

Tacoma Latino Town Hall

Report

2016



LATINO TOWN HALL TASK FORCE

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We also thank the City of Tacoma for funding for the Town Halls.

We acknowledge the many leaders who gave of their time and generously devoted hours to the work of planning and implementing the Town Halls, as well as the ongoing work to ensure the Latino Community's voice is expressed.

Finally, and most of all, muchisimas gracias to all the community members who showed up to our Town Halls and generously shared their view, values and community pride at the two Town Halls.

History of the Latino Town Halls

In partnership with the City of Tacoma, including staff from the Office of Equity and Human Rights and City Council Member Marty Campbell, Liesl Santkuyl and Sara Irish organized a Latino Roundtable Forum in November, 2015, with over 40 Latinos in attendance. The meeting, facilitated by Northwest Leadership Foundation executive staff, became a launching point for active Latino involvement in planning and implementing two Latino Town Halls in the spring of 2016. The group asked for and received funding from the City of Tacoma for two separate events, one on the South End of Tacoma, and one on the East Side. Although this funding was instrumental to being able to host these two events paying for marketing, flyers, interpretation, childcare and food, essential elements of the events the truly amazing leadership and contribution of the Latino-led (with over twenty planners and implementers) Tacoma Town Hall Task Force made both of the events successful. The group met twice a month from January through May 31st, and collectively volunteered over 800 hours dedicated to planning and implementing these events.

The group has continued to meet to investigate a collaborative identity and mission. A post-Town Hall retreat allowed this group to consider an ongoing desire to plan and implement more events and celebrations of our Latino community. The group intends to distribute the data from the Town Halls to several interested parties, including the City of Tacoma, Tacoma Community House, Tacoma Public School Leaders, and others.

During the first Town Hall in March at Mount Tahoma High School, over 150 people attended, which included Latino community members, including the Latino Task Force members and community leaders interested in hearing the voices of the Latino community. At the second Town Hall in May at Lincoln High School, approximately 100 attendees participated, including Latino community members, Task Force members and City Leaders and observers.

Research Design

Primary data was collected for this research using a mixed-methods approach. Both quantitative and qualitative instruments were employed as described below:

1. Three focus groups were conducted during each of two Latino Town Halls on March 19, 2016 (Mt. Tahoma High School) and May 12, 2016 (Lincoln High School) for a total of six focus groups. Each of the three focus groups at each town hall targeted different demographics of the Latino community in Tacoma. The focus groups were divided into

a) English language group b) Spanish language group and c) youth group. Interpretation services were made available for observers during each focus group, but observers were asked to not participate in the focus group.

2. In order to better understand who was participating in the Town Hall, all participants were asked to sign in and provide some basic demographic information during registration. All participants in each Town Hall were also asked to complete a voluntary anonymous exit survey. This survey included questions about a variety of demographic markers and asked participants to describe positive and negative experiences during the Latino Town Halls.

During the first Latino Town Hall, more demographic surveys were completed and therefore the overall data is slightly skewed due to differences in attendance and completion of surveys. Data from the first Town Hall in March, the second Town Hall in May, and overall data is presented in order to easily compare findings from each event. Based on the responses to the exit surveys, the participants of the Latino Town Halls were generally representative of the broader Latino population in Tacoma. There was a slightly larger proportion of youth in attendance overall, but all other age groups were more equally represented. A much larger percentage of female-identified participants attended and participated in the second event. The lower number of male participants overall may have influenced some of the conversations during the Town Hall; however, the planning group was pleased to see female-identified, Latina community members turning out and speaking up for themselves and their communities. Another interesting finding from the survey was that among participants who returned surveys, families where English is the only language spoken in the home represented 44% of participants, compared to 21% for Spanish-only homes and 28% for bilingual homes, making English-only homes the most highly represented at these events. Please see table 1 for more demographic data collected from both Latino Town Halls.

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA FROM TOWN HALLS

	Mach 2016 Town Hall	May 2016 Town Hall	Overall
% of Total Responses	64% of total	36% of total	100%
Top 5 Zip Codes			
	98404	98404	98404
	98405	98405	98405
	98408	98444	98444
	98409	98418	98409
	98444	98409	98408
Age			
Did Not Disclose	51%	44%	46%
14-24	6%	15%	11%
25-30	7%	8%	8%
31-35	4%	4%	4%
36-40	3%	4%	3%
41-45	4%	4%	4%
46-50	4%	11%	8%
51-55	7%	5%	5%
56-60	7%	1%	4%
61-65	3%	2%	3%
66-70		1%	1%
70+	3%	2%	3%
Marital Status			
Did Not Disclose	7%		5%
Single	40%	54%	47%
Married	53%	46%	49%
Household Size			
Did Not Disclose	59%	46%	45%
1	14%	14%	16%
2	4%	9%	8%
3	9%	3%	13%
4	10%	8%	14%
5	1%	2%	3%
6	1%	2%	2%
7		2%	1%
Sexual Orientation			
Did Not Disclose	38%	20%	28%
Heterosexual	57%	68%	63%
Bisexual	1%	6%	4%
Homosexual	4%	4%	4%
Pansexual		2%	1%
Gender Identity			
Did Not Disclose	13%	6%	10%
Female	41%	64%	53%
Male	46%	29%	36%
Gender Fluid		1%	1%
Primary Language at Home			
Did Not Disclose	12%	2%	7%
English	32%	54%	44%
Spanish	20%	21%	21%
Spanish/English	36%	23%	28%
Ethnicity			
Hispanic/Latino	70%	55%	57%
Black/African American	2%	12%	7%
Mixed Race	2%	2%	2%
Latino/Mixed Race	2%	6%	4%
Native American	2%		1%
Caucasian	10%	9%	9%
Chicano	2%	4%	3%
Asian	2%	4%	3%
Did Not Disclose	10%	7%	14%
Middle Eastern		1%	1%
Birth Place			
Born in USA	53%	60%	58%
Born Outside USA	45%	36%	41%
Did Not Disclose	2%	5%	1%



At each focus group, participants were asked four questions, which were modeled after questions the City of Tacoma used during the 2014-15 Human Services Strategic Plan data gathering process in order to ensure better reliability and validity of the questions themselves:

- 1) What are issues affecting your ability to live the life you want to live in Tacoma?
- 2) What are issues affecting your ability to live the life you want to live in Tacoma?
- 3) How can the Latino Community and the City of Tacoma work together toward solutions?
- 4) What are the strengths of the Latino Community in Tacoma?
- 5) What is your vision for the future of the Latino Community in Tacoma?

Discussions in each focus group were documented by a note taker and a scribe. The note taker was tasked with creating a running list of all the ideas participants generated in real time on posters so participants could see and visually review all the ideas discussed in each focus group. The scribe was given the task of transcribing the content of all comments made by participants, into digital notes, with as much detail as possible. The focus group participants' responses were then analyzed and grouped based on themes. Due to the nature of focus group discussions and data collection, the response data is qualitative in nature and therefore a quantitative analysis was not feasible and is not included in the following sections.

One limitation of the qualitative data is that it is only representative of the attendees of the focus groups, and attendance at the Latino Town Halls was self-selected. The recruitment process through word of mouth as well as through known public venues such as Spanish language radio and KBTC may have attracted a non-randomized group of Latinos. However, the gatherings were very well attended overall, with over 150 attendees at the first Town Hall, and over 100 attendees at the second Town Hall. Another limitation is that the focus group questions, although modeled after the Human Services Strategic Planning questions, were not validated questions, and the instrument has not been rated for reliability or bias. Nonetheless, they did elicit group engagement and generate a good level of response from the participants of both Town Halls.

Responses from the two Latino Town Halls revealed a passionate and deliberate consideration of the four questions presented to the groups. Participants demonstrated reflection, vision, and perception in their thorough examination of the issues discussed. The following four sections detail the findings from the qualitative analysis of the Latino community's responses to each of the four questions asked during the focus groups.

Summary

Both Latino Town Halls, in March and May 2016, revealed high degrees of concern for a lack of availability of and accessibility to resources in our community, **particularly in the areas of availability of health insurance, medical care, high quality education, and English classes.** Many noted the absence of a unifying agency for Latinos that would serve the Latino community in the following ways: expressing Latino culture, advocating on behalf of the Latino community, and providing basic services for navigation of cultural systems, language services and cultural artistic expression. Both **language** and **lack of culturally appropriate resources** were seen as barriers and identified as having a significant impact on community members and the community's quality of life. Education and economic/professional development remain a priority for participants, and many spoke to the concern for representation and inclusivity across the spectrum of services--judicial, law enforcement, education, housing, politics, etc. The cultural pride exhibited by the Latino community stood out as a strength for the majority, and participants expressed the desire for an increase in opportunities and services as representation improves.

While participants during the first Latino Town Hall identified important individual concerns and priorities that exist for community members, during the second Town Hall participants spoke to an organizational or collective perspective both in terms of representation and resources. The move towards a vision of organization as a community speaks to an increase in awareness of

the need for strategic planning, as group members shifted from individual needs towards a more cooperative approach with more mutually identified goals.

Issues Affecting the Latino Community

After a brief introduction by facilitators, participants in each Town Hall focus group were asked to identify issues and challenges that they as individuals have faced or challenges their community has encountered. Responses to this question can be summarized into eight major themes: cultural competence, immigration/rights, the environment, safety & security, resource availability & accessibility, education, outreach/advertising, and representation.

The first of the eight themes brought up by Latino community members in the Town Hall focus groups related to cultural competence and the lack thereof in local resources and community. Participants in the focus groups identified language barriers as a major reason the Latino community is often disconnected from the broader Tacoma community. In addition a lack of cultural awareness among the residents of Tacoma with regard to the Latino community, the potential for stigma, marginalization, and discrimination was also listed as a major barrier. Two of the focus groups also identified the importance of understanding the diversity of subgroups within the Latino community, including country and culture of origin, immigration status, age, acculturation level, and English-language fluency. They also felt it was imperative that the needs of all the many subgroups be considered when trying to understand the needs of the community and creating programs and policies to help remedy some of the challenges experienced by the broader Latino community.

The second major theme that emerged during the Latino Town Hall focus groups was surrounding the theme of immigration status. The Spanish language focus groups in particular spent time discussing the experiences of undocumented Latino community members and challenges that immigration status brings to the Latino community. This was a sensitive and personal topic for many of the participants and the Latino Town Hall taskforce would like to applaud the courage and honesty demonstrated by participants of the focus group sessions. The impacts of immigration policies were described to varying degrees from concerns for the wellbeing and the safety of loved ones, security of communities and families, and fears of deportation. Many participants were encouraged by the words of inclusion and support from Mayor Strickland in the opening remarks of the Town Halls, but expressed the need for more solid and visible policies supporting undocumented members of the Latino community.

Both the youth and the Spanish language focus groups spoke about the next theme, which was a concern for the environment as another challenge to living the life they wish to live in Tacoma. The Spanish language group brought up concerns around responsible stewardship of natural resources and waste management within the city of Tacoma. The English language focus group from the March Latino Town Hall identified environmental justice within the city of Tacoma as an environmental concern that impacted the daily lives of Latinos.

The fourth theme brought up in *all* of the focus groups was the safety and security of the Latino community within the city of Tacoma. Latinos felt a real risk of discrimination in many forms including language discrimination and a lack of inclusivity from the broader Tacoma community. In addition, participants felt there was a lack of safe and healthy housing options accessible to Latinos. Examples included a lack of real low income housing and a lack of first time homebuyer and/or single-family housing options that are accessible to Latinos in Tacoma. In addition, a lack of assistance from local financial institutions presents additional barriers for those who are interested and able to look for different housing options.

The fifth theme of resource availability and accessibility was named by all focus groups as a challenge for the Latino community. Examples included lacking or inadequate social and economic support and resources for the Latino community like welfare, health insurance, and work and job hunting services. The March English language focus group cited a lack of diverse language resources (including Spanish), a lack of accessible interpretation and translation services, and a lack of Spanish-speaking service providers in the Tacoma area as major resource challenges for the Latino community. This focus group also discussed challenges around language support in the legal system—especially in courts in the Tacoma area. Both the Spanish-speaking focus groups and the May English language focus group mentioned a lack of employment opportunities and/or opportunities for professional growth within their current positions as barriers. The May English language focus group also discussed a lack of accessible work support services for Latinos employed within the city as a barrier to overcoming economic disparities in Tacoma. Finally, inadequate transportation resources were cited as barriers for the Latino community.

Traffic, congestion, and limited transit options within Tacoma were named in multiple focus groups as exacerbating existing barriers that the Latino community already struggles to overcome including struggles with sufficient economic opportunities and housing accessibility. The May English language focus group also identified a lack of affordable childcare or early learning opportunities within the Tacoma area as a barrier for working families. Finally, limited accessibility to healthy food options, grocery stores and the existence of food deserts in various

areas within the Tacoma city limits were also discussed as major barriers to the health and happiness of the Latino communities across Tacoma.

Education was another important barrier identified by participants in all six Latino Town Hall focus groups. A lack of education opportunities for many Latino youth was discussed in five of the six focus groups. Higher education, for example, is generally perceived as inaccessible for many Latino families and youth. In the May English language focus group, a lack of educational opportunities for Latino community members—including youth, adults, and seniors—to learn to use current technologies was noted as a barrier to economic and academic success in Tacoma. The March English language focus group described a concern that the education system was generally unprepared to serve the Latino community and the graduating students were not well prepared to take on jobs that could serve their community. The May English language focus group discussed concerns around the lack of special needs support in schools and lower graduation rates for Latino youth in the area high schools. The March youth focus group identified a lack of support for education both within the Latino community and in the broader Tacoma community as a barrier for the success of young students. The youth in this focus group also recognized favoritism amongst educators as a barrier to success for young Latino students.

Barriers experienced by Latinos in the broader Tacoma community were introduced as another type of challenge for Latinos. Latino youth expressed experiencing social problems and not being able to access support, education and tools to successfully navigate the challenges they face at home and in their social lives. The March English speaking group also identified a fear of the police, a lack of police investment in the community, and underrepresentation of Latinos within the police force as community barriers for Latinos in Tacoma.

The eighth theme identified was around outreach and effective advertising and communication systems. Participants in the May English language focus group felt programming and organizations for Latinos lacked effective outreach/advertising and noted that many Latinos are often disconnected from existing events in the community. Ineffective communication and a general lack of broad communication channels for the Latino community were also identified by the March English language focus group.

The final theme that emerged during all six focus groups was representation of Latinos or visible leadership in the larger community. There was a notable consensus that Latinos lack fair representation in city government and in decision-making positions within the employees of the City of Tacoma. Both youth focus groups identified a lack of student/youth representation in decision-making within the community. The May English language focus group identified a

lack of political power despite significant gains in the population of the Latino community in Tacoma. The group also expressed their concerns that poor voter registration and voting turnout negatively affect representation of Latinos within city government leadership. The March English language focus group discussed the need for accountability from city officials and city government for promises made to the Latino community.

Opportunities for Collaboration in the City

There were four major themes expressed as opportunities for collaboration between the City of Tacoma and the Latino community that were discussed in the six Latino Town Hall focus groups. These included collaborations around resources, education, representation, and community.

Opportunities for new and improved resources and increased availability and accessibility to existing resources in Tacoma were the first themes discussed in all six of the Latino Town Hall focus groups. Economic resources appeared to be of particular importance to Latino community members. Participants made calls for increased economic funding and investment in infrastructure development, utilizing the Port of Tacoma as a source of employment, programming to promote inclusivity in employment (i.e. internships, apprenticeships, technical training programs, etc.), broader outreach to the Latino community in presenting work opportunities, an increase in professional growth opportunities for those already employed, and use of the employment resources group model (used in Seattle).

Other opportunities mentioned for collaboration between the City of Tacoma and the Latino community included increasing the number of Spanish-speaking service providers in Tacoma, more interpretation/translation and other language support services and resources, and increased funding for community-based organizations that serve the Latino community. There was also a call for increased resources around housing options (for example, a rent to own system, real low income housing options, and truly affordable housing in Tacoma). Despite the fact that transit investments had been determined by vote in the past, it was suggested that investments in transit infrastructure be revisited by the city government based on a community needs assessment.

Both of the youth focus groups and both English language focus groups identified the positive impact that mentoring opportunities developed and supported by the city of Tacoma could have on the future of Latino youth. Finally, better collaborations between community-based organizations, coalitions, and community groups was identified as a path for the creation of more connections within the Latino community and the improvement of event outreach and community engagement.

Collaboration related to improvements within education and the education system was the second major theme that Latino Town Hall focus groups identified an opportunity for the City and the Latino community to work together. Participants in all six focus groups identified a need for city government to prioritize education and funding and work closely with Tacoma Public Schools to ensure the success of all Latino youth. Focus groups also identified new educational opportunities including technical training and job skills training for youth, legal education for the broader Latino community, technology classes for youth, adults, and seniors, and financial classes to help navigate the use of financial institutions. The May English language focus group also discussed the benefits of having a Latino holiday for Tacoma Public Schools as a way for Latino youth to learn about and have pride in their community and culture. This focus group also explored the potential benefits of a complete dual-language program for students in Tacoma Public Schools. It was also suggested that local Latino community leaders be invited into the classroom as guests to speak to and inspire young Latino students. A few participants in the May English language focus group were also interested in seeing the reintroduction of civics programming within public-school education, as civic engagement is something that has cultural overtones, and many want to understand the cultural expectations in Tacoma.

The third area of collaborative opportunity identified in all six Latino Town Hall focus groups was around the increased representation of Latinos in government and leadership positions. Nearly all focus groups identified better representation of Latinos at all government levels, including city government, as an area of opportunity for collaboration. There was a particular emphasis on the lack of representation of Latinos in decision-making positions within Tacoma city government. Existing city leaders were also encouraged to take a stand for inclusiveness and to sponsor policies that promote diversity, inclusion and representation of marginalized voices, including those of the Latino community. This call was not just for the city of Tacoma but was also echoed more broadly for Washington state representatives and for federal representatives in Congress. Tacoma-specific recommendations included providing voting guides/information be provided in multiple languages, including Spanish, and ensuring that alternative-language voting materials are sent to the correct/current addresses of Latino voters. There was also a general consensus that Tacoma city representatives ought to make more of an effort to talk with Latino community members face-to-face and that the Latino community would be looking to hold its city representatives accountable for following through on the promises they made to improve the lives of the Latino community.

Strategies to strengthen community were discussed as the fourth theme identified as an opportunity for collaboration by all six Latino Town Hall focus groups. The March English language focus group suggested the inclusion of Spanish on city signs as a way to make the

Latino community feel welcome and included. This group also congratulated and encouraged Tacoma city leaders and city government forming broad new partnerships and relationships with Latino community leaders, identifying leaders in nontraditional ways and encouraging development of more Latino leadership in formalized programs. , including the City of Tacoma police department and the Office of Equity and Human Rights. Both the March English language focus group and the youth focus groups discussed increasing funding and access to youth programs supported by the city through the human services office. These programs could also include cultural education to encourage and support the transfer of Latino cultural values to younger generations. In addition to youth support, intergenerational support was discussed in the Spanish language focus groups to ensure that all age groups within the Latino community could interact, learn, support, and grow together. The May English language focus group prioritized the development of additional cultural activities and events within Tacoma. One popular idea that generated a great deal of buzz was a large Latino festival (similar to Ethnic Fest but specific to the many subgroups within the Latino community) as a way to bring community together, build connections, and develop new support among Latino groups. This focus group also advocated for the development of a local Spanish language radio station or, at minimum, regular Spanish language programming on an existing station; this could also serve as a way to organize within the community and disseminate information around community programming. More information in Spanish could easily be included on the City of Tacoma's website, including information on community events (community calendar), city commission positions, jobs announcements, and important documents, such as the Human Services Strategic Plan document.

Another key strategy to support the future health of the Latino community in Tacoma came in the form of a challenge from members of the Latino community to other parents to be more involved in their children's education and also in their communities (i.e. attend school board meetings, PTA, truancy boards, town hall meetings, etc.). It was suggested that the City of Tacoma could help to encourage the Tacoma Public Schools to more adequately address the needs of the Latino community in the form of support for parents who want to become more engaged in their children's education and understand the education system here in this community. It was also suggested that programming designed to support both youth and families should be focused on youth and evaluated based on the success of youth in the community (graduation rates, access to higher education, etc.). While a few Latino-specific community organizations in Tacoma currently exist, there was a general consensus that there is a need for additional direct services to be provided (in Spanish), through existing or new community-based organizations or support for more functional Latino-serving organizations. The final opportunity for collaboration came from another challenge from a Latino community member to encourage other members of the Latino community to show the broader Tacoma

community who and what Latinos are all about. It is a responsibility of both the community and the City of Tacoma to clear up misconceptions, break down stereotypes, and help Latinos take their place in the multicultural mosaic of Tacoma.

Strengths of the Latino Community

After detailing opportunities for collaboration in Tacoma, the conversations in the focus groups shifted to exploring the individual and collective strengths of the Latino community. The most prominent strength discussed in the focus groups centered on support that Latinos provide to their fellow Latino community members. It is critical to substantiate and acknowledge cultural pride which extends to everything from values and norms to music, dance, and food that many Latino subgroups share. The May English language focus group explained that Latino communities support local economies including both Latino owned businesses and local businesses outside of the Latino community. Amazing work is being done to create support, empowerment, and leadership for Latinos in Tacoma. The two youth focus groups described the Proyecto MoLE program as a strong example of an existing and successful youth oriented program that develops academic achievement, cultural pride, and leadership skills for Latino youth in Tacoma.

Participants of the focus groups were confident of their strengths both individually and as a community and were very quick to generate lists that detailed strengths of the Latino community. The most highly prioritized and valued strength was that of family and the love that the Latino community has for all intergenerational and extended members of the Latino family. The Spanish-language focus groups emphasized that the Latino community also strongly values civic rights, respects and appreciates the responsibilities that come with these rights, and are grateful and ready to take advantage of opportunities when they are made available. Another common strength disclosed was a deep sense of faith that grounded many of the participants in both the Spanish language and English language focus groups. The English language focus groups also described the strength of the Latino community social network with particular emphasis on the value and practice of inclusivity within the Latino community. Community skills like natural leadership and language (bilingual) skills were listed as additional strengths and assets brought to Tacoma by Latinos in the community. Other community characteristics included: passion, a profound sense of humanity, tenacity when faced with adversity, commitment and persistence coupled with a strong work ethic. In addition, participants described future strengths the Latino community will have both in terms of sheer numbers as the Latino population grows and the inherent intergenerational strength of families throughout the Latino community of Tacoma. Finally, participants in all six focus groups described a deeply

held loyalty for the Tacoma city community and intense patriotism for the United States of America as strengths of the Latino community.

Vision for the Latino Community

The final question posed to the focus groups during the Latino Town halls asked participants to describe their collective vision for the future of the Latino community in Tacoma. Seven major themes emerged from the focus groups: representation, Latino engagement, resources, education, community, immigration, and the environment.

Participants of the Latino town halls were optimistic about the future of their community and their representation in city politics. They voiced their hope that strong voices within the Latino community would have influence in education, community, schools, and decision-making at the city level. Participants also expressed a desire for the presence of Latinos within the Tacoma city community to be acknowledged, that their voices be not only heard but listened to and recommendations acted upon, and that their ideas be considered when creating new policies. Participants described their hope that the city of Tacoma would work to become an inclusive place with an emphasis on cultural representation and would work to dismantle segregation and self-segregation. All six focus groups wished for better representation at all levels of city leadership in the future. The participants described wanting representation in all levels of government as well as City leadership. Participants also expressed a desire to see more Latinos taking on professional jobs within the city of Tacoma and representing a larger percentage of the professional workforce within the city.

The second major theme participants identified as a future vision for the city of Tacoma involved engagement of the Latino community with the broader Tacoma city community. Participants described a vision for a unified multicultural city community where Latinos feel welcome and valued. The city of Tacoma, it was suggested, could show a greater degree of involvement within the Latino and other communities in order to help create a truly unified community. In order to help the Latino community re-engage with the broader Tacoma community, it was suggested that the city host national Latino organizations (i.e. the LULAC and the National Council de la Raza) and also help support large-scale Latino community festivals throughout the year. The ultimate goal for many participants with community engagement of Latinos was to see Latino youth participating in and having pride in their culture while still succeeding within the broader Tacoma community.

Conversations around resources formed the third major theme identified for the future of the Tacoma community. Resources mentioned included role models and mentors for Latino youth

in the community, more work opportunities, diverse economic development, universal healthcare access, culturally appropriate programs and resources, and increased funding for community organizations and programs. While many participants argued for the need for more resources and programming for Latinos living in Tacoma, many were also adamant that over time these programs should empower the Latino community to rely less on government aid programs, in order that they become able to support themselves, their families, and their communities.

Education was also a priority advanced as an important part of the success for the Latino community in the future. Examples often centered around investment in more educational opportunities for Latino students, including education policies and programs that would allow Latino youth the opportunity to learn about their history, family, languages, culture, and be supported in culturally sensitive ways within the public education system. There was also a hope expressed that along with increased diversity in education (both public and private), that Latino ethnic studies and cultural pride may one day be taught and encouraged within schools. Participants in all six focus groups expressed a desire for used to have access to better education in the future and that Latino youth would be more successful in completing their education at both the high school and higher education levels. Members of the English language focus groups specifically identified the goal that all Latino youth would graduate from high school and complete more than one year of higher education as a vision for the future of education for Latino youth.

The fifth theme expressed as part of the discussion for the future of the Latino community in Tacoma centered on the community identity within the larger sense of community. The need for recognition of Latino diversity and a deep need for inclusion in Tacoma was the first idea expressed. This idea could be realized in a variety of ways: the removal of language barriers, Latino community members being considered "Americans" as opposed to "Mexicans", the reduction of social barriers as a pathway towards future opportunity, the Latino community coming together to experience and celebrate community pride, and eventually the Latino community becoming more involved in the broader Tacoma community. It was also suggested that the City of Tacoma could become a true welcoming city by removing the detention center where significant numbers of the Latino community are being held. The youth focus groups also expressed their desire is for youth leaders out in the community and in city government, and the invitation for more youth involvement overall. By increasing the opportunities for used to have a voice in their community, many youth felt their peers would become more involved in their community and may have more hope for their future. Finally, a few members of the May English focus group expressed a desire for the communities to move away from sound-bite methods of communication; rather, they should develop new strategies that will foster

productivity and communication needed to bring different and diverse people together to create a multi-cultural community identity.

The final two pieces of the future vision for the Latino community generated during the Latino town hall park focus groups were about immigration and the environment. Participants hoped that let members of the Latino community could live and thrive into, without fear of immigration status and that members of the Latino community of Tacoma could become examples for other immigrant communities how to legally and successfully become contributing citizens. There was also a desire to see new laws around immigration Champion at the city, state, and federal levels and the hope that the rights of citizens would be maintained regardless of political climate. Finally focus groups discussed the importance for the future of responsible environmental stewardship and the need for the City of Tacoma to make decisions to safeguard the natural resources not only for the Latino community but for all people living in city of Tacoma.

Latino Community in Tacoma and Pierce County

Tacoma-Pierce County is one of the most populated and diverse counties of Washington State with a population of 808,200. The population of City of Tacoma is approximately 199,600. Census data (QuickFacts.census.gov) shows the following breakdowns for Pierce County in 2011: White persons -77.3%; Black persons 7.1% ; American Indian and Alaskan Native persons 1.6%; Asian persons 6.2%;Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander persons 1.4%.;Persons reporting two or more races 6.4%; Persons of Hispanic or Latino Origin 9.4%; White persons not Hispanic 70.1%.

Census data indicates that over 79,000 Pierce County residents are foreign born. There are 106,752 who speak a language other than English at home. Of those, over 42,000 speak Spanish, 39,000 Asian and Pacific Islander languages, and about 3,500 speak “other languages”. (Source: American Community Survey).

Pierce County is becoming more diverse along racial and ethnic lines. Black residents made up 6.8 percent of Pierce County’s total population compared to 3.6 percent of the state’s population. (Source: U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts)

DEMOGRAPHICS OF LATINOS IN TACOMA & PIERCE COUNTY

(Source: U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts)

Table 1.2 Age, Gender, and Race/Ethnicity Demographics in Pierce County vs. Washington State in 2014

	Pierce County	Washington State
Population by age, 2014		
Under 5 years old	6.9%	6.3%
Under 18 years old	24%	22.7%
65 years and older	12.7%	14.1%
Females, 2014	50.3%	50.0%
Race/Ethnicity, 2014		
White	76.1%	80.7%
Black	7.4%	4.1%
American Indian, Alaska Native	1.7%	1.9%
Asian, Native Hawaiian, Other Pacific Islander	8.1%	8.9%
Hispanic or Latino, any race	10.2%	12.2%

The following chart shows the break-down of Pierce County Latino residents by race in 2015, according to the US Census Bureau:

Geography	Total	Race Alone					Two or More Races
		White	Black or African American	American Indian and Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	
Pierce County, Washington	88,335	67,263	5,031	4,712	2,273	936	8,120

Notes:

The estimates are based on the 2010 Census and reflect changes to the April 1, 2010 population due to the Count Question Resolution program and geographic program revisions. Hispanic origin is considered an ethnicity, not a race. Hispanics may be of any race. Responses of "Some Other Race" from the 2010 Census are modified. This results in differences between the population for specific race categories shown for the 2010 Census population in this table versus those in the original 2010 Census data. For more information, see <http://www.census.gov/popest/data/historical/files/MRSE-01-US1.pdf>. For population estimates methodology statements, see <http://www.census.gov/popest/methodology/index.html>.

Hispanics or Latinos are those people who classified themselves in one of the specific Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino categories listed on the Census 2010 questionnaire -"Mexican," "Puerto Rican", or "Cuban"-as well as those who indicate that they are "another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin." People who do not identify with one of the specific origins listed on the questionnaire but indicate that they are "another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin" are those whose origins are from Spain, the Spanish-speaking countries of Central or South America, or the Dominican Republic. The terms "Hispanic," "Latino," and "Spanish" are used interchangeably.

Origin can be view as the heritage, nationality group, lineage, or country of birth of the person or the person's parents or ancestors before their arrival in the United States.

People who identify their origin as Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino may be of any race. Thus, the percent Hispanic should not be added to percentages for racial categories.

Non-Hispanic White persons are individuals who responded "No, not Spanish/Hispanic/Latino" and who reported "White" as their only entry in the race question. Tallies that show race categories for Hispanics and non-Hispanics separately are also available.

2014 U.S. Census Pierce County Estimates:

HISPANIC OR LATINO AND RACE				
Total population	201,794	+/-106	201,794	(X)
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	22,237	+/-1,626	11.0%	+/-0.8
Mexican	15,673	+/-1,537	7.8%	+/-0.8
Puerto Rican	2,005	+/-538	1.0%	+/-0.3
Cuban	272	+/-224	0.1%	+/-0.1
Other Hispanic or Latino	4,287	+/-756	2.1%	+/-0.4

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

DEMOGRAPHICS OF LATINOS IN TACOMA & PIERCE COUNTY (cont.)

Subject	Number	Percent
RACE		
Total population	198,397	100
One race	182,421	91.9
White	128,670	64.9
Black or African American	22,210	11.2
American Indian and Alaska Native	3,648	1.8
American Indian, specified [1]	2,491	1.3
Alaska Native, specified [1]	217	0.1
Both American Indian and Alaska Native, specified	7	0
[1] American Indian or Alaska Native, not specified	933	0.5
Asian	16,274	8.2
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	2,455	1.2
Some Other Race	9,164	4.6
Two or More Races	15,976	8.1
Two races with Some Other Race	1,623	0.8
Two races without Some Other Race	12,249	6.2
Three or more races with Some Other Race	263	0.1
Three or more races without Some Other Race	1,841	0.9
HISPANIC OR LATINO		
Total population	198,397	100
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	22,390	11.3
Mexican	16,145	8.1
Puerto Rican	1,964	1
Cuban	319	0.2
Other Hispanic or Latino [2]	3,962	2
Not Hispanic or Latino	176,007	88.7
RACE AND HISPANIC OR LATINO		
Total population	198,397	100
One race	182,421	91.9
Hispanic or Latino	19,465	9.8
Not Hispanic or Latino	162,956	82.1
Two or More Races	15,976	8.1
Hispanic or Latino	2,925	1.5
Not Hispanic or Latino	13,051	6.6

The following chart shows the break-down of City of Tacoma Latino residents by race in 2015, according to the US Census Bureau:

X Not applicable.

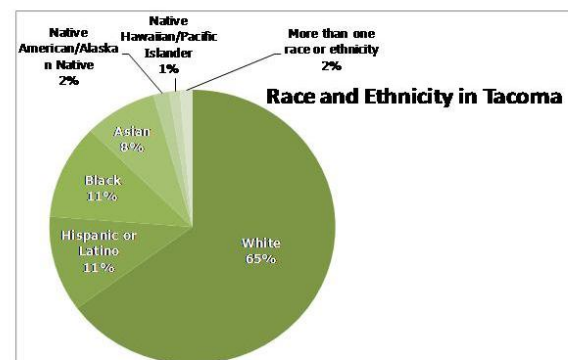
[1] "American Indian, specified" includes people who provided a specific American Indian tribe, such as Navajo or Blackfeet. "Alaska Native, specified" includes people who provided a specific Alaska Native group, such as Inupiat or Yup'ik.

[2] This category is comprised of people whose origins are from the Dominican Republic, Spain, and Spanish-speaking Central or South American countries. It also includes general origin responses such as "Latino" or "Hispanic."

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census.

DEMOGRAPHICS OF LATINOS IN TACOMA & PIERCE COUNTY (cont.)

Subject	Number	Percent
HISPANIC OR LATINO		
Total population	198,397	100
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	22,390	11.3
Not Hispanic or Latino	176,007	88.7
HISPANIC OR LATINO BY TYPE		
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	22,390	11.3
Mexican	16,145	8.1
Puerto Rican	1,964	1
Cuban	319	0.2
Dominican (Dominican Republic)	101	0.1
Central American (excludes Mexican)		
Costa Rican	38	0
Guatemalan	246	0.1
Honduran	134	0.1
Nicaraguan	62	0
Panamanian	263	0.1
Salvadoran	565	0.3
Other Central American	14	0
South American		
Argentinean	585	0.3
Bolivian	30	0
Chilean	14	0
Colombian	58	0
Ecuadorian	168	0.1
Ecuadorian	39	0
Paraguayan	8	0
Peruvian	224	0.1
Uruguayan	2	0
Venezuelan	26	0
Other South American	16	0
Other Hispanic or Latino		
Spaniard	1,954	1
Spanish	470	0.2
Spanish American	356	0.2
Spanish American	9	0
All other Hispanic or Latino	1,119	0.6



Human Services Strategic Plan, City of Tacoma, Neighborhood and Community Development Department, Human Services Division, June 2014

Notes:

The estimates are based on the 2010 Census and reflect changes to the April 1, 2010 population due to the Count Question Resolution program and geographic program revisions. Hispanic origin is considered an ethnicity, not a race. Hispanics may be of any race.

Call for Greater Social Equity

Addressing social inequities, including racial inequities, will require a greater level of commitment to identifying and eliminating the structural conditions that keep inequity in place. It will require more leadership and effort to engage those most impacted by potential changes to “come to the table” and create the future together. All components of the community of Tacoma – its residents, its government, and its social institutions - have a mutual responsibility to solve these problems together and re-ignite the spirit that inspired the motto: “The City of Destiny.” In today’s globalized reality, we are all interdependent. The value of interdependence is that we each have something to offer.

Tacoma’s Human Services Vision

The vision for the human services system in the City of Tacoma is that all Tacoma residents have access to the opportunities and pathways that will lead them to prosperity. *This vision is achieved through a robust and integrated system of culturally appropriate support services that are equitable, easy to access and navigate, and available in locations where the needs exist.*

Ensure the City’s human services investments are serving the entire community, not just people who know how to navigate the human services system.

Both the community mapping and environmental scan show how cultural, language, and socio-economic diversity in Tacoma and the region isolates some households and parts of the community from access to the opportunities that would help reduce the harmful effects of poverty and social injustice. The City needs to identify and fund creative ways of bridging these gaps in access and services so that all Tacoma residents have the opportunity to achieve self-sufficiency.

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