

BUILDING INTEGRATED COMMUNITIES

in Siler City, North Carolina:

Community Perspectives and Recommendations for local government

A report for
Siler City Building Integrated Communities (BIC)
June 2018

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I. Introduction

This assessment was conducted in 2017 and 2018 as part of Siler City Building Integrated Communities (BIC), a collaborative initiative of the Town of Siler City, community residents and organization leaders, and The Latino Migration Project (LMP) at the University of North Carolina (UNC) at Chapel Hill. The assessment aims to understand the experiences of immigrant residents in Siler City and Chatham County and present their recommendations to the Town of Siler City for supporting integration, wellbeing, and leadership.

The assessment is based on the following:

- Bilingual public meetings and discussion groups with 66 residents born in Latin American countries and the U.S.-born children of immigrants;
- Interviews with nine mental health professionals and educators at local schools and healthcare providers;
- Secondary data compiled from the U.S. Census and the N.C. Department of Commerce;
- Data visualization using Geographic Information Systems (GIS);
- Review of local community resources such as institutions, organizations, and informal groups;
- Review of recent Chatham County reports related to housing, health, and social services.

This report is available online in both English and Spanish languages at <https://migration.unc.edu/programs/bic/reports-and-resources/>.

Information from this assessment will guide the collaborative creation and implementation of a town-wide action plan for immigrant integration in 2018 and 2019. Residents who are interested in participating in the project and creating action plans are encouraged to contact LMP staff by phone at 919-966-1484 or by email at hgill@email.unc.edu, isaurag@live.unc.edu, and igutierrez@unc.edu (*Hablamos español.*)



About Building Integrated Communities

Building Integrated Communities (BIC) is a community planning process used to develop comprehensive integration plans with local government and immigrant and refugee leaders. BIC is a statewide initiative of The Latino Migration Project at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Conceptualized in 2010 in collaboration with the UNC Chapel Hill School of Government and funded by the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, the intent of this initiative is to help NC local governments successfully engage with immigrant and refugee populations to promote local economic development, enhance livability, and improve relationships through a community planning process.

The expectation of this multi-year process is that local governments and groups of diverse immigrant and community stakeholders will come together to address issues facing newcomers and generate innovative, locally-relevant public policies to strengthen desired outcomes. This process occurs through a series of stakeholder workshops facilitated by professionals from UNC Chapel Hill and is intentionally comprised of both local government officials and engaged community members, particularly leaders and advocates from the immigrant community. Since 2010, BIC has worked with the cities of Chapel Hill, High Point, Greenville, Winston-Salem, and Sanford.

Local governments apply to the program and are selected based in part on willingness of elected officials to expand opportunities for sustained immigrant leadership and civic engagement. Participants consist of elected officials, residents born abroad, and other community stakeholders from multiple sectors of the community. Together, they develop strategies to improve communication and trust between immigrants, local government agencies, and law enforcement officials.

Siler City joined the Building Integrated Communities Program in the spring of 2017.

II. Executive Summary

In 2017 and 2018, Siler City Building Integrated Communities (BIC) conducted a participatory community assessment to better understand the experiences of residents born in foreign countries. The assessment consisted of three bilingual **public meetings** in which 66 people participated, **interviews** with nine mental health professionals, educators, and healthcare providers who work with youth in Chatham County, a review of other data and research from the Chatham County Public Schools, Chatham County Health Department, Central Carolina Community College, the Town of Siler City, El Vínculo Hispano, the U.S. Census and the North Carolina Department of Commerce, Labor & Economic Analysis Division (LEAD). The Latino Migration Project's "[2016 Hispanic Community Needs Assessment for El Vínculo Hispano/The Hispanic Liaison](#)" also informed this research.

In this report, we highlight the valuable input of the many local residents who took part in this assessment through **public meetings** and **interviews**. The 75 residents who participated represented a diverse sample of immigrants from homes in Siler City, Bonlee, as well as other parts of Chatham County. This included both English- and Spanish-speaking residents from different countries of origin, as well as U.S.-born individuals with immigrant parents. We also spoke with a group of youth under the age of 18.

Together, these residents, or *participants*, shared important information about their experiences living in Siler City and Chatham County, as well as their recommendations for supporting local *immigrant integration*. We use *immigrant integration* to refer to a two-way process in which all residents work together to build stronger, more inclusive communities that benefit from increased civic participation, economic mobility, and access to mainstream institutions.

Participants identified challenges that are affecting local immigrants and their integration. Because BIC works with local government, we focused many of our questions on areas and services that the Town of Siler City provides (see pp. 6-8) such as housing, transportation, communication, law enforcement, leadership, and parks and recreation. At the request of BIC steering committee members, we included a focus on youth mental health. We also asked open-ended questions to generate ideas and perspectives about other areas of local experience.

Below, we describe these major issues as well as residents' recommendations for improving integration. We also include other types of data from this report, such as demographic and employment data, a review of local resources, and local health department findings, to support a better understanding of these issues.

Summary: Resident recommendations for supporting integration



Public Transportation: Increase access to transportation; more bus stops near neighborhoods; long-distance transportation options to Sanford, Asheboro, Greensboro, and Raleigh; expand outreach with Latino residents; improve Spanish language communication; and build more sidewalks.



Housing: Provide more affordable, child-friendly housing; improve conditions of existing rental housing; provide bilingual legal resources about fair and affordable housing; and engage residents in mobile home communities in Town planning processes.



Public safety: Reduce theft and gun violence; improve community-police relationships; provide more legal resources about ICE raids and civil rights; strengthen partnerships between and with local Latino businesses; and expand bilingual education related to youth drug and gun violence prevention.



Leadership: Provide interpretation in Spanish at public meetings; circulate bilingual agendas in advance; publicize events with welcoming language; expand recruitment efforts for town leadership and staff positions; create bilingual hiring policies; continue providing English courses; and increase access to local public libraries.



Business: Support local entrepreneurs by providing more legal resources and education in Spanish on how to buy a house/office/property, financing options; hire more bilingual staff in local government and the community college to support businesses, permitting processes, labor inspection, compliance with other regulations, and CPR courses; strengthen ties with and between local Latino business owners.



Communication: Make information available in both Spanish and English (on websites, utility bills, social media, and flyers); hire more bilingual staff in local government; enhance publicity of events, disaster response, and other local information.



Recreation: Invest in and maintain soccer fields; expand bilingual events and programs for youth and their families, particularly after school and on evenings/weekends; create more playgrounds for babies/toddlers; improve/expand the public pool; engage youth in decision-making related to parks and recreation.



Unity: Enhance community unity and trust; provide opportunities for relationship building between different race and ethnic groups, newcomers and longtime residents; support Latino cultural heritage opportunities, particularly for youth; address an increase in racism and conflict between students in public schools.

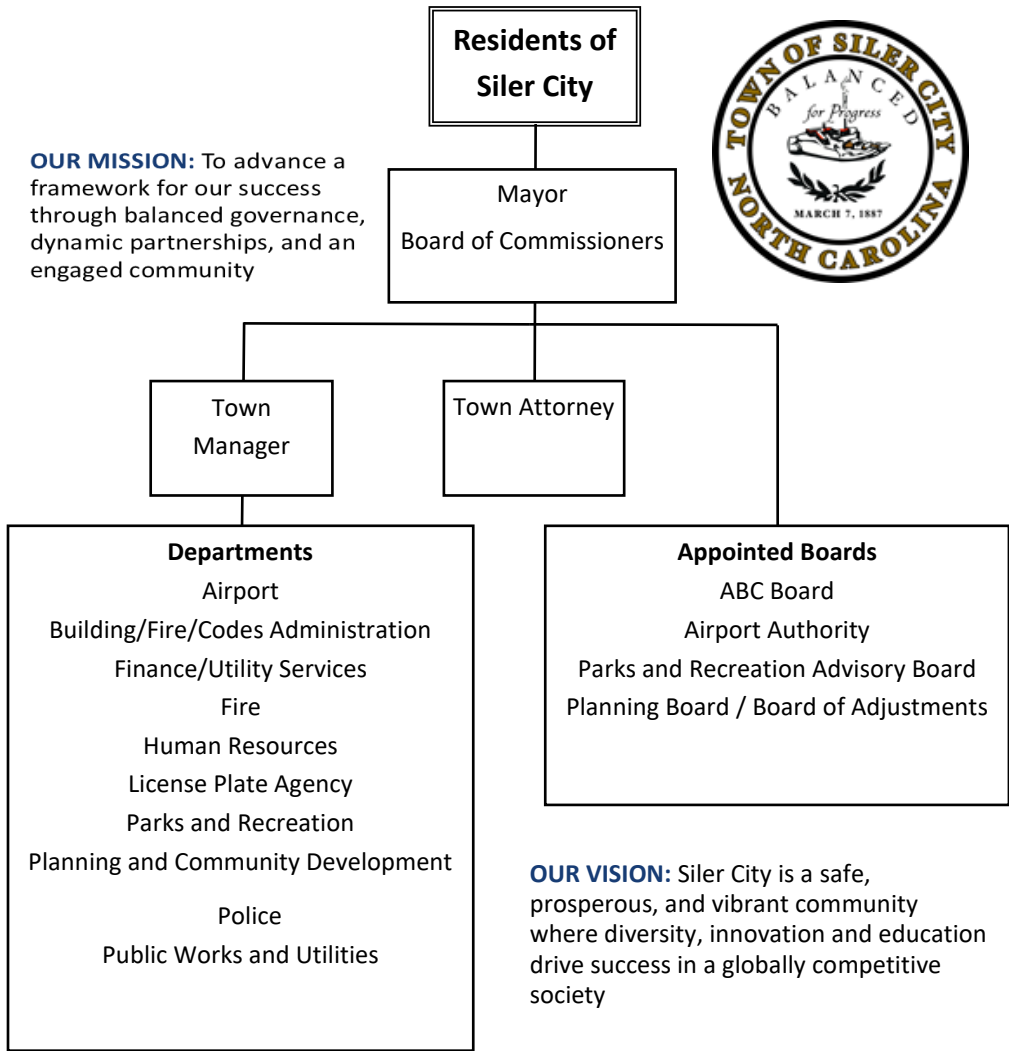


Youth mental health: Expand public school resources, including peer to peer support and crisis training, school-wide anti-racism education, and bilingual and culturally knowledgeable counselors and mental health professionals.

III. A Guide to Siler City Town Government

Town government provides basic services to residents, such as police protection, fire protection, solid waste services, and building permits and inspections. The Town of Siler City also has a long standing commitment to providing other community services, such as aviation, and low cost parks and recreational programs and facilities.

TOWN OF SILER CITY ORGANIZATION CHART





About Town Services

Siler City Municipal Airport

Provides access to aviation travel facilities for private, corporate, and chartered passenger aircraft

Building/Fire/Codes Administration

- Provides for the administration and enforcement of State building and fire code
- Provides for the administration and enforcement of various local ordinances such as property and health nuisances

Finance/Utility Services

- Provides administration of the Town's budget and accounting activities and ensures compliance with relevant fiscal regulations
- Assists Town customers with water, wastewater, solid waste and other billing accounts, services, and transactions

Siler City Fire Department

Provides emergency services within the Town's corporate limits and within the surrounding fire district

Human Resources

- Provides administration over personnel functions from hiring selection processes to assisting employees with retirement
- Provides compliance administration for regulatory mandates such as the Fair Labor Standards Act

License Plate Agency

- Provides NC Department of Motor Vehicle services, such as vehicle registration, tag renewals and vehicle title transfers
- Provides NC Department of Wildlife licensing services to the community, such as fishing and hunting licenses

Parks and Recreation

- Provides parks, trails, festivals and athletics
- Offers recreational programs, including football, cheerleading, baseball, basketball

Planning and Community Development

- Assists with decisions about how our town grows and promotes a sustainable future
- Administers and enforces the Town's land use ordinances
- Assists with recruitment and development of businesses in Town

Siler City Police Department

Keeps residents safe and provides community outreach and engagement through "community policing" model

Public Works and Utilities

Provides infrastructure and solid waste services including, water and wastewater treatment, sanitary sewer collections and water distribution, streets maintenance and repairs, yard and household waste collection and disposal, and cemetery and public facilities maintenance and repairs

Advisory Boards

Siler City ABC Board

Provides administrative, operational, and compliance oversight of the Town's ABC Store enterprise

Siler City Municipal Airport Authority

Offers input and recommendations to the Siler City Board of Commissioners for the orderly operations, management and development of the Siler City Municipal Airport

Siler City Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

Assists Parks and Recreation Staff with input and provides the Siler City Board of Commissioners recommendations on recreation services, greenways/trails, facilities, fees and other related recreation issues

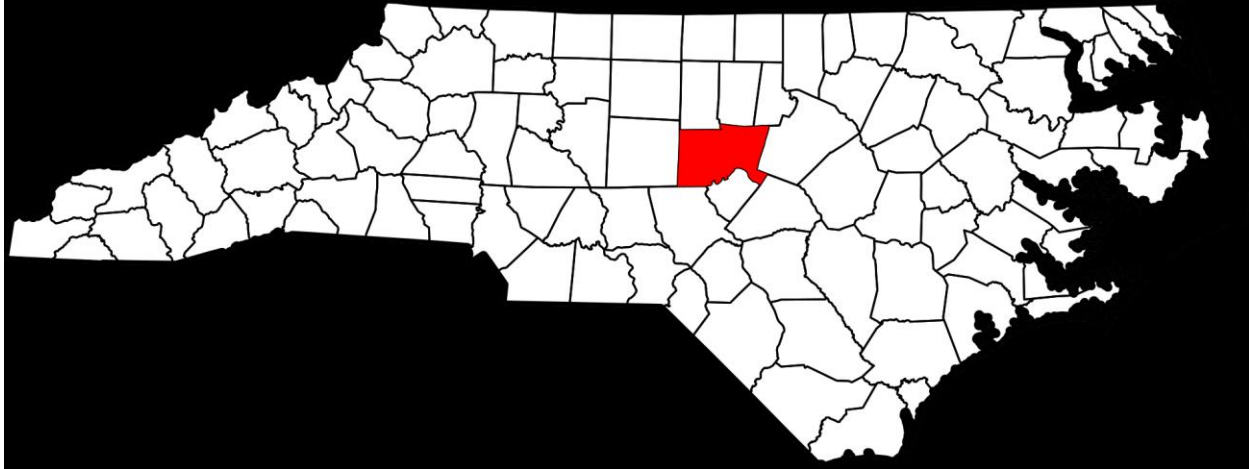
Siler City Planning Board / Board of Adjustments

Planning Board provides input on community planning and development matters for managing the growth of the community. The Board of Adjustments considers zoning and development appeals and variance requests.



SMALL TOWN OF THE YEAR

Town of Siler City Mayor and Board of Commissioners presented with "Small Town of The Year 2015" plaque awarded by the North Carolina Rural Center. Pictured from left to right: Bill Haiges, Mike Constantino, Cindy Bray, Mayor John Grimes, Mayor Pro Tem Larry Cheek, Tony Siler, Lewis Fadely , Chip Price



IV. Siler City’s Latin American heritage

People of Latin American origin are a diverse group who make up 43% of Siler City’s total population of 8500, and 12% of Chatham County’s total population of 69,000 [1]. Like other rural parts of North Carolina, Latino communities are predominately of Mexican, Salvadorian, Colombian, Guatemalan, and Honduran origin. More than half of Latinos in Chatham County are U.S.-born citizens, and about a third of the county’s estimated 6,000 foreign-born residents are naturalized U.S. citizens [2]. Although an increasing number of young people have U.S. citizenship status, many still live in mixed status families, where at least one parent or family member is undocumented.

In this profile, we frequently refer to *5-year estimates* from the American Community Survey (ACS), such as population estimates for “2012-2016”. These 5-year estimates combine yearly survey data that has been collected from smaller population samples over each of the five included years. Although 5-year estimates are more reliable than the alternative 1- and 3-year estimates, they are the least current of the three options, and they are best understood as reflecting population *trends*, not as exact counts of current populations/characteristics.

Note: The preferred language for self-identification varies among people of Latin American origin, and the U.S. Census has historically used the term Hispanic to refer to Spanish-speakers from both Latin America and Spain. This report uses the terms Hispanic, Latino, Latina and Latinx both together and interchangeably, to refer to people in the U.S. of Latin American origin or ancestry. *Latinx* is a relatively new gender-inclusive term used by some individuals of Latin American origin.

Overall, local trends in the growth of both Latin American and Asian immigrant populations in Chatham County mirror recent immigration patterns that have been observed statewide. Between 2010 and present, there was a decrease in newcomers from Mexico accompanied by an increase in newcomers from Asia [10]. Numbers of Central American migrants have also increased in the past five 5 years. These recent shifts have been described as the result of

heightened security measures along the U.S.-Mexico border, a growing economy in Mexico, an increase in crime in Central America, and a growing U.S. demand for highly-skilled workers such as for high tech employment.

Population Totals and Origins

From 2012-2016, the total population for the Town of Siler City was approximately 8,269 people. Over the past decade, the racial/ethnic composition of the population of Siler City has undergone subtle but significant shifts. In the last eight years, the Latino population has decreased by nearly one thousand residents. However, it remains the most significant component of the overall Siler City population. Because Latinos can be of any race, they are classified under all applicable race categories[3]. This can lead to misclassification when only race is considered independent of ethnicity. The figure below examines the shifts in the composition of the Siler City population taking both ethnicity and race into account.

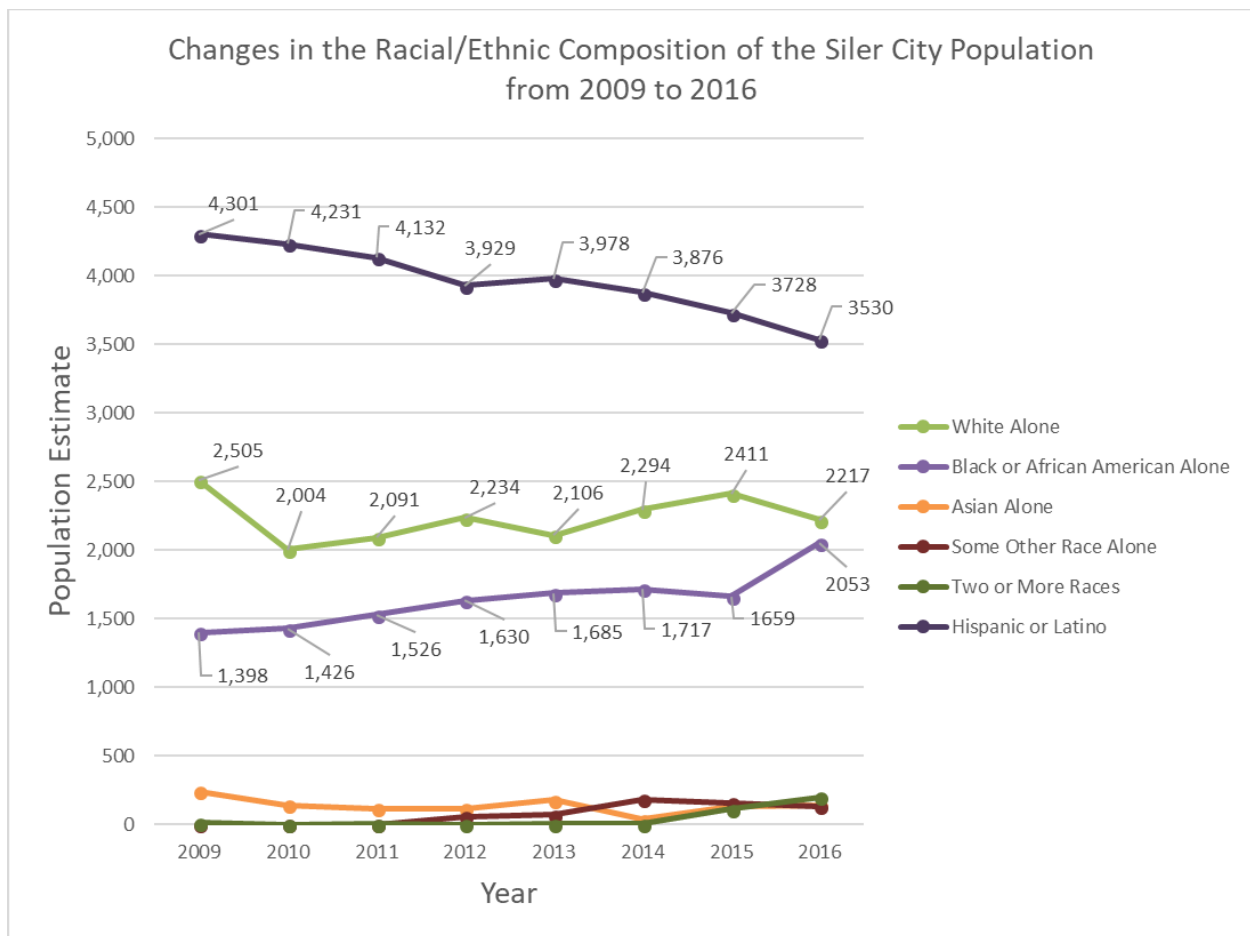


Figure 1 Source: American Community Survey (5 Year Estimates) Years 2006-2016

Nearly half of all Siler City residents—about 42.7%, or 3,530 residents—were Latino. Most Latino residents were of Mexican origin, although a significant number had other Central

American origins such as Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. We note that the U.S. Census has historically undercounted Latino residents[1].

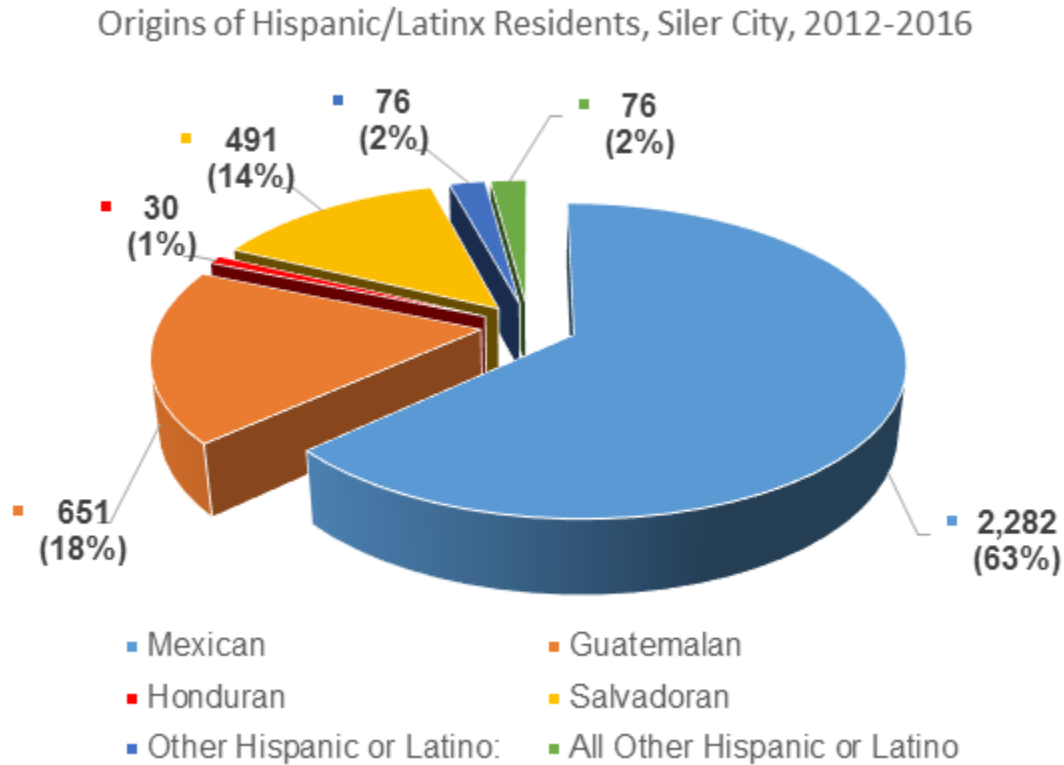


Figure 2 Source : American Community Survey 2016 (5-Year Estimates). Table SE: T139. Place of Birth for the Foreign-Born Population

Foreign-born residents

From 2011-2016, about 77.3% of all Siler City residents, or 6,394 residents, were born in the U.S.[1] More than half of Siler City’s Latino residents—were born in the United States.

Most of Siler City’s *foreign-born* Hispanic residents were born in Mexico, although a significant number were born in the other Central American countries of Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador[2].

In addition, the Census Bureau estimated that there were about 139 other foreign-born residents in Siler City who were born *outside of Latin America*, as depicted in the table below.

Origins of the Foreign-born Population outside of Latin America

Country	No. of Foreign-born persons	Percent of Total City Population
China	92	4.9%
Scotland	3	0.2%
Vietnam	27	1.4%
Italy	17	0.9%
Guyana	18	1.0%

Table 1 Source: American Community Survey 2016 (5-Year Estimates). Table SE: T139. Place of Birth for the Foreign-Born Population

Citizenship and Residency Statuses

About 1,618 of Siler City’s foreign-born residents, or 19.6% of Siler City’s overall population, were not naturalized citizens[1]. These non-U.S. citizens include “legal immigrants” (immigrants who have been admitted for permanent legal residence); “legal non-immigrants”, such as temporary workers and asylum seekers; and undocumented immigrants, such as residents who have overstayed a work visa or otherwise not obtained legal residence status[4]. Political rights and access to social services for these town residents range from severely restricted to non-existent.

English Proficiency and Languages

The most recent Language estimates available for Siler City residents are those from the 2011-2015 5-Year Estimates. In comparing the information on the 2016 (5-Year Estimates) “Place of Birth for the Foreign-Born Population” with those of 2015, we do not find a large shift in the population composition. For example, residents originating from China increase from 76 to 92 individuals whereas the other groups listed in table 1 above only increase by a few individuals. No new populations appear in the 2016 estimates. This supports the idea that the English proficiency estimates from 2015 are sufficiently accurate to represent 2016.

Given the large proportion of the population with Latin American origins, it is unsurprising that approximately 3,129 individuals, or 42% of the population of Siler City, speak Spanish [5]. Of these, 45% reported speaking English “Very Well” and 54% reported speaking English less than “Very Well.” In addition to Spanish, 76 residents reported speaking Chinese (1% of the population). All Chinese speakers were classified as speaking English less than “Very Well.”

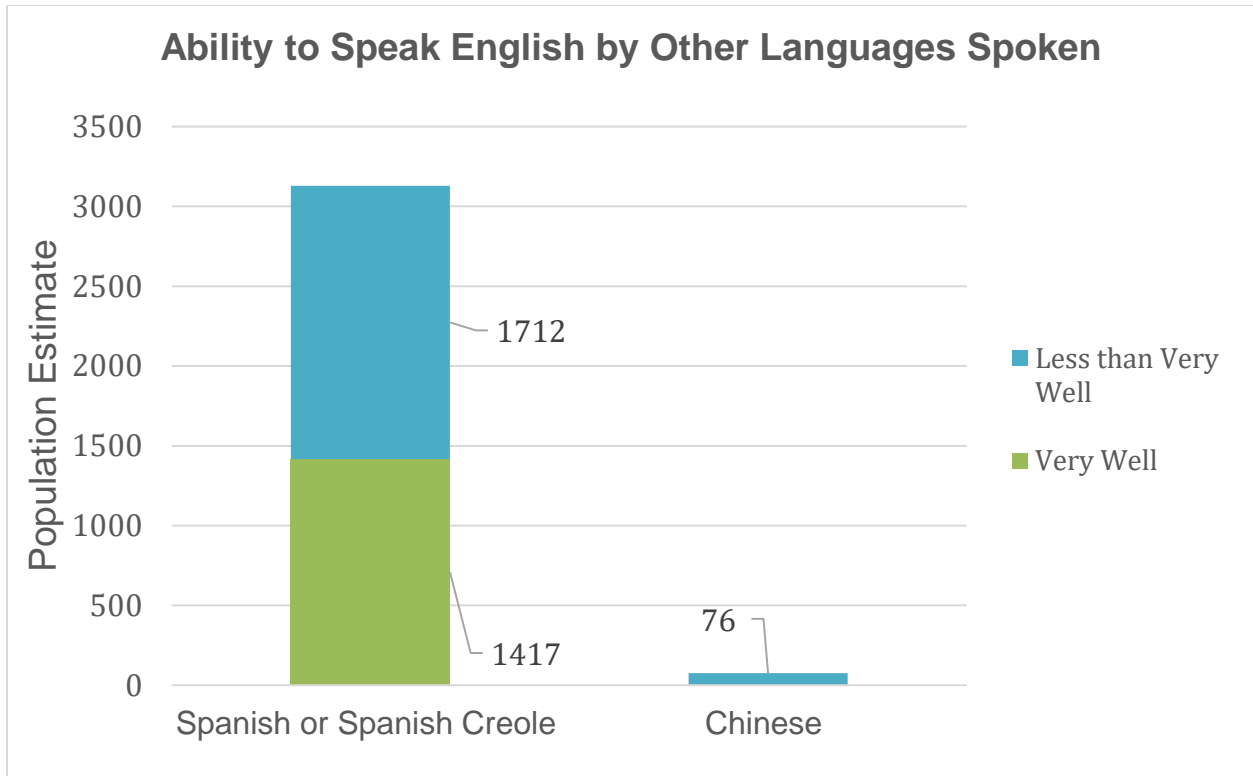
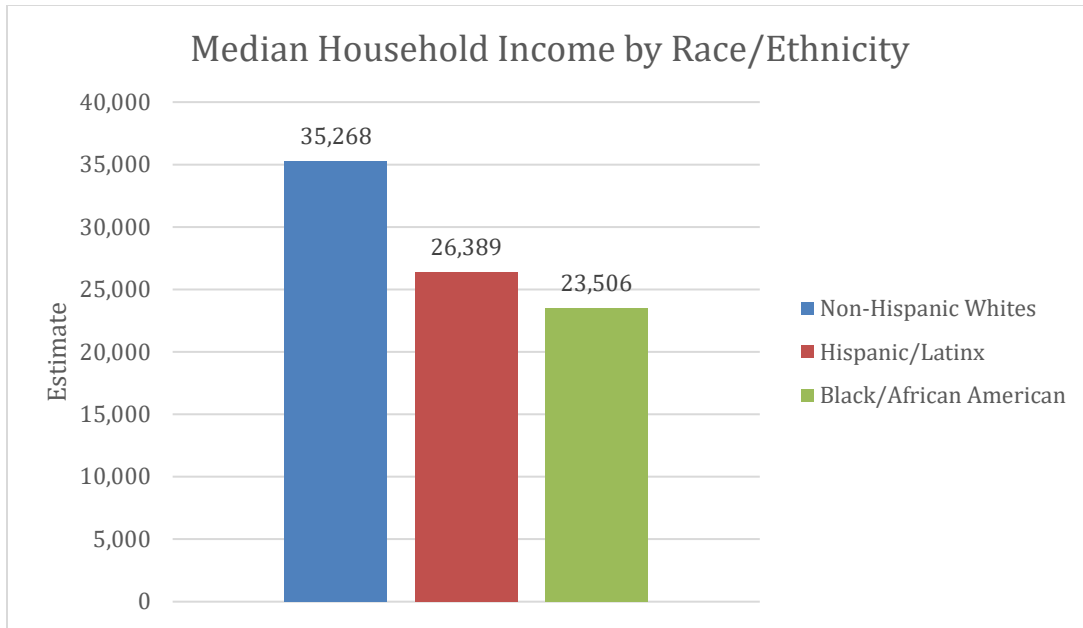


Figure 3 Source: U.S. Census Bureau; 2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table B16001.

Income

The estimated median annual income among all residents in Sanford in 2016 was \$29,718. This was, overall, lower than the N.C. statewide median of \$48,256 and lower than the Chatham County median of \$58,555 [6]. Median annual incomes are distributed unequally by racial/ethnic origin in Siler City. Non-Hispanic Whites have the highest annual median income at \$35,268 [7]. This is followed by Hispanics/Latinos with an estimated annual median income of \$26,389 [8]. Black/African American residents have the lowest estimated annual median income earning \$23,506 [9]. As mentioned above, this inequality is even starker when the whole of Chatham County is examined [10]. Approximately 41% of the Latino population in Siler City had an income that is at or below the poverty level, as compared to 28% in the Town of Siler City as a whole. By comparison, statewide, the percentage of all North Carolina residents statewide living at or below the poverty level was 17% [9].



The table below shows the industries employing Siler City residents over age 16 years [10]. Estimates for each industry are broken down by racial categories. This information only considers White and Black/African American residents alone and does not provide details on ethnicity. In addition, this is the most recently available information and comes from the 2011-2015 5-Year Estimates of the American Community Survey.

Distribution of employees by racial classification in Siler City

Industry	Number of persons employed by racial classification		
	White Alone	Black Alone	Some other race alone
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	27	9	45
Construction	150	22	246
Manufacturing	364	91	239
Wholesale trade	124	0	0
Retail trade	132	66	0

Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	88	15	0
Information	0	0	0
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	0	9	0
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	148	65	34
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	225	238	117
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	174	107	11
Other services, except public administration	135	47	39
Public administration	112	9	0

Table 2: Source: ACS 2015 DP03

Immigrant Economic Impact

We examined immigrants' economic impact in Siler City through data from the non-profit New American Economy. Their analysis situates Siler City within a region that encompasses the counties of Chatham, Orange, Durham, and Person [11]. Within this region, immigrants make up 12.3% of the population. This immigrant presence resulted in a contribution of 497 million dollars paid in federal and state and local taxes in the year 2014. The spending power of immigrants in this area totals approximately \$1.4 billion dollars. In this region, immigrant workers are concentrated in five industries: Construction (45.5%), Administrative Support (29.8%), Tourism, Hospitality, and Recreation (26.2%), Manufacturing (18.7%), and Transportation and Warehousing (15.1%). In addition, immigrants play an important role in generating jobs in this

region. Immigrants are 25% more likely than native-born residents of the area to be entrepreneurs. In addition, immigrants help to revitalize local communities. The 11,540 homes owned by the foreign-born population create demand for housing and also make communities more attractive to U.S.-born residents [11].

V. Findings

Our findings reflect the valuable input of the 75 local residents who took part in this assessment through **public meetings** and **interviews**. Participants represented a diverse sample of immigrants from homes in Siler City, Bonlee, as well as other parts of Chatham County. This included both English- and Spanish-speaking residents from different countries of origin, as well as U.S.-born children of immigrant parents and youth under the age of 18.

Because BIC works with local government, we focused many of our questions on areas and services that the Town of Siler City provides (see pp. 6-8) such as housing, transportation, communication, law enforcement, leadership, and parks and recreation. At the request of BIC steering committee members, we included a focus on youth mental health. We also asked open-ended questions to generate ideas and perspectives about other areas of local experience.

Below, we describe these major issues as well as residents' recommendations for improving integration. We also include other types of data from this report, such as demographic and employment data, a review of local resources, and local health department findings, to support a better understanding of these issues.

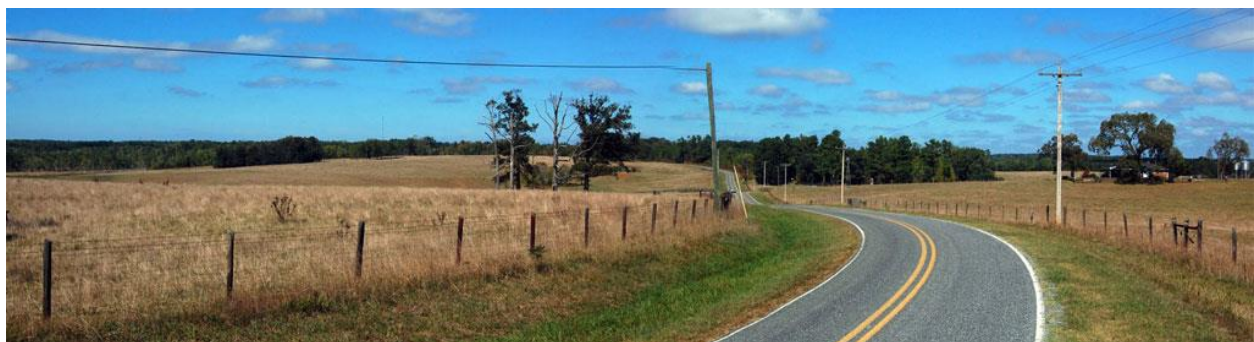


Photo courtesy of the Town of Siler City

Transportation

Transportation is one of the greatest challenges facing immigrant residents in Siler City, Chatham County, and throughout the state of North Carolina, particularly in rural areas where they is relatively limited public transportation. Current N.C. state law does not allow residents without proof of U.S. citizenship or residency status to obtain driver's licenses. Most participants we talked to drive, but shared that there are many community members not able to drive because they are not able to obtain a driver's license because of their immigration status.

Participants explained that as a result of these issues, many people have no safe transportation options for traveling to work, health clinics, or community businesses and institutions. They identified North Chatham Road and Hamp Stone Road mobile home communities as places that have a great need for better access to transportation.

Many residents live on busy roads unsafe for children (particularly in the Hamp Stone Road communities) and felt uncomfortable walking outside their homes. “The roads aren’t safe for pedestrians, and our children can’t play or ride bikes outside near busy roads,” said one participant. They suggested adding more sidewalks to improve community safety. Chatham County residents need long-distance transportation to places like Sanford, Asheboro, Greensboro, and the Mexican Consulate in Raleigh.

Chatham Transit Services

Chatham Transit provides public transportation throughout Chatham County during the hours of 6:00 am – 5:00 pm Monday through Friday. Fares are charged based on mileage and start at \$2.00 each way. Chatham Transit runs eight times each weekday from Pittsboro to Chapel Hill for \$3.00 each way, and three times each weekday from Siler City to Chapel Hill for \$3.00 each way [12]. This fixed service does not go to any neighborhoods identified by participants. Chatham Transit also offers transportation services to any Chatham County resident traveling in the County, but requires a 48 hour notice for all reservations. Chatham Transit number has a Spanish language option, and currently, three drivers and one dispatcher speak Spanish. Chatham Transit’s webpage has a translate button in the bottom right hand corner of the page.

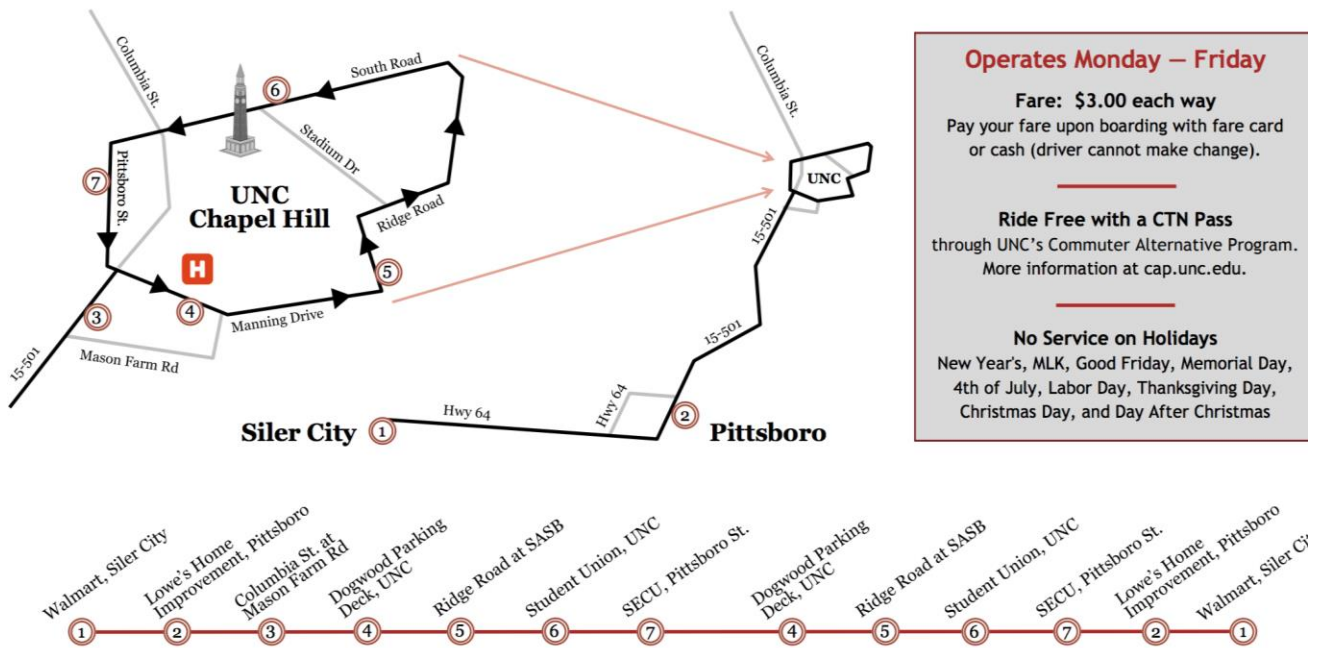


Figure 4: CT Express Route Map. Source: Chatham Transit Network website

In 2017, Chatham Transit conducted a Public Perception Study with local residents. The Study found that even though 73% of 251 respondents were familiar with Chatham Transit, only 19% ever used it. The survey was provided in English, resulting in limited feedback from Spanish-speaking residents who may have the greatest need for services.

Many participants of this BIC study were familiar with Chatham Transit, and several stated that it is an important resource that people use to get to doctor appointments, local businesses and other locations. They stated that there is a general need for more publicity, in Spanish, about Chatham Transit services. It is difficult to arrange a ride because of language barriers; even though there is a Spanish-speaking option by phone, an individual is not always available to take a call. They also shared that the two-day reservation policy is difficult, particularly when someone has an urgent medical issue.



Chatham Transit Staff (Photo courtesy of Chatham Transit Network)

Transportation Recommendations by Residents:

Participants made suggestions about how Chatham Transit and the Town of Siler City could make transportation more accessible:

- Provide more Spanish-speaking switchboard operators.
- Provide regular transportation routes (e.g. every 20 minutes, or every hour) that don't require a call ahead of time that access low-income neighborhoods.
- More sidewalks, particularly in neighborhoods on North Chatham Street, would improve community safety.
- Focus outreach efforts in North Chatham Road and Hamp Stone Road mobile home communities, which have a great need for better access to transportation.
- Expand long-distance transportation to places like Sanford, Asheboro, Greensboro, and the Mexican Consulate in Raleigh.

Housing

Immigrant residents face many challenges finding affordable, quality housing in Siler City and

Chatham County. Affordable housing in Chatham County is an equity issue: White households' median income is more than twice that of Black/African American households and of Latino households, according to a recent report by Triangle J Council of Governments on affordable housing [13].

Siler City' Latino population is higher than average for the region. Additionally, it has a higher than average number of housing units that are renter-occupied compared to other municipalities in the region. 77% of all renter households in Siler City have household incomes below \$50,000 per year. Of these low-income renter households, 63% are housing cost-burdened, spending more than 30% of their income on rent and utilities. Many of these household have residents for whom English is not their first language [13]

Participants shared that many residents have trouble finding affordable housing. Many landlords do not accept parents with children, or limit the number of children or people who can live in one rental property. There is a lack of sufficient rental units for low-income households, especially extremely low-income households, with an estimated gap of 1,995 affordable rental housing units in Chatham [13].

Additionally, much of the rental housing is in bad condition. "The houses on North Chatham Street do not have air conditioning," said one participant. Others reported housing without heat, a violation of housing code. Because many low-income immigrants do not qualify for federal public housing [14], naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH) is an important option. Over 20% of Siler City's housing stock was rated as being in "fair" or worse condition by the tax assessor [13]. Organizational leaders reported that the penalties for landlords who violate current housing codes are not sufficient to encourage compliance.



Residents of Johnson Mobile Home Community and staffmembers of El Vínculo Hispano. Photo courtesy of *The Raleigh News and Observer*

We conducted a special focus group with Johnson Mobile Home Community residents who faced eviction as a result of the arrival of Mountaire Farms Poultry Processing Company. According to

a news article, the company initially purchased the area formerly occupied by Townsend Processing Facility and later purchased the land on which the mobile home community was situated [15]. This exacerbated the already difficult process of finding affordable housing in the area. Residents in mobile homes felt frustrated and angry because they were not notified when the mobile home part was sold. They shared that some have lived 15 to 30 years in their neighborhoods. They felt that they should be part of the process and should have been notified about the possibility of the land being sold in advance so they could better anticipate a future move. They need help relocating, and transferring their electricity and water services, as well as help finding housing that accepts children and pets. Since the focus group, Mountaire Farms has reached a settlement with residents[16].

Housing Recommendations :

- Residents would like more bilingual legal resources about fair and affordable housing, and how to report a complaint about housing discrimination. Resource should include hard copy versions in Spanish that could be disseminated to Spanish-speaking residents.
- Provide fair housing education to landlords, particularly in neighborhoods with high number of Hispanic/Latino households.
- Enforce housing codes and establish program of periodic inspection in neighborhoods with a high number of Hispanic/Latino households.
- Strengthen housing codes and punitive measures for people who violate codes.
- Create a housing authority in Siler City.

See the Triangle J Council of Governments Report on affordable housing for general recommendations.

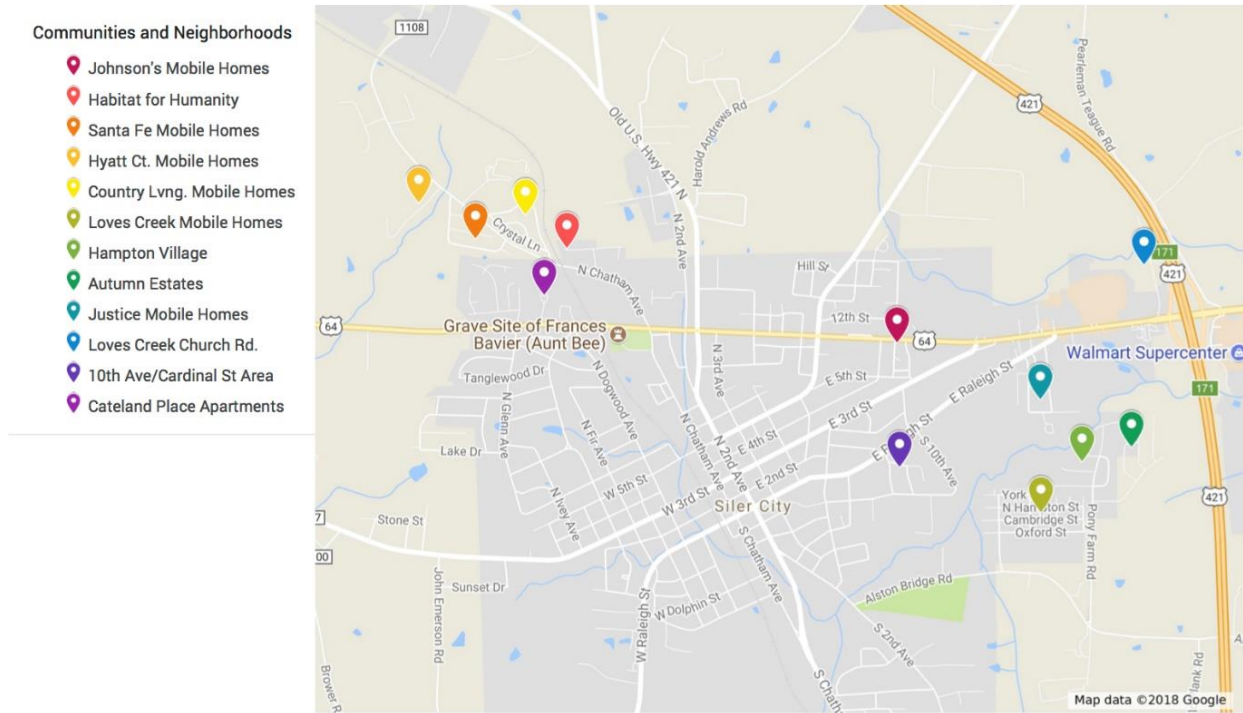


Figure 5: Siler City neighborhoods with residents of Latin American origin

Public Safety and law enforcement

Safety was an important theme throughout the assessment. Participants expressed the desire for safer neighborhoods, with less crime, robberies and gun violence. Participants were particularly concerned about youth access to drugs and guns, and expressed a desire for more youth resources and programs (by local police and others) about the prevention of substance abuse and gun violence. “I hear a lot of gunshots in my neighborhood, and it terrifies my family,” said one participant living on North Chatham Street.

Participants had divergent views of local law enforcement. Many participants expressed positive opinions about local police and appreciated the quick response to calls for help in their neighborhoods. Others shared that they fear police, and are hesitant to report crime or go to them for help. Much of the perception of local police is linked to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids conducted by federal officers, discriminatory traffic-stopping procedures and police checkpoints conducted by state and local agencies, and the participation of local law enforcement agencies in federal deportation programs like 287g and Secure Communities in recent years. During the assessment process, an ICE raid resulted in the arrests of 25 people in the Triangle area, including in Siler City and Chatham County [17].

The Chatham County Sheriff’s Department and Siler City Police Departments do not participate

in the federal 287(g) or Secure Communities immigration enforcement programs. Nevertheless, neighboring counties have adopted these programs, and participants reported that these practices and programs have damaged the reputations of local law enforcement.

Many participants described a time of widespread racial profiling by police in Latino neighborhoods several years ago, but perceive a change in recent years. By contrast, other residents reported that racial profiling has persisted, and they perceive that they are pulled over or stopped by police because of their race or ethnicity.

Residents provided examples of positive programs and interactions they have had with first responders in their communities. “People from the fire department and police have been visiting Habitat for Humanity a lot, and they are really friendly and have made good connections, said one participant.” Several participants referred to the value of ongoing, regular positive interactions in building trust.

Law enforcement recommendations by residents:

- Participants suggested to continue the “National Night Out” event and welcomed the opportunity for local police to connect with residents and merchants. One suggestion was to give law enforcement officials a tour of participating local Latino businesses during the event.
- Participants seek more bilingual police-community education related to youth drug and gun violence prevention.
- Building relationships between foreign-born and law enforcement must not be a one-time event, but must be a continuous, ongoing effort with regular events and interactions.
- Participants mentioned Habitat for Humanity as a model for good interaction between residents and fire department staff and police, who visit regularly and are friendly.
- Improved communication in Spanish about police procedures and “Know your rights” information about police encounters.
- More transparency and data sharing.
- Opportunities to provide input about new hires, including the new Police Chief.

Leadership

Many residents of Latin American origin are strongly engaged in local civic leadership activities, through their neighborhoods, faith communities, businesses, or non-profit organizations. Nevertheless, Latinos are underrepresented in elected and appointed leadership positions, as well as staff positions, in the Town of Siler City and Chatham County. The Siler City Police Department has position vacancies and has had difficulties recruiting residents of Latin American origin to serve as officers. Indeed, youth participants felt disconnected with local government because they see few leaders or advocates from similar backgrounds.

Participants voiced a strong interest in civic engagement and leadership opportunities and provided ideas for how the Town of Siler City could better engage communities. Many were unfamiliar with the functions of local government and expressed an interest in “Peoples Academies” and other opportunities for civic education. Several stated that they would value an invitation from public leaders to take part in civic activities. “We don’t know our leaders well and would appreciate the opportunity to know them better,” said one participant. Some voiced that there is a common perception among immigrants that “free speech” does not apply to them, particularly in the context of anti-immigrant sentiment from public leaders in North Carolina and throughout the United States.

Participants were interested in better understanding how public meetings work, what kinds of issues are discussed, and how local residents can publicly share their perspectives. Participants, as well as the staff of local non-profit organizations engaged in the Siler City BIC initiative, shared that they would value information or agendas in advance of public meetings so they can better participate. Also, they recommended that when publicizing events, information needs to be clear about what is required to attend (e.g. “no identification required,” and “all welcome,” are recommended language) and what the meeting will be about. The public library is an important place to access information, but it excludes many community members by requiring a driver’s license or passport (in addition to a local address) to get a library card.

Learning English is a critical skill for civic engagement. Many participants had taken English courses at Central Carolina Community College and with other organizations and appreciated these affordable opportunities. According to enrollment data from Central Carolina Community College, 77 individuals were enrolled in ESL courses since July 1, 2017 [18]. For public meetings and other leadership opportunities, language is a barrier for many in accessing these meetings, particularly for more recently arrived immigrants.

Participants were particularly interested in more information about Mountaire Farms. There were concerns about whether more people be displaced from neighborhoods, hiring practices, and changing community demographics due to a new workforce.

Youth participants were particularly interested in leadership opportunities related to Parks and Recreation.

Leadership Recommendations by Residents

- To eliminate language barriers, the Town should provide interpreters at local government and other community meetings. Information about meetings should be bilingual, available on the website and in hard copy.
- Parks and Recreation meetings could take place at local high schools to engage more youth in leadership opportunities.

- The Town of Siler City could provide a bilingual guide to local government, including specific information about boards and commissions.
- Organize bilingual “People’s Academies” to better educate residents, including youth in high schools, about local government.
- For more equitable representation in leadership and staff positions in Siler City, the Town and community partners could host a leadership recruitment fair to educate community members about local boards and commissions, including their purpose and power; member eligibility requirements; membership application process; and the components of a successful application. Elected officials and board/commission chairs could be invited to attend and meet residents.

Business and Entrepreneurship

In Siler City and Chatham County, immigrants are 25% more likely than native-born residents of the area to be entrepreneurs [11]. Immigrants play an important role in generating jobs in this region, and Siler City is home to many businesses owned by residents with Latin American heritage. In our conversations with local business owners, we asked how the Town of Siler City and local partner organizations, such as CCCC, EVH, and others, could better support local businesses owners.

Business recommendations:

- Employ more bilingual people in local government and partnering organizations to support business owners through the different processes need to create a business, apply for permits, labor inspection, ABC permits, tax requirements and follow other local regulations.
- Create Spanish language legal resources, provide a legal counselor, and/or organize orientations about how to buy a house/office/property and financing options.
- Provide more resources and courses about CPR and “how to start a small business” in Spanish.
- Provide building and safety codes and guidelines in Spanish.

When we asked for suggestions about “What can the town do to motivate community members to be a stronger part of local government?” participants provided many different ideas that included local businesses. Some participants encouraged local officials and Town staff to visit the businesses and introduce themselves, particularly during town-wide events such as the National Night Out and the annual EVH Fiesta. Specific suggestions included “organize an open house for Hispanic business owners, with a tour guide to explain what’s happening here and who does what” during National Night Out. Participants saw these events as times when local law enforcement officers could also connect with business owners and build relationships. Evenings

are a good time for business owners to meet and take part in organized activities.

Communication

Communication between the Town of Siler City and local residents is critical in ensuring community safety, well-being, and prosperity. Town staff face the challenges of communicating with utility customers, warning residents about dangerous weather conditions, responding to emergencies, and providing sanitary and infrastructural services vital to residents' health, in addition to many other things. The Town employs many forms of communication, including a website and social media (with separate twitter and/or Facebook pages for Parks and Recreation, Police, and Fire Departments) and mailings to Siler City residents. The Town also has a 24 hour a day telecommunications staff that meets the public, answers the phone, manages the radio, and dispatches calls to police and first responders.

One of the most important themes in the perspectives and recommendations of participants in this study was the need for more Town communications in Spanish language. Nearly all of Town communications are in English, and no telecommunications staff working on the police department telephone line (919-742-5626) speak Spanish. An estimated 3,129 individuals, or 42% of the population of Siler City, speak Spanish. Of these, 45% reported speaking English "Very Well" and 54% reported speaking English less than "Very Well." These statistics illustrate that while many immigrants are actively learning or have already learned English, bilingual communications by local government continue to be important. Language access for LEP individuals (limited English proficiency) is mandated by federal law under the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 for many federal programs, states, and localities. According to Chatham County Schools, only 50% of the families of enrolled children have access to the internet. Accessible information is particularly critical for recently-arrived non-English speakers, who may be unfamiliar with many aspects of living in the United States. We asked participants how the Town of Siler City could better communicate information about many areas that include utilities and public services, public safety issues, public meetings, civic engagement and leadership opportunities, and Town news and events.

Communications recommendations:

- Local government offices and agencies should hire more bilingual staff to improve communication practices.
- Local government websites should make information available in both Spanish and English. This includes dynamic content as well as static forms and utility bills and other information sent through post. Translation programs and software are not as sufficient in ensuring accuracy; certified professional translators provide higher quality products.

Projects or organizations intending to communicate with local immigrant communities should

consider the following recommended places/people/methods:

- Churches
- Laundromats
- Local businesses/tiendas
- The internet and social media (Snapchat and Instagram)
- Paper flyers
- Utility bills
- Letters to residences
- Central Carolina Community College ESL and other courses
- El Vínculo Hispano/ The Hispanic Liaison
- Chatham Latinos in Collaboration
- Communities in Schools
- Chatham Habitat for Humanity
- The Mexican Consulate in Raleigh
- Doctor
- Family and friends
- Health clinics
- Lawyer
- Chatham County Health Department
- Other speakers of Spanish language
- Public schools



Parks and Recreation

The Town of Siler City Parks and Recreation Department maintains six parks, two gymnasiums, and a community center, including the Paul Braxton Park, the location of the only regulation-size soccer field in the County. The Siler City Parks and Recreation Department sponsors youth athletics such as Football, Basketball, Baseball, Softball, Coach Pitch, T-Ball, and Pickleball, as well as special events, including a summer outdoor film series, “Friday Night Flicks,” a Mental Health Awareness Night, Easter Eggstravaganza, Fall-O-Ween and Supper with Santa. The department shares newsletters with events and information in English and Spanish language quarterly in the water bills of Siler City residents. They also advertise programs through a Facebook page. The Parks and Recreation Board consists of seven members who provide critical input to staff about projects and planning. Staff from the Town Parks and Recreation Department have actively participated in the Siler City BIC initiative.

All participants were enthusiastic about the value of parks and recreational opportunities and had used local facilities and fields maintained by the Town of Siler City and the Chatham Soccer League. They valued events and programs for youth, particularly in the evening and on weekends. Participants appreciated the creation of two new soccer fields to “rest” the heavily used Braxton Field, and emphasized that the soccer fields are a good place to invest and continue appropriate maintenance because many young people use them.

Parents described the need for more playgrounds for toddlers and small children, as well as a new public pool. Young participants felt strongly that Siler City needs more opportunities for adolescents and teenagers after school and on weekends. Siler City’s residents are younger, with 29% of the population being below age 19, and just 19% over age 60[10]). “We need more entertainment, a movie theatre, more parks that are near our neighborhoods and the center of town,” said one teenage participant. “Young people get bored and into trouble, like drinking and drugs,” said one parent.

Young participants were enthusiastic about the value of parks and recreational opportunities and were particularly interested in getting involved in decision-making related to parks and recreation. They emphasized that the soccer fields are a good place to invest because many young people use them, and that they provide healthy options for kids after school and on weekends. Participants were not aware of the Parks and Recreation outdoor movie events and suggested that these programs could also serve the purpose of sharing information about the Town of Siler City. In our BIC steering committee, two staff members of organizations that work with local youth described the need for a dedicated after school youth center with entertainment options.

Parks and Recreation Recommendations by Residents

- Engage residents with connections to communities of Latin American origin in planning events and serving on the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. Publicize board openings using networks outlined in the Communications section (p. 26).
- Continue to invest in and maintain soccer fields.
- Expand bilingual events and programs for youth and their families, particularly after school and on evenings/weekends. Include sub-titles on outdoor movies.
- Engage youth in decision-making related to parks and recreation.
- Dedicate an issue of the newsletter to sharing the major new improvements to the soccer fields, including the new and more durable rye grass for year-round use, change in “sideways play” regulations, and future planning for astro-turf.
- Dedicate an issue of the newsletter to sharing the major new improvements in the public pool (\$1.2 million renovation in 2018); and parks, including Washington Park (e.g. new structures for ages 2-12, new mulch and ACA accessibility); Bolin Lane Park (e.g. new megatower play structure for ages 2-12); and Landrus Park (to be renovated in 2019 with new therapeutic swings for kids with disabilities).
- Share newsletters with wider audiences beyond Siler City water utility customers using networks outlined in the Communications section (see p. 26).

Youth Mental Health

Latino youth and their immigrant families face a number of stressful social conditions and barriers to socioeconomic advancement. In recent years, federal and state policies and programs have made life difficult for many by restricting employment opportunities; limiting access to higher education; restricting mobility and access to drivers' licenses and other identification documents; and limiting access to health insurance and services (8). Moreover, federal immigration enforcement has shifted from borders to the interior United States and local police increasingly participate in deportation processes, resulting in historic highs in immigrant detention and deportation since 2008. While the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program brought some relief to young people in the last five years, the current presidential administration terminated the program in March of 2018.

Restrictive federal and state policies have been associated with negative health outcomes, such as decreased health care utilization, mental illness, poor maternal health, and food insecurity [19]. Mixed-status families report worse physical health for their children as compared to their U.S. citizen co-ethnics[19]. A number of studies have demonstrated that the constant fear of deportation and immigration raids results in the deterioration of immigrants' psychological, emotional, and physical health [20-25]. Latino youth are particularly vulnerable to stress during adolescence when they are in stages of psychosocial development.

In recent years, a particularly vulnerable group of children has settled in North Carolina. These are undocumented and unaccompanied minors who have migrated from Central American countries, sometimes alone or with little family support. The majority are teenage boys ages 14-17 [26]. Many have had to travel, by foot, from Central America up through Mexico. Unaccompanied minors often experience the trauma of fleeing from communities with high rates of violence, kidnapping and homicide. In Honduras, for example, the homicide rate is the highest in the world. These children have left families that have been targets of violence, and they are often victims of crime, not only in their countries of origin but during the long migration through Mexico and across the U.S. border. Between 2015 and March 2018, a total of 4,076 Central American migrant children were resettled in North Carolina [27]. These children suffer from many different health issues that include injury, illness, post-traumatic disorders, and other mental health conditions.

In Chatham County, Latinos experience higher than average poverty rates and low educational attainment: approximately 43% percent of Chatham County's 8500 Latinos live in poverty, the highest rate of any race or ethnic group in county. On average, 50% of Latino children lived in households with incomes below the federal poverty level in Chatham County [9]. The health and socio-economic status of Latinos in North Carolina is among the worst in the nation: median annual personal earnings of \$19,000 rank forty-three nationwide, more than a third of Latinos lack health insurance, and forty-one percent of Latino children (under seventeen years old) live

in poverty. The 2014 Community Health Assessment in Chatham County by the Public Health Department identified that “Latino residents are often susceptible to language, transportation, and economic barriers” in accessing healthcare, and experience a shortage of services and resources in general [28].

Public Schools

Public schools play an important role in providing students with healthcare resources or making referrals to outside organizations. All students have access to these resources and for the many children without insurance, they may be the only services available. Chatham County has a network of healthcare providers and school staff who work together to provide mental health support for youth. There are 18 public schools managed by Chatham County School District, serving 8,700 students.

Eduardo Fernandez, a Siler City native, Jordan Matthews High School graduate and staff member of the Building Integrated Communities Initiative at UNC Chapel Hill, conducted interviews with 7 mental health professionals who work with youth in Chatham County and Siler City at schools and organizations or clinics that provide healthcare. Interviewees included staff at Virginia Cross Elementary, Siler City Elementary, Chatham Middle School, Jordan-Matthews High School, El Futuro, and Daymark Recovery Services. Interviews were conducted via telephone or in person between October and December 2017; the focus group was conducted in the February 2018. The interviews were confidential lasted an estimated 30 minutes; the focus group lasted for approximately 1.5 hours. We conducted interviews at schools in Siler City with the highest populations of Latino students: Jordan Matthews High School (52.4%), Chatham Middle (69.4%), and Virginia Cross Elementary (74%).

Bilingual BIC staff also conducted a focus group at El Vínculo Hispano with 10 youth between the ages of 14 and 18 from Siler City and Bonlee in February 2018. Most of the participants’ families were originally from Mexico (2 were from El Salvador and Guatemala).

In addition to this primary research, UNC staff reviewed literature on healthcare access, U.S. immigration policy in the United States, and Latino adolescent mental health.

Findings

Below are themes we identified in the interviews, observations, and the youth focus group. We organize feedback into the categories of Healthcare provider/school staff perspectives and Latino youth perspectives.

Provider/school staff perspectives

What kinds of mental health issues do Latino students experience?

Providers and school staff identified the most prevalent mental health problems they encountered among Latino students in elementary, middle and high schools. These include self-harm, depression, isolation, anxiety, and behavioral issues such as ADHD. In high school,

participants perceived that self-harm, specifically cutting, was prevalent among Latina girls.

They shared that students they see talk about feelings of hopelessness and uncertainty about the future. They also spoke about the trauma of having a loved one in another country and the inability to see them because of the difficulty of traveling and obtaining visas. “We help kids cope with familial issues like how to deal with missing someone important,” said one school staff member. Participants shared how elementary school students have suffered the traumatic loss of family members because of deportation, leading to post-traumatic stress disorder and suicide ideation. Several participants expressed concern that some children are victims of child abuse and live in unsafe home and neighborhood environments. In other interviews and focus groups, we spoke to adult residents, primarily in Siler City, who shared they felt unsafe in some neighborhoods because of crime, gun violence, and poor housing conditions. The 2014 Community Health Assessment in Chatham County found that “young adults in Siler city mentioned being exposed to violence in their communities related to drugs, guns, and other illegal activities and interpersonal conflict.”

Participants also described some of the mental health issues of a particularly vulnerable group of children, unaccompanied minors who have migrated to the United States from Central American countries. They explained that these children exhibit many of the same symptoms described above, present behavioral issues at school, and/or turn to substance abuse. Additionally, they may also be dealing with untreated medical conditions or injuries. Counselors at El Futuro and Daymark described how young clients, particularly from El Salvador or Honduras, not only have experienced trauma coming to the United States, but also from finally reuniting with parents and family in the United States.

What resources are available to students who seek help at school?

School staff participants described the process of supporting students in need. Teachers are often the “first line of defense” and typically serve as the primary form of contact for students seeking help. Other important figures in a students’ life, such as parents or athletic coaches, may advocate or speak on the students’ behalf to school officials. If a teacher feels a student requires more attention, they are then referred to student support services and/or school-based counseling, which consists of a group of mental health professionals whose main job is to provide services within the school, either during or after school hours. This particular service provides ease of accessibility for students in need. Staff participants perceived school-based counseling to be particularly effective and that students connect well with providers. If the student requires more specialized attention, long-term care or therapy, they are referred to a community organization or outside healthcare provider such as El Futuro, Daymark, Renaissance, Cardinal, Peak Professional Group or the Department of Social Services. One limitation of referring students to outside organizations, however, is that students often lack transportation to these locations and cannot pay for the cost of services. El Futuro was cited as a preferred provider for several participants due to their staffs’ linguistic and cultural expertise.

Participants cited their perceptions of the limitations of mental health resources for Latinx youth in Chatham County. For school staff, they felt that schools had limited counseling staff and resources to support the many students in need or to build the kinds of trusting relationships that will empower students to seek care. They also expressed a concern with the transiency of mental health care providers in the area. “Mental health providers within Siler City have been seen as a revolving door, it can be so hard to get students in,” said one participant. Moreover, school staff perceive that many of these healthcare providers have a long waitlist, limited hours, and do not have resources to support the entire family, particularly people without health insurance or legal immigration status.

Our conversations with local health care providers revealed that not only do schools lack mental health resources, but that providers cannot meet the demand for services. For example, many people from surrounding areas, such as Sanford or Asheboro, drive to El Futuro for their services. Providers identified a lack of access to psychiatrists, particularly bilingual and bicultural professionals, as well as gaps in acute mental care throughout the area for people who are gravely disabled or likely to harm themselves or others. They shared that parents are sometimes unsupportive of their child receiving mental health care.

An important final point that participants acknowledged is that the school support system is only effective when students take the initiative to seek help. *“The key is getting them to come to the counselors,”* said one participant.

Youth perspectives

What kinds of mental health issues do students experience, and why?

We asked youth (age 14-22) about what kinds of mental health issues that their friends experience. Similar to the healthcare providers and school staff, they identified that many of their friends suffer from depression, anxiety, ADHD, and stress. When asked what caused stress or unhappiness, they attributed it to school related work and the pressure to graduate, issues at home, lack of self-confidence or hyper self-consciousness. They talked about being “caught between two cultures:” growing up in a different society from their parents, but not always feeling welcome in the United States. They talked about struggling with a hyphenated identity of Latina/o/x-American and pressures of being successful: the hope of their parents who had sacrificed everything to come to the United States.

Youth participants also spoke at length about the impacts of racism at schools and in their communities. They identified the current national political climate and the anti-immigrant rhetoric they hear in the media as a source of stress. They also talked about personal experiences of racism and spoke about the day after the 2016 national elections, when they heard openly racist comments at their schools. “The day after elections, there were teachers at every corner and outside of classrooms to make sure that there was no fighting,” said one young participant.

Students perceive that school administrators and teachers have not effectively addressed a climate of racism in schools.

Youth in high school also worry about deportation. Even if they do not have to worry about being deported because they are a U.S. citizen or have legal status, many are concerned about parents, friends, or other family. The recent ICE raids in Chatham and Orange Counties have terrorized families in the region.

Young people also feel stress from taking on many responsibilities in immigrant families, where parents may be unfamiliar with language, school materials, or the process of applying to college. Young people provide transportation for family members unable to obtain a driver's license and serve as interpreters and translators.

How do students seek cope with stress or seek help in crisis?

In the focus group, we asked young people about their familiarity with school and other support systems available. They either were not familiar, or only semi-knowledgeable, with ways to seek help at school. Many shared that they were uncomfortable seeking help from school guidance counselors, and sometimes teachers, for stress, anxiety, and other mental health issues. They stated that they were much more likely to talk to friends or go to organizations with Latinx youth support groups like El Vínculo Hispano (where the focus group took place) as a way to cope with daily stresses. Participants also mentioned Communities in Schools as an important resource. Youth participants perceived that there are more resources at the middle school level, particularly at Chatham Middle School, and shared how counselors can build trust with students by having a friendly demeanor, developing relationships with individual students, and taking frequent opportunities to ask them how they felt.

Summary of key findings

- Young people in Siler City face significant stress from poverty, the perception of racism in schools, an unstable and uncertain future due to immigration policies, the threat of deportation, and the responsibilities of helping their families navigate U.S. society.
- High school students turn to their peers more frequently for support than school staff when dealing with stress, anxiety, and other mental health issues or crises.
- School support staff need more resources and time to build relationships and trust with students so that they (students) will be comfortable seeking help.
- School-based counseling, which consists of a group of mental health professionals whose main job is to provide services within the school, either during or after school hours, is a particularly effective and accessible service for many students.
- Bilingual and culturally knowledgeable mental health professionals are an important resource for youth in Chatham County.

- Students perceive a great deal of racism in the school environment, particularly following the last presidential election.
- Many students respond well to support groups oriented around identity and heritage.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Focus Group Guide

“Discussion Guide” (Question List) for Community Discussions/Focus Groups

TOWN SERVICES AND PROGRAMMING (GENERAL)

Town staff will share a basic list of Siler City Town services and departments.

·Which of these town services or departments have you come in contact with, if any?

·What have been your experiences with these town services or programming?

(What have been your experiences contacting, or communicating with, different town services or departments?)

·How can the town improve these experiences?

·What concerns or worries do you or your families have, if any, about contacting or interacting with different services or departments?

(How safe do you feel contacting the town government?)

(Are there any services or programs that you do not trust? Why?)

·What town services or programming are unfamiliar to anyone here, or something that you don't know a lot about?

·What services or departments are you interested in learning more about? Why?

·What do you think are the most important things that the town government could do to improve you or your families' day-to-day life?

·What are some things that the town government could do to improve how connected you and your family are to

Siler City as a whole community?

(What could the town do to improve your sense of “community” or “connectedness” in Siler City?)

BUSINESS, TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING, AND HEALTH

·Do you or your families know how/where to learn about town resources for small business owners, or for starting new businesses?

·What would be the best way for the town to share information with you or your families about this?

(How do you USUALLY learn about any town services, programs, and events?)

(How can the town share this information better?)

·There are several local groups that support small business owners and people who want to start businesses in Siler City, such as the Siler City Development Organization, the Rural Siler City e-STEP committee for small business, and the Siler City Merchants Association. These groups have had difficulty with successfully involving members and representation from Siler City’s Latino business community.

·What can these groups do to involve more Latino business owners on their committees?

·Tell us about you or your families’ experiences finding, or trying to find, housing that is decent and affordable.

·Tell us about you or your families’ experiences with transportation (including public transit) in Siler City.

·How do you or your families go to the places that you need to go?

·What public transportation services are most needed, if any?

·What could the town do to help more people access medical or mental health care?

RELATIONSHIPS AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Please think about any communities in Siler City that you or your family are connected to, if there are any. For example, some people feel very connected to their relatives, their friends, their neighborhoods, their schools, the places that they work, or other groups.

·How can the Siler City government work *together* with you and your communities?

·What could the Siler City government do to make you or your family feel more connected to the *whole* Town of Siler City?

·What experiences have you or you families had with the *groups or people who help to make decisions for the town of Siler City*, such as the Town Council or the town’s Advisory Boards?

·What kinds of town decisions would you like to be involved with, or more involved with, if any?

·If you or your families do want to communicate more with the Town Council or with other groups that make town decisions, how could the town government support you to get more involved?

Appendix B: Youth Focus Group Guide

Siler City Discussion Guide for Facilitators

v. 2/5/2018

OVERVIEW: 10 min intro, 60 min discussion, 10 min thanks/demographic forms

Intro	10 min	10
Services & programming	20 min	30
Community Priorities	10 min	40
Civic engagement	15 min	55
Mental & behavioral health	10 min	65
Closing question	5 min	70
Thank you + Demographic forms	10 min	80

INTRODUCTION – [10 MIN]

Hello, everyone, and thank you again for being here!

My name is _____ and I am going to be the *facilitator* of this group, which means I will be guiding our group's conversation for the next hour.

The purpose, or goal, of this conversation, is to hear your experiences and recommendations for the Town of Siler City's services and programming, including your recommendations for supporting Hispanic youth and families' participation and leadership in the town government and town decision-making.

·Our note-taker, _____, will be taking notes on this conversation so that we can write a summary of our group's discussion. They will NOT write down anyone's name or information that could reveal the exact identity of who is in this group today.

·**[Note taker introduces self]**

·We will share this summary of our group's discussion with the EVH staff, town staff, and the other community organizations who are a part of the Siler City BIC Project.

· The Siler City BIC Project will then use YOUR ideas and recommendations from this discussion to start creating an

Action Plan. This means that we will develop strategies, based on your ideas today, to improve town services and programming and to support leadership from Hispanic residents in the town government.

So, what will happen for the next hour is that I will ask some specific questions to our group for discussion.

·I will ask you to try and speak one at a time, but everyone should feel free to share their thoughts and respond to each other's ideas.

·It is completely okay if people don't agree or have different ideas while we are talking – we just want to hear what everyone has to say.

·We do have many important topics to discuss, and we only have one hour together. Because of this, I may interrupt our conversation at some points so that we can move on to the next topic.

Last, we want to acknowledge that there are many important community issues and challenges that we may not be able to discuss today.

·For this project, we are focusing only on the Town's services and how it can support involvement in the town government.

·The questions that we talk about will be specific to local resources and support for Hispanic/Latinx business owners, town communications, and leadership opportunities.

Does anyone have any questions about this discussion before we begin?

Great, let's get started!

TOWN SERVICES & PROGRAMMING – [20 MIN]

1. Let's look at this list of town services and programming. What town services or town programs have you come in contact with, or been involved with, if any?

For each named:

o **What have your experiences been like with these services or programs?**

(What have been your experiences contacting or being involved with these different services and programs?)

o **How can the town or county improve these services or programs?**

2. What programs or services are you interested in learning more about? Why?

o **What would be the best ways for the town to share information with you or your families about these programs/services?**

COMMUNITY PRIORITIES [10 MIN]

3. What do you think are the most important things that the town government could do to improve you or your families' day-to-day life?

4.If time: What are some things that the town government could do to improve how connected you and your family are to Siler City as a whole community? (What could the town do to improve your sense of “community” or “connectedness” with other people in Siler City?)

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT – [15 MIN]

5. Let’s look at the town’s Advisory Boards. Have you or your family ever contacted or been involved with any of these Advisory Boards, or with the Town Council or any of the other groups who help to make town decisions?

6. What kinds of town decisions would you like to be involved with (or more involved with), if any?

- o **How would you like to be involved with these decisions?** (What are some ways you can see yourselves being involved or helping to make these decisions?)

- o **What could the town government do to support you being involved with these decisions or with the town leadership?**

MENTAL & BEHAVIORAL HEALTH – [10 MIN]

7.We talked to guidance counselors who shared that they see students who experience self-harm, depression, anxiety, and substance abuse. Can you share with us what might be some issues going on for Hispanic youth that might cause these problems?

8.What are some ways that students/youth and their families can help each other get through hard times?

OPEN/CLOSING – [5 MIN]

9. Is there anything else that you think is important for the Town of Siler City to know about supporting Hispanic youth and leadership in Siler City? Are there any important things we haven’t talked about today?

THANK YOU & DEMOGRAPHIC FORMS – [10 MIN]

Thank you, everyone, for sharing your experiences and recommendations today.

- **The next step of this project is that we will share a public report of everything that we have learned.**
- **We will be able to share that report with the public in the late Spring.**
- **After that, the Siler City BIC Project will spend a year working to create Town strategies for improving town services and for supporting foreign-born residents to be involved with their local government.**
- **If you would like to sign up for updates about when we share the report or about ways that you can be involved in the future to create those town strategies, please make sure to give me your email address and phone number today.**

Please also take a moment to fill out the 6 questions on the paper form at your seat and to give this paper to our note-taker. This paper does NOT ask for your name, but the other information will help us to generally describe the group who shared these ideas today.

Thank you again!

Appendix C: Interview Questionnaire for School-Based Mental Health Providers

1. What is your role here at _____ as a school counselor?
 - a. For summarizing what we learn from different providers, how could we describe that role without identifying who you are? Can we describe you as under student support services?
2. What behavioral or mental health counseling services are provided within the school, if any?
 - a. What do you consider to be the strengths of these services, if any?
3. What Latinx youth do guidance counselors serve? (What is the Latinx population that you serve?)
 - a. What Latinx youth typically walk through your doors?
 - b. How do Latinx youth usually come in contact with you or other guidance counselors?
 - c. How would you describe counselors' roles in supporting Latinx students' mental health? (What is your importance in supporting Latinx student's mental health? Why are counselors important to Latinx students?)
 - d. What other support systems exist within the school system for Latinx students?
 - i. How do you interact with those systems?
4. What behavioral disorders or mental health illnesses do you observe in the Latinx student population, if any?
 - a. What do you see the most of? (What are the most prevalent or common disorders or illnesses?)
 - b. How are you responding to these behavioral disorders or mental health illnesses?
 - i. What disorders/illnesses are outside of the scope of your services, if any?
 1. If so, what is done?
 - ii. What are any gaps or weaknesses in services that counselors' can provide?
 1. What are some unaddressed issues you are seeing, if any?
 - c. What are other ways or places that you know about that Latinx youth can seek support? (What are some of the other places or people you know about that provide support services to Latinx youth?)
 - i. Can you name these for me?
 - d. What are the practices or services providers in Chatham County where you refer Latinx students?
 - i. If so, how do you go about referrals?
 - ii. What kind of cases do you typically refer?
5. Please think about services within the school system and Latinx students. Can you elaborate on any gaps or weaknesses in services you are seeing?
6. Is there anything else that you would like to share/that is important for us to understand about your services or

about the behavioral and mental health of Latinx youth in Siler City?

Appendix D: Interview Questionnaire for Community Mental Health Providers

1. What is your role here at [EF/DM] (for staff/private)?
 - a. For summarizing what we learn from different providers, how could we describe that role without identifying who you are? (Administration? Clinic services? Local private provider?)
2. Can you describe your scope of services for youth?
 - a. What would you consider to be your strengths as a provider? (Any specializations?)
 - b. How do youth come in contact with your services? (If patients are referred, where are they referred from? How do youth learn about your services?)
3. How would you describe your organization's role in the Latinx community? (What is your importance to the Latinx community? Why is your organization important to the Latinx community?)
4. Who do you typically serve?
 - a. What services do you have that are directed towards Latinx community, if any?
 - i. How are these services directed towards the Latinx community?
 - b. Are there any accommodations for Latinx youth in terms of cultural awareness and linguistic competency?
 - c. [accommodations/competency/awareness] for Latinxs?
5. What are the behavioral disorders or mental health illnesses that you observe in the Latinx youth population, if any?
 - a. What are some of the most common disorders or illnesses?
 - i. Can you share any aggregate data about incidence or rates or prevalence? (email later?)
 - b. How are you responding to that, if at all?
 - c. What are any disorders or illnesses you observe that you do not or cannot provide services for?
 - i. How do you respond to youth with these behavioral disorders or mental health illnesses?
 - ii. How or where do the youth get support for these these disorders or illnesses that you don't provide services for, if at all?
 1. What are the unaddressed issues you are seeing, if any?
 2. What are any gaps or weaknesses in your services?
6. Let's think about Latinx youth in general, and not just those that you see or or serve at your organization. What do you see as the gaps in services for Latinx youth in Siler City in general?
7. Is there anything else that you would like to share/that is important for us to understand about your services or about the behavioral and mental health of Latinx youth in Siler City?