



*Reality Check  
Mini Series—Transportation*  
Sponsored by the Sun Prairie  
Youth and Families Commission  
October 12, 2016

# WHAT'S REALITY CHECK?

**REALITY CHECK** is a series of youth-driven, youth-focused after-school events, sponsored by the Sun Prairie Youth and Families Commission.

- It was designed to uncover important topics, create positive accountability, and connect youth through conversation.
- Students in grades 8-12 from Cardinal Heights Upper Middle School (CHUMS), Peace Lutheran, PPA, Sacred Hearts and Sun Prairie High School were invited.
- In response to the overwhelming response to the first event in 2014, the Commission launched a *Mini Series*— a series of smaller work groups to tackle major issues that were brought forward.

# REALITY CHECK—

## *THE MINI SERIES*

- Applications were distributed through school staff.
- The October 2016 work group focused on transportation needs for youth and adults in Sun Prairie.
- Adults from throughout the community attended to observe, and praise students for showing an interest in the direction of our community.
- Attendees enjoyed pizza, soda, and great conversation!

# WHAT HAPPENED?

Students addressed three questions on the issue of transportation in Sun Prairie:

- What is working?
- What's not working?
- What can we do, as students and as a community?

Students wrote/drew on tables as they explored each question. They transferred important points to sticky notes for sharing with the whole group in a circle discussion. Creativity was encouraged!

# WHAT IS WORKING...

Work group members:

- ✓ Enjoy riding in smaller buses.
- ✓ Think our City has good stop sign placement, but agree it's still hard to get out of Walmart.
- ✓ Appreciate the City's good taxi service.
- ✓ Like roundabouts because they are safe and efficient, but feel that drivers need some help understanding what path they should be on.
- ✓ Thank our crossing guards for making us safer, and encourage more adults to do the same.
- ✓ Applaud our good roads and bike routes.

# AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT...

According to teens from the Mini Series work group, Sun Prairie needs:

- More energy efficiency/fewer carbon emissions
- City planning that benefits drivers and pedestrians
- Hiking trails not just for recreation, but to get places
- Mass transportation to get anywhere you want to go (like Starbucks or a Performing Arts Center), including:
  - Accessible taxis and buses
  - A bus or buses just for teens that transports youth to a Recreation Center. Teens could be picked up in specific:
    - Neighborhoods
    - School
    - Library

# OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION: STUDENTS

- ✓ Write letters to the City Council
- ✓ Meet with and lobby local elected officials
- ✓ Hold fundraisers
- ✓ Encourage community to create more places for teens to hang out
- ✓ Ask teachers to relate school lessons to important community issues like transportation
- ✓ Reach out through Student Council and other students
- ✓ Circulate petitions
- ✓ Work to increase community connections
- ✓ Sponsor issue debates among youth

# FINAL THOUGHTS TO SHARE WITH THE ADULTS...

“There are real issues with transportation in Sun Prairie.”

“I have realized there are some major issues in transportation. And that teens can help.”

“It was just an amazing thing to get to hear people’s opinions and get to say what I had inside.”

“We have input.”



## TAKE AWAY

**We are very lucky that in Sun Prairie, our students don't just identify problems— they *drive* solutions.**

# MORE INFORMATION

<http://www.cityofsunprairie.com/420/Youth-Families-Commission>

**Find us on Facebook!**

<https://www.facebook.com/SPYFCommission>

**Have Questions:**

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