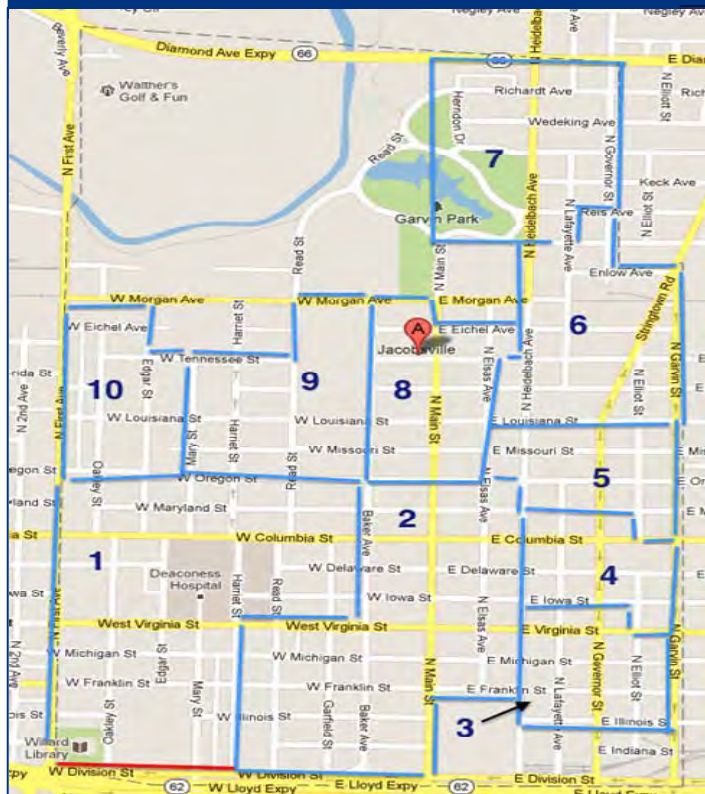




University of Southern Indiana



# Jacobsville Initiative: Neighborhood Assessment Report

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*Prepared for:*

**Habitat for Humanity of Evansville**

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*Under the auspices of:*

**USI Center for Applied Research**

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*USI Researchers names appear in alphabetical order*

## **Executive Summary of All Data from Phase I (Focus Groups) and II (Interviews)**

### **Key Findings from the Jacobsville Focus Group and Interviews:**

- *Strengths*

- The Jacobsville neighborhood is in a central and convenient location in the city of Evansville, and a major asset to the city. Jacobsville is close to several parks and other amenities in the city.
- The breakdown was even across gender lines among those who participated in the focus groups and the face-to-face interviews.
- We learned that the small business owners and residents felt that issues of crime were separate from the physical appearance of the neighborhood, and that safety was not connected to physical appearance, noting that the neighborhood was safer than it actually appeared.
- Many residents who participated in the face-to-face interviews felt connected to their neighbors. The residents felt their neighbors were friendly and nice to each other, and somewhat looked out for each other when they needed help or assistance.

- *Weaknesses*

- Everyone who participated in the focus groups and interviews acknowledged that there are not enough restaurants or dining options offered in the Jacobsville neighborhood. Some of the residents in the face-to-face interviews acknowledged that there are not enough restaurants within walking distance to where they live or restaurants that are accessible by public transportation.
- Many residents and small business owners in the focus groups and face-to-face interviews believed that their neighborhood was safe, and did not think safety was the biggest concern or the top issue, even though some acknowledged the need for an increased police presence in the neighborhood. The employees of the businesses in the Jacobsville neighborhood, on the other hand, cited safety as a bigger concern than the residents and small business owners.
- We learned that there is a disconnect in the feelings of safety in the neighborhood among those that work in the neighborhood and those that live in the neighborhood, which has an impact of the overall quality of life of the Jacobsville neighborhood. Addressing the need to be more connected to the community through more outreach programs to the community should be pursued and enhanced by the major businesses in Jacobsville.

- Everyone who participated in the focus groups and face-to-face interviews cited the overall physical appearance of the neighborhood as a major concern, which includes the decay and blight of the neighborhood and the deterioration of the housing stock.
- A number of the residents and employees in the focus groups and face-to-face interviews noticed a strong presence of graffiti, trash, and litter, and a number of broken sidewalks that limited mobility and walkability in the neighborhood.
- While the residents felt their neighbors, for the most part, looked out for each other, the employees of Berry Plastics and Vectren who were interviewed in the focus groups did not feel a strong connection with the Jacobsville community.
- This weak connection among the employees who work in the neighborhood, the businesses and other organizations and establishments who operate and do business in the neighborhood, and the residents who live in the neighborhood can be explained by the fact that many of the employees do not live in Jacobsville. Although their places of business are located in the Jacobsville neighborhood, they are not a part of the neighborhood and community.
- *Suggestions for Improvement*
  - The employees who participated in the focus groups acknowledged the need for greater community outreach and programs and activities aimed to connect employees of the business in the neighborhood with the overall neighborhood.
  - More recreational activities, activities for children, and community events should be planned for residents of the Jacobsville community.
  - A more and active and visible neighborhood association that is connected with residents through the Jacobsville community.
  - Add more restaurants and dining establishments to the neighborhood and within walking distance from residents.
  - Improve mobility and walkability in Jacobsville through the repair of sidewalks, and provide more public transportation access to residents.
  - Clean up trash, graffiti, and litter through the establishment of a neighborhood clean team that would periodically clean the neighborhoods. Establish more weekly neighborhood clean-ups consisting of residents and community volunteers.



## **Project Scope**

The Jacobsville Community Collaborative Project is a "holistic" and collaborative neighborhood revitalization program premised on the fact that no single action or initiative can turn a neighborhood around. This project builds on learnings from the ongoing Glenwood Neighborhood Initiative which has engaged multiple community stakeholders, as well as researchers to measure and assist in the collaborative. The analysis here provides an initial assessment of the neighborhood needs, completed by a team of faculty from USI Sociology, Psychology, Political Science, Public Administration, and Communication Studies departments.

Both phases of this project are an explorative investigation into the lives of those living, working, and conducting business in the Jacobsville area. The goal was to discover what these people enjoy, dislike, wish to change/keep the same about their community. Principal Investigators include Drs. Ronda Priest, Chair of USI Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminal Justice Studies; Paul Raymond, Associate Professor of Political Science; Amie McKibban, Assistant Professor of Psychology; Matt Hanka, Director of the Master of Public Administration; and Wes Durham, Associate Professor of Communication Studies.

## **Introduction: The Jacobsville Community**

The neighborhood of Jacobsville is located in the north central part of the city of Evansville, Indiana. According to the 2010 Census Data, the population of Jacobsville is 6,873 residents, and consists of 1.91 square miles (<http://www.city-data.com/nbmaps/neigh-Evansville-Indian.html>). The boundaries of the Jacobsville neighborhood are First Avenue to the west; Garvin Street from Illinois Street to Enlow Street, Enlow Street between Garvin and Governor Streets, and Governor Street from Enlow Street to Diamond Avenue to the East; the Lloyd Expressway and Division Street to the south and Diamond Avenue to the north. The Jacobsville neighborhood also includes the North Main Street Business District.

The Jacobsville neighborhood was established in 1863. The original neighborhood was East of First Avenue and north of Columbia Street, and was named after Hannah Jacobs and her farmhouse located at 609 W. Maryland Avenue (on the corner of Maryland Avenue and Oakley Street), which we refer to today as Old Jacobsville. The neighborhood was officially annexed as a part of the city of Evansville in 1868. As the city and neighborhood continued to grow, Jacobsville evolved as a blue collar community from Columbia Street north to Morgan Avenue between First Avenue and Main Street. The growth of Jacobsville included Union Stockyards which started in 1883 on Louisiana Avenue, and the Evansville Plate Works plant. This plant has become the focus of a federal environmental cleanup, due to its history of lead contamination (<http://www.historicevansville.com/jacobsville.php>).

# Summary Phase I: Focus Groups

- 45 people participated in nine focus groups representing employees of the major business, small business owners, and community residents/parents.
- All constituencies agreed that Jacobsville's major problem is general decay and unattractive appearance.
- Non-residents tend to link the unsightly appearance of the area to safety concerns.
- Residents believe the general decay of the area leads to greater drug and theft crimes.
- A general asset of the Jacobsville neighborhood is its central location and convenient access.
- Jacobsville could use a greater and more police presence.
- Jacobsville needs greater communication across constituencies about events, and increased resources for community involvement (events and spaces).
- There is more enthusiasm for involvement amongst employees and small business owners/leader of the area.



# Research Methods Phase I

## ***Methods: Overall Design***

A total of nine focus group sessions were designed to ensure data collection from a variety of stakeholders. As per discussion with the Jacobsville team, the following four constituencies were identified:

1. Major Employers of the Jacobsville area (Berry Plastics, Deaconess Hospital, and Vectren Corporation)
2. Jacobsville Small Business Owners (self-identified)
3. Parents/Guardians of Children (persons under 18 years old living full-time with parent/guardian)
4. General Community/Residential (any person living in the Jacobsville area)

One focus group was designed for each of the three major employers, and two group sessions were conducted for each of the other constituencies resulting in nine focus group sessions overall. Other than the major employer groups, all sessions were conducted at Deaconess Hospital located in the Jacobsville neighborhood.

Each focus group session lasted approximately one hour. The sessions were audio taped, and notes were taken by the facilitator assistant. Additionally, each participant was asked to complete a brief survey ("data sheet") in order to collect basic demographic data.

All sessions were conducted with the approval of and in compliance with the University of Southern Indiana Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the ethical treatment of research participants. Each participant was given an informed consent statement (that was also read to them) at the beginning of the session. All participants were notified of, and each gave consent to, the audio recording of the session. All transcripts and notes had the participants' names removed or replaced with pseudonyms.

## ***Methods: Recruitment and Participation***

Recruitment for the sessions depended on the target constituency. For each of the major employers, the business was contacted directly with arrangements made for "in-house" volunteering. Since sessions took place at the volunteers' place of employment during working hours, no additional compensation was provided.

For the parents' groups, 594 flyers were distributed per the principal's instructions to the students of Delaware Elementary School located in the Jacobsville community. Small business owners were recruited via flyers and meeting announcements during the North-side Business Association meetings in January and February 2012 (100 flyers were distributed at two different meetings). Community residents were recruited with direct flyer distribution at their homes (200 flyers initial distribution, 100 additional flyers one week later). Compensation for the above six community sessions consisted of snacks (e.g., cookies, cakes, sodas, water) and a \$25 Walmart gift card. All community sessions took place in a conference room at Deaconess Hospital.



All those who wished to volunteer for a session called the Center for Applied Research at the University of Southern Indiana. Each caller was screened to ensure that: 1) they were 18 years or older, and 2) they met the criteria of the group constituency. Volunteers were also asked to provide contact information so that reminder calls could be made the day before the session. The original sign-up sheets were destroyed at the completion of the sessions in compliance with IRB regulations.

The ideal size for focus group sessions of this type is four to eight participants. If four people did not volunteer for a particular session, it was cancelled and rescheduled. Volunteers were notified at least 24 hours in advance of cancellation and given the opportunity to participate in another session. If a session reached its maximum size, two volunteers were placed on a waiting list as alternates for that session.

The original sessions were scheduled as outlined below. Two sessions were cancelled and rescheduled due to lack of participation, as noted. The number of people who called to volunteer and the number who actually participated are noted in brackets after each date. Additional flyers and announcements were made if fewer than five signed up for a session. Particularly troublesome were the parent sessions where numerous people called to volunteer, but very few actually showed up. We also found that Saturday sessions had difficulties in that no one was available at Deaconess to help the participants find the conference room. We placed signs to help volunteers locate the room, but no-shows remained a problem on these dates.

**Sessions with small business owners, Facilitator-Dr. Paul Raymond**

Monday, February 13 at 6pm [cancelled with only 2 volunteers]

Thursday, February 23 at 6pm [replacement session, 5 volunteers/5 participants]

Monday, February 27 at 6pm [8 volunteers/7 participants]

**Sessions with general residents, Facilitator-Dr. Amie McKibban**

Wednesday, February 15 at 6pm [8 volunteers/7 participants]

Saturday, February 18 at 2pm [8 volunteers/5 participants]

**Sessions with parents, Facilitator--Dr. Wes Durham**

Tuesday, February 21 at 6pm [cancelled with all no-shows, rescheduled for March 3rd]

Saturday, February 25 at 1pm [7 volunteers/2 participants]

Saturday, March 3 at 1pm [replacement session, 5 volunteers/2 participants]

**Deaconess Employee Session, Facilitator-Dr. Wes Durham**

Thursday, February 23 at 3:30pm [7 volunteers/7 participants]

**Vectren Employee Session, Facilitator-Dr. Amie McKibban**

Friday, February 24 at 1pm [5 volunteers/5 participants]

**Berry Plastics Employee Session, Facilitator-Dr. Paul Raymond**

Monday, February 27 at 1:30pm [6 volunteers/5 participants]



In total, 45 people participated in the focus groups: 17 from the major employers, 12 community residents, 4 parents, and 12 small business owners. Nearly all resident participants, although participating in a particular session, could have qualified for other sessions (e.g., community resident participants that were also parents, parents that were small business owners, etc.).

### ***Methods: Data Analysis***

The audio recordings were delivered for professional transcription to Landmark Associates who specialize in academic research services on March 28, 2012. The transcripts were received back on April 13, 2012. Inaudible comments are noted in the transcripts. All comments are typed as spoken verbatim. Each facilitator performed the initial data analysis for their sessions. The research team met four times in April and May to discuss and validate findings across the sessions. Two additional researchers performed reliability checks on the data (inter-coder reliability).

### ***Methods: Project Timeline***

November 2011	Project Proposal Approved
December 2011	Institutional Review Board (IRB) Application; Focus Group Instrument Created
January 2012	IRB Approval; Recruitment Material (flyers/letters/meeting announcements) Created, Approved and Distributed
February - March 2012	Focus Group Sessions
March - April 2012	Transcription of Session Recordings; Initial Data Analysis
May - June 2012	Final Data Analysis (including inter-coder reliability)
July - August 2012	Final Report Prepared

# Findings, Suggestions, and Recommendations

Overall, the participants in the focus groups agreed that the central and convenient location of Jacobsville was a great asset.

The major area of concern was the unsightly appearance of the area and general urban decay. Residents linked the decay to a general lack of pride amongst residents. For non-residents, the unsightly appearance of the community made them apprehensive of crime and led to concerns of safety.

Participants generally agreed that a greater police presence and visibility in the area would improve the community by lowering instances of drug use/dealing and theft.

A greater number of business and services spread throughout the community was also a common discussion point across all groups.

Nearly all desired improved community communication, involvement, and resources (recreational spaces and events).

## ***Findings: Demographics of Participants***

Of the focus group participants, 17 identified themselves as non-resident employees, 18 as community residents, 8 as parents, and 12 as small business owners. Several participants identified themselves in more than one group (e.g., resident and parent), which accounts for a total greater than 45 (the total number of actual participants).

The participants were nearly equally split along gender, with 54.5% females participating, and 45.5% males (12 people did not answer this question).

Of those residing in the Jacobsville area, the mean length of residence indicated was 6.7 years. Residency ranged from a low of "less than one year" to a high of 25 years. 58% of the participants had been living in Jacobsville five years or less. Less than 2% lived in the area longer than 10 years.

A majority of participants had children/dependents (37% stated they had no dependents). Amongst those with dependents, two was the mean and in nearly all cases the dependents lived with the participant in the Jacobsville area (only one person stated their children lived elsewhere).

Of the employees, including small business owners, their average length of time working in the area was 9.8 years. This ranged from a low of 1 year ("just started") to a high of 62 years (reported by a small business owner who has lived in the area their entire life). 50% had worked in the area five years or less, while 23% reported working ten or more years in Jacobsville.



### ***Findings: Summary of Employees of Major Businesses***

There were several issues of concern consistent across all employees of the Jacobsville area, regardless of their employer. Consistently, safety was discussed as a major concern. Many felt unsafe parking in the area and walking from their car. However, very few cited specific instances of being a victim. Generally, all agreed that the area would benefit from a greater and/or more visible police presence.

For the most part, the feelings of safety were closely tied to the general appearance of the area and neighborhoods. Decay of the area was cited in all groups as a major issue. Run-down housing and general "unsightliness" was rarely discussed without mentioning feelings of risk and safety.

Employees also agreed that the area was centrally located and provided an easy commute. However, there was some disagreement about the availability of (quality) restaurants in the area. Vectren employees felt the area provided ample choices for dining, while Deaconess and Berry employees specifically cited a lack of quality dining in the area. Deaconess employees' concerns were of no restaurants nearby, while Berry Plastics wished for greater variety and healthier options. All agreed that the area would be improved with increased small businesses and services.

Both Berry Plastics and Deaconess employees desired greater interaction with the community. Berry Plastics employees in particular were very interested in community outreach and engagement, but lacked direction. Greater communication and knowledge of events in the area was stated often as an area in need of improvement.

### ***Findings: Summary of Residents and Parents***

Universally, participants liked the location of their neighborhood, feeling it was centrally located in Evansville and convenient to travel to and from the area. They also felt the METS bus services generally met the needs of the area and had easy access to stops and routes. However, they also cited the lack of walking and bike paths in the area. In general, one must use motorized transportation to take care of basic needs such as shopping.

The greatest concern of residents was the general appearance of Jacobsville. Like the employees, they often cited general housing and urban decay. However, they tended to view the appearance of the neighborhoods as a separate issue from that of crime, with the exception of abandoned housing leading to greater drug use/dealing. They blamed the general decay on a lack of pride by residents and absentee/non-caring landlords. Aside from drug use, the only other safety issue was that of general theft in the area. All groups agreed that a greater police presence is needed.

Suggested improvements for the area included resources for children (events and spaces) and community involvement. Several participants stated that city services and response to concerns was poor. They felt greater pride would be achieved through aesthetic improvements as well.



### ***Findings: Summary of Small Business Owners***

The small business owners liked and were committed to the area, citing the general friendliness of the residents. However, they too were very concerned with the appearance of the area. Like the residents, they did not connect the issue of safety with that of appearance, stating the area was safer than (non-residents) believe.

Generally, they thought the area would be improved through attracting a greater number and variety of new businesses. They also cited making the area more “family friendly” with events and spaces, and increasing/improving residential housing. Improving traffic flow was also a concern expressed by these groups.

### ***Findings: Detailed Data Analysis by Constituency***

#### **◆Community Residents**

#### **Benefits of living in the area – positive comments**

##### **1. Central location combined with convenience**

“Convenience. It’s a neighborhood.”

“I’m across the street from the Owl’s Club on Michigan. We use the butcher shop, that’s convenient. We use the money order place, that cash whatever, that’s convenient. The bus stop is convenient. Everything, to us, is convenient and a short distance. Doctor’s appointments are either here or ECHO Clinic; both are short areas to go to. The rent’s reasonable. The apartments are halfway up-to-date, modern. I mean, as far as I know, where I live is extremely just convenient. It’s pleasant. There’s always a parking lot where the police fill out reports, so there’s always a squad car in the area, so that just deters anything that’s motive in our neighborhood, and all our tenants are very good.”

“Access to the good bus system or decent bus system for this size town.”

“Access in both directions, or three directions.”

“Go everywhere.” [via the METS system]

##### **2. Friendliness of residents and small business owners**

“What people are out are friendly. I mean, they try to strike up conversations, whether it be through nosiness or just sheer friendliness. It depends on where you’re at, at the moment, but yeah, people do watch out for each other as much as they can, at least up in these parts. The part you’re talking about on Franklin, that’s going into – going either towards Berry Plastics, the industrial area, or the old wartime industrial park that’s not in use very much.”

“It’s not bad where I am now. I mean, nobody’s been in the yard, took anything, it seems to be a safe neighborhood. It’s nice and quiet. The neighbors all associate with each other. We don’t really know each other, but we speak and talk, and stuff like that.



You go back over the two blocks back toward the old funeral home, it gets to be a bad area again."

"With small businesses, I think the employees care more. It's not just some faceless corporation. You can feel that difference, definitely."

### **Concerns about living in the area – negative comments**

#### 1. Theft and drug use correlated with a sense of feeling unsafe

"I mean, I guess—well, I mean there's a lot of theft problems, though. I just had my bike stolen again. Just property thefts, you know, not so much violence, I don't think, just property theft and things."

"Especially when people go in your backyard and steal. They don't care about people's property. They'll just walk in the backyard at night, while you guys are sleeping or something, or not at home, and take all your bikes and take everything and bust out your windows."

"I've lived here a little less than a year. I think maybe progressively more during the winter months, I don't know if it's—you know, I don't know what's causing the problem, but I would say there's probably a little more—not violence, but safety issues. I mean, I wouldn't go walk around the neighborhood at night, you know? I wouldn't."

"There's, you know, drugs and petty crime around here."

"Well, people talking 'cause there's drug dealing going on. Well, you see drug dealing going on, all right, one house there's 15, 20 people going in at once. When you got that kind of stuff going on, cops won't do nothing about it."

"It was on Franklin, and I'm on Delaware, on the other side of the school there. I mean, it's just a matter of blocks, but there's a total difference in that block here and go down two blocks here. You're nice and quiet here, but down here, a little rough tech 00:05:33. I mean, they don't care to hit you, they don't care knock you down. They don't care walk in your house when you're sitting in there, and that's not good. We've got a lot old people can't defend their selves at all."

#### 2. Transportation insufficient for underserved populations

"There's no dollar store or anything around there. Whatever you shop in Jacobsville, you have the CVS-type places. They're very high in their prices. Then you have Buehler's, which is a grocery store. If you want to go shopping for a pair of shoes... [difficult for the poor to travel across town]."

"Oftentimes people move into the city because they can't get around as well. You know, there's a lot of people with transportation problems. I was in a wheelchair for a while, too, whenever I broke my leg last year. I was in a wheelchair for several months and I know that was a real challenge for me."

"People in wheelchairs, they can't get around. They can't drive."

"I ride my bike to get around town, so I have problems with bike routes, as well."  
Structural decay correlated with negative impact of landlord responsibility.

"The rate that houses are being knocked over around here, people feel like there's not going to be any left at this rate. There are so many houses that are being torn down. That's because of the dilapidation and them being abandoned. You know, some of these-I know that they had some issues with the landlord saying that they were going to fix these and they didn't. It just seems like there's not going to be any houses left if they keep knocking them down as fast as..."

"Then landlords don't always want to fix nothing. They're just money hungry."

"Nobody's rebuilding on the lots that get wiped out. Nobody's rebuilding because of local politics. It's just too much trouble to permit and to build a house in an existing neighborhood, and the style, and this and that. The lead abatement of the ground that has to be done and everything that goes with it, so it's prohibitive to do it. Yeah, by saving what we have with the revamping and weatherization, you get to keep the character of the neighborhood."

"Anyway, those buildings make the neighborhood look like you don't want to go into the neighborhood to the other side of the neighborhood to shop or to go through the neighborhood to see anything. They're redoing the park over at Willard Library. Well, it's a shame there's a park on one end. I think there ought to be something besides the senior citizen on the other end. Somewhere between here or somewhere—now, there is a small park between here and Garvin Park. Is that Reed Street it's on?"

### 3. General neighborhood decay

"Part of it's probably a lot of the social problems, like the homelessness and not having shelters for women, too. You know, you've got some really serious problems in the neighborhood and then you've got aesthetic problems that are probably less serious, but would help, too, I think. I think whenever a place looks better, people feel better about it. People want to do better."

"I mean, some of these sidewalks are kind of messed up. People can fall and hurt themselves."

"Well, the sidewalk condition is a really big issue."

"There's a serious trash issue."



"Well, there are-if the crime went down, instead of going up, and everybody quit throwing their trash out in the street."

## **Recommendations – ideas**

### 1. Resources that support community involvement and pride

"Skateboarding park for-I don't even skateboard anymore. I have a rod and a plate in my leg. I know that a lot of people would enjoy that."

"Basketball, with basketball goals, where people could play basketball and stuff at."

"I'd like to see, you know, some connected bike trails and pathways through the city, that connects the various parks and public resources, like libraries and museums and things that we go to every day, like a connection to where the city's not just all-because there's nothing that brings it all together."

"I think resident meetings might be-you know what I'm saying? Even though it's separate, but some type of resident meetings."

"Look at the shops and then maybe have dinner at Turoni's. Any kinda businesses that engage activities. Not necessarily you have to spend anything at the moment, but something to do. Then maybe go back and go, yeah, I just can't live without that, I'll go ahead and buy it."

"A little kid's park and I think it's on Reed Street. I'd like to see that—now, I saw that—I think it's been a year since I've seen that park. It's a nice little park. It needs to be reseeded and I think a couple of picnic benches. I think it needs to be, although sized for children and new equipment brought in. It has the old metal style equipment. I don't know how much that's used, but it could be updated and given more of a challenge for that part of the neighborhood. It's a pretty cool little park, it really is."

### 2. Services for at-risk populations

"-one of the things that I would like to see within this area, okay, for two main deals-we need a women's shelter. We already have a men's shelter. We do not have a women's shelter, at all" [for homeless or emotionally abused].

"There needs to be-there needs to, okay. This is something I read on a long time ago, okay. What about the teenager that's in trouble, that has no place to go?"

"What they need to build for these kids that get out of school late and need somewhere to play, instead of the streets, they need a Boys and Girls Club."

"I think just having the police deal with it is not necessarily a solution to the problem; maybe more treatment-oriented, prevention-oriented, reach out for mental health, things like that. I mean, we could tell the police to go find some more and arrest some more, but that's not really gonna solve it. You know, [cross talk 44:05] around here."



"Yeah, like people in their early twenties, you know, whenever they develop drug and alcohol problems, in their late teens, early twenties, if they were off doing other things, they could avoid that. I think a lot of people get sidetracked, going from high school to college around here, too. Maybe if there was something to really make sure that these kids are getting-because that's a really crucial part of their life, a really important turning point in their life. Maybe some kind of program to help them get from high school to college, help encourage that in this area."

"I think that another area I would say-this is only-a lotta people that's done time for drugs or something, they don't have all their rights. They can't come out and get food stamps to help t-for survival. I think that's kinda unfair."

"Clean up the alley, clean up the building modernize it, give them a sufficient and efficient place to lounge and enjoy themselves, and not make it look like it's a rundown halfway house for a junkie bin that you can go out and shoot and come back the next day. That's what it looks like."

### 3. Increase neighborhood housing and aesthetic appeal

"My idea is taking all these abandoned houses and fixing them up and then renting them out, instead of having people on the street."

"Well, a cleanup once in a while would help." [trash and litter]

"Okay, now here's another one for you. We have major waste disposal like once every six months. That needs to be a regular basis. The recycling bins, they take them once every two weeks. That should be taken with the trash..."

"Yeah, but to see some art projects on Main Street, you know, where the-they would have some murals or things like that. It would be so nice to have that here, something to do with the city, even, connected with the theme for Evansville."

"If they could have a program to maybe offer funding for getting a fresh coat of paint on some houses in the neighborhood, something to encourage land owners, homeowners, to paint their houses, you know, give them tax breaks or something on that, or a little funding for that, that might help."

"Yeah, there are a lotta buildings, like, down Michigan Street all the way down to Main Street. Like he was saying, there's a lotta houses-I would give ultimatums for at least a year, two years to these people. If they don't wanna rebuild these places, redo them, insulate them government style properly, fix up the outsides, I think they should be torn down. I think [inaudible 00:14:31] come in and build two or three apartment style type homes on all those properties, and it would make it a viable area to live in. It would keep industrial down to a minimum and still make it an inexpensive place to live. I think there's money to do that. I think the government has money to do it. It's kinda ironic that they received a couple million dollars to install cameras on 41, up and down the road and different areas around town, just for traffic violations and such."



"Yeah. I think it's outta control. Just neighborhood grooming. The city says the person is responsible for keeping trees, maintenance and all that. You know what I'm saying, trees on your property, but I feel like that they should play a role in that as well. You know what I'm saying?"

"LED lighting. Cut the bill down and actually change the appearance, instead everything being that yellow..."

## ◆Parents

### **Benefits of living in Jacobsville**

#### 1. Geographic convenience

"I think it's convenient, as far as it's close to downtown, close to the river, close to the hospital, close to shopping. It can be a walk around neighborhood."

"It has some good things. The garage is close by and like he said, the river's not too far, and the stores are here and there, although I don't particular care for the Buy-Low on Main Street."

### **Concerns about living in Jacobsville**

#### 1. Poor city services combined with a lack of pride among residents

"A good example is, the other day, there was a raccoon was sitting in the middle of the street, okay? Where I grew up at, you could call the city and tell them, "A raccoon's in the middle of the street," and they would be out there in an hour. That animal laid there all day, all day long. I called them at 7:00 a.m. in the morning, and it laid there all day long, and I don't know they come and got it. It was at night sometime."

"More police patrol. Over on my street, I'm getting ready to call the police again on the vacant house next door to me. I just told an officer the other night, back in the beginning of the summer, I dialed 911 because they had a lab going on upstairs."

"Like I said, a lot of it, to me, is just the city has turned their head on the neighborhoods, and not just this neighborhood. All over town, anywhere we've got a lot of rental property and not a lot of income, then you've got the turn of the head. You can see it."

"It's like you were talking about the meth lab in the house, but if people's area was cleaned up and stuff was done like that, and maintained like it's supposed to be, if you walk on the sidewalk, and the sidewalk's fixed, and mainly it's the difference in the height of the concrete, people might take a little more pride in their surroundings, and you wouldn't have the kind of things go on that do. If they don't care about their neighborhood or they don't care about their property, then they're not gonna care about the property next door."



"Because you already, like he said, you have people that move in and move out, and they don't care about the neighborhood or their house or whatever, and then you add that onto what the city don't do or whatever, and that just is, it's just piled up. It's part of the problem, over a period of time. You walk around, it's the same garbage laying in that same alley that's been there and never changed."

## 2. Community decay correlated with crime

"There's quite a few vacant houses. That would be nice, to have the neighborhood, when a house gets vacant like that and stays vacant for that length of time, to have the city get ahold of the landlords, and have the place boarded up and secured properly, and then watched. I mean, not as far as keeping an eye on it every night, but every once in a while, there's a city guy that comes around and sees whether or not you have too much trash in your yard, and writes you up for that. He can do the same thing, and make sure all them boards are secured, so that they're not sneaking back in after it cools down."

"Not an angel, but I've been running punks out of the house for years. It's been vacant for more than five years, and I've been running kids out, but that day, when I heard noises in there, I went around to the back, and the whole back window was all busted out, frame and everything. I seen somebody run around the corner, out of the kitchen, and I just yelled inside, "Hey, what's going on in here? You're not supposed to be here. You need to get out right now; fair warning."

"When Jacob, my son, was still in the stroller, me and the wife took him and my daughter, Anna-she's two years older than him-but anyway, we went over the park, because it was just a half a block away. I found a needle in the sand and a used propalastic, [sic] and its like, "We're not coming back over here. The kids have got no business playing in this nice park knowing that they can get stabbed or put a used rubber in their mouth. The park is deadly." I thought that over the years, maybe those people were gone, but I was talking to a neighbor, and she was telling me that her son, he's an adult, but he's been gone for about a year now, but at one time, him and his girlfriend went over there, and they found the same thing. This has just been in the past few years, so it hasn't changed over there. There's graffiti on the slide and stuff, and I won't let the kids go over there and play. It's a shame, because the park was put there for the kids to play in, but the riffraff, I guess, uses it at night or whenever."

"We found syringes over there [at Jacobsville Park]. I mean, it's a plus when you live right there by it. You've got little kids, but it's sad when you go over there with your child and there's used syringes everywhere, yeah."

"I mean, you have drug deals right there at the corner of my street. There's drug deals that go down all the time right there at the corner of my house."

"Yeah. I see drug deals-I look out my bedroom window, and I see drug deals go down right in front of my crib-or my house. I've got drug dealers I know. There are at least four drug houses on my block. You can tell-well, growing up in the neighborhood, I can tell-when they're doing the drug deals."

"Who wants to put their kid in there knowing that there's syringes around the whole other part of the [Jacobsville] park. How do you know there's not none in the sandbox?"

"We've all lived in the same neighborhood for eight years, so we've all got friends that live in the neighborhood. It's just but the new people coming in that are trashing it-I've got stuff all over my yard because of our neighbors just throwing the trash-"

"Right. You can't because I'm scared. I run barefooted when I play football. I don't want to get stuck by a used needle and get HIV or something like that from one of the just random needles."

### **Suggestions for improvement**

#### **1. More events and recreational spaces for children**

"They have things downtown, things like that. Maybe make some neighborhood things. I remember over in the Glenwood area you was talking about earlier, they used to have a thing over there, the fair was over there for the kids in the summertime. I don't know if they still do or not, but they had three or four-day events, where kids come over and shoot bows and arrows and what have you; games, things like that; they gave away books for people to read, for the kids. They might maybe should do something like that in some of these other neighborhoods. I always thought that was pretty cool."

"Yeah, that's what I'm saying, like there is places that you could make mini-parks around the neighborhood, where there is no money that really needs to be spent; basically one time and once every 20 years or something. Put a little mini-park in there or something for the kids to do that draws people out of their house. It's like you've got people moving around the neighborhood. You've got kids playing, people moving around, taking care of the kids. If they see more, then in the end, they're gonna do more, if they're staying in their house and not doing nothing."

"Better lighting would be better too. I know it's off what we were just talking about, but when you said put a little light up there, there's one light on my block, and it's right by them trees that are always blocking it."



## 2. More of a visible police presence in the community

"More patrol from the cops."

"I think there's more cops, there'd be less drug deals, less of the littler kids getting beat up on by the bigger kids. My kids don't feel safe. My kids are 14 and 13 years old and they don't feel safe to walk two blocks to her house without carrying a bat or something because of my son being jumped. Now if cops had been patrolling the neighborhood like they do everywhere else, it probably wouldn't have happened. I'm not saying it wouldn't have happened, but there's a good chance that it would not have happened. Because everyone knows cops don't patrol my neighborhood. I think that's the number one thing that needs to be done to make it a better place."

### ◆Small Business Leaders

#### **Positives Comments**

##### 1. Most residents are friendly and have a strong sense of community

Small business leaders like the Jacobsville neighborhood. They believe most residents are friendly and have a strong sense of community. The neighborhood's mixture of houses and small businesses results in a lot of "walk-in" customers, though there is also plenty of parking.

##### 2. Local businesses offer valued products and services to appreciative customers

There is a perception that businesses offer many valued products and services at affordable prices to friendly and appreciative customers. Despite the challenges detailed below, it is generally agreed that the area has improved in the last few years with the addition of new businesses, less transients, and the displacement of some undesirable elements (e.g., intoxicated individuals) to less visible locations in the neighborhood. While mindful that significant barriers to economic growth must be overcome, focus group participants are hopeful that efforts by Jacobsville businesses, the city, and nonprofit institutions will enable the area to experience an economic rebirth.

#### **Concerns**

##### 1. Large portions of the neighborhood are unsightly, though the area is not as unsafe as some nonresidents may believe

Focus group participants identify a number of negatives about the neighborhood. There are many unsightly or abandoned buildings, unkempt yards, and homes and businesses that need to be painted. Building codes enforcement is lax, and some businesses fail to empty trash bins in a timely manner. Evidence of a drug trade, the public consumption of alcohol, and the presence of vagrants and an occasional panhandler detracts from the aesthetic appeal of the neighborhood and makes the area appear much less safe to nonresidents than its small business owners believe it to be.



## **Suggestions for Improvements**

### **1. *Economic conditions can be improved by attracting new businesses, promoting existing businesses, improving traffic flow, building residential housing, making the area more family friendly, and increasing the visual appeal of the neighborhood***

Focus group members have several suggestions for improving the economic climate of the area. First, business leaders agree there is a need for more small businesses catering both to the needs of current residents as well as potential customers residing in other parts of the city. Despite blighted areas, focus group participants believe low property values and affordable rents will make the area attractive to business entrepreneurs, especially if tax assessments are adjusted to reflect the true market value of vacant properties. Suggestions for establishments catering primarily to residents include a fitness center, a hardware business, a farmers market, and a convenience store. Included in the types of businesses that might entice nonresidents to shop in the neighborhood are boutiques specializing in women's accessories (e.g., purses or jewelry) and antique stores.

### **2. *Promote existing businesses***

Focus group members note the importance of increasing the visibility of existing businesses. They believe there should be radio ads and brochures promoting local establishments. But they place more emphasis on the importance of sponsoring public events (e.g., a Christmas parade, music festivals, art shows, and book fairs) as a way to bring potential customers into the neighborhood.

### **3. *Improve traffic flow***

It was noted that it would be useful to restructure roads leading from the center of the city so traffic flows more smoothly into the Jacobsville neighborhood. The construction of the Civic Center many years ago resulted in a traffic pattern isolating North Main Street from the governmental and banking center of the city - an area showing signs of economic renewal. It is believed changes in traffic patterns will increase the number of people patronizing stores and restaurants.

### **4. *Increase/improve residential housing***

Study participants hope more residential housing will be built. There is a particular interest in middle income homes whose facades reflect the architectural characteristics of the area. There is less interest in the "cookie-cutter" style of housing that has recently been built in other neighborhoods.

### 5. Create a more family-friendly community

Small business leaders hope to expand the number of programs oriented toward youth and generally make the neighborhood more family-friendly. Ideas for making the area more family oriented include the addition of more parks, organized youth activities (e.g., tennis lessons), and designated areas in Garvin Park for young children to play.

### 6. Improved the appearance of the area

Finally, there is a consensus among study participants of the need to reduce the unsightliness of the neighborhood and change peoples' perceptions that the area is unsafe. In order to improve the aesthetics of the area, focus group members suggest that proprietors be encouraged to make cosmetic improvements to their establishments, building codes be enforced, residents be encouraged to maintain their houses and yards, street light poles be painted, large pots of plants be placed on sidewalks, parks be spruced up, and garbage bins be emptied in a timely fashion. In addition, some focus group participants believe it would be helpful if employees of an adult bookstore would refrain from gathering by the front door.

Recommendations for making the neighborhood appear safer include: the assignment of police foot-patrols, the prompt arrest of derelicts engaging in inappropriate public behaviors, and the installation of lights along the Green Way.

## ◆Deaconess Hospital

### **Positive Comments**

#### 1. Geographic convenience

"Our commute is not bad, cuz it's right off the highway, the Lloyd Expressway."

"Yeah, it's central for people who live north, west, east; so proximity-wise, it's convenient."

"Yeah, and if you need to run downtown for a meeting, you can do that very quickly."

### **Concerns about working in Jacobsville**

#### 1. The loss of Sandleben's Pharmacy and dining options

"It sounds funny, but I think losing Sandleben's, for a lot of people, just that one thing was a tremendous loss. It was kind of like an alternative-not that the hospital-but it's somewhere else people could go to get away from work for a little bit, step out. They'd have lunch, or even if you just walked over there, and some people, yeah, they walked over to smoke. I don't smoke, but it was somewhere you could walk away from the hospital on a nice day."



"From a hospital perspective, you don't see a whole lot of restaurants here close to the hospital."

"There's a Subway right here on our campus, but other than that, you gotta go to Main Street. Sandleben's was relatively close, but now, where do you go north to get the next restaurant? I don't know."

"We've often talked in our office about, it'd be nice if there was a nice like deli-type place, where you could get maybe hot-sort of like Sandleben's, but you could get deli sandwiches, hot soup, that sort of thing, but close would really add."

## 2. Safety and Drug use of residents

"For us, at the Child Care Center, because we have so many children, there are a lot of drugs in the neighborhood."

"We've had drug busts right like on the corner and cops, so safety is a real concern for our children and families that we serve."

## 3. Employee safety on and around campus

"Well, and safety for us walking to and from parking lots. There's three shifts here."

"I'm always the last one leaving the parking lot, cuz I work late. I'm not a scared person, but I keep saying, "Okay, now somebody would come by," cuz there are lots of people from the neighborhood that walk by when I'm going to my car at night. When I'm there, there's nobody else around. I'm the only one."

"You've seen that, and it lists the crime reported about this and that, and it's surprising, cuz they will have a number of break-ins and burglaries and this and that, and Deaconess will receive a complaint about an employee getting assaulted about once every three years maybe. It doesn't happen very often, but it's enough to scare you, [laughter] but then sometimes we'll have cars broken into, if they park on the street, cuz we have a lack of parking in our garages."

"Now one of the employees at Heart Group had their car stolen a year and a half ago, maybe two. She came out from work, and we were walking out, and I remember, I didn't realize what happened, but she's like looking around, and I thought, "Did she forget where she parked?" Somebody stole her van."

"Yeah, occasionally, you'll have a window broken out of car or somebody trying to break in and get some stuff that they see on the seat or something. You'll see some security notices in Deaconess Today occasionally, then always a follow-up to that. Sometimes there'll actually be a physical assault."

#### 4. Transient population and decay of area

"With our workforce, 80 percent are women or 90 percent, so safety and again, you want people that are new to Deaconess and Evansville to appreciate our campus and neighborhood. It's easy to be critical because of what you see, the housing."

"There was a guy at that little Jacobsville Park, and there were kids in the park, and I noticed he was really stumbling and kind of not coherent. I looked in my rearview mirror, and he started walking down the middle of the street, so I called the police. When I came back, the police had come over, and he had fallen in somebody's lawn. This was the middle of the afternoon, and there were children in that park. I didn't know; he appeared drunk, but he could have been high, he could have been whatever. In the middle of the day, I don't feel the neighborhood's even safe enough to have children out."

"That ends up with a lot of transient, and there's a level of, I wanna say pride in your neighborhood, when you own your own property as versus renting, I think."

"Yeah, that's where housing almost needs to get to the point where it's beyond repair, and then you bulldoze it down and have habitat homes or new housing, new developments. Some communities have to go through that transition. How many more years will it take or decades?"

"Yeah, the [Jacobsville Park] sign looks more like a city sign, but in this condition, it's more, I think, a spot where there's probably drug deals going on there or things like that. There's not a single light, not even on the corner there, you're right. Yeah, and so, there's no telling what happens after hours, because who's gonna see it?"

"Yeah, I was a little naïve about the people walking around. I didn't realize that there were people asking for money, which that happens, or just being right near-they ride their bikes and they ride so close to you sometimes, it's like, "What do you want?"  
Suggestions/plans for improving Jacobsville:

#### **Suggested Improvements**

##### 1. Creation of a Deaconess-owned recreational facility

"We are getting reading to construct an outdoor nature play space that'll be almost a city block, right next to Family Practice, and we just in some of our meetings have talked about possibly, maybe one Saturday a month, in the morning, like 10:00 a.m. to noon, opening the outdoor nature play space to the kids in the community. We're just toying around with that idea, because it's gonna be a phenomenal space for kids."

"It's gonna be beautiful and it's gonna be fun, and there's gonna be different learning areas, different stations around for kids to construct with tree limbs, and tree cookies, and rocks, and sticks, and there's gonna be stages for drama and imagination. There's gonna be a couple of little of huts. We have a sandbox, and also, we're gonna add dirt, so the kids can add wood or make mud pies."



"It's gonna be actually just phenomenal, and it's gonna be a big attraction for a lot of educators in the tri-state area I believe will come to see what we've developed, along with our regular inspired early childhood curriculum. Some of the thoughts have been to investigate the possibilities, the pros and the cons, of opening it up for a limited time, with supervision, to the neighborhood."

## 2. Better communication of community events

"It would be nice to know that and to have those marked somehow and really publicized."

"I think you have to get the employer-I think there may be a newsletter for Willard Library. Yeah, that's the way I come. I drive by, so I'll see their sign, like for their book sale or whatever. I'll be honest, I live in Henderson now, so I wouldn't know Willard library was having their annual book sale, unless I drove by there and saw their sign."

"Yeah, but I think in this area, if you knew more about what was going on, and I think like the farmer's market is a great idea. I've heard positive things. A simple thing I thought of just a second ago is, especially in the spring, summer, the employees like to walk, and having mile markers. It's a simple thing, but when I worked over in homecare, we figured it out, the square blocks, about what was a mile. That might tie in; I mean, tie this in with our wellness program, but that would also in the neighborhood encourage people maybe to get out a little bit and walk and know what's going on in their own neighborhood."

## 3. Additional and observable police presence in the community:

"When I first started working at Sandleben's, the neighborhood was extremely rough. I would work 'til 9:00 p.m. over there and there were routinely fights in the street that I'd have to call the police for and things like that, and then it got better for a while. Frankly, when the police department moved from Main Street to over where by Krista McCullough is, it was fine while they were there, cuz the patrols were more local. They moved a little bit farther east, and things got rough again."

"I talked to some of the crime prevention officers, and they said that basically what's happened is they've concentrated all their efforts on the south side, so the riffraff moved to the Jacobsville neighborhood. Now they're moving police back to the Jacobsville neighborhood again to try to run 'em somewhere else. It's gone through cycles, and what would I tell somebody basically about the neighborhood is just, "Watch your back."

## ◆Berry Plastics

### Positive Comments

#### 1. Location is convenient

For Berry Plastics employees, the most appreciated characteristic of the Jacobsville neighborhood is the ease with which it can be exited. Since Berry Plastics is positioned near an entrance to the Lloyd Expressway, employees can quickly drive to other parts of the city during their lunch hour or at the end of the work day to complete errands.

### Concerns about working in Jacobsville

#### 1. Lack of restaurant variety/dining options

Local businesses are rarely patronized. Focus group participants are aware of some of the restaurants in the area, but do not visit them during their lunch hour. They bring their lunch or take advantage of the Subway inside the Berry Plastics building. Employees are under the impression that local restaurants' cuisines do not include healthy choices and that these establishments are not prepared to serve food in the timely manner demanded by busy professionals. Some study participants believe the fast food restaurants in the area are unclean.

#### 2. Local businesses do not offer desired products or services

There is a perception that neighborhood businesses do not offer appealing products or services. Participants complain about too many fast food restaurants, "dive" bars, check cashing establishments, and stores selling second-hand goods. Employees desire more stores (or outdoor markets) selling fresh produce and they want more coffee shops and affordable restaurants offering healthy choices.

#### 3. The neighborhood is unsightly and unsafe

Participants are reluctant to explore the neighborhood because it is regarded as unsightly and unsafe. There are too many abandoned buildings, houses in disrepair, and uncut yards. The presence of what are perceived to be unsavory individuals in the vicinity of the Berry Plastics building discourages employees from parking their cars outside the fenced parking lot. Women are reluctant to walk around the neighborhood after dark. Both men and women refer to the fact that the management of Berry Plastics recently concluded that the services of a private security firm were needed during daylight hours as well as in the evening.



## **Suggested Improvements**

### 1. Employees have a desire to engage in outreach activities that will improve the lives of the neighborhood's residents

Employees express a desire to engage in more outreach activities, and are eager to be educated about the community's needs. There is a particular interest in the development of programs enabling employees to occasionally use their lunch hour to tutor adolescents or mentor adults. Focus group participants praise Berry Plastic's support for a program encouraging its employees to volunteer for local charities. Employees hope other institutions such as the University of Southern Indiana and the University of Evansville will facilitate more volunteering.

### 2. The recreational facilities do not meet the needs of children or Berry Plastics' professional workforce

Participants have limited knowledge of the recreational opportunities offered in the neighborhood, though most are aware of the existence of Garvin Park, the Greenway, the Pit Barbell Club, and a Golfing complex bordering the area. But there is a perception that Garvin Park is not very child-friendly, that portions of the Greenway are unsafe, and that other recreational facilities do not meet the needs of Berry Plastics' professional work force. They believe the Jacobsville neighborhood would be enhanced by the addition of recreational facilities for children (e.g., a rope course) as well as a fitness center catering to both male and female professionals.

## **◆ Vectren**

### **Positive Comments**

#### 1. Restaurants on North Main

"It's centrally located. It's less than five minutes from downtown, it's less than ten minutes from the east side, ten minutes from the west side, ten minutes to the north side."

"There's a lot of nice places to eat downtown, so it's close to places to go to lunch."

"The restaurants down Main Street are successful, but that, I guess, Main Street doesn't seem to be one of the-you walk down Main Street and it feels, to me, it feels okay."

"It's a more trafficked road from foot traffic to vehicles, and there are lights. I don't know that there's lights up and down many of the other streets." [re: North Main]

## Concerns of working in the area

### 1. Transient population and residential decay

"Yeah, I think that I have witnessed that type of activity over there. I still go over there at lunch sometimes and pick up a salad or something, but there is a lot more foot traffic in the area that kinda makes you a little apprehensive when you're looking at it when you're out and about. I don't notice it as much here, but if you get a block or so over on Franklin Street down around the hospital area, certainly there's a lot of activity out there that doesn't look like it's normal to the neighborhood."

"I would agree with kinda the foot traffic and the wandering, so it's kind of, I guess, that comfort with just being able to walk to wherever you're going. You're asking specifically about working in that area, so it's kinda, like, the individuals are there with a purpose rather than just maybe..." [roaming]

"I know that I said I don't spend a lot of time out away from here, but my wife does work at the hospital and everything. They don't go out unless they're in groups, because they're afraid to walk around the hospital. There's not much law enforcement in the area that they witness and the employees around that area, just like I said, are afraid to get out into the neighborhood."

"I also say maybe-kinda they're all related, because it's all-we have walked over here more in groups. You'll walk across broken glass, so you have that kinda people aren't necessarily caring for the area maybe, too. It's not clean."

"From a housing perspective, I'm not for sure, but I can't help but think that a lot of this is a landlord lease/rent type of thing, so there's a lot of-I guess there's not as much ownership. That would be my perception. We do see quite a few, hell, right across here on Franklin Street; the three houses are boarded up. One was a meth place. I'm not for sure how you go about attracting somebody that would be more of a homeowner, but somebody would take a little bit more ownership of the neighborhood or the location, rather than just being more transient, coming in and renting."

"Yeah. To Amy's point earlier, it's not really a point of destination. You get down there-unless you've got an activity to go to, as far as a ballgame or something like that, there's not really a place to go down and just what you consider a clean place to sit down. It's hard to imagine having another recreational area, if we can't take care of what we got. I used to go down here and run and stuff, and I mean, from night-to-night, the trashcans fill up, there's broken glass everywhere, and to keep that place really nice is pretty well a daily activity."

"I'd be concerned just because there are so many businesses here that moved away. I don't know much about owning your own business, but that would kinda scare me."

"You get outside the block and a half in any direction around Deaconess, and you run into the stray dogs and the abandoned houses, just like you do here."



## 2. Concerns about safety

"I would like it if I could actually go to Buy-Low, which is right next door, and not feel scared. I cannot go in Buy-Low, just so you guys know."

"You go on the side streets off of Main Street and then it gets sketchy."

"The area transforms after dark. You can be out here at lunchtime, like you said, and I don't have a problem. We'll buzz up and down Main Street. If we're late, especially this time of the year, by the time you get off and it's dark, and as you leave the area, it definitely takes a different..."

## **Suggested Improvements**

### 1. Increase in small businesses and services

"More restaurants. It's all about food."

"Yeah, it would be nice to have healthier-I mean, it's a bad thing, the McDonald's, and it's on the edge of downtown, which is, I think, why a lotta times this area has a lot of the homeless. Shelters are housed downtown, so when they get kicked outta the shelter in the daytime, that's where they come. Where do they congregate but a McDonald's, because they can hang out there. It would be nice to have maybe more locally owned restaurants with more healthy eating options and less fast food."

"I'm just trying to think of what businesses would add more value or more of a presence. I mean, there is, obviously, background, there's the hospital, there's Berry Plastics. I just struggle to find is it a small insurance company. I mean, we don't have any small insurance companies, do we, to need to move in."

"For me, anything that's gonna keep me from going to the east or west side is gonna be better, because I always head northwest to get to my house. If I could go to Buy-Low instead of having to go to Wal-Mart, it's going to be much easier for me, but I choose not to, just because I don't feel safe going there. If I could have my bank right here instead of going downtown, it's going to be easier."

### 2. More police presence

"I mean, in larger cities that have larger Jacobsville type areas, I mean, they have bicycle cops and motorcycle cops. Maybe that's the same kinda theme, but I mean, there is a noticeable presence where you don't think you're two miles away from the nearest officer. They obviously can't be on every street corner, but if the individuals in the area that maybe are suspect, if they know the law enforcement is in the area and if they're making loops or routes, or whatever, then that may help."

"I mean, when they patrol, one thing I was-we started working the Greenway, that's been redone. I thought it was interesting, we were walking one day, just me and another girl. We passed homeless on the bridge and such, but there was a cop that came in and he asked how we were doing, like, is everything okay. He asked us if we'd

been approached by anybody. He just wanted to let us know that he's out there just checking to make sure everything's fine."

"Yeah, the police sector down there, and about a year or so ago, so it's definitely decreased the amount of activity now. I'm not saying they were necessarily patrolling the area, but as they came and went, you would see quite a bit more activity in here. They may not have been focused on this area, but at least they were coming and going, and you just don't see that anymore."

### 3. Renovation of housing and neighborhood spaces

"Hiring out, contracting out somebody that comes through and sweeps more often than they do maybe in some areas. We walk around the houses and stuff here nowadays, the yards, there's a lotta trash and stuff in the yards. The uncleanliness of it also makes you feel unsafe about it, just because of the dirt and the trash."

"Is it common to put out—I mean, I know—don't know if downtown has—I guess along the river walk they have the trash cans out. I'm just wondering if that's some improvement in neighborhoods where, I don't know, I guess it would still have to be picked by somebody, like, contract that out. If you have a presence of a streetlight pole or something like that, I mean, lighting helps a lot, too, from a safety concern. Then, if they also had trash cans of some kind at the different..."

"Enforce inspection on houses."

"Whenever the apartment or house becomes vacant, before we allow electricity—I mean, usually, if it's off for a year, we have an inspection. If they inspected the housings prior to rentals."

"Short of any type of—when we talk about Main Street and Garvin—and I'll be honest with you, I've not used it, but you go to a lot of cities where the trolley service and stuff that would get you back and forth even from OVS, if you don't go to..."

"I think the city would have to take a lot of ownership in it and I don't know. Maybe they did in Glenwood, but if it's just habitat or volunteers from the area, painting houses or cleaning up debris, that's only a Band-Aid. If you don't increase the security or tear down houses that have been empty, fallen in on themselves for the past five years—maybe they can offer tax breaks for that business that's considering going somewhere."

"Going down that same path, I guess, when you look at trying to bring in, you got to have people in here to make any of this successful, people that actually live here. It's really difficult to go in and replace one house on this block and a house on this block, and, hey, we got an open lot to put one. You almost have to come in and start from scratch. We've had some small areas in town before that we've done that."



## Summary

Research with the different Jacobsville constituencies provided valuable insight into what is working, not working, and needs improvement. The central location and convenient access to the area is one of its greatest assets. However, all concluded the area is generally unsightly and need of visual improvement. For some, the appearance of Jacobsville raises concerns of safety. Residents link some of the decay issue with non-violent crime such as drug use and minor theft. All agree increased visibility of police patrols would be an improvement.

In conducting the research, we noticed a general enthusiasm gap between those who live in the area versus those who work there. Employees of the major business and small business leaders were very willing to not only participate in these discussions, but stated they wanted to contribute to the Jacobsville Collaborative Project efforts. We had a difficult time recruiting general residents, especially parents, to take part in the study. They generally believed appearance of the neighborhood needed to change first, before people would gain pride and desire involvement.

## **Phase II Qualitative Interviews**



## Methods Phase II: Community Interviews

The goal of the Jacobsville Collaborative Phase II was to reach residents across the Jacobsville area to explore their attitudes and experiences regarding their neighborhoods. To accomplish this goal, the Jacobsville Collaborative Project team identified volunteers willing to canvas the area and interview residents at their homes.

This group of 25 volunteers attended a two-hour training session on May 10, 2012 at the St. Vincent Center for Children and Families on the corner of First Avenue and W. Delaware Street in Jacobsville. The session examined the basics of conducting successful qualitative face to face interviews with neighborhood residents. Training topics included ethical guidelines for engaging residents, suggestions for approaching households/residents to request an interview, tips for detailed note taking, and examples of how to let the interviewer guide the process (e.g., engaged listening).

To help ensure wide coverage of the community, a map of Jacobsville was divided into ten zones (see figure one). Volunteers selected a partner to form an interview team resulting in thirteen teams. Each team was assigned a neighborhood zone, with zones six, eight, and nine receiving double team coverage. Each team was requested to complete at least two interviews within their zone (26 expected interviews overall). This study did not employ random sampling, and therefore the generalizability of data is limited. Instead volunteers used self-selection of households, seeking cooperative residents to interview.

Overall, 33 interviews were completed covering seven of the ten neighborhood zones.

Neighborhood Zone	# of Assigned Teams	# of Completed Interviews
One	1	0
Two	1	0
Three	1	2
Four	1	5
Five	1	3
Six	2	6
Seven	1	9
Eight	2	3
Nine	2	6
Ten	1	0

The teams received a set of open-ended questions to use during the interview. Questions were designed to gain insight into the residents' attitudes about their

community and provide valuable feedback to the Jacobsville Team. Specifically, questions were designed to delineate the subjective strengths, concerns, likes, dislikes, and needed improvements. Volunteers were instructed to use their own voice in the interview process and follow up with questions that built and expanded on the resident's stated views. Therefore, the interviews did not follow a standard procedure or ask the questions in strict order. The goal was an interview that appeared more like an engaged conversation with residents.

Volunteers were encouraged to complete their assigned interviews within two weeks. However, the last completed interviews were submitted up to five weeks past the original training session. Volunteers transcribed their own interviews from their on-site notes and sent them electronically to the researchers. All interviews notes clearly identified the neighborhood zone. Most of the transcribed notes included a brief statement of the question asked followed by the resident's response. Other notes only included responses. The details of the interview varied widely, with some interview notes consisting of a few phrases/sentences, while others a few pages. The lack of consistency in detail was the largest challenge in data analysis.

Interviews notes were analyzed to examine the common themes across the data. The data were initially analyzed by Drs. Priest and Hanka separately, and then the results were compared to validate the findings. Demographic information, when provided, was used to provide further insight to interview responses and help explain differences across residents. Data from the focus groups (Phase 1) and short community survey were utilized to provide further insight into residents' attitudes and validate the findings.





## **Methods Phase II: “Short-Form” Community Survey**

Each volunteer team was also provided with twenty copies of a “short-form” survey to distribute amongst the households of their assigned zone. Each survey was folded into a door bag with postage paid return envelope. The complete survey instruments are available in Appendix B. The survey was designed to provide additional data beyond the interviews and a method to reach more people in the area. This data also helps to fulfill requirements for the NR 4 Community Resident Survey, as requested by the Jacobsville Team. Since the requirements of the NR 4 required too many questions for a single instrument, three versions of the survey were created and randomly distributed to volunteer teams.

The survey was intended as a supplement to the interviews, rather than a complete, independent study of the community. Without follow-up procedures or prior notification, we expected the response rate to be rather low at five percent. Of the 400 hundred distributed, 41 were returned and 34 of those provided useable data giving a response rate of nearly nine percent. However, we can only assume the questionnaires were distributed in the zones for which interviews were completed, and that not all households received a questionnaire. Therefore, generalizability of the survey data is very limited on its own. An Excel file of the original data is provided to the Jacobsville Team for their own analyses and use.

## **Findings: Phase II Qualitative Interviews**

### **Findings: Demographics of Residents in Face-to-Face Interviews**

During the last three weeks of May 2012, trained volunteers conducted 33 household interviews with 43 individuals throughout the 10 zones in the Jacobsville neighborhood. The participants of the face-to-face interviews were nearly split along gender lines, very similar to the gender split of the participants in the focus groups: 21 residents were identified as male (48%) and 22 residents were identified as female (52%). Of those 33 households interviewed, 12 identified themselves as renters (36%), while 21 (64%) identified themselves as owning their own home. Most of the residents who identified themselves as a renter did not reveal how long they have rented in their neighborhood.

Some of the households had children and young family members, but children did not participate in the interview.



## **Findings: Face-to-Face Interviews in Jacobsville Neighborhood**

Data from the interviews were organized by modifying SWOT themes (Strengths, Weaknesses, Outcomes, and Threats) into ***Community Strengths, Community Challenges, and Community Desires.***

### ***Jacobsville Community Strengths (Positive Comments)***

#### **“Nice People”**

Overwhelmingly, residents value the “friendliness” of their neighbors. In nearly all interviews, statements about how “nice” everyone (in the neighborhood) were cited. Nice is qualified by further statements of how willing people were to help one another. Specific examples of helping include “give rides” (to work, shopping), mowing each other lawns, keeping an “eye” on each others’ property/homes. One interviewee stated how their neighbors take pictures/video of suspicious behavior on the street and share it to help protect the area.

Nice was further explained by people being “decent folks” and keeping to themselves. In other words, while there is a sense of looking out for one another and helping, there is not much direct interaction amongst the neighbors. Only a few interviewees cited they “friends” with their neighbors. Several, however, discussed they liked people “keeping to themselves.”

Peaceful and quiet was also a qualifier of the “niceness” of the neighborhood. Several commented on the high number of seniors in the area that contributed to this quality. Younger neighbors, such as college students, are generally responsive to requests to keep the noise level down and are respectful to their neighbors.

#### **“Convenient”**

Convenience of the area was also a major strength theme. Shopping, especially for groceries, is close. There are several businesses in the area providing plenty of choice as well. Some also commented that work was nearby. Only a few respondents didn’t have access to a car and commented that the bus system was convenient and cheap (“only one dollar to get anywhere”).

Convenience was also cited in regards to Garvin Park. Several commented on it being a “great asset” to the community. The park provides recreational activities (during the day only) for children and family events.

## **“Affordable”**

Cost of housing, both for purchase and rent, was another identified strength. Younger responders cited the ability to afford a “starter home.” It is not just the price, but the size of the housing that is attractive. Several commented on having enough room for their family (children/grandchildren) and outdoor space for recreation and gardening. Newer residents are located in Jacobsville primarily due to the affordability of the area.

## **“Safety”**

Nearly all interviewees, when asked, commented that they did feel generally safe during the daytime. For the most part, police patrol the area and neighbors keep an “eye on things.”

A few commented on transients, drugs, and generally “weird” events in the area, but in the context of those being mostly harmless. Crime in the area mostly consists of theft and graffiti, according to the residents. Most do not believe Garvin Park is safe at night, but is fine during the day.

Most had to be asked before commenting on safety, indicating it was not a top issue either way.

## ***Community Challenges (Negative Comments)***

### **“Decayed Appearance”**

Overwhelmingly, the decayed appearance of Jacobsville dominated residents’ concerns. Regardless of location, residents stated that the major issue of concern is the appearance of their area. Phrases such as “not being cared for,” “run-down,” “trash,” “poor condition,” and “junk-town” sum up their concerns. Furthermore, the appearance of the neighborhood is viewed in decline by longer term residents, qualifying their concerns with “*used to* (be better).”

The issues of safety and crime are linked to appearance in the residents’ views. The crimes cited are theft (often linked with trash in yards and alleys), vandalism (e.g., graffiti), and drug use/dealing (abandoned homes and ugly vacant lots). When a neighborhood looks decayed and unkept, it “invites” unwanted activity.

Moreover, the appearance of the area seems to be an overwhelming problem that is beyond the individual and leads to a cycle of further decay, by both residents and outsiders. Some of the residents noted feeling alone in their efforts to maintain their home and neighborhood, citing a lack of city response to repairing sidewalks, trees needing trimmed, poorly functioning sewers, and not fining/ignoring fines of violations (e.g., mowing).



General home decay was also linked to housing affordability. While none of the residents noted that the decayed appearance is what made housing cheaper, a few noted that general property decay did make utilities much more expensive and "unaffordable."

### **"Traffic"**

Traffic is also a concern of many, although for the most part it was discussed as a separate from "safety." Heavy traffic, speeding, speed limits too high in residential areas, running stop signs, lack of crosswalks, and street-parked cars blocking views were amongst those concerns raised. Specific traffic concerns depended of course, on the area in which the resident lived. But it was cited by nearly all across all interview zones.

Traffic is also linked to the lack of walkability in the area noted by some. They wanted more stores (hardware, groceries, drug stores) within *safe* walking distance. "Safe" walking distance is also linked to the decayed condition of the sidewalks in several of the neighborhoods.

### ***Community Desires (Suggestions for Improvement)***

#### **"Organized Neighborhood Clean-Up"**

With appearance of the area cited as a major problem, it is not surprising that most of the suggestions for improvement involved neighborhood clean-up efforts. The problem areas identified included houses, streets, alleys, sidewalks, and green spaces.

Reading the interviews, the desire for a cleaner, more visually appealing neighborhood is strong. What is lacking is organization. Each resident feels rather helpless in these efforts in that maintaining of one's own property is not enough to change the atmosphere. A community-wide effort, with someone to take the lead in organizing, is needed.

Residents further suggested property maintenance seminars, community gardens/adopt a spot, new/repared sidewalks, and more heavy trash pick-up days.

Aside from the visual appearance of the neighborhood, several residents cited the high cost of utilities and would like a weatherization program.

### **“Neighborhood Watch”**

Related to appearance, is the desire for a coordinated neighborhood watch program. While residents feel relatively safe, graffiti and vandalism is out of control. Furthermore, watch programs would help with minor theft in the area.

### **“Community Programs”**

Residents also had several suggestions for community-oriented programs to help build a sense of “us.” These included an addition shelter house at Garvin Park, additional bike lanes/routes in the area (including the park), block parties, and additional play areas for children.

### **“Local Stores”**

A smaller subset of interviewees would like to see more localized, smaller businesses in the area that are within walking distance. Suggestions for neighborhood-based shops included hardware, grocery/convenience, and eating establishments.

### **Summary Findings: Face-to-Face Interviews in Jacobsville Neighborhood**

In our analysis of the face-to-face interviews, some of the key issues and areas of concern expressed by the residents include:

- Abandoned properties were a big concern for many of the residents that were interviewed. Some dilapidated and deteriorating homes need to be torn down and removed. Some of the residents feel that they are on their own and that the city does not and will not respond to their concerns and needs. Some feel abandoned by the city altogether. Some residents expressed concerns over absentee landlords and the lack of maintenance and care of their rental properties.
- Several residents said that there are not enough businesses in the neighborhood, including the presence of dining and entertainment establishments. Some suggested additions to the neighborhood would be more restaurants, and convenience or grocery stores, and within walking distance of their homes. There is a lot of potential for good opportunities on Main Street; one resident expressed an interest in developing an Arts District for Jacobsville similar to Downtown. Some residents also expressed that there are not enough recreational opportunities for children in the neighborhood.
- Several residents surveyed expressed the need for a neighborhood watch for their blocks, while a few expressed interest in creating a community garden and an Adopt-a-Spot location.



- Another big concern for residents is the presence of trash, litter, and graffiti. Some suggested improvements from residents include graffiti cleanup, fixing the broken sidewalks, and conducting neighborhood cleanups.
- A number of residents had a positive view of their neighborhood. The neighborhood is quiet and safe; some residents said that their neighborhood is nice and some of the residents keep to themselves. Some felt that their neighborhood is a great place to live and a great place for children to play. Residents expressed a strong sense of community where neighbors are looking out for one another. Despite their neighborhood not being perfect, many of the residents expressed satisfaction with their neighborhood and would not move away from their neighborhood.
- Despite the presence of drug use, vandalism, and thefts, many residents did not feel that the crime rate was the biggest issue in their neighborhood.

### **Findings: Short-Form Questionnaire**

Three versions of the "short-form" questionnaire were distributed across the neighborhood zones. Of the 400 hundred distributed, 41 were returned and 34 of those provided useable data giving a response rate of nearly nine percent. Below are the summary findings from the exploratory questionnaires. The complete findings from each question is available in Appendix B.

- A majority of respondents believe it is important to have all types of shopping available locally. Most do their food/retail shopping in the area, but their banking and healthcare in other areas.
- There was an even split between those who believed their neighbors were helpful and those who thought not.
- Half of respondents reported they felt a part of the neighborhood and that neighbors shared neighborhood information.
- In addition to those issues cited by the interviewees, respondents to the questionnaires cited stray animals and insufficient street lighting as problems in the area.
- Although a small majority of respondents reported being satisfied with their neighborhood, they would not recommend their neighborhood as a good place to live.
- Aside from voting, only a small minority of residents report being involved in their community.
- Survey respondents cited their own home and house affordability as those items they like best about Jacobsville.
- The main form of communication in their neighborhood is from word of mouth (neighbors) and flyers/newsletters.
- Like the interviewees, survey respondents reported feeling generally safe, but not during night.

# **Appendix A:**

## **Focus Group Instrument and Data Sheet**



## Jacobsville Community Project

### **Demographic Information**

Gender:        \_\_\_\_\_ Male                                \_\_\_\_\_ Female

Age:                \_\_\_\_\_

Answer the following questions if they apply to you:

Years of residence in current neighborhood:        \_\_\_\_\_

Number of dependents: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of dependents in neighborhood: \_\_\_\_\_

Answer the following questions if they apply to you:

Years of employment in current neighborhood: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Focus Group Instrument: Residents**

1. What do you enjoy about living in your neighborhood?
  - a. Please discuss specific things about your neighborhood that makes it a pleasant place to live.
  - b. What things could be done to your neighborhood that would allow you to enjoy it more?
2. What issues concern you about your neighborhood?
  - a. Why do those particular issues concern you so much?
  - b. Please provide specific examples of these concerns.
  - c. In what ways could those negatives possibly be improved or fixed?
3. What types of businesses would you like to have in your neighborhood?
  - a. Why those particular businesses?
  - b. What businesses are successful within your neighborhood?
  - c. Why do you think those businesses are more successful than others?
4. Describe the recreational spaces that currently exist in your neighborhood.
  - a. What recreational spaces, if any, would you like to see added?
  - b. Of the spaces that do exist, what concerns, if any, do you have?
5. What advice would you give someone who was considering a move to your neighborhood?
  - a. What negative issues would you be hesitant to discuss? Why?

- b. What positive issues would you discuss? Why?
- 6. How, if at all, do your neighbors discuss the neighborhood?
  - a. What things do they talk about positively?
    - i. Please provide examples.
  - b. What things do they discuss negatively?
    - i. Please provide examples.

**Focus Group Instrument: Businesses/Employees**

- 1. What do you enjoy about working in this particular neighborhood?
  - a. Please discuss specific things about this neighborhood that makes it a pleasant or convenient place to work.
  - b. What things could be done to this neighborhood that would allow you to enjoy working in this community more?
- 2. What issues concern you about this neighborhood?
  - a. Why do those particular issues concern you so much?
  - b. Please provide specific examples of these concerns.
  - c. In what ways could those negatives possibly be improved or fixed?
- 3. What other types of businesses would you like to see move into this neighborhood?
  - a. Why those particular businesses?
  - b. What businesses are successful within this neighborhood?
  - c. Why do you think those businesses are more successful than others?
- 4. Describe the recreational spaces that currently exist in this neighborhood.
  - a. What recreational spaces, if any, would you like to see added? Why?
  - b. Of the spaces that do exist, what concerns, if any, do you have?
- 5. What advice would you give someone who was considering taking a job or moving a business to this neighborhood?
  - a. What negative issues would you be hesitant to discuss? Why?
    - i. Please provide examples.
  - b. What positive issues would you discuss? Why?
    - i. Please provide examples.
- 6. How, if at all, do your co-workers discuss the neighborhood?



- a. What things do they talk about positively?
    - i. Please provide examples.
  - b. What things do they discuss negatively?
    - i. Please provide examples.
7. How, if at all, do your customers discuss the neighborhood?
- a. What things do they talk about positively?
    - i. Please provide examples.
  - b. What things do they discuss negatively?
    - i. Please provide examples.

# **Appendix B**

## **IRB Approval and Recruitment Flyers**



Before you initiate a new research project, use this form to request review. Please include detail when requested and all required documentation (questionnaires, interview schedules, informed consent, etc.). PLEASE TYPE. For Review, submit the signed original and 1 electronic version (including all attachments) attached to an email addressed to [rcr@usi.edu](mailto:rcr@usi.edu). Following Initial Evaluation, the IRB Administrative Office may request additional copies for Convened Review if applicable.

### 1.) BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Principal Investigator:	Ronda Priest	Co-Investigator:	Paul Raymond
Department:	S.A.C.	Department:	Political Science
Email Address:	<a href="mailto:rpriest@usi.edu">rpriest@usi.edu</a>	Email Address:	<a href="mailto:praymond@usi.edu">praymond@usi.edu</a>
Project Title:	Jacobsville Community Assessment		

☒ Faculty | ☐ Staff | ☐ Undergraduate Student | ☐ Graduate Student | Other: ☐

If student investigator, name of Faculty Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Project Start Date: January 20, 2012 Proposed Project End Date: March 1, 2012

Human Subjects Research Training: ☒ USI | External Source: ☐ | ☐ No

### 2.) REVIEW CATEGORY:

Under which category do you request this proposal be reviewed? If you select Exempt or Expedited, please type in the appropriate category number (see *IRB Information Packet* pages 4-5 for Exempt (1-6) & Expedited (1-7) category descriptions).

☒ Exempt from Review—specify eligibility category #: 5  
☐ Expedited Review—specify eligibility category #: \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Convened Review

### 3.) DOCUMENTATION ATTACHED (Check all that apply) :

☒ Research instruments (questionnaires, interview schedules, surveys, tests).  
☒ Informed Consent documents (participant, parental, minor assent).  
☒ Verification letters (permission from other sites and participating agencies).  
☒ Participant recruitment information (ads, flyers, letters, etc.).  
☒ Proposal for external support.  
☒ Training Documentation (certifications, memos, etc).

### 4.) SIGNATURES:

**Investigator:** *I certify that the statements made in this request are accurate and complete, and if I receive IRB approval for this project, I agree to inform the IRB in writing of any emerging problems or proposed procedural changes. I further agree not to proceed with the research until the problems have been resolved or the IRB has reviewed and approved the changes.*

Signature of Principal Investigator:	Date:
--------------------------------------	-------

**Faculty Sponsor Approval (required for all students):** *I affirm the accuracy of this application, and I accept the responsibility for the conduct of this research, supervision of human subjects, and maintenance of Informed Consent documentation as required by the IRB.*

Signature of Faculty Sponsor:	Date:
-------------------------------	-------

5.) Please mark the appropriate column and provide details as necessary in your answers to the questions in Section 8. Describe the Proposed Research Project. (All questions in Section 8 must be answered.)

YES	NO
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> a.) Are you advertising for participants or posting a notice for volunteers? If yes, explain in question 8B and submit a copy of the advertisement or notice.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> b.) Are you paying your participants or providing extra credit? If yes, explain in question 8B.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> c.) Are your participants students at an institution other than the University of Southern Indiana? If yes, provide information in questions 8B and C.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> d.) Are you using a questionnaire or structured interview as part of your procedure? If yes, submit a copy of the questionnaire(s) and/or interview questions and explain in question 8E.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> e.) Does your study involve deception of your participants? If yes, provide information in question 8F.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> f.) Will you obtain information about your participants' private behavior, economic status, sexual preferences, religious beliefs, or other matters that, if made public, might impair their self-esteem or reputation? If yes, provide information in question 8F.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> g.) Are there prospective participants who might be especially vulnerable to risk due to your procedures? If yes, provide information in question 8F.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> h.) Will you be carrying out procedures or asking questions that might disturb your participants emotionally or produce stress or anxiety? If yes, provide information in question 8F.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> i.) Are you willing to allow participants to withdraw after debriefing and remove from your data all records of their involvement? If no, explain in question 8F.

6.) Vulnerable Populations—do your research participants INCLUDE any of the following:

YES	NO
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> a.) Children chronologically or developmentally younger than 7 years? (attach parental consent)?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> b.) Children or adolescents chronologically or developmentally aged 7 to 18 years? (attach parental consent and child or youth assent)?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> c.) Pregnant women or fetuses?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> d.) Prisoners?

7.) Protected Populations—does your research project specifically TARGET any of the following:

YES	NO
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> a.) Representatives of a minority group? (see page 6 of the IRB guidelines for a definition.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> b.) Institutionalized people?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> c.) Elderly people?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> d.) Socially, economically, or educationally disadvantaged people?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> e.) Other special populations? <input type="checkbox"/> USI Students Other <input type="checkbox"/>

### 8.) DESCRIBE PROPOSED RESEARCH PROJECT

Describe the proposed research project by responding to the following requests for information. Please type your response directly under each section. If you are using a separate sheet of paper, reproduce the requests for information with your typed responses. All questions must be answered.



#### **A.) RESEARCH QUESTION AND STUDY DESIGN**

**1.) State the research question to be answered by the project.**

**2.) Describe your study design including your proposed method of collecting and analyzing data.**

*According to 46CFR §46.102(d), "research means a systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge. Activities, meeting this definition, constitute research for purposes of this policy, whether they are conducted or supported under a program that is considered research for other purposes. For example, some demonstration and service programs may include research activities." <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/45cfr46.htm>*

- 1) The Jacobsville Initiative is a community revitalization organization established to improve the Jacobsville area neighborhoods. Through the auspices of CAR (Center for Applied Research), we have been hired to assess the needs of the residents. The research question therefore, is rather open-ended: "What is working in your neighborhood and what is in need of change?"
- 2) Neighborhood resident opinions will be collected via a series of focus groups. Our plan includes 9 focus groups, six to eight participants each, which will last approximately 1.5 hours. The focus groups will take place during January and February 2012 (exact dates are still being negotiated with the relevant constituencies). The focus group location is the Deaconess conference facility which is centrally located in the Jacobsville area. Each session will ask residents basically six questions
  1. What do you enjoy about living in your neighborhood?
  2. What issues concern you about your neighborhood?
  3. What types of businesses would you like to have in your neighborhood?
  4. Describe the recreational spaces that currently exist in your neighborhood.
  5. What advice would you give someone who was considering a move to your neighborhood?
  6. How, if at all, do your neighbors discuss the neighborhood?
- 3) Each focus group session will be audio taped, supplemented with notes. All recordings and notes will be professionally transcribed with identifiers removed from the transcripts (e.g., names replaced with letters)

The qualitative data will be analyzed by the research team centered around the common/typical answers to each of the above questions and a report will be prepared. This technical report will be submitted to the Jacobsville leaders for approval.

#### **B.) PARTICIPANT POPULATION AND RECRUITMENT**

**1.) Explain what criteria you will use to determine which participants will be included and which potential participants will be excluded from the project.** *For example, are there any participant enrollment restrictions based on race, ethnic origins, age, and/or gender?*

**2.) Describe, in a step-by-step manner, the method of recruitment, including use of recruitment letter and/or any advertisement.** *Specifically, how will you obtain potential participants and how will you contact them?*

**3.) Are you awarding monetary compensation or extra credit for participation?** *If you will pay the participants, how much will you pay; and how will you pay those who withdraw before the project ends? If you are offering extra credit, there must an equitable opportunity to earn extra credit for persons who choose not to participate in the study.*

**Note:** A copy of all participant recruitment materials (e.g., websites, posters, flyers, email call for participation, radio announcements, etc.) must be submitted along with the IRB application.(If requesting that your study be exempt from review, give sufficient details to justify how it fits into one of the exemption categories.)

1. All adults living/working in the Jacobsville area are eligible to volunteer for this study.



2. Volunteers will be recruited through three main sources: door to door flyers distributed to peoples' homes; announcements at churches and community organization meetings (e.g., Jacobsville Neighborhood Association); and through flyers/announcements at the major employers of the area - Berry Plastic, Deaconess, and Vectren. No specific person will be targeted or asked to participate. Dates and locations will be provided on the flyer/announcement along with contact information. Those who would like to participate will call/email CAR to sign up for participation. Each group will be limited to a maximum of eight volunteer participants. If a session is full, other session times will be offered to the participant. Volunteer participants are free to cancel their participation at any time. One day before the session, volunteer participants will be contacted via email/phone (their preference) to remind them of their focus group session.
3. Our research team will not be providing payment for participation, but the Jacobsville Initiative will be giving \$25 retail gift cards to all volunteer participants who show up for the focus group sessions. The gift cards will be distributed prior to the start of each focus group session, after participants sign the informed consent form. If a participant leaves after the start of the session, for whatever reason, the gift card is theirs to keep.

Additionally, snacks (e.g., pizza, cookies, bottled water, soda) will be provided to all participants throughout the session. Food items will be on a table for volunteer participants to access at will.

#### **C.) PROJECT SITE(S)**

1.) State the location at USI where the research study will take place.

2.) 'List all institutions other than USI expected to provide access to potential participants and describe facilities where research is to be conducted, etc (if applicable). Attach signed originals of approval letters, on the cooperating institution's letterhead, signed by appropriate authorized officials at each institution listed.

Note: Investigators may submit an application for IRB review prior to obtaining all required institutional approvals. In the application, the investigator should demonstrate that approval has been requested. Final approval to conduct research at a particular research site will NOT be granted until a signed original document with that institution's written approval has been submitted for the IRB's files.

1 & 2) The focus group sessions will take place at the conference facility at Deaconess Hospital, Deaconess Hospital, 600 Mary Street, Evansville, IN 47747. Several bus routes stop at this location as it is conveniently located in the Jacobsville neighborhood for easy access. The conference room has a conference table, chairs, and is handicap accessible. The approval letter from Deaconess is attached.

#### **D.) INFORMED CONSENT**

1.) Describe the informed consent process for recruiting participants into this study. *Where and when will informed consent be obtained? When will the potential participants (or their legal guardians) be initially approached for consent and by whom?*

Note: Please include a footer on each consent document with the principal investigator's name, project title, and page number. You are required to obtain informed consent from each participant prior to enrolling him/her in the research study. Prepare and attach Informed Consent documents for all relevant participants involved in the study. All Informed Consent documents should have a reading level at or below 8th grade and be written from the viewpoint of the participant; explain their involvement.

1. When calling to volunteer for a session, volunteers will be asked if they are 18 years or older. Underage volunteers will not be allowed to place their name on the session list. Upon arrival, each volunteer participant will be handed two copies of the informed consent document (attached). Before the session begins, the focus group leader will read the document to the group, ask if there are any questions, and invite participants sign the document if they understand its content and agree to participate in the research project. All those who agree and sign will be considered officially part of the study. One copy of the consent form is for the participant, the other will be for the research team's records.



#### **E.) PROCEDURAL DESCRIPTION**

**1.) Describe, in a numbered sequential list, all procedures to which human participants will be subjected. In addition, identify all procedures which are considered to be experimental and/or procedures performed exclusively for research purposes.**

**2.) Describe the setting and mode of administering the instrument(s) (e.g., by telephone, face-to-face, mail, email, group sessions, etc.), intervention, or applicable research activities. Include the duration, intervals of administration and overall length of participation.**

**3.) Include the provisions for maintaining privacy and confidentiality.**

1. 1) Potential volunteers will call to place their name on a session list. 2) Potential volunteers will be called/mailed (depending on their preference) one day prior to the session as a reminder. 3) Volunteers will arrive at the session and be given (and read) the informed consent documents. 4) \$25 retail gift cards (provided by the Jacobsville Initiative) will be given to all participants. 5) The focus group session will be a series of four to six questions (attached), asked to the group, by the focus group leader. 6) Volunteer participants' comments will be both audio recorded and noted. 7) Each session is expected to last 60 to 90 minutes. 8) Snacks and beverages will be provided throughout the session.
2. Focus groups is the mode of instrument delivery. Each session is expected to last 60 to 90 minutes, depending on the response/feedback of the group.
3. No names or other potentially identifying markers will be noted on any of the session notes. Any name mentioned during the session will be deleted and replaced with a letter (e.g., Participant A) in the official transcription.

#### **F.) RISKS AND BENEFITS**

**1.) Does the research involve more than minimal risk to participants? How will you screen and eliminate all participants from populations considered vulnerable from the study; and what will be your method of treating participants who experience adverse reactions?**

*Minimal risk means that "the risks of harm anticipated in the proposed research are not greater, considering probability and magnitude, than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests."*

**2.) Does the research involve the use of deception? Federal regulations prohibit the use of deceptive techniques that place subjects at greater than minimal risk. Please demonstrate the following: that the research could not be accomplished without using deception and describe how the degree of deception has been minimized.**

**3.) Explain the benefits of the research to the participants and also to society, if applicable.**

1. The focus group sessions involve minimal risk.
2. There is no deception in this study.
3. The volunteer participants are the direct benefactors of this applied research project in that their data will direct the community engagement project that will result. The larger Evansville area will also benefit from the neighborhood revitalization of Jacobsville which is the long term outcome of this study.

#### **G.) CONFIDENTIALITY**

**1.) What methods will you use to ensure confidentiality of data obtained? What safeguards will you use to protect participants?**

**2.) Include the plans for safeguarding identifying information during the entire research process as well as final disposition (or destruction) of data, and debriefing procedures. Explain how the researchers will debrief subjects after the deception and include all debriefing scripts.**

- 1.1. The focus groups are being held in a private facility, in a closed room. Participants' names and identifying markers will not be physically noted. Any name mentioned on the audio files will be removed from the official transcripts. Once the data is analyzed and the report is written, the original audio files will be erased. Additionally, all appointment/group lists generated (by volunteers calling in) will be destroyed at the conclusion of the study. During data analysis/report writing, any list/identifying material will be kept

locked in the SAC Department research room. No debriefing will be done in that it is part of the focus group session. However, all community residents are invited to the Jacobsville Initiative's "Community Discussion" in which the results of the study will be presented by the research team.

**H.) ADDITIONALS**

**Please all additional materials as electronic attachments OR cut and paste them into this form.**

*Please include a footer on each document with the principal investigator's name, project title, and page number.*

(Type answer here)

**NOTE:** For Review, submit the signed original (paper) and 1 electronic version (including all attachments) to [rcr@usi.edu](mailto:rcr@usi.edu). Approval for projects is valid for one year only. Investigators must submit an *IRB Renewal Application* for the second year's project before the year's end if the activity lasts more than one year. If you have questions regarding the review procedures or completion of this application, contact the IRB Administrative Office (SRO), WA 104, University of Southern Indiana, 8600 University Blvd, Evansville, IN 47712-3534, Phone: (812) 465-1126; Fax: (812) 464-1956; email: [rcr@usi.edu](mailto:rcr@usi.edu). Revised 10/08.



**THE JACOBSVILLE COMMUNITY INVITES YOU TO  
HAVE A VOICE IN YOUR COMMUNITY  
AND RECEIVE A \$25 WAL-MART GIFT CARD**

We are seeking Jacobsville community residents to interview to learn what is working in your neighborhood, and what you feel needs attention. We will be interviewing people in small groups and it will only take about 1-2 hours.

All who are on time and complete the interview will receive a \$25 Wal-Mart gift card. Also, refreshments will be provided.

All interviews will take place at Deaconess Hospital on Columbia St.

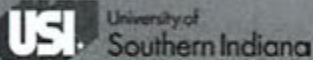
Interview Study Times:

Time

**VOLUNTEERING IS EASY!**

Call 812/461-5442 to tell them which study time you have selected.

This study is sponsored by USI Center for Applied Research.



# **Appendix C**

## **Interview Guidelines and Questions**



## Jacobsville Community Conversation Questions

NEIGHBORHOOD NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

GENDER(S) OF RESIDENT INTERVIEWED \_\_\_\_\_

ARE THEY A HOMEOWNER OR RENTER? (CIRCLE ONE)

INTERVIEWER: INTRODUCE YOURSELF AND MAKE SURE THEY AGREE BEFORE STARTING. AT THE END OF THE INTERVIEW, NOTE THE GENDER OF THE RESPONDENT, DATE, TIME, AND NEIGHBORHOOD NUMBER.

ASK THESE TWO  
QUESTIONS FIRST

How long have you lived in this neighborhood?

Are you planning to stay here? Why?

YOU DO NOT HAVE TO ASK THESE IN ORDER, OR ASK ALL QUESTIONS. LISTEN TO WHAT THEY SAY—THEY MAY HAVE ALREADY ANSWERED A SUBSEQUENT QUESTION.

What do you like most about your neighborhood? (–or–) What attracted you to this neighborhood?

What businesses do you think are needed here?

Are your and your family's needs met by the community? What could improve?

If there is one thing you would like to see changed around here, what would that be?

Can you think of other things that could be changed in order to improve the neighborhood?

Do you have children? How many? What are their ages?

Are there enough places for children to play? Are there good places and events for children in this neighborhood? What would like to see added or changed?

Are there good resources for adults in the neighborhood? What type of organizations and resources would benefit adults who live here?

What is the one thing you wish the community had that it doesn't have now?

Do you feel safe in your neighborhood? What would help you feel safer?

**Do you rent or own your home?**

(If "rent")—**Are you interested in buying your own home in this neighborhood?**

**Why (or why not)?**

**Do you work near here? What is your occupation?** (You may want to follow-up with how long they have been looking for work if unemployed, and what could help get them working again).

**What would you like the Jacobsville Project to know about you, your life, your family?**

**Are you personally involved in community events or organizations?** (Follow up with a question about what they enjoy about their involvement, or what type of events/organizations might help them to get involved).

**Would you like more information on the Jacobsville Project and what they are doing?** (If so, hand them a card to fill out—assure them the card is separate from your interview notes to maintain confidentiality).

Be sure to thank them for being interviewed and providing quality insight. If you have not given them a business card, be sure you do so. It is highly recommended to take notes on this interview before proceeding to the next.
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Gender of respondent    \_\_\_\_ male    \_\_\_\_ female

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional notes:



# **Appendix D**

## **Short-Form Survey Instrument and Findings**

Do you feel a part of this neighborhood?

- ☐ Yes, very much so 20% ➡ 50%
- ☐ Yes, pretty much 30%
- ☐ Somewhat so 30%
- ☐ Not very much 20%
- ☐ Not at all 0%

To what degree do people in this neighborhood share information about what is happening locally? Would you say they do so..?

- ☐ A great deal 0%
- ☐ A fair amount 50%
- ☐ Some 20%
- ☐ A little 10% ➡ 30%
- ☐ Not at all 20%

What other comments do you have about living in this neighborhood?

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Did you know that there is a team of people working to improve your neighborhood? The area of Evansville that is being targeted for improvement is known as Jacobsville. The first step to improving a community is learning what the people who live in it think about their neighborhood. We have been talking to people all over the neighborhood and now we would like your opinion. Your feedback is really important if we are to make real, positive changes in this community.

This short survey is sponsored by the Jacobsville Project Team. Their only purpose is to help people in this area by improving the neighborhood. Since your ideas are very important to the success of this project, we hope you will take 10 minutes or so to give us your opinion about where you live. Your responses will help us understand what should be done to improve the area.

Your answers will be completely private. Please do NOT write your address anywhere on this paper. Feel free to skip any question you do not wish to answer. This study is completely voluntary.

If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to call Ronda Priest at 465-1092 or email her at [rpriest@mail.usi.edu](mailto:rpriest@mail.usi.edu). She is a part of the Jacobsville Project Team and is in charge of this study.

Thank you so much for taking the time to answer these questions. When you are finished, just place this form in the attached envelope. The postage has already been paid.

Sincerely,

Ronda Priest  
University of Southern Indiana

This is the end of the study. Thank you again for your opinions. Please place this form in the provided envelope and mail it back so we can start working on improving the Jacobsville area!



To start, please let us know how important it is for you to do these things in your neighborhood?

	Very important	Important	Somewhat important	Not that important	Not at all important
Do your main food shopping	60	30= 90%		10%	
Do other kinds of shopping	40	20=60%	10%	20	10=30%
Purchase gasoline	30	40=70%	10%	10	10=20%
Eat out	30	10=40%	50%		10%
Do your banking	30	20=50%		20	30=50%
Receive medical or health care	40	20=60%	10%	20	10=30%
Receive dental care	30	20=50%	10%	20	20=40%

How often do you do these things in your neighborhood?

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Do your main food shopping	40	20	30	10
Do other kinds of shopping	30	20	50	0
Purchase gasoline	20	40	20	20
Eat out	20	30	40	10
Do your banking	10	10	0	80
Receive medical care	30	10	30	30
Receive dental care	22.2	11.1	11.1	55.6

All people need help sometimes. *How likely are people in your neighborhood to help out if ....*

	Very likely	Likely	Somewhat Likely	Not that Likely	Not at all Likely
You need a ride somewhere.	20	10=30%	10	30	30=60%
A package is delivered when you are not home and it needs to be accepted.	20	10=30%	30	20	20=40%
You need a favor, such as picking up mail or borrowing a tool.	20	10=30%	40	10	20=30%
You need someone to watch your house when you are away.	22.2	11.1=33.3	22.2	33.3	11.1=44.4
An elderly neighbor needs someone to periodically check on him or her.	20	20=40%	20	30	10=40%
A neighbor needs someone to watch a pet when he or she is not home.	22.2	11.1=33.3	22.2	22.2	22.2=44.4
A neighbor needs someone to take care of a child in an emergency.	11.1	22.2=33.3	11.1	22.2	33.3=55.5

If you had a choice, would you continue to live in this neighborhood?

- ☐ Yes 53.3%
- ☐ No 46.7%

Please describe why you feel this way.

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In what year did you move into this neighborhood? \_\_\_\_\_

What other comments do you have about living in this neighborhood?

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This is the end of the study. Thank you again for your opinions. Please place this form in the provided envelope and mail it back so we can start working on improving the Jacobsville area!

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Sincerely,

Ronda Priest  
University of Southern Indiana



The following are things people sometimes consider issues in communities. Please tell us whether or not you think each is a problem in this neighborhood.

	YES	NO
Poorly maintained streets and sidewalks	87.5	12.5
Litter, trash, or debris	93.3	6.7
Abandoned or vacant houses and/or apartments	84.6	15.4
Abandoned or vacant non-residential buildings	69.2	30.8
Graffiti	61.5	38.5
Poorly public spaces like parks and playgrounds	33.3	66.7
Traffic or speeding vehicles	81.3	18.8
Inadequate street lighting	53.8	46.2
Drug activity	87.5	12.5
Dumping	57.1	42.9
Vandalism and/or break-ins	61.5	38.5
Squatting	33.3	66.7
Stray cats and/or dogs	80	20
Other: _____		

Overall, how satisfied are you with living in this neighborhood?

<input type="radio"/> Very Satisfied	18.8%	= 62.6%
<input type="radio"/> Satisfied	25%	
<input type="radio"/> Somewhat Satisfied	18.8%	= 37.6%
<input type="radio"/> Somewhat Dissatisfied	12.5%	
<input type="radio"/> Dissatisfied	18.8%	
<input type="radio"/> Very Dissatisfied	6.3%	

Right now, how likely are you to recommend this neighborhood to someone else as a good place to live?

<input type="radio"/> Definitely would recommend the neighborhood	6.3%	=43.8%
<input type="radio"/> Probably would recommend the neighborhood	37.5%	
<input type="radio"/> Probably would not recommend the neighborhood	43.8%	=56.3%
<input type="radio"/> Definitely would not recommend the neighborhood	12.5%	

The following is a list of different ways in which people sometimes become involved in their communities. Please indicate whether or not you have participated in these activities in this neighborhood *during the past 12 months*.

	YES	NO
Attend a resident or tenant meeting, a block watch meeting, or a neighborhood association meeting	6.7%	93.3%
Attend a public meeting, write to a public official, or talk with a public official	37.5%	62.5%
Volunteer your time to support a non-profit or community organization	31.3%	68.8%
Become involved in community affairs, civic activities, or political issues	33.3%	66.7%
Work to improve the public spaces in your neighborhood	35.7%	64.3%
Vote in a local or national election	60%	40%
Participate in a community event or social activity sponsored by a local organization	46.7%	53.3%

Thinking about basic necessities, such as food, clothing, and banking, what portion of these goods and services are available in this neighborhood?

<input type="radio"/> Almost all	25%	=56.3%
<input type="radio"/> Many	31.3%	
<input type="radio"/> Some	12.5%	=12.5%
<input type="radio"/> Few	18.8%	
<input type="radio"/> None	12.5%	
		=31.3%

Do you currently own the home where you live?

- ☐ Yes **62.5%**
- ☐ No **37.5%**

If No, which of the following best describes how you currently pay for your home?

- ☐ I pay rent directly to a landlord. **25%**
- ☐ I pay rent to someone else living in the same home. **0%**
- ☐ I live in the home, but do not pay rent. **12.5%**

In what year did you move into your current home? \_\_\_\_\_

What other comments do you have about living in this neighborhood?

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Sincerely,

Ronda Priest  
University of Southern Indiana



People have many things they like and dislike about where they live. Please choose 3 things you like **BEST** and then 3 things you like **LEAST**.

	BEST	LEAST
My house or apartment	75%	12.5%
My neighbors	25%	12.5%
Distance to work	37.5%	25%
Access to amenities, such as stores or community centers	25%	25%
Proximity to public transportation	25%	12.5%
Schools for my children	0	0
Access to job opportunities	0	25%
Safety in the neighborhood	12.5%	50%
Affordability of housing	50%	12.5%
Types of housing available	0	37.5%

If there is something else, please write in:

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Please let us know what ways you find out what is going on in your neighborhood. Please check YES or NO to the below items.

	YES	NO
Neighbors, relatives, and friends	75	25
Flyers or newsletters	66.7	33.3
Block watch or neighborhood associations	20	80
Faith community members	0	100
Local human services organizations	0	100
Some other way (Write in)		

Please tell us how safe you feel in each of the following places.

	Very safe	Safe	Somewhat safe	Not that safe	Not at all safe
In your home at night	25	37.5=62.5	37.5	0	0
Outside your home at night (on the porch or stoop, or in the yard or alley)	14.3	42.9=57.2	42.9	0	0
Walking in the neighborhood during the daytime	25	25=50	50	0	0
Walking in the neighborhood at night		28.6	14.3	14.3	42.9=57.2
In parks, playgrounds, and other outdoor recreational areas	14.3	28.6=42.9	28.6	14.3	14.3=28.6

Please tell us how safe you think these people are in this neighborhood.

	Very safe	Safe	Somewhat safe	Not that safe	Not at all safe
Senior citizens	12.5	25=37.5	50	12.5	0
Children playing outside	14.3	0=14.3	57.1	28.6	0
Children and youth in school	14.3	42.9=57.2	28.6	14.3	0
Neighborhood residents going about their day	12.5	25=37.5%	62.5	0	0