

2015

Southside Neighborhood Association Survey- Final Report

SUBMITTED TO:



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ACTION

PLAN

TASK FORCE 2

Submitted by:

Sociology Capstone Course

Ball State University

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“Southside Neighborhood Association” Survey
Final Report

Submitted by:

Alexis Beane, Leah Martine, William Osborn,
Marlena Steinhall, and Eric Patterson

Sociology Department Immersive Learning
Ball State University
Building Better Communities Project

For questions regarding this report or project, please contact Melinda Messineo at
765-285-5530 or mmessine@bsu.edu

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Capstone Course Explanation & The Project

We are five students of the sociology capstone course in the sociology department at Ball State University for the spring 2015 semester. Capstone at BSU is a course that examines what students have learned from being in a particular educational department of the university. For several in the capstone course graduation takes place at the end of the semester thus moving onto the next chapter of their professional lives.

The sociology capstone course examines our knowledge of survey construction, data analysis, and research methods. One way that the course examines this knowledge is by having students participate in an immersive learning project where they asked to utilize the skills they have gained by joining with a community partner on a project. This semester the capstone course had 2 community partners

Sociology capstone examines:
*survey construction, data
analysis, and research methods*

(Muncie Clean & Beautiful and Muncie Action Plan). For the spring 2015 surveying for their community partner. For Muncie Clean and Beautiful this group was tasked with discovering what the perceived overall effectiveness of the organization was by those who were members and outsiders. There were two groups working with Muncie Action Plan which worked towards understanding aspects of two separate neighborhoods to help each with the information each wished to acquire. The Riverside/Normal City survey group were tasked to discover what the neighborhood saw as their strengths and weaknesses. Our group was the second group assigned for a project for Muncie Action Plan.

Muncie Action Plan tasked our group with asking the Southside neighborhood of Muncie, Indiana if they were interested in having a neighborhood association. We were also asked to discover if it was revealed that the Southside wanted a neighborhood association what size association would they desire. Muncie Action Plan desired to know if they would want a large all-encompassing “Southside Neighborhood Association” or instead a group of smaller associations within the Southside boundaries.

GOALS
1- Discover if the Southside neighborhood desired to have a neighborhood association
2- If the Southside desired a neighborhood association would they prefer a larger all-encompassing neighborhood association or would they prefer several smaller ones.

Strategies Utilized

During the course of the semester several strategies had to be utilized to gather data necessary for the project. The three methods the group utilized were as followed:

1. Canvass door-to-door
2. Contact local businesses
3. Contract local churches

We began with the strategy of canvassing door-to-door in each subarea of the Southside neighborhood. We started this strategy by breaking into two groups of two with one member being solely responsible for data analysis. One group began on Walnut and Memorial. This group worked towards Walnut and 20th street. The other group began canvassing the area to the east of Meeker and Memorial Street. This group began with the apartment complex known as Indian Village. Upon completion of gathering a significant representation of respondents from Indiana Village that group moved into the region above Indian Village. As each group continued canvassing endeavors it became apparent that we were not going to get the results that we desired as a group thus we began to utilize other strategies to gather the information necessary for this project.

The other two strategies that were utilized were contacting local churches and local



businesses. Unfortunately due to time constraints many of the businesses and churches contacted were not able to partner with us on this project (a list of those businesses and churches contacted will be attached as additional appendixes to this

report). Munsee Lanes, however, did partner with us. They allowed us to sit at the bowling alley to acquire respondents that lived in that area. This was conducted on a Thursday night when there were bowling leagues in attendance. These activities resulted in a total of 44 respondents over the course of the project.

Demographics

44 total respondents had the opportunity to answer a series of 21 questions (see Survey Appendix). Each participant was permitted to answer those questions that they felt comfortable with, as a result some questions have a lower number of respondents than the overall 44.

For a demographic background of those respondents by sex and age please see Charts 1 & 2 below:

Chart 1-

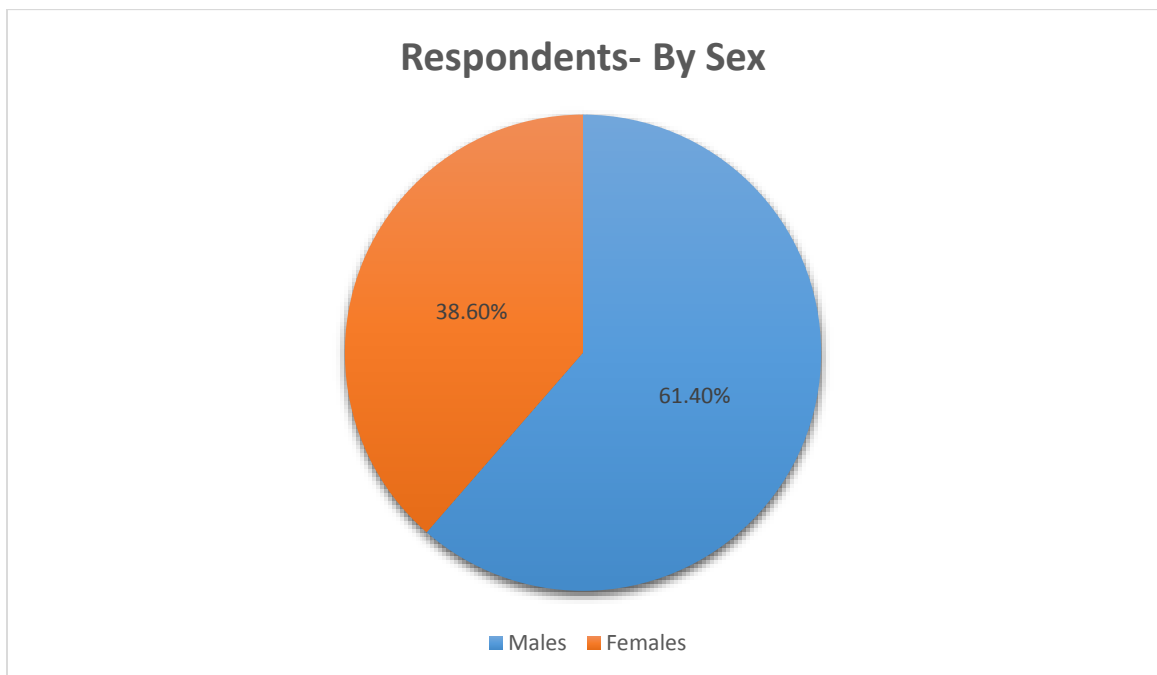
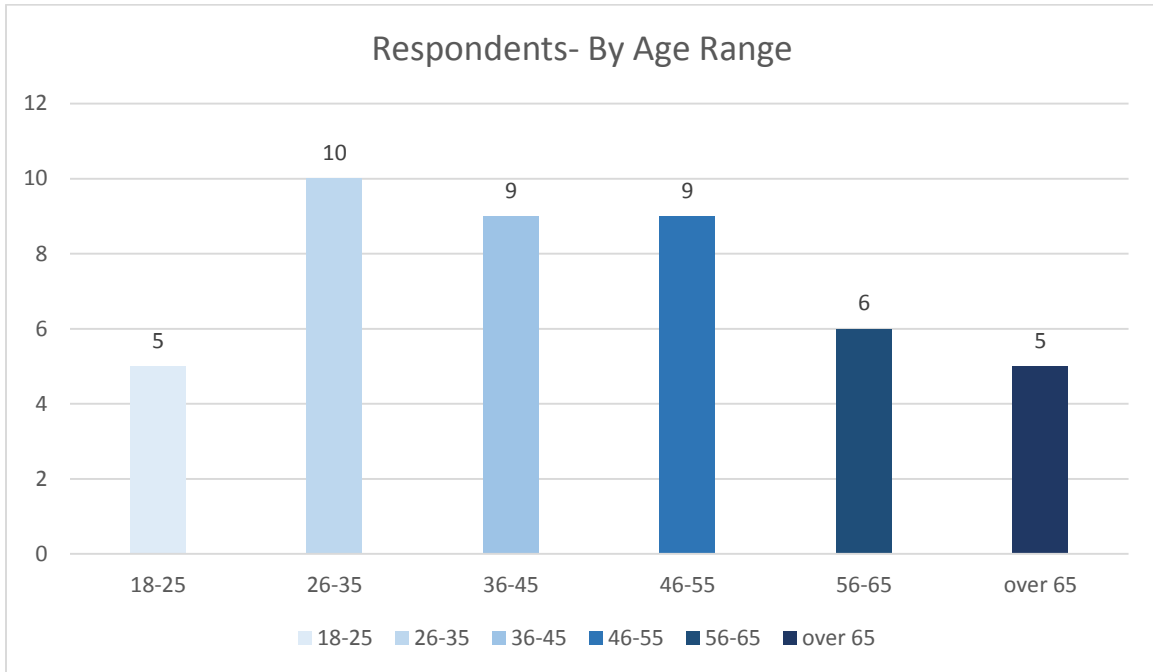


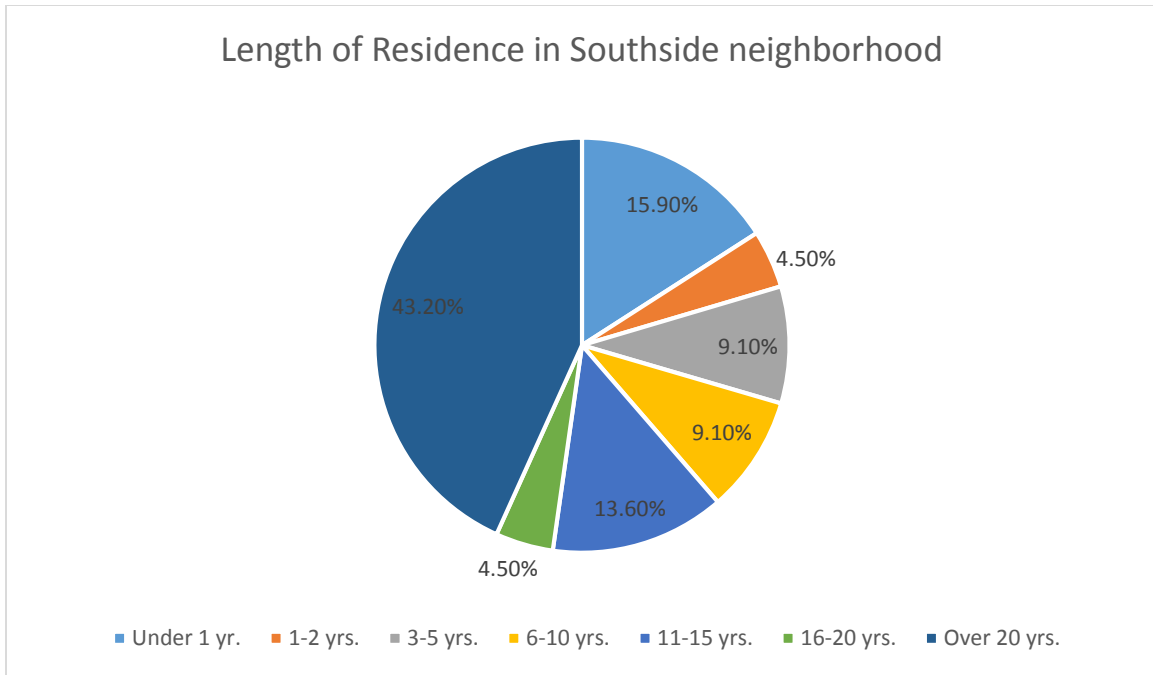
Chart 2-



As the charts showcase the majority of respondents to the survey were male and respondents primarily fell between the ages of 26-55 years of age. For full disclosure there were 28 male respondents and 16 female respondents over the course of the survey gathering process.

One demographic finding from the survey was that there was a gap between the lengths of how long one has lived in the community. The majority of respondents stated that they had lived in the area for 20+ years and the second largest group stated they had lived in the area for less than a year (see chart 3 for overall breakdown). The third largest group was those that had lived in the area for 11-15 years. These numbers shows that this area is a mixture of both newcomers and those that are invested in the overall community due to an extended length of stay in it.

Chart 3-



Findings

The overall question that we were asked to discover for the Southside was if they wanted a neighborhood association and if so what size they wanted it. The questions attached to answering those questions will be showcased first. We will then present other interesting findings from the questions asked, but only highlighting those that will help overall with the neighborhood association.

Question 12 of the survey asked the participants if they felt that a neighborhood association would benefit the Southside community. Of a total of 42 respondents for this question 30 (71%) felt that it would be beneficial while only 11 (26%) felt that it would not (one individual was unsure). Of the 30 respondents that felt that a neighborhood association would be

beneficial roughly 91% of them stated that they would participate in the association. These findings showcase that a part of the Southside would like to see a neighborhood association form

30 respondents wanted a neighborhood association while only 11 did not.

in the area and that they would participate in it. Question 15 asked the other part of goal of this survey that we were tasked with findings out about the neighborhood: What size neighborhood association would you like? Of 38 total

respondents to this question 29 (76%) felt that a smaller association would be better for the Southside community while 8 (21%) felt that a larger association would more beneficial (one respondent answered with unsure). This finding showcases that smaller associations would benefit the Southside instead of a larger one.

While running the data analysis on the project there were several key findings that are worth mentioning. It appears that people are invested in this community, as is showcased by the length of stay within the neighborhood. This conclusion is further backed by the fact that 77.3%

of 44 respondents stated that they were planning to stay in the area for the foreseeable future while only 22.7% felt that they wanted to move away from the area. Another answer that ties into this is that two answers were about

29 respondents wanted a smaller association while only 8 felt a larger association would be more beneficial

neighbors. One was in the strengths question (Question 9) that asked what the individual felt was the overall strengths of the neighborhood. The largest strength given was that neighbors were kind. The second was in the weakness section of the questions (Question 10) that asked what the individual felt were the weaknesses of the Southside community. The second largest answer was that they did not feel that they knew their neighbors that well. We can draw from these answers that community is a value that is important to the Southside community.

Recommendations

Based on our findings we feel that a neighborhood association would greatly benefit the Southside community. There is a desire to have a sense of community in this area that we can see showcased by the fact that they mentioned neighbors in both the strengths and weaknesses. A neighborhood association may be the best way to foster this sense of community. We further feel that a smaller group of associations based on regional aspects of the Southside community would be appropriate. This is based on the community's answers of desiring a smaller association. It is also based on the finding that many respondents felt that their neighborhood was only about a 2x2 block radius. While this small of associations would not be feasible it showcases that a smaller sense of neighborhood is thought of in this area. The focus of each should, however, be that they are a part of the Southside community as many of the respondents do still see themselves as "southsiders". The associations should not deemphasize this sense of community.

With these recommendations we also feel that there are several other recommendations that we would suggest that a neighborhood association address for the Southside community based on the questions we asked. The first area that should be focused in on is beautification of the area as many respondents felt that curb appeal was lacking. When asked what the focus should be of the neighborhood association this was the largest answer. There is an image that the community has of this area and the inhabitants feel similarly. They have a desire to clean up the community and make it appear nicer. A neighborhood association would help them with this. The second area that we feel the neighborhood association should focus in on is drug prevention. While this was the third focus desired by the question related to focus on the survey it was

however the most cited weakness of the community. With these two answer it would be beneficial for there to be a focus of some sort on drug activity in the Southside neighborhood for the association. The third area we feel that the association should focus in on is providing a sense of community that we have previously mentioned. The organization should consider having monthly meetings that are all about getting this community together. They value this and would participate if they are asked.

The last overall recommendation that we have pertaining to this project is that due to there not already being a neighborhood association formed in the area it would be appropriate to conduct this survey a second time. This would reinforce our findings and showcase that our findings are the desire of the entire community. We would be as bold to state that even a third wave of conducting this survey would be appropriate so that there is evidence built upon itself that showcases the community does indeed desire to have a neighborhood association. The more research to back-up any decision about the decision to have a neighborhood association would be highly beneficial for this community.

AREAS TO FOCUS ASSOCIATION ON

1. *Curb Appeal*— beautification of the area matters to the population. They want to see the overall “look” of the area improve and an association could help with this.
2. *Drug Prevention*— One of the largest cited weaknesses of the area in the results was that there were drug issues in the area. A neighborhood association should focus on any measures to help reduce drugs in the Southside neighborhood.
3. *Community Gatherings*— The Southside community values its neighbors. With this finding we feel that an association should hold monthly neighborhood gatherings (i.e. pot-lucks or picnics)

Appendixes:

List of Businesses Contacted:

12th Street Café
1900 S Mock Ave

Wendy's
2501 S. Madison St.

Arby's
2304 S. Madison St.

Mac's Restaurant
2323 S. Madison St.

Kentucky Fried Chicken
2324 S. Madison St.

Munsee Lanes
601 East 26th St.

Madison Street Diner
2421 S. Madison St.

Taco Bell
2201 S. Madison St.

Maring-Hunt Public Library
2005 S. High St.

Pizza Hut
2703 S. Madison St.

Aldis
3221 S. Madison St.

List of Churches Contacted:
(Google Maps Utilized and Contacted through phone)

Muncie Christian Center
1824 S Walnut St
Muncie, IN 47302
(765) 289-9601

Southside Church of God
101 E 22nd St
Muncie, IN 47302
(765) 282-6235

Heritage Apostolic Tabernacle
3120 S Walnut St
Muncie, IN 47302
(765) 289-5401

Temple Baptist Church & Christian Academy
3501 S Madison St
Muncie, IN 47302
(765) 288-7632

Muncie Pilgrim Nazarene Church
811 E 26th St
Muncie, IN 47302
(765) 744-5427

Wesleyan Chapel Church
1819 E 26th St
Muncie, IN 47302
(765) 289-0574

Church of the Nazarene
1915 E 20th St
Muncie, IN 47302
(765) 288-3971

East 16th Street Church of God
2605 E 16th St
Muncie, IN 47302
(765) 282-5651

New Covenant Ministry Church
2208 S Delawanda Ave
Muncie, IN 47302
(765) 282-1105

Industry United Methodist Church
1912 S Mock Ave
Muncie, IN 47302
(765) 288-3016

Neighborhood Association Survey

We are a class from Ball State University and we have been asked by Task Force 2 of the Muncie Action Plan (MAP) to talk to people in the neighborhood to find out if there is interest in having a neighborhood association and if so, what it should look like. We would like to know what you think about this issue.

This survey will take about 5-10 minutes to complete. You can skip any questions you don't want to answer. Your answers will not be connected to you in any way so please feel comfortable sharing your opinions.

The results will be shared with our class members, our professor Melinda Messineo, the Southside City Council representatives, and the members of MAP.

Thank You Gifts Available

If you would like to be included in a drawing for some thank you gifts like grocery gift cards, Dairy Queen gift cards, and others items, you will be able to provide your name and address on a separate piece of paper at the end of the survey.

If you have any Questions or Concerns about the survey you can contact:

Melinda Messineo at 765-285-5530 or mmessine@bsu.edu.

Do you agree to participate in this survey? Yes No

Thank you for your time!

1. How long have you lived in this neighborhood?

- Under 1 year
- 1-2 years 11-15 years
- 3-5 years 16-20 years
- 6-10 years Over 20 years

2. Do you rent or own your home?

- Rent
- Own/Currently Buying

3. What is your gender?

- Male Female

4. What is your age?

- Under 18 46-55
- 18-25 36-45
- 26-35 56- 65
- Over 65

5. What is your race/ethnicity?

- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Black/African-American
- Hispanic/Latino
- Native American
- Caucasian/White
- Other

6. What do you consider to be the boundaries of your neighborhood? (Please use streets, major landmarks, or shopping areas that can provide a clear boundary area)

7. What was your primary reason for choosing to live in your neighborhood?

- Location was close to my family
- Location was close to my job
- Location was close to my friends
- This neighborhood is affordable
- This neighborhood is my home
- Other (please describe)

8. Do you plan on staying in your neighborhood long-term?

- Yes
- No If no, why do you plan on moving away from this neighborhood?

9. What do you see as a strength of this neighborhood? Why?

10. What do you see as a weakness of this neighborhood? Why?

11. Do you consider your neighborhood to be "Southside" or do you think of it by a different name?

Neighborhood Associations are a way for neighbors to get together to socialize as well as organize in order to make improvements to their community.

12. Do you feel that a neighborhood association would benefit your neighborhood?

- Yes No

13. Would you participate in a neighborhood association?

- Yes No

14. What would motivate you to participate in a neighborhood association?

15. Would you prefer a larger neighborhood association that encompasses all of the Southside neighborhood area or would you prefer a collection of smaller neighborhood associations based on landmarks/regions of the Southside neighborhood (i.e. Muncie Lanes or Indian Village)

- I would prefer one larger association
 I would prefer a set of smaller associations

16. Have you heard of the Muncie Action Plan?

- Yes No

17. What day of the week would be the most convenient for you to attend a neighborhood association meeting?

- Sunday Thursday
 Monday Friday
 Tuesday Saturday
 Wednesday

18. What location(s) would you recommend for the association to hold their meetings at? (i.e. local Southside buildings like Maring-Hunt Library or Muncie Lanes)

19. What time would you be willing to meet for an association meeting? (pick as many times as work for you)

- Mid-morning (8am- 10 am)
- Late-morning (10am- 12 am)
- During the lunch hour (Noon- 1 pm)
- Early afternoon (1pm – 3 pm)
- Late afternoon (3 pm – 5pm)
- Early Evening (5pm- 7 pm)
- Mid-evening (7pm- 9 pm)
- Late evening (9 pm – 11pm)

20. What would be the single most important thing that the neighborhood association should focus on to help the Southside neighborhood?

21. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your neighborhood?

Thank you for your time completing this survey. If you would like a chance to receive one of the free gifts, please complete the attached paper with your name and address to be put into the drawing.