

Summary

During Phase 2 of the NVI Pilot, JFM took the opportunity to experiment with different outreach modes and survey incentive amounts to learn how to maximize response rates and achieve the minimum required responses in each Zone to produce statistically significant estimates of indicators. Phase 2 experimentation seems to indicate that many Detroiters may distrust or ignore mailed materials, even as incentive amounts are increased. A more detailed summary of the experiments is written below with an illustrative table. JFM will work with D3 and the NVI Task Force to continue with experiments in Phase 3 that may increase response rates and produce representative samples of the other Districts.

Common Elements of All Survey Campaigns

- Materials included similar messaging about purpose and benefit of NVI
- Materials included CDAD logo
- Materials included a phone number and email address for resident questions or requests for assistance in taking the survey
- Survey effort was generally publicized by District 7 CDOs

Survey Campaign Details

In November 2021, JFM sent invitation postcards to 1,250 randomly selected District 7 households, followed by reminder postcards two weeks later. The promised incentive for a complete survey was \$10. Data collectors visited 377 of those 1250 households to remind respondents about the survey and to assist them in taking the survey at that time, if the respondent desired. The canvassing effort resulted in 26 surveys completed in-person. In all, 40 surveys were completed in November, translating to a roughly 4% response rate among households that received invitations.

JFM tested two campaign designs in a March-April 2022 experiment. 3,096 survey invitation letters signed by CDAD Executive Director Madhavi Reddy were sent to the remainder of the sample. A subsample of 1,000 of those included a \$1 bill as a pre-incentive, which would be followed by a \$15 gift card completion. The other 2,096 envelopes included instructions for earning a \$20 incentive by completing the survey within two weeks, as opposed to \$15 if responding later. Reminder postcards were sent to all addresses two weeks later. Responses were received over March and April 2022. The early bird subsample completed 128 surveys, for an effective response rate of 6.1%. The pre-incentive subsample completed 71 surveys for a response rate of 6.6%.

In the third and final campaign, JFM increased the incentive to \$30 and created new materials, including large envelopes, paper surveys, and self-addressed stamped envelopes. JFM hired a vendor to hand-deliver these materials to 1,034 housing units, avoiding the postal system. In approximately 1 month, 68 surveys were completed for an effective response rate of 6.8%.

Lessons Learned

- Canvassing is resource-intensive and challenging to scale citywide, but also not as effective in increasing response rates as hoped.

- Some residents are unable or unwilling to use the Internet to respond. Mailed paper surveys and assistance over the phone seemed to help many of the residents respond.
- Pre-incentives may be slightly better than “early bird” incentives, but the difference was not large.
- Large incentives do not seem to have a dramatic effect on response rates.
- Some residents may be more inclined to look at and respond to materials dropped at their doors instead of mailed.
- Deployment strategies should keep in mind the challenges in reaching individuals in high-rises and other multi-unit structures.

Campaign	November 2021 Postcards + Doors	March-April 2022 Early Birds	March-April 2022 Pre-Incentives	May 2022 Door Drops
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Invitation Postcard ▪ Reminder Postcard ▪ Canvassing ▪ Door-hangers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mailed Invitation Letter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mailed Invitation Letter ▪ \$1 bill 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Drop off at door (not USPS) ▪ Invitation Letter, printed survey & SASE
Days in Field	26	58	58	29
Incentive	\$10	\$20 if completed in 2 weeks, else \$15	\$1 in envelope, \$15 on completion	\$30
Sample	N=1,250	N= 2,096	N= 1,000	N= 1,034*
Est. Reached (excl. returns, refusals)	N= ~1,000	N= 1,930	N= 947	N= 1,002
Complete Surveys	40	128	71	68
Est. Response Rate	~4%	6.1%	6.6%	6.8%

* The May sample was randomly selected from non-respondents in the March campaign.