

COLLECTIVE IMPACT LINCOLN



WHAT OUR NEIGHBORS SAID:
2017-2020

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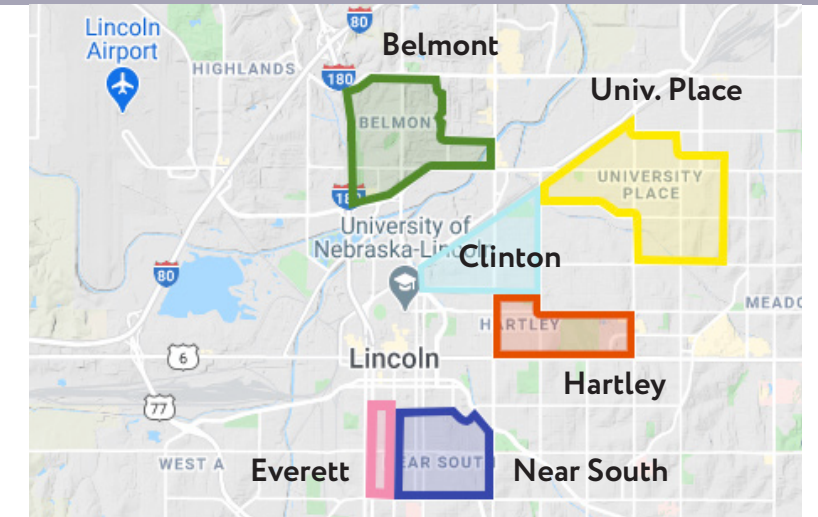
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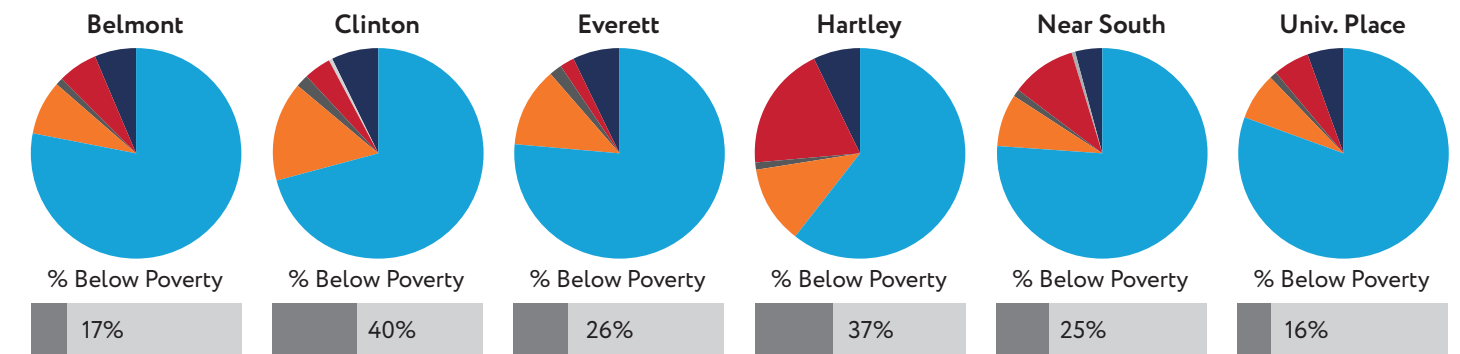
OUR NEIGHBORHOODS

Collective Impact Lincoln partners with neighborhoods identified through the Lincoln Vital Signs¹ report as being high-poverty or highly mobile. Many of these neighborhoods are also highly diverse in race, ethnicity, or income level.



RACE AND POVERTY LEVELS²

■ White
 ■ Black
 ■ American Indian
 ■ Asian
■ Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
 ■ Two or more races



WHAT IS COLLECTIVE IMPACT LINCOLN?

Collective Impact Lincoln (CIL) is a partnership between Civic Nebraska, Nebraska Appleseed, and the South of Downtown Community Development Organization. We focus our work on Belmont, Clinton, Everett, Hartley, Near South, and University Place neighborhoods in Lincoln, Nebraska.

MISSION

Collective Impact Lincoln creates lasting, meaningful, resident-led investment and positive change in Lincoln's core neighborhoods. Through canvassing, community events, and Community Builder Workshops, we help neighbors examine their communities' natural strengths and adopt new ways to improve.

VISION

CIL envisions a Lincoln where:

- Diverse community members, especially those from underrepresented communities and neighborhoods, are equitably engaged in public decision-making.
- Public policy and practices reflect and respond to community needs.
- All community members have access to decent housing, quality jobs, and public support structures so they can thrive.
- Every neighborhood is seen as vibrant and vital to our greater community, and no neighborhood experiences extreme poverty.

Collective Impact Lincoln interviewed more than **900 residents³** in the **six** neighborhoods about how to improve their communities. A majority of interviews were conducted in Belmont and Near South neighborhoods. About half of residents identified as female (55%) and male (44%), while 1% identified as non-binary or another gender identity.

Neighborhood	Estimated number of residents interviewed	Estimated percent of total interviews
Belmont	322	35%
Clinton	119	13%
Everett	160	17%
Hartley	47	5%
Near South	188	20%
University Place	98	10%

¹<https://www.lincolnvital signs.org/>

²The Census Bureau defines "below poverty" as below 100% of poverty level. Neighborhood demographics estimated using Census Tract data from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2015-2019 5-year estimates, Tables S1701, DP05.

³A total of 962 surveys of at least 927 different individuals.

WE WORK WITH OUR NEIGHBORS ON:

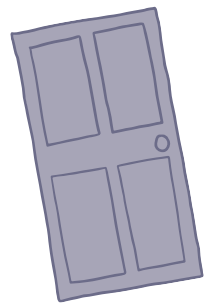
- **Leadership Development:** We identify local individuals who have potential for leadership, provide training through Community Builder Workshops to develop advocacy capacity, and create a deeper understanding of neighborhood assets and how to create change.
- **Neighborhood Revitalization:** We help residents create and support projects that improve neighborhoods and lift up asset-based messaging.
- **Grassroots Community Engagement:** We conduct deep canvassing to understand neighborhood-specific needs, build trust and confidence with community members, and weave together a growing base of Lincolniters directly affected by issues across communities.
- **Policy Research Advocacy:** We translate community needs into concrete policy ideas and develop campaigns to create policy change.



Our neighbors told us about issues they wanted to lift up, about concerns they had in their community, and what they liked about our neighborhoods.

NUMBER OF DOORS KNOCKED AND CONVERSATIONS

15,282



NUMBER OF NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECTS

34



276 NUMBER OF EVENTS

NUMBER OF COMMUNITY BUILDER WORKSHOPS

12



NUMBER OF ACTION COMMITTEES

30



962 NUMBER OF SURVEYS

WHAT OUR NEIGHBORS SAID

Collective Impact Lincoln knocked on neighbors' doors, held community events, and met with local organizations to understand what people liked or wanted to change in their neighborhoods.

WHAT NEIGHBORS LIKED

Most often, neighbors said that they liked their neighborhood and the quality of life in Lincoln. "Quality of life" included location (close to work, school, parks), family connection, or other assets. For example:

- Good accessibility

- Good place for family
- Close to campus
- Bike paths are good
- Close to children's school

Neighbors also said they liked their neighborhood, often saying that they like their neighbors and organizations in the community:

Like being near corner stores, access to downtown, bike lanes, likes diversity

I like how small it feels in terms of connections with people and the arts



What people liked best	Percent of Neighbors who mentioned this ⁵
Quality of life	58%
Placemaking/Sense of Community	14%
Schools	8%
Safety	7%
Housing	7%
Public services	5%
Employment	4%
Other (e.g., history, outdoors, "everything")	4%

Though all neighborhoods reported liking Quality of Life the best, some favorite qualities were different by neighborhood. For example, more University Place residents said they liked "Civic Engagement" compared with other neighborhoods, and more Hartley residents said they liked "Public Services" more than other neighborhoods. Everett residents more often mentioned "Placemaking" which referred to aspects of the neighborhood contributing to social connectedness and community, such as access to common gathering places like parks and local businesses.

⁴Comments from neighbors were summarized by CIL team members.

⁵Based on 747 responses.

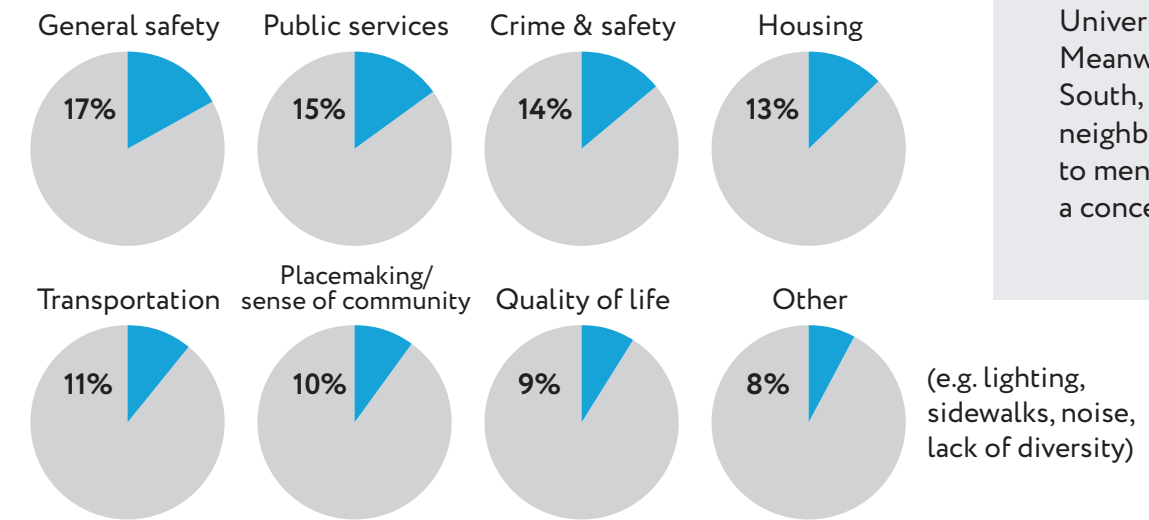


OUR NEIGHBOR'S CONCERNS

The most common concerns were safety and public services.

Common Concerns

Percent of neighbors expressing this concern⁷



Concerns also varied by neighborhood. Clinton and Belmont neighbors were more likely to mention transportation as a concern. Public services were most likely to be mentioned as a concern by Hartley and University Place neighbors. Meanwhile, Everett, Near South, and University Place neighbors were most likely to mention general safety as a concern.

⁷Based on 704 responses.

STRENGTHS MENTIONED BY NEIGHBORHOOD⁶

	Belmont	Clinton	Everett	Hartley	Near South	Univ. Place
Quality of life	60%	55%	49%	63%	54%	62%
Placemaking	12%	11%	27%	8%	21%	3%
Education	14%	15%	5%	8%	1%	1%
General safety	10%	13%	5%	0%	3%	9%
Housing	7%	11%	4%	8%	8%	7%
Public services	5%	3%	4%	17%	7%	9%
Jobs	8%	12%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Other	6%	3%	1%	0%	4%	1%
Civic engagement	1%	0%	1%	0%	3%	17%
Transportation	3%	8%	1%	4%	5%	0%
Crime safety	3%	4%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Healthcare	2%	4%	0%	0%	0%	0%

⁶Note: Categories ordered from most often to least often mentioned based on entire sample. Estimates based only on those individuals who both answered the question and could be assigned to a single neighborhood based on location data (ns: Belmont, 250; Clinton, 75; Everett, 95; Hartley, 23; Near South, 104; University Place, 69).

Concerns mentioned by neighborhood⁸

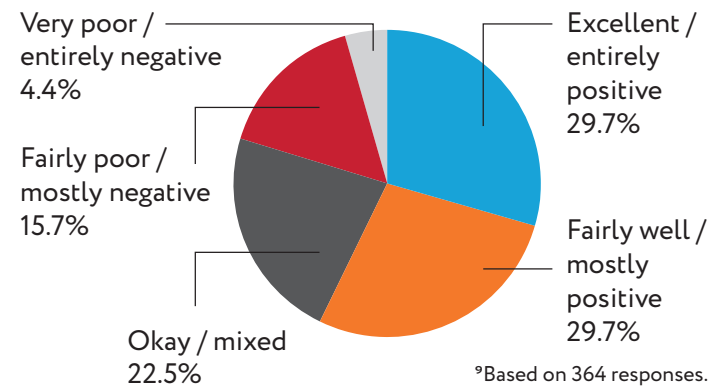
	Belmont	Clinton	Everett	Hartley	Near South	Univ. Place
General safety	11%	7%	24%	4%	23%	24%
Public services	11%	7%	14%	39%	14%	34%
Crime & safety	18%	11%	9%	9%	16%	12%
Housing	11%	22%	20%	0%	17%	4%
Transportation	16%	28%	4%	4%	6%	4%
Placemaking	16%	4%	7%	33%	8%	8%
Quality of life	8%	12%	13%	22%	7%	3%
Other	11%	4%	2%	0%	7%	3%
Healthcare	9%	12%	2%	0%	1%	4%
Jobs	8%	7%	1%	0%	3%	4%
Civic engagement	1%	4%	2%	22%	5%	9%
Education	4%	1%	5%	0%	1%	0%

Neighbors were asked about specific common issues.

TRANSPORTATION

Of those who offered their impressions of their experience getting around in Lincoln, most people rated transportation “Excellent / Entirely Positive” or “Fairly Well / Mostly Positive.”

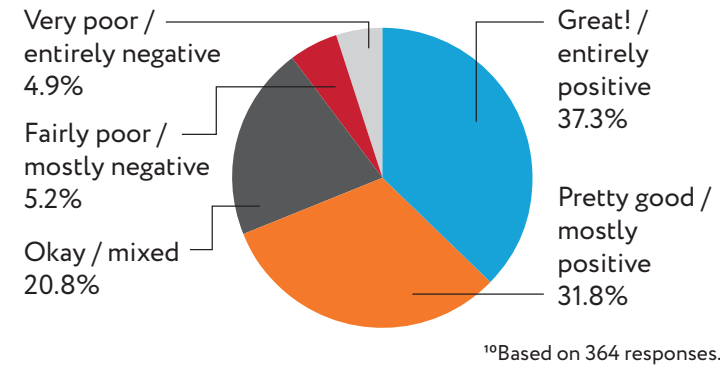
Impressions of Transportation⁹



JOBS

Nearly 70% of neighbors indicated mostly or entirely positive feelings about their current employment situation.

Impressions of Employment¹⁰



CHALLENGES

When neighbors were asked about challenges facing them and their communities¹¹, **health care** was mentioned most, with 1 in 4 neighbors saying that healthcare is a challenge.

Barriers to health care varied from limited access to insurance, high costs, or lack of nearby services. Many neighbors mentioned that they did not have insurance. For example, some people said:

Healthcare is okay. Wish there were maybe more resources. Very aware of nearby services for people who tend to live on edges of town.

She doesn't have health insurance. Needs healthcare, because she has chronic health conditions, and frequently has to go to the doctor.

Health care access. Goes to free clinics, but sometimes the free clinics take too long so opts to not go. Doesn't have insurance.

Common issues / challenges

Percent of neighbors mentioning¹²

Health care	26%
Food access and availability	19%
Crime and safety	12%
Employment	12%
Transportation	11%
Housing	11%
No issues / challenges to report	11%

¹¹Question was: “We’re trying to identify issues that impact people’s lives such as food access, jobs, safety, or anything else that comes to mind. We’re curious to hear; what in your life is an issue that is a challenge for you or those around you?”

¹² Based on 225 responses.



Food access and availability was the second-highest concern. Neighbors shared the need for fresh, quality food nearby, challenges in accessing SNAP or food benefits, and challenges with food programs such as availability and quality of food. Some neighbors also mentioned wanting a community garden or other community amenities. For example:

There isn't access to food or healthcare in the neighborhood unless you have a car.

Used to get food stamps, but now gets less because she makes \$20 more a month, but her benefits don't reflect that small change.

Trying to get food stamps. They barely have enough food and a lot of the food programming is during work hours. Mentioned that she has had experience with utility shutoffs.

On **crime and safety**, neighbors were concerned about crimes making them feel unsafe in their neighborhood or their homes. Neighbors were also concerned about policing too often in their neighborhood. Some wanted to improve neighborhood safety measures like adding more lighting or a police substation. For example:

Mentioned that there are several houses through which drugs are trafficked and nobody does anything about them.

Not comfortable walking home at night. Lots of police nearby - can't truly be yourself - always circling the same block trying to get someone in trouble. Doesn't make them feel safe. Always on edge.

Has witnessed a lot of harassment in the neighborhood, especially women in public. Also sees a lot of mental health and substance abuse issues in the neighborhood from people just walking around.

Regarding **employment and economics**, many neighbors talked about the “benefits cliff” – their food benefits cutting off when their income

increases. Neighbors talked about not being able to make enough money to get by and trouble with utilities being shut off. For example:

Goes last week of each month with nothing on disability, difficult to pay all the bills. Has problems with credit score, can only drive when there is enough money for gas.

Has issues paying her gas bills and electric bills -- they have increased recently. Is on food stamps but doesn't get enough to sustain herself. Only gets \$52 a month in food stamps.

Has had issues paying for utilities.

FOCUS ON: LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Every resident has a vision for their neighborhood. Our neighbors work with Collective Impact Lincoln to create change. Collective Impact Lincoln provides civic training and opportunities to advocate for the change neighbors want to see.



COMMUNITY BUILDER WORKSHOPS

Community Builder Workshops help our neighbors develop advocacy, leadership, and community development skills. Since 2017, Collective Impact Lincoln has hosted 12 Community Builder Workshops and trained 198 neighbors.

Neighbors have been very open to learning Community Building skills; 43% of those asked¹³ said they were interested in attending a Community Builder Workshop. An additional 20% of neighbors indicated they might be willing to attend later. Only 38% indicated they were not interested.

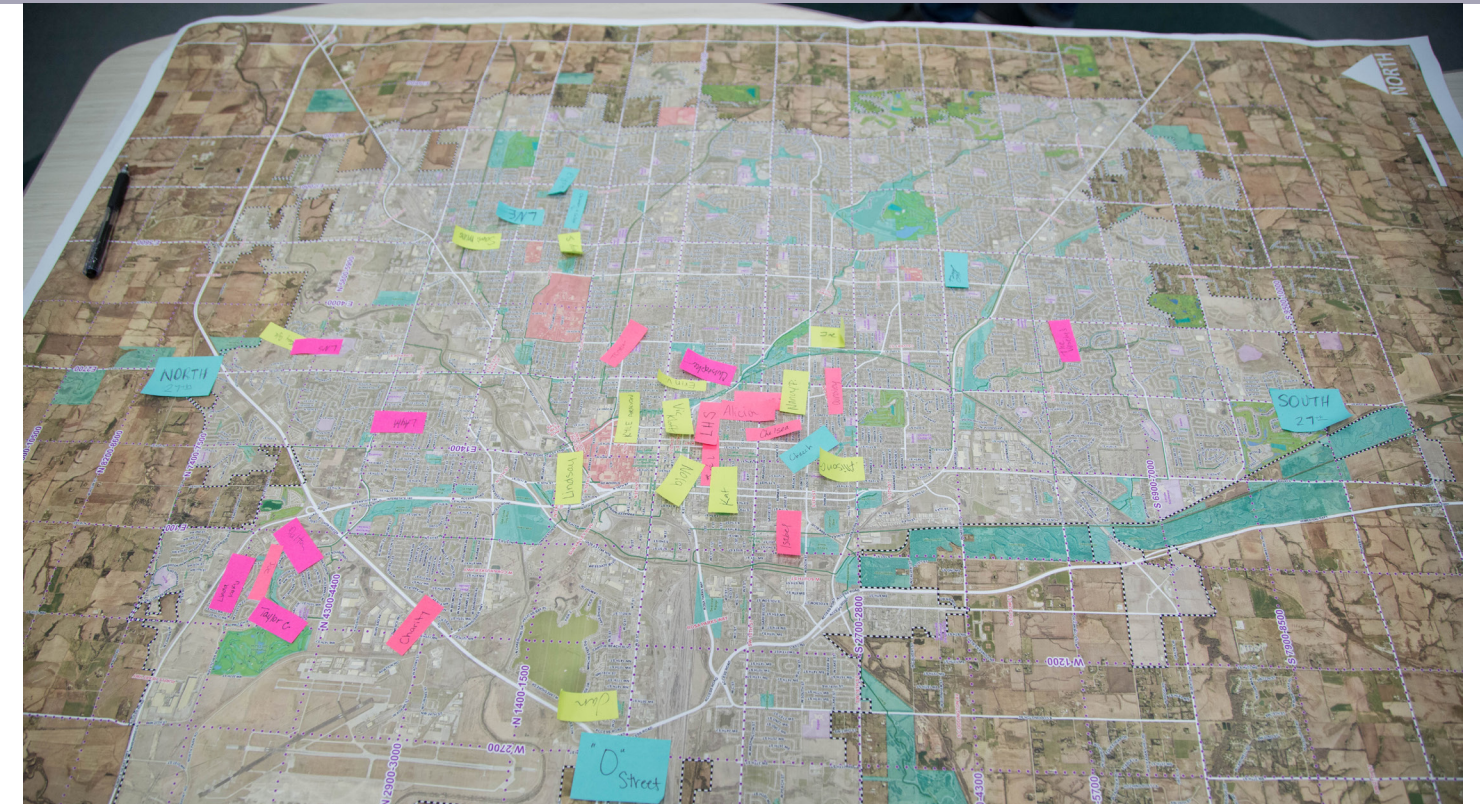
¹³Based on 122 responses.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Our neighbors have leadership and skills they are willing and able to share. Collective Impact Lincoln helps them identify and serve on public service organizations, local boards, and advisory committees to advocate for the change they want to see in their communities.

Collective Impact Lincoln partnered with or supported 30 action committees involving more than 50 groups or organizations focused on issues from community development and creative placemaking to housing, health, economic self-sufficiency, and voting.

In addition, neighbors involved in Collective Impact Lincoln collaborated on 34 different neighborhood projects. These ranged from education on renters' or workers' rights, to efforts to start new neighborhood activities like farmers' markets, to planning and participating in neighborhood celebrations.



FOCUS ON: GRASSROOTS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Collective Impact Lincoln works with neighbors to build relationships and understand how neighbors want to improve their communities. Engaging one another in conversation builds relationships, establishes connections, grows leadership skills, and sustains projects. Collective Impact Lincoln hosted events, met with residents, and used text- and phone messaging when in-person activities were not possible.

In addition, Collective Impact Lincoln hosted 55 other events involving more than 1,400 residents and aimed at addressing neighbors' concerns and visions. These events included:

- Pop-up farmers' markets in University Place to address needs for access to fresh foods and community gathering spaces
- "Reclaim your neighborhood" events around the revitalization of Cooper Park and plans for property purchase in the Near South neighborhood.

- Listening and discussion sessions around topics, such as Lincoln's affordable housing plans, neighborhood zoning, medicaid, healthcare access, early childhood needs, and the impacts of COVID-19.
- Celebrations and social events that bring neighbors together to foster connections and appreciation of neighborhood strengths.

Some neighbors said that they were willing and able to engage with their neighbors: 38%¹⁴ said they interacted with others in their neighborhood often.

- 71% said they are comfortable having a conversation with newcomers in their neighborhood.
- 43%¹⁵ said they are interested in volunteering for neighborhood-specific events (such as a block party or a potluck).

¹⁴Based on 122 responses.

¹⁵Based on 72 responses.

FOCUS ON: POLICY CHANGE

Through asset mapping and community conversations, Collective Impact Lincoln works with local leaders to turn community needs into policy ideas. Neighborhood leaders can push for policies that improve the lives of their community members and all Lincoln residents. Collective Impact Lincoln connects leaders to boards and community leadership positions, policy campaigns, and training opportunities. Neighbors advocate for affordable, quality housing policies by engaging in activities like:

- **Ordinance 19-52:** introduced and passed in a 6-1 vote before the Lincoln City Council creating a rental registry for single and double dwelling units and updating inspection triggers
- **Tenant Assistance Project:** a community-driven program that provides free legal representation to those facing eviction.
- **Nebraska Housing Advocacy Collaborative:** a collaborative of 66 members from more than 45 nonprofits, advocacy organizations, and community stakeholders advocating for the affordability, safety, and health of Nebraskans' housing choices. Collective Impact Lincoln helps the Collaborative with moderation and facilitation.
- **Affordable Housing Coordinated Action Plan:** Collective Impact Lincoln mobilized residents to inform and comment on the City of Lincoln's Affordable Housing Action Plan in 2020, hosting seven listening sessions and generating 49 community comments to city leaders.

HOUSING

Most (63%¹⁶) neighbors felt positive about the housing situation in their neighborhoods. However, there was a difference by neighborhood, with University Place having the most positive responses (70%) and Clinton having

¹⁶Based on 394 responses.



the least percent of positive responses (55%).

Among the nearly 300 comments about housing, neighbors often said they liked their house, quality of life, and landlord. Homeowners often said they were happy with their housing and neighborhood. Many mentioned that their landlord was responsive to their concerns. Most (77% of respondents¹⁸) said their tenant-landlord relationship was "Great" or "Mostly Good."

Rent was often seen as too high. A few neighbors reported concerns with landlords, such as not making

Feelings about housing by neighborhood¹⁷

Neighborhood (Number of neighbors who responded)	Belmont (117)	Clinton (62)	Everett (73)	Near South (71)	University Place (17)
It's great! / entirely positive	23.9%	24.2%	43.8%	35.2%	29.4%
It's pretty good / mostly positive	36.8	30.6	23.3	29.6	41.2
It's okay / mixed	27.4	29	17.8	15.5	11.8
I am unsatisfied / mostly negative	8.5	14.5	6.8	7	5.9
I am deeply unsatisfied / entirely negative	3.4	1.6	8.2	12.7	11.8

¹⁷Hartley had too few responses (10) to report percentages for this question.

repairs. About a third (38%¹⁹) said they there had been a time when they had to choose between paying for necessities or for housing.

Neighbors are nice. Help Each other out, kids play outside, very safe neighborhood.

Lives in their own trailer – owns. Landlord won't fix things in their trailer park. Pays for services but it's not great.

Lived here for 30 years, housing concern is about vacant houses, knows there is a need for housing but sees vacant homes and is concerned.

Love landlord, great apartment and affordable. She is interested in buying a home in the future, but sees the cost rising and the value/ quality of housing decreasing.

GOVERNMENT / CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

About half (47%²⁰) said it would be useful to contact an authority about their concern. Not surprisingly, residents also were split regarding their willingness to contact someone about their concerns. Only 49% of respondents²¹ said they had raised the issue they mentioned with someone else. When people did contact or talk to someone about an issue of concern, they most often talked with friends.

Although few (only 78) respondents discussed reasons for not contacting a government official about an issue, among those who did, the most commonly mentioned barriers were:

Lack of trust in the government (mentioned by 28%)

Feeling like they had no influence or that their concern was not important (26%)

Not knowing how to reach out or make the contact (24%)

Some also mentioned they felt their efforts would be a waste of time (13%), that they had previously tried to make contact and were discouraged by their experience (10%) or that they felt it would take too long (6%). For example:

Common people contacted ²³	Percent ²²
Friends	41%
City officials	35%
Decision makers	25%
Neighbors	13%

She currently doesn't feel comfortable talking to city officials, because she doesn't know how to talk to them.

Doesn't have confidence that the city will do anything. Feels that the city is already aware of problems but won't do anything about them. Stated multiple times that the city won't do anything about issues until they have to.

Has only talked to neighbors and friends. Doesn't feel like contact to an official would be useful for fear of getting kicked out of her housing.

Respondents²³ said that neighborhood institutions were doing well to address their needs. About 35% felt "entirely positive" or "excellent" about how places like schools, the city, or churches were addressing their needs. Another 30% felt "mostly positive" or that these institutions were doing "fairly well."

Neighbors said they wanted more community interaction from government officials (such as senators council members) and city workers (such as police). Those with children said they liked their local schools, which are often a hub for information about community activities and services. Churches and community centers also were hubs for information, social connection, and services:

Wanting police and city officials to be more communicative following incidents.

They love the schools and the neighborhood center is good.

The city does a good job of taking care of their service needs. Had an ash tree and they came and cut it promptly.

Appreciates churches in neighborhood, Foodnet operates in churches. Churches care about the neighborhood. F Street Church and Mercy City are both nice.

Some were concerned about the unequal treatment between neighborhoods in the city. Good lighting and sidewalk repairs, as well as regular maintenance to trees and parks, are popular desires.

Total loss of confidence in institutions. Feels the north side has been ignored and used by the city. Roads are

¹⁸Based on 79 responses.

¹⁹Based on 42 responses.

²⁰Based on 220 responses.

²¹Based on 243 responses.

²²Percentage is out of those who did discuss the issue with someone.

²³Based on 262 responses. Respondents could choose more than one category.

bad. Misuse of resources meant for these neighborhoods.

Would like to see some of the services that go to the south come to the north (e.g., stores, sites). Happy with city service.

He works with [redacted] and sees a lot of the suburbia areas getting way more attention sooner than this area. Says it could be the fact that this is generally lower income and therefore less of a city priority in terms of upkeep. Likewise people in these types of neighborhoods are less likely to report things to the city because they assume they are uncared for. I live in the ghettos so this is what I should expect.

A total of 290 neighbors shared how they stay updated on community issues:

- Social media (24%)
- Traditional media (TV, radio, news/newspapers) (24%)
- Other (word of mouth, newsletters, email, schools) (64%)



Appendix: Data Collection & Analyses Overview

Neighborhoods were canvassed by community organizers over the course of three years from 2017 – 2020. With more than 15,000 interactions and over 900 interviews, the CIL Team worked to collect information from all 6 neighborhoods. A team of community organizers and volunteers knocked on doors as determined by a canvassing tool to interview residents. Each interview typically lasted 5 to 45 minutes in length, and covered a variety of topics from what residents liked and disliked about their neighborhood, to specific issues of concern such as housing, jobs, or transportation. Sometimes, these interviews would take place at community locations, like Educare, though often they were collected door-to-door. Comments from residents were summarized by the CIL team and typed into a database, and thus, do not represent exact quotes from neighbors.

Data from the interviews was collected in one of two different database tools: a Google Form and a VAN database. These two data sets included a variety of information that was coded and analyzed separately first, and then merged together into a single dataset for analyses. Comments from neighbors were coded based on the questions to which they were responding. Neighborhood location was estimated by zip code, canvasser, and/or Census tract where noted. Demographic information was often not reported by interviewees, and was instead estimated based on Census data organized by related neighborhood Census tract. Neighborhood demographics estimated using Census Tract data from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2015-2019 5-year estimates, Tables S1701, DP05.

Data was analyzed by an external third-party, the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center.

WHAT WE CAN DO NEXT

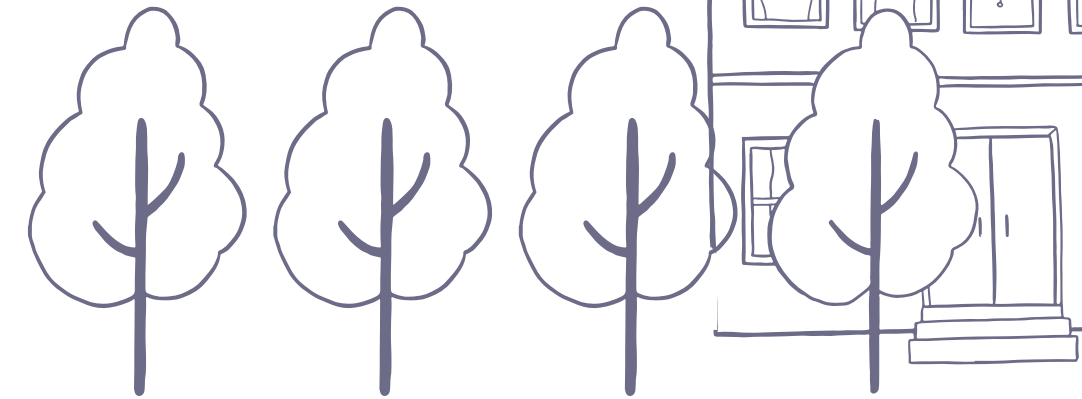
Together, our neighbors and Collective Impact Lincoln are lifting up Lincoln's core neighborhoods and creating resident-led positive change. The impact of efforts made over the past three years are far-reaching. Collective Impact Lincoln has engaged with community members to establish safe neighborhoods and advocate for adequate, affordable homes. Today, more Lincoln residents possess civic skills, engage in community activities and volunteerism, and are effective community leaders. In the coming years, Collective Impact Lincoln will continue to support transformative changes that improve the quality of life for Lincoln residents.

Neighborhood canvassing highlighted residents' concerns with housing affordability and adequacy. Based on these findings, Collective Impact Lincoln will continue to gather input on housing policy solutions, provide education surrounding housing policy issues, and educate residents on the processes to share their testimonies at City Council and state legislative hearings. Collective Impact Lincoln will continue to identify neighborhood leaders, provide ongoing leadership development workshops, and connect residents to advocacy opportunities.

Collective Impact Lincoln will continue to listen to residents and empower them to take actions based on their hopes and dreams. Collective Impact Lincoln will use the abundance of data collected through conversations with community members to inform future projects and activities.

Based on neighbors' input, Collective Impact Lincoln will focus on:

1. Highlighting the value of these neighborhoods by talking about their assets: good neighbors, affordable homes, and other amenities.
2. Providing opportunities for neighbors to engage with one another.
3. Encouraging policymakers, leaders, and police to positively engage with our neighbors and share information on community issues.
4. Continuing Community Builder Workshops to



connect neighbors to policymakers and leadership.

5. Partnering with local leaders and departments to improve housing conditions, address problem properties, improve conditions and costs for renters, and increase affordable housing.
6. Improving access to availability of fresh food and grocery stores close to neighborhoods.
7. Sharing information and resources relevant to the various needs and goals of residents across the neighborhoods.

WHAT DID WE MISS?

We want to hear your feedback and suggestions based on the information in this report. Reach out to Collective Impact Lincoln to learn more about this report, our work, and to get involved:

<https://www.civicnebraska.org/impact/>

COLLECTIVE IMPACT LINCOLN: A ROADMAP

Since 2017, Collective Impact Lincoln has worked closely with residents of the six neighborhoods to identify and address key issues. These concerns don't exist in a vacuum – and all are affected by the core issue of housing affordability. Here's a map of neighborhood priorities and highlights of our work in each area.

NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION

- Lift up resident-led projects – Family Literacy in Belmont and Everett; Great Plains Music Festival
- Mini-Grants to support neighbor-led projects – Everett Adopt-a-Block; People's Puppet Parade; University Place Days Celebration
- Support action committees – Renters Together; Clinton Neighborhood Organization

NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY

- 13th Street Improvement Project
- University Place Community Organization Park Revitalization
- 11th Street Safety Group

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

- Build policy platforms on issues shared by the community
- Hold neighborhood listening sessions and forums
- Invite and encourage neighbor testimony at city and state
- Mobilize grassroots network for policy changes – SpeakUpLNK.org

SOCIAL CONNECTION

- Build and connect neighbors – Community Builder Workshops
- Host neighborhood events
- Amplify stories – 'Stories of Impact' (bitly.com/StoriesImpact)

FOOD ACCESSIBILITY

- University Place Pop-Up Farmer's Markets
- NeighborWorks Community Leadership Institute
- Partner with businesses and organizations on food access

