

Somali American Community

Saturday July 19th, 2014

Question 1

“How can city leader work better with neighborhood and community organizations to make access to decision making opportunities more equitable and accessible to all residents?”

- Many believe that this wasn't a simple question
- Finding more people who can sit on boards and commissions
 - Recruiting people in the community
- Having the City of Minneapolis think about the capacity of different organization
- Making sure that city engages in different organizations and leadership
 - Not assume representations or face value, but ask how/who are you engaged with
- City of Minneapolis should always be listening
- Equity is very important in the Somali community
- African American (East African) on city board and council should represent the community
 - 3 out of 15 people of color that represent the city council
- City of Minneapolis council members are not diverse and should represent the city demographics
- City council make up doesn't reflect the current or forecasted populations demographic for the City of Minneapolis
- In the structural system, there is a design in place that keeps communities of color behind
 - Not having access or representation at the city level
- Investing in education is very important
- City should make sure that they engage in different communities to build trust and access
- Would like city to include all cultural communities
- East African and African American need to both understand that they are both one community and not divided communities
- Expand recourse into the community (allocate recourse)
 - Invest more money and tools to build up leadership
- City of Minneapolis should have active work with community leaders, business and organizations
 - Establishing relationship with leaders advisory committee

- Would like city to have more gathering for leadership in the community
 - This is for training and leadership
- Would like City of Minneapolis to communicate more
- Reaching out to people in in the community
 - Making sure people in the community opinion matters
 - Build the connection
 - Have translators so everyone can have access
 - Engagement should mean building trust
- The City of Minneapolis needs to have fundamental change in city leadership
 - Transformation of government
- Having people that are East African so people in the community can relate too
- More cops that reflects the community
- Would like for East African policy advisory group planning
 - Similar to the Latino Engagement Task Force
 - To build leadership and establish relations with the City of Minneapolis
- Would like a conversation Senior Community Specialist (Christina Kendrick) for aging East African citizens
- East African Community has a common denominator when facing issues
 - Housing (affordable and safe)
 - Educations
 - Money
- Would like City of Minneapolis to build trust with in the community organization/ faith base and education
 - Coming up with a blueprint or action plan for understanding community needs
- Having the position like the East African Specialist (Abdirashid Ahmed) outreaching to the community to build bridges and access
- Would like the City of Minneapolis actively listening
- City and community need to discuss decision making
 - Education
 - Employment
 - Generating income
- Would like people to feel welcomed and value at the leadership table
 - City level and country level
- Making sure City of Minneapolis communicate information and provides access tools when it comes to translation
 - Communication to lower tickets and towing cost
 - Parking in low-income areas and high concentrated areas (Parking permits)
 - Cedar-Riverside apartments/parts of South Minneapolis

Question 2

“What can city and neighborhood leaders do to help ensure that neighborhood organizations and all city boards and committees better reflect our communities?”

- Having leadership development training group session
- Creating data pools/ roster of people when opportunity comes up
 - Making sure qualified people are in city boards and commissions
- Having access and ideas of different organization groups
 - Community would like to send information for outreaching and networking
 - Outreaching to community advisors
- Outreaching information to different forms of media
 - East African newspapers, websites local Televisions
 - Include translations

Question 3

“What would get you and others involved in the community more involved in neighborhood organizations and in the civic life of our city.

- If city is more inclusive then the City of Minneapolis and public life would be better for all
- City of Minneapolis has to represent the people in the community to build trust and understanding
- East African community would like to engage more people in the community
 - Hold accountability in East African community (showing up to meeting)
- East African community would like to figure out how the city can be a more equitable community
- Train and create awareness in the community
 - Seeing mass of people behind supporting the East African community
- Access to equitable opportunity change in community