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Capitol Hill United Neighborhoods Announces Results of Community Feedback for Tears-McFarlane House and Property

Denver neighborhood organization looks to deliver 50-year vision shaped by history, city leaders, and neighbors

DENVER, CO—Capitol Hill United Neighborhoods (CHUN), Denver’s largest and longest-running registered neighborhood organizations (RNO), has released the results of neighborhood surveys that will be used to determine the future of the organization’s historic headquarters.

“We began this work in the Fall of 2017 with outreach to the community, including conducting a series of focus groups,” said Bill DeMaio. DeMaio, an architect and member of CHUN’s executive committee continued, “participants in these focus groups helped formulate a set of concepts that would help CHUN preserve the property, invigorate our nonprofit’s programming, and help create a funding stream for CHUN’s future operations and community support.”

In 2017, CHUN engaged City Street Investors—responsible for transforming historically significant jewels, like Denver’s Union Station—to determine neighborhood perspectives and identify potential uses for the property. Collectively the two organizations have initiated the necessary due diligence required for a project like restoring and preserving a 120-year-old property. Since completing the focus group, additional outreach included surveys and open houses.

Travis Leiker, CHUN’s board president said, “Staff and volunteers conducted hundreds of surveys among Cheesman Park-goers at various points during the months of May and June.” He continued, “Since the early-1970s, city leaders and neighbors have always envisioned a vibrant community space at the Tears-McFarlane property. The survey participants have provided helpful feedback on how best to move forward.” Most respondents were unaware

that the property was intended to serve as a community asset. More than 80% of respondents indicated that they live within the CHUN boundaries and 60% stated that they visit the park on a frequent basis.

Currently the property consists of the historic Tears-McFarlane house which is primarily utilized as commercial office space and a non-historic annex building which is used for meetings and events. Based on community input, the current uses are expected to continue, and additional uses and amenities will be added.

Survey respondents indicated the most desirable uses for the property are local coffee house, a small, intimate wine bar, and opportunities for neighborhood enrichment. Similarly, when asked which amenities survey respondents would use most frequently, the three most popular choices were a local coffee house, educational and enrichment opportunities, and a beer garden.

Community feedback continues to be CHUN's number one priority. In June, CHUN held two open houses and met with Cheesman Park advocates (Friends of Cheesman Park and the Cheesman Park Advocacy Group) to gather their thoughts and perspectives before moving forward with an eventual rezoning effort. Both City Street Investors and CHUN aim to hold another open house in the early fall, with additional surveys to be conducted on an ongoing basis until that time. "City Street is thrilled to partner with a strong neighborhood group like CHUN, and we are eager to deliver a vibrant community space neighbors and park advocates helped co-create," said Pat McHenry with City Street Investors.

Those interested in learning more about the next phase of the initiative should call 303.830.1651 or email chun@chundenver.org.

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Capitol Hill United Neighborhoods (CHUN) is a registered neighborhood organization and a Colorado nonprofit corporation. Founded in 1969, CHUN has evolved into one of Denver's oldest, largest, and most influential neighborhood organizations. The organization's mission is *Preserving the Past, Improving the Present, and Planning for the Future* of Capitol Hill and Denver.

The historic **Tears-McFarlane Mansion** was built in the 1890s and is recognized as an architectural jewel in Capitol Hill. The property, located just north of Cheesman Park, has been the home to CHUN since 2005. CHUN donates rental space to nonprofits and neighborhood organizations serving greater Capitol Hill, including the East Central Planning Committee, Cheesman Park Advisory Group, Denver Urban Ministries, Warren Village, and many others.

CHUN also utilizes the building for many civic activities and a multitude of community meetings that engage neighbors so that they may have a voice in shaping city policy around important neighborhood topics such as [zoning](#), [land use](#), transportation, [historic preservation](#), public safety, housing and homelessness. Additionally, several tenants have office space located in the Tears-McFarlane house.



Source: Capitol Hill United Neighborhoods



Source: History Colorado