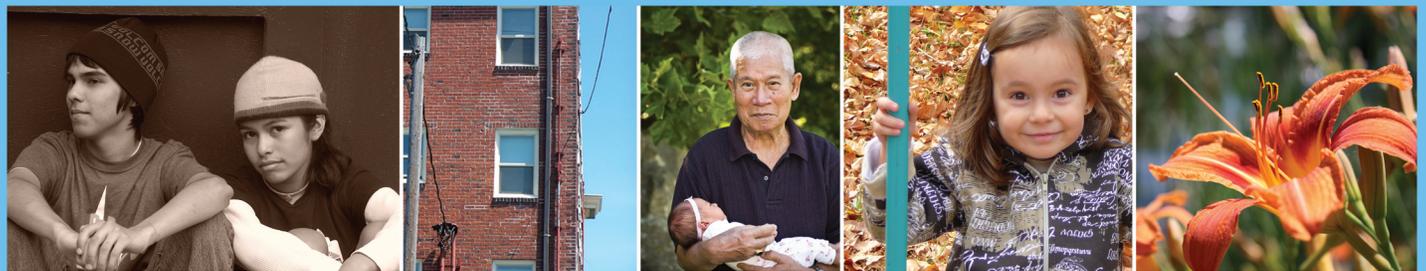


What was heard



Residents' Thoughts on
Revitalizing Alexandra Park

December 2008

Navjeet Sidhu

Community Social Planning Council of Toronto

For additional copies contact:

Community Social Planning Council of Toronto

2 Carlton St., Suite 1001

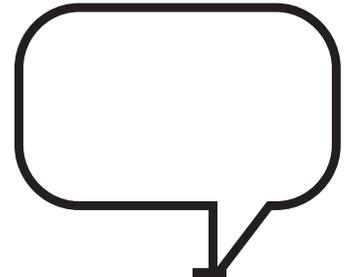
Toronto, ON M5B 1J3

info@socialplanningtoronto.org

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What was heard

Residents' Thoughts on Revitalizing Alexandra Park

December 2008

Navjeet Sidhu



**Atkinson
Housing
Co-operative**



TORONTO



**United Way
Greater Toronto**



**COMMUNITY
SOCIAL PLANNING
COUNCIL OF TORONTO**

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**Toronto
Community
Housing**

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- Alexandra Park Residents Association
- Atkinson Housing Cooperative
- City of Toronto - Office of Councillor Adam Vaughan
- City of Toronto - Social Development, Finance and Administration
- Cooperative Housing Federation of Toronto
- Residents of the Alexandra Park Community
- Toronto District School Board Trustee Chris Bolton
- Toronto Community Housing Corporation

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Lastly, a very special thank to all the residents of Alexandra Park who participated in our survey and in our focus groups. Your input and continued cooperation are greatly appreciated.

Executive Summary

The Alexandra Park neighbourhood, located in the south west corner of downtown Toronto, is home to over 2,000 residents, and consists of both the Atkinson Housing Co-operative and two Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) buildings. It is a culturally diverse community and one in which a majority of the residents live on a fixed income.

Recently, through discussions involving the City of Toronto and TCHC, the Alexandra Park community has begun development of a revitalization plan in order to improve conditions in the neighbourhood. The Alexandra Park Visioning Committee, consisting of key stakeholders and neighbourhood residents, was formed to help guide this process.

In order to find out what changes Alexandra Park residents wanted to see in their neighbourhood, the Visioning Committee enlisted the help of the Community Social Planning Council of Toronto (CSPC-T) to help conduct a survey of neighbourhood residents and facilitate subsequent focus groups.

Resident Survey

Residents of the community were hired and trained to conduct the survey and interview their fellow residents. The survey phase began in January of 2008 and ended in May 2008. A total of 386 residents participated in the survey, representing nearly 48% of the total number of Alexandra Park households.

The following are some of the key survey findings grouped into categories:

Neighbourhood Satisfaction

- 48% of the respondents indicated that **in the past two years the neighbourhood has changed for the better**. 20.6% said that it had changed for the worse while 31.4% said that it has stayed the same.
- Overall a **majority of respondents were very satisfied with their neighbourhood**, saying that it was a good place to live and a good place to raise children.

- What people enjoyed most about their community was its **convenient downtown location with easy access to many services and programs**. They also enjoyed the cultural diversity of the neighbourhood, and stated that generally the people in the area were very friendly and willing to help one another.
- Although residents expressed satisfaction with their neighbourhood, they did however raise **many common issues and concerns** they felt needed to be promptly addressed.

These critical areas of improvement include:

- » A general cleanup of the neighbourhood and the creation of more green space
- » Residential units need to be renovated and repaired
- » The local community centre needs to be expanded, and more programs for children and youth are desired.
- » The co-op board needs to better represent the community, effectively respond to their needs, and improve their overall communication and relations with residents.
- » Increased safety and security in the neighbourhood and crime reduction are common demands from many residents. However, many residents are also concerned that police and security frequently harass neighbourhood residents, particularly youth.

Access to Services & Safety

- The majority of respondents were **very satisfied with their access** to public transportation, recreational services, good and services, and community and health services in the neighbourhood.
- In general, people felt their neighbourhood was a **safe place to live**. More than half (55%), thought their neighbourhood has been getting more safe over the last few years. However, women respondents (35%) were more likely to report feeling less safe walking alone at night compared to male respondents (14%).

Connection Among Residents

- Residents expressed a **strong sense of connection with their fellow neighbours**. Nearly half (49.5%) reported that they spoke to their neighbours every day or almost every day.
- A majority of respondents also indicated that people in the neighbourhood generally got along with each other and were **willing to help one another if needed**.

Local Leadership Capacity

- 61.5% of respondents said that **there were people or organizations they could go to for help** to solve problems in the community. People identified workers and volunteers at community centres, local community service agencies and organizations, co-op and building management, and family and friends as those they could count on to resolve any neighbourhood problems.
- Emphasizing their commitment to the community, respondents strongly felt that **improving their neighbourhood was not a waste of time**. Demonstrating a strong sense of resident empowerment, 65.4% of respondents agreed that residents are capable of solving problems in the neighbourhood on their own.

Civic Participation

- Alexandra Park residents **actively participated in their community** in some shape or form, from attending community events in the neighbourhood, volunteering their time at a local agency or group, or attending school council meetings.
- Overall, residents' involvement in both the Atkinson Co-op and in the community as a whole **had either decreased or remained the same in the past two years**.
- 64% of respondents stated that they **would like to become more involved in decision-making and planning in the neighbourhood**, yet only 38.9% were willing to join group discussions about the future of the Atkinson Co-op community.

Focus groups

The second phase of the research process consisted of conducting nine focus groups with specific groups of residents within the Alexandra Park neighbourhood. Individual sessions were held with ethno-specific groups including the Bengali, Cantonese, Mandarin, Somali, Spanish and Vietnamese communities, and targeted demographic groups including youth, seniors, and residents on fixed incomes.

These focus groups largely validated the results of the survey, though they did also raise a few other key issues:

- Participants felt that the **negative image of the neighbourhood** as an unsafe and dangerous area needed to be improved.
- Residents expressed their **dissatisfaction with building management and the co-op board** and suggested developing new ways to enhance community representation, such as the election of neighbourhood block leaders.
- Resident engagement was often **difficult due to cultural differences and language barriers**, perpetuating the lack of a sense of community in the neighbourhood.
- Neighbourhood **youth expressed their frustration at the negative perception towards them** by their fellow residents. They also reiterated how important the Alexandra Park Community Centre and its staff were to them, as they play a crucial and supportive role in their daily lives.

The findings in this report will be used to help guide the Visioning Committee, with continued collaboration with local residents, in developing a community revitalization plan for the Alexandra Park neighbourhood.

Alexandra Park: Background

Nestled within the bustling south west corner of downtown Toronto lays the Alexandra Park neighbourhood, a culturally diverse community which is home to over 2,000 residents. Bordered by Spadina Avenue (East), Dundas Street (North), Denison Avenue (West) and Queen Street (South) it is comprised of both the Atkinson Housing Co-operative and two Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) buildings. In total the neighbourhood consists of 806 residential units, geared primarily towards fixed income residents.

The Alexandra Park neighbourhood has recently become a focus of attention by the City of Toronto and TCHC as talks of revitalization and redevelopment have trickled their way down to the community level.

Due to its prime downtown location, it is seen as an area with a tremendous amount of economic and social development potential that would greatly benefit neighbourhood residents and surrounding areas. While terms like 'redevelopment' and 'revitalization' suggests substantial restructuring and transformation, the community's history has shown that residents are no strangers when it comes to change.

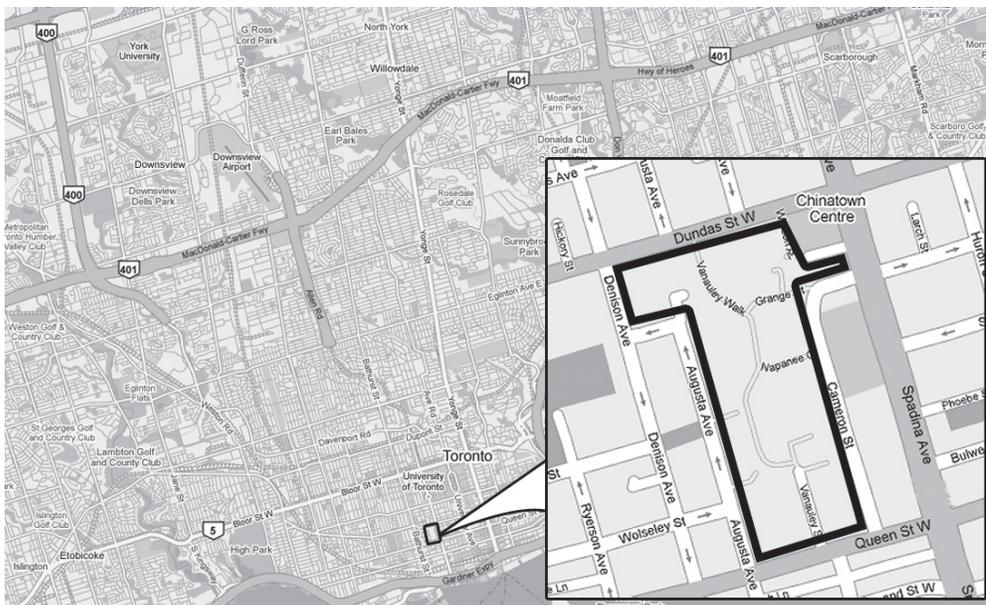
Constructed in 1968, the Alexandra Park Housing Project was originally government owned and controlled.*

However, in the early 1990s, community residents organized and worked together to convert their government public housing "project" into a non-profit co-operative in order to become directly involved in internal decision-making and improve the quality of life for neighbourhood residents.

This resident-based initiative was led by the Alexandra Park Residents' Association (APRA) and its president, Sonny Atkinson. In 1994 Alexandra Park Housing was renamed The Atkinson Housing Co-operative in Sonny Atkinson's honour.

It was not until 2003 that the final phases of conversion were completed, and the Atkinson Co-op earned the historic distinction of becoming the first public housing project in Canada to become a non-profit tenant-managed cooperative.

*CHFT: *Creating Co-ops: The Atkinson Co-op Story* (n.d.) Retrieved from: http://www.coophousing.com/development/development_atkinson.asp



Alexandra Park: Facts & Figures

The following demographic profile uses data collected from the 2006 Canada Census. Statistics Canada geographic boundaries differ slightly from the actual boundaries of the Alexandra Park neighbourhood. As a result, the data presented below are based on residents from the vast majority, but not all, of the Alexandra Park neighbourhood.

Population

Total population: 2,050

Gender

Male: 890 (43%)

Female: 1,160 (57%)

Residents

Families: 470

Persons per family: 3.3

59% are lone-parent families

23% live in non-family households*

**Non-family household refers to a single person living alone, or one or more persons sharing a dwelling but not considered a family*

Age

Aged 0-4: 5%

Aged 5-19: 30%

Aged 20-34: 18%

Aged 35-54: 20%

Aged 55 and over: 27%

**The average age of
Alexandra Park's
population is
36.9 years old.**

**45% of households
spend 30% or more
of their income on
shelter**

Employment (Aged 15+ years)

59% Not in the labour force

36% Employed

4% Unemployed

Household Income

Average household income: \$26,771

Median household income: \$19,265

Education for population aged 25-64

34% have no certificate, diploma or degree

36% have received a high school certificate

7% have received an apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma

10% have received a college, CEGEP or other non-university certificate, diploma or degree

14% have received a university certificate, diploma or degree

Ethno-racial

Top five ethno-racial groups:

1. Chinese (42%)

2. Black (30%)

3. South Asian (10%)

4. South East Asian (9%)

5. West Asian (5%)

Total percentage of people who speak a non-official language (language other than English or French) at home: 54%

Top 5 non-official home languages

1. Chinese (63%)

2. Vietnamese (14%)

3. Bengali (6%)

4. Pashto (3%)

5. Somali (3%)

**More than 90% of
Alexandra Park's
total population
come from ethno-
racial communities**

Immigration

• 64% of population are immigrants

• 35% are non-immigrants

Total immigration population by period of immigration

1971 to 1980: 16%

1981 to 1990: 23%

1991 to 2000: 33%

2000 to 2006: 23%

Population 15 years and over by immigration generation status

1st generation: 79%

2nd generation: 15%

3rd generation: 5%

Household repairs

26% of occupied dwellings were in need of minor repairs

13% required major repairs

Purpose: Neighbourhood Revitalization

In early 2007 initial discussions were underway for creating a new vision for the Alexandra Park community. The purpose of these conversations was to find ways in which to improve and revitalize the Alexandra Park neighbourhood, and develop a community plan for the area that would help to create a healthier, sustainable and thriving neighbourhood.

In order to help lead and direct this new vision and develop a community plan for revitalization, the Alexandra Park Visioning Committee was formed comprised of various key community stakeholders: The Atkinson Housing Co-operative, The Alexandra Park Community Centre, Toronto Community Housing, City Councillor Adam Vaughan, The Co-operative Housing Federation of Toronto, and local residents.

It was established at the outset that the development of a community plan must be a resident driven initiative, one in which local involvement, input and consensus was imperative. In order to assist in finding out how residents felt about their neighbourhood and the kinds of changes they wanted to see in their community, the Visioning Committee enlisted the help of the Community Social Planning Council of Toronto (CSPC-T) to undertake a resident survey. The findings from this survey would be used to help guide the Visioning Committee, TCHC, and the City of Toronto in creating a community plan for revitalization that reflects the needs and wants of the community and its residents.

Methodology

A total of 386 residents participated in our survey; representing nearly 48% of the total number of Alexandra Park households. The survey questionnaire (Appendix A) was modeled on a pre-existing survey that was developed by the United Way Toronto, in collaboration with the Community Social Planning Council of Toronto, and an original survey that was developed by the Alexandra Park Visioning Committee. Together, with the input and assistance from the Visioning Committee, survey questions were modified to make them more appropriate and relevant for the Alexandra Park community.

In order to achieve a more in-depth analysis and understanding of the neighbourhood, the questionnaire examines a diverse range of issues that have been divided into six sections: neighbourhood satisfaction, access to services and safety, connection among residents, local leadership capacity, civic participation and demographics. The survey consists of both open-ended and closed-ended questions.

As this was to be a community-driven process and a means to engage residents and help them to develop new skills, local neighbourhood residents were hired to conduct the survey and interview their fellow neighbours. A total of fourteen residents (10 youths and 4 adults) were hired to go door-to-door and administer the survey. These 'resident researchers' were trained by CSPC-T staff on the basic principles of research, how to properly conduct a research interview and accurately record responses, and effective ways to minimize bias and maintain respondent anonymity and confidentiality.

In order to ensure that all Alexandra Park households were given equal opportunity to provide their input and be represented in our survey, all 806 residential units in the neighbourhood were included in our study sample. In addition to going door-to-door to conduct interviews, the resident researchers also performed community outreach; helped to publicize the survey, posting flyers throughout the neighbourhood and talking with residents to provide them with information on what the survey was about and encouraging them to participate. The survey was launched at a community meeting on January 26th, 2008 at Ryerson Public School.

The surveying process concluded in May 2008.

Resident researchers were paired up, designated specific areas of the neighbourhood to canvass, and were instructed to attempt to make contact with someone from each household. We asked that one person, aged 18 years and over and who could speak on behalf of the entire household, take part in the survey. Follow-up visits were conducted for those residents who were not at home when initial contact was made. Participants provided verbal consent to participate in the survey. The survey questionnaire was translated into multiple languages and arrangements were made to have interviews conducted in a resident's native language if they were unable to communicate in English.

Once the data collection phase was completed the survey data was input and analyzed. A preliminary draft of the survey findings was produced. The initial survey findings were discussed with the Visioning Committee.

During the second phase of the research process, nine focus groups were conducted with members of the Alexandra Park community. The focus groups were held to validate survey findings and identify additional issues of concern to the community that did not emerge through the survey process. The Visioning Committee identified several groups that they wanted to hear from during this phase of the research. Focus groups were organized for specific ethnoracial communities and demographic groups including: members of Bengali, Cantonese, Mandarin, Somali, Spanish and Vietnamese communities, youth 14-24 years old, seniors and residents on fixed incomes.

Community notices were posted around the neighbourhood asking people from these communities and groups to participate in focus group discussions. Local residents were again hired to act as facilitators and notetakers where availability and scheduling permitted. Focus groups were held in the first language of each ethno-specific community and in English for the youth, seniors and residents on fixed incomes groups. Focus groups were held during the months of July and September 2008.

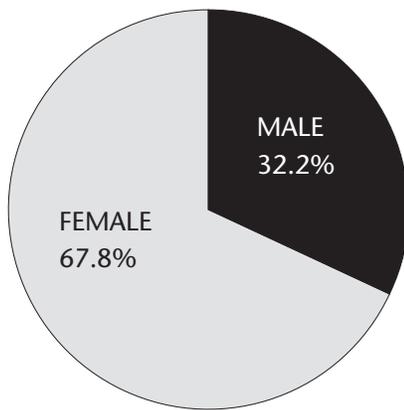
Survey and Focus Group Analysis

Survey responses were analyzed using standard statistical methods. Focus group notes were reviewed and major themes were identified. With respect to survey results, response rates differ from question to question. As the survey was voluntary and residents were free to refuse to answer any questions, not all respondents answered every applicable question. Specifically, questions of a sensitive nature such as those pertaining to household income had a slightly lower response rate. Note that some questions were only asked of some residents. For example, some questions were only asked of residents who had lived in the neighbourhood for two years or more. In the results section, the notation 'n' refers to how many residents answered a specific question. Some percentages do not total 100% due to rounding.

Survey Results: Demographics

Gender

n=376



Age Distribution	%
18 to 19	3.5
20 to 29	12.9
30 to 39	19.8
40 to 49	20.9
50 to 59	13.1
60 to 69	10.7
70 to 79	10.5
80 and older	8.6

n=373

Country of Birth	%
Canada	35.4
East Asia	20.1
Other	8.9
Europe	7.8
Caribbean & Bermuda	6.5
Southeast Asia	4.9
Central or South America	4.4
South Asia	4.2
Central Africa	2.1
Southern Africa	1.8
West Central Asia & Middle East	1.6
United States	1.3
Northern Africa	1.0

n = 384

Other: East Africa (6%), Central Asia (2.6%)

Language Spoken at Home	%
English	56.1
Chinese/Cantonese/Mandarin	19.7
Somali	5.2
Other	4.6
Vietnamese	3.8
Spanish	3.5
Portuguese	1.4
Arabic	1.2
Dari	0.9
Farsi	0.9
French	0.9
Pashto	0.9
Hindi	0.3
Italian	0.3
Punjabi	0.3
Urdu	0.3

n=346

Highest Level of Education Attained	%
No formal schooling	5.1
Some elementary school	5.3
Elementary school diploma	6.4
Some secondary (high) school	13.9
Secondary (high) school diploma or certificate	28.8
Registered apprenticeship or trades certification or diploma	2.9
College, CEGEP, or other non-university certificate diploma	19.7
University degree, certificate, or diploma	17.3
Other	0.5

n = 375

Average Length of Residency in Canada	20.6 years
Range	From 3 years to 97 years

n = 231

Household Composition: Gender	Sum
Total household males	371
Total household females	385

n = 251

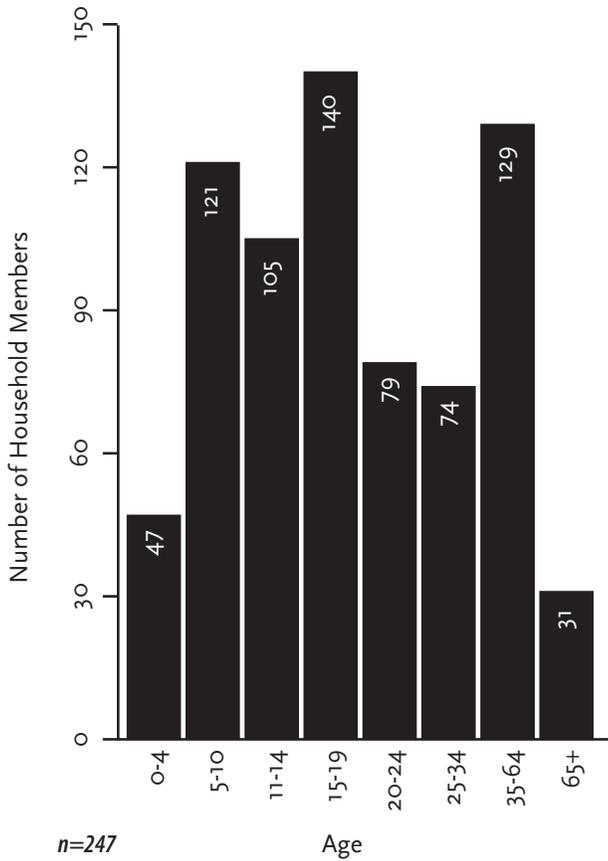
Marital Status	%
Single, never married	38.7
Married	26.3
Widowed	11.8
Divorced	11.0
Separated	8.6
Living common-law	3.5

n = 372

Household Composition	%
A lone parent with one or more children	32.0
A single individual living alone	30.9
A couple with one or more children	24.5
More than one family living together	4.3
A couple with no children	3.7
Two or more unrelated individuals living together	3.5
Other	1.1

n = 375

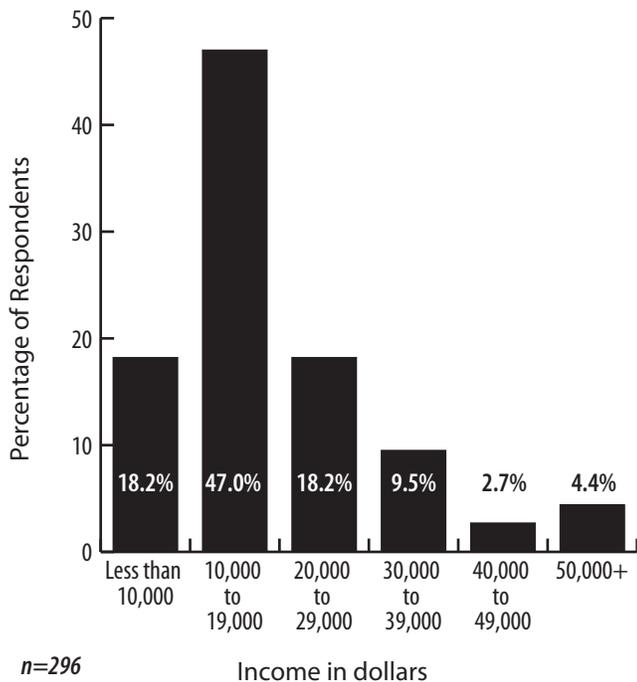
Household Composition: Household Members by Age



Main Source of Household Income	%
Employment or self-employment (wages, salaries, commission, tips)	44.8
Social Assistance or welfare (OW, ODSP)	22.0
Benefits from Canada Pension Plan	17.3
Retirement pensions	7.5
Basic Old Age Security	2.3
Other income (e.g. rental income, scholarship, other government income, stocks, mutual funds, etc)	2.0
No income	1.7
Employment insurance	1.2
Workers' compensation	0.6
Guaranteed Income Supplement or Spouse's Allowance	0.3
Child support/ Alimony	0.3

n = 346

Total Household Income



Survey Results

Section 1

Neighbourhood Satisfaction

In order to establish the overall level of satisfaction with the neighbourhood, we asked residents to tell us how long they have lived in the Alexandra Park community, their feelings towards the neighbourhood, what changes they have noticed in the past two years, and how long they expected to continue living in the neighbourhood.

Length of Residency

The average length of residency in the Alexandra Park neighbourhood is **11.1 years**. Residency ranged from less than one year to 45 years. (n=379)

Change in the Neighbourhood

In the past two years, would you say the Alexandra Park community has:

Changed for the better	48%
Changed for the worse	20.6%
Stayed about the same	31.4%

n=306

Nearly half (48%) of respondents stated that in the past two years, the Alexandra Park community has changed for the better. When asked what positive changes they have noticed in the past two years, many indicated that they have seen improvements in four main areas: maintenance of buildings and or units, increased cleanliness of the area, more security and a reduction of criminal activity, and finally, more programs and activities for residents.

WHAT YOU SAID

Changed for the better

“Less gangs and drugs, new improvements to units”



“Improvements of infrastructure, more youth involvement, reduction of violence”

“Better security, more cameras and more work being done”

“More people are involved with things and people are starting to view youth as part of the change”

“More community events”

“Painted the walls, cleaner areas (hallways, elevators)”

“Basketball court and playground”

20.6% of respondents however felt that their community had changed for the worse. These feelings revolved primarily around issues regarding perceptions of a lack of safety and security, an increase in criminal activity, and allegations of police harassment of neighbourhood residents. Other respondents felt that there has been a decrease in the amount of services that are being provided in the neighbourhood, that building and property maintenance has not been satisfactory, and that there was a lack of communication between board/management and residents.

WHAT YOU SAID

Changed for the worse



“More crime, drugs and violence”

“A lot of services and programs are no longer available here anymore. There are no youth, adult and senior programs, there are no night classes/ programs. No information regarding the children’s act, no legal knowledge. No programs/ seminars with a lawyer to help residents with legal issues/ problems. Senior programs to help them out, no notices to make them aware of services being offered. No religious services/ meetings for different background residents”

“Police treatment has become a lot worse”

“Co-op not telling us any updates”

“Dirty garbage all over”

“There used to be many services offered to us but now I find that they have lessened a lot. For example, they used to do checkups once or twice a year and ask if there are anything that needs fixing but now things like this never happens; now it takes a very long time for them to fix anything. I end up having to fix the problems myself with my expenses and it’s not that cheap”

Finally, 31.4% of respondents felt that their neighbourhood has pretty much stayed the same over the past two years. Statements made by residents indicate that these feelings are either positive or negative, reflecting their overall satisfaction with the neighbourhood.

.....
WHAT YOU SAID
Stayed the Same



“There might be some changes here and there but it’s about the same. They’ve done renovations like painted the doors, new elevators, new main entry doors, but not much”

“Residents are helpful to each other and all actively participate in all community events”

“Generally most things have not changed. The area still looks the same and there is still a high level of crimes occurring”

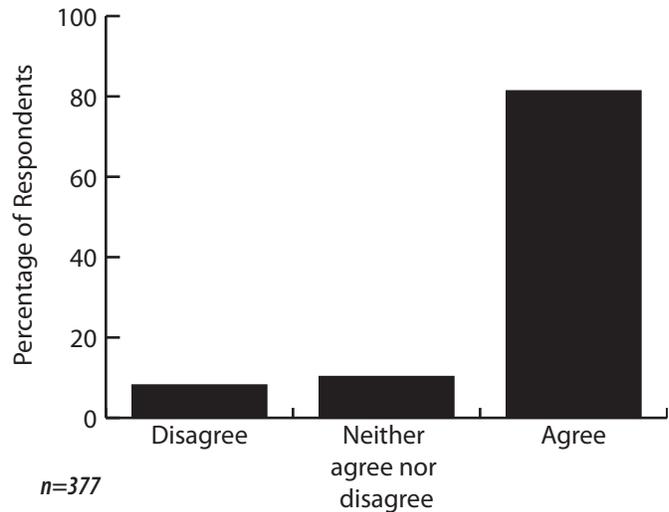
“The problems were always here just that people weren’t aware of them”

“No complaints, many projects done but everything same. Nobody cares so everything same”

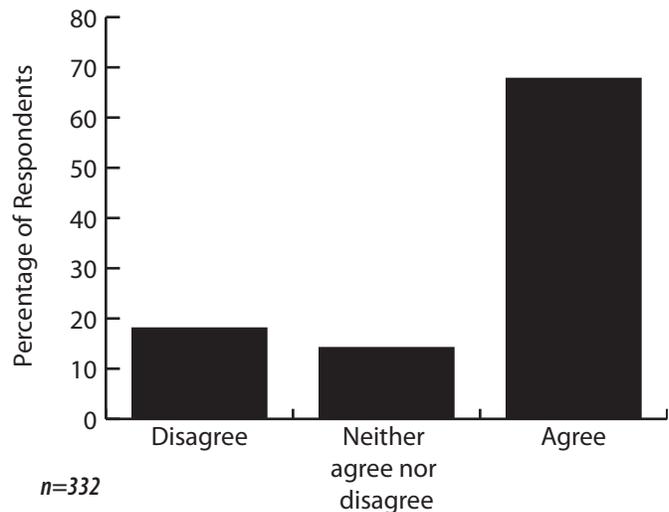
Despite the various issues that residents felt needed to be addressed, an overwhelming majority of respondents still felt that the Alexandra Park neighbourhood was a good place to live and to raise children.

Residents were then asked to name one thing that they liked and one thing they disliked about the Alexandra Park community. A majority of residents indicated that what they liked most was the convenient location of living downtown, with easy access to many services such as public transportation, a wide assortment of retail stores, schools, community centre, and the availability of community social programs. Respondents also ex-

My neighbourhood is a good place to live



My neighbourhood is a good place to raise children



pressed positive feelings in regards to their connection towards other residents living in the community, stating that it was a culturally diverse and friendly neighbourhood where people are willing to work together and help one another.

When asked to name something they disliked about the Alexandra Park community, resident responses varied, however, some previously identified issues reemerged. These issues include: safety and security, building and grounds maintenance, cleanliness, lack of social programs and community events for residents and their families, and negative opinions towards the co-op management.

WHAT YOU SAID

Thoughts on the Neighbourhood



LIKES

"It's convenient. Shopping is close, transportation is close to"

"There is a centre for children, programs after-school"

"Everything is close by. It's close to the food bank... My doctor's office is very close by and there's also a doctor once a week downstairs if I can't go out to my doctor"

"Everybody knows each other, school is close by, teachers are involved with kids, neighbours watch kids, park for kids to play"

"People like Olu, Walied and Coach John [from the community centre] are doing good things by helping our kids. We should all support them"

"The community is very diverse with different cultures and religions, however they can adapt and live with each other"

"It's very family oriented"

DISLIKES

"No programs to allow or get parents more involved with the community. Nothing for youth as well. Parents don't have or cannot get the services or resources to get the help needed"

"The neighbourhood does not look nice, it's dull and dark"

"It's not safe around here and security is not enough. There is always homeless people sleeping in the stairways, close to the entrances and exits. They would smoke and throw the butts around and go to the washroom in the buildings too"

"Police in the area do not investigate what is happening. We are terrified of police, they harass our people, they always accuse our youth. They criminalize our young people. I don't want to open my door to police, they treat Black people badly"

"The houses are too old. There are many maintenance problems. It takes the community service a very long time to fix problems in the house"

"Need to have more events to get the community involved"

"There's no communication about the board"

Areas for Improvement

Residents were asked to name two things that were needed to improve their neighbourhood. Although many residents felt very satisfied with their neighbourhood, they did raise several critical issues and concerns during the course of the survey that they felt needed to be promptly addressed and that were vital in improving the quality of life the community. The following tables highlight the most prevalent themes along with some specific statements made by respondents. These tables also help summarize the common issues that have been brought up thus far. Themes are not presented in any particular order or by frequency of responses.

Safety & Security

Issues around safety and security were frequently mentioned as being a concern for many residents. People felt that there needed to be an increase in security (police patrols, guards, cameras) due to criminal activity, vagrancy, and drug trafficking in the neighbourhood.

Some also expressed concern that police were too frequently harassing residents in the community, suggesting that relations between security and residents needed to be ameliorated.

Responses included:

- "Better security. Too much crime"
- "We have more police patrols now; we need more of this because the drugs people are still around. Parents should take responsibility, those caught with drugs should be kicked out from housing"
- "Security needs to stop harassing"
- "Security. I see lots of strangers in and out of the building. I'm scared to go out at night"

Cleanliness & Neighbourhood Beautification

Many residents felt that the neighbourhood needed to be cleaned up of the garbage, litter, dog waste, and graffiti and that effort should be made to help make the community greener and esthetically pleasing with more

trees, gardens, flowers and parks.

Responses included:

- “Make the community look nice, with gardening, nicer homes”
- “Garbage in backyards, people throwing things in other people’s backyards”
- “Roads are dirty, parks need to be cleaner”
- “We should build more parks”
- “Add plants and flowers”
- “It’s dirty, garbage needs to be better arranged. I always see people’s garbage everywhere, on the streets etc.”

Building/Unit & Physical Improvements

Respondents indicated that many of their housing units were in dire need of maintenance and repairs. This includes painting, new appliances and better laundry facilities, electrical wiring, roofing, and dealing with bug/mice infestations. Physically, outdoor improvements such as better visitor’s parking, fence repairs, and more lighting of pathways were brought up.

Responses included:

- “The pathways need to be smoother for children to ride bikes and play”
- “Less process to go through for getting small things fixed”
- “Maintenance needs more improvements. I reported two problems so long ago, and still nothing has yet to be done”
- “Fix the holes in the walls because there are so much mice running around the apartment. I can’t even sleep at night. I reported the problem, but they haven’t done anything about it”
- “Laundry mat in the building is very bad. Need better machines, those ones are too old”
- “The layout and access to the community, differently connected”

Co-op Board Management

Some residents also expressed their dissatisfaction with the co-op management and board of directors. They

thought that management needed to become better organized and that new board members are needed to better represent and work for the community.

Responses included:

- “Office needs to get organized”
- “Stronger board members that care about the place, and not only about their units”
- “Change the board”
- “Management should be improved”
- “The board needs better representation”

Community Social Services/ Programs and Events

Although residents stated that living downtown allowed them to have easy access to various social services and programs, many felt that certain services were lacking, most notably recreational programs, or programs geared specifically towards children and youth. Since the Alexandra Park Community Centre plays an important role in the community, many felt that it should be expanded and improved, allowing for more programs to be offered.

Responses included:

- “Programs for the youth, after school programs, help for school drop outs”
- “More facilities in the park needed, such as senior exercise tools, and more community support and social support”
- “On site nurse for the buildings (seniors)”
- “We need a health centre in the co-op”
- “More programs for youth. Also mothers need recreation programs”
- “More community events like BBQs”
- “More programs for the community centre so residents can benefit”
- “The only thing I feel we need is day to day care and checkups because you don’t know what would happen since we are all very old people and some with many health problems”

Physical Improvements

In terms of physical or infrastructure improvements, residents felt that the maintenance, upkeep and upgrading of existing residential buildings and units was very important, along with the construction of additional housing units. Aging buildings and houses has resulted in the need for major and minor repairs (i.e. windows, flooring, elevators, growing mold, etc) throughout the neighbourhood. Respondents also identified the need for improvement in regards to parking, especially visitors parking. Residents stated that the neighbourhood needed to be cleaned up of garbage and graffiti and more green space be created to make it more visually appealing. Finally, the need for more outdoor recreational facilities and improvements to the Alexandra Park Community Centre was frequently cited.

.....

WHAT YOU SAID

About Physical Improvements



"More colour to identify the community. Better physical appeal"

"More playgrounds and swimming pools for the kids during the summer"

"New houses- only if the residents can move back in"

"The community centre needs to be bigger, so that it can accommodate the number of residents in the community"

"More flowers around the area, less bricks and concrete. More plants would make the place more appealing"

"New buildings would be good to see because the buildings are old. They should change the stove, toilets, etc. because they are very old and dirty and impossible to clean. If they change one thing I think they should change everything else"

Expected Tenure

When asked how long they would continue to live in the Alexandra Park neighbourhood, nearly 77% of respondents stated that they planned to stay for many more years, while 7.6% said they would move as soon as possible. When asked the reasons for their continued residency, residents' responses varied. Many wanted to stay because they enjoyed living in the neighbourhood due to its convenient downtown location with easy access to various services, such as shops or schools for their children. Some indicated that affordability was the deciding factor, or that they had already been living there for such a long time and did not want to relocate. Others stated that they had little other choice but to stay due to personal circumstances.

Those who planned on moving from the neighbourhood, answered that either they were eager to find a bigger place to live to accommodate their family, that they just wanted to move to a different part of the city, or because they were generally dissatisfied with the neighbourhood.

.....

WHAT YOU SAID

About Staying & Moving



PLAN ON STAYING

"Rent is affordable and its downtown"

"I know my neighbours and the community is a good place to live.

"I am a single mom with 5 kids so school is nearby and area is nice"

"I was born here, my family has lived here for many years.

"Don't have money to move"

"I hope to live here until I get very old"

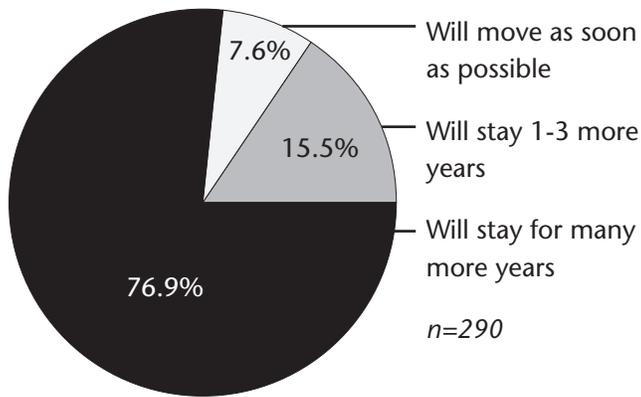
PLAN ON MOVING

"The house is too small for my family"

"Want another environment"

"So my kids can have a better future"

How long do you expect to be living in Alexandra Park?



**Section 2
Access to Services & Safety**

As mentioned earlier, what Alexandra Park residents enjoyed most about the neighbourhood was its convenient downtown location, allowing people to easily access a variety of programs and services. These sentiments are once again reflected in the survey results when respondents were asked how satisfied they were with access to health care, community services, business and retail, recreation services and public transportation.

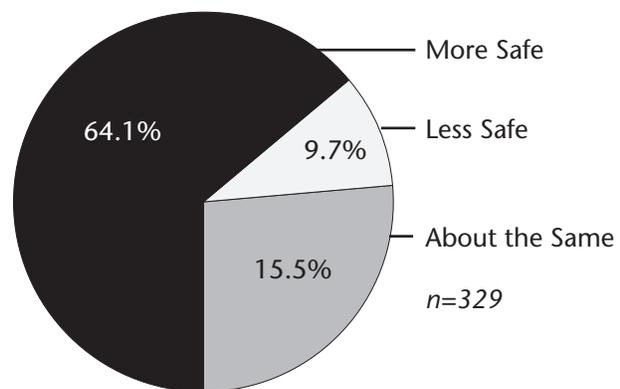
While levels of satisfaction are very high, some respondents however stated that there was some room for improvement in certain areas:

Health: Residents wanted to see more doctors, dentists, and walk-in clinics. Some even suggested an on-site community nurse.

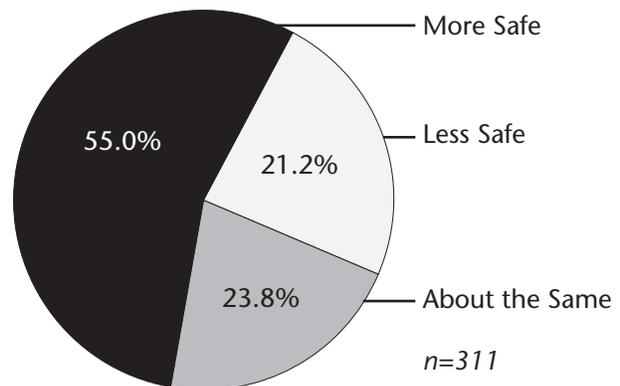
Community services: Residents wanted to have more daycare spaces available in the community, along with services geared specifically for youth, such as a youth drop-in centre or homework club. Others mentioned the need for job and computer training programs and employment services.

Goods and services: A common demand from residents was for the development of a large supermarket (i.e. No Frills, Price Choppers, Food Basics, etc) in the area that was easily accessible.

Relative to other places in Toronto, do you think this neighbourhood is:



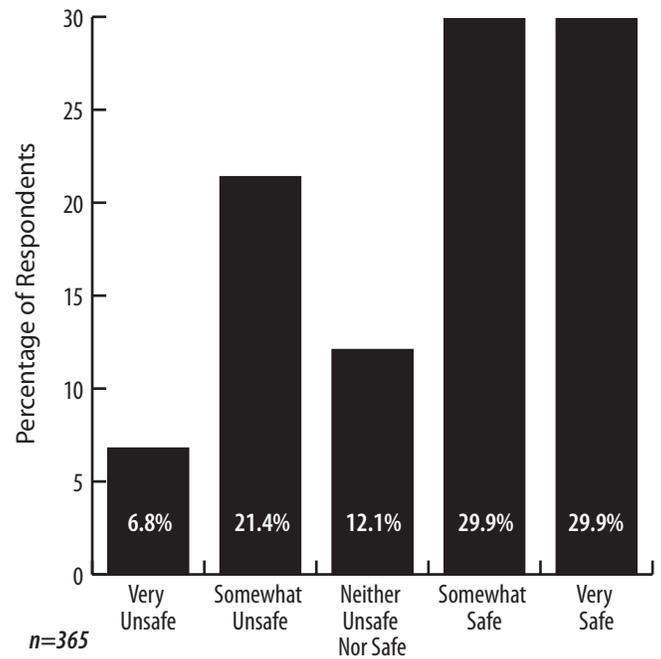
Over the last few years, do you think the neighbourhood has been getting:



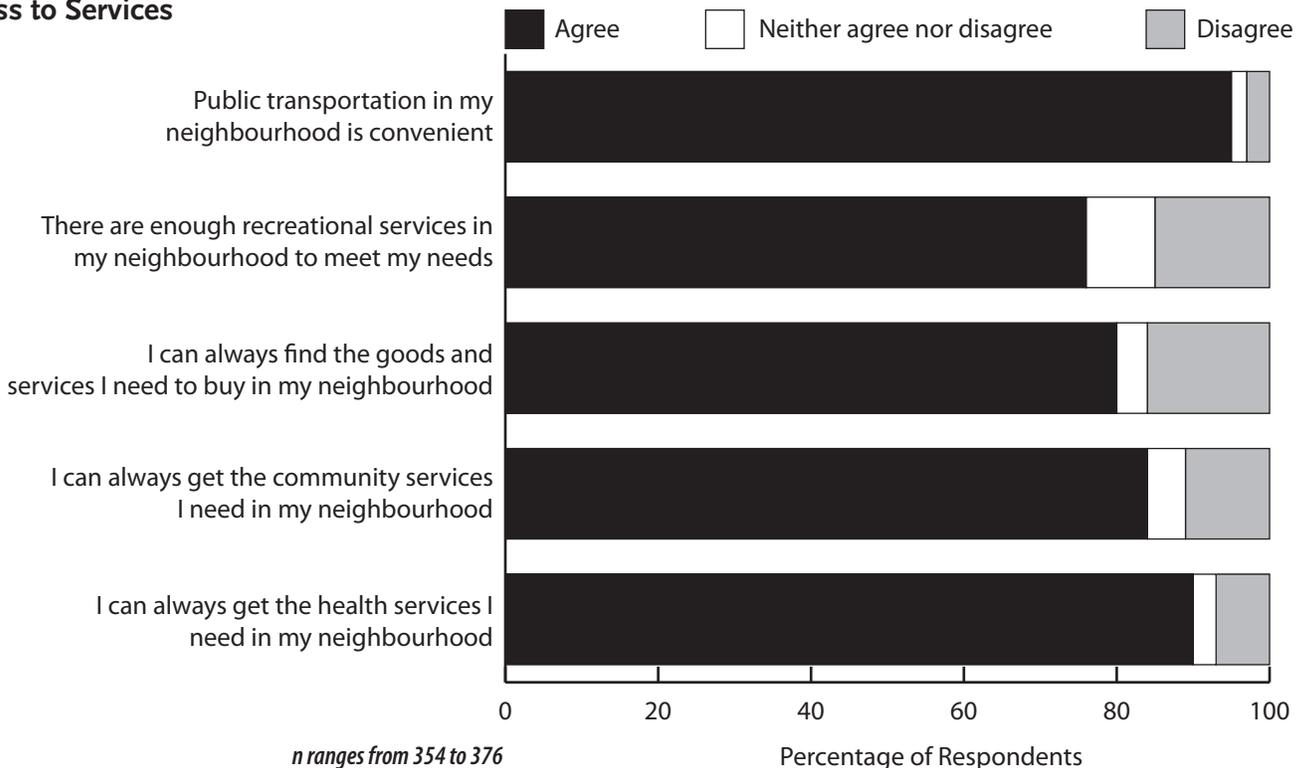
Recreational services: Respondents expressed a greater need for more outdoor recreational facilities such as swimming pools, parks and playgrounds. They also felt that the local community centre should be expanded and include a gym or fitness room and provide more organized recreational activities for residents.

Safety: Although issues around safety and criminal activity in the neighbourhood were concerns raised by many participants in earlier questions, a majority of residents, nonetheless, felt that their neighbourhood was a relatively safe place to live. When analyzed according to gender, however, 35% of women respondents reported feeling less safe walking alone at night compared to only 14% of men.

How safe do you feel walking alone at night?



Access to Services

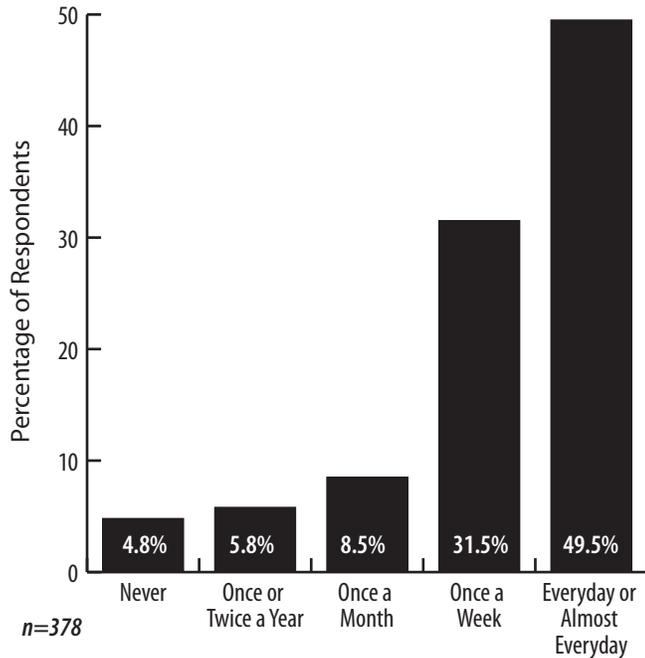


Section 3

Connection Among Residents

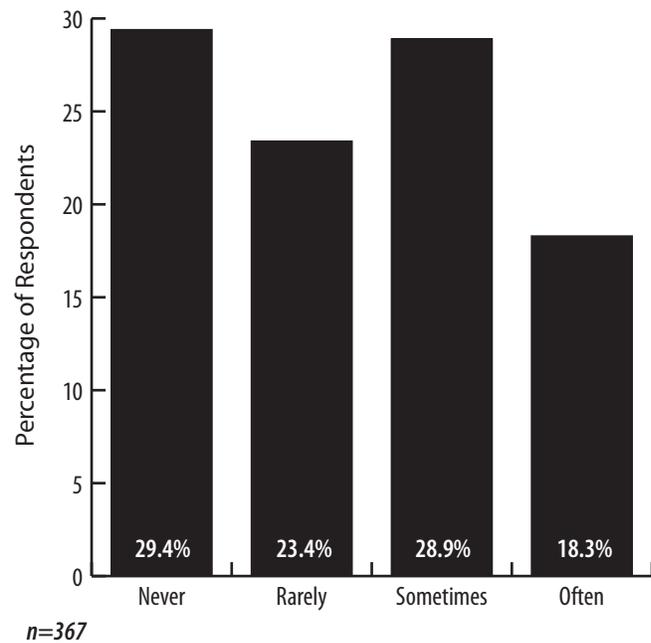
Survey results suggest a strong connection between neighbours. Most residents speak regularly with their neighbours and a sizeable number share information

Over the past year how often did you stop and talk to your neighbours?



and advice with neighbours. More than half of all respondents believe that residents get along with one another and are willing to help each other when and if needed. A majority of respondents also said that the youth in the neighbourhood play an important role in the community.

How often do you share information or offer advice about things such as parenting or job openings with other people in your neighbourhood?



Resident Connections

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
In this neighbourhood, when someone is not at home, neighbours will watch over their property (<i>n= 343</i>)	6.4%	42.9%	18.4%	25.4%	7.0%
People here are willing to help their neighbours (<i>n= 351</i>)	17.7%	58.7%	12.3%	9.1%	2.3%
People around here are willing to help their neighbours even if they come from different backgrounds (<i>n= 342</i>)	20.8%	59.1%	8.5%	9.1%	2.6%
People in this neighbourhood generally don't get along with each other (<i>n= 338</i>)	2.4%	10.7%	15.1%	48.8%	23.1%
People in this neighbourhood view the youth as playing an important role in the community (<i>n= 304</i>)	17.8%	51.3%	13.8%	12.2%	4.9%

Section 4

Local Leadership Capacity

Local Leaders: Who Are They?

N

Community Centres: Alexandra Park Community Centre, Scadding Court, etc	89
Community services & organizations: 7th floor services, St. Christopher House, Evangel Hall, YMCA, Scott Mission, Wood Green, food banks, legal clinics, etc	46
Management: Co-op board/ TCHC	37
Social Networks: friends, family, relatives	35
Community members/workers: Olu, Donna, Walied, etc.	15
Elected Officials: Politicians, Trustees, City Councillor, Provincial government	9
Other: Church, Hospital, Police, School	5

The survey findings reveal that a majority (61.5%) of Alexandra Park residents are indeed able to identify people or organizations that they can go to in order to help solve problems in the community. People frequently identified local community centres (most notably the Alexandra Park Community Centre), community workers and volunteers, and other local social service agencies as being best capable of resolving any community problems.

Those deemed as “decision-makers” such as the co-op housing board, TCHC and elected officials ranked lower by respondents. This may suggest that residents felt more comfortable in approaching community agencies and workers, as they may have already developed an

existing relationship with them. As well, residents may feel that community workers have more experience in dealing with specific issues and are confident that they would intervene or provide solutions.

The table below shows that a large number of Alexandra Park residents feel empowered and confident that the community can resolve its own problems and that they care enough about their neighbourhood to make it better. These feelings of resident empowerment and engagement may be attributed to the past experiences many have had during the decade long conversion from public to co-operative housing.

Resident Empowerment

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
If there is a problem in this neighbourhood, people who live here can get it solved (<i>n</i> = 347)	8.9%	56.5%	21.0%	10.1%	3.5%
People feel that efforts to improve this neighbourhood are a waste of time (<i>n</i> = 337)	4.7%	11.9%	10.7%	54.9%	17.8%
The people in this neighbourhood have almost no power over what happens here (<i>n</i> = 337)	8.9%	19.0%	14.8%	40.7%	16.6%

Section 5 Civic Participation

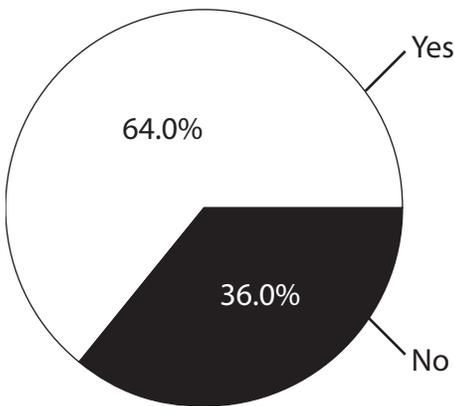
Many of the residents surveyed have been actively involved in the community in some shape or form, participating in various activities such as attending community events, doing volunteer work or attending school council meetings. When asked about their overall involvement in the Atkinson co-op and the community, however, many indicated that their involvement has either decreased or stayed about the same.

Reflective again of the residents' strong feelings towards the neighbourhood, an overwhelming majority (80.2%) felt that their neighbours would do something if they ever heard that the local school was going to close.

Finally, more than half of respondents (64%) indicated that they would like to become more involved in decision-making and planning in the community. They also noted that better publicity of meetings, accessible meeting times and more personal free time would facilitate their involvement.

Yet, a majority of residents (61.1%) indicated that they were not interested in joining group discussions about the co-op community. It is important to note that this specific question was asked to residents who not only lived in the Atkinson Co-op, but in the two TCHC buildings as well. Therefore, the high negative response could be attributed to respondents who felt this question was not applicable to them (if they indeed chose to respond to it at all).

Would you like to become more involved in decision-making and planning in your community?

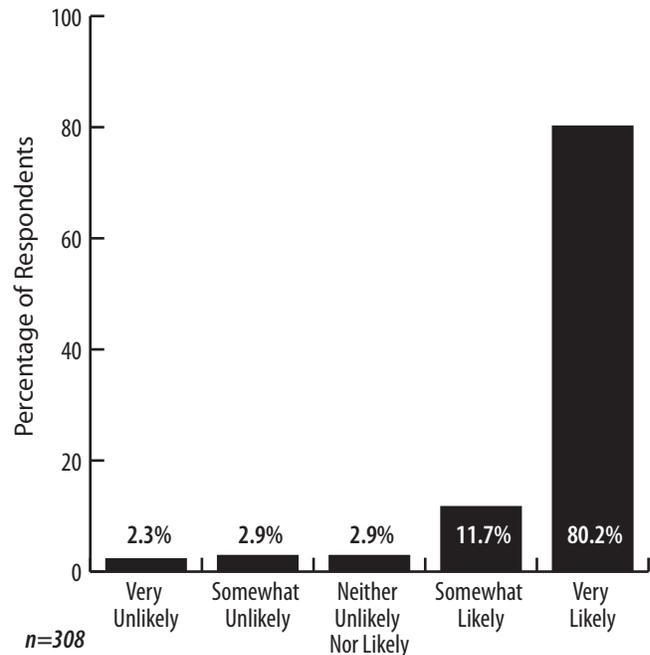


n=347

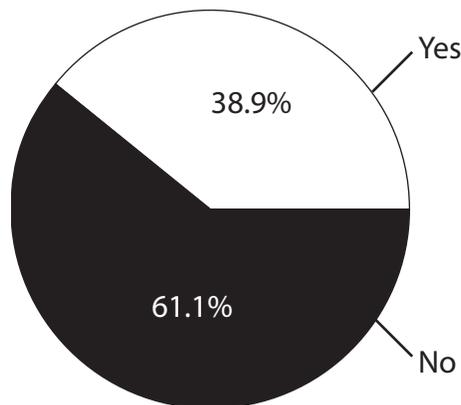
Yet, if we were to speculate as to other possible reasons for this unwillingness to become involved, it could be due to weariness or being uncomfortable in a group discussion setting, or due to language barriers.

Wanting to become more involved in the community but not wishing to take part in group discussions may also allude to the fact that residents would prefer more task-oriented involvement and hands-on approach to community planning. Familial obligations can also be an influential factor since many of those surveyed consisted of lone parent families.

How likely do you think it is that your neighbours would do something if they heard that the local school was closing?



Would members of your household be willing to join group discussions about the future of the Atkinson Co-op Community?



n=311

Community Involvement

Increased

Decreased

Stayed About the Same

In the past two years, would you say your overall household involvement in the Atkinson co-op has: (n=256)

24.6%

39.1%

36.3%

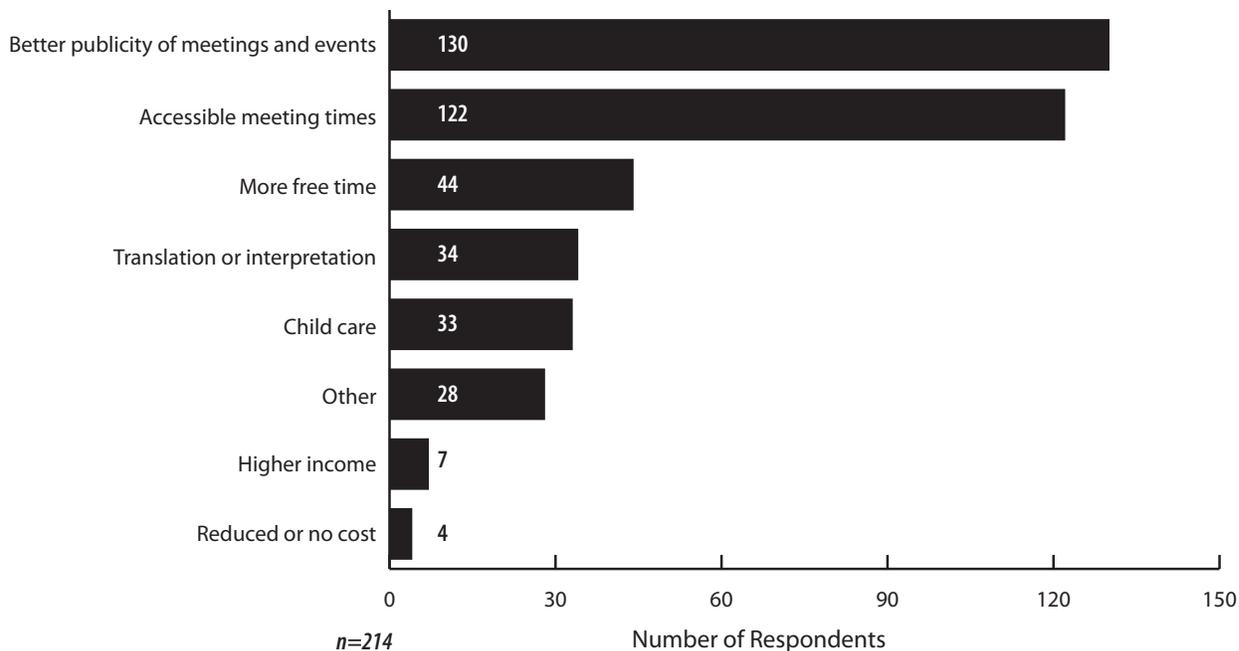
In the past two years, would you say that your overall involvement in the neighbourhood/community has (n=287)

25.4%

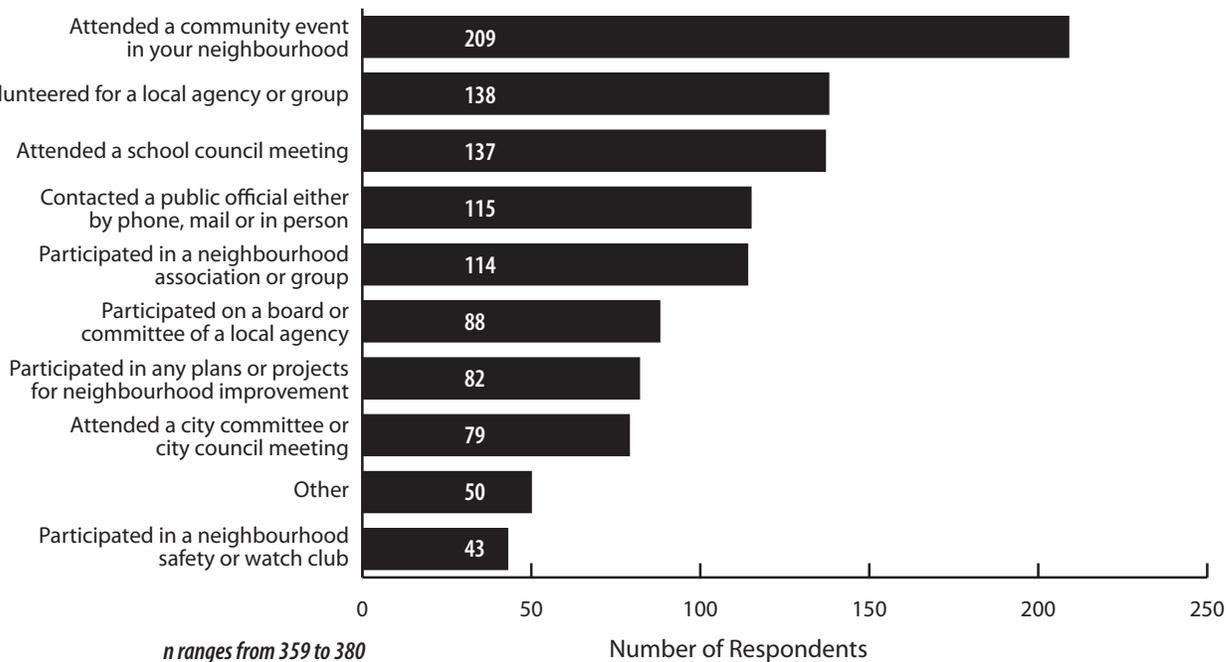
35.9%

38.7%

What would make it easier for you to become more involved in community decision-making?



Number of residents participating in various activities within the past twelve months



Focus Group Results

Upon completion of the survey process, focus groups were held with specific groups within the Alexandra Park neighbourhood. As mentioned earlier, the purpose of these focus groups was to discuss the initial survey findings, establish whether the results accurately described residents' feelings towards the neighbourhood, find out if anything was missed during the survey process, and allow the opportunity for residents to provide any additional input on how to make their neighbourhood a better place to live. Participants were asked the following questions:

1. Do you feel the report shows the reality of living in Alexandra Park as you know it?
2. How would you describe the community of Alexandra Park?
3. What is the ideal Alexandra Park for you? What would you do to make this happen?

Overall, nearly all the groups stated that the results of the survey were reflective of the general attitudes and concerns of the neighbourhood. Externally, safety and a cleaner environment were again mentioned as priorities. Participants also expressed concern over the negative reputation of the Alexandra Park neighbourhood as being a haven for gang activities (for example, being associated with a street gang known as 'The Project Originals') and an area that should be avoided. This reputation has caused problems in terms of police interaction with Alexandra Park residents- most notably neighbourhood youth who feel that they are subject to frequent police harassment and discrimination. Many felt that the concern over crime is thoroughly justified rather than overinflated and believe the youth are chiefly responsible. Participants cited frequent incidences including robberies, fights, drug trafficking, assaults, etc that has left many residents to worry about safety for themselves and their families, and also stating that local housing security was inadequate to solve the problem.

Internally, participants voiced their dissatisfaction with the co-op board and management. Many criticized the over bureaucratic and restrictive nature of management that had led to greater delays in getting the necessary repairs, renovations and maintenance that are required

in people's units. Residents stated that if they take the initiative to do the repairs themselves, they are either told by the management that they are not allowed to or will have to undo them if they ever decide to leave or face a penalty. Residents blame the board for failing to provide leadership in the community, not properly communicating with residents, and accuse the membership of being corrupt, self-serving and largely apathetic to the needs and concerns of the neighbourhood residents. Participants recommend that a new way of governing the co-op be established, electing more block or section leaders to better represent the community.

With the neighbourhood spatially spread out, many participants indicated that it was often difficult to get to engage with one another and know who their neighbours are. The multicultural and ethnically diverse makeup of the neighbourhood, along with a significant number of first generation newcomers, also meant that connection among residents was more difficult due to language barriers or cultural differences. Some indicated there was a lack of a sense of community within the neighbourhood, and that building unity, and community engagement and pride in the neighbourhood should be an area of focus. These sentiments seem to be in contrast to the survey findings which revealed a high degree of resident connection. However, this may imply that residents are connected to only a few of their immediate neighbours or to a handful of people already within their social circle, rather than to the larger community.

The youth on the other hand stated that they felt well connected, and largely looked for each other and protected one another. For them their unifying bond was the Alexandra Park Community Centre, as it played a crucial and supportive role in their daily lives and provided a place for them to engage in activities, and connect with each other. They wanted to see investments made in improving and expanding the community centre along with sustainable funding to maintain and create additional programs and activities. Youth also expressed frustration about the negative perception towards them by other residents, and that their attempts to become more involved in the community have not been recognized by the neighbourhood as a whole.

Summary

In summary, a majority of Alexandra Park residents have indicated that they are quite satisfied with their neighbourhood. Its convenient downtown location, easy access to a variety of programs and services, cultural diversity and friendly atmosphere are factors that make this neighbourhood a good place to live and to raise children.

Residents have also expressed a strong connection with their fellow neighbours and are willing to help each other when needed. They demonstrated a desire and willingness to become more engaged and involved with their community in order to make it a better place to live. Leaders in the community that were most frequently cited were workers and volunteers in the local community centres, such as the Alexandra Park Community Centre, and other community service agencies and organizations within the vicinity.

Residents have however, identified some critical areas that need to be addressed in order to improve their neighbourhood. Residential units need to be repaired and properly maintained, the grounds and surrounding areas need to be cleaned up and beautified with additional green space, and more programs geared towards children and youth need to be created.

While many residents expressed concern about safety and security and wanted to see more security and police presence in the area, others felt that security guards and police were harassing residents, particularly youth. This is an important, yet contentious and tense issue within the community.

Residents also suggested that the Alexandra Park Community Centre, which plays a crucial role in the neighbourhood, be renovated, upgraded and expanded in order to better service the community.

In terms of management, residents expressed some dissatisfaction with the co-op board, stating that the board did not effectively communicate with residents, it was overly bureaucratic, and that the current board composition did not adequately represent the community or address their needs.

People also felt that more work was needed in order to allow residents the opportunity to connect with one another, such as more community events and community engagement initiatives.

Based on the survey results, focus group findings and statements made by residents, a revitalization plan for the Alexandra Park neighbourhood is one that would address both the structural and physical needs of the area, as well as the internal issues of security, programs and services, management and resident engagement.

Building upon the existing strength in resident connections and empowerment can enable greater community engagement opportunities and resident involvement in future neighbourhood planning activities.

Moreover, the community plan development process must continue to engage the whole community, taking into account the cultural diversity of the neighbourhood and the diversity of linguistic groups within the neighbourhood, in order to achieve a truly inclusive plan.

Appendix A: Questionnaire

Alexandra Park Resident Survey

Interviewer Names: _____

Date: _____

Introduction/ Informed Consent

Hello, my name is _____ and this is _____. As you may know, the Alexandra Park community has been in talks with City Councilor Adam Vaughan, the Toronto Community Housing Corporation, Atkinson Co-op, and other community members and organizations to discuss ways in which we can improve the quality of life for residents in the neighbourhood. We are now doing a survey to find out how residents like you feel about their community.

This survey will take approximately 30-40 minutes to complete.

For this survey we will need to speak with someone who is 18 years of age or older and that can speak on behalf of your household.

The information gathered for this study will be used to inform service providers of the priorities in the Alexandra Park Community. Under no circumstance will be sell contact lists or personal information to others. All responses and personal information collected will be kept strictly confidential. Your participation is completely voluntary. You may choose to skip any questions that you do not wish to answer, and you can end the survey at any time. The information you provide will be kept only for the time it is needed for this research.

Do you have any questions?

Are you willing to participate?

Section 1: Neighbourhood Satisfaction

First, we would like to ask you some questions on how you feel about the Alexandra Park neighbourhood.

1. How long have you lived in the Alexandra Park community?

_____ YEARS _____ MONTHS 99 DK/NR

2. *IF RESIDENT HAS LIVED HERE FOR 2 YEARS OR MORE:

In the past 2 years, would you say the Alexandra Park community has:

1 Changed for the better

2 Changed for the worse

3 Stayed about the same

99 DK/NR

*IF RESPONDENT ANSWERS CHANGED FOR BETTER OR WORSE:

A. Briefly tell us what changes have you noticed in the past 2 years

*IF RESPONDENT ANSWERS STAYED ABOUT THE SAME

B. Briefly tell us in what ways your co-op has stayed the same

3. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements: [READ OPTIONS & CIRCLE NUMBER]

a. This neighbourhood is a good place to live

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither disagree nor agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- 99 DK/NR

b. My neighbourhood is a good place to raise children

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither disagree nor agree
- Agree

- Strongly agree
- 99 DK/NR

4. Name one thing you like about the Alexandra Park community

5. Name one thing you dislike about the Alexandra Park community

6. Name 2 things that are needed to improve this neighbourhood

A. _____

B. _____

7. What kind of physical improvements (i.e. roadways, new buildings) would you like to see for the community?

8. How long do you expect to stay living in Alexandra Park?

- 1 Will move as soon as possible
- 2 Will stay for 1-3 more years
- 3 Will stay for many more years (more than three years)
- 99 DK/NR

A. *IF THEY PLAN ON MOVING: Why do you plan to move?

B. *IF THEY PLAN ON STAYING: Why do you plan to stay?

Section 2: Access to Services & Safety

Next we would like to ask you some questions about services in your neighbourhood and community safety.

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

9. I can always get the health services I need in my neighbourhood [READ OPTIONS & CIRCLE NUMBER]

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither disagree nor agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- 99 DK/NR

A. *IF RESPONDENT ANSWERS STRONGLY DISAGREE or DISAGREE or NEITHER DISAGREE NOR AGREE: What health services can be improved, or are needed in your neighbourhood?

10. I can always get the community services I need in my neighbourhood (e.g. libraries, drop-in centres, daycare, training programs, etc)

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither disagree nor agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- 99 DK/NR

A. *IF RESPONDENT ANSWERS STRONGLY DISAGREE or DISAGREE or NEITHER DISAGREE NOR AGREE: What community services can be improved, or are needed in your neighbourhood?

11. I can always find the goods and services I need to buy in my neighbourhood

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither disagree nor agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- 99 DK/NR

A. *IF RESPONDENT ANSWERS STRONGLY DISAGREE or DISAGREE or NEITHER DISAGREE NOR AGREE: What busi-

nesses or business services are needed in your neighbourhood?

12. There are enough recreational services in my neighbourhood to meet my needs (e.g. community centres with sports facilities, parks, swimming pools, etc)

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither disagree nor agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- 99 DK/NR

A. *IF RESPONDENT ANSWERS STRONGLY DISAGREE or DISAGREE or NEITHER DISAGREE NOR AGREE: What recreational services can be improved, or are needed in your neighbourhood?

13. Public transportation in my neighbourhood is convenient

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither disagree nor agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- 99 DK/NR

A. *IF RESPONDENT ANSWERS STRONGLY DISAGREE or DISAGREE or NEITHER DISAGREE NOR AGREE: How can public transportation be improved in your neighbourhood?

14. Relative to other places in Toronto, do you think this neighbourhood is [READ OPTIONS]

1 More safe

2 Less safe

3 About the same

99 DK/NR

*SKIP QUESTION 15 IF LIVED IN NEIGHBOURHOOD LESS THAN 2 YEARS

15. Over the last few years do you think the neighbourhood has been getting [READ OPTIONS]

- 1 More safe
- 2 Less safe
- 3 About the same
- 99 DK/NR

16. How safe do you feel walking alone at night? [READ OPTIONS & CIRCLE NUMBER]

- Very unsafe
- Somewhat unsafe
- Neither unsafe nor safe
- Somewhat safe
- Very safe
- 99 DK/NR

Section 3: Connections Among Residents

Now we would like to ask you some questions about your connections to people in your neighbourhood.

17. Over the past year, how often did you stop and talk with any of your neighbours? [READ OPTIONS & CIRCLE NUMBER]

- Never
- Once or twice a year
- Once a month
- Once a week
- Every day or almost every day
- 99 DK/NR

18. How often do you share information or offer advice about things such as parenting or job openings with other people in your neighbourhood? [READ OPTIONS & CIRCLE NUMBER]

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- 99 DK/NR

19. How strongly do you agree or disagree with these statements: [READ OPTIONS & CIRCLE NUMBER]

a. In this neighbourhood, when someone is not at home, their neighbours will watch over their property.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither disagree nor agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

- 99 DK/NR

b. People around here are willing to help their neighbours.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither disagree nor agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

99 DK/NR

c. People around here are willing to help their neighbours even if they are from different backgrounds.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither disagree nor agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- 99 DK/NR

d. People in this neighbourhood generally don't get along with each other.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither disagree nor agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- 99 DK/NR

e. People in this neighbourhood view the youth as playing an important role in the community

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither disagree nor agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- 99 DK/NR

Section 4: Local Leadership Capacity

Now we are going to ask you some questions about how residents work together in your neighbourhood.

20. Are there people or organizations in your neighbourhood you can go to for help to solve problems in the community?

1 YES

2 NO

99 DK/NR

IF YES: Who are they? 1 _____
2 _____
3 _____

21. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements? [READ OPTIONS & CIRCLE NUMBER]

a. If there is a problem in this neighbourhood, people who live here can get it solved

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither disagree nor agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- 99 DK/NR

b. People feel that efforts to improve this neighbourhood are a waste of time

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither disagree nor agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- 99 DK/NR

c. The people in this neighbourhood have almost no power over what happens here

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither disagree nor agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- 99 DK/NR

Section 5: Civic Participation

Next, we would like to ask you some questions about your involvement in your community.

22. How likely do you think it is that your neighbours would do something if they heard that the local school was going to close? [READ THE OPTIONS & CIRCLE NUMBER]

- Very unlikely
- Somewhat unlikely
- Neither unlikely or likely
- Somewhat likely
- Very likely
- 99 DK/NR

23. Please tell me whether you have participated in any of these activities in the past 12 months: [CIRCLE NUMBER]

	YES	NO	DK/NR
a. Attended a city committee meeting or city council meeting	1	2	99
b. Participated in a neighbourhood association or group	1	2	99
c. Contacted a public official (i.e. politician) either by phone, mail or in person	1	2	99
d. Participated in a neighbourhood safety or neighbourhood watch club	1	2	99
e. Participated on a board or committee of any local agency or organization (local can be either at the neighbourhood or city level)	1	2	99
f. Volunteered for any local agency or group (local can be either at the neighbourhood or city level)	1	2	99
g. Attended a school council meeting (or PTA meeting)	1	2	99
h. Attended a community event in your neighbourhood	1	2	99
i. Participated in any plans or projects to improve your neighbourhood	1	2	99
j. Is there any other way you have participated in your local community or the co-op? If yes, please specify:	1	2	99

*SKIP QUESTION 24(A & B) IF LIVED IN NEIGHBOURHOOD LESS THAN 2 YEARS

24. A. In the past 2 years, would you say that your overall household involvement in the Atkinson co-op has:

- 1 Increased
- 2 Decreased
- 3 Stayed about the same
- 99 DK/NR

B. In the past 2 years, would you say that your overall involvement in the neighbourhood/community has:

- 1 Increased
- 2 Decreased
- 3 Stayed about the same
- 99 DK/NR

25. Would you like to become more involved in decision-making and planning in your community?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO
- 99 DK/NR

*IF YES:

A. What would make it easier for you to become more involved in community decision-making? [DO NOT READ OPTIONS]

- 1 Accessible meeting times
- 2 Better publicity of meetings and events
- 3 Child care
- 4 Higher income
- 5 More free time
- 6 Reduced or no cost
- 7 Transit
- 8 Translation/ Interpreter
- 9 Other _____
- 99 DK/NR

26. Would members of your household be willing to join group discussions about the future of the Atkinson Co-op community?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 99 DK/NR

A. If yes, please provide us with their contact information:

Section 6: Demographic Questions:

Finally, we would like to ask you some questions about you. Please remember that all information you provide is confidential, and you can choose to skip over any questions you do not wish to answer.

27. Gender: [DO NOT ASK UNLESS UNSURE]

- 1 Female
- 2 Male
- 3 Other

28. Which age group do you fall under? [READ OPTIONS]

- 1 18 to 19 years old
- 2 20 to 29 years old
- 3 30 to 39 years old
- 4 40 to 49 years old

5 50 to 59 years old

6 60 to 69 years old

7 70 to 79 years old

8 80 or older

99 DK/NR

29. What is your marital status? [READ OPTIONS]

1 Married

2 Living common-law

3 Widowed

4 Separated

5 Divorced

6 Single, never married

99 DK/NR

30. What is your country of birth? [DO NOT READ OPTIONS]

SPECIFY: _____

1 Canada

2 United States

3 Europe

4 South Asia (e.g., India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka)

5 East Asia (e.g., China, Japan, Korea)

6 Southeast Asia (e.g., Philippines, Malaysia)

7 West Central Asia & Middle East (e.g., Lebanon, Iran)

8 Northern Africa

9 Central Africa

10 Southern Africa

11 Central or South America

12 Caribbean & Bermuda

13 Other _____

99 DK/NR

A. *IF NOT BORN IN CANADA: How long have you lived in Canada?

Months: _____ Years: _____ 99 DK/NR

31. How would you describe your household? [READ OPTIONS]

1 a single individual living alone

2 two or more unrelated individuals living together

3 a couple with no children

4 a couple with one or more children

5 a single parent with one or more children

6 more than one family living together

7 other (please describe) _____

99 DK/NR

32. Not including yourself, how many members of your household are:

Male____ Female____

ages 0-4____ ages5-10____ ages11-14____ ages15-19____

ages20-24____ ages25-35____ ages 35-64____ ages65 and over____

33. What language do you speak most often at home? [DO NOT READ OPTIONS, SELECT ONLY ONE]

1 English

2 Arabic

3 Chinese/Cantonese/Mandarin

4 Dari

5 Farsi

6 French

7 Greek

8 Hindi

9 Italian

10 Macedonian

11 Pashto

12 Portuguese

13 Punjabi

14 Somali

15 Spanish

16 Swahili

17 Tagalog

18 Tamil

19 Urdu

20 Vietnamese

21 Other _____

99 DK/NR

34. What is the highest level of education you have completed? [DO NOT READ OPTIONS]

1 No formal schooling

2 Some elementary school

3 Elementary school diploma

4 Some secondary (high) school

5 Secondary (high) school diploma or certificate

6 Registered apprenticeship or trades certification or diploma

7 College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma

8 University degree, certificate or diploma

9 Other _____

99 DK/NR

35. What was your main source of income during the past 12 months [DO NOT READ OPTIONS]

1 No income

2 Employment or self-employment (wages, salaries, commission, tips)

3 Employment insurance

4 Worker's compensation

5 Benefits from Canada Pension Plan

6 Retirement pensions

7 Basic Old Age Security

8 Guaranteed Income Supplement or Spouse's Allowance

9 Child Tax Benefit

10 Social assistance or welfare

11 Child Support/Alimony

12 Other income (e.g., rental income, scholarships, other government income, stocks, mutual funds, etc.) Specify:

99 DK/NR

36. What is your best estimate of the total income, before deductions, of all household members from all sources during the past 12 months? [READ OPTIONS]

1 Less than 10,000

2 10,000 to 19,000

3 20,000 to 29,000

4 30,000 to 39,000

5 40,000 to 49,000

6 50,000 to 59,000

7 60,000 to 69,000

8 70,000 to 79,000

9 80,000 to 89,000

10 90,000 to 99,000

11 100,000 or more

99 DK/NR

Thank you very much for taking the time to participate in our survey!

Post Interview notes:
