



## Agenda Memorandum

Agenda Item – {{section.number}}.C.

### City Council Study Session March 20, 2023



#### **Strategic Priority 1: Preparedness and Resilience**

Build a system of intentional support for residents, businesses and the environment that mitigates risks and proactively seeks out ways to ensure the community not only endures, but thrives.



#### **Strategic Priority 3: Shared Sense of Community**

Foster equitable opportunities that help residents feel at home and connected in their community and empowered to live their best lives.



#### **Strategic Priority 4: Quality of Life**

Ensure that Westminster offers a diverse range of amenities and activities for residents, businesses and visitors that honor the city's history and support the arts, parks, recreation, open spaces, and libraries.

**Subject:** Presentation from Representatives of Jefferson County Public Schools on School Closures in the City of Westminster

**Prepared By:** Lindsey Kimball, Economic Development Director

### **Recommended City Council Action:**

Receive presentation from representatives of Jefferson County Public Schools on school closures in the City of Westminster.

### **Summary Statement:**

- Jefferson County Public Schools (JPS) plans to close three schools within the City of Westminster: Sheridan Green Elementary located at 10951 Harlan Street, Witt STEM Elementary located at 10255 West 104th Drive, and Zerger Elementary (Doral Academy) located at 9050 Field Street.
- The City and JPS are working together to ensure a smooth transition of these properties and to develop a collaborative community engagement strategy.

- JPS Staff will provide an overview of the school closure process, community engagement plans, timelines, and next steps.

**Fiscal Impact:**

\$0 in expenditures

**Source of Funds:**

Not applicable

**Policy Issue(s):**

Shall City Council receive a presentation from representatives from JPS on school closures in the City of Westminster?

**Alternative(s):**

City Council could choose not to receive a presentation. Staff does not recommend this alternative because the closure of the three schools within the City of Westminster will directly impact the three affected neighborhoods and the broader community.

**Background Information:**

Due to declining enrollment, JPS plans to close Sheridan Green Elementary, Witt STEM Elementary, and Zenger Elementary (Doral Academy) at the end of the current school year. JPS Staff and their consultants are working to determine the reuse for vacant school buildings and excess land. JPS Staff plans to conduct conversations with affected municipalities, convening individuals and/or groups to discuss interests, facilitating conversations among individuals or groups with shared interests, and collecting formal or informal ideas and proposals for vacant school buildings and excess land.

City Staff will continue its conversations with JPS Staff regarding a collaborative approach to community outreach and determination of appropriate reuse of the sites. Due to the proximity to residential and park facilities, and central location within established neighborhoods, acceptable reuses would need to be similar in nature and character to the existing schools and be embraced by existing residents. The engagement of the surrounding residents will be very important moving forward.

As part of the commitment to collaboration, JPS Staff will present at tonight's Study Session. The presentation will include an overview of the school closure process, community engagement plans, timelines and next steps, as well as allow a public forum for City Council members to ask questions.

Receiving a presentation from representatives of JPS on school closures in the City of Westminster is aligned with the City's Strategic Priorities of Preparedness and Resilience, Share Sense of Community and Quality of Life. The information contained in the report will allow the City and its residents to prepare for the closure of these schools and create a thoughtful and community-driven reuse process, which will help residents feel connected to their community's future and ensure that quality of life is sustained.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Mark A Freitag*

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