

## Las Vegas Family Church: Las Vegas Community Development Meeting Report

Leslie Rigney  
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On Tuesday, September 21, 2021, a community meeting was organized by Katherine Duncan and her staff at Harrison House entitled the 'Westside Improvement Fund Think Tank'. Several community organizations were involved. The purpose was to bring dialogue to the table and to learn what resources are available to the community and begin to find ways to work together to create meaningful development on the Westside, a part of Las Vegas that has been woefully neglected over the years



The meeting opened in Prayer by Rev. Gregg Smith of the Las Vegas Holy Community. Then, each person introduced themselves.

The meeting was live as well as virtual. Dr. Michael Jenkins was welcomed online. He encouraged development and reconciliation of all parties involved.

Historically, there had been a scarcity of communication between those people who live in the community and those in public office who oversee the programs available. Knowing that there were some antagonisms involved that could interfere with development, Leslie Rigney spoke, representing Universal Peace Federation Las Vegas, on the International Day of Peace. She presented Dr. Andrew Wilson's

recent PowerPoint on the 3 mottos of UPF: Interdependence, Mutual Prosperity and Universal Shared Values. Although the power point was focusing on North and South Korea, there were some similarities with North Las Vegas and the Westside Communities. The emphasis on cooperation and living for the sake of others may have helped to mitigate antagonisms that were brewing.

Community members heard from Bill Arent of Las Vegas Economic and Urban Development, of the many programs available and of the city's desire to help community members in accessing these programs. One community member shouted out "Why didn't we know about these programs?" This outcry highlighted the need for this very meeting.

A new member to Harrison House, Mr. Adrell Bullock, of Sage Bears Solutions Architect, gave a clear and professional power point outlining which private businesses could flourish in the Historic West Side. His youthful enthusiasm gave hope to the participants

Antonio Freeman, an Ambassador for Peace, spoke on the need for financial education and gave his commitment to offer this to the community at Harrison House.

John Edmond, from the Federal Economic Development Agency, encouraged businesses to work in a cooperative way to pool resources and invest wisely. James Humm, from the Governor's Office of Economic Development spoke about the Governor's American Rescue Plan.

Katherine Duncan led a helpful discussion about what people wanted to see on the Westside, and what they didn't want to have, which helped give clarity and vision to the day.

Participants were active in discussions and much sharing continued after the end of the meeting. The next meeting was set for the following Tuesday, with community members expressing hope that good development could happen, and excited to hear of programs designed to help the process.

UPF was grateful to help Katherine in this important project.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Leslie Rigney