

Far Northeast Area Plan Steering Committee Meeting #15



Date and Time: Wednesday, September 26, 2018, 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.
Location: Green Valley Ranch Rec Center

Attendees

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS (PRESENT)

Charlie Foster	Tim Camarillo
Frank Tagader	Donna Garnett
John Foote	Rick Wells
Susan Stanton	Loretta Pineda
Blanca Madrid	Angie Rivera-Malpiede
Rose Thomas	Terry Liggins

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS (ABSENT)

Brian Smith	LaToya Petty
Earleen Brown	Katie McKenna
Turner Wyatt	Rachel Marion
Shelli Brown	Ann White
Rich Barrows	

ELECTED OFFICIALS/COUNCIL DISTRICT AIDES

Chris Herndon, District 8	Stacie Gilmore, District 11
	Dondre Smallwood, District 11

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT STAFF

Eugene Howard	Courtland Hyser
Valerie Herrera	Sarah Showalter

VISITORS/GUESTS

Gretchen Armijo, DDPHE	Gloria Bonds
Samantha Suter, MIG	Rylie Clark
Dana Hoffman, PW	Aleya Billingsly
John Fair	Conrad Olmedo
Alonyia Trimble	Jamar Holmes

Meeting Summary

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Co-Chair John Foote welcomed the attendees and led the meeting.

2. MEETING NOTES APPROVAL

The July 25, 2018 meeting notes were reviewed and approved. There were no corrections.

3. BLUEPRINT DENVER OVERVIEW

Sarah Showalter from Denver Community Planning and Development provided an overview of the Denver right planning process and the public review draft of Blueprint Denver. Public comment on the draft plans will be open through October 31st, and steering committee members are strongly encouraged to participate and distribute this opportunity to their organizations and social networks. The City Council adoption process is currently scheduled for February, 2019.

Blueprint Denver is a land use and transportation plan for growing an inclusive city:

- Creating complete neighborhoods and networks
 - Complete neighborhoods:
 - Land use and built form
 - Mobility
 - Quality of Life Infrastructure
 - Complete networks:
 - Pedestrians
 - Bicycles
 - Transit
 - Auto and goods movement
- Measured, common-sense approach to growth
 - Guide most growth to:
 - Regional centers
 - Community centers and corridors
 - High intensity residential areas
- Consideration of social equity factors to tailor solutions by neighborhood
 - Access to opportunity:
 - Creating more equitable access to quality of life amenities, health, and education
 - Vulnerability to displacement:
 - Stabilizing residents and businesses who are vulnerable to involuntary displacement due to increasing property values and rents
 - Housing and jobs diversity:
 - Providing a better and more inclusive range of housing and employment options in all neighborhoods

4. FAR NORTHEAST PLAN ORGANIZATION AND SCHEDULE

Samantha Suter from MIG consulting presented an overview of the organizational structure of the Far Northeast Area Plan that is currently being drafted. The main components are as follows:

- a. Vision Elements- These describe the vision for the future using the six vision statements that were drafted by the steering committee last year
- b. Equity in Planning- This section is a deeper dive into the three social equity factors from Blueprint Denver. The Far Northeast Area Plan will identify solutions for inequities that tailored to each neighborhood.
- c. Framework Plan- Recommendations in this section apply to the entire Far Northeast planning area and address a wide range of topics:
 - Land use and built form
 - Mobility
 - Quality of life infrastructure
 - Economic development
- d. Neighborhood Chapters- Each neighborhood within the planning area will also get its own chapter that will address neighborhood-specific issues and opportunity areas
 - Montbello
 - Green Valley Ranch
 - Gateway/DEN
- e. Implementation- The implementation chapter will prioritize recommendations and identify timelines and responsible entities.

Courtland Hyser presented the timeline for finishing the Far Northeast Area Plan. Because small area plans update Blueprint Denver, the specific schedule for completing the Far Northeast Plan is dependent upon the completion of Blueprint Denver.

- a. October- Plan Drafting
- b. November- Plan Drafting, Planning Board Update
- c. December- Plan Drafting, Public Comment Period Opens, No Steering Committee Meeting
- d. January- Public Meeting #5, Public Comment Period Closes
- e. February- Revisions & Final Draft, Denveright Completed, Final Steering Committee Meeting
- f. March- Planning Board Public Hearing, City Council Committee (LUTI)
- g. April- City Council Public Hearing

5. RESULTS FROM ONLINE SURVEY #4

Courtland Hyser and Eugene Howard summarized the results from online survey #4, which replicated the exercises from the public meeting that was held on July 12, 2018. In total, 303 people completed the survey, providing 540 comments and placing 631 locational pins.

Public Meeting Number 4 and Online Survey Demographics

Public Meeting #4		Online Survey Respondents	
Black/ African American	53%	Black/ African American	17%
White	26%	White	62%
Hispanic/Latino	12%	Hispanic/Latino	18%
Other	6%	Other	16%
Asian, Native Hawaiian	2%	Asian, Native Hawaiian	4%
Native American	2%	Native American	1%

Public Meeting Number 4 and Online Survey Respondent by Age

Public Meeting #4			Online Survey Respondents		
0 - 18	0%		0 - 18	0%	
18 - 33	12%		18 - 33	30%	
34 - 49	29%		34 - 49	41%	
50 - 64	39%		50 - 64	20%	
65 and Older	20%		65 and Older	9%	

For future Growth and Development Scenarios, respondents stated they would like to see:

- Better, High Quality Retail and Commercial Development and Services
- Local Restaurants and Grocery Store options (and no chains or fast-food restaurants)
- Community Oriented Growth and Local Businesses
- Targeted Growth Near Green Valley Ranch Town Center, Northern Tower Road and along Peoria Street

On the topic of Fresh Food and Food Access, respondents expressed:

- Overwhelming support for healthy grocery stores and food options.
 - “More grocery stores is the top priority.”
- Some concern with limiting drive-thrus even for healthy options
 - “They are convenient for parents”
- Concerns with Goal 3: Local Food Production
 - Lower priority than increasing food retail, and limits on fast food
 - Difficulties include small lots, prohibitions on front yard gardens, and fruit trees attracting pests
- General support for improving transit access to food, particularly bike lanes. That said, feedback is mixed on bike-sharing/scooter-sharing programs.
- Support for free/affordable classes in schools or community centers on healthy eating, composting, and gardening techniques.

Regarding Parks and Recreation, respondents stated:

- Support for adding trees and greenspace
 - Some concern about wasted resources on trees that don’t survive.
 - Requests for community education and sustainable landscaping.
- Support for new parks
 - Requests for improved maintenance on new and existing parks.
 - Requests for additional recreation options (e.g. pools) within the area
- Support for better transit to parks, particularly safe trails and biking options
- Requests for more accessible programs for kids/teens and working adults (evening hours)
- Respondents are mixed on public art
 - Some say yes, others would prefer not to use limited resources to pay for art

On the topic of Affordable Housing, there was:

- Support for mixed income housing and affordable housing for elders, people with disabilities, and single parents

- Concern that affordable housing is being concentrated in this area and not being distributed equitably across the city
- Concern that density is already high
 - Desire to ensure increases in density are supported with plans for mitigating traffic and crime
- Suggestions to incentivize residents to “keep up” yards and comply with neighborhood regulations
- Support for tiny home communities, multi-generational housing and other innovative affordable housing ideas

When Asked about various modes of transportation, the survey respondents had the following thoughts to share:

Transit:

- Strong support for improved transit in the area
- Concern regarding congestion with recommendations that would add transit on 56th
- Requests for free structured parking at train stations
- Better connections to train stations

Roadways and Intersections:

- Residents highlighted many intersections for stoplights and turn lanes
- Requests for added lanes on congested streets like Green Valley Ranch Boulevard and 56th Avenue
- Congestion on 56th was mentioned repeatedly as a specific concern

Bicycle Infrastructure elicited the following comments:

- Requests for better bike connections to the rest of the city
- Lots of general support for bike lane improvements
- Requests for more protected bike lanes and off-street trails (safer for kids/ families)

Respondents shared the following regarding pedestrian improvements:

- Requests for better walking connections throughout the planning area
- Support for added walking paths and sidewalks
- Requests for safer walking conditions (better lighting, traffic buffers, safer routes to school, recreation centers and libraries)
- Improvements to wayfinding and signage
- Improvements at mid-block crossings and intersections
- Street calming measures to combat speeding and drag-racing

When questioned about street calming measures, like the removal of excess roadway capacity, respondents shared:

- While most respondents support reclaiming lanes along the streets with open channels (70%), those that do not support reclamation are very concerned about whether this would be a good use of city resources.
- Lots of concern about whether reducing a lane would result in less speeding

- Many are worried lane reclamation will only result in more congestion
- Many would like to see traffic calming through different measures (speed bumps, traffic lights) and resources spent on transit improvements instead
- Respondents in support of lane reclamation cited beautification, the introduction of additional greenery and trees that improve the environment and the potential for added bike and pedestrian amenities

The meeting closed with a discussion of the remaining 2018 meeting schedule. The next meetings will take place in October and November. There will not be a December meeting to allow for holiday commitments. The Steering Committee was asked to consider another November pot-luck to celebrate everyone's hard work and contributions for the year. The project team will inform the committee if there will be need to meet in January and February, and were asked to place "holds" on their calendars for those two months in 2019, and to plan to come support the planning process at Planning Board and City Council when the Far Northeast Plan is up for adoption.

6. UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

- a. Next Steering Committee Meeting
Thursday October 25th, 6:00pm-7:30pm
Montbello Rec Center Community Room
- b. Planning Board Update
Thursday November 14th, 3:00pm
City & County Building, 1437 Bannock St. Room #389
- c. November Steering Committee Meeting & Pot-Luck!
Wednesday, November 28, 2018, 6:00pm-7:30pm
Green Valley Ranch Recreation Center (not the GVR Library)
- d. No December Steering Committee Meeting