

March 2013

City Heights

Built Environment Team



“A Community Driven Action Plan”



Acknowledgement

The work of the City Heights Built Environment Team and this document is supported by The **California Endowment**, as part of **Building Healthy Communities**. A 10-year initiative with the goal: to create places where children are healthy, safe and ready to learn. The aim is to revolutionize the way all of us think about and support health for all Californians.

The California Endowment (TCE) is a foundation committed to improving the health of all Californians, especially those in underserved communities. TCE believes that health does not begin in a doctor’s office, instead it begins where we live, place has an enormous impact on our health. Being able to breathe clean air, to send our kids to school without fear of violence, to have a convenient place to buy fresh foods, to live near a park where we can walk and play – these are the things that prevent us from getting sick in the first place.

Thank you TCE for your support with the City Heights Built Environment Team!

I. Project Objective and Developing the Built Environment Resident Training

Building on The California Endowment’s Building Healthy Communities community engagement process in City Heights regarding topics of health the built environment, the Built Environment Team (BET) was created to work with residents to create the Community Driven Action Plan (CDAP). The CDAP represents a multi-year resident capacity building process that views City Heights residents as the central and primary drivers for change, with community organizations, organizers and existing community leaders providing the necessary tools and support to engage residents. Throughout the process, the BET organizers engaged a group of community residents that represented the diversity of City Heights including ethnicity, culture, age and gender to create a visionary yet pragmatic land use-centered Community Driven Action Plan (CDAP) that will be adopted and implemented.

Over the course of the past two years, the BET’s goals have been the following:

- Creation of a City Heights community where residents live with health-promoting land use, transportation and community development.
- Increasing opportunities for diverse low-income City Heights residents to organize and actively advocate for desired changes in land use planning issues and health concerns.
- Establishing community control
- Developing a Community Driven Action Plan
- Developing land use policies that will improve community health
- Promoting health and economic development for community residents
- Reducing environmental impacts that damage health

Curriculum Development and Approach

Creation of the CDAP began with an extensive resident training for community residents. The curriculum for the training was focused on building resident familiarity and knowledge on land use and issues that build a healthy and sustainable community. The training curriculum fostered resident knowledge around the **Why Place Matters** conceptual framework and taught participants the skills to organize and advocate for change. This emphasis was chosen because of City Heights’ unique history of inequitable land use decisions by empowered entities and decision-makers, the lack of robust, diversified community engagement in these decisions, and the limited acknowledgment of the

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significant connection between land use, health, and resident concerns.

Starting in Spring 2011 the four organizations, City Heights Community Development Corporation (CHCDC), Environmental Health Coalition



(EHC), International Rescue Committee (IRC), and Proyecto de Casas Saludables (PCS) – began working under the title of the Built Environment Team (BET) to develop a built environment advocacy curriculum and training model tailored to the needs of City Heights residents.

From the spring through summer, the BET met regularly to design a nine-week training curriculum that would address issues in City Heights’ built environment and leverage the expertise of each organization. The following list identifies the primary topics of each of the nine weeks:

- 1) Introduction to “Built Environment”
- 2) Social, Environmental, and Economic Justice
- 3) Community Planning
- 4) Green Zones and Ground-Truthing
- 5) Housing and Tenants Rights
- 6) Active Transportation and Community Mobility
- 7) Food Justice and Neighborhood Food Systems
- 8) Organizing
- 9) Advocacy

The training was designed to give the residents an in-depth understanding of the various elements of the built environment in City Heights as well as a framework of how to begin to advocate for system improvements for the community. Each session included an informative component, oftentimes in the form of a slide presentation, as well as an interactive discussion or activity that involved residents in both an engaging and educational context. Working with adults at various levels of literacy and understanding, the BET organizers pedagogical approach drew on each individual’s lived experiences and allowed them to apply the technical knowledge in a familiar context.

Curriculum Summary

The following section summarizes briefly the contents of each weekly training topic.

Introduction to Built Environment

In the first session IRC staff created a presentation to introduce the concept of the built environment and specifically detailed issues within the City Heights built environment and how those issues affect individual and community health. Additionally it addressed ways to change the inequalities in the built environment.

Social, Environmental, and Economic Justice

In the second session EHC discussed with residents the meaning of Social and Environmental Justice, and explained a case study detailing the process a community goes through to advocate for changes in unjust practices.

Community Planning

In the Community Planning session EHC explained how city planning and zoning functions and also presented a model for analyzing structures of power. In this session EHC led activities that asked residents to analyze who has the ability (power) to make changes within the built environment.

Green Zones and Ground-Truthing

In the Green Zones and Ground-Truthing session organizations and residents broke up into groups to explore the streets of City Heights and take notes on the actual conditions of the built environment—an activity that allowed residents to become researchers of their own environment.

Housing and Tenants Rights

Proyecto de Casas Saludables led an interactive presentation focusing on housing conditions in City Heights and the rights of tenants. In small groups, participants learned how to write a letter directed to the property manager or landlord asking to rectify a problem in their unit.

Active Transportation and Community Mobility

In the Active Transportation session CHCDC highlighted the struggles City Heights residents face in walking, biking, and driving within the community as well as potential opportunities for advocacy. In this session, participants explored a local case study – 50th Street & University Ave – that epitomized how residents can work together with community stakeholders and traffic engineers to change the narrative about the purpose

of a street and to work together to shape a plan for an intersection that would improve safety for all users, not just maximize efficiency for one group. Using felt cut-outs, residents also learned how to convert a traditional street into a Complete Street.

Food Justice and Neighborhood Food Systems

In the session entitled Food Justice and Neighborhood Food Systems participants were introduced to the concept of a food system and asked to examine the industrialized food system & local food systems. Additionally in small discussion groups they compared how jobs, health, environment, and community are affected by each system.

Organizing and Advocacy

In the last two sessions the collaborating organizations focused on presentations and activities that developed residents organizing and advocacy skills. Proyecto de Casas Saludables held a small group session in which each group had to recreate a city scene out of construction paper and cardboard. Each group was given materials for their task, but some groups had less materials than others. One group of only two people had all of the materials. Each group had to negotiate with each other in order to get their tasks accomplished. This interactive activity taught the participants about teamwork, inequity, and the importance of getting organized.

At each session, BET organizers provided catered dinners provided by City Heights entrepreneurs and ate together prior to the session. These shared meals were an essential element of the training in that they allowed time for group members to informally get to know one another and make friendships. This is particularly important because the four organizations brought together culturally and linguistically diverse participants from each organization,



with ages spanning from high school students to residents living in senior apartment complexes. Many of the participants had not met each other before. The training allowed diverse community members to establish relationships and trust with each other. One year later, after the training and over the course of many months of CDAP formation meetings, residents continue their passion and commitment to the project in no small part due to these personal connections with each other.

In addition to meals, simultaneous translation was provided in English, Spanish, Karen, Kizigua and Swahili in order to facilitate comprehension for diverse participants while keeping a timely flow to the sessions. Childcare was also provided for participants' families. To complete the training the organizations hosted a graduation ceremony at the New Roots Community Farm where participants also received certificates of completion.

II. Community Driven Issues

After a motivating graduation ceremony, on June 7, 2012, residents and organizations began to have by-weekly BET CDAP meetings. As a result of the leadership training and ground-truthing, the following community concern assessment was developed (see Table 1-1). The BET residents defined the community issues during the break-out sessions of the Leadership Training and at subsequent CDAP meetings and then voted to decide their priority level for the group.



These priority issues are the focus of the CDAP development, which covers problem, solution and action.

Top Three Community Issues:

1. Mobility
2. Fair Housing
3. Clean Environment

III. Mission Statements

After deciding on focus areas, residents began to envision an equitable City Heights. Focusing on inequities can drain and discourage residents from taking action, so the BET staff worked together with residents to create a vision that would represent a healthy, equitable, and livable City Heights. A common theme represented in the vision included safe and clean walking infrastructure, sufficient street lighting, dedicated bike facilities, rapid bus and trolley routes, open space, trees, safe transit stops, and more. The groups of residents shared the meanings behind their vision. The language

Table 1-1

HEALTH IMPACTS: Respiratory impacts (lung development and asthma), Obesity, Skin irritation, Brain development, Cancer, Diabetes, Hypertension, Heart Disease, Depression, Eye Disease, Mental Health, Domestic Violence, Physical Activities, Crime (mental/physical), Injury and Death from Traffic Crashes, Lack of Health Education, Stress, etc...		
TOPIC AREAS	DESCRIPTION	CITY HEIGHTS INEQUITY
Housing	Housing inequity means when the range and supply of affordable, high-quality (fair quality & healthy housing) housing is unavailable or insufficient in a lower income community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High cost of rent • Unhealthy housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mold, roaches, lead paint • Dilapidated infrastructure • Displacement • Low rate of home ownership
Clean Environment	A Clean Environment is a hazard-free environment that promotes the health and safety of our families both inside the home and outside in the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of clean air • Litter throughout the community • Lack of recycling and trash bins
Open Spaces	Open space inequity means there is less public spaces, such as parks, plazas and natural open space, in a lower income community than in wealthier communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of street trees • Hot, open sidewalks and parks without shade • Lack of park maintenance • Lack of bathrooms in the parks • No enforcement on drinking and smoking regulations, better signage • Lack of park safety • Need for a skateboard park • Need for park lighting • Need for better playground design • Need for water fountains • Lack of areas for seniors to meet up (Senior Center)

TOPIC AREAS	DESCRIPTION	CITY HEIGHTS INEQUITY
<p>Affordable, Healthy, Culturally Appropriate Food</p>	<p>Food inequity issues means when healthy, culturally-appropriate food is not available or affordable for the community.</p> <p>In some communities, the issue is the lack of markets or food stores. i.e. “food deserts”.</p> <p>While City Heights is not a food desert, access to healthy, pesticide-free, nutritious, culturally-appropriate food is not available to everyone.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of affordable, pesticide-free, chemical-free foods (produce, dairy, meats) in stores • Lack of affordable, culturally-appropriate foods (Halal meats, African veggies, etc.) • Lack of convenient transportation to larger grocery stores (for bulk buying) • Expensive prices at corner stores • Lack of personal gardening spaces
<p>Mobility</p>	<p>Mobility inequity means when transportation options (via car, bus, bike or by foot) are more limited or of less quality for a lower income community or community of color.</p>	<p>Automobile</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potholes in streets • Public Transportation • Bus stops are far apart • Infrequent weekend schedules • Lack of quality bus benches • Unaffordable bus fares • Need for better signage at terminals • Need for better bus routes and connections <p>Poor Pedestrian Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fast cars • Lack of wheelchair ramps • Narrow sidewalks • Insufficient street lights • Lack of crosswalks • Lack of safety <p>Bikeability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of bike lanes • Speeding cars impact bike safety • Lack of bike signage • Lack of bike racks



used to describe the vision was used to define the Mobility Mission Statements of the CDAP.

Because residents voted on mobility as their number one priority (see page 4), we began to focus in on the specific issues related to Mobility. Using the compiled list of City Heights inequities and referencing past vision discussions, we facilitated a small group conversation with the BET to develop Mission Statements related to each major transportation mode – walking, biking, transit riding, and driving. **The BET residents developed the following Mission Statement for each mode of City Heights Mobility:**

1. Walking:

- We want safe, pleasant and comfortable pedestrian routes to community destination points for all people of all ages.
- Complete missing sidewalks throughout the neighborhood. Existing sidewalks are free from obstacles such as utility boxes and in excellent condition
- Place recycle and trash bins every two blocks

2. Biking:

- Safe bike infrastructure and facilities, which respects bicyclists and their rights.
- Bike lanes with separation from cars and well connected to other bike routes

3. Driving:

- Better street conditions by having better street maintenance, right of way signage and enforcement, and traffic calming measures.
- Better signage of speed limits throughout community
- Street improvements should be done in a holistic manner
- Reduce car velocity by incorporating traffic calming measures

4. Transit riding:

- Improve public transportation with convenient and comfortable transit

stops for all people

- Improve frequent and affordable transit fare for City Heights
- Reduce transit fare
- Increase connectivity of transit routes
- All transit stops should have shelter and lighting

IV. Planning Projects

Once the Mission Statements were defined, BET staff assembled a list of on-going mobility-related City Heights projects. Of the on-going projects, the following related to the above-listed Mission Statements:

- State Route – 15 “CenterLine” Bus Rapid Transit
- 54th Street & University Avenue Complete Streets/Safety Project
- City Heights Urban Greening Project
- Discounted Bus Passes
- New City of SD Capital Improvement Project process
- Exploring SANDAG TransNet policy
- SANDAG Orange/Meade/Wightman/Landis Bike Boulevard Project

There was a facilitated presentation with the BET resident group that functioned as a “101” about each project which discussed the opportunities for community involvement. This included a needs assessment and solutions for completing the projects.

The Center for Policy Initiatives made a guest presentation on the City’s new Capital Improvement Project process which intended to increase opportunity for public input. Bridget Enderle from SANDAG made a guest presentation on the Mid City Bike Boulevard project which is called for in their Regional Bike Plan. There was a joint presentation on the policies that determine how SANDAG TransNet “half-cent sales tax” funding works.

Each project included its own unique needs and solutions. For example, the needs of the CenterLine project include (1) finishing the design and (2) identifying funding. The solutions included (1) attending next design meeting and (2) helping encourage SANDAG to apply for federal funding and prioritizing the project in the new SANDAG Regional Transportation Plan.

At the subsequent BET resident meetings, residents and staff created a matrix which measured each of the projects against the Mission Statements. For each transportation mode, residents voted “Yes,” “No,” or “Maybe” on the project’s ability to satisfy the Mission Statements.

After ranking each project’s ability to fulfill the Mission Statements, we tallied up the “Yes’s” and “No’s.” The projects which ranked the highest were the Urban Greening, CIP, and 54th& University Ave.

During the BET resident meeting, residents voted on which project they thought should be the advocacy priority of the group, the following project were selected:

1. 54th Street & University Avenue Complete Streets/Safety Project;
2. City Heights TransNet Funding Policy
3. San Diego Capital Improvement Project
4. Mid-City Bike Blvd Planning Process



V. Solutions and Actions

After many months of input, Table 1-2 specifies resident’s mobility goals for the built environment of City Heights. There are four priority projects identified where residents will influence outcomes to ensure the benefits for City Heights of improved walkability, bikeability, transit options and vehicle circulation. Lastly, there are some actions that still need research, resident training and community organizing to ensure the focus projects achieve the goals and improve the built environment of City Heights.

VI. Process and Evaluation

The commitment of dedicated City Heights residents has been crucial in the work of the Built Environment Team. To ensure that a process is in fact “resident driven,” the residents themselves have to be involved in the process. Creating a healthy community requires that City Heights

residents have greater influence in decision-making processes that impact their neighborhoods.

The residents’ participation, passion and community involvement have made it possible for every step taken towards the development of this plan is effective and substantial. These voices will see through the desired changes that we want to see in the community.

Through the commitment of City Heights residents many long hours filled with suggestions, questions, laughter, and the building of community, we have come to this document that you see today.

Table 1-2: City Heights Mobility Community Driven Action Plan

Goals	Mobility Planning	Process Actions
<p>Walking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want safe, pleasant and comfortable pedestrian routes to community destination points for all people of all ages. • Complete missing sidewalks throughout the neighborhood • Existing sidewalks are free from obstacles such as utility boxes with no pedestrian obstruction • Place recycle and trash bins every two blocks 	<p>54th Street & University Avenue Complete Streets Project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support SANDAG to apply for grants. If awarded, money will be to develop project • Identify funding sources that will develop this project • Possible connect this project with the Mid-City Bike Corridor Project • Support the residents to bring attention to this project to City of San Diego and SANDAG
<p>Biking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe bike infrastructure and facilities, which respects and enforcement of bike rights. • Bike lanes with separation from cars and well connected to other bike routes 	<p>City Heights TransNet Funding Policy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze current decision process, which determines how available money is spent in City Heights • Work with City of San Diego staff to prioritize complete street transportation strategies that will increase walkability, bikeability and improve safety, and slow down vehicles

Goals	Mobility Planning	Process Actions
<p>Driving</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better Street conditions by having better street maintenance, right of way signage and enforcement, and traffic calming measures. • Better signage of speed limit through-out • Street improvements should be done in a holistic manner • Reduce car velocity by incorporating traffic calming measures 	<p>SD Capital Improvement Project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become involved in The Center for Policy Initiative’s Community Budget Alliance • Organize residents and participate in City meetings to ensure that CIP process is transparent and projects in CH are being prioritized with funding • Support the effort to amend Council Policy 800-14 regarding prioritizing CIP projects • Seek community input with the development of projects for the CIP budget
<p>Transit riding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve public transportation with convenient and comfortable transit stops for all people • Improve frequent and affordable transit fare for City Heights • Reduce transit fare • Increase connectivity of transit routes • All transit stops should have shelter and lighting 	<p>Mid-City Bike Corridor Project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ground-truth project area with residents • Vision project area with residents • Identify a BET resident stakeholder and have them represent the BET in SANDAGs Community Advisory Group • Influence project to reflect the BET resident vision • Participate in SANDAGs planning process • Mobilize residents to SANDAGs planning process workshops

During these times of great change in City Heights; the residents are planting their seeds that they themselves and future generations will be able to enjoy because of their contribution in the community.



Words from some BET Resident Members

Lucken Gibore; came to City Heights in 1999

I had come from New York with my wife at the time and my first apartment was at 54th street and University, just down the street from where the New Roots Community Farm is today. I came here because my wife at the time was going to go to college here. I came here to get a job, and never planned to become part of the community, or stay in San Diego. I always had an interest in giving back to my community, but I always focused on my community in Jamaica. When I came here my mind was always in Jamaica. I took the BET training and started working at the New Roots Community Farm at about the same time. After I began to be involved in BET it hit me. It's good to give back in Jamaica, but what about here? What can I do here? People here need help and they can help me too. We can work together.

BET has opened up my eyes to needs but also the resources that we can access. It also brought us a group of people that we can share ideas with, that we can be friends with. It brought people from different social strata together to reach a common goal.

It's important to not only build community, but stabilize community. It helps us find resources and also to advocate. We need to have friends. We need to have a place to build a family. Especially when you move around a lot it's hard to make friends.

All of us who work with the BET we are different. We have different backgrounds, races, and many of us speak different languages, but we have the same goals. We can teach each other words, share food and understand each other's cultures and interact with each other. Sometimes we have fear of each other's cultures but we all want the same things: Safe healthy housing, a place for our children to play without fear, a place for our kids to learn. Parents of children all want the same things for their children.

Now I see things through the BET lens. Maybe we need a light here. Maybe these people aren't eating healthy. When I was at City College (studying agriculture) my whole focus was



on City Heights. As a resident of City Heights, how to give back to this community that has helped me. I was upset that I missed the first BET meeting this year because I had the flu. I understand how important it is to be committed to something. That if you're committed to something you gotta be really committed. If we say we're going to do something we have to do it. What would happen if the sun decided to not shine one day?

Marco Antonio Montiel; came to City Heights in 1989

My experience with the Built Environment Team has been very interesting because I have gained quite a bit of consciousness in relationship to our community that in the past I had not had the opportunity for reflection. Above all else, I really appreciated the introductory workshops where we had the opportunity to meet people from other ethnic groups, such as Somalis, Vietnamese, African people, African-American people, Anglo-Saxon people, and of course, other people from Mexico. These workshops brought me to the understanding about how important for us who live in City Heights, with its ethnic diversity, that we all have the same necessities, and the same vision to have a better life.

With these workshops, we began to understand that we have many topics in which we can begin to make change in our community where us, the residents, along with the four organizations, Proyecto de Casas Saludables, City Heights Community Development Corporation, Environmental Health Coalition, and International Rescue Committee, can begin to form a long term work plan. The topics that we began to work in are housing, environmental justice, transportation, green areas, or parks, and healthy food. This process has brought us to begin breaking down these topics into smaller topics, because each is unique and complex in itself.

Nevertheless, here in BET we have been learning in detail about our neighborhood, that there are 14 neighborhoods with 80,000 people, that there is a 1.5% higher level of asthma and lower salaries than in the rest of San Diego. All of this has brought us to understand our vision, where we want to see our priorities placed, and what we need to advocate for in the future. This also is very important, because we have learned a bit about the structure of the government so we can know where the resources are coming from and how they are distributed.



Another thing that I have learned is how we can work together in groups: how to come to consensus, when to have a majority vote, the importance of planning and how to advocate. The discussion and communication of ideas along with the rest of the residents, and this learning process is very important, because there is an overwhelming amount of information that we have to learn step by step so that we can see these long term changes happen in City Heights.

I am very happy that the residents of City Heights are working together to see change in our community.

Patty Saenz; moved to City Heights in 2009

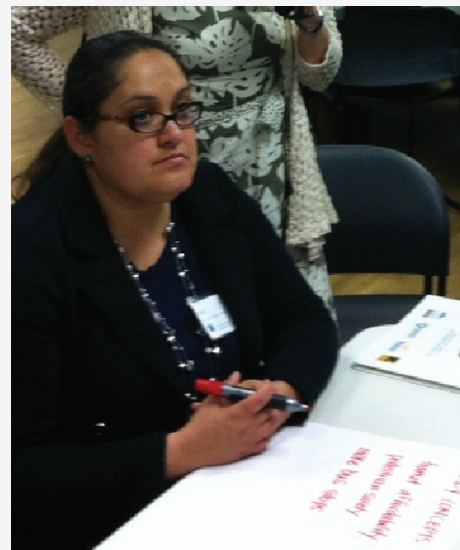
I got involved in my community because of my daughter who has autism. She had done therapies at home and evaluations at the San Diego Regional Center. A medical evaluation had recommended that we have our home checked for lead since it was built in the 30's. It was something that I put off for a while, as we dealt with other medical issues. A friend let me know that because we qualified for Medi-Cal, we could also qualify for WIC, because my daughter was still under age 5. When I was looking through all of my old WIC paperwork, I found something from when my daughter was 9 months old. It stated that she had a blood lead level of 12.2. I was floored because no one had ever followed up with me, and she was four years old when I found this out. I started to call around—I called the city and I called Environmental Health Coalition, who came to my house the next day to do a lead inspection. From standing outside of the house, the lead inspector told me that she could tell right away that we had lead paint. Her testing confirmed it. She answered my questions about children exposed to lead. She said of the cases she saw over the last 16 years, about 50% of the children presented with developmental delay due to lead exposure. I said that I would be a voice for those children. Luckily I had a good landlord who allowed EHC to help us with the lead abatement process for both my house and the back house, and that the 12.2 lead level was a clerical error; the nurse put the information in the wrong section of the form.

About the same time, a friend of mine invited me to her house because a filmmaker was traveling around the nation doing a documentary about environmental toxins. I participated in the discussions for the documentary. Maybe someday you'll see me in a movie, but I probably won't make the cut.

EHC took my word and started inviting me to be a part of their press conferences. I did the SALTA at the National City office after Franco Garcia invited me numerous times. I finally gave in. I was impressed. I felt inspired to become a community leader. Next thing I knew I

was running for the redevelopment committee and my husband joined the executive board with his union, and then I was invited on the board of EHC, and then to be co-chair of the BET.

Before all of this my community was mostly the autism community, and less the community found in my very own neighborhood. Now I think of ways to help people who live near me. As you meet people, you see where you think you could help them, giving them resources that you find along the way. Maybe it may not help me, but it may help my neighbor. For me building community means building trust by helping each other. It makes you feel less isolated and safer. I still get stage fright, but I’ve learned to work beyond it. One of my goals is to find more autism families in City Heights—I’d like to talk to the people who live here who have no support and I’d like to help them find the support that I have.



In the process of giving public testimony and being a part of community teams, it has helped me feel more at home as well as closer to my neighbors. It has helped me personally in that I remember that I am an advocate for not just my own daughter with autism but for my community here in City Heights as well. That’s something that gives me pride and good feeling.

For the BET meetings, I think that often times when people want to change something and feel they can’t do it alone, they look for power in numbers and sometimes for someone to lead the way. We feel like we are being heard in the BET. We know that we can’t do it alone, but together and with time, we will be able to.

Sally Lemmie; moved to City Heights in 1998

Working with the BET has been inspirational. Since I was disabled and had to retire early from my injuries, I never thought I was going to be able to do anything again. The classes (BET training) gave us information about who to contact when you have problems. It taught me how to form a group, how to work with people, how to talk to people and how to find out what people want. It’s taught me how to bring people together, how to reach out to people and to ask them about what they want. We have since formed a group of people here. (In her apartment complex). The planning commis-

sion has come here. (CHAPC), the 54th and University people have come here. The walkability study has come here. The BET has showed me how to go and get people and helped me know how to talk to people. This has helped me with the work in the community and also helped me with my own business and finding new prospects (customers).

The BET has taught us about food. I grew up not liking food “from the ground.” I grew up in Arkansas, and we would take trips to farms, we would drive by farms, but I never worked on farms, my family never worked on farms. Vegetables were dirty and disgusting to me. I never understood how important food was until I took the classes. The classes got me to try vegetables, then I began to start to take vitamins, and this then made me crave vegetables. This has helped me with my diabetes and high blood pressure, as well as my injuries. It’s helped me walk better. Now I have taught my children and grandchildren to eat more vegetables.

I used to be a security guard for the roundtable tv show that would speak to the local politicians. I would keep people from going into the room when they were taping the show so that nobody would bother them. I never imagined that I would be on the other side of the door, able to talk to these people, getting awards from Marti Emerald and Todd Gloria. You find that they are just down to earth, regular people.

I used to live in Carlsbad and worked in La Jolla, but when my granddaughter with Down’s Syndrome was born I would have to be in San Diego to look for programs for her at Rady Children’s hospital. I would also go here to El Cajon Boulevard to the Metro Center program. I was always in San Diego and I began to really like this neighborhood. By University and Fairmount I would see this big empty lot saying that an Albertson’s was coming, but I didn’t believe it. When I came back and saw that there was actually an Albertson’s built, I decided I wanted to live here, that when they said something would happen here, it actually did happen. It may not be overnight, but it would happen. I love living here because everything is close by.



I was first scared of people who were different than me. We couldn't communicate with each other. My brother fought in the Vietnam war, and now I have Vietnamese neighbors. I was scared in the elevator because we couldn't communicate. They didn't try to talk to me. Now, after creating a group here in the building, we have brought translators in here, and we have found that we all want the same things. They all now say hi to me in the Elevator, in English, "Hi Sally." That's about all that they say, but they say hi to me. One time the building manager didn't come to work for a week. It was rent week. There were a lot of Somali women who wanted to pay their rent. I was sitting downstairs and the maintenance man asked me if I could help him. I said I didn't speak Somali but I would try to help, and joked about if I was going to get paid for this. I had the women file in a line and I made sure that they had an ID and signed their money orders. I wrote down their apartment numbers and addresses on the money orders, but I made sure that they signed their own money orders. This is something that I learned from the BET. To be organized, to line everything up in order. If I never took the classes, I would have never known how to do this.

VII. Next Steps

- 1. Team Development and Coordination** – Continue consensus-based approach to develop a strategic vision and plan based on the above goals.
- 2. CDAP Implementation** – Nurture and support the team to develop an implementation plan for the transit/mobility CDAP, which includes resident base building, advocacy and research.
- 3. Leadership Development and Community Capacity Building** – Develop strategic leadership development training for community residents.
- 4. Development of other community issues** – Possibly continue the development of action plans for the other outstanding issues: Fair Housing and Clean Environment.