

FOCUS GROUPS SUMMARY
Wednesday October 5th, 2022
 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Location: City Administration Building

Vibrant Neighborhoods

- » More support for unhoused populations so we all can have safe housing
- » More block parties
- » Water and electricity in Ivywild Park
- » Infill houses should not be oversized for community!
- » Bump outs in Panorama Dr. and Mesa
- » Reduce speed limit on King St.
- » Sidewalk work for ADA compliance and safety on Panorama Dr.
- » Electrical line buried in PV and Mesa areas
- » Preserve historic character and housing stock especially in Ivywild
- » Preservation of affordable housing for diversity of residents
- » Amazing little footbridge crossing the creek
- » Better bike/walk path under I-25 at Tejon/Nevada
- » Block parties (x2)
 - I like Porch Fest
- » Affordable housing (x2)
- » Xeriscape demo gardens as points of interest
- » Community centers (x2)
- » Historic preservation zoning
- » Prevent density of neighborhoods
- » Connectivity and interesting paths/walkway/bikeway
- » Don't decrease mandatory lot sizes
- » Remember our water limitations and manage growth to preserve our neighborhoods quality of life
- » Support Westside Community Center!
- » Art
- » Multi family housing
- » Include affordable housing as a requirement for new housing development
- » Mixed use/incremental development
- » Form based code to keep the character of OCC
- » Implement traffic easing on Pikes Peak Ave and surrounding streets. It will make the neighborhood safer and more walkable.
- » More safe bike ways separated from cars
- » Better on street and off street bike connections helps travelers connect with neighbors

Neighborhood Specific:

- » Stratton Meadows:
 - More street plans/trees/flowers

- » Westside
 - The Westside Community Center is under-utilized
 - Revitalization w/mix of housing types and commercial/retail
 - Historic preservation
 - Not demolishing old buildings to put up higher density and traffic, crime and deteriorating our historic character and uniqueness
 - Change neighborhood name as Westside is too...
 - Housing diversity
 - Gentle density
 - 2 flats/3 flats/etc.
 - Attract more artists and local businesses
 - Create a 15 minute city
 - All needs within a 15 minute walk
 - Speaking of “The Westside” (smaller division of map), more than one attempt was made to have the area recognized as a historic district, which failed due to the diversity of building styles and decades in which they were built. It still represents a typical American neighborhood with quiet streets and strong bonds between neighbors. I would like to see this character maintained, high-rise multi-unit complexes will have to be carefully located to not disrupt the existing fabric.
- » Mesa
 - Interconnected neighborhood watch, social events, etc.
- » Old Colorado City
 - The OCC neighborhood between Hwy 24 and Colorado Ave has been neglected and needs improvement. Empty plots of land with unapproved commercial use. It’s also a gap in the Midland Trail that is poorly connected and unsafe
 - Safety
 - Police presence
 - Removing a lane of traffic to slow it down for pedestrian safety
 - Figuring out housing for homeless
 - Removing drug dealers/drug addicts
 - Think about burying electrical lines
 - Limit density of ADU’s in OCC. Too many close together create excessive light and noise and traffic

Unique Places

- » Bear Creek Dog Park, Cheyenne Library, Stratton Meadows Open Space (South Suburban Reservoir)
- » More community events at the Conservation Center on Mesa
 - Recycling event partnering with the League of Women Voters of the Pikes Peak Region
- » Increase safe walking and biking infrastructure especially using off-street spaces
- » We have wonderful places to drink beer (yeah!) but probably enough. We could use more places for youth to safely congregate
- » Keep the Westside Plan as it is
- » More road network for fire evacuation egress/ingress
- » Develop Uintah Gardens Center into something like Briargate Shopping (x3)
- » Caffeinated Cow and ice cream
- » Bike/Walk path under I-25 at Tejon and Nevada

- » Views are important – watch building heights (x2)
- » Open spaces and limiting traffic congestion in area. Beauty of the area should be high priority
- » Need small shops, restaurants, etc. not Circle K
- » Save historic sites!
- » Implement Midland Corridor Transportation Study conclusions. Traffic diet will improve OCC commercial area
- » Keep parking \$ in neighborhoods to improve walkability
- » Improve bikeability and walkability to commercial areas (x2)

Neighborhood Specific:

- » Stratton Meadows
 - Park
 - Another park in Stratton Meadows
 - Old Chamberlin School
 - Less fast food, more local businesses on South Nevada, less chains
- » Ivywild
 - Need better connections to 8th Street and across
 - South Nevada needs better zoning – no chains
- » Skyway
 - More scrub oak/native plants along 19th and 17th around basin
- » Westside
 - Branding Colorado Ave as its own district
 - Westside Community Center could be hub
 - Sustain resident-let commitment here
 - The Westside Community Center is the heartthrob of the neighborhood which needs more awareness
 - Westside Community Center is a gem. It is only going to become more vital, vibrant, and needed in the future as a place where people can bond, find common interests and concerns and share vital info and insights
- » Midland
 - Dead deer hit by cars going to Fountain Creek
 - Environmental equity
 - No Man’s Land gifted to be open space by General Palmer
 - Ped and wildlife bridge to Red Rock Open Space (x2)
- » Gold Hill
 - Height in new Gold Hill development should not be intrusive
- » Old Colorado City
 - Preserve OCC, add to historic register
 - Add a parking structure to make it easier for people to gather and for Old Colorado City to host large events. There’s a huge lack of parking for visitors, employees, business owners, and residents.
 - Van Briggles came from behind Rick’s nursery

Thriving Economy

- » By improving infrastructure (sidewalks, 5G, burying lines) this improves our neighborhood and the values of our homes
- » Junkyards be gone
- » Walkability on 8th Street and additional non-big box store
- » South Nevada below I-25 – Development consists primarily of fast food and self-storage places. Needs much more diversity and interest e.g. lower downtown
- » Better bike/walk access to spend \$ downtown as in OCC
- » No self-storage facilities needed
- » Mixed-use buildings in OCC
- » Pay more attention to quality of life vs quantity of life. Seems like developers run the show here!
- » View critical – limit building heights!
- » Concert venues
- » Entrepreneurship networking and support
- » Diversity retail and services on S. Nevada. No more fast food restaurants!!
- » Help preserve/reuse buildings
- » Allow AirBNBs to continue to operate
- » Coordinate trash/recycling collection to reduce road wear and tear and noise reduction. (one agency/neighborhood)
- » Historic preservation is critical
- » Implement conclusions of Midland Corridor Transportation Study. Traffic diet will make OCC Commercial District more desirable
- » Traffic is already horrible on S. Nevada at Cheyenne and all the new shops are not even open yet. Bad planning already – Don't take out existing old homes. Reroute traffic onto Nevada.
- » Invest in OCC infrastructure to encourage locals to walk to the area. Wider sidewalks, slower auto speeds, narrow lanes will make it more inviting. Result will be increased sales tax revenue.
- » Several small spots to shop scattered across neighborhoods to promote walking
- » Small shops, restaurants, coffee shops, walking mall
- » Keep parking \$ in neighborhoods that generate it. User for neighborhood development in OCC!
- » Identity and branding around near west Colorado Ave Business District
- » Improve non-motorized connections to businesses
- » No new national or large chains
- » We need greater support for unhoused populations
- » Greater support for low income families and youth
- » Accessibility to support growing economy (parking, sidewalks, etc.) is going to need attention. Particularly on side between Highway 24 and Colorado Ave

Neighborhood Specific:

- » Old Colorado City
 - Removing economic barriers for visitors like paid parking
 - Making the neighborhood safer so more people will visit to shop and dine
 - City should invest in marketing Old Colorado City – use the 1.9 million we collect annually in sales tax
 - Use the parking meter money we collect in our neighborhood and reinvest 100% of the funds into neighborhood projects and events to revive our neighborhood

Strong Connections

- » Speeds are an issue on our street. Have been asking for 2 years and still have nothing. Less garbage trucks or coordinating so many trips/week.
- » Bike trails separate from streets (safety)
- » Safety measures for pedestrians and bikers along Colorado Avenue – It gets unsafe after dark
- » Mesa Valley connector is a strong east-west candidate but is very steep and rough
- » Protected bike lane on Cheyenne Blvd.; limit “dooring” risk
- » Road diet for Colorado Ave. and bike boulevards
- » Implement conclusions of Midland Corridor Transportation Study. PLEASE!!
- » More public transport
- » Bijou bridge safety
- » Safe access across I-25
- » Limit Density
- » No setback changes – No Retool!!!
- » Pedestrian safety on Nevada!
- » More public gardens in abandoned ROWs
- » I don’t feel safe running/biking from my house on St. Elmo to the Greenway Trail
- » More public transportation options w/ more frequency
- » Expand scooter usage to trails
- » Light rail from downtown to OCC to Manitou
- » Bike travel
- » Speeding!
- » Buses!
- » Connect Midland Trail!!
- » Transportation safety for seniors and children
- » Great Walkability
- » Connect Midland Trail
- » Trolley or shuttle between Manitou and downtown
- » Planning code should include bike/pedestrian connections requirements when dense housing is built
- » Bike lanes and trails from Lower Skyway to Manitou and all the parks and open spaces – Stratton, Red Rock, Bear Creek, etc.
- » Midland Trail should be connected without having to cross streets. Need bike infrastructure to get bikes from trail to OCC businesses
- » Increase off-street trail connections for bike and ped
- » Remove the homeless camps from the Midland Trail PERMANENTLY – make it better and safer for walkers, runners and cyclists. Better signage.
- » The entire Greater Westside I would like some funding to go toward training CS Utilities crews on how to resurface our streets after subsurface repairs. The streets are entirely too bumpy. Also, manholes should not be located in wheeltracks.
- » Connect Midland Trail
- » Powerlines – bury! The elms are a major risk
- » Improve the Midland Trail and designate Cucharas and Pikes as the bike boulevard its supposed to be!
- » Much more bike ways separated from cars
- » Features on Colorado Ave to slow traffic

Neighborhood Specific:

- » Ivywild:

- Connection to PP Greenway @ Tejon is unsafe
- The greenway along the creek is pretty sad and unusable. Needs a lot of work.
- Unsafe trail connection under I-25
- » Gold Hill
 - 8th Street bike/ped connectivity
 - Preserve bike trails near/through Center for Creative Leadership
 - Make tunnel under 8th Street at Walmart safer or something
 -
- » Westside
 - Safe clear bike connection downtown to westside
 - Colorado Ave 8th to I-25
 - Safety and pedestrian comfort
 - Reduce to 3 lanes
 - Bridge across I-25
 - Turn Cucharras and Pikes Peak into bike boulevards
 - Bike connectivity needed at Uintah Gardens
- » Old Colorado City
 - Build a bridge over Highway 24 from OCC into Red Rocks Open Space
- » Mesa
 - Worried about trail connection and traffic on Chestnut when Centennial extension
 - Mesa Road near Holmes MS is dangerous with nigh speed traffic
 - Bump outs

Renowned Culture

- » Revitalize Westside Community Center (x3)
- » Great recognition of Indigenous peoples and honest account of settler colonialism
- » Keep Penrose Equestrian Center an equestrian asset
 - Needs major improvement to former boarding barns
- » Westside neighborhoods designated as a National Historic Register/Place
- » More public art
- » Find a way for the city to manage Westside Community Center
- » City needs to purchase Masonic Temple and make it a community arts center
- » I – VA clinic – cultural asset
- » Help preserve existing housing stock vs scrape and build houses
- » Preserve historic housing stock
 - Especially for range of socioeconomic situations
- » Enforce vagrancy and drug laws
- » Re-establish historic El Paso Canal
- » MORE OF ALL THIS!!!! (referring to definition of Renowned Culture)
 - But needs more safety and affordable
 - Ivywild School is a great example of this
- » Need to preserve affordable housing. Gentrification is pushing poorer people out.
- » Can we highlight more old buildings/historic info in this area (especially Stratton Meadows)
- » Pavilions to rent or gather
- » Concert venues

- Both indoor and outdoor
- » Safety a concern due to transients
- » Even more green space along Colorado Ave. corridor
- » Preserve historic neighborhoods – stop densification

Neighborhood Specific:

- » Ivywild:
 - Would be great to have some place to loiter in non-downtown areas with shade, seating, great views, especially in Motor City area
- » Westside
 - Painted traffic calming bump outs
 - History of OCC and all of the historic Westside must be preserved. Do not tear down history for higher density and ugly modern buildings!!!
- » Old Colorado City
 - Mural like what we have but need more
 - Bancroft Park
 - Revitalize the OCC Business District.
 - Support the Avenue Creative Circuit
 - Introduce form based code to keep new development in character with OCC historic buildings
- » Mesa
 - Can we have clarification on what the community asset is on Mesa Road and Fontmore Road?

Majestic Landscapes

- » Our view on Panorama, Crown Ridge + Pioneer/Mesa is majestic. Burying electrical lines would improve the view and help with outages (December 2021)
- » Improve open space and the water towers on Manitou Blvd
- » More open spaces
- » The greenway along the creek is grungy and trash filled. Needs a lot of work before people will use it.
- » Preserve mountain views
- » Limit building height – views are critical!
- » Pocket parks
- » Better access
- » School playgrounds open
- » Activation next to creek
- » Homelessness along creek/bike trails
- » Fountain Creek
- » Gold Camp Park
 - Interpretive (historic) signage
 - Needs to be replaced
- » Preserve views of the front range
 - *Tall pines included
- » Don't allow multi-story buildings especially near open spaces and neighborhoods that block the view
- » Better public access to Cheyenne Creek along Cheyenne Boulevard
- » Ensure maintenance of planting areas
 - Example: either side of Uintah west of I-25 by biking path

- » Rock outcrops
- » Support w/dedicated park tax funding
 - Both city and county parks
- » Safety for kids
 - Lighting, police/security
- » Safety concerns
 - Restrooms, addiction, homelessness
 - Bancroft Park
- » Continue to use TOPS to complete the 2014 parks master plan
- » Use natural spaces to increase trail transportation connections
- » RRCOS needs MTB only down trails to keep bikers safely away from hikers
- » Limit development of 2-story residences in OCC – blocking views of Pikes Peak
- » Filtration pools needed at 25th Street and 27th/28th along Fountain Creek
 - Parks can be situated around pools
- » I am disappointed in the growing proliferation of warning signs in and around our city parks. America the Beautiful Park, for example, has too many no parking signs that no one would even notice the mountain in the background and would be discouraged from parking to get out and enjoy the park. Also there are excessive numbers of security cars roaming, for example, the Legacy Loop parking lot at Fontanero and Recreation Way. There are police cars driving on Monument Creek Trail on both sides at night. Garden of Gods is gated closed at night, one of the few dark places in Colo Spgs where photographers like to shoot photos of the skies. It is great to boast about parks. It is another thing to make people feel welcome to use them.

Key Themes (from all)

- » Safe multi-modal transit is a priority
- » Access and availability of open spaces and community spaces
- » Support for local businesses and artists
- » Crime and people experiencing homelessness are a concern
- » Historic preservation