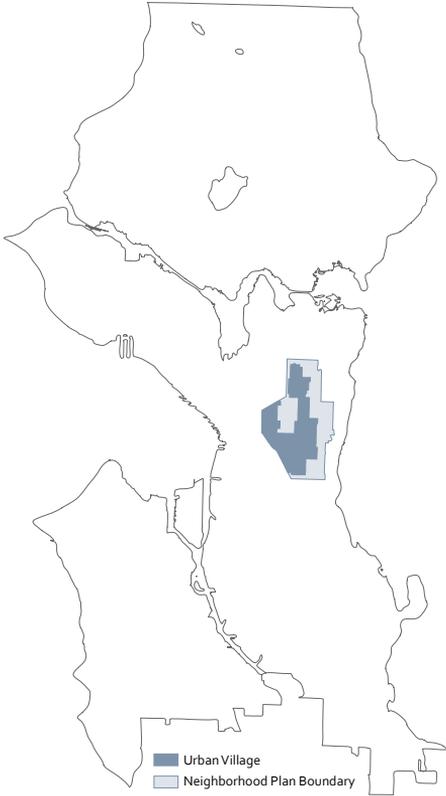


# CENTRAL AREA

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## Who did we hear from?

There are a few differences between the online and 1st open house responses. The biggest difference is simply the scale of response. At the first public meeting discussion table, there were only four or five people, and there were 157 online responses. The second public meeting the second neighborhood discussion included approximately 20 community members, who enthusiastically contributed to the discussion about change in the Central Area.

## What did we hear?

- Changing demographics: economic class and race makeup shifting.
- Safety is improving in some areas but other areas are either worse or no better.
- All business districts could be better, but Jackson and Madison areas have both improved.
- Parks are improved, but the plan made little provision for future needs in this area.
- There are more families with children in the area.
- Loss of schools is a concern.
- Transit service is generally good, but mid-day service is still wanting on some routes.

For more information about the Neighborhood Status Check, including the complete summary of the neighborhood discussion and the transcript of the online responses, please see the Planning Commission's [report](#).

## What are the similarities between the in-person and online responses?

The overall issues are generally the same, with gentrification, safety and crime, and quality of development issues being prominent. Many negative comments about townhouses were heard in both sets of comments. Comments about density go both ways - some feel there is not enough, some feel there is too much.



## What are the differences between the responses?

The online comments seem to focus on gentrification more, typically pointing out that many older and African-American households have been unable to afford increased taxes with higher property values (although one respondent said that many African American families moved out during the “crack” epidemic of the 1980s). Online, many mentioned that at the south and north ends of the 23rd Street corridor there has been some good progress on past problems, while there was little positive mentioned for the Union Street area in the center. While this distinction was not obvious from the first meeting, the second meeting and the online comments repeatedly emphasized the lack of progress at areas identified as ‘hubs’ by the current neighborhood plan. Online, there was often mention of the east African immigrant community that has come to the area in recent years, something that was not mentioned at the meeting. Transit service was discussed at length at the meeting, but is not mentioned in as great a proportion in the online comments.

### *In their own words...*

#### **How has your neighborhood changed?**

*Not very much. The new library is a huge improvement, but other than that, there is not a lot that has improved our livability. Not much happening in retail and bus service is quite deplorable. The CD still has the feeling of the city's forgotten neighborhood.*

*Yes. The opening of the light rail system and changed parking zone has changed the neighborhood for the better. I am seeing less cars during morning rush on the side streets and more people using public transportation.*

*It's become gentrified, home prices have gone up, many condos/townhomes have been built, but there are still few amenities, and the crime rate is still too high (the neighborhood doesn't feel safe for a female walking alone).*

*Seems to be getting more upscale. Still has difficulties.*