

The South Kelso Revitalization Plan

June 2013



PREPARED FOR THE CITY OF KELSO BY
CONFLUENCE PLANNING ASSOCIATES
PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY'S
MASTER OF URBAN & REGIONAL PLANNING PROGRAM

Appendices

Appendix A: Funding Sources

General Grants:

Washington State Community Development Block Grants – General Purpose Grants

Annual grants to assist Washington State small cities, towns and counties in carrying out significant community and economic development projects that principally benefit low- and moderate-income persons.

Examples of eligible projects include: public facilities, such as water, wastewater and streets; community facilities, such as community centers, fire stations, homeless shelters and child care facilities; economic development, such as microenterprise assistance and public infrastructure; and affordable housing and housing rehabilitation.

Washington State Community Development Block Grants – Public Services Grants

Grants to support partnerships with Community Action Programs. Targeted for new services, expansion of existing services, implementation of new innovative approaches and serving new clients.

These grants address the root causes of poverty and help poor families and individuals regain or retain self-sufficiency. Typical services include: child care; crime prevention; drug abuse prevention; employment; energy conservation; fair housing counseling; health education; recreational programs; welfare.

CDBG Public Services Grant Application Handbook:

<http://www.commerce.wa.gov/Documents/CDBG-PS-Application-Handbook-2013.pdf>

Cowlitz County Community Fund

Provides grants for arts and culture, children, community enhancement, conservation, education, and health and human services. The Grounds for Opportunity Café and Job Skills Training Center was a 2012 grant recipient.

Strategy 1: Form a Neighborhood Association

Northwest Health Foundation – Kaiser Permanente Community Fund – Capacity Building Grants

Provides grants for organizations needing time to develop their partnerships and strategies; are building their expertise in the field; are not yet able to clearly articulate how their work would improve community health and equity; and/or need to engage with their community to develop their goals, strategies and tactics. Capacity-Building grants range up to \$50,000 for up to 18 months.

The Highlands Neighborhood Association in Longview was a 2008 grant recipient.

Pacific Power Foundation

Provides grants to nonprofit organizations in the categories of education; civic and community betterment; culture and arts; and health, welfare and social services. Grants are generally less than \$10,000 with most between \$2,000 and \$5,000.

2012 civic and community betterment grant recipients include the City of Toppenish Community Council and the Enterprise Hometown Improvement Group.

Union Pacific Foundation – Community-Based Grant Program

A majority of grants awarded are to nonprofit organizations to help build capacity by helping new or existing programs reach more people or reach them more effectively.

Grants are awarded on an annual basis with the application process opening every May and applications due in August.

Strategy 2: Develop a Neighborhood Crime & Safety Plan

Washington State Community Development Block Grant – Planning-Only Grants

Annual grants to assist Washington State small cities, towns and counties in carrying out planning efforts that principally benefit low- and moderate-income persons.

Applications must meet one of the following program priorities: address public health and safety issues; improves essential services to low- and moderate-income persons; completes a necessary and specific step in a broader community development strategy; assists communities in meeting planning requirements that will primarily benefit low- and moderate-income persons; supports local planning to affirmatively further fair housing.

Applications will be accepted year round, starting May 1, 2013 until all funds are awarded.

CDBG Planning-Only Grant Application Handbook: <http://www.commerce.wa.gov/Documents/CD-BG-Planning-Only-Grant-Application-Handbook-2013.pdf>

MetLife Foundation Community-Police Partnership Awards

A joint effort by the MetLife Foundation and LISC CSI to recognize, sustain and share the work of innovative partnerships between community groups and police to promote neighborhood safety and revitalization.

In 2012 the Seattle Chinatown-International District Preservation and Development Authority and the Seattle Police Department were recognized for improving the safety and vitality of the International District. The Hilltop Action Coalition and Tacoma Police Department were recognized in 2010 for their work in the Hilltop neighborhood of Tacoma.

US Department of Justice – Community Policing Development

Provides grants to advance the practice of community policing in law enforcement agencies through training and technical assistance, the development of innovative community policing strategies, applied research, guidebooks, and best practices that are national in scope.

Community Policing Development Application Guide:

<http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/2013AwardDocs/CPD/2013-CPD-AppGuide.pdf>

US Department of Justice – Project Safe Neighborhoods

A nationwide commitment to reduce gun and gang crime in America by networking existing local programs that target gun and gun crime and providing these programs with additional tools necessary to be successful.

Currently, funding is being used to hire new federal and state prosecutors, support investigators, provide training, distribute gun lock safety kits, deter juvenile gun crime, and develop and promote community outreach efforts as well as to support other gun and gang violence reduction strategies.

Strategy 3: Improve Parks & Public Spaces

KaBOOM!'s Let's Play Community Construction Grants

Provides \$15,000 grants to be applied towards the purchase of playground equipment. Municipalities, neighborhood associations, and schools are all eligible to apply for grant.

Selection criteria include: demonstrated need for playground in the community; impact on low-in-

come areas; capacity to engage the community in planning and building the playground.

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation – Childhood Obesity Grants

Provides funding to increase physical activity by improving the built environment in communities. Grants are focused on underserved communities where residents often face high crime rates, dangerous traffic patterns, and unsafe sidewalks.

Communities can use grants to increase opportunities for physical activity by building new sidewalks, bike paths, parks, and playgrounds and by improving those that already exist.

The Cowlitz County Health Department is a current grant recipient to implement a governance structure to support a shared approach to delivering efficient public health services in Southwest Washington State.

Charlotte Martin Foundation

Provides grants to ensure opportunities for all youth, particularly the underserved and economically disadvantaged, to develop their skills in education, creative and cultural expression and athletics in ways that ultimately promote their habits of lifelong learning and their ability to make strong and lasting contributions to their respective communities.

Grants are focused on sports programs where youth populations are underserved after school and off-hours sports programs making better use of existing facilities.

Strategy 4: Establish Wallace Elementary as a Community School

US Department of Education - 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grants

Supports the creation of community learning centers that provide academic enrichment opportunities during non-school hours for children, particularly students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools. Grants are distributed by the Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Two sites within the Longview School District are current grant recipients: Monticello Middle School's Afterschool Program and Cascade Middle School's Afterschool Program.

Weyerhaeuser Giving Fund

Provides grants for Education & Youth Development and Human Services, Civic & Cultural Growth. Under Education & Youth Development the Fund supports educational programs and organizations that enhance and enrich learning experiences for youth. Under Human Services, Civic & Cultural Growth the Fund supports programs that serve the basic needs of families, move people toward self-reliance and family sustainability, promote economic development, provide cultural enrichment, and respond to local emergencies and disasters.

Longview is a past recipient of funding. The Kelso School District should be the lead agency on the grant application.

Cowlitz County Community Fund – Focus Grants Program “Breaking the Cycle of Intergenerational Poverty”

Provides grants to organizations that can clearly demonstrate how they are impacting intergener-

ational poverty in a meaningful and measurable way. Examples of eligible programs include early childhood education and health care initiatives.

Strategy 5: Build a South Kelso Community Center

US Department of Agriculture – Community Facility Grants

Provides grants to assist in the development of essential community facilities in rural areas and towns of up to 20,000 in population. Grants are available to public entities such as municipalities, counties, and special-purpose districts, as well as non-profit corporations and tribal governments.

Grant funds may be used to assist in the development of essential community facilities. Grant funds can be used to construct, enlarge, or improve community facilities for health care, public safety, and community and public services.

Ford Motor Company Fund – Community Grants Program

Supports initiatives and institutions that enhance and improve opportunities for those who live in the communities where Ford Motor Company operates. Grants are provided in three areas: education; auto-related safety education; and community development.

Government entities and nonprofit organizations are eligible to receive funding. Grant applications are considered on a rolling basis throughout the year.

Paul G. Allen Family Foundation

Provides grants to communities in the Pacific Northwest. The Fund supports programs in six program areas including an asset-building program; a basic needs program; an education program; and a library program.

Strategy 6: Conduct a Pedestrian Mobility & Safety Audit

Center for Community Progress

Provides a range of technical assistance and capacity building services. Staff help members of public and private organizations acquire the necessary skills and expertise to build capacity and improve the effectiveness of land use strategies and revitalization efforts for the long-term benefit of community residents.

Services include system assessments; roundtables; strategy implementation; and ongoing capacity support.

Strategy 7: Target Programs to Improve Housing & Neighborhood Appearance

Home Depot Foundation – Community Impact Grants Program

Provides grants of up to \$5,000 to nonprofit organizations and tax-exempt public service agencies that are using the power of volunteers to improve the physical health of their community. Grants are given in the form of Home Depot gift cards for the purchase of tools, materials or services.

Proposals for the following community improvement activities will be considered: repairs, refurbishments, and modifications to low-income and/or transitional veteran's housing or community facilities (schools, community centers, senior centers, etc.); weatherizing or increasing energy efficiency of low-income and/or transitional veterans' housing or community facilities.

US Department of Transportation – Safe Routes to School

Provides funds to substantially improve the ability of primary and middle school students to walk and bicycle to school safely. The program is focused on enabling and encouraging children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school; to make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation alternative, thereby encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle

from an early age; and to facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of primary and middle schools.

US Department of Agriculture – Very Low-Income Housing Repair Program

Provides loans and grants to very low-income homeowners to repair, improve, or modernize their dwellings or to remove health and safety hazards. Loans of up to \$20,000 and grants of up to \$7,500 are available. A grant/loan combination is made if the applicant can repay part of the cost. Loans and grants can be combined for up to \$27,500 in assistance.

To obtain a loan, homeowner-occupants must be unable to obtain affordable credit elsewhere and must have very low incomes, defined as below 50 percent of the area median income. They must need to make repairs and improvements to make the dwelling more safe and sanitary or to remove health and safety hazards. Grants are only available to homeowners who are 62 years old or older and cannot repay a Section 504 loan.

Strategy 8: Revive and Restructure the City and Business Community's Main Street Association

Main Street Tax Credit Program

The Main Street tax credit incentive program provides a Business & Occupation (B&O) or Public Utility tax (PUT) credit for private contributions given to eligible downtown organizations. A Main Street program must be at least Tier 2 to be eligible to receive contributions through this program.

Businesses will be eligible to receive a credit of 75% of their donation to a local Main Street Program and a credit of 50% of their donation to the Main Street Trust Fund.

Ellensburg, Coupeville, Chelan, Sumner, Snohomish, and Issaquah have all implemented this tax credit program.

Strategy 9: Coordinate Business Support Services through an Economic Gardening Initiative

Kauffman Foundation – Entrepreneurship

Provides funding, consultation and technical assistance for programs focused on education and entrepreneurship. Foundation is especially interested in the concept of economic gardening and is supporting such programs that assist second-stage companies.

Fee-for-Service Arrangement with Local Businesses

While much of the work associated with an Economic Gardening Initiative will be undertaken by city employees in the regular course of their work since it involves streamlining and improving existing procedures for working with local businesses, any additional costs will be covered by charging fees to the local businesses who are using the program.

Strategy 10: Streetscape Improvements to Revitalize South Pacific Avenue

Washington State Department of Transportation – Pedestrian and Bicycle Program

Provides funding to improve local transportation systems to enhance safety and mobility for people who choose to walk or bike.

Kelso has no projects currently being funded through this program.

Washington State Department of Transportation – Complete Streets & Main Street Highways Grant Program

The Washington State Legislature has tasked WSDOT with developing a Complete Streets & Main

Street Highways Grant Program to support communities seeking to make improvements to existing Main Streets to transform them into Complete Streets.

The proposed program would provide funding for the many different infrastructure improvements necessary to transform a street into a Complete Street, including sidewalk widening, lane restriping, landscaping, and additional lighting and signage.

Appendix B: Neighborhood Association Guides

The City of Lincoln, Nebraska's Urban Development Department has some great information and resources for Neighbors. <http://lincoln.ne.gov/city/urban/neighborhoods/index.htm>. From this website it is possible to download Neighborhood Association How-To's: A booklet compiled from several sources with advice on forming and keeping neighborhood associations active. This booklet has information about the first steps of forming a neighborhood association, Bylaws, running meetings and defining positions.

The City of Vancouver, Washington's Office of Neighborhoods has a Neighborhood Toolbox which includes a Handbook for Neighborhood Leaders: <http://www.cityofvancouver.us/cmo/page/of-ice-neighborhoods> which includes detailed information about running effective meetings.

The City of Providence, Rhode Island's Office of Neighborhood Services has a link called "Useful Ideas inside our Neighborhood Tool Kits" which includes some quick tips and a link to download Tips For Organizing A Successful Neighborhood Association. This document has information on forming and association, holding meetings, finding and sustaining leadership and managing group dynamics.

Appendix C: Guide to Organizing Neighborhood Kick-Off Meetings

South Kelso Neighborhood Association Kick-off Meeting(s)

What is the Purpose: To identify a core group of individuals who will lead the recruitment for the South Kelso Neighborhood Association, and lead the process of establishing an organizational structure for the group.

What do we need to figure out before the Kick-off meeting?

It is important that this first meeting is well organized, comfortable and productive. That means there is a bit of groundwork to do. The first steps include:

1. Find a venue for the meeting. For the first meeting, you might consider having it in someone's house. An agenda item will be to secure a public location for neighborhood association office and meeting space.
2. Compile an Agenda (see the next section for key agenda items).
3. Draft Bylaws. The group will need to draft and jointly agree-upon bylaws. It will be helpful to bring a first draft to the kick-off meeting. Bring enough copies for everyone to take home to review, consider, and edit.
4. Plan for light refreshments – some light snacks and drinks can go a long way toward making your meeting more comfortable and pleasant. You may choose to have a different volunteer bring snacks to each meeting.
5. Get the word out! There is a list of people who are interested in the neighborhood association from the ASK! Open House. This is a good place to start – but the more work that goes into outreach the better.

What do we need to do at the kick-off meeting?

There is a lot to cover! Below are some suggested agenda items:

- Meeting and office location. Group brainstorm: what are some possible venues? Discuss pro's and con's of each decide on a person to do further investigation into identified location(s).
- Outreach – how is the group going to get the word out about the Association? The more diverse and inclusive the group is, the more strong and resilient it will be. It will be important to consider strategies for making the meetings and publications accessible for non-English speakers.
- Leadership. The group will eventually need to hold elections for Neighborhood Association Leadership positions. At the Kick-off meeting, you will want to spend some time talking about what roles will be necessary and drafting position descriptions.

Some positions to consider:

Chair: run meetings, set agendas, draft the annual work plan

Assistant Chair: Assume chair responsibilities when that person is absent

Treasurer: Manage and track the group finances, maintain tax-exempt status

Recorder: Take meeting notes

Outreach and Recruitment Lead: Draft an outreach plan, and oversee recruitment

Design and Communications Lead: Develop outreach material, such as a neighborhood newsletter. Manage the Association website.

Events Coordinator: Plan and oversee public events

Spanish Interpreter/translator (maybe other languages too?): provide interpretation services at meetings and translation for outreach material.

Youth Liaison: Establish a formal link between the neighborhood association and neighborhood youth.

City Council Liaison: Advise the association on communication and engagement with City Council.

City Staff Liaison: Advise the association on communication and engagement with City Staff.

- Bylaws are rules governing process and procedure. Review the drafted bylaws and facilitate a group discussion. Ask the group how they would like to make edits (bring ideas to next meeting, hold a special meeting to discuss and draft as a group, etc.) Some items to consider:
 - Election process and terms length.
 - Membership requirements (you may want to set up some requirements, such as a minimum number of meetings and/or volunteer hours)
 - Frequency of meetings
 - Management of finances, meeting minutes, attendance.
- Neighborhood Association Goals and Priorities. At the kick-off meeting, it is a good idea to have a short discussion about what the group would like to achieve and where they would like to start. This might seem like an overwhelming task – but it is important this is the reason why people are going to be volunteering their time. You can request copies of the South Kelso Revitalization Plan from the City and the community feedback posters from the ASK! Open House. Eventually, a 1-year work plan will need to be drafted.

The Highlands Neighborhood in Longview undertook a similar process of forming a neighborhood association as the first and most important step toward revitalization. They can be used as a resource! Former Highlands Community Coach, Elizabeth Haeck, has a wealth of knowledge that she is willing to share: elizabeth@communityorganizing.net.

Appendix D: Highlands Neighborhood Association Community Coach
Grant Application

Northwest Health
FOUNDATION

Kaiser Permanente Community Fund
At Northwest Health Foundation

HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY COACH PROPOSAL

1. Applicant Organization

Name Highlands Neighborhood Association

Address 216 30th Avenue, Suite C

City, State, Zip Longview, WA 98632 Main Telephone 360-442-5850

IRS Tax Identification Number n/a

Organization Type: 501(c)(3) Government
 Educational Other Tax Exempt (describe)

Neighborhood Association; not yet with tax-exempt status

Total Annual Agency Budget n/a

2. Fiscal Agent Data – If Other Than Applicant Organization

Name City of Longview, WA

Address 1525 Broadway, P.O. Box 128

City, State, Zip Longview, WA 98632 Main Telephone 360-442-5000

Fiscal Agent IRS Tax Identification Number 91-6001367

Contact Name Kurt Sacha Contact Phone 360-442-5030

3. Project Details

Application type: Capacity Building Implementation

Project Title Highlands Community Coach

Population Served 4,500

Zip Codes Served 98632

Project Contact Melissa Taylor

Contact Title Senior Planner

Contact Telephone 360-577-3041

Contact Email mtaylor@cwco.org

Project Funding Period: Start Date (mm/dd/yy) 01/05/09 End Date (mm/dd/yy) 12/30/11

Total Project Budget: Year 1 \$113,349 + Year 2 \$135,990 + Year 3 \$140,728 = \$390,067

Total Amount Requested: Year 1 \$75,032 + Year 2 \$85,423 + Year 3 \$87,762 = \$248,217

4. Project Summary – Limit Narrative to 250 words

The Highlands Community Coach is the linch pin for building capacity within the Highlands Neighborhood Association and to implement the Highlands Revitalization Plan. This plan has four focus areas: 1) crime prevention and neighborhood safety, 2) housing and neighborhood appearance, 3) adequate community facilities and services, and 4) increased economic opportunities and asset-building. Each section identifies strategies at the neighborhood, city, and community levels that aim to improve outcomes caused by social, economic and health disparities.

The Community Coach will assist the association in organizational and leadership development over the next three years, which should help ensure long-term viability of the organization. The Coach will impart other skills, such as project management, to support the organization in implementing a variety of activities designed to address social determinants of health. Examples of these activities and how they address social determinants of health include:

- Reducing social isolation through developing a strong, active and effective neighborhood organization
- Increasing health outcomes by establishing community gardens and recruiting volunteers to build a community trail
- Reducing isolation and stress caused by crime through expanding citizen block watches, establishing a Block Parent Program, creating a “rapid response” graffiti removal team, and organizing community clean up events;
- Reducing poverty through a community asset inventory that can be used to identify micro-entrepreneurs or to create a Community Time Bank;
- Improved housing and beautification through creation of a Community Tool Shed and a volunteer Neighborhood Enhancement Team to assist elderly and disabled residents with minor home repairs.

5. Required Signature – Applicant Board Chair or Designee

I certify that our organization does not discriminate in its leadership, staffing, or service on the basis of age, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, national origin, political affiliation, or religious belief.

Signature Janice Barrera

Name Janice Barrera Title President, Highlands Neighborhood Association

The Community Coach will support the neighborhood organization in implementing a variety of activities, which are based on neighborhood-level strategies that address social determinants of health. Each of the data points listed in the previous section underscores the need for community action that will impact the daily lives of people living in the Highlands. The neighborhood association has an enthusiastic but unskilled cadre of officers and members. This core group needs training in many subject areas in order to effectively take on the challenge before them. They need skills in leadership, team-building, negotiation, and brokering partnerships, among others. They need training in how to make connections to build social capital and reduce fear and isolation within their neighborhood. They need to observe modeling of techniques to build bridges to social and financial capital resources outside of the community.

The Community Coach is the linch pin in this process. The deep and persistent problems that have gained foothold in recent decades could easily lead residents to despair of ever finding a navigable route to climb the mountain in front of them. The Coach will provide support, guidance and modeling of behaviors, skills and action— critical services for a growing organization, offering lasting benefits that will help the community achieve their goals.

Community Engagement

A Highlands Revitalization Plan Steering Committee was formed and met at least monthly throughout the planning process, from August 2007 until May 2008. This dedicated group of neighborhood residents and agency partners collected community input, brainstormed improvement strategies, and prioritized the recommendations. This group evolved into the Highlands Neighborhood Association following the adoption of the Highlands Revitalization Plan by City Council on June 26, 2008.

Three community-wide meetings were held to gather neighborhood input for the plan. Separate events in October 2007 involved brainstorming and small group activities to help develop a preferred future vision, potential strategies to reach that vision, and identification of community resources. A follow-up meeting, “Extreme Makeover, Highlands Edition”, was designed as a community design charrette which involved residents in hands-on activities to identify solutions to enhance community safety, increase street activity, and improve neighborhood appearance. During that same week, an expert in Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) visited Longview and conducted walking tours and workshops with residents of the neighborhood on the principles of CPTED. A final public meeting was held April 21, 2008 to gather comments on the proposed plan and priorities for implementation.

The Highlands Neighborhood Association has met twice per month since it formed in June 2008. There are 20-30 attendees at the community meetings, which is standing-room-only at the current location. The HNA has successfully carried out two community clean-up events, removing more than 22 tons of debris. These cleanups involved partnerships between neighborhood residents, Longview Solid Waste and Code Compliance, and outside volunteers. HNA recently held a “Movie Night in the Park” to celebrate and to demonstrate that it can be safe to be outside at night in the Highlands. A private media company partnered with HNA to put on a professional event, which was also sponsored by the city parks department.

2. Clear articulation of your strategies to meet this need by addressing social determinants of health, including your goals, objectives, and methods.

GOALS

The Highlands Revitalization Plan is organized around four goals or focus areas that impact the social determinants of health:

1. Crime Prevention: Increase the perception of neighborhood safety and enhance social cohesion and solidarity
2. Housing: Improve housing conditions and increase the rate of homeownership
3. Economic Development: Expand access to economic opportunities and assets that create wealth
4. Public Facilities & Services: Meet essential public infrastructure needs and expand community services and programs

Strategies to reach these goals are outlined in the Revitalization Plan at three critical levels.

Neighborhood strategies are those that community residents can implement with minimal outside technical/financial assistance. **City** strategies can be implemented through current or proposed city programs and funding mechanisms. **Greater Community** strategies are sponsored, funded or carried out by concerned parties within the broader community and the region.

OBJECTIVES

Neighborhood Strategies – A list of neighborhood strategies and their status is provided below.

1. Develop and grow a stable community organization to partner with city departments and community agencies. (currently underway)
2. Promote and support the expansion of Block Watch programs.
3. Recruit adults for participation a Block Parent/Safe House Program for kids.
4. Conduct regular, on-going community cleanups. (currently underway)
5. Mobilize a Rapid-Response Graffiti Removal Team.(currently underway)
6. Distribute information about junked car removal programs and market these to neighbors.
7. Create recognition programs for yard/lot beautification and maintenance.
8. Create gardening and beautification clubs; assist with “gateway” improvements at neighborhood entrances.
9. Create community gardens to promote healthy and fresh food choices. (planning underway)
10. Create a “Neighborhood Tool Shed” to support beautification and home improvement.
11. Create a Neighborhood Enhancement Team to help seniors, disabled persons, and others to maintain and repair their homes. (planning underway)
12. Conduct an Asset Inventory of the skills, talents and gifts of community members; use to create a Community Time Bank and/or to identify potential micro-entrepreneurs.
13. Promote participation in partner agency efforts, such as identifying and developing a business opportunity that will raise money for community projects or provide co-operative business opportunities.
14. Identify and recruit youth for employment and education programs as well as civic service and link them with these opportunities through partnering agencies.
15. Participate in city hall planning/zoning activities that affect the neighborhood. (on-going)
16. Encourage and identify small, high-impact neighborhood “mini-grant” projects that would be funded by community partners.

METHODS

The Community Coach will assist the Highlands Neighborhood Association with organizational development, community resource development, project management, and organizational/financial

sustainability. A proposed job description is included in the Appendix documents. The Community Coach will work with the Highlands Neighborhood Association (HNA) to:

- Bring organizational development services to the HNA, such as: Board Member Roles & Responsibilities, Strategic Plan Development, Effective Communication, and Team-Building.
- Assist HNA members in identifying organizational and community problems as they surface, developing skills and strategies to address emerging issues.
- Teach HNA members how to develop and implement informational and community organizing campaigns
- Expand the pool of leadership within the neighborhood by identifying, recruiting and training interested persons in organizational, interpersonal, advocacy and public policy skills
- Assist the HNA in defining a realistic annual “work program” to accomplish their vision in incremental steps that strategically build upon each other.
- Support the HNA in brokering lasting community partnerships that will bring resources to the community to support change on a large scale
- Train HNA and community members in project management skills that help them accomplish their community-based projects and activities that focus on the social determinants of health (e.g. trail-building, community gardens, Neighborhood Enhancement Team, etc.)
- Assist in development of a long-term organizational structure that will retain the neighborhood’s power of self-determination, and which will lead to financial and social sustainability

3. The timeline in which you hope to achieve your goals and objectives.

Achieving each of the community’s goals and objectives is a long-term proposition, with a ten-year horizon the minimum needed to effect significant change throughout the neighborhood. Nevertheless, the Community Coach is the key to this long-term achievement, bringing the appropriate skills to the neighborhood at a critical time of their development. Significant changes are possible and doable within three years. The primary tasks of the Community Coach are outlined below.

Year 1

- Organizational development, with emphasis on Roles & Responsibilities, Conflict Management/Interpersonal Skills, Effective Community Education & Organizing Campaigns, Achieving 501(c)(3) status, formation of the Highlands Resource Coordination Council, Project Evaluation Methods and Media Relations
- Identify outlets and approaches for recruiting members and expanding volunteerism
- Assist the HNA in developing annual work plans
- Identify key community partners and partnership opportunities for Year 2 and Year 3 activities as well as long-term involvement

Year 2

- Align community partners & resources to accomplish Year 2 work program
 - Support the neighborhood in completing one new informational/organizing campaign
 - Support the neighborhood in holding two community celebration events
 - Support the neighborhood in completing one new service activity
 - Support the neighborhood in planning and initiating one new multi-year activity in conjunction with an outside partner

- Individual Development Accounts targeted to Highlands residents; matching savings accounts are tied to participation in financial literacy classes, and can be used for purchase of a home, business start-up, or to further one's education
- Promotion of the "Bank-On Cowlitz County" initiative within the Highlands – a U.S. Treasury pilot to reach the unbanked through "second chance" mainstream financial services

Lower Columbia Community Action Council

- Work with the neighborhood to identify a potential social enterprise development to financially support neighborhood activities
- Assist in identifying potential micro-entrepreneurs and connecting them to business/financial resources
- Provide opportunities for WorkFirst, Community Jobs, Community Works and Community Work Experience clients who reside in the Highlands to provide community service that would help the Highlands Neighborhood Association to implement their plan while providing credit for work hours for compliance with public benefit programs
- Provide financial literacy classes in conjunction with the Assets & Opportunities Coalition

Work Source

- Outreach to Highlands area residents to meet strategic plan goals of:
 - Assisting the working poor with career/wage progression
 - Targeting out of school youth for GED and workforce training
 - Apprenticeship programs to expand wage progression for low income/out of school youth
 - Mentoring program for adults enrolled in Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language, and Vocational Education programs at Lower Columbia College
- VISTA navigator with Washington Service Corps will consult with the Coach for disability advocacy and employment for disabled community residents
- Train a community member to assist neighborhood residents to access Work Source resources via the Internet, in a neighborhood setting
- Provide customized job skills program for the Community Social Enterprise (see CAP Partner); For instance, a community childcare business could provide work experience as an internship that can be used for class credits at Lower Columbia College towards an Associates Degree in Early Childhood Education.
- Partner with Workforce Development Council, University of Washington and Lower Columbia College to offer Pacific Institute Programs within the neighborhood: "Thought Patterns for a Successful Career" and "Dependable Strengths" are key examples

Lower Columbia College

- Participate in project evaluation team with Cowlitz County Health Department and Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments over the three-year grant period; train neighborhood residents in selecting indicators, identifying or developing data sources, and evaluation of results
- Coordination with job training resources for neighborhood residents identified through Work Source/Highlands initiative

St. Helens Elementary School

- Assistance with outreach to Hispanic parents to engage them in various community events and activities

- Expand training opportunities in Project Management skills, Project Evaluation skills (Year 1 report; refinement of performance indicators), Effective Committees
- Continued organizational development and expansion of membership/volunteers

Year 3

- Align community partners & resources to accomplish Year 3 work program
 - Support the neighborhood in completing one new informational/organizing campaign
 - Support the neighborhood in holding two community celebration events
 - Support the neighborhood in completing two new service activities
 - Support the neighborhood in planning and initiating one additional multi-year activity in conjunction with an outside partner
- Develop Year 4 and Year 5 work program
- Outline steps needed to create a neighborhood community development corporation
- Continued training, organizational development and expansion of membership/volunteers

4. Description of your organization, including a summary of its background, purpose, and experience in the area for which funds are sought. If other organizations will be partnering with yours in support of this project, please describe their roles and experience as well.

The Highlands Neighborhood Association (HNA) was established by the residents of the neighborhood in order to promote the common interests and welfare of its residents and property owners. The HNA concerns itself with a variety of neighborhood issues and projects affecting the quality of life in the neighborhood and the Longview community in general. The HNA will look to a variety of government organizations, voluntary organizations, businesses, residents, and philanthropy for support in achieving approved neighborhood goals and activities. The HNA will encourage and work with the community to promote improvement, livability and “sense of community” with respect to common neighborhood values, culture, and history.

Because the organization was newly formed in June 2008, there is no experience with community coaching or in grants management. However, over the past 90 days, the HNA has drafted bylaws and elected officers, conducted two graffiti paint-over parties, organized two community cleanups that removed over 22 tons of garbage over two city blocks, and partnered with a professional media company to observe the first “Movie Night in the Park” to celebrate success and to foster a feeling of safety and a sense of community.

The City of Longview is acting as fiscal agent for purposes of the Community Coach grant. The city was incorporated in 1924 and enjoys a council-manager form of government which operates within ten city departments. The Finance Department will assume financial responsibility for grant management, while the Community Development Department will serve as the primary point of contact for activities and support. The city is also hoping to support the Community Coach through office space in the Highlands Satellite Office and access to office equipment.

A list of community partners committed to the project thus far is provided below, with a brief description of their role. *Enlistment of additional partners is an on-going effort.*

Cowlitz Assets & Opportunities Building Coalition

- Provision of free income tax preparation at site within the Highlands; increase amount of EITC and Child Tax Credit received by local households
- Financial literacy offered through the Lower Columbia Community Action Council

- Explore mentoring possibilities with faith-based group and Work Source for non-English speaking adults entering ESL, Adult Basic Ed, or Vocational Education tracks at Lower Columbia College
- Neighborhood communications via flyers and telephone trees to engage residents in activities
- Support in establishing a Block Parents Program to promote child safety

Head Start

- Outreach for student/family enrollment from within the Highlands neighborhood, including Head Start Parent Programs
- Coordination with the Community Coach as parents/children “graduate” from Head Start, to support parents in using the training and skills gained from Head Start within the greater Highlands community and to implement revitalization activities

Drug-Free Communities Program

- Training in resource development for neighborhood association members
- Support with coalition building activities, social norms marketing, activities to support protective factors/ reduce risk factors to reduce drug use among youth and adults; financial support is available for activities that focus on building capacity and reducing substance abuse

Emergency Support Shelter

- Neighborhood outreach and place-based classes on a variety of topics, including Shaken Baby Syndrome, Love & Logic Parenting, Sexual Assault Prevention, Teen Crime Victim Assistance and Self Defense, with provision of financial sponsorships
- Day Camps for 5-12 year olds aimed at prevention of substance abuse and violence, with financial sponsorship

St. John Medical Center

- Coordination and collaboration through the hospital’s Community Outreach Coordinator, particularly in the areas of domestic violence and expanding medical access via the Free Medical Clinic and Adult Dental Clinics
- Sponsorship for community-based classes for health and wellness and to address domestic violence issues

Cowlitz County Health & Human Services Department

- Place-based, bilingual behavioral health classes, e.g. Emotion Management, Parenting, etc.
- Health & Human Services Division support to the Community Coach and the HNA, as needed (Department Director, graduate student interns)
- Participation in project evaluation team, training residents to track outcomes and evaluate results
- Re-focus newly formed Hispanic Outreach Mobile Van from the workplace to the home. Station the outreach van within the neighborhood to offer health screenings, referrals to medical home, dental screenings/treatment for children, etc.
- Neighborhood-based Health Promotion Classes: Smoking Cessation, Nutrition, Physical Fitness, Immunization clinics (including teens); Syringe Exchange Program + AIDS/HIV awareness; radon/ mold testing for housing

Cowlitz Family Health Center

- Outreach services within the Highlands to assist residents in finding a medical home and enrollment in health care; educational fairs and events in the neighborhood oriented to health care and family planning; outreach for enrollment in Summer Feeding Program

- Maternity Support Services – in-home services to Highlands clients enrolled in MSS program; First Steps program for pregnant mom and babies under 6 months, with case management for up to one year
- Coordinate formation of a local SOAR (Social Security benefits) coalition to increase benefits enrollment for disabled persons so that they have access to housing and medical care

Longview Housing Authority

- Target Family Self-Sufficiency program to Highlands area renters and offer homeownership option (25% of all rental households in the Highlands have Housing Choice vouchers)
- Offer the Ready-To-Rent program to help tenants with poor rental history to secure stable housing by with partnering landlords
- Homeownership counseling & financial literacy through Family Finance Resource Center
- Fair Housing counseling and landlord trainings for drug-free housing, in partnership with Cowlitz Substance Abuse Coalition

Cowlitz Substance Abuse Coalition

- Neighborhood classes on tobacco, alcohol and drug abuse prevention
- Landlord classes on drug-free housing programs

Pathways 2020

- Organizational and strategic planning
- Grant writing/training for grant writing
- Facilitation of community/public meetings
- Collaboration with Community Coach regarding linkages to financial and social capital within the broader community

5. Names and qualifications of the people involved in implementing the project as well as their specific roles.

Highlands Neighborhood Association - Executive Committee

(See list of Executive Committee members in Appendix, item C.)

Qualifications: The Highlands Neighborhood Association was newly formed in June, 2008, and meets twice per month. The meeting room is filled to capacity with interested citizens. The HNA does not have a track record of experience in managing grants, though the association has managed short term projects for the benefit of the community, over the past 90 days and conducted a community wide planning process over the past year.

City of Longview

John Brickey – Director of Community Development Department, City of Longview WA

Qualifications: City employee for over 20 years; member of city management team

Kurt Sacha – Finance Director, City of Longview WA

Qualifications: Financial manager for biennial city budget of more than \$155 million; includes multiple grant awards under the city’s financial management; member of city management team

Highlands Coordinating Council

Membership in the Coordinating Council is yet to be determined, though it is intended that the Highlands Neighborhood Association would represent majority membership. The balance would be comprised of community entities with no vested interest in project funding, and could bring resources to the project. The Coordinating Council would serve multiple purposes, including:

- Encourage collaboration, reduce competition for scarce resources, and improve project coordination. For example, the coordinating council could convene all of the potential housing partners (or social service providers) in the community to request that they develop one proposal for a targeted area of the Highlands which reflects each agency's area of excellence.
- Provide a focus for resource infusion into the Highlands. The Coordinating Council could leverage small and substantial contributions for maximum impact.
- Provide a vehicle to allow the neighborhood association to evolve into a more self-sufficient model, such as a community development corporation.
- Ensure neighborhood self-determination in the short-term and over the long run.

Community Service Volunteer

A community sponsor will be sought to provide a Washington Service Corps/AmeriCorps volunteer position to assist the Community Coach in day-to-day activities. This person will answer phones, make referrals, and do the legwork to support project activities, thus freeing the Coach to focus on bigger-picture issues such as training and building partnerships.

A proposed organizational structure for the entire project is included in the Appendix.

6. Comments on past or present attempts by your organization and others to address the designated need, if applicable, and what was learned from these efforts.

Community improvement has been promised to the Highlands since the early 1990's. That assistance has been primarily focused through almost 15 years of Drug-Free Communities programs. In the first five years, the HARP neighborhood organization was founded and enjoyed several accomplishments, including community clean ups and beautification. Many of these efforts were provided for the residents by outsiders. After a few years HARP disintegrated due to in-fighting and loss of key members, which led to cynicism and apathy.

Almost ten years of Drug-Free Communities (DFC) programs followed, using a funded coordinator position aimed at reducing or preventing drug use. There were many reasons why this approach has not been as effective as once hoped.

- The approach was too narrow, focusing on reduction and prevention of substance abuse. The neighborhood has many related problems and issues, most of which are associated with adverse childhood experiences and the social determinants of health. These have not been addressed in a comprehensive manner.
- The DFC work program was limited in impact. Over most of its history, it has funded a coordinator responsible for organizing a series of one-time events. These did not build the capacity of the neighborhood to govern itself, mobilize resources, and carry out revitalization activities to improve the economic, social, and health conditions of the neighborhood.

Three members of the Highlands Neighborhood Association recently devoted a full day to attend a Syndemics seminar conducted by Dennis Embry of the Praxis Institute. They agree with the premise that there are common root causes for many of the ills that plague the community, and that a single focus, such as substance abuse, is not adequate to achieve the desired results.

7. Proposed methods for evaluating the impact of your program.

We are proposing an Evaluation Committee consisting of key staff members from three local agencies routinely involved in data analysis: the Director of Institutional Research at Lower Columbia College, the epidemiologist for the Cowlitz County Health Department, and a senior

planner with the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments. This group has the skills to work with the association to build capacity for program evaluation. This provides an opportunity to gain experience for future grants management, which supports the association's intention to become a self-sufficient organization.

The Evaluation Committee will invite community members to join in forming an Evaluation Work Group. Their initial work will focus on identifying appropriate, measurable indicators. Community members will be tasked with collecting and tracking data. The Work Group will sift through the data, compile the results, and interpret the findings in order to prepare an annual performance report following the close of each program year as well as a cumulative report at the close of the project. Some examples of potential performance indicators are provided below.

- Increase membership in the Highlands Neighborhood Association by 25% per year (Data source: Neighborhood Association meeting attendance records)
- Add a minimum of two new Neighborhood Block Watch groups per year (Data source: Longview Police Department records)
- Number of community services exchanged each year through the Community Time Bank. (Data source: Neighborhood Association records)

8. Explanation of your strategy to fully fund this project and what role KPCF funding would play in this strategy. If you have solicited or plan to solicit other funders, please describe those efforts here.

KPCF funding plays a central role in funding the Highlands Community Coach, by supporting salary and benefits, office supplies and travel expenses. A match of 64% is provided through in-kind services and contributions, additional grant applications and governmental support. A modest amount of social enterprise revenue has been projected. The city is limiting indirect costs to 5%.

The City of Longview will also use its CDBG, HOME and Capital Improvements Fund as matching or full project funding for certain community improvements, including a community trail, park updates, and pedestrian-friendly street improvements. These are not included in the budget.

Additional resources will be sought from local and regional foundations, including the Weyerhaeuser Company Foundation, Social Justice Northwest Fund, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Additional opportunities will be explored on an on-going basis.

9. Explanation of how the benefits of the project will be sustained after the KPCF grant has ended.

The primary purpose of the Community Coach is to support the development of a strong, viable community association— one that is organizationally, financially, and socially sustainable. By the close of the three-year grant period, community members and leaders will have been cultivated, nurtured and trained in the skills and techniques needed to build relationships within the neighborhood and across the broader community. They will have gained the ability to access community and charitable resources to achieve their goals, and to generate income through project activities and social enterprise. Health outcomes of community residents should improve as the social determinants of health become more balanced in favor of community residents.

The Highlands Coordinating Council will be established early in the grant period, and will be structured in such a way that it can eventually evolve into a community development corporation. Within this structure, the organization will continue to be a neighborhood-driven agent of change with greater access to resources for further community development.

Highlands Community Coach - Appendix Documents

A. Letters of support or commitment from partner; statement by the director of your organization that the proposed project has the organization's full support.

- Please see attached letters of support from community partners
- Please see attached statement by President of Highlands Neighborhood Association.

B. Itemized project budget showing how major expenses are estimated and how requested funds are to be spent. If funds are being sought or are committed from other funding sources, please provide the sources, amounts, and use of these funds. Use the attached budget template to submit this information.

- Please see attached budget template.

C. Board members' names and affiliations.

Highlands Neighborhood Association – Executive Committee Members:

Janice Barrera, President

Affiliation: Alcohol & Drug Dependency Counselor; Highlands homeowner and landlord

Marc O'Connor, Vice President

Affiliation: Retired; Highlands homeowner

Becky Branderhorst, Treasurer

Affiliation: Portland area manufacturing firm; Highlands homeowner

Linda Brigham, Secretary

Affiliation: Disabled; Highlands resident

Betty O'Connor, Historian

Affiliation: Retired; Highlands homeowner

D. One copy of your organization's audited financial statements for the most recent fiscal year.

- Please see attached document.

E. Other materials

- Health Disparities in the Highlands
- Community Coach Job Description
- Proposed Organizational Structure
- Photos of Neighborhood Activities

Highlands Neighborhood Association

c/o 216 30th Ave.
Longview, WA 98632

September 28, 2008

Chris DeMars
Northwest Health Foundation
221 NW Second Avenue, Suite 300
Portland, OR 97209

Dear Ms. DeMars:

During the 2007 development of the Highlands Revitalization Plan, the Steering Committee and citizens of the Highlands neighborhood identified the Community coach as their top priority in the short-term project list. In June of 2008 several members of the steering committee choose to start what is now the Highlands Neighborhood Association (HNA) in order to improve living conditions, make a safer neighborhood and deter crime. The HNA began holding neighborhood meetings where it became clear that the citizens are ready, and to date, everyone we invited and some who are eager to support this effort began attending the meetings. During these meetings the membership of the HNA has discussed the Coach and how it would impact the community. As a whole the membership was in favor of the concept and I have not heard anyone voice any objections.

A community coach would be a cohesive factor in building a sense of community pride. Through building the ground work necessary for the bridges to other resources and long-term relationships, working together with our partners will be the key to success. As the community becomes more aware of the HNA there is building interest. Healthy pride in the community starts with the youngest children. When parents, neighbors and community at large are working together toward identified goals, the children learn how to be responsible citizens through activism. Affecting a child's perception of society at large, will eventually bring about substantial changes in their personal lives, requiring fewer resources from social services.

Everyone is excited and hopeful about the coach and the potential changes it would bring to this neighborhood, empowering the residents to ultimately take ownership in the changes that occur and developing the pride that will bring about the changes to turn this neighborhood into a great place to live.

Sincerely,

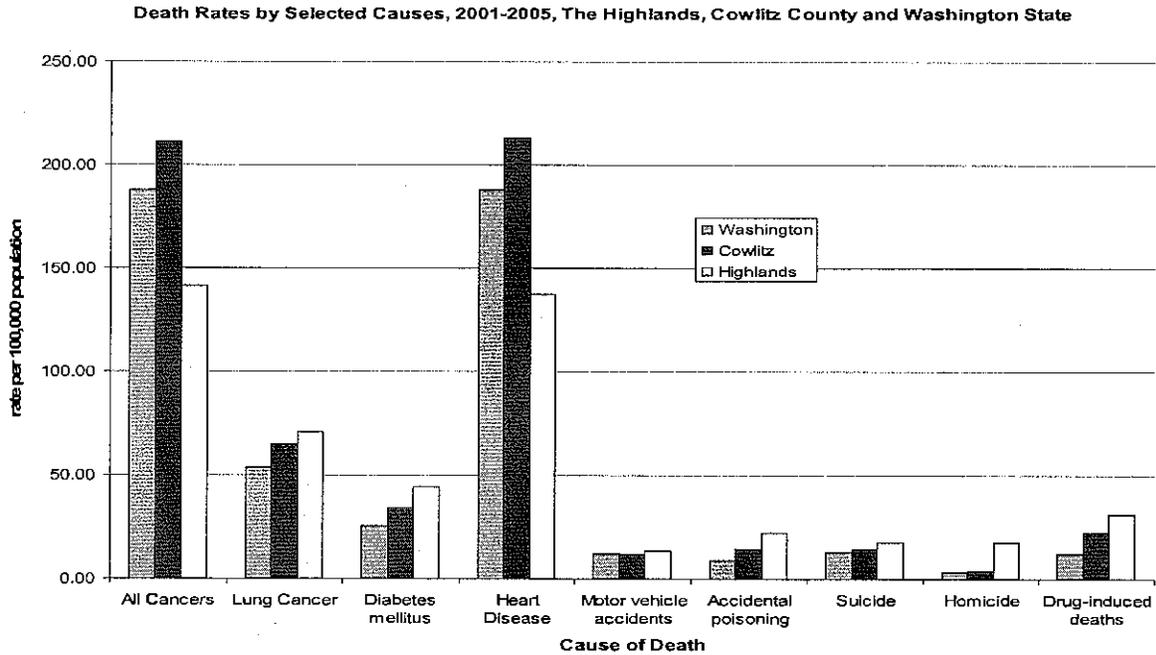
Janice Barrera

Janice Barrera, President
Highlands Neighborhood Association

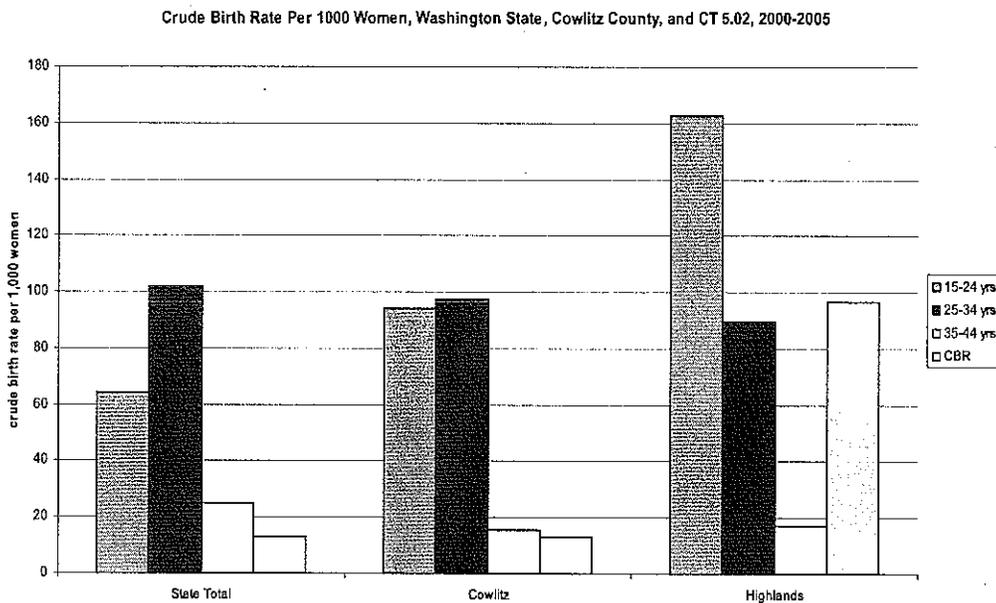
Hope **I**nspiration **G**oals **H**eart **L**eadership **A**ction **N**eighborhood **D**reams **S**uccess

Health Disparities in the Highlands

Death Rates by Selected Causes, 2001-2005 Highlands, Cowlitz County & Washington State Washington Department of Health Data



Birth Rate per 1,000 Women Highlands, Cowlitz County & Washington State Washington Department of Health Data



Highlands Community Coach

Job Description

Purpose

To assist the Highlands Neighborhood Association (HNA) to become an effective community partner in comprehensive neighborhood revitalization. The primary goal is to strengthen the capacity of residents to shape, steer and influence the renewal of their neighborhood. This will be accomplished through strengthening community-based leadership and building long term, strategic alliances among community, social service organizations, faith community, foundations, labor, social justice and other public interest organizations.

Desirable Skills

Five or more years experience in social work and/or community organizing; knowledge of environmental and social justice principles as well as social determinants of health; an understanding of political dynamics within low-income/minority communities as well as within community service networks

Roles & Responsibilities

Organizational Development

- Assist the HNA in developing and implementing informational, educational and organizing campaigns
- Provide organizational development services to the HNA, such as board member training, strategic plan development, etc.
- Assist HNA in identifying organizational and community problems as they surface, and in developing strategies or approaches to address emerging needs
- Identify potential community leaders within the neighborhood; train leaders in organizational, advocacy and public policy skills
- Develop recruitment plan to expand HNA membership and secure a stable pool of volunteers
- Assist the HNA in defining a realistic annual “work program” to accomplish their vision

Community Resource Development

- Assist the HNA in building networks capable of large-scale mobilization and change
 - Develop diverse relationships with groups and individuals within the Longview and Cowlitz County communities, and beyond
 - Initiate relationships of trust with potential and existing community partners and train members in sustaining these relationships

Project Management

- Assist in developing and launching campaigns around issues of neighborhood interest
- Coordinate and assist the HNA in implementation of community-based project work that focuses on the social determinants of health (e.g. trail-building, community gardens, Neighborhood Enhancement Team, etc.)

- Train HNA and community members in project management skills to accomplish their community-based projects
- Support the HNA in brokering community partnerships that will bring resources to the community to support change on a larger scale

Sustainability

- Train the community in resource development, including grants management and fundraising skills
- Assist in developing an organizational structure that will retain the neighborhood's ability for self-determination, and which will lead to financial and social sustainability

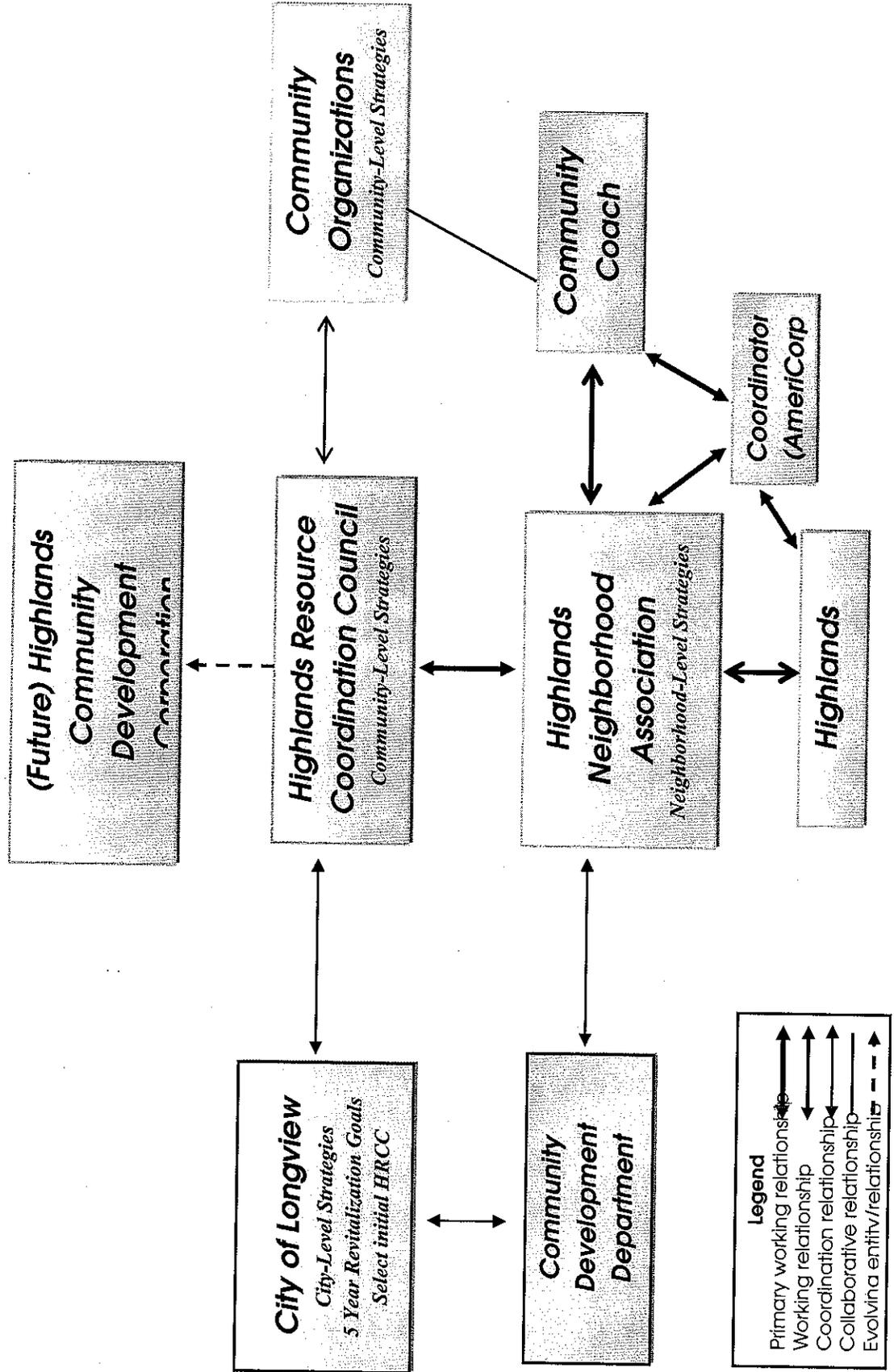
Desirable Qualifications

- Masters Degree in Social Work or Community Development
- 3-5 years experience in social work/community organizing/community revitalization initiatives

Desirable Skills & Qualities

- Prior experience in grassroots organizing and community development
- Understanding of environmental and social justice principles, social determinants of health, and low-income, minority community issues and concerns
- Ability to be flexible and adaptable to reach desired goals
- Bilingual skills for English and Spanish communications
- Web-site, database, and general computer skills
- Ability to work in a fast-paced, team-oriented environment managing various timelines
- Commitment to innovative strategies towards social change
- Effective time management
- Sense of humor!

Proposed Organizational Framework Highlands Community Coach



Highlands Neighborhood Association



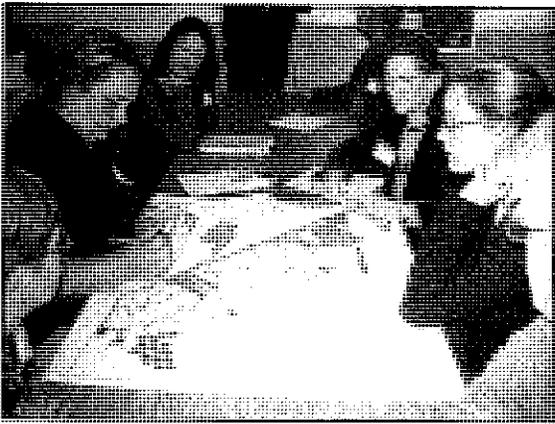
Pride of Ownership



Blighted Property



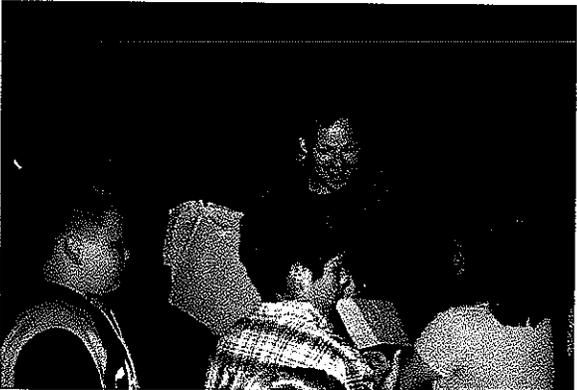
Highlands Plan Steering Committee



Highlands Community Meetings
(Above & Below)



Community Clean-Up Station



1st Movie Night At The Park



Graffiti Paint-Over Party

Appendix E. Highlands Neighborhood Association successful Northwest Health Foundation final report

Northwest Health Foundation Final Report: Community Coach Project 2009-2012

In brief, what was the aim of your project?

The aim of the Highlands Community Coach Proposal was to support the Highlands Neighborhood Association (HNA) in becoming an effective community partner in comprehensive neighborhood revitalization.

What were the major activities conducted toward grant goals?

The initial grant period, 2009-2011, focused on transforming a group of neighborhood volunteers into an effective grass roots association able to collaborate with community organizations to revitalize the distressed Highlands neighborhood. The strategy focused the group on establishing a community center and developing a network of programs aimed at improving circumstances for Highlands's residents.

The NWHF no cost extension, allowed a fourth year to build sustainability into partnerships and programs established by the group during the initial grant period.

Major accomplishments of the NWHF grant period are listed and updated below:

Highlands Community Center- established in the second year of the grant period, the center was quickly outgrown. 5,017 persons visited the center in 2012. In January of this year the HNA purchased a building adjacent to the neighborhood park. When renovated, the new location will accommodate larger participation and the more central location will provide easier access for the many residents who lack transportation.

Highlands Community Library- established in April 2011, the library has an inventory of 3,139 books and 132 movies. 565 books have been checked out to date. Two computers are available for public use and free Wi-Fi is available for all residents.

Highlands Community Garden- the HNA borrowed two vacant lots to establish the garden. Thirty-seven garden plots have been assigned since opening in spring 2011. A garden shed with an inventory of tools to loan was added the first year. A Weyerhaeuser grant helped the HNA purchase the borrowed lots and a 6' chain link fence to surround the garden. Owning the garden property gives residents a feeling of pride & accomplishment and adds to the sustainability of the revitalization project. Programs at the community center teach residents how to grow and maintain gardens, can fresh produce, and prepare healthy meals.

Highlands Time Bank- established in 2011, the bank boasts 61 members and 174 exchanges. The bank operates from a call in system with a database at the HNA office to support the many residents who lack electronic access. The program needs further marketing to ensure sustainability. A community jobs program participant has been requested to coordinate this important service.

Highlands Neighborhood Outreach- this program is being replaced by the **Adopt-a-Block Program** to ensure greater coverage and sustainability. Door to door visits carried out by an individual were not sustainable and covered a small percentage of the nearly 5,000 residents. Three blocks have been adopted by local organizations Since August 2012. The groups build relationships and support residents of an entire Highlands block. The three participating organizations organize block parties, facilitate clean-ups and conduct door to door visits. More organizations are being recruited to cover the remaining thirty-seven blocks. The program will ensure that residents get the long term mentorship they need to improve social and health outcomes.

Network of Community Partners -the HNA focused on building relationships with organizations interested in supporting the mission, and which link the Highlands to the broader community. As a result, the Highlands Neighborhood Association has partnerships with 49 entities throughout Cowlitz County. Examples of these partnerships include:

- Faith-based organizations such as Mountain Ministries, Love Inc., Shiloh Christian Fellowship, Highlands Baptist Church;
- Social service non-profits, including Habitat for Humanity, Goodwill, Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Cowlitz County, and Altrusa International;
- Local governmental entities and schools, including the city of Longview, Longview School District , and Longview Housing Authority;
- Local businesses such as Longview Fibre, Millennium, Weyerhaeuser and J.H. Kelley;
- Health organizations, such as Cowlitz Family Health Center, Community Health Partners, and Cowlitz County Health Department;
- Local and regional funders, including the Health Care Foundation, Northwest Health Foundation and United Way of Cowlitz County.

Highlands Graffiti Removal Team – the HNA partnered with Longview Police Department, Longview Code Compliance Department and volunteers to paint over graffiti as quickly as possible resulting in a 30% decrease in graffiti tagging.

Neighborhood Clean Ups – 23 clean up events conducted in partnership with local organizations yielded 2,174 volunteer hours and 62.12 tons of garbage removed and properly disposed of. The city’s code compliance department supports the effort by supplying dumpsters and providing technical support.

Highlands Photo book Project- the project brought awareness of the plight of Highlands’ residents to the greater community. A photo exhibit was prepared using the photos. The exhibit has been displayed at the Washington State Capital Building, a Washington State Family Policy Council event, at Evergreen State College and in downtown Olympia. The exhibit is now in Cowlitz County, ready to be displayed using local venues. An article written by reporter Amy Fischer, of The Daily News wrote; “For years the Highlands has been looked upon as an area where criminals roam free and wreak havoc on their neighbors. Most people who see the book are fascinated — not just with the photos themselves, but also with the very idea that someone would endeavor to document a segment of Longview's population that is the frequent butt of nasty jokes and remarks. Longview Community Development Director John Brickey, the city's liaison with the Highlands Neighborhood Association, said the book will be a good tool to help outsiders understand the neighborhood's diversity, strengths and challenges.”

Monthly Health Discussions & Clinics - Poorly attended from the beginning, the effort reveals a challenge to discover what residents find valuable relating to preventative care. Even blood pressure and vaccine clinics saw little participation. Other means of educating residents in preventative health behaviors are being explored to improve the unusually poor health outcomes experienced by Highlands's residents. When the planned community center is complete, the local health center is interested in placing a clinic there. Most agree that a neighborhood clinic for low income residents will be beneficial. Although health classes are not popular, we believe that the positive impact of the Highlands revitalization project on health outcomes is enormous.

Highlands Thanksgiving Food Box Give-Away- the third annual Thanksgiving food drive provided meals for 504 individuals in 120 families in 2012 and raised \$7,000 in food and cash contributions. The event has been increasing since it began in November 2010. Forty families were served that year and one hundred in 2011.

Christmas Support Program – 78 Highlands families were adopted by local individuals, businesses and groups in 2012, the second year of the project. Residents signed up for the program and the community came together to reach out to the needy families

Healthcare Foundation Programs Grant - a \$15,460 grant from the local foundation helped launch and support community center programs over an eight month period. Currently the foundation is considering an HNA grant request for \$47,000 to pay for the recently purchased property that will become the new community center.

Weyerhaeuser Grants –purchased two new computers for public use in the library. The computers have been a successful tool in engaging youth and in bringing residents to the community center. A second Weyerhaeuser grant purchased the two garden lots and a chain link fence.

Highlands Free Bike Program- HNA receives donated bikes from the Longview Police Department and local bike shops. Bikes are repaired by two disabled residents and distributed to locals who sign up to receive one. 87 bikes have been given to residents over the past year. This popular program has a long waiting list.

Youth Programs – In 2012; 1,297 children attended Disabled Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, Highlands's 4-H, Shiloh Youth Night, Capital Kids Foster Family Parents Night Out, Afterschool Hang-Out & Homework, all designed to engage youth and provide alternatives to less healthy activities. Programs are well attended and with the exception of two new programs, have been in place nearly as long as the center has been open. Some programs designed to help youth and adults were initiated but failed. Trial and error has become the process for discovering what the neighborhood needs.

Police Partnership / monthly workshops- Police and HNA share office space, partner in helping residents with needs and complaints, co-host neighborhood programs including Highlands Neighborhood Matters-a monthly informational program, annual bike rodeos, drug take-back events, graffiti paint overs, neighborhood clean-ups and National Night Out- an annual community safety awareness event. Communication between residents and police has improved and crime is trending

downward. Burglary 24% decline, vehicle prowling 23% decline, stolen vehicle, 64% decline, abandoned vehicles 55% decline, loud music 22% decline, partying 50% decline, domestic disputes 21% decline, domestic violence 34% decline. (2009-2011 Longview Police Data)

17th Avenue Property Acquisition – a blighted property was donated to the HNA in 2011. The association contracted to sell the property to the Housing Authority adding \$19,000 to the association’s budget. Proceeds from the property will defray costs of purchasing the new community center property.

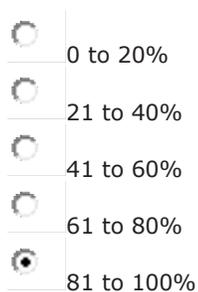
Summer Movie Nights in the Park –promote a sense of community and safety outside after dark. HNA shows outdoor family movies at Archie Anderson Park during summer months. Nine movie events have hosted more than one thousand guests. Longview Parks and Recreation Department and Central Baseball league work with the HNA to sponsor these events.

Free Laundry Day / School Supply Give-Away- The HNA, 20th Avenue Laundromat, local churches and the middle school student resource program worked together to offer this back to school service so residents can send their children back to school in clean clothes. 45 families have taken advantage of this service. In 2012, the second year of the program, local churches collected 500 back packs full of school supplies to give out during the laundry day event. Literally thousands showed up to receive supplies. Partners are determined to collect enough supplies during the year to ensure no one walks away empty-handed in 2013.

Newsletter – distributed monthly since 2010, an AmeriCorps member and community service police officer are working together to continue the important means of communication to the neighborhood and the greater community.

Community center planning grant – a \$15,000 CDBG planning grant was awarded to the HNA to hire an architect to design a new community center for the neighborhood.

Were proposed goals met?



- Radio
- TV
-

Describe

Although stable funding streams have not been secured, several grant applications are pending. Programs established in the neighborhood resulting from the NWHF Coach Grant continue. The HNA currently owns three properties, with one pending sale. The community center, in the renovation stage, will be the key to the organizations stability. A neighborhood consignment / coffee shop is in planning stage. Income generated from sales should bring in enough revenue to keep the community center and the HNA in business indefinitely. Undoubtedly, the most significant and enduring outcome is a diverse group of neighborhood leaders that have learned to work together, value each other's assets and overlook behaviors that initially led to confrontational situations. The group has become a family that welcomes new members unconditionally.

Please feel free to elaborate on any of your responses to questions 2 through 5

Based on your project experience, what would you like to share with others doing similar work?

In the beginning several board training exercises and activities gave the board an overview of how a non-profit board of directors operates. Although the trainings were helpful, in hindsight, the best instructor was simply meeting and doing. The practical experience that comes from working together over a long period of time was the greatest contributor to the success of the Highlands Neighborhood Association.

What other comments do you wish to share with the foundation?

The decision by the City of Longview to revitalize the neighborhood and their steadfast commitment to carry out the revitalization effort has been the root of the success of the project. Their unwavering support encouraged local organizations to invest themselves as well.

The funding NWHF provided truly did change the world. The upstream approach adopted by the foundation has allowed a small group of citizens the opportunity to discover paths to a healthier future and has leveraged such strong community support that the Highlands Neighborhood will never be the same.

How were funds expended? Please present this information in two side by side columns: how the budget was originally proposed versus how funds were actually expended. Or attach a spreadsheet below

See attachment

Respectfully submitted by Elizabeth Haeck – Highlands Community Coach

Appendix F. MetLife Neighborhood Revitalization Award Application

MetLife Neighborhood Revitalization Award Application

Lead Community Organization: Highlands Neighborhood Association (HNA) – Contact Person: Elizabeth Haeck
216 30th Avenue, Longview, WA 98632 Phone: (360) 442-0612 E-mail: elizabeth@communityorganizing.net

Lead Police Department: Longview Police Department (LPD) – Contact Person: Captain Deborah Johnson
1351 Hudson Street, Longview, WA 98632 Phone; (360) 442-5800 / Fax (360) 442-5963
E-mail: debbie.johnson@ci.longview.wa.us

Project Title: Highlands Community Policing Collaboration (HCPC) -Inception: June 2008 / Project End Date: ongoing

Partners: City of Longview Community Development Department – Director: John Brickey
1526 Broadway Avenue, Longview, WA 98632
(360)442-5080 Fax (360) 442-5953 / e-mail: john.brickey@ci.longview.wa.us

Longview Parks and Recreation Department (Parks & Rec) – Facilities Director: Dick Mueller
2920 Douglas Street, Longview, WA 98632 Phone: (360) 414-8137
E-mail: dick.mueller@ci.longview.wa.us

Habitat for Humanity (HFH) – Executive Director: Diane Perron
1145 11th Avenue, Longview, WA 98632 (360) 425-6177 / e-mail: dperron@cowlitzhabitat.org

Award Category: Community Engagement

How did you hear about the MetLife Foundation community / Police Partnership Awards?

A local organization; Love I.N.C., recognized the HNA / LPD partnership as a good fit and provided contact information. The suggestion was repeated by community member, Richard VanSickle, who recently visited Andriana Abariotes at L.I.S.C.'s office in Minnesota.

Briefly describe your program/partnership, objectives and program strategy.

“The Highlands is a War Zone” stated former Mayor Kurt Anagnostou, when the City of Longview made revitalizing the neighborhood a high priority in their ten year strategic plan. Out of control crime, poverty, blighted properties, and poor health outcomes led the city to take action. The implementation of the Highlands Revitalization Plan has been positively impacting the neighborhood, one of the poorest in the State of Washington, since its implementation in 2008. The Plan identified community policing as a best practice in engaging the nearly 5,000 citizens living in the forty block district. The Longview Police Department (LPD), Highlands Neighborhood Association (HNA), and the City of Longview joined forces to implement the plan with the following objectives:

- 1) Create an atmosphere of trust between residents and police
- 2) Improve neighborhood appearance, safety and vitality through active partnerships
- 3) Bring facilities, activities and community supports into the neighborhood to revitalize and reduce crime

Strategy: HNA and LPD share the Highlands Police Satellite Office and partner in opportunities related to supporting the residents of the distressed district. The HNA / LPD Community Policing Collaboration (HCPC) is the umbrella for a network of 49 community partnerships that work to improve the neighborhood and quality of life issues.

Roles of Program Partners:

Highlands Neighborhood Association (HNA):

- Encourage goodwill between residents and LPD through community meetings, events and outreach
- Provide use of neighborhood community center for police and partner organizations
- Connect residents with needs to appropriate service organizations
- Report suspected drug houses, crimes and potential problems

- Work with police to publish neighborhood newsletter
- Partner with LPD to bring community safety events to neighborhood

Longview Police Department (LPD):

- Provide office space, office equipment, meeting room and customer service to HNA
- Partner in Highlands Network of community partners
- Conduct monthly informational meetings and occasional Cop Chats at community center
- Investigate information provided by HNA / residents, continue to target drug houses
- Partner to publish neighborhood newsletter

Longview Community Development Department:

- Community development director acts as neighborhood liaison
- Provide fiscal agent support to HNA
- Provide computers, internet, phone, technical support etc to HNA
- Act as project advisor
- Help identify blighted properties, provide dumpsters and support for neighborhood clean-ups
- Participate in all outreach programs
- Collaborate in grant writing and fundraising

Longview Parks and Recreation Department:

- Provide free use of parks and park facilities for community events
- Collaborate with HNA and LPD in nearly all activities, Facilities Director serves as liaison
- Collaborate in grant writing and fundraising

Cowlitz County Habitat for Humanity / Longview Housing Authority / Lower Columbia Community Action Program

- Partner with HNA/LPD in Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative (NRI) Program
- Help residents identified by HNA / LPD and others who need help with exterior home repairs
- Participate in neighborhood events and outreach
- Convert blighted properties into new affordable homes
- Use community center for homeowner recruitment and other programs

Specifically describe the most impressive tangible achievements of your police-community collaboration. For instance how much did crime decline in your target neighborhood? What types of crime declined? What specific community development (brick and mortar and other tangible activities) resulted from the collaboration

- **Highlands Community Center/Community Library** - 5,017 persons visited the center in 2012, its second year of operation.
- **Network of Community Partners** –HNA/LPD developed relationships with 49 entities who participate in the revitalization project.
- **Highlands Graffiti Removal Team** – the HNA, LPD and volunteers paint over graffiti as quickly as possible resulting in a 30% decrease in graffiti tagging since 2009.
- **Neighborhood Clean Ups**- Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CEPTED) philosophy. 23 clean up events yielded 2,174 volunteer hours and 62.12 tons of garbage removed and properly disposed of. Police Alley Gator volunteers help to identify blight for removal.
- **Highlands Thanksgiving Food Box Give-Away**- the third annual Thanksgiving food drive provided meals for 504 individuals in 120 families in 2012 and raised \$7,000 in food and cash contributions. The event has been increasing since it began in November 2010.
- **Christmas Support Program** – 78 Highlands families were adopted in 2012, the project's second year.
- **Bike Program**- donated bikes from the Longview Police Department are distributed to needy residents. Two disabled residents repair them before residents receive them.
- **Youth Programs** – Over 1,200 children attend Disabled Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, Highlands's 4-H, Shiloh Youth Night, Capital Kids Foster Family Parents Night Out, and Afterschool Hang-Out & Homework in 2012

- **Summer Movie Nights in the Park** –promote a sense of community and safety outside after dark. Nine events have hosted more than one thousand guests
- **Newsletter** – Established in 2010 and published by an HNA member and community police officer
- **Drug House Disruption-** HNA and community members report suspected drug houses to the Highlands police officer who, as a result, spends time parked outside the houses. The occupants of 22 suspected drug houses have moved out suddenly.
- LPD and HNA focused on building relationships with organizations interested in supporting the mission, and which link the Highlands to the broader community. As a result, the collaboration has partnerships with 49 entities throughout Cowlitz County. Examples of these partnerships include:
 - Faith-based organizations such as Mountain Ministries, Love Inc., Shiloh Christian Fellowship, Highlands Baptist Church
 - Social service non-profits, including Habitat for Humanity, Goodwill, Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Cowlitz County, and Altrusa International
 - Local governmental entities and schools, including the city of Longview, Longview School District , and Longview Housing Authority;
 - Local businesses such as Longview Fibre, Millennium, Weyerhaeuser and J.H. Kelley
 - Health organizations, such as Cowlitz Family Health Center, Community Health Partners, and Cowlitz County Health Department
 - Local and regional funders, including the Health Care Foundation, Northwest Health Foundation and United Way of Cowlitz County.

Since 2009, communication between residents and police has improved. Crime is trending downward. Police officers report better relationships with Highlands’ residents. 2012 Longview Police Data reveals decreases in the following call types from 2009-2011: Burglary 24% decline, vehicle prowling 23% decline, stolen vehicle, 64% decline, abandoned vehicles 55% decline, loud music 22% decline, partying 50% decline, domestic disputes 21% decline, domestic violence 34% decline. Nine blighted properties have been converted to new/rehab affordable housing. Owners of the neighborhoods most infamous apartment complex partnered with HCPC to join the Crime Free Housing Program.

Note: while crime in the Highlands continues to decline, early 2013 data reveals increases in Domestic Violence and Burglary from 2011 to 2012. Although still lower than 2009 rates, HCPC is committed to addressing underlying issues. After discussing possible root causes, the group feels finding ways to improve employability and job opportunities is the wise strategy. The Highlands unemployment rate is dramatically higher than citywide, county and state rates. The partnership is working with the local domestic violence shelter for additional support.

How does your program/partnership advance or exemplify the constructive engagement between community organizations and public safety practitioners and their ability to impact neighborhood well being?

Both Community Oriented Policing and Problem Oriented Policing are preventive in approach. There is less dependence upon the criminal justice system and more focus on the engagement of other agencies, community members, and the private sector in partnerships that help reduce crime. The community policing strategy directly involves the community to define problems, needs, and solutions. Satellite offices, community meetings, citizen contract patrols, neighborhood watch and door to door visits are outreach tactics that reduce the fear of crime, support neighborhood unity and reduce both crime and disorder (National Research Council, 2004). At least six studies with strong experimental designs found this approach to be effective in responding to specific crime and disorder problems. The strategies used by the HNA/LPD Community Policing Collaboration (HCPC) are based on research and confirmed by data. After years of the highest crime rates in Cowlitz County and, in many cases, higher than state rates, the reduction in crime since the project’s inception directly correlates with the implementation of the Highlands Revitalization Plan’s Community Policing Collaboration. Other neighborhoods across the region ask how they might duplicate the Highlands strategy. Longview Police Chief, Jim Duscha is requesting duplication of the program in neighborhoods across Longview.



HIGHLANDS NEWSLETTER



Highlands Neighborhood Association

Office: 216 30th Ave., 442-5932 | Community Center: 205 Carolina Street, 442-4144

September 2012

Board Meeting: Monday, Sept. 10, 5:00 P.M. Satellite Office / Community Meeting: Monday, Sept. 24, 6:00 P.M.

Community Center Opportunities

- ◆ **Solid Rock Monster Night:**
- ◆ Kids 8-11 Sunday's 5-8 P.M.
- ◆ **Ask a Nurse Program :** (Family Health Center) Flu Shots and back to school immunizations- Monday, Sept. 17, 5-7 pm
- ◆ **HNA Community Meeting:**
- ◆ Sept 24, 6-7:30 P.M.
- ◆ **Cub Scouts:** Tuesday, 6:00-7:30 P.M.
- ◆ **Boy Scouts:** Wednesday's 6:00-7:30 P.M. 261-0081
- ◆ **English as a Second Language:** Wednesday's 5:00-6:00 P.M.
- ◆ **Solid Rock Amp Night:** Thursday's 6:00-8:00 P.M.
- ◆ **T.O.P.S. Group (Take off pounds sensibly):** Thursdays, 2:00-3:30 P.M. 425-8773
- ◆ **Highlands Neighborhood Matters:** Tom and Ray's Do it Yourself Car Maintenance, *starring Cindy Turpen* , Wednesday, September 19, 5:00-6:00 P.M.
- ◆ **Head Start Community Center Activities:** Parent Orientation- Sept 18 & 20, 12:30-3:00 Developmental Screening- Sept 28, 8:00-4:00

Welcome TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly)

The TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) Club Inc. is a nonprofit weight loss support group where members meet weekly in over 10,000 chapters in the U.S., Canada, and worldwide. TOPS began over 55 years ago and has helped people lose millions of pounds, while encouraging them to live a healthy lifestyle.

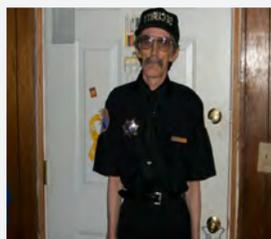
TOPS meets every Thursday from 2:00-3:00 P.M. at the Community Center. Call Carol at 425-8773



Highlands

Library Hours:

Monday - Friday 10-5,
Saturday 11-4



Thanks, Security Consultant Nelson Hooper

Do It Yourself Car Maintenance

Officer Cindy Turpen will walk us through basic maintenance and do it yourself repairs.

Wednesday, Sept. 19, 5-6 P.M.

Enjoy free refreshments.

The worst stuck on the side of the road story gets a prize !!!



It's time to sign up for Thanksgiving food box and Christmas gift programs. If you are in need, call or stop by the HNA Satellite Office. 442-5932



Free Flu Vaccinations are available at the community center Monday, September 17 for those who qualify. You must reserve your vaccine. Call 442-5932

Highlands Food Bank

donations of canned fruit and veggies are needed. Call 636-3754

food bank hours: Last 2 Tuesdays 10-noon, corner of 20th & Alabama



Volunteers Needed

Highlands Trail

Now that the trail is nearly complete, we need volunteers to hand water new foliage until the plants are established.

Let's show our appreciation by taking care of what we've been entrusted with.

Call 442-0612



Free! Free! Free!

Back to School Immunizations for those who qualify and.....

free stuffed animals to those who brave the needle!

To qualify you must have no

insurance or no Medicaid insurance. Information about childhood vaccines will be available as well.

Monday, September, 17, 2012, 5:30-6:30 P.M at the community center

Highlands Time Bank

Thanks Cowlitz Community Network and Department of Vocational Resources for funding our Time Bank again this year.

Call 442-5932 to join

Attention Parents: Free dental assistance for your children !!!!

Do you have Medicaid- eligible children that do not have a dental home and need dental care? Community Health Partners is here to help. Simply call Diana Thomas at (360) 200-3960 and she will do the rest.

The next scheduled clinic is Saturday, September 29, 2012.

For more information call Lesley Bombardier (360) 673-5423

Calling all kids 8-12.

Family Health Center is starting an awesome afterschool program at the community center just for you!!!

* Fun Activities * Information * Snacks *
Something cool to do afterschool call
HNA Office @ 442-5932



See Angel Rettig's New Mural on the south side of our office building

FREE Wi-Fi AND COMPUTER USE

Visit the community center to use computers for job search, home work, research or just for fun. Computer lab is open during Community Library business hours.

Are you a Cowlitz PUD Customer Age 65+ or Disabled?

Join Mark McCrady and Ned Piper at the Highlands Community Meeting, Monday, September 24 @ 6:00 P.M. at the Community Center. You could qualify to save up to 25% on your electric bill. **Pie and Coffee too!**



Wallenberg Preschool Program

St. Helens Elementary School

Free preschool program for eligible children designed to prepare 4 year old children for kindergarten

Call 575-7382

THE SOUTH KELSO REVITALIZATION STRATEGY: EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT



PREPARED FOR THE CITY OF KELSO BY
CONFLUENCE PLANNING ASSOCIATES &
PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY'S MASTERS OF URBAN & REGIONAL PLANNING PROGRAM

March 22, 2013

Executive Summary

The Existing Conditions Report (the Report) marks the completion of Phase One in the development of the South Kelso Revitalization Strategy. It contains a comprehensive review and synthesis of the current status and trends identified within the South Kelso Neighborhood, particularly in comparison to regional and statewide trends. These findings will guide the development of recommendations in Phase Two.

In developing the Report, the Portland State University graduate student planning team (the Planning Team) reviewed:

- **Existing Planning Documents** relating to transportation, housing, downtown revitalization, economic development, education, and social services.¹
- **Social support efforts** existing in the South Kelso Neighborhood.
- **Key demographics and trends** relating to population, ethnicity, income, and other indicators.
- **Access to parks, healthy food, transportation, and exposure to environmental toxics.**

The Planning Team also sought information and feedback from the general public by first developing the ASK! (Activate South Kelso) outreach campaign, and then conducting a series of **stakeholder interviews**, two public **'Coffee Talks,'** and small **focus group** discussions. The Planning Team has launched and is currently promoting the ASK! **community-wide survey**, to close April 26, 2013.

Literature Review, Research & Findings

Education & Housing- Indicators of social and economic health show a disadvantaged community in South Kelso with significant change in the past decade. Seventy-five percent of South Kelso has completed high school, though less than 7% of adults have completed college or an advanced degree. As of 2010, more than 25% of the South Kelso population is younger than 18 years of age, and elementary school enrollment is on the rise. South Kelso reports higher rates of unemployment than the city as a whole, and 48% of housing in the neighborhood is renter-occupied.

¹ Please see the full Existing Conditions Report for a complete list of documents reviewed, findings, and data sources.

Past Planning Efforts- The 1980 Kelso Comprehensive Plan notes a need to provide "a decent home and suitable living environment for all citizens of the community" and that this must be accomplished through the provision of "a variety of dwelling types, densities, and costs in all areas of the city." In particular, the Plan calls for new multi-family developments to be located "near commercial areas, recreation facilities, schools, employment centers, and transit routes." Since Plan adoption, Kelso has seen a limited shift toward multi-family housing, but has reported a slight increase in density along South Pacific Avenue.

The 2007 City of Kelso Downtown Revitalization Plan recommends amending Kelso regulations to permit greater height and density in the downtown area. The Plan recommends that City efforts to promote commercial activity be focused on the existing commercial corridor along South Pacific Avenue.

The 2009 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the Cowlitz-Lewis Economic Development District (CLEDD) suggests a number of strategies designed to develop a regional workforce, such as support for K-12 programs, training centers, and skills centers.

Access- In general, park access in South Kelso is high with the exception of the southern, industrial portion of the neighborhood. Community park use is inhibited by high crime rates and a lack of programming. Healthy food access is limited, with a very small portion of the neighborhood being within the recommended half-mile walking distance of the two sources of healthful food (Safeway, Cash & Carry). The United States Department of Agriculture defines a food desert as areas devoid of "fresh fruit, vegetables, and other healthful whole foods, usually found in impoverished areas." The South Kelso Neighborhood qualifies as a food desert based on this definition.

South Kelso's existing infrastructure shows considerable potential for a highly walkable neighborhood in terms of pedestrian navigation and proximity to schools, businesses, and employment centers. The 2012 CWOOG Great Streets Plan recommends partnerships between the City and School District to leverage state assets, such as seeking funds through the Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT's) Safe Routes to School

Program. These cooperative efforts would increase the walkability of the neighborhood for all residents.

Local Knowledge & Stakeholder Interviews

Comments received at public events were focused around three broad topic areas: community assets, problems, and solutions. Please see the full Report for a complete list of comments.

Assets-

- **Wallace Elementary** is a strong, positive force for the neighborhood
- Friendly **small town charm**, pride, and sense of community. The quiet neighborhood and the "old charm" of houses.
- In general, the neighborhood was considered safe. Dangerous areas are street-specific.
- **The police** play a positive role in neighborhood safety.

Problems-

- High drug use and crime. Low education.
- Hungry and bored youth.
- High transient population and rental turnover.
- Lack of community, no opportunities for connection or social capital building.
- Difficult relations between businesses and the City.
- Abandoned buildings and absentee landlords.
- The lack of proper infrastructure and upkeep of streets, roads, and houses.
- The need for economic development, jobs and a revitalized commercial downtown.
- The need for more/better parks with increased safety and programming.

Solutions-

- A neighborhood association and community groups (i.e. historic homeowners group).
- Celebration of Kelso's history. Historical highlights (i.e. historical murals).
- Improve access to parks along the river and landscaping for neighborhood beautification.
- Coordinated volunteer networks for neighborhood cleanup and painting days.
- Address the source of empty lots and abandoned houses. Offer both disincentives (i.e. tax penalties) and incentives (grants and other financing mechanisms).
- Hold community events like street fairs and block parties to encourage people to socialize with their neighbors.

- Develop a community center with free events and programs for all ages, including a community garden and life skills education.
- Increasing partnerships between the City and non-profits to better coordinate social services like Work Source and CAP.

Phase Two: Recommendations

These findings highlight the need for revitalization efforts to focus on the people of South Kelso as well as physical infrastructure and beautification projects. The Planning Team is currently developing a suite of recommendations that will leverage the community's existing assets and redress its challenges. These will be presented in publically accessible objectives, strategies, and actions designed to be implemented by the City and community partners.

Focus on People- Community investment in the people of South Kelso will leverage civic pride and volunteerism while increasing the capacities of the people through workforce development and educational attainment. The Planning Team will identify opportunities for collaborative partnerships between the City, the Kelso School District, the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments, and social service agencies. The South Kelso Revitalization Strategy will outline programs to build greater social capital, community engagement, and employability. Strategies will include funding options, recommended partnerships, and state and national programs.

Focus on Place- Solutions rooted in the physical environment will leverage South Kelso's historic small town charm, walkability, transportation access, natural amenities, and appealing aesthetics. The Planning Team will present solutions to spur greater residential property upkeep, downtown physical investments and beautification programs, enhanced pedestrian environments, as well as options for building on Wallace Elementary School's role as a community center and social service hub. The final South Kelso Revitalization Strategy will outline programs, funding, opportunities for collaboration, and recommend actions for each revitalization actor, whether community, agency, or governmental partner.

Timeline- The first draft of The South Kelso Revitalization Strategy Report will be completed May 13, 2013. The final draft will be submitted to the City on June 10, 2013.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
COMMUNITY PROFILE	5
SUMMARY OF EXISTING PLANNING DOCUMENTS	7
HOUSING	7
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	7
MOBILITY	8
EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES	9
RECREATION	9
KEY DEMOGRAPHICS AND TRENDS	10
POPULATION	10
EDUCATION	11
EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME	12
HOUSING	14
COMMUNITY PARK ACCESS	15
COMMUNITY VENUES	17
HEALTHY FOOD ACCESS	19
TRANSPORTATION ACCESS	21
ENVIRONMENTAL TOXICS	24
SOCIAL SUPPORT REVITALIZATION EFFORTS	26
COMMUNITY OUTREACH FINDINGS	28
COMMUNITY ASSETS	28
COMMUNITY PROBLEMS	28
COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS	29
STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW FINDINGS	31
ASSESSMENT OF UNMET NEEDS, OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES	33
NEXT STEPS	35

Introduction

This Existing Conditions Report outlines Confluence Planning Associates' (CPA's) research and data collected during the Landscape Scan phase of the development of the South Kelso Revitalization Strategy. This document is intended to summarize and synthesize data pertinent to the current state of the South Kelso Neighborhood and identify trends that may impact this community's future. This information—particularly when compared to regional and statewide trends—gives valuable insight into the health of the social and economic environment of the South Kelso Neighborhood. A comprehensive and holistic understanding of the community, including change over time, is necessary for the identification of local assets, constraints, and community priorities, and in the development of recommended strategies to achieve those objectives.

Literature Review

Confluence Planning Associates conducted a thorough review of existing planning efforts and demographic statistics that will ultimately influence the implementation of an effective Revitalization Strategy in South Kelso. CPA's research included a review of:

The **Summary of Existing Planning Documents** summarizes the past 30+ years of planning efforts in the region. These efforts are divided into broad themes: Housing, Economic Development, Mobility, Education and Social Services, and Recreation. Documents reviewed include the 1980 Kelso Comprehensive Plan, the City of Kelso Downtown Revitalization Plan (2007), the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments (CWCOG) Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Report (2009), the Consolidated Housing & Community Development Plan (2009-2013), the Cowlitz Transit Authority (CTA) Transit Enhancement Plan (2010), the CWCOG Great Streets Concept (2012), and the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the Cowlitz-Lewis Economic Development District (CLEDD) (2009).

The **Social Support Revitalization Efforts** section provides information on existing efforts to provide support to South Kelso residents, including the Lower Columbia Community Action Program (CAP), the Area Agency on Aging and Disabilities of Southwest Washington, and the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) (2009/2010).

The **Key Demographic and Trends** section outlines relevant trends in population, education, employment, income, and housing. This information was culled from local, state, and national surveys such as the U.S. Census and American Community Survey. These statistics help identify where Kelso may be gaining an advantage or falling behind in comparison to regional and statewide growth trends.

Local Knowledge

In an effort to gather data on the full spectrum of experiences, lifestyles, and perspectives of the South Kelso Neighborhood, CPA sought the casual anecdotes of local individuals with ties to South Kelso, in addition to formal institutional research publications. For their help, we would like to thank the residents, business owners, teachers, and employees of South Kelso for their willingness to share their experiences with our team.

CPA invited the general public to two 'Coffee Talks' held at the Kelso Public Library. The purpose of these was twofold: to inspire excitement in the community about their capacity to leverage change in their neighborhood, and to give the planning team an understanding of local knowledge systems rooted in place. Participants at these events engaged in informal conversation about their past experiences, present understandings, and future desires for the neighborhood. Summary findings from these events can be found in the **Community Outreach Findings** section.

The **Stakeholder Interview Findings** section summarizes the perspectives of a diverse range of stakeholders with ties to the South Kelso Neighborhood. Confluence Planning Associates defines stakeholders as a person

who—as a result of their affiliation with a particular organization or effort—may provide a unique perspective germane to their particular community experience. Stakeholders are typically 1) organized around a theme, 2) represent a body of individuals, and 3) are vested in the future health of the South Kelso community. These individuals typically represent a city department, not-for-profit organization, church, business, school, or other organization.

The **Synthesis** section contains CPA’s current understanding of South Kelso with consideration of all of the above findings. Four key leverage points have been identified: 1) the role of Wallace Elementary and a potential partnership with the Kelso School District; 2) Walkability and Density in the Downtown Core; 3) Community Cohesion; and 4) a Spatial Mismatch of Jobs and Capacity. By addressing these issues, the Kelso community has significant potential to build social capital, economic resiliency, and shape the future identity of the South Kelso Neighborhood as a vibrant, healthy community.

The planning team of Confluence Planning Associates looks forward to leveraging these lessons learned as we co-create a list of solutions, recommendations, and strategies that the collective community can utilize to best develop the future, vibrant South Kelso that all have imagined.

Community Profile

Kelso, WA is located on Interstate 5 about 50 miles north of Portland, OR and 120 miles south of Seattle, WA. The city is located at the confluence of three rivers, the Cowlitz, Coweeman, and Columbia. Kelso is the county seat of Cowlitz County. The city's population is approximately 12,000 people,¹ with about 50,000 residents in the entire metro region including the city of Longview that shares a border with Kelso and lies across the Cowlitz River to the west. Kelso has experienced virtually no population growth since 2000. The city is comprised of 8.5 square miles of land and has an average population density of 1,465 residents per square mile.

The South Kelso Neighborhood lies between the Cowlitz River to the west and the Three Rivers Mall to the east, Highway 4 to the north and the Kelso-Longview Airport to the south. The neighborhood includes a well-established core of single-family homes (mainly one-story residences), with a small commercial district situated along South Pacific Avenue, and vacant industrial land in the southern end of the neighborhood.

The South Kelso Neighborhood is home to approximately 5,846 residents living within 2,264 households, making it home to roughly half of the entire population of the city of Kelso.² The South Kelso Neighborhood is slightly younger than Kelso as a whole with over 25% of the population under 18 years of age.³ Much like the city as a whole, South Kelso is predominantly white, though it is home to the largest concentration of Hispanic or Latino residents—the largest minority in the city.⁴ Roughly 75% of neighborhood residents have completed high school, but less than 7% have completed college or an advanced degree.⁵ The South Kelso Neighborhood also has a higher unemployment rate than the city as a whole, 9.8% to 8.6%, and has the lowest median household income, \$33,143, and the highest percentage of households needing public assistance, 13%.⁶ Finally, while residences in the neighborhood are primarily single-family, 48% are occupied by renters rather than owners.⁷

¹ [1] City of Kelso Datasheet, October 22, 2012

² City of Kelso project proposal, Fall, 2012

³ ACS 2006-2010

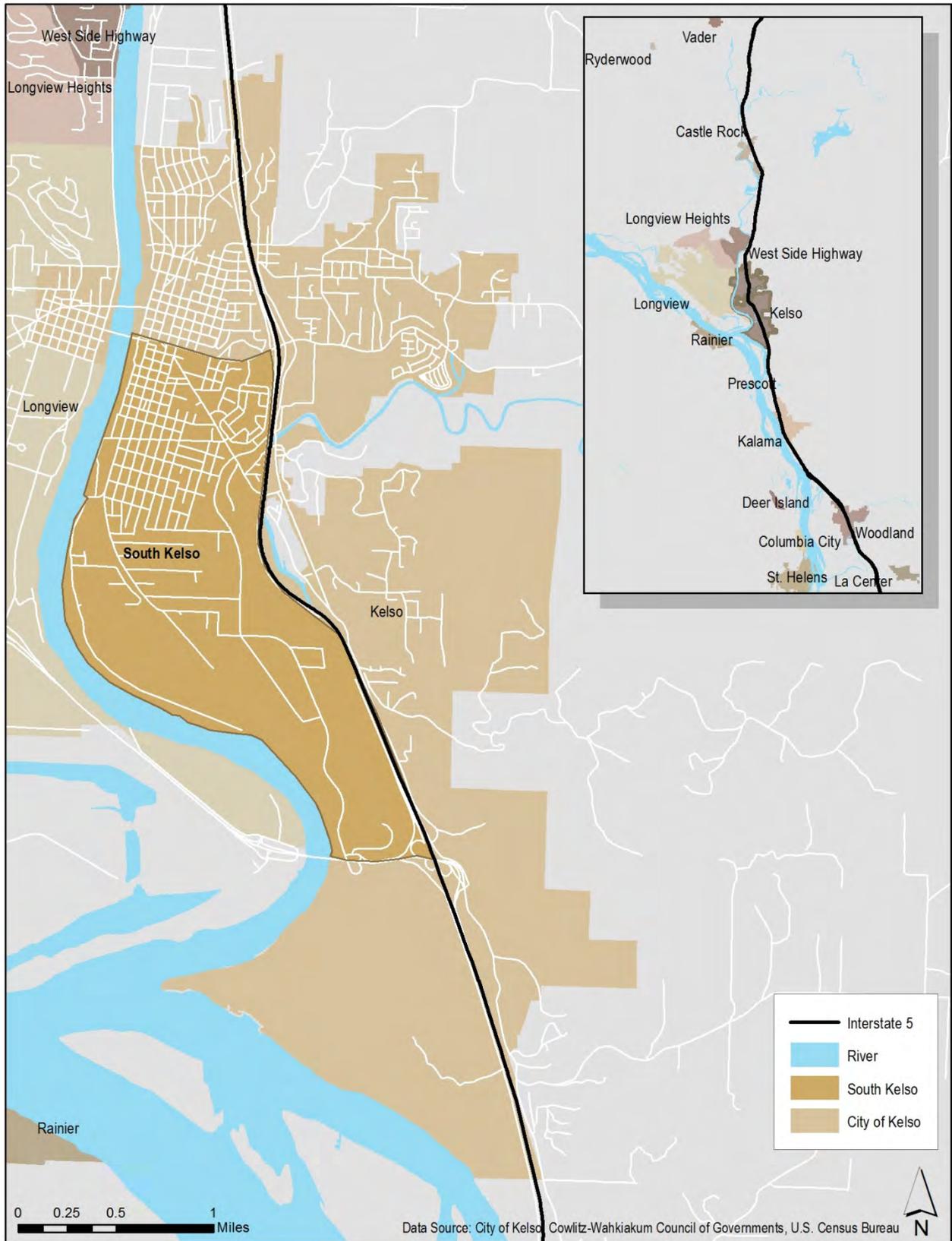
⁴ Ibid

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Ibid

Figure 1 South Kelso Context Map



Summary of Existing Planning Documents

As part of our due diligence and to better understand what past efforts have been suggested and attempted in the South Kelso Neighborhood, we reviewed a number of existing planning documents that have been generated over the past 30 years by the City of Kelso, the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments, and Cowlitz County.

For ease of reference, the summary of this document review has been organized into five themes: Housing, Economic Development, Mobility, Education and Social Services, and Recreation.

Housing

The 1980 Kelso Comprehensive Plan recognizes that there is a need to provide “a decent home and suitable living environment for all citizens of the community” and that this must be accomplished through the provision of “a variety of dwelling types, densities, and costs in all areas of the city.” In particular, the Plan calls for multi-family development to be located “near commercial areas, recreation facilities, schools, employment centers, and transit routes.” The geographic location of the South Kelso Neighborhood meets many of those identified metrics, however the community would benefit from additional employment centers located nearby.

The Comprehensive Plan also identifies the South Kelso Neighborhood as one that would benefit from greater availability of multi-family housing and medium density development in the form of single-family, duplex, or triplex units. In the years since the Plan was adopted, the South Kelso Neighborhood has seen a limited shift to these housing types and a slight increase in neighborhood density, particularly along South Pacific Avenue. However, the majority of the South Kelso Neighborhood remains single-family.

One option for achieving the housing density levels called for in the Comprehensive Plan would be through the amendment of the City’s zoning code to allow for increased building height and mixed-use buildings, especially along South Pacific Avenue, as recommended in the 2007 City of Kelso Downtown Revitalization Plan. A survey of downtown business owners showed general support for amending the zoning code to allow buildings with commercial on the ground floor and residential units above as a way of increasing residential density downtown. Allowing mixed-use development would result in new types of housing being available in South Kelso, attracting downtown residents to support South Kelso businesses.

The provision of affordable housing should be included in any revitalization effort in South Kelso. The Consolidated Housing and Community Development Plan (2009-2013) identifies a number of strategies to ensure that the housing stock of South Kelso continues to meet the needs of its residents. These strategies include: retaining, preserving, and improving the condition of decent and affordable housing for low- to moderate-income households; encouraging the acquisition of affordable rental housing to expand housing choices for low- to moderate-income households; assisting low-income and special needs renters who bear extreme housing cost burdens; and promoting diverse, thriving downtowns by supporting efforts to improve and expand housing within the central business district.

Economic Development

The Kelso community is struggling to transition out of its past economy based in resource extraction (fishing/logging) and into a service-based economy.

The 1980 Kelso Comprehensive Plan calls for a “diversified, well balanced economy to insure stable, sustained economic growth” by encouraging the siting of firms that will “diversify the local employment base, create employment and business opportunities, and reduce area dependence upon natural resource processing and seasonal activities.”

To achieve this, the Plan recommends that higher employment industries be given priority over low employment uses such as warehouses and storage facilities and that commercial development along South Pacific Avenue be encouraged to further connect with and blend into the surrounding neighborhood.

The City of Kelso Downtown Revitalization Plan (2007) advocates for the City to focus efforts on the existing commercial corridor along South Pacific Avenue. The Plan references a survey through which downtown business owners indicated that they believe the City could do more to support downtown businesses. Business owners indicated that they believe more could be done to make the downtown seem vibrant and attractive, including the programming of more community activities, the rehabilitation of storefronts, and the recruitment of new businesses to the downtown area.

Mobility

The Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments Great Streets Concept for Longview and Kelso (2012) identifies the two biggest challenges to mobility in the South Kelso Neighborhood as 1) a discontinuous pedestrian system that discourages walking and 2) many arterial streets that cut through the neighborhood, negatively impacting the overall connectivity of the neighborhood and opportunities for neighborhood place-making.

South Kelso's existing infrastructure shows considerable potential for the region to be a highly walkable neighborhood in terms of the average resident's proximity to schools, businesses, and employment centers. However, the current road system is unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists, forcing the majority of trips to be made by private automobile. The Great Streets Concept suggests that bicycle and pedestrian access should be a high priority in future local comprehensive plans. This could include "encouraging local jurisdictions to develop ordinances, which require the provision of safe, adequate, and convenient access for pedestrians and bicycles in new development."

In addressing concerns over school children walking to and from school, the Great Streets Concept encourages local jurisdictions and school districts to cooperatively seek funds through the Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT's) Safe Routes to School Program. It also encourages the provision of sidewalks and bicycle lanes on arterials and school routes. Increasing South Kelso's 'walkability' would encourage residents to frequent businesses in the core of the community, particularly those along South Pacific Avenue, as they would be more accessible than those necessitating a vehicle. The Great Streets Concept plan identifies a number of steps for improving the pedestrian environment in South Kelso, including the completion of the sidewalk network, the addition of high visibility pedestrian crosswalks, and activated traffic signals.

The Cowlitz Transit Authority Transit Enhancement Plan (2010) provides a comprehensive review of Cowlitz Transit Authority's (CTA) public transit services in the Kelso-Longview area. In 2008, the voters approved an increased sales tax to fund improved public transit services. The Enhancement Plan provides recommendations to improve Community Urban Bus Service (CUBS) based on an assessment of existing conditions and a public outreach process to identify needs and opportunities. The report recommends simplifying the two bi-directional loops through South Kelso to one streamlined route to improve legibility of the system.

During the development of the Transit Enhancement Plan, a passenger survey was administered to CUBS riders. The survey findings present some interesting statistics and generally indicate that CUBS passengers are highly transit dependent, including:

- 62% ride CUBS 5 days per week
- 15% would not have made the trip without CUBS
- 59% earn under \$10,000 per year
- Most CUBS riders are students, unemployed, or retired

Education and Social Services

The 2009 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the Cowlitz-Lewis Economic Development District (CLEDD) identifies a number of strategies designed to develop a regional workforce. These include: support for K-12 programs that strengthen the future employability of the community; encouraging schools, training centers, skills centers, and employers to offer workforce development opportunities, re-training, internships, and apprenticeships; encouraging adult education at high schools, community-based organizations, and community colleges; and encouraging or expanding opportunities and networks in education, languages, job training, and search services to assist immigrants and minority groups in the region.

The Strategy also recommends that local governments consider offering programs for the elderly, youth, those in poverty, those requiring mental health and substance abuse services, and to support and encourage cultural amenities.

Recreation

The 1980 Kelso Comprehensive Plan recognizes the need for parks and open spaces to allow for recreational opportunities. To realize this goal, the Plan suggests that improvements should be made to the recreational facilities at local school playgrounds, so that the schools may also serve as neighborhood parks.

The strategy identified the South Kelso Neighborhood as an area where the City should develop neighborhood parks that incorporate play facilities for area children. The Plan also notes that neighborhood parks should “be located so as to provide easy and safe access by area residents who may reach them by foot or bicycle.”

To address the maintenance needs of both existing and future neighborhood parks, the Plan suggests that the Park Board institute a neighborhood park maintenance program, utilizing local residents on a volunteer basis.

Finally, the Comprehensive Plan also recommends a continuation of the arrangement between the City of Kelso and the Kelso School District that allows for Kelso schools to be used as indoor facilities for group and individual recreation activities, and arts and crafts programs.

Conclusion

Review of these past plans has served as an affirmation that the issues and challenges that have been vocalized by the community are the same as those that have been identified in past studies. These plans have also highlighted the success or challenges demonstrated by past efforts, informing the future recommendations by the planning team.

Key Demographics and Trends

In addition to qualitative and anecdotal evidence, it is important to identify and measure quantitative community statistics in order to understand current existing conditions of the community, particularly with consideration to change over time. CPA reviewed key demographic statistics that are recognized as indicators for community economic, social, and environmental sustainability. These data can also be used to provide a baseline to measure future improvement based on team recommendations.

Population

The South Kelso Neighborhood has seen only a 1.6% increase in total population from 2000 to 2010. This figure is greater than growth numbers reported by the City of Kelso as a whole, but smaller than those of Cowlitz County or State of Washington (Figure 2).

Three significant population trends will impact the provision of services: 1) the number of working age adults (age 18 to 64 years) living in South Kelso has increased 7.6% in the past decade, a larger rate than was reported by the entire city. This suggests a growing workforce in South Kelso would benefit from job creation and workforce services within that area. 2) South Kelso and the city as a whole experienced a decrease in population under 18 years of age (-6.5% and -6.8%, respectively). These figures conflict with statewide trends (Washington State, 4.5% increase) (Figure 2). These changing demographics will have an impact on the Kelso School District in the form of shrinking enrollment (Figure 4). 3) South Kelso experienced a 9.1% decrease in the number of elderly residents between 2000 and 2010, suggesting that there may be a decrease in the demand for city services and programs for the elderly.

Figure 2 Age, Percent Change, 2000-2010 Census and ACS

	% Change: South Kelso	% Change: City of Kelso	% Change: Cowlitz County	% Change: Washington State
Total Population	1.6%	0.3%	10.2%	14.1%
Under 18 years	-6.5%	-6.8%	-0.7%	4.5%
18-64 years	7.6%	4.8%	11.1%	16.1%
65 years and over	-9.1%	-5.3%	27.8%	25.0%

The South Kelso Neighborhood has undergone a transition in the racial make-up of the neighborhood between 2000 and 2010. White, African American, and Asian populations decreased 5.7%, 16.7%, and 47.5%, respectively, while the Hispanic and Latino populations grew by over 60% (

Figure 3). Kelso as a whole experienced a similar trend over these ten years. This shift in demographics suggests that there is a growing need for bilingual services and future development that serves the Hispanic community.

These demographic changes also have the potential to disrupt the cohesion of the South Kelso Neighborhood as longtime residents adjust to the new neighborhood demographics. City efforts to promote cultural awareness, tolerance, and diversity would increase community cohesion in this area.

Figure 3 Race and Ethnicity, Percent Change, 2000-2010 Census and ACS

	% Change: South Kelso	% Change: City of Kelso	% Change: Cowlitz County	% Change: Washington State
White	-5.7%	-6.8%	5.1%	4.8%
African American	-16.7%	-20.4%	18.7%	20.7%
Asian/Hawaiian/Native American/Other	-47.5%	-46.3%	-34.0%	-8.0%
Hispanic or Latino	61.0%	63.4%	88.5%	71.2%

Education

Between 2000 and 2010, the neighborhood of South Kelso and the City as a whole reported similar decreases in populations of individuals under 18 (Figure 2). However, this is not reflected in student enrollment numbers. Wallace Elementary School, which serves the South Kelso Neighborhood, has seen its enrollment increase by over 10% in the past decade even as total student enrollment in the Kelso School District has declined by 5% (Figure 4). This suggests that there is a higher percentage of elementary age students living in South Kelso as compared to the entire city and that the City and School District should focus programs and services for younger students in the South Kelso Neighborhood.

Wallace Elementary School has seen a 13% decrease in the number of students meeting or exceeding the 3rd grade public school reading proficiency standard (from 68.9% to 55.6%), compared to the Kelso School District as a whole, which has seen a 2% increase overall (Figure 4). Third grade reading proficiency is widely seen as an indicator of future success in school. These figures may infer that a particular effort should be made to support youths’ progress in Wallace School.

Kelso High School has seen an almost 10% increase in its 4 year graduation rate⁸ in the past decade to 87.3%, far exceeding Washington State overall (76.6%) (Figure 4). Additionally, the number of South Kelso residents who have attended some college or received an Associate’s degree increased almost 9% between 2000 and 2010 (Figure 5). Yet, both the City of Kelso and the neighborhood of South Kelso have seen a slight decrease in the number of residents who have earned a Bachelor degree, suggesting that economic development needs to accommodate Kelso’s average level of education (Figure 5).

Over 87% of students at Wallace elementary receive free or reduced-rate meals, an almost 6% increase since 2005 (Figure 4). Both Kelso at large and Washington State reported higher percent increases of students receiving free and reduced-rate lunches.

⁸ The Kelso School District’s system for calculating graduation rates has changed to comply with national standards, which has influenced these figures.

Figure 4 K-12 Statistics, Percent Change, 2005-2012 Washington State Board of Education

	% Change: South Kelso	% Change: City of Kelso	% Change: Washington State
Student Enrollment	10.9%	-5.0%	3.0%
3rd grade public school reading proficiency	-13.3%	2.0%	0.5%
4-year adjusted cohort high school graduation rate	--	9.8%	2.3%
Free or Reduced-Price Meals	5.9%	11.4%	8.8%

Figure 5 Higher Education Attainment, Percent Change, 2000-2010 Census and ACS

	% Change: South Kelso	% Change: City of Kelso	% Change: Cowlitz County	% Change: Washington State
Attended some college or received Associate’s degree (age 25 and over)	8.8%	5.8%	3.4%	-0.1%
Received Bachelor, Graduate or professional degree (age 25 and over)	-1.6%	-0.7%	1.3%	3.3%

Employment and Income

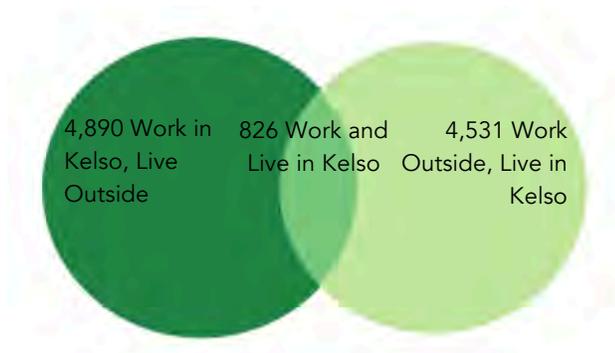
Kelso residents are primarily employed in retail (14.2%); health care and social assistance (14.0%); manufacturing (13.9%); accommodation and food services (8.1%); and educational services (7.9%) (Figure 6). Major employers in Kelso include the Kelso School District, Foster Farms, Safeway, Target, Columbia Analytical Services, Western Fabrication, PAPE Machinery, and DSU Peterbilt.

Figure 6 Top 5 Kelso Employment Sectors, 2010 U.S. Census

	Count	Percent Share
Retail Trade	759	14.2%
Health Care and Social Assistance	752	14.0%
Manufacturing	743	13.9%
Accommodation and Food Services	436	8.1%
Educational Services	421	7.9%

To date, there has not been a good match between available jobs and the qualifications of South Kelso residents. Figure 7 shows that the vast majority of Kelso residents don’t work in Kelso despite the fact that there are jobs present that attract workers from across the region. Only 826 Kelso residents work in Kelso.

Figure 7 Inflow and Outflow of Employment in Kelso, 2010 U.S. Census



Just over one-quarter of Kelso residents, 27.1%, work in Longview (Figure 8). Only 15.4% of Kelso residents also work in Kelso. Small percentages commute to Vancouver (4.6%), Portland (3.6%), Seattle (2.9%), Tacoma (1.8%), Woodland (1.5%), and Olympia (1.0%).

Figure 8 Work Locations of Kelso Residents, 2010 U.S. Census

City	Count	Share
Longview, WA	1,454	27.1%
Kelso, WA	826	15.4%
Vancouver, WA	246	4.6%
Portland, OR	194	3.6%
Seattle, WA	157	2.9%
Tacoma, WA	98	1.8%
Woodland, WA	79	1.5%
Olympia, WA	52	1.0%
Yakima, WA	44	0.8%
Hazel Dell, WA	40	0.7%
All Other Locations	2,167	40.5%
Total	5,357	100.0%

Unemployment trends in South Kelso and Kelso at large (Figure 9) likely relate to concurrent decreases in Bachelor, Graduate or professional degree attainment (Figure 5). Between 2000 and 2010, the unemployment rate in South Kelso increased 2.1% to reach 9.8%, while the rate in the city as a whole increased at a similar rate to 8.6% in 2010.

Figure 9 Employment, Percent Change, 2000-2010 Census and ACS

	% Change: South Kelso	% Change: City of Kelso	% Change: Cowlitz County	% Change: Washington State
Residents employed 50 to 52 weeks	6.2%	6.9%	7.1%	8.5%
Residents unemployed	2.1%	1.9%	1.9%	0.8%
Residents not in labor force	3.0%	-0.4%	1.8%	0.3%

An additional concurrent trend to the increase in unemployment has been a decrease in median household income, especially in the South Kelso Neighborhood. While the Great Recession resulted in across the board decreases in median household income as evidenced by Washington State overall experiencing a 4.5% decrease, this rate almost tripled in the South Kelso Neighborhood which saw a 14.4% decrease (Figure 10). In 2010, the median household income in South Kelso was \$33,143, compared to \$38,711 in 2000 (2010 dollars).

Though South Kelso saw a rise in unemployment and decrease in median household income, it experienced an 11% decrease in the number of residents living below the poverty line. This could be explained by a combination of higher wage earners leaving the neighborhood (resulting in a lower median household income) and an increase in wages at the bottom of the spectrum. These figures are notable when compared to conflicting trends in City of Kelso, Cowlitz County, and Washington State (Table 6).

According to the Center for Neighborhood Technology Housing and Transportation Affordability index, 100% of residents in the South Kelso Neighborhood spend more than 15% of their income on transportation costs. Moreover, 70% of South Kelso residents spend 45% or more on housing and transportation costs combined.⁹ These thresholds, combined with decreased median household income, indicate that many South Kelso residents are struggling to make ends meet.

Figure 10 Income and Poverty, Percent Change, 2000-2010 Census and ACS

	% Change: South Kelso	% Change: City of Kelso	% Change: Cowlitz County	% Change: Washington State
Median Household Income (2010\$)	-14.4%	-7.4%	-9.7%	-4.5%
Below Poverty Level	-11.2%	18.0%	32.8%	27.4%

Housing

Vacant housing in the South Kelso Neighborhood decreased at a slower rate compared to the city as a whole between 2000 and 2010, and remains at a higher rate to date. Just under 10% of the housing stock in South Kelso is vacant, down 14.5% since 2000, compared to a 21.1% decrease in the city all together (Figure 11).

South Kelso has experienced a shift away from homeownership and toward a rental market, as evidenced by the data presented in Figure 11. Renter occupied housing units increased 7.1% in South Kelso between 2000 and

⁹ H&T Affordability Index, from Center for Neighborhood Technology, accessed <<http://www.htaindex.org/map/>>

2010, compared to only 2.0% for the city as a whole. This type of trend may negatively affect neighborhood cohesion and the community’s sense of ownership. Traditionally, renters are more mobile, resulting in less social and financial investment in their neighborhood and less interest in engaging in neighborhood improvement efforts. Absentee landlords may also lead to disinvestment and lack of upkeep. The City could consider specifically targeting the renters living in South Kelso through programs that draw them into revitalization efforts.

Figure 11 Housing, Percent Change, 2000-2010 Census and ACS

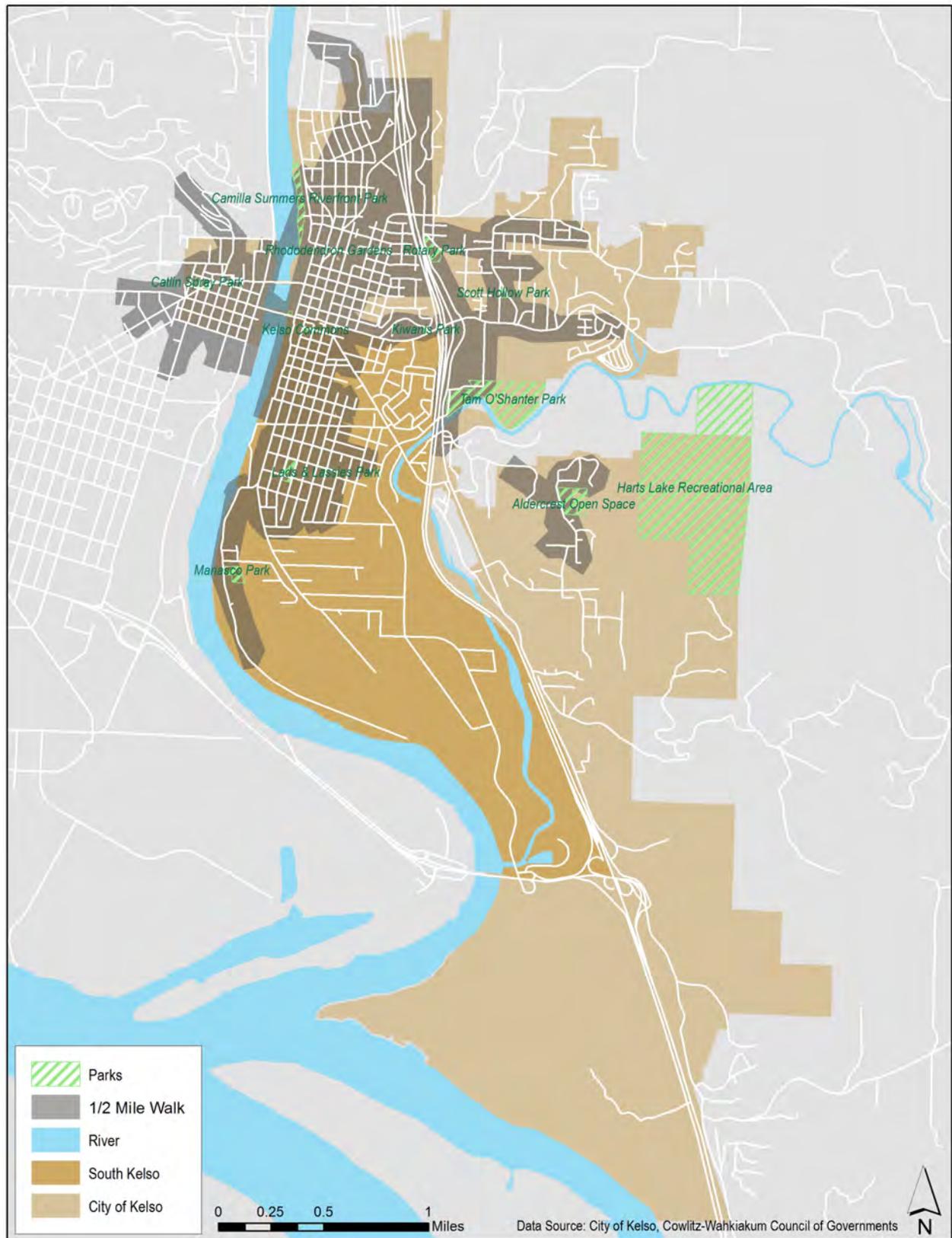
	Percent (2010) South Kelso	% Change South Kelso	Percent (2010) City of Kelso	% Change City of Kelso
Vacant Housing Units	9.6%	-14.5%	7.1%	-21.1%
Renter Occupied Housing Units	48.0%	7.1%	45.1%	2.0%

Community Park Access

Most Kelso residents are within a half mile walk of a community park (Figure 12). Yet, South Kelso residents have lesser access to parks than other neighborhoods in Kelso. The bulk of the southern half of South Kelso and the Three Rivers Mall and surrounding area has no access to parks. While this area is largely comprised of employment uses, some residences are located within this area.

Additionally, the quality and safety of the parks that are accessible may not be adequate for the facilities to act as recreational and social assets in the community. The Lads and Lassies Park and Manasco Park, located in South Kelso, are both small in size and may not feature the right mix of recreational amenities that interest area residents. Crime and drug use also discourage the functioning of these public spaces as community assets.

Figure 12 Community Park Access in Kelso, WA



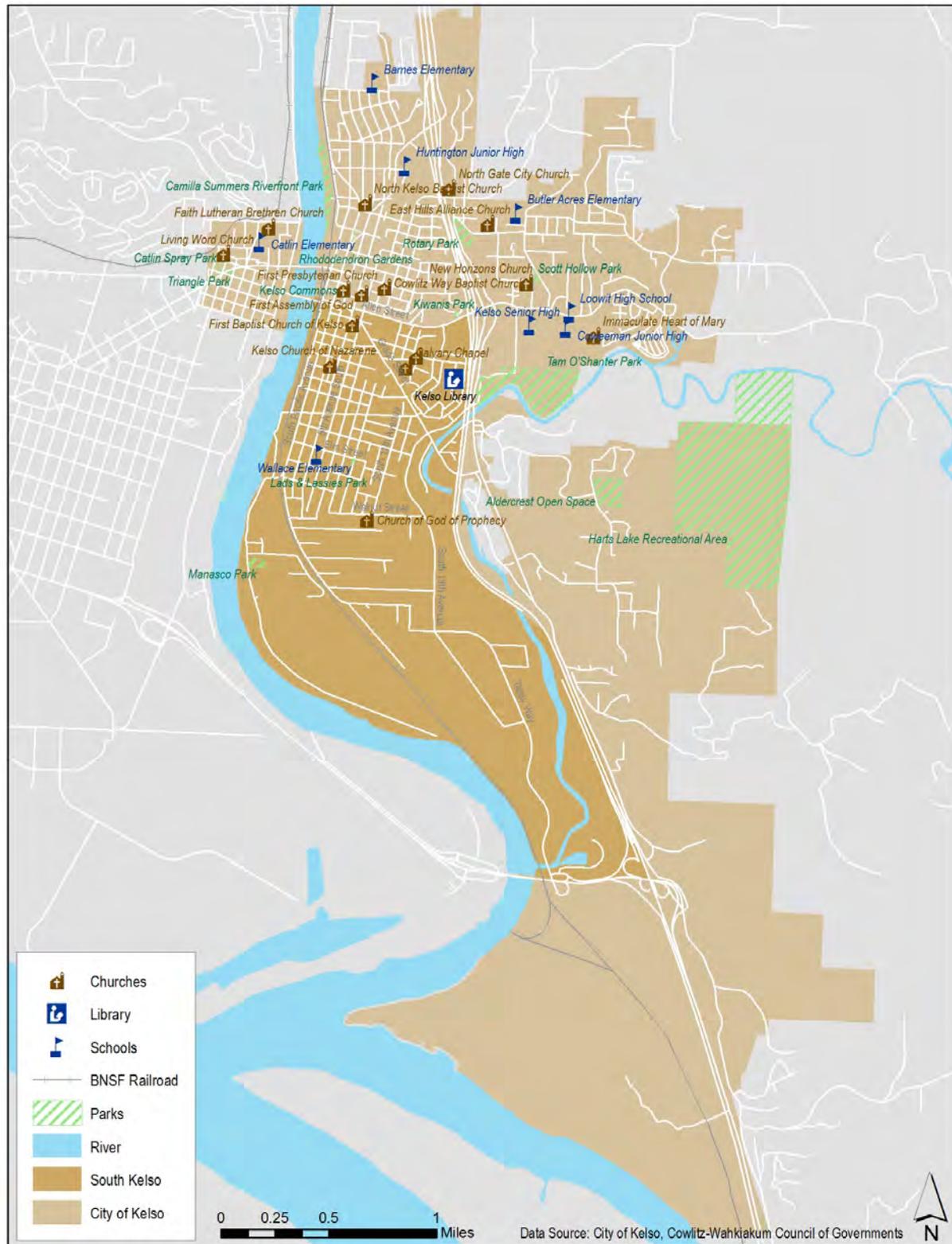
Community Venues

Figure 13 designates churches, libraries, and schools within the City of Kelso. The map reveals a dearth of these designated community venues in South Kelso, especially in proportion to other parts of the city.

Although there is a lack of service centers, two venues that are essential to community cohesion are located within South Kelso: Wallace Elementary School and the Public Library. Throughout this report, Wallace Elementary is highlighted as a point of community pride, and the single element of 'community' in South Kelso. Although it can be argued that the Library isn't in the South Kelso Neighborhood, many residents recognize this institution as being within their district and it still plays a vital role in an area where there are few community venues.

Physical space, such as community venues, generates security, comfort and connection for individuals, and allows residents to interact with and build community with other residents of their neighborhood. In these spaces information takes the form of stories, ideas, concerns, and challenges - all shared through conversations, activities, programs, and mentoring.

Figure 13 Community Venues in Kelso, WA



Healthy Food Access

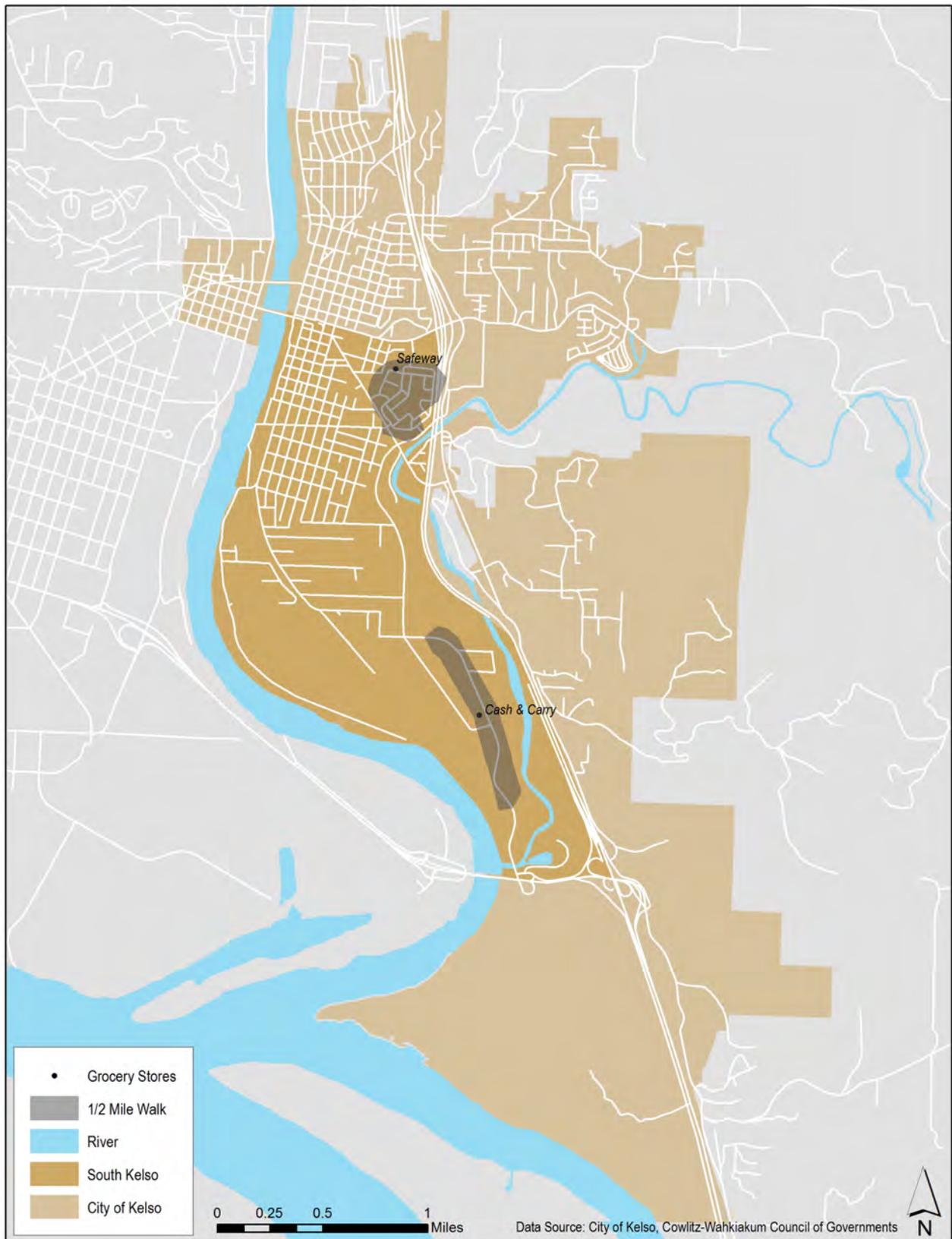
Decisions about food spending and diet are to a great extent impacted by accessibility and affordability of food stores, including the time required to reach a store that sells healthy food compared to ease of access of unhealthy foods.

Only two full service grocery stores that offer healthy foods are located within the South Kelso Neighborhood (Figure 14). Only very small portions of the neighborhood are within a half mile walking distance of these two sources of healthy foods.

The United States Department of Agriculture defines a food desert as areas “vapid of fresh fruit, vegetables, and other healthful whole foods, usually found in impoverished areas.”¹⁰ The South Kelso Neighborhood qualifies as a food desert based on this definition.

¹⁰ American Nutrition Association. *USDA Defines Food Deserts*. Nutrition Digest Volume 36 No. 3

Figure 14 Healthy Food Access in Kelso, WA



Transportation Access

South Kelso is well served by transit options, including CUBS¹¹ routes 20 and 21 (Figure 17). Routes 20 and 21 are two bi-directional loops through Kelso, providing South Kelso residents with access to Three Rivers Mall, Safeway, West Kelso, and Longview. These two routes operate on a 60 minute schedule from 7AM – 7PM on weekdays and 8AM – 6PM on Saturdays. There is no CUBS service on Sundays.

Route 21 experienced a larger ridership growth than Route 20 between 2008 and 2012, at 10.2% compared to a decrease of 3.5% (Figure 15). Yet, Route 21 carries more riders overall, at 92,632 riders in 2012 compared to 54,108 riders for Route 21.

The current route configuration and schedule does not provide service to employment locations in the southern end of South Kelso; however the agency is in the process of implementing the recommendations outlined in the 2010 Transit Enhancement Plan to provide some service to these areas.

Figure 15 Annual CUBS Ridership, Routes 20, 21 and All Routes, 2008 and 2012, River Cities Transit

	City of Kelso		
	2008	2012	% Change
Route 20	95,970	92,632	-3.5%
Route 21	49,090	54,108	10.2%
All Routes	361,256	381,018	5.5%

South Kelso residents also have access to two multi-use paths: one located along the Cowlitz River and one along the Coweeman River (Figure 17). These facilities can provide recreational as well as transportation options to South Kelso residents.

The South Kelso Neighborhood is generally characterized by a compact street grid, which allows for easy access to destinations by walking or bicycling. Walk Score, an online website, supplies scores to describe how walkable a specific location is. A Walk Score is a number between 0 and 100 that measures the walkability of any location. According to Walk Score, South Kelso’s Walk Score varies greatly, from 20 to 94. A score of 20 indicates a very car-dependent environment while a score of 94 suggests a walker’s paradise.

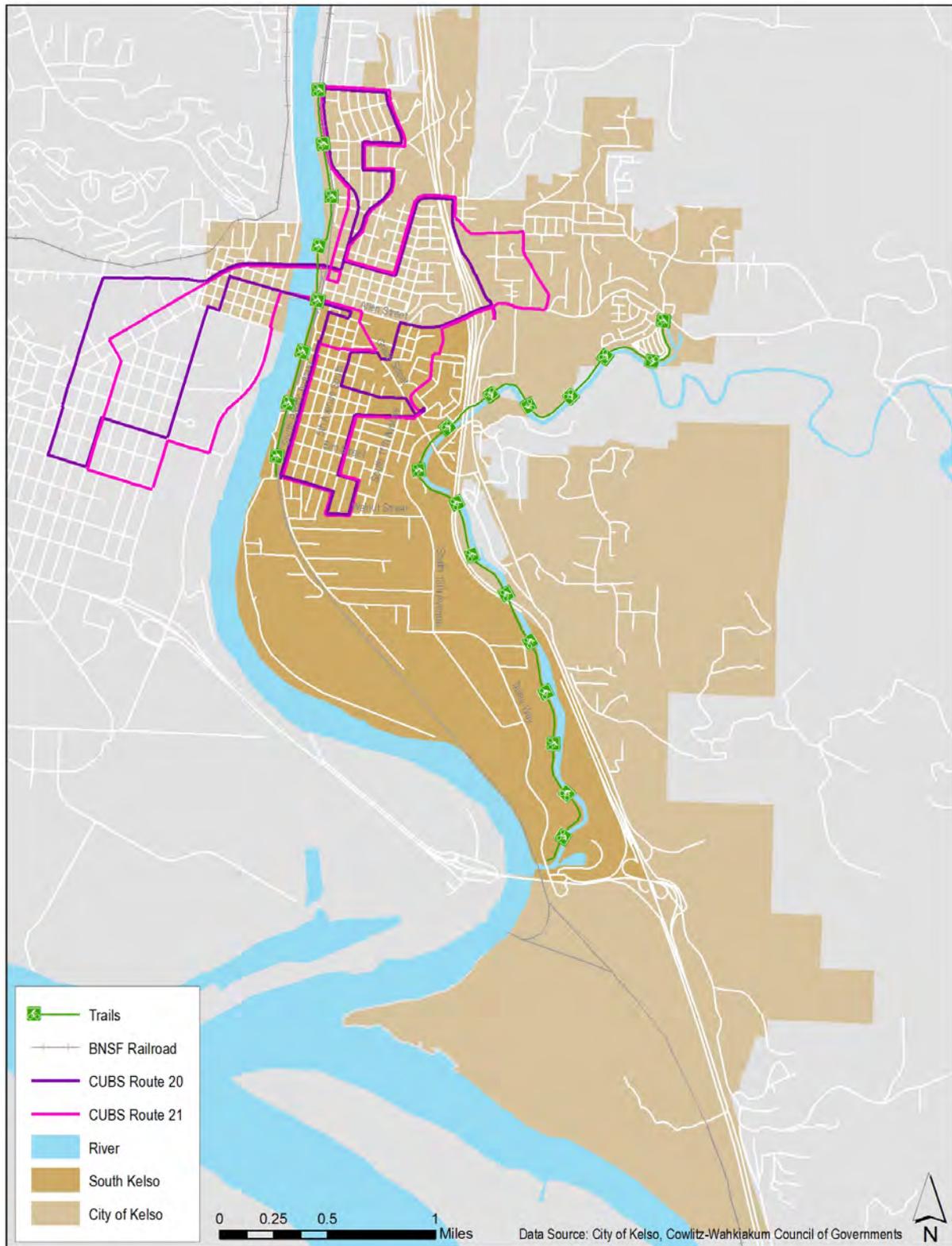
Some reasons for this large discrepancy include that the majority of South Kelso is laid out on a 19th century grid, which promotes small, connected blocks and high walkability. The intersection density of this grid is very high and promotes walking. However, this neighborhood has also experienced several decades of disinvestment, leading to crumbling or non-existent sidewalks. The southern portion of the neighborhood takes on a winding, disconnected street pattern promoting car use, larger plots of land, and less walking.

¹¹ Community Urban Bus Service has been recently renamed to River Cities Transit

Figure 16 Walk Score Categories and Descriptions

Score Range	Description
90 – 100 (Very Good)	A Walker's Paradise. Daily errands do not require a car.
70 – 89 (Good)	Very walkable with most errands accomplished on foot.
50 – 69 (Neutral)	Somewhat walkable with some amenities within walking distance.
25 – 49 (Poor)	Car-dependent with only a few amenities within walking distance.
0 – 24 (Very Poor)	Car-dependent with almost all errands requiring a car.

Figure 17 Transportation Facilities in Kelso, WA



Environmental Toxics

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) manages a dataset to track the release of toxic chemicals from facilities, known as the Toxics Release Inventory (TRI). The TRI inventory provides information to:

- Identify potential environmental concerns and gain a better understanding of potential risks;
- Identify priorities and opportunities to work with industry, government and communities to reduce toxic chemical releases and potential risks associated with them;
- Provide community members with information and insights regarding toxic chemical releases and waste management practices in the community;
- Make informed decisions on the consequences of such practices and take action; and
- Establish reduction targets and measure progress toward those targets (Agency, 2012)

The TRI does not reveal whether or to what degree the public is exposed to listed chemicals. It can be used as a starting point in evaluating exposures and resulting risks.

There are four TRI sites in South Kelso. (Figure 18). Those facilities are: Weyerhaeuser NR CO – Longview, Foster Poultry Farms Kelso Plant, Pacific Coating & Laminating, and Stowe Woodward.

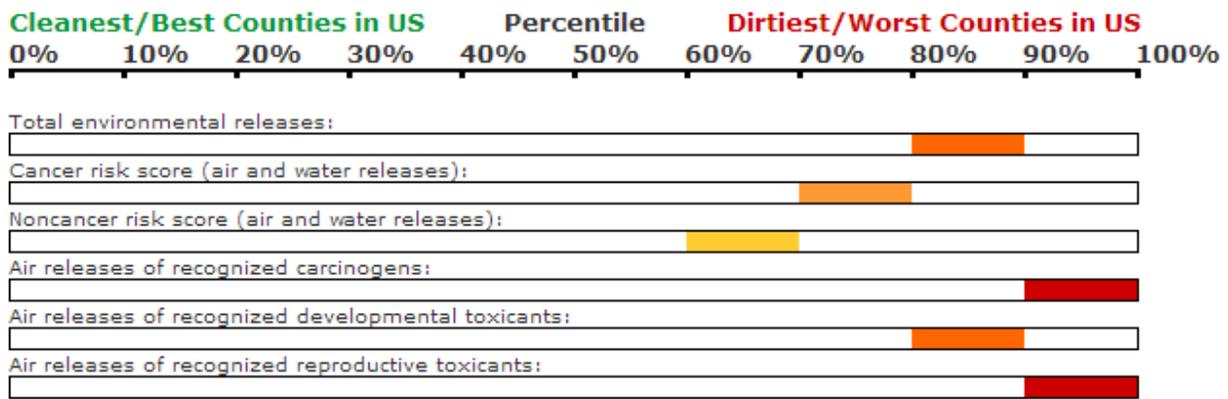
Figure 18 Map of Toxic Release Inventory Sites in Kelso-Longview, WA



Source: Environmental Protection Agency

The chemical releases documented in the TRI place Cowlitz County in the 90th percentile for the release of recognized carcinogens and reproductive toxicants. Cowlitz County is in the 80th percentile for total environmental chemical release and developmental toxicants (Figure 19).

Figure 19 2002 Rankings: Major Chemical Releases or Waste Generation in Cowlitz County



Source: www.scorecard.goodguide.com

Social Support Revitalization Efforts

The data above reveal a neighborhood struggling to meet the most basic characteristics of a stable community, including housing, education and jobs. South Kelso is going on several generations of disinvestment, extensive social support and households unable to break out of the cycles of poverty.

With this said, the community has not stood idly by in the face of these struggles. State and local efforts have reached out to the community to provide alleviation and support addressing many of the challenges listed in the previous section.

For example, the Lower Columbia Community Action Program (CAP) has been very active throughout Kelso for over several decades. An outcome of the Lyndon Administration's *War On Poverty* initiative, CAP has been present in Washington State since 1964.

CAP centers its work on the philosophy that community action must stem from a collective belief, identity and effort to improve one's neighborhood. Since its inception CAP has seen their several of their initial programs mature into fully-operational organizations, including two retail-based organizations that provide training for individuals and services to the community. The Grounds for Opportunity (GFO) Cafe is a full service cafe that also provides a 16-week certificate course for future employment in the restaurant industry.

The location also acts as the main kitchen for CAP's Meals on Wheels and Senior Community Lunch programs. The second operation, CAPtured Treasures, sells gently-used or new clothing, many high-end brands, at discounted prices. The store also serves as a training site for individuals interested in future retail careers.

In addition to CAPs work, the Emergency Support Shelter, Head Start, the Saturday Farmer's Market and the Ethnic Support Council have been providing services to the community for an extended period of time. Since 1989 the Ethnic Support Council has worked on meeting the needs of a constantly diversifying community of immigrants, refugees and those with limited English capabilities within Kelso, and heavily-consolidated in South Kelso. The Council provides on- and off-site interpreters and translators to assist with translation of basic day-to-day activities or more formal meetings and appointments. In addition, the Council provides cultural awareness and geography workshops for individuals or organizations looking to increase their understanding of diverse communities. The Council assists members of the Latino, Vietnamese, Russian and Cambodian communities in finding Kelso a welcoming place to call home.

The Area Agency on Aging and Disabilities of Southwest Washington has a branch office in South Kelso. The agency assists individuals who have health, access and mobility challenges due to aging or limited physical capabilities, as well as to those professionals who provide care to these individuals. The Agency provides Information and Assistance, Family Caregiver support, fitness and wellness and Education-based programs. Although CPA has not found any official community plans in their initial research of the organization, the ASK! campaign presents an opportunity to have a dialogue with this service provider on developing a South Kelso-specific plan to address the aging and immobile populations located in the neighborhood.

To directly address housing issues facing the community, the City of Kelso began the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) in 2009/2010 with the hope of using a variety of funding sources to acquire and redevelop structures or sites, in order to facilitate housing investment, neighborhood pride and increased benefit from developed land. NSP acquired four properties and helped with the purchase of a fifth property located in Longview. Since then NSP has deeded two of the properties to CAP, one to Habitat and the final project will also be deeded to CAP. The house in Longview currently serves as Veteran's housing.

Two of the Kelso properties were repair and remodel projects that turned into single family housing, while the Habitat for Humanity property was new construction. The most current project involves the remediation of an old salvage yard that had been a neighborhood eyesore for several years and will eventually be a structure deeded to CAP. However, even though these successes are a great accomplishment, all of the projects to-date have been located in North Kelso and Longview, none have occurred in South Kelso.

At a much broader level there are plenty of opportunities to partner with the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Government to work across their three broad mission areas with impacts for South Kelso-focused revitalization efforts - Community Mobilization, Economic Development and Affordable Housing and Homeless Assistance. Much of the Council's work and plans have been mentioned throughout this report. Continuing partnerships between the Council, the City and the neighborhood through the existing frameworks could serve as conduits for focusing on crime, neighborhood engagement, health and wellness, job and business development and housing-related research and programs in South Kelso. There are a variety of existing plans across these categories, but more research and a deeper conversation between the City of Kelso and the CWCOG directly examining South Kelo's role in these facets of community could result in strong, well-coordinated plans that can benefit the community and the region as a whole.

Community Outreach Findings

Confluence Planning Associates hosted two Coffee Talks at the Public Library to gather community input through casual discussion. These Coffee Talks were held for the duration of the library's public hours and offered free refreshments. Members of the CPA planning team listened to resident concerns, stories, and ideas for neighborhood revitalization in casual and unstructured interviews.

The comments that were received are focused around three broad topic areas: community assets, problems, and solutions. Community members offered many insightful and important comments pertaining to all three themes, but the general sentiment is that South Kelso is "hurting" or "depressed" and that the neighborhood is "not what it used to be." The following outlines the major themes that were heard throughout these events.

Community Assets

The community conversations revealed that residents are generally very happy with the school district and see Wallace Elementary as the focal point of the community. Several people commented on appreciating the quiet neighborhood and the "old charm" of houses. Much of the housing stock is historic, and 'with some work could be quite nice'.

People appreciate that they can walk to most of their destinations and like the bus and the bus routes. Tam O'Shanter Park was recognized as a community asset, as was the proximity to I-5.

Although safety was mentioned as a concern, some people said that their children play outside and it is safe. It was mentioned that the general safety of the neighborhood "depends on where you go." The police play a positive role in neighborhood safety; people noted that they "don't mess around."

The friendly small town charm and sense of community were noted. People like the mixed cultures and the local history. The community is proud of their children. They like the mall, the golf course, the museum, and the Old Kelso Theatre. Fishing on the Cowlitz, proximity to three rivers, and the open space were all noted.

Community Problems

Many of the problems mentioned were in regards to infrastructure. A general lack of walking facilities, such as crosswalks and sidewalks, were mentioned numerous times, as was poor street conditions. People feel that the lack of investment in their streets and sidewalks breeds a lack of investment in yards and houses. Sidewalks are viewed not just as walking infrastructure but as providing definition between the yard and the street, which help people to keep up yard appearance.

People would like to have more parks, and would like to see increased safety in the ones that exist. They also noted that the areas near bridges are unsafe, and there were questions about why two bridges were needed in the first place. The community noted vacant land and litter among general neighborhood appearance problems.

Economic development was a common theme. Some people noted that the mall 'killed downtown Kelso'. There were many comments pertaining to empty storefronts and lack of business in downtown. People spoke of the farmers market being prohibitively expensive for small entrepreneurs. There were general concerns about the lack of jobs and the long commutes that many people make to find living wages.

People are unhappy about the traffic re-route plan in West Kelso. It was noted that even though money has already been spent on this project, it would better to abandon the project regardless of loss investment incurred. This project signals to the community that the City has not prioritized South Kelso for reinvestment dollars.

There is concern that there are not enough activities for children and teens. It was mentioned that there used to be more for kids to do, with facilities such as skate world and the bowling alley. Youth have 'no place to hang out'.

One person said that nuisance abatement is negative and heavy-handed. However, it was mentioned several times that there is no longer an abatement officer and so the neighborhood appearance is going downhill. People said that when general neighborhood appearance is not enforced, it creates a general downhill spiral, which contributes to the neighborhood blight (known as the broken-window theory).

Complaints about the City were often in regards to the permitting process and believe that the City is not "business friendly." The community voiced concern about the process for the approval of large, publicly funded projects; people feel as though that the City is not open and responsive to their concerns.

Abandoned buildings and absentee landlords were mentioned as contributing to the general poor condition of the neighborhood. Some people were concerned that social services offered in the neighborhood act as a magnet for a needy population.

People commented on the lack of community cohesion, that neighbors don't know each other, races are separated, and the social capital that used to exist has been eroded. People feel that there is limited infrastructure for positive activity. Methamphetamine and crime were mentioned as safety concerns. Gang activity is also a safety concern, and it was noted that gangs hang out at Wallace Elementary after hours.

Community Solutions

After detailing the problems, Coffee Talk participants offered constructive solutions. In the community development realm, people suggested a homeowner or neighborhood association and a vintage home renovation group. Street fairs and block parties were also suggested. Several people said that they think there should be a community center with craft and gardening opportunities, a teen center, and a place for life skills education. A community or school garden was a recurring theme. A historical mural program was mentioned for beautification value.

Some people lamented that there is no Parks and Recreation Department in the City, and said that the City leans on Kelso High School too much. Free events and activities for all ages are wanted. An indoor skate/BMX park is desired, as well as a family fun center with an outdoor pool for summer activities.

There were suggestions to promote the high quality fishing that the area has to offer as well as improve access to the river. People would like to see parks along the river, and more landscaping for neighborhood beautification. A bike share program was also suggested.

It was noted on several occasions that a volunteer network could be tapped to keep up neighborhood appearance. Community clean up and painting days were suggested. Block parties were mentioned in this context, as well as a structure for "block champions." It was suggested that the Granges be included in neighborhood volunteerism as well as groups such as the boy scouts.

The train depot was suggested as an economic development tool. It was noted that this could be a regional park and ride hub for taking public transit to Seattle and Portland. People would like to see more tech industry, historic preservation, and a focus on the airport as an economic development tool.

It was suggested that the source of empty lots and abandoned houses be addressed. Tax penalties or other financing mechanisms to discourage vacant lots and rundown housing (presumably by absentee landlords) were

suggested. Other people suggested the focus to be on incentivizing good behavior as opposed to disincentivizing the problematic.

People mentioned the Work Source and their GED program. The Community Action Program (CAP) and an increase in City-nonprofit partnerships were suggested. One resident suggested an urban renewal area.

Stakeholder Interview Findings

Defining Our Stakeholders:

Confluence Planning Associates defines stakeholders as a person who—as a result of their affiliation with a particular organization or effort—may provide a unique perspective germane to their particular community experience. Stakeholders are typically 1) organized around a theme, 2) represent a body of individuals, and 3) are vested in the future health of the South Kelso community. These individuals typically represent a city department, not-for-profit organization, church, business, school, or other organization.

Purpose of Stakeholder Outreach:

It is the goal of Confluence Planning Associates (CPA), in partnership with the City of Kelso, to understand and respond to the South Kelso Neighborhood's needs and expectations. We believe that successful stakeholder engagement requires a commitment to actively engage with stakeholders to listen, build relationships, and respond to their concerns. Engagement is not an end in itself, but a means to help build better relationships with the community of South Kelso, ultimately resulting in improved lives for South Kelso Neighborhood residents and the City of Kelso as a whole.

Stakeholder engagement is CPA's attempt to initiate open, two-way dialogue seeking understanding and solutions to issues within the South Kelso Neighborhood. It involves discovery of issues within the South Kelso Neighborhood with the potential for the implementation of ideas that benefit both stakeholders, the community, and the City of Kelso. Engagement is used as a means for the City of Kelso to seriously consider the views and involvement of South Kelso residents. These residents provide significant feedback regarding opportunities to align citywide goals and objectives with the societal needs and expectations of residents and will help drive long-term sustainable solutions.

Current Stakeholder Outreach:

In February of 2013 planners from Confluence Planning Associates (CPA) began an intensive stakeholder outreach program. To date, CPA has interviewed more than 18 individuals including city officials, community leaders, church pastors, and local business owners. CPA planning staff felt it was vital to interview all stakeholders in person rather than over the phone. Using a personal, small-town approach allowed for CPA to have rich interactions with community stakeholders and create lasting relationships. Most importantly, by utilizing face-to-face interviews with community stakeholders, we have positioned our clients to maintain productive relationships with influential stakeholders long after CPA's direct engagement has ended. Stakeholder engagement is critical to the success of the South Kelso Revitalization Strategy. By engaging the right people in the appropriate manner we can improve the long-term success of this project.

As part of our outreach program, CPA has presented to four separate commission or councils within Kelso. Those are: The Kelso City Council (including the department heads), the Kelso School District (the largest employer in Kelso), the Kelso Planning Commission, and the Kelso Downtown Revitalization Association (KDRA). Through these four presentations we have informed and gathered feedback from 32 community stakeholders to date. These presentations were used to inform and to gather feedback from city leaders.

Common Problems/Themes from Stakeholder Outreach

The below is a summary of opinions and perceptions expressed in stakeholder interviews.

Lack of education/high dropout rates – The City of Kelso has one of the highest high school dropout rates in the State of Washington. CPA outreach staff consistently heard from stakeholders that there is a lack of education in South Kelso. Generally speaking this feedback was related to academic education, vocational training, and basic life skills for parents of South Kelso. The lack of education and life skills has carried forward from previous generations with children repeating the patterns of their parents (i.e. dropping out of school).

Drug use, crime, and safety – Each stakeholder interview (this does not include the presentations to commission/councils) revealed serious concerns over drug use and crime in South Kelso. High rates of these activities leave many stakeholders -including business owners and local residents- feeling unsafe in the neighborhood. Most noted that this feeling is particularly prevalent at night but most also noted a lack of safety during day light hours in certain sections of the South Kelso Neighborhood.

Hungry and bored children – Kelso was recently ranked as the #1 city in the State of Washington for highest percentage of households receiving food stamps. It was noted by one stakeholder that some children don't have access to adequate food while at home, relying heavily on meals offered during school hours. It was noted in more than half of the interviews that children are typically bored after school hours, on the weekends, and during summer break. There is a lack of programming and places for children to socialize healthily after school. This, according to those interviewed, increasing delinquency in the neighborhood.

Transient population and the built environment – South Kelso's rate of renter-occupied housing is roughly 76%. Spurring home-investments is more difficult in renter-dominated neighborhoods. Garbage, broken/falling fences, old cars, and other refuse are prominent features in many of the housing units. Most stakeholders interviewed felt strongly that South Kelso lacks basic infrastructure (i.e. sidewalks), in a neighborhood where roughly 90% of all elementary students walk to school.

Lack of community – The vast majority of stakeholders indicated a concern over the 'total lack' of community feel within the neighborhood of South Kelso. High crime and drug use are associated with distrust and a lack of safety, while the transient nature of many South Kelso residents doesn't engender social capital.

Difficult relations between businesses and the City – Interviews with business owners indicated that some business owners feel that the City of Kelso does not make existing or potential business owners feel welcomed. Some business owners expressed an opinion that development permits are expensive and that City staff are not as responsive as expected.

Potential Revitalization Partners

1. Kelso School District
2. Wallace Elementary School
3. Kelso Downtown Revitalization Association
4. Kelso Public Library
5. Kelso Police Department
6. Cowlitz County Fire & Rescue

Assessment of Unmet Needs, Opportunities, and Challenges

The above literature review, community feedback, and stakeholder interviews shed light on challenges the neighborhood of South Kelso is facing, as well as latent organizational synergy and significant opportunities for partnership. Many of the characteristics of the built environment in South Kelso are highly desirable—from beautiful turn-of-the-century buildings to the dense network of walkable street intersections. The community in South Kelso has a strong sense of community pride with great potential to be channeled into neighborhood empowerment and resident engagement. Furthermore, the relatively small size of the community may facilitate greater ease in partnership development and in combining assets to realize increased organizational efficiency and collective impact. The following section contains key leverage points that Confluence Planning Associates has identified as having the potential to render significant community impact in the short and long-term.

Wallace Elementary & the Kelso School District

Wallace was identified because of its role as a community hub, its impact in the lives of future Kelso residents, and its embodiment of significant public investment. A great majority of community members expressed that Wallace was the largest grounding institution for the South Kelso Neighborhood. Wallace's wholly positive reputation could be a strong catalyst for rallying the South Kelso Neighborhood around both the physical building and conceptual identity of the School and neighborhood. Wallace is easily accessible to the great majority of the community, both due to its central geographic location which aids in its walkability, but also conceptually because of its inextricable connection to the community's biggest rallying agent: children. Wallace is an approachable and unintimidating venue for facilitated community interaction and participation.

Furthermore, the school building and adjacent grounds represent significant infrastructure investment that has great potential to be utilized to achieve countless other community objectives (i.e. adult/continued education, community gardens, after-school programming). However, recent increases in school enrollment at the elementary level and concurrent decreases in performance may indicate a need for more support. As the neighborhood's chief constructive institution, it should receive priority allocation for investments in agency energy and funding. The potential inability of the school to maintain *and build* upon its successful position in the neighborhood could be devastating to the community; the failure of the community's star player.

The Kelso School District could be an integral player in the revitalization of the South Kelso Neighborhood. A strong partnership between the City and the School District could produce sizable results in securing funding for infrastructure (i.e. Safe Routes to School funding for sidewalks), programming, and reveal synergies in the form of collaborations for a community center. Past suggestions to combine Public School and general public parks could be realized at Wallace. This partnership could also increase the 'fundability' of grant and capital requests by demonstrating stakeholders' commitments to efficiency and collectively leveraged assets.

Community Walkability & Downtown Density

Many communities strive to increase neighborhood walkability for good reason: it benefits residents of every age range, lifestyle, culture, and income level, and strengthens the region's attractiveness for families, businesses, and the elderly. South Kelso has great potential to be a highly walkable neighborhood. The area's high density of street intersections and grid layout combined with historic housing stock, river front location, and small geographic size all point to the potential for a pleasant and productive pedestrian experience.

The City could encourage walkability by directly investing in built infrastructure (i.e. crosswalks) and by encouraging higher residential and employment densities in the downtown core. As suggested in the 1980 Comprehensive Plan, a zoning code amendment that permits a greater variety of uses (business and residential) and greater residential densities would result in highly walkable development. The Great Streets Concept indicates that bicycle and pedestrian access should be a high priority in South Kelso. Increased foot and bicycle traffic on residential and business streets would likely result in reduced crime and gang activity, encourage yard

maintenance, housing upkeep, and community cohesion through increased interaction. These issues directly translate into advantages for the local economy, public health, and ecological sustainability.

Community Cohesion

Community Cohesion and a wealth of social capital are inextricably linked to healthy community, particularly in those communities that are struggling financially. The South Kelso Neighborhood currently has limited social or physical infrastructure around which to engage in community activities. Social infrastructure includes clubs, associations, and councils, among others. Community members suggested the need for a neighborhood association, and have requested a club that focuses on historic home preservation. A physical venue to hold these activities is also needed, and South Kelso would strongly benefit from a community center or some location that serves as proxy.

Partnerships with Wallace Elementary and the Kelso School District may reveal opportunities to hold such activities in the Wallace Building after school hours. Past partnerships between the City and the Kelso School District are referenced in the 1980 Comprehensive Plan, but the extent of these partnerships is unclear at this point in time. Kelso also lacks smaller 'venues', such as community kiosks and bulletin boards, which can be built on street corners and parks.

Kelso has great potential to build a locally and regionally-recognized identity around the city's relationship with the natural environment. An identity grounded by a strong connection with the Cowlitz, Coweeman, and Columbia rivers would benefit from greenway development adjacent to the river, natural riverfront restoration, greater pedestrian and bicycle access, and the deliberate re-facing of buildings towards the river. A strong identity tied to a geographic place can promote community cohesion and pride.

Enhanced park access and programming would complement the Kelso river-based identity. Kelso currently has a good network of parks, wherein many households are within a ½ mile walk of a park (see Figure 12), however the majority these parks are underutilized, under-developed, and lack community programming opportunities.

Social and physical community infrastructure would help the neighborhood ossify around an identity, which is currently needed in South Kelso. Geographic neighborhood boundaries that are recognized throughout the community and promoted by neighborhood branding, slogans and imagery contribute to residents' pride and the feeling of 'belonging'. Many neighborhoods consider this the first step (after assembling a neighborhood association or working group) in establishing community cohesion. The neighborhood could leverage and learn from the existing 'We Are Kelso' campaign in rallying residents around a common theme.

Shifting demographics in the South Kelso Neighborhood present an opportunity and a challenge to the community. Often, long-term community members resent these changes and can harbor animosity toward their 'new' neighbors. Having multiple segregated communities in South Kelso prevents community cohesion and prohibits collaborative efforts in revitalization. The neighborhood's ethnic populations are growing; these changes should be ushered in with celebrations of cultural diversity, not by retreating into the isolated safety of familiar company. The City could engender greater tolerance (and thus sense of community) by promoting cultural awareness and sensitivity by hosting public events such as international cook-offs and tolerance workshops. This is a challenging task, but success relies on many small catalytic efforts throughout the neighborhood.

Addressing South Kelso's highly transient populations—measured by high reports of individuals experiencing homelessness and low reports of homeownership—would also be one successful strategy to achieve greater community cohesion. A high percentage of renter-occupied housing can correlate to shrinking investment in housing maintenance, parent and community involvement in schools, volunteerism, and neighborly relationships.

Spatial Mismatch of Jobs and Capacity

The South Kelso Neighborhood is currently experiencing a challenge associated with the spatial mismatch of jobs and the local residents' capacity to fulfill them. Many jobs in South Kelso, and Kelso at large, require applicants to have completed college or a vocational program. However, residents of South Kelso report limited educational attainment and trends indicate each generation sees a shrinking number of college graduates. These cycles are difficult to break, but not impossible. Education advocates need to provide simple and accessible venues through which South Kelso residents may advance their training and employability.

Partnerships between the City, regional education initiatives and agencies, and non-governmental organizations could provide significant funding opportunities to promote continued/adult education, vocational programs, and other skill development to make sure that residents continue to have the skills necessary to find jobs and remain employed. A partnership between the City, the Kelso School District, and Lower Columbia College could ensure that residents are entering the labor force with the skills necessary to be successful. Many residents suggested the need for life-skills education, particularly those for parents, to help break cycles of neglect in South Kelso.

Next Steps

Many challenges have been identified in the South Kelso Neighborhood, but more importantly, the community has many strong social and environmental assets that will prove integral to future revitalization. City revitalization efforts often struggle to achieve what Kelso has already confirmed: a wealth of beautiful historic buildings positioned around a highly walkable street grid, all within enviable proximity to three natural rivers and stunning mountain views. Furthermore, the community of South Kelso shows pride in the city and excitement about revitalization; positive energy which, with proper tools and channels, will prove invaluable in future efforts. CPA hopes to channel these assets and the community's desires into a series of steps and strategies to help Kelso realize the latent vibrant community it is.

Appendix I. Neighborhood Crime and Safety Information

Moving Forward with the Strategy

What can South Kelso residents do?	What can City Hall do?	What can the other agencies do?
Sign-up and get involved in the Neighborhood Association to work toward improved streets, lighting, and services.	Call for a multi-agency summit to talk about the formation of the South Kelso Neighborhood Crime and Safety Plan.	Be open and enthusiastic about the potential of working together.
Participate in existing safety programs.	Form district liaison positions (1-3 years volunteer with secured funding in year 5) under the Community Development director.	See South Kelso as one of the major leaks for crime in the network of pipes that is the Kelso-Longview region.
Talk about crime and its consequences in the home.	Host cross-cultural and cross-generational programs.	City Hall and the Police Department can hire a community outreach specialist to build better relations with the community and gangs.
Be more active in their neighborhood to provide "eyes on the street".		Coordinate competitive or counter-productive political and financial arrangements
Maintain yard and house in "safety-promoting" conditions.		

Appendix J. Develop a Neighborhood Crime and Safety Plan

Crime Reduction and Safety Enhancement Programs (Previous, Existing and Proposed Programs)

	Action	Lead Agency	Summary
Previous	Bike patrol	Police Department	The department used to have bike patrols in South Kelso. Perhaps this can be updated to include criminology students from LCC or neighborhood residents being trained and given responsibility
Previous	Police kiosk at Wallace Elementary	Police Department	The department used to have a station at the school. This could be reintroduced under the recommended strategy of converting Wallace Elementary into a Community School
Previous	Saturday youth activities at Three Rivers Mall	Kelso Police Department	The department used to organize youth sports activities at Three Rivers Mall on Saturday, perhaps with partners such as the School District, the CWCOG or civic organizations these activities could be reintroduced
Existing	Continue the various Citizen's Academies	Kelso Police Department and Cowlitz County Sheriff's Department	Engage in the Block Captain and Block Watch programs Neighborhood Association An individual agrees to be a block captain for a designated period with a set list of duties, such as introduce themselves to everyone on their block and note disturbances such as violence, the frequent presence of vehicles that aren't residents, speeding traffic counts, etc.-all with proper training beforehand.
Proposed	Form a Safe Walkers program	Neighborhood Association	Small groups of neighbors organized by the Neighborhood Association agree to walk together during the morning, afternoon or evening. This promotes social connections, exercise, and the presence of safety. It also puts "eyes on the streets".
Proposed	Form a Jr. Officer In-Residence Program	Police Department	This would be a joint effort between the City Hall, the Police Department, and Lower Columbia College, in which unarmed students in the LCC public safety program (and possibly police

			recruits) learn about the community development and environmental aspects of crime, the Police Department builds a pipeline of future, lightly-seasoned recruits, and the City gets an “unofficial” policing presence living in housing that they want to see rehabilitated and inhabited.
Proposed	Hold a neighborhood cleanup parade	Neighborhood Association	Use a regularly-scheduled event to make cleaning up the public spaces of the neighborhood an event involving kids, elderly and families, with music, a grand marshal, trash queens, the high school marching band, local social organizations (like the Optimists) and a grand prize winner for the block that turns in the most trash by tonnage.
Proposed	Form a Landlord Property Security-enhancement program	City Hall	Offer a class that helps property owners understand the steps they can take to better secure their property.
Proposed	Create a South Kelso district liaison position	City Hall	The South Kelso District Liaison position could serve as a connection between the City, the Neighborhood Association and the Police Department.
Proposed	Create a Community Specialist Police Officer position	Police Department	This position could be a joint-financed role between City Hall and the Police Department to hire an officer who specializes in community-development and gang interaction/intervention.

Appendix K. Community Priorities Survey Memorandum

Kelso Community Priorities Survey

Methodology

As part of the ASK! campaign to gain an understanding of community concerns, ideas, and priorities, a Kelso Community Priorities Survey was administered to the Kelso community between March 18, 2013 and April 26, 2013. An opportunity to win a \$50 grocery gift card was included as an incentive to complete the survey. The survey was provided in both English and Spanish. A total of 202 surveys were completed by Kelso community members.

This short survey asked respondents a variety of questions to better understand what priority areas the City should focus on and to gauge interest in potential community efforts to address some of the issues identified through ASK!

Paper copies of the survey were made available at the Library, City Hall, Ethnic Support Council, Eagles Lodge, Faithful Servants House, and the Kelso Housing Authority. Paper copies were also sent home to the parents of students at Wallace Elementary School and mailed with Housing Authority Bills. Information about the survey was included in water utility mailings sent out by the City of Kelso throughout the month of April.

The electronic version of the survey was distributed through Qualtrics, an online survey software provided by Portland State University. A link to the online survey was made available on the ASK! page of the City of Kelso website; emailed to participants of previous outreach events, including general public and key stakeholders; promoted via the Facebook pages of partner organizations, including Lions, Kiwanis, Rotary, Cowlitz Economic Development Council, Kelso-Longview Chamber of Commerce, Cowlitz Historical Museum, North Gate City Church, Church of Nazarene, Youth and Family Link, Kelso STOP Coalition, Kelso School District, and The Daily News.

Summary

According to survey respondents, the top very important priorities for the City to focus on include:

1. Reduce drug use and gang activity – 177, 90%
2. Family wage jobs for South Kelso residents – 145, 75%
3. Develop safe and fun activities for children and teens – 145, 75%
4. Fix streets, sidewalks, and crosswalks – 142, 75%

The community programs and activities that most survey respondents are definitely interested in learning more about include:

1. Neighborhood clean-up efforts – 96, 52%
2. Community food gardens – 78, 43%
3. Painting and home repair activities – 77, 42%
4. Community block parties and other neighborhood social events – 77, 42%

Community Priorities

Respondents were asked to rate 13 issue areas as Very Important, Somewhat Important or Not Important for the City to focus on. In general, most survey respondents gave all issue areas a rating of Very Important or Somewhat Important.

Out of the 13 issue areas, the most important issue by far that survey respondents want the City to focus on is to “Reduce drug use and gang activity” (Figure 1). Out of a total of 196 people who answered this question, 177 people (90%) report reducing drug use and gang activity as a Very Important issue area for the City to focus on.

“Family wage jobs for South Kelso residents,” “Develop safe and fun activities for children and teens,” and “Fix streets, sidewalks, and crosswalks” each received the next highest ratings by survey respondents. Around three-quarters of respondents (75%) state that these three issue areas are Very Important for the City to focus on and an additional 21%-26% view these issues as Somewhat Important (Figure 2).

The issue areas that received the highest percent of Not Important ratings by survey respondents include “Encourage historic preservation of houses and other buildings” (19%), “Conveniently located social services for low-income families” (16%), and “Provide shelter and basic services for people who are homeless” (15%)(Figure 2).

Figure 1 Importance of Issue Areas for the City of Kelso to Focus On, Number of Respondents

#	Issue Area	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Total Responses
1	Reduce drug use and gang activity	177	14	5	196
2	Family wage jobs for South Kelso residents	145	43	5	193
3	Develop safe and fun activities for children and teens	145	41	8	194
4	Fix streets, sidewalks, and crosswalks	142	51	5	198
5	Continuing education and workforce training (for adults)	122	60	13	195
6	Build a community center with programs for all ages	118	51	22	191
7	Provide shelter and basic services for people who are homeless	106	61	30	197
8	Encourage the upkeep of yards and homes	103	78	19	200
9	Increase opportunities for City leaders to hear community concerns and ideas	102	77	11	190
10	Parks and access to nature and the river	92	85	18	195
11	Conveniently located social services for low-income families	83	82	31	196
12	Provide convenient public transportation and biking options	79	92	21	192
13	Encourage historic preservation of houses and other buildings	67	90	37	194

Survey respondents were provided the opportunity to write in additional comments regarding priority issue areas for the City to focus on. Some representative write-in comments include the following:

- “People need to take initiative. City should advertise opportunities to hear community concerns and ideas.”
- “Develop and promote community pride and awareness. Encourage block or neighborhood parties or committees for people of like interests.”
- “The most important thing is to keep our neighborhood clean. We need to have events to help with clean-up efforts.”
- “When people feel like a community they bond and look out for others and in return it creates a safer environment for all.”
- “An after school program where parents who work late can have their kids go to or after school tutoring if kids need it. Tutoring either at the library or center. A place where parents can easily pick up their kids and not have to drive too far from their house.”
- “Engage S. Kelso youth in activities which are positive. Giving kids and teens an outlet which is positive is of top priority. South Kelso is currently a blight on the city and serious efforts need to be explored to engage and change the status quo of the youth to change the drug infused culture. Efforts by leaders and volunteers to provide options to the younger generations are essential to improving South Kelso's future and productivity.”
- “Drugs are a major problem that the police and drug task force are unable to focus on due to limited resources. On a daily basis I can watch multiple drug transactions. Our neighborhood has previously attempted to ban together for a neighborhood watch program to report this type of activity. It is concerning because the blatant use and selling of drugs in the neighborhood cannot be adequately dealt with. Children in the neighborhood are subject to not only witnessing these events but have a high likelihood of being introduced to the drugs and the crimes that are committed because of the addiction.”
- “Some things are troubling: 1. The lack of repairing streets and the lack of organized volunteer community efforts to clean up trash, cut weeds, etc. 2. The lack of organizations working together to sponsor workshops to help get adults trained and back to work. I feel Kelso lacks inspiration and visionary leadership who can get Kelso to change their image, to pull together and to make changes. We have a mentality without vision that just trudges along. We don't need more studies, we need people to organize the organizations and business and focus on common goals with specific action plans.”
- “I believe the #1 priority should be recruiting viable businesses to come to Kelso! It would be beneficial for the focus to be on how to "sell" the city of Kelso and also incentives offered to businesses that would make them want to move here. In my opinion, when a business inquires about moving to Kelso, they should be greeted with, "what can we do to help you be successful in our city!" We want your business!”

Interest in Community Programs & Activities

Next, survey respondents were asked to indicate their level of interest (Definitely, Maybe, No) in learning more about a variety of community programs and activities that may be started to address the issue areas highlighted above.

The program or activity that received the greatest interest from survey respondents is neighborhood clean-up efforts (i.e. litter removal, yard maintenance, etc.), with 96 respondents (52%) definitely interested in learning more about this type of effort (Figure 3 and Figure 4).

Community food gardens, painting and home repair activities, and community block parties and other neighborhood social events each received the next highest interest, at about 43% each (Figure 4).

Figure 2 Interest in Community Programs & Activities, Number of Respondents

Community Program or Activity	Definitely	Maybe	No	Total Responses
Neighborhood clean-up efforts (i.e. litter removal, yard maintenance...)	96	60	29	185
Community food gardens (i.e. plots available for rent at an affordable price)	78	65	38	181
Painting and home repair activities (i.e. basic maintenance, historic preservation...)	77	71	36	184
Community block parties and other neighborhood social events	77	68	34	179
A neighborhood association or other community organization	72	74	33	179
An affordable place to sell handicrafts and vegetables (i.e. a market location)	64	75	45	184

Survey Demographics

The demographics of survey respondents include the following:

- 50% of respondents are between the ages of 26 and 40; 28% are 41 to 60 years of age
- Three women for every man completed a survey
- 90% of respondents are white; 10% are Hispanic
- 60% of respondents live in South Kelso

Figure 2 Respondent Age Group

Age Group	Respondents	%
Less than 15	6	3%
15-25	16	8%

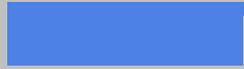
26-40		97	50%
41-60		54	28%
Greater than 60		22	11%
Total		195	100%

Figure 4 Respondent Gender

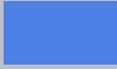
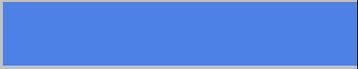
Gender		Respondents	%
Male		46	24%
Female		144	76%
Total		190	100%

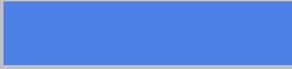
Figure 5 Respondent Race and Ethnicity

Race & Ethnicity		Respondents	%
Hispanic		18	10%

White		161	91%
African American		0	0%
American Indian		8	5%
Asian		1	1%
Pacific Islander		2	1%
Two or more races		5	3%
Total		177	100%

Note: Percentages do not add up to 100%

Figure 6 Where Respondents Live

		Response	%
South Kelso		120	61%
Elsewhere		76	39%
Total		196	100%

Appendix L. Public Outreach Plan

Goal

To involve as many residents of the South Kelso Neighborhood through as many modes as possible in the identification of community-desired outcomes and priorities.

Background

The City of Kelso has previously struggled with reaching this neighborhood due to lack of capacity and low response rates with more traditional outreach methods. However, the City's interest and passion for continuing engagement efforts with the residents was one of the main goals for the workshop project.

The basis of the public outreach plan stemmed from course work in the master of urban and regional planning program, firsthand experience by the Confluence Planning Associates, and recommendations from our Workshop Advisory Committee members and Expert Panels.

Modes

The team utilized a variety of public outreach modes over five months in order to gain a baseline understanding, help clarify challenges and solutions, and, finally, set a priority on the recommended solutions.

Modes included:

Coffee talks

Focus groups

Feedback chart left up in public library

Attending and presenting at public meetings

One-on-one interviews

Survey (hard copy through intercepts, handed out to students to take home, and online)

Open House

Ongoing media coverage

Feedback forms at City Hall counters and on website

In-class project with elementary school students

Methodology

The public outreach plan occurred in three phases over five months with each phase having a distinct purpose, methods, and media.

Phase 1: Build a brand in order to organize and communicate the public outreach effort.

Purpose: The point of branding the public outreach effort was to excite and motivate residents to participate in the process, create instant recognition across various media over an extended period of time, and serve as a rallying cry for future efforts.

Method:

1. Investigate previous City outreach efforts.
2. Research existing source materials on South Kelso to serve as inspiration points.
3. Conceptualize various options for name, logo, color scheme and imagery.
4. Choose a concept and develop it further.
5. Finalize the brand and apply it across all media.

Phase 2: Generate a plan that implements the outreach effort to different audiences through appropriate media.

Purpose: The point of developing multiple plans was to effectively engage, successfully gather feedback, and raise awareness of the larger South Kelso Revitalization Strategy through media that best suited each targeted group:

- A. Key Stakeholders
- B. General Public
- C. Elementary School Children
- D. Teachers
- E. Hispanic Populations

Method:

1. Define the characteristics of each group attempting to reach for feedback.
2. Brainstorm and receive approval on a list of outreach media appropriate for each audience.

A. Key Stakeholder Outreach

Purpose: To gain an inside perspective from professionals who work day-to-day in one or more of the challenging areas identified in South Kelso, ASK! conducted one-on-one interviews with as many subjects as possible in the four months of the start of the project. In the end, ASK! held 46 interviews.

Method:

1. Generate a list of initial interview subjects and receive client approval.
2. Create a list of open-ended questions to direct the interview, but allow flexibility for the subject to expound upon a point.
3. Make contact with stakeholders and set-up date and time for interview.
4. Conduct in-person interviews lasting between 45 minutes to an hour.
5. Ask for references for additional people to interview.
6. Present at established local agency meetings.
7. Analyze data and synthesize across consistent themes.
8. Form initial conclusions and present the first draft at a public Open House.
9. Invite key stakeholders to attend the Open House and gather their feedback.
10. Access feedback for final report.

B. General Public Outreach

Purpose: For any true community development effort to be successful, the purpose, goal and visions should come directly from the residents themselves. Planners are only present to start conversations, gather information, reference resources and tools, synthesize and analyze data, and then make an informed recommendation to decision-makers.

The general public outreach plan included multiple media in order to increase the likelihood of community response, encourage attendance at events, and make the public more open to a group thought process. It was also our hope that the branding would deter fear, suspicion, or resentment of another "government" planning effort prying into their daily lives.

Method:

1. Receive client approval for outreach media.

2. Produce a timeline for production of and implementation media.
3. Implement public outreach media.
 - A. Coordinate a multi-part story coverage with local newspaper.
 - B. Development and updating of outreach campaign on City of Kelso website.
 - C. Create flyers, posters, and postcards.
 - D. Design and showcase an advertisement for the local movie theatre.
 - E. Utilize mass email through City of Kelso.
 - F. Public surveys online and through hard copies
 - G. Kids In Kelso: Photojournalism project
 - H. Focus groups
4. Analyze data and synthesize across consistent themes.
5. Form initial conclusions and present the first draft at a public Open House.
6. Invite public to attend the Open House and gather their feedback.
7. Access feedback for final report.

C. Elementary School Children

Purpose: To reach an underserved population in most planning processes (children), the ASK! team worked with Julie Toney's 5th Grade Class at Wallace Elementary to tap into the kids' unique perspectives, open-mindedness, and creativity. The goal was to gain a different insight into the challenges and solutions for South Kelso, to get neighborhood kids involved in the planning process and to motivate adults to see things from a different view and get more involved themselves.

Method:

1. Research successful planning programs focused on students or kids.
2. Brand our program, Kids In Kelso: Photojournalism project
3. Approach the Kelso School District to gain approval and receive identification of a potential teacher at Wallace Elementary School.
4. Meet with teacher to discuss curriculum incorporation and logistics.
5. Receive approval from students' parents.
6. Kids pass around the digital cameras and take images of successful and unsuccessful issues in their neighborhood.
7. In small groups, ASK! team members led students in conversations about the images, why they were taken, what do they show, what else do they "like" or "dislike" about their neighborhood.
8. Turned images and captions into a series of posers.
9. Worked with downtown Main Street businesses to showcase posters in their windows.
10. Held a grand unveiling event with public officials, awarding three outstanding images, and handing out certificates to all of the students in the class.
11. Held a walking tour for event participants to walk around downtown and see the kids' posters.
12. Access feedback for final report.

D. Teachers

Purpose: ASK! wanted to balance the elementary student perspective with that of a major figure in their lives-teachers. We held a teacher-only focus group to gain some insight to the information they see and hear from their students.

Method:

1. Received approval from the School District and Wallace Elementary

2. Organized with a host teacher
3. Promoted the event
4. Held the focus group with coffee and snacks during a break at Wallace Elementary
5. Access feedback for final report.

E. Latino Populations

Purpose: In order to provide additional outlets for the Latino community we held a focus group and invited residents.

Method:

1. We coordinated with teachers at Wallace Elementary to coordinate the focus group and reach parents.
2. Organized focus group at Wallace Elementary.

Phase 3: Re-engage with outreach targets to confirm information we heard and to help us set priorities.

Purpose: At the same time we were collecting information, we wanted to turn around and make sure we were speaking correctly on their behalf-were we getting it right, did we miss something, or did we misspeak?

We also wanted to use this opportunity to have residents set priorities on which recommended strategies should be undertaken first through tenth.

Method 1: Survey

1. Create and receive client approval on a public survey
2. Implement a community prioritization survey by:
 - A. Conducting intercepts in public spaces
 - B. Handing the survey over to Wallace Elementary School students to take home to their families
 - C. Issuing it online through email and the City website
 - D. Promoting the survey on a public utility mail insert and on the City website
3. Gather responses and analyze data
4. Access feedback for final report

Method 2: Open House

Purpose: The ASK! team also wanted to provide a more face-to-face mode for reaching out to residents. An Open House was held on a Tuesday evening at Wallace Elementary School inviting audiences of all ages, including some of the Kids In Kelso participating students, to drop-by review the first draft of the recommended strategies and share their feedback. Participants got to have conversations with the ASK! team members and some professionals, review and take handouts, and interact with posters and stickers on setting priorities or giving feedback on each of the ten strategies. Those who attended also received food, free childcare, and prizes.

The final stage at the Open House asked participants to use stickers numbered 1-3 to mark their top three priorities of the ten recommended strategies from the ASK! team the City should pursue immediately.