

**Siler Rufina Nexus
Community Impact Measurement Survey
July 2022**



Background and Goals for the Study

This research study was commissioned by Homewise, Inc. to determine the attitudes and opinions of the residents of the Siler Rufina Nexus neighborhood of Santa Fe regarding various aspects of their community. This research project is consistent with the overall participatory planning approach Homewise takes with all of its development planning efforts. The goal of the research is to integrate the views of residents into the planning process for new development projects. For example, Homewise conducted a similar resident survey in Barelmas, one of Albuquerque's oldest neighborhoods, in 2020. In response to learning that residents identified both childcare services and workforce development as priority needs for the community, Homewise has engaged in commercial redevelopment projects with a 5-star woman-owned childcare development center and the Street Food Institute, a nonprofit dedicated to growing local food businesses. Homewise will follow the same overall process with this study and intends to use the data collected to drive decisions moving forward.

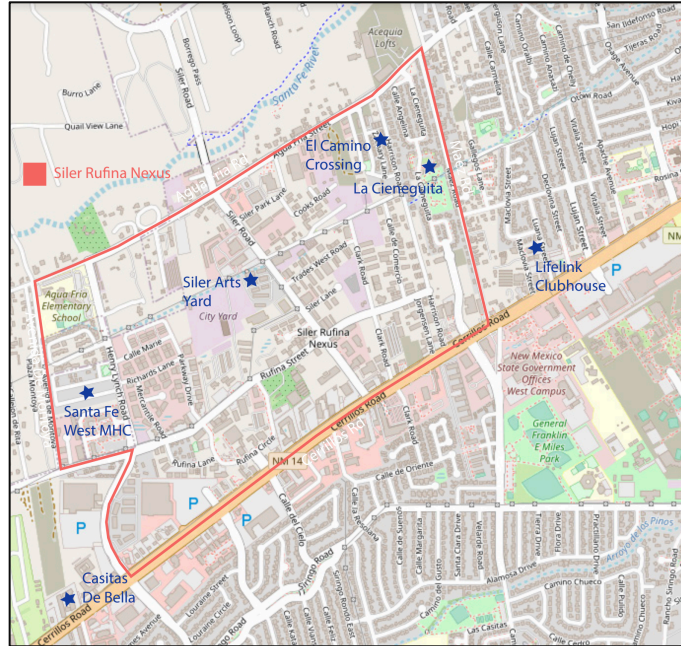
The Homewise Community Development Department implements a wide range of programs in order to accomplish placemaking that increases the homeownership rate, enhances social cohesion, and fosters long-term sustainability. An additional goal of the study is to track if these positive changes are happening in the communities in which they work, including the Siler Rufina Nexus neighborhood of Santa Fe.

Therefore, the results of this survey will serve as a baseline for comparison in a few years, as well as to help guide their development decisions in this community. To provide a complete picture of the data, in addition to overall percentages, the report includes results from an in-depth analysis focused on whether the opinions and attitudes of the community residents varied across demographics and key indicators, such as gender, race, language preference, time lived in the neighborhood, etc.

The geographical focus of the survey is the Siler Rufina Nexus neighborhood of Santa Fe, a diverse and fast-growing neighborhood within a predominantly commercial sector which is situated in what used to be defined as the Southern border of the City of Santa Fe. The well-being of the population of the Siler Rufina Nexus is vital to the overall Santa Fe area as this neighborhood is the geographical center of the City of Santa Fe. The neighborhood has a mix of industrial and residential zoning and is recognized for its commercial and residential diversity, incubating the artistic community, including performers and craftspeople, auto repair and contractor supply shops, and mobile home and elderly communities. The district has a handful of artistic and cultural resources that have spurred new development, including the internationally renowned [Meow Wolf](#).

The general boundaries of the neighborhood that were used to structure the target population and sampling design are Cerrillos Road on the Southern boundary, Agua Fria Street on the North, Avenida de Montoya on the West, and Maez Road to the East.

Below is a map of the neighborhood:



Research Design & Methodology

The research design consisted of a blended approach, including mailing out the survey to neighborhood residents and making extensive phone calls to allow residents to complete the survey by phone. This process resulted in a total of 206 completed surveys. Most responses, however, came from in-person interviews conducted by Homewise staff and community outreach workers who live in the neighborhood. This broad data collection approach allowed for full participation among residents, advancing the goal to ensure that all residents could lend their voice to development decisions. The approach also ensured that the data gathered was representative of the diversity of the neighborhood.

Our database of contacts came from within the neighborhood boundaries and used a secondary screening process to ensure that respondents to the survey lived within or very near the boundaries of the community. Our research design included the following specific approaches:

- **Paper surveys** were completed by respondents, and were generated from a mailer that was sent out to 1,000 residents within the neighborhood.
- **Phone banking** was used to contact 271 residents for whom we had phone numbers. Residents reached on the phone conducted the survey with a trained member of our staff.
- **In-person interviews** were conducted by five Homewise staff and two youth who live in the area and were trained as community outreach team members. The interviews were conducted via a door-to-door canvassing strategy. During the interviews, members of the research team took note of any time that respondents added emphasis to their comments, or if respondents referred to specific events or experiences while answering questions. This anecdotal evidence is included in the summary of results when appropriate. This was completed over 25 days and included outreach to the following specific locations:

- **Casa De Bella (formerly Warren Inn):** Residents in this area are generally on month to month leases at approximately \$700/month. This is the low end of the rental market in Santa Fe, in terms of both price and quality.
- **El Camino Crossing:** An infill, mixed income Homewise development on Agua Fria.
- **La Cieneguita:** Income tested housing for aging residents.
- **LifeLink Clubhouse:** A day program for residents experiencing housing instability and behavioral health challenges.
- **Interfaith Shelter at Pete's Place:** A low barrier shelter with various co-located services.
- **Santa Fe West MHC:** A mobile home community.
- **Atocha MHC:** A mobile home community.
- **Siler Arts Yard:** A new rental complex for artists subsidized by Federal Low income Housing Tax Credits.
- **Rufina Lane:** Mostly investor owned rental properties.
- **Maetz Road:** Mostly owner occupied homes nearby El Camino Crossing.
- **La Paz Lane:** Mostly owner occupied single family homes and townhomes.
- **Harrison Road:** Mostly owner occupied homes nearby El Camino Crossing.

The data was fielded from April to July of 2022 across the various data collection strategies described above. Respondents who completed the survey in person were provided a \$20 gift card to Smith's, a grocery store frequented by residents of this community. Residents who completed the survey by phone or online were randomly selected for a \$100 gift card to Smith's.

The survey was created by NeighborWorks America (a national community development organization) and modified by Homewise staff to reflect our research goals. The survey included questions to capture responses around the following themes:

- Relationship to their community, including neighborhood tenure and homeownership status
- Community satisfaction with the neighborhood
- Satisfaction of the public services offered in the community
- Level of involvement of residents and types of community interactions
- Neighborhood safety perceptions
- Changes in the community over the past three years
- Perceived agency and interest in community engagement to address neighborhood challenges
- Perception of housing affordability

Demographic Profile of the Sample

The survey collected demographic indicators of gender, race, age, and homeownership status to be able to explore potential sources of variation across these themes when possible. Below are some of the main demographic characteristics of the neighborhood as reflected by the survey:

- 53.7% of the sample is Hispanic or Latino, making this a Hispanic/Latino majority community.
- 53.2% of the sample is female.
- 28.8% are parents or have children under 18 living in their household.
- 35.1% of respondents are between the ages of 36 and 60.
- The average for time lived in the neighborhood as reported in the survey is 4.8 years.
- 49% of the sample rents their home, roughly 37% own their home, and the remaining approximately 12% either live with friends and family or have a different living arrangement. While the survey did not directly ask respondents whether or not they were currently un-housed, it is likely that a large section of the respondents who identified “other” are in this situation.

| Housing Status | Percent of Sample |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Renter | 48.96% |
| Owner | 36.46% |
| Lives with Family or Friends | 3.13% |
| Other | 8.85% |

Main Findings Organized by Theme

Economic and Substance Abuse Challenges Have Led to a Sharp Increase in the Un-Housed Population

A major theme that emerged from the survey and interviews was the marked increase in the un-housed population in the community. Although the pandemic driven recession has led to a national rise in the un-housed population, we heard from many respondents that there are some nuances to this situation that are unique to this community. Residents also indicated that there are structural factors that have led to some of the challenges facing the community. For example, multiple residents noted that most of the services for the transient population residing in the Santa Fe area are located in the Siler Rufina neighborhood. This was suggested by interview respondents to have not only led to an increase in the un-housed population living in the area, but a rise in short-term residents who come for services and might stay a night or two.

Many residents associated this trend with an observable increase in community members who are struggling with substance abuse or mental health challenges, as well as a perceived increase in crime. Residents noted that there are not sufficient services for residents struggling with addiction to opioid drugs which causes many to live on the streets if they cannot gain access to a bed in one of the treatment facilities. There are also some low-cost hotels in the community which have become a central location for the transient population, a segment of the larger community our studies’ participants feel are connected to crime and drug use.

An indirect outcome from the rise in un-housed population that emerged from the qualitative interviews is a tension developing among residents that may be negatively affecting social capital in the neighborhood. Some un-housed residents we heard from indicated that they do not

feel welcome in the neighborhood, and as is discussed in more detail throughout the report, permanently housed residents are unhappy with the perceived crime they associate with the rise in un-housed population. Finally, we learned that even some of the more long-term residents of the area who themselves are facing housing-access challenges believe that the population of unhoused residents has gotten much worse in the community. They also believe that something must be done to address crime and safety challenges in the community.

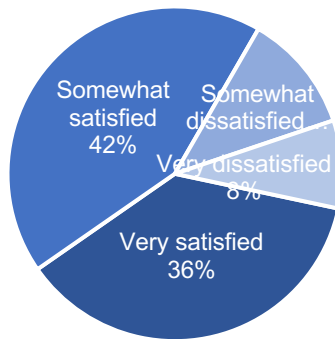
Although the report references this context across other aspects of the narrative, we felt it warranted being called out as an overall theme given how often it was mentioned. Below are some of the quotes that are reflective of what we heard more broadly across our discussions with residents.

- *“There are a lot of traffic from transient population who come for drug treatment and homeless shelter”.*
- *“[My] neighbors are great, but I am concerned with crime in the area, homelessness and lack of care of some homes”.*
- *“Homeless camping in the building, loud neighbors, cars getting broken into”.*
- *“lots of homeless with drug addiction and guns”*
- Interviewees also reiterated “the need for inpatient substance abuse recovery services and high-quality low barrier services for people experiencing homelessness.

Community Satisfaction and Desire to Remain Long-term Residents

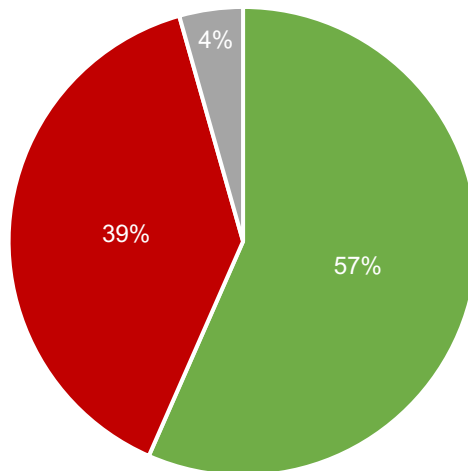
One of the most important indicators within the survey is the satisfaction level of members within the community. Overall satisfaction is correlated with a number of important outcomes, including desire to stay in the community for a long period of time, making this an important place to start the report. As reflected in the figure below, community satisfaction is overall very high in the Siler Rufina Nexus neighborhood. More specifically, 78% of the survey sample is either “very” or “somewhat” satisfied with living in the community. Although there is a small number of dissatisfied residents in Siler Rufina Nexus, including 8% who are very dissatisfied, the majority of residents appear content with their neighborhood. Crosstabulations suggest that there is nearly an even split between homeowners and renters among those who are dissatisfied living in this community.

Overall, considering everything, how satisfied would you say you are living in this community?

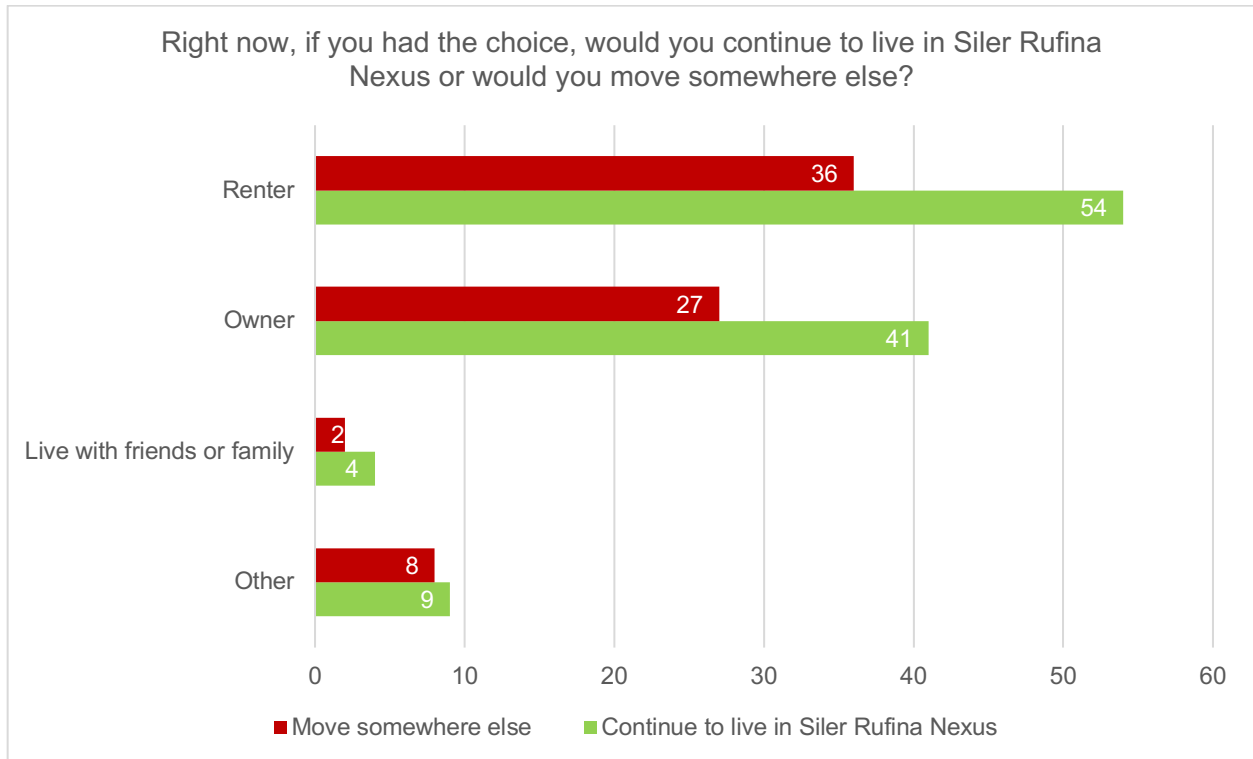


Respondents were also asked if they had the chance would they remain in this neighborhood or would they move somewhere else? As reflected in the figure below, if given the chance to move to a different neighborhood, the majority (57%) of respondents would reportedly continue to live in Siler Rufina Nexus. Despite high satisfaction levels, it is important to note that nearly 40% of respondents indicated that they would move somewhere else if given the chance to do so. This stays relatively consistent among all household statuses, though it is slightly higher among those who specified that they have a different living situation (88%) than renters, owners, and those who live with friends and family. This suggests that the un-housed population is much more likely to indicate that they would move to a different location if they had the means to do so.

Right now, if you had the choice, would you continue to live in Siler Rufina Nexus or would you move somewhere else?



■ Continue to live in Siler Rufina Nexus ■ Move somewhere else ■ No response



Survey participants were given the opportunity to elaborate on their responses to this survey item in an open-ended format, allowing for some clarity on what might be driving attitudes regarding continued residence in the community. As reflected in the quotes below, these open-ended responses uncovered that although most are happy with neighborhood, concerns about safety and the unhoused population appear to be driving residents towards moving away from the community.

- *“I think it is the future area that is available for what I call the community of artists and real people. Many lifelong residents and long-term residents are here.”*
- *“Want to move somewhere where there aren’t drug addicts walking around everywhere, preferably somewhere a little outside of town or somewhere where it’s safer to walk and bike, and to raise a family.”*
- *“Not safe”*
- *“Tranquil area”*
- *“Need bigger place, too urban.”*
- *“Calm, quiet neighborhood. Friendly community”*
- *“Don’t want to be here forever”*
- *“As neighborhoods go it’s probably one of the better and its location is excellent. People mostly keep to themselves but as mentioned above there are certain elements that are annoying. And some neighbors speak to each other. Others have put up tall fences and scary Do Not Trespass signs.”*
- *“[I] feel accustomed and love the neighbors”*
- *“I don’t think that it is a safe place”*
- *“I have loud neighbors who are into explosives and the city has done little to stop them.”*

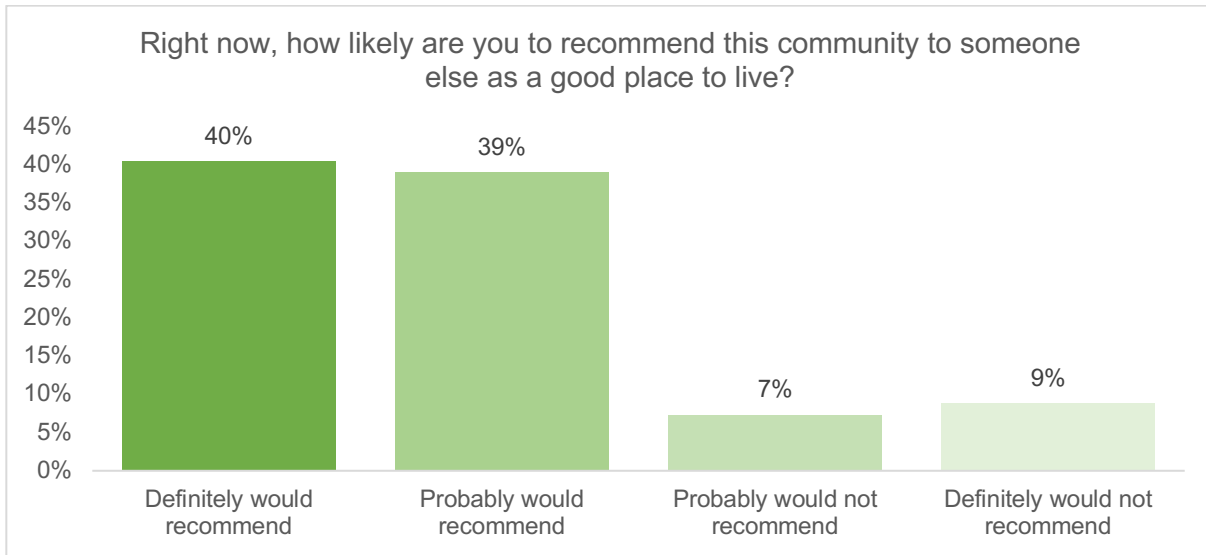
- *“[I’m] glad to have access to bus route, Walmart, the location, [and] access to other amenities.”*
- *“[There are] fumes from industrial neighborhood next door”*
- *“Quiet, friendly neighbors”*
- *“The lack of guaranteed parking and not having a yard makes me want to be elsewhere.”*
- *“There are better areas of town that are quieter and have fewer people loitering”*
- *“The neighborhood where I live is peaceful. The people who live here take very good care of their homes.”*
- *“Very industrialized and commercialized.”*
- *“It’s affordable but not a great place for kids.”*

Another strong indicator of the satisfaction a community member may have with their neighborhood is whether they would recommend it to someone else. The survey asked respondents to consider this in the battery of items focused on the larger theme of satisfaction with their neighborhood. Overall, 40% of residents would definitely recommend the neighborhood to others, and 39% probably would recommend (79% likely to recommend), which is a high contrast to the 16% who would not recommend and very similar to the percentage of respondents who are generally satisfied with their life in the community.

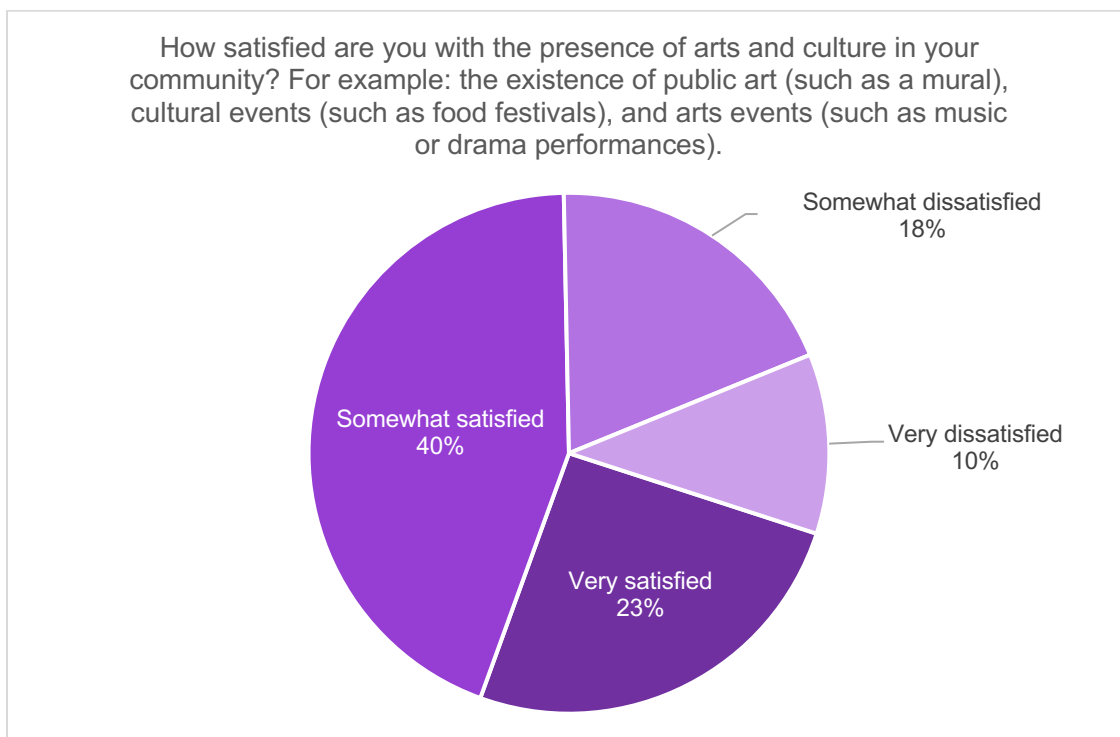
Respondents were once again provided an opportunity to expand on their reasoning regarding recommending the neighborhood to others. Some of these quotes are provided below. One of the themes that emerged from those comments is a concern about public safety. Several respondents noted, though, that the community is friendly, and the homes are well-taken care of. Reflecting the high rise in housing prices nation-wide and locally during the period of data collection, some respondents noted that the affordability of housing in the area may impact the ability of people they know to move to the community. This is a particularly salient issue in Santa Fe where housing costs jumped by 10% between April of 2021 and April of 2022.¹

- *“Calm, people are respectful, quiet”*
- *“It’s bad for people who don’t build fences or walls”*
- *“Beautiful apartments”*
- *“Nice place to live. Lots of kids”*
- *“Affordable, relatively quiet, [I] like my neighbors”*
- *“A lot of people are chill, but others are unstable. And if there is an accident on Agua Fria it causes a lot of chaos.”*
- *“No feeling of community”*
- *“Not a whole lot of chances to meet everyone”*
- *“...too many people coming here getting crowded and too much crime”*
- *“... although since I bought my house the price of homes has gotten much more expensive so I would still recommend the neighborhood but it’s much pricier than it was a few years ago.”*

¹ <https://www.abqjournal.com/2486825/santa-fe-becomes-far-less-affordable-in-2022.html>



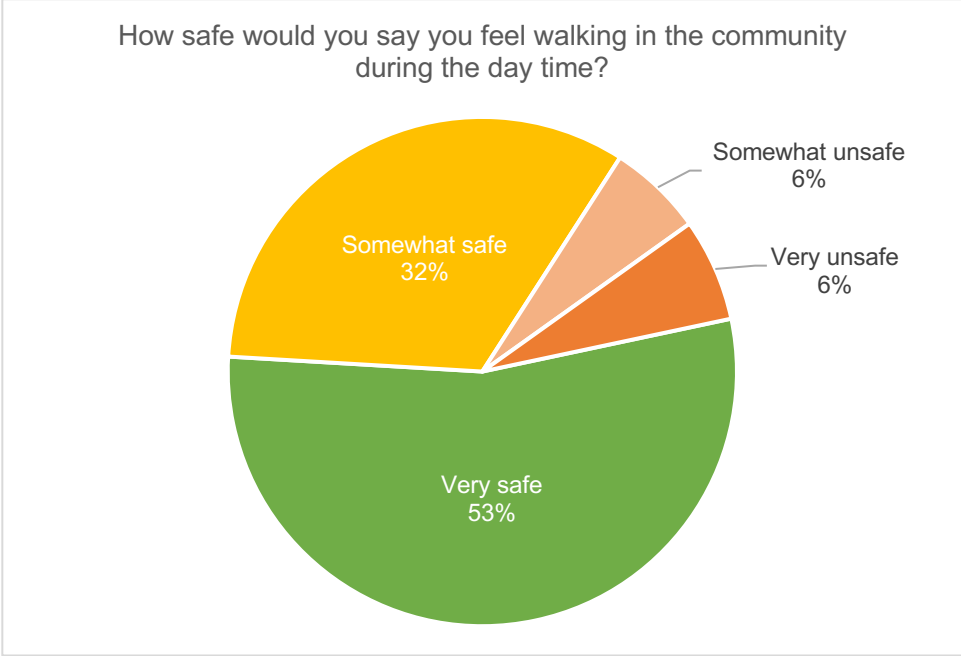
Since Siler Rufina Nexus is recognized for its artistic and creative community, it is unsurprising that 63% of the survey sample is satisfied with the presence of arts and culture in the community. For example, the existence of public art (such as a mural projects), cultural events (such as food festivals), and arts events (such as music or drama performances). This helps reinforce establishing the culture of the community around arts and culture particularly given that this was a consistent finding across the full sample of study participants.



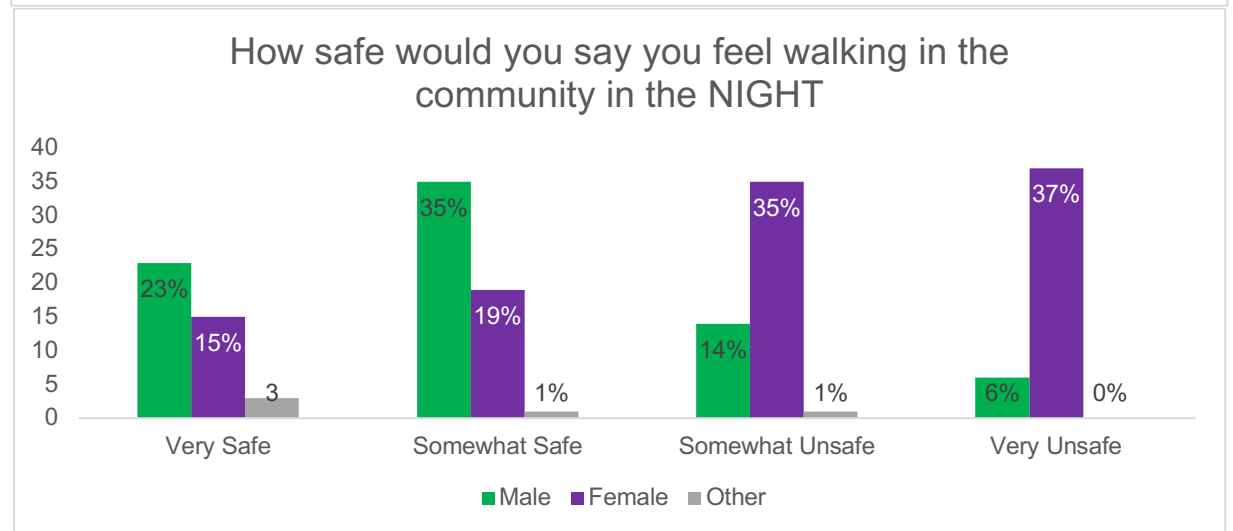
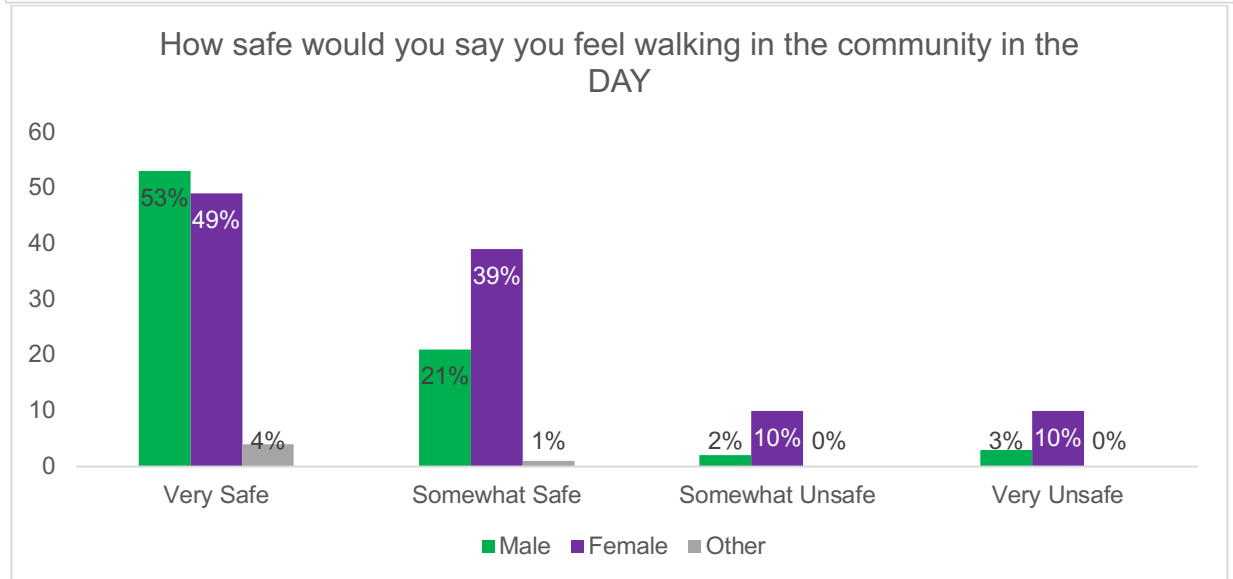
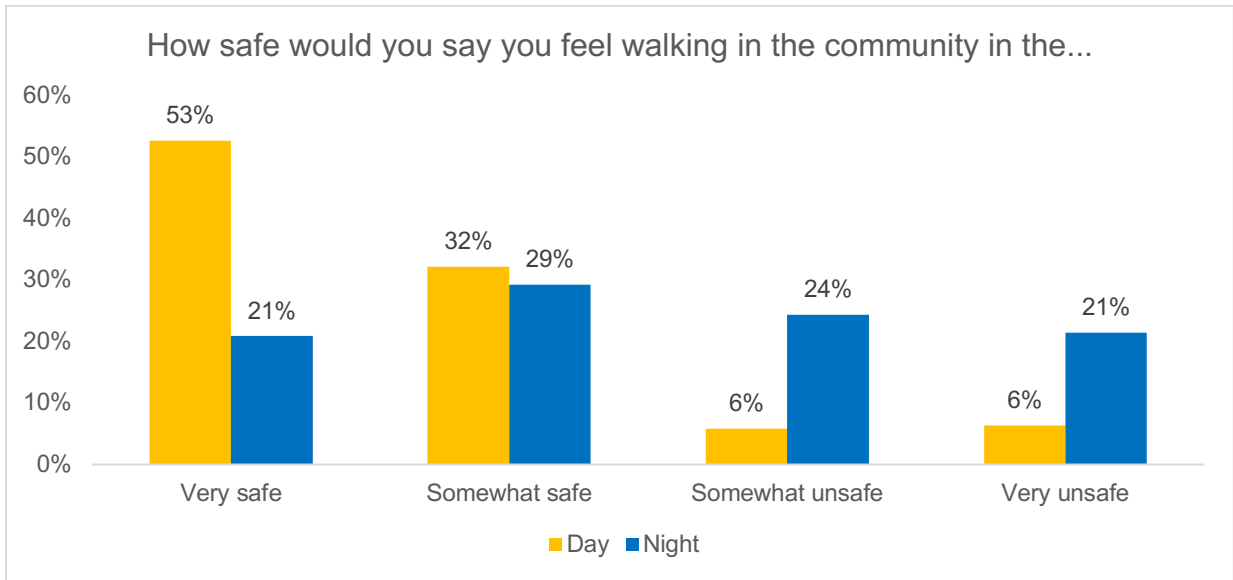
Perceptions of Public Safety and Use of Transportation

Safety

The survey’s comprehensive approach to capturing residents’ attitudes about their neighborhood included items on perceptions of neighborhood safety. The walkability of a community is important, not only to improving public health, but in establishing a sense of overall comfort in your neighborhood. Overall, the majority of the residents find Siler Rufina Nexus to be “very safe” while 32% find it “somewhat safe” for walking in the community during the day time. This indicates that there is an overall high feeling of safety. That being said, of those who feel somewhat safe or unsafe, there is an emphasis on safety concerns related to unhoused residents and drug use. Another large issue we heard during our interviews regarding walkability during the daytime was the high-speed traffic on Cerillos road. In fact, one resident said that it is not safe to try to walk anywhere near that major thorough-fare.



Perceptions of walkability unfortunately are not as positive when we focus on perceptions of safety when walking during the evening. Where 85% felt comfortable walking in the community during the day, only 50% feel comfortable doing so at night. The sharp difference between daytime and evening walkability could suggest the need for approaches to address public safety specifically in the evening hours. Additionally, as shown in the charts below, women are far more likely to feel unsafe both during the day and at night. Further efforts to identify strategies to make the community more walkable and improve safety should focus on the needs and goals of the women in the community given this trend.



When participants were asked why they responded the way they did on these safety items, we found several themes emerged. Overall, there was a significant number of respondents who noted that the high rate of the unhoused population in the area makes them feel unsafe, particularly in the evening. The salience of the challenges the neighborhood is facing with unhoused residents is reflected in the open-ended responses. Across all open-ended responses provided, challenges with the unhoused population, including perceptions that the number of unhoused individuals in Siler Rufina Nexus has increased, was mentioned more often than any other potential driver of public safety. Looking at options to reduce vehicles traveling at high rates of speed could also increase public perceptions of safety to use the neighborhood to walk for exercise.

Below are some of the quotes that are reflective of wider set of responses provided.

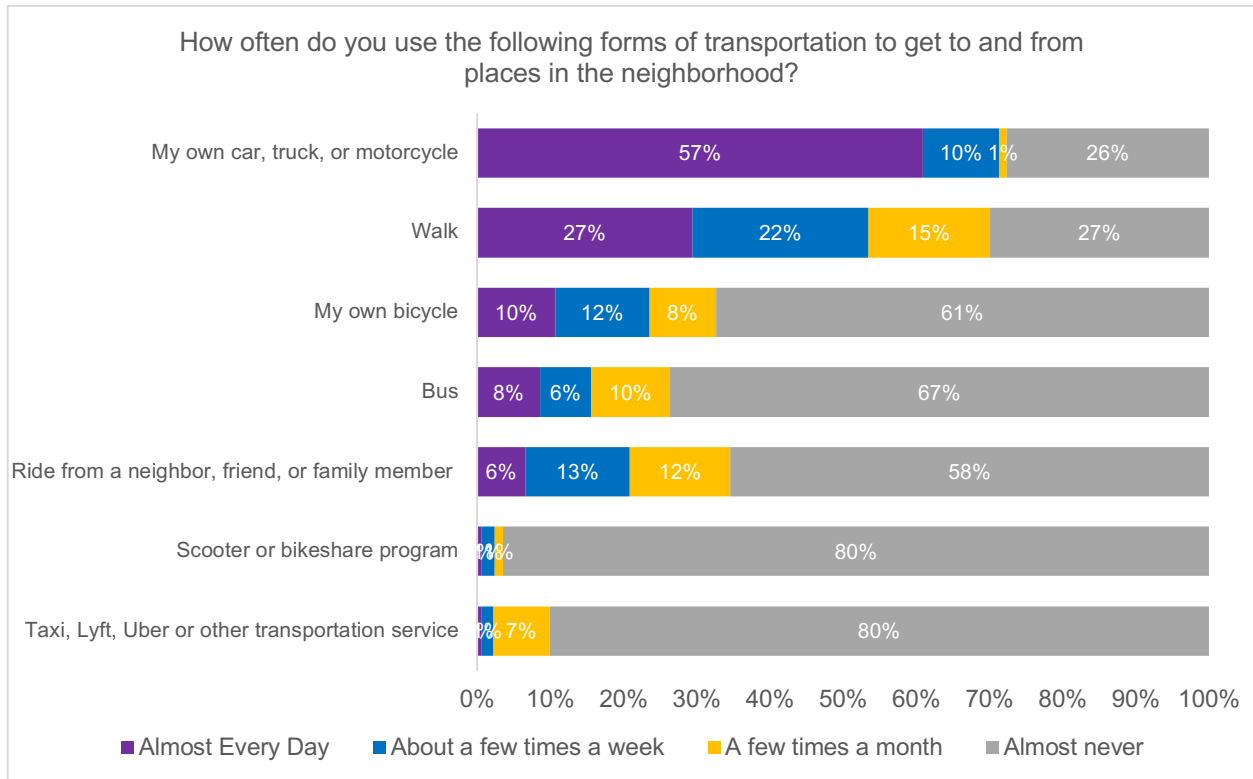
- *“Lots of people doing drugs at park and on side of trails at night. Last night there was some angry man walking around the neighborhood cussing and screaming at 2am.”*
- *“Don't like to walk at night. Homeless, drugs, bad drivers, lack of lighting.”*
- *“Street harassment and dogs”*
- *“Homeless people loiter in the neighborhoods and parks. Vehicle speed is a factor.”*
- *“Depends on area you walk. Homeless in public space”*
- *“We don't have any security at this apartment complex... [The] manager has made safety the tenants' soul responsibility...”*
- *“Lots of homeless people at night at it's very dark all over the area.”*
- *“I walk around my neighborhood a lot and I always feel safe. I also use the bike trails at night, but sometimes feel a bit unsafe in unlit parts of the trails, only because there is rarely anyone else around and that always makes me feel less safe.”*

Furthermore, during the qualitative interviews, staff noted a cohesive lack of sense of community *across* neighborhoods in the area. For example, residents in the Siler Rufina Art Yard, Santa Fe West Mobile Home Community, Casitas De Bella, and La Cieneguita display a willingness to walk around their communities during the day and felt a sense of connection to a few of their immediate neighbors. However, these same residents were fearful of walking and felt disconnected from institutions and residents outside of the developments in which they lived. This could indicate that those who have answered that they feel “very safe” or “somewhat safe” might feel less safe around nearby neighborhoods.

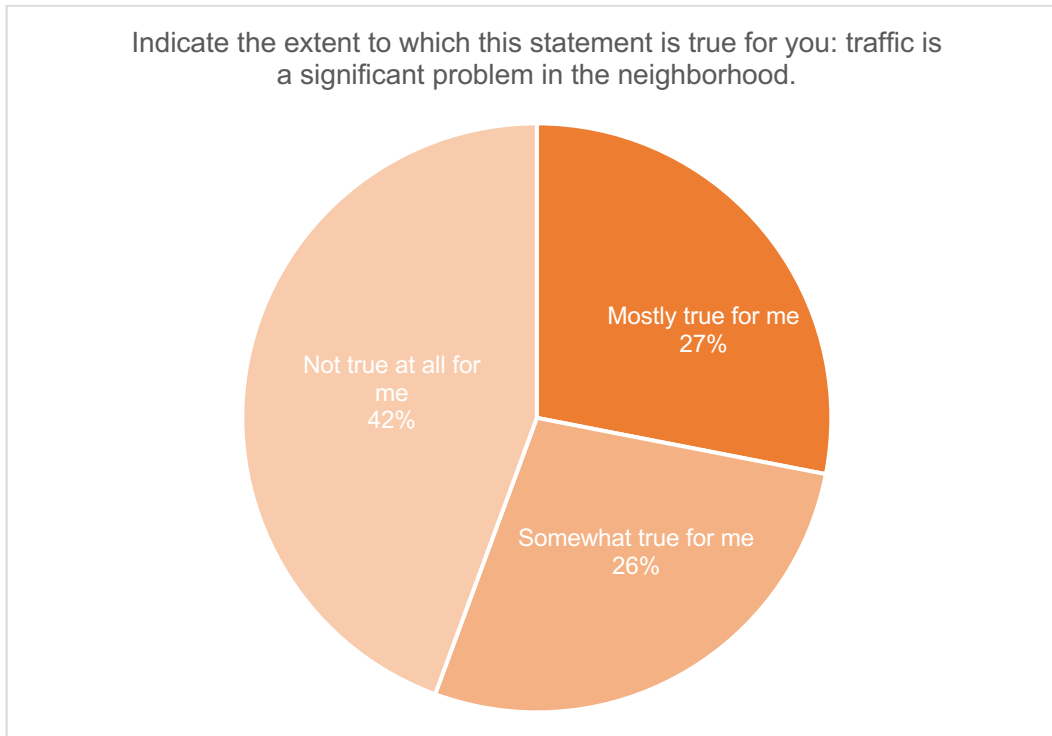
Furthermore, staff found that residents are taking extreme measures in response to their perception that there is a lack of safety in the community. For instance, a number of people reported they carry firearms in their multi-family buildings because of a fear of robbery and other crimes. Staff also spoke with a resident who wears a GoPro when crossing major streets like Siler and Cerillos because he fears that a motor vehicle will hit him and wants a digital record of anything that might happen to him while walking. Many residents noted that they do not travel to local parks because of the presence of hypodermic needles and encampments. This reiterates many of the same concerns noted in the survey process.

Transportation

Respondents were asked to identify their primary method of transportation within the community to help inform the need for parking and increased capacity for public transportation. Most residents in the community use their own vehicle for travelling, with 67% noting they use their car to travel daily or weekly. However, it is quite common (over 1 in 4) for people to walk to their destinations.



There is not a high use of public transportation, with 67% of respondents noting that they do not ever use a bus to get around. Given that 53% of the sample indicating that it is either “somewhat” or “mostly” true that traffic is a significant problem in the neighborhood (see figure below), it will be important to explore opportunities for increasing the use of public transportation to decrease reliance on vehicles, particularly if there are goals to expand development and housing.



Satisfaction With Service Provision in the Neighborhood

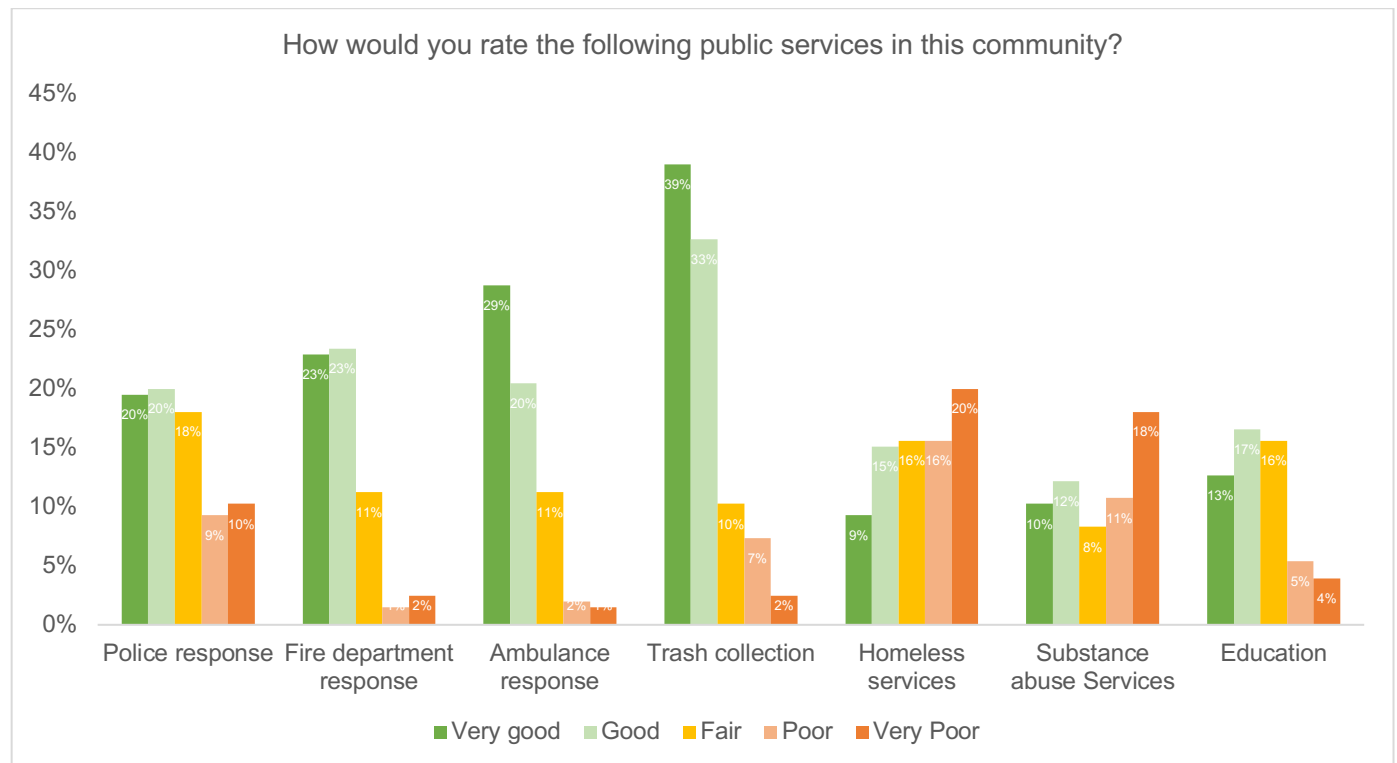
The survey also asked respondents for their evaluation of services provided by the City of Santa Fe in their neighborhood. Consistent with the more general indicators of satisfaction, the majority of respondents rate service provision as either “very good” or “good” across all four types of services. However, there is a slightly lower perception of police response compared to the other types of services tracked in the survey as reflected in the figure below.

- 72% rate track pickup as either “very good” or “good”
- 49% rate ambulance response as “very good” or “good”
- 46% rate fire response as “very good” or “good”
- Only 40% rate police response as “very good” or “good” only 20% rate police response as “very good”
- Only 23% rate services for unhoused residents as “very good” or “good”
- 29% rated substance abuse services “poor” or “very poor,” which is higher than any other service listed. This indicates a high priority need for community members.

To elaborate on services for unhoused residents and substance abuse offered by the community, the Interfaith Community Shelter, located at 2801 Cerrillos Road, offers a variety of wraparound services in addition low barrier shelter. Staff onsite provide case management, hot meals, showers, and clothing. ICS also collaborates with a number of local service providers who co-locate on site, including Goodwill Veterans Affairs, Southwest Care, Legal Aid, and LifeLink. Finally, during hypothermia season and in the heat of the summer months, ICS offers day shelter

and meals. Center staff shared with the surveying team that there are major gaps in the continuity of care for clients served by the Interfaith Community Shelter, most notably because of a shortage of property owners that accept rapid rehousing vouchers and detox center beds.

The Life Link provides services to people who are experiencing housing insecurity, living with mental health conditions, and who are survivors of human trafficking. Life Link is the largest provider of permanent supportive housing in Santa Fe; offers individual therapy, group therapy, and intensive outpatient treatment; and an array of outpatient treatment services for alcohol and drug abuse and dependence. Life Link staff report that there is a tremendous need for day programs at which clients can access safe physical space, basic hygiene, etc.

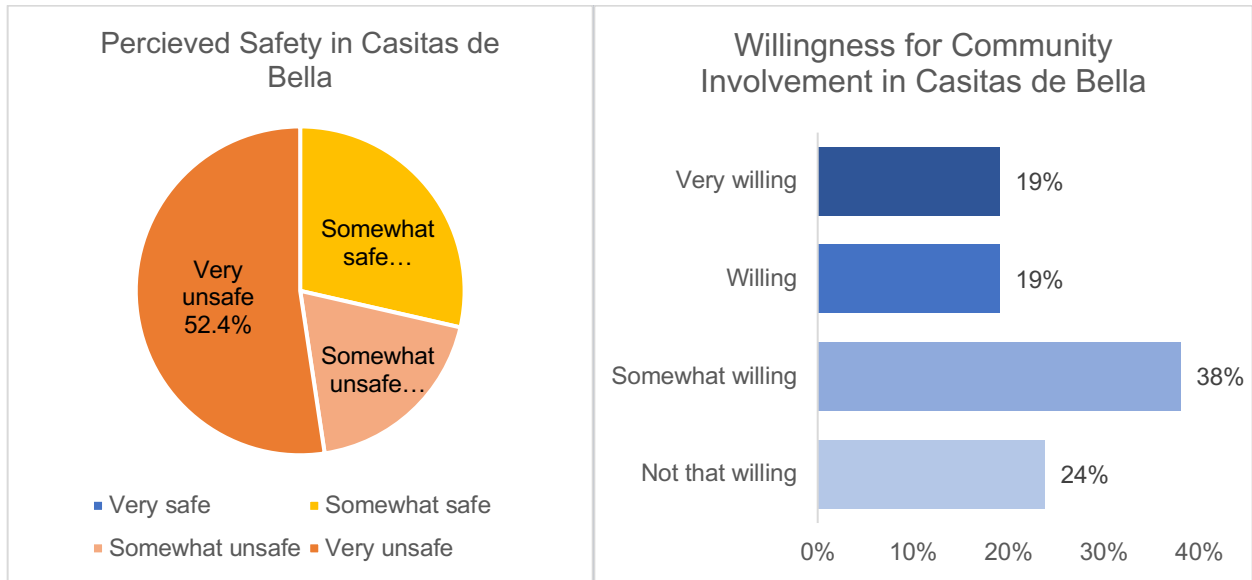


Perceived Efficacy and Collective Impact in Siler Rufina Nexus

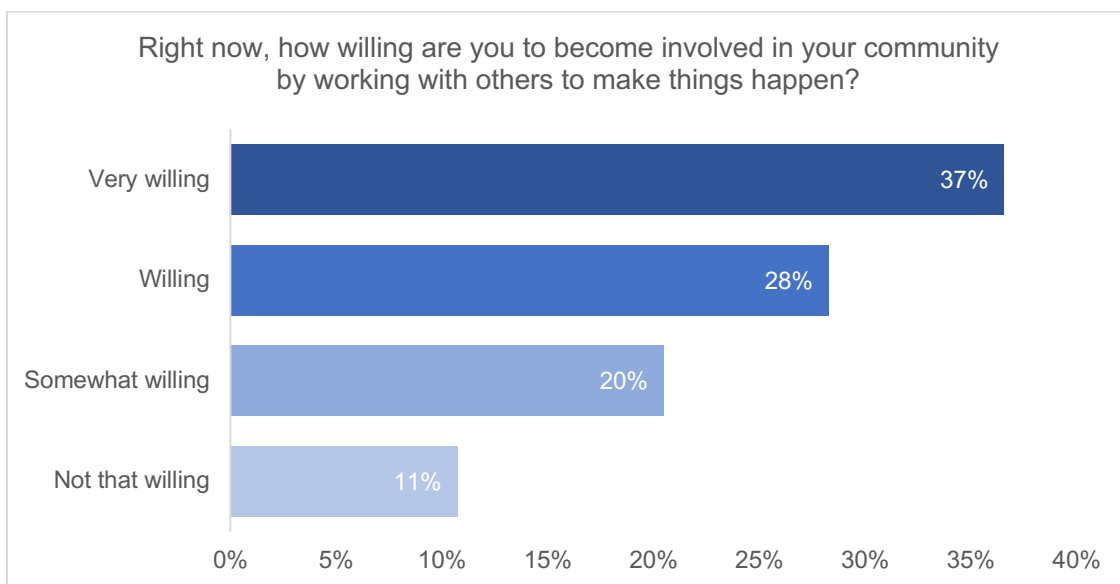
Another theme in the survey was to gauge how much members of the Siler Rufina Nexus community work together to solve problems in the neighborhood and help their neighbors when help is needed. A robust 65% of the overall sample reports that they are “willing” (28%) or “very willing” (37%) to become involved in their community by working with others to make things happen. Conversely, only 11% of respondents reported that they would “not be willing” to become involved in the community with others to make things happen. This suggests a relatively high rate of social capital in the community, a significant resource that can be leveraged to address some of the challenges raised in the survey, such as crime.

Notably, during the qualitative interviews, staff observed a lack of trust, especially in lower income communities within the neighborhood. For example, staff spoke with an elderly resident

who believed her neighbors were selling and using drugs, but when staff interviewed those neighbors, they learned that the 23-year-old resident was caring for his high-school aged brother and in the process of adopting another teenager whose parents were unhoused. This anecdotal evidence suggests a lack of trust between neighbors as well as a lack of community-building.

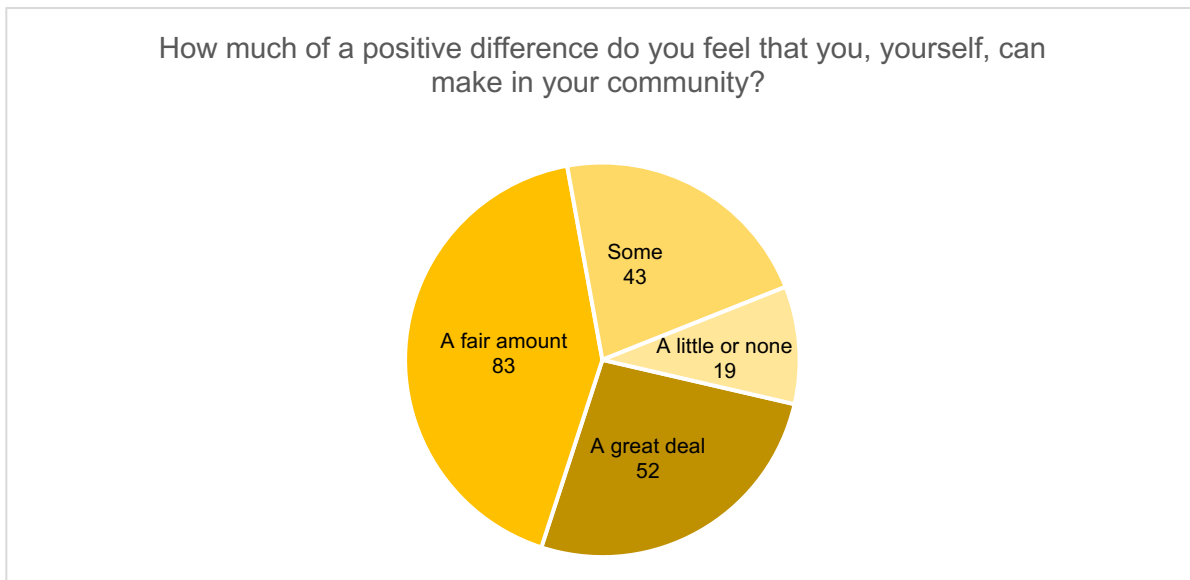


The perceived safety of Casitas de Bella is much lower than that of Siler Rufina Nexus as a whole. 52.4% of Casitas de Bella residents find the neighborhood to be “very unsafe,” and 19% “somewhat unsafe.” No residents in this part of the community rated Casitas de Bella to be “very safe.” We see also see a different trend in community involvement for Casitas de Bella. 62% of these residents are less than willing to work with other to “make things happen,” whereas in the total sample of Siler Rufina Nexus, as mentioned above, 65% were willing or very willing to become involved in the community.



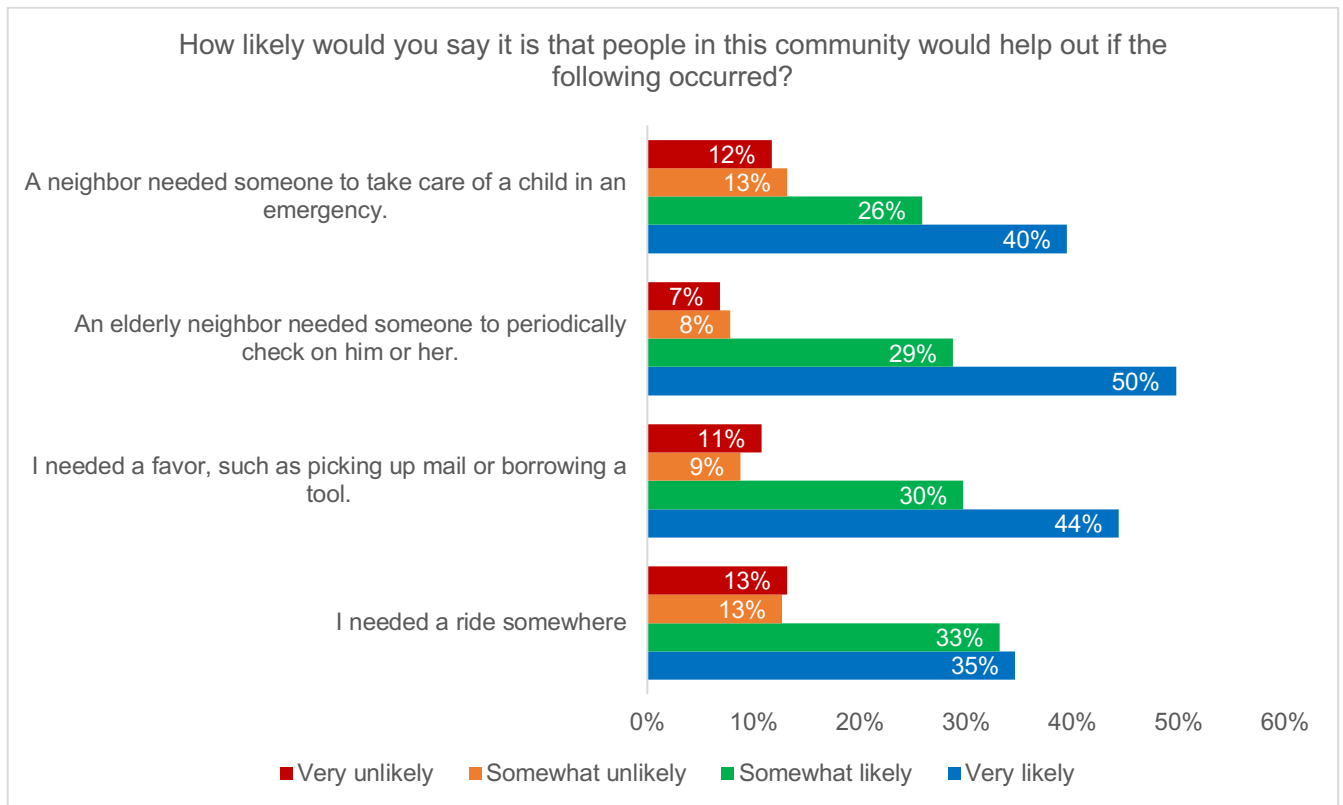
When we disaggregate the willingness to work with others in the community to make things happen by homeownership, we find evidence that improving homeownership rates in Siler Rufina Nexus could increase social capital. The breakout below of this crosstabulation shows that 16% of home renters (+6% compared to homeowners) are unwilling to work with others, which suggests that they could be less likely to experience a sense of long-term connectedness to their neighbors and the larger community.

The survey also includes a measure of internal efficacy, or how much members of the community feel that they can create a positive difference in their community. Over half of community members believe that they make a “a great deal” of positive impact in Siler Rufina Nexus, with another 83% reporting that they can make a “fair amount of” a positive difference. This is nearly double the 43% who only believe they can make “some” positive difference in their community, and over four times the amount that believe they can make “little to no” positive difference (19%).



Another indicator of the cohesiveness of a community is the extent to which residents believe that it is “very likely” their neighbors will pitch in to help others when they are in need. Many residents of Siler Rufina Nexus believe that the people in their community would help check-in on an elderly neighbor who was in need (50%), as well as helping them with a favor such as borrowing a tool or picking up some mail for them (44%).

Overall, 40% of Siler Rufina Nexus residents report that they think community residents would provide a neighbor with help with childcare, and 35% believe that it would be “very likely” for people in their community to give them a ride if they needed one. Yet, when considering those who find it “somewhat likely,” nearly 70% of the sample agrees that it is more likely than not that a community member would give them a ride if they needed one. This is reinforced by the nearly a third of respondents who reported to us that they rely on rides from neighbors or friends to get around the community in the earlier item focused on transportation.



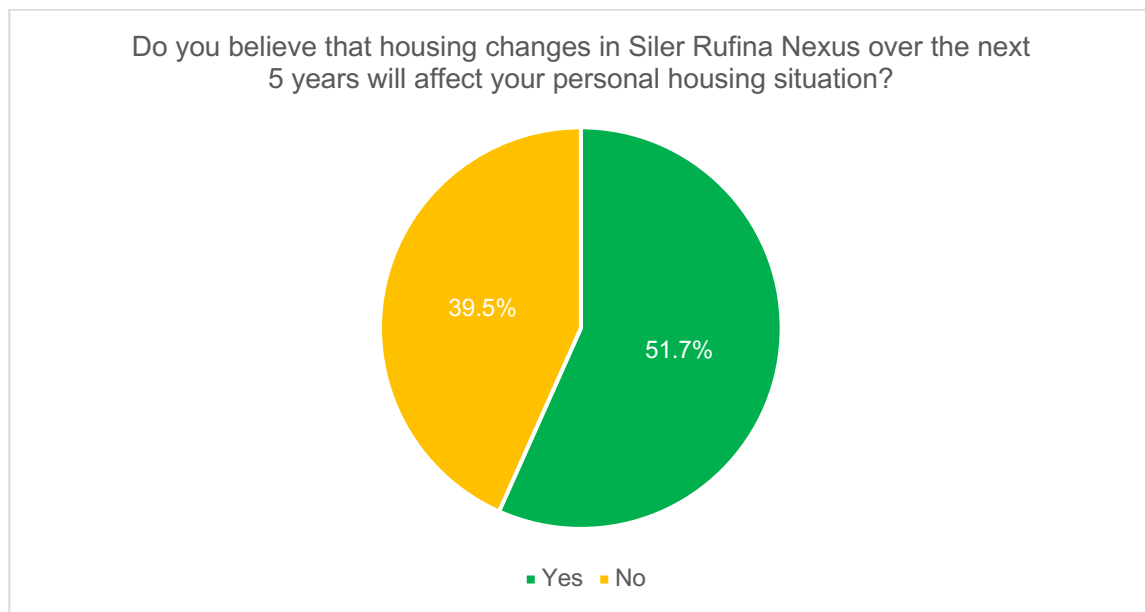
Attitudes of Siler Rufina Nexus Community Members Regarding the Future of the Neighborhood

Respondents were asked in an open-ended question to provide any thoughts that they had about how the neighborhood may change in the future. As reflected in the sample quotes below pulled from the larger set of responses, while most respondents viewed potential positive changes associated with economic development, others were concerned about their future and current ability to afford housing in the neighborhood. Fears of gentrification were mentioned often across the responses provided by residents.

Residents expressed the following statements:

- *“The Siler development has shown improvement along with other developments”*
- *“I have hope, this community stands out from the rest in all of Santa Fe and that they will do whatever it takes to make sure that the situations that are happening stop happening. I want the best living situation for my family and that is one of many reasons why we chose to live here. For our family to have affordable living and also workspace and from what we were told it was a green community which we loved.”*
- *“Hasn’t changed much in the past almost 4 years I’ve lived here, so why would it start changing now that it’s getting more expensive to buy and rent?”*
- *“Crime has increased over my life in Santa Fe. Homelessness has gotten worse, and the cost of living has just continued to rise.”*

- *“Excited that as the neighborhood develops it will continue to improve”*
- *“So much of homeless population because of Pete's place, someone started a fire in my backyard, can't even let daughter go to park next to our home.”*
- *“The new developments (including the Homewise development at ECC) on Agua Fria will be good for the area. I just learned about a boutique hotel planned for that area, and I think those kinds of projects will bring more of a lively feel to the area. I think the programming at the El Rey has been a very nice addition. The new Lamplighter Inn project is a great affordable rental addition to the community. I am, however, very concerned for renters as prices continue to escalate astronomically relative to wages. I'm also concerned that the number of unhoused people will continue to increase and they will not have access to the services they need. I hate Cerrillos Road and am concerned about the lack of care and safety of drivers. I'm also concerned about the on-going drought and urban tree loss.”*

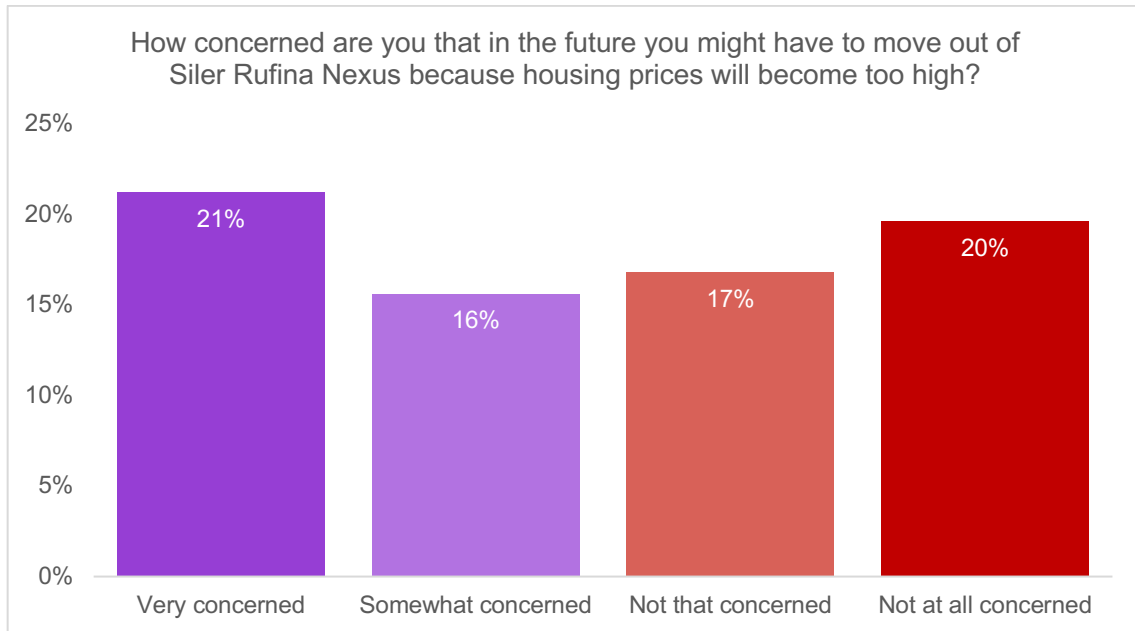


The concerns about the potential for gentrification with increases in prices is coupled with the slight majority of respondents feeling that their personal housing situation will change as a result of housing changes in Siler Rufina Nexus over the next five years. Furthermore, 37% of those survey stated that they were either very or somewhat concerned that in the future they might have to move out of Siler Rufus Nexus due to high housing prices.

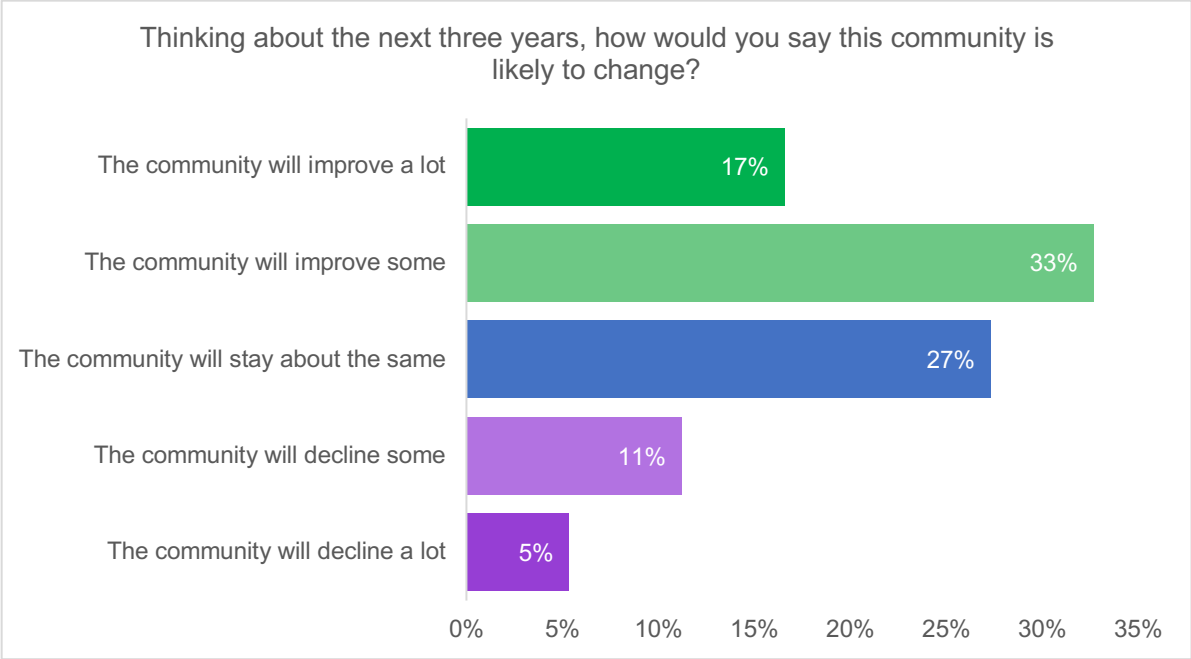
Furthermore, staff spoke with a number of residents who were dissatisfied with conditions of the properties they were renting because of safety, lack of working appliances, and bad management, but at the same time would not consider leaving because “there’s nowhere else to go.”

These outcomes show that housing investments and changes in the neighborhood should consider strategies to support existing residents to be able to remain in their home by keeping housing affordable and aiming to fix some of the common concerns of safety and friendliness. It is important again to note that the survey was conducted at a time when inflation, historic

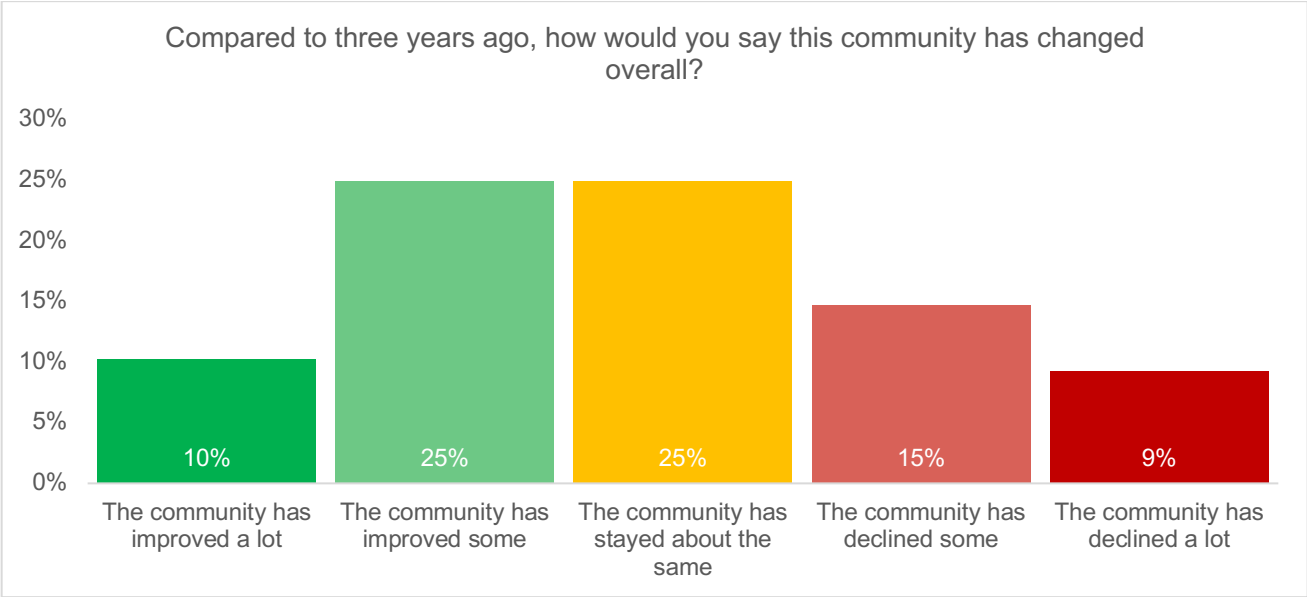
increases in housing costs, and overall cost of living were highly salient to not only New Mexicans, but all Americans.



The survey results support the overall themes of the open-ended responses. Positively, 50% of respondents believe that the community will improve over the next three years, which is in stark contrast to the 16% that believe the community will decline either “some” or “a lot.” Community residents are therefore highly optimistic about the future, a very positive finding in the survey that reinforces that most residents are satisfied with life in their community and desire to make this a long-term home.



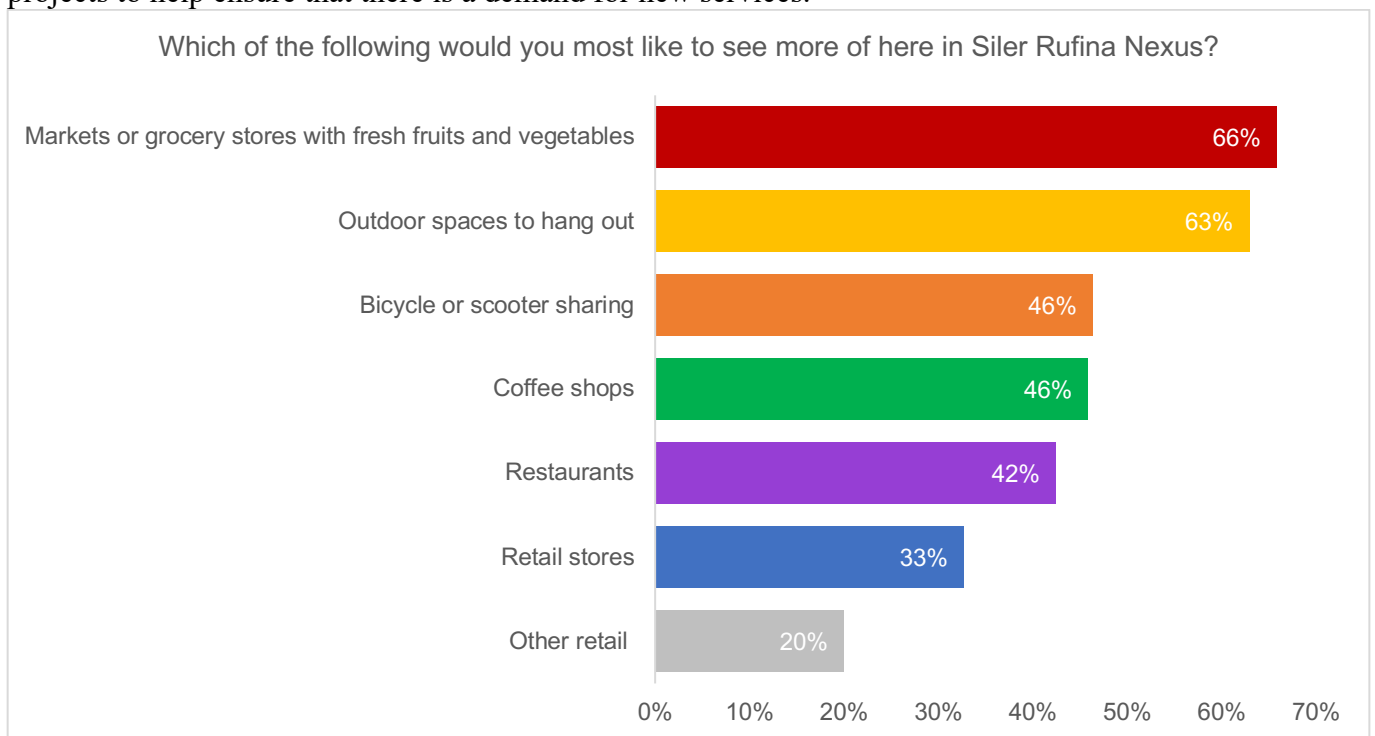
The survey also inquired about noticeable changes in the last three years. Although many participants are optimistic about the future of the neighborhood, a slightly lower proportion of residents believe that the neighborhood has changed positively over the last three years (35%). Along the same lines, 16% believe the community negatively changed. It is of course important to situate this finding within the major trauma community residents have endured during the past three years when the pandemic, rising cost of living, and increased crime have all generated high stress for New Mexicans.



Community Needs and Assets

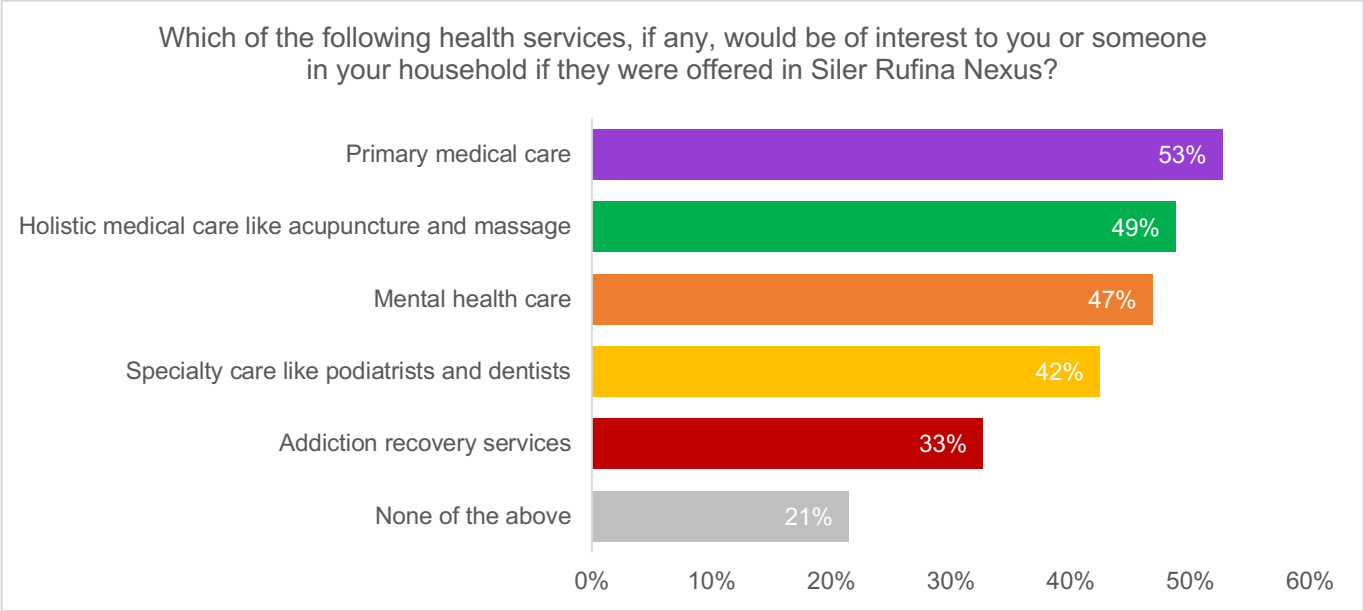
One of the goals of this study is to help inform future development in the area by providing residents an opportunity to identify what they feel is needed in the community. When identifying the needs they have in the neighborhood, Siler Rufina Nexus residents wanted to see more markets or grocery stores with fresh foods, this was the highest response provided at 66% of the sample. Respondents also pointed to wanting more amenities and lifestyle improvements such as more outdoor places to hang out (63%), access to bicycle or scooter sharing (46%), coffee shops (46%), restaurants (42%) and retail stores (33%).

These quality-of-life issues are essential investments needed to keeping residents satisfied with living in the community. This is valuable information to share with policymakers and developers, as far too often local residents are not able to provide their voice on development projects to help ensure that there is a demand for new services.

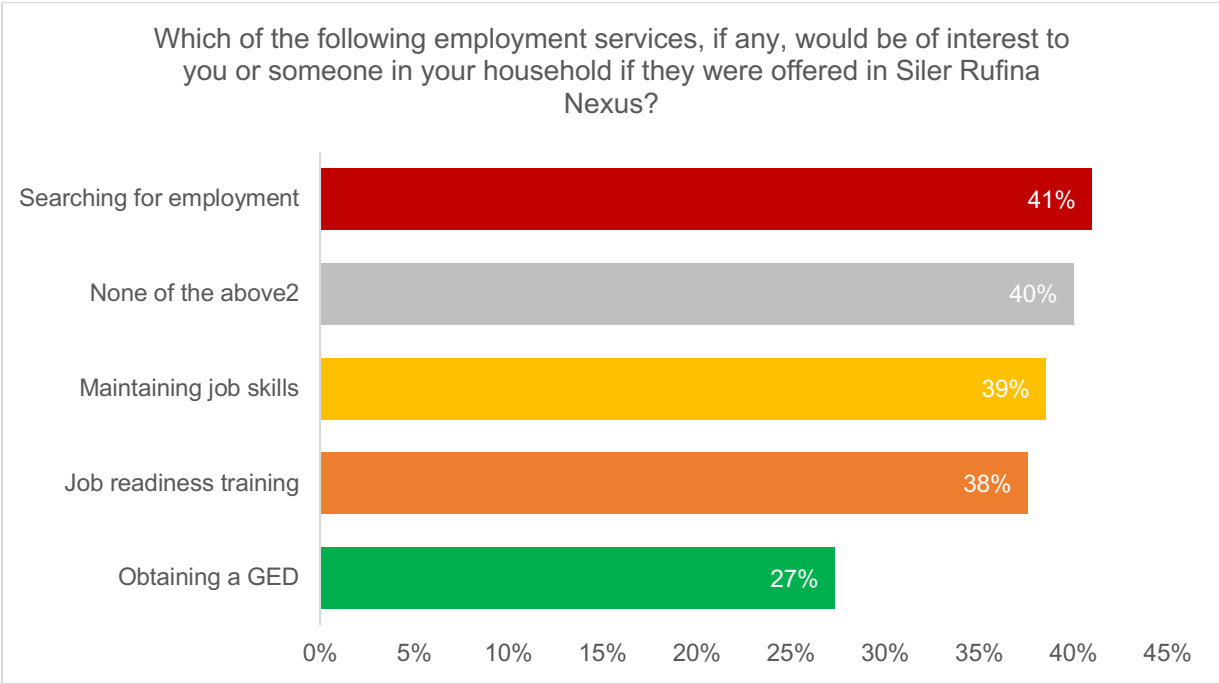


The survey also asked respondents about any services they would be interested in more specific to homeowner related services. More specifically, respondents were able to provide their thoughts on services that they would like to see provided in Siler Rufina Nexus across three specific areas: health, employment, and children-oriented services.

Medical care is the number one cited service of interest among community residents at 53%. The second highest identified service among residents is holistic medical care like acupuncture and massage therapy (49%), possibly inspired by the salience of mental health care access during the pandemic when stress levels are high across the country. Mental health care (47%), specialty care (42%), and addiction recovery services (33%) are also highly popular services for which residents would like to see greater access in the community.

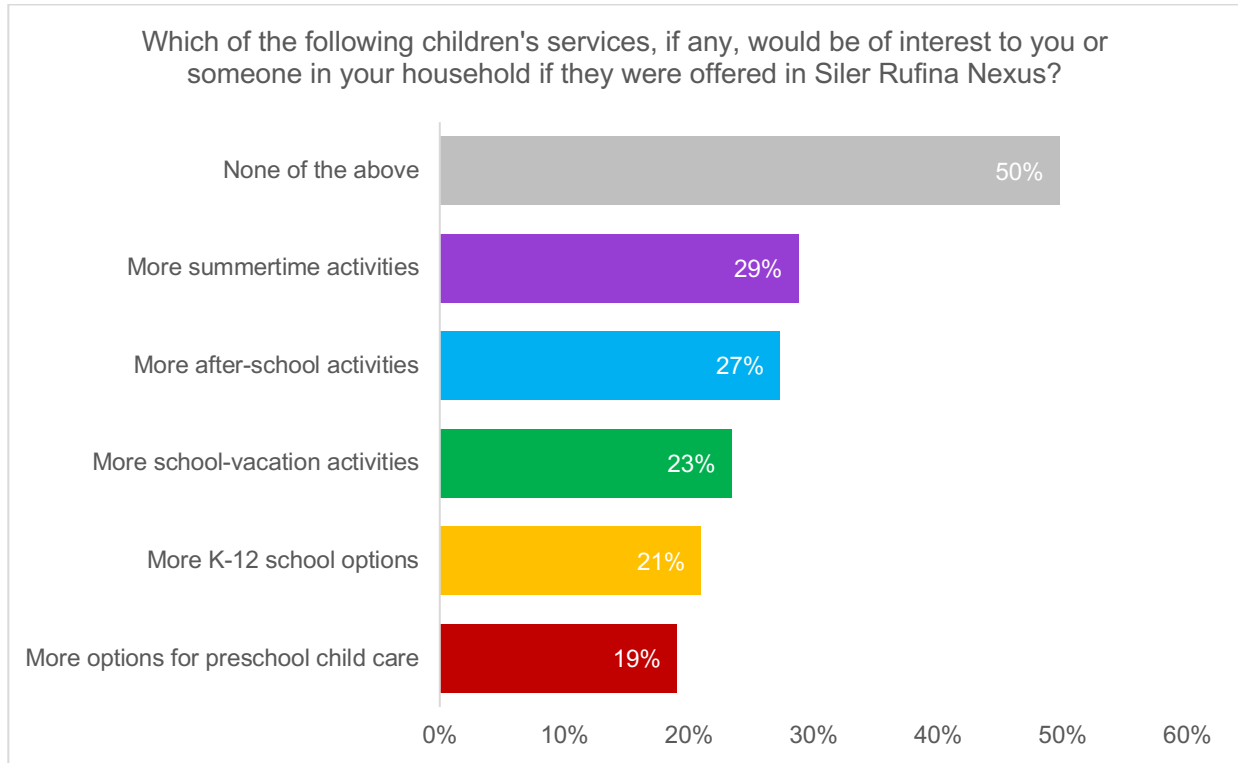


Respondents were also asked to identify their interest in employment services, a particularly important area of inquiry given New Mexico’s challenges with unemployment at the time of interviews.² It is clear that providing help with finding employment would be helpful to a high number of residents (41%). This is followed by maintaining job skills (39%), job readiness training (38%), and assistance obtaining a GED (27%). The importance of these resources in the city is very timely given high unemployment rates and the need for many New Mexicans to look for higher paying jobs to compete with inflation.



² <https://www.abqjournal.com/2482477/nms-unemployment-rate-highest-of-any-state-in-us.html>

Respondents were asked about any services that they would like to see offered in Siler Rufina Nexus specific to children. There is some interest in summertime activities (29%), after-school activities (27%) and school-vacation activities (23%). Parents are also interested in more K-12 school options being available for children, as well as pre-school childcare for families with young children.



Conclusions – Overall Findings

The survey identifies that residents of the Siler Rufina Nexus neighborhood enjoy living in their community and generally take pride in being from this area of the City of Santa Fe. Most residents express a desire to remain in this community and invite others in their network to make it their homes as well. Although some social science research has suggested that homeowners tend to have greater satisfaction levels in their community, high levels of satisfaction in Siler Rufina Nexus are consistent among both those who rent and who own their homes. Satisfaction with the community however is significantly lower among those who are facing housing challenges, including those who lack stable housing.

Although there is a lot of positivity reflected in the survey's findings, there are some concerns raised by residents that suggest the need for improvements to enhance the quality of life. The survey detected a high level of concern about the prospect of housing costs rising in the near future that could displace many members of the community who could not afford to pay more for their rent or property. While many respondents recognized that the economic development in the general area is positive, many expressed consciousness about the potential for gentrification to

occur as a result. Addressing this concern by creating more affordable housing would go a long way to improving overall satisfaction levels among city residents.

Despite very high satisfaction levels, many residents also expressed concerns about crime, safety, and a growing population of unhoused people that respondents see as being a challenge for their everyday lives in the area. There was a consistent theme across the data that there has been a significant increase in the unhoused population in the area with many residents perceiving that this is correlated with a rise in crime and a decrease in public safety. These are systemic issues that are challenges to the full city of Santa Fe, but this community has been uniquely challenged due to many of the service providers who work with the unhoused being located in the area and the concentration of low-cost motels in the area which has become a hub for short-term housing. This obviously impacts how residents feel about their community and their desire to remain long-term residents. Fear of walking at night due to these issues emerged as a particularly salient concern for survey respondents. Stakeholders should seek interventions to address safety concerns that leverage residents' underlying commitment to work collectively, as demonstrated in the "Perceived Efficacy and Collective Impact in Siler Rufina Nexus" section.

About the Authors

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