

Community & Supportive Services Plan

Perry Rose LLC

South Lincoln Redevelopment Master Plan Final Report

Introduction

Recommendations/
Overview



COMMUNITY & SUPPORTIVE SERVICE PLAN

INTRODUCTION

In conjunction with the South Lincoln/10th and Osage planning process led by Mithun, DHA retained Perry Rose LLC to assist in identifying and recommending supportive services, economic development opportunities, and community amenities for the proposed development. The recommendations are designed to support economic advancement and to improve the quality of life of both existing South Lincoln residents and potential new residents, and to support the creation of a vibrant neighborhood in which people from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds wish to live and work. While the physical planning effort focused on the DHA and City owned parcels, the supportive services, economic development and community amenities research explored the broader La Alma neighborhood and beyond.

In preparing the findings and recommendations presented in this report, Perry Rose LLC reviewed demographic information, met with community stakeholders, and solicited feedback from members of the South Lincoln Steering Committee and attendees at South Lincoln redevelopment community meetings.

Demographic information contained in this report is based on three sources: 1) a survey of 233 adult South Lincoln residents conducted by DHA Resident Services in the spring of 2009 (the "DHA Survey"); 2) a survey of 82 South Lincoln households conducted in the summer of 2009 by Laurie Walker, a PhD candidate at the University of Denver Graduate School of Social Work (the "Walker Survey"); and 3) a DHA Resident Services demographics

report dated March 2009. Perry Rose LLC supplemented this demographic data with information from interviews held during the spring and summer of 2009 with DHA staff, city staff, community organizers, community-based organizations, educators and others with firsthand knowledge of the South Lincoln/La Alma community and the needs of its residents.

Throughout the public planning process, Perry Rose presented preliminary findings and recommendations to the South Lincoln Steering Committee and to attendees at South Lincoln redevelopment community meetings. Findings and recommendations presented in their report have been further refined to reflect feedback provided by DHA staff, residents and other attendees at community meetings.

Our research confirmed that La Alma is a unique neighborhood with a rich cultural heritage, and with extraordinary proximity to a broad array of social services and neighborhood amenities. Unfortunately, many existing residents are not fully benefiting from the wealth of nearby resources, either because they are not aware of all of the resources available to them or because they feel uncomfortable venturing beyond their immediate vicinity to access resources (particularly institutional resources) in the broader community.

This finding indicates that physical redevelopment and the provision of services alone will be insufficient to support existing residents' economic advancement

and improved quality of life. DHA and its Community Supportive Service partners will need to assist residents in four key areas:

- 1) working through personal challenges and creating individual goals;
- 2) educating residents about available opportunities;
- 3) proactively referring each resident to relevant services; and
- 4) tailoring services to address residents' current abilities and comfort level.

Without this additional support, residents will continue to lack information about available resources and will lack the capacity to take full advantage of many of the more main stream resources that exist within the broader community.

The research found that South Lincoln residents have a vested interest in the neighborhood, and are ready for positive change and for the redevelopment into a mixed income neighborhood. Ninety-one percent (91%) of Walker Survey participants agreed or strongly agreed that redevelopment of South Lincoln is necessary, and eighty-six percent (86%) agreed or strongly agreed that they want their neighborhood to change. Ninety-seven (97%) of Walker Survey participants agreed or strongly agreed that they are ready to live in a mixed income neighborhood, with fifty-three (53%) of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that "residents with lower incomes will benefit from living near residents with higher incomes." Many residents not only are excited about positive change, but want to be catalysts in creating it. Seventy-five (75%)

of Walker Survey respondents affirmed that they would like to help their neighborhood change. The strong desire for positive change and the willingness to participate in bringing change about reflects residents' high level of commitment to La Alma. Indeed, eighty-two (82%) of Walker Survey participants indicated an interest in staying in the neighborhood if it is redeveloped.

Notwithstanding the desire for positive change, residents and existing community based organizations are concerned that without intentional community building, La Alma may become a community divided into two communities (the haves and have-nots). There is concern that these two communities will be connected only due to their sharing of physical space. Stakeholders view community supportive services, economic development and amenities as opportunities for true community building, through which La Alma can become a diverse, but integrated neighborhood.

It is important to note that none of the community supportive service and few of the amenity uses have the ability to raise capital for the purchase and build out of physical space. Therefore, where possible, Perry Rose LLC has focused on no / low cost programmatic partnerships that do not require new physical space. In cases where CSS partners or amenities would require new physical space, we have noted the physical space required as well as the organization's capacity to raise the necessary capital funds. In cases requiring the development of new

physical space, to ensure sustainability of CSS programmatic partnerships, we have focused on organizations with healthy operating budgets and long standing operating histories (the Boys & Girls' Club, the BRIDGE Project, Denver Inner City Parish, Emily Griffith and the Byers Library are examples).

Based on our research, Perry Rose LLC has identified the need for the following resources:

- I) Case Management ("Resident Navigation");
- II) Job Training, Job Preparation and Employment Counseling;
- III) Adult Education;
- IV) Physical & Mental Healthcare;
- V) Childcare and After School Programs;
- VI) Children's Education;
- VII) Financial Literacy and Home Ownership;
- VIII) Neighborhood Safety;
- IX) Services for the Elderly and Disabled;
- X) Transportation;
- XI) Arts & Cultural Activities; and
- XII) Recreational Activities.

The community also has expressed interest in the following amenities: a library, a computer lab and classrooms, a community gathering space, a grocery store, a restaurant, a community garden and a laundromat.

The following is a list of key recommendations with respect to community supportive services, economic development and quality of life considerations:

- 1) During predevelopment, establish a Resident Navigation Office comprised of professional case managers and trained resident volunteers to assist each resident in addressing personal challenges, and setting and working towards personal and employment objectives. In partnership with service agencies and community based organizations, the resident navigator(s) would conduct a holistic needs assessment for each resident and help each resident to set goals. Based on the results of the needs assessment and on each resident's objectives, the navigator(s) would then refer each resident to relevant services provided in La Alma or the surrounding community, and would work with each resident to assess progress towards meeting defined objectives.
- 2) In addition, the Resident Navigation Office should foster collaboration between and coordinate the provision of services by service agencies and community based organizations that serve South Lincoln residents. Coordination efforts could involve working with locally based non-profits and institutions to host information or educational sessions or cultural activities at South Lincoln, coordinating and publicizing events or programs sponsored by multiple service providers, and creating an affinity card that encourages residents to use local services and that documents residents' use of such services.
- 3) Intentionally structure some neighborhood based adult education, job training, job preparation and employment assistance programs as bridges that provide residents who are now largely dependent on public entitlements with the capability and confidence necessary to pursue mainstream avenues (vocational training, community college) to economic advancement.
- 4) Identify specific adult education, job training, job preparation and employment assistance programs designed to assist individuals with special needs: particularly non-natives who speak English as a second language, and those with physical, mental or learning disabilities.
- 5) In keeping with the Mayor's Office of Economic Development's ("OED") targeted growth industries, emphasize the construction, healthcare and energy industries in the self-sufficiency and educational services provided to South Lincoln residents.
- 6) Use vacant (un-leased) commercial space to temporarily house services that support economic development needs of the community. Market rate rental revenue from commercial uses like grocery stores, restaurants and other community serving retail is unlikely to materialize until after the completion of later phases of redevelopment that contain a greater percentage of market rate residential units. DHA should collaborate with Emily Griffith, the construction trade unions, or other partner(s) to temporarily use vacant 1st floor space in the Phase 1 senior building as "flex space" to host a green jobs construction trades center. The center should prepare interested residents to be involved in the rebuilding of South Lincoln and in renovations and green retrofits of single and multi-family homes in the surrounding community.
- 7) Include a permanent community facility that includes: a 500 to 1,000 SF computer center with 20 stations, a 1,500 SF meeting room to seat 100 to 150 people, up to 3 classrooms totaling 1,800 to 2,250 SF of space, and a library kiosk and book drop off. Work with nearby educational institutions, workforce training centers, healthcare providers, cultural groups and others to offer introductory classes/ programs in this space, with the end goals of educating residents about available resources and increasing residents' comfort level in venturing beyond the immediate neighborhood to take advantage of resources available in the broader community.
- 8) Use community supportive services, particularly those related to early childhood care, children's education and after school programs, as opportunities to build community across socioeconomic lines.
- 9) Work with the City and the Denver Inner City Parish as they renovate and reopen Neighborhood House as an early childhood education facility to ensure that services provided address the needs of South Lincoln families.
- 10) Provide new space to move the Boys & Girls' club within the redevelopment.
- 11) Work closely with the City, Denver Public Schools, and other children's service providers to improve educational offerings for neighborhood children, and to design programs that tie into the Obama Administration's interest in funding holistic programs aimed at combating intergenerational poverty. Apply for a Promise Neighborhoods grant and other relevant Federal grants.
- 12) Work with Denver Health to improve preventative care and mental health offerings provided to South Lincoln residents, or set aside space in the redevelopment for a clinic, like Clinica Tepeyac, which is committed to providing physical and mental health services to low income people. In addition to services provided at the hospital or the clinic, work with local health providers to provide proactive education and outreach in the local community on health related matters.
- 13) Include a senior center in the Phase 1 senior building. Once the senior center is operational, convert the senior center space in the La Alma Rec Center to intergenerational or children's focused space. Coordinate with senior service providers, like the DICP Parish Seniors program and Seniors Inc to program the new center.
- 14) Coordinate with RTD, City agencies and others to increase residents' transportation options. Work with RTD to provide bus service connecting the 10th and Osage Station area with major Citywide bus routes, with Denver Human Services to provide a shuttle between South Lincoln and the DHS facility at 12th & Federal, and with Denver Health to increase accessibility between the South Lincoln site and Denver Health. Coordinate with OED or other partners to provide a car share or van program for those who are unable to afford, but need access to a car as a condition of employment.
- 15) Provide space for a "Cop Shop" within the redevelopment, and work with the Denver Police Department to institute a neighborhood watch program.
- 16) Coordinate with the Santa Fe Arts District to increase residents' access to cultural programs, and to solicit member organizations' participation in the cultural preservation of the community.

