

**Falcon Heights Community Conversations II**  
**Meeting #2**  
**Thursday, December 17, 2020**  
**6:00 – 7:30 PM**  
**Zoom**  
**Meeting Notes**

NOTICE – These notes summarize the second of three in a series of community conversations. The third meeting will be on January 7, 2021. No final decision has been made about implementation of any of the ideas discussed during this meeting.

**Welcome, Review/Preview and Updates**

A Planning Team comprised of City Administrator, Councilmembers and members of the Citizen's Engagement Commission planned these conversations. They articulated the purpose:

- Share and reflect on what has been done since the 2018 Task Force
- Acknowledge calls for reform sparked by the deaths of Mr. George Floyd and Mr. Philando Castile and others & ask how members of the community are doing
- Ask for input for strategic planning to continue the next three years' inclusion and public safety work
- Seek partners in the community to take steps together

**Review of Conversation #1 on 12/7/2020**

- Updates from Mayor Gustafson and Councilmember Leehy on what has been done for inclusion and public safety.
- Conversation Highlights
  - On a scale of 1 – 5, Falcon Heights averaged a "3" on its efforts to address inclusion and public safety since 2016.
  - Theme for what the City could do better was *communication*.
  - Strengths included Restoration Day, Unity Day, Soccer time at Curtiss Field
  - Barriers to inclusivity from Meeting #1 included limited mixing between renters/homeowners, the City being broken up into quadrants

**Preview of Conversation #2 Tonight**

- Tonight's two questions build on conversation #1
  - How to get a "5"?
  - How community members and City could work together on inclusion.
- Survey Results
  - Involve residents in inclusion improvements.
  - Ideas for communication – town hall meetings, section in newsletter that specifically highlights initiatives and progress.

**Conversation #3 on 1/7/2021**

- Public Safety.

**FALCON HEIGHTS UPDATES (Mayor Gustafson and Councilmember Leehy)**

- Intergenerational Story Time was ready to start and interrupted by COVID-19
- Falcon Heights is working on renaming part of Larpenteur Avenue after Mr. Philando Castille

## Community Conversation #1

- Part A: If the City received a “5” for addressing inclusion since the last community conversation, what would be different in your community – what outcomes would occur?
- Part B: Share ideas for how you could work together as a community to achieve the outcomes you desire? Decide on 1 – 3 top ideas to share with the large group.

### Outcomes

- Participation of community members increases for City programs
- The City is more connected, community breaks out of silos
- More social events and communal connection occur across the City
- Improved communication
  - Community influencers help spread the word about inclusion initiatives
- Community members lead efforts and members of the City Council and City Staff participate
- There are links across stakeholder groups – there is a way to measure the City’s impact

### Ideas

- Stakeholder map lets us know who is involved in each of our neighborhoods and communities – identify different groups (e.g., renters, homeowners). Find ways to reach forward to them. Make links between groups, share what is being done.
- More people are aware of taking implicit bias tests, having conversations.
- City Hall or “city center” could be designated as a hub space to hold social events and foster a sense of community.
- Two national nights out (add one).
- Build a bridge to easily cross Snelling and Larpenteur.
- Identify community influencers to lead (church, school, apartments) and coordinate.
- Incentives to participate – for example, sweepstakes, ice cream, hot dogs, do a drawing of people who participate on Zoom.

## Community Conversation #2

The City is interested in ways to support community members who want to take action to increase a sense of welcoming and inclusivity in Falcon Heights. (Example from Meeting #1 included soccer time at Curtis Field. Barriers to inclusivity suggested during Meeting #1 included limited mixing between renters/homeowners, the City being broken up into quadrants)

- Share ideas for how community members and the City could work together. Hopefully this could result in representation and participation with more members of the Falcon Heights community. Consider how to overcome barriers through relationship building and communication.
- Do a major city event as soon as we can safely gather to a community park or school playground to bring people together. Have influencers “work the crowd” to reach out to people and find out how to best engage them.
- Structuring programming around cultural events, holidays for various community members to learn and highlight diversity
- Ask community members to share their expertise and stories with each other
- Create a “pay it forward” system for neighbors to get to know each other
- Highlight community members doing great things in our community – use community newsletter. Make the information more community friendly – focus on community in addition to City updates.
- Solar panels and technology – club, sharing how to take care of home together
- Updating the parks (already underway)
- Having on web page how people can share their stories, different events on blocks
- Coordination for the connectedness was a theme
- After we build momentum, create a pay it forward from neighbor to neighbor or block to block to form systems
- Update community park for social gathering
- Community potlucks and barbeques
- Utilize local businesses more – modernize the buildings and communal spaces
- Recreating a welcome wagon kind of thing (Community Engagement Commission is working on this, pandemic)
- Door knocker/hanger to welcome people, with QR code
- Invite a friend or neighbor to everything you participate in ... people are more likely to participate with a personal invitation
- Do door knocking from mixture of staff, elected officials, public safety, community influencers to check in with people and advertise a post-COVID event.