



Government of the District of Columbia
Vincent C. Gray, Mayor



Preliminary Report

Ward 8 Community Summit Washington, DC - July 9, 2011

On Saturday, July 9, 2011, throughout the day, nearly 600 Ward 8 residents, community leaders, District officials, and guests joined Mayor Vincent C. Gray, Councilmember Marion Barry, other Councilmembers, and Agency Directors at the Savoy and Thurgood Marshall Academy Sports and Learning Center. At this Ward 8 Community Summit, participants worked together to help shape the future of Ward 8.

Mayor Gray welcomed all community members. He stressed that there are many exciting developments taking place in the ward, and the community must play a role in shaping those developments. Councilmember Marion Barry also extended a warm welcome and emphasized the need for residents to work together during the summit to help the transformation of the ward.

The Ward 8 Community Summit had three main goals:

- Show the community the big picture of potential development and investment in Ward 8 and clarify connections across projects;
- Listen to the community's guidance on key policy issues in housing, retail, transportation, and jobs; and
- Support actions the community can take to shape the future of Ward 8 and connect with opportunities in and outside of the ward.

Throughout the meeting, participants used keypad polling to register their views and engaged in facilitated group discussions about the future of Ward 8 communities. The Ward 8 Community Summit utilized methodology from *AmericaSpeaks*, a nonprofit, non-partisan organization that engages citizens in the public decision-making that affects their lives.

This Preliminary Report is a summary of the priorities and preferences expressed by Ward 8 community members at the July 9 meeting. Following the summit, Mayor Vincent C. Gray and his administration will review feedback from the summit and report back to the community at a town hall meeting in mid September. Additional quarterly town meetings will be scheduled for the following year to ensure ongoing dialogue with citizens and the community. Everyone who registered for the summit will be notified once the meeting is scheduled.



Who Attended the Ward 8 Community Summit?

Town meeting demographics are compared with the demographics of Ward 8.

Gender	July 9	Census	Race/Ethnicity	July 9	Census
Female	54%	55%	Asian American	0%	0.3%
Male	46%	45%	Black or African American	86%	94%
			Latino	0%	1.7%
<u>Age</u>			White or Caucasian	6%	4%
15 - 19	5%	14%	More than one race	6%	0.9%
20 - 24	4%	11%	Other	2%	0%
25 - 34	14%	19%			
35 - 44	14%	18%	<u>Which statements apply to you?</u>	<u>July 9</u>	
45 - 54	21%	17%	I live in Ward 8	67%	
55 - 64	22%	13%	I work in Ward 8	33%	
65 and better	20%	9%	I worship in Ward 8	22%	
			I own a business in Ward 8	18%	
<u>Household Income</u>	<u>July 9</u>	<u>Census</u>	I shop in Ward 8	40%	
Under \$25,000	18%	41%	None apply	6%	
\$25,000 to \$50,000	22%	30%			
\$50,000 to \$75,000	21%	14%			
Over \$75,000	31%	14%			
Not sure	8%				

Who Attended the Ward 8 Community Summit? (Continued)

What is your housing situation?	July 9
Rent an apartment or home	30%
Own a single family detached home	21%
Own a single family attached home	33%
Own a condo or apartment	11%
Live in a group home	0%
Homeless / Live in a shelter	2%
Other	4%

I have lived in Ward 8 for	July 9
Less than 5 years	21%
Between 5 and 10 years	14%
Between 10 and 20 years	10%
Between 20 and 30 years	10%
More than 30 years	21%
I don't currently live in Ward 8	24%

Where do you go for household needs?	July 9
Ward 8	20%
Wards 7 & 8	12%
Other areas of DC	23%
Prince George's County, MD	26%
Other areas of Maryland	4%
Northern Virginia	16%

What People Love Most about Ward 8

Community members talked about what they most love about Ward 8. Top responses included:

- The "Spirit of the People" and sense of community 47%
- New and Potential Growth and Development Opportunities 65%
- Location in the City—close to the river, close to downtown, "suburbs in the city" 61%
- Historic and Unique – "Jewel in the Rough" 41%
- Green space views and parks (Anacostia Park, lots of trees) 34%
- "Friendly people" – "Folks ready for change" 27%

Concerns in Ward 8

Participants discussed what they are most concerned about in Ward 8. Responses included:

- Limited retail opportunities for consumers 28%
- Not enough opportunity for small businesses 14%
- Lack of jobs—not enough hiring of Ward 8 residents 47%
- Don't feel safe in Ward (high crime rate, not enough lighting) 37%
- Too much "unrealized potential" of residents 21%
- Lack of services for youth (education, recreation, and job training) 40%
- Poor perception of Ward in rest of the city and region 23%
- Gentrification might displace residents 24%
- Need more "live, work, play" opportunities 19%
- Improve quality of life issues (like loitering, litter) 13%



BUILDING: Managing Growth

Participants brainstormed about key benefits that will come to Ward 8 as a result of developments in the coming years.

Popular responses included:

- More JOBS!
- Better housing: more affordable, rise in home ownership
- Retail opportunities: easy to access, more diverse services (grocery, restaurants, drug stores, etc)
- Lower crime
- Decrease in abandoned and vacant properties
- Opportunities for small and local business owners—"they employ the most people"
- "Property values will rise. Demographics will change, and this is both a good and a bad thing."
- Improved educational opportunities for youth and adults. "Better schools," "More services."
- Improved quality of life: "People take pride in the ward."

Participants also offered their thoughts on how to ensure that benefits in Ward 8 will be linked to residents. The top responses were:

- "Enforce the law"—make sure employers comply with First Source and Community Benefits Agreement - 30%
- Provide incentives for employers to hire Ward 8 residents 30%
- Improve job access and job readiness – 47%
- Involve more residents in planning and development – 33%
- Better coordination among government, ANCs, nonprofits, community organizations, private sector, & residents – 36%

Community members discussed the Mayor's key principles that can be used to guide new physical development and growth in the years to come.

These principles are:

1. Preserve and enhance existing neighborhoods
2. Target new development to vacant sites
3. Develop regional centers for employment and business
4. Increase density at key sites
5. Link investments in places to investments in people

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being a very high level of agreement, what is your level of agreement with these principles as an effective way to guide future growth in Ward 8?

- Very low – 5 %
- Low – 6%
- Medium – 24%
- High – 32%
- Very high – 33%

PRESERVING: Housing and Retail

Community members proposed strategies that could be used to achieve balanced residential development that includes a diverse range of housing choices for existing and new residents. Here are the strategies that emerged:

- Develop and preserve affordable housing units – 31%
- Acquire and redevelop vacant properties – 37%
- Assist renters, prospective homebuyers, and homebuyers – 18%
- Prevent foreclosures whenever possible – 17%
- Expand outreach and use of DCHousingSeach.org, a tool to match residents with affordable housing – 6%
- Provide tax relief for people who need it most, like families and seniors – 15%
- Increase enforcement of codes for vacant properties and absentee landlords – 28%
- Increase education and outreach to residents about opportunities and existing housing programs – 29%

Community members developed strategies to ensure existing commercial areas and businesses thrive going forward. The popular strategies were:

- Improve transportation—better connections to get people to and from retail centers – 15%
- Support locally based businesses, both start-ups and existing – 36%
- Provide funding and tax incentives to new businesses, both federal and local – 23%
- Curb loitering by creating opportunities for young people and services for the homeless – 22%
- Make physical improvements to streets and storefronts (lighting, sidewalks, trees, murals, etc) – 35%
- Need to diversify existing mix of businesses – 19%
- Provide more parking spaces – 8%
- Limit the number of liquor stores in Anacostia/MLK – 21%

More and more, Ward 8 residents are getting around and traveling in different ways. At the Community Summit, participants discussed the types of connections that will have a positive impact on their day to day lives and the lives of their neighbors.

- Improve physical connections within the Ward – 15%
- Improve physical connections to the rest of the city – 8%
- Improve physical connections to the region – 15%
- A balance among all three – 62%

- Neighborhood quality of life and safety improvements – 40%
- Road improvements and traffic operations – 8%
- Streetscaping and public realm improvements – 13%
- Expansion of transit services to connect destinations within the Ward – 9%
- Expansion of transit services to connect the Ward to the rest of the city and region – 30%

- Complete planning and proceed with implementation – 27%
- Complete planning and delay implementation to address community and financial concerns – 42%
- Delay planning indefinitely – 26%
- No opinion – 6%

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