

FIRST LISTENING SESSION SUMMARIES

South San Pedro:

A. Healthy Communities (20 surveys)

1. Summary of respondents – resident/business, owner/renter, general duration:

All participants of the meeting who completed a survey were resident-owners whose residence in the neighborhood ranged from 1 to 40+ years. The majority of participants have lived in the neighborhood over 15 years.

2. Summary of “what does healthy communities” means to community:

In summary respondents stated that a healthy community is a place where there are meaningful and caring relationships among neighbors; a crime-free neighborhood with pride in neighborhood ownership; a clean, safe, well-lit and pleasant pedestrian neighborhood where shops, restaurants, healthy food and general services are within walking distance; a place where biking is safe and encouraged; a place where there is a good mix and diversity of housing and businesses; a place where private properties maintain their landscaping and structures; a place where children are seen and have safe schools and parks/open spaces to learn and play.

3. Summary of Public safety issues and Pedestrian Safety issues

On a scale of 1 (no crime) to 5 (very high), all respondents indicated that crime was greater than 2 and a majority ranked crime as 4. The types of crime respondents were concerned about included property theft and vandalism, burglaries, gang-related violence, drug dealing, vehicular-related deaths, speeding crimes against women and children, and prostitution. Respondents felt that crime could be ameliorated by having greater police surveillance by car, foot and bike; instituting a neighborhood crime-watch; improve lighting along public streets; installing traffic stops, traffic lights and calming devices along busy streets; increasing home-ownership while working to reduce the number of rental properties; requiring property owners of rental units to maintain their properties, enforcing the zoning laws, reducing the sale of alcohol, and creating jobs.

Almost without exception, respondents generally felt safe walking in their neighborhood during the day, but not at night. Challenges to walking in the neighborhood included uneven and narrow sidewalks with no street trees; trash, glass and weeds on the street; the driveways are difficult to walk along; fast-moving traffic on Zuni, San Mateo, Central, and Gibson, making it difficult to cross these streets; and poor lighting.

4. Summary of Exercise and access to healthy food

A majority of respondents exercise regularly by walking in their neighborhood. Some use private and public gyms and pointed to the lack of accessibility to these establishments in their neighborhood.

In terms of access to healthy food, many people leave their neighborhood to purchase weekly groceries and to eat out. Nearby grocery stores included John Brooks and Walmart, but were perceived as inadequate for providing affordable, fresh, healthy food. In addition, some respondents enjoyed the ethnic restaurants in their neighborhood, but pointed to the presence of fast-food, drive-thru establishments as a challenge to eating healthy. Many respondents would like to see grower's markets and a grocery store, like Sunflower Market, located within their neighborhood.

B. Zoning (18 surveys)

1. Summary of existing zoning according to residents – zoning areas of concern, restricted/limited uses, new uses.

Responses to zoning concerns varied widely. Some respondents simply did not know how to answer the zoning-related questions. Of those that did respond, there were concerns about the types of uses in their neighborhood. Respondents held a desire to see the following uses restricted: auto repair and related businesses, used car lots, package-liquor sales and bars, adult amusement establishments, farm animals, furniture resale shops, drive-thru business establishments and fast food restaurants, and apartments. Respondents requested more trees in the area.

Other zoning concerns were regarding the poor maintenance of properties, and particularly rental properties on which weeds, trash, and dumped furniture is seen outside of buildings. Along the same lines, respondents felt that zoning enforcement by the City needed to occur more regularly in order to address these concerns. The existence of vacant establishments and buildings was also identified as a concern. One respondent highlighted a zoning concern for a segment of the neighborhood south of the fair grounds and north of Zuni, indicating that residential uses should not be allowed in that area because it conflicted with the commercial uses.

C. Economic Health (19 surveys)

1. Summary of how economic health has been affected according to respondent. In what way – businesses opened /closed.

A majority of respondents noticed that in this economy most businesses have closed than opened. Respondents indicated that the difficult economy could be seen by the number of vacant establishments, home foreclosures, and a generally depressed appearance of the neighborhood. Respondents would like to see additional small, locally owned business establishments providing services, entertainment, and retail opportunities. Businesses promoting music, dance, and leisure activities, were seen as desirable, as were professional and medical business establishments.

2. Summary of interest in opening a business; type of business, challenges, home based business issues.

Except for a couple of respondents, the majority were not interested in starting a home-based business in the S. San Pedro neighborhood. One respondent had interest in opening a music studio while another considered the possibility of beginning a consultant and/or pottery business. One respondent recently opened a wedding videography homebased business. These respondents noted that obstacles that exist in the neighborhood, with regards to having a safe, pedestrian-oriented environment, are also barriers to having a home-based business. One respondent indicated that bad schools, teachers, too many treatment centers, apartments and unknown police force posed challenges to doing business in the International District.