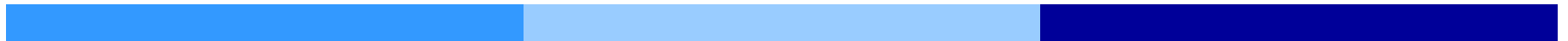# *Rainier Beach Neighborhood Capacity Project*

City of Seattle and
Rainier Beach Neighborhood Advisory Committee

December 8, 2011

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Outline

1. **Project Overview**

2. **Today's Goals**

3. **What We Learned About Rainier Beach**

4. **What We Learned from the Work of Others**

5. **How Does this Apply to Rainier Beach?**

1. Project Overview

PROJECT GOALS

1. DEVELOP A COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONAL MODEL
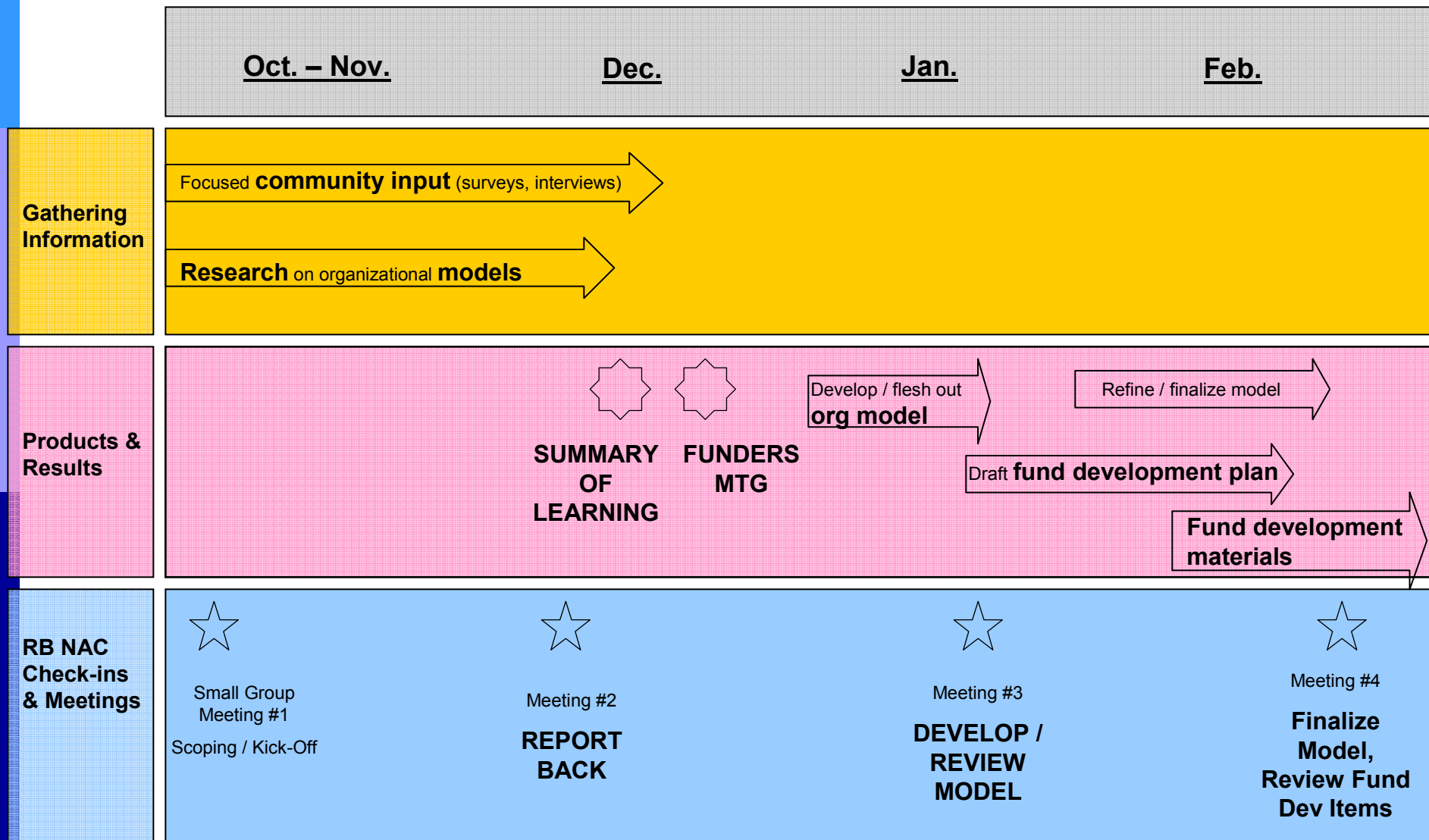
   ❖ Drives implementation of neighborhood vision & plan
   ❖ Inclusive
   ❖ Sustainable

2. BUILD FOUNDATION FOR EXTERNAL SUPPORT

   ❖ To support long-term goals
   ❖ Informed
   ❖ Strategic

1. Project Overview

Oct. – Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.

Gathering Information

Focused **community input** (surveys, interviews)

Research on organizational **models**

Products & Results

SUMMARY OF LEARNING   FUNDERS MTG

Develop / flesh out **org model**   Refine / finalize model

Draft **fund development plan**

Fund development materials

RB NAC Check-ins & Meetings

Small Group Meeting #1

Scoping / Kick-Off

Meeting #2

REPORT BACK

Meeting #3

DEVELOP / REVIEW MODEL

Meeting #4

Finalize Model, Review Fund Dev Items

2. Today's Goals

1. **SHARE** learning from community input & research

2. **CONSIDER** implications

3. **LAY GROUNDWORK** for the next step – fleshing out an organizational model

❖ *A word about critical input*

3. What We Learned About Rainier Beach

OUR FRAME FOR FOCUSED OUTREACH

Starting point: coalition concept, similar to or perhaps as Rainier Beach Community Empowerment Coalition (RBCEC)…

…but not a "done deal"

❖More concrete basis for discussion

❖Something that already exists can save time/effort

❖Established relationships, structure, momentum

❖Open for additional ideas, options & perspectives

❖Built into questions in survey & interviews

3. What We Learned About Rainier Beach

3 Tiers of focused outreach with…

Community groups that might play a direct role in an organizational structure.

Who	1. RBCEC Board	2. RBCEC Partners	3. Other CBOs Not RBCEC Partners or Historically Underrepresented
Purpose & Focus	❖Thoughts about neighborhood plan implementation ❖Thoughts about an organizational structure ❖Thoughts about potential role of RBCEC, strengths, additional capacity needed ❖Other ideas for community organizational structure		
		❖Experiences as partners	❖Familiarity with RBCEC & thoughts about potential role
Method	Group conversation with consultant	Online survey sent to all partners by Board chair	1-on-1 conversation with consultant
Who Responded	4 of 6 Board members	14 partners	20 individuals from 18 organizations

| 2. RBCEC Partners	3. Other Orgs Not RBCEC Partners or Historically Underrepresented
14 partners completed survey	**20 individuals from 18 organizations**
❖Center for Ethical Leadership ❖CHAMPS Resource and Service Center ❖Damascus Baptist Church ❖Friends of Atlantic City Nursery ❖Got Green ❖Parents for Student Success ❖Southeast Seattle Community Youth Orchestra ❖7 did not name affiliated organization	Refugee & Immigrant-serving Organizations ❖African Business Association of Seattle ❖Center for East African Community Services ❖Ethiopian Community Mutual Assn ❖Filipino Community of Seattle ❖Oromo Cultural Center / Oromo Community Organization ❖Medhane Alem Ethiopian Evangelical Church ❖Vietnamese Friendship Association Faith-based Organizations ❖African American Reach & Teach Health Ministry ❖Buddha Jewel Monastery ❖Medhane Alem Ethiopian Evangelical Church ❖Rainier Beach United Methodist Church Neighborhood Organizations ❖Rainier Beach Community Club ❖Rainier Beach Merchants Association ❖Rainier Beach Medical & Dental Clinic ❖Southeast Seattle Senior Fdn / Brighton Apts Other Community Organizations ❖African American Reach & Teach Health Ministry ❖Mount Baker Housing Association

3. What We Learned About Rainier Beach

OVERALL THEMES

1. ALL SHARE GENUINE CONCERN FOR AND COMMITMENT TO RB

2. VARIED INVOLVEMENT & CONFIDENCE IN NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN PROCESS = IMPLICATIONS

3. COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS IN RAINIER BEACH: MANY "SILOS", and NEED FOR MORE CONNECTION

4. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE: RANGE of IDEAS. MOST SAY MORE STRUCTURE IS NEEDED

"How can implementation of a plan be successful if the process didn't include significant community representation?"

"I once went to [a neighborhood] meeting and tried to get involved but there was no follow up. We have been involved at Othello, and found getting engaged much easier. I know exactly who to contact, call, and reach out to, same with Mt. Baker. Not so in Rainier Beach."
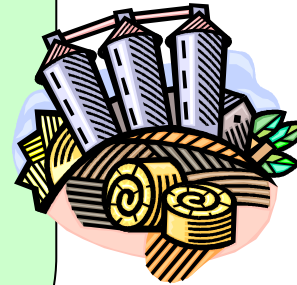
"There is a need for more connection, communication among groups. Many organizations don't know each other."

3. What We Learned About Rainier Beach

COMMENTS ABOUT A COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

"A coalition of local community organizations with RBCEC in a leadership role."

"We want to be very rooted in and connected to the community. Any connection that helps us do that – especially efficiently – is a good thing. We would be happy to help be 'one of the forces to unite.'"

"If we had good contacts / connections in Rainier Beach and understood what the community wanted, we would be open to doing something interesting, making sure our projects fit in and help support neighborhood goals."

"A network structure."

"General membership, executive Board for overall/oversight, and then Committees (which could be each organizational partner), who each do their own work and come back to the whole."

"It should be resident-centric…"

"Maybe it doesn't have to be one monolithic organization – there could be groups affiliated who still work on specific needs – so it's a mirror of the neighborhood. Kind of like a UN."

"A good feedback loop that the city doesn't ignore."

"A safe, neutral container for different conversations."

"The goal is whatever structure will WORK to REACH people. The main thing is people shouldn't be left out."

3. What We Learned About Rainier Beach

Thoughts About RBCEC Today
(from survey respondents)

Those who've been involved have positive things to say
(11 of 14 surveyed said they had good or very good experiences with RBCEC)

Comments about RBCEC Strengths

"Passion for the neighborhood; ability to see strategic connections; a sense of history and the importance of place in advancing community work."

"Community trust! Good Leadership! and true commitment and passion for serving families and community members at the Rainier Beach Neighborhood."

"Rainier Beach is not very well-organized as a community. It's hard to find an organization that speaks for the community. The Coalition is the closest we have."

Stated Strengths of RBCEC

❖ Open, inclusive, visible

❖ Trusted, credible, respected, especially leadership

❖ Convener of diverse groups and people

❖ Committed, passionate and invested in the neighborhood

❖ Longevity, history, community knowledge

❖ Works on broad range of issues

❖ Ability to see strategic connections, vision

❖ Successes to date (e.g. events, communication, convening)

3. What We Learned About Rainier Beach

Thoughts About Potential Role of RBCEC

Majority who responded support the idea of RBCEC in a lead role.

"It's wise to build on the pre-existing coalition rather than start from scratch. It seems the Coalition could take the lead on collecting and sharing input from neighborhood partners."

"Don't really mind who manages it especially if some organizations have been around longer and have capacity."

"The recognition \exists so there is no need for burning resources through duplication."

"Doesn't have an agenda; if it's another group, might have too narrow a focus or their own agenda…"

"Overall, I think should use and build on RBCEC as a vehicle; why waste time and resources on new."

One respondent had a different perspective.

"Leadership of RBCEC is great, inclusive, but the question is 'How do we get people into a closed system, where power brokers exist. People like structures.' I more envision a situation of 'controlled chaos' where there are many catalysts. The potential disadvantage of a coalition structure: how will it work in terms of bureaucracy, red tape? Getting things done? You don't want to stifle ideas, energy, creativity. Can groups come together? Will it mean funneling resources to one place?"

3. What We Learned About Rainier Beach

Thoughts About Potential Role of RBCEC

POTENTIAL ROLES

❖Voicing neighborhood needs

❖Liaison

❖Convening, connecting, informing

❖Providing vision, leadership as part of a collaborative community effort

❖Monitoring, buffer to institutions, *"…make sure City truly uses ideas and suggestions from Rainier Beach."*

❖Keeping organizations & stakeholders informed and involved

❖Ensuring racial equity outcomes

RBCEC BOARD THOUGHTS

❖Board members who responded are supportive of RBCEC in a lead role

❖Communication/information

❖Conduit for and to resources, projects, information

❖Convening, coordinating, connecting

❖Variation in familiarity with & support of planning update process

❖Biggest capacity need is additional staffing

3. What We Learned About Rainier Beach

Community Organizations who are
Not RBCEC Partners and/or Historically Underrepresented

OVERALL THEMES

1. MOST HAVE A SPECIFIC FOCUS (e.g. race/ethnic/cultural affinity, refugee & immigrant communities, faith-based, geography)

2. LACK CONNECTION and WANT MORE, BUT HAVE LIMITED CAPACITY
   - ❖ With other community organizations, institutions, neighborhood-wide efforts
   - ❖ Nearly all are volunteer-based and/or small, and lack capacity to engage consistently or deeply
   - ❖ To participate more, need support in various ways (information, contacts, relationship building, formal partnership, use of technology, compensation)

3. LITTLE OR NO FAMILIARITY WITH RBCEC
   - ❖ Most aren't familiar with RBCEC
   - ❖ Two tried to get involved, found it difficult to access

"Rainier Beach is changing – I'm not sure how well represented Coalition is now – e.g. immigrant populations."

3. What We Learned About Rainier Beach

Observations from Specific Types of Organizations

Faith-based Organizations

❖Relatively small congregations, not well-connected
❖Yet tight-knit and major gathering points within congregations

"Important role of faith institutions (churches, temples) and church leaders in reaching people. Find the pastors and imams. Then you can access people."

Other Organizations

❖2 serve geographic areas well beyond Rainier Beach
❖How to harness their contributions while engaging them in feasible ways

Neighborhood-based Organizations

❖The most potential for "duplication" of roles
❖Need for dialog about roles & relationships if a goal is to minimize overlap

3. What We Learned About Rainier Beach

Refugee & Immigrant Community Organizations

1. DISTINGUISH NEWCOMER NEEDS FROM RACE & ETHNICITY
    - ❖ *Unique needs* of refugee & immigrant communities are as important as cultural aspects

2. BARRIERS TO GETTING INVOLVED
    - ❖ Engaging on multiple levels while having little capacity
    - ❖ POL structure helpful
    - ❖ Need to <u>meaningfully</u> partner with organizations in each community, who are trusted & know their own communities

"Need to have real partnerships with ethnic organizations – not just ask for input, or hire 1 staff of a particular race or ethnicity. It's the organizations that have the trust and relationship with the community and will bring the community to engage."

"Mainstream organizations like XXX aren't culturally competent. City should invest in organizations closer to the ground, who understand communities. At the very least, keep the money 'in the City' and hire more culturally competent staff."

"Fund the MAA's [mutual assistance associations], not just the mainstream organizations."

3. What We Learned About Rainier Beach

Refugee & Immigrant Community Organizations

"Funding structures need to be challenged. Resources always go to the larger organizations, often before they've even consulted with communities of color. Then it trickles down. Or it may not trickle down at all. Again, ethnic communities are asked to participate too little too late with no support."

"I came to a meeting [of a RB group] but I didn't see any other refugee & immigrant leaders. They were talking about education and it was very aggressive. I was uncomfortable."

3. MAINSTREAM CONNECTIONS & RELATIONSHIPS
   - ❖ "Mainstream" disconnect: with City, intermediaries, even other community orgs
   - ❖ Gaps: language, culturally-based different communication styles, ways of engaging and advocating, outreach methods, program design
   - ❖ Lip service, tokenism – *"Sometimes, we participate but our feedback is not heard."*
   - ❖ Mutual perceptions/misperceptions that each others' communities are *"tight, and hard to break in"* to.

4. BUILDING CROSS-CULTURAL ALLIANCES TAKES WORK
   - ❖ Need for continued work toward cultural understanding across all communities in order to build alliances
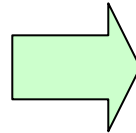
"Real challenge: building a strong multi-cultural collaboration model."

3. What We Learned About Rainier Beach

Thoughts About A Shared Cultural Center

PAST & PRESENT

"We have been franchised" out of necessity
All volunteers, small budgets

FUTURE

Most wish to have a cultural center, see value in it, even consider it critical

"Need to have services that refugees need. Families are busy, have critical family issues, so if they go out, it's for something critical such as homework, citizenship, not just for leisure things…"

"I want to see something that represents me or my people or my society. Kids needs a cultural center to keep in touch with their ancestors' culture, religion, values, social norms."

"Problem has been that the Rainier Beach Community Center does not serve the needs of refugee and immigrant communities, it's too mainstream. Folks feel like the building doesn't belong to them."

"Refugees and immigrants, especially newest newcomers, share similar identities, problems, goals, aspirations. If there was a center to bring all these communities together, it would be a good idea."

3. What We Learned About Rainier Beach

Thoughts About A Shared Cultural Center

KEY QUESTIONS TO BE DETERMINED

1. Purpose / functions?
2. Which communities?
3. Location?
4. Physical Form?
5. Role of City of Seattle?
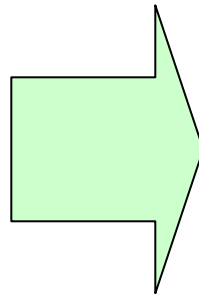
1. Identity, cultural preservation, services
2. All refugee & immigrant communities? Pan-African given RB demographics?
3. Rainier Valley? Rainier Beach?
4. Co-locate with RBCC? Separate?
5. Most think City should have strong role. What does City think? Pros and cons.

NEXT STEP – need a shared conversation

3. What We Learned About Rainier Beach

THOUGHTS FOR MOVING FORWARD

1. SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITY EXISTS
   - ❖ To harness more collective, stronger community voice
   - ❖ Stronger community voice = greater power to achieve neighborhood goals

2. NEED A STRONG FOUNDATION: A CLEAR, CREDIBLE & SHARED VISION
   - ❖ Is this embodied in the neighborhood plan / update?
   - ❖ If not, how can it become that or get as close as possible?

3. INGREDIENTS FOR A STRONG NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE TO SUPPORT THE VISION
   - ❖ Adds value
   - ❖ Accessible and able to bridge across cultures
   - ❖ Brings together while responding to distinct needs
   - ❖ Intentional about organizational development

4. What We Learned From the Work of Others

What is Collaboration?

- Mission-based organizations and individuals concerned about their community have a long history of working together.

- Approaches vary in structure and formality as much as do the causes, communities and people involved.

- Collaboration vs. collaboration

    - Collaboration: diverse interest groups that combines their human and material resources to effect a specific change the members are unable to bring about individually

    - The continuum of Collaboration that includes collaboration:

4. What We Learned From the Work of Others

<u>When is Collaboration a Good Idea?</u>

- *Not all relationships must be collaborative, nor should they strive to be.*
- Under some circumstances, it may be appropriate to establish a good communication plan.
- Under other circumstances, cooperation between two individuals may be sufficient.
- Perhaps coordination or partnership between two agencies to avoid duplication of effort is all that is required.

➢ *The general rule is that agencies should engage in collaboration when:*

✓ stakeholders have a common, long-term goal;

✓ are committed to working together as a team; and

✓ cannot achieve the goal more efficiently as independent entities.

4. What We Learned From the Work of Others

What can Collaborative efforts do well?

- Achieve more widespread reach than any single organization could.
- Accomplish objectives beyond the scope of any single organization.
- Bring greater credibility than individual organizations.
- Provide a forum for sharing information.
- Provide a range of advice and perspectives.
- Foster personal satisfaction and help members to understand their jobs in a broader perspective.
- Foster cooperation between grassroots organizations, community members, and/or diverse sectors of a large organization.

4. What We Learned From the Work of Others

What is the "continuum of collaboration"?

cooperation	coordination	collaboration
• Shorter-term, informal relations exist without clearly defined mission, structure, or planning effort • Information shared only about the subject at hand • Each organization retains authority and keeps resources separate • Virtually no risk exists	• More formal relationships and understanding of missions • Coordination focused around a specific effort or program • Planning, division of roles and opens communication channels between organizations • While authority still rests with individual organizations, everyone's risk increases • Power can be an issue. • Resources are made available to participants and rewards are shared	• A more durable and pervasive relationship • Participants bring separate organizations into a new structure with full commitment to a common mission • Requires comprehensive planning and well-defined communication channels operating on all levels • The collaborative *structure* determines authority; risk is greater because each partner contributes its resources and reputation • Power is an issue and can be unequal • Partners pool or jointly secure the resources, and share the results and rewards

4. What We Learned From the Work of Others

What are structures that facilitate Collaboration?

Advisory committees

Affiliation

Alliance

Coalition

Consortium

Commission

Co-sponsorship

Endorsement

Federation/Association

Joint Venture

Networks

Task forces

4. What We Learned From the Work of Others

What makes collaboration work?

Research indicates that the following factors influence the success of collaborations formed by nonprofit organizations, government agencies and others.

➤ Environment

➤ Membership Characteristics

➤ Process and Structure

➤ Communication

➤ Purpose

➤ Resources

4. What We Learned From the Work of Others

What makes collaboration work?

➢ Environment

  ✓ Collaborative group seen as legitimate leader

  ✓ Favorable political and social climate

➢ Membership Characteristics

  ✓ Mutual respect, understanding and trust

  ✓ Appropriate cross-section of members

  ✓ Members see collaboration as in their self-interest

  ✓ Ability to compromise

4. What We Learned From the Work of Others

What makes collaboration work?

➢ Process and Structure

✓ Members share a stake in both process and outcome

✓ Multiple layers of participation

✓ Flexibility

✓ Development of clear roles and policy guidelines

✓ Adaptability

✓ Appropriate pace of development

4. What We Learned From the Work of Others

What makes collaboration work?

➢ Communication

✓ Open and frequent communication

✓ Established informal relationships and communication links

➢ Purpose

✓ Concrete, attainable goals and objectives

✓ Shared vision

✓ Unique purpose

➢ Resources

✓ Sufficient funds, staff, materials and time

✓ Skilled leadership

5. How Does this Apply to Rainier Beach?

- Refer to the handout <u>Collaboration: What Makes It Work</u>

- Reflect on each factor we just discussed and Trang's presentation about Rainier Beach.

- Consider how the lessons from research and the experiences of others applies to Rainier Beach.

- Which "best practice" factors are especially pertinent to Rainier Beach NAC?

  - What factors are already in place here?

  - What community assets can we build on?

  - What factors will require attention to develop?

  - What factors will be especially challenging?

- Take a few minutes to record your thoughts on the handout.

- Pair up, and share your thoughts.

- Then we'll share back with the larger group.