

# N. Delridge Action Plan Phase 1 POEL Notes

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## Summary

Public Outreach and Engagement Liaison's met with members of their respective communities in small focus groups during the summer of 2014 to discuss similar topics as were considered at Delridge Day – We Love; We Need and Let's Work On.

### Love

- We would like to have restaurants, pho, supper market, store, bus station, swimming pool.
- We want to have restaurants and coffee shops. We can walk to Aki Beach.
- Public market where people can shop and buy stuff
- Some organization and small business
- Seattle police department on Delridge Way
- Van Lang Vietnamese Language School
- Vietnamese Cultural Center
- Delridge Day event
- Library

### Need

- Places for cultural festivals & celebrations
- More food and shops (culturally appropriate)
- Better roads & sidewalks
- Increased public safety
- There will be more police and safety around Delridge area.
- Better engagement and trust that interests will be incorporated during change.
- Recreation facilities & programs that respect their culture
- Cultural and Language classes for youth

### Work on

- Places for cultural festivals & celebrations
- More food and shops (culturally appropriate)
- Better roads & sidewalks
- Increased public safety
- Better engagement and trust that interests will be incorporated during change.
- Recreation facilities & programs that respect and sustain their culture

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## Vietnamese North Delridge Focus Group Report

- a) Focus group was held at the Vietnamese Cultural Center in North Delridge neighborhood. Meeting started with 15-minute around-the-table introduction of 16 attendees, informing participants the purpose of focus group, and ground rules. The next 90 minutes was focused on group discussion. David Goldberg from the City answered questions raised by participants. They also engaged in placing 1 “live/shop/gather” stickers on Delridge map at the end of the meeting.
- b) Sixteen participants were at least 45 - 75 years old. One participant was the founder of the Vietnamese Cultural Center (VCC). At least 5 attendees in the group engaged in VCC’s regular religious activities; one of them resides in Renton and volunteers at VCC on a regular basis. Other participants live/shop/socialize in North Delridge and White Center neighborhoods. A couple attendees were from Rainier Valley neighborhood.

**Question: What are the most important assets along in Delridge that support a healthy community? Assets can be physical such as sidewalks, parks, or social such as organizations etc.**

- **Police Department station** – I live in this neighborhood (near Delridge Way SW & SW Orchard St) for 37 years and it seems safer than years ago because the Police Dept. is in the area. Before there were gang groups so we reported to the police department. Now safety is much better because there’s a police station in the neighborhood.
- **Cultural community events/activities**
- **A multicultural senior center** that includes healthy living and social activities for elders.
- **Community education** on crime prevention and safety. This will help residents better understand the purpose of Neighborhood Block Watch activity and neighbors living in the same apartment unit.
- **A public library**

**Question: What physical or social aspects of Delridge have a negative impact on you, your family, and community?**

- **Sidewalks are narrower** because there are bicycle lanes now. This creates traffic jam during the weekdays, from White Center to West Seattle Bridge.
- We need **wider sidewalks for elders** to walk and to feel safer.
- **Safer neighborhood** from White Center to North Delridge (or West Seattle bridge)
- Effective method for **identifying/tracking evidence/incidents** related to safety issues
- Larger parking space to increase safety during bad weather at Vietnamese Cultural Center

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## Question: What opportunities, existing or within the next 5 years or so, can improve your community?

- **(Vietnamese) community center** that provides exercise/social activities (e.g. swimming pool, educational and community events) and activities for veterans to honor them.
- **A multicultural senior center** that includes healthy living and social activities for elders.
- **Community leaders** to advocate and support this neighborhood.
- **Sustain Van Lang Vietnamese Cultural School.** We need a stable, free of charge location to offer language services to students who wish to learn Vietnamese and English-as-a-Second Language. Currently, the school doesn't have a stable space to hold classes. We (volunteer teachers) are using Chief Sealth High School's space to host classes on a weekly basis.
- **Bigger parks** (on SW Brandon St & 26<sup>th</sup> Ave. SW) to allow more space for community events/activities and to look more welcoming because it's a small park now.

## **Delridge Day Notes**

A total of 15 Vietnamese community members were outreach to. Eight of them participated in Delridge Day at various time throughout the day. They spoke to City staff and reviewed the North Delridge map, wrote input on "I Love" and "We Need" blackboard, and took part in the photo booth activity.

Below are highlights from Delridge Day event:

### "I Love" Black Board Activity:

- Seattle police department on Delridge Way
- Van Lang Vietnamese Language School
- Vietnamese Cultural Center
- Delridge Day event

### "We Need" Black Board Activity:

- More crosswalks at stop lights
- Resources (e.g. funding/stable location) for Van Lang Vietnamese Language School
- Night markets
- Flea markets
- More community events
- shopping centers
- cultural grocery stores

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## **Cambodian Community Focus Group Notes**

1. What are the most important assets along in Delridge that support a healthy community? Assets can be physical such as sidewalks, parks, or social such as organizations etc...

- We would like to have restaurants, pho, supper market, store, bus station, swimming pool.
- Place where we can celebrate our festival and other cultural activities
- Sidewalk and park where we can bring our children and family to play and visit
- Public market where people can shop and buy stuff
- Some organization and small business
- We want to have restaurants and coffee shops. We can walk to Aki Beach.

2. What physical or social aspects of Delridge have a negative impact on you, your family and community?

- The road and sidewalks are dirty. There are old buildings that need to be fixed and cleaned. There are some drug activities. There is unsafe and people sell guns sometimes.

3. What opportunities, existing or within the next 5 years or so, can improve your community?

- The road should be more widely and more space. There will be more police and safety around Delridge area. Big building that can attract more tourists. We hope that we can walk, see view, and more people walking along the side walk of the road. We hope that we will not have any casino around this area.

4. What role do you see yourself playing in the community to create a healthier community, either as an individual or as a part of an organization? Who should we be talking to about this project?

- We should talk to more people in the community, to the leader, and mayor.

5. Do you feel that the preliminary issues are important?

- Yes, it is important because this is a big project that need so much involvement from the communities as well as budget. We are worrying that it will cost a lot of money but we are so excited to know that there are some new developments around Delridge area.

(A) participants were enjoyed during the discussion. They more concern about the budget and drug activities.

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## **Somalia Focus Group**

7/26/2014

North Delridge resident, Zamzam Derieh, was excited about the project and is looking forward to the focus group. She had questions regarding the project (was curious about why the City wants to carry out this project), and agreed that community input from Somalis would be very helpful, since the number is growing. Zamzam helped me understand that most of the families in the apartment complex would like to have the focus group closer, or even in the apartment building, since transportation can be an issue. Zamzam is willing to join the committee that is being created for the North Delridge Action Plan

7/29/2014

Sheikh Shukri is the Imam (preacher) of the Al-Tawheed Mosque. He wants the City to be more involved with the immigrant and refugee community in a more pragmatic manner. He also mentioned that there needs to be more programs for younger children in the area.

7/31/2014

All residents agreed that voicing out concerns is very important, and that they should partake in important discussions. However, some mentioned that the Somali community lags behind in being involved in important discussions, even though it's the largest East African population in Seattle.

7/31/2014

The youth I interviewed said that they would like more programs that are "cool," so as to have more things to do around the area. They agreed to come to Delridge Day, and be involved activities provided.

8/7/2014

**Focus Group Notes-** One issue that the attendees (majority women) specified is that they need a swimming pool area or gym that respects their cultural and religious values, i.e. being separate from men and having a better sense of privacy. In addition, they said that they're willing to work with the community but they don't feel like their voices will be heard, i.e. they're not well equipped as other groups that clearly voice their concerns in the community. They would love to have cultural classes for their youth, teaching Somali and making sure that they find people who can help their children integrate into the American culture rather than assimilating. Sahra Mohamed, a parent in the community, mentioned that they feel comfortable in joining community discussions if there was trust between them and those who are trying to bring changes (she felt that her opinion wouldn't be taken into consideration). The reason why Sahra mentioned that is because she thinks that the community outreach done is a one-way factor, rather than something that involves everyone.

With regards to the physical and social aspects of Delridge, the group mentioned that there are not a lot of youth programs available. They would love to keep their children busy, so that they don't get influenced by negative peers. Citizenship and ESL classes should be brought to the area, since there are so many families in need of such services.

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The group mentioned that opportunities that can help their community (existing or within the next 5 years or so) would be having better low-income housing for recently arrived families, better playgrounds, better or more organizations that serve can cater to most of their needs, better places for families to gather, etc. During this discussion, they kept coming back to the point that they would love to find a place or be given a space where they can teach their youth the Somali language, and this is due to the fact that they firmly believe that their children are slowly losing their culture.

They also mentioned that safety is an issue that needs to be tackled, transportation needs to be improved, and they hope that the city can create better parks.