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Columbia Third Street Neighborhood Improvement Program
Pre-test Report
Conducted for Lancaster Housing Opportunity Partnership

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Information Survey Results

Millersville students gathered information from 56 residents of approximately 112 properties or apartments on the 200-500 blocks of North Third Street. At least 10 properties were identified as vacant by neighbors. Taking the estimated vacant properties into account, the surveying yielded a 54.9% response rate. Several apartments were inaccessible to surveyors due to locked exterior entrance ways. Not all residents felt comfortable responding to the survey. Of the 56 responses, 30 indicated on the information survey they would “be willing to volunteer in the rehabilitation/repair of houses”. The list of residents and contact information will be provided to the leadership, along with the breakdown of data from the Information Survey Results.

Housing Repairs

The information survey asked residents what repairs they needed to their home in categorizations of “A brush with kindness” noting minimal repairs, “Weatherization”, and “Critical repairs” (See Appendix 1 for the options given under each category). This was adapted from the survey Lancaster Area Habitat for Humanity uses in neighborhoods. In tallying the home repair needs, several residents noted that windows needed repaired or replaced under several of the three categories. It was assumed that residents initially noted windows needed repaired under “A brush with kindness”, and then saw the window replacement option under the other two categories, ending up with checking multiple severities of window repair needs. A resident may have checked multiple answers because windows in various parts of their home needed various levels of repair. Please note: the numbers in the graphs below in the window repair category have been adjusted for this inflation, assuming the resident has severe need for window repair. See Appendix 2 for the raw tally. If the community means to address the window repair issue, follow-up with residents for clarification is needed.
The top three areas of need of “a brush of kindness” are: Exterior scraping, caulking and painting (23), Minor roof repair and soffit or fascia replacement (15), and Door replacement (12).

The top two areas in need of “weatherization” are: Caulking/foaming cracks and gaps (14), and Replacement of windows and doors (11). Interior and Exterior work (9), Adding or replacing door seals (9), and applying insulation (9) all were third.

The top “critical repair” needs are: Window replacement (17), Floor and wall repair/replacement (9), and Porch or wheelchair ramp (9).

Only 10 of those who responded said that they did not have need for repair to their home. The most common reason reported as why it is difficult to repair their home was financial reasons (26). Seven (9) people responded that physical ability made it difficult to repair their home, and one person noted that knowledge of home repair limits their ability to repair their home. Many of the renters said that the landlord takes care of problems in their home. Only two said that the landlord does not respond quickly to problems in the home. Renters who expressed dissatisfaction with their landlords were given the LHOP Tenant/Landlord Rights and Responsibilities booklet.
Community Survey Results

Of the 56 people who responded to the information survey, 51 responded to the community safety survey. Of those who responded, 32 have lived in this neighborhood for more than 5 years. Fifteen (17) of those surveyed rented their home and 33 owned their home.

The survey focused on neighborhood conditions, neighborhood problems, and neighborhood changes. The first question addressed how people feel about conditions in their neighborhood. It read “The following is a list of [13] things that affect how people feel about living in their neighborhood. Please say whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree” (Question 1). The second question addressed what problems they see in the neighborhood. It read “We would like to know whether you think the following conditions are problems in your neighborhood. Please say whether each of these [18] things is no problem, some problem, or big problem” (Question 2). The third question asked residents which changes are important to them in the neighborhood. It read “We would like to know what kinds of changes in your neighborhood are important to you. Please say which of these possible changes is not important, somewhat important or very important to you” (Question 3). Frequency tables were run for the survey results listing the number of responses for each item in the categories of neighborhood conditions, neighborhood problems, and neighborhood changes.

Areas for Improvement

The two neighborhood conditions (Question 1) which residents disagreed/strongly disagreed with were:

- “People in this neighborhood do something if a young person is disrespectful to an adult” (22),
- “Tenants keep the outside of their buildings neat and clean” (24).

The items most frequently chosen as big problems/some problem (Question 2) were: “Noisy cars and motorcycles” (44), and “speeding cars” (40). Because these issues are being addressed with city planning and many citizens are aware of these issues, the next three items most frequently chosen as “big problems/some problems” were not as drastic but are of note:

- “Noisy neighbors” (30),
- “Illegal drug sales and use” (30),
- “Garbage or litter on streets or sidewalks” (30),
- “Abandoned or empty buildings in this area” (23).
The three most important changes (Question 3) residents wanted to see were:

- “Increasing home ownership” (30),
- “Improving the conditions of streets and roads” (26),
- “Better enforcement of housing codes” (25).

When asked if they would like to move out of the neighborhood (Question 4), 39.2% said yes, and 56.9% said no. The most common reasons for wanting to move out of the neighborhood were:

- Parking (10),
- Conditions in the neighborhood (e.g. litter, noise, building upkeep)” (8),
- Concerns about safety and crime (5).
- Other: 3 people responded because their home is too small

When asked what they would like to learn more about (Question 5), the most frequently chosen topics that citizens would like to learn more about were: getting medical and dental care (14), budgeting money (10), getting more education (10).

Positive Results

Along with the negative conditions, problems in the area, changes residents want to see, and reasons to want to move out of the neighborhood, it is important to note the positives they already see in the community. A lot of residents agreed/strongly agreed that:

- “I speak to my neighbors when I see them” (43),
- “I would be willing to work with a neighborhood group to solve a problem” (40).

Residents reported no problem with:

- “Prostitution” (46),
- “Gangs” (47),
- “People stealing cars or taking cars for joy rides without the owner’s permission” (41).

Demographics

The racial/ethnic identities of those surveyed were 86.3% White, 2% Black/African American, and 5.9% other, including Puerto Rican, Egyptian, and Bi-racial. Of these, 5.9% consider themselves
Latino/Latina/Hispanic. The highest level of education for 45.1% of responses is a high school diploma, 31.4% some college or advanced training, 9.8% Bachelor’s degree, 7.8% less than a high school diploma, and 5.9% advanced degree. Most of those surveyed are working full time (49%), 17.6% retired, 11.8% disabled, 9.8% working part-time, 3.9% keeping house, and 5.9% unemployed.

**Looking Ahead**

These are the results of the information survey and the community survey of the 200-500 blocks of North Third Street in Columbia to inform neighborhood improvement projects. In several years, the community survey should be repeated as a post-test to assess the impact of the LHOP and Columbia partnership.
Appendix 1
Excerpt of from Information Survey\(^1\), page 2

Do you have a need for repair to your home?

YES_____ NO _____

Would you find it difficult to repair your home? If so, tell us why.

YES_____ NO _____

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Please, mark with an X the problems in your home:

**A BRUSH WITH KINDNESS**
- Exterior scraping, caulking and painting
- Window repair (new screen, glass, glazing)
- Minor siding and trim repair
- Minor roof repair and soffit or fascia replacement
- Board replacement in porch, stair or ramp
- Door replacement
- Landscaping (pruning and trimming, weeding, reseeding)
- Cleanup, brush/junk removal
- Weather stripping

**WEATHERIZATION**
- Interior and exterior work
- Replacement of windows and doors
- Caulking/foaming cracks and gaps
- Insulating openings, attics, crawlspaces, etc.
- Minor repairs to ventilation systems
- Adding or replacing door seals
- Insulating pipes and duct work; wrapping water heaters
- Applying insulation in walls
- Energy audits before and after work

**CRITICAL HOME REPAIR**
- Interior and exterior work necessary to maintain the home
- Window replacement
- Extensive siding and trim repair or replacement
- Major roof repair or replacement
- Porch or wheelchair ramp construction
- Installation or extension of house systems (heating, electrical, plumbing, etc.)
- Floor and wall repair/replacement
- Foundation repair

Please, Include other repairs that your home or neighbors have, that are not mentioned above:

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Would you be willing to volunteer in the rehabilitation/repair of houses?

YES_____ NO _____

Do you know people with experience in construction that would want to volunteer?

YES_____ NO _____

\(^1\) Adapted from survey provided by Lancaster Area Habitat for Humanity
### Appendix 2

#### A Brush with Kindness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exterior scraping, caulking and painting</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Window repair (new screen, glass, glazing)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor siding and trim repair</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor roof repair and soffit or fascia replacement</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board replacement in porch, stair or ramp</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Door replacement</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscaping (pruning and trimming, weeding, reseeding)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleanup, brush/junk removal</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weather stripping</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Weatherization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interior and exterior work</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replacement of windows and doors</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caulking/foaming cracks and gaps</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insulating openings, attics, crawlspaces, etc.</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minor repairs to ventilation systems</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adding or replacing door seals</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insulating pipes and duct work; wrapping water heaters</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applying insulation in walls</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy audits before and after work</td>
<td>8</td>
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#### Critical Home Repair

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interior and exterior work necessary to maintain the home</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Window replacement</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extensive siding and trim</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major roof repair or replacement</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porch or wheelchair ramp construction</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Installation or extension of house systems (heating, electrical, plumbing, etc.)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floor and wall repair/replacement</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation Repair</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Other

- Rain Spout
- Painting
- Floor is rotting
- Electrical wiring
- Wheelchair accessibility ramp needs to be installed

*Some selected "Windows" for all three categories:

Please see report for method of adjusting for this inflation.