

6.

ATTITUDE SURVEY OF THE
RESIDENTS OF LIGHTNING

City of Atlanta
Department of Planning
November 13, 1969

This report deals with the results of an attitude survey conducted in Lightning. The section of Atlanta known as Lightning is bounded by Northside Drive, Hunter Street, and Simpson Street. Lightning is zoned for industrial use.

This survey was conducted by the City of Atlanta Planning Department upon the request of the citizens of Lightning. The citizens voiced their support for this survey or a community meeting held Tuesday, October 14, 1969.

The Lightning attitude survey was conducted for several reasons. First of all, the questionnaire is aimed at securing two basic types of information. The first group of questions, one through nine, deal with the attainment of factual information, such as the number of persons in each household. The second group of questions, ten through seventeen, explore the attitudes of the people toward living in Lightning and the problems involved.

In addition to securing information, a second purpose of this survey is to let the citizens of Lightning know that the City of Atlanta is concerned and interested in their problems. A third purpose of the Lightning survey is to get both the citizens of Lightning and the City of Atlanta to start thinking about the short and long range problems of this area. This includes the exposure of short range problems that can perhaps be solved in the near future, with the people of Lightning and the city working together.

The survey was conducted Tuesday, October 28, 1969 through Thursday, October 30, on a door-to-door verbal interview basis. Twelve interviewers, black and white, were used to conduct the survey: One City Planning Department employee, two City Planning Department interns, one Model Cities employee, and eight HUD interns. (A list of interviewers appears in appendix A). They interviewed a total of 105 households, which is 77% of the total number of households in Lightning. Contact at each household was attempted at least three times: Morning, afternoon, and evening.

General Results

The factual results of the survey show that:

1. Forty-four per cent (44%) of the respondents live in housing which is overcrowded, having one or more persons per room.
2. Of the 105 households surveyed, eighty-one per cent (81%) rented their residences and the remaining nineteen per cent (19%) were home-owners. Seventy-five per cent (75%) of the renters and eighty per cent (80%) of the homeowners stated that they could not afford to pay more for housing.

3. Seventy-four of the interviewees, or seventy per cent (70%) were unemployed, due to disability, retirement, household responsibility or simple lack of ability to find work.
4. The average length of residence in Lightning of the respondents was nineteen years, with a range of 1.5 months to sixty-six years.
5. The average age of the respondents was 52.4 years, with a range of twelve to eighty-two years.

The attitudinal results of the survey show the following major findings:

1. The majority of interviewees (85%) like living in Lightning. However, of the ninety-eight respondents saying whether they would like to live elsewhere (See question 12), fifty-three per cent (53%) answered affirmatively, with the remaining forty-seven per cent (47%) preferring to remain in Lightning.
2. Ninety-one out of the 105 interviewees feel like they are members of the Lightning community and belong with the people there.
3. Housing was the most frequently-mentioned problem in Lightning, with fifty-two per cent (52%) of the respondents listing it. (See question 13).

Detailed Results

The complete interview schedule and tabulated results for each of the questions in the interview are presented in this section.

Questions and Responses

1. How long have you lived in Lightning?

Average length of residence - 19 years
Range - 1.5 month to 66 years

2. Where do you work?

Number of respondents unemployed, due to disability, retirement, household responsibility, etc. - 74 number of respondents employed - 29

3. How long does it take you to get to work?

Average travel time to work - 30 minutes
Range - 5 minutes to 1½ hour

4. How do you get to work?

Car - 8
*Bus - 15
Walk - 8
Taxi - 1

5. How old are you?

Average age of respondent - 52.4 years old
Range - 12 - 82 years old

6. How many people live in this house?

Average - 3.5

7. How many rooms are in this house?

Average - 3.7
(46 houses with one or more persons per room)

8. Do you own this house or rent it?

Own - 20 *Rent - 85

9. If you are a renter, could you afford to pay more rent for a better house?

Yes - 20
No - 64
Don't know - 1

If you are a home owner, could you afford to buy a different house?

Yes - 3
No - 16
Don't know - 1

10. Do you like living here?

*Yes - 89
No - 46

a. Why do you like living here?

Nice neighbors - 14
Like the neighborhood - 13

It is convenient - 13
All my friends live here - 10
Raised here or lived here
a long time - 9
Economic reasons - 8
No trouble or no one bothers me - 7
Nice landlord - 2

b. Why do you dislike living here?

Dislike the people - 4
Dislike the neighborhood - 4
Sub-standard housing - 3
Not a good neighborhood for
children - 2
Don't like living alone - 1

11. Do you feel like you are a member of this community and belong with these people?

Yes - 91
No - 9
Guess so - 1
No answer - 4

12. Would you like to live somewhere else?

Yes - 52
No - 46
Don't know - 4
No answer - 3

a. Why would you like to live somewhere else?

Would like a better neighborhood - 13
Would like better housing - 12
Dislike people here - 3
Want a garden - 3
Not quiet here - 2
See a change as good - 2
Wants a bath or hot water - 2
Want to move for health purposes - 2
Don't like living alone - 1

b. Why would you not like to live somewhere else?

This is "my home" - 6
Would be hard to get used to new people and church - 4

Friends or relatives are here - 3
Close to church - 2
Close to work - 1
Like it here - 2
Couldn't afford to move - 1

13. What problems need to be solved first to improve the neighborhood?

Housing

Inadequate water service - 11
Traffic problems - 8
Street repairs - 8
Poor sanitation - 8
Inadequate facilities for children - 5
Crime and poor police protection - 4
Bad people in neighborhood - 3
Poor bus service - 1
Lack of job opportunities - 1
We have no problems I can think of - 15
No answer - 14

14. If you were to live elsewhere, what general area would you like most?

Nowhere else - 21
S.W. - 2
N.W. - 10
ALHA project - 1
Griffin St. - 1
Dixie Hills - 2
Any nice place - 10
Hunter Homes - 2
Kirkwood - 2
Bowen Homes - 1
West side - 12
Out of state - 1
N.E. A & 1 - 1
Hunter & Mitchell - 2
South side - 1
University Homes - 1
Decatur - 1
High Rise for elderly - 1
Cascade Hts. area - 1
Howell Dr. - 1
Bankhead & Hightower - 2
Scott crossing - 1
Simpson Rd. - 1
In woods - 1
Adamsville area - 1
Around here - 3
McDaniel project - 1
Vine St. - 1

15. What kind of place do you think Lightning is to grow up in?

- Very good- 3
- Better than most - 8
- Same as others - 42
- Not as good - 24
- Very bad - 16
- No answer - 12

16. What do you like and dislike about living in Lightning?

Here is a card which lists some things you might like about living here. Please pick the two you like most. If there is anything you like but it is not on the card, go ahead and pick it.

- A. I am close to work - 15
- B. The rent is low - 34
- C. Many of my friends live here - 55
- D. I have lived here a long time - 43
- E. I own my own home - 10
- F. My relatives live in Lightning - 13
- G. Other reasons
 - Convenience - 6
 - Like the people
 - People take care of me when I'm sick; better than last place I lived in
 - There is nothing I like - 5
 - No answer - 5

17. This card lists some problems or things you might dislike about Lightning. Please pick the five you think are the biggest problems. If there is any problem you would like to pick but do not find on the list, go ahead and pick it.

- A. Not close to shopping - 27
- B. Not close to work - 7
- C. Lack of facilities and programs - 35
- D. Inadequate bus service - 17
- E. No health service - 24
- F. Inadequate water service - 18
- G. Unemployment - 18
- H. Housing - 65
- I. Education - 3
- J. Police protection - 34
- K. Rat control - 42
- L. Traffic and parking problems - 44

M. Other reasons -

1. Trash collection and yard maintenance - 5
2. Not close to any shopping centers - 4
3. Crime and juvenile delinquency - 2
4. Absentee landlords - 1
5. Need a laundromat - 1
6. Outside help is hurting us - 1
7. Cab fare is too high - 1

APPENDIX A

List of Interviewers

Frank Biggins, HUD Intern

Gary Brown, HUD Intern

Bill Hammer, HUD Intern

John Hiscox, HUD Intern

Louise Klaffner, HUD Intern

John Matthews, Department of Planning

Dot Metcalf, Department of Planning Intern

Nancy McKnight, Department of Planning Intern

Sonja Pevey, HUD Intern

Steve Steinart, Model Cities

Patricia Williams, HUD Intern

APPENDIX B

Interview Guide - Lightning

A. General Instructions

1. Make sure that all questions included are answered; however, if a respondent refuses to answer any questions, go on to the next item on your questionnaire. Record reason for no response, if possible. You may include other questions; record them as well as the interviewee's answer.
2. Please record all answers as accurately and carefully as possible.
3. Let the interview continue if the interviewee wishes to talk. However, one hour should be the maximum time required for the interview.
4. Record the date of the interview, the time at which the interview begins and is completed, and the total amount of time the interview lasts.

B. Introduction.

The following general introduction should be used in the interview situation: "Hello, my name is _____. I represent the City of Atlanta (show your identification card). The Mayor and Board of Aldermen are concerned about the problems of the people living in Lightning. Many different suggestions have been made about what the people of Lightning want and need from the city. However, we feel it is necessary to talk directly to the people of Lightning, so for the next few days we will be talking with all Lightning residents to help us find out exactly what the people want. Could you please take a few minutes to answer these questions?"

If subject refuses to participate in the interview, try to find out why. If he indicates he is too busy, try to make an appointment to interview him at another date. If he has another reason, try again to get the interview. However, if he absolutely refuses, do not persist. Record a response, and if possible, the reason. If no one is at home, try to contact the household three different times. If some interviewees are not available at certain times, a convenient time will be worked out in the interviewing schedule so these people can be contacted. If more than one member of a household want to participate in the interview session, record their responses separately. Each interview record should contain the responses of one person only. However, if this is not possible, indicate that responses came from two or more people.

Remember that the main purpose is to get answers to the basic questions contained in our questionnaire. If the interviewee has questions to ask of you, try to delay this discussion until the end of the formal interview. DO NOT, under any circumstances, attempt to answer questions of which you are unsure. The purpose of this interview is to find out what the people in Lightning think and want. If people ask questions you cannot answer, refer them to Mr. Johnny Robinson (you will have a supply of his personal cards to pass out to everyone).

C. Close

Close the interview by answering any questions you can, and by thanking the interviewee for his cooperation. State again that if he has any additional questions, he should call Mr. Johnny Robinson. Also, if he has any additional comments, attempt to record them on the answer sheet.