

# Memphis

Along the Mississippi River, the Fourth Bluff project will reconceive the historic Cossitt Library, Riverline Trail, Memphis Park and Mississippi River Park into places where Memphians from all backgrounds can come together to connect with nature and one another. The Memphis project's networked approach to design, programming and staffing aims to yield branch libraries, neighborhood parks and connected trails for the 21st century.

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**Goal: Civic Engagement**

**Signal:**

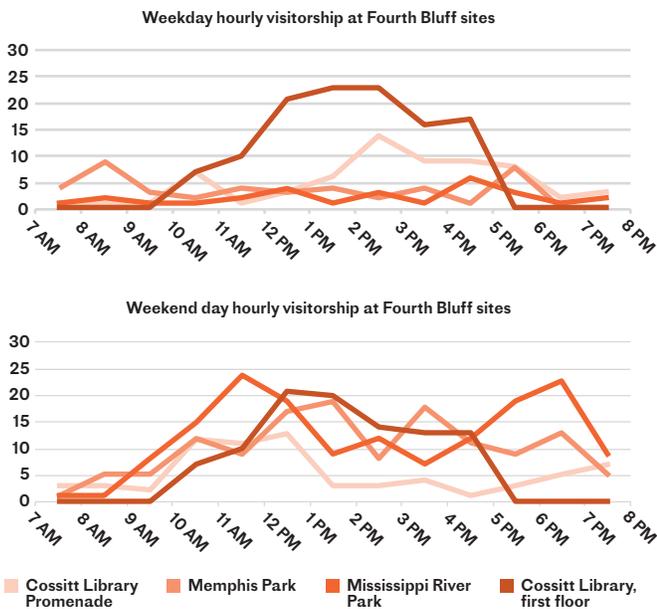
# Public Life

## Civic commons visitorship

Average hourly visitorship of the sites.

Source: Observation map

**7**  
people per hour

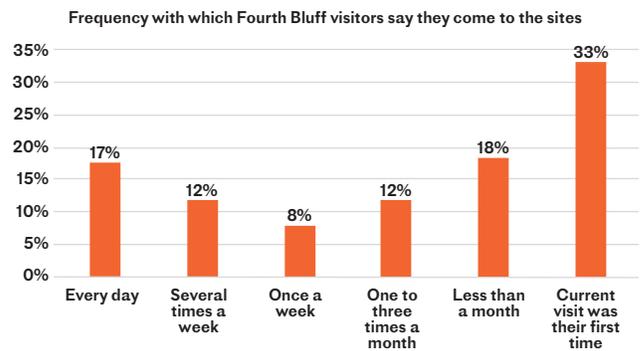


## Frequency of visits to the civic commons

Percent of respondents who say they visit the sites at least weekly.

Source: Intercept survey

**37%**



METRIC	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE	BASELINE
Length of average visit to the civic commons	Percent of site visitors who say they spend at least 30 minutes in the sites when they visit.	Intercept survey	82%
Frequency of visits to public places	Percent of respondents who visit a public place such as a park, library or community center at least once a week.	Neighborhood survey	69%
Regular programming of the civic commons	Average number of hours of weekly programming at sites.	Internet research	Mississippi River Park 0 Memphis Park 0 Cossitt Library 0

**Goal: Civic Engagement**

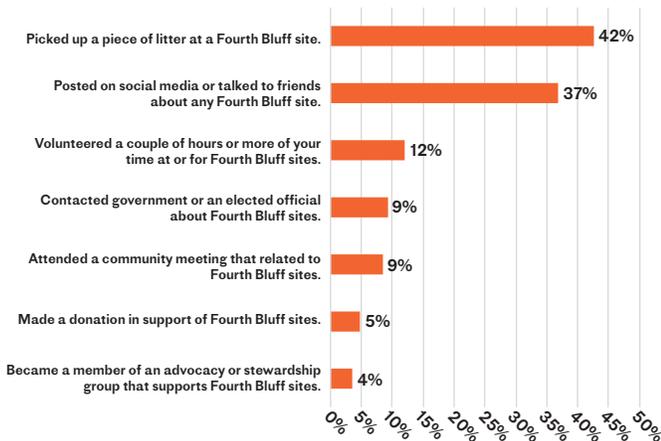
**Signal:**

# Stewardship & Advocacy

## Acts of stewardship or advocacy

Percent of respondents participating in stewardship or advocacy relating to the sites. **67%**

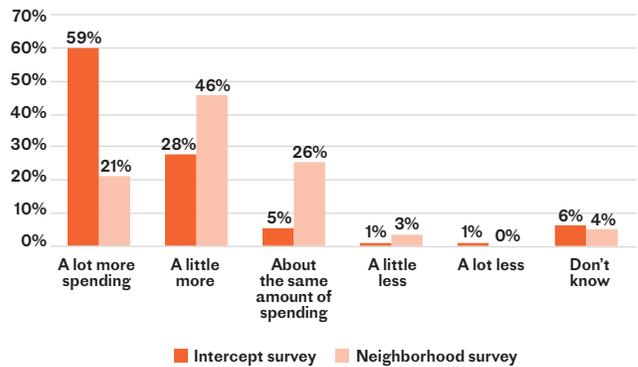
Source: Intercept survey



## Support for public spending on the civic commons

Percent of respondents who support increased government spending to fund civic assets. **87%** of site visitors

Source: Intercept survey; neighborhood survey



METRIC	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE	BASELINE
Neighborhood voter turnout	Percent of the citizen voting age population in the neighborhood that turned out for the last local election.	County elections data; Census Bureau population estimates	18.6%
Importance of civic commons sites	Percent of respondents who say the sites are important to either them, their community or the city.	Intercept survey	Important to me, my family, or my friends <b>81%</b> Important to this neighborhood or local community <b>90%</b> Important to the city <b>91%</b>
Support for public policies for the civic commons	Percent of respondents who would be more likely to support a politician who advocates for policies to better support civic assets.	Neighborhood survey	55%

**National comparison data**

Median voter turnout in most recent mayoral election in 30 largest U.S. cities was 20%; Source: Who Votes for Mayor?, 2016

## Goal: Civic Engagement

Signal:

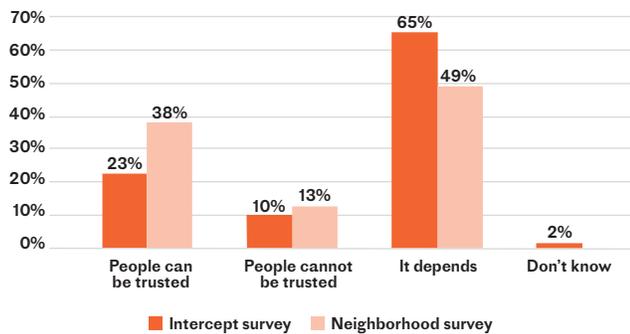
# Trust

## Trust in others

Percent of respondents who say that most people can be trusted.

Source: Intercept survey; neighborhood survey

**23%**  
of site visitors

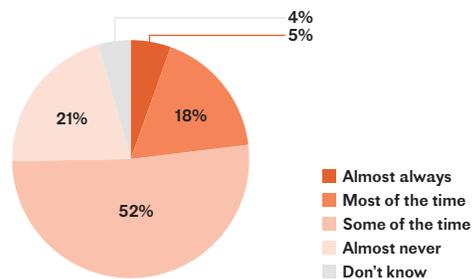


## Trust in local government

Percent of respondents who think they can trust the local government in their city to do what is right almost always or most of the time.

Source: Neighborhood survey

**23%**



METRIC	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE	BASELINE
Trust in local institutions	Percent of respondents who think they can trust the local government in their city to do what is right almost always or most of the time.	Neighborhood survey	60%
Physical markers of distrust in the neighborhood	Percent of parcels showing signs of defensive measures.	Physical survey	1%

### National comparison data

Nationally 32% say most people can be trusted, while 64% say people cannot be trusted; Source: General Social Survey, 2016

Nationally 20% of Americans today say they can trust the government in Washington to do what is right just about always or most of the time; Source: Pew Research Center, 2017

**Goal: Socioeconomic Mixing**

Signal:

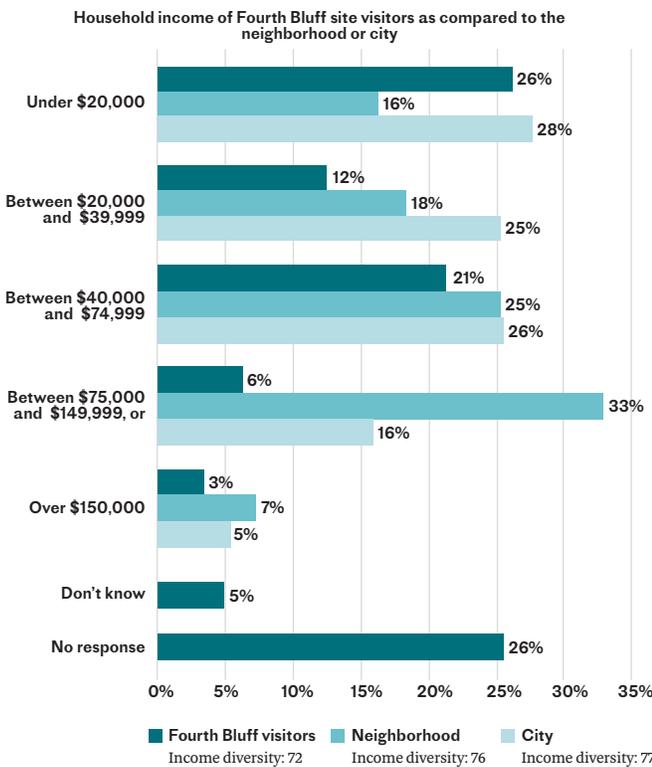
# Mixing on Site

## Income diversity of site visitors

Probability that any two individuals selected at random will be from the same income group. 80 is most diverse, 0 is least.

**72**

Source: Intercept survey

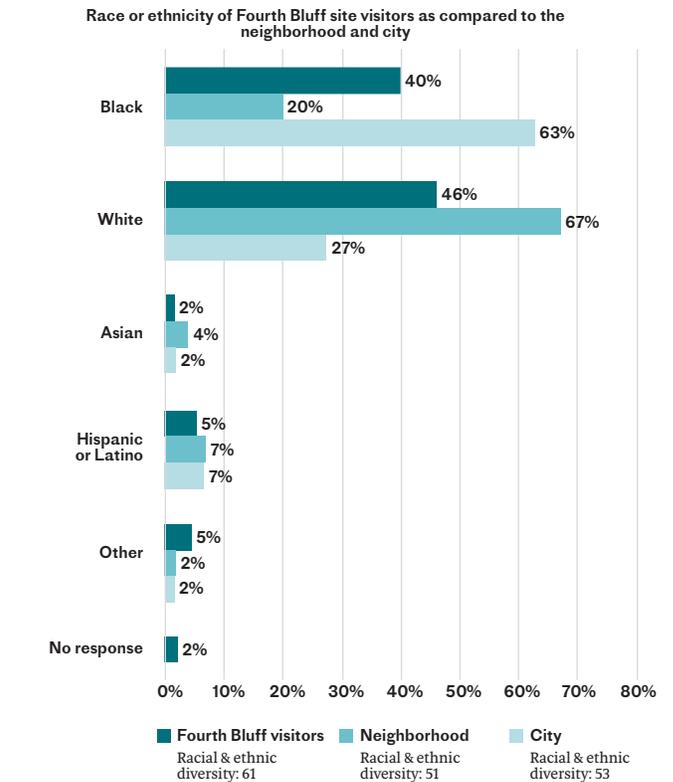


## Racial and ethnic diversity of site visitors

Probability that any two individuals selected at random will be from the same racial or ethnic group. 80 is most diverse, 0 is least.

**61**

Source: Intercept survey



METRIC	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE	BASELINE
Citywide site visitorship	Percent of city-resident site visitors who report living outside of the neighborhood.	Intercept survey	65%*
Opportunities for impromptu interactions in the civic commons	Percent of site visitors within conversational distance of one another.	Observation map	21%

\*Respondents who indicated they were homeless (15% of all intercept survey respondents) were counted as living inside the neighborhood.

## Goal: Socioeconomic Mixing

Signal:

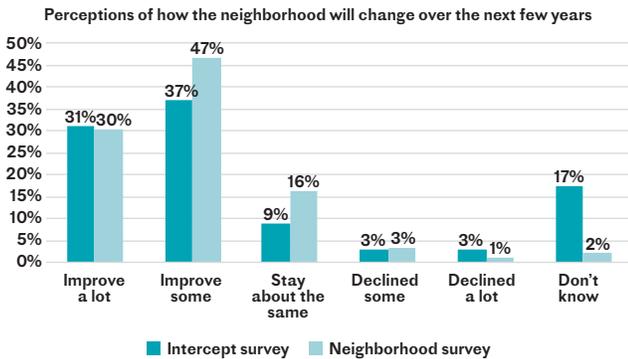
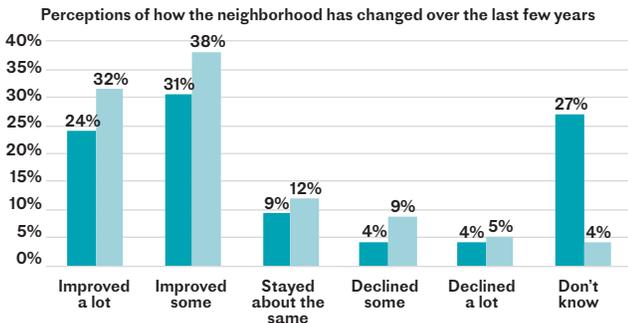
# Reputation

### Perceptions of the neighborhood and its future

Percent of respondents who feel neighborhood has changed for the better.

**55%**  
of site visitors

Source: Intercept survey; neighborhood survey

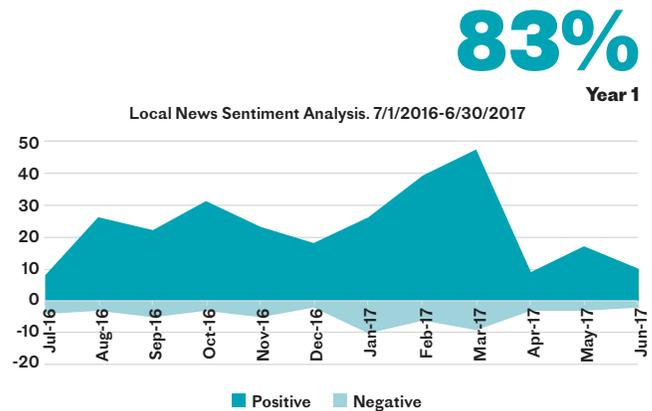
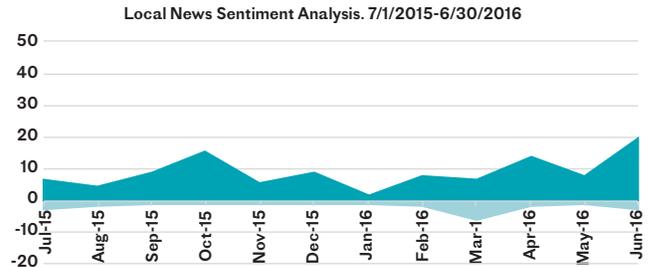


### Public perceptions of sites and of the neighborhood

Percent of local news articles with positive narrative about the sites and the neighborhood.

**82%**  
Baseline

Source: Monitoring of local news sources



**83%**  
Year 1

METRIC	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE	BASELINE
Impact of sites on the neighborhood	Percent of respondents who say the sites have a positive impact on the neighborhood.	Neighborhood survey	Memphis Park <b>76%</b> Mississippi River Park <b>79%</b> Cossitt Library <b>75%</b>
Awareness of sites	Percent of respondents who have visited the sites.	Neighborhood survey	Memphis Park <b>87%</b> Mississippi River Park <b>90%</b> Cossitt Library <b>53%</b>

**Goal: Socioeconomic Mixing**

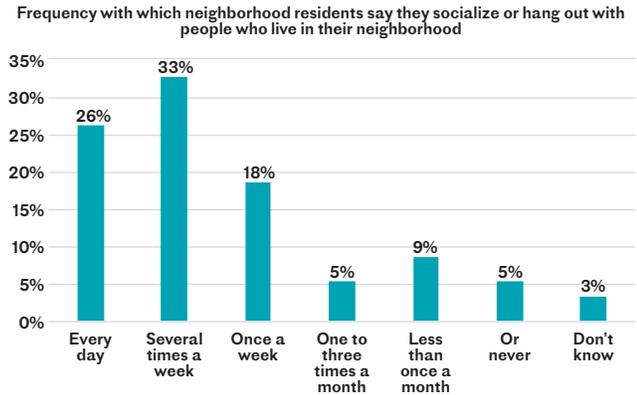
**Signal:**

# Bridging Social Capital

## Time spent with neighbors

Percent of respondents who say they socialize with people who live in their neighborhood at least once a week. **82%**

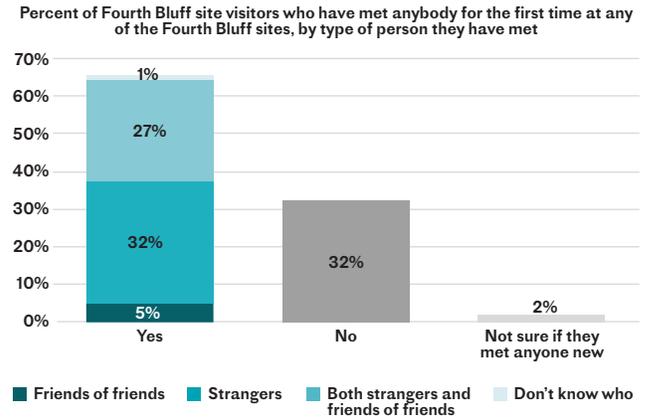
Source: Neighborhood survey



## Opportunities for meeting new people in the civic commons

Percent of site visitors making new acquaintances in the sites. **65%**

Source: Intercept survey



METRIC	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE	BASELINE
Diversity of neighborhood social networks	Percent of respondents with highly diverse social networks.	Neighborhood survey	70%

**National comparison data**

Nationally 20% say they spend a social evening with neighbors at least once a week, while 32% say they never do; Source: General Social Survey, 2016

**Goal: Socioeconomic Mixing**

Signal:

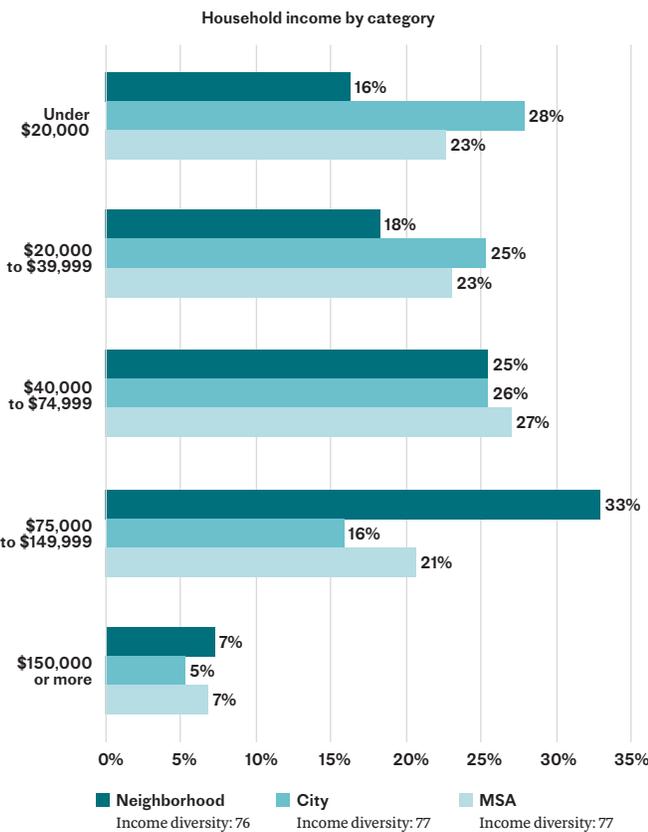
# Neighborhood Diversity

## Income diversity of neighborhood residents

Probability that any two individuals selected at random will be from the same income group. 80 is most diverse, 0 is least.

**76**

Source: American Community Survey

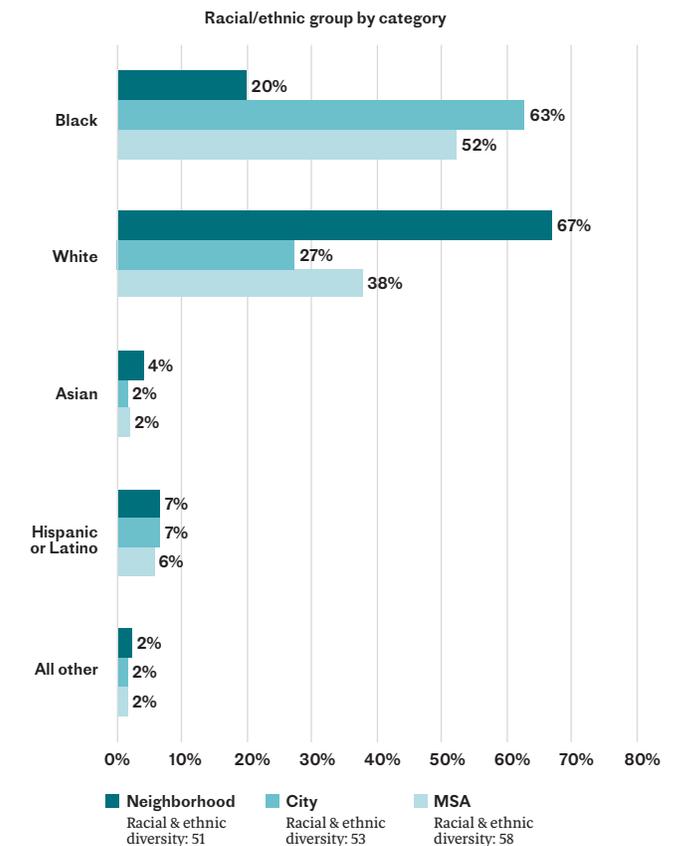


## Racial and ethnic diversity of neighborhood residents

Probability that any two individuals selected at random will be from the same racial/ethnic group. 80 is most diverse, 0 is least.

**51**

Source: American Community Survey



## Goal: Environmental Sustainability

Signal:

# Access to Nature

### Distance to park or public open space

Percent of residential parcels in the neighborhood that are within a half mile walk of a park or public open space.

**100%**

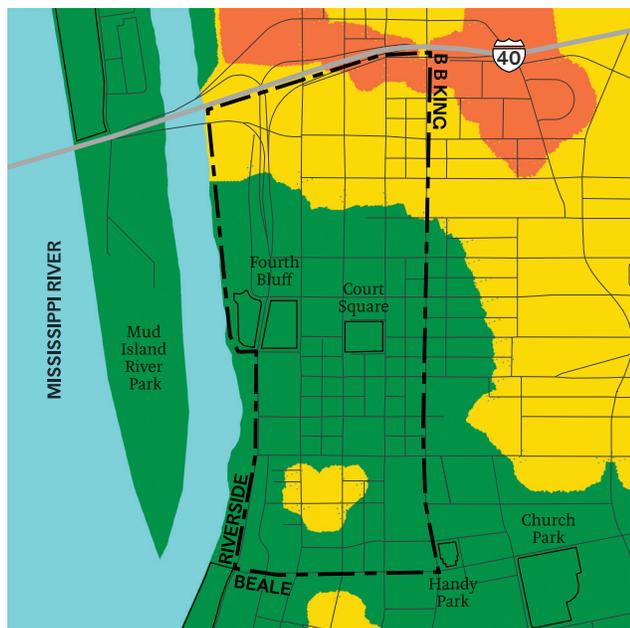
Source: Physical survey

### Perception of access to nature

Percent of respondents who say they live within walking distance of a park, trail, playground, or public garden.

**93%**

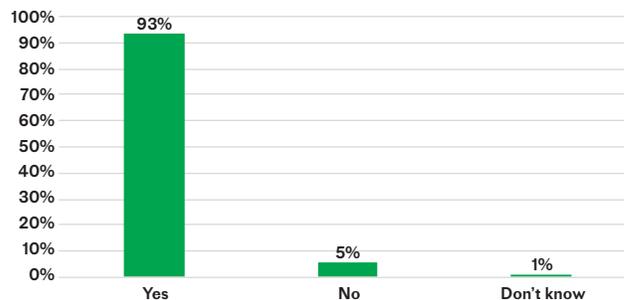
Source: Neighborhood survey



1/4 Mile

Within ■ 1/4 mile ■ 1/2 mile ■ 3/4 mile

Percent of neighborhood residents and workers who say there is a public asset within walking distance of their Downtown Memphis home or workplace



METRIC	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE	BASELINE
ParkScore®	Citywide analysis of an effective park system. 100 is most effective, 0 is least.	The Trust for Public Land	37.5
Citywide investment in parks	Total public spending on parks and recreation per resident.	The Trust for Public Land	\$53.00

#### National comparison data

The national median in the baseline year for total public spending on parks and recreation per resident was \$82. The maximum spending per resident was \$287 in Washington, D.C.; the minimum spending per resident was \$15 in Detroit, MI and Stockton, CA.

**Goal: Environmental Sustainability**

Signal:

# Ecological Indicators

## Tree Canopy

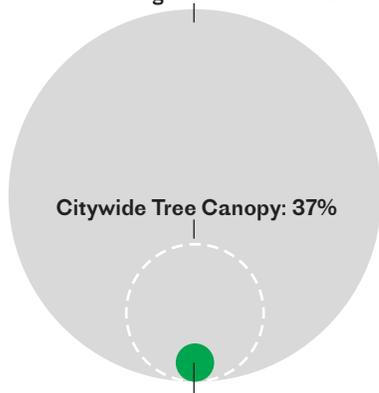
Percent of neighborhood covered by tree canopy.

Source: i-Tree Canopy by the USDA Forest Service

**10.3%**

of neighborhood land area covered by tree canopy

Total Downtown Neighborhood Area: 200 Acres



Downtown Tree Canopy: 10.3%

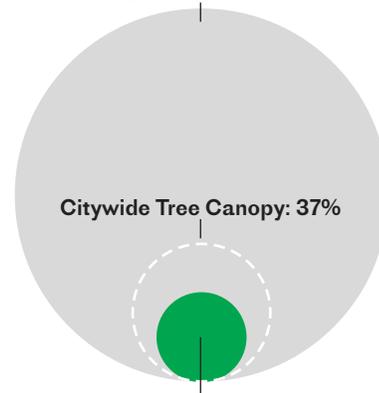
## Tree Count

Number of trees in civic commons sites.

Source: Physical survey, demonstration team tracker; i-Tree Canopy by the USDA Forest Service

**62**

Total Fourth Bluff Site Area: 10 Acres



Fourth Bluff Tree Canopy: 24.1%

METRIC	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE	BASELINE
Neighborhood carbon dioxide sequestered annually	Tons of carbon dioxide sequestered annually in trees located in the civic commons neighborhood.	i-Tree	111.03 tons
Site carbon dioxide sequestered annually	Tons of carbon dioxide sequestered annually in trees located in the civic commons site area.	i-Tree	13 tons
Perception of street trees	Percent of respondents who say street trees are beneficial to the neighborhood.	Neighborhood survey	86%
Sustainable materials	Quantity of sustainable materials incorporated in site design.	Demonstration team tracker	N/A
Stormwater management	Total square footage of stormwater features on neighborhood streets and in sites including basins, native plantings and impervious surfaces.	Demonstration team tracker	N/A

**Goal: Environmental Sustainability**

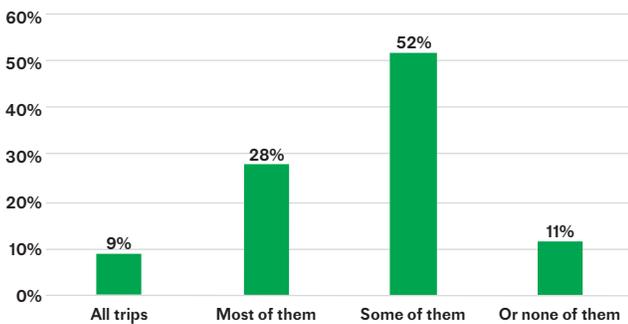
Signal:

# Walkability/ Bikeability

## Neighborhood walking and biking behavior

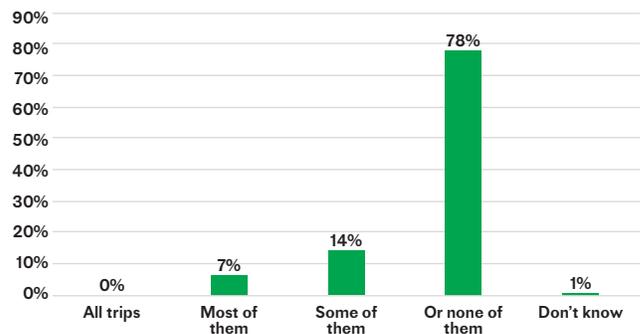
Percent of respondents who say they take at least some non-work trips by foot. **89%**

Source: Neighborhood survey



Percent of respondents who say they take at least some non-work trips by bike. **21%**

Source: Neighborhood survey



METRIC	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE	BASELINE
Walking, biking and transit access to the civic commons	Percent of respondents who say they walked, biked or took transit to the sites.	Intercept survey	66%
Neighborhood walking infrastructure	Percent of neighborhood intersections that include controlled pedestrian crossings.	Physical survey	84%
Neighborhood biking infrastructure	Percent of neighborhood street length that includes bike lanes (dedicated or shared).	Physical survey	4%
Neighborhood Walk Score	Index of walkability, based on distance to common destinations including parks, schools, stores, restaurants and similar amenities. 100 is most walkable, 0 is least.	Redfin	58
Neighborhood Bike Score	Index of bike access, based on bike facilities and share of the population using bikes. 100 is most bike-friendly, 0 is least.	Redfin	53
Neighborhood Transit Score	Index of transit access, based on number of stops and frequency of transit service in the area. 100 is most transit served, 0 is least.	Redfin	N/A

Signal:

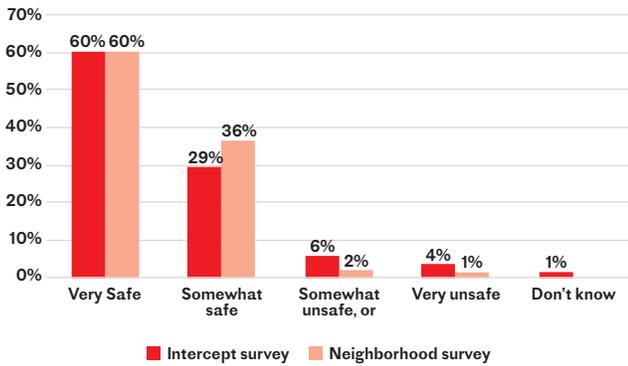
# Safety

## Perception of neighborhood safety

Percent of respondents who say they feel safe in the neighborhood during the day.

**89%**  
of site visitors

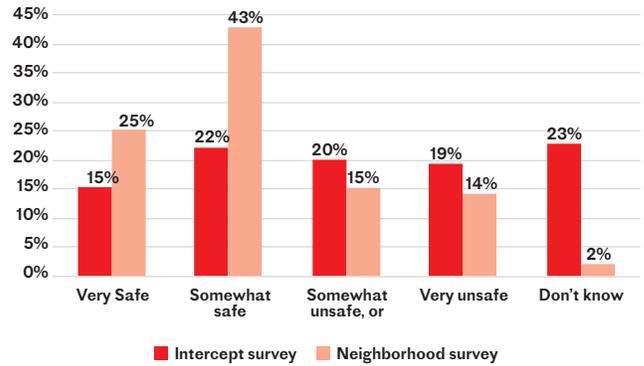
Source: Intercept survey; neighborhood survey



Percent of respondents who say they feel safe in the neighborhood at night.

**37%**  
of site visitors

Source: Intercept survey; neighborhood survey



METRIC	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE	BASELINE
Female site visitorship	Percent of site visitors who are female.	Observation map	45%
Reported neighborhood crime	Average monthly reported crime incidents in the neighborhood.	Local police department	150

Signal:

# Retail Activity

## Storefronts

Number of local customer-facing retail and service businesses located in the neighborhood.

**139**

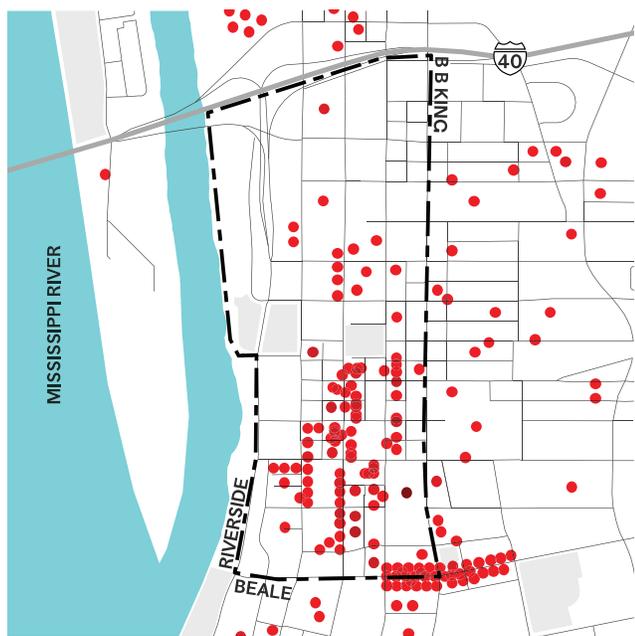
Source: Reference USA business database

## Commercial property vacancy

Percent of commercial buildings in the neighborhood that appear vacant.

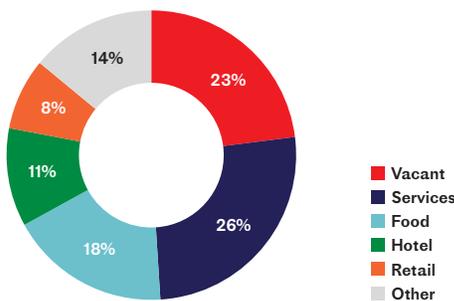
**23%**

Source: Physical survey



1/4 Mile  
● Commercial storefront

Downtown Memphis Commercial Types



METRIC	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE	BASELINE
Independent businesses	Share of neighborhood restaurants that are not part of one of the nation's 300 largest restaurant chains.	Reference USA business database	91%

**Goal: Socioeconomic Mixing**

**Signal:**

# Real Estate Value & Affordability

## Home values

Median and lower quartile values of owner-occupied homes in the neighborhood.

**\$212,600**  
median home value

Source: American Community Survey



**Median Home Value**  
**\$212,600**

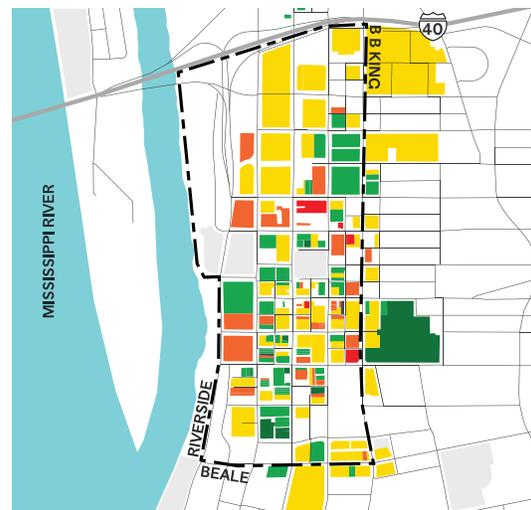
**25th Percentile Home Value**  
**\$146,700**

## Neighborhood building conditions

Percent of buildings that appear in good or excellent condition.

**39%**

Source: Physical survey



1/4 Mile  
 A - Excellent B - Good C - Fair D - Poor F - Very Poor Construction

METRIC	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE	BASELINE
Owner-occupied share	Percent of housing units in the neighborhood owned by their occupants.	American Community Survey	24%
Neighborhood rents	Median and lower quartile gross rent paid by renter households in the neighborhood.	American Community Survey	Median <b>\$980</b> 25th Percentile <b>\$794</b>
Cost burdened renters	Percent of renter households spending more than 30 percent of income on rent.	American Community Survey	32.9%
Residential property vacancy	Percent of residential properties in the neighborhood that appear vacant.	Physical survey	0%
Underutilized land	Percent of parcels in the neighborhood that are vacant lots or surface parking.	Physical survey	11%

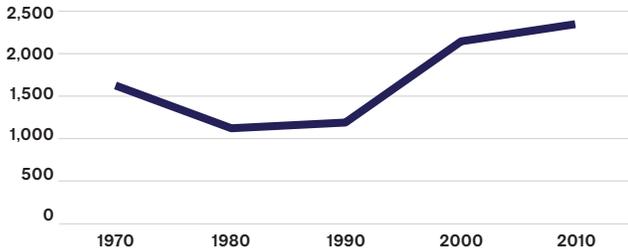
## Neighborhood Economic Measures

### Population

Total resident population in the neighborhood.

**2,431**

Source: American Community Survey

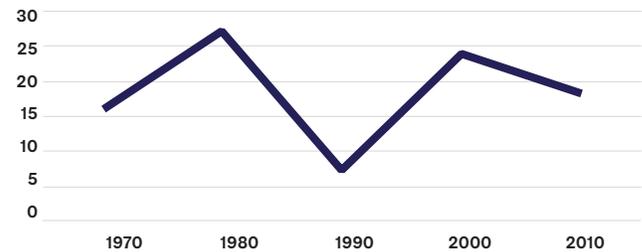


### Poverty Rate

Percent of households in the neighborhood living below the poverty line.

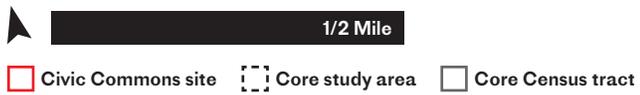
**15.5%**

Source: American Community Survey



METRIC	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE	BASELINE
Median household income	Income of the typical, 50th percentile, household in the neighborhood.	American Community Survey	\$57,750
Per capita income	Average income on a per person basis.	American Community Survey	\$60,642
Unemployment rate	Percent of the total labor force that is unemployed and looking for work.	American Community Survey	6.5%
Four-year college attainment rate	Percent of neighborhood residents 25 and older who have completed at least a four-year college degree.	American Community Survey	51.9%

# Geographic Study Area



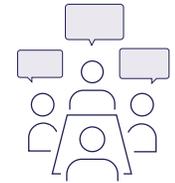
**Appendix:**

# Methodology

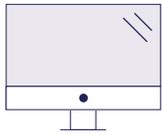
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## Appendix: Methodology

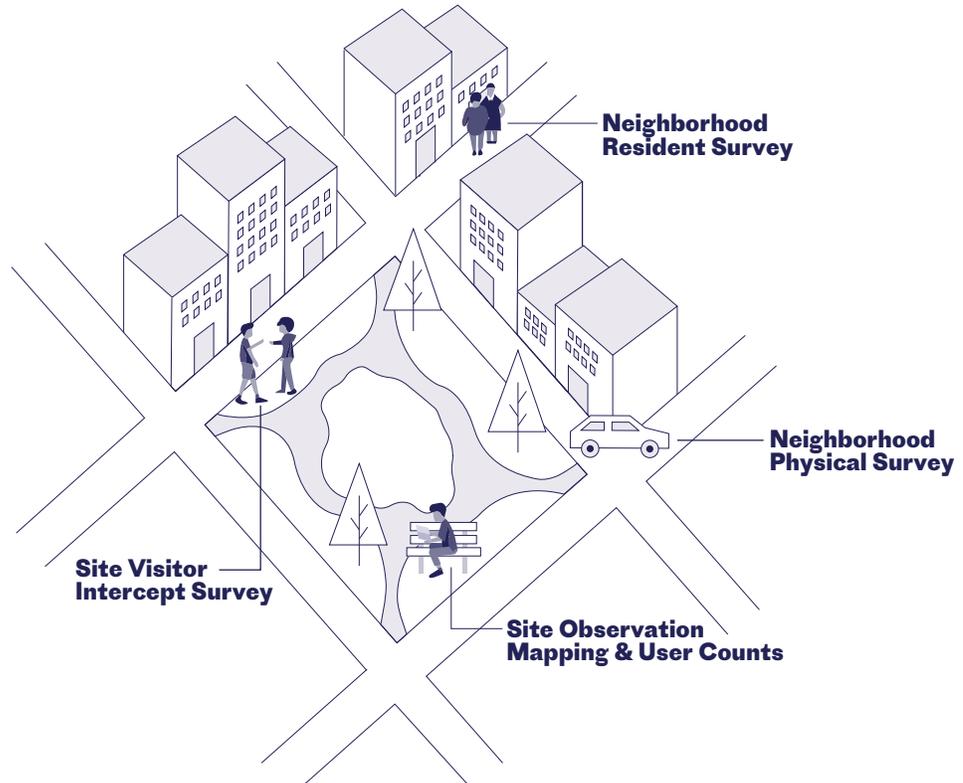
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**Neighborhood Focus Groups**



**Third Party Research**



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All data provided within this report was collected and analyzed by Reimagining the Civic Commons' learning partners City Observatory and Interface Studio, LLC.

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# Neighborhood Physical Survey

The physical survey of Downtown Memphis was fielded from January 9, 2017 to January 13, 2017 and recorded conditions of 363 parcels. The boundary of the neighborhood used for the physical survey extended west of B.B. King Blvd. to the Mississippi River, north of Beale Street, and south of Interstate 40. For streets that defined the boundaries of the study, parcel conditions were recorded on both sides of the street centerline. Surveyors collected data on a range of topics, including: land use, building and yard condition, street trees, tree canopy, transportation infrastructure, defensive design measures, and any activity related to sale, construction, or condemnation. The survey was completed by two staff members trained to recognize applicable physical conditions of properties from the street.

As a supplement to the data collected, surveyors also recorded a 360° video of parcel conditions throughout the study area on 1/10/2017 in order to have a visual record of conditions at the time of the survey. Since the camera is mounted on top of a moving car, downtown's two pedestrian thoroughfares, Main Street and Beale Street (between 2nd St. and B.B. King Blvd.) were not captured in this supplemental visual recording.

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## Appendix: Methodology

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### Physical markers of distrust in the neighborhood

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The physical survey also cataloged obvious physical markers of distrust towards the neighborhood located on residents' and business owners' properties. This metric, and the logic behind it, was inspired by *Robert Sampson's Seeing Disorder: Neighborhood Stigma and the Social Construction of "Broken Windows"*, in which Sampson examines the impact of visible forms of disorder on neighborhood perception. During the physical survey, staff noted the presence of the following signs of distrust, which included but were not limited to:

- "Beware of Dog" signs
- Grates on windows of residential properties
- Grates / pull-downs on commercial facades
- High or excessive fencing
- Home security system signs

### Neighborhood building conditions

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During the physical survey, building conditions were noted for each structure in the neighborhood based on exterior conditions visible from the street. Building conditions were rated on a scale of A (for Excellent) through F (for Failing), and included a separate for construction, based on the following criteria:

**A. EXCELLENT:** Good and needs no maintenance or repair; new construction and/or shows no signs of lack of maintenance or poor construction

**B. GOOD:** Needs minor repairs only; some signs of wear are visible and/or indicators of insufficient maintenance are present; all defects are minor and merely cosmetic.

**C. FAIR:** Requires a limited number of major repairs; there are highly visible cosmetic defects as well as visible indications of minor structural issues.

**D. POOR:** Requires comprehensive renovation; the building's defects are well beyond cosmetic and significant structural issues may be present; the building is in danger of becoming hazardous.

**F. FAILING:** Dilapidated and not able to be repaired or renovated; the building is structurally unsound, hazardous, and is not or should not be occupied.

**X. UNDER CONSTRUCTION:** Construction of building is not complete.

# Neighborhood Resident Survey

The Memphis Neighborhood Resident and Worker Survey was fielded from June 13 to June 24, 2017 as an intercept survey at four locations on streets throughout the Downtown Memphis neighborhood, including:

- Zone 1: The area of Main St. B.B. King Blvd. and Adams St. to Court Ave. (including all of Court Square
- Zone 2: The area of Main St. to 2nd St. and Court Square to Monroe St.
- Zone 3: The area of Front St. to 2nd St. and Monroe St. to Gayoso Square
- Zone 4: A defined walk route which started at Riverside Drive and Union Street going east on Union, south on Front St. east on Beale St. north on Main St. and west on Peabody.

Ninety-two respondents who live or work in Downtown Memphis completed the survey; though the total number of respondents for each question may vary slightly, as respondents were excluded from the data when they chose not to answer a question, unless otherwise noted. Surveyors were instructed to approach all individuals who passed their assigned surveying location. Individuals were offered the option to enter a raffle for a \$100 gift card as incentive to take the survey. Data in this report includes only respondents who reported working in Downtown Memphis or residing at an intersection or a ZIP code in the area extending west of Danny Thomas Blvd, north of Beale Street, and south of Interstate 40.

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## Diversity of neighborhood social networks

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This research seeks to understand the degree to which social networks among survey respondents are diverse with respect to income. The question administered to respondents is loosely modeled on a question developed as part of a research study on social networking sites by Keith N. Hampton at the University of Pennsylvania,<sup>5</sup> which itself has its roots in earlier studies on social capital performed by other researchers. This research employs a Position Generator Measure based on the method described in Lin and Erickson, 2010.<sup>6</sup> The Position Generator Measure employed in this research asks respondents whether they know anyone who works in a list of twenty professions, of which equal numbers are associated with five varying levels of prestige. The “prestige” of a position is defined by a society’s perception of the general standing of that profession and is not solely related to the level of education necessary to be employed in that position nor is it solely related to compensation. In developing this question, common occupations were sourced from the Census’ 2010 occupation codes and prestige scores for those occupations were derived from the General Social Survey.<sup>7</sup> The professions in each prestige category were selected because they are among the most common jobs in that prestige category within the United States. Traditionally, individuals in high prestige professions have access to a wider range of resources than those in low prestige professions; however, individuals in low prestige professions may have access to highly specialized resources that high prestige professions do not.<sup>8</sup> Respondents who know individuals in both high and low prestige professions are more likely to have access to a wide range of resources.<sup>9</sup> Thus, we would say that they have high levels of bridging social capital. This research states that residents have a high level of bridging social capital if they know someone who works in at least one of the five professions in each of the five prestige levels.

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5. Keith N. Hampton, Lauren Sessions Goulet, Lee Rainie, Kristen Purcell, *Social Networking Sites and our Lives* (Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project).

6. Nan Lin and Bonnie H. Erickson, *Social Capital: An International Research Program* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

7. Keiko Nakao and Judith Treas, *Computing 1989 Occupational Prestige Scores* (University of Southern California). Accessed from <http://gss.norc.org/Documents/reports/methodological-reports/MR070.pdf> on Jan 11, 2018.

8. *Ibid.*

9. *Ibid.*

# Site Visitor Intercept Survey

The Memphis Fourth Bluff Intercept Survey was fielded from April 6, 2017 to April 12, 2017 in Memphis Park, Mississippi River Park, and the exterior areas surrounding Cossitt Library. 145 respondents completed the survey; though the total number of respondents for each question may vary slightly, as respondents were excluded from the data when they chose not to answer a question, unless otherwise noted. Surveyors were instructed to circulate through the sites on a set circuit at regular intervals and approach all visitors to the sites as they observed them. Surveyors were instructed not to approach individuals outside the sites on adjacent sidewalks or properties. Visitors to the sites were offered the option to enter a raffle for a \$100 gift card as incentive to take the survey. Basic demographic information – including gender, race, and general age – were collected on everyone who surveyors attempted to survey, including those who declined, totaling 410 individuals. Where noted, demographic data in this report includes data on individuals who declined the intercept survey.

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## Income diversity of site visitors

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This income diversity index is computed as follows: Census data from 2011-15 American Community Survey on household income is used to divide the population into five income groups. We compute the share of the intercept survey respondents that is in each of these groups. The index is computed as 1 minus the sum of the squared shares of the five groups, and corresponds to the probability that any two randomly selected site visitors would be from different groups.

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## Racial and ethnic diversity of site visitors

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This racial and ethnic diversity index is computed as follows: Census data from the 2011-15 American Community Survey is used that reports the number of persons in each of five racial ethnic groups (white, black, latino, asian, and all other). We compute the share of the intercept survey respondents that is in each of these groups. The index is computed as 1 minus the sum of the squared shares of the five groups, and corresponds to the probability that any two randomly selected site visitors would be from different groups.

# Site Observation Mapping & User Counts

Observation mapping and user counts were conducted on two weekdays and two weekend days in April 2017 in Memphis Park, Mississippi River Park, the exterior areas surrounding Cossitt Library, and in the Cossitt Library interior. From 7:00 AM until 6:00 PM, at the top of each hour, surveyors walked about the Fourth Bluff completed two tasks, described below.

**Observation mapping.** At the top of each hour, surveyors marked on paper maps the location and general activity of all people within the sites at the moment the surveyor observed them. Observation mapping data in this report were tabulated using predefined activity categories that surveyors used to mark down individuals' locations. Data for a small number of hours were incomplete when surveyors failed to complete the task; for those times, data was duplicated from equivalent times during the corresponding weekday or weekend day when possible. The final weekday and weekend day observation mapping data presented in this report are composite counts from the two weekdays and two weekend days on which data was collected.

**User counts.** At the top of each hour, surveyors proceeded through a series of assigned points along the edges of the Fourth Bluff sites, at each of which they counted, for one minute, the number and general demographics of all individuals who crossed an imaginary line into or out of the site. User count data in this report were tabulated using predefined demographic categories that surveyors used to tally passing users; these include: total count, gender, general age, and whether the user was on a bicycle. Data for a small number of hours were incomplete when surveyors failed to complete the task; final analyses include no data for those times. The final user count data presented in this report are composite counts from all four days on which data was collected.

# Third Party Research

A range of third party data sources were collected and analyzed for this report including

- American Community Survey, 2011-15
- County elections data: County elections data from the Memphis election held on October 8, 2015
- Local police department: Memphis Police Department data, January to December 2016, retrieved from <https://www.memphisdailynews.com/CrimeReport.aspx>, for a 0.5 mile radius around 34 S. Front Street.
- Redfin, 2016
- Reference USA business database, 2015
- The Trust for Public Land, 2016
- Zillow, 2016

## Regular programming of the civic commons

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In order to calculate the average hours of weekly programming per site, staff researched programming information available online for each site within the Fourth Bluff, and for the Fourth Bluff itself for both the baseline year (July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016) and Year 1 study periods (July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017). The findings of this programming scan were then checked with local demonstration team members with direct knowledge of the programming at Civic Commons sites for accuracy.

## Public perceptions of sites and of the neighborhood

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For Downtown Memphis and its Civic Commons sites, mentions in general circulation papers, identified by Brink Communications, were tracked and identified by whether the article expressed an overall positive or negative sentiment. To track appropriate mentions, a list of keywords was developed relating to each neighborhood and site. A series of Google Alerts were then created for each news publication to catalog local news mentions. Article sentiments were tallied on a monthly basis. The number of positive mentions was divided by the total inventory to produce the average percentage of local news articles with positive narratives about the sites and neighborhoods.

Sentiments are analyzed on a yearly basis, starting on July 1, 2015 and concluding on June 30 of the following year. The news publications tracked in Memphis included the Commercial Appeal, Memphis Flyer, and Memphis Business Journal.

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## Appendix: Methodology

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### Income diversity of neighborhood residents

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This income diversity index is computed as follows: Census data from 2011-15 American Community Survey on household income is used to divide the population into five income groups. We compute the share of the population in each census tract that is in each of these groups. The index is computed as 1 minus the sum of the squared shares of the five groups, and corresponds to the probability that any two randomly selected persons in the neighborhood would be from different groups.

### Racial and ethnic diversity of neighborhood residents

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This racial and ethnic diversity index is computed as follows: Census data from the 2011-15 American Community Survey is used that reports the number of persons in each of five racial ethnic groups (white, black, latino, asian, and all other). We compute the share of the population in each census tract that is in each of these groups. The index is computed as 1 minus the sum of the squared shares of the five groups, and corresponds to the probability that any two randomly selected persons in the neighborhood would be from different groups.

### Tree canopy

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The USDA Forest Service's i-Tree Canopy tool<sup>13</sup> was used to estimate tree cover for Downtown Memphis. The i-Tree tool uses a random sampling process of publicly available imagery from Google Maps to classify land use types and calculate environmental and economic benefits from the percentage of tree canopy found in a given area.

For Downtown Memphis and the Civic Commons sites at the Fourth Bluff, a set of points for each geography were sampled using the i-Tree tool with a sampling goal of achieving an overall Standard Error of less than 2% for all land cover types. The number of points sampled for each geography included:

- Downtown (neighborhood): 1,200 points
- Fourth Bluff Site: 779 points

Citywide tree canopy estimates were drawn from third party sources.

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13. "The concept and prototype of this program were developed by David J. Nowak, Jeffrey T. Walton and Eric J. Greenfield (USDA Forest Service). The current version of this program was developed and adapted to i-Tree by David Ellingsworth, Mike Binkley, and Scott Maco (The Davey Tree Expert Company)." From: i-Tree Canopy Technical Notes. Accessed on 1/3/2018 at: [https://canopy.itreetools.org/resources/iTree\\_Canopy\\_Methodology.pdf](https://canopy.itreetools.org/resources/iTree_Canopy_Methodology.pdf)

# Neighborhood Focus Groups

Three focus groups – one comprised of downtown residents, one comprised of downtown workers, and one comprised of other downtown stakeholders, were held during the week of January 9, 2017 to January 13, 2017 in Downtown Memphis. In total, 25 community members participated in the focus groups. The goal of the focus groups was to gain a qualitative understanding of neighborhood conditions and Civic Commons sites from different populations that occupy it.

Local demonstration teams were asked to recruit 10-12 participants over the age of 18 for each focus group. Census data for the neighborhood was used to provide demographic recruitment targets with regards to age, race, and gender to ensure that participants were reasonably representative of the neighborhood population.

Focus groups were facilitated by 2 staff members for approximately an hour and a half without other members of the Civic Commons team or other local partners present. Participants were provided with a brief introduction to the Civic Commons project and the purpose of the focus group before discussion started. At the outset of some focus groups, local partners provided a brief introduction before departing.

Quotations from the focus groups presented in this report are edited for clarity.

**Appendix:**

# Focus Groups

The following quotes are from focus groups held in downtown Memphis during the week of January 9, 2017. Focus groups included:

- Downtown residents, including residents from adjacent neighborhoods, 11 participants
- Downtown workers, 8 participants
- Downtown stakeholders, 6 participants

Focus groups were facilitated by 2 staff members for approximately an hour and a half each without other members of the Civic Commons team or other local partners present. Participants were provided with a brief introduction to the Civic Commons project and the purpose of the focus group before discussion started.

Quotations from the focus groups presented in this report are edited for clarity.

# Civic Engagement

## Public life

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“After a game, I just love it. people are out, walking on the streets. Walking on Beale Street and walking to the bars. It's well lit and there's traffic. You just never feel unsafe”

**DOWNTOWN RESIDENT**

“I hate to say it. It's bars where I feel like a little bit more a part of the community.”

**DOWNTOWN RESIDENT**

“Downtown's nothing but bars, but its bars and places where socially, things happen, like Blind Bear. So if you go on a night that they have a poker tournament, of course, even if you just sit in the crowd, you're going to meet somebody.”

**DOWNTOWN RESIDENT**

“I think that's what's convenient about what's downtown. I know people who don't drink that much, but who go to bars because that's where people are.”

**DOWNTOWN RESIDENT**

“Some of my favorite parts of downtown are my favorite parts during the day and then, at night, it seems like there's nothing happening. It's like a ghost town. It seems like people just kind of hole up, it's like, “Oh, there's nothing happening anymore.” It makes you feel kind of alone.”

**DOWNTOWN RESIDENT**

“I find reasons to come downtown to eat or to play. Whether it's restaurants or going to The Orpheum, or Fedex Forum, or just taking a walk by the Law Library because that's cool. Where I live is boring.”

**DOWNTOWN WORKER**

“If there's something going on like Trolley Night, we might walk around more than just going to dinner somewhere, or going to a game or a concert or something. You kind of stroll around if there's something going on.”

**DOWNTOWN RESIDENT**

“Well they had, this summer, some concerts behind the library, because the back part is very pretty. It's on the bluff, and you can see over the river, and they have lights strung up. It was really cool, but I think people didn't really know about it.”

**NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENT**

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## Appendix: Focus Groups

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### Stewardship & Advocacy

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“One of the things that’s wonderful about our city is we’re small enough that if you see a need, or you see something that you think needs to be done you can just jump in and do it.”

**DOWNTOWN STAKEHOLDER**

“If you want people to feel comfortable in that park, if you can’t take the statue of Jefferson Davis down, maybe you should consider putting something up that makes people feel welcomed because that is a barrier.”

**NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENT**

“I’ve had a lot of conversations with my child about the Jefferson Davis Statue. I really don’t care that it’s there, but what it means is not welcoming to me.”

**NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENT**

“There’s more potential for the downtown neighborhood to grow in a positive way that we can influence with a more enlightened understanding of cities and how we want them developed.”

**NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENT**

### Trust

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“I would walk all the time, come home at four o’clock in the morning from Beale Street, and just walk home, and I didn’t think anything of it. In fact, not only did I not have any problems with crime, I would have some of the guys that I would feed at church go, ‘Oh you want me to walk with you and keep you safe?’ and I was like, ‘Sure.’”

**DOWNTOWN STAKEHOLDER**

“I moved downtown for the sake of security and constantly being around other people.”

**NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENT**

“You start to see some of the same people a little bit, so you feel in a sense of safety because you feel like you know your neighborhood a little more. You can spot people, and it just feels comfortable.”

**NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENT**

“A lot of these local places feel like a neighborhood bar, so you know the bartenders. You know the waitresses. You know everybody who’s working there.”

**NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENT**

# Socioeconomic Mixing

## Mixing on site

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“Tom Lee Park is very, very diverse, economically and racially. On a sunny day, it’s so cool to see. That, to me, is maybe the one place in Memphis where I’ve seen people from different backgrounds mixing.”

**DOWNTOWN STAKEHOLDER**

“At Grizzlies games, it just seems like the most diverse crowd. Everybody is on the same page, everybody’s doing the same thing. That’s when I think I see the heart of Memphis.”

**DOWNTOWN STAKEHOLDER**

“River Fit. They’ve maintained them. I think the RDC took over the maintenance on that. I really think that that’s important down there. I think it actually leads to more of the races, and ethnicity of socioeconomic classes actually mixing down there.”

**DOWNTOWN STAKEHOLDER**

“[At the Center for Southern Folklore’s Heritage Festival Labor Day Weekend event] You’ve got the Cherokee women who makes baskets. You’ve got the Methodist Japanese Society that does calligraphy. You’ve got blues performers. You’ve got marching bands. It’s all about southern culture, it’s a great mix of people, and it’s free. You have everybody together, people that normally wouldn’t run across each other are talking and they’re sitting next to each other on the patio somewhere, or just watching a performance together.”

**DOWNTOWN WORKER**

“I would say one of the reasons we moved downtown is because we didn’t want to be in a homogeneous neighborhood.. That’s what we came here for, to be able to walk a block or so and experience different cultures - just to have that accessible was something we really were looking for. That’s something you don’t really get in the other neighborhoods out East or anything.”

**DOWNTOWN RESIDENT**

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## Appendix: Focus Groups

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### Reputation

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“Our local news refuses to talk about the good things in Memphis. If you want to listen to good news in Memphis, you’ve got to listen to Memphians because you’re not going to get it from the news. They will tell you what’s really going on here that’s great, but the challenge is to persuade Memphians in the greater Memphis area that we really are doing great.”

**DOWNTOWN WORKER**

“I think people just have an assumption that downtown is dangerous. You see bad things on the news about downtown, but it’s so out of context.”

**DOWNTOWN WORKER**

“There are lots of people that live out in the suburbs and don’t think much about coming downtown and wouldn’t do it even if they had to.”

**DOWNTOWN WORKER**

“My 12-year old goes out all the time. She’s very aware of the city. She knows a lot about her city. Because, she got this from watching the news, she jokingly says when I leave the house “Don’t get shot.” She goes “Well you watch the news and everybody’s getting shot.” She just started saying that. That’s just the influence of hearing it every day.”

**DOWNTOWN STAKEHOLDER**

“I have worked downtown and lived in Memphis for 15 years and I’ve never even thought that was a library. I had a friend that went and they put their mail in the book return because they thought it was a post office.”

**DOWNTOWN WORKER**

“What I really love about Memphis is its identity and music history. I feel like a lot of the huge blues musicians are getting a lot older, and we need to make sure that we keep that blues identity. I think Stax is making a good effort but I’m worried that, as that ages out.”

**DOWNTOWN RESIDENT**

“I feel like everybody who lives outside of the loop thinks that downtown is a very dangerous place to be and you shouldn’t go there. I hear that from everybody.”

**DOWNTOWN WORKER**

“Other people are like, “You live downtown? What do you do when you have to go outside? What do you do when you have to go grocery shopping?” I’m like, “It’s fine. It’s totally fine.”

**DOWNTOWN STAKEHOLDER**

# Environmental Sustainability

## Access to nature

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“I love running on the riverfront, even all the way up to Mud Island, I think that’s just wonderful that you have immediate access to the riverfront. I like the Harahan bridge project, Big River crossing that’s opening, I mean all of these new connections to the river that seem to be cropping up, I think are really outstanding.”

**NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENT**

“I live at The Lofts at South Bluffs. My favorite spot is the riverfront. I’m there every day all the way to Mud Island, across the Harahan Bridge. I use the riverfront constantly.”

**NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENT**

“When it’s warm out, we’d take strolls at night along Tom Lee Park and the river. It’s beautiful. Do a little bit of illegal open carry, and just have a nice night time stroll.”

**NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENT**

“The river is such an incredible, symbolic, spiritual place.”

**DOWNTOWN STAKEHOLDER**

“If you grew up in a city that’s next to a river, it’s so central to your comfort and who you are.”

**DOWNTOWN WORKER**

## Walkability/bikeability

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“We walk to dinner. We walk to the farmer’s market. I like being able to walk. It isn’t always the destinations, sometimes it’s just about being able to walk.”

**DOWNTOWN STAKEHOLDER**

“I think Memphis is embracing a lot of these ideas of walkability and human level access to places. You’ve seen a lot of bike lanes go in over the last few years.”

**DOWNTOWN STAKEHOLDER**

“My favorite part of downtown is Main Street. Not just South Main but I like going up North as well. I like to be able to ride bikes downtown. Or you can just walk downtown, especially when it’s nice out.”

**DOWNTOWN STAKEHOLDER**

“A lot of the sidewalks along those connector streets are really bad. It’s treacherous if it’s dark. Aside from people, I might trip and bust my face.”

**DOWNTOWN WORKER**

“I worry a little bit about the infrastructure on things. I love when there’s events and everything. Sometimes I wonder if somebody is watching what happens when you close down Riverside and South Main on the same weekend. With all the new people that live down here, it causes some issues.”

**DOWNTOWN STAKEHOLDER**

# Value Creation

## Safety

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"I've never felt unsafe being downtown. I probably felt safer walking around downtown at night than I do in Cooper Young or Overton Square, because there's always so much going on and there's police officers everywhere. I've just never felt unsafe."

**DOWNTOWN WORKER**

"I think that really brings up the fact that everything past Court Square at night is really...You don't send anybody that way."

**DOWNTOWN RESIDENT**

"Especially at a certain time of the day, the area near the courthouses and stuff, for instance, just shuts down in a point, and it's terrifying."

**DOWNTOWN WORKER**

"One of the things that is still concerning around 10 or 11 o'clock at night, if I'm working late or something, sometimes I'll go to have dinner on Main Street and come back to work. Some of these side streets are very, very dark. They're unlit and they're dangerous."

**DOWNTOWN RESIDENT**

## Retail activity

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"I wish there were more businesses, more healthy places to get lunch. Really, all the food available downtown is fried."

**DOWNTOWN RESIDENT**

"I have no problem walking to Beale Street at lunchtime. There's just nothing there I want to eat."

**DOWNTOWN STAKEHOLDER**

"I'm starting to see a few things pop up here and there, which is really exciting, a few new restaurants, and I think Lansky Brothers might be opening as well. Those things look like they are changing for the better."

**DOWNTOWN STAKEHOLDER**

## Real estate value & affordability

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"I think there's places where people are still thinking about how downtown was 20 years ago... that all this growth is going on and maybe some of the infrastructure is not keeping pace."

**DOWNTOWN STAKEHOLDER**

"I just worry that our momentum will run its course."

**DOWNTOWN STAKEHOLDER**

"The only thing I worry about is when I choose to buy, will I be able to afford it? Because, as it grows and as it gets greater and better, it may get out of my price range. Then the place that I love that I don't want to leave, I won't be able to stay. I just hope I can afford to stay."

**DOWNTOWN STAKEHOLDER**