



VMP GRASSROOTS PLAN

GOALS

- Facilitate the passage of all necessary approvals from the Mayors Agent, Zoning Commission and City Council;
- Shift community dialogue and general perception to that of majority local support for VMP plans;
- Provide continuous political cover to local elected officials;
- Nurture and grow deep grassroots support among a wide variety of local stakeholders and residents by strengthening existing and creating new relationships.

STRATEGY

- Mobilize grassroots supporters to communicate with the above listed decision-making bodies and the media;
- (Re) educate residents on elements of VMP plans;
- (Re) energize current supporters and identify/mobilize new supporters;
- Neutralize opposition;
- Engage and leverage the support of third-party validators (thought/faith/institution leaders).

TACTICS

- Develop new messaging that bolsters and contrasts local support vs. special interest opposition, and use multi-layered communication to disseminate messaging;
- Create a community coalition, empowered with the tools to advocate on behalf of VMP plans and to organize local support;
- Create a business coalition, educated on the benefits of McMillan redevelopment and prepared with the tools to advocate on behalf of VMP plans;
- Leverage the support of allied organizations, thought leaders and local institutions as third party validators in the media, with elected officials and community members and collaborate to garner new, diverse support;
- Use regular communication and interaction through social media to inform and engage new audiences and provide a platform for active interaction with local media and elected officials;
- Maintain communication with ANCs, faith based groups/churches, minority groups, local economic/business orgs, non-profits, allied organizations and community leaders through regular electronic updates, occasional meetings, mailings, and/or telephone townhalls and personalized outreach;
- Attend and monitor local community, civic, ANC and opposition events.

MESSAGE

In order to achieve our goal of mobilizing new supporters, reenergizing current supporters and neutralizing/diminishing the impact of opposition, we must employ consistent messaging that:

- Contrasts local resident, business and 3rd party support for VMP with special-interest, non-local opposition;
- Speaks to resident's most pressing concerns about the redevelopment; and
- Allows supporters to visualize the end goal of final approval and creation of this new place.

Key Messages:

- The community wants redevelopment of the McMillan Sand Filtration site and supports VMP plans;
- Friends of McMillan has been hijacked by non-local, special interests and is spreading misinformation to further its agenda;
- The site was never a park. VMP plans are the only viable solution to bring a world-class, large park to the community;
- HPRB's recommendation that VMP move forward in the approval process is significant and sets the stage for plans to move through the final approval process.

Themes

We will name the local coalition and brand local support with themes that highlight these key messages:

- **Coalition:** Neighbors of McMillan (*as opposed to Friends of McMillan*)
- **Signs & rally call:** Create McMillan Park (*as opposed to Save McMillan Park*)

We envision slightly different messaging priorities for certain stakeholder groups:

TO Neighbors of McMillan (messaging used to energize the coalition)

- The community needs a voice that truly represents its best interests;
- With movement through the HPRB, we now have a clear path to final approvals;
- There is a plan of action in place and your commitment to/support of this plan will carry this over the finish line;
- The local community should decide what happens to McMillan, not outside special interest groups;
- A small minority is currently misrepresenting the views of the larger community.

FROM Neighbors of McMillan (messaging used by the coalition to energize local support, impact public opinion and influence decision-makers)

- People who live adjacent or very close to the site need a voice that truly represents us;
- Our voice is currently being hijacked by people who live outside the community or outside DC with a special interest agendas that has nothing to do with specific benefit to this community;
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- We are invested in the community and are interested in concepts/ideas that will add value to our community;
- We care about the long-term viability, sustainability and benefit of and to our community;
- We are not concerned with single-issue agendas – we are looking at the bigger picture;
- We must *create* a park and a special place where neither currently exists.

McMillan Business Coalition

- Economic benefit of redevelopment – new traffic, activity, shopping destination, new residents and daily employees

Public Health

- Benefit of walkable communities to promote healthy lifestyles

Eds & Meds

- Creating a more desirable location for current and potential staff/students
- Local investment and economic opportunity

KEY AUDIENCES & STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

See attached Communication Flow Chart for detail on communication to and from Key Audiences and Stakeholder Groups

Neighbors of McMillan (NOM)

This coalition group will be the central focus of our organizing efforts in the community. We will create a plan for the group and establish buy-in from a core group of leaders to lend credibility, be the face of the coalition and establish the effort in the community. We will create a toolkit for leaders to use and disseminate to resident supporters that will facilitate communication with the media and decision-makers. The goal will be to have a representative sampling of people from each community serving as leaders of the Coalition. (Fontaine team will execute all work on behalf of the coalition – making it as easy as possible for people to engage and solicit support from their neighbors) Coalition leaders/members will be asked to:

- Host and/or identify hosts for house parties
- Send neighbor-to-neighbor letters
- Express ownership of social media presence
- Engage in/attend earned media events
- Disseminate “Create McMillan” signs to neighbors – identify sign locations
- Follow-up with supporters identified through our mail and phone outreach
- Identify people who will write letters to the editor and to decision-makers
- Identify a group of people who can respond online to blogs and media
- Attend events where there will be opportunity for intercept with Council Members
- Attend community and civic meetings and display support for VMP plans