

**OPEN LETTER TO MAYOR VINCENT GRAY
JANUARY 24, 2014**

Mayor Vincent Gray
The Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Ave NW,
Washington, DC 20004

RE: Southwest Small Area Plan

Dear Mayor Gray:

The CBCC (the Near SE/SW Community Benefits Coordinating Council), wants to thank you once again, for supporting the SW Neighborhood Small Area Planning Process, and in so doing saving the Randall Park and Recreation Center.

We are writing now to highlight the important issues under consideration with the Small Area Plan and to provide you and the DC Department of Planning with our position on key issues under consideration.

Our organization represents all sectors of the SW and Near SE Community and has a vision for an inclusive and vibrant community which preserves housing for low-income neighbors and builds increased affordable housing for neighbors in middle-income brackets. We seek significant improvements in cultural and recreational resources, thriving elementary and middle schools, a state of the art community health clinic, and new infrastructure to support effective adult education and community enrichment.

Specifically, we urge that the Small Area Plan:

1. Provide assurances to current residents of the area between I and M Street SW now known as Greenleaf Housing Development that they will remain in the immediate community while renovation or replacement of the current housing is in process and thereafter. We favor a "build first" model if this goal can be achieved;
2. Re-design of South Capitol Street to make safe, and attractive linkage between our SW and near SE communities. We seek particular care for pedestrian and bikes at both at I Street and M Street, Children should be able to cross the thoroughfare to go to school. We also seek improved public transportation through our area by extending the Circulator from Southwest to Near Southeast across M Street to link the two segments of our community;
3. Commit to revitalization the Randall Community Center and Recreation Area for use of all residents.
 - Begin construction of the planned \$1 million Play DC Playground at the Randal site before finalization of the Small Area Plan. to make this wasteland a great community asset by replacing the asphalt with greenery and enhancing its use for families and the greater Southwest/Near SE community;

- Renovate and Invest in the old Randall Recreation Center, to turn it into a long sought Community Center. Add funds to the DPR Budget to support a long-term city contract with a not-for-profit for management of the Randall Center.
4. Retain and improve the stand-alone library at its current location in FY15 (prevent sale of that parcel to a private developer)
 5. Complete the SW Playground at the 3rd and I Street Park at the side of the Library (in planning since 2010).
 6. Support the process now beginning to renovate the historic Jefferson School and to turn it into a combination public middle school and community school.

Sincerely,
The CBCC Board of Directors

Ruth Hamilton, Chair

c.c.
Harriet Tregoning, Director, DC Office of Planning
Melissa Bird, DC Office of Planning
Councilman Tommy Wells
Roger Moffat, Chair, ANC 6D