

Ramona Gardens

2021 COMMUNITY SAFETY SURVEY





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank the survey administrators who administered resident surveys and all the individuals who participated in the resident surveys. Both survey administration and survey completion were made more challenging in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. Without such participation, this memo would not be possible.

This memo was developed to inform site specific Community Safety Advisory Committee(CSAC) safety priorities and opportunities. The opinions, findings and recommendations expressed are those of Urban Peace Institute.



I. INTRODUCTION

The Urban Peace Institute (UPI) was asked by the Community Safety Partnership Bureau (CSPB) to conduct community safety surveys for each Community Safety Partnership site (CSP). The data gathered from the community safety surveys provide baseline data to support the development of each CSAC's Site Safety Plan (SSP). The CSAC is a collaborative forum at each CSP site comprised of community stakeholders including residents, institutional partners, and community-based organizations. Each CSAC meets monthly, with the purpose to identify and address quality of life needs and public safety concerns within their respective community. The SSP will help CSAC's determine how best to respond to community issues and ensure positive, actionable outcomes. The SSP will be a living document that captures the initiatives, activities, milestones, and partnerships needed to achieve public safety goals. The SSP will serve as a roadmap for effective partnerships, encourage collaboration, and promote healthier and safer communities for all residents in CSP zones.

This report reflects the voices of community residents to establish public safety concerns and priorities. In addition, UPI summarized the top three safety concerns and opportunities to provide potential pathways for developing the SSP. Limitations include the small sample sizes from each site and lack of random sampling. Though some administrators did do random sampling by knocking on doors, the COVID-19 pandemic decreased residents' willingness to participate in a survey. This led many administrators to survey family members, friends, acquaintances in CSP zones. Additionally, for those who did knock on doors, the available residents were the ones who happened to be at home, possibly decreasing the amount of participation from residents who may have been working in the area. Nonetheless, the findings are significant to inform next steps rooted in community resident perceptions and experiences of safety in CSP zones.

Background

Urban Peace Institute (UPI) is a national social justice non-profit organization working with communities across the country to develop and implement innovative policy, system and practice solutions. Through policy and program development, training, smart justice, and technical assistance UPI implements effective strategies to reduce violence, achieve safety, and improve overall community health. Building on 16 years of success as a program of the Advancement Project, UPI launched as an independent organization in August 2015 and is currently operating under the fiscal sponsorship of Community Partners.



Community Safety Partnership

The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is the first relationship-based policing project implemented by the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), in collaboration with the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA). It was established in 2011 by LAPD and HACLA with the mission to increase and enhance safety in and around public housing developments by building sustainable relationships between law enforcement and community members, by increasing community capacity, and by providing services that support community safety and increase public trust.

II. METHODOLOGY

The UPI team and each CSAC worked together to create the contents of the survey through a feedback process, resulting in a (17) question survey that included (3) demographics questions. The survey looked to analyze residents' perceptions of law enforcement, gang activity and community safety, access to services, neighborhood concerns and strengths, and more generally, community cohesion. Following the survey development, the UPI team conducted outreach to residents in each CSP site to recruit 3-5 survey administrators per CSP site. Bilingual UPI team members conducted (10) 90-minute survey administrator trainings to review and explain each question, answer options, and go over possible community engagement scenarios. To prevent duplicating resident surveys, the UPI team assigned each survey administrator a target area within the CSP site. Each site was given 100 surveys, which was divided amongst the survey administrators. For a period of three weeks, survey administrators conducted surveys in their target areas and were given a stipend of \$10 for each completed survey in the form of an American Express gift card.

In total, UPI along with 38 trained resident survey administrators, collected 964 community safety surveys from residents of 10 CSP sites.

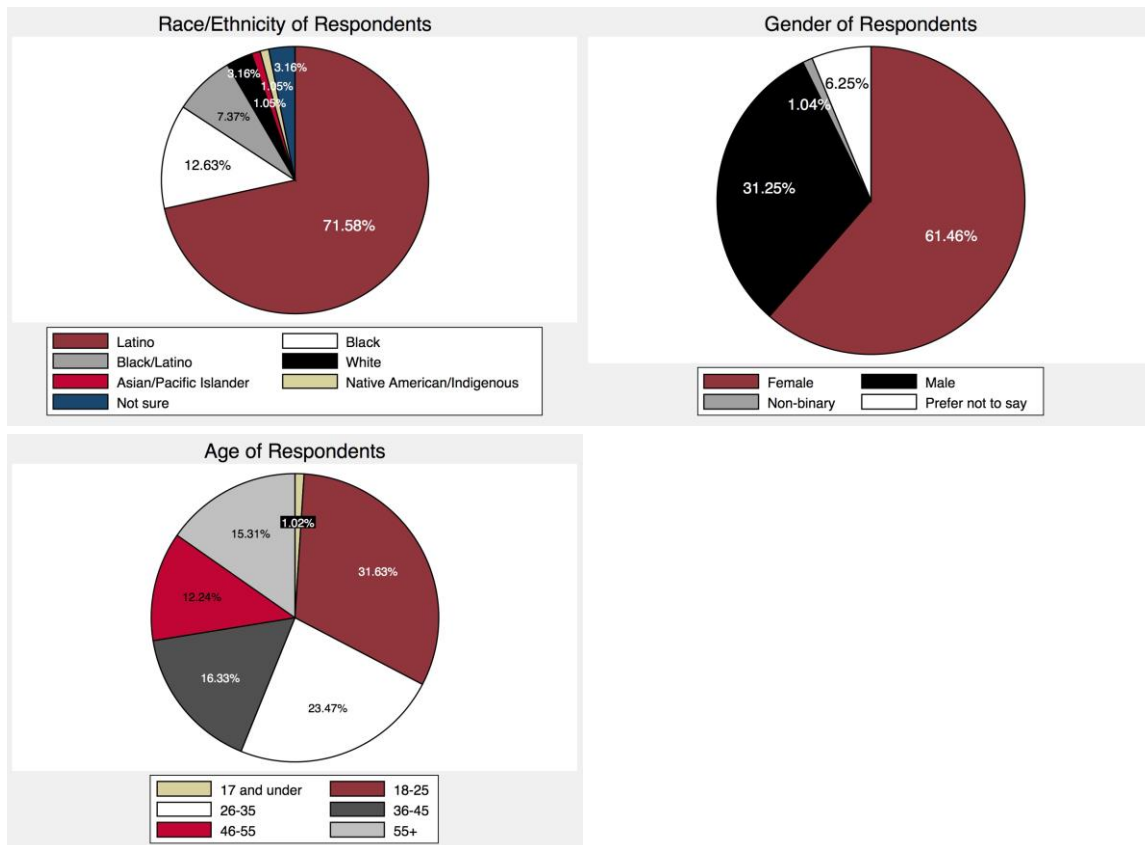
CSP Site	# of Surveys Collected
Avalon Gardens Housing Development	96
Gonzaque Village Housing Development	100
Harvard Park	97
Imperial Courts Housing Development	100
Jordan Downs Housing Development	100
Pueblos Del Rio Housing Development	87
Nickerson Gardens Housing Development	90
Ramona Gardens Housing Development	100
San Fernando Gardens Housing Development	99
South Park	95
Total	964



III. DEMOGRAPHICS

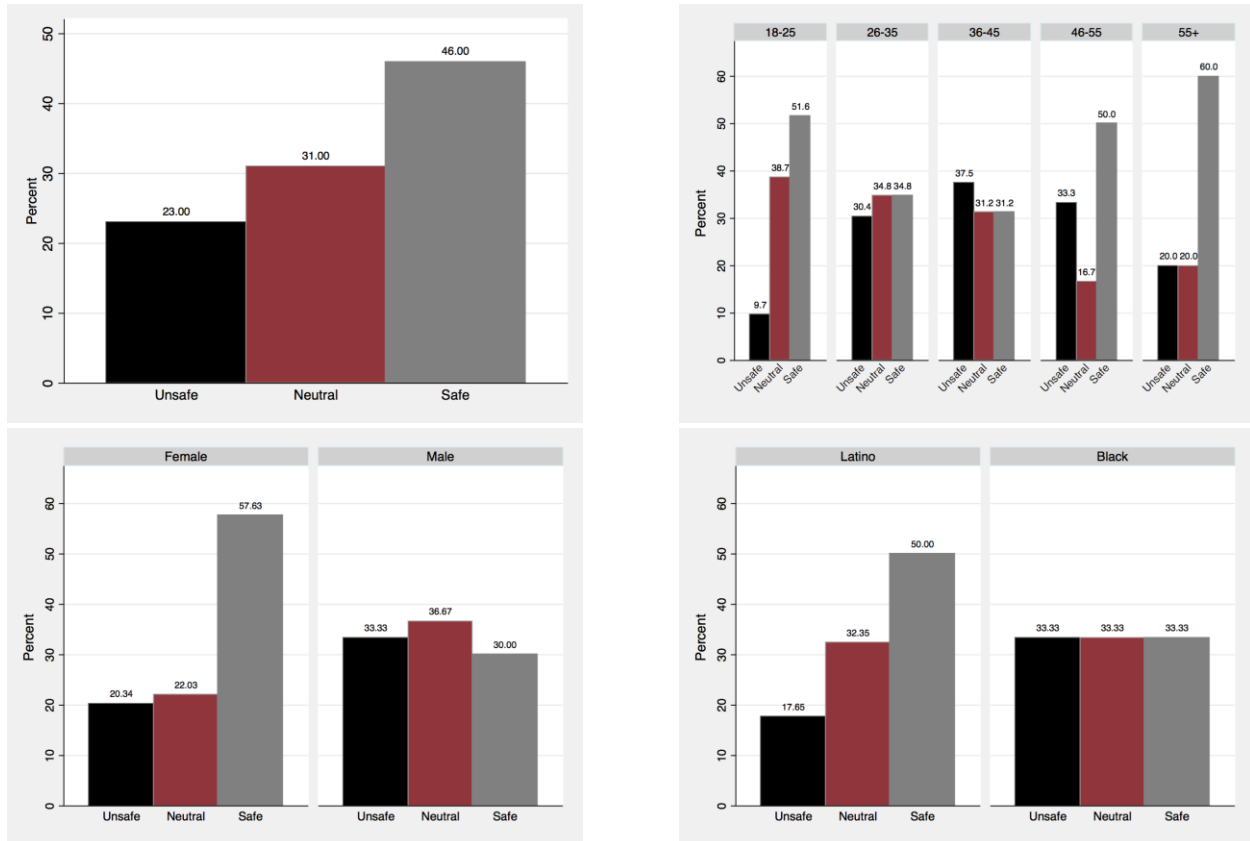
Ramona Gardens is a low-income public housing development under the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA), located within the Boyle Heights neighborhood of East Los Angeles. It is managed by HACLA, a state-chartered public agency which administers the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) housing programs in the City of Los Angeles. Ramona Gardens is bordered by Lancaster Avenue in the east, Evergreen Avenue to the north and Murchison Street to the west. According to HACLA’s, “2021 Statistics and Demographics Report,” the housing development is approximately 32 acres and has 660 units with 1,575 residents, who are predominantly 93.6% Hispanic and 4.2% African American. The average household income is around \$2,459 per month. The median age is between 40-60 years of age, with adults (ages 22-40) as the largest age group followed by adults (ages 41-60). Women account for 60% of the population compared to men who account for 40%. Ramona Gardens falls under the 90033-zip code.

Below are the survey respondent demographics. The data closely mirrors the general demographics of Ramona Gardens.



IV. FINDINGS

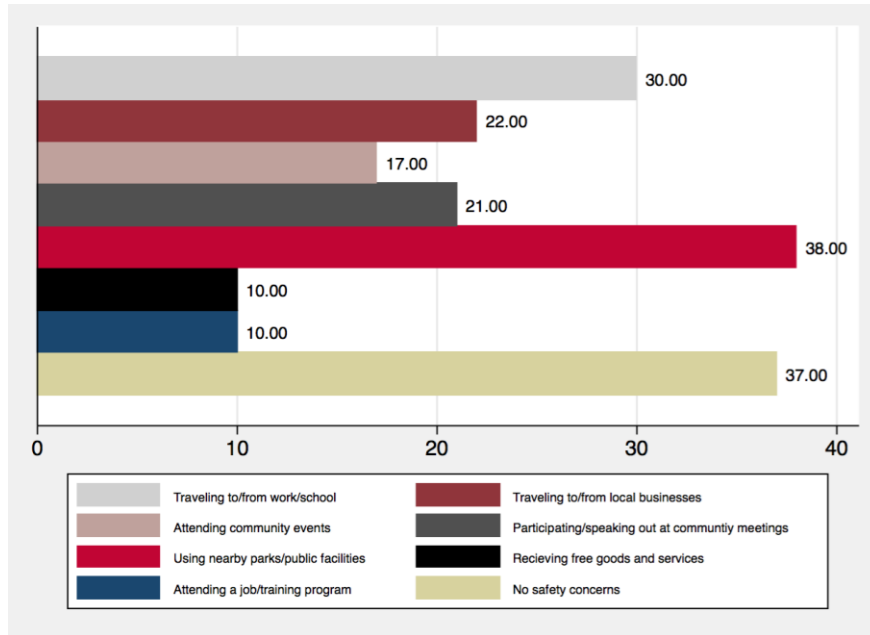
1. How safe do you consider your neighborhood?



Forty-six percent of survey respondents found Ramona Gardens to be safe, while 31% of survey respondents reported feeling neutral about their safety. Twenty-three percent of survey respondents found Ramona Gardens to be unsafe. Similarly, 60% of Residents ages 55+ reported feeling safe in their neighborhood. Additionally, women (57%) considered their neighborhood to be safe more than men (30%). When comparing by ethnicity, overall, 50% of Latino survey respondents felt safe about their safety, while 33% of Black survey respondents reported feeling safe.

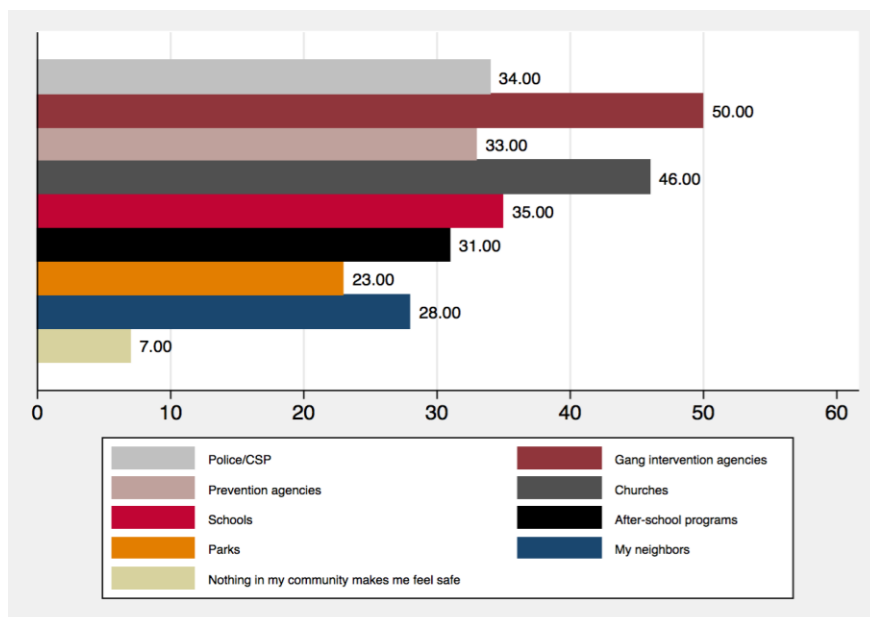


2. What kinds of activities would potentially pose a problem due to gang activity or safety concerns in your neighborhood if done during the day?



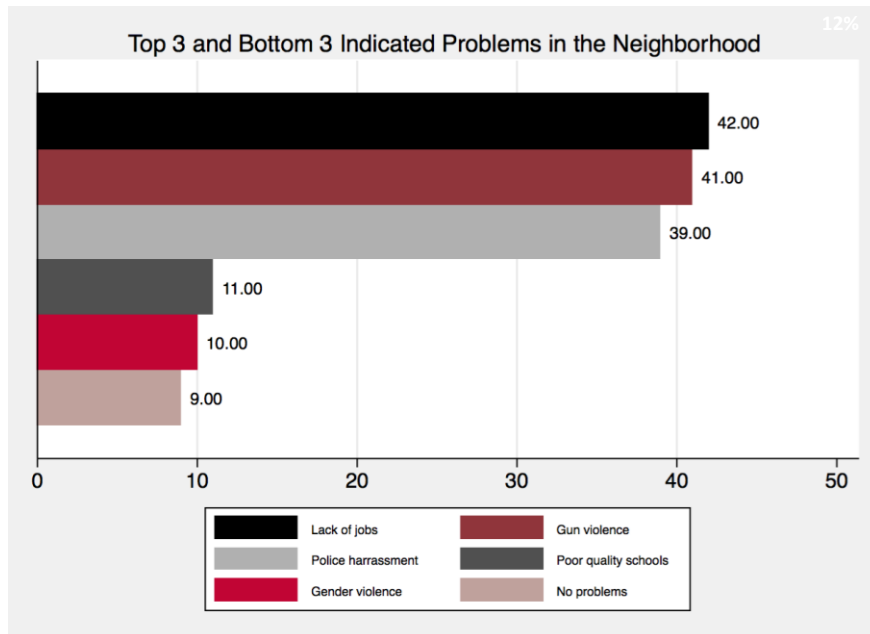
Thirty-eight percent of survey respondents reported safety concerns when using nearby parks/public facilities, followed by 37% of survey respondents who found no safety concerns. Another leading safety concern highlighted (30%) was traveling to/from work/school.

3. What makes you feel safe in your community?



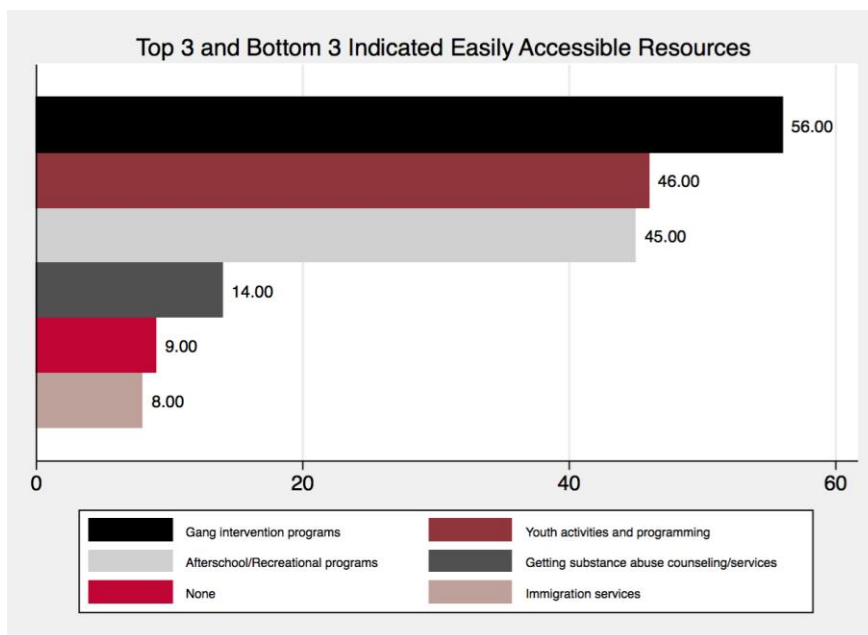
About 50% of survey respondents reported that Gang intervention agencies made people feel safe in Ramona Gardens. Followed by 46% who reported that church made them feel safe and 35% of survey respondents highlighting that schools made them safe in their neighborhood. Only 7% of survey respondents noted that nothing in their community made them feel safe.

4. Please indicate which of the following are a problem in your neighborhood.



Out of 25 options, the top three problems public safety issues survey respondents selected as a problem in their neighborhood were lack of jobs (42%), gun violence (41%), and police harassment (39%). The problems least selected were poor quality schools (11%), gender violence (10%), and no problems (9%). Other response options for this question included: police harassment, racial tension, fear of deportation, gender violence, speeding traffic, lack of services for ex-offenders, lack of jobs, poor quality schools, lack of parks and open spaces, lack of access to healthy food, lack of engaged public officials, too many liquor stores, too many smoke/marijuana shops, drug sales/use, gentrification, family stress and instability, child abuse, and domestic abuse.

5. In your opinion, which of the following is easy for people in your neighborhood to get help with?



The top three most accessible resources were gang intervention programs (56%), youth activities and programming (46%), and after-school/recreational programs (45%). The resource options least selected were getting substance abuse counseling/services (14%), none (9%), and immigration services (8%). Other survey response options included: stopping violence, getting medical or dental care, getting family services, getting mental health services/counseling, after-school or recreational programs, mentoring for youth, emergency housing and financial assistance, finding a school, and none of the above.

6. Are there additional issues/challenges facing the community?

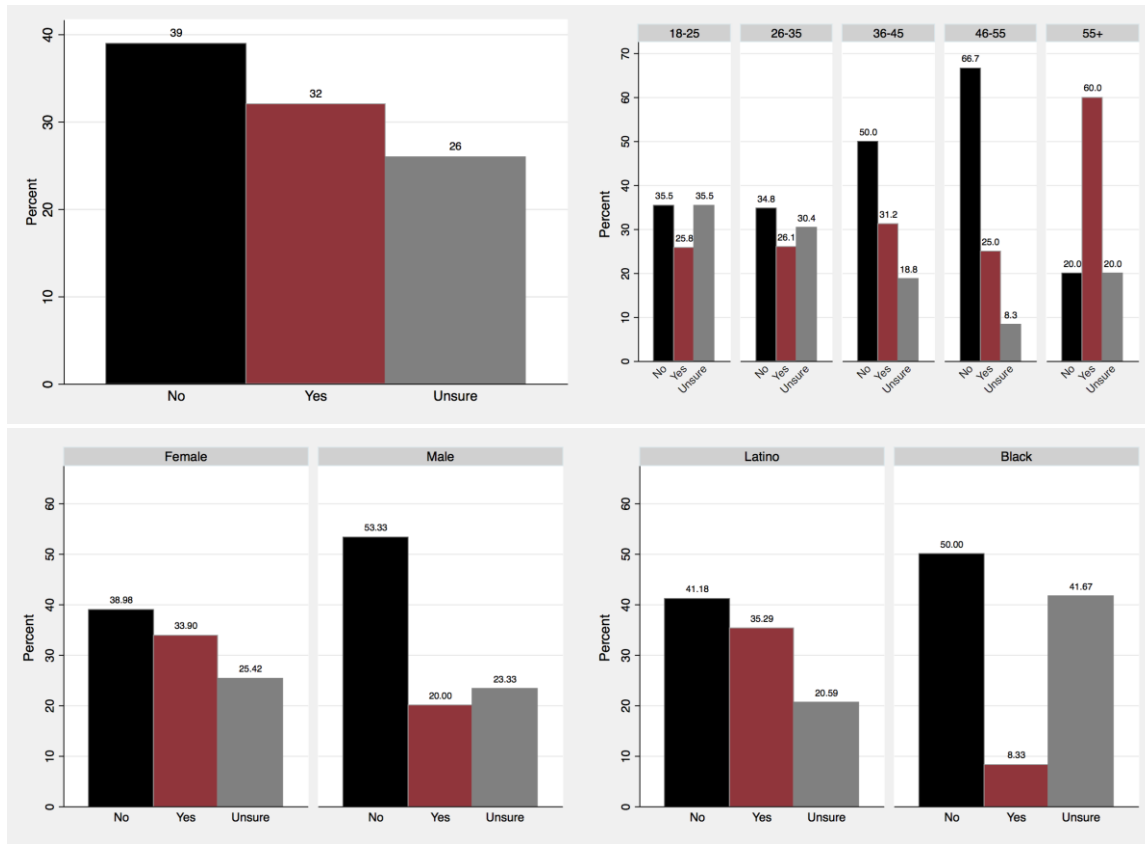
When survey respondents were asked what additional issues/challenges they faced in their community, most responses mentioned homelessness, vandalism, trash, and gang violence. Below are some quotes from survey respondents:

"No money to pay rent."

"Can't take children to the park due to the playground being trashed."

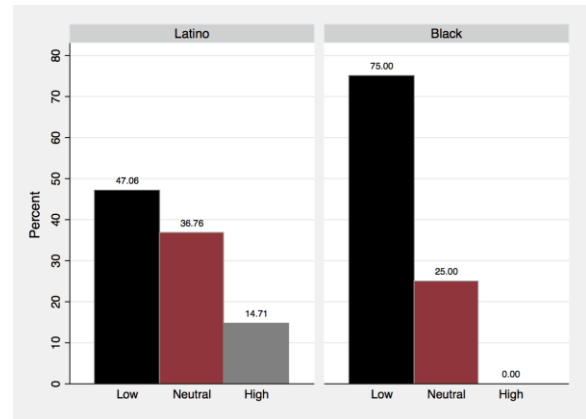
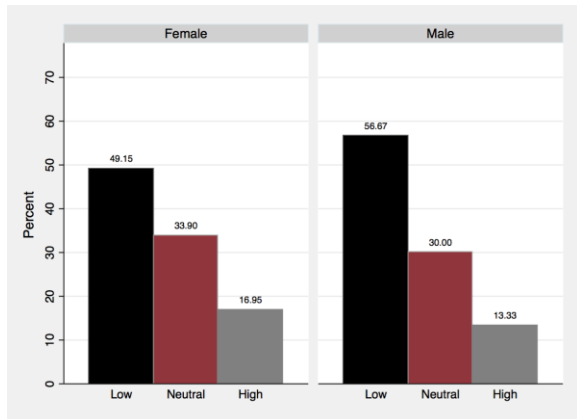
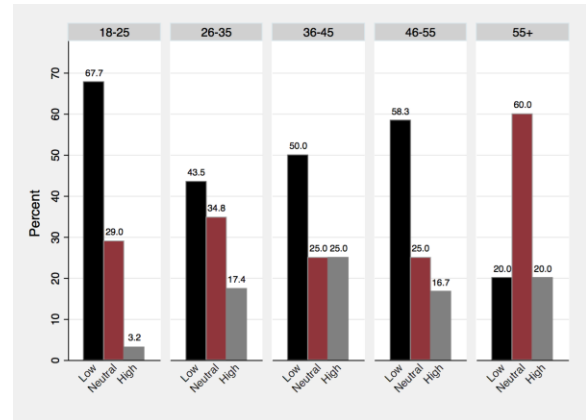
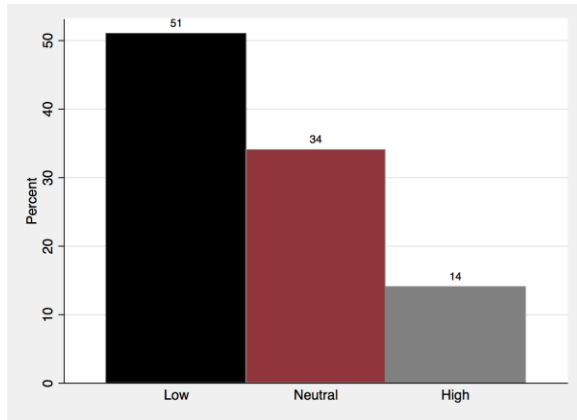
"The gangs and the homeless."

7. Do you know or recognize your Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Officers?



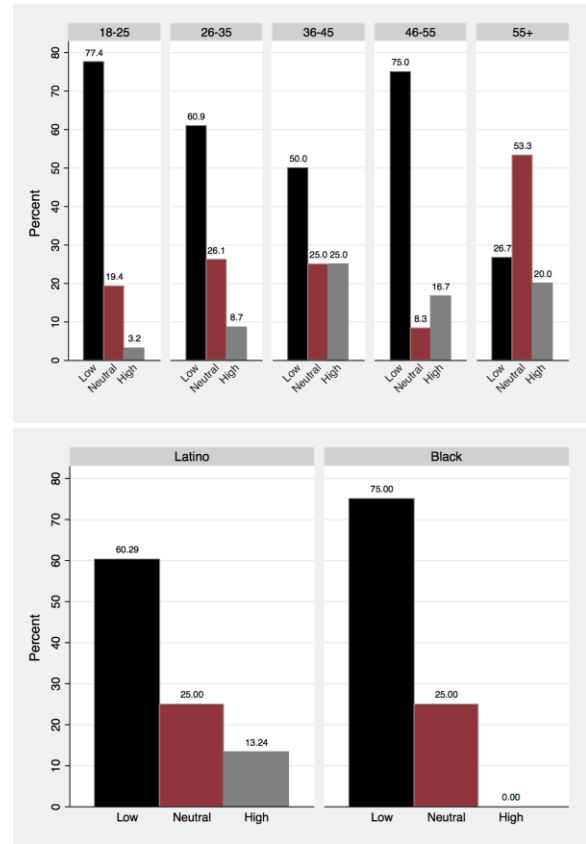
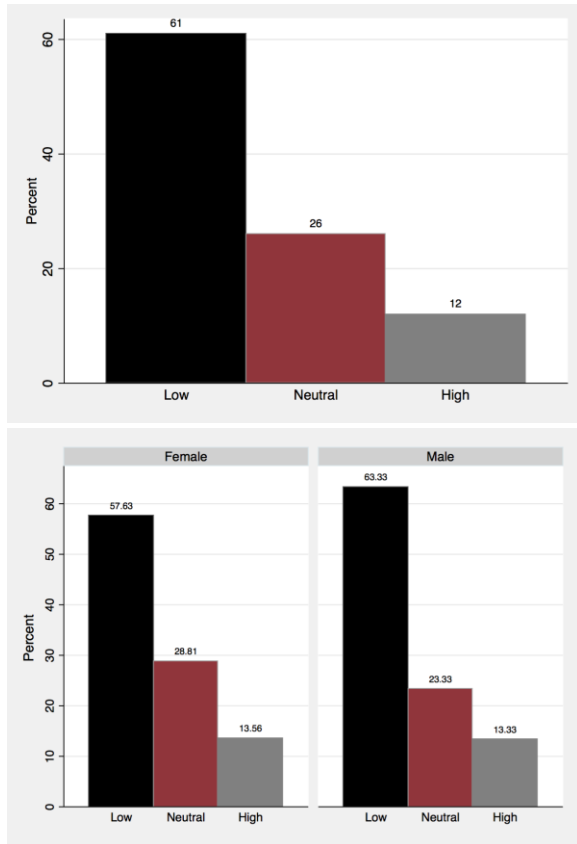
Thirty-nine percent of resident survey respondents reported not knowing or recognizing their CSP officers, while 32% reported knowing or recognizing CSP officers assigned to Ramona Gardens, and 26% reported being unsure. Fifty percent of adults ages 36-45 and 66.7% of adults ages 46-55 reported not knowing or recognizing their CSP officers. Similarly, 53.3% of men and approximately 39% of women reported not knowing their CSP officers. When comparing both major ethnicities, 50% of Blacks and 41% of Latinos reported not knowing or recognizing their CSP officers.

8. How would you rate the current level of trust and credibility between law enforcement and your community?



Overall, half of the respondents (51%) reported low levels of trust and credibility between law enforcement and the community. Seventy-five percent of Black respondents indicated lower levels of trust compared to Latino respondents (47%). Also, men (56%) reported having lower trust with law enforcement than women (49%).

9. How would you rate the current level of trust and credibility between elected officials and your community?



Similar to the previous question on law enforcement, 61% of survey respondents reported feeling low level of trust between elected officials and the community. Again, this is evident amongst both genders, all age groups, and both major ethnicities.

10. What community groups or community meetings do you attend/participate in?

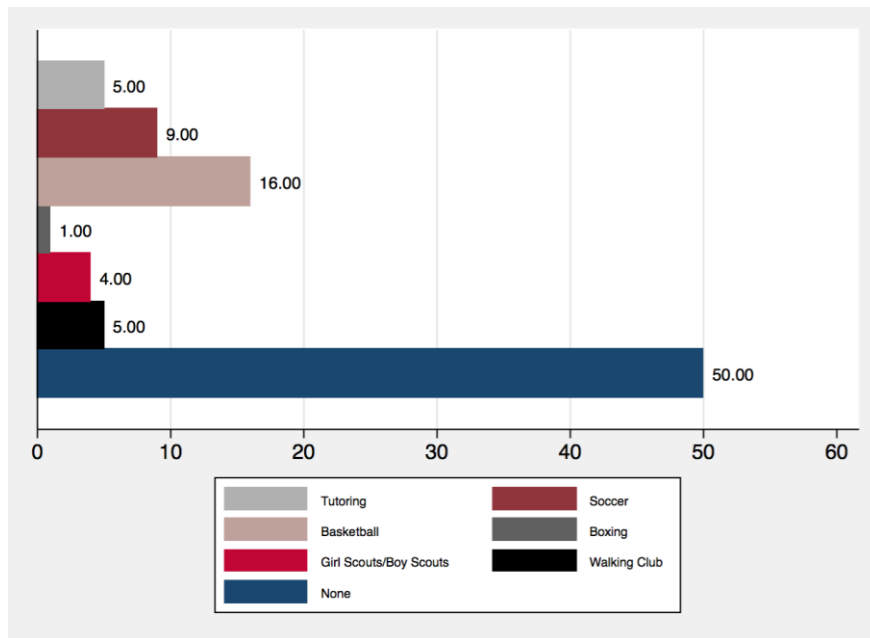
This question did not yield many responses, in fact many left this question blank. However, of those who did answer, residents mentioned SEA, Ramona Gardens RAC, and GRYD.

"Soledad Enrichment Action programs"

"Ramona Gardens RAC."

"Not the same as before COVID-19 "

11. Select all of the following program/activities you and your family participate in:



Fifty percent of respondents and their families reported not participating in any programs or activities. Approximately, 16% of survey respondents reported participating in basketball followed by 9% who reported participating in soccer.

12. What types of services or programs/activities would be most helpful for your community?

When asked about the types of services or programming needed for the community, the most popular responses included health services, access to healthier food, and community clean-ups. For instance, survey respondents quoted the following:

"Mental health services and low-income"

"Affordable clinics, better markets, and a resource center for schooling, jobs, and housing."

"Getting healthy foods at a low price."

13. What is something you'd like the Community Safety Advisory Council (CSAC) to focus on? Any advice to the CSAC?

Survey respondents reported wanting the CSAC to focus on increasing community cohesion, communication, and resources for the community. While a few surveys left this question blank, the majority of responses were repetitive and included similar requests to improve quality of life concerns. Some of these survey responses included:

"Unity of the community."

"Having more communication for residents."

"More resources provided in the community."

14. Do you have any additional feedback or comments?

In the last question, survey respondents were asked to provide any last comments or feedback. The majority of the responses were one word or short sentences that mentioned safety, police presence, trash, parking, and more. Below are some of the responses shared in the survey:

"There's a lot of trauma and there should be services."

"The RAC is not open since COVID-19 and it should be open for residents."

"Too much trash at playgrounds."

V. SUMMARY

The survey was intended to measure perceptions and experiences of public safety for residents at Imperial Courts. These results uplift the various community safety concerns and challenges faced by residents. Additionally, these results shed insight to resident group dynamics that offer potential leads for opportunities for intentional outreach to improve public safety. The data by gender, age, and ethnicity illustrate where more investment and attention should be prioritized. The following top safety concerns and opportunities are intended to inform the CSAC's SSP's and provide a roadmap for the creation of coordinated solutions to address resident safety concerns.

Top 3 Safety Concerns

- Lack of jobs 42%
- Gun Violence 41%
- Police Harassment 39%

Opportunities for a Safer Community

- Increase Gang Intervention Services
 - Fifty-one percent of survey respondents, the highest rated among survey options, reported that gang intervention agencies made them feel safe at Ramona Gardens as noted in questions 3, 4, 5, and 10.
 - Thirty-eight percent of survey respondents considered using nearby public parks/public facilities but gang activity or safety concerns pose a problem during the day.
- Invest in Community Engagement
 - Many survey responses for question 10 mentioned not engaging in community meetings or events but those that did participate did so with local schools, church, SEA and the RAC.
 - Respondents also repetitively shared the need for more resources in question 12, health services, access to healthier food, and community clean-ups.
 - Sixty-one percent of survey respondents rated their level of trust with elected officials as low at Ramona Gardens.
- Positive Police Presence
 - Fifty-one percent of survey respondents rated their level of trust with law enforcement as low at Ramona Gardens while at 39%, police harassment was the 3rd top safety concern for residents.



- Thirty-eight percent of survey respondents found that using nearby parks/public facilities unsafe due to gang activity or safety concerns in your Ramona Gardens.



VI. CONCLUSION

The community of Ramona Gardens is hopeful for incremental change so that all residents can live in a safe and healthy community. The data collected from the CSAC Community Safety Survey reflects this sentiment. It provides insight to the current level of public safety, highlights specific safety concerns, identifies trusted stakeholders in the community, and uplifts community needs and gaps in resources and services. As the CSAC moves forward, this baseline data will be considered for the creation of the Ramona Gardens SSP. Particularly, focus and attention on categorical data could help inform specific goals, benchmarks, and timelines. Additionally, the areas of opportunities provide a view into what subcommittees can focus on and what is needed in order to accomplish goals and work collaboratively.

As CSAC efforts move forward, an increase in participation of Ramona Gardens residents is essential to be truly effective. Ideally, residents should serve as subcommittee leads. Being community-centered and led in the development of solutions promotes community leadership and strengthens local infrastructures to be more responsive to residents who need assistance, while simultaneously transforming systems and services so that they are truly accountable to the people they serve. Increasing community safety requires building relationships with all stakeholders, primarily with residents, as well as with local service providers and elected officials to develop, tailor, and implement effective strategies to increase communication, coordination, and service provision so that all individuals and families can thrive.