TOWN OF NORMAL
430 TOTAL RESPONDENTS

How long have you lived in your current community?

Age

- 18-24: 65%; 25.34%
- 25-34: 58; 13.91%
- 35-44: 71; 17.03%
- 45-54: 91; 21.82%
- 55-64: 102; 24.52%
- 65+: 63; 15.14%

(Total responses: 417; skipped: 13)

Ethnicity

- Non-Latino/Non-Hispanic: 321; 74.65%
- Latino/Hispanic: 59; 13.91%
- Null: 97; 22.56%

(Total responses: 430; skipped: 0)

Race

- White: 342; 84.24%
- African American (Black): 32; 7.88%
- Other: 20; 4.93%
- Asian: 9; 2.22%
- American Indian or Alaskan Native: 3; 0.74%

(Total responses: 406; skipped: 24)

Gender

- Male: 249; 59.71%
- Female: 158; 37.89%
- Other: 5

(Total responses: 417; skipped: 13)

Do you consider English as your second language?

- Yes: 24; 5.83%
- No: 388; 94.17%

(Total responses: 12; skipped: 18)
**Highest Level of Education**

- No High School or GED: 1 (0.25%)
- High School or GED: 31 (7.67%)
- Some College: 79 (19.55%)
- Bachelors: 184 (45.54%)
- Graduate Degree: 105 (25.99%)
- Other: 5 (0.99%)

(Total responses: 404; skipped: 24)

**Home Ownership**

- Renter: 102 (23.72%)
- Owner: 289 (67.21%)

(Total responses: 398; skipped: 32)

**Household Income**

- $60K-$99.999: 89 (23.36%)
- > $100K: 134 (35.17%)
- < $60K: 158 (41.47%)

(Total responses: 381; skipped: 49)

**Number of People in Household**

- 1-2: 193 (47.89%)
- 3-5: 196 (48.64%)
- More than 5: 14 (3.47%)

(Total responses: 403; skipped: 27)

**Are you able to easily find safe, sanitary, and affordable housing in your community?**

- Yes: 343 (79.95%)
- No: 86 (20.05%)

(Total responses: 429; skipped: 1)

Normal respondents are:
- **Long-term residents**
  - Nearly 80% have lived in the community for at least six years or more.
- **Mostly non-Hispanic white**
- **Predominantly female**
  - Nearly 60% of respondents were female.
- **25 years or older**
- **Educated**
  - Over 90% have some college or higher level of education.
- **Predominantly homeowners**
- **Small- to medium-size households**
  - 48% are small (1-2) family households, and 49% are medium (3-5) family households.
- **From diverse income levels**
Survey Analysis Methodology

While the outreach was conducted regionally across Bloomington and Normal, this chapter only analyzes responses from survey takers who said they live in Normal. These results will inform the Town’s Consolidated Plan.

Each question was analyzed in several ways, including cross-tabulation with dimensions such as age, race, and income. Open-ended questions were analyzed by tagging each response based on its content. These tags were then categorized into general themes. Depending on the content of each response, some may only have one tag, while others could have several tags in different categories. For example, in the open text response area for the question “Do you believe housing discrimination exists in your community?” an individual answered “Yes, by Race and Income.” This answer was tagged into two categories: “Discrimination based on Race” and “Discrimination Based on Income.”

Note that the survey results are primarily focused on income. This is because the goal of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) is to serve low- to moderate-income households. The survey originally listed four household income brackets. However, the bottom two income brackets (under $30,000 and $30,000- $59,999) were combined for the survey analysis, since both income brackets can benefit from CDBG dollars. Combining these brackets allowed for simpler analysis of each question.

A portion of the respondents in the $60,000- $99,999 income bracket can be eligible based on household size and other aspects. Thus, those are the two-income brackets (under $60,000 and $60,000- $99,999) whose answers were analyzed in depth. Noteworthy results by another dimension, such as race or education level, are also included in the analysis.

The analysis will also feature a table highlighting the similarities in priorities of the respondents in the income brackets mentioned above. The green in these tables indicates overlap in the top five priorities.
Q. Ability to find safe, sanitary and affordable housing

Respondents were asked the question, “Are you able to find safe, sanitary and affordable housing in your community?” As shown in Chart N.1, about 80% of respondents from Normal said “Yes,” and about 20% of respondents said “No.”

Chart N.2 shows responses to this question broken down by income bracket. Notice that those with lower incomes are significantly more likely to have difficulty finding safe, sanitary and affordable housing. About 33.5% of respondents in the under $60,000 annual household income bracket replied that they are not able to find safe, sanitary, and affordable housing in their community. The two higher income brackets are both well under the 20% overall average.

Other Demographics to Note

Overall, the response rate to the question was about 80% “Yes” and 20% “No.” Among the 20% who said they have difficulty finding safe, sanitary, and affordable housing, the following groups responded at a higher rate than the 20% average:

- African American: 34%
- 18-24 Age Group: 29%
- 65+ Age Group: 24%
- High School Diploma or GED: 32%
- Some College Credits Earned: 26%
- Homeless: 100%
- Renters: 30%

“My daughter, single, earning approximately $15/hr was unable to find an apartment in Bloomington or Normal that she could afford on her own on her salary. She now lives with two other people.”

Respondents making under $60,000, African Americans, younger respondents, renters, and those with education below a Bachelor’s degree had more difficulty finding safe, sanitary, and affordable housing in Normal.
Q. Please explain the challenges you have faced in finding safe, sanitary and affordable housing in your community

Respondents were asked to elaborate on the previous question by explaining the challenges they have faced in finding safe, sanitary and affordable housing in their community. The responses to those questions were tagged by keywords, and the top tagged keywords are shown in the chart below. Each bar on the chart is broken down by income bracket. The top answer by far to this question was general “Affordability,” followed by “Neighborhood/Safe Area” and “Lack of Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities.” Table N.1 shows the top challenges in each of the two lowest income brackets. Only the top four were listed for the $60,000-$99,999 income bracket due to the low response rate in that bracket for this question.

Respondents in both of these income brackets indicated they have faced “Affordability,” “Neighborhood/Safe Area,” “Cleanliness (Sanitary),” and “Property Maintenance/Quality” issues the most when looking for housing. Interestingly, “Overabundance of Student Rentals” ranked highly for the under $60,000 income bracket, but no respondents in other income brackets indicated this was an issue.

**Other Demographics to Note**

- Both the 55-64 and 65+ age brackets ranked “Lack of Supportive Housing for People with Disabilities” first. Coupled with the income brackets chart, we can see that about half of those who stated “Lack of Supportive Housing for those with Disabilities” are from the under $60,000 bracket and half are from the over $100,000 bracket. This may be an indication that supportive housing for those with disabilities is not just a priority for low-income seniors but for seniors overall.
- Owners ranked “Property Taxes” fourth, whereas renters ranked it seventh. Renters ranked “Cleanliness” third, whereas owners ranked it seventh.
Q. Do You Believe Housing Discrimination Exists in Your Community?

Respondents were asked, “Do you believe housing discrimination exists in your community?” Chart N.4 shows the overall responses. 143 (about 33%) said “No,” 124 (about 29%) said “Yes,” 57 (about 13%) replied “Don’t know,” and the rest did not reply.

Chart N.5 shows responses broken down by income bracket. Notice that as income goes up, the response dynamics change. Respondents in the lower household income bracket overwhelmingly believe that there is housing discrimination in their community.

Chart N.5 - Responses for Normal Respondents by Income Level

Other Demographics to Note

- By Race: African Americans ranked “Yes” (11) higher than “No” (6).
- By Age: 18-24 age group ranked “Yes” (19) much higher than “No” (7).
- By Gender: Females marked “Yes” higher (80 “Yes,” 63 “No”), but males marked “No” higher (37 “Yes,” 70 “No”).
- By Housing Tenure: Owners marked “No” much higher (116 “No,” 69 “Yes”), but renters marked “Yes” higher (21 “No,” 43 “Yes”).

“Absolutely. As a social worker, I see it happening a lot. People with disabilities, minorities, and people with mental health issues are not being treated fairly.”
Q. Please explain how you feel housing discrimination exists in your community

Respondents were asked to elaborate further on what types of discrimination they have faced or believe exist in the community. The responses were tagged by keywords, and the top tagged keywords are shown in the graph below. The top answer to this question was general “Income Based Discrimination,” followed by “Discrimination Against Minority Groups” and “Possibly, but Have Not Personally Experienced It.”

By Income

Table N.2 shows the top types of housing discrimination that each of the two lowest income brackets (under $60,000 and $60,000-$99,999) have faced. Only the top four were listed for the $60,000 - $99,999 income bracket due to the low response rate in that bracket for this question.

Three out of the top five matched across both income brackets:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table N.2 – Top Responses by Lowest Income Brackets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Under $60,000 HH Income</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Green indicates overlapping priorities between the two income brackets.

“Income Based Discrimination,” “Discrimination Against Minority Groups,” and “Possibly Exists, but Have Not Personally Experienced It.”

Other Demographics to Note

- By Housing Tenure: Renters ranked “Discrimination Against Minority Groups” much higher (first) than owners (fourth).
Q. What type of public facilities would you like to see added or expanded in your community?

Respondents were asked to check all answers that apply to the following question: “What type of public facilities would you like to see added or expanded in your community?” The top answer was by far “Street/Sidewalk Improvements,” followed by “Homeless Facilities” and “Homeowner Housing Rehabilitation.”

By Income

As shown in Table N.3, “Street/Sidewalk Improvements,” “Homeless Facilities” and “Homeowner Housing Rehabilitation” programs rank the highest collectively among the lowest income brackets; each of those was ranked within the top five priorities.

Notable differences include the following:

- The under $60,000 bracket ranked “Community Centers” as priority number three, whereas “Community Centers” rank eighth on the overall responses and not within the top ten for the $60,000- $99,999 bracket.

- The under $60,000 bracket ranked “Water/Sewer Improvements” and “Demolition of Blighted Structures” much lower than the overall results.

Other Demographics to Note

- By Race: There was a significant difference in the top categories ranked by African Americans and the overall results. Among top categories for African Americans were “Recreation Centers” (ninth overall) and “Community Centers” (eighth overall). “Bus Facility Improvements” ranked fifth for this group but ranked tenth overall. “Street/Sidewalk Improvements,” which was ranked first overall by far, was ranked sixth by this group.

- By Age: 25-34 and 35-44 age groups ranked “Public Parks and Gathering Spaces” and “Libraries” higher than other groups.

- By Housing Tenure: Renters generally ranked infrastructure improvements (“Street/Sidewalk,” “Water/Sewer,” “Demolitions”) much lower than owners.
Q. What type of public services would you like to see added or expanded in your community?

Respondents were given a list of public services and asked to check all answers that applied to the following question: “What type of public services would you like to see added or expanded in your community?” The top answer was “Health Services,” followed by “Mental Health Services” and “Youth Services.”

By Income

Table N.4 shows the top ten priorities for public services by the two lowest income brackets.

Four out of the top five priorities are identical: “Health Services,” “Mental Health Services,” “Youth Services,” and “Veterans Services.”

The most noticeable differences in the two income brackets follow:

- The under $60,000 income bracket ranks “Disability Services” fifth, whereas it was ranked eighth in the overall results.
- The under $60,000 bracket ranked “Crime Prevention/Awareness” eighth, which was much lower than the overall ranking of fourth.
- The $60,000- $99,999 bracket did not rank “Job Training/Workforce Development” within the top ten, whereas it is ranked sixth on both the overall responses and the under $60,000 bracket.

**Other Demographics to Note**

- African Americans ranked “Child Care Services” third, and renters ranked it fourth, but it came in seventh overall.
- Additionally, African Americans ranked “Housing Discrimination Services” and “Food Services” higher than they appeared in the overall rankings.

Renters and African Americans ranked “Child Care Services” higher than the overall population of Normal.
Q. What type of assistance will help expand job and economic opportunities for low- to moderate-income residents in your community?

Respondents were asked the open-ended question: “What type of assistance will help expand job and economic opportunities for low- to moderate-income residents in your community?” The responses were tagged and the top tagged, keywords are shown in Chart N.9. The top three tagged responses were “Job Training,” “Public Transportation,” and “Apprenticeships/Internships.”

By Income

As shown in Table N.5, four out of the top five priorities for both of the lowest income brackets match: “Job Training,” “Public Transportation,” “Apprenticeships/Internships,” and “Attainable Job Opportunities.”

Table N.5 – Top Responses by Lowest Income Brackets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Under $60,000 HH Income</th>
<th>$60,000 - $99,999 HH Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Job Training (tie for 1st)</td>
<td>Apprenticeships / Internships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Public Transportation (tie for 1st)</td>
<td>Job Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Apprenticeships / Internships</td>
<td>Public Transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Attainable Job Opportunities</td>
<td>Lower Taxes / Lower Fees (tie for 4th)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Business Support (tie for 5th)</td>
<td>Attainable Job Opportunities (tie for 4th)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordable, Quality Housing (tie for 5th)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordable Child Care / Family Planning / After Hours Care (tie for 5th)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Green indicates overlapping priorities between the two income brackets.

Chart N.9 – Responses for Normal Respondents by Income Bracket

“More childcare options/assistance so people can afford to have a job instead of it costing more for childcare than you earn for the month. Or childcare options that are for people who work outside the tradition M-F 9 to 5 jobs.”
Q. Are there specific neighborhoods or areas within your community that should be targeted for revitalization or blight removal?

Respondents were asked the open-ended question: “Are there specific neighborhoods or areas within your community that should be targeted for revitalization or blight removal?” The responses to those questions were tagged by keywords, and the top tagged keywords are shown in chart N.10.

The top responses for Normal respondents were “Bloomington West Side,” “Orlando Avenue, Normal,” and “North Normal.” It is important to note that while Normal residents recognize the importance to revitalizing the West Side of Bloomington, Town’s CDBG dollars cannot be allocated outside the corporate boundaries of Normal. Another noteworthy observation is that not many respondents felt there is a need for targeted redevelopment in the Town.

By Income

Two of the top four locations for both of the lowest two income brackets match, although not in the same order.

The lowest two income brackets indicated the same top two neighborhoods to be targeted: West Bloomington and Orlando Avenue.
Public Meeting – Resource Allocation Exercise

After the survey period was finalized, MCRPC and Town of Normal staff held a public meeting that was open to all residents to weigh in further on how they would like to see CDBG funds spent. During the public meeting, staff coordinated a resource allocation activity, during which each attendee was given stickers representing dollars. Attendees were able to allocate funds to public services and public facilities based on what they determined to be the most important. Those public services and public facilities were then ranked based on the total amount allocated. Charts N.11 and N.12 (next page) show the results of the resource allocation activity. The total amount allocated was converted into percentages to show the percent of total funds allocated to that particular item. These percentages are an indication of the importance of that service or facility to the attendees.

Public Services

HUD puts a 15% cap on the amount of CDBG dollars that can be used for public services. For example, if HUD allocated $100 in CDBG funds to the Town of Normal, up to $15 could be used for public services. It is important to keep that in mind when looking at the resource allocations in Chart N.11. For example, in keeping with our $100 example, if the Town of Normal were only able to use $15 for public services, chart N.11 tells us that 17% of the $15 should be used toward “Job Training/Workforce Development.” Attendees at the public meeting ranked “Job Training/Workforce Development,” “Disability Services,” and “Mental Health Services” as their top three public services.

Survey takers were not asked to allocate resources, but rather were asked to check all public services they would like to see added or expanded in their community. Staff was able to generate rankings by combining results of the survey question and the resource allocation exercise at the public meeting. Table N.7 (next page) shows the overlap and discrepancies in the top five rankings between survey takers and public meeting attendees for public services. Green shows the...
overlap in answers.

Two out of the top five overlap: “Mental Health Services” and “Veterans Services.”

Public Facilities

Unlike public services, HUD does not put a cap on the percentage of CDBG dollars that can be used for public facilities. Generally, public facilities fall more directly into the purview of the purpose of CDBG, which is to provide safe, sanitary, affordable, and decent housing. Attendees at the public meeting ranked “Sidewalk Improvements,” “Accessibility Improvements,” and “Public Parks & Gathering Spaces, Community Centers, and Recreation Centers” as their top three public facilities.

Survey takers were not asked to allocate resources, but rather were asked to check all public facilities they would like to see added or expanded in their community. Staff was able to generate rankings by combining the results of both the survey question and resource allocation exercise.

There were some changes to how staff asked the question to attendees at the public meeting. Based on feedback received about the survey, it was determined that some of the categories from the survey should be combined or separated. The following changes were made for the public meeting:

- “Street/Sidewalk Improvements” was separated into two separate categories.
- “Water/Sewer Improvements” was separated into “Public Water/Sewer Improvements” and “Private Water/Sewer Improvements.”
- “Public Parks and Gathering Spaces” was combined with “Community Centers” and “Recreation Centers” into one category.
- “Libraries,” “Police Sub-Station,” “Medical Facilities,” and “Fire Stations” were omitted from the exercise to keep the exercise more manageable, since they ranked last on the survey question.

Table N.7 – Overlap in public service priorities, based on Normal survey responses and Normal public meeting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Responses</th>
<th>Public Meeting Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Health Services</td>
<td>Job Training/Workforce Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Mental Health Services</td>
<td>Disability Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Youth Services</td>
<td>Mental Health Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Crime Prevention/Awareness</td>
<td>Senior Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Veterans Services</td>
<td>Veterans Services (tie for 5th)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Housing Discrimination Services (tie for 5th)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Green indicates overlapping priorities between the two groups of respondents.

Table N.8 (next page) shows the overlap and discrepancies in the top five rankings between survey takers and public meeting attendees for public facilities.
Green shows the overlap in answers.

The following priorities overlapped: “Street Improvements,” “Sidewalk Improvements,” and “Public Parks & Gathering Spaces; Community Centers; Recreation Centers.” Note that while the combined group of “Public Parks & Gathering Spaces; Community Centers; Recreation Centers” ranked third in the public meeting, the separated categories had the following rankings in the survey analysis:

- “Public Parks & Gathering Spaces”: Fifth
- “Community Centers”: Eighth
- “Recreation Centers”: Ninth

Discussion

While the resource allocation activity was an important part of the feedback gathered at the Public Meeting, the discussion that followed allowed attendees to explain their choices further. The following topics were addressed during the discussion:

- Job training for youth could be a part of youth services.
- Tuition assistance is needed for job training/education.
- Accessibility improvements can extend beyond physical improvements. For example, there are technologies that can serve people with disabilities.
- More wheelchair-accessible parks are needed.
- Recreational activities for youth (ages 12-25) are needed.

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Table N.8 – Overlap in public facility priorities, based on Normal survey responses and Normal public meeting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Responses</th>
<th>Public Meeting Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Street/Sidewalk Improvements</td>
<td>Sidewalk Improvements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Homeless Facilities</td>
<td>Accessibility Improvements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Homeowner Housing Rehabilitation</td>
<td>Public Parks &amp; Gathering Spaces; Community Centers; Recreation Centers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Water/Sewer Improvements</td>
<td>Street Improvements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Public Parks &amp; Gathering Spaces</td>
<td>Bus Facility Improvements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Green indicates overlapping priorities between the two groups of respondents.