

MLK SUBAREA PLAN

Appendix G: McCarver Elementary Charette Results

Appendix G: MLK Intern Project – McCarver Elementary School Charettes

Successful solutions may be grounded in empathy, understanding, and compassion for and from all stakeholders involved. Ultimately there is a desire within the City of Tacoma for informed, positive, citizen participation that is representative of all perspectives. Children possess useful and important knowledge that no one else in the community can provide. As opportunities for children to participate in the redevelopment of their communities increase, so too will the positive contributions of all stakeholders.



In an effort to continue and grow partnerships with the community, the City of Tacoma has reached out to the children of McCarver Elementary for their input on, and vision for, the future of the Martin Luther King Jr. Way area. The children of McCarver are quickly gaining a reputation as highly motivated and influential members of the community. This is highlighted through such efforts as the Zina Linnik Project, which raised 3.5 million dollars for a full renovation of McCarver Park, as well as a new playground and spray-ground at Wright Park.

We asked the students what they liked about their neighborhood and community and what they would do to improve the MLK/Hilltop Area. Responses ranged from daily ice-cream trucks to transportation improvements (including tele-porters!), so they could get to Wright Park and the homes of relatives. The majority of responses focused heavily on wanting to feel safe when playing.

Following these activities, a visioning charrette was conducted focusing on the former Browne's Star Grill and the empty lot at 11th and MLK. Students learned about and integrated concepts such as mixed-use development, energy

efficient features, and concerns for social equity.

The Outreach participatory activities included 5 separate scoping and data gathering activities with students, kindergarten through 4th grade, throughout the Summer of 2012.

- A visioning charrette with 25 students from the 4th and 5th grades in the Peace Makers Club on May 25th, building 3-D models of potential redevelopment ideas for the former Browne's Star Grill catalyst site.
- A design activity on July 18th, which included a walking tour of the surrounding area.
- A visioning charette on August 6th with 20 students, 2nd grade through junior high, where participants focused on ideal bike boulevard intersections.
- Multiple planners and members of the MLK Working Group and community were present for all charettes.

Children, like all people, are at risk of marginalization if they do not have a voice or a forum to communicate their stake in the built environment. They can be particularly vulnerable due to their lack of resources monetarily, their easily restricted autonomy, and the perception that their inclusion in the public realm is less justified.

In order to engage children in the process you must engage those children that are directly accountable. This primarily includes schools and parents. The charette, as a planning tool, is particularly suited to children as it allows for engaging in developmentally appropriate expressions of their interests and desires for the urban realm.

While these charettes were initiated for ideas rather than action, an implementation charette in the future could involve all of the stakeholders that usually play a role in plan approval, as well as children. Integrating a wide selection of participants can help broaden the issue and can increase efficiency. Young people want to be included in the work of adults but they want to be treated with respect.

The MLK subarea and EIS has built on a legacy of community partnership with McCarver Elementary. Students and staff at McCarver have communicated a desire to continue this participation in the city's planning process by exploring new ways to expose students to the responsibilities of civic engagement.

Mrs. Miller's 2nd Grade Class, Tuesday May 16th

Likes (number of votes):

- 21 McCarver Park
- 21 Basketball courts
- 20 Museums (arts)
- 20 Food (local dining choices)
- 18 Parks (clean)
- 16 Classroom (learning environment)

Things to Change:

- Safer (parks, streets, neighborhood)
- More swings
- Fix park hazards (cushioned surfaces safe equipment)
- Address bullies and criminal element

Mrs. Smith's 3rd Grade Class, Tuesday May 15th

Likes (number of votes):

- 22 Pool
- 21 Playgrounds
- 18 Waterparks
- 14 Wright's Park
- 14 Waterpark
- 13 Hospital
- 13 Convenience stores (76)
- 12 Front yards (playing)
- 11 Hideout (secret safe place)
- 10 YMCA
- 6 Grammy's (family in neighborhood)

Things to Change:

- Add a year-round pool
- Huge slide
- Less litter
- No smoking, drinking or drugs
- Better local transportation (easier to stores and Wright's Park)
- Teleporters
- More freedom (fiduciary) able to do more with budget

Mr. Tucker's 4th Grade Class, Wednesday May 16th

Likes (number of votes):

- 22 Park across the street
- 19 Murals and other public art
- 18 People I know
- 18 Caring community
- 18 "Eyes on The Street" (safety from people outside watching for each other)
- 16 Feeling safe at home

- 16 Clean
- 13 Good people
- 10 Able to play in yard

Things to Change:

- Broken toys
- Flatter (grade the hills)
- Remove criminal element
- More toys
- Off-leash dog parks
- Address criminal elements behind stores and in alleys
- Stop panhandling
- Provide housing for homeless

