

Resilient Edgemere Community Planning Initiative

Create Phase Feedback

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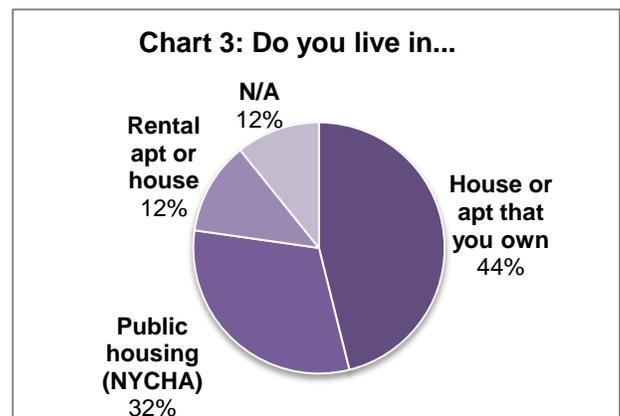
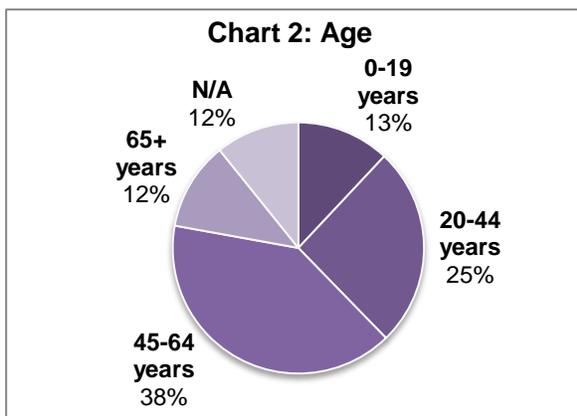
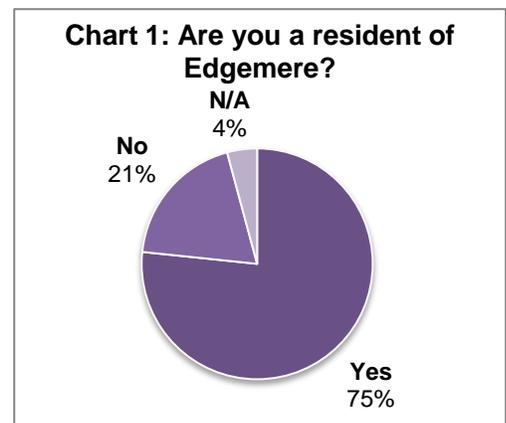
Please note that the opinions summarized in this document do not necessarily reflect an official position by any NYC agency. This summary is not based on scientific findings from a representative poll or academic study. Instead, it is a direct reporting of what respondents shared through the Feedback Forms, and interpretations of what we heard at the Workshops on April 2, 2016 and April 5, 2016.

Introduction

In the 2015 and 2016, as part of the 9-month Resilient Edgemere Community Planning Initiative, HPD facilitated four public workshops on October 24, 2015, December 12, 2015, April 2, 2016, and April 5, 2016 – on average about 75 people attended each workshop. A feedback form was distributed at the final two of these workshops and by mail. The purpose of the workshops and the Feedback Form was to gather community feedback on draft strategies for the neighborhood. The draft strategies were derived from the community goals gathered during the first two workshops of the Edgemere planning process and were developed in coordination with ten City agencies. Strategies were divided into four sections: *Housing and Neighborhood Character*; *Open Space, Coastal Protection, and Neighborhood Ecology*; *Mobility and Access*; and *Neighborhood Services and Amenities*. HPD will use the gathered feedback to refine the draft strategies and develop a draft plan, which will be presented to the community in a fourth workshop in Summer 2016. This document mirrors the subject matter divisions used at the workshop and demonstrates the general support that the draft strategies received from workshop participants and respondents to the Feedback Form.

Details about the Feedback Form

- The Feedback Form was mailed to all 1,700 households in Edgemere and was also available to be completed online or in person at the workshops.
- HPD received a total of 167 responses.
- Three-quarters of the respondents are Edgemere residents (see Chart 1).
- The majority of respondents were between 20-64 years in age (see Chart 2).
- We asked respondents to indicate whether they own their home, rent, or live in public housing to see whether the responses differed for each group (see Chart 3).
- Some questions allowed for multiple responses. Charts 5, 6, 9, 12, 13, and 14 therefore depict the number of votes for each option.
- Most of the respondents have not attended any of our previous events: Only 33 of the 167 respondents had signed in at one of our previous public workshops. (There might be some more overlap, however, since some people completed the Feedback Form anonymously.) This indicates that the mailing allowed us to reach Edgemere residents that have not yet been involved in the community planning process.



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Housing and Neighborhood Character

Participants at the Housing and Neighborhood Character station were most responsive to the map of strategies when discussing Housing & Neighborhood Character. Their comments are categorized in relation to areas on the map:

Bayfront:

- Mosquitos are an issue that needs to be dealt with in Rockaway Community Park, Bayswater Park, and along new shoreline feature.
- Limiting coastal development, building a protective feature, and protecting wetlands are critical.
- Any protective feature should not prohibit waterfront access and should, in fact, actively support it.

Rockaway Beach Blvd:

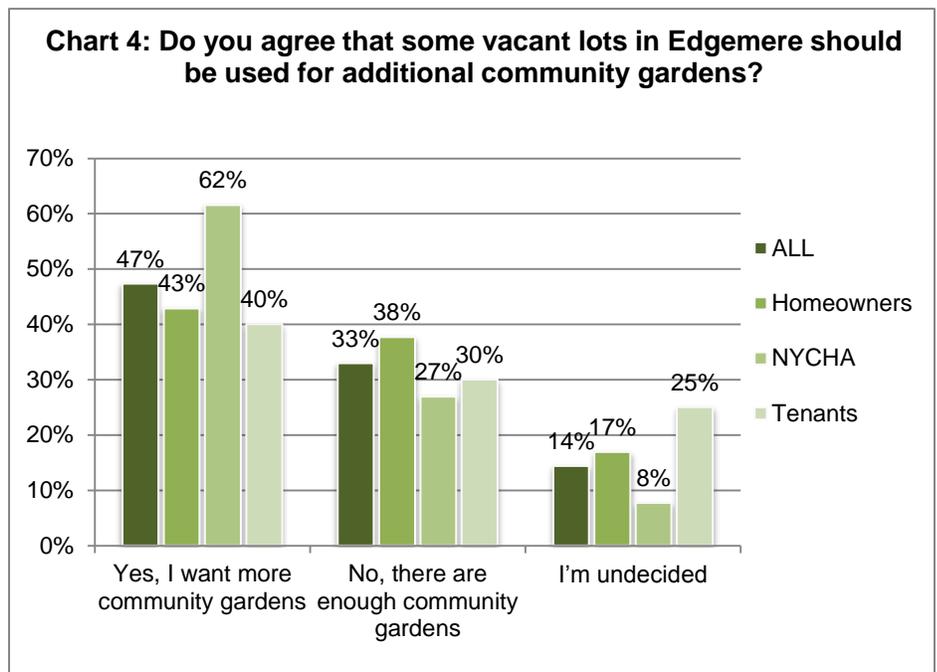
- People want a variety of retail/amenity uses along this corridor; the most frequently mentioned are sit-down restaurants and cafes, mom and pop stores, urgent care/pharmacies, and community center.
- Mixed-income, mid-rise housing is OK along this corridor although residents want to be sure that the density and building styles are sensitive to existing, nearby homeowners' quality of life and property value. Parking is a concern when locating retail and more housing along this corridor.

Western Edgemere future retail hub:

- People listed a variety of retail/community uses for this area; the most frequently mentioned were a café, community center, and school expansion

Neighborhood core:

- There is a strong preference for high-quality 1-2 family homes in this area of the neighborhood.
- There is a concern about affordability of new housing and that people are already being priced out of the neighborhood.
- Respondents to the Feedback Form suggested in the comments section that some of the new housing units should be reserved for families who were displaced by Hurricane Sandy.
- There is a desire to use some of the vacant lots for community gardens or open space.
- The results of the Feedback Form indicate that more Edgemere community members are in favor of additional community gardens than are opposed. While this is true for all groups of respondents (NYCHA residents, tenants of rental apartments/houses, and homeowners), NYCHA residents show significantly stronger support for more gardens than homeowners and tenants (see Chart 4).



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Open Space, Coastal Protection, and Neighborhood Ecology

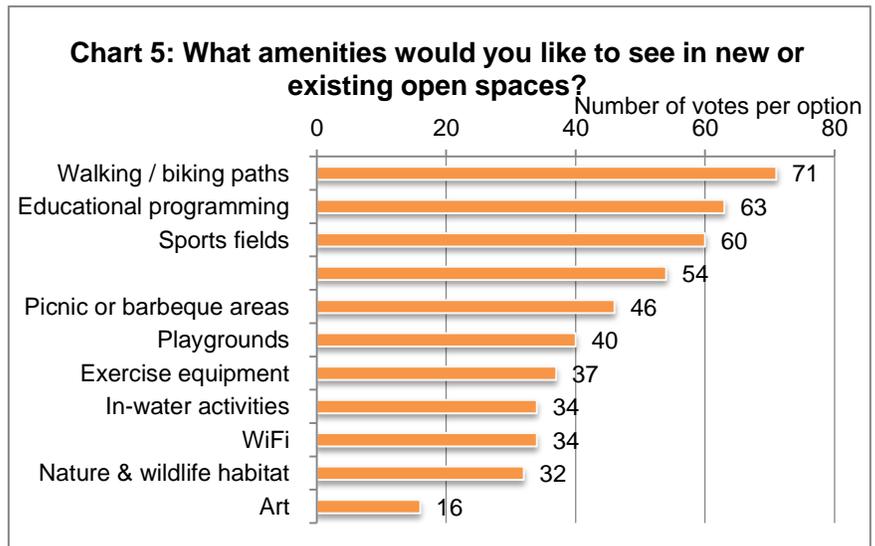
Participants at the Create Phase workshops showed strong support for strategies proposed by HPD and partner agencies in regards to Open Space, Coastal Protection, and Neighborhood Ecology - their comments are organized by strategies proposed:

Protect the Community: Raise the shoreline to reduce flood risk:

- There is a strong preference for a raised shoreline that maintains public access to the water.
- There is a concern about flood protection and people want any protection feature to be strong enough to withstand frequent storms, tidal flooding, and sea-level rise.

Use Open Space for Resiliency and Amenities:

- People want to limit development along the waterfront and in high-risk areas to create a buffer between Jamaica Bay and the neighborhood.
- People are worried about losing their investment because of flooding.
- There is community desire to use waterfront-adjacent land for park, stormwater management, community gardens, and wildlife space.
- Respondents of the Feedback Form want to see walking & biking paths, educational programming, and sports fields in new and existing open spaces (see Chart 5).

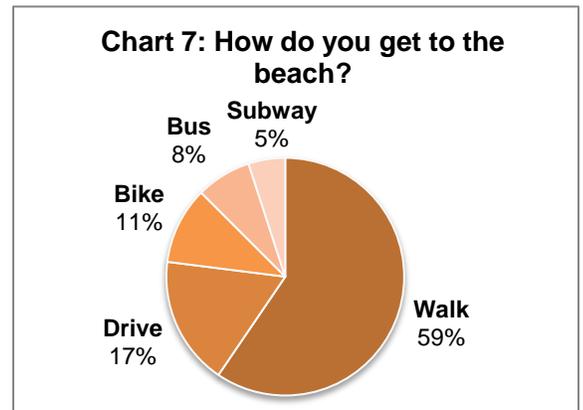
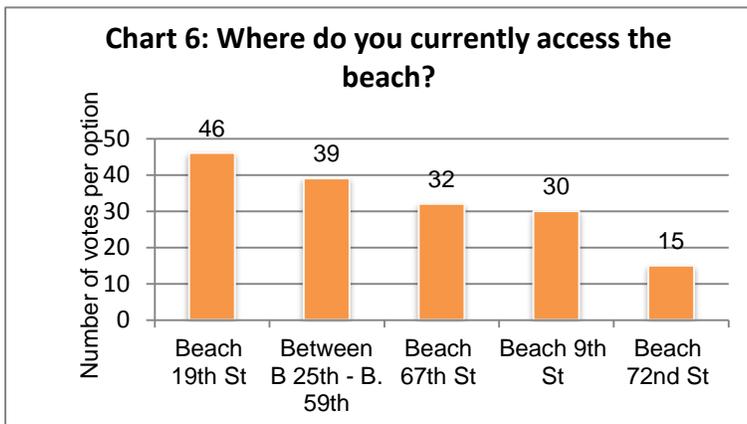


Improve Drainage and Water Quality

- Community members want the City to:
 - Address flooding during high tide, rain, and snow events.
 - Use alternative stormwater management methods - bioswales, rain gardens.
 - Have better access to at-home solutions for stormwater management like rain barrel giveaways.

Create Waterfront Connections

- People said that bayfront access should feature space for walking/running, exercise, biking, fishing, boating, sightseeing, and be family-oriented.
- The feedback we received at the Open Houses and through the Feedback Form demonstrates a strong desire for beach access closer to Edgemere, specifically at Beach 44th Street (see Chart 6).
- According to the Feedback Form, the majority of Edgemere residents walk to the beach (see Chart 7).



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Mobility & Access

Participants were uniformly supportive of the proposed Mobility and Access strategies - their comments are organized by strategies proposed:

Improve pedestrian safety & circulation and bicycle access throughout Edgemere and the Rockaways:

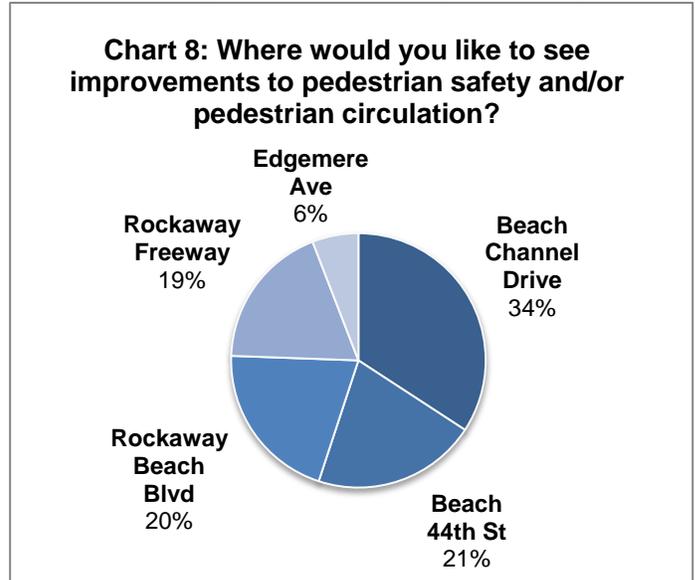
- There was a strong desire for:
 - Better crossings at subway stations and schools.
 - Speed bumps on residential side streets.
- According to the results of the Feedback Form, the roads most in need of improvements to pedestrian safety & circulation are Beach Channel Drive, Beach 44th Street, and Rockaway Beach Boulevard (see Chart 8).

Improve transit service and reliability

- People want the City to extend SBS stops near school, Q52 to Beach 44th St, and Q22 service in general.
- There should be skip stop service on A-Train in Rockaway.
- Community members need alternatives when the A-Train is down.
- There should be more infrastructure for alternative energy vehicles - electric car charging stations.
- Several respondents of the Feedback Form mentioned the need for elevators at the subway stations.

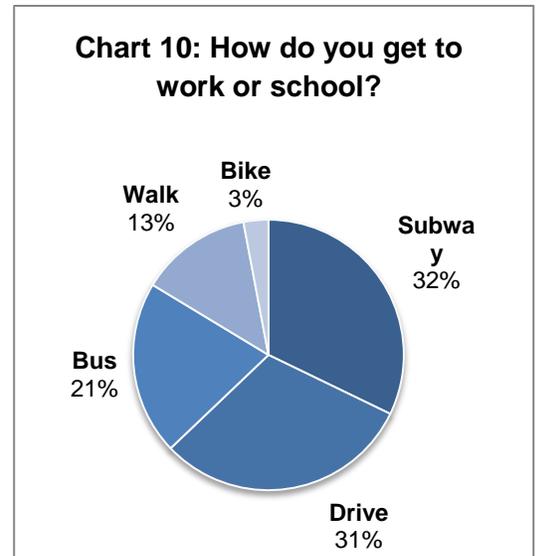
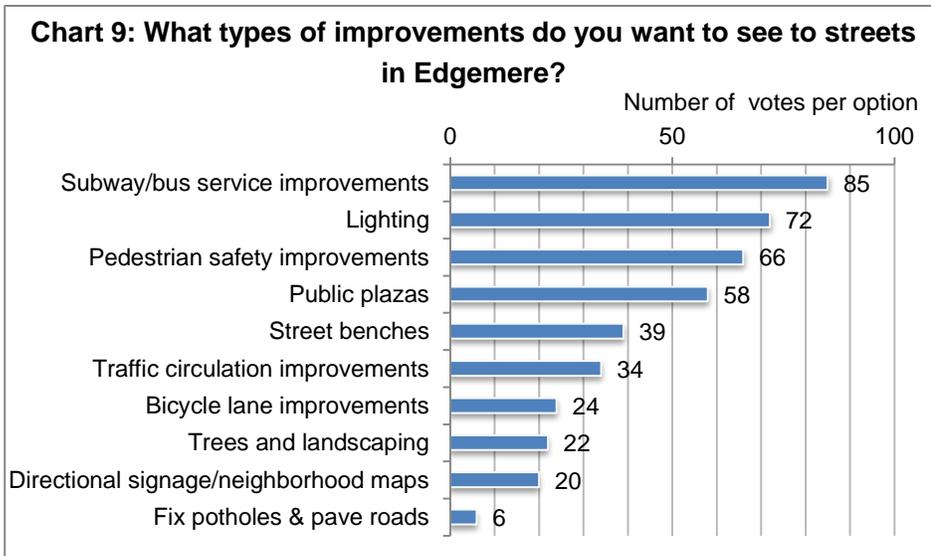
Improve vehicular access throughout the Rockaways

- People said Beach Channel Drive and Rockaway Blvd need to be resurfaced.
- The community thinks new roads should be impervious, including bioswales and tree pits.



Other Street Improvements

- Respondents of the Feedback Form prioritized subway & bus service improvements, better lighting, and pedestrian safety improvements (see Chart 9) when asked what type of street improvements they would like to see in Edgemere.
- Edgemere residents are most likely to drive or take the subway or bus to get to work or school (see Chart 10).

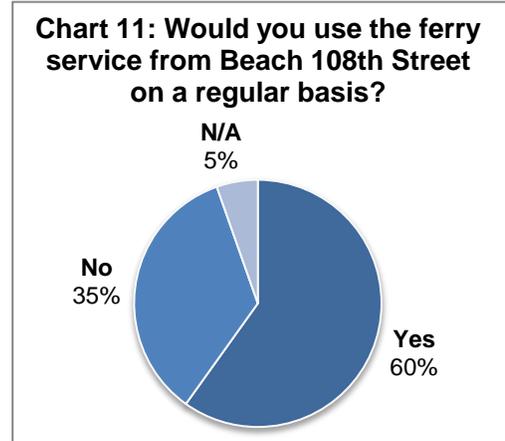
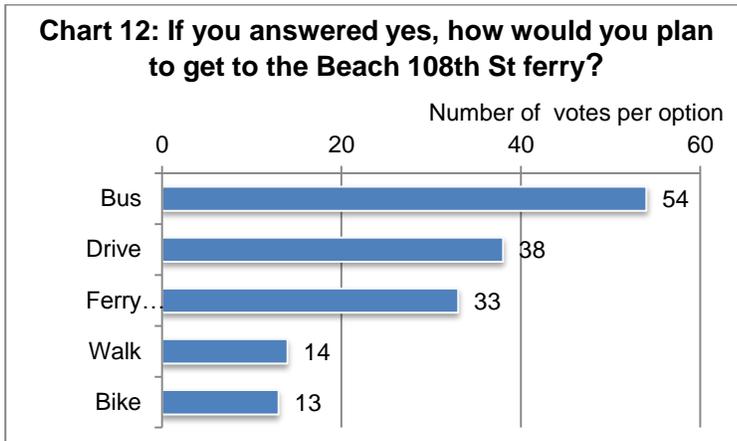


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Ferry Service

- A majority of the respondents of the Feedback Form said they would use the ferry service from Beach 108th St on a regular basis (see Chart 11).
- Those who said they would use the ferry service wrote that they would access Beach 108th St most likely by bus, car and/or ferry shuttle (see Chart 12).
- Several respondents expressed concerns in the comments section of the Feedback Form that the ferry will be too far away for Edgemere residents.

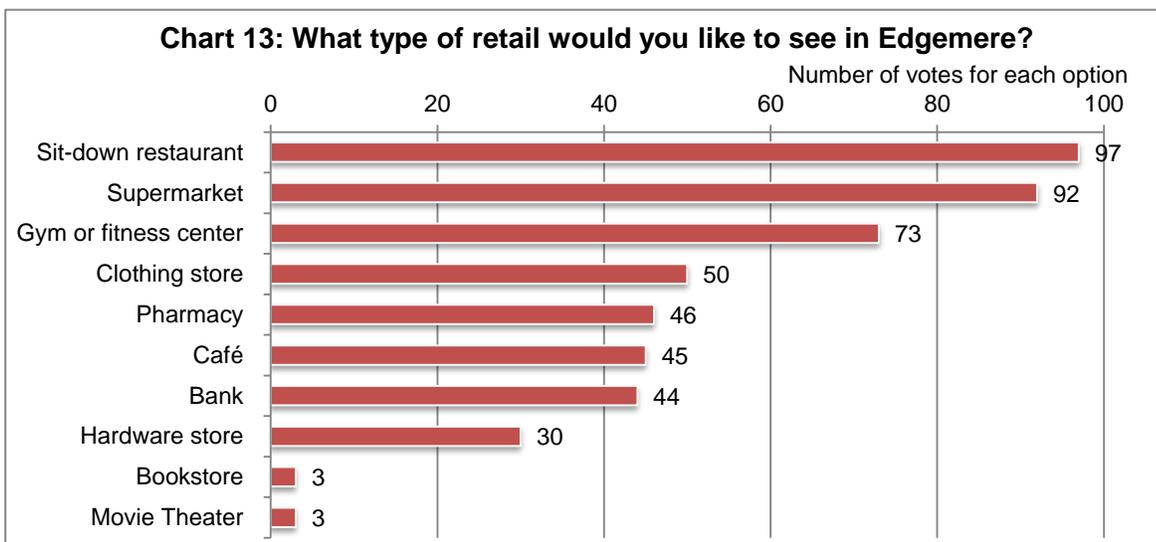


Neighborhood Services & Amenities

Participants were uniformly supportive of the proposed Neighborhood Services and Amenities strategies - their comments are organized by strategies proposed:

Create Neighborhood Resources Hubs: Promote the development of new businesses and community facilities at neighborhood hubs.

- People want to make Rockaway a destination.
- There is a need to create storefront infrastructure for entrepreneurs.
- The retail uses that were most favored by the respondents of the Feedback Form are a sit-down restaurant, a supermarket, and a gym/fitness center (see Chart 13).

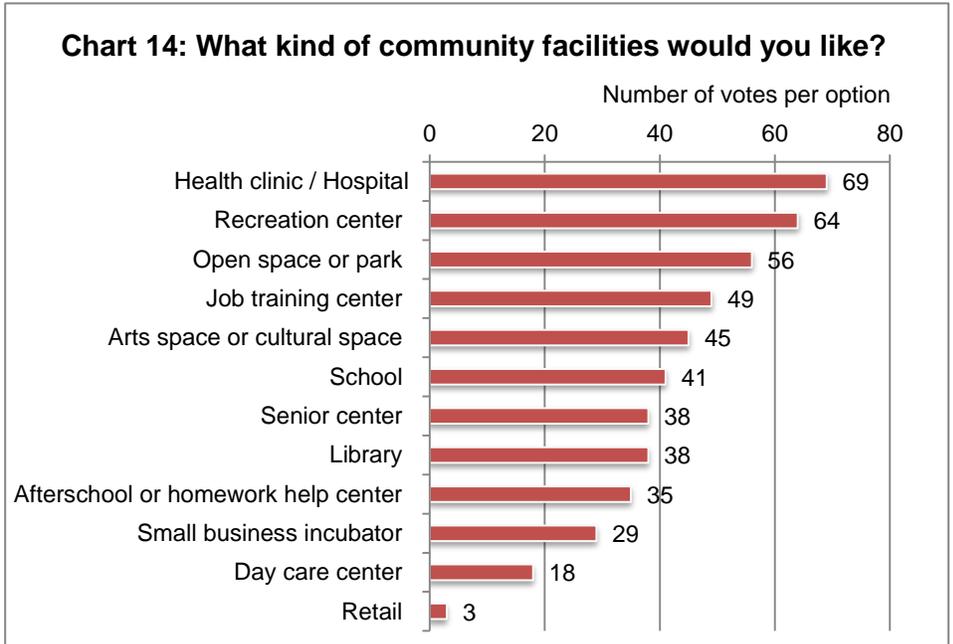


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Improve existing facilities and amenities: Activate vacant storefronts and make needed repairs to existing public facilities.

- The neighborhood needs:
 - Swimming lessons at the YMCA
 - Space to host meetings that are rentable by community members
 - More after-school programs
 - Recreation center for kids and adults
- The community facilities that are most in need according to the Feedback Form are a health clinic/hospital, a recreation center, and an open space/park (see Chart 14).



Create a healthier neighborhood

- The neighborhood needs:
 - Better access to fresh food - Whole Foods, Trader Joe's, food co-op.
 - Community gardens for learning, food cultivation.
 - Better and more parks with playgrounds.

Connect jobseekers to career resources and occupational trainings

- Neighborhood residents need transitional career services, mentoring services.
- There should be job training for local businesses.
- People want more space for local entrepreneurs in new developments, business incubators, and shared office space.
- The city needs to provide better promotion of existing services.
- A significant share (approx. 40%) of the respondents of the Feedback Form expressed interest in starting their own business (see Chart 15).
- Among those who would like to start their own business, 14% of respondents said they had already secured a location and were ready to open for business (see Chart 16).

Chart 15: Are you interested in starting your own business?

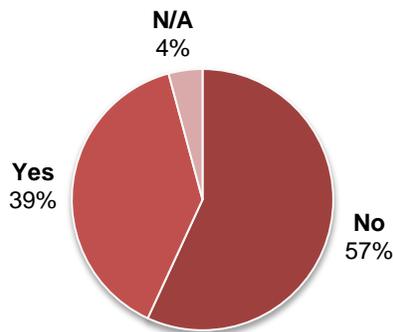


Chart 16: At what stage are you in starting your business?

