

The Next Door Listening Sessions: Barriers to Services

Summary Report August 2021

Title: Klickitat County Listening Session Latino Community



Summary Report:

The community members that attended this focus group were thrilled to be at this meeting conducted in Spanish. Most of them had received services like rent and energy assistance and food from the food bank at WAGAP. They have also had good experience from the Klickitat County School district where they have always feel respected and also supported during this pandemic. One of the biggest barriers they have when receiving services is the language mostly when trying to get services at the DMV office, Police, or to obtain documents such as an ID. Latino youth was one of their main concerns; they would like to see more community programs to empower Latino youth leadership and indoor or covered recreation spaces where they can play during bad weather. Another big concern was housing, rent is so expensive in this area and they could never afford to save money to one day own their own house. There was also a safety concern in some parts of the roads in White Salmon and a lack of information to register to receive emergency notifications and other community events.

Listening Session Notes:

1. *What services do you use in Klickitat County?*

- When the packing house burned down I got help with rent from WAGAP
- Schools
- Food Bank
- Food from the schools
- Police
- Public Schools
- Food Bank

2. *Are there services that you want or need but haven't been able to use in Klickitat County? Can you give examples?*

- We need support programs on how to own a house. For example, there is a program from California I know of where you can build your own house, and the mortgage payment will be base on how much you make. Where I currently live I pay \$1750 of rent there is nothing affordable rent is the high everywhere.
- A covered space where community members, in general, could practice sports or hang out during the rainy and winter seasons.
- Latino Leadership school programs to boost youth creativity so they can dream about going to the university.
- Dance programs for elderly
- Bike parks such as the skate park in Bingen

- It is difficult for me to get to DMV services due to transportation issues and also I have to ask for at least half of a day off from work and sometimes I don't get permission
- We need more things to do for kids like a theater
- English Classes
- Mental health programs (how to manage stress, depression, anxiety)
- We need a place where we can have a little garden a lot of us live in apartments where we don't have space to plant anything
- It will be good if the traffics signs on the loop trail road can be changed I have been walking there and there are very dangerous spots. Sometimes my kids want to go with me but I don't take them because cars drive to fast and there is a lot of narrow spaces
- We need better traffic signs where I live too. I live behind the high school and some of the teenagers are always speeding. There should be School zone signs like on the main Street.

3. *What are some of the barriers that stop you from getting these services?*

- One difficulty is that the closest DMV is in Stevenson, I have to go all the way there to get my stickers
- Language
- Another barrier is that we need to ask for half of the day off from work at least
- Or the sometimes we found out about events after they already happened
- Feelings of discrimination can be a barrier sometimes if we don't feel welcomed.

4. *How did you find out about the services that are available? How should organizations let people know about the services that they provide?*

- I think you could create a Facebook page or a group instead of a flyer the way we could find out the better since we are on our phones all the time
- Like the existing White Salmons Happenings group but in Spanish
- Emergency notifications: we don't have this information
- When the fire by the funeral home in White Salmon happened. I received text from my friends in Hood River they found out faster than me what was happening because they are registered in an emergency system a lot of us didn't know existed.
- Through text
- They should give the information to people like you that know most of the Latino community
- I got a phone call to my landline but it was in English
- Ubaldo Hernandez has been trying to notify us via text about things happening in White Salmon
- I think facebook is a good source of communication

5. *What was it like when you first went into get some of these services? Is there anything that could be changed to make this process easier or more welcoming?*

- I have heard is very difficult to obtain an ID because people don't know what documents they need
 - There was this time where I was driving to Bingen and a truck was driving up to White Salmon at a high velocity and the police follow me and gave me a speeding ticket when at was driving at the speed limit, but my car was full of Mexicans I have always thought the that's the reason why he stop me.
 - There was this other time that police were looking for somebody and they knock very loud at my door and the truth is that I got scared
 - There should be more bilingual personal in places offering support or services.
6. *When you get services, do you feel that your culture is respected by the staff? Are there examples of when you felt respected and welcomed? What did that look like?*
- Sometimes I feel like some cashiers at Harvest Market can be rude
 - Supervisors at some local businesses don't treat their employees right
 - I have felt some discrimination from a doctor and a receptionist my clinic
 - I had a bad experience at a hospital when dealing with an emergency. I don't know if it was because of a language barrier or the color of my skin
 - Thank God I have always been treated with respect including when I when to renew my driver's license
 - In clinics and banks I usually feel welcomed
7. *Have you experienced discrimination while asking about or receiving services in Klickitat County? What did that look like?*
- There was this time when I was looking for housing and after I completed it the landlord saw that I was Latina and told me she was not going to rent me the apartment because we the Mexicans said it will be only 6 people living in it and later there will be 12
 - No, not recently
8. *Are there other ideas you want to share about how services can be made available to you and others in your community?*
- Yes, there should be more people that speak Spanish to help the ones that don't
 - Yes, we need more housing for people the don't have where to live or a job can't stay while finding a job. I thought there was a place like that but I don't think there is.
 - I think the first thing will be to find out about all the services we have and then how to obtain them. We could use help with that, especially in Spanish.
9. *Thank you for sharing today. What is the best way for the voice of the community to continue to be heard?*

- There should be better internet services in rural areas like Husum and BZ corner because our kids need it right now for school.
- We are the ones that live in this community and we should get together and attend community meetings at the city hall to have our voice heard more.
- To recruit people and to continue doing these meetings with you guys. It is great to be asked for our perspective and experiences.