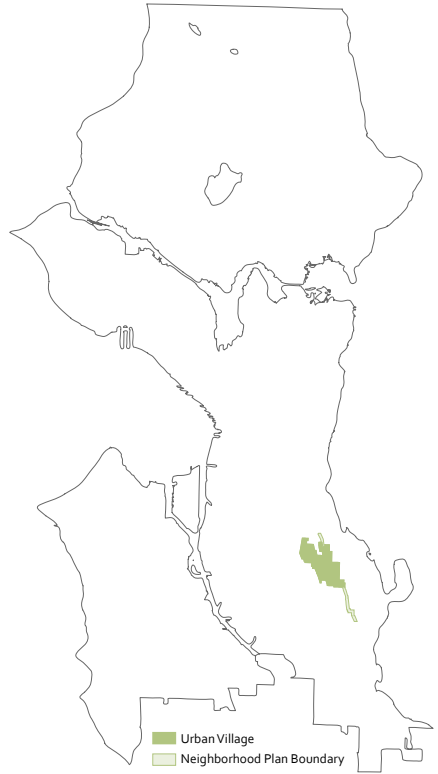


COLUMBIA CITY • HILLMAN CITY • GENESEE

Who did we hear from?

There was a greater variety of opinions expressed online (347 respondents) than in at the neighborhood discussion table (~30 attendees), as would be expected from a greater sample size. Overall, the majority of respondents both in-person and online concurred on the biggest issues related to the plan including the growth and revitalization of Columbia City's downtown core, the concurrent lack of such in Hillman City and Genesee, and a positive response to the light rail. Participants in the neighborhood discussion hewed more closely to answering the actual questions asked, especially related to achievement of the plan goals and the format of the status update.



What did we hear?

- Columbia City has seen dramatic economic growth and development; Hillman City and Genesee have not.
- Crime is either worse or at a minimum not improving. There is great overall concern regarding public safety.
- The light rail is a wonderful asset but many people find it inaccessible; cuts in bus service, a lack of feeder routes to the stations, and a lack of development around the stations or station placement were all seen as barriers (no station in Hillman City).
- Influx of families and children was seen as positive; demographic effects of gentrification and loss of people of color and lower-income residents were seen as negative for the community by both long-term residents and new residents who cited diversity as a reason for moving to the area. Residents want to maintain affordability in the community.
- The Columbia City Farmers' Market was singled out as a major community asset worth preserving. Poor schools were singled out as a large community issue.
- Transportation patterns outside of light rail are not seen as working on many levels. Rainier is dangerous, too busy for peds, retards growth opportunities in business districts, and lacks safe cycling pathways. MLK is fairly barren and not pedestrian-friendly. East-west routes are poor and getting worse because of Metro changes.

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?



People thought there was positive change regarding economic development Columbia City. Respondents are pleased with the small-town feel and character of Columbia City, its walkability, and the success of small businesses there. Overall, people are happy that light rail has gone in, though the lack of development around the stations is of concern. There is shared disappointment in the state of the business districts in Hillman City and Genesee and a feeling that Rainier is neither a safe transit corridor nor conducive to the growth of distinct, walkable, diverse neighborhoods. Genesee did not receive much attention by either group, in fact, the neighborhood plan seems very fractured—Columbia City getting and receiving a lot of attention; Hillman City wanting attention and having engaged supporters but not seeing growth; Genesee not receiving much advocacy in this process and not seeing growth that people like.

What are the differences between the responses?

Many more online responses commented on concerns over public safety—drugs, prostitution, property crimes, gang violence, youth violence—and their effect on development, consumer patterns, transportation use, and feeling of community. Scores of online respondents commented on demographic changes related to race and income, specifically the loss of lower-income and non-white residents being an overall loss for the community. The word “gentrification” appears frequently. Influx of families and children was mentioned in a positive light. Not mentioned in the neighborhood discussion, public schools were also mentioned as needing to be a priority for the community; more people wanted parking or feeder routes to light rail and opposed changes to bus service; townhouses were singled out for being shoddy and ugly. The Farmers’ Market was hailed as a wonderful asset and residents are concerned it find a permanent home.

In their own words...

How has your neighborhood changed?

It’s population is denser & more diverse, more shops and more types of businesses. It is safer with less drug and prostitution activity. Less litter. More expensive to live here. Light rail now accessible to me.

Significantly in some ways; not enough in others. We have a great “butcher, baker, and candlestick maker” kind of community, with the butcher, bakery, movie theater, library, cafes, restaurants, etc. Safety is still an issue; it’s still too car-oriented; there are still too many blocks w/o sidewalks and curbs. Also, I’m looking forward to more mixed-use development around the COlumbia City light rail station.