

The Living Room Block Party & Resource Hub

Event: The Living Room Block Party & Resource Hub

Location: Drivers Plaza, Athens between Market & San Pablo

Date/Time: Sept. 13 4-7 PM, Sept. 27 4-7 PM

Number of people reached: 77 in-person interviews

Event Description:



The Village and the Deeply Rooted in Oakland Partnership conducted English outreach across two Living Room events. The Block Party & Resource Hub had music, community mural making, food vendors, games, and legal support. The event welcomed all residents, with an emphasis on unhoused residents.

The team informed people what the General Plan is; conducted 77 in-person interviews; shared a 2-pager on housing and environmental justice conditions that people in Oakland are experiencing; handed out flyers for resources for Emergency Rapid Assistance Program (ERAP), library, and maintenance; referred community members to direct service organizations or City Department to address current needs; and gathered questions regarding the General Plan and City services. The 2-pager on housing and environmental justice conditions presented racial displacement, housing affordability, pollution burden, past and future housing production in Oakland, and a call to action.

Engagement Approaches:

- 1) Approach people to have a conversation rather than extracting information from them
- 2) A 2-pager on housing and environmental justice on the table in English

Demographics: The Deeply Rooted in Oakland Partnership is committed to reaching people who have not traditionally been part of planning processes. At this event we spoke with youth, older adults, unhoused folks, formerly incarcerated persons, tenants/renters, homeowners, people with disabilities, LGBTQ+ people, low-income persons, and persons experiencing environmental injustice. The following are demographic highlights based on the 77 in-person interviews we conducted:

- **Race/Ethnicity:** Majority of the people we spoke to are Black/African American (57%). *See Table 1 for more information.*
- **Age:** Majority of the people we spoke to are between the ages of 25-34 (20%). *See Table 2 for more information.*
- **Gender:** 42% are female, 51% are male, 1% are non-binary, and 1% are transgender. *See Table 3 below for more information.*
- **Housing:** Majority of the people we spoke with are renters (46%). *See Table 4 for more information.*
- **Disability:** 49% of people shared having a disability. *See Table 5 below for more information.*
- **Annual Personal Income:** Most have an annual personal income of between \$0 - \$10,000 (34%). *See Table 6 below for more information.*
- **Sexual Orientation:** 70% are heterosexual, 9% are LGBTQ+. *See Table 7 below for more information.*
- **Experience with Mass Incarceration:** 54% of people shared that they had some experience with mass incarceration. *See Table 8 below for more information.*

The 77 interviews included the following 8 questions and demographic information:

- **General:** 1) When did you/your family arrive in Oakland? Where were you living before?; 2) What neighborhoods have you lived in?; and 3) What's your favorite memory of Oakland?
- **Housing:** 1) Have your family members struggled with housing problems? If so, what have been your major problems?; and 2) What are your ideas for solutions? What would you like to see as solutions?
- **Environmental Health:** 1) Do any of your Oakland family members have trouble breathing, been involved in a car collision, been affected by wildfires (proximity or

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smoke), or flooding?; and 2) What are your ideas for solutions? What would you like to see as solutions?

- **Anything else you would like to share?**
- **Demographic Information:** Zip code, neighborhoods, age, race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, housing, disability, annual income, and formerly incarcerated

Engagement Summary

The following is a summary of the main points that community members brought up during the event. Points under each topic are ordered by most to least mentioned.

FAMILY ARRIVED IN OAKLAND

- A majority of individuals we spoke to shared that their families arrived between 1950-1979 (23%) and 1980-1999 (22%). *See Table 9 below for more information.*
- Most people had previously been living in the Bay Area. Bay Area locations included: Hayward, San Francisco, Palo Alto, Marin, Berkeley

A FAVORITE MEMORY OF OAKLAND

"Biking through the empty streets of West Oakland with friends late at night."

"Getting engaged at Lake Merritt."

"The community & block parties Oakland people do."

- **Oakland Pride and Culture:** People appreciate Oakland overall with an emphasis on its history, and people. They also like their community and block parties.
- **Parks:** Lake Merritt, Mosswood Park, Shoreline Park, Bushrod Park, Fairyland

HOUSING

"Many people in my family as well as community have experienced the terror of eviction, displacement. I was one."

"The struggle has cost me my life – due to homelessness I suffer from COPD, PTSD, been in a coma for 33 days, had to learn how to walk all over and also talk.

Have a hole in my lungs."

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

- **Issues:**
 - Renters are struggling to keep up with high and rapidly increasing rents because of lack of liveable wages

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- Finding affordable housing, whether renting an apartment or buying a house, is a challenge for residents in Oakland.
- **Solutions:**
 - Build more low-income housing.
 - Prevent big companies from buying properties.
 - Stop rent increases and lower rent.
 - Create more resources for renters e.g. rental assistance.

HOUSING HABITABILITY

- **Issues:**
 - Residents are unsatisfied with the quality of their housing.
 - Landlords don't take care of the rented housing units.
- **Solutions:**
 - Improve housing by addressing economic disparity between neighborhoods; build more affordable housing in "nicer" areas.

HOMELESSNESS

- **Issues:**
 - People have been facing long-term homelessness.
 - There is a lack of stability and support when unhoused, and people experiencing transition from or to shelters.
 - People experiencing homelessness are vulnerable to negative physical and mental health impacts.
- **Solutions:**
 - Provide more temporary and permanent housing opportunities, as well as supportive services.
 - Form solutions under the direction of those currently experiencing homelessness.
 - Utilize vacant units.

DISPLACEMENT

- **Issues:**
 - Evictions and loss of housing have forced people to move away from their communities.
 - Gentrification is creating more displacement.
- **Solutions:**
 - Provide more affordable housing.

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- Create more opportunities for undocumented immigrants to rent.
- Utilize abandoned buildings

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

"My whole family has respiratory problems"

"I personally had several car crashes near the bridge. It created PTSD."

"My housemates and I have been affected by wildfire smoke on several occasions throughout the years."

RESPIRATORY ISSUES AND WILDFIRES

- **Issues:**
 - People, including youth, have developed negative health outcomes, such as asthma and COPD, as a result of poor air quality and wildfire smoke. They now have trouble breathing.
- **Solutions:**
 - Create community gardens and green spaces. Plant more trees.
 - Create more non-smoking areas.
 - Use more sustainable energy sources.
 - Increase healthcare opportunities.
 - Decrease factories and factory emissions.

STREETS

- **Issues:**
 - People have experienced car collisions, and sometimes multiple of them. This has severely impacted their wellbeing.
 - Street sanitation needs to be improved.
- **Solutions:**
 - Fix potholes in streets.
 - Create better trash cleaning and street beautification programs.
 - Decrease cars and car emissions.
 - Invest in cleanliness in all neighborhoods.

NATURE & FOOD ACCESS

- **Solution:**
 - Discourage fast food restaurants in Deep East/West Oakland.
 - Create more neighborhood gardens

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA ANALYSIS

Note: The tables listed below do not include a total count because respondents can select more than one response for subsections – Race/Ethnicity, Housing, Disability, Sexual Orientation, and Experience with Mass Incarceration.

Table 1. Engagement by Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	Number of People	Distribution (%)
Black/African American	56	57.1%
Hispanic or Latino (non white or Black)	11	11.2%
White/European	6	6.1%
Native American/Indigenous or Alaska Native	5	5.1%
Asian	1	1.0%
Multi-racial	1	1.0%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	3	3.1%
Caribbean Islander	5	5.1%
Middle Eastern	3	3.1%
Other	2	2.0%
Decline to state	5	5.1%

Table 2. Engagement by Age

Age	Number of People	Distribution (%)
12-17	0	0.0%
18-24	2	2.6%
25-34	15	19.5%
35-44	4	5.2%
45-54	13	16.9%

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55-64	12	15.6%
65+	10	13.0%
Decline to state	21	27.3%
Total	77	

Table 3. Engagement by Gender

Gender	Number of People	Distribution (%)
Female	32	41.6%
Male	39	50.7%
Non-binary	1	1.3%
Transgender	1	1.3%
Intersex	0	0.0%
Decline to state	4	5.2%
Total	77	

Table 4. Engagement by Housing

Housing	Number of People	Distribution (%)
Rent	35	45.5%
Own	4	5.2%
Shared housing with family/roommates/partner	6	7.8%
Temporary with friends/family	6	7.8%
Mobile housing/unhoused	11	14.3%
Temporary (in shelter, hotel)	6	7.8%
Decline to state	8	10.4%

Table 5. Engagement by Disability

Disability	Number of People	Distribution (%)
A mobility impairment	10	10.1%
A mental health disorder	20	20.2%
A sensory impairment (vision or hearing)	7	7.1%
A learning disability (e.g., ADHD, dyslexia)	8	8.1%
Other	3	3.0%
Decline to state	37	37.4%
None	12	12.1%

Table 6. Engagement by Annual Personal Income

Annual Personal Income	Number of People	Distribution (%)
\$0-\$10,000	26	33.8%
\$10,001-\$20,000	9	11.7%
\$20,001-\$30,000	4	5.2%
\$30,001-\$40,000	4	5.2%
\$40,001-\$50,000	2	2.6%
\$50,001+	7	9.1%
Decline to state	25	32.5%
Total	77	

Table 7. Engagement by Sexual Orientation

Sexual Orientation	Number of People	Distribution (%)
Heterosexual	54	70.1%
Queer	2	2.6%
Bisexual	2	2.6%
Lesbian	0	0.0%
Gay	3	3.9%
Other	2	2.6%
Decline to state	14	18.2%

Table 8. Engagement by Experience with Mass Incarceration

Mass Incarceration	Number of People	Distribution (%)
I am a family member of someone who is formerly incarcerated	16	20.0%
I am formerly incarcerated	14	17.5%
I am a family member of someone who is currently incarcerated	13	16.3%
None	8	10.0%
Decline to state	29	36.3%

Table 9. Family Arrived in Oakland

Arrive in Oakland	Number of People	Distribution (%)
Before 1900	4	5.2%
1900-1950	8	10.4%
1950-1979	18	23.4%

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1980-1999	17	22.1%
2000-2010	9	11.7%
2011-2020	9	11.7%
2021+	4	5.2%
Visiting	1	1.3%
Working	0	0.0%
Other	1	1.3%
Decline to state	6	7.8%
Total	77	