

PLATT

FALL 2025

NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

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NEW SUMMIT STADIUM IS COMING

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NEIGHBORHOOD SPOTLIGHT 7 YEARS OF CHOOK

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NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES BY TOM SNYDER

Just going to say it - summer flew by way too fast. Hopefully it was a good one, filled with more than your fair share of backyard barbecues and Sweet Cow ice cream (or Stir Pan Creamery, if you prefer). Thankfully, summer lingers on with the Farmers Market running through November 9th, and fall's slow-burning fireworks of color giving us every reason to get outside and soak up this idyllic corner of Denver we call home.

First, to the rumor mill! I took another semi-deep dive into what's happening with the old 7-Eleven and surrounding properties on the south end of the 1200 block of South Pearl. A Site Development Plan has been submitted to the City of Denver and is currently under review.

The proposed building would be quite large by neighborhood standards — five stories tall, stretching from Louisiana Avenue north to 1227 S. Pearl, roughly where Stir Pan Creamery and Lavender Coffee Shop are currently located. The plan includes ground-floor retail and 170 residential units, 27 of which would be designated as income-restricted. It's still unclear whether these will be condos for sale or rental apartments (I'm guessing the latter).

The project also includes approximately 300 parking spaces, mostly underground. Did I mention this thing is big?

When Denver updated its zoning code in 2011, it allowed for greater density around light rail stations and transportation hubs - so developments like this were bound to happen eventually. No construction timeline has been announced yet, but I'd expect work to begin later this fall or sometime next year.

What about **Trader Joe's** you ask? Yes, the possibility of Trader Joe's taking the primary retail space is looking serious since on Aug 4 they applied for a Retail Fermented Malt Beverage and Wine License at this address. For the immediate future, however, you'll still have to trek to the Logan store for your Mandarin Orange Chicken and Dark Chocolate Peanut Butter Cups.

In our last issue, we reported on the opening of **Kazaki** at 1551 S. Pearl Street, along with rumors of a second restaurant sharing the space. Well, rumor no more. **Margot** officially opened in June. First, a quick side note to clear up any confusion (you're not alone!). The building itself is now called Denchu or Denchu Den. Inside Denchu, you'll find three distinct experiences:

Kazaki – a 21-course omakase-style dinner led by Toshi Kazaki of Sushi Den fame

DenBar – a sake and cocktail bar overseen by certified sake sommelier Yuki Minakawa

Margot – the newest addition to the lineup

Think of it as a refined, chef-driven food hall.



Back to Margot... It is the brainchild of Colorado native Justin Fulton, whose culinary journey has taken him from the East Coast to France and back to Denver. Most recently, he worked as chef de cuisine at the Michelin-recommended Mercantile Dining & Provision at Union Station. During that time, he also ran a seasonal Sunday-night popup at Coperta, exploring creative, rotating menus. Thanks to a mutual connection, Justin found the perfect opportunity to bring his vision to life with a brick-and-mortar home at Denchu.

You can experience Margot in two ways: À la carte in the main Denchu dining area, where globally inspired small plates are designed for sharing or at the chef's counter, a more intimate, twelve-course tasting experience for just eight guests, served in a private room within Denchu. The menu focuses on artfully composed dishes that balance international flavors with the best of Colorado's seasonal produce and artisanal ingredients.

Like Kazaki, Margot isn't your budget-friendly Taco Tuesday spot, Ibut if you're craving a world-class dining experience just a short walk from home, this one's not to be missed. Reservations for the chef's counter can be made at MargotDenver.com. The à la carte area welcomes walk-ins.

After indulging in Platt Park's many dining spots, you might be ready to get your heart rate up and BMI down — so let's welcome our newest fitness option: **Lagree Luxe** which opened this past July at 1804 S Pearl St. Likely you've wandered by this space many times over the past few years as it has sat vacant. Behind the scenes the owner of Luxe, Christa Chase and the owners of the building have struggled with the city working through a long permitting and remodel process which has taken almost two years to complete.

Luxe is a Pilates studio with a twist. It offers high-intensity, low-impact workouts using custom Megaformer machines (each 10.5 feet long and three feet wide) that blend strength training, cardio, and stretching. As Chase puts it: "People joke that it's Pilates on crack."

Learn more at lagreeluxe.com.

Before we wrap up, we wanted to highlight one more exciting addition coming to the neighborhood: Food Lab, set to open in September at 1250 S. Pearl Street. Food Lab is a hands-on cooking school designed to help you level up your skills in the kitchen, but it's more than that. It's a place to cook, sip wine, and pick up a few tips and tricks in a welcoming, beautifully designed space.

Sample classes include Summer in Italy, Korean BBQ, Mediterranean Tapas, Paella, and Japanese small plates, with many more on the schedule. The space itself? Let's just say it's the kitchen of your dreams. To sign up or explore the full list of classes, visit foodlabinc.com/Denver/home.

And with that, you're all caught up on the neighborhood buzz. May your garden harvest be bountiful, your leaves blow east with the wind, and your fall be filled with crisp days and cozy nights.

See you around the neighborhood, Tom Snyder

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Platt Park Neighbors for Climate Action:

Summer 2025 Update

On June 28 we organized our first meetup - 21 Platt Park neighbors went on a three-hour walking tour of our neighborhood, visiting 7 home landscapes where stewards are employing a variety of climate-smart landscaping techniques. These include, but are not limited to, those that enhance water conservation, soil health, biodiversity, and pollinator and bird health. We learned from homeowners and each other as we walked from place to place.

It was inspiring and fun! At the end of the morning participants indicated an interest in getting together early in the fall to share summer lessons learned and our garden produce at a Harvest Potluck Picnic at Platt Park. No date has been chosen, but if you are interested in participating, please let us know and we'll get back to you.

Email: plattparkclimate@gmail.com



Monthly Climate Cafes

We meet in the Back Room at HOJA (1284 S Pearl St.) to listen to and support each other as we navigate the multi-layered reality in our world and our neighborhood.

Every 2nd Wednesday from 11:30am - 1:00pm

Thank you to HOJA for continuing to provide us with this great space!

> For more info contact Paddy McClelland: 720-300-0276 | paddy@verdedenver.com.



The Platt Park Postcard is a series created by neighbors Barbara Lewis and Sharon Withers to highlight the colorful history of our community. What are you curious about? Email us at catalystbel2@gmail.com

Grass Roots Bluegrass

We're focusing on music in 2025. In this issue, we look at music in, of, and for the community.

"We break most of the rules. Any rule we know of we try to break it," said Tom Connole, founder of Retro Grass bluegrass jam group. "The only one we don't break is everyone is welcome."

The toe-tapping, hand-clapping rhythms of bluegrass music ring out at Cameron Church on Wednesday evenings and Sunday mornings. Anywhere from about 10 to more than 20 musicians from Platt Park and around the city gather on the south lawn of the church in summer; in winter, they move to the basement. Unlike many jam groups, all instruments and music books are welcome at Retro Grass, explained Tom, also known as the Human Juke Box because he can play so many songs from memory.



RetroGrass includes musicians of all ages. Here, Catherine's granddaughter joins in with her own accordion. A classically trained piano player, Catherine jokes that the accordion is more portable. Catherine grew up in a fivegeneration musical family in Appalachia so bluegrass is in the blood.

Photo Courtesy of Catherine Teutsch

While many of the musicians have played bluegrass for years, some professionally, others join the group to grow in ability and confidence. All love music and a night of jammin'.

The group began 15 years ago at Swallow Hill Music. Scheduling issues forced RetroGrass to move to Strange Grounds coffee shop on Broadway. When it closed, musician and Cameron Church member Catherine Teutsch arranged to move the performances to Cameron Church. She was thrilled to partner with Tom and bring her accordion to Retro Grass.

All donations go to Cameron Church. Learn more about RetroGrass on their FaceBook page, and learn about Catherine and Tom's five-member gig group, MicroGrass at micrograssband.com/micrograss.



Tom, on guitar, leads off every session with "I'll Fly Away," and closes with "Will the Circle Be Unbroken?" He grew up in St. Louis in a musical family and played music in church.

Photo Credit: Barbara Lewis



Seven Years of Chook: The Heart of the Bird Still Beats on Pearl

By Nora Weiser

When Chook Chicken opened its doors at the corner of Pearl and Louisiana in December 2018, the goal was both ambitious and refreshingly simple: nourish people with food that was healthy, delicious, and responsibly sourced. Seven years later, the rotisserie chicken shop that began as a neighborhood hangout has grown—with outposts in East Denver and Greenwood Village—but its soul remains firmly rooted in Platt Park.

Behind the concept were three familiar faces to Denver food lovers: award-winning chef and restaurateur Alex Seidel, Snooze co-founder Adam Schlegel, and beverage pro Randy Layman. Their shared values—supporting regenerative agriculture, reducing food waste, and giving back—shaped the concept. The name "Chook," Aussie slang for chicken, nods to the Australian markets that inspired the vision after family trips abroad.

Platt Park was always the natural place to start, and the team chose the neighborhood for the same reason that most of us choose to call Platt Park home. "It quickly became clear this was the ideal location," the team says, because of "its vibrant atmosphere, easy accessibility, and the strong sense of community it offers." The Pearl Street shop reflects that ethos friendly, familiar, and full of regulars who return not just for the juicy roast chicken or comforting Chook Pies, but because they feel at home.

The brand's evolution hasn't come without challenges. A shift from charcoal to gas rotisserie improved consistency, and the pandemic brought its lessons—among them, the hard decision to close their Stanley Marketplace location. But Chook emerged stronger and more focused. They now serve 450-500 locally-sourced birds per week at each location while staying committed to sustainable practices. At day's end they repurpose any remaining chickens into pulled chicken and chicken salad, and use bones and veggie scraps to create their flavorful stock. Plus, any extra mashers at closing time find a happy home in their comforting Chook Pies – a delightful spin on a cottage pie. These practices are part of Chook's efforts to reduce waste and minimize their environmental footprint.



In addition, their 1% Give Back program has helped raise thousands for local schools and nonprofits. They frequently host 'dine back' evenings, contribute auction items, and collaborate with the nonprofit organization ThirdMeal, which works to ensure families have access to clean, healthy food.

From its origins in a chef's Aussie daydream to its place as a beloved neighborhood staple, Chook's first home on Pearl embodies their commitment to sustainability, community, and serving up delicious food.



Adam & Alex when Chook opened in 2018



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DENVER'S HOTTEST RESTAURANTS, AND FUN SEASONAL EVENTS ALL YEAR LONG



South Pearl Street's Summer of Fun... with More to Come!

This summer. South Pearl Street has been alive with color, flavor. and community spirit. The South Pearl Street Farmers Market and the Final Friday Art Walks have kept the street bustling.

The Farmers Market has been a Sunday staple, with stalls overflowing with fresh Colorado produce, including Palisade peaches, sweet corn, crisp greens, alongside artisanal breads, honey, jams, and locally roasted coffee. Live music has set the soundtrack, while families and friends linger over breakfast burritos, chat with farmers, and enjoy the easy pace of our Sundays in Platt Park.

On the last Friday of each month, the Final Friday Art Walks have turned South Pearl into an open-air gallery. Local artists have showcased everything from paintings to sculpture, while shops and restaurants joined in with special menus and live music. The evenings have been a celebration of creativity and connection, so make sure you catch the next Final Friday!

Now, as summer winds down, the excitement builds for Oktoberfest on South Pearl Street. Arriving on Saturday, September 13th, this year's festival will feature over 10 local breweries pouring their best seasonal beers, from crisp lagers to hearty Oktoberfest styles. The day will be filled with live music, German costume contests, a brat-eating competition, a Kids Fun Zone, and the crowd-favorite Stein Hoisting Championships... a true test of strength and endurance!

Whether you're here for the beer, the contests, the music, or just the festive atmosphere, Oktoberfest promises to be the perfect send-off to summer and a lively welcome to fall.

South Pearl Street has spent the season bringing the community together. Now it's ready to raise a stein and celebrate. Mark your calendar for September 13th and join in the tradition. Thanks to our partner Platt Park Brewery for co-hosting this event every year. Stop in this fall for their new seasonal beers and their popular crowd favorites. PROST!



New Summit Stadium and Our Community

By Shelby Drulis, 3PA Board President

Kicking off in 2028, Platt Park will have a front-row seat to the buzz that the new Denver Summit FC Stadium will bring to South Denver. After a locally-connected ownership group, led by controlling owner Rob Cohen, won the expansion slot to be the 16th team in the National Women's Soccer League (NWSL), the 3PA Board has heard lots of excitement from our neighbors that Denver's first professional women's sports team will be playing their home matches just up Broadway at Santa Fe Yards.

As your Registered Neighborhood Organization (RNO), our role is to keep you informed (you're already reading the Platt Park Post! Check!) and advocate on your behalf throughout the stadium construction process. We've joined together with a coalition of RNOs, community organizations, and local non-profits to engage with the team's owners in a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) negotiation.

CBAs are legally enforceable agreements between community groups and a developer (in this case, the Denver Summit FC owners). They are meant to ensure that large-scale projects have a positive impact on the surrounding area and that local communities share in the benefits of economic development.

The CBA negotiation process provides a mechanism for us to present the team's owners with our request for the benefits that we feel will be most impactful on our community. We've organized our request into five categories, each with their own subcommittee: Art, History, and Culture; Business and Labor; Parks and Environment; Social Impact; and Transportation and Connectivity. I represent 3PA on the Steering Committee that will negotiate directly with the ownership group based on the ideas generated by the subcommittees. The 3PA Board members sitting on the subcommittees include Garrett Fardon on Transportation, Walker Knight on Social Impact, and Nick Bottinelli on Parks.

Compared to CBA negotiations for other large projects in Denver such as the National Western Complex or Ball Arena, the timeline for our negotiations is extremely condensed. By the time this issue of the PPP hits your doorstep, we hope to be in the advanced stages of negotiations with the team, with an eye towards creating a final draft of the CBA before submitting it to City Council for review in October.

While I don't think my suggestion to have the team's first championship parade route include South Pearl Street will be part of our request, I'm still looking forward to a fruitful relationship with our new neighbors.



强 Alex Magaña

DPS BOE At Large Candidate



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in fo@alex magana 4 dps. com





Platt Park Neighborhood Update

from Flor Alvidrez District 7 Councilwoman

Dear Platt Park Neighbors,

Hard to believe that 2025 is already halfway over! As we head into fall, my favorite season in Denver, I am sharing some exciting updates that directly impact our Platt Park community.

First, I've been working hard to ensure the Vibrant Denver Bond makes it onto the November ballot. I'm proud to share that Platt Park is set to benefit in two key areas: Decker Library and the Platt Park playground.

Decker Library's allocation of \$4.5 million will go toward longoverdue maintenance to preserve this neighborhood gem and historic Carnegie library. As for the playground, \$1 million has been allocated for improvements. Denver Parks and Recreation will launch a community outreach process to hear your ideas and priorities. If the community's vision exceeds the current funding, we'll work to tap into Parks Legacy funds to help bring that vision to life.

I've also heard your questions about the Jewell Bridge over Santa Fe. The project is technically under construction, contractors are hired, parts are ordered, and work is happening behind the scenes to minimize traffic disruption on the busy Santa Fe highway. We've already paid for the railroad airspace, and the team is moving steadily forward.

Another concern I continue to hear across the district is copper theft. This growing crime not only disrupts our parks, streetlights, and public infrastructure; it also puts lives at risk. Thieves often leave exposed wires and live electrical systems behind, endangering themselves and others.

That's why I proudly co-sponsored a new scrap metal ordinance that strengthens reporting requirements for scrap dealers and makes it harder to profit from stolen materials. This is one step toward holding bad actors accountable while protecting our community's safety and resources.

Lastly, if you haven't heard, our National Women's Soccer League team officially has a name: Summit Denver FC! A community benefits agreement is underway, and we expect a rezoning process later this year. After decades of disuse, we're finally transforming the Broadway Station area from a dirt lot into a community destination. And yes, that bridge to nowhere over the land between Broadway and Santa Fe will soon be a bridge to somewhere.

As always, my team and I are here to serve you. If you have questions, ideas, or need support, please reach out to us at district7@denvergov.org.

McKinley-Thatcher Elementary Update

By Ingrid Hoff



McKinley-Thatcher celebrated a long-awaited milestone this August. The school reached its full capacity of 325 students and two classrooms in each grade level, following an expansion project started in 2017. With a pre-expansion enrollment of just 160 children, McKinley has now doubled in size and is serving an increasingly diverse community. The expansion included a brand new building wing, opened in 2019, that now houses the school's state-of-art STEM (science, technology, engineering, & math) lab, art studio, and classrooms for 4th and 5th graders.

McKinley-Thatcher was also the recent recipient of two grants from the Denver Public Schools Foundation – both intended to beautify the school campus. One grant led to the creation of a brand-new outdoor mural in the art studio courtyard. The mural, completed in June 2025, was designed and painted by school staff and students. The second Foundation grant helped to replace decorative flags on the playground that had not been updated since the early 2000s. The new flags incorporate designs hand-drawn by the school's graduating 5th grade class of 2024-2025 and will be installed this autumn.



Decker Branch Library Fall Updates Middle School News

By Quetzalli Cortez



We are thrilled to share with you new and exciting things that are coming to the library!

Earlier this year, we acquired our new Playaway audiobook collection. Playaways are preloaded devices, each containing its own audiobook. All you need to do is plug in some headphones and press play! Customers have been asking about Playaways for the last few years, so we are excited to be able to provide this now! Come check them out!

Also, after more than a decade, Denver's citywide reading program, One Book One Denver, is back — and it's all about bringing people together through one shared story. Information about the selected book and associated events can be found at denverlibrary.org/obod. We'll have events across the city author talks, creative workshops, thoughtful conversations, and so much more. Be on the lookout in September for Decker's One Book One Denver program!

Check out our Upcoming Events page on our website to learn more about Decker's fall programs at denlib.org/decker. In August, we again began offering baby storytime on Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. and toddler storytime on Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. for the rest of the year.

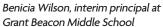
We hope to see you all soon! Happy reading!



Grant Beacon

By Alex Magaña







Alex Magaña, author of article

Welcome back! As summer wraps up, it's time to begin transitioning your children back to school. Our building has been quiet for the summer, but the hallways are polished, classrooms are prepared, and our staff is energized and ready to greet our students back with open arms. We've missed the buzz of student voices and the excitement of learning that our amazing students can bring to our school.

Help your middle schooler ease back into the school mindset by taking these important steps. Talk with your children about their excitement and any concerns they might have about the new school year. Get them to bed early - start shifting bedtimes now so they're well-rested and ready to learn. Set up daily routines - practice morning schedules, organize school supplies, and create homework spaces.

New Leadership Team:

Although I am running for the DPS School Board At Large, I'll continue supporting our amazing school community. We're also thrilled to welcome our new interim principal, Benicia Wilson, who was hired as the assistant principal and brings over 15 years of experience to our school. Together, we're building an incredible team that believes in every single one of our students.

Don't forget to check the school website for lastminute updates on registration, supply lists, and important forms. Thank you.





Asbury Elementary Turns 100!

By Lauren Walser, Asbury PTSO Co-President

There's something huge worth celebrating at Asbury Elementary: Our school turned 100 this year!

To mark a full century of educating neighborhood children, Asbury is throwing a community party on Friday, September 5, from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. All are welcome! There will be food trucks, music, and special guest speakers. Asbury alumni and current and former staff members will share their favorite Asbury memories. Parts of the school will be open to walk through and look at student presentations - and admire the school's historic architecture. (We love all the wood details!)

Students have been creating exhibits for the party, learning about the history of their school and, by extension, the world. Kindergartners and fourth graders have been collaborating on projects exploring Asbury of the past – a time before computers, a school garden, a student council, and social-emotional learning curricula. They've gathered old photos and memorabilia and created timelines that will be on display. Second and fifth grade students are working together to explore Asbury of the present, collecting photos from their favorite school traditions, like the Fall Carnival, Halloween parade, Thanksgiving lunch, Guinea Pig Race, and field trips. And first and third graders are looking to the future together, imagining the Asbury that students will be



enjoying in the decades to come. (For instance, in a year from now, Asbury Elementary will have air conditioning for the first time in its history, thanks to everyone in Denver who voted for Ballot Issue 4A back in November! We're so excited!)

If you miss the anniversary celebration on September 5th, mark your calendars for our Fall Carnival on Friday, September 26! Come see what's made Asbury so special for the last 100 years and help keep that spirit alive for the next century.





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