MONTBELLO ORGANIZING COMMITTEE
2017 – 2020 STRATEGIC PLAN

In 2017, the MOC Leadership Council approved the following goals, objectives, and strategies as priorities for the next three years. These include:

GOAL 1. STRATEGICALLY ADDRESS COMMUNITY-WIDE ISSUES AND CONCERNS THROUGH A VARIETY OF PROGRAMMATIC INITIATIVES.

Objective 1.1 Utilize a Task Team Model to involve residents, stakeholders, and staff in planning and implementation of program initiatives.

Strategies:

1. Annually, the Leadership Council in conjunction with Task Teams will identify issue areas and establish goals and objectives to be addressed by continuing and new Task Teams.
2. Task Teams will be chaired or co-chaired by a Leadership Council team member or someone approved by the Leadership Council to provide support, encouragement, and technical assistance as needed. Task Team Leaders are encouraged to attend at least 4 Council meetings each year.
3. Every Task Team must include at least one Leadership Council member.
4. Task Teams will make recommendations to the Leadership Council who in turn will approve, modify, or deny recommended actions.
5. Task Team leaders may be empowered to follow through with approved plans and will report monthly (either in person or electronically as may be determined) on the status of those plans and revised recommendations. Plans and recommendations will be formulated in collaboration with the Executive Director and MOC Council chairperson.
6. At least once each year, the Task Team and the Leadership Council will meet to assess and evaluate progress made toward identified goals and objectives and determine directions for the next year.
7. Develop and implement an intentional recruitment strategy to increase participation of under-represented groups and to support the leadership development among participants.

STATUS
Since 2017, MOC has worked with three Task Teams – Retail Development, Transportation, and Community Engagement.

Retail Development initially pursued the question of incentivizing a national grocer to open a store in Montbello. In early 2017, Retail Development worked with a consulting firm to conduct a Market Analysis to inform the effort to get a grocery-store. The Market Analysis was instrumental in securing additional grant funds for FreshLo from Kresge Foundation and the Colorado Health Foundation. The FreshLo Initiative is, essentially, a community economic development effort and addresses the grocery-store need as well as other retail issues.
**Transportation Task Team (T3)** began its work initially to address the closure of the RTD Park and Ride and a reduction in bus services in and out of the community. T3 worked diligently to help residents find out about these changes and organized residents to reduce the number of changes and to add a new route. In 2017, MOC was selected to participate on Mile High Connects and regional organization that addresses cross-cutting and metro-wide issues such as transit, housing, food security, etc. During that time MOC has worked on several cross-cutting issues including workforce training, advocating for affordable fares, use of RTD abandoned property, etc. T3 also sponsored 2 Job Fairs in 2017.

**Community Engagement** was charged with determining directions in which MOC would be involved at varying levels in addressing various issues identified by the community through focus groups, community meetings, and surveys. MOC took on the challenge of continuing the involvement of the whole community (following the Montbello 50th Anniversary Celebration) and worked with many community partners to develop and implement Montbello Alive! in 2017 and 2018. The location of Montbello Alive! community celebration was moved to the Montbello Campus and expanded to include a 5K Run and 1Mile Fun Walk.

**FreshLo Initiative** was developed and launched between 2017 and 2019. The purpose of the FreshLo Initiative is to create places in the community that promote cultural heritage, artistic expression, animate public and private spaces, rejuvenate structures and streetscapes, improve local business viability and public safety, and bring diverse peoples together. Collectively, these places will improve access to healthy, affordable food for all residents, but especially within low-income communities, and build social cohesion and increase physical activity within a vibrant cultural context. In 2018, the Retail Development Task Team morphed into the FreshLo Project Team which meets weekly, the FreshLo Partners Team which meets bimonthly, and the FreshLo Stakeholders group which meets two times per year.

**Objective 1.2** Implement a broad-based communication platform that includes print media, social media, and other formats to address outreach and in-reach in Montbello.

**Strategies:**

1. Regularly publish the Montbello Urban Spectrum Edition (MUSE) and disseminate the newspaper at identified locations, door-to-door delivery, and through on-line distribution.
2. Increase publication to a monthly and double distribution reach.
3. Utilize a MUSE advisory committee to identify relevant topics to be included in the newspaper and engage residents in contributing to the paper.
4. Maintain MOC website and Facebook page regularly and add other social media formats as appropriate.
5. Make all communication components available in Spanish.
STATUS

The MUSE was launched in August 2016 and since then 15 issues have been published and distributed. Initially, 2500 papers with 20 pages of copy were printed. In 2017, that number was increased to 3000 and mid 2017 the paper began to be distributed online as well. Papers are currently distributed through churches, schools, small businesses, and nonprofit organizations. Beginning in 2019, approximately 2000 papers are delivered to households. Online distribution reaches on average 8000+ social media pages. The paper is published in English and Spanish is now 24 pages in length.

MOC maintains a Facebook Page with almost 2000 followers. The Facebook page posts relevant announcements of events, activities, and happenings within the community and is updated several times each week.

Objective 1.3 Partner and collaborate with other civic, community, and social organizations and stakeholders to implement programmatic initiatives.

Strategies:

1. Ensure that MOC Leadership Council representatives and/or MOC staff participate on every local, state, or national planning effort that impacts Montbello.
2. Continue working with OED, Mayor’s office, City Council, and grocers to attract and implement one or more full service grocery stores.
3. Explore and, implement if feasible, the concept of a business development/chamber of commerce organization for Montbello.
4. Implement the FreshLo plan to build a cultural hub to promote cultural expression, social cohesion, entrepreneurship, and healthy eating.
5. Work with Denver Sustainable Food Council to develop a Montbello implementation response to the Denver Food Plan.
6. Work with RTD and City Council members to re-vision and re-develop the currently defunct Montbello Park and Ride.
7. Work with city agencies, and nonprofit organizations to activate public infrastructure to encourage increased physical activity among residents.
8. Pursue appointments and elected positions on all decision-making boards, councils, and commissions that make decisions regarding Montbello, including but not limited to FNE Education Commission, RTD Board, City Council, Mile High Connects, etc.
STATUS

MOC staff and board members participated and continue to participate in many local and state efforts including but not limited to: Denver BluePrint and DenverRight; City’s Far Northeast Planning Initiative; Blueprint to end Hunger in Colorado; DPS Far Northeast Education Commission; Walk Denver; Mile High Connects; Steps To Success, Denver Sustainable Food Policy Council, Councilwoman Gilmore’s District 11 Leadership Council, Montbello Farm-School Network; WorkForce Center at Community College of Denver, Kresge FreshLo Cohort.

Worked with Academy 360, Families Forward, Colorado Black Arts Movement, Steps To Success, and CLLARO to organize the Montbello Collaborative to address the need for services to support family development.

In 2018, MOC board chair ran for RTD Representative for District B which includes Montbello. In 2019, two MOC board members are running for City Council positions.

GOAL 2. IMPLEMENT MECHANISMS TO SUPPORT DIVERSE EMERGING LEADERS FROM WITHIN THE COMMUNITY AS THEY DEVELOP THE CAPACITY TO INFLUENCE DECISIONS THAT BENEFIT THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

Objective 2.1 Create a leadership development model that identifies potential new leaders with influence at the “grassroots” and “grasstops” levels.

Strategies:

1. Review effective strategies and best practices in leadership development.
2. Determine an appropriate leadership development model that reflects MOC values and goals.
3. Train and support MOC staff in developing and effectively utilizing leadership skills at multiple levels of influence.
4. Incorporate multi-level intentional efforts to recruit leaders from diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural constituency groups.
5. Collaborate with existing leadership programs to identify potential new leaders to MOC leadership.
6. Develop a recognition of leaders in MOC.
7. Adapt and develop leadership skills of new leaders and engage them in community change work in Montbello.
**STATUS**

MOC’s first Executive Director received community organizing technical assistance for the first several months of starting the position and participated in a support seminar for Executive Directors of Color in 2017. Hosted a 6-week Leadership and Community Organizing class for 6 community residents in 2018. In 2019, MOC staff taught 2 workshops on Grantwriting for Nonprofits and provided technical assistance to residents interested in starting their own nonprofit. A Community Engagement Specialist was hired at the end of 2018 and is providing consultation and technical assistance to two emerging leadership groups in the community.

In 2017, MOC convened a group of schools and other organizations concerned with food security in the community. From this effort the Farm-School Network was formed and is implementing a strategy in the community to address food access issues. Collectively, this Network is growing and distributing 10,000 pounds of food to families who need food. Some of the members have been able to secure grant funds to support their efforts, hire residents to work in the gardens, and all are now teaching nutrition and better eating habits. Almost 3000 students are being reached through the Network. Several youth leaders have emerged and started after school clubs to address food insecurity.

In 2019, the MUSE called for nominations of residents who lead on behalf of others and subsequently wrote profiles of the five of the nominees for the March/April issue.

**Objective 2.2** Utilize canvassing and other community organizing techniques to engage and build relationships with residents in Montbello activities for building leadership capacities within the community.

**Strategies:**

1. Recruit and train canvassers from within the community to communicate with residents on a wide variety of subjects
2. Work with other leadership training organizations to identify potential community members to work with MOC to affect change.
3. Conduct focus groups to engage small groups of individuals with similar demographics and interests to dialogue with MOC members about their concerns and hopes for the neighborhood.
4. Host regular community meetings to inform and engage residents in pertinent issue areas and to dialogue with community leaders around priorities, policies, and processes.
STATUS

In 2017, canvassers were hired and trained to go door-to-door to inform residents regarding job fairs and workforce training. In 2018 a crew of 10 youth and young adult canvassers were hired to knock on 1500 doors to conduct a survey of residents’ perceptions about issues and concerns in the neighborhood. A summary of the results was published in the MUSE and several community organizations are using the information to inform their programs.

In 2018, MOC convened 118 stakeholders to participate in a week-long panel process conducted by the Urban Land Institute to analyze the feasibility of the Montbello FreshLo Plan. Their feedback helped to expand and verify the original FreshLo Plan.

In 2017, MOC facilitated parental participation in several school-based focus groups conducted by DPS in the Montbello community. In 2018 MOC recruited 45 families to participate in parent focus groups conducted by RootED. The topic of the discussion revolved around status of education in Montbello.

Task teams met monthly in 2017 and 2018.

**Goal 3.** Strengthen and expand the infrastructure of the organization to have the capacity to carry out the vision, mission, and programmatic objectives.

**Objective 3.1** Expand the MOC Leadership Council within the limits of the Bylaws to ensure that the governance structure is broad-based, has a shared vision, is representative of the community, and that representatives have the skills, knowledge, backgrounds, experiences (both life and professional), and networks necessary to ensure MOC’s success.

**Strategies:**
1. Implement a process of board recruitment that includes stakeholders from within and outside the Montbello Community who will be involved at a high level of personal involvement and commitment.
2. The majority of the MOC Leadership Council will be comprised of residents who reside in the neighborhood.
3. Utilize the Task Team structure to address initiatives identified by the Leadership Council.
4. Set a committee structure and process by which the governance and accountability functions of the board is managed.
5. Conduct a board orientation for each new Leadership Council Member.
6. Assess and evaluate the functioning and progress of the Leadership Council on a yearly basis.
7. Host an annual meeting each year that is open to the community.
8. Develop and approve the yearly operating budget.
Objective 3.2 Employ, train, and support a high-quality staff with the expertise to manage the mission, vision, and work of MOC.

Strategies:

1. Hire, train, and support an executive director.
2. Annually, evaluate the executive director’s performance.
3. Empower the executive director to identify staff needs and hire positions as appropriate to carry out the work of MOC.
4. Develop policies and procedures that support the growth and development of the staff.

STATUS

MOC has not overall increased the number of board members since 2017. Several initial board members left the board for a variety of reasons and those seats were replaced and a more racially-balanced board has been achieved.

In February 2017, an Executive Director was hired and an existing board member left the board in order to take on a role as a paid consultant to manage the FreshLo project funded by Kresge Foundation and the Colorado Health Foundation. A part-time bookkeeper was retained to track expenditures, enter financial data, write checks, and work with a CPA to ensure employee taxes were paid properly.

In May 2018, the Executive Director resigned and the Freshlo Project Director was appointed as the Interim ED while continuing to manage the FreshLo grants. In December 2018 the acting ED was appointed to the position of Executive Director. Two part-time staff were hired in December – Community Engagement Specialist and FreshLo Walkable Loop Manager. The bookkeeper position has continued to the present.

Objective 3.3 Develop and implement systems of accountability and monitoring of MOC’s financial functions.

Strategies:

1. On a yearly basis initiate a strategic planning retreat to establish goals and objectives, assess performance, evaluate the programs and the overall organization.
2. Provide monthly financial statements to the MOC Leadership Council that includes an income/expense statement, balance sheet, and cash-flow.
3. File the IRS 1023 form so that MOC has its own 501(c)3 tax exempt status.
4. File all required annual forms including the IRS 990 and employment documents.
5. Conduct a yearly unaudited financial review until annual expenses reach approximately $400,000 and then conduct an independent, external financial audit.
6. On a quarterly basis, review all financial projections, program accomplishments, infrastructure needs and issues.
7. Prepare and disseminate an annual report highlighting the programmatic accomplishments, progress toward outcomes, and financial status.

**STATUS**

The last strategic planning retreat was held in 2016 and resulted in the development and board approval of the 2017 – 2020 Strategic Plan. In 2018, monthly financial statements including an income/expense statement, balance sheet, budget to actual report, and cash flow accounting were provided to board members at each monthly meeting.

In December 2017, MOC filed the IRS Form 1023 to request determination as a 501c3 organization. MOC received notification in January 2018 that it was determined to be a 501c3 effective back to September, 2015.

Financial policies and procedures were developed and approved by the board in late 2017. A Finance and Fundraising committee was formed at the same time and meets approximately monthly to oversee the financial reporting and to address fundraising needs.

In February 2018 MOC convened a stakeholders’ meeting which served as the annual meeting. An annual report was presented to the participants.

**Objective 3.4** Establish and implement financial and fundraising needs of the organization and diversify revenue streams in order to sustain the organization.

**Strategies:**

1. Develop a three-year financial resource plan that is approved by the Leadership Council.
2. On a yearly basis, develop a fund development plan to support the operational and programmatic plans.
3. Define the roles and expectations of the Leadership Council in terms of fundraising and resource development efforts.
4. Promote the organization to key funders and stakeholders that support and “feed into” resource development efforts.
5. Explore various MOC membership models that might provide a sustaining revenue source for the organization.
6. Ensure that MOC has a three-month reserve fund in the bank or in liquid assets.

GOAL 4. RECRUIT INDIVIDUALS FROM UNDER-REPRESENTED MINORITY GROUPS (I.E. LATINOS, YOUTH, ELDERS, ETC.) TO PARTICIPATE AT ALL LEVELS OF MOC’S WORK WITHIN THE COMMUNITY.

STATUS

The MOC board has achieved a more equitably balanced representation in its membership. The staff is racially balanced and representative of the community. In summer, 2018 MOC staff met with several leaders from the Latino community to begin a dialogue about making MOC more inclusive. As a result of those discussions, all MOC community and board meetings now include dual translation and Latino representation at those meetings has expanded significantly. Many new programmatic partnerships have been forming and MOC has included new partners in funding proposals that contribute resources to all partners working together on specific issues.

In Summer 2018 six youth were hired to help with MOC’s FreshLo Summer Farmer’s Market. In fall 2018 ten youth and young adults were hired to canvas the neighborhood in English and Spanish.