

# 2015 FILIPINO COMMUNITY DATA AND SURVEY REPORT: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Pre-Feasibility Study for a Seattle-Area  
Filipino Business Plaza



APRIL 2015

For Filipino Chamber of Commerce of the  
Pacific Northwest



Prepared by



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many thanks go to everyone who led and participated in this study for giving of their time and wisdom.

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### **100 community members who responded to the survey!**

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# 2015 Filipino Community Data and Survey Report: Executive Summary

FOR FILIPINO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

## Key Census Data

- 60,000 Filipinos in King County
- Median age: 32.6 years old
- 45% foreign born
- 61% speak an Asian/Pacific language at home
- 73% have at least some college
- 59% homeowners
- \$67,817 median household income
- 75% age 16+ are in the labor force
- Largest occupational area: Management, business, science and arts
- 57% drive alone to work

The Filipino Chamber of Commerce of the Pacific Northwest is exploring the feasibility of developing a Filipino Business Plaza in the Seattle, Washington, area. The work will be in three phases: (1) conduct demographic research, a community survey and interviews; (2) identify and assess potential sites; and (3) identify public and private funding sources to make the Plaza a reality. Phase 1 explored three research questions:

1. What are the size and demographic characteristics of the Filipino population in Seattle and the region?
2. What kinds of businesses and services would attract customers/patrons to the Filipino Business Plaza?
3. What does the research suggest about a good location?

To conduct this phase, Cedar River Group, LLC, researched U.S. Census data and Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) economic and population forecasts, carried out a survey of Filipino community members, and conducted interviews with 10 knowledgeable Filipino leaders.

## U.S. Census Data

The 2010 U.S. Census showed there is a substantial population in the region who are Filipino or Filipino in combination with another race/ethnicity<sup>1</sup>—more than 20,000 in Seattle, more than 60,000 in King County and nearly 99,000 in the three-county area of King, Pierce and Snohomish counties. The Filipino community is a small part of King County’s total population—only 3.1 percent. Taking in the broader Central Puget Sound region (including also Kitsap and Island counties), there are a total of 112,434 people who identify as Filipino, and who make up 82 percent of the Filipino population in Washington state.

<sup>1</sup> This report uses “Filipino” and “Filipino population” to refer to those who self-identified in the Census as Filipino or Filipino combined with another race/ethnicity, or consider themselves Filipino Americans.

The median age of Filipinos is 33.9 years old in Seattle, 32.6 years in King County, and 31.4 years in the three-county area, all of which are younger than the overall King County median of 37.9 years. The average Filipino family size of 3.51 in King County is slightly higher than that of the county as a whole (3.05).

Several demographic factors suggest that the Filipino community in Seattle and King County might identify strongly with their roots, which could increase their interest in a Filipino Business Plaza. For example, 45 percent of the Filipino population in King County is foreign-born, and 61 percent of Filipino households speak an Asian/Pacific language at home.

The Filipino population is well educated, with 73 percent having at least some college. A majority of the Filipino community own their homes. The median household income of Filipinos in Seattle is \$56,812 and in King County is \$67,817.



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Seventy-five percent of Filipinos age 16 or older in King County is in the labor force. Most (80.2%) are employed in private enterprises, both for-profit and nonprofit, with 16.9 percent employed by government, and small percentages self-employed or unpaid family workers. By occupation, Filipinos in King County are primarily in management, business, science and arts occupations (35.4%), and in sales and office occupations (27.9%). Much of the population has access to a car, with more than half of employed Filipinos driving alone to work, with a mean commute time of 27 minutes.

In Seattle, the largest numbers of Filipinos live in the Beacon Hill and Rainier Valley neighborhoods. Other neighborhoods in Seattle and King County that many Filipinos call home include West Seattle/ Delridge, Renton and SeaTac to the south, and Shoreline and Lake Forest Park to the north, though the northern areas have lower numbers than in the south.

*PSRC projects there will be more than 19,000 more jobs in SeaTac by 2040.*

### PSRC Forecasts

The PSRC conducts economic and population forecasting in the Central Puget Sound region. Matching the census tracts where the Filipino population resides (per 2010 census), with the PSRC's corresponding analysis areas reveals the communities that currently have higher

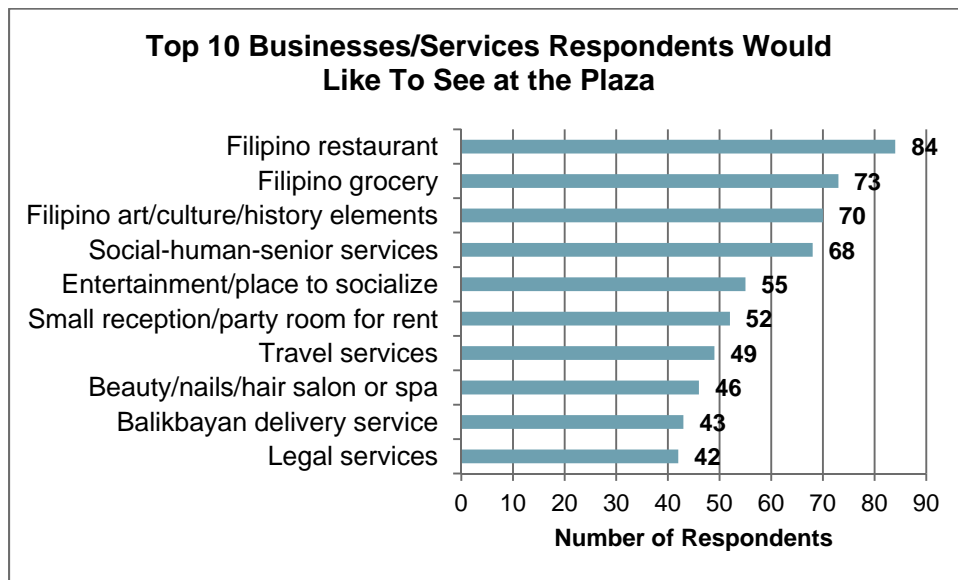
percentages of Filipino residents than the percentage in King County as a whole (3.1%). In Seattle these areas are Rainier Beach (11.71% Filipino), South Beacon Hill / Columbia City (11.2%), North Beacon Hill/Mount Baker (8.94%), and Delridge / Highland Park (6.22%). In King County, these areas are all in the south, including Skyway / Bryn Mawr, Renton, Kent and Algona (ranging from 8.94% to 5.67% Filipino).

For the three areas that the Filipino Chamber of Commerce of the Pacific Northwest is tentatively considering exploring as a possible site for the Plaza, the closest matches in the PSRC’s forecasts are South Beacon Hill / Columbia, Rainier Beach, and SeaTac. The PSRC’s forecasts show that SeaTac currently has by far the largest population and number of jobs of the three areas, and that both are projected to grow substantially by 2040 (22 percent population growth and 73 percent job growth). Of the other two areas, South Beacon Hill / Columbia City currently has a larger population and more jobs than Rainier Beach, but Rainier Beach is projected to gain slightly more in both, with jobs nearly doubling by 2040.

## Survey

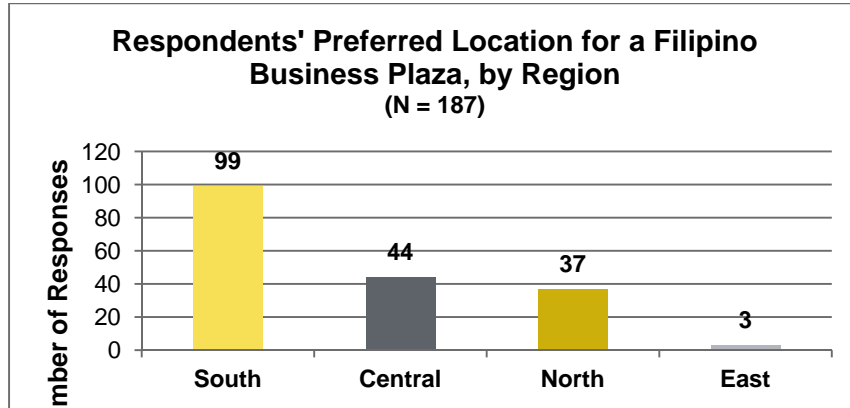
The consultants conducted a survey of Filipino community members in late 2014. The survey consisted of 10 questions asking about current patronage of Filipino businesses, what kinds of businesses and services would be appealing to have at a Filipino Business Plaza, and where to locate the Plaza. There were a total of 100 responses to the survey. Survey respondents indicated they are customers at a wide range of Filipino businesses, with Filipino grocery stores and restaurants frequented most often. More than a quarter of respondents said they visit Filipino grocery stores more than twice a month.

In response to the question about what to offer at the Plaza, more than 70 percent said they would like one or more Filipino restaurants, a Filipino grocery, and Filipino arts and culture elements. Nearly two-thirds (64) suggested having a wide range of offerings, including retail, professional services, a medical clinic, social services and government agencies.



Regarding the Plaza’s location, the largest numbers preferred sites in Beacon Hill or southeast Seattle (47 for near the Filipino Community of Seattle, 38 for Beacon Hill/Columbia City, 34 for Rainier Valley) Thirty-seven suggested North Seattle locations. Seventeen suggested a site in South King County near Seafood City or in Tukwila, Renton or Kent.





## Interviews

The consultants interviewed 10 leading members of the Filipino community, whom the Filipino Chamber committee had identified. There was no consensus among interviewees on a location for the Filipino Business Plaza. Several interviewees suggested that the Plaza’s location might be less important than what it offers, as long as it is readily accessible by highway and transit.

The type of business that most interviewees suggested was one that offers food—a Filipino restaurant, fine dining, grocery, bakery or coffee shop. Interviewees also suggested a variety of

### *Interviewees’ Top Advice:*

- Be clear about the purpose
- Have good access by car and transit
- Have a clear Filipino identity

service businesses. The most frequently mentioned were: financial services, Balikbayan, travel services, and real estate. Some suggested co-locating with housing or social services; others thought it should be focused on business.

Some interviewees

liked the idea of including event space, but there was no consensus on the type or size. Interviewees also suggested having a clear Filipino identity, such as through the kinds of goods and services offered, or through décor or events.

Two other factors that most mentioned were access and parking. The Plaza should be easy to access from I-5, with sufficient parking, and also by transit, and near a stop.

The main advice from several interviewees was to be very clear from the outset on the purpose for a Filipino Business Plaza, and to make sure all participating businesses agree on it.



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## Conclusions

The data on the Filipino population are favorable for a potential customer base for the Filipino Business Plaza because:

- There is a good sized population of Filipinos in the area with potential interest in patronizing a Filipino Business Plaza by cultural affiliation
- The population is young enough that they could be customers for two or more decades
- Most are employed and earn enough to become regular customers.

While there was not a clear consensus on a location, Beacon Hill, the Rainier Valley and near South King County areas had both high interest and are the current residence of the largest number of Filipinos. There was also good advice to make sure the location is easily accessible by major highways and by transit.

There was wide agreement that the Filipino Business Plaza should offer Filipino restaurants and a Filipino grocery, should have a clear Filipino identity, and be oriented toward a Filipino audience in offerings and décor. A range of other businesses and services would be of interest to many. The key will be to decide on the purposes and core audience for the Filipino Business Plaza, and to let those choices guide what is included.



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