

Date: 08.14.17

To: Kelli Mirgeaux

CC: Katie Carlson, Judy Gray, Niki Blue, Muki Ndabambi, Tom Orr, Robert Manuel, Jeff Miller, Justin Moed

Thank you for sharing the April 2016 list of commentaries and recommendations for the South Side Quality of Life Plan (SSQoL): with the Education and Workforce Development action team members. See the original 2016 list here: <http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Propoals-for-2016-Southside-Quality-of-Life-Plan.pdf>

Below are two of the various issues suggested for discussion from the list. I see resolving these concerns as vital to a sustainable SSQoL:

- 1) Making sure the SSQoL Plan lives up to its obligations to include all residents in its boundary. The initial study set benchmarks regarding the demographics of the area. See p. 12 of the "South Indy QoL Plan"  
[https://static1.squarespace.com/static/568ad268a12f44dfd965877f/t/58503556893fc016e5d0543c/1481651563150/SOindy\\_workplan.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/568ad268a12f44dfd965877f/t/58503556893fc016e5d0543c/1481651563150/SOindy_workplan.pdf)

The question is: where are the 20+% of non-white residents (12+% Latino/10.8% Black folks) and the 32% of those living in the circumstances of poverty? I've been to 2 major SSQoL events and saw none of these levels. And, I do not see these percentages reflected in the many pictures on the website <http://soindy.org/>, the workplan, or our Facebook page. See: <https://www.facebook.com/southindyqol/>

Yet, for example, these demographics are reflected in the resident population of Laurelwood Apartments on Carson Ave with its Laurelwood Family Investment Center (please view <http://www.indyhousing.org/iha-communities/view-properties/laurelwood> and <http://www.hcoarchitects.com/laurelwood.html>) and those living in the Village of North Acre and Longacre mobile home parks off Madison on either side of I-465.

**Question:** what are the plans of SSQoL to make sure the Laurelwood residents in Carson Heights, and those residents living just outside of 2 of the plan's 8 neighborhoods, yet still in the SSQoL boundaries (University Heights and Rosedale Hills), are represented in plans, events, programs, and our summits?

- 2a) Since the basic SSQoL mission states: "Engaging 8 neighborhoods in South Indy to implement a vision for equitable community development," it makes sense that the orientation and efforts of the Education and Workforce Development action team must also reflect the self-interests and perspectives of all residents *equitably*.

**Suggestion:** So it is equitable by being more inclusive of all vested interests and standpoints, change the name of the Education and Workforce Development action team to *Education and Workforce Development and Empowerment*.

**Issue:** How to make the "OUR PLAN" section (p.4) more equitable?

**Suggestions** for changes in wording and additions to OUR PLAN are in *italics*.

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- EDUCATION & WORKFORCE South Indy youth and adults have productive career opportunities with local employers.
- *EDUCATION & WORKFORCE South Indy youth and adults have productive career opportunities with local employers, and via their own businesses or worker cooperatives.*
  - Identify trades that are in demand by area businesses to promote job opportunities.
  - Develop a strategy to implement trades programs and identify potential public and private partners for implementation.
    - *Develop a strategy to implement trades programs and identify potential public, private, and union partners for implementation.*
  - Work with the Indiana Construction Roundtable to utilize their Speakers Bureau for career skills development.
  - Please add these here:
    - *Work with the Indiana Cooperative Development Center to utilize their Speakers Bureau for worker-owned business skills development.*
    - *Work with the Indiana State AFL-CIO to utilize their Speakers Bureau for worker self-organizing skills development.*

These ideas were previously shared with the action team and the larger community:

- <http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Suggestions-to-complement-and-supplement-the-Education-and-Workforce-Plan.pdf>,
- <http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/South-East-Working-Class-Task-Force-2016-December-2017-January-Newsletter.pdf>

### **Career and educational options besides college**

On p. 24 of the SSQoL, under “Education and Workforce Development 5: We envision broader community awareness of available resources that promote family supporting careers,” it states:

5.1.1 Identify the interests of the family & educate parents on career and educational options besides college and create events based on those needs (financial skills, career exploration).

**Commentary:** The emphasis on trades is important. Some of these skills can be learned relatively quickly and can provide a living wage, or lead to a career or a business. Even so, less emphasis on college can perpetuate the long-time stereotype that Southside students and families *can only do trades*. Remember, Indy’s “manual training” high schools--Manual (1895) then Wood (1953)--were located here “...on the other side of the tracks.”

What is more important, the “college or trades” debate takes our eye off the ball: the end goal of education for our students must be a critical consciousness, and so the critical citizenship this analytical awareness produces regardless of what our youth do after high school.

See the essay from the Southeast Working-Class Task Force on the issue:

- <http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/A-proposed-compromise-regarding-the-southside-debate-College-or-die-vs.-Not-everyone-needs-to-go-to-college.pdf>

### **References**

- Indiana Cooperative Development Center <http://icdc.coop/> 225 S. East St.692-7707 [info@icdc.coop](mailto:info@icdc.coop)
  - Also see SEW-CTF newsletter: <http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/The-Southeast-Working-Class-Task-Force-2017-July-August-Newsletter.pdf>
- Indiana State AFL-CIO <https://www.inaflcio.org/> 2917 Roosevelt Ave, West Building, 632-9147

- 2b) The “Talent & Trades” section of the Executive Summary, p.3 of the South Indy QoL Plan, can spell out a more equitable vision for our south side by also promoting workforce empowerment: self-sufficiency, self-determination, and/or self-employment. [https://static1.squarespace.com/static/568ad268a12f44dfd965877f/t/58503556893fc016e5d0543c/1481651563150/SOindy\\_workplan.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/568ad268a12f44dfd965877f/t/58503556893fc016e5d0543c/1481651563150/SOindy_workplan.pdf)

**Suggestion:** Make changes in the perspectives of the “Talent & Trades” idea. The re-wordings are in *italics*.

### **Talent & Trades**

South Indy residents will have a broad community awareness of resources available to promote family supporting careers where our youth and adults have productive career opportunities with local employers. The South Indy QoL will serve as a connector between training and employment opportunities and residents. *It will also serve to connect residents with training in entrepreneurial ideas, small business development, startup companies, and local self-organized worker-owned cooperatives.*

- Five trades programs developed and sustained with South Indy education and workforce partners.
  - *Five trades programs developed and sustained with South Indy education, and workforce partners including worker cooperatives initiatives, and unions.*
- Hold South Indy QOL education & workforce events that relate to the needs of the family.
  - *Hold South Indy QOL education & workforce empowerment events co-organized by the action team and families that relate to the needs of these families.*
- Work with businesses and schools to develop a trades mentoring program.
  - *Work with businesses, unions, local government, and schools to develop a trades mentoring program.*

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