

# Study Progress Report: The Impact of the Preference Policy on Wellbeing

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# The Impact of the Preference Policy on Wellbeing

## Broad Goals

- To understand the experiences and needs of those served by policy.
- To assist the Oversight Committee and Portland Housing Bureau in evaluating the policy and shaping ongoing implementation.
- To inform similar policies across the county.

# The Impact of the Preference Policy on Wellbeing

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## Initial Objectives

- To understand resident's motivations for applying to the Preference Policy.
- To learn about resident's experiences in the neighborhood and sense of community well-being.
- To begin to gather recommendations to improve social, cultural, civic, economic, and environmental well-being.

## Data collection to date

Building (# PP units)	Survey (% of units)	Interview	Focus group
Garlington Place (31)	17 (52%)	8	1 (6)
Rutherford Place (47)	36 (72%)	14	1 (12)
Beatrice Morrow (59)	45 (75%)	7	1 (10)
<b>Total</b>	<b>98 (69%)</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>3</b>

# Preliminary Findings

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**1. The Preference Policy is serving the intended population**

## Participant demographics

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- Lived in neighborhood average of 32 years
  - On average, lived 72% of life in neighborhood
  - 65% lived entire life in neighborhood

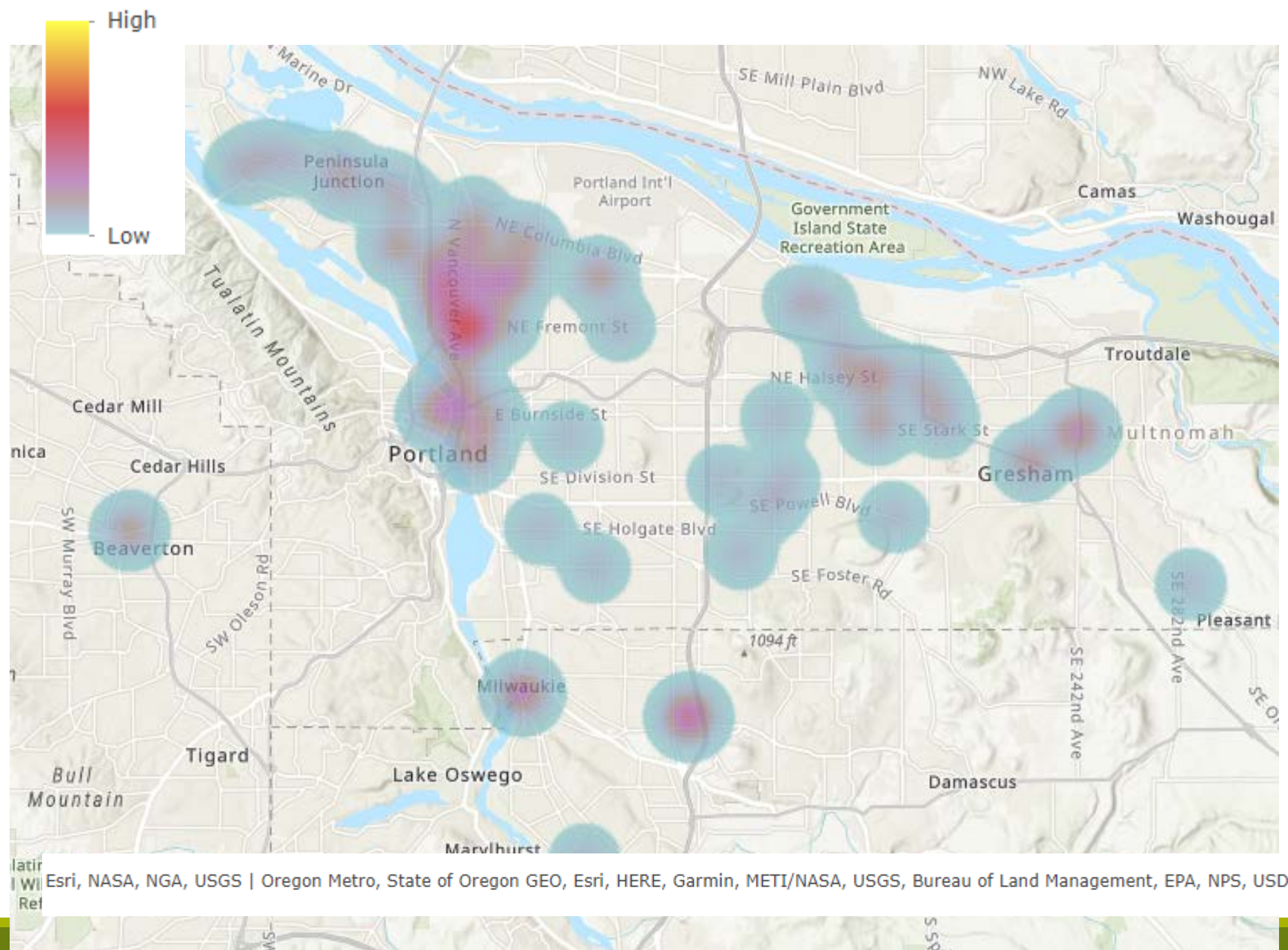
# Participant demographics

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- 84% Black
- 68% Women
- Age range 19-71, average 43
- 54% had no children living in home



Where did  
residents  
move  
from?



## 2. Place matters to residents housed through the Preference Policy

# Motivated by connection to neighborhood and need for housing

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- 80% reported their connection to the neighborhood was their primary motivation for applying
- 80% believed this was best chance to move from waitlist into housing

*"I've been here all my life, 67 years. Born in Multnomah County Hospital. I've lived all over the neighborhood, northeast, north, a little bit in the south, but basically my mother's been at her house for 54 years. She's still there."*

*"Ain't nothing wrong with wanting to live near around your people."*

“Individuals who feel a sense of security, belonging, and trust in their community have better health than those who feel isolated or marginalized”

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

## Extremely Strong Place Attachments

### Among residents surveyed:

- 91% agree that the history of this neighborhood matters to me
- 87% feel I belong in this neighborhood
- 83% have friends and family in neighborhood

### Compared to U.S sample:

- *19% of adults reported a strong emotional connection to their community*

**3. Residents are generally experiencing improvements to their wellbeing**

# An opportunity-rich neighborhood

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*" It's convenient over here, just about everything I need is like within walking distance. I really appreciate that. "*

- 93% agree there are many stores in neighborhood
- 85% agree there are accessible/affordable parks and rec facilities
- 82% agree it's a good place to raise family

# Positive Changes to Wellbeing

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- 78% participate in arts and cultural events
  - 53% report an increased participation since moving in
- 56% spend time volunteering
  - 24% report increased civic engagement since moving in
- 50% report getting to work and/or school is more convenient

*"It's just I'm glad to be back."*

4. ...and residents also reported risks/vulnerabilities to their wellbeing.



# Economic vulnerability

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- Only 48% agreed that people who want to can find a good job in the neighborhood
- Some are still precariously housed
- Most interviewed described needs for more low-cost stores and amenities

*"[I wish there were] more, different stores. Because the stores are so expensive that they put in this area."*

*"[there's]no black businesses or anything like that. That will need to come back and they will have to give the opportunities for blacks and help blacks."*

# Uneven experiences of equity and inclusion

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- 37% agree there's "a lot" of prejudice in the neighborhood
- 30% experienced discrimination in area businesses
- Most people interviewed described experiencing prejudice in the neighborhood

*"I had a guy, I was carrying a ladder, and I borrowed it from a friend, and this guy came out of his house and had his phone, and he's recording me walking down the street. He walked with me about five blocks, came in front of my house, and filmed me. I said, 'Man, what is up with this? I'm not stealing the ladder, it's my friend's ladder. I've got to work on the house, I'm painting...'"*

# Issues related to building design and neighbor relations

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- Design: Issues related to unit size, amenities, accessibility, parking
- Property Management: Issues related to maintenance, surveillance, resident services
- Affordability: Issues related to housing stabilization

# Preliminary Implications

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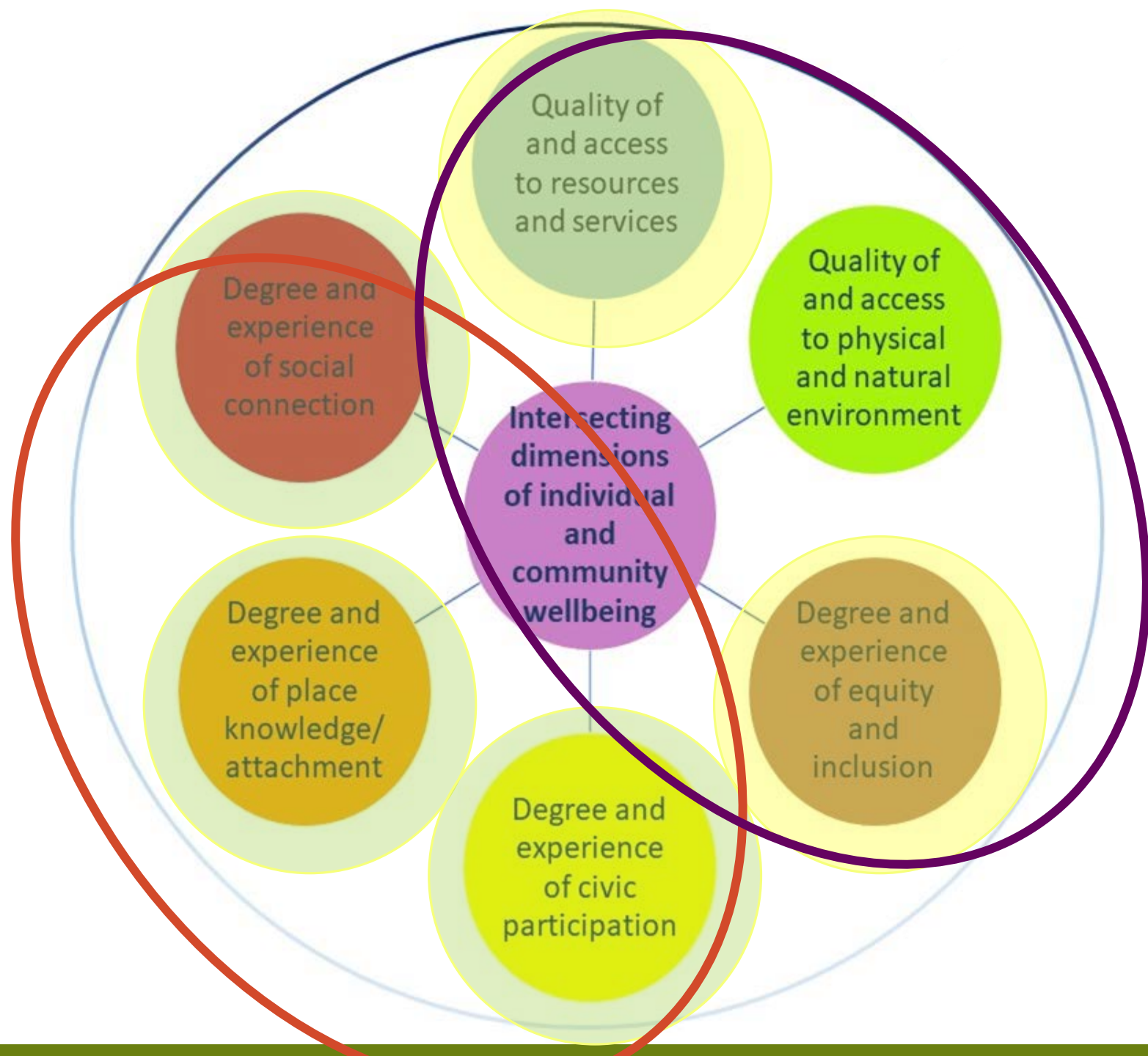
# Take-aways

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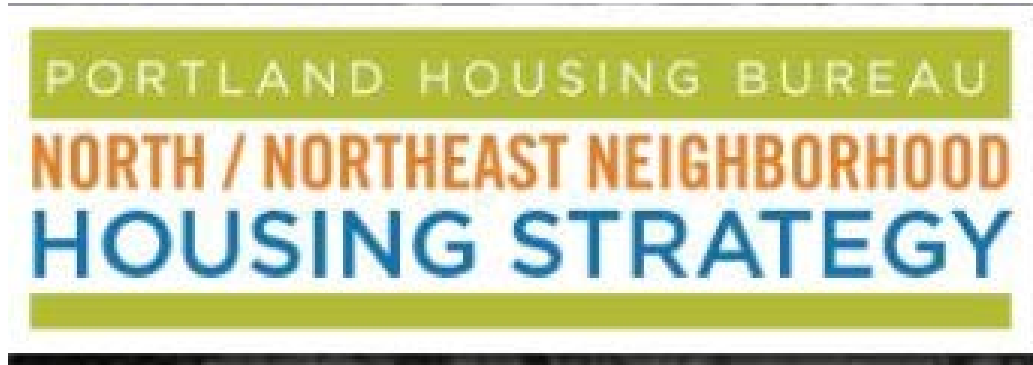
- Being able to live in the neighborhood where you have strong place attachments and social ties matters deeply to many.
- Residents experience their situations as improved, AND they experience tensions/threats to well-being.
- Affordable housing is necessary but not sufficient.

# Conceptualizing Community Wellbeing

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We  
have:



What if we had:



# Looking Ahead

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## NEXT STEPS

- Complete analysis
- Report findings to housing partners, residents, and other stakeholders
- Vet interest in Participatory Action Research with residents to address some of their concerns
- Funding to continue study
  - 301 more units to be leased by summer
  - Interested in changes over time



# Questions?

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PROJECT SUPPORTED BY PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY,  
IN COLLABORATION WITH THE PORTLAND HOUSING  
BUREAU.