

Community Concerns and Desires: Analysis of Jefferson Avenue TIPS Initiative

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Analysis of Jefferson Avenue Project TIPS (2014)

Survey

On July 17, 2014, the TIPS (Trust, Information, Programs, and Services) initiative was implemented in the Jefferson Avenue neighborhood in Rochester, New York, both to show support for the neighborhood, and to investigate community members' concerns and desires for their neighborhood. This report is designed to analyze the collected surveys and will discuss the various aspects of the neighborhood that the Jefferson Avenue community liked, the assessment the community made of their neighborhood, and the initiatives or activities the residents would like implemented within the neighborhood. Finally, this paper will provide multiple anecdotes that the Jefferson Avenue community wishes to share with law enforcement and community members in the neighborhood.

Methodology

The initiative used a survey of residents to obtain this information. The survey asked people to list what they liked, their concerns, and their desires for things to be done within their neighborhood. The survey asked community members how much they liked living in their area, how long they have lived there, and how likely they were to be living in the area in the future. The survey then asked the respondents if they had anything specific to tell the police, and, finally, if they had anything to share with their fellow community members.

Groups of three or four volunteers were sent out to administer the survey to preselected streets in the neighborhood. Each group had at least one law enforcement officer with them. These groups were instructed to travel down one side of the street and then return on the other side, knocking on every door. When residents answered, the volunteers were to read a readymade script to the participant and then conduct the survey. Only those houses where adult residents responded and agreed to take the survey are included in the sample.

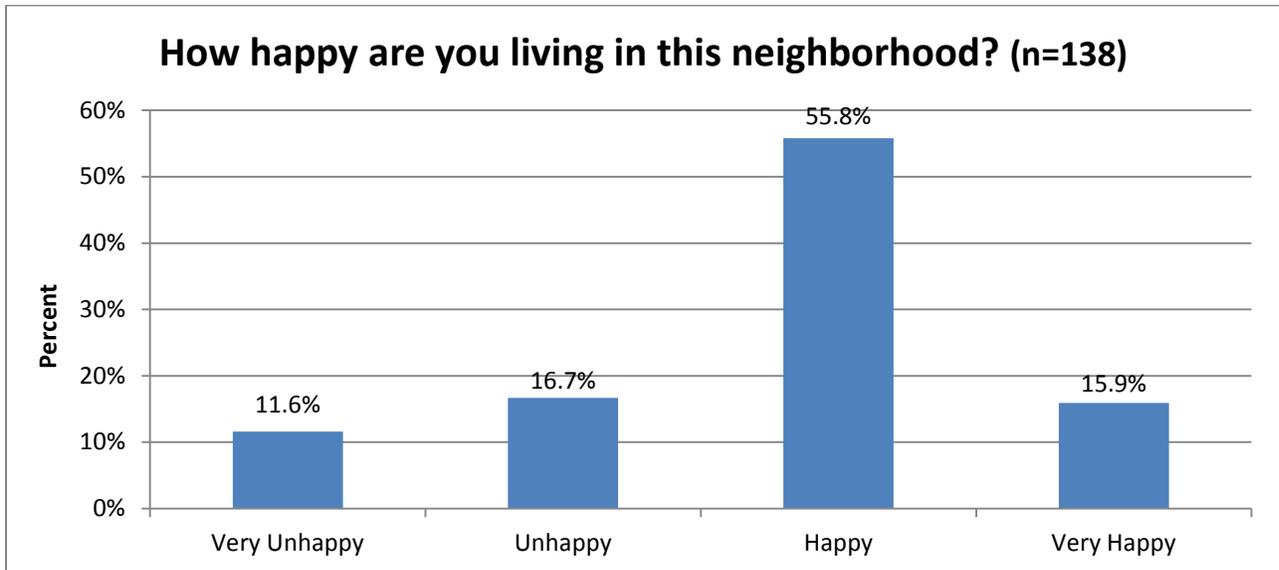
Because of this door-by-door sampling method, the resulting sample is not a random sample of the Jefferson Avenue community. Despite this, the resulting analysis should give valuable insight into the various issues within the community.

Data

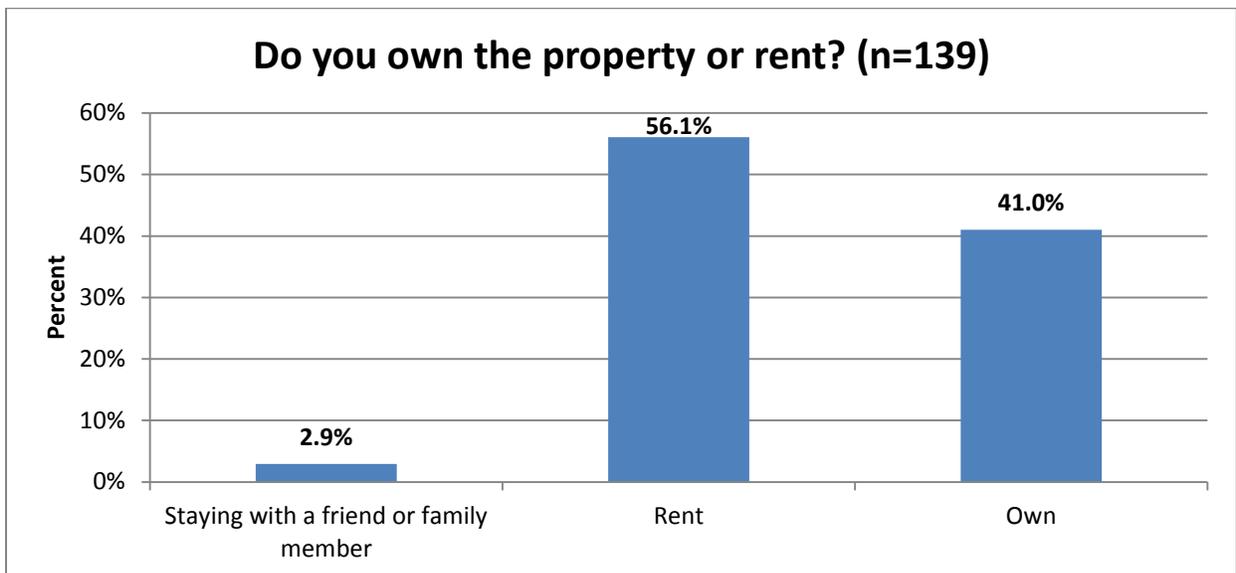
A number of groups surveyed 19 streets in the Jefferson Avenue community. Due to the small number of surveys collected on each street it is difficult to accurately compare between them. Therefore, the surveys collected from the streets mentioned above will be pooled together for analysis.

This group will be referred to as 'the Jefferson Avenue community'. A total of 140 surveys were collected from the neighborhood.

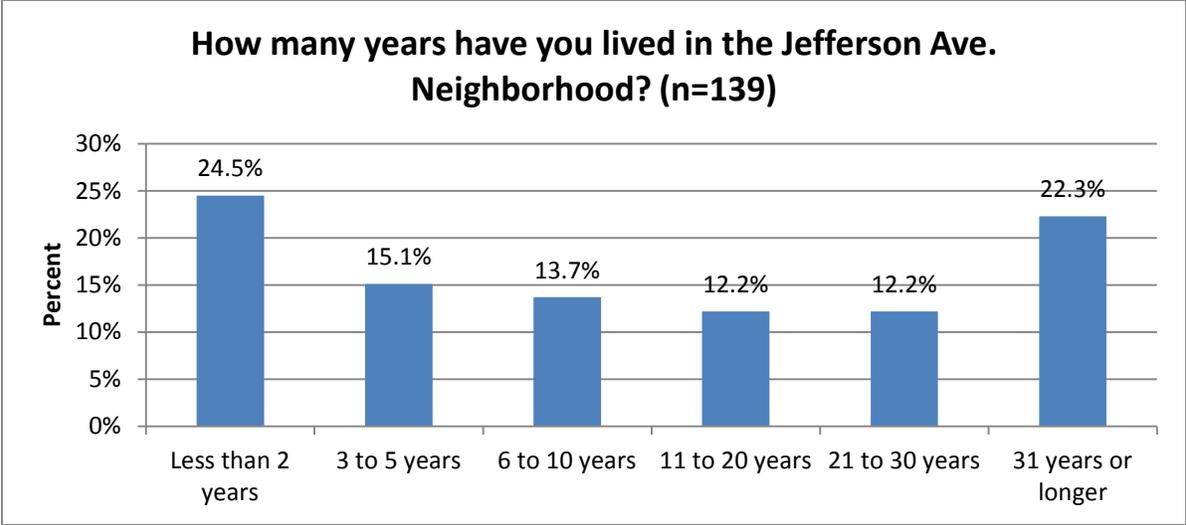
The first question asked respondents how happy they were living in their neighborhood. Of those surveyed, 71.7% reported that they were happy or very happy living in the Jefferson Avenue community, with 15.9% reporting that they were very happy.



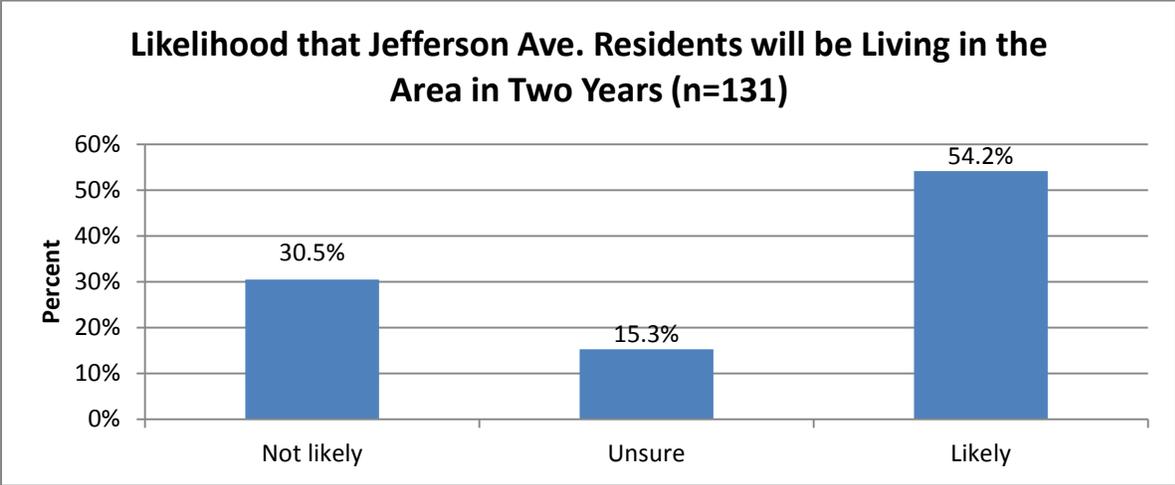
Next, the survey asked residents about their living situation. Specifically, residents were asked if they owned or rented their property. Of the 139 residents who answered this question, about half (56.1%) reported that they rented their property, 41.0% reported that they owned the property, (and four respondents (2.9%) reported that they were staying with a friend or family member.



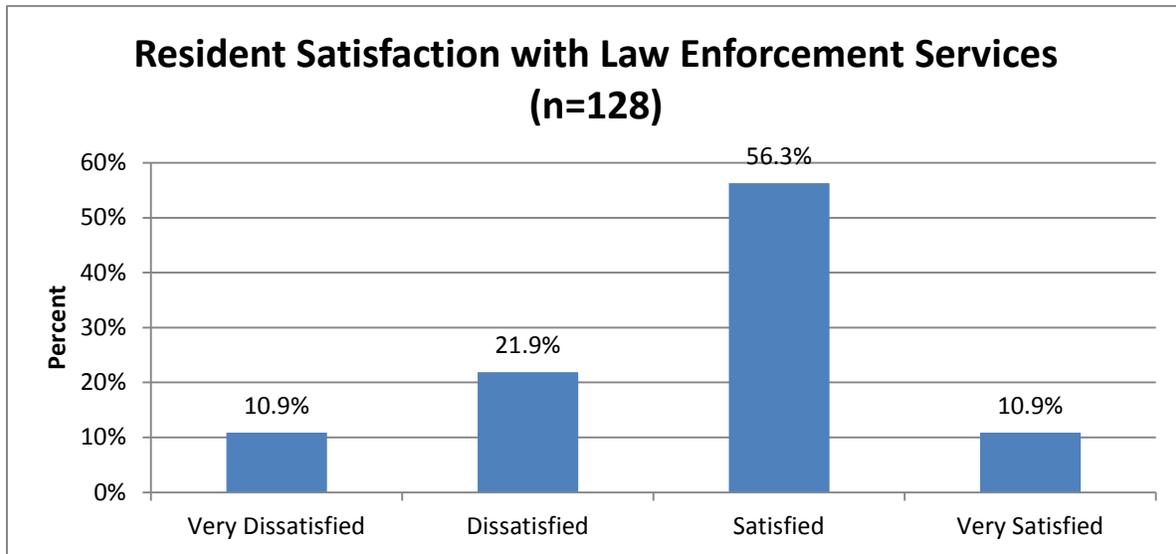
The next question asked respondents how long they had lived in the Jefferson Avenue community. Of the 139 respondents, 24.5% had lived in the area two years or less, 39.6% reported living in the area five years or less, and a little over half of the respondents (53.2%) reported living in the area 10 years or less. This graph shows a bimodal distribution, meaning that there are two peaks. In this case there are a large number of people who have lived in the neighborhood for less than two years and a large number of people who have lived in the neighborhood for 31 years or longer.



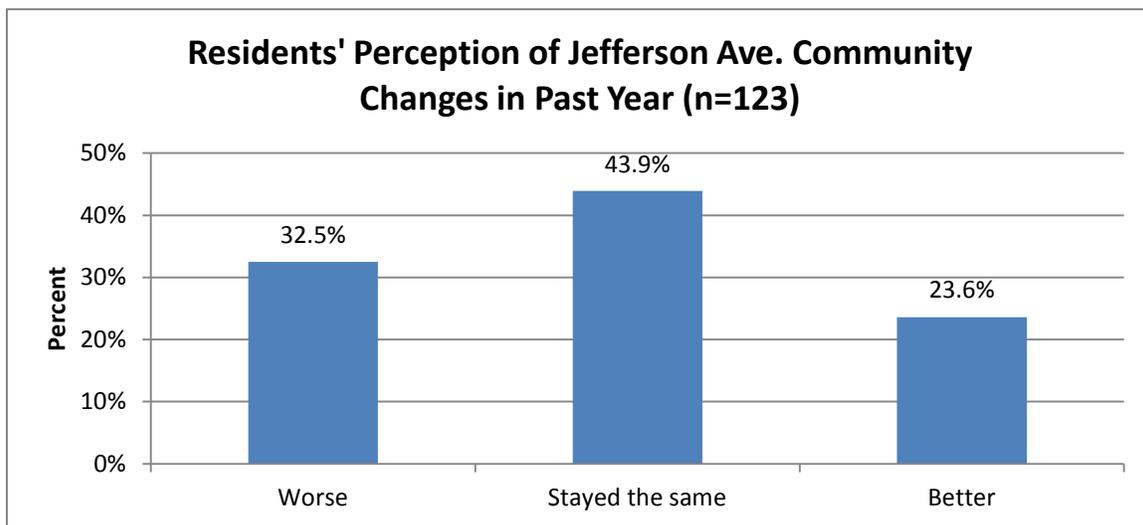
The next question asked residents how likely they were to be living in the Jefferson Avenue community in two years' time. Responses were taken on a three point scale consisting of the responses 'not likely', 'unsure', and 'likely'. Of the 131 residents who responded to this question, 54.2% stated that they were likely to be in the area in two years, 15.3% responded that they were unsure, and 30.5% reported that it was not likely that they would be in the area in two years.



The next question asked respondents how satisfied they were with the services offered to them by law enforcement officers. Most respondents answered the question (128), with 55.3% of respondents reporting that they were satisfied with the quality of service given to them by law enforcement officers, and 10.9% reported that they were very satisfied. That being said, there were still some respondents who were dissatisfied (21.9%) or very dissatisfied (10.9%) with the services provided to them. Many of those who voiced dissatisfaction cited long response times, police attitudes, and a feeling of a lack of police presence as the reason for their low rating.



The next question asked respondents if they felt the neighborhood had changed over the past year, and if it had changed for the better or for the worse. A good number of people (43.9%) in the Jefferson Avenue community felt that the neighborhood stayed the same over the course of the year. Of those surveyed, only 23.6% felt that the neighborhood had changed for the better.



The next question asked residents to list the one thing they liked most in the Jefferson Avenue community. This question was open-ended, meaning that the residents were not limited as to what they could respond. For the few residents who listed multiple responses, the first response was chosen. Most respondents reported that they feel that the people and/or the community is nice (39.8%), and that they felt the neighborhood was quiet or peaceful (21.1%). A number of respondents stated that they liked the area for the convenient location (10.2%), or enjoyed the kids in the neighborhood (5.5%). The remaining responses are depicted in the graphic below.

Jefferson Avenue Community Values

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Nice People/Community	51	39.8
	Quiet/ Peaceful Most of the Time	27	21.1
	Convenient location	13	10.2
	Kids	7	5.5
	Everything	6	4.7
	The Park	4	3.1
	Schools	3	2.3
	Community is active	3	2.3
	Police	2	1.6
	Church(es)	2	1.6
	Decreasing Crime Rates	2	1.6
	Lots of Homeowners	2	1.6
	House	2	1.6
	Lived there a long time	1	.8
	Clean	1	.8
	Affordable	1	.8
	Community/Rec Center	1	.8
	Total	128	100.0
Missing	-99.00	12	
Total		140	

The next question asked respondents to list three concerns they had for the Jefferson Avenue community in ranked order. The highest concerns listed by the Jefferson Avenue community will be discussed first.

For the residents' highest listed concerns, 17.9 % reported that they were concerned with drugs in the area, 15.2% reported that they were concerned with violence, and 14.3% reported that they were concerned with general or increasing crime rates. Twenty-eight respondents (20.0% of those surveyed) reported that they had no concerns whatsoever.

Greatest Concerns for Jefferson Avenue Residents

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Drugs	20	17.9
	Violence	17	15.2
	General Crime rates/Increasing crime rates	16	14.3
	Speeding	10	8.9
	Noise	9	8.0
	Disrespectful Youth	6	5.4
	Gun violence	5	4.5
	Unsupervised Young People/Loitering	4	3.6
	Car Traffic	3	2.7
	Burglary	2	1.8
	Lack of police presence	2	1.8
	Safety	2	1.8
	Failing/Closing Schools	2	1.8
	Housing Issues/Vacant Lots	2	1.8
	People in area	1	.9
	Aggressive Policing/Harassment	1	.9
	Neighborhood Cleanliness	1	.9
	Poverty	1	.9
	Prostitution	1	.9
	Dogs	1	.9
	Camera Surveillance	1	.9
	Curfew	1	.9
	Lack of Businesses	1	.9
	Dogs	1	.9
	Lack of Youth Activities	1	.9
	People not doing the right thing	1	.9
	Total	112	100.0
Missing	-99.00	28	
Total		140	

Of the residents who reported a second highest concern 22.4% reported that they were concerned with drugs, 22.4% reported that they were concerned with violence and 10.5% reported that they were concerned with lack of police presence in the Jefferson Avenue area. Evidently, respondent's second-highest concerns were similar to their highest concerns, probably just varying in rank across people. Because of the ranking system in the survey, those respondents who left only one concern, captured in the previous graph, were reported as having no second highest or third highest concern. These individuals were also coded as 'none', and were excluded from the table below.

Second Greatest Concerns for Jefferson Avenue Residents

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Drugs	17	22.4
	Violence	17	22.4
	Lack of police presence	8	10.5
	Unsupervised Young People/Loitering	3	3.9
	Neighborhood Cleanliness	3	3.9
	Lack of Youth Activities	3	3.9
	Burglary	2	2.6
	Poverty	2	2.6
	Prostitution	2	2.6
	Housing Issues/Vacant Lots	2	2.6
	Slumlords/Absentee Landlords	2	2.6
	Car Traffic	2	2.6
	Speeding	2	2.6
	Lack of Social Cohesion	2	2.6
	Gangs	1	1.3
	Safety	1	1.3
	Noise	1	1.3
	Disrespectful Youth	1	1.3
	General Crime rates/Increasing crime rates	1	1.3
	People not doing the right thing	1	1.3
	Outsiders	1	1.3
Gun violence	1	1.3	
The Bar	1	1.3	
Total	76	100.0	
Missing	-99.00	64	
Total		140	

Only 27.9% of respondents reported a third concern. These are listed in the table below; 101 (72.1% of respondents) did not report a third concern, and were thus excluded from the table below.

Third Greatest Concerns for Jefferson Avenue Residents

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Violence	5	12.8
	Speeding	5	12.8
	General Crime rates/Increasing crime rates	3	7.7
	Lack of Youth Activities	3	7.7
	Burglary	2	5.1
	Drugs	2	5.1
	Unsupervised Young People/Loitering	2	5.1
	Neighborhood Cleanliness	2	5.1
	Noise	2	5.1
	Gun violence	2	5.1
	Safety	1	2.6
	Prostitution	1	2.6
	Failing/Closing Schools	1	2.6
	Housing Issues/Vacant Lots	1	2.6
	Car Traffic	1	2.6
	Disrespectful Youth	1	2.6
	Lack of Social Cohesion	1	2.6
	Lack of Buisnesses	1	2.6
	Failure of Gov't Agencies	1	2.6
	No Jobs	1	2.6
	Outsiders	1	2.6
	Total	39	100.0
Missing	-99.00	101	
Total		140	

The next question asked respondents if there were any specific requests to be executed in the Jefferson Avenue community. A total of 92 requests were made, with the most frequent request being increased community and resident involvement (21.7%), requests for the creation of or greater involvement in the community watch program (14.1%), and requests for members of the community to report all problems to the police (13.0%). The remainders of the residents' responses are listed on the table below.

Requests from Jefferson Avenue Community

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Community/Resident involvement	20	21.7
	Community Watch	13	14.1
	Report Problems to Police	12	13.0
	Recreational Activities/Jobs for Youth	8	8.7
	More parental involvement	6	6.5
	More Police Effort/Persence	5	5.4
	People more Respectful	5	5.4
	Traffic/Roadways	3	3.3
	Community Meetings	3	3.3
	More Police	2	2.2
	Garbage on streets	2	2.2
	Housing/ Maintenance	2	2.2
	Drug Rehab	2	2.2
	Speed Bumps	2	2.2
	Community policing	1	1.1
	Garden/Park	1	1.1
	Bring in Buisness	1	1.1
	Screen Tenants	1	1.1
	Talk to kids in area	1	1.1
	Improving Community Activites	1	1.1
People keep to themselves	1	1.1	
Total	92	100.0	
Missing	-99.00	48	
Total		140	

The next question asked respondents if they had anything specific to tell the police. Because this question was open-ended, it is difficult to accurately quantify the majority of these statements. However, these anecdotes can provide interesting insight into how the members of the Jefferson Avenue community think and feel about police, crime, community, and quality of life issues in their neighborhood.

With regard to specific statements for police, 76 of the 140 residents left a response. Of those, five reported specific crimes or criminal behaviors. Those reports were kept confidential and have been provided to the Rochester Police Department. A number of respondents felt that the police did a good job responding to and handling requests for service from the community, but also felt that the police should have a more visible presence in the neighborhood, and that police response times and demeanor towards residents could be improved.

Bivariate Analysis

Bivariate Analysis is the analysis of the relationship between two variables. By using a crosstab, it is possible to examine subsets of the population surveyed and the relationship between variables such as how long respondents have lived in the neighborhood, how happy respondents are within the neighborhood, if respondents own or rent, and if respondents believe they will be living in the area within two years. Spearman Correlations were also run alongside the crosstabs to determine the nature and significance of any observed relationships. It should be noted that a Chi-square test was run on each crosstab, with results discussed below.

There were no significant relationships between:

- how long residents lived in the neighborhood and how happy they were
- whether they owned or rented and how happy they were
- whether they owned or rented and how likely they would be living in the area in two years
- how many years they have lived in the neighborhood and their satisfaction with police
- whether they owned or rented and their satisfaction with police
- how many years they lived in the neighborhood and whether they think it has gotten better or worse
- how satisfied they were with the police and how likely they felt they were to be living in the neighborhood in 2 years

As shown in the table below, there was a significant relationship between how long respondents had lived in the neighborhood and how likely they thought they were to be living there in two years. As would be expected, those who had lived there longer were more likely to expect to be living there in two years. Over half of those who had been there less than two years felt they were unlikely to still be living there.

		% of those who lived in the neighborhood for...						% out of all respondents
		Less than 2 years	3 to 5 years	6 to 10 years	11 to 20 years	21 to 30 years	31 years or longer	
How likely they were to be living in the neighborhood in 2 years	Not likely	54.5%	23.8%	35.3%	18.8%	20.0%	17.2%	30.5%
	Unsure	15.2%	28.6%	17.6%	25.0%	6.7%	3.4%	15.3%
	Likely	30.3%	47.6%	47.1%	56.3%	73.3%	79.3%	54.2%

Chi square = 24.694 (10), $p < .01$; Contingency Coefficient = 0.398, $p < .01$

All three of those who were staying with a friend or family member felt the neighborhood had gotten better over the past two years. Owners and renters responded similarly, with owners a little more likely to feel the neighborhood had gotten worse.

		% of those who...			% out of all respondents
		Stay with a friend or family member	Rent	Own	
Over the past year, would you say the neighborhood has gotten...	Worse	0.0%	31.4%	36.0%	32.5%
	Stayed the same	0.0%	48.6%	40.0%	43.9%
	Better	100.0%	20.0%	24.0%	23.6%

Chi square = 10.841 (4), $p < .05$; Contingency Coefficient = .285, $p < 0.05$

There was a strong relationship between how happy people were living in the neighborhood and how satisfied they were with the police. Generally, those who were happy living there were also satisfied with the police. That said, even among those who were very unhappy, half were either satisfied or very satisfied with the police.

		% of those who were...				% of all respondents
		Very Unhappy	Unhappy	Happy	Very Happy	
Satisfaction with the police	Very dissatisfied	25.0%	0.0%	10.3%	15.0%	11.0%
	Dissatisfied	25.0%	47.8%	13.2%	20.0%	22.0%
	Satisfied	37.5%	47.8%	67.6%	40.0%	55.9%
	Very satisfied	12.5%	4.3%	8.8%	25.0%	11.0%

Chi square = 23.743 (9), $p < .01$; Contingency Coefficient = 0.397, $p < 0.01$

The next table shows the inverse of this; that is, that people who were satisfied with the police also tended to be happier living in the neighborhood. However it is also of interest to report that 50 percent of people who were very dissatisfied with police still reported that they were happy living in this neighborhood.

		% of those with satisfaction level with the Police				Total
		Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	
How happy are you living in this neighborhood?	Very Unhappy	28.6%	14.3%	8.5%	14.3%	12.6%
	Unhappy	0.0%	39.3%	15.5%	7.1%	18.1%
	Happy	50.0%	32.1%	64.8%	42.9%	53.5%
	Very Happy	21.4%	14.3%	11.3%	35.7%	15.7%

Chi square = 24.743 (9), p < .01; Contingency Coefficient = 0.397, p < .00

There was a significant relationship showing that people who were very unhappy were less likely to be living in the area in two years. Similarly, people who reported that they were very happy were more likely to be living in the neighborhood in two years. However it is also interesting to note that a good amount of people who reported being very unhappy also reported that they were likely to be living in the neighborhood in two years' time.

		% of those who were...				% out of all respondents
		Very Unhappy	Unhappy	Happy	Very Happy	
How likely they were to be living in the area in 2 years	Not Likely	50.0%	43.5%	26.8%	14.3%	30.5%
	Unsure	6.3%	21.7%	16.9%	9.5%	15.3%
	Likely	43.8%	34.8%	56.3%	76.2%	54.2%

Chi square = 11.312 (6), p < 0.1; Contingency Coefficient = 0.282, p < .08

People who reported that they were very unhappy were more likely to think that the neighborhood has gotten worse over the past year. No one that reported being very unhappy felt that the neighborhood has gotten better. People who reported being happy or very happy were more likely to report that the neighborhood has gotten better or stayed the same.

		How happy are you living in this neighborhood?				% out of all respondents
		Very Unhappy	Unhappy	Happy	Very Happy	
Over the past year, would you say that the neighborhood has gotten ...	Worse	66.7%	47.8%	27.7%	5.3%	32.8%
	Stayed the same	33.3%	39.1%	44.6%	57.9%	44.3%
	Better	0.0%	13.0%	27.7%	36.8%	23.0%

Chi square = 19.744 (6), p < .01; Contingency Coefficient = .373, p < .005

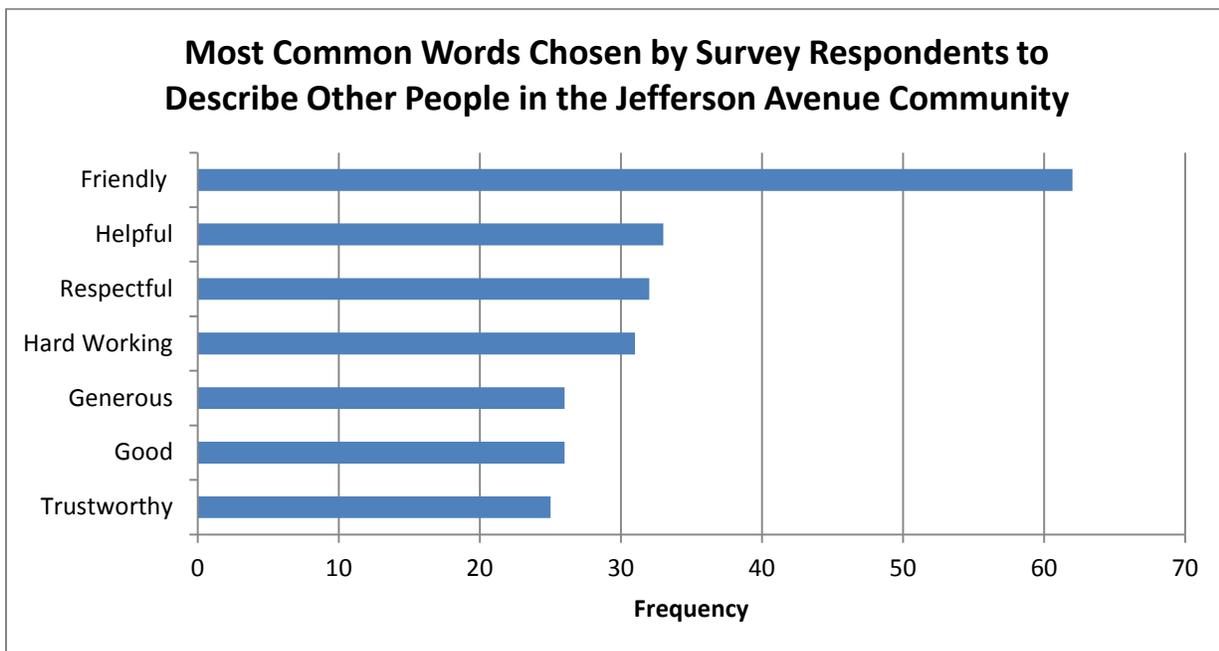
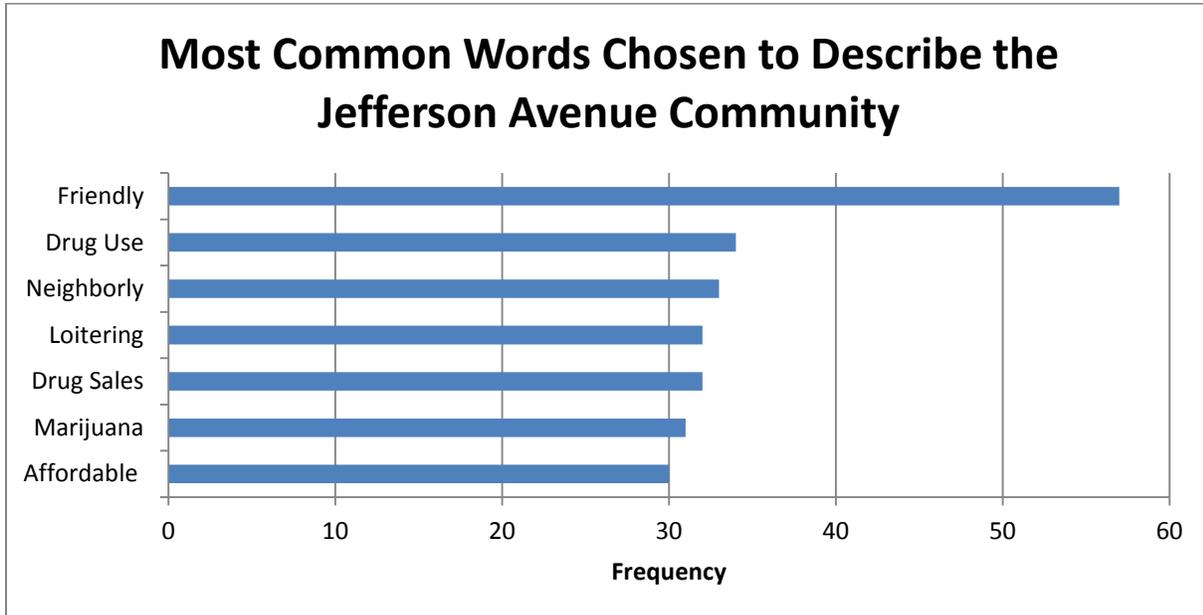
A majority (57.7%) of people who reported being dissatisfied with the police also reported that the neighborhood has gotten worse over the past year. Also, of the people who reported being dissatisfied with the police, none of them reported that the neighborhood has gotten better. 25% of people who reported being very satisfied with police as well as 25% of people who reported being very dissatisfied also reported that the neighborhood got better. Overall, most people felt that the neighborhood stayed the same over the past year.

		Percentages out of those who were...				Total
		Very Dissatisfied with police	Dissatisfied with police	Satisfied with police	Very Satisfied with police	
Over the past year, would you say that the neighborhood has gotten...	Worse	33.3%	57.7%	26.6%	16.7%	33.3%
	Stayed the same	41.7%	42.3%	42.2%	58.3%	43.9%
	Better	25.0%	0.0%	31.3%	25.0%	22.8%

Chi square = 15.131 (6), p < .05; Contingency Coefficient = 0.342, p < .05

Adjective Checklists

The final portion of the survey asked respondents to circle all the words or phrases that best describe their community and the people in it. Some examples of the words/phrases respondents could choose from were friendly, positive, exciting, full of strangers, dangerous, happy, good for kids, respectful, mean, responsible, and so on. The words with the highest frequency are shown in the charts below. Overall, people chose positive words to describe their neighborhood and the people in their neighborhood, though there are clear concerns about drugs in the area.



Conclusion

Most Jefferson Avenue residents were happy living in the neighborhood. Over half were renters. As such, there is some degree of mobility in the neighborhood, with nearly 40% of residents surveyed having lived in the neighborhood for less than five years, though about a third lived there more than 20 years. Most residents felt they would be likely to stay in the area, though, interestingly, home owners were not significantly more likely to believe they would be staying in the area than renters.

Over two thirds of survey respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with law enforcement. Those who were happier living in the neighborhood tended to be more satisfied with the police and to think the neighborhood has improved in the last year. On the other hand, people who felt that the neighborhood has gotten worse tended to be less satisfied with the police. This may be indicative of many of the concerns about crimes and violence in the neighborhood.

Nonetheless, residents did indicate concerns about their neighborhood. About a third felt it had gotten worse in the last year. Many residents were concerned about drugs, violence, and crime in the area, with some specifying gun violence and burglary as concerns. Residents wanted to encourage each other to be more involved in the community, particularly in the neighborhood watch and in reporting crimes to the police.

Overall, Jefferson Avenue residents surveyed in July 2014 felt their neighbors were nice, that the area was quiet most of the time, and that the location was peaceful. Most were happy living in the area and were satisfied with police, but they did express numerous concerns around violence, drugs, general crime, and concerns for youth in the area.

Questions remain as to how the community can or already is organizing to address some of these issues around violence and crime. It would be interesting to know how various community organizations in addition to law enforcement are targeting this area for prevention, deterrence, and social service efforts. It would be interesting to see how the positive attributes of the neighborhood could be built upon to reach these goals. We would also like to explore what it is exactly that makes residents of Jefferson Avenue either satisfied or unsatisfied with police services. More discussions would need to be had with Jefferson Avenue residents to understand the data from this survey more thoroughly.