



# Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County Price Hill Focus Group Summary

## Summary

The following groups from Price Hill were engaged:

- Latinx Spanish-speaking residents
- Senior citizens with physical disabilities or mobility challenges

Format and Questions:

- Approximately 75 minutes long
- Target group size: 4-6 participants
- Facilitated Q&A with visual activities
- Facilitated by one moderator (Design Impact) and one notetaker (library staff)
- After each focus group, the facilitator and notetaker transcribed responses, captured observations and insights

## Questions

Facilitators asked the following questions (or variations of these questions) to each group.

- **Community Views and Needs:**
  - Where do you feel most welcome in your community?
  - What are you most proud of in your community?
  - What kinds of places and programs would help your community thrive?
- **Current Views and Usage of Library:**
  - What do you like about your library?
  - What would you change or improve about your library?
  - Which library branches do you use?
- **Library Vision:**
  - What do you wish your library had?
  - What kind of place do you want the library to be? What do you imagine is possible?



# Focus Group Insights

## Seniors with Disabilities and Mobility Challenges (Price Hill)

**Date + Location:** March 12, 2019, 12-1pm at Price Hill Recreation Center,

**Facilitators:** Michelle Sucher, Design Impact (Facilitator), Steve Kemple, Price Hill Branch Manager (Notetaker), Kristen Payne, FTC&H (Observer)

### **Group Description:**

- 7 attendees
- Most participants had physical mobility issues – majority of the group relied on walkers
- Most participants considered themselves lifelong Price Hill residents
- Participants seated around a table; note taker and observer sat at taller tables nearby

## Latinx Spanish-Speaking Parents)

**Date + Location:** March 19, 2019, 12-1:15pm at Santa Maria Community Services

**Facilitators:** Daniela Vollmer, Design Impact (Facilitator), Denise Sretchen, Anderson Branch Manager (Notetaker)

### **Group Description:**

- 7 participants, all women; all Spanish-speaking; two from Guatemala, five from Mexico; ESL
- Participants were convened by Santa Maria for a prior event
- Roughly 10 kids present (estimated ages range from 1-5 years old)
- Focus group conducted in Spanish
- Two people mentioned that they do not have a need to use the library because their children were too young
- Participants mentioned using Cheviot, Covedale, Westwood, Delhi, and Price Hill branches

## Insights

The following insights were heard across both focus groups and sorted into three primary categories: *physical space*, *programs and services*, and *miscellaneous*.

### **PHYSICAL SPACE**

***How might we make the library a comfortable and accessible space for all patrons?***

- Seniors wanted a smaller satellite location like the Rec Center because the smaller, less overwhelming space offers personalized services and attention
- Comfortable furniture – places you’d want to sit for hours
- Lighting – bright and low light spaces, outdoor lighting to increase safety
- Easy-to-read signage
  - Latinx participants asked for signage in Spanish
- **Separate spaces designated for different uses and age groups**
  - Quiet spaces
    - Seniors mentioned quiet spaces where they could be “alone together” - quiet without being isolated
  - Privacy to use computers



- Flexible Community Spaces: spaces for classes, demonstrations, and meetings
- **ADA / physical accessibility**
  - Wide spaces for wheelchairs, walkers, and strollers
  - Elevators
  - Accessible, clean bathrooms
  - Places to park your walker
  - Physically accessible bathrooms
  - Convenient, accessible book drop: Currently, there's no before/after-hours book drop onsite (walking uphill to the branch is difficult)
  - Reading machines

## **PROGRAMS & SERVICES**

*How might we provide programs and services that tap into patrons' passions and interests and serve their needs?*

- **Lifelong learning & life skills**
  - Technology classes, especially for seniors
  - GED / continuing education
  - Tutors, homework help in Spanish
  - Weekly "Lunch & Learns" with guest speakers
- **Access to healthy food and cooking**
  - Nutrition programs
  - Health and cooking classes for adults
  - Healthy, diabetic-friendly snacks and fresh fruit for kids
- **Social services support**
  - Access to health care and health programs
  - Legal support Latinx community members
- **Technology**
  - More desktop computers: laptops are not senior friendly
  - Rentable computers and tablets (specifically that can be taken home and used off site)
- **Programming and collections for children and families**
  - Parents requested places for their children to be supervised in the library (childcare) so they could participate in adult programs
  - Pre-K (under 5) programming: some participants said they felt the library was only useful if you had older children
- **Social/community events**
  - Live music
  - Viewing parties for live TV events
- **More selection in movies, DVDs, and books**
  - Large print books
  - Anime
- **Latinx participants wanted more up-to-date books and materials in Spanish**
  - "More variety in Spanish... all I could find were old magazines. Nothing about math, history, health, recipes..."



- Books by well-known Latinx authors
- **Spanish-speaking staff not only make Latinx Spanish-speaking customers feel more welcome, but can provide more efficient and relevant service**
  - Santa Maria was a valuable place for community members because they could be with their families, see people they know, speak their native language, and get assistance they need

## MISCELLANEOUS / OTHER

### *How might we make the library a safe and welcoming place to all?*

- **Transportation is a barrier to using the library:** Many participants do not drive; Metro recently cut several stops, making it even more difficult to leave the neighborhood.
  - **Alternate transportation is expensive or inconvenient**
    - Metro Access bus fares in Price Hill are double the standard fare of a regular Metro bus (\$3.50 and \$1.75 respectively)
    - The Cincinnati Area Senior Services (CASS) bus is available, but only for those 60 and older; one individual mentioned that he frequently can't afford the Access bus, but he is too young to ride the CASS. Additionally, the CASS bus will not pick up fewer than 6 passengers
    - Idea: door to door shuttle service
- **The library is a place where people feel safe and secure.** Safety is a major priority and concern in Price Hill, both outside of the library and within the library.
  - Residents travel in small groups because they are afraid of being mugged or beat up
  - Residents do not have faith in the police force; police in the neighborhood are not responsive
  - Prostitution is a visible issue in the community and makes people feel concerned about their neighborhood
- **Affordability and accessibility are major concerns for residents.** Seniors shared that the neighborhood's recent improvement efforts were not designed to benefit them and felt excluded from the neighborhood's future. The library and Rec Center are places where the participants feel safe, welcome, and included.
- **Latinx participants wanted to see more clear and visible anti-discrimination efforts.** Spanish-speaking Latinx residents experienced racist and discriminatory behaviors and language at the library from other patrons with their kids present;
  - People feel afraid or not confident enough to confront people or tell library staff when they're being discriminated against
    - Some people mentioned that staff had witnessed discriminatory behavior and didn't take action. "We have experienced discrimination in other places, and when we have complained, nothing has ever changed . . . Why should we believe the library would do something about it?"
    - Some people said they don't want to report problems that may attract unwanted attention.
  - Ideas to support anti-discrimination



- Train staff to respond to discriminatory behavior
  - Post a clear discrimination policy and ensure it's enforced
- **Earlier hours can alleviate transportation and safety concerns.** Due to safety concerns and logistics of transportation, seniors requested earlier, extended library hours (earlier than 10 am)
  - The senior shuttle service hours did not match up with library hours, so seniors can only reasonably access library before noon
  - Bus costs and operation hours make the library hard to access
- **Participants were unaware about the full range of the library's programs and services.** The library has an opportunity to increase awareness about its existing services and programs
  - Eligibility requirements, especially related to documentation
    - “We thought we weren’t eligible to get a library card” —participants from Latinx group found out they were eligible at an event/group where someone from the library told them.
  - Cardholders can go to programs and events at any library in Hamilton County
  - People can utilize free WiFi with personal devices

