

# COMMUNITY INPUT SESSIONS:

## Reporting Results from Fall 2021

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### Background

In 2017, the Washtenaw County Office of Community and Economic Development (OCED) developed a **5-Year Fair Housing Plan** through a HUD process called **Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing**. The Plan outlined goals related to **fair housing**, and in it the County also made a **commitment to reinvest all Community Development Block Grant program income** within two specific census tracts – neighborhoods on the southside of Ypsilanti, located south of Michigan Ave (census tract 4106) and the LeForge area (census tract 4112). **Most importantly, the reinvestments must be decided based on resident input.** Community input was collected in Fall 2021 through in-person meetings, a virtual session, and an online survey for census tract 4106.

According to U.S. Census Bureau, census tract 4106 has a total population of 1,282 residents (American Community Survey, 2019) with a median household income of \$18,085 per year. Census tract 4106 includes households located south of Michigan Avenue and north of I-94 between S. Mansfield Street to the West and S. Hamilton Street to the East.



In efforts to collect resident input regarding additional community investments in neighborhoods located on the southside of Ypsilanti, the Washtenaw County and the Office of Community and Economic Development held five input sessions in October and November 2021, and attended one regularly scheduled community meeting, to hear from residents about the types of community infrastructure investments that are important to them.

A total of 25 residents attended the input sessions in October-November 2021, with an additional 4 providing input through an online survey – of the 29 individuals, 33 responses were provided (some people provided more than one suggestion). Below is a breakdown of attendance by session.

- Tuesday, October 5 | Location: Parkridge Park Pavilion - **7 residents in attendance**
- Wednesday, November 3 | Location: Hamilton Crossing Community Room - **4 residents in attendance**
- Tuesday, October 19 | Virtual session | Location: Zoom - **1 resident**
- Wednesday, November 10 | Location: Arbor Manor/Forrest Knoll - **4 residents in attendance**



OFFICE OF COMMUNITY &  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

*Collaborative solutions for a promising future*

*Last updated April 2022*

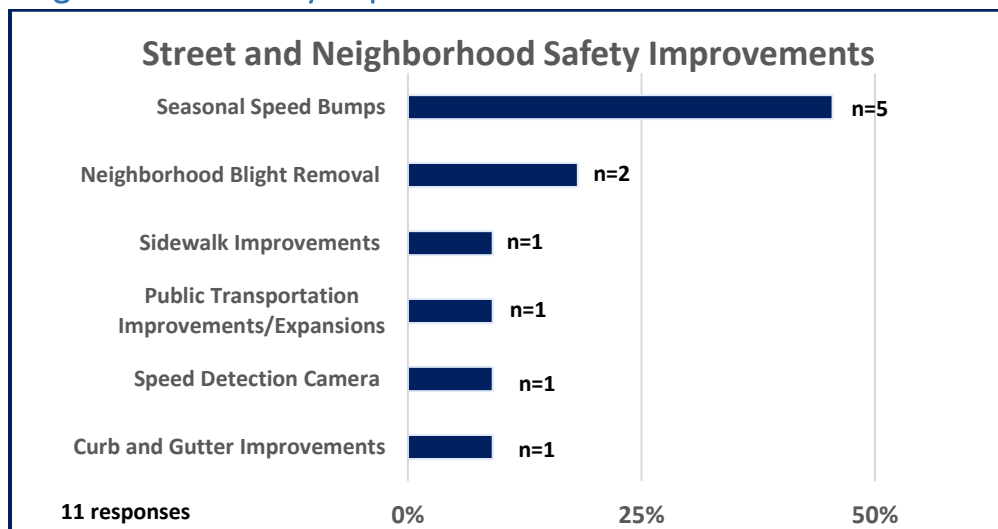
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- Saturday, November 13 | Location: Parkridge Community Center - **5 residents in attendance**  
*\*This was not an official input session, but OCED staff attended the Heritage Park Neighborhood Association meeting and engaged with 5 residents*
- Wednesday, November 17 | Location: New Parkridge Community Room - **4 residents in attendance**
- Online Survey Submissions - **18 people** responded to an online survey available for those that could not attend an in-person session, however, only **4 submissions were from residents** within the census tract available for CDBG funding.

## Community Input by Categories

### Street and Neighborhood Safety Improvements



During community input sessions, eleven responses from residents focused on the need for traffic safety improvements and measures to increase neighborhood safety in their community. Of these responses, 45% (n=5) emphasized the need for seasonal speed bumps and the following streets were identified as areas where speed bumps would improve safety: Armstrong Drive, Frederick Street, Harriet Street, Hawkins Street, Hilyard Robinson Way, Monroe Avenue, and Second Avenue.

Two responses expressed the need for blight removal—a resident asked for the trees and brush to be cleared on the vacant lot near Bell Street/Kramer Street/Briggs Street, while another individual said that three abandoned houses on Monroe Street (vacant for 10-15 years) should be demolished.



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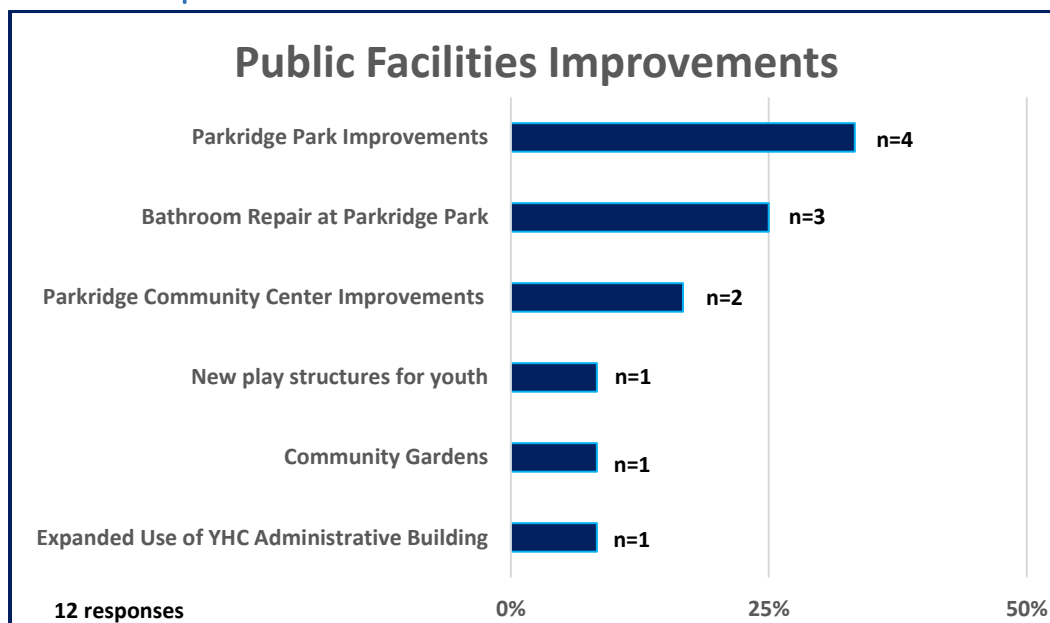
Other input in the street and neighborhood safety improvements category included the following:

- Curb and gutter improvements on Bell Street (n=1)
- Speed detection camera (n=1)
- Widen and repair sidewalks (n=1)
- Improve public transportation, i.e., AAATA buses and services for persons with disabilities and seniors for routes from Second Avenue to stores on West Michigan Avenue (n=1)

One resident expressed the need for a gated community and/or fences around rental units at New Parkridge to improve youth safety in the area, however, this would not be a project funded with CDBG funding because it is not on public land (and therefore, was not included in the chart above). However, OCED will share this input with the property management company at New Parkridge.

**Note: seasonal speed bumps are *not* CDBG-eligible, however permanent types of traffic-calming treatments *are* eligible per HUD requirements.**

### Public Facilities Improvements



Twelve residents gave input regarding park and community infrastructure improvements. Of these residents, four recommended improvements to Parkridge Park, located off Armstrong Drive, between Harriet Street and Monroe Street. These suggested improvements included repairs and resurfacing of the tennis court, additional playground equipment, and an information kiosk for community updates.

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One resident who responded to the online input survey asked for “more bike racks, tennis courts, track and a path with mile and a workout station/gym.” Although this resident did not specify the park by name, their address indicates that they live within 0.2 miles from Parkridge Park. Three residents recommended the need for the Parkridge Park bathroom to be repaired, as there is currently no working restroom on site aside from a seasonal portapotty.

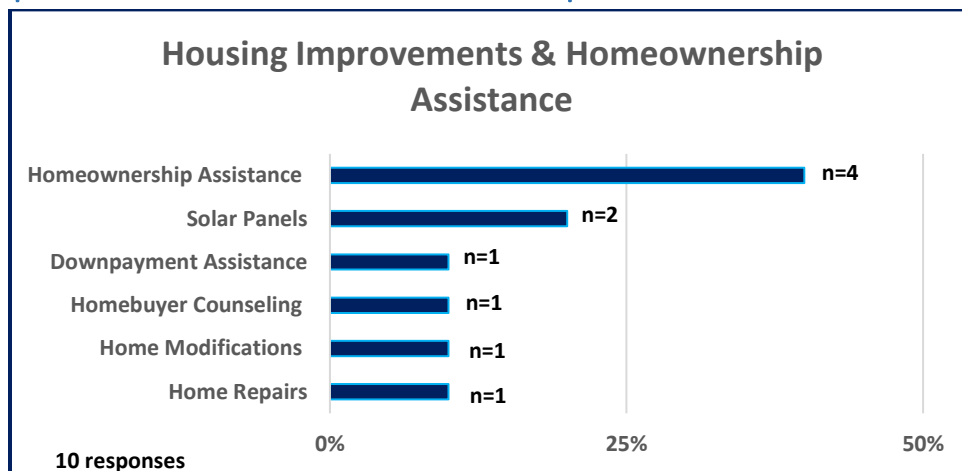
Two residents gave input about Parkridge Community Center improvements, including an expansion of the community center and improving the kitchen within the center.

Other responses in this category included:

- Expanded use of Ypsilanti Housing Commission administrative building (n=1)
- Community Gardens (n=1)
- New play structures for youth (n=1)

Input provided by residents during the sessions that are not eligible for this funding included a soccer field at Arbor Manor/Forrest Knoll, benches around Arbor Manor/Forrest Knoll common areas, community gatherings for “friendly competitions”, and a basketball court at Hamilton Crossing. Washtenaw County staff will provide this input to appropriate entities to elevate these requests for residents.

### Housing Improvements and Homeownership Assistance



Ten residents provided input around housing improvements and homeownership assistance in the community. Four out of the ten expressed interest in funding for homeownership assistance programs. Two out of ten expressed interest in solar panels for homeowners and/or solar panels on the roof of leasing offices to improve energy efficiency.



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Other responses included:

- Home repairs for homeowners (n=1)
- Exterior railings on homes for seniors (n=1)
- Homebuyer Counseling prior to buying a house (n=1)
- Down payment assistance for those looking to purchase a home (n=1)

### Community Resources

The following ideas shared by residents are not eligible for CDBG funds, however, see below for existing resources in the community to fulfill specific needs:

- *Structured and accessible communication; a way for neighbors to find out what is going on in the neighborhood*
  - Bulletin boards with local announcements are available at Parkridge Community Center, Hamilton Crossing, Forrest Knoll/Arbor Manor, New Parkridge, and many local faith-based communities.
- *Resources for seniors*
  - Please see the 2021 Senior Resource Directory for Washtenaw County, courtesy of Catholic Social Services for a comprehensive list of senior services county-wide: [2021 Senior Resource Directory FINAL.pdf \(csswashtenaw.org\)](#)
  - The Ypsilanti Senior Center, located at 1015 North Congress, offers a variety of fitness classes, arts and language courses, cooking workshops, and other social events. Visit [ypsiseniorcenter.org](#) or contact Executive Director, Monica Prince, at 734-483-5014 / [ypsilantiseniors@gmail.com](#) for more information.
  - The Home Delivered Meals Network is available to home bound seniors and provides nutritious meals delivered to their door. Washtenaw County Senior Café Program offers on-site meals for seniors. A list of local Meals on Wheels providers, as well as a list of Senior Café site dates/times and locations are both available at [washtenaw.org/796/Senior-Nutrition-Program](#)
- *Resources for Youth*
  - The Ann Arbor YMCA offers an East Washtenaw Basketball League for Ypsilanti youth in grades 6-12. For more information, visit [YMCA'S Ypsilanti Programs website](#).
  - Ypsilanti Township Parks and Recreation offers year-round programming for youth, including basketball leagues, soccer leagues, karate, dance, sports camps, among others. They offer a scholarship for families that need support. Learn more at [YTown's Recreation Guide](#).



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- *Big Brother/Big Sister program*
  - Big Brother/Big Sister of Washtenaw is located at 11 W. Michigan Avenue, Ypsilanti, MI 48197. Learn more at <https://www.bbbswashtenaw.org/>
- *Small business training for young entrepreneurs*
  - Please contact Liz Garaba ([egaraba@wccnet.edu](mailto:egaraba@wccnet.edu)) at Parkridge Community Center to inquire about available programming at Parkridge and WCC.
- *Leadership program to help youth learn to work and lead*
  - Young adults can apply for SummerWorks for paid employment experience. SummerWorks is Washtenaw County's Summer Youth Employment Program and offers a 10-week summer employment and mentorship program. This is one opportunity for young adults, ages 16-24 to gain leadership and employment experience. Learn more at [summerworks.info](http://summerworks.info).
  - Washtenaw Community College offers afterschool and summer camp programs for children and teens at Parkridge Community Center (591 Armstrong Drive in Ypsilanti). Programs include:
    - Afterschool tutoring for students ages 5 to 17
    - Youth Leadership Academy for teens ages 11 to 17
    - Girls Club for girls age 12 to 18 to build confidence
    - Mentor2Youth – afterschool tutoring and social skills
    - Parkridge also offers a six-week Summer Camp program for children ages 5 to 13, which runs 8:00am to 4:00pm Monday through Friday. Camp starts the first week in July and includes meals, tutoring, art projects, and field trips.

Contact the Parkridge Community Center at 734-483-7700 or stop by during regular operating hours (Monday - Thursday: 9 am to 8 pm/Friday: 9 am to 9 pm/Saturday: 9 am to 3 pm)

- *Childcare near New Parkridge*
  - [Bottles-N-Backpacks](#) is an affordable early childhood center located in Ypsilanti near the corner of Michigan Avenue and Second Avenue.
  - Childcare Network – Lists local childcare providers, and info on scholarships for families to pay for childcare: <https://www.childcarenetwork.org/>

