

July, 2023

# Jersey Street

# Community Visioning Report

**NYC**<sup>TM</sup>

Housing Preservation  
& Development

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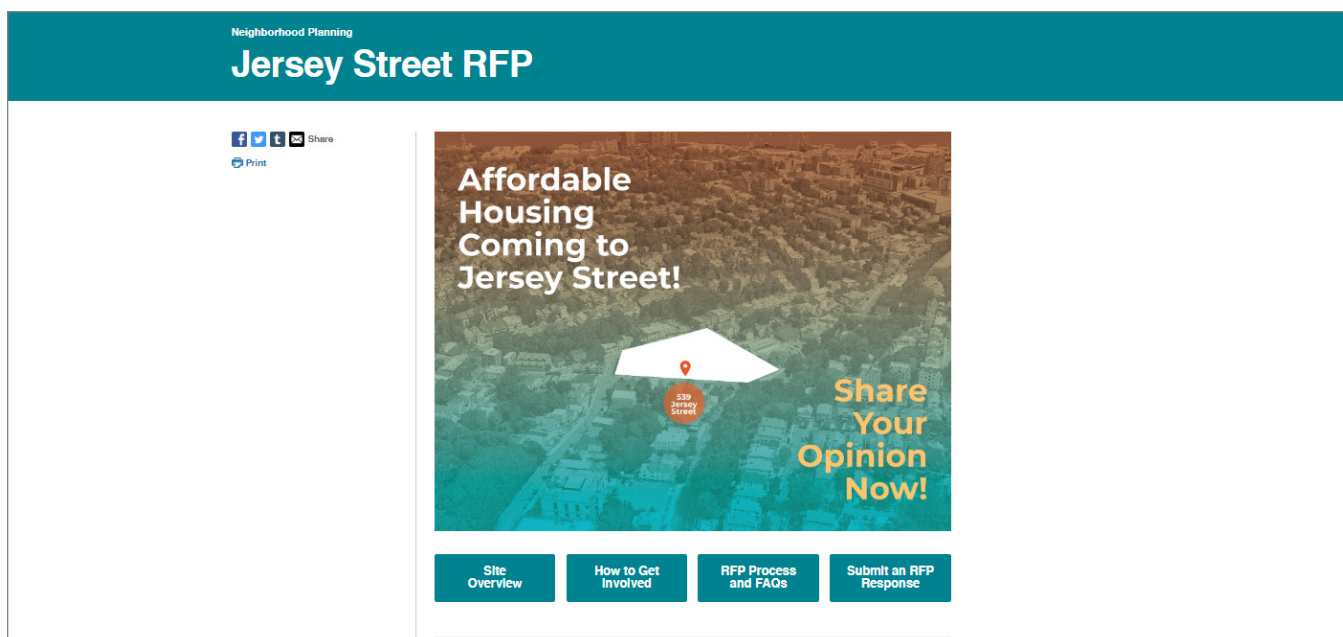
# What?

## Development Informed by Community

The NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) conducted community engagement from March through May of 2023 to gather input on the redevelopment of the City-owned sanitation garage at 539 Jersey Street and Victory Boulevard (Jersey Street site) with new affordable housing and community amenities.

No one understands neighborhood conditions and needs better than those who live and work in the community. HPD values this expertise, which is why community engagement is central to the affordable housing development process. The goal of this outreach was to identify priorities for housing, retail, services, and public space.

This report summarizes the results of the engagement process and is available on HPD's website at [www.nyc.gov/jersey-street-rfp](http://www.nyc.gov/jersey-street-rfp). It will be attached to the Request for Proposals (RFP) issued for 539 Jersey Street. Development teams responding to the RFP are strongly encouraged to consult this report and thoughtfully respond in their proposals. HPD will evaluate how well development teams incorporate the community vision from this report in their submissions.



Project Website

# Where?

## The Site

The Jersey Street site fronts Brook Street, Castleton Avenue, Jersey Street, Victory Boulevard and Pike Street and is approximately 115,000 square feet (2.6 acres).

The Staten Island District 1 Sanitation Garage is an active facility that provides vital cleaning, collection and snow removal services to residents of Community District 1. The NYC Department of Design and Construction (DDC) is currently constructing a new Staten Island 1 garage at the former Fresh Kills landfill, which is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2024. The NYC Department of Sanitation (DSNY) expects to relocate operations from 539 Jersey Street to that facility once it is completed, at which point the demolition and redevelopment may commence.



Site Aerial View

# The Context

The site is located between the St. George, New Brighton, and Tompkinsville neighborhoods of Staten Island Community District 1. The site is on an irregularly shaped block alongside one- and two-family homes, a local business, and the Mount Sinai United Christian Church.

Surrounding uses include small apartment buildings, one- and two-family homes, religious institutions, and many local businesses. Neighborhood residents shop, eat, and access vital goods and services along Victory Boulevard and Jersey Street.

The site is directly served by the S46, S48, S61, S62 and S66 buses on Victory Boulevard, and the S52 bus on Jersey Street, and is approximately one-half mile from the Tompkinsville Staten Island Railroad (SIR) station and one mile from the St. George Ferry Terminal.



Neighborhood Context Map

# How?

## Community Engagement Strategy

HPD scheduled a mix of in-person and virtual engagement events over the course of three months to provide various ways for community members to provide their input.

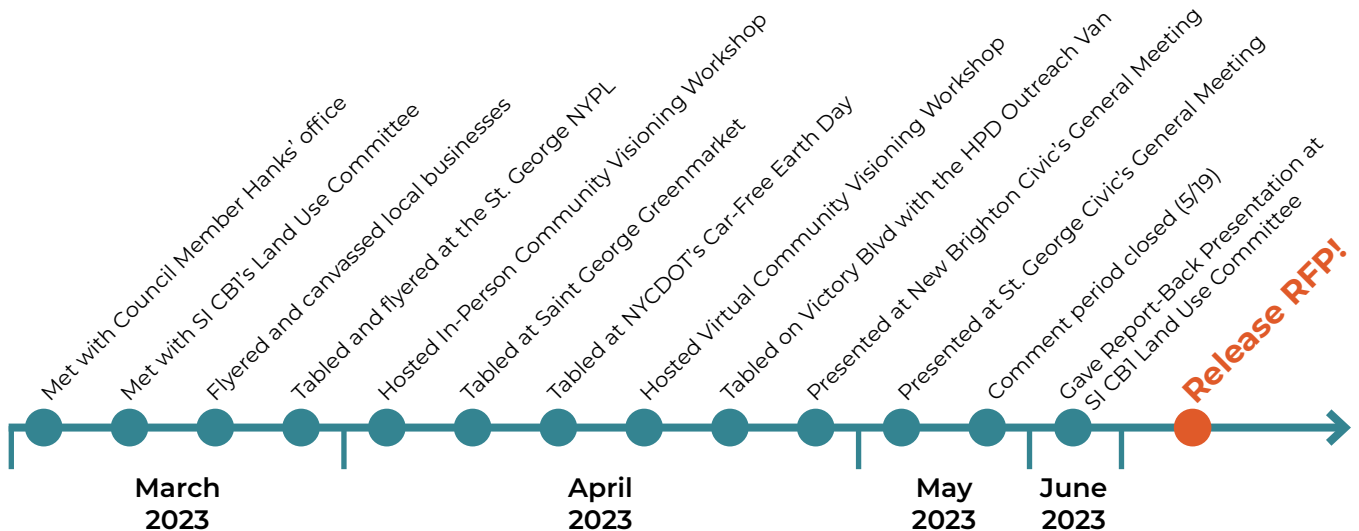
All project advertisements and engagement materials including email blasts, flyers, social media posts, questionnaire, and public comments map were translated to Spanish to accommodate the large community of Spanish speakers in the neighborhood. Live Spanish translation was provided at both the in-person and virtual community visioning workshops. Additionally, the [project website](#) is available in multiple languages.

When sharing information with the community and gathering input, HPD communicated the unique characteristics of the site including its unique shape and the existing adjacent buildings, as well as prior commitments that were made as part of the [Bay Street Corridor Neighborhood Plan](#).

At the workshops, online, or on the street, all members of the public were asked to answer the same questions about:

- Housing issues in the area.
- What kind of housing should be included at 539 Jersey Street.
- What ground floor uses and open spaces the site could provide for the broader community.

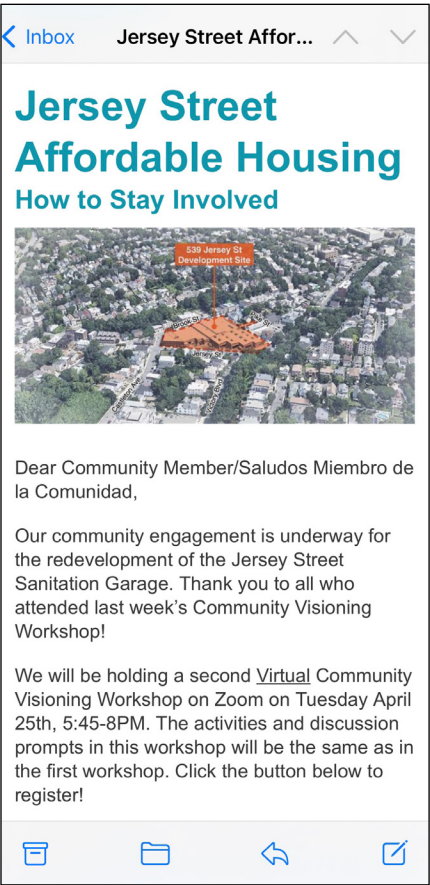
### Engagement Events Timeline



In addition to the individual events listed in the Engagement Events Timeline, HPD promoted the project in the following ongoing ways:

- Conducted targeted outreach to individual community-based organizations and stakeholders throughout the engagement period.
- Sent over ten email blasts to a growing number of subscribers.
- Posted on social media (Twitter, Instagram, Facebook) to promote ways to provide input throughout the engagement period.
- Began an open comment period for the questionnaire and public comments map on March 28, 2023. In response to public feedback on the proposed engagement timeline, the comment period was extended from May 1 to May 19 to ensure community members had ample time to submit their input.

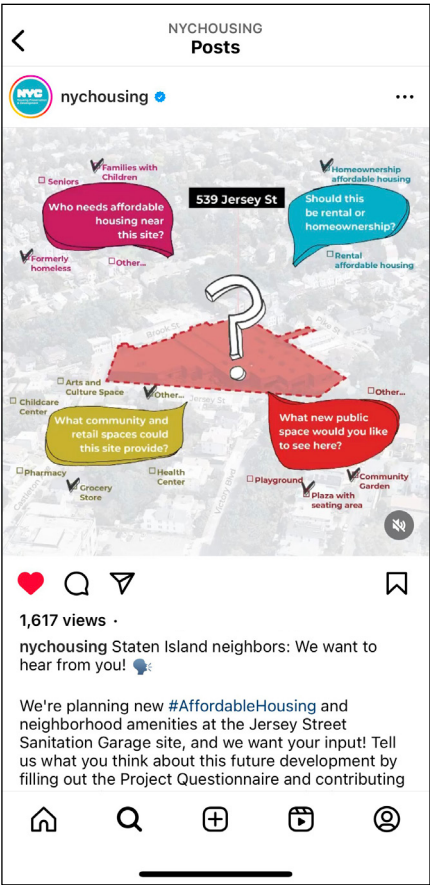
In total, HPD received **150 questionnaire responses**, reflecting a wide variety of backgrounds and ideas. 87 respondents filled out the questionnaire online, and 63 filled it out at workshops, tabling events and civic association meetings.



Email Blast



Twitter Advertising



Instagram Advertising





# Findings

Though participants communicated many different visions for the site, certain themes emerged as priorities. These priorities are reflective of the questionnaire responses and conversations had at workshops, tabling events, civic association meetings, Community Board 1 meetings, and the online public comments map.

RFP submissions will be evaluated based on the quality and feasibility of the proposals, as well as how well they respond to the priorities articulated by the community.

## Summary of Findings

### RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM

- **Staten Island has not seen much of any type of affordable housing built, so it is important to serve various types of households in this development, including rental and homeownership housing for a range of incomes.**

### GROUND FLOOR USES

- **A fresh food supermarket is needed as a walkable, affordable option in the neighborhood.**
- **Community spaces and services would especially benefit children, teenagers and seniors in the neighborhood.**
- **Services and amenities that already exist in the neighborhood should be considered when deciding which ground floor non-residential uses to prioritize on the site.**

### PUBLIC SPACE

- **Support for wider sidewalks, planting, seating and shelter around the bus stop at Jersey Street and Victory Boulevard.**
- **Concern about ensuring public access for spaces like community gardens and dog runs.**

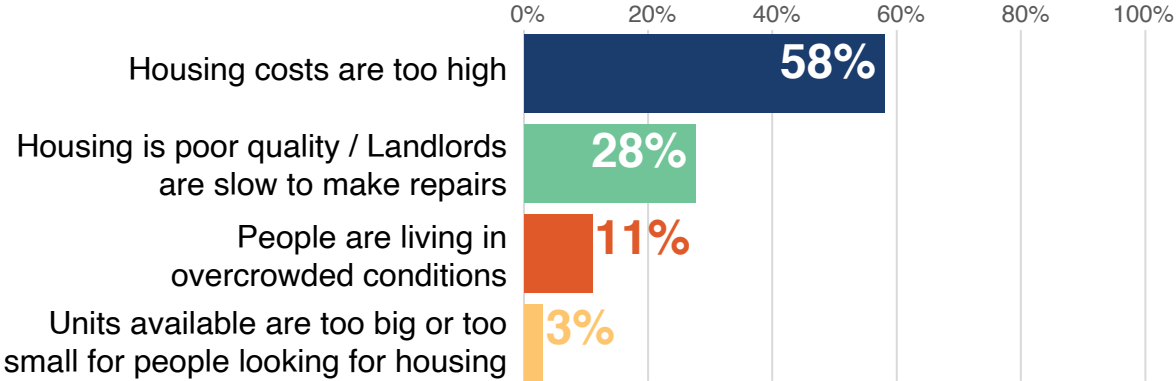
### GENERAL FEEDBACK

- **Desire for a transparent environmental remediation process.**
- **Plan for school seats and other infrastructure needs, such as transportation impacts, that arise.**

# RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM INTRO

HPD asked respondents about housing issues and barriers in the neighborhood to better understand how the 539 Jersey Street development could improve quality of life for neighborhood residents.

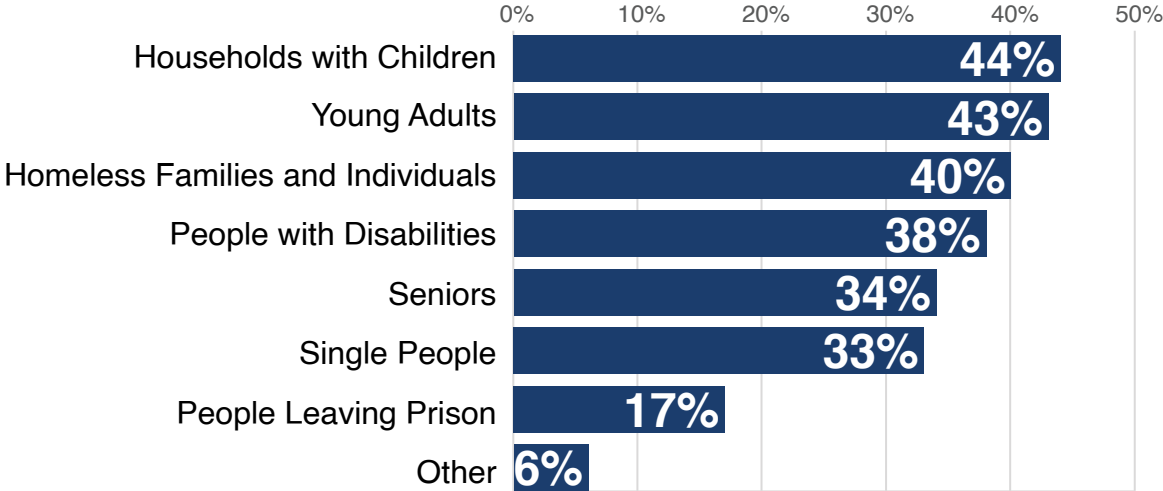
## 1. WHAT IS THE TOP HOUSING ISSUE IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?



78% of respondents answered this question.

## 2. ARE THERE TYPES OF HOUSEHOLDS OR PEOPLE WHO FACE THE MOST BARRIERS TO FINDING OR KEEPING HOUSING IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD?

Select up to 3.



92% of respondents answered this question.

“Seniors especially on fixed income are all going to be homeless soon. They are good people with a guaranteed income and would love a place to feel secure and not worry they are going to be forced out tomorrow.”

“Immigrants, specifically those without legal immigration status.”

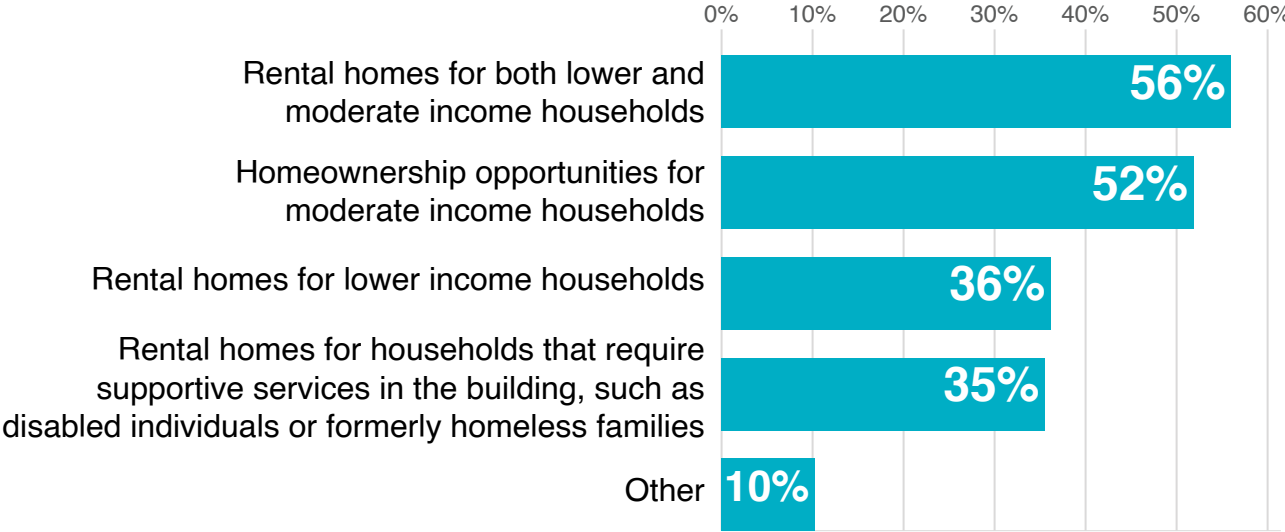
“Working families, just above the poverty line.”

### RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM

HPD builds income-restricted affordable housing where units are reserved for households in specified income ranges or with specific needs. Respondents were informed that approximately 90 of the approximately 223 units will be set aside for seniors.

### 3. WHAT KIND OF HOUSING SHOULD BE INCLUDED?

Select 2.



98% of respondents answered this question.

Two options were selected by a majority of respondents: “Rental homes for both lower and moderate incomes” (56% chose this as one of their selections) and “Homeownership opportunities for moderate income households” (52% chose this as one of their selections).

In the workshop, multiple people felt that the lack of affordable homeownership opportunities in the area is more pronounced than the lack of low-income rental housing.

“We need anything and everything because Staten Island just doesn’t have anything.”

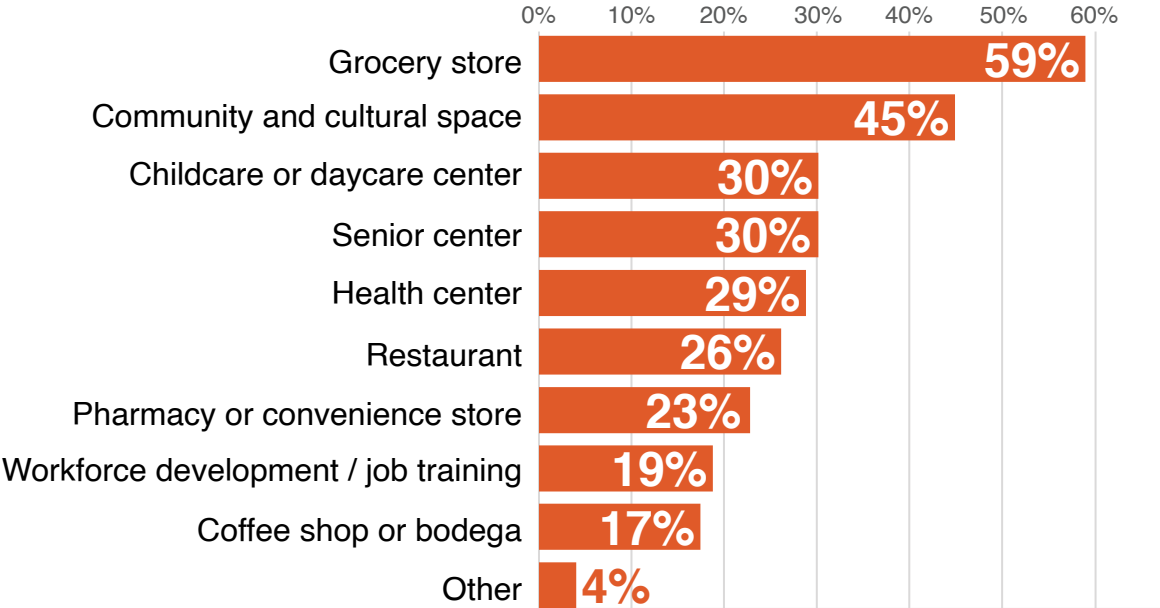
“There are [rental] apartments and single-family homes but nothing in between.”

“There is an “invisible line” that exists in the neighborhood that separates affordable and higher income housing. This site sits right near this line, so it could be an opportunity to better integrate wealth levels in the community.”

### GROUND FLOOR USES

HPD-financed buildings provide more than homes through their ground floors, which can serve the whole neighborhood. Respondents were asked to select categories of community and/or retail services that would be useful to locate on this site.

#### 4. WHAT TYPE OF GROUND FLOOR USES COULD THIS SITE PROVIDE? Select 3.



99% of respondents answered this question.

There was a strong preference for a grocery store. 60% of respondents selected a grocery store as one of their preferred ground floor uses. This was the only ground floor use that a majority of respondents agreed on. In the workshops, attendees talked about traveling far from home to access grocery stores in other neighborhoods. One attendee referenced their 45-minute walk to get groceries.

45% of respondents selected community and cultural space as one of their choices. In comments in the questionnaire and conversations at the workshop, people identified a mix of groups this space could serve; from afterschool programs for youth, especially teenagers, to a space focused on the needs of seniors. However, workshop attendees also highlighted the existing presence of senior services in the area, specifically at local churches, as compared to other needed services.

“Parents and grandparents need a place where our growing children can feel safe when they go outside and we don’t want them on their cell phones and playing video games all day and night.”

“I struggle to find spaces nearby where I can grow and find support.”  
[from a self-identified senior]

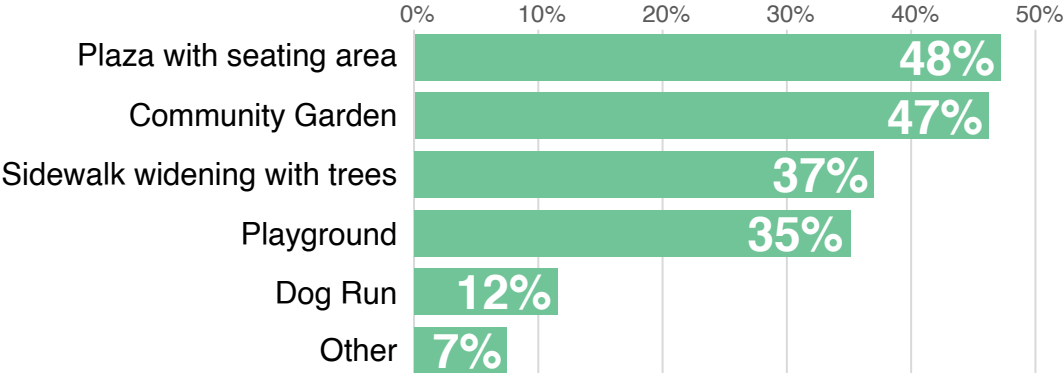
“Bodegas are too expensive to rely on for daily food needs.”

“This area is a food desert.”

**PUBLIC SPACE**

The large size of the development site provides an opportunity for HPD to incorporate public open space into the development.

**5. THIS SITE MAY BE ABLE TO OFFER A NEW PUBLIC, OPEN SPACE FOR NEIGHBORS TO GATHER. IF THAT IS POSSIBLE, WHAT WOULD BE A GOOD ADDITION TO THE AREA?**



90% of respondents answered this question.

In the workshops, attendees expressed interest in an open space where residents could sit. Workshop attendees pointed out that the bus stops currently lack shelter, and that seating and trees would be appreciated by bus riders, particularly in the summer. Others wanted an enhanced pedestrian experience (such as widened sidewalks) and to feel safe (increased lighting was recommended) around the bus stop.

Though “community garden” was a popular selection, questions came up in the workshop about how accessible a community garden or a dog run would be to the broader community. Due to the site’s proximity to busy streets, attendees in the virtual and in person workshops were hesitant to recommend a playground.

“Pedestrian connectivity in the neighborhood should be considered. There should be thru-block public spaces and walkways, permeable surfaces and extensive green planted areas. I would happily have taller structures in exchange for such spaces. The Jersey St edge of the plot can be utilized to make the commercial corridor more continuous. It needs a wide tree-lined sidewalk with multiple types of retail or other multi-purpose spaces.”

## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Respondents were given the option to include additional comments or feedback related to the site. About 1/3 of survey respondents shared additional comments. The comments highlighted below were representative of several themes that were repeated in questionnaires and conversations had through HPD's various methods of community engagement.

### 6. PLEASE SHARE ANY OTHER COMMENTS OR IDEAS YOU MIGHT HAVE FOR CONSIDERATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS SITE:

- “A **large grocery store** would be helpful. But **community spaces** such as an auditorium, meeting spaces, or a commercial kitchen which could provide an inclusive soup kitchen would all be helpful.”
- “This corner of Victory Blvd and Jersey Street hosts a **busy bus stop** for several MTA and school bus routes....There could be an opportunity to create a beautiful, comfortable and safe area with benches, lighting, covered space etc. for bus passengers to utilize while waiting for their ride.”
- “I love that my neighborhood is **multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and has various incomes**. We respect each other; but need more services in our community for young + senior people.”
- “**Open public space** is very important to mental and physical health of urban dwellers. Please consider adequate green space and help foster businesses and amenities that fit the existing community fabric of the neighborhood.”
- “**Pedestrian connectivity** in the neighborhood should be considered. There should be thru-block public spaces and walkways, permeable surfaces and extensive green planted areas.”

# PUBLIC COMMENTS MAP

The public comments map was created to gather input from community members on the neighborhoods surrounding the 539 Jersey Street development site. The map was offered in English and Spanish, online and as part of the paper questionnaire. The graphic below highlights a selection of the comments received on the map, including:

- Things community members love about their neighborhood.
- Things community members do not like about their neighborhood.
- Future ideas.

**Jersey Street Story Map** A Story Map **NYC** Department of Housing Preservation & Development

Submitted Comments New Comment

**We want to hear from you!**  
Tell us about the neighborhood by adding a comment on the map. Comment on the map to tell us about places that can connect to your vision for the sites and/or places you think are essential for understanding the area.

I love being close to the Si Ferry. I love being in a diverse neighborhood + enjoy my neighbors.

Creo que mi barrio es seguro para vivir.

I would love a bakery/coffee shop in this area.

Community garden here rocks!  
Needs more resources

Skyline playground is a hidden gem. A section of the park is 206 feet above sea level which gives you a view of the nyc skyline. In my opinion, it's not being properly maintained. The bushes and trees needs pruning. I would love to see this park get an upgrade.

Biking/walking can be kind of dangerous here, how can we make the street safer?

Buses are slow and inconsistent, which disadvantages commuters. It also encourages single-occupancy vehicle use, which increases traffic and pollution

I love this little park. I like to take my niece there, but its not cared for properly. nothing dangerous but it isn't inviting. I would like to see more opportunities for community gardens and events for families. Taking inspiration from Snug harbor.

LOVE the St. George Theatre!

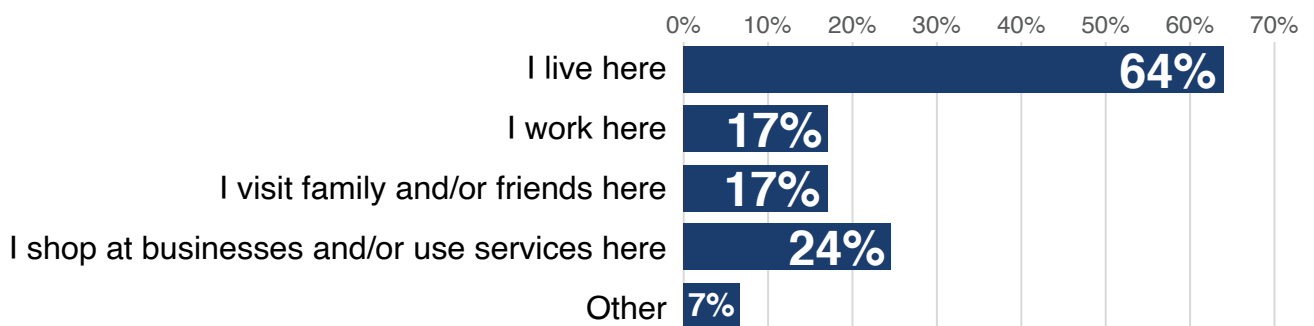
The Jersey Street Sanitation site is surrounded by the highest rates of asthma and pollution that has devastated this community for generations. This site must be remediated as a brownfield site and reparations must be made to address the surrounding community's years of generational severe health particularly with asthma and COPD related problems

# Profile of Respondents

Participants in the engagement activities do not reflect a random sample of people who live in the neighborhood. To understand who participated, questionnaire respondents were given an optional demographic survey. Below is a summary of responses to the demographic survey.

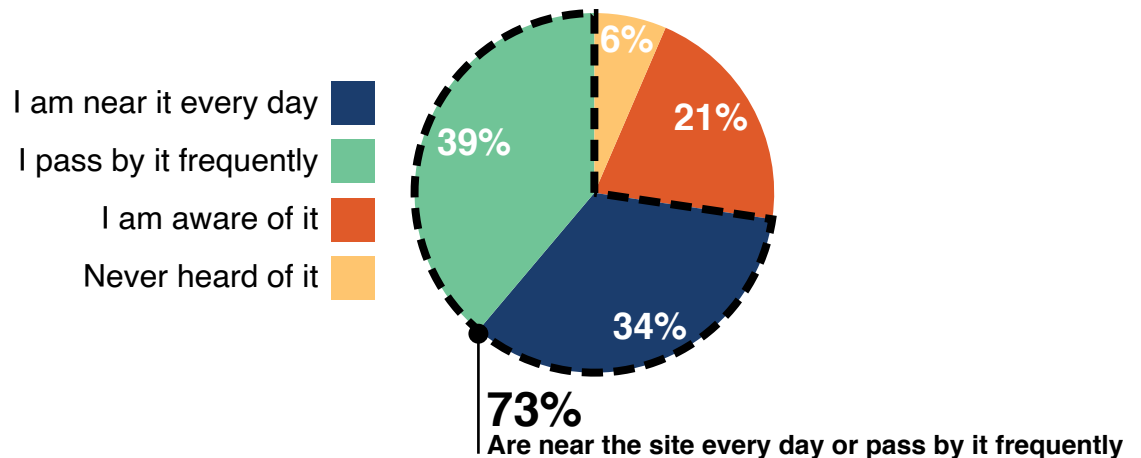
## WHAT IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE AREA AROUND 539 JERSEY ST?

Some respondents chose multiple options.



90% of respondents answered this question.

## ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH THE SITE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SANITATION GARAGE AT 539 JERSEY ST?



93% of respondents answered this question.

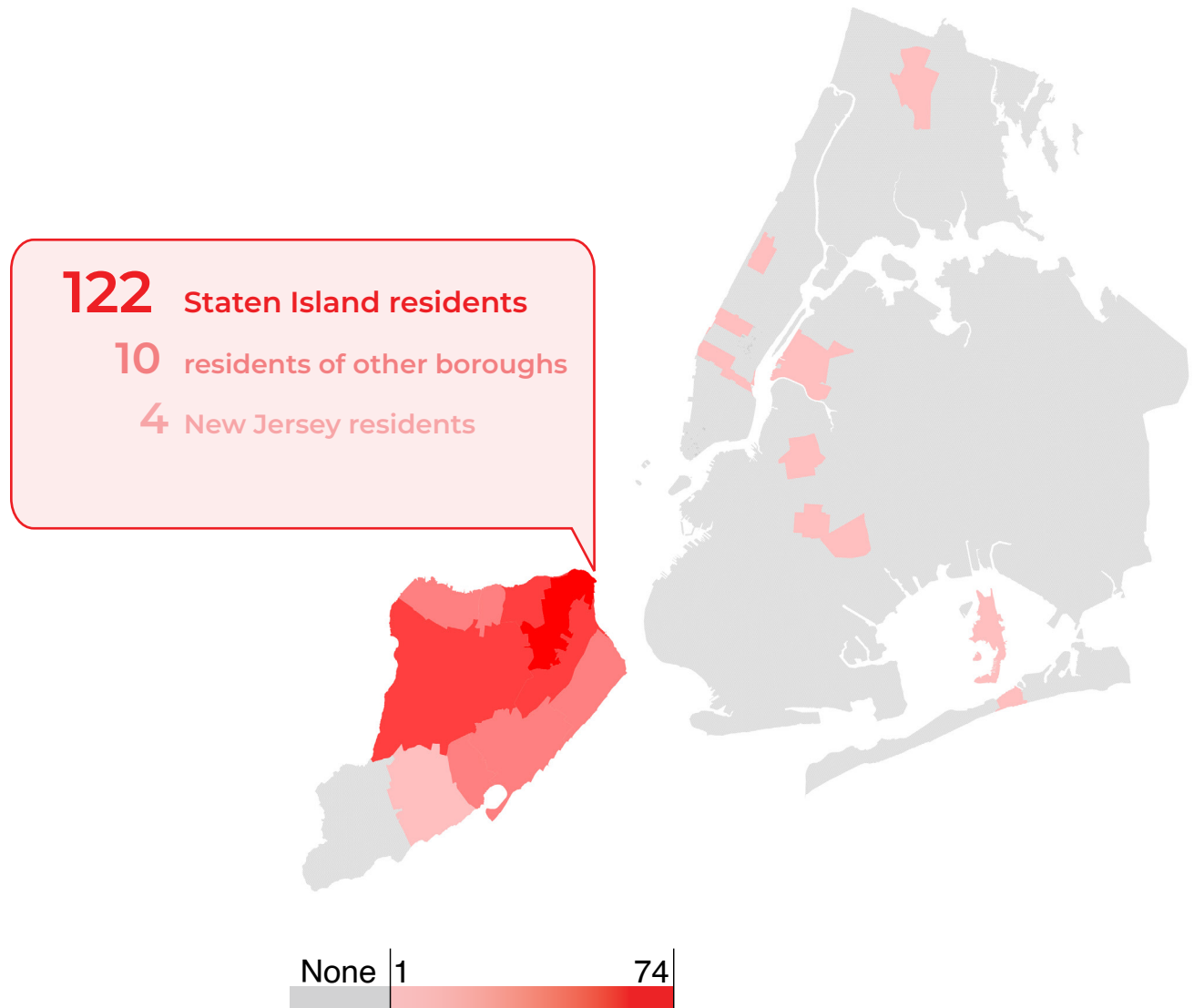
73% of respondents encounter the DSNY garage at 539 Jersey Street on a daily or frequent basis. Only 6% of respondents had no knowledge of the Jersey Street site.



## NEIGHBORHOOD OF RESIDENCE:

The sanitation garage at 539 Jersey Street is located in the 10301 zip code. Most respondents who gave their zip codes live in 10301. When the adjacent 10304, 10310, 10314 zip codes are factored in, around 80% of respondents live in the neighborhoods surrounding 539 Jersey Street.

- **What is your zip code?**



90% of respondents answered this question.

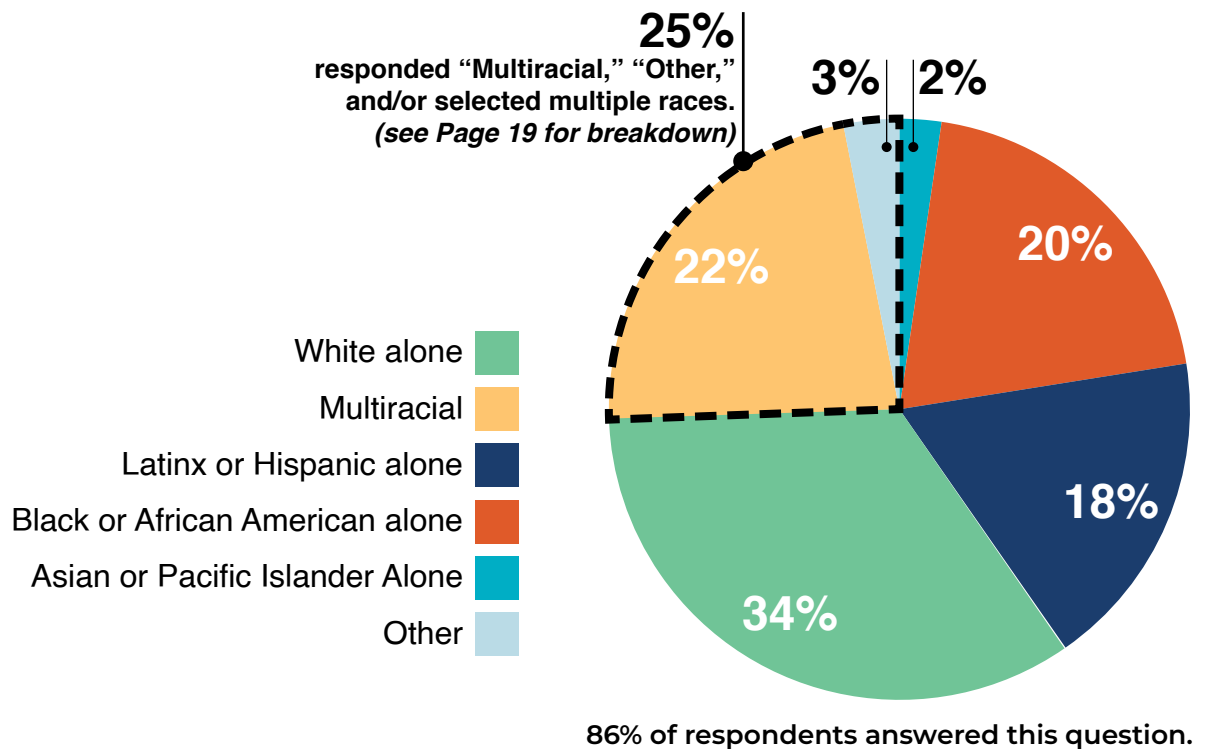
**AGE:**

Respondents ranged in age from 21-88. The median age of respondents was 44 years old, which is higher than the median age of 38.2 for Staten Island Community District 1 as a whole.

**RACIAL AND/OR ETHNIC GROUP:**

No single racial or ethnic group constituted a majority of questionnaire respondents. Those who identified as White Alone formed the largest single group, followed by equal numbers of those identifying as Black or African American Alone and those identifying as Multiracial (or who selected multiple racial and/or ethnic groups).

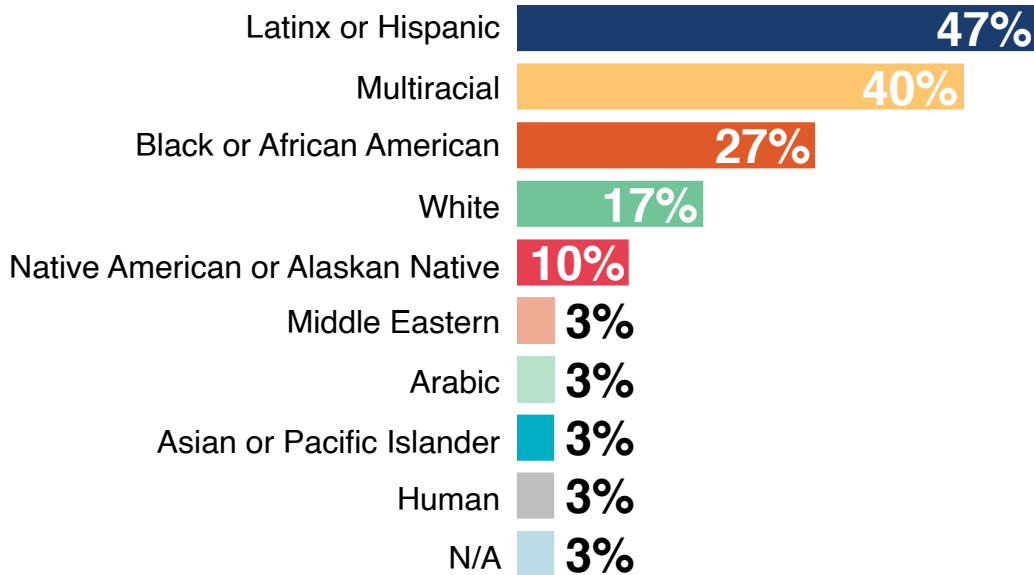
- **With what racial and/or ethnic group do you identify?**  
Select as many as apply.



Those who identified as Multiracial or selected "Other" could select as many groups as applied to them or write in a missing category.

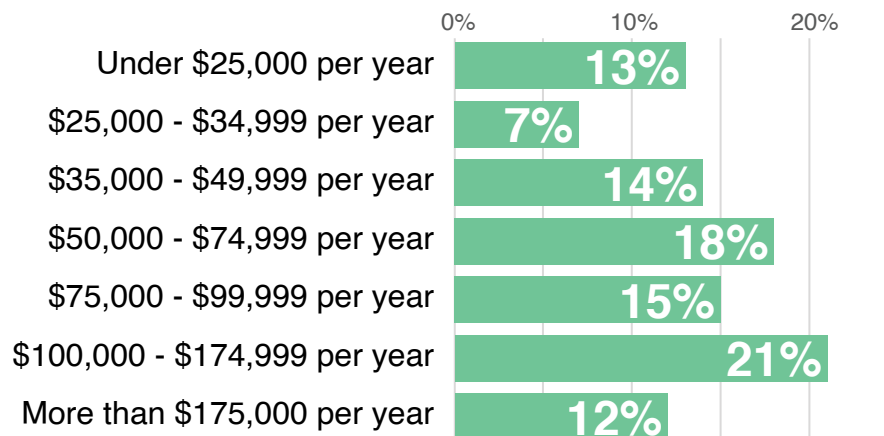
Latinx or Hispanic was the most common identity selected by those who identify with multiple racial and/or ethnic groups.

Racial breakdown of the 25% of respondents who answered this question who identified as “multiracial,” “other,” and/or selected multiple races, which is highlighted on the pie chart on Page 18.



### INCOME:

Questionnaire respondents reported a diversity of household incomes. Most respondents reported a household income of below \$75,000, which is lower than the median household income of \$78,498 of Staten Island Community District 1 as a whole. Around a third of respondents reported household incomes over \$100,000 a year.



73% of respondents answered this question.

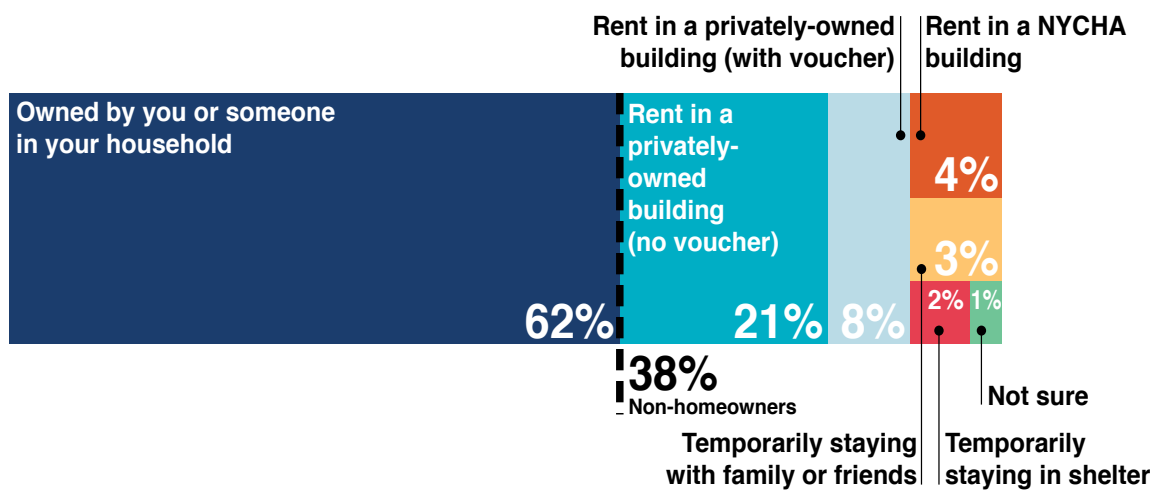
## HOUSING SITUATION:

Respondents were asked about their current housing situation and were given options reflecting a wide range experiences.

Household Size: A variety of household sizes were represented in the questionnaire respondents. The median household size was 3, which is similar to the average household size of Staten Island Community District 1. 20% of respondents live in households of 5 or more people.

Housing Type: Around 60% of respondents reported living in a homeowner-occupied household. This generally aligns with Staten Island Community District 1, where more than half of households own their homes. Of the remaining 38% of respondents, over half were renters in privately-owned buildings who did not use housing voucher assistance. Nearly a quarter of respondents who were not homeowners do use housing vouchers to rent in privately-owned buildings, and 10% were tenants in New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) public housing.

- Which of the following best describes your house, apartment, or place of dwelling?



89% of respondents answered this question.



**NYC**<sup>TM</sup>

**Housing Preservation  
& Development**  
Office of Neighborhood  
Strategies

- Email:  
[JerseyStreetRFP@hpd.nyc.gov](mailto:JerseyStreetRFP@hpd.nyc.gov)
- Project website:  
[www.nyc.gov/jersey-street-rfp](http://www.nyc.gov/jersey-street-rfp)
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