

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS DEVELOPMENT

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS MEETING SUMMARIES





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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

OVERVIEW

As part of the Community Engagement Process Development (CEPD) project, the CEPD project team conducted six (6) Community Conversations on behalf of the City of Raleigh Planning Department. There were a total of forty-one (41) participants. Spanish translation/interpretation services were provided when requested.

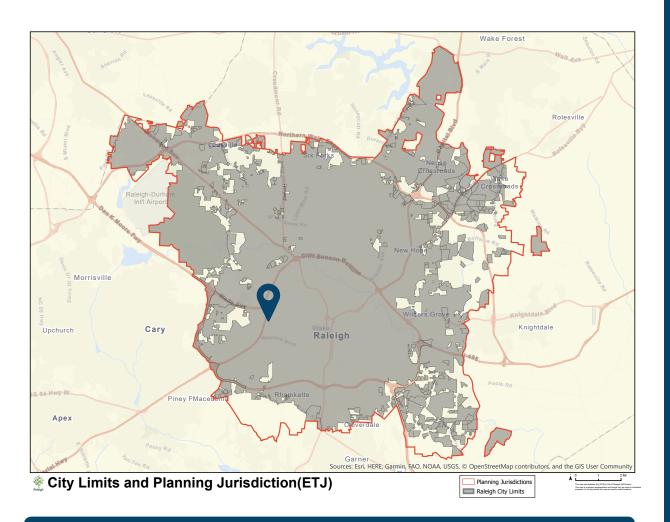
The Community Conversations were small, informal group conversations where participants were asked to respond to the following seven (7) questions:

- Have you ever participated in any outreach activities or events for projects conducted by the City of Raleigh?
- 2. For those of you who have attended these meetings, what was the experience like?
- For those of you who have not participated in a City engagement activity or event, why not?
- If you were interested, which of the following things would make it more likely that you would attend a public meeting?
- 5. If interested, when would you prefer to attend a project meeting or other City event?
- 6. How would you like to learn more about City of Raleigh events and provide your input on projects and plans?
- What is the best way for the city to inform you of an upcoming opportunity to provide your input on projects and plans?

Answers to the above questions were documented in the meeting notes. Other concerns that participants noted were documented in the meeting notes. The meeting notes for each group were distributed via e-mail to all attendees and translated into Spanish for the groups who required translation/interpretation services.

Participants were asked to respond via e-mail with any changes or additions to the meeting notes. The following pages provide a written summary of the answers, questions, and information provided during the CEPD Community Conversations.

AETHOD COMNUNITY



METHOD COMMUNITY & CENTER

The Method village was founded in 1872 by two freedmen, Jesse Mason and Isaac O'Kelly. Method was one of the first established communities to provide affordable land for former slaves to purchase after the Civil War. First named Save-Rent or Slabtown, after some time the community was renamed Method. Today, Method is home to a wide variety of peoples with varying heritages, histories, and traditions.

The Method Community Center was built in 1982 and sits on 8.3 acres of land. The Center is named after Harveleigh Monte Rivera White, a prominent leader, educator, and local civil rights activist. The Center includes the Old Agricultural Building of the Berry O'Kelly High School, the first fully accredited and largest rural high school in the state of North Carolina for African Americans. The Center serves as a meeting space for community gatherings and provides recreational space for athletics, arts, and youth activities.

SOURCES:

City of Raleigh, "Method Community Park": https://raleighnc.gov/places/method-community-park Southwest Raleigh, "From Boys to Men: A Homecoming in Method": http://southwestraleigh.com/fromboys-to-men-a-homecoming-in-method/

METHOD BOYS TO MEN

The Method Boys to Men Club is a nonprofit organization that seeks to enhance the lives of the people of the Method Community. Although the organization was founded in 2013, the members have a long history within the Method community. The Method Boys to Men members grew up in Method and attended school together in the early 1950s to late 1960s. Upon returning to the area later in life, they saw a need for assistance in their community.

Today, the group hosts weekly bread drives and provides assistance with food, clothes, and cash donations to local churches. They conduct cleanups of the cemetery and neighborhood and assist in mobilizing efforts to preserve Berry O'Kelly school grounds as an historical area. In 2017, the Method Boys to Men Club was awarded the Raleigh Parks and Recreation's Fred Fletcher Outstanding Volunteer Award for their work in the Method community.



SOURCES:

Method Boys to Men Club, "About Us": http://www.methodboystomenclub.org/about-us.html

Southwest Raleigh, "From Boys to Men: A Homecoming in Method": http://southwestraleigh.com/from-boys-to-men-a-homecoming-in-method/

ST. JAMES AME CHURCH

Saint James African Methodist Church has a long history in the Method community. The church was founded in 1866 by seven men in the Method community who wanted to put their faith into action: Louis Atwater, Zaney Coggins, Louis Mason, Bennett Powell, Berry O'Kelly, John Rhone, and Henry Wood. The land the church now stands on was gifted to the church by Berry O'Kelly in 1872 and still stands as a beacon in the community.

The St. James AME Church brings the Method community together in worship and service. Weekly, the church holds Sunday morning service, Sunday Intercessory prayer service, Sunday School, and Wednesday Bible Study. St. James also hosts workshops, theater, and other events tailored to enrich the lives and spiritual mindsets of their constituents.

SOURCES:

St. James AME Church, "Church History": http://stjamesamechurch.org/church-history/St. James AME Church, "Mission and Vision": http://stjamesamechurch.org/mission-and-vision/

St. James AME Church, "Events": http://stjamesamechurch.org/events/



ST. JAMES CHURCH & METHOD BOYS TO MEN

November 13, 2019 | 10:00 - 11:00 am

Method Community Center: 520 Method Rd, Raleigh, NC 27607

OVERVIEW

On November 13, 2019, Public Participation Partners (P3) staff facilitated a Community Conversation with St. James Church and the Method Boys to Men club at the Method Community Center. The purpose of this Community Conversation was to gather input from the public on their past experiences with City of Raleigh public outreach and feedback on what methods of community engagement would best reach the Method community. Fifteen (15) people were in attendance. Below is a summary of their responses to questions posed as well as other concerns that they had for their community.

Have you ever participated in any outreach activities or events for projects conducted by the City of Raleigh?

- Several people had attended public meetings prior to the CEPD
 - Did not receive postcards in the mail to invite them
 - Some with a Method address get a copy mailed to them of when the meetings are going to be (just started recently)
- One person gets a text from the CAC with meeting information

For those of you who have attended these meetings, what was the experience like?

- City staff will come and talk about plans and projects; they'll then take questions and concerns
- What the staff is unable to answer, they will table it and move on to the next thing
- They will form a committee and the committee will go out and do some research and bring back information for next time
- Some of the information the City provides is useful and some of it is just repetitive

- They've gotten a lot accomplished with public meetings in the past 5 years here (at Method) and up at the fairground especially when talking about a bridge project – DOT did ask what the community would like to see with that project
 - The City has also provided the opportunity to voice their concerns to a certain extent; for the most part, the City did listen
- The signs for zoning meetings are written in a way that is hard to understand
 - For example, if it says "zoning meeting" with numbers next to it, many people don't know what the numbers mean or what the meeting is about unless they research it. Need another sign beside it explaining exactly what the meeting is.
- Community members feel like they have to first read about projects, research them, etc. to make sure they understand because even if the City comes and presents things (like at a CAC meeting) the community members won't necessarily know what it means and if they don't understand it, it's like they never saw it
- Repetitive information

For those of you who have not participated in a City engagement activity or event, why not?

- "It's just not going to change" a feeling that attending a meeting won't make any difference
- The information isn't presented in a way that you understand
- You don't hear about the meeting or the project – need to advertise it more
- If you don't see the advertisements or talk to someone who knows about a meeting, then you don't know about it
- Signs might look like yard sale signs
- Schedule conflicts

If you were interested, which of the following things would make it more likely that you would attend a public meeting?

- Food
- Free parking
- Free child care would be important for people with kids
- Free transportation

**Downtown location would be difficult because of parking

How would you like to learn more about City of Raleigh events and provide your input on projects and plans?

- City Council representatives should come out and talk to the community
- CAC meetings but need to inform the community about what they are and how to get involved

What is the best way for the city to inform you of an upcoming opportunity to provide your input on projects and plans?

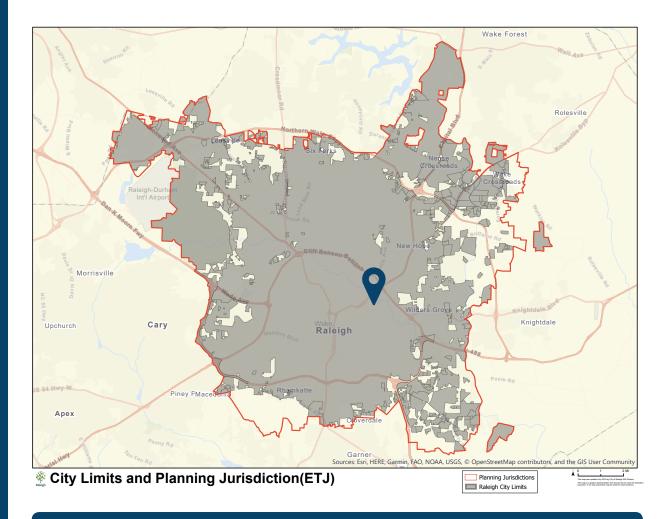
- Provide information to the Center (flyers, tell the community, etc.)
- Let the pastors know so they can let the congregation know during announcements
- Emails specifically to the local communities that reviews everybody's points and addresses what's been discussed, what they can do, and what the community can do
- Need to have information distributed in paper copy, such as fliers, posters, etc. and not just through e-mail. Need flyers about CAC meetings and other community events up in the Community Center so people can read about it and attend meetings
 - There are signs up, but someone has to see the signs to know it's happening
 - The community needs to spread the word about it
 - Someone needs to educate the community about what the CAC is

Other Concerns:

- Bus shelters Cary bus stops are like art, in Raleigh "nothing but a fire hydrant"
 - NCDOT meeting on the 19th will address this concern
- There are no bus shelters, no benches, which is an issue during inclement weather
- Would like benches outside of the soccer field so the community can stop for a minute and watch – builds community
- Book boxes on the road (little house where people can take a book and leave a book)
- Just now hearing about what CACs are in this meeting; didn't know about them prior to this meeting or how to get involved with them
- Would like a swimming pool in the rec center to help build community; renovate the gym
- The Center needs to have more activities for kids of all ages run by community members rather than external people; age specific activities (separate by age to keep them involved); should be educational in nature
- Would like a computer lab for kids to learn; need the technology, the resources, and tutors to come to help the kids learn the technology of the future so they're not left behind in the job market
 - The WiFi works in the gym, but not in spaces where you can use it (like the Agriculture building)
- Gym's ceiling is caving in need renovations; other centers have been renovated
- Concerns over closing entrances to Method Community Center that limits access, especially as the Center functions as a location for emergencies – limited access would make it more difficult and take more time to get to the Center, which could be a matter of life or death
 - What can we do to avoid the community being shut off from emergency and other uses? – NCDOT meeting on the 19th will address

Simone Robinson (P3) will get information back to the community about:

- Who is the Housing and Neighborhood Engagement Coordinator?
- What is the criteria for having a swimming pool?
- Will give them meeting summary from this meeting
- Follow up for another Community Conversation with Method community members in the evening
- Send an invitation to Pastor Newkirk up at Oak City and ask what a good time for them to meet would be
- Baptist church down the street might want to meet for a Community Conversation



EL PUEBLO, INC.

El Pueblo is a nonprofit organization specializing in leadership development for both youth and adults among Wake County's growing Latinx community. The group's mission is to build collective power through leadership development, organizing, and direct action so that the Latin American community and other marginalized community can control their own stories and destinies. While based in Raleigh, NC, El Pueblo promotes statewide advocacy and public policy organization.

The El Pueblo staff and community work together to achieve their mission. Their community programming includes a Youth Council, Derechos Sin Fronteras (Our Rights Have No Borders) curriculum, Pueblo Power Program (a leadership and youth organizing program focused on diverse social justice issues), and PARE empowerment groups for Latinas who have been effected by domestic violence and sexual assault. They conduct voter registration efforts and encourage Latinx member to turn out to the polls. El Pueblo also is active working to stop legislation that targets the most vulnerable in our community.

SOURCES:

El Pueblo, Inc., "About": https://elpueblo.org/about/

El Pueblo, Inc., "2017 Annual Report": https://elpueblo.org/2018/08/13/el-pueblo-2017-annual-report/

EL PUEBLO, INC.

November 20, 2019 | 11:00am - 1:00pm El Pueblo: 2321 Crabtree Boulevard, NC 27604



OVERVIEW

On November 20, 2019, Public Participation Partners (P3) staff facilitated a Community Conversation with El Pueblo Inc. The purpose of this Community Conversation was to gather input from the public on their past experiences with City of Raleigh public outreach and feedback on what methods of community engagement would best reach the Hispanic community. Nine (9) people were in attendance. 90% of the attendees spoke Spanish. Translation/Interpretation services were provided. Below is a summary of their responses to questions posed as well as other concerns that they had for their community.

Have you ever participated in any outreach activities or events for projects conducted by the City of Raleigh?

- Most of the attendees had not attended public meetings prior to the community conversations
- One person received a postcard with BRT meeting information

For those of you who have attended these meetings, what was the experience like?

- City could not talk to them due to language barrier
- Didn't feel it was a benefit to community
- Materials not translated

For those of you who have not participated in a City engagement activity or event, why not?

- Would not know what was going on
- Language barriers
- One person has lived in the area for 6 years and has never received any information about a city activity and/or meeting and she is bilingual (English, Spanish)

- Schedule conflicts
- Not sure that it would be a benefit to the community
- Need assurance that participation and/or attendance would not just be a waste of time
- Meeting notifications are not in their spoken language
- Did not know the opportunity was available for attendance

If you were interested, which of the following things would make it more likely that you would attend a public meeting?

- Snacks and/or refreshments
- Child care
- Free parking

If interested, when would you prefer to attend a project meeting or other City event?

- Saturday mornings
- Saturday afternoons
- Weekdays during lunchtime

How would you like to learn more about City of Raleigh events and provide your input on projects and plans?

- City website
- Social media
- Nextdoor App

What is the best way for the city to inform you of an upcoming opportunity to provide your input on projects and plans?

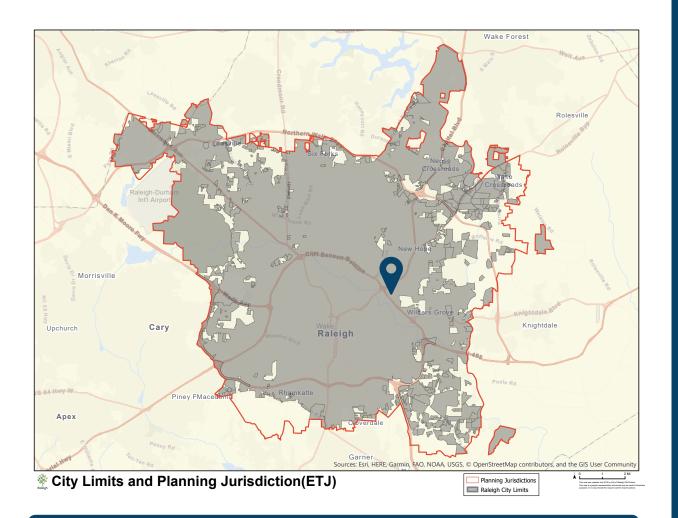
- Email
- Mailings and/or postcards
- Through CACs
- Social Media
- Would like to receive information in Spanish
- Need advance notice of when meetings are taking place; people have jobs and families; need to be able to plan for attendance
- For participation, City needs to post signs and/or posters in Hispanic grocery stores
- Public notifications in Spanish media
 - Que Pasa newspaper
 - El Pueblo's website
 - Univision (airs 6 pm and 11 pm)

Other Concerns:

- Concerned about paying higher vehicle property taxes continue to elevate even when property is depreciating
- What is the City Council?
- Would like to see more programs at the centersthatare in Spanish. Would like to take their children to the swimming pools. Not all parents and/or children speak English, would like for more of the programming at neighborhood centers to be in Spanish
- Accident rates; speeding is frequently high in some neighborhoods
- Many of the City channels are not in Spanish
- Neighborhood that does not have speed limit or signage posted
- Letters written to City regarding concerns never getting a response

Johnetta Perry (P3) provided additional information and will provide feedback on:

- How to find their neighborhood CAC by providing link
- How to sign up for the city's newsletter by providing website
- How to access the city's website via smartphone by walking individuals through the process
- Is there a city link phone number or website where you can request certain things in your neighborhood (like stop signs, speed bumps, speed limit signage) – information sent on 11/22/19
- Who to contact regarding appealing property tax values (information sent on 11/22/19)



HABITAT FOR HUMANITY - WAKE COUNTY

Habitat Wake partners with local corporations, individuals, congregations, and community groups to build safe, affordable homes with hardworking families. Since 1985, Habitat Wake has partnered with more than 625 families in Wake County. In 2019, they had a goal of building 83 new homes and completing 50 home repairs locally and providing funds for the construction of 125 homes globally.

Habitat Wake's success is possible through strong, diverse partnerships. Last year alone, more than 18,500 individuals volunteered their time to help build safe, affordable homes. Each year, more than 2,700 corporations, congregations, individuals and local organizations provide financial and volunteer support. Habitat Wake ReStores provide a sustainable revenue stream in support of their mission, enabling us to build even more homes.

SOURCES:

Habitat for Humanity - Wake County, "Partner with Habitat Wake": https://www.habitatwake.org/our-work?gclid=EAIaIQobChMI2I2o8uKK5gIVIeeGCh2Figx0EAAYASAAEgJm-vD_BwE

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY - WAKE COUNTY

November 20, 2019 | 6:15pm – 8:00pm Habitat Wake: 2420 N. Raleigh Rd, Raleigh, N.C. 27604



OVERVIEW

On November 20, 2019, Public Participation Partners (P3) staff facilitated a Community Conversation with members of Habitat for Humanity Wake County. The purpose of this Community Conversation was to gather input from the public on their past experiences with City of Raleigh public outreach and feedback on what methods of community engagement would best reach them. Thirteen (13) people were in attendance. Below is a summary of their responses to questions posed as well as other concerns that they had for their community.

Have you ever participated in any outreach activities or events for projects conducted by the City of Raleigh?

Yes, some have participated

For those of you who have attended these meetings, what was the experience like?

- Attended a CAC meeting but haven't gone in a while – told us what was going on with something going on in the neighborhood
 - The information provided was useful
- Go Raleigh meetings once a month and that has helped increase the number of buses/routes available
 - Have seen notices on buses about meetings/projects

For those of you who have not participated in a City engagement activity or event, why not?

 Information not provided to new residents in the community about what they should be involved in, how to be involved, etc.

- Have seen public notices, but live 10+ minutes away and don't know if the meeting is open to them or is meant for them
- Two attendees live in apartment complexes off of Capital Boulevard and have not received postcards about meetings or other notifications

If you were interested, which of the following things would make it more likely that you would attend a public meeting?

- Free parking especially (parking downtown
- is hard)
- Child care
- A full meal
- Refreshments
- Free transportation
- Keeping the session short to keep everyone's attention
- Making sure that staff follow up with the people who attend
- Want to feel like attending makes a difference – that their voices matter in the projects
- Better advertising send it through the schools to reach the parents

If interested, when would you prefer to attend a project meeting or other City event?

- Weekday evenings
- Sometimes might be good on Saturday afternoon
 - Have something for the kids to do if on the weekend

How would you like to learn more about City of Raleigh events and provide your input on projects and plans?

- Learn more from the apartment complexes
 let management know and they can send out e-mails to the residents
- Signs blend in with other standing signs (like voting signs)
- Small meetings allow for them to not feel intimidated and allow them to speak openly and honestly
- Utilize the community centers
- Collaboration between community members – have some distribute information to all the others
- Would prefer to be physically at a meeting to provide their feedback, but if they couldn't be there would like to be able to complete an online survey
- Wondering how they would get to see the feedback provided through a survey or meeting and if there's a better way to distribute than just posting it to the website

What is the best way for the city to inform you of an upcoming opportunity to provide your input on projects and plans?

- Advertising with the school districts
- Social media
 - Sign up to a group on Facebook to get notices
- Mailings
- Emails

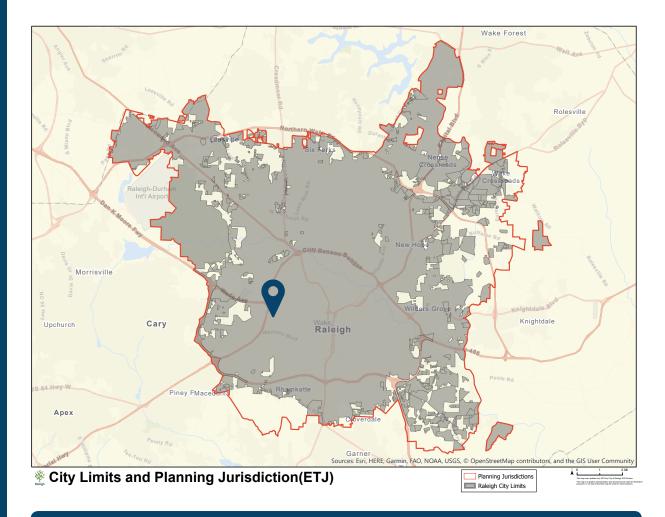
Other Concerns:

- Does Housing and Neighborhoods go to the people who were already living in the communities before development to get public feedback?
 - Ex. When they put up new apartment complexes that have rent higher than what was there previously, does the City consider the people who are low income in those areas? Where are those people supposed to go when they can't afford the new rent?
- Street lights going out in their neighborhood and it takes a month and a half or longer for someone to come out and fix it
 - Contacting multiple different offices

 not sure what department is the
 best one to contact for the issue
- When rezoning schools do they consider the parents' feedback?

Simone Robinson (P3) will get information back to them about:

- Does Housing and Neighborhoods go to the people who were already living in the communities before development to get public feedback?
 - Ex. When they put up new apartment complexes that have rent higher than what was there previously, does the City consider the people who are low income in those areas? Where are those people supposed to go when they can't afford the new rent?
- CAC Meetings how to get involved showed how to sign up for e-mails before leaving meeting 11/20/2019



ISLAMIC ASSOCIATION OF RALEIGH

The Islamic Association of Raleigh (IAR) is an Islamic center serving as a masjid, school, and a gathering place for the Muslim community in the Triangle region of North Carolina. In 1981, immigrant Muslims in the area formed the Islamic Association of North Carolina (IANC). In 1985, this organization helped found the Islamic Association of Raleigh (IAR) and build the first Mosque in Raleigh.

The Islamic Center consists of two buildings providing a main musullah (prayer hall) and a private Sisters' musallah, education facilities, multipurpose hall and gym, library, Sisters' areas, children's play areas, and Al-Maidah Kitchen and Cafe. In 2019, the City of Durham Board of Adjustment approved a 33,000 sq. ft. addition in two phases for the school and Mussulah to aid in the Center's growth. The Islamic Center holds prayer services, provides social services and refugee services, and conducts educational services for its members.

SOURCES:

Islamic Association of Raleigh, "About The Islamic Association of Raleigh": https://raleighmasjid.org/about/

Islamic Association of Raleigh, "History of the IAR": https://raleighmasjid.org/about/history.html Islamic Association of Raleigh, "IAR 2019 General Body Report": https://raleighmasjid.org/files/2019-iar-report.pdf

ISLAMIC ASSOCIATION OF RALEIGH

November 21, 2019 | 3:45 – 5:00 pm Islamic Center: 808 Atwater Street, NC 27606



OVERVIEW

On November 21, 2019, Public Participation Partners (P3) staff facilitated a Community Conversation with the Islamic Association of Raleigh. The purpose of this Community Conversation was to gather input from the leadership on their past experiences with City of Raleigh public outreach and feedback on what methods of community engagement would best reach the Muslim community. Two (2) people from the leadership council were in attendance. Below is a summary of their responses to questions posed as well as other concerns that they had for their community.

Have you ever participated in any outreach activities or events for projects conducted by the City of Raleigh?

- Yes (the leadership)
- Per leadership, many people have not attended

For those of you who have attended these meetings, what was the experience like?

- Only productive if it pertains to their community
- Not all of their membership lives in the same community

For those of you who have not participated in a City engagement activity or event, why not?

- Did not know the opportunity was available for attendance
- No notification of the event or meeting
- If the membership is not educated about what the activity or event entails, they will not participate

- If a survey is received and it doesn't pertain to the community, they will not complete
- People are survey fatigued

If you were interested, which of the following things would make it more likely that you would attend a public meeting?

- Per leadership, the Islamic Center can provide parking, refreshments, child care, and all of the amenities that are needed
- For the community, these would be helpful
 - Snacks and/or refreshments
 - Child care
 - Free parking

If interested, when would you prefer to attend a project meeting or other City event?

 For the membership, weekday evenings, many work and have families How would you like to learn more about City of Raleigh events and provide your input on projects and plans?

- City website
- Social media
- Islamic Center website
- Email

What is the best way for the city to inform you of an upcoming opportunity to provide your input on projects and plans?

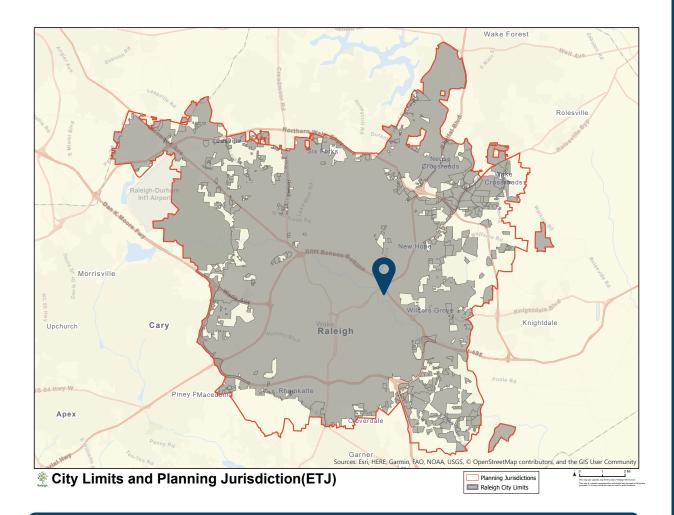
- Islamic Center website
- Email
- Mailings and/or postcards
- Through CACs
- Social Media

Other Concerns:

- Would like for the City to meet them at their location
- The center is equipped with the space
- They can provide child care
- They can provide food
- They can provide parking

Johnetta Perry (P3) will provide feedback on:

- Who is the CAC for that area information provided on 11/22/19
- Provide a write up to the leadership as an educational piece as to what is the CEPD Study – information provided on 11/22/19
- Leadership will distribute the survey among the membership



CENTRO PARA FAMILIAS HISPANAS

Centro Para Familias Hispanas (CPFH) began in 1997 with emergency aid services to the Hispanic community after Hurricane Fran. In 1998 Centro Para Familias Hispanas officially became a part of the Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Raleigh to provide information, referral and counseling services to low-income Hispanic families.

As the Hispanic population began to grow rapidly in Wake County, we saw the need to increase and improve our services in order to help them effectively. Currently Centro Para Familias Hispanas has specialized personnel in case management, education and immigration, and has a variety of programs.

SOURCES:

Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Raleigh, "Centro Para Familias Hispanas": https://www.catholiccharitiesraleigh.org/cpfh/

CENTRO PARA FAMILIAS HISPANAS

November 20, 2019 | 6:15pm – 8:00pm Habitat Wake: 2420 N. Raleigh Rd, Raleigh, N.C. 27604



Providing Help - Creating Hope - Serving All

OVERVIEW

On November 26, 2019, Public Participation Partners (P3) staff facilitated a Community Conversation with Centro Para Familias Hispanas (Hispanic Family Center). The purpose of this Community Conversation was to gather input from the leadership on their past experiences with City of Raleigh public outreach and feedback on what methods of community engagement would best reach the Hispanic community. The Director (Maty Ferrer) of the center and Editor (Coreen Villalobos) of La Conexion were in attendance. Twelve (12) paper surveys were collected. Below is a summary of their responses to questions posed as well as other concerns that they had for their community.

Have you ever participated in any outreach activities or events for projects conducted by the City of Raleigh?

- Yes
- Many of the people for whom they provide services have not attended

For those of you who have attended these meetings, what was the experience like?

 Director has met the Planning Engagement Coordinator, who she thought was very excited and passionate about reaching their community. Loved her enthusiasm for helping the community

For those of you who have not participated in a City engagement activity or event, why not?

- Some participants at the center cannot read well, assistance was needed in completing some of the paper surveys
- Notifications are not in their language

- Don't feel the need to attend
- Community members have jobs and families, most meetings are in the evenings
- Don't feel a part of the community
- Small group meeting would be better less intimidating.

If you were interested, which of the following things would make it more likely that you would attend a public meeting?

- For the community, these would be helpful:
 - Snacks and/or refreshments.
 - Child care
 - Free parking
 - Transportation

If interested, when would you prefer to attend a project meeting or other City event?

 For the membership, through the Hispanic Center How would you like to learn more about City of Raleigh events and provide your input on projects and plans?

• Hispanic Family Center

What is the best way for the city to inform you of an upcoming opportunity to provide your input on projects and plans?

- Hispanic Family Center
- Use La Conexion (media) to post upcoming events

Other Concerns:

- There are so many community members that don't feel a part of the community.
- Materials are not translated in their language and also if materials are translated, it's not correct
- One way to reach the community, would be to come to the center on Monday and Wednesday, they see up to 200 people in a 3-hour time span
- The Hispanic Center would be a great partner for the City Planning Department; the Director is passionate about assisting the community in any way she can
- To reach the community, translated ads can be posted in La Conexion