

NEIGHBORHOOD FIGHTBACK PLAN PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON RANDOM SAMPLE SURVEY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A committee was formed to advise the Bel Air Neighborhood Association board on directing the spending of infrastructure money remaining in the Neighborhood Fightback Grant. The committee discussed a list of possible projects without specific recommendations. The long list was re-written into seven general categories and a random sample neighborhood survey was done to rank the short list. The result was that the neighborhood most strongly wants improved access to the Grand Canal at 17th and 18th avenues with the addition of bridges over the user ditch and sidewalks approaching the bridges. Tied for second place were beautification of the canal access areas, discouragement of non-resident use of alleys, and completion of unfinished neighborhood sidewalks. A process should be started to plan and complete the canal access and beautification improvements.

THE PROBLEM

The Bel Air Neighborhood was a past recipient of a Neighborhood Fightback Grant. While most of the money was spent, there is \$13,000 remaining earmarked for infrastructure that has not been channeled into projects. The Bel Air Neighborhood Association Board formed a committee to bring the Neighborhood Fightback Plan up to date and to make project recommendations for the remaining funds. The committee gathered existing recommendations and added some of their own. However, prioritizing the list incorporating committee, board, or even general meeting input may not have reflected the neighborhood's opinions. So the list was condensed into seven categories and a random sample neighborhood survey undertaken.

THE SURVEY

The seven categories were formatted into positive statements as follows:

- 1) **IMPROVE CANAL ACCESS** by adding bridges across, or tiling a path across the user irrigation ditch. Add sidewalks from the street to the ditch crossings.
- 2) Install benches, welcoming/warning information, and **BEAUTIFY CANAL ACCESS** points to create neighborhood gathering spots.
- 3) **MAKE ALLEYS LESS FRIENDLY** to non-resident users by adding warning signs, fake cameras, or one way restrictions.
- 4) **REMOVE SPEED HUMPS** to improve emergency vehicle access and return the neighborhood traffic to its traditional state.
- 5) **COMPLETE** the sections of **MISSING SIDEWALK** in our neighborhood.

- 6) **INSTALL ADDITIONAL STREETLIGHTS** beyond the 10 that are now being installed.
- 7) **REFUND** the remaining \$13,000 to the city for use in more needy neighborhoods.

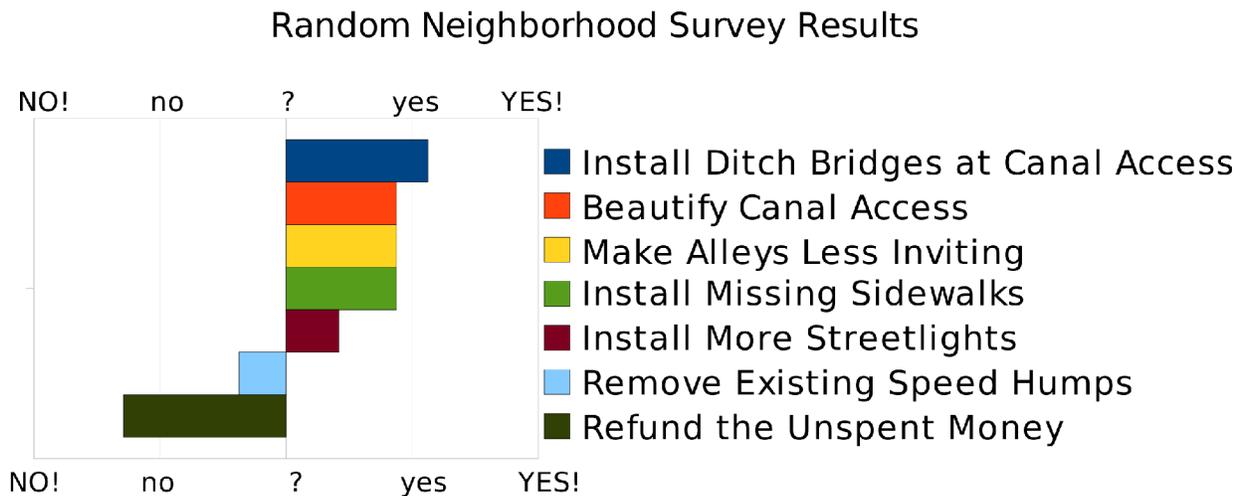
A parcel map of the neighborhood was consulted and 374 addresses collected, tabulated and randomized. The first 80 (randomized) addresses were chosen as interview sites. All 80 of these addresses were visited the week of October 10. The following considerations were made:

- Businesses were not surveyed.
- Apartment complex: the first apartment that appeared to be furnished was chosen.
- No answer: the location was skipped and not re-tried later.
- Refusal for any reason: the location was skipped and not re-tried later.
- The first adult to answer the door was surveyed.
- Each contact was asked their opinion on the importance of spending the remaining Fightback money on each of the survey items. Their responses were limited to strongly yes, yes, no, strongly no, and don't care.

Out of the 80 random addresses visited, 25 surveys were completed.

THE RESULTS

As a picture:



By the numbers:

RANK	STD DEV	DESCRIPTION
1.13	0.88	Install Ditch Bridges at Canal Access
0.88	0.93	Beautify Canal Access
0.88	0.97	Make Alleys Less Inviting
0.88	0.97	Install Missing Sidewalks
0.42	1.35	Install More Streetlights
-0.38	1.38	Remove Existing Speed Humps
-1.29	0.98	Refund the Unspent Money

CONCLUSIONS

The survey demonstrated that the neighborhood most prefers spending the remaining fightback money on improving Grand Canal access with the addition of bridges (or tiling) and approaching pathways. This survey item also had the lowest standard deviation implying that it may have the lowest level of controversy.

While the next three items have the same average score, beautifying the canal access has the lowest standard deviation of the three which identifies it as the best next choice for channeling the remaining Fightback money after improving the canal access.

Installing more street lights had a positive response, but it had much lower support than the first four items. The large standard deviation is an indication that even if money were available for this, more streetlight installations might be divisive and should be avoided in favor of the higher ranked items.

While some folks would like to see the speed humps removed, most wouldn't. The standard deviation flags this item as something of a "hot potato" as well.

Not so many folks thought that giving the money back was a good plan. The low standard deviation implies that even those who wanted to return the money weren't very enthusiastic about it.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions above, a design stage should immediately be entered with the City on choosing the canal access improvements considering cost, convenience, safety, and durability. The end result of that effort should be a plan or design that the Bel Air Neighborhood Association board can approve and the City can commit to.

It is likely that there will be money left over from the canal access modifications for beautification.

Since there will be some excavation necessary for the first project, it is important that the beautification project design be ready quickly as well to minimize the installation cost and interference.

There may be additional funds available after the first two projects, but since the next items are unrelated, it could be best to defer any planning effort at this time.