

REFRESH NEIGHBORHOOD DATA PROJECT

HOUSING+NEIGHBORHOODS

From summer 2017 to winter 2018, Broad Community Connections (BCC) led a community-based participatory research study to collect information on the health, wellbeing, wants and needs of residents living near the ReFresh Project. The below information is a synthesis of data regarding peoples' housing situations and feelings about their neighborhood collected from 200 door-to-door surveys with adult residents, all living within one-square mile of the ReFresh Project at 300 N Broad Street in New Orleans. The survey area covered parts of the Tremé-Lafitte, Tulane-Gravier, Mid-City, and Bayou St. John neighborhoods. BCC also conducted focus groups with key resident demographic groups to augment survey findings.



ReFresh
PROJECT

The ReFresh Project is a community health hub and collaborative of cross-sector partners working to achieve health equity in New Orleans neighborhoods along North Broad Street. Through health education programming, community engagement, data collection, information sharing, and systems-change advocacy, we work to ensure that all local residents have the tools, education and supports needed to be healthy and happy.

CHANGING NEIGHBORHOODS

It is no secret that the demographics of neighborhoods surrounding the ReFresh Project have drastically changed since Hurricane Katrina. For a host of reasons – many of which are rooted in historical and modern-day racist policies and practices – these areas have seen a steady decrease in Black residents and an increase in more affluent white residents over the past decade. For example, the U.S. Census and American Community Survey shows the historic Treme-Lafitte neighborhood as 92% African American in 2000, whereas 2012–2016 estimates show the neighborhood at only 64% African American.

The Katrina recovery effort also brought a wave of new low-income Latinx individuals and families to the city, many of whom continue to live in neighborhoods bordering the ReFresh Project. In addition to these shifting demographics, the lack of wage growth in New Orleans, the proliferation of whole home short term rentals, lack of real incentives for affordable housing development, and more, have resulted in a housing crisis with communities of color bearing the brunt of housing instability and displacement. With the ReFresh Neighborhood Data Project, we sought to better understand who currently lives in these neighborhoods, how and if they interact with their neighbors, their financial ability to afford housing, and their desire or lack thereof to remain in their neighborhood. The ReFresh Project also asked survey respondents about changes they would like to see to the built environment, as well as additional services and businesses they want in the neighborhood.



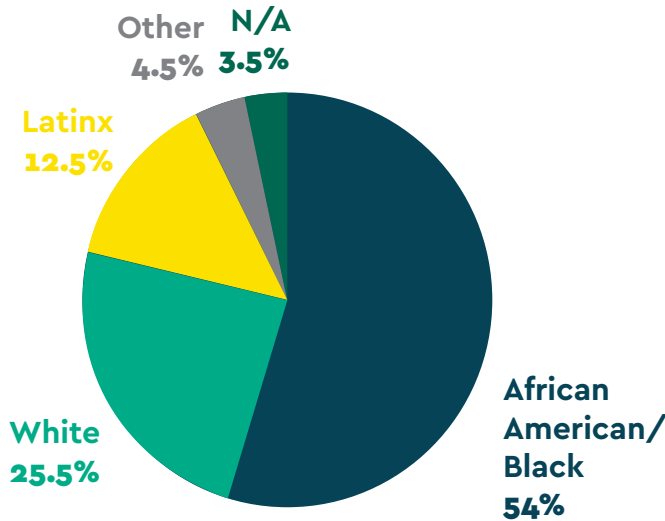
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GENERAL DEMOGRAPHICS

ReFresh neighborhoods are generally home to a diverse mix of older Black or African American* adults with deep roots in the neighborhood, young and childless white adults new to the neighborhood, and young Latinx** immigrant families.

RACE + ETHNICITY

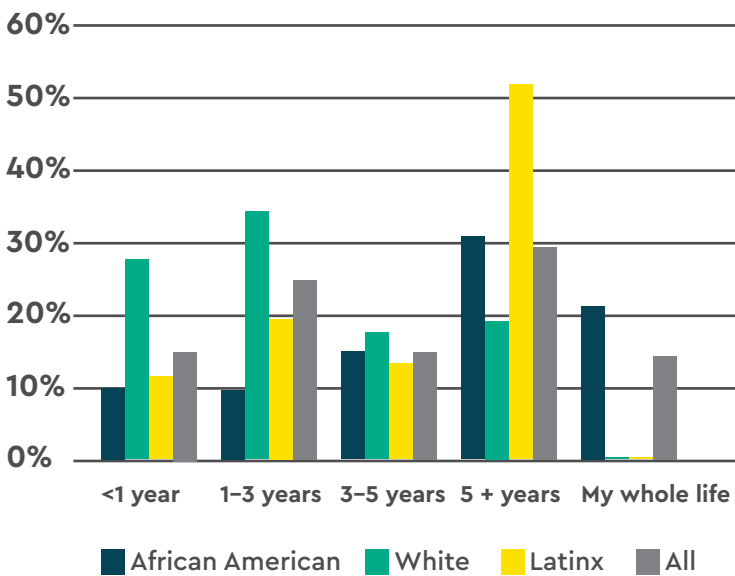


The majority of survey respondents identified as Black (54%), followed by white (25.5%) and Latinx (12.5%), respectively. Approximately 4.5% of survey respondents identified as Native American, Asian, or multi-racial, shown here as "Other". A separate 3.5% of participant responses (seven people total) did not identify as a discernable race or ethnicity. In an effort to make our graphs readable, we do not show outcomes for "Other" or for respondents who did not identify as any race or ethnicity in the remainder of this brief. If interested in this data, please contact ReFresh.

*The survey asked residents to identify their race from a list of options taken from the U.S. Census Bureau. One option was "Black or African American." For the sake of brevity and the desire to be inclusive of people of African descent from countries other than the United States, the term "Black" is used for the remainder of this brief when referencing residents who chose this option.

** "Latinx" is a gender-neutral term sometimes used in lieu of "Latino" or "Latina". For the purposes of this brief, "Latinx" is used to describe the residents who responded "Yes" to the survey question "Do you consider yourself Latino?".

HOW LONG HAVE YOU LIVED IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD?



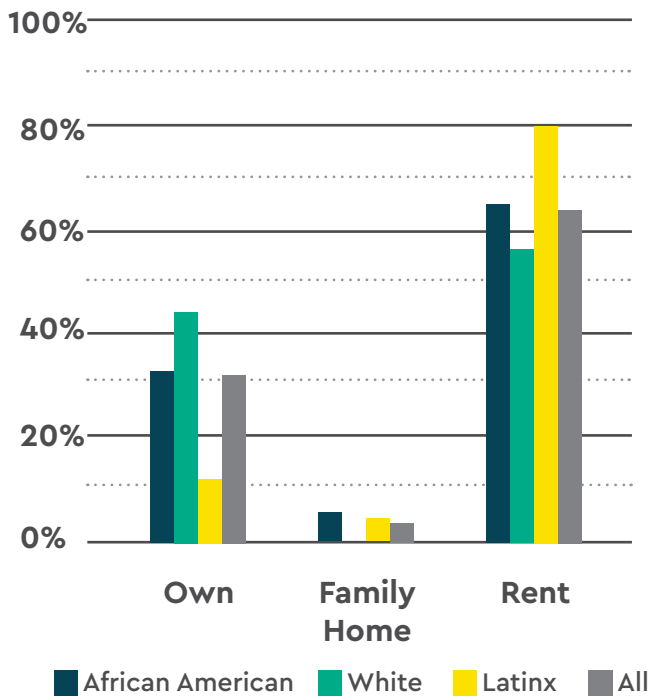
Black residents have the deepest roots in the ReFresh neighborhoods, followed by Latinxs, then white residents. Fifty-four percent of Black respondents had lived in the neighborhood for at least five years, with 22% having lived in the neighborhood their whole life or "close to it". Fifty-two percent of Latinx respondents had lived in the neighborhood for five years or more, yet none had lived there for their whole life. No white respondents had lived in the neighborhood their whole lives, and 81% had moved into the neighborhood within the past five years.



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DO YOU RENT OR OWN THIS HOME?



The majority of respondents in each racial and ethnic group rented their home. Despite being the newest group to ReFresh neighborhoods, white respondents led other racial and ethnic groups in homeownership at 43%. Of Black residents, 32% owned their home or lived in a family-owned home, followed by 16% of Latinx respondents. In follow-up focus group discussions, many Black homeowners reported owning their homes for a long time with some living in homes passed from generation to generation.



ReFresh Neighborhood Data Project

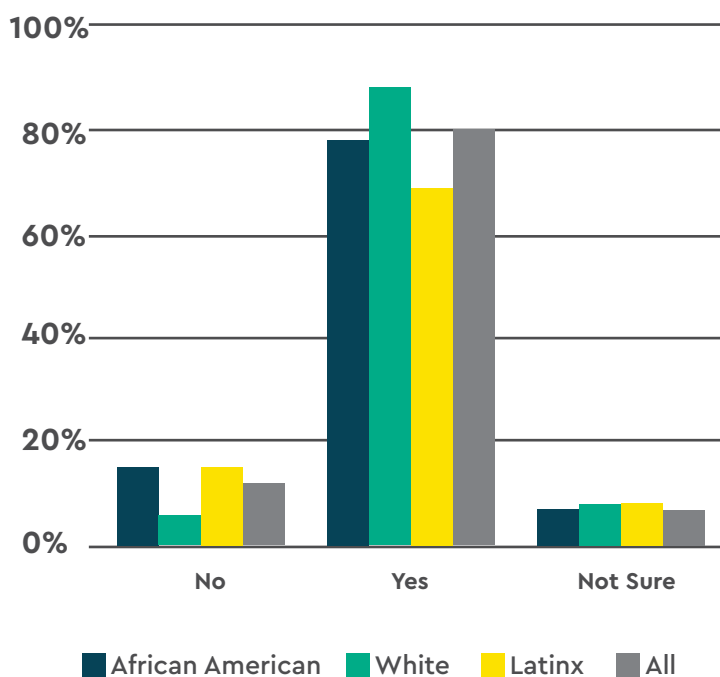
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HOUSING AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

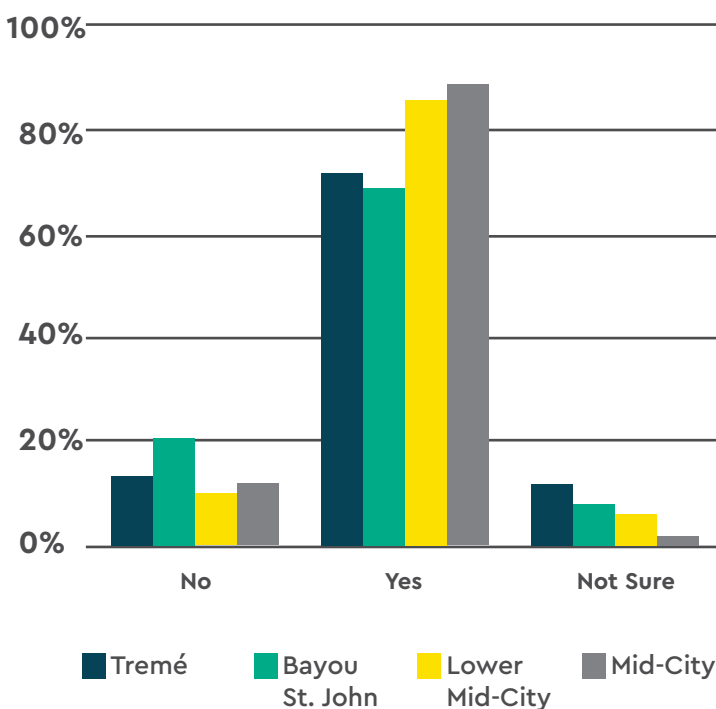
When asked, the majority of people surveyed across racial and ethnic groups stated a desire to stay in their neighborhood. Many residents were, however, concerned about rising costs for renters and homeowners. While most respondents socialized with people who live on their street, people of all races and ethnicities reported wanting to engage more with their neighbors across difference but felt discouraged in doing so and that others may not want to engage with them. Most respondents were concerned about the infrastructure in their neighborhood, and many wanted more places to buy groceries nearby and more recreational opportunities for youth.

DO YOU WANT TO CONTINUE LIVING IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD?

BY RACE + ETHNICITY



BY NEIGHBORHOOD



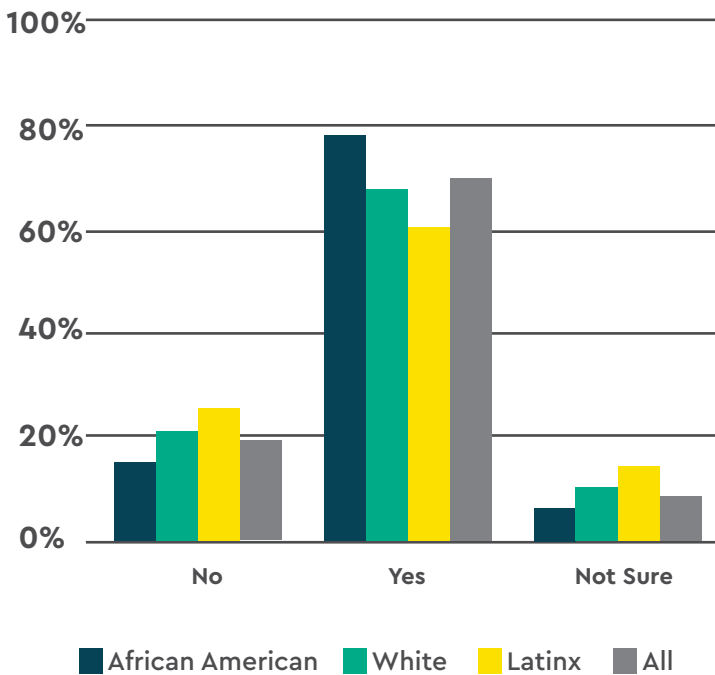
The majority of respondents across all races and ethnicities reported wanting to stay in their current neighborhood; 86% of white respondents, 79% of Black respondents, and 76% of Latinx respondents shared this sentiment. Of neighborhoods where surveyors collected responses, 87% of respondents in Mid-City wanted to stay in their neighborhood, followed by 84% in Lower Mid-City, 74% in Tremé, and 71% in Bayou St. John. Twenty percent of respondents in Bayou St. John reported not wanting to stay in their neighborhood, the highest "No" response rate of any neighborhood.



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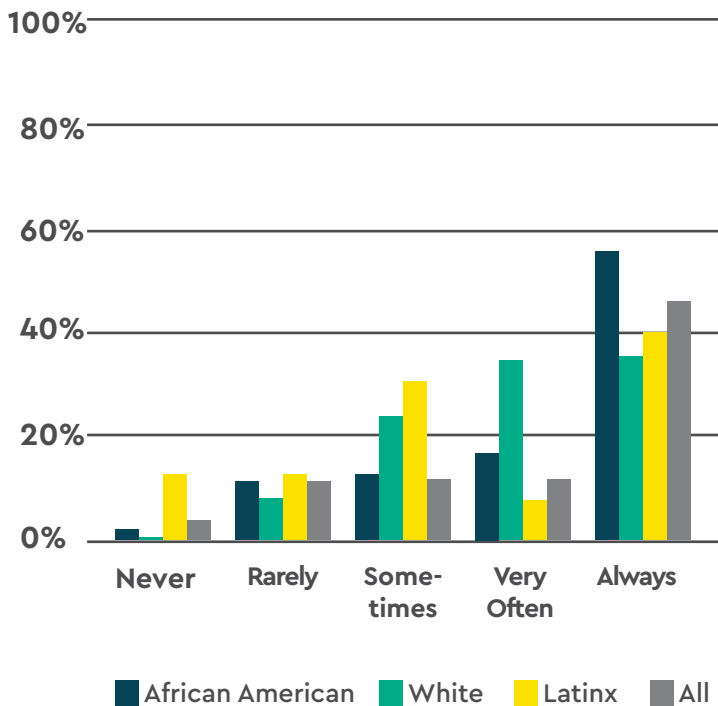
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COULD YOU AFFORD TO STAY IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD FOR FIVE MORE YEARS?



Black survey respondents were the most confident of any racial or ethnic group that they would be able to live in the neighborhood for the next five years at 78%. This is in comparison to 67% of white respondents and only 60% of Latinx respondents feeling confident they could stay. In follow up focus groups, Black participants living in subsidized housing stated that they felt insulated from rising rents and other housing affordability issues, therefore confident in their ability to stay in the neighborhood. Many Black seniors who owned their homes, however, cited concerns over rising property taxes, the cost of flood insurance, and other costs that made it difficult to maintain and keep their home while on a fixed income. Many also told stories of long-time renters they knew who had recently been pushed out of their homes because the owners wanted to sell. Respondents from all races and ethnicities reported concerns over rising housing costs, citing these as factors that may eventually push them out of the neighborhood.

HOW REGULARLY DO YOU STOP AND TALK TO PEOPLE IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?



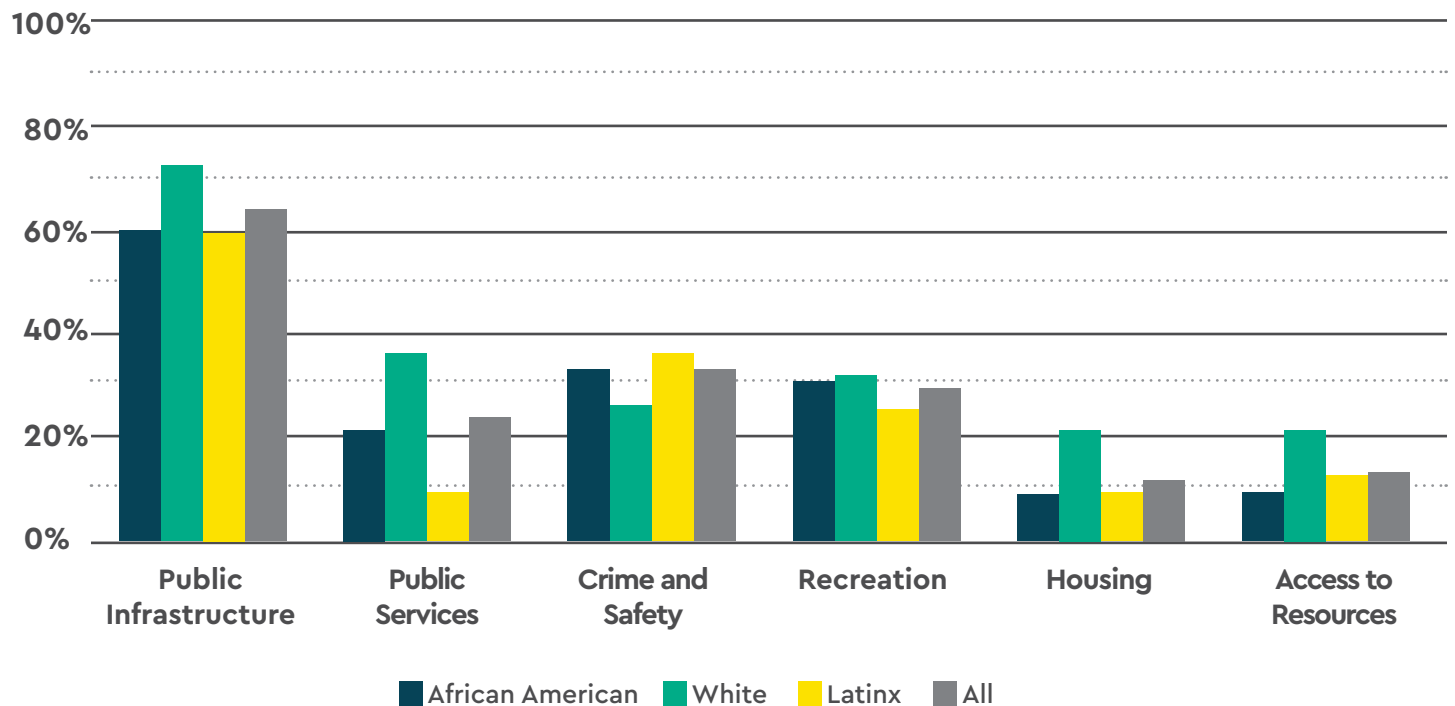
When asked how regularly they stop and talk with their neighbors, 72% of Black respondents and 69% of white respondents responded "Always" or "Very often". Only 48% of Latinx respondents answered this way, and 24% responded "Rarely" or "Never". In focus group discussions, a number of Black participants said that they missed the sense of community they felt before Katrina. Many also stated that they try to start conversations with new neighbors, but stop trying to engage if they feel their efforts are not reciprocated. In the focus group with mostly young white professionals, participants stated a desire to be on friendly terms with their neighbors but did not want to seem pushy by initiating conversations or unintentionally invade people's space.



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WHAT CHANGES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD THAT WOULD MAKE IT EASIER FOR YOU TO LIVE A HEALTHY AND HAPPY LIFE?



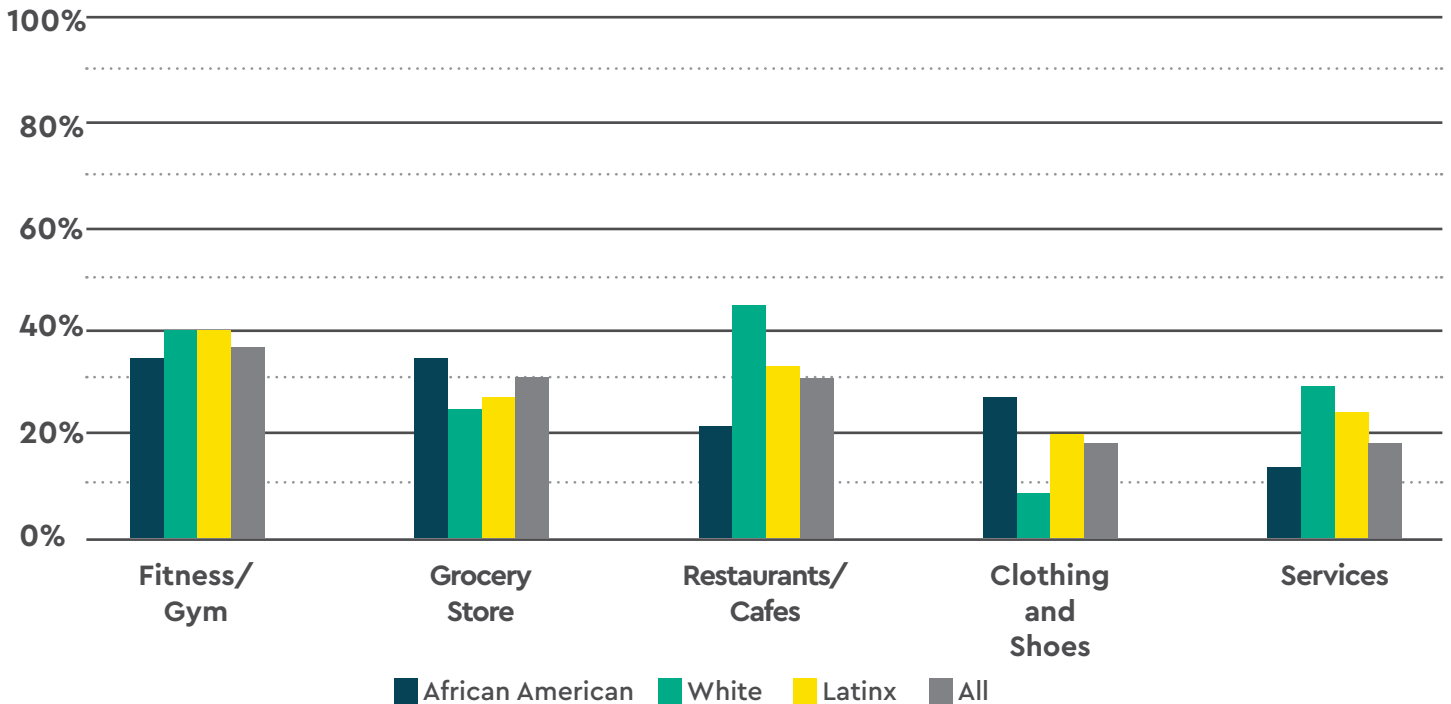
When asked what changes they would like to see in the neighborhood to make it easier to live a happy life, 63% of all people surveyed stated "Public infrastructure." This was also the number one answer across all racial and ethnic groups surveyed. It is important to note that the street flooding of July and August 2017 affected these neighborhoods and happened during the time when surveys were being collected, potentially influencing peoples' responses. For both Black and Latinx respondents, the most popular answers after "Public infrastructure" were "Crime and safety" and "More recreation," respectively. For white respondents, the second most popular answer was "Public services" followed by "More recreation."



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WHAT ARE THE TOP THREE TYPES OF BUSINESSES YOU WANT TO SEE COME INTO YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?



When asked about the top three types of businesses they would like to see come into the neighborhood, the most popular answers for all respondents were Fitness/Gym, Grocery Store, and Restaurants/Cafes. For Black respondents, Fitness/Gym and Grocery Store were tied for the most popular option with Clothing/Shoes coming in second. Black focus group participants showed a strong desire to bring back old style corner stores that were once located inside the neighborhood, though they did not want the stores to sell alcohol. For Latinx residents, Fitness/Gym was the most popular option followed by Restaurants/Cafes and Grocery Store, respectively. For white respondents, Restaurants/Cafes was the most popular option followed by Fitness/Gym second and Services third. All groups (with the exception of childless white respondents), stated a strong desire for more recreation opportunities for youth and places for young people to hang out.



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