

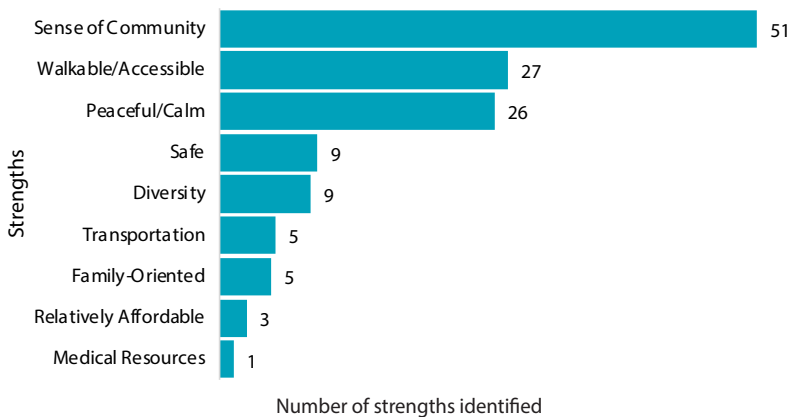
2022 Westside Needs Assessment Summary

Findings

The Westside of the City of Santa Barbara, CA is a vibrant, multicultural community situated west of U.S. Route 101 in the lower part of the downtown area. Described as one of the most densely populated neighborhoods in Santa Barbara, the Westside is largely residential with anchor institutions including a medical clinic, elementary school, and well-known taqueria.

The Westside Needs Assessment (WNA) describes the health and well-being of residents. When asked to identify strengths of the Westside, residents described a strong sense of community that supports each other, a peaceful and calm neighborhood, and a landscape that is walkable and easy to access on foot or bicycle (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Top Strengths Mentioned in Open-Ended Survey Question (n=150)



Methods

The Westside Needs Assessment gathered the strengths, needs, and opportunities of the Westside of the City of Santa Barbara through a random sample collected door-to-door and online. The 60 question survey was conducted in English and Spanish of [Census Tracts 11.01 and 11.02](#).

Questions from state and national questionnaires assessed the health and well-being of Westside residents. Select questions match those asked in the county-wide random survey included in the 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA).

Totalling 166 household responses, the sample was statistically weighted to increase the representativeness and match the demographics of these census tracts. Complete results of the WNA and 2022 CHNA can be accessed [here](#).

Demographics

According to the 2020 US Census, the Westside is home to:



8,794 residents

64% Hispanic/Latino | **34%** Non-Hispanic White

The median* household income is approximately **\$66,589**.

The median age is **31 years**.

32% have a Bachelor's degree or higher.

*The median is calculated by taking the "middle" value, the value for which half of the observations are larger and half are smaller.

Westside Compared to Santa Barbara County

Health

- Higher rates of **physical activity** (89% Westside (W); 84% County (C))
- Fewer residents experience good or better **general health** (76% W; 84% C)
- Significantly lower number of people with **health insurance** (78% W and 94% C)



Basic Needs

- Significantly more residents experience **housing insecurity** (21% W; 11% C)
- More residents had ever **experienced homelessness** (23% W; 12% C)
- **Food insecurity** was higher (32% W; 26% C)
- **Inability to afford a balanced meal** was higher (30% W; 22% C)
- Satisfaction with **food quality** and **food availability** was also lower (Quality 83% W vs. 93% C; Availability 81% W vs. 91% C)



Westside by Demographics Experiencing Need

Education

Westside residents with only High School (HS) Diplomas have:



- **Higher rates of physical inactivity** (22% only HS vs. 11% W)
- **Higher rates of poor mental health** (44% only HS vs. 17% W)

Westside residents with some college education have:

- **Higher rates of food insecurity** (45% some college vs. 32% W)

Race/Ethnicity

Those who are Hispanic/Latino are:

- **Less insured** (70% Hispanic/Latino vs. 91% Non-Hispanic White vs. 78% W)
- **Live in denser households** with 3.8 rooms for 4.1 people, compared to non-Hispanic Whites who live in 4.8 rooms for 3.0 people



Income

Those making \$35k or less per year have:



- **Higher rates of housing insecurity** (34% of households ≤ \$35k vs. 5% households \$75k+ vs. 20.5% W)
- **Higher rates of ever experienced homelessness** (40% of households ≤ \$35k vs. 8% households \$75k+ vs. 23% W)
- **Higher rates of food insecurity** (48% of households ≤ \$35k vs. 5% households \$75k+ vs. 32% W)
- **More challenges to afford a balanced meal** (46% of households ≤ \$35k vs. 5% households \$75k+ vs. 30% W)

Community Perspectives

Westside residents identified services that can help the community continue to thrive, including increasing access to educational programs for adults and children. The adult educational need is primarily focused on language acquisition (e.g., learning English) and workforce development. The child educational needs include after school programs and tutoring centers. Other frequently reported service needs include childcare services and access to fresh food, such as new grocery stores and a local farmers' market, to improve the variety and quality of available foods.

Conclusions

Findings show health disparities on the Westside compared to Santa Barbara County. Further inequities exist across race/ethnicity, income, and education demographics. Policy changes, more resources and services are needed to help alleviate inequities.

Community engagement is needed to identify the community's priorities, develop targeted services and reach the most vulnerable Westside residents. Current collaboration between University of California, Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara Unified School District, and others to develop a resource center could better align needs with potential services.

In addition, disparities identified on the Westside indicate that areas within Santa Barbara County are experiencing varying levels of need, and future needs assessments of other census tracts and/or municipalities could identify additional vulnerable populations.