



## BRUNSWICK COMMUNITY LISTENING SESSION SUMMARY

### PARTNERSHIP FOR SOUTHERN EQUITY

***This report is an overview of the small group discussions held during a community listening session in Brunswick, GA on Wednesday, February 1<sup>st</sup>, 9:00am – 11:00am at Coastal College of Georgia.***

*Participants included community organizers, nonprofit professionals, local leaders, and CCGA students, staff, and faculty.*

**Partners:**

Community First Planning Commission  
A Better Glynn

**Report created by:**

Partnership for Southern Equity  
[www.psequity.org](http://www.psequity.org)

## PSE Equity Tour Brunswick Listening Session

*During the first quarter of 2023, PSE held Community Listening Sessions in Albany and Brunswick to build on our work in 2020 with [the Georgia Systems Change Alliance](#), further cultivating relationships with community stakeholders who serve, support, and live in these communities. As a part of these sessions, PSE facilitated conversations with participants, designed to further understand the existing equity gaps, the efforts being made to address inequity, and how PSE can support these efforts. Below you will find the discussion questions, common themes, and key response.*

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### QUESTION #1: WHAT ARE THE EQUITY GAPS IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

#### COMMON THEMES

Some of the key equity gaps identified in the Brunswick, GA community includes the lack of quality air, better housing resources, the lack of quality healthcare and resources and education for a variety of different needs. Review the full list of equity gaps participants identified below.

#### Environmental Justice

- Education on risks and solutions of harmful environment
- Adequate leadership to reflect the community impact
- Lack of local resources
- Active industries – people living of the fence lines of those companies
- Black leadership – with the black experience
- Cultural appreciation

“Active industries – people living on the fence lines of those companies.”

#### Access to Capital

- Minority business ownership
- Economic development
- Credit lending barriers

#### Education

- Better outcome for children
- Funding and opportunity for further education, tutoring, and mentoring

#### Healthcare

- Local regulations for benefits
- Education and access to available resources
- Assistance from government agencies (FEMA)

#### Transportation

- To neighboring communities, cities and states
- Transportation for the elderly, disabled

#### Housing

- Access to better housing
- Education on available resources for black home ownership

“Historically not having access and ownership for black community – 90% renters.”

## QUESTION #2: HOW WOULD YOUR COMMUNITY BE DIFFERENT IF THESE GAPS WERE CLOSED?

### KEY RESPONSES

“Holding government and agencies in power accountable.”

“Policy changes: includes voting policies, environmental policies.”

“Mental health improvements.”

“Access to resources for elderly and disables community members.”

### COMMON THEMES

- Healthier people
- Vibrant communities
- Equitable access to healthcare and education
- Improved quality of life
- Improved housing
- More black homeowners
- More access to available resource
- More diverse and unified – more community / neighborhood

## QUESTION #3: WHAT WOULD IT TAKE TO REALIZE THIS CHANGE?

### KEY RESPONSES

“It must come from within & outside of local government.”

“Albany Together Fund.”

“Small business ownership.”

“Better transportation for severely disabled and elderly.”

### COMMON THEMES

Some common responses for the changes needed in order to realize the reversal in equity gaps for the Brunswick community are economic development with partnerships outside the community, more funds and availability of safe housing, access to resources such as better healthcare and education, black business ownership and mentoring.

Other responses included:

- Minority businesses ownership
- Access to resources: healthcare and education
- Economic development
- Growing population of elderly and lack of resources

## QUESTION #4: HOW CAN PSE SUPPORT YOUR EQUITY WORK?

### KEY RESPONSES

“Changing policies that weigh down people who can't help themselves at the moment: retirement funds, stealing retirement funds, lower costs of living.”

“Executing a plan for the future.”

“Find a better way to help them. HELP”

“A program/ resource to connect community with local government.”

“Change from within and outside of local government.”

### **COMMON THEMES**

Some common responses for the support that PSE can bring mostly revolved around aiding in the change of policies. Bringing the community into the conversation about equity gaps by collaborating with community officials and the community to help execute the necessary changes, and creating programs to connect the community with local government resources.

### **QUESTION #5: WHAT PRACTICES HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN ADVANCING THIS WORK?**

#### **KEY RESPONSES**

“Neighborhood planning assemblies.”

“Getting the youth involved – places and spaces to participate.”

“Writing letters and sharing stories.”

“Working with UGA to create an environmental justice academy.”

### **COMMON THEMES**

Some successful practices that would benefit this work and help close the equity gap within the Brunswick community are mentoring programs, advisory boards with black people with black experiences, getting the youth involved, writing letters and sharing stories so people outside of Brunswick understand the depth of the issues.

### **QUESTION 6: HOW ARE YOU ENGAGING YOUNG PEOPLE IN YOUR EQUITY WORK?**

#### **KEY RESPONSES**

“The environmental justice academy educates on how to protect their community.”

“Cultivate black leadership.”

“Environmental justice academy.”

“Round table and community discussions.”

### **COMMON THEMES**

Participants identified several ways that youth are engaged in solutions: educating them on the history of the Brunswick community and understanding that there is a need for places and spaces for the youth to get involved in their community. Participants identified the importance of creating safe spaces for young people and organizing community discussions to impact changes at a systemic level.

## QUESTION 7: WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE SOLUTIONS?

### KEY RESPONSES

“Free mental health.”

“Policy change.”

“Support for new parents.”

### COMMON THEMES

A key theme in the solutions to close the equity gaps included changes to policies that impact daily life and opportunities, with an emphasis on environmental policies. Also, participants identified access to capital and resources for struggling families, potential homebuyers, and minority-owned businesses as critical solutions to addressing equity gaps in Brunswick.