



ACCOUNTABILITY AGENDA

What is Unify South Dallas?

Unify South Dallas is a coalition of community-based organizations*. It exists to help community members ensure that new development projects benefit the people and businesses that call South Dallas home.

What is the purpose of the Accountability Agenda?

To help community members reach consensus on what they want for their neighborhoods, tell elected officials clearly what they want, and work effectively with them to make the desired changes a reality.

What is the Accountability Agenda based on?

Unify South Dallas hosted four community forums, focusing on transit-oriented development, housing, commercial development and major infrastructure (including Fair Park and S.M. Wright Freeway). The information gathered from developers and government agencies and the discussion around it formed the basis for the proposed Accountability Agenda.

What have we learned?

Information disclosed in the transit-oriented development forum	Why it matters
There is a lack of public knowledge about the process by which the city is formulating a strategy for transit-oriented development.	The lack of information has created suspicion and distrust, especially in the business community.
The city appears to have made little if any effort to make the Grand Park South TIF a success, but a transit-oriented development at Cullum and MLK would provide significant incremental taxes.	The TIF is designed to pump \$30 million into new streets, lighting, water and sewer connections and other public improvements; until private development begins, that money will not materialize.
The Real Estate Council Foundation has hired a national developer (McCormack, Baron, Salazar) to tell the City Council what it sees as the best opportunities for development in South Dallas. McCormack Baron Salazar is exploring at least two transit oriented developments in South Dallas in partnership with local developers.	These activities are likely to have a major impact on South Dallas, but no one has shared information about them with the community. As a result, rumors are flying and many in the community are suspicious and fearful.
Information disclosed in the housing forum	Why it matters
The Dallas Housing Authority demolished public housing in Turner Courts, without a guarantee of funding for replacement housing. DHA demolished Rhoads Terrace intending to sell the land to a private developer rather than create new public housing.	If no public or affordable housing replaces Turner Courts and Rhoads Terrace, low-income residents will be permanently displaced, and the neighborhood will be gentrified.

The city appears to have largely given up on nonprofit community development corporations.	For-profit developers do not have the same mission as nonprofit developers, to improve the lives of people already in the community.
Housing production under the city's Land Bank program has been minimal. Significant changes were made during the last legislative session that would shift the focus from housing to mixed-use development and from nonprofit to for-profit developers.	The land bank was supposed to create new affordable housing, built by nonprofit developers. Now it will be used to help for-profit developers produce more expensive mixed-use projects. That will tend to create more gentrification.
The city has not put forward any plan to relocate residents displaced and/or affected by construction of the Trinity Parkway.	Without a comprehensive relocation plan, this new freeway will do the same kind of damage that freeways did in the past.
Information disclosed in the commercial development forum	Why it matters
The city lacks a comprehensive strategy for creating jobs in South Dallas or preparing residents to fill the jobs that would be created by new development, for instance near transit stations.	South Dallas has very few jobs and virtually no high-wage jobs. Even if development brings new jobs, residents will not benefit unless they are trained to fill those jobs.
There appears to be no plan to help existing South Dallas businesses take advantage of any new commercial space that is built.	New space will come with higher rents; local businesses may need temporary assistance to afford the rents until their businesses grow.
Undesirable businesses such as bars and liquor stores continue to ruin many neighborhoods, despite past efforts to curb them.	New business will not locate in South Dallas as long as crime and vice flourish around bars and liquor stores.
Information disclosed in the major infrastructure forum	Why it matters
The city wants to move ahead quickly to bypass "dead man's curve" with a direct connection between Hwy. 175 and Interstate 45. Once that's done, S.M Wright can become a boulevard once again.	Replacing the freeway with a boulevard would reconnect the neighborhoods, reduce noise and pollution, and create very significant opportunities for new development, including jobs.
The Fair Park Trust Fund has not been used strategically, and the funding formula appears to be flawed.	South Dallas needs all the help it can get; the Trust Fund needs to capture a fair share of Fair Park revenue and spend it effectively.
There are ambitious plans for upgrading Fair Park, including making the Midway a year-round attraction, but little thought has been given to reconnecting the park to the surrounding neighborhoods.	Neither Fair Park nor the community can thrive as long as they remain isolated from each other.
It is not clear that anyone is analyzing how the DART green line will affect (ie, lessen) demand for parking at Fair Park.	If the State Fair needs fewer parking spaces, some parking lots could be used to build new housing to replace what was taken in the past.
It is possible that a charter school or a community college satellite campus could occupy a Fair Park building (for instance, the Science Place, when its new space downtown is completed).	These sorts of uses could make the Fair Park a place that directly benefits the community, rather than a place where outsiders come and spend money without interacting with residents or local businesses.

* The Unify South Dallas coalition includes IKOJA, Fair Park Merchants Assn., Hope Restoration, Frazier Berean Group, Carpenter's Point Senior Community, SouthFair Community Development Corp., African American Museum, Mill City Renaissance, Project Still I Rise, Clean South Dallas, Bertrand Neighborhood Assn., Charles Rice Neighborhood Assn., Forest Heights Neighborhood Development Corp., Frazier Revitalization Inc., Ex-line Neighborhood Assn., and the UT-Dallas Institute for Urban Policy Research.



PRIORITY AGENDA ITEMS

Agency Responsible	What We're Asking
Include the community as a full and trusted partner in creating economic growth	
McCormack Baron Salazar, TREC Foundation	Present a briefing in South Dallas for community members <u>no later than</u> the date on which the City Council's Economic Development Committee is briefed. The presentation should cover the process by which McCormack Baron Salazar was selected, the results of its analysis of economic development opportunities in South Dallas and basic information about any projects it has undertaken in South Dallas to date.
Dallas Housing Authority, City of Dallas	Put forward the strongest possible HOPE VI application to replace Turner Courts, including full participation by the city. Regardless of the outcome of that application, create a mixed-income neighborhood encompassing Turner Courts and Rhoads Terrace in which 60 percent of units are market rate and the remaining 40 percent are affordable, with the precise mix determined in consultation with the community.
City of Dallas	Account to community residents for the Land Bank's failure to produce more affordable housing. Describe the shift in emphasis from infill housing built by nonprofits to large, mixed-use projects built by commercial developers.
Use every available tool to create good jobs in South Dallas and prepare residents to succeed in those jobs	
City of Dallas	Adopt a policy requiring that any commercial development built in South Dallas with public incentives guarantee a percentage of the associated jobs to South Dallas residents. Require developers and companies with projects in South Dallas to brief community groups on the associated impacts, both positive (anticipated jobs) and negative (traffic, pollution). Partner with community groups in negotiating community benefits agreements to enhance positive impacts and mitigate negative ones.
City of Dallas	Take the lead in establishing a job readiness program to prepare South Dallas residents for the jobs that will be created new development, including the Inland Port. Fully leverage federal stimulus funds (for example, Pathways out of Poverty grants) designed to create jobs and improve job readiness in distressed communities.
State Fair of Texas, City of Dallas	Guarantee a percentage of all jobs related to any upgrades at Fair Park, including the planned Midway expansion, for South Dallas residents, with compliance monitored by the city.
Support redevelopment that heals wounds inflicted on the community by past development (such as freeways and parking lots)	
City of Dallas	Guarantee that all residents affected (not just displaced) by construction of the Trinity Parkway will be relocated to equal or better housing within the community (beginning with the proposed connector between Hwy 175 and I-45).
City of Dallas	Enact a moratorium on Specific Use Permits for new alcohol related businesses in South Dallas. Vigorously enforce the letter and intent of PD 595.
City of Dallas	Adjust the funding formula for the Fair Park Trust Fund so that it tracks with gross receipts for all activities at Fair Park. Engage a consultant to analyze how the fund can be used more strategically to promote broad economic growth.

ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS

Agency Responsible	What We're Asking
Include the community as a full and trusted partner in creating economic growth	
City of Dallas	Provide a list of the members of the Grand Park South TIF Board, and when their terms expire; set a deadline for filling any vacancies.
City of Dallas	Show the community what is allowable under current zoning within a 1-mile radius of all South Dallas DART stations. Describe any design guidelines in place in those areas.
City of Dallas	Quantify the infrastructure investments necessary to support transit oriented development in South Dallas.
Dallas Housing Authority	Present a strategy for replacing Turner Courts with new affordable units if the HOPE VI application fails.
City of Dallas	Amend the appointment process for boards and commissions to deal with the problem of lingering vacancies – for instance, by stipulating that if a Council member fails to nominate a person to fill a vacant seat within three months, an open application period will ensue, after which the Council will choose a candidate from among those who submit applications.
Support redevelopment that heals wounds inflicted on the community by past development (such as freeways and parking lots)	
City of Dallas	Seek a planning grant for an economic development plan that encompasses both Fair Park and the surrounding neighborhoods.
TREC Foundation	Fund a study by a national consultant to identify which Fair Park assets are significantly underutilized, including both structures and parking facilities. Study should include an analysis of the DART Green Line's impact on demand for parking.
City of Dallas	Issue a request for proposals for repurposing of vacant or underutilized Fair Park assets with the objective of adopting new uses that maximize the park's benefits to the adjacent neighborhoods as well as the city's tax base.
City of Dallas	Make the area bounded by South Lamar, MLK, Grand and I-45 a target area for land banking.
City of Dallas	Create a mechanism to ensure that a percentage of the spaces in new, publically supported commercial projects are affordable for locally owned businesses during an initial adjustment period of 2-3 years.
City of Dallas	Adopt the South Dallas Action plan elements related to S.M. Wright Freeway (4 lanes, 35 mph, full reconnection of cross streets) and South Lamar (relocation plan for heavy industries and alcohol related businesses).
City of Dallas	Establish a task force to recommend steps to create a community land trust along S.M. Wright and negotiate with the state to convey all state-owned land adjacent to the new thoroughfare into the trust.