

**Imagine 8 Tour
South City Park Notes
October 19, 2011**

Welcome and Update

South City Park Neighbors were welcomed by Bonita Lahey, President, South City Park Neighborhood Association. The group came together to meet to discuss the opportunities for being actively engaged in working with Councilman Albus Brooks, his staff and city agencies. Approximately 70 – 75 neighbors attended the meeting.

Councilman Brooks thanked neighbors for being active participants in their community. He emphasized the purpose of the Imagine 8 Tour and how it relates to the work of Engage 8 to proactively connect active and concerned residents around improving the quality of life not only in their neighborhood, but across all of Denver City Council District 8. Councilman Brooks provided an update on his *100 Day Plan*. He shared the successes that have taken place and the work that remains to be done. He reminded attendees to focus the energy of this session on aspirations and dreams, and not solely focus on what is not working in their community.

The purpose and function of Engage 8 was introduced by Tony Pigford. He covered the mission of this newly created nonprofit organization and reviewed the eight Empowerment Committees that residents will be active participants in. This work will focus on developing innovative and creative solutions that identify community assets and build upon them in order to improve the quality of life for all District 8 residents.

Conversation Circle Responses

Neighbors moved into small groups to discuss five assigned questions. The groups were organized by the Empowerment Committees of Engage 8. Group members shared the following issues, perspectives and suggestions. In addition, participants wrote sticky notes to share related opinions, or thoughts that they wanted to share with Councilman Brooks.

Education

- Connect Seniors as Sage Mentors, tutors and coaches/assistants for students

Land Use/Zoning

- Concerns
 - Light pollution
 - Noise pollution (from dumpsters, trucks and traffic)
 - Safety
 - Traffic flow
 - Alleys/abandoned buildings

- Homeless
 - Drug dealers
- Parking
- Rezoning will result in loss of the neighborhood having a residential feel/space
- View (parking lot vs. landscape or house)
- Construction noise and traffic
- Excited About
 - New business
 - Reduce blight
 - Essential services
- Grocery = anchor for other business

Economic Development

- Were drawn to this community by:
 - Attractive neighborhood (nice houses, City Park, Colfax development – at times)
 - Development potential
 - Access – to bus, downtown
 - Affordable houses
- Community operating at its best:
 - Friendly and cooperative residents
 - Involved neighbors
- Can build upon what is working by:
 - Collaborate on best methods
 - Balance concerns
 - Business working with residents (those that do) vs. those that intrude on sidewalk
 - Business considering courtesy and safety
 - Educate businesses as to other businesses mistakes
 - Empowering business groups
 - How to fill in “dead pockets” of development between vibrant businesses?
 - Avoid bad consequences of development that is not thought through
- Roles to play in creating change in District 8:
 - Thriving businesses
 - Ensure the community is safe
 - Keep the community is clean
 - People want to live here
 - People who don’t live here respect the neighborhood
 - Working with South side of Colfax
 - Businesses want to come here
 - People want to work at those businesses

Community Assets

- Rotation of library closure locations in the city
- Extension of library hours
- Broaden engagement of library in new and different ways

Public Safety

- Walk safely everywhere
- Lost turn lanes on Colorado Boulevard
- Stop signs on 16th Avenue
- Pedestrian crossings on Colfax
- Pedestrian crossings on 17th Avenue
- Better timing of lights on 17th & Colorado
- Jackson Street storm drains (mosquitos from standing water, better cleaning of drains)
- Graffiti removal (residents make a call)
- Stop sign visibility (trim trees around them)
- Sign spinners gotta go
- Speed bumps
- Sidewalk safety/maintenance

Connecting Diverse Communities

- Park
- Block parties
- Games and activities that will help us get to know each other
- Every committee connecting

Youth Advisory

- East High Engagement
- Intergenerational quilting
- Projects
- Community Service

Environmental Sustainability

- Were drawn to this community by:
 - Mature landscaping
 - Able to bike, walk and bus
 - City Park
 - Multicultural destinations
 - Colfax corridor
- Community operating at its best:
 - Inclusiveness
 - Diversity (people, businesses, building types)
 - Knowing neighbors

- “Island neighborhood”
- Garden Tours
- Neighborhood gatherings
- Can build upon what is working by:
 - Larger block party
 - Incorporate Pinnacle residents
 - Utilize South City Park Neighborhood Association website
 - Email blasts
 - Spring alley clean-up
 - Big Belly Drum – recycle = less noise
 - Composting services
 - Colfax Trolley
- Roles to play in creating change in District 8:
 - Continued neighborhood involvement
 - Lead teams
 - Stay aware of issues

Sticky Notes from Question 4

- Pedestrian safety – walk and leave the cars behind
 - Safe crossing on 17th and Colfax**
 - Speed bumps
 - Even sidewalks
 - Bicycle lanes
 - Reroute heavy traffic
- New grocery store****
- Continue to clean up south end of Adams/Cook alley (trash and graffiti)
- Street drains that work
- People will feel safe on the streets day or evening
- Diverse mix of businesses to allow residents to shop locally
- Community need business that draw our neighbors and others to enjoy the neighborhood
- Rec Center
- Less air and noise pollution**
 - Less cars on the street for parking
- Buses running on schedule
- NO movies in City Park. Keep the park totally free
- More neighbor involvement**
 - Beautification
 - Neighborhood Watch
 - Block parties*
 - Neighborhood-wide
 - Yard sale
 - Environmental clean-up*
 - High participation in neighborhood association*
- Less geese

- Active listening
- Connections with other RNOs
- Property values will rise
- Use of current facilities (library, Museum, Zoo, etc.)

Next Steps

Councilman Brooks thanked neighbors for taking the time to be active, concerned and engaged community members. He shared how this was the first of nine meetings that will be taking place throughout Denver City Council District 8 and that the input from these sessions will inform the work that he and his staff do to represent them at the City and to inform, shape and design the work of Engage 8.