

PROCLAMATION



City and County of Denver

Proclamation No. 18-0697 Recognizing Jan Marie Belle on the Occasion of her Retirement

WHEREAS, in 1987, Jan Marie Belle, along with many dedicated residents of Westwood, formed the Southwest Improvement Council (SWIC) to clean up yards, alleys and graffiti; and

WHEREAS, SWIC began operating out of the Westwood Community Center in 1992 and later expanded to address youth education, recreation, and employment; elder wellness; health promotion, disease prevention, and programs targeting populations of greatest need in neighborhoods throughout Southwest Denver; and

WHEREAS, in 1995, SWIC staff and Board of Directors formed a nonprofit development corporation, Southwest Neighborhood Housing Corporation (SWNHC), to increase the inventory of affordable housing in Southwest neighborhoods by developing homes which were sold to first time home buyers at below market prices; and

WHEREAS, SWIC became a Housing and Urban Development (HUD) approved agency with certified housing counseling programs to assist low-income residents with locating rental housing, providing homeownership training and first-time home ownership education, acquiring down payment assistance, and receiving services to prevent foreclosure; and

WHEREAS, today SWNHC retains 19 units of affordable rental housing for over 50 adults, seniors, and children at below market-rents; and

WHEREAS, the voter-approved 1998 Denver Bond covered an addition and full remodel of the Southwest Denver Community Center which was finally completed in January 2007; and

WHEREAS, having facilitated an institutional collaboration, SWIC today operates the Westwood Community Center with the following collaborative partners: Westwood Branch of the Denver Public Library, Mile High Montessori Child Care Center, and the Volunteers of America; and

WHEREAS, SWIC's programs now serve all of Denver with housing counseling, daily lunches for seniors, monthly "OYATE" Talking Circles for Native American and Hispanic Elders; weekly food banks, exercise and fitness programs for adults, after-school and recreation programs for youth, weekly sewing, quilting, knitting and crocheting for elders, a community garden, and an urban wildlife refuge.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER THAT:

Section 1. The Denver City Council hereby recognizes Jan Marie Belle for a job well done in her service to Southwest Denver and congratulates her on the occasion of her retirement as the founding Executive Director of the Southwest Improvement Council.

Section 2. That the Clerk of the City and County of Denver shall attest and affix the seal of the City and County of Denver to this proclamation, and that a copy hereof be forwarded to Jan Marie Belle.

PASSED BY THE COUNCIL June 25, 2018

PRESIDENT