



Developing Effective Neighborhood Leaders



A Neighborhood
Council program in
partnership with



Gonzaga University/City of Spokane Neighborhood Leadership Strengths & Needs Assessment

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Spokane neighborhood leaders play a crucial role in envisioning and implementing projects to help their communities thrive, while also serving as communication conduits between their neighborhood and City officials. However, many neighborhood council leaders lack relevant leadership experience, knowledge of city processes and structures, and awareness of issues related to diversity and inclusion. In response to these challenges, the Spokane City Council engaged the Gonzaga University School of Leadership Studies (GUSLS) to create a leadership development program for neighborhood council leaders and emerging leaders.

As a first step toward designing a program, GUSLS engaged in a leadership strengths and needs assessment within 29 neighborhoods in partnership with the Spokane Office of Neighborhood Services (ONS). The assessment team, led by two project facilitators and consisting of community volunteers, used a design thinking methodology to hold 29 interviews, two focus groups, and six meeting observations; additionally, they collected 105 surveys from residents across Spokane.

Findings indicated that most neighborhood councils lack diversity, with a majority of participants being white, retired females. Challenges within councils include lack of the following: 1) communication, 2) results, 3) accessibility, 4) sustained engagement from residents, 5) succession planning, 6) incentives/appreciation for service, and more. Many leaders expressed concern about the time commitment involved, which hampers recruitment of new council leaders. Strengths observed within councils include subject matter experts and a commitment to safety, relationship-building, and information sharing. Current neighborhood leaders and residents indicated that the most crucial skills and knowledge to include in a leadership program are (in order of preference) knowledge of city processes, running effective meetings, interpersonal communication, conflict resolution, and outreach. Knowledge and skills related to diversity, equity and inclusion were also indicated as a value, but not prioritized over the aforementioned topics.

Many recommendations have come out of this assessment focused on actions that can be taken by the Office of Neighborhood Services, current neighborhood leaders, and those designing the future leadership program. Seasoned, respected neighborhood leaders should be engaged in the program as subject matter experts and peer mentors. It is recommended to continue this work to create a training program emphasizing the previously discussed needs.

BACKGROUND

The City of Spokane relies on active, engaged citizens to deliver voluntary services and support to its residents in 29 neighborhoods. Residents and neighborhood leaders play a crucial role in envisioning and implementing projects to help their communities thrive. From traffic safety programs and neighborhood clean-ups to alley rehabilitation and block parties, neighborhood councils not only help neighbors get to know each other, but they improve the communities' well-being. Additionally, the councils and their elected leaders serve as direct conduits to the Spokane City Council and the Community Assembly, providing direct feedback from residents on issues that impact them. Likewise, councils provide opportunities for City Councilmembers and City employees to share relevant updates and information with residents.

Like any organization or group, neighborhood councils are not without challenges. Some neighborhood leaders have time and energy to devote to their community, but lack leadership experience (particularly amongst volunteers). While they may have great visions and intentions for their communities, progress can be stunted due to unfamiliarity with the complexities of a municipality and how to secure funding or support. Additionally, diversity – such as ethnic, gender, generational, economic, etc – is minimal, making neighborhood councils less likely to engage underrepresented residents and holistically address the needs of their constituents. When left unaddressed, these gaps in knowledge, experience, and diversity can lead to unachieved goals.

It is with these challenges in mind that the City Council engaged the Gonzaga University School of Leadership Studies (GUSLS) to design and deliver a leadership development program for neighborhoods. The key focus areas for the programs that were proposed by Council President Beggs were as follows:

- a) Help current and emerging leaders develop essential leadership skills
- b) Increase their knowledge of City structure and processes
- c) Enhance awareness and skills related to diversity and inclusion

As precursor to developing a leadership program, GUSLS partnered with the Office of Neighborhood Services (ONS) from February to July 2021 to engage in a leadership strengths and needs assessment within 29 neighborhoods. In doing so, the group would identify the assets and gaps within neighborhoods and their councils, thereby confirming whether the aforementioned proposed focus areas aligned with the perceived needs of neighborhood residents. The project would involve neighborhood residents and community leaders in interviews, focus groups, and surveys to surface key insights regarding the efficacy of neighborhood councils and perceptions within the local community. In turn, the insights would inform the design of a subsequent leadership program, thus increasing the likelihood for high value, resident engagement, and positive impact.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The neighborhood strengths/needs assessment was carried out by GU SLS through Co-Project Facilitators Gretchen Chomas and Christina Kamkosi. The assessment focused on an overarching question: *“How might we support current and emerging leaders in neighborhood councils in achieving their goals?”*

To address this question, the assessment identified the following:

- Resources/tools that civic leaders currently have available to them to develop as leaders.
- Skills that current and emerging leaders need to develop to be more effective in their roles
- Strengths they bring to their roles/communities
- Goals for their community/group
- Barriers to full, active participation
- Exposure to issues of diversity, equity and inclusion
- Attitudes regarding practices and cultures of various councils, committees, and commissions
- Knowledge of city government processes
- Learning/meeting preferences (ex. online vs. in-person)

Duration: Although the assessment was originally scheduled to last three (3) months, beginning February 2021 and ending in April/May 2021, it was extended to July 2021 in order to maximize the amount of feedback from the community.

Modality of need/strengths assessment: To engage in the assessment, the project facilitators and their assessment team utilized the *design thinking* methodology, a human-centered approach to problem solving that requires one to empathize with and learn directly from those who are impacted by the challenge. The project facilitators recruited and organized a group of volunteers from various neighborhoods to undertake the assessment (see assessment team below). Instruments used to conduct the assessment were:

- Individual interviews
- Listening sessions/focus groups
- Surveys
- Meeting observations

By gaining insights directly from neighborhood residents and established leaders, the assessment team has been able to recommend key features and needs for the forthcoming leadership development program

ASSESSMENT TEAM

The following section includes names of people who were involved with the strengths/needs assessment and their roles:

1. **Dr. Carly Cortright** served as the project liaison for the City of Spokane.
2. **Dr. Rachelle Strawther** served as the project liaison for Gonzaga University.
3. **Gretchen Chomas** was hired to serve as the co-facilitator and project manager for the assessment. Gretchen has deep ties within the neighborhoods from

previous work with the Spokane Regional Health District as well as volunteering in the neighborhoods herself.

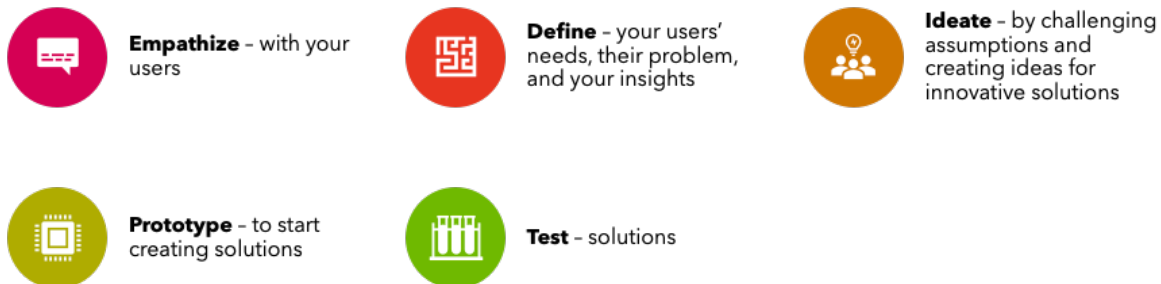
4. **Christina Kamkosi** was hired as the co-facilitator and project manager for the assessment. Christina has managed citywide projects in the past through her work at Empire Health Foundation, has extensive volunteering experience and deep relationships with communities of color in Spokane.
5. **Naomi Abella** works at the data center at the Spokane Regional Health District. Gretchen and Christina consulted with Naomi on survey questions.
6. **Annica Eagle** works in the Office of Neighborhood Services at the City of Spokane and partook in the Design Thinking Certificate Program at Gonzaga University. Annica conducted interviews and shared key knowledge about neighborhood and city government systems.
7. **Jarvez Hall** worked on researching best practices around neighborhood councils across the USA. He is a graduate intern from Gonzaga University. From his research we included highlights from Seattle and Salt Lake City.
8. **Gabby Ryan** works in the Office of Neighborhood Services at the City of Spokane and partook in the Design Thinking Certificate Program at Gonzaga University. Gabby conducted interviews and shared key knowledge about the neighborhood and city government systems.
9. **Lauren Schubring** is a past chair of the Emerson Garfield neighborhood council and served as part of the Assessment Team throughout the first and second phase of this project.
10. **Larry Valadez** served on the Assessment Team throughout the first and second phase of the project. He is a dedicated community member and business leader.

He serves as the vice president of the Hispanic Business/Professional Association and Foundation of the Inland Northwest.

DESIGN THINKING METHODOLOGY

Design Thinking is an iterative process in which we seek to understand the user, challenge assumptions, and redefine problems in an attempt to identify alternative strategies and solutions that might not be instantly apparent with our initial level of understanding - www.interaction-design.org.

The key is to stay neutral, utilize a beginner's mindset and a non-judgmental attitude to limit bias from the data. Below are the five phases of design thinking. This assessment process utilized the first three phases - Empathize, Define, and Ideate – to prepare for the design of the leadership program.



Emily Stevens, writing for CareerFoundry, gives us key highlights to understand the empathy/immersion phase:

- The Empathize phase requires you to set aside your assumptions. It's human nature to assume that others will think and feel the same as you in particular situations, but of course this isn't always the case. The first step in empathizing with your users is to suspend your own view of the world around you in order to truly see it through your users' eyes. As human beings, we all come with our own

preconceptions, experiences, and misconceptions; this is how we make sense of the world around us. However, these can hinder our ability to build empathy.

- One of the main objectives of the empathize stage is to identify user needs and behaviors that are latent, or unarticulated. It's important to distinguish between what people say they would do in a certain situation, and what they actually do. In reality, users may have habits or desires that they're not aware of, so it's essential for the designer to observe the user in action.

The team identified methodologies for collecting data through interviews, observations, focus groups and surveys from our community members (our users). During this phase, the assessment team was immersed in user-centric listening and understanding. The team also used platforms like Facebook, emails to neighborhood council leaders, personal text messages and word of mouth to advertise or encourage people to participate.

KEY FINDINGS

The following section will highlight the number of responses from each method used and provide key findings from each method. Data was collected as follows:

- Surveys: 105 received
- Individual interviews: 29
- Meeting observations: 6
- Focus Groups: 2

Findings: Individual Interviews & Focus Groups

A total of 29 interviews and 2 focus groups were held with leaders and residents throughout the city. These activities allowed assessment team members to dig more deeply into the topics and ask follow-up questions, thus leading to richer insights and feedback.

The tables below indicated topics and responses generated from these conversations. Respondents have been identified as those active in neighborhood councils and who

are not currently active or affiliated with a council. This distinction is important, as it exposes the differences in perceptions between those involved and not involved.

	Those active in neighborhood councils said...	Residents not active in councils said...
General concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Councils are non-inclusive •How to retain people through the year? •Accessibility, including transportation, childcare internet (tech barriers, affordability) •Outreach, how do we include all voices? •Meetings aren't engaging, impactful •No follow-through 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •They're concerned about lack of inclusivity • Don't see an impact (councils are not results-oriented) •Communication is poor
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •A way to keep people informed •Community- building (social interaction or connection) •Promotion of safe environments •A place to make the community better/help people •People have valuable expertise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •A place to get to know neighbors
Barriers to Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Time •Not representative, mostly for the elite or loud voices •Older adults, no youth •No childcare 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Accessibility •Time •Leaders lack awareness
Leadership needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Advocacy skills •Dealing with difficult people •General facilitation skills (zoom and in-person) •Tech savviness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Relationship building - be invited and included

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Listening skills •Communication 	
Desires/ Solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Stipends or appreciation for involvement •Include diverse voices (DEI) •Managing effective meetings, communications, Robert's Rules of Order •Authentic engagement •Members knowing their neighbors •Power dispersal/democratic •Provide food at meetings •Education on finances e.g. bank accounts, fundraising and 501(c)3 management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Stipends for involvement •Inclusive leadership •Accessibility •Education on city procedures (cheat sheet on how things work)

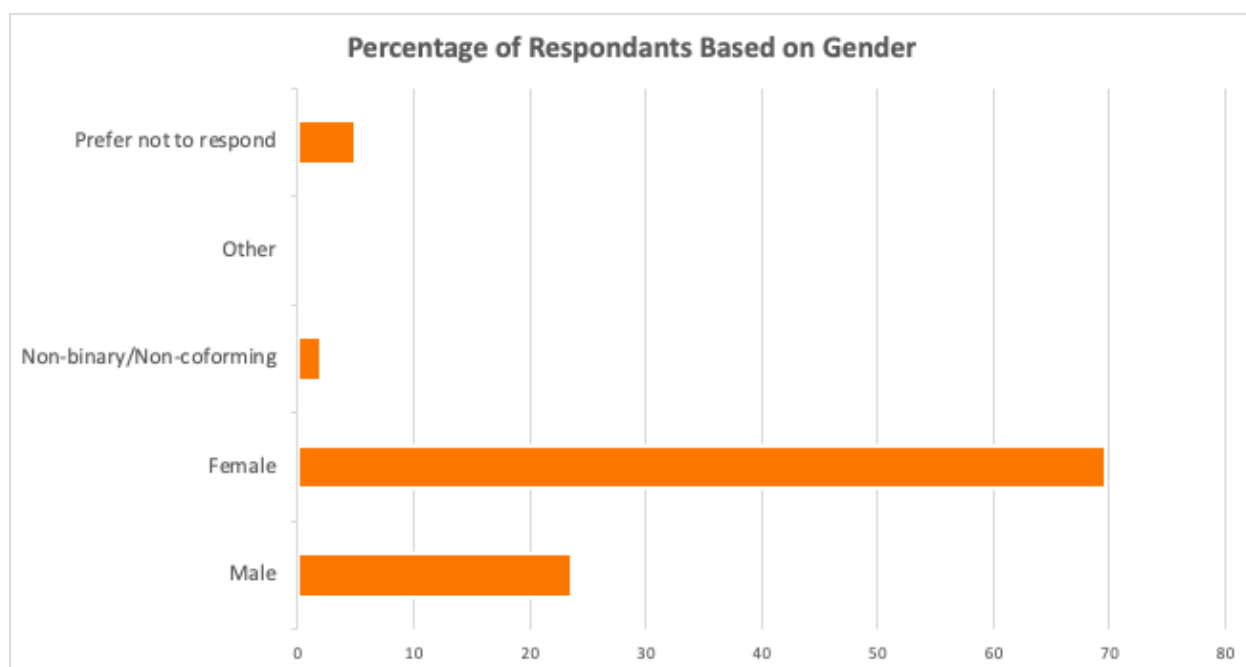
Findings: Survey

The survey, which was distributed by ONS on Nextdoor and social media, was completed by 105 Spokane residents. The instrument was aimed at all citizens in Spokane, not just those that are active participants in the neighborhood council system. As indicated in the graphics below, a majority of the survey respondents were white (81%) and female (nearly 70%), which mirrors the demographics of elected leaders in most neighborhood councils.

Ethnicities of Survey respondents	%	Count
Black (African or Caribbean American)	3.81%	4
Asian	1.90%	2

Alaska Native/American Indian	0.95%	1
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.00%	0
White	80.95%	85
Hispanic or Latina/o/x	2.86%	3
Other (please specify below):	1.90%	2
Prefer not to respond	7.62%	8

Table 1: The percentage of respondents based on racial demographics



Graph 1: The percentage of respondents based on gender

The survey requested respondents to identify the most crucial skills needed for neighborhood council leaders. The skills identified were as follows:

- Understanding of city government processes and policies, including funding resources – 19%
- Planning and running effective meetings – 16%
- Interpersonal communication/listening – 15%

- Conflict resolution and crucial conversations – 11%
- Networking and collaboration with the community – 10%
- New member outreach and engagement – 10%
- Delegation and follow-up - 8%
- Motivating and influencing others – 8%
- Awareness of commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion – 0%

It is important to note that, while diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) were highlighted in multiple individual interviews as concerns in neighborhoods, the survey results indicated that residents did not see DEI as a priority in comparison to other leadership focus areas. In essence, if residents had to make a choice between DEI training and other essential leadership skills training, the latter would prevail.

With regard to leadership program preferences, additional suggestions that surfaced in the survey results included:

- Including an applied project for neighborhood leaders to work on during the program
- Highly practical training that can be applied directly to the neighborhoods
- Targeted outreach to address lack of diversity, such as translation services and relationship-building
- Provision of childcare and bus passes to increase access
- Preference for a mixture of virtual and in-person learning

Observations from Neighborhood Council Meetings

Assessment team members attended and observed six (6) neighborhood meetings. The benefit of observing such activities is the chance to notice behaviors that may not be realized by those involved. Observations allow for a more clear, unbiased perspectives of situations, thus adding deeper insight into the challenge.

During the meeting observations, the team members noticed the following in general:

- Meetings were mostly attended by older, likely retired adults.

- The majority of the attendees were white women.
- Agendas were generally provided or shared.
- Meetings were dominated by a few loud voices.
- There were no agreements or norms used to guide how attendees should interact.
- Attendance was low.

RESOURCES CURRENTLY OFFERED TO NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERS

Building Stronger Neighborhoods (BSN) is a subcommittee of the Community Assembly. This working group has done significant work to provide training and information to help neighborhoods be more efficient and effective, such as Robert Rules of Order training to run effective meetings. Below are links to BSN resources that can serve as a jumping-off point for the future leadership development program.

Building Capacity

- [Connecting Your NC with Businesses and Nonprofits \(PDF 181 KB\)](#)
- [Welcome Bags for Residents \(PDF 181 KB\)](#)
- [How to Create a Block Watch \(PDF 73 KB\)](#)
- [Sample Neighborhood Meeting Sign-In Sheet \(PDF 18 KB\)](#)

Event How-To's

- [Hosting a Concert in Your Neighborhood Park \(PDF 63 KB\)](#)
- [Hosting an Outdoor Movie in Your Neighborhood \(PDF 61 KB\)](#)
- [National Night Out Against Crime Events \(PDF 58 KB\)](#)
- [Tutorial for Neighborhood Walking Tours \(PDF 160 KB\)](#)

Press Releases

- [Interacting with the Press \(PDF 137 KB\)](#)
- [Media Advisory Template \(PDF 46 KB\)](#)
- [Media Contact List \(PDF 74 KB\)](#)

Print Marketing

- [Creating a Brochure or Door Hanger \(PDF 1.1 MB\)](#)
- [Maximizing NC Cleanup Mailer \(PDF 656 KB\)](#)

- Office of Neighborhood Services Brochure (PDF 308 KB)

Social Media

- Social Media Best Practices (PDF 53 KB)
- Maintaining Social Media Accounts (PDF 74 KB)
- Facebook Advertising (PDF 104 KB)
- Using Mail Chimp How-To (PDF 61 KB)

Neighborhood Safety

- Neighborhood Concerns and Resource List (PDF 427 KB)
- Neighborhood Safety Brochure (PDF 3.7 MB)

Other resources available at:

<https://my.spokanecity.org/neighborhoods/resources/>

People who were interviewed and surveyed also discussed various leadership trainings that they attended over the years. Some of these were through local universities and some were run through the Community Assembly.

FOCUSING THE PROBLEM STATEMENT

By engaging in interviews, focus groups, observations and surveys, the assessment immersed themselves with the people most impacted by neighborhood issues. After analyzing data, the team revisited the original guiding question, *“How might we support current and emerging leaders in neighborhood councils in achieving their goals?”* and shifted the question slightly to *“How might we equip neighborhoods with knowledge, skills, and resources to increase engagement and effectively address their priorities?”*

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the understanding of the data collected, the assessment team makes the following recommendations to help build the leadership program. Additionally, recommendations are provided for the ONS and current neighborhood leaders.

1) Recommendations for the Office of Neighborhood Services

- Recognize or incentivize neighborhood council leaders for their time.

- Build partnerships with local employers to incentivize neighborhood council participation.
- Provide a recommended structure and practices across all the neighborhoods to help with clarity and continuity among neighborhoods. The following are recommended to be considered for these revisions and structural changes:
 - Guidebook for all past positions and their functions
 - Improve the Neighborhood Council (NC) websites and provide assistance updating them (partnerships with universities)
 - Reducing the requirement for people to have a voice if not at a certain number of meetings
 - Establish term limits on Neighborhood Council leadership
- Support community-led events financially and with other resources
- Provide networking / idea sharing space at meetings / conferences

2) Recommendations for the Design of the Leadership Program

- As originally proposed Council President Beggs, the leadership development program should continue to focus on these three areas and sub-topics:
 - a) Help current and emerging leaders develop essential leadership skills
 - Running effective meetings (including community agreements)
 - Interpersonal communication
 - Conflict resolution/crucial conversations
 - Outreach with businesses and new members
 - Delegation and time management
 - Succession planning
 - Financial management & fundraising
 - b) Increase their knowledge of City structure and processes
 - Overview of city structures
 - Applying for funding
 - c) Enhance awareness and skills related to diversity and inclusion
 - Why diversity matters
 - How to be inclusive of diverse voices
 - Microaggressions

- Partner with Building Stronger Neighborhoods to develop and launch the leadership program
- Develop an online library of resources for leaders featuring seasoned, respected community leaders as subject matter experts. Resources would include:
 - a) Existing BSN resources (note: review materials to determine whether they are still relevant and current)
 - b) Additional cheat sheets
 - c) Brief video tutorials on leadership skills
- Establish mentorship and peer-led initiatives so that seasoned leaders can share knowledge and best practices with new leaders
- Have the leadership program **work on a project in their neighborhoods** while going through the course

3) **Recommendations for current neighborhood council leaders**

- Host community events in addition to meetings to create opportunities for relationship-building
- Create awareness and marketing campaigns to increase involvement.
- Increase accessibility
 - Hold meetings at recommended convenient times of the day
 - Offer flexible participation to include both Zoom and in person options
 - Provide childcare during meetings
 - Arrange transportation or carpool for participants or offer bus passes to get to and from meetings
 - Provide affordable Internet stipends to address affordability and Technology barriers
- Address lack of inclusive leadership and diversity (racial, renters/homeowners, age gender, etc)
 - Provide language services to non-English speakers
 - Target outreach to build relationships with diverse communities within the neighborhoods e.g. welcoming letters, block parties and one on one meetings
- Consider learning from other cities e.g. Seattle and Salt Lake City

- Leadership training being offered to neighborhood and community leaders in their jurisdictions
- Both programs created common themes:
 - Both working to address a history of inequity in their cities
 - Many of these inequities had a basis in racial bias
 - Redlining, restrictive covenant agreements, and even city ordinances have historically restricted where BIPOC people could reside in a particular city
 - Gentrification, by means of urban renewal and “community revitalization”, has begun to displace BIPOC families from long-standing communities
 - With “race”, having so much to do with “place” regarding where people live in a city, also impacts involvement in neighborhood associations and also, which associations, historically, have gotten attention and resources from municipalities
 - Partnership with a university being key to providing a successful leadership program
 - Seattle’s PACE program (People’s Academy for Community Engagement uses the Trusted Advocate Model (see below) to place BIPOC communities at the early stages of policy development.
 - Part of this training is the use of Community Liaisons as a part of the training and as community liaisons on policy for various departments. The community liaisons are compensated for their time
 - Initially, The PACE program was 6 weeks long, held on a Saturday for hours per session and was a cohort model. It is now run during the week for 2-hour sessions. They have partnered with four community organizations (for the training and the recruitment of applicants) including the Urban League of Seattle. The training had more of an anti-racist lens and is tailored to specify affinity. Prior iterations of this program had mostly white attendees and this new

version of the program has increased diversity and increased engagement with community partners. The Trusted Advocated model is being used by multiple jurisdictions and has been the subject of multiple public reports.

Appendix 1: Strengths and Limitations

This section provides some of the strengths and limitations noted during the entire process.

STRENGTHS

- The participants involved in the process were leaders in their communities and had varied lived experience in the Spokane community. When creating solutions, it is always important to involve the people who are impacted the most.
- We also had participation from people who are not involved with the neighborhood councils. This feedback was valuable because it gave us a perspective on why people are not involved and gave insights on how to be more inclusive.

LIMITATIONS

- Participation from the Assessment Team was a major limitation. We had difficulties getting people involved and keeping their interest. We were asking for a time commitment that seemed like too much for a lot of people and the compensation was not commensurate with the amount of work we were asking for from the participants. In the future clear expectations and asks that are not open ended, and stipends that are commensurate with the work are recommended.
- Survey participation was also very limited though advertised widely through email, personal text messages, Facebook, neighborhood meetings e.t.c
- The facilitators and assessment team were not formally trained in design thinking, so we learned together as we were running the project. Because the expectation of the project was to follow this process, it was difficult to keep the group moving forward with design thinking when it was the first time the facilitators had been introduced to this method.
- The process itself did not have clear role expectations and was extended beyond the original time span allotted for the project. This created time limitations and

conflicts with other existing work and obligations of the facilitators and project managers.

Appendix 2: Interview Questions

1. What is your experience in being involved in your community e.g. being part of a Neighborhood Council, volunteering on a non profit board, etc?
2. What motivates you to be a part of your community/neighborhood council? Or what would motivate you to be part of your Neighborhood Council?
3. What's working well and what would you like to see improved on your Council?
4. What skills do you think you or community leaders need to advance or improve leadership performance?
5. How do you feel about creating a leadership program that benefits existing and future Neighborhood Council leaders?
6. What would need to be in place to allow or motivate you to participate in a new leadership program?
7. What gifts/talents/values do you bring (or could you bring) if you were more involved in your community?
8. Do you have any other thoughts about anything we talked about today?
9. Is there anyone else you would recommend for this interview? (someone who is not part of a neighborhood council or from a non-dominant culture)
10. We have a link to a short survey, will you please help us distribute?
11. What is your zipcode?

Appendix 3: Focus Group Questions

1. What do you like about your Neighborhood Council/What is currently working well?
2. What would you like to see improved in your Neighborhood Council?
3. What leadership training have you received to be successful in your roles?
4. What leadership skills/training do you think you need to be successful in leading your Neighborhood Council or prepare you for the next level of leadership?
5. How do you feel about creating a leadership program that benefits existing and future Neighborhood Council leaders?
6. What would you want to see in that leadership program or what would your goals be?
7. Is there anything else you would like to add?
8. Do you have an upcoming Neighborhood Council meeting we can come to observe or do a focus group?
9. Are there members of your group you would recommend for an interview?
10. We have a link to a short survey, will you please help us distribute?

Appendix 4: Survey Questions

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. The Spokane City Council/Office of Neighborhood Services and the School of Leadership Studies, Gonzaga University (GU SLS) will be engaging Spokane's Neighborhood Councils, Committees and Commissions in a needs/strength assessment. The goal is to support current and emerging leaders in Neighborhood Councils in achieving their goals.

Your input will help us develop a program that is both relational and transformative, with an emphasis on building knowledge and support for current and emerging leaders.

Thank you!

1. *Are you active in a Neighborhood Council?*

No

Yes

1a. *If no, why not (fill in the blank)*

1b. *If yes, which Neighborhood Council do you belong to?*

**Drop down of Spokane Neighborhood Councils*

2. *How familiar are you with the following systems? *scale 1-5 with 1 being no knowledge of how the system or how it works and 5 being very familiar with the system, its purpose and how it works*

- *Community Assembly*
- *Neighborhood Council*
- *City of Spokane City Council*
- *City of Spokane Strong Mayor for Government*

3. *What motivates you to be a part of your Neighborhood Council? Or stops you from being an active member of your Neighborhood Council? Narrative*

4. *What is your vision of a thriving neighborhood? What do you wish your community would provide for you and your neighbors? Narrative*
5. *Which of the following topics do you think are most important in improving neighborhood leadership performance?*
- *Running an effective meeting, effective listening and communication*
 - *Competence with diversity, equity and inclusion*
 - *Engaging New Members, Recruitment, and Outreach*
 - *Delegation*
 - *Understanding of city government processes and policies*
 - *Motivating others*
 - *Networking and collaboration with others businesses and organizations in your community*
 - *Mentoring*
 - *Resolving conflict and having courageous conversations*
 - *(Write in option)*
6. *What values and skills do you think are most important for a neighborhood leader?*
- *Organization/ meeting facilitation*
 - *Passion*
 - *Accounting/ bookkeeping*
 - *Extrovert/ outgoing / motivator*
 - *Networking and relationship building*
 - *Listening*
 - *communication*
 - *Brings food and other little things for group*
 - *Have time to dedicate*

- *Problem solver*
- *Ability to have a different point of view*
- *Inclusive/ Values what is going to be good for everyone in neighborhood*
- *Conflict resolution*
- *Delegation skills*

Check all that apply

7. *If a leadership development program was offered for current and future neighborhood council leaders, how interested would you be in going through it? (1 to 5, with 5 being highly interested, 1 being not at all interested)*

Provide optional comment box

8. *If you were to participate in such a program, what would be your goals? (Please select no more than 5)*

- *Make my neighborhood more welcoming to all people (including recruitment, meetings, events, trainings)*
- *Become more culturally competent*
- *Become more familiar with City procedures, funding access for neighborhoods*
- *Get better at talking to people who have different opinions from me*
- *Gain conflict resolution skills/address offensive comments*
- *Get better at helping my neighbor address challenges*
- *To have more pride in my community*
- *Be a better ally with people who are underrepresented in our neighborhood*
- *Other (write in below)*

9. *What features would make a Neighborhood Council Leadership program most attractive to you? (You may select up to five.)*

- *Being in a cohort with people outside of my neighborhood*
- *Being in a cohort with people inside my neighborhood*

- *workshop-style sessions focused on skills and practice*
- *Hearing from speakers of diverse backgrounds*
- *Examining neighborhood and individual case studies specific to my community's needs*
- *Learning about myself through DEI and leadership assessments*
- *Receiving continuing education (CE) credit for my participation*
- *Other*

10. *Optional: Please share an example of a challenge or achievement you've recently experienced in your neighborhood.*

11. *What delivery options are most attractive to you in participating in a leadership program? Choose your TOP 2.*

- *All online, completed on my own time/schedule*
- *A mixture of virtual sessions and independent online work*
- *A mix of virtual and in-person sessions*
- *All in-person sessions*

12. *What days and times would work best for you to be involved in a leadership program?*

- *Weekday evenings*
- *Weekends*
- *No preference*
- *Other*

13. *If there are classes, what frequency would be ideal for you?*

- *Short weekly classes*
- *Short classes every other week*
- *Longer monthly classes*

14. What is the maximum length of time you would be willing to participate in the program?

- Three months
- Six months
- Nine months
- One year
- I don't have a time constraint

15. If you you would like to be entered into the drawing for a gift card

Name:

Email Address:

**Please answer the following questions*

Optional: Is there anything else you would like to share? (Barriers, concerns, hopes, etc.?)

*The following questions are related to demographics and are **optional**.*

16. To help us understand your role, please share the capacity in which you are responding to this survey.

- Current NC Leadership member
- Current NC member
- Past NC Leadership
- Past NC Memer
- None of the above

17. Gender

- Female
- Male
- Non-Binary/Non-Comforming
- Other (please specify below):
- Prefer not to respond

18. *What is your ethnicity identity? Please select all that apply.*

- *Black (African or Caribbean American)*
- *Asian*
- *Alaska Native/American Indian*
- *Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander*
- *White*
- *Hispanic or Latina/o/x*
- *Other (please specify below):*
- *Prefer not to respond*

19. *Zip Code (type in)*

20. *If you don't belong to a Neighborhood Council and want to get connected, please indicate your name and email below.*

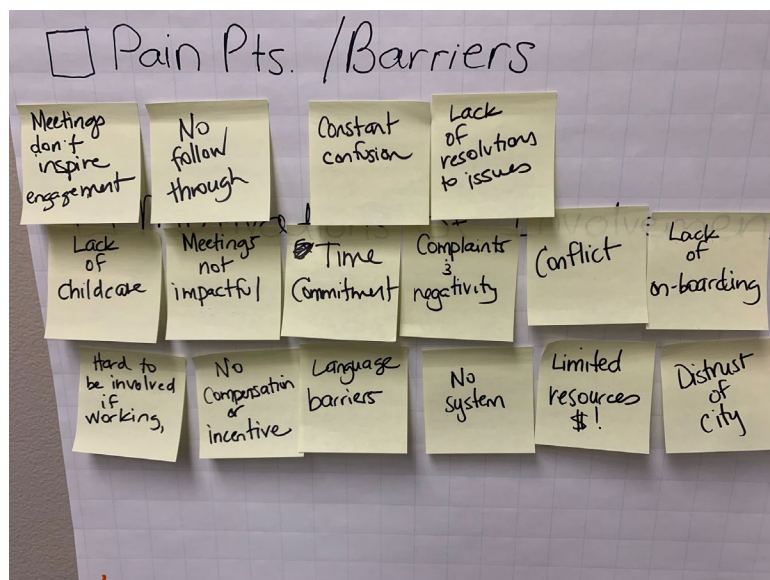
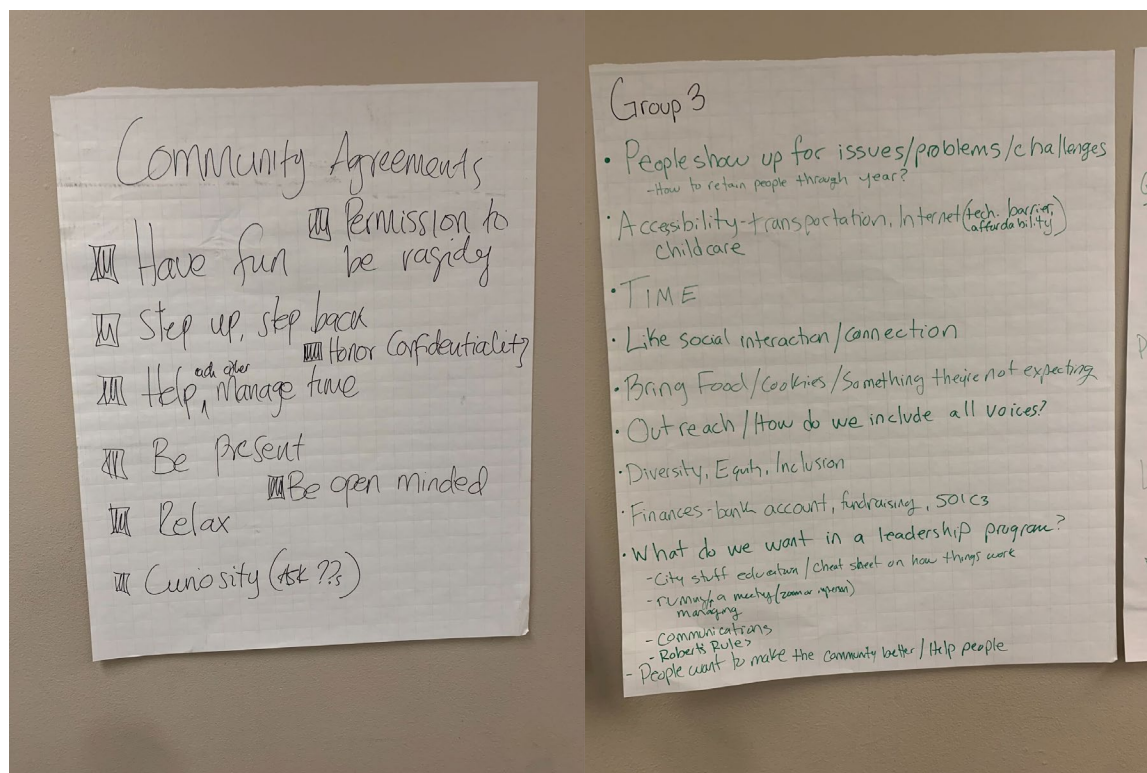
Name:

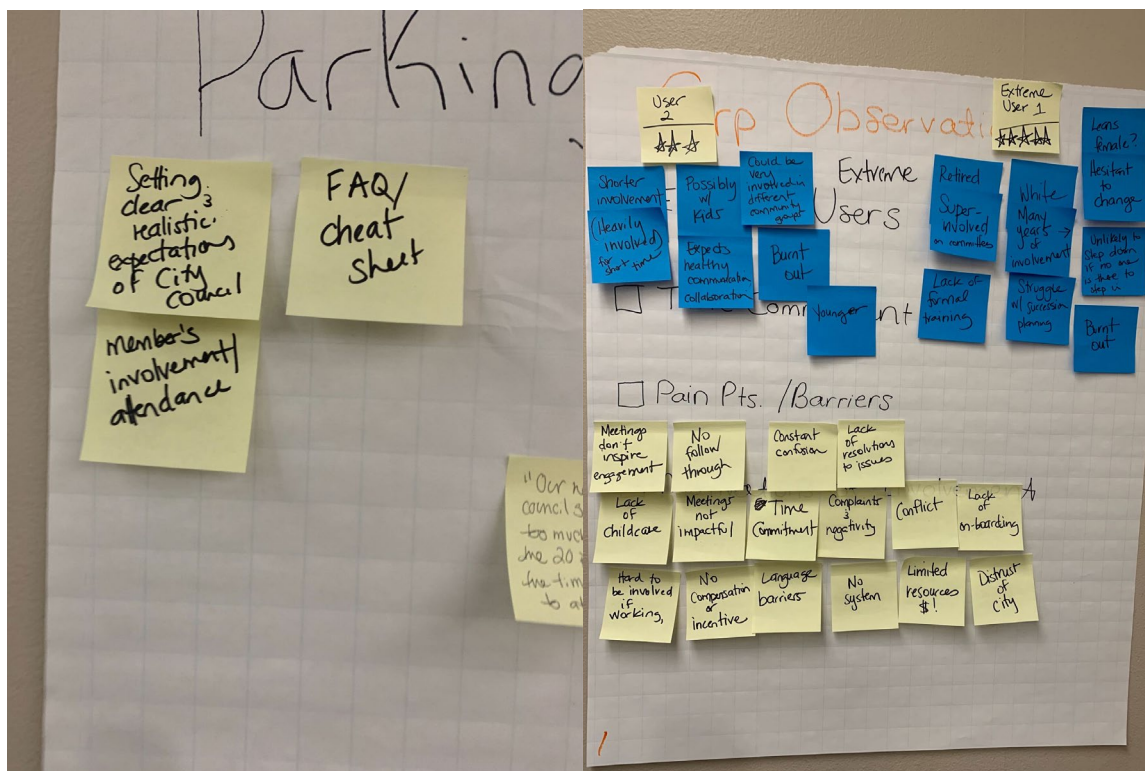
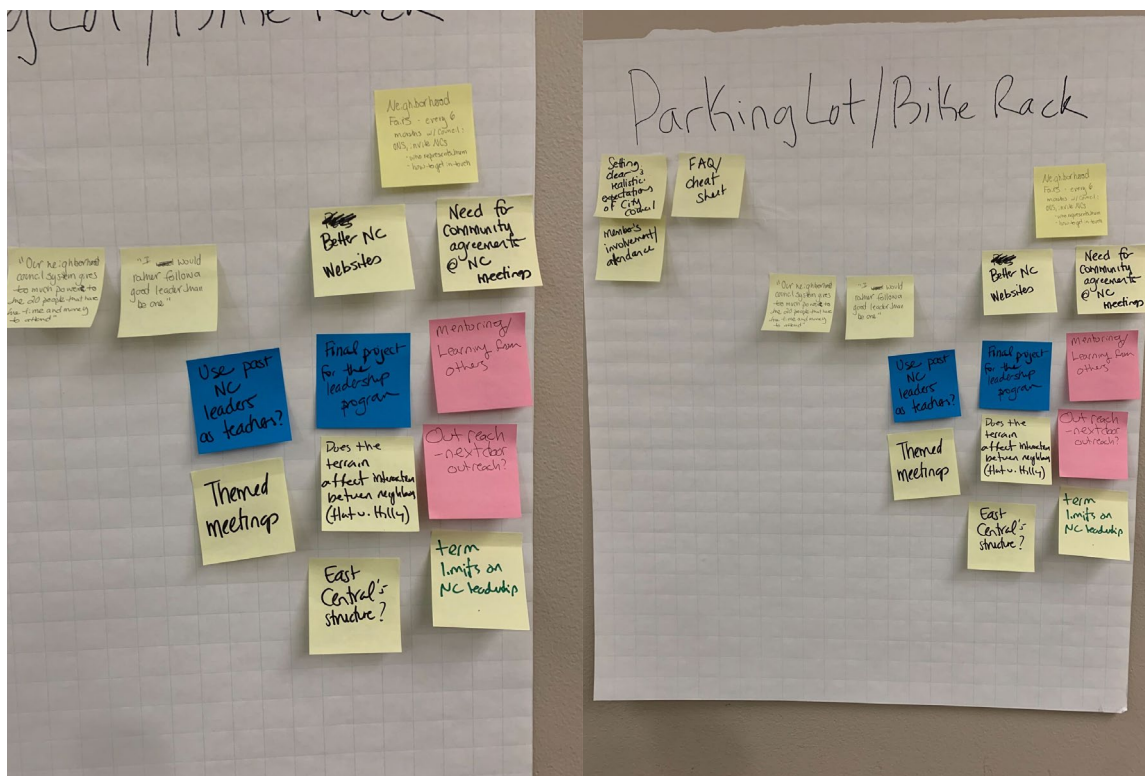
Email Address:

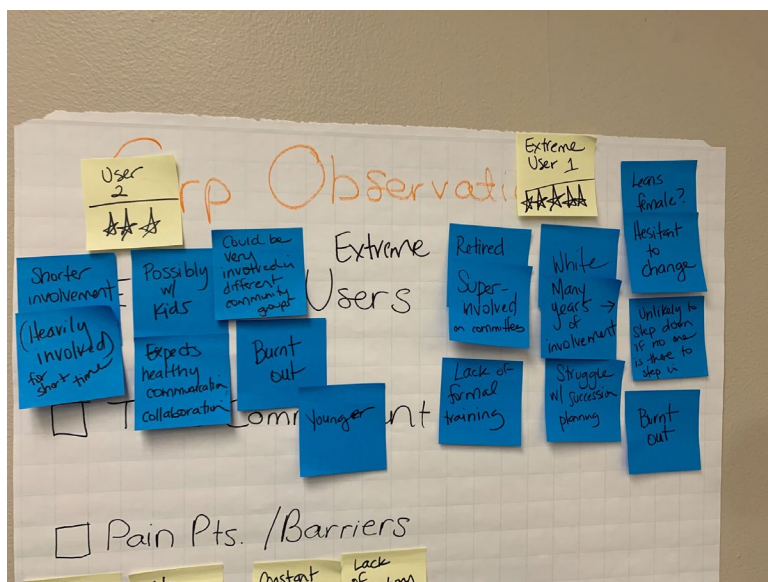
Appendix 5: Survey Results

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1ZP-i46xtH8ZRjmDFXyKiNn8d_vJBLX4I/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=114141955416902524019&rtpof=true&sd=true

Appendix 6: Data Analysis Meeting Pictures







How might we equip neighborhoods with knowledge, skills & resources to increase ^(inclusively) engagement & effectively address their neighborhood priorities?

Observations

- Not much awareness of NCs 3
Community Assembly (poor communication?)
- Mostly white females responding
- Lack of diversity; lack of welcoming feeling
- ie. renters
- Parks key concern/focus
 - + Safety
 - + Homelessness
 - + Crime/theft
 - + Streets
- Outreach/communication gaps → need better websites, platforms, etc.
- Leadership Training needs
 - #1: City processes
 - #2: Running meetings
 - #3: Interpersonal Communication
 - #4: Conflict Res.
 - #5: Outreach w/ businesses
 - #6: New member outreach

DEI?

- #1: City processes
- #2: Running meetings
- #3: Interpersonal Communication
- #4: Conflict Res.
- #5: Outreach w/ businesses
- #6: New member outreach



Solve problems
Ally with others
Become familiar w/ gov't.

Preferences

- Weekends! Or, no pref.
- 3-6 months
- 2x month?
- In-person / Virtual
- Learning from neighborhood leader
- Practical, application-based
- Diverse speakers
- Leans toward neighborhood/peer cohort

White
Females

No Awareness
of Community
Assembly

Awareness in
General

Address
Challenges

Ally in
neighborhood

Virtual is a
barrier

No Dedicated
Commitment
to DEI

Time of
Meetings

City
Procedures/
Understanding

Interpersonal
Communication

Planning/Running
Meeting

~~Certificate~~
Succession
Planning/Learning

Interest
in
Leadership
Training

2x a month

3 months

no time preference

Block Parties

More participation

More diversity

Address safety

Owner vs
Renter

Established

General
Themes/
Issues

- Non-Inclusive
- Keeping informed
- Community building
- Promoting safe environments

Participation

- Time
- Not representative → "elite", "loud voices"
- older adults, no youth

Leadership

- Need for Advocacy Skills
- Dealing w/ difficult people
- General facilitation
- Tech savviness
- Listening skills

Desires/
Solutions

- Inclusion - Diverse voices
- Authentic Engagement
- Members knowing their neighbors
- Power Dispersal/Democratic

Unaffiliated

- Concerned about Inclusivity
- Results-oriented
what is impact
- Similar → get to know neighbors

- Accessibility
- Time
- Awareness

- Relationship Building → be invited

- Stipend for involvement/leadership
- Accessibility

Group 3 Survey

- Q4:
- Didn't know about it
 - Not inclusive / transparent
 - Communication lacking
- Q5:
- Community events
 - participation
 - communication
 - infrastructure
 - DEI
 - resolve homelessness
 - Affordable, rental, + home owner housing
- Q7: people representing community - not just "allies" or "well meaning white people"
- Q9:
- Burned out / overwhelmed
 - time commitment
 - peer dynamic
 - GV is racist.....
- Q17:
- Stipend
 - resources & support
 - child care, food, transportation, language, flexible hours, localized focus (in district)
 - help other NC / District models
 - DEI emphasis

Appendix 7: Neighborhood Association Training Research

Narrative

Neighborhood Associations are an effective way to encourage civic engagement and provide information to folks in a given community. Research has shown that engaged and well-resourced community organizations impact civic pride and civic wellbeing of a community. Historically, Neighborhood associations have been used, politically, to exert control over a variety of issues, particularly zoning, and can wield tremendous power in terms of local politics. In American history, many of these associations have a track record of participating in exclusionary practices toward BIPOC communities and anyone who is not deemed “from” the community.

Neighborhood Associations (NA) are often independent entities that work with local officials and municipality staff to meet the needs of the community. The relationships can be political if elected officials are elected by geographical area or more cooperative especially if the municipality provides funding for the NA. Leadership training, offered by the municipality, is often something not made available, directly, by municipalities who fear the political repercussions of strong NAs.

Research has shown that municipalities that provide more resources and training to NA, especially those in low-income and diverse areas, see better and more robust community engagement and more community benefit. In researching other municipalities, many outsource this training to local community organizations and nonprofits. How this training is incorporated into the NA system of the community depends on funding priorities, political organizing, and the role the municipality wants to plan in civic engagement.

City Interviews

I spent extended time speaking with two municipalities, the City of Seattle and the City of Salt Lake City. We spoke about the leadership training being offered to neighborhood and community leaders in their jurisdictions. There were common themes to both of the

programs. The first is that each was working to address a history of inequity in their city. Many of these inequities had a basis in racial bias. Redlining, restrictive covenant agreements, and even city ordinances have historically restricted where BIPOC people could reside in a particular city. Gentrification, by means of urban renewal and “community revitalization”, has begun to displace BIPOC families from long-standing communities. With “race”, having so much to do with “place” regarding where people live in a city, also impacts involvement in neighborhood associations and also, which associations, historically, have gotten attention and resources from municipalities.

Seattle, WA

People’s Academy for Community Engagement

<https://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/peoples-academy-for-community-engagement>

YouTube: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=319609108795056>

Resource: Abesha Shiferaw, Abesha.Shiferaw@seattle.gov

Seattle’s PACE program (People’s Academy for Community Engagement uses the Trusted Advocate Model (see below) to place BIPOC communities at the early stages of policy development. Part of this training is the use of Community Liaisons as a part of the training and as community liaisons on policy for various departments. The community liaisons are compensated for their time.

Initially, The PACE program was 6 weeks long, held on a Saturday for hours per session and was a cohort model. It is now run during the week for 2 hour sessions. They have partnered with four community organizations (for the training and the recruitment of applicants) including the Urban League of Seattle. The training had more of an anti-racist lens and is tailored to specify affinity. Prior iterations of this program had mostly white attendees and this new version of the program has increased diversity and increased engagement with community partners. The Trusted Advocated model is being used by multiple jurisdictions and has been the subject of multiple public reports (see Anne E. Casey Foundation below) and case studies (see Seattle Case Study below).

Salt Lake City, UT

Westside Leadership Institute

<https://www.westsideleadership.org/>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VI0HJauT7YQ>

Resource: Eva Lopez, Eva.Lopez@slcgov.com

Salt Lake City's Westside Leadership Institute is a partnership between the city, University Neighborhood Partners, and University of Utah. Like many urban cities, redlining restricted people of color to certain areas of cities and often separated these communities by freeways. Salt Lake City is no different. To address the marginalization of communities, the Westside Leadership Institute helps to train leaders from the community and allow them to be a part of policy development.

Salt Lake City does not just ask communities to volunteer, they compensate people for their time through each department. An example would be if the transportation department wanted to conduct a study of the impact of a decision, if they only listened to businesses and though who could volunteer their time, the full community would not be represented. They pay community people to be contractors, train them on an issue, provide childcare during this training, and work to remove other barriers so that not only do they get participation, but they get meaningful participation. They are also allowed to be on review boards and ensure the training and time comes with power and impact.

The partnership with the college is key to receiving high quality training.

Trusted Advocate Model - A Multicultural Approach to Building and Sustaining Resident Involvement

Annie E Casey Foundation: <https://www.aecf.org/resources/trusted-advocates>

In 2006, the Annie E. Casey Foundation facilitated a peer match between two Making Connections sites: Oakland, Calif., and White Center in Seattle. The goal? Teach residents and community partners in Oakland about White Center's Trusted Advocates program, which utilizes respected local leaders to engage minority groups in community change. This report recaps how the peer match evolved, why the Trusted Advocates model works, and exactly what information the two sites exchanged. Making Connections is an ambitious 10-site, long-term initiative devoted to advancing the premise that supportive communities can help empower families and enhance outcomes for children. ([see full report here](#))

New Jersey Transportation Planning Authority:

<https://www.njtpa.org/NJTPA/media/Documents/Get-Involved/Public-Involvement/Public-Engagement-Toolkit/Tips%20for%20Planning%20and%20How%20To/Trusted-Advocates.pdf>

Seattle Case Study: <https://www.hindawi.com/journals/usr/2011/687834/>

Relevant Academic Research

Nelson, R. H. (2011). Homeowners Associations in Historical Perspective. *Public Administration Review*, 71(4), 546–549. <https://doi-org.gonzaga.idm.oclc.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2011.02384.x>
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_Cop8Xg_IrBDQ8ivBotXd41gufZyeo-l/view?usp=sharing

- “From the 1920s to the 1960s, in short, the workings of municipal zoning in the suburbs offered an informal system of collective property rights based on a de facto privatized system of local governance.

- “Zoning made it possible for suburban neighborhoods to exclude “unwanted” uses, functioning in this respect much like a collective property right (Nelson 1977).”

Ruef, M., & Kwon, S. W. (2016). Neighborhood associations and social capital. *Social Forces*, 95(1), 159-190.

[https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Seok-Woo-](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Seok-Woo-Kwon/publication/303819190_Neighborhood_Associations_and_Social_Capital/links/5791b02908ae64311c11b42f/Neighborhood-Associations-and-Social-Capital.pdf)

[Kwon/publication/303819190_Neighborhood_Associations_and_Social_Capital/links/5791b02908ae64311c11b42f/Neighborhood-Associations-and-Social-Capital.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Seok-Woo-Kwon/publication/303819190_Neighborhood_Associations_and_Social_Capital/links/5791b02908ae64311c11b42f/Neighborhood-Associations-and-Social-Capital.pdf)

- “The results underscore the need for social scientists to consider the inherent tension in neighborhood associations, as institutions that ensure the protection of property values, on the one hand, and that promote neighborhood cooperation and quality of life, on the other.”
- “From a historical perspective, the proliferation of neighborhood associations in the United States over the past 50 years has been dramatic.”
- “Urban centers such as Birmingham, Dayton, Portland, St. Paul, and San Antonio have implemented citywide programs, in which residents in every neighborhood are organized in an association (Berry, Portney, and Thomson 1993).”
- “A number of advocates and social scientists have argued that such associations can serve as a vehicle for activating social capital”
- “In a pioneering treatment of homeowners associations, McKenzie (1994) warned that these “private governments” can create rigid regulations that privilege the preservation of property values over individual freedom and community building.”
- “In these cases, neighborhood associations become a means whereby neighborly interactions are focused around club goods and racial segregation may be heightened (Strahilevitz 2006).
- “Voluntary neighborhood groups may also contribute to bias against (and segregation from) outgroups insofar as they are involved in the creation of exclusionary amenities, such as privatized policing within neighborhoods (Finegan 2013) or other mechanisms for maintaining social order.

Hur, M., & Bollinger, A. G. (2015). Neighborhood associations and their strategic actions to enhance residents' neighborhood satisfaction. *Nonprofit and voluntary sector quarterly*, 44(6), 1152-1172.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1MDuaqG2TWXAZ9TOKWFsliLAogmOINSb1/view?usp=sharing>

- “A neighborhood-representing community association (or neighborhood association [NA]) can offer community-based solutions to address problems and needs within a neighborhood.”
- “We also found that residents who live in an inner-city neighborhood were less likely to be satisfied with their NA's performance.”
- “We often heard from residents that their NA does not reach out to its residents; at the same time, the community leaders complained that residents do not want to be involved in the community. Good communication, supported by communicative planning theory, seems to be the key to success for both parties.”

Crubaugh, B. (2017). Diversity, poverty, and resources: The role of incentives and capacity in the presence of highly resourced neighborhood associations. *Sociological Focus*, 50(2), 138-158.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/12tLVXLkRuodTQQpHqEPP3gfjCDPw0-jL/view?usp=sharing>

- “Highly resourced neighborhood associations are a unique subset of neighborhood associations because whether they are all voluntary or include professional staff, they control a substantial amount of resources. Of all neighborhood associations in the United States, most do not control any resources—71 percent did not receive any funding in 2009 while highly resourced associations, 29% of ass associates, accounted for nearly all of the resources.”
- “Highly resourced neighborhood associations and the resources they bring to those they serve are not distributed evenly across U.S. metropolitan areas.”

- “Often those neighborhoods that are most in need of help are those that are socially disorganized due to their inability to reach common values and maintain effective social controls (Sampson and Groves 1989) or those neighborhoods that are socially isolated from mainstream society (Wilson 1987). Diversity and poverty have both been shown to present challenges to the achievement of social organization and social integration, potentially undercutting the ability of neighborhoods to organize collectively for neighborhood improvement (Putnam 2007; Small 2004; Tran et al. 2013).”
- “One way that neighbors can respond to diversity is to create a highly resourced neighborhood association to encourage these cross-cutting ties and attempt to reduce the real or perceived harmful effects of social disorganization due to racial or socioeconomic diversity.”

Cleveland, M., & Cleveland, S. (2018). Building Engaged Communities—A collaborative leadership approach. *Smart Cities*, 1(1), 155-162.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/328948672_Building_Engaged_Communities-A_Collaborative_Leadership_Approach

- “Poor community engagement is characterized by high crime rate, high poverty, and low education levels. A community that is highly engaged will have solved such problems”
- “When community leadership development programs operate in a silo, they limit their diversity in program diversity.”
- “research further suggested that individuals who have participated in a formal community leadership program tended to become more involved in their communities, with the biggest impact occurring when programs focusing on knowledge and awareness of the community recruit participants who are not already engaged.”
- “Organizational members input their skills and effort with the expectation of a return which will further their personal goals. Individuals are members of communities, and therefore should have the opportunity to contribute to the formation and direction of the community. When communities support a collaborative leadership approach, each individual will hold a shared

responsibility for the community. Community leadership development programs unite the emerging and existing leaders and will achieve the most effective outcomes by focusing on topics that relate to knowledge and awareness of the community.”

Other Cities

Colorado Springs, CO

Colorado Spring is the second most populated city in the State of Colorado. Colorado Spring’s neighborhoods are organized by the Council of Neighbors and Organizations. The city partners with the El Pomar Foundation to provide leadership training to ethnic minority leaders and encourage civic engagement.

From Civic Engagement Program

"The goal of the Civic Engagement Program is to give citizens the opportunity to educate themselves on the structure and policy issues of the City by shadowing and potentially serving on Boards, Commissions, and Committees."

Emerging Leaders Development Program for Southern Colorado

The Emerging Leaders Development (ELD) Program began in 2001 to help cultivate diverse leadership potential in Southern Colorado. The program convenes ethnic minority leaders in Colorado Springs and Pueblo, empowering them to engage in professional development opportunities and take on community leadership roles. ELD provides scholarships to leadership development programs and introduces participants to civic engagement opportunities such as service on nonprofit and statewide boards and commissions.

Link to Civic Engagement Program: <https://coloradosprings.gov/city-council/page/colorado-springs-civic-engagement-program>

El Pomar Foundation Emerging Leaders Program

<https://www.elpomar.org/programs/emerging-leaders/>

Council of Neighbors and Organizations

<https://www.cscono.org/>

Portland, OR

Portland is separated into 94 recognized neighborhood associations, 7 neighborhood coalitions 45 (active) Business Districts. The Portland City Council is elected at-large and not to represent a specific geographical area. Historically, The Portland Metro area was actually a group of smaller towns. Early 1900's, these areas merged into what we now know as Portland. These neighborhoods have wanted to maintain their identities and largely have.

Portland's Office of Community and Civic Life is the government entity that supports the associations. Most of the leadership training that is offered, is done by nonprofit partners. There include the neighborhood coalitions, affinity nonprofits, and Ventur Portland (for businesses).

From Office of Civic Life

The Neighborhood Network In Portland

The Office of Community & Civic Life provides coordination of Portland's "neighborhood network." This neighborhood system—nationally recognized in the 1990s—is made up of 94 recognized neighborhood associations and seven neighborhood district coalition offices located throughout the city. These district coalitions and offices provide support and technical assistance to the volunteer-based neighborhood associations, community groups and individual activists.

A neighborhood association is the officially designated, recognized organization for a specific geographic location. Neighborhood associations are the heart of neighborhood activities. Each association is self-governed by citizen-written bylaws that determine boundaries, the election and function of officers, and the frequency of meetings. Neighborhood associations work to reflect the issues and needs of its members.

District coalition and area neighborhood offices provide direct support and services to the neighborhood associations within their boundaries. A neighborhood coalition board supervises each office and contracts with Civic Life for funding. Each coalition board is composed of representatives from local neighborhood associations and other interested groups. Like the independent neighborhood associations, each board and local office determines its own procedures and standards for operation.

Civic Life's [Community Neighborhood Involvement Center](#) staff—public involvement outreach specialists—work with the district coalitions, offices, neighborhood associations and other community associations to coordinate organizing efforts, train community members in leadership and community organizing skills, create community-building partnerships, and provide technical assistance to other City bureaus' outreach and involvement efforts.

Link to Office of Civic Life

<https://www.portland.gov/civic>

Link to Office of Civic Life Equity Plan

<https://www.portland.gov/sites/default/files/2021/civic-racial-equity-plan.pdf>

Link to Northeach Coalition of Neighborhoods (Example of a Neighborhood Coalition)

<https://www.necoalition.org/>

Link to Venture Portland (Example of a Neighborhood Business Districts)

<http://ventureportland.org/>

Diversity and Civic Leadership Program

<https://www.portland.gov/civic/diversity-and-civic-leadership>

Austin, Tx

Austin, of all the cities researched, is pretty hands off when it comes to the neighborhood associations. The city has almost exclusively a regulatory posture with the neighborhood though the Austin Neighborhood Council is the organization that supports the neighborhood associations in more of a political role.

From Austin Neighborhood Council

Whether you have lived in Austin a short time or have been here for decades, you know that Austin continues to be a thriving and dynamic city that is growing in size and complexity. If you are a leader in your local community or would like to help shape and influence your community, consider joining the Austin Neighborhoods Council (ANC). Being an informed community member can be challenging, and even overwhelming; one way to be better informed and to participate in neighborhood issues is to become a member of the ANC.

Founded in 1973, the ANC serves as an umbrella organization that supports neighborhood interests. The ANC provides an important neighborhood forum where information about a variety of topics is shared. ANC is a valuable resource for neighborhoods that is not available elsewhere. ANC is a great place to learn, meet new people, solve problems, and "network." ANC's motto is "strength in numbers."

Link to Austin Neighborhood Council

<https://www.atxanc.org/resources>

Eugene, Oregon

Eugene is Oregon's second (or third depending on the week) largest city. It is located about 110 miles south of Portland. Eugene has eight City Counselors. One councilor is elected from each of eight wards with one-half of the council elected every two years. While there is a political component to their neighborhood associations, the Office of Human Rights and Neighborhood Involvement, takes the lead in coordinating, organizing, and training civic leaders.

From Office of Human Rights and Neighborhood Involvement

Eugene's Office of Human Rights & Neighborhood Involvement works to create an equitable, safe and welcoming community. We serve the entire community by providing opportunities for meaningful participation in community conversations, access to government processes and services, and by connecting people to local resources and assistance. We receive discrimination and bias complaints and work with the Eugene Police Department to track hate crimes and provide support to victims of such crimes.

HRNI supports the 23 recognized neighborhood associations of Eugene. We promote opportunities for Eugene residents to have their voices heard regarding decisions that affect the livability of their neighborhoods. We also support neighborhood association boards in making their engagement processes more equitable and inclusive. Click on the links below to learn how to get involved with your neighborhood. Love where you live!

Link to Office of Human Rights and Neighborhood Involvement

<https://www.eugene-or.gov/3913/Human-Rights-and-Neighborhood-Involvement>

Online training material offered

- [Read Policies & Guidelines for Neighborhood Associations](#)
- [Download the Better Boards and Meetings Training Materials](#)
- [Download the Effective Outreach Training Materials](#)
- [Download the Hate & Bias Prevention & Response Toolkit](#)