

Allen Boulevard District Plan Project Update: Spring 2018

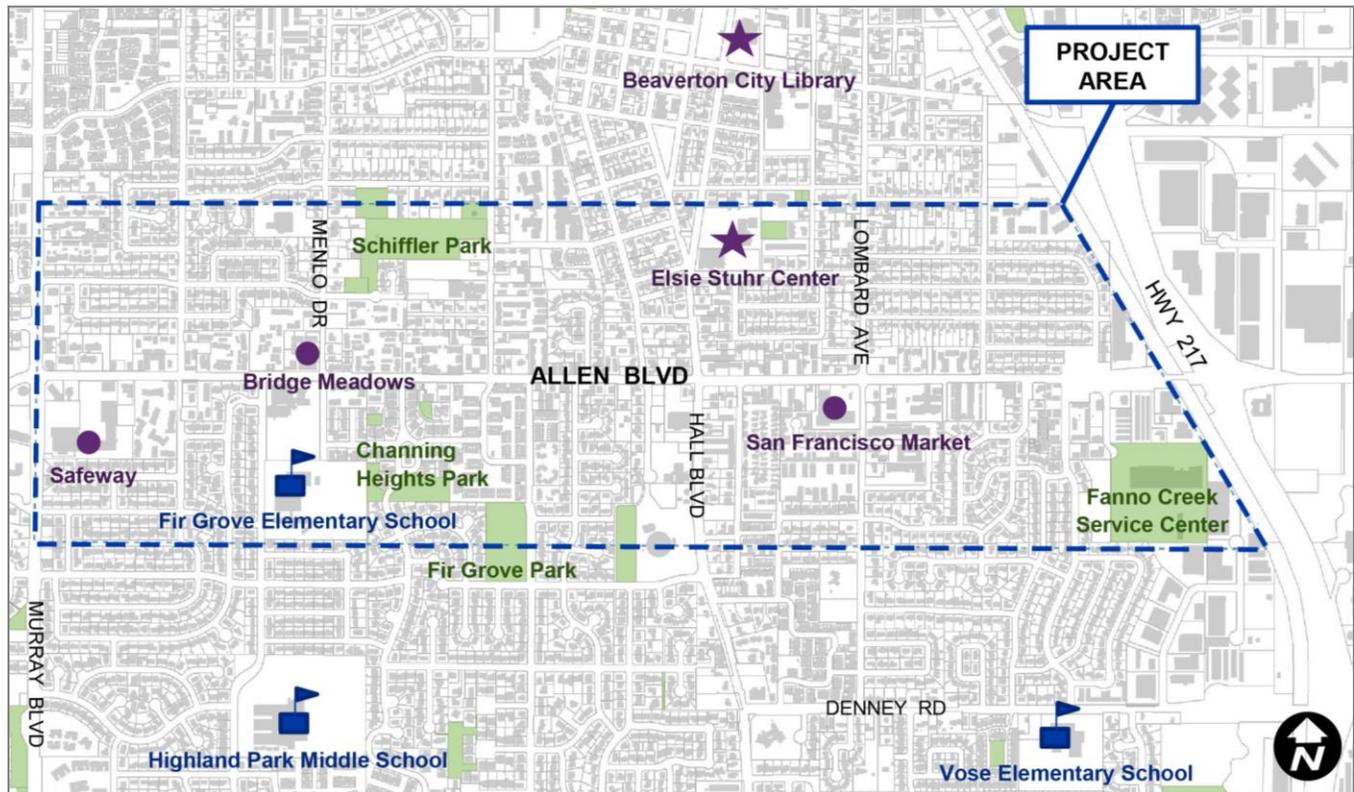
Project Description

The City of Beaverton is developing a district plan for Allen Boulevard (Figure 1), a culturally diverse neighborhood that is experiencing change. The Allen Boulevard District Plan will engage residents, businesses, property owners, community groups and city leaders to:

- Understand community priorities
- Develop goals for the district
- Identify actions and programs that will help meet community needs
- Select preferred solutions and prioritize actions

Figure 1. Allen Boulevard District

The district extends roughly one-quarter mile north and south of Allen Boulevard, between Highway 217 and Murray Boulevard.



Public Engagement

The Allen Boulevard District is home to significant number of low-income households, English language learners, immigrants and refugees. Given the diversity of residents and businesses in the area, the city hired a consultant to assist staff with multicultural engagement. Four community engagement liaisons (CELs) are working on the project, each representing a different linguistic or cultural community.

In February, the city launched the Allen Boulevard survey (online and hard copy). The purpose of the survey was to help better understand the community's priorities for the district. The survey closed at the end of March, by which time we received 1,048 responses, including 51 surveys from district business representatives. The CELs collected 187 surveys (in Spanish, Arabic, Korean and Chinese). Below is a summary of the Allen Boulevard District survey.

Approach: The survey was available online in English and Spanish, and hard copy surveys were translated into Spanish, Arabic, Korean and Chinese. To engage English language learners, communities of color, immigrants and refugees within the district, the city worked with four community engagement liaisons (CELs) to distribute hard copy surveys.

Survey Participants: The survey was open for 8 weeks and received 1,048 responses. A total of 861 surveys were submitted online (including 8 in Spanish), and 187 surveys were collected by community engagement liaisons. The majority of participants did not respond to the optional demographic survey questions. In general, hard copy survey participants were more diverse than online survey participants.

District Experience: When asked about how they experience the Allen Boulevard district, nearly half of the survey participants live within the district. Online survey participants were more likely to be homeowners, while CEL survey participants were more likely to be renters within the district. A majority of survey participants also drive through the district to get to another destination and/or visit shops, restaurants or services in the district.

District Assets: The district's proximity to downtown Beaverton was the top asset identified by survey participants. Other qualities that ranked highly include access to parks and open space, businesses and services, and cultural diversity of the district.

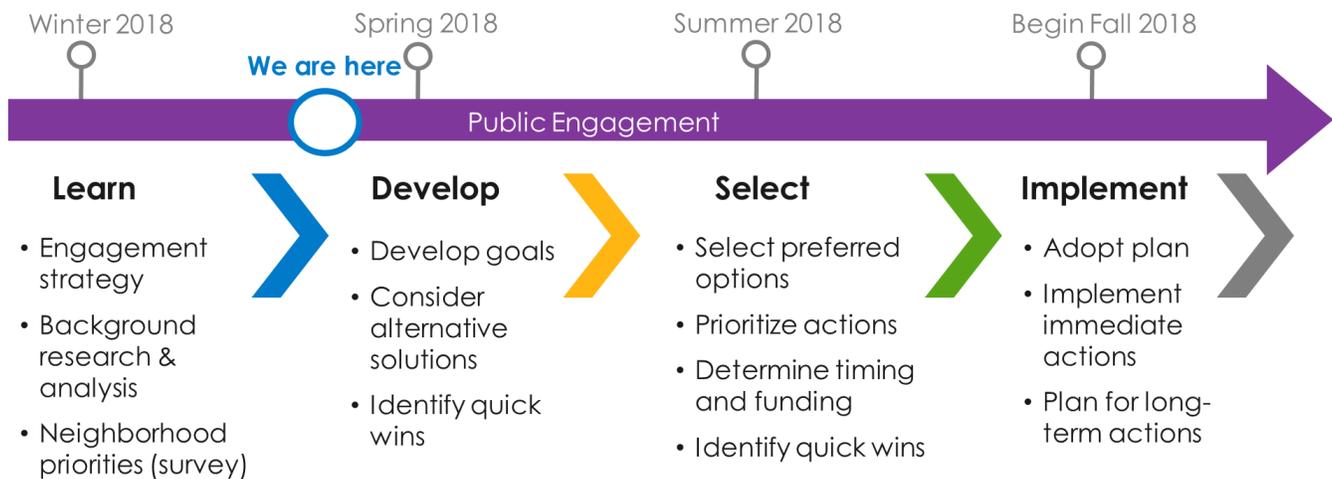
Top Concerns: When asked about their top concerns for the Allen Boulevard district, the majority of survey participants were concerned with neighborhood appearance. Other aspects of the district that are of relatively high concern include the pedestrian environment, quality of housing, neighborhood safety, and desire for different types of businesses and services.

When comparing online surveys to those collected by community engagement liaisons, some interesting differences emerge. Three-quarters of CEL survey participants identified lack of community gathering space and lack of recreational opportunities in the district as top concerns, while less than one-quarter of online survey respondents shared these concerns. Similarly, CEL survey participants were more likely to be concerned with the pedestrian environment along Allen Boulevard, quality of housing, housing affordability, and desire different types of businesses and services within the district.

Business Needs: A total of 51 survey participants identified themselves as business owners or managers within the district. When asked what actions or investments would help the needs of existing businesses in the district, the majority of business participants selected loans or grants for interior or exterior building improvements. Nearly half of the business participants expressed an interest in helping businesses form a group to work together.

Project Timeline

The Allen Boulevard project will be complete by fall of 2018. The city will involve community members during each project phase, shown in the project timeline below.



Draft Goals

Based on our analysis and community engagement efforts, we created a draft list of overarching district goals. The goals represent the desired future for the district. We will review and refine these goals during future engagement efforts. Establishing goals will help the community think of potential solutions and evaluate which solutions would most likely help achieve the goals, which will be useful as potential actions are prioritized.

- **District Appearance:** Improvements to existing buildings, storefronts and landscape areas contribute to an interesting and inviting district appearance. Residents, property owners, business owners, government and visitors all do their part to maintain and enhance district appearance.
- **Affordable Housing:** The district provides healthy housing options that meet the needs of all people, including people with lower incomes.
- **Safe Neighborhoods:** The district is a safe place to live in, visit, and travel within and through for all people.
- **Local Businesses:** District businesses meet the needs of nearby residents.
- **Transportation Connections:** The district offers safe, accessible transportation for all, including those walking, biking, taking transit and driving. People in the district have convenient access to jobs, goods, services, education and other opportunities.
- **Community Connections:** The district offers places for community members to gather, play, celebrate and connect with nature.
- **District Inclusion:** Current residents and businesses benefit from programs, investments and district change. The district remains a mixed-income area where a variety of social and cultural identities co-exist.