

Building 4J's Future

Public Input: Wall Comments

Community Forum on Sept. 27, 2012

Chávez Elementary School (Churchill Region)

Forum participants had an opportunity to provide input by writing on wall charts. There were six areas: The consultant's starter recommendations for the Churchill, North, Sheldon and South regions; comments on prioritizing goals; and "other comments." Participants also could submit comments written on a paper form.

*The comment chart for each school region was divided into three sections: + - OTHER
Comments have been transcribed in the section they were written in, regardless of content.*

Churchill Region

+ POSITIVE

- Put a charter school at Crest *[the former Crest Drive Elementary School]*

- NEGATIVE

- What about Family School?!? The proposed ATA/Asian focus leaves no room for this successful program.

OTHER

[No comments]

North Region

+ POSITIVE

- Better school climate for all kids and teachers
- Better teacher collaboration that will impact student learning and graduation rates
- Equity

- NEGATIVE

[No comments]

OTHER

- Partner with River Road Parks & Recreation District (outside of city limits but voter/citizen supported with bonding authority). Its center is 1 block from Kelly MS and the new Howard. The Y has its hands full with rebuilding in South region and new Y out west next to Meadowview in Bethel region.

Sheldon Region

[No comments]

South Region

+ POSITIVE

- Important to listen to Kevin Boling's perspective on the value of great educational spaces. Kids deserve them — whether in renovated or new buildings. *[Kevin Boling, the Bertha Holt Elementary School principal, spoke about why better school buildings matter.]*
- Build Roosevelt at Roosevelt.
- Edison and Camas are strong neighborhood anchors to which students walk and bike, promoting student, parent and community health. A school sited only at Camas or the Roosevelt site would decrease student safety and health and would impose a variety of external costs on all residents and businesses in the South region.
- We support a new Roosevelt on its current site
- Option 1 [build a new Roosevelt Middle School on the Civic Stadium site]: What else are we going to do with this site? No good options have come forward that have been funded.
- How much money will numerous safety measures at busy streets cost? (overpasses, extra safe crosswalks, traffic control devices and employees, etc.)?

- NEGATIVE

- Keep Edison and Camas Ridge as 2 schools
- These school decisions are important land use and community issues – transportation and sustainability issues should be part of the equation. Edison is a successful school, integrated into the neighborhood. Kids walk and bike. There is no parking lot. *[Secondary comment: This makes it sustainable, safer, and healthier!]* Renovation should be considered as an option.

- Combining Edison and Camas puts us at over 750 students. The majority of research supports smaller schools of under 400 (higher academic achievement, etc.)
- Consider renovating Edison. We already have \$900,000 approved by voters in the 2011 bond measure for capital improvements.
- Building a beautiful building that in its creation destroys a neighborhood is not a win for anyone. *[Secondary comment: Yes!]*
- Edison educated the greatest generation and continues to provide educational excellence. There is nothing wrong with the fundamentals of this building. Renovate. Look at examples in other communities that prize their historic schools and invest in them.
- The first goal should not combine “replace” or “renovate” — these are very separate issues
- Take a very serious look at the “renovation” option for elementaries in this region — likely to stimulate much more excitement/support among its constituents!
- Respect for the built historical structures important. Civic Stadium demolition would be met with lots of resistance.

OTHER

- 4J and Save Civic Stadium — keep as community sports field. CS [*Civic Stadium*] = community asset able to generate employment. Keep assets in community.
- South region voters support and vote for 4J funding, if the proposals make sense.
- Re-think assumptions about schools that are based on suburban, driving-based models, and instead envision the possibilities of a modernized, renovated urban-style school — embracing the small lot, limited parking (encouraging walking/biking), and building/adding vertically. At least consider other options... this would actually embrace cutting-edge “new urbanist” thinking. *[Secondary comment: Yes!]* Successful communities do not make decisions in “silos.” I would like 4J to consider the impacts their decisions have on factors technically outside their purview (this is hard but essential for Eugene’s overall wellbeing!). Our community is a system and decisions by one body can have dramatic positive or negative effects on another. City, 4J, UO, neighborhood collaboration.
- Take your time in this region, please!! Explore alternative options for Camas Ridge and Edison until a solution that can be supported by the school communities/neighborhoods can be reached. Perhaps South region’s needs can be addressed in 2 phases: Roosevelt this time, elementaries in the next bond?...
- I like the idea presented here at Chávez — bigger sized buildings to accommodate a larger student population, access to technology, clean greener environments, smaller classroom (student size), and the ability to use funds to help more students under one roof to have access to these and more. Also the immersion education programs in Eugene are extremely important to us as well (side note here!)

Prioritizing Goals: What's most important to you?

- Maintaining and enhancing neighborhood schools for their educational and community assets
- Renovation before replacement
- Urban neighborhoods don't need suburban school designs (renovation can meet the needs of all kids in attractive buildings)
- Maintain neighborhood elementary schools that can be safely walked or biked to
- Keep as many smaller neighborhood schools as possible
- Be cautious about embracing current models for facilities — ideas change, often in a cyclical way
- These goal jars are poorly framed if you are interested in gathering people's real priorities as opposed to imposing your predetermined outcomes. You can do better.

Other Comments/Questions

- Show me where payback is? What does it cost to renovate vs. build new. Doesn't compute. Re-building is too expensive. Edison and Camas Ridge.
- Please bring a map of the district with the school catchment areas next time.
- Build new in the regions that want that. Renovate and upgrade in cases where residents value their existing programs, locations, and school/neighborhood relationships.
- One of 4J's strongest assets has always been educational diversity — variety of choices to meet varying priorities/styles of education for all residents. It's one of the things that has contributed to private school competition being a minor factor in our community. What I hear tonight is a cookie-cutter approach. I fear that this will, in the long run, erode support for public education in this community.
- The goal selections only have the option of "replace or renovate." I will have a hard time correctly prioritizing unless these are separated. *[Secondary comments: Yes. I agree.]*
- Also the building operation and admin efficiency are lumped together. What if we think one is questionable and the other is very important?
- In some cases, school buildings have emotional attachments associated with them, rather than clear understanding of cost/benefit. Some older schools like Edison, may be too expensive to renovate. (\$10.8M to renovate, \$25M to build new). Building elsewhere, combining programs, etc. maybe a better option. Precedent: Lincoln School @ Jefferson and 12th was converted to apartments. Too expensive for 4J to renovate.

- See attached sheet, for questions about cost efficiencies. Also, “emotional” attachment matters. As Kevin Boling said, “humans do better with natural light, nurturing environments, and caring communities.” Also “emotional attachment” = community buy-in and support.
- Edison is a thriving school in high demand (despite receiving fewer resources than other schools.) Why close? It should be the model for all 4J → walkable, central, cared for by community, historic/rooted. Closing Edison would have dramatic effects on the neighborhood*, to be sure, but also Eugene’s economic competitiveness, UO recruitment, and the students, current and future, who would no longer be able to walk. I am deeply concerned about the direction 4J is going toward larger, more institutional education. Look at data that challenges cost-efficiencies supposedly gained from consolidation.
 - *The Edison catchment neighborhoods will slowly turn into [UO] student dominated neighborhoods without Edison. This has broad impacts including to the children who live in these neighborhoods.
- Send list of comments to attendees or post on website.
- 4 “equitable” regions — define criteria using for determining equitable — be transparent.
- Make sure 4J’s plans conform with Envision Eugene and other community plans.
- Please provide apples to apples comparisons of costs and results of renovation vs. replacement.

Other Written Comments/Questions (not on wall charts)

- Please consider the following: Sustainability – I am disturbed by the throw away mentality, land use and transportation issues, recognition and preservation of quality physical and educational environments. I am inclined to vote against a 4J bond measure for the first time if it includes closure of Edison.
- Replacement and consolidation of schools needs to be made with consideration and care for the populations affected, and with an eye toward long-term trends. I do not feel that school consolidation provides active transport or good, rounded nutrition and nutritional education. In particular, Family School will be harmfully impacted by being moved from school to school like a poor stepchild. Education is the outcome of collaboration between people. Teachers do not “provide” education. I would rather see Spanish Immersion in the Churchill region than Asian language. Who and where are the populations?
- Our meeting seems to be swamped with South region residents. Results may be biased.