

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT PLAN

GOAL 1.3 LISTENING SESSIONS



Summary: September 25, 2020, Meeting with LandPaths Volunteers

On July 8, 2020, Community Engagement Director Magali Telles and Community Outreach Specialist Gustavo Mendoza met with volunteers from LandPaths at Bayer Park & Garden for a listening session and dialogue.

Listening Sessions and Discussion Questions

Law Enforcement Specific Questions

1. What does it mean to feel safe in your community and how does that look?

- Residents feel they don't have the freedom to report issues in the community due to questioning from law enforcement on their own residency status.
- Residents fear reporting any issues to law enforcement.
- Community members witness law enforcement harass and remove street vendors, contributing to their fear to call upon law enforcement.
- Homeless can live on the streets but street vendors are removed; residents feel law enforcement should focus on removing the homeless not the street vendors.
- Ice cream vendors are kicked out.
- The homeless leave behind trash and its never cleaned up.
- A young man that sets up on the corner of West Ave. and Sunset Ave. was removed by law enforcement.
- Residents feel that the City should do more to educate the community and street vendors on the permitting process.
- There are too many barriers to obtaining permits, and the permits are too expensive. It's easier to work without a permit.
- The City should look at streamlining the process for street food vendors.

2. How can the City of Santa Rosa best outreach to the community?

- Residents feel that direct outreach to the neighborhood would be effective. Hosting listening sessions at community parks. They expressed a desire for city staff to come out to community events.
- Flyers aren't affective, they become trash; community members enjoy getting free marketing material, but they felt flyers are misused.
- Social outlets were identified as good marketing strategies: Facebook, radio stations. Best radio stations and timing identified as Exitos 98.7 FM Don Cheto, KBBF, hours of 7:00am-5:30pm.

3. What else would make you feel safe in Santa Rosa?

- Not sure but side shows are a problem. The cops are never around when you need them. Every Thursday – Sunday young people gather on West Ave. and Sebastopol Rd.
- A father spoke about not being able to visit shops or vendors on Sebastopol Rd. because his son has autism and he had a negative experience on Sebastopol Rd. due to the noise created by the side shows. The noise was so terrifying to him that he ran into the street to escape the noise.
- They would like to see law enforcement police the side show activity.
- When law enforcement have been called, they never show up.
- Acts of vandalism and property theft are never policed.
- COVID-19 has affected the pro social activities and youth take to the streets.

4. What has been your experience with SRPD?

- Called SRPD for a break in, when SRPD showed up the officer was only interested in the race of the perpetrator, no other investigation was conducted. SRPD responding officer left and never followed up with resident.
- “My car was broken into and I called SRPD. They came out and apprehended the suspect. They followed up with me during the court process and kept me informed.”

5. Can you distinguish the difference between SRPD and the sheriff department?

- The group didn't know how to distinguish the difference between SRPD and the Sheriff department.

6. What ideas do you have in strengthening relationships with the SRPD?

- Have programs that work in the neighborhood and work with the youth from the neighborhood.
- Residents enjoy taking pictures during the Cinco de Mayo Roseland festival with Highway Patrol motor vehicles.
- Participate in events where you get to experience food from different cultures.
- Recruit bilingual cops.
- California Highway Patrol hosts a bike rodeo in the Roseland Plaza that is always well attended.

City of Santa Rosa Specific Questions

7. Outside of law enforcement and SRPD, what other concerns or issues do you have that impacts your community? How can the City help to address these concerns or issues?

- Fixing street lights and roads.

- Addressing traffic during school times on Burbank Ave. and Hearn Ave. and traffic collisions on Kenmore Lane and Sebastopol Road.

8. What are the biggest barriers for engagement?

- Outreach in Spanish
- English language classes

9. Do you know how to report a problem to the City of Santa Rosa?

- No one in the group knew how to report any of these issues to the City of Santa Rosa.

10. Do you know who the Mayor of Santa Rosa is?

- No one in the group knows who the mayor is and many expressed an interest in getting to know him.
- Group members urged staff to carry the message back to the Mayor of Santa Rosa to try to meet with members of the Hispanic community.