



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

# Redevelopment of the Former DMV Site Project

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT







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## Acknowledgement & Gratitude

This journey wouldn't have been possible without the voices, vision, and dedication of the Southeast Raleigh Community. The Community Engagement Department expresses heartfelt gratitude to Raleigh residents, legacy families, City Council, staff, and local partners who helped bring this project to life. A special thank you to those who helped us every step of the way to ensure this work remained rooted in community.

## Introduction

From September 2023 to June 2025, the City of Raleigh undertook engagement for the redevelopment of the former DMV Site. This Engagement Report provides an overview of that community-centered engagement process. This effort prioritized both the community and city vision, aiming to ensure that future development is guided by the people it will impact most.

This project marks the City of Raleigh's first major redevelopment project led by deep, sustained public engagement. The effort fully prioritized community engagement from the start and reflects a shift toward more inclusive and collaborative planning, while honoring Southeast Raleigh's rich cultural history. Together, we've charted a course that blends vision with values, and a future rooted in partnership, resilience, and belonging.

# Site History and Community Legacy

Located at 1100 New Bern Avenue, this land has deep historical roots in Southeast Raleigh. Prior to the construction of the North Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) headquarters, the property played a variety of roles in Raleigh's history. Notably, the site was home to the first North Carolina State Fair sponsored by the State Agricultural Society, which was held there from 1853 to 1872.

Years later, this area became home to a vibrant and close-knit Black community in Southeast Raleigh. Families, churches, and local businesses helped shape a neighborhood full of culture, pride, and connection, particularly during and after the era of segregation.

As the City of Raleigh moves forward with redevelopment of the site, there is an opportunity to acknowledge this layered history and make a turning point by building something that honors the past, supports today's community, and creates new opportunities for the future.

## City Acquisition of the Site

In January 2019, the city began working with state leaders and North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) to explore future uses for the former DMV headquarters. Following the DMV's relocation to Rocky Mount, an opportunity emerged to reclaim the property for local benefit. That vision was later reinforced by the [New Bern Station Area Plan](#), which provided a foundational blueprint for how the site could evolve. The potential site opportunities identified by the City of Raleigh at the time included:

- Enhanced Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Station
- Mixed Income Housing
- Greenspace, Linear Park, or Enhanced Connectivity to other green space, heritage or recreation amenities
- Supportive services for businesses and residents.

On June 24, 2024, the City of Raleigh officially acquired the 5.88-acre site, and with the vision of a community-driven development. Historically, this part of Southeast Raleigh was home to many African Americans during segregation and is known for its resilience, strong social bonds, and cultural richness. While the neighborhood has experienced change through increased development and rising costs, many long-time residents remain, maintaining the spirit of connection that defines the area. The city wants to make sure the future of this site reflects and honors that history.





## Project Working Group (PWG)

To ensure meaningful participation, the City established a Project Working Group (PWG) comprising of 12 Raleigh residents, many of whom are legacy residents, community leaders, and neighborhood advocates. The PWG was instrumental in shaping engagement strategies and served as authentic ambassadors to the broader community.

During the early research phase, City staff met with representatives from Prosper Portland and the William & Russell CDC Board to learn from similar redevelopment efforts and support early visioning. Staff also met with local community leaders who have significant ties and impact in the Southeast Raleigh community. Over a six-month period, this group informally became "Process Leaders" and would spend about two-hours a month brainstorming viable uses for the site, and ways to incorporate community feedback. These conversations helped inform the formation and focus of the PWG.







The Project Working Group met monthly for over 13 months, with all meetings open to the public. Early sessions focused on building knowledge around redevelopment processes, the site's history, and prior City-funded projects. The group also reviewed case studies, learned from the City's Documentarians in Residence, and developed a Group Charter identifying responsibilities, roles, and milestones.

In addition to their monthly meetings, PWG members received engagement training and outreach tools, including meeting-in-a-box kits, social media templates, and printed project materials. These resources helped the group build shared values and co-create Request for Proposal (RFP) criteria that reflect community priorities, guiding the Request for Proposal for the site's redevelopment.

#### Project Working Group Members:

- |                                |                       |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| ■ Harolynn Coplin              | ■ Tara Minter         |
| ■ Dr. Ajamu Dillahunt-Holloway | ■ Tolulope Omokaiye   |
| ■ Desmond Dunn                 | ■ Anthony Pope        |
| ■ Karen Haynes                 | ■ Clark Rinehart      |
| ■ Felts Lewis                  | ■ Dr. Shawn Singleton |
| ■ Harold Mallette              | ■ Helen Tart          |





# By the Numbers



**14 Project  
Working  
Group  
Meetings**



**55 Community  
Events**

(detailed list found in  
Appendix A: Engagement  
Meeting & Events)



**12 Office Hour  
Sessions**



**5,100+ Printed  
Materials  
Distributed**



**7,131 Webpage Visits**



**700+ Survey  
Responses**



**4 Site Signs with  
Project Info and  
QR Code**

## Community Kickoff Event

On Saturday, August 24, over 300 neighbors gathered at the Former DMV Site to share food, stories, and ideas. We collected 469 comments from community members and the following community priorities emerged:

- Food/Market
- Affordable Housing
- Community Spaces & Recreation
- Health & Social Services
- Education & Training
- Shopping & Entertainment

## Community Office Hours

From October 2024 to February 2025, we hosted monthly office hours at the former DMV site, creating space for residents to share their thoughts, ask questions, and connect face-to-face with staff about the project.

# Former DMV Site Redevelopment Survey

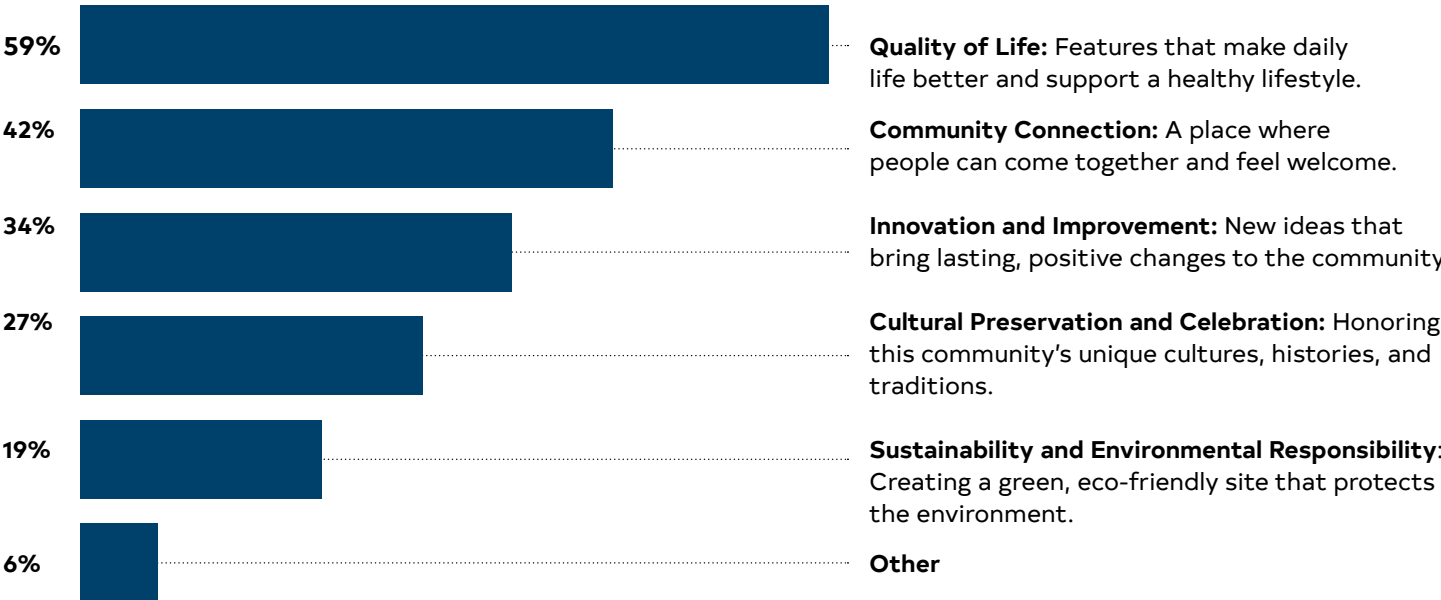
Between October 2024 to March 2025, the City of Raleigh conducted a survey to gather community input on the future of the former DMV site. Over 700 participants shared their thoughts, helping to shape the vision for this space.

## Survey Questions and Results:

1. Rank the following themes in order of importance (1 = most important, 6 = least important) Based on the results, here's how the priorities were ranked in order of importance:



2. What are the two most important values you would want the redevelopment to reflect? Based on the results, here are the values in order of importance:



3. Do you have any other things you'd like to share with us about the redevelopment of the former DMV site?

- 416 comments further deepened our understanding of community hopes, needs, and concerns.

These responses provided valuable insights into community priorities and values, guiding the redevelopment planning process.



# Vetted List of Site Opportunities

Following all engagement activities, the Project Working Group spent hours meeting to compile a vetted list of site opportunities that reflect the community priorities and values. This list is organized by high priority opportunities and lower priority opportunities, and is ranked in order of importance:

Must Haves/High Priorities:	Like to Haves/Low Priorities
<b>1. Affordable Housing (Space Requirement &amp; Strategy)</b> <i>Key Goal: Housing options for 30-60% Area Medium Income (AMI).</i> <i>Focus Area: Various family sizes, incomes, and employment types.</i>	<b>2. Retail (Space Requirement &amp; Strategy)</b> <i>Key Goal: Space for local, small businesses that reflect the historic New Bern Avenue corridor community.</i> <i>Focus Area: Provide access to essential goods.</i>
<b>3. Community Space (Space Requirement &amp; Strategy)</b> <i>Key Goal: Multipurpose indoor space with variety and flexibility in room size and state of the art technology</i> <i>Focus Area: Workforce development, educational classes, performances, etc</i>	<b>4. Food Incubator &amp; Co-op Space (Space Requirement &amp; Strategy)</b> <i>Key Goal: Space that provides fresh, healthy, and affordable food access.</i> <i>Focus Area: Commissary Kitchen for food services to access a commercial kitchen.</i>
<b>5. Cultural Recognition (Strategy)</b> <i>Key Goal: Cultural destination reflective of the historic community.</i> <i>Focus Area: Art, wayfinding, historical markers, and sculpture recognition.</i>	<b>6. Universal Site Design</b> <i>Key Goal: Design that's accessible to all.</i> <i>Focus Area: Beyond Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) minimum.</i>
<b>1. Sustainability and Innovation (Strategy)</b> <i>Key Goal: Varied architectural style, project creativity, and sustainability.</i>	<b>2. Childcare Options</b> <i>Key Goal: Drop-in daycare.</i>

## Conclusion

The work at the Former DMV Site reflects more than redevelopment, it's about legacy. It symbolizes a deep commitment to community restoration, intentional engagement, and collaborative planning. From the beginning, Southeast Raleigh residents have co-developed this process with heart, resilience, and hope.

Next steps include:

- Completion of a third-party market study analysis
- Development of community-driven Request for Proposal criteria to guide future proposals
- Site demolition and environmental remediation
- Exploration of various financing strategies to support intentional development
- Ongoing temporary site activations and storytelling initiatives to keep the community engaged

This is only the beginning. Together, we will continue shaping the future of New Bern Avenue and ensure it reflects where we've been, serves who we are, and leads us into where we're going as a city for generations to come.

## Appendix A: Engagement Meetings & Events

Month	Event	Location
April 2024	Children's Day	Moore Square
May 2024	Tarboro Road Center Working Group Meeting	Tarboro Road Community Center
June 2024	Juneteenth: A Chavis Celebration	John Chavis Community Center
June 2024	Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) Expo	McKimmon Center
July 2024	Black Farmers Market Pop-Up	Southeast Raleigh YMCA
July 2024	Martin Street Community Group	Roberts Park Community Center
August 2024	Community Day	Lincoln Park Holiness Church
August 2024	Community Kickoff: Shaping the Former DMV Site	Former DMV Site
August 2024	Fourth Ward's National Night Out	Fourth Ward Neighborhood
August 2024	Lincoln Park Food Pantry	Lincoln Park Holiness Church
September 2024	American Institute of Architect Triangle Meeting	Virtual
September 2024	Boyer Street Community Day	First Church of God Ministries
September 2024	Engage Raleigh Expo	McKimmon Center
September 2024	Martin Street Community Group	Roberts Park Community Center
September 2024	Raleigh Tamale Festival	Moore Square
September 2024	St. Ambrose Episcopal Church Laymen Leadership Meeting	St. Ambrose Episcopal Church
September 2024	The Sunshine Connection's Community Block Party	Cedar Crest New life Center
September 2024	Wake County Community Day	John Chavis Community Center
October 2024	African American Cultural Festival Board Meeting	Virtual
October 2024	Community Office Hours	Former DMV Site
October 2024	Fallin' for Local Event	Dix Park
October 2024	First Baptist Church Monthly Meeting	Virtual
October 2024	Martin Street Baptist Church Service	Martin Street Baptist Church
October 2024	Men of Southeast Raleigh's Annual Family and Friends Cookout	Anderson Point Park
October 2024	Southeast Raleigh Community Learning Center's Annual Night of Stars Gala	State Street Community Church
October 2024	Southeast Raleigh Promise Legacy Resident Ambassador Meeting	Ralph Campbell Center
October 2024	Tarboro Road Center Working Group Meeting	Tarboro Road Community Center



<b>October 2024</b>	Transportation Trunk & Treat	Marsh Creek Community Center
<b>November 2024</b>	American Institute of Architect Triangle Meeting	Virtual
<b>November 2024</b>	Battery Heights Neighborhood Meeting	Virtual
<b>November 2024</b>	Community Office Hours	Former DMV Site
<b>November 2024</b>	East Citizen Advisory Council (CAC)	Lions Park Community Center
<b>November 2024</b>	Men of Southeast Raleigh Monthly Meeting	Passage House
<b>November 2024</b>	Raleigh Interdenominational Ministerial All Meeting on Affordable Housing	Redeeming Love Baptist Church
<b>November 2024</b>	Solid Rock Ministries Board of Directors Meeting	Solid Rock Ministry International Church
<b>November 2024</b>	Southeast Raleigh Promise Legacy Resident Ambassador Meeting	Ralph Campbell Center
<b>November 2024</b>	Tarboro Road Center Working Group Meeting	Tarboro Road Community Center
<b>December 2024</b>	Black Santa Event	John P. "Top" Green Community Center
<b>December 2024</b>	John Chavis Memorial Park Senior Group Meeting	John Chavis Community Center
<b>December 2024</b>	Martin Street Baptist Church Conference	Martin Street Baptist Church Family Life Center
<b>December 2024</b>	Men of Southeast Raleigh's Kwanzaa Celebration	Southeast Raleigh YMCA
<b>December 2024</b>	Oak City Cares Day Weekend Shelter	Oak City Cares
<b>December 2024</b>	Oakwood Garden Club Monthly Meeting	Oakwood Garden Club
<b>December 2024</b>	Tarboro Road Center Working Group Meeting	Tarboro Road Community Center
<b>January 2025</b>	Community Office Hours	Former DMV Site
<b>February 2025</b>	Community Office Hours	Former DMV Site
<b>February 2025</b>	Raleigh Dream Center's Adopt-A-Block	Raleigh Millbank Apartments
<b>February 2025</b>	Raleigh Dream Center's Tuesday Night Street Outreach	Moore Square
<b>February 2025</b>	Tarboro Road Park Open House	Tarboro Road Community Center
<b>March 2025</b>	Engagement Pop-Up	Green Road Community Library
<b>March 2025</b>	Engagement Pop-Up	North Regional Library
<b>March 2025</b>	Engagement Pop-Up	Oberlin Regional Library
<b>April 2025</b>	District C Town Hall	Barwell Road Community Center
<b>April 2025</b>	Egg-stravagant Basket Giveaway	Former DMV Site
<b>May 2025</b>	Wake County Smart Start Block Party	Roberts Park Community Center

## Appendix B: Project Working Group Application

Thank you for wanting to join the City of Raleigh's DMV Site Working Group! The envisioned working group will play a pivotal role in community visioning and engagement. We are seeking a diverse group of individuals who can contribute innovative ideas and perspectives before the City of Raleigh initiates a Request for Proposal (RFP).

Members of the working group will develop creative ways to learn from community members about their ideas for the site and share information with the public about site possibilities. At the end of the Working Group's term, the final output will be a vetted list of potential site opportunities, based on community feedback, which will be used to aid the RFP criteria and provide valuable insights during the evaluation process. Your commitment to this project will have a big impact on our community, making the DMV site a place that meets the needs of Raleigh. If you're interested, please fill out the application below.

### Personal Information:

1. Name:
2. Contact Information:
3. Email:
4. Phone:
5. Address:

### Application Questions:

1. Are you a 2nd or 3rd generation Raleigh native? Yes/No
2. If no, why do you believe you should be one of the two reserved seats for community-at-large members? (Please provide a brief statement):
3. How do you hold strong connections to the New Bern Avenue Corridor? (Please provide details):
4. Please share your personal experiences, perspectives, and knowledge about the needs of Raleigh's Black/ African American community:
5. What skills or expertise do you possess that would contribute to the success of the DMV site working group? (e.g., community organizing, urban planning, business development, etc.):
6. Can you commit to actively participating in monthly hour-long meetings and contributing to the DMV site visioning process until the end of 2024? Yes/ No
7. Is there any additional information you would like to provide to support your application?





## Appendix C: Project Working Group Charter

KEY INFORMATION	
<b>Project Background:</b>	<p>In January 2019, collaborative discussions began between NCDOT, the City of Raleigh, and select legislators about the DMV headquarters in Southeast Raleigh relocating to Rocky Mount.</p> <p>An opportunity arose for the City of Raleigh to acquire the site that spans 5.88 acres and offers a pivotal opportunity for community engagement and development. The Project Working Group will help inform the visioning process for how the site will be redeveloped</p>
<b>Group Goals:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Honor and preserve the rich history and culture of Southeast Raleigh.</li> <li>■ Elevate the voices of legacy residents and those who will be most affected by this project.</li> <li>■ Explore creative approaches to gathering input from community members and potential community partnership opportunities.</li> <li>■ Share information about potential site possibilities and updates with the public.</li> <li>■ Achieve the vision and outcomes that reflect the community's values.</li> </ul>
<b>Roles &amp; Responsibilities:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Inform a community-centered visioning and development process.</li> <li>■ Identify opportunities to reflect City of Raleigh community and cultural history in the project.</li> <li>■ Identify community priorities that should be reflected in criteria.</li> <li>■ Contribute to and participate in community engagement efforts related to the development of the DMV site.</li> <li>■ Provide feedback and recommendations for opportunities for temporary activation.</li> </ul>
<b>Project Partners:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ DMV Project Working Group</li> <li>■ City of Raleigh</li> <li>■ Community Members</li> </ul>

PROJECT WORKING GROUP MEMBERS
<b>Name:</b>
Clark Rinehart
Ajamu Dillahunt-Holloway
Dr. Shawn Singleton
Helen Tart
Tara Minter
Harolynn Coplin
Anthony Pope
Desmond Dunn
Felts Lewis
Karen Haynes
Harold Mallette
Tolulope Omokaiye

## Appendix C: Project Working Group Charter (cont)

PARTICIPATION EXPECTATIONS	
<b>Meeting Cadence:</b>	Monthly, two-hour meeting with the full group every 2nd Thursday from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm. Additional meetings as needed.
<b>Meeting Procedures:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Meetings will be held in person at Martin Street Baptist Church (211 S State St or 1005 E. Martin Street).</li> <li>■ The Community Engagement Department will draft agendas, and meeting materials will be shared widely following the meeting.</li> </ul>
<b>Roles &amp; Responsibilities:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Respect the time of others: Come to meetings prepared. Begin and finish meetings on time.</li> <li>■ Stay on topic: Follow the meeting agenda to keep meetings focused.</li> <li>■ Encourage a safe space: Critique issues, not people. Respect the views of others.</li> <li>■ Step up, step back: Create room for different learning and communication styles.</li> <li>■ Remain engaged: Bring all ideas, experiences, and perspectives to the process.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Complete assigned work by established deadlines.</li> <li>» Familiarize yourself with topics/subjects related to the project and community.</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ Be mindful of who is talking: Allow everyone the opportunity to speak and listen actively to their contributions.</li> </ul>
<b>Group Communication:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Project Working Group documents will live in the Project Working Group shared folder.</li> </ul>
<b>Group Accountability:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Project Working Group will work with City of Raleigh staff to post site updates through the DMV project page.</li> </ul>

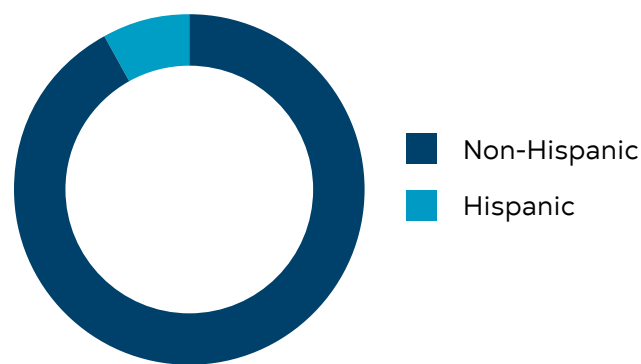
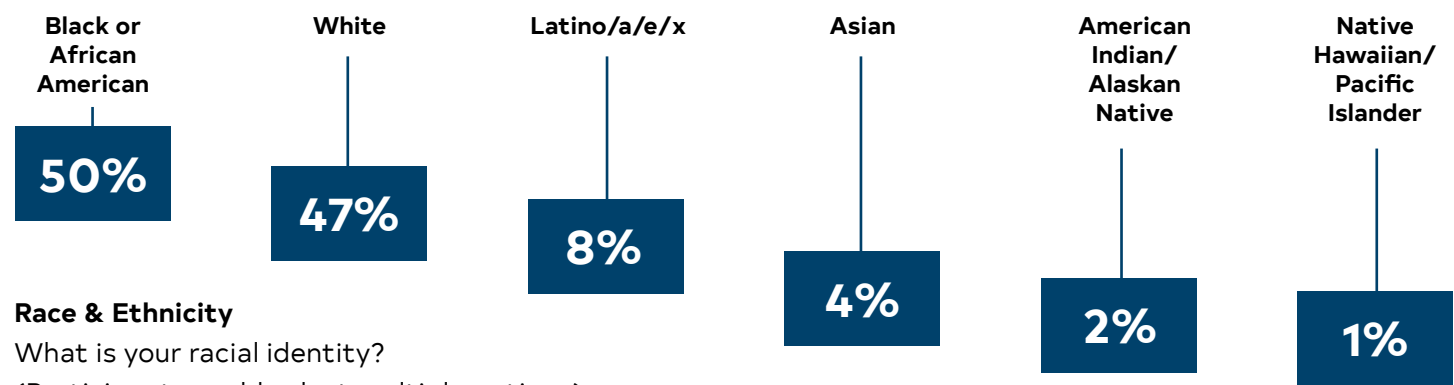
GROUP MILESTONES			
<b>Establish Group Charter</b>	Develop a Project Working Group Charter that outlines goals, roles and responsibilities, expectations, and expected outcomes.	May 2024	June 2024
<b>Complete Re-Development Orientation</b>	Includes a case study, in-depth sessions on project background, and redevelopment goals	May 2024	July 2024
<b>Identify Community Engagement Opportunities</b>	Identify possible community engagement ideas, events, and partners.	August 2024	March 2025
<b>Develop List of Site Opportunities</b>	Support in the execution and facilitation of community engagement to obtain diverse and representative feedback.	August 2024	May 2025
<b>Support Development of RFP/RFI</b>	Create a vetted list that provides an overview of potential site opportunities aligned with the community's vision.	January 2025	June 2025
<b>Participation in Pre-Proposal Meeting</b>	Share community vision with developers interested in responding to RFP/RFI	Summer 2025	TBD



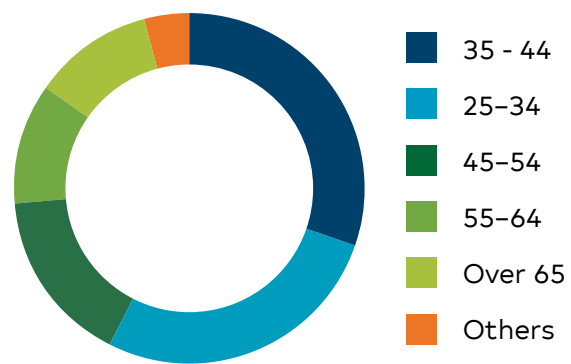
## DEFINITIONS

<b>Criteria</b>	Criteria refers to the scoring, priorities, considerations, and standards used to evaluate proposals for the Former DMV Site. These criteria are informed by community engagement, project goals, staff input, and statutory/conveyance framework or policies. They help shape the site's vision and are used as one part of staff evaluation and discussion of potential redevelopment proposals.
<b>Vetted Site List</b>	A vetted site list is a curated compilation of potential redevelopment opportunities for the Former DMV Site. Each site opportunity included in the list has been assessed based on desirability, viability, and feasibility.
<b>Community-Centered Visioning</b>	A participatory approach to planning and decision-making that prioritizes the perspectives, needs, and aspirations of community members, particularly legacy residents and those most impacted by redevelopment. This process ensures that the redevelopment reflects the values and desires of the community.
<b>Temporary Activation</b>	Short-term initiatives or events designed to utilize the Former DMV Site before permanent redevelopment occurs.
<b>Legacy Residents</b>	Long-term residents of Southeast Raleigh who have historical and cultural ties to the area across generations.
<b>Community Priorities</b>	Key concerns, needs, and aspirations identified by community members through engagement efforts.
<b>Project Working Group (PWG)</b>	A group of individuals representing various stakeholders, including current and legacy residents, as well as community leaders, tasked with advising on the redevelopment process of the Former DMV Site. The PWG ensures that the project remains community-focused and aligned with the established vision and values.
<b>RFP (Request for Proposals) / RFI (Request for Information)</b>	Document(s) issued by the City of Raleigh to solicit interest from developers, organizations, or other entities for the redevelopment of the Former DMV Site. These requests outline the criteria and expectations for proposals and provide an opportunity for potential partners to propose solutions aligned with the community's vision.
<b>Pre-Proposal Meeting</b>	Meeting(s) held during the formal proposal submission process to provide interested developers with an understanding of the community's vision, redevelopment goals, and criteria. This meeting allows for dialogue between stakeholders and potential project partners.
<b>Site Opportunities</b>	Potential uses or redevelopment possibilities for the Former DMV Site. These opportunities are evaluated based on feasibility, community alignment, and impact. Examples may include mixed-use development, affordable housing, community spaces, and economic development initiatives.

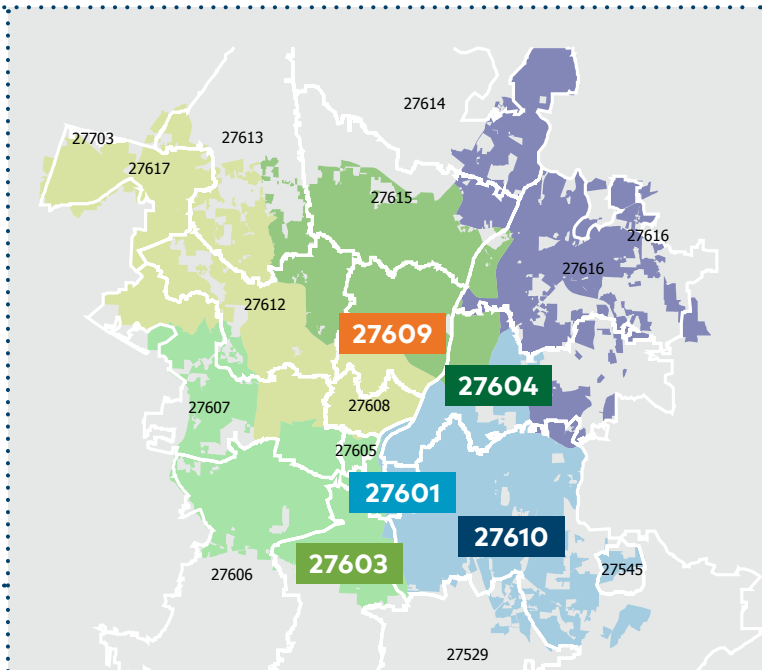
# Appendix D: Survey Respondents Demographic Breakdown



Non-Hispanic: ..... 92%  
Hispanic: ..... 8%



35 - 44 ..... 30%  
25-34 ..... 27%  
45-54 ..... 16%  
55-64 ..... 11%  
Over 65 ..... 11%  
Others: ..... 4%



**Zip Code**  
What is your zip code?

Zip Code	Percentage
27610	39%
27601	16%
27604	9%
27603	7%
27609	5%
Others	24%









**Raleigh**

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