

MEMORANDUM

To: Mike Ramsey and Scott Robinson, City of Denver
From: Root Policy Research
Re: July 23rd event engagement summary
Date: Wednesday, July 27, 2022

Community event overview

Root Policy Research held a Near Southeast Area plan community event on Saturday, July 23rd in Frances Weisbert Jacobs Park from 10:30am – 2:30pm. The purpose of the event was to engage with renters and get their feedback on the plan’s preliminary recommendations, as well as hear their ideas and perspectives on how they would like to see the area develop over the next 10-20 years.

There were two planned activities for the event. For the first activity, Root Policy staff talked through the preliminary recommendations and opportunities (development opportunities, missing middle housing opportunities, and industrial opportunities) presented at the most recent community workshops. Once the concepts and tradeoffs were discussed, participants were instructed to place dots on the opportunities that were most appealing/favorable to them. The second activity had participants write an idea, need, etc. on a sticky note and place it on a specific location on a 36” x 36” map of the planning area.

Overall, Root Policy engaged with approximately 25-30 individuals. The people that participated were diverse — both racially/ethnically and age wise. Below is a summary of the feedback that was gathered from participants.

Feedback on preliminary recommendations

Overall, participants preferred opportunities 2 and 3 of the development opportunities section. One participant advocated for opportunity 2 because they felt “gentle growth” would most likely occur. Other participants liked opportunity 3 because they felt it could create more local jobs and they liked concentrating growth in neighborhood hubs.

- Opportunity 1 | Continue concentrating growth at Colorado Station: **2 votes**
- Opportunity 2 | Focus growth along corridors and at key intersections: **9 votes**
- Opportunity 3 | Focus growth at regional, community, and local centers: **7 votes**

Preferences among the missing middle housing opportunities were spread pretty evenly. One person advocated for opportunity 4, noting that the City should prioritize middle class affordable living. They felt that allowing duplexes would be the best way to do this. Another person felt that adding duplexes in the planning area was the best option, saying “apartments are fine but they can get crowded.”

- Opportunity 4 | Allow duplexes in residential areas: **6 votes**
- Opportunity 5 | Transition from centers to corridors to residential areas: **6 votes**
- Opportunity 6 | Allow triplexes and townhouses along larger streets: **5 votes**

Among the industrial opportunities, participants overwhelmingly supported opportunity 7. One person noted they would love to see arts and crafts festivals in this space. Another participant suggested that the City get ideas from the community on what they would like to see at this location. A different participant who voted for opportunity 7 suggested prioritizing community gathering space for the area. One participant who voted for opportunity 9 did so because they did not want to see any jobs leave the area.

- Opportunity 7 | Innovation/flex place designation: **10 votes**
- Opportunity 8 | Value Manufacturing and Innovation/Flex: **3 votes**
- Opportunity 9 | Value Manufacturing and Local Center: **5 votes**

Participants were also asked to identify specific locations in the planning area where they wanted to see new development, improvements, etc. Information provided by participants included:

- One person noted that there is an empty lot at the northwest corner of Monaco and Evans — they suggested to “put something interesting” on the lot.
- Two participants wanted to see more affordable housing and apartments developed in the Washington Virginia Vale neighborhood. Both participants also articulated a desire for “landlords to be better regulated” — reasons they articulated for this suggestion included major rent increases and lack of responsiveness from landlords on concerns they brought to their attention.

- One participant suggested building a splash pad for children in Garland Park.
- Another participant wanted to see more affordable housing and green areas/parks in the area near Monaco and Florida.
- Another participant articulated a need for more tree cover on new bicycle paths in the planning area.

Other community feedback

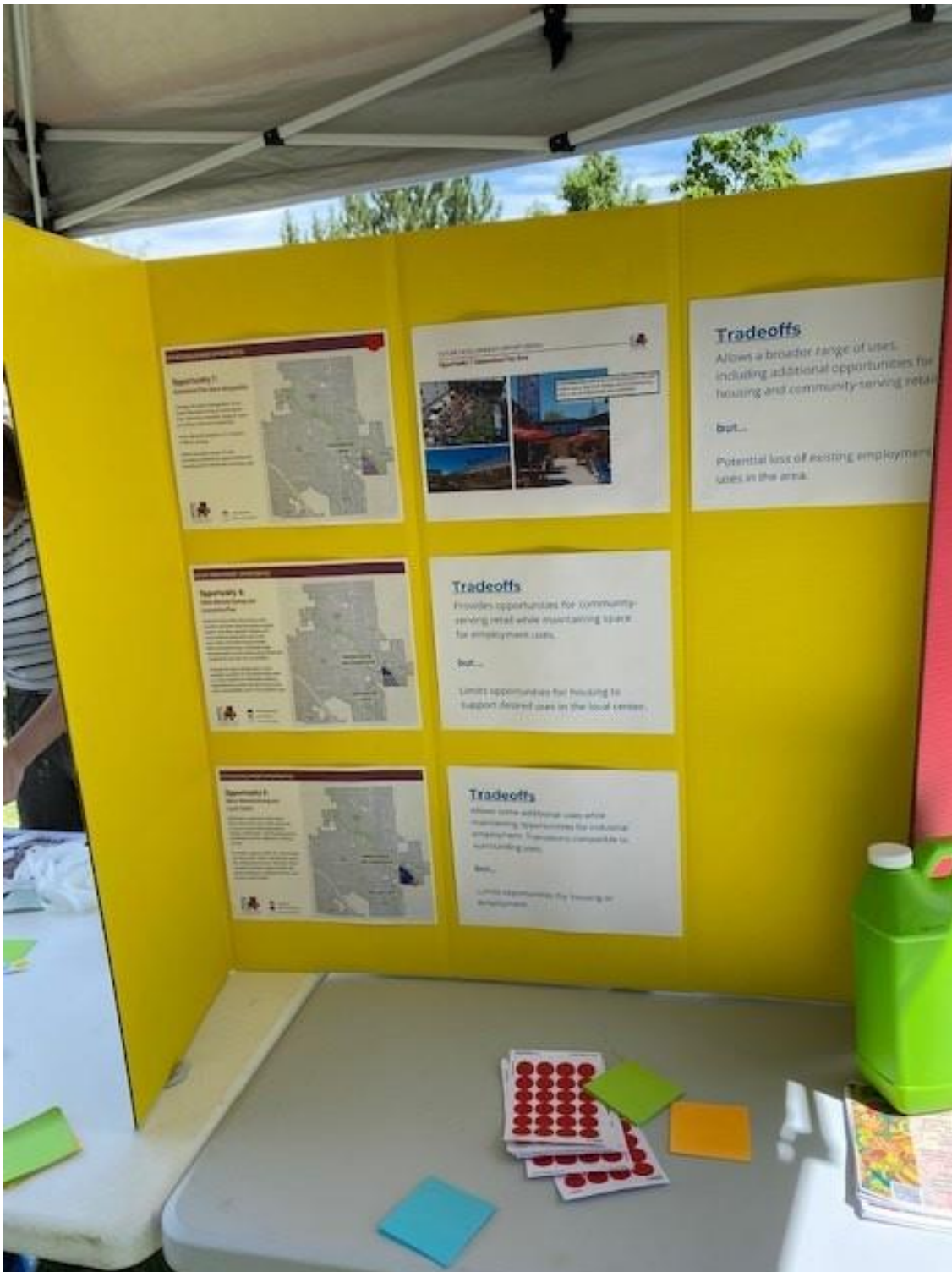
One person wanted a greater police presence around Jacobs Park — they felt that there has been an increase in people who are unhoused living in RVs and trucks parked around the park. They added that because there's not a police presence, a lot of illicit activities take place. They do not feel safe walking around the park early in the morning or late at night. They added that transit around the park and neighborhood is pretty good – the bus comes every 15-20 minutes. Security and safety concerns around the park was this person's main feedback for the area.

Other general comments from participants included:

- More parks, recreational opportunities, activities, and places for kids to go. A couple people indicated they would like to see a recreational or community center built in Jacobs Park or in the area.
- Prioritization for community gathering and connecting space. There are a lot of renters in the area and nowhere for them to come together and get to know each other outside of their individual complexes.
- More affordable housing options, especially rentals that cost less than \$1,000/bedroom and which accommodate lower wage workers.
- A homeless shelter should be located somewhere in the planning area.
- More tree cover throughout the planning area.







Opportunity 1
Develop the area adjacent to the existing retail center.



Provides opportunities for community-serving retail while maintaining space for employment uses.

Tradeoffs
Allows a broader range of uses, including additional opportunities for housing and community-serving retail.

but...

Potential loss of existing employment uses in the area.

Opportunity 2
Develop the area adjacent to the existing retail center.



Provides opportunities for community-serving retail while maintaining space for employment uses.

Tradeoffs
Provides opportunities for community-serving retail while maintaining space for employment uses.

but...

Limits opportunities for housing to support desired uses in the local center.

Opportunity 3
Develop the area adjacent to the existing retail center.



Provides opportunities for community-serving retail while maintaining space for employment uses.

Tradeoffs
Allows some additional uses while maintaining opportunities for industrial employment. Transitions compatible to surrounding uses.

but...

Limits opportunities for housing or employment.





