



# FAIRMOUNT NEIGHBORHOOD THROUGH THE EYES OF RESIDENTS

*Part 2: Household Needs  
Assessment*

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# Disclaimer

The study was conducted by the Public Policy and Management Center (PPMC) at Wichita State University (WSU). Funding for this initiative was provided by the Kansas Health Foundation (KHF). The PPMC is an independent research body. This report was prepared by the research team. It represents the findings, views, opinions and conclusions of the research team alone, and the report does not express the official or unofficial policy of the PPMC, WSU or KHF. Information for this report was supplied by residents of the Fairmount neighborhood. The accuracy of findings for the report is dependent upon these sources.

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# Introduction

This is the second of a three-part series that is intended to improve understanding of the Fairmount neighborhood as viewed through the eyes of nearly 400 residents. Part 1 assesses strength of commitment to the neighborhood, including collaboration between neighbors and between the Wichita Police Department and the neighborhood. These types of collaborations are instrumental to community development. Part 1 also demonstrates that Fairmount is prepositioned to become a model for how diversity and inclusion can become integral to community development. Part 2 provides an assessment of the needs of Fairmount residents. This needs assessment should prove useful in the design of an inter-sector collaborative network tailored to the concerns of residents. Place-based economic development in this case involves creating a community of choice by blending the socio-geographic space of nearby Wichita State University (WSU) and the Fairmount neighborhood. Part 3 in this series assesses Fairmount residents' support for changes taking place at WSU and for strengthening university-neighborhood connections necessary for the creation of a community of choice.

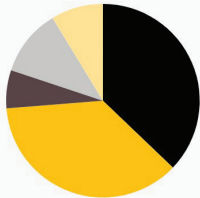
Section 1 of Part 2 opens with an assessment of needs associated with social and economic inclusion and the advancement of the public interest. Accordingly, Section 1 focuses on advancing the public interest in two ways. The first segment focuses on advancing the public interest by creating opportunity for households regardless of socioeconomic class. The second segment in Section 1 focuses on intergenerational equity and advancing the public interest through actions and investments that balance the concerns of current and future generations.



# Neighborhood Demographics



Race



- Caucasian
- African-American
- Hispanic
- Asian
- Other



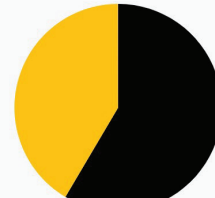
Age



- Below 25
- 25-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- 56-64
- 65 and Above



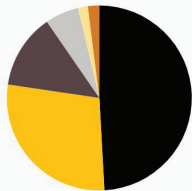
Gender



- Male
- Female



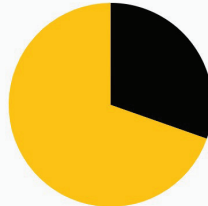
Household Income



- Less Than \$20,000
- \$20,000-\$39,999
- \$40,000-\$59,999
- \$60,000-\$79,999
- \$80,000-\$99,999
- \$100,000 & Above



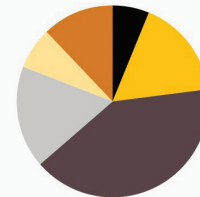
Property Ownership



- Own
- Rent



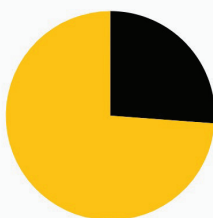
Education



- Not High School Graduate
- High School Graduate
- Some College
- College Graduate
- Some Graduate School
- Graduate Degree



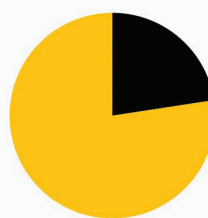
Have USD 259 Student in Household



- Yes
- No



Have International Student in Household



- Yes
- No



Length of Time in Neighborhood



- Less than 6 months
- 1 year
- 2-3 years
- 4-9 years
- 10 years or more

# Section 1. Economic and Social Inclusion



## EMPLOYMENT-RELATED CONCERNS AND INCLUSION

The development model employed by Wichita State University and its Innovation Campus focuses on changing the structure of the local economy and improving economic vitality by better positioning the region to compete globally. WSU has augmented its development strategy through a merger with Wichita Area Technical College (WATC). The merger between WSU and WATC produces a continuum of education. This continuum creates opportunity across the socioeconomic spectrum in an attempt to narrow the divide between advantaged and disadvantaged households. This section of findings begins with an assessment of the employment-related needs of Fairmount residents and economic inclusion.

### **Unemployed and Need a Job**

Nearly two-fifths (38.7%) of the residents indicate that someone living at their residence is unemployed and needs a job. It is important to note that respondents were specifically asked to focus on the needs of *someone living in their residence* when answering questions related to the items found in Sections 1 and 2. In spite of these instructions, it is assumed that some of the residents responded based on what they feel are consistent with the needs of the neighborhood. It is also important to note that households with multiple adults may have a mixture of employed and unemployed residents. Accordingly, respondents were instructed to report whether someone living at the residence is unemployed and needs a job. Younger households are particularly likely to report employment-related concerns. Approximately 47 percent of the responding residents 35 years of age or younger report that someone living at the residence is unemployed and needs a job. Renters (42.9%) are more likely than owners (30%) to indicate that someone living at the residence is unemployed and needs a job. Residents with schoolchildren (50.5%) are more likely than those without (34.6%) to indicate that someone living at the residence is unemployed and needs a job. Respondents with a WSU student living at their residence (49.2%) are much more likely than those without (28.8%) to report someone unemployed and in need of a job. It is important to note that students living in the neighborhood may be looking for sources of income but are faced with the unenviable reality of how best to balance the competing concerns of education and employment. Respondents from residential units that include international students (57.7%) are much more likely than those that did not (23.1%) to report that someone living at the residence is unemployed and needs a job. Hispanics (56.5%) are the most likely and Caucasians (31.5%) are the least likely to indicate that someone living at the residence is unemployed and needs a job.

### **Employed but Need a Better Job**

Underemployment is also an important concern of Fairmount residents. Nearly half (47.6%) of the residents report that someone in their household is employed but needs a better job. The youngest class of respondents (60.6%) is the most likely and the oldest residents (13.5%) are the least likely to report that someone living at their residence is employed but needs a better job. Males (54.7%) are much more likely than females (38%) to indicate the need for a better job. Renters (54%) are much more likely than owners (33.3%) to report the need for better employment opportunity. Households with a WSU student (63.1%) are much more likely than those without (33.2%) to report someone employed but in need of a better job. Residences with international students (67.5%) are much more likely than those without (41.8%) to report that someone living at the residence is employed but needs a better job.

### **Interested in Developing New Skills**

Structural unemployment is a mismatch between the skills demanded by the economy and those available in the labor pool. While structural unemployment is always a concern, it is likely to become an even bigger concern as the pace of change in skills demanded accelerates in an economy driven by continuous innovation. The merger between WSU and WATC is designed to promote innovation by facilitating a match between the skills that industry needs and the employment training necessary to meet these needs. In this case, access to a workforce with the appropriate skills better positions industry to compete globally and at the same time creates opportunity for economic inclusion across the socioeconomic spectrum. In an innovation economy, a workforce must be prepared to embrace change by continuously updating their skills in ways that are consistent with the changing needs of industry. When the needs of industry and the skills of the workforce are matched, opportunity for economic inclusion is advanced and community capacity is strengthened.

Consistent with the logic discussed above, Fairmount residents appear to be prepared to embrace change, with more than two-thirds (68.3%) of the respondents indicating that someone living at their residence is interested in developing new skills to improve employment opportunities. Generally, then, Fairmount residents appear to be favorably predisposed to participate in job skills training matched to the needs of industry. Much as expected, those younger than 25 years of age (82.4%) are much more likely than the oldest class of residents (32.7%) to indicate that someone living at their residence is interested in skill development to improve job opportunity.

Households earning less than \$20,000 (72.1%) are more interested in developing new skills than those with household incomes of \$60,000 or higher (63.6%). Renters (75.8%) are much more interested than owners (53.2%) in developing new skills to improve employment opportunities. Households with schoolchildren (79.6%) are more likely than those without (64.7%) to report an interest in developing new job skills to improve employment opportunity. Respondents with a WSU student living at their residence (84.5%) are much more likely than those without (53%) to indicate that someone is interested in developing new skills to improve employment opportunities. Respondents with an international student living at their residence (88.1%) are more likely than those without (62.7%) to report that someone in the unit is interested in developing new job skills. Asians (88.1%) and Hispanics (83.3%) are more likely than African-Americans (64.5%) and Caucasians (59.6%) to report that someone living in the residence is interested in developing new skills to improve employment opportunities.

### **Need Better Transportation to Get to Work**

The combination of student and lower income households necessarily means that public transportation is a particularly important component of economic inclusion in the case of Fairmount. Consistent with this understanding, more than 43 percent (43.4%) of the residents report that someone living in their residence needs better public transportation to get to work. Respondents between the ages of 25 and 35 years of age (54.9%) are the most likely and those 65 years of age and older (26%) are the least likely to report that someone living in the residence needs better public transportation to get to work. Households with incomes of less than \$20,000 (50.8%) are the most likely to report that someone needs better public transportation to get to work. Renters (48.8%) are more likely than owners (31.6%) to indicate the need for improved public transportation. Households with schoolchildren (52.5%) are more likely than those without (40.5%) to report the need for better public transportation to get to work. Respondents with a WSU student living at their residence (54%) are much more likely than those without (33.3%) to indicate the need for improved public transportation. Respondents with an international student (66.3%) living at their address are much more likely than those without (36.5%) to indicate a need for better public transportation to get to work. Caucasians (37.7%) and African-Americans (42.9%) are less likely than Hispanics (50%) and Asians (70.4%) to report that someone living at their residence needs better public transportation to get to work.

### **English as a Barrier to Inclusion**

Inability to speak English is a formidable barrier to social and economic inclusion. Nearly one-fifth (19.6%) of the responding residents indicate that someone living at their residence needs assistance learning English. Renters (23%) are more likely than owners (12.2%) to call for assistance learning English. Respondents with a WSU student living at their residence (31.4%) are much more likely than those without (8.5%) to indicate need for assistance learning English. Respondents with an international student living at their residence (43%) are much more likely than those without (12.9%) to indicate that someone at their residence needs assistance learning English. Much as expected, Hispanic households (50%) are particularly likely to call for assistance learning English.

## **ADVANCING THE PUBLIC INTEREST AND INCLUSION OF THE NEXT GENERATION**

A community that fails to invest its resources in ways that reflect balanced concern for advantaged and disadvantaged populations and that fails to balance the concerns of current and future generations places the future at risk. Many actions and investments potentially promote social and economic opportunity and the inclusion of today's children into tomorrow's economy. The findings reported in this segment of Section 1 focus on a couple of examples of how communities that value social and intergenerational equity might create opportunity for the next generation through improved educational and recreational opportunities.



The education of children is critical to the advancement of the public interest and the well-being of any community. Unequal educational opportunity is a foundational contributor to unhealthy societal division between those who are advantaged and disadvantaged. Disadvantaged schoolchildren tend to begin formal education behind their advantaged classmates, and without intervention many will fall further behind, sealing their fate of social and economic exclusion. In the past, parental co-production of an improved education was the norm. As the pace of society has accelerated and technology has advanced, an educational model that is overly dependent on parental co-production to facilitate a quality education raises many questions. When parents are unwilling or unable to provide meaningful co-production of an improved education, their children become vulnerable to cumulative educational deficits that will ultimately translate into diminished quality of life and raise legitimate concerns about equity.

### **Children Who Need Assistance with Homework**

Early intervention is important to address educational deficits that are particularly common among low-income students. Consistent with concerns about educational equity and the creation of opportunity, nearly a third (29%) of the residents indicate that someone living at their residence has children who need assistance with homework. More than 40 percent of the residents between 25 and 45 years of age report that someone living in their residence has schoolchildren who needs assistance with their homework. Interestingly, the need for assistance with homework does not vary statistically based on the education of the respondent. Almost two-thirds of the residents with schoolchildren who attend a USD 259 school (62.8%) report the need for assistance with homework. Hispanics (50%) and African-Americans (35.9%) are the most likely and Caucasians (18%) are the least likely to report that someone living at the residence has children who need assistance with homework.

### **A “Whole Child” Philosophy and Improved Recreational Opportunity**

A “whole child” philosophy and the desire to promote social inclusion necessarily means that numerous issues and interventions warrant discussion. Unfortunately, a comprehensive assessment is beyond the scope of this research. As a result, recreation has been selected as an example of an intervention that potentially contributes to the development of the whole child. Once again, although respondents were instructed to focus on the needs of their particular residence, it is likely that some of the respondents focused more broadly on the needs of children in the neighborhood. In any case, more than two-fifths (43.3%) of the responding residents indicated that someone living at their residence has children who need better recreational opportunities. Respondents between 35 and 45 years of age (70.8%) are particularly likely to report that there is a need for better recreational opportunities. More than 86 percent of those with children attending a USD 259 school (86.1%) report that someone in their residence has children who need better recreational opportunities. African-Americans (55.3%) and Hispanics (50%) are particularly likely to report children living at their residence who need better recreational opportunities compared to less than 29 percent of Caucasians (28.9%).

# Section 2. Health-Related and Basic Quality of Life Concerns



Quality of life, including economic livelihood, hinges on the health of the individual. The initial segment of Section 2 builds on this understanding by providing an assessment of basic health-care needs of Fairmount residents. The findings reported in Section 2 conclude by providing assessments of two basic quality of life concerns.

## Dental Care

Dental care is the most broadly described unmet health-care need assessed in the survey findings. Nearly two-fifths (39.8%) of the responding residents report that someone living at their residence has dental care needs that are not being met. Nearly half of the households with incomes below \$20,000 (47.7%) report that someone living at the residence has unmet dental care needs. Females (46.3%) are more likely than males (35.5%) to report that someone living at the residence has unmet dental care needs. Respondents with a WSU student living at the residence (43%) are somewhat more likely than those without (36.8%) to report that someone living at the residence has unmet dental care needs. Half of the responding Hispanics report that someone living at their residence has unmet dental needs. In some cases, these unmet dental needs may be less about access and more about knowledge of the dental-related care provided through the university.

## Eye Care

Nearly 30 percent (29.5%) of the residents report that someone in their household has eye care needs that are not being met. Residents between 25 and 35 years of age (35.9%) are the most likely to report unmet eye care needs. Females (33.9%) are more likely than males (26.6%) to indicate unmet eye care needs. Respondents with a WSU student living at the residence (36.4%) are more likely than those without (23.2%) to report unmet eye care needs.

## Medical Care

Approximately 28 percent (28.3%) of the responding residents report that someone living at the residence has medical care needs that are not being met. Females (30.7%) are more likely than males (26.9%) to report that someone living at their residence has unmet medical care needs. Respondents with a WSU student living at their residence (39.8%) are much more likely than those without (17.6%) to indicate that a resident has medical care needs that are not being met. Hispanics (34.8%) and Caucasians (30.5%) are more likely than African-Americans (27.7%) and Asians (26.2%) to report that someone living at their residence has medical care needs that are not being met.

## Prescription Drugs

About a quarter (23.7%) of the residents report that someone living at their residence has prescription drug needs that are not being met. Residents between 25 and 35 years of age (33.7%) are particularly likely to indicate unmet prescription drug concerns. Females (27%) are more likely than males (21.5%) to report that access to prescription drugs is a concern. Respondents with a WSU student living at the address (33%) are much more likely than those without (15.1%) to report that someone living at their address has prescription drug needs that are not being met.

## Mental Health Care

Slightly less than a quarter (23%) of the respondents report that someone living at their residence has mental health care needs that are not being addressed. Residents 25 and 35 years of age (30.5%) are the most likely to report unmet mental health care concerns. Respondents with a WSU student living at their residence (36.6%) are much more likely than those without (10.2%) to report that someone living at that residence has mental health care needs that are not being addressed.

## Handicap

Less than one-fifth (17.3%) of the respondents report that someone living at their residence has a handicap that is not being properly addressed. Females (20.3%) are more likely than males (15.4%) to report a handicap that is not being addressed. Respondents with a WSU student living at the residence (26.6%) are more likely than those without (8.5%) to indicate that someone living at their residence has a handicap that is not being properly addressed.

## BASIC QUALITY OF LIFE CONCERNS

The last two items in this section address basic quality of life concerns related to adequate food and clothing. Although all the needs assessed here leave considerable room for subjectivity, the final items are particularly difficult to define concretely. For example, not having enough to eat as defined by an 18-year-old male who is a freshman in college is likely different from a report from an 85-year-old female.

### **Enough to Eat**

Nearly a quarter (24.4%) of the responding residents indicate that someone living at their residence sometimes does not have enough to eat. Residents between 25 and 35 years of age (32.6%) are the most likely to report that someone living at the residence sometimes does not have enough to eat. Females (29.2%) are more likely than males (21.3%) to indicate that someone at their residence sometimes does not get enough to eat. Residences with WSU students (32.7%) are much more likely than those without (16.9%) to report that someone at the residence sometimes does not have enough to eat.

### **Adequate Clothing**

Slightly more than one-fifth (20.9%) of the responding residents report that someone living at their residence has clothing needs that are not being met. Respondents between 36 and 45 years of age are the most likely to indicate clothing needs. Respondents with a WSU student living at their residence (29.7%) are more likely than those without (12.7%) to indicate that someone living at the residence has clothing needs that are not being met.



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