

LA ALMA/ LINCOLN PARK

ARTS DISTRICT ON SANTA FE

Denver District 9 Legacy Project
Judy H. Montero | 2003 - 2015

DENVER
NEIGHBORHOOD
SPOTLIGHT



A LETTER FROM: **COUNCILWOMAN JUDY H. MONTERO**

When I was elected in 2003 I gathered residents from throughout District 9 in Denver and asked them what they wanted and needed for their neighborhoods. The “Mi Casa Es Su Casa” caucus (my house is your house) resulted in hundreds of yellow sticky notes pasted on the large district map.

I consider District 9 the heart of the city, and it’s been my home for most of my life. The district’s arteries – the neighborhoods – not only have vast cultural diversity but vast economic diversity. District 9 is home to residents who live in high-end lofts, public housing and homeless shelters.

I always viewed diversity as a source of pride that should be embraced and maintained. People of all cultural and economic means should be able to live together in harmony.

With that goal in mind, I got to work on the largest “to-do” list of my political career that spanned three terms. This newsletter details the projects that were checked off that list during my 12 years in office. It not only holds me accountable to the La Alma/Lincoln Park residents but includes the work that still needs to be accomplished by my successors.



2014 | Jaguar Leadership Club counselors and participants in front of the La Alma Recreation Center mural by Emanuel Martinez commissioned in 1978.

QUICK FACTS:

- Councilwoman Montero had a 98 percent attendance record during her 12-year term. She attended 573 Monday night Council meetings out of 586 total meetings.

- Councilwoman Montero chaired three different Council Committees during her 12-year term: Transit-Oriented Planning 2004-2005, FasTracks 2005-2010, and the National Western Stock Show 2011-2014.

- Councilwoman Judy Montero was elected Denver City Council President Pro-Tem on July 21, 2014.

The

THE POWER OF MENTORS

hundreds of sticky notes felt overwhelming at first but I had some amazing mentors who prepared me to meet the challenge.

I was privileged to know Sal Carpio, the district's first Latino councilman who served from 1975 to 1987. I met Sal's aide, Debbie Ortega, and helped her get elected in 1987. Debbie served the district until 2003 and I worked as her aide until 1997.

Mayor Wellington Webb appointed me in 1997 as the Public Information Officer for the Parks and Recreation Department and to serve as a council liaison.

My previous work with the Chicano Education Project and Denver Employment Training Organization in the 1970s and 1980s allowed me to meet future Mayor Federico Pena and political activists Paul Sandoval and Rich Castro.

These strong individuals taught me to never back down and to seek ways to find solutions. When I was told a problem couldn't be resolved, I remembered those lessons from my mentors and didn't accept no for an answer.



40 years of elected Latino leadership in District 9 | L to R: Judy Montero (2003-2015), Sal Carpio (1975-1987) and Debbie Ortega (1987-2003).

character of District 9 in tact when the city faced

A GOOD FIGHT

redistricting. Every 10 years,

the city must redraw its district boundaries based on the U.S. Census data.

The goal is to have approximately 54,560 residents in each of the city's 11 districts.

The council districts needed to be redrawn because the neighborhoods in the far northeast corner of the city grew more than other parts of the city. My argument was that combining neighborhoods with other districts would impact historic representation and for the first time in 40 years there would not be a Latino representative for District 9 – despite the large Latino population.

We debated the issue and had public meetings but the majority of the council voted for new boundaries. That means La Alma/Lincoln Park and the Arts District on Santa Fe will be rolled into District 3 after the May 2015 municipal election.

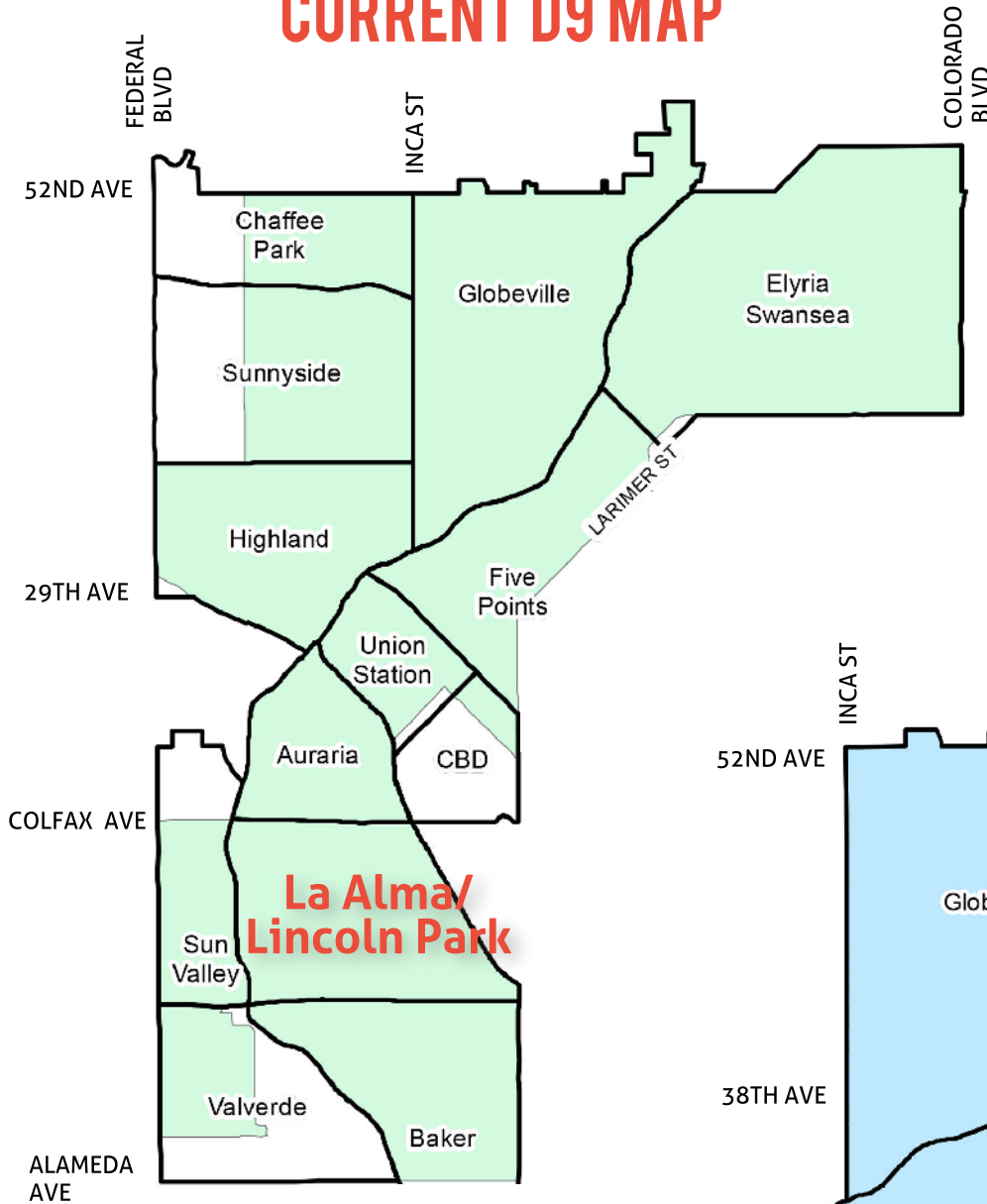
No matter who is elected on the council, the best advocates for La Alma/Lincoln Park and the arts district are the neighbors. I trust these neighbors will continue to keep watch and protect the interests of this unique area of Denver.



2013 | NEWSSED CEO Veronica Barela (L) and Councilwoman Montero (R) attend the groundbreaking of Metro State University's new athletic fields.

COUNCIL DISTRICT 9 MAPS

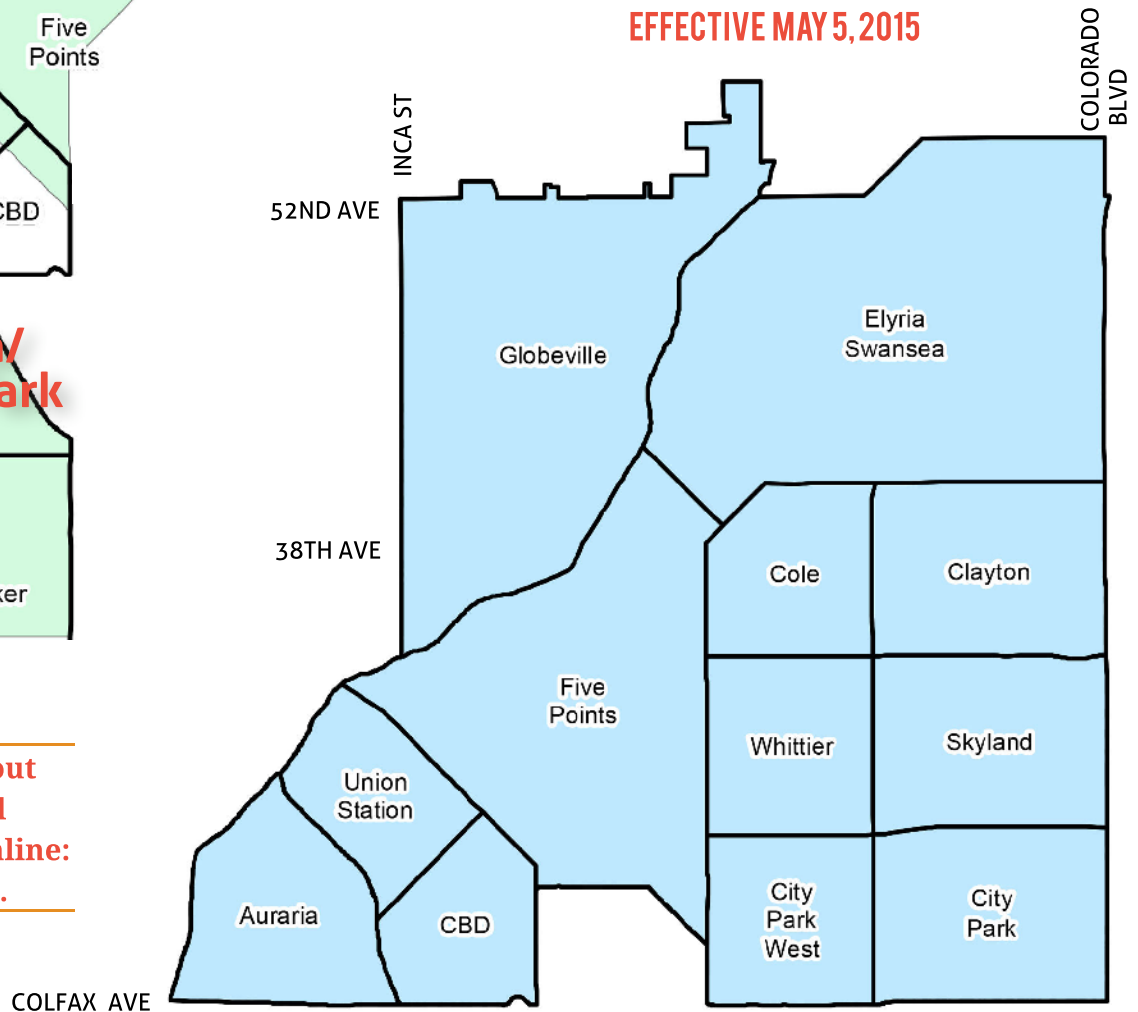
CURRENT D9 MAP



Every 10 years, the city must redraw its district boundaries based on the U.S. Census data. The goal is to have approximately 54,560 residents in each of the city's 11 districts.

FUTURE D9 MAP

EFFECTIVE MAY 5, 2015



For more information about redistricting, please call 720-913-VOTE (8683) or go online: denvergov.org/elections.

MUNICIPAL CALENDAR

MAY 5

Municipal General Election Day

-Polls open at 7 a.m., close at 7 p.m.

24-Hour Ballot Drop Boxes close at 7 p.m.

JULY 20

Inaugural Swearing in Ceremony of Denver Elected Officials

Mayor, City councilmembers, Clerk & Recorder and Auditor

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

2003–2015

• FORGED POLITICAL ALLIANCE •

Understanding the political history of the neighborhood, I reached out to longtime political activist Veronica Barela, president and CEO of NEWSED, a non-profit organization that has worked with disadvantaged neighborhoods since 1973 for economic revitalization, home ownership and showcasing the Chicano and Latino cultural influences. I knew that if Veronica and I worked as a team we could make things happen.

• HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT (HIA) FOR THE SOUTH LINCOLN HOMES NEIGHBORHOOD •

Denver Housing Authority produced an HIA in September 2009. The conclusions and recommendations in the HIA document helped guide the master planning efforts for South Lincoln and it was used as a reference for the La Alma/Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan. The HIA examined the influences and solutions to public health that can be affected by home design, urban form, layout and architecture of buildings, provision of services and economic opportunities.

• FOUGHT PLANS TO SELL LA ALMA RECREATION CENTER AND BYERS LIBRARY •

When the city was undergoing tough economic times in 2009, the administration wanted to sell La Alma Recreation Center and Byers Library, built in 1918 and part of the Carnegie library project. I fought hard to maintain both city historic landmarks for the neighborhood. Our working poor neighborhoods must have access to recreation and books.

• LA ALMA/LINCOLN PARK NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN, 10TH AND OSAGE STATION AREA PLAN •

Working with Barela, neighbors and the Denver Housing Authority we created revitalization plans for the area. These plans were shovel-ready when the federal government had stimulus money to invest in public housing plans. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provided \$3 million to DHA to start the planning process.

• MARIPOSA PROJECT AND SOUTH LINCOLN REDEVELOPMENT •

Our shovel-ready plans also lead to the \$200 million Mariposa project, a private-public partnership between DHA, private banks and developers seeking tax credits for entities making investments in public projects. The project included demolishing 278 public housing units and replacing them with 900 new units for residents of mixed economic means, including subsidized housing for seniors. The project has workforce opportunities, including the Osage Café and Arts Street to train youths for culinary and creative pursuits. Additionally, Youth Media Studio works with music educators through DHA and local hip-hop bands.



Courtesy: Denver Housing Authority

2010 | L to R: Councilwoman Montero, constituent Juanita Vigil and U.S. Representative Diana Degette (CO 1) attend the groundbreaking for the Mariposa project.

"Judy and I have become good friends and she is amazing to work with. Whenever issues emerged in the community Judy always included me. She has a great reputation throughout the community."

-Veronica Barela
President and CEO of NEWSED

• SAVED THE NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE •

The 1927 historic landmark was set for demolition but I helped residents fight to keep it. The city renovated the building that now houses The Bridge Project after school programs. With the assistance of bond money a public art piece was commissioned by artist Andrea Moore. She collaborated with youth who attended summer and after school programs hosted by The Bridge Project. She guided students through writing exercises and helped them develop poems reflecting their history, identity, and passions. She adapted the students' responses into a written and visual installation celebrating their authentic points of view.

• SUPPORT OF THE ARTS DISTRICT ON SANTA FE •

The neighborhood is home to the Arts District on Santa Fe, which has more than 40 galleries, shops and restaurants. Highlights include the Su Teatro Cultural and Performing Arts Center and the Museo de las Americas, which exhibits Latino art from Central and South America. Provided strong support for First Friday Art Walks with tenants along Santa Fe Drive.

OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

• JAGUAR LEADERSHIP CLUB •

Worked with Metro State University, Arts and Venues and Parks and Recreation to help fund a youth leadership development club during the summer at nearby Rude Park when the new swimming pool was under construction. The club continues to be active at the La Alma Recreation Center.

• LA ALMA SWIMMING POOL •

Constructed with bond money approved by voters.

• PLAYGROUND UPDATE •

A fitness zone was installed near the children's playground to promote an active and healthy lifestyle.

• ADOPTING OFFICIAL NAME OF LINCOLN PARK TO LA ALMA/LINCOLN PARK •

La Alma, meaning "the soul or spirit" reflects the culture of the neighborhood and the historic role the neighborhood park played in advocating for social justice issues.



2013 | Councilwoman Montero (C) with community and staff members at the committee meeting to formally adopt La Alma/Lincoln Park name.

• NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR LA ALMA/LINCOLN PARK •

In 2014 the La Alma/Lincoln Park neighborhood was named one of the "Great Places in America" to live by the American Planning Association (APA). The neighborhood was chosen because of "its unique and authentic characteristics" – many of which have evolved from years of thoughtful, deliberate planning and preservation by residents, community leaders and city planners.

• CREATION OF BIKE LANE ON 13TH STREET •

Advocated for bike/pedestrian path connection to the Sun Valley Neighborhood.

"I found Judy to be a dogged supporter of these neighborhoods and, given the tough job of balancing all the competing voices and expectations, that she managed to be fair, consistent, and put the long-term 'health' of these neighborhoods first."

-Lisa Bardwell
President of Earth Force

ONGOING & FUTURE PROJECTS

• ROLL-OUT TRASH BARRELS •

Advocated for roll-out trash barrels for every household to replace Dumpsters and help combat illegal dumping.

• TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT •

Continued traffic enforcement and studies to ensure safety for pedestrians and bicyclists along Mariposa.

• PARKING ISSUES ALONG SANTA FE •

Work with businesses and neighbors to find solutions to parking issues.

• QUIET ZONE •

Work to find a way to provide a quiet environment next to train tracks.



2012 | Councilwoman Montero (bottom left) and neighborhood residents participate in a bike ride along the South Platte River to support the B-Cycle bike share program.

• GRAFFITI REMOVAL AND ILLEGAL DUMPING IN ALLEYS •

To ensure the community that the neighborhood is clean and safe the city needs to continue with a no tolerance policy for illegal graffiti and illegal dumping in alleys.

• HIGH DEMAND FOR DENVER URBAN RENEWAL EMERGENCY HOME REPAIR FUNDS •

Provide resources for low-income residents to make necessary home repairs.

• STORM WATER BASIN AT 10TH & OSAGE •

Provide natural vegetative solutions for basin and drainage.

• LA ALMA/LINCOLN PARK •

Create a long-term master plan for the neighborhood.



Courtesy: Denver Housing Authority

2013 | Mayor Michael Hancock (L) and Councilwoman Judy Montero (R) enjoying a neighborhood tour using the B-Cycle bike share program located at 10th Avenue and Osage.

"Councilwoman Montero's deep roots in the Denver community fill our hearts so big with pride, and we are all taller in spirit and finer in action because of her commitment to District 9, the city of Denver and state of Colorado."

-Elbra Wedgeworth

Former Denver Councilwoman &

President of the Denver Union Station Project Authority Board of Directors



July 2011 | L to R: Councilwoman Judy Montero, at the swearing in for her current term, with Councilman Albus Brooks and Judge Robert Hyatt.



2013 | D9 staff attending Mayor Michael Hancock's State of the City. L to R: Councilwoman Judy Montero; council aides Amanda Sandoval, Benjamin Roldan and Nola Miguel.



Courtesy: Amanda Schultz

July 2014 | L to R: Councilwoman Judy Montero, newly-elected City Council President Pro-Tem, with newly-elected Council President Chris Herndon and former Council President Mary Beth Susman.

- AWARDS**
- 2010** NEWSED Community Development Corporation & Santa Fe Drive Redevelopment Corporation Celebrate Culture Civil Rights Award
 - 2010** Girl Scouts of Colorado Women of Distinction Award
 - 2010** Spirit of Tlatelolco Lifetime Achievement Award
 - 2012** University of Denver Robert L. Hawkins Social Work Achievement Award
 - 2013** Denver Public Library Cesar Chavez Leadership Hall Of Fame Award
 - 2013** Youth on Record Community Rock Star
 - 2014** Hispanic Contractors of Colorado Public Achievement Award

MORE FACTS:

- Councilwoman Montero served under seven different Council Presidents during her 12-year term: Elbra Wedgeworth, Rosemary Rodriguez, Michael Hancock, Jeanne Robb, Chris Nevitt, Mary Beth Susman and current President Christopher Herndon.

- Councilwoman Montero was vice chair of six different Council Committees during her 12-year term: Blueprint Denver 2004-2005, Youth & Community Services 2005-2006, Public Amenities 2006-2007, Neighborhood, Community & Business Revitalization 2008-2009, Land Use, Transportation & Infrastructure 2010-2014 and Neighborhoods & Planning 2014-2015.

CITY COUNCIL

City and County of Denver



Councilwoman Judy H. Montero
Denver City Council President Pro-Tem

Spring 2015

Hello District 9 Resident,

Driven by my desire to give back to our community, I have worked compassionately, diligently and methodically for my constituents as your elected City Council representative for District 9 since 2003. As a proud Latina, I have stood by some of the most vulnerable communities in Denver with the core values of social equity, cultural relevancy and environmental justice.

Working side by side with other City Council representatives and four Mayoral administrations (Hancock, Vidal, Hickenlooper and Webb), I have supported multi-use neighborhoods home to residents with diverse economic backgrounds. I embraced new transit-oriented development to better link the neighborhoods and cultivated long-lasting and crucial public/private partnerships.

It has been my honor to serve you these last 12 years. As I approach my term ending on July 20, 2015, I wanted to document some of the completed projects for your neighborhood and the work that still needs to be done when I am no longer your representative.

I want to thank you not only for our journey together, but also for taking time to read your neighborhood newsletter.

My staff and I celebrate the opportunity of being part of this adventure. We take pride that our hard work has improved our neighborhoods and we care deeply to leave a blueprint for our successors.

Thank you for the honor of electing me for three terms and be assured I will be working hard for you through July 20.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judy H. Montero". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Councilwoman Judy H. Montero, District 9
Denver City Council President Pro-Tem