

Jerome Avenue Study

Summer 2016 Public Engagement Feedback



6/16 -
8/16

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Overview

Over the summer of 2016, the Department of City Planning engaged with members of the public at six day-long of community events. These events were spread throughout the corridor and included Boogie on the Boulevard, Burnside Summer Walks, a series of topic specific Councilmember roundtables, and a Councilmember Summer in the Park day. The events provided DCP ample opportunity to get out into the community and continue to engage with community stakeholders, many of whom were new participants.

The hallmark exercise at the events was a customized tool developed at City Planning called “Build Your Neighborhood”. The objective of the exercise was to better understand neighborhood and community priorities in planning elements for the Jerome Avenue Neighborhood Study area. The planning elements, described in detail on the next page, ranged from services and programs such as increased opportunities for ESL training and support for local businesses, to capital improvements like planting more street trees and constructing affordable housing. These planning elements were based on the goals and strategies the community developed with DCP through events during the previous year.

The exercise was designed to task individuals with making choices that reflected what was most important to them. To do so, each planning element was assigned a different value (1-5), loosely reflecting the proportional real cost to the city to provide that element. Participants were provided 10 tokens that they then traded in for the elements of their choosing, provided they did not exceed their total of 10 tokens. In this exercise, participants operated with limited resources to select things for their neighborhood that they valued the most.

In total, 266 individuals participated in the exercise, each selecting from 20 elements to prioritize in the plan.

More than any other planning element, 138 participants selected Fresh Food Markets as a priority for their neighborhood. Some individuals went as far as to select this item two or three times, totaling the “purchases” of this element at 156. With that said, this item was among the lowest cost, valued at a single token.

More costly items, like creating low-income affordable housing and affordable housing (each with different associated costs) were chosen less often, but at a much higher cost. These elements represented a much higher total of tokens spent. Providing low-income affordable housing, at a value of 5 tokens per purchase, chosen 78 times, came out to 390 total tokens. Affordable housing, at a value of 3 tokens per purchase and chosen 99 times, came out to 297 total tokens.

Other popular choices indicated the need to address open space concerns, with “Improve Neighborhood Parks” receiving 94 total votes and “More Street Trees” receiving 90 total votes. The need to embrace and foster culture was also noted, as 116 votes were logged for “Support Arts & Culture”. Finally, economic development was strongly endorsed as a priority as “Job & Career Training”, “Support Business Startup and Growth” and “Support Existing Businesses” received 99, 35 and 27 votes, respectively.

While the data collected throughout the events serve a specific purpose, the value in the exercise did not end at the participant’s submission. With each submission came a conversation reflecting a very specific perspective, often focused around a very specific place. This exercise was ultimately able to touch many individuals who had no previous exposure to the planning process and encourage their continued participation, as well as reengage with folks that have been active throughout the process to-date.

Essentially, these summer events helped to communicate a number of critical points:

- **The Jerome Avenue Neighborhood Study is about more than zoning!;**
- **The City has finite resources, and identifying priorities is critical as the process moves forward;**
- **There are many different opinions on plan elements;**
- **The process is on-going & fluid, and;**
- **Public participation is essential to the success of the study & can take many forms.**



Map of Summer Community Events Participated In by the Department of City Planning in Support of the Jerome Avenue Neighborhood Study

Exercise Elements & Explanations

Improve Neighborhood Parks:

Prioritize the maintenance and recreational opportunities of existing neighborhood parks and open spaces

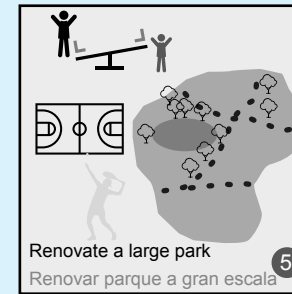


More Street Trees:

Prioritize the maintenance of existing and planting of new street trees along major corridors in the study area.

Renovate a Large Park:

Provide sustainable, high-quality, affordable housing with a range of options for residents at all income levels (extremely low-income, very low-income, low-income and moderate-income).



Revitalize Retail Corridors:

Prioritize the development of retail corridors in the study area by connecting businesses with services and grant opportunities, as well as invest in healthy streetscapes including lighting, greenery and other amenities.

Revitalize Under the Elevated:

Prioritize investments in public spaces underneath the elevated train along Jerome and River Avenues.



Improve Step Streets:

Provide sustainable, high-quality, affordable housing with a range of options for residents at all income levels (extremely low-income, very low-income, low-income and moderate-income).

Support Business Startup & Growth:

Provide opportunities for new businesses and entrepreneurs to access city services and programs to help clear the hurdles associated with starting and growing a business.

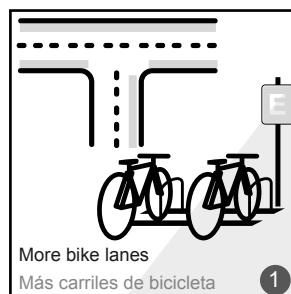


Create Community Space:

Prioritize the creation, preservation and expansion of community spaces such as community centers.

More Bike Lanes

Prioritize the addition of accessible and safe bike lanes along strategic streets throughout the study area connecting local resources, institutions and job centers

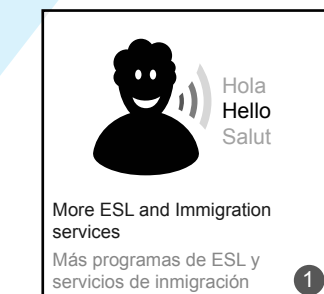


Improve Station Access

Prioritize the improvement of the MTA subway stations, elevated rail stations, and bus stops to focus on accessibility, safety and comfort throughout the study area.

Support Auto Businesses & Workers:

Prioritize finding creative solutions to ensure businesses in the automotive sector have access to all appropriate city services and programs to help them thrive in a competitive marketplace.



More ESL & Immigration Services:

Prioritize specific training and service programs on the large and diverse immigrant population throughout the study area.

Create Low-Income Affordable Housing

Provide sustainable, high-quality, affordable housing with a range of options for residents at income levels considered to be extremely low, and low.



Create Affordable Housing:

Provide sustainable, high-quality, affordable housing with a range of options for residents at all income levels considered to be moderate.

Protect Tenants:

Prioritize the basic rights of tenants ensuring all renters have access to safe and adequate housing stock, free from landlord harassment



Job & Career Training:

Ensure that all interested individuals have access to training opportunities in a diversity of fields.

Fresh Food Markets:

Provide opportunities, remove barriers and otherwise encourage spaces that provide fresh foods; from street vendors to local bodegas to larger grocery stores.

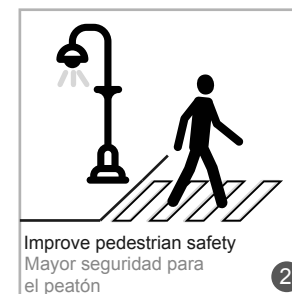


Support Arts & Culture:

Prioritize the support of, and access to, arts and culture programming and provide opportunities for arts uses to occupy space in new developments.

Improve Pedestrian Safety:

Design and invest in streets and sidewalks that prioritize people and provide equal access to all users.

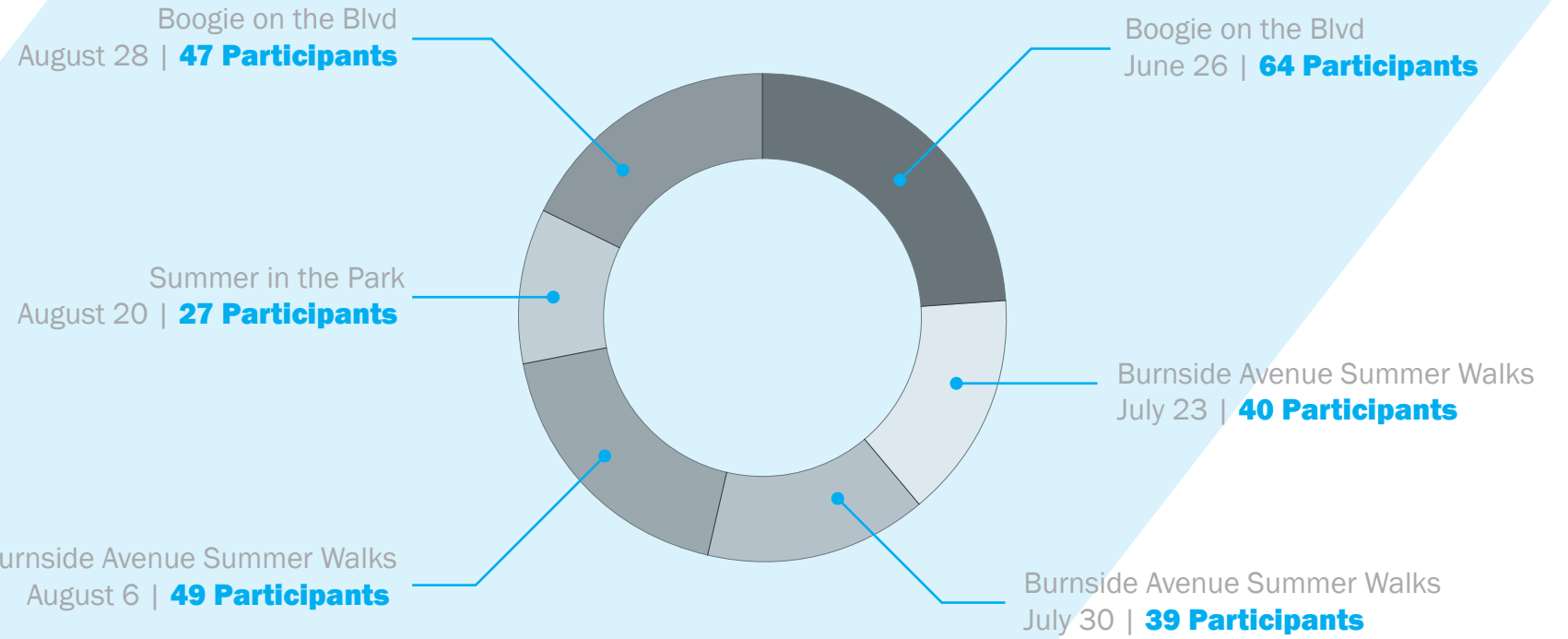


Support Existing Businesses:

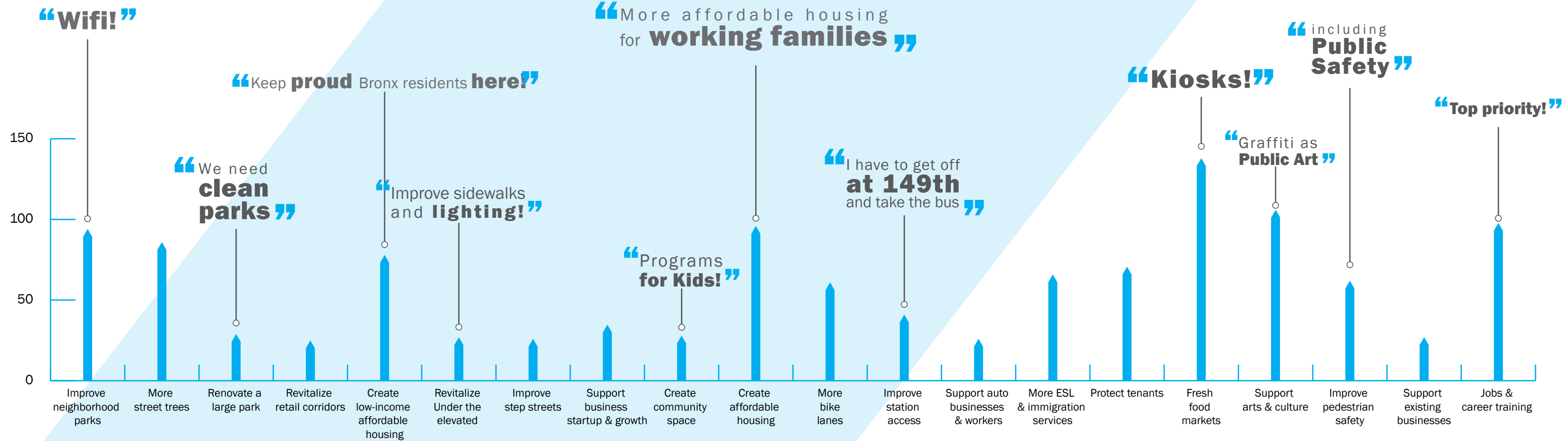
Promote and tailor existing programs to best meet the needs of existing businesses as change is being planned for along the corridor.

Data Feedback

- Over **250 individuals** participated
- at **6 different events** held in
- **3 different** Community Boards



Total Votes per Plan Element



Summer Events

Grand Concourse, Burnside Ave., Devoe Park | 6.16 - 8.16

