



City of Tukwila Community Connectors: 2016 Final Report

2016 marks the fourth year that Community Connectors have worked with the City of Tukwila to engage historically underrepresented communities in city planning processes. Community Connectors are demonstrated leaders from their communities, recruited and contracted by the City and nonprofit partners Global to Local and Forterra to be trained on specific issue areas in an effort to engage more diverse communities on issues of importance.

This program's success continues to be a collaborative partnership effort between:

- City of Tukwila: Rachel Bianchi & Mia Navarro
- Forterra: Lindsay Fromme Hanna & Dre Anderson
- Global to Local: Allison Mountjoy & Virginia Herrera-Paramo
- Community Connectors representing the following communities: Burmese, Somali, Latino, and Amharic/Arabic



Goals and Activities

The 2016 Community Connector program was focused on providing leadership training opportunities, increasing program visibility and accessibility, trainings on topic areas, hosting a community meeting and a post-project evaluation.

To accomplish these goals, the Community Connectors completed the following activities:

- 3/21/2016 – Tukwila City Council Meeting
- 4/28/2016 – Career Day at Foster High School
- 9/21/2016 – Disaster Preparedness with Tukwila Fire Station 51
- 11/9/2016 – Leadership Training
- 11/30/2016 – Training & Surveying Somali Businesses
- 12/7/2016 – End of Year Evaluation & 2017 Work Planning

Beyond the activities completed above, Forterra and the City of Tukwila worked to complete a Community Connectors Toolkit, which provides an overview of the program and examples of how city departments can use the program to increase inclusivity and diversity in their community engagement.

Summary

Overall, the Community Connectors and program partners achieved the goals identified for the 2016 program year. Staff transition at the City of Tukwila and Forterra led to a slight shift in activities, for example a community meeting was not held. However, the Connector's scope of work was expanded to new activities, such as surveying Somali businesses. Below are summaries of 2016 activities conducted:

Tukwila City Council Meeting

Community Connectors and City of Tukwila's now former Community Engagement Manager, Joyce Trantina, attended and presented at a City Council meeting focused on providing information about the Connector program to new City Council members and the newly elected Mayor of Tukwila. Three connectors attended and shared their personal experience as a Connector and expressed why the program is important to the community. These presentations helped increase visibility of the program with elected officials, with the hope that the program will remain a priority for the City.

Career Fair

The City of Tukwila and the Tukwila School District hosted their fifth annual Career Day on April 28th 2016 at Foster High School. The Community Connectors attended the career fair to increase visibility of the Connector program and to disseminate information back to the greater community about the career fair.

Disaster Preparedness Training

Safety is an issue of concern frequently raised by community members, and this training was intended to provide resources on disaster preparedness to build on 2015 trainings focused on safety. The training

was held at Tukwila Fire Station 51, where the Connectors got to meet the new acting Fire Chief, tour the facility (for most it was a first) and learn key concepts in case a disaster strikes. After discussing the differences between emergencies and disasters, Connectors learned how to be prepared with a disaster plan and survival kit. With an emphasis on affordability, a demonstration was provided for how to make a disaster survival kit for under \$10 while utilizing common items found in the average home. Following the training, the Connectors were provided a stipend for sharing the information they received with 3-5 additional members of their communities. Kit items such as survival blankets, flash lights, and other items were provided to the Connectors to share with community members. Feedback following the training included the recommendation that the training should be provided to other community groups, such as the mosque or churches.

Leadership Development

A key 2016 programmatic recommendation was to provide more explicit leadership development trainings. This leadership training was facilitated by Hla Yin Yin Waing (Waing Waing), Executive Director of the Center for Ethical Leadership. The “Gracious Space” training was intended to foster dialogue and facilitate lasting relationships. Leadership strategies were discussed that centered around diversity, inclusion, equity, respect, and cross-cultural dialogue. Connectors reinforced relationships with one another and were equipped with strategies for increasing listening and interacting cross-culturally.

Training & Surveying Somali Businesses

The City of Tukwila’s Economic Development Department and Forterra are working together to understand small business needs. As commercial and residential property values increase in South King County, the concern of displacement of small businesses has created an interest in properties that can meet small business owner’s needs. Two Somali Connectors supported this work by conducting surveys of small Somali businesses located in the Bakaro Mall and near the Juba Restaurant. Forterra will be assessing the findings of the survey to determine the feasibility of future developments or redevelopments.

End of Year Evaluation

Connectors and program staff came together in December to evaluate 2016 activities and plan for 2017. Feedback is included below:

Successes from 2016 to Continue:

- City Council Presentations
- Leadership trainings
- Job and resource fairs, sharing information back with communities
- Trainings are helpful to share resources with community
- Surveys are important

Recommended changes for 2017:

- Need more trainings
 - Leadership

- Job and resource fair
- More resources
 - Language translation
 - Transportation (to get to trainings)
 - Responsibility for issues (ex. who to call if a tree falls?)
- Not Necessary to repeat Police and Fire department trainings
- Youth training
 - Need a program for youth
 - Include info like where are youth-friendly places in the neighborhood?
- More Emergency preparedness trainings - teach what to do to more people in the community/host a big meeting
- Invite more community members to trainings
 - Disaster preparation
 - City council meetings
- Engaging more with the community
 - Learning what needed (low-income and especially youth)
 - ^ Youth killing ^ School to prison pipeline
 - ^ Technology ^ Drugs in communities and schools

2017 Work Planning

The City of Tukwila, Forterra and Global to Local identified projects that are a priority for the City in 2017 and that would benefit from having the Connectors provide concerted community engagement for. This includes the Public Safety Plan facility siting for a new justice center/police department and outreach focused around parks. The facility siting will include a Connector training, community surveying, and attending public open house meetings.

The City of Tukwila has a goal to increase the use of City Parks and recreational programming and wants to know what barriers keep people from using parks and how can awareness and use of parks be increased. The outreach component has the opportunity to be shaped by the Connectors, and Connectors were asked how much they knew about the City of Tukwila's parks, what could be better, and how the community could be engaged.

Feedback included:

- Use parks for volleyball
- Walk around park for exercise
- Global to Local group walking at Foster track
- Invite people to Cascadia and other parks
- Inviting people to physical activity
- Banner: Transportation
- Don't know about Tukwila Community Center
 - SeaTac more used because easier to get to/ walk to and has a rose garden
- Tukwila 5k – Get to know Tukwila Community Center
- Free bus passes/ Transportation

- Community based organizations
- Resources are not reaching the people
- Summer free meals/ people bring their kids to parks
- Free food/ Supplies
- People like parks in working class
- People don't visit because water fountains don't work/ there are none
- Music activities would be great/fun for everyone
- Used to be buses to Tukwila Community Center
- Basketball nets/ tennis nets are sometimes broken
- Health Screening gets people to the parks
- "See you in the parks"
 - Do this in neighborhoods near Tukwila International Boulevard
- People want parks with activities for kids
- People want to fish

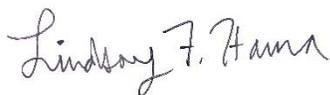
Next Steps

To maintain a consistent relationship between the Connectors and program work, it is recommended that the Connectors be engaged in a training in early 2017, and remain consistently updated as project details are formed. It is recommended to incorporate the Connector's recommendations above into planning for outreach around parks.

Upon concluding the fourth year of the Community Connector's program, it is evident that the program is heavily valued by community members, and that the Connectors themselves are regarded as leaders and sources of knowledge to their respective communities. Further institutionalizing the program and creating a pathway for City Departments to use the program outside of the annual workplan would be an asset to both City planning efforts and community members.

It has been a rewarding experience for Forterra to collaborate with the Community Connector program and partnership. We are excited to continue our collaborative efforts with the City of Tukwila, Global to Local and our extremely gifted and diverse Connectors as this program continues to evolve.

Sincerely,



Lindsay Fromme Hanna, Innovations Program Manager, Forterra



Dre Anderson, Community Engagements Manager, Forterra