



## RESIDENTIAL SURVEYS REPORT

July 2021

A housing survey for Cleveland residents was administered beginning July 1, 2020 and has collected responses on a rolling basis from that point forward. Responses were collected in two ways. First, a link to the survey was included in the application for COVID-19 rental assistance in Cleveland. The first 200 rent relief applicants who filled out the survey were mailed gift cards for Dave's Market in Cleveland as a thank-you for their participation. This method of survey distribution was designed to reach those who might otherwise be less likely to fill out a survey. The second outreach method involved distributing the survey link via City listservs, CDC mailing lists, and other contacts.

This analysis is based on responses collected through July 16, 2021. Over 2,000 responses were submitted. After removing partial responses and responses from non-Cleveland addresses, the sample included 1,648 valid responses: 737 from rental assistance applicants and 911 from the general population.

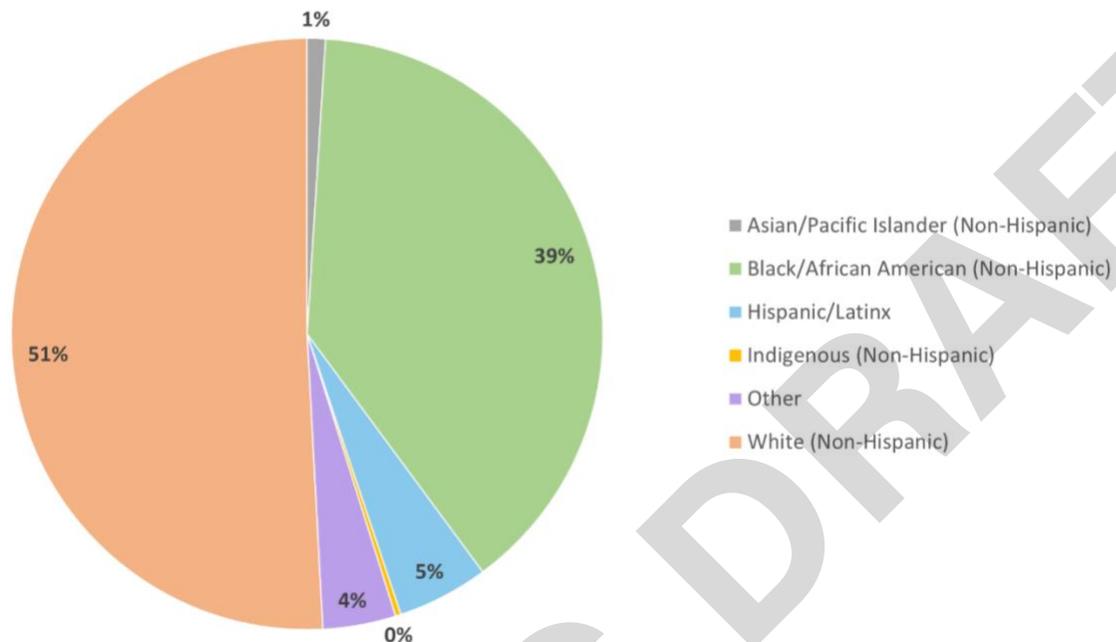
### Respondent Demographics

As shown in the map on the following page, the survey sample is distributed fairly well across Cleveland, with the highest shares of responses from the following zip codes: 44113 (15%), 44102 (13%), 44111 (10%), and 44109 (8%).

About half of respondents to the survey self-identified as non-Hispanic White (51%), 39% as non-Hispanic Black/African American, 5% as Latino/a, and 1% as Asian or Pacific Islander. This skews somewhat less diverse than Cleveland as a whole, which is 34% non-Hispanic White, 48% non-Hispanic Black/African American, 11% Latino/a, and close to 3% Asian. The dual distribution methods helped create a more balanced sample than might otherwise have been achieved; rental assistance applicants who completed the survey were 72% Black/African American while general respondents were 78% White.

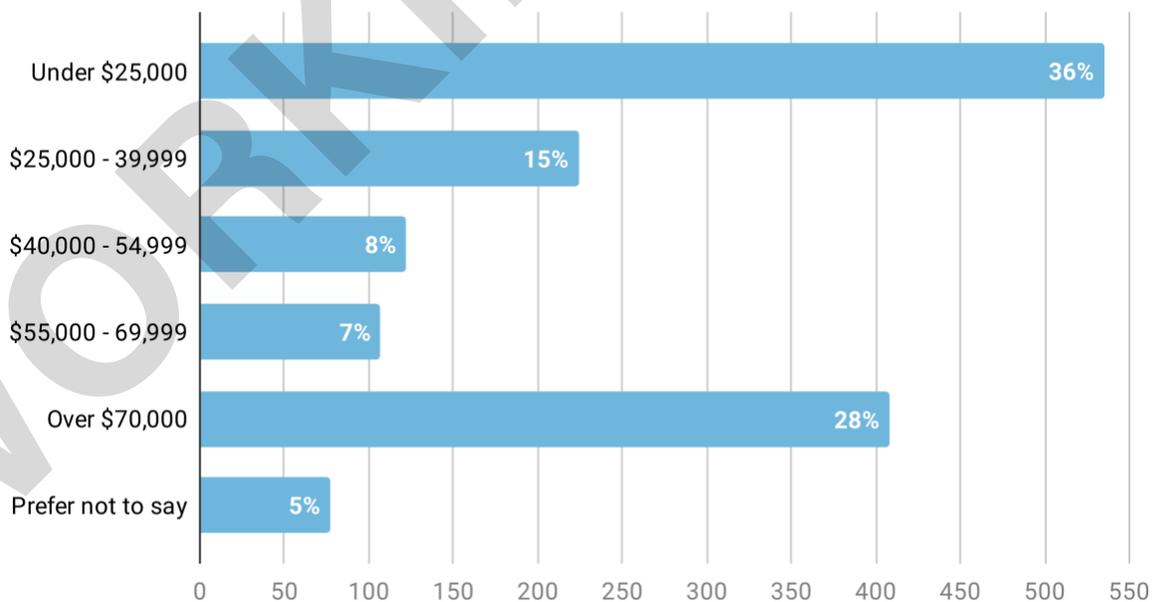
About a quarter (23%) of respondents reported that they live with a disability or long-term health concern.

### Race and Ethnicity of Survey Respondents



In terms of income, survey respondents represent a broad range. About a third (36%) have annual household incomes less than \$25,000, while 28% have incomes over \$70,000, and another third falls in between these two groups (see the chart below).

### Household Income of Survey Respondents

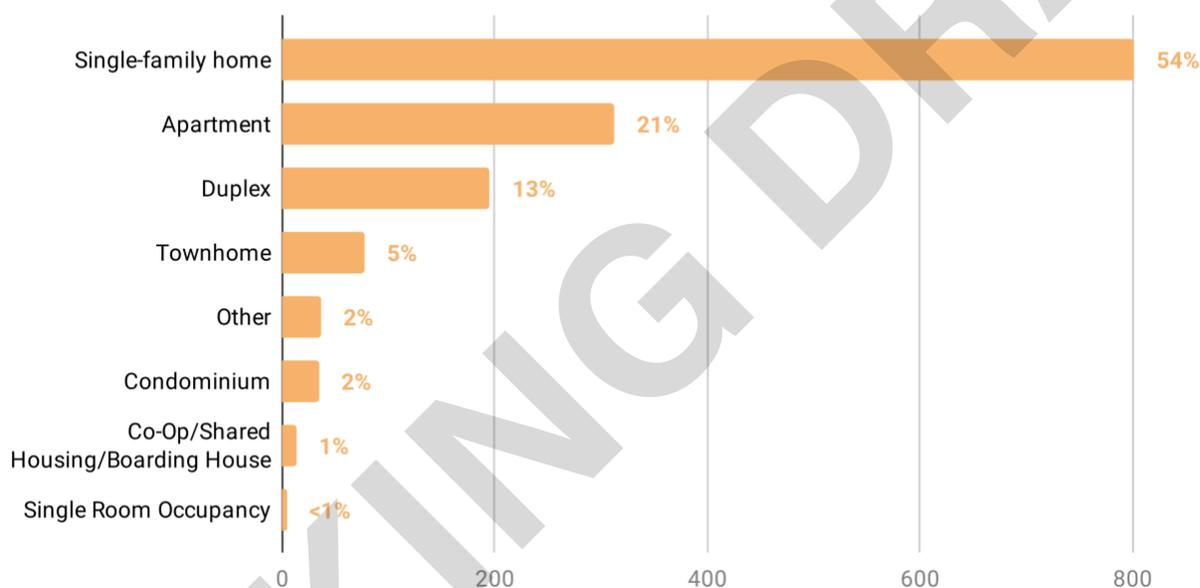


## Housing Types

Slightly more than half (53%) of respondents are renters, including the 2% who rent from the Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA). About 40% are homeowners. The remainder have alternative tenure situations, such as living with relatives or another household without paying rent, or living in a car, hotel/motel, or on the street. Like race/ethnicity, tenure types differ spatially, with West Side zip codes seeing higher rates of homeownership and East Side zip codes seeing higher rates of renter-ship (see maps, below).

More than half (54%) of respondents live in single-family homes. The remainder live predominantly in apartments, duplexes, or townhomes.

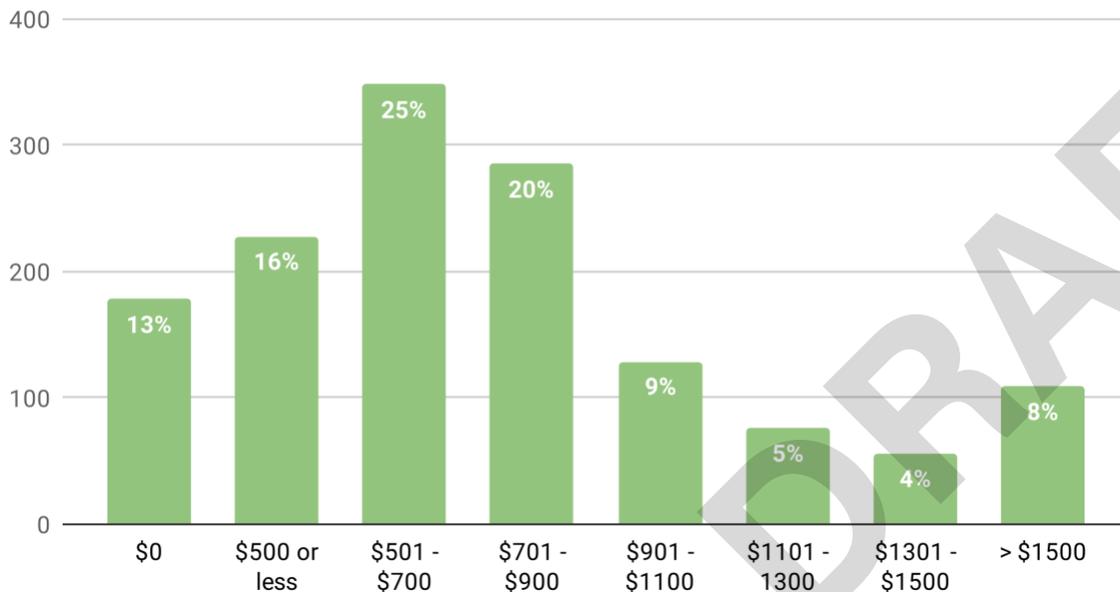
Housing Type



## Housing Costs

The average monthly rent or mortgage payment reported by respondents is \$757, with most paying between \$500 and \$900 (see chart below). Close to a fifth (17%) pay \$1,100 or more. These figures do not include utilities, property taxes, insurance, or other housing costs. About 13% of respondents pay \$0 in rent or mortgage costs, usually because their home is fully paid off, but sometimes as a result of one of the alternative tenure situations described above.

## Rent or Mortgage Payment

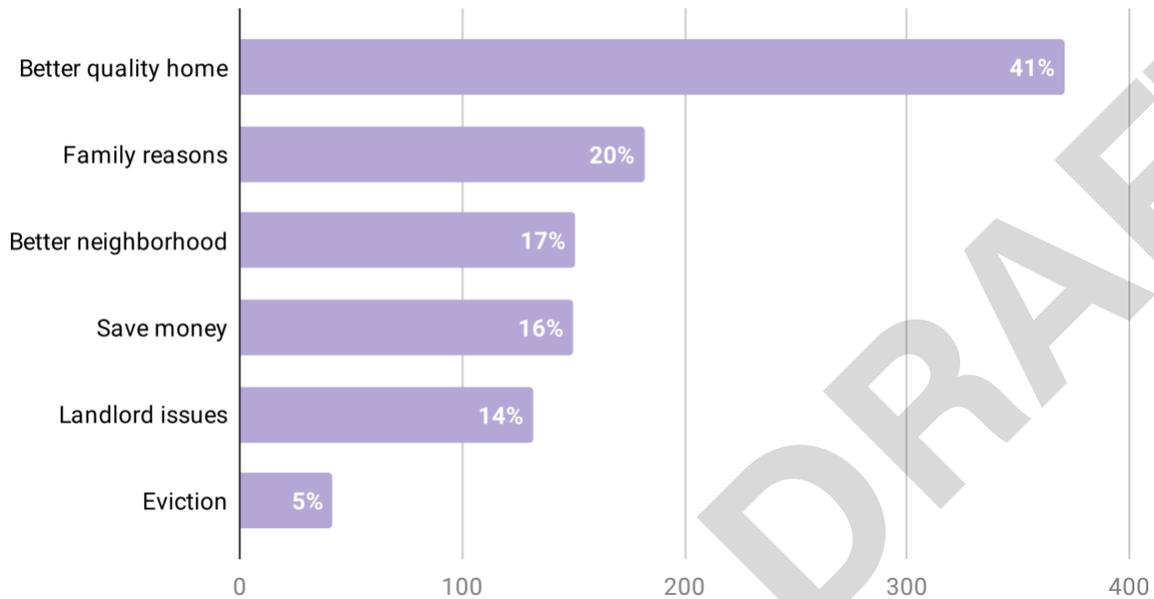


## Housing Mobility

Survey results reflected high housing turnover among a subset of respondents. About 20% of respondents reported having moved more than once in the past 3 years. In addition, when asked how long they planned to stay in their current home, 14% said they would stay for less than 3 months, 8% for 3 to 6 months, and 13% for 6 to 12 months. As shown in the maps below, those who had moved more than once, and/or planned to move within the next three months, were concentrated in the following zip codes on the East Side: 44103, 44104, and 44105. A high share (21%) of respondents in zip code 44113 on the near West Side had also moved more than once in the past 3 years.

Respondents were asked to select the reason(s) for past moves. Of those who had moved at least once in the past 3 years, 46% sought a better-quality home, a better neighborhood, or both. By contrast, 29% moved to save money, because of landlord issues, as the result of eviction, or a combination of these.

## Top Reasons for Moves

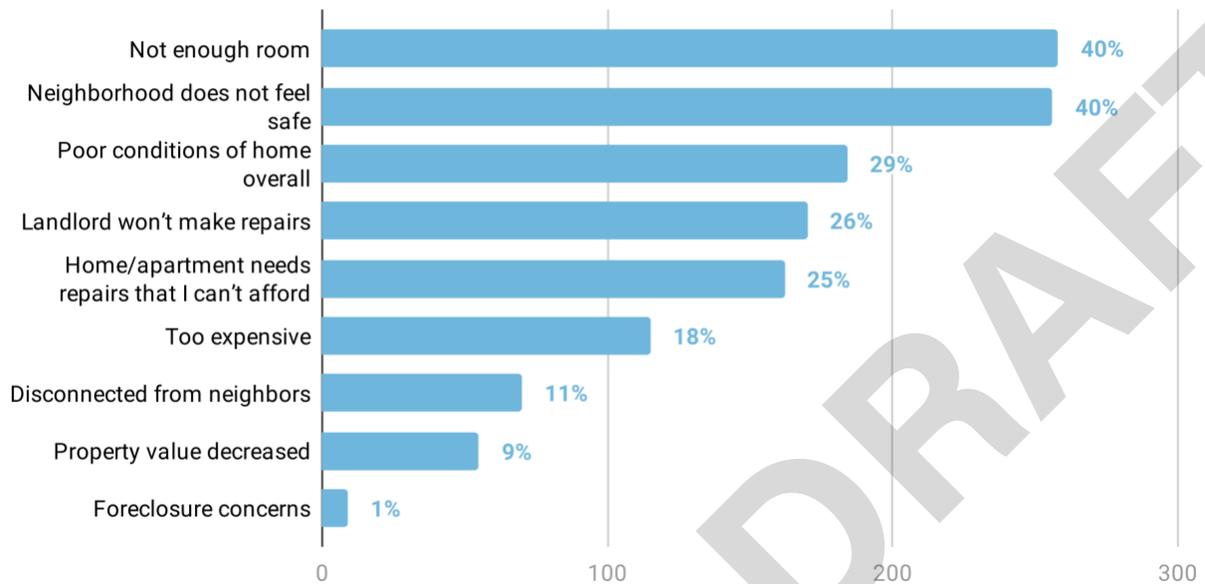


## Housing Satisfaction

Just over 600 respondents (41%) were dissatisfied with their current housing situations. The top reasons respondents selected to explain their dissatisfaction included feeling that the neighborhood is unsafe, an inability to make repairs (either because the respondent cannot afford them, or the landlord is not making them), and not having enough room. Many respondents also typed in additional reasons, including pest and mold infestations, negative landlord relationships, difficulty navigating a multi-level home, and having neighbors who made them feel unsafe. A small sample of write-in explanations for dissatisfaction includes:

- “I wish we had a bathroom on the first floor.”
- “I need a safer place for the kids.”
- “My home tested positive for black mold.”
- “I can’t pay to fix up my home.”
- “The whole neighborhood has been neglected for 40 years.”
- “The landlord makes me feel uncomfortable.”

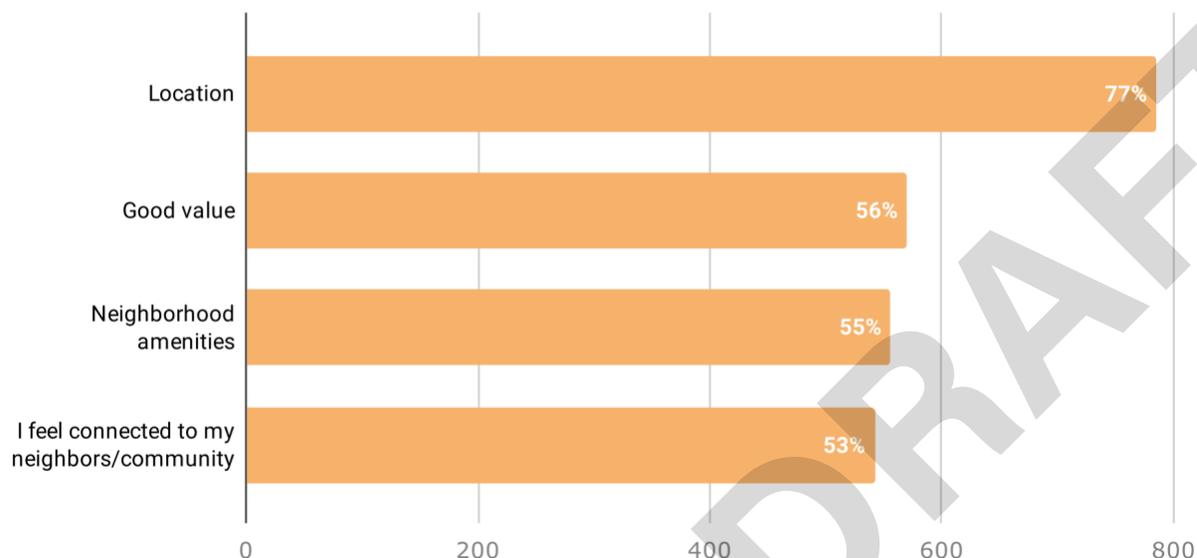
## Top Reasons for Dissatisfaction



Of those who were satisfied, the top reasons included location, good value, and neighborhood amenities. A small sample of write-in explanations for housing satisfaction includes:

- “No mortgage, neighborhood offers...the diversity we want.”
- “Walkable, good park, transit.”
- “Rent is cheap.”
- “I feel connected to my landlord.”
- “I feel safe, and it’s close to work.”
- “Supportive environment for my disability.”

## Top Reasons for Satisfaction



Housing satisfaction and dissatisfaction was strongly associated with zip code. Those in West Side zip codes were more likely to be satisfied, while those in certain East Side zip codes were more likely to report dissatisfaction.

## Housing Experiences

Additional survey questions asked about specific housing experiences, such as discrimination during the housing search process, landlord harassment, and interactions with (potentially) predatory buyers.

On the topic of housing insecurity, over a third (36%) of respondents reported that their income was not stable enough to cover all their housing costs each month. A quarter (29%) had experienced a utility shutoff because they were unable to pay. A third (34%) had lived in a home with unsafe or unsanitary conditions at some point, and 23% did not feel safe in their current home. A small sample of reasons for feeling unsafe include:

- “Gunfire can be heard from all directions every night.”
- “The [security] cameras don’t work. Two days ago someone in the parking lot pulled a gun on me [because I asked them] to move their car.”
- “Possibility of asbestos.”
- “My house got broken into.”
- “The basement floods when it rains, there is black mold on the walls and floors.”
- “Constant violence.”
- “The police are slow to respond.”
- “Domestic violence.”
- “My kids’ father is stalking me and we have black mold.”

Over 120 respondents (10% of those who answered this question) reported having been harassed by their landlord. A third (30%) had received one or multiple cash offers for their home. Landlord harassment and the experience of cash offers differs by zip code, probably partly because of the geographic distribution of renting and homeownership in the city.

Nearly a third of respondents reported having experienced housing discrimination or knowing someone who had (16% and 12%, respectively) during a housing search process. Common forms of discrimination included housing providers and real estate agents refusing to rent to or deal with a person or falsely denying that housing was available, and mortgage lenders denying a mortgage. Respondents also reported housing providers who refused to make appropriate accommodations for a disability. Respondents indicated that discrimination usually occurred on the basis of race, family status, and source of income.

Over 40% of respondents who had school-aged children reported that they had incurred higher housing costs in order to accommodate their children's education, for example, by moving to a more expensive neighborhood with access to a good school. A high share of those with school-aged children said their children did not attend their neighborhood school (38%), attended a public school outside of their neighborhood (14%), or attended a private school in their neighborhood (13%) rather than attending the neighborhood's public school (36%).