



Cultural Heritage, Social Well-being, and Public Health of DeLand's African American Community: A Community Assessment, 2020

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Executive Summary

The Wright Building was a focal point of the community between 1920-1970s. The building and stories emerging from individuals who remember its vibrant days indicate its role in several **interconnected** areas: economy, health, and cultural identity. It is a mistake if we approach these issues separately. The three areas are **interconnected** and equally important in helping any community to **sustain**. In fact, sustainability cannot be reached when the connection between aforementioned areas are not intentionally sought.

The building provided the community with a strong social network and social capital enhancing their resiliency in the time of segregation and Jim Crow laws. It was pivotal to help the community survive. **And this is how the community remembers this building.**

In the absence of such an essential community focal point, alongside other developments in DeLand community, the Black community lost not only resources that were created by their own community but also a **place** to meet, to gather and to socialize.

Study highlights according to our participants:

- Employment, education, and health services are the most pressing needs of the Black community in DeLand.
- Downtown DeLand is frequently used by White respondents, but not by Black respondents.
- More than 75% of Black respondents expressed their community lacks a specific public space for people to gather (compared to only 35% of White respondents).
- Only 20% of Black respondents said they have a great deal of trust in the Sheriff Department. More than 80% of Black respondents, however, have a great deal of trust in DeLand police.
- Less than 20% of Black respondents had a great deal of trust in Volusia County, the City of DeLand and schools.
- Less than 25% of Black respondents had a great deal of trust in the health care system.
- Major public health issues for Black respondents were drugs, violence, access to healthcare, HIV, mental health, and access to healthy food.
- Black respondents were least satisfied with building appearance, sidewalks, and street appearance in their community.
- Black respondents have much lower level agreeance with their community access to fresh fruits/vegetables and affordable food compared to White respondents.
- **An overwhelming majority of participants (both White and Black) believe that the Wright Building had important social, cultural, and economic roles for the Black community in the past.**
- **An overwhelming majority of participants (both Black and White) believe that the Wright Building is important to the community, for the City of DeLand, and as an important part of African American History in DeLand**

1. Study Purpose

The purpose of this research is to:

- 1) identify the current state of expressed social well-being and overall health in DeLand's Black community
- 2) identify the need for additional services, top priorities, top concerns, trust issues and satisfaction levels in DeLand's Black community
- 3) develop a better understanding of how the built environment may be impacting the community and reassess the need for healthy foods
- 4) identify the historical significance of the Wright Building in providing the community with social, health, and economic resources and determine if the Wright Building could provide those resources once again
- 5) identify the differences in needs and top priorities between Black and White participants

Important highlights of survey objectives:

- The purpose of this survey is to re-assess the needs of the DeLand community. We intend to focus primarily on the needs of the Black community.
- Unlike our other surveys, this study also engages White participants to be able to make comparisons between White and Black participants' responses and shed light on issues of equality and disparity.
- We focus on issues surrounding the built environment in participants' neighborhoods to compare the overall satisfaction levels among Black and White participants.
- Additionally, the purpose of the survey is to determine which services are of most importance to the community and discover which services must be increased and improved to result in a positive impact.
- The survey attempts to find the most prevalent and pressing public health concerns among the community and therefore determine which are negatively impacting the overall health and wellbeing of these individuals.
- The survey aims to reassess the food environment within the community. This has not been reassessed since the first needs assessment conducted in 2015 by Stetson University's Public Health Program.
- Finally, we aim to determine the significance of the J.W. Wright Building among the community members as well as evaluate the positive impact the renovation and preservation of the building would have on the African American community.

Additional Background Information about the J.W. Wright Building:

The J.W. Wright Building was constructed in 1920 by African American entrepreneur, James Washington Wright. It is located at the corner of W. Voorhis and S. Clara Avenue in DeLand, Florida. This building once served as the central location for bustling businesses, making it the economic and cultural center of DeLand's African American community during a time of segregation. The brick, two-story building provided the community with a variety of resources and services, including a café, barbershop, residential apartment space, a pool parlor and grocery store located next to the Washington Theatre. It also housed the dental office of DeLand's first African American dentist, Dr. S. W. Poole. Today however, the Wright Building has been vacant for almost two decades.

It was secured in 2018 by The Greater Union Life Center, a not-for-profit organization, to be renovated. In collaboration with the City of DeLand, the Greater Union Life Center, and Stetson University – as well as other committed individuals – the J.W. Wright Building is undergoing restoration following national historic-preservation guidelines, in an attempt to preserve the cultural heritage while also revitalizing the local economy.

2. Study Methods

In 2018, Chelsea Seaver began researching the Wright Building under the supervision of Dr. Asal Johnson in hopes of addressing the needs of the Spring Hill and DeLand community. Seaver conducted semi-structured interviews with DeLand’s African American residents to document the significance of this building for the community. The analysis of interviews resulted in four major themes:

- The Wright Building provided access to community resources and food,
- The Wright Building demonstrated social values for the community,
- The Wright Building was central to community resiliency during the Jim Crow law eras and beyond,
- The people who used the Wright Building were provided a sense of place and showed emotional attachment to the local neighborhood.

The interviews suggested the Wright Building provided the community with social, health and economic resources in the past. The gradual decline of this building and its eventual abandonment **created a gap and left the community in need of additional resources.**

Following interviews, Seaver performed archival and quantitative research regarding the building. She started her data collection in the form of a 20-question questionnaire.

The questionnaire contained four parts: demographics, community needs and public space, community health and wellbeing, and the contributions of the Wright Building.

With the help of other Stetson students, specifically Tahira Perry, surveys were distributed early March 2020 at the following churches within the DeLand and Spring Hill community: Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church, Greater Union Baptist Church, Thompson Street Tabernacle of Praise, Trinity United Methodist Church, and St. Barnabas Episcopal Church. All survey responses were entered into the statistical software, SPSS, verbatim by Chelsea and Tahira who also coded the data. Victoria Crawford continued Seaver’s research under a Summer Undergraduate Research (SURE) grant supervised by Dr. Asal Johnson. Victoria Crawford worked with the data to find trends, create figures, and draw conclusions based on the survey’s findings. By March 20, the data collection was ended earlier than planned because of COVID-19 shutdowns.

Limitations: The collection method for the survey yielded a low response rate. Multiple factors played a part. One factor being the difficulty involved in establishing a relationship with the predominantly White attendee churches. Stetson students were turned away from multiple predominantly White churches or did not receive responses from the senior pastors when asking for their permission to distribute surveys to their congregation. Therefore, data was collected mostly through small, predominantly African American churches in the DeLand and Spring Hill area. In addition, data collection was unfortunately cut short due to the COVID-19 pandemic resulting in a low response rate.

3. Respondents' Demographic Characteristics (n=67)

The surveyed population consisted of a majority of Black respondents, followed by White respondents, with a total of 67 participants. The majority of Black respondents were 50 years of age or younger (53%) and the majority of White respondents were 65 years of age or older (40%). The majority of participants had a college degree or above (52%), specifically, 42% of the Black population and 69% of the White population.

The total sampled population was majority female consisting of 67% of the respondents. Among the Black population, 71% were female, while 62% of the White population were female. About 72% of the total surveyed population live in DeLand, and 54% of all participants stated that they have resided in their current neighborhood for at least ten years.

Figure 1: Age composition of White and Black respondents, 2020, N=67

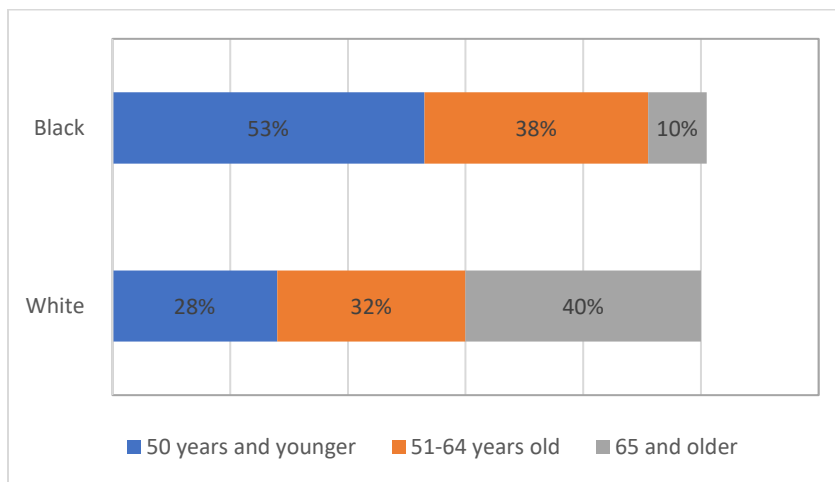


Figure 2: Educational status of White and Black respondents, 2020, N=67

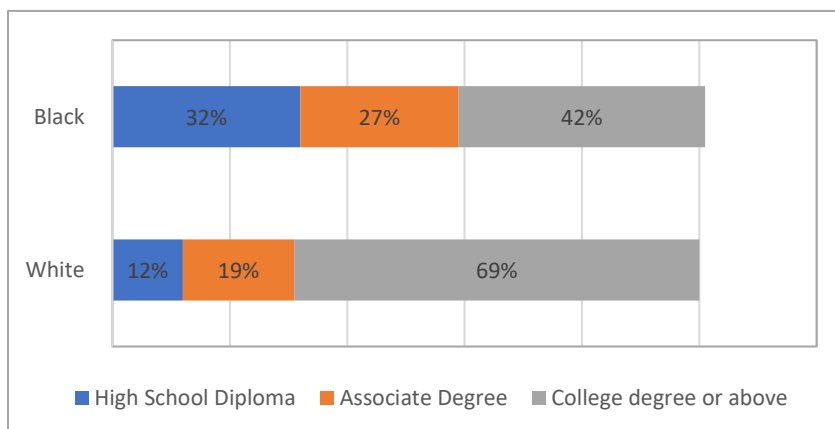


Figure 3: Gender composition of White and Black respondents, 2020, N=67

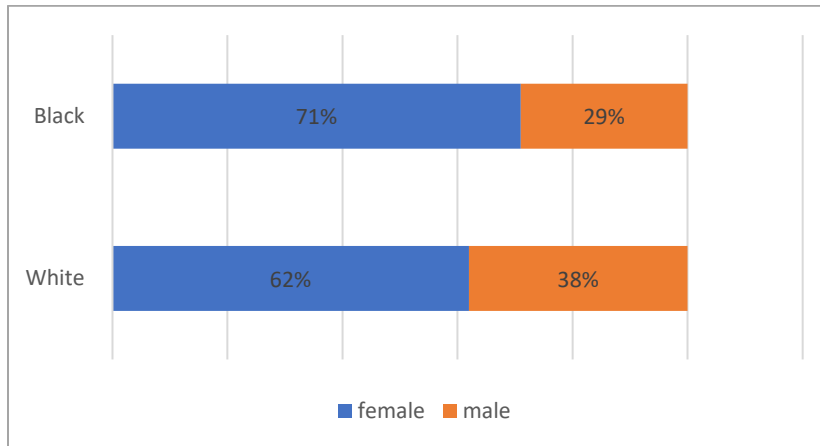


Figure 4: Years of residence in current neighborhood shown for White and Black respondents, 2020, N=67

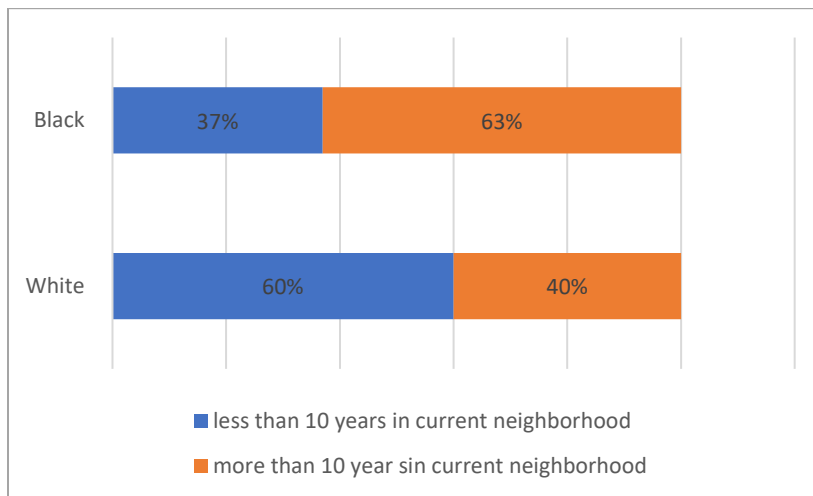
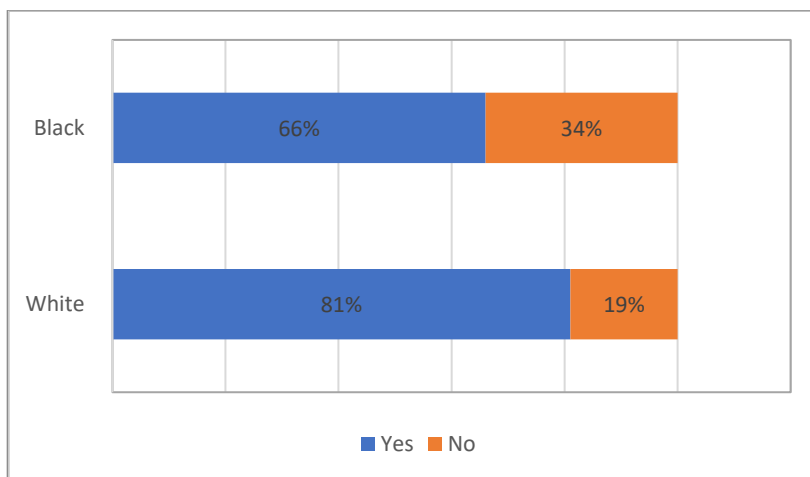


Figure 5: DeLand as current residence, 2020, N=67

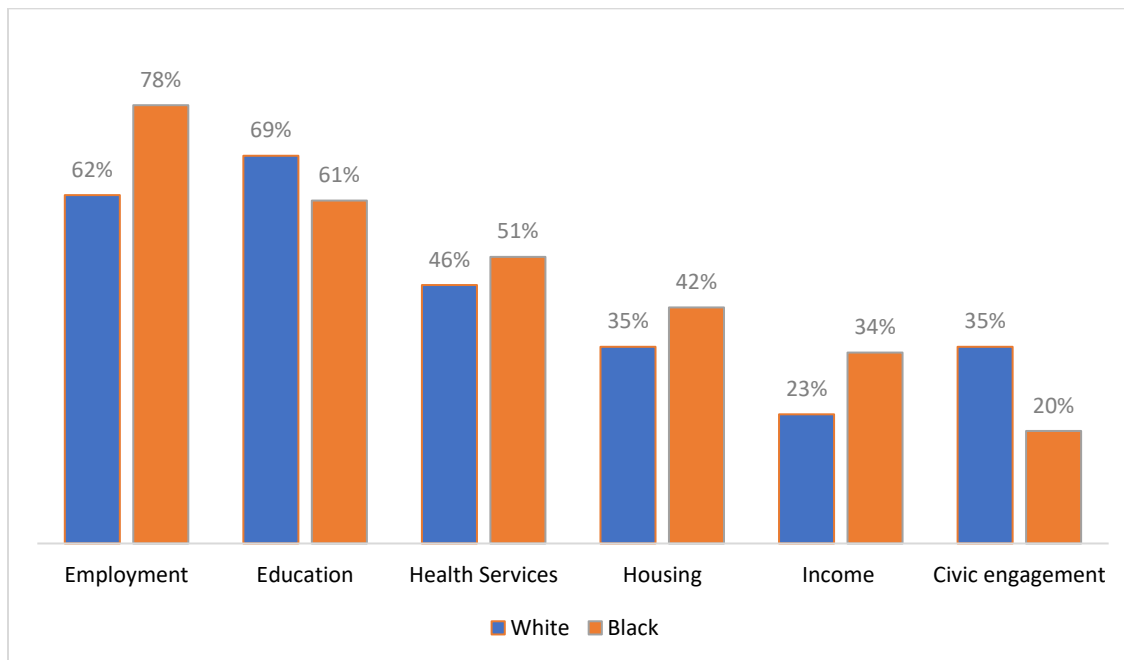


4. Study Results

I. The Most Important Needs and Services Among the Black Community (n=38)

- Employment was the number one need among the surveyed population. 78% of people prioritized employment over education, health services, housing, income, and civic engagement.
- Education was the second most important to the Black community (61%).
- Health Services was third, totaling 51%, followed by housing, income, then civic engagement.

Figure 6: The most important needs and services by respondents' race, N=67



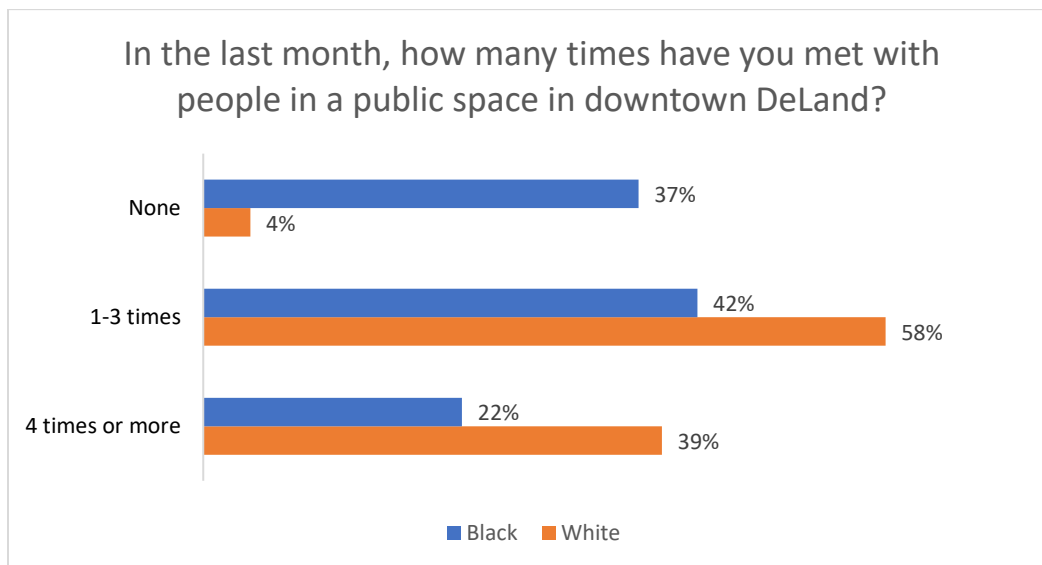
For White participants, as seen in Figure 6, education (67%) was followed by employment (59%) and health services (51%).

- ❖ It is important to note that in four categories Black respondents expressed needs higher than White respondents: employment, income, housing, and health services.

II. Downtown DeLand is frequently used by White participants but not Black respondents(n=65)

- Downtown DeLand is more frequently used by the White community than the Black community (n=68).
 - Over half of Whites surveyed (56%) have met with people in a public space in downtown DeLand 1-3 times in the previous month, compared to 42% of Black respondents.
 - **About 37% of Black participants did not meet anyone during last month in downtown DeLand compared to only 4% of White respondents.**
 - Among White respondents, 41% are frequent users of downtown DeLand (4 times or more during last month) compared to only 22% of Black respondents.

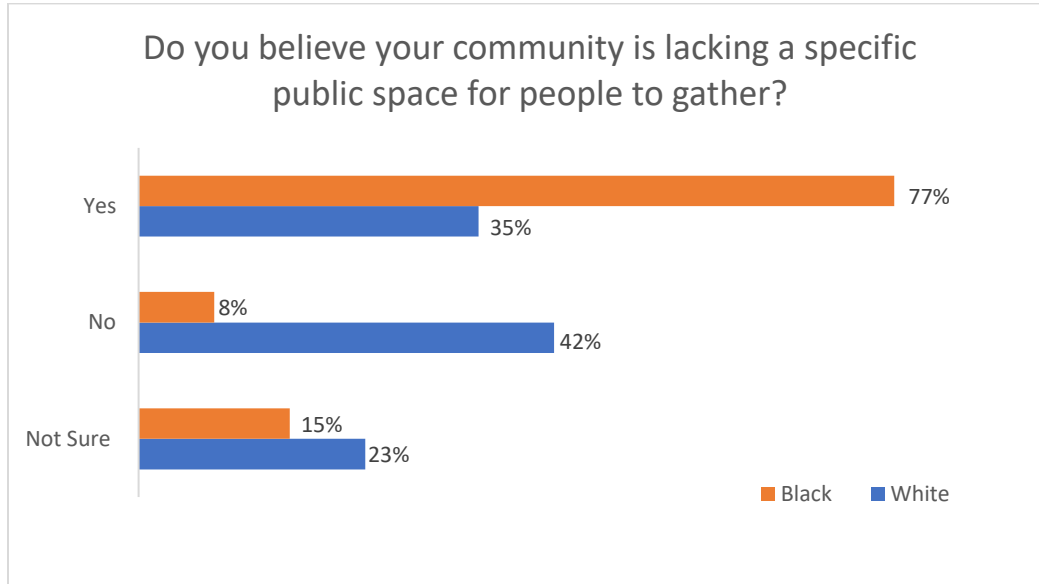
Figure 7: Frequency of downtown DeLand meetings, 2020, N=67



III. Lack of public space for community gatherings is an expressed concern for Black respondents (N=65)

- More than three quarters of Black participants (n=39) surveyed feel they are lacking a specific public space to gather (77%), in contrast to 35% of the White community surveyed. The number of white participants who responded to this question was 26.
- Likewise, only 8% of Black respondents did not feel such a shortage in their community compared to 42% of White respondents who responded “No” as seen in figure 8.

Figure 8: Lack of public space in the community, 2020, N=65

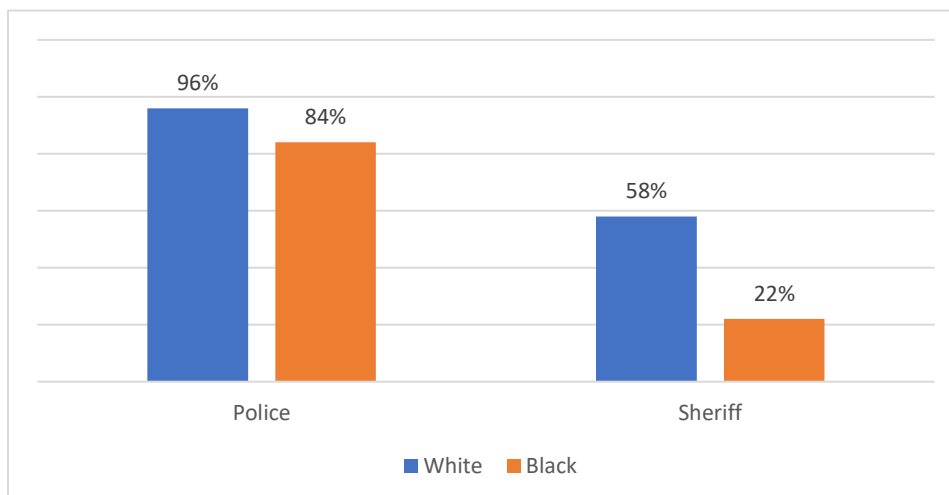


IV. Trust in Community Organizations and Services (n=66).

IV.1: Law Enforcement

- For both White and Black participants, their trust is far greater toward the DeLand Police Department than the Sheriff's Office. DeLand Police had a 96% trust level among Whites and 84% among Blacks. The Sheriff's Office had a 58% trust level among Whites and 22% trust level among Blacks.
- For Black people, their trust in both law enforcement agencies was lower than White respondents.

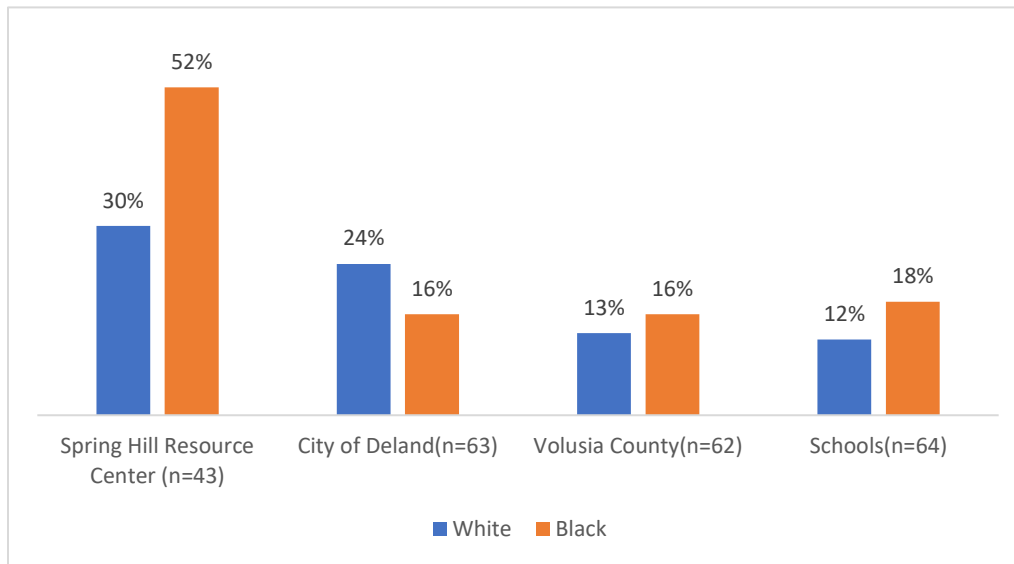
Figure 9: Percent with a **great deal of trust** in City Police and Sheriff's Office by Race, 2020, N=63



IV.2: City and County Services

- The trust levels among both Black and White participants are less than 25% toward schools, the governance of the City of DeLand and Volusia County. This consists of every City or County service listed except the Spring Hill Resource Center. The Spring Hill Resource Center (now Dr. Cusack's Resource Center) is the most trusted City/County service facility among those that were named on the questionnaire.

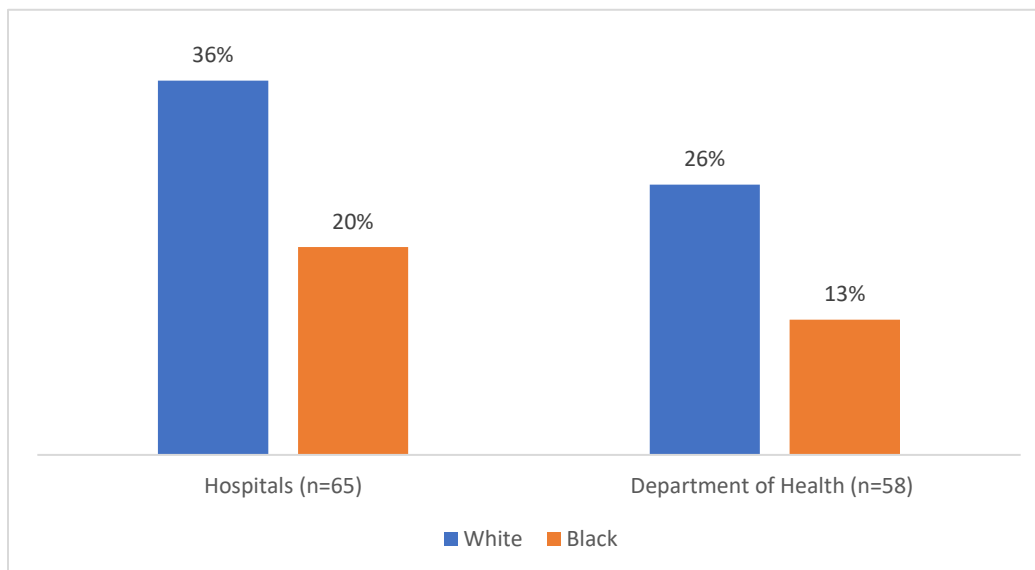
Figure 10: Percent with a great deal of trust in City/County services by race



IV. 3: Health Care Organizations

- The trust among Black participants was under 25% for hospitals and the Volusia Department of Health.

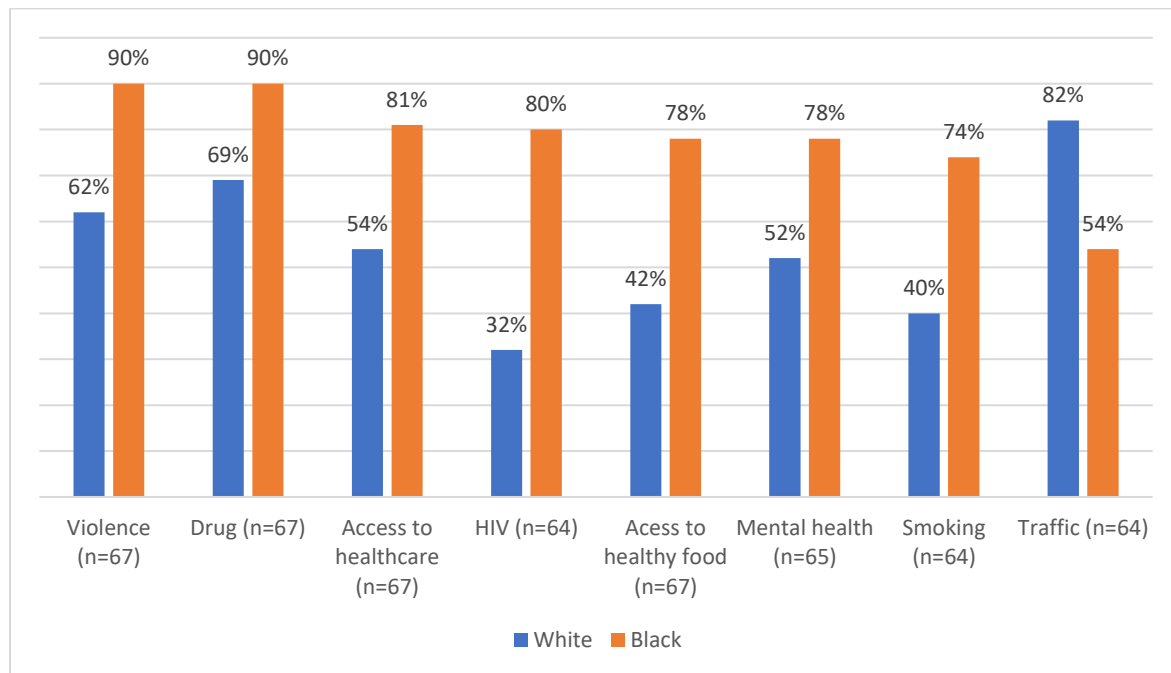
Figure 11: Percent with a great deal of trust in hospitals and department of health by race, 2020



V. Public Health Concerns Present in the Community

- The Black participants had a higher general concern for every public health issue. Following is the ranking of issues based on Black participants' responses:
 - 1- Drugs (90 % Black v. 67% White)
 - 1- Violence (90% Black v. 59% White)
 - 2- Access to Healthcare (81% Black v. 54% White)
 - 3- HIV (80% Black v. 31% White)
 - 4- Mental Health (78% Black v. 50% White)
 - 4- Access to healthy food (78% Black v. 41% White)
 - 5- Smoking (74% Black v. 42% White)
 - 6- Traffic (49% Black v. 23% White)
- The only category where less than 50% of Black participants did not feel concerned was "Traffic," where White participants also had the lowest concern, about 23%.
- The issues that resulted in the highest concern rates among all participants were Drugs, followed by Violence, and Access to Healthcare.

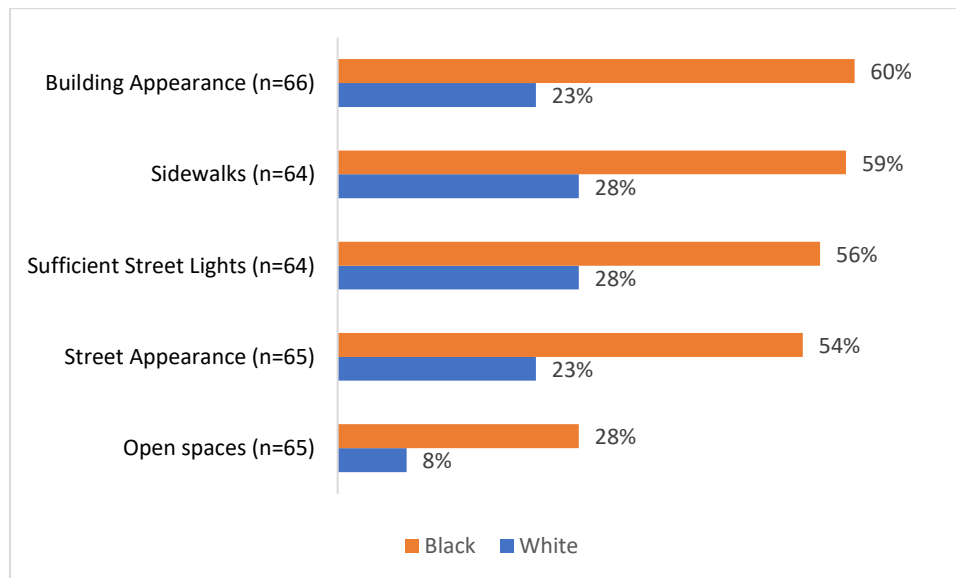
Figure 13: Concerned or very concerned about the following issues by race, 2020, N=67



VI. Dissatisfaction Levels with the Built Environment

- Black participants are more dissatisfied with different aspects of the built environment.
- In all questioned areas, dissatisfaction levels were above 50% among Black participants (with the exception of open space), while the dissatisfaction levels among Whites were below 30% in every category.
 - The dissatisfaction levels were lower in every category among White participants.
- Open spaces had the lowest level of dissatisfaction among the community; 28% among among Black and 8% among White participants.
- Dissatisfaction among Black participants for sidewalks, sufficient streetlights, building appearance and street appearance were above 50%.

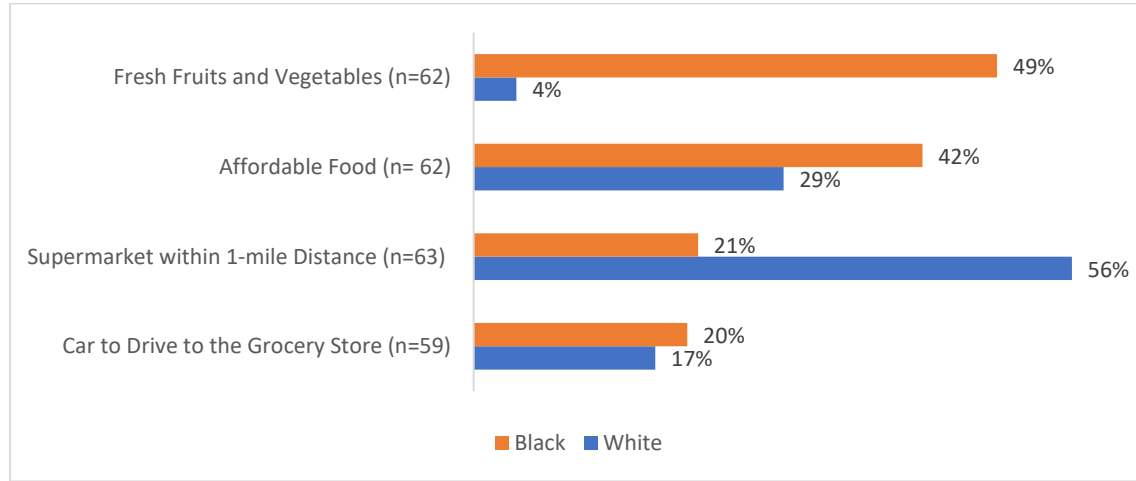
Figure 14: Percent dissatisfied with the following aspects of the built environment of their communities by race, 2020



VII. Lack of Access to Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Among the Black Community

- Community access to fresh fruits and vegetables was perceived considerably low among Black participants.
 - For White respondents, 4% disagreed or strongly disagreed that their community had access to fresh fruits and vegetables compared to 49 % of Black respondents.
 - 42% of Black respondents disagreed/strongly disagreed that there was affordable food access for the community, compared to 29% of White respondents.
- The White respondents had 56% disagreement/ strongly disagreement with having access to a supermarket within a one-mile distance and the Black respondents had 21% disagreement.
 - **Note:** there is a “Save A Lot” and “Walmart Neighborhood Market” close to historically Black neighborhoods in DeLand.

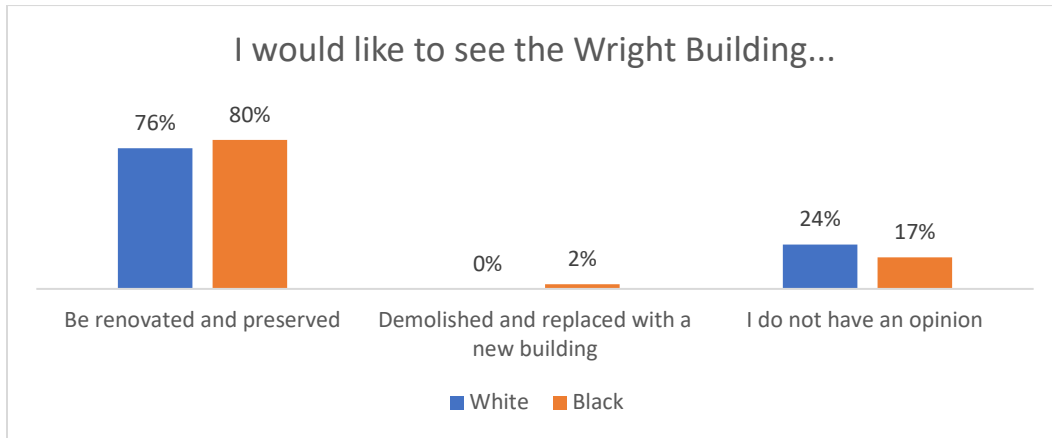
Figure 15: Percent who disagreed/strongly disagreed with their community having access to the following by race, 2020



VIII. The Significance of the Wright Building

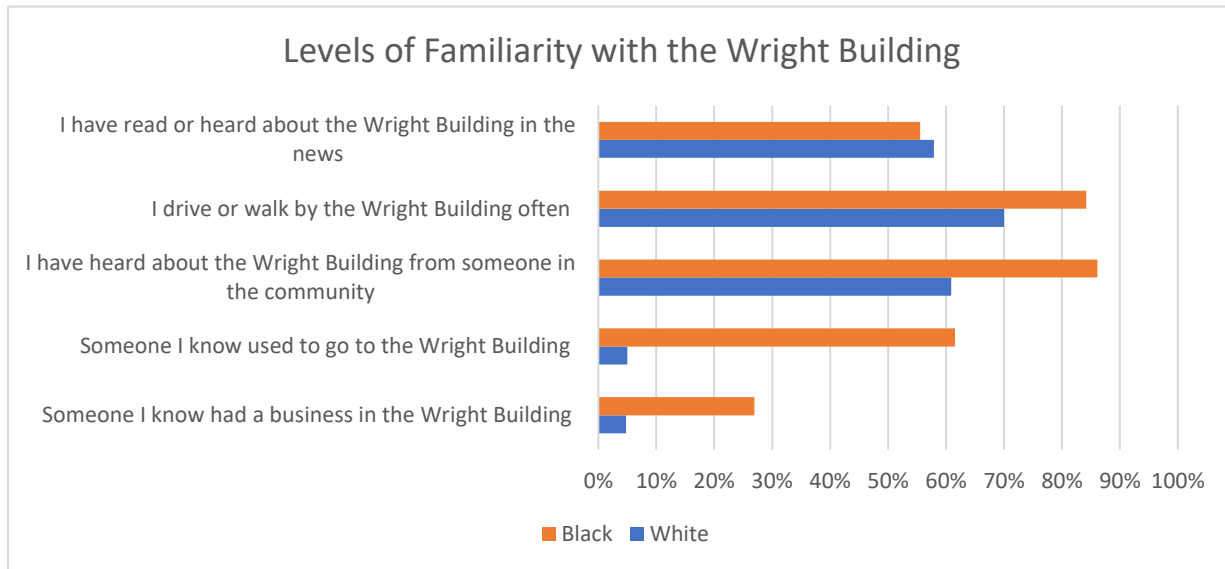
- *The majority of participants believe that the Wright Building should be renovated and preserved (76% among Whites and 80.49% among Blacks).*

Figure 16: Percent who would like the following be done with the Wright Building by race, 2020, N=66



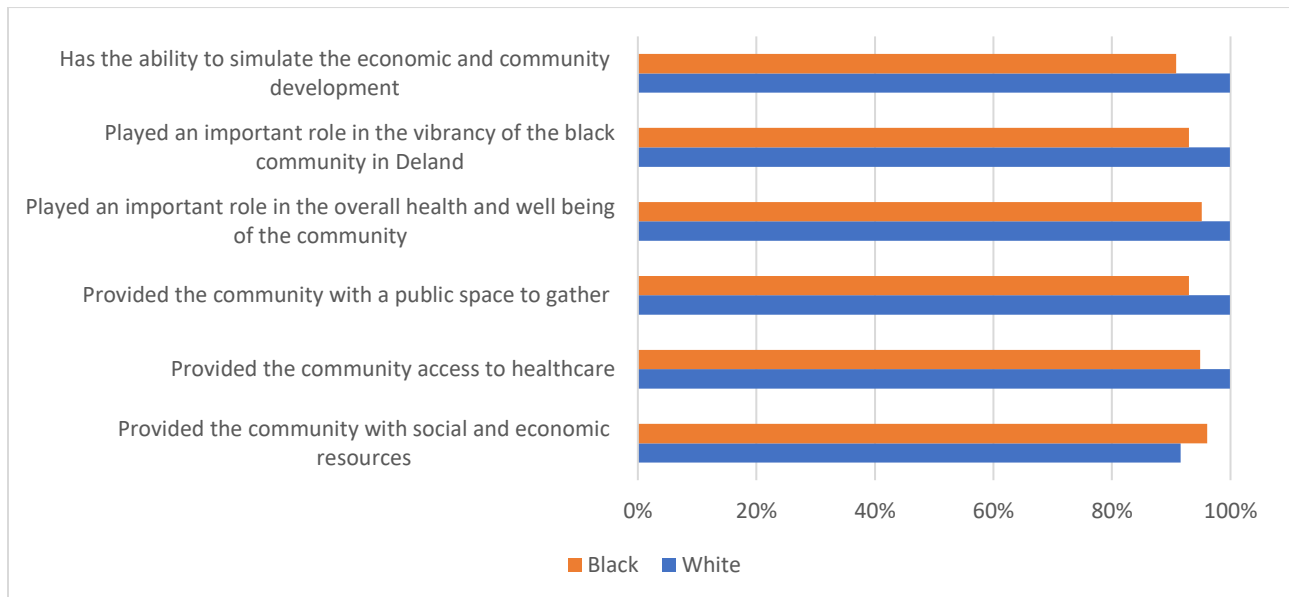
- Levels of familiarity with the Wright Building were highest for Black participants.
 - 86% of Black participants have heard of the building from someone in the community, in contrast to 61% of White participants.
 - 62% of Black participants knew someone who used to go to the Wright Building and 27% knew someone who had a business in the building, in comparison to 5% among Whites in both categories.

Figure 17: Familiarity with the Wright Building by race, 2020, N=65



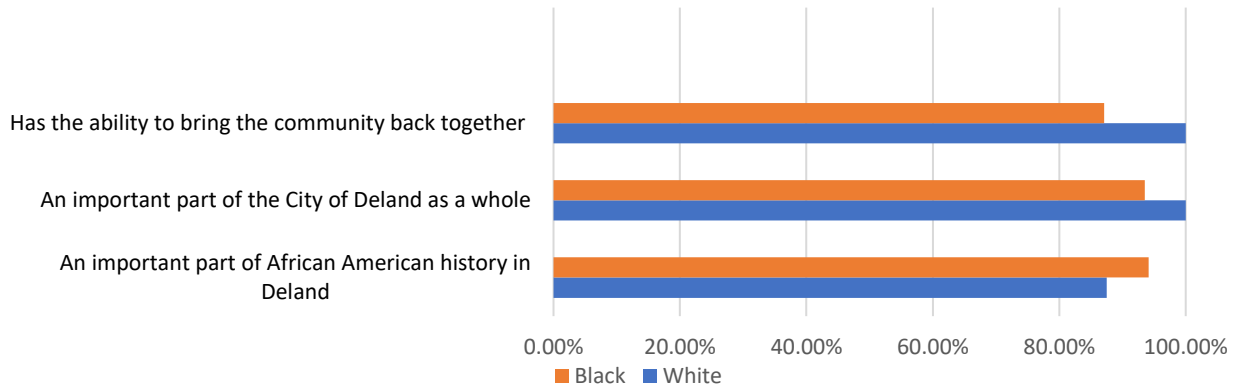
- **An overwhelming majority of participants believe that the Wright Building had important social and economic roles for the Black community in the past (Figure 18).**

Figure 18: Percent who agreed/strongly agreed with following statements by race, 2020, N= 61



- **An overwhelming majority of participants believe that the Wright Building is important to the community, for DeLand citizens, and as an important part of African American History in DeLand (Figure 19).**

Figure 19: Percent who agreed/strongly agreed with following statements by race, 2020, N= 61



IX. “Verbatim” Comments by respondents’ race:

- **Black participants left many comments regarding needs in relation to health care, mental health services and hospitals. Health care needs were also repeated several times by White respondents.**

Table 1: If [more services are needed in your community], please explain which services you would like to see more in your community:

Black	White
More community events to bring awareness regarding to what the organizational groups has to offer.	Mental health; law enforcement and community leaders respecting our rights; stop over taking and over-reaching.
Better health service providers – those I’ve visited all feel like clinics vs doctors’ offices. Better public-school offices and diverse education.	More transparency on Volusia County council
More services to be address in the area of housing, better jobs, security of our neighborhoods, elderly assistance	Clinics for health
Health services; Community social areas; Education on finances	In regard to schools, I would like to see more attention given to the education of special needs children.
Groups for the kids such as: kids suffering from depression, being bullied, or kids on the streets. The kids need more than just doctors.	Volusia County Schools needs to get act together. Tired of being looked at as last place.
More community things for people, not just downtown	Transparency and community support focus
Programs for homeless, low income center, health clinic for free services	Outreach
Need more mental health access and services within the community. Somewhere for people with mental health crisis are able to go on their own and family to call for resources and not be afraid of their loved ones being hurt are killed during crisis.	Mental health resources for PTSD sufferers
Health Department	Lower cost health sources; lower cost housing
More vocational schools, more business for more jobs, and more affordable housing	Affordable living, homeless shelters, and resources
Resources for jobs – places to go; Health clinics – low income and working family; More gathering places for community	
Services that can assist families and the youth in the community	
Local health sources made affordable to the homeless	

Police presence, better hospitals	
Volusia County Schools, City of DeLand governance, local health sources, Volusia County Health Department	
Workshops to help find employment, refresher courses, computer classes	
More involvement with our youth organizations, youth and cop programs brought back summer jobs brought back within our County settings. Evening training availability at our resource centers. Easier ways to access grants to smaller groups to help achieve some of these goals.	
Some people are not working and need medical attention.	
More transportation for the children riding bus.	
We need more teachers	

- **Black participants left many meaningful comments that indicate their need for preservation of local heritage in DeLand.**
 - Renovation of historical buildings, such as the Wright building, changing the street names, funding, and investment in local Black history and beautification of Black historic areas, which are largely neglected, have been some comments left by the participants.

Table 2: How you believe the City of DeLand can preserve the local heritage of the African American community?

Black	White
Maybe turn it into a big resource center and/or lounge.	Give equitable spots downtown and around town
Embrace what we have and continue to build	I am familiar with the Chisolm Center, and I know there is an African American museum also.
Continue to share and honor those who have contributed to civil rights and building our community. Also keep good care of the African American museum in our community.	Yes, it can but community around the Wright Building needs to be involved in the process and want preservation of heritage
We need to maintain this part of our community and the Wright Building is a very important part of our heritage.	Educational programs; museum displays
By making sure that we preserve all of our historic buildings in our own communities	Our town has a history that needs to be preserved and that includes buildings related to the African American heritage.
Coming together with local business to restore the community.	Preservation & renovation & their neighborhoods, art/music fests with local artists
More programs, advertisements, and get together more useful groups	By community spaces and gathering places to share
Help support and finances	Café
Supporting of Black businesses and education of Black heritage.	By renovating this building, it will save a piece of history and provide a place to meet
Community events, education, and empowerment	By renovating this building, it will save a piece of history and provide a place to meet
Supporting the community with preserving the history of the community. Offer grants to get the work done so visitors can learn the history of the City	Grants and fund raisers
Make it more open with more activities so people can know about it	By investing in the past building and social structures within the African American community

Change street names to those in the past. Doctors, educators, Starke Building. Did rename park – good start!! (Tre Thomas) Dr. Poole Street. City/ Stetson sponsor – Black Historical museum (Wright Building) and Annual Black History heritage festival	Supply more affordable housing; expand Chisolm Center resource space and Spring Hill Resource Center
By granting funds for business African American (locally) the opportunity to open a business that can grow the AA community and nation without discrimination	By bringing in the history of DeLand with past African American history
Renovate and restore buildings that are deemed historical; repurpose them for health and wellness use	
This is part of this community long history	
Additional funding	
By keeping history alive. Viewing something is always better than word of mouth.	
By not building affordable housing, that's all in all essence not affordable for the community	
Renovate some of the houses that are just rotting away becoming eye sores and make them accessible for renting/ homeless. Community market stand with farmers marketplaces like with fruits and vegetables stands. Building by the City that can employ people after hours or part time work like a bath house, more shelters, family living, family training money management classes after hours childcare facility access. Which can be available for people to rent which can go back into the community. Make it a partnership with license professionals.	
Do more work in the Black area.	
Continue to teach the history of African Americans consistently	
If all the people would come together as one	
Finance	
Beautification; sidewalks; extra lighting; repair the asphalt.	

This is the continuation of *Table 2: How you believe the City of DeLand can preserve the local heritage of the African American community?*

- **Black participants left many comments indicating direct connections to this building through their parents or grandparents.**

Table 3: Please leave any comments or opinions you have about the Wright Building and/or the community.

Black	White
Can you describe the Wright Building? I likely know what the Wright Building is by sight but not by name.	I don't know very much about the Wright Building, but it seems like restoration is a worthwhile project that will benefit the community.
I've heard from my family and parents about the Wright Building. I heard it was very useful to residents in the community.	It is a great idea to utilize community members to renovate and develop the value to the community of this building. It is also environmentally helpful to restore rather than demolish.
I believe preserving this building will open up many opportunities for the community to come together. Also will help a businesses in our area.	This is an important project. We must protect our history.
Should belong to the community. Not just a few policy makers. Could be used for health and wellness hub for community regardless of race, creed, or color..	As a teacher, I would like to connect our students to the local history in any way possible
I would like to see social media presence for the building	
History for the Black community!	
It is a part of history the City, and the community as a whole history should never be disregarded.	
If its in our community, please make it accessible for our community.	
If it can be transformed to somehow grab the attention of our youth people and once you have them try to reform and redirect wrong thinking. Give them goals and opportunities that they can't see. Gotta get dirty to get them clean.	
It part of our mother's and father's life.	
We need more help in the community.	

5. Conclusion

– Public Space and Downtown DeLand

- ❖ Black respondents in this survey indicated their community lacks a public place for people to gather.
- ❖ They also meet people in downtown less frequently than White people.
- ❖ This suggests downtown DeLand is NOT regarded as an appropriate and welcoming public place for them.
- Suggestion 1: Evaluate exclusionary practices in downtown. Activities and available food and services are offered for White people without consideration for Black culture and needs. Mainstreet murals tell a story of a White City built by White people. This is simply NOT true history.
- Suggestion 2: It is the responsibility of the City of DeLand to make intentional attempts to attract Black merchants, restaurants, and entrepreneurs to Main Street.
- Question: How can downtown CRA be utilized to incentivize Black businesses in downtown?

– Great Deal of Trust in City and County organizations

- ❖ Black respondents in this survey indicated lower proportion of ‘great deal of trust’ in the Sheriff. Note that the survey was collected before the death of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and many other Black civilians who were killed by law enforcement, as well as the *Black Lives Matter* national protests. It is likely that if we collected data after these tragic events and *Black Lives Matter* protests, the results would be even less favorable to Police and the Sheriff.
- Suggestion: This is such a complex problem that warrants another study. Evaluate the relationship between law enforcement and the Black community. Black communities have a complicated relationship with law enforcement. These communities struggle with crime and violence (as indicated by this survey) and would like to see law enforcement address these issues. But simultaneously, they are also aware that policing has not worked in their communities. They would like to see a change in police attitudes and commitments to their communities. They would like to be safe, not only from civilians’ crime and violence but also from police and law enforcement.
- ❖ Black respondents in this survey have lower percentage of ‘great deal of trust’ in the City of DeLand and Volusia County as well as the health care system. Also, in the White respondent’s comments, they brought up transparency issues with the County.
- Suggestion: Budget allocation and many important decisions are conducted by the City and the County. Lower level of trust might be the result of inequitable funding allocation and investments in Black neighborhoods. The patchy and fragmented governance of Spring Hill, where some areas are administered by the City and some other areas by the County, may add to this lack of trust. We suggest that the City of DeLand **reconsider the annexation of Spring Hill for the sake of consistent administration**. However, investment and

assistance should be provided to low income residents of Spring Hill to make their transition to the City affordable.

– Public Health Concerns

- ❖ More than 80% of Black participants were concerned about drugs, violence, access to healthcare and HIV.
- Suggestion: Public health community partners such as Advent Health, the Florida Department of Health and local Non-Governmental organizations conduct a qualitative study or focus group discussion. This would determine how the Spring Hill community's access to affordable health care, trust levels, and transportation can be improved. It will also address the prevention of HIV and the necessary treatment, which can be connected to allotted resources for the community. Substance abuse and violence might be best addressed by a public health approach, rather than the presence of police or law enforcement. In other communities in the U.S. evidence suggests that syringe exchange programs help prevention of HIV and Hepatitis C. This implementation could potentially reduce the rates in Volusia County and Spring Hill.

– Built environment

- ❖ Black respondents have low satisfaction levels with the presence of sidewalks and streetlights, as well as building and street appearances. A short tour around Spring Hill makes one understand the results of this survey. These results have only slightly changed compared to the survey that was conducted in 2015. Vacant deteriorating buildings with no trespassing signs are commonly observed when one is walking through the community. Sidewalks are broken, or in many places completely non-existent.
- Suggestion: At least in short term, small and low-cost beautification projects, such as murals, sidewalk repairs, or installing streetlights, could make a difference. It could also make Spring Hill community members feel that they are completely integrated into the City/County. These small beautification projects could be done in a way to amplify or enhance the culture and heritage of the community.

– Food environment:

- Community access to fresh fruits and vegetables and access to affordable food was perceived considerably low among Black participants.
- Suggestion: There is currently one community garden in Spring Hill. Food access and affordability can be addressed by initiatives such as the addition of community gardens and implementing multiple farmers markets. One farmers market is not enough to provide readily affordable access to fresh vegetables and culturally acceptable food. We recommend at least two farmers markets in different locations in the neighborhood. Farmers markets and community gardens also provide public gathering places for the community and help community members stay active and healthy. The comments that have been left on the surveys suggest that community gardens would provide community members with mental health benefits.

– Cultural Heritage and the Wright Building

- ❖ There is an **overwhelming consensus across** both races to preserve the Wright Building. Black participants had a more direct connection to the Wright Building; 62% knew someone who used to go to the building, and 27% knew someone who had a business in the building.

This survey provides evidence that Black respondents are concerned about access to health care, access to food, and access to a place that they can gather. They are also concerned about lack of jobs and employment opportunities. These matters are all interconnected. Our previous interviews about the Wright Building indicated that this building successfully connected people to these resources. It offered the Black community dental care, a café, a place for gathering and a network of community support. The building was also the heart of Black businesses during the Jim Crow era. It helped to define the Black business district of DeLand with job opportunities for the community. This also strengthened the social structure during the time that Black people would not be served in downtown DeLand or could not attend Stetson University less than 1 mile away.

This survey re-identifies many gaps in the community that were previously identified in the 2015 assessment. DeLand's Black community challenges still exist and persist. Preserving the Wright Building and restoring it may alleviate some of the identified problems. More importantly, that building stands tall to tell a story of a resilient community that survived against all odds.

The survey concludes that there is strong community support for restoration of the Wright Building. We hope that the renovation and preservation will be the first step in preserving other historical buildings in DeLand's Black historic neighborhoods. The African American Museum of Art stands near the Wright Building. We hope to see an active, local investment of the City and County in this museum. The **public** support would be central to preservation of cultural heritage within DeLand's Black community.

NOTE: The data was collected before national *Black Lives Matter Movement* and COVID-19 related health crises and its subsequent aftermath. We hypothesize that sections on community concerns, law enforcement, and health issues and racial disparities would have produced even more concerning results.

Acknowledgement:

This study would not have been possible without the help of the participating **churches and their members:**

- Greater Bethlehem Baptist Church
- Greater Union Baptist Church
- Thompson Street Tabernacle of Praise
- Trinity United Methodist Church
- St. Barnabas Episcopal Church.

Also, we would like to thank the following individuals and organizations:

- Spring Hill Neighborhood Residents
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- Mark Shuttleworth, Project Manager, Wright Building Restoration Project of Greater Union Life Center
- Greater Union Life Center Inc.
- Eli Witek, The West Volusia Beacon

Appendix: Questionnaire

The purpose of this survey is to explore how the Wright Building, once a vibrant public place for the African American community in Deland, is connected to the cultural heritage and wellbeing of the community. The results of the survey could assist in obtaining resources and funding for the Wright Building and the community's greatest needs. We will NOT collect individuals' names for this survey, unless you choose to be identified for further follow-up. Your participation is voluntary. Thank you for your time.

1. What is your gender?

- Male
 Female
 Prefer not to answer

2. What is your age? _____

3. What is your education?

- Some high school
 High school diploma
 Associate degree
 College degree or above

4. What is your race/ethnicity?

- African American/Black
 Hispanic/Latino
 White (Non-Hispanic)
 Two or more races
 Other _____

5. Do you currently live in DeLand?

- Yes No Not sure

6. How many years have you lived in your current neighborhood? _____

Part A: Exploring Community Needs & Public Space

7. In the last month, how many times have you met with people in a public place in Downtown DeLand? (This may include meeting to talk or to have food or drinks.)

- None
 1-3 times
 4-5 times
 More than 5 times
 I don't know

8. Do you believe your community is lacking a specific public space for people to gather?

- Yes No Not sure

9. Mark the three most important needs/services in your community:

- Employment
 Education
 Income and Asset Building
 Housing
 Health (Services and resources)
 Civic Engagement

10. How much trust would you say you have in the following groups /organizations? (Please mark only one box each)

A. Deland Police Department

- great deal a fair amount not very much not at all don't know

B. Volusia County Sheriffs

- great deal a fair amount not very much not at all don't know

C. Volusia County Schools

- great deal a fair amount not very much not at all don't know

D. City of Deland Governance

- great deal a fair amount not very much not at all don't know

E. Volusia County Council

- great deal a fair amount not very much not at all don't know

F. Spring Hill Resource Center

- great deal a fair amount not very much not at all don't know

G. Local Health Sources (hospitals, clinics, etc.)

- great deal a fair amount not very much not at all don't know

H. Volusia County Health Department

- great deal a fair amount not very much not at all don't know

11a. Do you feel the need for more services from any of these organizations/groups in your community?

- Yes No Not sure

11b. If yes, please explain which services you would like to see more in your community:

Please continue to the back of this page ->

Part B: Exploring Community Health & Wellbeing:

In this section, we want to know to what extent you believe healthy living is supported in your community. For example, access to fresh fruit and vegetables, gyms or exercise classes, and other beneficial influences on health.

12. Do you agree or disagree that you can live healthy in your area? (Please mark one box only)

- Strongly agree (can live healthily)
 Agree
 Neither agree nor disagree
 Disagree
 Strongly disagree (cannot live healthily)

13. To what extent are you concerned about the following issues that may be present in your neighborhood:

Mental illness

- Not Concerned at all Concerned a little Concerned a fair amount Concerned I don't know

HIV/AIDS

- Not Concerned at all Concerned a little Concerned a fair amount Concerned I don't know

Drugs

- Not Concerned at all Concerned a little Concerned a fair amount Concerned I don't know

Violence

- Not Concerned at all Concerned a little Concerned a fair amount Concerned I don't know

Access to healthcare

- Not Concerned at all Concerned a little Concerned a fair amount Concerned I don't know

Cigarette smoking

- Not Concerned at all Concerned a little Concerned a fair amount Concerned I don't know

Access to healthy foods

- Not Concerned at all Concerned a little Concerned a fair amount Concerned I don't know

Traffic: pollution, safety

- Not Concerned at all Concerned a little Concerned a fair amount Concerned I don't know

14. To what extent are you are satisfied with these aspects of the local community:

Open space: trees, grass, parks, play areas

- Strongly dissatisfied Dissatisfied Satisfied Strongly Satisfied I don't know

Street appearance: well maintained, such as pavement and litter

- Strongly dissatisfied Dissatisfied Satisfied Strongly Satisfied I don't know

Building appearance: well maintained walls, fence, front yard

- Strongly dissatisfied Dissatisfied Satisfied Strongly Satisfied I don't know

Sufficient street lights

- Strongly dissatisfied Dissatisfied Satisfied Strongly Satisfied I don't know

Sidewalks: ample access and well maintained

- Strongly dissatisfied Dissatisfied Satisfied Strongly Satisfied I don't know

Please continue to the next page →

15. To what extent do you agree with following statements:

My community has access to fresh fruits and vegetables.

Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree I don't know

My community has access to affordable foods.

Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree I don't know

My community has access to a supermarket within 1 mile distance.

Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree I don't know

Many people in my community have cars to drive to the grocery store.

Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree I don't know

Part C: In this section, we want to know if you believe the Wright Building could contribute to the health and wellbeing of the community.

16. Please answer the following statements based on your familiarity with the Wright Building

Myself, a family member, or someone I know had a business in the Wright Building.

Yes No Not sure

Myself, a family member or someone I know used to go to the Wright Building in the past.

Yes No Not sure

I have heard about the Wright Building from family/friends/someone in the community.

Yes No Not sure

I drive or walk by the Wright Building often.

Yes No Not sure

I have read or heard about the Wright Building in the news.

Yes No Not sure

17. I would like to see the Wright Building... (Please select only one)

- Be renovated and preserved
 Demolished and replaced with a new building
 I do not have any opinion about this building

18. How do you believe the city of Deland can preserve the local heritage of the African American community?

Please continue to the back of this page →

19. Based on your knowledge about the Wright Building, please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements:

- The Wright Building is an important part of African American history in DeLand.
 Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Not sure
- The Wright Building is an important part of the City of Deland as a whole.
 Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Not sure
- The Wright Building has the ability to bring the community back together.
 Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Not sure
- The Wright Building has the ability to stimulate economic and community development.
 Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Not sure
- The Wright Building provided the community with social and economic resources.
 Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Not sure
- The Wright Building provided the community access to healthcare.
 Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Not sure
- The Wright Building provided the community with a public space to gather.
 Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Not sure
- The Wright Building played an important role in the overall health and wellbeing of the community.
 Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Not sure
- The Wright Building is an important role in the vibrancy of the black community in DeLand.
 Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Not sure
- The Wright Building is too old to be preserved and it needs to be replaced.
 Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Not sure
- People do not remember the significance of the Wright Building anymore.
 Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Not sure
- The Wright Building should not be the priority of the community.
 Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly agree Not sure

20. Please leave any comments or opinions you have about the Wright Building and/or the community :

Please continue to the next page →

If you or a family member have any specific anecdotes, items, photos, or stories of the Wright Building, please include your contact information below. We would like to get in contact with you to learn more about the history of the Wright Building. Your contributions will help restore the building back to its historical state. If not, please leave this section blank.

Your contact information or identity will not be associated with your survey answers unless you choose to be identified for further follow-up. This information will only be used to contact you for more information on the Wright Building.

Name _____
Phone _____
Email _____

Would you be interested in participating in a short interview (30-60 minutes) to share more insight or knowledge that you have on the Wright Building?

- Yes
 No

To value and appreciate your time, we would like to gift you with a choice of a \$25 gift card to Publix or Walmart if you choose to participate in the short interview.

Thank you for your participation!