

Decreasing the Isolation of Gentrification

Improving Trust and Connecting to Opportunities at Ingersoll Houses



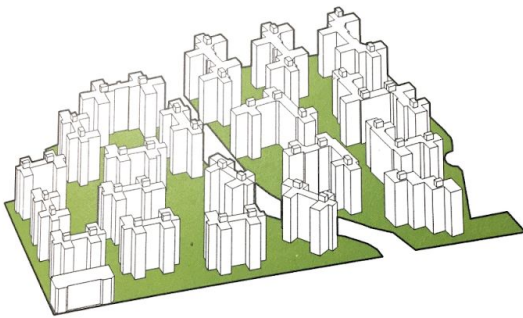
Ingersoll Houses

A. Background

Ingersoll Houses is located in Fort Greene, Brooklyn. Community District (CD 2), which includes Downtown Brooklyn and Fort Greene. The development consists of two large superblocks bound by Prince Street to the west, Tillary Street to the north, and Navy Street to the east. Built in 1944, the development contains 21 buildings between 6 and 11 stories tall, 1,840 apartments and is home to approximately 4,274 residents. About 29 percent of the development's residents are young people under the age of 18 and 12 percent are between the ages of 18 and 24. Nearly one quarter of the residents are seniors ages 55 and over. About one-third of Ingersoll households are headed by single parents or kinship caregivers.

Residents living in the Ingersoll Houses experience dramatically different economic conditions than other residents within their community district. The 2010 census indicates that some residents of Ingersoll Houses live within the second most impoverished census tract in New York City.¹ The median household income for residents of the Fort Greene/Brooklyn Heights Community District, (CD2), which contains the Ingersoll Houses, is \$92,562 -- 1.5 times higher than the New York City average and 3.5 times higher than the median income of residents within Ingersoll Houses. Approximately 21 percent of Ingersoll Households have an annual income under \$10,000, and pay an average monthly rent of \$573. The average rent for a one-bedroom apartment in Fort Greene is \$3,400.

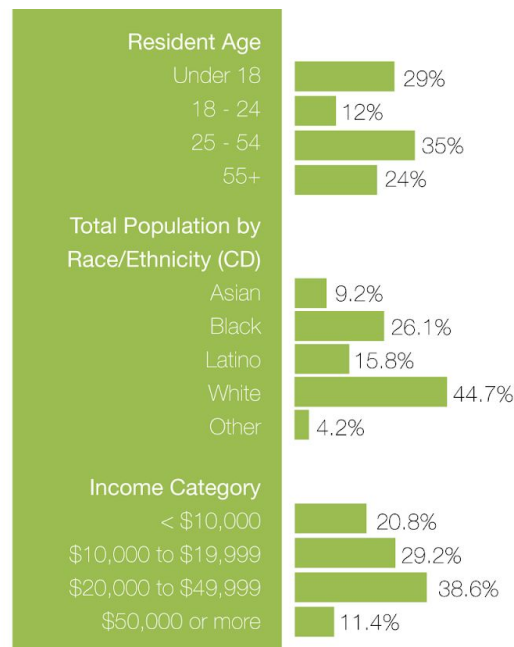
Ingersoll Houses



Year Built: 1944
 # of Buildings: 21
 # of Floors: 6-11
 Total Units: 1,840
 Population: 4,274

County: Kings
 Community District (CD): 2
 Neighborhood: Fort Greene

Illustration: NYCHAPEDIA

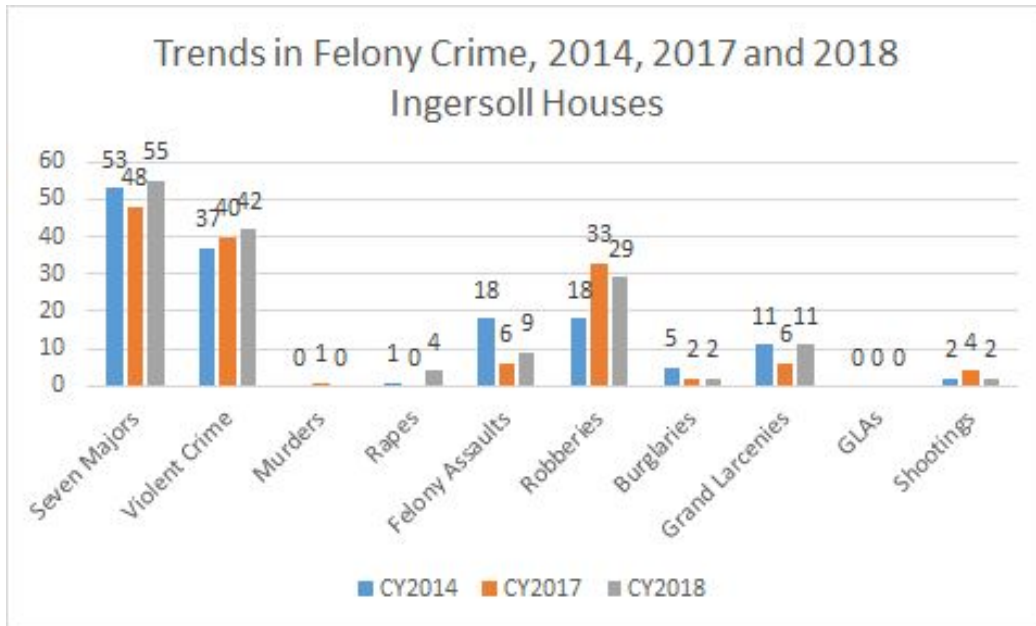


Residents of Fort Greene and Ingersoll Houses have experienced the effects of substantial gentrification. According to the Furman Center at New York University, from 1990 to 2014 average rent in Fort Greene increased by 53 percent - a rate of increase that is more than double the average rate of increase for New York City as a whole. These changes to the economic profile of Fort Greene have increased the cost of living in the immediate neighborhood, sending home prices soaring and flooding the neighborhood with expensive new restaurants and retail. Yet, even as overall wealth and resources increase within the wider community, residents of Ingersoll Houses continue to be affected by long-standing challenges.

¹ <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/data/2015chp-bk2.pdf>

B. Crime Overview | Trust | Justice

Index crime at Ingersoll Houses increased (+7) in Calendar Year (CY) 2018 compared to CY 2017.² Violent crime also increased (+2) in CY 2018 compared to CY 2017. Increases in CY 2018 were driven by spikes in rape (+4) and grand larceny (+5). Ingersoll Houses and Butler Houses both had the most reported rapes at any MAP site (n=4). Index crime has also increased (+2) from 2014 when MAP began. After a spike in CY 2017, shootings at Ingersoll Houses are now even with CY 2014 levels.



C. Priority Identification | Opportunity | Employment

Low income families are more likely to experience severe hardships, whether they rely on cash assistance, work, or a combination of both. Research indicates that more than 70 percent of low-income families experience some serious hardship (like housing insecurity or lack of childcare) within a twelve-month period. Furthermore, earnings from government assistance and low-wage labor are inadequate for providing even a minimal standard of living to low-income families, requiring many families to choose between necessary expenditures, like health care or food. Families from Ingersoll Houses also face significant barriers to using public and private services and to increasing earnings from work. Many low-income families are not aware of their eligibility for certain public benefits and those families that do receive government assistance

² Index crime, also known as “major crime” consists of the following crime categories: burglary, felony assault, grand larceny auto, grand larceny, murder, rape, and robbery.

may sometimes experience disincentives to increasing their earnings because as earnings increase, the amount of available government assistance may be reduced.

According to NYCHA, 48 percent of Ingersoll Houses working-age residents do not report income from employment and 96 percent of households at Ingersoll Houses earn below the average median income for New York City. These statistics suggest that many Ingersoll Houses residents are without employment and that those who are employed may be engaged in low-wage work. Approximately 20% of the Ingersoll Houses population are between the ages of 14 to 24 and many young people living in the Ingersoll Houses find the path from education to employment and economic security in adulthood inaccessible.

Research shows that those from low-income and less-educated families have lower rates of high school graduation, college enrollment, and college completion. Moreover, once they enter the labor market, they have lower employment rates and wages. The Brookings Institution completed an extensive longitudinal analysis of employment outcomes for youth and concluded that:

- Participating in cooperative education, internship, apprenticeship, or mentorship programs in high school is related to higher subsequent job quality. Relationships built between participants and adults set these programs apart from other career-related high school activities, like job shadowing, career majors, and tech prep, which are less impactful.
- Teenager's who work well paying jobs by their 23rd birthday often gain access to higher job quality in adulthood. Periods of unemployment in one's 20s are associated with lower job quality. In other words, early good jobs (as measured by wages) lead to later good jobs.
- Those with high school diplomas and post-secondary degrees have higher job quality at age 29, as do those who participated in a job training program between the ages of 24 and 27. Completing a post-secondary degree (two-year, four-year, or graduate) is the strongest predictor of a high-quality job among all factors considered in this report.

As a result, it is critical to invest in the resources that support job experience and educational attainment for young people living within NYCHA communities.

Young people are not the only ones in Ingersoll Houses who express a desire for better employment resources. The NeighborhoodStat team conducted



extensive outreach to better understand the resource constraints experienced by Ingersoll Houses residents. Approximately, 170 residents stated that they were seeking job readiness, resume writing support, and more awareness and connection to available jobs. Residents also noted challenges finding employment opportunities with the many large employers operating nearby: there are two local hospitals -- Brooklyn Hospital and Cumberland Hospital -- four colleges -- Pratt Institute, St. Joseph's College, Long Island University, and the NYU Tandon School of Engineering -- and three major supermarkets -- Trader Joe's, Whole Foods, and a Wegmans Food Market, all within a mile of the Ingersoll Houses. By building relationships and developing recruitment strategies with these businesses, the economic benefits they provide would be more readily accessible to residents of Ingersoll Houses.

How can we work together to improve employment opportunities:

The Ingersoll Houses NeighborhoodStat team has taken the first steps toward identifying ways for residents to partner with the City to improve public safety at the Ingersoll Houses. Here are some initial ways we can improve improve employment opportunities for residents of Ingersoll Houses:

1. Young Adult Employment

Challenge: Helping young people prepare to engage in work and life as productive adults is a central challenge for any society. This is especially true in Ingersoll, where youth and community members site the lack of access to educational, employment and economic opportunities as roadblocks to success. As a result, the lack of access to opportunities for low-income and less-educated families often leads to lower rates of high school graduation, college enrollment, and college completion. Eventually, low educational attainment leads to decreased employment and economic opportunities.

Suggested Next Steps:

- **Expand work-based learning opportunities within schools or community-based programs.** Work-based learning experiences such as internships, apprenticeships, and mentoring enables adults to provide students with developmentally appropriate and incremental guidance that helps them develop the skills that employers seek in new hires. Ensuring that participants are adequately staffed to support job development is extremely important since cultivating employer relationships and handling the logistics of internships and workplace visits takes legwork and cannot simply be an add-on to the existing duties of other staff.

- **Increase engagement in the Summer Youth Employment Program.** Residents of Ingersoll Houses who follow necessary protocols and complete the required forms for the Summer Youth Employment Program will be guaranteed enrollment in the program. Last year, 242 Ingersoll residents between the ages of 14-24 applied for SYEP, and 177 enrolled in employment. If the program effectively connects to local employers that surround the development, young people can take advantage of this entry point into employment and gain the many benefits described above.
- **Increase completion rates of post-secondary degrees, with an explicit focus on quality and equity.** The road to completion must run through quality teaching and curricula. Consider working with the Department of Education to provide special assistance to support Ingersoll residents, including more student supports and services such as tutoring and proactive advising. Furthermore, providing access to supports that ensure that Ingersoll residents and students gain access to assistance in case of financial or other emergencies.
- **Improve on-ramps to employment for teens and young adults,** particularly for those without post-secondary credentials. These on-ramps to employment can take many forms, including work-based learning programs referred to above. Programs for young adults not in high school or college typically offer work readiness and technical skills development, often in combination with academics, mentoring, supportive services, and paid internships or stipends. Well-designed programs align training with local employer needs and look for employment opportunities for potential for advancement.

2. Access to Local Employment Resources

Challenge: Wegmans, which was named the second best company to work for by Fortune magazine, went to extensive lengths to engage Ingersoll residents as they prepared to open their first New York City location in the Brooklyn Navy Yard.³ Over 200 Ingersoll residents applied for jobs and 120 of them were invited to interviews. The engagement of Ingersoll residents to fill positions at Wegmans is not the norm; in fact, such a turnout for the new employment required a collaborative effort from Wegmans, local community-based organizations like the Myrtle Avenue Brooklyn Partnership and local residents to raise awareness about the opportunities and to encourage residents to apply.

The truth is that most employment opportunities are not well publicized by the employer and word of available opportunities is not widely communicated to residents by other residents. In addition, not all employers feel motivated to recruit or hire local residents. To compound things further, many residents report that they are not aware of existing jobs in the area, nor are they

³ <http://fortune.com/best-companies/wegmans-food-markets/>

aware of opportunities for career development or job placement assistance. Besides the Brooklyn Navy Yard Employment Center, there are few organizations with the explicit purpose of supporting workforce development. Those that are committed to employing local residents are not engaged in the community effectively enough to ensure that Ingersoll is aware of and able to access open positions.

Furthermore, as with much government assistance, existing NYCHA subsidies are restricted to only those with family incomes that fall below a certain economic threshold. At NYCHA, any additional earned income can have a significant impact on a family's living situation. An increase in family income could trigger a rent increase or even the forfeiture of the apartment if that family's income exceeds the designated income limits set forth by NYCHA.⁴ The potential loss of an apartment, especially in New York City, where rent costs are exceedingly high, can be deeply unsettling. This stress is felt acutely by Ingersoll residents who, if faced with private housing in the Fort Greene community, would pay almost six times their monthly rent. For those NYCHA residents who are interested in expanding their economic output, the loss of their apartment and other government assistance can disincentivize them from pursuing their dreams or showcasing their talents. These restrictions on eligibility may also impact the types of jobs that NYCHA residents are willing to take.

Suggested Next Steps:

- **Develop or connect youth to workforce development programs.** The NeighborhoodStat stakeholder team, in partnership with community based organizations and stakeholders, should explore the availability of existing workforce development programs, and, where applicable, identify any limitations or obstacles that exist for enrollment and participation. The NeighborhoodStat team should consider working with or consulting resources provided by city agencies such as NYCHA's Office of Resident Economic Empowerment and Sustainability (REES), Small Business Services (SBS), the Mayor's Office of Workforce Development (WorkDev), Department of Cultural Affairs, the Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment, and the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD).
- **Expand partnerships with local businesses and create pipelines to employment.** There are several large businesses and institutions operating near the Ingersoll Houses. If possible, connect with these large businesses and institutions to identify opportunities for Ingersoll residents and to solicit recruitment support from these businesses. It is also important to consider whether opportunities exist for New York City employment by connecting with the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS).

⁴ <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/nycha/eligibility/eligibility.page>

- **Develop a clearer understanding of NYCHA income limits and work with NYCHA to support individuals whose income status may have recently improved.** Expand awareness of existing supports that are available to NYCHA residents who are transitioning from low wage work to higher income. If NYCHA policies are overly punitive regarding changes in income, explore ways to develop and enact policies that support a more easy transition away from affordable housing in the event that income suddenly improves.

D. Priority Identification | Trust | Justice

An essential element of the NeighborhoodStat process is the collaborative identification of public safety priorities and government service strategies to address top concerns. Citizen perceptions of crime and public safety matter. When police are open, respectful, and forthcoming about the reason for a particular interaction, and can explain the procedures they follow, community members are less likely to feel fear and distrust. They are more likely to perceive that their voice is heard and the process is fair. Community members can view police as legitimate when they see officer carry out their duties lawfully, fairly, and in accordance with the community’s best interest.

Residents are eager to develop a trusting, mutually supportive relationship with police. Ingersoll youth are reportedly excited to begin a dialogue with the NYPD where both parties discuss the assets and resources they can bring to public safety. The community engagement efforts of the NYPD do not go unrecognized. One fifteen-year-old Ingersoll resident stated during a Precinct Council Meeting that it was a place where “people can be heard,” and where they can achieve “a safer and more organized community.”

How we can work together to improve police-community relations:

1. Building Trust in Law Enforcement

Challenge: Resident experiences with the NYPD vary. The Neighborhood Coordination Officers (NCOs), in particular, developed a reputation for treating residents with courtesy and respect. However, some residents reported that they feel disrespected and treated with suspicion by other NYPD officers who were less familiar with the development and its residents. Multiple residents reported that officers issue tickets as a first response to complaints, without an explanation for why they are stopped. In 200 feedback forms, over 70 percent of young adults reported that they

do not feel respected, and in some cases, feel targeted and/or profiled, by the police. On multiple occasions residents of all ages reported that officers issued tickets as a first response to complaints, without providing explanation for why they were stopped.

Suggested Next Steps:

- **Promote transparency in police practices and procedures.** When police are open, respectful, and forthcoming about the reason for a particular interaction, and can explain what is happening and the procedures they follow, community members are less likely to feel fear and distrust.
- **Community conversations about race and police-community relations.** Having conversations about community-police relations can sometimes be uncomfortable. Encourage a professional, facilitated dialogue.
- **Develop a law enforcement-citizen coalition** at MAP sites. These coalitions could include trust building workshops, meetings, and community wide forums; develop mechanisms for community members to support police activities; and train coalition members in conflict resolution.
- **Establish a phone-tree.** In the wake of any controversial police incident, encourage police officers to establish a first-tier list of community members to contact immediately after any controversial event, day or night. A second-tier of contacts would be contacted early the next day.
- **Facilitate data sharing with community members.** Develop mechanisms to foster ongoing and continuous data-sharing with key community members to support joint problem solving, innovation, enhanced understanding, and accountability between communities and the New York Police Department.
- **Encourage participation of Ingersoll residents and stakeholders in the Citizens Police Academy.** The Citizens Police Academy provides members of the community with a background and understanding of NYPD activities and policies, as well as the structure and limit of police power.
- **Establish success indicators** to measure the progress of strategies to increase trust between law enforcement and the community.
- **Improve communication between residents and police officers** by ensuring that all police officers working at Ingersoll Houses have received implicit bias training, de-escalation of force trainings, cultural competency training. Include both 88th

Precinct and PSA3 NCOs at NeighborhoodStat stakeholder team meetings, so residents can become familiar with the officers.

- **Support neighborhood youth** by ensuring that Ingersoll youth are involved in NYPD mentoring programs, tutoring opportunities (if applicable), and that NYPD officers continue to participate in league play and on-campus recreational activities. Include a youth update at the build-a-block meetings.
- **Increase the visibility of police-community activities**, particularly when it applies to youth. Have the Explorers, PAL and other youth-groups connected to NYPD more visible in the neighborhood and involved in various sports tournaments or events if possible/related.

E. Priority Identification | Opportunity | Health and Well-Being

Good living conditions (e.g., housing, employment, physical health) are fundamental to well-being. Persistent health conditions at Ingersoll Houses produces chronic stress for many residents. The surrounding gentrification pressures and economic development occurring in downtown Brooklyn negatively impacts resident sense of safety and well-being. These sentiments spread into the relationships that Ingersoll residents have with each other within their campus and in their homes. The stakeholder team is particularly invested in supporting healthy relationships, ranging from intimate partners to family violence, because of the cyclic and far-reaching consequences of domestic violence. Supporting family wellbeing within Ingersoll will contribute to improved community relationships overall, and consequently improve perceived safety.

How we can work together to improve community health and well-being:

1. Domestic Violence

Challenge: According to the NYPD and the Mayor’s Office to End Domestic and Gender Based Violence (ENDGBV), reports of intimate partner violence are higher at Ingersoll Houses than at other MAP sites.⁵ Based on conversations with Ingersoll residents, the NeighborhoodStat team found that residents remain uncomfortable discussing experiences of intimate partner and family violence. Additionally, both residents who observe family/domestic violence within the development, as well as those who experience domestic/family violence themselves, are fearful of reporting these incidents. Such reports may result in intervention by the police or NYCHA which may threaten residential stability, income security, or incite other destabilizing events.

⁵ Higher incidence of domestic violence reporting may reflect a greater willingness to report such incidents due to improved awareness of such issues, an increase in the number of domestic violence related incidents, or both.

While city agencies like ENDGBV and community-based organizations offer workshops on healthy relationships and combating domestic violence, residents report that these programs are not offered during convenient hours.

Suggested Next Steps:

- **Increase awareness of the range of support available** to address domestic violence that does not necessarily result in a response by law enforcement or NYCHA. Use engaging strategies that meet residents where they are (in the evening, and through creative and interactive methods).
- **Develop community engagement and service strategies** that address domestic violence as an issue that impacts the whole family (or intimate partnership) rather than as a problem between the perpetrator and victim. For example, for issues of family violence, local organizations and residents could rely on conflict mediation providers who are trained in alternative dispute resolution methods that support both parties. Residents may more comfortably seek support for unhealthy relationships if they are presented with resources that don't result in an enforcement response.
- **Regularly share community models of success and healthy lifestyles** and involve local community members who have improved or positively reversed health indicators as ambassadors of local programs.