



**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF
SANTA FE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT**

Held Tuesday, July 22, 2025, at 3:00 p.m. in person at 725 Santa Fe Drive. The facilitator, George Lim, the Board of Directors of the Santa Fe BID, called the meeting to order.

Roll Call/Attendance: A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Santa Fe Business Improvement District, City and County of Denver, Colorado, was called and held as shown above and per the applicable statutes of the State of Colorado, with the following directors present and acting:

<u>Board Members - Present</u> Andrea Barela - BOD Rusty Brown - BOD David Brehm - BOD Michael Vela - BOD Sasha Zanabria - BOD Tom McLagan - BOD George Lim - BOD Jim Stevens - BOD Jackie - ED - Virtually Kristina Sablatura - BOD	<u>Guests</u> Officer CRO Technician Vanessa Sanchez Len Austin - Front Range Lieutenant Matthew Mallo Ana Paula ADSF Wesly and Rolando, City of Denver <u>Community Members:</u> Holly - virtually City of Denver guests
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Approval of minutes from the last meeting

Jim motioned to approve the minutes, Michael seconded, and all were in favor as the motion moved forward. **Vote:** Unanimous approval.

Approval of the Agenda

Jim motioned to approve the agenda, Tom seconded, and all were in favor as the motion moved forward. **Vote:** Unanimous approval.

Guest Updates

Officer Technician Vanessa Sanchez (Crime Report) Guest Support: Lieutenant Matthew Mallo



June Activity Overview

- Total Incidents: 16
 - Crimes Against Persons: 6 (up from 5 in May)
 - Crimes Against Property: 8 (up from 7 in May)
- Calls for Service: 63
 - 80% citizen-initiated
 - 20% officer-initiated (increase viewed positively as proactive policing)

Crime Breakdown

- Burglary: 1 (May) → 0 (June)
- Criminal Mischief/Damage: 2 (May) → 2 (June)
- Theft/Larceny: 1 (May) → 4 (June)
- Motor Vehicle Theft: 3 (May) → 1 (June)
- Aggravated Assault: 0 across both months

Summary: Crime levels remain relatively low, with positive signs in officer-initiated engagement.

Community Concerns

- **1124 Santa Fe Drive (Denver Earth):** Ongoing issue with unhoused individuals camping near the entrance, intimidating students/customers, engaging in public drug use, and disruptive behavior. CRO officers to increase patrols.
- **1075 Santa Fe (Ballet):** Similar safety issues addressed through increased patrols. CROs also provided student safety talks to support young residents and dancers.

Executive Director Updates

Lighting:

- Walkthrough with Radiant Lighting conducted.
- Poles on the 800 block are being replaced through an insurance claim.
- The 600 block pole was determined to be crooked but not broken; awaiting cost estimate.



- A question was raised whether the new corridor design will include lighting improvements.

Maintenance Report – Leonard Austin, Front Range Services

- **Trash & Graffiti:**
 - 380 receptacles are serviced weekly.
 - 80 graffiti tags and 480 stickers removed (slight increase).
- **Planters & Trees:**
 - 8 dead planters identified; the remainder are being watered regularly.
 - 1200 block pear tree diagnosed with powdery mildew; neem oil treatment underway.
- **Tree Care Proposal:**
 - Remove 5" of soil from tree wells; replace with Gorilla mulch for better water retention.
 - Pilot program proposed on one tree before corridor-wide rollout.
 - Winter watering program recommended to improve long-term health.

Board noted potential alignment with future Streetscape improvements.

Executive Director's Report (continued – Jackie Bouvier)

- Jackie will forward information about safety concerns (re: 1124 Santa Fe) to CRO officers and copy board member Christine for support and follow-up.
- Summer block walks: Jackie has been walking the corridor, distributing notices, and connecting with businesses. Plans to adjust timing (Thursdays/Fridays) due to more businesses being closed during daytime hours compared to last year.
- Notices for the **August 1st Friday Street Closure** were distributed widely; only a few areas remain pending.
- Ongoing coordination with Tom (financial review) and Craig from Radiant Lighting for the half-year walkthrough. Final summary pending.
- Mentioned upcoming discussion of the **Denver Vibrant Bond Initiative**; the BID project advanced to *Tier 1*. Still clarifying the city's color-coding system in funding charts.

Finance Report (Tom)

- Reviewed BDO contract and billing. Charges are consistent with the contract, but:



- Additional monthly costs (bill.com processing, administrative fees) are not included in this year's budget.
- Need to budget for these in future years.
- Quarterly financial updates will be provided moving forward.
- Awaiting Q2 report from BDO.
- QuickBooks clarification:
 - Previously paid by NEWSED during the BID transition, leading to a lump-sum repayment.
 - Now resolved and directly debited from the BID account.
- Benchmarking with other BIDs shows similar costs; current financials are considered reasonable.

Denver Bond Initiative (Vibrant Bond)

- BID's project advanced to **Tier 1** consideration.
- Still seeking clarity on the city's funding chart system (green/black/red categories).
- Andrea to provide further explanation at the future meeting.

Committees/Reports/Updates

First Friday Planning (Andrea and Ana Paula)

- **August 1st, Friday:**
 - Street closure: Santa Fe Drive, 6th to 10th Ave.
 - 75 non-food vendors, 17 food vendors confirmed.
 - Sponsorship from Councilwoman Jamie Torres was received to offset additional city-mandated costs.
 - New traffic management measures:
 - Digital billboards for detours.
 - Yard signs directing attendees to parking at West High School (mix of free & \$10 paid, funds benefit student programs).
 - Parking map published on the BID and Arts District websites.
 - Vendor parking: reserved in the 1000 block (approx. 47 spaces).
 - Police presence increased to 8 officers (vs. usual 3–5). Officers assigned to patrol and intersections (notably 6th & Santa Fe, 8th Ave).



- Permits secured: street permit & fire permit approved; awaiting final emergency plan submission.
- Anticipated attendance: 7,000–10,000 people. Foot traffic to be tracked via Visit Denver's cell-phone data system.
- Announcement: The Zone Marketplace (next door) will host a ribbon-cutting with Councilwoman Torres during the event.

- **July First Friday Recap:**

- Smooth operations despite falling on the July 4th weekend.
- Slightly smaller crowds, but vendors reported good sales and plan to return.
- Next permitted event: **September First Friday** (last of season).
- Concerns raised about October and beyond, when no permits will be pulled; Andrea is coordinating with the city to clarify enforcement of new vendor rules (no sidewalk vending on Santa Fe during First Fridays).

Economic Development & Community Updates

- **Neighborhood Map:** New BID/Arts District map finalized; to be printed and distributed by August First Friday.
- **District Banners:** New banners installed after delays; process improved for smoother future rollouts.
- **Property Taxes:**
 - Multiple members expressed concern over significant property tax increases being passed to tenants.
 - Spark Gallery and other businesses have closed in the past year due to affordability pressures.
 - Dark Gallery is facing a 20% increase.
 - Discussion:
 - Reviving the past **Property Tax Task Force**.
 - Exploring lobbying strategies for broader citywide relief (must involve other BIDs/districts).
 - Possible connection to Denver Arts & Venues, Mayor's Office, and CBCA for legal/pro bono guidance.
 - General agreement: requires coordinated effort beyond Santa Fe BID.

Property Tax & Affordability Discussion (continued)



- It was emphasized that property tax burdens are largely passed from owners to tenants, impacting galleries and arts businesses that typically rent rather than own.
- Suggested lobbying for **property tax caps or relief** for arts districts, citing models from other U.S. cities where historic or cultural districts benefit from reduced assessments.
- Discussed opportunity to engage owners in **activating vacant storefronts** for pop-ups, temporary shows, or community programming to sustain artist presence and visibility.
- Proposal for a **Community Benefits Agreement (CBA)**: non-binding agreement encouraging developers to commit to arts-supportive actions if they brand themselves as part of the Art District (e.g., reserving ground-floor space for arts use, providing reduced rates, contributing to district activities).
- Board members stressed the need to balance advocacy with maintaining relationships with property owners, noting that tax incentives could motivate owners to support such initiatives.

Discussion on Gallery Relocations

- Several long-standing galleries have closed or relocated due to costs:
 - Spark and other collectives moved to Lakewood or the Golden Triangle.
 - Some closed permanently (e.g., Scott's Gallery).
- Concern: BID is losing arts businesses to other arts districts where rents are more affordable.
- Recognized pattern where developers initially attract arts tenants to build vibrancy, then replace them with higher-paying commercial tenants once projects stabilize.
- Suggestion: explore **artist housing and studio models** from other cities where space is reserved at below-market rates, contingent on city support and tax offsets for owners.

Denver Art Society Update (Holly, Chair)

- Reported lease renewal challenges at their current building (El Noa Noa property).
 - Initially faced non-responsiveness from landlords; secured renewal only through an existing clause allowing a 3-year extension.
 - Still uncertain about long-term future beyond current lease; anticipate possible non-renewal.
- Noted difficulty engaging with owners, who are going through internal transitions (El Noa Noa closure, new leases, recent fire damage).
- Expressed desire to remain in the Santa Fe Art District but acknowledged that other districts are more affordable.
- Andrea Barela offered to facilitate direct contact with the property owners' family to help stabilize DAS's long-term presence or explore purchase options.



- Jackie Bouvier confirmed she has also struggled to reach the owners, reinforcing the need for BID support.

Sponsorships & First Friday Feedback

- Holland Group confirmed as **\$12,000 sponsor** for August First Friday—the largest sponsorship in recent years.
- Demonstrates the value of long-term relationship-building with developers and businesses.
- Ongoing outreach encouraged for both major sponsors and smaller, long-standing businesses.
- Andrea shared positive feedback from walking the recent First Fridays:
 - New vending format (designated vendor stations, clearer organization) has been well-received by both attendees and vendors.
 - No major negative feedback; crowds adapted quickly.
 - Vendor spaces continue to sell out, indicating strong demand.
- Andrea and Ana Paula, and the board expressed appreciation for the BID staff's hands-on management during events.

Streetscape Project Presentation

- Wesley Dismore (Senior Engineer, DOTI) introduced the **Santa Fe Streetscape Project** design team.
 - Partners: Kimley Horn (civil/green infrastructure), Livable Cities Studio (placemaking/streetscape), Dig Studio (landscape/urban design).
- Team reviewed guiding principles derived from community engagement:
 - **Themes:** Traditional & Historic, Playful, Active, and Bold.
 - **Priorities:** authenticity, creativity, safety, tree canopy/shade, event accommodation, and long-term maintenance feasibility.
- Reaffirmed that the design process is informed by extensive public and stakeholder input, with attention to BID priorities (safety, maintenance, event flexibility).
- Presentation set the stage for unveiling draft design concepts and continued feedback collection.

Andrea Barela emphasized the importance of **maintenance planning**, noting that BID is responsible for long-term upkeep once city construction is complete. City can only maintain features that match its standard streetscape toolkit; specialty items (e.g., custom trash receptacles, lighting, planters) will require BID management.



Presentation compared **levels of investment and amenities**:

- 16th Street Mall: high-cost, high-maintenance, many amenities.
- Brighton Boulevard: mid-cost, moderate amenities.
- Broadway: lower-cost, fewer amenities.
- Santa Fe's options balance investment with long-term sustainability.

Key design priorities:

- Trees, green infrastructure, and stormwater systems.
- Specialty paving and lighting for character and safety.
- Seating, art, and bike racks.
- Space for vendors during First Fridays.
- Flexibility for community events.

Sample Block Design (9th–10th Ave.) presented as a near-complete concept:

- Doubling the pedestrian amenity space compared to the current layout.
- Curb line adjustments with removable bollards for flexibility.
- Bump-outs retained but redesigned to function better than current installations.
- Expanded pedestrian zones to support seating, vendors, and art activation.

Maintenance Considerations:

- Trash receptacles chosen for durability and ease of servicing; within BID's budget to maintain.
- Irrigation systems to use stormwater sensors, reducing water costs.
- Electrical infrastructure to include lockable access for BID staff (Len) to manage corridor lighting and holiday installations.
- Current underground utility challenges noted (damaged electrical conduits, missing gas meters, etc.); future installations must address reliability.

Gateway Structure & Public Art:

- A **gateway element** remains in the plan but will be bid separately; it may be deferred if the budget does not allow immediate construction. Space will be preserved for future installation.
- Design team suggested forming a **Public Art Committee** (similar to Brighton Boulevard process) to select pieces, involving stakeholders and community members.
- Opportunities identified for both **permanent works** (sculptures, integrated art) and **rotating/temporary installations** (murals, kiosks, interactive elements).



Materials & Aesthetics:

- Team presented paving options; feedback suggested preference for a design that balances **historic character with modern usability**.
- Current diagonal concrete patterns may not be retained due to engineering and maintenance concerns.
- Board raised concerns about overly “modern” aesthetics; requested integration of traditional/historic references.

Activation & Community Use:

- Desire expressed for kiosks, small gathering areas, and flexible zones to host art, information, or temporary programming.
- The goal is to keep the corridor dynamic, avoiding a “build once, leave static” outcome.
- Examples: art hunts, rotating sculpture installations, artist-led community activation.

Next Steps:

- Design team to refine based on BID and community feedback.
- Detailed engineering work will continue, with final acceptance requiring BID to assume responsibility for maintenance.
- Gateway and public art funding to be pursued through grants or separate fundraising if not included in the base construction budget.
- BID staff encouraged to continue providing detailed operational input (trash, lighting, vendor management, activation planning).

Project Updates & Next Steps

- Confirmed upcoming **public engagement dates**:
 - **Business Open House** scheduled for August 21 (exact date and location to be circulated).
 - **Public engagement at September First Friday** – the project team will host a presence on the corridor to reconnect with the community.
- **Design Timeline**:
 - 60% design submittal expected in Fall 2025.
 - 100% design will follow, but the primary concern for businesses is the *construction schedule*, not design completion.
- **Funding – Vibrant Denver Bond**:
 - Santa Fe Streetscape remains included in all versions of the proposed bond package.



- Final bond project list expected to be referred to the ballot by end of August.
- If included and approved by voters in November 2025, project construction would proceed.
- If the bond passes, the earliest possible construction advertising: **April 2026** (based on bond funding availability).
- Andrea committed that the **discussion of construction phasing and impacts** will begin immediately after the election results (if the project is funded).
- If the project is not included or the bond does not pass, a **Plan B** will need to be developed.
- **Estimated Funding Allocation:**
 - The current proposal includes **\$29,085,000 for Santa Fe Streetscape** (not the full original request).
 - Design scope adjusted accordingly (e.g., excluding certain segments).
- **Bond Size Discussion:**
 - Original estimated bond total: ~\$750M.
 - Current package under consideration: ~\$900M.
 - Santa Fe is the *only project* the team submitted that remains in the bond package.

Maintenance & Infrastructure Issues

- **Street Lighting:**
 - Ongoing discussions about whether the City or BID will assume responsibility.
 - Regardless of ownership, lights will be **pedestrian-scale, efficient, and economical**.
 - Standardized installation drawings will be provided to BID for future maintenance.
- **ADA Compliance:**
 - The entire corridor will meet or exceed **current ADA and PROWAG standards**.
 - Potential incorporation of forthcoming ADA updates under discussion with City staff.
- **Gas Meters:**
 - Wholesale relocation of gas meters is not feasible within the bond funding/timeframe.
 - Some limited relocations may occur, but most meters will remain.
 - Design will **expand pedestrian space around meters** to minimize safety/access issues.
- **Fixtures & Furnishings:**
 - Items under consideration: bike racks, seating, planters, trash receptacles, light poles, and seat walls.
 - Andrea will circulate a **draft maintenance budget** outlining costs under “good, medium, and bad year” scenarios to ensure BID readiness for upkeep responsibilities.
- **Driveways:**



- BID and City will coordinate with property owners on possible **driveway consolidation** opportunities to improve pedestrian flow and reduce conflicts.

Green Infrastructure & Planting

- Discussion on balancing aesthetics with maintenance realities.
- Some plantings will be classified as **City-maintained stormwater facilities** under the Denver Green Infrastructure Division (DGI).
 - Example: Brighton Blvd planters are maintained quarterly by City crews (cleaning, plant replacement, etc.).
- Other landscaping may fall under BID responsibility; final delineation to be determined with DGI.

Closing Notes

- Andrea thanked board members for meeting in person, noting the productivity of face-to-face discussion.
- Emphasized BID's critical role in **maintenance planning and community coordination** as the project advances.

New Business/Old Business

- **Meeting Adjourned: 5:00 PM**

The next meeting will be on 8/26/2025