



Village Chats

GARDERE

The **Gardere Village Chat** was one of five conducted to gather the ideas and visions of residents in neighborhoods across Baton Rouge. There were commonalities across communities; however, each community had a unique viewpoint when considering the questions being asked. Below, we present the comments from the Gardere community members that represent the issues that differ from other communities.

Crime and Safety

Gardere participants discussed concerns about **crime and safety** more than any other group. These two areas are interrelated. They advocate for a community with less crime where their “kids will be safe.” Community members want drug use and dealing to be addressed. They would like to go to entertainment venues without fear of violence. Participants also point to guns being an issue in their neighborhoods. They made comments about hearing gunshots and safely securing firearms. This Village Chat is also unique because of the participants’ advocacy for surveillance camera installation. Community members believe the addition of cameras will help make their neighborhood safer.

Community Tensions

The comments of participants in the Gardere Village Chat reflected some tension between the Black and Latino populations in this neighborhood. Latino participants stated that there is a “**lack of education over cultural diversity**” in the community. They also point out the lack of education and the language barrier as barriers to community building. Lastly, they advocate for more “respect between cultures¹.” Other community members also believe that the different cultural groups should be in communication. Yet, they still desire a culturally diverse community.

Sewage Plant

Lastly, there is a sewage treatment plant located in the heart of the Gardere community. Therefore, participants’ comments about its impact are unique to this Village Chat. Community members stated they have had issues with “raw sewage [that] got in their homes.” They also discussed how the expansion of the sewage plant is displacing them.

Gardere community members showed elevated concern about crime and safety. They also brought a unique neighborhood perspective related to cultural relations and environmental justice. Other Baton Rouge communities may be having similar issues that serve as barriers to community building, although they were not as visible in their Village Chats.

To read the full Village Chat Report, click [here](#).

Translated from Spanish