

Stay Midtown Program Evaluation

May 2020

PSC



**PUBLIC SECTOR
CONSULTANTS**

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Executive Summary

Capital Impact Partners (Capital Impact)—a national community development financial institution—aims to improve economic mobility in targeted, asset-rich, mixed-use neighborhoods in Detroit through an inclusive growth framework. This work is done by investing in strategies that promote increased neighborhood density with a healthy income mix through catalytic financing for multifamily and mixed-use developments, key community services, and programmatic and policy interventions. Midtown Detroit, Inc. (MDI)—a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization—supports and enhances community and economic development efforts in the Midtown neighborhood through collaborative partnerships with stakeholders and funders.

In 2016, Capital Impact and MDI partnered to design Stay Midtown, a program that provides rent subsidies to Midtown households with incomes between 30 percent and 80 percent of area median income (AMI). These subsidies were offered to offset rapidly rising housing costs as a result of the largely positive neighborhood revitalization efforts in the area to allow residents living in the neighborhood for at least two years to remain in their current homes. Capital Impact and MDI designed this program to address an anticipated two- to four-year supply gap for low- to moderate-income households at risk of displacement in the rapidly redeveloping Midtown area. The program's objective is to help these households maintain housing security during a period of high demand and limited supply. Stay Midtown provides rental subsidies of up to \$1,500 a year for three years to reduce housing cost burden and increase housing and financial stability for residents that meet the program's eligibility requirements.

Capital Impact engaged Public Sector Consultants (PSC) to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of Stay Midtown. The evaluation had two primary goals:

- Evaluate Stay Midtown's impact on participants' overall housing and financial security
- Evaluate the program's strengths, challenges, and future opportunities

PSC conducted evaluation activities—including data analyses, surveys, interviews, and market and benchmarking studies—to meet the evaluation goals. PSC designed evaluation activities to provide an understanding of participant experiences and impacts, participation barriers, efforts to ensure the availability of affordable housing in the area, and the experience of other cities working to ensure housing affordability and equitable access to benefits of economic growth, reinvestment, and revitalization.

The evaluation revealed findings related to the program's impact on housing and financial security and the effectiveness of its operations. Overall, Stay Midtown reduces housing burden for its participants, allows many to meet affordability targets, and helps them better afford essential items, such as food, transportation, and prescription medications. Additionally, the program allows people to stay in their existing Midtown homes, when they otherwise would have had to seek other options elsewhere. Participants rated nearly every aspect of Stay Midtown highly and commended program staff for their willingness to help and their consistent communication. While participants were satisfied with the level and duration of rental subsidies, concerns about housing affordability remain, as many are reaching the end of the three-year participation window.

The evaluation also assessed alignment between program strategy and market needs. Analysis of Detroit's and Midtown's housing markets shows that rents are still increasing and that the demand for affordable housing outweighs supply. While the program has directly benefited participants, the availability of affordable housing Midtown still trails demand. However, Capital Impact and MDI are well positioned to participate in broader efforts to influence this market in conjunction with other partners, especially local government, working in the same space.

Introduction

Program Origin

In 2013, the City of Detroit declared bankruptcy. Just 13 months later, it recovered as a result of an innovative partnership between city and state government, business leaders, and Detroit's philanthropic community to restructure the debt. Continued investment from philanthropy, city government, and impact investors, such as Capital Impact, resulted in thousands of renovated and new housing units. However, demand exceeded supply, which provided an incentive and opportunity for property owners to increase rent.

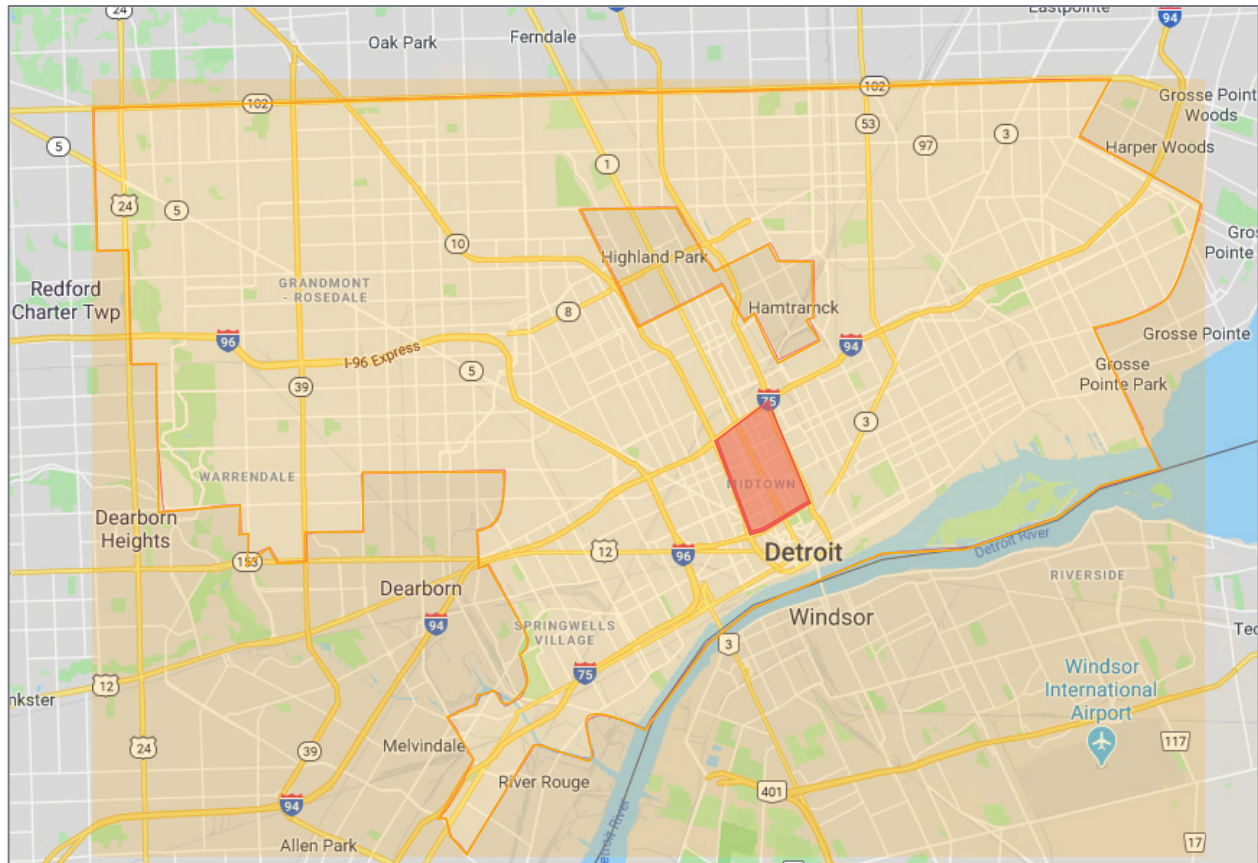
A study by SmartAsset, a financial technology company, identified ten cities in the United States that experienced the highest rent increases, with Detroit topping the list. SmartAsset reported that while Detroit experienced the highest rent increase of more than 48 percent from 2014 to 2017, household income growth lagged, increasing by less than 18 percent during that same period. This resulted in a 9.8 percent increase in the percentage of income spent on rent. For an average Detroit household, nearly 47 percent of their income was spent on rent (Miller 2018).

Capital Impact and MDI sought to respond to this trend with a programmatic intervention. Together, they launched Stay Midtown, a program aimed at addressing an anticipated two- to four-year supply gap for low- to moderate-income households at risk of displacement in the rapidly redeveloping Midtown area. The objective was to help long-term rental households maintain housing security and decrease housing burden while anticipating increased supply of affordable housing for households across all income levels by 2019 or 2020.

Midtown Neighborhood

The Midtown neighborhood lies just north of downtown Detroit and is bordered by the Edsel Ford Freeway (I-94) to the north, the Lodge Freeway (M-10) to the west, Chrysler Freeway (I-75) to the east, and the Fisher Freeway (I-75) to the south (Exhibit 1). The neighborhood is home to many organizations and businesses including, but not limited to, Wayne State University, the Detroit Institute of Arts, the main branch of the Detroit Public Library, Detroit Medical Center, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, and Henry Ford Hospital. Woodward Avenue bisects Midtown and maintains a variety of unique restaurants and shops to serve residents and visitors.

EXHIBIT 1. Midtown Neighborhood of Detroit



Source: Google Maps 2020.

Program Overview

Stay Midtown is a rental assistance program for low- to moderate-income households living in Midtown who want to continue living in the neighborhood but find it increasingly difficult to do so as a result of increasing rents. The program provides up to \$1,500 annually in rental assistance for three years to help households reduce housing cost burdens and reach targeted levels of housing affordability. To be eligible for assistance, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Be a current resident of a property within program boundaries
- Have a household income between 30 percent and 80 percent of AMI¹
- Experience a housing cost burden of more than 30 percent of total household income
- Be ineligible or unable to receive other federal housing subsidies/vouchers or other housing assistance programs

¹ Originally, the program was targeted to households with income between 50 percent and 80 percent of AMI. Program eligibility was expanded to respond to market needs and to increase participation.

Program boundaries, as shown in Exhibit 2, extend beyond Midtown, approximately six blocks to the north (to Philadelphia Street) and to the west (to Rosa Parks Boulevard) in order to increase the number of eligible households. Additionally, the program expanded its initial income eligibility threshold—from 50 percent to 80 percent of AMI to 30 percent to 80 percent of AMI—to address resident needs and expand eligibility.

EXHIBIT 2. Stay Midtown Program Area



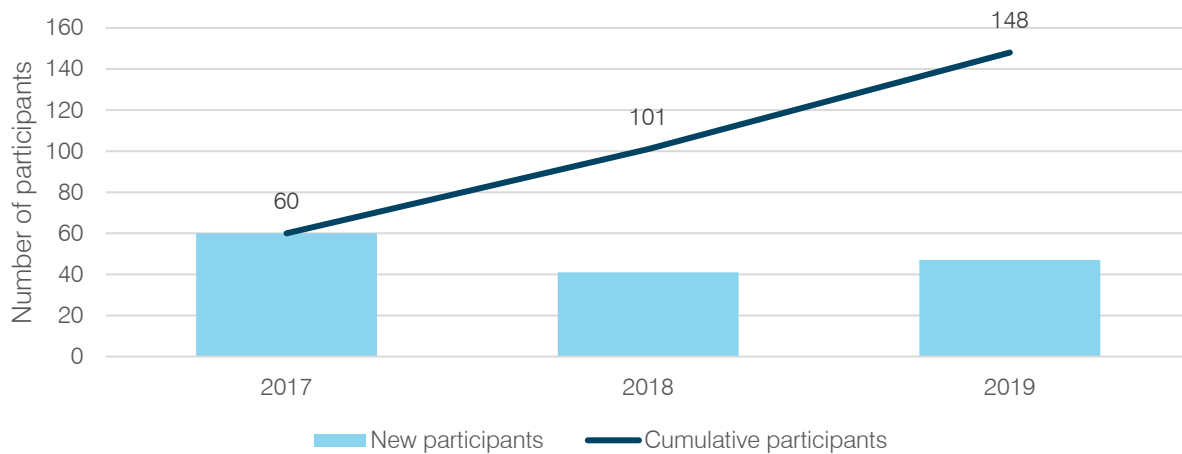
Source: Google Maps 2020.

In addition to the established criteria, other factors are considered. Applicants should be:

- In good standing with their landlord (e.g., able to demonstrate timely payment of rent)
- A Midtown resident for at least two years
- Not be full-time students or reside in university housing or other temporary housing options

By the end of 2019, Stay Midtown had enrolled 148 participants, all of whom received rental assistance (Exhibit 3). Over the course of the program, 21 participants left before the end of the three-year term because they moved (38 percent), increased their income (19 percent), or cited other reasons (42 percent). In addition, the Stay Midtown program provided relocation assistance of up to \$3,000 for four individuals—funding was used for moving reimbursements (rental truck, moving supplies, etc.), security deposit assistance, and potentially first month’s rent.

EXHIBIT 3. Stay Midtown Participation by Year

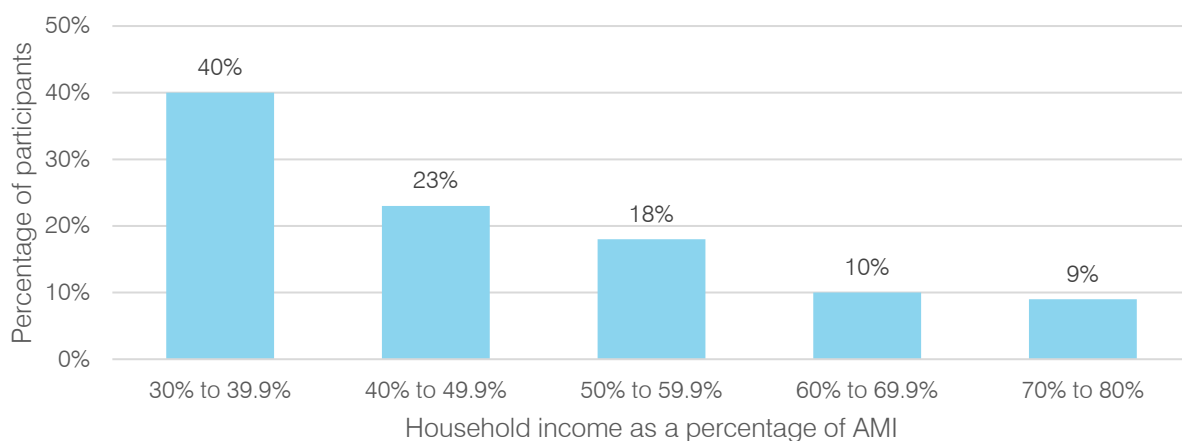


Note: $N = 148$.

Source: PSC analysis of participant data as of December 31, 2019.

Participants with incomes between 30 percent and 50 percent of AMI accounted for nearly two-thirds of participants, while those between 50 percent and 80 percent accounted for 37 percent (Exhibit 4).

EXHIBIT 4. Stay Midtown Participation, by Income Level

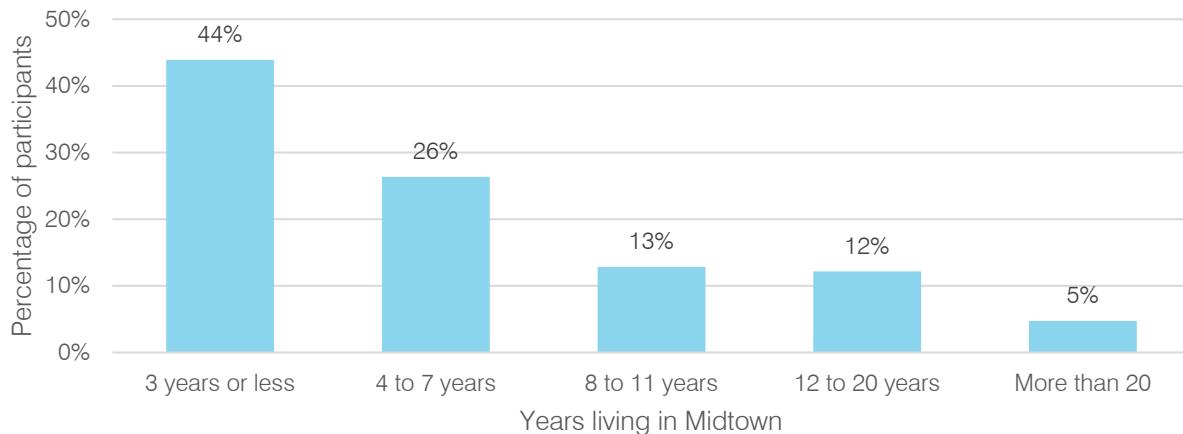


Note: $N = 148$.

Source: PSC analysis of participant data.

As shown in Exhibit 5, 44 percent of participants had lived in the neighborhood for three years or less when entering the program, 39 percent lived there between four and 11 years, and 17 percent lived there for 12 or more.

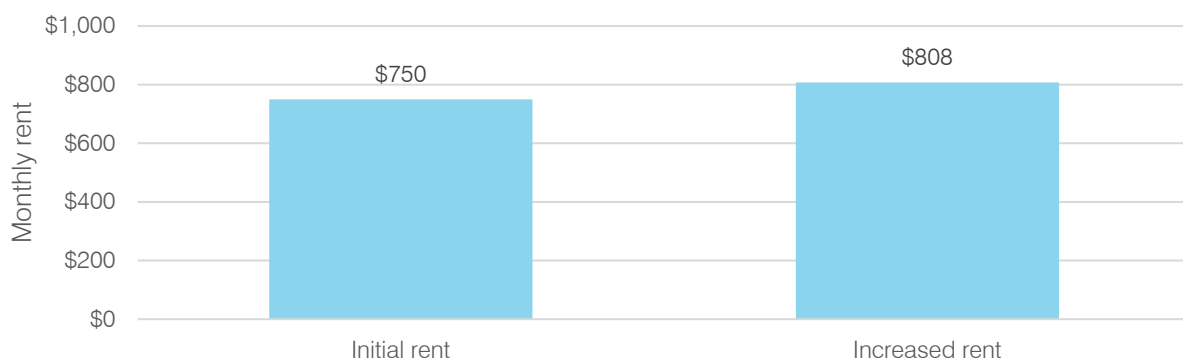
EXHIBIT 5. Years of Occupancy in the Midtown Neighborhood



Note: $N = 148$.
Source: PSC analysis of participant data as of December 31, 2019.

Exhibit 6 shows the initial average rent paid by program participants prior to enrollment and their increased rent levels (before subsidies) as they enrolled.² Nearly 75 percent reported rent increases as they entered the program, with totals ranging from \$8 to \$530 per month. The average rent increase at the time of enrollment was \$58 per month. Utility costs add an average of \$75 to the total monthly housing cost of each Stay Midtown participant.

EXHIBIT 6. Participant Rent Costs

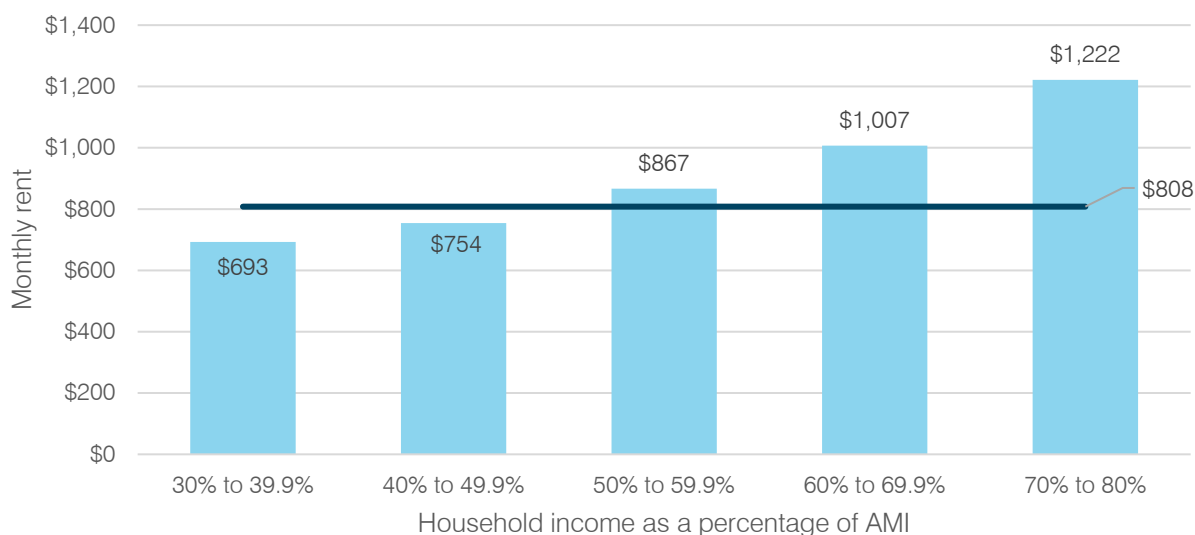


Note: $N = 148$.
Source: PSC analysis of participant data as of December 31, 2019.

² Participants demonstrate rent increases through subsequent rental agreements.

Rent paid by participating households varied significantly across income levels. Exhibit 7 shows the average rent paid by income level. Those with lowest income (30 to 39.9 percent of AMI) had monthly rental costs about 14 percent less than the average participant, while those with the highest income (70 to 80 percent of AMI) paid over 50 percent of the average program rent of \$808 per month.

EXHIBIT 7. Participant Rent Costs by Income Level



Note: $N = 148$.

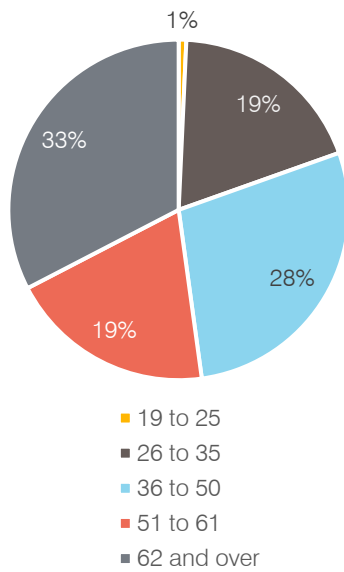
Source: PSC analysis of participant data as of December 31, 2019.
of participant data as of December 31, 2019.

Additional demographic characteristics, including age, race and ethnicity, education levels, and household occupancy are included in Exhibit 8. As shown:

- Of participants, 33 percent are 62 years old or older, 19 percent are between 51 and 61, 28 percent are between 36 and 50, 19 percent are between 26 and 35, and just 1 percent are between 19 and 25.
- Of participants, 87 percent identify as black or African American, 6 percent as Asian, 2 percent as white/Caucasian, and 1 percent as another race, ethnicity, or origin.
- The highest level of education of 5 percent of participants was a graduate degree, 17 percent have a bachelor's degree, 33 percent have some college education, 27 percent earned a high-school diploma or a GED, and 6 percent did not graduate from high school.
- Of participants, 58 percent live alone, 25 percent live with one other person, and the remaining 16 percent live with three or more people.

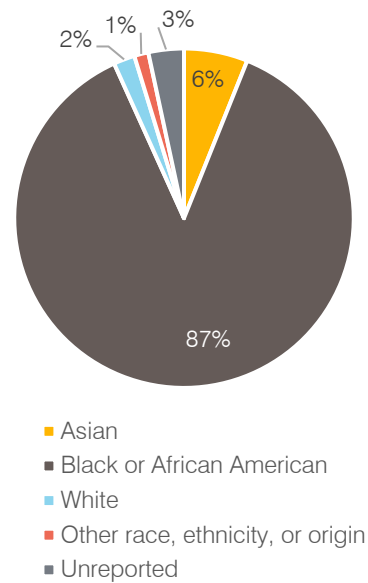
EXHIBIT 8. Participant Demographics

Age Distribution



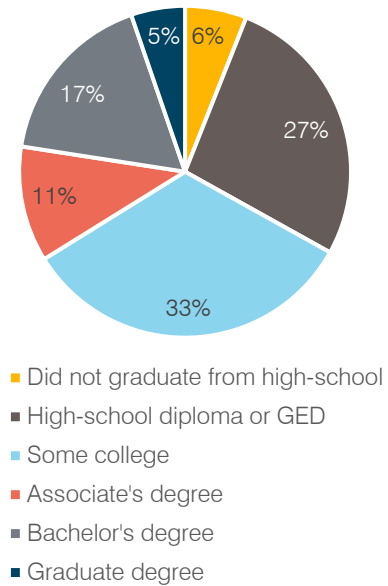
Note: $N = 138$. Not all participants provided age.
Source: PSC analysis of program participant data.

Race or Ethnicity



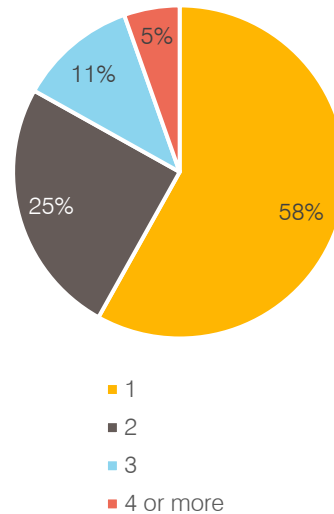
Note: $N = 148$.
Source: PSC analysis of program participant data.

Highest Level of Education



Note: $N = 133$. Not all participants provided education level.
Source: PSC analysis of program participant data.

Household Occupancy

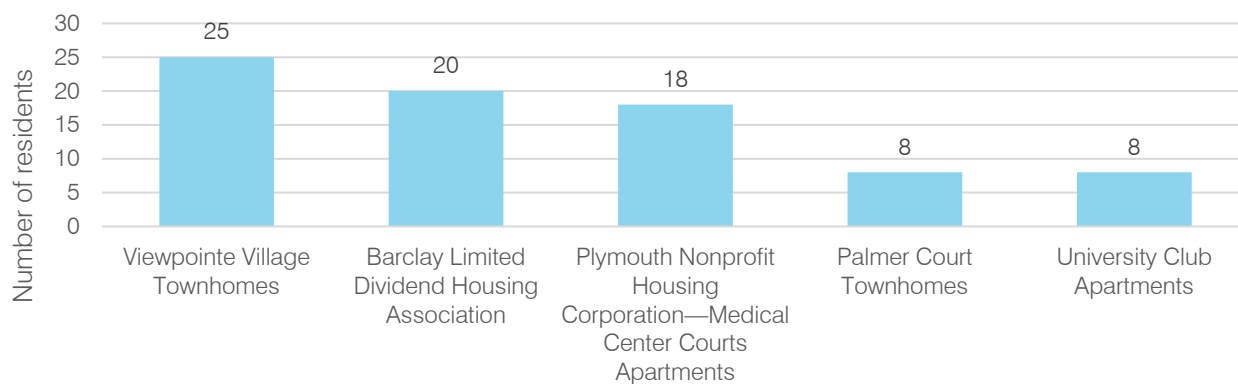


Note: $N = 148$.
Source: PSC analysis of program participant data.

Property Managers and Landlords

Property manager and landlord agreement is necessary for a household to participate in the Stay Midtown, but the program had no other restrictions for housing within the program boundaries. In total, 148 participants lived in 37 complexes or properties, five of which accounted for 50 percent of participant housing (Exhibit 9).

EXHIBIT 9. Complexes in Which Stay Midtown Participants Reside

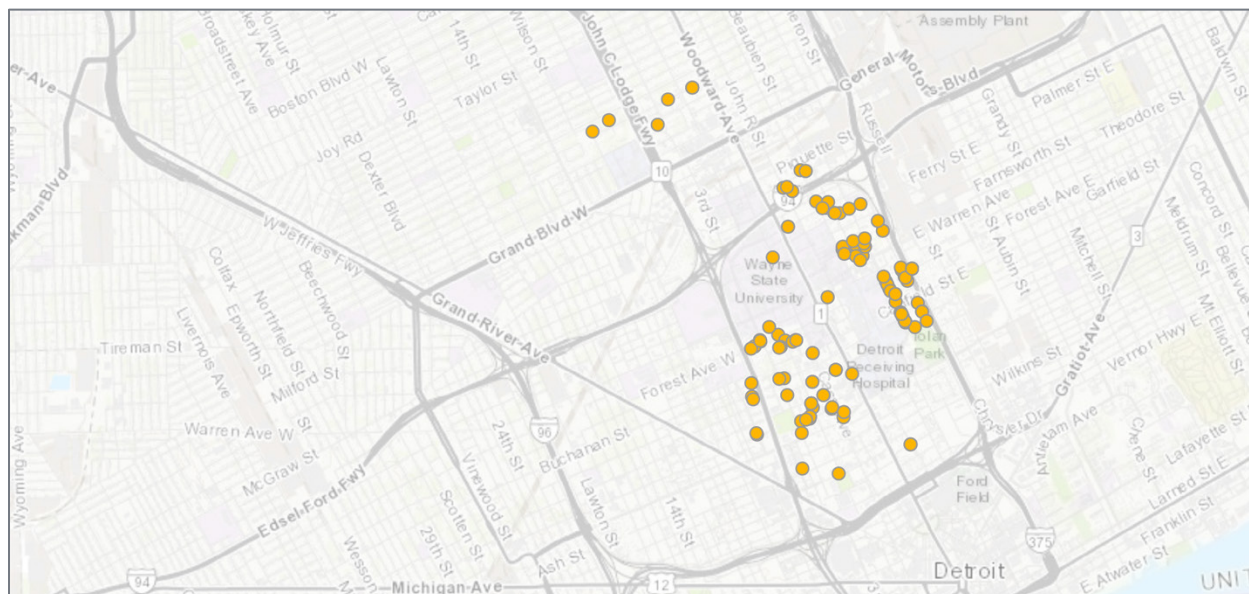


Top housing complexes in which participants reside

Note: $N=79$ of 148 participants.
Source: PSC analysis of participant data.

Exhibit 10 shows the location of residence for Stay Midtown participants within the program boundaries. Up to ten participants lived at any single address.

EXHIBIT 10. Participant Locations



Source: PSC analysis of participant data.

Evaluation Approach

Capital Impact engaged Public Sector Consultants—a nonpartisan research firm based in Lansing—to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of Stay Midtown. PSC worked closely with Capital Impact and MDI to determine evaluation goals and objectives and to develop an evaluation framework that aligned evaluation activities to the identified goals and objectives.

The primary goals of the evaluation included:

- Evaluate Stay Midtown’s impact on participants’ overall housing and financial security
- Evaluate the program’s strengths, challenges, and future opportunities

The second evaluation goal encompassed two key themes. The first is the alignment of the program with participants’ needs, including satisfaction levels and ease of participation; the second is the program’s effectiveness within the Midtown housing market. These themes are based on those served and the nature of the affordable housing market in a period of rapid reinvestment and recovery of Detroit and Midtown.

Exhibit 11 illustrates the framework that guided the evaluation of the Stay Midtown program. As indicated in the framework, each activity sought to inform one or more evaluation goals

EXHIBIT 11. Evaluation Framework

Evaluation objectives	Evaluation Activities					
	Participant data analysis	Participant surveys and interviews	Nonparticipant surveys	Stakeholder interviews	Market analysis	Benchmarking
Program impact on housing and financial security	✓	✓	✓			
Program ability to align with participant needs		✓	✓			✓
Program effectiveness within the Midtown housing market		✓		✓	✓	✓

A description of the evaluation activities conducted from mid-2019 through early 2020 follows.

- **Participant data analysis:** Analysis of a rich data set from MDI on participant demographics, rental costs, income, and tenure in the Midtown neighborhood.
- **Participant surveys and interviews:** Multimode (online and paper) surveys and in-depth interviews with program participants to collect information about program awareness, participation experience, housing preferences, perceptions of Midtown's revitalization, and the impact of the program on the ability to afford other essential items. A total of 44 participant survey responses were received, yielding a 35 percent response rate based on number of participants at the time the survey was conducted. In addition, 12 participant interviews were conducted; these interviews were split between survey respondents and nonrespondents.
- **Nonparticipant surveys:** Online survey with nonparticipants (those who were determined to be eligible for the program through prescreening but did not enroll) about program experience, housing preferences, and participation barriers. A total of 24 nonparticipant surveys were conducted, representing approximately 20 percent of responses.
- **Stakeholder interviews:** Interviews with philanthropic partners, community development organizations, property developers, local employers, and other stakeholders to determine perceptions of neighborhood needs, commitment to neighborhood diversity, trajectory for affordable housing availability, and potential opportunities for coordination.
- **Market analysis:** Assessment of the Midtown housing market since 2016, with a focus on the availability of affordable housing and changes in rental costs.
- **Benchmarking:** Study of other programs working to encourage resident retention in neighborhoods or cities where revitalization impacts the availability of affordable housing and drives increased rental rates. Interviews were conducted with program managers to identify best practices and capture lessons learned.

PSC met frequently with Capital Impact and MDI staff to discuss progress, challenges to data collection, and preliminary findings.

Evaluation Findings

The results of PSC's evaluation centered around three main areas that align with the evaluation goals:

- The program's impact on participants' overall housing and financial security
- The program's ability to align with participant needs, overall satisfaction with the program, and ease of participation
- The program's effectiveness in the Midtown housing market and efforts to expand availability of affordable housing

The findings in each of these areas are described in detail in the following sections. The findings are followed by recommendations for Stay Midtown's consideration as it continues assisting residents.

Program Impact on Participants' Overall Housing and Financial Security

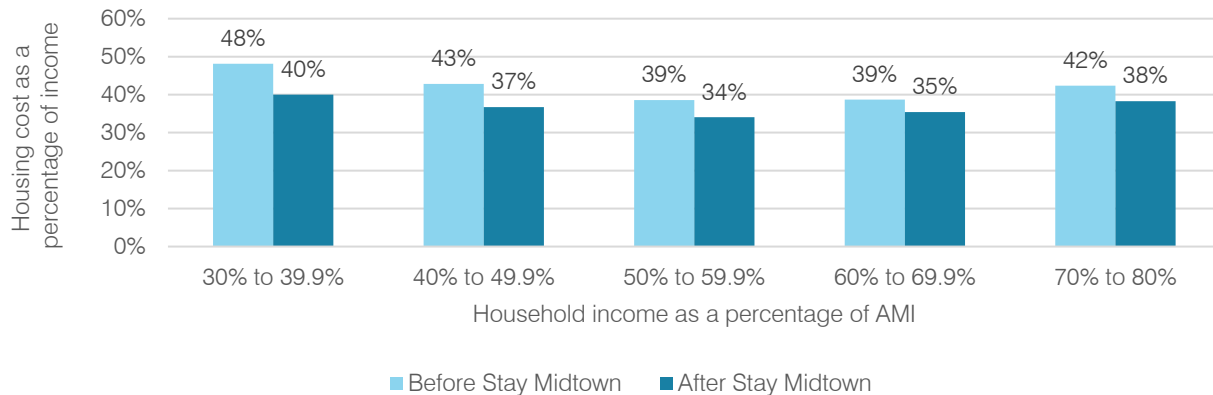
Stay Midtown provides funding to eligible renter households to help reduce the burden of housing costs and keep residents in their community. One of the evaluation's primary research goals is to assess the program's impact on participants' overall housing and financial security. To do this, the evaluation team reviewed and analyzed data related to cost burden, housing stability, housing choice, and access to safe, affordable housing.

Housing Cost Burden

The accepted standard for housing affordability in the United States (U.S.) is the percentage of income spent on housing. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (U.S. HUD), housing expenditures that exceed 30 percent of household income indicate a housing affordability problem, with expenditures of more than 30 percent referred to as "housing cost burden" (U.S. HUD n.d.b).

Exhibit 12 shows the percentage of income that participants spend on housing costs (rent and utilities) with and without the Stay Midtown housing subsidy at different AMI levels. Generally, the percentage of household income spent on housing decreases after participants receive Stay Midtown's rent subsidy. Program participants with the lowest incomes, 30 percent to 39.9 percent of AMI, had the highest housing cost burdens, but they experienced the greatest percentage decrease in housing cost measured as a percentage of income as a result of the subsidies (8 percent). Reduction in housing costs as percentage of income for individuals with incomes from 40 percent to 69.9 percent ranged from 5 percent to 6 percent, while those with incomes from 70 percent to 80 percent of AMI saw a 4 percent reduction.

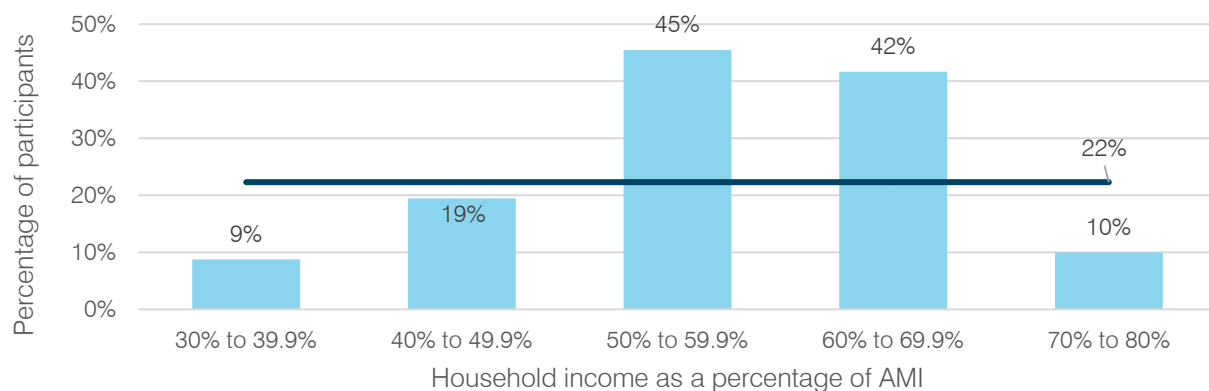
EXHIBIT 12. Housing Burden by AMI Level



Note: $N = 148$.
Source: PSC analysis of participant data as of December 31, 2019.

Exhibit 13 shows the percentage of program participants for which the target housing expenditure of 30 percent was achieved. Individuals with AMI levels between 50 percent and 70 percent were most likely to reach the target level of housing expenditures, which indicates affordability and confirms Stay Midtown's original program design of targeting households in the same AMI range. Only 10 percent of participants with incomes between 70 and 80 percent of AMI reached the target expenditure level. This may be because those participants had disproportionately higher rents.³ Overall, 22 percent of program participants reached the housing affordability target.

EXHIBIT 13. Percentage of Participants Achieving Housing Affordability Targets by AMI Level



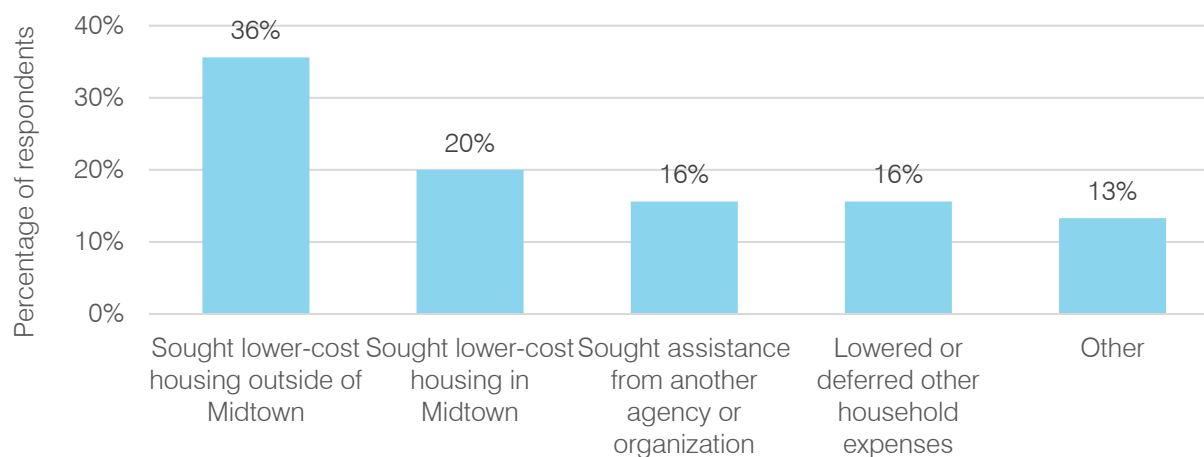
Note: $N = 148$.
Source: PSC analysis of participant data as of December 31, 2019.

³ See Exhibit 7. Participants with incomes between 70 percent and 80 percent of AMI had rental costs 50 percent higher than the average program participant.

Housing Stability

One of Stay Midtown’s primary goals is to enable housing stability for its clients and provide an avenue in which they can remain within the neighborhood. Thus far, the program is largely successful in achieving this goal. Without the opportunity to participate in Stay Midtown, more than half of participant survey respondents (56 percent) would have sought lower-cost housing, while more than one-third would have sought housing outside of Midtown (Exhibit 14).

EXHIBIT 14. What Program Participants Would Have Done Without Stay Midtown



Note: *N* = 45.

Source: PSC analysis of participant survey.

Survey question: Had the Stay Midtown program not existed, what would you have been most likely to do?

In addition to providing rent subsidies, Stay Midtown also offers relocation support, on a case-by-case basis, for those interested in using their subsidy to find more affordable housing options. Relocation support may include down-payment assistance, reimbursement for moving expenses, and help with locating other affordable options. Interviewed program participants said that both Stay Midtown’s rental assistance and relocation support are necessary to prevent resident displacement because the area is becoming increasingly expensive. Many interviewed participants want to continue living in the neighborhood and participating in the program due to anticipated rent increases and continued affordability challenges:

“I would love to continue in the program for a fourth year.”

—

“I have enjoyed being in the program because, as a senior, I have a set amount of money to work with. I don’t receive raises in my pension, part-time work, or Social Security, so it is important that a program such as Stay Midtown exists. I just wish that it could be adjusted longer for committed Detroit residents.”

—

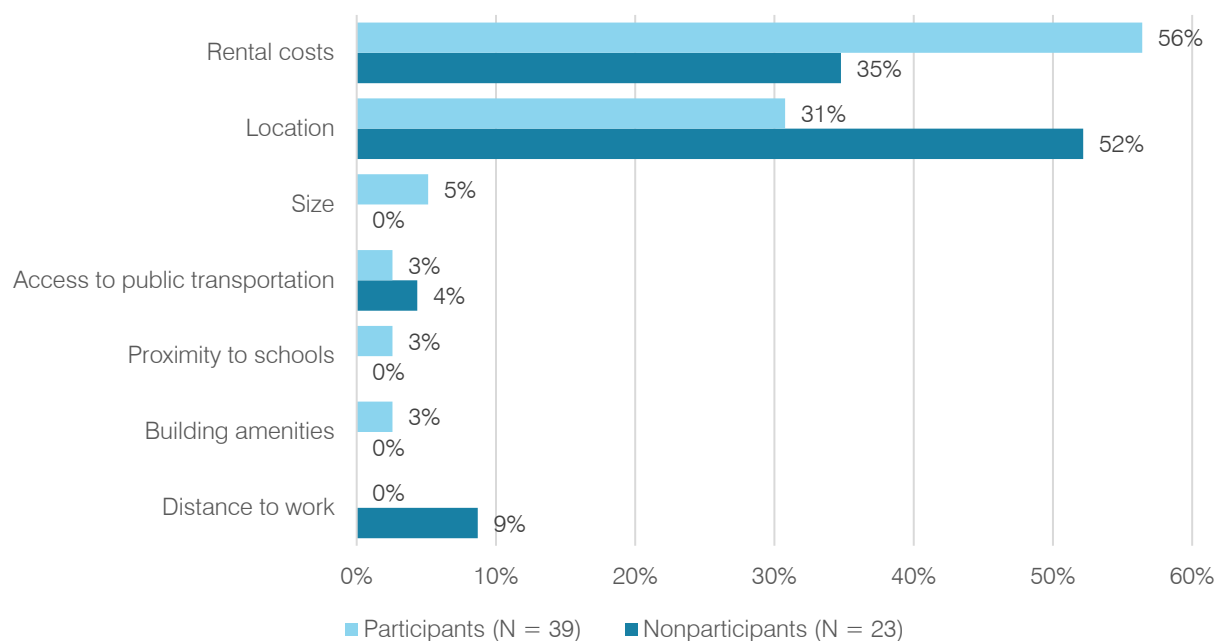
“I just wish I could get the support longer.”

Housing Choice and Access to Safe, Affordable Housing

Housing choice is an important indicator for assessing the program's impact on overall housing security. Through its design, Stay Midtown supports housing choice among program participants and allows them to remain in their current homes.

Participant and nonparticipant survey respondents exhibited significant differences in housing preferences. Of participant respondents, 56 percent said that rental costs were the most important feature when seeking housing, compared to 35 percent of surveyed nonparticipants (Exhibit 15). Location was the most important feature for nonparticipant respondents at 52 percent, compared to just 31 percent of surveyed participants. Apartment size, proximity to schools, and building amenities were additional considerations for participants. Distance to work and access to public transportation were top priorities for some nonparticipants. Neither participants nor nonparticipants rated building age, proximity to healthcare facilities, or expected utility costs as the most important consideration when seeking housing.

EXHIBIT 15. Importance of Selected Housing Features



Note: Data represents the percentage of respondents who rated each factor as the most important consideration when selecting housing.

Source: PSC analysis of participant and nonparticipant survey responses.

Survey question: Below are several factors that one might consider when selecting housing. Please number these elements in order of importance with one being most important and ten being the least important.

Surveyed program participants shared they would like information and resources about all affordable housing options in the neighborhood at the beginning of the program to help inform housing choice in case they would be interested in moving. Some mentioned difficulty finding other affordable, safe options on their own or being unsure of how to locate other options.

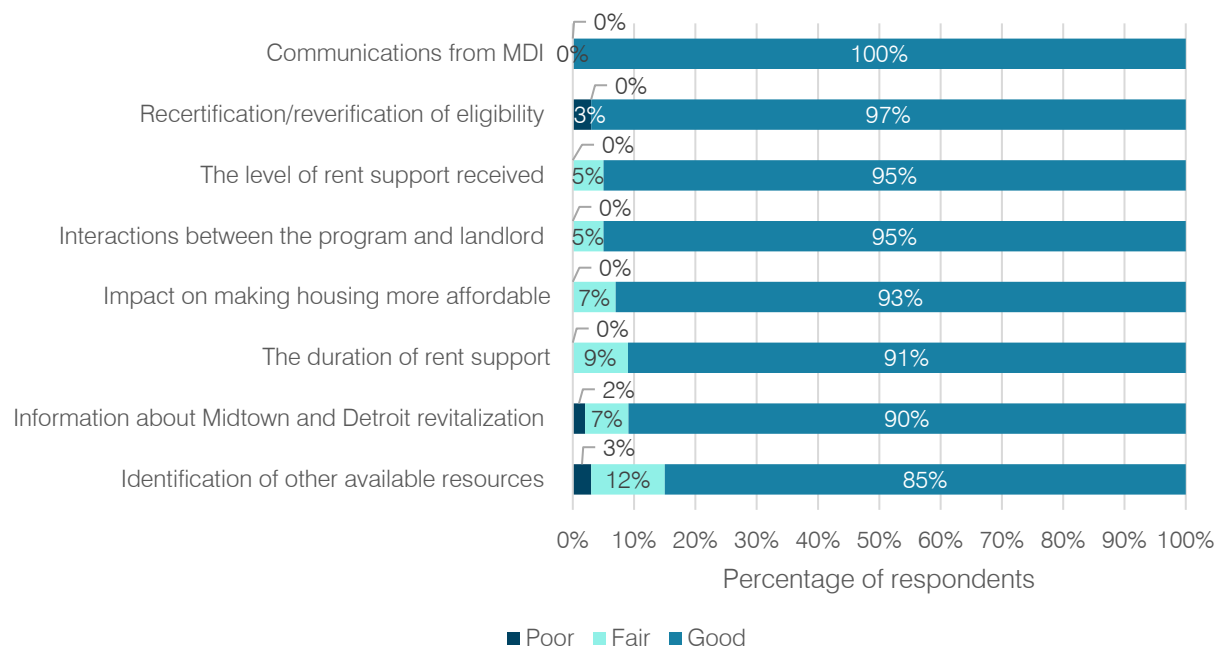
Program Ability to Align with Participant Needs

The evaluation's research objectives included an assessment of Stay Midtown's ability to align with participant needs. The evaluation team looked to program operations as well as participant engagement and satisfaction with the program to assess alignment.

Overall Participant Satisfaction

Most participant survey respondents were highly satisfied with Stay Midtown, especially with communication from MDI, the recertification/verification of eligibility process, interactions between the program and landlord, the level of rent support received, the program's impact on making housing more affordable, the duration of support, and the information provided about Midtown and Detroit. However, 15 percent of those surveyed indicated that identification of other available resources could be improved (Exhibit 16).

EXHIBIT 16. Participant Rating of Program Components



Note: *N* = 34 to 45.

Source: PSC analysis of participant survey.

Survey question: How would you rate the following aspects of the Stay Midtown program?

In addition, many survey respondents provided written comments with their ratings, describing high levels of satisfaction with the program overall:

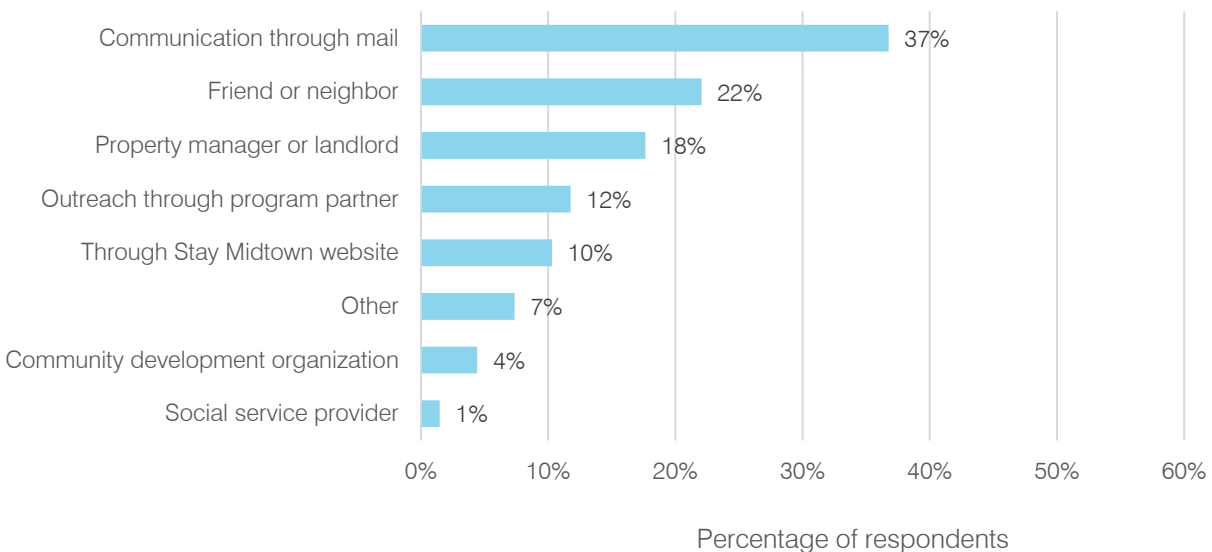
"[The program manager] has been incredibly helpful in assisting with my individual situation and those around me who have lived in the area and fear displacement on a daily basis. He and the other staff have always been respectful and understanding."

“I can surely say that my experience with the Stay Midtown program was absolutely wonderful and so helpful, especially when times were hard for me financially. It is a pleasure to be a member of the program. You are a blessing.”

Effectiveness of Communication

As noted in the previous section, program communication was the highest-rated aspect for surveyed program participants, which is demonstrated through engagement with program staff and utilization of a range of communication channels. Of all survey respondents, including program participants and nonparticipants, 37 percent said they heard about Stay Midtown through communication via mail, typically by flyer or postcard; 22 percent learned through friends or neighbors; and 18 percent learned through their property manager or landlord (Exhibit 17). Those responding “other” said they learned of the program through a coworker, teacher, or family member.

EXHIBIT 17. How Survey Respondents Heard About Stay Midtown



Note: $N = 68$.

Source: PSC analysis of participant and nonparticipant surveys.

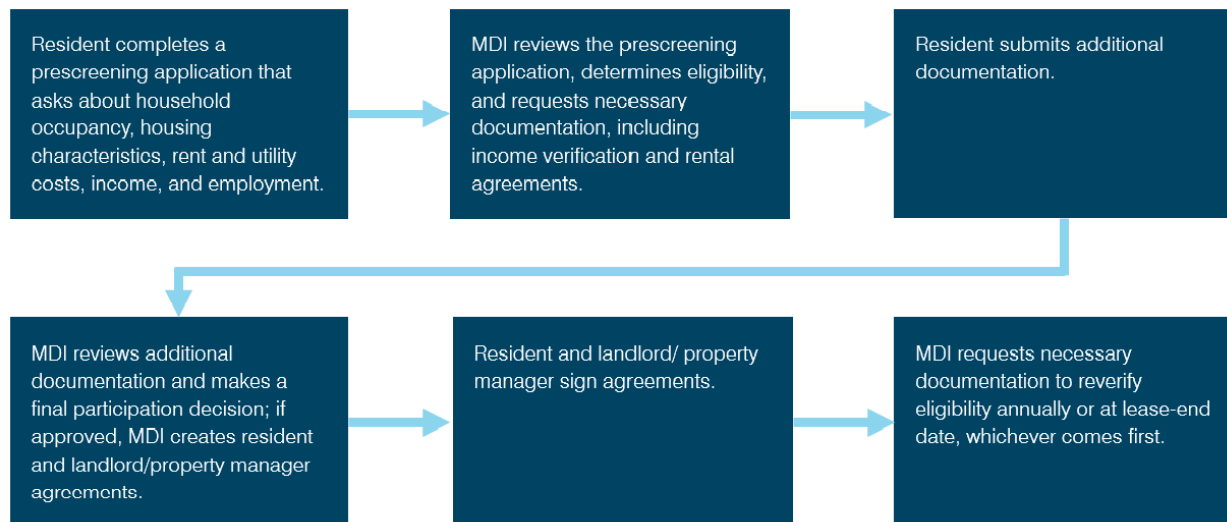
Survey question: How did you hear about the Stay Midtown program? Check all that apply.

During interviews, several program participants expressed frustration with the lack of communication between themselves and their leasing office/property manager, especially related to when payments are received from Stay Midtown. Stay Midtown provides participants with a schedule for quarterly payments; however, landlords/property managers have different approaches for applying these payments (e.g., some may apply the whole payment in the month it was received, while some may apply one-third of it each month of the quarter). This created uncertainty for participants about how much rent they should be paying monthly. Participants shared it would be beneficial to receive a notification from Stay Midtown program staff or landlord/property managers when the subsidy amount had been sent or received and how it was applied to their rent.

Satisfaction with the Application and Reapplication Process

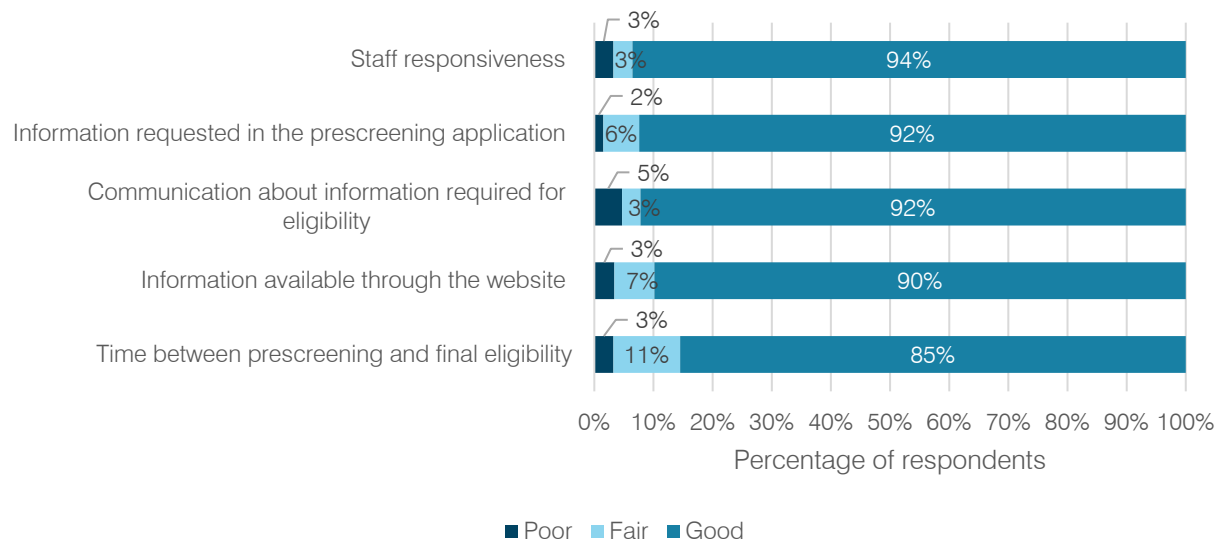
Applicants can complete the application online or on a paper form, which increases accessibility for potential participants. After submitting a prescreening application, individuals deemed eligible are asked to submit documentation to verify income, rental agreements, and other information. After a final eligibility decision, the individual and landlord sign the required documents. Program participants must resubmit verification documentation each year to remain eligible. Exhibit 18 illustrates the application and eligibility process.

EXHIBIT 18. Application and Eligibility Screening Process for Stay Midtown



Both program participants and nonparticipants were asked to rate various aspects of the application process. Overall, respondents rated the process highly. Staff responsiveness was rated the highest, with 94 percent rating it positively. Some indicated that the total time between prescreening and eligibility was fair or poor, at 11 percent and 3 percent, respectively (Exhibit 19).

EXHIBIT 19. Applicant Rating of the Stay Midtown Application Process



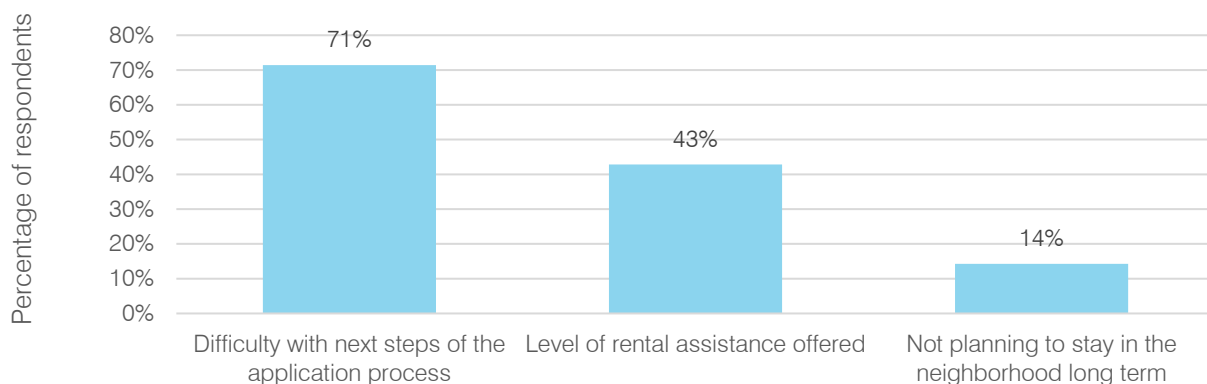
Note: $N = 59$ to 66 .

Source: PSC analysis of participant and nonparticipant surveys.

Survey question: Please rate the following aspects of applying to the Stay Midtown program.

While program participants rated all aspects of the application process highly, nonparticipants reported challenges later. More than 70 percent of nonparticipants said that difficulties with the next steps of the application process contributed to a lack of follow-through (Exhibit 20). In participant interviews, some said that the number or types of documents required to verify information, including income verification, rental agreements, and court documents, was complicated and occasionally difficult to obtain. However, they indicated program staff were very helpful and responsive to their questions.

EXHIBIT 20. Reasons Why Nonparticipants Did Not Participate in Stay Midtown



Note: $N = 14$.

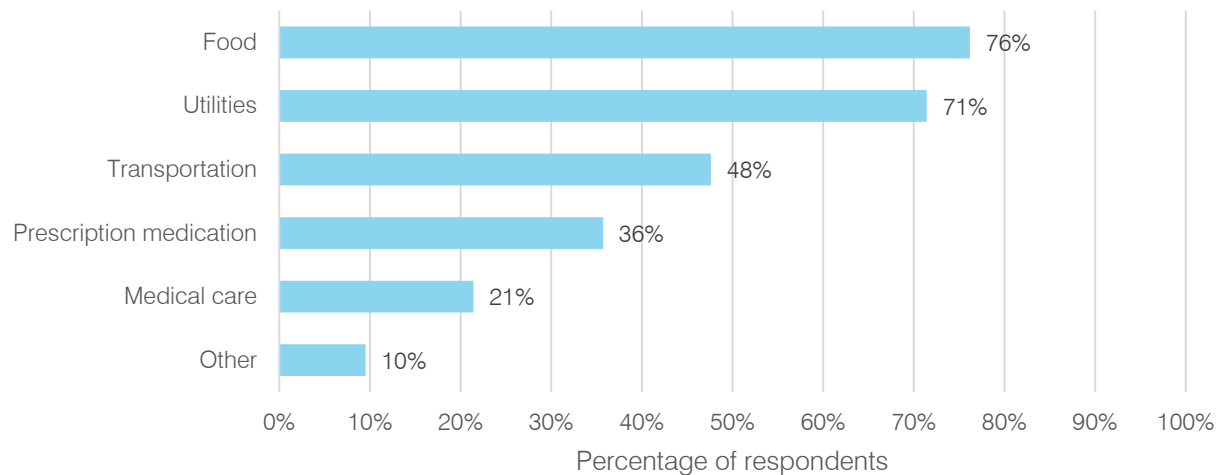
Source: PSC analysis of nonparticipant survey.

Survey question: What factors influenced your decision not to participate in the program? Mark all that apply.

Meeting Participant Needs

Because of Stay Midtown's program features, including the direct flow of monetary resources to subsidize rental costs, it effectively frees up participant resources for other use. Of surveyed program participants, 95 percent said it is easier to afford other essential items, such as household expenses and medical care, because of their participation. Most (76 percent) said they were able to better afford food, while almost half (48 percent) said they were better able to afford transportation (Exhibit 21).

EXHIBIT 21. Increased Affordability of Essential Needs for Program Participants



Note: $N = 42$.

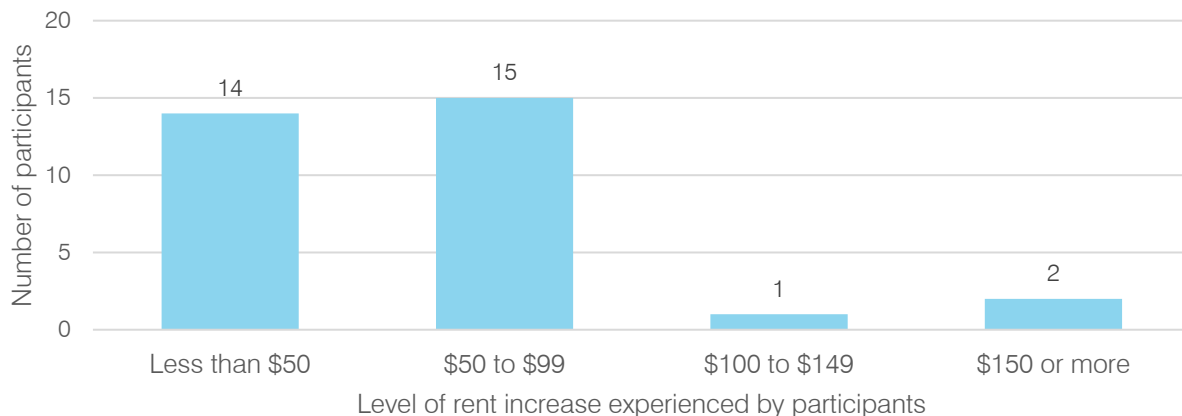
Source: PSC analysis of participant survey.

Survey question: Which essential items were you better able to afford as a result of participating in the Stay Midtown program?

However, all 12 program participants who were interviewed said Stay Midtown could partner with other social service or community organizations to increase access to other supports that could reduce their overall household expenses, increase their income, and improve overall quality of life.

Another challenge that many faced while enrolled in the program was an increase in their rent. Of the 148 total participants, 62 were enrolled in the program for two or three years.⁴ Of those, 32 faced rent increases during their program tenure, with increases ranging to from \$17 to \$277 (Exhibit 22).

⁴ Longitudinal data are available for only a subset of program participants. Data is unavailable for participants who either exited the program early (21 of 148 participants) or have not been enrolled long enough to have gone through the recertification process (65 of 148 participants).

EXHIBIT 22. Participants' Rent Increases During Stay Midtown Enrollment

Note: *N* = 32 of 62 multiyear participants.

Source: PSC analysis of participant data as of December 31, 2019.

Program Effectiveness in the Midtown Housing Market

Throughout the duration of the Stay Midtown program, the Midtown neighborhood experienced significant commercial and residential redevelopment. Capital Impact noted in its 2016 study on displacement and relocation that increasing rents and development pressures were resulting in the displacement of low- and moderate-income residents, noting the likelihood that this trend would persist without intervention (Frost et al. 2016). The study noted this risk was greater in naturally occurring affordable housing available at below-market rates compared to subsidized housing. To better understand the program's effectiveness in context of the Midtown housing market, several factors were analyzed:

- Participant perceptions and experience of Midtown's revitalization
- Status of the program's housing market assumptions
- Comparison between similar programs around the country
- Program ability to influence affordable housing development in Midtown

Participant Perception and Experience of Neighborhood Revitalization

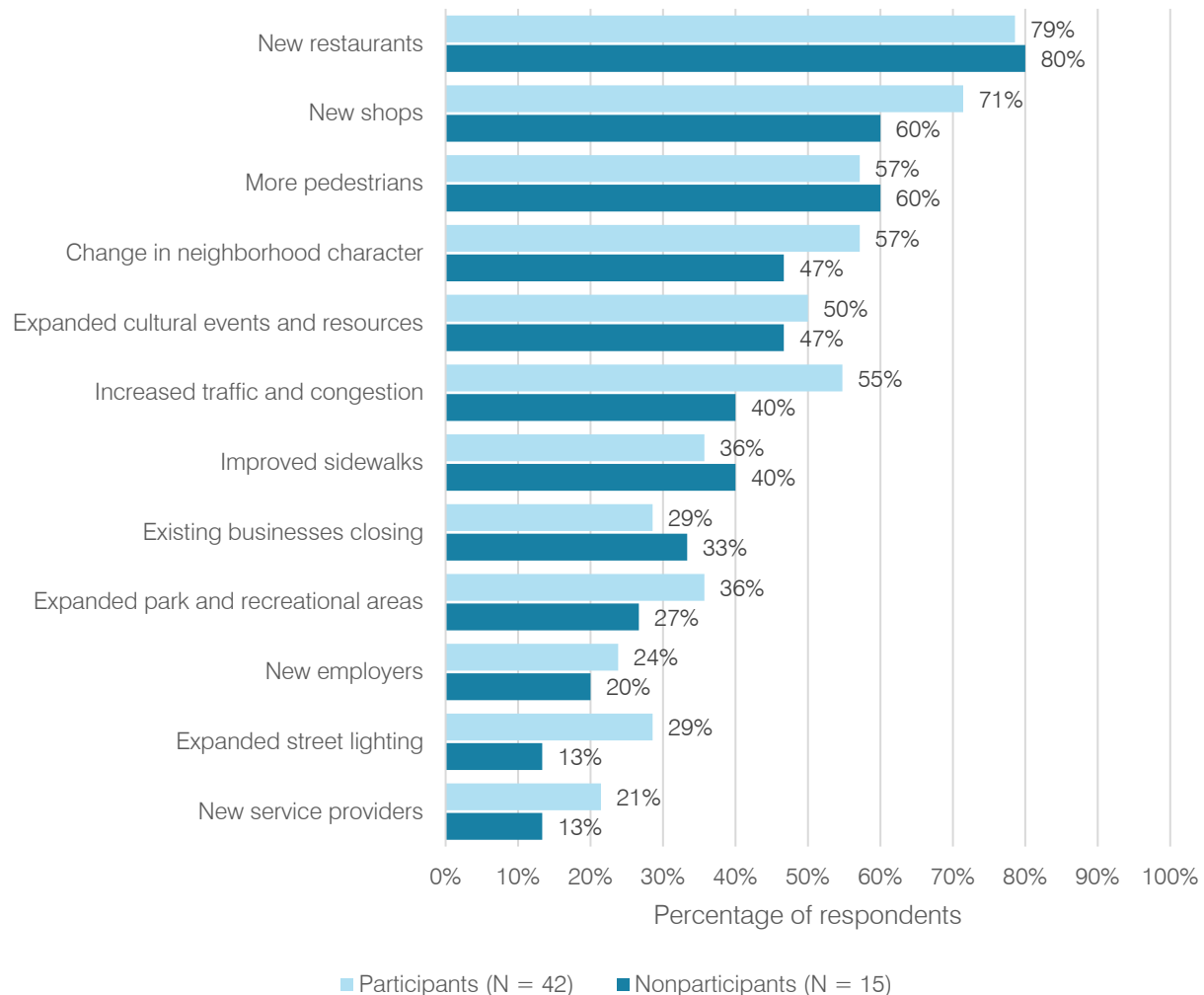
Over the past decade, Midtown residents have witnessed a period of significant investment and revitalization from businesses, government, philanthropic organizations, and nonprofits. These investments have included new forms of transportation, improvements to public infrastructure, new construction and renovations of vacant property, and the opening of many new businesses. This activity has created jobs, provided entertainment and cultural opportunities, and brought needed goods and services to the community. In interviews with program participants, many spoke highly of such changes, noting that the new amenities were a major reason why they wanted to remain in the neighborhood.

It is not possible to draw a direct line between Stay Midtown and an individual program participant's connection to neighborhood revitalization, as the program does not offer specific services focused on connecting participants with neighborhood benefits. However, by helping participants afford to continue living in Midtown and in the proximity of these amenities, the program provides an opportunity for these

long-term residents to participate in the revitalization they helped create and witnessed over the years. Also, by supplementing rental costs, Stay Midtown frees up money that participants can use to invest back into the local economy.

Both participant and nonparticipant survey respondents reported having observed changes to the neighborhood's character. Overall, both groups reported similar changes, such as more pedestrians, improved sidewalks, expanded cultural events and resources, and new restaurants (Exhibit 23).

EXHIBIT 23. Survey Respondents' Observed Changes in the Midtown Neighborhood

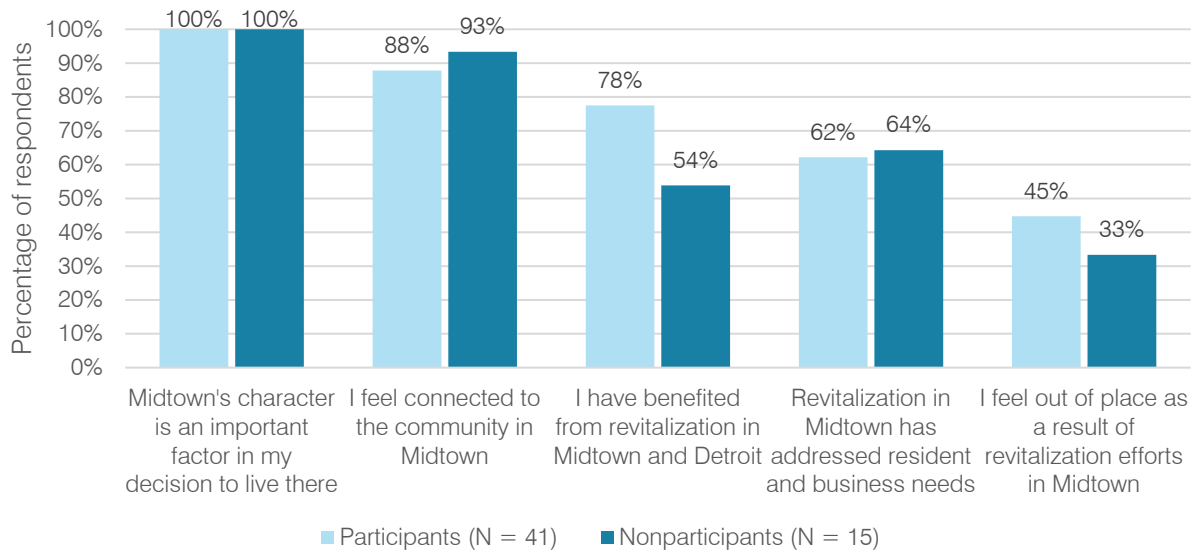


Source: PSC analysis of participant and nonparticipant surveys.

Survey question: Have you observed any of the following in the Midtown neighborhood in the past 24 months? Select all that apply.

Compared to nonparticipants, participant survey respondents were much more likely to say that they have benefited from neighborhood changes. Of participant respondents, 78 percent said that such efforts have benefited them directly, compared to 54 percent of nonparticipants (Exhibit 24).

EXHIBIT 24. Survey Respondents' Level of Agreement Regarding Perceptions of Midtown

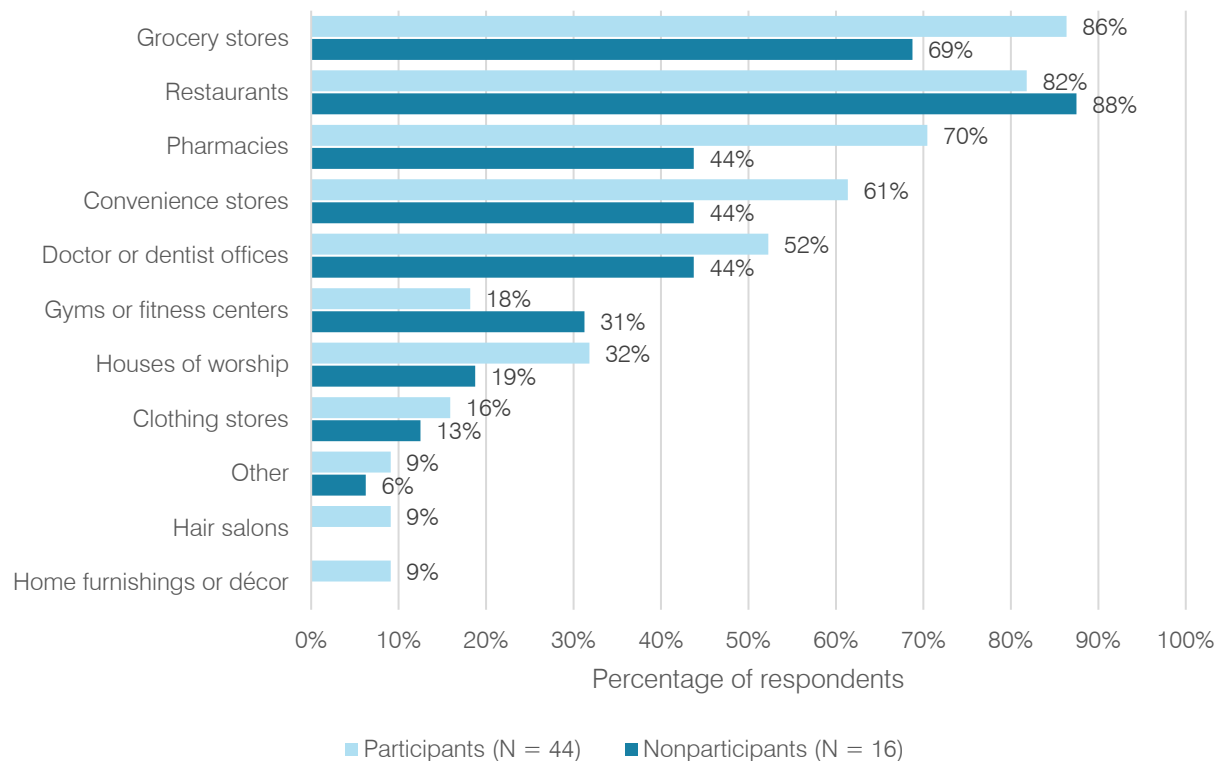


Source: PSC analysis of participant and nonparticipant surveys.

Survey question: Please indicate the level to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

Overall, participants frequent local businesses at higher rates than nonparticipants. For example, 86 percent shop at grocery stores within the neighborhood, compared to 69 percent of nonparticipants. Additionally, 70 percent of participants use local pharmacies, compared to 44 percent of nonparticipants (Exhibit 25). One-third of participants indicated they do not own a car and rely on walking, public transportation, and ridesharing as their primary modes of transportation. This makes neighborhood availability of essential services important for these households. One-quarter of nonparticipants did not own cars.

EXHIBIT 25. Types of Businesses Survey Respondents Frequent in Midtown



Source: PSC analysis of participant and nonparticipant surveys.

Survey question: Do you regularly use any of the following businesses in the Midtown neighborhood? Select all that apply.

Status of the Program's Housing Market Assumptions

In order to understand how housing trends have evolved since the program's inception, PSC analyzed several key market forces and noted emerging trends:

- **Housing cost burden.** The housing cost burden across Detroit remains substantial, with 55.3 percent of renters facing some form of housing cost burden.
- **Subsidized rental demand.** Demand for subsidized rental housing is significant. The Detroit Housing Commission (DHC) closed its Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program enrollment in February 2020 after only three days. The DHC received 22,000 requests for support.
- **Overall development trends and rental demand.** Residential rental units have grown by approximately 23 percent in Midtown since 2015, reflecting a very active rental market.

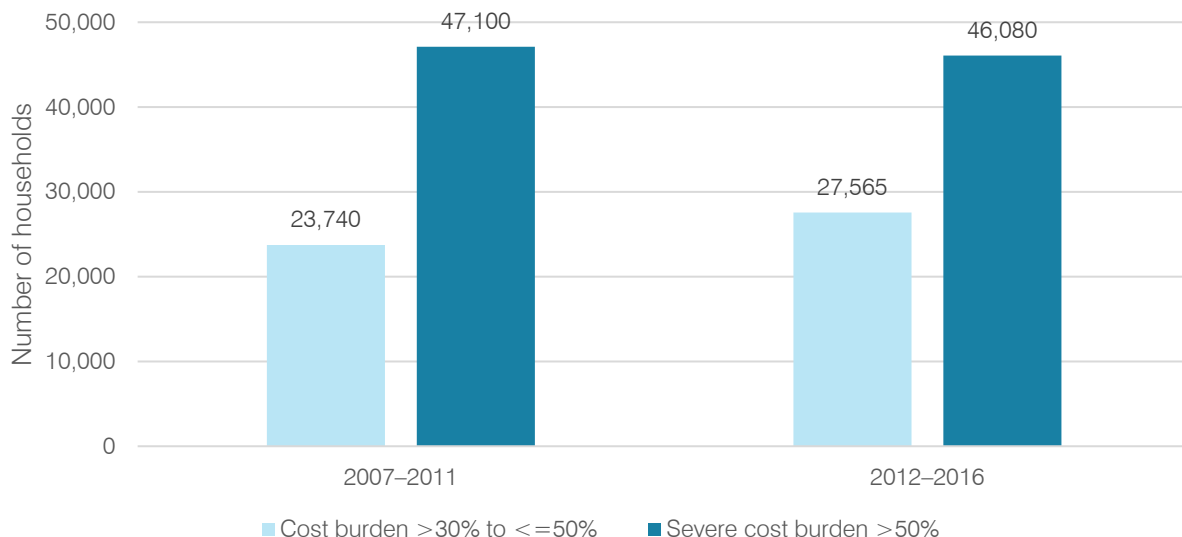
These factors were compared with Capital Impact's 2016 baseline report to understand current trends in the context of initial program assumptions. In addition, overall neighborhood growth has been analyzed to understand Midtown's growth relative to Detroit. The collective impact of all these factors points to a rental market where demand continues to outstrip supply and, as a result, housing burden remains an issue in Midtown and across Detroit.

Housing Cost Burden

The 2016 baseline report explored housing burden using HUD's Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) data set. By comparing 2007–2011 CHAS data with the most current CHAS data available (2012–2016), it is evident that the housing burden across Detroit persists.⁵

Exhibit 26 shows the number of renter households facing a housing cost burden—defined as 30 percent to 50 percent of total income used for housing costs. This figure has increased 16.1 percent, from 23,740 households to 27,565. Over that same time period (2007–2011 to 2012–2016), the number of households facing a severe housing cost burden—defined as more than 50 percent of total income for housing costs—slightly decreased from 47,100 households to 46,080 (2.2 percent). The increasing number of burdened households likely reflects stagnant or declining incomes, increasing housing costs, or a combination of both. The trendline points to continued rent pressures, as approximately 55.3 percent of all Detroit renters experience some form of housing cost burden.

EXHIBIT 26. Number of Renter Households in Detroit Experiencing Housing Cost Burden



Source: U.S. HUD n.d.a

⁵ The 2016 baseline study used the 2008–2012 CHAS data set. This study uses the prior year's data set to compare the most current CHAS data and to avoid overlap. The CHAS data set relies on five-year American Community Survey estimates, which derive information from a 60-month period to develop more accurate estimates than single-year data.

Subsidized Rental Demand

Sustained demand for subsidized rental property is most clearly evidenced by the HCV program, formerly known as Section 8, which the DHC administers. Funded by HUD, the HCV program provides rent vouchers to residents with very low (under 30 percent AMI) or low incomes (between 30 percent and 50 percent AMI) to reduce their housing costs to no more than 30 percent of their income (U.S. HUD 2020). According to Sandra Henriquez, executive director of the DHC, the DHC manages 6,000 rental vouchers through the program, and current HCV data indicate the overall demand for subsidized rental housing in Detroit substantially exceeds supply.

The DHC conducted a random lottery from February 3, 2020, to February 5, 2020, to select 7,000 households for placement on the HCV program's waiting list (DHC n.d.). This was the first time since 2015 this list opened. During the brief application period, the DHC received more than 22,000 requests. Participants on the waiting list are selected as current vouchers become available. The DHC has indicated that approximately 10 percent of their vouchers, or 600, become available on an annual basis. The selection list size reflects the combination of the estimated number of households selected for a voucher and natural list attrition over the next five years (Sandra Henriquez, pers. comm.).

The HCV program clearly indicates that demand for subsidized rental housing in Detroit far exceeds supply. In fact, the DHC estimates only one in seven or eight individuals in Detroit who need a subsidy actually receive such support (Sandra Henriquez, pers. comm.). The market for the HCV program and Stay Midtown overlap only partially, with the HCV program designed to support households with incomes of 50 percent of AMI or less. High demand for these vouchers illustrates that the need for affordable housing in Detroit continues to exceed supply and explains Stay Midtown's high participation rate among households with incomes between 30 percent and 50 percent of AMI.

Overall Development Trends and Rental Demand

According to MDI, since 2015, there have been a total of 2,170 new and under-construction residential rental units added to the Midtown neighborhood. These include units affordable at various levels (for households from 30 percent to 80 percent of AMI). There have been 336 new affordable units added, with 191 more under construction, representing 24.3 percent of all new and under-construction rental units. In addition to these, there are 1,389 existing affordable units, most of which underwent redevelopment or remodeling since 2015 (MDI 2020).⁶ In all, 51 percent of the new, under-construction, and existing residential rental units are affordable units. Additionally, another 450 affordable units are in the development pipeline.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the total number of occupied rental units in Midtown in 2015 was 8,426 (U.S. Census Bureau 2020a). Accounting for vacancy, the increase in units tracked by MDI represents an increase of approximately 23 percent since that time period—a significant rate of rental unit growth when compared to Detroit's overall population decline.⁷

⁶ Of the 1,389 existing units, 382 were still in the pipeline for renovation.

⁷ The U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey provides an estimate of occupied rental units, not total rental units. To accommodate for vacant units and calculate an estimate of overall rental unit growth, a 10 percent vacancy factor was applied to the total number of occupied rental units, generating a total rental unit count of 9,269.

Another strong indicator of the rental market in Midtown is MDI's survey of rental properties. Its January 2020 report surveyed 6,878 units and found overall occupancy to be 97 percent, with most buildings at 100 percent (MDI 2020). The high occupancy rates in residential rental properties, overall growth in these types of units, and rental rate increases indicate a market with strong demand and insufficient supply for both affordable and market-rate units.

Apartment Guide, an organization that tracks national rent trends, noted from 2018 to 2019 that rent in Detroit increased an average of 31.8 percent for studio apartments, 13.2 percent for one-bedroom units, and 9.1 percent for two-bedroom units (Apartment Guide 2020).⁸ This is another indication of strong demand in the city. Looking more closely at Midtown, two properties were included as case studies in the 2016 baseline report as well as their associated rental rate information:

- The property at 711 West Alexandrine Street was noted to be in a state of deterioration and then redeveloped into market-rate apartments.
- The property at 663 Prentis Street, acquired in 2014, was noted to be in good condition and then subsequently renovated (Frost et al. 2016).

Exhibit 27 shows rental rate changes for these two properties. According to Kimberly Phorns, leasing representative for the Alexandrine property, one-bedroom rates increased 53 percent, with two-bedroom units increasing 14 percent. The rates for the Prentis Street property increased 54 percent for studios and 57 percent for one-bedroom units (Apartments.com 2020). Figures for the Alexandrine property represent postredevelopment rates, while the Prentis property's 2016 rates were prerenovation. While these examples offer only a snapshot of the larger market, both are indicators of the rental market pressures that Stay Midtown participants experience.

EXHIBIT 27 Rental Rate Changes for Select Midtown Properties

Property	2016 Baseline Study		2020 Asking Rents			
	One Bedroom	Two Bedroom	One Bedroom	Percentage Change	Two Bedroom	Percentage Change
711 West Alexandrine Street	\$800	\$1,250	\$1,225	53%	\$1,425	14%
	Studio	One Bedroom	Studio		One Bedroom	
663 Prentis Street	\$450	\$550	\$695	54%	\$865	57%

Source: Apartments.com 2020; Kimberly Phorns, pers. comm.

⁸ Apartment Guide's rent data are derived from online listings on apartmentguide.com and rent.com. Apartments not listed elsewhere are not included.

Comparison Between Similar Programs Around the Country

Limited supply of affordable housing is an enduring issue for communities across the country. Market forces and constrained resources at the federal, state, and municipal levels compound this issue. At the same time, increased demand for housing in some communities has allowed landlords to continually raise rents, causing some residents to be priced out of their long-term homes and forced to move to other, less expensive areas.

Governments and nonprofits have attempted to address this issue in a number of ways, including providing incentives to developers to create affordable housing or offering assistance to families and individuals that allow them to afford available options. The form of assistance most similar to Stay Midtown's offerings are flexible housing subsidy or shallow rent subsidy programs. These types of programs help housing-burdened renters avoid homelessness or displacement with short-term and capped rental assistance. Peer programs exist in several other U.S. cities, including Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, and the District of Columbia (Homelessness Policy Research Institute 2018).

PSC conducted interviews with managers of two such programs to discuss how their program missions, structures, partnerships, strategies, and overall organization fit into the broader human services sector in the community. These programs, while different in their approach, scale, and scope, help individuals and families achieve stable, affordable housing through rental assistance.

Program structure and funding sources were key differences. Many programs are mostly, if not fully, funded by local government, with nonprofit partners serving in limited support roles, such as securing housing or providing financial coaching to participants. According to program leaders, this model enables stable funding and better coordination with other human services efforts, as government is often responsible for identifying program participants through ongoing human service case management work. Through the course of assisting individuals in accessing other support, individuals deemed eligible for flexible housing assistance are processed by government caseworkers. Then, the cases are given to a nonprofit partner to manage housing placement and ongoing housing-related services. Nonprofit partners are often chosen based on proven expertise with procuring and managing affordable housing units, but they are not expected to have wraparound case management expertise or capacity.

Peer programs also vary on the populations they serve. Some focus exclusively on serving those who experience homelessness, while others focus on those who experience housing burden. No peer program had a stated goal of preventing displacement. This could be attributed to a number of factors, such as affordable housing and homelessness aligning more closely with traditional government priorities other than displacement, or that most programs serve a wide geographic area and are unconcerned with movement within that region. While the goal of peer programs is for participants to achieve housing independence, there is not a strict timeline for when the support ends, unlike Stay Midtown's three-year time limit.

Additionally, most peer programs served persons with incomes at lower levels of AMI, when compared to Stay Midtown, and did so over a much larger geographic area. As mentioned previously, some programs served individuals who do not have homes or those who do not have stable income, while others target families at 30 percent of AMI or lower. Also, these programs were funded and designed to serve more individuals and cover a much larger geographic area than Stay Midtown.

Exhibit 28 provides a comparison of the Stay Midtown program and three peer programs over a number of common metrics. These programs are the Los Angeles County Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool (FHSP), the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority’s (MPHA’s) Soft Subsidy Initiative, and the District of Columbia Housing Authority’s DC Flexible Rental Subsidy (DC Flex). To develop the following matrix, PSC conducted interviews with Tyler Fong, senior director of program initiatives for Brilliant Corners on the Los Angeles FHSP, and Barbara Jeanetta, executive director of Alliance Housing Incorporated (Alliance) on the Minneapolis Soft Subsidy Initiative. PSC contacted the DC Flex program team to participate but was unable to conduct an interview with that team; secondary sources were used to complete that portion of the matrix.

EXHIBIT 28. Summary of Peer Programs

Program	Los Angeles County—FHSP	Minneapolis—Soft Subsidy Initiative	Washington, D.C.—DC Flex	Midtown and Detroit—Stay Midtown
Eligibility	Individuals who are homeless and patients of the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services (DHS) with complex medical and behavioral health needs.	Families who are homeless or below 30 percent of AMI.	Families residing in D.C. at risk of experiencing homelessness. Households must be headed by individuals at least 21 years old, have physical custody of at least one dependent child, are currently employed or have recent a work history, and are willing to complete a budget and financial management class or training before enrolling.	This program targets households within 50 percent to 80 percent levels AMI of the Detroit-Warren-Livonia, Michigan, metropolitan statistical area.
Geographic Service Area	Los Angeles County, California.	Minneapolis, Minnesota.	Washington, D.C.	Midtown neighborhood of the city of Detroit, Michigan
Program Benefits	N/A	N/A	\$7,200 per year for four years	\$1,500 per year for three years

Program	Los Angeles County—FHSP	Minneapolis—Soft Subsidy Initiative	Washington, D.C.—DC Flex	Midtown and Detroit—Stay Midtown
Program Structure	The FHSP is a public-private partnership led by the Los Angeles County DHS. Brilliant Corners is a nonprofit partner focused on creating affordable, supportive housing for underserved people. Within the FHSP, Brilliant Corners manages the acquisition of affordable housing units, placement of tenants, rental assistance, and landlord relations. The Los Angeles DHS provides case management services through a network of partner nonprofits and refers individuals to Brilliant Corners for housing.	The Soft Subsidy Initiative places families in rental units with significantly subsidized rents (30 percent to 40 percent below affordable housing rates) and incentivizes participants with cash bonuses for timely rent payments. The MPHA manages cases; meets with families weekly to determine their needs; provides motivation in the family's search for work, daycare, and education, and addresses other needs. To implement the program, the MPHA contracted with Alliance Housing Incorporated (Alliance), a local housing-focused nonprofit, which contacts partner organizations when a vacancy opens at the properties they manage, then helps place families, serving as a landlord.	DC Flex allocates \$7,200 a year to each eligible family, made payable to the recipients' landlord, for up to four years (the term of the pilot). Each month, families can withdraw any amount of money less than or equal to the full amount of their rent, allowing them to save money when they do not need as much. D.C. Flex provides a full month's rent in times of financial strain. At the end of each year, families can withdraw up to \$500 of leftover funds for household expenses. They then receive all remaining savings after their four years is up. D.C. Flex holds financial training sessions through Capital Area Asset Builders (CAAB). Following an initial mandatory orientation, families can voluntarily arrange to review their finances with CAAB employees at any point during their tenure.	Stay Midtown aims to reduce housing burden and increase housing and financial stability for residents who have lived in the Midtown neighborhood at least two years. The program provides a quarterly stipend for participants that is paid directly to their landlord. The amount of rental subsidy provided is designed to reduce housing costs (rent and utilities) to 30 percent of household income but is capped at \$1,500 a year. Additionally, the program anticipated a two- to four-year supply gap for low- to moderate-income rental properties and sought to address the increasing risk of displacement in the rapidly redeveloping Midtown area.
Eligibility Period	Unlimited.	Unlimited, but target household stability within five years.	Limited to initial pilot period (four years) but could be extended.	Limited to one three-year term.

Program	Los Angeles County—FHSP	Minneapolis—Soft Subsidy Initiative	Washington, D.C.—DC Flex	Midtown and Detroit—Stay Midtown
Partnerships	The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) determines eligibility and supports participants through its Continuum of Care initiative to coordinate housing and other services for families and individuals. ⁹	The Soft Subsidy Initiative is a partnership between the MPHA and Alliance, which administers the housing portion of the program.	DC Flex is a partnership between the D.C. Department of Human Services (DHS) and CAAB.	Stay Midtown is a partnership between Capital Impact and MDI. MDI provides staff, participant screening and engagement, and disbursement of subsidies; Capital Impact provides program funding and oversight.
Funding Sources	Initial investment of \$18 million over five years—\$4 million in philanthropic funding and \$14 million of public investment.	Combination of MPHA funding, HUD dollars (for subsidized rent), and philanthropic dollars for program management.	D.C. DHS.	Capital Impact is a certified community development financial institution and primary funder for this project.
Scale of Service	5,000 individuals housed in first five years.	50 families (at high point).	120 families.	148 program participants served by the end of 2019

Source: Tyler Fong, pers. comm; Barbara Jeanetta, pers. comm.; Brown 2019; Cohen and Leopold 2018; Hunter et al. 2017; District of Columbia DHS 2017.

⁹ The LAHSA was created by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, the Los Angeles Mayor's Office, and the Los Angeles City Council. It is the lead agency in the Los Angeles Continuum of Care, a regional body that coordinates housing and services for families and individuals experiencing homelessness.

Overall, Stay Midtown is unique among peer organizations based on its efforts to keep participants in their current housing or other options of their choice, its limited geographic area, its focus on individuals with incomes over 50 percent of AMI, its absence of government relations and support, and its willingness to serve single individuals rather than families. Stay Midtown is most similar to the D.C. Flex program, as both focus on providing rental subsidies to working people; however, D.C. Flex targets families and provides a larger yearly stipend (District of Columbia DHS 2017).

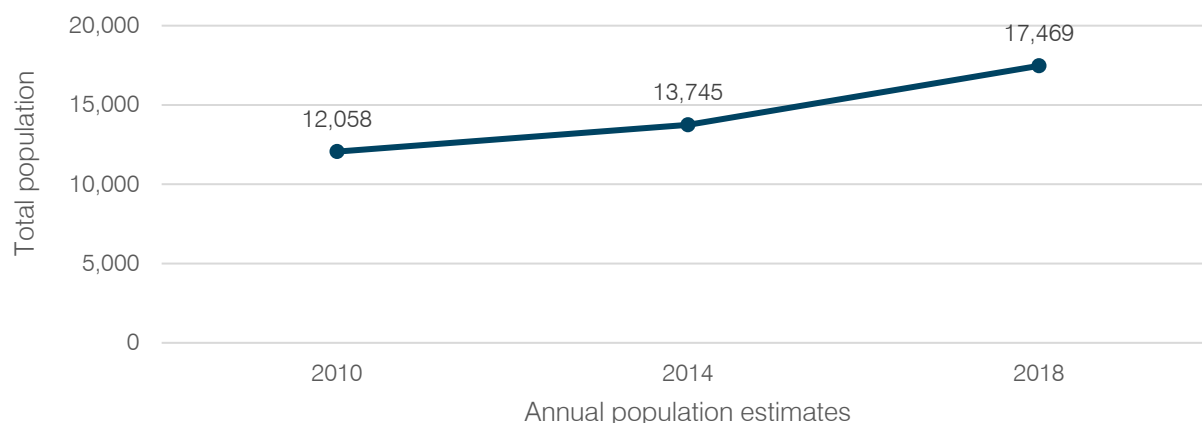
Program Ability to Influence Affordable Housing Development in Midtown

Participants' experiences with Stay Midtown and changing market dynamics illustrate a clear need to maintain and expand affordable housing options within the Midtown neighborhood. While evaluation findings have demonstrated the program's effectiveness in stabilizing the housing status of 148 participants, the effort is taking place within a sizeable and rapidly changing area. Detroit experienced a population decline from 2010 to 2018; however, Midtown experienced significant growth during this period.

Exhibit 29 shows population data for the Midtown neighborhood from the American Community Survey.¹⁰ Based on these estimates, Midtown experienced a 38 percent increase in residents, or nearly 5,700 people, from 2010 to 2018. This growth highlights the attraction of Midtown, especially amidst Detroit's overall 5.8 percent population decline (U.S. Census Bureau 2020b). Midtown's growth is also reflected in the increase in new residential units within the neighborhood. The 2,170 new and under-construction rental units since 2015 are likely sufficient to meet the housing needs of the 3,700 residents added between 2015 and 2018.¹¹ However, the high occupancy rates and climbing rents are more indicative that market demand for rental units is not yet completely fulfilled, regardless of whether they are market rate or affordable. The rapid growth rate also calls into question the accuracy of the population estimates, but the 2020 Census should provide a clearer picture of exactly how extensive the growth has been.

¹⁰ The American Community Survey relies heavily on estimating methodology that has high margins of error, particularly in areas like Midtown that experience rapid change. While total population estimates are used in this report, other indicators, such as residential occupancy rates, poverty rates, and other social indicators, have margins of error that make those variables too unreliable to draw definitive conclusions. The 2020 census will provide an opportunity for a more robust demographic analysis.

¹¹ To place 3,700 residents across 2,170 apartments would be a per-household population of 1.7 persons, which is well below Detroit's average of 2. (U.S. Census Bureau 2020b). This lower figure is consistent with apartment styles in the Midtown neighborhood and is a reasonable average when considering overall absorption.

EXHIBIT 29. Midtown Neighborhood Population Growth 2010–2018

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2020a

Stay Midtown highlights the challenges associated with stabilizing living situations for low- and moderate-income residents in a neighborhood experiencing significant redevelopment. Though the program has achieved important outcomes, the 148 households accessing rental subsidies represent 244 individuals, or approximately 1.4 percent of the neighborhood’s residents. While Stay Midtown’s ability to directly impact affordable housing stability for its participants is clear, its impact on overall the housing affordable market in the neighborhood is much more limited.

The program’s impact amidst these changing market forces demonstrates the need for and importance of maintaining affordable housing. The findings highlight ongoing challenges in residents’ ability to find, secure, and maintain affordable options, which presents a strong argument for the continued development of new, affordable housing and efforts to maintain existing options. This includes the need to continue, and where possible, expand programs like Stay Midtown that address an overlooked segment of the affordable housing market.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Impact on Housing and Financial Security

Stay Midtown clearly impacts housing and financial security. It reduces housing cost burden for all participants, helps most better afford essential items, and enables people to stay in their Midtown homes when they otherwise would have had to seek other, more affordable options.

As participants complete the three-year program, with some experiencing additional rent increases during their tenure, they worry about reexperiencing housing unaffordability. To increase Stay Midtown’s impact, the program may consider tiered subsidies based on income levels, housing rental costs, or other household needs to help more of the lowest-income participants meet the affordable housing threshold. Over the longer term, the program could focus on identifying affordable housing resources and connecting participants with those options. It could work also with the program’s property managers or

landlords to limit rent increases and ensure that housing meets all applicable codes and standards. Finally, as individuals come to the end of their three-year participation term, Stay Midtown may consider conditions under which the participation term may be extended.

Effectiveness of Program Operations

Participants gave Stay Midtown high marks across nearly every aspect of its operations. For those who interface with program staff regularly, they commend staff for their willingness to help and their prompt responses. PSC notes a heavy reliance on online communication between program staff and enrolled or prospective participants, including provision of program requirements, application submission, and updates. Not all have access to the Internet, so use of multimodal communications may be a better option to keep participants well informed of operations. Most participants learned about Stay Midtown through a mailer distributed throughout the neighborhood, emphasizing the effectiveness of printed information sent directly to participants.

While comprehensive case management is outside of Stay Midtown's scope, it may be beneficial to partner with other social service agencies as a way to promote the program and complement other housing subsidies to ensure all household needs are met.

Program Strategy Fit

Part of Stay Midtown's design was to provide housing subsidies to retain residents until rent prices stabilized and more affordable housing options became available. Analysis of both Midtown and Detroit's housing markets shows that rents are still on the rise and that the demand for affordable housing outstrips supply. While the program has benefitted participants, its impact on the affordable housing market in Midtown is limited. However, Capital Impact and MDI are well positioned to participate in broader efforts to influence the market in conjunction with other partners working in the same space, including the City of Detroit with its recently announced Preservation Partnership.¹²

To determine how Stay Midtown could maximize its impact for participants and the neighborhood and best leverage its strengths, PSC recommends a strategic planning process with stakeholders and participants. Stakeholders should include other organizations and agencies working to support affordable housing, community development organizations, social service agencies, and local government. Peer programs that focus on expanding access to affordable housing are much more connected to local government, as local government may provide funding or implement the program altogether. This connection underscores the complexity and magnitude of the affordable housing challenge.

¹² The Preservation Partnership's goal is to preserve affordable housing and prevent displacement in the city. Enterprise Community Partners, with support from six other partners, is leading the effort (Moran 2020). The mayor's office has identified 10,000 subsidized affordable units throughout Detroit, 6,000 of which may be removed due to expiring tax credit contracts (Duggan 2020).

The strategic planning process should seek to determine next steps, optimize design and implementation, and integrate the program more deeply into existing social services. As one participant stated:

“The program is 100 percent accomplishing its objective. Yet, it's not enough.”

Stay Midtown has effectively met the goals established at its inception, but key assumptions about increased availability of affordable housing in Midtown and throughout Detroit have not been realized. Demand for affordable housing continues to outstrip supply, and participants who complete three years of participation face increasing housing cost burdens. To ensure that participant benefits are sustained after their participation, Stay Midtown should focus on:

- Connecting participants with other social services to help them increase income or reduce other expenses
- Demonstrating the need for additional affordable housing options for Detroit residents
- Ensuring that program participants have access to affordable housing units as they become available

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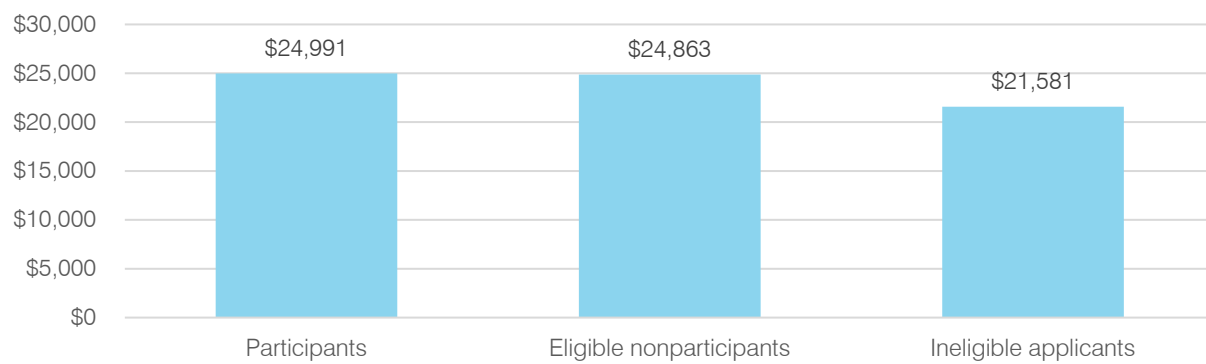
Appendix A: Comparison of Program Participants and Nonparticipants

Overview

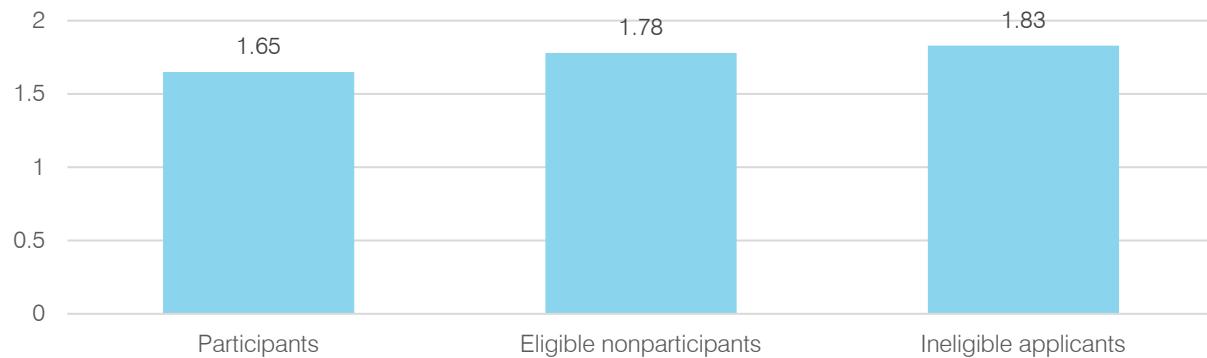
To understand the clients served through the Stay Midtown program, PSC reviewed and analyzed data on program applicants. MDI provided program data on Stay Midtown participants, eligible nonparticipants (those prescreened and determined to be eligible but did not enroll in the program), and applicants determined ineligible. PSC conducted exploratory analysis to identify key characteristics and compare participants and nonparticipants. Overall, PSC received data for 148 unique participating households that entered the program between 2016 and 2019, 131 eligible individuals or families submitted information for prescreening but did not complete the application, and 282 applicants were determined ineligible in the prescreening process.

Exhibits A1 through A3 compare household income, occupancy, and housing costs (including rent and utilities) between participants and the two categories of nonparticipants. Overall, ineligible applicants had somewhat lower household income and housing costs and larger household size.

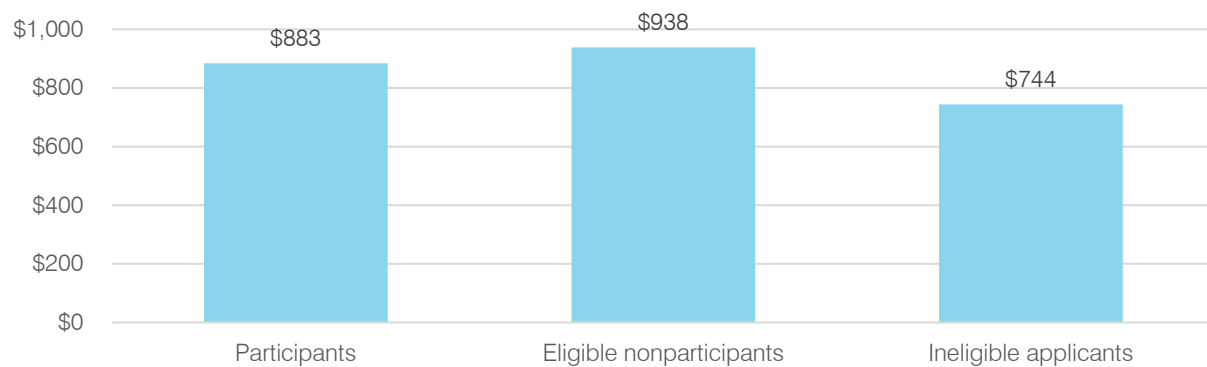
EXHIBIT A1. Household Income of Participants and Nonparticipants



Source: PSC analysis of program data.

EXHIBIT A2. Number of Occupants per Home: Participants and Nonparticipants

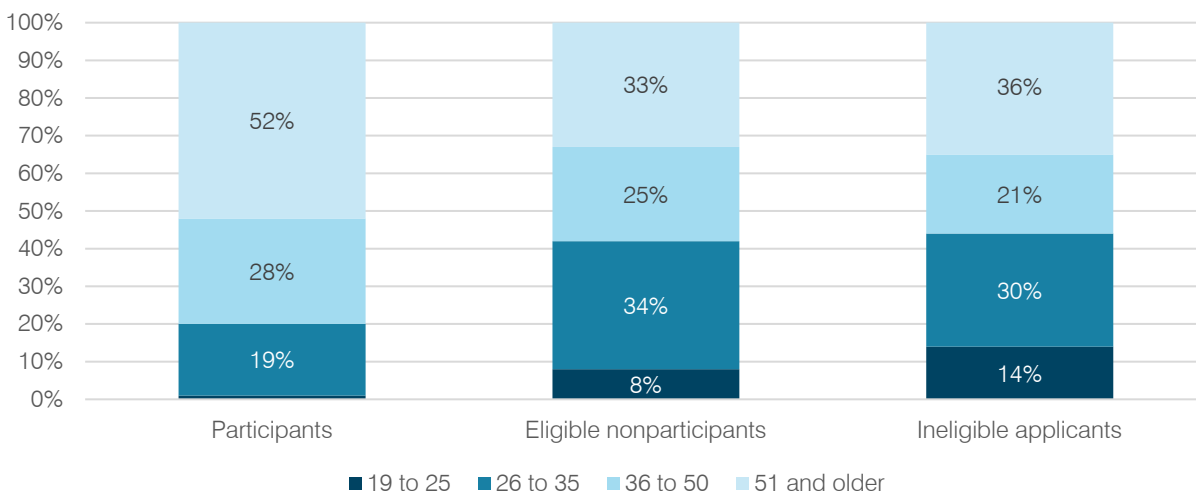
Source: PSC analysis of program data.

EXHIBIT A3. Housing Costs (Rent and Utilities): Participants and Nonparticipants

Source: PSC analysis of program data.

Exhibit A4 compares the ages of participants and nonparticipants. Both categories of nonparticipants had similar age distributions, with approximately one-third being over age 50 and slightly more than 40 percent age 35 or under. Participants tended to be older, with 52 percent over age 50 and 19 percent age 26 to 35.

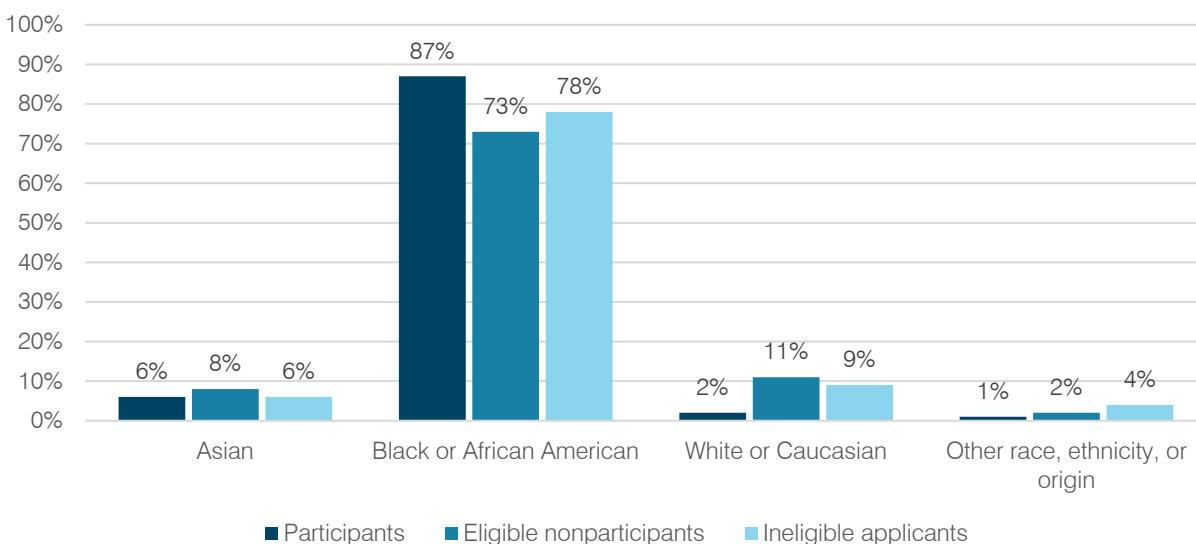
EXHIBIT A4. Age: Participants and Nonparticipants



Source: PSC analysis of program data.

Exhibit A5 compares the ethnicity and race of participants and nonparticipants. The majority of participants and nonparticipants were black or African American. White or Caucasian individuals made up 11 percent of nonparticipants, but only 2 percent of participants. Between 6 percent and 8 percent of participants and nonparticipants were Asian. Other race and ethnicities make up between 1 percent and 4 percent of participants and nonparticipants.

EXHIBIT A5. Race and Ethnicity: Participants and Nonparticipants



Source: PSC analysis of program data.

Appendix B: Stay Midtown Participant Survey



Participant Survey

Introduction

As a participant in the Stay Midtown program, you have a unique perspective on transitions in the Midtown neighborhood and efforts to ensure everyone benefits from Detroit's revitalization. In an effort to understand the program strengths, opportunities for enhancement, and impact on participants, Capital Impact Partners and Midtown Detroit, Inc. have engaged Public Sector Consultants (PSC) to conduct an evaluation of the Stay Midtown program. As part of that evaluation, we are asking you to complete this important survey. The survey will take 15 to 20 minutes to complete and your responses will be confidential. The survey asks about your experience with the program, your satisfaction with your current housing, and your perceptions of the changes in the Midtown neighborhood. Please be assured that responding to the survey does not impact your eligibility to participate in the Stay Midtown program. We hope you will invest some of your time in helping us to strengthen this and similar efforts.

You may complete this survey on paper and return the completed survey to: Pam Sanders, Public Sector Consultants, 230 North Washington Square, Suite 300, Lansing, MI 48933. Or you can complete the survey online by scanning the QR code below, or entering the following link into your internet browser: tinyurl.com/StayMidtownSurvey2019.



If you have any questions about the purpose of the survey or how the information collected will be used, you can contact Pam Sanders of PSC (psanders@publicsectorconsultants.com) or at 517-484-4954.



Stay Midtown Program Questions

What was the first year you participated in the Stay Midtown program?

- ☐ 2016
- ☐ 2017
- ☐ 2018
- ☐ 2019

How did you hear about the Stay Midtown program? Check all that apply.

- ☐ Through the Stay Midtown website
- ☐ From a property manager or landlord
- ☐ From a friend or neighbor
- ☐ From a community development organization working in the Midtown neighborhood
- ☐ From a social service provider
- ☐ Through outreach from a program partner (e.g., Midtown Detroit Inc.)
- ☐ Other, please describe _____

How did you submit your initial application to the Stay Midtown program?

- ☐ Online
- ☐ Paper
- ☐ Other, please describe _____



Please rate the following aspects of applying to the Stay Midtown program.

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	N/A
Information available on the Stay Midtown website	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Responsiveness of staff when answering questions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If you submitted your initial application online, the ease of the online application	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The amount of information requested in the prescreening application	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communication about the information required after the prescreening application to determine eligibility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The time between submission of the prescreening application and final eligibility notification	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please share why you gave the ratings you did for the aspects of applying to the Stay Midtown program.

What factors influenced your decision to participate in the program? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Opportunity to reduce my housing costs
- ☐ Interest in staying in the Midtown neighborhood
- ☐ Concern about rising rent costs
- ☐ Concern about utility costs
- ☐ Ability to avoid the inconvenience of moving
- ☐ Other, please describe _____



If more than one factor influenced your decision, what factor was most important to your decision to participate in the program? Select only one.

- ☐ Opportunity to reduce my housing costs
- ☐ Interest in staying in the Midtown neighborhood
- ☐ Concern about rising rent costs
- ☐ Concern about utility costs
- ☐ Ability to avoid the inconvenience of moving
- ☐ Other, please describe _____

After your first year in the program, did you apply to recertify your eligibility status?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not applicable because my participation in the program began in 2019

How would you rate the following aspects of the Stay Midtown program?

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	N/A
If you applied to recertify your eligibility status, the recertification/reverification of eligibility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communications from Midtown Detroit, Inc.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The level of rent support received	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The duration of rent support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interactions between the program and your landlord	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Impact on making housing more affordable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Identification of other resources available	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information about revitalization in Midtown and Detroit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Please share why you gave the ratings you did for the aspects of the Stay Midtown program.

Had the Stay Midtown program not existed, what would you have been most likely to do?

- ☐ Sought lower cost housing in the Midtown neighborhood
- ☐ Sought lower cost housing outside of the Midtown neighborhood
- ☐ Sought assistance from another agency or organization
- ☐ Lowered or deferred other household expenses
- ☐ Other, please describe _____

Has participation in the program made it easier to afford other essential items or household expenses?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If so, which essential items were you better able to afford as a result of participating in the Stay Midtown program?

- ☐ Utilities
- ☐ Food
- ☐ Prescription medication
- ☐ Medical care
- ☐ Transportation
- ☐ Other, please describe _____



What other impacts, if any, have you realized from your participation in the Stay Midtown program?

Have you received support for housing or other household expenses from other programs or agencies?

- ☐ Yes, please describe _____
- ☐ No

Midtown Neighborhood Questions

Have you observed any of the following in the Midtown neighbor in the past 24 months? Select all that apply.

- ☐ New shops opening
- ☐ New restaurants
- ☐ Expanded park and recreational areas
- ☐ Expanded cultural events and resources
- ☐ New service providers
- ☐ New employers
- ☐ Improved sidewalks
- ☐ Expanded streetlighting
- ☐ Increased traffic and congestion
- ☐ More pedestrians
- ☐ Change in neighborhood character
- ☐ Existing businesses closing
- ☐ None of the above



What other changes or revitalization effects, if any, have you observed in the Midtown neighborhood?

Please indicate the level to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Don't know or not applicable
The character of the Midtown neighborhood is an important factor in my decision to live there.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel connected to the community in the Midtown neighborhood.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is important to consider the needs of existing residents and businesses when pursuing community development and neighborhood investment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel out of place as a result of revitalization efforts in the Midtown neighborhood.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community development and investment in Midtown benefits neighborhood residents.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community development and investment in Midtown has benefited businesses operating in the neighborhood.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Revitalization in the Midtown neighborhood has addressed the needs of existing residents and businesses.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have benefited from revitalization in Midtown and Detroit.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Have you had the opportunity to share your opinions and preferences with local leaders about community development and investment in the Midtown neighborhood?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If so, how have you been able to share opinions and preferences (for example, where and with whom)?

Since you began participation in the Stay Midtown program, would you say that affordable housing in the Midtown neighborhood has . . .

☐ Increased

☐ Decreased

☐ Stayed about the same

☐ Don't know

Do you regularly use any of the following businesses in the Midtown neighborhood? Select all that apply.

☐ Grocery stores

☐ Restaurants

☐ Doctor or dentist offices

☐ Clothing stores

☐ Pharmacies

☐ Convenience stores

☐ Home furnishings or decor

☐ Hair salons

☐ Gym or fitness center

☐ Houses of worship

☐ Other, please describe _____



Questions About You

Are you currently living in the same place you lived when you began participation in the Stay Midtown program?

☐ Yes

☐ No

What is your current age?

How long have you lived in your current residence?

What is your primary mode of transportation?

☐ Car

☐ Bike

☐ Walking

☐ Public transportation

☐ Taxi

☐ Ride share app

☐ Other, please describe_____

Do you own a car?

☐ Yes

☐ No



What is your primary source(s) of income? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Wages from employment
- ☐ Social security retirement benefits
- ☐ Social security disability insurance, known as SSDI, or supplemental security income, known as SSI
- ☐ Pension
- ☐ Private disability insurance, i.e., short-term or long-term disability
- ☐ Self-employment
- ☐ Student financial aid
- ☐ Temporary assistance for needy families, known as TANF
- ☐ Other, please describe _____

Below are several factors that one might consider when selecting housing. Please number these elements in order of importance with the one being most important and ten being the least important.

- _____ Location
- _____ Building amenities (e.g., security, gym)
- _____ Size (square footage, number of bedrooms and bathrooms)
- _____ Age of building
- _____ Access to public transportation
- _____ Proximity to schools
- _____ Proximity to health care facilities
- _____ Distance to work
- _____ Expected utility costs
- _____ Rental cost



Are there other factors you consider when selecting a place to live? Please describe below.

What are your plans for housing after your participation in the Stay Midtown program ends?

- ☐ Stay in my current location
- ☐ Find another location with lower rent in Midtown
- ☐ Find another location with lower rent in another part of Detroit
- ☐ Find another location with lower rent outside of Detroit
- ☐ Unsure of plans after the program ends
- ☐ Other, please describe _____

If you plan to move out of Midtown after participation in the program ends, where do you plan to move?

Conclusion

Do you have any additional information that you would like to share about your Stay Midtown experience or any suggestions to enhance the program? If so, please share below.



Would you be willing to take part in a follow-up discussion about your program experiences? If you are able to participate in a 30 to 45-minute follow-up discussion, you will receive a \$25 Visa® gift card.

☐ Yes

☐ No

What is the best way to contact you to schedule a follow-up discussion?

Phone, please enter your preferred number _____

Email, please enter your preferred address _____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your input will help to strengthen the Stay Midtown program and other efforts to support affordable housing options in Midtown and greater Detroit.

Appendix C: Stay Midtown Nonparticipant Survey



Sometime over the past few years, you applied to the Stay Midtown program, a program that offers rental assistance for eligible Midtown residents who are experiencing a housing cost burden due to increasing rent costs. You were prescreened for the program and met the program's eligibility requirements, but you did not complete the full application process.

In an effort to understand the program strengths, opportunities for enhancement, and potential barriers to participation, Capital Impact Partners and Midtown Detroit, Inc. have engaged Public Sector Consultants (PSC) to conduct an evaluation of the Stay Midtown program. As part of that evaluation, we are asking you to complete this important survey. The survey will take just about 10 minutes to complete and your responses will be confidential. The survey asks about your initial experiences with the program, your satisfaction with your current housing, and your perceptions of the changes in the Midtown neighborhood. Your input will help us improve the Stay Midtown program and other programs designed to ensure all residents benefit from Detroit's growth.

You may complete this survey on paper and return the completed survey to: Pam Sanders, Public Sector Consultants, 230 North Washington Square, Suite 300, Lansing, MI 48933. Or you can complete the survey online by scanning the QR code below, or entering the following link into your internet browser: tinyurl.com/StayMidtownNP2019.

Please complete the survey and return it by October 25, 2019. Surveys postmarked on or before October 25th will receive a \$15 Visa gift card via mail for completing the survey.



If you have any questions about the survey, you can contact Chris Hughes at chughes@midtowndetroitinc.org.



Stay Midtown Program Questions

How did you hear about the Stay Midtown program? Mark all that apply.

- ☐ Through the Stay Midtown website
- ☐ From a property manager or landlord
- ☐ From a friend or neighbor
- ☐ From a community development organization working in the Midtown neighborhood
- ☐ From a social service provider
- ☐ Through outreach from a program partner (e.g., Midtown Detroit Inc.)
- ☐ Other, please describe _____

How did you submit your initial application to the Stay Midtown program?

- ☐ Online
- ☐ Paper
- ☐ Other, please describe _____

Please rate the following aspects of applying to the Stay Midtown program.

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	N/A
Information available on the Stay Midtown website	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Responsiveness of staff when answering questions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If you submitted your initial application online, the ease of the online application	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The amount of information requested in the prescreening application	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communication about the information required after the prescreening application to determine eligibility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The time between submission of the prescreening application and final eligibility notification	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Please share why you gave the ratings you did for the aspects of applying to the Stay Midtown program.

What factors influenced your decision not to participate in the program? Mark all that apply.

- ☐ Difficulty in the next steps of the application process
- ☐ Level of rent assistance
- ☐ Long-term plans to stay in the neighborhood
- ☐ Received assistance elsewhere
- ☐ Other, please describe _____

If more than one factor influenced your decision, what factor was most important in your decision to not participate in the program? Mark only one.

- ☐ Difficulty in the next steps of the application process
- ☐ Level of rent assistance
- ☐ Long-term plans to stay in the neighborhood
- ☐ Received assistance elsewhere
- ☐ Other, please describe _____

What factors, if any, might have increased your likelihood of participating in the Stay Midtown program?



Midtown Neighborhood Questions

Are you currently living in the same place you lived when you began the Stay Midtown application process?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If no, what best describes your change in residence?

☐ I moved somewhere else in the Midtown neighborhood

☐ I moved somewhere else in the Detroit area

☐ I moved somewhere else outside of the Detroit area

☐ Other, please describe _____

If you are a current resident of the Midtown neighborhood, have you observed any of the following in the Midtown neighbor in the past 24 months? Select all that apply.

☐ New shops opening

☐ New restaurants

☐ Expanded park and recreational areas

☐ Expanded cultural events and resources

☐ New service providers

☐ New employers

☐ Improved sidewalks

☐ Expanded streetlighting

☐ Increased traffic and congestion

☐ More pedestrians

☐ Change in neighborhood character

☐ Existing businesses closing

☐ None of the above



If you are a current resident of the Midtown neighborhood, what other changes or revitalization effects, if any, have you observed in the Midtown neighborhood?

If you are a current resident of the Midtown neighborhood, please indicate the level to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Don't know or not applicable
The character of the Midtown neighborhood is an important factor in my decision to live there.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel connected to the community in the Midtown neighborhood.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is important to consider the needs of existing residents and businesses when pursuing community development and neighborhood investment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel out of place as a result of revitalization efforts in the Midtown neighborhood.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community development and investment in Midtown benefits neighborhood residents.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community development and investment in Midtown has benefited businesses operating in the neighborhood.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Revitalization in the Midtown neighborhood has addressed the needs of existing residents and businesses.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have benefited from revitalization in Midtown and Detroit.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



If you are a current resident of the Midtown neighborhood, have you had the opportunity to share your opinions and preferences with local leaders about community development and investment in the Midtown neighborhood?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If so, how have you been able to share opinions and preferences (for example, where and with whom)?

If you are a current resident of the Midtown neighborhood, in the past three years, would you say that affordable housing in the Midtown neighborhood has . . .

☐ Increased

☐ Decreased

☐ Stayed about the same

☐ Don't know

Why do you think so?



If you are a current resident of the Midtown neighborhood, do you regularly use any of the following businesses in the Midtown neighborhood? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Grocery stores
- ☐ Restaurants
- ☐ Doctor or dentist offices
- ☐ Clothing stores
- ☐ Pharmacies
- ☐ Convenience stores
- ☐ Home furnishings or decor
- ☐ Hair salons
- ☐ Gym or fitness center
- ☐ Houses of worship
- ☐ Other, please describe _____

Questions About You

What is your current age?

How long have you lived in your current residence?

What is your primary mode of transportation?

- ☐ Car
- ☐ Bike
- ☐ Walking
- ☐ Public transportation
- ☐ Taxi
- ☐ Ride share app
- ☐ Other, please describe _____



If your primary mode of transportation is not a car, do you own a car?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Have you received support for housing or other household expenses from other programs or organizations?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If so, please describe the support for housing or other household expenses that you have received.

Below are several factors that one might consider when selecting housing. Please number these elements in order of importance with the one being most important and ten being the least important.

_____ Location

_____ Building amenities (e.g., security, gym)

_____ Size (square footage, number of bedrooms and bathrooms)

_____ Age of building

_____ Access to public transportation

_____ Proximity to schools

_____ Proximity to health care facilities

_____ Distance to work

_____ Expected utility costs

_____ Rental cost

Are there other factors you consider when selecting a place to live? Please describe below.



Conclusion

Do you have any additional information that you would like to share about your Stay Midtown experience or any suggestions to enhance the program? If so, please share below.

Please provide a mailing address where you would like your \$15 Visa gift card to be mailed to:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your input will help to strengthen the Stay Midtown program and other efforts to support affordable housing options in Midtown and greater Detroit.



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