



Meeting Details

Meeting Name:	East Steering Committee
Date/Time:	Wednesday, August 23, 2017, 6-8 PM
Location:	Art Gym Denver, 1460 Leyden Street

Attendees

Steering Committee Members

Merritt Pullam, Chair; Tom Fesing; Bridget Galati; Marti Holmes; Kyaw Lin Oo; Tracey MacDermott; Monica Martinez; Tom Meyer; Hilarie Portell; Wende Reoch; Roy Allen (alternate for Bellevue-Hale Neighborhood Association)

Denver Elected Officials & Staff

Councilman Christopher Herndon; Lucas Palmisano (Office of Councilwoman Susman)

Denver Staff

Curt Upton; Jason Morrison; Josh Palmeri; Ella Stueve; Elizabeth Weigle; David Gaspers; Laura Brudzynski; Julie Stern; Ashlee Grace; Michael Anderson

Other Presenters

Beth Vogelsang (OV Consulting)

Meeting Summary

1. **Welcome** – Merritt Pullam welcomed the steering committee members, introduced his role as chair, and walked the committee through the meeting agenda.
2. **Approval of July 26 Meeting Summary** – Merritt Pullam asked whether there were any comments on the July 26 meeting summary. No comments were raised and members approved the summary for posting on the website.
3. **Overview of Important City Projects** – Various representatives from departments within the City and County of Denver were asked to come speak about concurring planning efforts occurring throughout the City and specific to this planning area. The representatives spoke for roughly 5-10 minutes which was followed by a brief Q&A session with the steering committee.
 - Blueprint Denver (David Gaspers – Community Planning and Development)
 - Question: Are the five September workshops identical to each other? Will the September 21 workshop cover all of the East Colfax area?



-Answer: The workshops will have the same content, but the breakout groups will have maps that focus on the areas local to the workshop location. The September 21 workshop will cover all of the East Colfax area.

- Comprehensive Housing Plan Update (Laura Brudzynski – Office of Economic Development (OED))
 - Question: What is meant by “other affordability investments” in the plan outline?
 - Answer: Affordability investments include more than production/preservation of housing, such as programs that provide financial counseling.
 - Question: Please share more information on the sites the City has recently acquired and/or looking to acquire.
 - Answer: The City acquired 7900 East Colfax with the goal of a development that includes affordable housing and community-serving retail or other uses. The City Council is also considering the purchasing 8315 East Colfax with the intent of achieving similar affordability and community-serving goals.
 - Question: What other efforts does OED work on?
 - Answer: OED also works on business development and recruitment, workforce services, food access, and other economic development efforts.
 - Question: Is the City considering repurposing the motels along East Colfax for housing?
 - Answer: This is an idea that has been raised and OED is exploring it.
 - Question: Will OED return to the Steering Committee after adoption of the Comprehensive Housing Plan to share the final recommendations?
 - Answer: We will share the draft and adopted plan with the committee and are open to returning for another meeting if desired.
 - Green Infrastructure Implementation Strategy and Upper Montclair Basin Stormwater Study (Ashlee Grace and Michael Anderson – Public Works; Beth Vogelsang – OV Consulting)
 - No questions
 - Merritt Pullam requested a presentation on the Bus Rapid Transit project at a future steering committee meeting. He asked members to let him know if there any other concurrent efforts that they would like a briefing on.
4. **Steering Committee Time and Date** – Merritt Pullam and Curt Upton asked the steering committee for feedback on the current date/time of the steering committee meetings.
- The committee did not decide on a date. Curt Upton will follow-up with a Doodle Poll.
 - Try to avoid having the meeting the same week as the ongoing meetings for the Upper Montclair Basin Stormwater Study and the Quebec improvements if possible.



5. **Online Survey Discussion.** Curt Upton gave a brief update on the Online Survey and asked members for suggestions for increasing participation.
 - Over 880 respondents and over 1300 comments have been placed on the map to-date.
 - The survey will stay open until at least the end of September. The committee will decide at the September meeting if the survey should stay open longer, based on a review of the preliminary results. Once a deadline is decided, this should be widely publicized.
 - Members suggested forwarding to Denver Public Schools and reaching out to area churches and non-profits. It's also important to use other engagement methods to reach stakeholders who may not participate in the online survey.
6. **Targeted Community Engagement Activities and Discussion.** Curt Upton introduced two in-person engagement activities that will be used in the next few months. The activities are designed to be used for several audiences, events and meetings, and the input will be compared with the online survey input. The committee participated in the activities and provided feedback.
 - **Keypad Polling.** Elizabeth Weigle led a brief polling activity which had the steering committee members answer some general questions about the planning area. The exercise will be used in conjunction with the mapping exercise at upcoming meetings, and the results will be tabulated and analyzed together with the Online Survey input.
 - **Mapping Exercise.** The staff team led a 20-minute mapping exercise which asked steering committee members to place a dot on areas that they considered to be: 1) likes, 2) dislikes, and 3) big ideas in the planning area. The dots were color-coded and a sticky note was provided to record and document the feedback. Members then reported out to the larger group. Key ideas noted in the report out include:
 - Improve mobility on East Colfax, including support for BRT and Quebec improvements
 - Revitalize East Colfax with walkable retail
 - More parks, less asphalt
 - Concern that 16th Ave and other parallel streets will get more congested with BRT
 - Need affordable housing
 - Revitalize/redevelop motels with high-density housing and affordable housing
 - Add green space (even on Colfax) to provide plazas and mitigate flooding
 - Balance the BRT with a Main Street vision for Colfax
 1. Walkable, neighborhood-serving businesses
 2. Integrate creative stormwater infrastructure with BRT improvements
 - Leverage transit investment to create a true transit village
 1. Embrace density and affordability to create a mixed-income community
 - Collaborate with City of Aurora on both the BRT and neglected areas near Yosemite and Colfax
 - Anchor the community with vibrant/diverse schools



- Embrace a future with less cars; convert 13th or 14th Avenues into multi-use, pedestrian-focused trail (closed to vehicles)
- **Intercept Exercise.** Elizabeth Weigle introduced a 30-second exercise intended to be used at events. The exercise asks participants to choose three priority issues from a list of topics.
- **Discussion.** Members were generally in favor of the exercises. Feedback included:
 - Provide examples for the mapping exercise so that the questions aren't as abstract.
 - Consider integrating the mapping exercise into the intercept exercise (maybe one dot per person)
 - Consider providing tablets at the intercept exercise so that participants may take the full survey if they'd like
 - Consider translating the intercept exercise as this may be easier for some participants than the full survey
 - Change the wording for "Business Quality" on the intercept exercise to be more clear that this refers to retail mix/options
 - Members suggested several upcoming meetings and events where the mapping and/or intercept exercise could be deployed