ABOUT THE CITYWIDE SURVEY
In the fall of 2016, the I Dream Detroit project launched a citywide survey of women of color (Black, Latina, Arab, Asian, and American Indian) in Detroit. The survey gives women of color an opportunity to share their thoughts on their lives as mothers with dependent children, business owners, nonprofit founders and leaders, retirees, and workers. Their responses confirmed themes that surfaced through the interviews of those profiled in the report and those shared in the focus groups.

486
Number of respondents

131
Number of focus group participants

ABOUT THE FOCUS GROUPS
In the summer of 2016, the I Dream Detroit project worked with the following community organizations across the city to host six focus groups.
- Congress of Communities: 20 participants, predominantly Latina, all ages
- We the People of Detroit: 20 participants, predominantly African American, all ages
- Goodwill Industries: 18 participants, predominantly young African American women
- Food Labs and ROC: 13 participants, predominantly African American business owners
- Brightmoor Connection Client Choice Food Pantry: 30 participants, mostly African American, all ages
- Overflow (Mixed): 30 participants, predominantly African American, all ages

Women make up 53% of Detroit’s population

91% of all women in Detroit are women of color
**DETOUR**
Focus Group Findings

**CITYWIDE SURVEY RESPONDENTS’ DEMOGRAPHICS**

- **Race/Ethnicity:**
  - Black: 80%
  - Asian: 3.6%
  - Latina: 3.6%
  - Arab: 2.7%
  - American Indian/Native Alaskan: 0.5%
  - Multiracial: 5%
  - Other: 3.2%

- **Age Diversity:**
  - Under 18: 0.4%
  - 18–25 year old: 7%
  - 26–35 year old: 14%
  - 36–45 year old: 23%
  - 46–55 year old: 23%
  - 56–65 year old: 11%
  - 65+ year old: 7%

- **Economic Security:**
  - 50% of survey respondents said they do not earn a living wage

- **Income:**
  - Low Income: 52%
  - Middle Income: 43%
  - High Income: 5%

- **Education:**
  - High School Diploma/GED: 5%
  - Some College: 28%
  - Undergraduate Degree: 34%
  - Advanced Degree: 30%

- **Work Status:**
  - Employed: 52%
  - Unemployed: 13%
  - Retired: 15%
  - Business owners or nonprofit leaders: 19%
  - Job training program: 1%
  - 8% Unemployed and looking for work
  - 5% Unemployed and not looking for work

- **Union member:** 18%
EXPERIENCES OF ECONOMIC INSECURITY

57% self-identify as economically insecure, meaning they do not make a living wage or do not have disposable income left most months.

ECONOMIC INSECURITY
What they forgo:
- Recreation, leisure activities: 70%
- Auto insurance: 42%
- Medicine: 24%
- Transportation: 23%
- Food: 22%
- Utilities: 17%
- Necessities for their children: 15%

WOMEN LIVING BELOW THE POVERTY LINE
The W.K. Kellogg Foundation aspires to see all Detroits living 200% above the poverty line. The following statistics reveal some realities facing women of color who live below this line:
- 75% do not have money left over after paying all monthly expenses
- 74% of those who work do not earn a living wage that enables them to support their family
- 60% of retirees want or need to work
- 60% of retirees were forced into early retirement
- 54% do not have jobs that provide paid sick leave
- 52% work at jobs without vacation time
- 51% receive Medicaid/Medicare
- 44% say their home makes them feel most economically secure
- 35% get electronic food stamps
- 34% utilize food bank/food pantries

WORKING TOGETHER TO MAKE ENDS MEET
Women living 200% below the poverty line work together in the following ways:
- Lend each other money: 52%
- Share food: 52%
- Share transportation: 52%
- Give each other a place to stay when needed: 32%
- Watch each other’s children: 30%

THE UNEMPLOYED
- 92% say job opportunities would help them seek steady employment
- 43% say keeping full public assistance benefits until they get on their feet would help
- 43% say transportation would help them seek employment

WHO ARE THE UNEMPLOYED?
- 41% have been out of work for less than a year
- 41% of the unemployed have some college
- 40% of retirees want or need work to make ends meet
- 25% have been out of work for 1–2 years
WOMEN WITH DEPENDENT CHILDREN

39% have dependent children

64% have no money left over after monthly expenses

60% don’t make a living wage

48% find it difficult to maintain steady employment

Things that would help them maintain steady employment:
- Job opportunities: 91%
- Keep full public assistance benefits until they earn a living wage: 57%
- Childcare: 52%
- Transportation: 48%
- Training: 39%
- Second chance despite criminal record: 13%

“I want to live in a neighborhood and not in an area where it’s all lofts. I want to sit on my porch and watch children play and be a part of that community.”

“Don’t make a living wage
60%

“Type of childcare:
- Family member: 32%
- Children old enough to take care of themselves: 31%
- Before and after care program: 18%
- Friend or neighbor: 11%
- Licensed childcare provider: 10%

“There’s no recreational facilities in the city. There’s nothing for these kids. Everything is out in the suburbs, and it cost a lot of money.”

“We have so many health challenges among our children. And then our children are growing up sick adults. So that is my hope: That they really take an initiative to work on reduction of pollution in the city of Detroit.”
BUSINESS OWNERS AND NONPROFIT LEADERS

19% OF ALL SURVEY RESPONDENTS RUN A BUSINESS OR OPERATE A NONPROFIT

- 50% have registered their nonprofits
- 51% have registered their businesses
- 52% employ people from disadvantaged communities; with low-income business owners being notably more likely (64%)

CHALLENGES

- 67% are challenged by lack of access to capital
- 52% are challenged by paperwork
- 46% are challenged by finding customers

ECONOMICALLY SECURE

Of these business owners:
- 50% have registered their nonprofits
- 69% have registered their businesses
- 46% employ people from disadvantaged communities
- 53% are challenged by lack of access to capital
- 53% are challenged by paperwork
- 47% believe that preferential treatment is given to other businesses
- 15% have some college education
- 32% have a college degree
- 50% have advanced degrees

WHY BUSINESSES OWNERS STARTED THEIR BUSINESSES

Always been a dream: 44%
Maximize income: 38%
Provide services to community that meet basic needs: 37%
Create jobs for community: 35%
To organize community to advocate for equality, justice and fairness: 29%
Limited employment opportunities: 27%
Provide training to help people secure jobs and improve their lives: 26%

LOW INCOME

24% of this group operates a business or nonprofit

- 44% have registered their nonprofits
- 53% have registered their businesses
- 64% likely to employ people from disadvantaged communities
- 74% are challenged by lack of access to capital
- 39% have some college education
- 30% have a college degree
- 15% have advanced degrees

“Lack of capital is hurting my business.”

“It would be nice to see more loaning institutions provide small business low-interest loans or grants to Detroit residents who are long-time residents.”
**PERSPECTIVES ON DETROIT’S REVIVAL**

**INCLUSION IN DETROIT’S REVIVAL**

71% of all respondents do not feel like they are included in Detroit’s economic revival and development.

“Too much focus on building the downtown and Midtown area. I agree that we need to have a vibrant business area, but we need strong neighborhoods to sustain the city.”

“Easier access for quick business start-ups. There are many talented Detroiters who need to know how to be entrepreneurs and become independently wealthy.”

“There is little to no development in legacy neighborhoods. It is not clear how to access many of the tables where decisions are made about development.”

**CONTRIBUTION TO THE REVIVAL**

- Contribute as taxpayers: Low income 63%, Middle Income 63%, High Income 100%
- Support locally owned businesses: Low income 85%, Middle Income 84%, High Income 85%
- Support local institutions (nonprofits, churches) that help those in need: Low income 59%, Middle Income 78%, High Income 85%
- Participate in community organizing for social and economic change: Low income 59%, Middle Income 64%, High Income 69%
- Live in Detroit despite its hardships: Low income 48%, Middle Income 74%, High Income 77%
- Business owner or nonprofit leader who employs Detroiters: Low income 19%, Middle Income 27%, High Income 31%

1. Low income is defined here as below $37,677, based on Pew Research Center's definition of middle income as 2/3 to double U.S. median household income.
2. Middle income is defined as $37,677 to $110,000.
3. High income is defined as $110,001 or above.

“I feel that we are informed after decisions have been made. I feel that we should sit down at the planning table at the beginning stages.”

“I think Detroit residents would be more inclined to be involved if the needs of the neighborhoods (other than downtown/Midtown) were addressed as equally important as the revitalization of downtown.”

**WHO IS SHAPING DETROIT’S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT?**

- Small business owners: Residents 4%
- Elected officials: 13%
- Big business owners and investors: 73%

*Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.*