

SUBAREA PLAN

# NORTH HIGHLINE COMMUNITY NEEDS REPORT



*White Center Community  
Development Association*



# Table of Content

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Introduction	1
Methodology	2
Participants	4
Findings	8
Housing	9
Community	12
Employment	14
Business	16
Safety	19
Parks	21
Transit/Streets	23
All Priorities	26
Vision Statement	31
Additional Feedback	33

# Introduction

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King County is currently in the process of creating a Subarea Plan for White Center/North Highline area which will guide development in the neighborhoods of White Center, Boulevard Park, and the South Park area over the next 20 years. The plan focuses on zoning, land use, and issues like housing, economic development, transportation, environment, etc. In 2019, KC planners worked with community members to identify a list of values/priorities as well as a vision for our neighborhood. Based on the data that KC gathered and what we have heard from neighbors over time, the we compiled the top needs and asked our community prioritize them by levels of urgency. What are our most immediate needs, and what can be worked on later? This report outlines the data we gathered from these conversations with the community.

We recognize that this data may not fully and accurately reflect the collective experience and feedback of White Center/North Highline residents. We faced various challenges and limitations working with an institutionalized system that has historically marginalized the White Center community. We experienced accessibility barriers with rigid timeline, inaccessible platforms, and institutional language around subarea planning. The process did not support us to fully build an internal understanding of subarea contents in order to hold meaningful conversations with deep community understanding within each language/cultural group. As a result, all narratives and needs list created by the county and by us were experiencing a certain level of “lost in translation.”

# Methodology

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White Center CDA staff reviewed in detail the entire community needs list submitted by the county, taking into account the community conversations held in prior phases of subarea planning. After detailed review and note taking, we compiled the list into a more accessible list of 39 needs and community vision statement. Throughout review, sentiments and values that surfaced were noted.

The Top 39 Needs List and Vision Statement drafts were created and were then brought to a final internal staff review. The feedback from staff allowed us a first-round at editing down institutional language and building a certain level of accessibility and understanding of each need/priority listed. After building a certain level of understanding within staff of subarea planning concepts and needs list, we created an online survey translated in multiple languages - Somali, Vietnamese, Spanish, and Khmer. If time were on our side, staff could have increased the language accessibility and made more thoughtful edits as we moved towards language translation work. We launched the survey online, reaching out to partners and community through different social media channels such as Facebook, newsletter, Instagram, and website. The survey was available online for 2 months, from September 28th until November 28th and reopened again in December for some of our youths to participate.

# Participants

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We reached out directly to families, leaders, and youth in our community to hold one-on-one communications as well as group conversations. In these conversations, we provided an in-depth understanding of the subarea planning process as well as supported the community in completing the survey and answering any questions they may have around the subarea planning process as well as the survey. Community members who met with us individually or in groups to discuss were offered a \$50 gift card in honorarium for their time.

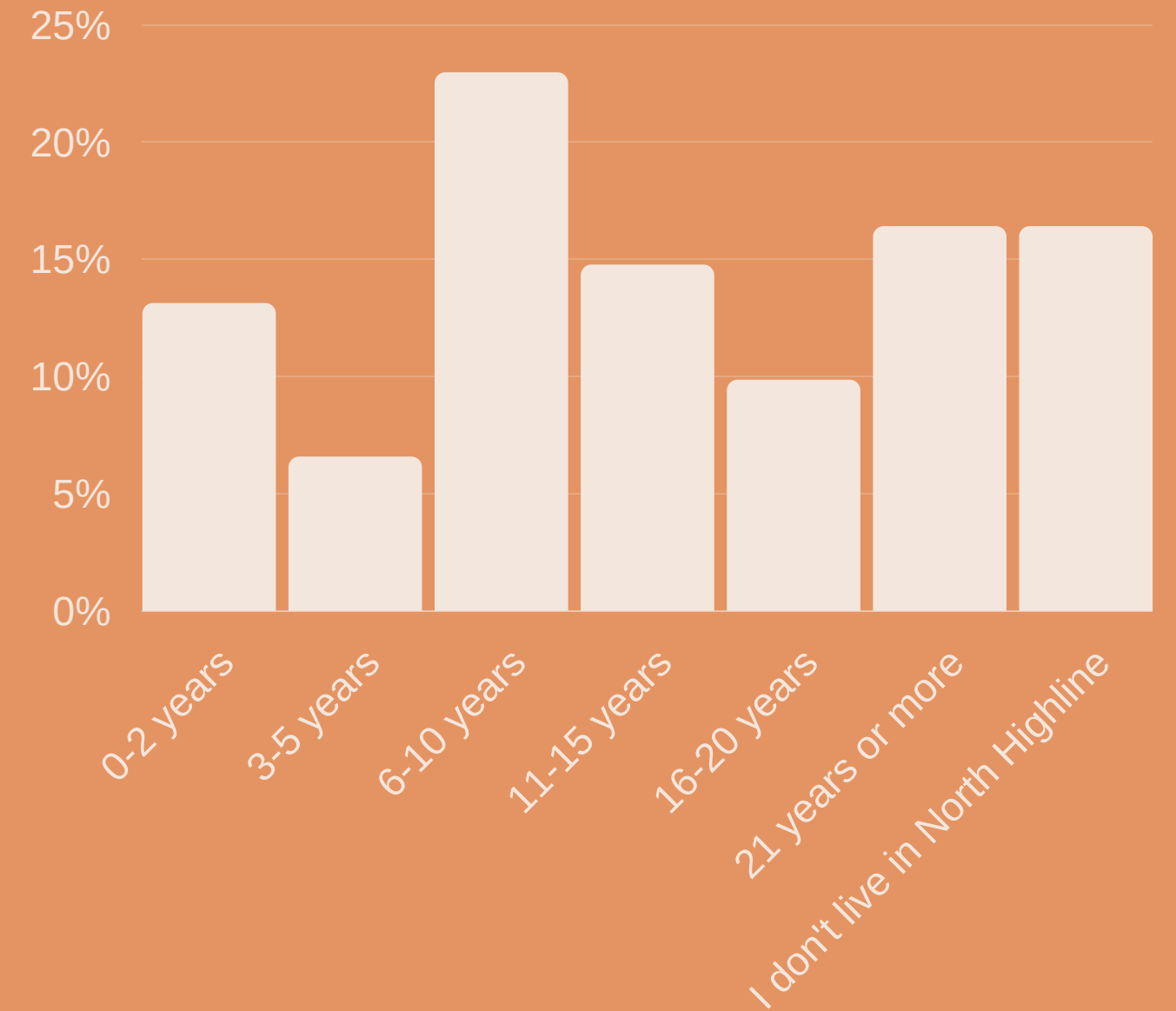
We built in more support for understanding content prior to online and in-person conversations, provided simulations of polls and internal discussions on content to all staff members, especially those who were key in supporting facilitation. We also implemented more ways to provide input during conversations like zoom polls on key policies and access the Top 39 online survey in various languages.

# Participants

## NORTH HIGHLINE RESIDENTS

A total of 82 community members participated in completing the survey. Of the 82 participants, 66% met with us one-on-one or in groups to discuss the subarea key policies, key map amendments, and Top 39 needs list.

Most survey participants have lived in North Highline for a long duration of time and expressed their deep connection to the area. Over 83% of community members who participated in the survey identified as living in the North Highline region, with more than 63% having been in North Highline for more than 5 years. Over 16% of participants have lived in North Highline for more than 21 years.



# Participants

## RENTERS & HOMEOWNERS

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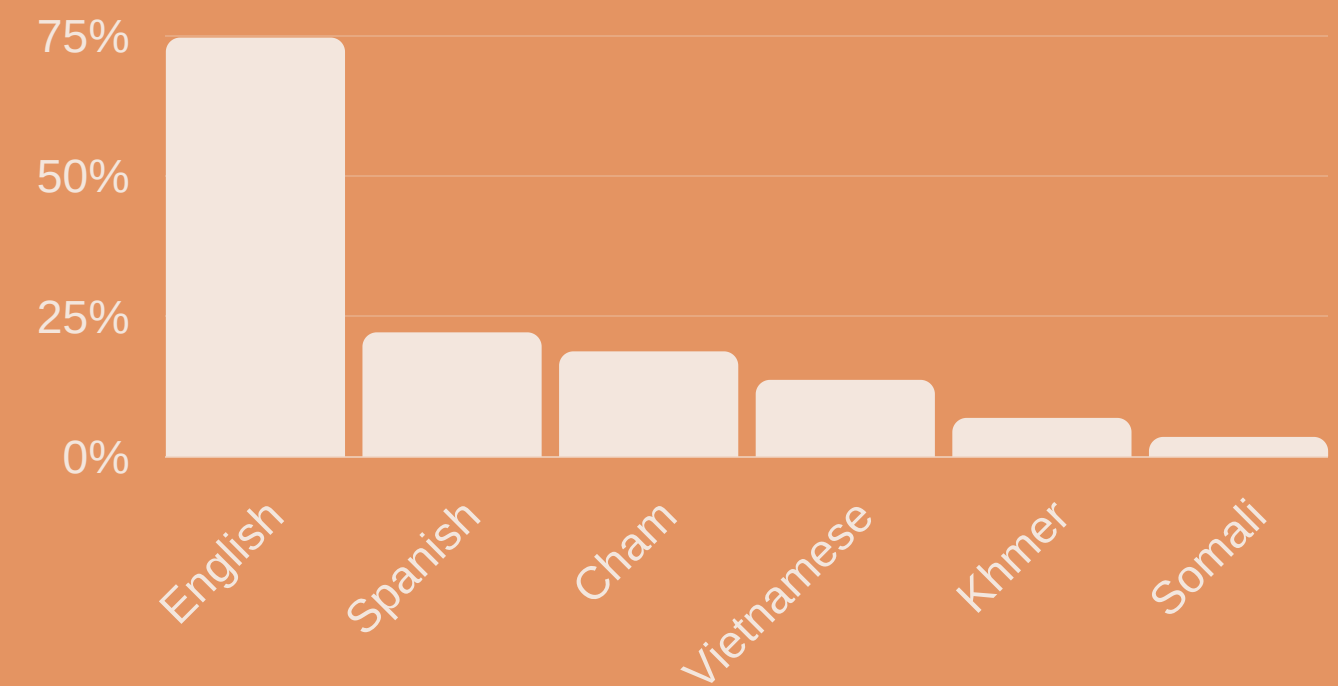
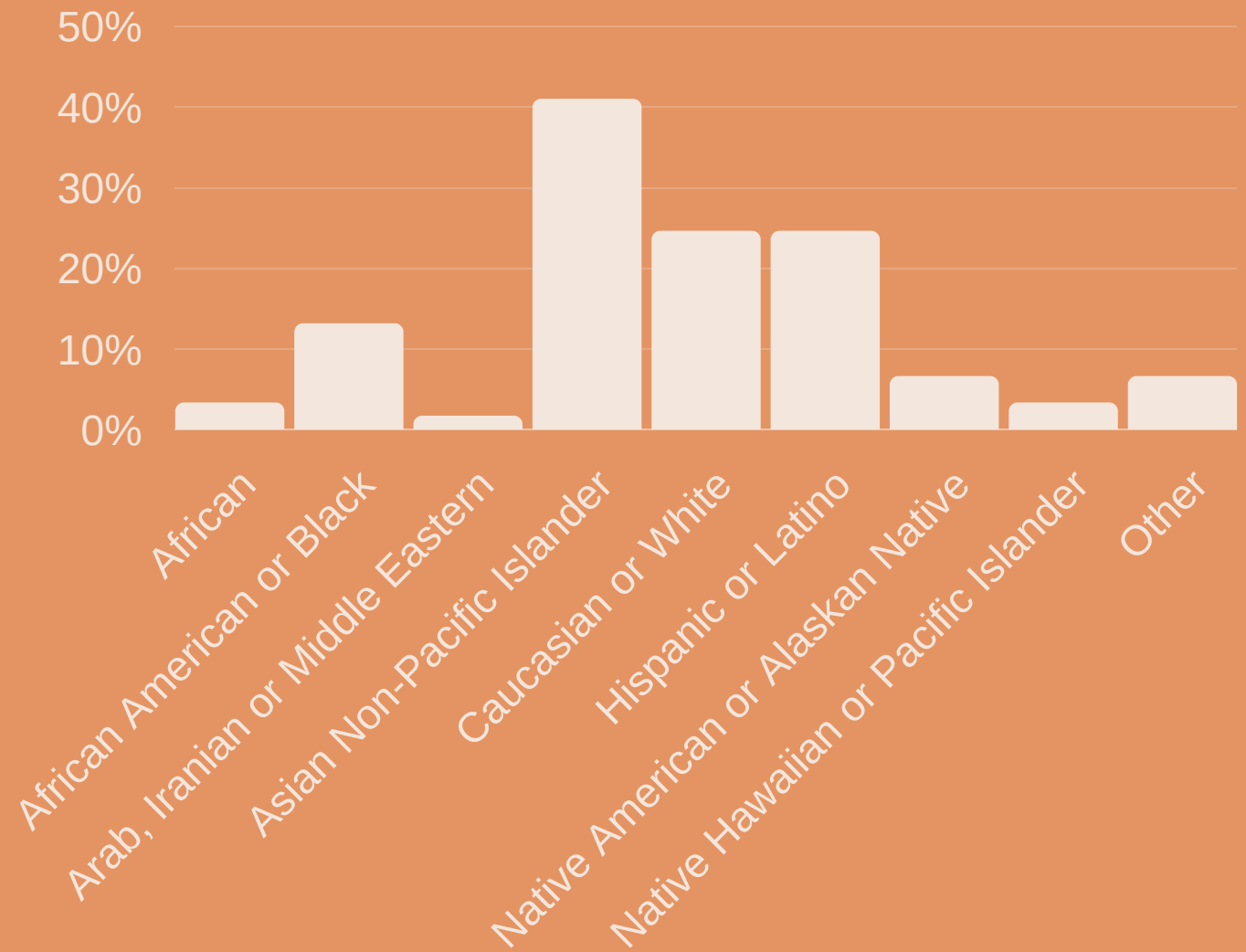
About 40% of participants identified as homeowners and 44% as renters in the North Highline area. For those who answered “other,” some used to live in the area but have since moved out. Some work in North Highline and some own their business in the area but do not live there.



# Participants

## RACE, ETHNICITY & LANGUAGE

Survey participants identified with a diverse racial and ethnic background, representing the many cultures in the North Highline area. Some participants further identified their cultural subgroup or tribal affiliation as Cham, Chicano, Mexican, Vietnamese, Colville, Choctaw and Blackfoot, Muslim, Cambodian, and Cherokee. Most participants (73%) identified English as the main language or one of the main languages they speak at home. About 66% identified another language as their main language spoken at home besides English. Those languages include Spanish, Cham, Vietnamese, Khmer, and Somali.





# FINDINGS

In order to organize ideas and discussions, community priorities in the survey were listed in the following 7 categories: Housing, Community, Employment, Business, Safety, Parks, and Transit/Streets. Participants were asked to rank each priority from 1-5, 1 being the least urgent and 5 being the most urgent. The level of urgency was weighted accordingly, taking into account the varying degrees of urgency and giving more value to those items in the average that occurred more often. Our findings are presented by the ranking of each item's weighted average within their category as well as all categories combined.



Housing



Community



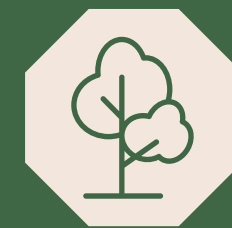
Employment



Business



Safety



Parks



Transit/Streets

# FINDINGS

## HOUSING

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Participants ranked 9 Housing priorities from 1-5, 1 being the least urgent and 5 being the most urgent. Listed here are the Housing priorities from the most highly ranked to lowest ranked weighted averages.



### 4.36

Develop affordable and culturally appropriate housing and community spaces for BIPOC/refugee and immigrant elders. Rent should be fixed and not exceed more than a third of a senior citizen's monthly income.

### 4.2

Develop more affordable housing for homeownership accommodating multi-generational households (below 60% of North Highline area medium income- \$40,000 - \$55,000 yearly income).

### 4.06

More opportunities, classes, and resources for affordable home ownership need to be provided for BIPOC low-income individuals and families and support classes for those transitioning from homelessness to permanent housing.

### 3.97

Develop affordable rental family housing that hold 3-5 bedrooms accommodating multi-generational households (below 60% of North Highline area medium income- \$40,000 - \$55,000 yearly income).

# FINDINGS

## HOUSING

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Participants ranked 9 Housing priorities from 1-5, 1 being the least urgent and 5 being the most urgent. Listed here are the Housing priorities from the most highly ranked to lowest ranked weighted averages.



3.76

Develop 2-4 story buildings (keeping in mind the existing building scale of the neighborhood) of affordable rental apartments, ideal for individuals who are just renting their first apartment, transitioning out of homelessness or do not have a family.

3.67

Support low-income homeowners to affordably build accessory dwelling units (ADU's) on their land, supporting their ability to house community members and create additional monthly income.

3.67

Establish land use codes and tax incentives that protect existing businesses from increased land values and higher taxes that come from redevelopment.

3.66

Develop more community-owned housing developments supported by investments, creating sustainable homeownership (e.g., Community Land Trust).

3.47

Develop buildings with both commercial and housing units including: full price, affordable housing, affordable commercial spaces and community gathering spaces.



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*"We need more housing for middle class family"*

*"More help with working with paying rent and more affordable rental prices."*

*"Least urgent does not mean it's not urgent. Right? It just means it's less urgent than the others. Homelessness is an epidemic that too many people are suffering from!! We need affordable and transitional housing NOW. "*

*"We need more affordable houses to buy and rent"*

*"More affordable housing for undocumented people."*

*"We need to make sure we are using North Highline income numbers and not King County as a whole"*

*"For ADUs, provide additional incentive to homeowners if their ADU is affordable for 5-10 years."*



# FINDINGS

## COMMUNITY

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Participants ranked 3 Community priorities from 1-5, 1 being the least urgent and 5 being the most urgent. Listed here are the Community priorities from the most highly ranked to lowest ranked weighted averages.

### 4.38

Implement more before and after school, weekend, and summer youth programs with educational opportunities that broaden, going beyond the regular school curriculum, educational opportunities cultivating a range of skills for children and youth.

### 4.36

Support the creation of affordable and accessible child care and preschool options for families in need of culturally sensitive child care and support for individuals who want to become providers of child care.

### 4.13

Provide more funding for services for the homeless community in White Center, including for Camp Second Chance.



*"I think it's really important to focus on a youth oriented space that will give the kids something to do or go to that acts as a "resource hub" during after school hours."*

*"There is a great need to create affordable preschool educational centers"*

*"Create safe spaces for the emotional and social development of families in White center"*

*"Before and after school care is urgent and important. Giving young people a breadth of diverse learning opportunities is important too. But making kids do another version of school starting an hour before school and ending two to three hours after school is TOO MUCH. Kids need to play. Social skills and being physical and exploring the world, identity development and emotional intelligence, life skills and being creative are all just as necessary and \*essential\* as "educational" opportunities. "*

*"We need more drug intervention and mental health therapy"*

*"Childcare is essential in dismantling sexism, as it mostly falls on women. Women need options. And for our Youth, every day that we wait to fund safe programming is a day we might lose another young person to drugs or violence."*

*"Affordable health care is important as this is also a huge reason for displacement"*



# FINDINGS

## EMPLOYMENT

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Participants ranked 3 Employment priorities from 1-5, 1 being the least urgent and 5 being the most urgent. Listed here are the Employment priorities from the most highly ranked to lowest ranked weighted averages.

### 4.31

Invest in workforce development programs and job training that focuses on quality jobs, living wages, growing skills and experience that build family wealth and well-being.

### 4.17

Invest in employment training opportunities to enrich and enhance opportunities for youth within trade union apprenticeships and growing industries like technology, green jobs, manufacturing, robotics etc.

### 3.96

Invest in youth and young adult programs supporting entrepreneurship, assisting young people in pursuing their business ideas.



"Support Meat Cutter Apprenticeship. There are multiple training agents/apprentices actively working in N Highline and attending classes at South Seattle College Georgetown Campus. Encourage Rx Apprenticeships at local pharmacies. Encourage Dental, Medical, etc. there are a lot of apprenticeships out there. Support ALL apprenticeships, not just Boeing/Tech/Buildings Trades. "

"More opening job placement for non speaking English speaking."

"I believe workforce training is the first step in bettering the quality of life for a community. Homeless and addiction services are a close 2nd and 3rd."

"Youth Finance and Business Entrepreneurship Programs"

"We need better jobs and better wages"

"Anything that we can do to help youth with financial literacy and entrepreneurship and/or trade."

"Need more high paying jobs in White Center"





# FINDINGS

## BUSINESS

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Participants ranked 9 Business priorities from 1-5, 1 being the least urgent and 5 being the most urgent. Listed here are the Business priorities from the most highly ranked to lowest ranked weighted averages.

4.20

Support small and large business employers to become better employers by providing high wages, health care benefits, time off, etc.

4.18

Implement a community-based business attraction that creates a family friendly business district and highlights the many cultures represented in White Center (for example: a cultural district).

4.04

Provide training for BIPOC business owners to understand aspects of owning and growing a small business and provide a variety of funding opportunities (grant and low-interest loan programs) to North Highline businesses.

3.96

Increase support to BIPOC/low-income business owners to buy commercial property and/or expand operations in White Center.

# FINDINGS

## BUSINESS

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Participants ranked 9 Business priorities from 1-5, 1 being the least urgent and 5 being the most urgent. Listed here are the Business priorities from the most highly ranked to lowest ranked weighted averages.



**3.91**

Create zoning to limit National Chains, Fast Food Operations and Smoke Shops.

**3.90**

Create venues and greater access to healthy food options for Top Hat residents.

**3.88**

Support BIPOC residents with neighborhood and culturally relevant resources to start a small business.

**3.84**

Programs to support thoughtful code enforcement for commercial properties in White Center. Businesses have the right to conduct their affairs in a well-maintained and regulated property.

**3.61**

Develop and fund a White Center downtown open space area that can support outdoor dining and ongoing community events.



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*"It is very important that there are multicultural businesses for everyone"*

*"Support new people who want to become a small entrepreneur to know how to support their employees as well..."*

*"We need to prevent displacement of businesses that are already in White Center Greenbridge and Cox park already have outdoor space. Downtown space should be reserved for businesses that can provide outdoor space for dining. Top Hat needs to be cleaned up and included in the prosperous King County economy. I think financial help should be offered to any small business owner willing to start a business in White Center. I think supporting employers with a well trained workforce is a good step. A family friendly business district is great, not sure it needs to be cultural though."*

*"Provide information to small entrepreneurs, workshops and training to understand how taxes and small businesses work in our county"*

*"Classes for business development and especially code enforcement have a high potential for racism and unintended negative consequences for business owners. I fear classes could "white wash" our businesses. I fear the financial consequences to small business owners when businesses have to close their doors while repairs are made to meet code. Both ideas have the potential to be immensely helpful ultimately! Please tread carefully."*



# FINDINGS

## SAFETY

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Participants ranked 4 Safety priorities from 1-5, 1 being the least urgent and 5 being the most urgent. Listed here are the Safety priorities from the most highly ranked to lowest ranked weighted averages.

4.17

Provide a variety of safety measures and solutions to all of our parks.

4.10

Less emphasis on sheriff response and fund programs that get to root causes/deeper solutions that focus on community-based alternatives and interventions.

4.10

Increase night patrols in the White Center business district to improve safety.

4.04

Support recruiting officers from the community and increase education of officers in community policing and relationship building.



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"White center does need some sort of monitoring or patrol specific to arson prevention, but adding general sheriff patrols sounds more like harassment waiting to happen."

"Divert funding to support housing, wages, youth support and away from KC sheriffs dept."

"Need social workers to deal with mental health calls and domestic violence situations"

"need faster police response"

"Frequent patrol would be great to decrease car theft and improve safety for the community."

"I think there should definitely be community input when it comes to safety in relation with policing. I think it's important for the sheriff and employees to come face to face with community members to hash out what a middle ground is when it comes to safety in our community. Similar to a forum."

"Prioritize funding to recruit more public safety officers and staff from the community of local residents"

"Please use yellow LED lights to improve safety while minimizing the negative impact on wildlife. Recycling and compost should be available to all."



# FINDINGS

## PARKS

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Participants ranked 5 Parks priorities from 1-5, 1 being the least urgent and 5 being the most urgent. Listed here are the Parks priorities from the most highly ranked to lowest ranked weighted averages.

4.30

Fund greater trash and large debris clean-up of our parks (attention to drug related items/needles).

4.03

Fund more cross-cultural and intergenerational events, such as a Night Market, Farmers Market, Makers Market.

3.78

Fund and create community garden spaces and gardening programs.

3.50

Create pocket parks (small parks built on small pieces of unused land for all community members to enjoy).

3.21

Create more bike trails and improve current bike trails.



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*"Community events are great. Day, night, multigenerational, farmers, art and cultural. They all build community. Access to vendors at these events should not be limited to a certain demographic though."*

*"I think we should emphasize the cleaning and upkeep of our parks more often. For example, I find it very important that we talk about how we can maybe do things like Spring Cleaning where we have the community hands on with what it means to keep a park sanitary. This could also be an educational thing for the youth of our community as teaching the importance of the role that our parks play for the community and why simple things like having a community garden in the park is essential for our community."*

*"Remove invasive plants like ivy and Himalayan blackberries. Create more outdoor gathering spaces that are very visible, not hiding places. Plant more trees please! "*

*"Better sidewalks and walkable spaces."*

*"Plant native plants!"*

*"The idea of pocket parks for the community is a good one!"*

*"Not only creating the spaces, but also guaranteeing security in them."*



# FINDINGS

## TRANSIT/STREETS

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Participants ranked 6 Transit/Streets priorities from 1-5, 1 being the least urgent and 5 being the most urgent. Listed here are the Transit/Streets priorities from the most highly ranked to lowest ranked weighted averages.

### 4.25

Improve neighborhood evening hour street lighting, especially along 16th Ave. SW and on all residential streets.

### 4.19

Create safe streets that we can walk on and enjoy. More funds to build sidewalks where needed and increase street tree planting and maintain mature trees and new landscaping (for example: green mediums and sidewalk plants).

### 4.03

Increase East to West routes and supportive transit service to job centers and community stores and resources.





# FINDINGS

## TRANSIT/STREETS

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Participants ranked 6 Transit/Streets priorities from 1-5, 1 being the least urgent and 5 being the most urgent. Listed here are the Transit/Streets priorities from the most highly ranked to lowest ranked weighted averages.

### 3.94

Fund programs that works with property owners to maintain large debris and pothole repairs along alleyways in the commercial core, increase safety solutions on commercial alleyways.

### 3.93

Improve traffic flow, traffic light timing, congestion, pollution mitigation along SW Roxbury St. and at SW Roxbury St./16th Ave. SW intersections.

### 3.62

Within the center of commercial district, consider other options to current yellow medium located in the middle of and along 16th Ave. SW., alleviating access/exit difficulties of emergency vehicles.



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*"Sidewalk improvement is very important here."*

*"The Rapid Ride H line will not really meet the needs of BIPOC families but rather tech workers living in Burien who need to get to South Lake Union. We need more East, West routes to support the use of Rapid Ride. More equity and access training for bus drivers and ORCA cards support for our youth and marketing in other languages to support the use of Rapid Ride H."*

*"I would love to see more sidewalks. My kids walk home from school and I get worried as only 25% of their distance has sidewalks. Since the closure of the west Seattle bridge, we've seen an increase in traffic in White Center and it was dangerous to walk within the neighborhood without sidewalks. This is a priority to make our community safe with proper side walks, better lightings, ways to improve traffic and etc."*

*"The one I'd like to emphasize the most is making sure that there are bus specific roads especially if we can make that happen in the commercial core for people who don't have access to cars to be able to go to work or have work be more accessible is important to me."*

*"Bike lanes on 102nd and 116th, please."*

*"We should make 16th Ave. SW a one way street!"*

# TOP 20 PRIORITIES

1

## COMMUNITY - 4.38

Implement more before and after school, weekend, and summer youth programs with educational opportunities that broaden, going beyond the regular school curriculum, educational opportunities cultivating a range of skills for children and youth.

3

## HOUSING - 4.36

Develop affordable and culturally appropriate housing and community spaces for BIPOC/refugee and immigrant elders. Rent should be fixed and not exceed more than a third of a senior citizen's monthly income.

2

3

## COMMUNITY - 4.36

Support the creation of affordable and accessible child care and preschool options for families in need of culturally sensitive child care and support for individuals who want to become providers of child care.

2

4

## EMPLOYMENT - 4.31

Invest in workforce development programs and job training that focuses on quality jobs, living wages, growing skills and experience that build family wealth and well-being.

# TOP 20 PRIORITIES

5

## PARKS - 4.30

Fund greater trash and large debris clean-up of our parks (attention to drug related items/needles).

6

## TRANSIT/STREETS - 4.25

Improve neighborhood evening hour street lighting, especially along 16th Ave. SW and on all residential streets.

8

## HOUSING - 4.20

Develop more affordable housing for homeownership accommodating multi-generational households (below 60% of North Highline area medium income- \$40,000 - \$55,000 yearly income).

7

8

## BUSINESS - 4.20

Support small and large business employers to become better employers by providing high wages, health care benefits, time off, etc.

7

# TOP 20 PRIORITIES

9

## TRANSIT/STREETS - 4.19

Create safe streets that we can walk on and enjoy. More funds to build sidewalks where needed and increase street tree planting and maintain mature trees and new landscaping (for example: green mediums and sidewalk plants).

11

## EMPLOYMENT - 4.17

Invest in employment training opportunities to enrich and enhance opportunities for youth within trade union apprenticeships and growing industries like technology, green jobs, manufacturing, robotics etc.

12

10

## BUSINESS - 4.18

Implement a community-based business attraction that creates a family friendly business district and highlights the many cultures represented in White Center (for example: a cultural district)

11

## SAFETY - 4.17

Provide a variety of safety measures and solutions to all of our parks.

12

# TOP 20 PRIORITIES

13

## COMMUNITY - 4.13

Provide more funding for services for the homeless community in White Center, including for Camp Second Chance.

15  
14

## SAFETY - 4.10

Less emphasis on sheriff response and fund programs that get to root causes/deeper solutions that focus on community-based alternatives and interventions.

15

## SAFETY - 4.10

Increase night patrols in the White Center business district to improve safety.

14

16

## HOUSING - 4.06

More opportunities, classes, and resources for affordable home ownership need to be provided for BIPOC low-income individuals and families and support classes for those transitioning from homelessness to permanent housing.

# TOP 20 PRIORITIES

18

## SAFETY - 4.04

Support recruiting officers from the community and increase education of officers in community policing and relationship building.

17

20

## PARKS - 4.03

Fund more cross-cultural and intergenerational events, such as a Night Market, Farmers Market, Makers Market.

19

18

## BUSINESS - 4.04

Provide training for BIPOC business owners to understand aspects of owning and growing a small business and provide a variety of funding opportunities (grant and low-interest loan programs) to North Highline businesses.

17

20

## TRANSIT - 4.03

Increase East to West routes and supportive transit service to job centers and community stores and resources.

19



# VISION STATEMENT

## DRAFT

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*Residing on the traditional land of the Duwamish people, North Highline celebrates its ethnic diversity, inter-generational roots and our ongoing inclusivity of diverse families and individuals, especially those most isolated and vulnerable. We call out race and place-based inequities and are committed to dismantling systems of power, privilege, and racial injustice.*

*With mutual support and respect, we value and live out our brilliance and power through community-led initiatives, creating thoughtful development without displacing longtime residents and small business owners, forming and owning the policies that impact us and building our individual and collective wealth, health, and well-being.*



# VISION STATEMENT FEEDBACK

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*"Think that there should be a little more detail added about what is celebrated by the diversity in the neighborhood."*

*"Would like to have a safe and fun community."*

*"Love it. Camp Second Chance are also residents of our community. Let's continue building tiny homes for those working towards a more stable future for themselves and their community. Camp Second Chance is included in those most isolated and vulnerable."*

*"I love it!"*

*"Well stated!"*

*"Short and simple."*

*"It's great! I love it! Nice work and a big thank you to all who contributed to it!!!"*

*"We need to increase employment opportunities in order to get out of poverty, get shelter, educate our children and become more productive members of White Center society in order to achieve the vision of equality."*

*"All government owned land should be given back to the Duwamish Tribe and that stretch along the Duwamish River should be cleaned up and given back to the people it's named after!!!!"*

## GENERAL FEEDBACK

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*"Safety for school students."*

*"Support for people who have ITIN tax payment number so that it is more accessible to buy a house."*

*"It would be great if you could help us with security in the white center area"*

*"I enjoyed the survey and being able to provide some input."*

*"Need resources that are available to Seattle and Burien to also be available to White Center"*

*"International museum-cultural museum. Thanks so much"*

*"I worry that even after all this input, a bunch of expensive market rate housing is going to be built, and rich, white people are going to flood into our neighborhood, and our sense of identity and pride in our diversity will be diluted and diminished. I guess this fear is pretty obvious and that's why we are doing all this input process, but when I see how the process is rushed and how it excludes many of the most marginalized people of our community, it's hard for me to keep the faith that this homogenizing gentrification that I fear will be averted. The vision statement is wonderful. If that statement is the guidepost for every decision about what gets developed, there is hope."*

*"You might want to do a limited high school survey to immigrant and refugee youth."*

*"Be true to your vision with immediate action in dismantling racism. LAND BACK"*

# CONTACT FOR QUESTIONS

**Helen Shor-Wong**

Economic Development & Anti-Displacement Manager

*helen@wccda.org*

**Mia McFarland**

Economic Development & Anti-Displacement Coordinator

*mia@wccda.org*

**Dao Tran**

Data & Evaluation Manager

*dao@wccda.org*