



2017 White Center Summit Report “Growth without Displacement” November 4, 2017 Evergreen High School

The White Center Summit was held on November 4 2017 at Evergreen High School. Approximately 85 to 100 community members attended despite the snow and inclement weather. Presenters included Mari Matsumoto from the Washington Immigrant Defense Group, Yenifer Baynes from Future Wise, and White Center Community Development Association staff members. Aaron Garcia served as the Summit Emcee.

The Summit agenda included presentations on Immigration Know Your Rights from Matsumoto and an overview of displacement strategies from Baynes. White Center CDA staffers presented highlights from the 2017 Community Survey and shared the community engagement process for the Big Idea project.



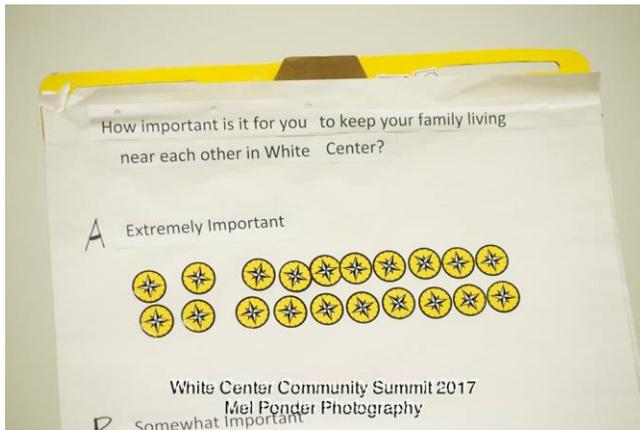
White Center facilitators discuss immigration and gentrification concerns at the recent White Center Summit in November 2017.

Facilitators from the Khmer, Somali, Spanish, English, and Vietnamese speaking community guided the small group discussions where community members tackled questions relevant to the “growth without displacement” theme. Responses to these questions (**in bold**) are summarized below. In addition a Pre and Post Test evaluation was completed to determine how successful the Summit was in meeting its objectives. Results are summarized below.

How important is it for you to keep your family living near each other in White Center?

An overwhelming majority of Summit participants (99%) stated that it was extremely or somewhat important to keep their family living near each other in White Center.

Reasons stated ranged from financial - "Helping each other, saving time and money, saving commuting time, and family closeness during holidays is important to us as a community"- to cultural – "Culturally we tend to live close by or in the same home," "Somalis...are very close to each other so it is very important to our culture to remain close together." The Spanish language group shared that "living close to family helps provide stability in the family structure" and "facilitates planning for the future" together.



The barrier mentioned most for continued residence in White Center is the cost of housing and rent. Lack of affordable housing has prevented family members of current White Center residents from living in White Center.

One resource that would help keep families living near each other in White Center are an increased availability of affordable housing, more community services for youth and kids, increased availability of halal foods, a mosque, more immigration services, and social support for those who have been incarcerated.

How is immigration affecting your community?

The small group reports indicate that there is great fear in the community that is resulting in social anxiety especially since there have been instances of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials showing up at immigration events. There were concerns that the travel restrictions make it difficult to go home and visit family members.

In one group, participants shared that there needs to be more work with youth so that they can get training on knowing their rights. Some said that youth are questioning their education needs and deeply concerned with economics, deportation, and incarceration. Helping the community know about how to restore voting rights for incarcerated people was also something that two groups shared.

One group stated that in order to reach those who need services we need to speak up more and meet people where they are at, sponsor private gatherings in people's homes, and work with immigration organizations beyond non-profits and expensive lawyers. A suggestion that White Center CDA create a communication dissemination plan via social media, text, phone, radio was made. "We need a way to reach other in the event of an emergency and we need safe places such as churches, community centers, parks, recreation centers."



Small group discussion with White Center residents at the White Center Summit in November 2017.

Where are our young people going?

All of the groups shared that many family members are moving to south King County for more affordability; some youth stay with parents, feeling “trapped” at home with no income stream to support themselves. For many, staying home is one way to continue schooling while staying culturally close to family until they get married or find employment elsewhere. There is great concern that youth are vulnerable to alternative “unsafe” options and community members are concerned that this will lead young people to the wrong path. The small groups report that very few young people own property and have access to resources.

In several groups, it was mentioned that oftentimes two to three young adults got together and rented a house or apartment; some joined the military or enrolled in the University and got prepared to come back to improve the White Center community and give back. Community members (especially in the Spanish speaking group) shared concerns around young people being incarcerated or killed due to police brutality or negative bias towards people of color.



Summit participant Christopher Treto in small group discussions at the November 2017 Summit

If you could fix anything, how would you solve the housing problem in WC?

The community offered several solutions outlined below to address the housing problem in White Center:

- “Build more affordable housing”
- “Revise housing restrictions on condos, houses, apartments”
- “Provide strategies and incentives to stay in their home”
- “Take advantage of resources from Habitat for Humanity home repair program”
- “Develop strategies to incentivize folks staying in their homes”
- “Access to minor home repair/Habitat for Humanity”
- “Mentoring young people on home buying”
- “Low interest, community loan program”
- “Community land trust”
- “Expand my own home for Family/ Friends”
- “Tiny homes that are centrally located, with social support that is extended for 2 years or more”
- “Health social services to address mental health and drug addiction”
- “Subsidized rent options”
- “Public services and infrastructure support (gas, sewer, and broadband) without privatization
- “Home ownership education/ assistance”
- “Promote creation of Latino Coalition w other community/ organizations”



Yenifer Baynes from Future Wise speaks with residents about displacement.

Pre and Post Test Evaluation

A total of 44 pretest evaluations and 41 posttest evaluations were returned. 70% of the evaluations returned were in English. Participants were asked to rate the following statements (in italics) using a Likert Scale, with 1 being Strongly Disagree and 5 being Strongly Agree.

“I have a good understanding of the results of the 2017 Community Survey.”

The number of people who “strongly disagreed” decreased from 32.56% in the pretest to 2.44% in the post test. The number of people who “strongly agreed” increased from 18.6% in the pretest to 43.9% after the Summit.

“I have a good understanding of the Big Idea Family Resource Center/Affordable housing project being proposed on the old Public health space.”

The number of people who strongly disagreed decreased from 34.88% in the pre-test to zero in the post test. The number of people who felt neutral about the topic increased from 18.6% in the pretest to 36.59% in the post test, while the percentage of respondents who strongly agreed went from 20.93% to 31.71% in the post test. This indicates that respondents increased their understanding of the Big Idea project from the information presented at the Summit.

“I feel comfortable discussing anti-displacement strategies with my friends and family.”

There was no significant difference from the pretest to the post test. This is an area that needs further review to determine effective ways to engage with the community on this topic.

“I feel confident that my family and I can continue to live in WC for as long as we want.”

There was no significant difference. The percentage of people who slightly and strongly agreed increased slightly from 58% in the pretest to 60% in the posttest.

Further information about this report can be obtained from Victoria Gardner, Ed.D., Data and Evaluation Manager of the White Center Community Development Association at <http://www.wccda.org/impact> or at (206)694-1081 extension 174. Photos by Mel Ponder Photography can be found on https://www.facebook.com/pg/MelPonderPhotography/photos/?tab=album&album_id=10156027923720798.