth are hooked up with school and recreational activities due to a proactive teacher or parent they have access to many more services than a child who is coming home everyday to their apartment in the Blake Road Corridor. There very few services for those kids. Hopkins needs a recreation center and free transportation to the recreation center.

More summer programs and after school programs for children and youth to keep them engaged and out of trouble.

Cottageville park needs to be updated and more accessible.

Organized activity that involves their community.

In particular, many children living in this area do not have any swimming skills. Also, many children roam the halls of apartment buildings with nothing to do. Structured extra-curriculars and additional homework support are vital for the success of these children.

What was done last summer is as good as it can be without neglecting other areas of the city.

Local after-school programs.

Make the changes to the existing parks.

Better and more varied activities/equipment in Cottageville Park.

After school programs/summer programs that are not out of reach cost wise or location and transportation. Enhanced park-safety, equipment, accessibility, etc.

More inclusive park and recreation programs.

Outreach to teenagers. After school programs promoting education for younger children.

Need after-school programs in the neighborhood, parks and recreation activities.

Improvements/expansion of Cottageville park.

More after school and summer programs available.

Community building with daily programs for youth/drop in center.

A10. Open-ended comments: What programs or services are needed to better serve children or youth who live in the Blake Road Corridor? (continued)

What programs or services are needed to better serve children or youth who live in the Blake Road Corridor?

Transportation to programs

Transportation to programs needed.

Access. Programs are available – encouraging parents to enroll their children. Transportation is an issue – how would they get to these programs?

Community activities which provide transportation.

Create some light rail transit for youth (and others) to get around.

Programs are there – transportation is the issue.

Better transportation access to activities in other parts of the city.

Busing for after school programs so more children can attend.

Parent involvement

Culture – many different cultures in neighborhood, but reminding parents that it's not safe or responsible to leave children alone. Responsible parenting.

Many parents do not know how to access pre-school programs. It would be so helpful to have someone in the community to recruit these families and walk them through the registration process.

More parental involvement.

Other

The city cannot be all things to all people. People cannot expect to have everything given to them simply because they are poor or immigrants.

I answered "I don't know" to most of the last set of questions because I think it is very hard to know what services or programs people who live in the Blake Corridor are using. So much of it depends on transportation and resources.

Safe sidewalks.

Strong enforcement of the curfew.

Don't know (9 respondents)

A11. Open-ended comments: What programs or services are needed to better serve adults who live in the Blake Road Corridor?

What programs or services are needed to better serve adults who live in the Blake Road Corridor?

Transportation

Better transportation to Eisenhower Community Center for adult ESL and GED classes.

Better public transportation so they can get to work and to the services they need.

Better understanding of transportation availability. (Bus, Hop-a-Ride). New options for transportation?

Programs are there – transportation is the issue.

Again, improving the transportation system and encouraging participation in school activities.

Adults need better public transportation and more access to services within the Corridor.

Parenting education/parent support/child care

Parenting classes

Child care.

Parents and child involvement programs.

Free day care.

Adult education

Adult Ed/ELL classes and ECFC classes on-site.

More connections to the resources offered by Hopkins School District – Family Resource Center, Adult Options for Education, Adult Enrichment, etc.

Greater access to adult/family literacy programs.

Neighborhood/community building

Neighborhood building.

Crime prevention. Organized neighborhood groups that provide some socialization, resident input in safety and crime.

Community building with evening programs/educational/cultural.

Social services

On site social services.

Access to food shelf.

Social service access, food shelf help.

Culturally-based services/outreach to immigrant population

English & "living in America" classes for the immigrants in the neighborhood.

Cultural adjustment, system navigation training programs would be helpful for people who are new to the country and people of color.

A11. Open-ended comments: What programs or services are needed to better serve adults who live in the Blake Road Corridor? (continued)

What programs or services are needed to better serve adults who live in the Blake Road Corridor?

Community center

The community center concept could serve both.

Community center that has program for kids and adults.

Other comments

See above.

Safe sidewalks.

Good relations with police so they see police as a resource and not a threat – this especially true for people from other cultures.

Don't know. (21 respondents)

A12. Open-ended comments: In your opinion, what are the three most important issues or needs in the Blake Road Corridor?

In your opinion, what are the three most important issues or needs in the Blake Road Corridor?

Crime prevention/reduction

Crime. (3 respondents)

Criminal element moving into the area.

Safety. (2 respondents)

Safety for both adults and children.

Decreasing crime. (2 respondents)

Understanding that poor behavior will not be tolerated in Hopkins.

Crime prevention. (2 respondents)

Unacceptable activity/behavior by youths.

Drug control.

Lowering crime.

Reduced criminal activity.

Recreational programs for children/youth

Programming for young people.

Opportunities for children's activities within the neighborhood.

Access to extra-curricular activities and homework support. (Keep kids busy outside of school and build their skills.)

Safe and consistent activities for youth.

What are the children, young and teens doing with their time, following school and during the summer?

Children programs.

Programs for any child after school/summer to attend without worrying about money or transportation.

Positive programs for youth.

Recreational opportunities.

Lack of activities for youth.

Activities for children.

More opportunities for children to learn/interact with other children.

A12. Open-ended comments: In your opinion, what are the three most important issues or needs in the Blake Road Corridor? (continued)

In your opinion, what are the three most important issues or needs in the Blake Road Corridor?

Community center/park

A community center.

Park facilities need to be improved. Accessibility to park facilities need to be improved.

Tiny park with no programs for the kids.

No gathering place for youth – inadequate park, no community center.

On site activity center.

Community Center.

Community Center (that offers after school programs, enrichment activities for children and adults).

Safe place for kids to go during the summer and after school.

Viable park.

Housing concerns

Absentee landlords need to be held accountable for the condition of their property and who they rent to.

Rental Licensing/Code Enforcement.

Improve housing.

Maintenance of property.

Better rental tenant screening.

Rent control.

Rental and multi-family housing issues.

Affordable housing.

Inadequate housing.

Better housing.

Safe housing.

Quality rental units.

Need for responsible landlords.

Resident and community involvement

Business owners getting more involved in community.

Blake Road intersects area – difficult to create a sense of community.

Continued neighborhood involvement by Police.

Community building activities with an upgrade of community facilities.

Families communicating with each other.

Organized resident input.

To provide residents opportunities to be involved in their community in ways that interest them, not those planning the programs and activities.

A12. Open-ended comments: In your opinion, what are the three most important issues or needs in the Blake Road Corridor? (continued)

In your opinion, what are the three most important issues or needs in the Blake Road Corridor?

Neighborhood appearance

Neighborhood clean up.

Improve the overall appearance of Blake Road. It looks like nobody cares about this area of Hopkins.

Physical deterioration.

Neighborhood blight.

Pedestrian walkways/safety

Safe street crossing.

Pedestrian safety.

Poor pedestrian design.

Sidewalks and bike path, bridge over Blake Rd. to businesses.

Transportation

Lack of good public transportation.

Transportation to/from services.

Transportation. (2 respondents)

Other comments

Reluctance of immigrants to assimilate into the culture here.

Cultural issues.

Infrastructure needs.

Redevelopment.

Lack of accessible activities in walkable distance.

Parent Education.

Pre-school recruitment.

Jobs.

Don't know. (9 respondents)

A13. Open-ended comments: Overall, what are your top suggestions for improving the Blake Road Corridor, in the short-term and long-term?

Overall, what are your top suggestions for improving the Blake Road Corridor, in the short-term and long-term?

Improve park/recreation center

Improve park facility and accessibility to create a more inviting community space.

Good park with a recreation center and drop in enrichment programs.

Upgrade to the park.

Some type of improvement to pocket park.

Improved access to Cottageville Park.

Long-term: neighborhood community center.

Better access to the Cottageville park – maybe the city could buy the two (or one) houses facing Blake Rd and turn one into a community center and/or cop shop.

Long-term – improve/expand Cottageville Park.

Build a community building.

Make the park more user-friendly.

The building of a Community Activity Center within the area.

Community Center for adults, seniors, kids, teen – everyone!!

Opportunities for resident/community engagement

Community involvement.

Short-term: assess social organizational relationship to residents – effectiveness. Long-term: outreach – relationship building – with more resident ownership in the process.

Weekly nightly neighborhood patrol and litter clean up by the residents and/or in conjunction with the City.

My suggestions is to build strong partnership between business, faith based, schools, city and county and other agencies in Hopkins to improve the quality of life for all and especially for people in the Blake Road Corridor area. When part of the city get affected, it should be everyone's concern.

Community engagement and empowerment. Create resiliency among the community members to become involved and improve their community.

Involve community members.

In the short-term, more emphasis in the block clubs and neighborhood groups.

Short-term – continue outreach efforts.

Continue efforts to develop a sense of community among residents. Last year, a great start was made – continue efforts.

A13. Open-ended comments: Overall, what are your top suggestions for improving the Blake Road Corridor, in the short-term and long-term? (continued)

Overall, what are your top suggestions for improving the Blake Road Corridor, in the short-term and long-term?

Expand programs/services

Keep up the great work in offering summer programming. Work with the schools in creating homework support for all children. Work with the schools in creating access of sports teams and other extra-curriculars.

Neighborhood gatherings with activities for young and old. After School Care for young and teens. Teen Club (life skills taught, job training or search, speakers, help them get excited and look forward to something positive in their future).

Develop positive programs in the corridor.

For the long term, have programs and services that meet the changing need of the community. Be flexible to meet the changing needs.

Short-term – keep developing programs and services in response to resident requests.

Short-term – summer programs affordable for children and transportation.

Long-term program strategies – i.e., Meadowbrook model with an Outreach Coordinator on-site at the Apartment Complex (Westside) that provides a resource link to residents and greater community/schools.

Continue to work on activities for children and adults.

Work together to provide better coordination of enrichment activities for youth. Figure out a way to have one registration form versus having families fill out lots of forms.

Improve management of rental properties

In the short term, changes in ordinances for landlords in screening tenants and property maintenance.

Pressure on landlords to responsibly care for their properties.

Landlord training of expectations, and penalties for not keeping rentals updated and for renting to people who commit crimes.

Require background checks on all prospective renters and more housing inspections to insure rental properties are being maintained.

Tougher rental ordinance/lease requirements/inspections.

"Beefed-up" rental licensing program.

Improve rental enforcement.

Improving sidewalks/pedestrian walkways

Creating safe zones for pedestrian traffic.

In the long term, a better integration into the rest of Hopkins. There are not enough street crossings and connections to the rest of Hopkins.

Sidewalks and bike path, bridge over Blake Rd. to businesses.

Creating pedestrian friendly environment.

Full-sized sidewalk from Excelsior to highway 7 on the East side of Blake Road.

Long-term – street crossing sign with flashing light for pedestrians crossing Westside to the other side of road.

A13. Open-ended comments: Overall, what are your top suggestions for improving the Blake Road Corridor, in the short-term and long-term? (continued)

Overall, what are your top suggestions for improving the Blake Road Corridor, in the short-term and long-term?

Increase police presence

Police presence.

Greater police presence.

Police kiosk.

Increased police presence in the area.

Street patrols or walking patrols by the police.

Neighborhood improvements/redevelopment

Community building activities with an upgrade of community facilities. The configuration of streets and access are long term projects that need to continue.

Improved lighting/equipment.

Long-term – major redevelopment.

Add lighting and cameras to parking lots.

Housing redevelopment, removal of blighted properties, repaving roads, refacing the fronts of commercial properties, installing street lights.

Other comments

Combination of good public transportation – bus, taxi, light rail, etc.

Enforce minimum community standards at a higher level.

Don't know. (11 respondents)

A14. Open-ended comments: What do you see as the strengths of the Stakeholder Group?

What do you see as the strengths of the Stakeholder Group?

Diversity of participants

There are a lot of people coming from a lot of different walks of life involved in the group.

Wide community support.

Representation.

Diversity in membership.

Diversity, experience.

Racial/cultural diversity. School District involvement.

The stakeholder group is very much involved and made aware about the progress. It has a good group of people that guide the study process.

Multiple voices.

I think the diversity of renters and home owners, along with a mix of business people and county staff.

Many different community members are included.

Diversity.

It is diverse.

Neighborhood involvement.

Large group that encompasses all social service agencies in SLP/Hopkins area.

Cross section of all parts of community (city, school, congregation, neighborhood, etc.).

A wide variety of interested parties.

Cross section of community members.

Commitment to process/concern for the Corridor

Strong commitment from the group leaders to change the current situation.

Commitment to improving the learning and after-school activities.

Personal and professional concern for the corridor, commitment to improve it, commitment to participate.

The people involved are very committed to making a change.

Commitment of individuals.

People who really care about the problems that exist.

Concern about the area from every stakeholder. A desire to make life better for the residents.

Engagement and commitment of the individuals.

The people in the group have a strong desire to see the area improve.

Good energy.

Genuine interest in families/children.

Strong investment, addressing issues.

Commitment.

A14. Open-ended comments: What do you see as the strengths of the Stakeholder Group? (continued)

What do you see as the strengths of the Stakeholder Group?

Leadership

Strong leadership.

The strength of this group is the energy and intellect of the Hopkins Chief of Police. He and his department should be supported at all costs to create a safer and more manageable community.

Chief Reid is approaching the problem well. It is a community issue and will only improve when Hopkins gives Blake Road the same attention that was given to downtown Hopkins.

Leadership.

Other

Also, the group has worked hard to make sure that families and youth have something to do during the summer when there is no school. This survey was also a good idea. You need to find out what the people in the area think.

Don't know (2 respondents)

A15. Open-ended comments: What recommendations, if any, do you have to help the Stakeholder Group be more effective?

What recommendations, if any, do you have to help the Stakeholder Group be more effective?

Increase community involvement

Too many members who seem to be of an honorary status, rather than involved and working.

Somehow bring the group to the renter population and get them involved in taking pride in their community.

Create more of a city-wide awareness and interest in improving the Blake Road corridor.

Residents participation (did try).

Involve all participants of the group, don't let a few dominate the informational meetings.

More involvement from the residents and property owners.

More neighborhood organization development to improve participation.

More neighborhood resident participation.

Get more community members involved.

There needs to be more one on one discussion with residents and businesses of people in the area. We are out door knocking and just talk with people.

Other comments

Improve communications.

Don't know. (10 respondents)

Meet more regularly – form small committees that work on specific issues.

Expect the city and school district to step up – our taxes should be used to serve the areas of greatest need. Search for large grants to really make a difference for all in this area (ex., new park with recreation center).

Keep the same leadership and continue focus.

Keep updating the stakeholders. Perhaps smaller breakout groups for specific issues.

None at this time. (2 stakeholders)

Speed up the time lines.

Create a fund raising task force to complete the study and also to be used to implement the study recommendation.

Recommendations for Long Term Planning (supplement by Tom Schirber)

Blake Road Corridor Community Assessment

Recommendations for Long Term Community Planning

April 2008

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Blake Road Corridor Hopkins, Minnesota

Recommendations for Long Term Community Planning

Overview

The City of Hopkins is experiencing an influx of low income families and individuals wanting to migrate there. Poorer populations including white, communities of color and immigrants moving to suburbs is not new to the Twin Cities Metro area nor to other cities around the country. As large groups of low income people seek a better quality of life, including employment, education and more affordable housing outside the urban areas, suburbs want to learn how to welcome and provide desirable communities for these populations.

Hopkins is a quiet working class town with many great attributes to offer new-comers. Approximately sixty-five per cent of the living units in town are rental and an even higher percentage is considered affordable. There are jobs, excellent access to transportation and good retail and service businesses close at hand. The Hopkins School District is well known and provides quality education. For the most part the City of Hopkins and its residents extend the hand of welcome to all who come there.

Large concentrations of low income people provide challenges to those looking to establish a stable home in a safe environment. Language and cultural barriers along with crime, prejudice and stereotyping create challenges to community building. Stakeholders in Hopkins have targeted the Blake Road Corridor(BRC) to pursue solutions for community building. A major step in this process is assessing the challenges and qualities of the area by surveying the residents who live there. The information gathered from this assessment process points to critical pathways to establish long term community development.

Conclusions

Need for Support, Stabilization and Services

“As recently as the 1990s, immigrants were flooding into Minneapolis and St. Paul, swelling the cities' immigrant populations from 43,000 to 97,000 during the decade. But in this decade, the city numbers are falling. For the first time, a decisive majority of immigrants -- nearly two-thirds -- are suburban.” (Allie Shah, *In Blaine, a Global Village*, Star Tribune, July 10, 2007)

As low income families, including immigrants, seek better living in the suburbs, new dynamics develop for them as well as the long time residents. As in Hopkins, other municipalities experience real and perceived issues related to race, culture, crime, education and community building. There is a growing need to address these issues

systematically through collaboration and community participation especially from the new residents.

The Blake Road Corridor is a concentrated and geographically isolated neighborhood of approximately 1,350 housing units. Located on the east side of town, the neighborhood is bordered on three sides by major roads and the City of St. Louis Park on the other. Most of the residents of the Corridor express a sense of being welcomed and that Hopkins is generally a good place to live. They see the Hopkins Police Department and the School District as definite benefits. Most residents are somewhat aware of the many supportive stakeholder agencies willing to help. On the other hand, because of the neighborhood's location and the fact that many services expect that clients come to them, there is a weak link to those services. Crime has increased over the past few years, children and families have few recreational outlets and there remains a high turnover rate in rental units.

A spike in crime in 2005 has been somewhat abated due to new police efforts, Neighborhood Watch program and some new children activities after school and during the summer. However, data shows there are still safety concerns and there is minimal participation by residents in community building activities. Because the situation in the Blake Road Corridor is not desperate it is the perfect time to plan for the future, pro-actively implementing planning to build community and preserve quality of life.

Need for Change

Many residents of the Blake Road Corridor expressed they do not participate in existing programs that could be of assistance to them. Contributing to this situation is a lack of knowledge, affordability, transportation, language barriers, culture competency issues and poor communication. Another difficulty often seen in low income housing is high turn over. Many of the residents in the Corridor will stay less than a year. Therefore, it is imperative that **outreach** be a top priority for all serving organizations including local government. Newsletters, door-knocking, informational events, block parties and various other methods of generating interest are essential. The most effective method for providing connection for residents is for services to be present at or near their homes. Outreach in the form of personal contact is effective, as well as a permanent office or building that provides information and programming on a daily basis, year round.

Safety is something everyone considers important. There are many ways to organize and promote safety. Formal programs such as Neighborhood Watch, Crime Watch, National Night Out and many others can bring people together. Talking about safety, planning events, knocking on doors and forming various support groups will generate community participation. Also tenant organizations and block parties keep people informed and help residents get to know each other. The City can organize community meetings around the need for sidewalks, lighting, pedestrian crossing and crime. The City might also consider a satellite office in an apartment complex for community liaison officer or just to increase police presence.

Large numbers of **children** in the Corridor are unattended and unsupervised after school and during the summer. This is of considerable concern to City Police as young people become involved in, or at least exposed to, criminal or nuisance activity. Community stakeholders have already seen signs of success with some programming activities during key times. Continued collaboration between schools, City parks and recreation, churches other non-profit groups is needed to enhance and expand children and teen programming and services. However, even if there is sufficient programming for children, many do not participate. Less than half the children from the Corridor have participated in after school programs provided by the Hopkins School district.

Common with low income families are issues around employment, transportation and **childcare** leading to instability. In Hopkins, residents report some success in finding jobs and transportation but childcare is very difficult. This issue alone can prevent families from financial success and stability. It has been reported anecdotally that young children are locked in their apartments without supervision from morning until evening. There is a need for safe, affordable childcare near the Blake Road neighborhood.

Considerable numbers of low income families stay in their apartments less than a year. There are a variety of reasons for this including job loss, change jobs, family issues, eviction and so on. Several problems result from **mobility** issues leading to unstable communities: a) families tend not to participate in programming; b) families are not engaged in the community c) families are unaware or uninformed about programs; d) children education suffers. Mobility can lead to instability in the family and potentially the community. Reducing the turnover or mobility rate of low income families positively impacts the quality of life for both those who might move and those staying.

There are cultural issues to be addressed when large numbers of foreign-born low income families reside in one community. There is a need for programming to bridge language and cultural gaps. **Adult programming** is essential to empower parents to feel confident and have the necessary resources to bring stability to their families. There should be education and assistance offered for language learning, jobs and employment, financial literacy and community engagement. Also, there is a need for landlord/tenant issues to be addressed. All people want to attain similar things in the places they live. They want to develop a sense of ownership, comfort and security. There needs to be a long term plan to establish appropriate, culturally sensitive programs to provide these things.

The area known as the Blake Road Corridor is a potential target for **redevelopment**. The mix of housing types includes single family homeownership, duplex rental, small multi-family and large rental housing complexes. There is one park in the area which is small and hidden from the street by two duplexes. The park is the location of nuisance and criminal behavior. There is a seventeen acre cold storage facility in the heart of the BRC that is poised for development. There is planning to enhance transportation with light rail (LRT) which would run through the Blake Road Corridor. Questions need to be raised regarding the impact of redevelopment on affordable workforce housing in the neighborhood.

The Metropolitan Council projects a growth of around a million people by 2020. This growth will require the increased need for housing for families of low income and workforce housing. Workforce housing includes people that serve this community – teachers, law enforcement, fire fighters and so on. Some density increase should be appropriately considered for the Blake Road Corridor area. There also should be consideration for new commercial/retail with potential job creation. As redevelopment discussion proceeds, there is a strong need for improved green space and a park that is large enough and safe for children. Cottageville Park is very small and could be expanded. Secondly, there is a need for a gathering space or community center. This space, whether new or in existing buildings should be a place for resources and assistance for the neighborhood. A critical component of this redevelopment should be the inclusion of the residents for planning input. A comprehensive effort should be undertaken to organize, recruit and educate nearby residents about the planning process. This would be accomplished most effectively by a lead stakeholder organization operating in the BRC and collaborating with other stakeholders, to develop relationships with the residents.

Developing Long Term Plans

Recommendations are made regarding resident/community needs and desires as expressed by study respondents and the experience of models in other communities. In order to accomplish a planning process and ultimately an appropriate and workable programming structure to address multiple issues, several components need to be in place. No one group, including the City or County government can tackle these complex issues alone. Along with City and County programs, there are multiple groups already working with residents to help build collaboration with government, elected officials and residents. Faith-based groups and schools are needed to partner in the effort as well. All of these stakeholders will need a lead agency to shoulder much of the organization and planning. Fortunately, Hopkins already has numerous stakeholder partners who are well ahead of most communities in similar situations. Already, two years of hard work and commitment from staff and volunteers from many organizations along with the City and the County, has shown the will to accomplish what needs to be done to create a better community. It will now require organized leadership and additional resident participation to facilitate the planning process.

Recommendations

Several models were considered along with stakeholder suggestions and resident survey data to develop these recommendations. The recommendations serve only as a general guide to develop a plan for the Blake Road Corridor. The specific means and methods will take effort from all levels the community. This will not be a one time fix. It will take considerable planning and persistence over time to develop a stable, thriving neighborhood. The potential results of this endeavor are well worth the effort. Many similar neighborhoods around the country have seen unique blossoming neighborhoods that are assets to their communities. Many studies have shown that stable affordable housing does not decrease housing values in the area. In fact, culturally diverse

neighborhoods can enhance economic development and contribute in many ways including art and music.

Planning

An effective planning process is critical for success. The New Communities Program in Chicago works in fourteen neighborhoods to develop “quality of life” plans. The Chicago program says this about planning:

“Planning can be more, much more, than a necessary step toward successful doing. Involve enough wise, energetic and committed people, and the very act of planning becomes a force in itself, an engine capable of pulling bold dreams into the realm of accomplished reality.”
(<http://newcommunities.org/cmadoocs/NCPCChicagoPlans.pdf>, Page 3)

Quality of life planning in the Blake Road Corridor can be a great influence beyond the neighborhood. The process will be ongoing as the community environment changes over the years. It can impact all of Hopkins and even surrounding areas.

Objectives

The following are recommended outcomes to aid in the planning process for the Blake Road Corridor. These outcomes relate primarily to quality of life issues for residents.

- 1) **Increase resident engagement** in community processes including crime and safety issues, community development, education, human services and the Blake Road Corridor planning process.
- 2) **Reduce crime rate** through programs that have worked elsewhere and a high rate of citizen participation. Support and compliment police efforts in the area.
- 3) **Reduce resident turn over** through outreach, tenant involvement, and various adult support programs. Attempt early interventions through relationship building.
- 4) **Enhance family stability** through variety of service providers and programming; creating a feeling of safety and programs for children.
- 5) **Enhance personal growth** education programs, child enrichment, family wealth and job enhancement. Every effort should be made to ensure cultural sensitivity.
- 6) **Improve sense of resident ownership** through creating volunteer opportunities, being involved in children programming, and participating in decisions that affect their lives.
- 7) **Improve relationship with surrounding community** by involving other Hopkins residents in cultural events and volunteering.
- 8) **Enhance community through redevelopment.** Improving safety on walkable streets, street crossing and attractive retail. Increase and preserve affordable housing stock with light commercial/retail mixed use.

Recommendation 1: *Establish collaborative advisory partnership.* This group can be a continuation of the existing BRC Advisory Collaborative or a new group. If a new group is formed, there should be some one from the original group for continuity.

Roles and responsibilities:

- Facilitate the planning process
- Make recommendations for decisions and funding
- Monitor progress
- Report to stakeholders

Representation. There should be representation in the following areas.

Residents of BRC

Police Department

City

County

School

Faith based

Community member outside of BRC

Other agencies currently working with BRC residents.

Landlords

Business community

There can be as many as 15 members serving on this group. Twelve is a good working number. Sub-committees can work more efficiently on specific issues.

Recommendation 2: *Establish a time line, goals and objectives.* It is essential that the advisory group accomplish this early on. Priorities should be established in line with the expectations of the larger stakeholder group. It may be necessary to provide a questionnaire for the larger group. Ongoing forums or focus groups with residents early in the process could enhance not only their participation but their input regarding goals and objectives.

Recommendation 3: *Identify a lead agency.* Find and enlist the participation of a non profit agency with the capacity and appropriate mission to take on the planning and implementation process. Ideally, this agency is already operating in the BRC area. The agency will work with the Hopkins BRC advisory group and stakeholders to facilitate the planning process, pursue a funding strategy and provide leadership and programming to meet the goals and objectives for the BRC neighborhood. The lead agency will also act as catalyst to bring together other agencies and organizations who can participate in the BRC plan. Collaboration will be the key to maximizing commitment and quality participation to meet all expectations.

Recommendation 4: *Identify external partners.* It will be critical to identify organizations which can assist in multiple ways. The organizations which funded the Wilder study would be a good place to start. They are already invested. They may be able to provide additional funding for planning and/or programming. They also may be in a position to provide advice and counsel for capacity building on specific projects. Even though Wilder Research will provide each funder with a copy of the report, the

advisory group or lead agency should provide updates and continue the relationship as plans move along.

Recommendation 5: *Establish programming through a strategic planning process.* Short term and long term program development will be needed to continue what has been successfully started with children. The needs of children and families are generally a priority for funders. The planning process which will prioritize program development is often subject to funding sources. However, a well thought out plan will be appealing to large grant makers. It may be necessary to get a small grant to hire a professional facilitator for the planning process. Also, planning to collaborate with and support other established programs, including the Schools, can be a big part of accomplishing the goals.

Recommendation 6: *Develop funding plan.* From the very beginning of the planning process, funding should be part of the discussion. Determine who will pursue grants. It could be the lead agency or other appropriate agencies including the schools or churches. It may be necessary to acquire the services of a contracted grant writer. It will be beneficial to start with the agencies which have already provided funds for the effort.

Recommendation 7: *Establish plan for a central community space.* It is strongly recommended that a community space be established for program operations. The space could be in an existing building or in a new building. The community space should be pursued in conjunction with City Planning for the area. It may be that the ideal situation would be to build a Community Center in a newly expanded Cottageville Park to include recreation. It should be easily accessible, highly visible and welcoming and safe for children. However, there could be a plan to integrate a community center into potential new developments such as the cold storage truck site. The lead agency should have offices in the center along with other potential agencies including the City. A community space should be large enough for education programs, computer room, recreation, case management or counseling rooms and community meetings.

Recommendation 8: *Work closely with the City around area development planning.* As the City of Hopkins completes its 2008 Comprehensive Plan, all stakeholders involved in the Blake Road Corridor effort should be kept apprised of new developments. The residents should be kept informed as well. Input at community meetings can lead not only to a sense of ownership in community but that input can influence decisions which affect their lives. Depending on the type of development, the City and non profits can get access funding primarily because of the low income people in the neighborhood. These are funding sources not available to for profit developments.

Recommendation 9: *Organize resident participation.* Even though the need for resident participation has been woven throughout all of the recommendations, it is too important not to be specified. The overarching goal of the BRC effort is to provide a quality of life plan for all citizens in the neighborhood and Hopkins. Quality of life is not something that is given to someone. It must be worked for if it is going to last. Also, many funders, especially Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) require resident participation. The best planned program is only good if someone shows up. Resident

participation in the planning process will lead to program success. Identifying leadership from the neighborhood along with opportunities for neighbors to speak out about their hopes and dreams are critical ingredients for effective planning and implementation.

Recommendation 10: *Improve Landlord/Tenant relations.* Working with landlords is highly recommended in order to improve site conditions, turnover and other management issues. Recruiting active involvement by owner/landlords will help protect their investment. Favorable involvement by landlords in supporting tenant programs, improving communication and providing incentives for tenants to take more ownership will financially benefit landlords. Programs such as eviction intervention and family financial education will also keep tenants in their homes longer, reducing turnover. Landlords should be asked to participate actively and financially as the community provides programming to bring stability to their tenants.

Comparative Models

Research of models from this region and around the country has not yielded an exact fit for the Blake Road Corridor. Each neighborhood is unique and requires internal assessment to meet goals which are specific to that neighborhood. However there are some similar components or core values that appear in most of the models studied. Many of the similarities found in the models are incorporated in the ten recommendations. The model components that stand out are categorized in two areas:

- 1) Infrastructure and Partnership
 - Lead organization
 - Community Participation
 - Oversight or advisory group
 - Thorough planning
- 2) Outcomes – improve quality of life by:
 - Reducing crime, increasing safety
 - Building family wealth
 - Preserving and producing affordable housing
 - Neighborhood redevelopment, commercial, retail and housing
 - Education and youth development

Listed below are four programs which offer comparable solutions to the Blake Road Corridor, and give a brief overview of each plan. Web sites are included for further reference and study. It is conceivable that the BRC planners will utilize components from some or all of the models. It is possible that one or more of the local programs could come to Hopkins and set up in the Corridor, continuing what they do elsewhere. Or they could be contracted to provide expertise to assist the BRC planners to establish a new process. Finally, a local lead agency could implement plans through existing agencies and programs using parts of each model.

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Operation Neighborhood Development Corporation (ONDC). (www.ondc.org)
ONDC operates in St Paul, New Brighton and Brooklyn Park. They operate in large single owner housing sites: Polynesian Village, New Brighton, 364 units; Eden Park, Brooklyn Park, 324 units and Ames Lake Neighborhood, East St. Paul, 311 units. Their stated mission is “*To support people and strengthen neighborhoods within affordable housing communities, through cooperative partnerships*”.

ONDC programs include:

Resident Services. This is a broad array of programs tailored appropriately at each site within the following categories:

- Community Safety Services
- Housing Stability Services
- Family Success Services

Ames Lake After Hours. Education based after school and summer program.

Family Success Project. Variety of programs to prevent eviction or housing loss. Program includes: employment support services, financial literacy activities, adult support groups, monthly educational workshops, career mentoring opportunities, and rent assistance during a financial crisis.

Live Together, Grow Together. An early childhood school readiness program, which is operated in conjunction with the public schools.

Park Promise. This is an academic success program for youth (K-8) conducted after school. Partners include the school district and other agencies. Program provides math and reading tutoring by licensed teachers and career mentoring.

ONDC develops community spaces within each site.

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CommonBond Communities Advantage Centers, (www.commonbond.org).

CommonBond, headquartered in St. Paul has developed thousands of living units in the Midwest region. They have developed an award winning effective housing service system called Advantage Center Services. Advantage Centers are known for successful youth enrichment programs and adult employment and financial education services. They are especially successful in conjunction with large numbers of housing units. CommonBond is also very successful with independent living senior services and people with special needs.

Along with customized resident services, Advantage Centers (which operate from a centralized community space) also assist with neighborhood revitalization and developing plans to avert vandalism and crime, reduce unit turnover, provide training and other suitable programs for existing developments. Advantage Centers can also help with establishing a **HUD Neighborhood Networks** program, which puts technology into the hands of low income tenants. <http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/mfh/nw/nwaboutnn.cfm>

Besides building new developments from the ground up, CommonBond’s Advantage Centers can work with existing neighborhoods. CommonBond will consult with communities to assess community development needs around housing and family

services. Experienced staff will work with boards, community and political leaders and potential human service agency partners to provide tools and methods to develop programs and meet community needs.

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Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) is a national intermediary which *“helps resident-led, community-based development organizations transform distressed communities and neighborhoods into healthy ones – good places to live, do business, work and raise families. By providing capital, technical expertise, training and information, LISC supports the development of local leadership and the creation of affordable housing, commercial, industrial and community facilities, businesses and jobs.”* www.lisc.org

Twin Cities LISC, which is one of the funders for the Wilder study, is the local LISC affiliate for the metro area. (www.lisc.org/twin_cities/) Twin Cities LISC will be initiating a demonstration for the **Building Sustainable Communities** program. Building Sustainable Communities is a comprehensive program going beyond physical improvements. It is also strengthening economics, improving and providing education, training and support for residents, and building partnerships. The program will work from five goals:

- Expanding capital investment in housing and other real estate development.
- Increasing family income, wealth and employment.
- Stimulating local economic activity and connections to the regional economy and beyond.
- Improving access to quality education.
- Supporting healthy environments and lifestyles.

Twin Cities LISC is looking to pattern some or all of its effort after LISC Chicago’s **New Communities Program**. (<http://newcommunities.org/index.asp>) This program, mentioned above under “Planning” is operating in fourteen Chicago neighborhoods with very similar approaches. The web link above has very detailed information related to building programs according to unique neighborhood attributes.

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NeighborWorks America (www.nw.org) is a well established training and organization resource development company in neighborhood revitalization. They have developed the NeighborWorks System, which has been building healthy communities since 1978. It is a national nonprofit organization which provides financial support, technical assistance, and training for community-based revitalization efforts. The NeighborWorks Training Institute offers many levels of training and other resources to those who are seeking to revitalize their communities. Neighborhood Housing Services of America was established as a secondary market providing financial services, technology and loan products to strengthen communities and improve lives for the long term.