

Community Connections Survey

Results Summary

June 1 - July 17, 2021 | Prepared by Public Participation Partners

Survey Overview

To help introduce the New Bern Avenue Station Area Plan project to the public, the City of Raleigh hosted an online survey to gather initial feedback from those that work, live, and travel in the New Bern Avenue corridor. The survey opened on June 1, 2021 and 258 participants took part in the survey before it closed on July 17, 2021.

Purpose

The purpose of this survey was to gather initial thoughts from residents regarding their vision for the New Bern Avenue area and areas that they believe the station area planning process should focus on. This feedback will help guide the station area planning process and provide the project team with insight on top priorities, concerns, and visions of current residents, workers, and travelers of the corridor.

Format

The online survey was hosted on PublicInput.com and was offered in both English and Spanish. The survey consisted of nine open and closed-ended questions about the participants' relationship and experience with the corridor, followed by nine voluntary demographic questions to help the project team understand who is participating and who is underrepresented in the data collection.

Survey Notifications

The City of Raleigh used the following communication methods and channels to spread the word about the survey and encourage participation:

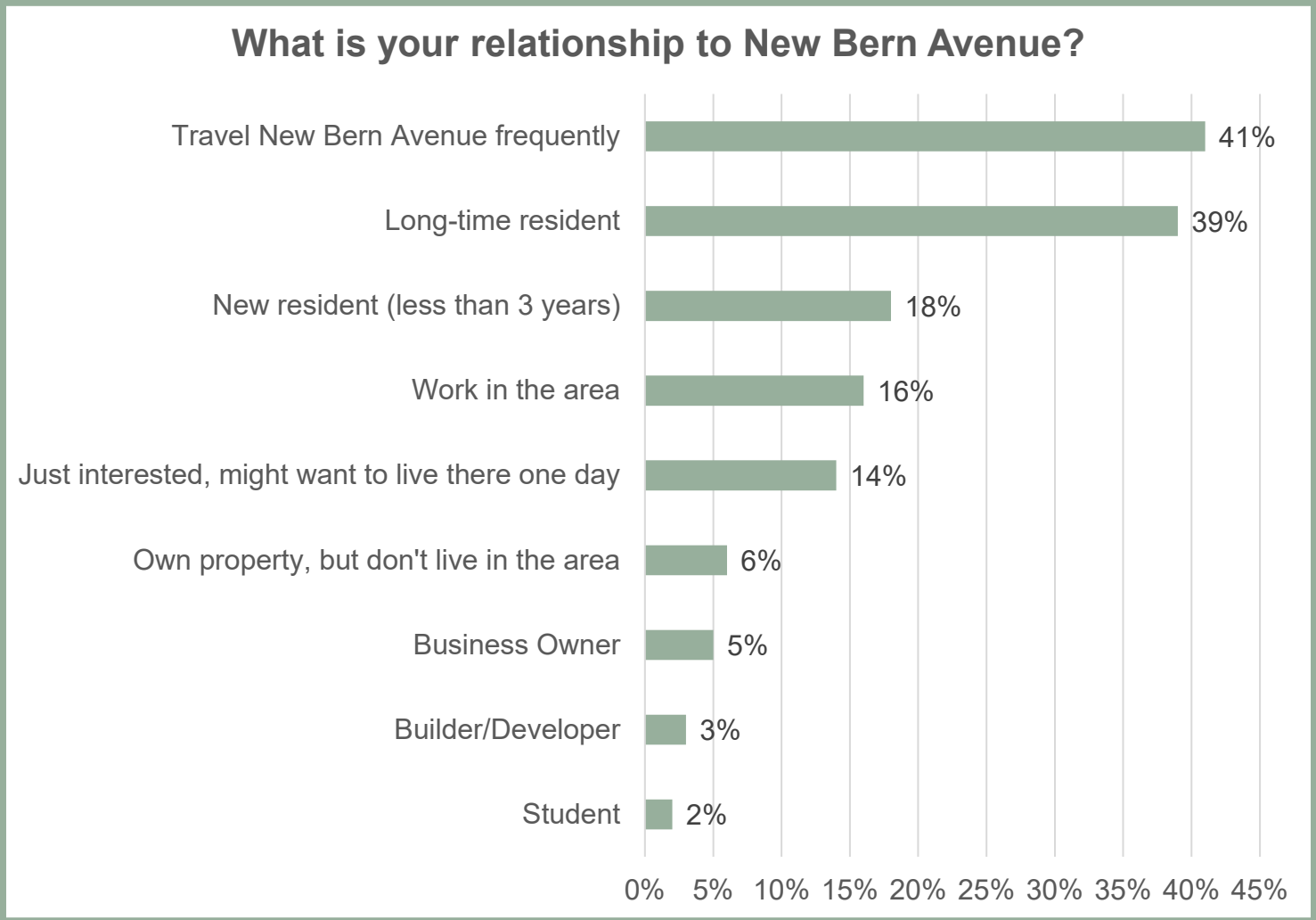
- GovDelivery emails from the City of Raleigh
- Social media posts on City of Raleigh accounts
- Postcards sent to residents in the New Bern Avenue area
- Information posted on the City of Raleigh website

Survey Results



Participants were first asked to share their relationship to New Bern Avenue.

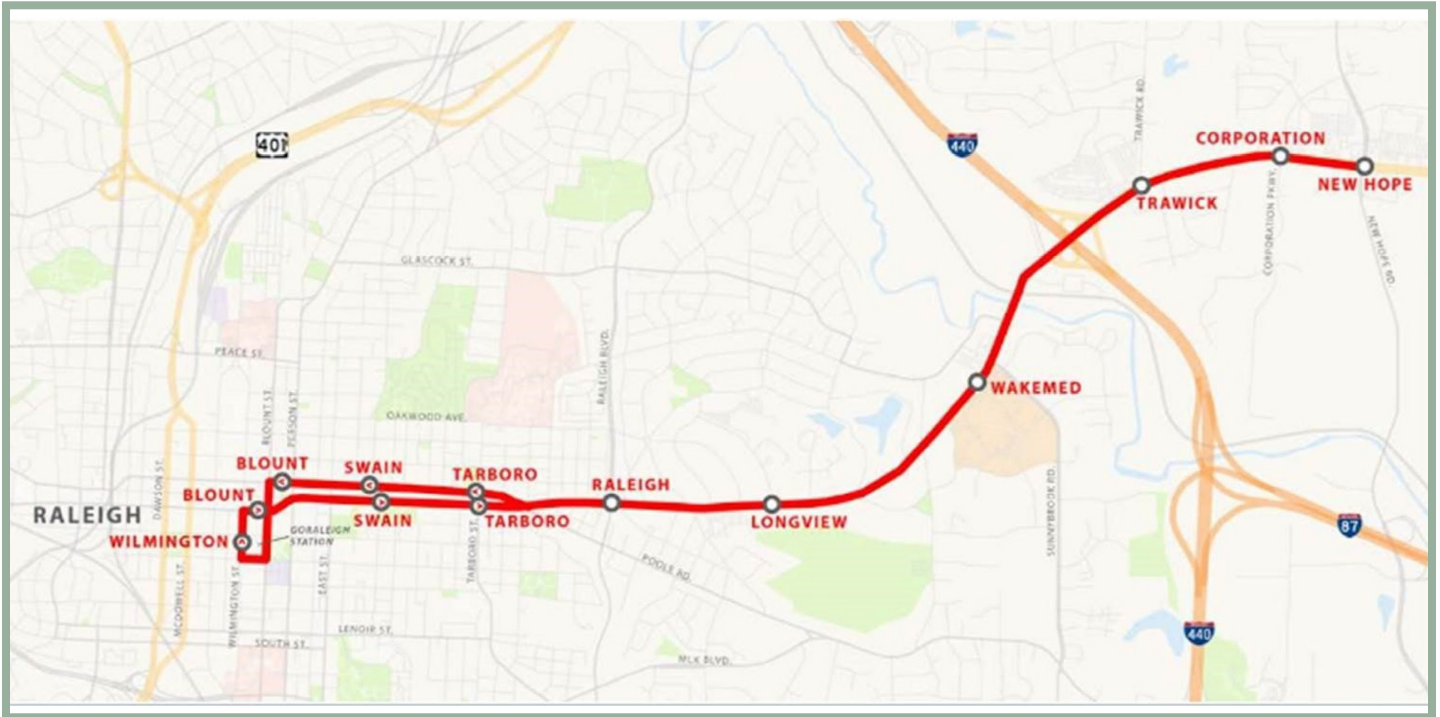
This question received 233 responses. A total of 41 percent of respondents said that they travel New Bern Avenue frequently, and 39 percent of respondents are long-time residents of New Bern Avenue. An additional 18 percent of respondents have been residents of New Bern Avenue for less than three years, 16 percent of respondents work in the area, and 14 percent of respondents noted that they are just interested in the project and may want to live in the New Bern Avenue area someday.



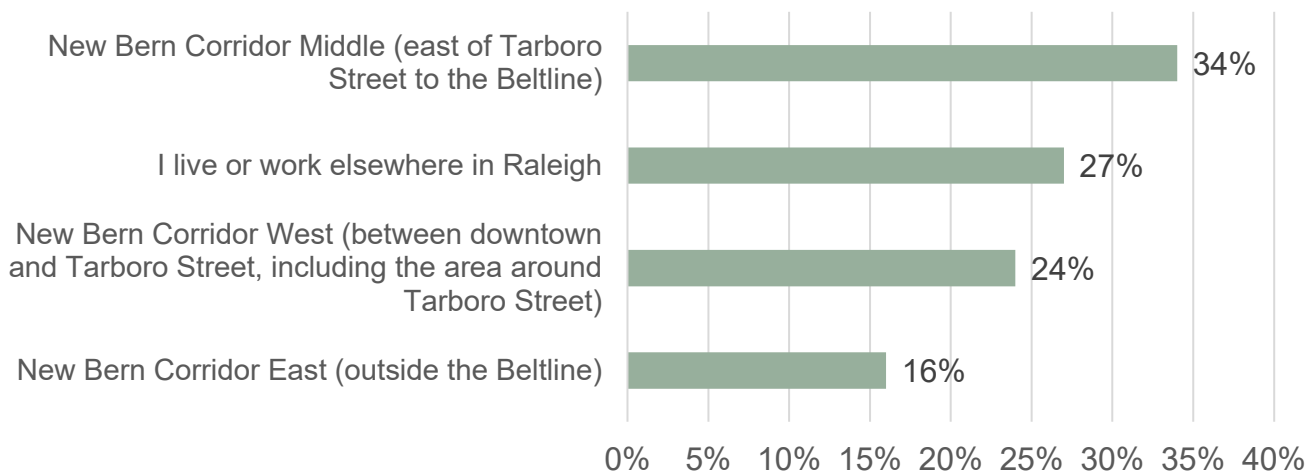
2

Participants were then asked to share what part of New Bern Avenue they live or work in.

This question received 250 responses. Over one-third of respondents live in the middle of the corridor, east of Tarboro Street to the Beltline. The second highest response showed that 24 percent of respondents live in the western part of the corridor, between Downtown Raleigh and Tarboro Street. Finally, 16 percent of respondents live in the eastern section of the corridor, outside of the Beltline. An additional 27 percent of respondents live or work elsewhere in Raleigh.



Which part of the area do you live or work in?



3

Participants were asked to share what they like most about their community currently.

When asked to share what they like most about their community, many participants mentioned the proximity to Downtown Raleigh and other significant locations, such as parks, WakeMed, future development, the Beltline, restaurants, gas stations, shopping locations, and schools. It is also close by to other towns, such as Knightdale. Many participants noted that this area was very accessible for getting around Raleigh and that it is convenient to many locations and things to do.

Many respondents also discussed the character and feel of the area, noting that the entire New Bern Avenue area has a neighborhood feel. They noted that they know their neighbors and like living in a diverse community. Some participants also mentioned that they like the history of the community.

Respondents also noted that the area is quiet, and they get to avoid the busy area and traffic of the Beltline while still being close to Downtown. Many respondents also commented on the greenspace in the area, noting that they like the abundance of trees and greenery.

Some participants also mentioned that they like the potential for the area. Some commented noting that they like the local businesses in the corridor, and others noted that they like that new businesses are coming to the area.

4

Participants were then asked to share what issues need attention in their community.

When asked about the issues that need attention in their community, many respondents mentioned concerns regarding pedestrian and bicyclist safety along New Bern Avenue. Many noted that walkability should be improved with more sidewalks and crossing lanes for streets. Others mentioned safety concerns with walking and biking due to speeding traffic, lack of street trees, lack of traffic enforcement, and low lighting in some areas. Several participants discussed the issue of drag racing down the corridor, stating that they have not noticed any enforcement to stop it. Others mentioned issues regarding bicyclist safety, and noted the need for safer bicycle infrastructure in the corridor, including separated bike lanes.

Other respondents discussed issues of gentrification and displacement in the area, noting that long-term residents were being pushed out of their homes due to rising prices and the lack of affordable housing. Many respondents noted a need for increased affordable housing in the area.

Some respondents discussed the aesthetics of the area, noting the need to revitalize abandoned buildings and bring in new businesses and restaurants to the area. Some commented on the lack of businesses and restaurants in the area. Others commented on the landscaping of the area, noting that it should be more well-maintained.

Participants also mentioned issues of littering and other crime in the area, some noting that there is not enough police presence along the corridor to prevent issues such as drug use. Other issues mentioned included noise and the growing population of homeless people in the area.

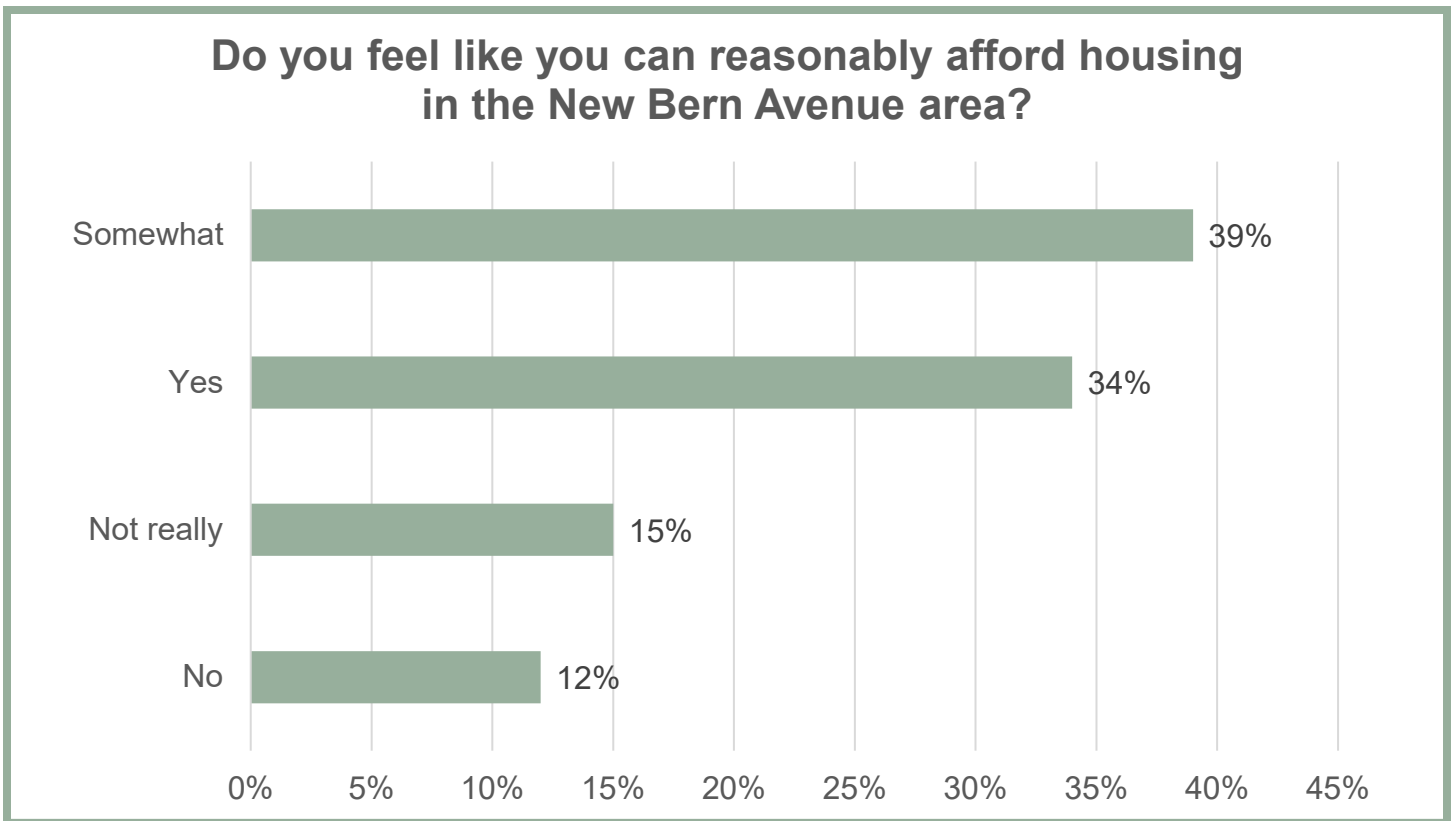
Participants also discussed transit as an area of concern, noting the need for more transit, as well as covered bus stations at transit stops in the corridor.

5

Participants were asked if they felt they could reasonably afford housing in the New Bern Avenue area.

This question received 186 responses. A majority of respondents noted that they either could afford housing in the New Bern Avenue Area (34 percent) or could somewhat afford it (39 percent). However, 15 percent of respondents said that they could “not really” afford housing in the area, and another 12 percent of respondents said that they could not afford housing in the area.

Note: A majority of the participants in this survey reported a relatively high household income, as seen in the demographics section on Page 13 of this document. Thus, this survey question may not accurately represent the perspective of many within the corridor. Additional data collection will need to be conducted to provide conclusions of affordability that are more reflective of the overall population in the New Bern Avenue area.

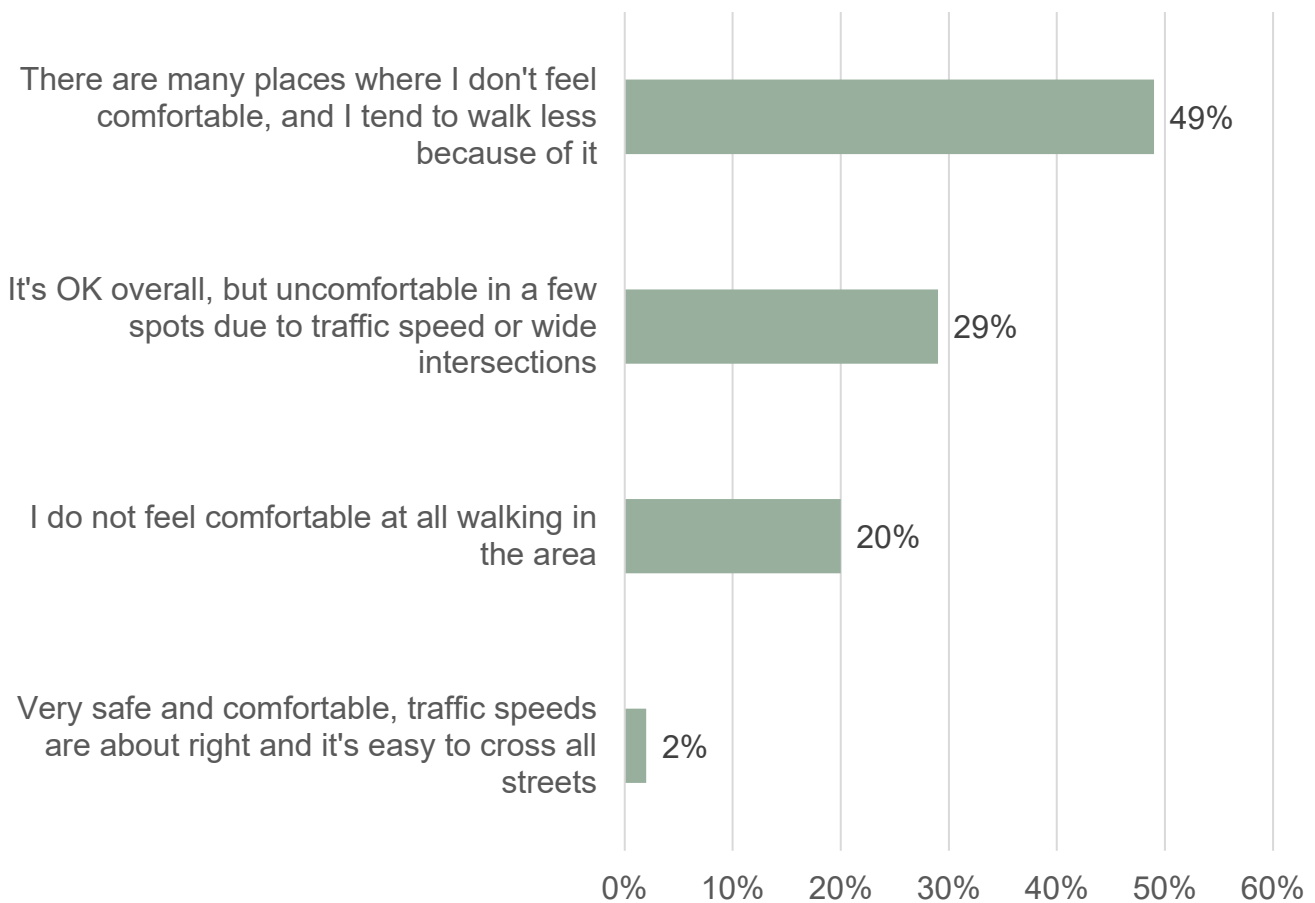


6

Participants were then asked how comfortable it is to walk in the New Bern Avenue area.

This question received 187 responses. Almost half of respondents (49 percent) noted that there are many places where they don't feel comfortable, and that they walk less because of this. Another 29 percent of respondents noted that walkability is okay overall, but there are some areas where they feel more uncomfortable due to traffic speeds or wide intersections. Additionally, 20 percent of respondents noted that they do not feel comfortable walking in the area at all. Only 2 percent of respondents noted that they feel very comfortable and safe, that traffic speeds are right, and that it is safe to cross all streets in the area.

How comfortable is it to walk in the New Bern area?

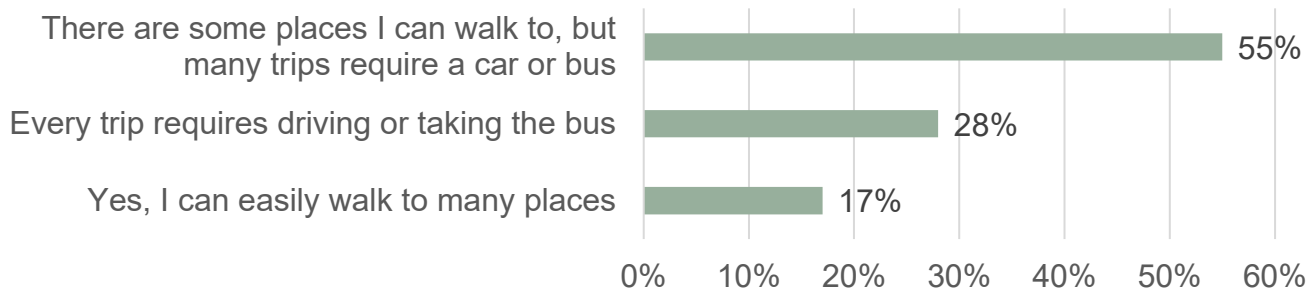


7

Participants were asked if there were places to walk or shop within walking distance of where they live.

This question received 179 responses. Over half of the respondents (55 percent) noted that while there are some places they can walk to, many locations require a trip by car or bus. An additional 28 percent of respondents noted that every trip requires a car or a bus. Otherwise, 17 percent of respondents said that they can easily walk to many places.

Are there places to work and shop within walking distance of where you live?



8

Participants were asked to describe their vision of the

New Bern Avenue corridor in ten years using ten words or less.

When discussing their vision for New Bern Avenue in ten years, many mentioned revitalization of the corridor through rebuilding businesses and restaurants, including more art along New Bern Avenue, and cleaning up the area. Some participants noted that they have a vision for the area to be a welcoming entrance to Downtown Raleigh.

Some participants noted that their vision for the corridor is that the area will be diverse, welcoming, and friendly for all that live there. They also noted that their vision for the area is that it is affordable, both for housing and for local businesses to thrive in the area.

Many respondents noted that their vision is that the corridor will be green with many trees and other greenery. Several participants discussed visions of decrease in littering and trash along the corridor.

Some participants discussed transit changes, noting desires for multimodal transit options, such as a light rail or increased public transit. Others mentioned visions of increased walkability of the area, as well as increased safety for cyclists. They noted desires for increased safety in the corridor by reducing speeding and increasing sidewalks.

While many shared this optimistic vision for the New Bern Avenue corridor in ten years, others noted that they envision that the corridor will have low-income populations being displaced from their homes, increased gentrification, and increased traffic in the area in the next ten years.

9

Participants were then asked what are the most important changes needed to achieve their vision for the area.

When asked what the most important changes are for achieving their visions, participants discussed a variety of changes, listed below.



Transportation, Transit, and Pedestrian Safety

- Controlling traffic
- Adding in traffic-calming elements along the corridor
- Introducing slower speed limits and speeding enforcement
- Increasing walkability through sidewalks and additional safety measures



Housing and Development

- Increasing affordable housing in the area
- Changing zoning to permit small businesses
- Adding missing middle housing



Environment

- Investing in revitalization and beautification efforts
- Pushing for green infrastructure
- Reducing litter and trash along the corridor

Amenities and Services

- Adding community parks and recreation centers
- Improving the school system
- Developing more amenities to draw people to the corridor

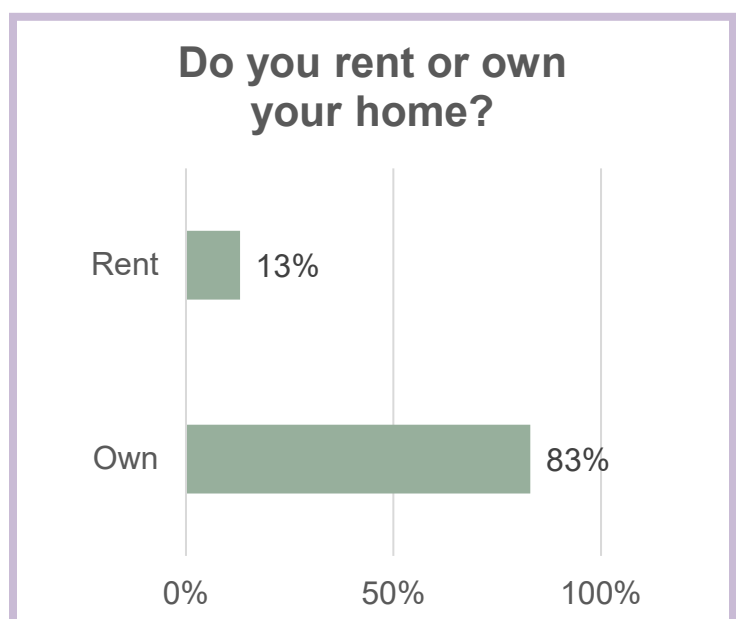
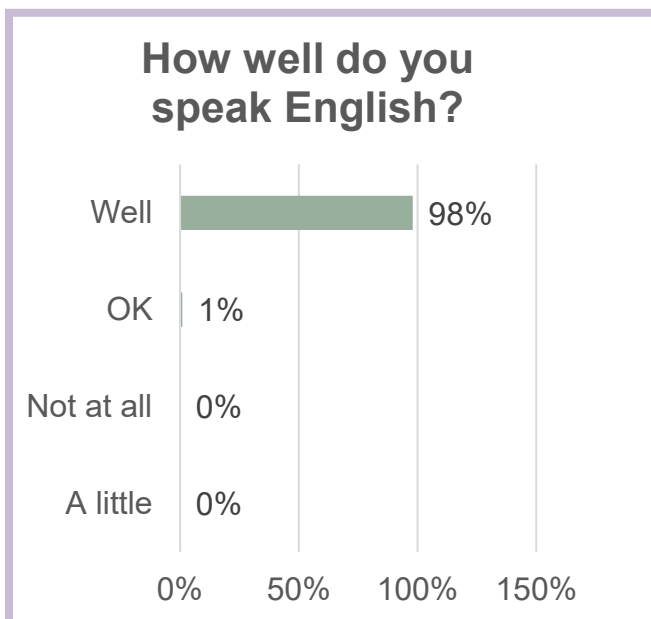
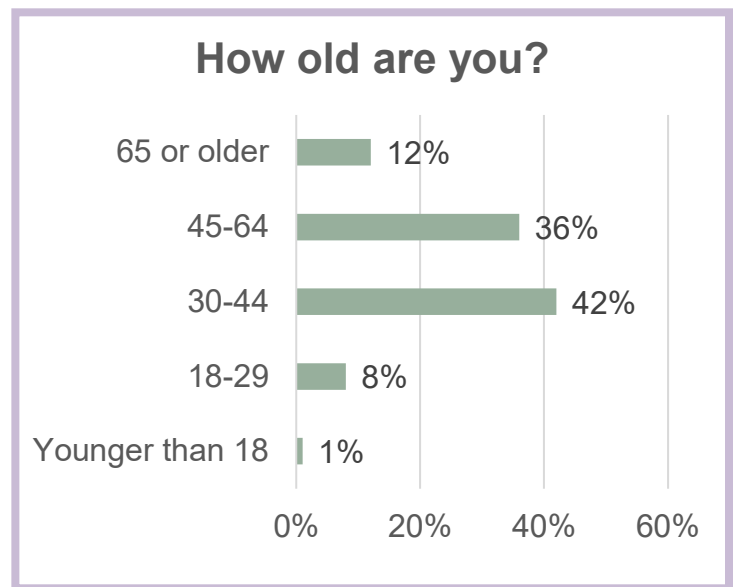
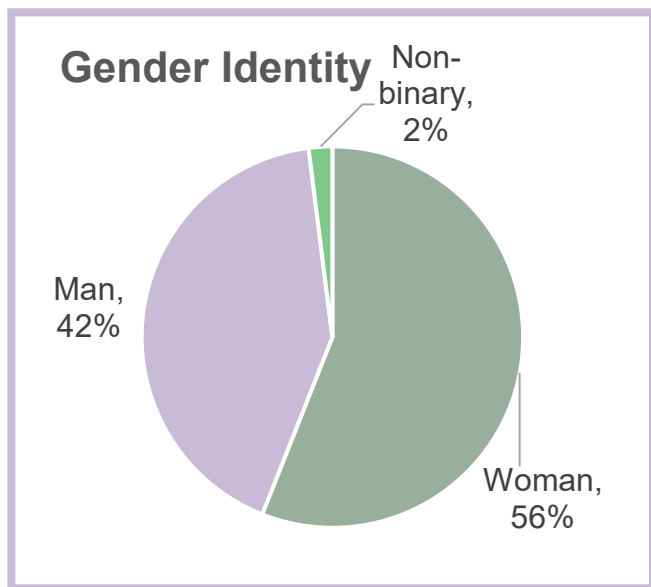
Additionally, participants noted that the City should work with residents in the corridor to determine actionable items that help achieve their visions, noting that City and community members must work together to enact change.

Voluntary Demographic Survey

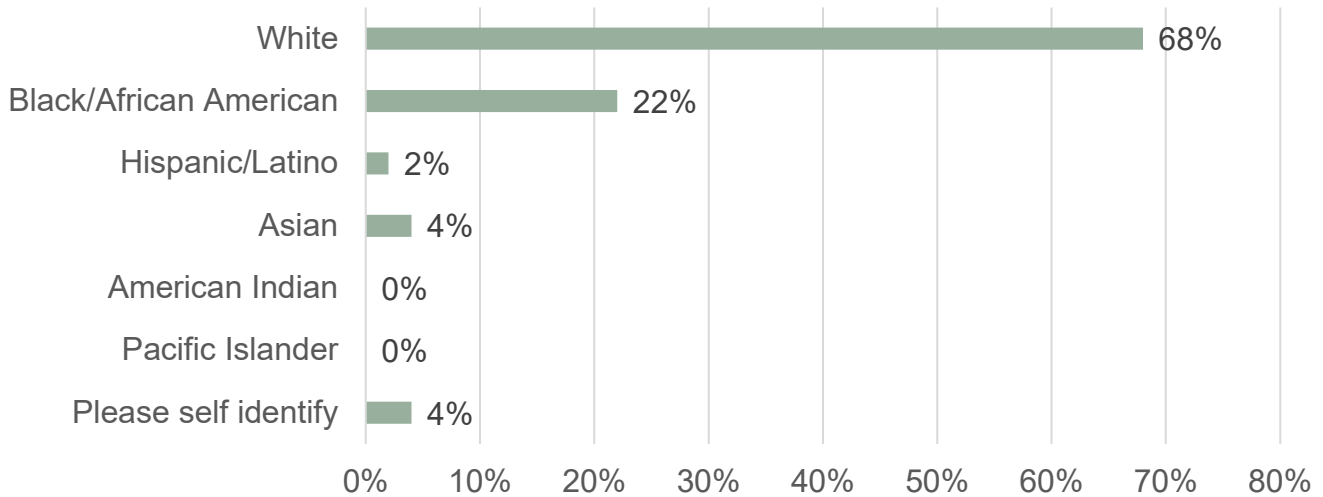
Voluntary Demographic Questions

The online demographic portion of the survey contained nine (9) voluntary demographic questions for participants to answer. Here are the key takeaways from the demographic portion of the survey:

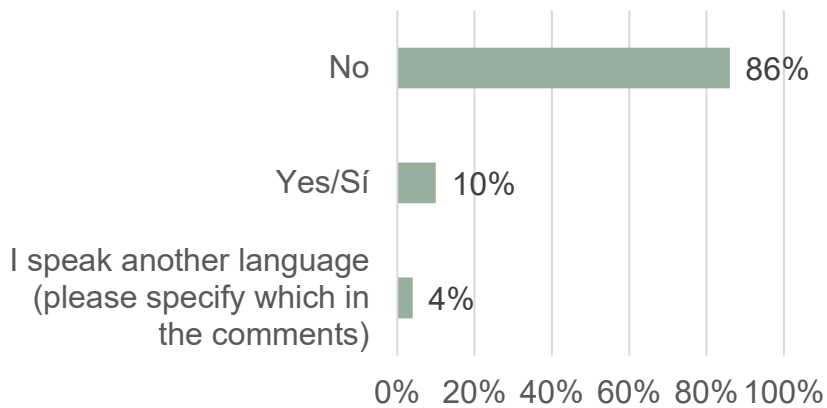
- 56 percent of respondents identify as female.
- 42 percent of respondents are between the ages of 30-44, and 36 percent are between 45-64 years old.
- 68 percent of respondents identify as White.
- 95 percent of respondents do not have a disability.
- 98 percent of respondents speak English well.
- 83 percent of respondents own their homes.
- Over half of respondents reported an annual household income of greater than \$94,000, and 43 percent of respondents reported over \$118,000.



What is your racial identity?

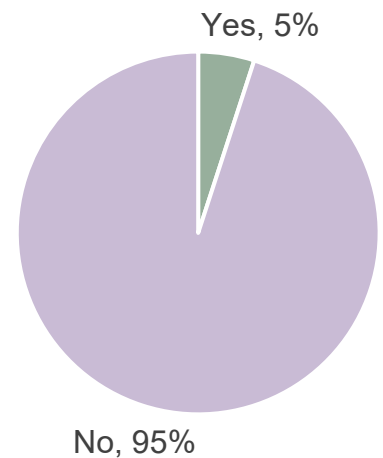


Do you speak Spanish? ¿Habla español?

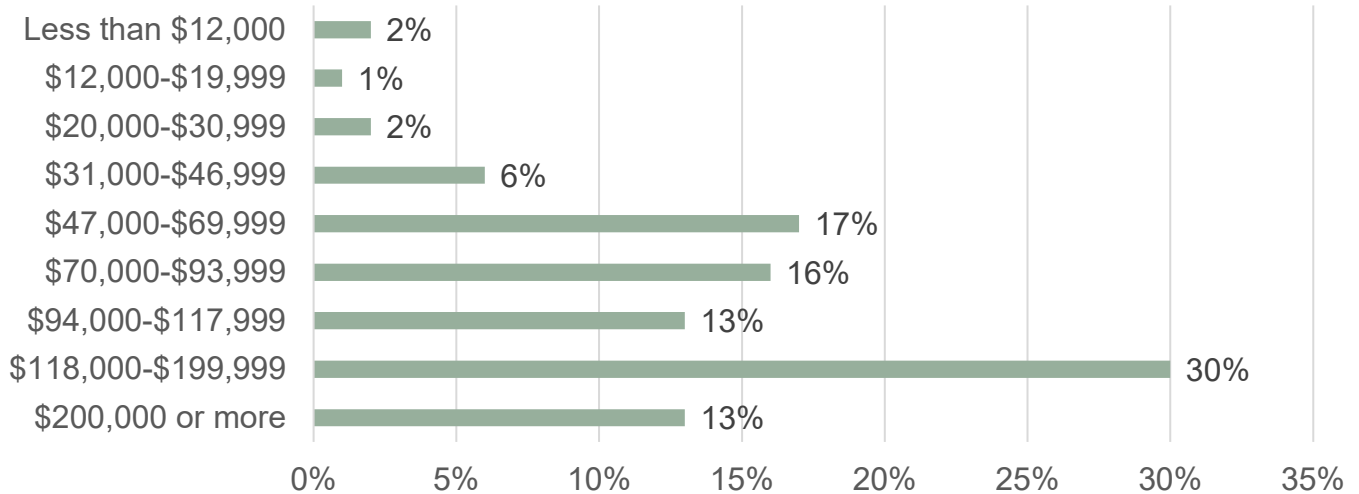


Participants were given the opportunity to provide comments on what other language they spoke. Additional languages included American Sign Language (ASL), Dutch, French, Russian, and Romanian. Additionally, some commented on their Spanish abilities, some noting that they can read or understand Spanish but not speak it very well, others noted that they are currently learning Spanish.

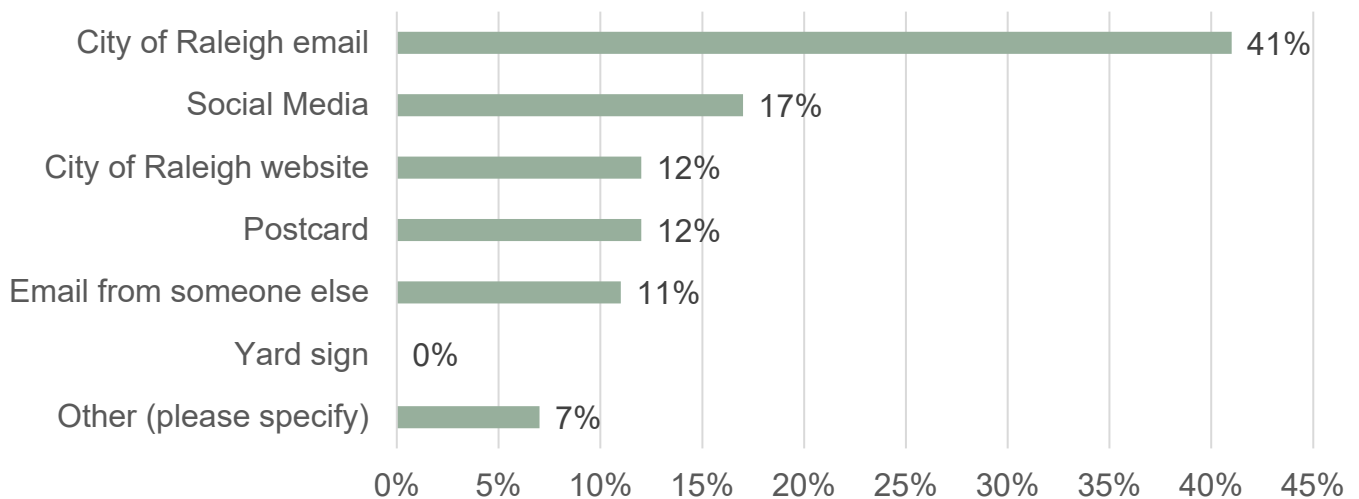
Do you have a disability?



What is your household income?



How did you hear about this survey?



Additional methods of notification identified in the comments included participants' work/ employer, DTRaleigh.com, participants' church, the bus, and NextDoor (though this can also fall under social media).

Recommendations and Conclusion

Recommendations for Future Outreach

While this survey reached a good number of Raleigh residents, some groups were underrepresented in the data collected. Primarily, low-income and racial/ethnic minority populations were underrepresented in this survey in comparison to the demographics of the study area. It is recommended to conduct targeted outreach to groups and organizations serving minority and low-income populations in the area during future phases of engagement to ensure that these groups are not excluded from participating or sharing their feedback throughout the project. Additionally, renters were underrepresented in the data collection, and future targeted outreach to apartment complexes and rental communities in the New Bern Avenue area may assist with reaching more renters in future engagement.

Conclusion

Many residents, workers, and travelers of the corridor like the New Bern Avenue area because of its proximity to Downtown Raleigh and other prominent locations, the suburban feel of the area, and the greenspace along the corridor. However, many expressed concerns regarding pedestrian and bicyclist safety, crime, displacement and gentrification, and abandonment of many buildings in the area, noting a need for revitalization and rebuilding. Many respondents expressed concerns regarding affordability, and they noted the need for increased affordable and missing middle housing to avoid residents being displaced from the community.

Affordable housing, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, community revitalization, crime, and transit were all primary topics of conversation in the comments throughout the survey, and should be some of the core focuses as the station area planning process progresses.