

1. What do you think about when you see the information provided tonight? Is there anything significant/interesting?

- High percentage of white population was surprising to some
- Only 6,000 available jobs for so many people looking for employment (much more demand than supply, like many other needs in the area)
 - Side note on some of the stats: although there are these jobs available, the jobs most likely go to people who already have jobs (need to have a job to have experience to get into the next job)
- Federal Poverty Level not adjusting was interesting since minimum wage increases and updating exempt rulings and salary requirements have been made in Washington
 - Push to maintain 200% FPL after COVID ends (at the very least, this will remain at 125%)
- Based on the survey results, do the community block grants guidelines still meet the needs for the community?
 - Some changes were made to the survey based on feedback from staff (this survey is different than the last survey)
 - Notice will be put out when changes are made
- Racial disparity was interesting to see, especially since 80% of the survey responding to the survey were white
 - Interested to see what the survey results are for other races, not just the white population
 - POCs are underrepresented when it comes to accessing services
 - Attempting outreach to gather better data from everyone
 - Partnering with 100+ agencies to get the survey out to more people
 - New partnerships with “By and For” organizations
 - More information will be provided in the actual needs assessment – the slides are condensed information
- Surprised that the cost of childcare is not factored in with any of the COVID times
 - Families are struggling with work/housing and childcare – which do they choose?
- Surprised by the number of women who responded to the survey than men
 - Women are much more likely to respond to a general survey than men (this is the trend in previous surveys as well)

2. What do you think are the causes of poverty in our community?

- Rent
- Mental Health
- Incomes
- Addiction
- Houselessness/homelessness
 - People are not moving out
- Credit card debt

- Are credit companies allowing more credit, or are people overextending their credit?
- Nothing to do except go to the Casino
- Disparity in wages
- Lack of access to education
- Hard to break the cycle if you come from a poor household with no privilege (difficult to move up in economic class)
- Cycle of recidivism within the jail system
- Lack of equity necessary to succeed
- Cost of childcare

3. What programs/services do you think will support people struggling financially?

- Getting an education
- Trifecta of housing, education, and food seem to be the foundation before one can get out of poverty
- People need to learn life skills/independent living skills to succeed (i.e. how to pay your bills, how to do your taxes, job skills, etc.)
- Opportunities for high school students to go to trade schools and not necessarily to college
- Where services are located: need to be closer together for ease of accessing (one-stop shop)
- Guiding/navigating through how to access the systems and different programs to prevent barriers
 - 211 Info works to organize the different programs and how to access them (they provide the information, but cannot guide you through the forms)
- Giving people money (such as Corona virus relief funds, etc.) – how do we re-distribute some of the wealth in our country?
- Affordable housing and jobs
- SSDI does not provide enough money to get out of poverty
- Continue programs like SNAP benefits, TANF, etc.

4. Is there anything you think is missing from the information/discussion provided tonight? Is there anything else you would like to add?

- The needs for internet and change shortages are not listed here
 - How are people going to do laundry with no change or do schoolwork with children at home without internet?
- What is the definition of “access” within the survey?
 - Define this term within the PPT or the full results
- Instead of asking what their need is, maybe ask “what needs to change in your viewpoint?”
 - There will be focus groups for those who responded to the survey to focus more on this type of question to facilitate the change

- Asking those who have gotten themselves out of poverty how they did it – solicit their feedback and see what works and what doesn't

1. What do you think about when you see the information provided tonight? Is there anything significant/interesting?

- Shocking to see so many people in poverty in Clark County
 - POCs overrepresented in the community and are underrepresented in service access
 - Those who are hearing impaired have an increased difficulty with masks due to COVID since they cannot read people's lips
- Shocking fact was that most people who are living in poverty are also working
 - Must double up on jobs to afford living, or they will be faced with challenges affording anything
 - Many people cannot afford many resources in the community, especially low-income and single-parent households (do not qualify or not enough to get by)
- Getting housing is an incredible barrier in the community, especially since you must prove 3x the monthly rent and rent prices are increasing
 - This also becomes a problem when people need to utilize childcare

2. What do you think are the causes of poverty in our community?

- No income or low-income (non-livable)
 - Disability does not provide enough to afford anything – rent is far too expensive to afford rent with only this as an income
- Cost of living is increasing
 - Even with a livable wage and a degree, nothing is affordable
- Cost of renting is too high
 - Even people with higher wages with well-paying jobs are seeing difficulty in finding housing
 - We are on the outskirts of Portland and housing is increasing there, which is pushing people to the outskirts of Clark County to find cheaper housing
- Medical services
- Cost of education is expensive (student loan payments are high)
- Hard to get out of the cycle of poverty
- Not a lot of assistance for certain utilities, such as using propane for heating

3. What programs/services do you think will support people struggling financially?

- Affordable childcare and other ideas that allows parents to be independent
- Affordable housing
- Financial assistance/literacy classes (i.e., learning how to budget, pay bills, find ways to increase finances and assets, etc.)
- More focus on education to ensure everyone is literate (to reduce the criminal cycle)
- Limiting how much rent per year can be increased
- Flexible funding for serving folk when they tell us what we need as a service provider to help them with that (no barriers for this funding)
 - Letting client voices inform how we serve them in the best way possible

- Addressing equity with BIPOC communities since they are disproportionately represented
 - Better outreach for BIPOC communities so they are aware of the services available
 - Ensuring programs and services are culturally specific to the communities they are serving
- Free education skills with no college necessary (how to use Zoom, basic skills to function independently), paid internship learning for how to open and run businesses, free entrepreneurship, etc.

4. Is there anything you think is missing from the information/discussion provided tonight? Is there anything else you would like to add?

- Hearing impaired are struggling with COVID – difficult to access and receive services and can no longer read lips due to the masks (cannot understand the environment)
 - Clear masks would help with this for lip reading purposes, especially in a hospital environment

A Portrait of Clark County, Needs of a Community Meeting Notes

December 3, 2020

Question #1: What do you think about when you see the information provided tonight? Is there anything significant/interesting?

- Surprised to see that Clark County is made up of such a large white population but most of us are still in poverty
- Appreciate perspective of those living with experiences such as homelessness
- Frustration when you see groups that are not receiving support services and inability to access them
- People living in poverty are working - a lot of people are doubling up to afford to live and if they are not working, it's even more of a struggle. So many people out of work right now due to COVID.
- Concerning that cost of living is so high or incomes are so low, or combo of both
- Single parents make too much to qualify for assistance but can't afford many things and the numbers proved that point and spoke to a lot of low-income and single parent families that can't access the resources to have a high quality standard of living. Resources they do get may not be sufficient. To get housing you have to have 3x income - actually getting housing is a huge barrier.

Question #2: What do you think are the causes of poverty in our community?

- No or low income - what is causing that situation? Living on disability but can't afford anything.
- Increased cost of living
- Rental rates
- Majority of income goes to paying rent
- Medical expenses
- Border town with PDX - suburb of PDX
- Heat/utility - no help
- College tuition to help get a better job

Question #3: What programs/services do you think will support people struggling financially?

- Affordable childcare
- Financial literacy - budget, ways to increase finances
- Literacy
- Limit rent increases
- Affordable housing
- Flexible funding - letting client experiences and voices inform how we serve them in the best way possible
- Address equity with BIPOC communities - disproportionately represented
- Culturally specific to communities they are serving
- Paid internships, job training

Question #4: Is there anything you think is missing from this discussion?

- Difficult to understand when I go out as a deaf person because I can't understand people with masks as I'm not able to read lips