The Road to Engagement:
Moving Towards an Active Neighborhood

Winter 2016

Student Researchers: Luwam Alemayehu, Kristine Aramaki, Cierra Brown, Jessa Cameron, Adel Clifton, Zixuan Guo, Hannah Lee, Mengdi Liu and Sylvia Na

Instructor: ManChui Leung

UNIVERSITY *of* WASHINGTON

W

Community Engagement

Photo Credits: Tina Brigit @FN_TinaBrigit

> *Activating* social ties among residents to *achieve collective* goals

> Collective efficacy ➡ Community Engagement

> RB has moderately high levels of collective efficacy but lower levels of engagement

Collective Efficacy

Theoretical Framework

What explains the gap between collective efficacy and community engagement?

> **Capacity for change**

−**Traditional and Social Resources**

> **Readiness for change**

−**Sense of Community and Feelings of trust**

> **Awareness**

−**Getting informed**

−**Visibility of neighborhood progress**

Foster-Fishman et. al. 2007

Research Questions

> What kind of traditional or social *resources facilitate* neighborhood engagement in Rainier Beach?

> Do Rainier Beach Residents have a *sense of community* that *encourages* neighborhood engagement?

> What forms of *visible* neighborhood progress in Rainier Beach *motivate* resident engagement?

W

Methodology

>**Street Survey**
- o 5 Hotspots: Safeway, Rainier and Henderson, Rose Street, Light Rail Station, Lake Washington Apartments
- o January 29 - February 21

>**Focus Group**
- o In collaboration with Rainier Beach Action Coalition
- o 1 focus group completed
- o February 16 @ RB Library

Measures

> **Community engagement**
- o Attending events, Volunteering, Participating in neighborhood groups, Attending town halls/ rallies

> **Resources**
- o Satisfaction with resources, Accessibility

> **Sense of Community**
- o Trust, Feeling at home

> **Visibility**
- o Ways to be informed, Awareness of neighborhood progress

Demographics

> **Survey Demographics (n=112)**
  - 57:43 Female to Male ratio
  - Average year of residency: 11.9 years
  - Largest age group sampled (60%): 26 - 45 years
  - 46% African-American, 16% White, 14% API
  - Majority (72%) US-born

> **Focus Group Demographics (n=11)**
  - 7:4 Female to Male ratio
  - Average year of residency: 7 years
  - Mean age 30, range 16 to 67
  - 8 African, 2 Other
  - 1 U.S. born
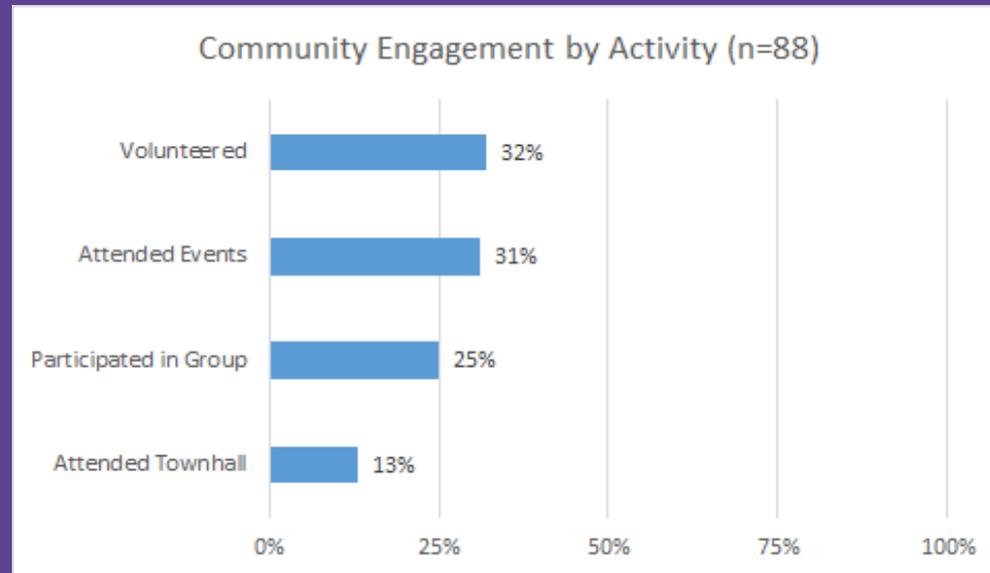
W

Findings

>**Community Engagement**

>**Resources**

>**Sense of Community**

>**Visibility**

W

Community Engagement

> **Community Engagement = 47%**

Community Engagement by Activity (n=88)

Activity	Percentage
Volunteered	32%
Attended Events	31%
Participated in Group	25%
Attended Townhall	13%

> **Key demographic differences:**
>> –Length of Residency
>> –Immigrant Status

Resources

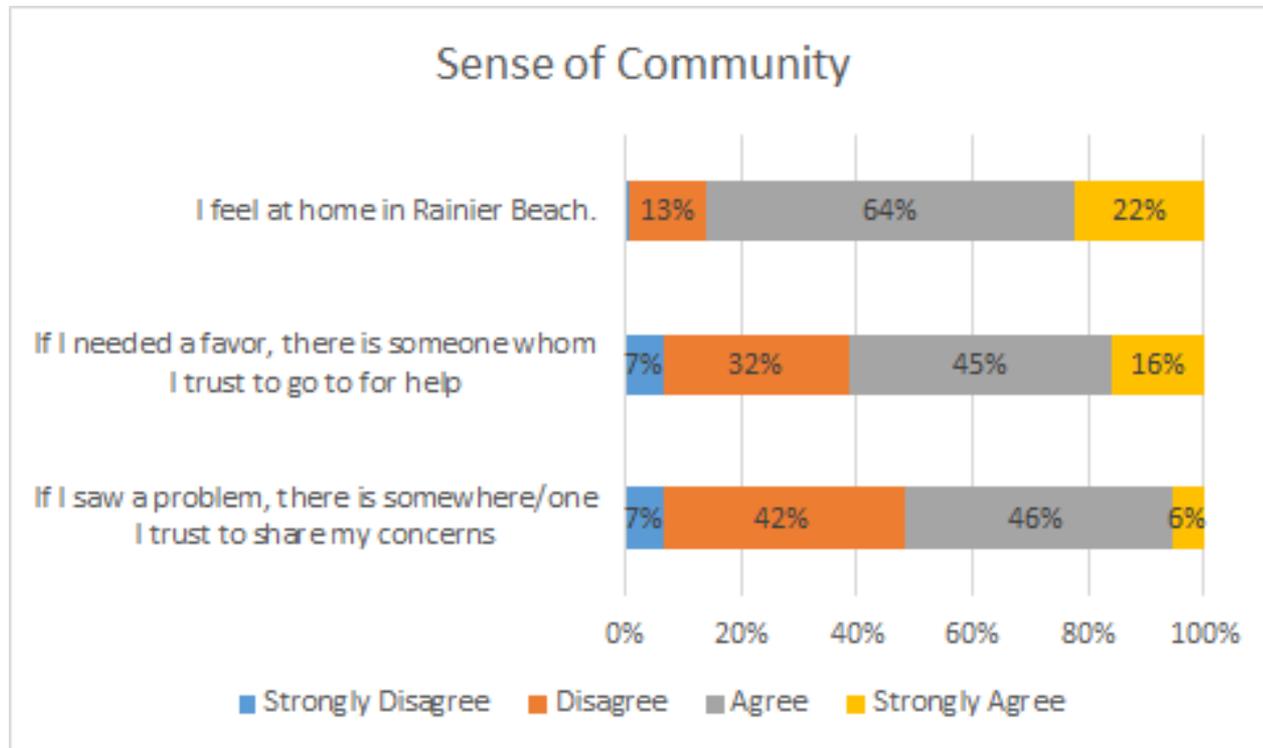> **Residents/neighbors (36%) and Services/facilities (27%) most important**

> **Making engagement more accessible:**
> - Weekends (22%), childcare (15%), job skills (14%) and friends/family (12%)
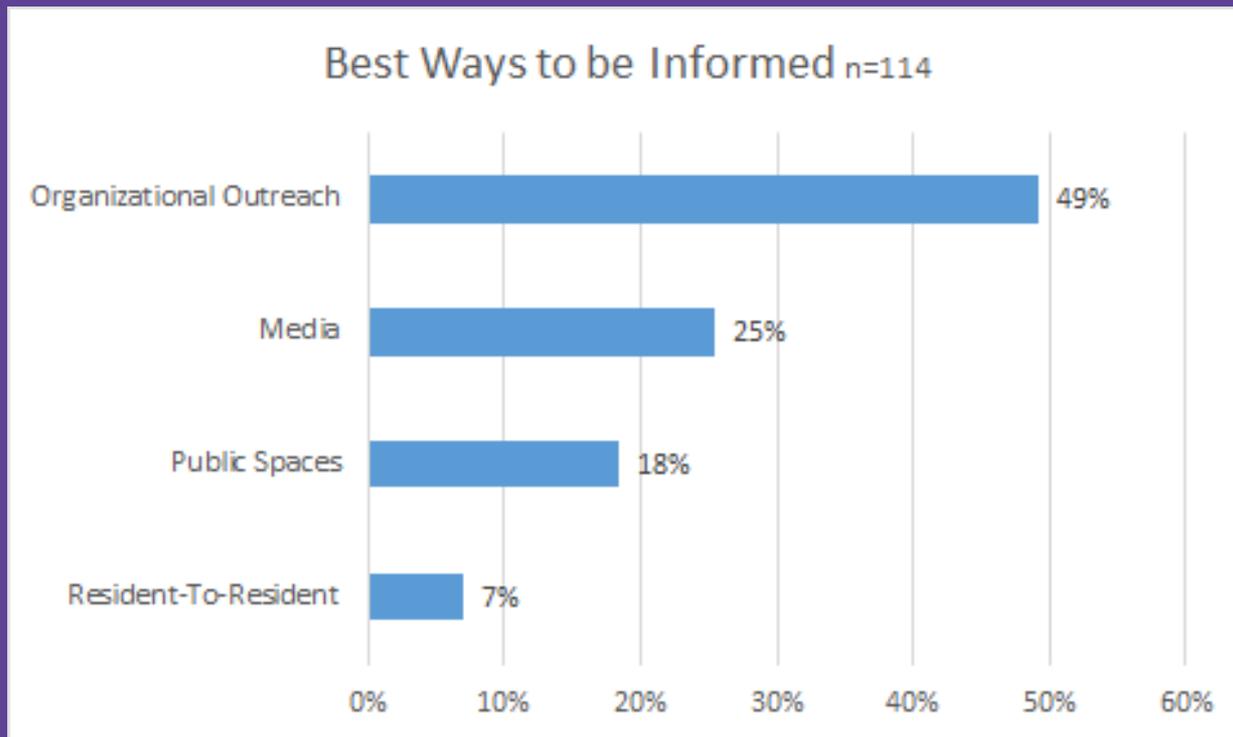
Sense of Community

> "I feel I am connected to the community because I am from the Somali community. I grew up here."
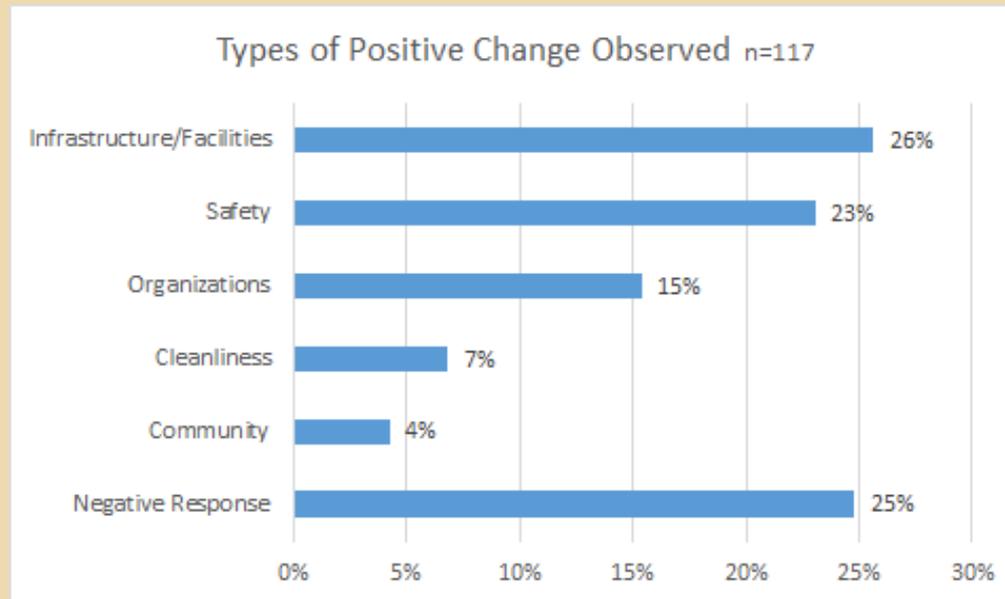> Moderately high sense of community

Sense of Community

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel at home in Rainier Beach.		13%	64%	22%
If I needed a favor, there is someone whom I trust to go to for help	7%	32%	45%	16%
If I saw a problem, there is somewhere/one I trust to share my concerns	7%	42%	46%	6%

Visibility

> Residents most value direct communication from community organizations

Best Ways to be Informed n=114

Category	Percentage
Organizational Outreach	49%
Media	25%
Public Spaces	18%
Resident-To-Resident	7%

Visibility

> **Most aware of changes that are physically visible**

Types of Positive Change Observed n=117

| Type	Percentage
Infrastructure/Facilities	26%
Safety	23%
Organizations	15%
Cleanliness	7%
Community	4%
Negative Response	25%

> **Observations (57%) & public facilities (17%) most frequent way residents learned about positive changes**

Demographic Patterns: Resources

Less satisfaction with resources among smaller racial and ethnic groups with more immigrants
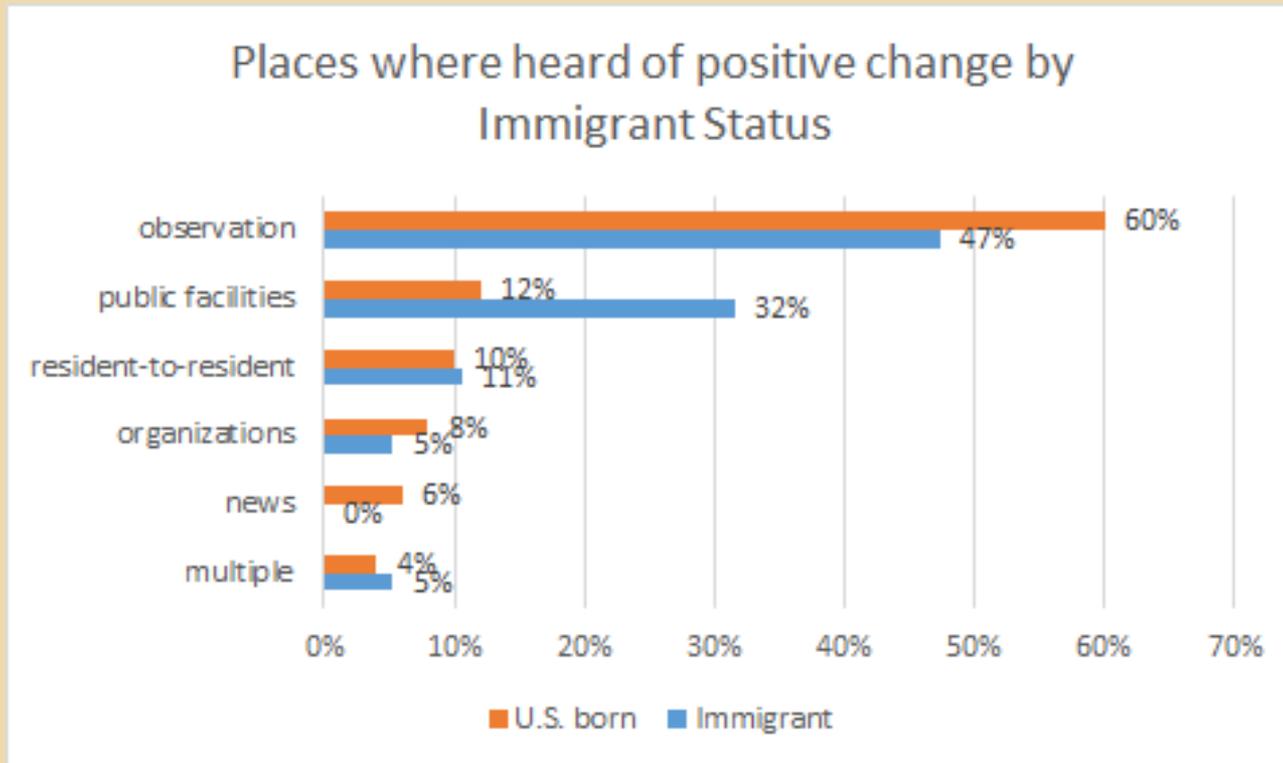

RB has the services/resources I need to participate
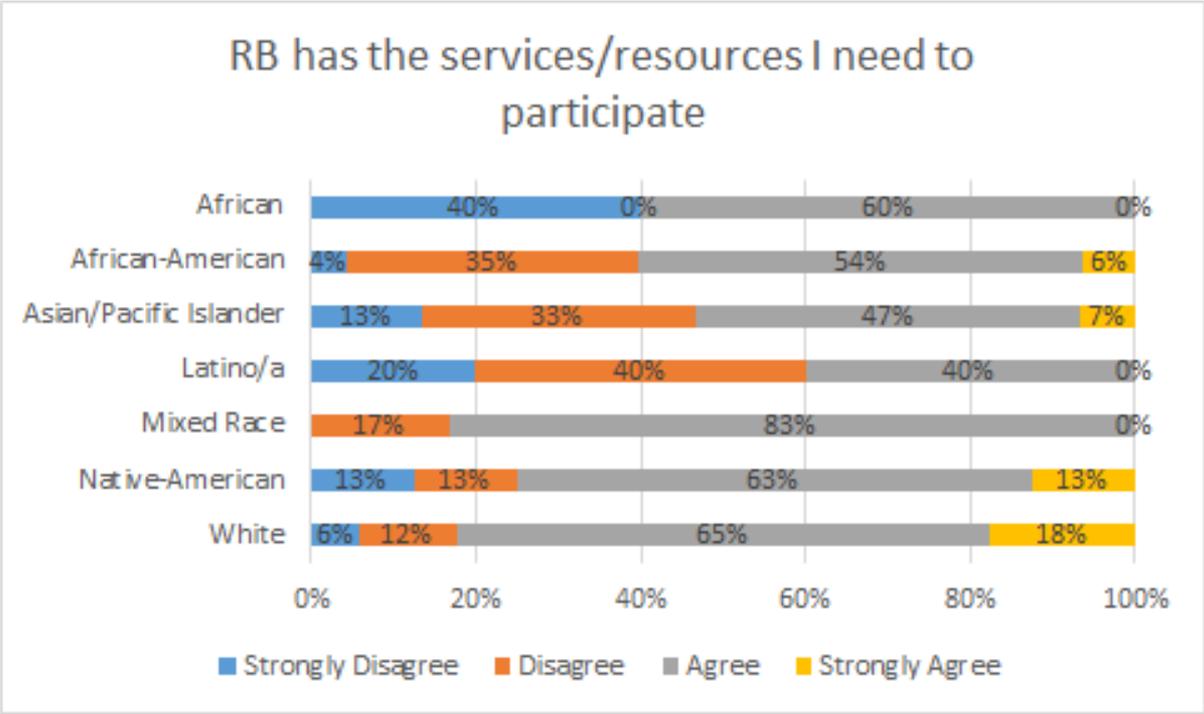
Demographic Patterns: Sense of Community

Decreasing feelings of neighborhood trust, with increasing age

There is someone/place I trust to go to if I saw a neighborhood problem by Age Group
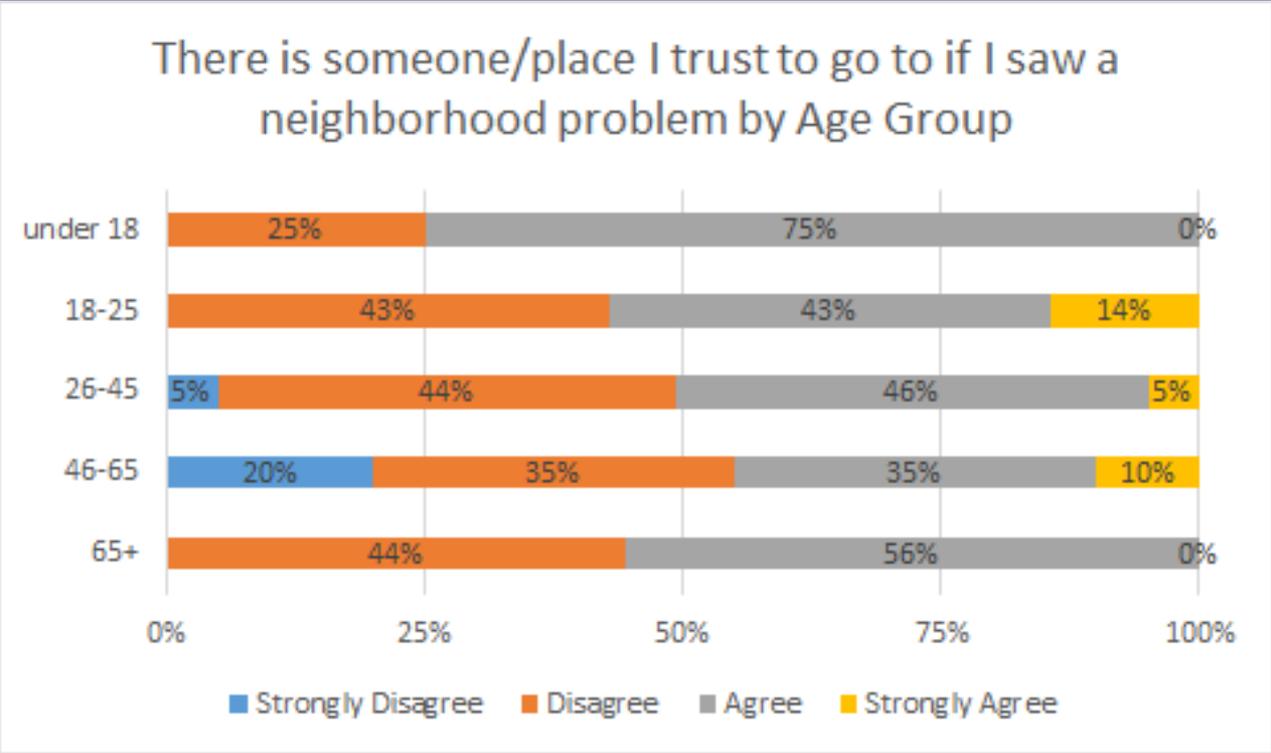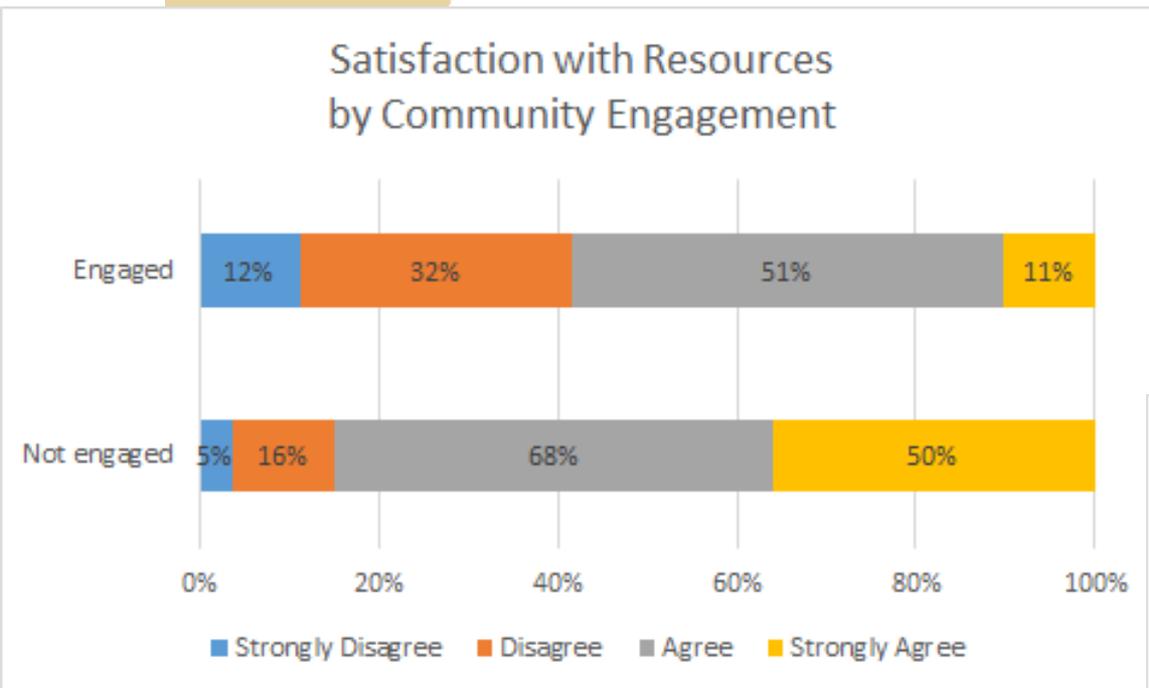
Demographic Patterns: Visibility

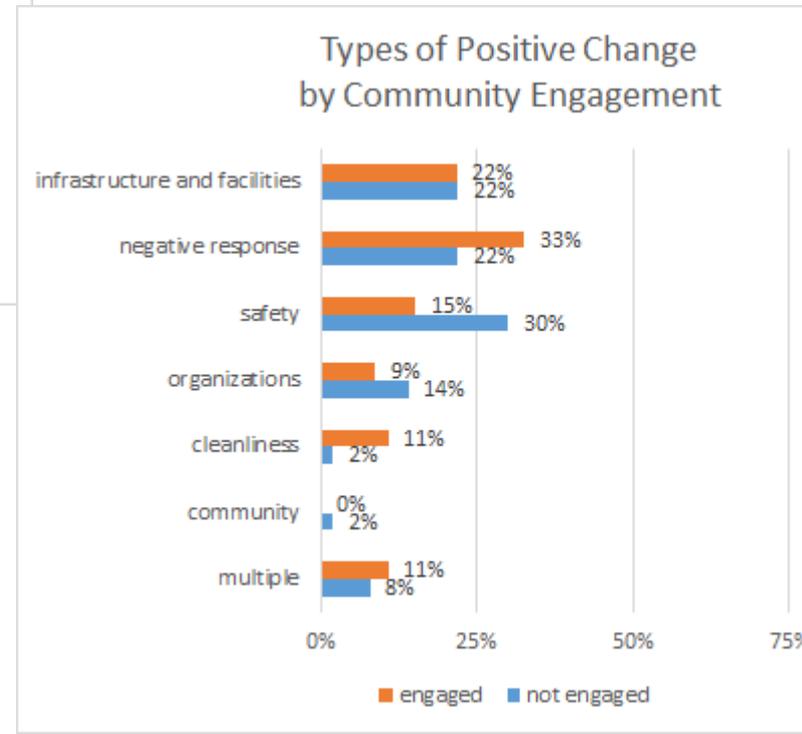**Immigrants more likely to notice change through public facilities than U.S. born**

Relationship btwn Efficacy & Engagement

Satisfaction with Resources by Community Engagement

Engaged	12% | 32% | 51% | 11%
Not engaged	5% | 16% | 68% | 50%

Legend: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree

Types of Positive Change by Community Engagement

	engaged	not engaged
infrastructure and facilities	22%	22%
negative response	33%	22%
safety	15%	30%
organizations	9%	14%
cleanliness	11%	2%
community	0%	2%
multiple	11%	8%

>**Correlation Analysis**
- Direction = Mixed
- Strength = None to Weak

Summary of Findings

Moderately high levels:
- **Use and satisfaction of neighborhood resources**
- **Sense of community**
- **Noticing positive change**
- **Community engagement**

No/Weak Correlation between Collective Efficacy and Community Engagement measures
People are connected to the neighborhood in positive ways, but not always in ways of active engagement

W

Discussion

> **Engagement Patterns**

  – **Community Engagement, Length of Residency**

    and Negative Responses
    – **Community vs. Neighborhood Engagement: Race, Ethnicity and Immigrants**

> **Opportunities for Organizations**

W

Strengths and Limitations

> **Limitations**

- convenience sampling limits generalizability

- overrepresentation of some demographic groups

- researcher bias

> **Strengths**

- Multiple methods (survey, focus group)

- Various ways to analyze data

- Could compare to previous "Making Connections" study

- Gained insight into Rainier Beach community

Recommendations to Increase Engagement

Increase Traditional and Social Resources by:

1. Building more connections and collaboration with local facilities and services

2. Increasing outreach to immigrants as well as residents in search of job skills for neighborhood engagement efforts

3. Continue expanding accessibility to RBAC's neighborhood engagement opportunities

W

Recommendations

Foster a Sense of Community by:

4. Focusing on engagement efforts with residents who have lived in the neighborhood for 2-5 years.

5. Continue building programs and events that are youth focused

6. Creating more volunteer opportunities with RBAC

W

Recommendations

Increase visibility of positive neighborhood progress by:

7. Increasing organizational outreach by direct email to residents

8. Creating more visible and physical information about neighborhood events and updates

9. Increasing awareness about positive neighborhood changes

Acknowledgements

>**Rainier Beach residents**

>**Rainier Beach Action Coalition**
>Patrice Thomas, Gregory Davis, Guyanthony Parramore, Robert Rosenberger

>**UW Department of Sociology**

>**A Beautiful Safe Place for Youth**

W

Thank you!

Questions?