

IMAGINE LAKE CITY TOGETHER



.....
A VISION FOR LAKE CITY
JUNE 2017
.....

A LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP



I want to extend our appreciation for all who joined with Children's Home Society of Washington, Lake City Future First and Lake City Neighborhood Alliance in imagining Lake City together.

As a leader in child and family services for 120 years, Children's Home Society of Washington understands the importance of building a strong community in order to impact the life of a child. An engaged community that understands and responds to the needs of families means children can grow, learn and succeed in life.



For us, a thriving community requires collaboration and partnerships among all those who see the potential for the future. We cannot accomplish our work alone. We know the importance of listening to all those who live, work and play in our growing and diverse community. Through surveys, affinity groups, gatherings and conversations, we have listened to your concerns and opportunities to make a community-led plan that focuses on the most critical areas impacting Lake City.

Because of your commitment to achieving a vision for the future, we believe this plan represents a significant step forward for Lake City. It builds upon the work of planning efforts from the past 25 years while addressing the current priority issues of Lake City today. To make the plan a reality, we need the support from individuals like you as well as community partners who will lead action efforts. We hope you continue to be a part of the conversation.

Again, thank you for your commitment to Lake City and a community that is inclusive, vibrant and welcoming to all.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D. Sharon Osborne".

D. Sharon Osborne
President and CEO of Children's Home Society of Washington



VISION & VALUES

VISION

We imagine Lake City energized by the strength of its increasingly diverse and committed residents, businesses, community groups, and institutions—together we are becoming an ever safer, more beautiful, healthy, and connected community.

VALUES

EQUITY:

We value a more welcoming place for all to live, work, learn, and play—this means staying community-driven and advocating for newcomers and existing residents who are at greatest risk of displacement such as low- and moderate-income children and families, people of color, older adults, immigrants, and others.

CONTINUITY & CHANGE:

We value embracing change that builds on our community's strengths and resources, including the wealth of past planning efforts.

ENVIRONMENTAL CARE:

We value our natural environment and believe that efforts to restore and care for it can improve any strategy.

PARTNERSHIP:

We value strong partnerships for implementation—both between local groups and with City and State, and County government—and seek to be active champions for any efforts in support of the Vision.

INTRODUCTION

Imagine Lake City Together is a vision for Lake City that was developed by hundreds of neighborhood residents, dozens of volunteers, and three dedicated organizations collaborating to lead the effort.

In the **Executive Summary, Vision and Values** articulates a desired future for Lake City, supported by a set of core values held by our community. **Planning Lake City Together** is a summary of the 10-month engagement process that produced this plan. **What We Heard** offers a broad synthesis of the lessons learned from listening to our community. The **Strategic Directions** represent the four most critical areas for community focus as we work toward achieving the vision. Finally, a concept for a **Transformative Project** for the Lake City civic core is described.

The remainder of this document provides background information and further detail about the plan. **Chapter 1: Background** introduces Lake City, and explores its social, economic, and physical features, as well as other recent efforts at community planning. **Chapter 2: What We Learned** describes the Imaging Lake City Together process, and presents results of several key activities, including a Resident Survey, Parcel Survey, and Affinity Groups and Community Conversations. **Chapter 3: Our Vision** expands on these elements, where they came from, and what they mean. **Chapter 4: Strategic Directions** has a set of supporting actions for each direction, which in turn have descriptions, timelines for implementation, and community partners for leadership. **Chapter 5: Transformative Project** details the vision for a project that will profoundly change the neighborhood's future, with specifics about how this will come about. Five **Appendices** include: results from the **Affinity Groups** and **Resident Survey**, a description of the **Parcel Survey**, details on the **Implementation Approach**, and **Internet Links** for references throughout this document.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

IMAGINE LAKE CITY TOGETHER LEADERSHIP TEAM

Ann Fuller, Children's Home Society of Washington
 Chris Levenson, Lake City Future First
 Sandy Motzer, Lake City Neighborhood Alliance
 Andrea Myers, Children's Home Society of Washington
 Janet St. Clair, Children's Home Society of Washington

STEERING COMMITTEE

Thatcher Bailey
 Tsukina Blessing
 Kelly Brown
 Srijan Chakraborty
 Barbara Cochrane
 Marty Curry
 Mercedes Elizalde
 Jude Ewing
 Dedy Fauntleroy
 Peggy Hernandez
 Kevin Hilman
 Maureen Horgan
 Molly Humphrie
 Brian Knoerlein
 Muriel Lawty
 Brad Malone
 Mark Mendez
 Tim Motzer
 Ghulam Murtaza
 Lynda Musselman
 Melanie Neufeld
 Doug Ouellette
 Diana Quintero
 Ray Robinson
 Katie Sheehy
 Monica Sweet
 Claudine Wallace
 Sean Watts

Mathew Ely
 Frank Voorhies
 Sandy Motzer
 Tim Motzer
 Mark Mendez
 Audrey Lawrence
 Melanie Neufeld
 Molly Humphrie
 Leslie Basil
 Nancy Blasé
 John Lombard
 Quillan Robinson
 Annie Stocker

RESIDENT SURVEY

Michael Vederoff
 Martha Dickerson
 Amy Mott
 Janine Blaeloch
 Nancy Blase
 Tsukina Blessing
 Kate Cordova
 Jo Coring
 Matthew Ely
 Quinn Ernst
 Dedy Fauntleroy
 Matt Grubenhoff
 Diane Haugen
 Dan Keefe
 Tom Keith
 Audrey Lawrence
 Justin Lazar
 Chris Lew

PARCEL SURVEY

Monica Sweet
 Kelly McKinney

John Lombard
 Ann Marchand
 Kelly McKinney
 Julie Miller
 Melanie Neufield
 Atticus Pettinato
 Tina Pham
 Joan Rey
 Samantha Robins
 Nathan Royston
 Pam Russell
 Jake Schamp
 Monica Sweet
 Kyle Sweet
 Frankie Torres
 Frank Voorhees
 Hannah Wong-Ligda

PROJECT SUPPORT

Susan Edwards

BDS PLANNING & URBAN DESIGN

Brian Douglas Scott
 Gabriel Silberblatt
 Beth Dufek
 Heather Manning

CBE STRATEGIC

Andrés Mantilla

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	7
PLANNING	
WHAT WE HEARD	
STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS	
TRANSFORMATIVE PROJECT	
CHAPTER ONE:	
BACKGROUND	18
CHAPTER TWO:	
WHAT WE LEARNED	30
CHAPTER THREE:	
OUR VISION	40
CHAPTER FOUR:	
STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS	44
CHAPTER FIVE:	
TRANSFORMATIVE PROJECT	68
APPENDICES	74

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PLANNING

This plan is the product of a year long collaborative and community-led planning effort, engaging more than 500 individual residents and workers in Lake City.

The Leadership Team composed of Children's Home Society of Washington, Lake City Neighborhood Alliance, and Lake City Future First convened a 29-member Steering Committee representing residents, key Lake City neighborhood groups, local institutions, businesses, City and Council representatives, park advocates, educators, faith leaders, and service providers. The committee provided critical oversight to this process and served as a sounding board for preliminary analysis of data, findings from engagement, and drafts of the plan.

Imagine Lake City Together is the product of a broad, inclusive, and representative collection of community voices. In addition to the Steering Committee, a randomly selected resident survey helped to reach deeper into the community and find new



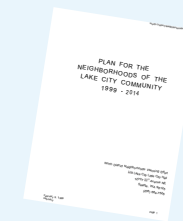
voices. Eleven facilitated affinity groups became a laboratory for neighborhood planning ideas held by very different cross-sections of the community. A parcel survey conducted by volunteers analyzed the physical condition of Lake City, block-by-block.

Analysis of all of this engagement helped to inform the Steering Committee in the creation of a clear, community-held vision for Lake City, as well as a set of commonly-held values. After reaching group consensus on four overarching strategic directions to support the achievement of this vision, the Steering Committee formed work groups to develop actions and activities for each. Finally, the Leadership Team conducted a series of Community Conversations to review the draft plan with Lake City residents.

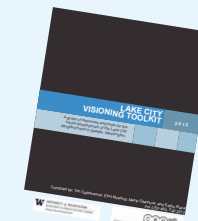


LESSONS FROM PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS

Lake City has a rich history of community planning efforts stretching over the last 25 years. These plans have responded to their contemporary issues, but some broad themes are still priorities in Lake City today.



1999 - 2014
PLAN FOR THE NEIGHBORHOODS OF THE LAKE CITY COMMUNITY



2012
LAKE CITY VISIONING TOOLKIT



2013
LAKE CITY VISIONING FOR THE PIERRE PROPERTIES



2014
LAKE CITY URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

KEY THEMES:

- » Pedestrian scale (sidewalks, mid-blocks, cross-walks, setbacks, beautification)
- » Massing buildings for increased height and density (infill, setbacks, mixed use)
- » Connectivity (parks & trails, residential access to commercial/business, TOD, bikeability)
- » Reduce auto-centrism (reduce surface parking, decongestion, Pierre properties)
- » Protect natural features (reduce impermeable surfaces, stormwater features, vegetation planning, highlighting Lake Washington & Thornton Creek)



WHAT WE HEARD



AFFINITY GROUPS

BDS and the Leadership Team conducted eleven affinity groups with different cross-sections of Lake City to delve deeper into the same issues raised by the resident survey. These included groups of: residents, seniors, Spanish-speakers, youth, young families, English language learners, businesses, and people experiencing homelessness. These groups were facilitated to elicit participants' specific values, fears, and priorities for Lake City today and in the future.

Eleven affinity groups engaged more than 100 people over several months. Areas of agreement held by each group include the following:

Areas of agreement across all affinity groups:

- » Sense of fear about crime and personal safety is an issue
- » Need targeted help for people experiencing homelessness

Priorities for most affinity groups (mentioned by at least 8 out of 11)

- » More (affordable) activities for children and teens
- » Improving pedestrian experience
- » Community gathering space
- » Housing affordability

100%

OF THE AFFINITY GROUPS
AGREED THAT SAFETY IS
AN ISSUE AND THAT LAKE
CITY NEEDS TARGETED HELP
FOR PEOPLE EXPERIENCING
HOMELESSNESS

STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee has had some robust conversations as a group. Some key themes of agreement that developed across three steering committee meetings, one project brainstorm, and Leadership Team workshops are the following:

- » Human Services are available; but not universally known throughout Lake City
- » Issue of perceived public safety versus actual crime
- » Desire for community gathering space accessible to all
- » Need for better walkability between places and spaces
- » Need for a focus on health and mental health issues in Lake City
- » Desire for strong organizational partnerships
- » Action plan should use a strengths-based approach (leverage what we have)
- » Build on existing planning work
- » Seek tangible success to build momentum

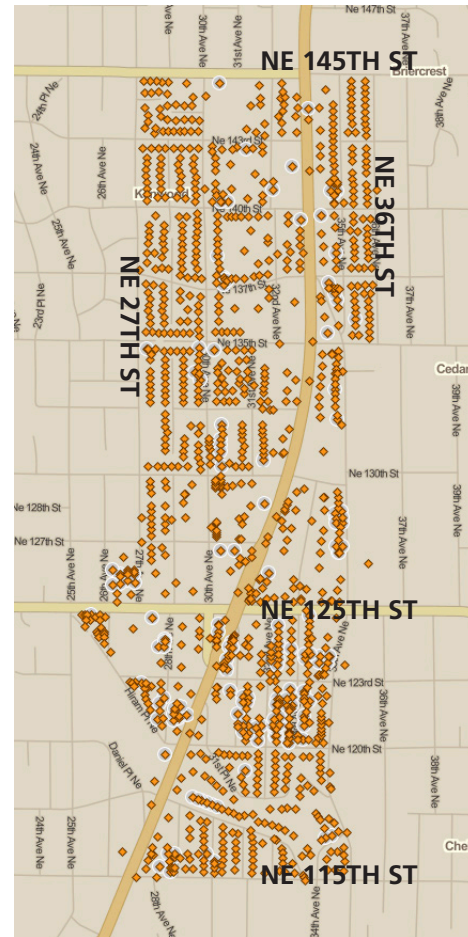
WHAT WE HEARD

PARCEL SURVEY

During this planning process over 1,400 individual Lake City land parcels were surveyed by dozens of volunteers. The Parcel Survey asks the survey-taker to assess the physical and land use characteristics of various elements of a parcel of land, recording things like occupancy type, property condition, and sale status. We customized this survey for Lake City by adding a question about the presence of a sidewalk for each parcel.

- » **Investment in the Civic Core:** Of the 33 properties classified as “New Construction / Improvements in Progress,” twenty or (60%) are located in the civic core of Lake City (within a 2.5 block square of the intersection of 125th and Lake City Way)
- » **Sidewalk Infrastructure:** The parcel survey validates Lake City’s well-documented need for pedestrian infrastructure. 59% of parcels surveyed in the study area did not have a sidewalk.

1400
PARCELS SURVEYED



RESIDENT SURVEY

During the Imagine Lake City Together process, 174 randomly selected residents completed a 40-question, in-person and mail-in survey. The survey gathered baseline information about the respondent (such as their race or ethnicity, length of time in the community, etc.) and asked them to evaluate Lake City in a variety of ways.

83%
OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS
WERE SATISFIED OR VERY
SATISFIED WITH LAKE CITY

The analysis of the survey data highlighted some of the following key findings:

- » **Community Satisfaction** 83% were “Satisfied” or “Very Satisfied” with Lake City; 69% would move there today if given the choice.
- » **Public Awareness of Services** For 14 out of 18 specific community services or programs (e.g. early learning, child care, senior activities), more than half of respondents were not aware of them in Lake City.

**MORE THAN HALF OF
SURVEY RESPONDENTS
WERE UNAWARE OF
THE MAJORITY OF
COMMUNITY SERVICES**

- » **Accessible** Lake City’s accessibility to freeways and public transportation got the highest marks among community attributes
- » **Perceived Safety** One in three survey respondents described the safety of the community as “Poor” or “Very Poor;” especially at night: 57% described it as “Somewhat” or “Very” unsafe.
- » **Affordability** The affordability of housing was the overwhelming reason for respondents choosing to move to Lake City (47%), and the most common reason given for possible decline in the next three years (loss of affordability).
- » **Pedestrian Experience** Lack of and condition of sidewalks and dangerous crossings/fast traffic were a common complaint.
- » **Trash** Litter and other garbage were cited as a common occurrence on the street.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The strategic directions represent the four most critical areas for community focus as we work toward achieving the vision. Each strategic direction has a set of supporting actions, which in turn have descriptions, timelines for implementation, and community partners for leadership.



ASSEMBLE LAKE CITY TOGETHER

Creating community by providing Lake City residents and workers with places and forums to come together and affect positive change in their community.

- » New Community Center
- » Make improvements to existing public open and parks space and public rights-of-way
- » Synthesize and build on existing public and private urban design plans and planning proposals
- » Strengthen current and develop new organizational partnerships that are inclusive to all

CONNECT LAKE CITY TOGETHER

Developing and improving tangible and intangible connections between Lake City people, places, and resources.

- » Strengthen enjoylakecity.org as a community central on-line community space
- » Establish youth advisory board

PROMOTE LAKE CITY TOGETHER

Asserting a positive image of Lake City to foster citywide recognition and local pride.

- » New neighborhood branding
- » Lake City Way beautification
- » Empty storefront activation

SERVE LAKE CITY TOGETHER

Developing resources tailored for vulnerable groups to improve the well-being of our community as a whole.

- » Community navigators, peer advocates & interpreter program
- » Community engagement process for new affordable intergenerational activities
- » Crisis intervention
- » Expanded day center hours



TRANSFORMATIVE PROJECT: PURSUE DEVELOPMENT OF A LAKE CITY “CIVIC HUB”

Over the course of the Imagine Lake City together planning effort, a major collaborative opportunity project emerged with the potential to create a transformative identity for the Lake City urban village. In fact, the Lake City “Civic Hub” embodies the vision and values of this plan so well that it addresses many of the Strategic Directions and Action Items outlined in the previous section.

Organizational Lead: Children’s Home Society of Washington

Action Description: Create a place—or connected series of places—within Lake City’s civic core¹ to establish a coordinated system of social and community services providing streamlined, integrated, culturally relevant and comprehensive services meeting the community’s needs. The Civic Hub will encourage and enable all residents to access gathering spaces, social services, multicultural spaces and activities, job development, and participation in City services and new community development. The Hub will support each of this plan’s strategic directions: it will be a venue for Lake City residents to Assemble and Connect; a point of local pride to Promote the district; and above all else, a place to deliver critical Services.

Partners: Anchored by the headquarters and programs of Children’s Home Society of Washington, this hub will seek to incorporate space for many Lake City organizations, including: the Hunger Intervention Program, Sound Generations, Lake City Neighborhood Alliance, Lake City Future First, Lake City Task force on Homelessness, Consejo, Mother Africa, the Seattle Housing Authority Lake City House Resident Council, Literacy Source, and others.

Justification from Engagement: Awareness and Utilization of Services

Strategic Directions: Assemble • Connect • Promote • Serve

¹ Area bounded by 125-127th Streets and 28-30th Avenues NE