



NORTH HIGHLINE

Subarea Plan

Public Review Draft Final Report

White Center Community Development Association

December 2021

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BACKGROUND

Community Advocated to Go Beyond Land Use

Based on an adopted planning schedule set within the King County Comprehensive Plan, the updated subarea planning process for North Highline began in 2018. Between 2018 and 2020, the County was focused on land use issues. With the land use focus and with the subarea planning process underway, community members from unincorporated areas of White Center, along with community members in Skyway advocated with council members, Joe McDermott and Girmay Zahilay for a subarea plan to go beyond land use and include other policy issues important to the community, like housing, economic development and parks. This expanded focus was especially important given that the last North Highline/White Center planning discussions completed by the County were dated in 1977 and 1994. A time frame worth noting, 25 to 44 years of no real dialogue between the County and North Highline/White Center residents regarding their future planning and development. In February of 2020, Girmay wrote an Opinion article in the Seattle Times, an opinion felt across Skyway and similarly White Center and rationale for why the community advocated for a more robust anti-displacement subarea planning process.

Article link here:

<https://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/we-failed-the-central-district-but-we-can-do-right-by-skyway/>

Community Vision and Challenges to Co-Create

With the expanded focus to go beyond land use and include other policy issues important to the community, the White Center Community Development Association advocated for a co-creating role with the County hoping to design a thoughtful community engagement process, especially with those who have not historically been included in land use planning.

Given the pandemic and its impacts highlighting persistent racial inequities in health, housing and economic security, the organized protest by Black, Indigenous and other people of color living in unincorporated areas and neighborhoods across the nation in response to the murder of George Floyd and the regions ongoing experience with the negative impacts of prior racist planning and development decisions, the need to thoughtfully engage our community to shape how land use policy reflected our community values was imperative.

White Center Community Development Association

Public Review Draft online content narratives were given to the WCCDA by County staff just two days before public comment period opened on September 30th, giving the WCCDA no real opportunity to digest, understand and make institutional narratives accessible to ourselves and to wider community members. It was mentioned to County staff on several occasions, the challenges we faced in building our community's understanding of drafted policies and the need to go beyond the basic provision of online written and language translation. A certain level of understanding and meaning when translating English planning terms was lost when the 39 needs were translated in four different languages. Similarly, policies experienced the same "meaning loss" when translated during discussions.

Community simply needed more time to understand, translate and change the institutional language, design necessary conversations that were COVID safe, and methods that allowed us to build upon a series of discussions with the same community member, reaching beyond the one-time discussion over zoom.

The White Center CDA was given \$100,000, a number of product expectations, and a short and rigid timeline to engage community members on the Public Review Draft, September 30th - October 18th, 2020. Given less than a month to engage the community on the Public Review Draft, community members of both White Center and Skyway advocated for more time to engage. The County responded initially with a one month extension and then a final extension of December 19th, adding two additional months. As the County moved forward with rigid deadlines and bulky planning terminology within their materials, the challenges to engage the community continued. We underlined the real challenges we faced to bring institutional content and policies to the community thoughtfully.

Challenges to Creating an Equitable Process

Excerpts taken from the North Highline Community Service Area Subarea Plan, the County's commitment to equity and justice states the following:

Planning is a key factor in promoting equity and social justice, affecting residents' ability to access the resources they need to succeed. Past land use and investment decisions have contributed to economic and social disparities, which have been felt in communities like North Highline. King County's Determinants of Equity Report states that "identifying how the built environment supports residents in improving quality of life, accessing jobs and housing is critical for promoting a healthy environment for all residents." The ultimate goal of the Subarea Plan is to make real, equitable improvements to the quality of life for everyone who lives, works, and plays in North Highline."

King County and the Puget Sound region abound with opportunities, but those opportunities are not equally accessible for all of King County’s residents. King County, as a local and regional government, recognizes this fact and has chosen to focus on equity and social justice in its work. That is why the County created the Equity & Social Justice Strategic Plan. This Strategic Plan lays out a set of **shared values** where the County commits to being:

- **Inclusive and Collaborative**
- **Diverse and People Focused**
- **Responsive and Adaptive**
- **Transparent and Accountable**
- **Racially Just**
- **Focused upstream and where needs are greatest**

Furthermore, the Comprehensive Plan states that King County “will identify and address the conditions at the root of disparities, engage communities to have a strong voice in shaping their future, and raise and sustain the visibility of equity and social justice. The goal is to start by focusing on prevention and addressing the fundamental causes of the inequities to have a greater overall impact.”

As we reflect on the narrative above, in particular the following statements, “residents’ ability to access the resources they need to succeed,” “economic and social disparities which have been felt in communities like North Highline,” “opportunities are not equally accessible for all of King County’s residents,” we focused our engagement efforts to these “residents and communities” that are typically not included in planning processes. These communities include our Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC), elders, the disabled and the unhoused communities.

We have found the County’s methods – the structure, the terms of the contract, the timeline and expected products – not **responsive** and needs to be more **adaptive** to the community’s challenges and solutions. There was no real process to keep the County **accountable** to their equity and social justice values. For accountability to have occurred, the County needed to own the role of “the one to be kept accountable.” Instead of owning its accountability, the County cultivated a relationship that was inherently more transactional and passed on community’s concerns about process and content to Council’s timeline and decision making power, leaving community’s concerns unaddressed, with little to no room for **collaboration** and **inclusivity**. The **shared values** are not evident throughout the subarea planning process.

County staff did make a few changes, adding more written translation sections to their online public input page and extended deadlines twice to accommodate an additional two months.

Though we acknowledge these changes, the changes left much to be desired in creating equity and inclusion within this work.

We conclude that we are experiencing an inequitable planning process needing reassessment. Resident's and business owners' overall ability to understand subarea planning materials have not been supported, given the lack of time, understandable tools and limited processes. In addition, the ongoing personal challenges of the pandemic, and rash of fires that occurred within the White Center business core has impacted the communities ability to engage quickly. The process has resulted in skewed data, limited engagement lacking depth and substance. This report highlights how we approached the challenges of engagement and the themes we heard from the community.

APPROACH AND METHODS

We reached out directly to families, leaders and youth in our community to hold one-on-one communications as well as group conversations. In these conversations we provided an understanding of the subarea planning process as well as supported the community in completing the Top 39 Survey, completing a Zoom poll of key policies and discussions on key map amendments. Community residents who met with us individually or in the Zoom group room were offered a \$50 gift card in honorarium for their time.

Vision Statement

As we entered Phase 2, the County and community still needed to refine it's needs and priorities. There was still a need to draft a new vision statement. Though the community had difficulties engaging in re-drafting the vision statement provided by the County, WCCDA staff completed a detailed review of all phase 1 conversation and all data collected since 2018 by the County and rewrote and shaped a new community vision statement. The new vision statement was included in the Top 39 Survey and was shared with the community throughout phase 2 conversations.

County produced vision statement

North Highline is a diverse, inclusive, and family-friendly community that supports thriving small businesses; values its parks and green space; enjoys proximity to urban amenities; celebrates self-reliance, creativity, and caring for neighbors; and provides opportunities for people of all socioeconomic backgrounds to live, work, and thrive.

New community vision statement

Residing on the traditional land of the Duwamish people, North Highline celebrates its ethnic diversity, inter-generational roots and our ongoing inclusivity of diverse families and individuals, especially those most isolated and vulnerable. We call out race and place-based inequities and are committed to dismantling systems of power, privilege, and racial injustice. With mutual support and respect, we value and live out our brilliance and power through community-led initiatives, creating thoughtful development without displacing longtime residents and small business owners, forming, and owning the policies that impact us, and building our individual and collective wealth, health, and well-being.

Top 39 Needs List

Also included in the Phase 2 work, a more defined Top 39 Needs List Survey under 7 community themes was developed and administered (translated versions provided in Spanish, Vietnamese, Khmer and Somali) after further review of approximately 26 community themes containing approximately 200 needs along with new input collected from 60 community members participating in our first run Community Needs Survey (English only), 8 Zoom conversations, and conversations at 6 local events. 77 community members participated in the Top 39 Needs Survey. We launched the survey online reaching out to partners and community through different social media channels such as Facebook, newsletter, instagram and website. The survey was available online for two months, from September 28 - November 28. Participants ranked the urgency level of all needs, surfacing the most urgent needs within each community category and identifying the top 10 urgent needs out of 39 priorities.

Also, we internally shaped the content and wording of the Top 39 Survey and Zoom polls containing key policies. As much as we could translate the institutional language and share key policies with WCCDA staff members, who mostly live and work in White Center, hold over 10 years experience in working with the community and who have engaged in countless hours of listening to parents, youth and elders over the years, challenges of engagement persisted.

This overall method intended to build our internal staff base of understanding with hopes of creating deeper engagement and better facilitation. This method did provide more or a base of understanding, but overall, the method was not as effective due to time constraints. We also provided simulations of our survey and poll with all staff members involved in facilitation and one-on-one conversations. Again, we found that we lacked the time to build new tools, new visuals, more context, adding missing content etc.

Public Review Draft

After reviewing all policies, we found the need to identify a short list of key policies and key map amendments to cover with community members. As we attempted to focus on key policies, we created on-line polls reflecting key policies, once discussion and polls were taken, poll results were submitted to the County's Public Review Draft input link to ensure community voices were reflected.

We convened 5 conversations with the community that focused on the Top 39 community needs, 4 conversations with the community on key policies and 5 conversations focused on key map amendments. A total of 14 conversations took place along with two dozen or more one-on-one conversations, and additional one on one outreach in person and on the phone.

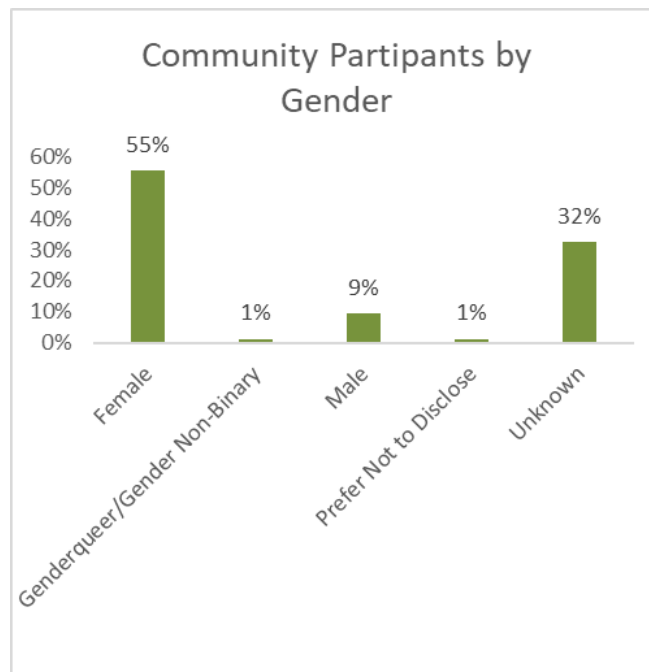
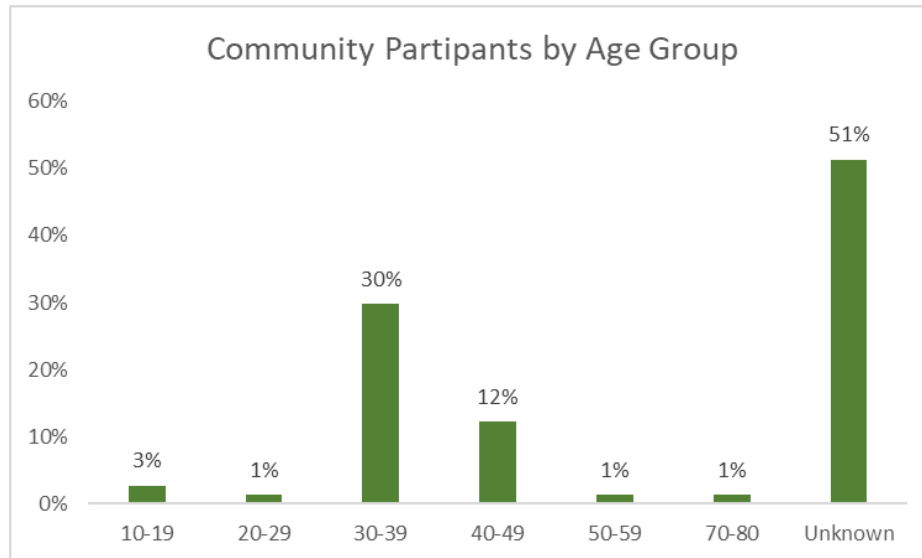
Overall, Public Review Draft policies felt disjointed and incomplete. Key planning policies discussed during our conversations, brought more questions and need for clarification, giving facilitators the challenge of gathering the feedback and opinions needed. We found difficulties in building understanding on policies that resulted in meaningful engagement given the time constraints and overall content material contained in the public review draft. Even when we extended conversations from 1.5 hours to 2 hours and in some cases 3 hours, community feedback was minimal.

As map amendments were discussed, the need for follow up information was needed, such as the specific height and parking requirements, what uses were allowed under commercial and industrial zoned areas, how inclusionary housing would be implemented, how do design standards fit in, and many other questions raised during conversations, All of these real time questions reinforced the need and the efforts to build more understanding and the need to build communities capacity to lead and engage in the subarea planning work.

We saw the need to host a series of meetings with the same residents, building on the premise that if we held more than one meeting, it would allow us to build a greater depth of understanding and we would receive a greater depth of input. Again, given set parameters and expectations, designing additional conversations was not possible. We built in more support for understanding policy content prior to on-line and in-person conversations, provided simulations of polls and internal discussions on content to all staff members, especially those who were key in supporting facilitation. Even when building this support challenges still persisted.

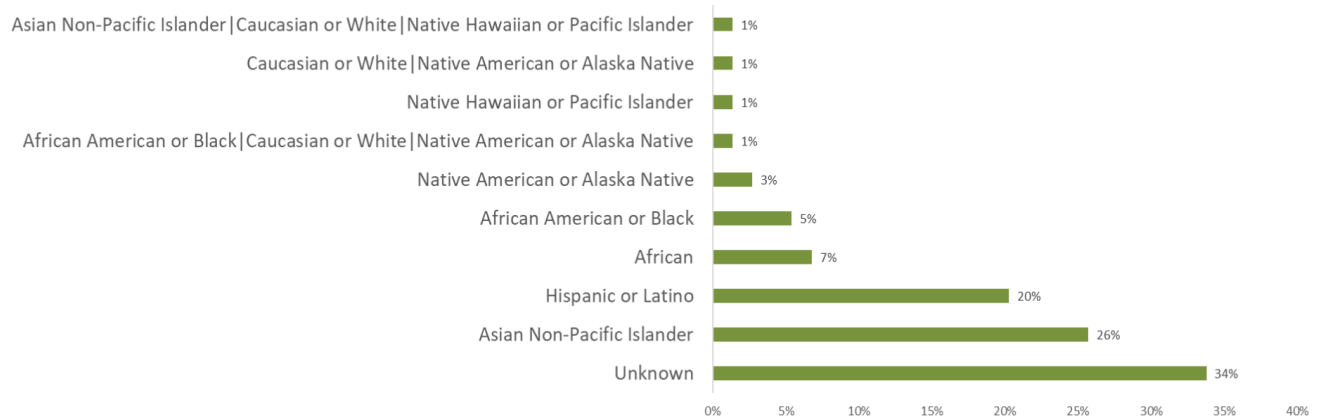
Demographics of Participating Community Members

We engaged in individual and group conversations with 74 community members of North Highline during phase 2 regarding the top 39 community needs list, the public review draft, and map amendments. Participants ranged in age. About 3% identified as being a youth below 19 years of age. Most were between the ages of 30-39 (30%) and 40-49 (12%). Most (55%) identified as female.

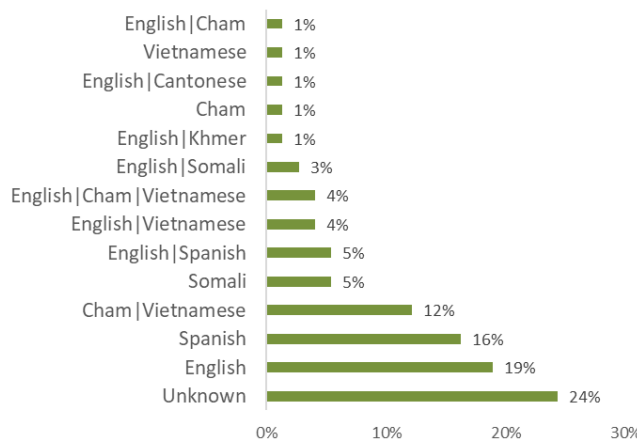


Community participants identified with a diverse racial and ethnic background, representing the many cultures in the North Highline area. Most identified with Asian Non-Pacific Islander (26%), Hispanic or Latino (20%), African (7%), and African American or Black (5%). About 50% of community participants identified English (50%) as the main language or one of the main languages they speak at home. Participants also identified Vietnamese/Cham (23%), Spanish (21%), Somali (8%), Khmer (1%), and Cantonese (1%) as the main language or one of the main languages they speak at home.

Community Partipants by Race & Ethnicity



Community Partipants by Race & Ethnicity



Detailed Summary of Community Input

Input is organized in the There were a total of 8 chapters included in the Public Review Draft with a total of 29 policies. We were able to take cover just 8 policies that all under 4 chapters, the chapters and policies covered were as follows:

Land Use

NH-2: Ensure that North Highline residents and businesses have opportunities to engage in development proposals as they occur, in ways that support and build community capacity to maintain and enhance the character of the neighborhoods in the subarea, through means such as community meetings, public noticing requirements, and permit submittal requirements.

People were broadly concerned that equitable land use policy needed to inc, Highline residents need to call out BIPOC community members especially. Development proposals need to be shaped by BIPOC communities before they occur.

NH-4: Utilize high-density residential zoning in the White Center Unincorporated Activity Center, the Roxhill and Top Hat Community Business Centers, and Glendale Neighborhood Business Center, to increase the supply of housing options throughout North Highline.

People were broadly concerned about incentives given to developers, small business owners didn't favor the reduced parking incentives given the congestion and shortage of parking that exists. The overall concern that developers never develop enough affordable units and enough 3-4 bedroom units that are needed. There was also concern for the affordability and size of commercial spaces, and the need to create a range of sizes that meet the changing and growing needs of new businesses and legacy businesses.

NH-6: Focus a mix of commercial and mixed-use development in the White Center Unincorporated Activity Center and Roxhill and Top Hat Community Business Centers.

There were those who agreed and disagreed with this policy. Community thinks of mixed use development as mostly unaffordable. Others thought that by bringing more residents to the area, a safer commercial core would be created. There were concerns from both residents, businesses and youth of living next door to businesses and vice versa. Youth want homes of their own single family home, not high density building developments like Greenbridge. Those developments feel like we're being enclosed and defined to a certain area. Youth want their own yards and their ability to live with their family, creating a unique home of their own. There is such a focus on mixed-use development, what about affordable homeownership and our ability to build our families wealth and well being?

NH-11: Seek to preserve and enhance community-identified cultural assets when development occurs and work with the community and developers to mitigate the loss of North Highline's unique cultural assets.

Themes of reparations and giving the Duwamish tribe their land and river back. Rename areas, parks, lakes, streets with indigenous, Lushootseed language and other languages spoken in the neighborhood. We need to create those cultural spaces and buildings that don't exist currently. How are we to preserve when we still need to create them?

Transportation

NH-22: Promote a pedestrian-oriented environment, build on the existing street system, and improve access to other travel options, such as transit and bicycling, through new commercial and mixed-use development in the White Center Unincorporated Activity Center and in other commercial areas in North Highline.

Consider the transportation section with a racial equity lens. Overall, residents are not primarily walking, sidewalks and east west bus routes or other modes of van service etc need to be created before we support infrastructure for bicycles. Where are we walking to? Youth and families looking for more family friendly spots to enjoy within the commercial areas - places, beyond restaurants and grocery stores. People expressed wanting to better understand what pedestrian-oriented looked and felt like. At what cost to the community would pedestrian-oriented and beautification be? Would it cost more to live in a place that was more pedestrian-oriented and close to businesses? Will those improvements cause displacement?

Services and Utilities

NH-25: Promote the efficient use of land by providing the necessary urban utilities and services through a coordinated and logical approach, including coordination with the City of Seattle for planned annexation.

Community was very confused with this policy. Though some acknowledged their need for improved utility structures and services, they needed more time to figure out what those structures and services looked like and then to connect those issues to past and future annexation issues.

Economic Development

NH-28: Partner with community organizations and other agencies to provide technical assistance to the North Highline small business community in areas such as commercial leasing, commercial land purchase, applying for grants and loans, and business financing and accounting.

For equitable development, BIPOC small businesses need to be included in the policy. The technical assistance needs to be language and culturally based rather than applying the traditional forms of technical assistance we're familiar with and knows does not work for all - going beyond one size fits all. All items listed, commercial leasing, land purchase, applying for grants and loans and financing - all are important, all are financially related solutions, but need to talk about the lack of community trust, bankability and challenges of our immigrant and refugee business community.

NH-29: Partner with community organizations in identifying and applying for funding sources to address the community development needs of very-low to moderate income residents of North Highline.

Most agree on this policy, but need to consider capacity and challenges for local, small community based organizations and their capacity to apply for funding sources.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO County

- ❖ The County needs to adopt a co-creating model with power sharing in decisions
- ❖ Support community-led planning with capacity building and resources beyond the basic costs and minimal time frame presented
- ❖ Leverage existing networks to center BIPOC voices - multiple organizations could assist in facilitating and connections to community
- ❖ Investing in community partner organizations with capacity to follow through on BIPOC priorities, urgent community needs implementation through several year update process
- ❖ Do a better job of addressing racial equity within the planning process; racial equity needs to be at the center of how plans shapes capital investments to meet community needs and resists displacement
- ❖ Most urgent community needs list items need further development by the community
- ❖ Most urgent community needs list implementation plans by County department(s) need to be shaped by the community and consider work to occur across departments
- ❖ Planning efforts need to consider a community organizing framework and lens

- ❖ County staff need to build their own relationships with community members and not rely solely on community based organizations
- ❖ Consider Policy Link's *Advancing Racial Equity as part of the 2020 Update to the Seattle 2035 Comprehensive Plan and Urban Village Strategy - Prepared April 2021* / Many thoughts within this narrative parallel North Highline concerns
- ❖ Ordinance 19146 needs to be considered and discussed in more detail with community and how parts of that ordinance is shaped

TESTIMONIALS

SAREY SAVEY

As far as my thoughts on my experience with the Top 38 survey and staff discussions going over key policies, content material, and the process – I would say it went very well. I completely understood what was being asked of me and I enjoyed going over a lot of the different things we talked about – especially when we did live Zoom polls and had everyone's input involved right then and there. I also enjoyed working with Omari to bring the list over to LGBTQ+ youth and hearing them have a discussion with each other on things they find important within the community and things they liked to see change. Overall, my experience has been a smooth one and I think that the youth really appreciated learning about subarea planning and having their voices be elevated.

DONNA CHAN

It was definitely a positive experience meeting with Jacqueline and the CDA to feel like we are being heard. It would be great to have continued talks to figure out how we can improve White Center! We need assistance now!!!

EIR CHEEKA

I really felt good about being able to provide the gift cards as compensation for helping with the sub-area plan. When volunteering is required, we only get the most privileged among us that can afford to volunteer and that will also skew things in the direction of racism and sexism. I was still frustrated by some of the language and combining of things that clearly showed the angle of the County, that political language can make things that are bad for the community sound good when it is bad or make it clear that the community can only get this one good thing if they accept this one bad thing with it. The community members made note of this language and their frustration with it.

It makes people think that their input won't actually be taken into account, another reason to incentivize participation since most people think that even if they give their input, it won't actually result in positive change. One thing that I wish we had done, since there was so much material to cover is to set it up as weekly or twice weekly meetings for a group, but as we thought we had less time than we did and it was not communicated to us how many hours was needed or how much money was in the budget to pay, I think that we did the best we could.

I personally always want to put Native voices up front and want the State and the County to do what it can to try to honor the treaties that the Federal government often refuses to and this is true in the case of the Duwamish. The tribe should be consulted and offered government owned land back. The North Highline area includes a stretch of the Duwamish river shoreline and the health of our land and water should be of utmost importance. The treaties are supposed to insure this with the right to harvest Native plants and animals, that cannot be upheld if the plants and animals go extinct or the fish are so contaminated with pollution that they are actually no longer safe to eat. The condition of the Duwamish river and our creeks and wetlands is unacceptable. Boeing and other industries that have caused this horrific contamination should not be allowed to get away with doing the smallest and cheapest clean up over the longest amount of time, they should be held accountable for the great harm they have caused and forced to pay for the best clean up possible

The poorest among us live in the most polluted areas and receive the worst health effects because of this. The inequity of wealth distribution is also one of the worst effects on our physical and mental health. All tools to help create the equitable distribution of wealth should be deployed, this includes rent control and increased access to home ownership as this is one of the biggest systems that keep wealth in the hands of the few, mostly men and mostly white.

The equitable distribution of funds in our schools is another area where we currently create harm and could potentially use for good. There should be no poor schools and no rich schools. The new laws in regards to school funding did not go far enough, not by a long shot. Universal preschools and access to affordable child care is another area where we could combat part of the system of sexism, make it happen in North Highline and King County, and put pressure on the State and Federal governments to do the best that we can for the betterment of all. I ask a lot, but our children deserve it and I will keep fighting for their future.

APPENDICES

A. Activities Of Community Engagement

Date	Duration (mins)	Description of Activity	Number of Adults	Number of Youth	Total Number of People
10/04/2021	90	White Center Community Development Association All staff Discussed and ranked top 39 community needs list survey. ZOOM poll results were submitted to the public input link.	14	0	14
10/07/2021	105	Cham Community Members (Vietnamese speaking) Discussion focused on the top 38 community needs survey. Discussion was encouraged and recorded, but due to technical issues, participants were not able to complete the survey in real time but we followed up and supported them to complete the survey at a later date. The Cham community focused their discussions on items most important to them: Affordable and culturally based child care centers, Lack of after school programming, especially programming focused on retaining their own culture and language. They desire a cultural center/museum in White Center to display artifacts from their country. They support youth entrepreneurship and assistance to community members who want to establish a food truck. They also had discussions on how parking would be impacted by creating new open space/plaza events. They wanted to see more foot traffic on 16th Ave. SW rather than more cars, maybe moving parking off of 16th Ave SW and welcome more open air dining areas. Establish a parking garage and parking lots for area customers. Limit chains and create more sidewalks, night patrols, more beautification in White Center business district core and create more landscaping in parks to support sledding and other snow activities during snow season.	16	0	16
10/13/2021	90	COO Community Partners Going over 8 policies with partners: FEEST, SWYF, Trusted Advocates, YES, Catherina Willard, Khmer Community of Seattle King County. ZOOM poll results were submitted to the public input	8	0	8

		link. Overall, a few comments were made regarding bike lanes, maybe not so much a priority, but addressing other transportation modes, walking (improve sidewalks, build sidewalks), bus routes, (east west routes added), senior van services etc. Overall comments showed concern for policies increasing density and displacing longtime residents and the inability for those already displaced to come back to the area.			
10/15/2021	90	Native and Black Community Members Meeting with families individually to go over the top 38 community needs survey with them. Families experienced challenges with the language used in the survey and were skeptical whether their feedback will influence change. ZOOM poll results were submitted to the public input link.	6	0	6
10/18/2021	90	White Center Community Development Association All staff Went over the 8 policies. Zoom poll results were submitted to the public input link.	13	0	13
10/21/2021	60	Somali Community Members Meeting with families individually to go over the top 38 community needs survey with them. Families experienced challenges with the language and translation of the survey. Staff ended up using the English survey and explaining the meaning of each priority using the Somali language.	5	0	5
10/21/2021	90	Spanish Speaking Community Members Meeting with families to go over the top 38 community needs survey. Families expressed concerns about displacement of housing and businesses. Queries were made about the increasing role of developers in the community.	11	0	11

10/26/2021	90	<p>Native Community Members</p> <p>NH2 No comments were made by the 3 participants.</p> <p>NH4 EC made a comment regarding industrial land uses alongside residential. Is it safe to live close to a car repair business? What are the pros and cons of industrial and residential uses located in proximity to one another?</p> <p>NH6 A and T were concerned about the mixed-used developments holding larger bedroom units 3-5 bedrooms. The mixed units they are familiar with don't have these larger units. Also, the concern is that when these mixed-use developments are located close to businesses and services, the units tend to be more expensive.</p> <p>NH11 No comments were made by the 3 participants. A person made a comment about the Duwamish River, parks, and creeks, all should be maintained or brought back to life/renewed. The County needs to be kept accountable for the renewal/cleaning of the Duwamish River from the years of pollution by Boeing. The Duwamish River should be given back to the Duwamish tribe. Signage throughout the neighborhood and business district should include developing signage/wayfinding signs using a variety of languages spoken in the neighborhood, especially the native language, Lushootseed.</p> <p>NH 22 - All did not think that this was not a priority, the current street systems are adequate</p> <p>NH25 - All three participants didn't understand the policy, therefore all 3 participants disagreed with the policy</p> <p>NH28 - No Comments were made by the 3 participants.</p> <p>NH29 - No comments were made by the 3 participants. Facilitator asked about which businesses they enjoyed and used in the neighborhood. They mentioned several restaurants and grocery stores in the area.</p> <p>One member mentioned the need for funding to cover administrative costs to execute and complete funding applications.</p>	3	0	3
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11/03/2021	90	LGBTQIA Youths Meeting with LGBTQIA youths to go over the top eight policies. A link to the top 38 needs list survey was provided as well.	0	14	14
11/03/2021	90	White Center Merchants Much of the time was spent on understanding the basics of Subarea and the initial review of key policies. Policy zoom poll was taken. Not much input, but slowly building understanding.	2	0	2
11/04/2021	90	White Center Merchant Much of the time was spent on understanding the basics of Subarea and initial review of key policies. Policy zoom poll was taken and results submitted to the public input link. Not much input, but slowly building understanding.	1	0	1
11/09/2021	60	Native Community Member Went over KC's website for sub area plan and public review draft.	1	0	1
11/09/2021	90	White Center Merchants Much of the time was focused on building understanding of key map amendments (Map 8,9,10). Focus Map Amendments: business owners were able to ask clarification questions on the amendments proposed. There was overall a genuine concern about the rise in rents when new development and density increased. I think there is a sense that new housing in the commercial core could bring more foot traffic and potentially streets could feel safer at night. But affordability of housing and commercial spaces was an overall concern.	3	0	3

11/16/2021	120	<p>This second discussion allowed a few small business leaders to build a deeper understanding of what the zoning would actually do and what incentives developers would be given. There was overall concern on parking requirement incentives and the current lack of parking spaces/options available in White Center downtown and concern for the current traffic congestion/accidents on 16th Ave. SW north/southbound towards and away from Roxbury Street. Merchants have gained a better understanding of current zoning in place and the limitless boundaries they hold. Merchants thought this current zoning should have been shared earlier so they could see what the current changes in zoning would possibly mean in the current context. More parking options should be created, example of the International District/Chinatown, how smaller parking lots were scattered throughout the commercial core was mentioned.</p> <p>Bike lanes:</p> <p>If bike lanes are added, it will take up parking space that is needed. The streets are too narrow for bike lanes, and There are only a few months a year when the weather is good for biking</p> <p>Parking: Parking garage or park and ride in downtown White Center would help with business parking - example of parking garage in Burien tied to transit. Another example is in the International District where there are public parking areas adjacent to businesses. Make the parking garage pleasant. Consider making 16th Ave SW one-direction. Allow more parking – don't cut back on parking. This is going to be particularly important if more residences in downtown White Center are to be encouraged. Don't make it more difficult for people to visit downtown White Center due to insufficient parking and do not lessen parking availability. The median along 16th Ave SW makes it tricky to park using the angled back-in parking (and in winter, when there is snow, cars don't see the raised median.</p> <p>Roadway Improvements: The proposal to remove the waiver on commercial development providing roadway improvements (curb, gutter, and sidewalk) is positive.</p> <p>Industrial Zoning: We discussed the proposal to rezone the remaining industrial zoned areas to commercial business. A need</p>	2	0	2
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		for places to make things was expressed.			
11/30/2021	90	<p>White Center Merchants</p> <p>This third discussion allowed local property owners to discuss overall subarea work and specific map amendments. WC staff were not able to locate the group discussion that day and a few other merchants were not able to locate the group as well.</p> <p>A merchant added, as a person with a physical disability, including mobility disability, they like the concept of a pedestrian-oriented environment, but they are a little nervous about that wording too just because not all of us are capable of being pedestrians and that includes people with disabilities, as well as elders. So they wish there was a different word here that had the word access in it somehow. What we want is a place that people can have access and mobility, including if it's possible through their own mobility through their own body or through other accessible means like a system of cut curbs right. In White Center that's sort of a problem because the cut curbs don't necessarily line up with each other, so you might people here in a wheelchair to get on a sidewalk somewhere and then not be able to get off.</p>	2	0	2
12/06/2021	90	<p>Community Land Trust Informational Session</p> <p>Yasmine Perez presented CLT, models, challenges, possible next steps were mentioned. WCCDA were able to ask a few questions on implementation. WCCDA will pursue more CLT conversations in the new year, exploring the options of single family home acquisition, listening to community members and actual experience with CLT's, CLT's that include commercial uses etc.</p>	12	0	12

B. White Center Community Development Association Policy Feedback

POLICY AREA & NUMBER	WCCDA COMMUNITY FEEDBACK
LAND USE	
<p>NH-1 Prioritize achieving equitable development outcomes that serve the needs of all North Highline residents and businesses through tools and strategies that prevent residential, economic, and cultural displacement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equitable development prioritizes BIPOC. So, serving “all North Highline residents and businesses and prioritizing BIPOC residents and small businesses” could be added to this policy • Consider adding “...through tools and strategies that were designed by community and/or have prior community feedback” • You can’t call out “equitable development” and not have language that prioritizes BIPOC and/or calls out community process and feedback, especially adding community processes whereby BIPOC are the majority participating. • Similarly, you can’t call out “equitable development” without instituting processes that include and welcome the participation of the most severely impacted, i.e. BIPOC.
<p>NH-2 Ensure that North Highline residents and businesses have opportunities to engage in development proposals as they occur, in ways that support and build community capacity to maintain and enhance the character of the neighborhoods in the subarea, through means such as community meetings, public noticing requirements, and permit submittal requirements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The County needs to partner with a BIPOC led community organization based in N. Highline to ensure that engagement of BIPOC residents and small business are welcomed and included in the engagement of development proposals. Again, you need stronger language here to operationalize equitable development. • This policy needs to connect with NH-29 (regarding community development proposals) because capacity building grant funds need to be connected to this policy. • “Maintain and enhance the character of the neighborhoods....” is too subjective. Based on equitable development, calling out the character of N Highline with “immigrant and refugee and NATIVE history and future” is critical to maintaining and enhancing the character. This policy opens up N Highline to gentrification vs. preservation and safety of its roots and future growth.
<p>NH-3 Focus medium-density housing development along transit corridors and adjacent to the White Center Unincorporated Activity Center and Roxhill and Top Hat Community Business Centers in a way that is compatible with surrounding areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify types of medium-density housing, townhome style and smaller duplex/triplex/fourplex projects? • The County should include and incentivize affordable housing development.

<p>NH-4 Utilize high-density residential zoning in the White Center Unincorporated Activity Center, the Roxhill and Top Hat Community Business Centers, and Glendale Neighborhood Business Center, to increase the supply of housing options throughout North Highline.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● For high-density, the County should include and incentivize affordable housing development, but to be aware of parking incentives. Businesses want designated areas for parking. ● This policy should also intersect with NH-29 regarding community development projects.
<p>NH-5 Support strategies in North Highline to increase commercial affordability and improve access to affordable commercial ownership for small businesses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The County should incentivize strategies. To me, incentivizing means the County will either discount fees, expedite permitting, etc. to provide some kind of systemic, operationalized incentive that works. The County says it wants to “support” – but how? The language needs to be a bit more robust because demonstrating support can also be done by writing a letter, which we don’t want. We want more robust, impactful action by the County. ● Prioritizing the strategies that are co-designed and/or at minimum have gone through a community feedback process, in multiple languages, with current businesses and incentivize small business participation, i.e. pay them to participate. ● This policy should also intersect with NH-29 regarding community development projects. ● Allocate more general funds towards COO/NDC’s Commercial Affordability Program work
<p>NH-6 Focus a mix of commercial and mixed-use development in the White Center Unincorporated Activity Center and Roxhill and Top Hat Community Business Centers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “Mix” needs to be defined more to include prioritizing uses that fulfill community needs and gaps. The community is already identifying needs/gaps in the Top 39 Survey. Use the survey as the baseline for the mix.

<p>NH-7 Preserves the small size and scale of existing businesses and creates new small commercial spaces in the White Center Unincorporated Activity Center that support creating local businesses, increase local business ownership, and prevent displacement of existing businesses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Yes, to preserve, but this policy should intersect with NH-28 to include culturally responsive technical assistance. ● “Create new small commercial spaces” that are prioritized by community needs and gaps and are immigrant and refugee owned/operated. This policy should also intersect with NH-2 to support “maintain and enhance character”. ● What about supporting micro-entrepreneurs working at home into a brick-and-mortar space in the business district? Not sure if this policy includes micro-businesses, of which, N Highline has multiple. This speaks specifically to immigrant and refugee entrepreneurship. ● “Creating local businesses” – the baseline should intersect with the community survey. ● The County needs to have a policy that works with Owners of spaces to also prevent displacement. This should intersect with NH-28 (regarding free technical assistance). ● Again, this policy should intersect with NH-29 and prioritize community development projects. ● Many of our local businesses have moved beyond “small commercial spaces,” Businesses are in need of larger spaces with greater square footage, beyond 5,000 square feet. Consider not just “small” but rather a range of sizes that meet the needed range, ages and stages of business needs. ● We need a policy that speaks to how affordable and relevant spaces are sustained and created. County will let the private market take hold of spaces without inserting real policies that take property off the private market. ● Work with community-based organizations to guide the types of new businesses that come to N.Highline. We want businesses, products and services that meet the needs and are affordable to families, youth and elders living here.
<p>NH-8 Support and maintain employment opportunities and local economic activity in existing industrial areas in Glendale and South Park through zoning and other regulatory tools.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Partner with BIPOC led community organizations in Glendale and South Park. ● N.Highline residents have expressed the need for employment in close proximity to where they live, more employment opportunities in N.Highline. Where can industrial areas be preserved and how can the County steer development towards creating quality jobs, like the La Mexicana factory site that provided jobs over decades for our community.

<p>NH-9 Support the use of urban design standards for nonresidential, multifamily, and mixed-use development in North Highline that enriches the area's urban form and character.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support the use of urban design standards that are demonstrated to increase the quality of life and safety for BIPOC. Do not simply rely on the status quo urban design standards – these have been demonstrated to activate gentrification. ● Again, if the County calls out equitable development, all policies need to align with the principles of it, meaning prioritizing the safety and increasing quality of life for BIPOC and the disabled. ● This policy needs to have an equitable community design process, in multiple languages, attached to it and needs to intersect with the transportation chapter to ensure BIPOC inclusion. ● “Urban form and character” need to be called out more specifically because this is too subjective in its current language. This needs to intersect with NH-2, to more strongly protect and enhance N. Highline’s roots as immigrant and refugee and NATIVE. ● Design standards need to go beyond “enriches the urban form and character. Does that mean to preserve and continue “eclectic signage & storefronts” and “incorporating local art?” Create a policy that goes beyond this. ● Check out the BIPOC in Built Project initiative at MIT.
<p>NH-10 Limit and avoid the clustering of legal cannabis businesses in North Highline through planning and policies, store licensing and siting, and related measures to prevent negative community impacts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Legal cannabis is also a health issue – it assists folks with their health problems, consider legal cannabis businesses products and services, those that meet the medical needs versus recreational needs ● Hold a community conversation with existing and future health providers, community health issues need to be connected here as it relates to new development and/or small business permitting.
<p>NH-11 Seek to preserve and enhance community-identified cultural assets when development occurs and work with the community and developers to mitigate the loss of North Highline's unique cultural assets.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How can you seek to preserve and enhance but also expand and grow cultural assets? ● Don’t just limit preservation to “when development occurs,” pursue preservation now! As displacement rates increase, seek and find places to preserve, projects that preserve, events that preserve.
<p>NH-12 Encourages the development of community-identified amenities near commercial centers, frequent transit corridors, and parks and trails through incentives and development requirements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work with the community and consider the Top 39 Community Priorities on amenities needed. (i.e. Child care, youth and children focused spaces, spaces for elders, intergenerational spaces, places to just hold a community meeting/activity etc.)
<p>HOUSING</p>	

<p>NH-13 Provide for a wide range of residential zones, densities, and housing types to continue to promote access to diverse housing choices for residents at a variety of income levels, ages, household sizes, and lifestyles to address the unique population and housing needs of North Highline.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This policy statement basically includes everything and everyone “under the sun.” What this policy does not do is address anti-displacement and preserving one of the primary cultural assets of N. Highline, i.e. BIPOC housing affordability. ● N.Highline has historically been a place of affordability and where cultural services and activities are supported, acknowledge the history and zone and incentivize accordingly ● This policy needs community preference and affirmative marketing attached to it. Referring to the anti-displacement report completed. ● This policy needs to intersect with the community development projects mentioned in NH-29. Add “prioritize housing choices that also meet community development projects for very low-income, etc.” as described in NH-29. ● The way this policy reads, it leaves the community open to “XYZ developer” to do projects in the community without any prioritization of actual community needs. (ie. affordable homeownership, larger affordable family units) There should be some type of community process included in this policy. Refer to NH-14.
<p>NH-14 Consider a full range of mandatory and voluntary strategies to preserve existing units, increase the supply of new affordable housing, and reduce the risk of involuntary residential displacement in North Highline, through tools such as:</p> <p>a. Inclusionary zoning; b. Tenant relocation assistance; c. Right to return and/or community preference; d. Community land trusts and other models of permanently affordable, shared-equity homeownership; e. Down payment assistance; f. Property tax exemption; g. Redevelopment assistance; and h. Funding equitable, community-driven affordable housing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We see anti-displacement here vs. in NH 13. ● What’s mandatory and what is voluntary in the list above? ● Assume this list of tools is cross referencing the anti-displacement report completed.
<p>NH-15 Require or incentivize residential development in North Highline to provide family size units, affordable culturally specific housing for elders, and rental units that are affordable to low- and extremely low-income households.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Incentivize = County provides more capital to build family size units as it is financially difficult to incorporate the 3+ bedroom units into projects. ● Careful on the incentives provided to developers like limiting parking requirements, especially when considering the commercial core areas where there is a lack of parking infrastructure

<p>NH-16 Promote safe and healthy homes through strategies, programs, and regulations that can address dilapidated or unsafe properties in North Highline.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This should be tied to environmental justice and intersect with Healthy Housing, i.e. asthma, etc. ● Policy should consider promoting healthy commercial spaces as well. A number of unsafe and underutilized commercial properties exist as well.
<p>NH-17 Support access to healthy, affordable, and culturally relevant foods for all residents throughout North Highline by encouraging grocery stores, small markets, farmers markets, urban farms, and community gardens.</p>	
<p>NH-18 Partner with Highline School District and other agencies and organizations to improve outcomes for students and their families.</p>	
<p>PARKS, OPEN SPACE & CULTURAL RESOURCES</p>	
<p>NH-19 Work with residents and businesses in North Highline to identify opportunities for planting trees and installing green infrastructure to reduce the urban heat island and improve water and air quality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prioritize inclusion of BIPOC, especially as it relates to BIPOC clusters in N. Highline. These areas and communities typically lack and have historically been excluded in conversations about the environment. ● “Installing green infrastructure” should include partnering with BIPOC businesses/contractors to build BIPOC business wealth. ● The identified opportunities should be led by the BIPOC community process and prioritize opportunities that prioritize BIPOC. ● Again, you can’t call out equitable development and then not specify working with BIPOC. You can work with all residents and businesses of N. Highline AND prioritize the voice of BIPOC as they are the most impacted.
<p>NH-20 Support additional recreational opportunities and culturally appropriate gathering spaces for communities in North Highline, such as new community buildings, plazas, open spaces, local parks, and pocket parks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This should also include equitable development principles, i.e. prioritize BIPOC voice and engagement to ensure safety and quality of life. ● Also, needs to intersect with NH-29 regarding community development projects for low-income community members. ● This policy doesn’t speak to existing gathering spaces. These need to be audited for cultural appropriateness as well as maintained more robustly, i.e. ongoing maintenance. ● New parks, etc. need to be developed in proximity to BIPOC clusters in N. Highline since these tend to have been historically excluded. ● Community baseline needs and gaps need to be prioritized here. ● Refer to Top 39 Survey Results and take next steps with community-based organizations to develop and define needs in more detail once priorities are assigned to specific County department or across County departments.

<p>NH-21 Partner with community organizations to increase capacity building and funding, share technical expertise, and leverage County-owned parks facilities to support the delivery of park improvements and recreational, cultural, and educational programs in North Highline.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Add “Partner with BIPOC led community organizations.” ● Co-design or ask BIPOC partner to identify and design capacity building programs and funding distribution that prioritizes BIPOC needs. ● “Share technical expertise” should also include “Train community in technical expertise.”
TRANSPORTATION	
<p>NH-22 Promote a pedestrian-oriented environment, build on the existing street system, and improve access to other travel options, such as transit and bicycling, through new commercial and mixed-use development in the White Center Unincorporated Activity Center and in other commercial areas in North Highline.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This chapter also falls under environmental racism. ● Refer to this June 2020 article on ‘Safe Streets’ Are Not Safe for Black Lives https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-06-08/-safe-streets-are-not-safe-for-black-lives ● “Improve access to other travel options” by partnering with BIPOC led community organizations to identify their travel option needs. In addition to transit and bicycling, consider parking dedicated for carpool, more east west routes that support resident mobility etc. ● This policy only focuses on new and future development. The County should also look at the current gaps and work with the community on filling these. This is in connection with NH-29 below.
<p>NH-23 Bus service and other transit models should provide convenient, safe access to commercial areas and community amenities in North Highline and surrounding city transit hubs so that residents are able to participate in the region's economy regardless of their age, socioeconomic status, or abilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide signage in different languages – those that are most spoken in N. Highline. ● This policy should intersect with public safety policy, especially as it relates to people of color feeling safe at bus stops during the night (and day even) and feeling safe getting on the bus. This policy should also intersect with the gaps in existing sidewalks, i.e. pedestrian oriented environments in NH-22. ● There are existing commercial areas and community amenities that lack convenient and safe access to bus service. The County should address these now vs. waiting for new, future development to address. ● Special accommodations should include convenience and safety for young adults, seniors and disabled community members. These populations need to be prioritized. ● Ongoing, regularly funded and sustainable County maintenance needs to intersect with this policy so that trash collection, graffiti, broken sidewalk lights, etc. are addressed in a timely manner. ● This needs a racial equity overlay / assessment. ● Consider the Rapid H Line, who will benefit and who will not

<p>NH-24 Prioritize safe and inviting walking and bicycling throughout North Highline to connect residents to transit facilities, North Highline commercial areas, local parks and open spaces, North Highline schools, and other local destinations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Partner with BIPOC led community organizations in N. Highline to identify and prioritize areas. It's not enough to just prioritize, the County should work with the community groups that are most impacted by the lack of safe and inviting walkways. Also, the disabled community traveling by wheelchairs or vision impaired individuals using walkways experience the lack of or consistent curb cuts and bulb outs.
<p>NH-25 Promote the efficient use of land by providing the necessary urban utilities and services through a coordinated and logical approach, including coordination with the City of Seattle for planned annexation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● "Promote the efficient use of land" needs a definition and an example. The way this policy reads is that the County can essentially take (i.e. eminent domain possibly) land in the name of "efficient use of land" without community process. ● This is an environmental justice issue. We all know that living in proximity to or underneath utilities is a hazard. The County needs to implement a racial equity assessment prior to any taking of land for utilities and services. ● This policy points to future opportunities. What about addressing the utility and service gaps that currently exist?
<p>NH-26 Encourage developers proposing to extend water or sewer service for new residential, commercial, or mixed-use development in North Highline to work with surrounding property owners to provide additional, reasonable access to public utilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The word "encourage" may not lead to any real change. Use the word "incentivize" instead. Though, this means that the County needs to actually provide an incentive for the developer to want to do this. Perhaps a % decrease in permitting fees?
<p>NH-27 Partner with the North Highline community to address unsewered areas between the SW Suburban Sewer District, the Valley View Sewer District, and other providers, as well as addressing aging and failing on-site sewage systems by identifying the most appropriate wastewater treatment options, such as conversion to sewer or decentralized options, that protect public health and support the community's housing and equity goals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This is an environmental justice issue. In addition to partnering with BIPOC led community organizations, the County shall implement a racial equity assessment to address aging and failing onsite sewage and unsewered areas...etc. ● Racism, including environmental racism, is a public health issue. The County shall work with KC Public Health and BIPOC led community organizations to address this issue.
<p>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</p>	

<p>NH-28 Partner with community organizations and other agencies to provide technical assistance to the North Highline small business community in areas such as commercial leasing, commercial land purchase, applying for grants and loans, and business financing and accounting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Partner with BIPOC led community organizations in North Highline and other agencies that can demonstrate serving BIPOC communities over the last 5-8 years. ● Provide free and/or affordable technical assistance in the languages spoken in North Highline and consider the specific and unique needs and challenges that exist among diverse business communities. One size does not always fit all. ● Prioritize marketing free and/or affordable technical assistance to small businesses owned and/or managed by BIPOC professionals, including immigrants and refugees. Use relevant local ethnic media and networks. ● In partnership with the North Highline community, set a baseline, annual goal of BIPOC small businesses who receive free and/or affordable technical assistance [aspirational % of BIPOC owned/managed businesses out of the total % of small businesses in North Highline]. If at the end of the year, the baseline, annual goal has not been met, work with BIPOC small businesses to change the distribution and possibly the type of technical assistance developed. ● Partner with a BIPOC led community organization in North Highline to convene and facilitate a process to identify culturally appropriate technical assistance needs (in addition to the above in the draft policy) on an annual basis. ● Partner with a BIPOC led community organization in North Highline to design a selection process for technical providers. At minimum, technical assistance providers shall have demonstrated experience in serving immigrant and refugee owned and operated small businesses or who hold the potential and desire to develop. For example, we know there are gaps for example in assistance tailored to the Khmer and Vietnamese business community. ● Additional technical assistance topics: reporting Owner code violations to the County
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<p>NH-29 Partner with community organizations in identifying and applying for funding sources to address the community development needs of very-low to moderate income residents of North Highline.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Prioritize partnering with BIPOC led community organizations in North Highline with a track record of serving communities of color.● In addition to identifying and applying for funding sources, the County shall provide capacity building grant funds to assist the community organization in actually applying for funding. The way this policy reads is that the County may or may not provide capacity/assistance in the actual application process and/or if the County does, what level of assistance will be provided? As you already know, some of the funding sources involve a complex application process and unfortunately some existing community organizations, especially small BIPOC led ones, do not have the in-house expertise to complete them. The community organizations should have some grant funds to be able to control how they ultimately apply for the funds.
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C. White Center Community Development Association Staff Poll Result of 8 Policies

