



Skyway-West Hill CSA Subarea Plan

Stakeholder Interviews

Introduction/Background

During the month of February 2019, King County Local Services staff conducted personal interviews with 25 residents of unincorporated Skyway-West Hill. All interviews contained the same six questions (below) which were designed to inform development of the ongoing Skyway-West Hill Community Service Area (CSA) Subarea Plan. All interviewees either resided or worked in unincorporated Skyway-West Hill and held a current or former leadership role of a Skyway organization or business or were otherwise an active and informed member of the community.

- 1. In the next 10-15 years, how do you think the residential neighborhoods and commercial districts of Skyway-West Hill will experience pressure to change or be different? (e.g. lot size, roads, walkability, lighting, building types)**

Density

- There will be pressure for greater density in the next 15 years. I don't see a great commercialization happening, but more on affordable housing. We will have a call for a greater portion for safety. I like the idea of **walkability**, but if we don't have a business district to go to there's no need for it.
- All of that will change. It's changing now. They're putting in bike lanes, curbs. As far as businesses are concerned, developers are targeting this area. Ten years ago they didn't want to sell, but now they are. Whether there's pressure or not, it will change. They're building new townhouses down the street. The pressure is there already.
- The area will definitely change. There's a huge shift in demographics, in the prices of homes. A lot of people are interested in rejuvenating the neighborhoods and the commercial districts. You're going to see more leaders emerging.
- Density plays a big part, not just lot size. How do you increase density without affecting lot size? People who own houses can't build ADUs (accessory dwelling units) because of the density requirements in the code. More density on single-family lots. On the commercial side, the pressure is on absentee landowners who aren't responsive. People want to see a local economic space that attracts developers who will partner with the community.
- Anticipates Skyway-West Hill will have quite a bit of pressure to develop over the next 15-20 years due to its central location in the region, the fact that there are no bridges between West Hill and Seattle, and the multiple public street access points into the community.

- Minneapolis changed lot size to eliminate single-family and got more townhouses and condos. More density and they were affordable. But we need to be careful. Town homes feel too dense. They don't feel like a neighborhood.
- Does not see a lot of change in the next 15-20 years, especially in the Lakeridge and Bryn Mawr areas; mostly single-family, stable housing here that will likely continue.
- Increase density.

Development pressure

- That is already happening. I'm an example of that. My wife and I originally moved from the Midwest. She works for Amazon. We were renting in the International District in 2014 and looking to buy, and our criteria included transit, affordability, and price. And I came across this property in Lakeridge. That was a right mix, not a new development, but as affordable as can be, near the light rail. She walks a few blocks from our house in Cornell and takes the light rail down Martin Luther King, Jr. Way. I guess our story is not unlike a lot of folks that discovered West Hill. There's just a good mix of accessibility and affordability as well as the natural backdrop of what the area offers, like the accessibility of the green space that we have. These are positives that draw people to the area. Folks like us are driving up the prices of homes for people living here—people who are on retirement income would be feeling the pressure. Also the close proximity to Seattle drives people to come here. I know some people have this affinity for Renton, but Seattle was what drove us here.
- Churches and religious organizations occupying spaces with cheap rent in business districts make redevelopment a challenge. One church recently moved out.
- There is increasing external pressure being put on the local housing market/supply. There are available, buildable parcels, and median prices are below King County prices.
- I think it's going to happen whether we want it to or not because of escalating land values.
- She is aware of Skyway-West Hill property owners, including an African-American church, who would like to do some development of their property do not have the expertise to go through the process. How can owners get support from King County to do small-scale development? There's a need to remove barriers.

Walkability

- I guess services, everyone want to be safe. There's no walkability—no sidewalks. The pressure will be from the citizens that we want to change because the county can't afford us. Try to annex to Renton again. With property taxes going up considerably, people want more services. For instance, if we go to Renton, all these different taxing agencies can be under one umbrella.
- Need more pathways for kids to safely get to schools.
- Walkability will be more important.
- Walkability is hugely important. There are lots of areas that are not accessible.

- Many areas don't have sidewalks in school zones. Caldwell School is my daughter's school. Walking there is scary.
- People would walk more and do more if there were more sidewalks.

Demographics

- I see it changing demographically. I can see the older residents dying off or moving away for many reasons. I'm thinking it would be younger generations. I've been hearing rumors of bike paths and talks about upgrading Skyway Park, so within the time frame there will be more demand for family-friendly services.
- Right now the pressure is affordability, but also economic mobility for the residents. If folks can't live, work, shop, or invest in the community, they are going to be displaced. We need to be able to live affordably, shop locally. Every dollar spent here circulates 20 times locally before it leaves. I see a big opportunity if we can develop the local corridors—not just private, but community ownership, a community development agreement. Locals having first crack at the stores, and what the street looks like. We are kind of the last undeveloped community, we are affordable but we are NOT affordable for people of color. King County is missing the boat on addressing racial/income inequality.
- The composition of the community will change demographically/economically.
- Communities of color may get pushed further south to get away from the downtown area.

Revitalize the commercial districts

- From an infrastructure standpoint, we need to catch up. Our commercial corridor sits between two well-developed areas in Seattle and Renton. Skyway-West Hill need to pay attention to the development that's happening now. The library has caught up, but there's no other sign of life out here.
- Make Skyway more than a transitional place. People pass through these roads to go to and from somewhere. We need to stop encouraging taverns to be open all night, these are the causes of issues here in the evening.
- The genesis of change is the library. We already have a library but now it's become the hub.
- Absentee landlords are a concern for business district revitalization.
- You can trace the decline of the Skyway business district to the opening of Renton big box stores. It's easier and simpler for residents to access services in Renton.
- Creating an improved town center (e.g. Skyway business District) helps draw people in from the periphery.
- I'm hoping that there can be more commercial development to get back to.
- Having more shopping options.

- Services such as doctors and dentists.
- Banking options.
- Many people do their shopping either one side or the other side of the hill—go to Fred Meyers and Safeway down there or go the other way to Seattle to go into the Safeway and things down in that area.
- From a business standpoint, business seeing this as potentially an attractive place, there are things that they'll look at...you know, what is the traffic, what is what is the walkability, can someone walk from their house to my business and back safely. Some of the work I do now is involved with families and education and transportation is a really big issue because east to west to east on West Hill is hard when I use public transportation—there isn't any, and so for families, for students to access their schools and for people to access the business district right now, they can't, and so hopefully within less than 10-15 years that's something that can be thought of and hopefully a solution found.
- Well it certainly already happened with businesses departing.

Other

- Roads need improvements now.
- Home buildings that affect businesses?
- Better lighting equals safety. Parks rely on good lighting and we need accessible ramps for crossings.

2. How do you see these areas being different and/or the same? (for example lot size, roads, walkability, lighting, building types)

Community center

- We need a community center. We don't have one because we aren't part of a city. The coffee shop is a sit-down place. Everyone liked the idea of having a place to hang out combined with youth activities. As a pastor, I'd like to see churches working together. We have an informal network of churches. A lot of the church members and pastors used to live here, but not all do.
- A community center is needed. The Skyway Tool Library could go into a community center.

Density

- In the future, we're going to see dense housing. We are already seeing multi-family housing or lots developed. Those people will need more resources, shops to go to. And this will also impact the business district.
- People are seeing a lot of box-type houses being built here and are unhappy about that. On the other hand they are seeing other cities requiring set-backs for these big box houses. People don't

want more density like building multi-family in the current R6 zone. If there are moves to rezone to allow more multi-family, mother-in-law type homes, people will push back. As far as the commercial district is concerned, I'm glad to see the new library but doubt that other businesses would set up shop here because they feel that people would just go down the hill and take their business to Renton.

- Be careful with decreasing lot sizes too much. Wallingford is an example of this, with congested streets, parking issues, etc.
- ADUs (accessory dwelling units) are a concern in many neighborhoods, especially when the main unit is not owner-occupied. It can lead to a decline in quality of life, issues with off-street parking, and infrastructure pressures.
- The number of large parcels that can be platted and/or short-platted will likely put property owners in a position to earn income from their land.
- Existing housing is diverse and WWII era styles; new structures may become more utilitarian and built to match the diverse population, larger family sizes, etc.
- Density is going to become an issue.

Walkability

- We need to figure out what the residents in this area want and try to attract businesses to cater to that. The walkability is not good for this neighborhood. You have a blank canvas; this area needs a vision.
- The hilly terrain of West Hill makes walking and general mobility a challenge for many residents.
- New shops that you can easily walk to.

Downtown revitalization

- I believe that development of housing with businesses on the bottom floor is about to happen in the area. I would love to see a lot of what's happening in Columbia City. We need a place to be able to hang out, like this guy right here (pointing to Nazvat Coffee) building a sit-down place for the community—more of that is what we need here. There is no hub for people to gather. We're even thinking of doing something like that in our church, a place to have coffee, computing, etc. I would like to see the zoning change, to me it's obsolete.
- Potential for this area is like Columbia City. I feel that this is almost happening. I heard that Hong Kong Seafood was consolidating their property to include 3-4 stories and there was the outcry that neighbors would be losing their views. I enjoy walking around Columbia City, different shops and grocery stores, etc. Give it about 5 years, this area would be developed. I see Renton Avenue as a corridor.
- Skyway needs an art gallery and more eating establishments.
- Need to replace old, crumbling buildings with new, mixed-use buildings.

- New infrastructure and other elements of “change” require funding. I don’t see many people willing to pay for the high cost of improved infrastructure
- Some will think, “I want to be able to walk to my local grocery store”—it just depends on the person. When I grew up here, when I was a kid at the hardware store, grocery store that people miss—they miss being able to have a drugstore, they miss having the Albertsons or Skyway Market or just having a sandwich shop or on a Saturday being able to just come out and walk down to the park and then walking on Princeton Avenue, and just taking pride in your neighborhood, you know? And maybe that will change.
- Columbia City, that is a little more lively as far as shops and restaurants and stuff compared to Skyway. Renton Avenue is pretty lively on a Saturday sometimes, especially if they have the church doing a cookout and raising money or a car wash and there’s lots of traffic going on up here. And I think sometimes businesses miss out on this, but there is a lot of traffic running through here and a lot of opportunity for businesses to grow.

3. What 1 or 2 improvements or different types of commerce do you think would help make the Skyway Business District a more attractive “downtown” for this community? Are there other types of businesses that you believe would benefit the community?

Community center

- A community center that is a hub of activities.
- I am hands down all in favor of a community center. I think that is grossly long overdue and not just for our older generation but also for our younger generation. A center that has programming, spaces for other activities to take place.

Pharmacy

- We need a place for our seniors to get their meds. Some of them can’t even get down the hill to Fred Meyer. There was a pharmacy just across the street a while back.
- We used to have a pharmacy.
- We used to have a pharmacy here but they couldn’t compete.
- A pharmacy.

Doctors/dentists

- Doctors, dentists

Restaurants/nightlife

- The café that’s going on will be a game changer. This will be a place to meet. The library will be as well. More sit-down restaurants, bars. I’ve heard this a lot in our community meetings, there’s no

place to meet during the day. Our organization's meeting is at night but during the day there's nowhere to go.

- I envisioned different cafes, eateries, different kinds of food. We should be able to attract different ethnic restaurants to come to this neighborhood based on the demographics. There's no meeting coffee shop out here, like coming on a Saturday morning. I would be a patron of a relevant business setting up in the community.
- Just in general, restaurants, some form of entertainment. We need some sit-down places. We are excited for Nazvat opening his coffee shop. Any meeting spaces would be good. The Beachcomber is gone now, I believe the owner is changing it to a bistro but that remains to be seen.
- Some people want local businesses—food and beverage—that create local energy.
- Skyway needs more gathering spaces, especially restaurants in the business district
- Food, like a local restaurant. We're really diverse community and I think we have two restaurants right across the street here with the Vietnamese bakery and Angel City Food Deli, but only one of those allows customers to sit in. And then also with Nexus Cafe going to go up across the street as well. Having a sit-down place to be social I think is really important for a community. We don't have a place to be social other than the bowling alley in here. It's hard to be social in the library, a place that's kind of supposed to be quiet.
- Better businesses—restaurants, coffee shops, ethnic restaurants/markets.
- Zoning to allow food trucks. There's a very cool model in Portland for food trucks (El Mercado).
- Places that bring people together.

Grocery store

- I'm glad we have Grocery Outlet, their prices are good but the selection is not. They've been here 3-4 years or more, but they don't have the selection of products and people tend to go to Renton.
- I love Grocery Outlet, but I feel that people don't shop there for their primary needs. It's a great place for supplementing, especially if you're on a budget. So you don't get the selection like a Fred Meyer, so people go down the hill. There would be some draw to a grocery store.
- Shopping options. Basically just one grocery store right now, Grocery Outlet. There used to be three.
- Better food stores. Grocery Outlet is OK, but we need a good grocery store.

Retail

- We actually have a retail leakage report. It depends on who you talk to: some people want to attract big retail—Target, grocery store—all of that paired with housing options, access to retail. Businesses that could provide jobs. Question: what about commercial space? Mixed use strategy, smaller micro-businesses.

- I don't know how you attract businesses here when they know that historically people shop down the street in Renton.
- More gathering areas. Connecting the commercial area to the park.

Other

- **Airbnbs.** I think those would be good for this area. You'll be bringing in people from all over the world. People that own homes, it becomes income for them. And just more stores, whatever that looks like. The church next door to the storefront got out-zoned.
- **Churches.** There are so many churches out here and they are exempt and we don't get any taxes from them. And some people complain about the marijuana shops, but they bring in revenue.
- **Farmers markets.** Why not have one in Skyway?
- **Fitness facility.** A gym or something like a gym.
- **Comment.** There is a need for "informed systems" and targeting resources to help residents increase their long-term prosperity.
- **Comment.** Social services. El Centro and Urban League. Need to have services in the community.
- **Comment.** To date, Skyway has witnessed very wishy-washy ideas and concepts without concrete projects on the ground.
- **Comment.** Need to address community problems from multiple angles, especially access to services.
- **Permitting.** The biggest part of what I've heard and understand is an awful lot of permitting. People are having trouble getting permits done so that they can actually work on businesses or their own homes. I was just like the gentleman with the coffee who actually had to fight to get a permit. I mean he worked hard—I think the permitting process will be a large stumbling block.

4. The development of affordable housing can influence the composition and feel of a community. Do you have an opinion about this? If so, about how much and what type of affordable housing do you think is needed in Skyway-West Hill, and what are the pros and cons for you?

Support affordable housing

- I'm for affordable housing, but it needs to be coordinated with services. Adequate transit and safety. For example Creston Point, just getting in and out of there is not safe. Don't build affordable housing as an island by itself.
- I'm for affordable housing. We need more in King County as whole. I want us to do it more smartly. I constantly hear of Creston Point and the lack of services, resources to provide the residents.
- I'm definitely in favor of affordable housing, but 'affordable' is the word. They are talking about affordability but the rent is not. We need to have accessibility to transportation. There's no bus service in Lakeridge, so no need to go there, none on Rainier so it makes sense to put it here. If we are putting affordable housing in Skyway, what can they walk to? There are no shops or places to go for walkability. There needs to be services. The library is good, but like I said before we cannot attract other businesses because they know no one shops here. But if we put a multi-family 5-6 stories tall, that might attract businesses.
- Views affordable housing as an appropriate use on the 2 acres of available land at the Brooks Village site.
- Are you talking about building more affordable housing? Yes I think that's good for the community. But there are pros and cons to that. You'll attract the good and the bad. That's all I'm about to say.
- Supports affordable housing incentives for private development but does not see King County building it. Some dismay with Seattle buying land/units and then selling them off
- Affordable housing is important, but for me it's about rental housing. There needs to be a range of options for people.
- For sure it can impact the character. There has been a contingent from Lakeridge raising concerns about rezoning that may block the views of homeowners. I do think we need affordable housing units. I know that within the neighborhood there are affordable units, and there is space. But the question is where is that allocated? At the end of the day everybody will need to adapt to change. For some people they'll have to move out because they can't afford the area or move because their views were blocked. Inevitably, quality of life wins out.
- Need multiple options for affordable housing. Using only one approach isn't a solution. Could be single-family homes, condos, workforce housing, elderly housing—elders are at risk of not having a place to live affordably. We need to have some spaces for preschool/early learning attached to housing/commercial development. I don't think there is a one way to get it all. Look out for the trap of always renting. People of color need to build generational wealth. Renting doesn't help with inter-generational wealth. I don't know if that is a priority of King County, helping people

obtain intergenerational wealth. As a black man who has seen this happen over generations, I think we need to try something radical to address this inequity. I think people are scared to take the risk.

- King County offering affordable housing incentives is generally good for community.
- It is important, and King County's obligation, to encourage a diversity of housing in character and sizes to match the diversity of Skyway's population. For example, many refugee and minority families prefer larger houses. But we also have retirees who desire smaller, more manageable units.
- Anything that provides support services to maintain people in the community is good for the community.
- Backyard housing could be bad, but we need to be creative.

Concerns about affordable housing

- What is the definition of affordable housing? There's low income families here. They are using urban development as a term.
- I think there should be a blend or balance of the two. The social service infrastructure does not support the community that needs it. A Planet Fitness would be wonderful. A condominium and businesses in the bottom. Just an infusion of innovation and creativity. Even an area where food trucks can park. Other business, perhaps a professional space rented out to starting professionals. From a map standpoint, this area is a great location. It's a connector between southeast Seattle and southeast King County.
- Affordable housing differs for different people. Especially when the income does not necessarily match what is required. The guidelines need to be in line with the reality.
- King County needs to enforce building and landscaping requirements. It tears down fabric of a neighborhood when these are not kept updated. The King County Housing Authority does an initial inspection of Section 8 housing but no follow-up. Many Section 8 homes are declining in condition.
- Concern with too much affordable housing in community. It hurts the tax base. We already have limited services; we should not overload them with a lot more housing until services can be increased.
- The North Highline fire district is broke. This is an example of how too much affordable housing in one jurisdiction can stress public services.
- I believe what we need is more of the single dwellings rather than apartments or condos or anything of that nature.
- First it needs to be the type of affordable housing that's clean and that people take pride in. I want to see the type of affordable housing that's a stepping stone to be able to grow in and maybe get their own home one day—hopefully it's kind of a transition, where they start there and their kids can grow up in a safe clean place. That's my vision of affordable housing.

- Townhouse construction is taking place or planned to take place, and there are buyers right now, so that's my concern is that if the townhouses don't sell, they have to turn them into apartments. Then sometimes the quality of life goes downhill when those are turned into apartments and foreclosures take place and things like that.
- Cons: if we follow in the way that Seattle is doing affordable housing, their model isn't working.

Other

- The type of affordable housing that seems to be predominant now is either apartments—a number of those have been constructed in the past 10 years—or townhouse developments, three of which are either under construction or in the planning phases right now. In my opinion, they're not necessarily going to be affordable. There are several development plans in place right now for single-family homes to be developed around the area, so it'll be interesting to see what happens with those.
- Very expensive houses have been sold recently, like one right across the street from Kelly High School for over half a million dollars. That was new construction and just sold recently, so just when you think you got it figured out you find out you don't.
- There need to be resources/opportunities to stay here. Will the neighborhood stay 75% people of color over time?

5. The online survey King County just completed (88 participants) showed a high level of concern about the potential displacement of residents and businesses due to future growth and investment. Do you know of specific stories of people who had to leave involuntarily? Do you think King County should require developers to take certain steps to help prevent this from happening? If so, what specific steps would you recommend?

Specific stories

- I definitely know people that had to leave. And even those who are on the cusp of leaving. The church next door (next to the Skyway Storefront) moved because they couldn't afford the rent. I know folks who want to move here but there's not a lot of affordable rentals in this area. The people already here are getting squeezed for sure. I want a healthy mix of low income and affordable housing. I don't know how you effectively stem gentrification. Are there any tax incentives developers can take advantage of to develop mixed units? Anecdotal conversations I have indicate that the county is more in a place to say no to stuff than it is to facilitate something good.
- I personally experienced that. I had to physically relocate my residence further south because I couldn't afford the rent here. Advocate using local contractors, advocate using local resources—to keep our dollars local.
- I know of quite a few people who have been displaced. Working in Skyway since 2008, working with developers to develop a community benefit/development agreement. That is a strong first

step, a community benefit agreement as a condition of a building permit above a certain threshold. Economic inclusion and equity analysis needs to be part of the agreement. Needs to be geared to those two points. Employment, income opportunities. Small business opportunities. Could be wealth creation avenues there.

- So like one person left, another is left, one group was here and I heard through the grapevine that were many other businesses want to come here.
- My daughter was at Campbell Hill and she had a classmate that went to school because a grandparent lived in the neighborhood. The family lived in Kent or Auburn, but they wanted the child to go to school here. Already people are being priced out of the neighborhood.
- That is true you know I literally—across street right here, there was a church last week that was operating out of there. Now it's empty. Prior to that, it was a dollar store, it was a business—and so you know I think that's just that's just one example. Currently I'm looking for office space. There's a building right here on 126th that I don't know if it got recently bought. I know it's been recently remodeled, and it's now turned into office space for a thousand square feet wanting \$2,300 in rent.
- The family motorcycle club was here...so businesses stepped aside from coming here. They've left the area too so it's kind of going back to this quiet community we've had before. A lot of people got tired of the bikers running through the community at three or four in the morning with the radio playing their music.
- It was a matter I think of economics. They can't afford to live here anymore or they didn't want to live here anymore due to schools, violence, etc. so I know of a number of people that moved away from the area voluntarily to Renton or areas where they felt the schools would be better. The violence would be lower. So it was of their own volition not necessarily economically driven. Try to make a better life for their children.

Don't know specific stories

- There is a misconception about gentrification in Skyway; efforts to prevent it are hurting opportunities for development.
- I don't see anyone displaced. And I don't personally know anyone in that situation. Perhaps property taxes have forced homeowners to sell and move elsewhere. Usually when an old home is bulldozed and a new home is built, it is still a single-family home. However, people saw that this area was affordable and that's why they came.
- I personally don't know someone getting displaced. But I've heard from others. I don't know if it has reached a critical point. I definitely hear complaints about the taxes, issues with the utility. I think someone is just taking advantage of the market while it is hot.
- There are many reasons people are displaced or leave a place—retirement, job relocation, divorce, etc. They are not all “bad.”

- Displacement is probably more of a concern for Skyway and Martin Luther King Jr. Way neighborhoods than Bryn Mawr or Lakeridge.
- Not aware of involuntary displacement happening; points out that many families are “aging out,” where they have grown old enough that they relocate to smaller places and places with more amenities. She is aware of several younger families that have relocated to Skyway.
- I don't have any personal stories of someone actually leaving the area. I mean, if they already own a home here now that house is worth \$350,000 for a 3-bedroom 1000-square-foot home. How does someone buy their first one for \$350,000 without help from family...that's going to be part of the squeeze right there, is people not being able to afford this area. I don't know if they're getting pushed out.
- So I don't know specifically of businesses or individuals that were priced out of the area or forced to leave.

Displacement policy suggestions

- The developers would need to research this community to find out what it needs. Put all things that would be viable to a community. Every time a church moves, we're in trouble.
- Not a policy person. Are there any services out there to help families facing foreclosures? I agree with the 88 participants.
- Gentrification is one of those unless you have the right infrastructure support, then it's not sustainable. But if you plan for it then there should be a balance. I'm not for or against affordable housing but there needs to be social services available to people in poverty. There needs to be a balance between law enforcement, community building, and businesses. If we are not able to mitigate people who are in poverty with resources, then we shouldn't be constructing affordable housing. What is equitable for everyone?
- Something's been left out: we need something for the young people. We almost need a hall. Yes, we've had many of our church members move out because they were priced out. Sorry to hear the beachcomber is gone, not that I endorse taverns but that's a business that's gone.
- I think policing is the top priority for everyone. People want safety. When they see their mailboxes opened all the time and burglar alarms going off that's a big deal. There's got to be a lot more outreach by the county—perhaps door-to-door. For example, when we were talking about annexation, the county did a poor job of letting people know that this was happening. And perhaps the location of the meeting. The VFW is not a very desirable place to hold a meeting. The library does not have adequate parking. The schools have space, like Dimmit Middle School has an auditorium. If you get the word out via emails, mailers, social media, door-to-door, then people will attend. Always offer food! Food always bring people in, alcohol does too and they'll bring their checkbooks. Perhaps using volunteers to get the word out. Like where I reside, I can easily doorbell the neighborhood with flyers announcing the meeting. There are people in the community willing to help.
- Developers don't think about the whole community. It would be very important for the county to think about creating complete neighborhoods, bringing in all those elements that work in the

community. Design, improve natural areas, open space, streetscape. Love to see at least 15,000 units of housing and economic activity for 15,000 jobs in the Renton Avenue corridor. Town Center/Regional Center, that provides this high number of housing units and jobs.

- When it comes to acquiring developers maybe in multi-family they can require certain floors to be affordable housing. But for me it's mostly about having a clean place for people to grow up in.
- Parks, bus, transportation, things like that.
- How can we use tax revenue from marijuana to buy land for housing in Skyway?
- The county should acquire land for housing—Brooks Village.

Other comments

- Recognizes challenge for King County to effectively govern a large, dispersed area; this is the advantage of annexation and having a single city represent Skyway's interests.
- There are some dicey challenges to having King County set new rules to prevent all displacement.
- Developers should have a shared responsibility to protect the community.
- The county should have a role to play to protect against displacement/gentrification.
- Seattle Housing Authority developments sometimes don't work to protect communities.
- Look at options for maintaining affordability.

- 6. After these individual interviews and before the next community forum, we plan to hold focus group meetings with 3-5 stakeholder groups in Skyway. We expect these to be around 8-12 people and related to land use, growth, density, and business district design. Do you have any suggestions/ideas for how these focus groups should be organized (e.g. by neighborhood? Minority population?)? What topics do you think are the most pertinent and would have the biggest draw for residents?**

Geographically

- It would be both, by neighborhood, nationality, businesses—that's what's going to draw people to the table.
- Organize by neighborhood. Eight neighborhoods. Speak to local context first and then grander Skyway/West Hill vision. What would draw people out is if we highlight economic development. I think you will get a huge turnout. If it is around affordable housing, then you will get pushback from the old guard. Everyone agrees that there should be economic development. Raise everyone's bottom line. When speaking about the local condition of the neighborhoods, be intentional about listening to the local challenges. Then have a couple of themes out there that you want to address. How to increase employment, increasing transit, making Skyway a destination. Some interactive topics. Sit-down format doesn't work. High-energy interactive work. Read your audience. Adjust technology to who you are meeting with.
- Strong support for focus group on the Anderson site on Martin Luther King, Jr. Way. Encourages continuous engagement on that topic. A possible new use is small, flexible, commercial spaces for small business. Small enterprises can help prevent crime.
- The race or whatever, because we're all Americans and it should be a community thing. If we split up the communities and have like the Bryn Mawr residents versus Navy, or okay I'm going to take three from here, I'm going to get three from Skyway—no.
- I think there's a couple ways you could go about it. It could be the folks that were impacted the most, or who don't feel attached to the business district as it is, so for example down on Rainier Avenue near more like Lakeridge, kind of Bryn Mawr, they don't have access to come up to the business district—they can have their own business district down there, some restaurants, but can they be connected and in what ways? Hopefully they can get some feedback on that, and the same thing on the other side of Martin Luther King with the Crescent Pointe Apartments.

Demographically

- The Hispanic population is very under-represented at Skyway meetings and in policy making. So I think reaching out to those two specific communities, and figuring out what that looks like...I think if we're talking about, is this just overall businesses, I think families—figure out if you can talk to parents, reaching out to different schools. We've got five schools in the area, so we're going to the PTA, school district, and figuring out how we can partner to get the biggest outreach. Current building owners here, you know what would they need to continue to stay? What would be an improvement that could help them stay versus in two years say, "you know what? I can't afford my mortgage anymore, I need to sell my building."

- Focus on demographics. Could have one focus group for communities of color.

Stakeholders

- The county is pretty strong on trying to be inclusive for input. However, this very plan has been talked to death. But does my voice really matter? We need very clear steps as to what will happen. I've been in many meetings where I've been promised things but they never did convince me that it's worth my time. Can the county allow a couple of churches to host these meetings? Instead of just a county meeting. The county definitely will be there in these meetings, but give some of the ownership.

Better outreach ideas

- Bridging the divide between Renton and Rainier. There's a huge divide between north and south. I hear a lot that folks living in Bryn Mawr or Lakeridge feel that the issues of Skyway don't affect them. A lot of outreach is needed in dense areas and apartment complexes. We don't do a great job of reaching out to people who are not proficient in English.
- How do we expand the community meetings to get new people? You constantly see the same folks attending. We've been making incremental progress. Perhaps finding advocates in the community or trusted folks.
- Definitely people care for what they care about. Let's not over promise and under deliver. Start with the interest groups first, use Talley High School, a great school for the community. Gather all the interest groups that you already have and have a big meeting. My particular interest is participating in a business discussion where we bring in food trucks, market it to the right demographics in the neighborhood.
- It definitely needs to have food. Reach out to other groups that normally do not attend these meetings. I am glad that you are reaching out to us. We've been here for over 30 years and we own that building and parking area.
- Both stakeholders should be heard. There should be an even balance, productive for all.
- Lack of representation in a county that has so many constituents spread over such a large area.
- For focus groups, recommends looking at 4Culture's model for small group meetings (e.g., like the recent meeting at the Skyway Fire Department); keep the number of questions small and wording short. Also recommends using NextDoor; can select a subarea in Skyway on the app and then add events.
- For focus groups, need to be very specific with questions so it helps to move beyond general visioning exercises.
- Focus groups need a very clear "flow" (e.g. A -> B -> C) so people see where the process is leading.

- I'm a big proponent of honoring people's time, so if there's some kind of compensation or incentive that you can provide folks.
- I don't know if you can just give straight up cash, but if you can do a grocery gift card or something like that I think would be really beneficial and would help gain attendance. That's worked before with other community organizing efforts.
- Community meetings in Skyway are not well attended. Small events are well attended. Have meetings at schools. People go to schools.
- Talk in regular people speak.
- Talk about what the business district will look like.
- Talk about housing development.
- Seattle outreach liaisons are a model – use consultants.
- Talk to kids—go to the high school/middle school.
- The bowling alley event was a good model.

7. Understanding that the Subarea Plan that we are working on is a *land use plan*, are there any other issues that you think are critical to the Skyway-West Hill community?

- **Open space/recreation.** There are definitely the old guard that opposes density, but they are still valuable members of the community. But speak to their issues and not ignore them. I don't believe a lot of people know of the improvements scheduled for the park. Let's celebrate "here's what's happening in Skyway." Getting new park space here is a great story. What's confusing to me is why Skyway Water and Sewer says that may not happen—improvements e.g. restroom rehabilitation. There's that credibility issue. I would think the county could impose eminent domain on this. But sounds like there's no will to make this happen.
- **Outreach.** I'll end this with the appreciation of inclusiveness of the county to get a broader perspective of the community.
- **Development.** Gentrification isn't a bad word. Either you're on board or not. What happened in the Central Area in Seattle wasn't explained properly. It's coming whether you're in it or not. But a discussion should be started now.
- **Open space.** Would love to see the money expended on the power line for open space. More walking areas, farmer's markets, more open spaces. Outdoor places are also important. I hear a lot about a community center, but I'm not convinced how effective it would be. I haven't heard about programming on that center.
- **Outreach.** Difference in classes in the Hill. The homeowners in the neighborhood see what they want to see in the neighborhood, and the ones in the lower income bracket...how do you meet in the middle? Props to the existing organizations in the Hill—WHCA and Skyway Solutions.

- **Public safety.** Skyway tends to be a thoroughfare for criminal activities to take place. I believe that issues are perpetrated by people who don't reside here. Not saying we don't have our own resident criminals. Public safety is an issue. What can be done to improve the public safety issue without turning this into a police state?
- **Public safety.** Youth component, invite them to the table. Public safety is paramount.
- **Open space.** More open space. The Lakeridge Park by Cornell is beautiful but people are concerned that homeless people camp there. We can have volunteers taking turns to lock that area and we brought that to the attention of Councilmember Gossett. With volunteers we won't need county resources or paid staff to be doing the locking and opening of the gate.
- **Walkability.** Sidewalks are a huge issue. Whenever I walk along Dixon Drive I'm at a loss, there's no streetlights. People are not educated and no outreach made to residents about streetlights and how they access PSE or city light to install one on their street.
- **Walkability** is an issue in this area. The view on top of Lakeridge is great but you don't know what may happen when cars speed on residential streets and no enforcement.
- **Public safety** is huge issue—and also personal safety.
- **Transportation.** We have to figure out how to have Skyway be a beacon. We need to figure out transportation in the area. How do we connect to light rail? How do we connect to get people downtown faster? Can we create employment areas and cultural areas? Employment areas, what types of businesses do we want to bring into the area? Martin Luther King, Jr. Way could be industrial, light industry, tech. Should we label it an employment area? The cultural areas, protect the heritage of people living in Skyway? Similar to how we protect green spaces. Skyway has large portions of ethnic communities: 1/3 African American, 1/3 Asian and 1/3 Caucasian, and there is no indication or signage.
- **Open space.** We need to save more trees and canopy cover in Skyway. Don't allow green space to disappear just for more density. Too much density can erode the character of a neighborhood.
- **Open space.** Loss of big yards is a concern. These allow gardens, places for children to play, etc.
- **Development/fit with community.** Skyway's casinos may bring in property tax but they are not necessarily an overall positive contributor to the community.
- **Development.** Some concern about triplexes and large homes being built that are out of character/
- **More social services.** Emphasized need for more accessible services and how Creston Point residents go to Renton where resources are located. There is currently no reason for them to go into Skyway.
- **Public safety.** Concerns about safety at Skyway Park...it's tough when a family is too afraid to walk to the park right in the middle of the day on a summer day. I don't know what the crime statistics are, I just know that most families aren't going to want to walk through there, they are too afraid. So what do you do about that?

- **Public infrastructure.** One issue that John Taylor has talked about at multiple West Hill meetings is drainage infrastructure, and most of it is 70+ years old. In my neighborhood I'm relying on a hundred-year-old drainage system that was actually installed by the city of Seattle. So having had flooding at my house for 38 years from time to time, that would be something that I would be most interested in is adequately addressing drainage issues from the heights of Skyway down through the flat lands where a lot of us live and experience flooding.
- **Open space/recreation.** In relation to social gathering places, you know we have a green space that hopefully within the next couple months will see improvements. We got a bunch of money for that but how can we engage folks...we used to have a lot more recreational opportunities for not just us but for everyone, you know baseball leagues, different tournaments, and stuff like that that would happen here, and for whatever reason kind of faded away.
- **Social services/healthcare.** We have one clinic here. I think it has two offices, and they operate a total of like 10 to 15 hours a week for 20,000 residents.
- **Schools.** Again with education, yes I know it's not King County's responsibility, but how can they partner with the Renton School District, with nonprofits, to figure out ways to educate their residents? Another piece of it too is safety. Compared to the county, Skyway-West Hill has a higher firearm death rate, we have a higher asthma hospitalization rate. I don't know if roads fall under land use, but if we can get some speed bumps and traffic cameras.
- **Public safety.** If you don't feel safe walking from your house to the business, or you don't have street lights right? If you look down the street right here, you can't even see the next three lights. Do I feel safe walking down the street to get a bite to eat? Yes or no? How does that affect the tax revenue and tax base again to support other things? So yes, there are a bunch of things, but I think you know.
- **Marijuana stores.** Oakland helped people of color get licenses for their stores.