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Sentiments of Community Stakeholders Living in Southern Nevada Neighborhoods

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SENTIMENTS OF COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS LIVING IN
SOUTHERN NEVADA NEIGHBORHOODS

By

Erin Ann Sheehy

Bachelor of Science in Sociology
South Dakota State University
2006

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the

Master of Public Health

Department of Environmental and Occupational Health
School of Community Health Sciences
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University of Nevada, Las Vegas
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THE GRADUATE COLLEGE

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Erin Ann Sheehy

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May 2014

ABSTRACT

Sentiments of Community Stakeholders Living in Southern Nevada Neighborhoods

by

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Community stakeholders provided insight to their local neighborhoods and shared their thoughts about the potential redevelopment of their neighborhoods. This study utilized data from the Southern Nevada Strong ethnographic research project. Ethnographic research was conducted over ten weeks in Summer 2013. Neighborhood observations and interviews with community stakeholders were conducted to understand how neighborhoods are utilized, how residents feel about potential redevelopment, and what areas of the neighborhoods residents would like to see improved in the future.

Photographs were also collected to further examine the characteristics, aesthetics, and spatial landscape of the neighborhoods. The purpose of this qualitative research project was to understand how community stakeholders feel about potential improvements to their neighborhoods and how they envision the future of their community for residents, business owners, employees, and students of the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods located in Southern Nevada. The goal of this research project was to provide an in-depth analysis of the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods.

Key findings included safety, built environment, social environment, economic conditions, and social capital.

Keywords: Ethnography, Neighborhoods, Community Stakeholders

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DEDICATION

To my family,
thank you for always encouraging me to follow my dreams.

I love you!

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Community stakeholders provided insight to how their neighborhoods are currently being utilized and ideas for how they envision the future of their community. Previous research focused on different aspects of community stakeholders and their neighborhoods, but did not specifically focus on the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods in Southern Nevada. There has been minimal research conducted about how community stakeholders feel about their current neighborhoods. A qualitative study provided us with detailed information about how community stakeholders feel about their neighborhoods. This study provided beneficial information about how current neighborhoods are being utilized and how the neighborhoods should be designed in the future. The purpose of this ethnographic study was to understand how community stakeholders feel about potential improvements to their neighborhoods and how they envision the future of their community for residents, business owners, employees, and students of the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods located in Las Vegas and Henderson, Nevada.

Ethnography is a qualitative research method that allows researchers to collect multiple forms of data including photographs, observations, and in-depth interviews (Creswell, 2013). According to Marvasti (2004), ethnography aims to study people and culture. Tedlock mentioned that “‘Ethnography involves an ongoing attempt to place specific encounters, events, and understandings into fuller, more meaningful context’” (Tedlock, 2000; Marvasti, 2004, p.36). In order to describe these events, ethnographic research requires the researcher to conduct in-depth fieldwork (Creswell, 2013).

History

Americans housing preferences have changed throughout the history of United States cities (Frumkin, Frank, & Jackson, 2004). In the beginning of the 19th century, Americans wanted to live in densely populated cities to be within walking distance of work, grocery stores, and entertainment (Frumkin et al., 2004). Gradually their housing preferences shifted in favor to homes located in the suburbs (Frumkin et al., 2004). According to Freudenberg, Galea, and Vlahov (2006), “In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, millions of working-class Americans moved into single-family homes throughout the United States” (p.138). Americans believed that the suburbs would bestow them with “domesticity, privacy, and isolation” (Frumkin et al., 2004, p.28).

There needed to be an abundance of reasonably priced housing in order for residential suburbs to be developed and thrive (Frumkin et al., 2004). There are several factors that increased the affordability of single-family homes (Frumkin et al., 2004). According to Freudenburg et al. (2006), “Housing loans and low-cost mortgages for veterans, federal subsidies for highway construction that facilitated commuting from suburban homes to urban jobs, and tax breaks for home mortgages all contributed to the major shift in population” (p.22).

Today research often focuses on residential suburbs and health effects from living in these environments (Freudenburg et al., 2006). Health issues moved with the residents from cities to suburbs (Freudenburg et al., 2006). “...For example, problems such as HIV infection, tuberculosis, drug use, and violence have moved both between and within metropolitan regions” (Freudenburg et al., 2006, p.22). Neighborhoods within these

residential developments need to be studied in order to design healthier communities in the future.

Neighborhoods

Residents that live in urban environments spend a significant percentage of their day in neighborhoods (Frumkin et al., 2004). According to Braveman, Egerter, and Williams (2011), “Neighborhoods can influence health through their physical characteristics, such as air and water quality and proximity to facilities that produce or store hazardous substances; exposures to lead paint, mold, dust, or pest infestation; access to nutritious foods...” (p.385). Previous research has identified neighborhood characteristics that can have an effect health.

S. Maintyre and her colleagues documented five neighborhood features that can have an effect on health (Cockerham, 2007). The first characteristic they identified is the communal space in the built environment that is shared by community members (Cockerham, 2007). Examples of shared space include neighborhood parks, schools, and recreation centers. According to Maintyre et al., the second characteristic was “the availability of healthy environments at home, work, and play” (Cockerham, 2007, p. 150). The third neighborhood feature identified was the neighborhood’s accessible services like medical facilities, sanitation facilities, schools, and law enforcement (Cockerham, 2007). Maintyre et al., mentioned the fourth neighborhood characteristic that can affect your health was “the socio-cultural aspects of the neighborhood like its norms and values, political, economic, ethnic, and religious features, level of civility and public safety, and networks of community support” (Cockerham, 2007, p.150). The fifth neighborhood feature identified was community member’s perceived status of the

neighborhood (Cockerham, 2007). The fourth and fifth neighborhood features that affect health because they are part of the social networks that form the social capital of the neighborhood.

Social Capital

Social capital is an important feature of neighborhoods that can influence health (Cockerham, 2007). “Putnam defined social capital as ‘connections among people—social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them’”(Frumkin et al., 2004, p.163). According to Cockerham (2007), Putnam stressed that social networks are “one of the most powerful determinants of an individual’s health” (p.172). Social capital components include trust, respect, volunteerism, social norms, reciprocity, collective efficacy, and shared public space (Frumkin et al., 2004). Researchers continue to study neighborhoods and their social capital.

Previous research has shown that social networks are an essential component of improved health (Frumkin et al., 2004). Kawachi, Kennedy, and Lochner (1997) found that depression, solitude, and isolation can be harmful to health, because these individuals often live in areas with low social capital. Social capital has been linked to lower crime rates, lower rates of alcohol abuse, and lower rates of cardiovascular disease (Frumkin et al., 2004). Social capital is an important public health characteristic of neighborhoods.

Community Stakeholders

Community stakeholders can provide insight into their current neighborhood and the neighborhoods social capital. Stakeholders are defined as “...people who affect or can be affected by a business” (Network for Business Sustainability (NBS), 2012, p.3). Stakeholders are often local residents that involved in community level issues (Collier &

Scott, 2008). There are three types of stakeholders: community stakeholders, foreign lobbyist, and worried residents (Collier & Scott, 2008). This qualitative research project focused on community stakeholders living in Southern Nevada.

According to NBS (2012), “Community stakeholders include neighborhoods, community development groups, environmental organizations, development organizations, citizen associations and non-governmental organizations” (p.3). Fagerholm, Kayhko, Ndumbaro, and Khamis (2011) mentioned that community stakeholders need to communicate about neighborhood backgrounds and beliefs in order to share their knowledge about the community. According to Collier & Scott (2008), it is important to involve community members in the development process of neighborhoods in order for them to have a high regard for the project. Community stakeholders feel more invested in the project when they are able to share information about their local neighborhoods (Collier & Scott, 2008).

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this ethnographic qualitative study was to understand how community stakeholders feel about potential improvements to their neighborhoods and how they envision the future of their community for residents, business owners, employees, and students of the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods located in Las Vegas and Henderson, Nevada.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, the author will discuss the theoretical framework chosen for this study. The Social Cognitive Theory is the theoretical framework that was selected to guide this ethnographic research project. The literature reviewed for this study includes scholarly publications including peer-reviewed journal articles that were published after 1998.

Social Cognitive Theory

Social Cognitive Theory is the theoretical foundation the author selected to use when designing the study. The Social Cognitive Theory was developed by Albert Bandura in 1962 and was originally referred to social learning theory (Glanz, Rimer, & Viswanath, 2008). Social Cognitive Theory examines both the psychosocial aspects that influence health behavior and techniques for encouraging behavioral modification (Amaya & Petosa, 2011). According to Amaya & Petosa (2011), the Social Cognitive Theory mentions

“the individuals capabilities to symbolize the meanings of behavior, their ability to foresee the outcomes of given behavior patterns, to learn by observing others, to self-regulate behavior, and to reflect and analyze experiences among the critical personal factors that help determine whether or not a particular behavior will occur in a particular situation” (p.134).

The Social Cognitive Theory includes the following concepts: reciprocal determinism, outcome expectations, self-efficacy, collective efficacy, moral disengagement, self-regulation, facilitation, incentive motivation, and observational motivation (Glanz et al., 2008). This research project focused on the environmental concepts that influence behavior.

Reciprocal determinism is one of the concepts of the Social Cognitive Theory (Glanz et al., 2008). Reciprocal determinism is an environmental concept that allowed us to explore the relationship among physical surroundings and individuals (Glanz et al., 2008). Reciprocal determinism is defined as “environmental factors that influence individuals and groups, but individuals and groups can also influence their environments and regulate their own behavior” (Glanz et al., 2008, p.171). The theory stresses the ability of people to work together towards a common goal (Glanz et al., 2008). According to Glanz et al. (2008), “This enables individuals to work together in organizations and social systems to achieve environmental changes that benefit the entire group” (p.170). “According to Bandura(1997), planned protection and promotion of public health can be viewed as illustrations of this kind of reciprocal determinism, as societies seek to control the environmental and social factors that influence health behaviors and health outcomes” (Glanz et al., 2008, p.170).

Facilitation is another concept of the Social Cognitive Theory (Glanz et al., 2008). According to Glanz et al. (2008), facilitation is an “environmental determinant of behavior” (p.173). Facilitation is “providing tools, resources, or environmental changes that make new behaviors easier to perform” (Glanz et al., 2008, p.171). Facilitation empowers people to make behavior changes by providing them with the instruments and resources (Glanz et al., 2008).

Literature Review

The literature reviewed for this study includes scholarly publications from peer-reviewed journal articles. The articles were found searching UNLV’s library database during the months of June and July 2013. The first search we performed included the

following key words: ethnographic and neighborhoods. This search was limited to articles from scholarly publications in peer-reviewed articles. The search was also limited to full text articles that were available online. This resulted in two articles with this key word search. The second search performed while searching for articles included the following key words: ethnographic and stakeholders. This search was not limited to scholarly publications including peer-reviewed journal articles. The search was limited to full text articles that were available online. One article was found with this key word search. The third search we performed included the following key words: community stakeholders. This search was limited to scholarly publications in peer reviewed journal articles. We found one article with this key word search. The fourth search involved the following keywords: ethnography in Southern Nevada. This was limited to scholarly publications in peer reviewed journal articles. Unfortunately, limited research was found with these key words.

The final search contained the following key words: ethnography research and Las Vegas. This was limited to scholarly publications in peer-reviewed journal articles and full text articles that were available online. This search yielded several journals that the articles had to be reviewed to find ones that pertained to neighborhoods in Las Vegas and Henderson, Nevada. Also included in this review are two journal articles that were required readings in a summer ethnographic research class at UNLV. The journal articles for the summer class were located by searching the journal article's title in the UNLV's library database. The literature review discusses the pertinent facts from previous research and questions that remain unanswered by earlier research.

The literature reviewed for this study includes scholarly publications of peer-reviewed journal articles that were published after 1998. The literature review included journal articles that were available online and published only in peer-reviewed journal articles. The literature review excluded journal articles that were not available online. The literature review also excluded journal articles that were not peer-reviewed.

Neighborhood Ethnography

Deener (2010) conducted ethnography of a neighborhood in Oakwood, California. Deener (2010) “used a historical and comparative ethnographic approach to emphasize how the collective visibility of the African American population and the collective invisibility of the Latino population were generated over time” (p. 48). The historical ethnographic approach allowed Deener to study multiple influences as they worked together to shape the neighborhood throughout time (Deener, 2010).

Deener (2010) found that “In Oakwood, however, demographic predominance is neither necessary nor sufficient to explain collective visibility: the neighborhood remained identified with African Americans long after their numbers had been surpassed by Latinos” (p.63). African Americans had established neighborhood resources like religious organizations, businesses, and civil service groups (Deener, 2010). The Latinos did not have an established neighborhood support system (Deener, 2010).

McKee (2013) conducted an ethnographic study to learn about the perceptions of the F Street closure in Las Vegas, Nevada. “The F Street Wall” was constructed in October of 2008, when the Nevada Department of Transportation was widening a section of the I-15 (McKee, 2013). According to McKee (2013), “this critical ethnographic

project documents the socially constructed and differentially interpreted meanings the wall signified for residents on both sides” (p.4).

McKee (2013) concluded that “this study suggests that the absence of meaningful social interaction between two culturally different groups may account for the differentially interpreted meanings, especially depending on one’s physical location, race, and social status” (p.12). According to McKee (2013), “For the residents of West Las Vegas, the wall symbolizes a collective sense of alienation and discrimination on the part of city officials that has persisted for nearly 80 years” (p.12). The residents on the opposite side of the wall believed that the wall provided separation from an underprivileged neighborhood (McKee, 2013).

Leventhal and Brooks-Gunn (2000) reviewed previous literature “...on the effects of neighborhood residence on child and adolescent well-being” (p.309). The author’s literature review focused on methods used to collect data, neighborhood characteristics, and future research (Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2000). Leventhal and Brooks-Gunn (2000) emphasized, “The presence in the community of learning activities, such as libraries, family resource centers, literacy programs, and museums, that parents can draw on for their children’s learning stimulation may improve the children’s development, especially school readiness and achievement outcomes” (p.322).

Social Capital

Reiboldt (2001) conducted an ethnographic study about teenager’s relationships with neighborhood gangs, family members, and community. The ethnographic study was conducted in Long Beach, California (Reiboldt, 2001). “A better understanding of adolescent males in poor urban communities and their interactions with gang members

and gang activity may be obtained through discussions with gang members, their friends, and their families” (Reiboldt, 2001, p.214).

Reiboldt (2001) found that “the lives of Jorge and Antonio Jr. provide two contrasting pictures of life in low-income, ethnically diverse urban communities” (p.238). Jorge did not have a strong support system and needed to join the neighborhood gang (Reiboldt, 2001). Antonio Jr. had a strong support system and did not join the neighborhood gang (Reiboldt, 2001). Reiboldt (2001) concluded, “If these two young men can overcome their dangerous neighborhoods and focus on positive family support, they may have a chance at a successful future” (p.240).

Cohen, Spear, Scribner, Kissinger, Mason, and Wildgen (2000) used the Broken Windows theory to explore neighborhood gonorrhea rates. The Broken Windows theory developed by James Q. Wilson mentioned, “If a broken window is unrepaired, all the windows will soon be broken. Broken windows are a signal that no one cares” (Cohen et al., 2000, p.230). The Broken Window theory implies that the condition of the neighborhoods built environment provides social cues that let people know what behavior is acceptable (Cohen et al., 2000). Cohen et al. (2000) found that in neighborhoods with high broken windows scores had higher rates of gonorrhea.

Zukin, Baskerville, Greenberg, Guthreau, Halley, Halling, Lawler, Nerio, Stack, Vitale and Wissinger (1998) focused on “a discursive analysis of cultural images, social practices, and space adds a new level of social critique to the usual explanations of urban growth and decline” (p.627). The authors compared and contrasted the following two cities: Coney Island, New York and Las Vegas, Nevada (Zukin et al., 1998). Zukin et al. (1998), concluded that “an analysis of cultural texts and visual images makes clear the

resonance between a city's ability, or inability, to attract residents, tourists, and investment capital—and its representation of significant social themes” (p.650).

Stakeholders

The final ethnographic study explored stakeholder's perspectives and visions of the future for their environment of peatland use in Ireland. According to Collier and Scott (2008),

“...that if local citizens are involved in the policy or planning process, decisions and actions will be better in two respects: they will command greater respect from local residents and hence carry more legitimacy and secondly, they will benefit from the insights and local knowledge brought by local residents acquired through living in the local area” (Burton et al., 2006; Collier & Scott, 2008, p.439).

The stakeholders were able to provide valuable insight about the future of their environment (Collier & Scott, 2008).

Collier and Scott (2008) reported the following results, “while perceptions of the peatland landscapes are clearly associated with their function, few interviewees had given much active thought to their future (after)use and new landscapes” (p.455). The stakeholders were concerned about community development, conservation, and standard of living (Collier & Scott, 2008). The stakeholders want to be able to utilize their land in a variety of ways (Collier & Scott, 2008).

A qualitative research approach was selected for the Southern Nevada Strong project. Southern Nevada Strong decided to include ethnographic research as part of the planning process. An ethnographic study allowed observations of neighborhoods to learn how they were being utilized. According to Marvasti, “...ethnographic techniques allow researchers to see human action as it happens and where it happens” (2004, p.42). Community stakeholders participated in the research project and provided knowledge

about their current neighborhoods. Community stakeholders gave meaning to the contextualized happenings of the neighborhoods (Marvasti, 2004). A qualitative method allowed the researchers to discover how the neighborhoods were being utilized and what could be improved in the future. Ethnography was the appropriate research method, because the meaning derived from community stakeholders was discovered to be contained to the neighborhoods (Marvasti, 2004).

Summary

There are many questions regarding neighborhoods, social capital, and community stakeholders that remain unanswered by previous research. Earlier studies explored different aspects of neighborhoods like gangs and how different races/ethnicities utilize their community, but did not look at community stakeholders in Las Vegas and Henderson, Nevada. Prior research focused on the F Street closure in Las Vegas, Nevada; this ethnography explored the views of residents that lived on both sides of the wall. One journal article conducted a literature review to learn about how neighborhoods impacted children during their formative years. This literature review only included children and adolescents. Previous research projects did not study how community stakeholders feel about Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods located in Southern Nevada. There is a need to learn how community stakeholders utilize their current neighborhood and how they envision their neighborhood in the future.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the author will describe the Southern Nevada Strong research project, field sites selected for this study, IRB protocol, and research methods. This study used two set of data from the Southern Nevada Strong's Summer Ethnography project. The author will describe the research methods that were utilized to collect the data from the field sites. The author will provide demographic information about the community stakeholders that participated in the interviews.

Southern Nevada Strong

Southern Nevada Strong is a publically-engaged regional planning process exploring opportunities for sustainable transportation, housing, economic opportunity and communities in local neighborhoods (Southern Nevada Regional Planning Coalition (SNRPC), 2013). "The City of Henderson on behalf of the SNRPC received a \$3.5 million Sustainable Communities Planning Grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development" (SNRPC, 2013, p. 1). The planning grant allowed for community member engagement, exploration of existing conditions, and to provide solutions to the current issues facing Southern Nevada (SNRPC, 2012). Southern Nevada Strong project has a 3 year timeline with objectives that need to be met along the way. The first year of the Southern Nevada Strong project involved quantitative research that evaluated the current conditions of Southern Nevada. The final report was titled *2012 Southern Nevada Existing Conditions Report* and was published on January 9, 2013. The report included information about the present economic conditions, current infrastructure, built environment and demographic information for Southern Nevada.

During the second year, as part of this planning process, Southern Nevada Strong organized the Southern Nevada Strong Summer Ethnography Research Clinic, which assembled a team of twelve UNLV graduate students to study twelve neighborhoods in the Southern Nevada Strong region. The first week of the summer research project involved an ethnographic research clinic taught by a professor and three students from Brown University. Brown University students would touch base with the UNLV graduate students regarding the research project and hold scheduled conference calls throughout the summer.

The third year of the project involved selecting neighborhoods that would receive further in-depth study (L. Corrado, personal communication, January 28, 2014). Boulder Highway and Gibson Road neighborhoods were selected to advance into this next phase of the project and to receive additional research analysis (L. Corrado, personal communication, January 28, 2014). This phase of the research project is scheduled to begin February 2014 (L. Corrado, personal communication, January 28, 2014). The Final Report is expected to be completed by early 2015.

Field Sites

The Southern Nevada Strong held outreach events throughout Southern Nevada to identify opportunity sites and to learn how community members were using the neighborhoods. The Southern Nevada Regional Planning Coalition used the outreach data to select the neighborhoods for the summer research project. The SNRPC selected twelve neighborhoods that UNLV graduate assistants would study throughout the summer (Appendix A). The Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods were selected to be part of the summer research project. The SNRPC defined the boundaries of the Gibson

Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods. The author participated in the summer ethnography research project and was assigned the Gibson Road neighborhood (Appendix B). Another graduate assistant was assigned the Boulder Highway neighborhood (Appendix C). The Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods overlapped in one location and had similar characteristics including parks, schools, higher education opportunities, industrial parts, and business areas. This study provided an in-depth analysis of the data collected for the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods, located in Las Vegas and Henderson, Nevada.

Gibson Road Description

The Gibson Road neighborhood included the area between the I-215 and Boulder Highway. Gibson Road runs through the neighborhood and is a major thoroughfare (Photo 1). Industrial power lines ran down the center of Gibson Road. The Gibson Road neighborhood is a combination of industrial warehouses, corporate offices, retail spaces, schools, and residential development. The industrial warehouses are located between Wigwam Parkway and American Pacific Drive. There are additional warehouses located on Gibson Road between Warm Springs and Boulder Highway. The warehouses are large box shaped buildings with windows only located around the main entrance. There are paved streets throughout the industrial warehouse area of the neighborhood. There are a limited amount of sidewalks in the industrial area of the neighborhood.

Gibson Road neighborhood has two business parks, located near Gibson Road and American Pacific Drive. These spaces are named Gibson Business Park and Black Mountain Business Park. Gibson Business Park is located on the west side of the street and Black Mountain Business Park is on the east side of the street. There are corporate

offices located in front of the large industrial warehouses. The businesses located within the business parks included automotive repair shops, brewery, car storage lots for the Valley AutoMall dealerships, fitness center, and landscaping companies.

The neighborhood has a large amount of retail space along Gibson Road to Warm Springs. Additional retail space is located on Sunset Road between Gibson Road and Boulder Highway. The Valley AutoMall occupies a large portion of the retail space in the Gibson Road neighborhood. The Valley AutoMall contained twenty car dealerships. There was smaller retail spaces located in strip malls along Gibson Road. These businesses included fast food joints, coffee shop, convenient stores, restaurants, and youth sports.

The schools located in the Gibson Road neighborhood included Lorna Kesterson Elementary School, ITT Technical Institute, University of Phoenix, and Touro University. Lorna Kesterson Elementary schools was centered in the residential area of the neighborhood. Lorna Kesterson Elementary school was closed during the data collection. ITT Technical Institute, University of Phoenix, and Touro University offered their students day and evening classes.

The residential area of the neighborhood was located on the west of Gibson Road between American Pacific Drive and Kelso Dunes. The housing in the neighborhood was a combination of apartments, single-family homes, and townhouses. The houses in this neighborhood were southwest-style with a stucco finish. Trail Canyon Park and Lorna Kesterson Elementary School are located in the center of the residential area. The residential area had sidewalks and crosswalks located near the school and park. There

were two newer gated residential areas located between Sunset Road and Galleria Road. The new developments offered two story homes with a brown stucco finish.

Two Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) bus routes, routes 217 and 115 operate on Gibson Road. The RTC bus route 217 runs from the Silverton Casino to Downtown Henderson. The RTC bus route 115 runs from Nellis to Horizon Ridge Parkway. There are eleven bus stops located on Gibson Road between the I-215 and Kelso Dunes. Four of the bus stops have benches and provide protection from the sun. One bus stop has a bench with no protection from the sun. The other six bus stops have patrons stand on the sidewalk or undeveloped area by a small sign that says RTC Bus Stop 217 or 115. The RTC bus routes do not connect to Sunset Road or Boulder Highway.

Boulder Highway Description

Boulder Highway is a major thoroughfare that runs northwest to southeast. Boulder Highway is fourteen miles long and is located in Las Vegas and Henderson, Nevada. Boulder Highway neighborhood included the area between at Old Vegas Trail and Fremont Street. Sections of Boulder Highway are maintained by the City of Henderson or Clark County. There was a distinct line that separated the two portions of Boulder Highway (Photo2). The City of Henderson maintained attractive landscaping along Boulder Highway. The section of Boulder Highway maintained by Clark County does not have similar attractive landscaping. The Boulder Highway neighborhood is a mixture of industrial warehouses, retail spaces, schools, and residential developments. Many of the businesses were located in small warehouse type buildings or strip malls along Boulder Highway.

There are large amounts of retail space along Boulder Highway. The retail spaces are located in individual buildings and strip malls. The retail spaces have fast food restaurants, coffee shops, automobile accessory shops, automobile repair shops, convenient stores, pharmacy, youth sports gyms, and grocery stores. Wal-Mart had two locations along Boulder Highway. There were a limited number of grocery stores along Boulder Highway. The grocery stores located on Boulder Highway included Fresh & Easy Neighborhood Market, Albertsons, and Smart & Final.

The schools located in the Boulder Highway neighborhood included Nevada State College, Foothill High School, Whitney Elementary School, College of Southern Nevada, Cynthia Cunningham Elementary School, Chaparral High School, and KO Knudson Middle School. Nevada State College, College of Southern Nevada, and one of the public high schools offered classes year-round. The other public schools in the neighborhood were closed during the data collection period.

Residential areas were located along Boulder Highway. The housing in the neighborhood included a combination of apartments, recreational vehicle motorhomes and campers, long term stay hotels, mobile homes, single-family homes, and townhouses. There were both low-income housing options and middle-class neighborhoods located along Boulder Highway.

RTC bus route the Boulder Highway Express operated on Boulder Highway. The Boulder Highway Express is a major bus route on the eastern side of the valley. The Boulder Highway Express runs from Bonneville Transit Center to College and Horizon. The Boulder Highway Express operated 24-hours per day. The Boulder Highway Express had bus stops located approximately every ½ mile along Boulder Highway.

Institutional Review Board

The IRB was obtained for the Southern Nevada Strong Summer Ethnography Research project. UNLV IRB approved the Southern Nevada Strong research project (IRB Protocol #1304-4440). All UNLV graduate students that participated in the Southern Nevada Strong Summer Ethnography research project were listed as part of the research team on the IRB. The author was listed as a research team member. The informed consent was completed by the community stakeholders prior to their interview. The completed informed consent forms will be stored in a locked facility for three years. After that time period the informed consent forms will be destroyed. This was a secondary research project that focused on the data collected for the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods from the Southern Nevada Strong Summer Ethnography research project.

Research Methods

A qualitative approach was used for this research project. Realist ethnographic approach was selected by Southern Nevada Strong, because it allowed information to be collected about how the neighborhoods are being utilized. Ethnographic research allowed community stakeholders to participate in interviews. The community stakeholders provided researchers with first-hand knowledge about the neighborhoods and provided their ideas regarding the future of the neighborhoods. Ethnographic research was conducted over ten weeks in Summer 2013. Neighborhood observations and interviews with community stakeholders were conducted to understand how the neighborhood is utilized, how residents feel about potential redevelopment, and what areas of the neighborhood residents would like to see improve in the future. Photographs were also

collected to further examine the characteristics, aesthetics, and spatial landscape of the neighborhood. This allowed the researchers to make detailed observations of the community and understand how community stakeholders utilize and understand their neighborhoods. The data collection methods utilized in this ethnography included interviews, observations, and photos.

Southern Nevada Strong created the inclusion and exclusion criteria for this research project. The inclusion criteria included anyone that was eighteen years old and older. The exclusion criteria omitted anyone that was under eighteen years old. The community stakeholders needed to spend time in either the Gibson Road and/or Boulder Highway neighborhoods.

Observations

Neighborhood residents, employees, consumers, and students were observed as they went about their day in the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods. Activities they participated in were noted; their interactions with employees and other residents, and the author listened to their conversations (Creswell, 2013).

Nonparticipant/observer as participant was the initial observation method the researcher used when watching the participants. This allowed the researcher to not take part with the participants. The researcher was able to observe the participants from a spot that did not distract the neighborhood residents, employees, or students. These spots included bus stops, coffee shop tables, and park picnic tables. Observations were conducted five days per week and the length of the observation was approximately two hours. The observations were conducted at various times of day to see how the action in the neighborhood altered throughout the day. The initial neighborhood observations were

utilized to collect data “by conducting observation as an observer” (Creswell, 2013, p.160).

The initial observations allowed the graduate students to identify focus areas in their neighborhoods. Southern Nevada Strong research project required each graduate assistant to identify focus areas in their assigned neighborhoods. The Gibson Road neighborhood focus areas included Trail Canyon Park, neighborhood schools, and the Valley AutoMall. The Boulder Highway focus area included Whitney Township, Desert Sands RV Park, Heritage Park Senior Facility, College of Southern Nevada, and the Nellis Boulevard, Flamingo Road, and Boulder Highway intersection.

After the focus areas were identified in the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods, the graduate assistants continued to observe the neighborhoods at various times in the day to collect observation notes about the action in the neighborhood and how it changed throughout the day. Observations for the day began at a focus site and would be adjusted based the neighborhood activity. Throughout the summer the graduate assistants had to plan accordingly for the intense summer heat. This included carrying two liters of water when in the field and storing additional water in the car. When the heat became too intense the researcher would drive through the neighborhood and pull over to write observation notes. All field notes were written in a journal and once the observations were completed for the day the observation notes would be typed into a Word document.

As the summer research project continued the graduate assistants became participants in the neighborhoods. The researcher would often become a participant when walking through the neighborhood and sitting at bus stops or park. At this point in the

research project the graduate assistants became “insiders” in their neighborhoods (Creswell, 2013). Neighborhood residents would often approach the graduate assistants to share information about the neighborhood and concerns that needed to be included in the summer final report. Residents would often share information about their daily routines in the neighborhood. The researcher wrote these field notes in the research journal. The neighborhood observations continued to be used to collect data “by spending more time as the participant than as an observer” (Creswell, 2013, p.160).

Interviews

Following initial neighborhood observations, the researchers identified and selected community stakeholders in the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhood for interviews. Southern Nevada Strong ethnographic clinic generated a list of potential interview questions that UNLV graduate assistants could use when interviewing participants. UNLV graduate assistants were not required to use the initial list of interview questions. The original list of research questions can be found in Appendix D. Dr. Dodge Francis rewrote the interview questions in order to gain more information from interviewee participants. The new list of interview questions can be found in Appendix E. There were a total of thirty-seven interview questions. Interview questions were designed to explore the community stakeholder’s feelings about the possible redevelopment of their neighborhood, share their ideas for the future, and what their major concerns were about the state of their current neighborhood. An interview protocol was developed that included the new research questions for the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods. The researcher shared the interview protocol with the Boulder Highway graduate assistant and they used identical research questions when

conducting the interviews. The interview protocol allowed the researchers to take notes and remain organized during the interview. The graduate assistants used the following identical interview approach: structured interview questions, recorded the interviews, wrote interview notes on the protocol, and transcribed the interviews (Creswell, 2013). Interviews were conducted in July and August 2013.

Southern Nevada Strong provided a neighborhood contact to each graduate assistant, which helped gain access to at least two interview participants. The Gibson Road contact provided the author the contact information for two interviewees. One of the interviewees gave the author another contact in the neighborhood following their interview. This led to a snowball sampling technique being utilized for the initial Gibson Road interviews. The Boulder Highway graduate assistant was given the names of two neighborhood contacts. Only one of the neighborhood contacts provided contact information for one interviewee. Initially, maximum variation was used when selecting the participants. This allowed the researchers to collect varied viewpoints about the opportunities for redevelopment of the neighborhood. Near the end of the research project, participants were selected based on their relationship to the selected focus areas, and based on convenience due to time constraints. Neighborhood residents, employees, and students traveled throughout the summer this created a challenge when trying to schedule interviews. Due to their schedules, several community stakeholders declined to participate in an interview. Interviews were conducted with twenty-one individuals who are considered Gibson Road and Boulder Highway community stakeholders (Table 1). Demographic information based on the community stakeholder sample population included 10 males and 10 females, ages ranged from 18-65+ years old, and education

attainment was high school to professional degree. The community stakeholders identified themselves as Caucasian, Hispanic, African American, and Multiracial.

	Male (N=10)	Female (N=10)	Total (N=20)
Age			
18-24	2	0	2
25-35	3	5	8
36-50	0	2	2
51-65	1	1	2
65+	3	2	5
N/A	1	0	1
Race/Ethnicity			
Caucasian	6	9	15
Hispanic	2	0	2
African American	0	1	1
Multiracial	1	0	1
N/A	1	0	1
Socio-Economic Status			
Low SES	5	1	6
Middle SES	3	8	11
High SES	1	0	1
N/A	1	1	2
Education Attainment			
High School	1	0	1
Associates Degree	0	0	0
Some College	2	2	4
Bachelor Degree	4	0	4
Professional Degree	1	1	2
N/A	2	7	9

Table 1. Community Stakeholders Self-Reported Demographic Information.

Initially, interviewees were identified based on their self- reported descriptions during the interview process. One interviewee requested that their demographic information remain confidential. Interviewees included an educator, five students, a consumer, four employees, two small business owners, two volunteers, a homeless resident, and four residents. Many of the interviewees even though they were identified

as something else live in the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods. Five interviewees lived in the Gibson Road neighborhood, eight interviewees lived in the Boulder Highway neighborhood, and seven interviewees did not live in the neighborhoods. This allowed the researchers to have varying perceptions of how the stakeholders utilize the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods.

Interviews with community stakeholders ranged from 10 to 60+ minutes. The type of interviews conducted included face-to-face and phone. One interview was conducted via phone due the interviewees travel schedule. Sixteen individual face-to-face interviews were conducted at public places located in the neighborhoods. Two interviews were conducted with two community stakeholders present and participating the interview process at the same time. It was the only way these four community stakeholders could participate in the interview process. At the beginning of each interview, the participants were informed about the interview procedure in the same way. He or she was informed that participation in the study was voluntary and that he or she was free to end the interview at any time. With the permission of the participant, a RCA digital voice recorder to record the interview.

Photographs

The final data collection method involved collecting photographs of the neighborhoods. According to Creswell (2013), documents including photographs can be gathered during the data collection. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) mentioned that “qualitative types of data might be broadly organized into text data (i.e., words) or images (i.e., types of pictures)” (p.177). The photos were taken by the researcher during observations of the neighborhood. The photos share the features of the neighborhood and

the issues the researchers experienced in the field (Marvasti, 2004). Photographs were used to capture images of the areas that have missing sidewalks, have litter along a fence, and other areas that need improvement.

Data Storage

For data storage, the researchers saved the interview transcriptions and observation notes on the author's computer. The computer is password protected and the author is the only one who has access to it. The computer file is also password protected to ensure that we are the only ones that can access it. The names of all participants were changed to ensure privacy. Dates were removed from the interview transcripts and from the results section to ensure the privacy of the interviewees. Southern Nevada Strong created a Dropbox folder so the researchers could easily share observation notes and interview transcriptions. The Dropbox folder was password protected and only researchers have access to it.

Data Analysis

The author conducted the data analysis after the final interview was completed. The author followed the steps for qualitative data analysis. Qualitative data analysis scholars provided the author with several steps to ensure the data analysis is completed correctly. The author conducted the data analysis by hand and did not use a computer program to assist with data analysis.

The first step was to make sure the data was in the right order and easy to locate. The author organized the data by hand and made sure that the computer files were stored in the appropriate folders. The data was organized by type with all the observation notes were saved in a folder together and all of the interview transcriptions were saved in a

separate folder. Photos were saved in folders created for Gibson Road and Boulder Highway. Next, the author organized the data files by date. The author also transcribed each of the recorded interviews verbatim. The data organization process helped the author become familiar with observation field notes, interview transcriptions, and photos (Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

The second step the author completed for the data analysis involved reading through the observation field notes and interview transcriptions. Marshall and Rossman (1999) mentioned that this step is often referred to the “research memo”. The author in the page margins wrote keywords or ideas as they read through the data (Creswell, 2013). The notes in the margin began to “form the initial codes” (Creswell, 2013, p.190). Some of the initial codes included the following: pedestrian safety, transportation, volunteering, lack of jobs, and sense of community.

The third step in the data analysis involved “the social setting, actor, and events” (Creswell, 2013, p.184). By describing, classifying, and interpreting the observation notes, interview transcriptions and photograph notes we were able to see the complete picture. This gave a perspective about the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods that were studied. The information was labeled into themes and codes (Creswell, 2013). According to Miles and Huberman (1994), “codes are used to retrieve and organize” the data that was collected earlier (p.56). Initially there were forty-one codes that needed to be reduced and combined with others in order to discover the themes.

The fourth step of data analysis involved “analyzing data for themes and patterned regularities” (Creswell, 2013, p.190). Marshall and Rossman (1999) described this step as

“identifying salient themes, recurring ideas or language, and patterns of belief that link people and settings together” (p.154). To do this the author analyzed the list of codes to discover the themes. The themes each contained several codes. Dr. Dodge Francis reviewed the themes and codes to ensure that the author conducted the data analysis properly.

The fifth step in data analysis is “interpreting the data” (Creswell, 2013, p.191). Creswell discusses interpreting the results for an ethnography and describing “how the culture works” (2013, p.191). This allowed the significances in the data to appear (Creswell, 2013). Finding the significances in the data helped to determine what could be learned from the research.

According to Marvasti (2004), “the last step in the analysis involves making meaningful statements about how your data illustrates your topic of interest” (p.90). The final step in the data analysis is when “researchers represent the data, a packaging of what was found in text, tubular, or figure form” (Creswell, 2013, p.187). This provided the complete representation of the ethnography. A diagram was sketched on the interview transcriptions showing the themes and a map was created to show how the actors are utilizing the neighborhood.

Validity and Reliability

Strategies used to ensure validity and reliability in this ethnographic study included triangulation, intercoder agreement, and Spindler and Spindler’s criteria for a “good ethnography” (Miles & Huberman, 1999; Creswell, 2013). Triangulation was used to ensure the validity of this qualitative research project. According to Creswell (2013), triangulation occurs when “researchers make use of multiple and different sources,

methods, investigators, and theories to provide corroborating evidence” (p.251). The graduate assistants collected multiple forms of data including observations, interviews, and photographs. This ensured the validity of the research project.

To ensure the reliability of this qualitative study an intercoder agreement was used when analyzing interview transcriptions (Creswell, 2013). An intercoder agreement allows multiple coders to analyze the interview transcriptions (Creswell, 2013). Dr. Dodge Francis reviewed the interview transcriptions for codes and themes. Dr. Dodge Francis discovered similar codes and themes.

This study followed Spindler and Spindler’s criteria for a “good ethnography” (Creswell, 2013, p.262). Spindler and Spindler mentioned that the “observations need to be contextualized” (Creswell, 2013, p.262). Researchers must conduct multiple data collection methods to be able to describe the participant’s situation (Creswell, 2013). The interviewer must remain unbiased when conducting interviews (Creswell, 2013).

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The author found the following themes while conducting the data analysis, the themes were identified and isolated. The researchers counted the themes and counted how many times the specific topic was brought up in the interviews and observation notes and also identified how many times in a specific way. The final themes then were identified and divided into categories. Five major themes were identified through the course of the study which includes: safety, built environment, social environment, economic conditions, and social capital. Some of the themes varied between the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods. The dichotomies between the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods will be described below in more detail.

Safety

Safety was one of the first themes that was discovered as the author conducted the data analysis. Safety concerns reoccurred in the observation field notes as well as the interview transcripts. These concerns that were mentioned in the observation notes and interview transcriptions became the codes and safety became the major theme as the data were analyzed.

Pedestrian Safety

Pedestrian safety was one of the codes that was discovered during the data analysis. Pedestrian safety reoccurred in the observation notes, interview transcriptions, and photographs of the neighborhood. According to Frumkin et al. (2004), "...a mile of walking or biking is more dangerous than a mile of driving, in terms of fatality risk" (p.113). Residents and employees were often observed jaywalking across Boulder Highway and Gibson Road. A resident was at the corner of Gibson Road and Warm

Springs Road when he mentioned that he prefers not to use the crosswalk. The resident said, “I prefer to jaywalk at this intersection because the crosswalk signal is not long enough.”

Another safety issue that was observed and reported in the interviews was the missing sidewalks in areas of the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods. Frumkin et al. (2004), mentioned that “roadways designed to move large numbers of vehicles quickly are usually unfriendly to pedestrians, and alternative routes, such as sidewalks and bicycle paths, are often omitted” (p.117). A community member was observed trying to navigate a section of undeveloped area on his way to the bus stop. The undeveloped area does not have a sidewalk and people would often walk on the side of the major road to avoid it (Photo 3). Interviewees discussed the missing sidewalks in the neighborhoods during their interviews. Interview P stated, “I would like to see the sidewalks fixed in certain areas it goes from concrete to asphalt” (Interview P, personal communication, n.d.). This photo shows a section of sidewalk that transitions from concrete to asphalt (Photo 4).

Pedestrian deaths were another safety concern in the neighborhoods. A previous study regarding pedestrian safety in Atlanta found “the most dangerous stretches of road were those built in the style that typifies sprawl: multiple lanes, high speeds, no sidewalks, long distances between intersections or crosswalks and roadways lined with large commercial establishments and apartment blocks” (Frumkin et al., 2004, p.113). Many of the stretches of road along Gibson Road and Boulder Highway do not have sidewalks and bike lanes. The Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods also have a limited number of crosswalks. Neighborhood residents talked about pedestrian

deaths in their community. The residents discussed the high amounts of traffic that travels along Boulder Highway and often times how neighborhood residents walk when they need to go somewhere. A neighborhood resident was recently hit by an automobile as she crossed Boulder Highway and Sunset Road intersection.

“We just had a resident in our community killed I would say she was hit about 3 months ago as she crossed the street. She died from injuries sustained in that accident about 3 weeks ago. She did not have any health problems prior to the accident.” (Interview O, personal communication, n.d.).

Pedestrian safety measures need to be incorporated when the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods are redeveloped in the future. Neighborhoods need to increase their pedestrian safety measures to ensure the safety of the community members. This should include improved built environment features like sidewalks, crosswalks, street lights, and reduced traffic speeds. Frumkin et al. (2004), found similar findings when they studied the neighborhoods and the built environment. According to Frumkin et al. (2004), pedestrian safety was one of their major concerns.

Bicycle Safety

The researchers observed large amounts of residents, employees, and students riding their bicycles throughout the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods. The individuals rode their bicycles for transportation and recreation needs. According to Frumkin et al. (2004), there are environmental changes that can help protect pedestrians and bicyclists. An example of an environmental change that can help protect bicyclists is a bike lane. Interviewees were pleased with the bike lanes that the City of Henderson has installed on their major streets. Interviewee L said, “Henderson did a good job of putting in the bike lanes. Henderson has bike trails now that you can ride on. The bike lanes and bike trails help a lot.” (Interview L, personal communication, n.d.).

Interviewees praised the bike lanes on Henderson city streets, but shared concerns about traffic when they cross an intersection. Interviewees mentioned that they often have to check the traffic a couple times prior to riding through an intersection.

“I have noticed the only that would be concerning is a lot of people in Nevada particularly like to run red lights. The traffic light will turn yellow and then red and then you still wait a few seconds and people will run it. There have been two times were somebody almost hit me while I was on my bike, but I am extra cautious when I ride my bike so I see them coming.” (Interview G, personal communication, n.d.).

Bike lanes need to be installed throughout the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods. Frumkin et al. (2004) found that bike lanes are often omitted from major thoroughfares in neighborhoods. According to Frumkin et al. (2004), bike lanes are necessary to protect bicyclist as they ride through the neighborhoods. Bike lanes should be added to the existing neighborhoods where possible to ensure the safety of the neighborhood residents that ride their bikes daily.

Police

According to Maintyre et al., having accessible neighborhood services like law enforcement can affect your health (Cockerham, 2007). Gibson Road interviewees commended the police presence in their neighborhood. Gibson Road interviewees talked about how the police drive through the neighborhood often and maintain the safety of the neighborhood. A Gibson Road resident said, “If any little thing goes on, then there is a Henderson police officer here” (Interview E, personal communication, n.d.). Another Gibson Road resident stated, “There is no crime in the neighborhood” (Interview D, personal communication, n.d.).

Boulder Highway interviewees mentioned that Henderson Police and Metro patrol certain areas along Boulder Highway depending on the location. Boulder Highway

interviewees mentioned that they feel safe in their neighborhood during certain hours. A Boulder Highway resident mentioned, “I feel very safe during the daytime. You don’t want to be around here after midnight or before daylight, but its relatively safe” (Interview K, personal communication, n.d.).

Boulder Highway residents brought up concerns about police chasing criminals through their neighborhood. Residents mentioned they would like police to remember there may be children playing their front yards when they are pursuing criminals. A Boulder Highway resident discussed their concerns below.

“If the police are chasing somebody they know how to surround the place or whatever. I know that the police are worried about the criminal running into someone’s house. If the police jump the curb to drive on the grass and a child doesn’t know the police are there. The police will hit the child” (Interview P, personal communication, n.d.).

Gibson Road and Boulder Highway residents need to have accessible neighborhood services. Gibson Road interviewees commended the police presence in their neighborhood. Boulder Highway should have a similar police presence in the residential areas. This would help to ensure that residents feel safe throughout the day in the Boulder Highway neighborhood. According to Maintyre et al, law enforcement is an important neighborhood resource (Cockerham, 2007).

Built Environment

Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods built environment was written about in observation notes and interviewees often mentioned the built environment features when answering interview questions. According to Braveman et al. (2011), communities can impact wellbeing and health through their physical features. The

following codes kept reoccurring: transportation, housing conditions, and community amenities.

Transportation

Transportation options in the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods included: RTC buses, personal automobile, paratransit, taxi, limousine, and bicycle.

Interviewees mentioned that the bus is too expensive for other residents, employees, and students. A Boulder Highway resident said, “I think the bus prices are too high for the regular buses. I think more people would ride the bus if it was cheaper” (Interview L, personal communication, n.d.).

The interviewees that currently used the bus as their primary form of transportation shared concerns about buses being late and not stopping at bus stops. A Boulder Highway student and resident provided an example of the bus failing to stop.

“I hit the stop button right before the bus stop, but not right at it. The bus driver just drove right past the bus stop instead of stopping. The bus driver drove past my bus stop. There was another time when I walked to the bus stop and was standing at the bus stop as the bus drove by. It’s really irritating when you’ve got places to go” (Interview P, personal communication, n.d.).

Another interviewee shared other concerns about using the bus as their primary form of transportation. The interviewee was concerned about the lack of protection from the sun and elements. This photo shows a bus stop with protection from the sun located in the Gibson Road neighborhood (Photo 5). College of Southern Nevada students have to wait for the bus at a bus stop without protection from the sun (Photo 6). College of Southern Nevada students shared their concerns about waiting for the bus in the sun.

“The only concern that I have is some of the bus stops don’t have a cover. You have to stand on the sidewalk in the heat while waiting for the bus. Other bus stops have benches and a cover, so you won’t burn up” (Interview N, personal communication, n.d.).

Former RTC bus passengers discussed why they decided to switch to personal automobiles for their primary transportation option. Interviewees mentioned that RTC needs to provide more frequent bus routes. A Boulder Highway resident and student said, “I wish they had more frequent routes. I used to take the RTC bus down Nellis Boulevard and the bus would only stop every 30 minutes” (Interview S, personal communication, n.d.). Interviewees mentioned the location of the bus stops were inconvenient. A Boulder Highway resident and student stated, “The bus is very inconvenient for me to walk a ¼ of a mile to a bus stop. My other option was to use two buses to get to school” (Interview P, personal statement, n.d.).

Public transportation is a vital neighborhood resource. Many residents in the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway depend on the RTC bus to get to jobs and/or school. Many interviewees mentioned improvements for the current RTC bus routes that included upgraded bus stops, better bus routes, and the location of bus stops. Frumkin et al. (2004) mentioned that bus riders often experience stress when using the bus as their primary transportation option. Bus riders have a lack of control of the bus schedule, location of bus stops, and whether the bus stops or not (Frumkin et al., 2004).

Housing Conditions

Housing conditions interview questions received a variety of responses from building more sustainable housing, increasing student housing options, and affordable low-income housing. Freudenberg et al. (2006) mentioned that “shelter is a basic necessity of life” (p.68). Interviewees stated that sustainable housing needs to be developed in the neighborhoods. A small business owner described their vision for

sustainable building practices in Southern Nevada. The small business owner worked in the Gibson Road neighborhood and lived in the Boulder Highway neighborhood.

“I would love to see more solar panels on houses and the apartments getting more into recycling. I think that most people select the cheapest way to build a house. Our energy usage even in cheaper housing could be reduced if they used better building materials to reduce the amount of leakage. I would love to see something that encourages better building practices. Using solar energy in Vegas should be a no brainer” (Interview H, personal communication, n.d.).

Interviewees brought up the need for more student housing options in the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods. The student housing options need to be located near the schools. An educator said, “I would like to see perhaps expansion of the type of housing that the students now have which are the apartment complexes. Students can utilize perhaps more apartment options in this community” (Interview I, personal communication, n.d.).

Interviewees discussed the need for more affordable housing in the Boulder Highway neighborhood (Photo 7). Interviewees mentioned that people struggle to pay their monthly rent. “The housing is so expensive a lot of people can’t afford their apartment. My family members living in a house pay quite a bit in rent” (Interview L, personal communication, n.d.).

Interviewees shared concerns and ideas for the future of housing in Southern Nevada. Affordable housing options are important in the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods. Interviewees also mentioned using sustainable building practices in the future. Freudenberg et al. (2006) stated that everyone should have access to shelter. Neighborhoods need to provide a variety of housing options to meet the needs of all of the residents.

Community Amenities

The Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods have the following community amenities: parks, schools, daycare, recreation centers, fitness centers, grocery stores, and restaurants. Interviewees discussed their neighborhood parks and recreation centers in great detail.

Parks

Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods have parks located throughout the area. According to Farley and Cohen (2005), “Parks, ‘the lungs of the city,’ are about the only places that people in urban areas can exercise without paying a membership fee, and they are needed even in the suburbs if children are to play basketball or soccer” (p.157). The City of Las Vegas and City of Henderson were praised for their parks by interviewees (Photo 8). A Gibson Road student described the parks located in the neighborhood.

“I think that is something that Henderson and Vegas do a great job of making sure that there is lots of parks close by for kids to play in and they are well covered too. They are pretty good parks” (Interview J, personal communication, n.d.).

Many interviewees reported that they had parks located within walking distance from their apartment or house (Photo 9). Interviewees described the parks located near their apartments or house. A Boulder Highway resident and volunteer described their neighborhood park.

“The park is right across the wash from where I live and it’s a really nice. There’s green grass all the time and its clean most of the time, so I think it’s a good park. They park has a big soccer field or grass area and a volleyball court” (Interview N, personal communication, n.d.).

Neighborhood students stated that they would meet classmates at the park for a picnic, game of bocce ball, disc golf, and/or to study. A Boulder Highway student and

resident said, “I would go to the park to read and study. I still go to parks to read my book or textbook” (Interview S, personal communication, n.d.).

Parks play an important role in the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods. Parks provide shared public space for community members to gather and socialize. Shared public space in neighborhoods is essential to the social capital and health of the residents. Farley and Cohen (2005) mentioned that parks provide a space for people to exercise and children to play sports. Gibson Road and Boulder Highway residents were observed utilizing their neighborhood parks.

Recreation Centers

Interviewees discussed the recreation centers located in their neighborhoods. The recreation centers in the neighborhoods are utilized by children, teenagers, and seniors. Youth recreation centers offered the following opportunities: participation in youth sports, after school programs, and summer programs (Photo 10). Senior recreation centers offered computer classes, fitness classes, and outings in the community (Photo 11). The recreation centers did not currently offer daycare services for neighborhood residents. The recreation centers were often located next to parks or local public schools. A Gibson Road employee mentioned, “We use the rec center pool over here and my kids take classes occasionally” (Interview A, personal communication, n.d.).

Interviewees mentioned that they teach classes or volunteer at the recreation centers located in the Boulder Highway neighborhood. Many interviewees described the recreation centers services. An interviewee mentioned, “We teach at the rec centers and they have nice facilities. I would say the recreation centers are good places for children and parents to go” (Interview H, personal communication, n.d.).

Interviewees talked about the inconvenient recreation center hours. The interviewees would like to see the recreation centers extended their hours during the summer months. A Boulder Highway student and resident shared their concerns about the recreation centers hours.

“There’s a rec center right across the street, but it’s inconvenient. The recreation center is only open during the afternoon from 3:00 to 5:00pm or 2:00 to 5:00pm. The kids can’t go to the rec center to play until the afternoon” (Interview P, personal communication, n.d.).

Recreation centers are an important neighborhood resource. The recreation centers provided activities for children, teenagers, and seniors. The recreation centers are shared public space that allows community members to participate in activities and socialize. Residents, students, and employees benefit from the recreation centers being assessable in the Boulder Highway neighborhood.

Social Environment

Neighborhood residents were observed partaking and reported participating in the following activities in their neighborhoods: bowling, walking, biking, hiking, going out to eat with friends, casino, movies, youth sports, and volunteering. The following codes reoccurred frequently: volunteering and illegal activities.

Volunteering

The interviewees mentioned that they give back to the community by volunteering, donations, and/or sponsorships. According to Cockerham (2007), “the more people invest socially, the more they are integrated into society and the better their health and well-being” (p.167). Interviewees stated that they volunteer at local schools, domestic violence shelters, youth recreation centers, senior recreation centers, church, local charity events and provide free medical services. An interviewee talked about how

he tries to help anyone in need. A Boulder Highway resident and volunteer shared the following example about providing food to a homeless gentleman. “I saw someone over there digging through the trash. He didn’t notice me so I just went home and made a food bag for him. I gave the bag of food to him” (Interview R, personal communication, n.d.).

An interviewee was involved in tutoring at a local school during the last school year. The interviewee talked about volunteering at a local elementary school.

“I was a tutor at a local elementary school. I was a tutor for two hours every week during the school year. I always helped the kids that were having trouble reading. I have also been involved in a project encouraging the schools to recycle” (Interview H, personal communication, n.d.).

An interviewee talked about an outreach event their church had for a local school.

A Gibson Road consumer and Boulder Highway resident shared information about the outreach event.

“We had an outreach event for a low-income area school. My church set up basically like a free rummage sale for people just come in and get the things that they needed. We got local grocery stores to donate quite a bit of stuff last year” (Interview B, personal communication, n.d.).

Giving back to the community by volunteering was important to community stakeholders. Volunteering is a component of social capital (Cockerham, 2007). Volunteering allowed community stakeholders to form social networks in their neighborhoods. Putnam’s research found that social networks influence people’s wellbeing (Cockerham, 2007).

Illegal Activities

Gibson Road interviewees did not mention any illegal activities that took place in their neighborhood. Graffiti was observed in the drainage channel along Gibson Road (Photo 12). Boulder Highway interviewees spoke about the illegal activities that occurred

in their neighborhood. Cohen et al. (2000) mentioned that The Broken Window Theory suggests that the condition of the neighborhoods physical environment provides social clues that let people know what behavior is acceptable. The following illegal activities were mentioned by interviewees: drug-trade, drunk driving, gang activities, selling food stamps, and prostitutes. Many Boulder Highway interviewees stated that drugs were being sold in their neighborhood. A Boulder Highway student and resident said, “They don’t work and you see people hustling people just trying to make easy money. For example, people sell drugs in my neighborhood” (Interview S, personal communication, n.d.).

Many interviewees talked about the alcohol use and drunk driving along Boulder Highway. A Boulder Highway resident discussed the alcohol and drug use in the neighborhood.

“I would say that our area is prone to having a lot of heavy drunk driving. The way people pass time is drinking and sometimes its drugs too. There’s a massive amount of drunk driving going on in this area. The police may not realize how many people are driving by drunk” (Interview O, personal communication, n.d.).

A Boulder Highway resident described the illegal activities in their residential area of the neighborhood. A Boulder Highway resident and volunteer described the activities in their neighborhood.

“My street has a couple houses where the cops have been a couple times. You know those neighbors aren’t good people. They barricade their house so other individuals don’t see what they’re doing. Down my street there are apartments where the cops are present all the time. I’ve heard a couple stories about people getting jumped and robbed. I haven’t had any problems in my neighborhood” (Interview N, personal communication, n.d.).

Many Boulder Highway interviewees mentioned the arson that occurred at Whitney Township Park. Neighborhood children lit the playground equipment on fire.

There was a fence built around the ruined playground equipment (Photo 13). Boulder Highway residents did not know if the damaged playground equipment was going to be replaced. A Boulder Highway resident said, “Whitney Township Park is across the street. We only have the little playground now. The big playground got lit on fire” (Interview P, personal communication, n.d.)

The Broken Windows Theory found that clues in the neighborhood environment let people know what behavior is acceptable (Cohen et al., 2000). In certain residential areas of the Boulder Highway neighborhood illegal activities were acceptable. Many interviewees reported a lack of job opportunities in the neighborhoods. The lack of employment options leads people to look for other ways to make an income.

Economic Conditions

Interviewees all agreed that there were a lack of job opportunities in Las Vegas and Henderson, NV. According to Lofters and O’Campo (2012), neighborhoods where disadvantaged people reside, are often have underfunded schools that cannot provide students with a quality education and limited job options. Interviewees mentioned that it is difficult to find jobs opportunities, their skill set often does not match the job description, transportation to and from the job site can be challenging, and that it is competitive job market. A Boulder Highway resident provided the following example about a woman that was struggling to find a job.

“I think there is a shortage of jobs. There are not many jobs available here. When I tell people I moved here for a job they are very surprised. I went shopping on the strip somewhere and this lady was like I have two degrees and here I am on the strip dress shop selling clothes, because I can’t find a job” (Interview B, personal communication, n.d.).

Many interviewees discussed the challenges that they face when searching for a job. Many interviewees mentioned hiring practices that discriminate against them. A Boulder Highway resident talked about the hiring practices in Southern Nevada. “I think low income people are looked down upon when they apply for jobs. You’re not supposed to discriminate in the workplace when hiring and whatnot. I think it does happen a lot in our community” (Interview O, personal communication, n.d.).

Many interviewees discussed the competitive job market in Southern Nevada. They often mentioned that the people applying for the available jobs had to be willing to work hard. A Gibson Road resident and employee described the current job market during their interview.

“I think it’s pretty competitive job market. It’s probably very competitive for the clerical jobs or management positions. I think people who are willing to work hard there is probably good opportunity for them. The people that are willing to work hard can do well” (Interview A, personal communication, n.d.).

Many interviewees discussed the challenges of the current job market in Southern Nevada. The interviewees mentioned that the job opportunities were often located across town. According to Lofters and O’Campo (2012), there are often limited employment opportunities in neighborhoods where disadvantaged residents live. The employment options in the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods were often located near the middle class residential areas.

Social Capital

Social capital questions allowed us to learn if there was a sense of community or lack of community in the neighborhoods. A sense of community is an important aspect of social capital in neighborhoods (Frumkin et al., 2004). According to Frumkin et al. (2004), “Sense of community is defined as ‘a feeling that members have of belonging, a

feeling that member's matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met..." (p.161). Gibson Road community stakeholders reported a sense of community in the neighborhood. Eight out of eleven reported a sense of community in the Gibson Road neighborhood. Three out of eight reported that they have a sense of community at work and/or school. The three also reported that they do not have a sense of community in their residential area and they do not know their neighbors. The Gibson Road neighborhood provided residents, employees, and student's opportunities to create strong social networks. Social networks are an important aspect of the neighborhoods social capital.

Six out of ten reported a sense of community in the Boulder Highway neighborhood. Four out of ten community stakeholders reported no sense of community in the Boulder Highway neighborhood. None of the Boulder Highway interviewees mentioned having a sense of community at work and/or school. The Boulder Highway neighborhood provided opportunities for residents to build social networks.

Community stakeholder's age, number of years in the neighborhood, and gender did not seem to influence their response about the sense of community in their neighborhoods. Community stakeholders reported living and/or working in the neighborhoods from 1 year to 40 years. A sense of community did not vary by neighborhood type.

A Gibson Road employee mentioned that the neighborhood does not feel like a community. The Gibson Road employee gave the following example of a community, "When I think of community I think of people who interact with their neighbors and who

have block parties. There's a common theme among the people" (Interview A, personal communication, n.d.).

A Boulder Highway resident and student talked about what a community means to them. The Boulder Highway resident and student said, "Well when I think of community, I think of the whole street at least knowing each other and saying hi. My community doesn't do that at all we all kind of do our own thing" (Interview N, personal communication, n.d.).

Many interviewees reported a sense of community in their neighborhoods. A Gibson Road resident discussed the sense of community in their neighborhood. The Gibson Road resident said, "There is lots of participation in our neighborhood. We know our neighbors which is kind of unique unfortunately nowadays" (Interview D, personal communication, n.d.).

A Boulder Highway resident described their neighborhood as being like a family. The Boulder Highway resident said, "Everyone knows each other it's kind of like a big family and helps protect each other the best way we can" (Interview R, personal communication, n.d.).

Social capital is an important public health neighborhood characteristic. Social capital of the neighborhoods can impact the health of the community members. The sense of community in the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods needs to be maintained in the future.

Community Stakeholders View of the Future

The Southern Nevada Strong project included learning about how community stakeholders envision the future of their neighborhoods. The interviewees mentioned that

they would like to see more sustainable public transportation systems, the Sunset Road area revitalized, neighborhood grocery store, and sustainable water practices.

Community stakeholders mentioned during their interviews that they would like to see more sustainable public transportation systems in Southern Nevada. Many interviewees mentioned that they would like to see the existing bus routes made more reliable and efficient. A Gibson Road small business owner and Boulder Highway resident discussed the need for more efficient transportation. “I am concerned about transportation, because I would like to see more efficient modes of transportation. I also want to help people who aren’t able to afford a car” (Interview H, personal communication, n.d.).

Two interviewees mentioned they would like to see a metro train system installed in Southern Nevada. A Gibson Road employee and Gibson Road resident discussed the public transportation in Salt Lake City, UT and Los Angeles, CA. The interviewees shared their ideas for a more efficient public transportation system.

Interviewee A: “I would love to see some kind of tram system or something more efficient. It’s just quicker than taking the bus. I would love to see more efficient transportation options in Southern Nevada” (Interview H, personal communication, n.d.).

Interviewee A.1: ‘Oh I agree. I think trains are the way to go. I love them. I think they are very quick economic way to get from A to B. It’s cleaner energy and there would be less smog” (Interview H, personal communication, n.d.).

Many interviewees mentioned that Sunset Road between the I-515 and Boulder Highway needs to be revitalized (Photo 14). Many interviewees walk or drive through this area to access services on the other side of the I-515. Sunset Road was missing sidewalks and bike lanes in sections of the area. Interviewees also specified they would like to see a medical clinic and fewer vacant lots (Photo 15). A Gibson Road small

business owner and Boulder Highway resident shared their vision of the future of Sunset Road. “I think some of the businesses along have a very cheap appearance. For example, one business is painted bright yellow paint to advertise bail bonds. That street needs to be encouraged to improve the look of it” (Interview H, personal communication, n.d.).

The Gibson Road neighborhood did not have a grocery store within its boundaries. The residents would often shop for groceries at the Wal-Mart located at Sunset Road and I-515. The Boulder Highway neighborhood had a limited number of grocery stores within its neighborhood boundaries. Sections of Boulder Highway were designated as food deserts (City of Henderson city planner, personal communication, February 26, 2014). Both neighborhoods could benefit from having a more convenient grocery store options. Interviewees mentioned that they prefer to shop for groceries at Smith’s, Food 4 Less, Trader Joe’s, Vons, WinCo, Target, Costco, Fresh & Easy, and Wal-Mart. A Boulder Highway resident shared the following information about the neighborhood grocery store options.

“There’s Wal-Mart, but I don’t shop there for groceries. There’s a Fresh & Easy in the neighborhood. The Fresh & Easy is getting ready to close down, so that will be gone. We really need a grocery store other than Wal-Mart in this area. It would be really nice if a grocery store chain opened a store in neighborhood” (Interview O, personal communication, n.d.).

Neighborhood residents approached the graduate assistants to discuss the importance of sustainable water practices. Many interviewees were concerned about the current water shortage that is facing Southern Nevada. A Gibson Road resident shared their concerns about the need to develop sustainable water practices. “Southern Nevada needs to develop and improve ways to conserve water” (Interview D, personal communication, n.d.).

Summary

Residents, employees, consumers, and students were observed as they went about their day in the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods. Community stakeholders shared their insight about the neighborhoods during the interview process. Participants communicated their ideas for the future of the neighborhood. Community stakeholders have a vast knowledge about their current neighborhood. Photographs were taken to show areas of the neighborhood that could be improved in the future.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Discussion

The Southern Nevada Regional Planning Commission Board received the Southern Nevada Strong summer research project final report. The Southern Nevada Regional Planning Commission reviewed the final report to learn how the twelve neighborhoods were being utilized. The Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods were selected to move into the next phase of the Southern Nevada Strong project. Gibson Road and Boulder Highway will receive additional research analysis. This will involve identifying opportunity sites within the neighborhoods for possible redevelopment. After the in-depth research analysis is complete the Southern Nevada Strong final report will be compiled.

Southern Nevada Strong ethnography research project allowed the UNLV graduate assistants to study the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods located in Henderson and Las Vegas, NV. Southern Nevada Strong used an innovative approach to regional planning. This innovative approach to regional planning allowed the UNLV graduate assistants to gather information about the residents, employees, and students that would be affected by potential redevelopment. Community stakeholders were able to share how they envision the future of the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods.

This study provided an in-depth analysis of the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods. The additional data from the Boulder Highway neighborhood strengthened this research project. The results of this study illustrate how the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods were being utilized. Community

stakeholders need to be involved in the research of their neighborhoods. Community stakeholders provided knowledge about their neighborhoods and how they envision their neighborhoods in the future. The results show how neighborhood residents, employees, and students utilize the existing space. Community stakeholders shared information about beneficial and detrimental neighborhood activities.

City planners should continue include ethnographic research as part of their community development plans in the future. Community stakeholders provided information about what areas of the neighborhoods they would like to see improved or developed. The participants also shared information about the types of grocery stores they would like to see built in the future. Community stakeholders praised Las Vegas and Henderson for their parks, recreation centers, and bike lanes. City planners need to reference this information as they develop the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods in the future.

Business owners and employees interview responses were similar to the residents that lived in the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods. The business owners and employees talked about using many of the neighborhood services. The business owners and employees had the same concerns about the lack of grocery stores in the neighborhood. The business owners and employees were less likely to report a sense of community in the neighborhood, but often did report having a community at work. The business owners and employees were benefiting from the social networks being established at work.

Safety was a concern in the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods. Community stakeholders discussed pedestrian safety concerns and bicycle safety in the

neighborhoods. Previous research showed that along major thoroughfares, in Atlanta, sidewalks, bike lanes, and crosswalks are often omitted from the streets (Frumkin et al., 2004). Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods were missing sidewalks, crosswalks, and bike lanes in certain areas. In the future, community planners should include these safety features in every neighborhood.

Community stakeholders discussed the built environment of the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods. Community stakeholders praised the City of Henderson and City of Las Vegas for the parks and recreations that were available in the neighborhood. Leventhal and Brooks-Gunn (2000) discovered the importance of community resource facilities in neighborhoods. The community resource facilities in the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods included the recreation centers. As the neighborhoods are developed and redeveloped in the future they need to include community resource facilities.

Boulder Highway interviewees discussed the illegal activities that happened in specific residential areas. The residential areas were often patrolled by the Henderson police and Metro, depending where the area was located. Previous research discussed how the physical environment gives people clues to what is acceptable behavior (Cohen et al., 2000). What can be done to shift the community member's perceptions of acceptable behavior in their neighborhoods?

Social capital was an important neighborhood resource in the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods. Putnam's research showed the importance of social networks and how they affect health (Cockerham, 2007). Volunteering is an important aspect of social capital. Many of the community stakeholders mentioned that they

volunteer in the community. In the future, social capital needs to be maintained in the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods.

Community stakeholders were allowed to share their view of the future of the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods. According to Collier and Scott (2008), community members need to be involved in the planning process of their neighborhoods. Gibson Road and Boulder Highway stakeholders were involved in the Southern Nevada Strong's regional planning project. Community stakeholders shared their insight of the neighborhoods and how they could be improved in the future.

Implications

Public health implications from the study include the built environment, barriers to neighborhood services, and social capital. The neighborhoods that community stakeholders live in can affect their health through the built environment and social capital (Braveman et al., 2011). This research project showed how the current residents utilize the neighborhood. The built environment should include sidewalks, crosswalks, bike lanes, and street lights to ensure the safety of neighborhood residents. The community stakeholders discussed the beneficial and detrimental aspects of their current built environment. The community stakeholders mentioned the barriers they face when trying to access medical care and grocery stores. Cockerham (2007) mentioned the importance of having basic neighborhood services and how not having access to them could potentially affect your health. Neighborhoods that are developed or redeveloped in the future need to include basic services and spaces to increase social capital.

Future research is currently being conducted in the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods. Future research should be conducted when the public schools

are in session in the neighborhoods. In the future, a focus group conducted with community stakeholders to learn more about how neighborhood residents use the public space and what areas of the neighborhood they would like to see improved. Future research should include a study with a larger sample size to learn from additional community members about how they are using the existing neighborhood. A larger sample size that includes multiple neighborhoods would make the results generalizable. Future studies using a mixed method study approach where data is being collected through several years at several diverse neighborhoods is needed to fully understand how the neighborhoods are being utilized. This mixed methods study should include questions that measure the social capital in the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods.

Limitations of the Study

Research limitations include seasonal snapshot, participants, and sample size. The summer data collection provided us with a seasonal snapshot of the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods. Data collection occurred during the summer months, Gibson Road and Boulder Highway residents may utilize the neighborhood differently during other seasons. The public schools were not in session during the data collection. It would have been beneficial to learn how the public school students, parents, staff, and busses use the neighborhood.

Interview participants were selected by the UNLV graduate assistants based on their convenience. The UNLV graduate assistants interviewed community stakeholders that they had established a rapport with during the initial neighborhood observations. The interviews with community stakeholders were conducted during the day. The interview participants for this research project were a convenience sample.

Sample size is another limitation of this research project. Only twenty-one community stakeholders in the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods participated in the interview process. Due to the small sample size the results are not generalizable to other neighborhoods.

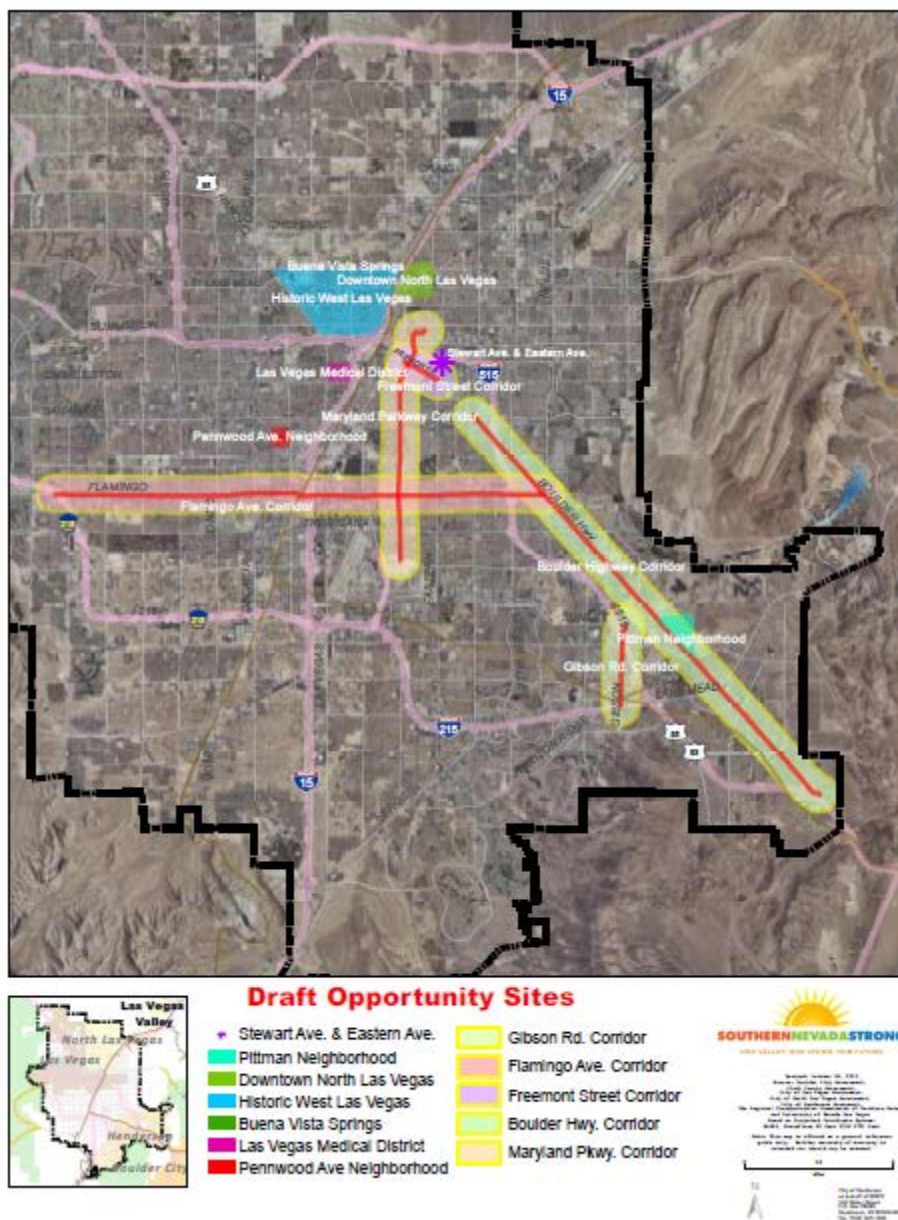
Conclusion

From a researchers perspective qualitative research project allowed an in-depth analysis to learn about the neighborhoods. The photos, observation field notes, and interview transcriptions allowed the researcher to conduct an in-depth secondary data analysis of Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods. The photos provided a visual way to show what needs to be improved in the neighborhoods. The photos also show the parks and recreation centers that neighborhood residents enjoyed having access to in this research area. Observation field notes allowed the researcher to learn about the neighborhood activity. Conducting the observations allowed the researcher to experience the areas of concern first hand. Community stakeholders that participated in the interview process shared freely about their neighborhoods. The community stakeholders provided the researcher with valuable information about the neighborhoods.

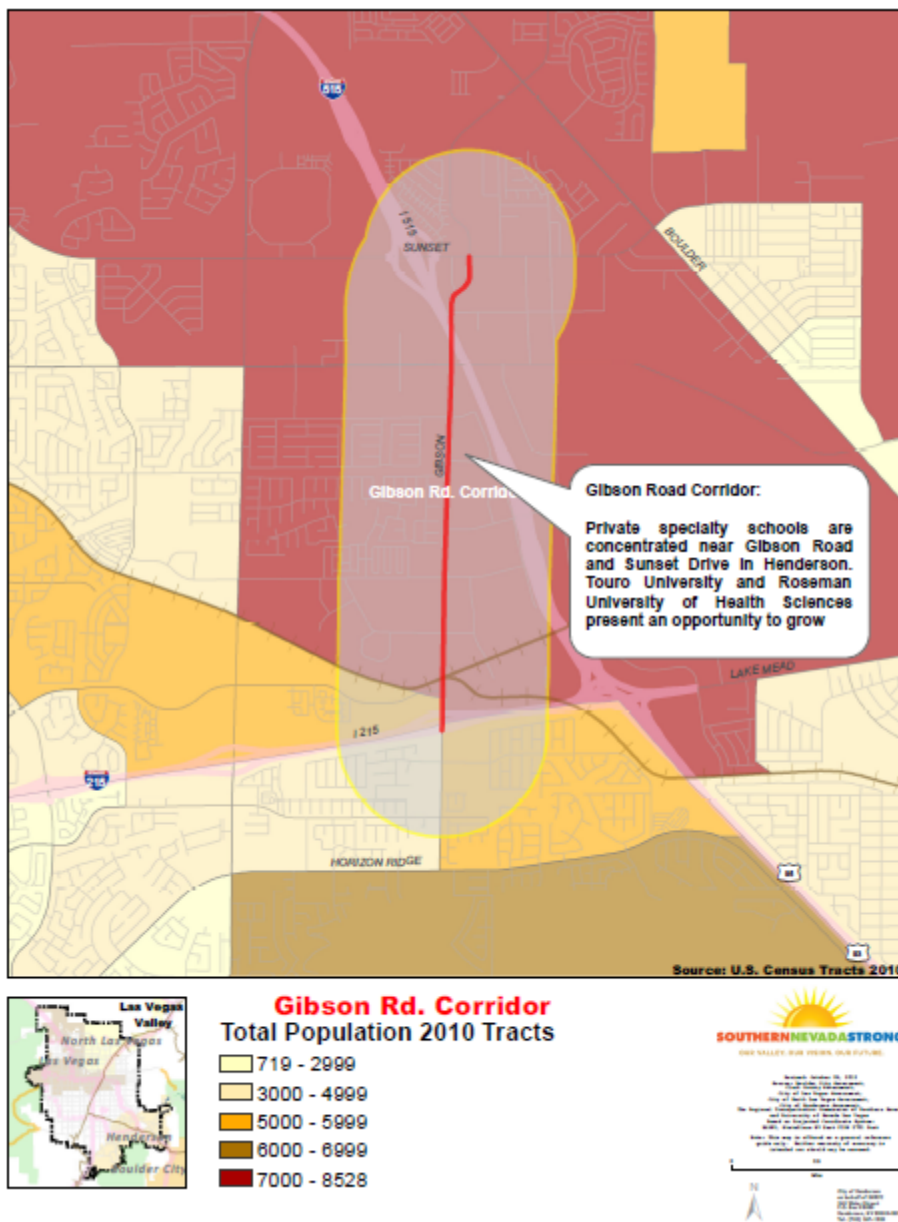
Southern Nevada Strong used an innovative approach to community planning. This research project allowed community stakeholders to be involved in the neighborhood development process. Residents, business owners, employees, consumers, and students shared their vision for the Gibson Road and Boulder Highway neighborhoods. Southern Nevada needs to continue to involve community stakeholders when developing/redeveloping neighborhoods in the future.

Community stakeholders shared their sentiments about living in Southern Nevada neighborhoods. They provided valuable insight into how the neighborhoods were currently being utilized. Community stakeholders had a vast knowledge of community resources. Community stakeholders communicated how they envision the future of Gibson Road and Boulder Highway located in Southern Nevada. How do you envision the future of the Southern Nevada?

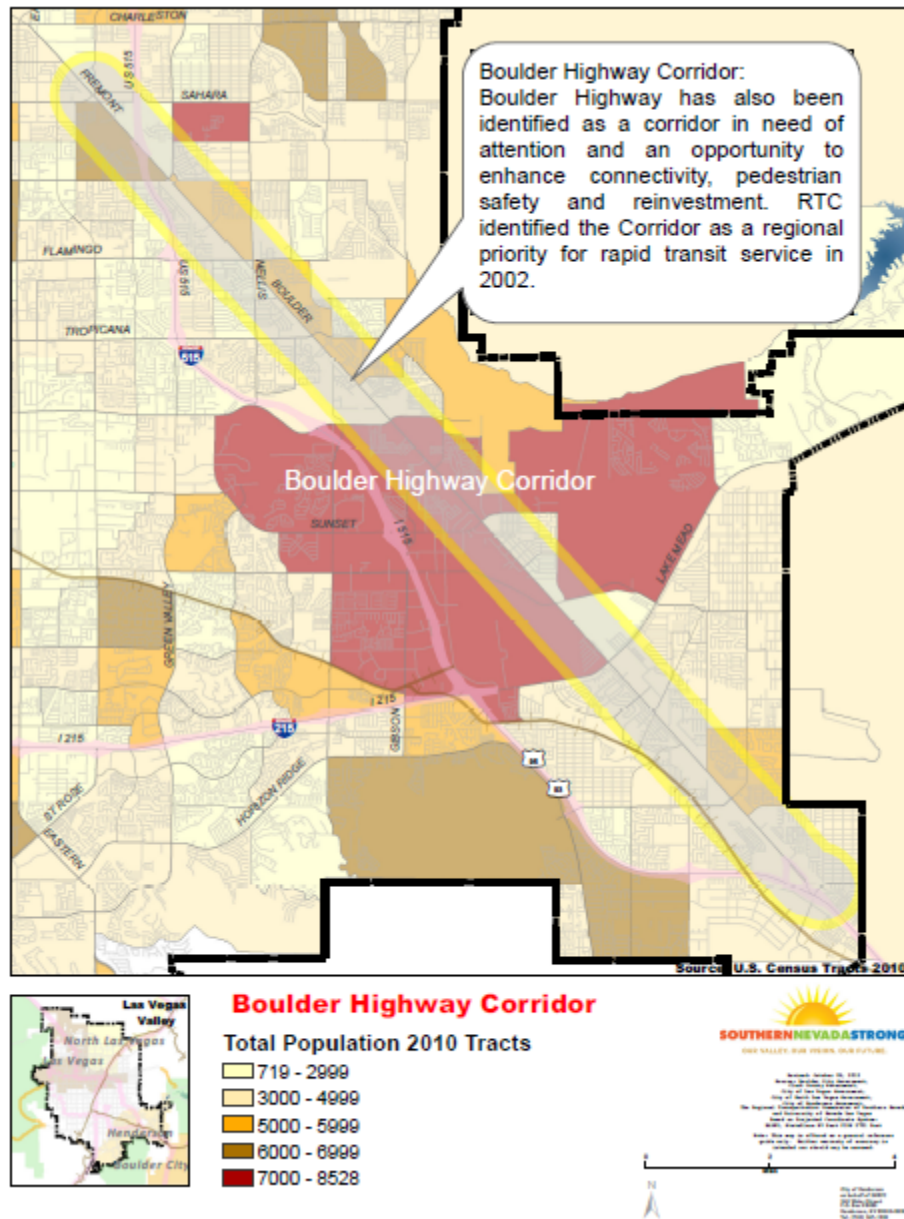
APPENDIX A: MAP OF SNS RESEARCH LOCATIONS



APPENDIX B: GIBSON ROAD MAP



APPENDIX C: BOULDER HIGHWAY MAP



APPENDIX D: ORIGINAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

SNS Livability Principles and Research Prompts

Transportation:

What are the major forms and means of transportation in this area? What major obstacles exist to affordable and reliable access to transportation? How do people experience and perceive issues related to transportation? In short, how does transportation (and its deficiencies) impact the quality of life in your fieldsite?

Housing:

What is the housing like in the neighborhood, as you observe it and as people narrate it? Where do people live? How connected or accessible are their homes from their places of work, school, or socializing? How close are residential units to markets, stores, and other amenities? What are people's perspectives on the available housing options and how might they like these improved? What kinds of changes is the housing stock undergoing? What is the *lived* impact of foreclosures on housing?

Economic opportunity:

What are the sources of economic opportunity for residents and business owners in this area (what kinds of businesses and jobs exist and where are they?) What are the obstacles for economic diversification and access to employment? How do people perceive existing employment opportunities?

Existing Communities:

What type of visible and less visible forms of community exist in this area? What kinds of events and activities do people engage in? Where do they gather? What issues matter to different forms of community in the neighborhood? Do people and/or groups feel like their voices matter in government and in the future of the city?

How do people talk about, define, and understand community? Is it the same as their geographic neighborhood? Is it contingent on certain familial, political, ethnic, religious, or other associations? How strongly do people identify with their neighborhood and/or community?

Physical Spaces:

What and where are the places (indoors or outdoors, public or private, mobile or stationary) where people convene and interact? Who owns or controls these spaces? How do different individuals or groups utilize these spaces? How does this change at particular times or under certain circumstances?

Community Amenities:

What type of community amenities exist in this area (e.g. fitness/recreational facilities, child care, elderly care, adult and youth educational opportunities)? What amenities are missing? How do different people use these amenities (or not)? How does the presence or absence of amenities shape the quality and vibrancy of everyday life in the area?

What do people do in their free time? Do they participate in any recreational or after school activities? Are they members of any organizations or clubs? Where do they hang out?

Demographics

We'd like to gather some simple demographic data on interviewees so we know if we are reaching people representative of the region. Some of the major categories of interest include: age, gender, ethnicity/race, socioeconomic status, and education.

APPENDIX E: NEW INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Protocol Project: Ethnography in Southern Nevada

Time of Interview:

Date:

Place:

Interviewer:

Interviewee:

Position of interviewee:

The purpose of this research is to understand community sentiment of potential redevelopment around these sites; engage community members to share their vision for the potential future of the area or other sites, and learn from community members how plans for redevelopment could better serve the needs of local community members.

Questions

Transportation

1. Do you walk to work?
2. What forms of transportation (bus, bike, car) do you use?
3. What transportation is available in this area?
4. Are there any concerns about the available transportation in your area...explain.
5. What are concerns of the transportation that you hear people talk about?
6. Do you think the current transportation options make a difference in your life?

Housing

1. How long have you lived in the area?
2. Please describe the housing in your neighborhood.
3. How available is schooling to this neighborhood?
4. What are options for shopping at grocery stores? (if not, use follow-up question)
 - a. -Where do you shop for groceries?

5. Are there parks or playgrounds in your neighborhood to use?
6. Do you feel safe to just go for a walk in the neighborhood...why or why not?
7. What types of housing changes would you like to see?
8. Has the loss of jobs in Las Vegas/Henderson caused any problems with your neighborhood housing?

Economic

1. What job opportunities are available for the people and business owners here?
2. Are there problems or issues in obtaining jobs?
3. What do you think about current employment opportunities?

Existing Communities

1. How would you describe your neighborhood?
2. How is it the same or different from when you grew up?
3. Do you think of your neighborhood as a community...explain?
4. What type of activities do your neighbors do together?
5. Do you feel as if you have a voice in your town, why or why not?
6. Can you tell how others feel in your neighborhood?
7. If you have a Home Owners association, are you involved with the HOA, how?
8. What role does the HOA play in your neighborhood, explain?

Physical Space

1. Describe your Community Amenities
2. What types of activities do you do in your neighborhood? Explain.
3. Are there fitness or recreational centers available in your neighborhood, please describe.
4. Do you use these facilities? Or neighbors?

5. If daycare is needed is that available in your neighborhood?
 - a. -Is the daycare, church based, privately home owned or public?
6. What do you like to do in your free time?
7. Do you have a sense of what neighbors do with their free time?
8. Are there school activities that you/family are involved with...explain.
9. Is there any particular place you/family/and neighbors like to hang out at?

Demographics

We'd like to gather some simple demographic data on interviewees so we know if we are reaching people representative of the region. Some of the major categories of interest include:

age, gender, ethnicity/race, socioeconomic status, and education.

APPENDIX F: PHOTOS



Photo 1: Gibson Road Neighborhood



Photo 2: Start of the Henderson median along Boulder Highway looking northwest



Photo 3: Section of missing sidewalk located along Gibson Road. There is a major bus stop south of this vacant lot. Community members had to navigate this lot in order to reach the bus stop.



Photo 4: Illustrates how the sidewalk transition's from concrete, to asphalt, and to dirt.



Photo 5: Bus stop located on Gibson Road with protection from the sun



Photo 6: Bus stop with no protection from the sun, located at the College of Southern Nevada



Photo 7: Boulder Highway neighborhood housing



Photo 8: Morrell Park



Photo 9: Park behind the Whitney Recreation Center



Photo 10: Whitney Ranch Recreation Center



Photo 11: Heritage Park Senior Facility



Photo 12: Graffiti in the drainage channel along Gibson Road



Photo 13: Whitney Township playground arson



Photo 14: Businesses along Sunset Road



Photo 15: Vacant lot along Sunset Road

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Neighborhoods

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