

Feedback Summary

“Let’s Talk About WeHo” Community Event

(Community Workshop #2)

CONTEXT & PURPOSE

On behalf of the City of West Hollywood (“City”), Gensler and Designing in Color held the **“Let’s Talk About WeHo” Community Event** at **Plummer Park** on **Sunday, April 21, 2024**. This was the second of three community workshops planned as part of the WeHo 40 Strategic Plan development process. After the initial Community Open House on March 2, 2024, the WeHo 40 project team synthesized feedback from community members and City staff into Key Themes and Preliminary Future Visions, which were the focus of this event.

The primary purpose of this event was to:

- **Share out key feedback collected to-date**, focusing on results of the “Core Values: Strengths & Weaknesses” exercise at the Community Open House as well as priority issues identified through the citywide survey, conducted by FM3 Research;
- **Validate and gather feedback on Key Themes** that the WeHo 40 project team synthesized from previously collected feedback;
- **Gauge support for the five Preliminary Future Visions**, which reflected specific suggestions and ideas gathered from community members; and
- **Identify community-supported priorities** on which the strategic plan could focus, based upon feedback on the Key Themes and Preliminary Future Visions.

During the event, participants were invited to view preliminary outputs from previous engagements and to leave feedback at a series of informational stations. WeHo 40 project team members were present at each station to hear directly from community members and answer questions about the project. Community members were also invited to participate in ongoing Griot Circle conversations, where participants engaged in deeper discussion on key issues with fellow community members and WeHo 40 project team members. This document summarizes feedback gathered during these activities.

Prior to this event, Designing in Color and Gensler also met with the WeHo 40 Action Team and Core Coalition, comprising community members as well as community-based and nonprofit organizations that serve the West Hollywood community. As with the Open House, feedback from those meetings as well as Gensler’s previous engagements with City staff informed the format, content, and activities of this community event.

STATION #1: WHAT IS WEHO 40?

Station #1 provided an overview of the project and the process. No feedback was collected at this station.

STATION #2: KEY THEMES

Participants were asked to provide comments on the Key Themes and to note any issues important to them that were not covered in the Key Themes as presented.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK (WHAT DO YOU THINK? AND WHAT'S MISSING?)

Comments generally focused on needs and/or issues relating to specific segments of the West Hollywood community that participants felt were underserved by the City as well as additional suggestions relating to the Key Themes. Overall, comments pointed to a desire or need for:

- **Greater support for trans and other historically marginalized community members.** Community members advocated for greater diversity of queer spaces, housing and other resources specifically addressing the needs of trans people, and greater equity and empowerment for historically marginalized individuals.
- **Greater support for artists, lower income individuals, persons experiencing homelessness, and others who struggle with West Hollywood's high cost of living.** Suggestions included affordable healthcare, housing, and workspace, lower cost dining options on main commercial corridors, and providing free coffee/tea to the unhoused.
- **Improvements or additions to the City's streets and public spaces.** Participants suggested making crosswalks safer for pedestrians, installing water bottle refill stations, and consistently providing trashcans on certain streets.
- **Arts and culture and other programming.** Specific suggestions included more arts and culture programming, neighborhood mini-libraries, and activities tailored to children at Plummer Park.
- **Leveraging social cohesion to strengthen climate resilience,** highlighting a resilience-building tactic that has been adopted by other cities. Research has shown that strong social connections within a community allow for faster recovery following climate-related disasters.



STATION #3: PRELIMINARY FUTURE VISIONS

This station provided an overview of the most prominent aspirations for the future of West Hollywood collected from community members during the initial Community Open House. The aspirations were displayed in thematic groupings, called “Preliminary Visions.” Participants were asked to indicate which Preliminary Visions were most important or appealing to them by placing a “thumbs-up” sticker on to the board. Participants were also invited to leave written comments.

SUPPORT FOR PRELIMINARY VISIONS (RANKED MOST TO LEAST SUPPORT)

Participants were asked to place one or more stickers next to the Preliminary Visions that were most important or appealing to them. Note that this exercise was only intended to provide a general understanding of relative support for each Preliminary Vision and to elicit further discussion and feedback. The results of this exercise were used by the WeHo 40 project team to identify and prioritize potential strategies for inclusion in the strategic plan.

Preliminary Vision	Sticker Count
A Safe Space for All	48
A Beacon of Arts and Culture	29
A Magnet for the Next Generation of Talent	27
A Leader in Urban Sustainability	25
A Haven for Pedestrians and Cyclists	16

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

The summary below is a synthesis of all community member comments posted under each Preliminary Vision and is not a verbatim transcription of any singular comment.

A Safe Space for All

- **Concerns about the unhoused population were framed as both a public safety and a humanitarian issue.** While acknowledging the need for security and safety measures to address broader public safety issues (e.g. installation of security cameras), participants also stressed the importance of approaching the matter with services grounded in compassion and care, especially in interactions with law enforcement personnel.
- **Education and awareness of the City’s affordable housing, healthcare, and other resources can complement existing tactics.** Community members emphasized the importance of increasing education and awareness on the availability of resources for accessing affordable housing, healthcare, and critical human services as an additional approach to addressing affordable housing and homelessness.
- **Services and programs for the trans community should be expanded.** Some comments called for increased funding for programs and services that specifically address the needs of the trans community.

A Beacon of Arts and Culture

- **Community members want greater support for arts and cultural programming and artists,** including public events and support services for the artist community. Some

pointed to the rising cost of living in West Hollywood and the financial challenges associated with working in the arts.

- **Programming targeting the Russian-speaking community and children should be enhanced.** Some community members would like the City to support programming in other languages that are spoken in the West Hollywood community, and others noted a lack of programming specifically for children.

A Haven for Pedestrians and Cyclists

- **Participants were divided over bike lanes.** Some argued that bike lanes cause traffic congestion and parking challenges. Others emphasized the importance of becoming more pedestrian and bike-friendly and related concerns, like illegal parking of cars in bike lanes.
- **Most other feedback focused on roadway safety improvements,** especially crosswalks and intersections.

A Leader in Urban Sustainability

- **Lack of broader community support for cycling** and other alternative modes of transportation was cited as a challenge.

A Magnet for the Next Generation of Talent

- **Participants offered suggestions** for attracting the next generation of talent, including **improved public safety and walkability; small business and startup attraction; and services to help BIPOC-owned businesses** succeed in West Hollywood.

What are We Missing?

Additional items not already represented in the Preliminary Visions include:

- **Cash-based assistance for low-income residents,** such as guaranteed income pilots
- Greater awareness of the needs of the **neurodivergent population**
- Improved **public safety outside bars and nightclubs**
- **Lower speed limits** on City streets

STRATEGIC PLAN STATION #3

WEHO TOMORROW: WHAT FUTURE VISIONS ARE YOU EXCITED BY?

WHICH OF THESE FUTURE VISIONS APPEAL MOST TO YOU?
PLACE A STICKER NEXT TO YOUR FAVORITE VISIONS, AND THEN TELL US WHY.

FUTURE VISION

LIKES & COMMENTS



A LEADER IN URBAN SUSTAINABILITY

- carbon neutrality / net zero
- transition to alternative energy sources
- more trees

More people friendly towards scooters, bikes, would be great

Rebuilding our city - Sustainable, beautiful, green - bringing back the community



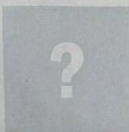
A MAGNET FOR THE NEXT GENERATION OF TALENT

- micromobility and transit options
- business/start-up attraction
- safety & walkability

I think safety is the most important goal in a city these times against crime!

Business startup not just working but also a place where spending is good

CREATIVE CITY must be a place where talent can stay



WHAT ARE WE MISSING?

(Place a post it here to add a future vision.)

Enforce some of our ordinances

Resources for the trans community

Outdoor food cart area for multiple food trucks

More Guaranteed Income Pilots in WEHO

Second Start!

Reduce crime and reduce homelessness

Address uptick in crime in WEHO bar/club scene on Santa Monica Blvd

More resources for TGI Community/ Shelter

Be more aware of people in the Autism Spectrum I was diagnosed 2013



WEHO TOMORROW: IN 2040, WEST HOLLYWOOD WILL BE...

**WHICH OF THESE FUTURE VISIONS APPEAL MOST TO YOU?
PLACE A STICKER NEXT TO YOUR FAVORITE VISIONS, AND THEN TELL US WHY.**

LIKES & COMMENTS

(inclusivity, equity, and wellness)

- affordable, multi-generational housing
- living wages
- mental health services
- citizen empowerment
- inclusivity beyond status quo (cis gender, gay, male)
- high-quality recreational amenities

A BEACON OF ARTS AND CULTURE

- public events and live performances
- creative/maker spaces
- artist support programs
- locally-owned small businesses

A HAVEN FOR PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS

- bike lanes and non-motorized mobility infrastructure
- temporary street closures (for events)
- traffic calming measures 🚶 🚲
- more public transit options (light rail) 🚶 🚶 🚶 🚶 🚶 🚶

