

## 2003 Floodplain Survey Summary

In the fall of 2003, these neighbors and staff of the Allen Neighborhood Center surveyed 183 households in the floodplain to share some of the results of our research and clear up misconceptions about flooding in the neighborhood. The survey also sought to identify the condition of houses and other structures, owners' plans (if any) regarding renovation or relocation, and residents' concerns and hopes regarding their neighborhoods. A database was created to organize our information, which was then analyzed to identify patterns and generate statistics, examples of which include:

- Over 1/3 of neighbors surveyed enjoyed the 'quiet' of the neighborhood.
- Over 1/3 of renters indicated an interest in purchasing a home in their neighborhood.
- 59% of respondents want to participate in neighborhood watches.
- 50% of respondents would like to see more block-based social activities.
- 44% of respondents have experienced some type of flooding at their current address.

When asked what they liked best about the neighborhood, neighbors had the following responses:

- 42 residents said their neighbors were what they liked best about living in Urbandale.
- 67 neighbors expressed that the peacefulness and quiet in the neighborhood was what they enjoyed the most.
- A number of people (27) listed location as the best part about living in the neighborhood. Access to businesses and the expressway, location to work and school (from elementary to higher education at Lansing Community College, Cooley Law School and Michigan State University) were discussed as being in close proximity to the neighborhood.
- Safety, security and the quality of their homes were listed less frequently as the things they liked best about their neighborhood.

When asked what they found most challenging, the majority of respondents said that traffic issues like speeding and poor signage concerned them the most. The condition and maintenance of roads, including poor lighting and storm drain cleaning, were listed most frequently as the highest concerns for Urbandale residents. Issues with neighbors, like car parking and noise were listed next frequently as the biggest concerns for survey respondents. Safety and security concerns with prostitution and drugs were also on the list of biggest challenges for neighbors. An equal number of neighbors described poorly maintained rentals, vacant houses, flood insurance rates, poorly trimmed trees and trash and litter as their biggest neighborhood concerns.

**When asked what changes they would desire to see, the overwhelming response from neighbors was better maintenance of storm drains and an increased police**

**presence in the neighborhood. These concerns were followed by road maintenance, more street signs, abandoned or vacant houses and trash removal.**

In short, neighbors had clear ideas about what it would take to begin to address some of their concerns and survey results demonstrate that much of the community enjoys their homes and neighborhoods, and are interested in working to make the area safer and more inviting.

Floodplain Survey Fast Facts  
As of 10/31/03

183 surveys completed

80 renter-occupied homes, 103 owner-occupied

81 residents had experienced one or more types of flooding  
basement flooding was most common type

31 renters indicated they would consider buying a home in their current neighborhood  
12 FAIR residents  
12 Frog Holler residents  
7 Square One residents

108 residents are interested in participating in neighborhood watches

92 residents expressed interest in neighborhood social activities

83 residents would attend a block meeting about floodplain issues if it were convenient

When discussing what they like best about their neighborhoods...  
62 residents mentioned "quiet"  
43 residents mentioned their neighbors