

RENTON SUNSET AREA CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS ENGAGEMENT AFFINITY GROUPS REPORT



APRIL 25, 2016



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	PURPOSE	1
2.0	BACKGROUND	1
3.0	OUTREACH	2
4.0	AFFINITY GROUPS	2
4.1	Elders group.....	6
4.2	Residents of Subsidized Housing	8
4.3	Hispanics.....	9
4.4	Families with Children.....	11
5.0	SERVICE ANALYSIS	13
6.0	SUMMARY	15
7.0	APPENDIX	17
7.1	Outreach postcard.....	17
7.2	Focus Group Questions (English and Spanish).....	18
7.3	Services Questionnaire (English and Spanish).....	20
7.4	Demographic Questionnaire (English and Spanish).....	22
7.5	Transformation Plan Information (English and Spanish)	24
7.6	Focus Group Minutes	26

1.0 PURPOSE

The Sunset Area is a distinct neighborhood and recognizable gateway to the greater Renton Highlands area. Designated a special planning area by the City of Renton, the neighborhood is characterized by substandard housing and higher rates of crime and poverty than the rest of the City. Based on over a decade of planning and community input, the City and its partners submitted a Transformation Plan to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for a 2015 Choice Neighborhoods Implementation (CNI) grant.

Although the application was selected as one of nine national finalists in 2015, it did not receive an award. After an assessment of the application, the City realized that it could improve the Transformation Plan with additional public outreach. Input from the engagement effort described below will be used to better define community needs and design the collection of services that will be supported by the Plan. Outreach may also help identify emerging community leaders interested in participating in the Transformation Resource Council that guides the implementation of the Plan.

The City of Renton identified four affinity groups that had been underrepresented in previous community engagement: elders, Hispanics, families with children living in private housing, and residents living in public or subsidized housing. Focus group discussions were conducted to provide an opportunity for the City to hear about the needs and hopes of neighborhood residents from these four affinity groups.

2.0 BACKGROUND

Over the last ten years, the City of Renton and its partners have engaged in extensive community planning and public involvement in the Sunset Area. In 2005, the City identified the neighborhood as a special area of focus. It set aside \$1.5 million to begin community planning and revitalization efforts and held a series of meetings that were attended by hundreds of local residents. A broad cross-section of neighborhood stakeholders participated in two task-forces, one in 2006 and one in 2008, that included business owners, churches, property owners, renters, seniors, the Renton Housing Authority, and the Renton School District. Work by the community task forces resulted in new Comprehensive Plan policies, the adoption of new zoning codes and design regulations, and support for additional planning for new housing, parks and recreation development, and community investments. A large community forum hosted by the City gathered broader input on the work of the second task force including a Spanish language discussion group with available Vietnamese and Chinese interpretation.

Implementation of the community Vision developed through the work of the task forces started with the Community Investment Strategy, adopted in 2010. Through the process of creating the Strategy, the Renton Housing Authority and Renton School District became partners in community transformation, committed to making investments that would revitalize the Sunset Area. In 2011, the partners completed a \$1 million Sunset Area Planned Action and Environmental Impact Statement to study the effects of residential and commercial growth that will accompany redevelopment of the neighborhood. This was followed by a Community Needs Assessment and public housing Resident Survey, both in 2014, that provided detailed information regarding the characteristics and needs of residents in the Sunset Area. Public engagement during this four-year period included meetings with public housing residents, community forums, outreach at community events and picnics, and public hearings. Although outreach efforts over the last decade have consistently yielded broad participation, the City wanted to hear from

particular segments in the community who may have distinct needs and desires. By holding focus groups, the City hoped to supplement the information that was already collected in the 2014 Community Needs Analysis.

3.0 OUTREACH

The strategy for focus group recruitment included both broad distribution of information and targeted outreach approaches. An invitation postcard was sent in both English and Spanish to all study area residents by mail. It was also emailed to all families in the study area with children enrolled in the Renton School District. Postcards were available in a number of community locations including local businesses, the public library, two neighborhood centers, and local churches.

Renton Housing Authority (RHA) staff distributed postcards to residents living in their Sunset Area properties and encouraged participation. RHA manages four senior and disabled housing projects within the study area: Hillcrest Terrace, Houser Terrace, Evergreen Terrace, and Golden Pines. Two subsidized housing projects, Glenwood Townhomes and Kirkland Avenue Townhomes, are also within the Sunset Area. Former residents of the Sunset Terrace public housing project that were relocated out of the Sunset area were also sent invitations. The Renton Housing Authority has worked hard to establish trust with their current and former clients, so staff outreach was particularly helpful in recruiting participants for the elder and subsidized housing focus groups.

Past efforts to engage Hispanics in the Sunset Area have been most successful when recognized community leaders encouraged participation. Conversations with the family liaisons that work in Sunset Area schools through a non-profit program, Communities in Schools of Renton, yielded important leads. Centro Rendu is an agency that provides educational and social services to Hispanic adults in South King County. As part of the St. Vincent de Paul organization, Centro Rendu has been doing outreach in the Renton Highlands over the past few years. Staff at Centro Rendu called Sunset Area families and assisted with sign-ups for a focus group held in Spanish.

4.0 AFFINITY GROUPS

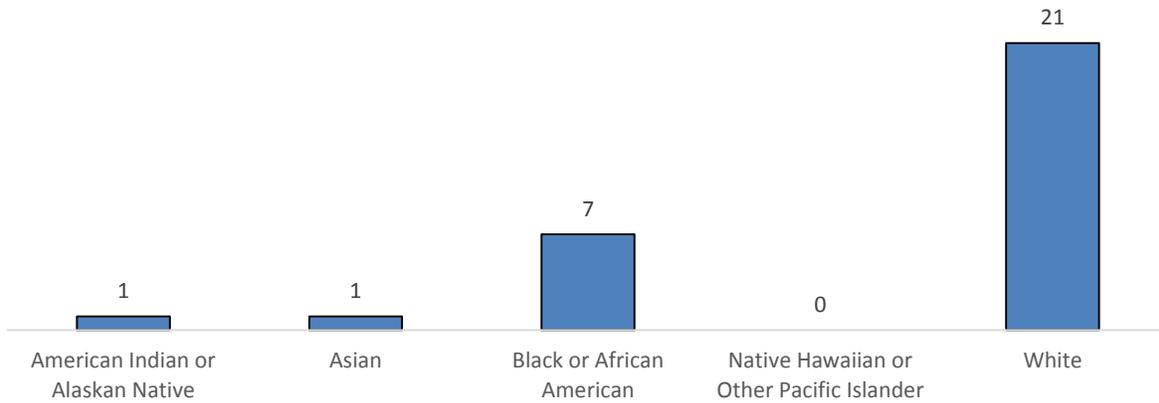
Four focus groups were held in the Sunset Area over a one week period in April 2016. Groups were capped at 12 participants each, in an attempt to encourage a conversational atmosphere and depth of discussion. Interested participants were asked to call or send an email to the organizers of the focus groups, and Spanish language response was available. Respondents were asked a short series of questions to ensure they lived in the neighborhood and matched the profile of the four affinity groups before being placed in a group. Focus group meetings offered food and childcare, and participants were given a \$20 grocery store gift card for their time. In addition, meeting organizers offered to arrange disability accommodations or translation services.

Groups were led through a series of discussion questions to explore specific needs in the areas of neighborhood, housing and transportation, employment and education, and services. For each topic, participants were asked to describe current conditions and their needs and desires for the future. During the Spanish-speaking focus group, volunteers from Centro Rendu facilitated the discussion. Project staff used an interpreter to help understand the conversation and to take notes. To finish the discussion, the group defined their top priorities, talked about who they would trust to help with these issues, and what progress could be made in the short-term. Participants were asked to complete a confidential questionnaire about services and provide some basic demographic information.

Participant Demographics

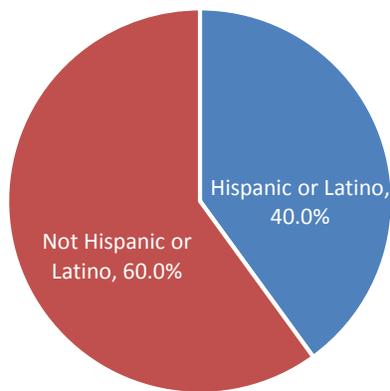
Between the four focus groups, there was a total of 33 participants. The most predominant race represented was white (see Exhibit 1) while 40 percent of the attendees were Hispanic or Latino (see Exhibit 2).

Exhibit 1. Race of Participants



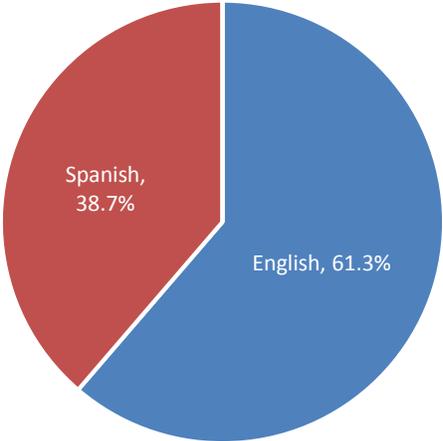
Note: Participants were asked to check all that applied.

Exhibit 2. Ethnicity of Participants



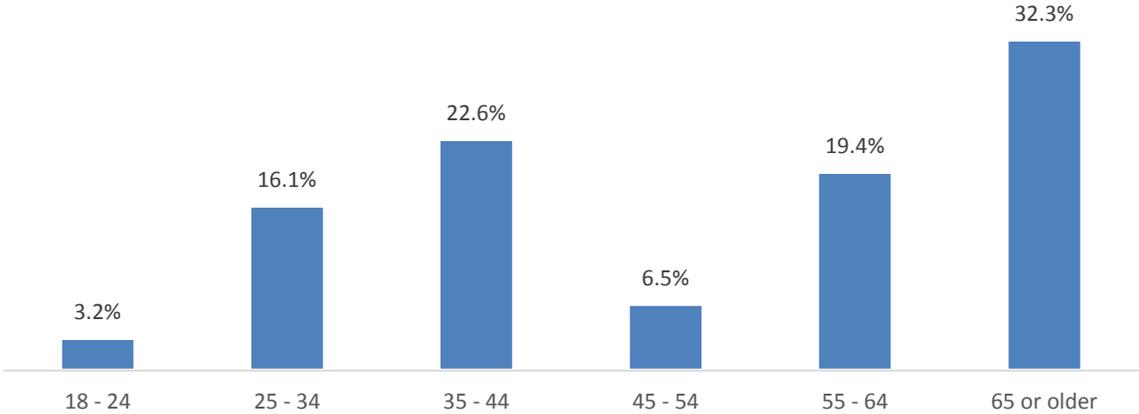
When asked about the primary language spoken at home, 61.3 percent of the group are primarily English speakers and 38.7 percent are primarily Spanish speakers (see Exhibit 3).

Exhibit 3. Primary Language of Participants



The age of participants varied, with the most common age ranges represented were 25 – 44 and 65 or older.

Exhibit 4. Participant Age

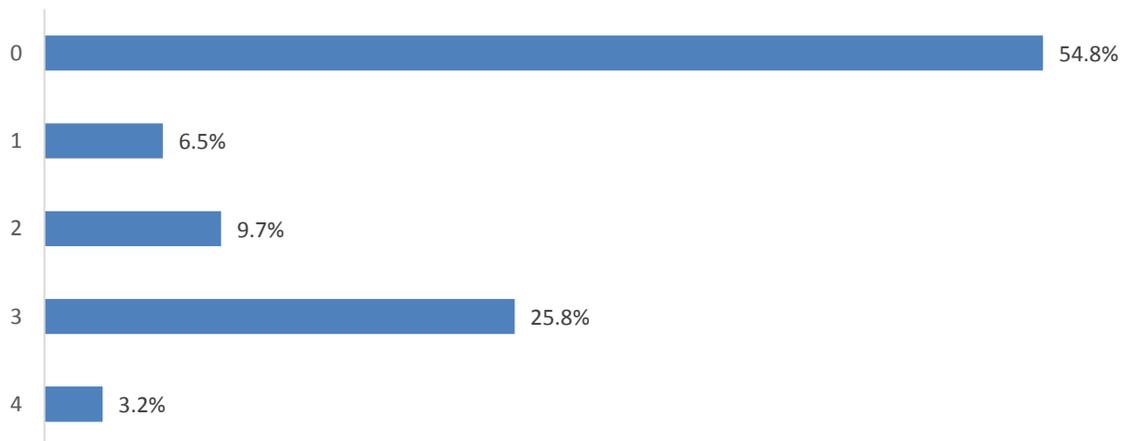


The survey asked about the number of adults and children present in the representative Sunset Area households. Exhibit 5 and Exhibit 6 show how many adults and children live in the households that were represented at the focus groups.

Exhibit 5. People Age 18 and Older Living in Participant Households

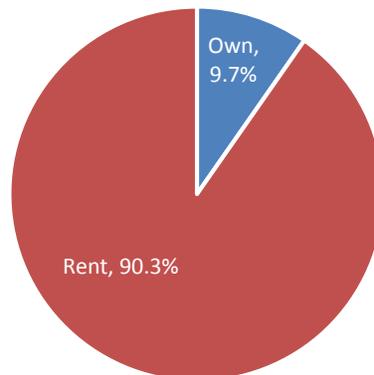


Exhibit 6. Children (18 and younger) Living in Participant Households



The majority (90.3%) of focus group participants rent their homes (see Exhibit 7).

Exhibit 7. Housing Tenure of Participants



4.1 ELDERS GROUP

People age 55 and over represented about 20% of the population in the neighborhood in the 2010 census, and it is home to four senior housing projects. Keeping with the eligibility threshold for senior housing placement, ages 62 and above were considered elders for this process. Although many senior participants were also Renton Housing Authority clients, there were also participants age 62 and older from the privately owned housing in the neighborhood.

There were thirteen elder participants, nine of which were white and three of which were black. There were no elder participants who identified as Hispanic or Latino. Only two participants were under the age of 65. One participant identified themselves as being between 45 and 54, and participated in the elder focus group due to a missed meeting the previous evening. All participants live alone in their household and all participants are renters. About two-thirds of the participants live in one of Renton Housing Authority's senior housing projects, with the remaining one-third living in private housing. The primary language for everyone is English.

Neighborhood

Elder participants desire a neighborhood that is friendly, safe, and secure with a multi-generational community. In order to create this environment, the meeting attendees feel that homes need to be cleaned up and revitalized, landlords need to be incentivized to do more to maintain properties, and there needs to be better traffic control. In addition, the elderly group would like to see more security in the neighborhood through more security cameras and more lighting on the streets.

Housing and Transportation

General impressions of the neighborhood's housing were fairly negative, with many comments focused on the run-down condition of a lot of the private housing. Participants attributed part of the problem to absentee landlords who are not responsive to tenant requests for improvements.

There was an appreciation for the affordability of the housing, whether public or private, and the fact that it supports good, working class families. However, there were comments on wanting a better way to bridge working class families and the retired community so that it is easier to stay in the neighborhood and there are more long-term residents fostering vitality and a feeling of community.

Others expressed a desire for more single family housing that is priced reasonably for working class families.

For seniors, getting around the neighborhood is quite challenging. Some use the Access bus, the Hyde Shuttle, and the 105 bus to get around. However, those modes of transportation all have restrictions that complicate their usefulness to the elders that participated in the group. For those walking in the neighborhood, sidewalks and intersections are thought to be hazards due to lack of maintenance and lack of traffic management interventions. One attendee noted that more benches and resting spaces would be helpful for seniors who need to slow down and take a rest when they are walking around the neighborhood.

Education and Employment

The perception is that those in the neighborhood get a good education, but do not have success getting good jobs in the neighborhood. Participants are concerned that as kids grow up around drugs, even within their home, it does not encourage them to better themselves. The seniors agreed that there needs to be an after school program within the neighborhood for middle school-aged children to keep them entertained, busy, learning, and engaged. In addition, the assets near the neighborhood, such as the Renton Technical College and union apprenticeship opportunities, need to do a better job of advertising what they have to offer. Connecting kids to opportunities in this way is essential, according to the senior group, because the parents have multiple jobs and various other things going on and may not have the time or energy to help their kids succeed.

The only available employment in the neighborhood is in service jobs. Participants worried that kids do not get mentorship or inspiration in the neighborhood that would motivate them to seek a professional-level job. However, it was recognized that Renton Technical College is a good institution and a good asset to build on. Getting Renton Technical College students to move into the neighborhood and stay is a challenge. The service jobs that are available were recognized as being important to the neighborhood because they provide an opportunity that is walking distance from home.

Services

The neighborhood has a variety of food delivery services and a Goodwill, in addition to those services provided by RHA to residents living in their housing. During the discussion, participants shared resources and noted a need for better awareness of what is available. Seniors expressed that there were many additional services they would like to see provided locally, which include handyman services and maintenance, a clothing bank, more food delivery, homeless services, vouchers provided locally, a multi-service center, a farmer's market, and a local police station.

Priorities and Follow-ups

When asked what was most important to the group of seniors, community safety and security, access for those trying to navigate through the community as a pedestrian, and revitalization of the neighborhood were all priorities. The group identified RHA and the City to make these changes, in addition to stating that they would like to get to a place where they could trust their neighbors and community to make these changes together.

A sign of progress to the meeting attendees would be the involvement of the Mayor and City Council, a neighborhood cleanup, and a feeling that the neighborhood feels they have a voice in the changes to their community.

4.2 RESIDENTS OF SUBSIDIZED HOUSING

The Sunset Area currently has a variety of subsidized housing options. As mentioned earlier, RHA has two subsidized housing projects in the Sunset Area. Glenwood Townhomes are eight units for larger families needing four or more bedrooms. Kirkland Avenue Townhomes are 18 family units of various sizes. Both projects provided replacement housing for the 100 unit Sunset Terrace housing project, which had been a long-standing fixture in the Sunset Area. Former residents of Sunset Terrace, which was fully decommissioned in 2014, were provided with full relocation assistance by RHA and will be offered the ability to return to the Sunset Area as additional replacement housing is built. Renton Housing Authority, King Housing Authority, and other public agencies manage a number of clients with Section XIII vouchers used to subsidize rental of private housing stock in the neighborhood. In addition to these public resources, Catholic Community Services manages subsidized housing units in the Sunset Area.

There were eleven participants signed up to attend the focus group, and five participants came to the meeting. One attendee was between the age of 18 and 24 and four attendees were between the ages of 55 and 64. Three participants live alone, while two live in a household with another adult. Only one attendee has a child in the home. All group participants are renters and everyone's primary language was English.

Neighborhood

The subsidized housing residents are interested in seeing their neighborhood become safer and cleaner and have concerns about the types of activities they see going on in some of the housing around them, particularly in the now vacated homes at the former Sunset Terrace apartments. Those attending the meeting desire a neighborhood that is family-oriented where neighbors feel comfortable with each other and where residents feel safer getting to know their neighbors. Currently, participants feel there is a barrier to this type of community-building because some of the other residents cannot be trusted. One of the attendees contributed that it would just be nice to know people.

The group felt that people in the neighborhood feel financially strained, and experience some difficulty in being able to afford basics like rent, utilities, and food. The areas further north in Renton are getting expensive but the rest of Highlands is getting really run down. There is a feeling that it looks more battered than it used to.

Housing and Transportation

Residents of subsidized housing expressed that they would like to see the Sunset Terrace community return to the neighborhood. Tearing down the vacant units and rebuilding new units that would allow some of the original residents to return would improve the neighborhood and make it more welcoming. In their estimation, if the housing is improved more people will want to stay. Currently, some of the housing has too many people living in it and the newer housing is too big and too colorful.

Transportation in the area is a challenge for most. There are some transportation services for those that do not have a car or cannot drive. Bus service provides good connections, but residents are challenged by the limited hours and infrequency of the bus service outside of peak travel times. Residents also enjoy walking around the neighborhood to visit with friends, shop, go to church, go to the store, for exercise, and to go to the library.

Education and Employment

Attendees of the meeting do not feel that kids are getting a good education. Participants attributed this to a high student-teacher ratio and a lack of parent involvement in the schools. Although they

recognized that Renton School District has made an effort to improve local schools, they had concerns that Middle and High School students were being moved through the system without ensuring that they had a basic education.

There are some recognized resources for employment within the neighborhood, but participants felt that not everyone who is looking for them is aware of these resources. Meeting attendees expressed that they need help with employment opportunities and would benefit from assistance in finding job leads, applying for jobs, and writing resumes, as well as to help them figure out what their marketable skills are. In addition, participants felt it is hard to know what kinds of jobs are available and what is available close to home. There is a concern that those who are completing school are still getting into trouble afterwards because there are challenges to finding a job in the area.

Services

A common feeling about the services available to residents was that people do not know about available programs. There is a need for a user-friendly website that connects people to resources. Residents listed a number of resources that they are aware of but expressed a desire for a food bank, a multi-service center, a swimming pool for health and fitness, financial help, additional after-school activities for their children, local parenting programs, local senior citizen programs, support groups, and language learning. In addition, there was concern that kids do not have access to counseling services. Lastly, the attendees were in support of more community activities, such as an outdoor movie night and block parties.

Priorities and Follow-ups

At the end of the discussion, the group agreed that its top concerns for the neighborhood are better awareness about resources and services available, safety, and a community that feels comfortable and trusting of its neighbors. However, participants did not feel that there were many agencies or individuals they would trust to help them make progress on these issues. Those identified as trustworthy include RHA, community leaders, and volunteers. It was felt that, in particular, youth and seniors need someone trustworthy to advocate for their needs.

For the subsidized housing group, benchmarks for success include seeing some new programs started, as well as seeing flyers and newspaper articles providing information on resources that are available to the community.

4.3 HISPANICS

In the 2010 census, Hispanics represented 24.5% of the population in the Sunset Area. A number of small businesses and stores have appeared in the neighborhood to support this population. At Highlands Elementary School, which is located inside the Sunset Area but also serves families from outside the study area boundary, 48.1% of the students are Hispanic and 47.7% of the students are transitional bilingual.¹

All twelve participants identified as Hispanic or Latino, with 9 identifying white as their race. There were five attendees between the ages of 25 and 34, six between the ages of 35 and 44, and one between the ages of 45 and 54. Ten participants indicated that they live in a household with two adults, while another two live in a household with three adults. One participant had no children in the home, two had two children in the home, eight had three children in the home, and one had four children in the home.

¹ Office of State Superintendent of Public Schools, 2014

Two attendees identified that they are owners of their home and the remaining ten rent their homes. All twelve attendees speak Spanish as their primary language.

Neighborhood

For this group, safety and security was the most important neighborhood issue. There is a strong feeling that the neighborhood is a barrier to kids growing up safely and with better opportunities than the parents have had in life. Participants noted that public spaces are not safe for their families because of the public drug use and the presence of homeless in parks, school grounds, and the library. Participants described rampant drug use that occurs openly in public spaces. (During the focus group meeting, which was held at an elementary school, participants observed a group of teenagers smoking marijuana on the playground, with little concern about the visible presence of adults or children.) A growing number of homeless people in the neighborhood, living in their cars and frequenting playgrounds or the library without a specific purpose, also give parents concern because they are an unknown element.

Members of this group report that the language barrier prevents them from getting essential information about safety and security in their neighborhood. They would like more communication and involvement from local police and would like officers in their community that speak Spanish.

Housing and Transportation

Participants in this group did not see the Renton Housing Authority as a source of housing for them. Most live in market rate rental housing and struggle with finding high-quality housing that they can afford. Several people reported living in substandard and hazardous conditions including mold exposures, units that had smoke and water damage from fires in adjacent units, and buildings in general disrepair. In their experience, landlords often refuse to make improvements until tenants have lived there for five or more years and refuse requests for repairs. Rents are also on the rise and energy costs are high in many units. In some apartment complexes, other tenants are seen to create a dangerous situation with fighting and drug use. People feel a trade-off between paying for housing and providing a good future for their children. Affordable, energy-efficient, healthy housing is a top need. Access to emergency housing is also needed.

Transportation is auto-oriented and those without a car get rides from friends and family. Bus service provides some connections, but is also expensive for most families, at up to \$5.00 for a bus ride. Within the neighborhood participants feel that City has not properly planned for the traffic and parking generated by the additional housing that is being built. Sidewalks and public spaces are not accessible for strollers and wheelchairs, making it difficult to navigate the neighborhood by foot.

Education and Employment

Participants reported that there are not acceptable jobs in this area for Latinas, and none with opportunities for advancement. Those who lack English language skills and/or a social security number can only get very low-paying jobs. Childcare costs are so high that for most it is not economically viable for most women in this group to work. There is a daycare that takes low-income children just outside the study area, but it only accepts children under age six. There is no coverage in the area for school-age children, and with drug use and other safety concerns, parents do not want to leave them home alone.

Ideally participants would like part-time jobs available for Latinas in the community that would help them to develop themselves and build work experience. They could help others who don't know English, work in childcare, or work in schools or the library. One attendee mentioned that there used to be a childcare program at Renton Technical College that supported parents going to school, but it is now gone. A Working Connections Childcare program would provide a great service to this neighborhood.

All the parents in this group had concerns about their children's education and future. Parents often did not receive basic education in their home countries and do not know how to help their children in school. There was concern about younger children being pulled out of the classroom to focus on reading skills, but then getting behind in other subjects or missing out on the assignment of homework. Most participants expressed a desire for after school help for their children, and programs to help parents help their children with homework and school assignments. One parent expressed concern that her special needs child had not been supported by a para-educator for two years, and as a result was not able to participate in an integrated classroom setting. Parents of older children noted that bi-lingual children have assets and tend to do well in school. However, parents do not understand the process of applying for college, applying for scholarships, or financing a college education. When parents try to contact schools, they feel that counselors only want to work with kids and do not want to talk to parents.

There was also concern about how the boundary lines were made for school attendance areas. Families who live south of Sunset Boulevard send their children to Dimmitt Middle School and Renton High School, in Renton's west hill and downtown Renton. Attendees felt that this is too far for kids to go outside of their neighborhood, and generates unnecessary traffic. Renton High School was also viewed as having a drug problem and providing less adult supervision than Hazen High School, located in closer proximity to the neighborhood.

Services

According to participants, there are no services in this area for low-income people. Services in the neighborhood cost a lot and low-cost services are located in Seattle or Kent. It can be challenging for families to get to the places with services. Sometimes the Mexican Embassy sets up a mobile clinic in downtown Seattle – a mobile clinic in this neighborhood would be welcome. For these participants, the most needed services in this neighborhood are low-cost medical, dental, legal, mental health, and family planning. In addition to those services, parents want more activities for kids in this neighborhood, especially during school breaks, including indoor activities when it is cold outside.

Priorities and Follow-ups

At the end of the discussion, the group agreed that its top concerns for the neighborhood are safety, housing, and health. However, participants did not feel that there were any agencies or individuals they would trust to help them make progress on these issues. Centro Rendu, which provides Hispanic adults with services, was seen as a good start on helping the Hispanic community.

The benchmark for progress for this group was information. Participants want to know about the resources that exist in the community and how they can access them. They would like to meet with police and work on security issues in the neighborhood. It was very important to all participants to have a voice in what happens in the community and to have government consider their needs when making decisions.

4.4 FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN

Families with children represent 32.1% of the households in the Sunset Area in the 2010 census. Family household size averages to 3.09 persons per household. Although there were six people signed up to attend, there were three attendees that came to the focus group for families with children that was held on April 18th from 6:30 – 8:30 PM at the Highlands Elementary School.

Neighborhood

Meeting attendees from the group representing families with children were concerned about safety in the neighborhood, especially for their kids. They identified that there are some bad influences in the neighborhood. People do not feel comfortable in some areas and certain parts of the neighborhood are aesthetically a mess. In addition, there are concerns about speeding and its impacts on particular corridors. There is not a sense of community, which attendees attributed to the large presence of renters that come and go from the neighborhood frequently.

The group identified a desire for the neighborhood to be inviting. There is a hope that it can be the type of neighborhood that residents would want to show off and be proud of, where a strong sense of community exists. As part of this process, attendees hope that improvement initiatives will benefit homeowners and increase property values. Where the City has made improvements through new green areas and sidewalks, these are seen as a positive change.

Housing and Transportation

Housing quality is seen by this group as “deplorable.” They see that there are a lot of duplexes that no one is taking care of and feel that many of them are unmaintained rentals. One attendee described the feeling of being around these uncared for homes as “depressing”. It was recognized that these units are meeting someone’s need, likely due to their affordability. Although the housing quality may not be what people deserve, it is probably what someone can afford. In addition, it was mentioned that the landlords may be negligent since they know developers may become interested in the property.

Participants thought there should be more townhomes with better design located along major corridors in order to create links throughout the neighborhood. In particular, there was an idea that condos and townhomes concentrated on Harrington would help the neighborhood revitalize.

The meeting discussion around transportation identified challenges for bicyclists, in particular. The sidewalk network is thought to be good but there are safety concerns about speeding vehicles and illegal activity that one may encounter while walking.

Education and Employment

Education in the elementary schools is thought to be good, with some supportive services provided to children, such as language translation services for transition from a Spanish-speaking household. The group has concerns, however, about the challenges their children will face at the middle and high schools in the area. One attendee hoped for a private school to move into the area. Poverty, bullying, and safety in schools are all seen as barriers to kids getting a good education.

The types of jobs that attendees identified as available within the neighborhood primarily include retail, such as grocery and restaurants. Restaurants tend to be smaller, family-owned establishments that may be staffed by family members. There is a perception that well-paying jobs with opportunities for advancement are not available in the neighborhood. One attendee hoped for businesses that draw employees from further away, such as tech firms. Renton’s attractions, such as The Landing, could help catalyze changes if Sunset could link up with The Landing somehow (although it was recognized that the hill is a barrier).

Services

Representatives of families with children were appreciative of the library and fire station, but felt that there is a need for daycare, medical clinic, more parks, a police station, an all-inclusive health center, and tutoring services.

Priorities and Follow-ups

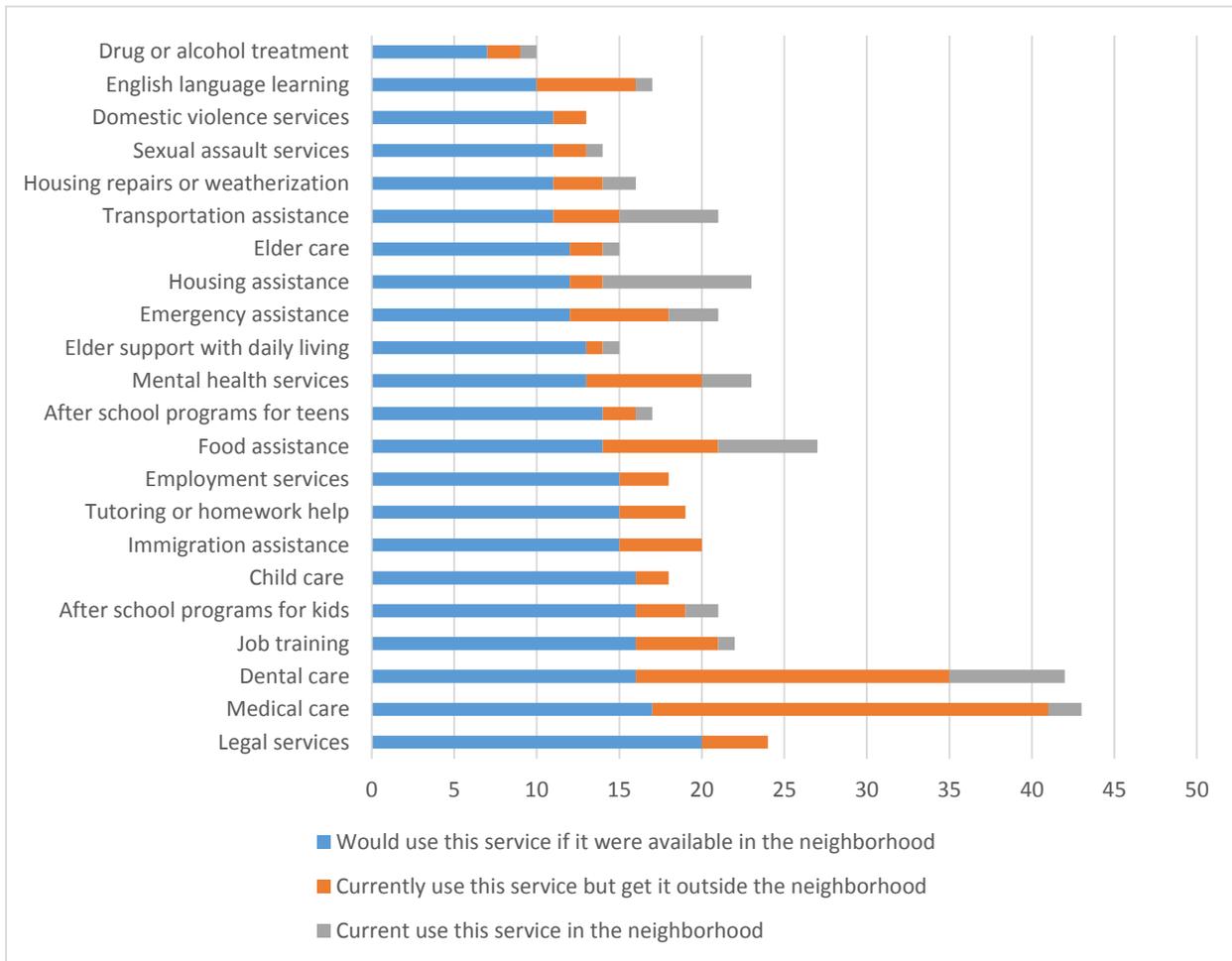
Priority issues to address include rebuilding vacant property, including the area adjacent to the library, and fostering a sense of community through block parties, picnics, and other activities. The group identified the City, private builders, RHA, neighborhood associations, and those who have gone through the same process in other neighborhoods as trustworthy partners.

To the attendees, indicators of progress included seeing changes to the park area (such as the footprint laid out, site preparation and land clearing underway, and starting to see the park take form), some building underway on Harrington, the planned greenway down Harrington being implemented, and more people coming together as a neighborhood and community.

5.0 SERVICE ANALYSIS

Meeting attendees filled out a services questionnaire. For each service type (e.g. food assistance, employment services, legal services) survey respondents were asked to identify whether they currently use this service in the neighborhood, currently use this service outside of the neighborhood, and if they would use the service if it were available in the neighborhood. Exhibit 8 shows the services that are most commonly used by residents and those where there is a gap in the Sunset Area but that residents would like to see available locally (blue).

Exhibit 8. Services Survey Responses



The services used most frequently in the neighborhood include dental care, food assistance, housing assistance, and transportation assistance. Many participants find they seek medical and dental care outside of the neighborhood, as well as food assistance, emergency assistance, job training, and English language learning. In group discussions, participants expressed the high personal cost of obtaining these services out of the neighborhood due to a lack of efficient transportation options and not having adequate childcare. There are a wide variety services desired for the neighborhood. Those most highly demanded by respondents include medical and dental care, legal services, immigration assistance, child care, after school programs for kids, tutoring or homework help, employment services, and food assistance. These services were each desired by around fifteen of the participants.

In each of the groups participants expressed a desire for resources about services to be more readily available. Subsidized housing residents and seniors in Renton Housing Authority projects relied on housing authority staff to help them navigate access to services when they knew that they were available. Those seniors living in private housing and the Spanish language group had little access to information about resources that were available to them. All of these groups also expressed a need for various types of emergency services that could help families in crisis with food, housing, or other needs. The idea for a multi-service center where neighborhood residents could turn to when they needed various kinds of support was discussed by both the elders group and the group of subsidized housing residents. Participants in the families with children group expressed a similar idea for a multi-service health center that offered a variety of medical, dental, and mental health options.

Notably, the Hispanic community has special service needs because of barriers related to language, culture, and immigration status. Although having knowledge of available services would be a good start, language and cultural barriers prevent people from understanding the processes and procedures needed to access the services. Whether it is working within the school system to advocate for their children's education, accessing affordable medical or dental care, finding emergency assistance, applying for college, or asserting landlord-tenant rights, this group needs assistance in navigating the system. Furthermore, although immigration status was only mentioned briefly in the conversation on employment, those who lack a social security number or legal status, have fewer service options and are unlikely to persist if they are turned away.

6.0 SUMMARY

Based on all of the information discussed by the groups, several themes emerged for neighborhood improvement. These themes were safety, sense of community, and neighborhood revitalization. Although each theme was distinctly expressed, all three themes are interconnected.

Safety and neighborhood security were chosen by three of the groups as a top priority for neighborhood improvement. All of the groups reported feeling unsafe in public spaces because of illegal activities and drug use. Run-down and vacant properties, including the former Sunset Terrace property, were seen as attracting a bad element that needs these types of spaces where no one is watching. Similarly, the parks, open spaces, and school yards in this neighborhood mostly have poor visibility from the street, possibly contributing to their use for drug activity. Better urban design for new facilities (including consideration of crime prevention through environmental design techniques), additional street lighting at night, increased police presence, and drug education and enforcement could enhance the feeling of neighborhood security.

Another safety issue that was consistently discussed involved pedestrian safety. Different groups presented different concerns about pedestrian safety. On some of the longer boulevards, speeding is an issue that could be addressed with enforcement and traffic calming measures. The Elders group identified a number of specific intersections that had poor visibility, lacked curb cuts and accessibility features, and presented other safety hazards. These issues were also identified in the Hispanic group as difficult for young children and strollers to navigate. Sidewalks in this neighborhood were built to a variety of standards including at-grade right-of-ways, raised sidewalks with curbs, and sidewalks that meet the city's current complete-streets standard that include a planting strip. A comprehensive evaluation of sidewalks and intersection conditions, and a plan to bring the neighborhood up to current standards, could improve pedestrian safety and accessibility.

When describing what they would like for their neighborhood, all groups expressed a strong desire for a sense of community and the participants of the subsidized housing residents and families with children groups chose it as a priority. Elders described their ideal of a multi-generational community where there were opportunities for people at every stage of life. Barriers to creating a better sense of community involved both social and environmental factors. Feeling safe in community spaces like parks and streets was a major environmental factor. The constant movement of people in and out of rental housing as they search for better quality, more affordable housing was a significant social barrier. People do not see this as a neighborhood to stay in or take pride in, and there is no active neighborhood organization.

Creating a sense of neighborhood is difficult because often there are many underlying influences that prevent neighbors from getting to know each other. Reducing barriers such as neighborhood crime or poor quality rental housing, as identified in the focus groups, will require a multi-faceted approach.

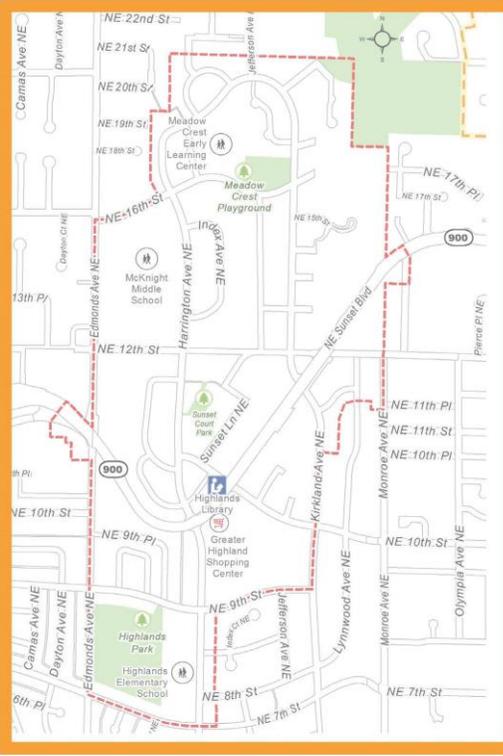
However, investing in community building can start right away. A handful of the participants in the focus groups expressed a desire to stay involved with neighborhood activities and future planning efforts. The City has a well-established neighborhood program that could be used to assist and mentor these emerging leaders in the formation of a neighborhood organization. Community events such as clean-up days, National Night Out, the summer picnic program, or neighborhood block watch could utilize existing City programs to leverage community involvement and neighborhood pride. Additional programs that help neighbors learn community organizing or leadership skills could also help improve community efficacy.

Groups also supported overall neighborhood change and revitalization. Given the description of housing conditions in this neighborhood, building high-quality housing which is affordable to all incomes was seen as a key component of neighborhood revitalization. This included the completion of the Vision for Sunset Terrace, the construction of new market rate housing, and the rehabilitation of existing privately-owned units. Participants generally felt that there were assets in the neighborhood that revitalization could build from, including close proximity to shopping, a new library, and local schools. Participants also viewed neighborhood problems as solvable. Better housing and more social services would enable people to stay in the neighborhood longer and create a better sense of community.

Some participants had some information about the community planning work the City had done over the last decade prior to attending a focus group. Others were introduced to the concept of a neighborhood Transformation Plan through materials they received at the group. Participants generally favored the direction of the Transformation Plan and expressed a desire to learn more, to continue to participate in planning efforts, and to have their voices heard. The Transformation Plan offers the opportunity to continue to engage this neighborhood in community change.

7.0 APPENDIX

7.1 OUTREACH POSTCARD



SUNSET
Area Transformation Plan
The Suburbanization of Opportunity

TELL US ABOUT YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD!
CUÉNTANOS DE TU VECINDARIO!

For more information:
rentonwa.gov/sunsetarea

The City of Renton and the Renton Housing Authority want to hear from you about the Sunset neighborhood! Four group discussions will be held in the afternoons and evenings in mid April.

Food and childcare will be available. Participants will receive \$20 gift cards for their time.

Space is limited - reserve your spot by April 8th!
Email us at RentonSunset2016@gmail.com or call (206) 493-2369.

La City of Renton y la Renton Housing Authority quieren oír de usted sobre el barrio de Sunset. Cuatro discusiones de grupo se llevará a cabo en las tardes y noches durante a mediados de abril.

Alimentos y cuidado de los niños estarán disponibles. Los participantes recibir \$20 tarjetas de regalo por su tiempo.

El espacio es limitado - reserve su lugar antes del 8 de abril! Un correo electrónico a RentonSunset2016@gmail.com o llame al (206) 493-2369.

City of Renton
Community & Economic Development
1055 S.Grady Way
Renton, WA 98057



7.2 FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS (ENGLISH AND SPANISH)

Neighborhood

What kind of a community do you want?

Why is that important to you?

How is it different from the way things are now?

Housing and Transportation

Describe the housing in the neighborhood. (What is the quality of the housing that is available?)

What kind of housing options are needed to meet the needs of the community?

How do people get around without a personal vehicle?

What would make it easier or more convenient for people to get around?

Employment and Education

Describe the jobs available in the neighborhood. (Do the jobs pay well? Are there opportunities for advancement?)

What changes could be made to improve employment opportunities in the neighborhood?

Are there any job training resources that should be available to neighborhood residents?

Describe the quality of the education that children in this neighborhood receive? (Are they prepared for life? Careers? College?)

Are there barriers that prevent them from getting a good education?

Services

Describe the type of family, health, and social services that are offered in the neighborhood (i.e. health care, childcare, emergency assistance, employment services, mobility service, mental health services, legal services, etc.).

What types of services would be helpful in this neighborhood?

Shopping

Describe the goods and services available in the neighborhood.

What kinds of things does the community need to shop for outside of the neighborhood?

Wrap-up

Given what we just talked about, what are the two to three most important issues or concerns when it comes to the community?

Thinking back over the conversation what groups or individuals would you trust to take action on these things?

If we came back together in six months or a year, what might you see that would be an indication that the things we talked about were starting to happen?

Now that we have talked about this issue a bit, what questions do you have about it?

Vecindario

¿Qué tipo de comunidad ustedes desean?

¿Por qué es importante para ustedes?

¿Cuál es la diferencia de cómo son las cosas ahora?

Viviendas y Transporte

Describan las viviendas en su vecindario. (¿Cuáles son las condiciones de las viviendas disponibles?)

¿Qué diferentes opciones de vivienda son necesarias para satisfacer las necesidades de la comunidad?

¿Cómo la gente se moviliza sin el uso de un vehículo personal?

¿Qué es lo que haría más fácil y conveniente para que la gente se pueda movilizar?

Empleos y Educación

Describan las oportunidades de trabajo en su vecindario. (¿Los trabajos, son bien pagados? ¿Hay oportunidad de progreso?)

¿Qué cambios se necesitarían para mejorar las oportunidades de empleo en su vecindario?

¿Hay recursos de capacitación laboral para los residentes del vecindario?

¿Describan la calidad de la educación que los niños reciben en este vecindario? (¿Los prepara para la vida? ¿Carreras técnicas? ¿Universidad?)

¿Hay barreras que los previenen de tener una buena educación?

Servicios

Describe los diferentes tipos de servicios para la familia, la salud y los servicios sociales que se ofrecen en su vecindario. (i.e. Servicios médicos, guarderías para niños, asistencia de emergencia, servicios de empleo, servicios de transporte, servicios de salud mental, servicios legales, etc.)

¿Qué servicios serían útiles en este vecindario?

Compras

Describan los productos y servicios disponibles en su vecindario.

¿Qué cosas la comunidad necesita, que los hace salir a comprar fuera de su vecindario?

Para terminar

Teniendo en cuenta lo que acabamos de hablar. ¿Cuáles son los dos o tres asuntos o preocupaciones más importantes que tienen cuando se refieren a su comunidad?

Pensando en la conversación que hemos tenido. ¿En qué grupo o individuo, confiarían que haría cambios necesarios sobre estas mejoras?

Si nos reunimos en 6 meses o en un año. ¿Qué cambios serían para ti una indicación de que las cosas que hemos hablado están empezando a suceder?

Ahora que hemos hablado un poco sobre las necesidades de esta zona. ¿Qué preguntas tienen?

7.3 SERVICES QUESTIONNAIRE (ENGLISH AND SPANISH)

Which types of services does your household use or need? Are these services in the neighborhood? Please check as many boxes as apply:

Someone in my household:	Currently uses this type of service in the neighborhood.	Currently uses this service, but gets it outside the neighborhood.	Would use this service if it were available in the neighborhood.
Medical Care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dental Care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mental Health Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drug or Alcohol Treatment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Food assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Housing assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Housing repairs or weatherization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emergency assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transportation assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employment services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Job Training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
English Language Learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Child care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
After school programs for kids	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
After school programs for teens	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tutoring or Homework help	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Elder care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Elder support with daily living	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legal Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Immigration assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual assault services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Domestic violence services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Preguntas sobre los Servicios – Del Grupo de Enfoque Sunset Area

¿Qué tipo de servicios usa o necesitan en su hogar? ¿Tiene estos servicios en su vecindario? Por favor marque todas las que aplican para ustedes.

Alguien en mi hogar:	Actualmente usa estos servicios en mi vecindario.	Actualmente usa estos servicios, pero los obtiene fuera de nuestro vecindario.	Usaría estos servicios si fueran ofrecidos en su vecindario.
Atención Medica	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Atención Dental	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Servicios de Salud Mental	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tratamiento para Drogas y Alcohol	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asistencia Alimentaria	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asistencia de Vivienda	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reparación de Viviendas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asistencia de Emergencia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asistencia de Transporte	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Servicios de Empleo	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Formación Profesional	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enseñanza del idioma Inglés	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guarderías	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programas para los niños después de la escuela	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programas para los jóvenes después de la escuela	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tutoría y Ayuda con las tareas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cuidado de Ancianos	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ayuda a los ancianos en su vida diaria	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Servicios Legales	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asistencia de Emigración	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asistencia al asalto sexual	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Servicios de violencia domestica	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7.4 DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE (ENGLISH AND SPANISH)

What is your race? Mark one or more races to indicate your race.

- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White

What is your ethnicity?

- Hispanic or Latino
- Not Hispanic or Latino

What is your age?

- 18 – 24
- 25 - 34
- 35 - 44
- 45 - 54
- 55 – 64
- 65 or older

How many people (age 18 and older) live in your household? _____

How many children (under age 18) live in your household? _____

Do you own or rent your home? own rent

What is the primary language spoken in your home? _____

Información Demográfica - Del Grupo de Enfoque Sunset Area

¿Cuál es su raza? Marque una o más razas si es necesario.

- Indio Americano o Nativo de Alaska
- Asiático
- Negro o Negro Americano
- Nativo de Hawái o de las Islas del Pacífico
- Blanco

¿Cuál es su etnicidad?

- Hispano o Latino
- No Hispano o Latino

¿Cuál es su edad?

- 18 – 24
- 25 – 34
- 35 – 44
- 45 – 54
- 55 – 64
- Mayor de 65

¿Cuántas personas de 18 años o mayores viven en la casa? _____

¿Cuántos niños menores de 18 años viven en la casa? _____

¿Usted es dueño o alquila la casa? Dueño Alquila

¿Cuál es el idioma que se habla en casa? _____

7.5 TRANSFORMATION PLAN INFORMATION (ENGLISH AND SPANISH)



The Sunset Area

The Sunset Area is a distinct neighborhood and recognizable gateway to the greater Renton Highlands area. The neighborhood was largely established in the early 1940s to provide temporary housing for workers at nearby Boeing and PACCAR during World War II. Much of the original housing remains but is in very poor condition. In the neighborhood crime is higher, vacancy is higher, and the number of people living in poverty is higher than the rest of the City. For this reason, the Sunset Area has been recognized as a special planning and revitalization area by the City for more than ten years.

Choice Neighborhoods Initiative

In 2015 the City of Renton, Renton Housing Authority, and King County Housing Authority submitted an application to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development for a Choice Neighborhoods Initiative grant. The application requested \$30 million for a five-year project to fund housing development, neighborhood improvements, and social and educational services in the Sunset Area. Although the application came close to being selected, it was not awarded funding in 2015.

Plans are already in the works to apply for a Choice Neighborhoods Initiative grant in 2016. If funding can be secured, investments in new housing, economic development, and social services will provide greater opportunities and benefits for all people living in the Sunset Area.

The Transformation Plan



- Build approximately 200 new public, affordable, and market-rate housing units on Renton Housing Authority property
- Stimulate new market-rate housing development on part of the former Sunset Terrace site



- Provide additional health care services in the Sunset Area
- Provide services to support those with low incomes
- Provide services to support immigrants and refugees
- Connect job seekers with employment services



- Create programs to ensure kindergarten readiness
- Support student academic success and college/career readiness
- Provide career education and job-training opportunities for all ages



Choice Neighborhood Initiative Partners



City of Renton | Community & Economic Development | 1055 S. Grady Way, Renton WA 98057 | www.rentonwa.gov/sunsetarea



El Sunset Area

Sunset Area es un vecindario notorio y reconocido como la puerta de entrada a todas las áreas de Renton Highlands. Este barrio fue establecido en los comienzos de los años 1940 para proporcionar alojamiento temporal a los trabajadores de Boeing y PACCAR durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial. La mayor parte de las viviendas originales todavía existen pero en muy mal estado. En este vecindario el crimen, las casas desocupadas y el número de gente viviendo en pobreza es más alto que en el resto de la ciudad. Por esta razón Sunset Area ha sido considerada por la ciudad como una zona que necesita una especial planificación y revitalización por más de 10 años.

Iniciativa de Vecindad

En el año 2015 la ciudad de Renton conjuntamente con el Departamento de Vivienda de Renton, y el Departamento de Vivienda del Condado de King presentaron una solicitud al Departamento de Vivienda y Desarrollo Urbano de los Estados Unidos para una subvención del proyecto llamado Choice Neighborhoods Initiative. La solicitud pedía \$30 millones de dólares para financiar un proyecto de 5 años el cual consiste en la creación de viviendas y mejoramiento de viviendas, asimismo, proveer servicios sociales y educativos en Sunset Area. A pesar que esta solicitud estuvo cerca de ser aprobada, no se concedió la subvención en el año 2015.

Actualmente se está preparando una nueva solicitud de subvención para el proyecto Choice Neighborhoods Initiative para el año 2016. Si se lograra obtener la subvención requerida para invertir en nuevas viviendas, desarrollo económico y servicios sociales, esto crearía mejores oportunidades y beneficios a todos los habitantes de Sunset Area.

- El Plan de Transformación**
-  • Construir aproximadamente 200 unidades de vivienda pública a precios moderados en la propiedad del Departamento de Vivienda de Renton
 - Promover el desarrollo del mercado de viviendas en una parte de lo que antiguamente se llamaba la zona de Sunset Terrace
 - Proveer servicios adicionales de salud para los residentes en Sunset Area
 -  • Proveer servicios adicionales de salud en Sunset Area
 - Proveer servicios de ayuda a las personas de bajos ingresos económicos
 - Proveer servicios de ayuda a los inmigrantes y refugiados
 - Facilitar la comunicación de las personas que están buscando trabajo con agencias de trabajo
 -  • Crear programas para asegurar que los niños estén preparados para iniciar el Kindergarten
 - Apoyar académicamente a los estudiantes para que inicien su carrera en la universidad exitosamente
 - Facilitar información sobre diferentes carreras educativas y proveer entrenamiento para trabajos técnicos para todas las edades



City of Renton | Community & Economic Development | 1055 S. Grady Way, Renton WA 98057 | www.rentonwa.gov/sunsetarea

7.6 FOCUS GROUP MINUTES

RENTON SUNSET AREA FOCUS GROUPS

Public and Subsidized Housing Residents Affinity Group

April 13th, 2016 | 5 - 7 PM | Renton Housing Authority

INTRODUCTION

Introduction from Erika

Mark – Discussion of Sunset Area Plan and other broader initiatives and partnership with RHA and their plan for replacement of affordable homes.

ATTENDEES

There were five participants at the meeting.

Also in attendance:

Erika Rhett – BERK Consulting

Izzy Cannell – BERK Consulting

Mark Santos-Johnson – City of Renton

Kellee Rodriguez – Renton Housing Authority

Julia Wilder-Barnes – Renton Housing Authority

TOPIC 1 – THE NEIGHBORHOOD

What kind of community do you want this neighborhood to be?

Safe environment

Clean area – Glenwood area has homeless and trash coming into the vacant buildings, police are coming all the time – what’s happening? Drugs? Prostitution?

Love this area but the things going on at the vacant homes are making want to move out because of the activity

Not enough light

Squatters at vacant housing – this is also the darkest street

The library is a good addition

Wants family-oriented, wants neighbors to be comfortable with each other and friendly – too many people walk around with chip on shoulder

Block parties would help

The new police station makes feel safe

Feel safer when you can get to know your neighbors

Right now, doesn't trust her neighbors – doesn't feel safe with them or speaking with them

Not trying to snitch or get in anyone's business but I want to feel safe too

For seniors, probably a problem too – they want to get out and walk around

Used to walk a loop around the school but when it's dark there are bad things happening out there

In the last 5 years, the safety has changed a lot – need to be really careful now

- Renton Highlands is starting to feel like Skyway in South Seattle

In our own communities we need to work on communication

The churches used to be involved more – used to get flyers etc but haven't seen in 3 years

- Some churches are getting pretty battered down now though
- Churches have to screen so badly that it's becoming less friendly

Security and cameras are everywhere – don't like that it invades privacy but need it for the safety

A lot of things have been changing in the last few years in particular – is there something that has changed that isn't already on the list?

Nice to know people

Compared to how it used to be, it's not a bad area

Like the lighting that are at Kirkland Townhomes

It's hard for people to just survive here - it's good to hear that something is planned

- Some of Renton (near Bellevue) is getting so expensive and the rest of the Highlands is getting really run down
- It never used to be like that – it's getting battered
- Right now, it looks awful driving down Sunset

A lot of people don't know there's a neighborhood center on 16th

TOPIC 2 – HOUSING

What is the housing like in the neighborhood? And what's available? Can people find housing that meets their needs?

Would like to see the Sunset Terrace come back

Don't like the new townhomes – too big, too many levels

The housing is run down and raggy and needs to be torn down

Everything needs to be updated so that it's more welcoming and so people want to stay there – if it looks run down, no one wants to be a part of that

The colors makes it look like it's obvious public housing

Too many people living in one house – 3 bedroom and nine people sometimes

TOPIC 3 – GETTING AROUND/TRANSPORTATION

There is a bus that comes to pickup – donation-based for 55 and older – Hyde's Bus

Access Bus

Regular bus service serving the neighborhood – 111 & 14 are great but only work during peak hours – need longer hours

The bus is convenient but doesn't run long enough and doesn't run frequently enough

Walk around neighborhood some for friends, shopping, church, store, exercise, library

TOPIC 4 – EMPLOYMENT

Childcare is good for people with kids

Labor Ready right by carwash

Resources

- Hold my hand and help me get a job
- it's really hard to get anything good without knowing someone
- Would like to have the training – how to do resumes, etc
- Would like help figuring out what they're good at – never knew what her marketable skills are

Temp agency – don't have to go through the interview

Would like to know what kind of jobs are available

Everything has done is good at, but can't do interviews

DVR program – retrains you for a new/different job

Want something close to your home

A lot of stuff around here – new developments like The Landing

People who are coming out of school are having trouble finding jobs in the neighborhood

TOPIC 5 – EDUCATION

Do you think kids are getting a good education?

No

Student-teacher ratio is way too high – kids getting put in the gym in some of the high schools

More involvement in the schools

- Parents need to be involved
- The more parents are involved, the better outcome it can be

- Teachers are tired, need to help

Kids should start learning at home

Renton School District is definitely trying – there are new programs – but it's not enough

Middle school and high school students have a harder time

- New program needs to be put in place
- Too many people getting out of high school who aren't educated enough to be out and getting into no good
- Keep moving students through the system (even though they should still be in school) because it is overcrowded

Need more teacher assistance

Need to cut back class sizes

GED is bad – it became a way for kids to quit school

- Not getting the full education you get when you're in a classroom being taught
- Socialization that happens at school is important

TOPIC 6 – COMMUNITY SERVICES

Barriers – There are a lot of programs out there but people don't know about them

- Need user friendly site about connecting to programs
- The City website is too confusing for people
- People don't know about the programs, the resources, etc.
- Some people don't have technology, or can't pay for it, or don't know how to use it, or are living in their car

Resources that people know about:

- Hyde Bus
- ORCA Card
- Labor Ready – pay cash daily
- Neighborhood legal program
- Rec program – after school program
- Library – tutoring
- Senior citizen programs – downtown
- Celebrate Recovery – Highland Community Church

What kind of services does the community most need:

- Another food bank
- Multi-service Center
- Swimming pool – health and fitness

- Financial help (211)
- More activities after school – Boys and Girls club type activities
- Parental guidance/Parenting programs – program on parents learning how to interact with their kids
- Senior citizen program – local
- Support groups
- Movie night – outdoor
- Language learning
- Support for kids that need counseling and need to unload

TOPIC 7 – SHOPPING

What can you shop for here? And where do you shop?

Very expensive grocery stores – QFC, Albertson, Viet Wah

Grocery Outlet – but can only get what they have – what there’s a good deal on

Goodwill

Methodone Clinic – not a bad thing – the people need the help

Marijuana Stores – plenty of those around

Vets (but not emergency)

Mexican store

Pet store

Fire Station

Ezell’s Chicken

What do you want here?

Trader Joe’s

More beauty supplies – drugstore

Day cares – affordable

Costco

Movie theater

Pool

Bowling

American food

St. Vincent (wish there was still one)

Urgent care clinics (closer than Duvall, and one that’s closer)

Police station

Buffet restaurant – family restaurant

Amusement places – arcade, pizza place with arcade

YMCA – closest one is Newcastle and it’s not bus accessible

SUMMARY

What are two or three most important things you’d like to see change?

Topic	Who would you trust to help provide this?	Sign of progress?
<p>Make the resources more available so that people can use them</p> <p>Online</p> <p>Binder with all the resources – available at the Housing Authority, Neighborhood Center, Library</p>	<p>RHA</p> <p>Community Leaders</p> <p>Volunteers</p> <p>Need an advocate for:</p> <p>Youth</p> <p>Seniors</p> <p>Other</p>	<p>Start programs</p> <p>Have a motivator</p> <p>Get flyers out</p> <p>Renton Reporter articles</p>
<p>Safe community, family-oriented, feel comfortable with your neighbors and get to know your neighbors</p>		
<p>Kids</p> <p>Give back</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Things for kids to do</p>		
<p>Support that provides the feeling of security for a minute</p>		

CLOSING QUESTIONS

Questions about what is coming for housing and when

Will it all be affordable?

Want to know more about what is happening in the city and how to be involved

RENTON SUNSET AREA FOCUS GROUPS

Elderly Affinity Group

April 14th, 2016 | 2- 4 PM | Hillcrest Community Building

INTROS

Erika – meeting introduction.

ATTENDEES

There were 13 participants at the meeting.

Also in attendance:

Erika Rhett – BERK Consulting

Izzy Cannell – BERK Consulting

Mark Santos-Johnson – City of Renton

Kellee Rodriguez – Renton Housing Authority

Lisa Fabatz – Renton Housing Authority

TOPIC 1 – YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

What kind of community do you want this neighborhood to be?

Friendly and safe

Safe and secure

Multi-generational

Clean up the duplexes

Revitalize some of the houses

- Paint them
- Clean up the yards

Incentivize landlords to do more to improve and revitalize the properties

Might get more medical facilities

Better traffic control around the playground and the nursery school/preschool

- Audible sound for the traffic light at NE 10th & Sunset
- Add flashing light on the Stop signs at Kirkland & NE 10th Street – where the Highland Community Church is

- Need flags at the crosswalk at NE 10th and Index – by Renton Housing Authority
- Crosswalk stoplight on Sunset – no crosswalk for two – three blocks
- Raised crosswalk over Sunset
- Better crossing at 16th and Kirkland
- At least two more crosswalks across Sunset
- So pedestrian unfriendly
- Speed bumps

Like the shopping nearby – shopper friendly

Too much noise at the Goodwill & the activities going on there

Underground wires

TOPIC 2 – HOUSING

How would you describe the housing in the neighborhood and what kinds of housing are needed to meet the needs of the community?

Some of the private housing is pretty run-down and junk needs to be cleaned up

Our neighborhood is made up of working class families – they’re here because the housing, even the private housing, is affordable

Like that there are lots of families with young children, there are older folks, there’s a really nice mix

Would like something that bridges working class versus retired so you can stay in the neighborhood and don’t have to move out so can keep that vitality and feeling of community

- The housing that is here now does not accomplish this
- We need more single family housing that is reasonable – something that a family where both parents are working can afford – step up from the duplexes but not a mcmansion and for someone who doesn’t want to leave the community

Better security in the neighborhood – a lot of theft – need better security in the new housing

- More security cameras
- More lighting on the streets – it’s so dark

Some of the housing is owned by companies outside of the United States – maintenance is not good – absentee landlords are a problem

TOPIC 3 – TRANSPORTATION

We know there are some challenges with getting around. What would make things easier for people to get around if they don’t have a car?

Benches as resting spots so that when you’re walking and need a break, can slow down and take a rest

Bring back the old 909 bus, and the old route of the 908

Sidewalks are so bad it is a physical hazard – a lot of people get around by walking

- Need ramps
- Need sidewalks that aren't buckling

Use Access bus to get around

Use 105 bus to get around

Use Hyde bus to get around – it comes right to the curb – but is only good in Renton – no fee but can make a donation – appreciate if you call 3 weeks in advance

If can't get Access or Hyde, have to call a taxi

Parking on the RHA properties

TOPIC 4 - EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION

What kind of jobs are available in the neighborhood?

SECEPPIT – senior employment program – federally funded employment program for seniors

Getting a good education but not getting successful professionals in the neighborhood

Service industry jobs are the jobs in the neighborhood so kids aren't getting the mentorship or inspirations from those with more professional jobs – don't see the professional level jobs as kids grow up, only see the service industry jobs

The Renton Vo-Tec is the highest it gets around here – one of top ten 2-year colleges in the US – one of the highest graduation rates

RTC is a good asset to build on

How do we get those students to move into the neighborhood and stay here

Would be good to see a community college

Computer training program for seniors

The new library is good and will have some training programs

A four year-college would be nice – even if it started out small

They took away the post office

The service industry jobs are also important – can walk there, sometimes union wage, it's in the neighborhood

Renton is a hotbed of apprenticeship programs for specialized skills – unionized trades – carpentry, painters, pipers, machinists, etc.

Are there barriers for kids that grow up in this neighborhood from getting the education they need and preparing for college?

All of the kids are growing up around drugs – it's in their house and doesn't encourage them to better themselves

Need an after school program for middle school aged children – something to keep them entertained, busy, learning, engaged – need it right here in the neighborhood

Need a Boys and Girls club type activity

Need to have a career day at the school – have Renton VoTec come up to the school and advertise to students

Have a rally of all the public departments – fire trucks, cement trucks, etc. – come to the local schools to advertise the opportunities

The parents are too busy – they have multiple jobs – there is no time for them to help the kids discover these things – the parents don’t have the time or energy so need to find another way to get the kids attention

English is not the first language of a lot of families in this neighborhood – putting out the word only in English is not going to get the word out to everyone

TOPIC 5 – SERVICES

What services are offered in the neighborhood?

HAVE	DON'T HAVE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goodwill • Foodbank – but not always there when you need it • Chicken Soup – meal delivery service • RHA provides a great service • Lion’s Club can help out with eyeglasses, hearing aids, etc. – great service but they’re overextended • Food service – Meals on Wheels and Chicken Soup • Food service with fruits and veggies – just serves the elderly housing for now at RHA • Houser Terrace gets Panera Bread – it’s great but sometimes too many sweets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handyman that can help moving furniture around, lifting something heavy, etc. • RHA doesn’t have any maintenance help for retired community – what about a group of high schoolers to help out/volunteer – need volunteer bank • Clothing bank – referral only – only one located in Renton and it is located across the street from the library downtown • Need foodbank that delivers • Need a foodbank at the Community Center • Second hand donation system • Any services for the homeless – they are sleeping in the church vegetation, the lawns by the apartments • A place to give out vouchers • Service Center – a building with all of these services together in one place • A foodbank for pets – sometimes can’t feed your pet • Farmer’s Market in the parking lot of the middle school or something – brings people together – can’t get vouchers though if you’re under 55 • Police station in the neighborhood

TOPIC 6 – GOODS & SERVICES, SHOPPING, ETC.

HAVE – INSIDE	DON'T HAVE - OUTSIDE but want inside
---------------	--------------------------------------

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Library • Eye Doctor • Rite Aid • Lunch • Good, local, bakery • Ethnic eateries – can eat Vietnamese, Chinese, Mexican • JoAnn’s fabrics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costco • WinCo – more affordable • Trader Joe’s • Sam’s Club • Want access to these places • Dry Cleaners • Coffee shop – especially by the library – need a place to sit down for a bit and have reasonably priced snacks • Hallmark store – could even pay your PSE bill there • Hardware Store • More American food • Need to spruce up Highlands Shopping Mall • A pool for hydrotherapy • St Vincent DePaul – taken away and moved downtown • Social Security • A place to get quarters
--	--

TOPIC 7 - WHAT’S MOST IMPORTANT TO US

	Who do we trust to do it?	What is a sign of progress?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community security & safety • Clean neighborhood <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There’s nowhere to throw trash – it’s all over the ground because there’s no trash cans • Access for people trying to navigate through the neighborhood and across Sunset Avenue – how the circulation works through the neighborhood as a whole <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pedestrian overpass, crosswalk mid-block on long Sunset Ave Block • Incentivize and assist the whole neighborhood to revitalize and clean up semi-yearly – if our neighborhood looks nice, we feel better about it, we feel safer, the cycle continues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Community cleanup day ○ Provide dumpsters etc. on certain days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The people who work for RHA • City of Renton – community grants • Don’t know who to trust – don’t live in RHA • Want to trust neighbors and community to do it together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get the Mayor and City Council involved • Neighborhood cleanup would have occurred • Community participates in the cleanup – don’t expect City to do it all – Have a month, each part of the neighborhood does a cleanup in each of the four weekends of the month – parks department involved, community involved, volunteers involved • The neighborhood has a voice, has some say and some investment in the neighborhood • Bring this to the Renton City Council

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Provide incentives for absentee landlords to participate in that● Food - food access, food bank, fresh food, affordable food | | |
|---|--|--|

QUESTIONS & OTHER COMMENTS

Will they be building any more housing like the new ones off Kirkland and 16th?

They aren't going to have those all apartments are they? Homes too?

Homeownership – without owners people are coming and going all the time and then crime goes up

How will this affect my rents?

Do you know what they're going to build?

RENTON SUNSET AREA FOCUS GROUPS

Hispanic Affinity Group

April 14th, 2016 | 5:30 – 7:30 PM | Highlands Elementary

INTROS

Erika introduced the project through a translator and introduced Laura and Maricela from Centro Rendu who acted as facilitators for the meeting.

ATTENDEES

There were twelve participants in attendance including Laura and Maricela from Centro Rendu.

Also in attendance:

- Erika Rhett – BERK Consulting
- Annie (Interpreter through Dynamic Language)
- Mark Santos-Johnson – City of Renton

TOPIC 1 - NEIGHBORHOOD

The neighborhood needs to be safer. There is a prison program in the neighborhood that needs to be removed from here. We used to receive letters if a dangerous person lived close by, but they are no longer sent. I saw on the news that in the Maple Heights a man drove by and showed his parts to a mother and daughter walking in their neighborhood. The Hispanic community doesn't always understand what is in the news and they get little information about dangers in the neighborhood.

There is marijuana in the park and at the school playground. Even at this school, right before this meeting. It also happens at Honeydew Elementary.

I went to a meeting at the city about marijuana use regulations and they want to have a committee to give more answers to the community about what is happening with that.

Why does the government make decisions about things like that (marijuana use) without keeping us in mind? People are smoking marijuana a lot in public in this neighborhood. People should not be allowed to smoke anywhere that children can go, or around any children. There are kids in my son's 6th grade class that smoke marijuana. The smell of it gets everywhere. You can smell it on kids and parents can't control it because it is everywhere.

Before there used to be police station in this neighborhood and there was a more rapid response to local calls. Since they took away the station it takes longer for the police to respond. More stations are needed in outlying areas.

There are some police that have been involved with the Latino people in this neighborhood. Officer John Awai speaks Spanish. Latino people want this relationship with the police to have a good relationship for

their families and for the community as a whole. The police chief is planning some outreach to the Latino community.

There are three police forces: the city, the state, and transit. Different police respond for different issues.

Library security is needed. At the library there are lots of homeless people. Do we talk about that problem with the library or the City?

Theft has gotten bad. People come right into the garden and take whatever they can like bikes and tools. Something was stolen from my garden two times in two weeks.

The city has been transforming over the last few years. It is different. Streets used to be clean, we could walk freely and had no worries. Now it is scary at night. There are drugs and people getting high.

This area is becoming undesirable. Police drive by and don't do anything about drug use. You never know how a high person reacts. My phone was stolen at the park. I am afraid of going to the park with my kids.

The Highlands Neighborhood Center is not safe for kids. I used to let my kids go there. Now there are drugs, homeless, fighting. There are guys, adult men, just sitting there watching the kids. There needs to be a closed play space where kids are safe. I don't want to keep my kids inside at home- they just eat and get fat.

We need activities like gymnastics, volleyball, basketball, karate, dance for kids and parents in the neighborhood.

Kids see everything around them- they see other kids getting high and get to the age where they want to try it. In all the streets and parks people are getting high. On 4th and Union there is a marijuana store- there is too much advertising for it. There is also a store on Sunset- why do we have so many?

What is our future? Why doesn't the government understand that marijuana is not a regular cigarette? The smell is everywhere- it comes every day from my neighbors and my family has to smell it. I can't move because the cost of 1st/Last/Deposit is \$5000.

Our kids were born here- we want them to get ahead.

TOPIC 2 - HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION

I have friends in apartments close to this school. They pay a lot and the conditions are horrible. The landlord won't change the windows or the carpet, but the rent goes up and up.

Low income housing is horrible here and the people who live there aren't good to be around. The people who live there are into drugs, fighting. The housing is bad quality- bad carpet, bad smells. The owner won't change anything.

When it's cold there is so much mold. My kids are allergic and everything in my house is wet, stick and wet, even the carpet. I have to clean the walls and windows every week to get rid of mold. The owner says he won't change the carpet until we live here 5 years.

I want help to find a place without mold and also energy efficient. I don't want to pay so much in utility bills. I should be able to have a place where I don't have to sacrifice what I can provide for my kids just to pay the rent.

There are people who sleep in their cars around here. Who are they? I don't feel safe sending my kids to school past these people.

I am worried about abandoned houses. They attract homeless people and gang kids. Also the police have detected this but they can't be there 24 hours a day.

People without cars get around by bus, getting rides, by bicycle, and by skates and scooter- teenagers.

People around here fly where they need to go (the word for getting high in Spanish is the same as to fly).

When I first moved here the bus was \$1.25, but now it's \$2.50, and the express bus is \$5.00- the red line.

When the neighborhood is urban designed and they construct all these apartments, how many families are there going to be? Each family has two cars. The streets aren't bigger or wider for all these people and cars. On Sunset Boulevard there are three driving lanes, but when they are full the lanes gets confused and dangerous. If they add housing, they need better transportation. Make the streets accessible, more sidewalks, more parking, more transit. If they only allow one parking space per apartment then people park on the street, but the streets become too narrow and it's hard to see. If you get in an accident, this is your fault. This is particularly tough on Harrington Avenue south of Sunset Boulevard.

When the city does a new project and closes the street they are not efficient. They don't consider the effects on traffic from closing streets. They close the street for weeks before the project is started and then move so slowly. Get the road projects done efficiently.

There is no access to Centro Rendu down by the Renton Airport by bus. Bus service is more than ½ km away which is hard for disabled people to get there. A stop is needed there.

There needs to be a ramp that helps people who can't go on the stairs into the park across from Honeydew Elementary. Everyone walks there from this neighborhood, but strollers and wheelchairs can't get in easily. The parking lot is full of people in the parking lot who are smoking marijuana. It's so scary, we can't go into the park from that direction. People are also selling there, hanging around and others coming and going. The part of the park that isn't scary has the stairs.

I see a lady with four kids try to take her stroller up and down those stairs almost every day.

TOPIC 3 - EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION

There are no good jobs in this area or jobs with opportunities for advancement. The best job is probably McDonalds down the street, but it doesn't pay enough to cover childcare.

The area by 4th and Union has Safeway and Starbucks, there is probably more employment over there.

There may be some jobs, but they aren't the kinds of jobs we would want to work at.

We need job opportunities for Latinas. Jobs in our own community. We could help other people who don't know English, maybe help at the library.

It is hard for us to get hired if we don't have good English. If we don't have a social security number or citizenship we can only get jobs that pay the minimum.

It would be good if there were jobs for us at the schools, part time.

It would be good to have a job that would help Latinas develop themselves and build experiences.

A place for childcare is needed and it must be low cost. We can't afford to work without childcare.

I wish there was a job and resource fair that helped us understand resources in our community.

There should be working connections- a state childcare program.

Some daycare centers allow those who work there to bring their children to the childcare center for free while they are working.

There used to be a daycare at the college (RTC) so I could go to school, but it's not there anymore.

The way the school district has split up the high schools is terrible. We are not satisfied with this. Kids who live south of Sunset Boulevard go all the way down to Renton High School. Kids on the north side go to Hazen High School. Hazen is so much closer, so why do they send the kids to the south so far away? There are lots of marijuana smokers at Renton. There is more adult supervision of students at Hazen.

If they analyzed it, why would they want to add all that traffic up and down the hill, just to transport kids to school? The school district needs to analyze that limit. The same thing happened with the Junior High School.

There is a new middle school being built that will help. It is up by Newcastle. Some of the students at McKnight will go to the new school and some of the kids going to Dimmit will now go to McKnight. Why are they moving these kids all around?

Special education kids are sent to Campbell Hill. My daughter goes there and she is supposed to have a para-educator. She hasn't had one for the last two years. That means she can't get into integration classes, and those are really important for her.

When kids are in the first grade, if they aren't reading English on level they are taken out of the classroom during the day to focus on reading. This should happen after school. I could pick her up, no problems. When she is out of the classroom for reading, she misses all the other subjects and gets behind. She gets ahead on reading, but is behind in everything else.

Kids from Spanish-speaking homes are often behind in English and we can't help them in English.

We didn't have the opportunity to study in our own countries. We can't help our kids with their homework. There need to be programs to help parents so they can help their kids.

Kids need extra help after school to catch up on their learning. My kids get more confused because the teacher gives the homework assignments and they are out of the class.

There is a homework program for kids and ELL for adults at the Library. There is "study zone" at the library.

More help is needed for our kids. I speak both languages but I don't have education to support in most subjects. My daughter is doing okay in school. She wants to go to Running Start, but I don't know how to sign her up for it.

Does anyone know about a bi-literacy seal? Kids who are bi-lingual can pass an exam and get college credit for speaking a second language.

Kids who are bi-lingual don't really get behind. Their brains are actually smarter. It's a myth that they are behind.

Kids need help figuring out how to get into college and how to get scholarships.

We need to know about how to finance university. We need information and help on how to get kids into the university. I don't have the knowledge on how to apply and get in. Counselors are supposed to help but they talk to the kids not the parents and then the parents don't get the information.

Parents should go with the kids to the school. Counselors don't want to hear from the parents, but it is our right to go.

TOPIC 4 - SERVICES

There are no services in this area. Everything costs a lot, especially mental health service.

I want a clinic for low income people. Going to Seattle is a pain.

Healthpoint is not receiving new patients. You have to go to Kent to be seen, it is too far away.

My insurance cards are only good for some clinics and none are nearby.

There is low income clinic near Rainier Avenue- it's only \$10 for an appointment. That is what we need in this neighborhood.

There is childcare for low incomes- the Kindercare- over by the McDonalds, but it only takes kids under age 6. There are no resources for low income kids in school.

The main need is medical, dental, legal, daycare, family planning.

Why did they move the family planning clinic away from the WIC office? They replaced it with a dental clinic, but it's hard to get in and is restricted to only some kinds of people.

The dental office takes kids with medical coupons, but only will take a mother if they already have the kids as patients.

A mobile clinic for dental would be great- they have that in downtown Seattle.

If I have to take the bus to Seattle for medical or dental care, I can't always get home in time to pick the kids up from school.

Sometimes the Mexican Embassy sets up a mobile clinic. Maybe they would help to bring a clinic to this neighborhood.

We need something in this neighborhood to keep kids busy during summer and school breaks. There need to be more activities and sports.

There need to be indoor activities when it is cold.

TOPIC 5 - WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT TO US

The top concerns for the neighborhood are safety, housing, and health.

We don't know who to trust, there are no agencies, we aren't sure who to ask for help, we don't get invited to participate in the community.

I trust Centro Rendu. They care. They help us.

Renton Housing Authority doesn't help. Another apartment in my building burnt down. I had a four week old baby. My whole apartment was damaged by the smoke. All my baby's clothes and the carpets and furniture smelled like smoke. The Red Cross gave us emergency housing for nine days only. Renton Housing Authority could do nothing to help us. There is a long waiting list for RHA housing. After nine days we were told we could go back to our apartment. The landlord would not replace the carpet or anything in the apartment – he said it was our fault for not opening the windows. We thought it was unsafe to live there and asked the city to come and inspect the building. No one came to help us. The landlord had to replace the windows due to the fire and raised the rent from \$850 to \$1000 but no other changes. We were desperate and had to live in our car- with four children. We lost everything. I got a lot of referrals, but no one could help us. I tried to get legal help, but the law office changed ownership and they dropped our case.

RHA doesn't help Hispanic people.

I also lived in a building where there was an apartment fire on a different floor, but I was on the third floor and everything in my apartment got wet. Everything was damaged but all the landlord did was bring in something to suck out the water. I didn't get any compensation for all my things that were ruined.

The changes we want to see in one year or less are better security. Help the community know about what resources are out there. There needs to be a meeting with police. We need to know what services are out there and how we can access them.

We want our voice to count. We want the city to help. We need to know what our rights are and how to exercise them.

RENTON SUNSET AREA FOCUS GROUPS

Families with Children Affinity Group

April 18th, 2016 | 6:30 – 8:30 PM | Highlands Elementary

INTROS

Erika and Mark introduce project.

ATTENDEES

There were three participants in attendance.

Also in attendance:

Erika Rhett – BERK Consulting

Izzy Cannell – BERK Consulting

Mark Santos-Johnson – City of Renton

TOPIC 1 – YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

What kind of community do you want and why is it important to you?

Safe

- We all have kids – safety and being able to walk around at night
- There are some bad influences
- Have seen drug deals in the park when their with kids
- There is a large motor home on Glennwood that has been sitting there for three weeks
- There are people living in their cars and motor homes on the residential streets
- The park is closed off and it is hard to see in there – so kids will hang out and have fires and do drugs etc.

The new park will be ringed by apartments – the idea is that there are people always looking onto the park – helps with safety

The schools are good

- The kids can walk to school

Traffic – speeding – need speed suppression

- 12th all the way to 16th – no speed signs and no traffic management
- Harrington from 12th to Sunset

Inviting – we want a place where people feel they want to gather

- Amphitheater for shows and events to happen and for people to go
- Things that draw people

We want to show off our neighborhood and be proud of it

Want to have a strong sense of community

Would like to see home values go up – whatever is done should benefit the homeowners

Amenities

- Like seeing the amenities and places can walk to

Recreation

- Currently there are no bike lanes
- Would like it to be friendly for bicyclists and pedestrians

How are things in the neighborhood now?

Don't know too many people in the neighborhood

Had a lot of renters in the neighborhood (but those houses are now being bought)

Unsafe

- Glennwood is a mess – it's not inviting at all – afraid to even go back there now

City put in new sidewalk and green areas – positive changes

- Nice to see things are improving after being stagnant for so long

TOPIC 2 – HOUSING

How would you describe the housing in the neighborhood and the quality?

It's deplorable

It's mostly the duplexes – nobody is taking care of them

Many of the one's that are not maintained may be rentals

Most of the homes in the neighborhood are deplorable

- No one is doing anything to their front yards
- Moss growing on roof
- Doesn't feel safe
- Nobody is putting any care into homes
- It gives you a depressed feeling
- There are some eyesores -

Do you think the housing in the community meets the needs of the people who live here? If not, what kind of housing do we need?

If there are people living in them, it's meeting the need for someone

People want to live there because it's probably affordable

How much turnover do you think happens in the neighborhood? It seems like people do stay for a long time

Housing may not be what people deserve but that's probably what they can afford

- Maybe the landlords have something else in mind
- Some of the housing is coming down and new housing is going in

What should the housing be?

Really like the townhomes that lives in

Townhomes would be a good model for Harrington

Ideally – have it be housing for longer-term – so people want to stay

Establish a community so that people want to be there and get to know neighbors because they're going to be there and stay

Design

- Don't like the new housing with the colors by the community center
- The ones on Glennwood are better

Would like to see condos and townhomes on Harrington

Concentrate on Harrington – put up decent structures to invite a link across the neighborhood

TOPIC 3 – TRANSPORTATION

For those without a car, what are their resources for getting around?

Friendly for bicyclists and runners

Bus

Walking – there are good sidewalks

Make it easier for bikers – so that they feel safe to bike

- Very few dedicated bike lanes

Want to feel safe to walk over to the shopping center

- Don't want to see people drinking in public or doing drugs as walking into town

Parking – a problem by the library

- As new amenities come to the area by the library and the park, could parking be even more of a problem

TOPIC 4 - EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION

What kind of jobs are available in the neighborhood and how would you characterize them? And what kind of changes could be made to improve employment opportunities in the neighborhood?

Most of it is retail – grocery, a few restaurants

Jobs with opportunities for advancement and that pay well are not available in the neighborhood

Restaurants – for the most part, family owned restaurants with owners as employees

- See as an opportunity for the few that make small business work, but not many outside employment opportunities

Is there anything we could do in the neighborhood to improve the opportunities? What would need to be in place?

Bellevue is very livable but people tend to live outside of it

I think people tend to work outside of Sunset

Could try to get a cool tech company – an Amazon or something?

- People in the neighborhood but also from outside would work there

Employment that could capture people in the neighborhood but also draw from far away

Renton has some attractions going now – The Landing is a pretty attractive spot

- If could link up The Landing and this area that would help
- The hill between here and The Landing is a barrier

Columbia City has improved a lot – would like to have something similar

Are there opportunities for teens to work in the neighborhood?

The retail maybe

See a lot of Help Wanted signs

More restaurants and shops in this area to draw people and provide more jobs – like The Landing

Do you think your children and other children in this neighborhood are getting a good quality education? Are they being prepared for whatever might come next in life?

Yes – but daughter is only 11 and is at a big school

McKnight is one of biggest Middle Schools in the state – that makes me concerned

Sierra Heights – wish kids could go to Kennydale though

Highlands Elementary perceived as having some challenges

15 year old goes to Hazen – it's okay

It would be cool if a private school moved in here

Are there barriers that prevent kids from getting a good education?

There's a lot of poverty

Worries about the bullying in school for some kids – it won't be “cool” to do things like take a leadership position, etc.

- Safety in the schools to go ahead and take a leadership position can be a challenge

Good system for Spanish speaking household – the transition has been good – support has been in place for the students and have translation services – Sierra Heights and Kennydale

TOPIC 5 – SERVICES (FAMILY, HEALTH, SOCIAL SERVICES)

HAVE	DON'T HAVE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day workers hub • Halfway house • Library • Fire Station 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daycare – private • Medical site – clinic or something similar – Group Health is outside • Parks • School – not a good site for doing anything – it's a swamp when it rains • Police Station • Health/Dental/Mental Health - all inclusive – where someone can go if they're in crisis and get everything all in one place • Homework – tutoring services

TOPIC 6 – GOODS & SERVICES, SHOPPING, ETC.

HAVE – INSIDE	DON'T HAVE - OUTSIDE but want inside
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail • Grocery • Restaurants • Drugstores • Cannabis places • Salons • JoAnn's • Variety of restaurants • Vince's Restaurant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More nightlife – wine bar, sports bar • Medical • Nicer restaurants • There is a variety of cultures in the area – maybe could capitalize on some good, unique Mexican restaurants, Asian • If we could be known as a place where you could get good quality ethnic food • Kid entertainment – also help for teens getting jobs • Sport turf fields – a draw on its own – a multi-use field – currently have to travel for that

TOPIC 7 - WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT TO US

Priorities	Who do we trust to do it?	What is a sign of progress?
------------	---------------------------	-----------------------------

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebuilding – what’s vacant – can currently point to 8 places that are vacant from front door – need to improve what’s in the private and public stock • Area by the library – redevelop area adjacent where now fenced off – not very useable currently – transform into the vision of what it’s supposed to be • Replace the little park and have a big park • Have a sense of community – hard with the people that rent but have lived here for 8 years and have never felt a sense of community or known many neighbors – create a sense of safety and community with each other • Organize block parties and picnics – watch out for each other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City of Renton • I think private builders as well • With a little bit of skepticism, would trust the RHA • Neighborhood association – your neighbors • Someone who has gone through the same process in other neighborhoods and can help out since they have the experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See progress on the park area – the footprint is laid out – the site has been prepared/land has been cleared/housing demolished – no fenced in area – can start to see the park take form and make clear what the intention is • Some building underway on Harrington, and other places • Have more people come together as the neighborhood association and get them started – the input is good, but it’s also beneficial to get together as a community • Landscaping component – greenway down Harrington – maybe that will be the last thing but looking forward to it
--	---	--

QUESTIONS & OTHER COMMENTS

Is it working – this process of getting feedback from the groups?

Do you feel like things are moving along?